

The Oasis

"Pilot"

Written by

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CAST LIST

DAVID ECKSTEIN
LIZ MORRETI
JOHNNY SALTZMAN

MOE DALITZ
MORRIS KLEINMAN
DAVID GOLDWATER
JAYNE DALITZ
MARY DALITZ

JOHN ROSELLI
MARSHALL CAIFANO
NICK "PEANUTS" DANOLFO
EDDIE ROSELLI

SPECIAL AGENT JOHN H. WILLIAMS
HANK GREENSPUN
SHERIFF RALPH LAMB

JAMES "JIMMY" HOFFA
PETE "HORSE FACE" LICAVOLI

BLACKJACK DEALER
GAMBLER

RABBI
BAR MITZVAH BOY
WAITER

THE OASIS

"Pilot"

TEASER

INT. DESERT INN, CASINO FLOOR - NIGHT

A STACK OF CHIPS spills across green felt into frame --

BLACKJACK DEALER (O.S.)
Winner, winner!

Pull out to reveal a young BLACKJACK DEALER tossing new cards toward a nervous-looking GAMBLER. He inspects his hand -- Five of Hearts, Jack of Diamonds. Sitting on 15...

The Gambler considers -- then TAPS the top card.

Behind the Dealer, MARSHALL CAIFANO (30s) an enforcer with piercing eyes watches the game suspiciously. What he lacks in height, he makes up for in crazy.

CLOSE ON THE DECK:

We see the Dealer deftly lift the top card, pulling the second instead and slinging that one the Gambler's way -- a Six of Spades.

BLACKJACK DEALER (CONT'D)
Twenty-one!

Having seen the cheat -- Caifano stands as the Dealer turns to the next Player.

BLACKJACK DEALER (CONT'D)
Would you like to hit, sir...?

CUT TO:

INT. DESERT INN, COUNT ROOM - LATER

WHAM! A fist slams into the Dealer's mangled face. BLOOD FLOWS from his nose and mouth. Caifano looms over the Dealer amidst the metallic cages and lock boxes.

CAIFANO
You steal from us, you mick cock
sucker?

To emphasize the rhetorical nature of his question, Caifano gives the Dealer another hard right to the ribs.

In the corner, MORRIS KLEINMAN (40s) body of a boxer with a nose to match, stands as if to say, "that's enough."

Barely able to stay upright, the Dealer's head droops.

CAIFANO (CONT'D)
(re: the Dealer)
Oh no you don't, you little shit stain.

Caifano crosses back to the Dealer and delivers blow after blow as if to punctuate each word.

CAIFANO (CONT'D)
Stay. The. Fuck. Ah. Wake.

KLEINMAN
That's enough, Caifano... You're liable to kill him --

Kleinman grabs Caifano's arm, pulling him off the Dealer.

KLEINMAN (CONT'D)
I said, that's enough!

CAIFANO
(turning on Kleinman)
Look, I don't take orders from kike errand boys!

KLEINMAN
Caifano, if this piece of shit dies in our count room... I can promise that the guy you do take orders from, will kill you himself.

A tense beat. Caifano finally backs down.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - LATER

Kleinman roughly pulls the bloodied Dealer from the back seat of a Cadillac.

KLEINMAN
Get walking. And don't stop till you hit Barstow.

Kleinman crosses back to the passenger's side as the Dealer limps away from the car toward the dark desert.

CAIFANO
Wait!

The Dealer stops abruptly, not sure what to expect...

CAIFANO (CONT'D)

Leave your shoes.

The Dealer stares at Caifano incredulously. Then, kicks off his shoes and skulks away into the night.

EXT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

The Cadillac peels out and makes a U-turn, heading back in the direction it came.

WE TRACK with the car and break off just in time to PAN UP to a sign that reads, "Welcome to Las Vegas!"

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

Tony Bennet's "Rags to Riches" plays over the title sequence. WE SEE Sin City, 1961, at the height of "Vegas Cool" -- the Sands, a roulette wheel, money, the desert and finally -- a half-built casino... The Oasis.

SMASH TO BLACK

END OF TEASER

ACT ONEEXT. OASIS CASINO - DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT -- No more than a construction site. The exposed frame looks like a bleached elephant skeleton, baking in the desert sun.

INT. OASIS CASINO - CONTINUOUS

No workers, no sounds -- save for the foot falls of DAVID ECKSTEIN (30s). Equal parts charm and hustle, a casino developer who somehow maintained his faith in humanity -- making him at best: a clean-cut oxymoron. Eckstein sweats, chasing after JOHNNY SALTZMAN (50s).

ECKSTEIN

What if we cut costs? Put off the fixtures in the kitchen and the guest rooms -- focus on just the casino itself?

Saltzman, turns back on Eckstein. Rips off his foreman's hard hat and sets down clipboard.

SALTZMAN

The casino itself?! David, Glitter Gulch, this is not. You wanna be a proper carpet joint, it's gonna cost... and some.

ECKSTEIN

But if we hold off on the molding, the painting -- look, screw the finishing touches, Johnny. We've got to keep building --

SALTZMAN

That's what I'm trying to tell you.
(a beat)
You're tapped out David.

ECKSTEIN

We had investors once, I keep telling you we can get more. But I can't attract capital to a stalled out project. Johnny, everything I ever saved... I sold my father's laundry for this place.

Reluctantly, Johnny picks up the clipboard, proffering.

SALTZMAN

That's what I been trying to tell you.
Look, I could let my fee slide, but my
crew...

Eckstein looks up from the clipboard -- staring Failure
square in the eye.

ECKSTEIN

(contained)

I brought you here Johnny. Brought you
here to build this place. And now that
I'm out this far -- a goddamn tightrope
walker in the middle of the line...
You're telling me what exactly?

A beat.

SALTZMAN

I'm sorry David.

Saltzman gathers his hard hat and walks off, leaving
Eckstein with nothing but his best intentions.

EXT. FBI BUILDING - DAY

On the steps, Special Agent JOHN H. WILLIAMS (late 30s),
pretty slick for a G-Man -- holds court for the PRESS.

AGENT WILLIAMS

I'm very pleased to be taking over the
Las Vegas Division -- now the FBI's
central hub for all of Nevada, here in
our new home.

Williams gestures toward the gleaming Federal Building.

In the gallery, AN ARM JUTS UP sporting the rolled sleeves
of a hard-working newsman. Williams nods to the reporter,
HANK GREENSPUN (50s).

GREENSPUN

Why the move south Agent Williams?

AGENT WILLIAMS

(smarmy)

J. Edgar must think some of that
gambler's luck will wear off on us --
help clear some cases.

He flashes a grin. The Press eats this bullshit up.

GREENSPUN

What can you tell us about the Bureau's increased interest in casinos?

AGENT WILLIAMS

Come on now, you know I can't discuss open investigations. We really ought to wrap it up here --

GREENSPUN

-- Let me clarify then, Agent Williams. Isn't it true that you are here at the direct request of Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, to investigate the influence of organized crime on the gaming industry?

A beat, Williams thinks before answering. FLASHBULBS POP. The only sound is the constant WHIR of TV CAMERAS.

AGENT WILLIAMS

All I can say, is that the Bureau in concert with the Justice Department is looking into the possible role that organized crime plays within the gaming industry here in Nevada...

In the gallery, he finds only worried stares.

AGENT WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

(playing to crowd)

We're putting the Mob on notice -- and you can quote me on that.

CHUCKLES from the Press. OFF Williams sizing up Greenspun -- not sure who is friend and who is foe.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE - DAY

MOE DALITZ (50s) sits at a stately desk, looking like the years of having every angle figured out have worn him thin. He licks his thumb, counting money into piles.

DALITZ

The sole reason I agreed to run this garish monstrosity -- when first presented with the opportunity -- was the abundance of unaccounted for cash. Which, if unreported, could be untaxed. Thus, affording me the unique opportunity to bilk the U.S. Government out of their "cut" -- thieving, meddling bastards that they are.

He finishes counting one stack and passes it to Kleinman, who scribbles figures down in a ledger.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

(re: the money)

But now taxes give way to tribute, and tribute only grows... Irrespective of the ledger. Not a mere percentile but rather a monthly ransom from those --

(a dirty word)

"*capo mafiosa*" who, as far as I can tell, offer no benefit to our enterprise -- as it remains legal here in the great State of Nevada.

KLEINMAN

Caifano offers no benefit. I know that for a plain fucking fact.

Dalitz stops counting, crosses to pick up a duffel bag.

DALITZ

('we've been over this')

Morris, he's Roselli's boy --

KLEINMAN

He's a liability is what he is!

DALITZ

What do you expect me to do?

KLEINMAN

I just don't see why he's here. The Desert Inn was our hotel, Moe. A Cleveland joint. But I look around... and I don't see Mayfield Road.

Annoyed, Dalitz snatches up stacks of money from the desk tossing each into the bag as he continues --

DALITZ

We're the biggest show in town, Morris. And make no mistake -- the pie is being divvied the fuck up. Bygone are the Board of Directors. The "*Grand Council*" calls the shots now -- and those greedy Sicilian cunts see you and me as two Jewish pricks from Cleveland standing between them and an unending supply of cash.

KLEINMAN

Can they squeeze us out...?

DALITZ

We own a percentage of the Desert Inn, and it's a drop in the bucket at that. What we need is an opportunity -- one those shysters can't lay claim to.

KLEINMAN

I hear the Mint is up for grabs...

DALITZ

A real casino, Morris. Not some shit-box on Fremont Street.

Kleinman thinks on it.

KLEINMAN

I know a guy... recently had a patch of bad luck. Heard he might be selling.

Piqued, Dalitz gestures: *"Get the fuck on with it."*

KLEINMAN (CONT'D)

Big joint, out on Ninety-One. The buy in would be steep, but with that location...

Dalitz thinks for a beat, then -- ZIPS the duffel and slides it toward Morris.

DALITZ

Take Roselli his cut, and then... Look into it.

OFF Dalitz, intrigued by the possibility.

INT. SYNAGOGUE - DAY

Eckstein stands with the congregation. At the front on the bima, a RABBI stands before the Torah flanked by a BAR MITZVAH BOY.

BAR MITZVAH BOY

Bar'chu et Adonai ham 'vorach.

ALL

Baruch Adonai ham 'vorach l'olam vaed.

BEHIND ECKSTEIN, Kleinman enters and approaches.

BAR MITZVAH BOY

Baruch Adonai ham 'vorach l'olam vaed... Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam...

Eckstein clocks the newly-arrived congregant who joins him in his pew. They speak in hushed tones as service continues.

ECKSTEIN

Here to repent, Morris?

KLEINMAN

You know me -- only here for the Challah and wine... How ya been, David?

ECKSTEIN

(loaded)

Better.

BAR MITZVAH BOY

Asher bachar banu mikol haamim, v'natan lanu et Torato.

ECKSTEIN

Not that I mind the company, but -- is there something you need?

KLEINMAN

Moe Dalitz needs to see you...

Eckstein takes that in, obviously Dalitz's reputation precedes him.

ECKSTEIN

What the hell does Dalitz want with me?

KLEINMAN

I told him about the job you did on that sawdust joint. How you turned the place around. He seemed impressed with your business acumen.

ECKSTEIN

Thanks for thinking of me Morris, but I'm not looking for a job --

KLEINMAN

And he's not offering one, David. Moe's interested in buying that half-built casino of yours.

BAR MITZVAH BOY

Baruch atah Adonai, notein haTorah.

ALL

Amen.

RABBI

Please be seated.

OFF Eckstein, realizing he's the only one still standing.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

LIZ MORRETI (late 20s), a brassy, tenacious cocktail waitress, weaves through the lounge, dropping drinks at tables. Eckstein chases after her, trying to keep up.

LIZ

(wary)

I don't know, David. Way I hear it, Dalitz has some serious juice.

ECKSTEIN

I'm not marrying the guy!

LIZ

I just think you have other options... You're good at what you do. I'm sure you could find other buyers --

ECKSTEIN

Other buyers?! Have you been listening to what I'm telling you? There is no one else.

She deposits her last high ball glass and heads behind the bar. Eckstein sidles up.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

From where I'm sitting, Moe Dalitz is a godsend. Pour me a bourbon would ya, I'm celebrating.

Liz doesn't need to ask -- knows he likes it neat.

LIZ

('be careful')

To new acquaintances.

ECKSTEIN

To wise guys and wiser buys.

Eckstein takes back the bourbon.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

After I unload this place... you gonna finally let me take you out for dinner?

A beat, Liz leans in... Then, snatches the empty glass.

LIZ

Not a chance, Eckstein. Not a chance.

She struts to the end of the bar. OFF Eckstein, hating to see her go, loving to watch her leave.

INT. DESERT INN GOLF COURSE, CLUBHOUSE - DAY

Kleinman carefully peruses sleeves of balls while Dalitz impatiently sits in a nearby chair.

KLEINMAN

No sir, you can't go out and tee up just any old ball...

He picks up a brand new glove, shows it to Dalitz.

KLEINMAN (CONT'D)

Need a new glove, Moe? They got lefties!

DALITZ

(annoyed)

No, I don't need a new glove, Morris. What I need is for you to quit taking your sweet precious time, making me spend my entire fucking day in the goddamn pro shop.

KLEINMAN

You don't want blisters...

And with that, Dalitz is up and heading toward the door. Muttering to himself as he goes.

Kleinman follows... then **DOUBLES BACK TO SNAG THE GLOVE.**

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Kleinman catches up to Dalitz in the lavish restaurant.

At a CORNER TABLE sits JOHN ROSELLI (55), expensive suit, sharp haircut. Looks like he's been at this table for years -- empty plates, coffee cups, and an ENTOURAGE.

KLEINMAN

(re: Roselli)

It ain't right -- the way he sets up at that table like it's his goddamn office.

DALITZ

Leave it alone, Morris.

KLEINMAN

I'm just saying, he acts like he owns the place is all.

DALITZ

He's the Don of Las Vegas... He does.

They arrive at Roselli's table and start to glad-hand.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

Mr. Roselli, how we doing?

ROSELLI

Just swell, Moe. Say -- have you met my son, Eddie? Eddie, say hello to Mr. Dalitz.

In the entourage sits EDDIE ROSELLI (early 20s), John's son and heir apparent. Eddie shakes hands with Dalitz.

EDDIE

Nice to meet you, Mr. Dalitz.

DALITZ

Likewise Eddie, likewise.

ROSELLI

Mr. Dalitz here runs this entire casino, Eddie. He's an honest to God number-crunching Hebe genius -- and gentleman that he is, he lets me bring down the class of the joint by conducting my affairs at this particular table.

(reaching for a wallet)

Speaking of, let me pay for once why don't you?

This is a show. Some of Roselli's Goons grin at the ruse. Dalitz plays his part.

DALITZ

Your money's no good here, John.

KLEINMAN

(strained)

We better get going, Moe. Don't want to miss our tee time.

DALITZ

Right, excuse us gentlemen. Eddie, nice to meet you.

And they're off -- Dalitz and Kleinman walk in silence toward the door, but as soon as their out of earshot --

DALITZ (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Mother fucking cock suck.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - LATER

On the green, Kleinman stands over a twenty footer. He pulls back and strokes it -- leaving the ball a good seven feet short.

DALITZ
You know what they say, Eckstein.
Drive for show, and putt for dough.

Dalitz stands with Eckstein as Morris finishes out.

DALITZ (CONT'D)
(light-hearted)
Which might account for Morris' complete inability to ever win money at golf. Now some folks -- some folks barely address a putt. They make a cursory effort to line it up, and then just, swat at the fucker. But others... they know there's more at play. A putt'll break this way and that as the green rises and falls. A water hazard, the wind -- hell, even the position of the goddamn sun affects the way the grass lays.

Eckstein is on edge, *"What's with all the small talk?"* As he continues, Dalitz steps up to a fifteen footer.

DALITZ (CONT'D)
The secret to gambling at golf -- and gambling in general for that matter -- is simple. Winners aren't "lucky". They're not the most athletic, or the smartest, or even the coolest under pressure. Winners have one thing in common: They don't make bets they can lose. Winning is simple. It's about diminishing intangibles -- about knowing all the factors in play and taking away risk.

Dalitz strokes it -- a perfect lag, stops inside a foot.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

That's the secret to success
Eckstein... Plain. And. Simple.

Eckstein crosses to his marker and places a ball. He stares down the line, but soon looks back to Dalitz.

ECKSTEIN

(on eggshells)

When Morris came to me -- it's just...
He mentioned you might have an offer
you'd like to discuss.

DALITZ

I suppose I know all I need to... I'm
willing to repay your debt, and name
you head of the new casino -- effective
immediately.

What?! Eckstein clocks Kleinman who can only shrug.

ECKSTEIN

I thought you were interested in buying
the Casino.

DALITZ

With an eye toward naming you Head of
Operations...

ECKSTEIN

And if I refuse?

DALITZ

Eckstein, given my background,
acquiring the proper licenses could
prove to be... difficult. I need
someone to run the place. I looked
into it, and you're more than capable.
Masters in business, previous
experience -- plus, you got no family
so I know you don't mind long hours.

Taken aback, Eckstein turns to his putt --

DALITZ (CONT'D)

You said yourself you gotta sell. This
way you land a paying day-to-day, plus
you don't lose your initial investment.

CLOSE ON Eckstein looking down the line -- a treacherous
ten footer. Surprisingly... his face seems stoic.

ECKSTEIN

(not looking up)

Tell you what, Dalitz. I'll agree to your terms... But if I make this putt, you cut me in for ten percent of the ownership.

Intrigued, Dalitz considers for a beat, then --

DALITZ

Alright, Eckstein... You've got yourself a bet.

Rising to address the ball, Eckstein hardly blinks. A calm, yet intense focus fills his eyes...

Back, then through; he rolls it -- breaks right, back left, slows then... Trickles in, dead center!

OFF Eckstein, beaming part-owner, we:

SMASH TO BLACK

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOINT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

It's after hours, the joint is empty. Liz stops folding napkins, stares slack-jawed back at Eckstein.

LIZ

You did what?!

ECKSTEIN

I took the damn offer is what I did.

LIZ

David, you don't get it. These aren't just "bad" guys, they're "shallow grave in the desert" guys.

ECKSTEIN

(building)

Look, this absolves my debt. Plus, he's willing to cut me and Morris in --

LIZ

But what if --

ECKSTEIN

But what if nothing, Liz.

(laying it out)

Look, my parents fled our home in Russia. They risked their lives and traveled thousands of miles so their son could make something of himself. "Make my mark" the old man used to say.

Getting emotional, Eckstein picks up a napkin from Liz's stack, folding absentmindedly as he continues.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

And he worked his fingers raw, washing clothes every goddamn day of his life -- and for what?! To put me through University so I can up and sell it? The business he built and the only thing standing says, "Eckstein was here"?

Embarrassed, Eckstein brusquely turns away from her.

LIZ

(delicate)

Life... it can be hard -- especially in a place like this.

After a beat, Liz comes around the bar and sits down next to him.

LIZ (CONT'D)
And if it weren't for you, I'd've
packed my bags and headed back to
Colorado years ago.

She lightly puts a hand on his arm.

LIZ (CONT'D)
You've made your mark -- on me at
least. And that's only the beginning.

He can't help but smile. A beat.

LIZ (CONT'D)
(playful, tough)
Now, gimme back that napkin! You're
folding it all wrong, jackass.

OFF Liz and Eckstein -- alone together.

INT. DESERT INN, CASINO FLOOR - DAY

The front doors swing open as Eckstein steps into -- The Desert Inn -- gambling at its finest. Men in fancy suits bet high-stakes as glamorous women feed pennies to one-armed bandits.

WE FOLLOW Eckstein as he makes his way through the bustling Casino, scanning for a familiar face. He spots Kleinman near the back and moves toward him.

Before he can reach Kleinman, NICK "PEANUTS" DANOLFO (30s) a greasy, gruff torpedo, steps in front of Eckstein --

PEANUTS
Who the fuck are you?

ECKSTEIN
I'm David, David Eckstein. I'm, um,
Mr. Dalitz and I...

Kleinman sees this and moves to intercede.

KLEINMAN
He's alright, Peanuts. Eckstein here
is Mr. Dalitz's golfing partner.

Peanuts gives Eckstein a long once over...

PEANUTS

What do I care? Get the fuck outta here, will ya?

Kleinman ushers Eckstein away by the shoulder.

ECKSTEIN

Nice guy, that one.

KLEINMAN

Always play things close to your vest, Eckstein. Not everyone working here is on our team... Come on, we're meeting with the lawyer at Dalitz's house.

ECKSTEIN

What's Mr. Personality do anyway?

KLEINMAN

Oh, Peanuts? He's the Host.

OFF that irony.

EXT. DALITZ HOUSE, BACKYARD - LATER

A large ranch style suburban home, in the pristine backyard we find a pool. Next to the pool lies JAYNE DALITZ (late 30s) beautiful, drunk early and often -- currently sunbathing topless.

Jayne lifts a cold highball glass to her forehead seeking relief from the Nevada sun.

DALITZ (O.S.)

Jayne honey!

JAYNE

(shouting)

Out here!

Dalitz emerges from the patio with Eckstein and Kleinman in tow. They make for the pool until -- ALL THREE CLOCK MRS. DALITZ'S CURRENT STATE OF UNDRESS.

DALITZ

Jaynie!?

She stands and begrudgingly slips on a robe -- not bothering to cinch it closed. Then crosses over.

JAYNE

Where are my manners. Can I offer you a cold beverage, Morris? How about you, mister...?

Mortified, Eckstein extends his hand and shakes.

ECKSTEIN

Eckstein, David Eckstein.

DALITZ

(embarrassed)

Sorry Eckstein, Jayne here's originally from France where the beach attire's a little more... Optional.

(calling out)

Mary!

In the pool a short distance away, MARY DALITZ (17) sporty, too smart for her own good, stops swimming laps --

DALITZ (CONT'D)

Mary, take these gentleman inside with Mr. Goldwater, please?

Mary begrudgingly obeys. As she passes Dalitz, she leans in to give Daddy a hug.

MARY

(sotto re: Jayne)

That's probably her fifth old fashioned. She's shit-canned.

DALITZ

Watch your goddamn mouth, Mary.

MARY

Daddy, can I go to the drive-in tonight? That movie where Paul Newman plays pool is finally out.

DALITZ

Who's going?

MARY

(cagey)

Just a friend from school.

DALITZ

Does this friend have a penis?

Mary's silence tells her father all he needs to know.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

We've been over this, sweetie. You're not allowed to date.

MARY

But Daddy --

DALITZ

Don't "but daddy" me. It's a crummy story anyway. The real Fats was from New York not Minnesota. Now go inside.

Jayne watches as Mary begrudgingly wraps herself in a towel and leads Eckstein and Kleinman to the house.

Dalitz crosses to his wife, and moves to kiss her on the cheek -- but she shrugs him off.

JAYNE

God, I remember when I had that ass...

DALITZ

(to the point)

Listen, I need you to come out tonight.

JAYNE

Oh come on Moe, I don't want to go to another boujee nightclub with your fuckwit friends.

DALITZ

It's business Jayne. I've got dinner set up with a potential investor.

JAYNE

What's in it for me?

DALITZ

(sarcastic)

The pleasure of my company.

Jayne's smug look says, "oh goody." Dalitz stands, starts to leave, then stops --

DALITZ (CONT'D)

Tonight's important Jayne. If we don't convince this investor...

(beat)

Just be on your best behavior.

JAYNE

When am I not?

Dalitz isn't going to touch that one. He exits toward the house. OFF Jayne, sipping her old fashioned.

INT. DALITZ HOUSE, STUDY - MOMENTS LATER

Dalitz enters to find Kleinman and Eckstein already mid-conversation with DAVID GOLDWATER (50s), a bookish, weasel of a man.

DALITZ

Sorry to keep you all waiting. By all means, carry on Goldwater.

Goldwater nods deferentially. Then, pulls out some papers and places them on the table as he continues.

GOLDWATER

As I was saying, after you deed the Oasis over to our newly formed shelter corporation, Mr. Eckstein, the group will vote to make you a partner and thereby de facto co-owner of your former casino. From there we'll seek a loan from Mr. Dalitz's contact -- who has a sizable pension fund from which to borrow against -- then the Bank of Las Vegas will provide a trust deed and mortgage using the existing structure as security for the loan itself...

Goldwater proffers the deed for Dalitz and Kleinman to sign. They do so, happily.

Goldwater slides the deed to Eckstein. He hesitates --

ECKSTEIN

So, we're backing a multi-million dollar loan with a third mortgage on an already over-extended casino?

GOLDWATER

Exactly.

ECKSTEIN

And in this scenario, we put forth no capital, having our debts totally subsidized by said loan?

GOLDWATER

Uh yes, exactly.

ECKSTEIN

Approval of which, you can somehow
guarantee with the Bank of Las Vegas?

GOLDWATER

(getting annoyed)
Yes, exactly.

Eckstein looks to Dalitz and Kleinman.

KLEINMAN

He's a really good attorney.

DALITZ

(indicating to
Eckstein)
You sign there.

And Eckstein does.

GOLDWATER

Gentleman, you're now all three co-
owners of the Oasis. Mazel tov.

The newly formed "board" shakes hands, off which --

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

An Impala tears down the road. Inside, Greenspun sings
along with Ray Charles' "Hit the Road Jack".

EXT. DESERT - LATER

Greenspun exits his car and crosses to SHERIFF RALPH LAMB
(40s) a hardscrabble cowboy -- hat and all. Lamb gives
directions to a few Deputies at the crime scene, then turns
to shake Greenspun's hand.

GREENSPUN

Moment for the press, Sheriff?

SHERIFF LAMB

Took you long enough, Hank. This shit
came across the scanners hours ago.

GREENSPUN

(re: the desert)
Well, if your corpse had the fucking
decency to die within the city limits,
I'd have gotten here sooner.

As Greenspun and Lamb walk toward the scene, they pass a few MILITARY POLICE sitting in a jeep.

GREENSPUN (CONT'D)
What's with the G.I.'s?

SHERIFF LAMB
They blow up those test nukes out here,
it's technically Federal land.

GREENSPUN
You'd figure Uncle Sam would spring for
a better fence to keep people out --

They arrive at a BODY, lying face down in the dirt.

GREENSPUN (CONT'D)
Ok if I take a photo?

SHERIFF LAMB
Knock yourself out. MP's found the
body early this morning. From the
looks of it, someone beat him half to
death then left him out here for the
buzzards.

Greenspun SNAPS a photo. Then, lowers his camera looking quizzically at the corpse.

GREENSPUN
Why isn't he wearing any shoes...?

CLOSE ON THE BODY

REVEAL: It's the DEALER FROM THE DESERT INN.

Lamb can only shrug a "who knows". OFF Greenspun confused.

INT. DESERT INN, LOUNGE - EVENING

Dalitz and Jayne jump to their feet as Kleinman leads TWO MEN toward the bar.

DALITZ
Gentlemen! So glad you could make it.
You remember Morris and my wife
Jayne... And allow me to introduce our
new business partner, David Eckstein.
Eckstein this is Pete Licavoli and
James Hoffa from Detroit.

PETE "HORSE FACE" LICAVOLI (40s) built like a fridge -- and about as smart as one too, shakes first.

Then, Eckstein greets JAMES "JIMMY" HOFFA (late 40s) beady eyes, droopy jowls -- utterly terrifying.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

Jayne honey, why don't you and Morris help these boys get a drink.

Jayne ushers the three men toward the bar as Eckstein buttonholes Dalitz --

ECKSTEIN

(sotto)

You didn't tell me your potential investor was Jimmy fucking Hoffa!?

DALITZ

(incredulous)

Oh, pardon me, Eckstein -- I wasn't aware you required approval for steps undertaken pulling your ill-begotten investment out of bankruptcy! Allow me to take a second and clarify something for you: We are not partners, you and I. You're just some schmuck with a half-built hotel lucky enough to fall into my good graces. So do me a favor tonight, and shut the fuck up. Can you do that for me?

Stung, Eckstein nods his head yes.

INT. DESERT INN, SECLUDED TABLE - LATER

End of the meal. Dalitz is mid-pitch. Eckstein watches Hoffa, et al for any tell.

DALITZ

With a premium location, at the southernmost tip of the Vegas Strip, The Oasis will appear like a mirage -- springing forth from the desert to greet weary travelers driving up Ninety-One. We're nearly seventy-five percent complete, and with the proper capital influx, we could open the doors in eight weeks --

LICAVOLI

It's true --

DALITZ

Now each year, Las Vegas has what... Eleven million tourists?

(MORE)

DALITZ (CONT'D)

And eighty percent of these road warriors drive in from Southern California -- making our joint the first one they fucking see --

LICAVOLI

It's true --

DALITZ

Now do you think these folks wanna stay at the dusty old Sands or Sahara? Or wouldn't they prefer a weekend of opulence, of mystique, a weekend in paradise... "A weekend at the Oasis."

Dalitz tosses back what's left of his wine as if to add emphasis. He waits on Hoffa, who takes his time...

HOFFA

How much do you need -- all in, to finish the job?

DALITZ

We're looking at around four million...

Another long beat as Hoffa sips his coffee.

HOFFA

I won't quibble with facts and figures -- though I have it on Licavoli's authority that Eckstein's original eight hundred grand got you "three-quarters" done, still in need of a cool four mil.

Dalitz stares daggers at Licavoli.

LICAVOLI

('well...')

It's true.

HOFFA

All in all, the total price tag is fair for a joint this size. My only concern -- the strip has six luxury resorts already. No one's sure how many casinos Ninety-One can support. So... Why the Oasis?

Nervous, Dalitz turns his wine glass in circles by the stem -- He's about to lose the biggest fish of his life.

A long tense beat.

ECKSTEIN

If I may, Mr. Hoffa --

Dalitz's look screams: *"What the fuck are you doing?!"*

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

People will come because this casino is gonna be different. No glittery eyesore -- the Oasis will be paradise on Earth. An Arabian-themed palace --

HOFFA

But you're still one of smallest casinos on the strip --

ECKSTEIN

(reaching)

Which we'll make up for with luxury -- amenities in the guest rooms, the finest dining in the city, a pool with a working waterfall --

HOFFA

(building)

People want value, not an up charge --

ECKSTEIN

But the floor show --

HOFFA

You can't compete! The Rat Pack is nightly at the Sands and next month they're getting Judy freaking Garland --

ECKSTEIN

It'll be bigger than the Sands!

HOFFA

Bigger?! How...

Shit. Eckstein's eyes dart around the room, wheels spinning, having painted himself into a corner.

ECKSTEIN

(stalling)

Ours'll be different. It'll be sensational... It'll be...

Eckstein locks eyes with Jayne -- A lightning bolt!

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

Parisian!

Jayne smiles, she sees where he's going.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

You see Jayne here, she's French -- from Marseille. Came here after the war. There aren't many cultural differences, but earlier today, when I first met her, Mrs. Dalitz was, well -- sunbathing... topless.

Eckstein waits for recognition... Hoffa and Licavoli aren't following.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

We put on a nude floor show.

He steals a look with Dalitz, *"Are they buying this?"*

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

It'll be sensational, erotic, titillating!

("are you kidding me?")

Fellas, nude dancing girls. We'll be the talk of the town!

Another long beat as Hoffa thinks it over...

HOFFA

(working it out)

The Dunes has a burlesque kind of a thing -- but nothing like this.

LICAVOLI

It's true.

The men ruminate on it... Then --

HOFFA

(extending his hand)

You gentlemen got yourself a backer.

OFF the deal-sealing hand shake we --

SMASH TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREEINT. OASIS, CASINO FLOOR - DAY

CHYRON: "Eight Weeks Later"

Nothing like last we saw it, the casino floor bustles with activity as WORKERS put on the finishing touches. The whole place glints like an ornate palace. We pick up Eckstein, mid-conversation with Dalitz.

ECKSTEIN

The rugs are down but the artwork for the rooms still needs approval --

DALITZ

Pick whatever you like -- personally, I'm partial to anything looks like it came from the Kama Sutra.

Dalitz inspects a piece depicting a naked concubine.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

(genuine question)

How many women you think it takes to make up a harem?

ECKSTEIN

We'll have the lights for the floor show up by the end of day --

DALITZ

Is there a minimum, or --

ECKSTEIN

Speaking of the floor show... I've got this friend --

DALITZ

I'm just wondering when you graduate from Bigamist to Sultan?

(an afterthought)

She's not a fatty is she? Your friend?

ECKSTEIN

No, no. She's -- well, she's something special.

DALITZ

Alright, alright. Why don't you bring Miss "Something Special" around end of the week.

From the entrance, up comes Kleinman -- in a rush.

KLEINMAN
We gotta shut it down, Moe!

DALITZ
Slow down Morris, what's wrong?

KLEINMAN
I just got this in the mail. It's from
the Tax Commissioner.

Handing over the letter.

DALITZ
(reading)
Shit.

OFF Dalitz floored.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE - LATER

A bespectacled Goldwater line items the Commissioner's letter as Eckstein and Kleinman wait expectantly. Dalitz paces behind them. Then crosses to a drink cart.

DALITZ
We are not shutting down.

Dalitz pours himself something strong and neat, fills three more glasses for his guests.

DALITZ (CONT'D)
How the fuck did they refuse our license, Goldwater?! You've had me stuffing every pocket in Carson City with graft for years. Don't tell me they finally appointed an honest fucking Commissioner -- 'cause if so, we'll all be left holding nothing but our own limp pricks.

GOLDWATER
We've been diligent, Mr. Dalitz, quite diligent. And given the Commissioner's previous position, coupled with the timing of his letter, I can only assume that -- well... pressure must've been exerted by *outside parties*.

DALITZ
You're saying someone connected queered my hustle?

GOLDWATER

Uh, yes, exactly.

KLEINMAN

This stinks of Caifano, Moe. That goombah fuck's got ears all over the Desert Inn.

DALITZ

(piecing it together)

They wait till we're too far in, then they put the screws to us...

Dalitz gulps back some rye, ruminating on it.

ECKSTEIN

Fellas, Italians or no, we've got to open next Friday. We sent notice to the papers, already booked half the rooms -- we're throwing a bomb party for Christ's sake. The next nuclear test isn't for months.

KLEINMAN

So what?

ECKSTEIN

So, if we don't get that license, we can't pay back our loan. And if we can't pay back our loan...

They all consider the potential "fiduciary consequences" of renegeing on a debt to the Teamsters.

DALITZ

Alright... It's time to call in a favor.

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT - LATER

CLOSE ON A PHONE

A WAITER carries a rotary on a silver platter from the back, into the restaurant, around a corner and up to:

WAITER

Mr. Roselli, a call for you, sir.

OFF Roselli picking up the handset --

INT. FBI BUILDING, AGENT WILLIAMS' OFFICE - SAME

CLICK. Williams presses "record" on a reel to reel device, listening with headphones. He scribbles notes in a tape log when -- KNOCK, KNOCK.

Williams looks up to find Hank Greenspun in his doorway.

AGENT WILLIAMS

Well... If it isn't the Edward R. Murrow of bum-fuck nowhere Nevada.

GREENSPUN

(faux-friendly)

Agent Williams, I had no idea you were a subscriber!

AGENT WILLIAMS

The fuck do you want, Greenspun?

Greenspun sits, pulls out a file and slides it to Williams.

GREENSPUN

(jaunty)

I wanted to share an interesting little news item -- as a kind of professional courtesy... Awhile back, our local Sheriff finds a John Doe beat to death out in the middle of the desert. Figures it could be mob-related. But hey, they got no leads...

Williams scans the police report which includes a PHOTO of the SHOELESS DEALER.

AGENT WILLIAMS

So what? Local yokel finds a cold case in the sticks. What am I supposed to do with that?

Greenspun slides another stack of papers to Williams.

AGENT WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

These are...?

GREENSPUN

Tax records -- turns out, up until recently, Mr. Black & Blue dealt twenty-one at the Desert Inn... I did some digging and found an eyewitness says the casino's own security drug that dealer away from a table the night he went missing.

Williams perks up at this wrinkle.

GREENSPUN (CONT'D)

I'm burying the story, I'll have you know.

AGENT WILLIAMS

What's in this for you?

GREENSPUN

Guy's a nobody, and at this point, it's just speculation -- and that don't sell papers. But way I figure it, a lead like that... Well, it might help a fella in your profession build a case.

AGENT WILLIAMS

And in return?

GREENSPUN

All I ask is for a little quid pro quo, John. If and when something worthy of a headline comes across your desk -- you call your friends at the Las Vegas Sun first...

A beat as Williams measures Greenspun.

AGENT WILLIAMS

(coming around)

Alright, Hank. You just became the FBI's favorite periodical.

OFF the beginnings of a beautiful friendship.

INT. FITTING ROOM - DAY

Inside the small room, Jayne slinks into a navy-blue gown, then turns to face her reflection in the mirror.

The garment falls perfectly against her figure, but Jayne seems... underwhelmed. Then, exits out into --

INT. COMMON AREA - CONTINUOUS

Mary spies her mother and stands as Jayne walks toward the three-way mirror.

JAYNE

Help me with the zipper?

Mary crosses and obliges, taking in the ensemble.

MARY

(genuine)

Wow, that one's really nice, Mom.

JAYNE

It's your father's opening, dear. I don't need to look "nice," I need to look perfect... And this --

(re: the dress)

The waist is too high and it doesn't lay right, it's very dated.

MARY

I think you look like Jackie Kennedy.

Jayne finally smiles at that.

JAYNE

We can do better. Would you grab that gray Cassini we were eyeing.

MARY

Sure.

Mary exits leaving Jayne to stare at her own reflection. She fusses with the dress then notices something. She leans in, close to the mirror, and finds: A SINGLE GRAY HAIR, "*fucking perfect*".

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Mary finds the dress in question and takes it off the rack. She starts back to the fitting room, but stops short at a mirror --

Somewhat self-consciously, she holds the dress up to her chest, eyeing how it might, one day, fall.

EDDIE (O.S.)

Isn't it a bit early for prom?

Startled, Mary whips about to find Eddie, John Roselli's son, who has apparently been watching her.

MARY

It's not for me. If you'll excuse me --

EDDIE

Aw, c'mon. I didn't mean to run you off. The opposite in fact. I'm Eddie --

MARY

Eddie Roselli. I know who you are.

EDDIE

Oh... right.

An awkward beat.

MARY

Customarily, now might be the time you ask me for my name.

EDDIE

You're Mary Dalitz.

MARY

You got a tail on me or something, Eddie?

EDDIE

Could you blame a guy?

MARY

(not impressed)
Do cheese-ball lines like that actually work on college girls?

EDDIE

If you're gonna strikeout, better to go down swinging...

Eddie sheepishly grins as Mary gives him the once over.

MARY

Tell you what Eddie, against my better judgment, I find you kinda cute --
(qualifying)
In a dopey sorta way.
(an opening)
So I'm gonna let you ask me out.

She waits... Then, realizing, Eddie jumps in --

EDDIE

Oh right, do you wanna -- I mean, could I take you out sometime...
(beat)
Please?

MARY

A week from Friday -- everyone will be at the casino opening. Pick me up at seven thirty.

And with that she turns to go, a smug smile on her face.

EDDIE
(calling after her)
Next Friday then -- It's a date!

She stops; turns back to him -- glaring at that word choice. OFF Eddie, enjoying a little tit for tat.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dalitz and Kleinman brief Eckstein.

DALITZ
He's willing to pull the appropriate strings but first... He insists on meeting you.

ECKSTEIN
(alarmed)
What does John Roselli want with me?!

CUT TO:

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT - MUCH LATER

Eckstein is greeted at the door by Peanuts and Caifano.

ECKSTEIN
David Eckstein, I've got an appointment with Mr. Roselli --

He starts in but is immediately halted by Caifano --

CAIFANO
Hold up Hymie.

Caifano motions to Peanuts who roughly pats down Eckstein. After Peanuts gives Caifano the "all clear".

CAIFANO (CONT'D)
(feigning manners)
Won't you follow me, sir.

Like a lamb into the wolves den he does --

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE - EARLIER

Back with Dalitz, Kleinman and Eckstein as they lay out the gauntlet for him... INTERCUT AS NEEDED --

DALITZ

The question at hand is not merely the approval of another casino -- rather, it is specifically your involvement with which Roselli can take issue. Both Morris and myself are known entities. While you -- on the complete fucking other hand -- are an intangible.

ECKSTEIN

So what do I have to do?

DALITZ

Roselli's gonna explain to you, his "role" in the operation. You're to shut the fuck up and listen when he's talking.

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT

Roselli, at his usual table.

ROSELLI

First off David, allow me to share a tiny bit of what it is I do here in Las Vegas... You see, I look out for the interests of all the casinos. Which boils down to basically one thing: Keeping business open. From time to time someone or something will impede our continued forays into the gaming industry, and I -- for my part -- will remove that impediment.

Eckstein, flanked by Peanuts and Caifano, nervously sips a glass of water.

ROSELLI (CONT'D)

And for this service, I require loyalty from anyone wants to deal games of chance in the state of Nevada.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE

Kleinman pulls out a bag and slides it toward Eckstein.

DALITZ

As a sign of respect, you will offer to Roselli a gift, demonstrating your intentions toward a mutually beneficial partnership.

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT

ROSELLI

Well, Eckstein... how do I know I have
your loyalty?

After a beat, Eckstein dumps the contents of the bag out on
the table -- a huge pile of cash.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE

DALITZ

Roselli and his associates, these men
do not respond to weakness. You'll
need to stand firm with their type...

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT

Caifano jumps up, alarmed as Peanuts clumsily scoops
handfuls of bills back into the bag.

CAIFANO

'The fuck Eckstein?! You come in here
and dump ice on our table for God and
who-the-fuck-else to see?

ECKSTEIN

(eerily reserved)
This is merely a gesture of my --

CAIFANO

-- Fuck your fucking gesture Ikey-mo,
this shit can't happen here --

ECKSTEIN

All due respect, Caifano, my
conversation is with Mr. Roselli --

CAIFANO

Fuck you and fuck your conversation you
no good long-nosed --

SLAM! Eckstein gavels the table with an open palm.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE

Getting to the point, Dalitz leans in --

DALITZ

It is incumbent upon you to gain
Roselli's blessing, without which, we
are a shark that cannot swim -- dead in
the fucking water, David.

(beat)

Now if you are very, very lucky,
Roselli will grant you a private
audience to finalize terms, allowing
for the completion of the Oasis.

ECKSTEIN

And how do I do that, exactly...?

Dalitz and Kleinman stare back at Eckstein, blank.

DALITZ

Damned if I know, Kid.

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT

Roselli measures the man before him...

ECKSTEIN

(calm yet powerful)

I have come today to humbly ask for
your protection. And your blessing in
my business venture.

If he's scared shitless, Eckstein does not betray it.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

I begin by pledging my fealty to you,
Don Roselli, and by kindly asking your
associate --

(indicating Caifano)

To shut his goddamn mouth, leaving us
to our discussion.

A beat. Slowly, a wry grin spreads across Roselli's face.

ROSELLI

(amused)

Boys, give us the second.

Peanuts and Caifano begrudgingly leave Roselli and Eckstein
at the table when -- CLICK:

A BLACK & WHITE PHOTO OF THE MEETING FLASHES ON SCREEN.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - CONTINUOUS

In the moonless night, Williams snaps pictures through a telephoto lens --

INT. LAS VEGAS SUN - LATER

RING RING. Last man in the office, Greenspun picks up the phone.

GREENSPUN

This is Hank...

INT. FBI BUILDING, AGENT WILLIAMS' OFFICE - SAME

Williams sits at his desk with the surveillance photos laid out in front of him.

AGENT WILLIAMS

What do you know about a David Eckstein...

OFF the clandestine photos of David and Roselli --

SMASH TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOURINT. DESERT INN, CASINO FLOOR - DUSK

Liz waits near the flashing neon of the main entrance. She scans the crowd impatiently.

Suddenly, Eckstein hustles up, still adjusting his tie.

ECKSTEIN

Sorry I'm late.

LIZ

(sarcastic)

Oh no, no rush Davey, just the biggest meeting of my life here --

ECKSTEIN

(genuine)

And I wouldn't dream of making you miss it -- something came up.

LIZ

Is everything alright?

ECKSTEIN

It will be.

LIZ

Good... Now how do I look?

He finally slows down long enough to take her in. If she was cute behind a bar, she's stunning now.

ECKSTEIN

Do you know when you're being rhetorical?

She smiles, at ease. Then, Eckstein leads her into:

INT. DESERT INN, LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

They walk and talk.

ECKSTEIN

All you need to do is be yourself.

LIZ

Is there even time to work me into the number?

ECKSTEIN

Don't worry about it. I find myself recently -- and in all likelihood only momentarily -- in the man's good graces... He owes me.

LIZ

Then why can't you stay for the meeting?

ECKSTEIN

I've gotta run back to the Oasis for a press thing. Meet you after for a drink with Kleinman?

LIZ

You better.

They arrive at a table in the corner, where sits Dalitz.

ECKSTEIN

Mr. Dalitz, allow me to introduce Liz Morreti.

Dalitz looks up to find -- Liz, beaming a smile.

LIZ

How do you do, Mr. Dalitz?

A little clumsy, he rises to his feet and shakes her hand. He looks... taken aback.

DALITZ

Fine, I'm fine...

(back to form)

And call me Moe, Miss Morreti. I hope you know you come highly recommended. If it weren't for Eckstein here's wherewithal there'd be no job -- hell no casino for that matter.

He crosses to Eckstein and pats him on the back. For the first time, the two seem to share a conciliatory warmth.

ECKSTEIN

I'll leave you to it then.

As he leaves, Eckstein shoots Liz a wink.

INT. GOLF COURSE, RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Dinner at Roselli's table. He and Caifano nibble at salads while Peanuts blows on a piping hot cup of soup.

ROSELLI

Is Eckstein always in such a foul mood around you, Caifano?

CAIFANO

Hard to say... I think I put the little prick on edge.

Roselli sits there, rolling something over in his mind when -- SLURP! Peanuts sucks back a mouthful of soup.

Roselli shoots a glance his way but Peanuts -- oblivious to his total lack of etiquette -- continues to SLURP yet another spoonful. Annoyed, Roselli loudly drops his salad fork onto the plate.

Caught, Peanuts slowly puts down the spoon.

PEANUTS

(re: half-eaten soup)

Better save room for the main course...

Under this, a Waiter arrives with the table's entrees.

CAIFANO

Why do ya ask, boss? I thought you gave those assholes your blessing?

ROSELLI

Sure, to risk everything opening a new casino. They can be my guest... But that don't negate the fact, I still want Dalitz and his crew out of the Desert Inn.

CAIFANO

So get rid of 'em?

ROSELLI

If it were that easy, Caifano, why the fuck would they still be there...?

(clarifying)

Las Vegas is an open town, and as such, any family is free to do business here. I can't remove Dalitz without pretext.

CAIFANO

Is a slit throat pretext enough?

ROSELLI

(serious, riled)

You listen to me you psychotic little fuck. The last thing I need is you laying so much as a finger on Dalitz.

(MORE)

ROSELLI (CONT'D)

I know you see that errand boy of his
as some sorta brass ring to get your
hook into, but you start shit with
Kleinman and Dalitz can go over my head
-- straight to the other families.

PEANUTS

Like baiting a fish...

A beat, as Roselli slowly turns to Peanuts -- who
unassumingly eats his dinner.

ROSELLI

The fuck did you just say?

PEANUTS

(re: his entree,
mouth full)

You know -- fish.

Roselli just sits there, flabbergasted at the pure
simplicity of it.

ROSELLI

Peanuts, you're a goddamn genius, you
know that?

Unsure of what he's done, Peanuts offers his plate --

PEANUTS

You wanna share or something...

OFF Peanuts, confused.

INT. DESERT INN, DANCE FLOOR - LATER

Dalitz expertly leads Liz around the floor as the house
band plays "(How Little it Matters) How Little We Know."

LIZ

Do all your business meetings end in
dancing?

DALITZ

(sarcastic)

Eckstein told you how he got the job,
huh?

Liz laughs at this.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

I can't very well hire a dancer if I don't know whether or not she's light on her feet, now can I?

As they circle, Dalitz looks like he might actually be enjoying himself [for the first time in 44 pages].

DALITZ (CONT'D)

You know, this -- being here with you, it's -- it's just rare that one finds respite, working in my line. Players cheat, dealers steal. This business, hell this whole goddamn city's full of liars and crooks.

LIZ

Well, why do you do it then...?

They take a turn in silence as Moe considers.

DALITZ

(opening up)

Life, it's about seizing opportunity. Growing up, guys I knew found it -- more often than not -- on the wrong side of the law... I've got a past, Liz. And anywhere else in this country, I'm a dead beat. A con with a record. But here... I'm respected. An honest to God civic leader.

(a beat)

Some folks associate this place with sin and vice and debauchery. But gambling -- that's all I know. And it's illegal everywhere else, save for right here. That's why I call Vegas home. Because this town, it's my opportunity... And I'm damn sure gonna take it.

As the song winds down, they stop dancing, but don't immediately separate. There is serious chemistry here.

DALITZ (CONT'D)

Thanks for the dance, Miss Morreti...

They hold each others' gaze for a beat, then -- Liz grabs Dalitz by the collar, desperately pulling him toward her FOR A PASSIONATE KISS.

The moment takes over and they entwine until -- she abruptly pushes him away, embarrassed by her own actions.

LIZ

I'm sorry, it's late. I should -- I need to go.

And with that, Liz turns and leaves. OFF Dalitz, still trying to catch his breath.

INT. OASIS, CASINO FLOOR - LATER

FLASH. A PHOTO POPS of Eckstein beaming proudly on the nearly-finished floor of the Oasis Casino.

PULL BACK to REVEAL Greenspun and a PHOTOG standing with Eckstein who excitedly leads the men around.

GREENSPUN

Thanks for taking the time to chat with us Mr. Eckstein, I know you must be swamped. Excited to finally be opening the front doors?

ECKSTEIN

I can't believe it's three days away -- seems like just yesterday this place was only a blueprint. Truth is, I never thought I'd see it finished.

GREENSPUN

What's in store for opening night?

ECKSTEIN

Well, they're dropping another A-Bomb out there in the dessert. So we're opening with an atomic-themed party.

Behind Eckstein, scantily-clad DANCERS rehearse a number.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

(to the Photog)

Snap a picture with the girls in the background -- that'll sell some papers.

GREENSPUN

I hear you'll be featuring some rather scintillating entertainment.

ECKSTEIN

(playing it up)

I'd tell you more, but your rag's a family paper, right?!

Amused with himself, Eckstein crosses to a nearby roulette table and inspects the felt and woodwork.

GREENSPUN

(innocuous)

You're obviously the face of the operation, but who are the other financial backers? You didn't pay for this place by yourself...

ECKSTEIN

Well... The Oasis is actually co-owned by myself along with a few members of the Desert Inn Group.

GREENSPUN

Moe Dalitz and Morris Kleinman in specific.

Eckstein stops fiddling with the table. Turns back to Greenspun, who feigns interest in his notes.

GREENSPUN (CONT'D)

Way I hear it, that Dalitz guy's got some questionable associates.

Greenspun crosses to Eckstein. Then, gives the wheel a little spin.

GREENSPUN (CONT'D)

What about John Roselli? He got any stake in your casino, Eckstein.

ECKSTEIN

(lying)

Who...?

GREENSPUN

(genial, a put-on)

Roselli... John Roselli. I'm surprised you're blanking on the name. I hear you met with him a few nights back -- over at the Desert Inn Golf Course.

Eckstein steps toward Greenspun, close enough to swing... Then, firmly puts a hand on the roulette wheel -- halting the spinning sound.

ECKSTEIN

I think we're finished here.

GREENSPUN

Well, thanks for your time, Mr. Eckstein.

Greenspun drops his business card on the table.

GREENSPUN (CONT'D)

You may not know it yet, but there will come a day when you realize just how out of your depths you actually are. And when that day comes... You'll know where to find me.

(as he leaves)

Good luck with the opening.

OFF Eckstein, unsure of what Greenspun knows.

INT. DESERT INN, LOUNGE - LATER

Peanuts and Caifano, lumbering from the casino floor into the lounge, mid-conversation.

PEANUTS

(confused)

So the show -- the one inside the real show -- that's the Rob Petrie Show?

CAIFANO

(clarifying)

No, no, the show within the show is called the Alan Brady Show.

PEANUTS

And Dick Van Dyke is Brady?

CAIFANO

No, Van Dyke see -- he plays a guy that works on the Brady Show.

PEANUTS

Named Petrie?

CAIFANO

Yeah, Van Dyke's the actor, and his character's name is Petrie --

PEANUTS

But this Petrie fella, he ain't the star? He works on some other mope's show --

CAIFANO

He's one of the writers.

(clarifying)

On the made up show, not the real show.

PEANUTS

But the real writer, he plays an actor on the made up show?

CAIFANO

Exactly, he plays the star of the made up show, Alan Brady.

PEANUTS

So why don't they call it the Alan Brady show?

Peanuts stares blankly back at Caifano... Still waters run deep.

PEANUTS (CONT'D)

It'll never last.

In need of a stiff drink if this line of questioning is to continue -- Caifano heads to the bar.

CAIFANO

(to the Bartender)

Anything wet.

Down the bar a ways, Caifano spots -- Eckstein and Kleinman. He gestures to Peanuts--

CAIFANO (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Let's go fishing...

They move deliberately toward Eckstein.

CAIFANO (CONT'D)

Well lookey what we have here, Nick. If it ain't the newest crown-fucking prince of Las Vegas.

Caifano feigns a bow.

CAIFANO (CONT'D)

Your Highness...

KLEINMAN

(simmering)

Go fuck yourself Caifano.

CAIFANO

I'm sorry, Morris, but Eckstein and I are trying to have an adult conversation here.

Riled, Kleinman gets to his feet, bowing up to Caifano.

PEANUTS

(sarcastic)

Better watch out, Marshall. We got ourselves a real tough guy here.

ECKSTEIN

Mind your tone. That's my business partner.

CAIFANO

(getting right up in
Kleinman's face)

I'll speak to this shit-stain in whatever the fuck tone I want...

KLEINMAN

(a powder keg)

You want me to teach you a lesson, you greasy wop cunt?

CAIFANO

(quiet, intense)

I want you to teach my grandmother to suck eggs, Kleinman...

A tense beat as Kleinman's face darkens.

ECKSTEIN

Fellas... Maybe we should all go get some air or just --

WHAM! Kleinman slams the butt of his hand into Caifano's face. BLOOD EXPLODES from Caifano's nose as Kleinman grabs him by the shirt and throws him into the bar.

Eckstein moves to intercede but Peanuts stops him.

Using the bar to brace himself, Kleinman savagely kicks Caifano in the head over and over and over.

OFF Eckstein in shock --

SMASH TO BLACK

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVEINT. JACKPOT MOTEL, WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Amidst a cavalcade of mobbed-up drivers, enforcers and lieutenants sits -- Eckstein and Kleinman. They couldn't look more out of place if they tried.

ECKSTEIN

(sotto to Kleinman)

Mind telling me again why we're out here with the goddamn goombah pride parade, and not in there with Dalitz?

KLEINMAN

(sotto)

Because that is a meeting of *capi mafiosi*. Turns out, still having your foreskin is a prerequisite for attendance.

ECKSTEIN

(sotto)

Then what's Dalitz doing in there?

KLEINMAN

(sotto)

Knowing the I-tai's... I'd say he's getting fucked up the ass right now.

INT. JACKPOT MOTEL, CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

The room is littered with the usual suspects: Licavoli, Peanuts... Near the head of the table, Roselli sits next to a bandaged-up Caifano -- who grins from ear to ear.

At the far end of the table, stands Moe Dalitz -- waiting for the ax to fall.

As Roselli rises to his feet, the room quiets down.

ROSELLI

(to Dalitz)

Eager as we all are to put this unpleasantness behind us, the Council is ready to hand down its decision.

(taking his time)

This organization... We have always been a family. And as such, blood cannot spill between blood.

(to Dalitz)

(MORE)

ROSELLI (CONT'D)

Your role within the family has always been appreciated -- and will continue to be so... However, these actions, by your associates and *consigliere*, leave us with no choice. You've got too much on your plate, Moe -- what with running one casino while trying to open another. And so, with your blessing, Nick Danolfo will be promoted from host to head of the Desert Inn.

Stoically, Dalitz crosses to Peanuts and shakes his hand, forcing a smile.

DALITZ

Congratulations.

As the others begin to clap --

INT. JACKPOT MOTEL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

At the elevator, Dalitz pushes the down arrow.

ECKSTEIN

Well... what happened?!

DING. The three men board.

DALITZ

We're out... The Sicilians just took over the Desert Inn.

Utterly crestfallen, the three men board the elevator.

As the doors start to close, we hear a full orchestra's bombastic opening salvo to "In the Still of the Night".

EXT. OASIS CASINO - NIGHT

Establishing shot -- GRAND OPENING SEQUENCE.

INT. DALITZ'S HOUSE, MASTER BATH - NIGHT

Jayne, a vision in gray, helps Dalitz into his tuxedo jacket. Moe can only stare down his own reflection...

She leaves snatching up a glass of wine, gulping back sips as she goes --

EXT. DALITZ'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Mary waves "goodbye" to her parents as they pull out of the driveway. As soon as their car drives off, Mary's gaze flits to the opposite side of the street --

There, a waiting convertible FLICKS on its headlights --

INT. OASIS, BACK HALLWAY - LATER

Looking overwrought, Eckstein walks purposefully toward a door marked "Dressing Room" -- an elegant bouquet of white roses in hand.

At the door, he knocks and quickly scribbles something onto a card. A STAGE HAND appears and takes the flowers from him --

INT. OASIS, DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Stage Hand delivers the arrangement to Liz who sits in front of a brightly-lit beauty mirror. She opens the card, it reads: "Break a leg! -E"

She puts down the card and goes back to applying her make-up. She looks conflicted.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE - SAME

The door to Dalitz's dimly-lit office slowly opens REVEALING Roselli and Peanuts standing outside. Roselli gestures to Peanuts, "*after you*".

INT. FBI BUILDING, AGENT WILLIAMS' OFFICE - SAME

At his desk, Williams flips through a chaotic stack of files and papers, but stops on one item in particular -- the photo of our dead Blackjack Dealer...

EXT. OASIS CASINO, SERVICE ENTRANCE - SAME

Relaxing, Kleinman takes a long drag from a cigarette, when -- the HIGH BEAMS from a familiar looking Cadillac pull up in front of him.

Inside the car sits a maniacal looking Caifano...

KLEINMAN RUNS -- making a break for it -- but Caifano is quickly out of the car with a GUN TRAINED ON HIM.

INT. OASIS, CASINO FLOOR - SAME

Amidst the tumult, Greenspun SNAPS PHOTOS of revelers.

The LIGHTS DIM as the room directs its attention toward the stage --

INT. OASIS, BACKSTAGE - SAME

Eckstein peers out from behind the curtain at a packed room. Beside him, Dalitz fidgets with his bow tie...

DALITZ

I suppose we're on then.

ECKSTEIN

Hey Moe --

Dalitz turns to face him.

ECKSTEIN (CONT'D)

Now that the Dessert Inn's not... I just need you to know that you're all in.

A beat.

DALITZ

I should hope so, kid. 'Cause I just jumped out of the plane after your ass -- sans parachute.

And with that, they step on stage --

In the darkness, a sea of underwhelmed faces stare blankly back at the two men... Eckstein looks to Dalitz, "*Here goes nothing.*"

ECKSTEIN

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of Mr. Dalitz and myself, I'd like to welcome one and all to the grand opening of the fabulous Oasis Resort and Casino!!

A smattering of applause.

DALITZ

Well... without further ado, sit back, relax and enjoy the stylings of our Oasis Dancers.

ECKSTEIN

Followed by one helluva fireworks show courtesy of your friends and mine, the Nevada Testing Site!

To call the crowd's reaction luke warm, would be generous. Under which, Eckstein and Dalitz hastily leave the stage.

Then, the music comes up again -- it's "In the Still of the Night" but now a quick up-tempo version a la Sinatra's "Ring-A-Ding-Ding".

The curtain FLIES OPEN TO REVEAL a bevy of scantily clad dancers dressed as "test pilots".

At the first big musical break, out come the "bomb"shells -- girls dressed as atomic bombs. The one in the center looks familiar -- it's Liz.

A few CATCALLS and WOOTS from the crowd. As the number starts to build --

EXT. MOUNT CHARLESTON - SAME

On top of Mount Charleston, bleachers face the bleak darkness. Huddling close together amidst the other onlookers, Mary and Eddie share a blanket.

EXT. DESERT ROAD/INT. CAR - SAME

The Cadillac flies down a dirt road --

Inside -- Caifano drives in silence -- no sign of Kleinman. As he drives, Caifano uses a bloody rag to wipe his hands.

INT. FBI BUILDING, AGENT WILLIAMS' OFFICE - SAME

Williams stands, facing a nearly blank evidence board. Photo of the Desert Inn, the dead Dealer, and nothing else.

After a long beat, Williams takes a single photo and pins it up -- Eckstein. It's not much, but it's a start.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE - SAME

Behind the desk, Peanuts smiles, sitting in the high-backed executive chair of his brand new office.

Opposite, Roselli opens a cigar box on Dalitz's desk, grabs a stogie and lights up.

EXT. OASIS CASINO - SAME

Greenspun exits the casino, turns up his collar to the cold and crosses to a waiting taxi.

INT. OASIS, CASINO FLOOR - SAME

Standing to the side of the stage, Eckstein cranes to get a look at Liz. When a window opens, he spies her on stage WEARING A WHITE ROSE IN HER HAIR.

As the dance number builds, the "bomb"shells begin releasing their payload-shaped braziers revealing -- the real bazookas.

On stage, Liz coyly plays to the front of the house -- she's the final girl to "deploy her ordinance".

Then, she pulls the rose from her hair, kisses it and tosses the bloom down to -- Dalitz??!

OFF Eckstein, confused and suddenly suspicious of his new business partner, we:

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Face down on the hard pack, Kleinman slowly stirs. Groggy and bleeding from the head, it's obvious that he's been knocked unconscious.

Kleinman stumbles to his feet and takes in his surroundings... He can make out a few houses and sheds, but there are no street lights -- just dirt roads.

Then, he sees it. About 30 feet away, he can make out the outline of a man wearing a fedora.

KLEINMAN

Excuse me, sir!

Kleinman slowly walks toward the man, who makes no reply.

KLEINMAN (CONT'D)

I've had an accident... I could really use a ride back to town.

Still nothing. Kleinman squints, trying to make out the man as he gets closer.

KLEINMAN (CONT'D)

Hey mister, you deaf or something?

When he's to within ten feet, Kleinman finally sees...

The man is a mannequin.

KLEINMAN (CONT'D)

(realizing)

Oh shi--

SUDDENLY THE ENTIRE DESERT FLASHES WHITE --

EXT. ROAD - SAME

Caifano jumps at the brilliant FLASH of an explosion!

The blinding plume of fire can be seen in his rear view mirror, as he speeds away -- just outside the range of the shockwave.

EXT. MOUNT CHARLESTON - SAME

The mushroom cloud silhouettes Mary and Eddie.

They pay no attention to the blast -- instead, slowly moving in for a kiss.

INT. LAS VEGAS SUN - SAME

As Greenspun watches the massive printing press, he clocks a LOW RUMBLE in the windowless room as the LIGHTS SUDDENLY PULSE UP and DOWN.

INT. DESERT INN, DALITZ'S OFFICE - SAME

Peanuts and Roselli stare out the window. Then, Roselli slowly approaches the glass until the reflection of the blast obscures his face.

INT. FBI BUILDING, AGENT WILLIAMS' OFFICE - SAME

As Williams paces, WE PUSH PAST HIM toward a window where off in the distance a lone plume can be seen dotting the tranquil night sky like an incredibly bright birthday candle.

EXT. OASIS, ROOFTOP - SAME

The entire crowd now fills the casino rooftop. Amidst the throng, Dalitz stands gape-jawed, taken aback by the sheer power of it.

Next to him, Jayne averts her gaze to look at something off to the periphery -- REVEAL she's looking at Liz.

OFF which we:

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

No sounds -- save for foot falls. Eerily similar to the first moment we met him, Eckstein reaches a door and turns into --

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Eckstein's old haunt. Empty now except for the new COCKTAIL WAITRESS. Dion and the Belmonts' "In the Still of the Night" plays on the jukebox.

ECKSTEIN
(to the Waitress)
Bourbon, please -- neat.

He takes a seat at the bar looking world weary and unsure of what to do next. When the Waitress brings him a glass, Eckstein digs in his pocket for cash. He pulls out a handful of bills along with -- Greenspun's BUSINESS CARD.

He drops a few singles for the Waitress, then stares at the card for a long beat...

Finally, David pockets the card and turns to his drink.
OFF Eckstein, we --

FADE OUT

END OF EPISODE