

The Killing of a Chinese Bookie

by

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thoughts, themes, and ideas
mercilessly stolen from

John Cassavetes'

The Killing of a Chinese Bookie

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OCTOBER 1997
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FADE IN:

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

The screen is filled with a sea of ballet and nude beauty. Tight female images dance slowly and rhythmically as the music plays. Their movement is graceful and elegant. Image after image dissolve together into a fantasy of seductive aesthetic perfection.

VOICE OVER

Welcome to the World Famous Lido
Burlesque and Cabaret, Ladies and
Gentlemen. Where beauty is everything
and everything is beautiful. A place
of fantasies where your best dreams
come true.

A place to leave your worries.
Unhappiness is not allowed here.
Because here, at the Lido, anything is
possible. So, sit back and relax, and
you'll never want to go home. Because
at the Lido, you are home.

THE PAYOFF

It was the first day of summer and the last time that SONNY would ever have to meet MARTY REITZ.

The payments would always have to be in cash. Small bills and always in a sandwich bag.

EXT. PALM RESTAURANT - DAY

The traffic steadily moves by the small restaurant in the Miami smog. A cab pulls up to an outdoor cafe and SONNY SORAVILLA gets out. He carries the little brown bag. Sonny is immaculate. The ring, the links, the manicure. The wide collar of the pastel shirt and the cream single breasted summer suit. The Florida sun beats down as he pays the cab. He takes off his sunglasses, wipes his face with a handkerchief, and moves inside.

INT. PALM RESTAURANT - DAY

Sonny sits down at a table for two, placing the brown bag in front of the right arm of MARTY REITZ.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No matter how many times over the last seven years that Sonny has met Marty to payoff, he never really found a way to be comfortable with him. There was something about him. His eyes, his direct way of staring, his punctuality, that made Sonny feel like he was a little kid in a bully's presence.

SONNY

Am I late?

MARTY

No.

The WAITRESS comes over and places two pieces of pie down, forks, coffee. Marty grabs the paper bag and gets up, leaving Sonny to sit alone.

Sonny lights a cigarette, looks at his watch, and fumbles with his pie.

WAITRESS

Anything else?

SONNY

No, this is good, thanks.

WAITRESS

Would you like to pay the check now?

SONNY

Yes, that would be fine. Give me the bill.

Sonny pulls out a few dollars and sets them on the table as Marty returns.

MARTY

You can go now. It was all there.

He gobbles his pie down and slurps his coffee. He then switches his empty plate for Sonny's pie.

MARTY

I can't stand it. I'm a sweet freak.

SONNY

Listen, I want to thank you.

MARTY

For what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY

Well, it's taken me seven years.

MARTY

Hey, better for me.

SONNY

I suppose. You know something? I feel great.

MARTY

What?

SONNY

I said, I feel terrific.

MARTY

Are you trying to put me on?

SONNY

No. No. I'm just saying it feels good to be free and clear.

MARTY

Well, there you go.

SONNY

I pay my debts. I'm a businessman and I pay my debts. Can I buy you a drink?

MARTY

No.

SONNY

Just one? To celebrate?

MARTY

Look, jerkoff, I don't drink. I don't drink because I don't like a lot of conversation. So, if you got something to say to me, say it, otherwise I'm going to leave.

SONNY

Okay. Sure. I understand. I'll see you around.

Marty gives him a look and gets up.

THE CLUB

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - DAY

A round yellow cab pulls up and Sonny pays. He moves to the front door and opens it up with a key.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - DAY

Sonny turns on a light and looks at the empty club. He loves this place. The Lido is not your average strip joint. Sure, there's a stage and the go-go cages, but it's not bump and grind. There are no poles at The Lido. People come for the entertainment as well as the beautiful girls. And Sonny keeps the place up nice. Fresh paint. Shiny floors. And an attractive bar setup. He looks around, and for the first time, it's all his.

Sonny moves through the large room and into a corridor that leads to his office.

He takes the tuxedo off the back of the door and looks at himself in the mirror as he changes.

He picks up the phone and dials.

SONNY

Hello, Mrs. Lagner? Is Billy there?
No, he's not here and it's four o'clock again. I understand that parking cars may not be important to him, but cars are important to me. Cars mean customers. Would you give him that message? Thank you, Mrs. Lagner.
Thank you.

He hangs up and puts the finishing touches on his bow tie. Sonny looks sharp. He always looks sharp.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - DAY

Sonny returns to find the bartender, JOHNNY SINGLETON, behind the bar doing side work. Everyone calls him RED.

SONNY

Hello, Red, I didn't see you.

RED

It's four o'clock.

SONNY

What's the breakage?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Red hands Sonny the restock report and pours him the usual. Grand Marnier. Chilled. Sonny pulls out a wad and counts out cash for Red's bank.

RED

Mr. Soravilla, no disrespect, but I was thinking. The place don't come alive here until nine, ten. Why don't we open up later? Say, eight-thirty, nine?

Sonny doesn't look up. He just sips the Grand Marnier and studies the report.

SONNY

Lots of Vodka. Good. People like Vodka. Very popular.

RED

I'm not trying to say nothing. It's just that I don't have time to take care of myself. I never eat. I haven't had a haircut. My wife is pissed.

SONNY

How is Shirley? Give her my best.

RED

She's good. Still at the restaurant.

SONNY

Take her out to dinner tomorrow. Don't argue with me. I'll get Jerry to cover. Okay, let's see, napkins, toothpicks, good. Out of Coca-Cola? If I'm low on Coca-Cola, I want to be low on rum. Alright?

RED

Yes, Sir. Mr. Soravilla, I want you to know that I appreciate my job. I'm the envy of the neighborhood. Everybody, they ask me about the asses. They ask me about the pussies. Questions. I swear to God, you wouldn't believe it. How big? How red? Oh, I like my work all right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY

I know you do. You're a good worker.
A lot of people have told me they like
to come in here because of you.

The front door flies open and in blows a round man. He's full of excitement. His name is IRWIN DI MUGNO. A man of questionable sexuality and Sonny's best friend. Irwin is the headliner at The Lido and performs under the pseudonym, "Mr. Sophistication."

IRWIN

Will somebody please tell me how
fucking hot it is out there? I need
air. I need air. Alright, Sonny, you
have to listen to me. I have an idea
for a new number. Ready?

SONNY

Shoot.

IRWIN

Picture Brazil. Rio. Copa. Bang.
Music. I'm in a spot. My skin is all
tanned. I have a moustache. "The Girl
From Ipanema" starts playing.

(sings)

"Young and tan and warm and tender..."

Sonny moves over to the reservation book, but he's not disinterested. Quite the contrary. Sonny and Irwin are the creative team.

IRWIN

You know the song, right?

SONNY

Yeah, sure.

IRWIN

So then the girls come out. They're
also very tan. Cafe au lait. Oba oba.
Whatever. And I'm looking for the girl
from Ipanema and I can't find her. And
their bosoms are bouncing and I'm
heartbroken.

SONNY

I like it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Sonny moves through the club into the back refrigeration area. Mr. Sophistication follows and helps him pick up a giant Coca-Cola tank.

IRWIN

And you know how the girls always want to sing and I never let them? Well you know the part, la la la la la la la la la? Here's their chance if they can ever find one fucking common note.

SONNY

Good. Good. So, where are we? In a city? At a nightclub? On a beach? Where?

IRWIN

Why?

SONNY

If we're in Rio, the audience has to feel Rio. What are the sets like? What is the mood? What are the shoes like?

IRWIN

You know something? I love you. Alright. We can't be on the beach because then we're barefoot and I'd look like an asshole standing there in a suit. I refuse to do that Julio Iglesias strolling through the surf thing.

They bring the tank back to the bar and try to move it around the corner.

RED

Hey, boss, let me get that.

IRWIN

Yes, Sonny, put that down. Red can get that. That's what he gets paid for.

(to Red)

You see this man? He shouldn't be lifting. He has style. You, and you know I love you, are a lifter. Sonny doesn't lift. The man is elegant. He loves shoes.

RED

Yeah, he's real fancy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

IRWIN

Alright, Sonny, pay attention. I want to finish this and start to prepare. What? You have this face. What is it?

SONNY

I paid the club off today. I'm done. It's all mine.

RED

Congratulations, Sonny.

Irwin gets emotional and throws his arms around Sonny.

IRWIN

Oh my God, I'm so happy for you. Wow.

He kisses both of Sonny's cheeks.

SONNY

Okay. Let's keep going. Where are we again?

IRWIN

We're in a nightclub. Carnival style, but everyone formal.

SONNY

So, what about the girls?

IRWIN

In the beginning, they're not naked. The costumes are angelic. Chiffon. Netting. Saran Wrap. It's all very sheer and removable. Whatever. The costumes are easy. I'll make them all myself.

Sonny and Irwin make their way outside and look around. A skinny guy with longish hair and pinprick pupils sits on a metal folding chair. He wears a red jacket and a black bow tie. His name is LAGNER.

SONNY

Oh. You're here.

LAGNER

I've been here. Where are you?

SONNY

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

LAGNER

What?

Sonny shakes his head.

IRWIN

Never mind. Just park the fucking cars, pothead.

They move back inside.

SONNY

Come on. I'm very interested in this number. I want you to show me everything.

Sonny watches as Irwin hops up on the stage and goes through the number from A to Z.

EXT. MIAMI SKYLINE - NIGHT

Jobim's "The Girl From Ipanema" plays over the Miami skyscrapers. It's a hot, humid night. The traffic is thick and everyone is on the street. The beautiful and the not so beautiful. The Whites and the Latins, the gays, the kids, and sketchy types all out seeking voyeuristic pleasures. WE SEE The Lido all lit up in neon.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

RIO

The place is packed and very alive. A spotlight illuminates Mr. Sophistication. He's wearing a fake moustache, a sequined half jacket, and is belting out "The Girl From Ipanema."

THE GIRLS

Behind him are the dancers. Blonde. Brunette. Pasties. Boas. The boobs. The asses. The legs. They move behind him in a chorus type of manner. And one by one the girls pass by him, paying him no attention. He follows each passing girl across the stage to no avail. They keep disappearing. Finally, he gets emotional and pulls out his handkerchief, knocking a large wad of cash to the floor. All the girls see the money fall and like magic, they are all over him. Mr. Sophistication has lots of girls from Ipanema.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLACKOUT

INT. LIDO BACKSTAGE DRESSING AREA - NIGHT

The half clad dancers rush back into the dressing room area. With so little time between numbers, everyone is in a mad rush. The clothes come off, the costumes go on, and the make-up has to be changed. There's not enough space at the mirror, so all the girls crowd in and fight for the good light. There's pushing and shoving and time is running out.

Suddenly a cat fight explodes between JONESY, a tall, beauty and SUMMER, a compact blonde, who probably reminds us that we may have overinflated our tires. The two half naked girls are mauling each other. Scratching and punching and pulling hair. Sonny appears at the doorway.

SONNY

Hey! Stop it. What the hell is going on here? Cut it out. You hear me? I said knock it off.

He shakes the two girls and pulls them apart.

SONNY

Now what's the story?

JONESY

It takes me two minutes and I got here first.

SUMMER

She's always doing this. All she has to do is paint whiskers. I've got the eyebrows. I've got the lips that have to come off. And all this tan shit. She knows that and she always pushes me out of the way.

JONESY

If she would just wait her fucking turn, we'd all be able to get ready. It's not like we don't do this every night. And the next time you come near me, you fucking bitch, I'm going to knock you out.

SONNY

Alright, enough. You, take your tan off and get ready. Jonesy, you wait.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jonesy is furious. Sonny moves to her, puts his arms around her. She stiffens.

SONNY

Okay. Okay. I have a club to run.
I've got to make choices. It's not
directed at you. Do I love you?

He holds her head in his hands.

SONNY

Look at me. Do I love you?

She softens.

JONESY

Yes.

He gives her a kiss.

SONNY

That's right. Now look, there's some
room over here to get ready. Take your
time. I won't start without you.
Okay?

JONESY

Okay.

She kisses him. It's small at first but as it lingers, it
gets pretty steamy.

SONNY

Okay. Come on. That's enough. Thank
you. Not now. Later. Not now. We
have a show to do.

Sonny walks back out into the club.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

It is the busiest time of the night. People are pouring
in. A couple of girls are in the cages, working the
intermission. Sonny is at the microphone.

SONNY

Alright, Ladies and Gentlemen, direct
from Broadway, our next act is
guaranteed to make you want to play
with your pussy. Sorry about that.
Couldn't resist.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY (cont'd)

And here at the Lido, without a doubt,
we have the prettiest pussycats in the
world. So now, won't you take a ride
with the smooth sounds of Mr.
Sophistication through the wonderfully
purrfect world of "Cats."

The music comes up and Sonny jumps off the stage. He makes
his way through the club, stopping by tables, shaking
hands, making sure everyone is comfortable. He moves to
the bar where Red is swamped. The place is really full of
people.

SONNY

You need help?

RED

I need ice.

SONNY

Again? Tell Jerry.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny pokes his head outside and Lagner once again is not
there. Two cars are parked on the street in front of the
club waiting to be valeted.

SONNY

Son of a bitch.

The first car is impatient and wants to drive away, but
Sonny runs around the car in his tuxedo.

SONNY

Here. Here. Give me the keys. It's
not a stick, is it? I don't drive a
stick.

INT. LIDO STAGE - NIGHT

CATS

Mr. Sophistication is putting everything he has into
"Memory." He is a lion tamer and is perspiring profusely.
His make-up runs. He kicks and dances and cracks the whip.

The girls are in feline costumes with little ears and tails
and painted whiskers. They bounce around, jump through
hoops, and walk on all fours. But the real show is Mr. S.
He's really something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Judy Garland eat your fucking heart out. The number comes to a big finish as the audience roars.

BLACKOUT

INT. SONNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The Lido is closed and everyone's gone. Sonny and Irwin are doing the day's totals. It's late and Sonny and Irwin are exhausted. Irwin has been drinking. He hits the keys on the adding machine. The paper jumps up with the total.

IRWIN

Almost thirty two hundred.

SONNY

After everything?

IRWIN

Thirteen eighty.

SONNY

How much?

IRWIN

Thirteen hundred and change.

SONNY

After everything?

IRWIN

Yep. Big night.

SONNY

That's too much. Do it again.

Irwin slugs down his drink and hits the keys again. The roll of paper flies around and Irwin turns the calculator so Sonny can read it himself.

IRWIN

There it is. Thirteen hundred eighty dollars is your end.

SONNY

Jesus Christ. One night.

IRWIN

You deserve it, Sonny.

Sonny peels off five hundred dollar bills and hands them to Irwin, who declines. But Sonny insists.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

Come on, this is our club. Let me be a big shot once in a while.

IRWIN

Thanks.

SONNY

I'm going to take the girls out tomorrow. I never do anything for them any more. We're going to go out and spend the day in the sun. See the daylight for a change. We're going to get drunk, and laugh, and not be responsible all day. Do you want to come?

IRWIN

No, thanks. I need the sleep. I better go. It's almost morning.

SONNY

Do you want to stay here? I don't want you driving.

IRWIN

No. Oh, wait. I don't know. Maybe I better. I am pretty looped.

SONNY

Let me just put this away and I'll walk you upstairs.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

The lights go off and Sonny helps Irwin up a narrow flight of stairs. At the top is Sonny's loft. He lives at the club.

His room is not glamorous. A queen size bed, a desk, and a pullout. Sonny pulls the sofa out and Irwin plops down.

Sonny moves to the closet and gets ready for bed, hanging his clothes meticulously. Irwin lies down. He is tired and drunk and feeling a little sentimental.

IRWIN

I'm proud of you, Sonny. You took this place and made it what it is. The best damn club on the strip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

Yeah. Yeah.

IRWIN

And today, you paid it off. I don't know what I'd do without you, Sonny. You're a real man.

SONNY

I don't know what you're talking about. You do everything.

IRWIN

No, don't do that. You know you're a lifesaver. I love you, Sonny. You took me in, included me, and treated me like a true friend.

And with that, Irwin is asleep. Sonny smiles. He comes over and puts a pillow under Irwin's head, takes off his shoes, and throws a blanket over him. He then moves over to the wall unit and flicks off all the lights.

EXT. HIALEAH PARK - DAY

Sun. Grass. Flamingos. Hialeah is a beautiful race course. Everything pink and green. Sonny and his girls all dressed in stripper clothes sit in the forest green canvas covered box seats in the sunny section.

The girls pound tropical drinks with little umbrellas, while Sonny enjoys a perfect Manhattan. He's up a lot of cash and in a great mood. He studies the racing form. Then he makes a decision. It's "Touch of Gold." He gets up to place his bet at the Mutuels window.

SONNY

(calls back to girls)

Okay, last race, because we've got to go. Anyone want drinks while I'm up? Pina Coladas? Yes? And Mai Tai's? Okay. Pina Coladas and Mai Tai's. Alright. Get everyone together and meet me down by the rail because we're already late.

EXT. HIALEAH PARK - DAY

The horses are all lined up. Sonny and the girls are in the pit. Sonny holds a handful of tickets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"Touch of Gold" wears the blue colors. The starting gate opens and the eighth race starts.

SONNY
Come on, "Touch of Gold."

The horses thunder by them. Very close. Everyone screaming, as the blue horse pulls ahead.

SONNY
Come on, you mother. Come on, baby.
Yes!

Sonny thrusts his arms in the air and the girls jump all over him. It's "Touch of Gold" by a nose.

INT. LIMO - DAY

Sonny and the girls are late, but nobody cares. Their chauffeur, LAMARR, drives very quickly along the streets to get Sonny and the girls to the club on time. Sonny is changing into his tuxedo in the car.

The girls pass around a bottle of champagne, getting those last few swallows in before work. Everyone gets smashed to one side of the car as the limo makes a turn and pulls up in front of the club.

INT. LIDO - IRWIN'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Sonny sits on the counter in front of a large mirror surrounded by light bulbs. Irwin faces the mirror as Sonny applies his make-up

MR. SOPHISTICATION
I don't like this new you. I swear to God, I don't know you any more. You don't care about the acts. You just count your money and show up drunk.

SONNY
You are wrong. I love you, Irwin.

MR. SOPHISTICATION
Don't call me Irwin. In here, I'm Sophistication.

SONNY
Sorry. I am going a little crazy.
I don't know what it is. I just have this feeling.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY (cont'd)

I don't think I'm ever going to worry again. Do you like liner?

MR. SOPHISTICATION

The dark one. Here. And more cheeks. This is the theatre, not a fashion shoot.

SONNY

Hold still.

MR. SOPHISTICATION

What about our girls? Are they going to remember the numbers or are they too wasted?

SONNY

They'll be fine.

MR. SOPHISTICATION

Because if they're just going out there to show their pussies off, I'm not going on. You don't need me for that.

SONNY

Stop it. The girls are fine. They're getting cleaned up right now.

INT. GIRLS' DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

The girls are all crowded around a large mirror doing cocaine. Up to bat is HUTCH with PEACHES on deck. They are all drunk. Clothes everywhere. No one ready. Sonny opens the door and looks around.

SONNY

Hey. What's going on? We're about to start. Let's go. Everyone dressed. Hurry up.

He walks over to the mirror and sees the lines of white powder.

SONNY

What's this? Where did you get this? Is this from Lagner?

HUTCH

No. I had it already. I brought it.

SONNY

Liar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He picks up a pinch, puts it to his nose, and sniffs.

SONNY

Mmm. That's cocaine, alright. What are you thinking? You can't dance on drugs.

PEACHES

Want to bet?

SONNY

I'm no moralist and I understand this is a modern society, but we have a show to do. There's an audience out there. So everyone go get ready. It's no time for a party. Two minutes and positions. Let's dance, girls.

He wipes his fingers on his gums as he leaves.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny looks up and down the street as the customers pile into his place. The colored neon splashes on and off his face. The traffic slows and the passengers gawk as they pass by.

More customers. A group of four blacks approach. A Japanese group. Couples. College kids. Sonny sends them to the door where JERRY takes their money and gets them seated.

THE GANGSTERS

A green Sedan De Ville pulls up and out step four tough looking men in suits. They are MORT WILD, JOEY LONGO, BUZZY PHILLIPS, and MANNY CARPE. Sonny moves over to greet them and ushers them in the door.

SONNY

Welcome to the Lido, Gentlemen. Right this way. Leave the car. We'll put the car in the lot around the corner. Plenty of room.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

The place is filling up and Sonny pushes his way inside. The doorway area is crowded and Jerry calls for Sonny.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JERRY

Sonny, I need you. These gentlemen want to sit by the stage, but I don't have anything for them. They won't sit anywhere else and they won't wait.

One of the men, Joey, speaks up.

JOEY

We're not sitting a mile away. We came here to fucking enjoy ourselves.

SONNY

You want to be by the stage?

JOEY

We want to be close.

SONNY

Of course. Jerry, give me a hand here. Leave the door. Right. Now, let's grab a couple of tables.

Sonny and Jerry grab tables and set them up with some difficulty in front. They move other tables until there's enough room and then pull all the chairs over.

SONNY

There you go. Ringside tables. Right in front.

Mort hands him a hundred.

SONNY

Thank you, but give it to your waitress. I'm Sonny Soravilla. This is my place.

MORT

Hey, terrific. Your place? Pleased to meet you. Mort Wild. This is Joey Longo, Buzzy Phillips, Manny Carpe.

SONNY

Nice to meet you. Great.

MORT

This is Sonny Sepharino.

SONNY

Soravilla.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MORT

Soravilla. Sorry about that. Can't hear. My fucking ears, they're so bad. Everything is like tin. Can I buy you a drink?

SONNY

No, thanks, but, you want drinks? I'll get the girl right over.

MORT

Yeah, thanks. Get the girl. Great place you got here.

MANNY

Terrific.

SONNY

Yeah. It's pretty full for a Sunday night.

MORT

Very nice. Classy. And the broads are outstanding.

BUZZY

Very bueno.

SONNY

Thank you. Thank you, very much. If you need anything, I'll come running.

THE SETUP

Mort hands Sonny his business card. The card reads "The Ship Ahoy. 222 Venice Street. Card games. 24 hours."

MORT

If you ever feel lucky, please come and see us. You should. You'll have a good time and you won't have to bring cash. I'll extend you all the credit you want.

SONNY

Terrific. Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got to go announce the next act and the parking guy's not here. It's a little nuts. You understand. You're a club owner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he passes by the bar, he sees NIKKI draped all over a drunken man who nuzzles her neck inappropriately.

SONNY

Hey.

NIKKI

This is my friend, Sonny. I know this guy.

SONNY

Yeah, yeah.

Sonny hops up on stage and takes the mike.

PARIS

SONNY

Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is Sonny Soravilla. The show is about to start. So now if you'll just sit back and relax, let your imaginations wander, I'd like to transport you to a world of fascination and splendor. Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you Paris.

The "Paris" number begins. Mr. Sophistication comes on stage and starts singing. The girls appear. Cheers. Sonny watches for a moment. He likes this number.

INT. LIDO BACKSTAGE DRESSING AREA - NIGHT

Sonny moves offstage and pushes the curtain back to watch the number in progress from the wings. The act is front lit and Mr. Sophistication and the back sides of the strippers are rim lit and in partial silhouette.

A pair of hands wrap themselves around Sonny's chest and two female heads nuzzle him. It's Nikki and Hutch and they're up to naughty no good. Sonny protests, but it's a losing battle. He knows the girls are not on for another two numbers and this is semi-regular behavior. The door to Sonny's office slams behind them.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

On stage is the "Paris" number. Mr. Sophistication is singing an "I Love Paris in the Springtime"/"Thank Heaven For Little Girls" medley.

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CONTINUED:

The girls are dressed in French school girl outfits. White shirts. Navy skirts. Pigtails. The number starts off quite innocently. But as it progresses, the skirts come up, the clothes go off and the braids are undone.

Mr. Sophistication sports a Maurice Chevalier hat and cane and inspects the girls as he passes.

QUICK CUTS

INT. SONNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Sonny and the two girls have cleared the desk and are getting into it.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET STAGE - NIGHT

The dancers blouses come off.

INT. SONNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Everyone's tops come off.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET STAGE - NIGHT

The skirts drop.

INT. SONNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Sonny's pants drop.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET STAGE - NIGHT

High heels are kicked off.

INT. SONNY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The girls tug at Sonny's shoes.

SONNY

No. No. Not the shoes. I want to keep the shoes on.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET STAGE - NIGHT

Mr. Sophistication's version of "Thank Heaven" gets really raunchy. He moves behind the girls and gyrates. The crowd loves it. One girl. Two girls. He is now a French girl sandwich. With the beat of the music, the cuts build and become quicker as the number builds into a mock orgasm. Intercut, of course, with the office. Even the girls in the cages shake their hair loose, throw back their heads and scream with delight before WHOOPEE! The number comes to an abrupt end and WE BLACKOUT.

INT. LIDO BACKSTAGE DRESSING AREA - NIGHT

The girls rush to the dressing room with their clothes in hand. Everyone is in a rush to get ready for the next number. Nikki and Hutch exit Sonny's office followed by a disheveled Sonny. Mr. Sophistication passes by and looks at him.

IRWIN

Nice, Sonny. Real nice.

SONNY

I was just...

IRWIN

I know what you were doing.

Sonny is busted. The girls give him shit from the dressing room.

PEACHES

God, Sonny, I thought you loved me.

SUMMER

You used to love me.

JONESY

Yeah. Why don't you love us any more?

Sonny moves to the door and smiles.

SONNY

I do. I love you. And you. All of you. I have no favorites. You know that. I love you all the same.

Irwin sits at the mirror putting his make-up on.

IRWIN

You're unbelievable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

I know. God, I love this place. I love you.

IRWIN

Yeah. Yeah. Leave me alone. I've got to get ready.

SONNY

Okay. Right. Hurry up, girls. The Western number is next.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

THE WLD WEST

Sonny moves on to the stage and takes the mike in a spotlight.

SONNY

Paris, Ladies and Gentlemen. How about another nice round of applause. Now, for our next number we're going to transport you back in time to the era of Jesse James and Doc Holiday. Where the West was wild and the guns were fast. Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you the O.K. Corral.

THE BITE

The music starts. Mr. Sophistication comes on stage in a ten gallon hat, cowboy boots, and a gun belt. It's Cher's "Bang, Bang, You Shot Me Down." The girls come on in cowgirl outfits and elaborate gun battles with pop guns punctuate the number.

Sonny moves confidently over to the gangster's table. He pulls up a chair and sits down. He motions to the waitress and buys a round.

SONNY

So, tell me about this club. I'm very interested in gambling.

MORT

We formed this private club where people come and play poker. We're just there to see that nobody cheats. It's a lovely seaside atmosphere, very formal, nice people, steady customers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORT (cont'd)

We take our share from the pot and everyone plays against each other. We're just there to make sure that no one cheats.

SONNY

Sounds like a lovely place.

MORT

There's a pool and jacuzzi. The food is good and there's plenty to drink.

SONNY

I wouldn't have any trouble getting in?

MORT

No. Just mention my name. Come any time. You have my card.

Mr. Sophistication shoots girls and all their clothes fall off. He turns to the audience and blows on his gun and shoves it back into the holster as we FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. MIAMI BEACH - WATERFRONT STREET - NIGHT

A navy stretch limousine cruises the street until it finds the right address and stops.

THE GAME

EXT. 222 VENICE STREET - SHIP AHOY - NIGHT

The door opens to reveal a frightening looking man. He is the BOUNCER.

BOUNCER

Yeah?

Sonny stands at the doorway with four of his girls. Lamarr waits with the limo behind them on the street. They are completely overdressed. Sonny with his tux and the girls with their evening dresses and corsages.

SONNY

I'm Sonny Soravilla. I'm a friend of Mort's.

BOUNCER

Hold on.

The door shuts and after a few moments it reopens. Mort Wild's face jumps into a big smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORT

Sonny, you made it. Terrific. Come on in. And you brought the girls. Fantastic. The car has to move, but I'll tell one of the boys to take care of it. Come in. Come in.

INT. SHIP AHOY - NIGHT

The Ship Ahoy is a converted large family residence. There's a living room and a kitchen, but up a small flight of stairs there's a large open area where the tables are. It's a very upscale setting. The gambling room has big picture windows that reveal the blue of the Atlantic.

Mort walks Sonny over to the bar while they clear a spot for him at one of the tables.

MORT

I put you at the best table. You know how to play "Texas Hold'em"? Two down, five up? It's easy. You'll figure it out.

SONNY

Hey, Mort. I've got to tell you something. I didn't come with any money.

MORT

What did I tell you? You don't need money here. There's no problem. Whatever you need, you've got. Okay?

SONNY

Great.

MORT

Look, the table is ready. I'll go get you a couple racks. What do you need? Five, ten thousand?

SONNY

Sure. Whatever you can do.

MORT

Name it.

SONNY

Ten?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORT

Fine. Sit down. I'll be right over.
What do you want to do with the girls?
There's a pool and jacuzzi upstairs.

SONNY

Can we get some chairs?

MORT

Sure. You want them to sit with you?

SONNY

Yeah. For luck.

MORT

This is your place, Sonny. Relax. You
can do whatever you want. Do the girls
like champagne? Manny, bring us a
couple of bottles of pink champagne.
I'll be right back with your money.

INT. SHIP AHOY - OFFICE - NIGHT

Mort grabs a couple of five thousand dollar racks and makes
out a marker. EDDIE THE ACCOUNTANT, sits behind the desk
flanked by Joey Longo and a couple of other goons.

EDDIE

Do we know this guy?

MORT

He's a club owner. Owns the strip
joint over on Broadway.

JOEY

I don't like him. He thinks he's a big
shot.

EDDIE

Is he reliable?

MORT

He's an asshole. How should I know?
He brings strippers to a card game.

JOEY

(to Mort)

You're giving him the credit?

MORT

That's right. Is there a problem with
that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEY

No.

MORT

All of a sudden you've got an opinion?

JOEY

No, boss.

MORT

Do me a favor. Don't be interested in things that don't concern you.

JOEY

Right.

MORT

Unfuckingbelievable.

EDDIE

What's his limit?

MORT

As much as he wants. I'm approving it. This guy's a pigeon. Now sign this.

Eddie puts his initials on the marker.

EDDIE

Can he play?

MORT

Who gives a shit?

INT. SHIP AHOY - GAMBLING ROOM - NIGHT

CARDS

Sonny is at the table. There are SIX PLAYERS and a DEALER.

SONNY

Now how much do I have to bet?

His voice is a bit too loud, trying to include the girls.

DEALER

If you want to stay in it's four hundred dollars.

SONNY

I want to stay in. I always want to stay in. I'm going to call every hand.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY (cont'd)

You know why? I feel lucky tonight and I don't trust anybody. Everyone bluffs. Everyone here is a liar. Am I right?

The faces around the table that look at him are blank. An oriental woman, a few white haired gentlemen, a young Italian guy, a Brazilian. All sharks.

The hand progresses. Some stay in, some drop out, but it's a lot of chips. Sonny loses. Sonny loses again. And again before winning a hand.

SONNY

You see that? Okay, babies, now we're getting started. Now we're on a roll. Touch my cards for luck, girls. Touch them and touch me.

PLAYER #1

Hey, jerkoff, keep your cards on the table.

PLAYER #2

What the fuck is going on? Turn around and play the game or get up.

SONNY

Anxious, huh? You must have a good hand. But I'm in because I have a good hand too. Just kidding. Never mind.

DEALER

Sir?

SONNY

Four hundred.

The WAITER comes over.

WAITER

Another drink, Sir?

SONNY

Yes. Thank you. Would you tell Mort I need some more chips. I'm starting to get the hang of this game.

MONTAGE

Sonny plays hand after hand. He wins a few, but mostly, it's bad. The girls get up and leave him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He gets more chips, but through everything, he keeps talking and laughing. For Sonny, this is social.

EXT. SHIP AHOY - ROOFTOP POOL AREA - NIGHT

The girls are upstairs partying down. There are many bottles of champagne and the girls are doing big whacks.

Two of the goons, Manny and Buzzy, are engaged in intimate conversations with Summer and Peaches, respectively. The subject of their talks has been shaded by the drugs. "The thing I like most about myself is," etc. Coke rap.

The other three girls sit on lounge chairs and swill their champagne.

HUTCH

Men can never quit. They keep going if they lose. They keep going if they win. That's why I think it's a fake. You know the way they stand up straight, look you in the eye? I think men are pretend, girls. You know? All right, I don't know what I want. A pretty car, a nice house, some wine in the sun, a horse to ride over the green lawn. Who knows? But if a damn man gets hold of the moon, he'll go up there. You know what I mean? I can't express what I mean. He'll make it a thing.

NIKKI

A place to go rather than romantic like.

HUTCH

Yeah. They're press agents. Honey, I'm going to do this to you. Honey, I'm going to do that to you.

JONESY

All right. All right.

HUTCH

It's a shitty place, and I'm in a new dress. He comes up here with a roll of bills. Why doesn't he give some to us to play? I don't like to stand around all night. He doesn't play that good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NIKKI
What are you talking about?

JONESY
She doesn't know.

INT. SHIP AHOY - GAMBLING ROOM - NIGHT

At the table, Sonny continues to lose. Three of a kind over two pair. A boat over a straight. His rhythm is gone. He gets bluffed out and then stays in too long. He has had too much to drink and he is just chasing. Jonesy appears behind him.

JONESY
How are you doing?

SONNY
Fine.

JONESY
Good or bad?

SONNY
Not so good.

JONESY
Do you want to go home?

SONNY
No.

She reaches up and starts massaging his neck. Sonny looks at his cards. A pair of bullets in the hole. Good.

He throws his chips on the table and everybody follows suit. This could be a big hand for him. The cards are turned over. A couple of Kings. Sonny is looking good. Jonesy is rubbing his back harder now.

SONNY
Darling, could you not do that? Could you stop? I understand what you're trying to do, but it's just no good right now. I can't concentrate.

She starts to get up.

SONNY
No, don't leave. I'd like it if you sat next to me for luck.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY (cont'd)
You're good luck. I promise we'll
leave soon. Just don't touch me.

A lot of money being thrown on the table. Sonny checks his
stack.

THE FALL

SONNY
I need more chips.

The FLOOR MANAGER comes over.

SONNY
How's my credit?

FLOOR MANAGER
Sorry, but you're tap city.

SONNY
Says who?

FLOOR MANAGER
Do yourself a favor. Go home. It's
morning.

SONNY
I'm in the middle of a hand here.
Where's Mort? He knows me. He said I
didn't have to worry, that I could have
all the credit I needed. We're old
friends.

FLOOR MANAGER
I'm sorry.

SONNY
You want me to write you a check? I'll
write a check for ten. Give me ten
more.

The Floor Manager leaves and everybody at the table waits.
It's uncomfortable.

DEALER
It's your bet, Mr. Soravilla.

SONNY
I'm waiting for chips. How am I
supposed to bet without chips? You saw
what just happened.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEALER

I know that, Sir. I'm just saying that you're up.

SONNY

I know I'm up.

More waiting. Sonny snaps his fingers.

SONNY

I'd like to get another drink. Can I get a drink please?

Mort comes over to the table.

MORT

Hey, Sonny, what's going on?

SONNY

I ask for more chips and I get told that I'm cut off. We're in the middle of a hand and this joker tells me to go home.

MORT

Sonny, you can have whatever you want, but you're down forty eight already.

SONNY

I'm down. I'm up. That's the way it goes.

MORT

I like you, Sonny. I don't want you to get hurt.

SONNY

I need to take a shot to get some of this back. I'm good for the money.

MORT

Of course. I know you are. Everybody knows that. It's just that it's a friendly game and I want to stay friends.

SONNY

We're friends. Of course we're friends.

MORT

Alright?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY

Yeah.

MORT

Is everything else okay? You having a good time?

SONNY

Yeah. Terrific.

MORT

I'll get the chips.

SONNY

Just ten more and we'll call it a night.

CLOSE UP on the cards. THE CAMERA reveals Sonny's hand, another hand, and another as it circles around the table. It's the big hand of the night.

Sonny keeps raising. He's confident. But it's that forced confidence. The kind of confidence that doesn't pay attention to sense or luck. The kind of bravado that revs you up and tries to keep your spirits high.

A couple of players drop out, but not Sonny. It's down to him and the Italian guy and Sonny is not going to be scared out of this pot. He pushes a big pile of chips across the table.

SONNY

No one is going to raise? I paid to see your cards. Let's see them.

The Italian drops his cards and WE HOLD and PUSH IN on Sonny's face.

INT. SHIP AHOY - WAITING ROOM - DAY

SETTLING UP

Various losers sit in the large room waiting their turn to square up. Among them is Sonny, who sits with the girls, who are drunk. They laugh and zing rap. Sonny is in no mood.

HUTCH

What's the matter, Sonny? What happened, did you lose?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

I don't want to talk about it.

Joey eyes Sonny and the girls. He pours himself a drink.

JOEY

People who owe money. That's the worst sin in the world. Here's to the biggest sinners in the world. People who owe money.

The door to the office opens and Buzzy pokes his head out.

BUZZY

Bring in the doctor.

INT. SHIP AHOY - OFFICE - DAY

Joey ushers in DR. ROBERT STARKEY and his wife, VERA.

MORT

Who are you?

DR. STARKEY

Robert Starkey.

JOEY

Just another successful night at the tables, huh, Doctor?

DR. STARKEY

I'm a friend of Dr. Wyan.

MORT

What kind of a doctor are you?

DR. STARKEY

A urologist. If that matters.

BUZZY

A urologist.

JOHNNY C.

In medical circles, he's a plumber.

DR. STARKEY

That's exactly correct.

BUZZY

God, I've got to take a leak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DR. STARKEY

You ought to be a little respectful of anyone's profession. Especially mine.

VERA

Bob.

DR. STARKEY

Vera. Just a second, Vera.

MORT

We're here to discuss a loss of five thousand dollars this evening.

DR. STARKEY

I can handle that in thirty days.

MORT

Thirty days is not good enough.

DR. STARKEY

What is good enough?

MORT

Now.

DR. STARKEY

No. I can't do it.

VERA

Bob.

DR. STARKEY

I need thirty days.

VERA

Bob, you're making an idiot out of yourself.

She takes off her ring and holds it out. Eddie the Accountant takes it away quickly.

VERA

Take my ring. There's two carats there.

DR. STARKEY

No, Goddamnit. Vera, just take it easy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VERA

These guys are not kidding. This isn't a game. Go outside. I'll take care of this.

The group look around at each other. The sexual implication is clear. Starkey is furious, but his wife doesn't back off her position.

MORT

Doctor. Bob. Just take it easy, will you?

VERA

These men will kill you. And they will kill me.

DR. STARKEY

Please.

VERA

(screams)

Will you get out!

JOEY

You just got orders, Doc.

DR. STARKEY

Vera!

VERA

Out.

Joey unceremoniously escorts the doctor to the door.

DR. STARKEY

Vera!

Vera is left in the room. The goons chuckle.

EDDIE

This goddamned ring is only worth about six hundred dollars.

VERA

No. That's worth at least five thousand dollars.

EDDIE

It's worth six hundred to us, dear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MORT

Darling, this is not what you think.
You don't have to worry about the cash,
but you do have to help us.

VERA

I will.

MORT

I want you to make your husband's bank
files available to us.

She looks around the room at the gangsters.

MORT

Just for a short time.

INT. SHIP AHOY - WAITING ROOM - DAY

The office door opens and Vera exits. Sonny and Joey's
eyes meet. Sonny starts to get up, but Joey re-enters the
office and shuts the door behind him.

INT. SHIP AHOY - OFFICE - DAY

JOEY

Big money's up next.

MORT

Soravilla?

JOEY

He's out there.

MORT

Good.

MANNY

He's in to us for sixty.

BUZZY

Fifty eight plus all the drinks.

MORT

Yeah.

JOEY

Ten to one, he don't have it. Fucking
hard-on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORT

So what? It's there. We'll get it.
Alright. I need someone to be the
boss. Johnny C. You're up.

The man he refers to is JOHN CUNDARI, a large dark haired man with a thick neck, a busted nose, and a dim bulb. He's obviously not at the top of the food chain.

JOEY

Him?

BUZZY

Hey, boss. I don't mean to say
nothing, but it's a lot of money here.
Why don't you let me do it?

JOHNNY C.

I can do it. Fuck you.

BUZZY

Your mother's cunt. You're too stupid.

JOHNNY C.

Who's stupid?

BUZZY

Who's stupid? Who's stupid? You, you
fucking retard. Or have Manny do it.
He's a great liar. The best.

MANNY

I am.

JOEY

Hey, I'll do it.

MORT

Everybody shut up. Johnny's going to
do this. He's the only one that Sonny
doesn't know. We'll all be here and
we'll help him.

JOHNNY C.

Thanks, boss. Fucking assholes.

MORT

Now, you shut up and listen, because if
you fuck this up, I am going to be
angry. All you've got to do is sit
behind the desk and tell him to give
you the money.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MORT (cont'd)

If he writes a check, fine. If not,
we'll take it from there.

JOHNNY C.

I know what to do. I've seen you do
it.

MORT

You know, my balls. Just remember that
you're the boss. Just try to think
like someone intelligent and the rest
of us will try not to laugh.

JOHNNY C.

Don't worry.

MORT

Alright. Put your jacket on. Are you
ready? Bring him in. This should be
easy. The guy is a real pussy.

INT. SHIP AHOY - OFFICE - DAY

Sonny is led in, followed by the girls. There's not enough
places to sit.

MORT

Hello, Sonny. Come on in. Can I get
you a drink?

SONNY

No, thanks.

MORT

This is Mr. Cundari. Sonny Soravilla.

JOHNNY C.

Sit down and have the girls wait
outside.

SONNY

They're with me.

JOHNNY C.

I understand that, but have them wait
outside. I don't like doing business
in front of women.

Sonny, embarrassed, asks them to leave. He walks them to
the door and tells them he'll be right out. Then he comes
and sits back down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHNNY C.

I understand you owe us some money.

SONNY

Yes. It's alright.

JOHNNY C.

What's the number?

EDDIE

Fifty eight thousand.

JOHNNY C.

That's a big number. How do you want to take care of it?

SONNY

Money is not going to be a problem.

JOHNNY C.

That's fine. What do you want to do, write us a check?

SONNY

Uh, well, I never carry that kind of cash in the bank. I put all my money in the business.

JOHNNY C.

Okay. Get his information.

EDDIE

Can I see your credit card, please?

Sonny takes out his wallet and produces the card.

EDDIE

A driver's license? Just give me everything.

Eddie takes all the cards and identification and hands Sonny back his empty wallet.

SONNY

The money is there. I just need a couple of days to move things around. Rob Peter to pay Paul. You know?

JOHNNY C.

What does that mean, you need a couple of days?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY

I'll go to the bank, move some things around, and do a couple things, and I'll have it.

JOHNNY C.

Alright. We'll send somebody with you. What time do the banks open? Ten o'clock?

BUZZY

Ten o'clock. They close at three.

MANNY

Friday's at six.

JOHNNY C.

Someone will pick you up and drive you to the bank.

SONNY

I don't think that would be appropriate. I'll take care of it myself.

JOEY

What the fuck does that mean? Take care of it yourself. How? Where's our fucking money?

JOHNNY C.

Mr. Soravilla, I don't want to get angry, but I don't like your answers. You won't write me a check. You don't know where your money is. I get the feeling that I'm being bullshitted here.

SONNY

That's not true. I intend to pay. I'm going to pay. I'm not one of those guys who considers a bet just paper. I have a triple A credit rating.

EDDIE

Yeah, the gas card here is gold.

JOHNNY C.

So, what you're saying is you need a couple of days?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SONNY

That's right.

MANNY

This is bullshit. Either he has the money or he doesn't.

JOEY

This guy's a liar, boss. You want me to tell him about the money?

MORT

Hey, what are we doing? Mr. Soravilla has the money. He just said that. He's a respected businessman. He's a money person. If it's all tied up in the club, then he's got to make arrangements. He hasn't given us any reason to believe he won't pay.

JOHNNY C.

You gave him this credit?

MORT

Yes, I did. We're old friends.

JOHNNY C.

Are you going to pay for this? Do you guarantee it? Then shut your mouth. Fifty eight thousand dollars is a lot of money.

There is an uneasy silence and Sonny shifts in his seat.

MORT

Excuse me, boss. May I say something? Why don't we do this? We have him fill out a form 17, use the club as collateral, and give him a couple of days.

JOHNNY C.

This is a mess and I'm tired. I don't want to hear about this any more. You're responsible for this, Mort.

MORT

No problem. I told you. He's a friend of mine. Eddie, give me a form 17. Sonny, fill this out so we can all go home. When you square the marker, we rip this up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Eddie sets triplicate forms on the desk in front of Sonny and hands him a pen. Sonny looks at the papers, takes a breath, and signs away.

MORT

Alright. That's it. You can go. Do you need a ride home? Do you need a car?

SONNY

No, thanks.

MORT

Okay. Listen. I'm sorry about all this, your first night and all. Salty night.

He ushers Sonny to the door.

MORT

Talk to you Thursday.

SONNY

Right.

Sonny leaves. The door closes behind him and everyone starts laughing.

MORT

(to Johnny C.)
You were terrific.

MANNY

I can't believe you. Where did you get that shit? "Are you going to pay? Then shut your fucking mouth."

BUZZY

How about the bank thing? "We'll drive you to the bank." What the fuck was that?

JOHNNY C.

I don't know. It just came to me.

EDDIE

You were great, Johnny.

BUZZY

Let's face it. We were all pretty good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MORT
We have everything?

EDDIE
He signed a blank IOU.

MORT
Assholes. The world is filled with
assholes.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Sonny and the girls walk home along the sand. The limo
shadows them along the street. The girls are drunk,
pushing him, and teasing him.

JONESY
How much did you lose?

SONNY
I lost the club.

EXT. LIMO - DAY

Sonny puts all the girls into the car.

SONNY
Alright. Good night. Everyone get
some rest. You've got to be at the
club on time tomorrow. Lamarr, get
these girls home. No fucking around
and partying.

JONESY
You alright?

SONNY
Yeah.

JONESY
What are you going to do?

SONNY
I don't know.

JONESY
You want me to stay with you?

SONNY
No. Get some sleep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAMARR

Do you want us to drop you off?

SONNY

No. I'll walk. Thank you, Lamarr.

Sonny slips a bill in Lamarr's hands.

SONNY

I won't be needing you any more today.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - DAY

Sonny walks to the door of his club, opens it with a key.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - DAY

The place is gray where patches of light strike the floor.

We see the dust in the air. Sonny walks to the other end of the bar and pours himself a large glass of Grand Marnier. He finds a silex pot still filled with used coffee grounds and rinses them out. Water splatters over his tux.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - DAY

Sonny comes out of his Nude joint. He walks up the street to an outdoor coffee shop. He looks to be a peculiar man in his black tux in the white sun.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The boundaries of the coffee shop contain tables with Cinzano umbrellas. A SHORT ORDER COOK leans over a railing which separates the place from the street. It's 10 A.M. A 19-year-old waitress with a pimply face and a big set of boobs moves over to Sonny. Her name is LYDIA.

LYDIA

All dressed up with no place to go?

SONNY

Got any fresh orange juice?

LYDIA

Sure we do.

SONNY

Is that bottled, frozen, or fresh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LYDIA
Frozen fresh.

SONNY
Okay, give me a coffee.

LYDIA
How are you doing over there?

SONNY
Over where?

LYDIA
At your place?

SONNY
Good.

LYDIA
You going to let me audition for you?

SONNY
You don't want to do that. Get my
coffee, will you?

She moves off and Sonny watches her go. A good behind.
Her bosoms are ripe and rich. Her legs are firm. There's
something off balance about the girl and about the day.
But he watches her move away and he watches her return.
Not bad. The cars roll by and Sonny crosses his legs.

LYDIA
(bending over him)
Nice and hot. Want me to fix it for
you? Sugar?

SONNY
Two.

LYDIA
Cream?

SONNY
Yeah.

LYDIA
Can I?

SONNY
I suppose so, if you want to. You have
a good body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LYDIA
And I can dance.

SONNY
How old are you?

LYDIA
Are you kidding? Too old.

SONNY
Well, call me tonight, or tomorrow.

LYDIA
You want some toast?

SONNY
No.

LYDIA
You going back to the place?

SONNY
Yeah.

LYDIA
Want me to audition for you?

SONNY
You're working.

LYDIA
I can get someone to cover for me.
Breakfast is almost over. We're dead
until lunch.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - DAY

THE AUDITION

The light streaks across the dance floor as the front door opens and Sonny and Lydia come in.

SONNY
I'm going to close this door. I just
have to find the light. This damn
switch doesn't work half the time.

LYDIA
You have a dressing room? I need a
costume.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

Yeah, it's beyond the stage to your left. There's a light switch on your right as you go in. There are a few costumes there. Try on what you want.

He starts to walk after her. It's a big place, it's a long walk. He finds her in the darkness, touches her by mistake.

SONNY

Sorry.

He fumbles for the switch and she turns and presses up against him in the dark, very close.

Sonny finds the switch and the lights come on, breaking the moment. She moves slowly past him.

LYDIA

I'm okay now. Thanks. Just wait outside. Sit in the audience. You have any music?

Sonny walks over to the tape deck and flicks it on. Love music with a slow beat overcomes the room. A little loud, then softened. Sonny moves over to the lights, adjusts the spots. Then he lights a cigarette and sits down, putting his legs up on a table and yawns. Lydia comes out in Summer's white robe. She moves gingerly across the stage in a ballet step, then falls slightly off balance. She turns and looks at Sonny.

LYDIA

I can do that better. Just got to limber up.

The MUSIC swells and she lifts her leg high in the air. Then she turns, her large buttocks pressing through the sheer robe. She moves off the stage and begins dancing through the tables close to him. The robe comes off.

As WE PUSH IN to Sonny's face, we can see his distant look evaporate and his attention become completely focused on the girl. For an instant, it's as if Sonny is clear. No worries. Their eyes lock and he's completely in the moment.

He proffers his face she is right on top of him. We continue to PUSH IN on Sonny with the music, and the beat, and the effect of the spinning lights, until he is completely surrounded by skin.

INT. LIDO BACKSTAGE DRESSING AREA - NIGHT

Sonny walks in late with Lydia, carrying shopping bags. They poke their heads into Mr. Sophistication's dressing room.

IRWIN

Sonny, it's late.

SONNY

Lydia, I'd like you to meet Irwin Di Mugno, the one and only Mr. Sophistication, and my best friend. Irwin, this is Lydia...what is it, honey? Patterson?

LYDIA

Yeah.

SONNY

Lydia Patterson.

LYDIA

Pleased to meet you.

IRWIN

Likewise, I'm sure.

SONNY

Lydia's going to be dancing with us. She's starting tonight.

IRWIN

Yes. I know the drill. Did he get you any clothes, honey?

SONNY

We have everything.

IRWIN

Okay, darling, this is what you do. The girls change in there. Why don't you find yourself a spot and I'll come and talk to you in a minute.

SONNY

Go on, now. It's showtime. I'm late.

Lydia kisses Sonny and exits and the vamp music for the opening of the show starts playing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRWIN

Are you going to tell me about it? I hear you lost a lot of money last night.

SONNY

Too much.

IRWIN

How much?

SONNY

Doesn't matter. It's all paper.

IRWIN

Oh, Jesus. What are you going to do?

SONNY

I don't know. But I'm not borrowing money. I'm not going to go do seven more years of shit. Every Monday, coming up with the money. I break my ass in here being charming, getting people in. Glad handing tourists, oglers, freaks.

IRWIN

I know you do.

SONNY

I work too hard. It's too much.

IRWIN

Yeah, but the money. You lost it.

SONNY

I'm not paying.

With that, Sonny walks on stage right on cue.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

RAI NDROPS

SONNY

Ladies and Gentlemen, if you'll now turn your attention to the stage, Mr. Sophistication, with the help of our lovely girls, will now perform a very wet number. He will be singing a medley that is a mixture of classic and modern.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY (cont'd)

Irving Berlin meets Annie Lennox, if you will. Without stopping to explain, and without further ado, I give you the incomparable Mr. Sophistication and the Morton Salt girls.

The music starts. A rain bar has been rigged and the water sprinkles down on the stage. The medley is "Here Comes The Rain Again"/"I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm." Hey, it's the Lido. Anything goes.

Mr. Sophistication and the girls come out in rain slickers, hats, and umbrellas. The water drops down on them and glistens off their rain gear and bare behinds.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Two Cadillacs pull up in front of the club and the Ship Ahoy gang gets out. There's Joey, Buzzy, Manny, and the bouncer from the Ship Ahoy. Lagner sits in his metal chair.

LAGNER

You want valet service?

The gangsters ignore him and start to case the joint.

LAGNER

You're going to have to move those cars or you'll get a ticket.

Joey, the crazy one, moves over to the carhop.

JOEY

Is Mr. Soravilla inside?

LAGNER

Yes, sir.

JOEY

Go get him. Will you?

A bill is slipped into the kid's hand and he moves inside. The five gangsters lean against the car. They mull and look the place over.

MANNY

This place is worth a lot of money.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEY

Stuck-up, pretty, little pornographers.
With their faggy clothes and big shot
mouths.

BUZZY

Yeah. The place is in a good spot.
It's got good frontage.

MANNY

Good what?

BUZZY

Frontage. Like the front of a place.
The way it looks from the street.

MANNY

That's not frontage, you fucking moron.

JOEY

Polished nails. They snap their
fingers and laugh too quickly. They
love the sound of their own voice.
Rich, shiny, little pimps, with a
thousand broads around them if the
price is right.

BUZZY

You really want a piece of this guy,
don't you?

JOEY

Shut up. You know nothing about life.
You never read a book. I'm not like
you. You have no idea what's in my
mind. You don't have any opinions.
You just pass the days kissing your
superior's ass.

BUZZY

Kiss your own ass.

Sonny comes out and it doesn't take him a second to
recognize the Bouncer, the dark blue suits, and the bent
noses.

SONNY

Which one do I talk to?

JOEY

You talk to all of us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY

You want a drink? Want to come inside?
We can go into the back room.

JOEY

No, let's take a walk. We don't want
anyone coming over with a napkin.

SONNY

What's going on?

Joey grabs Sonny's face with one hand and slams him up
against the building, smashing his head into the wall.
Sonny's not a fighter.

Joey then takes a swing and drives his fist deep into
Sonny's mid-section. One. Two. Three. Four times.

Joey is a tall man and his angry long arms drive more and
more of the air from Sonny's body, until he drops.

Joey watches him. Sonny tries to catch his breath.

JOEY

You owe us fifty eight thousand
dollars. You know, sometimes you wake
up the next morning, you go through the
next day, it's hard to realize that you
had a bad night. We were in the
neighborhood. We thought we'd remind
you.

INT. ORBIT BAR - NIGHT

THE PROPOSAL

The men walk Sonny in and sit him at a booth. Already
seated are Mort, Johnny C., and Eddie. A WAITRESS comes
over. The men all order beer. Sonny orders coffee.

JOHNNY C.

We went to the bank today. Eddie, what
are those figures? You got those
figures?

EDDIE

We had your place appraised.

JOHNNY C.

Sonny, how you going to pay us? You
going to take a loan or what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

I just finished paying a loan. Took me seven years to pay off the place.

EDDIE

I was going to say, there's no mortgage.

SONNY

I own it outright.

MORT

You did a good job.

MANNY

Ought to get rid of that kid in front.

JOHNNY C.

You got the paper?

EDDIE

I got a Xerox.

Waitress comes over with beers.

EDDIE

Want me to give it to him?

JOHNNY C.

Give it to me.

JOEY

The place is worth shit. Tell him the place is worth shit.

JOHNNY C.

What Joey is trying to say is that the place is no collateral.

MORT

It's seasonal. I was here on a Sunday night, when business is usually down, and they were doing well, again tonight it's crowded. People coming in.

JOHNNY C.

You got the figures there?

EDDIE

A hell of an overhead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUZZY

We've been doing a lot of checking on you. You hired too many people.

MANNY

You've got to cut down. It's too expensive. You can't have too much money being spent all the time, right?

SONNY

I paid off the place. It took me seven years.

EDDIE

Original mortgage? Second? What?

JOHNNY C.

Where are you going to borrow that kind of money?

EDDIE

Fifty eight thousand including what you took out last night.

JOHNNY C.

What do you mean "took out?"

BUZZY

He cashed some chips.

SONNY

I cashed a check.

JOHNNY C.

And you came out with what?

SONNY

I had a thousand cash when I walked in. I lost that.

JOEY

Who the fuck are you looking at? I swear to God, I'm going to break your hole wide open.

They pick up the beers and drink down.

JOHNNY C.

When are you going to be able to pay us?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOEY

Maybe not now, but it's coming. Count on it.

EDDIE

The place isn't worth anything, it's no collateral.

SONNY

No place is any good unless you run it. I'm the only one that can run the place.

A beautiful GIRL walks by. The guys all gawk and call after her.

MANNY

Where are you going, baby? Come over here.

BUZZY

I swear to God, I'd fuck you so hard you'd call your own name.

MORT

Seriously, what do you make? I mean, what's the actual take out?

SONNY

I don't know what I'm supposed to do. I've got to see a guy and...

JOEY

Which guy?

MANNY

A banker guy?

JOHNNY C.

Who is it, a friend?

MORT

Wait a minute, don't rush the man.

JOEY

Get that tomato to get us another drink.

(calls out)

Hey, waitress, get your ass over here. Stupid bitch, didn't even smile when we came in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SONNY

Look, the thing is I need a couple of days.

JOEY

Shut your fucking mouth and listen. You're on vacation. You're catching a break here.

JOHNNY C.

Okay?

Sonny looks at Johnny C.

JOHNNY C.

Hey, what do you think of Chinese?

SONNY

Chinese?

JOEY

I'm going to shoot him.

JOHNNY C.

Hey, what do you think?

Johnny C. makes gesture pointing his thumb downward.

JOHNNY C.

Gooks. Yes or no?

The Waitress comes over and they order another round.

MANNY

We got this Chinese bookie who's an asshole.

BUZZY

Whatever he is.

EDDIE

Fifty eight thousand is a lot of money. We'd like to reduce the bill, discount it.

MORT

Maybe get rid of it all together.

JOHNNY C.

But you got to do something for us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JOEY

He doesn't even know where he's going to get the money.

MORT

Tell him about the Chinese.

BUZZY

Shut your mouth. Here she comes again.

The Waitress takes forever to put the drinks down. Joey purposely knocks one over.

JOEY

Go get a rag.

WAITRESS

I have a rag.

JOEY

(throws her rag away)

Well, go get another one.

(watches her leave)

You can't talk in here. People coming up to the table all the time.

JOHNNY C.

Seriously, we have this punk in Chinatown. He's an old man, his name is Lin. He loves beautiful girls but the sucker won't leave Chinatown. He won't leave his street. He's got all these young kids with the sideburns, you know? For protection. All doped up. None of them worth a shit. They're lost because they don't know what they are. If they're American, Chinese, or what. So they're resentful like the Blacks or the Mexicans. You know? They're all alike. But the Orientals, you know, like in the war? Were you in the war?

SONNY

Yeah, I was.

MORT

Where?

SONNY

Vietnam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

MORT
Then you know.

SONNY
I do know.

MANNY
Ever see any action?

SONNY
Yeah.

MORT
How much?

SONNY
A tour. I killed some people, if
that's what you want to know.

BUZZY
How?

SONNY
With an M-16.

MANNY
Infantry?

SONNY
Yes.

BUZZY
Well, then you know the Orientals.

SONNY
Yes, I do.

JOHNNY C.
That's wonderful. So you killed Gooks?

SONNY
Well, during the war.

JOHNNY C.
Oh, I know, we're not talking about
killing Japs now. We're talking about
your experience.

MANNY
Vietnamese.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

BUZZY

North Vietnamese, they weren't Japanese.

MANNY

Little tunnel digging bastards. Sneaky fucks.

JOHNNY C.

So this freaky old man, Lin, he's got eight or nine of these kids around him all the time.

SONNY

What does he do?

MORT

He's a bookmaker.

JOHNNY C.

He loves beautiful girls.

BUZZY

He's crazy about girls, big, fat girls.

MANNY

All girls. He's a pervert.

JOHNNY C.

What we need from you is this. We have a problem. You can help.

MORT

That's what we're talking about. Some way for you to reduce the debt.

SONNY

If you're asking me to kill someone the answer has got to be no. I'm a lot of things, but I'm not a fool.

JOHNNY C.

Nobody said you were a fool. Who said you were a fool? Did I say you were a fool?

SONNY

I'm a club owner. I took this place from nothing and built it into something.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

SONNY (cont'd)

I've been loan-sharked to death, tried a lot of banks, I got a good credit rating, gold credit cards, I pay my debts. I know that fifty eight thousand is a lot of money. That's why I'm here. I thought I could reduce the debt. But if it's something big, count me out. I know the score, but there's no way for me to help if it's something big.

MANNY

So what you want to do is reduce the debt, not get rid of it.

BUZZY

By how much?

JOEY

What the hell are we running? Who is telling who what here? A man loses money, he should pay.

MORT

What do you have in mind?

SONNY

I want to reduce the debt. What do you have in mind?

JOHNNY C.

Hey, we want the money. But, if you want to do us a favor? Take the girls down to Flower Street. Around Hope. That's the neighborhood that we need him to leave. Find the bookie. No doubt we want to kill him. Take the girls, he loves girls. Bring him here to your club, we'll take care of the rest.

EXT. DELANO HOTEL - BLUE DOOR RESTAURANT TERRACE - DAY

THE SEARCH

Irwin Di Mugno sits at an outside table. He's not happy. Without the protection of makeup and the night, he really shows his age. He is slugging down coffee and smoking cigarettes trying to wake up.

Sonny moves outside and joins Irwin at the table. He looks well scrubbed and freshly pressed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But the big aviator sunglasses hide the dark circles under his eyes. He motions to the WAITER, who comes over to the table.

SONNY

I'd like a cup of black coffee, please. And if you could put it in one of those thin china cups you have. Thank you. And I'm expecting three ladies. Quite good looking. Would you have someone show them to the table when they come in? Thank you.

(to Irwin)

Morning.

IRWIN

It's eleven o'clock, Sonny. Do you want to tell me what we are doing?

SONNY

We are waiting for the girls and then we are spending the day together. Are you hungry? Do you want some breakfast?

IRWIN

No. I never eat in the morning. I try not to be awake in the morning. I had company, Sonny. I'm exhausted and I'm sweating and I want to go home.

SONNY

Cheer up. Let's have some fun. We'll spend the day together. We'll make it a thing.

IRWIN

I can't dance all night, make love until dawn, and get up at eleven in the morning.

SONNY

Come on. You want a mimosa? I'll have a mimosa with you.

Jonesy is brought over by the MAITRE D', who holds the chair as she sits.

MAITRE D'

Pleasure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY

We would like some mimosas.

MAITRE D'

Of course. I'll get your waiter.

Jonesy looks smashing in her little stripper jumpsuit and heels. Sonny must have told her to dress up.

JONESY

Hi.

SONNY

How are you feeling?

JONESY

I'm a little worked. But, I'm alright.

She takes Sonny's hand.

JONESY

You're so nervous.

SONNY

I'm not nervous.

JONESY

Your hands. They're shaking.

SONNY

No, they're not. We're having mimosas. You want one?

JONESY

Yeah.

SONNY

Where are the girls?

JONESY

Lamarr just went to get them. They should be here in a minute. So, what are we doing?

SONNY

I thought we'd go to Chinatown. Look around. Have some lunch. I thought I'd look up an old friend of mine. Mr. Lin.

IRWIN

Who is Mr. Lin?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SONNY

He's a friend of mine. You don't know him.

IRWIN

Does this have anything to do with the money you lost?

SONNY

I said, we'll go down there, have some lunch. Try to look up an old friend and invite him to the club. We'll buy the girls some kimonos, noodle around, and have a good time. Jesus Christ.

Nikki and Hutch arrive at the table also "dressed to the nines" in stripperese. Sonny motions for the check.

HUTCH

Hi, guys. What's going on?

EXT. CHINATOWN - STREETS - DAY

Sonny, Irwin, and the girls walk around Chinatown. Lamarr follows in the limo.

INT. CHINESE SOUVENIR AND GIFT SHOP - DAY

Sure enough, the girls and Irwin are trying on brightly colored, silky, pajama-style outfits with Oriental stitching. Irwin wears the black. It makes him look thinner.

Sonny stands with an ORIENTAL SALESLADY and talks to them as they change.

IRWIN

What do you think?

SONNY

Terrific. Looking good.
(to saleslady)
How much for the kimonos?

SALESLADY

No kimono.

SONNY

What?

SALESLADY

No kimono. Chinese robes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

Chinese robes. Whatever. We'll take them.

SALESLADY

You see other stuff? We have lots of things. We have fans. Toys for children. Things imported. We have poster. You see the cat?

SONNY

Do I see the cat?

SALESLADY

Cat poster. Very funny. Nice. You like?

SONNY

I don't know. Ask him. Hey, Irwin, you want a cat poster?

IRWIN

I'll be right there.

SONNY

Yeah. I want you to take a look at the cat poster. Say, is Mr. Lin here? Is Mr. Lin around? I'm looking for Mr. Lin.

The woman's expression barely changes.

SALESLADY

No English. You talk to sister.

The woman scurries away and we hear her speaking in Chinese. The word "Lin" rings out clearly a few times. ANOTHER ORIENTAL SALESLADY comes over. Her English is better.

SALESLADY #2

May I help you?

SONNY

Yeah. We're buying a bunch of stuff here, but I am also looking for a Mr. Lin. I'm wondering if you could tell me how I could find him?

SALESLADY #2

Lin?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY
Could be Ling?

The saleslady just looks at him.

SONNY
Lin? Ling? Anything? I'm just
looking for the guy.

SALESLADY #2
Sorry.

INT. IMPERIAL PALACE RESTAURANT - DAY

Sonny, Irwin, and the girls sit at a table with delicate little food in silver dishes. A small man in an expensive dark suit comes to the table. He is the OWNER.

OWNER
Everything alright?

SONNY
Yeah. Uh, listen, I was looking for an
old friend of mine. Mr. Lin.

OWNER
Mr. Lin?

SONNY
Without a G, I think. Mr. Lin. You
see these girls? We're out looking for
a good time. I thought I'd introduce
them to Mr. Lin, because these girls
really like to party. You know?

Irwin and the girls look at Sonny, responding to his crude behavior.

SONNY
I don't know if you know Mr. Lin or
not, but ask around. Let me give you
my card. It's very important that I
talk with him. We're old friends.

The owner, confused, takes the card.

SONNY
That's me. Sonny Soravilla. And the
Lido is my club. Tell Mr. Lin to come
on down. Everything complimentary. On
me. Tell him there's lots of girls
down there I want to introduce him to.

INT. SHANGHAI BAR - DAY

Happy hour. Cocktails. Drinks made out of pineapples. Stingers. Scorpions. Zombies. Irwin is brainstorming with the girls about a Chinese number for the club. Sonny moves away from the table and over to the BARTENDER.

SONNY

Hey, you don't know where a guy can place a bet around here, do you? No English? Betty betty?

The bartender shakes his head.

BARTENDER

No.

SONNY

You no lucky lucky?

BARTENDER

No.

SONNY

Look. I was supposed to meet a friend of mine, Mr. Lin, down here. I can't seem to find him. Because these girls are ready to get crazy. You don't know where to get any drugs, do you? You don't understand anything I'm saying. Do you?

He makes hand motions of drug taking.

SONNY

Sniffy sniff? Forget it.

AT THE TABLE

Sonny returns.

IRWIN

Sonny, what are we doing? Enough food and enough drink. Let's do something.

NIKKI

I want to see a movie. I want to see a kung-fu movie.

IRWIN

You're acting very strange.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

Never mind. Let me pay the bill and we'll get out of here.

Sonny moves back to the bar and hands the bartender his card.

SONNY

I don't know if you understand one word I'm saying because you haven't responded. But if you find out anything, make sure you have Mr. Lin call. Here's the number in the limo. The driver will deliver a message. Remember. Mr. Lin. Lin. You could understand me if you wanted to.

BARTENDER

Lin.

SONNY

That's right.

He peels off a few twenties and puts them in the bartender's hand.

BARTENDER

Lin.

SONNY

Lin.

INT. CHINATOWN - MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

Sonny, Irwin, and the girls sit in the empty matinee house. The girls eat popcorn and ice cream bars. Irwin is asleep.

ON THE SCREEN plays a Chinese adventure picture. Women and men flying, as they fight with magic swords. The hero being tortured. Tortured and tortured until he slowly dies. Sonny feels uniquely sympathetic to his plight.

SONNY

Jesus Christ.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Buzzy and Manny wait outside the club. They look up and down the street. They check the cars as they pass. They smoke their cigarettes impatiently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The headlights of the blue stretch appear and Lamarr swings it around back to the rear entrance.

Sonny, Irwin, and the girls are in a very up mood, as they tumble out of the limo and into the club.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

The girls are in the intermission cages working the customers. The Lido is open for business, but showtime is not until eight.

Irwin and the girls hustle to the dressing room area to get ready. Sonny calls after them.

SONNY

Let's go, girls. It's a quarter 'til. You've got ten minutes. Don't forget to tell the other girls about the new Chinese number. And set a rehearsal time.

Suddenly, Sonny is intercepted by a tall man who towers over him. He looks up to find Joey, who stands there blocking his path.

JOEY

Hello, Sonny. What's the story?

SONNY

Can I talk to you in a minute? We're very late.

Another hood moves up behind Sonny and takes his arm.

JOEY

Step outside.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Buzzy and Manny flank Sonny and the hood, and walk him across the wide street. Joey takes care of Lagner at the door and trails.

The traffic is thick along the boulevard. The cars hit their brakes and horns sound as Sonny is marched to the waiting Sedan De Ville.

INT. GANGSTER'S CAR - NIGHT

THE ULTIMATUM

The door opens and Sonny gets pushed in. Behind the wheel is the bouncer from the Ship Ahoy, and Eddie the Accountant is in the passenger seat. Behind them in the back seat are Johnny C. and Mort. The other goons wait around outside of the car.

EDDIE

I better get out. If there's trouble out there, I can handle it without going crazy.

The Accountant gets out of the car and Sonny is left with the bouncer in the front seat. There is some quiet.

JOHNNY C.

What happened? Did you find the Chinaman?

SONNY

I went down there.

MORT

But you didn't find him?

SONNY

No.

BOUNCER

He looked but he didn't find.

JOHNNY C.

You took the girls?

SONNY

The girls came with me.

MORT

But you had no luck.

JOHNNY C.

Maybe they recognized you.

SONNY

From where? Who recognized?

John's luck couldn't last forever. He finally said something stupid. Everyone looks at each other and there is more silence. Mort takes over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORT
Get Joey in here, next to him.

SONNY
What's the matter?

MORT
You didn't do the job.

SONNY
I couldn't.

MORT
Your collateral is worth shit. You've
got to do the job.

Joey gets in next to Sonny, crowding him. Sonny checks him out. Manny replaces the driver and Buzzy sits in the back.

MORT
You want to do us something for our
money, don't you? You want us to
reduce the debt, right?

SONNY
Yes.

MORT
But you'd rather lose the debt?

SONNY
Yes, I would.

JOHNNY C.
Then you want to do it.

SONNY
Do what?

Mort gets hot. He grabs Sonny's face.

MORT
Don't you get cute with me, you little
cocksucker. You don't have the money.
You didn't do the job.

MANNY
This is not our problem. This is your
problem.

BUZZY
Big problem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MORT

And this is the end of it. No more fucking around. Now, something very bad is going to happen. Right now. Right now, if we don't get some satisfaction. So, what do you want to do?

SONNY

I don't know.

MORT

That's right. You don't know. You don't know shit. You have no idea how completely fucked you are if you don't start giving me the right answers.

JOHNNY C.

He doesn't want to cooperate. Fuck him. Let Joey take care of this and let's go.

SONNY

No.

MANNY

No, what?

SONNY

Just give me some time.

JOEY

You have no time.

SONNY

Just wait.

JOHNNY C.

Fuck you. Joey, take him out and shoot him.

SONNY

Alright. Alright. Okay.

MORT

Okay, what?

Sonny doesn't respond.

MORT

I'm going to ask you one last time. Do you want to do it or not?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

There is a pause.

SONNY
I want to do it.

JOHNNY C.
You want to find the Chinese bookie?

SONNY
Yeah.

MORT
Give it to him.

Manny gives Sonny a heavy, small brown paper bag.

MORT
(leaning over seat)
Take it out.

JOHNNY C.
Check the bullets. Don't forget the
bullets.

Sonny takes a piece from the bag. It's a blued snub nosed
'38. Joey hands him a box of bullets.

MANNY
You know how to load it?

JOHNNY C.
Show him about the safety.

BUZZY
It's on safe.

MORT
We borrowed a car. It's behind us.
That's what you'll use.

MANNY
It was just taken, so there won't be an
alert out on it for an hour or two.

MORT
Take a look at it. So you know what
you're driving.

Sonny turns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MANNY

It's a Mazda. An automatic. The car is running on wires. No key, so don't stall it.

Buzzy bends over with a flashlight on a map. It's a bright pencil type light.

BUZZY

Here it is. 535 Owens. Get on the interstate until Manning North. You can only go one way. You know it?

SONNY

No.

BUZZY

Don't matter. It's all on the map. Turn left on 23rd. Make the first right. On Hampton, okay?

JOEY

Say you hear him, asshole.

SONNY

I hear.

BUZZY

Go to the end of the street, veer left, and you're on Owens.

MORT

But park the car where it's marked. Walk seven blocks. It's on the map. You're on Hampton and you walk to Owens. It's all marked.

MANNY

Here's the key. We had it checked. It works.

BUZZY

For the back stairs only.

MORT

He has dogs. Three of them. You need to stop at some joint and buy meat.

JOHNNY C.

He could buy twelve hamburgers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MORT

Lin goes to bed at nine, he's an old man. Am I right? Am I right? Am I right?

BUZZY

Yeah, boss. He retires at nine.

MANNY

We checked that out.

MORT

He's an old man. He sleeps alone. There's an A-frame house in front of the big place. He has guards living there.

SONNY

He has guards living in the A-frame.

MANNY

And somebody is always outside on watch. Sometimes two. They are quick and quiet.

JOHNNY C.

There are lights and trip wires, aren't there?

MANNY

They won't be a problem. They're only in the back of the driveway.

MORT

Take a cab back.

MANNY

Throw the gun away.

SONNY

Wait a minute.

BUZZY

No time.

MORT

Use the light. Study the map.

SONNY

What am I supposed to do again?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JOEY

Kill him.

JOHNNY C.

No one is throwing fifty eight thousand dollars away. What you're doing will take a lot of heat off of us.

MANNY

Don't forget to turn on the headlights and drive at a normal rate of speed.

BUZZY

Don't feed the dogs unless you have to.

MORT

Once you ditch the stolen car, don't go back to it. And don't take a cab in the neighborhood.

MANNY

You ought to start now. The earlier you grab him, the better.

MORT

Too late is too quiet.

MANNY

You'll have trouble with the back door. It hasn't been opened for a long time. Here's a piece of soap. Rub the key.

MORT

You understand?

SONNY

Yeah.

MORT

Okay, get the Accountant.

Buzzy, in the back, jumps out.

MANNY

Let me check the gun again.

Joey removes the bullets, clicks it off, aimed low at Sonny. It's pin clicks. And again and again.

MANNY

Okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

MORT

Re-load that goddamned thing and let's
get the hell out of here.

JOHNNY C.

Give me the paper.

The Accountant pulls out the chit and the contracts.

JOHNNY C.

Give them to the sap.

EDDIE

Mr. Soravilla, you want to check these
over?

MANNY

Tear them up if you want.

BUZZY

We should get out of here. We're
parked in a loading zone.

JOHNNY C.

Tear up the debt. Tear up the debt.

Sonny reads the documents in his hands.

MANNY

Here's the gun. All set. The little
book, with all the steps. The soap.
The key.

JOHNNY C.

Tear up the shitting debt!

Sonny, startled, looks up and then tears up the paper.

EDDIE

The car is running.

MORT

You'll be all right.

BUZZY

Piece of cake.

Sonny takes the bag and the rest and gets out of the Caddy.
He moves to the Mazda and drives off.

MORT

Just another funeral.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

A car drives by. In it we see Reitz, he HONKS and the men wave.

JOEY

It's wonderful when a man goes to die so easily. I understand now why you didn't want me to do it.

MORT

That wasn't the point. We want him dead, but everyone knows it. And Lin is well liked and we don't need this thing coming back to us. Somebody's going to say we stiffed this guy Soravilla at the tables. Law suits, lawyers, business managers.

EDDIE

It's better to stay clean.

JOHNNY C.

You're right, why take a chance. There's going to be some fallout. We don't need any fingers pointing at us.

MANNY

It's genius. That fucking bozo is never going to make it.

BUZZY

Yeah. And better if there's a body.

MORT

I got a bad reputation and I don't like it. The point is I'm not going to collect fifty eight thousand dollars from that hobo. I'd rather have his club.

MORT

How much you think the place is worth?

EDDIE

The signs alone are worth a fortune.

MANNY

This is a good business.

MORT

What's the frontage here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

EDDIE

Including the building, the structure, the materials. We had it appraised. We don't have all the totals, but it's got to be a few hundred thousand.

MORT

Good. I forget how easy this always is. It's amazing, people are so weak. Now, let's go across the street and check out our new investment.

The men move across the street.

BUZZY

I told you about frontage.

MANNY

You didn't say it like that.

BUZZY

Your ass.

MANNY

All I'm saying is don't use words you don't know. Makes you look stupid.

BUZZY

Your balls are stupid.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

The gangsters enter the club and look around.

MORT

Count the house.

Mort and the boys move past the tables and through to the back stage area into the dressing room. They walk around like they own the place. They appraise the merchandise. In the dressing rooms, several girls are sitting, smoking. The men look.

MORT

Good business.

EXT. MIAMI HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Mazda speeds along the Florida highway.

INT. MAZDA - NIGHT

The lights fly by as Sonny drives the beat up sedan. The strange orange hue of the lights intermittently illuminates Sonny's skin. He checks the map, holding it up. His face is strangely calm, his movements smooth.

EXT. ASTRO BURGER - NIGHT

The grey Mazda pulls into the lot. Sonny gets out, leaving the engine running.

INT. ASTRO BURGER - NIGHT

Sonny walks up to the counter. A KID in a blue polyester uniform takes his order.

SONNY

Twelve Astro Burgers, please.

KID

Boy. Hungry, huh? How would you like those?

SONNY

What?

KID

You can build your own burger.
Lettuce, tomato, onion?

SONNY

I don't care about any of that. Plain is fine.

KID

Plain?

SONNY

Plain.

KID

Cheese?

SONNY

No.

KID

We have American, Jack, or Cheddar.
It's awfully good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

Nothing. Just bread and meat. That's what I want. Thank you.

Sonny moves to a pay phone while the burgers are being prepared. He stuffs quarters into the slot and dials.

SONNY

Who is this? Red? How's it going? Well, who's on stage? Peaches and Summer? Yeah? Why are only two girls on stage? Where's Irwin? He just came up. Alright. Well, what's he singing? But how can that be? How can that be the song with only two girls on stage? Red? Hello? Oh, Jerry? Jerry, I can't understand Red. Who's on stage now? The short girl, Summer? Right. The tall girl, Peaches? Yeah, and what number is it? Is it the "Cats" number? Is it the "Cats" number for Christsake? You've been at the place seven years and you don't know what the "Cats" number is? Well, are the girls in kitty costumes? You don't know. Well, what is Irwin singing? Is it "Memories"?

(sings)

"Memories. All alone in the moonlight. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. She is smiling alone." Uh, huh. Alright, I don't know what anybody's doing, but I'll be in soon.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

The Mazda turns onto a residential street, and then into another before parking.

INT. MAZDA - NIGHT

Sonny pulls the ignition wires apart, killing the engine. It is very quiet. The only sound is the pounding of Sonny's heart in his ears. He checks the map one last time. He double checks the gun. Loaded. He stuffs the map and the gun in his coat pocket. He takes a rag out of the back and quickly wipes off the steering wheel and door handles, everything, before getting out and slamming the door.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Sonny pulls up the collar of his jacket as he moves up the street. He moves in and out of illumination as he passes under the street lamps.

All the time Sonny seems strangely cool. It's hard to believe that he would kill. And that this crazy mission will come to pass.

EXT. LIN'S A FRAME HOUSE - NIGHT

Lin's place is at the focal point of a three way intersection. The house is lit up and sits behind a six foot high cement wall. The guards' quarters are upstairs, and at the front, by the gate, and CHINESE FACES walk back and forth, occasionally looking out of windows facing onto the street.

There are tennis courts to the left and behind them water. There is movement in this area as well as the sound of Chinese voices. To the right is a high tree lined wall. And in the back, rising high is a great colored bright structure of a home.

EXT. OWENS STREET - NIGHT

Sonny stands in the darkness, directly across the street. He watches the house.

INT. GUARDS' QUARTERS

All of Lin's security are young with the tight pants and the pointy zip up boots and automatic weaponry. All Oriental and all with fresh, uncompromising faces. Some move in and out of the room as it is connected to a set of stairs that lead down to the driveway. On a wall, four monitors flick different images of various locations around the grounds.

There is one guard, KAI, who seems to be in charge. His eyes never leave the monitors. His demeanor is all business.

EXT. OWENS STREET - NIGHT

Sonny waits. His face is like stone. He watches until the time is right and then makes his move. He moves quickly, cutting diagonally across the street and along the tree lined wall. As he walks, from over the wall WE HEAR the sounds of dogs. Big dogs. Growling and snapping. Sonny keeps moving past the house and the dogs grow quiet.

INT. GUARDS' QUARTERS - NIGHT

Kai hears the dogs, flicks the switch to get the right picture on the monitor. Nothing out of the ordinary. The dogs disperse.

EXT. HILLGARD STREET - NIGHT

Sonny keeps walking until he rounds the corner. His heart is really going now. He takes a minute for his breathing to regulate and then he moves back, along the wall toward the house.

As he passes the big tree he reaches into the bag and throws handful after handful of hamburgers over the wall.

EXT. LIN HOUSE - NIGHT

WE SEE twelve hamburgers hit the ground and three large CHINESE KENNEL DOGS start devouring them.

OUTSIDE THE WALL

Sonny scales the wall and hops over.

INSIDE THE WALL

He jumps down and lands next to the dogs. They stare at him, but keep on eating. Sonny starts walking slowly across the large grassy area toward the house. The dogs do not move forward. They do not attack.

Sonny reaches the gate at the bottom of the back stairs. He silently shuts the gate behind him.

INT. GUARDS' QUARTERS - NIGHT

Kai has missed Sonny's break in, but still he doesn't like what he sees. The dogs are acting strange. He dispatches two of the guards to go down and check it out.

EXT. LIN HOUSE - NIGHT

Sonny moves slowly up the stairs. He freezes when he hears the guards in the yard. The guards look around, cue their walkies, and communicate in Chinese. Shanghai, we have a problem. They start to look around.

He moves up the stairs and one of the planks makes a loud creak. The guards react and cue their walkies once again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kai's voice is shrill, as it barks out orders over the intercom. The guards fan out, their flashlights and assault rifles at the ready. Sonny moves up the rest of the stairs, but more guards arrive in the yard. He puts the key in the lock and tries to turn it. Click. Click. No go.

One of the guards moves toward the back stairs, directly toward Sonny. He shines his flashlight directly where Sonny is, but...

GUARDS POV

Sonny is not there.

WE SEE Sonny lying on the platform until the light sweeps quickly by. He then gets up quickly, fumbles with the soap, rubs the key, and turns the lock. The door opens and Sonny is inside.

INT. LIN HOUSE - NIGHT

Sonny moves through the darkness into a corridor that is silhouetted by light. Chinese music and sounds of muted conversations from downstairs are heard as he moves down the hallway. Sonny pulls his gun and pushes the upstairs doors open as he passes.

The last door is Lin's bedroom. Sonny swings the door open. The lights are on but the bedroom is empty. The bathroom door is open. There is the sound of running water. Sonny moves to the bathroom and enters.

There in a sauna bath is LIN. He is an old man, nude in the swirling water. With him is a young Oriental woman. A NUBILE who washes him. Lin calmly looks up to see the cause of this intrusion.

THE KILL

Sonny raises the '38 and fires twice. Lin is hit twice and most surely dead. And then all hell breaks loose. The nubile is covered in blood and screaming.

Guards rush up the stairs. An alarm goes off around the grounds. Sonny rushes out of the bedroom and turns down the corridor. But the corridor is unrecognizable. He's gone the wrong way. Footsteps are heard. Closer and closer. And voices screaming in Chinese. Sonny opens a door, enters a bedroom, and finds a window. He opens it and drops twenty feet to the ground below.

EXT. LIN HOUSE - NIGHT

Sonny falls on the lawn. He picks himself up and sees the dogs running toward him and barking. But the wall is close and Sonny takes off. The guards see him running and open fire. Sonny sprints to the wall and hurdles it. The dogs bark and continue to snap even after Sonny is gone.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - NIGHT

Sonny runs down the empty street.

EXT. LIN HOUSE - NIGHT

The front gate opens and two cars full of guards peel out of the driveway. They tear down the streets looking for the murderer.

Sonny stands in the shadows behind a tree. The Chinese car passes and he sprints down an incline toward Manning Boulevard.

EXT. MANNING BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Sonny sprints down the incline. A bus. It's moving to a stop, going in the wrong direction. Sonny runs to the bus bench and waits for it to come.

SONNY

Come on. Come on.

Sonny notices the gun still in his hand and sticks it in his pocket.

The bus doors open and Sonny gets on.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Sonny breathes heavily. The other passengers look at him and he turns away and averts their eyes. The lights of the city pass by as we get further and further from the crime scene. WE SEE Sonny's face as he stares out the bus window into the night.

SONNY'S POV

The cars. The streets. The foot traffic. People doing their thing. On this, a night just like any other night.

Sonny's face registers as he sees a line of taxis in front of a hotel. He jumps up, pulls the cord, signalling to get off.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Sonny exits the bus, runs for the cab, and gets off.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Sonny sits back.

SONNY

I want to see a show. Take me to Miami
Beach. I want to go to the Strip.

The car takes off. Sonny checks the rear window. Nobody is following. He's done it. Free and clear.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

The yellow cab pulls up and Sonny gets out. He is shaken, but still in control. He gathers himself and enters the club quickly.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny rushes in. He moves past Jerry at the door and looks around. The place is packed and everything is running smoothly.

But for Sonny, everything seems different. He is disoriented. People's motions are too sudden. Sounds are too loud. He is totally out of sync. His eyes dart around. He is suspicious of everyone.

He moves backstage to the dressing areas.

INT. LIDO BACKSTAGE DRESSING AREA - NIGHT

Sonny moves through to take a look at the girls. They all greet him enthusiastically, hug him, kiss him, but he's not there. He smiles, excuses himself and moves over to Irwin's room.

INT. LIDO - IRWIN'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Irwin's clothes are off. He is changing out of the Western outfit. He is pulling off his boots and looks up when Sonny opens the door.

IRWIN

Oh, hi, Sonny.

SONNY

Everything alright?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IRWIN

Fine.

SONNY

Nothing out of the ordinary?

IRWIN

No, some of the caps didn't go off, but that's normal. I just kept pulling the trigger.

SONNY

What does that supposed to mean?

IRWIN

Nothing. Everything is going fine. Stop worrying. It's a good house. Are you alright?

SONNY

Yeah.

IRWIN

Where have you been?

SONNY

Something to do. Never mind.

IRWIN

Alright, Sonny. I love you, but leave me alone. I've got to get ready.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny moves back into the club and sits down at the bar. Red sets down his Grand Marnier in front of him, but Sonny doesn't touch it.

In the deepest part of his mind or soul or whatever it is, Sonny is alone. He walks and talks like Sonny, but the feel of his body is alien to him. The heart is not his. He has gone from the child to the adult and there is no turning back. All the innocence of his previous years seem distant and without recollection of their details, and sudden insightful flashes of doom wall up his mind.

The vamp music for the Rio number has started. Time for Sonny to announce the act. Sonny cannot move. He turns to see the gangsters across the club. Joey, Buzzy, Manny. They act very friendly as they acknowledge him. Sonny tries to squeeze a smile, but it doesn't work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Manny shrugs conspiratorially, as if to say, "What happened?" Joey indicates for Sonny to move outside so they can talk. Sonny looks down. His jacket is soaked on one side. The red from the blood does not read against the black of his tuxedo.

RED

Boss.

Sonny shakes his head trying to rid himself of the cobwebs. He looks back at the goons. They're smiling, but the smiles are crooked. It's all wrong. A woman's face strikes him. A waitress moves with too much effort. Everything is wrong. It's all in SLOW MOTION or STOP MOTION or STEP FRAMED or some fucking thing.

RED

Sonny. Hey, Boss. You better get up there.

Sonny moves unsteadily to the stage and takes the mike.

THE LAST TIME

SONNY

I love this place. Goddamnit, I love this place. It's the damndest thing.

There is a long pause. The vamp music continues to play.

SONNY

Before we start our next number, I'd like to do something special. I'd like to bring out one of the greatest performers who has ever graced a stage. Irwin, could you come out here please? I want you to take a bow. Irwin.

Irwin, standing in the wings is at first startled, and a bit put out, especially with the "Irwin" thing. He then relents and comes out onto the stage and into the lights.

SONNY

Brought to you directly from a ten year engagement from the world famous Casino de Grande in Paris. The one, the only, the incomparable, Mr. Sophistication.

Mr. Sophistication takes a bow and the audience cheers. This is his moment and Irwin eats it up. His face breaks into a huge smile and his eyes mist up dramatically.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He holds his hands out graciously to the audience as the cheering gets louder. Sonny sticks the microphone under his arm and claps with all his might.

SONNY

Bravo!

The audience really whoops it up. Irwin takes another bow and blows kisses to the crowd.

IRWIN

Thank you. Thank you all. Alright,
Sonny. Enough.

SONNY

And now for the girls. The most
beautiful women on earth. My babies.
Jonesy, come on out here, sweetheart.
Nikki, you too. Come on, Summer,
Lydia, Hutch, Peaches.

One by one the girls come out and take seductive bows until all the girls are on stage. The audience goes nuts.

SONNY

Bravo!

WE SEE a wide shot of everyone on the stage. Pandemonium.
The house. The lights. The music. The wild applause.
Now, that's entertainment.

The performers finally wave to the audience and exit the stage.

SONNY

Alright, everyone. Enough of that.
We've got a show to do. So, without
further ado, Ladies and Gentlemen, I
give you Rio.

Sonny walks offstage and the Rio number begins. Sonny moves through the club. He is greeted in an overly warm fashion by Joey, Manny, and Buzzy.

JOEY

Fabulous place.

SONNY

Thanks.

JOEY

Girls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SONNY

Yeah.

JOEY

Just like home.

Joey embraces him, leans in, and whispers in Sonny's ear.

JOEY

Let's take a walk.

The gangsters grab him by the arm and march him outside.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

REDEMPTION

The Cadillacs are parked around the corner in the side parking lot. Joey and the boys walk Sonny at a quick pace.

MANNY

What happened?

SONNY

He's dead.

BUZZY

The Chinaman's dead?

JOEY

Keep your fucking voice down.

SONNY

Relax, boys. Everything is fine.

The four men pass Lagner, who sits on the metal folding chair outside the club. Lagner calls to Sonny as they pass him.

LAGNER

Hey, Boss. Jerry's been giving me a bunch of shit while you were gone. That guy is on drugs. You've got to keep him away from me.

SONNY

Alright, Billy. I'll talk to you in a minute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAGNER

All I'm saying is you're my boss and that guy's a dick.

The hoods pull Sonny around the corner.

SONNY

What's the deal?

JOEY

Shut your mouth. I didn't like you before. I don't like you now. I don't like the way you talk.

SONNY

Sorry.

JOEY

You ever read the Bible?

SONNY

No.

JOEY

You should.

SONNY

Alright.

JOEY

Alright, what?

SONNY

If I get a chance, I will.

BUZZY

Just get in the car, shmucko.

Joey takes his head and shoves him in the green De Ville. Sonny looks around the inside of the crowded car. He doesn't understand the silence. He doesn't understand the impassive faces or the hostility. For some crazy reason he thinks he is now one of them.

Finally, Mort speaks.

MORT

Tell me about it.

SONNY

He's dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MORT

The bookie is dead.

SONNY

Yes.

BUZZY

Bullshit.

JOHNNY C.

You're sure?

SONNY

Well, yeah. He's got to be. I don't see how he could be anything else.

BUZZY

What does that mean?

MANNY

You've got to be certain.

JOHNNY C.

Hundred fucking percent positive.

SONNY

I hit him twice. Once in the chest and once in the face.

MORT

Alright, Sonny. Slow down. We'll get to that. Start from the beginning and tell me what happened.

SONNY

Alright. I did what you told me. I followed the plan. The map was fine.

JOHNNY C.

What do you mean the map was fine?

MORT

Let him talk.

JOEY

This fucking guy is a liar. Look at him.

SONNY

I would like a cigarette. Does anyone have a cigarette I can borrow?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A cigarette is passed to him. Sonny inhales.

SONNY
I got the meat.

JOHNNY C.
You got the meat?

BUZZY
What meat?

SONNY
I stopped at the Astro Burger on
Hayworth.

MANNY
That's a cop hangout.

BUZZY
Why Astro Burger?

JOHNNY C.
Probably was followed.

MANNY
This fucking guy is a cheese eater.

JOEY
Why the fuck do you stop at a cop
joint?

MORT
Go on.

JOEY
If you ever open your mouth to involve
us in any way, I'll stuff your mouth
with shit. You get my meaning? Answer
me.

SONNY
I do. Yes.

JOHNNY C.
Oh, this is bad. This guy's an idiot.

MANNY
Genuine creep.

BUZZY
He stops at Astro Burger.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MORT

Everybody needs to shut their fucking holes right now or I'm going to get angry. I'm not interested in any of your fucking opinions. I'm talking to Sonny and it's important. So put a fucking sock in it.

SONNY

I bought twelve hamburgers. Plain. I drove to the spot on the map where I was supposed to park. I wasn't followed. I wiped the car down.

MORT

Good.

SONNY

Fed the dogs. Got past the guards.

JOHNNY C.

How?

MORT

Hey, I told you about shutting.

JOHNNY C.

Sorry.

SONNY

I went up the stairs. Used the soap on the key to get in.

Sonny stops. Something flashes on his face and he cannot speak for the moment. An image he's just seen and heard in his mind.

The gangsters look at each other, but Mort holds up his finger. Finally, Sonny regains himself.

SONNY

I walked through the upstairs according to the plan.

Another pause. Sonny moves his mouth, but nothing comes out. Eddie the Accountant taps on the window.

MORT

Tell that guy to wait his cunt.

Sonny re-experiences the night's events right before our very eyes. Flashes. The old man's death. The shooting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

The blood. And his acceptance of the responsibility. A cloak of guilt that wraps around Sonny that presses hard on his chest with anxiety. Sonny becomes emotional and has difficulty breathing.

MORT

Come on, Sonny. Spit it out.

SONNY

It was very simple. He was taking a bath. There was a girl.

MORT

Then?

SONNY

I shot the gun. Twice.

MANNY

Only twice?

BUZZY

Why twice?

SONNY

I don't know. To be sure.

MANNY

Oh, look. I think he's going to cry.

MORT

Manny.

MANNY

I swear to God.

Mort taps on the window to speak to Eddie.

MORT

Give me those papers.

(to Sonny)

And then?

SONNY

I ran out of the room.

MORT

And then you ran. You got away. The rest is history. Alright. Let's not get too broken hearted weepy weepy about this. I'm beginning to feel like a half a fag here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

SONNY

Sorry.

MORT

Somebody roll down the windows. Let's get some air. Too many people in this fucking car. I can't breathe.

SONNY

That's what happened. I'm telling you.

MORT

I believe you, Sonny. We already heard, anyway. I just wanted to hear it from you. Give him the papers.

A number of documents are handed to Sonny. He looks down at them.

SONNY

What's this?

MORT

It's simple. We want your club.

Sonny is dumbfounded.

SONNY

But...

JOEY

But nothing, you little faggot. This is the end of the fucking line. Sign the contract or stop breathing.

MORT

Sonny, it's a good place. It's worth something to us. You owe us.

SONNY

But I did what you asked. We're square.

JOEY

We're square for shit. We're never going to be square. You lost a lot of money. And fucked around and you tried to stiff us and now we own you. Do what you're told. You get no explanations. The club. We like it. We own it. Fuck you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

JOEY (cont'd)

This contract signs you and the Lido over to us for life. Now, sign the motherfucker.

EDDIE

You can run the place. You'll be paid out of the net.

JOEY

A salary.

SONNY

A salary.

EDDIE

We'll take care of the books. You'll talk to us on Monday's.

JOEY

Every Monday.

EDDIE

We don't want to change management.

Sonny is stunned.

JOEY

This is good the way you look right now. You lost that smug little prick shit, didn't you? I'm really enjoying this.

MORT

We're not asking your permission. Sign it so we can get out of here. We'll be in touch.

There is a flurry of movement and a flash of metal as Sonny points his arm and suddenly the '38 snub nosed is stuck right in Mort's face.

SONNY

Go fuck yourself.

The gangsters go to make a move, but Mort stops them. Sonny's got the drop on him.

SONNY

The first person I'm shooting is you. I'm shooting you first.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

MORT

Alright. Sonny's right. He's right.
Everyone just relax. Nobody do
nothing. Sonny's right.

Sonny grabs the door handle, opens the door, and is out of
the car. All the time he keeps pointing the weapon at
Mort's head.

SONNY

Fuck you. Fuck you.

JOHNNY C.

Didn't anybody pat this ass down?

SONNY

You're not taking my club. You're not
taking it. This is my home. I did
everything for you guys. I did
everything. I held up my end. And now
it's over. I'm through with you pieces
of shit.

MORT

Sonny, you don't want to do this.
(to Johnny C. behind the wheel)
Start the car.

MANNY

We should talk.

JOHNNY C.

We didn't know you felt this way about
it.

BUZZY

There's no bullets in that gun, Boss.
You can see the empty chambers.

SONNY

You want to try me? You want to try
me, you fucking cowards?

JOHNNY C.

Think about what you're doing.

MANNY

Nothing good can come out of this.

MORT

We can do this later. Alright? Sonny.
Just calm down.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

MORT (cont'd)
(to Johnny C. in the driver's
seat)
Drive.

SONNY
Fuck you. Stay the fuck away from me.
Stay away from my place.

MORT
Alright, Sonny. Take it easy. I said,
drive the fucking car.

The car starts and Johnny puts it in gear.

SONNY
That's right. Move your asses. If I
ever see you around here again, any of
you. I swear to God, I'll kill you.

MORT
You're a little too excited right now.
There will be plenty of time to talk
about this later.

JOEY
Yeah, you'll come to your senses real
soon.

SONNY
Try me. I'd love it.

JOEY
What? You think this is over? This
ain't over. Be seeing you around,
Sonny.

The window rolls up and the car starts to take off. Sonny
keeps pointing the gun and follows the Caddy into the
street as it makes a big wide turn onto the Boulevard.

Sonny stands in the middle of the strip waving his gun and
screaming like a maniac.

SONNY
What's the matter? You scared of me,
you little cowards? You fucking pimps?
Any time, babies. Any time.

Sonny stands in the middle of the busy Boulevard. The
traffic on the strip slows in both directions, as Sonny is
caught up in the moment. His shirt is now soaked red with
blood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (10)

People gawk and shout at him as they swerve to avoid him, but no one seems to notice or care about the gun he brandishes.

The moment seems overly extended. Almost frozen in time. The image in front of us is what Sonny has become. His contorted face is shrouded in neon and the white hot light of the passing headlights. He's been pushed and twisted and bullied.

And now, there he is. A man in a tuxedo, standing in the middle of the street, venting his broken frustration.

Sonny reacts to the sound of a loud, blaring HORN behind him and snaps out of it.

He ducks out of traffic and onto the sidewalk. He walks the half block back to the front of the club and opens the door to check with Jerry.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny pokes his head in.

SONNY

How we doing?

JERRY

How we doing? Look.

Sonny looks around his club. It is packed. Mr. Sophistication and the girls are in the middle of the Paris number. The crowd is laughing and cheering. The drinks are moving and the place is hopping. A car horn is heard.

Sonny turns to find a car waiting to be valeted. Once again, no Lagner.

SONNY

Where's Billy?

JERRY

I haven't seen him. And remind me to talk to you about that kid.

Sonny moves outside.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny walks over to the car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SONNY

Leave the keys in it. I'll take care of it. Are you here for the show? Come on inside. We're full, but talk to Jerry. He'll find you a table. It's not a stick, is it?

The patrons move inside and Sonny is left to park the car himself. He pulls it into a spot in the parking lot.

He walks back to the front of the club, holding his side. He stops and looks up at the front of the building. The place needs paint.

He pulls a pack of cigarettes from his pocket. They're soaked with blood. He finds the driest one and his red hands light it.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny moves inside and looks around. Everything fine. Nothing to do. Sonny stands against the back wall and smokes his cigarette. Mr. Sophistication and the girls are in the middle of the Paris number. Sonny watches the show. The images on stage become slow and beautiful and surreal.

WE PUSH IN on Sonny's face. He loves this number. He watches with great satisfaction until a look of acute pain flashes on his face. He puts his hand on the wall to steady himself. Then, with some difficulty, he moves outside.

EXT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

Sonny walks out and steadies himself. He opens his coat and examines his wound. He's bleeding too much. There's guts and fluid and flesh. It's bad. He staggers over to Lagner's chair and collapses into it.

THE END

His pallor is poor. His breathing becomes short. On the other side of the street, a familiar Cadillac has pulled over and catches Sonny's attention. Joey, Buzzy, and Manny sit in the Caddy, eyeballing him.

Sonny stares back at them, facing them off. He reaches into his pocket to fumble for his gun. But the goons just shake their heads and laugh at him, before taking off. They'll be back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sonny leans his head back against the wall. He needs to rest. He needs to rest. His breaths become very shallow. There won't be many more. His eyes glass over. He blinks once. Twice. Three times.

INT. LIDO BURLESQUE AND CABARET - NIGHT

WE SEE the club in all it's glory. Mr. Sophistication and the girls perform with all the grace and beauty of any opera or ballet.

SONNY V.O.

Welcome to the World Famous Lido
Burlesque and Cabaret, Ladies and
Gentlemen. Where beauty is everything
and everything is beautiful. A place
of fantasies where your best dreams
come true.

A place to leave your worries.

Unhappiness is not allowed here.

Because here, at the Lido, anything is
possible. So, sit back and relax, and
you'll never want to go home. Because
at the Lido, you are home.

The CREDITS ROLL as WE FADE OUT.