

CAIN & ABEL

QYN & IBIL

Pilot - Part I

"My Brother's Keeper"

Pilot - Part II

"Markheim"

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**TEASER**

FADE IN:

**EXT. DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS - 7-11 PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

Chasing marquee lights. Neon. Even a convenience store off the old strip proudly displays joyless local glamour.

A rhythmic beat hails from an adjacent nightclub.

Clubgoers DEL and JAYNA (early 20s) emerge from the store.

JAYNA

So did what's-his-name get us on the list, or what?

DEL

Dunno. Lemme check.

Del sets his OVERSIZED SODA down on the nearest hood.

He takes his phone out. Scrolls through texts.

DEL

Uh...

In the b.g., Russian mafia lieutenant ARKADY BYKOV and enforcer VIKTOR MOGILEVICH (late 30s) exit next.

DEL

...We gotta text him back...

ARKADY

(hostile)

What in a FUCK?

The couple abruptly looks up.

Arkady enters Del's personal space. Slaps the fountain drink off his Jaguar's gleaming hood.

DEL

Oh, shit! ...Bro!

The emptied cup skitters across the pavement.

DEL

Hey, whydja hafta --

ARKADY

Clean this.

DEL  
 I'm sorry, bro -- I ain't tryna  
 fuck wit your ride, er nuthin. I  
 ain't even look, thass all.

ARKADY  
 Did I say open stupid fucking  
 mouth? No. I said clean up fucking  
 mess.

Jayna already has her phone out, recording.

Del goes to mop up the water-ring with his sleeve.

Arkady explodes.

ARKADY  
 DON'T FUCKING TOUCH CAR!

Grabbing Del's neck, Arkady bends him over the hood.

Presses his cheek against it beside the ring.

JAYNA  
 Hey, let him go!

ARKADY  
 (to Del)  
 Use tongue.

DEL  
 What?

Arkady takes a REVOLVER from the waistband of his track suit.

Jams it against Del's temple.

ARKADY  
 (cocks hammer)  
 Fucking clean it with mouth, bro.

DEL  
 O-K, O-K! Holy shit, don't kill me!

Shuddering in fear, Del's Code Red Mountain Dew tongue worms  
 out, licks at the condensation ring.

VIKTOR  
 (in Russian, subtitled)  
*Arkady, look! He is pissing  
 himself!*

Revolted, Arkady turns him loose. Ensures his car and clothes  
 are piss-free.

The couple dashes off.

ARKADY  
 Hey, come back! Girlfriend can  
 stay!  
 (then)  
 C'mon, sweetheart! I take you on  
 best ride of life!

**INT./EXT. JAGUAR - NIGHT**

They settle into their seats. Arkady at the wheel.

ARKADY  
 What is English word for him? Not  
 bitch. I mean, he is bitch, but not  
 this.

VIKTOR  
 (slowly)  
 Douchebag.

ARKADY  
 Da! Yes, douchebag.

Suddenly, two dark-clad legs ending in black boots jump down on the Jaguar's hood, caving it in.

The steel-tipped boots turn to point at the pair inside.

A steady stream of urine cascades down the windshield.

ARKADY  
 Motherfucking DOUCHEBAG!

VIKTOR  
 (in Russian, subtitled)  
*I'll handle this.*

But this isn't Del.

And the instant Viktor gets his feet under him, the DARK MAN (mid-40s) perforates his larynx with a flat-head SCREWDRIVER.

As Arkady gets out, the man rolls off the hood on the driver side. Kicks the door closed on Arkady's gun hand.

The loose firearm discharges inside the vehicle, shattering the windshield.

Viktor crawls toward the store clutching his ruined throat.

The attacker jams the screwdriver into Arkady's shoulder.

Arkady wriggles free, squealing.

Runs off. Pulls the screwdriver out a few yards away.

Drops it without stopping.

The weapon tumbles with acrylic-steel clatter until the other man spins a graceful pirouette retrieving it and --

Follows Arkady next door, into the --

**EXT./INT. ASTRO-VEGAS NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT**

Arkady blows past the BOUNCER (30), who reports his arrival and injuries into a headset upon recognizing him.

The distraction allows the pursuer to approach.

He fakes a half hug while ramming the screwdriver into the bouncer's armpit, surgically severing his axillary artery before strolling into the packed club.

Slamming bass. Flashing multicolored and stroboscopic light.

It's our first real look at the attacker: long, dark jacket that could pass for formalwear. Black collared shirt. Chin-length hair covers his face in stringy salt-n-pepper strands.

Because the path Arkady cleaves across the crowded dance floor closes in his wake, the pursuer shivs random dancers in the kidneys then pushes them out of the way. Stick and push.

Stick and push. Stick and push.

In the chaotic environment, most remain blissfully unaware of the unfolding mayhem, allowing the attacker to follow Arkady all the way to the DJ booth.

There, he tackles the mobster. Rolls him onto his back.

Repeatedly slams his head against the stage.

Each strike perfectly aligns with each bass hit until --

Arkady Bykov loses his life to the sound of dance music, distant screams, and his killer's hysterical laughter.

SUPERIMPOSE: This is CAIN.

**END TEASER**

**PART I****"MY BROTHER'S KEEPER"****INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN**

A small, unidentifiable DARK SMUDGE on white bed linen.

On the nightstand. A cell phone blurts a sudden alarm.

Haggard-faced ABEL BALLANTINE (mid-40s) -- fighting his way toward becoming a nobody -- rolls out of bed.

Zombielike, he slogs over to the --

**BATHROOM**

Still waking. Lip smacks. What tastes like the inside of a raccoon's asshole? A look in the mirror. Tongue out.

**FREEZE FRAME**

MAN (V.O.)  
Ladies and gentlemen, this hapless  
lost cause is Abel.

**END FREEZE FRAME**

ABEL  
Helpless?

MAN (V.O.)  
Hapless. It means --

ABEL  
(brushing teeth)  
I know what it means. And I'm not a  
lost cause either.

MAN (V.O.)  
Could've fooled me.

Each time Abel stops brushing to speak, blue suds spray out, blotting the mirror and basin.

ABEL  
I have a roof over my head...

MAN (V.O.)  
This shithole?

ABEL  
...a reliable car to drive...

MAN (V.O.)  
That piece of shit?

ABEL  
...a good job that's --

MAN (V.O.)  
-- BORING!

ABEL  
-- going to pay me well.

MAN (V.O.)  
If they hire you.

ABEL  
When they hire me. That's why it's  
called "temp-to-hire."

MAN (V.O.)  
And if for some completely  
unexpected reason they decide not  
to?

ABEL  
Shut up. I haven't spent two years  
grinding away in that office for  
nothing.

MAN (V.O.)  
Indeed. You've done it with zero  
job security or benefits for a  
pittance that barely covers your  
piece of shit payments so you can  
drive your shitmobile home to your  
shithole.

For an internal voice, his sorta sounds like someone else...  
Abel rinses. Straightens up. Frowns at the blemished mirror.  
Swiping his palm down its surface smears his REFLECTION.  
Gazes into his troubled distortion for a long while then --  
Leaves it streaked.

**INT. ATHLETIC CLUB - LOBBY - DAY**

Abel approaches the front desk shouldering a gym bag.

ABEL  
 (muttering to self)  
 ...Anyone but Troy. Anyone but  
 Troy. Anyone but Troy...

A cheerful CLUB MANAGER (early 20s) checks him in.

MANAGER  
 Good morning, Mr. Ballantine!

ABEL  
 Morning. Who do I have first today?

MANAGER  
 Um, let's see.  
 (reviewing court schedule)  
 Looks like...

ABEL  
 (whispers)  
 Anyone but Troy. Anyone but Troy.

MANAGER  
 You're on with... Ethan. Court Two.

Abel exhales relief.

MANAGER  
 (rechecks)  
 I'm sorry, no -- it's actually  
 Troy. Court Three.

Abel wilts.

ABEL  
 Thanks.

MANAGER  
 You're welcome! Oh! And Mr.  
 Ballantine?

Abel stops at the turnstile.

ABEL  
 Yes?

MANAGER  
 Unfortunately, your credit card is  
 still expired --

ABEL  
 Still?

MANAGER

We'll just need a new one or this month's payment before I can swipe you through.

ABEL

May I take care of it after?

MANAGER

Certainly, sir. But this will have to be the last time.

ABEL

(entering club)

Thanks again.

MANAGER

Have fun!

Abel's face isn't anticipating fun.

**INT. RACQUETBALL COURT GALLERY - DAY**

In the b.g., PLAYERS enjoy smooth and easy games on several glass-walled courts while --

MEMBERS mill about outside. Preparing to play. Idle chatter.

A few recognize Abel. Namely the amicable WILL (early 50s).

RANDOM MEMBER

Hey, guys -- Abel's here!

WILL

Abel! How's it goin, buddy? I heard you got Troy first. You better win so I don't have to play 'im.

ABEL

I'll do my level best.

WILL

Good luck!

He'll need it -- for tolerating his opponent, not the game.

**INT. COURT THREE - DAY**

Abel. Warming up. His practice shots reverberate. Whip-CRACK!

Overbearing bully TROY (30) enters. The type of guy you'd find everyone avoiding in a bar, his supreme confidence in his shabby skills and absent etiquette presents a liability.

TROY

Abel today? WOOOO! Yer gonna getchyer ass kicked, boy!

ABEL

You, uh, wanna warm up, or anything?

TROY

No need, loser! I was born ready to beat your puny ass all over this court, be-yotch! Serve it up!

ABEL

Zero-zero.

Abel serves. Whip-CRACK!

Whip-SMASH! Troy whacks the ball as hard as he can.

TROY

WOOOO!

The reckless shot rebounds around the court.

Abel exhibits unenthusiastic effort.

TROY

(gestures)

Oh yeah! Thass right! Get the fuck out my house, be-yotch!

Abel goes back to receive Troy's serve.

Next rally. Abel's return shot.

A few shots in the exchange.

Troy. Tracking the ball. Shoves Abel into the wall. Hard.

And it only gets worse from there.

--Sloppy, hazardous rallies

--Their bodies collide

--Abel recoils as Troy argues a call in his face

--Abel serves but Troy's return shot pegs him in the back

--Last, Troy unloads on another shot.

His racquet edge strikes Abel's solar plexus on the follow-through hard enough to double him over.

He falls down. The wind knocked out of him.

ABEL  
(slowly getting up,  
weakly)  
Do-over.

TROY  
(already lining up serve)  
No fuggin' way! Did you see that  
shot? That's my point, baby!

Quick glance at Abel's REFLECTION in the glass wall.

Troy's serve.

Abel's return.

But when Troy lines up to take the next shot --

The edge of Abel's RACQUET SMASHES HIS OPPONENT SQUARE IN THE FACE, splitting his protective eyewear in two.

Copious blood immediately spurts from the injury.

ABEL  
Oh, crap! Are you O-K?

Troy. Holding his face together.

TROY  
Joo pugging broke by doze!

ABEL  
So... Do-over?

Troy storms off the court. Passes Will exiting the gallery.

ABEL  
(calling after him)  
It was an accident. I'm sorry.  
Troy, I'm REALLY SORRY!

The court door bangs shut.

Abel turns to his REFLECTION in the glass wall.

ABEL  
What the heck was that?

**EXT. GENCOM GLOBAL, LLC. HEADQUARTERS - PARKING LOT - DAY**

Abel's rickety Toyota Corolla rolls into a spot designated for employees and parks.

Dressed for the office, Abel gets out with his work bag.

**MAIN ENTRANCE**

Abel taps his keycard against the terminal.

The light turns briefly yellow, then reverts to red.

He tries opening the GLASS DOORS. Still locked.

Tries the keycard again. Click!

Still locked.

A third try. Nothing.

Disinterested security guard KARL (60s). Seated behind the reception desk on the other side. Scrolls through his phone.

ABEL  
(through doors)  
Karl? ...Karl, my card's not working.

MAN (V.O.)  
Hey, just like the racquet club!

Abel gives it a couple more useless tries.

ABEL  
Can you let me in? Karl!

No acknowledgment from Karl.

MAN (V.O.)  
Is this normally how the temp-to-hire process works?

ABEL  
(under breath)  
It's gotta be a mistake.

MAN (V.O.)  
You're a mistake.

Abel presses his lips into the small space between the doors until they look fishlike.

ABEL

Kaarrrrlllll... I know you can hear me, Karl. Can you please let me in? Something's wrong with my card. Or maybe the lock's broken.

Abel steps away. Takes his phone out and dials.

When he turns back around, he sees --

Another EMPLOYEE breeze right through.

But the door locks again just as Abel reaches for it. Click!

Karl's dismissive goodbye wave before he dives back into feed scrolling.

Abel surrenders. Returns to the --

#### **PARKING LOT**

Just in time to see his CAR BEING TOWED.

Already? Were they waiting for him to show up?

He takes off after it, calling out, but changes priorities.

Chases a bus pulling away instead.

#### **INT. BUS - DAY**

Moderately full of PASSENGERS. Abel takes a window seat halfway down the aisle as the bus rolls out.

Opens up his phone contacts. Redials.

His recruiter, LISA (late 20s), answers.

LISA (V.O.)

Red Rock Staffing, this is Lisa.

ABEL

Hi, Lisa. This is Abel Ballantine. I've been on assignment for you at Gencom but I'm having trouble accessing the building today...?

LISA (V.O.)

(keyboard tapping)

One moment...

(then)

According to my notes the employer elected to discontinue the assignment.

ABEL

That's not possible! I'm supposed to be officially hired next week.

LISA (V.O.)

I'm sorry it didn't work out, Mr. Ballantine. Now, if you'd like --

ABEL

Wait -- was there a reason? Does it say why...?

LISA (V.O.)

(tapping)

Evidently, they elected to discontinue the assignment when an employee reported smelling alcohol on your breath.

ABEL

Now I really don't believe you -- I don't even drink. Besides, I was the only person in that office not screwing around online all day -- and they fired me?

INTERCUT WITH:

**INT. RED ROCK STAFFING - LISA'S DESK - DAY**

Lisa. Screwing around online.

LISA

Technically, they elected to --

ABEL

-- discontinue the assignment. Yes, I heard you the first two times. Fine. Whatever. What else can you send me on?

Disconnect tone.

ABEL

Hello?

Abel regards his phone with disgust.

Hold on -- did his REFLECTION in the bus window just...

Misbehave?

MAN (V.O.)  
Now what're we gonna do?

The bus opens its doors at a stop.

The DARK MAN boards. Watch out! He's coming right toward you!

He takes the empty seat beside Abel.

REVEAL - their identical resemblance when he tucks his messy, dark hair behind his ears

CAIN  
I said, now what're we gonna do?

ABEL  
Get the car back, go home, and look for a job.

So the voice in Abel's head all along belongs to this psycho?

That must mean...

CAIN  
Ever seeking that "normal" life. Why can't you get it through our head? There is no normal life. Not for us. You need to accept that, maybe let me run things awhile...

ABEL  
Absolutely NOT!  
(backs off)  
Now keep it down. People are starting to look.

A WOMAN (60s) notices Abel SITTING ALONE. Talking to himself.

Regards him with suspicion. Contempt.

CAIN  
C'mon. You know I could do so much better by us.

Abel acknowledges her. Fakes using his Bluetooth earpiece.

ABEL  
Yeah? You wouldn't happen to know why my mouth tasted like alcohol when I woke up this morning, would you?

CAIN

How can I drink from in here? Hell,  
I can't do anything thanks to you  
and that damn doctor.

ABEL

(muses)

It doesn't make sense.

CAIN

Hey, maybe you started sleep-  
drinking.

ABEL

(skeptical)

Sleep drinking?

CAIN

You never know what goes on in the  
deep, dark night.

ABEL

What goes on in the daytime is bad  
enough. Anything you wanna say  
about that game?

CAIN

Like what?

ABEL

Like how you got out?

CAIN

The door opened for a split second  
and I seized the opportunity.

ABEL

Bull. How could that happen in the  
first place? It's not like my life  
was in danger.

CAIN

Maybe it was one of those Damar  
Hamlin things.

ABEL

Huh?

CAIN

That football player who went into  
cardiac arrest. A sharp blow to the  
chest can be fatal.

ABEL

Even if that's what triggered the fail-safe, we don't hurt people!

CAIN

And what's Troy's policy?

ABEL

It was an accident!

CAIN

That motherfucker had it coming! Do you have any idea how long I waited for a chance like that?

ABEL

You could've easily killed him.

CAIN

Well, those were the stakes and that's how I got out.

ABEL

I don't accept that. And then what, huh? Manslaughter charges?

CAIN

Don't blame me for what didn't happen.

ABEL

Yeah, assault. Much better.

CAIN

Either way, I hardly think he'll be running his shit mouth from now on.

ABEL

Either way, it was clearly a false alarm and you shoulda stayed put. I'll bring it up with Grady.

**EXT. FREMONT EAST APARTMENTS - NIGHT**

Cain waits at the top of the stairs for --

Abel. Finally reaches his front door. Keys the lock.

ABEL

I love how it took all day to get my car --

But the key won't turn and the lock looks new.

ABEL  
What the...?

He snatches a FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER taped to the doorjamb.

CAIN  
What's that, a note from the  
roomies?

ABEL  
Yes.

CAIN  
What's it say?

ABEL  
(crumpling page)  
It says we don't live here anymore.

**EXT./INT. FREMONT EXPERIENCE - GOLD RUSH CASINO - NIGHT**

The Old Strip. It's no family-friendly Disneyland like the current Vegas strip. These are the original casinos still in operation. Darker. Grittier. More storied.

The streets are teeming with DRUNKS and TOURISTS.

Abel. Lost in thought. Walking fast.

Cain throws an arm over Abel's shoulders, steers him inside.

Guides him through a maze of glittering slot machines.

CAIN  
We don't have to be homeless  
either.

ABEL  
I'm aware of that. But I have other  
options to exhaust first.

CAIN  
Like what?

ABEL  
Never you mind.

They reach the back of the casino.

Covered tables. Closed bar. No patrons.

CAIN  
I have a right to know what the  
plan is, chief.

ABEL  
(still keeping voice down)  
Rights? You don't have any freaking  
rights!

CAIN  
And you don't have any freaking  
job, so it looks like I'll hafta  
bail us out again.

ABEL  
I don't need your help --

A COCKTAIL WAITRESS (mid-20s) interrupts.

ON NAMETAG - "SASHA"

SASHA  
Can I get you something to drink,  
sir?

Abel looks up.

Cain vaults over the empty bar.

CAIN  
Hell yeah, you can! Put up a whole  
row of 'em, Sasha!  
(left hand bar karate  
chop)  
Starting here --  
(right hand bar karate  
chop)  
-- and ending here!

SASHA  
(to Abel)  
Sir?

ABEL  
(glum)  
Nothing for me, thanks.

Sasha's leaving without an order confirms what the bus ride  
intimated: only Abel can see and hear Cain.

**INT. SMITH CENTER - BALCONY - PRIVATE BOX - NIGHT**

Russian mafia boss IONOV KALASHNIK (mid-50s). A living Potemkin Village masking a troubled mind. Lowered eyelids. Bald head tipped forward. Listening to the PIANIST (40s) onstage perform Rachmaninov's Prelude in c-sharp minor.

**IONOV'S GOONS RETALIATE OVER ARKADY / CONCERT**

-- VAN -- Masked MEN abduct a PEDESTRIAN.

-- CONCERT -- Ionov listens, impassioned.

-- BAR -- Busting and smashing the place up. Goons beat and terrify PATRONS.

-- CONCERT -- The pianist's hands delicately caress the keys.

-- RESIDENCE -- Committing arson with flamethrowers. Are PEOPLE trapped inside?

-- CONCERT -- Felt hammers and dampers work the strings.

-- HOTEL ROOM -- Torturing some POOR BASTARD for answers. Is that Del?

-- CONCERT -- Mayhem orchestrator Ionov listens, entranced.

-- DESERT -- Kneeling ENEMIES lined up for execution.

**BACK TO CONCERT**

Ionov's trusted associate PAVEL (30s) enters the box.

Placing a hand on his boss's shoulder gets his attention.

REVEAL - Ionov isn't lost in the music -- he's scrolling social media on his phone. He shows it to Pavel

ON PHONE - looped clip of a cat dancing in a funny outfit

Pavel gestures for Ionov to join him in the --

**INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Ionov. Furious now.

IONOV  
(in Russian, subtitled)  
*And still, you know nothing?*

PAVEL  
 (in Russian, subtitled)  
*I think it's possible -- maybe this  
 person has no connection to the  
 business.*

IONOV  
 Don't be fool.

PAVEL  
 Like if we got on someone's bad  
 side...

IONOV  
 I AM SOMEONE'S BAD SIDE! Find out  
 who was responsible and bring him  
 to me. I want to watch life slip  
 away on moment he says --

SMASHCUT

**INT. GOLD RUSH CASINO - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Abel. Before the mirror. His outstretched arm and open palm.

ABEL  
 Hi! I'm Abel Ballantine. It's nice  
 to finally meet you!

CAIN  
 (commandeering reflection)  
 Excuse me -- what are you doing?

ABEL  
 Introducing myself.

CAIN  
 She doesn't know your name?

ABEL  
 She doesn't know my last name.

CAIN  
 Why would she need to know our last  
 name? Are you meeting for dinner or  
 filing your taxes?

ABEL  
 It shows I'm comfortable enough to  
 tell her. It builds trust.

CAIN

She doesn't need to know our last name, O-K?

ABEL

O-K.

CAIN

Good. And why the hell are you sticking our hand out like that? What're ya gonna do, whack her one?

ABEL

I --

CAIN

Think, knucklehead. You don't shake hands with a gal you're trying to bang. If you do anything with your hands -- that is, if she extends her hand -- you take it like this --  
 (underhanded)  
 -- lean in like you're going to kiss it, but don't. Instead, just make unassuming eye contact and smile nicely as you hold her gaze. And for those few precious moments, by God, focus all your attention on not being an asshole. Think you can do that?

ABEL

Um...

CAIN

Great. We're boned.  
 (then)  
 Actually, we won't be. Shit.

ABEL

For the last time, I don't need or want your help, Cain.

Cain's expression. Patronizing and reproachful.

ABEL

Stop looking at me like that.  
 (angrier)  
 Stop looking at me like that!  
 (pause)  
 Oh, fuck me? Fuck YOU, pal!

Abel freezes. A male GUEST (60s) stands in his periphery --

Just inside the doorway. Watches him argue with his own reflection.

The guest turns back. Rushes out.

Abel locks the door after him. Ensures the stalls are empty.

CAIN

You really think dating is the best idea for someone like us, partner?

ABEL

Grady says I should be meeting others and developing relationships. He thinks I spend too much time alone.

CAIN

Ha! It's a good thing girls online don't have any concerns about meeting psychos, eh?

(then)

Make sure you spend plenty of time raving about Dr. O'Daniels' sage advice.

ABEL

She doesn't need to know about either one of you.

Abel works on combing his hair back.

CAIN

What if she asks about your non-existent job?

ABEL

Oh, right. I forgot about that.

CAIN

Don't worry, everything will be going so well by then you could ask her back to your car.

ABEL

(miserable)

Why can't you just leave me alone?

CAIN

I don't know, maybe it's because YOU'RE IN MY FUCKING WAY!

ABEL

(pacing)

Shut up. Shutup. Shutupshutup!  
Shutupshutupshutupshutupshutup...

(back to mirror)

You're gonna let me have this date,  
Cain. You're gonna sit tight in  
your cage, keep quiet, and let me  
have one normal night or -- y'know  
what?

(retrieves pill bottle  
from work bag)

Grady and I will bury you under a  
mountain of medication!

Abel gives the bottle and abrasive, angry shake.

CAIN

You wouldn't dare.

ABEL

And I'll only let you out when I  
sign up for double shifts at the  
shelter.

CAIN

(sneezes)

You wouldn't DARE!

ABEL

Like hell I wouldn't. One night,  
Cain. It's not too much to ask.

**INT. BLACKJACK BAR & GRILL - BAR - NIGHT**

A busy, upscale restaurant.

Abel pulls up a barstool. Nervously scans the lounge.

Bartender WALLY (late 60s), a portly gent with smile lines  
and definitely someone's grandfather, places a coaster.

WALLY

Good evening, sir. What can I get  
you?

ABEL

Just a menu, please. I'm actually  
meeting someone for dinner.

WALLY  
 (menu hand-off)  
 If you'd like anything while you wait, just let me know.

ABEL  
 Thanks, but she should be here any minute.

WALLY  
 Ah! It's that kind of meeting. Certain you wouldn't care for a little something to grease the wheels?

ABEL  
 Quite certain. Thanks anyway.

Wally attends to another GUEST.

Abel reads down the menu.

ABEL  
 (to self)  
 What does "Market Price" mean?

CAIN  
 (suddenly beside him)  
 It means you can't afford it.

Abel covers his mouth with the menu.

ABEL  
 Great. You again.  
 (through teeth)  
 I thought I told you to stay in your pen.

CAIN  
 I'm only here in spirit.

ABEL  
 Your spirit isn't welcome either.

CAIN  
 Think of it this way: I cannot sit idly by while your control of the physical spoils our existence with near-constant loserdom.

ABEL  
 So you're using your influence over my imagination to, what, stay involved?

CAIN

C'mon, I'm the ultimate wingman.  
You know I can be surprisingly  
supportive in matters of the heart.

ABEL

Yeah, if anyone needs it ripped out  
still beating.

CAIN

Most do. Did you order us some  
drinks yet?

ABEL

No.

CAIN

Barkeep!

ABEL

Stop! Now get outta here before you  
scare her off.

CAIN

No friggin' way. This concerns me  
too, Abes.

ABEL

Cain...

CAIN

Lighten up. She won't even know I'm  
here.

ABEL

Make sure it stays that way.

A woman's voice. Behind them. Friendly and disarming.

INANNA "NAN" ACLIMA SUMMERS (mid-30s), whose disposition  
isn't nearly as retiring as her idyllic name, arrives.

NAN

Am I interrupting something?

ABEL

I was just -- talking to myself.  
(nervous laugh)  
Hi, I'm Abel, it's nice to --

NAN

(firm handshake)  
-- finally meet you.

She relaxes her strong grip, withdraws her hand, and turns away as Abel leans into empty space now empty-handed.

NAN

I reserved us a table... Unless you'd rather sit at the bar...?

ABEL

A table is actually much better.

### MAIN DINING ROOM

A SERVER (early 20s) stands tableside. Hands clasped behind her back.

SERVER

A Cosmo for the lady... And for you, sir?

Cain pulls up a chair. Sits on it backwards.

Looks over a drink menu.

CAIN

Should we get bottle service? We should get bottle service.

ABEL

(to server)  
Water with lemon.

CAIN

Adventurous.

ABEL

(slumps)  
Water with lime.

CAIN

That's more like it, champ.

SERVER

(departing)  
Back in a moment.

NAN

You're only having water? I know they say not to drink when you're meeting for the first time, but --

ABEL

No, please go ahead. I've been avoiding alcohol because... Because I --

NAN

-- turn into a different person when you drink?

ABEL

No, no. Definitely not. No, I was gonna say that it doesn't agree with my medication, that's all.

NAN

That's sensible. So I still don't know what you do for work...?

ABEL

I, um, have you heard of Gencom? Over in the business park? It's a tech company. I work in -- it's just an office job. I'm thinking about leaving, actually.

NAN

Why?

ABEL

They, um, don't have much of a team culture there. How -- ahem! How about you?

NAN

I'm with the L-V-M-P-D. Violent Crime Division.

ABEL

You're a cop?

CAIN

(claps hands, gets up)  
Well, this was fun. We're leaving.

NAN

I have police training. But I work in the lab.

Cain circles their table. Leery. Predatory.

ABEL

(to Cain)  
Sit down!

NAN

Excuse me?

ABEL

I mean, is that a sit-down-all-day kinda thing? Or, like, a lot of standing...?

Cain rolls his eyes. Takes his seat. Leans back and puts his feet up on the table. Ankles crossed on the white linen.

NAN

It's a ton of standing.

(smiles)

But we're used to it.

Reaching for his water, Abel knocks over the electric candle.

ABEL

That's so -- interesting!

NAN

Are you O-K? You seem a little nervous. It's O-K if you're nervous. I get it.

ABEL

Sorry, yes -- I mean, no -- it's just, I can't get over how much lovelier you are in person.

NAN

Oh, my. Thank you. Really. That pic my drunk bestie took is just awful. I have better ones, but I wasn't sure my ideal someone should base their interest on some fake-perfect glam portrait, y'know?

ABEL

Totally. Would you excuse me for a moment?

NAN

(warm grin)

Of course.

ABEL

(reviewing menu)

If the server comes back before I do, please order --

CAIN

-- a raw, dripping steak!

ABEL

-- the vegan casserole for me? No  
spice or seasoning, though.

### **BATHROOM**

Abel enters the single occupancy room. Locks the door.

He withdraws a prescription pill bottle from his pocket.  
Gazes deep into the mirror. Trancelike.

His surroundings darken. Fade. Disappear.

### **DAYDREAM - BLACK VOID**

Abel crosses a cavernous room -- larger than a plane hangar  
-- its ceiling and walls somewhere far beyond the black.

The only light filters down on a jail cell -- a cube of bars  
seemingly extracted from a prison and dropped into the space  
on a heavy marine anchor chain.

Incarcerated at its center, Abel's twin sits on a short  
stool, the only other item present.

Cain rises on Abel's approach. Meets him at the thick bars.

ABEL

(opening pill bottle)  
Give me one good reason...

CAIN

Just think about how much more  
smoothly everything would go if you  
let me out. Let me handle this.

ABEL

Absolutely not. In fact, never when  
she's around. Never, never, never.

CAIN

Fuck! You like her? Do you have any  
idea what could happen if she finds  
out who we are?

ABEL

She won't. Besides, we put all of  
that behind us a long time ago.

CAIN

Speak for yourself.

ABEL

Great idea! You stay here and I'll do all the talking. Alone.

Cain stifles a laugh.

ABEL

O-K, smart guy. What'll take to get you to behave?

CAIN

Are you trying to bargain with me? As if we're somehow not starting from a complete lack of fairness?

ABEL

Cain, I'll do anything.

CAIN

You know what I want.

ABEL

Well, since that's not possible, how 'bout something you don't want?

CAIN

Such as?

ABEL

Going to the shelter. You let us have a peaceful dinner without the benefit of your company and I'll take the night off.

CAIN

My good man, you have yourself a deal.

#### **END DAYDREAM**

Abel. Before the mirror again. Screws the bottle cap back on.

#### **MAIN DINING ROOM**

Abel sits down as Nan sips her Cosmopolitan.

She looks happy to see him.

NAN

The server came back so I ordered for us.

ABEL

Nice! Thank you. What did you end up picking?

NAN

The poached salmon.

ABEL

I heard that's really good here.

Abel lays the cloth napkin across his lap. Eyes her beverage.

ABEL

Where were we again?

NAN

Talking about pics.

ABEL

And work before that.

NAN

That's right. So, what do you like doing outside of work?

ABEL

Um, I also volunteer at an animal shelter.

#### **DAYDREAM**

Cain sneezes again. The sound booms in the vast space.

#### **END DAYDREAM**

NAN

That's so cool! I love animals. I've been thinking of adopting a furry friend myself for some time...

As Nan speaks, Abel becomes distracted by the sweet, pink COCKTAIL in her martini glass -- its dainty lemon twist curled on the rim.

Closer. A light mist of condensation on its crystal surface.

Abel licks his lips. Swallows.

The ambient voices jumble together. Overlap incoherently. Including Nan's.

NAN  
 Wuh-blah-bl-bl-blah-bl-blah. Bluh,  
 wubba, blah.

Back to the Cosmo.

CAIN (V.O.)  
 You're not gonna let the lady drink  
 alone are you?

Nan takes a small sip. Places it back on the table.

CAIN (V.O.)  
 Just go ahead and order one  
 already. The server should be back  
 with the apps soon enough... You  
 know she'll appreciate the upsell  
 on your bill... And plus then the  
 lady won't be drinking alone.

NAN  
 Blah, bl-blah-blah. Wubbuh-bluh,  
 wubbuh-blah-blah.

The practically glowing pink cocktail. Refreshing. Delicious.

NAN  
 Abel? Hello?

ABEL  
 Huh?

NAN  
 (turning)  
 Are you --?

Nan notices the attractive younger WOMAN (late 20s) at a  
 table behind her.

NAN  
 I must be blocking the view. Here,  
 let me make it easier.

Nan closes out the check using her phone as she gets up.

ABEL  
 Wait, no -- I wasn't --

NAN  
 Don't bother. Real nice meeting  
 you.

She gets up. Gathers her purse. Departs.

CAIN (V.O.)  
You better do something...

ABEL  
I'll give you two minutes.

CAIN (V.O.)  
Atta boy.

Abel reaches over. Grabs Nan's half-empty glass and slams the rest of her Cosmopolitan.

**DAYDREAM**

Cain's cell door swings open.

**END DAYDREAM**

Rising now. Everything about Abel is suddenly different. Straight posture. Fluid stride. Confident and carnal.

Taking Abel's horn-rimmed glasses off, his hair falls free, untucked from his ears.

He finds Nan --

**EXT. BLACKJACK BAR & GRILL - ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

Waiting for the valet. Frustrated and hurt.

Nan sees him coming.

She starts to object, but when their eyes lock --

He moves in close. Places a gentle hand on her waist.

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
Don't go.

Their lips nearly meeting, she melts into him. Drawn in.

NAN  
(relaxing)  
O-K...

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
Listen, I hafta be at the shelter pretty soon. Wanna come with? Check out some potential furry friends?

NAN  
(mesmerized)  
O-K...

CAIN (AS ABEL)

And maybe afterward, we could --

Abel's hand reaches up, shoves his own face.

Somewhere, a door of iron bars slams shut.

ABEL

-- just walk back. It's only a few blocks from here.

NAN

O-K. Yes.

(takes his arm)

Sounds fun.

PRE-LAP: Pleasant, upbeat music plays.

**INT. CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL RESCUE FACILITY - NIGHT**

The pair --

--Chases puppies

--Cuddles new kittens

--Exercises dogs

--Administers medication to a cat

--Distributes treats to kennel occupants

The music FADES as --

**INT. BLACKJACK BAR & GRILL - PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT**

Abel closes Nan's driver side door after her.

Backing out, she gives the universal "call me" sign.

Abel responds in kind. Waves. Watches her go.

CAIN

(also waving beside Abel)

Incredible. You managed not to blow it.

ABEL

I can't believe I'm about to say this, but... Thank you.

CAIN

For what, that almost-kiss?  
Somehow, I didn't mind.

ABEL

No. The shelter was the last place  
you wanted to go and you suggested  
it anyway. That means something.

CAIN

Don't get used to it. Just thinking  
of that flea-infested rat's nest  
makes me itchy.

ABEL

Next time...

Abel realizes he's standing there alone.

**EXT./INT. ABEL'S TOYOTA COROLLA - NIGHT**

Still parked on his former residence's street, Abel gets in  
on the passenger side. Fully reclines the seat.

He pulls on a beanie. Bundles into his coat. Las Vegas nights  
are bitter cold this time of year.

A wisp of breath plumes from his lips when he exhales.

A group of drunken PARTIERS on the sidewalk passes his car.

Someone laughing inadvertently bumps into the fender.

Jostles Abel.

These are not ideal sleeping conditions. Even for him.

Abel. Fed up. Opens the trunk.

Holy shit, is that a body bag??

Abel pulls the zipper down a short way.

REVEAL - the dim trunk light illuminates Cain's fine evening  
jacket. Its silk lapels. Carefully embroidered stitching

**EXT. FREMONT STREET EXPERIENCE - NIGHT**

Abel. Wearing Cain's jacket now. Walking fast.

ABEL  
 Hopefully I don't need to tell you  
 what'll happen if you abuse this  
 opportunity.

CAIN (V.O.)  
 I still can't believe you're  
 arriving at this conclusion all by  
 yourself.

**INT. GOLD RUSH CASINO - BAR - NIGHT**

Abel grabs a stool at the bar closest to the craps table.

The BARTENDER (early 40s) leans toward him. Listening.

ABEL  
 Hey, I just lost some serious  
 money. Help me take the sting out  
 of it?

BARTENDER  
 What'll it be, sir?

ABEL  
 I'm thinking whiskey rocks, a  
 snakebite, and a Gunsmoke lager.

BARTENDER  
 One bourbon, one shot, and one  
 beer. Coming right up.

While the bartender sets up his drinks, Cain joins Abel.

CAIN  
 How much cash we got?

Abel opens his wallet.

REVEAL - a single five-dollar bill

CAIN  
 You want the Honeymoon Suite or the  
 Presidential?

ABEL  
 Just try not to draw too much  
 attention to us.

They each raise a glass. Clink them together.



PAVEL  
 (to Rafe)  
 Tell him what you told me and  
 you'll have no problems.

RAFE  
 You'll let me go?

PAVEL  
 Da.

RAFE  
 Will you give me your word?

PAVEL  
 Da. I give word.

The mint limo. Spotless. As well cared for as Arkady's Jag.

It stops in front of the group.

Driver YURI (late 40s) gets out. Opens the rear door.

Ionov disembarks without breaking his gaze from his phone.

He mumbles something to Yuri in Russian.

Yuri reaches inside the vehicle. Silences the music.

RAFE  
 Mr. Kalashnik! I have information  
 that'll help you. I'll tell you  
 everything I --

IONOV  
 Shh. Look, look, look.  
 (shows phone)  
 Is funny, no? ...Some say Russian  
 have no sense of humor. I disagree.  
 Take me, for example. I have  
 marvelous sense of humor.

RAFE  
 (terrified grin)  
 Y-yessir. Anything, you say.

IONOV  
 Now. What is it you want to tell  
 me?

RAFE  
 The night it happened -- what was  
 it? A couple weeks back...?

**INT. PRIVATE POKER ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK**

Twelve MEN from criminal outfits play poker at a round table.

A thirteenth, Cain, enters -- possibly by mistake.

Everyone notices the visitor. Rafe among them.

RAFE (V.O.)

As you are no doubt aware, some of the local business interests get together for a friendly game when everyone's gettin' along. Somma your guys were there, somma ours.

(pause)

But then this -- unaffiliated -- freakshow comes staggering in wantin' ta play.

IONOV (V.O.)

Who was he?

RAFE (V.O.)

I dunno. Never seen 'im before. Long, messy hair. And drunk. Blind stinkin' drunk. Looked like he rolled in from some fancy party -- so we let him stay to lose whateva money he had left.

IONOV (V.O.)

And did he?

Cain. Hauling a mound of chips toward himself.

RAFE (V.O.)

FUCK NO! I mean, fuck no. He spent the whole night cleaning us out --

Cain's fully upended scotch glass. Slurping and suckling ice.

He exchanges the glass for a full one from the COCKTAIL WAITRESS (early 20s). Hammers it while gesturing for another.

RAFE (V.O.)

-- and still drinking like he was born underwater.

A more substantial pile occupies the middle of the table.

RAFE (V.O.)

Then. On the last hand. Every player's all in, right? The pot's up to two million easy.

And that's just the cash. Boat  
keys, car keys, house keys, you  
name it.

The players' zeal contrasts Cain, who's about to pass out.

RAFE (V.O.)

We're all lickin' our chops cuz  
almost every hand has royalty in it  
and the stranger's luck ran out  
three drinks before. He's the last  
to show. But when he turns his  
cards over --

(Cain drunkenly does)

-- he's got a straight goddamned  
flush. So what does he do next?  
You'd think he laugh his ass off  
raking it all in.

Cain gets up. Lays his arm across the table.

RAFE (V.O.)

Instead, he plows the whole pile --  
chips, rings, Rolexes -- right onto  
the floor. Then he puts this  
canister-looking thing on the table  
and pulls a pin out of it.

Cain backs up as the canister pops. Spews smoke.

RAFE (V.O.)

Every motherfucker in that room  
hits the deck thinking it's a  
grenade when it's actually a smoke  
bomb. So as it starts going off,  
this guy jumps up on the table  
flipping open one of those --  
whatchacallit?

In dreamy slo-mo, Cain twirls the knife open as clouds of  
white smoke bursts into the air.

PAVEL (V.O.)

Butterfly.

RAFE (V.O.)

Butterfly, yeah! One of those  
butterfly knives and goes to work  
on us.

Pandemonium as Cain dashes through the fog, stabbing and  
slashing with lethal accuracy -- a bloody ballet.

RAFE (V.O.)

It was like he wasn't even drunk -- like he was pretending the whole time. So naturally we're all guns a-blazin' by now, but between the confusion and crossfire, no one takes a shot.

The exit momentarily appears between rafts of smoke.

RAFE (V.O.)

I seen the door from the corner of my eye and go for it, only to find out the sick bastard locked us in with him. The moment I turn back around, he comes through the smoke and goes for my face. But I put my arms up just in time, so the knife went in on this side --

(pointing at forearm)

-- and come out here. Three inches higher or lower and we wouldn't be talking right now.

Cain flips the knife closed as he exits the private room.

#### **BACK TO PRESENT**

RAFE

Then he left without taking so much as a single poker chip. And that was it. That's all I know.

IONOV

Wow. That is fantastic story. But you left out most important part.

RAFE

I -- did?

IONOV

You see, all your friends are in hospital. All mine are in morgue.

Rafe petrifies. Goes chalk white.

IONOV

Why is this?

RAFE

(innocently, frightened)

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

Ionov lets it sit a moment.

IONOV  
Ha! Don't worry, is not your fault!

RAFE  
(glorious relief)  
Right? No, yeah, no -- everything I  
said was the God's honest truth of  
what happened.

IONOV  
And I believe you!

RAFE  
You do? Ahem! You do.

IONOV  
Of course. This man, he attacks me  
still. Also because description  
matches nightclub. You are free to  
go.

RAFE  
Really? Oh, thank you, Mr.  
Kalashnik! Thank you so much!

IONOV  
No, no. You have my gratitude for  
information. Yuri will drive you  
anywhere you want to go. Yuri!  
(re. Rafe's sling)  
Take care of injured wing, eh?

RAFE  
Yessir. And thanks again.

Yuri starts the limo. Upbeat music blasts into the space.

Stepping aside to let Rafe past, Ionov pulls a gun and kills  
him when he least expects it.

**INT. LIMOUSINE - REAR COMPARTMENT - NIGHT**

Pavel fumes. Ionov stares out the window.

PAVEL  
(in Russian, subtitled)  
*I gave him my word he could go if  
he talked. My word!*

YURI  
(driving)  
He was police informant.

PAVEL

Is that true, Ionov? And you knew  
this already? Before killing him?

IONOV

(in Russian, subtitled)  
*Start shaking down those who owe us  
money.*

PAVEL

*We're not finished, cousin. Why did  
you do it?*

IONOV

He did not laugh at cat video.

Pavel's blank stare.

IONOV

You also did not laugh at cat  
video.

Ionov slowly faces Pavel with dead eyes.

**INT. GOLD RUSH CASINO - GAMING FLOOR - NIGHT**

Cain has a successful night of drinking and gambling.

**QUICK FLASHES - CAIN WINS BIG**

--Cain rolls a seven in craps. His side goes wild. Mountains  
of chips slide his way

--Playing roulette with several stacks on the double zero  
bet. When the ball stops the payout is huge. Many more stacks

--Destroying the DEALER (60s) by hitting blackjack

--He finds a new craps table and repeats the cycle

**BACK TO GOLD RUSH**

Cain. Navigating a maze of slot machines.

CAIN

Well, Abes, you'll be working off a  
hangover for the next week or so,  
but it was a great night. Mission  
accomplished.

**INT. LOUNGE AREA - DAWN**

Cain separates from Abel, phantomlike, one becoming two.

He falls into his own bucket chair as they sit down.

Apart from the splitting headache he instantly feels --

Abel seems uncomfortable. Itchy in Cain's clothes.

He looks down at the glass carrying case in his hands -- full to the top with rows of chips and gaming plaques.

ABEL

What's this?

CAIN

Not bad, right? C'mon, let's go cash in the last round.

ABEL

(scratching torso)

The -- last round?

Abel discovers a money belt inside his shirt. He's completely wrapped in packs of bills.

CAIN

Yeah, I hit a few casinos and came back.

ABEL

(getting up)

Are you shitting me? Cain, this is way too much money!

CAIN

You're welcome.

Abel hustles across the gaming floor.

ABEL

I told you not to draw too much attention to us!

CAIN

What, nobody ever wins big at a casino?

ABEL

NO! No, they never do!

CAIN

It's not my fault I'm lucky.

ABEL

Yeah, right. That can't possibly be it. And we know it's not Karma.

CAIN

Oh, no? I think it's because the universe feels bad for screwing me out of having my own fucking life.

ABEL

Yeah, well, I'm still convinced you cheat somehow.

They reach the --

### **CASHIER'S WINDOW**

A TV drones behind the weathered CASHIER (late 30s) as she sorts and counts.

CASHIER

Would you like cash, check, or electronic transfer, sir?

ABEL

(quietly)  
Check, please.

CASHIER

Sir?

The TV newscast ensnares more of Abel's attention.

ABEL

I said, a check will -- be fine...  
Thanks...

### **SECURITY ROOM**

Ionov, Pavel, Yuri, and a heavily bandaged Viktor enter.

A frazzled young SECURITY DISPATCHER (mid-20s) calls for their attention.

DISPATCHER

I'm so glad you guys are finally here. You'll want to see this right away.

IONOV

(to Viktor)  
*Go. Find out what his problem is.*

DISPATCHER  
 (leads Viktor over)  
 I've got the footage up on these  
 four screens.

Viktor leans in. Observes all of Cain's activities at once.  
 Including his current transaction at the cashier window.

DISPATCHER  
 This guy was on the hottest streak  
 I've ever seen...

Viktor's breathing accelerates. Reaches high panic.  
 He recognizes the big winner in the video but can't say  
 anything because that man severed Viktor's vocal cords.

#### **CASHIER'S WINDOW**

Cain drones on while Abel becomes immersed in the newscast.

CAIN  
 (muffled)  
 You look like hollowed-out shit in  
 my jacket, by the way.

ON TV - A REPORTER (30s) outside a cordoned-off nightclub

REPORTER (ON TV)  
 ...authorities still have no  
 suspects in custody at this time...

CAIN  
 (muffled)  
 Good thing we'll have a beautiful  
 hotel room to recover in. They'll  
 probably comp it...

#### **SECURITY ROOM**

Ionov and company watch the feeds, both live and pre-  
 recorded.

IONOV  
 (seething)  
 Secure exits. Get everyone.

**CASHIER'S WINDOW**

Abel absently takes the check. Continues watching at an unattended window.

ON TV - Caption: "BRUTAL SLAYING, STABBINGS AT ASTRO-VEGAS"

CAIN  
(muffled)  
...Or at least buy us breakfast.

ABEL  
(transfixed on TV)  
You fucking liar. Where were you?

CAIN  
Huh? Hey, I was a good boy. No one got hurt and I delivered on the job you gave me. More than delivered.

ABEL  
Where were you?

CAIN  
In the casinos. Slaving over a hot craps table all night.

ABEL  
(abandons him)  
I don't believe you.

Cain catches up. Hustles alongside.

CAIN  
Abes, the report isn't even from last night. They're talking about TWO nights ago.

ABEL  
(confirms on phone)  
Fine. So what?

CAIN  
So you weren't blackout drunk or in mortal danger two nights ago, were you?

ABEL  
No.

CAIN  
Then, there you have it.

ABEL  
Somebody's messing with me and the  
only person that could be is you.

CAIN  
What makes you say that?

ABEL  
Because.

CAIN  
Because why?

ABEL  
Because you're ALWAYS messing with  
me, that's why. Because nothing's  
adding up, that's why. And because,  
whenever I come close to having a  
normal life, you send everything  
INTO A TAILSPIN, THAT'S WHY!

CAIN  
Normal life. Hmf. As if there even  
is such a thing.

## LOBBY

Abel squints and shies at the morning sunlight ahead.

He navigates GAMBLERS and HOTEL GUESTS bottlenecked near the  
entrance where --

Several SECURITY GUARDS coordinate.

Just as Abel reaches the exit, a hand attached to a well-  
muscled arm reaches out, grabs his.

JACKED GUARD  
'Scuse me. Ima hafta ask you to  
come wid us, sir.

When Abel tries to wrest himself free of his grasp, the guard  
puts him in a chokehold.

The crushing force on his windpipe inhibits his crying out.

ABEL  
Help...!

CAIN  
(right in front of Abel,  
cups palm by own ear)  
I'm sorry, what was that?

ABEL  
Ggghharr... HELP!

CAIN  
Good thing you're still pretty  
drunk from last night.

Cain merges with him. Assimilating. Gaining control.

Cain reaches for Jacked Guard's belt. Grabs his holstered service weapon and puts a round through his foot.

He squeals. Releases his captive.

Collapsing in pain frees the firearm still in Cain's grip.

The crowd drops to the floor as Cain levels the gun and abruptly leaves Abel.

Abel gains control. Finds himself pointing the firearm at innocent people ducking for cover.

Cain stands nearby, nearly falling over with laughter.

ABEL  
CAIN!

Ionov, his GOONS, and army of SECURITY PERSONNEL round the corner from the gaming floor.

Abel ejects the magazine. Shucks the breech. Drops the gun. Turns and runs out of the casino, directly into --

**EXT. FREMONT STREET EXPERIENCE - SIDEWALK - DAY**

A wall of TOURISTS. Packing the midway.

Ionov's comrades follow him out of his casino.

Abel. Fighting the congestion. He might as well be trying to run down Bourbon Street during Mardi Gras.

ABEL  
You see? You see? This is what it  
always comes to! Exactly this!

The goons are closing in -- no one wants to be in their way.

They'll have Abel in seconds.

A drunken COLLEGE STUDENT next to him grabbing the nearest trashcan to throw up in causes Abel to notice a random outdoor staircase in the middle of the thoroughfare.

Abel races toward it, pushing through the throng.  
He jumps a security chain, charges up the steps.  
Yuri is right on his heels with Viktor close behind.  
At the top of the --

#### **DEPARTURE AERIAL PLATFORM**

Abel manages to grab hold of a pre-rigged zip-line harness.  
Threads his arms through the shoulder straps and --  
Jumps -- zooming high above the crowd and quickly away from  
his pursuers to safety. ZZZ-zzz-ZZZ! Down Fremont Street.  
Without an attendant to slow or stop his arrival, though,  
Abel's rig crashes into the opposite terminal's pulleys.  
He takes a hard fall onto the --

#### **ARRIVAL AERIAL PLATFORM**

Gets up. Descends the stairs. Stops on the final landing.  
Abel takes out his phone. Dials. It goes to voicemail.

GRADY (V.O.)

You've reached the voicemail of Dr.  
Grady O'Daniels. Please leave your  
message and I'll get back to you as  
soon as humanly possible. If this  
is an emergency, hang up and dial 9-  
1-1. ...Beep!

ABEL

Hi Grady, it's Abel Ballantine.  
It's happening again. I'm on my way  
to your office right now.

Abel descends the last few steps. Disappears into the crowd.

#### **INT. OFFICE BUILDING - STAIRWELL - DAY**

Abel bursts through the fire door at the base of the stairs.  
Frantic. Paranoid.

CAIN (V.O.)  
 (still laughing)  
 You shoulda seen the look on our  
 face!

ABEL  
 (bounding up steps)  
 Stay away from me!

He encounters Cain on the next landing. Hurries past.

CAIN  
 And where do you suggest I go, dear  
 boy?

ABEL  
 WHEREVER YOU CAME FROM! You and me  
 -- WE'RE THROUGH!

CAIN  
 You don't mean that.

ABEL  
 (struggles for breath)  
 The hell -- I don't. Just wait --  
 and see.

**INT. DOCTOR O'DANIELS' OFFICE - DAY**

The posh office decor pushes the boundaries of patient  
 comfort well into inappropriate opulence.

Then again, this is Vegas.

Gentle and compassionate GRADY O'DANIELS (early 60s) in a  
 leather wingchair plays some type of horse game on a tablet.  
 Portly and jovial, he epitomizes a caring therapist: ill-  
 fitting slacks, the latest in his library of sweaters.

Abel explodes through the door. Slams it shut after himself.

ABEL  
 (winded, distraught)  
 Grady! Full-blown attack. You have  
 to help me -- the only one who can  
 -- I know I don't have an  
 appointment...

GRADY  
 (goes to him)  
 That's all right, I got your  
 message.

Abel's inability to get his breath has less to do with the stairs than his lingering anxiety coming out of shock.

GRADY

There, there, let's sit down.

Grady helps him to the couch.

GRADY

(soothing)

Slow, deep breaths. Let yourself calm down and relax. You're here with me and everything's going to work out.

Abel sinks into the cushions as Grady returns to his chair.

GRADY

Now. Take your time and walk me through what's been going on.

ABEL

(reclined)

God, where do I begin? Everything's so confusing. I lost my job, my roommates kicked me out...

GRADY

I'm terribly sorry to hear that -- last time you were here we talked about you going on a date.

ABEL

Yeah, that was the one thing that didn't end in disaster. Cain even did me a favor.

GRADY

(stops jotting notes)

Cain. Did you a favor.

ABEL

Yeah! I couldn't believe it either. But now I'm starting to think he only did it so I'd let him out.

GRADY

You let him out? On purpose?

ABEL

Just to get some money together.

GRADY

So how long has it been since you last drank alcohol?

ABEL

Um, this was all last night, so... Not quite a full day. But leading up to that was a long time.  
(reflective pause)  
Except...

GRADY

Except -- what?

ABEL

I dunno, it's all a complete jumble. Cain thinks I've been sleep-drinking. Is that a thing?

GRADY

It sounds like I should ask him.

ABEL

I don't think that's a good idea.

GRADY

Confusion precedes clarity, I always say. And the only way to achieve that is analysis from Cain's perspective.

ABEL

(getting upset again)  
NO! You don't understand. Grady, he's -- he's a murderer.

Grady abruptly looks up from his notes.

ABEL

He's been lying to me and somehow killing people when my back's turned. I saw this newscast as we were leaving a casino --

GRADY

If any of this is true, then I absolutely must talk to Cain.

Abel sits up just enough to give Grady's antique mahogany bar trolley a disgusted sidelong glance.

ABEL

O-K, but could you maybe try to  
kill me with a letter opener  
instead?

GRADY

I have a much better way.

ABEL

Will it help with the confusion?

GRADY

As long as you follow my  
instructions exactly. Now, point at  
the wall clock on your left with  
your right index finger and put  
your left index finger in your  
right nostril.

(Abel complies)

Next, count backwards from five  
thousand by subtracting seventeen  
from each number while singing your  
answers to the tune of Happy  
Birthday.

ABEL

(sings)  
Um, four thousand nine  
hundred eighty-three... Four  
thousand nine hundred sixty-  
six... Four thousand nine  
hundred forty-niiiiinne...

GRADY

The way to know without  
knowing, you know, is a way  
of unlocking the unconscious  
mind from conscious flow.  
Don't say "no way" to the  
hypnosis way -- it's the only  
sure way to never know what  
our minds say when we go into  
a deep sleep.

Abel immediately falls into a glassy-eyed hypnotic trance.

GRADY

Can you still hear me, Abel?

ABEL

(dazed)  
You sound -- so far away.

GRADY

(diminishing)  
And farther with each word. Until  
your senses are completely  
deactivated. You see nothing. You  
feel nothing. And all that you hear  
is silence...

Grady waves his hand across Abel's slack face.

GRADY

Abel?

Grady kneels beside his practically catatonic subject.  
Inches closer. Reaches for the patient's lap...?  
And steals four thick packets of bills from the money belt.  
Grady adjusts Abel's shirt. Creeps back to his wingchair.

GRADY

I'm going to count down from three.  
And when I snap my fingers, you'll  
be fully awake, like nothing  
happened.

(pause)

Three... Two... ONE!

Snap!

The patient jumps to his feet. Saunters to the drink cart.

CAIN

(sarcastic)

Nice seeing you again, Doc.

(pouring a drink)

Mind if I help myself to a bit of  
the hair o' the dog? Thanks.

GRADY

May I ask with whom I'm speaking?

CAIN

How many freaks you think we got  
rolling around up upstairs anyway?

GRADY

Where is Abel right now?

CAIN

(looks up)

Am I my brother's keeper?

### **BLACK VOID**

Abel. In a cell like Cain's but with NO DOOR.

ABEL

(grabs bars)

Hello? Grady, can you hear me? Dr.  
O'Daniels? What's going on? DOCTOR!

His cries echo until the endless void devours them unheard.

**BACK TO OFFICE**

GRADY

In a very real sense, yes.

Cain drops Abel's eyeglasses into a trashcan. Returns to the couch. Plops down. Drink in hand. Lounges.

CAIN

So, tell me, Doc. Now that we've dealt with the chronic pain in my ass -- who else has been giving you a hard time?

**INT. LVMPD CRIME LAB - DAY**

Nan. Peering into a microscope.

Her SUPERVISOR (mid-40s) enters. Chucks a plastic evidence bag onto her station.

SUPERVISOR

This just came in for you, Nan. Top priority.

NAN

(doesn't look up)  
K, thanks...

This deeply engaged, she won't get to it anytime soon.

But it catches her eye. Her gloved fingertips graze the clear plastic to make out what's inside --

A flat-head screwdriver splotted with dried blood.

FADE TO BLACK.

**END PART I**

**PART II****"MARKHEIM"****EXT. GENCOM GLOBAL, LLC. HEADQUARTERS - ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

MUSIC CUE: "Raindrop Prelude" by Frederic Chopin

A sledgehammer's mallet scrapes along a concrete walkway.

Its carrier, Viktor, reaches his COMRADES gathering outside the locked glass doors.

**INT. GENCOM LOBBY - NIGHT**

Security guard Karl scrolls his phone. Oblivious.

Viktor swings the sledgehammer. Shatters the doors.

Glass spreads across the floor like pulverized ice.

The thugs enter slowly. Their boots crunching on shards.

Karl. Looking up now. Paralyzed by fear.

They close in on him until their jackets screen the view.

**INT. RED ROCK STAFFING - LISA'S OFFICE - DAY**

The same group surrounds a frightened Lisa.

Strips the headset from her hair. Tapes her mouth.

**EXT. ATHLETIC CLUB - LOBBY - DAY**

They grab the club manager getting out of his car.

Throw a bag over his head. Force him into their SUV.

**INT. LUXURY RANCH ESTATE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

A pair of hands, coppery with drying blood, pick out the delicate final chords of Chopin's piece on a grand piano.

The backs of three MEN. Rapt. Listening from the couch.

END MUSIC CUE

The performer turns. Acknowledges them. It's Cain.

CAIN

Did you gentlemen enjoy that one?

They remain seated. Immobilized in silence.

Enthralled, perhaps, by the elegant musical artistry.

REVEAL - front-facing view. Nope. They're all dead. Propped up in a line on the sofa. One strangled, the piano wire still around his neck. The second with his throat cut. The third with Cain's butterfly knife buried in his eye socket

Cain skips down into the --

### SUNKEN LIVING ROOM

By the third dead goon's side. Leans on the sofa arm.

CAIN

(pinching his cheek)

How 'bout you, cupcake? You were awfully critical earlier...

Abel's cell phone rings. Cain answers.

CAIN (AS ABEL)

Abel Ballantine's House of Healing and Friendship -- how may I brighten your day?

(pause)

Oh, hey, Nan...!

(yanks knife from victim's eye)

Ah, nothing special. The usual. What's going on with you?

(pause)

Why, I'd love to...

He flips the knife closed. Drops it decisively into his jacket's breast pocket. Gives it a comforting little tap.

No longer on the call, Cain enters the --

### KITCHEN

Finds a pair of pliers in a drawer near an expensive stove.

Rips every igniter out of its oven and range.

Twists the knobs to maximum.

Gas hisses through multiple open valves.

In the --

**DINING ROOM**

He lights a SINGLE DINNER CANDLE.

**EXT. CIRCULAR DRIVEWAY - NIGHT**

Cain rolls his eyes at Abel's unsightly Toyota Corolla.

Parked beside an ornate stone fountain, it resembles a lost soul on a king's doorstep. Begging for charity. Pathetically.

**INT. UNDERGROUND GARAGE - NIGHT**

Fluorescent lights blink on over a line of exotic cars.

Hands clasped behind his back, Cain wanders through several million dollars worth of vehicles.

CAIN

Eeny, meeny, miny...

SMASHCUT

**EXT. LUXURY RANCH ESTATE - NIGHT**

The high whine of the jet black Ferrari F8 Spider's engine.

The structure's windows flash orange as Cain races away.

He blasts through the gate. Ionov's home explodes in the b.g.

**BLACK VOID**

Abel looks up from the footstool in his cell.

ABEL

Cain? Grady? What's goin' on up there, are you guys making good progress...?

**EXT. LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD - NIGHT**

Cain rockets down the strip with Nan in the passenger seat.

Wild, wind-blown hair. No brake lights? ...Ever?

Nan discreetly watches him downshift and hit the accelerator.

NAN

You seem -- kinda different than what I expected from our emails.

CAIN (AS ABEL)

What's "email"?

A siren blats. WOOP-WOOP! Red and blue lights flash.

A glance in the rearview. Uh-oh.

Cain pulls the stolen Ferrari convertible over.

The kind of female HIGHWAY PATROL OFFICER (late 30s) who probably had a part on *Reno 911!* approaches the driver side.

OFFICER

Good evening, folks. Sir, may I see your license and registration?

CAIN (AS ABEL)

Certainly, officer. I have them right here.

Cain reaches for the same inner breast pocket last seen collecting his butterfly knife.

Yikes! Is he really going to murder this cop in front of Nan?

OFFICER

I also noticed your safety belt isn't secured. I'll have to cite you for -- Nan?

NAN

Lora? I thought that was you!

OFFICER

Omigod, hi! Wow, I haven't seen you since --

NAN

-- Kiara's bachelorette party -- was it two years ago...?

OFFICER

At least. No three. Wait -- yeah, two very long years ago.

NAN

And how have you been?

OFFICER  
(leaning on Ferrari)  
Oh, y'know, same old. Nicole  
-- you remember my oldest, Nicole --

NAN  
Of course.

OFFICER  
-- is graduating elementary school  
this spring, can you believe it?

NAN  
Not at all. Last time I saw her she  
was just a baby in your arms.

OFFICER  
And she's almost as tall as me now.

NAN  
You're kidding.

Cain drums his fingers on the wheel. Adjusts the rearview.

OFFICER  
Cross my heart. Hey, what about the  
Christmas party? Are you going?

NAN  
To which one...?

OFFICER  
For the state-ies.

NAN  
I'm not sure if my department's on  
the guest list.

OFFICER  
Don't worry about that -- we'll go  
together, yeah?

NAN  
Yes. Yes, definitely. You still  
have my number?

OFFICER  
I'll text you.

NAN  
Sounds good. Great seeing you,  
Lora!

OFFICER

You as well. As for you --  
 (addressing Cain)  
 Buckle up. And take it easy out  
 here. You're driving too fast with  
 precious cargo and I don't want you  
 ruining our plans, *capiche?*

CAIN (AS ABEL)

Yes, ma'am.

OFFICER

(smiling)  
 All right, you folks enjoy the rest  
 of your night now.

Cain buckles his belt as Officer Lora returns to her cruiser.

As Nan waves goodbye, Lora points at Cain behind his back and gives two approving thumbs up.

**INT. BLACKJACK BAR & GRILL - MAIN DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

After the same SERVER from their previous visit walks the pair to their table, Cain pulls her aside.

CAIN

It appears you're quite busy this evening.

SERVER

(jokingly exasperated)  
 Very. Especially with that huge convention in town.

CAIN

I bet you'd rather have just one table in your section.

SERVER

Yeah, in my dreams.

Cain snatches the order book from her apron. Slips a packet of bills into it, several thousand dollars in hundreds.

CAIN

(returning order book)  
 Here's to a dream come true.

SERVER

Sir, I can't.

CAIN

She'll have whatever pink nonsense  
she was drinking last time.

SERVER

My coworkers --

CAIN

And I'll have a Manhattan. In fact,  
let's have you and Wally the  
Bartender mix up a whole pitcher of  
'em. That way, you can be on  
standby with a shaker for refills.  
Perhaps on the other side of these  
plants.

SERVER

(unenthusiastic sigh)  
When would you care to order  
dinner, sir?

CAIN

Look, you have one job to do. Full  
cocktail glass at all times. Does  
that work for you, or shall I take  
my cash to a competing waitress?

SERVER

(pulling out his chair)  
Certainly, sir. I'll bring your  
drinks at once.

CAIN

There's a good lass.

She departs. Cain joins Nan.

NAN

Deja vu, huh.

CAIN (AS ABEL)

If you say so.

NAN

So.  
(disarming smile)  
How was your day?

#### **QUICK FLASHES - IONOV'S RANCH**

--Cain. Naked from at least the waist up. In a bubbling hot  
tub glowing red. Arms outstretched. Head back. Eyes closed

--Jets on high make three additional CADAVERS across from him jiggle and wobble

**BACK TO TABLE**

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
Fairly relaxing.

NAN  
Well, it was my day off, so I looked into adopting Franklin, and I think I can make it work.

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
I beg your pardon?

NAN  
Franklin.

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
Who?

NAN  
The kitten at the shelter...

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
(sneezes)  
Animals. Of course.

NAN  
Can we please go see him after dinner?  
(playfully childlike)  
Please, can we, can we, can we?

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
Sure, fine, yes, anything you want, dahling.  
(looking around)  
Where is that waitress?

She's right beside him. Placing their drinks when he twists back around.

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
Finally.

Cain reaches into his inner left jacket pocket. Withdraws a prescription pill bottle --

CLOSE ON BOTTLE - "antipsychotic"

-- but sets it aside on the tablecloth, repulsed. From the inner right, he withdraws a second bottle, opens it --

CLOSE ON BOTTLE - "allergy"

-- and chases a few pills with his entire first Manhattan.

NAN

Didn't you say alcohol clashes with  
your medication?

The server is already shaking when Cain gestures for another.

CAIN (AS ABEL)

What, these? Nah, they're just for  
allergies -- I don't take the  
others anymore.

NAN

You volunteer at an animal shelter  
even though you're allergic?

Cain shrugs.

NAN

That's the sweetest thing I've ever  
heard.

Cain slams another cocktail.

The shaker shakes.

NAN

Do you have family in town?

CAIN (AS ABEL)

A brother. Twin brother actually.  
Except he's kind of an asshole.

NAN

Hey, what if we went to see  
Franklin now and came back for  
dinner?

CAIN (AS ABEL)

Seriously?

NAN

I had a late lunch...

Cain's quick glance to the server's strained smile.

CAIN (AS ABEL)

(cueing server)

Fine. But let me get one last  
cocktail beforehand, my dear.

She pours.

NAN  
Won't that --

Cain slams it. Pitches the cherry into his mouth.

NAN  
-- take a while...?

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
(stands up)  
Let's go.

The ANTIPSYCHOTIC MEDICATION BOTTLE. Abandoned on the table.

**INT. CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL RESCUE FACILITY - OFFICE - NIGHT**

Viktor and Yuri. Bent over the glow of a desktop monitor in the darkened room.

A mobile phone is connected to the terminal.

ON PHONE DISPLAY - the word "hack" amid Cyrillic script

ON MONITOR - "Access Granted"

Employee and volunteer file folder icons appear onscreen.

A window pops up.

ON MONITOR - "Abel Ballantine - Volunteer Profile"

ON MONITOR - "Under Physician's Care: Dr. Grady O'Daniels"

ON MONITOR - "Emergency Contact: Dr. Grady O'Daniels"

ON MONITOR - "...Grady O'Daniels..."

The main entrance doors opening in the lobby beyond disrupt the two. Causes Yuri to knock a desk lamp over.

**EXT./INT. LOBBY ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

The newcomers hesitate when the lamp clatters to the floor.

NAN  
Are people supposed to be here at  
this hour?

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
 (sneering)  
 In a few minutes, they won't be  
 anywhere. Stand by.

Instead, Nan pushes past him. Heads straight inside.  
 She calls out to the two figures emerging from the office.

NAN  
 Metro P-D! Anyone home?

Viktor and Yuri step into the auxiliary lights overhead.

YURI  
 (presenting ID badge)  
 Is O-K! We are cleaning crew.

CAIN (AS ABEL)  
 (leaving the shadows)  
 Earlier, she said, "How 'bout  
 Thai?" but I said, "No -- I'm  
 hungry for Russian."

The door nearly comes off its hinges when Viktor races out.  
 Yuri hasn't yet reached that level of fear.  
 Cain withdraws the knife. But, flipping it open --  
 It slips from his fingers and hits the tile -- too bloody.  
 Disappears into a dark corner. Coagulating and forgotten.  
 Cain abruptly doubles over. Clutching his skull. Crying out.

CAIN  
 WhaAAAHHH...??

Their physical body hits the floor. Abel takes over.  
 Nan goes to him.

NAN  
 Abel! Are you alright? What's  
 wrong?

ABEL  
 (ailing, shit-housed)  
 Nan? Where -- where am I?

Abel. Crawling. Searches the floor for his glasses, his  
 blurry, farsighted vision undulating from the booze.

The apparition of Cain looms over him.

CAIN  
 You Clever Clarence! You switched  
 the meds, didn't you?

**QUICK FLASH - BLACKJACK BATHROOM CONFRONTATION**

--Abel turns from the mirror and switches the pills after threatening Cain during his first date with Nan

**BACK TO LOBBY**

While Nan and Abel are distracted, Yuri pulls a gun.

YURI  
 Don't move.

**EXT. RESCUE FACILITY - SIDE ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

Yuri exits the building alone.

Brushes past Viktor, waiting by their vehicle.

From the trunk, Yuri retrieves Viktor's sledgehammer and a six-pack carrier of Molotov cocktails.

He throws a set of old snow chains over his shoulder. Slams the trunk closed.

Viktor struggles to object, his voice still a hoarse croak.

VIKTOR  
 You are monster.

YURI  
 (hustling off)  
 And you are pussy!

**INT. RESCUE FACILITY - LOBBY - NIGHT**

Sensing the conflict, many DOGS are already BARKING and YIPING in their kennels when Yuri returns. Smashes the fire alarm's main control box with Viktor's sledgehammer.

Abel. Zip-tied at the wrists and ankles on the floor.

Yuri approaches. Snaps cell phone pics of Abel squirming.

ABEL  
 (slurring)  
 Whush wrong with you? There'th no  
money here!

YURI  
I tell boss you and lady cop die  
very slow.

ABEL  
WHERE IS SHE?

Yuri delivers two swift kicks to Abel's gut. Stomps his ribs.  
Reviewing his phone, Yuri dislikes what he's captured.

YURI  
(retaking pics)  
Stop moving!  
(then)  
Ugh! Lighting also is terrible.

Yuri lights the first cocktail. Throws it at a b.g. window.  
The bottle explodes. Liquid fire cascading down the blinds.  
He throws two more.  
The entire lobby is quickly ablaze -- and better lit.  
Yuri takes a few additional photos.

YURI  
(reviewing new pics)  
Hmm, much better.

Yuri heads toward the kennels with the remaining Molotovs.

ABEL  
CAIN! CAIN, HELP!

Cain's ethereal specter. Crouching beside the bound Abel.

CAIN  
Unfortunately, that's a no-can-do,  
jefe.

ABEL  
Slop wasting time! Thankth to you,  
I'm sho drunk you could breeze  
right outta dat cell and take over.

CAIN  
And thanks to that medication, my  
hands are tied.  
(dissipating)  
Technically, your hands are tied --  
mine no longer exist...

ABEL

Doesn't matter. You'll have 'em  
back when the fail-safe kicks in.

CAIN

That won't work either, I'm afraid.

ABEL

Why not?

CAIN

Because it also no longer exists.

ABEL

What the hell are you talkin about?

CAIN

It might be better if you simply  
accepted this. I'm not exactly  
happy about it, but let's be  
honest: I never had as much to  
lose.

ABEL

You have everything to lose!  
Dontcha get it? If I die, we die,  
and that includes YOU, dumbass!  
Thash why me and Grady created the  
fail-safe in the firth plathe! Sho  
you could protect us!

CAIN

Actually, you fools did that  
because you are too much of a  
coward to face your own death --  
which, ironically, now seems rather  
inevitable.

ABEL

(reasoning)

So you're saying, what, the fail-  
safe can't kick in because you took  
the antipsychotic?

CAIN

No.

ABEL

Then why not?

Cain's silence says he's reluctant to elaborate.

Abel sweats under the onslaught of rising heat.

ABEL  
 Just fucking NO? If this is really  
 the end, you better tell me why  
 not, motherfucker!

CAIN  
 (vanishing)  
 Because Grady and I sorta disabled  
 it...

He's gone.

ABEL  
WHAT?  
 (desperate)  
 CAIN!

The animals' cries. Mewling. Howling. A rising chorus.  
 Black smoke fills the air, both here and in the --

#### **KENNELS**

Where confined dogs are agitated. Pacing. Throwing themselves  
 against their cages. SCREAMING alarm.

Back in the --

#### **LOBBY**

Abel rolls around, fighting to get free. Despite the smoke --  
 The increased lighting reveals an OBJECT ON THE FLOOR nearby.  
 Abel's poor vision can't quite make it out. Can it help?  
 Coughing, he inchworms toward it regardless.

Inebriated Abel squints. It's Cain's butterfly knife. He --

--Cuts himself loose  
 --Grabs a fire extinguisher  
 --Puts out fires  
 --Sets the ventilation system to High

He finds Nan protecting kitty FRANKLIN (<1) locked inside the  
 cat room off the main lobby. Chains on the door.

Abel bangs on the viewing window.

ABEL

Nan! It's gonna be O-K! I'll getcha  
outta there, hold tight.

Abel goes to the rear entrance doors. Finds them chained as well -- from outside.

**UTILITY CLOSET**

He finds a ladder leading to the --

**ROOF**

And crosses it before descending a second ladder to the --

**EXT. RESCUE FACILITY - RECEIVING DOCK - NIGHT**

And stumbles into its attached work shed.

He grabs a pair of pruning shears, but noticing a separate fire alarm freezes him in place.

Following a contemplative beat, he clumsily cuts the chains from the rear entrance but doesn't go inside.

What is he waiting for?

Abel reluctantly returns the shears.

Pulls the auxiliary fire alarm.

And staggers off into the night.

**INT. RESCUE FACILITY - CAT ROOM - NIGHT**

Nan approaches the viewing window with Franklin in her arms.

She searches the smoke-filled scene for any sign of Abel.

**EXT. HIGH ABOVE RESCUE FACILITY - NIGHT**

A fat supermoon hangs in the clear sky.

In the distance, multiple red and blue lights start toward the smoking structure.

Their sirens inspire and reassure the howling dogs.

**HIGH ABOVE LUXURY RANCH ESTATE**

Across town, fire trucks work on putting out a second fire.

**LUXURY RANCH ESTATE**

Ionov shakes hands with the FIRE MARSHALL (60s).

He leaves him. Joins his COMRADES, keeping their distance from the authorities on scene.

Despite the fire department's efforts, his home remains a roaring inferno in the b.g.

IONOV  
(speaking Russian)  
*Only speak if you have that  
bastard's head in a box.*

Yuri says nothing. Presents the pics on his phone to Ionov.

IONOV  
*Where is he?*

YURI  
Dead. Girlfriend also.

IONOV  
*You deny my response?*

YURI  
I -- uh, I...

Before he can answer, Ionov drags him out of sight by the throat, whacks Yuri's skull until Viktor pulls him back.

Ionov pulls free. Straightens his suit.

IONOV  
*Insolent fuck!*

Yuri cowers on the ground. Reaches inside his shirt. Removes Cain's money belt from his waist. Offers it to Ionov.

YURI  
He had this. Please. You take.

IONOV  
(snatching belt away)  
You dare give me my own money?

(in his face)  
Now you really owe me.

BLACK.

**EXT. FREMONT EXPERIENCE - ALLEYWAY - DAY**

Abel's eyes blink open to meet two blurry, beady, black ones.  
Active pink nose. Whiskers. The RAT (2) eyes him curiously.

ABEL  
(groans)  
Good morning, sir.

Half buried in trash, Abel sits up. Holds his aching head.  
The rat darts off as Abel squints skyward, rubbing his eyes.  
The signature LED canopy overhead displays the current  
weather, time, and temp: Sunny, 9:21 a.m. Forty-two degrees.  
Noticing the day of the week, however, puts him on his feet.

ABEL  
Thursday? Fucking Thursday??  
(emerging from alley,  
mortified)  
What could that maniac have been  
doing for an entire week?

Abel. Frantic. Approaches PASSERSBY in desperation.

Disheveled and smeared with soot, he bears no resemblance to  
the person who previously met Nan at Blackjack Grill.

No doubt he also reeks of old sweat and liquor.

ABEL  
Excuse me? Excuse me, can you tell  
me what day it is?

Those not completely ignoring him seem eager to get away.

ABEL  
(pointing up)  
Pardon me, is that right? Is that  
the correct day? Please!

A pedestrian within earshot recognizes Abel. It's Will, his  
friend from the racquet club.

WILL  
Abel? Hey, ABEL! Over here!

Abel turns. Looks in Will's direction.

**INT. GOLD RUSH CASINO - SPORTSBOOK LOUNGE - DAY**

Dressed in workout clothing clearly meant to accentuate his toned -- not bulky -- physique and meticulous grooming habits, Ionov and his ENTOURAGE enter. Cross the room.

Dr. Grady O'Daniels. Seated in his overcoat. He won't be staying long. He swivels in his chair, acknowledging them.

Only Ionov sits down. His crew stands around Grady like eager vultures until Ionov waves them away.

IONOV  
Who are you and what do you want?

GRADY  
(nervous)  
Merely to settle my account.  
O'Daniels. Dr. Grady O'Daniels.

Bandaged Yuri appears to recognize that name.

Grady pushes an envelope thick with cash across the table.

The act doesn't break Ionov's iron stare at Grady.

Pavel retrieves and tucks the envelope into his suit jacket.

Yuri leans down. Whispers in Ionov's ear.

Ionov reacts a beat later. His expression softening.

IONOV  
(glance at Yuri)  
I like man who pays what he owes.  
When I was boy, soldiers came to my  
village, my home. They were --  
(looks to Pavel)  
-- *verbovka*.

PAVEL  
Recruiting.

IONOV  
Recruiting, *da*.

**EXT. RUSSIAN VILLAGE - KALASHNIK RESIDENCE - DAY - FLASHBACK**

YOUNG IONOV (10). Holding a trembling pistol to a KNEELING MAN'S (45) bowed head outside his home.

SOLDIERS stand by, forcing Young Ionov's PARENTS to watch.

The boy drops the gun. Runs to his mother's leg.

Everyone laughs. Kneeling Man is executed anyway.

Two more gunshots ring out.

The lifeless bodies of his parents collapse around the boy.

Soldiers drag Young Ionov away, screaming.

**INT. RUSSIAN ARMY ENCAMPMENT - MESS TENT - DAY**

TEEN IONOV (15) works a makeshift kitchen with the COOK (60).

IONOV (V.O.)

After this I meet one chef. He take me under wing. Teach me how make *borshch*. And I make best *borshch*. I make with *uszka* -- mushroom dumpling. Everyone love.

Soldiers. Heartily chowing down on the soup.

IONOV (V.O.)

Then. One day, I make *borshch* with many bad mushroom.

Violently ill soldiers. Groaning. Vomiting everywhere. Collapsing with debilitating stomach cramps.

IONOV (V.O.)

And when they have finest moment, I have finest moment.

Teen Ionov stalks the tent with a steady pistol, executing his sick comrades at point-blank range -- regardless of their participation in his parents' deaths.

One after the other until only the cook remains.

Begging for his life, the boy seems to allow his escape, only to shoot him in the back as he runs away.

**BACK TO LOUNGE**

Ionov gleefully concludes the tale.

IONOV

This was how I survive odds. Start  
rise as best ever entrepreneur,  
make people happy all around world.  
Is good story, no?

Grady stares back, agape.

GRADY

W-why did you tell me that?

IONOV

After years I pay back soldiers. In  
full. That is why I like man who  
pays what he owes.

GRADY

You know, traumatic -- ahem! --  
childhoods often result in --

IONOV

Also, I have new hotel opening on  
strip and I am invite select group  
of players to be first V-I-P guests  
-- even before casino opens.

GRADY

(rises, leaving)

That's very generous. Thank you,  
but unfortunately, I must decline.  
I do appreciate your taking the  
time to meet with me today, though.

Ionov's comrades barely stand aside to allow Grady past.

IONOV

Nyet? All chips and amenities free  
for you... Play every games before  
anyone else... Cash out anytime...

Grady edges by, continues toward the exit.

IONOV

Did I not mention you will enjoy  
unlimited credit?

Grady stops. Turns back after moment's contemplation.

GRADY

Unlimited, you say?

**INT. FREMONT DINER - BATHROOM STALL - DAY**

Will stands over ill Abel, puking into the commode.

WILL

That's it, buddy. Get it all out.

Only dry heaving now, Abel falls over. Retching, shivering.

Will helps him to his feet. Assists him to the sinks.

Abel washes up.

WILL

You, uh, don't look so great,  
chief.

ABEL

(dries face)

I'm fine. Just getting over a  
stomach bug -- I think that was the  
last of it.

WILL

And what's going on with your eyes?

ABEL

I lost my glasses, that's all. I'm  
fine, Will. Really.

WILL

Yeah, you keep saying...

ABEL

C'mon. Let's get some breakfast.

**BOOTH**

A BREAKFAST SERVER (20s) takes their order.

WILL

Just coffee for me, thanks.

Attention shifts to Abel, who is somewhere between spooked  
and slightly green. His shaking hands fumble the menu.

ABEL

(squinting, flips pages)

I dunno. Um, maybe an omelette?

WILL  
 Forget that. Just bring him two  
 slices of dry whole wheat toast and  
 a Bloody Mary.

ABEL  
 Hold the toast, please.

The server retrieves their menus. Steps away.

WILL  
 Miss?  
 (she turns back)  
 Toast.

ABEL  
 (to Will)  
 How did you know?

WILL  
 I've seen the signs. My brother-in-  
 law refuses to admit he has a  
 problem.

ABEL  
 I can relate to that.

WILL  
 Plus, you sometimes sweat vodka  
 when we're playing racquetball.

Abel looks away. Ashamed.

WILL  
 For a while I thought you were  
 drinking beforehand. It's funny,  
 though: that's not even what I'm  
 most worried about.

Abel looks to him again.

WILL  
 I saw what happened with Troy.

**QUICK FLASH - COURT THREE**

--Cain smashes Troy's nose with Abel's racquet frame

**BACK TO BOOTH**

ABEL  
 I can explain --

WILL

I'm not sure who that was, but the Abel Ballantine I know would never do that. Not even to a complete shithead who totally deserved it.

Abel abruptly whirls around in his seat. Then untwists.

ABEL

(glancing over shoulder)  
Did you hear that?

WILL

Hear what? Talk to me, Abel. Tell me what all's been up.

ABEL

It's...  
(sighs)  
Complicated.

The server places their beverages.

WILL

It's O-K -- you can open up to me if you're having troubles. It's what I do.

ABEL

Aren't you a sports psychologist?

WILL

I can make referrals. It's confidential either way.

ABEL

(takes a long drink)  
I have this -- twin brother.

Cain appears. Groomed and in his jacket. Seated beside Will.

CAIN

Are you talking about us? Don't you talk to him about us.

Abel glares at Cain. Drinks.

ABEL

It's like, he's a Siamese twin except only on the inside.

CAIN

God dammit! What did I just say?

WILL  
This brother, he talks to you?  
Tells you to do things?

ABEL  
(at Cain)  
Yeah. Yes, he does. And he's full  
of really bad ideas.

Cain bridges a hand on his chest like, *Moi?* but --  
Will only sees empty space beside him.

WILL  
How long has this been going on?

ABEL  
As long as I can remember. Since  
childhood.

WILL  
Have you ever been to a doctor?

CAIN  
Hey, leave Grady out of this.

ABEL  
Been seeing one the past couple  
years. Dr. O'Daniels.

WILL  
Did they prescribe any treatments  
or medication?

Abel retrieves the pill bottle from Cain's dirty jacket.  
Will examines it with Cain beside him once more.

WILL  
This says they're for allergies.

ABEL  
Oh! It's Seroquel, actually. I used  
an old bottle.

WILL  
Your doctor prescribed an  
antipsychotic for these symptoms?

ABEL  
Uh-huh.

WILL  
Are they effective?



WILL

Abel. Man. Take a look at yourself. You're behaving erratically, hearing voices, and saying you have lost time? You need a full diagnosis, but I'm almost positive you're not on the right medication and booze is just fuel on the fire.

Will notices his trepidation. Provides assurance.

WILL

Either way, I'm going to help you get through this.

CAIN

Ha! What a crock of horseshit! He's not your friend, Abel! He doesn't give a rat's ass about you -- it's all about him. I'm the only one who ever looked out for you.

Anger rising, Abel addresses newly empty space.

ABEL

Oh, yeah? Then tell me what you and Grady have been doing behind my back!

WILL

Excuse me? What behind whose back...?

CAIN (V.O.)

Over our dead body.

WILL

Listen, I'll get in touch with this Dr. O'Daniels. In the meantime, is there someone we can call? A family member? Significant other...?

ABEL

Oh -- God -- Nan! How could I have -- I hafta go...

But not before he finishes that drink.

ABEL

(between slurps)  
...I'll pick up your beverage next time...

Abel gets up. Plunks the empty glass down on their table.

WILL  
Abel, wait --

ABEL  
Thanks, Will!

Abel dashes out of the diner.

WILL  
You're welcome?

**EXT. FREMONT STREET EXPERIENCE - DAY**

Abel. Hustling through TOURISTS strolling the midway.

CAIN (V.O.)  
Where are you going? The cocktails  
are back that way, dahlink.

ABEL  
Will you please leave me alone?

CAIN (V.O.)  
We could at least get the last of  
that Bloody Mary. You're letting  
the littlest final splash go to  
waste. And the celery? That thing  
probably absorbed pure alcohol into  
it -- sucked it right up -- sshllp!

ABEL  
Go away, Cain!

CAIN (V.O.)  
No chance, Abes. Not until I know  
where we're going.

ABEL  
Guess.  
(looks ahead)  
Uh-oh, too late! We're already  
here.

**EXT. LVMPD DEPARTMENT - DOWNTOWN COMMAND - DAY**

Abel heads toward the building at a determined pace.

CAIN (V.O.)  
You can't possibly be thinking what  
I think you're thinking.

ABEL

Oh, yes I am. I'm turning us in and telling Nan everything I know. They can sort out the rest.

Incorporeal Cain separates from Abel. Stands in his way.

CAIN

DON'T!

Abel marches through the phantom.

Cain keeps pace alongside Abel as he starts up the steps.

CAIN

O-K, O-K! Grady's being harassed by Russian mobsters he owes money to so he sent me after them in exchange for extra yard time. There. Happy?

Abrupt stop. Abel's distant stare. Processing.

ABEL

How many?

CAIN

Um...

ABEL

How MANY, Cain?

CAIN

I sorta lost track.

ABEL

(anxious)

Good god. Are there any left?

CAIN

Any what?

ABEL

Russians!

CAIN

Of course! Jeezus, who do you think I am, John Wick?

Abel breaks for the main entrance. Cain reintegrates.

Reaching for the door, his left hand grabs his right wrist.

CAIN (V.O.)  
Not so fast.

ABEL  
(arm wrestles self)  
Let us in there, Cain! You owe me  
that much for getting Nan mixed up  
in this.

CAIN (V.O.)  
It's not MY fault she called you!

ABEL  
(smitten)  
She called me?

A COP (30) on his way to work tries to slip past.

COP  
Pardon me, sir.

The cop stops just inside the entrance. Turns back.  
Compares the man behind him with a notification on his phone.

COP  
Sir?

Abel recoils. Descends the outdoor steps.

COP  
(following him)  
Sir! May I speak with you?

Additional POLICE join the cop. Abel hurries away.

COP  
STOP THAT MAN!

Street level. Abel breaks into a run.  
Abel. Fleeing. Jags through the crowded street.  
A familiar sign --

**EXT. BLACKJACK BAR & GRILL - ENTRANCE - DAY**

-- comes into view. He sprints toward it.

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY**

Abel. Looking back over his shoulder. Looking everywhere.

Cain separates. Pretends to act as a second set of eyes.

ABEL  
 (winded)  
 Where's my car? I know you were  
 here getting liquored up last  
 night.

Urgent footfalls echo as officers close in.

CAIN  
 Yeah! That Wally makes the best  
 Manhattan --

ABEL  
 CAIN!

CAIN  
 Check my coat.

Abel takes out an unfamiliar set of keys.

Thumbing the fob unlocks the black Ferrari convertible,  
 parked lengthwise across four stalls.

Abel's disdain.

CAIN  
 It's a long story.

ABEL  
 Later. Right now we have to work  
 together.

CAIN  
 Why?

ABEL  
 Because I can't see!

CAIN  
 I mean, why should I help you? So  
 you can throw me right back in a  
 cage as soon as it's over?

The cops round the final corner.

ABEL  
 We'll work something out!

Abel chucks the keys into the air with their right hand --

Cain reintegrates. Catches the keys with their left.

He vaults into the driver seat.  
 Smokes the tires in reverse.  
 Peels out through the throng of scattershot police.  
 The Ferrari jumps out from the garage into the street --  
 Drifts around a corner to the amazement of ONLOOKERS.  
 But just as the Ferrari clears the next block --  
 Cain separates into the passenger seat --  
 Surprising Abel, who retakes the wheel unsteadily.

ABEL  
 What the hell?

CAIN  
 I can't hold on -- we didn't drink  
 enough.

ABEL  
 (squints through  
 windshield)  
 Then we really do need to work  
 together. Be my eyes.

CAIN  
 How? I still don't know where we're  
 going!

ABEL  
 Guess.

CAIN  
 This again?

ABEL  
 I'm gonna rip that stupid shrink's  
 dang head off.

CAIN  
 Now we're talking. Go left.

**EXT. GOLD RUSH CASINO - PROMENADE - DAY**

Ionov. Wandering along with his full entourage of COMRADES.

IONOV  
 (to Yuri and Pavel)  
 You see how I handle doctor?

He will go to hotel by self -- no bag on head.

PAVEL  
Boss, is that not your car?

The Ferrari arrives from the cross street.

Abel turns too sharply. Grinds the rims on the curb.

IONOV  
(scowls at Yuri)  
Da, is car. Also, this man looks much less dead than described.

The Ferrari clumsily swerves back into traffic. Speeds away.

PAVEL  
(to all)  
*Don't just stand there!*

YURI  
*We'll never catch them!*

IONOV  
Is O-K. I know where he goes.

**INT. FERRARI - DAY**

The open road affords a chance to catch their breath.

ABEL  
So where's my car?

CAIN  
I'd tell you but you won't be happy.

ABEL  
No, please. I'm absolutely certain I'll love it. Tell me.

CAIN  
I drove it into the Russian boss's living room when I burned his house down.

ABEL  
WHAT?

CAIN  
Told ya.

ABEL  
Dammit, Cain!

CAIN  
Stop bunching up your panties and  
check the glovebox.

Abel flips it open. Squints.

CAIN  
See? All your plates and tags are  
there. I didn't leave anything that  
could be traced back to us.

ABEL  
No? That wasn't a Russian accent I  
heard when I was hog-tied on the  
shelter floor?

Abel slams the glovebox shut. Inadvertently swerves with his  
eyes off the road. Attracts the attention of highway patrol.

Red and blue lights flash in the rearview. WOOP-WOOP!

Cain pivots in his seat.

CAIN  
Whoa, is that Officer Melons?  
(confirms)  
Yep. Pull over. I wanna get another  
look at that ass too.

ABEL  
In a stolen vehicle with impaired  
eyesight and reeking of alcohol?  
Oh, and surely you've noticed by  
now we're wanted. Thanks to you.

CAIN  
Just do it! I have a plan.

Abel's disbelief.

CAIN  
If you want to work together, you  
have to trust me, *mon frere*.

ABEL  
Yeah, that'll be the day!

Abel pulls over nonetheless.

**INT. HIGHWAY PATROL CRUISER - DAY**

Officer Lora shuts her door.

Dashcam and windshield views show her approaching the stopped Ferrari too late to hear --

DISPATCH  
(on radio)  
Attention all units. Be on the  
lookout for a late model black  
Ferrari convertible...

**EXT. FERRARI - DAY**

Officer Lora arrives at the vehicle.

OFFICER  
Well, well. Seeing you all over the  
road back there I thought, 'Whoa,  
is that Mr. Flashypants?' Yup.

ABEL  
I can explain, Officer.

OFFICER  
Save it. Our girl didn't come into  
work today. You wouldn't happen to  
know anything about that, wouldja?

ABEL  
Nan? I mean, Officer Summers? Crazy  
coincidence -- I was actually  
hoping to ask you the sa--

Cain's spectral leg passes through the center console. Cuts Abel off when their foot mashes the accelerator.

Spinning tires kick up gravel and debris. Officer Lora reels.

The engine shrieks as they fishtail back into traffic.

Lora jumps back into her cruiser. Gives chase.

**INT./EXT. FERRARI - DAY**

Abel sees the highway patrol car follow them in the rearview.

ABEL  
That was your plan?

CAIN  
 We just needed a head start. I'll  
 help us lose her -- WATCH OUT!

The Ferrari swerves again. Narrowly avoids a collision.

ABEL  
 (to other vehicle)  
 SORRY! Sorry-sorry-sorry!

CAIN  
 (at Abel)  
 Quit being a bitch!  
 (looking back)  
 Aw, shit.

ABEL  
 Now what?

CAIN  
 She has friends.

Another cruiser and a motorcycle unit join the chase.

ABEL  
 So NOW what?

CAIN  
 (whiny voice)  
 Gee, there sure are a lot of 'em.  
 Maybe we should surrender...

ABEL  
 You think...?

CAIN  
 NO! We're in a Ferrari! Go FASTER!

From the passenger side, Cain reaches for the paddle shifter.  
 Drops a gear. Hits the accelerator with their foot once more.

The tires bark on the tarmac as they surge ahead.

Abel squints. Despite some distant clarity, their immediate  
 surroundings are a blurry mess.

They weave through unfocused blobs. Horns. Near misses.

ABEL  
 Where are we?

CAIN  
 Parkway.

ABEL  
No duh. Which exit is Grady's?

CAIN  
The last one.

ABEL  
Back there? Crap!

The MOTORCYCLE COP (30) pulls alongside them.

MOTORCYCLE COP  
(on loudspeaker)  
PULL OVER!

Abel nods. Shrugs helplessly.

ABEL  
Cain, don't hurt him.

CAIN  
Sorry, homes. You'll thank me  
later.

Cain assimilates but only where necessary.

Their foot -- runs the Ferrari slightly ahead.

Their arm -- flings the door open.

They hit the brakes and e-brake.

Motorcycle Cop crashes into the open door, shearing it off.

Cain cranks the wheel. Causes a 180-degree spin that leaves  
them driving directly into oncoming traffic.

The engine screams.

Cain fully returns to the passenger seat.

ABEL'S POV: formless blobs blasting by within inches of  
certain death. Blaring horns

ABEL  
AAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!

Police units split between helping the downed officer --

And flipping around to pursue the convertible.

CAIN  
Calm down, GOD DAMN YA!  
(then)

And don't worry -- he's fine.  
Probably. Now cut in front of that  
semi and buttonhook into the last  
exit. I have an idea.

ABEL

I hope it's superior to your last  
two ideas!

Rocketing down the off ramp. Cain climbs onto the trunk.

Firmly grasping Abel's headrest, he pushes his head through  
it and their skull until his eyes align with Abel's.

ABEL'S POV: his field of vision immediately switches from  
unfocused to perfect clarity

Now they really do resemble severely conjoined twins.

CAIN (V.O.)

Better?

ABEL

Way better!

The Ferrari zigzags through traffic. Runs all the lights.

ABEL

I don't hear any sirens. Did we  
lose 'em?

Cain returns to the passenger seat. Lounges.

CAIN

Yes.

Helicopter blades surpass the whining engine as a chopper  
angles around a building. They'll be spotted in seconds.

CAIN

No.  
(thinking fast)  
Hit the next right.

ABEL

Where!?

CAIN

Riiight here! Now the last left at  
the end of the alley -- you'll see  
an underground garage -- it's the  
back way into Grady's office park.

The Ferrari streaks down the alley, corners into the --

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY**

And stops. Its throaty engine cuts off.

CAIN

(checks for cops)

We made it. Amazing. Do me a favor?  
Drink more next time so I can  
handle the driving.

ABEL

(at empty seat)

Have you completely lost your  
freaking mind?

Abel gets out of the vehicle.

**INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY**

Marches toward the elevators.

ABEL

(furious)

Thanks to you, innocent people are  
getting hurt! Thanks to you, my  
life's in the shitter -- again! But  
ya know what? My next doctor is  
gonna help me bury you once and for  
all!

CAIN

(tagging along)

You mean exactly like Grady and I  
just did with your gullible ass?

Abel stops cold. Daggers in his eyes.

ABEL

You tried.

Cain only gazes devilishly back, nonplussed.

CAIN

Ooh, you almost sounded mildly  
threatening. Still holding my  
butterfly?

ABEL

(continuing toward  
elevators)

I have to find out if he knows  
anything about Nan first.

CAIN  
He's not gonna tell you a damn  
thing.

ABEL  
Exactly.

**INT. DOCTOR O'DANIELS' OFFICE - DAY**

The door opens. Grady's patient enters.

Grady sets the "horse game" tablet exemplifying his gambling addiction aside. Rises from his wingchair.

GRADY  
Cain, my boy! Glad you're here.  
Come in, let me pour you a drink.

Overtly Cain-like, the patient saunters over to the sofa.  
Collapses into it.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
Make it a triple, Doc.

Cain's projection grabs a seat on Grady's desktop.

Grady eagerly fixes their drinks at the antique cart.

GRADY  
(to Abel as Cain)  
I've managed to secure a fabulous  
new arrangement with our Russian  
friends.

CAIN  
"Friends"? Find out what the hell  
he means.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
"Fabulous"?

Cain rolls his eyes.

GRADY  
Yes. And lucrative. Therefore, I no  
longer require your services.

Grady serves his patient a triple Scotch.

CAIN  
 (salivating)  
 Omigod, if you slam that whole  
 thing I'll tell you where your  
 glasses are!

Instead, Abel sets it on the coffee table between them as --  
 Grady returns to the wingchair.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 What the blistering fuck are you  
 talking about, Doc? We had a deal.

GRADY  
 I know. But things are different  
 now. Evidently, Mr. Kalashnik  
 thinks rather highly of me.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 Who?

GRADY  
 Mr. Ionov Kalashnik, Russian owner  
 of the Gold Rush Casino and  
 upcoming Gold Standard Hotel on the  
 strip.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 Is that right.

GRADY  
 Matter of fact, he's invited me to  
 an exclusive pre-grand-opening  
 reception strictly for V-I-Ps.

CAIN  
 Uh-oh.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 What about us?

GRADY  
 I dunno, consider yourself cured!  
 It's the Cain Ballantine Show now  
 and forevermore! Enjoy!

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 And my brother?

GRADY  
 That loser? No, Abel won't be  
 giving you any further trouble. Not  
 after we put him on ice last week.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 Ha-ha, yeah! What a total loser!  
 Speaking of, remember how he was  
 blathering on about some woman?

GRADY  
 (reflects)  
 ...yes, I believe so. At least,  
 when he talked about going on a  
 date I assumed it was with a female  
 -- but who cares, right?

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 Right. Anyway, her name is Nan  
 Summers. She works for the L-V-M-P-  
 D and it's urgent that I find her.

GRADY  
 So you're asking me?

Abel nods.

GRADY  
 Never heard of her.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 Never?

GRADY  
 Never.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
 You're absolutely sure?

GRADY  
 One hundred percent.

Abel stands. Raises the glass. Drains it. Crosses to Cain.

CAIN  
 Finally! He's all yours.

Abel appears apprehensive. Hesitates.

Cain directs his attention to a letter opener on the desk.

CAIN  
 (cracks fingers, neck)  
 Just do your best, sport. I'll  
 clean up the leftovers.

Abel tucks the letter opener up their sleeve.

Cain points down into the wastebasket.

Abel retrieves his glasses. Puts them on. Scans the room.

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
Interesting...

GRADY  
What's that?

ABEL (AS CAIN)  
I never noticed -- there are no  
diplomas on your wall.

GRADY  
Of course not. Why would there be?

Abel turns to face Grady. Takes a step toward him.

ABEL  
Because real doctors frame their  
diplomas and hang them up.

GRADY  
(goes pale)  
Abel...?  
(flustered)  
You're here --? How did --?  
(nervous laugh)  
I-it's not what you think.

ABEL  
Oh, no? Which part?

Another step closer to Grady's wingchair.

ABEL  
The part where you lied to us? Used  
us? Almost got Nan and me killed?

Another step.

GRADY  
You don't understand -- the  
Russians -- they were gonna kill me  
-- it was the only way --

ABEL  
Let's not forget the part where you  
tried locking me inside my mind  
forever...

Another step -- Abel looms over him.

ABEL

...but, honestly, I'm kinda hung up on the part where you pretended to be a REAL FUCKING DOCTOR!

GRADY

(rises, composed)

If I was still a doctor, I'd have turned you in a long time ago. You're so out of control, there's no telling where you'd be if I hadn't given Cain some direction. You should thank me.

Grady backs up a step.

ABEL

I SHOULD KILL YOU! We trusted you and you betrayed us! And for what? Money? Greed?

Another step.

GRADY

Believe whatever you want. I did what was best for everyone. You were well protected while Cain rid the world of some really bad dudes and look where we are now: it all worked out.

ABEL

Worked out? What little semblance of a life I had is OVER! A woman is missing and both the Russians and police are after us, y-you manipulative BASTARD!

Just as Abel goes for him the RUSSIANS storm the office.

Abel stays on Grady. Tackles him. Hands around his fat neck.

He strangles Grady with his own tie.

GRADY

Mm -- MMMM!

ABEL

(feigns listening)

Sorry? I didn't catch that, "Doctor" O'Daniels -- I'm done taking your advice!

The Russians yank Abel off Grady and onto his feet.

Slugging him in the stomach knocks his wind out.  
 Grady struggles to find the ligature under his jowls.  
 They straighten Abel up. Hit him again.  
 Spectral Cain calmly approaches.

CAIN  
 Mind if I cut in?

ABEL  
 (fighting for air)  
 By all means.

Cain merges. Takes over. Stomps Yuri's foot to get free.  
 He drops a thug by breaking his nose with his elbow. Grabs  
 another by the hair and drives his knee into his face.  
 Grady finally loosens the tie. Air rushes into his lungs.

GRADY  
 MARKHEIM!

Cain and Abel's body goes limp as they collapse. Unconscious.

BLACK.

PRE-LAP: Children's laughter.

**INT. CHUCK E. CHEESE - DAY**

Hollow plastic rumble. Points of light pierce the darkness.  
 Illuminate multi-colored spheres.

The lighted space between the spheres grows as they separate.

One hand reaches up. Another grabs it.

Cain hoists Abel out of the ball pit.

ABEL  
 Hey, you're --  
 (punches Cain's shoulder)  
 -- you're real!

CAIN  
 Nope. We're both unconscious.

ABEL  
 How?

CAIN

The doc must've had a fail-safe of his own. Some kinda system override to save his own ass if -- ahem! -- when he finally got on our bad side.

ABEL

And who are all these children?

CAIN

Christ only knows what Grady concocted futzing around with our noodle. They're probably random kids we've encountered over the years. Ooh! I think I gave that one a wedgie behind the Dunkin' Donuts in fourth grade.

ABEL

Betcha don't remember which one of us got in trouble for it, though. How do we wake up?

CAIN

Beats me. I usually just talk you into drinking.

Abel tries the entrance doors. Locked.

ABEL

So if we're stuck in here --

CAIN

-- the Russians are likely taking us somewhere we can be discreetly eliminated up there.

ABEL

Seriously? Then -- what? We're just gonna lie down and die?

CAIN

Unfortunately, we're already lying down somewhere, so we won't have a say in the matter.

Abel grabs a dining room chair by the seatback.

ABEL

Here's what I have to say about it!

CAIN

That won't work.

He swings the chair at the plexiglass entrance door, but it bounces off. Jarring. Ineffectual. Skids across the floor.

CAIN

Told ya.

Friendly CHUCK E. CHEESE CAST MEMBER ERICA (20s) greets them.

ERICA

Mr. Ballantine?

ABEL

Yes?

CAIN

Yes?

ERICA

Your order is ready.

ABEL

It -- is...?

ERICA

I believe so.

(checks paper slip)

Aren't you order number --

(Grady's voice)

Three, two, ONE!

WHITE.

**EXT. GOLD STANDARD RESORT HOTEL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT**

While the new building's sleek and modern lower third glimmers like a crown jewel, its skeletal, incomplete upper floors reach for the endless black sky in unholy worship.

**INT. GAMING FLOOR - NIGHT**

A fully decked-out-for-Christmas casino in full swing. Dazzling lights. Inviting games. But where is everyone?

Pavel stands guard alongside a lone blackjack table centered on a dance floor-sized square of plastic sheeting.

Four CAPTIVES with black cloth bags on their heads are seated around the table. Hands bound behind them.

Dealer Ionov in a sharp suit. Resembles a literal card shark.

He strips the bag from Cain and Abel's head. Their eyes adjust to the lights, the disorientation.

IONOV

Welcome back to Land of Living. For  
now...

ABEL

(looking around)  
What is this?

Abel immediately notices an adjacent, unoccupied bar with  
beer taps but no liquor bottles in the b.g.

Grady stands tableside organizing fat stacks of chips. Pale  
and sweating despite an apparent attempt at cleaning himself  
up for the hotel. He's the only one with a cocktail.

Abel stares directly at it. Lightly smacks his lips.

IONOV

Which one I am talking to?

GRADY

(at Cain and Abel)  
To whom do we have the pleasure of  
speaking?

ABEL

Fuck you, Grady.

GRADY

Not sure. They're both pretty  
pissed at me...

Abel phases out. Cain snaps to attention.

CAIN

(at Ionov)  
Listen up, cueball. After I  
slaughter everyone in this room,  
I'm gonna do to this hotel what I  
did to your house. They'll see the  
flames from outer space and I'll be  
dancing around it like a wild  
savage with your lifeless bodies  
roasting inside! Bwa-hahahahahaaa!

GRADY

It's Cain.

They shake their head.

ABEL

I don't know w-what my brother's  
done, but please -- I'm begging you  
-- please don't hurt me.

GRADY

No -- we're back to Abel.

Mouth-breathing Grady returns Abel's glasses to his face.

Ionov deals up-facing cards to the three mystery players and himself.

IONOV

Doctor told me about condition. You are sick puppy.

ABEL

Anything he told you is a lie.

IONOV

Why is this?

ABEL

Because he's a quack.

IONOV

He is... Duck?

ABEL

No, a quack. A fraud. Not really a doctor.

GRADY

(coughs)

Watch it, Abel. One magic word from me and it's right back to the pizza mouse with you. And there you'll stay -- trapped in kiddieland while your physical self rots away in an institution. Is that how you want to spend the rest of your days? Drooling all over yourself in some underfunded shithole? I didn't think so.

Ionov deals the second round of cards, including his own face down card, and strips the bag from the first player's head.

REVEAL - it's Karl, the Gencom building security guard

He frantically sizes up his circumstances.

ABEL

Karl?

His duct taped mouth prevents him from responding.

IONOV  
Hit or stand?

Karl glances at his cards, incredulous.

ON CARDS - nine and five of hearts

IONOV  
(nods)  
Hit?  
(shakes head)  
Or stand?

Uncertain and quaking with fear, Karl nods.

Ionov deals a card.

ON CARDS - eight of spades

Ionov takes out a silenced pistol. Executes the player.

ABEL  
KARL!  
(then)  
What the FUCK? WHAT THE FUCK!

Ionov transfers Karl's chips to a stunned but gleeful Grady.

IONOV  
Twenty-two is too much. Bust.

ABEL  
You didn't have to kill him!

IONOV  
He had more chance to save life  
than comrades.

ABEL  
You did that -- because of Cain? So  
you're, what, making them play  
Russian Roulette?

Ionov misunderstands. Glances at a nearby roulette wheel.

IONOV  
Nah. Is too many chances.

Ionov reveals the second player. The racquet club manager.

IONOV  
(deals, then nods)  
Hit?

(shakes head)  
Or stand?

ABEL  
HEY! Hey, uh -- guy --

CAIN (V.O.)  
You don't even know his name, do  
you.

ABEL  
(to club manager)  
Don't listen to him! O-K, pal? Just  
don't play.

IONOV  
Hit or stand?

ON CARDS - ten of diamonds and nine of clubs

Ionov's manicured fingertips caress the handgun resting  
beside his four of spades.

The club manager shakes his head. Stand.

Ionov reveals the final player. Lisa from Red Rock Staffing.

ABEL  
Lisa, oh god.  
(then)  
These people -- they did nothing to  
you!

IONOV  
Da, they are only associates you  
have. My associates are sixteen  
dead comrades!

Abel closes their eyes.

BLACK.

ABEL (V.O.)  
Sixteen?

CAIN (V.O.)  
I knew it was a lot. I knew it was  
-- sorry.

ABEL (V.O.)  
Next time you wonder why you're  
unfit to participate in society,  
this is the reason.

Abel opens their eyes.

ABEL  
Listen to me. Please, listen, sir.  
They're not my friends, O-K? They  
don't even like me.

IONOV  
Hit or stand?

Lisa. Desperate confusion. Looks between her cards and Ionov.

IONOV  
(losing patience)  
Hit? Or stand?

Her rapid breaths. Flaring nostrils. Keeps looking to Abel.

ABEL  
(realizes)  
She doesn't know the rules!

Lisa nods in agreement.

Ionov takes that to mean "hit" and flips a card.

It's a bust -- the bullet he puts between her eyes knocks her  
backward off the stool.

Ionov transfers her chip stacks to Grady's growing pile.

IONOV  
One of sixteen was cousin. Arkady  
Bykov.

**QUICK FLASH - ASTRO-VEGAS NIGHTCLUB**

--ARKADY'S POV: Cain -- slamming his head against the stage

**BACK TO GAME**

Ionov plays his hand out. His four of spades, plus --

IONOV  
In Old Country, when I was away at  
war, he bring food and medicine to  
my sick mother.

The ten of hearts makes fourteen, plus --

IONOV  
(grave)  
He was good man. He was good  
lieutenant. Now he is dead cousin.

REVEAL - six of clubs hole card shows a total of twen --  
 Ionov puts two rounds through the club manager's heart.  
 Grady's winnings delight his eyes. He loosens his tie.

IONOV  
 (unsettling mood switch to  
 cheerful)  
 But don't worry! I will give you  
 same chance as other three!

GRADY  
 (kills his vibe)  
 I thought your parents were dead...

Ionov glares at him. While he clears the table --  
 Abel closes their eyes again.

BLACK.

ABEL (V.O.)  
 Was that triple Scotch enough to  
 get us out of this?

CAIN (V.O.)  
 No.

ABEL (V.O.)  
 How long can you hold it?

CAIN (V.O.)  
 If we don't move too much, five  
 minutes. Maybe.

ABEL (V.O.)  
 Do it.

Cain opens their eyes.

Ionov deals only to Cain and himself.

Cain immediately hits blackjack.

Grady chuckles. Mops sweat from his face with a handkerchief.

CAIN  
 I win! Move those stacks over here,  
 fatass.

ON CAIN'S HANDS - tip of the letter opener slips out, stops  
 on the back of their thumb. Wrist twist. He grabs hold of it

IONOV (O.S.)  
 (sharp laugh)  
*Da, is funny!*

CAIN (O.S.)  
 Yeah? But I'm guessing you're not  
 gonna blow your own brains out, eh,  
 Roosky?

Ionov deals again.

Blackjack again.

GRADY  
 (chuckle becomes coughing)  
 Perhaps I should get some of your  
 chips, eh, Mr. Kalashnik?

Ionov strips a stack of cards from the shoe. Shuffles madly.

IONOV  
 (sour)  
 It would not be first time.

GRADY  
 (stretches arm)  
 Huh?

IONOV  
 Is nothing. Enjoy winnings -- after  
 tonight I never see you in casinos  
 again.

ON CAIN'S HANDS - dull blade sawing against zip-tie plastic

GRADY (O.S.)  
 Why... Why not?

Another hand.

Another blackjack for Cain.

IONOV  
*Suka, blyad!* Is not possible!

GRADY  
 'Scuse me? Mr. Kalashnik? Why  
 wouldn't I come back to your  
 casinos?

IONOV  
 Come on. You are like disgusting  
 pig-man.

I am sick in stomach at very sight  
of you -- why would I want you in  
new casino?

GRADY  
(baffled)  
Then -- why did you invite me?

IONOV  
(winks)  
Because I know truth. I know you  
use this man against me. And is why  
I poison drink with strychnine.

Grady glances at his empty glass. Further loosens his tie and  
collar backing away from the table as reality sets in.

GRADY  
What?

IONOV  
(mocking)  
What?  
(approaching Grady)  
You must think I am fool. You must  
think I am -- how American say --  
"as dumb as you look."

Still backing up, Grady trips over his own feet.

Crawling on all fours now, he unsuccessfully gags himself.

Ionov kicks his rear.

IONOV  
*Do svidaniya, fat fuck!*

YURI  
(arriving)  
Boss!

Viktor and Yuri wrangle a feisty Nan -- her hands bound in  
front with her own cuffs -- despite Yuri's gun at her back.

YURI  
(in Russian, subtitled)  
*Do you want her here with you?*

IONOV  
*No. All of this trash is going to  
the desert later. But they won't  
forget a police officer, so take  
her upstairs.*

YURI  
Upstairs?

IONOV  
All the way. Top of the hotel.

ON CAIN'S HANDS - furious, fruitless sawing  
Cain closes their eyes.

BLACK.

CAIN (V.O.)  
Yo, Abes. My Russian's not that great, but I think they're about to throw your lady friend off the roof.

YURI (O.S.)  
*It is forty-two floors.*

ABEL (V.O.)  
She's here? What makes you say that? And since when do you speak Russian?

IONOV (O.S.)  
*Take the elevator.*

CAIN (V.O.)  
It's fascinating what you can pick up when people beg for their lives. Wait --

YURI (O.S.)  
*There is no elevator yet.*

ABEL (V.O.)  
Wait?

IONOV (O.S.)  
*The service elevator, idiot!*

Unintelligible Russian arguing.

CAIN (V.O.)  
-- I think I almost --

Click! The zip-tie finally snaps.

CAIN (V.O.)  
Yup. We're good.

Abel opens their eyes. Looks over at the commotion.

IONOV  
(to cohorts)  
I show you!

Just before they force her down the hallway --

Nan turns and, in one fluid motion, manipulates the handcuff chain around Yuri's wrist -- leverages the gun under his chin until it discharges, ending Yuri's life.

Only Cain's head separates, briefly giving them a two-headed appearance.

CAIN

Hey, I like this one! Think she'll  
keep us?

Yuri's body crumples to the floor off the plastic sheeting.

IONOV

Ach! Son of bitch! Is brand-new  
carpet!

Viktor embraces Nan in a bear hug. Hauls her down the --

Adjoining corridor following Ionov.

Abel sneaks up on Pavel watching from his position.

CAIN (V.O.)

Now take that letter opener and ram  
it straight into that  
motherfucker's ear!

Instead, Abel jams it directly between Pavel's shoulder blades. Runs for the elevator.

Ionov sees them coming. Gets on with Viktor and Nan.

The doors shut just before Abel can get a hand between them.

He punches the call button in frustration.

Abel. Returning. Dodges Pavel -- whose motor functions are a tad wonky due to the unreachable shiv in his spine -- and leaps onto the bar. Slide-rolls onto his back under the taps.

He opens his eager mouth. Tries several handles but --

No beer flows out. They're not yet connected to any kegs.

ABEL

Dang it!

Pavel finally eschews the letter opener to go after him.

Abel kicks him away. Rolls off the bar. Tussles with Pavel. Grabs a stool. Swings it at Pavel's head, knocking him out.

When Pavel hits the floor, a silver flask from his jacket pocket slips free. Glides across loud casino carpet.

Abel dives onto the flask. Kneeling, he unscrews its cap.

Cain separates. Cheers him on.

CAIN  
 Atta boy, Abel. Pound whatever's in  
 there. I'll get 'em, brother. I'll  
 get 'em all.

ABEL  
 (hesitating)  
 What about Nan?

CAIN  
 The cop broad? Yeah, sure,  
 whatever. C'mon, let's go.

ABEL  
 (recapping flask)  
 No, Cain. All you ever do is make  
 things worse. I have to do this  
 myself. Straight and sober.

CAIN  
 Ah-hahahahaha!  
 (then)  
 Oh, shit -- you're serious? I don't  
 think you're up for it.

ABEL  
 Let's find out.

Abel paces over to Grady, face down beside a slot machine.

His breathing is rapid. Labored.

Abel grabs a handful of his hair. Lifts his head.

Grady's eyes loll.

ABEL  
 Hey...!

CAIN  
 Swear.

ABEL  
 ...fucker!

CAIN  
 Now say something cool.

ABEL  
 The postman always rings twice.

CAIN

What the hell does that mean? Just -- no. Also, not badass enough. Try a movie quote.

ABEL

The first rule of fight club --

CAIN

Forget it.

ABEL

Well, what would you say, smart guy?

CAIN

The TRUTH! That you looked up to him like a father and he BROKE YOUR HEART! That you were lost and desperate for his help -- but all he ever did was use us to protect his own addiction like the VILE PIECE OF FAT, RANCID SHIT HE IS!

DING!

CAIN

There's your elevator.

Grady's last breath gurgles out of his throat.

ABEL

We're gonna need a new shrink.

**INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Cain beside Abel. Riding up. Elevator music playing.

Abel turns Yuri's gun over in his hand.

CAIN

Do you even know how to shoot a gun, Captain Courageous?

ABEL

(tucks gun in rear  
waistband)

Oh, I'm not gonna shoot it.

CAIN

And you do realize the guys holding your girlfriend are dangerous armed mobsters, correct?

ABEL  
I'll think of something.

CAIN  
I think you're overestimating your  
competence against deteriorating  
circumstances.

DING!

**INT./EXT. INCOMPLETE 42ND FLOOR - NIGHT**

The service elevator opens. Abel disembarks alone.

CAIN  
(vanishing)  
Good luck, killer. Do us proud.

Quiet tools. Wind-blown tarps flapping.

Ionov. Waiting before a closed door and partially built wall.

Viewable through the portal window beyond, Viktor has Nan in  
an open area with no walls between them and the pavement --  
forty-two stories below.

IONOV  
(over winds)  
We have saying in Russia: *Mezhdu  
molotom i nakoval'ney*. It mean  
between hammer and anvil. Is where  
you put me -- but I have solution!  
You work for me. I need enforcer  
and you are perfect weapon: a  
killer who hide in plain sight and  
even if found would never be  
convicted by reason of insanity.

Abel marches right into his personal space.

ABEL  
I'm also between the hammer and  
anvil. Fortunately, my brother  
taught me all I need to know.

IONOV  
What is that?

ABEL  
Fight dirty.

Abel delivers a swift kick to Ionov's crotch and charges  
through the door as if breaking it down, but --

Loses his balance. Can't halt his momentum --

And narrowly avoids plummeting to the ground himself, indicating extreme danger in every direction.

Viktor notices the downed Ionov. But mistakes Abel for Cain. Releases Nan. Leaves exactly as he left the animal shelter.

Abel embraces a relieved Nan.

Ionov hobbles into the open area. Silenced gun out and ready.

IONOV

(gasping)

All -- is forgiven. I cover every needs. Plus, we offer -- most stupendous dental plan. Do we have deal?

ABEL

Yes.

NAN

"Yes"? What deal?

IONOV

Good. Then certainly you know girlfriend must have accident.

ABEL

Say no more.

Abel spins Nan around. Manhandles her to the edge.

NAN

Wait -- what? What's going on?

ABEL

(whispers to Nan)

Do you trust me?

NAN

You left me in a burning building, so NO! I DON'T!

ABEL

(furtively jams Yuri's gun into her waistband)

Somehow, I'll make up for that!

NAN

(fighting Abel)

NO! STOP!

Abel throws her over the edge!

Abel returns to Ionov dusting off his hands.

ABEL

That takes care of that. We're all yours.

Skeptical, Ionov paces to the spot from which she fell.

Just as he peers down, Nan scrambles from the scaffolding onto the forty-first floor below -- out of sight.

Ionov searches for any sign of her with predatory intensity.

Ionov returns. Grabs Abel by the lapels. Moves him to a side without scaffolding.

Will he drop Abel from the dizzying height?

IONOV

(scrutinizing)

Did girlfriend hit scaffold?

ABEL

What scaffold?

IONOV

So you understand: you ever cross me, I will be hammer. *Da?*

ABEL

*Da.*

**INT. GAMING FLOOR - NIGHT**

Ding!

The elevator opens. Abel follows Ionov.

IONOV

(referencing five corpses)

Hurry. Help me with others. Police will be here soon.

Nan gets the drop on Ionov. Levels the gun at his back.

NAN

We're already here.

**INT. DOCTOR ZIEGLER'S OFFICE - DAY**

Indiscreet psychiatrist DR. STEVEN ZIEGLER (mid-50s). On the edge of his seat. Mouth hanging open. His notes forgotten.

???? (O.C.)

And that pretty much brings us up to speed.

ZIEGLER

Would you excuse me a moment?

Ziegler presses a button on his desk. Paces to the exit.

CLOSE ON - the mystery patient's fine evening jacket as he discovers the Gold Rush Casino check still in its inner breast pocket for eighty-four thousand dollars

**RECEPTION**

Ziegler's assistant, HELEN (30s), rises from her place before an identical device, their intercom. Has she been listening?

ZIEGLER

Did you get any of that?

HELEN

Uh, pretty much all of it! How much is true is going to keep me up all night, though.

ZIEGLER

I'll bet. I already have a ton of follow-up questions for Will.

HELEN

Your colleague? The sports psychologist in Vegas?

ZIEGLER

The one who referred the patient, yes.

HELEN

Can I ask you something?

ZIEGLER

So long as you don't expect any real answers, sure.

HELEN

Do you think he really is dissociated?

ZIEGLER  
Too soon to tell. Why?

HELEN  
I mean, what if -- it struck me  
that maybe he's just a raging  
blackout drunk.

ZIEGLER  
Only further analysis will tell.

HELEN  
At least he's finally getting the  
help he needs.

ZIEGLER  
I better go finish up.

HELEN  
One last question?

The doctor pauses outside his office door.

HELEN  
If they really are dissociated, how  
can you be sure which one of them  
told you that story?

ZIEGLER  
That, my friend, is what will keep  
me awake all night.

Helen's congenial grin. She returns to her desk.

Ziegler disappears back into his office.

The entrance door swings open. A lone INDIVIDUAL enters.

Helen looks up. Sees a belt badge.

HELEN  
May I help you?

NAN  
(warm smile)  
Hi! I'm here to pick up Mr.  
Ballantine.  
(then)  
Abel Ballantine.

FADE OUT.

**THE END?**