

21

by

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FADE IN

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

CLOSE-ON the green felt of a blackjack table. The well-manicured HANDS of a BLACKJACK DEALER smoothly slip cards out of a six-deck shoe, dealing with steady, practiced moves.

A Jack of spades, two of hearts, seven of diamonds, King of clubs, and so on around the table. We hear the V.O. of KEVIN LEWIS. We see the action that he describes.

KEVIN (V.O.)

These are the rules of Blackjack and Basic Strategy. The dealer deals you two cards. You add them up and try to get closest to 21. If the dealer shows a high card, keep hitting 'til you get 17. If the dealer shows a weak card - like a 5 or a 6 - stick with your first two cards. If you get over 21, you bust and the dealer takes your money.

The Dealer swipes a player's money, then deals another round.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D) (cont'd)

The rules are simple, as card games go. With one exception. The goal in blackjack is not to get the best hand. The goal is to beat the dealer. If you beat the dealer, you beat the House. If you beat the House, you beat Vegas.

LAS VEGAS. 4AM.

WE PAN UP TO...The DEALER. He addresses an UNSEEN PLAYER.

DEALER

What do you say, Frank? It's been a helluva run.

WE PAN AROUND TO...KEVIN LEWIS, 21. A professional card counter and blackjack star, Kevin's currently enjoying his spring semester as a senior at M.I.T. He wears a blonde wig, fake mustache and mirrored shades that reflect a pair of 10s.

KEVIN (V.O.)

By the way, my name is not Frank.

He "drunkenly" takes a sip of his martini. It spills. The only other player we reveal is a WOMAN next to him.

RESTLESS WOMAN

Don't you think you've had enough?

INT. PARIS HOTEL - SUITE - BATHROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Kevin puts on his wig and fake mustache. In seconds, he's gone from Ivy League to Alcoholics Anonymous.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin, smiles at the woman, then pushes \$50,000 worth of chips into the circle and smiles at the woman. He mumbles.

KEVIN
I'm splitting.

DEALER
Splitting tens!

A PIT BOSS nods "okay" as the Dealer deals Kevin a King on the first 10, and 9 on the second. The Dealer draws a 17. Kevin wins \$100,000. The Pit Boss nods to a FLOOR MANAGER.

Seated at another blackjack table is JILL TAYLOR, 22, wearing a red dress, stunning. She looks at Kevin, urgent.

KEVIN (V.O.)
That's Jill. She's a rocket scientist.
No, really. She is. Tonight, she's my
Spotter. We have hand signals. Folded
arms mean, "The table's hot." A bent
right arm means, "Double the bet." And
then there's what she's doing now.

We SEE Jill nervously run her hand through her hair.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Running your hand through your hair.
That means one thing. "Get out. Now."

Four ENORMOUS MEN in yellow jackets race toward Kevin. He quickly gathers his chips and gets up.

DEALER
You don't want to color up?

KEVIN
No, I like how they jiggle in my
pants.

Kevin jams the chips into his pockets, slings his duffel bag over his shoulder. He heads toward the doors, moving fast. Jill falls in with him, the Yellow Jackets close behind.

JILL
You split 10's.

KEVIN

The running count was 24.

JILL

Yeah, and you tipped off the Eyes in the Sky. We're burnt.

(Beat)

If I don't get into law school 'cause of this, I'm gonna kill you.

KEVIN

Oh, shit.

Kevin stops cold as...four more YELLOW JACKETS appear at the door. They're led by a man we'll come to know as VINCENT COLE, late-40's, Vegas thug. Kevin and Jill are surrounded. The CAMERA SWIRLS around them, pulling up and away as...

BOSTON. SEPTEMBER. 8 MONTHS EARLIER.

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Kevin does the butterfly in the olympic-sized pool. He cuts through the water, eye goggles on, gasping. He reaches the end and looks up. His COACH stands over him with a timer.

COACH

Off by ten seconds. That's not gonna cut it, Kev.

Kevin pulls off his goggles, tired. He SEES the clock as...

EXT. M.I.T. CAMPUS - CONTINUOUS

Kevin, his hair still wet, wearing a blue Oxford, tan khakis, knapsack slung over his shoulder, heads across campus. He's always on the move. ANDREW TAY, 21, tall, geeky, comes over.

ANDREW

You missed lab last night.

KEVIN

I had to work.

ANDREW

Kevin, it's the 2.70 Competition. There's gonna be a thousand people packed into that auditorium, watching what kind of machine we built. You should be taking this more seriously.

KEVIN

I am taking it seriously. But unlike you, I wasn't born with a silver protractor in my mouth.

ANDREW

A protractor? Why would I have a protractor in my mouth?

A stunning girl pulls up in a convertible BMW. It's Jill Taylor. Kevin stops, watching her, mesmerized.

KEVIN

God, she is so beautiful. I always see her outside 2.11. Who is she?

ANDREW

You're taking Mechanical Engineering?

KEVIN

Andrew...I'm gonna be late for work. I promise. I'll be there tonight.

Kevin unchains his bike, hops on and rides off as...

ANDREW

Don't bail on me, Lewis!

But Kevin's already pedaling in the direction of Jill. She SEES him approach and waves. Kevin waves back, then realizes she's waving to a GOOD-LOOKING GUY. The guy hops in Jill's convertible as they drive off. Kevin feels like an idiot.

EXT. MASS. AVE. BRIDGE - DAY

Kevin pedals furiously over the Charles River and bangs a left down onto the Esplanade. He rides past rollerbladers, joggers, sunbathers. In the b.g., is the M.I.T. Great Dome.

EXT. BROOKS BROTHERS - NEWBURY STREET - DAY

Kevin tears down the Rodeo Drive of Boston. Past Armani, DKNY, the Ritz Carlton. He pulls up to Brooks Brothers and chains his bike to a lamppost.

He opens up his knapsack, pulls out a blue blazer and unravels it. It's a mess. Totally wrinkled.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - CONTINUOUS

Kevin enters, sans jacket. His boss, MARK, mid-40's, officious, looks at him disapprovingly.

MARK

Where's your jacket?

Kevin pulls out the wrinkled jacket as a human bone falls out of his knapsack. Mark looks perturbed. Kevin picks it up.

KEVIN

It's...cortical bone...for my thesis.
I'm doing a study on Quantitative
Computed Tomography...Basically, it
scans the density of human bone and...

He trails off as Mark just stares at him.

MARK

There's a 42 regular in the back. And
Kevin? I'm docking you two hours pay.

KEVIN

Oh, c'mon, Clark.

MARK

Let's make it three hours, okay?

Mark walks off as MILES, 21, Kevin's classmate and co-worker, comes over.

KEVIN

Why three hours?

MILES

His name's not Clark...By the way,
thanks for showing up at 2.70. Oh,
that's right. You weren't there.

Miles gives him a fake smile and heads to the back.

INT. M.I.T. - BASEMENT LAB - NIGHT

Kevin, Miles, STUART and HERB, all 21, sit at a table. (We'll notice that Herb never speaks.) The table is littered with motors, screws, bolts, springs, wire, hinges, etc. Andrew reads from a set of instructions.

ANDREW

"The Competition takes place May 6th.
All scoring will use the algorithm:
(mass + 100 grams) x (cumulative
rotation of platter + 1 radian)." Oh,
and this is important. "Contestants
must always wear safety glasses."

KEVIN
(picking up a tiny s-hock)
What the hell is this? Mitochondria.

ANDREW
No, and if you were here last night,
you'd know what it is.

STUART
Yeah. It's a model of Andrew's penis.

ANDREW
Shut up, Stuart.

MILES
Yeah, Stuart. Give Andrew a break. He
doesn't have a penis.

They burst out laughing.

ANDREW
I thought we were here to talk about
science.

STUART
We're building a machine that throws
ping pong balls into a cylinder. How
is that science?

MILES
Just for once can't we talk about
women, or getting laid, or...women?

ANDREW
Fine. Then don't come crying to me
when I'm in a doctoral program and
you're pumping gas.

STUART
Oooh, a doctoral program. And what are
you gonna do with that? Teach?

ANDREW
You ever hear of the CDC?

KEVIN
Yeah, the Can't Do Chicks club.

The guys crack up.

ANDREW

The Center for Disease Control, ass.
I'm the guy who's gonna save your dick
when it turns black from VD.

MILES

At least we'll have gotten laid.

STUART

I'll tell you who's getting laid. You
hear Fisher and Martinez dropped out?

KEVIN

What?

STUART

They came up with some bullshit inter-
net start-up idea. This Silicon Valley
schmuck bought 'em out for ten mil.

KEVIN

Ten mil? Jesus. I tutored Fisher in
molecular engineering.

MILES

You did a good job.

Something about this bothers Kevin. Herb picks up a motor off
the table as...

MILES (cont'd)

Herb, put that down.

INT. M.I.T. - LECTURE HALL 26-100 - DAY

Kevin sits in his chair, taking notes, as a PROFESSOR,
ancient, stands before a podium and drones on about the
latest analytical methods in mechanical engineering.

PROFESSOR

...analyzing kinematic and dynamic
characteristics of planar and spatial
mechanisms, including robotic
manipulators...

Miles holds up a drawing of a naked girl with giant breasts.
Kevin laughs. Miles turns the drawing over. Written on the
back is \$10,000,000. Kevin stops smiling.

PROFESSOR (cont'd)

...vector, graphical, 4 by 4 matrix
methods for kinematic analysis...

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY

Kevin and Miles shoot hoops. Miles is just awful, but Kevin's got skills. In the b.g., the worst game of basketball in the history of the sport is being played by 2 teams of MATHLETES.

Kevin goes to take the ball out. He stops as he sees Jill Taylor walk by in running clothes. She looks incredible.

MILES

Don't even think about it.

KEVIN

Who is she?

MILES

Jill Taylor. She's a rocket scientist.

KEVIN

Is she with anyone?

MILES

Dude, we're geeks. Mathletes. A girl that hot's gonna want someone who's smart, good-looking and rich. And one out of three ain't gonna cut it. She's got "Harvard Ho" written all over her.

Kevin blows past Miles for an easy lay-up.

KEVIN

So I got into Harvard.

MILES

Yeah, but you chose M.I.T. And y'know why? 'Cause you knew the square root of Pi at the age of four.

KEVIN

Five. I was a late-bloomer.

Miles takes a shot. The ball sails clear over the backboard and nearly hits a STUDENT. The Student looks pissed off.

MILES

My bad!

(To Kevin)

My point is, some guys get the chicks, daddy's car and a trust fund. And other guys...they know the square root of Pi.

Kevin takes a jump shot and misses. He looks back towards the beautiful Jill. He doesn't even exist in her universe.

MILES (cont'd)

You coming to the frat party tonight?

KEVIN

(nods)

Y'know, just once it'd be nice to have some girls at these parties.

MILES

Why break with tradition?

INT. M.I.T. - FINANCIAL AID OFFICE - DAY

Kevin stands at the front of a long line of financial aid STUDENTS. A tired-looking woman with the name tag, MARGE, stands behind the counter. Kevin pleads his case.

MARGE

It's a student loan, Mr. Lewis.

KEVIN

I know it's a student loan. But I don't get paid 'til Friday.

MARGE

Then you'll be paying 10% compounded interest for each day you're late.

KEVIN

C'mon. Can't you make an exception?

MARGE

Are you a Red Sox fan, Mr. Lewis?

(off his nod)

Then you're used to disappointment.

NEXT!

EXT. BROOKS BROTHERS - EVENING

Kevin exits the store, sticks his tie and jacket in his knapsack and unchains his bike. He hops on and takes off, riding past Rolls Royces, Bentleys, etc.

EXT. KENMORE SQUARE - EVENING

Kevin rides through Kenmore Square, to his left the lights go on at Fenway Park. He heads up Beacon Street, straight uphill. Makes his way past Boston College.

EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Newton, Mass. A middle class, suburban enclave just outside Boston. Colonial-style homes dot the landscape. Perfectly manicured lawns, trees with changing leaves. Kevin's bike leans against the front porch of his family's home.

EXT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Kevin's mother, ELAINE LEWIS, 50's, wears nurse's whites, grills dinner. Kevin sits at a table, poring over a textbook.

MRS. LEWIS

What's the basic structure of eukaryotic chromosomes? DNA or nucleosomes?

KEVIN

It's a trick question. Nucleosomes consist of histones and DNA.

Kevin's father, PETER LEWIS, 50's, comes out holding a giant jug of Carlo Rossi wine. He unscrews the cap and sniffs it.

MR. LEWIS

Ah, last week. That was a good year..

KEVIN

Screw top. Nice, dad. You're movin' up in the world.

Mrs. Lewis brings dinner over as Mr. Lewis pours the wine.

MR. LEWIS

Chemistry. Fluid Dynamics.

KEVIN

Bring it.

MR. LEWIS

I have a can of beer.

KEVIN

What kind of beer?

MR. LEWIS

Kevin Lite. It's sitting out in the sun. Open. What's making it evaporate?

MRS. LEWIS

The sun?

MR. LEWIS
Ladies and gentlemen...Nurse Elaine.
The genius.

KEVIN
Kinetic energy.

MR. LEWIS
Why?

KEVIN
Because the molecules attained enough
speed to overcome the attractive
forces of liquid.

Mr. Lewis takes a beat, nods, satisfied, but reserved.

MR. LEWIS
The MCATs are March 1st. I say the day
before, you stay here. We work on the
sample writing portion. You gotta get
at least a 10.0 across the board, Kev.
I'm talking Verbal Reasoning, Physical
Sciences, Biology.

MRS. LEWIS
Peter, I think he's ready.

MR. LEWIS
I'm just saying. Take it from someone
who got 9.2's. That didn't exactly get
me into med school. Let alone Harvard.

For a second, things are tense. Elaine puts on a happy face.

MRS. LEWIS
Okay, enough of that. What about
girls? You dating anyone?

KEVIN
Mom, it's M.I.T.

EXT. DELTA UPSILON FRAT HOUSE - NIGHT

PRETTY GIRLS wearing Harvard gear walk by as a drunk MATHLETE
leans over and hurls in the bushes. M.I.T. STUDENTS drink
beers as "Sweet Child O' Mine" BLASTS from inside the house.

INT. DELTA UPSILON FRAT HOUSE - NIGHT

Pictures of Stephen Hawking, Bill Gates and Pamela Anderson
cover the walls. The room is packed with FRAT GUYS. A STUDENT
does a beer bong as the Frat Guys cheer. "Chug! Chug! Chug!"

In the corner...Kevin, Stuart, Miles, Andrew and Herb sit around a poker table. Kevin's clearly kicking ass.

KEVIN

Ante up, ladies. The game is Follow the Queen. Everyone know how to play?

STUART

Yeah, we all follow Andrew.

They crack up. Kevin deals the first two cards down to each player. He's totally smooth. He deals the next card up.

KEVIN

King bets.

STUART

I'm in for five.

Everyone tosses in their chips as Kevin continues dealing.

MILES

I saw your girlfriend today.

ANDREW

Who's your girlfriend?

MILES

Jill Taylor.

KEVIN

She's not my girlfriend. A pair of aces for Miles the geek. 8 of hearts for Stuart. Herb's working on a flush.

STUART

You going after her?

KEVIN

I didn't say I'm going after her. I just said she's hot.

ANDREW

I fold.

MILES

Pussy.

STUART

I thought it was Wellesley to bed. Harvard to wed...

EVERYONE

And M.I.T. girls to talk to.

They all burst out laughing.

MILES

Yeah, well, Jill Taylor's goddamn sex on a stick.

KEVIN

Aces still has the bet.

Miles tosses in another ten. Stuart sees the bet. Herb folds. Kevin then pushes a huge pile of chips into the pot.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I see your ten and raise you fifty.

MILES

No, thanks. I'm saving up for grad school and a handjob.

STUART

I'm in.

KEVIN

It's down to me and Stuart. A pair of deuces against a possible flush.

Kevin deals the last card down. They both take a peak:

STUART

I'm in for ten.

KEVIN

Is that right? Well, here's the thing, Stu. I don't think you got that flush. So I see your ten and raise you fifty.

Stuart stares at Kevin for a long beat. A Mensa Standoff. Suddenly, Stuart folds. The guys and Herb go nuts as Kevin wins. He turns his cards over. All he had was a pair of 2's.

STUART

You sick bastard! You beat me with deuces?

ANDREW

How'd you know he didn't have the flush?

KEVIN

There's ten hearts showing. I had one in the hole. That leaves two in the remaining thirty cards. And the odds on Stu having one of them were 18:1. It was a numbers play.

(Beat, smiling)

You gotta love poker.

MILES

Poker? I don't even know her.

All the guys crack up, except for Andrew.

ANDREW

I don't get it.

The CAMERA PANS OVER TO...

JASON FISHER, 21, six-foot one, pure muscle, watches on. He could easily bench press all five guys. Next to him is...

ANDRE MARTINEZ, 21, small; wiry, with slicked back hair. Martinez nods to Fisher.

INT. DELTA UPSILON - KEVIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Kevin lays crashed out on his worn futon in his IKEA-inspired room. We SEE a HAND holding a stick. It's heading for Kevin's genitals. It makes direct contact as...

KEVIN

Ow! Christ!

Standing at the foot of his bed are Fisher and Martinez, laughing their asses off. Martinez pokes Kevin again.

MARTINEZ

I think it's awake.

KEVIN

Martinez, cut the shit.

(checks the clock)

Oh, man. I'm gonna be late for work.

Martinez tosses him a 2-inch roll of bills, bundled by a strip of red tape. On the top is a picture of Ben Franklin. Kevin stares at it. He's never seen this much money.

MARTINEZ

Count it.

Kevin breaks the colored tape. It's all hundred dollar bills.

KEVIN
\$20,000...?

FISHER
You got ten minutes to get dressed.
Flight leaves Logan at eleven. We'll
get down to A.C. no later than one.

KEVIN
A.C.?

FISHER
Atlantic City. You're coming with us.

KEVIN
Atlantic City...? Fisher, I can't.
It's Saturday. I have to work.

MARTINEZ
Ooh, Saturday. Golly gee, Beave.
What's that, double time? A whole
forty bucks gross?

FISHER
That is gross. Show him the tickets.

Martinez takes out three tickets, hands them to Kevin.

KEVIN
The Oscar De La Hoya fight? These are
ringside seats. How'd you get these?

MARTINEZ
Dude, ours is to not ask where? But
when. And what kinda honeys are gonna
be with us.

FISHER
It's gonna be sick, dude. The best
weekend of your entire life. Now are
you coming or what?

Kevin takes a beat, excited as...

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - DAY

Kevin stands with a well-to-do HUSBAND and WIFE. The Husband
models a jacket, unable to make up his mind. Kevin watches
on, miserable, pissed at himself for not going to A.C.

HUSBAND
I'm just not sure it's me.

WIFE

It's boring. It's boxy. It's blue. How is that not you?

(To Kevin)

What do you think? Or are you just gonna stand there all day?

KEVIN

Well...it's a two-button classic navy blazer in a premium natural stretch wool. It has a darted front for a structured fit. It's lightweight with double besom flap pockets and a back center vent. And at 15% off \$499.95, it comes to an even \$424.96.

(off their look)

I'm good with numbers.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - STOCK ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin does inventory. A portable radio is tuned to the De La Hoya fight. Miles enters with a massive stack of shoe boxes.

MILES

Personally, I would've gone. But then that's just me. I'm a risk-taker.

He walks off as Kevin goes back to his stock check.

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Kevin swims laps as his Coach paces back and forth.

EXT. MASS AVE BRIDGE - DAY

Kevin rides his bike across the bridge in the pouring rain.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - DAY

Kevin kneels before a CUSTOMER and chalks his pants. A measuring tape is draped around his neck.

INT. M.I.T. - LECTURE HALL 26-100 - DAY

On the blackboard in big letters reads 2.70 COMPETITION. Kevin drifts off, stares out the window. He SEES Jill Taylor park her convertible BMW. He watches her walk off as...

INT. M..I.T. - Z CENTER - NIGHT

Kevin swims laps in the pool. The rest of the athletic center is empty. WE PAN UP TO THE SECOND FLOOR...Watching from the darkened windows of the weight room are Martinez and Fisher.

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - NIGHT

Kevin finishes his laps. He reaches the end of the pool, flings his arms over the ledge, worn out. Directly in front of him are two pairs of feet. He looks up and SEES...

FISHER

There's someone we want you to meet.

KEVIN

Right now?

(off their nods)

Can we do this later?

EXT. M.I.T. CAMPUS - NIGHT

Kevin, his hair still wet, wearing flip flops, is led across campus by Fisher and Martinez.

KEVIN

Where are we going?

MARTINEZ

The Infinite Corridor.

INT. INFINITE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Flourescent lights shine dimly in the empty hallway. Kevin looks uneasy as they make their way down. Their footsteps ECHO thru the empty hall. They reach classroom 4-145 and...

INT. M.I.T. - ROOM 4-145 - CONTINUOUS

An old music room with cinderblock walls and a ring of blackboards. Small rectangular tables, arranged in the shape of a large intestine, serve as desks. Tables are covered by green felt, giving it the air of a Gamblers Anonymous. Three STUDENTS sit in plastic chairs. At the head of the room is...

MICKY ROSA, 40's, neat, impeccable, a brilliant professor of mathematics. He has a look of "no man is an island, but I come pretty damn close" on his serene face. This is a man who knows his assets. And he'll be the last one to tell you what they are as he's taking your money. He smiles at Kevin, Fisher and Martinez as they enter the room.

MICKY

Welcome to Blackjack 101, Kevin. You ever been in this room before?

KEVIN

(nods)

Freshman year. Linear Algebra.

MICKY
How'd you do?

KEVIN
I got an A.

MICKY
Do you know who I am?

KEVIN
Professor Rosa. You teach -- taught --
Group Two. Numerical Analysis,
Nonlinear Dynamics...until...

MICKY
You can say it. We're all family here.
Until I was expelled. Expunged. Excom-
municated. You ever take Group Two?
(off Kevin's nod)
How'd you do?

KEVIN
I got A's.

MICKY
Well, I'm no longer a professor at
M.I.T., so you can call me Micky.

Kevin looks at the other students. Two of them he's never
seen before. But the third one...It's Jill Taylor. She stares
at him, cold, her usual look of indifference toward him.

KEVIN
What is this, a club?

MARTINEZ
You know how me and Fisher sold that
internet idea?

Kevin nods. Martinez shakes his head no.

MICKY ROSA
Kevin, this is the MIT Blackjack Team.
We'd like you to join our family.

KEVIN
Why me?

MICKY ROSA
Because you're so damn handsome.
(off their LAUGHTER)
Well, we have a lot to teach you. We
should probably get started.

KEVIN

I'm not sure this is such a good idea.

MICKY

Kevin, blackjack is a flawed system. It's beatable. It's a game with a memory. The cards already drawn are the past. The cards still to come are the future. Your future.

FISHER

You ever hear of Basic Strategy?

(off Kevin's "no")

You'll learn.

MARTINEZ

We use a hi-lo method. It lets you keep track of the number of high cards left in an unplayed shoe. Instead of counting individual cards, you can just keep track of a single number. It's called the Running Count.

Another student, KIANNA, 21, Asian, cute in a Velma from Scooby Doo kind of way, chimes in.

KIANNA

Every time a low card comes out of the deck, it's plus one. Every time a high card comes out, it's minus one. The more positive the Running Count, the more high cards there are in the deck. The better your chance of winning big.

(Beat, introducing)

I'm Kianna.

Another student, DYLAN, 21, jumps in.

DYLAN

When there are more high cards in the deck, you have the advantage and it's time to raise your bets. When the Running Count is negative, you lower your bets. It's that simple.

(Beat, introducing)

Dylan.

FISHER

The casinos have been screwing people over for years, dude. The games are rigged to give the house a major advantage. It's time for some payback.

MARTINEZ

Think of us like Robin Hood. Just...
not the one with Kevin Costner.

MICKY

We're gonna hit Vegas hard, kiddo, and
we want you to come along.

Kevin looks around the room from Micky to Martinez to Fisher
to Kiana to Dylan, his eyes finally landing on Jill.

JILL

It'll be fun, Kevin. We'll compare
engineering notes on the plane.

Kevin's stunned. Jill's actually noticed him before.

KEVIN

You think we can really make money
doing this?

MICKY

Enough to pay your entire college
tuition in one night of work.

KEVIN

That's a hundred thousand dollars.

Micky nods, smiles as...

MONTAGE

INT. DELTA UPSILON - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Fisher and Martinez speed deal to Kevin. He tries to keep
track of the cards, looks totally overwhelmed.

INT. M.I.T. - BARKER LIBRARY - DAY

Kevin deals to himself. A STUDENT watches from the couch,
absent-mindedly picking his nose, intrigued.

INT. M.I.T. - LECTURE HALL - DAY

Miles takes notes as Kevin reads his textbook. We CLOSE-IN on
the page and SEE it's a cover for a book: *Blackjack and You*.

INT. M.I.T. - ROOM 4-145 - NIGHT

Kevin stands with his back to a blackboard. On the board is:

+1 = Tree	+10 = Bowling
+2 = Switch	+11 = Football
+3 = Stool	+12 = Eggs
+4 = Car	+13 = Witch
+5 = Glove	+14 = Ring
+6 = Gun	+15 = Paycheck
+7 = Craps	+16 = Sweet
+8 = Pool	+17 = Magazine
+9 = Cat	+18 = Voting Booth

The team fires numbers at Kevin. All the while, Micky watches on in the b.g. Everyone stops cold as...

The classroom door opens. They all look up at a SURPRISED GIRL, standing in the doorway.

SURPRISED GIRL
Chemistry Review Session?

They all just stare at her, not responding. After a beat, she gets scared, steps back into the hallway and closes the door. The team immediately goes back to yelling at Kevin.

MICKY
What's the count?

KEVIN
Plus four.

MICKY
Plus five. Let's go again.
(off their GROANS)
What's the matter? No one wants to be rich?

EXT. ESPLANADE - DAY

Kevin goes running with Martinez and Dylan.

MARTINEZ
The team's divided into three types of players: Spotters, Gorillas, and BPs.

DYLAN
BP's are Big Players. Like Martinez.
Fisher's obviously a gorilla.

MARTINEZ
A Spotter's job is to find a good table with a hot deck, then call in a Gorilla or a Big Player.
(MORE)

MARTINEZ (cont'd)

Most Spotters back count, meaning they stand around the casino, looking over players' shoulders, counting the cards as they come out of the deck.

DYLAN

It's too obvious. Our Spotters sit at the tables, playing the minimum bet as they count. Under the radar.

MICKY

As soon as the count gets good, the Spotter signals the Gorilla. And we get the party started.

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - DAY

Fisher and Kevin play basketball.

FISHER

A Gorilla's more acting than gambling. He gets called into a hot deck, stumbles over like a drunk rich kid, throwing down big money. He doesn't think for himself. He's just a Gorilla, brain-dead. But if the count's high, his percentage advantage can be huge. He doesn't count. He just bets and waits for the Spotter to signal that the run of good cards is over. Then he gets up and wanders off in search of his next call-in.

Fisher dribbles, charges into Kevin, knocking him on his ass, then lays the ball in for an easy bucket. Kevin, sprawled out on his back, pushes himself up.

KEVIN

What's a Big Player do?

EXT. JILL'S BMW - DAY

Jill drives through downtown Boston, her convertible top down. Kevin rides beside her.

JILL

A Big Player does it all. Acting, counting, betting. He tracks the shuffle, cuts to aces. He carries the big money and gets known by the casino personnel. They comp him penthouse suites 'cause he's betting a thousand bucks a hand.

(MORE)

JILL(cont'd)

The Spotters call him in, but he doesn't just come in and play. He takes over. He does things the Gorilla can't. But he does it with style, so the casino can't nail him. He has to look the part. Be "the Man." And no matter what kind of shit goes down, he never forgets the signals.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - DAY

Kianna tries on a blazer as Kevin helps her out. She runs through the signals, folding her arms behind her back.

KEVIN

The deck's hot.

She touches her eye.

KEVIN (cont'd)

I need to talk.

She puts her hand to her forehead.

KEVIN (cont'd)

I'm getting heat from the Pit Boss.

She runs her hand through her hair.

KEVIN (cont'd)

Get out. Now.

She runs her hand through her hair again.

KEVIN (cont'd)

Yeah, Get out. Now. I got it.

She does it again. Something's wrong. Kevin looks up and SEES his boss, Mark, watching them. Kevin smiles at him, nervous.

END MONTAGE

EXT. CHINATOWN - NIGHT

Kevin emerges from the steps of the Park Street T Station and finds himself in the heart of Chinatown. He stops, looks around, more than a little nervous.

KEVIN (V.O.)

There are times in a person's life
when you make a conscious choice.

He makes his way across the empty street, looks for signs and storefront numbers. Everything's in Chinese.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I should've been in my room, studying.
 Or, at the very least, taking one of
 those Stanley Kaplan courses on how to
 win big on your GMATs, MCATs or GREs.

He nervously heads down a narrow, poorly paved alley. On either side, doorways are boarded up, windows are smashed. He SEES the number 43 scrawled across a tattered blue awning.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 But, instead, here I was.

He RINGS the buzzer as...

A peephole slides open. An EYE appears. After a beat, a latch is unlatched, chains are unchained, locks are unlocked. Kevin looks terrified as...An ELDERLY CHINESE MAN in a white undershirt opens the door. Is that blood on his shirt?

ELDERLY CHINESE MAN
 You Kevin? You Kevin?
 (off Kevin's nod)
 You follow.

INT. CHINESE BUTCHER STORE - CONTINUOUS

The Elderly Man leads him through the Chinese butcher store. They get to a staircase and make their way up. WE HEAR the POUNDING of Kevin's heart, mixed with the POUNDING of his footsteps. Sweat starts to course down the sides of his face.

KEVIN (V.O.)
 It looked like I was caught somewhere
 between *The Deer Hunter* and *Full Metal Jacket*.

At the top of the stairs, the sounds of a party are heard through a locked door. LAUGHTER, VOICES. The Elderly Man takes out a set of keys, unlocks the door. He turns the knob.

KEVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I was just hoping they didn't have a
 Russian Roulette Wheel.

WE CLOSE-IN on Kevin's eyes as the door swings open into...

INT. CHINESE CASINO - CONTINUOUS

A private, underground casino in full swing. It's like a mini-Vegas. GAMBLERS sit at blackjack tables, roulette wheels spin, PATRONS crowd around craps tables.

ELDERLY CHINESE MAN

You go. You go.

The Elderly Man pushes Kevin inside and closes the door behind him. Kevin hears the deadbolt lock into place. He stands there, frozen, not knowing what to do.

He searches the room. Standing at the bar is Fisher. Kevin smiles at him, but Fisher looks away, as if he didn't exist. He scans the crowd again. Martinez sits at a blackjack table.

Kevin moves through the crowd, pretends to watch the action on the roulette wheel, then SEES Dylan at a table. Jill drunkenly hangs all over him. Kevin glances toward Martinez who folds his arms over his chest. THE SIGNAL.

Kevin takes a deep breath, then crosses the room. He grabs a seat in the third base position. A grey-haired CHINESE DEALER smiles at him, his gums black as licorice.

MARTINEZ

It's colder than a witch's tit in here.

KEVIN (V.O.)

"Witch's Tit." The count was plus 13.

Kevin pulls out several twenties and lays them on the felt. The Dealer counts it and hands him stacks of red \$5 chips. Kevin bets the maximum. \$100. The cards are dealt.

Kevin draws a 20 against the dealer's 8. The Dealer busts. Kevin wins. He bets another hundred, doubles down on an 11 and draws a King for 21. He starts to relax.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

So who do I have to screw to get a drink around here?

The Dealer laughs, showing off his black gums as...

Kevin wins hand after hand. He chats up the other PLAYERS, flirts with the Cocktail Waitress, tosses her chips for tips. A FIGURE moves up behind him as...

A canvas bag comes down over his head. Strong arms wrap around his chest, yanking him off his stool. Kevin SCREAMS as he gets dragged across the room. A door opens as he's tossed into a closet. The canvas bag gets ripped off his head as...

KEVIN (cont'd)

Jesus! Don't kill me --

Kevin cuts off as he SEES Fisher standing over him.

FISHER

What's the count, Kevin?

KEVIN

What?

FISHER

I said, what's the count?!

KEVIN

Plus 18!

Fisher steps aside revealing...Micky, Martinez, Dylan, Jill and Kianna. They're all standing in the closet doorway.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

What the hell's going on?

MICKY

Congratulations, Kevin. You just passed your final test.

KEVIN

You guys suck.

They all start cracking up as...

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

I was officially on the team.

EXT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - DAY

Kevin rides his bike through upscale Beacon Hill. He looks for house numbers, stops at 95 Chestnut Street. He RINGS the bell. Micky opens the door. He looks surprised.

MICKY

Kevin...what's going on, kiddo?

INT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - DAY

Kevin enters the stunning living room as Micky heads into his gourmet kitchen. A huge plate of sushi is laid out.

KEVIN

You sure I'm not interrupting?

MICKY

Not at all.

Micky slices a piece of sushi and picks it up with a pair of chopsticks.

KEVIN

I didn't know you could make this kind of money teaching.

MICKY

Depends what you're teaching. Here. Try this. It's toro. Fatty tuna.

Kevin takes a bite.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Is that insane? That's what I love about sushi. It's the only food in the world that uses a binary system. Ones and zeroes. Pieces and rolls. It's a mathematician's wet dream.

Micky goes back to work, slicing more fish, expertly.

MICKY (CONT'D)

So, listen, we're getting close. But there's some things you should know before we move on. These trips to Vegas are work. The hours are long. Nights are late.

(Beat)

"You get up every morning from the alarm clock's warning. Take the 8:15 into the city. There's a whistle up above. People push and people shove. And the girls who try to look pretty."

Kevin nods, seriously. Micky laughs, starts singing the rest of the Bachman-Turner Overdrive classic.

MICKY (cont'd)

"Takin' care of business...everyday.
Takin' care of business...every way.
I've been takin' care of business.
It's all mine. Takin' care of business
and working overtime. Work-out."

(Beat)

Bachman-Turner Overdrive?

Micky sobers up as he sees something's bothering Kevin.

MICKY (CONT'D)

You're worried about getting caught.
(off Kevin's nod)

(MORE)

MICKY(cont'd)

If it happens, the only thing they can do is ask you to leave. And you know what you do? You get up and leave.

KEVIN

And then what?

MICKY

And then we hit the casino across the street. If we get burned, there's another one up the block. And another on a riverboat in Chicago. And one on an Indian reservation in Connecticut.

KEVIN

So if they can't stop us, then how come more people don't count cards?

MICKY

Because more people didn't score 800 on the math section of their SATs.

KEVIN

I don't know, Micky. I just...I feel like...

MICKY

What? Like we're cheating?

KEVIN

Yeah. I mean, we're getting the answers before the test. I've never done that before.

MICKY

Think of it like Non-Linear Algebra. Every hand is an equation. Every turn of the cards is a pop quiz. But you studied. You did your homework.

KEVIN

But you're not supposed to study for blackjack.

MICKY

Says who? The Nevada Gaming Commission? Look, what we do is not illegal. We don't alter any rules or change the nature of the game.

KEVIN

I thought gambling was about luck.

MICKY

Let me tell you about luck. Luck is something people wish for who aren't good at math. People whose IQs aren't the size of Ted Williams' lifetime batting average. Who weren't "lucky" enough to win the genetic lottery.

(Beat)

We need you, kiddo. Your brain's a goddamn pentium chip. But when you walk into a casino, they're gonna think you're just a kid. When the truth is, you're a winner. Get used to it.

Kevin smiles, flattered by such high praise.

KEVIN

So you'll be there? When we go?

MICKY

To Vegas? Yeah. But not on the floor.

KEVIN

How come you're not playing?

MICKY

'Cause I'm the coach. When you're watching the Lakers, you don't ask why Phil Jackson's not playing?

Beat, then...

KEVIN

I just have one question. What if my grades go down?

MICKY

You'll have so much money, you could pay Bill Gates to tutor you.

INT. LOGAN AIRPORT - DELTA TERMINAL - NIGHT

Kevin, carrying his knapsack, walks with Fisher and Martinez through the airport. They pass a men's room.

FISHER

Wait for us. We gotta hit the head.

KEVIN

I don't have to go.

-

INT. MEN'S ROOM - STALL - NIGHT

Fisher pushes Kevin into the stall and locks the door.

FISHER
Pull down your pants.

KEVIN
What?

FISHER
Don't ask questions.

Kevin unzips his pants, starts to pull them down. Fisher pulls huge rolls of \$100 bills out of his knapsack.

FISHER (cont'd)
Shove these in your underwear.

KEVIN
Are you insane?

FISHER
You want me to do it? 'Cause I swear
to God, I will.

Kevin starts shoving the money into his underwear. Fisher hands him more rolls.

FISHER (cont'd)
Put these in your pockets.

KEVIN
They're gonna see it. It's too
obvious.

FISHER
Even if they do, the money won't set
off the metal detectors. Which means
there's no probable cause for search.

KEVIN
Why don't you leave it in your bag?

FISHER
'Cause it shows up on the scanner,
genius. And we're not about to have
them confiscate \$250,000.

KEVIN
\$250,000...? Why do I have to do it?

FISHER

'Cause you're the mule.

(Beat)

Y'know, you really suck at not asking questions.

Fisher exits the stall as Kevin calls out to him.

KEVIN

What's a mule?

He finishes stuffing the rolls into his pockets. He steps out of the stall as...An INTRIGUED MAN sees Kevin exit and gives him a knowing smile.

INT. LOGAN AIRPORT - DELTA TERMINAL - NIGHT

Kevin exits the men's room. Martinez and Fisher SEE the huge bulge in his pants and crack up. Martinez starts BRAYING like a mule. They make their way to the security check.

MARTINEZ

Act casual. Think casual. Be casual.

Kevin nods, blinks the sweat from his eyes. Visions of *Midnight Express* dance in his head. He gets closer to the metal detectors, his pulse racing, heart pounding. He puts his knapsack on the conveyor belt. Stands before the big white metal detector. The red light blinks to green as...

Kevin's world SLOWS DOWN. A SECURITY GUARD moves her lips in SUPER SLO MO. She motions for him to go. Martinez gives him a nudge in the back of his sweat-soaked t-shirt.

Kevin lifts his 10,000 pound foot and takes the first step toward his prison sentence. He slowly crosses the threshold. The Security Guard looks oddly at his bulging trousers as...

He makes it through. No alarms go off. He's free and clear. He quickly heads for the gate. Until...

SECURITY GUARD

Sir!

Kevin stops, terrified. He turns toward the Security Guard, his damp hair plastered to the sides of his head.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

You forgot your bag.

Kevin SEES his knapsack sitting at the end of the conveyor belt. He nods "oh" as...

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Kevin sits in his seat, dealing to himself, counting cards. Across the aisle, a CARD COUNTER deals to himself, just like Kevin. The Counting Man's lips move with each card he draws.

Sitting next to him is...the Intrigued Man from the men's room. He smiles at Kevin, winks, blows him a kiss. Kevin turns toward the window, looks out and SEES...

LAS VEGAS. The bright lights of downtown feed into the neon Strip, with its massive hotels. The Luxor Pyramid, the MGM Grand, the red volcano of the Mirage, spitting flames.

Kevin smiles, then deals to himself one last time as...

LAS VEGAS. OCTOBER.

EXT. MANDALAY BAY - NIGHT

A black limo makes its way down the Strip. It pulls up to the MGM Grand. The back door opens as Fisher and Martinez step out. They're already on the move toward the doors as...

Kevin steps out of the back. He stares up at the monstrous hotel/casino, smiles, then catches up to Fisher and Martinez.

INT. MANDALAY BAY - SUITE - NIGHT

Martinez, Fisher and Kevin enter the opulent suite. Already there are Micky, Jill, Kianna and Dylan. Kevin's blown away by the spectacular floor-to-ceiling windows and views.

MICKY

What took you so long?

FISHER

Traffic was a bitch.

MICKY

(switching into game mode)

Okay, it's 11PM. First shift goes on in 2 hours. You'll play from 1AM to 10AM. Second shift starts Saturday at 9PM. At 2AM you go on break and then play the graveyard shift from 4AM to noon. This is the big money shift. No dealer worth his salt works graveyard. At 12PM, you get some food, some rest. Then you're back on from 4PM 'til 8. By 9PM Sunday we're at the airport. We take the 10:00 Red Eye to Boston. The flight gets in at 6AM.

(MORE)

MICKY (cont'd)

You grab your bags, hop a cab to school and you're back in class by 8. Any questions?

KEVIN

Are we playing here?

MICKY

No, we never play where we're staying. It's too risky. The Eyes in the Sky.

JILL

They're the fish-eye cameras hanging from the ceiling in the casino pit. There's cameras everywhere. Elevators, bathrooms. From the time you enter to the time you leave, they're watching.

MICKY

That's why when you hit The Mirage, you're gonna stagger it. Every fifteen minutes. As soon as you leave this room, you don't know each other.

FISHER

And if anyone wearing a suit wants to talk, don't. 'Cause the truth is, they don't really wanna talk.

MARTINEZ

It's called "back-rooming." They take you into some basement and show you the error of your ways.

KEVIN

Has anyone ever been back-roomed?

Micky opens his mouth and pulls out a row of false teeth. He smiles toothlessly at Kevin. He puts his teeth back in.

MICKY

You'll be fine. Martinez, you're our Big Player tonight. Fisher, you're on Gorilla duty. Dylan, Jill, Kianna, Kevin...you guys are Spotting.

They all start to go on the move.

MICKY (cont'd)

Oh, and Kevin. Don't let anyone named Guido take you for a drive in the desert, okay? Have fun.

Micky smiles at him as...

EXT. THE MIRAGE - NIGHT

Kevin pulls up in the back of a taxi cab. He looks anxious.

KEVIN

Can I get a receipt, please?

CAB DRIVER

You're kidding me, right?

INT. THE MIRAGE - CASINO - NIGHT

The atrium is decorated like a tropical jungle. Kevin enters and takes in the waterfall and babbling brook. He makes his way into the Polynesian-themed casino. The place is jumping.

SEXY WOMEN wear shiny tube tops. JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN shout drunkenly at each other. BIKER DUDES wear their "good" tank tops and sport freshly coiffed mullets. Kevin takes in the scene, jazzed by it. He's finally at a party with women.

KEVIN

Act casual. Think casual. Be casual.

A drunken Texan kid rides his blackjack stool like a bronco and waves his ten gallon hat over his head. He's totally out of control. Kevin catches the kid's profile. It's Fisher.

Kevin walks past a blackjack table. Jill sits in the third base position. She's talking to DEALER #1.

JILL

You think you got it rough? I gotta sit here while my asshole husband plays craps all night.

He walks past another table. A "Big Shot" sits next to Dylan and tries to help out.

BIG SHOT

Lemme tell you how to play blackjack. You ever hear of Basic Strategy?

DYLAN

Gosh, that sounds complicated.

Kevin keeps moving around the blackjack pit. Kianna sits at a table and stares at her cards. DEALER #3 waits patiently.

DEALER #3

Do you want another card?

KIANNA

(giggling)

I no know.

Dealer #3 rolls his eyes, annoyed, as Kevin finds his place at a table and takes a seat. A LARGE MIDWESTERN HUSBAND AND WIFE are already seated.

MIDWESTERN HUSBAND

Come to join our sinking ship?

Kevin pulls out (20) \$100 bills. He lays them on the felt as the Husband and Wife look at him, surprised.

KEVIN

My dad's in plastics.

Kevin SEES Martinez enter the casino. He's doing his best Lou Diamond Phillips impression from *Stand and Deliver*: baggy pants, flannel shirt only buttoned at the neck, slicked back hair, wraparound shades. Kevin bursts out laughing as...

MONTAGE

INT. THE MIRAGE - CASINO - NIGHT

WARP SPEED. GAMBLERS come and go at a mile a minute. Everyone and everything is a blur. Except for Kevin who sits at the table in REAL TIME. He places his minimum bets.

We SEE him go thru a number of signals: leaning back with his arms folded, touching his eye, scratching his ear, rubbing his neck. All the while, the world whips by him.

INT. THE MIRAGE - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin sits, huddled in a stall, writing notes on a mini-pad of paper.

INT. THE HARD ROCK - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin cozies up to a STUNNING WOMAN, having a blast. He folds his arms as Martinez slides up to the table.

INT. THE LUXOR - CASINO - NIGHT

The DEALER pulls the red cut card from out of the shoe. Kevin casually tosses him a \$25 chip and walks off.

INT. THE LUXOR - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin stands at a corner urinal and jots down more notes.

INT. THE VENETIAN - CASINO - NIGHT

A COCKTAIL WAITRESS brings Kevin a martini. He tosses her a tip, takes a sip, glances down at his watch. The DIAL SPINS. 4AM. 5AM. 6AM.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin takes notes in a bathroom stall. He flushes the toilet, then steps out as a MAN and WOMAN have sex on the sink counter.

INT. THE PALMS - CASINO - MORNING

Kevin sits at the table, bleary-eyed, barely able to keep his head up. He glances at his watch. It's 10:00 AM. He looks over, SEES Martinez. He gives Kevin the signal as...

EXT. THE PALMS - MORNING

Kevin steps out of the casino. He shields his eyes against the sunlight, then hails a cab.

END MONTAGE

INT. MANDALAY BAY - BEDROOM - DAY

Kevin lays asleep in bed. He stirs, opens his eyes. Standing over him is Jill. He smiles at her. Is this a dream? ..

JILL

Nice undies.

Kevin looks up at the giant mirror above his bed and realizes he only has on underwear. It's not a dream. He tries to cover up as she tosses him a stack of money.

KEVIN

What's this?

JILL

Your tuition.

(off his look)

Don't get too excited. It's not all for you. It's the player's take from last night. Twenty grand. We split it six ways.

KEVIN

That's thirty-three hundred and thirty-three dollars.

Micky enters.

MICKY

And thirty-three cents.

(Beat)

C'mon, get dressed. It's Fight Night
at the Grand.

KEVIN

What's Fight Night?

JILL

Imagine New Year's Eve, the Fourth of
July and St. Patrick's Day all rolled
into one.

MICKY

You're our gorilla tonight.

Micky turns to go as...

MICKY (cont'd)

By the way, nice undies.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - CONTINUOUS

The place is rocking, filled to capacity. Kevin steps through
the doors, almost bowled over by the frenetic energy. A DROP
DEAD GORGEOUS WAITRESS walks by, gives him a seductive smile.

He grabs a Scotch from off her tray, takes a sip. He messes
up his hair, unbuttons a few buttons on his shirt, then heads
thru the crowd. He spots Kianna, dressed in the latest Asian
dominatrix-wear. She's surrounded by adoring BUSINESSMEN.

Nearby, Jill sits at a table with three African-American men
in expensive silk suits. She leans back, folding her arms.
Kevin grabs a seat as the Dealer swipes Jill's chips.

JILL

There goes that paycheck.

Kevin, playing the part of the drunk frat boy, pulls out
\$10,000 in cash and tosses it on the felt. He turns toward
the three African-American men.

KEVIN

How's everyone doing tonight -- ?

He cuts off as he realizes he's sitting across from SHAQ,
MICHAEL JORDAN, and PATRICK EWING.

MICHAEL JORDAN

We've done better, Big Money.

Kevin tries to regain his composure as...

MONTAGE

Kevin leads the NBA Dream Team in an impressive slaughter. He places \$1,000 in the betting circle, draws an eleven, doubles down and draws a Jack for 21.

He splits tens, wins \$2,500. Patrick Ewing pulls out cigars for everyone, cuts the tips and hands them around.

Kevin doubles down on an eleven and draws a nine. He wins another \$2,000. Shaq high-fives him.

A CROWD grows as Kevin splits aces and draws 10's for two blackjack.

There's tens of thousands of dollars on the table. The dealer pulls a king on his fourteen and busts. The crowd goes wild.

Kevin draws a pair of Jacks. He splits them, putting another \$5,000 in the betting circle.

INT. MGM GRAND - SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Two SECURITY GUARDS, 30's, wearing yellow jackets, sit at monitors that show every angle of the casino. They're glued to a monitor, watching Jordan, Shaq, Ewing and Kevin.

SECURITY #1

He's won over twenty grand.

They look over to a man in a yellow jacket. It's VINCENT COLE. He lights a cigarette, never taking his eyes off Kevin.

VINCENT COLE

Get a headshot. We'll check it against the book.

(Beat)

Vegas...Eventually everyone goes home a loser.

ON THE MONITOR...They go CLOSE-UP on Kevin, smiling as...

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin looks up and SEES Jill give him the signal. It's time to go. She gets up from the table.

JILL

Gentlemen, it's fight time.

INT. MGM GRAND - GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT

Kevin walks down the aisle, dazzled by the bright lights, past SCREAMING FANS. He looks at his ticket, checks the seat number as the boxing ring gets closer. He hears a WHISTLE and turns to see Jordan, Ewing and Shaq sitting in row 10.

SHAQ

Yo, Big Money!

He DAPS fists with the three superstars, then continues closer toward the ring. He SEES the rest of the M.I.T. gang sitting ringside and takes his seat beside them.

MUSIC explodes from the speakers, the entire arena shakes, the CROWD leaps to its feet as LENNOX LEWIS steps into the ring. Micky winks at Kevin and raises his palms up as if to say: *What do you think?* Kevin's mind spins, happy as...

INT. M.I.T. - BASEMENT LAB - NIGHT

Miles, Stuart, Andrew and HERB sit at a table, working on their 2.70 Competition mechanical model. Everyone but Andrew has beers sitting before them. On the radio, they listen to the COLOR COMMENTARY of the Lennox Lewis fight.

STUART

This is bullshit. We should all be working on this together.

MILES

Yeah, well, you didn't get stuck taking his shift at Brooks Brothers.

ANDREW

Y'know, we're not supposed to have alcohol on school grounds. We could get in trouble.

MILES

Andrew, I've never hit a woman in my entire life. Don't be the first.

Herb watches on, nervous. He takes a sip of beer.

MILES (CONT'D)

Herb, did you just drink my beer?

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Kevin sleeps in his seat as Martinez shakes his arm.

MARTINEZ

Kevin, honey. Time for school.

Kevin wakes up, looks around disoriented as...

EXT. LOGAN AIRPORT - MORNING

An exhausted Kevin exits the terminal. He looks at the bright sun, puts on a pair of shades and heads for the T station.

INT. DELTA UPSILON - KEVIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Kevin enters his frat bedroom and closes the door. He pulls out a roll of \$100 bills, looks for a good hiding spot, then sticks them under his mattress. He exits the room.

After a beat, he re-enters and closes the door. He reaches under his mattress, takes out the roll of \$100 bills and counts the money. It's \$10,000. He laughs, in disbelief.

KEVIN

Holy shit.

He peels off a \$100 bill, puts the money back and leaves.

INT. M.I.T. - CLASSROOM - DAY

Kevin enters the classroom. Miles motions him over.

MILES

Jesus, you look like shit. Where were you this weekend?

KEVIN

I had this...thing...with my parents.

MILES

Really? Could you be more vague?

(Beat)

You missed a helluva frat party. We almost had a girl there.

KEVIN

What do you mean, almost?

MILES

It's a long story.

The PROFESSOR enters the classroom as everyone quiets down.

MILES (cont'd)

You studied, right?

KEVIN
Studied for what?

PROFESSOR
Put your textbooks away. You'll have
an hour and fifteen minutes to
complete the exam.

Kevin looks sick as...

INT. M.I.T. - CLASSROOM - DAY

The CLASS is in the midst of a test. Kevin writes furiously,
glances up at the clock, flustered. Time's ticking away.

PROFESSOR
Pencil's down...Pencil's down!

Kevin puts down his pencil, unhappy.

INT. INFINITE CORRIDOR - DAY

Miles and Kevin exit the class. Kevin looks a lot worse for
the wear. They start heading down the hall. Kevin's freaked.

MILES
How'd you do?

KEVIN
How do you think I did?

MILES
Well, why the hell didn't you study?

KEVIN
I forgot.

MILES
What are you talking about, you
forgot? You're goddamn Rain Man.

KEVIN
I forgot, okay? Christ, Miles. Give me
a break.

MILES
Alright. Relax...

They pass Jill. Kevin smiles at her, but she ignores him,
like she has no idea who he is. Miles watches on.

MILES (cont'd)
Dude, you gotta give that up.

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - DAY

Kevin swims his laps. He reaches the end of the pool, flings his arms over the ledge. Directly in front of him are two pairs of feet. It's Mr. Lewis. Kevin looks nervous as...

MR. LEWIS

You have a cold. What's making your nose run?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Kevin and his parents sit at a table, having dinner.

KEVIN

Epithelial cells.

MR. LEWIS

Why?

KEVIN

Because that's the classification of nasal mucosa cells responsible for the release of excess fluid.

MRS. LEWIS

Is this really dinner talk?

MR. LEWIS

I need something to take my mind off my \$10 hamburger.

MRS. LEWIS

You're the one that wanted to eat out.

MR. LEWIS

Elaine, just because I'm complaining about the price, doesn't mean I'm not happy.

MRS. LEWIS

They cut the funding on your father's lab.

MR. LEWIS

Apparently, geology research is a low priority in this administration.

(Beat)

That's why you gotta ace your MCATs, Kev. It's everything we've been working toward.

Kevin nods, feeling the pressure. A WAITRESS comes over.

WAITRESS

Can I get you anything else?

MR. LEWIS

Not unless someone wants a \$12 piece
of cheesecake.

The Waitress drops the check. Kevin reaches for it.

KEVIN

I got it.

MRS. LEWIS

Honey, don't be ridiculous.

KEVIN

No, it's okay. I got a raise at Brooks
Brothers.

MR. LEWIS

Is this a good kid or what?

(Beat)

Hey, don't forget. A week from
Saturday. The Harvard-Yale game.

Kevin takes a beat, remembers his next Vegas trip.

KEVIN

A week from Saturday? I...I have to
work that day.

MR. LEWIS

Are you kidding me? Kev, this is a
Lewis family tradition. We've never
missed a game.

KEVIN

It's part of my promotion. I'm taking
on more responsibility.

MR. LEWIS

I hope that's not going to interfere
with your studies?

MRS. LEWIS

Peter, give him a break. He's working
so hard. We'll all go next year. When
he's a Harvard med student.

Kevin smiles, a little guilty as...

MONTAGE

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin lays down \$10,000 in hundreds on the green felt of a blackjack table. Sitting a few seats away is Jill Taylor.

KEVIN (V.O.)

The next 2 months flashed by at a thousand RPMs.

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Kevin and Jill sit together with their tray tables folded out, going over their mechanical engineering homework.

KEVIN (V.O.)

My world became a schizophrenic blend of gray reality and neon fantasy.

INT. INFINITE CORRIDOR - DAY

Classroom doors fly open as STUDENTS pour into the hallway. Out of a classroom comes Kevin, Fisher, Martinez, Jill, Dylan and Kianna. They stride through the sea of Mathletes.

KEVIN (V.O.)

Every third Friday, we'd leave from the Infinite Corridor to America West, flight number 69. The Vegas Express.

INT. LOGAN AIRPORT - NIGHT

Kevin and company walk walk thru the terminal, toward the metal detectors. No fear, no trepidation.

KEVIN (V.O.)

The moment we left campus, the concepts of "vectors" and "matrices" were replaced by "upgrades" and "comps."

EXT. MCCARRON AIRPORT - NIGHT

Kevin and company exit as a stretch limo sits parked at the curb with its back door open. They climb into the limo.

KEVIN (V.O.)

Bicycles became stretch limos.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Kevin and Jill float in a swimming pool...INSIDE THEIR ROOM. A BUTLER comes over and brings Jill a glass of Cristal. At a table, Micky and the team are served filet mignon.

KEVIN (V.O.)
Dorm rooms became 5,000 square foot
suites, with butlers and maids.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin sits at a blackjack table, smoking cigars with BRUCE WILLIS. Kevin hits on 16 and draws a 5 for 21. Bruce and Kevin high-five, then light cigars.

KEVIN (V.O.)
It was like manna from heaven, the
loaves and the fishes, and water into
wine all rolled into one.

A DROP-DEAD GORGEOUS MODEL literally drops into Kevin's lap,
all over him. Jill watches on from across the room.

INT. DELTA UPSILON - KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Kevin lifts up his mattress. In between the box spring and
mattress, his roll of \$100 bills now has company. There are
literally dozens of rolls of hundreds. He pulls five more
rolls out of his underwear and hides them under the mattress.

KEVIN (V.O.)
It was biblical. Epic.

INT. KEVIN'S FAMILY HOME - MORNING

Kevin's parents, his SISTER, and GRANDPARENTS, sit around the
Thanksgiving dinner table.

KEVIN (V.O.)
By Thanksgiving, I was a pro on all
levels. Counting, shuffle tracking,
cutting to aces. None of which I could
tell my family. In Boston, I had to
play the part of Kevin Lewis.

Kevin enters with a giant roast turkey on a platter. The
whole family "OOHS" and "AHHS." Kevin's mom beams at him.
Where's Norman Rockwell when you need him?

KEVIN (V.O.) (cont'd)
But in Vegas...Hey, I could be anyone.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin sits at a blackjack table and speaks to the DEALER.

KEVIN
John Voightman. Nice to meet you.

INT. CAESAR'S PALACE - NIGHT

Kevin shakes hands with a PIT BOSS.

KEVIN

Mark Townsend. How's it going?

INT. THE MIRAGE - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin sits at a crowded high rollers table. A Dealer, DAVE, checks his I.D. Kevin stays cool and calm as ever.

DEALER DAVE

Ling Chan? You don't look Chinese.

KEVIN

I'm adopted.

INT. M.I.T. - CAFETERIA - DAY

Kevin, with his lunch tray on the railing, stands before a CAFETERIA LADY at a cash register. She looks over his credit card.

KEVIN (V.O.)

My wallet was filled with every credit card. None of which said Kevin Lewis.

She hands him back his card as he shuffles through a stack of credit cards. We can SEE all of his aliases.

CAFETERIA LADY

Do you have anything with your real name on it?

INT. CAESAR'S PALACE - SUITE - NIGHT

Kevin enters the palatial 2-floor suite. Micky, Jill, Fisher, Martinez, Kianna and Dylan are there. They look at him expectantly as...

Kevin dumps a stack of \$100,000 chips on the table. It's over \$2 million. They're stunned. They all crowd around him, congratulating him, except Fisher. He keeps his distance.

KEVIN (V.O.)

As for Micky, well, he was the king. I was learning from the best.

INT. MGM GRAND - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Kevin rides by himself. He watches the numbers light their way down to the casino floor. The elevator rolls to a stop. The doors slide open. WE CLOSE-IN ON KEVIN'S EYES as...

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - CONTINUOUS

The casino's empty. Tables pushed over, chairs on their side, chips strewn across the floor. Yellow police tape stretches across the high rollers section. Kevin looks in shock as...

EXT. THE CRAZY HORSE II - NIGHT

A long line of GUYS waits to get into the premier Vegas strip club. The MGM Grand limo pulls up, rolls to a stop. Kevin steps out, bypasses the line and heads to the front door. A BOUNCER immediately unhooks the velvet rope.

BOUNCER

Good evening, Mr. Kalfus.

KEVIN

Bob.

Kevin greases Bob's palm with a \$100 bill and enters.

INT. THE CRAZY HORSE II - CONTINUOUS

STUNNING WOMEN, in retro Tawny Kitaen-chic, dance around poles to a White Snake classic. LAP DANCERS strut through the dark club, looking for their next gig.

Kevin enters, makes his way through the crowd. At a back VIP table, the team is quietly freaking out. All the while, Micky smiles like the Cheshire cat, watching the dancers on stage.

FISHER

Where the hell have you been?

KEVIN

I was sleeping. What happened?

KIANNA

Apparently, people weren't happy with the Shane Mosely decision..

DYLAN

Some idiot fired a gun in the casino and everyone freaked. A riot broke out. People started grabbing chips.

KEVIN

Did anyone get hurt?

KIANNA

Yeah, us. The casino's changing its chips. From \$100 on up. So the thieves can't exchange them for cash.

JILL

We have 'til tomorrow night, or we're gonna be sitting on \$200,000 of worthless plastic.

DYLAN

The problem is, if you cash in more than \$10,000 in 24 hours, the casino fills out a CTR. And the IRS gets notified.

KEVIN

What's a CTR?

KIANNA

A cash transaction receipt.

MARTINEZ

Dude, man. I can't handle the IRS. They hate people like me.

DYLAN

Martinez, they hate all card counters.

MARTINEZ

Fuck card counting. I'm talking about Mexicans, man.

The White Snake song ends and is replaced by the old Foreigner "hit," "I WANNA KNOW WHAT LOVE IS."

FISHER

Micky, what the hell are we gonna do?

MICKY

Don't you just love this song?

(singing to Kianna)

"I wanna know what love is. I want you to show me."

FISHER

Hey! I'm talking to you.

Micky turns, a look of calm anger in his face. Serene, but pissed. Before he can respond, Kevin SEES a DRUNK GUY tuck a casino chip into a stripper's g-string.

KEVIN

What about them?

KIANNA

Who?

KEVIN

The dancers.

JILL

Is that what we're calling them now?

KEVIN

They can cash the chips. The casino's just gonna think they're tips.

FISHER

Kevin, shut up. You don't know what you're talking about.

MICKY

I beg to differ, Jason. I think Kevin knows exactly what he's talking about.

KEVIN

That's why we're here, isn't it?

MICKY

Who carries around multiple thousand dollar chips, other than professional gamblers?

(To Kevin, smiling)

Kiddo, you're a chip off the old block.

Fisher looks unhappily at Micky and Kevin bonding. Martinez turns to Fisher.

MARTINEZ

Your first name's Jason?

Everyone laughs, except Fisher as...

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - DAY

A huge line of STRIPPERS winds its way through the casino and leads up to the CASHIER. They each take their turn, cashing in their chips.

KEVIN (V.O.)

It worked. The plan was genius. And we'd reached an all new level of Vegas insider trading.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

An assembly line is set up around the dining table. On one end, Kianna, Martinez and Fisher fill Ziploc bags with chips as Jill hands them out to awaiting Strippers.

On the other end, Strippers turn in their envelopes. Dylan counts out the cash as Kevin gives each Stripper her payoff.

KEVIN (V.O.)

This was Disneyland for adults and no one knew it better than Micky.

Kevin looks up at Micky, amused, as Micky winks at him.

LAS VEGAS. 5 AM.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

The high stakes area is filled with a raucous crowd. Kevin, wearing a cowboy hat, sits at a table, putting on a show. Sitting in the third base position is Fisher.

A huge crowd stands behind them, watching the action. Over \$100,000 in chips sits before Kevin. He's playing two hands, with \$10,000 in each circle. The DEALER deals...

Kevin draws an 11 and a pair of 9's against the Dealer's 5. He doubles the 11, raising that hand's bet to \$20,000. He draws a 7, making a hard 18.

He splits the 9's, adding another \$10,000. He draws a 2 on one hand and an 8 on the other. Kevin doubles the first hand, another \$10,000, drawing an 8. He leaves the last hand alone.

He now has \$50,000 on an 18, a 19, and a 17 against the Dealer's 5. Fisher, betting \$500, sticks with his 20. Kevin leans back, a big smile on his face as...

The Dealer turns over his bottom card. It's a 6. Kevin's smile disappears. The Dealer flips the next card. A 10, for a 21. The Dealer sweeps Kevin's \$50,000 off the table. The CROWD is stunned. A WOMAN watches on.

WOMAN

Oh my God...

Kevin shoots a look over at Fisher. Fisher's face has turned red. Kevin tries to stay cool and shrug it off.

KEVIN

Hey, it's just money, right?

(To the Dealer)

C'mon, Hoss. Let's saddle up again.

The crowd CHEERS as Fisher touches his eye, giving the signal that they need to talk. Kevin ignores him and puts \$10,000 more in three betting circles. The Dealer deals Kevin an 11, a 14, and a pair of 7's. The Dealer draws himself a 6.

KEVIN (cont'd)

Here we go again.

On the first hand, he doubles down on the 11, adding \$10,000 more, and draws a 9 for a solid 20. On the second hand, he leaves the 14 alone.

On the third hand, he splits the 7's, adding another \$10,000. He draws a 10 on each, for two 17's. Once again, he has \$50,000 on the table, riding on a 20, a 14, and two 17's. Fisher sticks with his 13. It's now the Dealer's turn.

He flips his bottom card, revealing a queen. He now has a 16. Kevin finds his smile, starting to feel more confident as the Dealer draws his next card...5.

The crowd GASPS at the Dealer's 21. Kevin sits there, frozen. He's just lost a total of \$100,000 in less than a minute. He looks down at what used to be his pile of chips. All that's left are three scattered \$25 chips.

He tries to be cool, standing up from the table. He scoops up his \$75 in chips and makes his way unsteadily through the crowd. He picks up his pace, walking through the casino, knocking into a GAMBLER, spilling the man's drink.

GAMBLER

Watch it, dick!

Kevin's cowboy hat falls off. He drops his three chips, doesn't even bother to pick anything up. He gets to the front doors as...

EXT. MGM GRAND - NIGHT

Kevin bursts through the doors. He runs, pushing past the crowds. He comes around the side of the building and bends over, sick, literally. He GASPS for air, tries to stand up as...BANG! Fisher hits Kevin. He goes flying to the ground.

FISHER
You asshole!

Kevin just sits there on the ground, a mess. Fisher, holding Kevin's cowboy hat, stands over him.

FISHER (cont'd)
Don't you ever ignore my signal!

KEVIN
The count was plus 16.

FISHER
I don't give a shit if the count's plus 50. The table was bad. You lose that kind of money, you walk away.

KEVIN
Fisher, I was the BP. It was my call.

FISHER
Yeah, and you lost \$100,000! There's no goddamn way in hell you're staying on my team if you keep that shit up.

Jill races over, gets in between them.

JILL
Get off of him.

FISHER
He lost a hundred grand!

JILL
Yeah, and nobody beat the shit out of you when you lost fifty grand in Chicago.

(Beat)
We're a team, Fisher. Get over it.

Fisher takes a beat...

FISHER
Y'know what? Fine. Go be with your boyfriend.

He throws the cowboy hat at Kevin and storms off. Kevin pushes himself up, puts his hand to his eye, in pain.

JILL
You all right? -
(off his nod)
Look, don't worry about it.
(MORE)

JILL(cont'd)

We're up a million-five on the weekend anyway. Actually, make that a million-four.

KEVIN

I'm sorry.

JILL

You should be. I had to find out from Fisher that you're my boyfriend.

Jill starts walking back to the casino. She turns back, notices Kevin's not with her.

JILL (cont'd)

Are you coming? Or do I have to go back in there solo?

Kevin smiles, heads over to her as...

CUT TO:

CLOSE-ON KEVIN WITH A SHINER

He's sleeping. His eyes flutter awake. He reaches over and picks up the phone, presses "0". After a beat...

KEVIN

I'd like to order room service.

(Beat)

What do you mean, you don't do room service?

WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

BOSTON. DECEMBER.

INT. DELTA UPSILON - KEVIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Kevin looks confused as he lies on his bed in his tiny frat room. Miles stands in the doorway.

MILES

Hey, Heffner. When you're done ordering room service, we have class.

(Beat)

What happened to your face?

INT. M.I.T. - LECTURE HALL 26-100 - DAY

Kevin, Andrew, Miles, Stuart and Herb sit in the back of the huge lecture hall. They argue with each other, hushed.

STUART

The actuator doesn't work.

ANDREW

Yeah, and who's fault is that?

STUART

Yours.

ANDREW

I'm in charge of the motor, not the actuator.

STUART

They're the same thing, nimrod.

MILES

Look, we're supposed to have a prototype built by now. Which means, you gotta get off your ass, Kevin. You're the only one who knows how to operate the lathe.

ANDREW

It almost took off my goddamn thumb last night.

Kevin nods, seriously. After a moment, he starts to laugh.

ANDREW (cont'd)

It's not funny, Kevin. You should see the callouses on my hands.

MILES

Those aren't from the lathe.

Kevin, Miles, Stuart and Herb burst out laughing. They try to cover it up as a student, SANJAY, SSHHHHES them.

SANJAY

Would you guys keep it down?

KEVIN

(lowering his voice)

Okay, look, tomorrow we skip 2.05; get into the lab --

STUART

2.05's a core class. We can't skip it. There's a sign-in sheet.

KEVIN

So we someone'll sign-in for us.

ANDREW
But that's illegal.

Kevin whispers over to another student, JACKSON, 21.

KEVIN
Jackson, do us a favor. Tomorrow,
2.05, sign us in.

JACKSON
Is that before or after you suck my
cock?

MILES
I didn't know you were so lonely.

Kevin pulls out a \$100 bill and hands it to Jackson.

KEVIN
How about now?

The guys look at Kevin in shock as...

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - DAY

Kevin tries to tape measure a very overweight BIG GUY.

BIG GUY
I told you I'm a size 38. Now give me
the goddamn pants.

KEVIN
Okay, look. These are 32's, right?

He picks up a pair of 32-waist slacks.

KEVIN (cont'd)
Rule of thumb is, if you can wrap the
waist of the slacks around your neck
so the ends meet, then it's your size.

Kevin wraps the waist around his neck. It fits.

KEVIN (cont'd)
See? I'm a 32. It fits --

He cuts off as he SEES Micky standing outside the window.
Micky motions him outside. Miles walks by Kevin.

KEVIN (cont'd)
Miles, can you cover me?

MILES

And do your job? That's so not like you.

Kevin heads for the doors as Miles goes over to the Big Guy.

BIG GUY

I want a pair of size 38 slacks.

MILES

And for whom would they be, sir?

EXT. BROOKS BROTHERS - DAY

Kevin exits the store and sees Micky standing before the window of an expensive restaurant. Kevin goes over to him.

KEVIN

Micky, I'm in the middle of work.

He points out a WELL-DRESSED MAN and WOMAN in the restaurant.

MICKY

You see that couple? The lady's wearing vintage Gucci and an emerald cut diamond ring. The gentleman has on Armani and a \$15,000 Rolex. They appear to have class and yet, they're drinking a '96 Barolo when everyone knows that veal is the only part of the cow with which one drinks white.

Kevin looks at him, unsure. Doesn't know where this is going.

MICKY (CONT'D)

I saw the accounting from Saturday. What were you thinking when you put \$50,000 on that table?

KEVIN

Nothing. I thought I was gonna win.

MICKY

Did it occur to you, you might not?

KEVIN

No. I did the math. The true was plus eighteen.

MICKY

What about when you lost the second fifty?

KEVIN

Look, am I in some kind of trouble?
'Cause if you want me to pay it back --

MICKY

Why haven't you quit your job?

KEVIN

I need the money for med school.

MICKY

You've already made ten times in Vegas
what you could make here.

KEVIN

Yeah, and what would I tell my
parents?

Micky smiles. Inside the restaurant, a WAITER gushes over the
well-dressed Couple.

MICKY

You know why that waiter's kissing
their ass? Because they look the part.
And, like everyone else, he can't tell
the difference between real and paste.

KEVIN

What about me? You think I look the
part?

MICKY

Kiddo, you are the part. I told you.
You're a winner.

KEVIN

I lost \$100,000.

MICKY

And you'll lose a lot more on your way
to making us all rich.

Micky watches the couple in the restaurant.

MICKY (cont'd)

You can't buy class, Kevin. It's
something you're born with. Like
wisdom teeth.

KEVIN

Wisdom teeth get pulled out.

MICKY

And you wonder why there are so many
dumb people in the world.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - DAY

Kevin re-enters the store as Miles goes over to him.

MILES

Everything all right?

KEVIN

Yeah. Everything's cool.

Miles looks at Kevin, not quite believing him.

MILES

The other day, with Jackson. Where'd
you get that money?

KEVIN

Oh, my Dad. He...came into some money.
Y'know, the funding for his lab.

(changing the subject)

What happened with the Big Guy?

MILES

I sold him the 38's. Fuck him.

(Beat)

Man, the lies we tell ourselves just
to get through the day.

Miles heads off as Kevin lets that sink in. Kevin's PAGER
BUZZES. He looks down at the number, frazzled. He heads
toward the back of the store.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - STOCK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kevin enters and heads back behind a rack. He takes out his
brand new cell phone and dials.

KEVIN

Yeah?

EXT. ESPLANADE - DAY

Fisher walks along the Charles River, talking on his cell.

FISHER

Team meeting. Tonight at Crossroads.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - STOCK ROOM - DAY

Kevin ends the call as Miles comes around the corner. He sees the cell phone.

MILES

Your dad must have some lab.

INT. CROSSROADS IRISH PUB - NIGHT

Kevin climbs the stairs and head toward the back. Sitting alongside a *High Roller Vegas* pinball machine are Jill, Kianna, Dylan, Fisher and Martinez.

FISHER

Good. We can start.

KEVIN

Where's Micky?

Silence...Kevin looks around, unsure. Something's wrong.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

What's going on?

FISHER

Micky's out.

KEVIN

What do you mean, he's out?

FISHER

We're going on our own.

MARTINEZ

He's using us, Kev. We're slave labor.

KIANNA

(furious)

I wasn't aware slaves made \$10,000 a week.

FISHER

Look, the deal is, we're making a shitload of money for a guy who doesn't do jack.

KIANNA

Except teach us a skill that's made us all rich.

MARTINEZ

Kianna, we've more than paid him back.
Between the six of us, we now have
enough to put up the \$1.5 million
every weekend.

KEVIN

But it's our own money. What if we
lose?

DYLAN

I thought you didn't think about
losing.

KEVIN

I didn't when it was someone else's
money.

FISHER

We made \$2 million last weekend. But
all we got was ten grand each. Now
imagine we split the two mil six ways.

DYLAN

That's over \$333,000 per person for
one weekend's work.

Kevin can't believe this. He looks over to Jill for help.

JILL

Kevin, we've got one more semester,
then we're out of here. We'll never be
together like this again.

MARTINEZ

It's our last hurrah, dude. Don't you
wanna go out with a bang?

KEVIN

Yeah, but...Don't we already have
enough? I mean, how much more does
everyone want?

MARTINEZ

Millions.

DYLAN

Millions.

FISHER

Hundreds of millions.

KIANNA

You guys are making a big mistake.

Kevin looks miserable, torn.

KEVIN

So who's gonna tell him?

INT. MICKY ROSA'S APT. - DAY

Kevin, Fisher and Martinez sit on a couch across from Micky. Kevin keeps rubbing his sweaty palms against his pants, a total wreck. It's dead silent, then...

MICKY

You took a vote?

They nod. Micky nods. He looks really calm, non-plussed even.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Okay, then.

Fisher, Martinez and Kevin exchange stares, waiting for the other shoe to drop.

FISHER

That's it?

MICKY

Why? Is there something else?

(off their shrugs)

Great. Then I'll notify my investors.
I guess the stock market's gonna have
to be good enough from now on.

He laughs. They all force awkward laughter too. Then silence.

MICKY (cont'd)

Well...

Micky stands. The others take their cue, totally weirded out.

MARTINEZ

Thanks for being so cool about this. -

MICKY

Andre, I understand. It's nothing
personal. It's just business.

As he leads them to the door, he puts his arm around Kevin.

MICKY (CONT'D)

Don't feel bad, kiddo. This is supposed to happen. It's every parent's dream. You teach your kids, raise them to one day leave and start their own families. It's the oldest story in the book. Look at Oedipus.

KEVIN

Oedipus killed his father and had sex with his mother.

Micky just smiles at him. As his departing pupils leave...

MICKY

Just one last piece of advice, if I may, before you go out in the world.

(Beat)

Don't ever get too comfortable. Each time you walk into a casino, they're watching. Every time you cash in a chip, they're taking notes. Sooner or later, they'll start asking questions, and you'll be faced with the most important decision a card counter ever has to make. Knowing when to walk away. I promise you, that time will come. Because if there's one thing I'm sure about after all these years, things...will...change.

The guys all look suddenly terrified as...

EXT. MICKY ROSA'S APT. BLDG. - DAY

Kevin, Fisher and Martinez exit the building and stand in the street, numb. They all look at each other, scared.

MARTINEZ

He called me Andre. He never calls me Andre.

FISHER

We need to-hit the Sun.

MARTINEZ

No, not the Sun.

KEVIN

What's the Sun?

They start heading up the street as WE PAN UP TO...

MICKY

He stands in the window, watching them, expressionless.

EXT. MOHEGAN SUN - CASINO - DAY

Kevin, Fisher, Martinez, Jill, Kianna and Dylan stand before the entrance of this enormous Indian casino.

FISHER

The Mohegan Sun. It's an Indian casino.

MARTINEZ

I don't know about this, man. I mean, it's bad enough we stole their land.

Fisher heads for the doors as the others follow his lead.

INT. MOHEGAN SUN - CASINO - DAY

The casino is the size of a football field. The team enters, in awe.

KEVIN (V.O.)

The Mohegan Sun is the fourth largest casino in the U.S., with over 180,000 square feet of gaming area and 190 tables.

Kevin and company quickly get to work and win money hand over fist. Martinez splits on aces and draws two face cards.

KEVIN (V.O.) (cont'd)

They never saw us coming. By 11 PM, we were up over a hundred grand.

Kianna calls in Fisher. He sits down, puts \$10,000 in the betting circle. He draws an 11, doubles down and hits 21.

KEVIN (V.O.) (cont'd)

By 4 AM, we were at a quarter million.

Kevin plays all six chairs with \$5,000 apiece spread out across an empty table. He doubles and splits, now playing a total of eight hands. The Dealer busts. Kevin wins \$40,000.

KEVIN (V.O.) (cont'd)

By 10 AM, we were closing in on \$400,000. It was almost too easy. What could go wrong?

INT. SECURITY ROOM - DAY

On a MONITOR we SEE black & white footage of a guy playing blackjack. He's betting thousands, splitting, doubling down, winning big. Is it Kevin? A CASINO OWNER watches on.

CASINO OWNER

Call the Plymouth Agency. Get Vincent Cole on the phone.

INT. DRY CLEANERS - DAY

Vincent Cole hands over his laundry, including one of his yellow blazers. The DRY CLEANER sees a spot on the jacket.

DRY CLEANER

Is that blood?

VINCENT COLE

No, but it can be.

The Dry Cleaner looks scared. Cole's cell phone RINGS. He answers.

VINCENT COLE (CONT'D)

Cole...Tell your security to stand down. I'll take care of it.

He ends the call, dials another number.

VINCENT COLE (cont'd)

One of our guys surfaced.

EXT. CASINO - DAY

Cole and his team of YELLOW JACKETS pull up in a caravan of Chevy Caprice Classics. They emerge from the cars, heading towards the casino doors, guns visible tucked into waists...

INTERCUT BETWEEN:

INT. CASINO - DAY

ON MARTINEZ...He sits at a table. He SEES Kevin being the Big Player. Martinez looks past Kevin, his eyes go wide as...

ON THE FRONT DOOR...Cole and his team of Yellow Jackets enter the casino. They move smoothly, in military fashion.

ON MARTINEZ...He tries to catch Kevin's attention, running his hand through his hair. Kevin's oblivious.

ON COLE...As he approaches "Kevin" from behind.

ON JILL...She SEES Martinez push away from the table. Her eyes go over to Kevin. He looks over to her. She shakes her head "no," panicked, running her hand through her hair.

ON COLE...As his hand reaches for "Kevin's" shoulder.

ON KEVIN...Face flushed as he tries to quickly gather up his chips. The HAND lands on his shoulder. WE PULL BACK AS...

ON COLE...His hand on "Kevin's" shoulder. The card counter turns around. It's not Kevin. Wrong casino. Wrong card counter. Cole's face hardens, disappointed.

ON KEVIN...He spins around and comes face-to-face with several angry looking AMERICAN-INDIAN employees. A BALD FLOOR MANAGER looks really unhappy.

FLOOR MANAGER

We've been watching you.

KEVIN

(terrified)

You have? Why's that?

The Floor Manager breaks into a huge smile.

FLOOR MANAGER

Because you're exactly the kind of player we want here at the Mohegan Sun! Are you aware that you can buy any number of wonderful gifts with all the comp points you've earned?

Kevin shakes his head "no," relieved as...

EXT. MOHEGAN SUN - CASINO - MORNING

Kevin stands in front of a van as CASINO EMPLOYEES load it up with TV's, microwaves, VCR's, and stereos.

INT. CAESAR'S PALACE - BACK ROOM - DAY

The Yellow Jackets beat up the Card Counting Man.

VINCENT COLE

Are you in any way affiliated with Micky Rosa?

CARD COUNTING MAN

I told you. I don't know who that is.

The Yellow Jackets work him over some more. With each name Cole throws out, the Yellow Jackets get in more shots.

VINCENT COLE

How about Jason Fisher? Andre
Martinez? Jill Taylor? Kevin Lewis?

The Card Counting Man can barely talk. A cell phone RINGS.
Cole checks the number on his caller ID, then answers.

VINCENT COLE (cont'd)

Hi, honey...No, Daddy's at work now
right...Who's the best girl...? That's
right. You are. Love you.

He ends the call, turns back to the bleeding, beaten card
counter. Cole smiles, amused.

VINCENT COLE (cont'd)

Kids...

He tosses a casino chip on the table.

VINCENT COLE (CONT'D)

Eat it.

The Card Counting Man looks terrified as...

LAS VEGAS. NEW YEAR'S EVE.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

The casino is packed with GAMBLERS and REVELERS. We SEE the
team spread throughout the blackjack tables. They're having a
blast. That is, everyone except Jill.

She catches Kevin's attention and signals him, touching her
eye. "I need to talk." Kevin looks around, nervous, as...

EXT. MGM GRAND - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Kevin steps out onto the roof. Jill stands by the ledge,
overlooking the Strip.

KEVIN

What happened? Was there heat?

Jill doesn't answer, takes a beat, not even looking at Kevin.

JILL

What are you gonna do after this?

KEVIN

We're supposed to meet at The Mirage.

JILL

No, I mean, when it's over. We can't play blackjack forever.

KEVIN

I'm taking the MCATs. My Dad wants me to go to Harvard Med.

JILL

I'm thinking of going to law school.

(off his nod)

There's a lot wrong with the criminal justice system. It tends to favor the rich. I figure maybe I'll do some pro bono work. Try that out for a year.

Kevin nods, looks at her strangely.

KEVIN

Jill, we're supposed to be working right now.

JILL

It's New Year's Eve, Kevin. You know what normal 21-year olds are doing tonight? They're being 21. They're drinking, partying, having sex.

KEVIN

Not my friends.

JILL

I said "normal."

(Beat, laughs)

I got half the dealers here thinking I'm Princess Isabella of Portugal.

KEVIN

They think I'm Scott Greenberg. Sole heir to the Trojan condom fortune.

JILL

(laughs)

And you wonder why Micky never played.

KEVIN

He told me he was the coach. Like Phil Jackson.

JILL

That's a good one. The truth is, he can't play.

KEVIN

What do you mean?

JILL

There's an urban myth...that there's some kind of facebook with mugshots of all the guys who've ever been banned from Vegas. They say Micky's on the first page. He's hasn't set foot in a casino in over fifteen years.

KEVIN

He said it was legal.

JILL

It is if you don't get caught.

(Beat)

You like it, don't you?

KEVIN

What, blackjack?

JILL

Vegas...the whole thing.

KEVIN

Yeah, what's not to like? Y'know, somehow I made it through high school and college and never got invited to a party. I kinda feel like I finally got invited, y'know?

Jill nods, then just looks out onto the Strip.

KEVIN (cont'd)

What about you? Why do you do it?

JILL

(shrugs)

When you go from Miss Porter's to Choate to M.I.T., the idea of playing blackjack...it just seemed like the wrong thing to do.

There's a beat between them, then...

KEVIN

Jill, why'd you tell me to come up here?

JILL

What time is it?

KEVIN

(checks his watch)

11:59.

JILL

It's New Year's Eve. And I couldn't think of anything more depressing than not having someone to kiss.

Kevin nods "oh," suddenly nervous as she leans in and kisses him. They start pulling at each other's clothing, on the rooftop, oblivious to the rest of the world as...

INT. HOTEL SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clothes are strewn around the room. Kevin and Jill make love against the backdrop of huge plate glass windows that look out toward amazing views of the Las Vegas Strip.

INT. M.I.T. - BASEMENT LAB - DAY

Kevin, Miles, Andrew, Stuart and Herb work on their 2.70 machine. Attached to the machine is an "arm." Andrew operates a remote as the "arm" scoops up a ping pong ball and tilts back, like a pitcher throwing a baseball.

The guys watch on, excited as Andrew guides the machine toward a cylinder at the end of the table. The "arm" goes to drop the ping pong ball inside the cylinder, but comes crashing down too hard and crushes the ping pong ball.

KEVIN (V.O.)

And then just like Micky predicted, things started to change.

The guys look at the crushed ping pong ball, devastated.

MILES

Well, that worked out well.

INT. BROOKS BROTHERS - DAY

Miles works behind the counter as Mr. Lewis enters.

MR. LEWIS

Hey, Miles. I'm looking for Kev.

MILES

He's not here.

MR. LEWIS -

You sure? He told me he was on this weekend.

MILES

No, we switched.

(covering)

I think he's studying for the MCATs.
He's been working really hard.

MR. LEWIS

We haven't even seen him since he got
his promotion.

MILES

What promotion?

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - DAY

Kevin swims in a meet, badly lagging behind. STUDENTS yell, cheering on. He reaches the end of the pool, finishing last. He slams his hand against the deck, mad at himself.

INT. M.I.T. - COACH'S OFFICE - DAY

Kevin's Coach sits behind his desk. The door pushes open. It's Kevin, wet hair, towel wrapped around his waist.

KEVIN

You wanted to see me, Coach.

The Coach looks up at him, unhappy as...

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - DAY

Kevin, with his duffel bag slung over his shoulder, walks with Miles through the athletic center.

MILES

You got fired?

KEVIN

I didn't get fired. It's called
getting cut. I got cut, okay?

MILES

Y'know what? Fuck 'em. That swim meet
was totally fixed.

(Beat)

So does this mean you'll have more
time for the 2.70 Competition?

KEVIN

Jesus, Miles, you're starting to sound
like Andrew. Is that all you guys
think about?

MILES

Yeah, that's all I think about. Look, I'm not going to med school, Kev. I need 2.70. There's gonna be recruiters from McKinsey and Lehman Brothers. And I'm not about to look like an asshole up there, okay?

Kevin doesn't respond, just keeps walking.

MILES (cont'd)

What the hell's going on with you? You're never around. You take off almost every weekend. You lie to your dad about getting a promotion...

Kevin stops.

KEVIN

What?

MILES

He was in the store last weekend.

KEVIN

Miles, what'd you tell him?

MILES

Nothing. I said you were studying for the MCATs.

Kevin nods, his mind spinning.

MILES (cont'd)

Look, I gotta get to class. But can I just say something?

(Beat)

The 2.70 Competition...? That's all you used to think about, too.

Miles heads off, leaving Kevin alone in the gym as...

LAS VEGAS. FEBRUARY.

INT. THE MIRAGE - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin plays blackjack. He looks up as someone slides into the third base position. It's SANJAY. We last saw him telling Kevin and the guys to quiet down in the 26-100 lecture hall.

Kevin's stunned to see him, but Sanjay plays it cool. He pulls out a two-inch thick fold of hundred dollar bills and tosses it on the table.

DEALER

Can I see some I.D.?

Sanjay hands him a Player's Card. The name reads ERIC BOYD.
The Dealer hands it back, satisfied.

DEALER (cont'd)

Thank you very much, Mr. Boyd.

The Dealer slides \$20,000 in chips over to him. Sanjay places \$5,000 in the betting circle. The Dealer deals as Sanjay starts throwing numbers at Kevin, trying to confuse him.

SANJAY

Man, I've been playing for seven hours straight. That's like four-hundred hands. You should've seen how many 6's, 7's and 9's I got. And I'm trying to add 'em all up. 7 plus 6, 6 plus 8, 5 plus 9. I swear, if I had 5 or 10 bucks for every 14, 15 and 16, I'd be a goddamn millionaire.

Kevin's head starts to swim with the numbers. He loses the count and busts. He loses again. Then loses again. All the while, Sanjay's winning. Kevin's face turns red. He SEES Martinez and touches his eye, signaling him.

INT. THE MIRAGE - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin, Martinez and Fisher are all lined up at urinals.

FISHER

You sure he's a student?

KEVIN

He sits near me in 26-100.

MARTINEZ

Maybe he's just playing for fun.

KEVIN

He has a Player's Card. He started throwing numbers at me, making me lose the count --

Kevin cuts off as the bathroom door swings open. Sanjay enters. Fisher races over and throws him against the wall.

SANJAY

Shouldn't you wash your hands first?

FISHER

Listen to me, asshole. This isn't Boston. Who are you playing for?

SANJAY

Wayne Newton.

Fisher slams him against the wall even harder.

FISHER

You get your ass out of here and take your bitches with you, okay?

SANJAY

Hey, it's cool. It's colder than a witch's tit in here anyway.

He smiles and exits the bathroom as they realize...

MARTINEZ

He's got another team.

INT. CAESAR'S PALACE - HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Micky is with a whole new team of players. The door opens. Sanjay enters, nods to Micky.

MICKY

Okay, second shift. Sanjay, you're BP. Steve, you're on for Gorilla. The rest of you are spotting. And, remember. Who inherits the earth?

SANJAY

The meek?

MICKY

Wrong. The meek had their chance and they blew it. The Amphibians inherit the earth. And we're gonna take all that dead money along for the ride.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Vegas. The team sits in a back booth, freaking out. Micky's cool head is not there to prevail.

DYLAN

The Amphibians?

JILL

That's their team name.

FISHER
You knew about this?

JILL
I heard rumors.

FISHER
Then why the hell didn't you say anything?

JILL
Uh, hello? Did you hear the part where I said "rumors?"

MARTINEZ
The Amphibians...damn. How come we don't have a cool name?

KIANNA
It's another team. So what? There's four million casinos in this town.

FISHER
I think it's time we expand. If Micky can take on new players, why can't we?

DYLAN
Anyone know any good Spotters?

INT. DELTA UPSILON - ANDREW'S ROOM - DAY

Andrew, wearing reading glasses, stares at a computer screen, clicking away. Kevin enters.

KEVIN
Hey, you got a minute?

Andrew looks up from his monitor. We SEE computer screen images reflecting off his glasses. They look like playing cards. We realize he's playing computer blackjack.

ANDREW
Don't tell anyone.

Kevin smiles as he sees the cards in Andrew's eyes.

INT. M.I.T. - Z CENTER - WEIGHT ROOM - DAY

Miles tries to bench press as Kevin spots him. We realize there are no weights on the ends of the bar. Miles struggles.

KEVIN

All I'm asking is for you to think about it.

MILES

If I say no, are you gonna drop the bar on my head?

INT. M.I.T. - STUDENT CENTER - DAY

Kevin sits across from Stuart.

KEVIN

And the great thing is, we'll be together every weekend. Which means more 2.70 time.

STUART

I don't know, Kev. I got a lot of homework. I like homework.

Kevin takes out a cigarette, lights it up.

STUART (cont'd)

You know that's really bad for you.

INT. DELTA UPSILON - BATHROOM - DAY

Kevin leans against a sink and talks to a closed stall door.

KEVIN

It's just two weekends a month. It won't interfere with any classes.

The stall door opens. It's Herb. He shakes his head "no."

INT. DELTA UPSILON - KEVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Kevin, Miles and Andrew sit in Kevin's bedroom.

MILES

Look, we're supposed to graduate in a few months.

ANDREW

Yeah, if this ends up on my transcripts...

KEVIN

It's not gonna end up on your transcripts.

ANDREW

Besides, I'm not a very good flyer.

Kevin nods, takes a beat, then...

KEVIN

Okay, that's cool. But let me just show you one thing.

Kevin lifts up the mattress. Hidden underneath is over half a million dollars in tight rolls of hundreds. Andrew and Miles stare in disbelief as...

EXT. MCCARRON AIRPORT - DAY

A 737 hits the tarmac and skids to a stop as...

EXT. MCCARRON AIRPORT - TERMINAL - DAY

Martinez, Miles and Andrew exit the terminal, carrying knapsacks. A Mercedes limousine pulls up. The passenger door opens as DINO, 30, slick black ponytail, black suit, steps out and smiles at Martinez.

DINO

Welcome back, Mr. Shamberg.

ANDREW

Mr. Shamberg?

Miles and Andrew look nervous as...

INT. MERCEDES LIMOUSINE - DAY

Martinez, Andrew and Miles climb into the back of the well-appointed limo. For a quick moment, they're alone.

ANDREW

Where's Kevin?

MARTINEZ

He's meeting us there. By the way, for the next 24 hours, I'm Bob Shamberg. And you don't speak English.

MILES

What?!

Dino hops into the limo and sits across from them.

DINO

I'm Dino, Mr. Shamberg's host at the Venetian.

MILES

No...Ingles?

He smiles weakly. Suddenly, he's not having any fun.

EXT. VENETIAN - DAY

The limo drives down the Strip and pulls up to the Venetian. Dino hops out and holds the door open. He hands Martinez a room key.

DINO

You're all set. If you need anything,
just page me.

He yells at Miles and Andrew.

DINO (cont'd)

HAVE FUN, AMIGOS!

Kevin smiles, nods as...

INT. THE VENETIAN - CASINO - DAY

Martinez, Miles and Andrew enter the casino. They head past a FLOOR MANAGER.

FLOOR MANAGER

Mr. Shamberg...Nice to see you again.

Martinez nods to the Floor Manager as PIT BOSSES, DEALERS, CROUPIERS, and COCKTAIL WAITRESSES smile and say HELLO. They make their way into...

MARTINEZ

Pretty sweet, huh?

MILES

No, it's not sweet! Who the hell is
Bob Shamberg?

ANDREW

How come we don't speak English?

MARTINEZ

Dudes, relax. It's all just fun.

MILES

Martinez, neither one of us knows
enough Spanish to keep this shit up.

Martinez stops, looks at the two of them, serious.

MARTINEZ

Okay, here's the deal. My name is Shamberg. Bob Shamberg. Fisher, Kevin and I are top secret government spies posing as M.I.T. students.

Miles and Andrew look at Martinez, stunned, absolutely blown away. Martinez bursts out laughing.

MILES

You're such an asshole.

MARTINEZ

--C'mon, I wanna show you something.

Martinez pushes through the crowd. He heads to a blackjack table. Two JERSEY GIRLS sit next to each other on the last two stools. Across from them sits...

Kevin. Jill is draped all over him, playing her role. It's the first time Miles and Andrew have seen them together. It's a Kevin they've never seen before. He's playing two hands.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)

By the way, we don't know Kevin.

They stand away from the table, watching on. Kevin has a 2 and a 3. He motions for a card. It's a 5. He takes another. 6. He takes another. It's an ace. He motions for another.

DEALER

You have 17, sir.

Kevin motions for another card. It's a Jack. He busts. The two Jersey Girls are really annoyed by him.

JERSEY GIRL #1

Nice goin', dumb ass.

JERSEY GIRL #2

Y'know, you're really belittling yourself and the game.

Kevin's second hand is a pair of 7's. He splits. Takes four cards on each hand and busts on both of them.

ANDREW

I thought you guys were pros?

MARTINEZ

Look how he's betting. Ten bucks a unit. He doesn't care about these hands.

(MORE)

MARTINEZ(cont'd)

He's playing a part, some rich asshole who doesn't give a shit about losing. At the same time, he's running the cards, trying to control the deal so a specific card is dealt to him.

MILES

What do you mean, a specific card?

MARTINEZ

It's called shuffle tracking. My guess is, he saw the bottom card when the dealer shuffled the deck. My guess is that card was an ace. And if you're real good and the dealer lets you cut the deck, you can cut to that card and work it so that you're dealt that ace.

ANDREW

(laughing)

Yeah, right.

MILES

Even if you got the ace, how much difference would it make?

MARTINEZ

Watch.

Kevin suddenly pushes a stack of black and purple chips into the betting circle. The Dealer looks over to his PIT BOSS. He seems to recognize Kevin. The Pit Boss nods "okay."

The Dealer deals the first card to Kevin. The Queen of Hearts. Kevin's next card is...The Ace of Spades. Blackjack. Andrew and Miles are stunned. The Dealer pays out thousands of dollars. Kevin sweeps up his chips.

KEVIN

Y'know, I think I'm finally getting the hang of this. Ladies...

He takes Jill's hand and walks off. The Jersey Girls stare after him, stunned.

EXT. THE VENETIAN - POOLSIDE - DAY

Andrew, Miles and Martinez make their way around the pool. Laying on a lounge chair, wearing sunglasses, are Kevin and Jill.

KEVIN

Welcome to Vegas, boys.

Kevin lifts up his glasses and smiles as...

EXT. THE HARD ROCK - CASINO - NIGHT

In SLO MO, Andrew, Miles and Kevin stride through the casino like they own the place. They're hipper and cooler than we've ever seen.

INT. THE HARD ROCK - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin, Andrew and Miles stand at the entrance of the casino and survey the action.

KEVIN

Act casual.

MILES

Think casual.

ANDREW

Be casual.

INT. THE HARD ROCK - CASINO - NIGHT

The team is in action, sitting at various blackjack tables. Dylan talks to DEALER #1.

DYLAN

Yeah, I know. I'm kinda young for an astronaut.

At the next table is Jill, talking to DEALER #2.

JILL

Believe me, I'd rather be in bed with my husband, but the guy's shootin' blanks. If y'know what I mean...

At the next table is Kianna looking dominatrix-chic, her hair up in chopsticks. She talks to DEALER #3.

KIANNA

There's nothing wrong with a little pain.

At the next table is Miles. A GORGEOUS VEGAS GIRL is sitting next to him, flirting. Miles is in heaven.

MILES

Did you know the human body is 90% water? I'd love to show you the other 10.

At the next table is Andrew, sweating profusely. He's a wreck. DEALER #4 waits patiently for him to make a decision.

DEALER #4

Do you want another card?

ANDREW

I don't know. Do I?

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

Miles, Kevin and Andrew drink champagne as WAYNE NEWTON sings on stage.

KEVIN (V.O.)

In one month, we doubled our investment.

EXT. NEWBURY STREET - DAY

Kevin and Miles walk past Brooks Brothers with Armani garment bags. Their boss, Mark, stares out the window. They wave to him.

INT. M.I.T. CLASSROOM - DAY

The Professor drones on as Stuart and Herb look bored out of their skulls. They steal a glance out the window and SEE...

A limo pulls up as Kevin, Andrew and Miles hop out with knapsacks. Herb and Stuart watch on, in shock.

KEVIN (V.O.)

Graduation was just three months away
and I had a million dollars in cash
and prizes.

INT. M.I.T. - FINANCIAL AID OFFICE - DAY

The still very tired-looking Marge stands behind the counter. Kevin enters. He takes packets of \$100 bills out of his knapsack and stacks them on the counter. Marge is stunned.

KEVIN

You take cash, right?

INT. THE PALMS - RAIN NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

The dance floor throbs with HOUSE MUSIC as Kevin, Jill, Kianna and Andrew cut loose on the floor, partying, holding champagne glasses. -

At a VIP table, Miles wears dark shades and pops a bottle of Cristal. He pours some for the MALOOF BROTHERS, Martinez and Dylan.

KEVIN (V.O.)

We were 21...And we were rich.

All the while, Fisher sits in a corner. He watches Kevin and Jill dance with each other, hot, sexy.

INT. THE MIRAGE - NIGHT

Kevin takes a seat at a table across from Jill. A Pit Boss, TED, approaches. Across the room, Andrew watches on.

PIT BOSS

Good evening, Mr. Schneider. Can we get you a drink?

KEVIN

I'll have a vodka gimlet, Ted.

ANDREW'S POV

As he SEES the Pit Boss turn away from Kevin and shout at someone. Andrew's eyes go wide, stunned. He folds his arms over his chest.

Kevin looks up and SEES Andrew folding his arms with a vengeance, nodding with urgency. The people at his table look at him like he's insane.

INT. THE MIRAGE - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin bursts through the door and meets Andrew at the urinal.

ANDREW

How many times do I have to signal you?

KEVIN

Yeah, I got it. The deck was hot. I was working another table.

ANDREW

The deck wasn't hot. I was telling you to get out. Now.

KEVIN

No, you weren't.

ANDREW

Yeah, I was.

Andrew folds his arms over his chest several times.

ANDREW (cont'd)

Get out. Now. Get out. Now.

KEVIN

Andrew, folded arms over your chest means, the deck is hot. Running your hands through your hair...that means, Get out. Now.

ANDREW

The Pit Boss yelled, "Card Counter."

Kevin closes his eyes in disbelief.

KEVIN

He wasn't saying "Card Counter." He was saying "Cocktail!" Y'know why? 'Cause I just ordered a COCKTAIL!

ANDREW

Oh...

There's a quiet beat between the two of them as...

ANDREW (cont'd)

I thought he said, "Card Counter."

INT. THE MIRAGE - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin exits the men's room. He walks past the CASHIER as Kianna turns around, closing her bag.

KEVIN

What are you doing?

KIANNA

I was carrying around too many chips.

KEVIN

Did you just cash out?

KIANNA

Hey, I can't help it if I'm winning.

KEVIN

Kianna, you're spotting. You're not supposed to cash out.

KIANNA

Don't tell me how to do my job, Kevin.
I've been doing this a lot longer than
you, okay?

She walks off as...

MATCH CUT TO:

CLOSE-ON A MONITOR. WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL...

INT. THE MIRAGE - SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Vincent Cole watches Kianna walk away from Kevin.

INT. THE MIRAGE - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin sits at a blackjack table. He's annoyed, not paying attention to Dylan as he runs his hand through his hair. He does it again. But Kevin's too caught up in his own head as Vincent Cole leans over Kevin's shoulder.

VINCENT COLE

May I have a word with you, sir?

Kevin turns and SEES Vincent Cole right in his face. Cole starts helping him off the stool. Several yellow jacket THUGS stand behind him.

VINCENT COLE (CONT'D)

There's a few questions we'd like to
ask you downstairs.

KEVIN

Sorry. I gotta go.

Kevin tries to break away, but Cole holds his arm securely, gets in his face.

VINCENT COLE

We can't let you play blackjack here
anymore. You're too good for us, Mr.
Lewis.

Kevin's eyes go wide at the mention of his name. Cole smiles at him as he pulls his arm free and hustles for the door.

INT. CAESAR'S PALACE - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Fisher rides down by himself. The elevator doors slide open. TWO YELLOW JACKETS stand before him. Fisher presses the button to close the doors. The Yellow Jackets block the doors from closing.

INT. THE RIO - NIGHT

Jill sits at a table and lays out \$10,000 in cash on the felt. A PIT BOSS comes over and puts his hand on Jill's.

PIT BOSS

Your money's no good here, Ms. Taylor.

Jill looks up at the man, stunned as...

INT. HOTEL SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Martinez lays in bed, dead asleep, a YOUNG WOMAN by his side. There's POUNDING on the door. Martinez sits up in bed, suddenly panicked.

VINCENT COLE (O.C.)

Mr. Martinez! We'd like a word with you.

Martinez jumps out of bed and races over to a huge stack of chips and cash on a table.

YOUNG WOMAN

Martinez?

There's more POUNDING on the door as Martinez starts jamming the chips and cash into a duffel bag.

VINCENT COLE (O.C.)

Don't make us bust down the door, Mr. Martinez.

YOUNG WOMAN

Who's Martinez?

Martinez searches for a place to hide, then races into the bathroom as...

INT. HOTEL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

SMASH! The door crashes open as HOTEL SECURITY, Yellow Jackets and Vincent Cole rush in. They make a beeline for...

INT. HOTEL SUITE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Security races in. The Young Woman SCREAMS. She's in tears.

VINCENT COLE

Where is he?

She nods toward the bathroom.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Security and Vincent Cole enter the bathroom. They yank the bathtub curtain aside. Martinez is lying on the bottom of the tub with the duffel bag held tight to his chest. He smiles.

MARTINEZ

Is there a problem?

INT. BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Martinez sits on a chair as Cole dumps the contents of the duffel bag out on the table. Hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash and chips come pouring out.

MARTINEZ

That's my money. You can't take that.

VINCENT COLE

You're right. That would be stealing.

Cole picks up a \$5,000 chip and hands it to Martinez.

VINCENT COLE (CONT'D)

You've eaten a lot of the casino's chips, Mr. Martinez. Let's make this last one really memorable.

Martinez looks at the chip, horrified.

MARTINEZ

Don't I get a glass water?

Cole shakes his head "no" as...

INT. M.I.T. - ROOM 4-145 - DAY

A stack of photocopied booklets gets thrown on the table. The cover of the booklet reads THE PLYMOUTH AGENCY. The team sits around the room where they all first met. Martinez is there, too. He looks horrible.

FISHER

We've been sold out. I got this from my host at Caesar's. He says this guy Vincent Cole runs the Plymouth Agency. They're a private security company casinos hire to get the bad guys. We're the bad guys.

MARTINEZ

They got our names, photos, gambling schedules, profits, everything.

KIANNA

It's gotta be the Amphibians.

DYLAN

The Amphibians don't have our gambling schedule.

FISHER

My host says whoever did it, got twenty-five grand for turning us in. Anyone get paid off recently?

KIANNA

I don't think so. We all make way more than that in a weekend.

Kevin picks up a booklet and starts leafing through it. The rest of the team takes copies.

MARTINEZ

It's arranged like a Most Wanted List. The higher the picture, the bigger the threat.

Kevin flips open to page one. His picture is number one, above a photo of Micky Rosa. Kevin suddenly looks sick.

FISHER

Congratulations, Kev. How's it feel to be number one?

JILL

What's the matter, Fisher? Jealous?

FISHER

Of what? His card counting, or that he's banging you?

Kevin jumps over a desk and immediately goes after Fisher. Martinez and Dylan jump in and pull him away.

MARTINEZ

Relax! Would you guys take it easy?

Andrew and Miles flip through their copies of the booklet.

MILES

Oh man...They have my parents' address.

ANDREW

They have my social security number. I didn't even know I had a social security number.

KEVIN

That's it. They know who we are now. It's too dangerous.

FISHER

Yeah, that's just like you. The first sign of trouble and you wanna split.

KEVIN

Look, the only reason I did this was to pay my tuition. And at this point, I got enough to send us all to med school. I'm out.

Kevin leaves the classroom.

EXT. M.I.T. - CAMPUS - DAY

Kevin exits the building and heads down the steps as Jill comes out after him. She catches up.

JILL

Kevin, wait...Listen, I know things seem a little out of control.

KEVIN

They made Martinez eat a casino chip. That doesn't freak you out?

JILL

Yeah, but we were doing so great. I mean, what if this is it? What if we can never live like this again? Are you really ready to give that up?

KEVIN

Jill, why do you even care? It's not like you needed the money in the first place.

(off her look)

What?

JILL

Look, you don't understand. This is it for me.

KEVIN

What are you talking about?

JILL

Kevin, I didn't go to Miss Porter's or Choate. I'm here on a partial scholarship. My BMW? It's leased in Micky's name. I just make the payments.

(Beat)

Please...don't quit yet. We can do this. Just one more shot.

KEVIN

How? We're burned. They know our faces. I mean, what do you want us to do? Call Plymouth and find out what casinos have accounts with them?

Jill shrugs to Kevin like "Why not?" He closes his eyes, can't believe he's about to do this.

MONTAGE

INT. INFINITE CORRIDOR - DAY

At a bank of payphones, Kevin, Fisher, Miles, Kianna and Jill all take turns calling the Plymouth Agency.

KEVIN

Hi. This is Dave Rubin from Caesar's Palace. I'm calling about my account.

FISHER

My name's Brian Townsend. I'm calling from the Grand Victoria in Chicago.

JILL

The Rio? Hi, this is Amy from the Plymouth Agency.

MILES

I'm Chief Jay Strongbow from the Mohegan Sun.

Kianna SPEAKS Japanese on the phone. We can decipher the words "MGM Grand" and "The Plymouth Agency." She hangs up, turns to the rest of the team and shakes her head no as...

VOICE (O.C.)

Excuse me. Can you tell us where to find room 7-107?

They turn around to find...Dylan and Martinez. Dylan's wearing a tie dye shirt with a dreadlock wig. Martinez is wearing fake teeth with faux-acned skin.

KEVIN
They'll never fall for it in Vegas.

FISHER
That's not your decision.

KIANNA
Who says we gotta go to Vegas?

SOMEWHERE IN LOUISIANA. MARCH.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - DAY

The team climbs out of a puddle jumper and looks around at...nothing. The place is a barren airfield. It looks exactly like Las Vegas...before Bugsy Siegel.

MILES
Isn't this where they did
"Deliverance?"

Fisher looks at Miles, annoyed, then starts walking.

INT. MINIVAN - DAY

The team is crammed into a minivan. It's dead silent as they pass a Shreveport City Limits sign.

MILES
Shreveport, baby. Shreveport.

EXT. RIVERBOAT - CASINO - NIGHT

Car doors SLAM shut as we PAN UP TO REVEAL...

THE TEAM. Dressed in disguises from Fisher's peroxide punk to Martinez's clearasil look. Andrew wears a handle bar mustache. Miles has on a heavy beard, looking almost Hasidic.

KEVIN
We are going to die.

INT. RIVERBOAT CASINO - NIGHT

The team is spread out around the tables. They're winning big, drawing the attention of PIT BOSSES and FLOOR MANAGERS.

Jill signals Kevin into the table. As he approaches she gets off her stool and passes on the count.

JILL
I think I'm gonna get some eggs.

She heads off as Kevin takes a seat. He watches Jill go toward the ladies room. He puts \$2,500 in the betting circle and immediately draws a pair of Kings. He splits, draws 10's on each, and wins \$10,000.

We STAY WITH HIM as he continues betting heavily and winning. After a few beats, a PIT BOSS rushes past the table. Kevin watches him join three other PIT BOSSES at a desk.

POV KEVIN

As the four men huddle around the desk. A fax machine prints out a page. A Pit Boss rips the page from the stream of fax paper and holds it up for the others to see.

The page is split in four sections with photos of two young men and two young women. Another page comes out. The Pit Boss tears it off. On it are photos of four young men. Another fax comes through. On this one is a single, enlarged photo of...

KEVIN

Kevin tries to keep cool. He quickly scans the room, spots Fisher, Martinez, Dylan, Kianna and Andrew. Where's Jill? He looks toward the ladies room. She's still not out.

The Pit Bosses are now scanning the room as back-up SECURITY approaches. Kevin pushes himself away from the table.

DEALER

Where you going? The hand's not over.

Kevin heads toward the bathroom, passing Fisher along the way. He leans into him.

KEVIN

We're getting out of here.

Fisher looks up and SEES the Pit Bosses on their phones, staring straight at Kevin and Fisher.

FISHER

Shit!

THUGS start moving through the casino. TOURISTS, wearing the latest in overalls couture, watch with curiosity. Kevin gets to the ladies room. A sign on the door reads, Out Of Order. He tries to push it open. It's locked. He starts to sweat.

He hears a CRASH from the adjoining men's room. He pushes the door open.

INT. RIVERBOAT CASINO - MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kevin enters and HEARS VOICES.

MAN (O.C.)

How many of your friends are with you?

JILL (O.C.)

I don't know what you're talking about.

Kevin comes around the corner and SEES Jill with her back up against the wall. She looks terrified. Crowded around her are YELLOW JACKETS. She looks past the Yellow Jackets to Kevin. One of the Yellow Jackets turns around.

IT'S VINCENT COLE

Kevin looks at him, in shock.

VINCENT COLE

Well, if it's not your knight in shining denim.

KEVIN

Don't.

VINCENT COLE

Or what?

Cole takes a step toward him. Kevin quickly surveys the bathroom. In between two sinks is a mop with a wooden handle. He grabs the mop and holds it up.

KEVIN

I said, don't.

Cole smiles, takes another step as Kevin swings the mop and smashes the long mirror above the sinks. Glass flies. Under one of the stalls, WE SEE a pair of FEET lift up, in hiding.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I'll make you a deal. You leave her alone and I won't shove this up your ass.

(To Jill)

C'mon.

Jill slips away from the wall and rushes over to Kevin.

VINCENT COLE

You're making a mistake, kid. You're a long way from Delta Upsilon.

Kevin and Jill exchange quick glances as...

EXT. RIVERBOAT CASINO - NIGHT

Fisher, Martinez, Kianna, Dylan and Andrew run over to their minivan. They all jump in as Kevin and Jill race out. They make their way over.

KEVIN

C'mon, let's go! Let's go!

They all jump in. Suddenly, Kevin stops.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Wait. Where's Miles?

INT. RIVERBOAT CASINO - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Behind a stall, WE SEE the pair of FEET lower into frame. The stall door opens as the bearded Miles steps out. Standing before him are two THUGS. Miles looks nervous.

MILES

Shalom.

EXT. RIVERBOAT CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin, Jill, Andrew and Stuart watch on as THUGS send Miles sailing over the deck of the boat and into the river. A Thug points his finger at Kevin and clicks it like a gun as...

INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT

Kevin drives as Jill rides shotgun. Miles is soaking wet. The team is in a minor state of frenzy.

DYLAN

We're dinosaurs...

FISHER

We're not dinosaurs!

KIANNA

How the hell'd they know we'd be there?

ANDREW

We didn't get to cash in our chips.

Everyone takes a beat as...Fisher SLAMS on the brakes.

FISHER

We're going back.

MILES
Are you insane?

KEVIN
Fisher, we're going home.

FISHER
You are not the captain of this team,
Kevin.

JILL
Guys...

KEVIN
Give it up, Jason. It's over.

FISHER
You wanna give it up? Fine. Then
you're off the team.

JILL
GUYS!

They turn towards Jill as a bright spotlight flashes through the windshield.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The minivan is surrounded by cop cars. A SHERIFF approaches as several DEPUTIES fan out, all holding shotguns.

SHERIFF
Would you kindly step out of the van?

The team slowly climbs out.

SHERIFF (cont'd)
Now there's two ways this can go down.
You can hand over your chips and get
the hell out of my town. Or, you can
keep your chips and never leave my
town. If you get what I'm saying.

The Deputies aim their shotguns as Miles quickly hands over his chips. The rest of the team follows suit.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
You see I told you those M.I.T. kids
were smart.
(Beat)
Now I say you best leave tonight.

ANDREW

Our flight's not 'til tomorrow.

SHERIFF

Then I imagine you'd be driving your asses back to Bean Town.

INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT

The team drives along Route 167 in the middle of the night. They pass a sign that reads: NOW ENTERING ARKANSAS. It's dead silent in the van.

KEVIN (V.O.)

Micky said the most important decision a card counter has to make is the decision to walk away.

(Beat)

I'd always wanted to be invited to the party. Now I didn't want to be the last one to leave.

EXT. JILL'S APT. - NIGHT

Jill and Kevin pull up in the back of a cab. Jill gets out, carrying her bag.

JILL

..You wanna come up?

KEVIN

I was hoping you'd say that.

INT. JILL'S APT. - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The elevator door slides open as Jill and Kevin make their way down the hall. Jill suddenly stops...

JILL

Oh my God...

KEVIN

What?

The door to Jill's apartment is cracked open.

INT. JILL'S APT. - CONTINUOUS

The place is trashed. Cushions ripped up, furniture tipped over.

JILL

No, please...

Jill opens the door to a walk-in closet, flips on the light. Tears stream down her face. There's a huge hole in the wall.

JILL (cont'd)

It's gone.

EXT. BEACON STREET - NIGHT

Kevin runs down the street, full speed. He gets to the frat house and races inside.

INT. DELTA UPSILON - CONTINUOUS

Kevin tears up the stairs, taking them two at a time, nearly knocking down STUDENTS on the way. He turns the corner towards his room. He SEES that the door is open and stops. He looks sick, slowly heads toward the door.

INT. DELTA UPSILON - KEVIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kevin enters his room. The bed's made. His desk is in order. Nothing's been touched. He breathes a sigh of relief and lays down on his bed, exhausted, his double life no longer fun.

He stares up at the ceiling, overwhelmed by the last seven months. He looks over at the clock on his night stand. It's 3 AM. His eyes go wide, suddenly scared.

He pushes himself up from the bed, his breath coming in short gasps. Sitting alongside the clock is...

A PURPLE CASINO CHIP

Kevin picks it up. The name on the chip reads: Riverboat Casino Shreveport, LA. He goes over to the window and looks out onto the alley.

Standing in the shadows is a MAN, in silhouette, the red coal of his cigarette burning brightly. Is it Vincent Cole? The Man drops the cigarette, crushes it under foot.

Kevin watches the Man disappear up the alley as...

KEVIN

Oh, no...

He goes over to his bed, lifts up the mattress. The money's gone. He sits down on the bed, stunned as...

INT. MR. LEWIS'S SUBARU - DAY

Mr. Lewis drives as Kevin rides shotgun. Kevin looks like he's lost his fire. They pull up to a downtown building.

MR. LEWIS
How do you feel?

KEVIN
Good.

MR. LEWIS
You think you're ready?

KEVIN
Yeah.

MR. LEWIS
You got your number 2 pencil?

Kevin holds it up for his Dad to see.

MR. LEWIS (cont'd)
Good.

Mr. Lewis takes a deep breath, he seems more nervous than Kevin. Kevin goes to get out of the car. Mr. Lewis stops him.

MR. LEWIS (cont'd)
Hey...whatever happens in there today,
your mother and I are proud of you.

Kevin smiles, then starts toward the building's entrance.

MR. LEWIS (CONT'D)
The inner membrane of a mitochondrion
is analagous to what of a prokaryote?

KEVIN
A cell-wall.

Mr. Lewis smiles, then realizes...

MR. LEWIS
No, it's the plasma membrane.

Mr. Lewis looks worried.

INT. MCAT TEST CENTER - DAY

Kevin takes his MCAT exam. He writes in an answer, erases it, writes in another. He writes down equations on a scratch pad. Scribbles them out, crushes the piece of paper. He snaps the point of his pencil. Looks at it in horror. It's a nightmare.

INT. M.I.T. - BASEMENT LAB - DAY

On a blackboard reads: 2.70 COMPETITION IN 1 WEEK! Kevin, Miles, Andrew, Stuart and Herb take cover as their machine whips ping pong balls at them. It's not going well.

EXT. CROSSROADS IRISH PUB - NIGHT

Kevin, Andrew and Miles walk up to the bar. There's a huge line of students waiting to get in. The guys look depressed as they go to the back of the line. Stuart and Herb approach.

STUART

Oh, good. The line's not too long.

Herb smiles at Miles.

MILES

Shut up, Herb.

EXT. M.I.T. - CAMPUS

Kevin exits the Fairchild Building with Miles and Andrew. A MAN in a black suit approaches.

MAN

Kevin Lewis?

KEVIN

Yeah?

He hands Kevin an envelope and walks off.

ANDREW

What is it?

Kevin opens it up, starts to read as...

INT. JILL'S APT. - HALLWAY - DAY

Jill opens the door. It's Kevin, on the verge of tears.

JILL

What happened?

KEVIN

The IRS. I'm being audited.

INT. JILL'S APT. - DAY

Jill looks over the contents of the envelope as Kevin paces around the apartment, freaking out.

JILL
These are copies of CTR's.

KEVIN
I didn't fill out any CTR's.

JILL
Well, someone did a really good job of forging your signature.

KEVIN
Jill, what am I gonna do? They took everything.

JILL
Kevin, you owe \$612,500 in taxes.

KEVIN
I don't have it!

JILL
Maybe we could go to Fisher and Martinez --

KEVIN
No, I don't wanna go to them.

JILL
Well, that's the only way I know how to make half a million dollars. Unless you have any other ideas?

WE CLOSE-IN on Kevin as...

EXT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Kevin RINGS the bell. After a moment, Micky opens the door.

INT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Micky makes dinner as Kevin stands across from him, his knapsack resting on the counter.

MICKY
It's called Blue Fish à la Betty. And don't tell anyone, but the secret ingredient?

Micky pulls out a box of Ritz Crackers.

MICKY (cont'd)
You crumble them up for a light breading and no one's the wiser.

Micky smiles, but Kevin's not on the same page.

MICKY (cont'd)

How much you say it was again?

KEVIN

Six-hundred grand. Give or take.

MICKY

You shouldn't have filled out the CTR's.

KEVIN

Micky, they weren't mine. I've never even filled one out. I know better than that.

MICKY

So what are you saying? You got set up?

KEVIN

Maybe. It could've been one of the Amphibians.

MICKY

I'd look a little closer than that.

KEVIN ..

What do you mean?

Micky doesn't respond.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Micky, if you know something...

MICKY

From the moment you came on the team, Fisher was threatened by you. You were the best any of us had ever seen. A goddamn cash cow. I mean, think about it. You gorilla'd your first weekend. The hi-lo system was a joke to you. You could've counted all 312 cards if I'd asked you to. Nobody could do that. Not even me in my prime. And I was good.

KEVIN

Micky, I need a bankroll. I need to go into Vegas and hit it hard and fast. Before Cole nails me.

Micky takes a beat, goes to stick his tray of fish in the oven. The phone RINGS. He YELLS as he burns his hand. The answering machine picks up. WE HEAR MICKY'S OUTGOING MESSAGE followed by a BEEP.

WOMAN (O.C.)

Hey, you there? It's me.

Kevin looks toward the machine. There's something familiar about the voice. Micky, throbbing hand and all, makes a dash for the phone and picks it up.

MICKY

Yeah, I'm here.

Micky motions to Kevin that he'll be just a minute. Kevin nods. Something's wrong. He looks around the kitchen as...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Kevin enters the stunning living room as Micky heads into his gourmet kitchen. A huge plate of sushi is laid out.

KEVIN

You sure I'm not interrupting?

INT. CROSSROADS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The team argues about whether to fire Micky.

KIANNA

You guys are making a big mistake.

INT. THE CRAZY HORSE II - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Micky sings the Foreigner song to Kianna.

MICKY

"I wanna know what love is. I want you to show me."

INT. THE MIRAGE - CASINO - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Kevin sees Kianna turn away from the cashier, placing a slip of paper in her bag.

INT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Micky hands Kevin a piece of sushi. He takes a bite.

MICKY
Is that insane?

In the b.g., a door is open. WE TRACK thru the living room, thru the open door and SEE...Kianna, standing in the shadows.

END FLASHBACK

INT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Micky hangs up the phone and goes back over to the kitchen. Kevin's face has gone white.

MICKY
Sorry about that, Chief.
(re: Kevin's expression)
You all right?

KEVIN
Yeah...I'm good.

MICKY
So you need a bankroll, huh?

Kevin nods, takes a beat, his mind spinning. Then...

KEVIN
I'm gonna need more than that.
(Beat)
I need you to play.

Micky laughs.

MICKY
I haven't been able to play in fifteen years.

KEVIN
But don't tell me you haven't thought about it. I've been doing this for seven months now. And you can't tell me you'd rather be on the sidelines, than in the game.

MICKY
I'm not going in there, Kev. I don't play anymore.

KEVIN
Why? Because you don't have the chops? Or maybe you never did. You know what they say. Those who can, do. And those who can't...

MICKY

Are you doubting my abilities?

KEVIN

How can I doubt a variable?

(Beat)

But if you really were as good as you say, then imagine how much we could make if the two of us were Big Players. It would be our biggest take ever. In one night we could make millions. Or maybe I should say, you could make millions.

He knows he now has Micky's full attention.

KEVIN (cont'd)

All I'm asking for is enough to cover the IRS.

For the first time, Micky's speechless. Kevin smiles at him.

KEVIN (cont'd)

Your fish is burning.

EXT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - DAY

Kevin exits and heads up the street to Jill's BMW. He climbs in the passenger side. Jill's behind the wheel.

KEVIN

We're in business.

Jill smiles as she starts the car and shifts into drive.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kevin studies in bed. His phone rings. He answers.

KEVIN

Hello?

INT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Micky stands looking out his huge bay window.

MICKY

The first weekend in May. They won't know what hit 'em.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

KEVIN

I have the 2.70 Competition that
Monday.

INT. MICKY ROSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MICKY

Take it or leave it.

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kevin nods, hangs up the phone. He immediately dials another
number.

KEVIN

We're on.

INT. LOGAN AIRPORT - DELTA TERMINAL - NIGHT

Kevin, Jill, Andrew and Miles make their way through the
terminal, determined, game faces on.

LAS VEGAS. MAY.

INT. PARIS HOTEL - SUITE - NIGHT

The team enters the spectacular suite. Miles unzips his pants
and pulls the money out of his underwear. He dumps the rolls
on the table.

MILES

I used to dream about having this much
money next to my penis.

For the first time, Kevin addresses the team, à la Micky.

KEVIN

Okay, here's the deal. No gorillas
tonight. The three of you are
spotting. If the count's below plus 7,
don't call us in. This is about
maximizing our time and R.O.I.

ANDREW

What's R.O.I.?

KEVIN

Return on investment. You play five
bucks a hand.

(MORE)

KEVIN(cont'd)

We don't wanna make any money off spotting and we don't want any more attention than we're already gonna get. This is about the kill. The quicker we zip in, the less chance we have of Cole showing up. By the time anyone recognizes us, we'll be gone and with more money than any of us ever dreamed of. Any questions?

ANDREW

You think I can get a girlfriend out of this?

EXT. MGM GRAND - NIGHT

Several Caprice Classics pull up as Vincent Cole and his Yellow Jackets exit the cars. They move, en masse, toward the front doors of the casino.

INT. PARIS HOTEL - SUITE - NIGHT

Miles and Andrew put on disguises. Jill walks by dressed how we saw her in the opening. She looks stunning. The guys can't help but watch her.

INT. PARIS HOTEL - SUITE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Standing at the sink is Kevin. It's the flashback moment we saw at the beginning of the movie. He wears his blond wig and big bushy mustache. He looks up as Jill enters.

KEVIN

How do I look?

JILL

Like a porn star. Where's Micky?

KEVIN

He's meeting us down there.

They take a beat, both a little nervous.

JILL

You ready?

KEVIN

(smiles)

It's been a helluva senior year, huh?

Jill laughs as...

EXT. MGM GRAND - NIGHT

A limo pulls up to the hotel. The back door opens as Micky steps out, in disguise. A goatee, long sideburns, black-framed glasses.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - CONTINUOUS

Micky enters. He stops, breathes it in. He's back, for the first time in 15 years. He circles the blackjack tables, casually, confidently. No one gives him a second look.

At a table, in the third base position, sits Jill. She leans back, folds her arms. Micky heads over to an empty chair. As he sits, Jill chats with the DEALER.

JILL

So I hear they've got a webcam in the pool. I bet you see some freaky shit.

Micky gets the signal. Pool. Plus eight. Micky pulls out a huge roll of hundreds and hands them over to the Dealer.

MICKY

Let's see what we can do with this.

The Dealer nods to a PIT BOSS. The Pit Boss comes over. Micky sees that his name tag reads, DAVE.

PIT BOSS

Good evening, sir. Do you have a player's card?

MICKY

No, I don't, Dave. But it sounds fascinating.

PIT BOSS

I'll need to see some identification.

Micky coolly, casually takes out his wallet and hands over his license. The Pit Boss examines it.

PIT BOSS (CONT'D)

Very well, Mr. Jordan.

MICKY

Max, please. Everyone calls me Max.

The Pit Boss exits to take care of Micky's player's card. The Dealer slides over a stack of chips. Micky tosses him a \$100 chip.

DEALER

I haven't done anything for you yet.

MICKY

You will.

The Dealer likes the sound of that. Micky pushes \$5,000 into the betting circle. He draws a pair of Kings and smiles as...

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

The elevator doors open as Kevin steps out, duffel bag over his shoulder. He surveys the crowd.

Sitting at a table, in plain view, is Andrew. He catches Kevin's eye, but doesn't make a move. The table's cold. He looks over at Miles, but Miles isn't giving any signals either. At another table he SEES Micky and Jill.

Someone brushes up hard against Kevin. He stops, taken aback. It's Fisher, in ponytail wig and punk rock disguise.

FISHER

Hey, Kev. Shouldn't you be studying for finals?

KEVIN

What the hell are you doing here?

FISHER

That's funny. That's what I was gonna say. Who you playing with?

Kevin nods toward a table. Fisher looks over and SEES Micky. Kevin smiles as Fisher loses his cool.

FISHER (CONT'D)

I wanna talk to you. Now!

INT. MGM GRAND - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kevin and Fisher stand at the back urinal.

FISHER

What are you doing with Micky?

KEVIN

Why? You wanna join our team?

FISHER

Listen to me, this is our turf. You're nothing but a tourist here.

KEVIN
Vegas is a big town, Jason.

FISHER
Why don't you play at Circus Circus?
That's a little more your speed, okay?

KEVIN
Tell me something. Is Kianna here?

FISHER
Why wouldn't she be? She's on my team.

KEVIN
The two of us playing the same
casino...it's no accident. You should
leave. Before it gets worse.

FISHER
Or what? Is that some kinda threat?

KEVIN
Y'know, Fisher, for an M.I.T. student,
you're an idiot.

Kevin reaches over and flushes Fisher's urinal. It splashes
all over his pants as Kevin quickly makes his way out.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin makes his way out of the bathroom and SEES Jill sitting
at another table. She looks at him, concerned. He plays cool
as he SEES Miles calling him in. Kevin takes out a pair of
mirrored shades and grabs a seat at Miles's table.

MONTAGE

Kevin and Micky go on an amazing run. Micky plays two hands,
draws a pair of Kings on one and a pair of 9's on the other.

He splits both hands, doubling up to \$20,000 on the table. He
draws blackjack on one hand and a 20 and two 19's on the
others. He wins \$22,500 in one round.

He's clearly basking in the neon glow, back in his element
for the first time in years. He orders a drink, tosses the
COCKTAIL WAITRESS a tip and holds court at his table.

Across the room, Kevin plays multiple hands. Doubling down,
splitting aces, coming up with back-to-back blackjacks. He
catches a signal from Andrew whose table has turned really
hot. He switches tables as Miles calls Micky in.

INT. MGM GRAND - SECURITY - NIGHT

Cole stands before the bank of monitors, flanked by THUGS. Standing beside him is the CASINO MANAGER.

ON THE MONITOR...We SEE images of Kevin and Micky with hundreds of thousands of dollars in chips stacked before them.

CASINO OWNER

I'm gonna lose my goddamn job. Are you gonna do something or what?

VINCENT COLE

It's not time.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Miles and Micky sit at a table. Low card after low card comes out of the shoe. Micky wins \$50,000 on a single hand. He tosses the Dealer a \$1,000 tip.

KEVIN (V.O.)

It was 4 AM. And we were up over a million dollars when Miles did the unthinkable.

Miles leans back and folds his arms over his chest, calling Kevin in. Kevin's eyes go toward Micky, not wanting two BP's at the same table.

Miles ignores this and folds his arms over his chest again. Kevin looks over to Jill. She's got nothing. Then Andrew. His table's cold.

KEVIN (V.O.) (cont'd)

For the first time ever, two Big Players were about to play the same table.

Kevin goes over and takes a seat. Miles talks to the Dealer.

MILES

You should see my room. It's the size of a voting booth. And the air conditioner's busted. I swear you could fry an egg in there.

Kevin tries to conceal his amazement.

KEVIN (V.O.)
 Voting booth and egg. An amazing plus
 30. It was a card counter's perfect
 storm.

Kevin pushes \$10,000 worth of chips into the circle. A WOMAN approaches. We recognize her from the opening scene. She's the RESTLESS WOMAN who told Kevin he'd had enough to drink.

RESTLESS WOMAN
 Is this seat taken?

MICKY
 Only by you, darlin'.

She sits at the table as the cards come out. Micky and Kevin go on a tear, ecstatic. A CROWD grows, watching the two men clean house. Black, purple, orange and brown chips fill the table. It's an unbelievable run.

The shoe is getting low, nearing the cut card. There's \$100,000 on the table. Micky draws a pair of 8's and splits. Kevin draws an 11 and doubles down.

There's now \$200,000 on the table. Their cards come out. Micky ends up with a 19 and 17. Kevin ends up with a 20. The Dealer's cards come out. He busts! The crowd ROARS.

INT. MGM GRAND - SECURITY - NIGHT

Cole and company watch on with the Casino Manager, who's not so quietly freaking out.

CASINO MANAGER
 To hell with my job. I'm gonna end up
 buried in the goddamn desert.
 (To Cole)
 If you don't stop this right now, I'm
 gonna send down my guys.

Cole, his eyes still on the monitor, turns to the Manager.

VINCENT COLE
 It's time.

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin sits at the blackjack table, wearing his mirrored shades. We realize we're back at the opening scene.

DEALER
 What do you say, "Frank?" It's been a
 helluva run. You in or you out?

Kevin goes to take a sip of his martini. It spills.

RESTLESS WOMAN

Don't you think you've had enough?

His face flushed, Kevin pushes \$50,000 worth of chips into the circle and smiles at the woman. He mumbles, drunkenly.

KEVIN

I'm splitting.

DEALER

Splitting tens!

A PIT BOSS nods "okay" as the Dealer deals Kevin a King on the first 10, and 9 on the second. The Dealer draws a 17. Kevin wins \$100,000. The Pit Boss nods to a FLOOR MANAGER.

Kevin looks over and SEES Jill. She runs her hand through her hair. He and Micky SEE the Yellow Jackets racing in. They quickly gather their chips, get up to leave.

DEALER (CONT'D)

You don't want to color up?

KEVIN

No, I like how they jiggle in my pants.

Kevin jams the chips into his pockets, slings the duffel bag over his shoulder. He and Micky head in opposite directions. Jill falls in with Kevin.

JILL

You split tens.

KEVIN

The count was twenty-four.

JILL

Yeah, and you tipped off the Eyes in the Sky. We're burnt.

(Beat)

If I don't get into law school 'cause of this, I'm gonna kill you.

KEVIN

Oh, shit.

Kevin stops cold as...four more YELLOW JACKETS appear at the door with Cole. Kevin turns quickly, trying to run in the opposite direction and slams into Security. They throw him to the ground, chips spilling out of his bag all over the floor.

ON MICKY...As he looks over his shoulder, SEES Kevin splayed out in the middle of the casino. He dodges arounds the craps tables, another exit straight ahead. Micky smiles as he steps through the doors...

EXT. MGM GRAND - CONTINUOUS

Micky exits and comes face-to-face with the Casino Manager. He's surrounded by SECURITY and OFFICERS.

CASINO OWNER
Mr. Rosa...If we could have a moment
of your time.

INT. MGM GRAND - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

The door opens as a YELLOW JACKET leads Micky inside. Already seated against the wall is Kevin, empty-handed, nursing a bruise on his face.

YELLOW JACKET
Make yourself comfortable.

The Yellow Jacket exits, closing the door behind him. Micky goes over and sits next to Kevin.

KEVIN
Thanks.

MICKY
For what?

KEVIN
For trying to help me out. You didn't
have to do it.

MICKY
Are you kidding? I wouldn't have
missed it for the world. Blackjack is
a sickness, Kev. It's an addiction.
I've been jonesing for what? 15 years
now? This was a chance to count with
you. Two of the best who ever played
the game. For one night. My biggest
win ever. The fix of a lifetime.
(Beat)
And I gotta tell you. It lived up to
the hype.

KEVIN
What's gonna happen now?

MICKY

They'll come in, slap us around a little. It's nothing a little dental bonding can't fix.

KEVIN

I'm talking about the IRS.

MICKY

\$612,500. That's a lot of money, kiddo.

Kevin turns to Micky, smiles.

KEVIN

That's funny.

MICKY

What's that?

KEVIN

I don't remember telling you the exact amount.

MICKY

Sure you did. That day at my apartment.

KEVIN

No, I think I said six-hundred thousand. Give or take.

MICKY

Kevin, what are you accusing me of?

KEVIN

I thought it wasn't supposed to be personal.

MICKY

You think I set you up with the IRS?

Micky smiles, takes a long beat.

MICKY (CONT'D)

We had a deal. You and me. We had something special. We even shook on it. Can you imagine that? A handshake. Remember when that used to mean something? Remember when someone's word was good enough?

KEVIN

I never wanted to break away from you.

MICKY

But you did. I gave you the goddamn ride of a lifetime.

KEVIN

And then used Kianna to leak our schedules to Cole. You got us all blacklisted. And screwed me with IRS.

MICKY

It's just business, kiddo.

(Beat)

I'm disappointed in you, Kevin. I really thought you could've been a winner.

The door opens as Cole enters with several Yellow Jackets. They close the door behind them. Cole tosses the loaded duffel bag of chips on a table.

VINCENT COLE

Looks like you fellas had quite a night.

(Beat)

So who's first?

Kevin stands up.

MICKY

That's the spirit, Kev. Take it like a man.

Kevin smiles at Micky, then turns to Cole.

KEVIN

We all square?

A Yellow Jacket opens the door for Kevin. Micky's stunned.

KEVIN (cont'd)

(To Cole, re: the chips)

After what you took from my room, you should let me keep this.

VINCENT COLE

I'm letting you keep your teeth.

MICKY

What the hell's going on?

KEVIN

It's just business, kiddo.

Kevin smiles at Micky and exits the room. Cole smiles at Micky.

VINCENT COLE

I've been wanting to nail your ass for fifteen goddamn years.

The Yellow Jackets close in on Micky as...

INT. MGM GRAND - CASINO - NIGHT

Kevin re-enters the casino and makes his way toward the door. On his way, he passes Kianna at a blackjack table. She looks at him, in shock. He's unscathed. He whispers in her ear.

KEVIN

I hope you know a good dentist.

Kevin walks off. As he passes the blackjack tables, we SEE Miles gather a huge amount of chips and get up from the table. At the next table, we see Andrew gather up his big stack of chips and stand up. At the next table we see...

HERB with a huge stack of chips. Next to him is STUART with his stack. A table over is JACKSON from 26-100 Lecture Hall. And other FAMILIAR M.I.T. STUDENTS we've seen in 26-100. They all gather their chips and head for the doors.

EXT. MGM GRAND - NIGHT

Kevin exits the casino. Sitting in the back of a stretch limo with the door open is Jill.

JILL

Hey, sexy. Need a ride?

Kevin goes over to her and gives her a kiss as...

INT. M.I.T. - AUDITORIUM - DAY

The place is packed with STUDENTS for the 2.70 Competition. STUDENTS are cheering. TV CREWS are capturing all the thrills and chills as machines throw ping pong balls into cylinders.

The floor clears as the next team sets up their machine, ready for competition. The PROFESSOR speaks into the microphone.

PROFESSOR

Team 21...? Has anyone seen Team 21?

The crowd falls silent as...

The auditorium doors fly open. Kevin, Miles, Andrew, Stuart and Herb enter with their machine. They get to the center of the floor. They take a beat, looks at each other.

HERB

Let's kick some ass.

The team YELLS, pumped up as their machine tosses ping pong balls in the cylinder, expertly. They're far better than their opponents. Kevin smiles at Andrew and Miles as...

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Kevin, carrying his 2.70 trophy, opens the door to his bedroom. He stops cold as he sees his father sitting on the edge of the bed. In Mr. Lewis's hand is a envelope.

MR. LEWIS

You want to tell me about this?

Kevin looks panicked, speechless. Mr. Lewis stands, takes a step toward him.

MR. LEWIS (cont'd)

You know we'd have to find out sooner or later.

KEVIN

Dad --

MR. LEWIS

No. Kevin, I want to say this.

Mr. Lewis takes a beat, gathers his thoughts.

MR. LEWIS (cont'd)

Never...And I mean, never. In the history of the Lewis family...have I been so proud. An 11.0 on your MCAT's? Harvard Med's gonna beg you to enroll.

(Beat, ecstatic)

You know, I don't know if anyone's ever said this to you before, but... You're a winner, kiddo.

He gives Kevin a big hug. As they hug, Kevin SEES the IRS letter on his desk. He tosses his jacket over it. Mr. Lewis pulls back, beaming, notices how nice Kevin's room is.

MR. LEWIS (cont'd)

Where'd you get all this stuff?

EXT. M.I.T. - GRADUATION - DAY

Killian Court is filled with STUDENTS in caps and gowns. The DEAN stands on the podium. Miles goes up to get his diploma.

DEAN

Miles Levy.

Kevin, wearing his mirrored shades, gets his diploma.

DEAN (cont'd)

Kevin Lewis

EXT. M.I.T. - GRADUATION - LATER

Kevin stands in between his proud, beaming parents as Miles snaps a photo. We CLOSE-IN on Kevin as...

KEVIN (V.O.)

Today's my twenty-second birthday. And gone are the days of 21. We walked out of the Grand that night with \$2 million. Our biggest take ever. I had no trouble paying off the IRS. And as for the rest of the money...

(Beat)

We invested it in a mutual fund. I'm currently earning 6%.

Kevin, Jill, Andrew, Miles, Stuart and Herb all stand arm-in-arm as Mr. Lewis snaps their picture. WE PAN OVER TO...

A classroom window. We SEE Fisher and Martinez staring out.

INT. M.I.T. - ROOM 4-145 - DAY

Fisher turns away from the window and addresses a new classroom of blackjack RECRUITS.

FISHER

Okay, so who knows the rules of Basic Strategy?

FADE OUT.

THE END