

# THE DEUCE



A Television Series  
Pilot Episode

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FADE IN:

EXT. BAR/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

A nondescript bar in Brooklyn. A few cars, late model circa 1971, parked on the street. One car, a '68 Pontiac Le Mans, is among them. Two unidentifiable MEN in the front seat. We HEAR, faintly, the SOUNDS of the Cornelius Brothers' "Treat Her Like A Lady" on the car radio. On the MEN, waiting:

INT. BAR/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Cornelius Brothers also PLAYS on the bar radio. Behind the bar, the night manager, STEVE DAGROSA, 29, pulls cash from the beds of the register and counts it out on the mahogany. On the bar top is a canvas, zippered bank bag with a lock and key. STEVE makes a notation on a deposit slip. He's young but an efficient manager. Near STEVE is a barmaid, LYNDA, mid-30s, rinsing netted bar mats with the soda gun. Closing time, a last PATRON standing, downing his scotch, rising, waving drunkenly as he walks unsteadily from bar.

PATRON

See ya tomorrow.

He goes. LYNDA hangs netting over the rails, wipes her hands.

LYNDA

Steve, you want me to stick?

STEVE

Nah, you can go.

LYNDA

I can make the drop on my way out.

STEVE

I got it, sweetheart. Go home.

STEVE begins to stuff the bag with cash and the deposit slip.

EXT. BAR/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE walks out carrying the bank bag under his arm. He locks the front door, checks it, then looks around the street before crossing. He's heading toward a bank on the opposite corner. FOLLOW him as his walk catches the towers and lights of the Verrazano Bridge rising above the Bay Ridge blocks. Reaching the drop slot, a hinged steel door, he looks around one more time. As he does, an engine ROARS to life and the headlights on the Le Mans illuminate as the Pontiac pulls off the curb and heads right for STEVE and the bank. STEVE slides the bank bag into the drop box, turns, and instinctively raises his hands as the Belvedere comes to a slanted stop in the middle of the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Two men, TED and ALEX, get out of the car. TED is skinny, wildly up on speed, and holding a gun against his leg. Both are wearing jeans and leather.

ALEX

You know what this is, barman.

TED

The night money. Give it up.

STEVE looks at the gun. Blood drains from his face.

STEVE

Too late. I already made the drop.

TED

The *money*, ginzo.

STEVE

If I could get it for you I would.  
I'm *sorry*.

TED cocks the hammer back, points the gun at STEVE.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Shit, wait. I got two little kids.

TED steps forward and places the muzzle of the revolver against STEVE's temple. STEVE's upraised hands are visibly shaking. He can't even speak.

TED

Get on your knees. Beg for your  
fuckin' life.

After a slight hesitation, STEVE drops to his knees.

STEVE

Please, don't shoot me. *Please*.  
(not over yet)  
My kids. Please, for my kids.

TED laughs, then points the gun up to the sky and fires off two rounds. Then he pistol whips STEVE and follows his partner back to the Le Mans. On STEVE, holding a bloody temple, still on his knees, fuck me,

CUT TO:

EXT. STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Mercury Monterey pulls to curb, parking haphazardly. Still a bit dazed, holding a bloody rag against his temple, STEVE exits car, heads toward a red-brick, nondescript house.

INT. STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE enters, sees his mother-in-law, MARIE, seated on the couch, bathed in the glow of TV, smoking a cigarette. She's watching vintage "Tonight Show" with vintage Carson, who is wrapping up, saying good night from the chair. STEVE comes around the front of the couch. MARIE doesn't take her eyes off the TV, or notice his injury or the bloody rag.

STEVE  
Where's Cathy?

MARIE  
She asked me to watch the kids.

STEVE  
For what?

MARIE  
She went out.

STEVE  
Out where? Where's your daughter?

MARIE shrugs, eyes still on TV. STEVE heads upstairs.

MARIE  
Go to sleep, Steve. You look tired.

On MARIE, as an interior door SLAMS,

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL/STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE exits from the bathroom, still matting his head with a wet handrag. He enters:

INT. BEDROOM/STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE flicks on the light, looks around: unmade bed, clothes all over, photos on the bureaus of him, his wife, his kids. He takes in the photos, sits, thinks for a moment in silence. Then he picks up the phone, dials.

STEVE  
Kim...It's Steve. Yeah.  
(brief pause)  
Listen, I can't be there for the distributor this morning. I can't make that. Send Duk or the other guy, your cousin...  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE (CONT'D)

(listens)

Listen to me, Kim, I got robbed tonight. With a gun. Got my head banged up good. Gonna need stitches or whatever. I'm still bleeding.

STEVE listens to Korean-American JABBERING on the phone, closes his eyes.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Kim, I nearly got fucking killed making the night drop.

(more JABBERING)

Why? I'll tell you why. Because you don't pay enough to give up the other job, that's why. Because I gotta work both sides of the river seven fucking nights a week to make enough for me and my fucking family.

More Korean-American JABBERING. STEVE listens for a moment more, than flops back on the unmade bed, the receiver held away from his ear and the rag against his wound. As we PAN ACROSS to the night table and a wedding shot of Steve and Steve's wife, an Italian-American lower-rung mob princess whose image fairly screams attitude and heavy maintenance. The photo, the lamp, the phone are suddenly swept aside by an arm as STEVE's anger runneth over. On STEVE, getting up, tossing the bloody handrag and staggering out,

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - DAY

Early morning emptiness. Cigarette dangling, STEVE stands on the sidewalk, head now sporting a taped bandage with a small, pink spotting from the bleed. He's standing next to a TEAMSTER, who is waiting by a handcart with boxes of liquor stacked. STEVE squints at a clipboard, looks in top box.

STEVE

I see the Walker Red.

TEAMSTER

Black is still on the truck.

(nods at handcart)

You got another two after this.

STEVE nods, looks at clipboard.

STEVE

Lose the Creme de Menthe already.  
Nobody drinks that shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEAMSTER nods, hauls handcart inside. STEVE looks down the Midtown street. A streetwalker, we will soon know her as SOPHIE, white, is walking home after a night in the trenches, carrying her spike heels, barefoot on sore feet.

SOPHIE

Steve.

STEVE

Hey, Soph.

SOPHIE

(off head injury)

Other guy looks worse, right?

STEVE

He got my blood on his shirt. I fuckin' know that much.

SOPHIE laughs, moves on. STEVE watches her ass roll down the sidewalk, then looks around at the New York morning. Trash blowing in the street, gypsy cabs, then up at the Pan Am Building and the Chrysler Building beyond. As HE stubs his cig, and steps off the street, a survivor, a New Yorker,

FADE TO:

MAIN TITLES

FADE IN WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK CARD:

NEW YORK CITY

FADE OUT. THEN FADE IN:

1971

FADE OUT, THEN FADE IN TO:

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY/8TH AVENUE - DAY

Establishing. Parked outside the terminal, an El Dorado with opera windows and a diamond cutout in the back.

INT. WAITING AREA/PORT AUTHORITY/8TH AVENUE - DAY

Two pimps, C.C. and JERRY LOVE, are seated in the waiting area of the bus terminal, watching the arriving and departing PASSENGERS moving about the large, dingy space. C.C., thirties, black, is average size and build, wearing a tight-fitting jumpsuit, hat and shades. Next to him is a walking stick with a crystal head, leaning up against his seat. LOVE is forty-ish, black, very tall, with a blowout, wearing a suit and an open shirt with collars long as pizza slices, and stacks with three-inch heels.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOVE

...No, see, that shit ain't crazy.  
He ain't bein' crazy at all. He  
actin' like a motherfuckin' fox.

C.C.

You think?

LOVE

Nixon? I see right where the man is  
comin' from. Shit make total sense  
to me...

C.C.

How you figure?

LOVE

He president. He got to front some  
bein' The Man. So, like, on the one  
hand, he got his people in Paris  
talkin' peace, right? That shit's  
the carrot. But the stick? He got  
to make them slopes think he crazy  
enough to do all kinda shit. Bomb  
the shit outta Vietnam. Take over  
Cambodia. Whatever the fuck.

C.C.

So you thinkin' he frontin'...

LOVE

That man want outta that war like  
everyone else. But he can't play it  
like that, see. He gotta make them  
motherfuckers think that he will do  
any got-damn thing they can imagine.  
Shit, if I was him, I'd be flashin'  
nuclear weapons an' shit.

C.C.

F'real?

LOVE

Not sayin' I'ma use that shit. I'm  
sayin' I'd be like, 'Do not fuck  
with President Jerry Love because  
the nigger is crazed and he *will*  
drop that big motherfucker on y'all.'  
Same as this here...

(nods at Port Authority)

I mean, C.C., do you really want to  
ever cut a bitch? Right? I mean,  
sometimes you want a bitch to *think*  
that you might, but shit...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

C.C.  
So Nixon pimpin'...  
(off LOVE's nod)  
Well, shit, that makes good sense.

LOVE  
'Course, I was in the shit for a  
year. You know that, right?  
(off his look)  
Americal Division. Had me up in  
them Central Highlands.

C.C. takes this in, impressed.

LOVE (CONT'D)  
Nixon know what he doin' in Vietnam,  
brah. He know the game.

C.C. nods, convinced. A good-looking YOUNG WOMAN walks by,  
lugging a suitcase. She's a take-no-shit type, scowling.

LOVE (CONT'D)  
What you suppose her problem is?

C.C.  
I ain't even know and I ain't  
interested.

LOVE  
You could turn her ass out. I ain't  
met one yet couldn't be broke.

C.C.  
I'm lookin' for product, not a  
challenge.

LOVE  
You just lazy.

C.C.  
Practical.

A BLACK WOMAN walks by with a huge ass. Their heads swivel.

C.C. (CONT'D)  
Damn. Look at that onion.

LOVE  
Shit don't work for me.

C.C.  
You couldn't handle that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOVE

I'd handle the *shit* out of that motherfucker. I'd ride that bitch like Man o' War.

(shakes head)

But the clientele? I'm talkin' about the white boys. Just too intimidating for them, dig? The bitch got *too* much ass.

C.C.

I ain't know there *was* such a thing.

The two smile and casually give each other skin circa 1970. After a long beat, LOVE muses...

LOVE

I'm gonna get me a Chinese ho. Want my herd to be international and all.

C.C.

You speak Chinese?

LOVE

Know a couple Vietnam words. That shit's like a cousin to Chinese.

C.C.

What you fuckin' around for? Get a couple of white bitches and a fine black bitch, and work 'em. Ain't no man can handle but two or three bitches, anyway, and if he got 'em he better speak their language.

An attractive white girl, LORI, 19, is standing alone holding a suitcase, looking bewildered and vulnerable. She's dressed blandly. C.C studies her.

C.C. (CONT'D)

Look here, Jerry, I'm gonna check you later.

C.C. gets up, he and LOVE execute an elaborate handshake, then C.C. moves toward LORI.

C.C. (CONT'D)

'Scuse me, baby.

She looks him over, doesn't seem to know what he is, but tellingly, doesn't seem scared.

C.C. (CONT'D)

First time to New York?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LORI  
Does it show?

C.C.  
A little. But that's cool. Everyone  
here came from somewhere else.  
(warm, gentle smile)  
Where you from?

LORI  
Minnesota.  
(pause)  
I need to find a place to stay.

C.C.  
Can't be making those kinds of  
decisions until you put some food in  
your stomach. Let me buy you  
breakfast. I know a spot serves it  
all day long.

LORI looks down at her feet, looks around. Unsure.

C.C. (CONT'D)  
It's breakfast, that's all. C'mon,  
keep me company. C.C. don't like to  
eat alone.

LORI  
C.C.

C.C.  
That's right. And you are?

LORI  
Lori.

C.C. takes her suitcase from her hand and she lets him.

C.C.  
Pleased to make your acquaintance,  
Lori. Let's get goin'. My short's  
right out front.

On C.C. and LORI, new friends,

CUT TO:

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY/8TH AVENUE - DAY

C.C. and LORI approach his El Dorado, clearly a pimp's car.  
LORI's eyes smile, she's fucking with him:

LORI  
Is this a Cadillac?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

C.C.

Goddamn right it's a Cadillac. A customized El Dee, to be exact.

LORI

I never rode in a Cadillac before.

C.C.

You gonna ride in one now.

He opens the trunk and puts her suitcase inside, then opens the passenger door for her. She gets in and he comes around to the driver's side.

INT. C.C.'S EL DORADO/PORT AUTHORITY/8TH AVENUE - DAY

The two of them are in the front seat lined with fake white fur. Behind them, in the backseat, is a pole strung across the interior on which various women's outfits are hung. LORI turns her head and inspects the clothes.

C.C.

Pretty, right?

LORI

Why do you have that stuff?

C.C.

I'm in sales.

(off her look)

Look here, baby. I'm not bein' critical or nothin' like that. You a lovely young lady. But that outfit you're wearing? It says small-town girl. See what I'm sayin'?

(re: the rack)

I'm gonna let you pick out some new things from that rack, just so you can look, you know, more New York. You'd like that, wouldn't you?

LORI looks at the clothing, unimpressed. She drops the play.

LORI

Shit, C.C. I'm from Minnesota and I wouldn't be caught dead in most of that shit. Is this really New York fucking City, or did I fall off the Greyhound in Cleveland...

LORI takes a cigarette from her purse, lights it, exhales roughly. Suddenly, she looks a little harder and more experienced than she did before. C.C. studies her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

C.C.  
Ain't no need for the rest of the  
sales pitch is there?

LORI blows smoke through the open sunroof, smiles at him.

LORI  
Breakfast.

AS HE gives her a glance, checks the rear-view, pulls off,

CUT TO:

EXT. 42ND STREET BETWEEN 9TH AND 10TH/TIMES SQUARE - DAY

A MAN who looks exactly like Steve walks down a blighted street near the House of Korea. He's wearing a black shirt and moves with a cocky athleticism that we have not previously seen in Steve. Though the viewer does not yet know it, this is Steve's twin brother, JOHNNY DAGROSA. JOHNNY stops to talk to JERSEY, a bookie wearing a frilly white shirt that is borderline feminine.

JOHNNY  
That shirt is real pretty. What'd  
you do, Bernardo, fly down to Puerto  
Rico to get it?

JERSEY  
You want something?

JOHNNY  
Mets are at the Reds in Cincy, right?  
What's the line?

JERSEY  
The Reds and one.

JOHNNY  
New York is due. Who's pitchin'  
today, Seaver?

JERSEY  
Tug.

JOHNNY  
Whad'ya think?

JERSEY  
I don't think. You want the action  
or not?

JOHNNY takes a roll from his pocket, peels off bills.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHNNY

A hundred on the Metropolitans.

JERSEY takes it, looks JOHNNY over.

JERSEY

Heard you used to play.

JOHNNY waves his hand, almost dismissively.

JOHNNY

Drafted by the L.A. Dodgers. They  
slotted me for single-A ball.

(off his look)

Never even drank the cup of coffee.  
Fuck it. Too many rules for me.

JOHNNY chin-nods at JERSEY's frilly shirt.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I really do like that shirt.

JERSEY

(hesitant)

Yeah?

JOHNNY

My sister has one just like it.

And with that JOHNNY walks off down the street and WIPES  
FRAME. We STAY ON a whore named CANDY, twenties, petite,  
blonde, notable breasts. She's talking to a pimp, RODNEY,  
black, educated, very good-looking. Behind them, another  
whore, THUNDERTHIGHS, black, late twenties, works a corner.

RODNEY

Between my expertise and your good  
looks? Shoot. Thoroughbred like  
you, we would own this damn street.

CANDY

I'm doin' fine.

RODNEY

Fine ain't good enough for a woman  
like you. I'll make you a star.  
Ali MacGraw gonna want *your* autograph.

CANDY

You're not listening, Rodney. I  
take care of my own self.

RODNEY nods in the direction of THUNDERTHIGHS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RODNEY

Talk to Thunderthighs. She'll tell you. I'm nothin' but good to her.

A POTENTIAL JOHN walks by, slows down.

CANDY

Hey, baby, you datin'?

The POTENTIAL JOHN eyes RODNEY and moves off quickly.

CANDY (CONT'D)

Shit. See what you did?

RODNEY

I don't think you understand. It's a scary world out here. *Vola-tile*. Girl could get her arm broke, or she could get cut. This one girl I knew, thought she could make it on her own, got served a Drano cocktail.

CANDY

You threatening me?

RODNEY

Never. The opposite. I'm threatening anyone that would ever threaten you.

CANDY

Rodney, sugar, no one makes money off my pussy but me. I'm gonna keep what I earn, and I don't need you or anyone else to hold my money for me.

CANDY looks him in the eye, she's strong.

CANDY (CONT'D)

Now get out of here and let me do my thing. You're busting on my groove, Rodney.

RODNEY

Yes, ma'am. Talk some other time.

RODNEY drifts, leaving CANDY on her corner. As a car drives by and slows to a crawl...

CANDY

Hey, baby. You datin'?

On CANDY, at work,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Head still bandaged, STEVE is still at the stick. Late night, bar-time clock saying two-ten in the morn. Bar empty except for four WISEGUYS, Italians, thirties, crowded around a booth, drunk and enjoying themselves. STEVE goes down the bar to VINCENT, the owner, forties, who is counting out the night's take with the deposit envelope.

VINCENT

I got the drop tonight. Don't worry about that, Stevie.

STEVE nods, checks his watch, looks over at WISEGUYS, nods.

STEVE

Can I give 'em the last call?

VINCENT

Them guys? No way. You pour until they're done. Make it a lock-in if you have to.

STEVE

C'mon, boss.

VINCENT

Stevie, are you out of your fuckin' mind? That's Twist and his crew. Carmine and them? You toss 'em before they're done and I'll be eating Carmine's asshole until I'm dead.

(gets up)

Fuck no. You stay 'til they go.

VINCENT takes the deposit bag, nods, exits. On STEVE, trapped after closing time, throwing a resentful look to the WISEGUYS, who continue to party,

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM/APARTMENT/RIVERSIDE DRIVE - NIGHT

On a turntable, the Allman Brothers' long "Mountain Jam" from the Fillmore recordings, the kind of shit white liberals were getting high to in 1971. On the sofa, a 34-year-old NYU ASSISTANT PROFESSOR. On the ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, a 19-year-old undergraduate, MAGGIE SMITH, grinding on the OLDER GUY until he finishes. MAGGIE laughs at him.

PROFESSOR

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

The expression on your face. When you came. That look.

(lights cigarette)

If people stopped for a minute and realized what they look like during sex, they'd lose it. I mean if it wasn't fun it would be ridiculous.

PROFESSOR

God, I shouldn't be doing this.

MAGGIE

Fucking?

PROFESSOR

Fucking you. You're eighteen, for god's sake.

MAGGIE

Nineteen. And that argument is begging the question. *Petitio principali.*

PROFESSOR

And could damn near be your father.

MAGGIE

*Argumentum ad hominem.*

PROFESSOR

Jesus Christ, Maggie, if anyone found out, I'd be...

MAGGIE

*Argumentum ad misericordiam.* An appeal to pity if ever I heard one.

PROFESSOR falls silent, looks at MAGGIE, blowing smoke.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Midterm's gonna be cake for me.

On the PROFESSOR, over his head with this one,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

STEVE sits with KIM, the owner, fifties, at the bar. Some PATRONS, with one BARMAID washing glasses and another wrapping silverware in cloth napkins at one end of the bar. Behind them, the restaurant is mostly bare of DINERS. A couple Korean WAITERS lean against pillar and wall, commiserating quietly, waiting for customers that never come.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

Don't look at me. The bar pulls money. Some, anyway.

KIM

Not enough.

STEVE

If you didn't make me run the whores and street people off before eleven o'clock, I'd make more. They gotta drink too.

KIM

Family restaurant.

STEVE

Right. So where are the fucking families.

KIM has no answer, looks around at the emptiness.

STEVE (CONT'D)

It's that kimchee shit you're serving. And the dogmeat or cat or whatever.

KIM

No dog. Beef. Marinate beef!

STEVE

Nobody eats Korean food, Kim. Probably not even in Korea if they can fucking help it.

KIM

Korean very good. Spicy.

STEVE

How 'bout you get someone in here to cook steaks. Or Italian.

KIM

No good, Steve. Another month like this. We close up. No good.

On STEVE, looking around at a dead spot on its last legs,

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM/NEW YORK UNIVERSITY - DAY

PROFESSOR is lecturing on logic, teaching a Philosophy 101 section. In the second row is MAGGIE, ostensibly taking class notes, but mostly pressing a pencil against her lower lip, fucking with PROFESSOR's mind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR

...and as we've seen, there are a number of equivocation fallacies, either traveling from the general to the specific, or vice versa, but even more common is the manipulation of a syllogism in which different meanings of a key term are substituted. Etymological fallacies...

His eyes go to MAGGIE. She is beautiful.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

Ah...

He looks away, tries to recover his place.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

Oh hell, where was I?

MAGGIE

Syllogisms.  
(he still struggles)  
Etymological fallacies?

PROFESSOR

Right, yes. The etymological fallacies can often be, um, subtle, yet profoundly destructive to, ah, to logical argument.

PROFESSOR finds the track. On MAGGIE, not taking notes,

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S NEST/HIGH 30S/WEST MIDTOWN - DAY

It's a soul food diner, run by, naturally, a black guy named JACK, up from the South. Blue-gum, South-of-the-Mason-Dixon-Line SOUL and FUNK comes from the jukebox. This is the daily hangout for our PIMPS and PROSTITUTES. All-day breakfast, beer and wine available. C.C. and LORI are seated at the counter, finishing breakfast. Also seated on the stools are a white pimp named GENTLE RICHIE, with long hair and soft eyes; his sole girl, ROCHELLE, black, 30; LARRY BROWN, loud and boastful, wearing all brown, with a matching, large, floppy hat; and his two white girls, LORETTA and BARBARA. In a booth sits JERRY LOVE, clean in his suit, with two girls, SHAY, black, and MELISSA, white, a pretty lady who looks a bit damaged. Seated alone, by the cash register, is ASHLEY, a white girl from West Virginia, who talks her idea of "black." She is cold-eyeing LORI. LORI pushes her plate away, lights a cigarette. JACK takes her plate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK  
What you think, baby?

LORI  
Real good. You can burn.

JACK takes the dish to the bus tray.

LORI (CONT'D)  
What was that sausage thing?

C.C.  
That's a half-smoke, girl. Guess  
you don't have those up in the Lakes.

LORI  
First time for me.

C.C.  
Onliest thing they got up in Minnesota  
is hockey players and heifers.

LORI  
You talkin' about my mother, C.C.?

C.C.  
(recovering)  
Your mother play hockey?

GENTLE RICHIE comes down and greets C.C. GENTLE RICHIE looks  
high as a Denver hippie.

C.C. (CONT'D)  
What it look like, Richie?

GENTLE RICHIE  
Everything is everything.

He drifts toward the men's room.

LORI  
He's different.

C.C.  
Richie just go with the flow. Ain't  
the aggressive type. Why he only  
has one girl -- not everyone gets to  
be successful.

(leaning close)  
But you gonna be. I'm gonna take  
you over to the stroll later on  
tonight, introduce you to some  
veterans, let you get a feel for  
things. How's that sound?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

C.C. (CONT'D)

When I saw you come off that bus, I  
knew you understood this here, and I  
knew we was meant to be together.  
You don't have to worry about *nothin'*.

She nods, she's been down this road. Not exactly  
enthusiastic, but she knows what time it is. C.C. looks  
over her shoulder at ASHLEY, who has tears in her eyes.

C.C. (CONT'D)

'Scuse me, baby.

C.C. slides off the stool and goes to ASHLEY. PICK UP on  
LARRY BROWN, LORETTA, BARBARA and SOPHIE, the hooker seen  
walking past in the teaser.

LARRY BROWN

We straight, right?

LORETTA

(rote)

Yes, Larry. Gonna have a big night.

LARRY BROWN

Soph, no layin' back tonight, you  
hear? We steady on it.

SOPHIE

I'm for you, Daddy. You know I got  
my regular tonight.

LARRY BROWN

Yeah, well that's one in the tank.

BARBARA is putting on lipstick.

LORETTA

Gimme that, Barbara.

BARBARA

When I'm done, girl.

LARRY BROWN

Larry Brown gonna buy you girls a  
nice dinner in return. You hear me,  
Loretta?

LORETTA

(rote)

We got you, Daddy.

PICK UP on JERRY LOVE, who passes an amber vial of coke across  
the table to MELISSA.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOVE

There you go, baby. Take a little  
of that freeze, wake your ass up.

MELISSA uncaps the vial, slips the attached spoon in and  
takes a snort, one nostril, then the other, right out in the  
open. No one pays it any mind.

LOVE (CONT'D)

Don't fall in love with it now.

But MELISSA has already done just that. Her eyes come alive.

SHAY

Give it here.

MELISSA passes the vial to SHAY, reluctantly. BACK ON C.C.,  
now seated next to ASHLEY, sweet-talking her, nodding casually  
over his shoulder toward LORI.

C.C.

...just someone I met today and need  
to settle. But she ain't gonna take  
your place, you can believe that.

ASHLEY drags on cigarette, says nothing. C.C. gets closer.

C.C. (CONT'D)

Look here, girl. You my bottom.  
You know this.

ASHLEY

I be tired, C.C.

C.C.

When you come home from work tonight?  
I'm gonna give you a bath. And then?  
I'm gonna fuck you so good, you gonna  
remember why we together, on the for-  
real side. How that sound to you?

ASHLEY

(glance at LORI)  
Just you 'n' me?

C.C.

No one else.

REVERSE ON LORI, watching them, in her new world,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - DAY

Weekend. Bar traffic pretty good already in late afternoon. Now down to a wide band-aid, STEVE checks stock, pats BARMAID on the ass, and grabs his car keys, heading out. VINCENT pulls him up as he's leaving.

VINCENT

Jimmy just called. His sister was in a car accident down in Rockaway.

STEVE

Yeah?

VINCENT

Says he's gonna be late.

(shrugs)

I need you behind the bar.

STEVE

It's my night across the river. You know this, Vinnie.

VINCENT

Fuck that. I need you tonight.

STEVE

You're my weekdays and they're my weekends. I got two jobs, Vincent.

VINCENT

You leave now, you only got one.

STEVE stares at him for a beat. BARMAID looks over appalled. As STEVE nods to BARMAID, walks out,

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY/S.R.O. HOTEL/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tarted up for the prowl, SOPHIE motors down the hall with her purse. Just as she reaches her room, a MAN, white, middle-aged, appears from the stairwell door, begins heading toward her in the hall. She finds room key in her purse as the MAN finds his own, seemingly heading past her. As SOPHIE takes a last deep breath and opens her door, the MAN changes his vector and grabs her from behind, shoving her into the room. As we HEAR a struggle and Sophie's brief SCREAM from:

INT. ROOM/S.R.O. HOTEL/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

SOPHIE struggles with MAN, who grabs her roughly, tossing her down against the side of the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAN

You fuckin' whore.

SOPHIE tries to get up, MAN grabs her by the wrist and slaps her, hard, across the face. SOPHIE begins to cry. MAN slaps her again, goes for his own belt. On SOPHIE,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Decent weekend bar traffic, restaurant quite dead. STEVE works the bar with ELLEN, a barmaid, short but built, beside him, reaching in vain for a high-shelf bottle.

ELLEN

Coulda been a dancer, I was only taller.

STEVE

You're perfect, doll.

STEVE gets the bottle down for her, touches her hip with his hand. She smiles, there's something between them, perhaps. STEVE returns to the register, checking totals before noticing TOMMY LONGO, another wiseguy, waiting for him at the end of the bar, smoking a cigarette, along with a COMPANION, shorter, with a pug's face.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What would you guys like?

LONGO

Steve Dagrosa, right?

STEVE

All day.

LONGO

You got a brother named Johnny.

STEVE

Yeah.

LONGO

Your brother's been very active in the wire services lately. Unfortunately...

STEVE shows his disgust. He's been here before.

STEVE

How much?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LONGO

Twenty Gs, give or take. Plus, the interest rate, which, I admit, is unreasonably high. So now, thirty.  
(shrugs)  
It compounds.

STEVE

Why come to me?

LONGO

Your brother, as limited a gambler as he is, is also irresponsible in the bargain. He can't make good. You, however...you're a working man as I understand. Barman here and in Brooklyn, always around some cash.

STEVE

I don't steal from Kim. And I don't steal across the river. I'm no thief.

LONGO

Well, you're gonna have to come up with somethin'.

STEVE looks around the crowded bar.

STEVE

Look, I got a bar I need to tend to right now. And I gotta think. Can we meet when it's quieter?

LONGO

Okay, I'll come by tomorrow when you open. But just to be clear, this is not a situation you can ignore.

STEVE

I get it.

LONGO snaps ash off his cigarette.

LONGO

We'll take those drinks now. Scotch rocks. And not from the well.

As STEVE turns, walks the bar, ready to comp the drinks,

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM/S.R.O. HOTEL/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

SOPHIE sits, nude, eyeing her jawline in a hand mirror as the MAN, her regular, smokes and watches her calmly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOPHIE

Shit.

REGULAR/MAN

Hmm?

SOPHIE

I think it's gonna swell.  
(turns to him)  
It's already swole up, right?

REGULAR/MAN

A little, maybe. Sorry about that.

SOPHIE

That was a little rough.

REGULAR/MAN

Yeah, I know. It got away from me  
there this time, I guess.

SOPHIE

Wrist also hurts.

REGULAR/MAN

Geez, Soph, you know I'm sorry. I  
just...you got me going tonight.

SOPHIE looks over at him. He's sheepish now. REGULAR pulls  
wallet from his pants, counts out one twenty.

REGULAR/MAN (CONT'D)

Extra twenty for it, okay?

SOPHIE

(softening)  
I got you going, huh?

REGULAR/MAN

I think it was the shoes.

As SOPHIE nods, continues checking herself in the hand mirror,

CUT TO:

INT. STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE enters, tired from work, finds mother-in-law, MARIE,  
in the same position on the sofa, watching Carson.

STEVE

Where is she?

MARIE shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Gowanus, right? Or maybe the other  
bar down in Bensonhurst?

MARIE  
(eyes on Carson)  
She had to go out. Hell you want  
from me?

As STEVE exits in a fury,

CUT TO:

EXT. POOL HALL/GOWANUS/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE at the solid wood door of a blackened-window pool hall.  
He knocks, two short, then three. The after-hours code.  
The door opens and he steps inside:

INT. POOL HALL/GOWANUS/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE walks past a long bar, through a dark pool hall, heavy  
with cigarette smoke, where PLAYERS shoot under blocks of  
light. Few look his way and those who do are not his friends.  
Jackie DeShannon's "What the World Needs Now Is Love" comes  
from the juke. Yeah, you don't get to choose what's on the  
jukebox when you're headed into a barfight. STEVE enters a  
back area holding one single pool table and a smaller bar.  
Walking around the pool table, teasing with a cue, is his  
young, good-looking wife, CATHY, bouffant hairdo, Banlon  
pullover atop black leotard only, smoking a cigarette and  
drinking a gin and tonic. Shooting pool, holding a cue stick,  
is EDDIE, a smalltime hood, and another hood, RICO, also  
with a cue. Other HOODS, sitting on high pool-hall stools,  
watch the game. A cigarette, hot end out, rests on the edge  
of the table. EDDIE doesn't acknowledge STEVE yet. STEVE  
walks over to CATHY.

STEVE  
C'mon. Let's go home.

CATHY  
I'm not finished with my drink.

STEVE  
You've had enough.  
(realizing)  
The fuck are you wearing?

CATHY  
I got on a leotard. I'm not naked  
or nothing.

STEVE looks at her. Really? Fucking really? CATHY nods to  
where she's draped a skirt over a barstool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATHY (CONT'D)

I can't play pool in the skirt.  
It's too tight. Can't bend.

STEVE

You fuckin' piece of work. C'mon.

STEVE grabs her arm.

RICO

The lady said she's still drinking.

STEVE ignores RICO, heads for the door.

EDDIE (O.S.)

Hey, fucko.

EDDIE's menace makes STEVE turn. EDDIE rests his cue against the table, picks up his cigarette and an open bottle of Miller High Life, and walks over to STEVE, who turns to face him. EDDIE looks down at STEVE's side-zipper, black boots.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

I like your Beatle boots. They're  
real boss.

EDDIE turns the bottle over, pours beer on STEVE's boots. STEVE's face reddens but he says nothing.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Which Beatle are you?

RICO

He's Ringo.

EDDIE

You look a little angry, Ringo. The  
thing is, what are you gonna do?

STEVE slumps a little. He's not going to do a thing.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

The lady was playing me eight ball.  
And I got a couple solids left.

STEVE

Her name is Cathy. She's my wife.

EDDIE

Said I got a couple balls left.

(pause)

You know what it's like to be playing  
a game and still have balls, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE looks over to CATHY, who looks away. She's embarrassed at his humiliation, but won't back him. Or come home. She's in the wind and has been for a while now. STEVE looks around. He's outnumbered, and not a fighter. EDDIE drags on his cigarette.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Take it out on the fuckin' arches.

After a last disappointed look at CATHY, STEVE turns and takes the long walk through the pool hall, the jaunty, Burt Bacharach arrangement of the Jackie DeShannon song trailing him like laughter. On STEVE, emasculated and broken,

CUT TO:

EXT. 42ND STREET BETWEEN 9TH AND 10TH/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Beside his Lincoln, LARRY stands with SOPHIE, mothering her, applying lotion to the swollen side of her face.

SOPHIE

...He didn't mean to, Larry. He just got excited.

LARRY BROWN

You think he excited. Shit, I'ma show him what excited is...

SOPHIE

Larry, he's a regular. Every two weeks. One G to play pretend.

LARRY BROWN

This don't look like no pretend.

She winces. He gets more gentle, assessing her bruise.

SOPHIE

Larry, you saw. He gave me an extra twenty. He didn't mean it.

LARRY BROWN

Extra twenty, shit. Before you do him the next time, you tell him that if he fucks up like this again, he gonna have me raisin' up on him. Regular or no...

SOPHIE

I'll tell him, Larry. I will.

LARRY nods, mollified, kisses her on the cheek, sends her back down the pavement, where she passes CANDY and the aptly named THUNDERTHIGHS, wearing hot pants, standing on the corner

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

as a car slows down and comes to a stop. In the car is a TEENAGED DRIVER and three TEENAGED BOYS, Jewish, South Shore Long Island.

THUNDERTHIGHS

Y'all datin'?

TEENAGED DRIVER nods to the backseat driver's side, where STU, a nervous kid, sits. His look screams "virgin."

TEENAGED DRIVER

Gotta birthday boy here. How much?

THUNDERTHIGHS

Thirty and ten.

(off his confusion)

Thirty for the date, ten for the room. You ready?

TEENAGED DRIVER

(looks to CANDY)

He wants *you*.

THUNDERTHIGHS nods at CANDY: Go ahead. CANDY leans into the open driver's window.

CANDY

That'll be forty, honey.

As the TEENAGED DRIVER gets the pooled money together, CANDY looks at STU in the backseat.

CANDY (CONT'D)

What's your name?

STU

Stuart.

CANDY

We're gonna party, Stuart.

After she takes the cash and stuffs it in her shirt:

CANDY (CONT'D)

Come with me.

Some LAUGHTER from STUART'S FRIENDS as he gets out of the car. On CANDY, who's made a date,

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM/STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE steps in quietly. Finds MARIE on the couch, sleeping, a dead cigarette between her fingers, the TV showing test

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

pattern. He takes the cigarette out of her hand, drops it in an ashtray, leaves the room.

INT. BEDROOM/STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE is packing a duffel bag. Not too much stuff. Opens a box on his dresser, looks into it, selects a few pieces of man jewelry, closes it. Takes a short glance at a framed photograph of him and Cathy in happier times, but doesn't linger. He's made his decision.

INT. KIDS' BEDROOM/STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Holding the duffel bag, STEVE stands in the bedroom of his KIDS, watching them sleep. They're very young -- five-year-old BOY, three-year-old GIRL. We HOLD for a long beat as STEVE contemplates. It's a big step, the biggest a man can make. He bends down to kiss the head of one KID, then goes to the second bed and repeats the goodbye.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

CANDY walks down the hall of the S.R.O. with STU, who's very nervous. He stops walking. She turns, urges him on.

CANDY

C'mon, sugar. I don't bite.

CANDY stops at a door, uses a key to open it, goes inside. As STU takes a breath, follows,

CUT TO:

EXT. STEVE'S HOME/BAY RIDGE/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE, duffel in hand, walks down the street, passing his Mercury. He's leaving it and every material thing behind for Cathy and the kids.

EXT. ELEVATED SUBWAY STATION/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE takes the steps up to the elevated platform. No one else around, it's the middle of the night.

INT. CANDY'S ROOM/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

The room is small, sparsely furnished, with a thin-mattress double bed. A scarf has been hung over a lamp, the one attempt to bring mood and romance to the room. CANDY goes to a drawer, retrieves a condom, brings it over to STU, who is sitting nervously on the edge of the bed. She sits beside him. STU doesn't know what to do so he leans in to kiss CANDY, but she backs off and shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CANDY

There's rules, honey. First one is,  
you can't kiss me on my mouth.

She opens her shirt and undoes her bra. She's bountiful.

CANDY (CONT'D)

But you can touch my tits. Only if  
you want to.

He touches her gingerly and his mouth drops open. CANDY  
reaches down and unzips his jeans.

CANDY (CONT'D)

Let's see what we got here.  
(checking him)  
You're ready, aren't you?

CANDY tears open the wrapper and extracts the condom.

CANDY (CONT'D)

You gotta wear this.

STU

I can do it.

CANDY

No. Candy's gonna fit it on you to  
make sure. That's rule number two.

CANDY puts the condom in her mouth, kneels down, and to STU's  
astonishment, she uses her mouth to slide the condom on his  
member. He begins to squirm.

STU

(shooting off)  
Oh...God.

CANDY

Oh, my goodness. You were ready.

CANDY has the condom off, and walks it back toward the  
bathroom, even as STU is still trying to regroup,

CUT TO:

INT. 2 TRAIN/SUBWAY/BROOKLYN - NIGHT

STEVE rides the 2 under the East River, his duffel at his  
feet, the usual MISCREANTS and SLEEPERS on the car.

CUT TO:

INT. CANDY'S ROOM/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

CANDY primping in fucked-up, ionized mirror. STU buttoning up, reluctantly, watching her.

STU

Can I get a few minutes. I'll be ready again...

CANDY

One ticket, one ride. That's rule number three.

(smile)

You wanna go again? Thirty for the second go. The room is already paid.

STU

I don't have thirty. We already all pooled what we had.

(still hoping)

It was my birthday today.

CANDY

Well, happy birthday to you.

STU ventures a complaint for the first time.

STU

Doesn't seem fair.

CANDY

Fair?

STU

You barely had to do anything. Cost as much as someone who takes longer.

CANDY looks at him. He's meeting her eye. Has she misjudged?

CANDY

What do you do, Stuart?

STU

I'm in school.

CANDY

What does your father do?

STU

Sells cars. He's got a dealership. Valley Stream.

CANDY

That's *his* job, right?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CANDY (CONT'D)

And if someone comes in and knows just the car he wants and doesn't dick around or need a long test drive, and they don't argue about the color or whatever? Does he give them the car for less? Do they pay less than the guy who comes in and takes forever, and has to drive five or six cars and talk about the radio and the whitewalls and everything else before he's done and ready to buy?

STU looks away. Sees where it's going.

CANDY (CONT'D)

He don't let the easy customer have two cars for the price of one, right?

CANDY walks over, gives the KID a little buss on the cheek.

CANDY (CONT'D)

This is *my* job, Stuart.

The KID has no more argument in him. Defeated, he tucks in his shirt, hitches belt, then stops. He has a thought.

STU

You wouldn't take a check, right?

CANDY looks at him. What a sweet little mouse.

CANDY

Personal check? No, ordinarily.

(smile)

But from you, Stu, I think I would. Local bank, right?

STU goes for wallet. On CANDY, unbuttoning again,

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY CARS - DAY & NIGHT

MONTAGE. STEVE riding on unidentified trains, different cars, different PASSENGERS, white collar, blue collar, Puerto Ricans, blacks, whites. Sometimes the cars are full, sometimes empty or near so. STEVE is sometimes awake, brooding, sometimes agitated, sometimes sleeping, his hand looped inside the handles of the duffel bag, and eventually, a bit of a beard beginning to appear on his face. Concluding MONTAGE with:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INT. 1 TRAIN/SUBWAY/MANHATTAN - NIGHT

With the last, CROWDED train lurching to a halt and an OLDER DRUNK leaning into STEVE, bringing him back to the reality of his world. He looks around as the subway doors open and people rush out and others rush on. STEVE, now with a two-day growth, takes this in a moment more, then grabs his duffel and exits train to:

INT. SUBWAY STATION/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

STEVE walks through an underground station, slower than the others who are rushing through, on their way to work, or just moving fast because they're New Yorkers. TRACK STEVE as he walks the platform, then up the exit steps. STAY ON STEVE's face as he emerges from the station and steps onto the sidewalk:

EXT. 42ND STREET/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

STEVE drops his duffel bag to the sidewalk, looks around, then up at the lighted majesty of Times Square, at its glistening, gaudy height. On STEVE, resolving never to go back across the river, walking into the city,

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT DESK/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

C.U. on the card being filled out, STEVE using his right name because what-the-fuck. PAN UP to DESK MAN, assessing STEVE in a half-assed way.

DESK MAN  
Hourly. Or nightly.

STEVE  
(thinks a bit)  
Gimme a month. I'll pay up front.

DESK MAN looks at him, not entirely approvingly. On STEVE, settling into a fresh purgatory,

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE/NYU CAMPUS - DAY

Establishing. The college campus, circa 1970s. MAGGIE moves through the counter-culture, anti-war bohemia of the Square, crosses the street and glides into a dorm.

INT. CORRIDOR/DORMITORY/EAST 10TH STREET - DAY

MAGGIE moves among other STUDENTS. The hippie era has peaked and many of the STUDENTS still wear their freak flags high,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

but a few have begun to sport a new, punk-before-punk look. A mix of glam and androgyny. She veers into:

INT. DORM ROOM/DORMITORY/EAST 10TH STREET - DAY

Three students, VERONICA, CECELIA and BRIAN, are sitting on the floor, books and notebooks around them. VERONICA is holding a lit joint. "Ziggy Stardust" spins on the turntable of a compact system.

VERONICA

Maggie. Finally.

CECELIA

Keynesian economics, *fuck*. You gotta explain this shit to us.

MAGGIE

Studying or gettin' your heads up?

BRIAN

Pacing ourselves.  
(holds up joint)  
Little bit of this...  
(nods at text)  
Little bit of that.

MAGGIE

Not that I give a shit. There's nothing more boring to me than talking about money, but...  
(picks up book)  
Have you guys read this yet?

BRIAN

The Theory of Cock and Bullshit?

MAGGIE

*The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. Have you even leafed through it?

No answer. BRIAN takes joint from VERONICA, hits it.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Well, there's no way you'll be able to read it by tomorrow's exam.

VERONICA

We'll just cram our asses off.

BRIAN

(holding joint)  
I'm kinda hungry suddenly. Who wants to go in on pizza?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VERONICA

I'm up for Joe's.

BRIAN

No, let's go to Ray's.

CECELIA

Which Ray's? Over on Sixth?

BRIAN

No, *real* Ray's. On Prince.

VERONICA

I thought Sixth Avenue was real Ray's.

MAGGIE

Seriously, you guys are not gonna make it past dinner. You're done after the second slice.

CECELIA

We should cop some speed, man.

VERONICA

Where, genius?

BRIAN

It's New York. Where *not*?

VERONICA

We could go by Max's for the first show. A guy in my psych class works there and eats bennies like candy.

CECELIA

(dubious)

A guy.

MAGGIE

We can try that.

(holds up book)

In the meantime, I'll give you the Cliff's Notes version.

BRIAN

Now you're killin' my high.

MAGGIE has a seat on the floor, joins them.

MAGGIE

So, like, the Keynesian cats advocate for a mixed economy. Mostly private sector, but help from the government when it's needed. The Austrians disagree with them...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CECELIA

There are Austrians in this?

MAGGIE

...the Austrians disagree, but the big Keynesian argument is for government to spend in the bad times and then pay back in the good...

The other STUDENTS start to take notes. On MAGGIE, taking charge, as Ziggy plays guitar,

CUT TO:

INT. FASHION DISTRICT/MIDTOWN - DAY

STEVE rolls out of a workaday lunchspot and heads down the sidewalk uptown toward his remaining job, passing fashion piecework houses and wholesale outlets as he slides up Seventh Avenue. He walks by a women's clothing outlet, then another, and then, something clicks. He stops, looks back. PICK UP on the display window of a shop offering ladies leotards, all colors, the mannequins arrayed to show leg. As STEVE steps back into frame and contemplates the simple leotard,

CUT TO:

INT. CHECK CASHING JOINT/TIMES SQUARE - DAY

CANDY is in a check-cashing spot. She fishes a check out of her pocket and places it on the counter. C.U. on the check: it's the one Stuart wrote out to her. An acne-plagued CLERK takes the check, looks it over.

CANDY

You need my I.D.?

CLERK

Ain't got amnesia, Candy. It's you.

On CANDY, who's been here before,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - DAY

STEVE is at the bar with ELLEN, two other BARMAIDS, both of them young, all attractive. Boxes from the women's shop are splayed open and ELLEN is holding up a black leotard as STEVE tosses another one to JULIE, who is leggy.

STEVE

I guessed at the size. They said I could bring 'em back to exchange if I guessed wrong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE  
Wear these to work?

STEVE  
With heels, yeah.

ELLEN  
Shit, Steve. We're gonna have every  
drunk trying to play grab ass.

STEVE  
You'll have every drunk overtipping.

JULIE frowns, a bit dubious at where this is going.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
If I was Hugh fucking Hefner, you'd  
have to wear them goofy bunny ears,  
too. This? This is nothing.  
(to ELLEN)  
C'mon, El. Model 'em for me.

On ELLEN, heading with hers to the rear room. STEVE looks  
down at JULIE's legs, nods approvingly.

JULIE  
And so now I gotta carry drinks all  
night in heels. Fuck you, too, Steve.

On STEVE, shrugging, unwilling to take no for an answer,

CUT TO:

EXT. HI RISES/UPTOWN/EAST SIDE - DAY

One of the many rent-controlled, hi-rise, brown brick  
apartment buildings situated near the East River.

INT. CANDY'S APARTMENT/EAST SIDE - DAY

CANDY enters, carrying her purse and mail. It's a modest  
one-bedroom. In contrast to her trick pad, it's furnished  
as a residence. Orderly and clean. There's even a sliver  
of a view to the East River. She takes an envelope out of  
her purse, drops the mail on her desk, sits down there. She  
retrieves cash from the envelope and stacks it neatly next  
to a green ledger book, which she opens. The desk is very  
organized.

CLOSE ON the ledger. Columns, representing payables: rent,  
Con-Ed, Mom, "Bobby/College." She counts the cash and puts  
it into several stacks. The mail that she has dropped  
includes several letters addressed to Candy with different,  
generic last names, return addresses all male, all sent to  
P.O. Boxes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Starting to sort mail, CANDY notices that the light on the TEAC answering machine set next to her rotary phone is blinking. She activates machine, listens.

FLORENCE (O.S.)

Eileen, this is your mother. I thought you'd like to know that your father left town today on a business trip.

(beat, a bit coldly)

Your son has been asking for you.

A beat and then CLICK. CANDY sits there for a moment. The mention of her son and her given name causes her to reflect. Almost absently, she removes her wig: CANDY has rather short black hair. She doesn't look like a hooker now. She looks like any woman in New York trying to get by. On CANDY, tired,

CUT TO:

INT. MAX'S KANSAS CITY/PARK AVENUE SOUTH - NIGHT

MAGGIE wades through the CROWD at Max's, her companions, BRIAN, VERONICA and CECELIA, hanging back. The vibe here is more complex than peace-and-love. It's the dawn of punk, before punk had a name. On stage is a young GARLAND JEFFREYS, in blackface, doing a cover of ? and the Mysterians' "96 Tears." VERONICA spots her friend, BOB, a skinny dude, working as a barback behind the stick. She goes to him. MAGGIE is up front at the stage, dancing by herself to "96 Tears" with raucous CROWD. On VERONICA, leaning over bar to talk to BOB, who shakes his head "No." Then he leans, says something in her ear. On VERONICA, who looks around, eyes lighting on MAGGIE: the Strong One,

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

JULIE fronts the leotards outside of the restaurant entrance, next to signboard that advertises the House of Korea Happy Hour and Happier Hours thereafter, featuring the House of Korea Hostesses. She has a tray with empty glasses on it and offers a glass to each who enter.

JULIE

First one is free. Show the glass to your barman.

As two BUSINESS SUITS take her up on the offer, ogling her a bit as they enter,

CUT TO:

INT. TAXICAB/MIDTOWN - NIGHT

MAGGIE in the front seat next to the CAB DRIVER, with BRIAN, VERONICA and CECELIA crammed in the back.

CAB DRIVER  
Hell's Kitchen, I got that. But  
where exactly?

MAGGIE  
Tenth and Forty-Eighth.

VERONICA  
Bob said his guy would be there, on  
the corner's got the bar.

BRIAN  
Bob said.

MAGGIE  
Let's just get it done.

On MAGGIE, a little exhausted by their collegiate bullshit,

CUT TO:

EXT. 10TH AVENUE & 48TH STREET/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The taxicab pulls away, leaving MAGGIE, BRIAN, VERONICA and CECELIA on the corner opposite the bar, where LANCE, a speed-freak-dealer, stands, smoking a cigarette, his back against a wall. He's wearing a light leather.

VERONICA  
That's him. Bob said he'd be wearing  
that coat.

More than a block away, nearly obscured by other cars, sits an idling NYPD squad car. CECELIA looks at VERONICA, then hands MAGGIE some cash. MAGGIE gets what's happening.

MAGGIE  
I guess I'm elected.

CECELIA  
If we all go, it'll look like  
something's happening.

MAGGIE  
(knowingly)  
Comin' with me, Brian?

BRIAN, shamed, cuts his eyes away. MAGGIE allows herself a small smile before crossing the street. As she does:

INT. NYPD SQUAD CAR/10TH AVENUE/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Behind the wheel is uniformed officer DANNY FLANAGAN, confident bordering on cocky. FLANAGAN is looking at LANCE. FLANAGAN'S POV: MAGGIE approaches LANCE.

FLANAGAN (O.S.)  
Don't do it, honey.

MAGGIE talks business with LANCE. She gives LANCE some money and he puts something in her hand. FLANAGAN hits the globe light and blasts the SIREN as he pulls off the curb and rushes toward the corner where MAGGIE has made her buy.

EXT. 10TH AVENUE AND 48TH STREET/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

BRIAN, VERONICA and CECELIA back into the shadows. They watch as MAGGIE freezes and LANCE stands passively, taking his medicine like a veteran. REVERSE ON MAGGIE, in the glare of the searchlight, busted.

LANCE  
You set me up?

MAGGIE  
Nope. I'm fucked, same as you.

LANCE looks at her, sees she's honest. He shrugs. FLANAGAN gets out of his car as a backup unit arrives, assessing MAGGIE with a bit of wolf.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
Can I just explain? I'm a student. N.Y.U. I've got a final in the morning. I needed something to stay awake, so I could study. That's all. If I can just call my father...

FLANAGAN  
You'll get a phone call. But it doesn't matter to me who your father is. I'm gonna do my job, Miss.

MAGGIE  
It's Maggie, and I wasn't suggesting you wouldn't do your duty, Officer...

She reads his nameplate.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
Fla-na-ga.

FLANAGAN  
It's *Flanagan*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

They left the N off the end there.

FLANAGAN

Yeah. Been meaning to get that fixed.

FLANAGAN looks her over. Pretty and he likes her confidence.

FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

Get in the backseat, Maggie. I gotta take you to the station.

MAGGIE

Aren't you gonna cuff me?

FLANAGAN

You're gonna try and rabbit on me?

FLANAGAN opens back door of the squad car. On MAGGIE,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

The place is jumping. BUSINESSMEN and Times Square DENIZENS rubbing shoulders. LARRY BROWN enters with LORETTA, one of his girls, and is astonished to see every barstool taken. STEVE holds his hands up, what-can-I-do-brother?

LARRY BROWN

Damn, boy. What happened. This was my joint for a late cocktail, and now, shit, you overrun with suits.

STEVE

Leotards.

LARRY BROWN

Say what?

STEVE

I put the girls in leotards and heels. Paraded a couple of 'em down the sidewalk as it was getting dark.

LARRY BROWN

That's all? You ain't sellin' pussy, just dancer clothes?

STEVE

That's it.

STEVE serves LARRY BROWN a drink, his compliments. LORETTA too. JULIE glides by with a tray of drinks. LORETTA assesses her with a vague frown.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LORETTA  
How much is she making?

STEVE  
Tonight? Four hunnert in tips, easy.

LORETTA looks at her pimp.

LARRY BROWN  
Bitch, do not even think it. I'm a  
sportsman and there ain't no sport  
in that. None at all.

STEVE looks down the bar, sees TOMMY LONGO eyefucking him.

STEVE  
Drinks are on me guys. Sorry I don't  
have a stool open for you yet.

STEVE heads down the bar to LONGO.

LONGO  
You duckin' me?

STEVE  
Not at all. I had some shit go bad  
across the river. My home life.

LONGO  
Sorry to hear it.

STEVE  
Fuck can you do. I'd complain but  
you're not here for that, are you?

LONGO  
No. I'm not.  
(looks around)  
Christ, you blew this place up  
tonight, didn't you. I must say I  
am enjoying the ladies in the tight  
outfits. That's very nice.

STEVE  
Listen, about my brother...

LONGO  
And his thirty-two five large.  
(pause)  
It accrues. As I said.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

I'll cover the original bets, thousand a week for the next twenty weeks, but on my salary I'll never catch up to the vig. Can we start with the money owed on the bets? And I'll lean on him to get right on the rest as soon as he's flush.

LONGO

Personally, I hear you. But I'm afraid that others I work for will not listen.

STEVE

Fuck can I do? If I can keep this bar hot, I can probably clear a thousand a week, if I'm lucky. More than that, I need time...

LONGO considers, looks around.

LONGO

I'll take that message back to my people. But if you see your brother, tell him that he's cut off until he gets right. Word is out on the Deuce. His bets do not play.

STEVE nods. LONGO leaves. STEVE heads back down the bar to where KIM, the owner, is frowning, incongruously unhappy.

STEVE

Fuck is wrong with you?

KIM

Everyone drinks. Everyone looks at the girls. No one for dinner.

STEVE

Enough with your doggie dinners. Christ. We're making real money here.

On KIM, who sees himself as a restaurateur,

CUT TO:

INT. MIDTOWN PRECINCT HOUSE - NIGHT

FLANAGAN walks in holding MAGGIE by her arm, indicates for her to have a seat. Nearby is seated another uniformed officer, CHRIS ALSTON, black, big moustache, early thirties.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLANAGAN

Observed copping amphetamines from a known skel on Tenth and Forty-Eighth.

(to MAGGIE)

I got somethin' to do. My partner, Officer Alston, is gonna look after you while I'm gone.

FLANAGAN puffs out his chest, he's putting on a show. MAGGIE sits. Amused, ALSTON watches FLANAGAN walk tall out of room.

ALSTON

How old are you?

MAGGIE

Nineteen.

ALSTON

Student?

MAGGIE

N.Y.U. Sophomore.

ALSTON

Copping speed in Hell's Kitchen? Obviously you're not stupid. But do you know how stupid that is?

ALSTON looks in the direction where FLANAGAN walked out, then back at MAGGIE.

ALSTON (CONT'D)

I think you'll be all right.

On MAGGIE, who has started to get the same vibe herself,

CUT TO:

EXT. 42ND STREET BETWEEN 8TH & 9TH/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

CANDY, now back on the street, and THUNDERTHIGHS, standing on the sidewalk, watch as LORI gets out of C.C.'s El Dorado. He drives, leaving her. LORI approaches them, hesitantly. CANDY and THUNDERTHIGHS nod, but say nothing. LORI pulls a smoke from her purse.

LORI

You got a light?

CANDY

If you're passin' those out, we do.

LORI offers them the pack, THUNDERTHIGHS draws two cigarettes, gives one to CANDY, gives the pack back to LORI. THUNDERTHIGHS strikes a match.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They come in close and the flame illuminates their tired faces. LORI drags and exhales, nods at THUNDERTHIGHS.

LORI  
You're, um...

THUNDERTHIGHS  
Thunderthighs.

She half-pirouettes to show her big-ass legs.

THUNDERTHIGHS  
As advertised.

LORI  
C.C. says I should rap to you, get myself up to speed.

CANDY  
What's your name, girl?

LORI  
Lori.

CANDY  
You got New In Town stamped on your forehead. C.C. scooped you up quick.

LORI  
I make a mistake on that?

A look between CANDY and THUNDERTHIGHS. No need to bust the new girl's bubble just yet.

THUNDERTHIGHS  
C.C. runs women just like the rest of 'em. Same soup, different day.

CANDY  
It's not like you haven't been around the block before, right?

LORI  
Not this block.  
(beat)  
I met some players at Jack's. Guy named Jerry Love. And a dude in a brown suit...

THUNDERTHIGHS  
*Larry Brown.*

CANDY  
Stay clear of Larry. He rises up quick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THUNDERTHIGHS  
His girls got daddy issues.

LORI  
Don't we all.

CANDY smiles without joy, drags on her cigarette.

LORI (CONT'D)  
The hippie-lookin' cat, Richie?

THUNDERTHIGHS  
Gentle Richie's cool. But you ain't  
gonna make no money with Richie.

LORI  
You're with...

THUNDERTHIGHS  
Rodney.

LORI  
(to CANDY)  
What about you? Who's your man?

CANDY  
No man. Just me.

LORI  
No man? How does that work?

CANDY  
You gotta work a little harder, be a  
little more careful. Every now and  
then a guy burns you for some cash,  
or some player raises up for a moment  
or two. But it works for me.

LORI  
Lot to think about.  
(exhale)  
Me, I need pimping. Otherwise, I  
tend to get lazy.

CANDY looks at her, nods, agreeable. To each her own. As  
CANDY, THUNDERTHIGHS and LORI stand in the darkness, very  
late at night, and smoke,

CUT TO:

INT. MIDTOWN PRECINCT HOUSE - NIGHT

FLANAGAN returns, dressed in his street clothes. He's slicked  
his hair back, too. A small, knowing smile from ALSTON.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

Can I make a phone call?

FLANAGAN

You're not gonna need it.

(smile)

It's your lucky night. You caught me at the end of my shift, so...

MAGGIE

I don't understand.

ALSTON

Officer Flanagan doesn't wanna bother with processing and fingerprinting. He's got other fish to fry.

FLANAGAN

I'll drop you at your dorm. Subway's not safe this time of night.

ALSTON

Let me guess. You gonna stop and have a cocktail on the way.

FLANAGAN snaps his fingers theatrically.

FLANAGAN

That's an idea.

ALSTON

And give Maggie here some counseling over a drink or two.

FLANAGAN

You're pretty smart for a...

ALSTON

*What?*

FLANAGAN

...for a beat cop in The Bag. Don't be so sensitive, Christina.

MAGGIE sees he's an asshole, but now, her savior. To ALSTON:

MAGGIE

Thank you for the water.

ALSTON

Mind yourself out there. Hear?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She nods, knowing he's not talking about the streets. On ALSTON, who watches them leave,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

After hours at the bar. Tourists and businessmen are gone, leaving the Times Square DENIZENS mostly, PIMPS, WHORES, GAMBLERS. Door opens and JOHNNY DAGROSA saunters in, blandly smiling like he doesn't have a care in the world.

JOHNNY

Ellen, a ginger ale, will ya?

ELLEN shoots ginger ale from the gun into a rocks glass.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

And put a little Crown Royal in it.  
Just for color.

ELLEN reaches up the shelf, on tiptoes, for the Crown Royal. STEVE glares at his BROTHER.

STEVE

Where the fuck have you been?

JOHNNY

Queens.

STEVE

The fuck you doin' in Queens?

JOHNNY

They still take my bets there.

STEVE

You're still betting?

JOHNNY

Winning. I'm up four thousand.

STEVE

Bullshit. Lemme see.

JOHNNY proudly goes into his jacket pocket, flashes a roll. STEVE snatches it away as ELLEN brings JOHNNY his drink.

JOHNNY

What the...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

This is going back to the unhappy dago that was on that stool two hours ago, looking for you and leaning on me for thirty large.

JOHNNY

Who? Tommy Longo? He came to you? Why would he come to you?

STEVE

Maybe because you were in Queens.

JOHNNY

Fuck him.

STEVE

No, Johnny. We don't fuck him.

JOHNNY

Seriously, gimme my money.

STEVE

Seriously, no.

JOHNNY

C'mon, Stevie, I'm runnin' hot.

STEVE

No, Johnny. I put myself up for you. I bought you some time.  
(holds roll)  
This'll buy your ignorant, degenerate ass a week or two more.

JOHNNY frowns, bolts half his drink.

JOHNNY

I always said you were never no fun and you just proved it.

STEVE

Yeah, well, Ma spoiled you.

JOHNNY

(laughs, regroup)  
So what's new?

STEVE

Me, I quit Vinnie's and, oh yeah, I moved outta the house on Cathy.

JOHNNY

Yeah?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

Took a room this side of the river.  
It's done. I'm out for good.

JOHNNY

Really? For good. Because I don't  
wanna say nothin' bad about your  
wife and then have you two get back  
together and have you lookin' at me  
all fucked-up like...

STEVE

Marriage is dead. Say what you feel.

JOHNNY

Well, Cath kept her looks. I'll say  
that much. And considering her  
brothers are all upstate and her  
dad's a shylock and her whole family's  
a pack of scumbag assholes, she ain't  
all that bad.

(finishes drink)

But Christ, if she had as many pricks  
sticking out of her as been stuck in  
her, she'd be a fuckin' porcupine.

JOHNNY smiles at STEVE, who shakes his head, walks down bar.  
As he does, FLANAGAN enters with MAGGIE in tow.

FLANAGAN

Still serving, Stevie?

STEVE

For you, Officer? Tap's open.

As FLANAGAN sidles up next to the PIMPS, nodding recognition,  
then gestures for MAGGIE to join him. On MAGGIE, nonplussed,

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. CORNER/44TH STREET AND EIGHTH AVENUE - NIGHT

Early morning hours. Pimp rides parked in a row on a side  
street. LORI trundles up and C.C. opens the Cadillac door  
for her, all chivalrous. LORI slides into:

INT. CADILLAC/44TH STREET - NIGHT

LORI slides across backseat, pulls off her heels, pulls a  
wad of cash from her top as C.C. slides beside her. In the  
front seat, adding makeup in the rear-view is ASHLEY. C.C.  
counts it out.

C.C.

Oh shit. What is this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

C.C. holds up two hundred-dollar bills.

C.C. (CONT'D)  
Franklins, two of them.  
(kisses LORI)  
Thank you, baby.

C.C. leans forward, taps ASHLEY on the shoulder.

C.C. (CONT'D)  
Ash, honey. You wanna get a look at  
these? They hundred-dollar bills.  
I don't think you've seen their kind  
in a while, baby. Look here. This  
shit will make you nostalgic.

ASHLEY  
That ain't funny, C.C. I pulled as  
much as her tonight.

C.C.  
Yeah, I'm just fuckin' with you.

ASHLEY  
Can we call it a night?

LORI  
I'm tired, too.

C.C.  
One more each. Up and at 'em, ladies.  
Before the sun catches us all.

C.C. slides out. On LORI, sighing, and putting her shoes  
back on, as ASHLEY snaps her makeup closed and pulls her  
jacket close around her shoulders. As the HOOKERS exit to  
the street, LARRY BROWN is checking his watch, frowning to  
C.C. as he scans the street.

C.C. (CONT'D)  
Who you waitin' on, Larry.

LARRY BROWN  
Sophie.

On LARRY BROWN, anger just below the surface, scanning street,

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM/WALK-UP APARTMENT/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

SOPHIE sits at the edge of a bed, dressed but barefoot,  
smoking a cig, raptly intent on a black-and-white television,  
showing an early morning movie: Ronald Colman in "A Tale of  
Two Cities."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's headed for the guillotine, being nice to the seamstress. C.U. on the trundle as Parisians jeer.

SOPHIE

Oh, geez.

REGULAR #2

I know. She's terrified, but watch, he's gonna get her through it.

PULL BACK to reveal REGULAR #2, a gaunt man, a bit hepatic, in his sixties, also dressed, watching from a chair. A mostly empty pizza box is on the bed between them. C.U. on the television: Colman comforting the girl, kissing her innocently on the cheek before her number is called and she mounts the guillotine. BACK to SOPHIE.

SOPHIE

She loves him, right? Does he know that she loves him?

REGULAR #2 shrugs. Hard to say. C.U. on television set as Colman hears the blade come down and his own number called. BACK on SOPHIE, finishing her cig, stubbing it in ashtray.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Oh, geez. No one loved him until right now, at the end...

C.U. on the television screen as we pan the rooftops of Paris and hear the final line about a far, far better thing. Then credits. BACK to SOPHIE, whose eyes are wet.

REGULAR #2

Pretty great, huh?

SOPHIE

Yeah.

REGULAR #2

You ever read the book?

SOPHIE

There's a book?

On REGULAR #2, looking at her warmly nonetheless,

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

An hour or so before the crack of dawn. At a table, JOHNNY is in a card game with three KOREAN WAITERS. We hear only LAUGHTER, his Brooklyn accent, and the yip-yap of the KOREANS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Behind the bar is STEVE, talking to MAGGIE and FLANAGAN, seated on the other side of the log. MAGGIE is nursing a glass of wine while FLANAGAN is drinking liquor and talking loud. He looks like he's had a few or maybe he can't hold it. STEVE's drinking Hennessy.

STEVE

So what'd you do, spit on the sidewalk?

FLANAGAN

She tried to purchase amphetamines. Over on Tenth.

MAGGIE

Needed to stay up all night. I have an exam tomorrow.

STEVE

You made a mistake, so what?

FLANAGAN

Try coffee next time.

STEVE

(to MAGGIE)

What are you studying?

MAGGIE

My final's for econ. But I'm an English major.

STEVE

You already speak English pretty good. You need more school for that?

MAGGIE

English Lit.

STEVE

Like, American stuff.

MAGGIE

Not all. This semester I'm taking a class called 'Existentialism and the Absurd.' We read *The Stranger*. Do you know Camus?

STEVE

I know Sabu. Saw his pictures when I was a kid. Jungle Book, like that.

MAGGIE's intrigued, unsure if STEVE's putting her on or not.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLANAGAN

Who has time to read a book?

It's like FLANAGAN's not there. STEVE lights a cigarette.

MAGGIE

This your place, Steve?

STEVE

I manage it.

MAGGIE looks at ELLEN and the BARMAID, in leotards.

MAGGIE

You ask them to dress like that?

STEVE

That's a whatdoyoucall it, an innovation I just made tonight. The better they look, the more tips they make. And it brings the suit-and-tie trade into the bar.

MAGGIE

Do you ever wonder what it's like for them to be objectified?

STEVE

Object-a-who? Slow down, kid, I'm just a guinea from Brooklyn.

MAGGIE

It means, treating a person as a thing. Ever wonder what they think about that?

STEVE

What, I look like The Amazing Kreskin? I don't know what they think. All I know is, they just made more money tonight than any night in months.

(beat)

You could do what they do. I'd put you behind the stick in a heartbeat.

MAGGIE

I *know* I could. But would I?

STEVE

Right. I wouldn't want you to feel like, you know, a *thing*.

MAGGIE

You're smarter than you let on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

No one's ever called me smart before.  
Not ever. But thank you.

FLANAGAN finishes drink, shakes the cobwebs from his head.

FLANAGAN

Christ, I'm three sheets.  
(to MAGGIE)  
You ready to go? I'm ready.

MAGGIE

Think I'll stay here, have one more.

STEVE

I'll get her a cab, Danny.

FLANAGAN reaches for his wallet.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Your money's no good in here, Officer.

FLANAGAN writes down number on a bev-nap, pushes it to MAGGIE.

FLANAGAN

You can get me here anytime, Maggie.  
Case you get jammed up, whatever.  
Or, you know, if you just wanna talk.

MAGGIE

Thanks for giving me a break.

FLANAGAN

That's me. Officer Friendly.

He tries one last rakish smile on her but he just looks like a drunk, and so, he exits. After he's gone, STEVE reaches into his pocket, comes out with a couple of pills.

STEVE

Here you go. This is what you were  
looking for. Next time, don't go to  
Hell's Kitchen and deal with scum.

MAGGIE

Thanks, but I'm okay. The speed  
wasn't for me, it was for my friends.

STEVE

Don't you have to study?

MAGGIE

I know that econ shit inside-out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

You better get back. It's gonna be light out soon. Catch the dawn it makes you feel like a vampire.

MAGGIE

I'll sit with you for a little while, if you don't mind.

STEVE tops off her glass of wine, then pours a cognac for himself, watches as MAGGIE crumples up the napkin on which FLANAGAN wrote his digits.

STEVE

Lemme get rid of that for you.

STEVE throws the napkin in the garbage can. On ELLEN, who knows she will always be one of many, watching STEVE and MAGGIE from the other end of the bar,

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM/WALK-UP APARTMENT/HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

SOPHIE carefully empties the ashtray, then begins putting on her heels. REGULAR #2 pulls his wallet, begins counting tens. SOPHIE sees him and feels a little guilty.

SOPHIE

You don't wanna do nothin' tonight, Louis. Nothing?

REGULAR #2

Naw. I liked watching the movie with you is all.

SOPHIE

Nothing? Not even a handjob?

REGULAR #2 smiles, shakes his head. SOPHIE gets up, kisses him affectionately on the cheek, takes the cash, counts it, pauses, worried.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Listen, Louis, I been up here so long watching the movie I'm worried that my man might get upset if I only come back to him with the usual price. Do you, um, do you think you could advance me now, so he'll be cool with me and I'll come past for free next week.

REGULAR #2 thinks for a minute, finds it reasonable. He peels off another fifty dollars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She takes it, hugs him warmly.

REGULAR #2

You want the rest of the pizza?

SOPHIE

No, honey, I'm good. I gotta race.

REGULAR #2

Okay. See you next week.

SOPHIE

Thanks for the movie.

She kisses him again, lets herself out. On REGULAR #2, as the late show on his television has now gone to test pattern,

CUT TO:

EXT. EIGHTH AVENUE/TIMES SQUARE - DAWN

Other pimps have departed and the STREETWALKERS are all in as SOPHIE comes hustling up to LARRY BROWN beside his Lincoln. LORETTA and ROBERTA are asleep in the car already. SOPHIE sees LARRY's anger and immediately offers up her cash. LARRY takes it, assesses, gives the tightest of nods. As SOPHIE gets into the backseat and LARRY gets under the wheel, and the Avenue is giving over to the day,

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE/NYU CAMPUS - DAY

It's the morning. MAGGIE, squinting in the sun, gets out of a taxicab and runs across Washington Square.

INT. CORRIDOR/CLASSROOM BUILDING/NYU CAMPUS - DAY

MAGGIE walks down a hall amongst COLLEGE STUDENTS, comes to a door, tries the handle -- it's locked. She looks in the cutout window. MAGGIE's POV: a classroom, a test in progress. Her friends, BRIAN, VERONICA and CECELIA, all seated and taking the econ exam. MAGGIE has missed her final. On MAGGIE, turning and walking back down the hall. She's not distressed. Maybe she's free.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET/QUEENS - DAY

CANDY, sans wig, walks up a sidewalk to a small house set in a row of similar small houses in Queens, an elevated subway track behind her. CANDY's got a wrapped present in her arms. She rings the doorbell. The door opens and a rather severe-looking older woman, FLORENCE, stands in the frame.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No words are spoken, but FLORENCE yields for CANDY to come inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM/CANDY'S CHILDHOOD HOME/QUEENS - DAY

CANDY stands awkwardly in the living room with her MOTHER. A couple of TV trays are positioned around the room, sparsely furnished with hotel-style landscape prints on the walls, but no family photographs. The TV, a free-standing color console, is always playing when CANDY arrives and today is no different; daytime game shows. CANDY puts the present on the couch, hands FLORENCE an envelope.

CANDY

That's for the month.

FLORENCE counts the cash.

CANDY (CONT'D)

Where is he?

FLORENCE

He was taking a nap. Had a little fever this morning, but he's okay. He's allergic to school, is all.

CANDY

Don't wake him up.

FLORENCE

He woke up when he heard the doorbell. Go put your coat in your room.

FLORENCE leaves CANDY standing there for a beat, until she slowly heads toward:

INT. CANDY'S BEDROOM/CANDY'S CHILDHOOD HOME/QUEENS - DAY

CANDY enters her bedroom, takes off her coat and drops it on her single bed. White furniture, lace curtains. It's the bedroom of a teenaged girl, slowly wearing out. CANDY looks around. Her face does not show nostalgia or regret, but rather, detachment. ON the walls: posters and lobby stills of '60s female movie stars, voluptuous, powerful women who used their God-given bodies and looks to achieve success. Ann-Margret in *Viva Las Vegas*, Raquel Welch scantily clad in *One Million Years B.C.*, the iconic still of Ursula Andress on the beach in *Dr. No*. Also, photos of teen idols David McCallum, the Fab Four and other British Invasion-era heartthrobs taped to the walls. On CANDY, disconnected, until...

BOBBY (O.S.)

Mom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns to see her son, BOBBY, 7. CANDY goes to her knees and gives her SON a long hug.

CANDY  
Hey kiddo. You don't look sick to me. You look like you should be in school, right?

BOBBY shrugs, hugs CANDY again. As FLORENCE watches from the doorway for a beat, then walks away,

CUT TO:

EXT. PROSPECT PARK/BROOKLYN - DAY

STEVE and CATHY are on a bench in Prospect Park, idly watching as their KIDS horse around by the pond. CATHY looks worn; maybe it's the cigarettes and booze. Their conversation is cordial but serious.

CATHY  
They miss you.

STEVE  
They look like they're doin' all right to me.

CATHY  
You think they need you when they're babies. It's when they're older...

STEVE says nothing.

CATHY (CONT'D)  
It's not like you can blame me.

STEVE  
I can't? I'm working seven nights a week, holding down a coupla jobs and you're...

CATHY  
Seven nights a week, right. I'm supposed to be home with the kids every night and where are you?

STEVE  
I'm working.

CATHY  
You coulda done that thing with my father. He'da got you made, maybe. Or at least you'da been in a crew, Stevie. Instead...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

Fuck that shit, okay, Cath? I hate that shit. Everywhere I turn, some fuckin' asshole dago who thinks he owns the world because he's in some fuckin' crew. Your father's an asshole, and your brothers are both dead from that shit.

CATHY

And you're a barman.

STEVE takes the insult and shrugs. Yeah, I am.

CATHY (CONT'D)

I'm still young, Stevie. And you don't never come home to me.

(pause)

And it ain't like you ain't out there fucking around on me, when you can. I know. You ain't foolin' nobody.

STEVE says nothing. It's over, why even lie.

STEVE

You got the house, the car. I send cash over every week, don't I? You and the kids, you'll never miss a meal. So what the fuck...

CATHY

I want you to come home.

STEVE

Ain't gonna happen, Cath.

CATHY

Stevie, you got a home, a family, a color T.V. And you're livin' in a shitty Times Square hotel with whores and drunks.

(pause)

Look, Stevie I'm sorry for some of the shit I done. I am. You know we could be good if we tried...

STEVE looks her in the eyes.

STEVE

I'm not coming back.

CATHY looks at him hard, all calculation gone. STEVE checks his watch, gets up, nods to where the KIDS are playing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Tell the kids...

CATHY  
*Tell 'em what?*

STEVE  
I had to go.  
(pause)  
I'll see 'em again.

STEVE takes off. On CATHY, watching him walk,

CUT TO:

INT. BAR/HOUSE OF KOREA/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Late, the STREET CROWD in play. On C.C. and his white girl, ASHLEY, petulant, seated at the bar.

ASHLEY  
But it's raining, C.C.

C.C.  
No one likes to get wet. But we all gotta work, girl.

ASHLEY  
I don't wanna work tonight.

C.C.  
I know, baby. I know.  
(beat)  
Look here: Let's go upstairs and talk about this, just the two of us.

PICK UP on STEVE, smiling at ELLEN, who smiles back,

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY/UNDERGRADUATE DORM/NYU CAMPUS - NIGHT

A Doors album BLARES from a stereo, as MAGGIE moves through drunk-ass COLLEGE KIDS, chugging beer and staggering about, thoughtless, unable to hold either liquor or demeanor. She looks into one dorm room, sees a couple BOYS shotgunning a bong. She moves on and passes a drunk GIRL against a wall, a MALE UNDERGRADUATE pushing a hand up the back of her sweater, struggling with a bra strap. MAGGIE moves on to her own dorm room, pushes back the door enough to make sure she isn't interrupting anything. She enters:

INT. MAGGIE'S DORM ROOM/UNDERGRAD DORM/NYU CAMPUS - NIGHT

MAGGIE steps inside to HEAR someone retching in the bathroom. She opens the door, assesses, nods indifferently.

MAGGIE  
Hey, Cheryl.  
(slight pause)  
How's it going?

CHERYL continues to puke loudly. MAGGIE nods as if the sound is the answer to her question. She goes to her bed, stretches out, back against the wall, looking at the window and the city just outside. From inside the bathroom, we hear:

CHERYL (O.S.)  
Oh god. I'm so sick.

On MAGGIE, waiting for some other life than this,

CUT TO:

INT. STEVE'S ROOM/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

STEVE is fucking ELLEN. He's got her on the edge of the bed. He's standing, looking down, watching himself go in and out of her. Her ankles are up on his shoulders. Rain beats on the window, as he finishes. As they both work to catch their breath, they HEAR a woman's chilling SCREAM.

ELLEN  
Steve...

STEVE listens, doesn't react. But then a second SCREAM.

STEVE  
Awright. I'll go look.

On STEVE, reaching for his pants,

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

STEVE walks down the hall, shirtless, barefoot, listening. Comes to a stairwell door with a porthole style window in it, HEARS something, looks through the window. His POV: C.C. has backed ASHLEY up against a wall on the landing. He has one of her arms raised and has pinned it. Her armpit has been slashed open and she's bleeding profusely and sobbing. C.C. is holding a straight razor at his side. STEVE ponders for a moment, decides against intervening, walks back toward his room.

INT. STAIRWELL/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON C.C. and ASHLEY. C.C. looks deadly and hyper-violent, different than we've seen him before.

C.C.  
How'd that feel?

ASHLEY  
(petrified)  
H-hurt.

C.C.  
Next time I'll open your face. You'll never make another penny. Send you back to West Virginia and let your daddy ass-fuck you all over again...

ASHLEY  
C.C...

C.C.  
I ain't say you could speak. When I say to get out there and retail, you do it. You don't like workin' in rain? I don't give a good fuck if you wet or cold, or on fire, you get me my got-damn money.

C.C. steps back and walks out the door:

INT. HALLWAY/ROYALTON HOTEL/TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

C.C. walks down the hall with blood all over his jumpsuit. STEVE reaches his door, puts his key to the lock, turns and sees C.C. coming toward him, nodding, speaking casually:

C.C.  
Steve.

And C.C. keeps walking by. On STEVE, with grievous wonder, watching C.C. walk the hall,

FADE OUT.

END TITLES