

JO JO DANCER
YOUR LIFE IS CALLING

Original Screenplay

by

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Final Draft

December 10, 1984

Revisions

1-14-85 Blue

-JOJO DANCER

-YOUR LIFE IS CALLING

1 FADE IN:

Over a BLACK SCREEN we HEAR the anticipatory mumbling SOUNDS of an audience as it is interrupted by:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Ladies and gentlemen... JOJO
DANCER!!!

Simultaneously with this announcement, opening CREDITS BEGIN. We HEAR tremendous APPLAUSE, and then:

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. KITCHEN - BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - EARLY MORNING

JOJO (V.O.)
Thank you ladies and gentlemen!

Jojo begins his ROUTINE OVER as CAMERA PANS the room. As Jojo progresses in his comedy routine, we start to become aware of a faint, undiscernible CLINKING NOISE in the b.g. that becomes increasingly louder and grating to the point of distraction from his monologue.

CUT TO:

2A INT. KITCHEN - CLOSEUP OF POT ON STOVE - MORNING

The source of the CLINKING NOISE is revealed to be a small glass bottle boiling in a metal pot. Lying around the counter is drug paraphrenalia. A body passes through FRAME, silhouetted by the morning light. Hands proceed to prepare the mixture that has been cooking on the stove, taking the bottle to the sink and running tap water over it. Over all this we still HEAR Jojo's MONOLOGUE; it's in direct counterpoint to what we're seeing. FOLLOW the figure out of the kitchen to...

3 INT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

We FOLLOW the silhouetted figure down a hallway passing several posters on the way; the posters indicate who Jojo Dancer is -- having such titles as "In Concert...", "Appearing One Night Only...", etc. We go past several doors to a bedroom.

4 INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME

We continue to HEAR the routine as we look about the bedroom. It's in total disarray; dresser drawers not closed, clothes strewn about, trash can overflowing. Preparations for basing cocaine are scattered about. As we MOVE FURTHER into the room, we SPOT an Emmy statuette. The mess about the room is extensive.

5 ANGLE ON JOJO'S WALL

Adorning the walls of this room are many personal artifacts from Jojo's career; more posters, photos of him with various celebrities show the extent of his fame, as we continue to HEAR his comedy routine.

5A INT. BEDROOM

The same pair of hands we saw in the kitchen comes into FRAME. The hands reach for a pipe and carefully place cocaine rocks in its stem. FOLLOW the pipe to its user's mouth as he takes a hit from the pipe, and savors it, inhaling for as long as he can. We SEE it's Jojo Dancer as ecstasy fills his face. He's really high, enjoying the moment as the smoke dissipates around him.

After a few moments Jojo gets up, a look of fear fills his face. He begins looking down the hallway, locking his door and retreating back into his room, as we CONTINUE to HEAR his ROUTINE. We begin to sense an out of control paranoia within Jojo as he imagines he hears voices; he checks the closets, and behind the doors. Finally he goes over to the window, pulls aside the sheer curtains, opens the window and looks out.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. WINDOW (REVERSE ANGLE)

as Jojo looks out, fearfully. Satisfied, Jojo closes the window and pulls the curtains together. CAMERA REMAINS on window as we SEE Jojo walking back and forth inside. Routine continues until suddenly we HEAR a bloodcurdling, agonized scream, followed by an explosion that blows out the windows. At the same moment, ROUTINE and CREDITS END.

SMASH CUT TO:

7 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - POV JOJO - SOME TIME LATER

A gurney bursts through hospital doors. We SEE blurred images of ceiling lights as it's rapidly wheeled down the hallway. The CROSSTALK is indistinguishable but we definitely feel a sense of urgency.

7A Jojo looks from left to right trying to focus on the MEDICAL ASSISTANTS who push the gurney through yet another set of doors and into the emergency room. The gurney stops underneath a large, round surgical light. Several faces can be SEEN moving in and out of FRAME, none too clearly. One face, DOCTOR CARLYLE'S, leans in close, but remains UNFOCUSED.

8 ANOTHER ANGLE

We can SEE Jojo, his body is badly burned. Several Medical Attendants are careful not to touch him. The room is cluttered with POLICEMEN, NURSES and MEN in blue surgical gowns. A doctor tries to comfort Jojo as people scurry about the room hooking up monitors, IV stands and other equipment. Although there is a sense of urgency, these professionals handle their task with methodical precision.

We HEAR the MUFFLED SOUNDS of Jojo's BREATHING through a respirator as we SEE a MONTAGE of the emergency team swinging into action, moving in equipment, their faces mirroring the tension as they work to save Jojo's life.

9 ANGLE ON JOJO

As he tries to raise his hand to touch the doctor's arm. Dr. Carlyle smiles with concern and gently places Jojo's hand back down.

DOCTOR CARLYLE

(reassuringly)

We're going to give you something
for the pain.

10 ANOTHER ANGLE

One of the nurses escorts the two officers standing at the edge of the emergency room out into the hallway. They leave rather reluctantly.

11 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME TIME

The medical team continues working together efficiently, each one performing their task with a purpose, conscious of the ramifications.

12 ANGLE ON JOJO

We continue to HEAR Jojo's BREATHING through the respirator as he now begins MUMBLING incoherently.

JOJO'S POV

13

The doctors huddle around Jojo. They look DISTORTED and HAZY as in an hallucination.

13A ANOTHER ANGLE - JOJO

As an EXACT IMAGE of himself begins to RISE UP, struggling to leave his body; it is Jojo's ALTER EGO, and he's having difficulty getting out, separating himself from Jojo.

ALTER EGO

Let me go... GODDAMNIT!!

JOJO

(drugged)

Wait a minute...

Alter Ego finally extricates himself, stands alongside Jojo.

ALTER EGO

(furious)

This is a fine how do you do,
You're a fuckin' ASSHOLE! You
know that, pal?

Jojo mumbles in response.

ALTER EGO

(points to Jojo's
smoldering body)

Look at you! Oh my ass, you are
an asshole!

14 ANGLE ON DOCTORS

As they proceed to clean Jojo's wounds, his heart stops.

Suddenly the SOUND of Jojo's breathing has been supplanted by a flat, high-pitched WAIL from the electrocardiogram (EKG).

DOCTOR CARLYLE

(frantically)

His heart's stopped!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Immediately they mobilize to work on reviving him. They begin shouting out orders and carrying out the necessary life-saving procedures. Alter Ego watches as DOCTORS Carlyle and WEISSMAN work feverishly, along with the nurses, trying to reactivate Jojo's heartbeat.

ALTER EGO

(incensed)

FUCK YOU! Your heart's stopped!!
You son-of-a-bitch! You ain't
gettin' off that easy, pal!

Alter Ego steps in closer, raises his fists and brings them down swiftly, whacking Jojo right in the chest. Jojo's chest now begins to move in and out slowly.

15 ANGLE ON EKG

As it again registers Jojo's heartbeat in a steady 'blip.'

16 ANGLE ON DOCTORS

As they're working on Jojo.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN

We got him back. Let's get him
stabilized and give him twenty
milligrams of Lasix IV.

17 We HEAR Jojo's BREATHING resume as he begins mumbling.

ALTER EGO

(to Jojo)

What happened? You wanna know
what happened? I wanna know what
happened, cause I'm pissed off.
I don't understand you.

Jojo mumbles incoherently.

ALTER EGO

I can't deal with this. I
gotta go. Look, try to hold
it together until I get back,
Okay? Think you can handle
that?

JOJO

I'll try...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALTER EGO

Try... my ass.

18 He starts to leave, stops at the door as Jojo mumbles.

DOCTOR WEISSMAN

Who's he talking to?

DOCTOR CARLYLE

I don't know. Probably to God...
Bless his heart.

JOJO

(to Alter Ego)

I-I-I need you...

ALTER EGO

Where were you when I needed you?

Alter Ego storms out of the room.

19 (Note: As the attendants continue to work on Jojo's burns, dialogue to come will indicate that although he is still alive, he is not out of danger yet.)

20 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - ELEVATOR AREA

Alter Ego walks out of the emergency room, makes his way down the hall. He passes by one of the policemen and a nurse who are standing by the elevator. They're in conversation about Jojo. He stops to listen.

NURSE

I didn't know he did that
much drugs.

POLICEMAN

Hey, he won't be doing anymore.

He laughs.

ALTER EGO

(to himself)

What the fuck do you know.

Alter Ego shakes his head and as the elevator door opens he steps inside.

21 INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY

As Alter Ego steps out from elevator, he sees...

21A ALTER EGO'S POV - LOBBY

The place is crawling with media people and curiosity seekers; It's like a carnival sideshow. Reporters are cornering doctors, asking questions; autograph seekers are trying to bribe nurses; bag ladies and injured drunks are there, offering useless help.

OLD DRUNK

I got some skin... he need some skin? How much you gonna pay?

AUTOGRAPH HOUND

(to orderly)

Can you press his hand on this book, maybe get his fingerprints for me?

An undertaker offers his card at the admissions desk in case Jojo's not already spoken for. Alter Ego overhears a VOICE in the crowd asking if Jojo is an organ donor. Amidst laughter, someone SHOUTS out:

VOICE (O.S.)

I want his dick!

ALTER EGO

(to himself; disgusted)

Let me out of here!

Alter Ego pushes his way past the crowds, out towards the exit doors.

22 EXT. HOSPITAL - EARLY MORNING - SAME TIME

We can still HEAR the SOUNDS of the emergency room, doctors talking and Jojo mumbling, as we SEE people of all types and dress walk in and out of the hospital. Alter Ego bursts through the hospital doors, steps into the sunlight and gives a deep sigh as he walks down the hospital steps. A BLACK LIMOUSINE with tinted windows pulls up to the curb, stops. The back door swings open automatically. Alter Ego walks to the limo, turns and looks back at the hospital, gives another sigh and gets inside. As limo drives off, BEGIN 1940'S STYLE MUSIC.

23 INT. LIMO - EARLY MORNING (MOVING)

As the car moves down the street, Jojo's Alter Ego sits looking out the window, pensively. We can still HEAR the sounds of the emergency room, Jojo's mumbling.

JOJO (V.O.)

Where are we going?

ALTER EGO

To save your life. We gotta look, find out how this could have happened.

The SOUNDS continue until the LOUD CHIME of a school BELL breaks the tension.

DISSOLVE TO:

24 EXT. STREET - DAY (FLASHBACK SEQUENCE) - COLUMBUS

The limo pulls up in front of a school yard. We're now aware of being in another time, another place. The 1984 limo seems out of place in this typical midwest city and we can SEE by passing cars and people dressed in fashions of the day, that it is sometime in the mid-1940's.

25 ANOTHER ANGLE

Alter Ego exits the back of the limo and walks into the playground. There's monkey bars, teeter-totter, slides, swings -- all kinds of children's toys. As he walks through the yard, the smell and feel remind him of days gone by.

We HEAR another school BELL RING as children of all sizes and colors run from the building. We SEE LITTLE JOJO and two of his friends -- RAYMOND and CHARLIE -- exit the school yard hurriedly, free at last.

Jojo's Alter Ego stands in the school yard, unnoticed by everyone except Little Jojo, who stares at him questioningly.

26 ANOTHER ANGLE

Raymond and Charlie, playing tag, notice Jojo's attention is elsewhere.

RAYMOND/CHARLIE

Hey, Jojo,....C'mon.

CUT TO:

27 EXT.. ESTABLISHING SHOT - INDUSTRIAL AREA - DAY

Smokestacks and factory buildings. Music in b.g is "TOBACCO ROAD." We SEE the three boys walking along the street being followed by the slow-moving limo.

28 EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA - JUNK YARD - DAY

CAMERA FINDS Little Jojo, Raymond and Charlie playing cowboys in an old junk yard behind one of the warehouses, jumping up and down on discarded mattresses. In the distance Alter Ego can be seen watching them intently. Little Jojo sees Alter Ego but turns his attention back to the mattress.

LITTLE JOJO
(indicates mattress
stuffing)
Looks like hair!

While Charlie and Raymond continue to play, Little Jojo, unnoticed, turns his back.

29 ANGLE FAVORING LITTLE JOJO

Jojo turns around -- a big grin on his face -- revealing that he has stuffed mattress hair inside the zipper of his pants, and does his impersonation of a grown man.

LITTLE JOJO
(in a deep voice)
I'm a grown man! I got hair, look!
Let's go get some pussy!

He gestures to the large mounds of hair protruding from his zipper.

CHARLIE
Hey, me too, man. I'm gonna get
some pussy! Let's go!

Raymond and Charlie proceed to imitate Little Jojo and stuff hair in their trousers. They parade around doing imitations of adults.

RAYMOND
Yeah, boy, you ain't a man till
you get some hair.

Laughing and squealing excitedly, they dart out of the junk yard and around a corner to:

30 Omitted
31 Omitted

32 EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

as they come upon CLARA, a prostitute, who's standing on the street corner, 'working.' In the distance we can SEE the limo cruising behind them.

LITTLE JOJO

Hey, Clara, wanna see something?

She turns, slightly annoyed by the presence of these three little boys.

CLARA

Go away. You're botherin' me.
I'm workin'.

She walks a few steps down the street; the boys persist, Raymond and Charlie egging Jojo on.

LITTLE JOJO

Ah, Clara... look what I got.

He points to the fly on his pants. Clara turns around, looks at them and their 'hairy monsters,' and can't help but laugh.

CLARA

What's wrong with you boys?
What's that you got there?

RAYMOND

That's hair. We're grown.

CLARA

Uh-hun. Well if you're grown,
I gotta take your picture.

She looks in her purse:

CLARA

(continuing)

Let me find my camera...
Here it is!

Lined up in a row, Raymond, Charlie and Little Jojo are quite a sight standing their with their 'hairy monsters.'

33 ANOTHER ANGLE

Clara moves closer to them, her back to CAMERA. We SEE her lift her dress. A stunned expression comes over the boys' faces.

CLARA

Smile at the birdie!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And she lifts her dress all the way up. Horror-stricken and wide-eyed, the three boys gasp as run off as quickly as they can.

34 CLOSEUP - CLARA

She's laughing at her little joke. A male passerby, slightly startled, gives her a look.

CLARA
(indignant)
What're you lookin' at?

35 EXT. JUNK YARD - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Little Jojo, Raymond and Charlie slow down and catch their breath, their 'hairy monsters' are still intact. In b.g. we can SEE the limo stop a short distance away from the boys.

CHARLIE
I ain't never seen nothin' like that. I'm gettin' this hair outta my pants... it's itchy. And I don't wanna be no grown-up yet.

RAYMOND
Hey, that was the real thing. That was 'pussy.'

CHARLIE
I ain't never seen anything like that before in my whole life.
(to Jojo)
You see it all the time, Jojo. You ever had some before?

Jojo gestures, finger in hand, the old in and out. They all laugh.

RAYMOND
(boasting)
I had me some before.

The boys look at him with new-found respect.

RAYMOND
(continues)
One time when I was down South, my cousin --

36 ANGLE FAVORING THE BOYS

As they hear:

MR. MOTORCYCLE (O.S.)
What're you boys doin' in my
junkyard?

BOYS
Huh?

37 WIDER ANGLE

REVEALS the voice belongs to an elderly-looking Black man with one eye, no teeth and a menacing face. It's MR. MOTORCYCLE, the owner of the junkyard. Seated next to him on a wooden crate is his wife, an elderly White woman with a kindly face; she's dressed in an old print dress.

LITTLE JOJO
(frightened)
Nothin', Mr. Motorcycle.

RAYMOND
(chimes in)
Sir!!

LITTLE JOJO
We was just playin' with our hair.

MR. MOTORCYCLE
Throw that nasty hair away!

The boys start taking the mattress hair out of their pants.

MR. MOTORCYCLE
People been stealin' stuff from my
junkyard... two carburetors and a big
motor that was over there.
(points)
You boys steal that motor? You look
pretty strong to me.

The boys shake their heads, 'no.' They're terrified.

MR. MOTORCYCLE
(continuing)
If I catch 'em, I'm gonna chop their
heads off and shrink 'em. I can get
some good money for little Black
boys' heads.
(leans toward them)
I sell 'em to the white folks downtown.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A beat as the boys stand there petrified. Mrs. Motorcycle, who's been listening to all this, chimes in:

MRS. MOTORCYCLE
You're scaring them boys, Carl.
They're nice boys. You boys want
me to take your picture?

She leans over and reaches down, beginning to raise her skirt, much to the shock of the three boys.

BOYS

NO!...

They look at each other and run quickly away. We can now SEE Mrs. Motorcycle pick up her old beat-up box camera on the ground between her legs.

MRS. MOTORCYCLE
(watches them run;
to Carl)
What's wrong with them boys, Carl?

MR. MOTORCYCLE
(looks at her)
Africans.

38 EXT. LOWER CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD - LATE AFTERNOON

The three boys walk along the street. Raymond and Charlie say 'goodbye' to Jojo, they've got to get home. Jojo tries to persuade them to stay and play some more, he doesn't want to go home. Raymond and Charlie decline and go, leaving Jojo all alone. We get a sense that for Jojo, home is where you go when there's no place else to go.

Jojo walks down the street to a residential neighborhood we've not seen before. There's a tavern on the corner; music on the jukebox is playing as Jojo stops to look inside. Then, he goes around to the side of the building where he sees a lady open a window to greet him. In b.g., limo follows.

LITTLE JOJO
Hi, Miss Mabel.

MABEL
Hi, Jojo. Home from school?

LITTLE JOJO
Yes, M'am.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MABEL

You do good?

LITTLE JOJO

Yeah.

Mabel takes a chicken leg, wraps it in a napkin and hands it to Jojo. He thanks her, then runs off, back to the front of the bar. He looks in again and sees a bunch of men arguing as the bartender spots him.

BARTENDER

Say boy, get away from that door!

38A Jojo runs off down the street. He walks, passing some houses upon whose porches sit WHITE LADIES, clad in scanty costumes. Jojo waves to some of them. One of them motions him over but he shakes his head and walks on as the woman laughs. We now SEE that the houses are brothels; a few cops come out, laughing.

38B As Little Jojo walks further, the neighborhood and its brothels turns progressively Black. A trucker HONKS and waves; Jojo's in his element now. An ice truck goes by and a piece of ice falls off the back, much to Jojo's delight; he kicks the ice down the street, playing his own version of 'kick the can.' A policeman walks by, looks at Jojo, then moves on.

As Jojo passes more whorehouses, he sees tricks going inside, eager to spend their paychecks. In an alleyway he sees a crazy man who preaches in the street, being beaten up by two men; the man fights them, but finally gives in as they put a bucket over his head. Jojo's seen it all before, life is cheap here on the street; he walks on as the limo follows him at a constant distance.

39 ANOTHER ANGLE - CLOSER

Jojo approaches a two-story Elizabethan house in good repair with classic picture windows adorning the front. Upon further inspection, we SEE several BLACK LADIES sitting in the windows, wearing scanty attire. The large front door is wide open. Jojo sits atop the front stoop's concrete buttresses and gives out with a wild 'Tarzan' yell. Just then he hears:

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

Get in this house, boy!

Jojo almost falls off the buttress, hops up the steps, only to find himself staring into the face of a big robust Black woman of about fifty; this is Jojo's GRANDMOTHER. She gives Jojo a menacing look as she holds a large strap in her hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINGED:

GRANDMOTHER

Those are your school clothes.
You ain't supposed to be playin'
in them.

LITTLE JOJO

Yes, M'am.

GRANDMOTHER

(warmly now)
How's Grandma's baby?

LITTLE JOJO

Fine, Momma.

GRANDMOTHER

Why you so late comin' home from school?

He doesn't reply, just looks at the limo as it pulls up.
Then he looks at his grandmother.

LITTLE JOJO

Grandmomma...

GRANDMOTHER

What, boy?

He looks back at the limo again.

LITTLE JOJO

Oh,... nothin'.

GRANDMOTHER

You know what? I got a call from
Ethel Green. She was downtown today
and said there was three 'mannish'
boys... with hair stuffed all down
their pants. And they was runnin'
around annoyin' people. You know
anything about that?

(holds up strap)

If it was you, I'll beat your little
ass.

LITTLE JOJO

No, Momma... I was at the junkyard.
Raymond and Charlie was stealin' and
I was tryin' to stop 'em.

GRANDMOTHER

(she knows better)

Uh-huh. You all better stay away
from Mr. Motorcycle's place. And
if I ever catch some little boys
downtown, I'm gonna wear your ass
out. Now, come on in the house!

CUT TO:

40 INT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Little Jojo and his grandmother enter the foyer. As is typical of this period, there are open double doors to the right and left, exposing two large sitting rooms. A well-polished hardwood staircase leads to the second floor. Girls in varying degrees of undress wander about.

GIRLS

Hi, Jojo.

LITTLE JOJO

Hi, Miss Judy. Hi, Miss Sandra.

He smiles shyly.

ANOTHER GIRL

Come here, baby. How's my baby?
How you doin' in school?

LITTLE JOJO

Fine, Miss Audrey.

As Little Jojo and his grandmother walk along the hall, they pass by BIG JAKE, the establishment's bodyguard. He's about six feet six, an imposing and effective figure.

Jojo takes out his report card and hands it to Audrey. She looks at it and then passes it around to all the ladies who comment on Jojo's grades as he swells with pride. One of the girls tries to show Big Jake the card, but Jojo's grandmother pipes in, grabbing it away.

GRANDMOTHER

(to girls)

Don't do that. You know he
can't read.

BIG JAKE

(leans in to Jojo)

Glad you can, Jojo. School is
important.

Jojo nods, then heads for the living room, saying his hellos and giving the girls each a kiss as is his regular practice. In the b.g. we can SEE some of the girls lining up, hoping to be chosen by a trick who's looking them over.

As Jojo shows one of the girls his report card:

GIRL

Good grades, baby. Give me a kiss
and bring me some luck.

She kisses him and puts a few dollars in his shirt pocket.

41 NEW ANGLE - TO INCLUDE GRANDMOTHER IN LIVING ROOM

As she reaches over and grabs the report card.

GRANDMOTHER

Give me that. Let me see that!
 (a beat; as she looks)
 Your momma has to sign this, She's
 busy, but your daddy's out back.
 He'll sign it.

Jojo takes the report card and walks out of the living room into another room where we SEE a HABERDASHER who's showing his wares -- scanty, suggestive clothes -- to the prostitutes who eagerly try some of them on. Jojo watches for a beat, then runs out to...

42 EXT. JOJO'S HOUSE - BACK YARD

Jojo's FATHER is bent over a large pot of fish, as the SCREEN door SLAMS. He's about thirty, huge, with a strong-willed, trusting face and large hands. He's wearing fishing clothes as Jojo runs up to him, report card in hand.

LITTLE JOJO

Hi, Daddy.

FATHER

(doesn't look up)
 Hand me one of them croppies...

A hint of pride in his eyes, he watches as Jojo reluctantly tries to grab one of the slippery fish.

FATHER

What're you afraid of, boy?

LITTLE JOJO

Nothin'.

Jojo cannot seem to grab a fish.

FATHER

Pick that fish up!

LITTLE JOJO

I don't wanna... you take it.

FATHER

(angry)
 Pick it up like I told you. You
 got to get it around the gills. Hold it.

Jojo drops the fish to the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER

You dropped it. C'mon, pick it up. Help me clean these fish.

His father takes a fish, begins cleaning it, making Jojo warch.

FATHER

See this? This one is bad -- can't eat it. Give it to the cats.

(tosses it aside)

Hand me another one.

Little Jojo grabs a tiny one, his father throws it back, makes him get a bigger one. Father helps him get it.

FATHER

Good... Now we gotta clean him out real good. That's the only way you can get your momma to cook 'em.

LITTLE JOJO

Where's Momma? She's gotta sign my report card?

His father doesn't answer at first, then:

FATHER

She's busy.

(beat)

Let me see that.

His father rinses off his hands, drying them on his pants leg. He takes the card, looks at it.

LITTLE JOJO

Hey, Daddy, you know today at school they asked us what our parents did and I told them that you and Momma ran a nightclub.

FATHER

(no eye contact)

That's good enough.

(beat)

Pretty good report card, this time, 'cept says here your attitude is bad. What's wrong with your attitude?

LITTLE JOJO

Teacher says I daydream.

FATHER

Don't pay attention, huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LITTLE JOJO

Sometimes I don't.

(changing the subject)

When're we gonna move? I don't like it here much. You said we were gonna move.

FATHER

(tired of the questions)

Soon, Jojo, soon.

LITTLE JOJO

When is 'soon'?

FATHER

Soon is soon. You ask too damn many questions.

He stops what he's doing.

FATHER

(continuing)

Ain't you got some homework to do?

LITTLE JOJO

Yes sir.

FATHER

What kind?

LITTLE JOJO

Well I gotta do some readin'... practice my spellin'... and work on my writin'.

FATHER

Well with all those questions you got, why don't you write me note. Make sure you spell everything right so I can read it. Now get in the house and do your homework. Here, your Momma'll sign this.

He hands Jojo back the report card and leans back over the pot. Jojo stands there, wanting to kiss his father, but he doesn't. As he leaves:

LITTLE JOJO

Daddy... Momma don't want to live here either.

(CONTINUED)

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JoJo. Dancer

20. *

CONTINUED:

Little Jojo's statement strikes a raw nerve.

FATHER

(cuts him off)

That's the way life is. You don't
always get to do what you want to
do. Now go inside!

Little Jojo walks into the house past Alter Ego who's standing
on the porch. Alter Ego looks at his father as though he
was seeing him for the first time. Just then, his father
cuts his hand on the knife he's cleaning the fish with.

FATHER

Fuck!!

Little Jojo turns to look at his father; he feels distant as
he looks at his father for a beat, then turns and goes inside.

His father looks perplexed, then resumes cleaning the fish.

A43 INT. JOJO'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY - LATE AFTERNOON *

Little Jojo is climbing the stairs as he turns to see...

LITTLE JOJO'S POV - HIS ALTER EGO

As the Ego enters the house downstairs. There's a pause as
the Alter Ego looks up at Little Jojo. Suddenly we HEAR
YELLING and screaming coming from above. CAMERA PANS to Little Jojo
at the top of the stairs as we SEE a trick being ejected
from one of the rooms by an irate prostitute. She yells for
Big Jake to come help evict the man as she throws his clothes
on the floor after him. Just then, Big Jake arrives.

ANGRY PROSTITUTE

(to trick)

You stinkin' motherfucker!!

(to Jake)

Get rid of this freak! Wanted me to
PISS on him!

(to trick)

Garbage motherfucker! You picked the
wrong girl, baby!!

BIG JAKE

(taking charge)

Go on in the room, baby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Little Jojo is standing at the end of the hallway watching all this as the prostitute pushes the trick away, goes into her room and SLAMS the door behind her.

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)
(calling from downstairs)
What's goin' on up there?

BIG JAKE
(answering her)
Nothin'. I got it under control.

Jake grabs the man's clothing and hands it to him. The trick is embarrassed, but after seeing the towering Big Jake, he's glad to get out of there with his life.

TRICK
(to Jake)
I...I didn't mean to cause any trouble.

BIG JAKE
That's all right now. Like me to send you up somebody else?

TRICK
No... it's okay. I think I'd better go.

BIG JAKE
And don't forget your shoes.

TRICK
(warming to him)
You're a nice man.
(beat)
Could you pee on me?

Jake looks like he's about to explode; grabs the man by his shirt.

BIG JAKE
You freak motherfucker!!

Jake swiftly escorts the man down the stairs, past Little Jojo who's been watching the whole time.

42 ANGLE ON LITTLE JOJO - HALLWAY

The altercation having ended, Little Jojo makes his way further along the hall. Walking past one of the doors, he HEARS a MAN LAUGHING and a WOMAN GIGGLING. He stops at the door and peeks through the keyhole to see...

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21A. *

44 JOJO'S POV

A big fat WOMAN and a MAN in bed

44A ANGLE ON LITTLE JOJO OUTSIDE DOOR

As he accidentally BUMPS his head, making a noise.

44B BACK TO SCENE - JOJO'S POV

As the man sits up, startled.

MAN

What was that?

WOMAN

Jojo! Is that you out there?

44C ANGLE ON JOJO

Caught, he runs off. As he passes another door, he stops. He puts his hand on the doorknob, ready to open it, but changes his mind and walks away from the door, down the hallway and enters the last door at the end.

45 INT. JOJO'S BEDROOM

The room is clean and simple -- a small brass bed, dresser and chair. The late afternoon sun streams in through the curtained window. Little Jojo enters the room and immediately begins doing an impression of what he's just witnessed -- Big Jake throwing the trick out. Little Jojo's amusing himself, acting out all the parts.

LITTLE JOJO

(as the trick)

Thank you, thank you, thank you
for peeing on me.

LITTLE JOJO

(as prostitute)

I didn't PEE on you! You're a liar!
I ain't no dog!

LITTLE JOJO

(as the trick)

Shuttup, bitch! Do your job.

LITTLE JOJO

(as prostitute)

Hey Jake, throw this crazy man
outta here!

Assuming the demeanor of Big Jake, Little Jojo raises his arms and begins stomping around the room, making his foot-steps loud and heavy. He looks like some kind of monster.

LITTLE JOJO

(as Jake; deep voiced)

All right, man. I'm gonna throw
your ass outta here.

46 NEW ANGLE

To include Alter Ego in the room, sitting on the bed. Little Jojo stomps around the room, imitating Jake, only to come face to face with his Alter Ego. After a beat:

LITTLE JOJO

(to Alter Ego)

I'm gonna be in for a lot of trouble
when I grow up, ain't I?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alter Ego nods 'yes.'

LITTLE JOJO
Am I always gonna be bad?

ALTER EGO
You're not bad, Jojo. Not at
all. Too bad nobody's ever
gonna tell you that.

LITTLE JOJO
Why won't they tell me?

ALTER EGO
I'm tryin' to find out. I'm tired
of feelin' bad too, Jojo.

LITTLE JOJO
(with bravado)
I'm not afraid, you know.

ALTER EGO
I know.

With that, Alter Ego goes to the door. With a look of pain
on his face, he starts to leave. Then:

LITTLE JOJO
(to Alter Ego)
Can't you change things?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALTER EGO
I'm gonna try.

He leaves, as we...

CUT TO:

47 INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE JOJO'S ROOM

Alter Ego walks slowly down the familiar hallway, listening to the SOUNDS of men and women. As he starts down the stairs...

CUT TO:

48 INT. FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

Alter Ego wanders down the hallway, listening to the LAUGHTER behind closed doors. He walks up to one of the doors; it's the same door Little Jojo neglected to peek into earlier. Bracing himself, Alter Ego knocks on the door.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Come in.

He opens the door and enters.

49 INT. BEDROOM

A pretty WOMAN is seated at the dressing table preparing herself for work. Alter Ego approaches gradually; the room is exactly as he remembered it. The room is lit with a red glow. The furniture is meager, just a bed, dresser, mirror and chair. On the dresser is a pitcher and wash bowl with wash cloths alongside it. The woman looks at Alter Ego; she seems to recognize him.

MOTHER

My, my... let me see you, baby.
Look at my boy.

She turns and faces him.

ALTER EGO

Hi, Momma.

MOTHER

Look at you. You sure have grown
up to be something. Who would have
guessed it.

(beat)

What kinda work you do, Jojo?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALTER EGO
Show business.

MOTHER
Uh-huh. It's in your blood.
(a bit nervous)
Have you seen your grandma?

ALTER EGO
No, M'am.

MOTHER
(relieved)
That's good. It would only upset
her.

She turns back to the mirror and finishes dabbing at her face and hair. Alter Ego sits in a chair next to her.

MOTHER
What're you doin' here, Jojo?

ALTER EGO
Just wanted to see you, Momma.

49A ANOTHER ANGLE

His mother pulls out one of the dressing table drawers, takes out an old piece of paper -- it's a little valentine drawing from Jojo to his mother.

MOTHER
Let me show you somethin'. You remember this? You made this for me in the first grade, and I cried. Sometimes I look at it now and I cry. I didn't know what I was goin' to do with you, Jojo. You were such a bad boy, got in trouble all the time. But I'm glad you turned out the way you did, Jo.

ALTER EGO
I'm glad you feel that way, Momma.

MOTHER
Jojo,... did you ever forgive me?

ALTER EGO
No, Momma. I don't think I ever did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOTHER

I understand. Sometimes I wish I could get your daddy to understand. I tried so hard to get outta here. But I understand, ... sometimes I wish I didn't understand. You know how it is. The only reason I'm hanging around is 'cause I know how you're gonna turn out.

(pause)

That surprises you, don't it -- that I know how you're gonna turn out... to be just fine.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

MOTHER

(aggravated)

Shit!

We HEAR a second KNOCK, more insistent this time.

MOTHER

Well, back to work...
(lighter attitude)
Just a minute!!

50 NEW ANGLE

She checks herself in the mirror just one more time, gets up. Sensing this is his cue, Alter Ego rises and starts to leave. His mother stops him as he stands by the door, and says:

MOTHER

I have nothing to give you. I gave you everything I had, except to say, 'I love you.'

As Alter Ego stands there at the door we HEAR BREATHING sounds from the Intensive Care Unit.

ALTER EGO

I gotta go now.

It's a bittersweet moment between them. A trick enters room when Alter Ego opens the door.

MOTHER

(to trick)

Hi, baby!

Alter Ego gently closes the door behind, as we END FLASHBACK.

51 INT. INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - PRESENT - LOS ANGELES

As Alter Ego closes the door we SEE he is now in the Intensive Care Unit alongside Jojo who's bandaged from head to toe except for his eyes and mouth. He's hooked up to various machinery as Alter Ego sits down beside him and begins talking to him.

ALTER EGO

You gotta forgive her, Jojo. I know this is painful for ya, man, but ya gotta do it. Look at it, look at all of it. It has a lot to do with why you're here. I mean, the women you chose for yourself. You're lucky you made it this far, Jo.

Jojo, semiconscious, mumbles. He's BREATHING STEADILY.

52 ANOTHER ANGLE

An IMAGE begins to form on the wall before them. It's a WOMAN in silhouette. (SPECIAL EFFECTS)

ALTER EGO

What're you thinking, Jo?

Jojo mumbles again,

ALTER EGO

Oh sure, it's easy for you to say!

More mumbling.

ALTER EGO

(continuing)

That's great! You made it very clear.

(beat)

Hmmm. ever think about this, Jo?

Maybe you were tryin' to get approval from your mother through other women.

Jojo reacts, mumbling louder.

ALTER EGO

Just a thought, just a thought, Jo. Take it easy.

(sees image on wall)

What'd'ya like about this one anyway? Her smile? Get outta here. Sure it wasn't those big tits!?

53 ANOTHER ANGLE

IMAGES begin to form themselves much clearer now and BEGIN FOCUSING on a WOMAN in SILHOUETTE (END SPECIAL EFFECTS).

DISSOLVE TO:

54 INT. NIGHTCLUB - JOJO'S TABLE - MID 1970'S - LOS ANGELES

MUSIC FULL UP as we REVEAL Jojo at a table with several of his friends, laughing and having a good time. The music and dress tells us that this is the 1970's.

55 ANOTHER ANGLE

As Jojo watches we SEE MICHELLE, a warm, sensuous Black beauty, with large, round eyes, and a smile that lights up her face when she speaks. Jojo's eyes are riveted on her as she dances with a White MAN.

As Jojo watches her, SAMMY DAVIS, JR. comes over to his table to say 'hello.' After some conversation, Jojo continues to watch Michelle; he notices that she's wearing a low-cut blouse, and a stylish pantsuit outfit with high heels that flatter her already perfect legs. She's truly a vision.

After a while they stop dancing and the man takes her to her table where she resumes talking to her GIRLFRIEND.

ANGLE ON JOJO AT HIS TABLE

As he stops a waiter who's carrying a bottle of champagne.

JOJO

(to waiter)

Where are you taking that?

WIDER ANGLE

As the waiter points to Michelle. Jojo gets an idea; he takes the bottle from the waiter and puts a napkin on his wrist.

JOJO

(to waiter)

I'll take it over.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Assuming the demeanor of a waiter, Jojo walks across the room, over towards Michelle's table. As he approaches it, we SEE the girlfriend excuse herself. Jojo nods his head, as if in approval.

He reaches Michelle's table...

JOJO
(to Michelle)
Your champagne, my dear.
Dom Perignon, '55.

Michelle looks up at him, stares at him blankly.

MICHELLE
Thank you, boy.

Jojo laughs.

MICHELLE
What's so funny?
(beat)
You're not the waiter, are you?

JOJO
I'm Jojo Dancer.

MICHELLE
(smiles seductively)
Am I supposed to know who you are?
Are you famous?

JOJO
Some people think so.

MICHELLE
(playing with
him)
Oh... forgive me. I've been out
of the country.
(pause)
Do you know me?

This catches Jojo off-guard.

MICHELLE
(continuing)
I'm Michelle Jensen. Do you
know me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

(picks up on
the game)

No... I've been out at the
home.

They both laugh... this breaks the ice.

JOJO

Can I join you?

MICHELLE

No, but you can sit down.

He does. Jojo stares, at a loss for words.

MICHELLE

(notices)

What're you staring at? You know,
it's rude to stare.

JOJO

I was starin' cause I think you're
very beautiful.

MICHELLE

I bet you say that to all the
girls.

JOJO

The beautiful ones... I say it to.
The ugly ones, I don't say
nothin.'

MICHELLE

(changing the
subject)

Who's that guy over there --
at your table?

JOJO

Which guy?

MICHELLE

The guy that was dancing with
Diana Ross.

JOJO

Jack? Jack 'the Flash' Bailey.
Oh, he's a deejay from New
York.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHELLE

(seemingly interested)

Oh, that's Jack "the Flash." I never knew what he looked like. He's quite handsome.

JOJO

Would you like to meet him?

MICHELLE

No, not really.

JOJO

Later a bunch of us are going over to my house. Listen to some music, tell a few lies, laugh a lot. Would you like to go?

MICHELLE

Thank you. I'd like to do that, but my car isn't here.

JOJO

You can ride with me.

MICHELLE

I'd like to, but my girlfriend has to get home.

JOJO

I'll drop her off.

They stare at each other for a beat.

MICHELLE

I haven't said I'd go yet.

JOJO

And you haven't said you wouldn't.

CUT TO:

56

BALLS BUSTING ON A POOL TABLE - MID 1970'S - LOS ANGELES

PULL BACK to REVEAL we are in Jojo's den. It's wood-panelled and very masculine. Photos and gold albums line the walls. All the accoutrements of early 'success.' Although the place is an obvious sublet, Jojo's tried to make it seem homey. MUSIC plays in the b.g.

Michelle is playing pool as Jojo looks on. She's very enticing; her pantsuit clings to every curve.

57 INT. JOJO'S DEN - NEW ANGLE - NIGHT

SEE Jojo having a line of cocaine off a mirror on the coffee table. He offers some to Michelle; she accepts. It's obvious they're making small talk. He'd rather be raping her than talking to her and she knows it.

JOJO

Would you like some Courvoisier?

MICHELLE

Thank you.

(about a photo)

Oh, is that you and Muhammad Ali?

JOJO

Yeah. About ten years ago. He was still Cassius Clay then.

MICHELLE

(blase)

I never cared much for boxing.

She takes another line of coke, goes over to a small statue and fondles it sensually, aware that she's tantalizing him.

MICHELLE

(cooly)

What is this? Is this some kind of an award?

JOJO

It's an Emmy for some writing I did.

MICHELLE

(indicating gold albums)

And these?

JOJO

They're albums that went gold.

MICHELLE

Are they real gold?

JOJO

(laughs)

I wish.

MICHELLE

I prefer diamonds myself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

You would.

MICHELLE

What is that supposed to mean?

JOJO

(changing the subject)

Wanna see something special?

MICHELLE

(taking it as a
double entendre)

Yeah...

He picks up a little figure of a man that sits on a nearby table.

MICHELLE

What's that?

JOJO

My daughter made it for me at summer camp.

MICHELLE

Oh, you have a daughter. Are you married?

JOJO

No. Are you?

Michelle goes back to the table, picks up the cue stick and continues to play.

MICHELLE

Not. exactly.

JOJO

What do you mean, 'not exactly'?
Isn't that like being a little
bit dead?

MICHELLE

I never thought of it that way.

Jojo picks up a cue stick and watches her play, mentally seducing her.

JOJO

Well, is that why you have a ring
on your finger? Is that 'not
exactly?'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHELLE

(looks at her finger)

Oh, it was a gift from a friend
of mine... named George.

Jojo gives a "not bad" look.

JOJO

I didn't mean to get too personal.

MICHELLE

Yes you did. But it's okay.
George and I have an understanding.
We do what we want.

JOJO

(almost an aside)

Well it's obvious you do what you
want.

Before Jojo can really put his foot in his mouth, she
changes the subject.

58

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Michelle continues shooting.

MICHELLE

(looks at decor)

Hmmm, nice setup. Is this
place yours?

JOJO

I rent.

MICHELLE

Who decorated?

JOJO

Oh, I don't know. What's wrong
with it?

MICHELLE

It's a little tacky. Whoever
lived here had terrible taste.

JOJO

(defensively)

House came furnished.

(hurt; making light)

It's got a bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHELLE

So's the county jail.
 (as she drops
 another ball)
 And it's kinda decorated like
 it, too.

She sinks another shot.

JOJO

Nice shot.

MICHELLE

I have an imported marble pool
 table at my apartment.

JOJO

(mocks her)

I have an imported marble pool table
 at my apartment.

(sarcastic)

Did George get it for you too?

MICHELLE

If you must know, I won it
 from George in a poker game.

She takes a pause, looks up from the table.

MICHELLE

(directly)

And if you're going to get so
 irritated, let's not even talk
 about it.

JOJO

(checks his watch;
 changes subject)

Well, I guess the others aren't
 coming. We've been stood up.

There's a beat, then:

MICHELLE

You're full of shit!

She makes a combination and then sinks the eight-ball. An
 "I won again" smile crosses her face.

59 ANGLE FAVORING JOJO

He's determined to play.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Michelle takes the challenge and racks the balls.

MICHELLE
(steps back from the
table)
Of course... ladies first.

Jojo steps up to the table, takes careful aim and... wham!
He sinks the eight-ball on the break.

CUT TO:

61 INT. JOJO'S BEDROOM - PRE-DAWN

Jojo and Michelle are making love as MUSIC PLAYS softly in
the b.g. CAMERA FLOWS with the music.

ALTER EGO (V.O.)
You two were beautiful together,
Jojo. Too bad it couldn't have
stayed that way.

JOJO (V.O.)
Yeah...

62 ANGLE ON JOJO

As we DOLLY IN on his FACE while he's in the act of making
love. SMOOTHLY, the CAMERA DOLLIES BACK and we SEE that
he's with another woman. CAMERA PULLS BACK further to
reveal we're watching a movie in a screening room. Jojo
sits alongside several people, the DIRECTOR and some
EXECUTIVE TYPES.

63 ANOTHER ANGLE

As the MOVIE ENDS and the LIGHTS COME UP, the Director and
an Executive turn to Jojo who's sitting alongside them,
slightly inebriated, a bottle of Courvoisier in hand. Jojo
takes drink from a cup he's holding. He looks very annoyed.

DIRECTOR
(taking a toot)
So, what do you think, Jojo? The
studio's really hot for this picture.
You're gonna have a winner.

JOJO
(visibly upset)
What did you do with that scene
at the party? You cut out that
scene with me and her that sets this up!

(CONTINUE D)

CONTINUED:

EXECUTIVE

Well , it didn't seem to motivate the story, and, you know, you were out of town. We tried to call you and you didn't return the call. The secretary couldn't find you. We had to make a decision. You just weren't available.

JOJO

(angry)

Shit. You mean I come back from Houston to see this shit? You told me you were going to have that fucking scene in the movie...this movie, not another movie! You told me that!

DIRECTOR

Jojo, you know, the studio...

JOJO

The studio, my ass! You let me down. This is my movie too! I trusted you. You don't even tell me that they cut that out. If you never intended to use it, why'd you shoot it for!?

DIRECTOR

You said you wanted the scene at the party, so we shot the scene at the party. We tried to get it in the movie...

JOJO

(disgusted)

You was bullshittin' me from the beginning, man. You guys are fucked. I ain't never trustin' no white folks again.

There's an uncomfortable silence in the room.

63 NEW ANGLE

Michelle walks into the screening room, sits down near the back. A YOUNG WOMAN approaches Jojo.

YOUNG WOMAN

(quietly)

Mrs. Dancer's here.

As she points, Jojo turns around, smiles. Michelle responds. Jojo gets up, walks to the back of the room and sits in front of her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

(to Michelle)

Hi Baby. We're just finishing this.

Jojo looks back toward the screen for a moment, then:

JOJO

I missed you. Want a drink?

She shakes her head 'no.'

MICHELLE

How was your trip?

JOJO

It was okay. Same old bullshit. I'm tired... a little drunk...

MICHELLE

I'd like to get something to eat.
(slight pause)
I gotta talk to you.

64 NEW ANGLE TO INCLUDE DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE

As Jojo and Michelle get ready to leave, the Director walks up to them.

JOJO

(to director)

Okay, look I'll call you guys tonight.

DIRECTOR

No problem. Don't worry so much. It's gonna be a good movie, Jojo.
(to Michelle)

Please, Mrs. Dancer, don't let him worry so much.

JOJO

(to director; drunk)

Look, motherfucker, it's my wife... You don't tell her to worry 'bout me 'cause... I'm not worried that you're worried. 'Cause, that's the way it is.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

Jojo and Michelle get up. He picks up a garment bag from one of the chairs, throws it over his shoulder, and they both walk out of the room. A sigh of relief and good-riddance crosses the director's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DIRECTOR

He's really pissed.

EXECUTIVE

We tried to reach him. This is
a better idea anyway.

(beat)

Isn't it?

DIRECTOR

I don't know. Let me think about
it.He takes a 'toot', then hands the vial over to the executive.
The executive then takes a 'toot.'

EXECUTIVE

Yeah... it's a better idea.

CUT TO:

65 EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON (AERIAL SHOT)

To establish car on highway.

JOJO (V.O.)

You bought a new car while I was
away? You should've told me.

MICHELLE

Don't worry. I didn't use your
money. Isn't it a great ride?

67 INT. CAR - JOJO AND MICHELLE - SAME TIME

The car speeds along the highway as:

MICHELLE

Dawn called about Joy. She wants
her to go to camp this summer.
I don't...

JOJO

(interrupting)

Wait a minute! Whose money is
it?

MICHELLE

It was a gift to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

A gift to you... from who?

MICHELLE

George.

JOJO

Pull this motherfucker over!

Michelle knows that he's serious, and since he's opened the confrontation, she's happy to oblige, pulling the car over.

67 EXT. CAR

The Jaguar pulls off the highway onto a point overlooking the ocean and comes to a halt.

68-Omitted

69 INT. CAR

Michelle turns off the ignition and turns toward Jojo who's looking out the window. As they sit we PULL BACK to REVEAL Alter Ego sitting in the back seat.

JOJO

I don't believe this! She picked me up in this motherfucker's car!

MICHELLE

Who are you talking to? Are you crazy?

JOJO

(to Michelle)

No, bitch, what I am is angry.
Get the fuck out of this car.
Get out!

Michelle knows that look of his and is fully aware of what the consequences might be. This is not the first time they've fought. Frightened, she reluctantly gets out of the car.

MICHELLE

I'm not going to fight with you about it. I'll get out of the car. But if you lay one fucking finger on me.. I'm going to call the police.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

70

She slams the door. As Jojo sits there simmering, Alter Ego speaks:

ALTER EGO

You're drunk, Jo. You're not thinking straight. Why don't you tell her about Sandra and Joyce? Tell her about all the shit you've done. Come clean, maybe she'll come clean with you. Otherwise, it's a mess all over, man. Shit, or get off the pot.

JOJO

Why are you sayin' all this?

ALTER EGO

I love you, Jo. I wanna see you happy.

(beat)

Trust me.

JOJO

You really think I should?

ALTER EGO

Yeah.

71

Jojo turns to look at Michelle who's standing outside the car.

JOJO

(calls her over)

Michelle?

71A

ANGLE ON JOJO AND MICHELLE

As she walks up to Jojo in the car.

JOJO

(composed; appeasing)

Michelle... I'm hurt right now. I love you very much... And, I'm sorry I acted like such an asshole.

(beat)

Can I confess something to you? I haven't been real honest with you.

(under his breath)

I... I had... relationships. And, I lied...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHELLE
(unable to hear him)
What?

JOJO
(louder)
I've had relationships. I slept
with Sandra... and Joyce, one night.

MICHELLE
(shockad)
What? You slept with Sandra?
When she was here?

JOJO
Yeah... and Joyce.

MICHELLE
Why you motherfucker!!

JOJO
(with a little smile)
I knew you were gonna feel that
way, but I feel clean tellin' you.

QUICK CUT TO:

71B JOJO'S POV

As Michelle's fist comes swinging into his face.

CUT TO:

71C ANGLE ON JOJO/MICHELLE/ALTER EGO

Jojo turns to Alter Ego:

JOJO
See?! Trust you, huh? Satisfied,
you asshole?!

ALTER EGO
(embarrassed)
Hey, Jo... sometimes I make mistakes!

MICHELLE
(yelling)
George was right about you. You're
a selfish son-of-a-bitch!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Michelle stands there, rambling on, trying to defend her actions, trying once again to manipulate him but he's had it. Jojo's tired of the competition.

MICHELLE

(continuing)

All those nights I was alone --
I needed someone I could trust
and talk to. You understand,
Jojo, talk to? Not talk at.
I never want to talk to you
again, Jojo.

ALTER EGO

I'll still talk to you, Jojo.

JOJO

Fuck the both of you!!

MICHELLE

(irate)

Fuck the both of us?! Well,
fuck you! I'm leaving you.

JOJO

Not in this car.

Jojo starts the motor.

ALTER EGO

(nervously)

What are you gonna do?

Jojo revs the engine.

72 ANOTHER ANGLE

The car takes off, heading for the cliff's edge.

ALTER EGO (V.O.)

Jo!! ... Jo!!..... NO!

Michelle's expression is one of total disbelief as she finally realizes what he's about to do. She runs screaming after the car while Jojo drives to the edge of the cliff, jumping out of the car just before it goes sailing off into the air.

ALTER EGO (V.O.)

Jojo...!!!

And the car crashes onto the rocks below, exploding into a fiery grave.

73 EXT. CLIFF - LATE AFTERNOON

Jojo gets up and wipes himself off, a look of anger mixed with a strange sense of satisfaction on his face. He knows he's done wrong, but it was something he'd been dying to do.

74 JOJO'S POV

His Alter Ego crawls up over the edge of the cliff -- shaken, but smiling. Michelle is screaming, ranting and raving in the b.g., but her VOICE is TUNED OUT as Alter Ego speaks.

75 TWO SHOT - JOJO & ALTER EGO

The Alter Ego is totally dishevelled. Jojo touches his chest and winces slightly.

ALTER EGO

(brushing himself off)

This car's gonna need a tune up --

(to Jojo)

How do you feel?

JOJO

(nodding his head)

I feel fuckin' great. I feel... great.

Alter Ego begins to walk away.

JOJO

(notices)

Hey! Where you goin'?

ALTER EGO

You really don't get it, do you?

How'd you expect it to end? It was a game from the beginning, Jo.

JOJO

What fuckin' game?

76 CLOSEUP - ALTER EGO

As he turns to face Jojo we HEAR a WOMAN'S VOICE come out of his mouth. The voice is that of Jojo's grandmother.

ALTER EGO

(woman's voice)

What's the matter with you, boy?

Alter Ego turns and as he does, CAMERA PANS with him as we:

CUT TO:

77 EXT. JOJO'S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Jojo's grandmother sits on the porch breaking green beans into a pot and humming an old gospel hymn. Little Jojo slowly walks up the steps and sits with his back to her. He's in a strange kind of mood, quiet and unhappy. After a beat:

GRANDMOTHER

I said, what's the matter with you, boy?

LITTLE JOJO

Nothin'.

GRANDMOTHER

What're'ya doin' home so early from school?

LITTLE JOJO

I didn't feel like playin'.

His grandmother keeps cracking the beans, aware that something's wrong.

GRANDMOTHER

Why, Jojo?

There's no response. She peers at him; then:

LITTLE JOJO

Those boys down at the tracks -- they jumped me.

GRANDMOTHER

What boys?

LITTLE JOJO

(reluctantly)

Johnny Dubie... Joel Williams, and his brother, Charlie...

GRANDMOTHER

What'd they jump on you for?

LITTLE JOJO

'Cause they said I lived in a whorehouse and I hit 'em. I hit Johnny and then Charlie and Joel jumped on me.

Grandma takes in the information. If she's shocked or surprised, it doesn't show on her face.

GRANDMOTHER

(shaking her head)

They ain't got no business jumpin' on nobody.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Little Jojo gets up and turns to face his grandmother now, a questioning look in his eyes.

LITTLE JOJO

Then they said my mother was a whore.

GRANDMOTHER

Now next time they call you momma a whore, why don't you tell 'em that their momma's a tramp. 'Cause them Williams boys' momma's fuckin' everybody in town. She's fuckin' Mr. Earl, the postman; old Joe Harold down at the barber shop; and she's also fuckin' Johnny's daddy -- ain't gettin' a quarter for it. Givin' pussy up out of both drawer legs...

(under her breath)

And with her poor ass...

(more audibly)

Now tell 'em that!

Jojo eyes get big as saucers.

LITTLE JOJO

Johnny's daddy...?

GRANDMOTHER

If they get real smart, you tell Charlie that Bud ain't his daddy. His real daddy's Pee Wee Claybourn, the insurance man. And if they don't believe it, tell 'em to come back and talk to me. And bring his momma with him so I can tell them all at the same time, so's I won't have to repeat it!

She continues to crack the beans, not skipping a beat. Little Jojo takes all this in, then:

LITTLE JOJO

They said they was gonna beat my ass on the way to school tomorrow.

GRANDMOTHER

The nerve of them boys.

(looking at him)

Don't nobody be beatin' on Dancer's ass... and you's a Dancer! When they hit you, you hit 'em back, only harder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Little Jojo looks at the wise old woman with love and respect.

LITTLE JOJO

Yes, Momma.

GRANDMOTHER

You gotta be strong, son. You gotta be a man and stand up for your rights. 'Cause if you don't, you're gonna be runnin' for the rest of your life, and don't no Dancers run from nothin'.

(beat)

You get down to the railroad tracks early in the mornin' and get yourself a big stick. Find yourself a real good hidin' place and when they come by, jump out and commence to wailin' on their ass. They won't be jumpin' on you no more, you can believe that.

LITTLE JOJO

But, Momma... they said they was gonna beat my ass.

GRANDMOTHER

Honey, just remember one thing... you gotta bring ass to get ass.

She sees that Jojo's confused. The old woman stops what she's doing and pulls him to her lovingly.

GRANDMOTHER

You my baby. Now go on upstairs and wash up -- get ready for supper. Then you gotta go to bed 'cause you gotta get some rest. You got a lot of fightin' to do tomorrow.

(beat)

Ain't nobody gonna look out for you but yourself, Jojo. 'Cause Grandmamma ain't always gonna be here to see about ya.

He gives her a big hug, clinging to her as if for dear life.

79 CLOSEUP - LITTLE JOJO

LITTLE JOJO
You're gonna live forever, Momma.

The grandmother holds him very tightly to her, laughing affectionately as we begin to HEAR a high VOICE, singing gospel-like MUSIC in b.g.

GRANDMOTHER
Well, I sure hope so, baby.

DISSOLVE TO:

80 ON JOJO'S FACE - MANY YEARS LATER

He's looking down at something, pain and sadness on his face. As tears begin to well up in his eyes, CAMERA begins a SLOW PULL OUT as MUSIC CONTINUES in b.g.

JOJO
(trying hard
for control)
You're the only one that loved
me, the only one, Momma. The
only one that understood. Please
forgive me. Please, Momma, for-
give me... I tried.

The CAMERA continues to DOLLY BACK REVEALING that he is standing over a casket surrounded by baskets and baskets of lovely flowers.

81 JOJO'S POV

His grandmother lies there peacefully.

82 BACK TO SCENE

The CAMERA continues to DOLLY BACK SLOWLY to REVEAL we're in a funeral home, past rows and rows of pews, further and further during:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

(continuing)

Now that you're gone, I have no one to turn to. You left me all alone. Have to do it by myself now, Momma. And you know I don't do that very well.

He leans in to kiss her. CAMERA DOLLIES BACK further and we find ourselves in...

83 INT. JOJO'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

We HEAR labored BREATHING. It's Jojo; he's been observing the entire scene from his hospital bed. After a moment, the breathing is interrupted by a lot of VOICES talking at once.

CUT TO:

84 INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING AREA - DAY (PRESENT)

DR. CARLYLE stands in a crowd of REPORTERS. Microphones come at him from every direction.

DR. CARLYLE

As of 2:27 this morning, Jojo Dancer developed complications in his respiratory system and we gave him Salucortef, a hydrocortisone which cuts down inflammatory reaction in the body. He is in a critical state right now, and his condition is guarded. he's being monitored around the clock.

FLASHBULBS go off throughout.

DR. CARLYLE

Mr. Dancer's being given intermittent positive pressure breathing treatments -- and we have obtained permission from the family should surgery become necessary so there will be no delay. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. we will keep you posted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He tries to move through the crowd. Several reporters continue to press him for answers.

DR. CARLYLE
I have no further statement.

REPORTER
(showing a mike in
his face)
Dr. Carlyle, I'm Herb Peterson
from Channel Two News --

PULL BACK to REVEAL we're...

85 INT. AN APARTMENT - DAY

This news conference is being shown on television. On the screen, we SEE JUDY WILLIAMSON, the hospital administrator, attempting to fend off the reporters.

NEWSWOMAN
(on television)
Can we talk to his wife?

WILLIAMSON
(on television)
Mr. Dancer's divorced.

A hand reaches in and turns the set off.

86 INT. APARTMENT - ANOTHER ANGLE - DAY - PRESENT (LOS ANGELES)

The apartment is moderately furnished, decorated in eclectic antique, reminiscent of the sixties. The hand belongs to an attractive, blonde-haired woman in her thirties. It's DAWN, one of Jojo's ex-wives. A look of deep concern crosses her face.

GIRL'S VOICE
(tears in her eyes)
Mom... is Daddy going to be okay?

87 ANOTHER ANGLE

A girl of about ten, JOY is a lovely combination of her mother and father. The expression on her delicate face says she's frightened. Seeing this, Dawn extends her arms to the child.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN

Don't cry, baby...

(she holds her)

Just relax. He's in a good hospital and they're gonna do everything they can.

JOY

(lightly sobbing)

Is he gonna die?

DAWN

(fights back tears)

He's not going to die. He'll be all right.

She strokes her daughter's head assuringly. Frightened herself, she knows she must be strong for Joy's sake.

DAWN

I'm gonna take you to grandma's house.

She kisses her lightly on the head.

JOY

But I want to go with you to see Daddy.

DAWN

I don't think he's able to see anyone now. Just let me go by myself, okay?

JOY

Would you take him something for me?

Dawn nods and Joy leaves the room. CAMERA PANS around the room as Dawn's attention is caught by photos on her wall. She stares poignantly at pictures of Joy, Jojo and herself -- the family in happier times.

88

ANOTHER ANGLE

When the little girl returns, she is carrying an old, worn-out hand puppet. She hands the puppet to her mother.

JOY

Tell I love him very much. And he should hurry up and get well.

A beat, as Joy looks into her mother's eyes. As Joy begins to cry, Dawn holds her, crying too.

89 ANGLE ON DAWN AND JOY

As CAMERA MOVES IN on Dawn's face we can see how hard it is for her; she must not only deal with her daughter's emotions and be a tower of strength for her, but she must also deal with what she's feeling. And we can see that the puppet has sparked some very deep feelings. At this moment we begin to HEAR 60's TYPE MUSIC FADE IN.

DISSOLVE TO:

90 INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - DAY (FLASHBACK) - MID 60'S - LOS ANGELES

We can SEE a WOMAN inside as she intently watches Jojo who's outside looking through the window of her store. Across the street, behind Jojo we SEE a 'Black Panther' demonstration -- one typical of the times. A moment later, he enters the store; a tiny BELL RINGS as the door opens.

Looking around, Jojo seems hypnotized by all the wonders in the the store: dolls, shoes, books, old records and photos; it's a potpourri of treasures from the past. CAMERA PANS with him as he walks over to where the woman -- her back to CAMERA -- is putting crystal on a shelf. Jojo stands there a moment. As the woman turns we SEE she's a young girl in her early twenties, with long, straight hair. It's Dawn, about 10 years earlier. MUSIC plays softly in b.g.

DAWN

May I help you?

JOJO

Yes. I'd like to get a toy for my friend's birthday.

DAWN

How old is your friend?

JOJO

She's about five.

DAWN

(her eyes light up)

How about clowns?

JOJO

I like clowns. Yes, I think she'd like clowns.

Dawn raises her hand to reveal an old hand puppet -- the same one we saw earlier, but a little less worn.

DAWN

(as puppet)

Hi. My name is Ethel. What's your name?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Amused by this charming girl, Jojo plays along.

JOJO

(laughs)

Jojo.

DAWN

(as puppet)

Is that your full name?

JOJO

No, Dancar...

DAWN

(as puppet)

Jojo Dancer?

JOJO

It was my mother's idea.

DAWN

(as puppet)

You're kind of cute. How'd you like to take me home to your friend?

DAWN

(in her own voice)

Ethel! You don't even know this man.

DAWN

(as puppet)

I don't even know you but you got your hand stuffed up my dress.

Dawn quickly grabs the puppet's mouth.

DAWN

(in her own voice)

I'm sorry. Ethel's such a bad lady sometimes.

JOJO

(laughing)

I'll take her.

DAWN

Ethel? I've never even thought of selling her -- she's the store mascot. I wouldn't know what to ask for her.

(beat)

I know who you are. I've seen you on t.v. I really like your stuff. I think it's very funny.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

Thank you.

DAWN

Where are you appearing?

JOJO

I'm at the Club Flamingo.

DAWN

How long you gonna be there?

JOJO

Oh, two weeks. Friday's the last night.

DAWN

I'd really like to see you.

JOJO

You would?

Jojo's bewildered; overcome with shyness. There's a chemistry between them but neither is quite sure of the next move. After an awkward moment:

JOJO

(continuing)

Would you like to come to the show Friday, be my guest?

DAWN

Yeah, if I can bring my friend.

JOJO

(reluctantly)

Okay.

Jojo starts to leave, realizes he doesn't even know the lovely woman's name.

JOJO

(to Dawn; slightly embarrassed)

Uh... 'cuse me, what's your name?

DAWN

Dawn Simmons.

JOJO

Okay, Dawn. The show starts at 8:30.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN

I'll be there.

JOJO

Two tickets for Dawn Simmons.
Okay, be seein' ya.

Awkwardly he begins to back through the shop, smiling and waving goodbye, almost knocking over an antique table.

DAWN

(as puppet)

Bye, Jojo.

JOJO

Goodbye Ethel.

After he leaves the shop we SEE Dawn smile to herself as we:

CUT TO:

91 INT. CLUB FLAMINGO - NIGHT - MID TO LATE SIXTIES (LOS ANGELES)

It's a small supper club half-full of people talking and drinking. Jojo's performing on stage, working hard. Some of the patrons pay attention, applauding occasionally. Rather than being concerned about them, Jojo is giving a command performance for Dawn who sits in the front row with a girlfriend. They laugh at anything and everything Jojo does regardless of whether anyone else does or not. It's clear she adores him.

92

(RUMPELSTILTSKIN ROUTINE TO COME)

DISSOLVE TO:

93 INT. DAWN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - MID TO LATE SIXTIES (LOS ANGELES)

94-95-96-97-Omitted

The apartment, while not very large, is neatly decorated, vaguely resembling the antique shop with remnants of days-gone-by. Shelves of books line the walls. As MUSIC -- appropriate for the time -- plays in b.g., we FIND Jojo and Dawn sitting on the floor across from one another around a small coffee table, eating Italian food. On the table, a few empty containers, a candle, a bottle of wine and Courvoisier. They're eating, laughing and having a good time, clearly attracted to one another. Dawn pulls a small vial of cocaine from her pants pocket and offers Jojo a toot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN
(holding out vial)
Hera, want some lady?

JOJO
No.

DAWN
You should try some. It really
opens you up, makes you feel
good. Relaxes me.

98 She takes a toot, offers again.

DAWN
Sure you don't want some?

JOJO
(watching her)
No.

DAWN
(another toot)
Ever tried it?

JOJO
(changing the subject)
I was glad you showed up tonight.
Thought you might be comin' with
a guy.
(beat)
So, what did your friend think?

DAWN
She thought you were very funny.
I did too. Especially the part
about when you were a kid.

JOJO
The crowd loves that one. I wish
I could do more stuff like that.
(laughs)
I thought about doin' it, but I
know if I did I'd be outta the
business in a week.

DAWN
What makes you say that?

JOJO
Look what's happening to Lenny
Bruce.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN

Ever seen him? Lemmy, I mean.

JOJO

No, but I heard his records.

(trying to
convince himself)

Look, I got five Sullivan shows
next year, booked. I can do Griffin
anytime I want. There's a possi-
bility I'm gonna do a film... and I
open in Vegas in two months at
Caesar's with Tony Bennett.
I'm booked for the next two years.

DAWN

Are you happy?

JOJO

Yeah, I'm happy.

(looks at her;
honestly)

No, I'm not happy. I feel like
I'm bein' controlled. My life
ain't my own anymore. I'm booked
for the next two years like a fuckin'
slave.

Trying to control himself, it's apparent Jojo's very uncom-
fortable with the conversation. Sensing his discomfort:

DAWN

Jojo, what are you afraid of?

99

CLOSEUP ON JOJO

quite agitated.

JOJO

(defensively; cutting
her off)

I ain't afraid of nothin'! Except
of people bein' a pain in the ass
and tellin' me what to do with my
life. That scares me. I don't
have to expose myself to people.
See, I think I have a right to do
with my life what I want to do
with it.

100 ANGLE ON JOJO AND DAWN

DAWN
 Then why don't you change it, Jojo?
 Be your own man, otherwise you'll
 be trapped for the rest of your life.

Dawn takes another toot, then:

DAWN
 (continuing)
 Hey, I'm sorry. You brought it up.

JOJO
 (losing it)
 Fuck you!

The tension in the air is thick. Dawn stares at him a beat, wipes her mouth with a napkin and gets up. She's not going to challenge him any further... at least not right now.

DAWN
 What did you say?

JOJO
 I said... fuck you.

DAWN
 (smiles)
 Hold that thought -- I'll be right
 back.

Dawn gets up from the table. Jojo's greatly relieved. Dawn laughs, looks at him in somewhat of a seductive manner, and enters the bathroom.

101 ANGLE ON JOJO

as he sits looking at the vial of cocaine on the table. He nonchalantly picks it up and plays with it as he looks around the room. Opening the vial he takes out a miniscule amount and inhales it, sneezing right afterwards. As the rush hits him, he smiles and takes a drink. The MUSIC ENDS and Jojo gets up to go over to the stereo, checking himself out in the mirror as he passes. He flips the record over and then proceeds to peruse the many books stuffed on the shelves, glancing occasionally at the bathroom door, as MUSIC plays in b.g.

102 JOJO'S POV

The shelves contain an interesting collection -- research books; political books; books on ecology and feminism; some poetry by the likes of Allen Ginsberg; a few novels -- no romance or pulp novels in the lot.

103 BACK TO SCENE

Jojo looks toward the door again; it's awfully quiet in there. He walks over to the table, sneaks another toot, boldly increasing his intake. He discreetly checks himself out in the mirror once again. This time, as he turns to walk away, the image in the mirror stays the same...

CUT TO:

CLOSEUP ON JOJO

Looking perplexed as he looks in the mirror.

JOJO

What the fuck is that? How can that be?

He turns to walk away, then turns again to the mirror, but the image (Alter Ego) is gone. After a beat, Jojo walks over to the bathroom door, wondering what Michelle is doing.

JOJO

You all right in there?

He gets no answer.

JOJO

(his old man voice)

Say girl, bring your butt on outta there. What you done did... fell in? Don't try to commit suicide by flushin' yourself down the toilet. This is a respectable place. We don't allow no flushers here. You wanna flush, you gotta go to Cleveland.

We can HEAR LAUGHTER from behind the door. He smiles, moves back toward the table.

JOJO

(continues in old man voice)

Maybe we should'a had China food, girl. Could'a got you a fortune cookie. Change you attitude!

He sits back down at the table, his back to the door. As it opens:

JOJO

(continuing)

And another thing...

He turns toward the door, agape at what he sees.

104 JOJO'S POV

Dawn's standing at the bathroom door, naked... and lovely.

JOJO (O.S.)

Damn...

DAWN

I thought about what you said.
You're absolutely right. Fuck me.

105 CLOSEUP - JOJO

He can hardly believe what he sees, as we...

FADE TO BLACK

HEAR LAUGHTER

FADE IN:

106 INT. DAWN'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT (LATER)

As CAMERA PANS this room, we SEE more books, papers, a typewriter. This is Dawn's workroom as well as her bedroom. The little hand puppet from the antique shop sits upon a shelf. As CAMERA CONTINUES TO PAN we HEAR:

JOJO (O.S.)

(his old man voice)

You damn near killed me, girl!
You got some Hall of Fame pussy!

We HEAR Dawn LAUGH, then we HEAR the SOUNDS of them snorting cocaine. CAMERA finally comes to rest upon Jojo and Dawn, as they lay under the covers in her bed. Dawn is giving Jojo another toot of cocaine, then takes one for herself.

DAWN

Can I confess something to you?

JOJO

Uh-huh.

DAWN

I had three orgasms. One before we started and two while we made love.

JOJO

Damn. That's pretty good, huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAWN

Not bad for a comic.

107 Inspired, Jojo leaps out of bed, letting out a Tarzan yell!

108 ANOTHER ANGLE

Dawn's hysterical as Jojo prances around the room, beating on his chest, playing Tarzan. She reaches for the cocaine, takes another toot.

Collected now, Jojo picks up his drink from the nightstand and begins reading some of the titles of the books laying around -- Mao's Little Red Book, Leroi Jones, the Warren Commission Report. He stops at Malcolm X, picks it up.

JOJO

I don't believe you read all this stuff!

DAWN

Nothing wrong with being socially conscious.

JOJO

(playfully)

What's the name of your organization... Pussy Now?

He knows by the look on her face that he's said the wrong thing. She's anything but amused.

DAWN

(means it)

God, you're crass... and such a chauvinist!

JOJO

You liked it two minutes ago.

(beat)

What's a chauvinist?

DAWN

(bluntly)

It means you think with your prick!

Jojo flops back down on the bed, attempts to make amends.

JOJO

(points to his crotch)

Hear that? You got the brains.

(beat)

I'm a comic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She takes the Malcolm X book from him and begins reading from it. He looks at her.

DAWN

The only difference between you and me is you were born Black... I chose to be Black.

JOJO

(annoyed)

Umm... you are fucked up! I mean you do have some good points. You're brilliant. You look good. Have a nice body, ... got some excellent pussy. But you're Snow White -- not Angela Davis!

(leans in close)

And you choose to be Black today, but when the real shit comes down, you could very easily choose to be white again, and probably will.

She smacks him across the face, stunned that he would attack her integrity. Instinctively, Jojo begins to retaliate, catching himself before he hits her. They stare at each other a beat before:

DAWN

(changing her tone)

I had no right to do that. I apologize. Please forgive me.

(beat)

I love you, Jojo.

She makes a move toward him.

JOJO

You know, you scare the hell outta me. Everybody I know, all they talk about is making money. You're the strangest person I ever met, the only one who understood how I felt inside. And that scares me.

Dawn holds him, tenderly caressing his head.

DAWN

But you gotta take a chance on yourself, Jojo. I'm taking a chance on you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They embrace, holding tightly.

JOJO

I worked so hard to get here.
I'm afraid of throwing it all
away. What if it doesn't work?

DAWN

It's not working for you now
anyway. You may have to go through
some pain to get there, but it's
time to quit the bullshit, Jojo.

JOJO

(insecure)

But I'm afraid they'll hate me.

DAWN

Better them hating you than you
hating yourself. I'll always
love you...

Jojo lets the words sink in. She looks at him, then:

DAWN

What are you thinking about?

Jojo smiles at her contently. A big smile crosses her face.

DAWN

Hold that thought.

With that, she throws the covers back and disappears from view.

109 Omitted

CUT TO:

110 INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT - LOS ANGELES - MID TO LATE SIXTIES

There's a fair-sized audience even though the place is far
from packed. In a jacket and felt hat, Jojo performs on stage
doing his "Rumpelstiltskin" routine to a smattering of
applause and a few chuckles. Dawn walks in, sits down in
front and smiles at him.

Jojo notices a couple get up to leave. Sensing indifference
in the audience, Jojo gets fed up; he stops his routine and
gives the audience a long, hard look. Finally he speaks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

Look, I'm from Colombus, and I can't do this anymore.

(pause)

Shit. It's killin' me. I love to make people laugh, but I don't like doin' this anymore.

111 The audience doesn't quite know what to make of this remark. Dawn laughs, giving him a supportive look.

112 ANGLE ON JOJO - ON STAGE

As he starts talking, getting into a new kind of routine.

JOJO

There's things I'd really like to talk about. I'd like to talk about real people...

CUT TO:

113 JOJO'S POV - THE AUDIENCE

As he continues doing this monologue, a few more people begin leaving, obviously not too pleased to be hearing stories instead of the jokes they came for.

113A Jojo's ROUTINE CONTINUES over several TIME DISSOLVES, showing the changing face of the audience. Soon, only Dawn and three or four others are left in the audience; Jojo is playing to an almost empty room.

113B We DISSOLVE again and begin seeing the empty chairs filling up, little by little, as we HEAR Jojo's ROUTINE; his monologue is developing, becoming stronger, sharper; he's able to weave his stories skillfully. The scattered laughter is being replaced by a rousing chorus of laughter from people obviously enjoying themselves.

113C Throughout Jojo's changing routine, we DISSOLVE to SEE DAWN sitting in different seats, as she watches his comedic development; she sits farther and farther back in the club as the seats down front fill up, openly snorting cocaine. Each dissolve finds her wearing more expensive and stylish clothing; she's becoming increasingly involved in her now-affluent lifestyle as Mrs. Jojo Dancer. Even when she's surrounded by friends, a certain sadness pervades her gaiety as though she was caught up in something that's made her lose touch with her former self... and with Jojo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

113D We HEAR Jojo's ROUTINE continue; he's now more polished and precise in his delivery, as we:

CUT TO:

114/
115 ANGLE ON JOJO - ON STAGE

For the first time we see a new Jojo -- one who's in total command of his audience, as they howl with laughter. He's cool and casual now; his laid-back appearance is the anti-thesis of his wife's style -- all sparkle and diamond bracelets. He looks rebellious and defiant in his new AFRO hairstyle. Jojo's really cooking now; he ends his routine to great APPLAUSE and makes his exit as the audience wildly calls him back to the stage.

116 INT. NIGHTCLUB - BACK STAGE - SAME TIME

Jojo comes off the stage only to be surrounded by several admiring women. Dawn is there to meet him and makes her way through the women to Jojo's side.

DAWN

(pointedly)

Is there any room for Mrs. Dancer?

Dawn and Jojo hug as a MAN comes up to Jojo to ask to borrow some money. Jojo gives him a few bucks and the man leaves.

DAWN

(to Jojo)

Dig this -- He asked me to ask you to stay another week -- more money!

JOJO

Wait a minute, you're not my agent. I didn't ask you to book me. I'm not goin' to stay here. I'm goin' to New York.

DAWN

You didn't tell me you were goin' to New York.

JOJO

(reaches for drink)

I didn't know I had to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Just then, a flashy, but attractive WHITE MAN, about thirty years of age, comes up to them. Wearing several strands of gold chains around his neck, he's accompanied by TWO gorgeous WOMEN -- one Black (CLAUDINE) and one White (OLIVIA). The man, all smiles, reaches out to shake hands with Jojo.

MAN

Hey, my man... that shit was funny!
(introduces himself)
Clifford Miles...

117 ANOTHER ANGLE

Jojo obviously doesn't remember the man, but he shakes his hand just the same.

JOJO

Oh...Oh, yeah.

Jojo's eye is caught by one of the beautiful women who stares at him flirtatiously. Dawn, a little high, sees this and feeling threatened, pushes herself closer to Jojo, regaining his attention.

JOJO

(to Dawn)

Dawn, I want you to meet Cliff Miles. Cliff, this is my wife, Dawn.

CLIFF

(to Dawn)

We only met once. I'm Anee's boyfriend. Don't you remember?

Dawn nods. She doesn't really remember him but he's charming nonetheless. He's the kind of guy her girlfriend said she didn't like, but somehow Dawn can't believe it.

DAWN

Oh yeah. She used to talk about you all the time.

CLIFF

(smiles; to Jojo)

I brought you and the lady a little gift.

He hands Jojo a vial of cocaine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLIFF

(continues; introduces
the girls)

And these are a couple of my lady
friends... Olivia and Claudine.

There are halloes all around. Jojo notices the women again
as they each move to one side of Cliff, locking their arms
through his. Dawn puts her arm through Jojo's, staking out
her territory.

CLIFF

Hey, Jojo, I'd like to invite
you up to my apartment after the
show.

CLAUDINE

(chiming in)

Yeah, just sit around, do some
blow, have some laughs. What'd'ya
say?

DAWN

(to Jojo)

I thought we were going to have
breakfast alone this morning.

JOJO

(to Dawn)

I don't want to do that. We can
eat alone anytime. I'm tired --
I'd like to relax. It sounds like
fun, I wanna make a night of it.

CLIFF

Hey look, come on up. We'll have
breakfast at my place. Claudine
here cooks up a great omelette.

Cliff makes a most ingratiating eye contact with Dawn; this
time Jojo notices; a hint of jealousy crosses his face.

DAWN

(to Cliff; looking
at Jojo)

Okay. Whatever makes my man
happy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With that, Jojo downs his drink and takes a snort.

CUT TO:

118 INT. CLIFF'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (LATER) - LOS ANGELES - SIXTIES

Sixties MUSIC PLAYS OVER. There's a party in progress in this slightly less than expensive apartment. The place is furnished but a gaudy taste prevails. The partygoers are an ethnic mixture; people are drinking, snorting, talking, laughing and more snorting; a mound of cocaine takes center stage, laid out on a mirror on a large table. We SEE Cliff introducing Jojo and Dawn to several of his friends. The party is in full swing as we:

119 thru 123 Omitted

DISSOLVE TO:

124 INT. CLIFF'S APARTMENT - JUST BEFORE SUNRISE (LATER)

CAMERA FINDS Jojo asleep on the couch in the same living room we saw earlier. The room is a mess. Jojo wakes up and instinctively walks toward the bedroom and enters. He sees Dawn, in bed with Cliff and the beautiful Black woman, heavily engaged in sex. She motions for him to join them. Repulsed, Jojo runs from the room.

125 NEW ANGLE

FOLLOW Jojo as he runs out of the apartment into...

126 EXT. CLIFF'S APARTMENT - BACK YARD - DAWN

Jojo runs through the door and into the back yard. He falls to his knees and begins to throw up.

127 ANOTHER ANGLE

Dawn is standing there in the doorway, a blanket wrapped around her, a look of hurt and confusion on her face. Then:

DAWN

(screaming)

Isn't this what you wanted?

Begin SLOW ZOOM IN on Dawn's face as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

128 INT. HOSPITAL - FAMILY WAITING ROOM - ON DAWN (PRESENT)

She's sitting in the hospital, lost in her thoughts. The little hand puppet is on her lap.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK to REVEAL she's sitting alongside some other women. The waiting room is filled with people -- friends, family, hangers-on.

129 ANOTHER ANGLE - ON THE WOMEN

As awkward silence prevails as Dr. Weissman walks up to them.

DR. WEISSMAN
(looking around)
Mrs. Dancer...

FOUR WOMEN STAND, look at each other, uneasy with the situation. Standing along with Dawn is Jojo's other ex-wife, Michelle. The two women look at each other. Jojo's first wife, GRACE, is also standing; she looks like a typical midwestern housewife; she's about forty but she dressed much older than her years. The fourth woman is ALICIA, Jojo's current girlfriend.

DR. WEISSMAN
(noticeably
uncomfortable)
Oh, excuse me... I -- I didn't
realize there were... four of you...
Ah,... I just wanted to tell you
that he's stable. If there's any
change, Ms. Williamson will let
you all know.

Embarrassed, he smiles and heads for the door hurriedly.

ANGLE ON DR. WEISSMAN & MS. WILLIAMSON

As we SEE him talking to Ms. Williamson, pointing back towards the women, obviously distressed. She, on the other hand, seems amused.

ANGLE ON THE WOMEN

Suddenly Alicia starts to break down, blaming herself for Jojo's condition.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICIA

I don't know what happened. We had a fight three days ago... he was doing drugs. I didn't know how to stop him.

(starting to cry)

He needed me. I wasn't there when he needed me... He asked me to marry him and I said 'no'.

(beat)

I don't know what happened. I'm sorry...

GRACE

(comforting her)

It's all right.

MICHELLE

(concerned)

It's not your fault.

DAWN

It's all of our faults...

(beat)

For loving him.

As the women comfort Alicia, Grace steps aside, her face is pensive and sad.

130

CLOSEUP - JOJO'S FACE

His face is fully bandaged but we can SEE his eyes, he's thinking as Alter Ego speaks to him.

ALTER EGO (O.S.)

Well, they're all out there. You just couldn't get a handle on it, could ya Jojo? You couldn't handle love.

(beat)

You're really scared. Afraid to make that commitment. The thing you want the most scares you to death.

(compassionately)

It's only love, Jojo. It don't hurt. It don't hurt like this.

DISSOLVE TO:

131 INT. BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING (FLASHBACK)

ANSWERING SERVICE (V.O.)
 Nine-three-five, seven-one-one-one.

CAMERA PANS the room and FINDS Jojo on the telephone.

JOJO
 (desperate)
 Alicia, please.

SERVICE (V.O.)
 Who's calling please?

JOJO
 Jojo Dancer. Is Alicia in?

SERVICE (V.O.)
 If she's not answering, she's not there.

JOJO
 Do you have to be so shitty when I call?

SERVICE (V.O.)
 I'm the service. You don't have to call.

JOJO
 (angry)
 If I ever see you, I'll kick your ass --

SERVICE (V.O.)
 (interrupting)
 I'll tell her you called.

CLICK...DIAL TONE

Jojo sits there perplexed. Feelings of guilt flow through every vessel and it shows on his face. He walks over to the dresser, pours a shot of Courvoisier and drinks it down. Then he goes to the stereo unit and flips it on. (NOTE: This entire sequence will be done as a STYLIZED MUSIC VIDEO)

He scurries back to the dresser, opens drawers, looking for something. He pulls out a clear package. We can SEE a bit of residue left in the bag.

132 ANOTHER ANGLE

Jojo takes it to the basing pipe, puts it in, lights up, getting only one hit. Obviously not satisfied, he puts the pipe down and heads for the bathroom/dressing area, turning on a tv set, but leaving the volume off as he walks by.

133

INT. BATHROOM AREA - SAME TIME

It's wall-to-wall mirrors. Many Jojos walk through this area on their way to his dressing closet, which is also wall-to-wall mirrors. Jojo pulls out a dresser drawer; moves socks about in search of the drugs. He slams it shut. Yanks out another drawer and begins to look among layers and layers of neatly folded shirts. Slams that drawer shut and opens another.

Irritated, Jojo begins pulling stuff from the drawer and throwing it on the floor. Nothing there. He opens all the drawers and scatters stuff everywhere in pursuit of the drugs. Next a jewelry box... and expensive looking watches, rings, etc. tumble to the floor. He's not finding what he's looking for. Then his suits, pants, jackets, shoes, everything -- pulling out money and jewelry and tossing it about as if it had no significance -- looking frantically for the cocaine, going into a junkie frenzy.

Jojo spots a rock, but it's a real one. Spent, he sits on the floor, looking at himself in the mirrors, the anger distorting his face. It's a face he's never seen before, somewhat demonic and tortured. He touches himself, not believing what he sees.

JOJO

Is that me?

(angry; to his
image)

Fuck you!!

He gets up and heads for:

134

THE BEDROOM

Jojo rushes to the telephone, picks it up and dials. It RINGS TWICE, then:

MAN (V.O.)

Hello.

JOJO

This is Jojo. Can I come over?

MAN (V.O.)

How many?

JOJO

A couple.

MAN (V.O.)

Same price.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO
Okay. Can you bring it over?

MAN (V.O.)
No.

JOJO
(desperate)
Why can't you bring it over!?
(pause)
Is Sailor there? Can she bring
it over?

MAN (V.O.)
No. Sailor doesn't do that anymore

JOJO
(tries a new tack)
I'll give you some extra money if
you come.

MAN (V.O.)
(losing his patience)
C'mon man... what're you gonna
do?

JOJO
I'll be there in twenty minutes.

We HEAR a CLICK and a DIAL TONE. Jojo slams down the phone.

135

ANOTHER ANGLE

Jojo's getting nervous -- where's he going to get the drugs?

JOJO
(to himself;
in mirror)
This is the last time. I'm not
gonna buy anymore. I know I
said that before but this time
I really mean it.
(beat)
These motherfuckin' dope dealers!

He picks up his jacket, puts it on.

JOJO
Fuck it! I ain't goin'.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jojo puts his hand in the pocket. A shit-eating grin crosses his face as he lifts a package out of the pocket. He looks at the package -- two small packets of cocaine, and begins laughing almost uncontrollably.

JOJO

Look at this... a gram of coke!
I'm gonna fix me some base.

He sits down on the floor in front of the tv set, laying the cocaine out before him. He gets up and accidentally knocks over a glass of water on the dresser. He watches it fall to the ground and sees:

136 JOJO'S POV

The water as it dissolves the cocaine, right into the rug.

137 ANGLE ON JOJO

The realization of what he's done, hits him. Crazy and infuriated, he begins screaming and tearing up the room even more.

Finally, his anger spent, Jojo falls to the floor in front of the glaring television set, and simply stares at the silent images, too numb to even move. After a moment he reaches over to turn it off as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

138 INT. JOJO'S HOUSE - COLUMBUS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) - EARLY 60'S

On an old black and white tv screen we see an old tv show, as a HAND comes into FRAME and abruptly turns the set off.

VOICE (O.S.)

So, you quit your goddam job?

139 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

A young, barely twenty, JOJO DANCER, is laying stomach-down on an old cot in the middle of the living room. Pictures of Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy adorn the mantelpiece. Wife Grace is sitting next to Jojo, as Jojo's father stares at him accusingly.

GRACE

(disbelieving)

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER

Yeah. He quit his job, gonna be in show business. That's what he told Harry down at the packing house!

JOJO

Yeah, I don't wanna spend the rest of my life cleaning out pig guts if you don't mind. I can do somethin' else.

(beat)

I watch television and I see there's a place for me there.

FATHER

(angry)

You fuckin' idiot! That's all you're 'bout good for is cleanin' up guts. Be glad you can do that!

GRACE

But Jojo, we can't...

JOJO

(cutting her off)

You gonna turn against me too?

GRACE

No. I love you, I'm your wife. What do you wanna do?

JOJO

I wanna give it a try.

FATHER

Son-of-a-bitch!

(yells into

next room)

Sonja! Your stepson here wants to go into show business.

140

SONJA, Jojo's stepmother, comes into the room. She's a bit younger than Jojo's father.

SONJA

If that's what he wants to do.

FATHER

You're dumb as he is!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

I talked to Fred Palmer, he's the emcee down at the Kit Kat Club and he said I got talent. He thinks I can really do something with myself, if I get outta here.

FATHER

He's been playin' there over ten years and he ain't shit! Just a dumb white boy, tellin' some tired ass jokes.

JOJO

He's been in show business most of his life... He knows stuff!

FATHER

He don't know shit if he fell in it! Just like you.

SONJA

(interjects)

Charles, it's in his heart. You know he likes it. Always has, ever since I've known him. And his mother... you know she loved to sing. She always said he was gonna be somebody.

FATHER

He ain't shit! And his mother wasn't shit!...

We SEE that Jojo's been trying to control his anger, but he's had about enough. He's about to explode.

JOJO

Don't talk about my mother. She ain't here to defend herself, but I am!

FATHER

I'll kick your ass and your Momma's ass too if she was here!

JOJO

You son-of-a-

Jojo's father belts him one. Jojo doesn't react, instead he holds in his rage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER

What are you gonna do? Stand up to me?

Jojo's father knocks Jojo down with a swift hit. Then, the two of them go at it as Sonja and Grace start screaming, trying to pull the men apart. Even though his father is swinging at him, Jojo resists, not wanting to hit his old man.

SONJA

(to Grace)

We gotta stop them! He's gonna kill him!!

Finally, Sonja is able to pull Jojo's father away from him.

SONJA

(to her husband)

You ain't got no business hittin' him like that!

FATHER

(turns on her)

Get outta my face, bitch! I'll knock the fuck outta YOU!

SONJA

(to her husband)

You're wrong, Charles. You're wrong. Please don't hit him anymore.

JOJO

You'll never hit me again!

FATHER

(to Jojo)

Tell you what you do... Get your shit, get your show business ass outta here.

Grace brings some cold towels and begins putting them on Jojo's brow, gently wiping the blood away.

JOJO

I'll get out. I don't wanna be here. I never wanted to be here!

FATHER

I'm tired of you livin' off me. Get your lazy ass outta my house and don't ever come back! And don't call me if you get in trouble!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

I'll never call you, but when you see me... I'll be somebody! I'll show you.

FATHER

(getting angry)

You're gonna show me shit.

SONJA

(trying to calm him)

Please, Charles... don't

FATHER

(under his breath)

Son of a bitch...

He turns and walks out of the room. Grace is holding a shaking Jojo in her arms.

GRACE

I'll go with you, Jojo.
... I love you.

SONJA

(indicating her husband)

I'll talk to him.
(to Jojo)
You okay?

JOJO

I'm fine. I'm finer than I've ever been, right at this moment in my life. I know exactly what I'm gonna do.

He looks at Grace and Sonja.

JOJO

(continuing)

I'm goin'. There's a place in Cleveland. A man who owns a club saw me here. Said he'd give me a job.

GRACE

That man don't know you. He ain't gonna remember you, Jojo. He tells that to everybody.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

No, he likes me. Said I had talent.

SONJA

But Jojo, you gotta be realistic.

JOJO

I am realistic.

He goes over to the closet and takes his suitcase out.

JOJO

I'm already packed. I was gonna
leave Sunday. I'm leaving now, tonight.

(to Grace)

You goin' with me?

Grace looks scared, unsure of what to do.

GRACE

I've never been anywhere.

JOJO

I've never been anywhere either,
but anywhere's better than here.
Anywhere. I gotta get outta
here or I'll die.

GRACE

I'll go and get my things.

Grace leaves as Sonja walks over to Jojo, Concerned, she kisses
him gently on the cheek. She uses a towel to wipe blood off his face.

DISSOLVE TO:

141 ANGLE ON JOJO'S FATHER

As he sits alone in the bedroom. He looks pensive and upset.
Suddenly we HEAR a SCREEN DOOR SLAM. The man is startled
by it as it breaks the tense silence. Then, we HEAR someone
WALK into the room.

SONJA (O.S.)

(quietly)

He's gone, Charles...

FATHER

(defiantly)

Good...

Even though he's being stubbornly defiant, we can SEE on
his face that he really doesn't mean it.

142 INT. BUS DEPOT - NIGHT - DOWNTOWN COLUMBUS - EARLY 60'S

Packed and waiting for their bus to leave, Jojo and Grace sit nervously as departure ANNOUNCEMENTS are HEARD over the loudspeaker. Jojo's face is bandaged and from time to time Grace makes sure the bandages are holding up.

The station is full of activity: families huddle together, excited at the prospect of their trips; lost, lonely people sit isolated from the others, oblivious to the activity around them. Grace watches the passing scene anxiously, scared for what the future might bring, until:

LOUDSPEAKER (V.O.)

(muffled)

Bus leaving for ... platform
six...

143 ANGLE ON GRACE AND JOJO

JOJO

That's us!

They get up. CAMERA FOLLOWS them as they walk to the bus platform.

JOJO

I can't believe we're doin' this!

GRACE

I'm scared, Jojo.

JOJO

Don't be scared. It's gonna be all right.

GRACE

How are we gonna eat? How are we gonna live? How far do you think we're gonna get on the little bit of money your step-mother gave us?

JOJO

It's gonna be all right.

As they get to the bus and are about to step on, Grace hesitates and turns to Jojo.

JOJO

C'mon...

GRACE

I can't leave, Jojo. My Mamma, my Daddy... I need them. You go. It's what you want... I don't want this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jojo looks at her intently:

JOJO

Please don't do this to me now.
Please. This is important to me.

GRACE

Why did you marry me, Jojo?

JOJO

Oh God... you know why I married you.

GRACE

'Cause you thought I was pregnant?

JOJO

Yeah.

GRACE

I'm sorry I tricked you, Jojo.
I'm sorry I wasn't pregnant. I'm
sorry I lied... I didn't want
to be alone.

JOJO

I didn't want to be alone either.
That's why I married you.

GRACE

Didn't work out, did it Jojo?

JOJO

No, it didn't work out.

GRACE

Will ya come home if it doesn't
work out? I'll be here -- waitin'
for you.

JOJO

If it doesn't work out, I ain't
comin' back... here.

GRACE

Then I guess this is goodbye.

Just then the BUSDRIVER tells Jojo to get on the bus. They
embrace for a moment and then let go. Jojo walks toward the bus.

GRACE

(calling)

You'll be fine, Jojo

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jojo turns back to look at her as he walks.

JOJO

I'll write.

She knows he's not going to, but smiles anyway. As he turns and boards the bus:

GRACE

(to herself)

Okay, Jojo.

144 INT. BUS - ANGLE ON GRACE - SAME TIME

As the bus doors close in front of her.

145 INT. BUS PLATFORM - WIDE ANGLE ON GRACE

Watching, as the bus pulls away, leaving her a lonely figure.
MUSIC BEGINS FADING IN.

CUT TO:

A146 EXT. INDUSTRIAL SECTION - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT - CLEVELAND

MUSIC UP: "I'm A Man" sung by Muddy Waters. (Note: MUSIC in b.g. throughout this entire sequence of Jojo on the road.)

CUT TO:

146 INT. BAR - COLLINS CLUB - DAY - CLEVELAND

It's a dingy little bar. A couple of patrons look as if they're left over from the night before. Jojo walks up to the bartender who points to a fat man sitting in a chair at one of the tables. Jojo walks over to the man, puts out his hand as if he's a long-lost friend. The man doesn't shake it, giving him a cold stare in return. SEE Jojo, animated, explaining who he is. The guy doesn't seem to remember, and when he does it's, 'So what!?' We can SEE the disappointment in Jojo's face as we:

CUT TO:

147 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - INDUSTRIAL EAST - EARLY SIXTIES

Jojo's standing on the side of the road, hitchhiking. Not one car stops to pick him up. As he thumbs, a truck splashes him.

148 INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY - EARLY SIXTIES

There's nobody in the shop except Jojo, sweeping up. It's a typical barber shop; pictures of old boxing stars such as Joe Louis are hanging on the walls, alongside photos of famous baseball players. Jojo looks beat. He grabs a dust pan, bends over sweeping up the hair and empties it in a large pail.

149 EXT. SMALL NIGHTCLUB - DAY - EARLY SIXTIES - INDUSTRIAL EAST

Jojo walks up to the door, puts his suitcase down, straightens himself up, pats his hair, picks up the suitcase and enters.

150 INT. SMALL NIGHTCLUB - DAY

It's not much better than the last one. A couple of patrons and a young woman on a makeshift stage auditioning. Jojo walks over to the man who looks like he's in charge, tells him he's looking for a job. SEE him pantomime that he sings, dances, tells jokes. The man couldn't be less interested. He dismisses Jojo with a wave of his hand and goes back to watching the woman on the stage. Disappointed, Jojo picks up his suitcase and trudges out into the bright sunlight.

151 EXT. CAR WASH - ANOTHER DAY

Jojo finishes drying one of the cars. A very wealthy looking older woman walks up, hands him a ticket and gets into the Cadillac. Jojo watches her drive off, sighs. He walks over to another car and begins again.

152 EXT. NIGHTCLUB - EARLY EVENING

Jojo enters the small club.

153 EXT. NIGHTCLUB - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

He comes out, looking dejected. Walks off down the street.

154 EXT. SHOESHINE STAND - DAY

Jojo's shining shoes, working very hard. He finishes up one customer, flips the towel over his shoulder as the customer chucks a quarter at him. He looks at it -- it ain't much but it's better than nothing. Just then another man gets up into the seat, begins to read a newspaper as Jojo starts shining his shoes. Jojo finishes, thinking he's done a good job, but the man complains about polish on his socks. He storms off, complaining to the manager, leaving Jojo no tip for his outstretched hand. A moment later the manager comes over and we can SEE him tell Jojo that he's fired.

155 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - INDUSTRIAL EAST - EARLY SIXTIES

Tired, Jojo returns to his small rundown hotel room, turns on the lights only to find he's been robbed. The room is in shambles. Jojo looks in the closet and sees his clothes are gone; the dresser drawers are empty. Jojo sees that the window's open; he goes to it and looks out but there's no sign of the thieves.

156 INT. HOTEL LOBBY

Jojo walks up to the desk clerk to complain but the man shows him his unpaid bill. Jojo gives the clerk his last few dollars.

157 EXT. RAINY STREET - NIGHT

Cold, wet and homeless, Jojo walks the rainy streets, uncertain of his destination.

158 INT. MISSION - SLEEPING ROOM - NIGHT

A very tired Jojo can be SEEN laying on a cot, half-asleep as a big, burly-looking man walks into the room and throws his gear onto the cot next to Jojo's.

159 ANOTHER ANGLE

The man sits down on his cot, takes off his shirt, hangs it on a chair next to the bed. He then proceeds to untie his shoes and take them off, shoving them under the bed. Next his socks, which he puts in his bag and then places it on the chair. Jojo eyes all this without being noticed.

The man rolls up one pant leg and unscrews what we now SEE is a wooden leg, removes it and carefully lays it down next to his bag. He leans to one side, takes out a wallet and stuffs it in his shirt pocket, then lays down and closes his eyes.

160 INT. MISSION - SLEEPING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

It's very dark now except for the light cast from the street lamps outside. Jojo rolls over very quietly, sits up. After a beat, his hand moves slowly to the man's shirt pocket; lifts the wallet. He waits, making sure the man hasn't seen him and, when he's satisfied, begins to take out money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A bunch of photos fall to the floor. Jojo leans over to pick them up and notices they're of a woman and lots of children. He stuffs the pictures back into the wallet and begins to put it back into the shirt pocket when a guilty look crosses his face. Jojo puts the money back as well, returns the wallet to the man's shirt pocket, lays back down and falls asleep.

161 INT. MISSION - SLEEPING ROOM - NEXT DAY

When Jojo awakes, the burly man is gone. He gets up, reaches for his shirt and notices a twenty-dollar bill sticking out of the pocket. Jojo looks over to where the man was sleeping, smiles to himself, amused -- and grateful.

162 INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT (SOME TIME LATER) - YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO -1961

It's a fairly decent club, filled with only a few people, as Jojo watches a stripper by the name of SATIN DOLL, finish her act. In her mid-twenties, Black and very beautiful, Satin wears a G-string and pasties, as she leaves the stage. Jojo applauds appreciatively as the emcee takes the stage. Jojo finishes his drink and gets up, heading for the backstage entrance. In the shadows of the club we can SEE a little mealy-faced guy, who's standing there, surveying the situation as if he owned the place. He will become known later as ARTURO, a man with excess energy, a swift wit and a pleasing personality. Arturo has one handicap -- he stutters, but it doesn't slow him down a bit.

163 ANGLE ON JOJO - BACKSTAGE

As he asks someone where he can find Satin Doll. A guy points him to her dressing room. Jojo walks to the door and knocks. As Satin Doll opens the door, looks him over and invites him in, we can HEAR the OVERLAPPING SOUNDS of MUSIC from the stage mixed with a LENNY BRUCE COMEDY ROUTINE playing on a record player in Satin's dressing room.

164 INT. SATIN'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The room is small but clean. Satin moves some clothes off a chair and motions for him to sit down.

SATIN DOLL

I saw you out there.

(recognizing him)

Weren't you playing down at the Dolly Club the other night?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

Two nights. I was only there two nights.

SATIN DOLL

You're very funny.

She notices he's listening to the Lenny Bruce album. She goes over and turns the record player off.

SATIN DOLL

(indicating record)

That's Lenny Bruce... You know who he is?

JOJO

No.

SATIN DOLL

He's a genius.

(beat)

What do you wanna be someday?
Lookin' for work, aren't ya?

JOJO

Yeah.

SATIN DOLL

(concerned)

Not doin' too well, are ya?

Jojo looks at her as we:

CUT TO:

165 INT. CLUB - ANOTHER NIGHT

Satin Doll is standing, along with Jojo, next to a solemn gangster-type named SAL.

SATIN DOLL

(indicates Jojo)

I'm tellin' you, Sal. I've seen this kid before, in Baltimore. He's gonna be great. Why don't you talk to Gino about giving him a shot.

She hits Sal playfully, then turns her attention back to Jojo as she gives him a wink. Sal thinks it over, then:

SAL

Okay, okay. We'll give this asshole one night.

(to Jojo)

If it don't work out, kid, you're out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SATIN DOLL

Thanks, Sal. You're a sweetheart.

JOJO

(to Sal)

Thank you.

SAL

(looks at Jojo)

Hey you... get a suit!

JOJO

(points to his clothes)

What about this?

SAL

That's not a suit! We already got
a cleaning man!

Sal walks off as Satin Doll and Jojo turn to each other happily.

166 INT. NIGHTCLUB - ANOTHER NIGHT

We're on a FOUR-PIECE COMBO playing "Going To Chicago." It's the same club we last saw, with a few more people. The audience is mixed. Some are listening; most are talking among themselves.

PAN to FIND JOHNNY BARNETT on stage, singing. Johnny's a man in his fifties who has obviously reached the pinnacle of his career and for him, this is it. As he begins the last refrains of the song, we:

CUT TO:

167 INT. NIGHTCLUB - BACKSTAGE

Jojo is standing in the wings along with Satin Doll, listening to Johnny's last refrain. Jojo has on what he thinks is a fancy new jacket. Satin's wearing her G-string and pasties, a sequined dress is over her arm.

JOJO

(referring to Johnny)

My father has all his records. He was one of the greatest. What happened?

SATIN DOLL

Life, baby. Same thing that's gonna happen to all of us.

(concerned)

Don't be nervous, Jojo. Just tell the jokes like you did the other night. You'll be fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jojo sits down. He's nervous, but not as much as Arturo is as he comes over.

ARTURO

D-d-don't sit down, Jojo. N-not in the suit you're gonna wear on stage. Don't ever do that, it's bad luck... take the crease outta your pants.

JOJO

Thanks, Arturo.

SATIN DOLL

Arturo. would you press my dress?

ARTURO

Yeah, Doll.

Their attention now turns to the stage where Johnny has just finished his number. There's a scattering of applause. Johnny comes offstage to meet Jojo and Satin Doll in the wings.

JOHNNY

(to Jojo, referring to audience)

All you gotta do is die, they're ready for a funeral.

Johnny takes the backstage microphone to introduce Jojo.

JOHNNY

Thank you, thank you. And now ladies and gentlemen, the Club Shalimar is pleased to present a young man who will tickle your funny bone. Direct from Pittsburgh...

JOJO

(to Johnny)

I'm not from Pittsburgh!

SATIN DOLL

That's all right, just accept it.

JOHNNY

(covering the mike)

That's right kid, I'm just buildin' you up.

(into mike)

Ladies and gentlemen...Jojo Dancer!

We HEAR some scattered CLAPPING as Satin Doll pushes Jojo out on stage. Johnny turns to Satin Doll:

JOHNNY

What the hell kind of name is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Satin Doll and Johnny watch Jojo, they're joined by Sal, looking none too happy. Jojo tells a joke but gets little response, only a few grumbles from the audience. Then, a heckler calls out:

HECKLER (O.S.)

Maybe they like that shit in Pittsburgh!

168 ANGLE ON JOJO

On stage as he sweats, working hard.

169 BACK TO WINGS

As Satin Doll, Sal and Johnny watch.

JOHNNY

I'm gonna go 'round front and watch this.

Johnny leaves.

SAL

(to Satin Doll)

He ain't so good. Ain't worth no hundred a week.

SATIN DOLL

I'm telling you, he's gonna be all right, just give him a chance.

SAL

He's makin' me real nervous.

SATIN DOLL

You're nervous? Just rub me on the ass... that'll calm you down.

Sal smiles; it's not a bad idea. He does it.

170 ANGLE ON JOJO

As he starts to get some laughs. The audience is responding.

171 BACK TO WINGS

Sal is still fondling Satin's behind.

SATIN DOLL

(proud; slapping his hand away)

See, I told ya. He's gonna go somewhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAL

Yeah, but why couldn't you get him cheaper?

SATIN DOLL

That boy's gonna be makin' two grand a week someday.

SAL

(not impressed)

They said that about Johnny and look at him.

The audience is HOWLING now.

SATIN DOLL

Hey, c'mon, Sal. Listen to that. They love him...

(beat)

They like him, okay?

172/
173

INT. NIGHTCLUB - OUT FRONT

Jojo finishes the routine and comes backstage where he's hugged by Satin Doll as Sal looks on. Johnny and Arturo come backstage to congratulate him.

JOHNNY

Welcome aboard, kid.

ARTURO

C-c-on-g-gr-

JOHNNY

(to Arturo;
impatiently)

Spell it!!

ARTURO

J-j-j-

JOHNNY

Jojo! Motherfucker!

As Arturo continues to sputter:

JOHNNY

(taking the reins)

He liked it!

DISSOLVE TO:

174 INT. A WHITE CASTLE RESTAURANT - LATER THAT NIGHT - OHIO - 1961

The place is not very crowded at this time of the morning. There's a short order cook behind the counter and one waitress who's cleaning the sugar dispensers in preparation for breakfast. At some of the tables we SEE some denizens of the night -- a few pimps and their whores, some nightworkers, a couple of hardhat types, and at the end of the counter a cop is sipping his coffee.

Jojo, Johnny and Satin are having a late supper. By the looks of their plates, they've been there a while. They're having a good time as Johnny compliments Jojo on his act.

JOHNNY

How the fuck did you think of something like that, boy? Yeah... you got what it takes. Satin and I seen 'em come and go.

They're joined by Arturo who's bringing them coffee.

JOHNNY

(to Arturo)

Why don't you let the waitress do that?

ARTURO

(excitable)

Well, s-she's t-taking too long.

JOJO

(to Johnny)

My father played your records all the time.

JOHNNY

Oh yeah? Like which ones?

Jojo names a couple of tunes.

JOHNNY

Shit, I don't even have that old record.

JOJO

Yeah... my Dad don't throw away nothin'... 'cept me.

Jojo is devouring everything in sight as he talks. Johnny is beginning to warm up to the kid.

JOHNNY

You sure do eat a lot for such a little guy.

JOJO

(his mouth full)

I'm hungry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHNNY

(continuing)

You know, you're really very funny. Can I give you some advice?

JOJO

Yes, please.

JOHNNY

Sometimes, you step on your own jokes. The audience is still laughing at the first joke, and you're on your second. Have more confidence in yourself, Jojo.

The fact that he really is funny is just beginning to take hold and Jojo starts to pay attention.

JOHNNY

(continuing)

-- and wait a minute. Let 'em get the laugh out.

(leaning in close)

You see, the difference between you and me is I'm a singer. They wait till I'm finished to applaud. But you're a comic. Your thing is timing, the timing's important.

ARTURO

Yeah, t-t-t-timing...

JOHNNY

Shut the fuck up, Arturo.

JOJO

I just be scared. And I keep going -- feel like a moving target.

JOHNNY

Yeah, but you gotta give 'em a chance to laugh.

ARTURO

(piping in)

I laughed.

JOHNNY

You'd laugh at anything.

(to Jojo)

No offense, Jojo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SATIN DOLL

Well, fast or slow, I think you're funny.

(sincerely)

The other thing you got goin' for yourself is you're cute.

Jojo doesn't know what to say. The strong show of support is overwhelming.

JOJO

(to Satin)

I really want to thank you for gettin' me this job and takin' that risk.

SATIN DOLL

There was no risk. I knew what I was doing.

She touches Jojo's hand, squeezes it gently. Just then a TAP is HEARD on the window. Satin turns her attention in the direction of the noise, smiles, waves and makes a motion to someone outside.

175 JOJO'S POV - THROUGH WINDOW

There's a big, burly White MAN smiling back at Satin Doll. He looks the table over, then heads for the front door of the restaurant.

176 BACK TO SCENE

JOJO

Who's that?

SATIN DOLL

Oh, that's Lawrence... Detective Lawrence.

JOJO

(concerned)

Detective? You in some kind of trouble?

Satin laughs, appreciative of Jojo's concern.

SATIN DOLL

No... he's the one gonna be in trouble. He's late.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jojo gives an 'Oh, really' kind of look, not wanting to pry. Whoever that guy is, if he's with Satin, he's okay with him

Just then, the waitress comes over with some hot coffee. Jojo waves her off; Johnny indicates he'd like some more; Satin applies lipstick, oblivious to the woman as she primpes in her hand mirror. She gets up and leaves, saying 'goodbye' to all.

ARTURO

(offering)

It's on me... here's another round.

JOHNNY

(sarcastically)

What're ya gonna pay her with?... Spit?

ARTURO

(assertive)

I got money. I made some tips tonight.

(to Jojo)

You know, they're gonna bury the show Friday night... it's the last night.

JOJO

What's 'bury the show' mean?

JOHNNY

It's a tradition.

As Johnny and Arturo laugh, we:

QUICK CUT TO:

177

INT. CLUB SHALIMAR

It's closing night. Satin Doll's on stage in clothes identical to what Johnny Barnett was wearing when we saw him sing "Going to Chicago." Now it's Satin's turn. She's singing her heart out doing an impression of Johnny's rendition.

SATIN DOLL

(not half-bad)

... "Goin' to Chicago, but I can't take you..."

The BAND does a musical refrain and Satin Doll takes a bow to vigorous applause.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SATIN DOLL

(quieting them down)

Thank you, thank you... I'm glad
you're all enjoying yourselves
this evening here at the Club
Shalimar.

(a beat)

And now, ladies and 'gentlemen'...

(an aside to the
audience)

... and I use that term loosely...

She elicits a few snickers from the crowd; they've caught
the reference.

SATIN DOLL

(continuing)

I'd like to present the woman you've
all been waiting for... that
glamorous...

(a drum padiddle)

that beautiful...

(drum padiddle)

that g-o-r-g-e-o-u-s thing...(looks off into
wings; can't keep
a straight face)

the internationally famous...

Miss Satin Doll! Hit it maestro!

And the band strikes up "Satin Doll" as onto the stage comes...

178 ANGLE ON JOJO

All dressed up in one of Satin's gowns. Looking as female as
he can in a tight sequined gown with gloves to match. He's
wearing a wig, earrings, lots of makeup (including false
eyelashes) and wobbling awkwardly in spike heels. It's a
funny sight.

Although initially embarrassed, once on stage, Jojo plays
it for all it's worth. And the crowd goes wild!

179 INT. CLUB SHALIMAR - BACK STAGE (A SHORT TIME LATER)

Satin Doll's in the wings watching Jojo's gyrations. She's
hysterical. Sal walks up behind her, watches a moment, not
so amused. We can tell by the AUDIENCE LAUGHTER that they
love it. He's knocking them dead. After a few beats:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAL

(making conversation)

That kid's got better legs
than you.

(matter-of-factly)

We got a little problem with the
payroll.

Satin Doll turns her attention from Jojo.

SATIN DOLL

What the fuck are you talking
about?

SAL

(starting to lose
his calm)

Just shut the fuck up or I'll
kick you and these bums outta
here on your Black asses.

(indicates Jojo)

My brother and I did you a
fuckin' favor last week, remember?

SATIN DOLL

(relenting)

How long this time?

SAL

A week.

SATIN DOLL

One of these days, Sal, you're
gonna do this stuff to the wrong
person.

SAL

(taken aback)

Hey, we're fair to the Coloreds,
they come in as customers. We
water down drinks for everybody --
we don't play no favorites.

(smiling)

What'd'ya wanna do? Cause a big
problem.

She's heard all this before and is bored with the excuses.

SATIN DOLL

I got a sick kid in the hospital.

(angry)

You guys promised to pay me every
fuckin' week.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAL

(threatening)

You better shut ya fuckin' mouth or your kid's gonna grow up without a mother. If you keep fuckin' with me, I'll make a phone call and you won't be able to work nowhere... you'll be lucky if you're able to walk.

SATIN DOLL

You know, Sal... you want to be a gangster so bad, so fuckin' bad... you're pathetic. You're not Gino. If it was Gino, I'd be real scared.

(beat)

I should put my ass in your face and you're whipped, okay? And I know what's goin' on. You guys are just tryin' to keep us here another week cause you like the show... and you're afraid to lose us, aren't you?

SAL

(simmering)

You get paid next week!

He turns and walks off. Satin stands there, angry. After a moment to compose herself, she leaves.

180 ANOTHER ANGLE

The audience is really enjoying Jojo. APPLAUSE can be heard as we SEE Jojo wiggle seductively towards us. He's had a good time with this performance and it shows. Jojo reaches the wings only to be greeted by Arturo who's obviously upset.

JOJO

(to Arturo)

What's wrong? Was I that pathetic?

ARTURO

N-no.

We HEAR an introduction for Johnny Barnett who runs onstage in clothes similar to Jojo's from opening night. He thanks the audience and begins to tell jokes. (NOTE: Same jokes Jojo told when we last saw him will be HEARD UNDER the following.)

JOJO

What's the matter?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTURO

(upset; stuttering
more than usual)

Well, there ain't nothin' you
can do about it, so don't worry.
It's just the same old shit!

JOJO

What the hell's goin' on? What're
you talkin' about?

ARTURO

We don't have any rights. We
ain't gettin' paid.

JOJO

What do you mean?

ARTURO

Just what I said. They're kinda
short this weekend, again... and
so we're not gettin' paid -- not
until next week.

JOJO

Well, shit. I don't work for
free for nobody.

ARTURO

Forget about it, Jojo. Sal and
Satin Doll... they had a fight and
she said this is the third time he's
been tryin' to do this. And she
needs her money -- she's gotta sick
kid.

JOJO

Wait a minute. Wait just a damn
minute. They ain't doin' this to
me. I ain't nobody's slave. I'm
gettin' my money... and her's too!

ARTURO

(worried)

Jojo, you don't want to be playin'
around with them, or they'll find
your little ass in the river!

JOJO

(adamant)

They're gonna pay me my fuckin' money.

And Jojo leaves in a huff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTURO

Oh-oh, there's gonna be trouble.
I'd better tell Doll.

Arturo rushes off to find her as we HEAR more LAUGHTER and APPLAUSE out front.

181

INT. JOJO'S DRESSING ROOM - SAME TIME

It's more like a closet than a dressing room. Jojo storms in, slamming the door behind him and ripping the wig from his head. He begins to rummage through a small bag on the dressing table, the angry determination on his face contrasting sharply with what he's wearing.

182

ANOTHER ANGLE

We SEE Jojo's Alter Ego, laughing at the humor of the situation. Jojo finds what he's looking for -- a small pistol.

ALTER EGO

What are you going to do, Jojo?

JOJO

(surprised)

Huh?

(looks up)

I'm gonna get my motherfuckin' money! I need it. I have a job next week. Satin Doll called somebody in Buffalo. They're gonna hire me.

ALTER EGO

(indicating pistol)

What are you gonna do with that?

JOJO

This is my insurance.

ALTER EGO

You're making a big mistake, Jo.
That's a starter pistol, it shoots blanks.

JOJO

I know that. But they don't know that.

ALTER EGO

Jo, they don't shoot blanks.

JOJO

Get the fuck outta my way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Resigned, Alter Ego steps out of the way as Jojo heads for the door, pistol in hand. Stops short. He searches for a place to put it; his choices are very limited. Finally, he stuffs it down the front of the dress into his cleavage.

183 ANOTHER ANGLE

Jojo takes a deep breath. A beat, then Jojo walks through the door, slamming it behind him to punctuate his determination. We SEE Alter Ego in the mirror, all alone now.

184 INT. NIGHTCLUB - BACK STAGE - NIGHT

As Jojo makes his way down the hall, we can still HEAR Johnny Barnett getting a lot of mileage out of Jojo's jokes.

He stops in front of a door marked "PRIVATE," gulps, and meekly knocks. Then he knocks a little harder. The door is opened by Sal.

SAL

Yeah? What'd'ya want, kid?

JOJO

I wanna see Mr. Bonucci.

Sal looks Jojo up and down, calls out:

SAL

Hey, Gino... There's a young lady out here wants ta see you.

GINO (O.S.)

I'm havin' my dinner.

SAL

I think you oughtta see this one.

GINO (O.S.)

Okay... okay. Send her in.

Sal opens the door wider and Jojo saunters in past him.

185 INT. GINO'S OFFICE

Gino sits behind a large oak table eating spaghetti, a bottle of wine and bread close by. He's tucked a napkin in the front of his shirt like a bib. Gino's rather heavy-set; a thick head of dark hair sprinkled with gray at the temples is slicked back away from his ruddy face. As Jojo enters the office, Gino gives Sal a look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sal sits down in an overstuffed chair and props his feet up on the desk. Gino gives him a look and continues eating. Sal removes his feet.

GINO

(pleasantly)

Hey, Jojo... what can I do for you?

JOJO

Satin Doll tells me you're not gonna pay us till next week, and I want our money tonight.

GINO

You'll get your money. What's the problem?

JOJO

I wanna get paid tonight. I have a job somewhere else.

GINO

You get your money next week just like everybody else. Or the week after... depending on how I feel.

JOJO

(threatens)

I want my money.

GINO

(a mouthful of spaghetti)

Get the fuck outta here.

JOJO

Nah.. You ain't gonna do me like that.

Gino looks up, puts his fork and spoon down, and wipes his mouth with the bib.

GINO

Hey! Do you read lips? Watch my mouth.

(points; deliberate)

Get-the-fuck-outta-here...

Gino stares intently at him for a beat, goes back to his food. Sal laughs, as their strong-arm, a mean-looking thug named VITO, hovers in the background.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAL

You better leave, sweetheart.

Jojo stands for a moment, makes a decision. He pulls the pistol from his cleavage and points it directly at Gino's head.

186

ANOTHER ANGLE

Gino is looking down the barrel of Jojo's pistol, coolly. Sal bolts upright, looks from Gino to Jojo and back to Gino again. Gino continues to stare at Jojo, looking him up and down as if he's just seen him for the first time. A smile crosses his face.

GINO

So... what're ya gonna do, kid?
Shoot us or fuck us?

They both howl. Jojo is totally disarmed and apparently unaware that Gino knows he's got only a starter pistol.

JOJO

(trying to cover;
in his most
menacing voice)

You're gonna pay us our fuckin' money.

Gino rolls more spaghetti on his fork, gives Jojo a look, laughs and takes a large mouthful. Sal is laughing uncontrollably now; Jojo stands expectantly.

GINO

(chewing)

Sal, you see this mulaggine?

Swallows hard as laughter overtakes him. Sal beats on the desk with both fists trying to control himself.

GINO

(to Sal)

You see the fucking balls on
this tatsun?

Gino gets up, walks over to Jojo and grabs his cheeks with both hands as if he were a long lost nephew. He pinches Jojo's cheeks.

GINO

We're crime... and crime
don't pay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gino, Sal and Vito laugh hysterically as the door suddenly BURSTS open and Detective Lawrence comes in. Vito starts to advance on Lawrence, but then:

LAWRENCE

Hey Vito, what the fuck's goin' on?

With that, Detective Lawrence punches a surprised Vito, knocking him clear across the room.

GINO

(in an about face;
to Jojo)

Hey, Mr. Capone! This is your lucky day. We're gonna pay off everybody --

We SEE his hand move under the table for a moment... but there's a big smile on his face.

GINO

(continuing)

-- outta my own pocket. Here!

Jojo is thunderstruck.

GINO

C'mere...

Very congenially, Gino hands Jojo some money. Smiles all around. Jojo looks from face to face and lightens up.

GINO

As a matter of fact, I'm goin' to call my uncle in Detroit. Get you another job.

(to Lawrence)

That all right with you, Detective Lawrence?

Lawrence gives him a look, then turns to Jojo:

LAWRENCE

C'mon, kid. Let's get outta here.

As he ushers Jojo out the door, Lawrence gives Gino another 'don't fuck with me,' look, as we:

CUT TO:

187

INT. CAR - (MOVING) - NIGHT - LATER

No one's talking, Detective Lawrence concentrates on his driving, checking out the rearview mirror every once in a while. Satin stares out her window; Jojo sits in the back seat, wedged in between Johnny and Arturo, looking shocked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO
(to himself)
I don't get it...

JOHNNY
They were gonna kill you, boy.

JOJO
What're you talkin' about?

SATIN DOLL
Let's get to the bus station.

JOJO
Bus station? I'm catchin' a
train tomorow.

JOHNNY
You're catchin' a bus tonight.

JOJO
What?

188 ANGLE FAVORING DETECTIVE LAWRENCE

LAWRENCE
Where're you from?

JOJO
(drained)
Columbus.

The detective snickers.

LAWRENCE
No Italians in Columbus?

JOJO
Huh?

LAWRENCE
You don't get it, do you? What'd'ya
got, shit for brains?
(beat)
Let me give you some advice, kid.
In the future, don't you ever
pull a gun on a Guinea unless
you're gonna shoot 'em.

Jojo takes in the remark, not fully cognizant of its implications.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

It was just a starter pistol.
(defensive)

Hey, they didn't want to pay us
our money.

JOHNNY

They do that all the time. It's
part of the business. Sometimes
you get paid and sometimes you
don't.

(beat)

Detective Lawrence is doing this
because he cares about you.

LAWRENCE

Personally I don't give two shits
about you or your money. I'm
doin' Doll a favor. So get your
little ass out of town and never
come back.

SATIN DOLL

He's just a kid, Jake.

A look passes between them.

189 EXT. BUS STATION - LATE NIGHT

The terminal is deserted as they pull up with the exception
of an old man, half-asleep behind the counter. Detective
Lawrence stops the car, looks into the rearview mirror.

LAWRENCE

It's all clear.
(to Jojo)
Get out.

Jojo grabs his stuff and gets out. Johnny and Arturo get
out too.

190 ANOTHER ANGLE

He stands at Satin's window.

JOJO

(leaning in)
What's gonna happen to you?

A warm smile comes into her face -- she really cares about
him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SATIN DOLL
(lovingly)
You're a silly man, Jojo.

She puts her hand out the window and touches his, tenderly. Their eyes lock for a moment; he looks at her in gratitude.

SATIN DOLL
Let me know where you are and I'll
send your stuff.

ARTURO
G-g-go get 'em, Jojo.

JOHNNY
Remember what I said, kid.

ARTURO
(piping in)
Tat:t...

JOHNNY
(impatient)
Timing!...you motherfucker.

Jojo nods, looks to Satin Doll as she hands him something.

SATIN DOLL
(to Jojo)
I got something for you, Jojo.
It's just a book. Read it in
your spare time.
(beat; smiles)
I know you'll make it, Jojo.

Johnny and Arturo get in the car. It pulls away leaving Jojo standing there all alone.

191 ANGLE ON JOJO

As the car drives off, it REVEALS Alter Ego standing there, looking at Jojo. Jojo, still in makeup and Satin's clothing, sits on a bench. As MUSIC FADES IN ("I'm A Man" by Muddy Waters), a look of angry determination comes across Jojo's face. CAMERA goes in TIGHT on Jojo's face as we begin to HEAR CLINKING NOISES FADE IN. The noise becomes louder as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

192 ANGLE ON RECORD PLAYER

The song: "I'm A MAN" is just ending as we SEE another record drop on the turntable. Begin to HEAR the opening refrain from "SKETCHES OF SPAIN."

193 INT. BEDROOM - JOJO'S WALL - DAY

Adorning the walls of this room are many personal artifacts from Jojo's career; photos of him with various celebrities show the extent of his fame. As the music plays, we HEAR movement in the b.g.

194 ANOTHER ANGLE REVEALING JOJO

He's barefoot, looking kind of scruffy in slacks and shirt. Pipe in hand, Jojo looks nervous and edgy, thinking he hears the sounds of voices. He sits up, looks around, not sure what he hears. Just then, the telephone rings, jolting Jojo out of his stupor. Scared, he drops the pipe. He realizes it's the phone ringing and picks it up.

JOJO

Hello...

(smiling)

Hi, Alicia. You finally called.
I'm glad to hear from you.

He's really flying.

JOJO

(continuing)

No... no, I'm fine.

Jojo takes the pipe and inhales a long one, lets go.

JOJO

I am...

He laughs as she starts to say something.

JOJO

(quickly)

Don't fuss, don't fuss with me.
I know you don't want me... I
know. Look, I'm all right! I
stopped doin' dope.

(beat)

I'm not full of shit!! I stopped!

(beat)

Five minutes...

(beat)

Listen Alicia... I... don't hang
up on me, Don't hang up on me.
You bitch!

He slams down the phone. Looks for his pipe, finds it.

195 ANOTHER ANGLE - JOJO'S POV

Alicia stands there wearing the same clothing as in the hospital scene.

JOJO

Alicia!

ALICIA

I'm sorry I hung up on you, Jojo. I know I was a bitch. But you weren't straight. You fucked around, did what you wanted to do, when you wanted to do it.

JOJO

All I ever wanted you to do was to understand... just be my friend.

He tries to light his pipe.

ALICIA

I wanted to love you, Jojo. That's all I wanted to do... just love you. Why wouldn't you let me love you?

He finally lights the pipe.

JOJO

I didn't know how.

He takes a hit off the pipe and finds Alicia's gone. By now he starting to feel real good. He gets up and walks into:

196 INT. BATHROOM

Jojo goes over to the sink and splashes water on his face. In the mirror we can SEE Jojo's grandmother looking at him with concern. Jojo looks up and sees her in the mirror.

GRANDMOTHER

What happened to you? You're not the baby I raised.

JOJO

(like a little boy)
I don't know, Momma. Somehow I lost it.

GRANDMOTHER

Why'd you fall in love with that girl?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANDMOTHER

(continuing; stern)

She ain't nothin' but trash!
Why're you lettin' her make an
ass outta you, boy?

(angry)

You're pathetic! I told you I
wasn't always gonna be around to
protect you. Goddamn it! You
gotta do it for yourself!

He's looking at her and he's shaking. Suddenly, she's gone.
He's sweating now, out of breath.

JOJO

(screams)

Mommaaa..... Don't leave me,
Momma. Don't leave me! Momma,
don't leave me again! I need
you.....Momma.....

He sinks to his knees, still sobbing for her. Suddenly, he
HEARS:

VOICE (O.S.)

What you doin', Jojo?

Startled, Jojo turns to SEE:

197 LITTLE JOJO

LITTLE JOJO

(shaking his head)

You're gonna get in trouble and
somebody's gonna get hurt. And
it's gonna be me.

198 ANGLE ON JOJO AND LITTLE JOJO

As Jojo walks over to the little boy.

JOJO

No... no more. Nobody's gonna
get hurt... no more.

Jojo talks as he walks into the bedroom, putting things away.
Disoriented, he tries to puts things in order. Then he
notices his shirt is dirty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO

Can't use this. It's a dirty
shirt...

He takes it off; changes it.

199

FATHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

What're you doin'? What's that
pipe for?

Jojo looks. His father stands before him, looking mean and
angry.

JOJO

My pipe?

FATHER

Yeah...

Jojo walks over and picks up his pipe, shows it to his father.

JOJO

See, Pa...pipe. Smoke... base.

FATHER

What the fuck's wrong with you, boy?
You smokin' that dope, ain't ya?

JOJO

Yeah.

He lights the pipe, inhales.

FATHER

(shakes his head)

Sure grew up to be a man, all right,
didn't you boy?

(beat)

I told you you wasn't shit. You
wasn't shit then and you ain't shit
now,... just like your momma.

JOJO

I ain't shit, just like you said.
And I hate you, you son-of-a bitch!!

His father starts to walk away.

FATHER

Frankly. Jojo, I never liked you
much either.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO
 Wait... I-I'm gonna fix it.
 It's gonna be all right.

Jojo is alone, goes over and picks up a shirt as MUSIC FADES IN softly; the melody is "Satin Doll." As he tries to clean up we can see that he's breaking down, holding on by ever so slender a thread.

JOJO
 (mumbling)
 See, I'm gonna...

200 NEW ANGLE

Satin Doll appears, gracefully dancing to her theme music around Jojo's bed. She stops to talk to him as the music plays.

SATIN DOLL
 Hi, Jojo.

Jojo turns to look at her. He's mumbling to himself, out of it.

JOJO
 I'm gonna...

SATIN DOLL
 Yeah, I know, Jojo. That's good.
 But Jojo, I'm real disappointed
 in you. I mean, I real disappointed
 in you.

Just then, Arturo appears.

ARTURO
 Y-y-yeah. R-real disap-pointed...

Jojo's shaking now.

JOJO
 Leave me alone, okay? Just go
 away... and leave me alone.

SATIN DOLL
 I'll go away, but that ain't gonna
 help.

"Satin Doll" MUSIC FADES and she's gone, along with Arturo. As these familiar voices continue to swirl around Jojo's head, they begin to OVERLAP, all of them speaking at once.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICES

Really disappointed in you, Jojo.
Real... disappointed. Somebody's
gonna get hurt... Jojo.

Jojo takes his tie, tries to tie it, but fails. Disoriented and frightened, Jojo falls on the bed and curls up in a fetal position. A hand comes into FRAME and begins patting him on the head.

MOTHER (O.S.)

My baby.

201 FULL BACK to REVEAL his mother as she appears.

MOTHER

(continuing)

Momma's here. It's okay.

She sits on the bed next to him, takes him into her arms and gently rocks back and forth.

MOTHER

Did you ever forgive me, Jojo?

Jojo looks up into her face.

JOJO

I didn't understand when I was
little, Momma. I forgive you.

MOTHER

That's good, Jojo. But why
can't you forgive yourself?

She looks at him, smiles and then disappears. Looking quite dismayed, Jojo continues cleaning in his own paranoid delusion.

202 ANOTHER ANGLE

We SEE Alter Ego standing there alone, looking at Jojo and leaning against a wall, having been privy to all the visitors. He's dressed in the exact same outfit as Jojo. Alter Ego walks over to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALTER EGO

Jo, right now somethin' bad is happening... and it's right up your alley, isn't it?

JOJO

Leave me alone!

ALTER EGO

(continuing)

You think you deserve to feel rotten.

JOJO

Leave me... alone!!

ALTER EGO

Right now Jo, you may not know it, but you're the happiest man in the world.

JOJO

I'm sick.

ALTER EGO

Yeah, but you're lovin' the misery. All the plans you made, look at it... they're all going up in smoke, Jo.

Jojo takes a puff off his pipe.

JOJO

Fuck you!!

(beat; disoriented)

Just leave me alone. I just want everybody to leave me alone! I just wanna...

ALTER EGO

(cutting in; pointedly)

Die?

203 In a flash, all the people from Jojo's past come back. Jojo's mother, father, grandmother, Satin Doll, Arturo, Johnny, Little Jojo and even his ex-wives, all appear and begin speaking to him all at once.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOJO
(filled with remorse)
Oh God... where's my soul?

GRANDMOTHER
Nobody can save you now. Nobody.
Not even yourself.

FATHER
(ominously)
You're forsaken, Jojo.

LITTLE JOJO
It's all over, somebody's gonna
be hurt, and it's gonna be me.

JOJO
(desperate)
Help me, help me please! Some-
body help me!

VOICES
(overlapping)
No more, Jojo... the help ran out.

MOTHER
(encouragingly)
Jojo, my baby. Please. You have to
help yourself this time.

JOJO
Don't tell me that, Momma. Not
you, too?!

VOICES
What you gonna do? What you gonna
do?

JOJO
(thinking)
I know what to do...

204

Jojo sits there, almost rocking. He's in a crazed state, then:

JOJO
(deliberate)
I know how to get my soul back.
(crazed)
I just have to punish myself to
fix it, so God will forgive me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jojo takes a bottle of rum that is on a dresser and drenches himself. He takes his lighter and tries to light it, but it doesn't work. Jojo, his face a mask of pain, looks at Alter Ego who seems to understand what's about to happen.

ALTER EGO

No, Jojo! You don't have to do this. Please don't do this. I'm here to help you! Just ask me for help.

JOJO

Get away. I don't want no more. I can't take anymore. I don't want to feel pain, anymore.

ALTER EGO

Jojo... isn't there another way?

He walks over to Jojo and grasps him firmly.

ALTER EGO

(sadly)

Jojo...don't, Jo.

We SEE Jojo's face and hands; he's trembling now. Jojo hardly responds to Alter Ego. He's drained of all emotion, beat up from days of self-abuse. Feeling alienated from the world, all of Jojo's memories have turned against him and at this moment, Jojo is more dead than alive. He has only enough strength left to at least in his mind, salvage his soul -- by destroying himself.

205 We begin to SEE all the FACES in Jojo's past; quick CUTS back and forth, as they all condemn him.

206 Frightened, Alter Ego looks at Jojo, realizing it's too late to help him.

JOJO

I gotta fix it...

Jojo tries to light the cigarette lighter again; this time, -- it works.

CUT TO:

207 CLOSEUP - JOJO'S FACE

Jojo gives out with a bloodcurdling scream, the same scream we heard in the opening, as a wall of FLAMES bursts across the screen, blotting out his image.

CUT TO:

208 INT. JOJO'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Doctors Carlyle and Weissman are in Jojo's room; he's taken a turn for the worse. A NURSE is bustling about, checking monitors, writing on charts, awaiting orders from the doctors. Everyone is concerned, there's a terrific sense of urgency. By the look on the doctors' faces, we can see that Jojo might not make it.

As the doctors continue to discuss Jojo's worsening condition, his Alter Ego shows up. He bends down close to Jojo and whispers:

ALTER EGO

There was a time, Jo, when you were full of life, full of promise. Now you're full of self-pity and doubt. You came from the bottom to the top. You got just high enough so you'd have to have a long fall. Why'd you let go of the good?

(after a beat)

I don't know what it is, but there's people out there, like you, who just don't believe when something good happens to them that they deserve to have it happen. You never believed...

Alter Ego looks around, sees the faces of the doctors; he sees the machines that indicate time is of the essence.

ALTER EGO

It's up to you now, Jo. We're goin' fast...we ain't got much time. All you gotta do is say, 'help me.' Let go of the pain Jo. You can live or you can die... It's up to you...

There no response from Jojo. His Alter Ego looks a bit uneasy.

209 ANGLE ON JOJO

We SEE his lips move ever so slightly under the bandages. We HEAR him so faint as to almost not be heard at all.

JOJO

(struggling with
the word)

He... he... hal...

Alerted, the medical team moves over to his bed, as:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 JOJO
 (a little plainer)
 Help me... help me... help...

The nurse heads for the crash cart as Weissman moves to the telephone, picks up the receiver and begins shouting orders into it.

CUT TO:

210 ANOTHER ANGLE

As the medical team moves about, Alter Ego is seen leaning over Jojo's bandaged body, a relieved smile on his face.

 ALTER EGO
 Damn! Man, I thought you'd never
 ask!!

And with that he jumps into the lifeless form in the bed.

211 BEGIN SLOW ZOOM into Jojo's bandaged face as life comes back into his eyes. CAMERA CONTINUES until Jojo's eyes fill the entire FRAME...

212 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

CAMERA then PULLS BACK to reveal Jojo on stage (PRESENT). He's dressed to the teeth, very sharp, and playing to a packed house.

(SHORT MONOLOGUE TO COME)

As Jojo continues his monologue we HEAR Alter Ego as he speaks over the routine.

 ALTER EGO (V.O.)
So there you have it. Jojo made a choice to live. And I'm glad he did. He's tryin' now... he's makin' an effort. Ah, he's not perfect... but nobody is. Just as long as you make the effort, that's what counts.

The audience laughs at something funny Jojo's said on stage.

(CONTINUED)

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117. :

CONTINUED:

ALTER EGO (V.O.)
I think he's gonna make it. But
you know what? Just in case he
doesn't... I think I'll stick
around.

Begin CLOSING CREDITS and MUSIC.

THE END

ORIGINAL