

TEQUILA
SUNRISE

by

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SHOOTING SCRIPT
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FADE IN:

1 HIGH TENSION WIRES ALONG THE PICO RIVERA RIVERBED (DUSK) 1

above the traffic on the Santa Ana Freeway plunge into forced perspective along concrete banks, then disappear into a muddy sky. CAMERA DRIFTS DOWNWARD during:

BOBBY DARIN'S VOICE

Thank you. Well we turn from the number one song in the country to the number one track on this side. Most people know this song as 'La Mer' and in French 'la mer' means the sea. Now this particular record was released in January of 1960 and personally if you don't mind my saying so my French never sounded better -

(singing)

' - somewhere, beyond the sea,
somewhere waitin' for me - '

2 CAMERA DROPS BELOW THE SANTA ANA FREEWAY 2

Parked just above the riverbed on the broken asphalt of a mosquito abatement control road, is a dusty Camaro -- Darin's version of 'Beyond the Sea' comes from its radio and now is broken up by crackling from the tension wires.

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

Whose idea was this? Yours or theirs?

SANDY LEONARD'S VOICE

What idea?

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

Meeting here.

SANDY LEONARD'S VOICE

Theirs. Why?

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

Because it looks like we're out here dealing dope, that's why -
(in response to
crackling radio)
- you like listening to static?

SANDY LEONARD'S VOICE

(a touch defensive)
It's tough getting FM.

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

- under high tension wires and a fucken freeway, yeah, sure - these guys are late. What time'd you say they were gonna meet you?

SANDY LEONARD'S VOICE

- seven.

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

- real late.

SANDY LEONARD'S VOICE

Okay, what do I do about it now? I can't call it off, so what do I do now?

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

(after a few taut,
static-filled
moments, almost
lazily:)

Now? now you back the car up
twenty feet and see if you can get
K-Earth.

Sandy Leonard starts the car and backs it slowly thru its own fumes TO and PAST CAMERA a few yards. The last few bars of 'Beyond the Sea' can be heard clearly once more.

McKussic nods approval at the loss of static. He checks out Sandy Leonard's chic but rumpled three-piece suit and the lawyer's briefcase.

McKUSSIC

Face it. Most of the time this job involves..

(glances around)

..waiting. That's what it is. You wait.

(amused)

'It's on the way..hey, the guy left ten minutes ago, he's definitely got it with him..

(teasing)

- should be here any minute..'

3 A '79 CAD SEVILLE

3

moves noticeably faster than the flow of traffic on the Santa Ana Freeway. The shadowy profile of the passenger, NICK FRESCIA, leans forward as he sings 'Beyond the Sea' with Darin. Frescia glances at the gun strapped to the driver's exposed right calf, then to the one poking out from the driver's open jacket. He stops singing:

FRESCIA

I thought this was going to be a nice, quiet deal tonight, Leland.

LELAND

It is.

FRESCIA

I don't want my ass blown off - I got a dinner date in forty-five minutes.

LELAND

You'll make it.

FRESCIA

(the smile never wavers
as he points)

Then don't miss the offramp.

4 THE SEVILLE SWERVES

4

and cuts off a car to make the Florence offramp and the bridge that crosses the desolate riverbed. Frescia resumes singing with Darin.

5 THRU THE PASSENGER WINDOW MOVING (NIGHT)

5

the Camaro is parked in the distance. Frescia turns to Leland. He's outrageously handsome and clearly disgusted.

FRESCIA

Who picked this spot?

LELAND

They did.

FRESCIA

- look down there -
(pointing to riverbed)
besides the car, what do you see?

LELAND

...nothin'. Weeds.

FRESCIA

You could hide a tank in those weeds. Never mind. Let's go - with any luck they're as dumb as we are.

Frescia's Slav but has the Chicano habit of articulating each syllable with insulting care.

6 INSIDE THE CAMARO

6

McKUSSIC

(squints)

- boy this is not too cool. Could you tell him to lower his brights at least?

The Seville pulls up dangerously close, its headlights FLOODING the Camaro.

McKUSSIC

Back up! back up! back up!..

Sandy Leonard freezes. McKussic turns the ignition key and jams his foot on Sandy Leonard's. He slams the car in reverse.

7 EXT. SERVICE ROAD (NIGHT)

7

The CAMARO FISHTAILS backwards down the narrow asphalt road, tires kicking up dust and flirting with the forty-foot drop down the embankment's steep walls to the riverbed. McKussic brakes.

8 HE LEANS OUT THE WINDOW

8

McKUSSIC

Lights, godammit!

The Seville's headlight beams vanish.

SANDY LEONARD

Jesus Christ, we're just meeting here to make sure we weren't followed.

A-8 UNDER THE BRIDGE

A-8

Leonard meets with Leland, opens the briefcase revealing the coke. Leland zips open a tote bag filled with money.

B-8 THRU McKUSSIC'S CAR WINDOW B-8

Leonard and Leland obstruct his view to the Seville down the road. McKussic moves across the seat to get a better view of the Seville's lone passenger. He can't.

C-8 THRU THE SEVILLE WINDOW FRESCIA C-8

is having similar problems trying to glimpse the Camaro's lone passenger.

D-8 BACK AT THE CAMARO D-8

McKUSSIC
(as Leonard gets in)
- he's not alone.

LEONARD
(smugly)
- neither am I.

McKussic is not reassured.

9 EXT. HOLIDAY INN MONTEBELLO (NIGHT) THE CAMARO 9

turns into one of the side parking lots.

McKUSSIC
Drive all the way around.

The Camaro whips thru the back parking lot and heads back to the first parking area. They pull into a space. McKussic gets out and stops by another parking space. Something crunches under his feet.

SANDY LEONARD
What're you looking at?

McKUSSIC
(kicking a candy wrapper)
Peanut shells. Somebody's been hanging around in their car. You got a room near that stairway?

10 McKUSSIC ON FIRE EXIT LANDING 10

stares at the zig-zag of steps three flights down to the parking lot. The Seville with Frescia has already been parked a couple spaces from the Camaro. McKussic spots something at his feet. He looks UP the stairs.

MCKUSSIC

(to Leonard)

Go on in, leave the door open, and
the briefcase in the john -

McKussic climbs the stairs to the fourth landing. His eye level just clears the metal grating when he sees an area is littered with peanut shells.

11 INT. HOLIDAY INN HOTEL ROOM (NIGHT) MCKUSSIC 1

rushes past SANDY LEONARD, enters the bathroom. He pulls the top off the toilet tank and drops to his knees. He opens the briefcase and pulls out the coke. It's two solid rocks. He crushes them and ties the plastic baggie to the toilet float. He wiggles the handle and it's clear that if he flushes, the baggie will open and spill its contents. He replaces the top on the tank.

12 MCKUSSIC RE-EMERGES 12

from the bathroom, tosses the briefcase on the bed.

SANDY LEONARD

What were you doin' in there?

There's a knock on the door.

SANDY LEONARD

- who is it?

MUFFLED VOICE

- it's Leland, Sandy.

McKussic indicates that Leonard open the door. Leland enters with Frescia behind him.

LELAND

Sandy, say hello to Nick, Nick's my
partner -

McKussic watches with as much surprise as he ever registers.

FRESCIA

Hold it -

(pointing at McKussic)
- who the fuck is that?

SANDY LEONARD

- a friend..

FRESCIA

He's not my friend. I got all the friends I need.

(back to Leland)

Is he your friend?

SANDY LEONARD

- he's my ride. He drove me, that's all.

FRESCIA

Then let him wait in the car. I don't like meeting strangers.

Sandy Leonard starts to protest. McKussic holds up his hand.

McKUSSIC

Hey, that's cool. Lemme - take a quick leak and I'm outta here.

Before anyone can respond, McKussic jumps into the john and SHUTS the DOOR. In a moment, the o.s. SOUND of the faucet and the TOILET FLUSHING. McKussic re-emerges, heads to the door, pauses:

McKUSSIC

(to Sandy Leonard)

- it's none of my business, but I don't think you oughta be lookin' for any new faces in your life either.

FRESCIA

Fine with me. I'll wait outside.

13 OUTSIDE IN THE HALLWAY McKUSSIC

13

walks a few feet ahead of Frescia toward the elevator.

FRESCIA

I thought you retired.

McKUSSIC

I am retired.

FRESCIA

Then what're you doing here?

McKUSSIC

- he drives me out here to look at a piece of commercial property, stops and tells me another client of his paid him off with a pound of coke and wants me to hold his hand while he sells it.

FRESCIA

- that's a flimsy fucking excuse.

McKUSSIC

As far as it goes, yeah. But then I thought I'd stick around - he kept telling me his customers asked more questions about me than the dope. My phones have funny little noises on 'em. Are you setting me up, buddy?

FRESCIA

I wouldn't know. I got here by accident.

McKUSSIC

- talk about a flimsy fucken excuse -

FRESCIA

Later - this is going down right now. And do yourself a favor - don't go back to the car -

McKUSSIC

- don't you go back to the room, there's no evidence. Sorry, Nick. I couldn't afford to have him busted, dumb as he is. He's my lawyer -

With a quick wink, McKussic disappears down the stairwell.

14 EXT. HOLIDAY INN PARKING LOT

14

a helicopter hovers over the Holiday Inn parking lot, lighting it up like a premiere while police cordon off the Camaro..

FRESCIA

(amazed at the activity)

Who authorized this shit?

COP

You, Lieutenant...that's what we
were told..

Frescia watches as the diminutive Sandy Leonard is handcuffed and hustled into a squad car. He shakes his head in disgust and walks away.

15 THE FLASHLIGHT BEAMS OF RAIDING DEPUTIES 15

poke thru the baby palms and stacked deck chairs surrounding the Holiday Inn swimming pool.

They sweep past the stilts of the lifeguard stand and move on leaving the pool in darkness. McKussic's feet and legs break into frame, as he climbs out of the lifeguard stand and down its ladder.

A-15 EXT. FREEWAY NEAR HOTEL A-15

McKussic flees.

16 MCKUSSIC AT THE RIVERBED 16

scrambles over chain link fencing then slides down its concrete siding some thirty feet until he hits the floor of the riverbed -- clumps of scrub oak, stagnant water and horseshit under the thundering Santa Ana Freeway. He looks up to see flashlights poke thru the fencing. The helicopter's huge beam drops like a plumb line, the weeds around McKussic flatten. In another moment, it SWEEPS UP the riverbed. McKussic gets to his feet and dashes into the dark.

17 AT THE FAR SIDE OF THE ARROYO MCKUSSIC 17

scrambles up the riverbed's wall, runs along barns and stables, shakes a snarling dog loose from his pantleg, and disappears under the belly of the freeway.

18 A QUIET STREET 18

McKussic emerges. At a public phone outside a 7-Eleven he fumbles for a couple of dimes, dials, and tries to catch his breath.

19 A STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL GIRL STANDS BY THE RESERVATION DESK 19

of a fashionable South Bay restaurant. JO ANN VALLENARI punches the latest blinking light on the phone.

JO ANN
Vallenari's, good evening.

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

Hi, this is Dale McKussic -

There are volatile sounds of Italian heard thru the swinging doors of the kitchen a few steps away.

JO ANN

- oh yes, Mr. McKussic, I'm sorry,
it's a little noisy at the moment.
Aren't we seeing you this evening?

20 McKUSSIC AT THE PICO RIVERA PHONE BOOTH

20

glances nervously over his shoulder at a low-rider cruising by.

McKUSSIC

- I don't think I can make my reservation.

JO ANN'S VOICE

(smoothly)

How late will you be?

McKussic hears the distant sound of a siren.

McKUSSIC

- I'm not sure. How late is the kitchen open?

21 WITH JO ANN

21

a waiter whips thru the kitchen doors, and more angry Italian can be heard.

22 INT. KITCHEN VALLENARI'S

22

VITTORIO VALLENARI, Jo Ann's smoothly tailored brother, and NINO the chef are near the meat locker, Nino holds a huge carving knife. The other on-line chefs are edgy. The atmosphere is one of simmering hysteria.

VITTORIO

- what am I supposed to do? Tell a private party of 15 they can't have rack of veal milanese?

NINO

It's not on the menu!

STEVE

(a waiter, flying in)

Nino, they're waiting for the saltimboca!

Dead silence. Jo Ann enters.

NINO
 (spitting it out)
 All right, Giovanna, rack of veal
 for fifteen or -
 (sweetly)
 - saltimboca Vallenari for twelve.
 what's it gonna be?

JO ANN
 Saltimboca for twelve.

NINO
 Ecco, proprio cosi.

JO ANN
 (to a furious Vittorio)
 I'll go to the wine cellar and
 explain the delay to Mr. Bivens.
 Oh, and Nino, could you keep the
 kitchen open for a good customer?
 (with a tiny gesture to
 match)
 - per un po?

NINO
 (for you anything)
 Certo, Giovanna.

23 VITTORIO CATCHES UP TO JO ANN

23

as she emerges from the kitchen, carrying a frothy confection
 of meringue, whipped cream and strawberries.

VITTORIO
 You spoil him rotten, Giovanna, you
 hear me?
 (Jo Ann continues to
 rearrange pastries:)
 - you treat him more and more like
 a child.

JO ANN
 (sweetly)
 - I don't treat him any differently
 than I do you, Vic -

VITTORIO
 (you got a big mouth)
 - che boccaccia che ci hai,
 Giovanna -

SAM LEHMAN, in his seventies, staggers into the pastry tray. Jo Ann adroitly catches him by the elbow.

LEHMAN
(staring down)
Boy does that look good.

JO ANN
- it's called 'boccone dolce,'
"sweet mouthful."

LEHMAN
Jo Ann, you're absolutely right -
He puts his hand on Jo Ann's ass.

JO ANN
What I think goes exceptionally
well with our desserts, Mr. Lehman,
is a double espresso. Come along
now. Arturo has one waiting for
you.

Towing the compliant old gentleman by his elbow, she takes him to the bar and Arturo. Lehman reaches for the espresso and promptly spills it across the bar.

24 EXT. MANHATTAN BEACH STREET (NIGHT)

24

Frescia's Seville pulls up across from Vallenari's. Frescia gets out and heads toward the back of a black Cherokee van across from the restaurant. He throws open the van's rear door.

A-24 INT. VAN (NIGHT)

A-24

Two men are in the back, AL MAGUIRE is on headphones, RALPH SPUDDER sits on a floor littered with peanut shells, a camera dangling from his neck.

FRESCIA
(to Maguire)
Tell me something, Al. When you
asked for my help at the last
minute, you didn't know who it was
you were asking me to bust?

MAGUIRE
I knew who it was. Why didn't you
bust him?

FRESCIA
You know that too. He's a friend
of mine.

Frescia smiles pleasantly.

MAGUIRE

(not amused)

- I gotta tell you one of the first things I heard when I came to L.A. - Nick Frescia wouldn't work the South Bay because he didn't want to bust Dale McKussic. Tonight you proved the point. You not only let McKussic walk, you kicked him out of the room and gave him a personal escort. Why?

Dead silence. Then:

FRESCIA

Because you are predictable, Al. Mac saw you coming a mile away.

MAGUIRE

- how did you know he wouldn't be holding?

Spudder's crunching on peanuts. Maguire gives him a look.

FRESCIA

Was Sandy Leonard? You busted him. Okay. No coke, no sale, no conspiracy to sell. All you got is a lightweight conversation with a chickenshit Century City lawyer - and a probable lawsuit for entrapment. Mac's lawyers would have made mincemeat out of you. I let him walk to save you from a bad bust.

(leaning forward, an expansive smile)

Al, I did you a favor.

Maguire suddenly decides that something on the headphones captures his attention.

FRESCIA

What is it?

MAGUIRE

(listening)

McKussic.

FRESCIA

You're kidding.

MAGUIRE

He's in this place week in week out
and Sandy Leonard's the lawyer for
this restaurant.

FRESCIA

- McKussic and the Vallenaris are
talking drugs and money?

MAGUIRE

They're real careful what they say.

FRESCIA

How about letting me hear it?

MAGUIRE

I'm telling you, Nick, they're real
fucken careful -

FRESCIA

I'm sure you're right, but could I
hear at least?

Maguire hits the speaker switch.

JO ANN'S VOICE

- in that case, why don't I give
you a taste...something different
tonight, Mr. McKussic?..

All four heads in the crowded truck lean intently forward,
clustered around the Fargo unit.

JO ANN'S VOICE

- how about - rigatoni?

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

Rigatoni?

JO ANN'S VOICE

Rigatoni quattro formaggi - a
creamy blend of four Italian
cheeses - fontina, teleggio,
gorgonzola, parmigiano.

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

- sounds good -

FRESCIA

- sounds good to me too. Look Al, before we spend another five grand to hear what Mac's having for dinner, take my guys off the clock and let me ask him - unless you guarantee the federal government's picking up the tab tonight.

25 AT A BOOTH McKUSSIC

25

is in the midst of downing his second Tequila Sunrise. Frescia walks up.

FRESCIA

What's good here?

McKUSSIC

Everything. Why, you hungry?

FRESCIA

(sitting in the booth)

I missed dinner. What're you having?

McKUSSIC

A little pasta.

FRESCIA

Something like rigatoni quattro formaggi?

Almost on cue a waiter sets the enticing dish in front of McKussic, along with another Tequila Sunrise.

McKUSSIC

Good guess.

The waiter sprinkles on parmigiano, sets down a fresh fork. McKussic holds up two fingers. The waiter deposits the extra fork for Frescia, leaves.

FRESCIA

You've just had the head of narcotics in L.A. County arguing with the Drug Enforcement Agency about what you're doing in here.

McKUSSIC

Why?

FRESCIA

What do you mean why? You're a drug dealer and you don't pay your taxes!..

McKUSSIC

- there's guys a lot more active than me these days.

FRESCIA

Yeah but a hometown boy like you could do a lot for South Bay cops, you're a legend around here. Not only that, you're white. They figure when they print your picture in the paper, they'll be able to see it.

McKUSSIC

What do you figure, Nick?

FRESCIA

I made Lieutenant, Mac. It'll be announced next week but - I'm heading up narcotics for County. One way or another, I'm gonna be back in the South Bay with you.

McKUSSIC

Gee. Congratulations.

FRESCIA

That's all you've got to say?

McKUSSIC

What about your law degree? I thought you wanted into the DA's office -

FRESCIA

Would you stop worrying about my fucken career a minute? The Federal Government swears you're doing business in here.

The waiter clears away the rigatoni and places before McKussic a plate of grigliata mista, the various selections of fish artfully arranged.

McKUSSIC

I'm not.

(in response to
Frescia's continual
stare)

Try the sandabs.

Frescia takes a bite off McKussic's plate.

FRESCIA
..terrific...I still think
something's going on here.

McKUSSIC
I'm not dealing.

FRESCIA
(laughing)
I didn't say you were!..look Mac, I
don't stop being a detective
because there's no crime.

McKUSSIC
...well, what do you think's going
on here?

FRESCIA
- maybe just something you don't
want me to know.

McKUSSIC
(relieved)
- oh.

JO ANN'S VOICE
How are we treating you this
evening, Mr. McKussic?

Frescia now looks up to see:

26 JO ANN

26

standing by the table, looking gorgeous, and waiting for a
reply. McKussic seems momentarily at a loss. Then:

McKUSSIC
Fine - thank you.

Jo Ann takes in the decimated plate and the fork in Frescia's
hand.

JO ANN
Can I offer something more?

McKUSSIC
- more?

JO ANN
There are two fish you haven't
tried, and they're excellent.

McKUSSIC

- oh, sure.

FRESCIA

(stopping her)

What are they?

Jo Ann turns and for the first time looks directly at Frescia.

JO ANN

I thought I'd surprise you.

McKUSSIC

Uhh this is my friend Nick -
Frescia..

JO ANN

A pleasure, Mr. Frescia. I'm Jo
Ann Vallenari. Can I bring you a
plate as well?

FRESCIA

Thanks, I've got to be going.

JO ANN

Perhaps you'll try us another
night.

FRESCIA

What I tried tonight was terrific.

JO ANN

I'm very pleased to hear it.

Without a pause she turns and continues her way out of the
dining room.

27 FRESCIA WATCHES

27

until she disappears, and McKussic watches Frescia.

FRESCIA

She like that with everybody?

McKUSSIC

Like how?

FRESCIA

- polite, married, or she could
give a shit.

Frescia never quite takes his eye off McKussic as he waits for
a response.

McKUSSIC
..I don't know, Nick. She's not
married.

Frescia nods, smiles. Casual:

FRESCIA
- attractive.

McKUSSIC
Oh yeah.

FRESCIA
- so how about it?

McKUSSIC
How about what?

FRESCIA
Whatever you're doing, will you do
it somewhere else and not make me
look bad?..

McKUSSIC
There's one last thing -
(in response to
Frescia's stare)
No new business - it's an
accounting problem.

FRESCIA
An 'accounting problem'?

McKUSSIC
Colombians. There's always some
kind of discrepancy about money.

FRESCIA
Sure. They don't know how to
count.

Both men smile.

FRESCIA
- I got your word?

McKUSSIC
- yeah.

The two eye each other for a long unguarded moment.

FRESCIA

- one more thing. How about
another bite of that fucken fish?
It's great.

McKussic shoves the entire plate toward Frescia.

JO ANN

This is your fault, Arturo -

28 AT THE NEAR END OF THE BAR

28

Jo Ann is taking a drink away from Nino the chef who still wears his white chef's coat. Nino is feeling no pain. For the first time an emotional edge ruffles up her silky manner.

ARTURO

- I gave him two drinks -

JO ANN

It's two too many, if my brother sees Nino like this -

ARTURO

- what's he gonna do, fire him?

JO ANN

- he's not going to fire the chef, Arturo, but one bartender more or less is not the end of the world -

She playfully slaps Arturo's wrist.

ARTURO

Giovanna!

JO ANN

- and I don't want him driving that little car -

ARTURO

- he can have my car -

JO ANN

Your Cadillac? you really want to kill him, don't you?

Nino has been happily watching the argument.

NINO

I'm no driving, Giovanna - I'm going dancing!..

He slips off the bar stool and nearly falls to the floor. Jo Ann props him up, looking darkly at Arturo.

JO ANN

- you're going home. I'm taking you. Now.

Nino protests like a little boy. Jo Ann laughs and crooks her finger.

REACTION FRESCIA

coming out of the main dining room watches this surprising emotional display from Jo Ann with keen interest.

FADE OUT.

29	EXT. LOMITA SHERIFF'S SUBSTATION (DAY)	29
30	INT. STATION (DAY) FRESCIA	30

sits at his desk chewing bubble gum and listening to random surveillance conversations from the restaurant. He replays Jo Ann saying softly, "Is there anything else I can get you, Mr. McKussic? is there anything else I can get you, Mr. McKussic? is there anything else I can get you, Mr. McKussic?" Frescia nods, smiles.

Maguire taps on the glass of Frescia's cubicle. Frescia turns off the recorder as Maguire enters.

MAGUIRE

Well?

FRESCIA

In the course of last night something came up..which persuaded me that Mac dining in that restaurant is a non-drug related activity.

Maguire strains to catch any mocking edge in Frescia's tone. He can't.

MAGUIRE

- yeah, well your friend's not getting away with what he's gotten away with for fifteen years and retire.

FRESCIA

What do you suggest?

MAGUIRE

I suggest..you make sure we have a case. After all, what are friends for?

Maguire returns to his cubicle. Frescia thoughtfully blows a bubble, pops it. He follows Maguire.

A-30 INT. MAGUIRE'S CUBICLE

A-30

Maguire is now seated, surrounded by several white-shirted federal agents listening to another tape of McKusick and Jo Ann. He quickly shuts it off when Frescia enters. A secretary brings in a tray full of cokes in paper cups and sets them down on Maguire's desk.

With a swipe of his hand Frescia clears Maguire's desk of the Coca-cola cups. Coca-cola splatters everywhere - the glass walls the white shirts of Maguire and his agents. Only Frescia remains spotless.

FRESCIA

(furious)

You want something to clean up? you got it.

He strides out the door.

MAGUIRE

What the fuck is that supposed to mean? Frescia, goddammit -

FRESCIA

(turning sharply)

I don't need you flying in from Washington telling me to manufacture evidence, Al! This is my backyard, I don't grow weeds in my backyard so I can pull 'em - I got enough problems around here.

And he's out the door.

B-30 INT. CUBICLE FRESCIA

B-30

goes over federal pay vouchers and something catches his eye: a number of them marked #7244, each in the amount of eleven hundred dollars. Frescia begins to line them up on his desk and compare their dates. Maguire enters, in a clean shirt.

MAGUIRE

You know Frescia I look at you and it's like dealing with a guy in love with a bad broad.

FRESCIA

(amused)

Yeah?

MAGUIRE

Yeah, and just because I might feel for the guy it don't make me feel any better about the broad. McKussic is a drug dealer and a crook, he's pure California flake. Hey, what can I say? Love is blind.

Frescia laughs.

FRESCIA

Mac hasn't been active for over a year.

MAGUIRE

Guys like that don't quit 'til they're caught. Carlos is coming to town.

FRESCIA

Who says?

MAGUIRE

- he's getting ready to move 1200 kilos of coke, personally.

FRESCIA

- and that's why you been watching
Mac -

MAGUIRE

(nods)

That's the word.

Frescia fingers the vouchers.

FRESCIA

- for 1100 a week a local snitch is
liable to give you any word you
want to hear.

MAGUIRE

- we're also hearing it from down
south, and believe me, I'm not
paying our legal Latins a dime.

This gets to Frescia.

MAGUIRE

(pressing the bruise)

- like you say, this is your
backyard. Has Carlos ever made a
move in it without Mac's help?
Could Mac refuse Carlos even if he
wanted to? Not only that, if we
bust him with Carlos I'll
personally guarantee that McKussic
won't have to stand trial in a
federal court. He's a local boy,
we'll keep it a local bust. You're
liable to save him fifteen years of
his life. It's up to you, Nick -

Frescia plunges his hands into his pockets, slowly nods
assent.

31 EXT. HYDRO-PORE PLANT TORRANCE (DAY)

31

a huge quonset hut with its loading doors open, revealing
three extruders. They are machines which recycle rubber into
long and porous hose.

McKUSSIC

works by a broken-down extruder and a pile of messy rubber
pipe. Behind him on the walls, pinned up brochures proclaim
"HYDRO-PORE - Leaky Pipe Irrigation - the Avocado Growers
Dream".

GREG LINDROFF hovers over McKussic.

LINDROFF

Mac I swear to God I wasn't trying
to use you -

McKussic turns the water on. It surges into a new section of pipe. The pipe looks like it's perspiring, the water leaking out of it in beads of sweat, like Lindroff.

LINDROFF

I was trying to pay some bills..

McKUSSIC

Well now you got another bill to
pay -

LINDROFF

They'll kill me if I don't come
thru!

McKUSSIC

They won't kill you. They'll just
break your legs, oh wow it's the
money-junkie -

SHALEEN

Mac I've been calling and calling -

Getting out of a car driven by a younger girlfriend is SHALEEN
McKUSSIC, thirty-five and sleek, busty beachy good looks with
a skin like a lizard's.

McKUSSIC

I sent your lawyer the check.

As he works on another extruder Lindroff helps him hook up the
flow regulator.

SHALEEN

Tomorrow's the first of the month.
You might as well write another
one -

McKUSSIC

Shaleen, I'm at a critical point in
this business. It requires cash -

SHALEEN

So do I.

(exasperated, to
Lindroff)

- honestly Greg, one day his kid gets old enough to ask what he does for a living and he develops a conscience - I'm sorry Mac. I'm not starving so you can tell your little boy you're a rubber hose salesman instead of a drug dealer -

Lindroff heads over to help a harried looking Mexican who's using a large fork lift to heap coil after coil of hose into the rear of a semi.

SHALEEN

I need another ten thousand. The Mercedes burned up.

McKUSSIC

You mean the 500? It's under warranty. Take it in and make 'em fix it.

SHALEEN

You know those assholes. They claim I didn't have any oil in the engine.

32 INT. HYDROPORE OFFICE (DAY)

32

McKussic opens a ratty safe.

SHALEEN

Come on, lighten up. There's worse things in life than drugs.

McKUSSIC

(tossing her a pack of
hundreds)

Yeah sure - flat tires, dog shit,
alimony -

Shaleen places it on a desk scale.

SHALEEN

(weighing the pack)

Hmmm. Forty-nine grams. That's
five thousand dollars.

McKUSSIC

You'll get the rest next week.

SHALEEN

(moving close to him)

Look, Mac. You're so cute messin' around with all that farm equipment - but you could make it so easy on all of us. What difference would it make if you did it for a while longer?

McKUSSIC

The difference is I'm not doing it.

His beeper, inopportunately, goes OFF. Shaleen laughs.

SHALEEN

(contemptuously)

Tell me about it. They're beeping you to buy rubber hose.

33 IN A PHONE BOOTH OFF PCH (DAY)

33

is McKussic with a stack of quarters and a fresh stick of pink gum with the numbers 011-22-24-27 scratched on its sugary surface.

McKUSSIC

- dos-dos-dos-cuatro-dos-siete?

He gets a 'si' and promptly chews the gum with the phone number on it.

CARLOS' VOICE

Hey, my buddy! what's up?

McKUSSIC

You called me, buddy.

CARLOS' VOICE

I'm coming to town.

McKUSSIC

Not now, man. They're watching everywhere I go -

CARLOS' VOICE

Buddy, for Chrissakes! you been after me for three years to finish up my business with you -

McKUSSIC

- I'm telling you man, there's some renewed interest in me around here -

CARLOS' VOICE

- don't be a worrywort, buddy -

McKUSSIC

My cousin used my name as a
guarantee of delivery.

Carlos swears a jetstream of Spanish.

CARLOS' VOICE

See this is the problem when you
try to walk away from a long and
distinguished career. There's
always someone who tries to cash in
on you before you go. Buddy, don't
give him the steam off your shit.

McKUSSIC

It's not my cousin I'm worried
about - if this buyer thinks I
reneged on a deal, it's gonna be a
mess. You shouldn't come here now.

CARLOS' VOICE

I'm sorry buddy but if I was a
check, I'd be in the mail. You'll
have to straighten it out -

McKUSSIC

Oh man, I don't want to do this -

CARLOS' VOICE

How much did your cousin guarantee?

McKUSSIC

Twenty.

CARLOS' VOICE

Tell me where you want it.

McKUSSIC

...outside of L.A.

CARLOS' VOICE

My boy's somewhere right now,
sitting on a couple hundred.

McKUSSIC

Little Carlos?

CARLOS' VOICE

He's twenty-three. He's a good
boy, completely reliable. Can you
still spot me seven points, buddy?

McKUSSIC

Carlos, I haven't played a lot of ping-pong lately.

CARLOS' VOICE

Sure, buddy, neither have I! Never mind, I come and play you soon. Take care of my boy now.

McKUSSIC

I thought he was gonna take care of me.

He hangs up with Carlos' laughter ringing in his ears.

34 EXT. SHERIFF'S STATION (DAY) 34

Frescia races down the street, pulls into the station. Jo Ann's Alfa is parked out front.

35 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM JO ANN WITH MAGUIRE 35

and a couple of other cops dressed in street clothes, with big shoulder holsters showing. Frescia quietly enters and stands by the door, without Jo Ann being aware of his presence.

MAGUIRE

(holding up Nino's passport)

It seems your chef's visa has expired -

JO ANN

He does have a work permit.

MAGUIRE

It's temporary and about to elapse.

JO ANN

My brother's hired a lawyer who's working thru Immigration to get Nino his green card.

MAGUIRE

You mean Sandy Leonard.

JO ANN

(surprised he knows)

..yes..

MAGUIRE

As a matter of fact, Mr. Leonard's been arrested, hasn't he Miss Vallenari?

JO ANN

What for?

MAGUIRE

We thought you'd tell us. Have you ever seen Sandy Leonard in your restaurant with a Mr. Dale McKussic?

JO ANN

Well, yes. They're both very good customers.

RALPH SPUDDER

What's that?

JO ANN

What's what?

RALPH SPUDDER

A 'good customer.'

JO ANN

- oh, someone who's on time and doesn't make personal requests or demands for unusual dishes -

MAGUIRE

In other words you're telling us you never have to satisfy any personal requests from Mr. McKussic.

The implication, however vague is unsavory. Jo Ann's face becomes a mask.

JO ANN

No, Mr. Maguire. He usually orders right off the menu - who are you and what's this all about?

Frescia watches impressed with Jo Ann.

MAGUIRE

- agent Maguire, Federal Drug Enforcement.

JO ANN

Did you arrest Sandy Leonard on some sort of drug charge?

MAGUIRE

We arrested him.

JO ANN

What makes you think my restaurant is involved?

MAGUIRE

For one thing, Leonard's there all the time.

JO ANN

So is the district attorney. Does that mean he's selling drugs in my restaurant?

MAGUIRE

Mr. Leonard doesn't have dinner with the district attorney. He has dinner with Mr. McKussic.

JO ANN

Are you saying that Mr. McKussic is selling drugs in my restaurant?

ANOTHER COP

...maybe...

JO ANN

Well all I do is see him eat.

MAGUIRE

Look, Miss Vallenari we know how important your chef is to you, we've got our problems, we certainly don't have to help Immigration with their problems..

JO ANN

In other words, Mr. Maguire, if I'll spy on my customers, you'll make sure my chef isn't deported for drunk driving -

MAGUIRE

I didn't say that -

JO ANN

Don't bother to explain. At 8 o'clock tonight I'll be seating my lawyer and his ex-partner who is now a Federal Judge downtown. I'm sure they'll understand what you meant and explain it to me -

FRESCIA

(coming up from behind her)

Okay, Al. Hello Miss Vallenari I'm Lieutenant Frescia from the Sheriff's Department -

JO ANN

We've met.

FRESCIA

Absolutely. And when you sue him I don't want to be anywhere in sight. Come on. Get me outta here -

Before she can say anything, Frescia takes Jo Ann by the hand and leads her out of the room.

36 EXT. LOMITA SHERIFF'S SUBSTATION (DAY) JO ANN

35

emerges with Nino in tears. There's a slight crash in the hallway behind them. The sound frightens Nino. He holds onto Jo Ann.

NINO

I was a no drunk, I gotta sick driving that goddam car. It drives like a goddam boat -

He angrily points to a big red Cadillac with a wrinkled front fender parked to the side of the station. There's an angry gaggle of voices behind the door and Frescia pops out. Jo Ann looks worried.

FRESCIA

- it's nothing really -
(walking them down the steps)
- somebody dropped last night's evidence on the floor..including Nino's urine specimen.

NINO

(very worried)
What's that mean?

FRESCIA

It means we'll have to drop the case.

NINO

(stopping, to Jo Ann)

- no court?

JO ANN

(eyeing Frescia)

No court.

Nino hugs and kisses Frescia.

FRESCIA

(laughing)

Take it easy, for Christ's sake! I work here..

(catches Jo Ann looking at him)

- what's on your mind?

JO ANN

How I met you with Mr. McKussic..you two looked like friends.

FRESCIA

(a little embarrassed)

- yeah, well -

JO ANN

(hastily)

- I'm sorry, it's really none of my business, and you've been terrific -

FRESCIA

(helps her into car)

- don't worry about it, just..buy me dinner one of these days.

NINO

Any goddam day you want, Nick.

Nino has hopped into the passenger side of the Alfa. Jo Ann and Nick continue to look at one another.

JO ANN

Thank you so much.

She drops her sunglasses over her eyes and drives off.

37 MAGUIRE MEETS FRESCIA ON THE LOMITA STATION STEPS

37

where Frescia has paused to watch the Alfa disappear into traffic.

MAGUIRE

We just got word on your friend
McKussic. He's got a deal cooking.

FRESCIA

- yeah?

MAGUIRE

We're gonna nail him.

FRESCIA

If you want Carlos the worst thing
you can do right now is bust Mac.

MAGUIRE

Why? Once we get to Mac he'll give
us Carlos.

Frescia smiles and turns back to the Alfa which is disappearing up the hill. Maguire is a little uncomfortable with Frescia's reaction. Then:

MAGUIRE

Why'd you let her chef go?

FRESCIA

She's tough, isn't she?

Maguire grunts, meaning 'not really.'

FRESCIA

She beat the shit outta you, Al.

MAGUIRE

She did not!

FRESCIA

Hell she didn't! Ask anybody in
the room.

MAGUIRE

(following Frescia back
into the station)

What's she got to do with this
Frescia?

38 A PSA PLANE LANDS IN SAN FRANCISCO 38

39 EXT. SAN FRANCISCO TERMINAL STEPS (DAY) 39

McKussic is barely glimpsed in the stream of passengers. His hair is neatly combed, he wears a nondescript coat and tie.

40 EXT. SAN FRANCISCO HYATT MCKUSSIC 40

exits a cab and enters the hotel.

41 INT. HYATT HALLWAY 41

McKussic knocks on a hotel door. It opens. Three men, two of whom look as dyspeptic and conservative as any DEA agent, are lounging around, highballs in hand, cigarette smoke in the air and a large suitcase on the bed. The third man, longer haired and more casually put together, has been sitting on the dresser.

THIRD MAN

Hey, Mac, I appreciate you stepping in for your cousin like this. Good flight?

MCKUSSIC

All the way. You?

THIRD MAN

We chartered a Lear. Any problem?

He hands the suitcase to McKussic.

MCKUSSIC

None.

HEAVY-SET MAN

If you're going to take our money, how about some guarantee -

MCKUSSIC

What do you want a receipt? look, I didn't want to be here to begin with -

He sets the suitcase back up on the bed.

THIRD MAN

Take it easy, Mac.

HEAVY-SET MAN
(holding onto the suitcase,
his nerves showing)
..we've only got it for the day..

McKUSSIC
In other words, it's not your money.

HEAVY-SET MAN
- right.

McKUSSIC
Everybody's fronted, that's the
name of the game -
(hefting the suitcase)
I hope you didn't go and give me a lot
of tens and twenties now, they have
enough trouble counting hundreds.

A-41 DOWN THE HALL

A-41

of the 23rd floor McKussic knocks on Room 2314. A small but wiry Colombian opens it. He's in his shorts.

SMALL COLOMBIAN
Are you Mac?

McKUSSIC
Where's Carlos Junior? He's got to
help me do some counting here.

JORGE
We count. He's chopping.

McKUSSIC
Chopping?

JORGE
Chopping in the mall.

McKUSSIC
What the fuck for?

JORGE
Leather goods, or something, I'm
not sure. He said he'll be back
any minute.

McKUSSIC
Well give me the product -

JORGE
He didn't want it here with the
money -

McKUSSIC

I know, I'll take it away right now -

JORGE

You can't - Carlos took it with him.

McKussic braces himself..checks the digital clock on the radio-alarm. It reads 12:27.

42 AT THE EDGE OF THE SHOPPING MALL

42

A wall clock reads 1:23. He hangs up the house phone and strides back into the mall. In the arcade a bunch of Colombians are playing video games. They are dressed in sweaters and leather, sport moustaches and gold chains, and loudly kick the shit out of the machines swearing at them in Spanish. McKussic walks up to CARLOS JR. who is playing a Star Wars-type game called "GORF."

GORF MACHINE

'Ha, ha, you missed me, Space Cadet.'

CARLOS JR.

- fock you!

He kicks the machine, and hits the suitcase under it.

McKUSSIC

You guys think you're invisible, or what?

CARLOS JR.

Hey, Mac! Man, this goddam machine discourages you at every level. I can't figure out how to keep from getting killed.

He goes back to giving the machine a whack.

GORF MACHINE

'- bad shot, Space Cadet.'

McKUSSIC

Why aren't you in the room? Don't hang out here in the lobby with the product.

McKussic's indicated suitcase.

GORF

' - prepare to die, Space Cadet - '

CARLOS JR.
Prepare to die my ass, take this
you fock!

He gives the machine a vicious kick, knocking the suitcase
over.

McKUSSIC
Don't break the rocks.

CARLOS JR.
(furiously working the
game)
- what?

McKUSSIC
Don't kick the suitcase. It breaks
up the rocks. Buyers like the big
rocks.

CARLOS JR.
What the fock difference does it
make? They're probably chort.

From across the mall a couple of racy Colombian ladies stand
in the doorway of a fancy leather goods store, holding up a
couple of bags.

ONE COLOMBIAN LADY
Oyez, Carlos! Te gusta! Carlos!

Carlos Jr. looks up in surprise, taking his hands off the
controls.

GORF MACHINE
'- oh, oh, too bad, you bite the
dust, Space Cadet -
(rat-tat-tat, then:)
- ha-ha-ha.'

CARLOS JR.
(in Spanish)
- godammit, Dolores, you cooze you
made me lose my concentration!

A Security Guard walks by the arcade door.

McKUSSIC
Get everybody out.

CARLOS JR.
Why?

McKUSSIC

Because this is a full on movie you got going here and I don't want to get busted by that security guard in a Smokey the Bear outfit!...look Carlos, because your father and I are friends, I'm going to explain it to you like I think he would - you wanna sell, they wanna buy but you don't want to have to meet each other to do it. So you do it thru me, and I cover everybody - you lose product, I owe the buyer product, he shorts you money, I owe you money, in other words I make sure you don't meet and don't cheat, now take that shit out of the middle of the shopping mall, follow me, and give it to me when I tell you.

43 INT. BUYER'S HOTEL ROOM

43

McKussic walks in on three unhappy looking men, sitting on a bed piled with kilos of coke double bagged in plastic.

McKUSSIC

- okay everything's set, they had a little trouble counting - something wrong?

No answer from the three men. McKussic picks up a rock from a broken kilo - a crystal weighing nearly a pound.

McKUSSIC

It looks great.

HEAVY SET MAN

It is.

OTHER MAN

It's not the kind. It's the amount.

McKUSSIC

What do you mean?

THIRD MAN

They're short.

McKUSSIC

They're short? How can you tell? You haven't even got a scale.

THIRD MAN
I can count six kilos.

44 INT. COLOMBIANS' HOTEL ROOM

44

McKussic confronts Carlos Jr. He's hot.

McKUSSIC
Your father told me you were
sitting on two hundred.

CARLOS JR.
Well, it was a miscommunication -

McKUSSIC
Talk about short!..these guys have
to be back in Portland with the
product by eleven tonight.

CARLOS JR.
Why? They can take back the extra
focking money.

McKUSSIC
No they can't! when they're here to
buy 20 they're here to buy 20, they
can't go home with 14 kilos and
change. If they do the guys who
loaned these guys the money are
gonna figure these guys went ahead
and bought 20, turned over 6 real
fast and kept the profit and
they're gonna be pissed. You got
any gold?

Maria brings a bottle and a bathroom glass. He pours out
three fingers of tequila and knocks it back - three different
times. Carlos Jr.'s eyes widen a little.

McKUSSIC
..who in the world is gonna believe
I couldn't come up with 20 kilos,
my reputation's too good, your
father's is too good, it's gonna
fuck us!

CARLOS JR.
(getting a little
worried)
Shit, man I'm sorry.

McKussic knocks the last drops out of the glass and laughs.

CARLOS JR.
What's so focking funny?

McKUSSIC
..friend of mine they been after a long time finally got it in a sting operation six months ago and ended up in Federal Court. When he told the judge he was too old to do five twenty year sentences, what do you think the judge told him? 'Do as many as you can.'

McKussic laughs wildly, lying back on the bed and the money. It takes Carlos Jr. a moment, but he laughs with McKussic.

CARLOS JR.
' - do as many as you can,' that judge is pretty focking funny -

McKUSSIC
- yeah -

CARLOS JR.
Hey man. I just realized I know where you can do nine.

McKUSSIC
Nine what?

CARLOS JR.
Kilos.

McKUSSIC
(sits up, immediately sober)
- where?

CARLOS JR.
Santa Monica.

McKUSSIC
Oh, shit no -

CARLOS JR.
(misunderstanding)
Shit yes. No shit, nine. Six for sure.

- 45 EXT. LAX (DAY) 45
- A black Porsche pulls out of the parking structure opposite PSA arrivals, and moves into heavy airport traffic.
- McKUSSIC'S VOICE
- I just landed at LAX -
- VOICE OF ONE OF BUYERS
- how about the Santa Monica Airport coffee shop by eight tonight?
- 46 INT. PORSCHE McKUSSIC (MOVING) 46
- and on his cellular phone. A blue plastic souvenir bag with a Golden Gate bridge is on the seat next to him. The dash clock reads 6:17.
- VOICE OF ONE OF BUYERS
(anxious)
- we gotta leave by eight.
- McKUSSIC
No problem.
- 47 THE BLACK PORSCHE MOVING (DAY) 47
- speeds up Vista del Mar; the long white beach of Playa del Rey on one side, the ugly gothic electric turrets of the Edison plant and the Scattergood sewage plant on the other side.
- 48 THE PORSCHE PULLS THRU
- chain link fencing surrounding the old abandoned Westchester.
- 49 AS HE DRIVES McKUSSIC CAN SEE
- the hilly residential streets flanked by rotting palm trees and street lights, but with no homes - every one torn down for the freeway that never came. His clock on the dash reads 7:19. McKussic pulls over to a crumbling sidewalk hops out and disappears down cellar steps.

50 SEVERAL COLOMBIANS

50

who are waiting for him look like a hit squad in search of a target. One of them pulls out a trash bag. McKussic offers the Golden Gate souvenir bag.

ONE OF THEM

(refusing it)

Carlos'll collect later - just make sure there's six, and take off. Some motorcycle gang tried to follow us here.

McKussic turns over the bag and several kilos tumble out. As he puts them back:

McKUSSIC

- what for?

ONE OF THEM

Who knows, man? people are crazy for no goddam good reason sometimes, you know?

McKUSSIC

(heading up out of cellar)

- yeah -

ONE OF THEM

- on the other hand they might be the guys we sold those six kis to before Carlos called and said to give 'em to you -

McKUSSIC

(stops cold)

- oh no shit -

ONE OF THEM

We're gonna straighten it out, man, don't worry - but for the time being the best thing is to avoid them altogether, you know? just in case.

51 INT. PORSCHE (DAY)

51

McKussic behind the wheel now has a trash bag full of coke and a shoulder bag full of money. He glances at the clock - it's 7:29.

McKUSSIC
 (with a glance at the
 two bags)
 - talk about twenty years -

As he starts the car and takes off after a few turns in the road he sees the first motorcycle.

52 MOTORCYCLES CONVERGE ON THE PORSCHE 52

McKussic swings off the road across a vacant lot avoiding foundations, palm trees, and street lamps. He swerves around a foundation and finds himself nearly driving into an abandoned swimming pool. The motorcycle doesn't see it and disappears into the pool in a shower of sparks.

McKussic's Porsche hits the road again, two motorcycles in pursuit - speeding to and thru the open gap in the chain link fence, then spinning a 360 onto Vista Del Mar, nearly dropping off the cliffs.

53 EXT. CENTINELA DRIVE (LATE AFTERNOON) McKUSSIC 53

turns onto it, breathing easier now. It's 7:58. The Santa Monica Airport Entrance is coming up on his right.

54 THRU WINDSHIELD A PHALANX OF COPS 54

line the airport road on either side.

55 McKUSSIC FREEZES 55

He glances at the coke and money on the passenger seat.

The cops are gesturing at McKussic who is slowing down and looking for a break in their ranks, hoping to spin around and escape. He sees it and is about to turn when a cop leans over and BANGS on the hood of his car.

COP
 What the hell's the matter with
 you? haven't you ever seen a movie
 being shot?

McKussic glances thru the break in their ranks and sees the CAMERA and crew, the DIRECTOR, and ACTORS.

COP
 - so move it.

McKUSSIC
- sorry officer.

COP
Just move it.

McKUSSIC
Yes sir.

56 McKUSSIC TURNS 56

into the lot for the OASIS AIR TERMINAL. The clock there reads 7:59.

57 OMIT 57

58 INT. OASIS COFFEE SHOP THE THREE MEN 58

are waiting at a table when McKussic walks in. The Third Man looks to the dyspeptic other two, checks his watch and smiles.

THIRD MAN
No problem?

McKUSSIC
No problem.

He smiles and gives the Third Man a quick wink.

THIRD MAN
I told you guys. You didn't have a thing to worry about.

McKUSSIC
(looking around)
They don't serve cocktails?

59 EXT. ALLEY AND GARAGE APARTMENT (NIGHT) 59

McKussic parks his Porsche and walks thru his backyard. It's one big sandbox strewn with fins, and deflated beach toys, a hot tub in a patch of crab grass, a Winnebago with a parachute awning.

60 INT. LIVING ROOM (NIGHT) 60

Lindroff watches television with a couple of girls who are wearing roller skates and not much else. McKussic passes behind them and limps up the stairs, grabs a beer from the kitchen and limps out into the den. It is a room of games, from the ping-pong table to the dart board and video games, to duelling pistols on the coffee table.

LINDROFF
 (coming up stairs)
 You all right? what happened?

He indicates McKussic's limp.

McKUSSIC
 Nothing. Just too much money - and
 new boots..

He pulls off his boot. A pack of hundreds falls out. He
 sighs with relief.

McKUSSIC
 - how about cleaning this off and
 get some new paddles? Balls too.

McKussic indicates the cluttered ping-pong table.

LINDROFF
 Yeah? You suddenly up for a little
 ping-pong?

McKUSSIC
 (ignoring the question)
 - what're the Sin sisters doing?

LINDROFF
 Just crankin' on the coke --
 (in response to Mac's
 look)
 I'm kidding, Mac. I'm kidding.

Totally exhausted, McKussic takes his boot and the pack of
 hundreds and heads upstairs to the third floor.

LINDROFF
 (calling after him)
 Mac, I owe you for life.

61 POV TELESCOPE (NIGHT)

61

A BLUR of lights and shapes until the neon sign of VALLENARI'S
 is in view. Just as the sign comes into focus it goes dark.
 FADE:

65 EXT. McKUSSIC'S HOUSE (DAY)

62

The sky is pale with a splash of grenadine. There's the sound
 of roller skates on the strand. McKussic stirs in his deck
 chair on the bedroom balcony where he has fallen asleep next
 to the telescope and a nearly empty pitcher of Tequila Sunrise
 mix. He gets to his feet and holds onto the railing.

On the Strand below, the Sin sisters, in bikinis and roller skates look up, each doing a lazy turn.

SIN SISTERS
Hey, Mac, where you been?

McKUSSIC
Right here. You seen Greg?

Lindroff pokes his head out from under the veranda.

LINDROFF
- we didn't wake you up?

McKUSSIC
No, man, I'm just going to bed -
but I'd like you to drop something
off for me at Vallenari's tonight..

He lets an envelope float down to the strand where Lindroff catches it.

LINDROFF
..who for?

McKUSSIC
Jo Ann Vallenari.

63 INT. VALLENARI'S (NIGHT)

63

Arturo gestures like a bird just shit in his right eye.

JO ANN
What's wrong?

Arturo points down the crowded bar to Nick Frescia, sitting immaculate and isolated in his own cigarette smoke.

ARTURO
The cop. He's waiting for you.

JO ANN
How nice -

Arturo stops her, polishing a glass under her nose.

ARTURO
It's a not nice. He's a cop who
thinks he did you a favor, and cops
are the worst barflies in the
world, they're gonna freeload offa
you the rest of your life,
Giovanna, it's a not worth it, I'm
telling you.

JO ANN
- you just don't like his looks,
Arturo.

FULL SHOT BOOTH JO ANN AND FRESCIA

seated while a waiter pours champagne. It is Jo Ann who
samples it and nods approval, with Frescia watching.

FRESCIA
Arturo's looking at me and I don't
think he approves.

JO ANN
Of what?

FRESCIA
The way I look at you -
(quickly)
- it's quite an experience watching
you work.

JO ANN
Oh?

FRESCIA
Like you're in a play and
everything's on cue. You're kind
of letter perfect.

JO ANN
- thank you.

FRESCIA
Tell me, do you ever flub your
lines?

Jo Ann sets down her champagne glass. Pleasantly:

JO ANN
- is that a polite way of
suggesting I lack spontaneity?

FRESCIA
No - I enjoy the performance.

JO ANN
(amused)
- but you'd like to see me
flustered.

FRESCIA
Seen Mac lately?..Mr. McKussic is
going to ask you to cater a party.

JO ANN
That is our business.

The salad tray rolls up. The waiter hovers over them, mixing
the Caesars.

FRESCIA
(reluctantly)
- well we think it involves his
business.

JO ANN
Are you suggesting I refuse because
it's a party for drug dealers?

FRESCIA
(embarrassed)
No!
(after the waiter
leaves)
..it's just if it's for this one
particular guy, he's particularly
unpleasant.

JO ANN
You mean violent?

FRESCIA
Oh I doubt that. Unless of course
he doesn't like your lasagna.

JO ANN
(amused)
I'm sure Mr. McKussic's friend will
be very well behaved.

FRESCIA
Why would you call him a friend?

JO ANN
- it's a figure of speech,
Lieutenant. Who else would Mr.
McKussic give a party for?

FRESCIA
A business associate. As it
happens Carlos and Mac are friends.

JO ANN
- and you and Mac are friends -

FRESCIA

- that's right -

JO ANN

- well it sounds like a pretty friendly situation all around -

FRESCIA

Not exactly. Mac and I went to school together in Redondo Beach and played water polo, Carlos and Mac went to jail together in Mexico and played horseshoes and ping-pong. Nobody knows Carlos. Nobody even knows what Carlos looks like but Mac -

Jo Ann carefully places her salad fork prongs down on the plate.

JO ANN

Then you want to know what Carlos looks like and you're asking me to spy on a customer so you can find out -

FRESCIA

(exasperated)

Absolutely not!..look, let's not discuss my business, his business, or your business, okay?

JO ANN

(pleased with herself)

That leaves us with nothing to talk about.

FRESCIA

- let's eat.

64

EXT. VALLENARI'S (NIGHT) LINDROFF

64

pulls McKussic's Porsche into the parking lot, in what is becoming a driving rain. He hurries into the restaurant.

65 INT. MCKUSSIC'S BATHROOM (NIGHT) 65

McKussic turns off the shower, and rain can be heard drumming on the roof. He grabs a towel, hurries into the bedroom to the ringing phone.

66 INT. VALLENARI'S BATHROOM 66

Lindroff on a public phone has the bathroom door open a few inches, holds the envelope McKussic had given him early in the day. Thru the partially opened door Frescia can be glimpsed in the booth across from the bar with Jo Ann.

LINDROFF

- she's having dinner with him.

67 INT. MCKUSSIC'S (NIGHT) 67

MCKUSSIC

- she can't be.

LINDROFF'S VOICE

- a waiter's standing there right now, checking out their Caesar salads -

McKussic sinks thoughtfully to the bed, toying with a sleeve from his sportcoat, which is neatly laid out on the bed with the rest of his dinner dress.

LINDROFF'S VOICE

- so what do you want me to do with the envelope? drop it off anyway? Mac?

MCKUSSIC

- yeah, why not?

68 INT. McKUSSIC'S DOWNSTAIRS (NIGHT)

68

Downstairs on a bean-bag sofa McKussic and Lindroff are sprawled in front of the huge Mitsubishi television screen munching on Dorito chips, drinking Dos Equis and tequila. McKussic is mindlessly flipping the top on a Zippo lighter. They're ripped and enjoying a re-run of the eleven o'clock news.

LINDROFF

- you meet at Orville and Wilburs maybe once every Christmas, right? he throws his Chevrolet keys on the bar you throw your Porsche keys on the bar, you pick up your drink and there's a gold Rolex on your wrist and he's wearing a Timex. Even if he wasn't a cop he'd have to hate your guts.

McKussic suddenly laughs.

McKUSSIC

(reacting to the news of another coke bust)
' - street value twenty-seven million dollars!' What street is that? geez, show me how to get there just once!..

LINDROFF

You hear me, man? He came in there looking for a way to bust your buns.

McKussic stretches.

McKUSSIC

..well, he's gonna have to drag me outta bed to do it..
(he makes it to his feet)
I'm under the weather, heavily...

LINDROFF

What I'm telling you is for your own good, Mac. Hey, Mac! Your keys.

Lindroff tosses McKussic his Porsche keys. He catches them at the top of the stairs and as he heads into the bedroom starts to toss them onto the nightstand - but the characteristic ignition key catches his eye. It seems to wake him up. He stares at it thoughtfully, turning it over in his hands, trying to come to some sort of decision.

69 AT THE BOOTH IN VALLENARI'S JO ANN AND FRESCIA

69

are in the middle of their meal and the restaurant is nearly empty. One dead champagne bottle is upended in the ice bucket and a lone captain is popping open another.

FRESCIA

- swordfish is great -

JO ANN

Yes, it's an excellent piece -

FRESCIA

- and the Crystal -

JO ANN

- you know it -

FRESCIA

- we serve it at the Lomita Station -

JO ANN

What do cops drink?

FRESCIA

Oh hell. It depends. Generally I recommend my men stay away from vodka and stick to scotch and bourbon.

JO ANN

Why is that?

FRESCIA

So the brass'll know they're drunk and not stupid.

JO ANN

You have an answer for everything -

FRESCIA

So do you. Every question Maguire asked the other day you answered like you were reading off a menu.

JO ANN
You mean you're still suspicious
about me and Mr. McKussic?

FRESCIA
- yeah.

JO ANN
You actually think we're in
business together?

FRESCIA
(amused)
- no.

JO ANN
(amused)
- oh.
(then)
I don't date the customers, Nick -
especially when they drive fifty-
thousand dollar cars and always pay
in cash -

Jo Ann smiles. The champagne is having its effect. They're
both distracted by the captain who asks Jo Ann if she wants
him to close the restaurant. She says she will.

FRESCIA
Then you'd heard about Mac -

JO ANN
Sooner or later you hear everything
in a restaurant -

FRESCIA
He's never asked you out?

JO ANN
The only thing he's ever asked me
for is another tequila sunrise,
you're still suspicious!

FRESCIA
If I was what difference would it
make? You'd talk me out of it.

JO ANN
That's not it.

FRESCIA
No?

JO ANN

No - you're just suspicious of any woman who hasn't slept with you.

FRESCIA

(laughing now)

Jo Ann..

JO ANN

Nick, what is it? you need Chapstick or lip gloss or something, because your lips keep getting stuck on your teeth, or is that your idea of a smile?

Frescia's smile freezes. Jo Ann starts to laugh and tries to apologize for it and laughs harder.

FRESCIA

It's my idea of a smile..man, you're tough.

JO ANN

You're a bad boy, Nick. You're a very bad boy.

Frescia picks up a Zippo and lights a cigarette. When he sets it down, the raised brass lettering that is worn nearly to the aluminum surface boldly reads R.U.H.S.

JO ANN

(tapping the lighter with a fingernail)

- what's that mean?

FRESCIA

Redondo Union High

JO ANN

(teasing)

You smoked in high school?

FRESCIA

(with a wink)

- we were a bunch of rowdies, Jo Ann -

He touches her wrist. She jumps a little.

JO ANN

- how about an espresso?

FRESCIA

What?

She goes over to the bar and the espresso machine.

JO ANN
I've got to lock up and I'll never
do it like this..

She doesn't see the rain spattered envelope by the cash register. She's just gotten smacked in the eye with a water drop. She looks up toward the roof.

70 INT. WINE CELLAR JO ANN

70

trips into the room, sways around several checkercloth tables, and wraps her arms around a big wine barrel.

FRESCIA
Jo Ann, what're you doing?

JO ANN
- I want this under..there...

FRESCIA
Let me.

JO ANN
No you'll get dirty...

Frescia wrestles the barrel away from her.

FRESCIA
Don't be silly -

JO ANN
(as Frescia rolls it
under the skylight)
- that skylight's indented for some
reason so, the rain fills it up
into a puddle until it becomes like
a pond and then -

Frescia has the barrel in position under the skylight.

FRESCIA
Then what?

He gets his answer. The skylight caulking gives and a sheet of water pours out of the ceiling, drenching him.

JO ANN
Then you're all wet.

She starts to laugh.

JO ANN
 Oh God, Nick, I'm so sorry, I
 really should do something -

Before she can do anything he's got her in his arms, kissing her. She kisses him back and both of them get wet in the rain from the leaking skylight.

THE WINE BARREL BOTTOM

is covered with water, occasional raindrops on the surface sounding like kisses.

71 INT. BEDROOM (NIGHT)

71

McKussic watches the rain drifting past the floodlight beam outside the window. He turns to pour another tequila sunrise from the pitcher at his elbow, spots the Zippo lighter he'd been flipping earlier.

LINDROFF'S VOICE
 (almost soothing)
 - I don't know what it is about
 going to high school with someone
 that makes you feel you're
 automatically friends for life.
 Who says? who says friendship lasts
 forever? we'd all like it to maybe,
 but maybe it wears out like
 everything else, like tires.
 There's just so much mileage in 'em
 and then you're ridin' around on
 nothin' but air.

McKussic RISES abruptly. The sound of a soft Nat Cole melody coming from K-Earth can be heard. He spots a cat on the sundeck outside the door, covered with mist, looking in at him. He goes to it and opens the door. A sharp series of ALARMS go off.

LINDROFF'S VOICE
 What is it? you alright man?

McKUSSIC
 - I just tried to turn out the
 floodlight - but listen, man.
 You're gonna have to pull that
 alarm system outta here -

LINDROFF
 - Mac, you need the security -

McKUSSIC

- every fucking time I really need to work it I'm too drunk to figure it out. Get rid of it. It just isn't me, man.

McKussic sighs and turns out the floodlight.

72 FULL SHOT VALLENARI'S (NIGHT)

72

The neon sign over the restaurant is DARK. The rain has stopped. Only a Cadillac Seville and an Alfa Romeo are left in the lot. The sky is beginning to lighten. FADE.

73 INT. LOMITA STATION (DAY)

73

Maguire pops into Frescia's cubicle.

MAGUIRE

Any word on where McKussic's giving the party?

FRESCIA

How would I know? I'm waiting to hear it from your snitch.

The phone rings. Frescia picks it up.

FRESCIA

It's a personal call.

Maguire nods. Frescia waits til Maguire leaves.

FRESCIA

(then)

How about a movie?

A-73 JO ANN AT THE RESTAURANT ON THE PHONE

A-73

Arturo suspiciously staring b.g.

JO ANN

(pleased with the call)

I can't tonight. We're really booked.

FRESCIA'S VOICE

- this afternoon.

JO ANN

Don't you ever work?

FRESCIA'S VOICE

- I'm working now.

JO ANN
 (more softly)
 Don't say that or I'll believe
 you!..I always believe the worst.

FRESCIA'S VOICE
 I'm going to die if I don't see
 you.

This last is loud enough for Arturo to have heard. Jo Ann squeezes the phone to her ear and lowers her voice.

JO ANN
 - well we can't have that..how
 about checking out the competition
 with me this week? That way we can
 both keep working..

B-73 EXT. REX (NIGHT) B-73

Jo Ann and Frescia enter. Jo Ann is greeted as tho she's a celebrity.

C-73 INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT (ANOTHER NIGHT) C-73

The captain starts to pour from a bottle of Sassichai 1980, for Frescia's approval. Frescia stops him - indicates it is Jo Ann who will sample the wine. She samples it. She approves. Frescia is charmed and impressed.

D-73 IN AUTHENTIC CHINESE RESTAURANT (ANOTHER NIGHT) D-73

A waitress brings trays of steaming bamboo baskets. Jo Ann indicates her desire for Frescia to try the chicken feet. Frescia demurrs. She's amused.

E-73 INT. VALLENARI'S (NIGHT) F-73

McKussic is at the bar, being served a tequila sunrise by Arturo - he's staring unhappily at the reservations desk, which is vacant. Clearly Jo Ann is not working.

G-73 EXT. BEACH HOLE IN THE WALL TACO STAND (DAY) G-73

Frescia's at the order window while Jo Ann sits at an outdoor table catching up on her mail. Frescia brings back steaming tacos, indicating this is more like it. Jo Ann has opened up a rain spattered envelope and is lost in its contents.

INT. LOMITA STATION (DAY) FRESCIA

still casually dressed from the beach rolls in. Maguire's pissed.

MAGUIRE

Where the fuck've you been?

FRESCIA

Working my ass off, Al. Mac's party is a week from tomorrow at his house at one in the afternoon for fifty-six guests.

On Maguire's reaction FADE:

74 INT. MCKUSSIC'S LIVING ROOM 74

McKussic and Cody enter as the black-out drapes are opened and a dozen or so screaming kids yell, "SURPRISE!"

75 EXT. MCKUSSIC'S BACKYARD (LATER) 75

The children and their parents have eaten royally. SHALEEN is at one of the tables for adults talking to WOODY TRAYNOR, a man wearing county lifeguard shorts and a t-shirt that says 'NOT CAUGHT IN SANTA MONICA BAY.' McKussic slips Shaleen an envelope and gets a warm hug from Woody.

A magician entertains using large metal rings and flimsy scarves. He pulls brightly colored doves out of apparently empty cages. McKussic has been toying with a piece of nautical line, tying knots in it.

MAGICIAN

Well, I seem to have come up with an empty ring. I wonder if Cody's Dad could help us. How about it Mac?

The kids and their parents applaud. McKussic feigns reluctance. Jo Ann pauses on the back porch to watch. McKussic spots her and climbs the porch.

JO ANN

Am I part of this?

MCKUSSIC

..it's not gonna hurt.

McKussic holds up the nautical line - POOF! the knots disappear. He then passes his hand along the line and it is transformed into a brightly colored scarf. He turns to Jo Ann and places the scarf in her pocket. McKussic withdraws the scarf - it is snow-white. Applause. McKussic bunches the scarf into a silk bouquet, turns to Jo Ann.

McKUSSIC
Blow, go ahead - blow.

Jo Ann blows. McKussic bends over, whispers something, and - POOF! in his hands he holds a white dove. McKussic releases the dove which flies to the empty sixth ring held by the magician, all to applause - and Jo Ann's astonishment.

76 INT. SECOND FLOOR McKUSSIC'S

76

Jo Ann notices the ping pong-table clean and ready for action. McKussic pads down the stairs from the third floor, carrying a white envelope.

McKUSSIC
(handing it to her)
- thank you. Nice food.

JO ANN
Thank you. Nice party..

Jo Ann is a little uncomfortable under McKussic's even gaze.

JO ANN
- you're a real magician. I was surprised.

They head down the stairs.

McKUSSIC
Well it was a surprise party.

JO ANN
(a little eager)
That's right, did it surprise your boy?

McKUSSIC
(opening the screen door)
Oh yes. Not as much as it surprised the twenty-five cops on the beach but it did, yeah.

Jo Ann stops cold. Cody can be seen with a couple of his friends on the porch, arguing about who looks thru the new telescope.

McKUSSIC
(quietly)
Are you going to tell me that's a surprise?

JO ANN

- no. Mr. Frescia said there was a possibility the police would be watching you.

McKUSSIC

Did he say why?

Jo Ann finally looks at McKussic.

JO ANN

- yes. Do you want me to be specific?

McKUSSIC

I'd appreciate that.

McKussic steps back inside and Jo Ann follows.

JO ANN

(very uncomfortable)

He said..you were a serious drug dealer and that you promised to quit but that - you lied and were - still doing it..

McKUSSIC

He called me a liar? What a bummer - well, I can't blame you.

JO ANN

Blame me for what?

McKUSSIC

Telling Nick about the party -
(tapping envelope)
- I counted that kind of fast -

He abruptly walks away and heads up the stairs.

JO ANN

- I didn't tell Mr. Frescia about the party. He told me.

McKussic stops on the stairs. Cody and a couple of his friends are on the front porch rudely checking out girls on the beach.

McKUSSIC

Cody! watch your language.

JO ANN

(embarrassed, angry,
and half to herself)

- what was I supposed to do? it seems to me it would have been more insulting if I'd refused to cater the party. I didn't know it was your child's birthday, you didn't order the cake from us, I didn't even know you had a child, in fact I thought it was a party for someone called Carlos -

She breaks off abruptly when she sees McKussic looking at her.

McKUSSIC

- that's the most I ever heard you talk, other than saying what's on the menu. Just pretend like none of this ever happened.

He smiles and continues, leaving Jo Ann confused and full of feeling. She turns to go and finds Cody standing there.

CODY

What do you call that skinny spaghetti?

JO ANN

Angel hair. Why, did you like it?

CODY

Oh yeah.

JO ANN

Thank you.

He makes way for her as she starts out the door.

CODY

You just cook and then you leave?

JO ANN

(turning back)

Why yes, what else would I do?

CODY

I don't know. I never saw a cook that looked like that.

JO ANN

I take it that's a compliment?

CODY
 (very serious)
 - oh yeah.

JO ANN
 (pleased)
 Happy birthday, Cody.

77 EXT. STRAND

77

Lindroff and McKussic stride swiftly thru late afternoon beach traffic.

McKUSSIC
 Why would Nick Frescia know about the party before Jo Ann Vallenari did - you were the only one I told.

LINDROFF
 You didn't tell me, Mac. You gave me an envelope. I never opened it. Who did you talk to? when did you hire that magician, when did you invite Cody's friends, their parents, when did you mention it to his mother? You gotta get her permission to say 'boo'.

McKUSSIC
 I'm sorry, man, I'm getting seriously paranoid - especially with my kid visiting - got any quarters?

McKussic tosses his head toward some parking lot ~~planes~~ off the strand.

78 INT. LOMITA SHERIFF'S STATION BRIEFING ROOM

78

Frescia and Maguire are going at each other as half the beach around McKussic's house comes dragging in - a surveillance crew of volleyball players, skaters, surfers, fishermen, the dog-catcher with the handcuffs.

FRESCIA
 We got the Harbor Patrol involved?

MAGUIRE
 They do surveillance in the marina.

FRESCIA

There's boats in the marina. This is a house. The house is not gonna float away - it's not gonna fucken move.

(the phone buzzes;
picking it up)

Yeah? Put him thru.

(Frescia turns his back on Maguire who is suddenly very curious)

- hey, how you doin'?..In my office. How about you?

79 WITH MCKUSSIC ON PARKING LOT PHONE 79

MCKUSSIC

- in my office. I was wondering if we could get together somewhere, Nick -

80 WITH FRESCIA AND MAGUIRE 80

who is called to another extension line.

FRESCIA

Hell yes. Any particular time?

81 WITH MCKUSSIC AND LINDROFF ON AN ADJACENT PHONE 81

MCKUSSIC

How about right now?

82 WITH FRESCIA AND MAGUIRE ON DIFFERENT EXTENSIONS 82

FRESCIA

- sure, why not?

Frescia stops, looking over at Maguire who is red in the face.

MAGUIRE

- look, when you say the man's giving a party in a week or two and you say Carlos is coming to town in a week or two - what the fuck do you think I think?

Frescia hangs up the phone. He moves to Maguire, smiling.

FRESCIA

- who's your snitch, Al. He hasn't gotten a goddam thing right, you look for Mac in L.A. and he's in San Francisco, you go for Carlos and get Mac's kid -

Maguire cups his hand over the phone.

MAGUIRE

- Nick, he's not mine to give -

FRESCIA

(heading out)

- I'm not authorizing anymore county funds unless you get ahold of somebody who can actually identify Carlos -

MAGUIRE

(into phone)

- the Sin sisters? What the fuck are you talking about I don't know any - oh, is he right there?

83 WITH LINDROFF ON THE PARKING LOT PHONE

83

McKussic hanging up his phone, and moving toward Lindroff.

LINDROFF

- just about.

Lindroff hangs up abruptly.

84 EXT. CHILD'S SWING BEACH (DUSK)

84

McKussic sits in one of the swings, the sun making the chain link at his temple seem molten red as it nearly touches the deep blue horizon behind him.

McKUSSIC

How come you tried to get me kicked out of my favorite restaurant?..You told Jo Ann Vallenari about me, didn't you Nick?

Frescia SWINGS into SHOT until he and McKussic are nearly side by side in their respective swing seats.

FRESCIA

Yeah I did.

McKUSSIC

You got a reason?..

FRESCIA

- a few days after I saw you at the restaurant, it happened her chef got arrested for drunk driving. She came down to the station and she seemed like an upright citizen - I didn't want her getting into something that might hurt her.

McKUSSIC

You didn't want her hurt.

FRESCIA

You got it.

McKUSSIC

Is that why you told her about Carlos? So she'd know him if she met him? So she could identify him? Is that your way of making sure she's not gonna be hurt?

The sun has sunk half-way below the horizon and the light is going on their faces.

FRESCIA

Okay I fucked up. I shouldn't've said anything about Carlos. Look - I been dating Jo Ann, it obviously affected my judgment here...

The sun has fallen. Their profiles turn to silhouettes. McKussic's tips slowly toward the sand.

McKUSSIC

Well. I'm glad you told me, I guess..

He gets up to leave - turns back.

McKUSSIC

By the way - you told Jo Ann about the party.

FRESCIA

No, Mac. You got it backwards. She told me.

McKUSSIC

Yeah? Then she got it backwards.

FRESCIA

Well, it's understandable - you confronting her like that - she probably got flustered. After all she's not used to that sort of thing. She's a very traditional girl. Wish Cody happy birthday for me -

85 INT. VALLENARI'S (NIGHT) JO ANN AT THE RESERVATIONS DESK 85

is freshly pulled together but very busy and to use Frescia's word seems on the verge at least of being flustered.

ARTURO

Giovanna, Giovanna -

JO ANN

I'm on the phone, I'm on every phone in the house!

ARTURO

- what do you want me to do with Mr. McKussic's tip?

He holds the envelope McKussic had given Jo Ann earlier.

JO ANN

What you normally do. Divide it up - the waiters and everyone who worked the party -

ARTURO

It's a pretty good tip.

JO ANN

What are you talking about?

ARTURO

Well - his bill was \$2500, and his tip was - \$2500.

JO ANN

(quietly)

There's five thousand dollars in there?

ARTURO

Musta been a real good party.

JO ANN

Arturo - give me that envelope.

86 EXT. VISTA DEL MAR (DAY) JO ANN'S ALFA 86

moves past the Edison plant and into Manhattan Beach. She turns right and plunges down towards the pier.

A-86 EXT. MCKUSSIC'S HOUSE (DAY) A-86

Jo Ann's Alfa is now parked off the alley. CAMERA RISES picking up Jo Ann purposefully trodding across the strand and onto the beach, heading towards the pier.

87 EXT. BEACH (DAY) MCKUSSIC 87

is on a beach towel watching Cody thru binoculars as he tries his hand at surfing. Cody is resting on his board, waiting for the next set.

MCKUSSIC

(shouting)

Get away from the pier! Cody!

He waves him away, lowers the binoculars when a shadow crosses over him. He looks blankly at Jo Ann, wearing a sweatshirt and no makeup.

MCKUSSIC

Holy smoke, it's you!

JO ANN

Yes it is. Look Mr. McKussic we have to talk.

(waving envelope)

This isn't right.

MCKUSSIC

Oh, darn, I shorted you, huh? sorry about that, I was in sort of a hurry, but listen, I'm good for it - just as soon as my boy -

JO ANN

I don't want your money. I don't want any of it.

MCKUSSIC

(shocked)

- how come?

JO ANN

What did you think you were paying for?

(shoving it in his hands)

Here -

McKUSSIC

I don't get it. If it's not
enough -

JO ANN

It's not enough. You don't have
enough money to buy me, nobody
does -

McKUSSIC

Buy you what?

JO ANN

There's five thousand dollars in
here!

McKUSSIC

- just lower your voice, okay? I
don't want anybody to think
something's goin' down here - five
thousand dollars?

JO ANN

That's right.

McKUSSIC

Oh - well - then I didn't short
you. I guess I grabbed the
hundreds - you owe me.

JO ANN

Then this was a mistake? you
miscounted?

McKUSSIC

- it's a habit I got hangin' around
Colombians.

JO ANN

- what?

McKUSSIC

- just a joke, darlin' -

Jo Ann has suddenly looked toward the ocean and the pier.
McKussic follows her gaze.

88 POV PIER

88

Cody's surfboard turns over crazily in the foam of a wave that has crashed into the pier. The board bangs into the pilings and is bounced around like a pinball. There is no Cody. McKussic dashes into SHOT running at breakneck speed toward the surf.

89 EXT. MCKUSSIC'S HOUSE MANHATTAN BEACH STRAND (DAY)

89

Jo Ann inches her Alfa right up to the front porch. She whips around and opens the passenger side for McKussic who carries Cody, now dry and wearing a neck brace, up the outside stairs to the second story and into the house.

90 MCKUSSIC'S BEDROOM

90

McKussic places Cody on the bed. Jo Ann pulls back the covers.

MCKUSSIC

(to Cody)

- thought you might like to stay in
my room, how about it?

Cody nods and feels the neck-brace. His red eyes well up with tears. Cody grabs McKussic's hand, starts to cry. McKussic plucks a Kleenex off the bedstand.

MCKUSSIC

- okay, okay - what do you see?

He holds the empty Kleenex in front of Cody.

CODY

- nothin'...

McKussic passes the Kleenex thru his hands - then OPENS it - there's a huge SNICKERS bar.

MCKUSSIC

You call that 'nothin'?'

CODY

Can I have it right now?

MCKUSSIC

- long as you eat your dinner.

JO ANN

How about if I send over some angel
hair pasta?

CODY

- okay.

McKUSSIC

'Thank you.'

CODY

- thank you.

JO ANN

- be well, Cody.

91 INT. DEN McKUSSIC'S HOUSE WITH McKUSSIC AND JO ANN

91

who can't help but notice the ping-pong table again - cleaned
and ready for action.

McKUSSIC

I don't know what I'd done if you
hadn't come along, Greg had my car -

McKussic has started to shake a little.

JO ANN

- here, why don't you sit down?

McKussic breaks away from her and lurches toward the kitchen.

McKUSSIC

- I just need some gold -

He grabs the bottle of tequila on the counter and pours it -
into three shot glasses. He promptly downs one after another.

JO ANN

(quietly)

Sit down, Mr. McKussic.

He allows himself to be seated by her. Jo Ann kneels beside
him, checks her watch. She looks at McKussic's bowed head,
trying to decide what to do.

JO ANN

Your boy lives with you?

McKussic looks up, smiles.

McKUSSIC

Depends.

JO ANN

On what?

McKUSSIC

Money and his mama's mood -

McKussic rises and heads back for tequila, pours another shot.

JO ANN

- don't you think you've had
enough? I mean you want to hear
Cody if he wakes up and needs
something, don't you?

McKussic puts the shot glass down carefully - after draining
it.

JO ANN

You're not going to answer me, are
you?

McKUSSIC

I don't really think you want me
to.

JO ANN

Yes I do.

McKUSSIC

(amused)

Okidokie - I'll answer any question
you care to ask. How about that?

It's a challenge that Jo Ann, has stepped into - she sees
McKussic waiting for her to back down.

JO ANN

- okay..

She looks around - her eyes take in the bar top and the
tequila.

McKUSSIC

Bet I know the first question.

JO ANN

What's that?

McKUSSIC

'How about a drink?'

Jo Ann flinches - then it turns into a tight little smile.

McKUSSIC
Straight?

JO ANN
You can hold the lemon and salt.

McKUSSIC
You a tequila drinker?

JO ANN
(downs the shot)
- how can you feel about your boy
the way you do and sell drugs?
Cocaine - it is cocaine, isn't it?

McKUSSIC
Well, it was.

Jo Ann shakes her head, grimly amused.

JO ANN
But not anymore.

McKUSSIC
No.

JO ANN
You were out with Sandy Leonard the
night he was arrested.

McKUSSIC
Nick told you that?

JO ANN
You weren't out with him?

McKUSSIC
- oh I was -

JO ANN
- and you weren't selling cocaine?

McKUSSIC
No, I wasn't - he was.

Jo Ann smiles.

JO ANN
Oh come on! then what were you
doing?

McKUSSIC
(glum)
Trying to teach him how to sell it.

Jo Ann breaks out laughing. Then:

JO ANN
- you're serious.

McKUSSIC
(embarrassed)
Well, that's what it came down to -
that fella Sandy Leonard's smart
enough to be a lawyer, but he's way
too dumb to be a crook.

JO ANN
You had to be getting something.

McKUSSIC
Well yeah. He's my lawyer.

Jo Ann turns back, puzzled.

JO ANN
..yes..

McKUSSIC
He's your lawyer too.

JO ANN
Okay, he's your lawyer and he's my
lawyer. What does that do for you?

McKUSSIC
Look I pretty much knew you knew
what I'd done for a living and I
wanted him to let you know I also
had a legitimate business -
naturally I didn't want him busted
in the meantime.

JO ANN
(relentless)
- you thought Sandy Leonard would
give you respectability?

McKUSSIC
- yes m'am.

JO ANN
What do you need it for?

McKUSSIC
...so if I asked you out...maybe
you'd accept.

JO ANN

(stunned and redfaced)

- but I mean - gee. You don't need a lawyer for that - dating is not a criminal activity, Mr. McKussic. I think your profession has clouded your judgment here.

McKUSSIC

- sure, why not?

JO ANN

- I just don't know what to say. I'm - sorry. I'm really sorry - I'm flattered and I believe you and uhh - it was awful dumb.

McKUSSIC

Yeah it was..

JO ANN

- I'm late as hell -

She turns and heads down the stairs, walks back up into SHOT.

JO ANN

I would like to call and check up on Cody.

McKussic nods.

92 INT. VALLENARI'S (NIGHT) JO ANN

92

flushed and elegant makes her way thru the crush of customers to the reservations desk by the bar.

JO ANN

Arturo, pour me a glass of champagne..

As Arturo pours, Jo Ann breaks into a smile.

JO ANN

You'll never believe what just happened -

ARTURO

- if it's bad news, Giovanna - I generally believe it.

JO ANN

- I went to return Mr. McKussic's money -

ARTURO
 You gave back my tip? I don't
 believe it - good evening
 Lieutenant.

Jo Ann is taken aback to see Frescia standing coolly beside her.

JO ANN
 - you're early!

FRESCIA
 You're late.

JO ANN
 Disappointed?

FRESCIA
 Yeah, what kept you?

JO ANN
 You don't want to know.

She takes his arm and leads him to the middle booth which is empty and set up for two.

JO ANN
 - we're right here -

FRESCIA
 No we're not.

JO ANN
 Then where do you suggest?

FRESCIA
 (taking her arm)
 - the wine cellār, where else?

Jo Ann can't believe it.

JO ANN
 Come on, Nick, let's not kid
 around, I mean it now, I've got
 customers all over the place - I'll
 scream -

93 SHE SAYS THIS AS HE OPENS THE WINE CELLAR DOOR

93

to a private party of at least fifteen - all male, and with a noticeable Latin contingent.

ONE LATIN

- that is quite unnecessary,
senorita -

Jo Ann turns and faces a scholarly, impeccable Mexican in his three-piece suit. She is mortified.

FRESCIA

Jo Ann Vallenari, may I present
Commandante Xavier Escalante-
Portero y Vega of the Mexican
Federales?

ESCALANTE

- a pleasure. Lt. Frescia seems to
have alarmed you.

FRESCIA

- I surprised Miss Vallenari with a
private party in the wine cellar
here. She didn't realize I'd
phoned ahead and made our
reservations -

ESCALANTE

You go to a good deal of trouble to
explain an inconsequential event,
Lieutenant.

FRESCIA

(quickly)
Al, you remember Jo Ann Vallenari -

94 INT. VALLENARI'S BAR FRESCIA

94

leads Jo Ann out of the wine cellar.

FRESCIA

You were going to tell me about
your day -

JO ANN

Oh, with Mr. McKussic -

Jo Ann is interrupted by a Captain. Then:

FRESCIA

You were with Mac? How come?

JO ANN

If this is a professional question
I don't want to answer it -

FRESCIA
Purely personal.

VITTORIO
Jo Ann, please, the judge is
waiting for you -

JO ANN
- be right back...

By the crowded reservations desk Jo Ann greets a well dressed but tough looking fireplug of a customer.

JO ANN
Judge Nizetitch, I'm sorry, I hope
I didn't keep you too long.

She leads the Judge and Mrs. Nizetitch into the main room.

JUDGE NIZETITCH
(in the direction of
Frescia)
- don't let that good lookin' fella
give you a hard time -

JO ANN
I'll try not to, Judge -

JUDGE NIZETITCH
Next time you let me know.

JO ANN
- I think I can handle him -

JUDGE NIZETITCH
Jo Ann, don't kid yourself. These
boys only care about one thing - a
conviction. But they'll make you
believe anything. They can charm
the pants off you. Here, this'll
keep Nino in the country. What's
the special tonight?

INSERT NINO'S GREEN CARD

Jo Ann, a little dazed and holding the green card walks away from Nizetitch, pauses as she sees Sandy Leonard staring at her from his table.

LEONARD
- your friend's looking at us -

Jo Ann turns and looks at Frescia:

Frescia finds Maguire tugging at his sleeve.

MAGUIRE

Come on, Nick. Escalante's waiting. He's gonna give you a token of his government's friendship.

FRESCIA

What?

MAGUIRE

A gun -

(irritated)

- what can I tell you? You been insisting on somebody who can ID Carlos and I got him for you. Now don't mess with these people - you can mess with her anytime.

WITH JO ANN AND LEONARD

LEONARD

- you think it was an accident Nino got arrested for drunk driving? Frescia had the police waiting for him every night.

JO ANN

- but why?

LEONARD

He figured you knew more about Mac than you did and he was going to use Nino to find out.

JO ANN

How did Judge Nizetitch get involved?

LEONARD

He was the Federal judge Frescia went to for Nino's deportation order - I pointed out to the judge that he was about to deport his rigatoni quattro formaggi -

95 AROUND THE CROWDED TABLE IN THE WINE CELLAR ESCALANTE

95

stares at his fellow officers north and south of the border thru a forest of tequila and scotch bottles.

ESCALANTE

- our informants assure us that Carlos will contact Mr. McKussic at his home before he goes anywhere else to conclude his business.

MAGUIRE

Why would he risk going to McKussic's house?

ESCALANTE

- well he certainly doesn't expect me to be there to identify him Mr. Maguire, and after all, beaches are a crowded friendly place, aren't they? People don't wear much in the way of clothing and guns and surveillance equipment are that much more difficult to hide. Mr. McKussic thinks about such things - which brings me to the point: a group of Mexicans patrolling the strand around his home will look conspicuous. I would suggest your people patrol the beach and maintain a wide perimeter with some form of frozen surveillance for us.

MAGUIRE

Where would you like to be?

ESCALANTE

- there's an empty lot on the highlands just above his home - but I am informed Mr. McKussic has a boat stored on this lot. That could prove awkward.

FRESCIA

It can be handled.

MAGUIRE

How?

FRESCIA

(rising)

- with a phone call.

Maguire's eye catches the opened rosewood box by Frescia's table setting. Against black velvet is a nickel plated Walther PPK with a carved ivory handle depicting the Mexican Eagle over the serpent - with sparkling rubies for the eagle's eyes.

96 WITH FRESCIA ON THE PHONE AT THE BAR

96

JO ANN

Don't you have to get back to your party?

Something in her manner has Frescia immediately on guard. He hangs up.

FRESCIA

In a minute. What's wrong?

JO ANN

You were asking about Mr. McKussic. What did you want to know?

FRESCIA

- I was asking about you, Jo Ann. I wanted to know why you saw him...

JO ANN

- I thought he owed me an explanation.

FRESCIA

Did you get it?

JO ANN

- oh yeah. Would you like to hear it?

She looks directly at him.

FRESCIA

- I'm not sure -

JO ANN

(with a cold smile)

Mr. McKussic it seems was engaged in his business for purely romantic reasons, while you it seems have been engaged in romance for purely business reasons..

Her voice has grown soft and silky. Frescia clearly doesn't like it.

FRESCIA

- I'm not sure I understand that -

JO ANN

A little vague for you?

FRESCIA

- a little -

JO ANN

Well then let me spell it out -
 (clear and distinct)
 - you want to fuck your friend,
 fuck him, not me!..

Heads turn. Vittorio freezes and goes white. Jo Ann storms out of the restaurant.

97 EXT. VALLENARI'S (NIGHT)

97

Jo Ann calls for her car. Frescia bolts out.

FRESCIA

Jo Ann, listen to me -

She's in tears, without an edge, and without any pretence of one.

JO ANN

No! I really don't want to! You knew how he felt about me didn't you? you probably knew all along - I hate this, I hate being aware of what you're doing, I hate being aware of him, because now he's a person -

Jo Ann gets in her car and takes off - exiting with a rude scrape of the tail-pipe, leaving an embarrassed silence behind.

98 AT A PCH PHONE BOOTH MCKUSSIC

98

exhausted, painstakingly pulls a toothpick somebody has jammed into the coin slot, deposits a quarter. It rings - pushes his beeper.

(OVER SHOULDER) GRAFFITI ON THE PHONE BOOTH GLASS

reads 'There is no life east of Sepulveda.' Someone picks up:

A SLEEPY LATIN VOICE

- hello -

MCKUSSIC

- yeah this is Mac. You called me.

SLEEPY LATIN

(waking up)

- yeah Mac - Carlos junior called us about you last week, you were in trouble we gave you those six kilos -

McKUSSIC

- listen man I realize we're on a public phone and everything but could you not say that word?

SLEEPY LATIN

- oh, sorry my friend, sorry my friend - anyway, Carlos Jr. says somebody is going to come to you with a half a million dollars on a deal - his father wants you to accept it -

McKUSSIC

Carlos Senior would have to ask me personally -

SLEEPY LATIN

- he can't do that right now -

McKUSSIC

- then neither can I.

He hangs up.

99 INT. McKUSSIC'S BEDROOM (MORNING)

99

McKussic enters to Cody in his pajamas on the bed watching a cartoon on television.

McKUSSIC

Put your neck brace on, dammit
Cody! Didn't you sleep with it?

Cody looks surly - and doesn't help McKussic when he puts the brace back on Cody.

CODY

You were out all night..

McKussic, working on the neck brace ignores this.

CODY

You have a date?

McKUSSIC

Sort of..now listen son. I've got to go somewhere -

CODY

- is there a problem?

McKUSSIC

What do you mean?

CODY

A business problem.

McKUSSIC

Oh no, no, everything's fine. We got another order Friday from an Idaho farmer - 15,000 feet of hose at 37 cents a foot - your Daddy's gonna end up irrigating half the country. There's no problem.

(watching Cody carefully)

- I just, I'll be back this afternoon, this evening at the latest and we'll do whatever you want -

He hugs and kisses Cody and heads to the door.

CODY

Who's gonna sit me?

McKUSSIC

Anne Marie. She's downstairs. She's very good.

CODY

You ever date her?

McKUSSIC

No I don't date the baby sitters, Cody. Please I gotta get where I'm going -

CODY

Couldn't Jo Ann baby sit me?

McKUSSIC

(turning)

Who?

CODY

Jo Ann Vallenari.

McKUSSIC

How do you know her name?

CODY

She promised to make me angel hair spaghetti.

McKUSSIC

(sitting on the bed)

Well, I wouldn't count on that now - she's a very busy girl..

CODY

Doesn't she like you, Dad?

McKUSSIC

Geez I don't - we never really got around to that -

CODY

How come she doesn't like you?

McKUSSIC

- I didn't say she doesn't like me!
I don't know what she likes and what she doesn't like. I don't know if she likes a goddam thing! you know there are some people in life who don't like very much of anything, you know they just have nice manners and live, you know?
(desperate)
Cody, please let me go -

CODY

Okay, Dad -

100 EXT. VACANT LOT (DAY)

100

On the highlands above the Strand, McKussic is at the wheel of a truck with a sleek cigarette shaped racing boat in tow. He's inching it past a tool shed, thru a gate and into an alley with the help of one of his workmen, Pepe. Lindroff, pulling into the garage of McKussic's house on the strand below, spots him:

LINDROFF

(climbing up from below)

What're you doin'?

McKUSSIC

- got a ticket. 'Noise Abatement Ordinance - no work on machinery allowed in the neighborhood.'

LINDROFF

- you haven't worked on that thing for months -

McKUSSIC

- anyway, if I don't move it, they will.

LINDROFF

- I ran into Rudi Samudio's customers. They're desperate for product.

McKUSSIC

Not as desperate as Rudi. He's doing a hundred years.

He goes to climb into the cab. Lindroff stops him.

LINDROFF

- they'll go up to half a million in advance -

McKUSSIC

Greg, come here!

(Lindroff flinches)

- it's a real bad business. Don't kid yourself you can survive it.

LINDROFF

You have.

McKUSSIC

- says who? come on Pepe, let's stick this in the water and see if it still floats -

The trailer rig leaves the lot. Framed by pepper tree branches is a nearly perfect view of McKussic's house and yard below.

101 INT. VALLENARI'S BAR (DAY)

101

Arturo is alone scowling by the cash register, going over accounts. Jo Ann enters - she looks younger without makeup, beautiful and wiped out. Arturo takes one look at her, turns on the espresso machine. Vittorio, chattering away to one of his vendors, stops, comes over to his sister, very solicitous.

VITTORIO

What can I do for you, Giovanna?
Tell me.

ARTURO

Give her the night off.

VITTORIO

- what?

ARTURO

- send her to Italy goddammit!
where she can meet civilized men
not these South Bay beach bums -

JO ANN

(starting to laugh)

- Arturo, Vittorio, basta - nobody
is sending me anywhere -

VITTORIO

Giovanna you're upset. Go home and
rest and come back tonight.

Jo Ann is laughing and doesn't see what Vittorio and Arturo have - Frescia unshaven, in Levis and a sweater standing a few feet behind her. Arturo discreetly moves down the bar, but has his eye on Frescia who eases onto a stool two or three down from Jo Ann.

FRESCIA

I didn't know you, I didn't know
your relationship with Mac, I only
knew he was hiding something. It
turned out to be his feelings. But
you're so smooth, I figured you
were hiding something too.

He makes a move towards her. One look from Jo Ann stops him cold.

JO ANN

How? how could you tell? You lie
to me about Mac, you lie to Mac
about me, you lie to the Judge
about everybody, sooner or later
you've got to lose sight of the
facts, don't you?

FRESCIA

- no..you don't lose sight of the
facts..Not unless you're nuts. You
lose sight of your feelings.

Frescia's hands start to tremble. He immediately goes for a cigarette but then doesn't light it. Jo Ann watches him closely.

FRESCIA

Mac knows what he feels - he's crazy about you and he doesn't want to get caught. For a crook it's crystal clear. On the other hand for a cop it's confusing. Mac's my friend and I like him. Maguire's my associate and I hate him. I probably have to bust my friend if I'm gonna do my job. Now I hate that but I hate drug dealers too, and somebody's gotta get rid of Carlos. How do I do that? Maguire, the creep, wants me to bust Mac any way I can, even if it means manufacturing evidence. Then he wants to coerce Mac into turning over Carlos - I don't approve of this approach. I think I'll stay away from blackmail and try 'selective surveillance.' What the hell is that? Well, it's not too complicated. With my powers of deduction, I walk into your restaurant, take one look at you and realize that no matter how good the food is, Mac's not here to eat. He's in love. He's always been piss-poor at hiding his feelings and you're gorgeous. Then I have to wonder if you're not as smooth about concealing your feelings as you are at taking care of your customers. I know you're not in the drug business, but maybe you've got guilty knowledge that can help me do my job. I check you out - you've had, as near as I can tell, three affairs in the last seven years - one with a lifeguard who was more a highschool buddy than anything else, the other a painter from Venice who did some frescoes in your restaurant, and the third a married man where you broke off the relationship almost immediately. You are not exactly wild and unpredictable in this area.

(MORE)

FRESCIA (cont'd)

So I figure if you're willing to get involved with me you're probably not involved with Mac, but given his interest in you you're likely to find out what's going on in his life as anybody else - whether you cater a party, or he brings people in here - what I didn't figure is that you're not like me. You're not devious. You're honest and kind and principled and I trust you - suddenly I'm ashamed. You're the most beautiful thing I've ever seen, I'm nuts about you. Now - I've only got one question - and it's not about Mac. I don't want to know what you know about Mac. I just want to see you tonight. Will you? See me?

He waits eagerly for a reply.

JO ANN

- what else do you know about me Nick?

Frescia's eyes widen. He sees she's teasing. The phone rings. It keeps ringing.

JO ANN

(slowly)

- didn't somebody put on the machine? somebody didn't, because I'm the one who's supposed to do it
- Vallenari's, good morning..yes?..

Her canned music manner evaporates:

JO ANN

- I do too know who it is. How in the world did you get my number?

Frescia cocks his head toward the phone at the dramatic change in Jo Ann's manner.

JO ANN

(quiet but clear)

..I don't believe you..

He reaches for a cigarette, doesn't seem to be able to find a match. He moves down the bar ostensibly to pick up a pack by the cash register which is close to Jo Ann and her conversation. She turns questioningly when she senses he's at her back. He holds up the pack of matches by way of reply. She nods, 'oh' - then stops. She looks down the bar - two packs of matches are crammed under the ashtray in front of Frescia's bar stool. Jo Ann turns back to the phone.

JO ANN

- all right, I'll see what I can do.

She glances back down the bar at Frescia who is flicking his cigarette into the ashtray. The matchbooks under it are gone.

JO ANN

(quietly)

- I'll be over as soon as I can.

She hangs up and moves back down to Frescia.

FRESCIA

So do you think there's a chance?.

JO ANN

Of what?

FRESCIA

Seeing you tonight?

He's very close to her. She lifts her head to meet his gaze.

JO ANN

..let's play it by ear. Call me later.

FRESCIA

- okay....

102-105 OMITTED

102-105

106 EXT. VACANT LOT (DAY)

106

A camper parked above the Strand has its rear door casually open, Los Lobos blaring from it.

VOICE

(in Spanish)

Do we know who she is?

A-106 INT. CAMPER

A-106

A Mexican cop hands the spotter to ESCALANTE who looks thru it to McKussic's kitchen. Jo Ann is cooking up a storm and chattering away to someone who can't be seen.

ESCALANTE'S VOICE

- female Caucasian in her late twenties, fair hair, medium height, no makeup or visible jewelry, wearing a full blouse with a fancy hip belt..

107 INT. LOMITA STATION TASK FORCE AREA

107

Maguire and Frescia, surrounded by bulletin boards and the buzz of preparation for the coming bust, listen to Escalante's voice.

MAGUIRE

What do you think she's doing there?

ESCALANTE'S VOICE

- right now she's cooking spaghetti.

Frescia who has reacted to the description of Jo Ann's skirt and sweater which he had seen earlier at Vallenari's now reacts to the news of what she's doing.

MAGUIRE

(amused)

- a fancy dish cooking spaghetti -

Maguire hangs up the phone. Heightened preparations resume. Frescia heads toward the door.

MAGUIRE

Where you going?

FRESCIA

Carlos is due at McKussic's -

MAGUIRE

- not til 11:30 -

FRESCIA

(at the door)

Jo Ann Vallenari is not an informant, Al. I don't want her mistaken for one.

MAGUIRE

Forget it. If she let herself in,
she can let herself out.

(moving to him, more
quietly)

- I just left half a million bucks
with somebody at the Wayfarers
Chapel. It wasn't for religious
purposes.

Frescia turns and heads out the door.

MAGUIRE

(calling after)

- I mean it, Nick! You call her or
go anywhere near Mac's I'll have
you arrested..you hear me?

Frescia nods and keeps walking down the hall.

108-109 OMITTED

108-109

110 EXT. MCKUSSIC'S GARAGE & ALLEY (NIGHT)

110

McKussic pulls his Porsche in and gets out. He abruptly lifts his head like an animal catching a scent. There's a scraping sound. The cat seen earlier on the veranda is perched on a trash can in the garage, pawing at something. McKussic comes over and sees it is - a crumpled pasta box.

111 EXT./INT. BACK PORCH & KITCHEN

111

McKussic quietly opens the kitchen door. On the counter are dishes of freshly cooked pasta and vegetables, neatly saranwrapped. On the kitchen table a bottle of Chardonnay is open, a single wine glass half-full beside it. A lush Missoni hangs over the back of a kitchen chair. McKussic can't quite believe it. He hurries quietly thru the kitchen starts to bolt up the stairs when he hears a brushing sound. The guest bathroom door under the stairs is open. He moves to it.

112 THRU THE DOOR

112

McKussic finds himself staring at the nape of Jo Ann's neck. Her long dark hair is brushed forward and she continues to stroke thru it. Her makeup is laid out on the bathroom sink. With a wild tumble of hair Jo Ann straightens up into SHOT. She finds herself staring in the mirror at McKussic who stares back at her face - fully made up and the elegant mask that it is in the restaurant.

JO ANN

How long have you been here?

McKUSSIC

How long have you been here?

JO ANN

- can we discuss this somewhere else?

A-112 INT. KITCHEN

A-11

JO ANN

- after I got indignant over you leaving him alone, Cody admitted he dismissed the babysitter to get me over here. I didn't know when you were coming back so I finally called his mother to pick him up.

McKussic sits on the chopping block just a step or two from Jo Ann.

McKUSSIC

How did he know where to reach you?

JO ANN

He called the restaurant.

McKUSSIC

He called the restaurant?

JO ANN

Yes, he called the restaurant - would you care for a glass of wine? it's not a bad Chardonnay -

McKUSSIC

Where did he get the number?

Jo Ann picks up the Gourmet Magazine that McKussic is practically sitting on. She flips it open to a layout of Vallenari's, a photo of herself and her brother:

JO ANN

- from your bedstand -
(she checks her watch)
- I'm late for work -

She goes for her sweater.

McKUSSIC

When was the last time you saw Nick
Frescia?

JO ANN
(scarcely missing a
beat)
- this morning.

As she shoulders her purse to go:

McKUSSIC
I didn't realize you were open for
breakfast..when are you going to
see him again?

JO ANN
I can't answer that -

McKUSSIC
Oh yeah, you never talk about your
customers -

JO ANN
- especially not after I've slept
with them.
(hurt as well as angry)
..if you want to know anymore about
Mr. Frescia, you'll have to talk to
him.

She walks out the door.

McKUSSIC
(calling after,
laughing)
- yeah and he'll tell me to talk to
you. Thanks for the bullshit,
Slick.

The backdoor closes. She reappears in the kitchen door.

JO ANN
(furious)
Did you call me 'Slick?'

McKUSSIC
I'll say.

JO ANN
- okay, ask me anything.

McKUSSIC
- ask you anything -

JO ANN
Anything. Whatever you want to
know about me.

McKUSSIC

Okay -

As he's thinking and she watches him mull it over:

JO ANN

Anything at all Mr. McKussic.

McKUSSIC

(erupting)

- listen would you mind not calling me Mr. McKussic!

JO ANN

I'll call you whatever you want but I'm not real good at undercover work -

(with amused contempt)

- I don't know your first name.

McKUSSIC

(a sigh)

- it's Dale. Don't call me that either.

A moment.

JO ANN

..then don't call me 'Slick.'

113 SLIDES ON A DARK WALL

113

one after another of Jo Ann and McKussic in the restaurant. Different times. Different tables. Different customers - but always she works, he watches the beauty beyond his reach.

INT. POLICE PHOTO LAB

Frescia, his walkie-talkie by his side, sits in the dark projecting surveillance slides - hearing Maguire broadcast periodic threats for Frescia either to reveal his whereabouts and/or show up at the station. Frescia concentrates on the slides: McKussic in a volleyball game on the sand, at the extruder plant, roller skating on the strand, working on his boat - in some part of most of the frames, LINDROFF appears. One way or another his eyes are on McKussic.

114 OMITTED

114*

115 CLOSE LEAKY RUBBER HOSE IN MCKUSSIC'S HANDS 115

ANGLE WIDENS as McKussic sits cross-legged on the crab grass by the hot tub, one end of the twenty inch section of hose pressed against his palm, blowing as hard as he can on the open end.

Jo Ann kneels, watching as little beads of sweat break out all over the outside of the hose. McKussic stops blowing, lets the water run out of it.

MCKUSSIC

It's leaky pipe irrigation. Trade name's Hydro-pore. You make it out of old vulcanized tires, stick it under about fourteen inches of soil, and it 'sweats' out the water - this week I got orders for fifty-thousand foot from a lemon grower in Encinitas -

116 INT. LOMITA STATION MAGUIRE ON THE RADIO 116

MAGUIRE

- you said she was leaving.

ESCALANTE'S VOICE

She was.

MAGUIRE

What's the delay?

ESCALANTE'S VOICE

They're watering the lawn.

117 MCKUSSIC AND JO ANN BY THE HOT TUB 117

JO ANN

- I didn't think there were any citrus groves left in California -

It's obvious he's dying for her approval. She turns the hose over in her hands.

MCKUSSIC

- so what do you think?

JO ANN

I think..you're a legitimate businessman.

McKussic practically beams.

McKUSSIC

Yeah. Well I hope so. If this doesn't work I'm a crook forever..

JO ANN

- why haven't you gotten out of that other before now?

McKUSSIC

It's tougher to quit than you think.

Jo Ann hands the hose back to McKussic in her best restaurant manner:

JO ANN

- just say 'no'.

McKussic laughs.

McKUSSIC

I been sayin' it for three years. Nobody wants to hear it.

JO ANN

Like who?

McKUSSIC

My ex-wife for one.

JO ANN

What about her?

McKUSSIC

She's used to living on a drug dealer's wages.

JO ANN

Tell her to live on less.

McKUSSIC

Not me. Then she'll tell the courts I'm a drug dealer - I pay her what she wants or she won't let me see my kid.

JO ANN

Because you're a drug dealer she figures she's got the right to be a blackmailer?

McKUSSIC

- you got it.

JO ANN
(laughing too)
- be serious, what's your lawyer
say?

McKUSSIC
Same thing her lawyer says.

JO ANN
Which is?

McKUSSIC
Pay her if you want to see your
kid.
(he starts to laugh
again at Jo Ann's
disbelief)
- nobody wants me to quit, "Don't
quit, don't get caught stay on top
long enough for us to knock you
off - ", that's the motto around
here. Nobody wants me to quit.
The cops wanna bust me, the
Colombians want my connections, my
wife wants my money her lawyer
agrees and mine likes getting paid
to argue with them. Nobody wants
me to quit - hey I haven't even
mentioned my customers. You know
they don't want me to quit.

He lies flat on his back and laughs.

JO ANN
- that is completely paranoid -

McKUSSIC
- I'm sure it is..on the other
hand..nobody wants me to quit..

He can barely get this out. He's laughing manically now. It
makes her start to laugh again.

JO ANN
Stop it, I don't want to laugh at
this, it's not funny.

She starts smacking McKussic to make him stop. He rolls with
the blows and laughs harder until she inadvertently strikes
him in the face - the blow has an ugly sound to it. McKussic
stops laughing. He sits up on his elbows.

McKUSSIC
- that was rude..

JO ANN

Oh God, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry,
what can I do?..

She touches his cheek and seems almost desperate.

McKUSSIC

..c'mon, it didn't hurt that bad -
just lookin' at you hurts more -

He takes her in his arms and catches her full on the mouth,
pulling her onto him, their heads nearly hanging over the hot
tub in the crab grass.

JO ANN

(firmly)

- I don't want to do this..

She pushes him away, obviously shaken. McKussic watches her
while she straightens out her skirt, brushes off some crab
grass and makes it to her feet. MOVE WITH Jo Ann as she walks
unsteadily thru the backyard, thru the open gateway and out to
the alley. She fumbles for her keys and turns to get in her
car. She drops her keys.

A-117 IN THE EMPTY GATEWAY

A-117

a figure has materialized. It's McKussic. He's standing
perfectly still as tho he'd been there all night.

JO ANN

(after a long look)

..yes I do..

McKussic moves to the car. They face one another across the
low convertible top of the Alfa.

JO ANN

- why me?

McKussic leans on the top.

McKUSSIC

Do you have a favorite color?

JO ANN

(puzzled)

- yes. No - I mean right now I
suppose it would be purple.

*

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

Yeah? *

Camera moves IN and WITH Jo Ann:

JO ANN

- yes. I seem to see it everywhere
lately - everywhere I look -
African violets, some gladiolas in
the restaurant...I don't know why
lately it just reminds me of all
the things I like - *

She breaks off when she sees McKussic is no longer on the other side of the convertible. She turns and catches herself staring into his eyes, his face just inches from hers.

McKUSSIC

- exactly. It's your favorite
color. It's still hard to say why
you like it..isn't that right?

118 REACTION ESCALANTE

118

as he looks thru the spotter, stunned.

DISSOLVE:

119 EXT. VACANT LOT AND ALLEY (NIGHT)

119

still and peaceful. The only movement is smoke from the cigarette in Escalante's mouth. He sighs and rises off the bumper of the camper. He walks across the alley and stares down.

120 POV MCKUSSIC'S GARAGE AND BACKYARD 120

The Winnebago with its parachute awning partially obscures the hot tub. CAMERA MOVES TOWARD IT.

121 CLOSER ANGLE (MOVING) 121

PAST the garage and McKussic's Porsche, PAST the cat futzing with some trash out of the can.

CLOSER STILL

PAST a sand box and fins, PAST the edge of the Winnebago, UNDER the parachute awning. Camera is GROUND LEVEL. Only Jo Ann's sweater is visible on the crab grass a few feet from the hot tub where it had fallen from her shoulders. VIEW SHIFTS slightly.

A GHETTO BLASTER

playing soft music partially obscures Jo Ann who lies on her back, her head toward CAMERA, her legs dangling into the tub. Her naked body edged with light from a streetlamp, backlit like a new moon. McKussic's head is a shadowy presence between her legs. CAMERA MOVES TOWARD THEM. McKussic abruptly rises out of water, FILLING FRAME. Jo Ann's body is wrapped around his, her back to CAMERA, her legs and arms intertwined around him, desperately holding on, water from their bodies flying everywhere, soaking their clothes which lie scattered on the ground.

JO ANN

- don't let go of me! don't let go
of me! please don't let go of me -

Their bodies inadvertently hit a stay on the parachute awning and white silk descends and envelopes them. DISSOLVE:

122 INSERT TERMINAL BANK COMPUTER SCREEN PRINT OUT 122

'L.A. County Criminal Record - Lindroff, Gregory M., male
Caucasian, age 28, height 6'1" wt 187 - '

Frescia and Thelma are watching the computer.

THELMA

- same as the local - some petty
busts and he works for Hydro-Pore
in Torrance, here comes the
federal -

The computer screen print out reads 'Lindroff, Gregg.'
Nothing else.

THELMA

- talk about drawing a blank -

The computer activates. A number, '7244*' has appeared beside Lindroff's name and then, across the otherwise blank screen: 'For further information contact Agent Maguire, DEA.'

FRESCIA'S VOICE

- sometimes, Thelma, it's what you don't say that says it all -

Frescia punches an intercom button on Thelma's desk.

FRESCIA

Al, I hear you been looking for me. What's the problem?

123 INT. LOMITA STATION

123

Maguire is surrounded by empty styrofoam cups and crumpled take-out containers. The wall clock reads 8:40.

MAGUIRE

I can't talk now, Nick. We got a problem.

124 EXT. MCKUSSIC'S BACK YARD (NIGHT)

124

The parachute awning is crumpled on the ground. The Winnebago rocks slightly, just once. Thru the spotter Escalante's assistant catches the movement.

ESCALANTE

- she leaving?

ASSISTANT

(looking)

I..don't think..she's going..anywhere..

Escalante shakes his head and checks his watch. DISSOLVE:

125 INT. WINNEBAGO

125

Jo Ann lies on the trailer bed, sheets drawn up, staring blankly into space. McKussic enters, wearing a towel and carrying a quart of Evian water and a glass. He sits and pours. She gulps down the glass.

MCKUSSIC

More?

Jo Ann barely nods. He pours another glass. She drinks it right down.

MCKUSSIC
Still thirsty?

She nods. He pours another glass. She drinks it down.

MCKUSSIC
Are you all right, Jo Ann? Look,
can you say something?

She finally looks at him.

JO ANN
- I can't take this seriously -

MCKUSSIC
- okay -

JO ANN
- tomorrow I won't feel this way -

MCKUSSIC
- okay -

Jo Ann puts her arms around McKussic.

JO ANN
- but I can't leave just yet -

MCKUSSIC
- okay -

JO ANN
(her arms tightening
around him)
- don't you want to know why?

MCKUSSIC
- okay -

JO ANN
(kissing him)
- my clothes are still in the
dryer -

JO ANN
- okay -

And they're locked in one another's arms. DISSOLVE:

126 WHIRLING DRYER

126

with front loading glass door. Jo Ann's belt lies across the dryer top, her blouse and skirt can be seen chasing each other, like tigers melting into butter. DISSOLVE:

127 INT. LOMITA STATION (NIGHT) 127

Maguire bites his nails. Frescia gets on the radio. He can be heard broadcasting to surveillance units on the pier, around the strand, on the highlands and to Escalante who is using the spotter.

MAGUIRE

Doesn't McKussic know Carlos is gonna be there in less than an hour?

128 WITH ESCALANTE LOOKING THRU THE SPOTTER 128

ESCALANTE

..perhaps he's forgotten about that.

129 BACK WITH MAGUIRE 129

who looks at Frescia as if to say, 'what do we do now?' The wall clock reads 10:32.

130 THE DRYER (INT. MCKUSSIC'S) 130

is on a soft cycle, Jo Ann's blouse and skirt now fluffed and lazy, taking turns falling on each other. The sound of the phone ringing and ringing is nearly lost in the lazy turns. DISSOLVE:

131 INT. WINNEBAGO 131

Jo Ann and McKussic are on the bed. Her head resting on his lower thigh, his head resting on her upper thigh, each body crescent shaped and melting into each other. Jo Ann looks the more exhausted of the two. McKussic sits up slightly til their profiles are nearly touching. There's a SOUND coming from the house - like a door closing.

JO ANN

You expecting company?

MCKUSSIC

- not really. I mean, they'd call first...

(he listens, silence:)

- hey. Dryer's stopped..

McKussic's beeper goes off in the dark.

JO ANN

What's that?

McKUSSIC

Nothin' - just got to check with my
service -

(gives her a gentle
nudge)

- be right back -

132 EXT./INT. McKUSSIC'S (NIGHT)

132

wearing a towel and holding his pants and beeper, McKussic trips up the steps, past the dryer and into the kitchen. He follows the phone cord on the floor to the hall. The phone sits on the stairs leading to the second floor. Slightly puzzled, McKussic picks up the phone and begins to dial. Behind him on the stairs a man's legs break into frame. Escalante, gun drawn, moves toward McKussic. As McKussic finishes dialing, Escalante grabs the phone and slams it down. He wraps his arms around McKussic and sticks the gun barrel up McKussic's nose.

McKUSSIC

What the fuck are you doing, man?
Are you nuts? They're coverin' me
like a blanket out there, didn't
Junior tell you to call first? not
only that you scared the shit outta
me...

Escalante is laughing with tears in his eyes. He hops the railing and gives McKussic a big hug who's having none of it.

McKUSSIC

It's not funny, man, I'm wearin' a
fuckin' towel - didn't you talk to
Carlos Jr.?

ESCALANTE/CARLOS

You know who is in charge of all
that surveillance out there? The
United States Government and the
Federal Republic of Mexico have me
watching you waiting for me to show
up, which reminds me -

He grabs two walkie-talkies, hesitates:

ESCALANTE/CARLOS

- I talk into the wrong one of these buddy, and it costs us fifty years apiece.

(in Spanish:)

- yeah, radio back to Maguire, tell him Carlos showed up at McKussic's - and everything's on schedule.

He punches out, stares at a flabbergasted McKussic.

ESCALANTE/CARLOS

I told you, buddy, I told you on the phone I take care of everything, and my boy told you, you don't trust my boy?

McKUSSIC

(reluctantly)

- not really.

ESCALANTE/CARLOS

(laughing)

- neither do I! but you, Mac I trust with my life you keep me waiting all goddam night and never show the slightest sign of being worried about me.

McKUSSIC

- I'm sorry man..

ESCALANTE/CARLOS

(hugging him again)

Forget it, buddy. You had your hands full I could see that and what's more you fuck like a world champion!

(walking with him into the kitchen)

- four fucking hours, those cops are terrified their wives are going to hear about this, I got starved just watching. Does that girl cook? if she does buddy marry her, trust me.

He goes for the leftovers.

133 INT. WINNEBAGO JO ANN'S BACK AND PROFILE

133

She catches a scent on the back of her hand, inhales it, and settles back prepared to wait half the night for McKussic... then thru the music on the ghetto blaster she hears a sound, like somebody clucking their tongue on the roof of their mouth. She wraps a blanket around herself and steps out into the night - ambling a few yards to her sweater by the hot tub. She throws it over her shoulders; it covers her to mid-thigh and she lets the blanket fall away. The 'tongue-clucking' continues. She takes a few more steps toward the house, then freezes. She recognizes the sound.

134 INT. MCKUSSIC'S DEN

134

The ping-pong ball flashes back and forth over the net with increasing tempo. McKussic and Carlos play with remarkable skill and dexterity. Carlos holds a Carta Blanca in one hand.

MCKUSSIC

Man, do you think this is the best idea right now?

CARLOS

Come on buddy, when's the next time we'll get a chance to play? -

MCKUSSIC

- in jail -

Carlos laughs and spits beer on the table.

CARLOS

Conjo! look what you made me do!

He goes to clean it off.

MCKUSSIC

- I better go say something to my friend.

CARLOS

Give the poor girl a rest for Chrissakes - who is she anyway? she looks vaguely familiar.

MCKUSSIC

You wouldn't know her - hey man, how did Junior know Lindroff offered me a deal and what did he mean you wanted me to accept it?

CARLOS

I realize it must've confused you, buddy, but at that moment it was the only way I had of solving a problem which I've since -

The walkie-talkie BLARES. Carlos goes to the coffee table and punches in.

CARLOS

- yeah -

VOICE

(in Spanish)

- the girl's on the back porch -

McKUSSIC

(before Carlos can
reply)

I'll take care of it.

McKussic hurries down the stairs.

A-134 IN THE KITCHEN

A-134

He stops Jo Ann by the back door. She's gotten her clothes out of the dryer.

JO ANN

..you've got company..

McKUSSIC

- yeah. They - sort of surprised
me.

The phone rings. McKussic looks to Jo Ann, looks upstairs. It keeps ringing.

JO ANN

(tentative)

..maybe..you should answer it..

McKussic nods, goes back in the door. In a moment comes back out.

McKUSSIC

It's for you..

JO ANN

(shocked)

- who?

McKUSSIC

- I think it's the restaurant -

McKussic watches her go back into the kitchen. Carlos is looking down from the second story den, pointing to his watch with a ping-pong paddle.

CARLOS

- it's after 11, for Chrissakes.
You gotta be outta here in less
than twenty minutes - we're never
going to finish the game -

Jo Ann comes back out, concerned.

McKUSSIC

- anything wrong?

JO ANN

Vittorio's wife called. He had to
go home and they want me to close
up -

135 EXT. McKUSSIC'S YARD

135

They walk toward the trailer.

McKUSSIC

- come back -

JO ANN

- but your company -

McKUSSIC

- they'll be gone by then -

JO ANN

- but -

They've reached the trailer.

McKUSSIC

What's on your mind?..what I'm
doin'?

Jo Ann takes a breath and nods. McKussic glances toward the house, then:

McKUSSIC

I've gotta make a delivery - it's
not dope, darlin'..it's one last
thing I gotta do for an old friend.
It won't take long.

Now he waits for her answer. She's torn. The strains of
'Beyond the Sea' can be heard coming from the JVC.

JO ANN
- I like that song..

She quickly steps inside the trailer to change. McKussic sighs.

McKUSSIC
(waiting outside)
...yeah it was big when I was in
high school -

JO ANN'S VOICE
- sounds like something you danced
to at your senior prom -

McKUSSIC
Not me.

JO ANN'S VOICE
Why not you?

McKUSSIC
I never went.

Jo Ann pokes her head out of the trailer, standing on the step.

JO ANN
You should've. They were fun.

McKUSSIC
(looking up to her)
I would've - if I could've taken
you.

Jo Ann looks down at him for a long moment.

JO ANN
I believe that. I'll believe
anything you tell me, Mac -

She steps off the trailer and into his arms.

JO ANN
(kissing him)
- it'll take me an hour and a
half..

McKUSSIC
I'll be waiting.

She's gone. McKussic looks after her like he's witnessed a miracle.

POLICE RADIO (V.O.)

- attention all Birdwatch units,
dove in flight, repeat the dove is
in flight -

136 HIGH ANGLE SHOTS MANHATTAN BEACH 1

Eleven fifteen on a hot Saturday night and traffic from the strand to the pier to Sepulveda is swollen and raucous. Cars are moving toward bumper lock.

POLICE RADIO (V.O., cont'd.)

- leaving the target area,
proceeding south in traffic in a
burgundy colored '78 Alfa Romeo
Spyder convertible and turning
right down Highland -

At a corner near Highland and 10th street an unmarked car flips a U thru heavy traffic. Jo Ann is stopped while beachgoers with pails and flashlights spill across the street in front of her.

137 INT. TASK FORCE CENTER (NIGHT) 137

MAGUIRE

(on the radio)

- this is Bald Eagle, cut her
loose, return to your locations,
prepare all units for rolling
surveillance -

(punches out)

- I can't believe it, Nick she
finally left -

(looks up)

- where's Frescia?

138 INT. FRESCIA'S SEVILLE (MOVING) 138

Frescia punches out on the walkie-talkie and races down a beach back alley, slips onto twenty-third street and in another hundred feet he skids into Highland.

Jo Ann slams on her brakes when she finds herself facing the high beamed Caddy in front of her. She starts to protest wh Frescia appears in his own headlights gesturing for her to pull off onto twenty-third.

Fifty feet from the corner they stop under a street lamp. Frescia again gets out of his car and goes to Jo Ann.

FRESCIA
There's nothing wrong with
Vittorio's wife. I had Arturo call
you at Mac's -

JO ANN
(she starts up the car)
- get out of my way.

She tries to pull out into traffic but it's now backing up in both directions on the side street and Frescia's in her way.

FRESCIA
- you're not going anywhere til you
listen to me -

His walkie-talkie goes off. Other drivers hear it. Frescia rushes back and lowers the volume returns to Jo Ann. HOLD a moment.

RADIO VOICE
(from walkie-talkie)
- all units, we are now active, the
hot spot has changed to Pier 14,
north of the bridge four hundred
yards along Ferry street, all
units - clear channel four, roll
over to two and confirm -

The walkie-talkie goes silent - Frescia and Jo Ann, h.g., are in a heated exchange.

FRESCIA
Mac is gonna get busted. There's
an informant making sure of that.
That could get you hurt. I told
Mac about us, Jo Ann.

JO ANN
So did I.

FRESCIA
You get real friendly real fast
don't you?

JO ANN

You're wrong. Mac's been coming into the restaurant for three years. As far as I'm concerned it's three years too late.

FRESCIA

(furious)

I want you to take something with you -

JO ANN

Anything if you'll let me go -

FRESCIA

- put this in your purse, til I talk to Mac.

He hands her a long-barrelled Smith and Wesson.

JO ANN

You gotta be kidding.

FRESCIA

I'm not letting you go til you take it. You know how to use one of these things?

JO ANN

I know how to use it, I don't know how to put it in my purse.

She indicates the hand-bag which is smaller than the gun.

FRESCIA

- wait a second -

He hurries back to the car, re-emerges with a rosewood case and opens it. In it is the PPK with the ivory handle given to him by Escalante. He pulls the clip, loads and checks it.

FRESCIA

Now it's ready to fire.

JO ANN

Thanks a lot.

FRESCIA

- put it in and I'll leave.

She drops it in her purse. Frescia takes off. Jo Ann watches Frescia's tail lights until they turn the corner. She then cuts across the road heading back in the direction from which she came.

139 EXT. BEACH AND PIER (NIGHT) 139

Filling up with little family groups carrying pails and flashlights, pant-legs rolled. Here and there on the beach a fire burns.

140 EXT. MCKUSSIC'S (NIGHT) 140

Jo Ann pulls up; her wheels running into the sand. She hurries up the steps to the front door, then thinks better of it - she turns and races up a walkway between houses to the back alley until she can see into McKussic's garage - the Porsche is gone. She takes a breath, deciding what to do. There's a noise. It comes from a corner of the garage. She clutches her purse and goes to see. By the garbage can McKussic's stray cat is licking its paw. Jo Ann smiles with relief. Behind her the surveillance camper of Escalante's glides silently INTO SHOT.

141 INT. MCKUSSIC'S 141

Carlos sees Jo Ann coming up the stairs, flanked by his men. He goes to meet them, cutting off her view of the room.

CARLOS

(in Spanish)

- are you crazy, bringing her up here -

His expression changes when Jo Ann hits the light.

CARLOS

- now I recognize you -

JO ANN

Jo Ann Vallenari. Where is Mr. McKussic could you tell me?

CARLOS

- yes, from the restaurant, now you have your makeup on -

He's handed her purse by one of the men. It's open. He pulls out the PPK by the nickel-plated barrel. Carlos shakes his head sadly.

CARLOS

- I recognize this too..

Carlos turns and walks around a shuttered screen back into the den. Lindroff is standing by the ping pong table with something that looks like half a million dollars spread all over it.

LINDROFF

- yeah, you gotta watch her.

CARLOS

Is that right?

LINDROFF

- she's friendly with a cop who knows Mac. Where is Mac, anyway?

CARLOS

You think she could be dangerous, give the police information, be some sort of informant?

LINDROFF

- I do, and Mac's crazy about her. He wouldn't see it.

CARLOS

That's terrible. Have you mentioned this to him?

LINDROFF

Oh yeah - I do what I can for Mac. Anyway -
(indicating money)
- it's all here..

CARLOS

- yes, it is - speaking of information, you got busted by the Drug Enforcement Agency four months ago. You didn't happen to mention that to Mac, did you?..

(Lindroff freezes)

- no I didn't think so. That's a shame. When you're in trouble people have to talk to somebody, and if it's not their friends it's usually their enemies -

(he pulls out a piece of paper)

- Federal Narcotics Number 7244 -

Lindroff is edging toward the stairs. Behind him one of Carlos's men is coming up the stairs. There are shouts of excitement o.s. Carlos goes to the window and opens it. He smiles.

CARLOS

- the grunion are running...

142 THE BEACH IS ALIVE WITH GRUNION 142

Wide-eyed little silver slivers washed in on the tide, wriggling under moonlight and dozens of flashlight beams. They are eagerly scooped up by bare legged hunters as tho they were money.

143 EXT. SEA HORSE APARTMENTS (NIGHT) 143

Frescia is parked on the Esplanade, searching bumper to bumper traffic. He glances at the car clock which reads 11:42. Frescia picks up the walkie-talkie, starts turning the channels -

WALKIE-TALKIE

- the Hawk is now at the Vincent
Thomas Bridge off-ramp -

FRESCIA

(frantically punching
in)

- this is Golden Eagle over at the
Esplanade, what are you doing in
San Pedro -

MAGUIRE'S VOICE

- where the fuck are you, we
changed the hot spot twenty minutes
ago -

FRESCIA

- where to?

MAGUIRE'S VOICE

- Pier 14 off Ferry Street but
forget it, with this beach traffic
you'll never make it.

144 WIDE ANGLE ESPLANADE (NIGHT) 144

Frescia's Caddy makes a big swing cutting into bumper to bumper traffic. He opens his car door and stands on the flooring, looking toward the sea to a lifeguard ramp. The beach is crowded with grunion hunters, their flashlights illuminating, among other things, dirt bikes. Frescia honks, bullies and bumps his Caddy fifty feet down to the ramp, and plunges down to the beach itself and the lifeguard stand.

FRESCIA

(to the lifeguard)

- police -

(holding up his badge
and keys indicating
dirt bike)

- trade you mine for yours -

145 ON THE SAND WIDE ANGLE 145

A single light from the speeding dirt bike scatters the grunion hunters as Frescia races at the edge of the soft sand.

146 HIGH ANGLE HARBOR FREEWAY 146

In the distance, the cyanide green of the Vincent Thomas bridge can be seen spanning the night sky. Frescia takes the off-ramp that leads under the bridge to the Catalina Air Terminal, the cruise lines, warehouses, old canneries and ships encircling the great harbor.

147 EXT. PIER (NIGHT) 147

Frescia zips thru an underpass, emerging with a view of pier 14 teeming with police activity. He rolls onto it nearly ploughing into the mass of police cars and cops and flashing lights. He stops when he looks down the ramp leading to the dock below.

Lindroff's body is floating half in half out of the water - next to dozens of aluminum propane cylinders. Some stacked and tied together, a few strays float in the water. One is bent and cracked, its white contents scattered across the dock, absorbing salt water and looking like slushy snow. Police are gingerly trying to load them onto cargo lifts without falling in the water. Maguire spots Frescia who is already half-way down the ramp.

MAGUIRE

Well, the good news is we got the coke - the bad news is Carlos got away.

FRESCIA

- uh-huh - and Mac?

MAGUIRE

He wasn't anywhere around.

FRESCIA

Where was he?

MAGUIRE

What is this shit, Frescia? We just made one of the biggest busts in history and you weren't around either.

FRESCIA

And him -

He points down to Lindroff.

MAGUIRE

- he's one of theirs. He went down, what can I tell you?

FRESCIA

He's got some interesting holes in him -

MAGUIRE

What are you talking about?

FRESCIA

For only getting hit once or twice he got 'em in the best possible spots.

(looking up to the pier)

All right, who fired their gun? everybody to the edge of the pier and let's have a show of hands - come on people, hands in the air -

Twenty-five plainclothed and uniformed cops line the pier a dozen feet above Frescia and Maguire - not one of them raises his hand.

FRESCIA

Then how in the fuck did this guy get dead!

Silence.

MAGUIRE

Escalante's men got here ahead of us. That's when there was gunfire.

Frescia goes to one of the propane containers and knocks the sealer off. He inhales deeply.

FRESCIA

This stinks.

MAGUIRE

Gasoline, but don't worry it's
coke -

FRESCIA

- for months now I been hearing
that Carlos was real unhappy
because he'd shipped cocaine on a
tanker where it got soaked in
gasoline and he couldn't sell it.

MAGUIRE

- what?

FRESCIA

Twelve hundred kilos exactly. I
think you just paid half a million
dollars for it, Al.

MAGUIRE

That's bullshit. Carlos wouldn't
go to this kind of trouble for..

Frescia lets him trail off.

FRESCIA

- half a million dollars? Probably
not. But who knows what he's
really up to? Your snitch isn't
gonna tell us.

Frescia indicates Lindroff half floating in the water at his
feet. Maguire looks considerably chastened.

FRESCIA

(looking around)
Where's Escalante?

MAGUIRE

I don't know, he was talking about
going back to his boat..

FRESCIA

What boat?

MAGUIRE

- Escalante sailed up from
Ensenada. He wanted to fish for
albacore on the way home.

Frescia smiles.

FRESCIA

Gone fishing.

MAGUIRE

Yeah, what's wrong with that? *

FRESCIA

Escalante is Carlos, you miserable
shit.

148 EXT. OCEAN OFF PV PENINSULA (NIGHT) 148

McKussic's cigarette boat planes on a bed of white water at a good 50 knots. It passes the San Pedro lighthouse, caught briefly in the sharp yellow eye that blinks a warning signal every six seconds.

149 EXT. L.A. HARBOR BREAKWATER 149

McKussic enters the harbor and cuts the engine. Behind him in the open sea a fog bank has formed.

A-149 POV MOVING VINCENT THOMAS BRIDGE A-149

McKussic passes under it.

150 EXT. YACHT MI CONSENTIDA (NIGHT) 150

lush and beautifully maintained it quietly inhabits a slip in one of the commercial sections of the harbor. McKussic pulls alongside and it can be seen that a boat identical to the one he's in rests as a launch atop the large yacht.

One of the crew members reaches for his line, a cigarette in his mouth, red tip glowing.

McKussic

(in Spanish)

- don't smoke, I got some kind of
leak in the fuel line..

Carlos Jr. has come on deck.

CARLOS JR.

(helping McKussic aboard)

We got a little problem.

McKUSSIC

What is it?

CARLOS JR.

The old man's gotta tell you. You know him. 'When my buddy gets here, let me make all the necessary explanations, just because you have information son doesn't mean you have to go into the broadcasting business..'

McKUSSIC
What kind of explanations?

151 INT. YACHT STATEROOM

151

McKussic holds a Carta Blanca in one hand and the ivory-handled PPK Walther in the other hand. Carlos stands by solicitously. They are alone.

McKUSSIC
- pretty gun.

CARLOS
(taking it back)
Almost as pretty as she is. How about another beer? tequila? you name it, buddy it's yours.

McKussic starts to cry. He's bent over almost jack-knifed when Carlos gets on his knees to put his arms around McKussic, rocking him back and forth, ignoring the spilt beer drenching his own trousers:

CARLOS
Buddy, my buddy, no one ever said it would be easy, did they?

152 EXT. COUNTY LIFE GUARD TOWER (NIGHT)

152

WOODY TRAYNOR comes driving down the ramp in his County Lifeguard truck, yellow light spinning. He hits the beach and hops out, hurrying over to Frescia and Maguire.

WOODY
- what's up, Nick? I'm the one who should be asking you for help, it's rowdy as hell down here -

FRESCIA
- we gotta find a boat -

A-152 THEY ENTER THE CONCRETE CINDER BUILDING

A-152

and make their way up three stories to the glass tower which overlooks everything from Palos Verdes to Redondo Beach -

FRESCIA
- fifty to seventy-five feet, probably out of Ensenada. It would've put in for a mooring within the last five days -

WOODY

(amused)

You want me to check with every
harbormaster from here to Mexico?

Frescia nods. His walkie-talkie goes off. He punches in.

RADIO VOICE

This is Bravo Unit at Marine and
Highland. Nobody's at McKussic's.

FRESCIA

- what about Jo Ann Vallenari?

RADIO VOICE

She never reached the restaurant.
We can't locate her, Lieutenant.

153 INT. YACHT STATEROOM (NIGHT)

153

McKussic paces the floor, an empty shot glass in his hand. A half-filled bottle of Tequila is on the shiny teak table in front of Carlos who now sits, staring at VHS tapes of Tijuana bullfights.

CARLOS

- she works hard in a glamorous
restaurant, but never takes the
time to enjoy a meal. She starts
to take the time. She enjoys it.
She goes from one customer to
another, from your friend Nick
Frescia to his friend Dale McKussic
to - who knows? I'm sure the girl
has friends of her own!

(he allows himself a
chuckle)

- the point is, she's discarded her
traditional values. She's lost.
Then she uses cocaine, for
Chrissakes. Naturally, she dies.
It's an American tragedy.

McKussic stops and looks at Carlos.

CARLOS

I ask you to do nothing, but I do
nothing without your approval -

McKUSSIC

- and if I don't approve?

CARLOS

Then - we'll talk until you do.

He rises and lights a joint.

CARLOS
Here -

McKUSSIC
No thanks, man -

CARLOS
- come on, when was the last time
we smoked some really good shit,
come on buddy, life is serious
enough -

McKussic takes the joint.

A-153 IN THE LIFEGUARD TOWER (NIGHT)

A-153

Frescia works with Woody while reports from various harbor masters are radioed in - King Harbor, Newport, Long Beach, Port Hueneme, Channel Islands, Avalon. Maguire is eating a plate of freshly fried grunion with relish.

MAGUIRE
- I'm telling you right now, Nick,
if we find him anywhere near
Escalante, I'll put him away for
twenty-five years -

FRESCIA
That's not what we agreed on, Al -

WOODY
Who're you talking about? Not Mac.

Frescia doesn't answer.

WOODY
(to Frescia)
You didn't tell me Mac was
involved.

MAGUIRE
What difference does it make?

WOODY
Mac's a friend.

MAGUIRE
He's a drug smuggler.

WOODY

Look, man. I'm a lifeguard, I'm not a cop. Now you tell me what's going on here or I'm not calling another harbor master -

154 INT. STATEROOM

154

McKussic and Carlos are now seriously ripped. There are a couple of major lines of coke on the teakwood table top. Carlos is waving another joint, and trying to eat the chips, salsa and guacamole spread around.

CARLOS

I always try to look on the bright side of things.

He laughs.

McKUSSIC

You do?

He laughs.

CARLOS

- always, buddy. I was going to give you a half a million dollar wedding present, and sad as all this is -

He tries to hold up the briefcase. It slips and breaks open - thousands spill across the floor.

CARLOS

- she's going to end up saving me a lot of money...

He's now laughing with McKussic joining him.

McKUSSIC

- you put it to Lindroff, didn't you man?

CARLOS

- buddy some things happen too fast to tell you about it ahead of time -

McKUSSIC

(abruptly)

I want to see her.

This sobers Carlos enough to make it seem as tho he's never been anything but.

A-154 IN THE DOORWAY

A-154

Jo Ann is motionless. Very pale she faces the two men, seated and wasted, watching another bullfight. McKussic slowly looks at her.

JO ANN

(to McKussic)

Why would I do something like that,
what for? what would I have to gain -

CARLOS

Believe me, Jo Ann we have been
sitting here doing nothing but asking
ourselves that same question.

JO ANN

And what's your answer?

Carlos checks out the t.v. It's a particularly bloody corrida.

CARLOS

Watch the bullfights.

JO ANN

I don't like them.

Jo Ann is looking only at McKussic - who is pouring himself another shot of tequila, ignoring her.

CARLOS

(looking at the matador)

- he's making those passes with the
left hand and with left-handed
passes the muleta - the cape - is
always a smaller lure - I haven't
seen any matador stand his ground
in front of the horns like that
since Aruza. *

A couple of his associates in the room agree.

MCKUSSIC

He's a pussy.

Suddenly you can hear the humming of neon lights and it is very still.

CARLOS

(with a laugh)

He's the finest matador in Mexico. *

McKussic pours another shot.

McKUSSIC

He's a pussy, man.

One of Carlos' men starts into the room. Carlos waves him back.

CARLOS

(with a smile)

Why is that, buddy?

McKUSSIC

(with a laugh)

- I don't know why, but look at him -

He grabs the joint from Carlos and takes a hit.

McKUSSIC

Look at the fucken matador, man. I mean what does he do? He dresses in his little fucken uh-hh spangles and his sequined little jacket and his little fucken tights and wraps his little fucken sash around him and puts on his little fucken stockings and his high heeled shoes and his little fucken cap and he does up his little hair in a fucken pigtail - it's a pussy!

McKussic goes for some of the coke, using a Dorito chip for a spoon and with a couple of quick whiffs makes it to his feet, ignoring the hostile stares from Carlos' men. Jo Ann's appalled and terrified.

McKUSSIC

(swaying)

- but it's not an insult, man. That's what a bullfight is, it's sayin' he's the pussy -

(he grabs a napkin and

holds it like a cape)

and we're the bull. We're the fucking idiot that charges all the time!

Now Carlos laughs approvingly - as do his men. McKussic turns to Jo Ann, and lowers his head, staring at her.

McKUSSIC

- and what they do is they nail us every fucking time. I mean they got us. Bullfighters are trying to say that pussies are stronger than we are. That's all. And they are! There's nothing we can do -

(he moves around the room, trying to stay on his feet)

...I mean they've got that thing, they wave it like a red flag and what do we do? we charge that sucker we can't help it. We got no choice. And so they always got the edge cause they always know what we're gonna do, we are fucking predictable man -

(he's back to Jo Ann)

and they're gonna just stick it in and break it off and that's it! there's not a fucking thing you can say.

Carlos is laughing and approving hugely of McKussic's moves.

CARLOS

Bravo, buddy! Well, what're we gonna do about it.

McKussic staggers toward Carlos and starts to fall. Carlos quickly catches him in his arms. McKussic looks down at the napkin he still clutches.

McKUSSIC

(stupidly)

- what do you do about it?

He stuffs the handkerchief in Carlos' breast pocket as if that's his answer, then pulls it out holding onto the pearl handled PPK, pulling back on the trigger and holding it under Carlos' nose. It's all one motion, a perfect sleight-of-hand.

McKUSSIC

- you die! you fucken die, that's what you do about it, you die -

Carlos' men start for McKussic.

CARLOS

No, no, I've seen him this way, he's very serious.

McKUSSIC

I'm sorry, man, I can't let you do it, can't let this happen -

He backs Carlos out of the stateroom in front of Jo Ann who is so stunned at the turnabout that she still can't react.

McKUSSIC

(to Jo Ann)

You want to stick around or come with me.

155 THEY MOVE ONTO THE DECK

155

Carlos' men close behind. McKussic moves down to his cigarette boat, wisps of fog starting to swirl around them..

McKUSSIC

Pepe, start the engine - now get on the big boat - come on -

- this last to Jo Ann as he helps her into the cigarette boat. One of Carlos' men raises a semi-automatic.

McKUSSIC

(pointing the Walther at the engine)

Do it and he's gonna lose this boat - ask him if he wants to lose the cargo..

(Carlos doesn't)

- put it in the water.

The semi-automatic goes overboard. McKussic pushes off, under Carlos' watchful eye.

McKUSSIC

- stay up on channel 12 and launch the cigarette - I'll let you know where we'll swap boats -

CARLOS

- this is a tragic fucking mistake, buddy. She'll testify. She'll get us all. She's the only one who can! What are you going to do about that? What about your boy? your family, your friends, for Chrissake? what are you going to do?

McKussic whips the idling engine into gear and takes off with a roar and a huge white plume for a wake.

156 EXT. OCEAN OFF CALIFORNIA COAST (NIGHT)

156

The cigarette boat speeds in the opposite direction now, flirting with the edges of the fogbank. As it goes, the lights of the mainland can be seen in the distance. The boat disappears from sight. In a moment or two the high whine of its engine begins to break up and sputter.

157 CIGARETTE BOAT

157

It is be-calmed. McKussic has pulled back the hatch. Increasingly the fog swirls and thickens.

McKUSSIC

- listen, can you go below?
There's a flashlight just inside
the companionway -

JO ANN

Mac -

McKUSSIC

Can you get it? We haven't got all
night.

She steps down and opens the cabin door. It's dark. She fumbles around, sliding on what appears to be stacks of paper and plastic. She gets hold of the flashlight hanging from the bulkhead, switches it on. She finds she's standing on nothing but money. The flashlight beam plays over the cabin clear to the bow - it is filled to the gunnels with money by the millions clearly visible thru the translucent polyurethane packing.

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

Jo Ann, how about that light?

She hurries out.

McKUSSIC

Would you hold it, please?

She does while he works on the carburetor and the fuel line.

JO ANN

- that's..an awful lot of money..

McKUSSIC

(working)
Fifteen million dollars.

JO ANN

That's an awful lot of money..

McKUSSIC

(working)

- yeah, well - money makes people predictable at least. They're never gonna be reliable.

(laughs)

- there's nothin' Nick doesn't know about me now, is there?

JO ANN

(lowering flashlight)

I didn't talk about you.

McKUSSIC

Forget it.

JO ANN

I don't want to forget it -

McKussic drops the electrical tape. He's shaking ~~when he~~ straightens up this time.

McKUSSIC

I don't care what you want - as soon as I drop you off take a long vacation to Bora Bora, the Fiji Islands, and stay there. You'll never live to testify.

JO ANN

Testify? I was never going to testify.

McKUSSIC

You're telling me -

JO ANN

Mac I'd die before I'd hurt you -

McKUSSIC

That was being arranged - look let me make this easy for you. I'm going to try to make sure you stay alive - just don't talk to me.

He goes back to work.

JO ANN

- if you believe Carlos, then why did you save my life?

McKussic peers over the hatch, his face white and almost luminous in the fog.

McKUSSIC

- because I have to face my
kid!..and he wouldn't like it if I
let you die. Now would you hold
that light?

Shaking he bends over the hatch.

JO ANN

Mac, I love you.

This stops him. He straightens up slowly, a queer little
smile on his face.

McKUSSIC

You've got to stop talking, you
know? Because if you don't
somebody's gonna get hurt. Let me
put it like this - say that again
and I'll smack you one and keep
smacking you till you stop saying
it. Now hold that fucken light.

He bends over the engine.

JO ANN

I love you.

McKussic straightens up sharply, hands flying. Without even
looking, he's managed to backhand her in to the bulkhead. She
snaps up against it and holds on. When she turns to face him
he can see her mouth is cut and her nose is starting to bleed.
She takes a step toward him, swaying from the blow and the sea
swells.

JO ANN

I love you.

McKussic can't believe she's saying it.

JO ANN

I love you. I love you. I -

He hits her again and brings her to her knees. She has to
grab the cabin siding to make sure she doesn't go right to the
deck. She regains her footing.

JO ANN

I love you -

McKussic knocks her down but the blow seems to have affected
him more. He leans on the bulkhead, staring down at her
terrified:

McKUSSIC

- for God's sake don't get up.
Don't say it again..

Jo Ann struggles to rise, but the boat has turned its beam to the swells and footing is difficult even for McKussic. She barely makes it to her feet. McKussic braces himself. She opens her mouth to speak - a ground swell cuts away her footing and she ends up in McKussic's arms.

They sink to the deck, McKussic holding her and begging forgiveness. His head rests on Jo Ann's breast. She cradles him as tho he'd been struck.

JO ANN

(softly)
- it's all right, it's all right,
it's going to be all right...

158 INT. LIFEGUARD TOWER (NIGHT)

158

Woody is uncharacteristically hot.

WOODY

(to Maguire)
You know how Mac got busted? One
summer vacation he was on the beach
in Mexico smoking a joint -

MAGUIRE

- that doesn't excuse him for
turning into one of the world's
major dope dealers.

The wall phone starts to ring.

WOODY

Nick, get this guy outta here -
(picking up phone)
Woody Traynor, tower 12 -

159 EXT. BREAKWATER (PORTOFINO) (NIGHT)

159

McKussic's on the walkway above the floating dock where his boat is visible thru the fog. He's on the phone, his arm around Jo Ann.

McKUSSIC

- I'm at the back of Portofino's.
I've got somebody who needs to stay
with you for the next twelve hours.
Can you meet us right away?

160 INT. TOWER WOODY

160

on the phone, Frescia more curious about the conversation than Maguire.

WOODY

(sees he's being
watched)

- sure, why not? See ya.

He hangs up. Maguire and Frescia are staring at him.

MAGUIRE

I'm gonna have to insist on your
help, Woody.

WOODY

Sorry - but that was Marine Bio,
the city of Los Angeles just dumped
nine million gallons of raw sewage
into the bay, I've gotta grab my
guards and post warning signs to
stay off the beaches -

MAGUIRE

(worried)

- but - I just ate the fish -

WOODY

Yeah, suddenly the dope dealer's
not so important.

Woody's out the door. Frescia watches him go, trying to
decide something.

161 OMIT

161

162 EXT. PORTOFINO (NIGHT)

162

McKussic and Jo Ann huddle in the fog. The harbor warning
light brushes past them every few seconds. There's the sound
of laughter and glass breaking, coming from the restaurant.

JO ANN

Will it be all right?

McKUSSIC

(seeing her anxiety)

Oh. Yeah...I admit he is a bit
short tempered, but if I can get
him to talk long enough to give him
his money it'll be fine, don't you
worry -

JO ANN
When will I see you?

McKUSSIC
- dinner tomorrow?

He's glancing down the strand, anxious for Woody to appear and trying not to show it.

JO ANN
What time do you want your reservation?

McKUSSIC
- oh - seven thirty, how about that?

JO ANN
(trying to be cheerful)
- I'll put it down -

Headlights break thru the fog. It's Woody's lifeguard truck.

JO ANN
(her heart sinking)
- don't be late now -

Woody gets out of the truck.

WOODY
I'm sorry, Mac -

McKUSSIC
Jesus, what for -

He breaks off when he sees Frescia getting out of the other side of the lifeguard truck.

WOODY
Nick was there when you called.

FRESCIA
(moving to McKussic)
- you're a material witness in the shooting of Greg Lindroff. Either you tell me where Carlos is right now or you become an accessory to your cousin's murder.

McKUSSIC
I can't help you. I've gotta go, man.

FRESCIA

Mac, you're under arrest.

McKussic is at the top of the gangway leading down to the floating dock and his boat. He turns back and sees the .38 in Frescia's hand. Woody is shocked. Jo Ann can't believe it. McKussic reaches out in a placating gesture.

McKUSSIC

Hey Nick, lighten up -

FRESCIA

(not amused)

You touched me. Interfering with an officer of the law while he's making an arrest is a felony.

McKUSSIC

Oh well, in for a penny in for a pound -

McKussic kicks the gun out of Frescia's hand. It goes flying into the fog. McKussic races down the gangway, slides across the dock and tries to cast off when Frescia barrels into him. Frescia hits McKussic and knocks him down. He picks him up and hits him again - rolling him off the dock and into the boat, Frescia landing right on top of him - only to face McKussic holding the pearl-handled PPK which he has magically pulled out of the air.

McKUSSIC

Here's another gun you pulled.

FRESCIA

I don't believe you'll use that...

McKussic immediately cocks it.

McKUSSIC

Nick, I'll make a believer out of you.

Frescia is stunned.

FRESCIA

I don't get it. You're not this stupid! I caught you. You can't pretend you're not caught - what're you gonna do, spend the rest of your life in Mexico? You can't hide there either. You've got one chance - turn yourself in -

McKUSSIC

What for?

FRESCIA

- what for?

McKUSSIC

Yeah, what for? My business is selling rubber hose - I've held onto money for somebody and they're here to pick it up - it's their money - now get off my fucking boat and let me go - I'll complain to my lawyers in the morning -

FRESCIA

(getting slowly off the boat)

Carlos is a killer. I'm a cop and I've gotta do my job -

McKUSSIC

Tell me this, Nick. No bullshit for once. What do you think about that girl up there.

FRESCIA

- I like her -

McKUSSIC

- you love her. Maybe you're a cop most of the time, but tonight you're just a jealous, fucked up son of a bitch who can't even be straight with himself -

McKussic turns over the engines and takes off, disappearing into the fog.

Frescia sits heavily on a piling, staring at the fog. Woody hurries down the gangway.

WOODY

You hurt?

FRESCIA

- yeah.

He smiles and gets to his feet. As they move up the walkway to the truck:

WOODY

What're you going to do?

FRESCIA

What can I do? this whole drug deal was a diversion so Carlos could pick up his cash -

(glances into the fog)

- even if I knew where they were I couldn't arrest them. Money without drugs is - money. You could have some trouble with the IRS but not if you're Mexican -

(Frescia spots Jo Ann)

- you really know how to add insult to injury, you know that? You gave him my gun.

JO ANN

..no I didn't -

FRESCIA

- hell, have it your way -

He breaks off when he spots the bruise on her face. He sees her coat is damp and wet. He touches it, tastes his fingers.

FRESCIA

You've been out there and back. Mac's already dropped off the money.

JO ANN

No..

FRESCIA

Come on, the engines on the boat were still hot. You were out there. What's the point of lying?

JO ANN

(firmly)

He's dropping off the money now.

Frescia's genuinely puzzled by her insistence.

FRESCIA

Why didn't he do it the first time?

JO ANN

I'm - I'm not sure..

FRESCIA

(abruptly)

Carlos recognized you.

Jo Ann looks wearily at Frescia and says without accusation:

JO ANN

Not until he recognized the gun.

FRESCIA

- you've got to give me the location of Carlos yacht.

JO ANN

Why?

FRESCIA

Because Mac's gone back there to kill Carlos. You can identify Carlos as Escalante - he won't let you live and Mac knows that.

JO ANN

- but he said -
(she breaks off)
- he wouldn't do that. He couldn't..

FRESCIA

Probably not. But that doesn't mean he won't die trying.

163 INT. LIFEGUARD TOWER MAGUIRE

163

sits, worried. The radio blares. Spudder shows up with a brown bag. Maguire opens it, pulls out milk of magnesia. He hears some Spanish on the radio channel. It cuts in and out. He adjusts it.

McKUSSIC'S VOICE

(impatiently)

- no, no the old 17 - by the graveyard.

CARLOS' VOICE

I'm on the way.

Maguire puts down the milk of magnesia.

164 EXT. CARLOS' YACHT (NIGHT)

164

The twin cigarette is lowered thru the fog into the water. Carlos, visible thru the fog in an orange Patagonia, gets into the boat. One of his men wants to go with him. Carlos indicates he's going alone.

165 GLIDING THRU THE FOG NEAR PIER 17 165

are the red, white and green running lights of McKussic's cigarette. He cuts the engine, gliding toward the pier pilings. Quickly he opens the hatch and goes to work on the wires around the distributor cap. He turns on the ignition. There's a spark from the wires. He turns off the ignition then slices into the fuel line. Thru the worklight a rainbow spurt of fuel shoots into the hatch. McKussic shuts the hatch.

166 ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL AN AUDIO VISUAL WARNING LIGHT 166

beeps an angry red. McKussic quickly hits a switch above it. The light goes off but the beep, tho muted, can still be heard. McKussic turns up the radio - music covers the sound. He looks up. The purr of another cigarette can be heard. Slowly the tri-colored running lights of Carlos' cigarette appears thru the fog.

167 INT. CAR MAGUIRE AND SPUDDER (MOVING) 167

thru the fog on an old harbor road. Pier 17 can be seen looming up ahead. This is an abandoned area of the harbor - a rotting dock with collapsing corrugated metal buildings, a few oil pumps working and work lights near them. Maguire can spot the running lights of McKussic's boat visible below the pier.

MAGUIRE

- they're down there..

He turns off the headlights and stops the car.

MAGUIRE

We can't use the radio. They might hear us - what's worse Frescia might hear us. I don't trust the son of a bitch as far as I can throw him. Go back and telephone the Coast Guard. I'll be on 16.

He takes his Walkie Talkie, gets out of the car and moves on foot toward the pier.

168 EXT. PORTOFINO (NIGHT) JO ANN AND FRESCIA 168

JO ANN

There was a small boat like Mac's on the yacht. I think Carlos was going to use it and meet Mac somewhere else -

WOODY
 (from the truck)
 Nick! Maguire left the tower -

FRESCIA
 Did he say where?

WOODY
 No - but one of the guards said he
 asked for directions to pier 17.

FRESCIA
 Which 17? The new one or the
 graveyard?

In response to this last word Jo Ann turns toward Frescia.

JO ANN
 - probably the graveyard -

169 BELOW PIER 17 (NIGHT)

169

Carlos cuts the engine and glides alongside McKussic.
 McKussic stands by the instrument panel, his hand not far from
 the ignition. ...

McKUSSIC
 - welcome aboard -

He offers Carlos a hand. Carlos takes it and boards
 McKussic's boat. McKussic gives him the PPK when he gets on
 deck.

McKUSSIC
 - watch it, it's loaded.

He hands it back to McKussic who pointedly gets rid of it,
 putting it on the control panel.

CARLOS
 Keep it as a souvenir. You'll
 spend the rest of your life in jail
 and I won't be around to take care
 of you - I'll be in a Mexican jail.

McKUSSIC
 She's never going to testify.

CARLOS
 How can you say that goddamn you!

McKUSSIC

- not against her husband. And if she can't testify against me she can't testify against you.

CARLOS

She's going to marry you? Who said?

McKUSSIC

She did.

CARLOS

Oh, no, no, no. Under the circumstances she would have said anything. She would have fucked a snake. Come on, now. Be serious.

McKUSSIC

- if there's one thing she knew, I was gonna let her walk away.

Carlos glances around the deck. The music dips and the muted warning beep can be heard. Carlos does not appear to react to it.

CARLOS

(thoughtfully)

...she actually said she was gonna marry you...

McKUSSIC

After I whacked her around a little, yeah -

CARLOS

- well - congratulations. But under the circumstances I don't think I can hang around to kiss the bride - shall we?

Carlos has been idly sitting on the gunnel. He indicates the tow line of his boat.

McKUSSIC

Oh yeah. Don't you want to check below?

CARLOS

When it comes to money, buddy, I trust you. I hope she's worth it, that's all I can say.

He offers McKussic the tow line. McKussic, stands on the gunnel to hop into Carlos' boat. He watches Carlos go to the control panel to start the engine.

McKUSSIC

Hold it -

Carlos stops, hand poised.

McKUSSIC

(with a sheepish smile)

- I've got that thing rigged to blow sky high.

Carlos nods, smiles.

McKUSSIC

(hopping back onto the deck)

- God I'm sorry, I hated like hell doing it, but you know how paranoid you get -

CARLOS

- unlike you -

McKUSSIC

(moving to Carlos)

- really I'm sorry Carlos, I just I didn't want her hurt -

CARLOS

- would you mind undoing it?

McKUSSIC

(moving quickly to the hatch)

- look at it this way. If you tried anything, I'd'a been blown up with you.

He's now bent over the hatch, covering the wires and blowing out the fumes.

CARLOS

(pulling out a pistol)

You were planning to keep me company -

McKUSSIC

(working, not seeing it)

- I couldn't let you go thru that by yourself -

CARLOS

- of course not -

As the fumes disappear the beeping sound of the warning system, barely audible, stops.

CARLOS

- when I first heard that, I thought you'd rigged the butane stove -

McKUSSIC

- I thought of that but then I realized it would be too hard to control, the ignition's easiest -

He breaks off realizing the implications - and looks up from the hatch to see Carlos with the gun.

McKUSSIC

- you knew.

CARLOS

I know you, buddy -

McKussic slams down the hatch and leaps toward the control panel and th pearl-handled PPK. Carlos fires twice hitting McKussic knocking him to the deck. Carlos is on top of him, pistol whipping him and swearing in Spanish.

CARLOS

(breaking into English)

- you son of a bitch, you son of a bitch you son of a bitch -

He stops and pulls McKussic up from the deck - it looks like he's going to smash him into the bulkhead. Then he hugs McKussic fiercely.

CARLOS

- how could you make me do this to you! Friendship is the only choice you can make in life that's yours. You can't choose your family - godammit I've had to face that, and no man should be judged for whatever direction his dick goes. That's like blaming a compass for pointing north, for Chrissakes. Friendship is all we have. We chose each other. How could you fuck it up? How could you make us look so bad?

McKUSSIC
I'm sorry, Carlos.

Carlos sees the blood oozing from McKussic's side.

CARLOS
Oh Jesus Christ, look at that.

McKUSSIC
(with a moan)
- I can't man..you're in the way..

CARLOS
(holding his head
tenderly)
It's just as well. It looks
terrible. -

McKUSSIC
(in pain)
- yeah?

CARLOS
- I broke a rib or two at least. I
hope I didn't fuck up your insides
too bad buddy - no matter what it
won't be as bad as what that girl
did to you..

McKUSSIC
Carlos, you can't hurt her, please,
please...

CARLOS
(with a reassuring pat)
- we'll talk about it later.
(McKussic starts to
protest)
- the important thing now is not to
get excited and show me how to keep
this boat from exploding so I can
get you to my doctor -

170 MAGUIRE

170

is getting more and more edgy. He's quietly switching channels on his walkie-talkie, whispering urgent calls for help. Unfortunately he gets a reply that blares out in the fog:

WALKIE-TALKIE

Come again, come again. You're going to have to speak up on channel 12 -

Maguire frantically tries to turn it down.

171 CARLOS WITH MCKUSSIC

looks up thru the fog.

CARLOS

Was that from my boat?..

He looks around.

172 MAGUIRE ON THE DOCK

1

A dozen feet above and about 15 yards in front of him tries to conceal himself behind a corrugated metal shack. He hits it and it collapses creating an awful racket. Maguire is instantly on his feet, shining a light down into the boat.

MAGUIRE

All right this is Federal Agent Maguire, you're not moving from that boat. You're under arrest.

CARLOS

(unfazed)

- this is Commandante Xavier Escalante - Portero y Vega and I have a prisoner in serious need of medical attention. I'm going to get him that attention and there's not a goddamn thing you can do -

Carlos has his hands full with McKussic. Before he can move Maguire FIRES. Carlos is hit. He rises to his feet and grabs the PPK off the control panel. He's hit again. He returns the fire before he sinks to his knees. Maguire empties the clip at the two huddling figures in the boat.

MAGUIRE

meanwhile is panicked. He falls to the dock trying to reload. He jams another 14 round clip into his 9mm weapon.

173 WITH MCKUSSIC AND CARLOS

173

huddled behind the hatch, Carlos badly wounded.

McKUSSIC

- if he keeps firing, he's gonna
blow us sky high..can you make it
to the other boat?

CARLOS

- I can't make it anywhere.

McKussic inches along the deck, makes certain that the tow line is secure, then struggles to pull himself over the gunnels and onto Carlos' cigarette boat. Maguire spots him and FIRES. Carlos manages to get off a round or two to afford McKussic partial cover.

- 174 ON CARLOS' BOAT McKUSSIC 17
starts the engine and puts it into drive, directing its bow toward the dock and Maguire. He immediately puts it into neutral.
- 175 THE TWO BOATS 17
bump up against one another in the fog, move slowly in tandem to the pier. Maguire can't figure it out, pauses momentarily. McKussic makes it back to the stern of his boat, reaches the instrument panel, hits the BILGE PUMP. He grabs a silver object from the panel.
- 176 AT THE WATER LINE 176
a serpentine rainbow trail can be seen coming from the scuppers.
- 177 McKUSSIC 177
tries to pull Carlos onto the hatch - the two wounded men having a hard time of it.
- 178 MAGUIRE 178
starts to fire again. The bow of the first boat has reached the pier and starts into the pilings. As it bumps into them the two boats bump up against one another. McKussic and Carlos go off the stern into the water, McKussic holding his right hand in the air. The boats bang into the pilings, jarring the dock and knocking Maguire down. He continues to fire at Carlos and McKussic in the water.
- 179 McKUSSIC WITH CARLOS 179
in one arm struggles to a thin rainbow line of gasoline still holding his right hand above the water. A metallic object can be glimpsed in it.

- 180 FRESCIA 1
pulls up some fifty yards from the dock. He uses his Walkie Talkie, warning Maguire to stop firing. Then he races toward the dock.
- 181 IN MCKUSSIC'S HAND 1
is the Zippo. He pries the top back. There is a spark. He tries again. It ignites.
- 182 FLAMES DART 18
across the water's surface. They move under the pier and snake around the pilings to the stern of the cigarette boat. It explodes. There's one final glimpse of Maguire before he and the dock and the pilings explode into the fog and the night and fall in a fiery shower around McKussic and Carlos.
- 183 FRESCIA 18
has hit the ground, now gets to his feet and runs toward the flaming pier.
- 184 IN THE WATER 184
McKussic clutches onto Carlos, trying to grasp a partially sunken hull to keep them afloat.

CARLOS

(elated)

- I knew I could count on you
buddy, I knew it, now..if..we can
just kill that girl -

(he sees the look on
McKussic's face and
smiles)

- it's time for both of us to quit,
buddy.

MCKUSSIC

- you mean it?

CARLOS

- I've seen it coming for some time
now - cocaine is no goddam good for
anybody. The future - the future
is - grass. Grass, buddy. I got
60 tons of Thai stick coming in,
take what you want, whatever I got.
you can have, you know that -

Carlos puts his head on McKussic's shoulder and

McKUSSIC
 (holding him tight)
 - I know buddy, I know...

185 THE OTHER CIGARETTE BOAT 13

mangled and in flames has not yet exploded and is drifting toward McKussic who does not see it.

186 WITH FRESCIA 13

He's spotted McKussic in the water and tries to warn him but the second boat explodes and McKussic disappears in the flames and fog.

FADE:

187 EXT. VALLENARI'S (LATE AFTERNOON) 13

Jo Ann's Alfa sits beside Arturo's Cadillac in the nearly empty lot.

188 INT. VALLENARI'S 13

Jo Ann hovering over the reservations desk, pale but elegantly dressed, the bruises on her face scarcely noticeable under makeup in the soft light.

Each time the phone rings she picks it up with a smooth, 'Vallenari's, good evening,' either taking a reservation or graciously turning one down.

ARTURO

Any word?

JO ANN

They're still searching.

Jo Ann shakes her head. The anxiety that has not crept into her voice steals across her face. Shaking, she looks down at the reservations book.

INSERT

By the 7:30 time slot is, 'McKussic - for two.'

Arturo picks up the ringing phone.

ARTURO

Somebody says they're calling you from a boat.

ARTURO

watches Jo Ann as she picks up the phone. Her back stiffens. She very slowly pencils out McKussic's reservation. She hangs up.

JO ANN

(to her maitre d')

Gio, table fifty one's going to be available tonight.

JO ANN

(to her brother who looks distraught)

Vittorio, would you excuse me?

VITTORIO

Of course -

She turns and walks out the restaurant door.

189 EXT. MCKUSSIC'S HOUSE (SUNSET)

189

The tide is high, the surf is heavy and lifeguard trucks patrol the beach. Their loudspeakers warn swimmers out of the water. Frescia sits on the rail of McKussic's second story balcony, quietly waiting.

Jo Ann's Alfa pulls into SHOT. In her evening wear she steps out of the car and onto the sand. Seemingly lost, she stares toward the horizon.

190 INT. LIFEGUARD TRUCK (MOVING)

190

One of the two blonde surfer guards is on the speaker:

GUARD

All right everybody, there's a riptide and we're off duty, let's play it safe, all swimmers out of the water -

OTHER GUARD

(spotting Jo Ann)

Jesus, Kenter did you see that?

Jo Ann, glimpsed thru the rear window of the lifeguard truck now steps out of her high heels and speeds toward the surf line, hitting it at full tilt.

OTHER GUARD

- Kenter for Christ's sake, pull up, she's fully dressed, I think she's trying to kill herself -

191 THE LIFEGUARD TRUCK

191

quickly turns back thru the edge of the surf to glimpse Jo Ann.

Kenter grabs a pair of binoculars and searches thru the window.

OTHER GUARD

Do you see her? do you see her?

KENTER

Yeah. I see her.

Kenter hands the binoculars to the other guard, who takes them. He looks.

192 THRU BINOCULARS POV

192

Jo Ann can be seen chest high in the pounding surf - moving into McKussic's arms.

Woody's got his lifeguard boat stern to shore, fighting the waves, having just dropped off McKussic. He starts to take off. His radio stops him.

FRESCIA'S VOICE

Anybody see our friend?

193 McKUSSIC'S BALCONY FRESCIA

193

on his walkie-talkie, holding a pair of binoculars.

WOODY'S VOICE

- negative

FRESCIA

Who took care of the gunshot wound?

WOODY'S VOICE

- ohh, your friendly neighborhood lifeguard.

Frescia nods approval. He gazes out to sea. A touch rueful:

FRESCIA

Cute couple, huh?

He shrugs and rises to leave.

194 A HUGE WAVE

194

crashes over McKussic and Jo Ann. They disappear. Thru the foaming surf they re-emerge - not having moved an inch, still locked in one another's arms.

OTHER GUARD'S VOICE
(thoroughly disgusted)
Well fuck it - let 'em drown.

The lifeguard truck speeds on. Moving across the sand it continues to urge the rest of humanity to play it safe and come out of the water.

FADE: