

BOUND

Written by

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FADE IN:

Inside a closet.

It is a large closet with double doors, a crisp line of light cutting down through the center of the darkness.

As we begin to descend, voices echo in our head.

VIOLET (V.O.)

I had this image of you, inside of
me, like a part of me.

We move past a shelf filled with hatboxes and handbags. It is a woman's closet.

CORKY (V.O.)

You planned this whole thing,
didn't you?

CAESAR (V.O.)

Where's the fucking money?

We glide over the tightly packed hangers, close enough to feel the different fabrics and descend past the dresses to the racks of high heels.

VIOLET (V.O.)

We make our own choices, we pay our
own prices.

CAESAR (V.O.)

All part of the business.

VIOLET (V.O.)

All part of the business.

CORKY (V.O.)

What choice?

We slide along the delicate taper of a stiletto heel and reach the bottom of the closet, where we find a pair of black Dr. Martens boots that are tied together with a white rope.

VIOLET (V.O.)

I want out.

We move up the boots and we see it is a woman who is bound, lying motionless on the floor of the closet, the rope coiling tightly around her wrists.

The crack at the bottom of the door lights her face. She is gagged and unconscious, a trickle of blood running down her forehead. Her name is CORKY.

VIOLET (V.O.)
Like a part of me.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Leaning against the back of the elevator is Corky, a very butch-looking woman with short hair and a black leather jacket. She is a lesbian and wants people to know it.

As the doors begin to slide shut, a woman yells.

WOMAN
Wait! Hold the elevator.

Corky pushes the "open" button. A couple steps into the elevator. His name is CAESAR, a middle-aged Italian, wearing an expensive suit and sunglasses.

She is VIOLET; a piece of sexual candy that would melt in your mouth.

She hears it again, a guttural sound.

CORKY
Thanks again for this opportunity,
Mr. Bianchinni. Goodbye.

She hangs up the phone and walks toward the wall.

As she gets closer, we hear a bed rocking, tapping against the wall.

The man's breathing grows more and more labored until finally it swells --

DISSOLVING
INTO:

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

The whining motor of a high-powered drain-rod.

The spiral cable whips wildly, spiraling deeper into the tub drain, black goo splattering everywhere.

The machine is so loud Corky almost cannot hear someone pounding on the apartment door.

Killing the motor, she stands and goes to the door.

Behind the door is Violet, wearing jeans, a white T-shirt and cowboy boots.

VIOLET

Hi. My name is Violet. We sort of met in the elevator --

CORKY

Yeah, sure. I'm Corky.

VIOLET

I heard you working in here and I just wondered if you'd like a cup of coffee?

She is holding two cups of coffee: one black, one with cream.

CORKY

Sure. Come on in. Give me a minute.

Violet steps inside as Corky goes back to the bathroom to wash off the drain dreck.

VIOLET

What happened to Rajeev?

Corky calls from the bathroom, scrubbing her hands vigorously.

CORKY

Who?

VIOLET

Rajeev, the man who usually works on the building.

CORKY

Oh, he went home to India, but as far as I know he'll be back.

She wipes her hands on her overalls, returning to the main room.

VIOLET

So this is temporary for you?

CORKY

Pretty much. One day at a time.

Violet hands her the cup of black coffee.

VIOLET
I guessed you were straight black.

CORKY
Good guess.

They both sip from the piping hot mugs.

CORKY (CONT'D)
Mmmm ... thanks, I needed this.

VIOLET
My pleasure ... but to be honest,
I did have a slightly ulterior
motive here. I was wondering if I
could ask a small favor?

CORKY
A favor?

VIOLET
Yeah, see, I'm kind of a night
person, so I was wondering if it
wasn't a terrible inconvenience if
you could wait a bit before using
power tools.

CORKY
Oh, I'm sorry --

VIOLET
No, it isn't your fault. The walls
here are just so thin.

CORKY
Are they really?

VIOLET
Yes, it really causes problems.
Sometimes it's like you're in the
same room. But if it's too much
trouble, I understand ...

CORKY
No, no trouble. There's other work
to do.

VIOLET
You're doing everything yourself?

CORKY
Yeah.

VIOLET

That is so amazing. I'm in awe of people who can fix things. My dad was like that. We never had anything new. Whenever something broke he would open it up, tinker with it and it would work. His hands were magic.

She looks at Corky's hands cupped around the mug.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Yeah ... I bet your car is twenty years old.

Corky smiles.

CORKY

Truck.

VIOLET

Truck. Of course.

CORKY

'63 Chevy.

VIOLET

I knew it.

VIOLET SIPS

VIOLET

So, how do you know the owner, Mr. Bianchini?

CORKY

I don't, really. I was referred to him.

VIOLET

Oh, really.

Corky suddenly feels she has revealed something.

CORKY

Do you know him?

VIOLET

No, but Caesar does. He likes him. Says he's a good Italian.

CORKY

Caesar is your husband?

VIOLET

Oh no, no. I'm not the marrying kind.

Smiling, she says nothing else.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

I should be going. You can drop the cup off anytime.

CORKY

Thanks.

VIOLET

My pleasure.

CORKY watches her leave.

EXT. THE WATERING HOLE - NIGHT

A dirty bar hidden away on a dark street, its cracked, moon-white sign the only evidence it exists.

Corky's truck swings into a space in front of a couple of large motorcycles. She flips her collar and heads for the door.

INT. THE WATERING HOLE - NIGHT

The smell of leather and cigarette smoke fills Corky's nose as she crosses to the bar.

BARTENDER

Well, well ...

Corky sits as the fat bartender waddles over.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Been awhile, Cork.

CORKY

Five years, two months, sixteen days. How you doing, Sue?

Corky puts a cigarette in her mouth and lights it.

SUE

Like shit. Now that we're all caught up, how about a drink?

Sue opens the refrigerator and pulls out two Old Styles.

CORKY

Thanks.

They click the bottles together and drink.

SUE
You got a job yet?

CORKY
Yeah. Some plumbing, painting and
shit.

Sue laughs.

SUE
I mean a J-O-B. A real job.

CORKY
Not for me, Sue. I'm straight and
narrow. I'm just here to get laid
or drunk and hopefully both.

Corky gets off the stool.

CORKY (CONT'D)
Thanks for the beer.

Looking around, she sees a woman alone at one of the back
tables. Through the smoky din, she bears a slight
resemblance to Violet.

The woman is dressed all in black, including a leather
jacket.

Smiling, Corky slides into the chair beside her. There is
no one smoother.

CORKY (CONT'D)
Hi.

WOMAN
Hello.

CORKY
You know ... that outfit would
look great on my bedroom floor.

The woman smiles just as someone taps Corky on the shoulder.

She turns and is face-to-face with a large bull of a woman
in a heavy leather Chicago Police jacket. She is more wide
than fat.

WOMAN COP
Hey, Jesse. What's happening here?

CORKY
Nothing ... yet.

WOMAN COP
Who's this?

Her coat opens as she puts her hands on her hips. A service revolver is clipped to her belt.

She squints at Corky, her head nodding in recognition.

WOMAN COP (CONT'D)
Wait, I know you.

CORKY
I don't think so.

WOMAN COP
I didn't know you were out.

Corky smiles at the woman in black.

CORKY
When you get tired of Cagney and
Lacey, come find me.

She heads for the exit.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The neighborhood would be politely described as "rough." Corky's truck does not stand out parked alone on the littered street.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It is a hole but it is home.

Corky is lying on her futon staring up at the ceiling, a beer resting on her stomach; a folk singer quietly croons from the radio.

We see the ceiling, a circle of light hovering over the small desk lamp. We move in on the spot, which slowly fills up the screen until there is nothing but the white light.

Suddenly a wet paint roller loaded with white paint cuts a swath across the ceiling.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

Corky is painting the ceiling. The folk ballad has become an angry Riot Grrrl anthem.

She is working hard, the roller sucking back and forth. Sweat covers her face.

Dropping the roller down, she reloads it in the tray when the phone rings. She stops and answers it.

CORKY

Hello? Oh, hi, Mr. Bianchinni ...
yes, everything is going fine. I
got the tub drain all cleaned out.

She listens for a moment.

CORKY (CONT'D)

What apartment?

She glances at the main wall.

CORKY (CONT'D)

All right, all right, I guess I
could take a look. Yeah, you're
welcome, goodbye.

She hangs up and looks again at the wall, feeling...
curious.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Corky knocks and after a moment Violet opens the door. She seems surprised.

VIOLET

Oh no. Shit. I didn't know he
would call you. God, you must
think I'm a total nuisance.

CORKY

Not exactly.

VIOLET

I'm sorry, I usually would call
Rajeev, but I didn't know what to
do so I called Mr. Bianchinni.

CORKY

He said you lost something.

VIOLET

Yeah, come on in.

She steps back and Corky walks inside.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Violet leads her through the apartment. It is expensively furnished with very masculine tastes; a lot of gray and black leather.

VIOLET

I was doing some dishes and just as
I pulled the stopper my earring
fell in.

Corky looks at her blankly.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

It's one of my favorites. That's
why I got upset. I know it
probably seems ridiculous to you.

An eyebrow goes up.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, look, forget it. I
shouldn't have called...

CORKY

I told Bianchinni I would take a
look. Is it that sink?

Violet nods.

She opens the sink cabinet and pulls out a pair of channel locks from her back pocket. The teeth of the channel locks open and bite onto the pressure nut.

CORKY (CONT'D)

Do you have a pot or a bucket?

VIOLET

Sure.

She hands one down to her. Corky slides it under the curved pipe.

As she works, Corky feels herself staring at Violet, at the hem of her dress curving tightly around her thighs.

Water begins to trickle into the pan.

The nut slides loose and Corky tips the trap. Water splashes into the pan with a soft metal "tink."

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Did you find it?

Corky fishes into gray water and pulls out the earring.

Violet screams, a huge smile on her face, half-falling as she tries to hug Corky.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
I can't believe it! You did it!

Corky leans back under and replaces the trap.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Thank you so much. You have to let me pay you something --

CORKY
No. Mr. Bianchinni asked me to do it. I did it.

Corky checks the drain by running the water.

VIOLET
If you won't take money, how about a drink? It's getting late. You can't work all night.

Corky eyes her for a moment.

CORKY
Okay, one drink.

VIOLET
What do you want?

CORKY
A beer?

VIOLET
A beer. Of course.

She smiles and turns to the bar.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Sit down.

Corky sits on the black leather couch and Violet returns with two bottles of Heineken. Corky sneers.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Thanks again.

They clink the bottles and swig.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
You seem uncomfortable. Do I make
you nervous, Corky?

CORKY
No.

She looks at Violet, then takes another long pull on the
bottle.

VIOLET
Thirsty, maybe.

Violet smiles, her eyes again talking for her.

CORKY
Curious, maybe.

VIOLET
Curious? That's funny, I'm feeling
a bit curious myself right now.

Violet notices the tattoo on Corky's arm.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
That's a great tattoo.

She reaches over and touches it.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Beautiful labrys.

Corky is a bit suprised that she knows what it is. She
nods, rubbing it as if trying to hide it.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Are you suprised that I know what
it is?

CORKY
Maybe.

VIOLET
I have a tattoo, would you like to
see it?

She moves closer, sliding over the leather cushions as she
opens the front of her dress.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
A woman in upstate New York did it
for me.

She is not wearing a bra.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Here. Do you like it?

Set against the soft white skin of her breast is a bright green-stemmed violet.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
It took her all day to do it. She promised me it wouldn't hurt, but it was sore for a long time after. I couldn't even touch it.

Corky looks up from Violet's breast to her dark eyes.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
But now I love the way it feels.

She runs her fingers softly over the slightly scarred skin.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Here, touch it.

Corky feels the blood pounding in her ears as Violet takes her hand and places it on her breast.

CORKY
What are you doing?

Violet looks at her.

VIOLET
Isn't it obvious? I'm trying to seduce you.

CORKY
Why?

VIOLET
Because I want to. I've wanted to since I first saw you in the elevator.

Corky watches her, trying to figure her out even as her thumb presses into Violet's nipple.

Inhaling sharply, Violet closes her eyes; she can feel Corky staring at her.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
You don't believe me. But I can prove it to you.

She takes Corky's wrist and begins pulling her hand down her body.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 You can't believe me because of
 what you see ...

She forces Corky's hand between her legs, up under her dress.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 But you can believe what you feel.

Violet opens her eyes, a wanton smile on her lips.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 You see ... I've been thinking
 about you all day.

Corky's forearm flexes and Violet moans.

With both hands, Violet takes hold of Corky's forearm.

CORKY
 You planned this whole thing?

Violet's head swims; she is unable to breathe.

CORKY (CONT'D)
 You dropped that earring down the
 drain on purpose, didn't you?

VIOLET
 If I say yes, will you take your
 hand away?

CORKY
 No.

VIOLET
 ... yes.

Now it is Corky who smiles.

Violet shivers, her thighs rubbing, her hips thrusting against Corky's hand.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 Please, Corky ... please ...

Her eyes barely open.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 ... kiss me.

In a single motion, Corky takes hold of the back of her neck and covers Violet's open mouth with her own.

With her hand still stuffed between Violet's legs, Corky lays her back onto the couch as the kiss becomes more --

More desperate, more hungry until --

We hear the front door unlock and open.

CAESAR

Violet?

Violet's eyes pop open and she pushes Corky back.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Violet, you home?

They scramble to compose themselves.

VIOLET

Yeah. In here, C.

He comes around the corner and in the dim light sees the two figures sitting close on the couch.

CAESAR

What's this?

He mistakes Corky for a man.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

What the fuck is this?

Violet stands as Caesar barrels toward the couch.

VIOLET

I didn't expect --

CAESAR

What the fuck is going on?

Corky stands and turns, Caesar suddenly realizing that she is a woman.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Oh, shit ...

VIOLET

Caesar, this is Corky. Corky, Caesar.

CAESAR

I'm sorry, Christ, I thought ...
it's fucking dark in here.

He reaches to the wall for the lights.

VIOLET
She is working for Bianchinni.

Caesar extends his hand.

CAESAR
Oh, right, right. Don mentioned
that to me. Hi, welcome to the
family.

Corky shakes his hand.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
You're helping Rajeev?

CORKY
No. Rajeev's in India.

VIOLET
She's doing the work herself.

CAESAR
No shit. Bianchinni hired you?
You know he's a good friend of
mine. |Family, really.

CORKY
That's what Violet said.

He looks at her as if he knows something.

CAESAR
So, you just got out?

VIOLET
Jesus, Caesar!

CAESAR
What? It ain't no big fuckin'
deal. I know who Don hires. Did
you know he did time himself?

Corky shakes her head.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Thirteen fucking years. See, there
ain't no secrets here.

Corky doesn't like this man.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
How many'd you do?

CORKY

Five.

He whistles.

CAESAR

Not bad. What for?

VIOLET

That's none of your goddamn business, Caesar.

CAESAR

You're right. You don't have to tell me, if you don't want to. I just hope you understand you're among good people here.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a thick fold of money and peels several hundreds. Corky stares at it.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Come on, come on. if you understand what I'm talking about you're going to take the money. if you don't, I'm going to have to worry about you.

Corky takes it. Caesar smiles.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Good. I hate to worry. I got ulcers.

CORKY

I should be going.

CAESAR

What? How about a drink?

CORKY

My brushes, I have to clean my brushes. Thanks, though.

CAESAR

Another time.

CORKY

Sure.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Close on the paintbrush, Corky's fingers pushing through and separating the black bristles under the running water.

When the brush is clean, she flicks it dry and resets the edge.

She goes to the sink to wash her hands when she stops, noticing her left hand.

It is the hand that was between Violet's legs.

She is about to smell her finger when she sees herself in the mirror.

CORKY
What are you doing?

She drops her hand.

CORKY (CONT'D)
What am I doing? I'm fucking up,
that's what I'm doing.

She scrubs her hands clean.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

It is late, the area burnished with amber street light. Corky walks from the building to her truck.

She climbs inside and slides the key into the ignition, when suddenly the passenger door opens and --

Violet gets in. Stunned, Corky stares at her.

VIOLET
I had to see you.

CORKY
Look, I don't think this is a good
idea.

VIOLET
I wanted to apologize.

CORKY
Don't apologize, please. I can't
stand women who apologize for
wanting sex.

Violet smiles.

VIOLET
I'm not apologizing for what I did -
-

She slides across the seat.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
I'm apologizing for what I didn't
do.

She kisses Corky, and if Corky is trying to resist, we can't tell.

The windshield is beginning to steam when Violet, panting, breaks the kiss.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Do you have a bed somewhere?

Unable to speak, Corky reaches over and starts the engine.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The sex.

There is nothing flower-scented or out-of-focus about it.

It is sweaty, slippery, body-grinding, bed-squeaking lesbian sex --

Pungent and potent --

And when it is over, neither woman can move.

Finally, Corky's eyes flutter open.

CORKY
I can see again.

Violet smiles.

Slowly, Corky gets up and goes to the fridge. She grabs a beer and presses it to her sweating forehead.

After a moment, she lowers it, gently pressing the cold can elsewhere. Eyes closed, she lets out a long "Ahh."

Violet hears the sizzle-pop of the beer as Corky returns to the bed.

She holds the beer to Violet's lips and tilts the can, watching Violet's throat as she drinks.

Violet's eyes open.

VIOLET
... I needed that.

CORKY
Tell me about it.

Corky hands her the beer as Violet sits up a bit.

CORKY (CONT'D)
Caesar's Mafia, isn't he?

VIOLET
You have to ask?

CORKY
No.

VIOLET
Funny, nobody calls it that
anymore. Caesar calls it "The
|Business."

CORKY
How did you meet him?

VIOLET
They took over a club I was working
at. Caesar started managing it.

CORKY
He's a launderer?

VIOLET
Basically.

CORKY
How long have you been with him?

VIOLET
Almost five years.

CORKY
Five years is a long time.

VIOLET
Yes, it is.

Corky stares at her beer. She knows what Violet is thinking.

CORKY
The redistribution of wealth.

VIOLET
What?

CORKY
Isn't that what you wanted to know?
What I did time for?

VIOLET
The redistribution of wealth?

CORKY
That's what I tell someone when I'm
trying to get them in my bed.

VIOLET
I'm already in your bed.

CORKY
My cellmate would say she did her
time for getting caught. She was
always more honest than me.

Corky sips her beer.

CORKY (CONT'D)
I started stealing when I was
little. We were piss-poor, which is
not an excuse, just a fact.

It isn't like her to talk about this, especially with
someone she just met.

CORKY (CONT'D)
The first time I remember so
vividly. A bunch of us kids were at
Waxman's Drugstore, when Mr.
Waxman, who was a mean old prick,
always worrying about us robbing
him, dropped a roll of quarters.

We can almost hear the coins tinkling on the tile floor.

CORKY (CONT'D)
I can still hear that sound, those
quarters, because right then
something clicked inside of me.
Some instinct took over and as
everyone, including Waxman, dove
down, I reached up and emptied the
cash register.

Violet smiles. She likes this woman.

CORKY (CONT'D)
I gave most of the money to my mom.
I told her I found it at the
trainyard. She was so happy she
cried, calling me her lucky charm.
Fifteen years later, I guess my
luck ran out.

She swallows that with beer.

CORKY (CONT'D)
 Sometimes I tell myself that I
 didn't have a choice, that stealing
 was surviving. Usually I can admit
 that's bullshit. I did it because
 it was a way out. It was easy and
 I was good at it, real good.

She glances at Violet.

CORKY (CONT'D)
 I don't usually talk this much. I
 guess I have been rehabilitated.

Violet laughs.

VIOLET
 You didn't have to tell me if you
 didn't want to.

CORKY
 I guess I wanted to.

VIOLET
 I'm glad you did.

CORKY
 So am I.

EXT. PARKING LOT DAY

Corky gets out of her truck carrying her tools. Grinning
 like someone who has been well-laid, she whistles off to
 work.

EXT. LOBBY - DAY

Between the main doors she sees a man. His name is SHELLY
 and he is an overdressed accountant.

He is very nervous, talking to someone through the intercom.

SHELLY
 I know he's gone. Please. I have
 to talk to you.

Fiddling with her keys, Corky recognizes the voice that
 answers him.

VIOLET (V.O.)
 What do you want, Shelly?

Shelly glances over his shoulder at Corky, answering in a hushed voice.

SHELLY

I have to leave. Tonight.

For a moment the intercom is silent. Then the door buzzes and Shelly pushes inside. Corky follows him to the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Corky glares at Shelly and begins pumping the trigger of her circular saw.

Shelly hides behind his sunglasses, watching the elevator numbers go up. The doors open and he scurries out.

INT. HALL - DAY

She watches him enter Caesar's apartment, her smile now completely gone.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

It is later. Through the wall we listen to the same sound as before of two people making love. We drop down and find Corky's brush, still wet with paint, abandoned in her tray.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Her face glistening with sweat, Violet climaxes, letting the orgasm spread through her like melting butter.

VIOLET

I had this image of you, inside of
me ...

She flattens her palms against the soft cradle of her pelvis.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Like a part of me ...

As she opens her eyes, we see that her lover is Corky. Violet watches as she gets off the bed and begins to get dressed.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

You are so beautiful.

Corky does not answer as she yanks her pants on. Violet sits up. She can feel that something is wrong.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

CORKY
Nothing.

Violet pulls the sheet around her.

VIOLET
Yes there is. I felt it this morning when I brought you the coffee.

CORKY
Shit, here we go.

VIOLET
You didn't want to see me, did you?

CORKY
If there is one thing I can't stand about sleeping with women, it's all the fucking mind reading.

VIOLET
What are you afraid of?

CORKY
I'm not afraid of anything.

VIOLET
I don't understand - ?

CORKY
I know! You can't understand, because we're different, Violet. We're different.

VIOLET
We're not that different, Corky.

CORKY
How can you sit in that bed and say that?

VIOLET
Because it's the truth.

CORKY
Let me guess. This is where you tell me that what matters is on the inside. That inside you, there is a little dyke just like me?

VIOLET

Oh no, she's nothing like you.
She's a lot smarter than you.

CORKY

Is that what her daddy tells her?

VIOLET

I know what I am. I don't need to
have it tattooed on my shoulder.

CORKY

What are you saying? That you
don't have sex with men?

VIOLET

I don't.

CORKY

For Christ's sake, Violet! I heard
you! Thin walls, remember?

VIOLET

What you heard wasn't sex.

CORKY

What the fuck was it?

VIOLET

All my life, everyone has been
telling me that when I have sex,
I'm not really having sex. Not
real sex. But they're wrong. I
know what is and isn't sex and what
you heard was definitely not sex.

CORKY

What was it then?

VIOLET

Work.

That knocks Corky back.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

You made certain choices in your
life that you paid for. You said
you made them because you were good
at something and it was easy. Do
you think you're the only one
that's good at something?

Violet stare pins Corky to the wall.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

We make our own choices and we pay our own prices. I think we're more alike than you want to admit.

CORKY

What about that guy this morning?

VIOLET

You mean Shelly?

CORKY

Don't tell me, you're a workaholic.

VIOLET

No. Shelly knows what I am. He saw me in a bar with another woman.

CORKY

I suppose he just wants to watch.

That's all Violet can take.

VIOLET

Fuck it! I think you better leave.

CORKY

I think so, too.

Violet turns away.

VIOLET

Try not to steal anything on the way out.

That stings but Corky walks out without looking back.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

It is dark now. Corky is standing above the paint tray that has skinned over. She picks up the brush. It is dry with paint.

CORKY

Shit.

She throws the brush across the room.

EXT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A green-and-white street sign juts in the foreground of Caesar's upscale apartment building.

The sign reads: "FRANKLIN STREET."

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The rusty Chevy glides to a stop in a parking space near the service entrance. In its payload is a boxed bathroom vanity and sink.

Corky climbs out of the cab and into the back, unhooking the bungee cords that hold down the boxes.

She looks up as a black Lincoln Town Car screeches into a spot not far from her truck. THREE SERIOUS-LOOKING MEN get out, leading a fourth, Shelly.

He is the only one who seems to notice Corky.

They enter the building, the door closing behind them.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Corky's legs jut out from the old wicker vanity as she finishes detaching its anchors and pipe work.

She stands, giving it a yank and pulling it away from the wall, when voices begin to filter in from the next-door apartment.

She listens - a rising string of warbling sobs drowned out by an angry voice.

ANGRY VOICE

Shut the fuck up! You piece of shit!

We hear a scream.

ANGRY VOICE (CONT'D)

You're going to tell us! You're going to fuckin' tell us! just a matter of fuckin' time!

Each sentence is punctuated with grunts and thuds.

ANGRY VOICE (CONT'D)

Where is it? Where the fuck is it?!

We begin to close in on Corky as she listens to each thud, watching something that disturbs her.

ANGRY VOICE (CONT'D)

You shit! You piece of shit!

With each thud the water in the toilet shimmers like a struck cymbal. As we move closer, the sound swells until --

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CAESAR'S BATHROOM DAY

Where blood splatters the toilet, heavy drops hitting the water and spreading like inverted mushroom clouds.

ANGRY VOICE

Did that hurt? News flash, fucko:
I'm just getting started.

The angry voice belongs to JOHNNIE MARZZONE. Shelly is kneeling in front of the toilet, hands tied behind his back with electrical wire.

Johnnie Marzzone is a flashy young man in Armani slacks, silk shirt and silver-tipped cowboy boots. His tie is tucked in, as if torture were a fine-dining experience.

Caesar and two other men are crammed in the small bathroom.

JOHNNIE

You got nerve trying to fuck us!
Nobody fucks me! Nobody fucks my
father! Nobody! Nobody!

Shelly screams as Johnnie repeatedly rams his face into the toilet.

CAESAR

Whoa, whoa. Come on, he's making
too much noise.

JOHNNIE

You hear that, bitch? Be quiet!

CAESAR

Here, put this in his mouth.

Caesar hands a towel to Johnnie, who stuffs it into Shelly's mouth.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Like Corky, Violet can hear the beating. She is trying to block it out but cannot.

Standing at the bar, she runs the blender, grinding ice cubes, trying to drown out the sounds of the bathroom.

The bathroom door opens.

JOHNNIE

Prick! I can go all night! All night!

Caesar steps out, shutting the door, masking the sounds behind him. Violet moves toward him.

VIOLET

Caesar, I'm leaving.

CAESAR

What? Oh, come on, I didn't use one of the good towels.

The door opens again as someone else steps out.

VIOLET

Caesar, I'm serious. This is too much. I have to get out of here.

CAESAR

Why? 'Cause you know him?

She nods.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

You women are so fucking sensitive.

He takes hold of her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

But I don't want you to go. I like you here. You know this isn't easy for me, either.

He embraces her. Over his shoulder she sees MICKEY MALNANO in the hallway, staring at her.

He is an older man, hair graying, built like a fireplug. Siney mass strains at his Brooks Brothers suit.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Now why don't you go watch some TV or something?

MICKEY

Are you okay, Violet?

CAESAR

Mickey, why is Johnnie here? You know how I feel about that fucking psycho.

Mickey continues to stare at Violet, who looks up at him with her big doe eyes.

MICKEY
Caesar, didn't I tell you to get something?

CAESAR
Sure, Mickey. Sure.

He goes to the kitchen.

Mickey moves closer to Violet, lifting her chin the way a father would do to his little girl.

MICKEY
You shouldn't have to see this.
Why don't you get out of here? Go for a walk.

VIOLET
Caesar wants me to stay.

MICKEY
Don't worry about Caesar. I'll handle Caesar. You just get out of here, okay?

She smiles.

VIOLET
Thanks, Mickey.

Caesar returns from the kitchen. He is holding a pair of tin snips. Mickey takes them.

MICKEY
Thanks, C. Now let's end this thing.

Violet watches them return to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Mickey takes off his coat and hands it to a large man named LOU. He slaps Johnnie on the back.

MICKEY
Hey, Johnnie, ease up, okay.

Johnnie hits Shelly once more.

JOHNNIE
Prick.

Johnnie checks his hair in the mirror, carefully. Then he begins putting on the rings he had removed for the beating.

Mickey kneels down next to Shelly's ear and motions to Lou, who lifts Shelly's bound arms.

MICKEY

Shelly, I'm going to ask you ten times. You understand? Ten times.

Mickey grabs Shelly's pinky finger, putting it between the metal blades.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

One. Where is our money?

Shelly whimpers, red-faced and sobbing. There is a sick crunch and Shelly howls into his gag as his pinky finger bounces to the floor amid the expensive leather footwear.

CAESAR

Aw ... Christ.

We hear Caesar retrieve a tissue and his hand enters the frame, scooping up the pinky.

He plunks the severed finger into the toilet and it sinks to the bottom.

Caesar drops the toilet seat down and flushes.

INT. BATHROOM - EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

Corky can't stand it anymore. She throws her tools down, leaves the bathroom and finds --

Violet waiting in the main room. Both women stand apart in silence.

Violet seems on the verge of saying something but doesn't know how to start. Her lip begins to quiver; her eyes search the room, returning to Corky each time.

The violence in the next room can still be heard.

CORKY

Violet? Are you all right?

Almost unnoticeably, Violet shakes her head. Corky puts her arm around her.

CORKY

Come on. Let's go.

INT. BAR - DAY

It is the kind of bar businessmen drink at in the afternoon. Dark wood and padded leather.

The bartender, joking with a cluster of men, does not notice Corky as she moves up to the bar.

CORKY

Excuse me.

The bartender glances over.

CORKY (CONT'D)

Draft beer and a TNT.

Corky eyes the men, who stare into their drinks.

The bartender says nothing as he puts the drinks in front of her.

Corky heads for her table, ignoring the whispers and snickers.

Corky and Violet, the only women in the room, sit close together at a far corner table.

Violet's voice is hushed.

VIOLET

Shelly was skimming from the business. He came to see me yesterday because he was afraid Caesar figured it out. He wanted to run but he wanted me to come with him.

CORKY

Even though he knew about you?

VIOLET

Yes.

CORKY

He was in love with you, right?

VIOLET

That's what he told himself. But it wasn't even about me, it was about Caesar. He wanted what Caesar had. That's how they are. I understand them.

She glances around the room; a man at the bar smiles at her.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

For Shelly, taking the money was a way to take from Caesar. He could have run at any time, but he didn't because he didn't want out.

CORKY

Sounds like he wanted to get caught.

VIOLET

Maybe he did. He would brag to me all the time. He was never afraid of Caesar because he didn't know him. Not like I do.

Two men sit down near them, laughing.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Caesar lives for these moments. He tells me it's just the business, but I know it's more than that. He likes it. The violence. I'll catch him in the bathroom mirror touching his scars. He says they remind him who he his. They're all like that. Except maybe Mickey.

CORKY

Mickey?

VIOLET

He's the part of the business that the rest of them pretend to be. |But Mickey doesn't like it like they do. I suppose that's why he's good at it.

Violet stares at her glass, at the melting ice.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

I used to be able to block it out. I would tell myself that I wasn't really there so nothing really mattered. But I can't do it anymore.

She downs the last of her drink.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

I've been making the same mistake Shelly made. But now I know what |I want.

She turns to Corky.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

I want out. I want a new life. I see what I've been waiting for, but I need you, Corky.

CORKY

For what?

VIOLET

You made a choice once. Do you think you would make that same choice again?

CORKY

What choice?

VIOLET

If those quarters fell to the floor, would you still reach up to that cash register?

Corky stares at her, knowing where this is going. She glances around the crowded bar.

CORKY

Not here.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Corky's truck sits in a gravel parking lot.

INT. CORKY'S TRUCK - DAY

Through the back window of the truck, Violet and Corky are silhouettes against the street light.

VIOLET

Caesar is going to get the money and bring --

CORKY

How much money?

VIOLET

Shelly said it was over two million dollars.

Corky quietly swallows that pill. It begins to rain.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Caesar will bring it to the
apartment to count and go through
|Shelly's books to figure out how
he did it.

CORKY
Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Do
you have any idea what you are
saying? You are asking me to help
you fuck the mob.

Violet nods.

CORKY (CONT'D)
These people are serious, Violet.
If you want to know how serious,
ask Shelly. They're worse than any
cop because they have lots of money
and no rules. You fuck them,
you've got to do it right.

VIOLET
That's why I need your help. You
said you were good.

CORKY
I am, but ...

She knows Violet is challenging her.

CORKY (CONT'D)
All right, let's say for the moment
that I believe everything you are
saying.

VIOLET
You think I'm lying?

CORKY
I didn't say that, but since you
did, let's say that you are. It
would have been easy to set Shelly
up. You could have got him killed
knowing that Caesar would bring the
money to the apartment.

Violet stares, her face poker-blank.

CORKY (CONT'D)
All you would need to keep yourself
clean would be someone unconnected,
someone like me.

VIOLET
Is that what you think?

CORKY
I'm just making a point. You have
no idea what you're asking. How
much trust two people need to do
something like this.

She moves closer to Violet, the sound of the rain beating
against the metal cab.

CORKY (CONT'D)
For me, stealing is a lot like sex.
Two people that want the same thing
sit in a room and they talk, they
start to plan and it's like
flirting, a kind of foreplay,
because the more they talk about
it, the wetter they get.

She stops.

CORKY (CONT'D)
The difference is, I can have sex
with someone I just met, someone I
hardly know, but to steal I need to
know someone like I know myself.

VIOLET
Do you think you know me like that?

CORKY
I think ...

They are close enough to kiss.

CORKY (CONT'D)
We're going to find out.

Corky pulls back.

CORKY (CONT'D)
But first, I want to see this
money.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Violet springs from the couch as the front door crashes
open, Caesar charging in. He is doubled over, clutching
something to his stomach.

He rushes to the kitchen, dumping a bloody bundle into the double sink. There is blood everywhere, smeared up and down Caesar's front.

VIOLET
Oh my God ...

Violet takes a step toward him, unsure of what has happened.

CAESAR
Don't worry. It ain't mine.

He pulls a bottle of whiskey and a glass from the cupboard.

VIOLET
Caesar, what happened?

CAESAR
It was unbelievable! Un-fucking-believable!

He pours himself a shot, belting it back.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Goddammit, look at this shirt!
It's ruined!

He begins unbuttoning the bloody shirt.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
It started when Shelly took us to the money. I tell you, Mickey Malnato knows his shit, he does. Shelly takes us right there.

He throws down another shot.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
So Shelly's down on his knees and he's pulling out this bag of money from a safe in the floor and I'm staring at it like "holy fuck!" I mean, look at it --

He tears open the bloody bag, wet money bricks spilling out.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
And all I can think is how the fuck did he do this when - Bang! Johnnie caps him. Blood sprays everywhere, all over the money. We've no idea if this is even all of it.

Caesar is exasperated.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

And right then I go through the roof and - Boom! I belt the dumb fuck as hard as I can. I didn't care whose son he was, I just wanted to hit him again. Knock some sense into that dumb son of a bitch.

He looks at the pile of bloody money.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Just look at this mess I got to deal with.

VIOLET

What are you going to do with it?

CAESAR

I told them to run it through the cycles. But I guess Gino has plans for it because he's coming here tomorrow night to pick this shit up.

Searching through a sink cabinet, he can't find what he needs.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Where the hell's the laundry detergent?

VIOLET

Ummm ... in the linen closet.

Caesar walks down the hall to the bathroom. Violet's eyes do not move from the pile of money.

Corky seems to come from nowhere. She whispers.

CORKY

Come to my place in the morning.
Early, okay?

Violet nods.

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Corky's hands twitch, and then flex against the ropes that bind them.

A reflex echoes through her body, muscles spasm and limbs jerk against their bonds.

As if in a dream, she struggles, trying to get free, fighting toward the edge of consciousness until --

She seems to succumb, slipping back into stillness.

We move toward her face, her closed eyes as we again hear the voices in her head.

VIOLET (V.O.)
You're having second thoughts.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Violet is on the bed, Corky at the window.

CORKY
... no.

She turns to Violet.

CORKY (CONT'D)
You said he washed the money?

VIOLET
Yeah.

CORKY
Then what? Exactly.

VIOLET
He hung it up.

CORKY
What?

VIOLET
To let it dry.

She begins to focus on the memory.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
It was unreal ...

Moving in on her face.

MATCH CUT TO:

Benjamin Franklin's face on a hundred-dollar bill.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Franklin's face rotates as we pull back, seeing rows of bills carefully paper-clipped to lines of string.

VIOLET (V.O.)
Hundreds, paper-clipped everywhere
like leaves.

Eyes filled with green, Violet turns inside the laundry lines of money until she sees Caesar.

Wearing his undershirt, he is across the room standing at the ironing board, ironing every single bill.

He seems to have one eye on her, one eye on his work.

VIOLET (V.O.)
Then one by one, he ironed all of
it.

He sprays starch across several bills and presses the steaming iron to them.

CORKY (V.O.)
Did he sleep?

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Violet is in bed, unable to sleep, listening to the machine-shuffle of Caesar's bill counter.

VIOLET (V.O.)
No. But neither did I.

We move past her, floating toward the wall.

VIOLET (V.O.)
All night long I listened to that
sound.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

We drift across Caesar's desk, past bricks of bound bills, as Caesar folds the paper tape around another stack.

CORKY (V.O.)
What sound?

He hits the counter again and we hear the sound, now very loud as hundreds blur by, fluttering beneath us.

VIOLET (V.O.)
The sound of money.

The sound rolls into thunder --

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

That seems to shake the apartment.

CORKY
And where is it now?

VIOLET
In his office. I saw it this morning.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Violet cautiously enters the office with a cup of coffee.

Working furiously at the computer, Caesar jumps when he sees her, bloodshot eyes animal-wide.

He checks his watch as she sets the coffee in front of him.

VIOLET
I need to go to the store.

He nods automatically, back in his work, as she sees the briefcase filled with perfect rows of hundreds.

VIOLET (V.O.)
It's in a case, on his desk.

CORKY (V.O.)
Does the case lock?

We see the open top with its silver flip-over locks.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Violet is trying to remember.

VIOLET
Yes.

CORKY
Good.

Corky begins to pace, ordering the information in her head.

CORKY (CONT'D)
All right, now, tell me about Johnnie.

VIOLET
Johnnie?

CORKY
It sounded like he and Caesar don't
like each other.

VIOLET
Like each other? They hate each
other.

CORKY
Why?

VIOLET
It started way before I was around.
I think basically it's because he
thinks Johnnie is a complete idiot.
But Johnnie runs Chicago because
Gino is his father.

CORKY
Who is Gino?

Violet suddenly feels that she has made a mistake.

VIOLET
Gino Marzzone.

CORKY
Marzzone? As in Angelo Marzzone,
head of the Marzzone family?

VIOLET
That's his brother.

CORKY
... shit.

Corky covers her mouth.

CORKY (CONT'D)
Gino Marzzone is coming tonight to
pick up the money?

VIOLET
Yeah.

CORKY
And Johnnie is his son, that's
Johnnie Marzzone?

VIOLET
Yeah.

CORKY
Sweet Jesus.

Eyes wide, she paces, pulling at her lip, mumbling.

Suddenly she freezes as it clicks into place. She looks at Violet.

CORKY (CONT'D)

It's perfect.

She's pacing again.

CORKY (CONT'D)

Gino Marzzone is coming to your apartment. It's a big deal, isn't it? That means Caesar will be ready. He doesn't want to look like an idiot. Gino has been there before?

VIOLET

Yeah, twice.

CORKY

What happened?

VIOLET

Not much, really. Caesar was nervous, kept cleaning the apartment. The first time, he picked out the dress he wanted me to wear.

Something occurs to Corky.

CORKY

Does Johnnie hit on you?

VIOLET

Johnnie hits on anything in high heels.

CORKY

Has Caesar ever seen him?

VIOLET

He does it right in front of him.

CORKY

It's getting better and better. Keep going.

VIOLET

Gino doesn't know English, or at least he pretends he doesn't, so he doesn't talk much.

(MORE)

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 He gets right to the point. Both times they talked for about five minutes, had one drink and then they left.

CORKY
 What did Gino drink?

VIOLET
 Scotch, Glenlivet. I remember that Caesar made a huge deal about it.

Corky smiles, the wheels rolling.

CORKY
 All right ...

She turns from the window and gets onto the bed.

CORKY (CONT'D)
 I have an idea to make this work.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - DAY

Violet is getting dressed, lining her lips with lip-pencil.

CORKY (V.O.)
 You'll go back and get ready, take your time, make it real.

As she works on her face, we see the room behind her and the discarded dresses scattered about.

CORKY (V.O.)
 The more attractive you are, the more believable it will be.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Corky breaks her thought-train.

CORKY
 What time did you say they would be there?

VIOLET
 The plane is in at seven, so I'd say about eight.

CORKY
 Any bodyguards?

VIOLET

Gino travels with a big man named Roy. Caesar calls him the driver.

CORKY

Fine.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Caesar again checks his watch.

CORKY (V.O.)

At some point Caesar is going to quit. I'd guess sometime around six, making sure he's got time to get ready.

The watch reads 6:10. Caesar rubs his eyes, his temples.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Violet is at the bar in a sexy dress and high heels.

CAESAR

Un-fucking-believable, what this guy did. Shelly is one smart-ass motherfucker, I mean, he was one smart- ass motherfucker.

He laughs as Violet smiles, handing him an enormous drink.

CORKY (V.O.)

As soon as he is done, you'll be right there to put a big drink in his hand.

He takes the drink.

CORKY (V.O.)

We want him to come down, to relax, feel in control again.

VIOLET

Poor boy, has to work so hard.

She gives him a woman's sympathy pout; he knows what it, loves it anyway.

Smiling, he slides his hand down over her ass.

CAESAR

You look good enough to eat.

She smiles and waits for the kiss she knows is coming.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Both women are starting to feel it, to believe it.

VIOLET
Where will you be?

CORKY
Waiting in the apartment next door.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT

Corky sits on the floor of the dark apartment. She has taken off her boots, which are beside her.

VIOLET (V.O.)
Waiting for what?

Through the wall we can hear the shower.

CORKY (V.O.)
For the shower. That will be our signal.

Corky opens a thin box filled with needle-thin lock picks.

She selects several and slips them into her multi-pierced ears like earrings.

CORKY (V.O.)
When he's done with his shower, you will go to the bar.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

In slow motion, Caesar drops the shower plunger and water chokes from the faucet.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Behind the bar, Violet pulls out the bottle of Glenlivet.

CORKY (V.O.)
You'll get out the Scotch that Gino drinks.

Violet steps out from the bar, her eyes on the bedroom, when the bottle slips from her hands.

We watch it slowly fall --

CORKY (V.O.)
 And as you do, the bottle will slip
 from your hands. -- and shatter
 against the hardwood floor.

CORKY (V.O.)
 An accident.

VIOLET
 Shit! Oh shit!

Caesar yells from the bathroom.

CAESAR (V.O.)
 What happened?!

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Hearing Caesar, Corky gets up, moving quietly toward the door.

CAESAR (V.O.)
 V! What the fuck was it?! Violet?

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Caesar enters, a towel wrapped around him, hair still dripping.

CAESAR
 V, what? You can't hear me?

Violet looks terribly upset as she begins to clean up.

VIOLET
 Caesar, it slipped ... I was
 trying to get ready ...

Caesar realizing what happened.

CAESAR
 Oh, fucking Christ ... You gotta
 be kidding me!

He rushes at her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 Fuck! Fuck! How did you ...
 Awwww goddammit!

VIOLET
 I'm sorry. It was an accident.

She stands up.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Don't worry, I'll get some more.

CAESAR
There's no time.

VIOLET
Don't be silly, Caesar. It'll take
five minutes.

She turns him back toward the bedroom.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
I'll clean this up and be back
before you're even dressed.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Violet opens her door, stepping into the hall where Corky is waiting.

CORKY (V.O.)
When you open the door, I'll be
there.

They pass each other in silence, Violet stepping out as Corky slips in.

VIOLET (V.O.)
What if he sees you?

CORKY (V.O.)
He won't.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Caesar is working intently on his fingernails. We glide over a set of gleaming metal manicure tools. We see his hand as he delicately applies a coat of clear polish to a nail.

Through the open door, we see Corky moving almost casually across the living room.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Corky is looking for something.

VIOLET
You can't know for certain that he
won't see you.

CORKY
Trust me, Violet.

She finds a black duffel bag from one of her tool buckets.

VIOLET

I'm just asking, what if?

CORKY

If he does ...

Corky slips her hand in between the mattress and box spring, pulling out a gun.

CORKY

Then I won't have a choice, will I?

She tosses the gun on the bed.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

The black case is lying on the desk, locked shut. Corky moves around the desk, dropping down behind it.

CORKY (V.O.)

When I'm inside, I will get the money.

From her earlobe, she chooses the right pick, sliding out the silver tool.

It takes only a second and the first lock pops open.

She is working on the other lock when the door is pushed open and Caesar walks in.

Corky drops down, grasping for her gun --

As Caesar, wearing only underwear, enters. He blows on the drying polish on his fingernails before delicately selecting a suit from his closet.

The gun ready, Corky, pressed against the desk, waits until he leaves.

She lets her breath out, then pops the second lock, unzips the black duffel bag and quickly empties the case, filling the bag with fat money bricks.

CORKY (V.O.)

I'm going to need something ...

Finished, she zips up the bag and looks about.

CORKY (V.O.)

... to fill the case.

She sees a stack of newspapers hidden near the desk.

CORKY (V.O.)
Yeah, you should hide it near the
desk before you leave.

She fills the case, then closes it.

CORKY (V.O.)
At that point --

She thumbs the locks shut and they snap, unnaturally loud,
into place.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

They are both on the bed.

CORKY
There is no going back.

VIOLET
When I get the Scotch, how do I
know you won't take off?

CORKY
The same way I'll know that you
went to Scotch. Trust.

Their faces are close, eyes still trying to read each other.

VIOLET
I still don't see how I'm going to
get clean with the money in the
apartment. Everyone will think I
did it.

CORKY
Not Caesar.

VIOLET
Why?

CORKY
Because of what you are going to
tell him. You have to make it as
real as you can. The moment you
open the door with the Scotch in
your hand, you will be covered, and
that moment is the most important
moment in the plan.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door bursts open. Violet enters quickly, carrying a bottle in a thin brown bag.

CORKY (V.O.)
If it's real enough, he'll believe
it, because deep down he'll want
to.

VIOLET
C! Shit, I'm sorry!

Caesar wanders out, tightening his tie. She looks at her watch.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
They were early.

CAESAR
What are you talking about?

VIOLET
They just left, didn't they?

CAESAR
What are you, drunk?

He smiles, grabbing the bottle from her.

VIOLET
You mean they weren't up here?

CAESAR
No! They're still on their way.

VIOLET
That doesn't make any sense.

CAESAR
Why?

VIOLET
Because I just saw Johnnie
downstairs.

Caesar turns.

CAESAR
What?

VIOLET
I was getting out of the car when I
saw him in the Mercedes.

CAESAR
It couldn't have been.

VIOLET
It was him. I'm positive.

CAESAR
It's impossible!

VIOLET
Caesar, I know Johnnie. It was him. I screamed when I saw him. I couldn't believe I missed them. I knew you were going to be upset so I thought I'd apologize and give Gino the Scotch. I honked a couple of times but he didn't stop.

She watches him, her words caving in around him.

CAESAR
But Gino's plane doesn't get in for another half-hour.

Violet thinks.

VIOLET
Actually, I didn't see Gino in the car.

His eyes dart. His forehead beads with sweat. He turns toward the office.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Violet is staring at Corky's mouth.

CORKY
If Caesar hates Johnnie like you say, then the second he opens the case he'll know, in his gut, that Johnnie just fucked him. He'll realize that he has no choice. He can't touch Gino or Johnnie. There's only one way out.

She pauses.

CORKY (CONT'D)
He'll have to run.

VIOLET
If he runs, everyone will assume he took the money.

CORKY
You'll be clean and we'll be rich.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Caesar stands over the desk, afraid to open the case.

INT. CORKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

VIOLET
Jesus, that's beautiful.

CORKY
Thank you.

VIOLET
If you're this goddamn smart, how
did you ever get caught?

CORKY
Every job like this has moments
where things don't go so well and
everyone starts thinking about
their own ass. It's in those
moments that everything comes
together or falls apart.

She looks dead at Violet.

CORKY (CONT'D)
I had a partner and she fucked me.

VIOLET
I won't.

CORKY
I think we're going to find out.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

The key turns and the locks pop. When Caesar sees the
newspaper, the whole world begins to spin.

VIOLET
Caesar?

His chest collapses onto itself while his hands ball into
fists.

CAESAR
No no no no ...

She moves around the side of the desk and sees the
newspaper.

VIOLET

Oh God ...

He slams the case shut, his head hanging down.

After a moment he looks at her, like a little boy about to cry.

CAESAR

... I've been set up.

He seems ready to scream but can't say anything.

VIOLET

Johnnie?

The name is like water hitting hot oil.

CAESAR

That fuck! That rat-fuck! Little
shit rat-fuck!

He starts punching the desk, each blow harder than the last.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky can hear him pounding. She looks down and smiles.
Between her legs is the open bag stuffed with money.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar is choking on his own rage.

VIOLET

Why? Why would Johnnie do this?

CAESAR

Jesus Christ, Violet! Open your
fucking eyes! Johnnie hates me
like I hate him!

He starts to pound his fists against his own head.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

I hate that little fuck! I hate
him! I hate him! I should've done
him!

VIOLET

But you know he did it.

CAESAR

So what?! So fucking what? Use
your head, Violet.

(MORE)

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 The money is gone. Gino is coming here to get it. You think he's going to believe me if I tell him his piss-hole son stole it! Is that what you think? I don't. You know what I think? I think I'm a dead man. I'm one in the brain. That's what I think!

VIOLET
 Caesar, what are we going to do?

He grabs hold of his chair, using it to support himself

CAESAR
 I know what he wants me to do. He wants me out of here. He wants me to run.

She watches him, his body rocking against the chair.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 If I run, then everyone will think I took the money and he walks away with two million clean.

The words squeeze out like tears.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 God, I can see him right now driving to get Gino. I can hear him laughing, fucking laughing, laughing at me.

He swings the swivel chair over his head and smashes it down on the desk. Again and again.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 Laughing at me! Laughing at me!

The chair falls and he stands alone, covering his face to hide his tears.

VIOLET
 C ...

She goes to hold him.

CAESAR
 Don't touch me!

He backs into the corner of the room.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Just leave me alone! I got to
think!

Violet watches him trying to wipe the tears and sweat from
his face.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Got to think this through ...

VIOLET
Caesar, maybe we should run --

CAESAR
Violet, please!

VIOLET
I mean it, Caesar, forget Johnnie,
forget the money, let's just go
now, before it's too late --

CAESAR
Goddammit, Violet! Would you just
leave me the fuck alone! Please!
Leave! Now!

VIOLET
All right, Caesar.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Violet enters, closing the door quietly behind her. She
looks at the wall, then goes to the bed and picks up the
phone.

As she dials, we move along the phone cord, following it
down to the jack in the wall.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

We move out from another jack, following a different cord.

Corky is sitting with her back to the wall. The black phone
beside her barely rings once before she answers.

She waits, saying nothing.

VIOLET (V.O.)
It's me.

CORKY
What happened?

INT. BEDROOM NIGHT

Violet whispers, her hand cupped over the mouthpiece.

VIOLET

He totally freaked. I've never seen him like this. He's out of his fucking mind.

CORKY (V.O.)

That's okay, as long as he believes it was Johnnie.

VIOLET

Believes it! Jesus, it's driving him crazy. He wants to kill him. I don't know, Corky, I don't know what he is going to do. I'm getting nervous, really nervous.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

CORKY

It's all right, Violet. It's working. All we got to do is wait him out and see what he does.

VIOLET (V.O.)

What if he doesn't run?

CORKY

That means he probably will kill Johnnie.

VIOLET (V.O.)

Oh, Christ, I got to get out of here!

CORKY

Listen, if he doesn't run, all you have to do is break down, go to your bedroom and pack some things, start crying, saying you love him but you can't do it. You're sorry but you have to leave and just walk out.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

VIOLET

okay, all right.

CORKY (V.O.)
 We're almost there, Violet. just
 hang on.

Violet hears him.

VIOLET
 He's coming ...

She hangs up quickly just as Caesar bursts in.

CAESAR
 I got it! I know what I got to do!
 I got to get the money.

VIOLET
 The money? The money's gone.

CAESAR
 No. Johnnie's got it. All I got
 to do is get it back.

VIOLET
 But it could be anywhere.

CAESAR
 He didn't have that much time. He
 had to pick up Gino. I bet you
 he's got it with him. I bet it's
 in the car.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky presses against the wall, trying to hear.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar is pacing.

CAESAR
 He didn't see you, did he?

VIOLET
 No.

CAESAR
 See, right now he doesn't know that
 I know, that's why he put the paper
 in the case. He wants me to hand
 the case to Gino. Then there is no
 doubt it was me. Gino will put a
 bullet in me himself. But it ain't
 going to happen. I won't let it!

(MORE)

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Johnnie ain't going to fuck me!
Not like this! No way!

VIOLET
This is insane!

She throws open her closet.

CAESAR
What are you doing?

She grabs a suitcase from under the bed.

VIOLET
I'm leaving! This is crazy! I
don't want to be involved. I don't
want anything to do with this shit!

She starts yanking the dresses from the closet.

CAESAR
You can't leave.

VIOLET
The hell I can't!

CAESAR
I need you ...

VIOLET
Bullshit! You don't need me!
You've never needed me! I can't
help you! Understand?! I have to
get out.

CAESAR
Violet, I won't let you leave.

She turns and sees that he is holding a gun.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
If you're not with me, Violet, then
I have to assume you're against me.

VIOLET
Caesar, this is crazy.

CAESAR
Maybe it is, maybe it isn't. Maybe
you dropped the Scotch by accident.
Maybe you didn't.

Now it is her turn to feel the world spin.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

It would have been so easy to let him in as you went out.

VIOLET

You don't, you can't believe that

...

CAESAR

I've seen the way he looks at you. He's always wanted you. Maybe two million dollars finally bought you.

She slaps him hard. He stares at her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Violet, but it has to be this way.

He moves past her, picks up the dresses and returns them to the closet.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

I hope you understand. I want to trust you, I want to believe you, but I don't have any other choice.

He shuts the closet.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Caesar is at the bar, drinking the Scotch. The gun in front of him. Across the room, Violet sits, staring holes through him.

They wait in silence.

CAESAR

You sure you don't want a drink?

Violet says nothing.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

In the dark, Corky sits, her face, her posture very similar to Violet's.

She is concentrating, her mind somewhere else, when the door buzzer sounds.

She turns her head and hears Caesar faintly answering the intercom.

Corky stands just as --

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Violet stands.

Caesar faces her for a moment, then shoves the gun into his belt behind his back.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky watches through the door peep as three men pass by.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

There is a knock and Caesar opens the door.

GINO MARZZONE is an old Italian whose face is a mask of irritated indifference.

ROY, his enormous driver, is behind him.

Caesar smiles, greeting them in Italian with open arms.

Johnnie is the last inside. He has tape over his broken nose. He smiles and hugs Caesar.

JOHNNIE

You shouldn't have hit me.

CAESAR

You want to get into this now?

JOHNNIE

No, no, Caesar. Not now.

He smiles again, patting him on the shoulder, then throwing a fake punch.

Caesar sees Gino with his bright Italian smile, flattering Violet, kissing her.

GINO

Hey, Caesar! You take care of this girl, or I find out!

JOHNNIE

You are as radiant as ever, Violet.

As he bends to kiss her hand, she sees Caesar watching them.

CAESAR

Glenlivet, right, Gino?

JOHNNIE
I'll have whatever Violet's
drinking.

VIOLET
I'm not drinking.

JOHNNIE
Then neither will I.

This makes Violet very uncomfortable.

VIOLET
No, I'll have a Tanqueray and
tonic.

JOHNNIE
Caesar, make that two TNTs.

Caesar's hand shakes as he pours Gino's Scotch.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Pacing in her socks, Corky tries to think through several possible situations. She stops, staring at the bag of money.

The idea of its sitting out in the open suddenly bothers her.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar hands Violet and Johnnie a drink. He stares at her. She stares back.

JOHNNIE
Salud, eh. Roy, Violet, Pop,
Caesar.

Caesar watches Johnnie, suspecting everything he does.

Johnnie reaches into his pocket and takes out a cellular phone.

GINO
No, Johnnie. No goddamned phones.
Not now.

JOHNNIE
Pop?

GINO
Caesar, come here. Sit. We talk
now. You too, Johnnie.

Each man sits on either side of Gino.

GINO (CONT'D)
 Caesar, look at me. Johnnie tell me what happened. Caesar, you gotta do me a favor, a personal favor. For me, eh? You gotta start respecting Johnnie the way you respect me. You understand? Good.

Caesar sees Johnnie smiling at him, but when Gino turns, the smile disappears.

GINO (CONT'D)
 And you, Johnnie. You gonna stop acting stupid. You gotta earn this respect that Caesar's gonna give. You understand? Good. Done. Now, where's my money?

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky drops a hefty bag, knotted tight, into an open five-gallon bucket of paint.

As she picks up a paint stick, we see a second bag beside another bucket.

She pushes the first bag down until it disappears, enveloped by the milk-white liquid.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar puts the briefcase onto the coffee table.

Gino looks up at Caesar, very serious, with his hand on the case.

GINO
 We know how this was done, eh?

CAESAR
 Yeah, I know.

He looks dead at Johnnie.

GINO
 It won't happen again, eh?

Caesar shakes his head.

GINO (CONT'D)
 Good.

Gino throws down the last of the Scotch.

GINO (CONT'D)
Done. We go now.

JOHNNIE
Jesus Christ, Pop. You got two
hours until your plane leaves.

Gino checks his watch, shouting in Italian. Johnnie shouts back until Gino throws up his hands, refusing to listen.

GINO
Caesar!

He gestures to his empty glass, then folds his arms, leaning back. Caesar gets the bottle.

JOHNNIE
So Caesar, what did it total out
at?

CAESAR
Two point one seventy-six.

Johnnie whistles as Caesar pours Gino another Scotch.

JOHNNIE
Unbelievable. Can you believe
that, Violet?

GINO
Hey, Johnnie ...

In Italian tells him to shut up.

JOHNNIE
Come on, Pop, all I want to know is
one thing. Just one thing after he
made such a big deal out of it. I
bet it wasn't a big deal. Was it,
Caesar?

CAESAR
What's that, Johnnie?

JOHNNIE
The money I bet it was nothing to
get it clean, after you made such a
fucking big deal ...

GINO
Johnnie, what did I say?

JOHNNIE

Pop, this is important to me. It's a simple question. if he would just answer the question, that's the end of it.

CAESAR

Where is this going, Johnnie?

JOHNNIE

Just admit it, Caesar.

CAESAR

Admit what?

JOHNNIE

That you overreacted. That you lost it. Not me. It was your mistake.

Caesar sees it so clearly now.

CAESAR

All right, Johnnie, you want to play it this way, I can play it this way. You want to know who made a mistake, why don't you open the case.

VIOLET

Caesar ...

CAESAR

Shut up, Violet! This is between me and Johnnie.

He pushes the case toward him.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

You want to do this now, let's do it. Open the case. Open the fucking case.

Johnnie stares at him, feeling that something is very wrong.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

That's right, I know. I fucking know.

JOHNNIE

Know what?

CAESAR

Open the case!

JOHNNIE
All right! Where's the key?

CAESAR
You don't need a key.

He tries but it's locked.

JOHNNIE
How the fuck can I open it?

CAESAR
The same way you did before.

JOHNNIE
What are you talking about?

Caesar smiles and tosses the key onto the table.

CAESAR
There you go, Johnnie.

He reaches for the key. Caesar stands up and gives Violet his drink.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Get me another.

He can see the fear on her face as she goes to the bar.

Time drips.

The key turns. One lock pops.

Then the other.

The case opens like a scream and Johnnie sees the newspaper.

JOHNNIE
What the ...

Before anybody can move, Caesar whips around with his gun.

Roy jumps off his stool, his drink crashing to the floor.

CAESAR
Don't! Don't fucking move!

Nobody can believe what is happening.

GINO
Caesar? What is this?

CAESAR
Ask Johnnie! Ask your rat-fuck
son!

JOHNNIE
What the fuck?

Caesar levels the gun.

CAESAR
You don't think I'll do it, do you?

JOHNNIE
I think you're fucking crazy!

CAESAR
Where is it?

JOHNNIE
Where's what?

CAESAR
The money!

JOHNNIE
Caesar, I don't know what you're
thinking here, but if you don't put
down that gun --

He stands up.

CAESAR
Sit down!

He does.

GINO
Caesar!

CAESAR
Gino, your son stole this money to
set me up and I can prove it.
Violet!

She doesn't know what to say.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Tell them! Tell them!

VIOLET
For Christ's sake, Johnnie, do what
he says.

JOHNNIE
This isn't happening ...

Boom! Caesar blows a hole in the couch right between Johnnie's legs. Johnnie screams.

CAESAR
The next one blows off your dick.

JOHNNIE
You're a dead man! A fucking dead man!

CAESAR
Where is it?

GINO
Enough!

Gino jumps up.

CAESAR
No, Gino!

GINO
You aim a gun at me?! Do you know who I am?! I am Gino Marzzone. You understand?

He starts walking toward Caesar. Roy moves around for a good angle.

CAESAR
Sit down, Gino!

GINO
No, Caesar, gimme the gun.

CAESAR
Stay away!

He backs up as Gino walks straight to him.

GINO
We're family, Caesar.

CAESAR
No!

GINO
Gimme the gun.

CAESAR
I can't. I can't.

GINO
Give it to me.

He reaches up and takes hold of the barrel. Caesar looks resigned as he shuts his eyes.

GINO (CONT'D)
Good man.

Close on Gino's hand holding the gun barrel as --

Caesar fires.

From behind the gun we watch Gino's grip yanked free, time melting away as he falls, blood bubbling from his chest, his eyes wide in disbelief.

His body hits the floor and the room erupts.

Roy dives, drawing his gun as Caesar continues to fire, pumping the trigger.

Violet drops behind the bar as Johnnie screams, falling towards his father.

Blood spurts from Roy as two bullets hit, his gun clattering and sliding across the floor.

Johnnie lunges at Caesar as Caesar turns and fires, hitting Johnnie everywhere; blood and meat spray and speckle everything around him.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

The gun continues to fire as Corky clutches the phone, whispering.

CORKY
This is an emergency!

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Crunched down behind the bar, Violet listens to the only sound, repeating in the unnatural quiet:

Click. Click.

Click.

Rising, she peers over the edge of the bar.

Caesar is standing in the aftermath. His gun is still aimed at Johnnie as he pulls the trigger over and over.

The bodies are still, blood silently pooling around them.
Blinking the sweat from his eyes, Caesar sees Violet.

CAESAR

I had to do it, Violet. You saw
it. I had no choice. It was
Johnnie. That lying fuck. He made
me do it.

He looks down at Jobnnie, hate rising like bile.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

You lying rat-fuck. You think you
can set me up? Is that what you
think? You stupid fuck.

Kicking the body, he causes a series of sickening wet
noises.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

I'm a dead man? I'm a dead man?
Guess again, fuck-face. Who's
dead? Who's the dead lying rat-
fuck? Take another guess, take
another fucking guess!

He stops, panting, unable to catch his breath. Violet is
afraid to even look at him.

Blood creeps along the edge of the floorboards.

Caesar tries to clear his head, mopping the sweat from his
face. He bends down and starts searching Johnnie's pockets.

He finds his keys.

VIOLET

What are you doing?

Lost in thought, he goes to Gino. Throwing open the coat,
he sees the airplane ticket. There is a bullet hole in it.

He checks the times and then his watch.

CAESAR

... maybe three hours.

VIOLET

Caesar, what are you going to do?

CAESAR

What do you think we're going to
do? We have to find the money.

VIOLET

What?

CAESAR

Once we have the money, then none of this ever happened.

VIOLET

Caesar, you just killed Gino Marzzone.

CAESAR

No I didn't. Not if his body disappears and not if the money is still here. Then they never showed up.

VIOLET

What happened to them?

CAESAR

I don't know. We may never know, but I'm going to guess it was a job, maybe the Karpoli family.

He smiles.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

All part of the business.

He picks up Roy's gun and stuffs it in his belt.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

We just got to find the money. Once we do, everything is going to be all right.

In the distance, the wail of a police siren can be heard.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Through the window they see a squad car, lights blaring, roll up in front of the building.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

VIOLET

Oh, no.

He turns back to the carnage.

CAESAR

Fuck.

VIOLET
Caesar, what are we going to do?

CAESAR
They're just cops. Stall them as long as you can.

Caesar flies into action.

Grunting, he hauls Gino's body up, drags it to the bathroom and throws it into the tub. He returns for Johnnie's body.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Standing near the bathroom, Corky hears the metal echo of the tub. Looking at her tub, she imagines what he is doing.

Through the wall, she hears the door buzzer.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The buzzer sounds again as Violet sees him lift Roy's body.

CAESAR
Answer it!

He heads back to the bathroom, dropping Roy onto the other two.

The three bloody bodies fill the tub.

We see Johnnie's arm hanging over the edge as Caesar snaps the shower curtain around, hiding them.

VIOLET
Hello?

COP #1 (V.O.)
This is the police, ma'am.

She cuts them off using the intercom.

VIOLET
The police?

Over her shoulder she sees Caesar moving the furniture, clearing the area around the heavy bloodstains.

COP #1 (V.O.)
We had a report of gunfire, so if you could --

VIOLET
Gunfire? Is this a joke?

Violet sees Caesar hurry to his office.

COP #1 (V.O.)
No joke, ma'am. Please open the door.

VIOLET
How do I know you are cops?

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Caesar seizes the beautiful oriental rug in his office and yanks it up, overturning furniture. Dragging it out, he slams the door behind him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Violet looks at Caesar, who is working with the calm, single-minded focus of a machine.

COP #1 (V.O.)
Ma'am, you have to open the door.

VIOLET
All right.

She buzzes them in as Caesar throws the rug like someone making a bed, letting it fall to the floor and cover most of the blood.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

The cops are waiting for the elevator. After a moment, the door slides open.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Violet moves away from the intercom as Caesar begins arranging the furniture on the rug.

CAESAR
Get me a wet towel.

His words push her to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Stuffing a towel into the sink, she turns on the water. She does not even look at the shower curtain.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

The elevator opens and the cops step out.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar grabs the television remote, hits "on" and jacks the volume until it is obviously loud.

Violet returns and he snatches the towel from her.

INT. HALL

As the two cops walk down the hall, they hear the television. They look at each other, already knowing what happened.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Like a maniac, Caesar wipes at any blood still visible until there is a knock on the door. He grabs Violet by the arm.

CAESAR

If you're thinking about doing something stupid, remember I just killed Gino Marzzone. You understand what that means?

She nods.

VIOLET

They're just cops.

There is another knock, much louder.

Violet goes to the door as Caesar rips off his blood-soaked jacket and shirt.

He drops down behind the bar leaving the chain on, Violet opens the door. The cops smile.

COP #1

See? We're for real.

VIOLET

I'm sorry, it's just you hear stories.

COP #1

You did the right thing.

Crouching, Caesar wipes vigorously at the blood on his hands and face.

Violet opens the door.

Caesar crams the bloody wad under the bar sink.

Just as the cops enter the living room, Caesar stands, looking comfortable in no shirt, with ice cubes in his hands.

CAESAR
Hey, hey, Chicago's finest.

He plunks the ice into a glass and walks from behind the bar

CAESAR (CONT'D)
How's it going tonight, fellas?

COP #1
Pretty good, sir.

Caesar turns his head.

CAESAR
Huh? I'm sorry, I can only hear in this ear.

The cops look at each other again.

Wiping his wet hand on his pants, Caesar shakes hands with each of them.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
I'm Caesar and this here is my Violet.

They smile at Violet as Caesar puts his arm around her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Violet said something about gunshots?

Violet sees the gun wedged in the back of his belt.

COP #2
Yes, sir, a neighbor in the building called in.

COP #1
I think we know what happened.

COP #2
It was probably just the television.

CAESAR
The television?

He looks at Violet.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Honey, why didn't you say
something? Turn it off.

Violet walks across the rug and turns off the TV.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Fuck, this happened before. It's
this shitty ear. Born with it.
The batteries wore out in my aid.
I'm sorry.

COP #1
It's all right, sir.

COP #2
No big deal.

CAESAR
Hey, can I get you guys a beer?

COP #1
Not on duty, sorry.

CAESAR
Oh, right.

COP #2
But, uh, would you mind if I used
your bathroom?

Caesar's face tightens.

CAESAR
Yeah, why not? It's right there.

COP #2
Thanks.

He heads for the john.

Violet watches Caesar back up to the bar, moving behind it.

CAESAR
I'm going to make myself a drink,
if that's okay?

COP #1
Go right ahead, sir.

INT. BATHROOM NIGHT

Cop #2 enters, walking right past the shower curtain. We
hear his sigh as he starts to piss.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cop #1 walks onto the rug, looking around, turning to Violet.

COP #1
This is a beautiful place.

VIOLET
... thank you.

She stares at his shoes on the rug.

Watching everything, Caesar takes a sip of his drink. He slips his gun out and holds it at his side.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

There is a bulge in the shower curtain where we imagine Johnnie's arm is hanging.

Slowly we slide down to the bottom edge of the plastic curtain, where a drip of blood forms and --

Plips into a small red spot on the white tile floor.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Close on the heel of the cop's black shoe, where we can almost see the blood seeping up through the oriental rug.

COP #1
Is this a condo?

Violet nods.

Everyone turns when Cop #2 busts out of the bathroom.

COP #2
Okay, let's roll.

Cop #1 walks across the rug to the hardwood floor. He turns to Caesar.

COP #1
Try to keep the extra batteries for your aid around.

CAESAR
Good idea.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky hears the cop say goodbye to Violet. The door closes. She isn't sure what she should do.

Over her shoulder, she notes the bucket of paint. She lets the cops leave.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar puts on a new shirt, the gun stuffed in his pants.

CAESAR

Let's go.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky rises at the sound of Caesar's door closing.

We track her along the wall to the foyer as she follows the faint sounds of Caesar and Violet's footsteps.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

As they pass by, Violet looks up to the door of the empty apartment, straight at the peephole.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT Corky is pressed against the door, eye at the peephole.

She sees that Violet is afraid as the two women seem to speak to each other with their eyes.

CORKY

... shit.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Caesar is on his knees, searching under the seats of Johnnie's Mercedes. Unable to find the money, he is ready to snap.

From the main doors, Corky slips out of the building. Hiding behind a column, she sees Violet and Caesar across the lot.

Corky moves behind the parked cars, the gun squeezed in her hand.

Violet edges away, on the verge of running, looking toward the busy street.

Standing, Caesar pounds on the car.

CAESAR
Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

VIOLET
Caesar, someone could see us out here.

Ignoring her, he tries to think.

CAESAR
Get in.

Still too far from them to do anything, Corky sees Caesar slam the trunk.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Get in! It's got to be at his house. That's the only other place it could be.

Violet looks around the lot, looking for some way out.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Violet! Now!

Corky can only watch as Violet gets in and the car rips away.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alone, Corky stands over the bucket of paint. She kicks it with her boot-toe.

CORKY
Two million dollars, Cork ... Two million dollars ...

She sighs, wondering how long she can make herself wait.

EXT. JOHNNIE'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

The BMW is parked in front.

INT. JOHNNIE'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Close on Caesar, as he rakes his sweaty hair back, his face knotted in torment.

CAESAR
Okay, I come in ...

He turns as if he just came in through the front door.

We see Johnnie's home has been laid to waste. The furniture is broken, cushions split open, pictures shattered, holes punched in the drywall -- even the carpeting has been torn up.

Caesar doesn't look much better.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
I've got the money ...

Huddled in a corner, Violet watches him.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
I can't wait to see the look on
Caesar's face when he finds out.

Caesar moves from the front door, trying to get into Johnnie's head.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Now I don't have much time ...

He takes a couple of steps into the room.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Got to put it someplace safe ...

He looks at a closet. It's gutted, searched 10 times already.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
... put it ...

A couple more uneasy steps and he looks at a large overturned rolltop desk.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
... got it ...

He starts looking around the room as if he is seeing for the first time that it is destroyed. He is near the breaking point.

VIOLET
C?

His voice cracks. There is nowhere else to look.

CAESAR
Where did I put it?

He explodes. A terra cotta lamp sails across the room.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Where's my fucking money?! Fucking
cocksuckers! Where the fuck is
it?!

He smashes his forehead into the wall, denting the drywall.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Ow.

He holds his head, sinking to the ground.

VIOLET
C?

She sits next to him, putting a hand lightly on his
shoulder.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
It's not here, Caesar.

CAESAR
Where, then?

VIOLET
I don't know. it could be
anywhere. We don't even know if he
was alone. Please, Caesar, we don't
have much time. Let's get out of
here.

He knows what he has to do. Digging through the debris, he
finds the phone.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

CAESAR
We're going to need some time.

VIOLET
Who are you going to call?

Already dialing, he does not answer

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Caesar?

Caesar takes a deep breath, mustering composure.

MICKY (V.O.)
Yeah?

CAESAR
Hey, Mickey.

VIOLET
Oh, God.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Caesar? What the fuck time is it?

CAESAR
Mick, I know it's late, but there is a problem. They haven't shown up yet.

MICKEY (V.O.)
What? They ain't there?

CAESAR
No. I don't know where they are. I even called over at Johnnie's, but no answer.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Okay. Let me call around. I'll see what I can do. Don't go anywhere, okay?

CAESAR
Okay, sure, Mick.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Caesar, you still got the money?

Caesar looks at Violet.

CAESAR
Yeah, Mick. I've got the money. I'm staring right at it.

MICKEY (V.O.)
Good. Sit tight. I'll call you.

He hangs up.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar drags himself in. Violet closes the door behind them.

Caesar moves into the room where it happened. He is dizzy and confused and does not want to be here.

Violet turns him around.

VIOLET
I'll start packing. You know what
you have to do.

She turns him toward the bathroom. He nods.

CAESAR
I can use Johnnie's car, dump it in
Lake Michigan ... I need plastic
bags ... tape and rope ...

VIOLET
Just hurry.

Nodding, he heads for the kitchen.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Violet enters and goes straight for the phone. She looks at
the blank wall as she dials.

VIOLET
Please, Corky ...

The phone rings.

When Corky answers, Violet almost collapses with relief.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
Oh, thank God.

CORKY
I'm still here.

VIOLET
I was so afraid you ...

CORKY
You don't quit on me, Violet, and I
won't quit on you.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

A box of Hefty bags tucked under his arm, a coil of
clothesline in his hand, Caesar searches through several
cabinets.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Violet glances at the door.

VIOLET
Corky, it worked! He's going to
run.

(MORE)

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 He needs to take care of the bodies
 to buy himself time, but as soon as
 he leaves, it's over.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky falls against the wall.

VIOLET (V.O.)
 just a little longer and it's ours.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mumbling to himself, Caesar walks out of the kitchen,
 heading for the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Violet reaches out and touches the wall, as if she were
 touching Corky.

VIOLET
 Corky, I have to tell you something

...

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky turns to the wall.

CORKY
 I know, Violet. I know.

Her fingers gently touch the wall as we travel up and over,
 where we see they are actually touching the wall in the
 exact same place.

CORKY (CONT'D)
 It's why I'm still here.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Suddenly, Violet hears Caesar.

CAESAR (V.O.)
 Violet?

As he opens the door, she slams down the phone.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

The line cuts off.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Fear and panic paralyze Violet as Caesar drops everything, grabbing for his gun.

CAESAR
Who was that?

He levels the gun at her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Who the fuck was that?

She stands and he rushes at her, grabbing her by the throat.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Was that Mickey? Did you call
Mickey? Did you?!

She shakes her head and he throws her on the bed. The gun aimed at her, he picks up the phone and --

Hits the redial.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Unsure of what happened, Corky hears the phone ring and answers it on reflex.

Listening, she waits.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caesar listens, waiting as long as he can.

CAESAR
Mickey? Is that you?

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky hangs up, jumping away from the wall.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caesar hits the redial again.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Panicking, Corky doesn't answer it, but as it rings very loud in the empty apartment, she realizes her mistake.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Turning slowly toward the wall, Caesar hears the phone ringing in the empty apartment.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Corky rips the plug out of the wall.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The line goes dead.

CAESAR

Who is that? Who is over there?!
Tell me!

She tries to get away, but he grabs her and slaps her to the ground.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT

Corky hears Violet scream and that does it. Gun in hand, she flies at the door.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door to the empty apartment slams shut and Caesar, hearing it, starts to run --

But Violet reaches out, catching his ankle, sending him crashing to the dresser.

VIOLET

Run! Just run!

INT HALL - NIGHT

The door to Caesar's apartment is locked. Corky falls to one knee, whipping two lock picks from her earlobe.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caesar raises the gun to pistol-whip Violet and she screams.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Working the lock, Corky hears Violet's scream cut off.

She feels the tumblers click, and rotates the cylinder.

A shadow stirs under the crack of the door as she hears something that sounds like footsteps. Corky freezes.

Corky presses down low against the door beneath the peephole.

She can almost feel Caesar beyond the door, but grits her teeth and turns the doorknob.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door cracks open and Corky slips in, gun-first. As she moves into the room, we see Caesar behind her.

He puts his gun to her head.

CAESAR
Drop the fucking gun or die!

Corky hesitates.

CAESAR
Drop it!

She does.

CAESAR
Turn around.

Rising from her crouch, she turns and he recognizes her.

CAESAR
You!? Holy fucking Christ! You
gotta be kidding me!

He starts to laugh when she strikes --

Knocking the gun, she punches him, slamming him back against the door as --

She twists, diving, grabbing her gun, just as --

He steps and kicks her full in the face.

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Still unconscious, Corky's head jerks, reacting to the kick. We see the dried blood caked to her cheek where his kick split the skin. She is again swimming toward consciousness.

We hear water splash, her face flinching as we move closer, the sounds and voices echoing.

CESAR (V.O.)
Wake up! Come on, you fucking
dyke!

We hear Caesar slapping her.

CAESAR (V.O.)
Wake up!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Corky's face is dripping with water as her eyes slowly blink open.

Coming into focus is Caesar, standing over her with an empty glass in one hand.

CAESAR
Good.

Except for the gag, she is bound as we have seen her bound in the closet.

Caesar yanks out his gun and puts it to her head.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
I know everything now so I don't want to hear any "I don't know" bullshit, you understand?

She sees Violet on the bed, also bound hand and foot.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
God, I should have seen this coming! The second I met you, I knew it. Everyone knows your kind can't be trusted! Fucking queers make me sick.

The gun digs into her cheek.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
But you tried to fuck the wrong guy. And I swear to you that I'm going to kill you for it.

He thumbs back the hammer.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Where is the money?

VIOLET
Don't tell him --

CAESAR
Shut up, Violet!

VIOLET
He can't kill you --

He aims the gun at Violet.

CAESAR
Violet!

VIOLET
Not until he has the money!

He fires and she jumps as the bullet punches through the wall behind her.

His point made, he puts the gun back to Corky's head.

CAESAR
Now, where the fuck is my money?

CORKY
Lick me.

CAESAR
Where is it?

CORKY
Either pull the trigger or get that thing out of my face.

Blood temperature rising again, Caesar pulls the gun back and slaps her with it.

CAESAR
Stupid cunt!

VIOLET
Caesar, stop acting like an asshole and think --

CAESAR
Don't try to tell me what to do.

VIOLET
You need the money just like we do.

CAESAR
Shut up, Violet.

VIOLET
Let us go and we'll make a deal.

He rushes at her, grabbing a fistful of her hair.

CAESAR
Shut the fuck up!

He looks at Corky.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
What did you do to her?! This
isn't my Violet!

He looks at her as if unable to recognize her

CAESAR (CONT'D)
What did she do to you?

VIOLET
Everything you couldn't.

He shoves her down.

CAESAR
You ungrateful bitch! You had
nothing before I met you. You were
nothing!

He stomps around the room.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Who gave you this place? This
apartment?

He throws open the closet.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Who gave us all of this? I did! I
gave you everything! I gave you
this life! I made you, Violet. I
saved you.

He seems to believe what he is saying.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
I saved you.

VIOLET
Ha! What a load of crap. Look at
yourself, Caesar. You're a thug.
|You launder money for the mob.
You rent women like you rented this
apartment.

He doesn't want to hear this.

VIOLET (CONT'D)
 Saved me? You don't even know me.
 You used me, Caesar, just like I
 used you. All part of the
 business.

CAESAR
 You betrayed me!

VIOLET
 You murdered Gino!

CAESAR
 I had to. You made me.

VIOLET
 Bullshit, you killed him. Not me.
 You did it because you couldn't
 stand the thought of Johnnie
 fucking you.

CAESAR
 Shut up!

He slaps her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 Okay, you want business, I'll give
 you the fucking business.

He leans closer.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 I'm going to make you beg just like
 Shelly did. Just like Shelly!

He storms out of the room.

Corky looks up at Violet.

VIOLET
 I'm sorry, Corky ...

CORKY
 Don't be sorry. Help me.

She pulls at the ropes as Violet slides off the bed.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Caesar throws open the broom closet and grabs the clippers
 that Mickey used to cut off Shelly's finger.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The two women are back-to-back, fingers working at each other's knots when Caesar bursts into the room.

CAESAR

Oh, no no no.

Grabbing Corky by the boots, he drags her and flips her so that she can now see Violet.

He drops down onto Violet putting the clippers in front of her face.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Hey, Violet, you remember these?

Her eyes widen with terror. She starts to scream when he stuffs a towel in her mouth.

Laying against Violet, he turns to Corky.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

I'm going to start with her so you'll get a good idea what's coming.

He takes hold of Violet's pinky finger, stretching it out.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

I'm going to ask you where the money is. Every time you don't give me an answer, I'm going to cut off one finger.

CORKY

No.

CAESAR

When I reach ten, then I'll start with you.

He puts the finger between the blades.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Where is the money?

Corky sees Violet thrashing helplessly. She has no choice. Her mouth opens as --

The door buzzer rings.

Caesar is distracted, trying to think who it could be.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
... Mickey.

He sees the phone, where he dropped it, lying off the hook.

The door buzzer rings again, more insistently. Corky sees him momentarily unnerved.

He looks back at her.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
I said where --

He starts to cut and Corky screams --

CORKY
No! I'll tell you!

He stops, the door buzzing continuously.

CORKY (CONT'D)
It's over there in the empty
apartment.

As she speaks, the sound of the door buzzer changes.

CORKY (CONT'D)
I put it inside one of the paint
drums.

He is not looking at her; listening, he realizes that Mickey is buzzing the other apartments.

CAESAR stands as the buzzing stops. He pulls out his gun and aims it at Corky.

CAESAR
I promised I would kill you.

He cocks it.

CORKY
You can't kill me yet.

CAESAR
Why?

CORKY
I could be lying.

His hand start to shake with ftustration. He is beginning to hate this woman more than he ever hated Johnnie.

Taking a deep breath, he eases back the hammer.

CAESAR
You're going to wish to God you
hadn't done that.

He kicks her again, snapping her head back.

After he leaves, Violet looks over and sees Corky lying unconscious.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Caesar tries to open the door to the empty apartment but it is locked.

CAESAR
Fuck.

At the end of the hall, the elevator "dings." Just as the door opens, Caesar jumps back into his apartment.

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CAESAR
Son of a bitch ...

His mind a racing blur, he locks the door and runs back to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

With another towel, he gags Corky and drags her into the closet. In her pocket, he finds the key.

He closes the doors, then hangs up the phone.

Grunting, he hauls Violet up over his shoulder --

When there is a knock on the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carrying Violet, he hurries to the kitchen, where he throws Corky's gun into the freezer. Mickey is banging on the door as Caesar heads for the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM

Dropping Violet onto the floor, he reaches behind the curtain and turns on the shower.

CAESAR
Mickey will get in. I know he
will.

We hear the water hitting the bodies while Caesar starts tearing off his clothes.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Violet. I can kill you right now if that's what you want. If you want to live, then you have to help me. I need you to make Mickey believe that everything is normal.

He picks up his gun.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Tell me, do you want to live?

She stares hard at him and his gun, then nods.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Good girl.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

We move toward the door as the lock clicks open.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Violet's hands are untied. She pulls off the gag and the ropes at her feet.

Naked, Caesar sticks his head under the shower spray, wetting everything.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Still dripping, Caesar walks into the room, a towel wrapped around his waist, another towel in his hand.

Mickey and Lou are standing in the middle of the room.

Caesar jumps.

CAESAR

Jesus Christ!

Caesar holds his chest, laying it on a bit thick.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Holy fuck, Mickey! You scared the shit outta me.

He sees they both are holding their guns.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

What is this? what are you two doing, sneaking in here with your peckers in your hands? You gonna do me, Mick? Is that it?

Mickey smiles, putting his gun away.

MICKEY

No, Cease. There was no answer.

CAESAR

I thought I heard someone knocking.

MICKEY

I was buzzing, I was knocking, but I guess you couldn't hear me on account of being in the shower.

CAESAR

Yeah, it was Violet's idea. I was so wound up about Gino, she was trying to help me relax.

MICKEY

That Violet is one nice lady. Wish someone would help me relax.

CAESAR

Shit, Mick, come on in, let me get you a drink. Sit down, Lou.

Behind the bar, he sets down the towel he was holding and we see the gun hidden inside it.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Violet watches through a sliver of open door, her mind already working.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Caesar is making the drinks.

MICKEY

We was worried about you, Cease.

CAESAR

Me? Why?

MICKEY

We went over to Johnnie's place just to check it out and it was busted up, Bad.

Caesar hands him a drink.

MICKEY

I started thinking maybe it's about the money so I call you, but all I get is the busy signal. I figure the phone is off the hook, that's why I come rushing over here.

CAESAR

Oh Christ, the phone ... That was a fucking stupid thing to do, wasn't it?

MICKEY

Hey, if Violet was helping me relax, I'd probably do the same thing.

Mickey smiles as he sips his drink.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Violet stands and goes to the shower curtain. She reaches in and turns off the water. Steadying herself, she pulls back the curtain, exposing the wet, bloody bodies.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mickey is looking at the furniture.

MICKEY

Cease, can I ask you something?

CAESAR

Yeah.

MICKEY

Why'd you move all the furniture around?

The knot in Caesar's stomach tightens.

MICKEY

Let me guess. That was Violet's idea, too.

He laughs, and Lou laughs with him.

CAESAR

Actually, yeah, she was nervous about Gino coming, wanted everything to look right. You know women, Mick.

MICKEY

Sure, Cease. They make us do stupid things, don't they.

Caesar smiles feebly.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Violet has pulled up Johnnie's body and is digging through his coat pockets, searching for something.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mickey sees the briefcase still on the coffee table.

MICKEY

Is that the money?

CAESAR

Yeah, that's it.

Caesar puts his hand inside the towel as Mickey walks across the rug.

MICKEY

That fucking Shelly. I gotta hand it to the guy, but Jesus, if I were him I would have bailed a long time ago. I mean, how much money does a man need?

Talking to Lou, he picks up the case and walks back, somehow moving right between the wet spots.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

I remember I was just staring at all this goddamn money, Shelly down on his knees, and the next thing I know, Johnnie just blows his head off.

He slaps the case up onto the bar.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

What a fucking mess. Johnnie's laughing his ass off and that's when Caesar lost it and - Boom. He coldcocked him. Fucking coldcocks Johnnie Marzzone.

He thumbs the latches but the case is still locked.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Hey, Caesar, where's the key?

CAESAR

The key, yeah, the key's in my pants in the bathroom.

MICKEY

Fuck it, I don't need the key.

Caesar takes the smallest breath.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

I didn't need a key to get in here, did I?

He pulls out a lock-pick and starts working the lock. The muscles in Caesar's forearm bulge as he tightly squeezes his gun.

He is slipping toward that same desperate choice. He is going to attack when --

Across the room, the phone rings.

Everyone looks at it.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Who the hell could that be?

The phone is near the couch. Caesar doesn't want to let go of the gun.

The phone continues to ring.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

You gonna answer it?

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Violet has Johnnie's cellular phone.

Watching through the cracked door, Violet sees Caesar cross to answer the phone.

CESAR (V.O.)

Hello?

VIOLET

Hello, Caesar. This is Gino.

Caesar looks toward the bathroom.

CAESAR (V.O.)

What?

VIOLET
You're blowing your only chance.
Act like I'm Gino.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Caesar's eyes light up.

CAESAR
Holy shit, I don't believe it!
We've been going crazy over here,
Gino!

VIOLET (V.O.)
Good boy.

Mickey jumps up.

CAESAR
It's Gino! It's Gino!

MICKEY
Where in the hell is he?

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

VIOLET
We were in a car accident --

CAESAR (V.O.)
They were in a car accident.

VIOLET
But everybody is all right.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CAESAR
They're all fine. Just bruises and
shit.

VIOLET (V.O.)
Now you listen to me, asshole, I
know your gun is behind the bar ...

MICKEY
Un-fucking-believable. I called
those highway patrol dumb fucks.

CAESAR
Ssh! I can't hear Gino!

VIOLET (V.O.)
 We make a deal or I come out and
 hand this phone to Mickey.

CAESAR
 I'm listening.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Violet has her robe over her dress, wrapping her hair in a towel, making sure the bruise on her forehead is hidden.

VIOLET
 I want what's mine, half the money.
 We get rid of Mickey, no one else
 dies. No one. Say yes, I
 understand.

CAESAR (V.O.)
 Yes, I understand.

VIOLET
 Tell them I'm at St. Mary's off the
 Kennedy, in the waiting room, but
 stay on the phone until I come out.

CAESAR (V.O.)
 Sure, Gino, sure.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Out of the corner of his eye, he watches Violet come out of the bathroom.

CAESAR
 St. Mary's off the Kennedy, sure.
 Okay, Gino.

Mickey sees Violet.

VIOLET
 Mickey? What are you doing here?

MICKEY
 Violet, it's Gino and Johnnie.
 They were in a car accident.

VIOLET
 Oh my God. Was anyone hurt?

MICKEY
 I think everything is okay.

Caesar hangs up.

CAESAR
They're at St. Mary's in the
waiting room.

Mick is already on the way.

MICKEY
I can't fit them all in my car so
give me your keys. You drive my
car, Lou.

Caesar sees Violet walking toward the kitchen.

CAESAR
Sure, Mickey, sure. Violet!

She stops, looking straight at the freezer.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Go grab my car keys from my pants
in the bathroom.

She turns to him.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Please, help us out, Mickey wants
to get going.

She turns to the bathroom.

MICKEY
They might want to go straight to
the airport and back to Miami, so I
better take this.

He grabs the briefcase.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
You got the key?

CAESAR
Oh yeah. Violet!

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Where Corky remains bound, still unconscious. We hear the
name echo in her head.

CAESAR (V.O.)
Violet!

Suddenly, her eyes blink open.

CAESAR (V.O.)

Violet!

Her eyes blink again as she tries to focus.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Violet hands Mickey the keys for the car and the case.

MICKEY

Thanks, V.

He kisses her on the cheek.

CAESAR

Call me as soon as you get him.

MICKEY

Leave your phone on the hook.

Mickey and Lou leave. Violet is staring at Caesar, standing near the door.

In his right hand he is holding the other towel. He smiles.

CAESAR

Now that's teamwork.

VIOLET

I should have let him kill you.

CAESAR

You know he would have done you, too.

VIOLET

I knew I couldn't trust you.

He drops the towel, raising the gun.

CAESAR

I said I'd let you live and I will.

He smiles again.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Maybe.

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Corky is wide awake, thrashing-mad, biting her gag, struggling to get free.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Caesar pulls his pants on.

CAESAR
Time to find out if the dyke was
stupid enough to lie.

Caesar drags Violet through the front door.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The closet doors burst open as Corky fights her way out.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Caesar sees the buckets of paint.

He rips the lid from the nearest and kicks it over. Paint
spills out across the floor.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Suddenly Corky stops; something has caught her eye. We drop
down, focusing on what she is staring at --

The clippers.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

He kicks over the second bucket and the bag tumbles out with
the rushing flow of paint.

CAESAR
Yes!

He turns to Violet, who is already running out the door.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
No!

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Violet turns down the hall, bare feet beating against the
floor.

Caesar slices out of the room behind her.

CAESAR
Violet!

He aims the gun as she hurls her self into the emergency
door.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Fuck!

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

She flies, hands on the rail, spiraling down each flight as he charges after her.

CAESAR

Goddammit, Violet! Stop! Now!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Straining, Corky's fingers curl around the handle of the clippers.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Violet smashes through the door, but instead of turning to the main doors, she runs straight for the elevators.

She pounds the button and waits.

VIOLET

Come on. Come on, please.

She hears Caesar coming just as the elevator opens.

Caesar crashes out of the stair door, running toward the exit. When he doesn't see Violet, he turns to the sound of the elevator --

And catches a glimpse of her as the doors close.

CAESAR

Oh, you bitch. You fucking bitch.

Taking a really deep breath, he throws open the door to the stairs.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Violet takes Johnnie's cellular phone from the robe pocket and dials a number.

Mickey answers on the car phone.

VIOLET

Mickey! Oh God, Mickey!

MICKEY (V.O.)

Violet?

Whispering, she acts terrified.

VIOLET

He made me help him, Mickey, God, I was so afraid. It was Caesar, all Caesar. You have to help me. He's coming - Oh God!

She hangs up, eyes blazing.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Sweat pouring off him, Caesar climbs the stairs.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

The elevator opens, Violet bolts out. She runs down the hall, past the empty apartment, back to her door.

VIOLET

Corky?

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

She rushes to the bedroom, where she finds the coils of cut rope.

VIOLET

Corky!

She looks at the wall separating the apartment.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Caesar half-falls out of the stair door, drenched with sweat.

INT. EMPTY APARTMENT

Gun ready, Caesar throws open the door.

Spread out like a pond of milk is the spilled paint, but --

The money is gone.

Leading away from the white pool are boot prints and the drip trail of the plastic bag.

The tracks lead to the bathroom.

Caesar kicks open the bathroom door and finds the bag of money next to Corky's empty boots.

Over his shoulder we see Corky already swinging a massive pipe wrench.

At the last second he is able to duck, falling to the ground as --

The doorjamb splinters with a terrible metal crunch.

Before he can recover and shoot, she brings the wrench down on his arm.

He screams as the gun hits the floor.

She kicks it, sending it skidding, hydroplaning across the paint pool to the other side, leaving a jet trail of white swirls and spirals on the wood floor.

They fight, Corky raining blows onto his back and flailing arm until --

He catches her foot, flipping her as he clambers up.

Scrambling across the paint, slipping, crawling for the gun when --

Violet bursts in, pointing the gun from the freezer.

VIOLET

Stop!

Caesar, on hands and knees, looks at her, then at his gun still out of reach.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

It's over, Caesar. I called Mickey. He's on his way.

Violet stands for long time, the gun trained carefully on him as he rises from the floor.

Panting, Caesar watches her like a mad dog.

VIOLET (CONT'D)

Get out of here, Caesar. If you want to live you had better start running.

He smiles.

CAESAR

All these years and you still don't know me, Violet.

She glances down and sees the paint-covered gun.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

But I know you.

He turns to the gun.

VIOLET
Caesar, don't.

CAESAR
What are you going to do, V? Shoot me? Kill me in cold blood? I don't think so. I'll tell you why. If you had it in you to pull that trigger, you would have done it a long time ago. If I was you, I would have killed me the minute I brought the money home. But you didn't and I know why, because you don't want to kill me. Do you, V? Do you? No, I know you don't.

VIOLET
Caesar, you don't know shit.

Violet fires --

The bullet hits Caesar in the shoulder, knocking him off balance. Another doubles him over as blood speckles the pool of paint.

She empties the gun into him. His body arcs back, falling, splashing into the paint.

Caesar's blood bubbles out bright red against the glistening white.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAESAR'S APARTMENT - DAY

It is empty and clean. In the bedroom, only a few hangers are left dangling in the open closet.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Mickey is standing with Violet, next to his Lincoln Town Car.

VIOLET
I will never understand it, Mickey.
You didn't even call the police.

MICKEY
I told you, the family doesn't want the police around. We want to take care of it ourselves and we will. I'll find him. I swear I will.

VIOLET
I know you will.

MICKEY
Sure you're going to be okay? I mean, if you're having second thoughts, my offer still stands.

VIOLET
Thanks, Mickey, but I need to get out, you know? Get away from all of this.

Mickey nods.

VIOLET
But thanks. Thanks for everything.

She hugs him and he kisses her. Then he gets in his car. Violet watches him drive away and knows that she is free.

EXT. CORKY'S APARTMENT

Corky sitting on stoop, patient, like a rock.

She looks up as she hears high heels, and smiles at --

Violet standing there, new outfit.

Corky stands in front of her.

CORKY
Hey.

VIOLET
Hey.

CORKY
How'd it go?

VIOLET
I'm here, aren't I?

Corky nods.

CORKY
I guess we should get out of here.

Violet nods.

Corky digs out alarm keys, aims, fires. Violet turns, looks.

New truck.

Violet turns to Corky, eyebrow cocked.

CORKY (CONT'D)
Thought we might need a getaway
car.

Smiles, they get in.

INT. TRUCK

Corky admires truck.

CORKY
You know what the difference is
between us, Violet?

VIOLET
No.

CORKY
... Me neither.

Lean for kiss, as dolly in.

Guns engine.

Zoom.

THE END