

More Going Down

An LGBTQ Murder Mystery

By Dennis Manning

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Jake, Boyfriend of Carlos - 28 - 35, White or could be any race

Robin, a friend of Jake's, Carlos' former and current boyfriend - 35 - 43 exotic or ethnic could be any race

Carlos, Boyfriend of Jake - 35 - 43 - Cuban, dominant

Mitch, Manager of Jake - 40 - 45 - Hispanic

Karen, a friend of Carlos's and his former girlfriend, is 40's, High style - 45, white, with black hair.

Nina, a waitress - 25, Hispanic or Cuban

Alejandro, a waiter, 30, Cuban

Francisco - Cuban Drug Lord, 50's

Rene - Cuban thug, late 30's

RAÚL DELGADO - 50's, Latin,

Officer #1 - mid 20's, Latin, or any race.

SETTINGS

Miami, Florida.

The restaurant **EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE**

The apartments of Carlos, Karen and Robin

Miami Police Station

PRODUCTION NOTES

The production starts in present day. Then moves back in time 4 years. Then progress in time back to present day.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE FREEDOM TOWER, MIAMI 1 AM SEPTEMBER 24, 2014

ON SCREEN: SEPTEMBER 24, 2014

THE ICONIC FREEDOM TOWER STANDS TALL UNDER THE MIAMI NIGHT SKY. IT'S 1 A.M. ON A HOT AND HUMID SEPTEMBER NIGHT. THE AIR IS THICK WITH TENSION, THE OPPRESSIVE HEAT CLINGING TO EVERYTHING. THE STREETS ARE EERILY QUIET, SAVE FOR THE DISTANT SOUNDS OF THE CITY. LUST, DANGER, AND POWER SEEM TO HOVER AROUND LIKE A SHADOW.

CARLOS, 25, LEANS CASUALLY AGAINST HIS CAR, LOOKING EVERY BIT THE FUTURE KINGPIN HE WILL BECOME. HE LIGHTS A CUBAN CIGAR. HIS DARK EYES SURVEY THE QUIET STREET, HIS FACE A MASK OF CONTROL. NEXT TO HIM IS MITCH, ALSO 25, A HISPANIC THUG WITH A WILD LOOK IN HIS EYES. HIS ARM IS AROUND BRIAN, A 21-YEAR-OLD IRISH LAD WHO'S CLEARLY OUT OF PLACE IN THIS DANGEROUS WORLD.

Brian fidgets, nervous. They have all been drinking.

BRIAN

Mitch, listen... I need to talk to you."

Mitch, leaning against the car with a cocky grin, looks over at Brian. He laughs slightly, not taking Brian seriously.

MITCH (TEASING)

What, are you mad I didn't call you last night? Relax, Irish, I'm here now.

BRIAN

No, Mitch. I'm serious. This... us... it's not working. I want out.

Mitch freezes, the smile fading. Carlos now takes notice and is watching closely. Mitch turns his head slowly to look at Brian, confusion crossing his face. Then he chuckles, but it's forced.

MITCH (LAUGHING)

Break up? Is this a joke, Brian? C'mon. Carlos, Irish wants to break up! We're just getting started.

BRIAN

No, Mitch. You're getting... obsessive. I can't do this anymore. It's over.

Carlos (calmly, eyes on Mitch):

CARLOS

Hey, tranquilo, Mitch. Let's not do anything stupid tonight. It's hot, it's late, and we've had a good run. Were drunk. Let's drop Brian off and we go gamble. He just needs some space.

Mitch turns to Carlos, his eyes wide with disbelief. The muscles in his neck tighten as anger begins to bubble beneath the surface.

MITCH

Space? He doesn't need space, Carlos. He needs to realize what he's got. I'm not letting him just walk away.

Carlos (cool, trying to defuse)

CARLOS

Mitch... we don't own people. If he wants to go, let him go. You can find someone else. I'll find you someone.

MITCH

You think you can leave? After everything I've done for you? You don't get to walk away from me, Irish.

BRIAN

Mitch, Mate, please... I don't want any trouble. I just need ta get out.

MITCH

Out? Out? I will tell you when you are out.

Carlos steps in, placing a hand on Mitch's chest, trying to physically hold him back.

Carlos (firmly, warning)

CARLOS

Mitch, don't. It's not worth it.

But Mitch's eyes flicker to Carlos' holster. In a flash, before Carlos can react, Mitch grabs the gun from Carlos' waist.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Mitch! What the hell are you doing?! You loco son of a bitch.

MITCH

You're not walking away from me, Irish. You're mine.

BRIAN

Mitch, no! Please, I'll stay. I'll stay!

Three deafening gunshots ring out in the humid Miami night. Brian's body crumples to the ground, blood pooling beneath him, his eyes wide open in shock. The street falls silent, save for the soft hum of the city in the distance.

Carlos stands frozen, his eyes wide as he stares at Mitch, who is still holding the gun, breathing heavily, his body trembling with the aftermath of what he's done. The gun slowly lowers as reality sets in.

Carlos (stunned, but trying to snap Mitch out of it)

CARLOS

Mitch... what the hell did you just do?!

Mitch's eyes flicker with confusion and shock, like he's just waking up from a dream.

MITCH

I... I didn't mean to...

SUDDENLY, IN THE DISTANCE, THE SOUND OF SIRENS BREAKS THROUGH THE SILENCE.

Carlos snaps into action. He takes out his cell phone and calls Francisco.

CARLOS

Francisco.

FRANCISCO

Mi amigo, late isn't it. What do you need?

CARLOS

We got a problem. Get Rene and get down to the Freedom Tower. We need bags, the chain saw and tell Rene we got to take my boat out to feed the sharks.

FRANCISCO

Roger that, Papi. Be there shortly.

Carlos hangs up.

SIRENS ARE GETTING CLOSER. CARLOS IS IN COMPLETE CONTROL.

MITCH

Carlos you got to help me.

CARLOS

You stupid, fuck, you used my gun.

Carlos lands a punch on Mitch's face hard enough to knock him down. Carlos leans over Brian. Carlos wraps his right hand with a handkerchief.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Irish, I am sorry to do this, but we need evidence.

Carlos pounds Brian's face with 3 punches. The handkerchief gets bloody and he wipes the blood on Mitch's right hand. Mitch is stunned as he get up.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Mitch you got some drugs on you?

MITCH

What?

CARLOS

Mitch not a lot of time here. You got some packets of coke on you.

MITCH

Yes.

Mitch takes out three packets and hands them to Carlos. Carlos puts them in Brian's jean pocket.

CARLOS

Give me \$500, the cops are coming.

Mitch pulls out a bank roll and peels off 5 X \$100 bills. Carlos stuffs the bills in Brian's other jean pocket.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Now don't say a word. I'll handle this. Now hit me in the face. My right eye.

MITCH

What?

CARLOS

Just do it. Quick.

Without any fanfare, Mitch lands a solid punch to Carlos' right eye. Carlos barely winces. In a low growling voice, Carlos' looks at Mitch.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Fuck. You owe me.

TWO POLICE OFFICERS COME ON THE SCENE. ARROGANT. NAME BADGE
VISIBLE RAÚL DELGADO

RAÚL DELGADO

Oh Carlos Diaz. And Mitch what's-your-name?
Oh yea, Carlos' girlfriend. Well what are you two ladies up to this evening? Oh I see a little catfight.

COP 2

Boss, we got a dead guy here.

CARLOS

Rafa Delgado. You must be wanting my attention again?

Carlos winks at Delgado. Delgado cracks him across the face for that. Carlos doesn't flinch. Just gives a wry smile.

RAÚL DELGADO

Smart ass.

CARLOS

Like I was saying, Rafa, Irish drug lad. He tried to offer us drugs and

MITCH

We said "no way, we don't do drugs."

Carlos shoots a look at Mitch and says in a quiet commanding voice as he pulls Mitch in to speak in his ear

CARLOS

I said I got this.

Carlos turns back to the cops, big bold, innocent storytelling that is not fooling anyone.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Así que le dijimos, 'no, chico, nosotros no hacemos drogas.' And the kid? He didn't like that. Came after us, loco, outta nowhere.

Carlos shrugs, chuckling.

Mitch y él empezaron a tirar unos golpes, back and forth, ya tú sabes. I tried to step in, break it up... but Mitch, con su buena puntería, throws a sucker punch—at me instead of the Irish!

He laughs, shaking his head.

Then the kid comes at us again, loco. And Mitch, in self-defense—quick thinking—grabs the gun from my holster and bam, shoots Irish to stop him. Qué cosa, man. Fuck me, we could've been dead, right here, in front of the Freedom Tower.

RAÚL DELGADO

So that's how it happened

MITCH

Just like that.

Carlos gives Mitch another look like "shut up." Carlos smiles at the cops.

COP 2

Boss should I call this in?

Carlos (with a sly grin, voice calm and smooth)

CARLOS

Chicos, chicos, no se preocupen por eso.

He leans back, casually gesturing.

We can clean up our mess... siempre lo hacemos, ¿no?

He gives them a knowing look, as if they've been through this before.

No hay problema aquí.

Carlos snaps his fingers. Mitch takes out the bankroll, peels off 5 X \$100 for each cop, and hands it to each.

COP 2

I don't see a mess. What I do see are two faggots who need to get off my goddamned streets.

Carlos glares his coal black eyes at the officers

CARLOS

¿Oye, qué dijiste? You think you can talk like that to me?"*

He chuckles darkly, his expression hardening.

This is my city, chico. Y si alguien needs to get off these streets, it sure as hell ain't me or my people.

He leans in, voice dropping to a dangerous whisper.

Cuidado... porque no sabes con quiÃ©n te estÃ¡s metiendo.

RAÚL DELGADO

I am not convinced I can forget this?

CARLOS

Rafa, mi amigo... I get it, olvidar ain't cheap, huh?

How about we make it a little... easier for you to forget, eh? More than enough to keep your mind clear, and your pockets heavy.

He pats Raúl on the shoulder, his voice low but persuasive.

Come on, we both know nobody needs to know about this. ¿Verdad? Irish has money and coke in his pockets, I think, I mean he was trying to sell us something.

Rafa goes over to Brian and pulls out the cash and the drugs. He puts them in his pocket.

RAÚL DELGADO

Voy a estar vigilándote, Carlos. I can smell scum from a mile away, and let me tell you, I don't like the stench."

He steps closer, his tone dropping, dripping with warning.

You put yourself in a spot like this again, and no amount of cash will make me forget. ¿Me entiendes? Next time... it'll be harder to walk away clean.

CARLOS

Maybe you need more convincing.

Carlos moves in inches away. You feel their breath. Carlos winks at the cop and tugs at his crotch. Carlos touches his own crotch. Their eyes lock for a moment. Passion hangs in the air.

Rafa in a low commanding voice

RAÚL DELGADO

I will be watching you, Carlos.

CARLOS

¿Vas a estar mirándome, eh? Good... porque te gusta lo que ves."

He lets the words hang in the air, his gaze never leaving the cop's.

Don't worry, cariño... I'll make sure to put on a good show for you.

The cops depart.

AS THEY LEAVE FRANCISCO AND RENE SHOW UP IN A BLACK RANGE ROVER. **LICENSE PLATE ON THE CAR - SINMIEDO** (FEARLESS) THEY GET OUT AND OPEN THE BACK TO REVEAL BODY BAGS CHAIN SAW, AND ROPES. **ON THE UNDERSIDE OF RENE'S RIGHT FOREARM A TATTOO IS SEEN - A SERPENT COILED AROUND A DAGGER, WITH THE SERPENT'S EYES BURNING RED.**

Francisco in a cool tone.

FRANCISCO

Mi Amigo. We got this. Rene help Mitch get that man in the back. Time to go fishing.

THE SONG BAILANDO" BY ENRIQUE IGLESIAS (FEAT. DESCEMER BUENO AND GENTE DE ZONA) PLAYS.

THE CAMERA MOVES BACK AND MERGES TO THE BAY WHERE CARLOS HAS HIS BOAT EL TIBURÓN ("THE SHARK").

THE MEN TAKE THE BODY TO THE BOAT. THEY ALL GET ON AND CARLOS DRIVES OUT TO THE OPEN WATERS. THE SOUND OF THE BUZZ SAW IS HEARD AND THEN BODY PARTS ARE STREWN INTO MIAMI BAY.

CARLOS, NOW SHIRTLESS, HIS BACK DISPLAYS HIS TATTOO, A PHOENIX RISING FROM FLAMES, WITH THE FLAMES SUBTLY FORMING A

RAINBOW. THE WINGS OF THE PHOENIX ARE POWERFUL, WIDE-
SPANNING, AND EDGED WITH GEOMETRIC DESIGNS. HE IS SMOKING A
CUBAN CIGAR SAYS TO THE SHARKS AND WHISTLES

CARLOS

Here boys. Papi Chulo is gonna feed you.

Sharks come out of the water.

EXT: CITY SCENES OF CUBAN MIAMI. STREETS, BARS, CIGARS, SEXY
PEOPLE

ON SCREEN SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 MIAMI - TEN YEARS LATER.

THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC OF THE ORIGINAL DENNIS MANNING SONG,
"MORE GOING DOWN" PLAYS. THE FEEL IS MOODY, SUSPICIOUS, AND
SEXY WITH A FILM NOIR FEEL.

MIAMI IS ABOUT HIGH STYLE, POWER, PASSION, SEX, CIGARS, BARS,
AND CARS. THE ULTRA-RICH CROWD WHERE MONEY IS NOT AN OBJECT
BUT A REQUIREMENT.

IN THE SCENES FLASHES OF CARLOS MAKING DEALS. THE VIP ROOM AT
THE RESTAURANT, **EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE**, WITH DRUG DEALS.
MIAMI BEACHES, BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE. CARLOS WORKING THE CROWD.
ROBIN, HEAD OF SECURITY WATCHING, LOOKING. MITCH IS IN THE
OFFICE COUNTING MONEY. KAREN AT THE RESTAURANT PODIUM
CHECKING PEOPLE IN. CARLOS SEDUCING JAKE. CARLOS IN SPAIN
WITH ROBIN MAKING LOVE ON THE BEACH. CARLOS AT A ROMANTIC
DINNER WITH KAREN. CARLOS CUTTING DEALS WITH MITCH AND THE
CUBAN MIAMI MOB. CARLOS TYING UP ALEJANDRO AND THEY HAVE
NAKED SEX. CARLOS LOOKING OUT HIS WINDOW AND BISCAYNE BAY,
SHIRTLESS, DISPLAYING ACROSS HIS STRONG MUSCLED BACK, A
PHOENIX RISING FROM FLAMES, WITH THE FLAMES SUBTLY FORMING A
RAINBOW. THE WINGS OF THE PHOENIX ARE POWERFUL, WIDE-
SPANNING, AND EDGED WITH GEOMETRIC DESIGNS. HE LIGHT UP A
CUBAN CIGAR. CARLOS OWNS THE WORLD.

INT: BACK ENTRANCE OF **EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE**, THE RESTAURANT
AND BAR OWNED BY MITCH AND CARLOS. 6PM.

THE RESTAURANT **EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE** - MURALS OF HAVANA PRE-
REVOLUTION. THEY SELL ONLY CIGARS FROM EXCLUSIVE CUBAN
BATCHES. THE RESTAURANT SYMBOLIZE CARLOS' ATTEMPT TO FUSE HIS
CUBAN ROOTS WITH HIS CRIMINAL EMPIRE. MURALS DEPICT
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL REFERENCES TO CUBA'S MOB SCENE IN THE
1950S, MAKING THE RESTAURANT BOTH A SYMBOL OF POWER AND LOSS.

THE SUN STILL BLAZES ON ANOTHER HOT, STEAMY MIAMI DAY.
WORKERS ARE BRINGING IN LIQUOR, BOXES OF CIGARS, FOOD AND
OTHER UNMARKED GOODS. THE WAITSTAFF LADIES ARE HIGH STYLE,
THE MALE WAITERS AND BARTENDERS ARE AS GOOD LOOKING, TIGHT
BODIES. ALL OOZE OF SEX APPEAL, LUST WITH A HINT OF DANGER.
THE MOOD IS LIVELY.

CONVERSATIONS ARE A MIX OF LATIN AND ENGLISH. THIS SCENE HURRIES. EXCITEMENT. WE ARE IN THE WORLD OF CARLOS DIAZ!

CARLOS, A RUGGED CUBAN MAN IN HIS LATE 30'S, WEARING A WHITE "A-SHIRT" (THINK ITALIAN MAFIA), THE EDGES OF THE PHOENIX SLIPPING OUT FROM UNDER THE SHIRT. HE HAS A CUBAN CIGAR IN HIS MOUTH, SMOKING ARROGANTLY, AND CHECKS IN ALL THE DELIVERIES. HE CHECKS OUT THE WOMEN AND THE MEN WORKERS. GIVING A WINK, A NOD, A PAT ON THE BUTT. IT IS ALL RANDOM. HE EXUDES "MACHISMO." HE LOOKS AROUND, KNOWS HE OWNS THE WORLD AROUND HIM. HE BREATHES IT ALL IN. HE SMILES. NOT INTIMIDATED BY ANYONE OR ANYTHING.

MITCH, A HISPANIC MAN IN HIS 40'S, IS IN GOOD SHAPE, JUST NOT AS IN SHAPE AS CARLOS IS AND THEY BOTH KNOW THAT.

He comes up to Carlos and pats him on the back. Carlos barely acknowledges this and keeps working, checking, and owning everything around him.

MITCH

Carlos, I think we are going to have a strong night, tonight.

No response from Carlos.

MITCH (CONT'D)

I said

CARLOS

Mitch I heard you, pal, gonna be a great night.

A waitress and waiter approach.

NINA

Carlos, you said you would call me last night.

Carlos looks over at Alejandro the waiter and gives a wink. Alejandro, cool and does not break confidence.

CARLOS

Nina, I had to tie someone up last night.

NINA

Someone?

CARLOS

No, baby, something, I had to tie something up last night.

Alejandro gives a wry smile.

ALEJANDRO

Nina, come on, let the Boss Man go, we got to set up for the cocktail party.

MITCH

Yes, Alejandro, I need that to go off without a hitch. Francisco's Daughter is 21.

ALEJANDRO

Yessir. ¡Ay, Ivette! Esa niña tan linda... ¡ya es legal!"

(He winks.)

"Now the fun can really begin." Come on, Nina you can talk to Papi, later.

NINA

Carlos you will call me, right.

CARLOS

Sure. Sure.

Alejandro leans into Carlos's ear and says in a low growl. Carlos puts his hand on Alejandro's right pec and gives is hard squeeze.

ALEJANDRO

See you Boss Man. If you need to tie someone up again....call Me.

"Smooth Operator" plays.

THE CAMERA MOVES OUT AND UP AND WE SEE CARLOS WORKING EVERYONE IN THE ROOM. CARLOS SNAPS HIS FINGERS AND A WORKER BRINGS CARLOS A BLACK AND WHITE CUBAN SHIRT AND HAT. HE SLIPS IT ON LIKE HE HAS DONE A 1,000 TIMES. IT IS "SHOWTIME." HE CLAPS MITCH ON THE BACK. THE CAMERA ROLLS THROUGH THE KITCHEN WITH AN ARRAY OF ACTIVITY AND VOICES. CARLOS IN EVERY SCENE. TO THE BAR CROWDED WITH PEOPLE AND DRINKS. PATRONS CALL OUT "CARLOS" HE NODS, KISSES, WORKS THE ROOM.

He goes to the podium where the guest arrive and Karen is there managing the incoming flow.

KAREN, A HIGH-STYLE WOMAN OF MEANS IN HER LATE 40'S, JET BLACK HAIR, CARLOS' FORMER GIRLFRIEND AND STILL HOLDS A TORCH FOR CARLOS.

Carlos leans in to give Karen a Kiss on the cheek.

CARLOS

Ah, Karen... todavía rompiendo corazones, ¿eh?
It's almost criminal cómo dejas a todos
queriendo más... igual que a mí. Pero tú
siempre supiste cómo mantener las cosas...
interesantes, ¿verdad?"

KAREN

Carlos, darling, you know I have no idea what
half of that meant... but you do have a way of
making even the unknown sound tempting. Keep
talking, I might just learn something this
time.

Carlos looks the reservations and
smiles he moves to the front door
where his secret lover, Robin,
head of security is managing the
evening's security detail.

ROBIN, 35, SOLID, MUSCULAR BUILD WITH AN EXOTIC LOOK AND FEEL
TO HIM, GIVES A WINK TO CARLOS. THEIR LOVE IS UNKNOWN TO ALL,
EXCEPT KAREN. CARLOS AND ROBIN SMOLDER FOR EACH OTHER. ROBIN
IS THE HEAD OF SECURITY AND ALWAYS WATCHING, EYES DARTING,
THERE COULD BE DANGER EVERYWHERE AND ROBIN KEEPS IT ALL
SMOOTH.

Karen looks on as they Carlos and
Robin talk and glares.

Carlos leans against the doorframe
and talks to Robin in a low,
sultry, sexy voice. Robin looks
at the open shirt of Carlos that
hints of the solid chest and hair
that is pushing to be exposed.
Robin quickly focuses.

CARLOS

"Todo bien, mi amor? You're looking especially
sharp tonight. Are you keeping an eye on me or
the whole place?"

ROBIN

You know I'm watching everything, Carlos. Can't
afford to let anyone get too close... except
you, of course.

CARLOS

Ah, cariño I feel safer already. But don't get
too distracted, Robin... I might need rescuing
later.

ROBIN

Papi Chulo, you're the only one worth saving.
Just give me the signal.

(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Carlos, I see the way you look at others, like Alejandro. Sometimes I wonder... do you even see me anymore?

Carlos brushes the side of Robin's face and gives a low growl.

CARLOS

Cariño, I see you. I always see you.

ROBIN

Then why do I feel like I am disappearing?

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS CARLOS OUTSIDE OF THE BUSY RESTAURANT. THE VIBRANT MIAMI STREET SCENE. DUSK IS FALLING AND THE NEON LIGHTS ARE COMING UP. CROWDS SWIRL, EVERYONE KNOWS CARLOS, AND CARLOS KNOWS EVERYONE. HE MAKES EVERYONE FEEL IMPORTANT.

EXT AND INT: CARLOS OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT, ROBIN INSIDE WORKING SECURITY

Carlos talks to the mic in his ear in a low voice. He talks to Robin inside.

CARLOS

Robin... ¿me tienes en tu mira? You always did like to keep those eyes on me... but tonight, make sure you don't get too distracted, cariño

ROBIN

Carlos, you know I've always got eyes on you... but don't worry, I can handle the rest while keeping you in focus. Stay out of trouble, mi amor.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT

FRANCISCO AND RENE, TWO OF THE BIGGEST LATIN MAFIA KINGS ENTER TO TALK WITH CARLOS ABOUT THE VIP EVENT TONIGHT FOR FRANCISCO'S DAUGHTER IVETTE'S 21ST BIRTHDAY.

ON THE UNDERSIDE OF RENE'S RIGHT FOREARM A TATTOO IS SEEN - A SERPENT COILED AROUND A DAGGER, WITH THE SERPENT'S EYES BURNING RED.

CARLOS

Francisco, Rene. Mi casa es su casa. Ivette's special night, huh?

FRANCISCO

Sí, Carlos. Twenty-one... seems only yesterday she was just a niña. Time moves fast, doesn't it?

CARLOS

It does. And tonight... everything will move even smoother. VIP treatment, like I promised.

FRANCISCO

Good... good. Ivette deserves the best. You know, she's grown up around... certain expectations. I'd hate for her to miss out on anything.

CARLOS

Miss out? Not in my house. You know, we keep things... exciting. All tastes catered.

RENE

Is Alejandro working the party? I hear this place has a... reputation. Special flavors, if you know where to look.

FRANCISCO

I trust you've arranged for... a little bit extra tonight. Things that make a night unforgettable, eh?

CARLOS

You'll find what you're looking for and more. Just below the surface. All within reach for those who know where to reach. Alejandro is setting up the bar, Rene why don't you go check it out. Francisco see how the tables look. I have everything arranged.

The two men head off to the function room to see Alejandro.

SWIRLS OF IMAGES OF CARLOS AS HE WALKS BACK THROUGH THE RESTAURANT HEADING TO THE OFFICE IN THE BACK. EVERYONE TRIES TO GAIN HIS FOCUS, HIS VIEW. HE BREEZES BY KAREN, GIVE A NOD TO NINA. BEFORE GOES THROUGH THE DOOR TO THE BACK, CARLOS LOOKS OVER AT ROBIN. ROBIN CASTS A STEELY GAZE OF LOVE AND LUST AND GIVES A SLIGHT NOD. CARLOS WINKS.

SADE SONG, "SMOOTH OPERATOR" IS HEARD.

Carlos reaches his office and Mitch is there looking over recent account records. Mitch seems worried.

MITCH

Carlos, the numbers here don't seem right. We seem to be short on cash flow.

Carlos eases the financial journal out of Mitch's hands captivates Mitch with his voice and eyes.

CARLOS

Mitch, I will look into that.

Carlos moves in closer and gives a low growl in Mitch's ear.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Mitch why don't you spend time doing something else.

MITCH

What do you need? Anything.

CARLOS

Good boy. That's what I want to hear.

As Carlos pushes the office door closed with his boot, the camera shows Carlos pushing Mitch down to his knees about to perform oral sex. A deep moan is heard from Carlos.

THE CAMERA SWIRLS THROUGH THE LIVELY, HOT, SEXY MIAMI CROWD. THROUGH THE KITCHEN BUZZING WITH ENERGY. TO THE BAR WHERE COCKTAILS ARE SLUNG, PEOPLE CONNECTING.

"Faith" by George Michael plays.

WELL, I GUESS IT WOULD BE NICE IF I COULD TOUCH YOUR BODY
I KNOW NOT EVERYBODY HAS GOT A BODY LIKE YOU
BUT I GOT TO THINK TWICE BEFORE I GIVE MY HEART AWAY
AND I KNOW ALL THE GAMES YOU PLAY BECAUSE I PLAYED THEM TOO

THE CAMERA MOVES TO THE VIP ROOM. RENE AND FRANCISCO ARE TALKING WITH ALEJANDRO. MONEY IS GIVEN TO ALEJANDRO AND HE HANDS FRANCISCO A SMALL "PACKET." DRUGS HAVE JUST BEEN PURCHASED/EXCHANGED.

Francisco gets a text message.

FRANCISCO

Ivette and her mother have arrived. I am going to meet them.

Francisco departs. Rene barely notices as he focused on Alejandro.

The song "Faith" now fades as Rene speaks in a low gruff voice to Alejandro.

RENE LEANS IN, HIS FOREARM ON DISPLAY, REVEALING THE SERPENT COILED AROUND A DAGGER TATTOO. THE SERPENT'S RED EYES GLEAM UNDER THE SOFT LIGHT. ALEJANDRO SITS BACK, COOL AND COMPOSED, HIS EYES TRACING OVER RENE'S TATTOO.

Rene (grinning, voice low and suggestive)

RENE

He oído que eres toda una inversión, Alejandro.
Tell me, what does it take for a man like me
to... enjoy your company?

Alejandro chuckles softly, leaning forward slightly, letting the question linger as he watches Rene with a teasing smile.

ALEJANDRO

Mmm, that depends... on what kind of company
you're looking for.

He pauses, eyes flicking to the tattoo.

I offer... many services.

He gestures casually toward Rene's forearm, his voice sultry but cool. He runs his hand over Rene's bicep and then lightly tugs on Rene's groin.

Alejandro (with a playful smirk)

Nice tatt. ¿Qué significa? Tell me about it.

Rene, intrigued by Alejandro's control, glances at his tattoo before looking back at Alejandro.

Rene (grinning, voice dropping)

RENE

Esto es sobre sobrevivir... danger, deceit, and
power. Things you and I both know all too well,
¿verdad?"

He pauses, his eyes locking onto Alejandro's.

But I'm not just looking for the usual. No,
no... I'm looking for something unforgettable,
something that leaves a mark.

He smirks, his voice turning darker.

The kind of experience you don't walk away from
without feeling it in your bones.

ALEJANDRO

Don't worry, I always deliver more
than expected.

RENE

I like the sound of that. Let's
say... we seal the deal over drink.

ALEJANDRO

I am your bartender for the evening. Can you
handle what comes after?

THE SONG "FAITH" COMES BACK ON. THE CAMERA MOVES PAST THE
OFFICE DOOR AND IT OPENS AS MITCH HEADS OUT AND CARLOS ZIPS
HIS FLY WITH AN ARROGANT SMILE AND SWAGGER. MITCH HAS A LOOK
OF ECSTASY ON HIS FACE.

THE CAMERA ZOOMS THROUGH THE BUSY KITCHEN. OUT TO THE PACKED
RESTAURANT AND BAR. FRANCISCO MEETS HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER,
SHE HAS A SASH THAT SAYS "PRINCESS 21 FOREVER." ROBIN
CHECKING ON SECURITY. KAREN CHECKING IN PATRONS.

CAUSE I GOT TO' HAVE FAITH
I GOT TO HAVE FAITH
BECAUSE I GOT TO HAVE FAITH, FAITH, FAITH
I GOT TO HAVE FAITH, FAITH, FAITH

ON SCREEN: MORE GOING DOWN - OPENING CREDITS

THE ORIGINAL SONG, "LOVERS, LIES AND ALIBIS" PLAY AS THE
OPENING CREDITS ROLL ACROSS THE NIGHT MIAMI SKY. THERE IS A
SENSE OF LUST, DANGER AND FILM NOIR EXCITEMENT IN THE AIR.
THE SCENE SWIRLS THROUGH THE BEST AND MOST ICONIC MIAMI.

(CONT'D)

SONG: LOVERS, LIES AND OTHER ALIBIS

LOVERS AND LIES AND OTHER ALIBIS
LOVERS AND LIES AND OTHER ALIBIS ...
WHY DO YOU SMELL OF CUBAN CIGARS
WHERE DID YOU GO IN YOUR MIND LAST NIGHT?
WHERE ARE YOU NOW, BECAUSE SOMETHING IS JUST NOT RIGHT
I SENSE A CHANGE IN THE AIR, WHY ARE YOU SO FAR AWAY?

LOVERS AND LIES AND OTHER ALIBIS
A CHANCE ROMANCE UNDER THE STARS IN THE SKY
LOVERS WILL LEAVE YOU AND LIES ARE A GUARANTEE
I'LL BE YOUR ALIBIS IF YOU WILL BE ONE FOR ME

LOVERS AND LIES AND OTHER ALIBIS
A CHANCE ROMANCE UNDER THE STARS IN THE SKY

LOVERS WILL LEAVE YOU
AND LIES ARE A GUARANTEE
I'LL BE YOUR ALIBIS IF YOU WILL BE ONE FOR ME

THE CAMERA LOSES FOCUS FOR A MOMENT THEN COMES BACK IN FOCUS.
CARLOS IS STANDING OUTSIDE OF THE RESTAURANT AND A HEAVY RAIN
STARTS.

INT. DREAM SEQUENCE - EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE - NIGHT

CARLOS ENTERS THE BUILDING FROM THE POURING RAIN, BUT HE IS
NOT WET. CARLOS STANDS AT THE ENTRANCE OF **EL IMPERIO DE LA
NOCHE**, BUT THE CLUB IS DIFFERENT. THE NEON LIGHTS FLICKER,
CASTING EERIE SHADOWS ACROSS THE EMPTY DANCE FLOOR. THE
MUSIC, USUALLY PULSING WITH LIFE, IS ABSENT, LEAVING A
SUFFOCATING SILENCE. THE PLACE FEELS ABANDONED, AS THOUGH A
STORM HAS BLOWN THROUGH, STRIPPING IT OF ALL ITS ALLURE.

THE RAIN OUTSIDE IS RELENTLESS, POUNDING AGAINST THE WINDOWS,
BUT INSIDE IT'S UNNATURALLY DRY. CARLOS WALKS THROUGH THE
DESOLATE CLUB, HIS POLISHED SHOES ECHOING AGAINST THE FLOOR.
HE'S WEARING AN IMMACULATE SUIT. HE LOOKS DOWN TO FIND HIS
HANDS ARE BLOODSTAINED, DARK CRIMSON DRIPPING FROM HIS
FINGERS.

CARLOS

Robin?

HIS VOICE ECHOES THROUGH THE EMPTY CLUB. IN THE FAR CORNER, A
DOOR CREAKS OPEN, AND A SOFT LIGHT SPILLS OUT. THE RAIN GROWS
LOUDER, ALMOST DEAFENING NOW, AS CARLOS WALKS TOWARD THE
LIGHT. HIS STEPS QUICKEN, HIS CHEST TIGHTENING. AS HE NEARS
THE DOOR, HE SEES ROBIN STANDING INSIDE, HALF-DRESSED, BUT
WITH HIS BACK TO CARLOS.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Robin!

ROBIN TURNS SLOWLY, BUT HIS FACE IS BLURRED, UNRECOGNIZABLE.
HIS CHEST IS BARE, A DEEP SCAR CUTTING ACROSS HIS SKIN--AN OLD
WOUND, PERHAPS ONE INFLICTED BY CARLOS HIMSELF. ROBIN DOESN'T
SPEAK, JUST WATCHES CARLOS WITH UNREADABLE EYES. CARLOS MOVES
CLOSER, REACHING OUT TO TOUCH HIM, BUT THE CLOSER HE GETS,
THE MORE ROBIN FADES INTO THE SHADOWS.

JUST AS CARLOS' HAND ALMOST TOUCHES ROBIN, THE DOOR SLAMS
SHUT WITH A DEAFENING BANG, TRAPPING CARLOS ON THE OTHER
SIDE. HE POUNDS AGAINST THE DOOR, THE BLOOD ON HIS HANDS
SMEARING ACROSS THE WOOD, BUT IT DOESN'T BUDGE.

CARLOS WAKES UP IN HIS BED NAKED, PANTING HEAVILY, HIS
MUSCLED, HAIRY CUBAN BODY COVERED IN A SHEEN OF SWEAT.

ON HIS STRONG MUSCLED BACK A TATTOO OF A PHOENIX RISING FROM FLAMES, WITH THE FLAMES SUBTLY FORMING A RAINBOW. THE WINGS OF THE PHOENIX ARE POWERFUL, WIDE-SPANNING, AND EDGED WITH GEOMETRIC DESIGNS.

ROBIN IS SHIRTLESS, ON HIS BACK, SOUND ASLEEP.

Carlos reaches a hand out to lightly brush Robin's chest and Robin without waking pulls Carlos down to rest his head on Robin's chest. Robin puts a strong arm around Carlos and says

ROBIN

Shh, Papi Chulo. Sleep.

CARLOS' BLACK EYES STARE INTO THE NIGHT. ROBIN IS PEACEFULLY ASLEEP.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK. CUBAN MUSIC IS HEARD IN THE DISTANCE IN CARLOS' MIND. HEAVY RAINS FALLS. THE SCENE FADES.

EXT:EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE, THE RESTAURANT, 6:15PM

ON SCREEN SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 MIAMI 6:15PM TODAY

JAKE, 28, A WHITE MAN, COMPUTER GEEK TYPE WALKS INTO THE RESTAURANT. HE HAS SUNGLASSES ON TO HIDE HIS BRUISED CHEEK AND BLACK EYE. HE GOES TO THE BAR. THE RESTAURANT IS BUSY. HE ORDERS A DRINK. THE FEELING IS TENSE. JAKE IS LOOKING FOR AND WAITING FOR ROBIN. KAREN IS NOT AT THE PODIUM. CARLOS IS NOT AROUND. THE SCENE IS FAST-PACED AND TENSE.

JAKE

Can I get a beer?

BARTENDER

Sure thing, Jake. You want to start a tab?

JAKE

God no. Have you seen Robin?

BARTENDER

He is always around let call him.

Robin comes over to meet Jake.

ROBIN

Jake.

JAKE

Robin, where have you been?

ROBIN

Relax, Jake, relax. I am here now. I am the head of security. I got keep my eye on everything.

JAKE

Did Carlos see you?

ROBIN

No. He left over an hour ago.
What's with the shades?

Jake takes them off to reveal the
bruise and the black eye.

JAKE

Carlos.

ROBIN

Jesus. Jake, put the shades back on, don't want to draw attention. Let's talk about the plan.

Jake puts the shades back on.
Nervous and tense in his voice
looking around.

JAKE

Karen? Did she see you. She is his eyes, always looking. God I hate her.

ROBIN

No, she left with Carlos. Let's just talk through the plan.

JAKE

He won't let me leave.

ROBIN

Yes, he will let leave you. There is somebody else.

JAKE

Somebody else? Are you sure?

ROBIN

Has been for awhile. Long while.

JAKE

You knew? Why didn't you tell me?

ROBIN

Not my affair. Look, just stick to the plan.
Remember the plan?

JAKE

I don't think that I can go through with this.
Robin. I am scared.

ROBIN

We have been through this. You said you needed
my help.

JAKE

I know. I know.

ROBIN REVEALS A GUN AND HOLSTER. HE PATS IT NON-DISCRETELY
AND LOOKS JAKE IN THE EYE AND IN COMPLETE CONTROL.

ROBIN

Jake just stick to the plan. I have a plan.
I got protection. We have....protection

JAKE

I said no guns. No violence.

ROBIN

Right. *You said it.* I did not.

JAKE

You are not bringing that gun. Promise me.
Robin!

ROBIN

What?

JAKE

I said, "promise me."

ROBIN

Ok. Ok. We will stop by my place first and drop
off the gun. If it goes down bad, I'll hit
Carlos, knock him down, you run. We will meet
at my place. You got that? You just run and
don't look back. You got that? Jake? Jake!

JAKE

What?

ROBIN

I said, "Do you got that?"

JAKE

Yes. Yes.

ROBIN

Yes, "What?"

JAKE

I turn and run, don't look back

ROBIN

Right.

JAKE

Yes. Yes, the plan I got it.

ROBIN

Great. Tell me.

JAKE

OK, I walk in and I give Carlos a Kiss. I say,
"Carlos. I want to break up. Yes, leave. No
nothing, it's me. I need to focus on some
things and well, you will be fine."

JAKE stops and shakes his head.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Bullshit. This is bullshit.
Carol will never go for that.

Revealing his holster.

ROBIN

Oh yes, he will. I'll help, Carlos see things
my way.

JAKE

I said no guns, you promised. He's gonna kill
us.

ROBIN

Not if I kill him first. Come on. Drink up.
Let's get the hell out of here and get this
over with.

"SMOOTH OPERATOR" vamps.

They head out of the bar into the
Miami evening.

EXT: JAKE'S & CARLOS APARTMENT - AN HOUR LATER

ON THE SCREEN: 1 HOUR LATER, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024

Jake and Robin approach the ultra-
modern Miami apartment with
sweeping views of the bay. 12th
floor. They take the elevator and
get off and head to suite 1250.

THE MOOD IS TENSE. ROBIN IS COOL AND IN CONTROL.

ROBIN

Are you cool, Jake?

No response. He elbows Jake.

JAKE

Yes, yes I am cool. Just nervous

Jake drops his keys

ROBIN

Jesus, Jake get it together

JAKE

Ok, ok, I am just scared. What if this goes bad? What if Carlos gets angry?

ROBIN

Come on Jake, open the door.

JAKE opens the door. He turns on the light. This lights up only the entrance. We DO NOT see the body on the floor.

Carlos? Carlos? I am home. Carlos?

JAKE looks around.

Robin, something is wrong.

Carlos lying dead on the floor in a glamorous yet shadowy Miami penthouse. The lights come up and CARLOS is dead on the floor, Jake nearly trips over him.

Robin. Robin.

Robin looks around, as "The Plan" has suddenly changed.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

What the fuck?

JAKE

What happened?

ROBIN

Somebody got here before we did.

JAKE

What do you mean "before we did" what were you going to do?

ROBIN

Jake. Wake up. The plan. The plan went wrong.

ROBIN is pacing and trying to think.

JAKE

But you said, "I got a plan." What the hell was "the plan?"

ROBIN

Shit. This is not the plan.

JAKE

Robin, come on we got to go. We should call 911.

ROBIN

Quiet, Jake. Let me think. We need find out who did this. We are not safe until we know.

THE SCENE FADES. THE CAMERA SWIRLS TO CARLOS DEAD ON THE FLOOR. JAKE NERVOUS. ROBIN PACING.

THE SONG "BLURRED LINES"

INT: EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE, THE RESTAURANT

ON THE SCREEN: 4 YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 7PM

THE RESTAURANT HAS A COOL VIBE.

MITCH IS BEHIND THE BAR, WIPING GLASSES. HIS CELL PHONE RINGS. SPLIT SCREEN WITH CARLOS BACK IN THE OFFICE AND MITCH AT THE BAR. CARLOS IN COMPLETE CONTROL.

MITCH

Hello, Mitch here.

CARLOS

Mitch my boy, you ready with the plan?

MITCH

Hey, Carlos. Yes everything is set.

CARLOS

DJ ready?

MITCH

Yes I told the DJ. But, Carlos, "Sinatra tunes?"

CARLOS

Sinatra, yes, it's got to be Sinatra. Don't fuck this up.

MITCH

It's all set. When you arrive, I will hand you your "drink as usual."

CARLOS

Good Boy. Good actor.

MITCH

Been in movies. You said you saw me in that spy movie, yes it was a great part, oh yea, I got screen time and credits...

The call drops

SPLIT SCREEN GOES BACK TO JUST MITCH AT THE BAR.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Hello? Hello? Carlos? Damn. Call dropped.

JAKE ENTERS. AS HE GETS TO THE BAR, MITCH GIVES A NOD TO THE DJ AND THE SINATRA SONG PLAY, "FLY ME TO THE MOON." JAKE SAYS TO MITCH,

JAKE

God I love Sinatra songs. Can I have a beer?

MITCH

One beer. Yea, Sinatra songs are great. Hey what's your name. I haven't seen you before.

Carlos enters and is watching this attempted "pick up" by Mitch who is trying to get Jake. Carlos will deal with him later.

JAKE

Jake. My name is Jake.

MITCH

Smiles and reaches his hand out the shake Jake's hand.

Good to meet you. I am Mitch. Hey I get off in an hour you want to

CARLOS WALKS OVER. HIS ENTRANCE CUTS OFF THE CONVERSATION WITH MITCH AND JAKE. CARLOS GLARES AT MITCH TO LET HIM KNOW THAT HE KNOWS WHAT MITCH WAS TRYING TO DO. CARLOS NOW FOCUSES ON JAKE CARLOS SETS HIS EYES ON JAKE. JAKE SMILES

AWKWARDLY. JAKE IS IMMEDIATELY TAKEN WITH CARLOS. MITCH HAS NOW BECOME A WALL FLOWER IN THE SCENE. CARLOS IS IN CONTROL.

MITCH

Carlos, here is your drink as usual.

CUBAN OLD FASHIONED: A TWIST ON THE TRADITIONAL OLD FASHIONED, USING DARK CUBAN RUM INSTEAD OF WHISKEY. IT'S RICH, SMOOTH, AND PACKS A PUNCH—JUST LIKE CARLOS.

JAKE LOOKS AND IS IMPRESSED. HE IS HUMMING THE SINATRA SONG.

CARLOS

Thanks, Mitch, you always know what I like.

Carlos gives a long look at Jake. He speaks in a lower, sexy voice.

CARLOS

So what's your name?

Mitch to Carlos in an upbeat I-want-to-help tone.

MITCH

His name is

Carlos glares Mitch and gives a "Hands Up" as to silence MITCH. Mitch stops talking. Carlos turns to Jake

CARLOS

So what's your name?

Wait don't tell me! "Rick?" "No no, "Rick is slick" I know, your name is "FRED" No, no "Fred is dead"

JAKE

Fred is dead?

CARLOS

Well, I mean I haven't heard from him in a while.

MITCH

Yea, Carlos, one day he just never came back.

CARLOS

Ok, ok, let's see, "Riley?"

JAKE

Riley? That sounds like a dog's name

CARLOS

A dog? Hmmm, do you roll over?

JAKE

Do those lines ever work?

CARLOS

Well I want it to work this time. Mitch let's get Jake a drink. Give him what I have.

MITCH

Sure thing, Carlos, coming right up.

Jake in an easy but confident tone. He extends his hand.

JAKE

Jake, the name is Jake.

CARLOS

"Jake." I knew it.

JAKE smiles and rolls his eyes like "yea sure."

And you are gonna want my drink from now on.

MITCH hands JAKE the Cuban Old Fashioned drink.

JAKE

Really, you knew my name was JAKE? Thanks for the drink. And? I am having this from now on?

CARLOS

You will get used to it.

Carlos pulls Jake in for a kiss. After the kiss, Jake who is flustered and trying to stay cool.

JAKE

That was good.

CARLOS

Good?

JAKE

It was nice. Easy cowboy.

CARLOS

Nice? I can do better than that.

Carlos pulls in again, Jake
lightly blocks him. They both
laugh

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Would you dance with me?

JAKE

Dance with you? Here?

CARLOS PULLS JAKE UP FOR A DANCE, EFFORTLESSLY AND CARLOS IS
IN COMPLETE CONTROL AND JAKE IS COMPLETELY TAKEN WITH CARLOS.

IN THE BACKGROUND THE ORIGINAL SONG BY DENNIS MANNING "WOULD
YOU DANCE WITH ME IS PLAYED SWELLING AS THEY DANCE AND TALK.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Dance here? Now?

Carlos voice smooth, laced with
seduction.

CARLOS

EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE... it's my restaurant. I
can do whatever I want with whomever I want.

He leans in slightly, his eyes
locked on Jake's.

¿Sabes bailar, Jake?

He smirks, seeing Jake's
confusion, but continues.

No te preocupes... I'll show you. Come on, let
me teach you a little something.

Carlos extends his hand, his voice
dropping into a softer, more
commanding tone.

Just follow my lead. Trust me.

Jake hesitates, his heart racing.

Carlos pulls him close, his
movements smooth, effortlessly
guiding Jake onto the dance floor.

JAKE

I... I don't really know how to dance.

Carlos grinning, his grip firm
whispering against Jake's ear.

CARLOS

Don't worry, cariño. With me, you won't need
to. I'm the best teacher. One dance, Jake.
What's the worst that could happen?

HIS EYES DARKEN WITH CONTROL AS HE BEGINS TO LEAD, THE RHYTHM
OF THE MUSIC GUIDING THEIR STEPS.

THEY MOVE AND CARLOS' EYE CAPTURE JAKE. JAKE TRIES TO
MAINTAIN HIS COOLNESS. WHO CAN RESIST CARLOS?

The original song "Dance With Me"
is heard as they dance a seductive
dance. Carlos is irresistible.

WOULD YOU DANCE WITH ME?
TAKE A CHANCE WITH ME
COME ON DANCE WITH ME
COME ON, IT'S JUST A DANCE

COME AND TAKE MY HAND. FEEL THE RHYTHM OF THE BAND
COME ON DANCE WITH ME
COME ON IT'S JUST A DANCE

Carlos Spins Jake around. Romantic

IT'S A SLOW SONG
AND THAT'S WHERE YOU AND I BELONG
THIS IS NOT ROMANCE

JAKE

Seriously, not romance?

Carlos speaks sexy and low

CARLOS

This is just a dance.

They pause and go to the bar and
have a drink.

JAKE

Well you move pretty good.

CARLOS

I am LATIN, it is in my blood.

CARLOS pulls JAKE into him again
and kisses, JAKE gives in.

JAKE

I feel like you have done this before?

CARLOS SINGS

Do you know what time it is

JAKE

Here we go. Yea, it's 8:15

CARLOS

No, it's time to dance with me.

CARLOS motions "come on baby dance
with me, very playful. The music
swells.

IT'S A SLOW SONG AND THAT'S WHERE YOU AND I BELONG
THIS IS NOT ROMANCE. COME ON IT'S JUST A DANCE. JUST A
DANCE.

JAKE

You... you're really something else, Carlos.
I'm not sure if I should be impressed or
terrified.

He glances up, meeting Carlos'
eyes, the tension between them
undeniable.

But I guess there's no turning back now, is
there?

Carlos' cell phone rings, Carlos
steps away. We do not hear Karen,
only Carlos' responses. Carlos
looks over and winks at Jake. Jake
looks at his watch thinking maybe
it is time to go. Carlos
motions/mouths "1 minute, Don't
go."

CARLOS

Karen! How are you. No, can't talk right now.
Kind of busy. Yes I will call. Promise. I will
call. Ok I am really kind of busy right now.
Ok. Yes, you too.

JAKE

Wow look at the time. I don't want to keep you.

CARLOS

I want to keep you.

JAKE

OMG another pickup line.

(SINATRA SONG COMES ON, "AS TIME GOES BY")

JAKE

OMG I love Sinatra!

CARLOS

Romantic right?

JAKE

Did you plan this?

CARLOS

I have been planning for you my whole life

JAKE

OMG another line.

Carlos pulls Jake in again for a
kiss.

CARLOS

Come on, it's just a dance.

JAKE

And this is NOT romance.

Carlos gives a sly smile, eyes
dancing with mischief.

CARLOS

Jake... esto no es romance, cariño. It's just a little... fun

Phone rings. Carlos steps away. We do not hear Robin on the phone, only Carlos' responses. CARLOS has his eyes on Jake. Keeping JAKE engaged in the moment. Carlos motions to Mitch "Another round." Mitch delivers the drinks.

CARLOS

Robin. Hey. No. I am busy right now. I am at the bar. No. Don't come down. I will call you later. I will. I am kind of busy right now. Ok Ok.

CARLOS hangs up.

JAKE

So EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE, is your bar?

CARLOS

Si, mi amigo, I own everything I want. And right now

JAKE

Oh, God, not another pick up line

CARLOS

I want you.

JAKE

What are you the Mexican Drug Lord.

Carlos quickly pulls Jake in and speaks low. He is VERY CLEAR and intense.

CARLOS

Cuban, Jake. Cubano. Don't get it twisted. And trust me... I'm much more than some drug lord.

JAKE

Cubano, I got it. And whatever more you are... I think I'd like to find out.

CARLOS

Ah, Jake... quiero estar muy ocupado contigo. You belong to me now... a tu Papi Chulo. Don't even try to fight it, cariño.

Carlos moves in a kisses Jake
again. As he kisses Jake he says

CARLOS (CONT'D)

But I do need something?

JAKE

And what is that?

CARLOS

Your phone number because I can't remember
mine.

JAKE sighs.

JAKE

So you own all of this.

CARLOS

This and a lot more. Te quiero... ahora. You're
mine, Jake. No lo olvides.

JAKE

I am not sure I know what it is you just said.
I am yours, already?

CARLOS

Is there a problem with that. Rápido? Jake...
yo siempre consigo lo que quiero. And right
now... lo que quiero eres tú

JAKE

I gotta learn more Spanish so I know what you
are saying.

CARLOS

Oh I will teach you, trust me.

JAKE

You want to get out of here?

CARLOS

I am just waiting on you to ask

JAKE

Remember this is not romance.

Carlos pulls Jake in for one final
full on kiss

CARLOS

Oh, ok, what is this, then

JAKE

It's just a dance.

SINATRA SONG "NEW YORK, NEW YORK" SWELLS AS CARLOS LEADS JAKE OUT OF EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE AND INTO THE HOT MIAMI NIGHT START SPREADING THE NEWS...

INT: KAREN'S APARTMENT AND ROBIN'S APARTMENT SPLIT SCREEN

ON THE SCREEN: 10 minutes before...

THE CAMERA EAVESDROPS ON EACH PERSON. BOTH APPEAR TO BE "UPSET" WITH CARLOS. KAREN IS, ROBIN IS ACTING.

KAREN'S APARTMENT FILLED WITH ART AND DESIGNER NAMES.

ROBIN'S APARTMENT, SLEEK AND ULTRAS-MODERN.

THEY ARE IN THE SAME MOMENT, JUST NOT TOGETHER. THIS FOLLOWS THE INTRODUCTION OF JAKE AND CARLOS. HE SITS IN HIS CHAIR TAKING NOTES ON "THE PLAN."

ROBIN

The plan. The plan is for Carlos to get Jake.

KAREN IS PACING. LOOKING AT HER WATCH, MUTTERS, "ALWAYS LATE" SHE TAKES OUT THE PHONE AND CALLS CARLOS. THIS IS THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PREVIOUS CONVERSATION. WE NOW HEAR BOTH SIDES OF THE CONVERSATION.

CARLOS is light, fun. KAREN is irritated.

THE SCREEN SPLITS WITH KAREN ON THE LEFT AND CARLOS AT THE BAR FOR THE CALL. ROBIN IS GONE FROM VIEW. THE CAMERA IS STEPPING INTO THE SAME SCENE WITH CARLOS AT THE BAR, WE NOW SEE THIS FROM A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW WITH THE ADDED PERSPECTIVES OF ROBIN AND KAREN.

INT: INSIDE EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE & KAREN'S APARTMENT SPLIT SCREEN

KAREN

Carlos, where are you?

CARLOS

Karen!

KAREN

Carlos we had plans for tonight.

CARLOS

Hi! How are you?

KAREN

I said we had plans tonight.

CARLOS

No, can't talk right now. Kind of busy.

KAREN

Yes but we had plans, I have been waiting.

CARLOS

Yes I will call. Promise.

KAREN

You always do this to me. Will you call me later?

CARLOS

I will call. Ok I am really kind of busy right now.

KAREN

You will call right?

CARLOS

Ok.

KAREN

You are going to call? What time? When?

CARLOS

Yes,

KAREN

Carlos!

CARLOS

You too.

Karen paces wildly her voice and tone rising and falling.

KAREN

Ok bye. Damn. WHO is he with now. I have been waiting. WE had dinner plans. I don't like this. This isn't right. I do everything for him. Everything.

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

This isn't going to continue. Things will change. It's like I only matter when it is convenient for him. Carlos makes you feel special even though you are not.

It's like the moment there is someone else, I get the back seat.

INT: SPLIT SCREEN WITH KAREN'S APARTMENT AND ROBIN'S APARTMENT

KAREN CONTINUES TO PACE. ROBIN IS COOL AND COLLECTED. HE REHEARSES HIS LINES "ONCE AGAIN."

KAREN

I never liked Robin. Never. That one is trouble. Something about him I never liked. Secrets. He has secrets. Robin has secrets. Carlos and Robin have secrets together. Always talking hush-hush. I don't trust Robin. I don't like the control he has over Carlos. Then when Carlos drops them, or they drop out of sight, who does Carlos call? Me. "Oh Karen, I'm lonely. Oh Karen let's get together." All I do is wait for him.

THE ORIGINAL SONG BY DENNIS MANNING QUEUES "*MORE GOING DOWN*"
KAREN IS FRUSTRATED, YET STILL IN LOVE WITH CARLOS. SHE
MOVES FROM HOPEFUL TO ANGRY TO SCORNE.

THE CAMERA WILL FLASH SCENES THAT GO WITH THE LYRICS AS KAREN
PACES AND RANTS.
SONG: MORE GOING DOWN

I SIT BY THE PHONE
YOU SAID THAT YOU WOULD CALL
THERE'S SO MUCH TO TELL YOU
REMEMBER OUR TIME LAST FALL

Karen pauses and thinks, then
smiles

REMEMBER OUR FIRST KISS
THAT MOMENT IS TOPS ON MY LIST
AN HOUR GOES BY AND I WONDER WHY YOU HAVEN'T CALLED.

ROBIN IS COOL, EASY, SMOOTH. IN THIS SCENE HE MUST CONVINCE
KAREN TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS ALSO A VICTIM OF THE AFFECTIONS
OF CARLOS. IT IS PIVOTAL TO THE ENTIRE SCENE THAT WE SEE

ROBIN EVOLVE, EVEN THOUGH KAREN IS NOT AWARE THAT ROBIN IS ACTING OUT A PART. ROBIN NEEDS AN AWARD-WINNING PERFORMANCE. WE ARE ABOUT TO SEE GREATNESS AS ROBIN DOES THE CHANGE UP TO CONVINCE KAREN THAT HE IS SCORNE, AS WELL, BY CARLOS. "THE PLAN" IS CONTINGENT ON FOOLING KAREN.

Robin takes out his phone and calls Karen.

Karen looks at the phone, sighs, she is irritated.

KAREN (CONT'D)

God I never liked him.

KAREN answers the phone.
Irritated

KAREN (CONT'D)

Robin. What?

Robin sounds very upbeat. A complete contrast to Karen's sour mood.

ROBIN

Hey have you heard from Carlos? He and I were

KAREN

What? No, *Carlos and I had plans.* (sarcastic)
Didn't you two break up?

ROBIN

Well not officially.

KAREN

I heard it was over for months. But hey, what do I know.

ROBIN

I see you are your typical "upbeat and fun self"

KAREN

Yea, well fuck you. Bye.

Karen hangs up the phone. Robin smiles. Karen continues to vent.

ROBIN

Miserable woman.

KAREN

I pick up his laundry. God I hate Robin. Hate him. He should have been gone a long time ago.

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

Why is he still around? "*Karen, hi!*" Secrets. Robin has secrets. Carlos, that bastard. They have secrets. I don't like secrets. Why did he not get rid of Robin like I suggested. Carlos and I used to spend every Friday evening together. We snuggle, we make popcorn and watch bad movies. Carlos makes me laugh.

THE CHORUS TO THE SONG, "MORE GOING DOWN" IS HEARD AS KAREN FUMES. SHE THROWS PILLS AROUND, BUMPS A GLASS OF WINE AND IT FALLS AND SHATTERS.

I WONDER NOW AM I THE ONLY ONE?
THERE'S MORE GOING DOWN TONIGHT THAN JUST THE SUN

INT: SPLIT SCREEN ROBIN CALLS CARLOS AT EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE

Robin Calls Carlos.

ROBIN IS THE ONE IN CHARGE. HE IS CHECKING IN ON THE "PLAN."
CARLOS IS LIGHT, ROBIN WANTS AN UPDATE.

ROBIN

Carlos, are you with Jake?

CARLOS

Robin!

ROBIN

So did you get him yet?

CARLOS

Hey. No.

ROBIN

Did you make a move on him?

CARLOS

I am busy right now.

ROBIN

Are you back at your place?

CARLOS

I am at the bar.

ROBIN

So you didn't leave yet?

CARLOS

No.

Robin Laughs and says in a teasing voice

ROBIN

Do I have to come down there and do this myself?

CARLOS

Don't come down.

ROBIN

Stick to the plan.

CARLOS

I will call you later.

ROBIN

Did you play Sinatra? He loves Sinatra

CARLOS

I will.

ROBIN

Did you use those one-liners we practiced?

CARLOS

I am kind of busy right now.

ROBIN

Well call me later?

CARLOS

Ok Ok. (he hangs up)

ROBIN

Yes, bye

INT: ROBIN'S APARTMENT

Robin paces. He thinks. He is practicing his "lines" to sound convincing. We watch this man "practice" in front of us.

ROBIN

Once again. That man stands me up." No too happy.

He paces again. Muttering. Trying different inflections.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

"Once again." No. (Again) "Once again." Shit not right. I got to be able to make this work. Karen will know if I lie.

(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)

I got to sound, hurt. Yea that's it. Like I will take action against Carlos the Mother Fu... (he laughs) "Carlos the Mother F...that's funny. I am the tough one here. Ok I got it.

He shakes it off. He turns his back. We are about to see a performance of a man who has had enough.

He pretends he is hanging up the phone again.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Yea. Bye

And so we begin to see the transformation. This must be 110% convincing of a hurt, cast-aside-for-someone-else lover. Robin turns around dead-on to the camera.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

"Once again. That man stands me up. All week"

Robin is liking the sound of his voice, he sounds convincing, he smiles to himself.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Yes that is what it should sound like. I know more....

Knock and the door opens, KAREN Enters

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Karen? What are you doing here? Sure, come on in.

KAREN

Robin, I am tired of getting stood up by Carlos. I have had it.

ROBIN REALIZES THAT THIS IS HE CHANCE TO "CONVINCE" KAREN THAT HE IS ALSO "HURT." ROBIN CONTINUES WITH HIS "HURT AND REJECTED" FEELINGS FEEDING OFF OF KAREN.

ROBIN

Don't start with me on, Carlos. Once again. That man stands me up. All week. All the time I get from him

Imitating Carolos' low sexy voice

ROBIN (CONT'D)

"Baby I'll come over Thursday, come on we can go dancing."

Now back to his voice with the anger building.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Bullshit. That's what it is. He strings you along and along and along, and then nothing.

Karen looks at Robin. She is not sure of this "anger" that Robin is displaying. Yet, she is getting convinced that maybe that have something in common. Their dialogue is rapid fire. The intensity of their emotions build as the talk.

KAREN

I bet he has somebody new.

ROBIN

Some new "what's his name?" Are you kidding me?

ROBIN AND KAREN

I remember when I was the one who turned his head.

They look uneasy at each, realizing that they share the same disconnected feeling with Carlos

KAREN

What?

ROBIN

Well, I was

KAREN

Please not now with that. Let's stay on Carlos. I have issues with the two of you but we'll get to that another time.

Robin now with more intensity.

ROBIN

I didn't change he did.

KAREN

And then you feel like it's your fault. I wait
and I wait.

ROBIN

And I wait. He moves on and comes back.

KAREN

I do anything and everything he says, just to
be near him.

ROBIN

He has the last word, every time. I am not
putting up with another year or week of
disappointments or his Cuban bullshit.

KAREN

Robin, I never thought that I would say this,
but we are a lot alike.

ROBIN

What do you mean?

KAREN

We have both been pushed aside by Carlos.

ROBIN

I thought it was me

KAREN

I thought it was me.

ROBIN & KAREN

Perhaps I want too much?

They shoot each other a look as
they seem to be comrades on the
same side of the war.

ROBIN

I told myself "this is fine"

THE SONG "MORE GOING DOWN" COMES BACK IN AS THE CAMERA
DISPLAYS A HEATED CONVERSATION WITH ROBIN AND KAREN. PAST
VIEWS OF TIMES TOGETHER WITH ROBIN/CARLOS AND KAREN/CARLOS
AND EACH ONE EXPERIENCES THE "CARLOS MOVES ON TO SOMEBODY
NEW" MOMENT. CARLOS WILL BE IN MID-CONVERSATION/INTIMACY AND
THEN MOVE ON TO SOMEONE ELSE.

IF WE ARE CHANGING LANES
WHY CAN'T WE BE THE SAME
AN EVENING GOES BY
I WONDER WHY YOU HAVEN'T CALLED

I WONDER NOW AM I THE ONLY ONE
THERE'S MORE GOING DOWN TO NIGHT
THEN JUST THE SUN
THERE'S MORE GOING DOWN TONIGHT

THE TALK AROUND THE TOWN
IS THERE IS MORE GOING DOWN
THEN JUST THE SUN WITH YOU AND I

THE SONG FADES IN THE BACKGROUND. THE MOOD DARKENS AS A
STORM BEGINS OUTSIDE ROBIN'S APARTMENT. KAREN LOOKS OUT AND
TALKS WITH DISDAIN AND DISINTEREST.

KAREN

While I do not like you

ROBIN

Thanks, I appreciate that honesty.

KAREN

While I do not like you, I like being used even
less. Damn Carlos.

ROBIN

Wait till I see him.

KAREN

Not if I see him first. I am leaving.

ROBIN

Karen you want to stay for a drink?

KAREN

Let's not get too friendly. Secrets. You two
have secrets and I don't like it.

Karen leaves. Robin waits,
watches her leave and then smiles.
Robin calls Carlos and in a
sinister voice he says

ROBIN

Once again. That man stands me up.

Again with more feeling portraying
his "anger"

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Once again. That man stands me up

He smiles to himself. He says in a
chilling, low tone, reflective
voice.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

The sun will rise. The sun will set. There will be more going down than just the sun.

Robin takes off his shirt, catches his look in the window.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Papi Chulo, we need to get back to Spain.

The scene fades to memory of Carlos and Robin on the beach in the moonlight in Spain making love.

The song "More Going Down" fades.

INT: OFFICE AT EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE

ON SCREEN: 3 DAYS BEFORE TODAY SEPTEMBER 21, 2024

Whitney Houston "How Will I Know" plays

JAKE SITS AT THE COMPUTER, SCROLLING THROUGH ORDERS. HIS BROW FURROWS AS HE NOTICES A SET OF SHIPMENTS THAT DON'T MAKE SENSE FOR THE RESTAURANT. HE CLICKS A FEW MORE TABS, UNCOVERING MORE SUSPICIOUS ORDERS. MITCH WALKS IN, CASUAL BUT ALERT, SENSING SOMETHING'S OFF. MITCH HAS A "SURPRISE" DOZEN OF RED ROSES BEHIND HIS BACK FOR JAKE. JAKE IS FOCUSED AND UNAWARE.

MITCH

Jake, how is the report coming?

JAKE

Mitch, what's this? These shipments... they don't add up. We're supposed to be ordering wine and seafood, but I'm seeing shipments for... let's just say a lot more than that. Cuban cigars and a lot of big cash deposits that don't tie to anything.

MITCH

Oh, that. Must be a mix-up in the inventory system. Happens sometimes, especially with the VIP orders. Different suppliers, you know how it is.

JAKE

Someone's hiding what's really coming in. You expect me to believe that's just a glitch

MITCH

Trust me, it's nothing. I'll take care of it.

JAKE

No, Mitch. What's really going on here?

Mitch pulls out the roses from behind his back. Trying now to break the mood and get Jake off of the reporting issue.

MITCH

Surprise!

He hands the flowers to JAKE.

JAKE

Surprise? Wow, what is this for? Thank you!

MITCH

Our anniversary!

JAKE

"Our Anniversary" ? Anniversary of...

MITCH

Of being together.

JAKE

Together?

Mitch is awkward as he has missed a beat. He attempts to laugh this off to save himself from being embarrassed.

MITCH

Yes! Together! Together at work. Yes, that's what I meant, of course working together. It seems like yesterday.

EXT: FLASHBACK TO 4 YEARS AGO MITCH AND JAKE ON THE BEACH
DREAM-LIKE MEMORY FOR MITCH.

FLASHBACKS OF MITCH AND JAKE'S WEEKEND IN CANCUN.

MITCH

Do you remember that weekend we took back then to the beach in Cancun? That was a great time. That was wonderful.

Jake talks plainly, Mitch is in a dream-state.

JAKE

Then I met Carlos.

MITCH

I used to turn your head, remember? You still turn my head.

JAKE

Really? I've been with Carlos now for 4-years

MITCH

And we would go out for drinks

JAKE

We haven't done that in a long time.

MITCH

We don't go out any more.

JAKE

Mitch we haven't gone out in years, I am with Carlos, remember

MITCH

I remember that trip. I should have made a move on you.

JAKE

Ah Mitch, come on, what a teaser you are.

Mitch pauses and smells the roses.
The dream-state ends. Mitch
smells the roses.

INT: OFFICE AT EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE

MITCH

I am not teasing. Funny.

JAKE

Funny? What's funny?

MITCH

Roses. They have lost their scent.

(Jake smells the roses)

JAKE

Yeah you are right. Well scent or no scent they are beautiful. Thank you.

MITCH

Jake you are welcome. You deserve that and a lot more. Hey you want to go get a drink since you are wrapping this up?

JAKE

Hey! Remember you were the bartender that night I met Carlos?

MITCH

Those damn Sinatra songs.

JAKE

What?

MITCH

Nothing. So how about that drink?

JAKE

Thanks, I will pass. I have been working late the last week and Carlos will kill me if don't get home early.

MITCH

Carlos. You like him?

JAKE

Yes. We have been together 4 years now.

MITCH

Isn't he kind of demanding? He can be a hard-ass. Pushy. Always his way.

JAKE

Well sometimes he is, but you work with him. You know. He tries to be this big Latin tiger, but he is really a pussy cat.

MITCH

Jake, I care about you. If you ever need anything or in trouble I am here for you.

JAKE

Mitch, thanks. I care about you, too.

MITCH

I knew it. I knew you did. If I ever thought
that Carlos hurt you, I, I could not, I would
not stand for it

JAKE

Mitch, that is sweet.

MITCH

Sweet? I don't want to be sweet. I care about
you, Jake.

JAKE

I know, I know.

MITCH

You know?

JAKE

Mitch, I know you have my back.

MITCH

I would like to get you on your back.

JAKE

Ha you are funny. What a teaser.

Mitch moves in face to face. Now
in a low sexy tone.

MITCH

I am not teasing. So how about that drink?
Let's see If I can turn your head again.

Mitch kisses Jake.

Jake is surprised.

JAKE

Ok Ok, Mitch go easy. I would love to but I do
need to go. Carlos, you know is waiting.

He moves in and kisses JAKE,
again.

MITCH

Come on Jake. Come on.

Mitch kisses Jake, again, this
time heavy.

JAKE

Hey, ah Mitch Ok Ok. Hey, Mitch. Easy, Easy cowboy. Have you been drinking? As Cher would say, "Snap out of it."

MITCH

What does Cher have to do with us?

JAKE

Mitch? Come on, "Moonstruck?"

MITCH

Jake, I love you. I have had feelings for you for years.

JAKE

Come on, no? I am sorry. I didn't know

MITCH

How could you not know? I mean, I am always looking to you. I have loved you since the first time I saw you.

JAKE

I didn't know that you felt that way.

MITCH

FELT? I feel this way now. It is obvious. OK, Jake, I love you. Dump Carlos. I could take care of you, always.

JAKE

Mitch, I mean you are a super guy, nice, easy.

MITCH

Nice? I am nice?

JAKE

No, no that's not what I meant. I am mean you are sweet. Wonderful.

MITCH

Sweet? Nice? Wonderful? Am I too late? Jake I want you. Could you want me? Well could you? Could you love me?

JAKE

Mitch, ah,

MITCH

Jake, I am perfect for you. You are perfect for me.

Mitch moves in and forces another kiss on Jake.

MITCH

Jake, I need you. Jake I have always seen us together. I mean together, forever. Just you and I. Can't you see that?

JAKE

Mitch, I thought you were being, nice.

MITCH

Nice? NICE? Again with the nice. Fuck that, I don't want to be "nice"

JAKE

Mitch, I am sorry. I should go. Carlos is waiting.

MITCH

Carlos is trouble. He is not right for you. He has to go. He is not the one for you. If you would open your eyes. I'm right here. I'm perfect for you.

Mitch grabs Jake, and forces another kiss on him.

Jake tries to back up an Mitch hits Jake and he falls.

Mitch growls and picks up Jake by the shirt.

MITCH

I am right for you. I am perfect for you. You will come to see that. Do you understand?

Jake gets up. Shakes it off. Stunned that he got hit. He rubs his jaw.

Mitch (his voice low, almost pleading)

MITCH (CONT'D)

You can't just walk away from this, Jake.

He stops pacing, standing still, the weight of his obsession heavy in the room.

You can't walk away from me.

JAKE

Mitch. I'm not your puppet. I'm not-whatever you think this is.

He shakes his head, stepping toward the door.

I'm not staying here just to be your prisoner.

Mitch (desperately, stepping closer to Jake)

MITCH

Prisoner? Jake, no...You don't understand. This... what I feel for you, it's real. It's the only real thing I've got.

Mitch's voice grows darker as he steps even closer.

Mitch (quieter, more intense):

You think I'd let you walk away? After what I've done to protect you?

Jake (turning, angry now)

JAKE

Protect me? You think this is protection? You just slapped me down to the floor.

MITCH

You were going to leave me. You were going to run away, just like all the others. I couldn't let you do that, Jake. I won't let you.

JAKE

Mitch, leave you? I am not with you! Jesus did you just make this shit all up in your head.

Mitch steps closer, his hand reaching out to Jake, but Jake steps back. Mitch's desperation spills over, turning into something darker.

MITCH

I've done everything for you. I've killed before. I am protecting you from Carlos.

JAKE

So, you've killed someone. You... you murdered them? How long until you do the same to me?"

MITCH

I would never hurt you, Jake. I couldn't.

JAKE

Mitch you just did. It's ok. It's ok. Let's just let it go.

MITCH

But you have to understand... no one else can have you. No one. I need you. I need you to stay.

JAKE

Mitch, this isn't love. This is control. You're obsessed, and it's going to destroy both of us.

MITCH

Jake... please. I can't lose you. Not like the others. You're all I have left.

JAKE

Mitch, Let's just take a breath. Let's just take a fucking breath. Ok, this got out of hand. I am gonna go. Let's just forget this.

Mitch stumbles back, the words hitting him like a blow. Jake leaves. He leaves the flowers.

THE CAMERA LINGERS ON MITCH FOR A MOMENT, HIS FACE A MIXTURE OF RAGE, DESPERATION, AND HEARTBREAK. THE ROOM FEELS SUFFOCATING, THE TENSION UNBEARABLE. THE DOOR CLOSSES, LEAVING MITCH IN THE SHADOWS, TRAPPED IN THE VERY OBSESSION THAT HAS CONSUMED HIM.

MITCH

Jake! You left the roses. I'm sorry.

Brooding, talking to himself.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Idiot. I am such an idiot. That was embarrassing. I looked like such a fool.

He smells the flowers.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Roses with no sent, lousy roses.

He tosses them in the trash.

MITCH (CONT'D)

How could he not know? Nice? Nice? I have been so clear with him. So I hit him, but he deserved that. This side business of Carlos is trouble. This cover for moving high-end designer drugs through Miami's elite is gonna stop. Carlos is nothing. He is not the person for my Jake. Backroom parties, Cuban Mafia all around, all the time. Paying off cops, cocaine for the non-name Miami elite. If he was not around, I know my Jake would see it my way. It is so clear. Jake belongs to me. I did not have this wrong. He knew I loved him. That I do love him that we are perfect. So I hit him. He had that coming. Telling me "I didn't know." I will not be just another rose on the vine.

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS MITCH BROODING, PICKING UP THE ROSES. THE ORIGINAL DENNIS MANNING SONG "ANOTHER ROSE ON THE VINE" PLAYS.

SONG: ANOTHER ROSE ON THE VINE

I WHISPERED IN THE DARKNESS, "HELLO"
I WAS LOOKING FOR THE ONE I USED TO KNOW.
I WAS LONGING FOR OUR DAYS IN THE SUN
I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS THE ONLY ONE
WHO COULD TURN YOUR HEAD
BUT NOW INSTEAD I'M JUST ANOTHER ROSE ON THE VINE

AND I USED TO TURN YOUR HEAD , BUT NOW INSTEAD
I'M JUST ANOTHER ROSE ON YOUR VINE

KAREN ENTERS. SHE IS MATTER-OF-FACT. MITCH IS STARTLED.
THE SONG UNDERSCORES THE SCENE.

KAREN

Oh *that* went well, Mitch. Bravo!

MITCH

Karen, what the hell are you doing here.

Karen Laughs sarcastically.

KAREN

Drama. I just love a little drama, don't you?

MITCH

When did you get here?

KAREN

What are you going through, Mitch. And oh, nice slap down. Poor Jake.

MITCH

What did you see?

KAREN

Everything. The roses. The "Roses have no scent." You making your move. Playing your hand. USING your hand. Ouf I didn't see that coming. DING DING ROUND ONE over. Jake was down for the count! The awkward series of kisses. Ohhh my

She laughs.

MITCH

Look you told me to make a move. You said "Carlos and Jake are splitting up."

KAREN

Mitch, Mitch, Mitch. You should listen closely. I said, "I *think* Carlos and Jake are having trouble."

MITCH

No. You said, "Jake talks about you all the time, Mitch. Carlos has not been paying enough attention to Jake." That's what you said, Karen.

KAREN

Well, I might have (she pauses) over-dramatized the situation a little bit. Mamma does like a little drama to spice things up!

MITCH

You told me, Karen, I should make a move. And, Jake is on to things around here.

KAREN

A move yes, Mitch. Not a slap down. Ouf! And what things does Jake know?

She laughs as she says the next line.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Jake to the floor! Mitch is the winner of Round One!

MITCH

I looked like an idiot.

She Laughs again as she speaks
these lines as well.

KAREN

No, Mitch. You Look like an idiot. Present
tense. Mitch, my dear, you slapped Jake down!

MITCH

He deserved that. You set me up.

KAREN

Mitch calm down. We can fix this. Now how much
or what do you think Jake is aware of?

Mitch still brooding.

MITCH

Jake knows too much. He's asking questions
about the shipments. The cash deposits with no
sales attached. He's not stupid, Karen. He's
figured out what we're running. Now we've got a
problem. If he talks... we're finished.

KAREN

Now, Mitch you are getting yourself all worked
up. Mitch, stop being so dramatic. He's just a
kid, probably scared out of his mind right now.

MITCH

We either bring him in deeper or we cut him
loose-permanently. You remember from before. I
will help him along to see it my way. Things
are going to be different.

KAREN

I remember and Carlos had to get you out of
that mess. Poor, Irish. Shot dead at the
Freedom Tower. Kind of ironic don't you think?
But then again, a dead body in Miami is nothing
new. Thank God for sharks! Ah, the old 'bring
him in or bury him' dilemma. Always a classic
in this business. So, what do you want from me?
Need a clean-up job? Or do you want me to reel
him in... make him feel comfortable enough to
stay quiet. You want me to play nice with the
boy? Make him think he's safe, part of the
inner circle?

MITCH

Carlos is out. Mitch is in.

(MORE)

MITCH (CONT'D)

Jake will understand and thank me for this.
Carlos has to go.

KAREN

Mitch you focus on Jake. I will work on him as well. And as for Carlos, leave him to me. Remember Carlos saved you the last time you went too far.

MITCH

Karen, let's not bring that up again. That dead man wanted to leave me. Nobody leaves, Mitch.

INT: PAN THROUGH THE RESTAURANT EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE

THE CAMERA BACKS OUT OF THE OFFICE, GOES THROUGH THE BUSY KITCHEN AND INTO THE RESTAURANT. CARLOS IS AT THE BAR WOOING GUESTS. ROBIN WATCHES AND OBSERVES. ROBIN SEES ALEJANDRO LOOK AT CARLOS SEDUCTIVELY AS HE WHISPERS INTO CARLOS' EAR. ALEJANDRO SEES THAT ROBIN OBSERVED THIS. ROBIN NODS FOR ALEJANDRO TO COME OVER.

ROBIN

Alejandro, what are you and the Boss talking about.

ALEJANDRO

Nothing Mr. Security. He need help tying someone up.

ROBIN

Someone?

ALEJANDRO

Something. Tie Something up. You can keep your handcuffs to yourself.

Robin with a commanding quiet tone bites each word out as a threat and promise of trouble for Alejandro.

ROBIN

Don't fuck with me. Back off.

Alejandro laughs sarcastically and Robin pulls him in quickly and subtly in by his neck and squeezes Alejandro's balls. Alejandro's face gets red and he squirms.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Shhh. Now you listen to me. When I say "Back off" that is what you will do. Back the fuck away from Carlos. You get it.

ALEJANDRO

Yea yea I get it.

ROBIN

I want some respect. Some goddamned respect from that tight ass and smart mouth of yours.

ALEJANDRO

Ok

ROBIN

Ok what?

ALEJANDRO

Ok, Sir.

Robin releases the grip on Alejandro's neck but gives his balls one more squeeze and smiles. Alejandro quietly winces.

ROBIN

Good Boy. Now back off. Get that bar set up for the party. Do your fucking job, you're a bartender.

THE CAMERA PANS OUT TO THE RESTAURANT. ALEJANDRO WALKS AWAY AND THEN LOOKS BACK. ROBIN GIVES AN ICY STARE. CARLOS WORKS THE BAR AND HE LOOKS OVER AT ROBIN. CARLOS GIVES ROBIN THAT HEARTBREAKER SMILE. ROBIN, COOL, COLLECTED, NODS.

The scene fades out.

INT: CARLOS' APARTMENT

ON SCREEN: 2 DAYS BEFORE PRESENT DAY. SEPTEMBER 22, 2024.

Billy Joel "Movin' Out" is played.

Jake and Carlos are arguing. We don't hear them but it is apparent that Jake is upset and Carlos is trying to calm him down. Jake is irritated and has had it.

CARLOS

You've been quiet lately. ¿Qué pasa, Jake? Something on your mind.

BILLY JOEL "GOOD LUCK 'CAUSE I'M MOVIN' OUT" SONG ENDS.

JAKE is irritated.

JAKE

Yeah, Carlos, we need to talk about when would breaking up work for you?

CARLOS

Look we are not breaking up. You are mad. I get it. I am sorry.

JAKE

No I am not mad, Carlos, I am done. I'm not blind. I've seen things... things I can't ignore anymore.

CARLOS mood change now taking control.

CARLOS

Seen what, Jake? What do you think you've seen? Believe me you are NOT done. You are staying right here. You belong to me. You're overthinking things, cariño. Let's not make this into something it's not.

JAKE

Don't do that, Carlos. Don't lie to me. I'm not stupid. I know what's going on... and I don't want any part of it.

Carlos steps close and in a low, commanding and growling voice

CARLOS

Jake, calm down. You don't know what you're talking about. You're making something out of nothing. I'm telling you... it's nothing.

KAREN OPENS THE DOOR AND WALKS IN. KAREN'S HAIR IS NOW BLONDE IT WAS DARK BEFORE. JAKE IS UPSET. KAREN HAS NO CONCERN OR CARE. SHE WALKS OVER AND KISSES CARLOS ON THE CHEEK, SHE GIVES A CHILLY NOD TO JAKE.

KAREN

Carlos, wonderful to see you. You missed me, yes? I thought so. Hello, Jakey.

Jake rolls his eyes.

JAKE

It's Jake. Jake. Karen, do you ever knock?

KAREN

Why did I interrupt something? Oh sorry. Well, anyway Carlos always says I can come anytime.

JAKE

You should knock. Knock. You know that word "Knock"?

Karen gives JAKE a look of disdain. She puts her arm around CARLOS.

JAKE

Carlos? Anything?

CARLOS

Jake, relax, it's just Karen.

JAKE

That's great. Just great.

KAREN

How easy was that? All set with you Jakey?

JAKE

Please do not call me "Jakey"

KAREN

Carlos calls you "Jakey"

CARLOS laughs a bit.

JAKE

Yes. That is CARLOS. That is not you.

KAREN

Touchy. Someone is having a little fit, today. Did you not get your bottle?

JAKE

Karen

CARLOS

Jake it's ok. Relax.

JAKE

I am gonna take off, I got work to do. Mitch called me, and wants to pick up our conversation from yesterday.

KAREN

What did you two talk about? Must have been exciting! Like watching a boxing match.

JAKE

What did you say.

KAREN

I couldn't help but remember that little... incident I saw between you and Mitch

CARLOS

What incident?

JAKE

Nothing.

KAREN

Quite the dramatic scene, wasn't it? Very... telenovela.

CARLOS

What happened?

JAKE

Carlos, I will be back to finish this conversation.

KAREN

Oh don't go because of me.

JAKE

When you are leaving?

KAREN

Later.

JAKE

Great. Carlos I'll be back, later. Text me when you are free so we can continue our conversation.

KAREN

What are you two lovebirds talking about?

CARLOS

Karen, go easy.

She laughs.

KAREN

Jakey, You didn't leave yet? I had already forgotten you. The door is that way

JAKE

Karen, really you are a Blonde? Great color, it looks so natural on you.

Karen snuggles up to Carlos like a Black Widow.

KAREN

Oh thanks, I am glad you noticed! Blondes do have more fun.

JAKE

Sarcasm. That was sarcasm. It's looks like shit.

Jake leaves. Karen takes out a nail file and sharpens her nails.

CARLOS

So what happened with Mitch and Jake?

KAREN

Nothing, really. Mitch made a move on Jakey and he refused. Mitch slapped Jakey to the ground. He is such a boy. Moody.

CARLOS

Wait, Mitch slapped Jake? And he is MY boy.

KAREN

Hmm?

CARLOS

Karen! Are you listening?

KAREN

What? Did I miss something? Is Jakey still having a tantrum? Maybe you need to put him in his playpen.

CARLOS

Don't call him "Jakey" You know that irritates him.

KAREN

Well, you do. And I know it irritates him. THAT is the point.

CARLOS

Just ease up on him.

KAREN

You know he is onto things around here. Why do you call him "Jakey"

CARLOS

What things. He doesn't know shit. "Jakey," well that's my pet name for him.

Karen does a dramatic little scene of Carlos and Jake making love

KAREN

Jakey, Jakey oh Jakey,ohh

Carlos smiles. Breaks the mood to easy tones.

CARLOS

Ok, ok

KAREN

And what is his pet name for you?

CARLOS

Carlos blushes. Then PUFFS UP proud. He flexes and grabs his crotch as well to make the point.

"Papi Chulo"

KAREN

"Papi Chulo" now isn't that ...cute.

Jake comes back in, bustling through.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Oh look who is back? Did you need lunch money?
Bus fare? Directions?

JAKE

I forgot my phone. Karen. Back off. I am
telling you, back off.

Jake gets his phone and goes to
head out.

KAREN

Well "Papi Chulo" and I will be right here.

Jake stops dead and turns

JAKE

What did you say?

He looks at Carlos. Carlos is
embarrassed and looks away.

What did she just say?

KAREN

"Papi Chulo" what did I say something wrong? I
like it, "Papi Chulo. (she groans) "Oh, Papi
Chulo."

JAKE

Carlos? Unbelievable.

Jake leaves.

KAREN

What? What did I do?

CARLOS

Stop. Enough. Give it a rest.

Karen in a very overly dramatic
tone.

KAREN

Ouf. Another touchy one! A women doesn't feel safe with all this hostility around her. I feel threatened! I feel threatened!

She laughs. She does a Betty Boop move to show off her blonde hair.

KAREN (CONT'D)

So what do you think?

CARLOS

Think about what? Oh, the hair. Sure. Nice.

KAREN

Well, I have heard "That Blondes have all the fun!" Remember...you and I? On the beach. That song we used to sing

KAREN does an acapella version of
"Seasons In The Sun"

KAREN SINGS

WE HAD JOY WE HAD FUN WE HAD SEASONS IN THE SUN!

CARLOS

Light laugh

Yes I remember.

KAREN

Those were great times.

CARLOS

Yes they were.

KAREN

You were good for me. I was good for you.

CARLOS

Yes.

Karen moves in and kisses Carlos on the lips. Carlos doesn't react.

KAREN

So...

CARLOS

Karen, come on, we've been through this and you know that I like men.

Karen plays sexy and she kisses Carlos on the neck.

KAREN

I know you like men, now, and I thought maybe you might like me, again?

Karen continue to kiss his neck.
Carlos is not responding.

CARLOS

Ah Karen, You know I like you. You are my best friend. You always

KAREN

I know "I have your back, I listen, I am ready to do anything."

KAREN STOPS SUDDENLY. SHE STEPS BACK LIKE SHE HAS SEEN A GHOST. SHE SPEAKS IN A DRAMATIC AND "I-AM-THE-LAST-TO-KNOW TONE OF VOICE"

She gasps. She gets up and repeats herself, Frantic. Carlos is not sure what is going on.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Oh My GOD! OH MY GOD. OH MY GOD. Oh my GOOOOOOOOOOOD.

CARLOS

Karen, What?

Karen moves to the chair and sits.
She speaks in a sad, bland tone.

KAREN

I am a Fag Hag.

CARLOS

No. You are not

KAREN

Yes. I have become the best-friend-Fag-Haaaaaag. What was I thinking?

CARLOS

What do you mean?

Karen pulls the blond wig off. She is embarrassed and could kick herself. She speaks very plainly like she is speak age-old truths.

KAREN

Jesus. I, I, I put on this stupid wig, trying to get your attention. I think I can rekindle an old flame. God this is so depressing. I feel like such a fool. A "Fag Hag" I am a goddamned Fag Hag to Carlos!

CARLOS

Karen no you are not.

KAREN

Carlos, do not interrupt me. All I do for you. I am there for you. When you broke up with all those men I was there. When you had a fling and then finished with Harry, I was there. I took care of Fred. Do you remember? When you wanted to set up this Drug thing.

CARLOS

Karen, now let's bring that up.

KAREN

Which thing not to bring up? The Miami-Cuban drug business at your restaurant EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE or Fred. Carlos, I took care of Fred.

KAREN speaking like CARLOS.

"We need to get rid of him, Karen....Fred Knows too much, Karen.." Jesus. "Fred is dead" remember that Carlos?

CARLOS

Yes, yes I remember.

KAREN

And?

CARLOS

And what?

KAREN

Thank you? I took care of Fred. Fred is gone.
Fred is dead.

KAREN groans and changes the mood

Anyway, We drank ourselves blind over the split
with Juan, or John or what was his name...

Carlos

Craig. His name was

Karen

Do not jump in here. Craig. Oh Craig! That
one was such a loser. Weak. They all have
been weak. I am not weak. I showed YOU things.
I introduced you to wine and fashion and art
and business. Your fucking clients at the
restaurant. You didn't know any VIP people.
You cheap, Cuban hustler. Sure, you look good
and God knows you are smooth. You can talk the
wings off of an angel. Damn it, I hate you for
that. I have wasted so much time, just waiting
for you. Season after season after month after
year. Waiting for you, Carlos. Snow turns
into rain into summer into fall. And for the
record I think of you every God-Damned time
that song plays.

CARLOS

What song.

KAREN

Jesus! Keep up! That song. That song. *Dan
Fogelberg.*

KAREN SINGS

*MET MY OLD LOVER AT THE GROCERY STORE. THE SNOW WAS FALLING
CHRISTMAS EVE*

CARLOS

He smiles

Oh yea. I remember

CARLOS SINGS

AND THEN I TURNED TO MAKE MY WAY BACK HOME

KAREN AND CARLOS SING

Gently with reminiscent tone

THE SNOW TURNED INTO RAIN

They pause. Both not sure what to
do with that memory.

KAREN

I never liked when "snow turned into rain." I was ready at any moment to be with you, go with you, anything just to be close. I waited for you. I am the one for you. The men will always come and go because that is what men do. Men are pigs. Men don't care. Men don't get you like I get you. And this new one, JAKY, God, I hate him. You know why? Do you really know why? Carlos!

CARLOS

What? You told me not to interrupt.

KAREN

Well keep up.

CARLOS

Ok Ok. What?

KAREN

Do you know why I really hate this new one, Jakey?

CARLOS

It's been 4 years Karen. I am not sure why we are having this conversation?

KAREN

Because He doesn't deserve you.

CARLOS

What does that mean?

KAREN

I mean that you are not a good person. One look in those eyes and men are mesmerized, we are all cast under your spell. Jake loves you. Mitch idolizes you. Mitch has a thing for Jake. I love you. And that Robin is still around. Secrets. You two have *secrets*, and I don't like it. No one knows you like me. No one and that is a fact. You better wise up Mr. Diaz, because I have dirt on you. I have the story about Fred. And Irish, 10 years ago.

Carlos speaks in a low and focused tone. Biting on every word.

CARLOS

Karen, I would be very, very careful about what you say and the claims you think you know.
Back off of Jake. Back off of Robin.

She walks up to him and finger points his chest and taps on his chest with each word again.

KAREN

Is that a threat? IS THAT A THREAT?

She laughs coldly.

KAREN

I dare you to stop me. If needed I will bring you down. You better cut off this Jakey thing now. End it. I don't like all of these secrets with Robin.

CARLOS

What secrets? What are you talking about?

KAREN

And while you are at it, get that Robin out of the picture. That little bird has been around too long. I don't like him. Never did. He has secrets. I don't like secrets. He has some hold on you. Knock it off. Get them both out of the picture, Or

CARLOS

Or what?

She FINGER POINTS the next sentence in a loving tone.

Karen

You will be very happy with just me. You can have your men, but you will come home to me. We will be the power couple and you will always come home to me.

CARLOS

Karen that is not going to happen.

KAREN

You better get Jakey and his shit out of here.
Pack up whatever loose ends you have with
Robin. Momma needs some love.

She goes to the mirror. Smooth
out her clothes. Takes out her
compact and applies the REDDEST
lipstick possible as she speaks.
All matter-of-fact.

KAREN

You know I think it IS true. This BLONDE is
gonna have a lot more fun starting now.

She heads towards the door. She
pauses and comes back and kisses
CARLOS on the neck leaving a bold
set of RED LIPS on his neck.
MARKING her territory. She heads
back to the door.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Papi Chulo, I'll see you soon. Remember we
belong to each other. Right?

CARLOS

Sure. Karen, one more thing. No one tells me
what to do or when to do it. Who to love who
not to love is that clear?

KAREN

Oh Carlos, cut the drama. You and I will be
together. You'll see. Just like before. I am
here to help you, any way I can. Isn't that
right

CARLOS

Sure.

KAREN

Good boy.

Karen leaves. Carlos is brooding

CARLOS

Good Boy? Good Boy? What a bitch. I "belong"
to her. That's what she thinks. Jake Belongs
to me. He is mine. Robin is mine.

(MORE)

The Drugs will continue. Robin has a plan.
Stick to the plan. Jake belongs to me, MY
JAKEY.

CARLOS shakes it off and gets back
into a character. CARLOS takes out
his cell and calls JAKE. CARLOS
sounds apologetic.

CARLOS
Jake, yea, I am sorry. Come on home. Yes,
Karen left, don't worry about her. We need to
figure things out. Ok on your way? Great.

CARLOS hangs up and goes back to
his brooding and Karen. His mood
changed back to brooding.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
"Good Boy" I am not her "boy." She has
nothing on me. Nothing.

Jake enters. Carlos changes back
his attitude.

Hey I am glad you are back. I am sorry.

Carlos goes to Jake and gives a
hug, strong, and a full kiss.

JAKE

Ok ok, slow it down. What is on your neck?

CARLOS
Oh that is from Karen.

JAKE
Karen? What? Why in the hell are her lips on
your neck?

Jake sighs. Shakes his head. Jake
backs up a few steps.

Carlos
I have been a jerk. I should not have let
Karen go on the way she did.

Jake

No. You have not been a jerk. You are a jerk.
And she kisses you?

CARLOS

No that was nothing. That is nothing.

JAKE

Carlos, I can't do this anymore. I don't want to be involved in something this dangerous. I just... I want out.

Carlos

Jakey, you can't leave. I need you. I do.

JAKE

I think you would be fine. You are always fine.

CARLOS

Jake, look, it's not all bad and it doesn't have to just end. Sometimes you just have to listen, inside, you feel it right?

JAKE

Carlos, I got to let go

Jake move towards the door and
Carlos blocks him and pulls his
arm.

CARLOS

No. No it's you and me. That's what it is.
Jake. No. I am warning you. You can't leave.
We are in this together. Don't walk away from
us because of something you don't understand.
I'm protecting you... always

JAKE

You are warning me? You are protecting me?

CARLOS

Believe me when I tell you that you will get
over this "thing" and see it my way, our way.
You are staying. You belong to me, is that
clear. And you're mine. Don't forget that.

JAKE

Belong? Are you crazy?

Carlos slaps Jake hard enough to
knock him to the ground.

CARLOS

You are mine. That's gonna bruise. Good. Give you a reminder of who is in charge here.

Stunned. Looking up

JAKE

Jesus. That is the 2nd time.

CARLOS

Yes I heard Mitch took a crack at you. Get up. Get up! Can't you see you are making me crazy? Nobody hits my Jake.

JAKE

Well you just did.

CARLOS

Comes with the territory.

He shakes it off and gets up, rubbing his jaw.

JAKE

Don't do that, Carlos. Don't lie to me. I'm not stupid. I know what's going on. Big deposits with no sales, inflated inventory. Come on.

Carlos grabs Jake.

CARLOS

What is going on with Mitch? Are you seeing him behind my back? Are you cheating on me?

JAKE

No I am not. But I should ask you that same question.

CARLOS

What question? What are you saying.

Carlos raises his hand again to slap Jake, and Jake does not flinch.

JAKE

What are you gonna hit me again? You are pathetic. You Cuban mafia thug. There is more going down around here than anyone is telling me. I am going to find out. You have lovers everywhere. I see the way that Alejandro looks at you. The fucking FedEx guy. Jesus. And what about Spain?

CARLOS

What about Spain? What do you mean?

JAKE

I found receipts, expenses on the books that don't add up from my point of view. Who was with you in Spain? Karen? Are you bisexual?

CARLOS

I am Latin, everyone is fair game!

JAKE

Jesus, make up your mind.

Jake heads to the door and Carlos blocks him.

JAKE

Carlos get out of my way.

Carlos kisses Jake as a form of power.

CARLOS

You will be back.

Jake shakes his head and leaves.
Carlos pauses and smiles.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

The "PLAN." Got to stick to the "PLAN'" Papi Chulo is back and on top. Jakey has a few lessons to learn.

Walks around and does an "air slap" and relives the slap that knocked JAKE down, he laughs a bit as he acts this out.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Round One goes to Papi Chulo!

Knock on the door. CARLOS goes to the door. ROBIN enters. ROBIN is wanting the details.

ROBIN

I just saw Jake leave.

CARLOS pulls ROBIN inside.

CARLOS

Robin, Listen. Just listen. That worked.

CARLOS kisses ROBIN.

ROBIN

Tell me.

CARLOS smiles, his mood changed.
He kisses ROBIN again, quickly.

CARLOS

Oh yes. I slapped him right down to ground.
You should've seen his face. He was scared. It
is gonna leave a mark, black eye I think. I
just laid one on him. Good thing we practiced
that. Fuck, I scared myself a bit (he smiles).

ROBIN

The Plan, Carlos. The Plan. Are we on track?

CARLOS

The plan is on track. Jake knows or is onto
the Drug Distribution through EL IMPERIO DE LA
NOCHE. He know s about Spain.

ROBIN

Spain? What does he know about Spain?

CARLOS

He thinks I was there with Karen. We are almost
through. I got to get Karen back in line.

ROBIN

Carlos, you are with me. You are gay,
remember?

CARLOS

Robin, I love you. Karen and I had a thing a
long time ago and she tried to come on to me
this evening. Put on a blond wig.

ROBIN

So now you like blondes?

CARLOS

Well how would you look as a dusty, dirty
blonde? I love you. Now back to the plan. You
give Jake an hour and call him. Move this
along. Wait till I tell you about Mitch. Holy
shit. Mitch did it on his own (Carlos Laughs).
You won't believe it.

ROBIN

Tell me?

CARLOS

Mitch slapped Jake down! Karen was there! You better go. Jake may come back.

ROBIN

Alright. Where is the gun?

CARLOS Reveals the gun and holster. He smiles.

CARLOS

Right here. Now go.

ROBIN

Ok Ok. I am going. I will be back in a few hours. Wait up.

ROBIN kisses CARLOS. CARLOS Growls.

CARLOS

I will be here.

ROBIN exits. CARLOS smiles. He says in a menacing tone

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Would you dance with me? Come on, it's just a dance.

INSTRUMENTAL OF THE SONG "MORE GOING DOWN" PLAYS. THE CAMERA PANS OUT THE WINDOW TO SHOW THE VIBRANT MIAMI NIGHT LIFE.

JAKE IS AT THE BAR AT EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE. ROBIN COMES IN, HIS EYES DART AROUND CHECKING FOR SECURITY. JAKE HUGS ROBIN. THEY LEAVE AND GO TO ROBIN'S APARTMENT.

ROBIN SETTLES JAKE INTO THE GUESTROOM.

ROBIN

Jake, you had a rough night. We can talk in the morning. I need to get back to the restaurant and there is a late party for some folks in from Cuba. I will see you tomorrow morning, We can go have breakfast and work this out.

JAKE

Robin, I can't thank you enough. I found out things that aren't right. As the head of security you should see what I found. Also, what about Spain? Several trips there and big expenses that don't make sense. Karen must have been with him.

ROBIN

Ok, Ok, let's look at what you discovered. I
have a plan on what to do next.

THE CAMERA MOVES TO A SEEDY SIDE OF MIAMI WITH BACKROOM
EVENTS, BARS, CIGARS AND CARS.

INT: CARLOS IS IN HIS LIVING ROOM

ON SCREEN: A FEW HOURS LATER THAT EVENING, SEPTEMBER 22, 2024

ROBIN GETS OF THE ELEVATOR. THE ORIGINAL SONG, "WHAT ABOUT
SPAIN" PLAYS AS THE SCENE OPENS. FLASHBACK TO SPAIN WHERE
CARLOS AND ROBIN MADE LOVE.

PRESENT TIME. ROBIN KNOCKS ON THE APARTMENT DOOR OF CARLOS.
ROBIN ENTERS AND THEY FALL MADLY, WILDLY INTO EACH OTHER.
TEARING OF CLOTHS. CARLOS IN IS A BLACK JOCK STRAP WHEN HE
TAKES HIS JEANS OFF. . ROBIN GROWLS. MOVING AROUND THE
APARTMENT. THE CAMERA DOES NOT SHOW FULL MALE-ON-MALE SEX,
THIS IS NOT A PORNO SCENE. THE MEN WILL KISS, TEAR CLOTHES
OFF, SWEAT, MOVEMENTS OF SEXUAL ACTS. THE SONG IS PLAYED
OVER THEIR LOVE MAKING AND WILL FADE AS MOMENTS OF DIALOGUE
ARE SPOKEN IN THE HEAT OF PASSION.

SONG: What About Spain?

WHAT ABOUT SPAIN? WHAT ABOUT OUR DAYS IN THE SUN?
DON'T YOU MISS THAT MAGICAL, MYSTICAL, LIBRA MOON?
WE DRANK TEQUILA. WE DRANK SANGRIA. WE FOUND A RHYTHM IN
THE AIR. LET'S GO BACK AGAIN. WHAT ABOUT SPAIN?

EXT: LAST YEAR ON THE BEACH IN SPAIN, MAKING LOVE IN THE SAND
WITH CARLOS AND ROBIN

WHAT ABOUT SPAIN? WHAT ABOUT THE TIME WE GOT LOST IN THAT
TOWN WHERE NOBODY NEW OUR NAME.

INT: CARLOS' APARTMENT

Carlos has Robin pinned against
the wall in heated sex.

ROBIN

God, it was like there was no else that
mattered but us.

WE DRANK TEQUILA

WE DRANK SANGRIA

WE FOUND A RHYTHM IN THE AIR. LET'S GO BACK AGAIN.WHAT ABOUT
SPAIN?

AND NOW BACK IN THE CITY I THINK I HAVE FORGOTTEN
THE SOUND OF THAT GUITAR
ON THE NIGHT WHEN WE MET

Robin has Carlos on his back on the bed, both men naked, entangled in each other.

CARLOS

Robin, sometimes I worry that this is all going to fade. That in the end, everything ends. You will be there with me, right?

ROBIN

Be there? In the end? Oh yes i will be right by your side.

WHAT ABOUT SPAIN? WHAT CAN WE DO TO HOLD ON. OUR MEMORIES SEEM TO FADE DON'T YOU MISS THAT MAGICAL, MYSTICAL, LIBRA MOON. WE DRANK TEQUILA. WE DRANK SANGRIA. WE FOUND A RHYTHM IN THE AIR. WHAT ABOUT SPAIN? WHAT ABOUT SPAIN?

ROBIN AND CARLOS FINISH THEIR LOVE SCENE. THE CAMERA HOLD THE SHOT LOOKING OUT ON THE MIAMI BAY MOONLIGHT AND THIS WILL TRANSITION TO THE MORNING SUNRISE.

Instrumental of the song "What About Spain" lingers in the air. Both men are naked and asleep. Their bare chests are seen, both with a glisten of sweat from multiple sex sessions.

INT. DREAM SEQUENCE - NIGHT - EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE

CARLOS IS STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE, THE CLUB PACKED WITH PEOPLE. THE MUSIC IS LOUD, PULSATING, AND THE LIGHTS FLASH IN RHYTHM. EVERYTHING SEEMS NORMAL AT FIRST, UNTIL A STRANGE FEELING OF UNEASE CREEPS OVER HIM.

HE'S DRESSED IN HIS SHARPEST SUIT, BUT SOMETHING FEELS WRONG. HE GLANCES AROUND, SENSING THAT THE EYES OF EVERYONE IN THE CLUB ARE ON HIM. HE BRUSHES IT OFF AT FIRST, TRYING TO MAINTAIN HIS CONFIDENT COMPOSURE, BUT THE WHISPERS BEGIN.

Crowd (murmuring, laughing softly)

CROWD

Look at him... the maricón mafia boss.
Can you believe he thinks he's in charge?
Pathetic.
Carlos the gay king! ¡El maricón cubano! Look at him! Look at him!

HE TRIES TO SPEAK, TO SHOUT BACK, TO ASSERT HIS POWER, BUT HIS VOICE IS CAUGHT IN HIS THROAT. HIS HANDS CLENCH INTO FISTS, BUT THEY TREMBLE UNCONTROLLABLY. HIS SHARP SUIT, HIS SYMBOL OF POWER AND CONTROL, BEGINS TO FADE—HIS CLOTHES DISINTEGRATE INTO TATTERED FABRIC.

HE LOOKS DOWN IN HORROR AS HE'S LEFT STANDING, EXPOSED AND VULNERABLE, NUDE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CROWD. **ON HIS STRONG MUSCLED BACK A TATTOO OF A PHOENIX RISING FROM FLAMES,**

CROWD (CONT'D)

You think you can run this city, maricón?
You think anyone takes you seriously?
Look at you! Power? You're a joke!
¡El maricón nunca manda!
The gay man never rules!
Rise Phoenix! Spread your gay wings! Fly!

ROBIN

You think being gay makes you special, Carlos?
You think you've earned your place here?

The Crowd and Robin now chant
louder to a deafening pitch

ROBIN & THE CROWD

¡Maricón! ¡Maricón! ¡Maricón! Spread your
wings! Fly faggot! Fly maricón!

CARLOS

I am proud... proud to be who I am
I am proud... proud to be who I am

CARLOS FINALLY REACHES THE EXIT, STANDING IN THE DOORWAY, HIS CHEST HEAVING AS HE GASPS FOR AIR. THE RAIN OUTSIDE POURS HEAVILY, LIKE A WALL HE MUST PUSH THROUGH. AS HE STEPS OUTSIDE, THE LAUGHTER FADES, BUT THE FEELING OF SHAME AND HUMILIATION CLINGS TO HIM. HE LOOKS BACK AT THE CLUB, THE NEON SIGN FLICKERING OMINOUSLY IN THE STORM.

HE WAKES UP NAKED, STANDING BY THE WINDOW IT IS POURING, HE QUIVERS REPEATING "I AM PROUD" AGAIN AND AGAIN. HIS TATTOO GLISTENS. **ON HIS STRONG MUSCLED BACK A TATTOO OF A PHOENIX RISING FROM FLAMES,**

Robin, naked comes over to him and
gives a strong bear hug from
behind to comfort him. He
outlines the Phoenix on Carlos's
back/

ROBIN

Another nightmare, Papi.

CARLOS

Yes and you were laughing at me. Laughing, you
and the crowd.

ROBIN TAKES A STRONG HAND AND LEADS CARLOS BACK TO BED. CARLOS FACES THE WINDOW WATCHING THE HEAVY RAIN. ROBIN DOES THE "SPOON" POSITION AND PULLS CARLOS IN. IN MOMENTS ROBIN IS ASLEEP. CARLOS' DEEP, BLACK EYES STARE INTO THE RAIN.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

I am proud...I am proud.

The scene fades.

INT: BEDROOM AT DAWN AT CARLOS' APARTMENT

ON SCREEN SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 - 1 DAY BEFORE TODAY

THE SOFT MORNING LIGHT SPILLS THROUGH THE LARGE WINDOWS. ROBIN, SHIRTLESS LOOKS OUT. ROBIN TURNS AND STARES AT HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR. HIS BODY, HARDENED FROM YEARS IN SECURITY, CONTRASTS WITH THE VULNERABILITY IN HIS EYES. HE RUNS A HAND OVER HIS CHEST, LINGERING ON AN OLD SCAR.

ROBIN

Strength doesn't protect you from everything...
does it?

CARLOS LEANS BACK AGAINST THE HEADBOARD WITH A CUP OF CUBAN COFFEE IN HAND, HIS EXPRESSION UNREADABLE. CARLOS GOES UP FROM BEHIND AND ENGULFS ROBIN IN A HUG AND KISSES HIS NECK AND STARTS WHAT COULD BE ANOTHER ROUND OF SEX.

CARLOS

You're mine, Robin... siempre

ROBIN

Then why do I feel like you're slipping through
my fingers?

CARLOS

Porque... a veces tengo miedo... that one day
you'll see the real me... y te vas. Nunca he
tenido que aferrarme a nadie antes. No sé cómo
ser lo que tú necesitas. Pero te necesito,
Robin... más de lo que sabes.

ROBIN

Carlos... I've seen the real you. And I'm
still here. You don't have to be perfect... no
tienes que ser más de lo que ya eres. Forever.

Carlos gives a tighter hug.

CARLOS

So, Jake, Karen, Mitch. The plan is set, Robin.
No mistakes

ROBIN

I know, Carlos. Everything's in motion. Jake's primed... Mitch is already pushing him. But what about Karen?

CARLOS

All she cares about is herself. Once Jake kills Mitch, she won't see it coming. By the time the cops connect the dots, she'll be buried under enough evidence to sink her for good. Besides I gave Karen what she wanted.

ROBIN

What she wanted?

CARLOS

She said, "Momma needs some love" so I gave her some love. Well I can swing both ways. I had Karen wrapped up tight around my (he grabs ROBIN'S crotch)...hmmm *finger*.

ROBIN

You had sex with her? When?

CARLOS growls low and moans.

CARLOS

When you went to meet Jake at the restaurant and then get him settled at your place.

ROBIN

Before I came over?

Carlos puffs up and grabs his crotch. Proud.

CARLOS

Well, you got to do what you got to do. I had to have her trust me again. So I went in...deep

ROBIN

Ok Ok I don't need to hear this. And Jake? He is quickly putting things together.

CARLOS

Jake will do exactly what we need him to do. Mitch slapped Jake to the ground!

ROBIN

Yea what a bonus!

CARLOS

Mitch slaps Jake. I slapped Jake. Twice now Jakey takes a slap! Good Boy! Robin your plan is genius.

(MORE)

CARLOS (CONT'D)

He thinks everyone is gonna slap him! We get this wrapped up and we start a new Drug Distribution in Barcelona.

ROBIN

Segtis. Better market. All the men go there. And we like men.

CARLOS

Men like us! Karen is gonna help Jake see the light. That Mitch is a threat. She thinks she and I are running off together.

Robin pulls Carlos in and in a cold dead stare

ROBIN

Don't cut me out, right. Till the end right?

CARLOS

Tú y yo... hasta el final, mi amor."

He pauses, brushing his lips against Robin's ear, his tone turning more possessive.

There's no one else. Just us. Always.

He presses a lingering kiss to Robin's neck, his voice barely a whisper now, but full of heat.

No hay escape... You're mine, Robin. Forever.

ROBIN PULLS BACK SLIGHTLY, MEETING CARLOS' GAZE, HIS BREATH CATCHING FOR A MOMENT AS HE PROCESSES THE DEPTH OF CARLOS' WORDS.

Robin his voice low, laced with both passion and a hint of vulnerability:

ROBIN

Siempre tú, Carlos... even when I try to escape, I can't. You know that.

He runs a hand over Carlos' chest, his eyes dark with love and lust.

"I'm yours... until the end.

Robin leans in, capturing Carlos' lips in a slow, heated kiss, letting the weight of their words hang between them. As they pull apart, Robin takes a deep breath, his resolve settling.

Spain better be ready for us.

CARLOS SMIRKS, A GLEAM OF DANGEROUS CONFIDENCE IN HIS EYES AS ROBIN STEPS BACK, SLIPPING ON HIS JACKET. ROBIN GIVES ONE LAST LINGERING LOOK BEFORE TURNING

ROBIN (CONT'D)

I am off to get Jake.

CARLOS

Mi corazón se ha perdido en ti.

ROBIN

I don't know if I can hold onto it... but I can't let you go.

THE CAMERA GOES THROUGH THE WINDOW AND SWIRLS TO THE VIBRANT MORNING STREETS OF MIAMI WITH VENDORS, WORKERS AND THE CITY ALIVE.

INT: BACK ENTRANCE OF EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE, THE RESTAURANT AND BAR OWNED BY MITCH AND CARLOS.

ON SCREEN: 10AM SEPTEMBER 23, 1 DAY BEFORE TODAY.

THE ORIGINAL DENNIS MANNING SONG, AFTER THE THUNDER AFTER THE RAIN" PLAYS AS THE SCENE BEGINS AND UNDERSCORES,
AFTER THE THUNDER, AFTER THE RAIN
AFTER THE SILENCE, AFTER THE PAIN
AFTER THE MOMENT WHEN THE MOMENT GONE
AFTER A WHILE YOU LEARN TO MOVE ON.

AFTER THE THUNDER, AFTER THE RAIN
AFTER IT'S DONE NO NEED TO EXPLAIN
AFTER THE NIGHTMARES EASE INTO DREAMS
AFTER IT'S DONE IT'S NOT AS BAD AS IT SEEMS

The song fades to instrumental.
Moody and dark.

KAREN IS AT THE OFFICE. JAKE ENTERS. JAKE HIS FACE STILL SHOWING A BRUISES FROM WHERE CARLOS SLAP HIM. KAREN HAS A RED COCKTAIL DRESS ON WITH LONG GLOVES, THE BLONDE WIG.

JAKE

My God, did you not go to bed yet? A little much for 10am don't you think? Against my better judgement I am here. What do you want? Jesus, you still have that wig?

KAREN

Blondes do have more fun. What's with the shades? A little style and mystery added to your wardrobe?

Jake removes the sunglasses.

KAREN (CONT'D)

My, my, someone likes it rough.

JAKE

So what is it? I know what's going on. There is more going down around here than anyone is telling me. I'm not dumb. Why were you in Spain?

KAREN

Jakey, calm down. Spain? Who is talking about Spain?

JAKE

Call me Jake, ok?

KAREN

You look like someone who's had enough, Jake.

Jake glances up, his eyes tired,
as Karen sits across from him,
crossing her legs elegantly.

JAKE

I am gonna get this sorted.

KAREN

You were never meant for this world, Jake. But Mitch? He's been pulling you in deeper since the moment he laid eyes on you. And look where it's gotten you--beaten down, trapped. He could kill you. What will you do?

JAKE

He's... obsessed. It's like I can't escape him. But... I can't kill him, Karen. I'm not like that.

KAREN

You say that now, but what happens when Mitch snaps again? He's dangerous, Jake. You've felt it. He almost killed you over nothing. Next time, he won't stop.

She pauses, letting the silence
grow heavier.

Do you really think he'll let you walk away?
That any of this can just... end? Not unless
you end it first.

JAKE

There has to be another way. I don't want to be like him.

Karen (leaning closer, her voice dropping, laced with quiet venom)

KAREN

You're not like him, Jake. You're better. You're smarter. And you deserve to be free from this nightmare he's dragging you into. But the only way to get out... is to take him down first. Think about it... Mitch killed his last lover when he tried to leave him. And Carlos? Carlos made it disappear. Do you really think Mitch wouldn't do the same to you?"

She tilts her head, letting her words hang.

If you don't stop him, Jake, he'll destroy you. It's only a matter of time.

JAKE

But if I kill him... I'll never be free of it.

KAREN

And I know that I have not always been, nice. You look like hell, Jake. That slap must've been worse than I thought.

JAKE

This is a combo order Matich and Carlos. I'll be fine, why would you start caring about me, now?

KAREN

Jake, Jake, Jake. Relax. Momma is here to help. We need to look at your options. Mitch isn't playing around anymore. You're not the first to feel his temper... and if you don't act soon, you won't be the last.

JAKE

What do you mean?

KAREN

Jake, Mitch murdered his last lover. Ten years ago. He tried to leave Mitch, and Mitch made sure that never happened. Poor, Irish.

JAKE

Irish? Murder? What? Why haven't I heard about this?

KAREN

Because Carlos made it disappear. All of it. Mitch walks free because Carlos pulled the strings with the police. Paid them off.

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

Are you willing to wait until it's you lying on the floor, dead?"

JAKE

Paid off the police? Murder? I think this is all a story. I am not a murderer.

KAREN

You're not a murderer, Jake. And I know Carlos hit you, knocked you down and that is the 2nd time you have been slapped down.

JAKE

Jesus is nothing private?

KAREN

And I know that you are scared of Carlos and you should be. Mitch is rather dangerous.

JAKE

Carlos? What will he do? And, Mitch that was just a misunderstanding.

KAREN

Believe me, those two have been comrades for years. You know about their fishing out on Biscayne Bay? People who are problems go out on his boat, El Tiburón, and never come back. Carlos likes sharks. He can be dangerous. Mitch is a dangerous man with a dangerous past.

JAKE

Enough, Karen. What do you want?

KAREN

Jakey, Momma only wants to help. Jakey, you ever hear about Fred?

JAKE

That old joke, "Fred is dead"?

KAREN

Exactly.

JAKE

What do you mean?

KAREN

I mean Fred tried to leave Carlos. Carlos was not having that. Then Fred is gone. A guy tried to leave Mitch, he is gone. Seems like a pattern with those two? People just

(she snaps her fingers)
Disappeared. Fishing trips, I guess?

JAKE
That's insane. You are saying that Carlos
killed Fred.

KAREN
Ask the sharks.

JAKE
And I think you are making this shit up. Just
another one of your games. You always try to
get in my head.

KAREN
Jakey you need protection.

She takes the gun out of her
purse.

JAKE
What a gun? No I do not need it.

KAREN
Jakey take it.

JAKE
Stop it with the "Jakey"

KAREN
I think you are going to want to have some
insurance.

JAKE
I am not taking a gun. Put that away.

THE CHORUS TO THE SONG "AFTER THE THUNDER, AFTER THE RAIN"
PLAYS. WE SEE KAREN CAST HER SPELL ON JAKE.

SHE MOVES BEHIND HIM AND HELPS HIM TO HOLD THE GUN IN HIS
HANDS. SHE IS SEDUCING HIM, TRANCE LIKE AS SHE GETS HIM TO
HOLD THE GUN AND GET HIS PRINTS ON IT.

THEY FIRE PRETEND SHOTS LIKE PLAYING "COWBOYS AND INDIANS AS
A KID.

AND THUNDER IS JUST A SOUND
AND ALL THE RAIN CAN DO IS COME DOWN AND DOWN
NO NEED FOR FEAR OR REFRAIN
IT'S JUST THE THUNDER. IT'S JUST THE RAIN.

KAREN sits down and takes Jake's
hand.

She lets go of his hands and he
hold the gun steady.

AFTER THE THUNDER, AFTER THE RAIN
AFTER YOU DO WHAT YOU DO, YOU CANNOT EXPLAIN

KAREN

You'll be alive, Jake. And that's what matters.
You're already in this. The only way to survive
is to end it. And then get out. You're stronger
than you think. Think it over, Jake. But don't
take too long. Mitch won't wait forever.

She steps toward the door, her
tone dropping.

This isn't about being a killer. It's about not
becoming a victim.

SHE LEAVES JAKE ALONE IN THE ROOM, THE DOOR CLOSING SOFTLY
BEHIND HER. JAKE SITS IN SILENCE, THE ECHO OF HER WORDS
REVERBERATING IN HIS MIND, PUSHING HIM CLOSER TO THE EDGE.
THE INSTRUMENTAL PLAYS ON DRAMATICALLY WITH THE SONG "AFTER
THE THUNDER, AFTER THE RAIN." THE SCENE FADES.

EXT: DARK MIAMI STREET, OCEAN BLVD

KAREN DRIVES THROUGH THE SLICK STREETS OF MIAMI. THE RAIN HAS
JUST STOPPED, LEAVING A GLISTENING SHEEN ON THE ROAD,
REFLECTING THE NEON LIGHTS OF THE CITY. HER HANDS GRIP THE
STEERING WHEEL TIGHTER THAN USUAL, HER MIND RACING. THE
RHYTHMIC SOUND OF THE WINDSHIELD WIPERS ECHOES LIKE A
METRONOME, CUTTING THROUGH THE SILENCE INSIDE THE CAR

HER FACE IS ILLUMINATED BY THE DASHBOARD LIGHTS, BUT HER EYES
ARE DISTANT, FOCUSED NOT ON THE ROAD BUT ON EVERYTHING THAT
JUST UNFOLDED. THE CONVERSATION WITH JAKE REPLAYS IN HER MIND
LIKE A BROKEN RECORD, EACH WORD ECHOING BACK AT HER LOUDER
AND LOUDER.

KAREN

Mitch killed his lover... Carlos made it
disappear... Jake has to kill Mitch. I thought
I had it all figured out... but I'm not the one
pulling the strings. That son of bitch.
Carlos... you set me up.

Now with more intensity.

That lousy son of a bitch! He always gets what
he wants, right? He thinks he's so goddamn
clever!

The song comes back in as Karen
drives and thinks.

AFTER THE THUNDER, AFTER THE RAIN
AFTER YOU DO WHAT YOU DO, YOU CANNOT EXPLAIN

AFTER THE MOMENT YOU REALIZE YOU ARE THE PAWN
AFTER THAT MOMENT YOU WAKE UP AND MOVE ON

AND THUNDER IS JUST A SOUND
AND ALL THE RAIN CAN DO IS COME DOWN AND DOWN
NO NEED FOR FEAR OR REFRAIN
IT'S JUST THE THUNDER. IT'S JUST THE RAIN.

THE CAMERA GOES BACK TO FOCUS ON KAREN. BLAND TONE AND SHE
SHAKES HER HEAD.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Carlos... you might think you're in control.
But you forgot one thing. The queen can take
down the king!

SHE SLAMS HER FOOT ON THE GAS, THE CAR SPEEDING DOWN THE
EMPTY MIAMI STREETS. THE STORM RAGES ON OUTSIDE, BUT INSIDE,
KAREN'S MIND HAS GONE SILENT, FOCUSED. SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE HAS
TO DO NOW

MONTAGE FLASHBACKS

THERE IS A MONTAGE OF FLASHBACKS OF ALL CHARACTERS. AS THE
MONTAGE IS QUICKLY MOVING THROUGH THE SCENES THE ORIGINAL,
DENNIS MANNING SONG PLAYS "WHAT WOULD CHER DO." THE FEELING
IS INTENSE, PRIMAL, RHYTHMIC. INTIMACY SCENES ARE NEVER
PORNOGRAPHIC, BUT INTENSE. MEN DO NOT REVEAL THEIR PENIS AND
KAREN'S NAKED BREAST IS NEVER SHOWN. THE MEN HAVE FIRM,
MUSCLED BODIES. BARS, CIGARS AND CARS.

The scenes:

MITCH TALKING WITH JAKE AND THEN THE SLAP AND JAKE HITS THE
FLOOR.

KAREN AND CARLOS MAKING LOVE TWO NIGHTS AGO.

ROBIN AND CARLOS MAKING LOVE FROM 1 NIGHT AGO.

MITCH AND CARLOS HAVE ORAL SEX IN THE OFFICE.

JAKE AND CARLOS HAVING COFFEE; DANCING ON THEIR FIRST DATE;
SEX IN THE APARTMENT

CARLOS DOING DRUG DEALS; VIP DRUG PARTIES AT THE RESTAURANT;
CARLOS AT THE BAR WORKING THE CROWD AS ROBIN OBSERVES; DRUGS
COMING IN, MONEY EXCHANGES, CUBAN CIGARS, CARLOS IN A WHITE
TANK TOP, CUBAN HAT AND GUN HOLSTER.

CARLOS TIES UP ALEJANDRO IN A SEX SCENE.

ROBIN AND ALEJANDRO, "BACK THE FUCK OFF."

THE RESTAURANT BUSY. MIAMI NIGHT LIFE. CARLOS EVERYWHERE.

JAKE'S HEAD SPINNING ALL OF THESE THOUGHTS.

CARLOS SLAPS JAKE TO THE GROUND.

IF CHER WAS IN TROUBLE
SHE WOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO
WHEN LIFE GOT HER DOWN
SHE WOULD ALWAYS CHOOSE
TO LOOK UP. TO LOOK OUT. TO LOOK AT THE STARS.
SHE SAYS, "WE ALL SLEEP ALONE."
SHE SAYS, "WE ALL HAVE OUR SCARS.

SO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF NO NEED FOR ANYONE
AND BELIEVE IN YOUR TRUTH BECAUSE WHEN THE DAY IS DONE
FIND THE HEART OF THE GYPSY DEEP INSIDE OF YOU
"SNAP OUT OF IT" THAT'S WHAT CHER WOULD DO.

IF CHER HAD BEEN USED SHE WOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO.
WHEN LOVE GOT HER DOWN SHE WOULD ALWAYS CHOOSE.
LET THE MAN GO. LET THE MAN DOWN. LOOK AT THE STARS
SHE SAYS, "THE WAY OF LOVE" WILL LEAVE YOU SOME SCARS.

SO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF NO NEED FOR ANYONE
AND BELIEVE IN YOUR TRUTH BECAUSE WHEN THE DAY IS DONE
FIND THE HEART OF THE GYPSY DEEP INSIDE OF YOU
"SNAP OUT OF IT" THAT'S WHAT CHER WOULD DO.

WHEN YOU MEET A BOY
AND HE STEALS YOUR HEART LIKE THIEF
HIS KISSES WILL LIE
DON'T LOOK IN HIS EYES
HE'S JUST A TRAMP
HE'S JUST A THIEF
HE'S JUST A GYPSY, WHO WILL ALWAYS USE YOU
WHAT WOULD CHER DO? WHAT WOULD CHER DO?

IF CHER WAS IN TROUBLE SHE WOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO.

INT: CARLOS' APARTMENT

ON SCREEN: SEPTEMBER 24, 2024, TODAY, 7:15 PM

JAKE AND ROBIN APPROACH THE ULTRA-MODERN MIAMI APARTMENT WITH
SWEEPING VIEWS OF THE BAY. 12TH FLOOR. THEY TAKE THE
ELEVATOR AND GET OFF AND HEAD TO SUITE 1250.

THE MOOD IS TENSE. ROBIN IS COOL AND IN CONTROL.

ROBIN

Are you cool, Jake?

No response. He elbows Jake.

JAKE

Yes, yes I am cool. Just nervous

Jake drops his keys

ROBIN

Jesus, Jake get it together

JAKE

Ok, ok, I am just scared. What if this goes bad? What if Carlos gets angry?

Robin, slightly irritated.

ROBIN

Come on Jake, open the door.

JAKE OPENS THE DOOR. HE TURNS ON THE LIGHT. THIS LIGHTS UP ONLY THE ENTRANCE. WE DO NOT SEE THE BODY ON THE FLOOR.

JAKE

Carlos? Carlos? I am home. Carlos?

JAKE looks around.

Robin, something is wrong.

CARLOS LYING DEAD ON THE FLOOR IN A GLAMOROUS YET SHADOWY MIAMI PENTHOUSE. THE LIGHTS COME UP AND CARLOS IS DEAD ON THE FLOOR, JAKE NEARLY TRIPS OVER HIM.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Robin. Robin.

Robin looks around, as "The Plan" has suddenly changed.

ROBIN

What the fuck?

JAKE

What happened?

ROBIN

Somebody got here before we did

JAKE

What do you mean "before we did" what were you going to do

ROBIN

Jake. Wake up. The plan. The plan went wrong.

ROBIN is pacing and trying to think.

JAKE

But you said, "I got a plan." What the hell was "the plan?"

ROBIN

Shit. This is not the plan.

Taking control of himself.
Thinking quickly and now in a
slightly angered tone.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Quiet, Jake. Let me think.

JAKE

Robin, come on we got to go. We should call 911.

ROBIN

Not till we find out who did this. We are not safe until we know.

KAREN APPEARS, AS IF SHE WERE HIDING, OBSERVING. COOL, SLY AND NO EMOTION.

KAREN

Well, Boys, what do we have here? OH, is that Carlos?

JAKE

Jesus, where did you come from.

KAREN

Well I was over there and now I am here.

Robin is icy and focused. His
"Plan" is unraveling in front of
us. Jake and Mitch not yet aware.

ROBIN

Karen, what happened.

She speaks in a surprised voice,
and very sarcastic, overly
dramatic voice.

KAREN

You know I am not quite sure.

We hear the door lock being picked
JAKE and ROBIN look. KAREN Feigns
dramatic tension.

OH My! I wonder who that is? Help! Help! I feel
threatened.

JAKE

What's that?

ROBIN

Shh. Quiet.

KAREN

OH the excitement! Intruders!

JAKE AND ROBIN LOOK AROUND FOR SOMETHING TO PICK UP. JAKE
GRABS A PILLOW. ROBIN GOES FOR THE LAMP. THEY HOLD THEIR
ITEM UP READY TO THROW AT THE INTRUDER. ROBIN LOOKS AT JAKE
AND SHAKES HIS HEAD.

ROBIN

Jake! Seriously? A pillow?

Jake looks embarrassed. He puts
the pillow down and stands behind
Robin. Robin just rolls his eyes.

The door opens, Mitch has a gun in
his hand, pointed ready to fire.
He looks nervous, but ready to
take action.

JAKE

Mitch?

MITCH

Jake? Are you ok?

ROBIN

Mitch?

MITCH

Robin, what the hell?

KAREN

Mitch, now this is a surprise! We should have
a party!

ROBIN

Mitch, why are you here?

KAREN

Oh Robin, hmmm you look surprised.

ROBIN

Mitch, put the gun down.

MITCH

Jake, are you ok? Where is Carlos?

KAREN

He is taking a little nap.

ROBIN

Karen.

KAREN

Mitch, Carlos is here. He is dead.

MITCH

What?

KAREN

Dead. Dead. Dead. How did this happen? Who could have done this? So many suspects?

Mitch moves in. Karen heads to the door unnoticed and locks it and puts the key in her pocket. No one else is aware of this.

MITCH

So, Jake are you ok? Are you hurt? Robin what did you do?

Mitch points the gun at Robin, and Robin make a move to go for Mitch.

Karen, what did you do?

Mitch points the gun at Karen.

ROBIN

Mitch let's put the gun down?

JAKE

Mitch, it's OK, come on put the gun down.

MITCH

Jake I thought that you were in trouble. Karen said that you were in trouble and needed my help.

JAKE

Karen, what did you do?

In her overly dramatic voice.
Like she is also forgetting,
thinking of the "details."

KAREN

Honestly, I don't remember. So many details.

JAKE

Mitch, why do you have a gun?

KAREN

Yes, Mitch, why do you have a gun?

MITCH

Karen you said that Jake was in trouble.
Carlos was gonna kill Jake.

KAREN

Odd? That is the 2nd time that you said that.
I don't remember that conversation. Robin, you
seemed surprised to see Mitch, standing here.

ROBIN

Karen, shut up.

KAREN

Robin, sweetie, do you want to share (air
quotes) "THE PLAN" with Jake?

ROBIN

Karen, I am warning you, shut your mouth.

SHE TAKES THE ACTUAL GUN OUT OF HER PURSE AND POINTS AT ROBIN. NOW SPEAKING IN A VERY PLAIN, MATTER OF FACT TONE. SHE AIR QUOTES AGAIN FOR DRAMATIC EFFECT.

KAREN

Or what, Robin? Or what? Wait in "THE PLAN" wasn't I supposed to go jail, framed? Oh and Jakey, wasn't he supposed to go to Jail, too?

KAREN sits down. She resumes her pleasant tone.

So many details. I have to get them all straight in my head. Of course that would be the only "Straight" thing around here besides me!

She looks at the three of them and laughs.

Ohhh, Momma has made a funny! The only straight thing in the room!

MITCH

So wait, Jake was not in trouble?

KAREN

Oh Mitch, you have to keep up. Things move quickly around here. Let's all have a seat and have a chat.

ROBIN

Fuck that. I am leaving.

She clicks the gun as to shoot it.

KAREN

Robin, sweetie, Momma has very good aim, at close range, so why don't you and Jakey and Mitch all just sit down. I don't want to ask again.

Robin advances towards Karen and she fires a gun shot to the floor. Robin stops.

ROBIN

Jesus, Karen.

JAKE

Karen you almost hit him.

KAREN

Jakey, Jakey, Jakey, Momma meant to miss.
Please would you all keep up. Now Jakey, be a
good boy and pour us all a drink. He's such a
good boy, don't you think, Robin?

ROBIN

Karen, I am warning you.

KAREN

Yes, yes, so you've said. Whatever. What did
Carlos ever see in you?

JAKE

Carlos? And Robin?

KAREN

SO many details. So many of you have been with
Carlos! And wait till you all hear about the
roses that Mitch got for Jakey. OH that was a
delicious little love scene!

MITCH

Karen you filthy Bitch.

KAREN

Mitch now I will not tolerate language. Tsk Tsk
Tsk, you boys do need to learn your manners.

Mitch gets up and goes to the
door.

MITCH

I am getting out of here.

He tries the door and it is
locked. He struggles with the
door.

The door is locked!

KAREN

Hmmm, that is odd.

She pulls out the key and laughs.

Oh here it is!

MITCH

Give me the key. I want out.

KAREN

Mitch, Mitch, Mitch. Come back and sit down and enjoy the party. Now I wonder who did this to Carlos.

JAKE

Well it wasn't me. He was my boyfriend.

KAREN

Oh, so being his boyfriend makes you innocent? Really? Then I guess Robin would be innocent, too? And didn't Carlos slap you to the ground? Wait, Jakey didn't Mitch slap you to the ground? My you do like it rough. But as Tina would say, "What's love got to do with it?"

MITCH

Tina? Who is Tina

Jake and Robin look at each other and roll their eyes. They say in unison

JAKE & ROBIN

Tina Turner!

KAREN

Mitch you better take notes. The police may want some of these details!

She laughs.

Tina Turner! How could you not know? I think they may take your GAY CARD for that one! Oh well. Now back to the boyfriend thing, Jakey. So if you didn't kill Carlos because he is, well WAS, your boyfriend, does that mean that Mr. Robin is innocent, too?

JAKE

What does that mean? Robin was with Carlos?

ROBIN

Karen you are starting things you don't want to finish.

KAREN

Robin, you remember that I have the gun, right? Yes Robin was with Carlos just last night, while Jakey you were snuggled in Robin's guest room. They have been together for years. One of those long-term relationships.

MITCH

Wait so Carlos was with Robin?

KAREN

Mitch you are not grasping the basic facts here. Carlos was with Jake. Robin was with Carlos.

MITCH

The three of them together?

KAREN

Robin, this is getting tiring could you just dumb it down for Mitch?

ROBIN

Mitch just shoot her?

She laughs.

KAREN

Mitch shoot me? Well there's this history with Mitch and guns and dead people so Mitch can't really get caught with a loaded weapon, can you sweetie? And now that Carlos is dead, who will make your crimes go away?

She laughs.

Mitch are there even bullets in the gun?

Mitch looks down, embarrassed.

ROBIN

You idiot. Why did you come in with a gun not loaded?

JAKE

Robin. Use your gun.

He growls as he says this.

ROBIN

Remember, Jake you made me promise, "No guns"

JAKE

Well if you knew? Wasn't this your plan?

ROBIN

This is not part of the plan.

KAREN

"THE PLAN!" Oh yes! The question is: *What does ROBIN know?*

KAREN laughs.

Why is Mitch here at all?

She pauses and looks far off like she is pondering the details, counting on her fingers.

Let's see, Mitch should be dead. Jake should go to jail, Robin and Carlos sail off. Karen goes to jail. Isn't that right Robin? Oh and the Drug Operations start again in Segtis! God I just love Spain! Don't you, Robin? You were there so many times with Carlos. Was that your little love nest?

ROBIN

Karen, you better stop

JAKE

Robin was in Spain with Carlos?

KAREN

Or what, Robin? You threaten, threaten, threaten? And you the head of Security? What did you love about Spain? The Libra Moon? The tequila? Maybe we will come back to that interesting story!

KAREN does a deadpan look to MITCH.

Mitch you should be dead.

MITCH

What?

KAREN

Now let me think who was supposed to kill Mitch. Hmmm, those darn details again, so many plot twist to your "Plan" Robin. Oh yes, I was supposed to talk Jake into killing Mitch, but then I saw the light. Robin, you are so clever. So involved. So, what was the word that Carlos used? Oh yes, "*GENIUS*"

Karen pauses and smiles just like the GRINCH. She speaks in a eerie tone, mocking Robin.

GENIUS. GENIUS.

She laughs.

Oh I love a good mystery. Boys, don't you?

JAKE

Where is this going?

KAREN

It is all so, interesting! What I want to know is who killed Carlos? Has anyone called the police?

MITCH

Police? No police. I can't

KAREN

Get caught at a murder scene again? Mitch we have a dead body here.

JAKE

I don't want to go to jail? I didn't do this.

KAREN

Oh Jakey, I mean, Robin was planning to frame you for the murder of Mitch. With a good friend like that, who needs two? But then Mitch is here and not dead. What do you think, Robin? Wasn't the plan to have Mitch dead by now?

MITCH

Yea I am not dead.

KAREN

Well done, Mitch, I see you are catching on!
Good Boy! So Jakey, you and Carlos meet in a
bar, they play Sinatra tunes. And all those
bad pickup lines. Jakey you do remember those,
right? Jakey?

JAKE

What?

KAREN

Robin, so glad you and Carlos rehearsed that.
So, what is that word? Wait, I will think of
it again...oh yes, "GENIUS"

KAREN laughs again

Jakey, you think it is just, oh what's the
word, "Magic"

ROBIN is clenching his fist, KAREN
reminds ROBIN of the gun in her
hand.

When all along it is part of Robin's "Plan" you
know to get you. The "PLAN" Jakey was to use
you. I just love that little "Would you dance
with me" scene. Sharing Carlos's drink, a
Cuban Old Fashioned!

KAREN SPEAKS LOUDLY to CARLOS ON
THE FLOOR

Carlos I loved that part! Hmmm, no answer.

MITCH

Karen, Carlos is dead

KAREN

Oh, Mitch you are catching on! See Robin,
Mitch is catching on.

KAREN leans over loudly to CARLOS
Carlos, Mitch is catching on!

JAKE

How do you know about all of this?

ROBIN

Karen just shut up.

KAREN

Oh Jakey, you and I, we were the PAWNS in this
plan. Isn't that right Robin?

JAKE LOOKS AT ROBIN AND GETS UP AND THEY START TO FIGHT.
KAREN LETS IT GO ON FOR A MOMENT. THEN SHE SETTLES THEM
DOWN.

KAREN

Boys, Boys, please we don't want to alert the
neighbors.

JAKE AND ROBIN SETTLE. THEY ACT LIKE 5TH GRADERS EDGING EACH
OTHER ON.

MITCH

What is going on?

KAREN

Mitch which part is confusing you? The part
that you were supposed to be dead or the part
that you are still alive?

MITCH

All of it!

KAREN

Robin can you help us out here. I mean it is
your plan.

ROBIN

I am not saying anything.

KAREN

Manners, they seem to be lacking in you, Robin.
Oh yes, Mitch back to you. Oh wait, but
remember when you were the bartender on that
fateful night? The night when Carlos and Jake
met. That was a set up, right?

JAKE

A set up? This was all a set up?

KAREN

Oh Jakey, not you, too? You must stay with us
here as we unravel this. Isn't that right,
Robin? Robin, sweetie am I missing anything?
The first meeting, Mitch knew, you knew, Carlos
knew and I knew. Everyone but little Jakey.
Is that right, Robin?

ROBIN

Karen get on with whatever it is you are doing.
I will get you for this.

KAREN

Yes, yes. You keep saying that. Anyway back to
Mitch who was the bartender and then the boss!
Those details!

KAREN winks at ROBIN

GENIUS.

ROBIN

Just shut up Karen.

KAREN

Yes, yes so you've said. So you keep saying. Manners, Robin, I will not stand for ill-manners. Anyway back at the Bar, Sinatra music, Jake got with Carlos and then that way Jake could work with you, Mitch, which all part of the "plan"

She laughs again.

I know I keep laughing but no one else is. I just find this all so, *interesting*. Oh the "plan" the "plan" Robin you are so clever. The drugs, the VIP, the cigars, the cars and Alejandro! Those fishing trips with the sharks on El Tiburón ! And Mitch don't you guys do some illegal stuff? The drug parties for the VIP! The cocaine, the woman, more cigars, anything goes right? Men with men, Men with women, Carlos with Alejandro, tying him up, Alejandro with Rene. My what a fun spot EL IMPERIO DE LA NOCHE has been! The police are gonna LOVE THIS. Oh the police did anyone call them. I mean we do have a body on the floor. Hmmm,

Robin, Jake and Mitch all look at each other.

Well ok if you are going to do something right do it yourself. I called the police.

ROBIN

You called the police?

MITCH

I can't have the police?

JAKE

I want to know what is going on?

KAREN

Jakey, you were going to get framed for the murder of Mitch, but Momma too care of all of that. Robin and Mitch you both will be very popular in jail. GENIUS, isn't it, Robin?

Karen regroupes

So the police. They will be here in a little while.

ROBIN

Karen, I am gonna kill you.

He rushes to Karen and she shoots and again "Misses" Robin.

Jesus, Karen. You are crazy.

KAREN

I feel threatened. I feel threatened.

Now forceful

Now will you sit down. I want to tell our story. You all just have to hear this. Oh that tape, let's see

She takes out her phone, she scans the phone

Oh yes here it is, let's give quick listen. You boys will love this story.

SHE PLAYS THE RECORDING. ROBIN SQUIRMS. JAKE AND MITCH GLARE AT ROBIN. AS THE TAPE PLAYS ON SCREEN WE SEE THE FLASHBACK CONVERSATION LIVE WITH ROBIN AND CARLOS. THE SCENE IS TENSE.

INT: FLASHBACK CONVERSATION IN CARLOS' APARTMENT

CARLOS

The gun will be there. Karen will meet Jake tomorrow to give him the gun for protection. She will get Jake to hold the gun. He will then give it back as we both know he hates guns. Karen gets the gun back to me. I kill Mitch. Leave the gun.

ROBIN

Jake goes down.

CARLOS

Jake goes down. Oh there is a lot more going down then just Jake. Believe me.

ROBIN

Ok let's do this. I cannot see you again until this is through.

CARLOS

Well then, let's make this night count

KAREN stops the phone. Back to her playful tone. The scene fades.

INT: THE APARTMENT OF CARLOS

KAREN

Robin what do you think?

Robin growls.

MITCH

I don't like the sound of this story.

KAREN

Mitch, you were supposed to be dead! And you, with no bullets in the gun! Ha.

ROBIN

Ok Karen get on with it.

KAREN

Oh I thought you would never ask. I am gonna run through this rather swiftly, so boys keep up. The police will be here shortly, so let's not waste any time.

All show level of disapproval.
Robin is looking at Mitch like they are plotting a plan. Karen sees this.

Oh and please, no subplots at this point. There is enough drama happening right now so don't you two Try anything.

She points the gun at Robin and Mitch.

Karen

So Jakey, have you been counting?

JAKE

Counting? Counting what?

KAREN

My God. Is anyone with me? Robin can you please help?

Robin growls.

ROBIN

Bullets. Have you been counting bullets.

KAREN

Oh, Robin, you are the brains in this operation. Now when you were with Carlos were you the top or the bottom? And then when Carlos was with Jake was he the top or the, wait you were still with Carlos when he was with Jake, so was Carlos confused, because Carlos used to be with me. Hmmm I am getting confused. Then Carlos and I did make love two nights ago. Then Carlos and Robin made love last night. Jakey you got that right?

JAKE

What now, the bullets?

Sarcastically.

Yeah, bullets. You fired 2 bullets.

MITCH

Yes, I counted 2-bullets.

KAREN

Oh Jakey and Mitch, you do have to keep up with momma. Details. As they say "The devil is in the details." Mitch, honey you are so quiet. Are you ok? Do you feel left out?

MITCH

Leve me out of this. I am not part of this, this lovefest.

KAREN

Robin I knew you are the bright one in the group, how many bullets fired?

Robin snarls.

ROBIN

3

JAKE

No Robin, 2

MITCH

Yes 2-bullets, both fired at you, Robin!

ROBIN

You idiots. 3. 3 fucking bullets. 2 at me and one at Carlos.

MITCH

But Carlos is dead.

KAREN

Very good, Mitch you are keeping up!

JAKE

So 3 bullets?

ROBIN SIGHS AND SHAKES HIS HEAD. HE GLARES AT JAKE AND POINTS UP 3-FINGERS. ROBIN IS IRRITATED.

ROBIN

Karen just get on with whatever you are doing.

KAREN

Sure thing, Robin. You are in charge. This is your plan. But wait, Jakey and Mitch, I wonder? Do you think that I am a part of Robin's "Plan"?

JAKE

Wait so this whole thing another set up?

MITCH

Robin, I am gonna kill you

KAREN

"Oh I feel threatened. I feel threatened!"

She laughs.

Mitch I would not say "kill" that could be used against you in court. You know that "motive" thing they always talk about. Well, shall we continue with our story?

ROBIN

Just get on with it.

KAREN

Tsk Tsk Tsk so touchy. I guess you were the top, always in control

She laughs.

Ok our story, now this is a brief recap to get you all up to speed. There are lovers, lies and other alibis. Truths and events here. No shooting the messenger!

She pauses and then laughs.

Ohhh Momma has made another funny "Don't shoot the messenger!"

MITCH

Not funny

JAKE

You are sick.

KAREN

Well at least you are listening. OK here we go.

She does this in fast, matter of fact tone, like the voice you hear at the end of an add for "side effects" of a drug. As Karen speaks on screen is a rapid flashback of the events she talks about.

OK. SO, 10-years ago I was with Carlos, and Carlos was straight then, well as far as I could tell, then he met Robin and whoopsie he fell for Robin. The drugs started flowing in and out of the restaurant. VIP'S in, cigars, cars, women, men, booze, well it is Miami! Robin keep things tight and secure, he had Carlos on a short leash. I was out Robin was in. Mitch killed that guy who tried to leave him, Irish. Fred tried to leave Carlos, Fred is dead. Thank God for the sharks! 4-years ago Robin had the "Plan" and they wanted to get out of Miami. Mitch and Carlos and then Mitch and Robin each had a little fling.

JAKE

Carlos and Robin each went with Mitch?

She rolls her eyes. Dismisses Jake.

KAREN

You see they were trying to figure out Mitch's "type" and found that it resembled something like, well you Jakey. Mitch you do remember those little flings right? With Robin and Carlos? Mitch dear are you with me?

MITCH

Yes

JAKE

So Mitch you went with Carlos and Robin?

KAREN

Like jack rabbits. So the "Plan" in a nutshell was to get Jakey and Carlos together. Jakey likes Sinatra, Loves a kiss, likes someone to take charge.

JAKE

How do you know?

KAREN

Jakey, Jakey – social media, Grindr, The Carpenters? Sweetheart, you're a walking confession. You like Cher, I like Cher. Snap out of it! Barry Manilow? Fine – shoot me.

Robin laughs a bit.

ROBIN

Yea, I did find that a little odd

KAREN

Oh Momma made another funny "Shoot me"

MITCH

I am getting nervous, I feel trapped.

KAREN

Mitch have a drink. You were supposed to be dead. Oh wait I am getting to that now.

So Jakey wanted someone in charge. Blah Blah Blah Jakey and Carlos roll around in the sheets together but Carlos takes these business trips to Spain. What about Spain? Jakey you remember that. You could not join because it was all "Business"

Robin Growling.

KAREN

Oh right, Robin, you were there on all of those trips. You see the police will be here soon. So, Jakey, you could not join because it was all business, except the only business that was going on was Robin plowing Carlos and all the while, Jakey you were doing Carlos, Carlos was doing Robin, Mitch wanted to do you, AND you apparently were "unaware" of Mitch's advances and then you got the flowers, Mitch was another "rose on the vine" my God so much drama. Mitch slapped you down. Next day, Carlos slaps you down. Jakey why do people feel the need to slap you down? Well I would LOVE to find out,

She takes a long deep breath.

But, we have to keep moving! And that brings us just about to the present. Then just 2 days ago Carlos and I had a little round, then 1 day ago Robin and Carlos had one more night to "plan the plan" and we did hear that little snippet, and don't you just LOVE that word "Snippet" it is the perfect sound for the word, and did Robin and Carlos just go at in the apartment, on the floor, on the couch, on the bed, back to the counter, even I got a bit steamy looking at all of that. Jakey you are at Robin's place staying safe because Robin had to "go do a party." Bravo Robin for being so, what is the word, oh you have STAMINA. I counted at least 5 "explosions" from you that night. POW. POW. POW. POW. POW! Good Boy. Carlos took it like champ!

She breaths in deep.

So,

ROBIN

Are you finished?

MITCH

Yes, can we just get out of here?

JAKE

I am with them, can we go?

KAREN

Boys, have we forgotten the elephant in the room? Hmm? Anyone?

ROBIN

Carlos

KAREN

Yes! Each of us has been with Carlos.
Intimate with Carlos.

KAREN leans towards CARLOS on the floor and says in a slow, loud voice.

CARLOS WE HAVE ALL BEEN WITH YOU.

Motive? Seems that everyone of us has a motive.
Robin, you are the brains here. What do you think?

KAREN breaths in and out, big sigh.

So we are now caught up. I realized while trying to convince Jakey to take the gun to kill the sexual advances of Mitch, or use as protection form Carlos, I realized that I was the PAWN.

KAREN'S mood suddenly snaps. She gets angry and stands up.

I WAS THE PAWN. I was going to go down. Jake was going to go down. Mitch was going to be dead and what? Robin and Carlos were just going to sail off together?

KAREN LOOKS RIGHT AT ROBIN. HE LOOKS AND THEN LOOKS DOWN.
KAREN HAS A DEEP SIGH. SHE SITS BACK DOWN, COLLECTS HERSELF.

My mother told me that "a lady never swears."
Well I am sorry but,

Very calmly and lady like

"Fuck no." I am sorry. Language. I was not going to let any of that go down. There is a lot more going down than just the sun tonight. So let's tell the final scene right before you all showed up. Boys are you with me? So many details!

INT: FLASHBACK TO 1 HOUR CARLOS APARTMENT

ON SCREEN: 1 HOUR AGO

A MIST COMES ACROSS AS KAREN TELLS THIS STORY AND CARLOS IS NOW ALIVE AND PART OF THE RETELLING. THIS IS ONE HOUR AGO.

CARLOS

Karen, I have no idea what you are talking about. You just make this stuff up.

KAREN

Carlos I heard you and Robin, "The Plan"

CARLOS

You only thought you heard, you make things over dramatic just to suit your needs.

KAREN

You asked me to get the gun

She takes it out of her purse.

This gun, to Jakey, and get his prints on it, so you could frame him for the murder of Mitch.

CARLOS

You are fabricating this all in your mind I never said that. I never told you that. No one would ever believe that.

KAREN

Really?

SHE TAKE OUT HER PHONE AND PLAYS THE RECORDING OF CARLOS.

CARLOS (RECORDED)

Karen all you have to do is get Jake to hold the gun. Wear a pair of gloves, those long red ones, dress up, seduce him into the plan. Then when Mitch is dead the cops will go straight to Jake. I will leave these letters, these are romance letters I made up from Mitch to Jake at the scene. Now be a good girl and do this for me.

CARLOS is outraged.
How did you get that?

He slaps her and she falls to the floor.
I am going to kill you for this.

HE RUSHES TOWARDS KAREN, SHE TAKES THE GUN AND SHOOTS CARLOS.
HE FALLS TO THE FLOOR. CARLOS DEAD ON THE FLOOR. THE CAMERA
SWIRLS AND THE SHOT GOES BACK TO THE PRESENT

INT: BACK TO THE CURRENT SCEENE

Mitch, Robin and Jake seated and a
dazed look on their faces.

JAKE
I never knew. Robin how could you? Set me up,
I go to jail? You guys kill Mitch?

Robin looks away.

JAKE
Well say something!

ROBIN
I thought it was a good plan. I didn't count
on Karen.

JAKE
Didn't count on Karen? Are you crazy. You were
gonna let me go to jail. All this time, you
were supposed to help me and

MITCH
You were in on this all the time. Just one lie
after another?

ROBIN
If I am going down you will go down with me.

KAREN
And poor Carlos. Robin I guess this was not
part of the plan?

ROBIN

Shut up Karen. Just shut up.

THE LIGHTS SUDDENLY GO OFF. THE ROOM IS BLACK. THE CAMERA POINT OF VIEW, KAREN HAS ON NIGHT VISION GOGGLES. SHE CAN SEE ROBIN, MITCH AND JAKE BUT THEY CANNOT SEE HER, NOR CAN THEY SEE EACH OTHER.

JAKE

What happened?

Robin in a commanding voice trying to take control.

ROBIN

Stay where you are, everyone.

MITCH

Who is this?

ROBIN

Mitch, for fuck's sake that is me. Now don't move.

Karen yells in the dark with an overacted, dramatic voice

KAREN

I feel threatened! I feel threatened!

ROBIN

Karen what are you doing.

Gun shot. Robin drops dead to the floor.

MITCH

Robin! What was that?

Gun Shot. Mitch drops dead to the floor.

JAKE

Robin! Mitch! Karen what is happening?

Gun shot. Jake drops dead to the floor.

TENSION. HOLD for 5 seconds.
Karen says calmly.

KAREN

"Alexa stop recording." "Alexa turn the light
on."

THE LIGHTS COME BACK UP. WE SEE THE BODIES OF MITCH, ROBIN
AND JAKE ON THE FLOOR, SHE SAYS IN A LOW, SLOW VOICE.

KAREN

Momma knows a lot of things. Jakey, you keeping
count? 6 bullets. I fired 6 bullets. Robin?
Mitch? Anything?

We hear knocking on the door.
Police are outside.

VOICES

Open up! Police.

Karen in the same over-acted, over
dramatic voice

KAREN

Oh please help. I am so very frightened. They
all came at me. Oh please help! I was
threatened!

THE POLICE HEAR HER DESPERATE CRIES AND BREAK DOWN THE DOOR.
THE FIRST OFFICER STORMS IN, GUN DRAWN, SCANNING THE ROOM.
HIS PARTNER QUICKLY FOLLOWS, EYES LANDING ON THE SCENE BEFORE
THEM—FOUR DEAD BODIES, KAREN HUDDLED IN THE CORNER, SHAKING

POLICE DETECTIVE RAÚL DELGADO

Jesus... what the hell happened here?

KAREN

I... I didn't have a choice! They were going to
kill me! It all happened so fast. Mitch... he
was out of control, and then Jake... and
Robin... they turned on me. I had no choice.

POLICE DETECTIVE RAÚL DELGADO

Ma'am, just take it easy. You're safe now. Can
you tell us what happened?

KAREN

Mitch... he's been obsessed with Jake for months. You know Mitch killed that man, Irish, 10 years ago. He never got caught. He is an outlaw. The Fishing and sharks on their boat, El Tiburón.

POLICE DETECTIVE RAÚL DELGADO

Funny I can't recall that case.

KAREN

Paying off local police. The drugs, the sex. The Bars, cigars and cars. Tonight, it escalated. Mitch went mad. Then they all turned on me. I didn't know what to do. I begged them to stop, but they just kept coming at me!

OFFICER #1

It was self-defense.

KAREN

Yes, self-defense. I was threatened! I was threatened!

POLICE DETECTIVE RAÚL DELGADO

Ok, Ok, calm down. Call it in. We need the scene processed, but it looks pretty clear to me.

OFFICER #1

Dispatch, we have a 10-54, multiple deceased at 28 North Bay Road, unit 1250. It appears to be self-defense. Send forensics and backup immediately

THE SONG "MORE GOING DOWN" QUEUES UP AS THE POLICE ENTER. WE DON'T HEAR THEIR VOICE BUT SEE THEIR ACTIONS. KAREN DRAMATICALLY CRIES, RE-ENACTS THE SCENE. GIVES HER PHONE WITH THE RECORDING TO THE POLICE. TIME PASSES. AMBULANCES COME. BODY BAGS.

POLICE DETECTIVE RAÚL DELGADO

Good thing, Karen you had that gun. I have been tracking Carlos and his mob for years. We knew about the drug ring from the restaurant with Mitch, Carlos and Robin. We couldn't get a hard lead. You are lucky they didn't kill you. We'll need to take you in for questioning, but from the looks of it... it's clearly self-defense

KAREN

Yes, I am so lucky to be alive. They were all connected. All using each other. Jake was Carlos' boyfriend.

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

Robin was Carlos' boyfriend. Mitch was obsessed with Jake. All Mafia thugs. I had no idea. Then they all turned on me. Help I feel threatened. I feel threatened!

POLICE DETECTIVE RAÚL DELGADO

It's OK, it's over. You are safe now.

KAREN

I... I thought that was it. I saw my life flash before my eyes. They were... they were like wild animals, and I-I just... I didn't want to die like that. Not at their hands."

She takes a dramatic pause,
looking upward as if searching for
strength.

I kept thinking... 'Is this how it ends for me?
Alone? Fighting for my life in a place that was
once so... full of life?'

Tears well up again, perfectly
timed.

But I fought back. I had no choice. God
knows... I never wanted it to end like this.
But they left me no choice. I found out about
all the drugs, the VIP events, the sex, cigars,
cars and liquor, all happening at El Imperio de
la Noche. I wasn't raised like this.

SHE LOOKS AT THE OFFICER, HER EYES GLISTENING, THE EMOTION IN
HER VOICE SWELLING AS SHE STEPS CLOSER.

I just... thank God you're here now. Thank God
someone believed me. I thought... I thought I
was going to die! There is that Alejandro at
the restaurant he organizes a lot of the shady
events for Carlos and Robin. I think that the
three of them were intimate. I had no idea.

She collapses slightly into
Officer #1, playing up her
exhaustion and relief.

Thank you... thank you for saving me.

THE THEME MUSIC SWELLS.

THE CAMERA PANS TO THE NEXT DAY. ALEJANDRO BEING HANDCUFFED AND TAKEN AWAY. AT THE POLICE STATION CONVERSATION, TEARS, DRAMA, HUGS. KAREN WALKS OUT OF THE STATION. GETS IN HER CONVERTIBLE AND DIVES THROUGH THE STREETS OF MIAMI. BY THE BEACH, PAST THE BARS, CIGARS AND CARS. THE SONG "MORE GOING DOWN" PLAYS AS THE END CREDITS ROLL.

THE SUN WILL RISE. THE SUN WILL SET.

I WONDER NOW WAS I THE ONLY ONE

THERE'S MORE GOING DOWN TONIGHT THAN JUST THE SUN.

THERE'S MORE GOING DOWN TONIGHT, THAN JUST THE SUN.

HOLD

THERE'S MORE GOING DOWN

END A LA LES MIZ STYLE BIG CRESCENDO.

BLACKOUT