

*The Boneyard*

by

Rob Sabal

Copyright 2007  
WGA (W)1198893

THE BONEYARD

by Rob Sabal -- Copyright Rob Sabal 2007

FADE IN:

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

In an elegant Beacon Hill townhouse a couple lies slumbering after a night of revelry and lovemaking.

**DESI** (32)

A handsome, longhaired Chicano man, grown puffy from his regular consumption of alcohol, begins to stir. Half asleep, he walks seasick to the bathroom. The first door he reaches gives way against his weight. It is the closet, that will do. Hanging on the doorknob he urinates long and hard. Relieved of his frothy burden he stumbles back to bed, gently caressing the woman whose wardrobe he has stained.

INT. PAWN SHOP - NIGHT

Dressed in black leather, concealed with a black mask, a shadowy figure drills open the safe of the Charles River Pawn Shop. The open door reveals jewelry, old coin books, but no cash. She scoops them into a backpack and flees out an open window.

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

Desi is blissfully unaware of the light coming in through the blinds. He rests angelic as **TINA** his bedside companion opens her eyes. Realizing a new day has dawned without her notice she ejects from bed full throttle. At the other end of the room law books and notes are scattered over a desk-top. Inspired, Tina jots a few lines. She paces as she practices her opening speech.

TINA

I'm sure all of you have heard from  
TV shows and movies that the burden  
of proof is on the prosecution.  
What does that mean...burden of proof?  
It means that the defendant...

Desi snorts and pulls the pillow over his head.

Tina steps into her closet, considering what to wear, addressing each suit like an individual juror.

TINA (CONT'D)

...the woman you see here, Ms. Rita  
Robbins, is not guilty of any crime.  
(MORE)

TINA (CONT'D)  
She's accused. And at this moment  
you have to believe that she is just  
as innocent of the crime as me or...

Catching the odor, she picks up a pair of shoes still soggy  
with urine.

TINA (CONT'D)  
(to Desi)  
...you! That's it.

She pitches the shoes at Desi's head, attempting to rouse  
her slumbering companion.

TINA (CONT'D)  
Wake up.

DESI  
Green clovers, yellow moons, pink  
hearts.

TINA  
Desi!

DESI  
G'morning sweetie.

TINA  
Don't sweetie me.

DESI  
OK Honey.

TINA  
I mean it. You peed in my closet.

DESI  
It was the cat.

TINA  
I don't have a cat...

Using his shirt to insulate her hand she grabs one of the  
shoes off the bed and crams it under his nose.

DESI  
Oh man!

TINA  
...just a big dog of a boyfr--a, a  
what?

Desi playfully transforms into a panting mutt. He tries to  
bite Tina in the behind

DESI  
Significant Other.

TINA  
Significant. Yeah, a significant  
pain in the butt. You're fun Des,  
but fun isn't enough.

Finally he gets it.

DESI  
I can be less fun.

TINA  
You take too much energy.

DESI  
Boring even.

She gathers his clothes and shoves them into his chest.

TINA  
Get Up. Get Dressed. And GET OUT!

INT. ROOM - MORNING

Hunched over a desk the figure from the pawn shop robbery  
squints through an illuminated magnifying glass attached to  
the desk top.

#### **HER HANDS**

Work quickly, popping gem stones from their settings. A  
black velvet cloth is sprinkled with brilliant stones,  
diamonds, rubies, opal, emeralds. She lays them in a wooden  
box.

EXT. BEACON STREET - DAY

Desi carries a small vintage leather suitcase as he walks  
the street. Vibrant and colorful, Beacon Street is adorned  
with banners and posters for the Museum of Fine Arts, the  
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Symphony, and Ballet.

EXT. BOSTON GARDEN - DAY

Crossing into the Garden, Desi makes his way by the swan  
boats and up the steps to the bridge that spans the pond.  
At the top of the steps, like a toll booth attendant, a  
panhandler stands completely frozen, his hand outstretched.  
There is a small pile of coins in his palm. A tourist walks  
by and drops a few pennies into his hand. Desi passes the  
man, then returns.

DESI  
Sorry about this, I just need 85 cents for the "T." I'll get some cash and make it up to you on the way back.

He's picking through the change. Mostly pennies. The man stands like a statue.

DESI (CONT'D)  
81,82,83, 84, 85. Jesus, what's wrong with people, they can't spare nickles, dimes or quarters?

INT. GREEN LINE TRAIN - DAY

Every college in Boston advertises on the "T." "Now that I've been to Thoreau College, I've got more than a job, I have a career." "The faculty here at BSU really care." Desi scans the promises skeptically.

The subway has climbed out of its tunnel and become a trolley. Desi hops out at a busy intersection.

EXT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY

Desi waves to the proprietor as he unlocks the door heading up to the second floor apartments.

INT. LANDING - DAY

Desi ascends the stairs that lead to the apartments above the flower shop. He goes to number 4.

His key doesn't fit the lock.

INT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY

This colorful shop is filled with healthy plants and blooms of all kinds. A pair of Love Birds rest in a large cage suspended over a small Virgin of Guadalupe alter. A respectable older Mexican woman, **MRS. CAMPOS** explains the situation to Desi as she waters the plants.

MRS. CAMPOS  
Aye Vicente. What else could I do?

DESI  
Did you sell my books?

MRS. CAMPOS  
Oh no, Mr. Campos and I we put everything in storage. You can come and get it when you have another place. We have a little room anyhow.

DESI

I need a few things, some clothes...

MRS. CAMPOS

Mr. Campos, he wanted to sell everything to make up for some of the rent. So, I don't think he's going to let you take anything until you work a deal with him.

DESI

I'll pay you, you know I will.

MRS. CAMPOS

Now Vicente. Go and get yourself a room at the YMCA.

Handing him a 20 dollar bill from the cash register.

DESI

No, Senora Campos, I already owe you.

MRS. CAMPOS

When you get a job you can pay me back.

She puts the bill in his hand.

DESI

That's the thing, I don't really want a job.

MRS. CAMPOS

Hijo!

She sprays him in the face with the plant mister.

MRS. CAMPOS (CONT'D)

Wake up!

She hands him a paper towel from the arrangement table.

DESI

In the bible, Jesus said, "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns and yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Do not be anxious saying 'what shall we eat?' Or 'what shall we drink?' Or 'what shall we wear?' Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be yours as well."

MRS. CAMPOS

Aye, how you smart boys can have so little sense, I don't know.

DESI

It's the Bible!

MRS. CAMPOS

God helps those that help themselves.

DESI

I'll pay you when I can.

MRS. CAMPOS

Be a good boy, Vicente. Then good things will happen for you. Dios te le guarda.

INT. ROOM - DAY

Wearing white gloves, the figure from the robbery removes silver dollars from the pages of the coin books. She places them in small zip-lock bags then stacks them in a small white gift-box. She seals the top and writes the number 1111 on the top.

EXT. RITZ CARLTON - DAY

Desi strides into the fabulous hotel.

INT. RITZ CARLTON BAR - DAY

He prowls through the room assessing the patrons, listening to conversations, searching for his mark. He spies a woman sitting alone with a guidebook. He steps to the bar.

DESI

Let me have a Cape Cod.

He passes the 20 dollar bill to the bartender who brings back 15 and the drink. He strolls toward the woman.

DESI (CONT'D)

Welcome to Boston.

WOMAN

Hello.

DESI

Really a lovely time of year to visit.

WOMAN

Very pleasant, yes.

DESI  
I've taken the liberty of bringing  
you the official beverage of Boston,  
the Cape Cod.

WOMAN  
Why thank you.

She accepts but doesn't drink.

DESI  
Most of America's cranberries are  
grown here in Massachusetts.

WOMAN  
I didn't know that.

DESI  
No, you won't find that in the  
guidebooks.

She looks at him with what appears to be interest.

DESI (CONT'D)  
May I join you?

But really she is anticipating the arrival of the man who  
has come up behind Desi. He sits down in the booth with the  
woman.

MAN  
Excuse me.

WOMAN  
Darling this gentleman from the hotel  
was just telling me about cranberries.

She tastes her drink.

DESI  
(pun intended)  
Tart.

She nods her approval to her companion.

MAN  
I'll have one...

WOMAN  
A Cape Cod...

MAN  
Yes, a Cape Cod as well, thank you.

Desi is already gone.



INT. THE EMERALD NECKLESS TAVERN - DAY

Desi looks more out of place but seems more at home in this cheap dive of a bar. With his address book and a shot of bourbon Desi is ready to find another friend or ex- who is willing to put him up (put up with him). He places a call on the pay-phone. He talks; smooth, convincing. Fails.

Another call. No luck. Another drink.

Another call.

Another page of his address book. Another drink.

**FACES ON THE OTHER END OF THE LINE**

Polite rejection.

Hostile disbelief.

Who?

INT. TAVERN - DAY

The address book is turned to "Z."

DESI

(leaving a message)

Hi Tina, sweetie, it's me. I'm sorry about this morning. It was the champagne last night, you know it always makes me a little disoriented the next morning. I know you have this big trial and all, but I think things are going really well for us, don't you? Maybe I should stay at my place for a few days, then, when you're over the anxiety of the trial starting we could...

He's cut off by the beep -- his time is up.

DESI (CONT'D)

...get together.

EXT. YMCA - DAY

Desi trudges into the YMCA.

INT. YMCA - DAY

Desi argues with the man behind the check-in desk.

DESI  
I've never had to pay in advance  
anywhere before.

CLERK  
15 dollars.

Desi fumbles around in his wallet.

CLERK (CONT'D)  
Cash.

DESI  
I'll just go to the ATM and be back.

CLERK  
You do that.

DESI  
(Stomping out the  
door)  
No trust these days.

EXT. BOSTON COMMON - DAY

Desi slumps on a park bench, considering his alternatives.  
A car horn intrudes on his introspection. Two rag-tag men  
are jumping out attacking cars stopped at the light, washing  
windshields for a handout; their

### **BEDROLLS**

Stowed nearby.

Feeling like he doesn't belong, Desi relinquishes the bench.

INT. PARK BATHROOM - DAY

Desi urinates. He talks to himself.

DESI  
Why the fuck would you put a closet  
door right next the bathroom door.  
Idiotic design. No one thinks  
anymore.

He zips and goes to the sink, checks himself in the polished  
metal mirror.

DESI (CONT'D)  
... Different door, I'd be out on  
the balcony just looking down...

INT. SECOND CHANCE CLOTHES - DAY

OWNER  
A lovely suit.

DESI  
(authoritative BS)  
Italo Calvino.

OWNER  
We give you half of the selling price  
in trade or 40 percent in cash. That's  
32 cash or 40 in trade.

DESI  
How about you give me 20 in cash,  
and 15 in trade?

OWNER  
Fine. Dressing room is in the back.

The store is filled with men's formal wear. The perfect  
place to sell a suit but not such a great choice to buy  
another for 20 bucks.

Desi emerges from the dressing room in a paisley tuxedo.

DESI  
(to the off screen  
clerk)  
Come on, you must have something  
else.

INT. YMCA - DAY

The men who were washing car windows are completing their  
transaction. The clerk is handing them keys.

CLERK  
That's room 311 and 312.

Desi walks in wearing a red velvet tux and a "I told you so"  
attitude.

DESI  
(handing over the 15  
dollars)  
Here you go, I'd like that room now.

CLERK  
No vacancy.

DESI  
What?

CLERK

Full up.

DESI

Don't mess with me.

The panhandler from the bridge walks in. Interrupts.

PANHANDLER

201.

The clerk retrieves a key from the cubby-hole and hands it to the man.

CLERK

(to Desi)

Try again tomorrow.

Desi grabs back his cash and stomps toward the door in a huff. Unfortunately, he has stomped on the foot of the panhandler. They are eyeball to eyeball. Angry recognition flashes on the panhandler's face and he extends a demanding hand.

PANHANDLER

You!

The panhandler grabs at the cash in Desi hand and snags a couple of Ones.

PANHANDLER (CONT'D)

Payback. With interest.

INT. EMERALD NECKLESS - DAY

Desperation erases his pride. He finds the phone number for

**DALE CLEVINGER.**

EXT. HYANNIS PORT MANSION - DAY

Dale Clevenger parks his vintage Mercedes in front of the sprawling estate.

INT. HYANNIS PORT MANSION - DAY

The ornate dining room table is covered with china, crystal, figurines, silver services, and other items bespeaking wealth and history. Clevenger and a young couple walk toward the dining room from the foyer.

CLEVINGER (O.S.)

It was most tragic.

SURVIVOR (O.S.)  
The debt is considerable.

CLEVENGER  
Because it was ruled a suicide?

SURVIVOR  
That's right. There is no insurance.

CLEVENGER  
We will do our very best on your behalf. The firm takes 25% as the auction fee. Today we'll go through everything piece by piece. We'll look at condition, historical interest, and give you an estimate of what it should get at auction.

He checks his watch, then steers the couple to a small side table.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)  
This is a fine example of an early American tea-table, although it lacks some of the more desirable qualities that would make it worth more. The carved lion claw feet for example suggest the 19th century equivalent of out-sourcing. Now if they were, say, scrolls, that would be different. It is in excellent condition, I'd say it will bring \$ 1200.

The couple exchange a glance then nod their acceptance. Clevenger examines a silver fork.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)  
The Revere Ware is lovely, yes.

SURVIVOR  
It was made by Paul Revere himself. Been in the family for more than 150 years. A gift to Great-Great-Uncle Eli after the war of 1812.

CLEVENGER  
That is a wonderful story. True, I'm sure.

Clevenger's cell phone begins to ring.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)  
Excuse me.

He turns away from the family and reaches into his pocket retrieving both the ringing phone and an identical

**SILVER FORK**

That he palms inside his hand.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

This is important to you and I'd rather not be interrupted, so I'll just let it ring.

He sets the phone down on the table. Calling attention to the ringing phone is Clevenger's way of diverting attention from his quick silver switch.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

This is beautiful, but Uncle Eli must have done something with that original silver because you see, this isn't it. Let me show you.

He flips to a page in an antique guide-book.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

You'll notice the stamp on this fork is the same stamp you see here, on this page. It is from Revere's foundry, but was manufactured after his death. See the laurel. If it had been Uncle Eli's it might have been worth \$ 20,000 or so. The most I could get for it would be about 5,000.

The phone continues to ring.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

Forgive me.

Angrily pulling up the antenna and flipping open the phone he moves away from the group.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Five rings. Not ten. Not fifteen. Five rings at 4 o'clock. What is the matter with you?

INT. TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

DESI

Is that a rhetorical question or a genuine expression of concern?

INT. HYANNIS PORT MANSION - CONTINUOUS

CLEVENGER  
Who is this?

INT. TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

DESI  
It's your old pal.

INT. HYANNIS PORT MANSION - CONTINUOUS

CLEVENGER  
Desi!

DESI  
I told your secretary it was an  
emergency. How is my old roommate?

CLEVENGER  
You need a new line. What do you  
want? I'm busy.

DESI  
I need a place to stay.

CLEVENGER  
A place to stay.

DESI  
Yeah, nothing fancy.

CLEVENGER  
It's me or the street.

INT. TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

DESI  
No, of course not. I'm moving out  
of one place and into another, and  
everything is in transit, the new  
place isn't ready, I'm already out  
of the old place, so--

CLEVENGER  
So, stay in a hotel.

DESI  
And miss a chance to spend time with  
an old friend like you. Come on.

INT. HYANNIS PORT MANSION - CONTINUOUS

CLEVENGER  
You're broke?

DESI  
No.

CLEVENGER  
Drunk?

INT. TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

DESI  
It's happy hour.

CLEVENGER  
Desperate?

DESI  
Well...

INT. HYANNIS PORT MANSION - CONTINUOUS

CLEVENGER  
Are you calling me first or last.

DESI  
Dale, you are the first person I  
thought of, my good buddy Dale.

CLEVENGER  
Sorry Desi, call me after everyone  
else has turned you down. See you.

INT. TAVERN - DAY

DESI  
OK, OK! It's you or I'm on the  
street.

CLEVENGER  
Alright, I have a place for you.

DESI  
Great. I don't need the guest room.  
No monogramed...

CLEVENGER  
Not at my house. We have a no animal  
policy in my building.

INT. TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Desi writes down the address.

DESI  
OK, got it, I'll be there.



EXT. AUCTION HOUSE - DAY

Strikingly athletic,

**JOSEPHINA RAMIREZ (25)**

Strides by the gallery without pausing to notice the beautiful antiques and art displayed in the window. A banner hangs from the storefront announcing the next auction:

**CLEVENGER'S PRESENTS -- EARLY AMERICAN ANTIQUES AND COLLECTABLES -- JULY 1 - 3**

Rounding a corner she comes to a side door marked "deliveries" and rings the bell.

**A PANEL OPENS**

Glancing to insure their solitude, she pushes the box marked 1111 through to the waiting hands. She loiters uncomfortably. Breaking open her large purse she excavates down to the bottom and retrieves a tootsie-roll pop. Again the panel opens and a box is passed out. She picks it up and cradling it in her purse so no one else can see, she counts the bills inside. Satisfied, she clears out.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - EVENING

Desi searches for the address as he walks towards the Domino Hotel, a bleak hi-rise on the edge of the Combat Zone. It is the kind of place that rents by the week, by the month, and sometimes by the hour.

A woman approaches the door carrying a bag of groceries. Desi holds the door open for her. It is Josephina. They exchange a glance as if to say, "how'd you end up here?"

INT. DOMINO HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

JOSEPHINA

Thanks.

DESI

You're welcome. Need a hand with your bags?

JOSEPHINA

No, that's OK. You aren't...not this building...you know, the doorman?

DESI

(realizing what he's wearing)

No. Oh the tux...

He tags along as she makes her way to the elevator.

JOSEPHINA  
(embarrassed)  
It's nice, reminds me of my high-  
school prom.

DESI  
Your date wore a red velvet tuxedo?

The door opens and she steps in.

JOSEPHINA  
No, I did.

The doors close.

INT. BONE YARD BAR - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Desi walks through the hotel foyer and into the Bone Yard Bar, an adjoining lounge. He surveys the clientele, a cross section of the social fringe. He spots himself in the mirror.

BARTENDER  
Halloween's in October.

DESI  
I swear, a guy can't dress anymore.  
We're living in slob culture.

BARTENDER  
You want something?

DESI  
A well-whiskey.

BARTENDER  
Have to say "trick or treat."

Dale strides in. Plants himself on the stool next to Desi.

CLEVINGER  
Desi, you look great. But you always  
look great, no matter what.

DESI  
Dale.

BARTENDER  
That's two bucks.

Desi fishes out some change, starts to count it.

CLEVENGER  
Forget about it. Jonny, give him  
something he can drink. And get me  
the unusual.

BARTENDER  
OK Boss.

DESI  
Boss?

CLEVENGER  
That's me.

DESI  
You run the bar?

CLEVENGER  
I own the building.

DESI  
A hotel on Baltic Ave.

CLEVENGER  
My father left it to me, but I have  
plans.

DESI  
It'll never be the Ritz.

CLEVENGER  
You best get used to the place.  
This is your new home.

DESI  
Hijo de Puta.

CLEVENGER  
That's very nice.

DESI  
I'm not staying here.

CLEVENGER  
I'm not giving you a place to stay.  
I'm offering you a job.

DESI  
A job?

CLEVENGER  
Most people have one.

DESI  
Slaves.

CLEVENGER

The ones who don't, usually want one.

DESI

Go figure.

CLEVENGER

You're so smart, the rules don't apply to you.

DESI

Rules were made to be broken.

CLEVENGER

-- You use your friends--

DESI

What are friends for?

CLEVENGER

You snake around with a different girl every week--

DESI

I really like Tina.

CLEVENGER

You think the world owes you a living.

DESI

Of course it does.

Clevenger knows it is impossible to win this argument.

CLEVENGER

You know why everyone around you helps you out? They see you for what you could be. Not for what you are.

Desi knows he's right.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

But that wears off. It's when they realize that what you are is all you're ever going to be that they dump you.

Dale has gotten the better of him.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

So here it is, I need a manager. Someone who can collect the rent.  
(MORE)

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

It pays and it puts a roof over your  
head.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL THIRD FLOOR HALL - LATER

Desi traverses the length of the short hallway like a Choulin priest walking across rice paper. Sounds filter through the hollow doors. The MOANS of lovemaking blend uncomfortably with the WAIL of paranoid hallucination. The good-hearted LAUGHTER from one room is replaced by the derisive SNIGGER of a domestic squabble in another, creating a diabolical ECHO. The sounds coming from behind these closed doors reveal the wretched refuse of humanity of which he is now a part.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - EVENING

Gently pushing back the door, Desi enters the murky enclave that is his new home. In some ways it is better than he thought. A tiny outer office for conducting his employment related duties adjoins a modest furnished room, bed, nightstand, TV and VCR, fridge. The appointments are old deco, pleasing to his eye. A tacked-up Maxfield Parish poster highlights one wall. But the smell! The commingled smell of corporeal suffering and of carnal ecstasy pushes him back against the wall. He staggers to the window and throws it open. The stench of the city seems like honeysuckle.

**DESI'S POV**

EXT. ALLEY - EVENING

In the trash-filled alley below, a group of unwholesome **TEENAGERS** smoke pot, drink cheap wine, and argue, loudly.

STAN

The Bodhisattva is enlightened!

GANDALF

No, then he'd be the Buddha!

STAN

You're too fucking literal. Anyone can be the Buddha. I can be the Buddha. You can be the Buddha.

DESI

(calling down)

Hey Boys! There are people living up here.

STAN

And we're dying down here man, so fuck you.

GANDALF

That's on the eight-fold path, right  
thought, right speech, right insult...

STAN

Right upside your head.

They laugh. Desi turns back inside, amused.

EXT. ALLEY - EVENING

With milk crates for chairs, **STAN** and **GANDALF** continue arguing. Stan, a neo-hippie, is a wisp of a youthful man. Gandalf suffers from Werners Syndrome, making him look four times his sixteen years. Two others, **CHET** and **MONA**, focus only on each other as they make-out on a filthy fold-out couch concealed between two dumpsters.

GANDALF

It came and went and everything is  
just as fucked up as it was so, so  
what?

STAN

This whole millennium thing was just  
another way to get you to buy shit  
you don't need.

GANDALF

Like Mother's Day.

STAN

You going home tonight?

GANDALF

(sarcastic)

Yeah, I'm not feeling bad enough  
already.

STAN

Come over to Howard's.

GANDALF

No, he's too -- weird.

Desi approaches this squalid sanctuary. Stan calls out to the approaching stranger.

STAN

Hey Dude, whatever you got, we don't  
want it.

DESI

I don't want it either, but I'm stuck  
with it.

GANDALF  
Hey buddy, walk on by.

Desi holds up a bottle of whiskey.

DESI  
Don't be so uptight. I brought this.

He pours a paper cup full and gives one to Stan and Gandalf.  
Pours one for himself.

STAN  
You're the guy from the window.

DESI  
It needed some air. The room, it  
stinks.

GANDALF  
The whole place stinks.

STAN  
The whole fucking city stinks.

GANDALF  
The whole damned fucked up world  
stinks.

Not wanting to top this, Desi lifts his cup.

DESI  
To the fucked up world then.

They drink. Gandalf lights up a joint.

Gandalf notices Desi's stare and launches into his canned  
explanation while holding in the pot smoke.

GANDALF  
Werner's Syndrome, Pre-mature aging.  
Genetic dysfunction. Cell replication  
and regeneration on an unnaturally  
short cycle.

DESI  
Between the beard and the staff, I  
figured you for Gandalf the Gray.

GANDALF  
Just 16 going on 60.

Chet and Mona come up from behind.

CHET  
Hey, I'll see you all later.

MONA

Bye.

She gives him a sweet little kiss.

CHET

Bye.

Envious of Mona's affection, Gandalf and Stan don't respond to his salutation. As Chet's tight butt vanishes from the alley, they let fly the barbs.

STAN

(to Gandalf)

He came, he saw, he conquered.

GANDALF

(to Stan)

No, he saw, he conquered, he came.

MONA

God, you're so immature.

DESI

I'm going up to the roof. You want to come?

STAN

Sure.

MONA

Can we just go up there?

DESI

Sure we can. I'm the manager here.

MONA

That's too bad.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL ELEVATOR - EVENING

They enter the elevator. Desi presses 12.

DESI

We'll climb up the fire escape from 12.

Slowly, very slowly, the elevator ascends. A conversation begins innocently enough, but as the elevator rises so do tempers.

MONA

Doesn't this building have thirteen floors?



DESI  
I don't know. 12 is the last button  
here.

MONA  
I just counted 13, outside.

Stan and Mona continue talking.

GANDALF  
(to Desi)  
Buildings don't have a thirteenth  
floor. It's considered bad luck.  
Superstition. It must have been the  
14th floor.

STAN  
When?

MONA  
Lying on the couch.

STAN  
You were counting the floors while  
you were doing it?

MONA  
Well...

STAN  
(responding to Gandalf)  
Why disparage the poor 13, how did  
this start?

DESI  
Because 13 is a prime number.

GANDALF  
So is 11.

MONA  
The oxygen tank didn't blow up on  
the Apollo 11, just on the 13.

STAN  
(to Mona)  
So old Chet was so gross that you'd  
rather count the floors of the  
building?

MONA  
He was sort of, focused on himself.

GANDALF

(to Mona at same time  
as Stan)

What I'm saying is that the agreement to call it the 14th floor makes it the 14th floor since there is no necessary relationship between the signifier and the signified to begin with.

MONA

(frustrated by the  
two conversations)

Call it whatever you want, there is a floor above the 12th floor. 12 plus one equals 13. So it is the 13th.

GANDALF

But we've all agreed to call the floor above the 12th the 14th. So, it isn't the 13th.

MONA

Call it the smart ass floor, the I'm smarter than you are floor, call it whatever the hell you want to call it. But when I push you off the fucking roof you are going to fall 13 floors.

The elevator doors open. They step out into the hallway.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE/ROOF - EVENING

They have to climb a long way up the fire escape to get to the roof.

DESI

Here we are.

He takes a deep breath.

DESI (CONT'D)

Fresh air.

MONA

Nice view.

DESI

I heard you talking, you can stay up here if you want to. It gives you a place to hang out. Stay overnight if you want.

They exchange glances.

STAN  
That'd be great.

DESI  
I don't think anyone will mess with  
you.

MONA  
Who'd want to mess with us?

Stan is talking in the background with Gandolf.

STAN  
Come here.

Mona talks with the others. Then she comes back to talk  
with Desi.

MONA  
Here, this is for you.

She hands Desi a snub nose 38 caliber revolver.

MONA (CONT'D)  
It's loaded. The safety's on.

DESI  
No, thanks -- I don't -- I never  
have even.

GANDALF  
We knew the last manager of this  
place. He was a decent guy.

STAN  
We sent him a card in the hospital,  
didn't we? Well, we meant to.

MONA  
Take it, you'll need it.

INT. BONE YARD BAR - NIGHT

Clevenger and his surly-looking companion, **STINGO**, sit in a  
dark corner and converse in low tones.

CLEVENGER  
You haven't come through.

STINGO  
Right job hasn't come along.

CLEVENGER

Is that so?

STINGO

No crews going out need my expertise.

CLEVENGER

Then let me suggest that you broaden your skills.

STINGO

I only do what I do best. One job of mine is worth 10 of what these other hoods bring in.

CLEVENGER

We have a deal, you don't deliver, you'll be on the street.

Stingo yanks a letter from an official-looking envelope and waves it in front of Clevenger.

STINGO

Government says my disability's cut off. Someone rats me out, tells 'em I'm OK? Now I got nothing coming in. You know who might have tipped them off?

CLEVENGER

They have eyes everywhere.

STINGO

Time to unload what's upstairs.

CLEVENGER

Time for you to go back to work. I can find ten other low-lives that will do what you're supposed to be doing.

STINGO

They don't know what I know.

EXT. RIVER FRONT STREET - NIGHT

Josephina strolls leisurely along the Esplanade in the warm summer night. Cement chess tables go unoccupied, though they bathe in the yellow of the sodium lights. She finds the darkest table and leans against it, alert, expectant. An old man emerges out of the shadows.

RAUL

Jose? That you Jose?

JOSEPHINA

Josephina.

RAUL

You waiting for me?

JOSEPHINA

(saying the password)

"I'm here to play chess."

RAUL

Then you're not who I was looking  
for, pardoname.

JOSEPHINA

That's what I'm supposed to say.

RAUL

To whom?

JOSEPHINA

To you, I'm supposed to say that I'm  
here to play chess.

RAUL

I don't play chess.

JOSEPHINA

I'm not here to play chess.

RAUL

(continuing)

Dominos, there's a good game.

JOSEPHINA

Did Montes send you? He said he'd  
be here himself.

RAUL

(lying badly)

Who? No, I don't know any Montes.

JOSEPHINA

You tell Montes that if he wants  
what I have, he's going to have to  
see me himself.

RAUL

I'm just waiting for Jose, OK, I  
don't know what you're talking about.

Josephina strides deliberately back toward the Domino.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Desi finishes washing out his shirt in the basin. He hangs it on a hanger in front of the open window. Landing on the bed and escaping into *Leaves of Grass* is Desi's way of coping with the twist of fate that landed him in room 303 of the Domino Hotel. The VO of the poem continues under the following fight sequence between Josephina and Clevenger.

DESI (V.O.)

"This is the female form. A divine nimbus exhales from it from head to foot. It attracts with fierce undeniable attraction. I am drawn by its breath as if I were no more than a helpless vapor, all falls aside but myself and it. Books, art, religion, time, the visible and solid earth, and what was expected of heaven or fear'd of hell, are now consumed." "The female contains all qualities and tempers them. She is in her place and moves with perfect balance. She is all things duly veil'd. She is both passive and active, she is to conceive daughters as well as sons, and sons as well as daughters." "See the bent head and arms folded over the breast, The Female I see."

EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The '77 Ford LTD that rattles around the corner has seen better days. But it has enough acceleration left in its old engine to zoom in front of Josephina as she is about to cross Washington street. Grinding to a stop, the door opens. Raul is driving. A rotund hulk of a Mexican man gets out of the front seat. It is Montes.

They face each other, immovable as two columns at Stonehenge. Josephina turns to run. Clevenger blocks her path. Moving swiftly and gracefully, Josephina stuns Montes with a back-kick to the gut. He is down.

Clevenger swipes her feet out from under her then lands a bone crushing kick to her ribs. Josephina is defeated.

He searches her bag and lifts out

**The BOX OF GEMS,**

Her cash, and a tootsie-roll pop. Josephina manages to sit, leaning against the building behind her. She squints into the face silhouetted by the street light.

Clevenger unwraps the candy and sucks on it.

CLEVENGER

(whispering)

I know everything. I know everyone.  
And everyone owes me. Another stunt  
like this, and one night you're on a  
job, and surprise, there's a guard.  
And he shoots you dead.

Clevenger walks back to the LTD and hands Montes the money he's taken from Josephina. The car speeds away. Clevenger strolls off into the night, whistling "Whistle While You Work."

The sound of a gunshot comes from the car causing Josephina to dive down, her head bent, her arms folded across her breasts. But there are no shots, only the LTD backfiring as it races off.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Desi's concentration is broken by what sounds like gunshots. Setting aside his book of verse, he peers out the window but sees nothing. He tucks the newly acquired revolver under his pillow as if it were his childhood teddy bear. He extinguishes the light, and sleep overtakes him. The strobing neon light casts demonic shadows on the Maxfield Parish poster of Mercury.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - NIGHT

The ancient neon street sign of the Domino Hotel buzzes and sputters like a dying lightning bug. Stumbling up the steps, hobbled by her beating, is Josephina.

EXT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

A figure moves from shadow into the warm glow of the gas street lamp. It is Tina. Her antique leather briefcase is overstuffed with papers so she carries a stack of law books under one arm. As she steps up to her building and fishes for her keys she is buzzed in by the doorman. She waves to him as she enters.

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

#### **THE ANSWERING MACHINE**

Blinks persistently. Her load slips from her fatigued fingers and onto the desktop. She touches the playback button and the machine releases its stored treasure. As it plays, Tina changes from corporate to casual. She returns to the desk with a glass of Baily's on the rocks.

DIRK (V.O.)

Hi Tina, it's Dirk. In case I didn't tell you straight out, good job today. Remember, it's just the beginning, so stay focused. Get some rest, and we'll see you tomorrow.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Hello, Miss Singer. Paul Pressler says that he will testify that Rita was with him at the theater. I have details in the office.

DESI (V.O.)

Hi, sugar. Did you get my first message? I said too much maybe and I got cut-off so I'll try to keep this short. I'm sorry. And I need you to get me out of this bad place that I'm in. It's pretty horrible. I want to be with you. Will you take me back? Get me out of this place. The phone number is...

Tina stops playback. She sits at her desk, takes out legal papers and briefs, and starts to read.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL, ROOM 915 - DAY

#### **AN ELDERLY WOMAN**

Sits in her tidy and charming room. She places \$100 in cash in an envelope and seal the flap with a sponge. On the face of the envelope the date is written in shaky script -- "first week - July -- Williams # 915."

INT. DOMINO HOTEL, ROOM 414 - DAY

#### **A YOUNG MAN,**

Pierced and tattooed, counts out \$400 in cash. His calloused and scarred hands put the money into an envelope. On the front, in large print, are the words, "July Rent -- Cox -- #414."

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - DAY

Desi sits at a tattered desk, deeply carved with initials and pictographs. He reads, "Book-keeping for the Bewildered." On the opposite wall is the interior of the rent deposit slot. He doesn't look up as

#### **AN ENVELOPE**



Is pushed through. It is from Williams in room 915. It rests atop a small mound of other envelopes, Cox's among them, slumbering unsheltered in an old cardboard liquor box.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Desi scoops the envelopes out of the cardboard box and begins the accounting. Businesslike, he opens an envelope, counts the cash, writes out a receipt, and slips the money into the bank pouch. The task is interrupted by a phone call.

DESI  
Domino Hotel, Desi here.

INT. AUCTION PREVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Clevenger is calling on his cell phone. He is in an ornate gallery holding a variety of antiques, each displayed with a number and a description. He checks the presentation as he converses with Desi.

CLEVENGER  
Good morning Desi. It's collection day. Everyone should have paid up by now. Listen to me, no one gets a free ride. Understand. Since I am such a nice guy, I give everyone an extra day to pay. What you have to do is this: find everyone who hasn't paid and collect at least for the week. If they don't pay you, on the spot, make them sign a "seven day eviction notice."

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DESI  
Make them?

INT. AUCTION PREVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLEVENGER  
You're a persuasive guy. I'll be by in the morning to pick up the cash.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Desi's accounting is neat and meticulous.

CLEVENGER CON'T (V.O.)  
Cash flow is serious business Desi so don't fuck it up.

INT. AUCTION PREVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLEVENGER  
And don't let me find out you're  
taking a little something for  
yourself. Otherwise...

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DESI  
This job is making a new man out of  
me Dale.

CLEVENGER (V.O.)  
Great. Just what we need.

DESI  
So, where's the safe?

CLEVENGER  
Too easy a target.

INT. AUCTION PREVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DESI (V.O.)  
No safe?

CLEVENGER  
Wasn't safe enough.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DESI  
So where should I keep this money?  
There are thousands here.

CLEVENGER (V.O.)  
Someplace safe.

DESI  
And where would that be?

INT. AUCTION PREVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLEVENGER  
I don't know. I'm not sure any place  
is safe.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - DAY -- LATER

Desi wears his red tux, again. He checks himself in the  
mirror. Tests his line.

DESI  
I'm here for the rent.

Taking off the jacket and putting on a raincoat he tries his line into the mirror again, an octave lower.

DESI (CONT'D)  
Manager, rent is due today.

Taking the 38 from under his pillow he stuffs it into an inside pocket. What about the cash? He decides the safest thing to do is to carry it with him. He stuffs the pouches into his pockets. Cool, calm, collected, he begins his rounds: first stop, next door.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL THIRD FLOOR HALL, SANTIAGO'S ROOM - DAY

Desi's knock releases a fury of sounds and voices from the paranoid/schizophrenic who resides inside. Desi knocks again. The door opens the length of a safety chain. A hand mirror sloppily duct-taped onto a golf wedge peaks around the corner of the door and out into the hall.

#### **THE EYE**

Of the beholder is reflected in the mirror.

#### **POV - SANTIAGO**

Scanning neurotically up and down the length of the door, the mirror reflects the ceiling and the ancient filth encrusted rug from the hallway. Finally, Desi's reflection is in clear focus. His long black hair appears as a mass of slithering snakes.

SR. SANTIAGO  
Dios Mio!  
(in spanish)  
The mother of God protects me from  
the monstrous snakes who seek to  
swallow me.

DESI  
Senor Santiago.  
(in spanish)  
The rent, Senor, the rent. I am  
here to collect this month's rent.  
You have to pay for living here.

He tries to peek inside the apartment.

SR. SANTIAGO  
(in Spanish)  
Avert your gaze oh Medusa. You will  
not turn me to stone.  
(MORE)

SR. SANTIAGO (CONT'D)

I see you and by the power of the  
almighty Christ you shall not take  
my soul which is his alone. You are  
clever, yet there is no wisdom beyond  
the vision of the blessed one.

The door slams in his face. Desi fills in an Eviction Notice.  
As he is about to slip it under the door he reconsiders his  
action and crumples it up instead. He checks his list and  
walks toward the elevator.

INT. JOSEPHINA'S ROOM - DAY

The sweat soaked pillow is one sure sign. The nasty raised  
bruise on her side is another. Josephina is badly hurt.  
She holds a bag of frozen peas against this wound but clearly  
it requires more. Her raspy breathing stops as she is  
startled by the knock on the door. Another knock.

DESI (O.S.)

Hello. It's the manager. I'm here  
to collect this month's rent.

Wrapping herself in the sheet, Josephina supports herself by  
clutching the furniture and leaning on the wall as she drags  
herself to the door. She opens it just as Desi is bending  
down, slipping a notice under. It looks like no one is there.  
She recoils madly, yelling to some unknown presence.

JOSEPHINA

Don't fuck with me.

DESI

(standing quickly)  
Hey, it's me.

JOSEPHINA

What are you doing?

DESI

I was putting this notice under...

He finally really sees her.

DESI (CONT'D)

Whoa, you're sick. You're hurt.

JOSEPHINA

It's nothing.

He peels back the sheet and sees the large raised bruise on  
her flank.

DESI

Let me see. Nothing!? No, this is serious.

JOSEPHINA

I'm alright.

DESI

I'm taking you to the hospital.

JOSEPHINA

I can't pay.

DESI

They have to see you at the emergency room.

He finds her clothes and begins dressing her. Injured and tired she is compliant through this rather intimate encounter. Desi encourages her talking to take her mind off the pain and his proximity.

JOSEPHINA

They send bills, then letters from lawyers. They want to know how you make your money. They want to see your taxes. They want to control everything so they get paid. I don't want people poking around in my business. I won't give up my freedom.

DESI

Life before liberty.

JOSEPHINA

What good's one without the other?

DESI

Life you've got, liberty is just a myth anyway.

JOSEPHINA

Not to me.

INT. ELEVENTH FLOOR HALL - CONTINUOUS

Josephina grips Desi's arm as they head for the elevator.

JOSEPHINA

Why are you being so nice?

DESI

If you stay here and die, then I have to clean out your room.

(MORE)

DESI (CONT'D)

It's just so much easier if you die  
in the hospital. Dead people are so  
messy, they have no manners.

JOSEPHINA

And I thought you cared about me.  
I'm not hurt that bad.

DESI

Can you dance?

JOSEPHINA

No.

DESI

Then it's life threatening.

The elevator door opens. **ED THE HEROIN ADDICT** is inside.

DESI (CONT'D)

Going down?

ED

Yeah, what else is new.

They step in and the elevator door closes.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - DAY

Josephina leans against Desi's shoulder as he looks out from  
the back seat of the cab. He notices the rich and the poor,  
the contrast of conditions that make up the metropolitan  
landscape.

A mob of men loiter outside a soup kitchen near Tremont and  
Boylston. They argue and posture while they wait for their  
next meal.

Shoppers, burdened with their load of riches make their way  
from the department stores of Downtown Crossing toward the  
"T" station at Park Street.

Desi puts his arm around Josephina. She smiles an expression  
of relief, knowing that it is safe for her to be hurt with  
him.

As they near Mass. General, the landscape fills with college  
students, enjoying their leisure and privilege along the  
banks of the Charles.

INT. MASS. GENERAL - DAY

Sitting with the clip board of forms, Desi asks Josephina  
questions and fills in the paperwork.

Completed, he takes it to the counter, then returns to his new friend.

DESI  
They're ready to take you in, so,  
I'll see you later.

He kisses her on the forehead. The gleaming chrome and glass sliding doors part in front of him as he walks out of the hospital...

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - DAY

...And through the darkly soiled wooden doors of the Domino Hotel. He is back at work.

INT. FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Desi walks down the hall.

#### **A RED LIGHT BULB**

Comes on over one of the doors.

INT. CANDY'S ROOM - DAY

Tungsten lights blaze in the room. Everyone is rushing into their places as the camera operator counts down to "Action."

CAMERA OPERATOR  
Standby, we are ready to roll tape  
in five, four, three, two...

He signals **CANDY** and **SANDY** who sit behind a small semi-circular desk. Behind them, a banner announces the name of their public access TV show, "Cross Talk."

CANDY  
Hello and Welcome to --

SANDY AND CANDY  
-- Cross Talk.

SANDY  
-- The weekly meeting place for the  
transgendered community. I'm Sandy--

Who is small, precise, conservatively dressed in a man's suit. A bit of a curmudgeon compared to,

CANDY  
-- And I'm Candy...

Oversized and outlandish.

CANDY (CONT'D)

And today on Cross Talk we have a super special show. Professor Chris Straayer from New York University is our guest. Professor Straayer is author of *Deviant Eyes*, *Deviant Bodies*, and she will be talking about the she-male in history.

The Camera Operator is dialing on a cell phone.

SANDY

But you know how traffic is...So Professor Straayer is still on her...

CANDY

His...

SANDY

Until Professor Straayer does arrive, we thought that we would try something brand new...

The phone rings.

CANDY

And take a few calls from our listeners.

The Camera Operator, holding the cell phone between her/his shoulder and ear, dashes into frame with the ringing phone. S/he tugs to unravel the phone cord then places it on the set. Diving down out of frame, s/he crawls off like a soldier dodging bullets.

SANDY

And here is someone who is just dying to talk with us.

CANDY

They must have saved the number from the last show. Yeah, that's it.

SANDY

For the rest of you, the number here is 617-555-9119.

He picks up the phone. Only Sandy hears what the caller is saying.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Hi, you're on Cross-Talk.

A loud knock freezes the action. Another loud knock. Candy moves to the door while the cameras follow.



INT. FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Desi waits expectantly under the red light. He is about to knock again when the door flings open. First he is blinded by bright light spilling from the room, then engulfed in the shadow of a gigantic silhouetted amazon.

INT. CANDY'S ROOM - DAY

She pulls him in. Pushing him toward the set.

CANDY

Dr. Straayer! You found us, that is sooo wonderful. Nothing too serious I expect.

DESI

No, No...

CANDY

Parking wasn't a problem?

DESI

No, I'm not--

CANDY

Always is. Had we just given up on you? We had. But then, here you are.

She plops him in beside Sandy.

SANDY

Thank you for your call.

She hangs up on the fake caller.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Welcome Professor, Welcome to Cross Talk.

DESI

I'm not --

CANDY

-- What you seem...Isn't that true with all of us? Masks, always masks.

SANDY

That is why Prof. Straayer is here. Author of *Deviant Eyes*, *Deviant Bodies*, she will explore her hypothesis that bisexuality is simply another form of trans-genderedness.

CANDY

You write here that everyone has the potential for bisexual interactions.

SANDY

So that would mean that everyone is potentially transgendered.

CANDY

Wouldn't you say?

DESI

(acting the authority)

Of course, gender is socially rather than biologically constructed.

CANDY

Profound, profound. I know that I always could go both ways, no problem.

DESI

People simply need to be more tolerant of their own expressions of their sexuality. End up sleeping with a same sex partner? This is no more unusual than paying the rent for example. Just something that happens every so often. And it doesn't change them in any fundamental way. It doesn't mean that they're not what they were...

CANDY

It just means that they are so much more than they were before, that so much more of them is open to the world.

SANDY

But that can be a shock.

DESI

Oh yes, like the shock of being put out on the street. Being homeless, for not paying the rent. Like you haven't done this month.

SANDY

What!?

CANDY

Why, you're not Professor Straayer.

DESI

No, I'm not.

SANDY  
Then who are you?

DESI  
I'm the manager of these fine accommodations. Which you are not entitled to remain in unless you have paid for that privilege.

SANDY  
Cut! Cut.

CANDY  
Do you really think that anyone can go both ways?

DESI  
Of course.

CANDY  
What about you?

SANDY  
What about paying the man.

CANDY  
Oh yes...

DESI  
Cash only.

CANDY  
Too bad, here you go.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY, ROOM 222 - DAY

Loud music blares from behind the door of room 222. Desi approaches and knocks, hard, announcing himself.

DESI  
Manager.

The music cuts-out and the door opens revealing the face of, **SISSY DEL TRECCO**, a cherubic young woman.

DESI (CONT'D)  
Hi. You're Sissy Del Trecco?

SISSY  
You're early.

DESI  
Your rent is due.

Desi's request for the rent payment produces a worried furrow on this angelic demeanor. From behind the door an irritated Man calls out.

MAN (O.S.)  
It's dry, get it off!

SISSY  
Hold on.

INT. SISSY'S ROOM, 222 - DAY

Sissy vanishes and Desi looks in, deeply puzzled. Lying on a roll away bed is a man naked from the waist down, a giant mound of plaster covers what must be a sizable erection. Sissy grabs this mound.

SISSY  
It's still wet. Five more minutes.

RICK  
Five more minutes the mold will be too hard, you'll have to crack it off.

SISSY  
Rick, you're just a cock, OK. Not a sculptor. So just stay hard this time. You need a nipple clamp?

RICK  
No.

SISSY  
Maybe something up your butt would help?

RICK  
Shows what you know.

Desi has taken a few steps into the room. On a bookshelf he spies rows and rows of plastic penises lined up like proud soldiers in formation. Sissy notices his gaze.

SISSY  
I'm really a good artist.

DESI  
And I'm Charles Bukowski.

SISSY  
Whatever you say, Chuck.

She points to a shelf of well-crafted and sensuously expressive nude sculptures. One in particular is exquisite.

Two figures in a spiral embrace burst from a mass of broken chains.

SISSY (CONT'D)

This is some of my real work. I made this one for my MFA at Mass. College of Art. "Love Unchained."

Pointing back to Rick.

SISSY (CONT'D)

This other stuff just pays the rent.

DESI

Not very well, huh?

SISSY

What do you mean.

DESI

The rent, you owe for the week, at least.

SISSY

Oh yeah. I'm meeting with a buyer today. He's buying this whole batch of Rick's and Rod's. Then I'll bring the rent by. The whole month's.

DESI

The owner says to give you notice if you don't pay now, but I'll wait 'till later.

SISSY

Thanks Chuck.

RICK

Sissy!

SISSY

(sweetly)  
Got to go.

She grabs Desi's groin and gets a good feel.

SISSY (CONT'D)

Ever think about modeling?

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Desi goes to another doorway wondering what he's going to find this time. There's a note tacked on the door with a small pen knife.

"IN THE SHOWER"

It reads. He heads down the hall and opens the Men's bathroom/shower room door.

DESI  
Seldon Olson. You in there?

A woman steps out into the hall, still toweling off.

WOMAN  
Not unless he's had a sex change.

She continues talking as she heads back to her room.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Someone switched the signs. Thought it would be funny.

DESI  
A laugh riot.

WOMAN  
Yeah, tell the manager.

DESI  
As if he'd do something about it.

WOMAN  
Stingo's in the Bone Yard anyway. That's where he always is.

INT. BONE YARD BAR - DAY

Stingo, mean and drunk, takes up one end of the bar.

STINGO  
One more here.

BARTENDER  
You're tapped out.

STINGO  
You're going to fuck with me too? Fucking government spy.

Desi sits down next to Stingo.

DESI  
Whisky. Pour him one.

STINGO  
All right!

DESI  
You Seldon?

STINGO  
(with no trace of  
humor)  
You my dead mother?

Desi considers the possibility that he could have been Stingo's mother in a previous life.

STINGO (CONT'D)  
Stingo, the name is Stingo.

DESI  
Like in *Sophie's Choice*.

There's no mistaking Stingo's shotgun stare. Desi's nerves kick in.

DESI (CONT'D)  
*Sophie's Choice*, the William Styron book. They made a movie out of it. Meryl Streep played Sophie. "...My dearest Stingo, you are such a beautiful lover."

STINGO  
What the fuck is your problem man?

DESI  
So you're not a beautiful lover, I'm sure you share other qualities with the idealistic young...

STINGO  
Get out of my face.

DESI  
I wish that were possible. But I came down to ask you for the rent.

STINGO  
You're shitting me.

DESI  
No. I'm asking you.

STINGO  
You want the rent?

DESI  
Yeah.

STINGO  
Clevenger put you up to this?

DESI  
I work for him.

STINGO  
So does everyone. And I don't pay  
rent.  
(angry)  
Nobody should have to pay fucking  
rent for these little shit holes.

DESI  
You know how it is. I'm just doin'  
my job.

STINGO  
Oh yeah, I know how it is.

DESI  
It's nothing personal.

STINGO  
(to everyone in the  
bar)  
Hey the pointy-headed, pencil-necked,  
book-read, Mexican fuck says its  
nothing personal him coming to take  
my money.

DESI  
I do my job or I'm out on the street.

STINGO  
I'd feel sorry for you out on the  
street. So I'm sending you to the  
hospital instead.

Stingo gives Desi a hard punch to the stomach. Desi crumples  
to the floor.

BARTENDER  
You're not busting up my bar, now  
take it outside.

Pulling himself up Desi leans against the bar.

DESI  
OK, don't pay...

Desi struggles to say something else, and throws up the entire  
contents of his stomach on Stingo. Stingo is enraged.



STINGO  
You fuck. Echh.

He kicks Desi hard in the ribs. The force of the blow spins Desi around. The 38 revolver and the money pouch fly out of his pocket as Desi goes down. Desi makes a feeble grab for the gun and the money. Quick as a cat, Stingo leaps over Desi's crumpled body, picking up the revolver and the fat pouch. Stingo holds up the gun ready to fire.

STINGO (CONT'D)  
Not a twitch. This fight ain't going  
to make it outside.

Desi freezes as he stares down the barrel of his own gun. Stingo unzips the pouch and stands hypnotized by this fortune. Everyone in the bar is transfixed. Desi scans the stoney faces searching for a friend. No one is fool enough to stand up to Stingo.

DESI  
(to himself like a  
prayer)  
"I suddenly encountered the face of  
loneliness and it was a merciless  
and ugly face indeed."

The eerie silence is shattered as Gandalf's knarled walking stick crashes down on Stingo. Another blow thrusts into his side. Stingo is down. Stan takes the gun. Gandalf grabs the cash.

Stan kneels on Stingo's throat, pressing the gun barrel against his mouth. Desi lords over the fallen man.

DESI (CONT'D)  
This is your eviction notice.

STINGO  
We'll see what Clevenger has to say.

DESI  
That was his money you were about to  
steal. See what he says about that.  
Time for you to clear out.

Stingo gets to his feet, towering over Desi and the teens.

STINGO  
Watch your back, little man.

Stingo grabs a bottle, and storms out into the city.

Desi stands defiantly, watching Stingo vanish.

STAN  
(to Gandalf)  
Call an ambulance.

DESI  
I just want to sit down.

He lowers himself into a chair. The bartender brings over a drink.

GANDALF  
You could have internal injuries.

DESI  
Thanks guys, Ok, thanks.

STAN  
Is there anything...?

GANDALF  
Yeah, anything...

STAN  
We can help out.

DESI  
Go upstairs and clean out Stingo's room. You can bring his stuff down here. Now beat it.

STAN  
All right.

Desi hands over the keys.

DESI  
Bring 'em back.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Battered and stiff, Desi inspects the damage Stingo inflicted. He bows before the dingy washstand to clean off some of the blood and bile.

INT. ED & GRETCHEN'S ROOM - DAY

Ed The Heroine Addict, and his girlfriend, **GRETCHEN**, begin their latest argument -- it's how they know the other still cares.

GRETCHEN  
You shot in your cock vein?

ED  
So?

GRETCHEN  
You stupid --

ED  
-- I thought...

GRETCHEN  
You don't think anymore, you don't  
do fucking anything anymore. You  
don't fucking fuck anymore.

ED  
I thought it would be a kick.

GRETCHEN  
Kick you right outta here.

ED  
I don't get it.

GRETCHEN  
I don't get it. I don't get it.  
That's what I'm telling you.

ED  
What?

GRETCHEN  
God you're thick.

ED  
I am not.

GRETCHEN  
Too bad you're not hard.

ED  
Hard?

GRETCHEN  
Hard. Stiff, swollen, engorged,  
HARD.

ED  
Is that what this is about?

GRETCHEN  
You shot up your dick, Ed.

ED  
I'll wear an appliance.

GRETCHEN  
An appliance!

ED  
So?

GRETCHEN  
So, I'm not fucking a toaster.

ED  
You fuck everything else. You want  
a cock inside you?

GRETCHEN  
That's right.

ED  
I'll go out and find you one.

GRETCHEN  
Right.

ED  
Right.

GRETCHEN  
You do that.

ED  
I will.

GRETCHEN  
Make sure he's not a junkie. Fucking  
junkies can't get it up.

ED  
I'm out'a here.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - DAY

Desi packs his shaving kit with shampoo and shaving gear readying himself for a shower. He loops "soap on a rope," around his neck, hitches up his towel, and pulls the door open. Standing in the doorway like a continuation of the wall is Ed.

ED  
Hey Desi.

DESI  
I'm on my way to the shower.

ED  
It's an emergency, kind of.

DESI  
Either it is or it isn't.

ED  
It's my girlfriend, Gretchen, she  
needs it.

DESI  
She does?

ED  
A lot.

DESI  
Yeah?

ED  
Right now.

DESI  
What?

ED  
What do you mean?

DESI  
What does she need?

ED  
It.

DESI  
It?

ED  
She needs IT.

DESI  
Oh, well, give it to her.

ED  
I can't.

DESI  
No one's stopping you.

ED  
I can't.

DESI  
Moral prohibition?

ED  
No, I can't.

DESI  
You can't?

Ed shows him his track.

DESI (CONT'D)

Wow. I didn't know it affected  
your...

ED

Performance?

DESI

Right.

ED

I don't know, maybe it does.

DESI

So you can?

ED

No, I shot up my dick.

DESI

You what?

ED

It was the only good vein I could  
find.

DESI

You are shitting me. You shot up  
your dick?

ED

Yeah, and I've had a little trouble  
since then. So you have to fuck her  
for me.

DESI

You can't fuck for someone else.

ED

I love this girl. OK? I don't want  
her leaving me, I don't want her  
cheating on me. This is the ONE.  
You know what I mean. The ONE. So,  
she says she wants a hard cock.  
Well, it ain't mine, so I tell her  
I'll find her one. And she says,  
bring it on.

DESI

Look at me Ed. I'm beat up. I'm  
trashed. I'm just going to shower  
and go to bed.

ED  
This will make you feel better.  
Endorphins man, Endorphins.

DESI  
Endorphins.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL THIRD FLOOR HALL - DAY

Ed has walked Desi over to the door of his room.

ED  
So go in there. Fuck her. And then  
come find me down in the Boneyard.

He pats Desi on the back and Desi watches him as he takes  
off down the hall and into the bathroom.

INT. ED & GRETCHEN'S ROOM - DAY

A large mattress with green sheets floats on the blue shag  
carpet like a giant lily pad. And passed out on this leaf  
is Gretchen, the pink flower. Desi stares at her, considers  
it. Even fishes some condoms out of a box. Thinking better  
of it, he drinks deeply from the open bottle of Jack Daniels  
and heads off to the shower.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL THIRD FLOOR HALL - DAY

Ed is coming out of the bathroom. Desi slaps him on the  
back.

DESI  
She loved it.

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Desi showers off this peculiar day.

EXT. BOSTON ALLEY - DAY

Stingo leans on the bell at the back door of Clevenger's  
auction house. Coiled like a snake, his arm shoots through  
the panel as it opens, grabbing the person on the other side  
in a vice-like grip. With strength fueled by desperation he  
violently pulls the arm of the unlucky agent through the  
opening.

STINGO  
I'll rip it off your shoulder. Now  
open the fucking door.

When Stingo hears the bolt thrown open, he kicks the door  
open hard, flinging the injured man out into the alley. He  
storms inside.

INT. AUCTION HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Stingo knows just where to go. He navigates the back-room corridors, up a flight of stairs and he is at Clevenger's office.

INT. CLEVENGER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Clevenger is unruffled by Stingo's entrance.

STINGO

You're the one who called the government on me you bastard.

CLEVENGER

No. No one called anyone.

STINGO

You send that fuck to collect rent from me.

CLEVENGER

Everyone pays, keeps it legal. You don't have the money, you get thrown out. You know how it works.

STINGO

A deal is a deal and I've waited long enough. I'm not doing the crappy little jobs anymore. You ain't the only one who can call the government.

CLEVENGER

Careful Stingo.

STINGO

You pay them off you think you're untouchable? I got ways to hurt you, you don't even know. You'd be nothing without the rest of us.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL - DAY

Refreshed, Desi makes his way down the hall to his room. The door is closed, it is locked. He is wearing only a towel. He remembers now, he gave the keys to Stan.

DESI

Shit. Stan.

He attempts to cram his shaving kit through the "rent deposit" slot in his room. It's too thick. He begins to take out the contents one by one and slip what he can through the crack -- razor, shampoo, the condom he picked up, shaving cream won't fit, conditioner won't fit.



Resting these big containers against his door, he flattens the shaving kit and forces it through the slot.

INT. STINGO'S ROOM - DAY

A scale, baggies, and other paraphernalia litter Stingo's room. Gandalf and Stan are concluding the ritual of the pot deal. Stan rolls a nice thin joint, lights it up, and hands it over to **THE CUSTOMER**. Their debate resumes, interrupted by the exaggerated inhalations and exhalations of the smokers.

STAN

You have to tell them where you are.

CUSTOMER

Then there's no point to the whole system.

STAN

It's an invasion of privacy.

CUSTOMER

You're calling for help.

GANDALF

Say you're shot. You're bleeding.  
You crawl to the phone.

He crawls to the phone.

GANDALF (CONT'D)

With your last ounce of strength you  
pick up the phone and dial.

He picks up the phone and dials 911.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

911, what is your emergency.

GANDALF

And then, you collapse.

His hand slams down the receiver.

STAN

And that is where they find you.  
Two days later when you're stinking  
the place up.

INT. STINGO'S ROOM - DAY

Desi's towel-clad entrance brakes the cycle of this banter.

STAN

Nice look for you Des.

GANDALF  
It's the big Kahuna.

DESI  
I need my keys.

STAN  
You didn't get them?

DESI  
I didn't get them.

STAN  
You didn't?

DESI  
No.

STAN  
I put them in your room.

DESI  
In my room? But I'm out here.

STAN  
I put them under the door.

DESI  
What?

STAN  
I thought you were sleeping in there.  
I was trying to return them.

DESI  
Great, Great. Open a window. If  
you're going to deal, do it in the  
street.

GANDALF  
That's gratitude.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL - DAY

Desi lumbers back down to his room. Someone has come along and covered the door with shaving creme obscenities and anarchy symbols. The last thing he wants to do is get intimate with the carpet but he has to look under the door and flattening himself out is the best way.

DESI'S POV

No keys in sight. He tries slipping his hand under. No good.

INT. ED & GRETCHEN'S ROOM - DAY

He ignores Gretchen and some stranger getting it on as he strides directly to the closet and grabs a wire hanger.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL - DAY

Desi slips the hanger under his door. No luck. Desperate, Desi knocks next door. Screams of terror. He knocks again.

DESI

Sr. Santiago, I'm the manager.

The door opens a crack, stopped by the end of the safety chain.

DESI (CONT'D)

My room is right next door. I locked myself out...

SR. SANTIAGO

Ojos de diablo!

As Santiago pushes the door closed, Desi throws his weight against it. The chain gives way and Desi flies into the room.

INT. SANTIAGO'S ROOM - DAY

He dashes for the window, throws it open and is out on the ledge while Santiago screams in terror.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL THIRD FLOOR LEDGE - DAY

The window slams shut behind him. The ledge is a bit narrower and the distance a bit further than Desi had suspected.

**DESI'S POV**

Sure, it's only three stories but that seems far enough. Certainly a fall would end badly. As he inches along the ledge the sound of a squad car's siren becomes more distinct. He spots it pulling up just as he makes his final approach to his own window. As he does, the towel slips off. It floats down gently on the breeze, draping itself over the head and shoulders of the **PATROL OFFICER** as she steps from her squad-car.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The officer rips the towel from her eyes just in time to see sky-clad Desi dive into the window of his room.

EXT./INT. DOMINO HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

**THE BLACK BATON**

Slaps into her hand in rhythm with her stride as she walks into the hotel and through the hallway.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY, STINGO'S ROOM - DAY

The officer raps on the hollow door with the butt of her baton. The door opens but the pot-smoke fog makes it difficult to see. It is Gandalf, Stan, and the customer.

OFFICER

We received a 911 call from this phone, is there an emergency?

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - DAY

Stan and Gandalf are handcuffed together as the officer leads them to the squad car. Their response to being arrested is like everything else, they make it into a joke. They deliberately walk around two separate sides of a stop sign, smack together and fall down like a scene from a Stooges movie. The Customer follows after them. He doesn't think it's funny at all.

CUSTOMER

You fucking idiots. Can you be serious for five seconds?

STAN

(seriously)

No. We can't. Blame our parents.

(to Gandalf)

What do you think, was that five seconds?

GANDALF

Three at the most.

CUSTOMER

You got us arrested.

GANDALF

My fault, I had this image of an ambulance.

STAN

Just bad dharma...you bum.

CUSTOMER

You're getting senile.

STAN  
Se Nile is a river in Egypt.

GANDALF  
No, De Nile is a river in Egypt.

She loads them into the cruiser...

OFFICER  
You're both in denial. Now get in.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL ROOF - DAY

Mona observes the scene below.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - DAY

Desi, freshly showered and shaved emerges from the Domino and into the fresh summer day.

EXT. BOSTON GARDEN - DAY

He strolls through the garden stopping to admire a flower bed. Glancing about to make sure he is not observed, he plucks a few blooms. Here and there he stops and plucks a few more until he has a small bouquet of flowers.

INT. MASS. GENERAL - DAY

Desi inquires about Josephina at the registration desk.

CLERK  
She's been admitted.

The phone rings.

CLERK (CONT'D)  
Excuse me...Mass General  
Information...Well let's see...  
(checking her computer  
monitor)  
No, nothing like that...No...I don't  
see anything...Ok thank you.

DESI  
You don't have any idea where she  
might be?

CLERK  
She wasn't in Emergency?

The phone rings again.

CLERK (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...Mass. General  
Information...OK...OK...No that would  
be from the commonwealth not the  
hospital... No, not here...I'm  
sorry...OK...Thank you.

DESI

They said she was in radiology but  
when I went there they hadn't seen  
her yet.

CLERK

I'm sure she's in getting tests.  
You can wait or try back. I think  
she'll be here overnight for  
observation.

DESI

Can you give her a message for me?

CLERK

Sure, here, write it down.

He writes a few words, folds the paper and writes her name  
on the outside.

DESI

Here.

CLERK

I'll make sure she gets it.

EXT. MANAGER'S ROOM - NIGHT

It's easy to spot the door to the Manager's Room, it's the  
one still dripping with shaving creme.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Desi steps into his room and turns on the light. The room  
is trashed. The open window is smashed out. The pages are  
ripped out of every book. This is a hate crime not a break-  
in and Desi knows it. Pulling on the phone line like a he's  
fishing without a pole yields, from under the rubble, the  
telephone. He dials and waits anxiously.

DESI

Dale, this is Desi. You have to  
come and pick up this cash.

CLEVENGER

Calm down Des.

DESI  
Someone's going to kill me for it.

CLEVENGER  
No, no one is going to kill you.

DESI  
What do you know?

CLEVENGER  
You're just feeling insecure.

DESI  
Fuck you Dale, have you stayed down here? That fucker Stingo is after me, trashed my room, tore up my books.

CLEVENGER  
Calm down.

DESI  
What happened to the last manager?

CLEVENGER  
Who?

DESI  
The manager, before me.

CLEVENGER  
What do you mean? Nothing happened.

DESI  
He was in the hospital, right? Same thing happened to him is going to happen to me.

CLEVENGER  
He had a heart attack. He was old.

DESI  
Someone tried to kill him.

CLEVENGER  
No. The people who live there are poor but they're not criminal. No one is going to kill you for the money. OK?

DESI  
They're not just poor, they're desperate. Desperate in ways you've never been. And I'm not just visiting, Dale, I'm part of them.

(MORE)

DESI (CONT'D)

I'm poor too. And I know what I would do, what I could do, if I had to.

CLEVINGER

I'll be by first thing in the morning.

Desi hangs up the phone. Calm but still uneasy, Desi fills his small suitcase with the money he has collected. He picks up the binding of "Leaves of Grass," and the torn out pages and adds them in with the cash. Grabbing the bag and the flowers, he retreats to the safety of anywhere that isn't his address.

EXT. 11TH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Cautiously avoiding any human contact, Desi sneaks his way to room 1111, Josephina's room. His soft knocks receive no reply. Using a pass key he lets himself in.

INT. JOSEPHINA'S ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

He is visibly more relaxed as the door clicks closed behind him and he twists the dead-bolt. He begins settling in for the night. Taking the neglected flowers out of their wrapping he arranges them in a pitcher of water. Resting on the bed, he opens his suitcase and removes the damaged book. He finds a page, searches for where it might go and then tapes it in.

INT. JOSEPHINA'S ROOM - LATER

Desi is sleeping on top of the torn pages, his head resting on the suitcase.

#### **THE DEAD-BOLT**

Turns. The sound startles him out of his slumber.

#### **A GLOVED HAND**

Reaches in and extinguishes the light. He goes to grab the revolver. The door creaks open revealing a figure, it hesitates, straining to see or hear. Desi, lifts the gun. One step into the room then with an explosive move, the figure flies toward Desi, kicking the gun out of his hand, and flattening him with a solid strike to the groin and nose. Desi writhes on the floor. Victorious, the aggressor flips on the lights. Josephina recognizes Desi, still panting with pain. Their eyes meet, instantly both are relieved to recognize the other.

JOSEPHINA

You? Are you all right? Did I...



DESI  
Break my nose? I think, I don't  
know.

She leans over him and grabs a bag of peas out of her freezer.

JOSEPHINA  
Here.

Desi put the vegetable ice pack on his groin.

DESI  
Oh, that's better. Reminds me of an  
old girlfriend.

JOSEPHINA  
You're seeing the wrong kind of girls.

DESI  
I prefer the kind that beat me up  
but I just keep falling for the ones  
that freeze my balls.

Desi struggles to his feet. He collects the book binding  
and pages readying himself to leave. Deliberately shielding  
the contents from Josephina's glance, he opens the cash case  
and stuffs the pages inside.

DESI (CONT'D)  
Polite way you have of greeting your  
guests.

JOSEPHINA  
That's the way I would greet anyone  
who broke into my room.

DESI  
I have a key.

The adrenaline rush wears off and Josephina collapses on her  
bed.

DESI (CONT'D)  
Aren't you supposed to be in the  
hospital?

JOSEPHINA  
No insurance.

DESI  
The humanity.

JOSEPHINA  
It's just a broken rib. They said  
to take it easy --

DESI  
-- Don't beat anybody up.

JOSEPHINA  
What are you doing here?

Desi and Josephina perch on the edge of the bed, arm in arm, in front of the dresser admiring the slightly tattered blooms. They catch sight of themselves in the dresser mirror. They are both wrecked.

DESI  
I brought you flowers.

JOSEPHINA  
Next time, leave them in the ground so everyone can see them.

DESI  
Who knew you were such a populist.

JOSEPHINA  
You don't know much about me.

DESI  
Like why you'd wear a tux to your prom.

JOSEPHINA  
There was no prom.

DESI  
No?

JOSEPHINA  
No, I was at a new year's dance at the female juvenile detention center in San Antonio. Some girls had to dress like the guys would, if there'd been guys. I was one of them.

DESI  
I'd never think of you as one of the guys.

JOSEPHINA  
Thanks.

DESI  
(about the flowers)  
I took them to the hospital but they couldn't tell me where you were. I wanted to cheer you up.

JOSEPHINA  
They're beautiful. It was sweet.

DESI  
And I needed a hideout.

She doesn't follow.

DESI (CONT'D)  
I got one someone's bad side.

Josephina stiffly demonstrates Karate moves.

JOSEPHINA  
Just remember the eyes, the throat,  
the nuts, and the knees. Simple  
self defense.

DESI  
(sarcastic)  
Worked for you.

JOSEPHINA  
There were two of them.

DESI  
And they worked you over pretty good.  
I'll get going, let you rest.

JOSEPHINA  
What about...?

DESI  
I'll be OK, you know, be a black  
belt in one lesson. It's probably  
all in my head anyway.

JOSEPHINA  
Come back if you need to.

DESI  
I will, thanks.

JOSEPHINA  
Good-night.

EXT. THIRD FLOOR HALL - NIGHT

Desi ambles toward his room. Blocking the entrance is Mona. Rocking slightly in a fetal position, she seems to have been there for all eternity. Sitting forlorn against his still foamy door she looks so young and vulnerable.

MONA  
You have to help us.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

He goes to the window, closes it and locks it, even though it is smashed in.

DESI  
Look at me, I can barely help myself.

MONA  
Just like every other adult.

Realizing that closing the window provides no security, he takes the Maxfield Parish poster off the wall and fits it into the window frame.

DESI  
What am I supposed to do? They got themselves busted.

MONA  
Do you know what's going to happen to them?

DESI  
I have a pretty good idea.

He digs around for a hammer and nails in a desk drawer.

MONA  
You have no idea.

DESI  
Oh no?

MONA  
No.

DESI  
Let's see. For those two--They're smart, articulate. They sit in the county jail for a couple of days, plead guilty, convince the judge that they will change, and never ever get into any trouble again. Then they get probation time and they're back on the roof in a week.

MONA  
Flat wrong.

DESI  
Yeah?

Desi hammers the framed poster into the window frame.

MONA

They wait in jail for a month.  
Sleeping 8 to a cell. Gandalf is  
already sick and susceptible to just  
about anything. He catches some  
kind of cold or something and next  
thing you know he's got pneumonia.  
Stan gets himself beat up for opening  
his mouth when he shouldn't have.  
Then, there's mandatory sentences  
for dealing, they end up in state  
juvy camp...

DESI

OK, OK.

MONA

It's a nightmare, beginning to end.

Desi takes off his blood stained shirt and starts to wash it  
in the sink.

DESI

OK. All right.

MONA

So you'll help?

DESI

No.

"No" is not what Mona came to hear. The word crushes her  
physically. Desi can't help pausing, looking at her,  
offering.

DESI (CONT'D)

I can't help them.

MONA

Bail them out. Maybe find them a  
lawyer.

DESI

Right. I'm not their parents.

MONA

That's why I'm talking to you. You  
might help. I know you have money.  
I've looked at your hands. I don't  
know what you're doing here, but  
you're used to better.

DESI  
I've been around money, but I've never had any. That is the crucial difference. Now, I have to go.

MONA  
What about what you have in that bag?

DESI  
That's not mine. It's the rent money.

MONA  
They saved your life today.

DESI  
God was that today?

MONA  
If they hadn't stepped in, that guy might have shot you dead.

DESI  
How much is the bail?

MONA  
Five thousand each.

Desi snaps back into cynical mode.

DESI  
You're setting me up.

MONA  
No.

DESI  
You're running some scam on a poor old sucker like me.

MONA  
No. You saw what happened.

DESI  
Probably planned the whole thing. Who ever heard of some fool calling the cops on himself.

MONA  
We like you Desi, we trust you. You can trust us too.

DESI  
Here take it.

MONA  
Serious?

DESI  
You kids need it more than Dale.

MONA  
Oh, god, thank you.

DESI  
We have got to figure out what to do, what to tell him.

MONA  
We'll help you.

DESI  
Go get them bailed out. Then come right back. Show me I'm no fool.

Desi sits in the ruin of his room staring up at the Maxfield Parish print of "Mercury."

EXT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Desi strolls down the street in the warm summer air.

The "panhandler of stone" stands on the corner, a small pile of coins in his palm.

DESI  
Sorry, I can't help.

He smiles at the lovers walking arm in arm. With unconscious intention, he ends up in front of Tina's building.

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

CONCIERGE  
Yes sir, may I help you.

DESI  
I'd like to see Miss Singer.

CONCIERGE  
I'll ring.

He dials.

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)  
Miss Singer.

DESI  
Tell her it's Vincent, Vincent Veracruz.

CONCIERGE

Vincent Veracruz in the lobby for  
you.

(to Desi)

She'll be right down.

DESI

I'll be waiting outside.

CONCIERGE

Very good sir.

EXT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Tina peeks out the door and spots Desi sitting on the steps.

TINA

Desi?

DESI

Hi. You knew it was me.

TINA

Yeah, but I didn't know your name  
was Vincent.

DESI

No, you never asked what my real  
name was.

TINA

I thought it was Desi.

DESI

Just a cruel nickname. Made me feel  
like one of the crowd. Desi -- you  
know, the funny Mexican. That's how  
you think of me too. Isn't it?

TINA

No.

DESI

An amusement. Your funny Mexican  
clown keeping life kind of  
unpredictable.

TINA

You did that.

DESI

Dress him up and you can take him  
anywhere.



TINA  
You didn't seem to mind.

DESI  
Only look how it ends up for me.

TINA  
Desi; Vincent, I don't want, don't have the energy, don't really need anything more serious than a good time.

DESI  
That's what I am?

TINA  
That's what you were. And honestly, yeah, that was great. It was fun being bad for a while. But we both deserve to be with someone who we're Good with.

Everything that needed saying has been said.

DESI  
Good luck on the case.

TINA  
Thanks.

As he stands to go he reaches into his pocket and pulls out a piece of paper and hands it to Tina.

DESI  
The names of a couple of kids that I know. They got busted dealing pot. I thought if your firm needs to do some pro-bono work.

TINA  
I can check with Dirk, but, this trial...

DESI  
They need a break.

TINA  
Let me call the public defender's office. See who's on it. If their lawyer isn't in criminal practice, I'll see if someone I know will handle it.

DESI  
That'd be great. Thanks.

INT. BONE YARD BAR - NIGHT

Desi glances into the lounge after coming back from Tina's. Josephina sits alone at the bar. The jar of flowers is perched by the bottles of the bar back. Pleased to see her he approaches.

DESI  
Taking your medication?

JOSEPHINA  
Couldn't sleep. Came down looking  
for the sandman. You seen him?

She pulls out the stool, inviting him to join her.

DESI  
I'm avoiding him. If I fall asleep  
I might end up dead.

JOSEPHINA  
And who'd clean that up.

DESI  
My room got broken into. That Stingo  
has it out for me. That's why I was  
in your room. I thought you'd be at  
the hospital and I was hiding out  
with the rent money.

JOSEPHINA  
I'll protect you.

The crew of kids burst into the Bone Yard like they're surfing a big wave.

GANDALF  
Hey there he is.

STAN'D  
The man. The hero. The legend.

DESI  
So you numbknuckles made it out all  
right?

MONA  
Thanks to you.  
(to Josephina)  
He bailed them out.

DESI  
(explaining)  
The rent money.

JOSEPHINA  
No place is safe now.

GANDALF  
Through thick and thin to the bitter  
end.

The bartender comes over.

BARTENDER  
Last call. You all want anything.

DESI  
How 'bout we buy a few bottles and  
take them up to the roof.

ALL  
Good idea, yeah.

DESI  
Celebrate independence day.

GANDALF  
Independence day.

STAN  
Independence day.

DESI  
Come on, you can help me figure out  
how to get out of this mess.

They make the trek back up to the roof.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT - LATER

Music plays from a boom box as Desi, Gandalf, and Stan stand  
at the edge of the roof urinating on the street below. Mona  
and Josephina stand nearby.

JOSEPHINA  
You'll get it back after the hearing.

GANDALF  
Not if we plead guilty.

MONA  
They take it as part of the fine.

GANDALF  
Five thousand up in smoke.

STAN  
In the blink of an eye.

DESI  
I'll just clear out.

JOSEPHINA  
Then it's like you're stealing it.

DESI  
Well what, I lost it?

GANDALF  
Tell him someone stole it from you.

DESI  
I could do that.

STAN  
Tell him that guy...

DESI  
Stingo...

STAN  
Stingo came back and took the money.

DESI  
He'd throw me out.

MONA  
But not lock you up.

STAN  
Incompetent but not criminal.

JOSEPHINA  
You can stay with me.

Desi finishes his business and zips up.

DESI  
I'd love to. But anyone who has  
ever put me up has ended up throwing  
me out.

In the morning Desi will worry about the morning. Now, he lives and loves and is stirred by the music. He cranks the volume.

DESI (CONT'D)  
Come on, it's the soundtrack of my  
life.

As the Beck song, *Loser*, blares from the stereo, Desi grabs Josephina and pulls her onto a skylight. She watches as he dances a frenetic stomp.

Just as the words "kill me" blast into the night air, he jumps, spins, beats his chest and the glass shatters. Screaming, they plunge through the skylight. But only about three feet. Standing waist high amid the glass shards they look like they're levitating.

DESI (CONT'D)  
You OK?

JOSEPHINA  
OK.

DESI  
All right, hold on to my shoulder  
and just slide back down the glass.

STAN  
Good.

GANDALF  
That's it.

MONA  
Made it.

Josephina is deposited successfully on the roof.

DESI  
Now, I'll just try to...

As he shifts his weight to climb out, crash, the floor opens and he plummets down into the dark.

Josephina and the shocked group of teens gathers around the black hole.

JOSEPHINA  
Vicente!

DESI (O.S.)  
What the fuck?

MONA  
You OK?

DESI (O.S.)  
Everything feels intact.

STAN  
The head bone's connected to the  
neck bone.

JOSEPHINA  
Just stay still. If you're hurt,  
you shouldn't move.

GANDALF  
We could call 911.

MONA  
Don't do us any favors.

JOSEPHINA  
I'm going to get my flashlight and a  
rope. I'll be right back.

Josephina runs to the ladder.

STAN  
She's got a rope?

DESI  
(from below)  
Hey Stan.

STAN  
Yeah.

DESI  
Toss down one of those bottles.

STAN  
Sure.

Stan fishes out an empty beer bottle from the trash.

STAN (CONT'D)  
Ready?

DESI  
Yeah.

The bottle crashes to the floor below.

DESI (CONT'D)  
Damn.

STAN  
It was empty anyway.

DESI  
That's why I let it hit the floor.

Josephina climbs up the fire-escape ladder and back onto the  
roof.

STAN  
(calling down)  
Cat woman has returned.

DESI (O.S.)

Woof.

JOSEPHINA

(calling down)

Shut up.

(to Stan)

Here, help me find a secure place to tie this.

They find a vent pipe and tie the rope around it. Josephina stands at the edge of the broken window, ready to slide down.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)

OK, I'm going down.

DESI (O.S.)

That's got a nice sound to it.

JOSEPHINA

(calling down)

Shut up.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM -- NIGHT

She shines the flashlight all around. As she descends, the lantern's pale light reveals a chamber filled with small art objects and paintings on the walls. Desi has fallen through a false ceiling.

MONA

(peering into the chamber)

What's down there?

The light finds Desi sitting atop a pile of broken boxes, styrafoam packing peanuts cushioned his fall.

DESI

I'd say it's the 13th floor.

EXT. ROOF -- NIGHT

Back up top, Mona gives Gandalf an "I told you so" look.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM -- NIGHT

Josephina joins Desi in the chamber. She surveys the space as she helps him to his feet.

DESI

I'm OK.

JOSEPHINA

I don't see a door.

There are no doors, no windows. They begin searching for a way out. Josephina recognizes some of the jewelry that she stole from a different pawn-shop.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)  
These are stolen.

DESI  
You think?

JOSEPHINA  
I know they are. I did the job.

DESI  
You?

JOSEPHINA  
Either I'm a thief or a whore.

Desi understands the choices she's had.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)  
That's my deal, with Clevenger. He buys whatever I give him and he gives me protection.

DESI  
Doesn't seem like he's taking care of his end of the deal.

JOSEPHINA  
Who do you think beat me up?

DESI  
Clevenger?

JOSEPHINA  
I was working something on the side. He found out.

DESI  
I'll...

JOSEPHINA  
...stay away from him. Let's get out of here.

Josephina grabs the rope. She's stopped by a stabbing pain in her side. The broken rib hurts too much.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)  
I don't think I can.

Desi tries to boost her up.



DESI

Here.

JOSEPHINA

I can't hold it.

DESI

There's no other way.

Calling up.

DESI (CONT'D)

Hey up there.

The teens gather around and peer down at Desi and Josephina.

MONA

Yeah.

DESI

There's no way out down here and  
Josie's too hurt to climb. Do you  
think you can pull her out?

TEENS

Sure.

DESI

OK, I'll boost you, then stand up on  
my shoulders.

JOSEPHINA

Ready.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

With the rope tied on to the vent pipe, the three teens start  
to pull Josephina up. They manage to pull her up a foot.

GANDALF

2nd floor, foundations, intimate  
apparel.

Another foot or two.

STAN

3rd floor, housewares, home wares,  
loungeware.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Josephina is just lifting off Desi's shoulders.

DESI

You're doing great.

Josephina tries to mask her pain.

EXT. ROOF - CONTINUOUS

**THE ROPE**

Is fraying as it slides across the broken glass of the skylight. No one notices. It snaps.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Josephina lands hard on top of Desi.

EXT. ROOF - CONTINUOUS

The three teens are propelled backward knocking the vent pipe over the side of the roof. It falls silently...down...

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

...Landing with a explosive crash near the side of the hotel where Stingo is loitering and drinking with a small group of men. Curious, rather than startled, he looks up at the roof.

EXT. ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Stan peers over the edge of the roof.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Stingo's POV -- seeing Stan looking over the edge of the roof.

STINGO

I'm going to take a piss. Stay out  
of trouble.

He hurries under the sputtering neon sign and enters the Domino Hotel unnoticed.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Josephina and Desi huddle together comforting each other.

JOSEPHINA

There has to be a door, they get  
stuff in. Check along the floor.

They begin searching the seams of the room for a way out.

DESI

We have to get out of here.

JOSEPHINA

We're looking.

DESI  
No, away from the Domino Hotel, away  
from Clevenger.

JOSEPHINA  
There's only one way and I wouldn't  
recommend it.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The elevator door opens and Stingo walks in. He pushes the  
button for the 12th floor.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Desi starts to pull back the corner of a large Persian rug.

DESI  
Grab the other side.

They roll the rug, lifting furniture and boxes as they go.  
Their effort is rewarded, they spot a trap door. Something  
else peaks out from under the rug, it is an old canvass.

They exclaim simultaneously.

JOSEPHINA  
Look.

DESI  
Look.

Desi means the canvass and Josephina means the way out.

Desi holds the canvass for Josephina to see. It is a  
beautiful antique painting.

JOSEPHINA  
Forget it, there's a latch here.

DESI  
You recognize it?

JOSEPHINA  
No, I don't do art. Push this here.

DESI  
I'm taking it.

JOSEPHINA  
You're crazy? You can't sell it.

DESI  
We'll hold it hostage.

JOSEPHINA  
Clevenger will...Just leave it.

They remove a panel in the floor which reveals a large hinged attic style door with a folding ladder attached. It seems stuck or locked. Desi pushes on it hard but it doesn't budge.

INT. 12TH FLOOR HALLWAY -CONTINUOUS

Stingo unlocks a door with no number on it.

INT. 12TH FLOOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is empty. Banging is coming from a panel on the ceiling.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JOSEPHINA  
Let me see.

She tries it.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)  
It must be locked from the other side.

Desi tries it again. Now he's frustrated. He jumps up and down on the door.

DESI  
OK, OK, we'll take off the ladder.

JOSEPHINA  
Great idea.

Handing him a pocket knife.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)  
There's a screwdriver on this.

Desi starts to work on the ladder. He hears a click.

DESI  
(whispering)  
What was that?

Josephina didn't notice.

JOSEPHINA  
What?

He hears the sound again.

DESI

That.

JOSEPHINA

Yeah, I heard it too. Sounds like a  
latch opening.

It occurs to both of them what she's saying just as she says  
it.

The floor door opens out from under Desi and he slams into  
the room below.

INT. 12TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

Desi crashes down into a dark room, landing hard on the floor.  
It's silent.

JOSEPHINA'S POV

Looking through the trap door with her flashlight. Desi is  
immobile on the floor. Her light searches the room. It  
illuminates a demonic face, Stingo.

JOSEPHINA

(to Desi)

Look out.

The lights come on in the room below. Desi is stunned by  
the brightness and frozen by the sound of an attacker. Stingo  
is angry and drunk. He lands a kick to Desi's abdomen, but  
there is no force in it.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Josephina tears through the contents of the room searching  
for something she can hurl down on top of Stingo. She grabs  
a silver service and dashes back to the doorway.

JOSEPHINA'S POV

Desi and Stingo are locked in a combat clench. Like a failing  
top they spin into the walls. Each one tries to shake the  
other angling for a knockout punch. And so they are  
stalemated. Good and evil, yin and yang, push and pull,  
round and around.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Josephina takes aim with the silver tray and flings it down  
like a frisbee of death. It slams into a wall-mounted mirror  
which explodes into shards. Her diversion works. The two  
fighters are freed from each other.

INT. 12TH FLOOR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Desi grabs the tray just in time to block Stingo's right hook. His fist crumples into the silver shield. Desi has the advantage. And he hammers Stingo with the tray releasing a torrent of anger. Each phrase punctuated with another blow.

DESI

Here's for the book...First Knopf printing...irreplaceable...was my mother's...gave it to me for graduation.

Stingo is defeated. Desi is exhausted. He sits across from Stingo, looking at the wounds he has inflicted. His innocence and immunity are lost. Tears well up in his eyes.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Josephina grabs the piece of rope that fell back into the room with her and climbs down to join Desi. They rest together.

JOSEPHINA

Next time remember. Eyes...

She wipes away his tears.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)

Throat...

She kisses him on the neck.

JOSEPHINA (CONT'D)

Knees...

She strokes his knee and thigh.

DESI

You skipped one.

INT. 12TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT -- LATER

### THE ROPE

Is knotted tight around Stingo who lays unconscious on the floor. Desi holds the painting while Josephina finishes Stingo's bondage. They turn out the light. As the door opens, the light from the hall plays across the mirror fragments making it seem like the floor is strewn with jewels.

DESI

Goodnight sweet prince.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY, ROOM 222 - NIGHT

Desi and Josephina wait for Sissy to answer the door.

SISSY

Who is it?

DESI

It's the Manager.

A groggy Sissy opens the door.

SISSY

About the rent, I meant to get it to you but the scum bag who said that he was going to buy this load blew me off, so here I am up to my ass in dildos...

Explaining to Josephina.

DESI

Pays the rent.

JOSEPHINA

Not in this case.

DESI

You took art history, right?

SISSY

Yeah, so?

INT. SISSY'S ROOM, 222 - NIGHT

Pushing his way in, exuberant and hushed Desi rushes over to a drawing table and flips on the light.

DESI

You have to see this.

SISSY

OK -- But it wasn't my best subject.

DESI

What about it?

She glances at it.

SISSY

Not bad for a beginner.

DESI

I didn't paint it!

SISSY  
So who did?

DESI  
You tell me.

SISSY  
How would I know?

DESI  
Because you're an artist.

SISSY  
Right. I'm casting dildos to pay  
off my school loans. Put that in  
the fucking alumni magazine.

JOSEPHINA  
You're making an honest living.  
You're trying. That's what's  
important. No?

Sissy takes down a very large hard-cover art history book  
from her shelf. She hands it to Desi.

SISSY  
I never could sell my books.

DESI  
Me neither. So what do you think?

SISSY  
A copy of something, Dutch maybe.

JOSEPHINA  
A copy?

SISSY  
A real one'd be in a collection.  
Not at some flea-market.

DESI  
It was in a collection.

SISSY  
Right.

JOSEPHINA  
It's stolen.

Sissy can tell from their look that it is the truth.

SISSY  
Let me see it.





INT. CANDY AND SANDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The two lie peacefully in bed as the pounding wakes them.  
Candy gets up, puts on her wig and comes to the door.

CANDY  
Who is it?

DESI  
It's me Candy. It's an emergency.

Opening the door.

CANDY  
Dr. Straayer!

DESI  
Do you still have all your equipment  
here?

CUT TO:

INT. CANDY AND SANDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are up and the video viewfinder shows Desi and  
Josephina holding the stolen painting.

DESI  
As you can see, the Vermeer is in  
relatively good condition. It is in  
my possession and I am willing to  
return it to the proper authorities.  
I am removing a small chip of paint  
from the corner here and taping it  
to the video box. This tape along  
with the chip will establish the  
authenticity of the painting. If  
appropriate terms can be arranged,  
the painting will be returned  
immediately.

SANDY  
And Cut.

CANDY  
Ready for tape number two?

DESI  
Ready.

INT. JOSEPHINA'S ROOM - NIGHT

JOSEPHINA  
I have a little place here.

She removes a panel from the floor and slides the canvass in between the joists.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - NIGHT

Desi, Josephina, Gandalf, Stan, Mona, Candy, Sandy, and Sissy cram themselves into a cab.

DESI  
Louisburg Square.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The cab pulls up to a stop sign in the right-hand lane. A semi-truck is on their left, already waiting.

INT. CAB - POV - CONTINUOUS

The truck begins to pull forward and then cuts a right hand turn. The back two axles roll over the hood of the cab, crushing it.

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

Everybody screams.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The cab sits demolished on the empty street. Everyone piles out, no one is hurt. Desi walks around to the driver.

DESI  
Will eight bucks cover it?

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE LOBBY - NIGHT

They enter an up-scale building. The group of misfits file over to the waiting area and sit politely while Desi talks to the concierge.

CONCIERGE  
No sir, I will not.

DESI  
Please, I have to talk with her now.

CONCIERGE  
I will not announce you at four o'clock in the morning.

DESI  
Ronald, you remember me.

CONCIERGE  
Of course.

DESI

You know that I know Tina. So please,  
just tell her I'm here. It is an  
emergency.

CONCIERGE

It always is with you sir.

DESI

I am completely sober. I'll take  
full responsibility. Please, tell  
her I'm down here.

He rings the phone.

CONCIERGE

Pardon me Miss Singer. Ronald here  
at the front entrance. Mr. Veracruz  
is here wishing to see you. He is  
with a small group of people and he  
says that it is urgent.

(pause)

No ma'am, he appears sober. Very  
well.

(to Desi)

Miss Singer will not see you.

DESI

What?

CONCIERGE

You may contact her at her office.  
I have the number here if...

DESI

Ronald, I'm going up there.

CONCIERGE

Please Mr. Veracruz. I will call  
the authorities if you leave me no  
other choice.

DESI

Call her again, ask her if she'll  
watch this tape...it will take two  
minutes.

CONCIERGE

Very well.

He calls.

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)

Miss Singer, sorry Miss.

(MORE)

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)

Mr. Veracruz has a very short videotape he'd like you to view. I'm afraid that I will have to call the authorities and have him removed if you do not view it now. Very well Miss.

(to Desi)

I will deliver it to her on the condition that you remain here quietly.

The concierge exits through the security doors. Desi turns to the group.

STAN

Very persuasive.

GANDALF

What did he do to her?

CANDY

You just don't understand women boys.

STAN

No?

CANDY

No. No girl is going to let a man up to her place at four in the morning. It's not respectable.

STAN

You hear that Mona?

JOSEPHINA

She bailed you out.

The concierge returns.

CONCIERGE

I gave the tape to Miss Singer.

DESI

Did she say she would watch it?

CONCIERGE

I did not inquire, sir.

DESI

Do you mind if we wait?

CONCIERGE

You may wait until 6:30 sir.

(MORE)

CONCIERGE (CONT'D)

Then I will have to ask you to leave  
as the residents will begin to embark  
for work. It would be indelicate  
for your band of vagrants to be found  
squatting here in the lobby.

DESI

Yeah, Thanks.

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Tina clicks off the TV. She places a call.

TINA

Hi Dirk, it's Tina. Sorry. Can you  
first chair today? No, I'm OK.  
It's an opportunity for the firm.  
Big time. Listen to this.

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE LOBBY - NIGHT

The whole bunch of the Domino Hotel troop snoozes on the  
couches and chairs in the lobby. They are an unsightly bunch,  
the fringe that gives the fabric character. Tina stands  
looking at them. Desi and Josephina are cuddled together in  
an upholstered chair. She wakes him up.

TINA

Desi. Des. Hey.

DESI

I like otters...oh, hey there  
sweetheart. Look, they followed me  
home, can I keep them?

TINA

You never change.

DESI

That's where you're wrong about me.

TINA

Come on upstairs, we need to talk  
about your tape.

DESI

Hey everybody. This is Tina. She's  
going to help us.

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE ELEVATOR - NIGHT

All nine cram into the elevator. Desi presses number 13.

INT. BEACON HILL TOWNHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

With everyone huddled around her, Tina hangs up the phone.

TINA  
We have a deal.

Celebration.

JOSEPHINA  
You're kidding!

STAN  
Dude!

DESI  
Let's hear it.

TINA  
You deliver the painting. The reward  
for all the paintings is 6 million.  
But since the Vermeer is considered  
the most valuable, they'll give you  
3 million if it's authenticated.  
The firm gets a third.

Sandy counts the crowd.

SANDY  
2 million divided by 9 is 222  
thousand, 222 and 22 cents.

SISSY  
That's my room number, 222.

STAN  
Must be your lucky day.

SANDY  
Is there tax on this?

TINA  
No, reward money isn't taxable.

CANDY  
So we'll be getting 444 thousand  
dollars.

SANDY  
By my calculation.

CANDY  
We're rich.

GANDALF

Hey, the money's great, but what about us?

TINA

They won't drop the charges.

MONA

Oh man.

TINA

But I did get them to agree to a misdemeanor charge, with probation. I think it's a good deal.

MONA

Thank you, Miss Singer. And the bail money?

TINA

You can go and claim it.

DESI

You're the best.

TINA

Meet me at the Museum at 9, with the painting.

JOSEPHINA

Let's go.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - DAY

Clevenger parks next to the front door and strides into the Domino Hotel.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL - DAY

He walks to the manager's room. On the door is a large envelope with his name on it.

INT. MANAGER'S ROOM - DAY

Clevenger takes the videotape from the envelope and pops it in the machine.

CLEVENGER'S POV

DESI

(on TV)

Is it on? OK? -- Hi Darrel. It's your old pal Desi.

(MORE)



DESI (CONT'D)

You know, I never really cared that much for the nickname. It's kind of a put down. Anyway, I wanted to let you know that I found this.

He unrolls the painting.

CLEVENGER

What the fuck!

DESI

So, here is the deal. I spent the rent money. Sorry. But, think of it as a loan, I'll pay you back from the reward money I'll get turning over this painting to the museum. How did you end up with this anyway? Well, don't worry, it's in a safe place and knowing how you love art, I'll get it back where you can enjoy it once again. Don't try anything funny, or I'll tell the authorities that you stole it. And I'll tell them about that little room of yours on the 13th floor.

Dale gives Desi's smirk a swift kick. The TV crashes against the wall as Dale storms out.

INT. 12TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Clevenger races up to the secret 12th floor entry.

INT. 12TH FLOOR ROOM - DAY

Stingo is roused out of his unconsciousness by the sound of Clevenger entering.

CLEVENGER

You worthless shit stain. I'm leaving you there.

Anxious to see the result of the breach of security, he folds down the stairs, and scurries up into the hidden room.

INT. JOSEPHINA'S ROOM - DAY

Josephina and Desi take the painting out from under the floorboards. They wrap it in a sheet and take it to the elevator.

INT. ELEVENTH FLOOR HALL OUTSIDE ELEVATOR - DAY

Hand in hand, Desi and Josephina wait for the elevator.

DESI

We do pretty well together.

JOSEPHINA

If I was staying in the thieving  
business, I'd have you on my crew.

The door of the elevator opens and Clevenger is in the lift. A moment of stunned recognition hits them all. Then Josephina reacts, giving Clevenger a quick kick to the solar plexus. He collapses against the back of the elevator as the doors close. Desi and Josephina split up, Josephina runs down the stairs while Desi dashes out to the fire escape with the painting.

INT. DOMINO HOTEL - DAY

The expectant group mills about waiting for Desi and Josephina to emerge with the painting.

MONA

It's taking a long time.

SISSY

They're probably necking. You see  
the way they were looking at each  
other.

CANDY

Young love, so refreshing.

SANDY

He's not going to go off and leave  
us, is he?

GANDALF

He may be a bit rudderless, but he's  
honorable.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE/THIRD FLOOR LEDGE - DAY

Desi jumps off the fire escape and makes his way across the ledge to his third floor room.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL OUTSIDE ELEVATOR - DAY

Ed waits for the elevator. It opens, Clevenger is inside.  
Ed steps in.

INT. ELEVATOR -- DAY

Clevenger furiously presses the "door close" button. He checks the lights for their progress.

ED

I have this girlfriend. Well sort  
of my girlfriend. Anyway...

INT. STAIRWAY/FOYER - DAY

Josephina flies down the steps and out into the foyer.

JOSEPHINA

Call the cops. Call the cops.

STAN

What the fuck!

JOSEPHINA

Phone! There! Call the cops.

Mona grabs the pay phone and dials 911 just as Clevenger  
bursts out of the elevator. He holds Ed by the neck and  
fires a round in the air.

CLEVENGER

Put it down!

Mona is frozen with fear.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

Put the phone down!

From inside the phone she hears the dispatcher's voice.

DISPATCHER

911 what is your emergency?

She hangs up.

ED

I just asked him if he wanted to  
sleep with Gretchen. Is that so  
wrong?

CLEVENGER

Where is the painting. Where is the  
painting!

No one speaks.

CLEVENGER (CONT'D)

Where is he. He's not with you.  
Now! WHERE IS HE?

Josephina can't help but look through the window as a couple  
of people are yelling to someone up on the building.

CROWD

Jump! Get it over with! There's no  
hope!

Clevenger, dragging Ed with him, runs outside. The rest of  
the group follows.

EXT. THIRD FLOOR LEDGE - DAY

Desi is still on the ledge but now moving away from his room  
back toward the fire escape. Letting go of Ed, Clevenger  
takes aim and fires. The bullet misses. Clevenger bolts up  
the fire escape. Desi scoots back along the ledge, diving  
into his room through the open window. Quickly, he bolts  
the windows behind him. Clevenger is already at the ledge  
now, making his way toward Desi's window. He gets to the  
window, it's locked. Clevenger notices the open window of  
the room next door. As he begins to enter Sr. Santiago comes  
screaming to the window. In terror he gives Clevenger a  
push and he falls to the street below.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The Police pull up. Everyone gathers around. Clevenger is  
down but not seriously hurt. He has landed on the old fold-  
out couch and bounced onto the pavement. Desi comes running  
outside. The group turns away from Clevenger to assess Desi's  
condition.

JOSEPHINA

Are you all right?

DESI

Yeah I'm OK.

CANDY

The painting?

The sheet covering the rolled up canvass has a large hole in  
it.

SISSY

Oh god, he shot the Vermeer!

DESI

Its OK, its OK. Look.

Desi takes off the sheet to reveal that it is the Maxfield  
Parish print from his room upstairs.

DESI (CONT'D)

I thought it would be a good decoy.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - DAY -- TWO WEEKS LATER

Mona sits behind the wheel of a nice old black Valiant convertible. She is parked outside the Domino Hotel. She flips through the channels on the radio and comes to rest on:

CANDY (O.S.)  
Greetings. You're on the Cross-Talk  
radio network.

SANDY (O.S.)  
Gender blending radio for the New  
Millennium.

CANDY (O.S.)  
Now we'll hear a classic from Annie  
Lennox of the Eurythmics...

SANDY (O.S.)  
And "Sweet Dreams."

INT. JOSEPHINA'S ROOM - DAY

Inside, Desi helps Josephina carry a few suitcases and a box.

DESI  
That's it?

JOSEPHINA  
I travel light.

DESI  
I have to see the manager. I'll  
catch up with you.

JOSEPHINA  
OK.

INT. THIRD FLOOR HALL - DAY

Desi knocks on the manager's door. Gandalf, the new hotel manager, answers.

DESI  
Hey.

GANDALF  
Hey man, moving out.

DESI  
You got all this money and you're  
staying here?

GANDALF  
Well, it feels like home.

DESI  
Here.

Desi hands him an envelope full of cash.

GANDALF  
What's this? I don't need this.

DESI  
It's for the Disturbed One. Next door. It should keep his rent paid until his wish comes true.

GANDALF  
You got a good heart. So long Des.

DESI  
So long...

GANDALF  
... my friends call me...

DESI  
(cutting him off)  
Gandalf.

GANDALF  
My new friends call me Gandalf.

DESI  
Remember, its not how long you live but how you live that makes it worthwhile.

EXT. DOMINO HOTEL - DAY

Josephina and Mona are waiting in the car. Desi dumps his small valise in the back seat and hops in back then climbs over in front between them.

DESI  
Thanks for giving us a lift.

MONA  
You two belong in Cambridge.

DESI  
Let me drive.

Desi jumps on Mona and she has to wriggle out from under him.

MONA  
No way. You're...craz...heavy.

DESI

Come on. I'm a great driver. I've  
been driving for years. Two years.

Desi pulls out into traffic, completely ignoring every other  
car on the road. They continue talking as they cruise out  
of the Combat Zone.

EXT. COMMON - DAY

A towering new statue is just being erected at the edge of  
the Boston Common. It's Sissy's MFA statue, "Love Unchained."  
The Valiant zooms by.

JOSEPHINA (V.O.)

You got your license when you were  
thirty?

DESI (V.O.)

Never too late to try something new.

EXT. LONGFELLOW BRIDGE - DAY

The sun glints off the water of the Charles River. Sailboats  
skip over the waves as the Valiant crosses the bridge  
overhead. They're on their way out of Boston.

THE END