

Sucker Punch

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EXT. CLOUDY SKY - DAY

Fade in to white, then the edge of the cloud is revealed and we see down to a small ribbon of shiny, two-lane black top, a rain slicked road, which winds through a forest of leafless trees. The road turns out of view and looking straight down, we reveal carved into the forest made of meadows and cut trees like a crop circle, the Warner's logo pulling slowly by, beneath. A wisp of cloud, and again the road turns back into view. We see a car, a tiny dot. Clouds wisp by as we drop impossibly fast 'til we stop in front of the 50's era sedan. Rain pounds, the chrome grill grins like a shiny black demon. We move up to the driver. Windshield wipers reveal the image of a man in his late 50's, scratch marks across his face. This is the STEPFATHER: short, fat, dark hair and grey skin. His left forearm bandaged, fresh blood soaks through the gauze. Following his nervous glance, we slide across the windshield to his sleeping passenger.

It's a young girl, 18, for the purpose of this story we call her BABYDOLL. She is dressed in dirty pink flannel pajamas. She's wrapped in a grey wool blanket. Pale skin, blonde hair in ratty pigtails. Beautiful. We rotate until we look into the passengers window. Streams of water run like veins across the glass. The Stepfather's watery eyes move across her form. He takes a deep breath and returns his gaze to the road. The car moves slowly past us and heads down the road through a forest of winter trees, like a forest of bones. The trees yield to open fields of yellow grass, and they drive on toward the dark shape of a massive brick building sitting at the top of a hill. Lightning strikes.

EXT. LENNOX HOUSE - DAY

Heavy rain falls in slow motion as the passenger door is opened. Two large men, ORDERLIES dressed in white, pull the girl from the car. She's startled awake and frightened. She fights them, her grey blanket falls to the ground. She's dragged toward the looming structure. The Stepfather watches coldly, shrugs on an overcoat and follows. She pulls away and stumbles, the orderlies are on her, pressing her face into the wet concrete of the pathway. She sees something just out of view, her face twists in pain.

BABYDOLL
(barely audible)
Oh God. No.

She looks back at her Stepfather.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

You liar! You lied to them! What did you say? What did you tell them?

The orderlies lift her off the ground and pull her away. She continues to plead with the uncaring men.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

Please. It was an accident. You have to believe me. I didn't mean to...

Our view widens as they reach the large arching gates of the massive brick building. And we see planted in the yellowing grass, an aging sign reads: "Lennox House - Institution for the Mentally Insane."

EXT. LENNOX HOUSE COURTYARD - DAY

She watches the orderly put a key in the lock. They push through the gate. More orderlies in white smoke in the shelter of the arch. Their look is detached, as if the sight of a girl in panicked horror is normal. A walkway cuts through the center of the courtyard. Benches surround the dead garden. The brick building towers on all sides of them as they approach the main entrance.

INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

They walk in holding the young girl tight. She shivers, her wet pajamas hang on her thin frame. Water puddles on the cold stone floor. Older couples in overcoats and hats sit in the dimly lit reception room. Their faces carved in that great sorrow of a loved one lost. A woman works behind a window in the reception room. A broken man waits for help. The orderlies walk up with the girl. Without looking, the woman hands the Stepfather a clipboard with some papers then buzzes them through another door. They continue down the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Dirty white tiles rise six feet up the walls. Light-green paint chips and bubbles from the aging walls. Cast iron radiators crouch on ornate feet, clicking and steaming. Pipes drip from the ceiling. The girl is frightened but focused. At the end of the hall stands a man with crossed arms. Dressed as an orderly, he holds a folder. With a crooked smile he watches the group approach. This is BLUE JONES, just 40, not a doctor, not a janitor.

But clearly from his stance, and his confident grin, the unofficial Don of the institution. This is his world. He eyes the girl then turns his gaze to the man.

BLUE
You the father?

STEPFATHER
Stepfather.

BLUE
That's right. We talked on the phone. Follow me.

He grabs a key from a chain on his neck. Unlocks the door behind him.

INT. SERVICE HALLWAY - SAME TIME

BLUE
We'll take her into the theater.
Mrs. Shultz will want to see her.
She likes to see all the new girls.

He eyes the girl then looks to the Stepfather.

BLUE (CONT'D)
Don't worry, Dad. Everything is gonna be fine.

He lifts up the folder. The group turns down another short hallway. They approach some double doors.

BLUE (CONT'D)
I got everything under control around here.

INT. GYMNASIUM - SAME TIME

Blue pushes open the doors. They enter a desolate theater/gymnasium. An open floor in front of a stage at one end. An assortment of ratty chairs and card tables loosely face it. The girl is led by the two orderlies to the center of the room. Blue nods, they release her, she looks around. A dozen or so inmates shuffle in the shadows, a few sit catatonic. Stacked against the wall are old flats from forgotten theatre productions. A childhood castle, a choo choo train, a charred landscape, a Japanese pagoda. Blue stands with the Stepfather a few feet behind the girl.

A crude set of a child's bedroom has been built on stage. In the bedroom another girl, SWEET PEA, 19, dark hair.

She's dressed in a simple grey uniform like the other inmates. She nervously sits on a single bed on stage rocking herself. At the front of the stage dressed in restrictive tweed is her psychiatrist, MRS. SCHULTZ, 40. She threads an old reel to reel audio player with tape. We see the workings of the tape player in extreme detail, the sound heads, the rollers, the take up reel. The woman in tweed reviews her notes through reading glasses, looks up at Sweet Pea studying her.

BLUE

This is what we call the "theatre." The girls use it to be social, and Mrs. Schultz uses it to help them deal with their shit. Call it "therapy." Honestly, it just makes me horny. Watching them act out who touched them or beat them.

The Stepfather looks nervously at Blue.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Mrs. Schultz seems to think it helps 'em. I'm not sure, but whether it does or doesn't won't matter much to you cuz once we take care of business, there won't be any of that for this one. She'll be in La La Land.

The young girl in the pink pajamas watches from the floor, softened by the frightened girl on stage.

BLUE (CONT'D)

And your troubles will be over, right? Now, I know I said twelve hundred over the phone, but I could lose my job if this gets out. I'm taking a big risk. What do you say, two grand even?

STEPFATHER

What are you talking about? Don't try and cheat me you prick, we had a deal.

Their whispers have grown intense. The girl listens, shifting her focus from the stage back to her Stepfather and Blue.

BLUE

Listen, Father. I don't know what you did to her. Frankly I don't want to know.

(MORE)

BLUE (CONT'D)

But what you telling the detectives
when they come snooping around?
Hmmm? I'm sure they'd love to talk
with her, get her side of things.

Furious at being hijacked, the Stepfather coughs. He gives
Blue a look, then recounts his money.

BLUE (CONT'D)

You'll be happy, trust me. Now
here's the thing, we don't have a
doctor on staff who can do this
procedure.

STEPFATHER

What?

BLUE

But, we just happen to have one
scheduled to come. He'll be here
in 5 days. So I'll just slip her
into the work orders. I've done it
dozens of times.

STEPFATHER

Listen, don't fuck this up. I told
the police she lost her mind when
her Mother died. Accidentally
killed her sister, then tried to
kill me. The truth is... more
complicated.

BLUE

It always is.

The Stepfather's not happy at being threatened. Mrs. Shultz
looks to Sweet Pea on stage.

MRS. SHULTZ

I'm going to start your music. Now
ok, you're safe, it's all safe.
Remember it's like we talked about,
you control this world. Now relax,
and just let go.

She flips on the reel to reel, the tape begins to move.
Static crackles across the sound heads, then music. Low at
first, a haunting intro. The girl begins to sway, her eyes
close.

STEPFATHER

I don't want her remembering
anything.

MRS. SHULTZ

Let the pain go, let the hurt go,
let the guilt go. What you're
imagining right now, that world you
control, that place can be as real
as any pain.

BLUE

(in a hushed voice to
Babydoll's Stepfather)

Don't worry, she'll be lucky if she
knows her name after I'm done with
her.

The words echo in Babydoll's ears. We see Blue and the Stepfather standing behind her. The music swells, we begin to slowly pan away. It's as if the room begins to rotate around the girl. A few crazies shuffle in bathrobes arguing to themselves. The room continues to turn, we see the chipped paint of its faded opulence. An old basketball hoop. Its rim without a net stands forgotten and silent. We pass the empty chairs and tables that face the stage. Past Mrs. Shultz, glasses perched on her nose taking notes.

We find the stage. Sweet Pea sitting on the bed, pulls her knees to her chest. We pass the primitive bedroom set. We begin our trip back around. Rotating off the edge of the stage once again, back towards the girl. The room has somehow changed...

The chipped paint replaced with a fresh coat. The card tables have turned into round wooden tables with cafe chairs turned over on them. We rotate past a column and the interior changes further. We now see ornate mouldings gilded in gold, velvet curtains cover the exits. We continue until we find the girl again, her eyes have not left the stage. Her clothes have changed. She is now wearing a simple dress with "Saint John's Orphanage" stenciled to her breast pocket. Behind her, the Stepfather wears the black suit and collar of a priest, he is now Father O'Rourke. Blue has been transformed from orderly to gangster. He wears an expensive Italian suit, his black hair slicked back. We don't stop, we continue to move another 180 degrees. We journey back towards the stage, the crazies are gone...

Without cutting, the atmosphere has changed from cold sterility to privileged temptation. A few scantily clad showgirls straddle chairs watching the stage. We pass them to find Mrs. Shultz dressed in a leather corset. She taps a staff on the floor, now a choreographer, her beat in time with the hypnotic music. The analytical eye of a therapist replaced with the scrutiny of an artist. We follow her look to the stage...

The set is now of the highest production value. "Babydoll's" bedroom, the room of a wealthy family's child. High ceilings, windows and doors. Opulent mouldings in dark woods. A collection of toys neatly arranged on shelves. We move onto the stage, passing golden shelled footlights. On stage, a storm is raging. We see stage hands pulling levers working in the wings. A carbon ark briefly ignites creating a convincing lightning effect. Another sprays a hose at the window, the driving rain. We continue pushing in until the set fills our view and we slow to a stop. Sweet Pea's appearance has changed, she is now "Babydoll." She wears pink flannel pajama's, her hair now blonde with pigtails. She sits in a slice of light coming from the doorway, her back to us...

INT. BABYDOLL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We continue our move, rotate around Babydoll, she's frightened. We reveal that the room is no longer a set but four walls. A real storm thunders outside shaking the windows. A shadow moves over her, she looks up. A grim doctor stands in the doorway with a black bag, he shakes his head slowly. Babydoll moves past the doctor and down the hall...

INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Babydoll looks in as two nurses pull a sheet over a body on the bed. Her younger sister rushes in. Babydoll catches her and tries to hold her back. Her body is wrenched in grief. The two collapse at the foot of the bed. The younger one grips the bedsheet, knuckles turning white. She pulls it down revealing their Mother's lifeless face. Lightning flashes on their short, fat Stepfather in the doorway. He holds a crystal decanter of bourbon in his hand. His face strangely passive, his eyes lock with Babydoll's. Lightning bathes the scene in white as her eyes go dark with anger...

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

From above, rain falls in sheets across a sea of black umbrellas. A dark casket is lowered by hand into the damp earth. Babydoll and her sister, both dressed in black, move to the graves edge. Babydoll holds a red rose, the rain strikes the petals in slow motion. She drops the rose, we watch it fall. Her sister grabs her tightly, barely able to stand from the grief. From across the grave Babydoll's Stepfather stares at her. His mood is ominous and scheming. Shovels stab the dark earth and push it into the grave.

The sound of soil striking the casket becomes the sound of thunder...

CUT TO:

INT. STEPFATHER'S DEN - NIGHT

The thunder rolls as the Stepfather pokes the fire in the large fireplace, sparks ignite. Carved lion heads and human figures which hold the mantle are illuminated in the warm glow. He returns the poker to its stand and moves to a large oak desk. He stares at a sealed envelope. It reads "Last Will and Testament" and a woman's name. He opens the drawer, we see a gun, a 1911 Colt .45. He pushes it aside and grabs a miniature samurai sword letter opener. He opens the envelope, we watch him read the letter. Lightning flashes across the pages. We see in close up the words "of sound mind," his eyes reading, "do hereby leave," his face twists in anger, "all my worldly possessions to my two daughters." Gritting his teeth he clears his desk with a sweep of his arm. He finishes a bottle of brandy and throws it into the fireplace. He looks up towards the ceiling. We follow his look, moving through the plaster, past pipes and floorboards, we rise into the younger sister's room...

INT. YOUNGER SISTER'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Babydoll is dressed in her pink flannel pajamas. She watches her sister sleep. Even in sleep the pain is knitted into her brow. She kisses her on the forehead. Babydoll rises, shuts off the light as she leaves the room...

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Babydoll closes the door, she sees her Stepfather silhouetted at the top of the stairs. She rushes to her bedroom, but before she can close the door he is there...

INT. BABYDOLL'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

The Stepfather pushes the door open knocking Babydoll to the ground. Enters the room and stands over her. Wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, eyes brazen with anger and lust. He grabs her by the hair and pulls her onto the bed. Taking hold of her lapels he begins to rip open her pajamas. The first button pops, we follow it through the air, it hits the hardwood floor spinning like a silver dollar. We see the Stepfather out of focus behind the button licking her neck and chest.

With all her strength she pushes him off, runs her nails down his face. He backhands her to the ground, brings a shaking hand to the bleeding scratches on his face. He looks at the blood, his rage deepens. Babydoll crawls to the corner of the room. He stares at her, wheels turning in his head. She watches as he glances over his shoulder to her little sister's room. Lightning flashes as he smiles back at Babydoll. He turns to leave, she lunges and grabs his leg. He kicks her off, shuts the door and locks it...

Close up, we see a key drawn from the lock, we continue through the keyhole to find Babydoll's eye. She watches her Stepfather reach her sister's door. He looks back at Babydoll then enters the room. She shakes the locked door. A scream, her sister tumbles into the hallway, he drags her back in. She kicks free, runs into the hallway closet and slams it shut. The Stepfather turns the knob, it's locked. Babydoll scans the room, rushes to her window and steps out into the driving rain...

EXT. HOUSE - SAME TIME

She slips on the roof and falls, catches the gutter, makes her way down. Part of the gutter pulls free from the wall, water rushes over her. She climbs down and jumps the last eight feet to the grass below. She rushes around the house and goes in the front door...

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

The Stepfather kicks the closet door, it splinters open...

INT. STEPFATHER'S DEN - SAME TIME

Babydoll opens the drawer, sees the samurai sword letter opener. She pulls it out then notices the gun. She drops the sword and grabs the gun. She runs up the stairs...

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

The Stepfather shrugs off his suspenders and unbuttons his shirt. The little sister cries in the corner of the closet as he advances on her. He looks back, Babydoll aims the gun at him. He half smiles, then puts up a hand. Takes an easy step towards her. She fires, he jumps at the shot. The bullet hits a pipe running down the back of the closet. It sprays steam from a high pressure. Now the fear is real, he continues to move forward. She shoots again exploding the bare bulb that hangs in the closet.

A shower of sparks rains down. He looks into her frightened eyes, she shakes her head. His eyes turn dark, she pulls the trigger...

In extreme slow motion the bullet strikes his arm misting his face with blood as he falls to the ground.

She rushes past him into the closet. She takes her sister by the hand. But the girl won't stand. Babydoll drops to her knees, she sees the blood begin to soak through her sisters nightgown. A gunshot wound pulses from her chest. She puts her hand on it trying to stop the blood. Pulls her sister's lifeless body into her arms. The Stepfather has crawled across the hall to a small phone nook. He grabs at the phone's cord, it falls next to him. Babydoll cries as she rocks her dead sister in her arms, she drops the gun to the floor. She lays her sister down. Slipping on the pooling blood she backs out of the closet. Stares at her sister's lifeless body for one last moment, turns and runs...

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Babydoll runs in the rain along a wrought iron fence, turns into the cemetery. Police cars approach. She reaches her Mother's grave site. Headlights cut the night behind her. She falls on the fresh grave. She weeps as water runs down the granite headstone. A dozen flashlights light her up, she squints into the beams...

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT - LATER

The Stepfather stands next to a police car getting his arm bandaged. He talks to police officers as he carefully watches Babydoll. She struggles to break free, two police officers hold her. A paramedic gives a shot to sedate her. Extreme close up of the syringe, the liquid plunges into her veins...

INT. 50'S SEDAN - DAY

Babydoll sleeps in the passenger seat wrapped in a grey blanket. We move from her, past her Stepfather and look out through the front windshield. The rain falls hard, in slow motion the wipers clear the water revealing the dark institution looming on the hill...

INT. LENNOX HOUSE - DAY

Blue, dressed as an orderly, pushes Babydoll to her knees. She stares at a bucket of water and a filthy toilet.

He leans in and smells her hair. She looks, extreme close up as she sees a key dangling from his necklace. After closing his eyes and inhaling deeply he violently slaps her across the side of the head. She pulls a scrub brush from the bucket, her eyes welling and red...

INT. BLUE'S OFFICE - DAY

Blue argues with another orderly. He gestures towards the floor plan of the institution thumb-tacked to the wall behind his desk. Babydoll passes by the room with her cleaning cart, she closely eyes the map...

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Babydoll is lead in a straight jacket by two orderlies, her face red, her hair dirty and stringy. They stop at a security check point. A greasy orderly opens the gate and checks her out. He smiles, lighting a cigarette as she passes by. She looks, extreme close up of his lighter, a Zippo with a dragon etched on its side.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Babydoll stacks some cases of tomato sauce in the dingy industrial kitchen. Across the room the greasy COOK finishes cutting. He stabs the butcher's knife into the chopping block. Babydoll checks out the shiny metal blade...

INT. MRS. SHULTZ'S OFFICE - DAY

A metronome clicks back and forth. Babydoll sits in a chair watching the cold rain hit the window. Mrs. Shultz sits across from her at a small table, she leans forward and adjusts a microphone. Mrs. Schultz then adjusts her reading glasses and turns on the reel to reel.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Faded white tiles cover the walls of this forgotten room. Babydoll is seated in a stainless steel chair as two nurses in white strap her down. Her head is locked in place by stainless steel calipers. A man stands silhouetted by the light. He pulls on rubber gloves, his face in shadow. Close on his glasses as they reflect a stainless steel tray, an ice pick and a wooden mallet. A look of fear crosses Babydoll's face as the ice pick is brought close to her.

Unable to move she closes her eyes as the ice pick is brought toward her nose. The wooden mallet is pulled back ready to strike. Just as the mallet is about to swing, Babydoll screams out!

BABYDOLL

STOP!! Stop... get that thing away from me. I'm not kidding, quit it. Shut off that damn music! What the fuck is this! What is this?

The music stops, the lobotomy doctor steps back with his tools.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

Untie these straps. Come on, hurry, and don't forget my ankles.

Her hands are freed and she pulls the blonde pigtailed wig off of her head. It's Sweet Pea, the frightened girl on the stage at the start of the music. She shakes her dark hair letting it fall to her shoulders. She pushes the nurses aside, comes out of the chair and strides forward.

SWEET PEA

This is a joke, right?

INT. BROTHEL - SAME TIME

We now see that the operating room is back on the stage. Cast members take a break, stage hands stand in the wings. Sweet Pea walks to the footlights and looks down at Mrs. Shultz.

SWEET PEA

Don't you get the point of this? It's to turn people on, not to... I don't know, indulge in your perverse fantasies... Listen, I get the sexy little schoolgirl, I even get the helpless mental patient. Right, that can be hot. But what the fuck is this? Lobotomized vegetable? Really... Do you know how wafer-slim the percentage of people who get off on this particular fetish? I mean how about something a little more commercial for god's sake? No one's gonna want me after they see that. I mean what kind of fucked-up ending is this?

MRS. SHULTZ

I was going for something more artistic, you know? It's symbolic of your inner journey, and that your internal victory is just as important as your physical one.

SWEET PEA

Inner journey? Have you seen the people that are coming to these shows?

She holds her hands open.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

I don't want to argue about it. You gotta fix the ending, it sucks. Something happy. I don't know... a dance number or something. Something... that feels good. What the fuck are you trying to do to me?

Mrs. Shultz holds up a hand to calm her down.

MRS. SHULTZ

Okay, okay, we'll work on it. I think I have some ideas.

She taps her staff on the floor getting all the girls' attention.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

Let's wrap it up, ladies.
Rehearsal in one half hour.

Everyone slowly starts moving, wrapping it up.

BLUE (O.S.)

(calls out)

Sweet Pea!

Sweet Pea squints into the darkened theatre.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Come over here!

She jumps off the stage and turns to Mrs. Shultz. Sweet Pea raises her palms as if she were handcuffed and walks backwards towards Blue.

SWEET PEA

You gotta help me. I'm the star of this show. Remember?

She turns around and stands face to face with the new girl. Sweet Pea smirks at the lost girl from the orphanage. Blue and Father O'Rourke step up to meet her.

BLUE

Sweet Pea, this is.....

SWEET PEA

Don't tell me. The priest brought you here from the orphanage, right. To lose your virginity. No, let me rephrase that. To sell it.

BLUE

That's right.

SWEET PEA

How original.

BLUE

The High Roller's coming for her in five days. He's gonna do a little flower picking. And as always, he's prepared to pay handsomely.

SWEET PEA

Lucky you.

Babydoll looks around anxiously.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

Ain't nowhere to run in here, Babydoll.

Father O'Rourke smiles humbly.

FATHER O'ROURKE

I overheard you talking with Mrs. Shultz. I just want to say, I thought the whole show was sexy.

SWEET PEA

Yeah? Well, you're pretty fucking perverted... no offense.

FATHER O'ROURKE

None taken.

BLUE

I was hoping you could show this little Babydoll around the place. Give her a tour of our little establishment.

SWEET PEA

Blue please, you saw the show. I don't have the time. Let my sister take her. Rocket!

Up on stage dressed as a sexy nurse is ROCKET, 17, another dark haired beauty, wild but sweet. She jumps off the stage and walks up to Sweet Pea.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

Show her around, will ya, sis?

Sweet Pea walks towards Mrs. Shultz.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

So what do we got?

Rocket stares at Babydoll.

ROCKET

Hi.

Babydoll looks back apprehensively.

BLUE

Rocket, you know Father O'Rourke?

ROCKET

Hello, Father.

FATHER O'ROURKE

You're very good up there.

ROCKET

Why thank you.

She keeps an eye on Babydoll.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

Come on, let's go.

She gently touches Babydoll who pulls away.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I don't bite, very hard.

Her smile softens Babydoll.

FATHER O'ROURKE

Nice doing business with you. Blue, I'll be by next week for my cut from the High Roller.

BLUE
I'll see you then.

FATHER O'ROURKE
Goodbye my dear.

Babydoll freezes with an angry chill. She turns to see Father O'Rourke smiling at her. She spits in his face. He yells out, wiping the spit out of his eyes. He screams, recklessly attacking Babydoll. Rocket pulls her to the side as he misses. Everybody stops and watches the old priest lose it. Blue takes him by the arm as he stumbles about delirious with anger.

FATHER O'ROURKE (CONT'D)
That little bitch!

BLUE
Easy Father.

Rocket pulls Babydoll out of the club lounge. Sweet Pea smiles at them as they pass.

FATHER O'ROURKE
You'll get what you deserve, you fuckin' bitch. I hope you rot in here!

SWEET PEA
Welcome to your new home.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Heavy double doors made of red leather and brass buttons swing open. Rocket and Babydoll quickly walk in.

The yelling echoes and subsides as the thick doors close. Rocket watches Babydoll as she stares at the purple doors lining the hallway. Low lit chandeliers run the center like an old faded club in New Orleans.

ROCKET
This way.

They walk. Every door has a red number and a peep hole.

ROCKET (CONT'D)
You're gonna be okay, you'll see.
I know it takes a little getting used to.

Babydoll stops at a doorway.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

My name's Rocket. So... How did you become an orphan? Okay, I get it. It's complicated right? It always is. That's cool, we all have our stories. Mine's... well, it's... complicated.

Babydoll leans in close and sees that the peep hole looks into the room. Rocket opens the door to a beautifully ornate bedroom.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

Well, these are the rooms where we take the clients. Fresh towels in the bathroom. In the drawer here you'll find...

BABYDOLL

Clients?

ROCKET

Yeah. Blue owns the club, and we, my dear, are the main attraction, Ta-daaa! You didn't think we were just dancing in there, did ya? The club's a front for his business; guns, gambling, medication, special favors, things like that. He brings in his clients, and we make them come back for more. That way Blue can keep an eye on the competition.

She steps into the bedroom, walks up to the bed and presses a button. The ceiling above opens to reveal a huge heart-shaped mirror, a pink fluorescent light pulses around it.

INT. SERVICE HALLWAY - DAY

Dirty yellow fluorescents flicker from above. Babydoll and Rocket step through puddles of liquid, pass old groaning pipes that hiss and fart. Containers and boxes litter the way.

ROCKET

That's the laundry room. This room over here is where all the cleaning supplies are. Mops, buckets, gloves, soaps, disinfectants, aprons.

BABYDOLL

For what?

ROCKET

New girls get cleaning duty.
Sorry, that's just the rules.

Babydoll stares at some greenish black ooze dripping down the wall. She stays close to Rocket, they pass through metal double doors. Beethoven is heard thundering down the hall from the kitchen. They approach it, look in the doorway.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

Come on, there's more.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

A heavy knife comes down on a piece of meat. A dirty old radio sits on a cart playing Beethoven. The Cook, 50's, stinky, wears a dirty putrid apron that he wipes the blood on top of old blood. The room is dark and dangerous, steam sprays, pots boil. His sweaty albino skin glows under the light, cataract eyes squint looking for an ingredient. He absently sheathes the knife in a wooden holster alongside four other blades.

ROCKET

This is the kitchen. We all work here.

He sticks a thermometer in a pot. The sound of three bells ring through the hallways.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

It's time for rehearsal.

The Cook looks at the girls. He licks the liquid off the end of the thermometer.

COOK

Got a fever?

Rocket flips him off, the Cook runs his greasy tongue across his fat lips.

BABYDOLL

Eewww...

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

The tall windows are bricked up, sunlight pours through the missing bricks at the top.

The sound of heavy breathing and squeaking rubber shoes. The wooden floor is worn out, a mirror stretches the length of the wall. Twenty girls move about the room. Dancing, stretching and practicing. Their bodies glow with sweat. Sweet Pea stands with two girls, her mind is elsewhere.

BLONDIE, 18, dark beauty, street kid. AMBER, 17, country girl with a big heart.

AMBER

I don't think she's a problem. I mean come on, she looked nice.

BLONDIE

She looked stuck up.

AMBER

She's scared, I feel sorry for her.

BLONDIE

You feel sorry for everyone, Amber. Remember when you got here? Nobody felt sorry for you. Stupid hick.

SWEET PEA

Blue's saving her for the High Roller.

BLONDIE

Ha! She's no virgin.

AMBER

You should talk. You lost your virginity before you could even spell it.

BLONDIE

Virginity's a big word.

Rocket and Babydoll walk into the room. Everybody slows down to take a look. Sweet Pea sees them, grabs Amber and Blondie.

ROCKET

We practice in here.

Babydoll feels the looks. Girls whisper to one another as they walk up to Sweet Pea.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

Babydoll, this is Blondie, Amber, and you've already met my sister Sweet Pea.

SWEET PEA
Watch yourself.

BLONDIE
Yeah.

Babydoll looks up, she sees a tiny moth fluttering in a shaft of sunlight.

ROCKET
Guys come on, give her a break.

SWEET PEA
Oh, I'm sorry, are you her new best friend?

ROCKET
Can I finish my tour...thank you. Everybody gets a dance, a routine that we practice and practice, and practice. The men watch us perform, and if they like what they see they reserve private time with us, you know in the rooms I showed you. That's why we dance.

Babydoll looks around the room. Everybody's watching. The tension is broken by a loud tapping sound that echoes through the room.

All the girls scramble, creating a straight line in front of the mirror. Mrs. Shultz walks in, tapping her staff. Rocket grabs Babydoll and pulls her in line. Mrs. Shultz walks in front of the line looking closely at the girls.

MRS. SHULTZ
Use this. This confusion. This jealousy and anger. This pain. Use it in your dance. For your dance is the true expression of your self. Let out the Forgotten Child. The Inner Whore. The Goddess that life has crushed.

She arrives at Babydoll and looks closely, she sees something.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)
Use your gifts. Push through the fear to reach your own paradise.

INT. SLEEPING CHAMBERS - NIGHT

We move quietly past the cots that line the room. All the girls are sleeping. The sound of crying coming from the end of the room. Rocket listens in bed, she sits up.

SWEET PEA

Leave her alone.

She watches Rocket from her bed. The whimpering continues. Rocket looks at Sweet Pea then gets up.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME TIME

The room is white tiled and sanitary. Babydoll crouches below the sink trying to stop her tears. Rocket looks into the room. She watches Babydoll for a moment then walks up to her.

ROCKET

It's okay.

Babydoll holds herself tight not looking up. Rocket gently touches her back.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

It's going to be okay.

INT. DINING HALL - MORNING

The room is dark. Chandeliers hang low, casting a soft glow above two long tables littered with girls eating. Others walk in carrying trays of breakfast. Sweet Pea, Amber and Blondie sit together. Sweet Pea's not eating. She watches Rocket and Babydoll at the end of the table eating together.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Babydoll pushes the cart through the maze of hallways. Up ahead a door is slightly cracked open, she stops. Looking inside she sees Blue conducting business. He sits at a table, next to him stands A YOUNG GIRL, nervous and shaken. He laughs gesturing to her. Three men, CRIMINALS, sit across from Blue. One man tosses a fat roll of bills onto the table. Babydoll watches then hurries down the hallway.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MORNING

The door opens, Babydoll stares at the disgusting mess. Wearing gloves she mops the floor, scrubs the toilets and wipes stuff off the bathroom stall walls. The toilet door kicks in and knocks her to the floor. Sweet Pea enters and raises a foot to threaten Babydoll.

SWEET PEA

Don't be talking with my sister.
You got that?

Sweet Pea stomps out of the room. Amber and Blondie look in the stall at Babydoll for a beat and then leave.

INT. BROTHEL - DAY

Shots of Babydoll: Taking off bed sheets, fluffing pillows, loading washing machines with dirty laundry. She stops at a doorway, a laundry basket under her arm, and watches Mrs. Shultz and a DESIGNER fashion an outrageously wonderful costume on one of the girls.

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

Babydoll pushes the cart, her apron is filthy. She slows to a stop hearing voices talking around the corner.

SWEET PEA (O.S.)

I'm trying, I really am.

BLUE (O.S.)

We're all trying.

SWEET PEA (O.S.)

I did good last night.

BLUE (O.S.)

Yeah well, that was one night.
Remember last year? They couldn't
get enough of you.

SWEET PEA (O.S.)

I can do that again.

Babydoll looks around the corner and sees Sweet Pea talking to Blue inside his office.

BLUE

Numbers don't lie, Darlin', you
ain't doin' it.

SWEET PEA

Give me a chance, Blue.

BLUE

Everybody's got an expiration date.

Sweet Pea looks away and sees Babydoll, their eyes lock. Blue follows her look, sees Babydoll. He smiles at her. Walks to the door and slams it shut.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The Cook eats a greasy sandwich. Mozart's "Requiem" crackles through the radio. Rocket comes in carrying a case of potatoes. He nods to the storeroom. His fingers run along the knife handles on his waist, a twitch he's done a million times. He watches Rocket as she walks by, his eyes violate her.

INT. PANTRY - SAME TIME

Rocket enters and looks for space on the counter. She pushes some boxes over and lays down the case. She sees some chocolate bars on the shelf, thinks for a moment, she takes one. The Cook grabs her from behind. She struggles to break his grip, kicking at the shelves. He drops with her to the floor, she fights but can't get free, he gropes her body.

ROCKET

No!

INT. HALLWAY NEAR THE KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Babydoll mops the floor as she hears the yell echo down the hallway just as three bells ring over the intercom.

INT. PANTRY - SAME TIME

The Cook covers her mouth. He pulls at her clothes, she bites his hand. He shoves her head to the floor immobilizing her, she's lost all control.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Babydoll looks into the kitchen, Mozart's "Requiem" continues to play. Nothing looks out of the ordinary, a shadow moves in the pantry.

INT. PANTRY - SAME TIME

Babydoll looks in to see the Cook's huge back. He's on top of someone. Fear grips Babydoll. Suddenly her eyes and Rocket's meet. She sees the knives on the Cook's belt. She quickly reaches down and grabs one of them. He looks, she holds the knife to his throat.

BABYDOLL

Let her go, pig.

Everybody's adrenaline is pumping. He smiles and lets her go.

COOK

I didn't mean nothin'.

Rocket scrambles out from under him and gets behind Babydoll. The Cook stands and laughs.

COOK (CONT'D)

Just havin' some fun.

Babydoll drops the knife, they run out of the room.

INT. SERVICE HALLWAY - DAY

Babydoll and Rocket slow down to a walk. Rocket is silent, holds herself tightly. Babydoll looks back over her shoulder, Rocket stops and closes her eyes.

BABYDOLL

You okay?

Rocket takes a deep breath, nodding, quickly getting herself back together.

ROCKET

Let's go, we don't want to be late.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

The girls are spread out in the room. Mrs. Shultz cracks her staff in rhythm with the music against the floor. Sweet Pea is in the center of the room dancing, she's distracted. Mrs. Shultz watches closely, she stops the music.

MRS. SHULTZ

Stop, stop. Where are you?

Babydoll and Rocket walk in the doorway. They stand next to Amber. Mrs. Shultz sees them.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

Sweet Pea, take a break. Babydoll,
over here.

Babydoll walks out to the center of the room. Mrs. Schultz
moves around her.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

You seem fit enough.

Blue walks in, watches curiously, Sweet Pea gets anxious.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

I'm going to play you some music,
ok? I want you to just relax.

She walks over to an old reel to reel, threads a new tape.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

Feel the music, open your heart to
it, let it in. And when you are
ready, I want you to dance.

Mrs. Shultz presses play, the heads to the reel to reel
engage. The music begins, a drum beat from the soul of the
earth. She taps her staff stiffly on the floor to the beat.
Babydoll looks out at the girls watching in anticipation and
judgement. Too much pressure, she can't do it. She lowers
her head. Mrs. Shultz stops the music. Blue's not
impressed, he's about to leave. He shakes his head "too
bad." Mrs. Shultz walks up to Babydoll and whispers in her
ear.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

If you don't dance, you have no
purpose, and we don't keep things
that have no purpose. You see,
your fight for survival starts
right now.

The words penetrate Babydoll.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

You're afraid. Don't be. You have
all the weapons you need. Now
fight.

She walks back to the reel to reel. One of Blue's henchmen
walks in next to Blue. Amber looks up at him, he looks back.
She smiles doing a jerk-off motion with her hand. He smiles
back.

Mrs. Shultz presses play, the heads engage. Babydoll looks
around the room. Blue smirks at her.

Concentrating, she slowly starts to sway to the music. She can't take everyone looking at her. She closes her eyes. The music pounds. Time slows. A snowflake lands in her eyelash and melts. Then another, and another, it is snowing.

EXT. JAPANESE TEMPLE - DAY

Snow falls through the mist as the music continues to play. Babydoll opens her eyes, her breath is cold in the frozen air. In front of her stands an ancient temple surrounded by a forest of redwoods. Its heavy wooden gates are open, she walks through.

INT. JAPANESE TEMPLE - SAME TIME

Babydoll enters. Staring down at her from both sides are enormous wooden statues of warrior Gods striking battle poses. In the center of the open courtyard sits a two story pagoda. Snow blankets everything in white. She walks to the pagoda, its doors are open. Inside is a WISE MAN, not Japanese, kneeling in a white kimono.

BABYDOLL

Hello... Excuse me. Uh, could you help me? I don't know where I am.

WISE MAN

Shoes.

BABYDOLL

What?

WISE MAN

Your shoes. You're tracking snow everywhere.

BABYDOLL

Oh, god. I'm sorry. Do you want me to take them off?

WISE MAN

That time has passed. What can I do for you?

BABYDOLL

Nothing I... Just...

WISE MAN

Let me ask it another way. What do you want?

BABYDOLL

What do I want... Well, to escape,
I guess.

WISE MAN

You guess.

BABYDOLL

No, I do. I want to get out of
this place.

WISE MAN

Freedom. That wasn't so hard, was
it...? I'm going to help you to be
free. How does that sound?

BABYDOLL

What do I have to do?

WISE MAN

You have to not judge what I'm
about to tell you. You have to be
brave. You have to be selfless,
and above all, you have to trust
yourself.

BABYDOLL

Ok.

WISE MAN

Really?

BABYDOLL

I said ok.

He gracefully picks up a brush. Dips it into a small pot of
ink. The music from the rehearsal hall loud in the sparse
pagoda.

WISE MAN

Alright. You will need five items
for this journey. This journey to
freedom.

BABYDOLL

When do we start?

WISE MAN

We've started already.

Babydoll watches the brush strokes coming down on the paper.
The writing is ancient, closer to pictures.

WISE MAN (CONT'D)

First is a map, then fire, a knife,
and a key.

BABYDOLL

You said five things.

He opens his eyes and looks at her.

WISE MAN

The fifth thing is a mystery. It
is the reason, it is the goal.
Only you can find it, and if you
do, it will set you free.

At his side are two black lacquer boxes which he pushes
toward Babydoll.

WISE MAN (CONT'D)

These are your weapons.

She walks over, opens the boxes. Inside one is a beautiful
Japanese short sword. In the other, a custom .45 automatic.
She takes them and stands, feeling the weight in her hands.
A gust of wind blows, she looks to the front gates. Staring
back are six time traveling samurai, not your "typical"
samurai. Combining classic samurai gear with machine guns
and modern weaponry. One samurai takes a knee, aims a rocket
launcher at Babydoll. She looks back to the Wise Man like
"what the fuck?"

WISE MAN (CONT'D)

Defend yourself.

The rocket's fired, it screams across the courtyard.
Babydoll arches backwards, her shortsword sinks into the
ground catching her fall. The rocket shoots over, scorching
her clothes. The bottom half of the pagoda explodes, the
blast knocks her down. The top story of the pagoda crashes
and sits on top of the fire. The six samurai spread out and
approach. Babydoll rises as fire and debris fall. She's
wide awake. Another rocket is launched, she runs, it hits
the temple setting fire to it. She heads straight for a
samurai who fires two pistol-gripped shotguns. She dodges
and drops, slashes her sword as she slides between his legs.
Comes up behind, shoots her .45 into the back of his head.
Grabs his body for a shield as gunfire hits him. A rocket
shoots towards her. She spins out attacking a samurai who
holds two swords. A blur of movement they fight.

A carving of the "three monkeys" (hear, see, speak no evil)
gets pelted with bullets. All the fine craftsmanship of the
temple gets worked hard.

Her sword locks with his. Another rocket. She back flips kicking the samurai into the oncoming rocket, he disintegrates in a blast. The temple quickly engulfs in flames.

Two samurai run, chasing her down. She heads straight for the burning pagoda. She springs off the debris, somersaults through the fire and lands inside the top story of the pagoda. One samurai drops to his knees right before the fire. The second one hits a heavy foot on his back and dives for Babydoll. He crashes through the wall hits her from behind. Her sword is knocked out the window. He pulls her into a choke hold. Spins a dagger in his hand and drops it towards her throat. She catches the blade with her .45 inches from her neck. It's a battle of strength as the blade slowly gets closer. The pagoda is engulfed in flames. She slowly turns her wrist with the .45, ducks her head to the side and fires, dropping the samurai behind her. She kicks out through the window, lands in the snow beside her sword.

Exhausted she hears a weapon engage, grabs her sword as a machine gun rips. With blinding speed she deflects the bullets with her sword and charges the samurai. She back flips, sinks her sword into the samurai's neck through a gap in the armor. She lands behind him, pulls his arm as his machine gun continues to fire, she sprays another one with the bullets.

The last samurai aims the rocket launcher, pulls the trigger, it's empty. He drops the smoking weapon to the ground. She stands with the dead samurai holding him in place with her sword. The last samurai pulls out his sword and charges Babydoll, she readies herself, waits for him to get in range. She pulls her sword out from the dead samurai's neck and kicks the body. In slow motion she spins with her sword. The body tumbles and trips the oncoming samurai. He falls towards her, coming out of her spin she slices through the air with her blade and decapitates him. His head and body tumble to the ground. She stands holding her final move. The temple burns in flames around her. She feels the stillness. Her sword is greased in blood. A drop hangs from the tip. It falls and hits the snow. The music stops.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Babydoll is in her final killing pose. Her eyes snap open, she gasps for air. Everyone is silent, frozen in disbelief. Mrs. Shultz starts to clap ecstatically, the girls slowly join in. Blue and one of his henchmen come out of their daze. A big smile creases Blue's face, Sweet Pea watches him nervously. Babydoll's in shock, Rocket runs up.

ROCKET

What the fuck was that?!

The girls surround her. Babydoll smiles feeling the rush of being alive. Sweet Pea stands apart from the group not quite sure what to make of Babydoll.

INT. SLEEPING CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Babydoll's eyes are alive. It's late, the girls are in their beds. Amber moves her body and hands dancing.

AMBER

Can you teach me how to move like that?

Sweet Pea rolls her eyes trying to sleep.

BABYDOLL

I don't know, I'll try.

ROCKET

I never saw Mrs. Shultz clap like that.

SWEET PEA

Get over it, go to sleep.

ROCKET

She's not easily impressed.

SWEET PEA

She wasn't impressed. I didn't think it was so hot. All that gyrating and moaning. It didn't even tell a story.

AMBER

Well, Blue didn't seem to mind.

The words click something into place in Babydoll's mind. She starts to put it together.

SWEET PEA

I don't care how much he liked it. The dance is more than just titillation. Mine's very personal. It says who I am. What the fuck does yours say?

BABYDOLL

It says I'm going to escape from here.

The girls look at her not sure they heard her correctly.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

It says I'm going to be free.

A mix of fear and excitement fill the girls.

SWEET PEA

Send me a postcard from paradise.

BLONDIE

Yeah me too.

ROCKET

Are you really going to try and escape?

BABYDOLL

Yes.

ROCKET

Could I come?

BABYDOLL

Of course.

SWEET PEA

You're not going anywhere, Rocket.

ROCKET

I'll do what I want.

SWEET PEA

No one's ever escaped from here.

AMBER

The last three girls that tried, died.

SWEET PEA

That's right, and the same thing will happen to the next fool.

BABYDOLL

Not if we're smart.

SWEET PEA

There's no WE in YOU, fool. You put your time in and don't cause trouble. Blue will let you go.

ROCKET

That is such bullshit.

BLONDIE

No it's not.

ROCKET

It's a bunch of lies. We've been fed promises to keep us in line.

Her eyes pierce Sweet Pea's.

BABYDOLL

Just listen to my plan. Maybe...

SWEET PEA

I don't want to hear your fuckin' plan. None of us do.

She looks at Rocket.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

None of us.

She lays her head down, the others follow. Rocket looks at Babydoll with hope for the first time. The lights snap off, Babydoll stares toward the ceiling.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

It's a bustle of scantily clad girls. Trying on costumes, grooming in their make-up mirrors. They get ready for dance practice. Mrs. Shultz writes a list of names on a portable chalkboard. She schedules the dancers for the night. All the girls slow down and watch to see who holds the number one spot, the prized position. Sweet Pea watches anxiously as she writes her name at the top. Everyone goes back to what they were doing. Sweet Pea's relieved, she stands with Rocket, Blondie and Amber.

MRS. SHULTZ

Let's move it. Time for rehearsal.

She pushes her way through the crowd and leaves the room.

SWEET PEA

We're not helping Baby.

ROCKET

But what if it's a good plan?

SWEET PEA

Then let her do it.

ROCKET

If it's a good plan, I'm going. I don't care what you do.

SWEET PEA

Fine. You're on your own.

ROCKET

I've been on my own.

SWEET PEA

Sure you have. Look where that got us.

She stares accusingly at Rocket.

ROCKET

Baby saved me from the Cook yesterday.

SWEET PEA

What?

ROCKET

I was putting some things away in the kitchen. He grabbed me from behind. Pulled me to the floor, I couldn't move.

AMBER

No.

ROCKET

But before anything happened, she was there. Held his knife up to his throat.

Babydoll walks into the room.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

She saved me.

Babydoll looks around, Sweet Pea looks at her closely. Most of the girls leave, heading for rehearsal. A couple girls giggle and run out catching up with the others. Rocket, Blondie and Amber walk into the room. Babydoll looks back at them then steps up to the chalkboard. She spins the board and takes a piece of chalk. Sweet Pea watches, standing in the doorway with Rocket.

Babydoll writes a list numbered one through four. She steps aside. The list contains the words MAP, FIRE, KNIFE, and KEY.

BABYDOLL

The High Roller's coming for me in three days. But I'm getting out before he does, and this is how I plan to do it.

SWEET PEA

What - are you retarded? I thought I told you we don't want to hear your stupid plan.

BABYDOLL

Well, I've got nothing left to lose so if you want to shut me up, you're gonna have to come do it.

Sweet Pea stares at Babydoll then looks at Rocket who softens her with a slight smile. Sweet Pea shakes her head and looks down, then looks back at Babydoll.

SWEET PEA

Well...

BABYDOLL

Ok... We need to gather these four things. If we get them all, we can be free.

ROCKET

How do we use them?

SWEET PEA

Slow down. How do you plan on getting these things?

BABYDOLL

Whoever has the item we need, we get them to watch me dance.

SWEET PEA

Oh sure, and we run around and pick their pockets?

BABYDOLL

Yes, that's right.

SWEET PEA

Ok, this is stupid. We'd be taking all the risk. Doing all the work while you prance around with the perfect alibi.

BABYDOLL

As long as I'm dancing, they won't even know you're there. You saw it for yourself.

She points to number one.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

We need a map of this place. Something that shows us which way to go. Which doors lead out. Where the guards are posted.

ROCKET

Blue has a map behind his desk.

BLONDIE

So what? He'll know it's missing.

ROCKET

We'll copy it.

BABYDOLL

Right. Second thing we need is Fire to start a distraction when we escape. Plus a fire should disable the check points.

AMBER

Blue doesn't allow us matches in here.

BABYDOLL

But a lot of people smoke in here, right, so... Details, come on we'll figure that out. Third, a Knife, in case we run into trouble.

ROCKET

The Cook... his belt.

BABYDOLL

Yes... good.

AMBER

But that means we gotta get close to him.

ROCKET

Great.

BABYDOLL

The last thing is a Key, for the doors.

AMBER
Blue wears a key around his neck.

BABYDOLL
For what door?

ROCKET
All of them. It's the Master Key.

SWEET PEA
It's around his fucking neck.

BABYDOLL
That might be a little harder than I thought, but we'll get it, and then we'll get outta here.

Sweet Pea watches Rocket bursting with excitement.

AMBER
Free?

ROCKET
... free...

SWEET PEA
Hey hey, keep your heads on. This plan is crazy. There's armed guards everywhere. If Blue finds out, we're dead. You know that.

ROCKET
We're already dead.

AMBER
I'm in.

BLONDIE
So am I.

ROCKET
Me too.

SWEET PEA
This is some bullshit... Oh fuck...
Ok but...

The girls watch Sweet Pea.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)
I'm only doing this because you guys would get caught without me.

She looks at Rocket.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

But if this gets too hairy and I say it's over, we stop. Okay?

The girls nod.

BABYDOLL

Okay.

Sweet Pea takes a deep breath and looks back at the list.

SWEET PEA

I'll get the map.

INT. BLUE'S OFFICE - DAY

We pull out from a map of the brothel pinned to the wall. Blue sits at his desk. Sweet Pea looks in the door.

BLUE

What do you want?

SWEET PEA

She's dancing.

BLUE

Who?

SWEET PEA

Babydoll.

His mind pulses, he passes Sweet Pea and disappears down the hall. She quietly closes the door. She sees the map. Looks to the copy machine and turns it on. It hums warming up, she glances over her shoulder.

TITLE OVER BLACK: AUDITION

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Babydoll stalls for time, tying her shoes, focused, anxious. Mrs. Shultz taps her staff on the floor.

MRS. SHULTZ

(in German "Move your ass!") We need to find the right music for your dance. Now hurry, we must begin.

Babydoll peeks over at Rocket. She gives a wink as Blue walks in the door, Babydoll rises.

Mrs. Shultz starts the music. Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit." It sounds like an evil machine beginning to clank and roll. Babydoll takes a deep breath, looks at herself in the mirror. She follows the music, closes her eyes.

EXT. WWI BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

An artillery shell screams overhead, Babydoll opens her eyes. The shell explodes close by. The music thunders as Babydoll rises. She looks out onto a charred landscape of 1917 France, not a tree is standing. Smoke drifts through the ruins of this battlefield of the imagination. World War I from a toxic fever dream. Artillery streaks the sky, machine gun fire and explosions shake the earth around her. Massive airships dot the sky like enormous whales. Tiny four-winged airplanes buzz them like bees.

Sweet Pea, Rocket, Blondie and Amber sit on artillery cases, waiting. They face an enormous fireplace, all that's left of a once beautiful chateau. They're confident, tough and sexy in their outfits from the show. They bristle with machine guns, shotguns, dueling pistols, tomahawks and grenades. They look like they raided a war museum.

An explosion close by rocks the chateau. The Wise Man steps out from behind the fireplace. It's the same Wise Man from the Japanese temple. He's dressed in a uniform of a French officer. Babydoll walks up to the girls.

SWEET PEA

He's about to start the briefing.

He points to a blackboard, the same one from the dressing room. A crude chalk drawing outlines their mission.

WISE MAN

We are here, and this bunker is where the map is. Your mission is to retrieve it. This first part you run like hell. Then once you've reached the trenches the real fun begins.

The chimney is hit again. The Wise Man gestures behind them. A handful of YOUNG SOLDIERS hardened by war stand behind them.

WISE MAN (CONT'D)

These boys will guide you to the enemy line.

He takes a rifle with an infrared scope and eyes the machine gun nest that's been firing on them.

He focuses on the shooter's eyes blazing with a demonic fire. He shoots and takes him out.

WISE MAN (CONT'D)

And one more thing... Good luck.

They engage their weapons. Babydoll heads out, the girls follow. They are accompanied by "doughboys" who fall in around them. A blaze of machine gun fire drops a couple doughboys.

The girls scramble into a shell hole and spread out. They continue the charge as explosions rip around them. Shooting blindly they make their way through the carnage of dead bodies. Tearing through barbed wire they run across an open field.

A flash of light from above and shocking BOOM! A gigantic zeppelin bursts into flames above them. They scramble for cover as it descends and explodes beside them. The concussion knocks them to the ground. Babydoll looks out, the music warps in silence, the sound of the battle slowly comes back to her ears.

They help each other up. Finding the trenches they drop in. They immediately encounter a group of massive GERMANS in gas masks. Babydoll deflects gunfire with her shortsword. A bayonet thrusts but misses Babydoll's heart as it pins her against the dirt wall. She swings her shortsword knocking the gas mask off the German. Not a man, but a demon stares back at her and yells. He pulls a long dagger from his side. He thrusts it at Babydoll just as a shotgun blast takes off half his head. Babydoll's frozen, she looks to the side at Sweet Pea standing with a smoking shotgun.

Babydoll nods back in thanks. Sweet Pea pulls the bayonet out releasing Babydoll. The nightmare boils around them. They fall back in with the others and fight for their lives against an army of pure evil. The last doughboys fall with the demons. The girls look at each other, torn and covered in blood and mud. They reload and head forward through the high walls of the trenches. Body parts stick out from the dirt walls.

The sound of flesh being eaten and dogs fighting. They look around a corner, three giant WAR DOGS feast on the dead. Through the blood, one war dog catches a scent. It looks towards them, its eyes burn with a glow. The dogs charge, the girls fall back. Two dogs run past Babydoll, she fires her .45 at the last one. She hits it three times, it keeps coming. She somersaults over it grabbing the dog's head. Buries her shortsword into the back of its skull. Amber screams as she and Blondie are trapped underneath one of the dogs.

Both hold its head as it snaps and drools trying to connect. Sweet Pea is hit by the charging dog, her weapon's knocked away. The dog growls and steps closer, Rocket shoots it from behind. It turns to face her.

Rocket looks at a soldier, half dead, his head and chest stick out of the wall. The dog lunges, Rocket moves, the dog clamps down on the soldier, he screams in agony. Rocket fires two shotgun blasts point blank into the dog's head, it drops dead. The soldier is silent. Blondie and Amber kick their dog off of them. Before it can attack again everyone opens fire on it. The dog crumbles to a smoking heap of meat.

Zig zagging through the trenches they see the bunker. Machine gun nests sit outside the door. Babydoll, Rocket and Sweet Pea throw hand grenades. The bunker explodes.

The girls move in, knocking away the burning rubble. The roof is open to the sky, they enter the devastated room. A DEMON COMMANDER sits at a desk. Behind him, the map hangs on the wall. He's untouched by the blast. He stands, he is enormous. His face and gas mask have melted into one piece. The girls attack firing, he is unfazed by the bullets. He knocks the desk away and walks towards them. Sweet Pea makes her way towards the map. He grabs Amber and throws her into Babydoll. Rocket and Blondie fire at him with all they've got. He turns on them, grabs Blondie by the throat and lifts her into the air. Babydoll charges and cuts off his arm with her shortsword, he howls. Sweet Pea rolls up the map and whistles. The roar of approaching enemy troops thunder outside. From above, a rope ladder from a giant airship drops into the room. The girls run for it grabbing hold, it starts to lift. Babydoll helps Blondie up, they grab the ladder. The commander lunges and grabs hold of the last rung. They rise into the air. Babydoll swings her sword and chops off his gas mask. An evil mouth grins back.

She takes a step up and cuts the last rung of the ladder. The Commander falls to his awaiting troops below.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

Babydoll is frozen in her final pose. She looks around the room in a hyper daze as the girls erupt into applause. Blue closes his mouth and smiles at Babydoll. He walks over to Mrs. Shultz.

BLUE

My God, that was nice work... Gives me an idea. What about a private show tomorrow night for the Big Boss?

(MORE)

BLUE (CONT'D)

Nothing touchy-feely, just something to get him and his boys wound up, ready to spend some money. All she has to do is what she did just now.

MRS. SHULTZ

She's not ready. It's too raw. She doesn't even have a costume yet... There's no sets, it's out of the question.

BLUE

Are you kidding? She's more than ready. She doesn't need any of that shit. She's perfect.

MRS. SHULTZ

I still say she's not ready.

BLUE

So work with her if it makes you feel better, but either way I want her up there tomorrow night, got it?

He walks away, Mrs. Shultz is not happy. She cracks her staff on the floor.

MRS. SHULTZ

I'll see what I can do.

BLUE

Thatta girl. Let's not forget about tonight though. We're gonna have a full house.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Sweet Pea heads down the hall, she looks back to see if she's followed. Turning the corner she slams into Blue coming the other way, she doesn't stop.

SWEET PEA

Oh sorry, Blue.

Blue watches her curiously.

INT. BLUE'S OFFICE - DAY

Blue walks into his room, a certain smell is in the air. He walks up and touches the copy machine, it's warm.

"What's going on?" He looks closely around the room, something's out of place. The map is slightly crooked. He walks up to it, studying it closely. It has new pinhole marks in the wall. He sits in his chair.

MONTAGE OF A NIGHT AT THE BROTHEL

INT. MAIN STAGE - NIGHT

Sets and backdrops of mountain ranges and city skylines pass each other. Props are pushed into position. Ropes and pulleys guide a large statue of Chairman Mao as stagehands prepare for the night. Music pumps through the speakers, Mrs. Shultz checks the quality with the soundman. An electrician checks the lights, bringing them up, dimming them down.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - SAME TIME

Cocktail girls walk the tables turning on the small lamps. Blue is dressed sharp in his purple suit, checks his watch. He drinks a tall glass of whiskey, everything looks ready. The stage manager gives him a nod. Blue leaves the room.

INT. SECURITY CHECK POINTS - SAME TIME

Blue passes through three separate gates. Each one monitored by a guard.

INT. SIDE DOOR - SAME TIME

Passing the last gate Blue adjusts his suit. He walks up to the side door, pulls the key from around his neck. Unlocks the massive dead bolt with a "CLANK," pushes the heavy door open with a "WHOOSH."

EXT. SIDE DOOR - SAME TIME

Expensive cars pull up as valets open doors. Criminals, gangsters, dark characters of the night emerge. Sunglasses, watches, diamonds, and guns sparkle in the night as an endless flow of decadence rolls into the Brothel. Blue smiles at all the money. He shouts hellos and greetings. Whispers sweet secrets and lies into the ears of the richest looking crooks.

INT. COAT CHECK ROOM - SAME TIME

Guns, assorted weapons and money are dropped into individual storage bins. The client is issued a ticket with a menu. Everything from drinks, to chips, to girls, to favors.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - SAME TIME

The room is a flourish of color and movement as the girls get ready. Extravagant costumes of feathers and flash are squeezed into. Make-up mirrors covered with souvenirs, photos and memorabilia are stared longingly into as the girls glamour up. Just before leaving for the stage one of the girls does a shot of rum.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - SAME TIME

The house is packed. The camera pans through the dark and dangerous crowd. Famous for all the wrong reasons.

Gangsters party, cocktail girls deliver drinks.

INT. MAIN STAGE - SAME TIME

Amber performs in a stylish communist red outfit. It's a spectacular production of The Chinese Cultural Revolution.

INT. BOOKING WINDOW - SAME TIME

The gangsters crowd the window. A guard arranges the girls to meet with them, stamping tickets, issuing room numbers.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Babydoll changes the sheets on a bed as a client and his girl put their clothes on.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - SAME TIME

A rough bald-headed thug loses at cards. He throws the table, pulls out a hidden sawed off shotgun.

INT. CLIENT BEDROOM - SAME TIME

A girl makes love to a guy. Straddling his waist she bucks, throwing her head back wildly. Blue watches, unnoticed in the shadows.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - SAME TIME

Bouncers in riot gear take position near the card table. The rest of the lounge continues to party.

A Gangster sits on his chair and opens his arms. He extends his hands to the thug holding the shotgun. Suddenly cards shoot out from his wrists. The Gangster ducks for the table as the thug is hit by the cards. The thug fires, blowing a hole in the table.

INT. CLIENT BEDROOM - SAME TIME

The guards spray the two with bullets. Babydoll watches in horror from the hallway.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - SAME TIME

A bouncer fires his riot gun at the thug BOOM... BOOM. Two rubber bullets the size of beer cans cripple the man. The bouncers descend on the table beating the gangs with clubs.

INT. CLIENT BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Blue takes the dead client's coat. He pulls out an envelope with two plane tickets, he tears them in half. Babydoll watches from the doorway.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - SAME TIME

A golden dragon jumps over the great wall of China.

The crowd goes wild.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

It's the end of the night. Sweet Pea and Rocket, dressed in bathrobes, sit next to each other looking into their make-up mirrors. Sweet Pea takes a shot of rum as she removes her make-up. A few girls rise from the large row of mirrors heading for bed leaving Sweet Pea and Rocket alone in the dimly lit dressing room.

ROCKET

Sweet Pea.

SWEET PEA

Yeah.

Rocket looks around to make sure they are alone.

ROCKET

What if this works? What if we go home?

SWEET PEA

Don't get your hopes up. And if someone hears us...

ROCKET

Don't be so tough all the time. I know you're thinking about it too.

SWEET PEA

No, I am not.

ROCKET

(with a smile)

Yeah, you are, you grumpy bitch. Tell the truth.

SWEET PEA

Alright... Alright. I'll admit I have given it some thought.

ROCKET

I knew it. Ha.

Sweet Pea slides closer to her sister.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

I wonder if they changed our rooms.

SWEET PEA

Dad probably did. He always wanted an office or a boy.

ROCKET

We weren't exactly the sweet girls Mom wanted either.

SWEET PEA

Speak for yourself.

ROCKET

Hey.

SWEET PEA

Kidding.

They look at each other. Sweet Pea pushes the hair out of Rocket's eyes.

ROCKET

I miss her.

They sit for a moment and then Sweet Pea to break the silence...

SWEET PEA

You need new shoes.

ROCKET

Are you kidding?

She pushes her chair back and takes a few steps away from Sweet Pea, then lifts her bathrobe above her knees revealing her worn sneakers with the worn gold leather wings sewn onto the sides.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

They're my favorite.

SWEET PEA

I couldn't tell.

ROCKET

They're gonna fly me home.

She clicks them together like Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz." Sweet Pea laughs smiling at her sister.

SWEET PEA

Ok... Ok, come on, let's get out of here and get some sleep.

The two sisters laugh their way out of the dressing room shutting the lights off as they leave.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

The girls have just finished rehearsing. Their bodies glow with sweat as they warm down on the bar. Warm sunlight streams in from the high window as Mrs. Schultz returns to her office. Sweet Pea turns from watching Mrs. Schultz go to Amber, Blondie, Rocket and Babydoll.

SWEET PEA

The Big Boss comes tonight, and I've never seen him without a big stogie in his mouth.

AMBER

I hate those cigars. I can't get that stink out of my hair.

The girls look at Amber.

AMBER (CONT'D)

What?

SWEET PEA

You have to get his lighter.

AMBER

I'm not doing that.

ROCKET

Yes you are, we need it.

AMBER

Come on, be reasonable.

SWEET PEA

Amber, he's your client.

AMBER

But what if I screw up?

ROCKET

We got your back. You can do this.

AMBER

He keeps it here. Ya know...

She touches her chest.

AMBER (CONT'D)

...in his breast pocket.

SWEET PEA

So you do the old kiss, then rub his chest, reach in - bam! You're gold.

AMBER

Yeah, kiss the neck. That's good...

The girls laugh. Rocket slides over to Babydoll and the talk turns quieter.

ROCKET

Thanks for the other day.

BABYDOLL

For what?

ROCKET

The Cook.

BABYDOLL

It was nothing.

ROCKET

Shut up. No one takes a risk for anybody in here. Thank you.

BABYDOLL

You're welcome.

ROCKET

You have family?

BABYDOLL

...no.

Rocket sees she's hit a nerve.

ROCKET

I'm sorry, I forgot you were an orphan. I ran away from mine. At the time I thought I was pretty smart. Shows what I know.

She laughs.

ROCKET (CONT'D)

Sweet Pea followed, she's always looked out for me.

BABYDOLL

She still does.

ROCKET

I know, big sisters. What are you gonna do... She thinks she's my Mom. You ever wish you could take something back? Something you said or something you did.

BABYDOLL

All the time.

ROCKET

Me too... me too.

TITLE OVER BLACK: REHEARSAL

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

MRS. SHULTZ (V.O. OVER BLACK)

I want you to just relax. You're
going to do just fine tonight.

The girls get ready for the night's private show. Mrs.
Shultz stands in the center of the room looking at Babydoll.

MRS. SHULTZ (CONT'D)

Now. (In German) Let's move!

Mrs. Schultz storms from the room. Babydoll finishes her
make-up. She goes to the chalkboard, spins it. The word MAP
has a line through it. She takes the chalk and puts a line
through FIRE.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - NIGHT

Double doors swing open, two men enter. They look tough,
hard and efficient. They scan the room clocking all the
workers. Everything's been rearranged. A red crushed velvet
chair sits center stage. One touches his ear, whispering
into a microphone. Blue does a fat line of cocaine. The
BIG BOSS enters the room. There is an aura of power and
money around him. He wears a hand-tailored suit and shoes,
all style. The most expensive watch glitters from his wrist.
He sits down in his chair, the two men stand behind him. Blue
walks up and hands the Big Boss a cigar. Amber walks up, he
opens his arms. Amber curls up on his lap and watches as he
lights the cigar. She looks nervous as he puts the lighter
in his breast pocket. Mrs. Shultz walks out on the stage.

MRS. SHULTZ

Gentlemen, welcome. We have a new
girl tonight, something extra
special. It is a work in progress.
So I apologize in advance for the
raw nature of the performance... I
will say, however, that's part of
the charm.

The Big Boss reaches into his chest pocket. He pulls out a
gold lighter with an ornate dragon sculpted on the side. The
dragon has ruby eyes and tiny diamonds that sparkle from its
mouth. Amber eyes the lighter. He strikes the flame and
lights his cigar. Blue signals to the stage manager, the
house lights come down.

INT. BACKSTAGE - SAME TIME

Babydoll's heart races, breathing steady, adrenaline flows as she prepares herself. The music starts. It sounds like metal being forged on an anvil. A stage hand turns an old wheel, thick velvet curtains open. Babydoll sways in the spotlight, she slowly closes her eyes.

INT. B-24 LIBERATOR - NIGHT

Babydoll opens her eyes. She stands with the other four girls. They wear parachutes, leather and armor mixed with their stage outfits. The roar of the wind and the engines pound with the music. The airplane rocks, dodging a fireball, the girls adjust like gymnasts.

Amber flies the plane. Babydoll looks out the open door. They circle above a castle carved into stone against a desolate medieval landscape. In and around the castle a war rages between BLACK KNIGHTS and DARK ORCS who protect it. Fireballs rocket towards them from below. The Wise Man stands by the blackboard. He points at a crude drawing of their next mission as fireballs rake the plane.

WISE MAN

Amber will keep the bird on station. Blondie will operate the mini-gun. The rest will drop. Once in the castle make your way to the labyrinth below. This is where the nest is. When you find the baby, you'll need to slit its throat. Down inside its neck are two crystals that when struck together produce the most magnificent fire you'll ever see.

He steps to the door and looks down.

WISE MAN (CONT'D)

Oh and one more thing. Don't wake the mother.

He smiles and jumps out of the plane. A fireball explodes off the nose of the plane.

Amber struggles with the controls, Blondie grabs hold of the GE mini-gun in the window and starts firing. She takes out the orcs running the fireball catapult.

BLONDIE

HA HA! Eat lead, you ugly motherfuckers!

Her machine gun roars as she continues to lay it down. They strap themselves down with shotguns, G36 machine guns and close-range firepower. Babydoll grabs a spool of rope. They look out the doorway and nod to one another, Babydoll jumps.

EXT. CASTLE WALL - SAME TIME

Orcs reload a second catapult, take aim and fire.

EXT. SKY - SAME TIME

Babydoll, Sweet Pea and Rocket fall with tactical parachutes. The fireball screams towards them, they cut quick, it blazes between them. They drop towards the wall coming fast upon a war. Black Knights climb ladders and scale the castle. Streams of molten fire pour from walls to the Black Knights below.

EXT. CASTLE WALL - SAME TIME

They land on the wall, taking out the orcs at the launcher. Release their parachutes, grab their weapons and head into battle. Heavy wooden bridges criss cross the center of the castle. Babydoll leads the way with her .45 and short sword. She cuts down orcs and frees Black Knights. They join them in their quest. Back to back they fight their way along the high wooden paths.

Up ahead a GIANT ORC swings a battle axe, chopping his way through a gauntlet of Black Knights. With brute force he tops heads and cracks bodies. He sees the girls. Babydoll fights forward, their paths collide. They battle, mixing styles of fighting. The savageness of a monster against the raw ballet of a samurai. His power overcomes Babydoll, she's hit.

Slow motion as she almost falls off the walkway. She looks down, enormous cauldrons of fire burning below.

Rocket catches Babydoll and pulls her back. Sweet Pea fires her shotgun at the Giant, distracting him. Babydoll ties her rope to the edge of the walkway. The Giant Orc chops with his axe. Babydoll ducks as the axe slams into the bridge, shaking the structure. She ties the other end of the rope to her ankle. She grabs onto the orcs arm as it lifts the axe into the air. She swings from his arm and kicks him in the head.

The Giant Orc lunges at Babydoll, she runs towards the edge. He chases her and stops as she dives off. She freefalls to the burning cauldrons.

Reaches the end of her rope and swings under the bridge. Her momentum lifts her up onto the otherside. With a swing of her shortsword she cuts the rope and lands back on the bridge. She stands between Rocket and Sweet Pea. They charge the Giant Orc standing with his back to them. They slam into him, knocking him off the bridge. The Giant falls and lands in a burning cauldron below.

The airplane swoops low and rakes the castle with gunfire.

The girls reach the castle floor. They stop at the archway to the main gates to reload. The battle is boiling out of control. Babydoll takes note of the stone archway. The Black Knights open the main gates. A sea of Knights pour in. The three girls run with them to the castle entrance, the Black Knights being killed along the way. The girls reach the castle and descend the stairs into darkness.

INT. CASTLE - SAME TIME

Torches light the way as they travel a labyrinth of huge tunnels. The sound of the battle thunders above. Babydoll grabs a torch as they wind through the maze. Bones crack at their feet as they pass the remains of orcs and Black Knights. Babydoll holds a finger to her lips, the sound of purring like an enormous cat can be heard. She comes upon a nest made of thatched roofs of houses.

Quietly they climb the sides and look at a sleeping baby dragon the size of a VW bus. Its nostrils flare to an unfamiliar smell, its eyes flash open. The dragon snaps at Sweet Pea, who dodges its teeth. Babydoll steps on its neck and chops off its head. The body rears up then collapses dead. The deed is done. Babydoll drops down, reaches into the hot flesh and searches for the crystals. Pulling them out she cuts the tendons that hold them in place. Her forearms and hands drip with blood. She takes the two crystals, sparks them together, a brilliant flash lights the room. She drops them in a leather satchel tied to her waist. The music breaks into a soft whisper. Suddenly, from above an orc leaps down at Babydoll. Sweet Pea unslings her shotgun and blasts the orc. The sound echoes down the tunnels, they stand in silence. Then from the bowels of the castle a deep breath inhales from the darkness. Then the music pounds again.

BABYDOLL

Move it.

They run fast as the sound of thunder approaches. An ancient shriek rips through the tunnels. Hot air rushes up from behind, the girls turn down another tunnel. An inferno blazes past them licking their heels. They continue running.

The sound of the war booms louder as they ascend the steps. Reaching the top Babydoll parries a blow then sticks an orc in the throat with her sword. The castle thunders from below. The girls rush to the side and clear the entrance.

Overhead shot of the castle grounds as an enormous dragon is born from the castle's entrance. It flaps its mighty wings and sprays a liquid fire that engulfs the battling orcs and knights. The dragon lands on the ground and scurries like a lizard along the castle grounds and walls, chomping on anything in its reckless path.

INT. B-24 LIBERATOR - SAME TIME

The plane rattles and shakes. Amber's eyes are afire with the madness below.

AMBER

Let's toast this bitch!!

She drops the plane and heads straight for the dragon. She reaches back, Blondie pulls her out of the chair. They jump from the plane.

INT. CASTLE GROUNDS - SAME TIME

Babydoll stands with Sweet Pea and Rocket, she looks to the front gates. The dragon looks up to the sound of the screaming airplane. The dragon lets out a blast of fire that engulfs the plane. Babydoll runs with the girls towards the front gates. The plane is a ball of fire as it explodes into the dragon. The dragon is knocked back and shaken. The debris settles as Orcs and Black Knights lay scattered on the floor from the explosion.

Babydoll stands between the castle gates. She pulls out the crystals from the leather satchel. Sweet Pea pulls Rocket to the side. Babydoll hits the crystals, the dragon sees the flash. It howls in anger and charges at Babydoll, she doesn't move. The dragon stretches its neck out and dives at Babydoll. She leaps to the side and somersaults off the archway and into the air. The dragon's head slams into the archway, shaking the castle walls. Its head is stuck as Babydoll finishes her spin and lands on its head. She takes her sword and buries it between the dragon's eyes.

INT. CLUB LOUNGE - NIGHT

Babydoll on stage is in her final killing pose. There is a stunned silence. Blue gently backhands a tear from his cheek. The Big Boss and his two men sit mesmerized.

Amber is gone, the Big Boss slowly rises. We see the ash on his cigar is four inches long. Babydoll holds the pose on stage, her body rising and falling with her heavy breath, then the Big Boss claps his hands together, the ash falls in slow motion. As the bodyguards join in, the Big Boss turns to Blue with a look of disbelief and gratitude. He absently takes the cigar from his mouth, still stunned by the experience. He notices it's no longer lit and he pats his breast pocket, all the time the bodyguards applauding behind him, a look of puzzlement crosses the Big Boss's face. The curtain closes.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Extreme close-up, lighter. We see the dragon etched on the side. The lighter is thumbed and is lit. We pull back to see Amber with it. She is smiling. The dressing room is full of only our girls. Amber snaps the lighter closed and tosses it to Sweet Pea.

AMBER

I knew I could do it. Damn, that girl is good.

SWEET PEA

See what you can do? Wow.

Sweet Pea turns to Rocket and tosses it.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

Check it out.

Rocket looks at the lighter.

ROCKET

Half way home.

BLONDIE

Hey, let me see it.

Babydoll enters from the stage shining with sweat, but happy to see the girls so pumped.

BABYDOLL

How'd we do?

Rocket tosses the lighter to Babydoll.

ROCKET

Two for two.

BABYDOLL

Nice.

Babydoll pulls her dressing table out from the wall, the mirror shaking as it scratches across the floor. She kneels down and with some seamstresses' tape, she begins to tape it to the back of the dressing table. We see the map folded and taped on the back of the drawer.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

Let me just put it with the map.

She pulls some long strips over the lighter and stands. She puts her back against the table and begins to push it back.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

You did good, Amber.

AMBER

Thanks, Baby.

And Babydoll gives Amber a hug. Sweet Pea looks at Rocket and smiles. Just then the door is whipped open and Blue walks in, his men behind him.

BLUE

What is this... Some kind of a celebration...

He looks around the room scanning the girls' faces.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Are congratulations in order?

He looks into Sweet Pea's eyes. She is as hard as stone.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Hmmm...

ROCKET

It was this Babydoll's first time on stage. You know how scary that can be, Blue, and she did well. That's all.

Blue looks around, his eyes settle on Blondie. He moves close to her.

BLUE

Of course, the bond of the theater... What else could it be? It's not like you have anything to hide, do you?

He gets right in Blondie's face, his voice growing more intense.

BLUE (CONT'D)

It's not like anyone was in my office fucking with my shit. It's not like people are missing things, small objects here and there.

Blondie begins to shake with fear.

BLUE (CONT'D)

No, that would be outrageous, and we have such an obvious explanation for your exuberance. The fraternity of performers, the adrenaline of the curtain rising... Maybe it's my fault. Maybe I've become too... familiar with you girls. Maybe I need to make an example of someone, reestablish the parameter of our relationship.

Blondie looks down, she is too freaked out to keep her cool. Blue smiles and looks at Babydoll. Amber steps away from Babydoll as Blue approaches, now looking right at her.

BLUE (CONT'D)

How about you?

He gets right up to her. She looks into his eyes and smiles ever so slightly.

BLUE (CONT'D)

You think you're special, don't you? That the rules somehow don't apply to you. That you are... untouchable. I'm gonna let you in on a little secret. If I was not going to make a small fortune on you with the High Roller, I would take you right now, and I would fuck that little smile right off your face.

With that he turns away from Babydoll and addresses the room.

BLUE (CONT'D)

It saddens me that I have to resort to threats with you girls. I thought we were past that. I just need this bullshit to stop or... like I said, out of mutual respect, we need things to go back to normal, ok?

Blue gives Blondie one last look and marches out of the room. The door slams behind him. The girls are silent. Amber puts a hand on Blondie's shoulder.

SWEET PEA

Well, so much for that little experiment.

ROCKET

What are you saying?

SWEET PEA

I'm saying it's over. It was fun, but it's over. Right, Baby?

BABYDOLL

I don't know.

Sweet Pea moves across to Babydoll.

SWEET PEA

Whaddaya mean, "You don't know?" Blue is on to us. We had a deal. You said yourself if I say it's over, it's over.

Rocket shakes her head.

ROCKET

But we're so close.

SWEET PEA

Did you not hear Blue? He knows what we're doing. He knows we're up to something. If he catches us again, it won't be a lecture, I promise you.

BABYDOLL

But Sweet Pea, Rocket's right. The High Roller comes tomorrow. If we just stay with the plan...

SWEET PEA

No. You're fucked, literally, and we're out.

Sweet Pea looks to Rocket.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

Right, Rocket?

She looks at Babydoll and takes a deep breath.

ROCKET
I wanna finish this. It's our only
chance to go home.

Sweet Pea is stunned.

SWEET PEA
You're gonna risk your life for
this pipe dream. You're gonna
choose her over me after all I've
sacrificed for you.

Rocket steps toward Babydoll.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)
Well, fuck you too.

Sweet Pea turns and storms out.

TITLE OVER BLACK: SHOW TIME

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - MORNING OF THE BIG SHOW

BABYDOLL (V.O. OVER BLACK)
Ok, now that we're short one, we're
all gonna have to step up.

Two rows of dryers hum rhythmically as Babydoll, Amber,
Blondie and Rocket talk under the greenish top light of the
bare fluorescent bulbs.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)
So let's go over it one more time.
Amber is in charge of music and
you'll also be the lookout.
Rocket, you'll have the regrettable
task of helping to distract the
Cook, and Blondie, since Sweet Pea
won't be joining us, you gotta pull
the knife from the Cook's belt
while we have his attention. Are
you gonna be ok with that?

All the girls nod except Blondie who looks away, distracted.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)
Blondie, you with us?

Blondie does not respond.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)
Blondie!

Blondie looks slowly back to Babydoll.

BLONDIE

Yeah, I heard you.

BABYDOLL

Well, are you gonna be ok?

BLONDIE

Yeah, I'm good.

Babydoll holds her look a moment longer searching for some reassurance, gets none, then turns back to the rest of the girls.

BABYDOLL

We meet in the kitchen in one hour.
That gives us just enough time to
pull this off before the High
Roller arrives. Do your best to
act natural 'til then.

The girls scatter. Blondie lingers for a moment in the laundry room then picks up a stack of towels and moves down the hall. She passes guards and other girls heading to the dressing room before the show, gossiping, bustling this way and that. She moves slowly past them 'til she arrives at the Rehearsal Hall. She puts the towels on a rack to one side of the giant chipped mirror. She arranges the towels neatly then turns to leave, but catches a glimpse of herself in the mirror. She looks at herself for a moment then walks up to the mirror looking right into her own eyes. It is too much for her, and she begins to shake her head slowly then closes her eyes and turns around, putting her back to the mirror. As she begins to weep quietly she slides down the mirror 'til she is sitting on the floor. She draws her knees in and grips them. She begins to sob harder. Mrs. Schultz comes out of her office looking for the source of the crying.

MRS. SCHULTZ

Who's there? Who is that?

Blondie does not reply, but Mrs. Schultz sees her on the floor with her back against the mirror.

MRS. SCHULTZ (CONT'D)

Child, what are you doing down
there? Are you alright?

Blondie rubs her eyes, embarrassed that she has been caught in such an exposed position.

BLONDIE

I'm sorry. It's nothing.

Blondie begins to move as if to get up, but Mrs. Schultz crouches in front of her.

MRS. SCHULTZ

What's wrong? Did someone hurt you?

BLONDIE

No, it's not like that. It's really... It's nothing.

MRS. SCHULTZ

It's ok... You can tell me - I'm a good listener. It's what I do.

Mrs. Schultz rocks onto her knees, her hands smoothing her tight skirt as light streams in dusty shafts from the high windows.

MRS. SCHULTZ (CONT'D)

You know, sometimes it helps to talk these things out. Now what's wrong? It can't be that bad.

Blondie sniffles and looks into Mrs. Schultz's blue eyes.

BLONDIE

They'd kill me if I said anything.

Mrs. Schultz smiles.

MRS. SCHULTZ

My goodness, that sounds a bit extreme. Don't you think it can't be as serious as all that?

Mrs. Schultz puts her hand on Blondie's cheek and gently wipes a tear.

MRS. SCHULTZ (CONT'D)

Now tell me what's wrong, child.

BLONDIE

All right... I'm gonna trust you. Promise you can keep a secret?

INT. KITCHEN

Babydoll stares at the clock shaking her head, then lets out a deep breath. She peels potatoes slowly as she watches the seconds tick by. Rocket crosses the kitchen to her.

ROCKET
(quietly)
Where the fuck is she?

BABYDOLL
I don't know.

Babydoll looks over to the Cook who is chopping something, unaware of the girls' plan.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)
It doesn't matter... It's over....
So close. Oh well. Sweet Pea was right.

ROCKET
I'm sorry. Are you sure we can't do this with the three of us?

Babydoll takes a potato out of the metal bucket half-filled with water.

BABYDOLL
Yeah, I'm not gonna do something stupid and get you all in trouble. You know what? We got this far, right? That's something not a lot of girls could do, what we've done. And... I mean, how bad can the High Roller be?

Babydoll tries to smile.

Just then another bucket of potatoes is slammed down on the table. Rocket and Babydoll turn as if caught to see Sweet Pea wiping her hands on a dingy apron.

SWEET PEA
Don't you girls have some work you should be doing?

Rocket's face lights up.

ROCKET
Oh God, Sweet Pea, you came to help us.

SWEET PEA
No. I came to keep you from getting killed. There's a difference.

Babydoll nods to Sweet Pea. The girls exchange a moment of respect before Babydoll speaks.

BABYDOLL
(quietly)
Thanks.

SWEET PEA
We're not done with this, I mean
you and me. It's not ok.

BABYDOLL
I'm still gonna say thanks.

SWEET PEA
Say whatever you want, but I don't
think we have a lot of time so if
you're done with the pleasantries,
I think you got a dance to do.

And we cut to a close-up of a cord being pulled from a socket with a spark. The classical music stops, the Cook looks up from his work. A folding chair is snapped open in the center of the kitchen. Amber slides a mop handle through the pulls of the double doors. Babydoll wipes the stainless-steel table clean with one sweep of her arm, dumping the buckets of potatoes, water and all, onto the floor. The Cook puts his knife in his belt, and with the others moves slowly toward Babydoll, who is climbing on to the table.

COOK
What the hell are you doing?

Rocket stops him by putting herself between him and Babydoll. She puts two fingers on his chest and pushes. He stumbles back into the folding chair, perplexed by her mischievous smile.

Amber plunks the large radio down on the corner of Baby's table, then plugs it back in. The cord snakes across the floor, dangerously close to the spilled water. We see the water is still moving, and that there is a fray in the cord.

Sweet Pea tunes the radio. It squawks with static before we land on a station with a strong signal. We hear a deejay introduce a song. Sweet Pea looks at Babydoll, who nods. The music starts to swell through the room. Rocket straddles the Cook to his amazement. Amber looks out the round windows in the double doors, and the coast is clear. She nods as Sweet Pea eyes the knife on the Cook's belt. Babydoll begins to groove with the music. Rocket leans in to the Cook's ear. His eyes land on the swaying girl who stands on a stainless-steel table in the center of the kitchen.

ROCKET
You're gonna wanna watch this.

Babydoll closes her eyes, and as she opens them again, the music echoes off the glass of modern skyscrapers. The chalkboard is set upon the rooftop heliport, 80 stories above the teeming city. A matte black Black Hawk helicopter idles nearby as the the Wise Man takes the girls through the plan. Amber listens with her candy-apple red pilot's helmet under her arm and lollipop in her mouth. Babydoll checks the breach of her M4 as if by reflex as she listens. Sweet Pea and Rocket adjust each other's rigs tightly, straps on harnesses each of them wear.

WISE MAN

The nuke is on a hijacked train.
There are a dozen or so gunmen on
board. The idea is simple.

The Wise Man gestures to the diagram on the blackboard that shows the bomb being lifted from the train on a line with the helicopter.

WISE MAN (CONT'D)

Dispatch the gunmen, disarm the
nuke, then steal it.

The helicopter rips through the night, flying down the canyons of glass toward the elevated train tracks. Wind howls through the cabin. Babydoll points past Amber.

BABYDOLL

There it is.

We see the train rocket down the tracks toward the helicopter. The girls strap on small jet packs and do final checks with their guns as the helicopter begins to pace the train.

WISE MAN (V.O.)

Oh yeah - one more thing. The
train is on a collision course with
the 10 P.M. Express out of
Kalamazoo, so if I were you, I'd
hurry.

The girls stand in the door of the helicopter then use a short blast from their jet packs to land on the roof of the speeding train. Babydoll, Rocket and Sweet Pea work quickly to lay an 8-foot square of plastic explosive on the roof of the train. Once the explosives are set, Babydoll gives a thumbs-up to Rocket who squeezes the detonator.

The thin sheet metal peels back and is ripped away by the howling wind of the moving train. The girls drop into the gaping hole, instantly engaging the gunmen within. The gun battle is intense and at point-blank range.

Babydoll in the heat of battle has to transition to hand-to-hand. At the center of the train car is the freezer-size, hi-tech atomic bomb. One of the gunmen purposely targets the bomb. Babydoll is able to draw her sword in time to block the bullets as Sweet Pea takes him out.

Rocket moves to the bomb's hi-tech keypad where she cracks open the playing-card size plastic holder which contains the codes to defuse the bomb.

We see the counter at 25 seconds. Rocket begins to punch in the codes when from behind her, a gunman appears in the doorway, firing. The bullets spray and spark around Rocket. Sweet Pea spins in the nick of time, firing her side arm. She drops the gunman. Rocket nods a thank you to her sister, Sweet Pea, who smiles, then she quickly returns to the keypad punching in the last 3 digits. The countdown stops at 18 seconds.

Babydoll and Sweet Pea work like a pit crew unbolting the nuke from the floor of the train. Amber radios down from the helicopter which has dropped a cable through the hole in the top of the train.

AMBER

Yeah... You guys better hustle
because here comes the Express
right on time.

And looking past Amber into the distance, we can see the Xenon-powered headlight of the oncoming train with its promise of a 200 mile-an-hour, head-on impact.

BABYDOLL

This will only take a second.

The girls clip cables to each of the four corners of the bomb. As Rocket looks down at her jet pack, she notices it's been shot. Liquid fuel runs out of it. She makes a silent note to herself as she gives Babydoll the "ok." Babydoll climbs onto the roof of the train. The helo roars above her. She clips herself on to the cable which goes taut with the 2,000 lb. payload. Sweet Pea and Rocket swing up on to the roof blasted by the wind of the speeding train.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

Piece a'cake, right?

Rocket smiles then looks down into the cabin where a bloody hand reaches for the keypad, and we see the wounded gunman punching the code into the pad, his trembling finger poised above a flashing button which reads, "Detonate." The girls look at each other, and the music which has accompanied their adventure crackles and whines, then cuts off leaving them in silence. No wind, no roar of the helicopter. Silence - save their breathing.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Oh no.

Babydoll opens her eyes. She stands awkwardly on the stainless-steel table. Her look goes instantly to the radio, her gaze running along the cord 'til she sees what's happened. The water from the spilled potatoes has reached the fray in the cord. It sparks in the puddle. The Cook comes out of his trance induced by Baby's dance. He looks a question to Rocket as he begins to feel he's being played. He looks down. Kneeling next to his chair is Sweet Pea - she holds one of his smaller knives in her hand. Rage fills his eyes as he looks down to the missing knife on his belt. He tosses Rocket to the ground and backhands Sweet Pea hard. The small knife flies from her hand, sliding across the floor to Amber's feet. Stunned, she looks down at it.

The Cook rises, kicking the folding chair back. As he stands, the chair slides - pulling the cord from the radio out of the water with a spark. The music crackles back on. The Cook then pulls his biggest knife - his rage focused on Sweet Pea. In that moment, Blue and two of his men reach the door. He looks in to the kitchen through the round windows and sees the Cook standing over Sweet Pea, knife drawn. He pushes the door - it won't budge. The mop handle rattles between the pulls of the door. He shouts in slow motion, eyes wide with rage.

Babydoll stands stunned, frozen, as the Cook draws his knife back, ready to plunge it home. Rocket launches herself in front of Sweet Pea. As the Cook thrusts his knife forward, Babydoll raises her hand and closes her eyes as not to see her friend stabbed.

Babydoll slowly opens her eyes, her hand still up. Wind pounds her. The music and sound of the helicopter ring in her ears. She instantly pulls her gun and shoots the gunman at the keypad in the forehead. He crumples, but his hand falls onto the flashing button, and the countdown continues. 18, 17, 16...

Rocket instantly shoots the cable just below where Babydoll is hooked to the helicopter.

As the payload is released, the helicopter is flung free with Babydoll spiraling at the end of the cable. Rocket speaks into her headset.

ROCKET

Amber, the bomb is active. Get free, get free.

Eight hundred yards away, the Express rumbles toward them. Down on the counter: 13, 12, 11...

SWEET PEA

Set your pack to "Full Burn."
Let's go.

Rocket smiles and shakes her head, turning to show the bullet hole in her jet pack.

ROCKET

Sorry, mine's fucked. And you know yours will never carry us both.

Sweet Pea furrows her brow. The wind howls between them.

SWEET PEA

Well, we have to try, right? I'm not leaving without you.

ROCKET

Ok, we'll try, but you have to promise me two things.

SWEET PEA

I promise anything you want. But let's go.

The two sisters look at each other, then Rocket moves in close to her sister, looking like she is about to clip her harness to Sweet Pea's. Down at the counter: 10, 9, 8...

ROCKET

Ok, the first thing is you have to promise not to be mad about this.

SWEET PEA

About what?

And Sweet Pea looks down. Rocket has her hand on Sweet Pea's jet pack controller.

ROCKET

This.

And she hits the ignition. Sweet Pea tears off the roof of the train in a column of smoke and fire. She screams away from her sister, the jet pack thrusting her into the sky at 300 miles per hour.

Rocket shrinks into the distance, looking small. Sweet Pea cries out helpless as her jet pack sputters - its fuel consumed by the full-power escape. The engine gives one last defiant burst of power before she begins to free fall toward the city 2,000 feet below. She slowly rotates 'til she is looking down on the forest of skyscrapers. Just as she begins to fall, Babydoll takes hold of her outstretched hand, the tow dangling below the speeding chopper as it powers away from the city.

Back on the roof of the train, Rocket turns to look into the bright white light of the Express as it closes the last 25 yards. Her face overexposes. We see the counter: 3, 2, 1. And as Rocket smiles, we are back with the helicopter.

Babydoll and Sweet Pea squint into the flash of the atomic bomb, and as the chopper speeds away from the growing mushroom cloud, Babydoll closes her eyes, a tear squeezing from its corner.

INT. KITCHEN - THAT SAME MOMENT

There is a loud bang at the door as Blue kicks it, the mop handle holds. Babydoll opens her eyes...

The Cook crouches over Rocket, his hand on the handle of the knife plunged into Rocket's chest, Sweet Pea on the ground. Below them, the moment hangs like some grizzly tableau, then the Cook slowly pulls the blade from Rocket's chest, wobbling back, stunned by what he has done. Rocket falls into Sweet Pea's arms, her breath gurgling and short. Blue kicks at the door again, the mop handle cracks, but does not break.

BLUE

Open this fuckin' door.

Rocket looks up at her sister, blood runs from her mouth as she smiles. Sweet Pea searches her face, helpless.

ROCKET

And the second thing is, tell Mom I love her.

Sweet Pea's face is stitched in pain as she watches the life leaving her sister.

SWEET PEA

I'll tell her. I promise.

And as Rocket dies, the door explodes with the force of Blue's kick, the mop handle splintering apart. Blue takes in the scene for a moment.

BLUE

What the fuck is going on in here?

The Cook stands, not moving. Blue slaps him across the face.

BLUE (CONT'D)

What did you do, you simple fuck?

Blue looks up at Babydoll on the table then to the radio and the folding chair. He shakes his head slowly, the music still crackles through the tiny speakers 'til Blue knocks them to the ground.

Amber looks around the room then down to her feet we see the small knife on the floor in front of her. Amber looks up at Babydoll, their eyes lock, Babydoll nods at her.

Sweet Pea lunges at the Cook, but is caught by Blue's men. Blue moves to the struggling Sweet Pea. He looks at her, but calls to Amber.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Amber, you've got Sweet Pea's slot in tonight's show. Go get ready and don't disappoint me.

He looks at Sweet Pea the whole time.

BLUE (CONT'D)

You were my best girl... Now look at you. Put her in the closet - I'll deal with her later.

The boys drag her out. Amber follows, head down. She chances one last look to Babydoll who watches her go, then looks down to where the knife was on the floor. It's gone. Blue steps up to Babydoll.

BLUE (CONT'D)

And as for you, it's show time.

INT. THE THEATER, BACKSTAGE

Blue peeks out from behind the curtain - it's a full house. He looks to the center of the theater where the High Roller sits backlit, flanked by two beautiful women in white. He is hard to see, but from his silhouette and graceful movements, it is obvious he is not the fat, disgusting mob boss that Blue had painted to Babydoll. A stagehand passes Blue.

STAGEHAND

They want Baby. Blue, people have been talkin' she's gonna bring the house down.

Blue nods to the stagehand, takes one last look at the High Roller who smiles at the Maitre D' as he offers the High Roller a bottle of champagne. Blue pulls the curtain closed and storms back to the dressing room. Mrs. Schultz is putting the line up on the chalkboard. Sweet Pea's name is being erased and Amber's name is in its place. Mrs. Schultz then turns to Babydoll flanked by an old seamstress holding Baby's costume on a hanger. Mrs. Schultz looks at the outfit, inspecting it.

MRS. SCHULTZ

Just in time.

It is the schoolgirl outfit from Baby's fantasy, complete with shoulder holster and pink rubber gun. As Babydoll looks at it, Blue enters, seeing the outfit.

BLUE

Get dressed... Hurry. I got something to say.

Blondie, Amber, Mrs. Schultz and a handful of other girls gather round as Babydoll quickly strips, then dresses, the old seamstress helping her. Blue watches her, smiling, and before she is all buttoned up, he begins.

BLUE (CONT'D)

I try to give you all a good life,
I do. I feel like I treat you
well. I buy you pretty things, I
put a roof over your heads. You're
all like my children. And what do
I ask in return? Just for respect,
honesty... A give and take
relationship.

The girls all look scared by the odd tone to Blue's speech. Blondie looks at Mrs. Schultz, a worried look crosses her face. Blue reaches into the waistband of one of his men, pulling a pistol, waving and gesturing with it as he talks.

BLONDIE

(whispering)
Please, you didn't.

BLUE

But it's come to my attention that a few bad eggs, lead by one in particular, have spit in the face of that generosity and are plotting against me... Me, your father... your lover... your... employer. Plotting to take from me my most precious possessions, your very selves.

The girls look scared as Blue paces in front of them.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Some of your little band have already learned the hard way that the only way out of this place, whether you choose to believe it or not, is with my say so...

He looks around the room at the scared faces, only Babydoll is defiant. Blue nods at her, almost smiling at her strength.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Fortunately our young daughter here, Blondie, realizing the error of her ways, came to us wishing to help guide her sisters off a most dangerous path. Her story at first was unbelievable, but after hearing who was involved, well, it started to make sense.

He moves to the chalkboard and flips it, revealing the list of talismans and the brief description in pictures and words of their retrieval. We see MAP with a line through it, FIRE with a line, and KNIFE with a line. KEY is unmarked. Blue points to the word KNIFE with the barrel of the gun, smiling.

BLUE (CONT'D)

I think this chicken was counted just a little before it hatched. Ain't that right, Amber?

He moves over to her.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Nothing to say?

He circles behind her.

AMBER

Blue, I...you...

BLUE
You know what? It's ok.

And he puts the gun to the back of her head and pulls the trigger. The gun roars.

BABYDOLL
NO!!!!

The mirrors tremble with the concussion.

BLUE
(smiling)
Wow...that was loud.

He looks at Babydoll in her schoolgirl outfit, and it seems to inspire him as he moves to Blondie who begins to sob.

BLUE (CONT'D)
Come now, this will all be over soon and we can get back to business as usual. Blondie, I owe you a deep thanks for all you've done. The only thing is...I hate a snitch... SO.

He raises the gun and fires again. We see the slide eject the cartridge in super slow motion. As Blondie crumbles to the floor, Blue's lustful gaze locks on to Babydoll. It is an angry mix of love and hate. He tosses the gun to his henchmen then gestures for him and everyone to leave.

BLUE (CONT'D)
I hope you've all learned something. Now get these bodies out of here. And the rest of you, don't you have a show to do? Go on, go!!

And the girls, Mrs. Schultz, and the henchmen dragging the dead girls rush from the room leaving Blue and Babydoll alone. Blue looks at Babydoll, who backs up to her dressing table. As Blue presses toward her, his expression - not anger, but an odd sadness - seems to grip him.

BLUE (CONT'D)
Ya know, I've been thinking about all that money you're gonna make me. I've been thinking about his sweaty hands all over you. I've been thinking about all those prying, hungry eyes watching you... Lusting, wanting.

He moves in close to Babydoll, looking at her collar bone, at the breath rising and falling under her crisp, white shirt.

BLUE (CONT'D)

And you would think all that would bring me pleasure... Hell, I'm in the business of pleasure... But ya know what I feel...?

Babydoll puts a defensive hand on Blue's chest as he presses forward.

BABYDOLL

Blue, why don't we talk about this later... Everyone's waiting...

BLUE

I feel like a kid sitting in the corner of the sandbox while everyone plays with my toys but me.

He takes hold of her aggressively. She swings at him, but he catches her arm. There is no magic fighting power here. This is real.

BLUE (CONT'D)

(whispers aggressively)

So ya know what I'm gonna do? I'm taking my toys and I'm going home.

He pushes Babydoll onto her dressing table, her back slams against the mirror, one of the light bulbs explodes. He pulls at her shirt, a button pops. His hands push her short plaid skirt up. She fights him, but he is powered by lust and jealousy. She grits her teeth as she fights, but he forces her legs apart, reaching down to undo his pants. She swings with her free hand and though she strikes him hard, he does not react, just smiling with angry passion. As he grabs a handful of her hair and pulls her head back, she cries out as he presses closer, her hand going desperately to the underside of the table, and we see as the table shudders from the struggle, the underside of the table where they have hidden the other objects. We see taped to the wooden bottom of the table the lighter, the map and as her fingers fumble near the new object and Blue kisses her neck, we see her mouth the words, "Please, Amber," and her hand comes to rest on the handle of the knife. Suddenly her body goes limp in Blue's arms and he can instantly feel the change in tension. He shakes her, but she does not fight. He pushes himself to arm's length. He looks at her. Their eyes meet, then her gaze falls to the key dangling on the chain around his neck. It swings in slow motion.

BLUE (CONT'D)

What's wrong? Lost your fight?

Babydoll lowers her chin, her breathing controlled, her voice calm.

BABYDOLL

No, I just found it.

And she thrusts the knife into Blue's neck, the small blade sinking to the hilt. He grits his teeth and stumbles back, his knees knock together as he staggers. He hunches in agonizing pain. Babydoll steps up to him and rips the key from his neck. Blue falls to his knees, his eyes wide as he looks up at Babydoll. Blood comes between the fingers of the hand that Blue has brought to his neck. The key swings from the chain in Baby's fist.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

You'll never have me... Ever.

And she puts her high heel against his chest and pushes him to the ground. He writhes in pain as Babydoll collects her objects, the lighter, the map, and she takes the bottle of overproof rum from her dressing table.

INT. THE CLOSET

We are in extreme close-up as the teeth of the key push the tumblers. The key turns, and out of darkness a slash of light reveals Sweet Pea in the closet sitting, her knees drawn in, her face red and wet with tears, on a pile of shoes. We see Babydoll standing in the doorway ripping a strip of fabric from the bottom of her shirt and after pouring some rum on it, she begins to stuff it into the bottle.

BABYDOLL

It's time to go.

And Babydoll tosses the lighter to Sweet Pea as she climbs out of the closet.

SWEET PEA

Where's Amber and Blondie?

Babydoll offers the rum soaked fabric to Sweet Pea who strikes the lighter.

BABYDOLL

It's just you and me now.

Babydoll throws the bottle into the closet. It explodes against the back wall, fire washing over the shoes, spreading quickly. Babydoll closes the door.

INT. THE HALLWAYS OF THE BROTHEL

The girls quietly make their way down the halls near the lobby of the theater, unlocking a side door with Blue's key. The girls can hear the crowd chanting for Babydoll. Some of the guards standing in the lobby move to the doorway of the theater hoping to get a look at the show. The girls use this opportunity to move past the guards, then move down a series of corridors using the map 'til they reach a checkpoint which is more like a prison checkpoint. Blue's key won't work here. The girls hide nearby.

SWEET PEA

Now what?

BABYDOLL

Wait... for it.

INT. THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE

The burning closet smoke pours from around the door. One of Blue's men turns into the hallway seeing the door to the closet, fire rages within. The guard rushes to the wall-mounted fire alarm and pulls it.

INT. NEAR THE CHECKPOINT

The alarm sounds and a buzzer releases the door latch automatically.

BABYDOLL

That's it.

The girls open the two doors. Once through, they use the map to duck down an adjacent hallway avoiding a rush of men escaping the building. They use the key to reach a side door which empties into the courtyard. They can see the gate and the glow of the city beyond. The girls crouch in the arch of the doorway. There is a handful of men smoking near the gate. Babydoll looks at the men...

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

Damn it.

...then looks at Sweet Pea who shakes her head at Babydoll. They can't get by.

SWEET PEA

This can't be. We did everything right.

Babydoll looks at the key, puzzled. Something's missing.

BABYDOLL

(whispering to herself)

A map, fire, a knife, a key, and one thing more...

She looks up at the men who laugh and joke with each other while blocking the girls' escape.

BABYDOLL (CONT'D)

One thing more... A mystery.

She looks at Sweet Pea who looks at her.

SWEET PEA

What...?

BABYDOLL

It's me.

SWEET PEA

What are you talking about?

BABYDOLL

It's me. I'm the final piece in the puzzle... I get it now. It's the only way this ever could have ended.

SWEET PEA

What are you saying?

Babydoll looks calm. She smiles at Sweet Pea.

BABYDOLL

I'm saying you go back to your family. You tell your mother what Rocket said. Live a normal life, love, be free, forget about this place. You live for all of us, now.

Sweet Pea begins to understand what Babydoll is saying.

SWEET PEA

Baby, no we...

BABYDOLL

It's ok, it's better this way...
Now listen. I'm gonna walk out
there. When they come for me, you
go.

SWEET PEA

There's gotta be another way.

Babydoll rises from where she was crouching with Sweet Pea.
She looks down at her.

BABYDOLL

No, this is right. Now don't fuck
it up. Stay off the road, look for
a bus station. You're gonna be
fine.

And Babydoll turns away and walks out into the courtyard.
She moves slowly and with confidence. The talking men in
their dark suits don't notice her at first, puffing
cigarettes and laughing 'til one sees the small girl walking
defiantly into the center of the courtyard. They stop
talking, watching her move. She is sexy, dangerous and
impossibly innocent. She stops in front of them. One of the
biggest of the guards steps up to her (a stand-off). The
guard smiles at the small girl in front of him.

BIG GUARD

Where you going, sweetheart?

Baby's eyes go cautiously to Sweet Pea who moves along the
wall unnoticed. She is near the gate, close to escape, but
it is too exposed. If she moves the last 15 feet to the gate
she will be noticed. Babydoll knows she must do something
more. She lowers her chin, striking a pose that all at once
says, "I am a warrior." The guards are amused at the
aggressive stance of the young woman before them. The large
man standing before her then turns to his friends mocking
fear.

BIG GUARD (CONT'D)

Oooh, she's scary.

And as he turns back, Babydoll steps up and kicks the big
guard in his crotch as hard as she can. The guard cries out
bending at the waist, his face to the sky. He drops to his
knees. The other guards break into laughter. The next
guard, still laughing, steps past his fallen friend to deal
with the young girl. He tries to grab her. She squirms
away, scratching his face, then punches him in the neck. He
grabs his throat, wheezing air through his injured larynx.
She spins, kicking him to the ground. The laughter stops.

The guards toss down their cigarettes, the two fallen guards writhing in pain. The men grow grim and stern as they now feel a threat from the small girl. She stands calmly and watches them. With all their attention now focused on Babydoll, Sweet Pea makes her way to the gate passing through silently and slipping into the darkness beyond. Babydoll can see Sweet Pea has made it out and looks at the large men who now surround her, her face relaxed. The men fall upon her, aggressive, angry. They are not gentle and their blows are hard. She falls, and in a state of half-consciousness, she smiles. As the big guard rises and as they hold her, he draws back and punches Babydoll to darkness.

EXT. A COUNTRY HOUSE - DAWN

We see laundry slowly swaying in the light breeze of early dawn, the sun just skimming the bellies of some scattered cirrus low on the horizon. And we move in on a sun dress, simple, timeless. And as we reach it, Sweet Pea pulls it from the clothes pins which hold it to the line. She looks around. Unseen, she moves off.

INT. THE HIGH ROLLER'S SUITE

The High Roller sits in shadow across the room from Babydoll on the bed - a butterfly bandage on the bridge of her nose, her left eye blackened from the fight with the guards. She lies in her costume of the schoolgirl - shoulder holster and all. The High Roller sips what looks like scotch from a highball glass in a gold-gilded, Louis-the-Whatever chair across the room. His women in the white dresses attend Babydoll, one of them gently pats her forehead with a damp washcloth as the other adjusts her pillows. Babydoll blinks into consciousness.

HIGH ROLLER

There you are. You gave us quite a scare, you know.

BABYDOLL

Where am I?

HIGH ROLLER

Safe for now.

The girls attending Babydoll grow even more attentive as the High Roller speaks, staying across the room in shadow. But there is something in his voice - something kind.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

I don't know how to put this delicately so I'll spare you the insult of being vague. You and I are supposed to fuck. Forgive my language, but it is in keeping with the spirit of the arrangement.

Babydoll pushes herself up onto her elbows squinting to see the man across the room.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

I have no interest in fucking you. As a matter of fact, I can think of nothing more offensive.

BABYDOLL

Then you can let me go.

The High Roller takes a deep breath setting his glass down on the small table next to his chair. The two women in white hover around Babydoll completely enamored by her.

HIGH ROLLER

Yes... Well, that brings us to the current situation. I don't want to call it "situation" - maybe "negotiation" makes more sense. You see, I'm what you would call "the man who has everything," yet, I lack the one thing money can't buy.

BABYDOLL

Love.

HIGH ROLLER

Close... Truth is more accurate. A true moment - a moment that exists outside of who I am, of my money, my status. A moment of truth in a world of lies.

The High Roller rises from his chair and moves toward Babydoll. As he emerges from the shadows, we see him clearly for the first time, and he is not as Blue described. He is not the fat, greasy monster that Blue said was coming for her. Instead, as he moves closer, Babydoll can see his perfectly groomed hair slightly gray at the temples, trim in his impeccable tailored smoking jacket and, punctuating his movie-star good looks... eyes... of the deepest blue she has ever seen - blue and kind as he smiles at her.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

And it just so happens that that moment, that true and fragile thing like a glass egg or a sandcastle, can only be given by a non-faker, a non-actor. That's you.

BABYDOLL

I don't understand.

The High Roller stands over her, his smile soft as a grandmother's. The ladies in white gracefully remove his velvet smoking jacket as he adjusts, then begins to remove his diamond cuff links.

HIGH ROLLER

I have spent a small fortune to get you here in this room, this golden cage. All of us want you here. But you... And what you want... Well, that's the real question, what you want. You're supposed to give yourself to me or I'm supposed to take you - that's the arrangement. It requires zero from you in the area of the spirit - it is completely physical. A disciplined mind, which I can see you have, will give me nothing. I might have your body, but you the intangible and undefinable spark, the dream that makes us... each of us, who we are, that unique and perfect identity like a snowflake - impossible to duplicate again in all the ages or on a billion planets across an infinite universe. That you, I will never know... But that's precisely what I want.

The High Roller begins to slowly unbutton his shirt. The ladies in white take the cuff links. They touch him with delicate tenderness, their attention and focus moving equally between Babydoll and the High Roller as he sits on the edge of the bed and gently pushes some strands of hair out of her eyes.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

I know what I'm asking... for the most precious possession you have.

(MORE)

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

You're wondering that even if you wanted to, you don't know how to find that kind of desire in yourself.

BABYDOLL

I'm sorry, you seem nice... You don't want me to lie, do you?

HIGH ROLLER

Right... You're getting it, so here's my offer: Because though you can't buy love, truth is for sale. All I require is a sliver of a moment. To have you not by force, not in prison, but simply as a man and a woman. To see in your eyes the truth of desire that you give yourself to me freely not because you have to, but because you want to. And right here, right now there is no place you would rather be, and no man you would rather be with.

The High Roller smiles. The women in white remove his shirt, his tan chest and arms shine in the warm, soft light of the room.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

And for such a gem, I am prepared to give as well... Freedom. That will be your payment. Total and perfect freedom. Freedom outside the drudgery of practical living. Freedom as abstract ideal.

As he speaks he begins to kiss her softly on the neck, her tension slowly releasing. The women in white help unbutton her shirt, their fingers lightly brushing her skin as they work, their lips parting softly in repressed pleasure.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

And how will you experience such freedom if that truth can pass between us? I have the power to release you from this place. I will promise you that Blue will never touch you again. I will buy you a cabaret, a paradise, for you and your friends with an unlimited production budget. A place where you don't have to fuck the clients.

(MORE)

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

A place where you can express
yourself without fear - motivated
only by the joy of that perfect
freedom.

The women in white have unbuckled Babydoll's shoulder holster, their deft hands move across her body removing articles of her clothing like waves of warm water. The High Roller's touch is gentle, yet full of purpose - surgeon's hands. Baby's breath grows stronger, her eyes half-closed as she begins to give herself over to the feelings. The women in white unbuckle her short, plaid skirt. The High Roller whispers into her ear intensely.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

Freedom from pain. Freedom from
worry, responsibility, from guilt,
regret...

He kisses her deeply, her hands going to the back of his neck.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

...sadness, loss, the freedom to be
happy.

Babydoll kisses him back hard. The women in white are taking the High Roller's pants off. We see the women in white rolling Baby's knee socks down as they open her legs. The High Roller and Babydoll naked on the bed, Babydoll arches her back, her breath deep and full of passion, her hands pulling at the High Roller almost begging him wordlessly to make love to her with her body. He pushes himself up on to his arms, she looks up at him in the moment before he enters her. She is about to close her eyes.

HIGH ROLLER (CONT'D)

Don't close your eyes. Look at
me... The freedom to love.

And something crosses her face - a wash of emotion. Not reckless desire, not lust, a wash of something deeper...
Peace.

INT. OPERATING ROOM, THE MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

We hear the ping of the mallet hitting the lobotomy spike. We see Baby's eyes in extreme close-up, locked in an emotionless stare. We see the spike drawn out of her nose. It clanks into a stainless steel basin, a wisp of crimson swirls in the water around the spike. The High Roller steps back from Babydoll whose face we don't see. But the High Roller appears different - no smoking jacket, no tan now.

The movie-star good looks and blue eyes are surrounded now by the white tile and disrepair of an institution past its prime. Two nurses work quietly to unbuckle Babydoll from the chair where the lobotomy was performed as the High Roller stands looking at her through JFK-era, black-rimmed glasses, his wrinkled shirt rolled at the sleeves his hair not so perfect. He just looks at her, disturbed by something - staring mesmerized.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR

Jesus...

He shakes his head slowly still looking at Babydoll. We never see her.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Did... Did you see the way she looked at me?

The nurses don't seem to hear him. They continue working.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Just in that last moment... it was like...

He turns, searching the room with his eyes.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Where's her file?

One of the nurses finds the file and hands it to the High Roller who still stares at Babydoll. He begins to flip through it, not sure what he is looking for. In that moment, Mrs. Schultz enters, but she now wears a tweed suit. The choreographer whose fashion sense could only be described as vintage dominatrix, the Mrs. Schultz we knew, has been replaced by a confident, yet small-time institutional psychiatrist.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Ah, Mrs. Schultz. What do you know about this one...? There was something...

Mrs. Schultz looks at Babydoll. We still don't see her face.

MRS. SCHULTZ

Yes... Well, it's all in there. Her mother's death seemed to plunge her into a deep depression. In a fit, she accidentally killed her sister... It's a shame I couldn't do anything for her. I tried, ya know.

(MORE)

MRS. SCHULTZ (CONT'D)

I play music for the girls, I talk to them - see if I can't get them to act out past traumas. I've had success.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR

I'm sure... So it was you that ordered this procedure?

MRS. SCHULTZ

No, Doctor, I can't say I agree with this solution. No offense, it's just... Still, in her case, maybe. Anyway, it was on the order when she arrived. The stepfather dropped her off. Nice enough fella. Poor guy. She had only been here a week, you know. She stabbed an orderly, started a fire, helped another patient to escape. She's been quite a handful. Why? Is there something...?

Just then two orderlies enter the room. We recognize them as two of Blue's henchmen from the brothel. They now are dressed in the white suits of the orderlies. They move to Babydoll, each taking her by one arm to help her rise from the chair.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR

No, no, it's...

Again we don't see her. The High Roller stares at her one last time before the orderlies take her.

HIGH ROLLER/DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I've been doing this quite a while. I'll be honest with you - sometimes I wonder whether or not it's right and I've seen some tortured souls, let me tell you. But this one, the way she looked at me, I've never seen anyone who... it was something in her eyes... like she wanted me to do it... odd. I hope it helps her.

And the orderlies walk her past the High Roller and Mrs. Schultz. As we travel through the institution we will never see her face. They buzz her in through a door similar to the door Babydoll and Sweet Pea went through before escaping. As they pass through the door, they pass a fat orderly with a new disposable lighter. He strikes it absently as the trio passes him. He eyes Babydoll nervously as she goes by.

As the orderlies and Babydoll make their way down the chipped and faded hall, past knocking radiators, past an open door to the kitchen, we see the Cook in the industrial space. He pauses from his work to watch Babydoll pass, he absently touches the empty sheath on his belt of knives. He shakes his head and returns to his work. They lead her through the gymnasium with the stage at one end. On the stage we can see the simple flats, naively painted, depicting a castle, a Japanese pagoda, a charred landscape and a train. The reel-to-reel sits quietly on a cart in the corner. Finally, they lead her down a long hallway. They pass a door sealed with plywood. The door frame is charred and burned, the black marks from the fire licking up across the roof of the hall. We can see some water damage on the floor from putting the fire out. And at the end of the hall under a flickering green fluorescent, Blue stands waiting for her in his white orderly's uniform, a bandage on his neck. The orderlies bring Babydoll right up to him. He looks at her, a rude smile crosses his face as he shakes his head.

BLUE

Who's the smart ass now...?

We still do not see Baby's face. Babydoll says nothing in the silence. Blue's smile leaves him.

BLUE (CONT'D)

That's what I thought. Now get her downstairs. I got unfinished business with her.

EXT. SMALL TOWN BUS STATION - DAWN

Sweet Pea, now in her stolen dress, enters the bus station waiting room smiling nervously at the handful of waiting passengers. We hear the air brakes of a bus pulling into the station. Sweet Pea turns to see the dirty silver beast coming to a stop, but as she turns, she also sees two State Troopers exiting their car in the parking lot. The passengers rise and Sweet Pea moves in to the small group. The Troopers crane their necks to get a look at the young girl that matches a description which came in over their radio. She is at the back of the line as the people file onto the bus. Sweet Pea knows she has no ticket, no money, no ID of any kind. She looks down at her feet nervously, then just as she reaches the door of the bus...

TROOPER #1

Excuse me, Miss.

Sweet Pea is frozen. She does not step onto the bus, nor does she turn.

TROOPER #1 (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

The Trooper moves closer trying to get a look at Sweet Pea.

TROOPER #1 (CONT'D)

Miss, could we have a word?

Sweet Pea raises her chin looking desperately to the bus driver seeing him for the first time. He smiles gently at her from the driver's seat. We recognize him as the Wise Man from Baby's fantasies. Sweet Pea, of course, does not. She is about to turn to the Troopers when the Wise Man speaks up.

DRIVER

Is there a problem, gentlemen?

The Troopers furrow their brows at the Bus Driver.

TROOPER #1

This doesn't concern you, sir, we just need to ask this young lady some questions.

DRIVER

Well, could you make it snappy? I need to stay on schedule.

TROOPER #2

We understand.

DRIVER

Do you? That young woman's been on this bus since Hartford. I don't see what she could possibly know about anything happening around here.

The Trooper eyes her.

TROOPER #1

Is that true, Miss?

DRIVER

I just let her off to use the restroom. Mine's not working.

He gestures with his thumb toward the back of the bus.

TROOPER #1

Alright...

The two Troopers look at each other, trying to remember what they saw. Trooper #1 pushes his hat back on his head and takes a deep breath. Sweet Pea sheepishly shrugs.

DRIVER

Oh and one more thing. She's been nothing but a joy the entire journey.

TROOPER #1

I said alright... Miss, I'm sorry about the inconvenience. You have a nice trip now.

SWEET PEA

It's no problem. Thank you.

She gets on the bus, the double doors close behind her. We hear the brakes again as the bus begins to pull out of the station. Sweet Pea stands in the front speaking softly to the Driver, her weight shifting as the bus accelerates.

SWEET PEA (CONT'D)

I don't have a ticket. I...

DRIVER

I know. It's ok. Go find a seat in the back. Try and get some sleep - we got a long way to go...

And he smiles and looks back toward the road as the bus moves down a country road with rolling hills covered with leafless trees.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

We move with Blue, Babydoll and the two orderlies down a dark hallway. Pipes line the low ceiling, puddles of water shine with the light from the orderlies' flashlights as they walk quickly down the dark hallway.

ORDERLY #1

Blue, listen, we've had a nice run here, and hell, you know I am grateful. You've taken good care of all of us. But this is it for me. This is the last time. I can't do this anymore.

The group reaches the doorway to a dark, drippy boiler room. A large furnace hisses in the shadows. A stained and damp mattress lays like a perverse altar in the center of the room.

BLUE

You need to shut the fuck up and do as you're told. Now get her on the fuckin' mattress. That bitch stabbed me, now it's time for some payback.

The Orderly takes Babydoll by the arm and begins to lead her into the boiler room.

ORDERLY #1

Blue, I'm not kidding. I've talked to the rest of the boys and...

BLUE

And what?

ORDERLY #1

Blue, I've got a family, ok? A lot of us do - we got a lot to lose - and since that girl escaped, the police have been asking questions about how we're running the place.

He walks Babydoll into the center of the room. Blue pushes her onto the mattress sharply and with anger.

BLUE

We don't run the place. I run this motherfucker. Now watch the door.

Blue moves toward Babydoll who lies on the mattress, her face in shadow. Blue unbuttons his pants as he looks down at her.

ORDERLY #1

This is it... This is the last time. I am not hurting these girls anymore.

Blue does not look back at the orderlies.

BLUE

Shut the fuck up!

The orderly just shakes his head, tapping his flashlight into his open palm. Blue kneels down on the mattress. Babydoll does not move. Blue reaches up under her medical gown and pulls off her underwear, then he opens her legs, dropping his own pants, and goes into a push-up position between Baby's legs, then kisses her neck before whispering in her ear...

BLUE (CONT'D)

(whispering)

That's right, it's me, you stuck-up, little whore. Remember me? I've been dreaming about this since you first walked in here.

He pushes himself up onto his arms looking at Baby's face. We don't see her. Something's wrong and we see it in Blue's eyes.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Well, that's ok. I know you're in there somewhere.

Blue smirks at Babydoll furrowing his brow, then his smile fades. He looks down at his own crotch area shaking his head.

BLUE (CONT'D)

That's right, go ahead. Smile. It's fucking hilarious.

He tries to kiss her then sits up onto his knees. He tries to get himself hard. He looks at Babydoll while stroking himself, but looking at her is not helping. He stares up at the ceiling exhaling deeply, frustrated by his impotence.

ORDERLY #1

Blue, what's the problem?

BLUE

What's the problem is I'm hearing your fuckin' voice. That's the problem.

He drops back down kissing her neck. He puts a rough hand on her breast, yet still is unable to become aroused.

BLUE (CONT'D)

Shit, shit, shit. What are you smiling at?

Blue stares down at Babydoll, frustrated and angry. He slaps her hard.

BLUE (CONT'D)

I said what are you smiling at?!!

He winds up to slap her again and Orderly #1 catches his back swing.

ORDERLY #1

Blue, what are you doing? Don't you think people are going to notice she has a frickin' black eye? Are you stupid? I told you they're watching us. This is over.

BLUE

Let go of me.

Blue rips his arm free from the Orderly's grip and pulls up his pants as he stands.

ORDERLY #1

Jesus, Blue, she's making you crazy.

BLUE

Me crazy... Look at her. She's a drooling vegetable for fuck sake. You think I give a shit about her? She gives me the creeps with that smile. I'm not fuckin' that - who would? Look at her.

Blue takes the Orderly's flashlight and shines it on her. We see her face for the first time, slightly overexposed by the bright beam. We begin to hear The Five Stairsteps' intro to "O-o-h Child."

BLUE (CONT'D)

I mean, where do you think she is right now...

We slowly pull back from Baby's face as the lyrics begin, "O-o-h Child, things are gonna get easier." Her look is calm, joyful. Her smile warm, a smile of deep peace and gratitude. As we pull out more we see she is no longer laying on the stained mattress, but now standing on a stage, and with "O-o-h Child" swelling, we begin to hear applause. Babydoll nods in acknowledgement to the audience, then she calls to the wings and Rocket blinks out into the spotlight taking Baby's hand. The two look to the opposite wing and Sweet Pea slowly emerges from backstage, she too bowing shallowly to the audience, smiling, as she joins Babydoll and her sister. The three bow deeply and then are joined by Amber and Blondie. The five girls bow, then call for Mrs. Schultz to join. She steps out onto the stage from the wings, bows, but gestures back to the girls as if to say, "It's all them." We glide around behind them, our view flaring as we look into the spotlights. We move behind the girls revealing the audience dressed in tuxedos, standing in ovation.

We glide out into the majestic dinner theater, white table cloths, gold-gilded chairs and, by the exuberance of their response to the show, an audience of deep artistic appreciation. We see Father O'Rourke at a table near the front with the Big Boss. The two look at each other smiling, not a hint of their darker sides, just enthusiastic applause. We glide past them seeing Blue's men/orderlies all on their feet looking dapper in black tie, then to a table in the center of the theater we see Blue standing smiling, clapping hard, a look of amazement on his face. He looks over his shoulder and we follow his look to the High Roller still flanked by his women in white. The High Roller nods at Blue, gesturing to the stage, "I told you." His gaze returns to the stage, intensifying his applause, looking just at Babydoll, proud. We rotate past the High Roller to look back at the stage. Babydoll nods to the High Roller and mouths, "thank you," then looks out into the audience, that look of deep peace washes her face. The girls smile, the odd rose being tossed from the audience. The girls take one last bow then step back, and with the proscenium perfectly framed, the curtain closes.

THE END.