

THE WILD HONEYSUCKLE

BY

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INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CRUISE MONTICELLO, walks into a hotel room with ANGIE RILEY and pulls her into him.

CRUISE
You've got the most inviting lips;
round and lush, I can hear them
whispering "kiss me, kiss me".

ANGIE
That's what I want them to say.

Cruise picks up Angie and carries her into the bedroom and lays her on the bed kissing her breasts. Angie MOANS softly.

ANGIE
I want you. I've wanted you all
night. Give it to me. Give it to me
hard.

CRUISE
No, it's better when you go slow.

ANGIE
Hurry. Hurry.

A door SLAMS in the next room. Angie looks up surprised.

ANGIE
What the hell is that?

CRUISE
Someone's in the front room.

ANGIE
Of my God. That's got to be my
husband.

CRUISE
Your husband. You never told me you
were married.

ANGIE
You never asked.

Angie jumps out of bed, runs to the door and locks it. She grabs her blouse and skirt and begins dressing hurriedly.

HUSBAND OS
You home, honey?

ANGIE
Holy, Jesus, Son of God.

Cruise frantically puts on his shirt.

ANGIE
Get out. Get out.

CRUISE
Where? There's only one door out and he's in front of it.

ANGIE
The window. There's a ledge you can sneak out from.

HUSBAND OS
Are you coming out or do I have to come in?

ANGIE
I'LL BE RIGHT OUT, HONEY.

Angie points to the window anxiously.

ANGIE
Please hurry.

Cruise opens the window and climbs onto the ledge. Angie closes the window behind him. The bedroom door nob RATTLES.

HUSBAND OS
It's locked, honey.

ANGIE
I'm coming.

Angie unlocks the door and her husband enters grinning.

HUSBAND
Did I surprise my little sugar plum?

ANGIE
I was just getting ready for bed. I thought you were coming tomorrow.

HUSBAND
The thought of you all by your lonesome was more than I could bear.

ANGIE
How considerate.

HUSBAND
Well, I did fantasize about having wild sex with you all the way here.

ANGIE
How romantic.

HUSBAND
Come to papa.

ANGIE
Well, I'm going to bed.

The husband undresses quickly, turns off the light and jumps into bed.

ANGIE
I'm awfully tired, honey.

HUSBAND
It's okay, baby, I've got enough energy for both of us.

EXT. BUILDING LEDGE - NIGHT

Cruise inches his way along the ledge and slides down a drainage pipe to the last ledge where the pipe ends, one floor above an alley. Some vagabonds are standing around a fire lit cauldron, passing a liquor bottle around.

CRUISE
HEY, DOWN THERE.

The vagabonds look up.

CRUISE
CAN YOU OPEN THE THE DUMPSTER LID?

VAGABOND ONE
WHAT FOR?

CRUISE
IF THERE'S ANY TRASH IN THERE I'M JUMPING IN.

VAGABOND TWO
YOU'RE GONNA KILL YOURSELF.

CRUISE
TWENTY BUCKS IF YOU JUST DO IT.

The vagabonds open the dumpster full of trash. Cruise jumps.

EXT. CITY ALLEY - NIGHT

The vagabonds peer into the dumpster.

CRUISE

How about a hand?

The men pull out Cruise. He hands them a twenty dollar bill.

VAGABOND TWO

Hey, Sonny, have a swig. Looks like you could use one.

Cruise dust himself off. A vagabond offers Cruise the bottle.

CRUISE

You want me to take a sip of rot gut from a bottle that's just passed through your greasy disease infested lips?

Cruise walks away, turns back, grabs the bottle and takes a big swallow.

CRUISE

What the hell, a drink's a drink.

The vagabonds LAUGH as Cruise exits the alley.

INT. TAVERN ON THE BRIDGE BAR - NIGHT

Cruise and EDDIE FELL are leaning against a bar watching the woman stroll by.

EDDIE

"Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink."

CRUISE

You've got to get your mind off the babes. It's not good for your Tai Chi equilibrium.

EDDIE

Or, assume the lotus position facing East, meditating profound truths.

CRUISE

Or, any position you're okay with.

EDDIE

The missionary position doesn't count, in case you didn't know.

CRUISE

I haven't used that one in years.

EDDIE

How about the "Around the World" positions?

CRUISE

Could never get past Trinidad and Tobago.

EDDIE

It's uncanny how every time you swing it's a grand slam with fireworks going off.

CRUISE

Had a fielders choice once. She was barely eighteen and I was pushing twenty seven so it felt strange.

EDDIE

You mean she wouldn't let you.

CRUISE

She was the one that got away or maybe I was the one who got away. Anyway, somebody got away.

Cruise strokes his chin.

CRUISE

There was something about her.

EDDIE

Can you put your finger on it?

CRUISE

I liked the way she giggled.

A pretty woman walks by and smiles at Cruise who winks back.

EDDIE

I don't get it. I'm polite and treat the ladies with respect and they dump all over me while you, who could care less, they flock to in droves.

CRUISE

Science hasn't been able to break it down yet. Like the lioness who only lets the lion with the right genes mate with her. It has to do with body language or the symmetry of your face or something.

EDDIE

Hey, that hot chick over there just waved at you. Do you know her?

Cruise looks over to where Eddie points and waves back.

CRUISE
She looks vaguely familiar.

EDDIE
Maybe if she lowers her blouse it'll jog your memory.

The lady blows Cruise a kiss and smiles. Cruise gives her a slow salute and smiles. JOANNE GIVENS walks toward them.

EDDIE
Oh, my God, she's headed this way.

Cruise gives Joanne a big hug.

CRUISE
Hey, good to see you again.

JOANNE
It's been so long you probably don't even remember me.

CRUISE
Dig your fingernails into my back and talk dirty and maybe it'll all come back.

Joanne GIGGLES.

JOANNE
You're bad. You're looking powerfully nice, buffed up and all.

CRUISE
Well, you know, a veggie diet, working out daily, no women or booze and going to bed early does wonders.

JOANNE
You're such a good liar, but then again you've had so much practice.

Joanne pulls out a card and hands it to Cruise.

JOANNE
If you ever want to break that no woman rule give me a call.

CRUISE

Only if you promise to not take
advantage of me.

JOANNE
That still leaves me lots of wiggle
room.

CRUISE
A wiggle on you would bring my
morale way up, if you know what I
mean?

Joanne shakes her finger at Cruise smiling.

JOANNE
Bye, y'all.

TREVOR ROLLINS, a large flamboyantly dressed man and MALDO
PENZI, a small mousy man stop in front of Cruise.

TREVOR
I see you haven't lost your touch. I
can always count on young flesh
being around when you're here.

CRUISE
Hi, Trevor. Does management know
you're here? You know, their health
rating.

Trevor extends a gaudy rings covered hand.

TREVOR
I just had my nails manicured by
Jean Paul Lacroix. Clean enough?

CRUISE
I thought they'd be longer, darker
and sharper, to be personality
coordinated, you understand?

Trevor points to Cruise's necklace.

TREVOR
Ah, a sea shell necklace. How
appropriate since in mythology it
represents the vulva of Venus the
goddess of love.

CRUISE
The organ that gives that sweetest
of all pleasures.

TREVOR

You've met my friend Maldo, of course?

CRUISE
Oh, is it your turn to walk him?

TREVOR
You're very clever. Do you hate me because I might steal one of your girls, or is it because I'm rich?

CRUISE
Let's just say you're a new subspecies that everyone wishes was on the endangered list; in the Reptilian section, I believe.

TREVOR
I especially like the Bushmaster Viper, extremely poisonous, hunts only at night and can open their mouths very wide to consume their prey.

CRUISE
And your lovely friend here, does he scavenge after you or do you just keep him around for his wit?

MALDO
I don't like your filthy mouth.

CRUISE
Careful now, or I'll open the shades and let the light in.

MALDO
I spit on your caca face.

Maldo takes a threatening step forward, but Trevor puts a hand on his shoulder.

TREVOR
Don't be a fool, Maldo. If you let him get to you, he wins.

MALDO
He pretty face loser.

A beautiful woman walks by and Trevor's eyes follow her.

TREVOR
Speaking of prey, we need to be going to my reserved booth where I

can study them more closely.

CRUISE

Don't forget to take this one here with you, that be from the Rattus-rodentia order.

Trevor and Maldo exit.

EDDIE

What was that all about?

CRUISE

Let's just say he's perversely flawed in many disgusting ways and, no, don't ask.

EDDIE

All humans are flawed. That's what makes us human.

CRUISE

Yeah, but he's more human than most.

A woman walks by and smiles at Cruise. Cruise smiles back.

CRUISE

She reminds me of this perfect five foot three 103 pound bundle of sexy perfection, my latest love.

EDDIE

You mean conquest.

CRUISE

Here she is leaning against me with both of our hormones churning full throttle, kissing passionately, and touching each other in all those dark forbidden places.

EDDIE

Okay, okay, I get it.

CRUISE

It all comes down to when the moment's right can she deliver the goods, moves wise?

EDDIE

You're just doing this to torture me.

CRUISE

It's sweet, baby. Here she is,
squeezing my hand whispering "I want
you", but I'm in no hurry, because I
want to stretch out the way I'm
feeling.

EDDIE

You mean the Viagra hadn't kicked in
yet.

CRUISE

Then she leans over and kisses me
lightly on my cheek showing just
enough cleavage to let me know
there's more where that came from.

EDDIE

You've always hated me, Cruise, I
can see that now.

CRUISE

It wasn't just sex, Eddie. It was
more like deep in our souls.

EDDIE

Soul? I didn't know you had one.
Okay, okay, so what happened next?

CRUISE

I didn't want to say anything to
break the spell, so I just winked
and smiled, you know, subtle body
language.

EDDIE

She liked it?

CRUISE

Oh, yeah, she grabbed my hand and
pressed it up against her thigh
under the table.

EDDIE

Her th-thigh under the table?

CRUISE

Ah huh, soft and warm. No make that
a bit more then warm.

EDDIE

And me, I'd settle for just a walk
to get on base.

CRUISE

Then she leaned in and bit my lip,
just hard enough to let me know she
was ready for business.

EDDIE
Business? Really? Is that with a
little "b" or a big "B"?

CRUISE
I was ready too and knew it was
going to be a night to remember with
just the right combination of
tenderness, raw unleashed passion
and technique.

EDDIE
Technique? I never knew. How do you
learn? Are there books?

CRUISE
She caressed me on my cheek as she
slowly sauntered out, her not so
small bosom bouncing as she went.

EDDIE
She can't do that to you, not with
everything so perfect and all.

CRUISE
The way she walked she should have
been arrested. And those legs, long
lovely legs that seemed to go on
forever.

EDDIE
I thought she was only five foot
three?

CRUISE
Yeah, but a tall five foot three.

EDDIE
So you followed her out?

Cruise shakes his head.

CRUISE
I didn't want her to think I was too
eager. You know how women are. If
they think you're too easy you can't
be good kind of thing.

EDDIE
How well I know that.

CRUISE

By the time she got to the elevator, she had taken off her shoes, holding them over her shoulder giving me that sly Mona Lisa smile that could mean any one of a hundred things, all naughty.

EDDIE

But you narrowed it down to just one nasty thing, didn't you?

CRUISE

As we were getting into the elevator I told her, "I've got a bottle of Dom Pérignon in my room that will pour perfectly out of those pink slippers.

EDDIE

Why can't I ever think of things like that to say.

CRUISE

She just smiled and said "That would be nice."

EDDIE

So, was she nice or not?

Cruise studies the check on the bar.

CRUISE

I think she made a mistake.

Eddie snatches the check, crumbles it and throws it down.

EDDIE

Don't worry about the fucking check, just answer the question?

CRUISE

What question?

Eddie grabs Cruise by his shirt.

EDDIE

WAS...SHE...NICE...OR...NOT?

CRUISE

Well, let's just say she had what it takes and knew how to use it...

Cruise smiles and winks.

CRUISE
...if you know what I mean.

ANGELA WINTERS strides over and SLAPS Cruise.

CRUISE
HEY! What the hell was that for?

ANGELA
For being the bastard you are.

CRUISE
I never made any promises, baby.

Angela closes her eyes, her head bowed. She shakes her head slowly and looks up.

ANGELA
I'm sorry. I had no right to hit you.

Angela wipes a tear from her face.

ANGELA
I trusted and loved you and then one day you just walked out without a word, a call, nothing.

Angela closes her eyes again trying to stop the tears.

EDDIE
Are you okay?

Angela nods with her eyes still closed.

ANGELA
No, I'm ashamed for making a fool of myself. Thanks for asking. I can see you're a nice guy.

Angela exits.

CRUISE
You give a woman everything you've got and all she can say is "I've had just about all I can take."

EDDIE
She seemed like a nice person. Why'd you do it, Cruise?

CRUISE
She was nice, one of the best, but she lost me when she started to

press me with the "C" word like all the others.

EDDIE
The "C" word?

CRUISE
Commitment! As in the ball and chain for life club; the little house in the suburbs, the petunia patch, the patter of little feet. The whole picture never appealed to me.

EDDIE
You'd rather flit from flower to flower sucking out the good stuff?

CRUISE
Sure, why not. Tomorrow may be too late.

EDDIE
"Behold the ego, set in glowing emptiness on the edge of time. Like an echo resounding through the mountains with no place to go", Kaufmann.

CRUISE
Women will forget and forgive what you said and did, but never how you made them feel, Cruise.

EDDIE
You hurt that girl bad Cruise, some thing you should think about.

CRUISE
Look kid, I always tell them up front that I'm not the marrying type, but they think they're the one who can change me. So, who's the Machiavellian one here?

EDDIE
The young chick with the nice giggle that got away: you need to find her, let her know you love her so she'll never get away again. And, I do know what I mean.

Eddie picks up the crumpled bill, looks at it and throws some money on the bar.

CRUISE

You never look back, kid.

EDDIE

"No man is an island, entire of itself...". Ah, never mind.

CRUISE

Some people come together, some go their own way, riding the breeze.

EDDIE

You're going to end up alone, an old man without anyone noticing or caring.

CRUISE

Alone is good. Quiet, you own it and no rules to follow.

EDDIE

I pity you. It's sad is all I can say.

Eddie turns to leave.

CRUISE

Hold on there. Pretty strong words for a guy who just wanted to check out the "hot babes", remember?

EDDIE

Let's just say we look at women through a different pair of glasses.

CRUISE

You see what you want to see.

EDDIE

Why don't you grow up. You're obsessed with nothing, but sex.

CRUISE

Really? If a woman said you could brush against her breasts, would you blush and decline or maybe put your hot little hand under her blouse for a bigger thrill.

EDDIE

Is that a trick question?

CRUISE

I just want to know the level of

your hypocrisy.

EDDIE
I don't answer leading,
hypothetical questions.

CRUISE
And, if hot pulsating flesh wins out
would you want more, or, dare I say
it, much more?

Eddie glares at Cruise.

CRUISE
What, your tongue getting too hard
to speak or maybe it's not your
tongue that's getting hard.

EDDIE
I'm done here.

Eddie storms off. Cruise pulls out a dollar coin and spins
it on the bar.

CRUISE
Around and around it goes, where it
falls nobody knows.

MONICA HALTOM, a striking thirty somethings comes over.

MONICA
Want another one?

CRUISE
Heads yes, tails I go home and
meditate on the value of leading a
pure celibate life.

The coin falls on heads.

CRUISE
The coin God has spoken.

Cruise looks up at her.

CRUISE
You must be new here. I don't
remember seeing you before.

MONICA
I'm the new owner and this is my way
of getting to know my customers.

CRUISE

Hey, you're kind of cute. Maybe we can be social media friends or something.

Monica leans over and touches Cruise's shell necklace.

MONICA

I love your shell, but it's so small. I'll go ahead and get you that shooter. You'll be needing it real bad about now.

CRUISE

You've reading me all wrong, lady. I'm not needing anything. I just take what comes and ride with it, like a slow soft change up floater that I'll knock out of the park, every time.

MONICA

Actually I like men who throws them hard and fast on the inside, a pitch hustlers like you will never get to. I'll go ahead and make it a double.

Monica exits. Cruise intently focuses on the empty shooter glass slowly rotating it, motionless, as everyone bustles about around him.

INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

RALEIGH BUCHANAN is packing clothes into boxes. Cruise enters.

CRUISE

What the... What's going on here?

RALEIGH

Hey Cruise, didn't see you come in.

CRUISE

You moving out?

RALEIGH

Yep. Remember I told you last week.

CRUISE

You never told me shit. We have a one year lease, remember?

RALEIGH

You'll have no trouble getting someone to fill my space with the

28th floor view and all.

CRUISE

You still pissed 'because I aced you out on that chick last month?

RALEIGH

No, Cruise, I'm getting married. And I don't think she'd approve of having you around.

CRUISE

Married? What? You had nothing but contempt for Willy when he went traipsing down the aisle last month. "Shoot me if I ever get this crazy" was your quote if I recall.

RALEIGH

Last month? That was over a year ago. Hey, sorry to break the news, but we all eventually have to grow up.

CRUISE

I don't get it. Or, is this about the clock ticking or something? There's lots of juice left in you for the good stuff.

Raleigh stops packing and puts a hand on Cruise's shoulder.

RALEIGH

You've been a good friend for a long time. Lot's of good times over the years. But, there comes a time when you've got to stop and take a long hard look at yourself and see where you're headed.

CRUISE

I can clearly see where you're going. Manicured neighborhood, white picket fence, two car garage, minivan loaded with screaming kids, making sure you have coasters for your drinks.

RALEIGH

I'll be the head of the family so it won't be that way.

CRUISE

Sure, but she'll be the neck that

tells the head where to go.

RALEIGH

Ever heard of a four letter word called "love"?

CRUISE

All the four letter words I know start with a different letter.

RALEIGH

Maybe if it ever happens to you, which I doubt, you'd understand.

CRUISE

So who's the lucky princess?

RALEIGH

I'm not telling because you'll drag her through the gutter.

CRUISE

Please, just tell me it's not big tits.

RALEIGH

You're such a predictable asshole.

CRUISE

Anyone but her and I'll even go to your wedding.

RALEIGH

You're not invited, whoever it is.

CRUISE

Looks like I got a winner. Time to turn in my winning bingo card.

RALEIGH

You're starting to annoy me. Don't push, Cruise, I'm warning you, don't push.

CRUISE

Hell man, you're going to have to sound proof your bedroom with all her moaning. I'll get you ear muffs for your wedding present, industrial grade that is.

Raleigh grabs Cruise and slings him across the room.

RALEIGH

YOU PRICK. I told you to cool it.

They glare at each other, breathing hard.

CRUISE

Remember the time in fourth grade when I hit fatso Billy the bully on the side of the head with my book and pinned him down and kept hitting him until Miss Pendleton pulled me off?

RALEIGH

He never bothered us again, but you were a marked guy from then on. A reputation I guess you've never really shaken.

CRUISE

You were always an easy mark. Maybe that same protective instinct is popping up again in me.

RALEIGH

Except I'm 32 years old now and can take care of myself.

CRUISE

Yeah, yeah, you're right.

Raleigh continues his packing.

CRUISE

I'll speak my last words and say no more.

RALEIGH

Just as long as you don't insult Allie.

CRUISE

It's not about Allie. It's about expectations.

RALEIGH

What do you mean?

CRUISE

When you marry there's this long list of expectations that women think are their birth rights. Shit society has drilled into their heads since they were barely out of diapers.

RALEIGH

Same as men.

CRUISE

A good provider, terrific lover, a nest to pamper and shape, a loving father, sensitive to her every whim and feelings. Deprive her of anyone of those and she'll start nagging and later cheating. Shall I go on?

Raleigh looks at the ground thinking.

RALEIGH

All the things I want to give her.

CRUISE

Sure you do, and if you deliver, then you'll live happily and gloriously ever after.

RALEIGH

So what's your point?

CRUISE

Most guys fall short, as do women. It's called reality. So in the end it's not odds Jimmy the Greek would bet on.

RALEIGH

All I know is how I feel when I'm around her.

CRUISE

Feelings are just chemicals that eventually evaporate. And, then one, or both of you, will start looking for someone else to crank up those same chemicals again.

RALEIGH

Really? Pretty strong stuff from a guy who's never been there.

CRUISE

You're forgetting Melanie in third grade who I gave my paper ring to, who dumped me when she found I was from the wrong side of town.

RALEIGH

So that's where all this anger's coming from.

Cruise pulls a small trophy from a mantle.

CRUISE

"Dart board champ, Murphy's Pub".
Guess you won't be going there
anymore not without getting
permission first from you know who.

Cruise throws the trophy to Raleigh who catches it and puts
it into one of the boxes.

RALEIGH

When does the lecturing end? No,
make that nagging?

CRUISE

Just giving you a primer for what's
coming next.

RALEIGH

Zip it. I've heard enough. I mean
it.

CRUISE

Sure, sure. Maybe I'd better leave
before I lose what little good will
I have left.

Raleigh stops packing and looks intently at Cruise.

RALEIGH

You'll always be my friend, Cruise,
but it's no fun being around you
anymore. You've got anger or
something inside of you that's
keeping you emotionally stuck in one
place.

CRUISE

I think you mean stuck in a lot of
places and it's not anger, if you
know what I mean.

They both LAUGH.

RALEIGH

You're such an asshole and you
always find a way to get the last
word.

CRUISE

I'd better go.

Cruise exits.

EXT. CITY HIGHWAY - EVENING

Cruise is on his cell phone driving down a city street.

CRUISE

Hey, baby, been thinking about you?

Cruise smiles.

CRUISE

That's not nice... six months, that long, really? Well, how about us making up for lost time? You name it, I'll be there... Oh, you're at Dante's. Order me a tequila on the rocks and I'll be there in a flash.

INT. DANTE'S - EVENING

Cruise gives HOPE CASSIDY a hug and joins her in a booth.

CRUISE

You look stunning. Makes me want to grab and devour you in one giant swallow.

HOPE

Better make it two swallows. I'm needing more time to warm up these days.

CRUISE

You know I've always had a soft spot for you.

HOPE

I think you mean a hard spot for me.

CRUISE

I could never fool you. I think that's what sets you apart.

HOPE

That's where I've been with you all right, apart, way apart.

The waiter brings Cruise a drink. He raises his glass.

CRUISE

To our long friendship.

HOPE

Better make it the short fading friendship. I've got someone meeting

me here in just a few minutes.

CRUISE

I was hoping we could spend the evening together.

HOPE

This is a new Cruise I haven't seen before. Nice doesn't become you.

CRUISE

It's me baby, the same old lovable Cruise you've always known.

HOPE

You haven't given me this much attention since that night under the willow tree, which I doubt you even remember.

CRUISE

Always. How could I forget. You had a very loose white lace blouse with little pink ribbons on top that I delicately unloosened if I recall correctly.

HOPE

My memory is you were in a hurry and delicately doesn't even come close. And the only thing pink were my panties which I never did get back.

CRUISE

One of my dearest mementos. But, at least the blouse was white.

HOPE

The way I was behaving those days I wasn't allowed to wear white.

CRUISE

How about the lace part?

HOPE

Just give it up. All you can really remember is that you nailed me.

CRUISE

Nailed? That sounds so...so...

HOPE

Okay, how about strapped on, banged, humped, bonked, fucked her brains

off? Better?

CRUISE

Okay, nailed.

HOPE

You need to be going. My fiance'
should be here any minute.

CRUISE

Fiance'? You're kidding?

HOPE

Would you believe it, Cruise? This
guy actually loves me.

CRUISE

A woman or man never knows what true
happiness is until they get
married...and then it's too late.

HOPE

Your version. My version; settling
down with someone you love who loves
you back is the emotional rock you
need to be truly happy.

CRUISE

Sure, sure. Somehow I just thought
you'd be the one gal who would
always be there for some good times.

HOPE

I kind of vaguely remember that
girl, but she doesn't exist anymore.

CRUISE

Well, at least we'll always have
fond memories of each other.

HOPE

I'll always remember you as a cosmic
black hole. Someone who sucks
everything in, but gives nothing
back. That's not a slam, that's just
the way you are.

CRUISE

I feel so much better now, knowing
it wasn't a slam.

HOPE

There's a spark in you that's very
appealing. A spark that no one's

ever been able to corral. If you ever open up to someone you love you'll find it's the sweet part of the bat that drives the ball over the fence every time.

CRUISE

Sweet part of the bat. I like it; really like it. I'm going to write it down as soon as I get home.

HOPE

I wish you the best, Cruise, really. I suspect somewhere deep down there's a nice sensitive guy trying to get out.

Cruise gets up and throws some money on the table.

CRUISE

Sure, babe, sure. And it was a white lace blouse.

HOPE

If you insist. Oh, here he comes now.

A man approaches the booth.

CRUISE

See you around, kid.

HOPE

Probably not.

Hope rises from her booth and hugs her beau as Cruise scurries off.

INT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOME - DAY

Cruise KNOCKS on the door. CAMIE RINDLE opens the door.

CAMIE

Cruise, what a surprise to see you. What brings you here?

CRUISE

Just an old friend dropping by to say hello.

CAMIE

You're looking good, Cruise. Now I'm reminded why the ladies always succumbed to you so easily.

CRUISE
I just realized I'm missing my
friends I used to hang out with.

CAMIE
You must be between hot babes to be
thinking of me.

CRUISE
Well, we used to cut a pretty wide
swath in the old days if I'm
remembering correctly.

CAMIE
Swath? Is that what you're calling
it these days? I thought of it more
as spatial topography like a top and
a bottom. And we both know who was
on top.

CRUISE
You were always the best in my mind.
Swear and drink like a sailor on a
three day pass. Take a punch and
jump right up with a smile. They
don't make them like that anymore.

CAMIE
I think I liked the "I don't give a
shit, take or leave it Cruise I used
to know better, and it was take it
if I recall correctly.

A baby's CRY comes from another room.

CAMIE
Oops, my baby just woke up.

CRUISE
Baby?

Camie scurries toward the bedroom.

CAMIE
Come and see my beautiful baby.

CRUISE
You've got a baby?

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Camie picks up her baby who stops crying.

CAMIE

How's my little baby doll? My
precious little tootsie?

Camie picks the baby out of the crib onto her bed and rolls
over onto the bed herself.

CAMIE
The most perfect baby you'll ever
see in your life.

The baby smiles at Cruise.

CAMIE
This is my friend, Cruise.

The baby continues smiling at Cruise. Camie turns to Cruise.

CAMIE
My baby likes you.

CRUISE
Of course. All females like me.

CAMIE
He's a boy.

CRUISE
Really? With that shit eater on his
face and glint in his eyes you
better look into this while there's
still time.

Camie LAUGHS.

CRUISE
I can see you're happy. Good for
you.

CAMIE
This is what life's all about,
Cruise. All the other stuff was just
pretend noise.

Camie puts her hand on Cruise's hand.

CAMIE
I hope you find what you're looking
for Cruise. You're really a nice guy
disguised as a lot of things you
aren't.

CRUISE
Nice guy. You really know how to
hurt a guy.

CAMIE

No, I sincerely mean it.

The baby starts COOING.

CAMIE

Cuchi coo! I'll tickle you.

The baby starts LAUGHING making Camie GIGGLE. Cruise slowly, quietly backs out of the room.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Cruise cell phone RINGS as he's walking through a city park.

CRUISE

What is it, Greg?

GREG OS

You got a call from your favorite perverted friend.

CRUISE

Trevor, the patron saint of horny guys who hang around sex clubs. Blow him off if he calls again.

GREG OS

Says he wants to meet you at the Broadway Club to discuss business.

CRUISE

Hang on for a second.

A troubadour walks by SINGING.

TROUBADOUR

*With just a gaze in your eyes I see,
a special look that's intriguing
me.*

Cruise sees an elderly couple strolling by holding hands.

CRUISE

Let it go. I don't deal with sleaze.

GREG OS

You might want to reconsider. I checked him out. Think lots of zeros as in 50 mil.

CRUISE

50 million? Really? Okay, call him back and tell him I'll meet him at

his club tomorrow at one.

A young couple pushing a baby carriage walk by smiling.

CRUISE

Hold on. The troubadour is back.

The troubadour SINGING.

TROUBADOUR

*I feel a love that's inside of me
which expresses my reality. I think
of you and its tenderness Being with
will bring me happiness.*

A young man nearby keeps looking at his watch. His face brightens when a young woman approaches. She runs into his arms. He pulls her head back and WHISPERS a few words to her. She closes her eyes and cries. He wipes away her tears and they kiss. They look into each others eyes, smiling.

CRUISE

Okay, I'm back. I want you to find someone for me, a Miss Jana Klein. She used to live in Peachtree Corners.

GREG OS

Miss Jana Klein. A young lass is it? I'll get right on it. You know how I thrive on responsibilities.

CRUISE

Quit your drooling and just get on it. Call me when you have something.

TROUBADOUR

*Your eyes embrace my mind, revealing
its every thought. Will my smile
touch your face? Only you can say
for sure, if our sharing will occur.
Its loving you that's always on my
mind.*

INT. BROADWAY CLUB - DAY

Cruise enters the exclusive Broadway Club and is escorted to Trevor's table. Trevor rises as Cruise approaches.

TREVOR

Thanks for coming.

Trevor signals the waiter who quickly approaches.

CRUISE
I'm just staying for a drink so you
need to get to it.

TREVOR
Please get my good friend here
whatever he wants.

WAITER
What's your pleasure today, sir?

CRUISE
Best tequila you have on the rocks.

The waiter withdraws.

TREVOR
I'm so happy you accepted my
invitation. A move you won't regret
I can promise you.

CRUISE
Your face is radiating greed, but
then what else does it radiate
except for the occasional lust.

Trevor ROARS with laughter.

TREVOR
Occasional lust isn't even
occasionally close.

CRUISE
I'm only here because you have lots
of money and I'm hoping there's a
way I can get some of it.

TREVOR
Of course. I expect nothing less.

CRUISE
Something about an investment you
want me to make for you?

TREVOR
Do you know why Wall Street folks
are so successful and filthy rich?

CRUISE
They're smart, resourceful and work
hard?

TREVOR
No, they cheat.

CRUISE

And, you're indignant because they're successful and you're not?

TREVOR

Indignant, ha! Why shovel sand against the tide. I just want to get my fair share.

CRUISE

So why am I here?

TREVOR

Bareda, International is making an announcement soon that the FDA's approved a new drug they've developed to cure Alzheimer's.

CRUISE

How reliable is that information?

TREVOR

Revealed to me by a little wisp of a lady in a white lab coat who's just one of their many scientists who developed it.

CRUISE

Finding a cure for Alzheimer's is medicine's holy grail. I'm skeptical.

TREVOR

Mrs. Nadira Darzada graduated cum laud from Oxford University with a Doctorate in Biomedical Science and is a renowned scientist in her field.

CRUISE

And why would she give you that privileged information?

TREVOR

Let me put it this way; do you know any scientists who are in the upper 3% income level with two kids in Ivy League colleges? I'll let you do the math.

CRUISE

So you pushed a little opportunity her way, being the nice guy you are.

The waiter appears with Cruise's drink and exits.

TREVOR

So let's spin the wheel and put it all on red.

CRUISE

Insider trading's a felony. You'll look good in a gray uniform. You wear extra large, I believe?

TREVOR

That's where you come in. I want you to buy their stock, a few million at a time around without drawing too much attention.

CRUISE

And, what's my stake?

TREVOR

You get 25% of the profits.

CRUISE

Why don't you do it yourself? Easy enough.

TREVOR

I'm afraid there are a few skeletons in my closet that prevent me from doing that. You know how long memories the Feds have.

CRUISE

You can throw a stick down Wall Street and hit a dozen money guys who would love to accommodate you, no questions asked.

TREVOR

But, I don't know or trust them. They'll pass the word on to their other investors and the game will be over.

CRUISE

How do you know I won't do the same?

TREVOR

I know it sounds crazy, but somehow the fact that you hate me so much makes me trust you.

CRUISE

The whole thing smells. Easy money
is usually regret money.

TREVOR

You're thinking too much. No loose
ends here. The only question is how
much to plunk down.

Cruise rises. Trevor also rises.

TREVOR

I presume I'll hear from you soon?

CRUISE

Right after I've checked up on
Bareda and your lady contact.

TREVOR

I knew in the end we'd get along.

CRUISE

No, I just lowered my
standards.

Cruise exits.

INT. UNICORN FINANCIAL OFFICE - DAY

Greg enters smiling.

GREG

Got something you're going to like,
boss man.

CRUISE

Let's hear it.

GREG

Your Miss Klein is still living in
Peachtree Corners playing folk rock
in small venues around town.

CRUISE

Did you find her address and
telephone number?

GREG

Something much better. She's playing
tonight at the Null & Void Pub in
the Village.

Greg puts a photo of her on Cruise's desk.

GREG

I used to think you just liked easy,
superficial bimbo's, but now I'm
going to have to rethink that.

CRUISE

And, I'm going to have to tell
Louisa about your nasty fantasizing.

GREG

Don't bother. I told her once about
this woman who was flirting with me
and her response was "Why?" She told
me I was negotiable for five hundred
dollars.

CRUISE

She's selling you a little short,
don't you think?

GREG

No, that was five hundred dollars
she was willing to give.

CRUISE

See if you can get some more
personal info on a Mrs. Nadira
Darzada, one of Bareda's research
scientists.

GREG

Sure enough, boss.

Cruise studies the photograph Greg left on his desk.

INT. NULL & VOID PUB - NIGHT

JANA KLEIN on guitar, MARTIN FLANAGAN on keyboard, and
DANZEL HOWE on bass are on stage. Cruise enters.

JANA

*Now and forever we will be together
like the breeze and the willow fur.
Yes we will, I can feel it in my
every being.*

Jana puts her guitar down and walks down from the stage with
her mike SINGING as she mingles with the audience.

JANA

*Now forever more I'm telling you,
yes we will you and I forever
more...more, yes forever more.*

Jana walks toward a pool table and sits on it still SINGING.

JANA
*Give me your hand, put it to my
heart and you'll know how I feel.*

The mostly male crowd starts WHISTLING. A YOUNG MAN raises his hand.

YOUNG MAN
I volunteer.

More CHUCKLES and JEERS from the crowd. Jana smiles, waves her index finger side to side and scoots over to the middle of the pool table, her legs crossed, still SINGING

JANA
*Yes we will, yes we will this I
promise with all my everything.*

The MUSIC ends. Guys help Jana off the pool table as the crowd APPLAUD.

JANA
We'll take a short break.

Jana walks by Cruise without noticing him.

CRUISE
Hey, kid.

JANA
Cruise! My God, Cruise. I can't believe it. What are you doing here?

CRUISE
I heard you were playing here so I had to see if the image I had of you in my mind was fantasy or real.

JANA
What a surprise. Really, you caught me totally off guard.

CRUISE
It's been a few moons.

JANA
It's really good to see you. I often wondered what happened to you.

Jana looks over at a group in a nearby booth.

JANA
Hey, I've got some friends who came by to watch me. Why don't you come

over and meet them?

CRUISE

No, I just wanted to drop by and say hello and see how you're doing.

JANA

Everything's fine. Just going where my heart's telling me to go.

CRUISE

That I can see and hear.

JANA

Why'd you just suddenly show up, not that I'm complaining?

CRUISE

That summer we spent together somehow won't go away. It always felt like unfinished business. I wanted to see how I would feel when I saw you again.

JANA

Shall I roll the drums?

CRUISE

The same, just like I never left. I keep telling everyone you were the one that got away.

JANA

I was way too young for you back then and I think we both knew it. I'm grateful you didn't push it.

CRUISE

Well, you're a big girl now. And in full bloom I might add.

JANA

I have a guy I've been seeing a lot lately. In fact, that's him over there in the booth with my friends looking at us.

CRUISE

Oh, yes, I see. The face that launched a thousand knives. Maybe you'd better head back before he succumbs to an overdose of anxiety.

JANA

Yeah, but that doesn't mean we can't still be friends.

CRUISE

Friends? I just felt a chill run up my spine. I tell you what. You pick the time and place and let's give it one more go and if you tell me you still want to just be friends I'll move on without a whimper. Well, maybe a little one.

JANA

Let me think about it.

CRUISE

Here's my card. Call me if you're feeling daring.

JANA

Okay.

CRUISE

Oops, looks like your number one worried fan is coming over to check me out.

BOBBY SEYMOUR, a short nerdy looking guy approaches.

BOBBY

Everything okay here?

JANA

Hey, Bobby, I want you to meet an old friend of mine, Cruise Monticello. And, Cruise, this is Bobby Seymour.

Bobby and Cruise nod at each other.

CRUISE

Bobby Seymour as in BS. I always use words with the same initials to help me remember names. BS, BS. Okay, BS as in Boy Scout.

BOBBY

Nice trick. Yours would be CM. Let me try it. Alright, Cocky Mother. There I think I've got it.

BOBBY

What kind of business you in Cocky? Sorry, I meant Cruise.

CRUISE

The greedy money making type. And you Booby? Sorry I meant Bobby.

BOBBY

I'm heading up a charity called "The Untouchables" for the homeless.

CRUISE

How noble. That explains the glow around your body. If you'd brought your donation can I'd have thrown in a dollar.

JANA

I just knew you two were going to hit it right off. Bobby, give me a moment with Cruise.

BOBBY

If you need me I'll be right over there.

Bobby scowls back at Cruise as he leaves.

JANA

Really, Cruise, a dollar?

CRUISE

This guy's got hovering down to an art form. Just keep in mind that possessive people can be dangerous when they lose control.

JANA

Thanks for the concern. Dangerous is the last thing anyone would say about Bobby. I've got to run. Come by and see me play again sometime.

Jana hugs Cruise and he exits.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Cruise drives down a country road with Jana and turns into a smaller dirt road and come upon a country pasture.

JANA

Park here.

EXT - COUNTRY PASTURE - DAY

Cruise parks his car and he and Jana walk toward a nearby stream. where they lay down a basket, a guitar and a blanket

under a tree near the stream. They sit on the blanket.

JANA
I love coming here to feel the
beauty of nature.

Cruise touches Jana's ribbon in her hair.

CRUISE
You've had a ribbon in your hair for
as long as I've known you.

JANA
Since I was a little girl, actually.

CRUISE
You need to take it off and let it
fall soft against your face.

JANA
I do, right before I go to bed.

Two birds fly by. Jana points toward them.

JANA
I wonder what they're saying.

CRUISE
Do you want to go to my place or
yours?

Jana smiles. A yellow butterfly hovers nearby.

JANA
In China they represents the passion
in lovers hearts.

CRUISE
You have no idea how expensive it
was for me to get that yellow
butterfly from China here.

JANA
I half way believe you.

Jana points to a wild flower.

JANA
And, look, a wild honeysuckle.

Cruise pulls out a wine bottle and removes the cork.

JANA
Phillip Freneau, an American

Revolutionary poet, wrote this
beautiful poem about it.

CRUISE

A poem about a wild honeysuckle; I'
can barely contain my excitement.

Jana strokes the Honeysuckle flower lightly.

JANA

*"Fair flower, that dost so comely
grow, Hid in this silent, dull
retreat, Untouched thy honied
blossoms blow, Unseen thy little
branches greet: No roving foot shall
crush thee here, No busy hand
provoke a tear."*

CRUISE

"...that dost so comely grow." I
like it, I really do.

Jana pulls out two slices of watermelon from her basket.

JANA

What do you say we take off our
shoes, dangle our feet in the stream
and eat some watermelon?

CRUISE

Watermelon? Okay, but this will have
to be strictly off the record. You
know, my reputation.

JANA

You mean the full court press,
never let up, lover boy reputation?

Jana and Cruise take off their shoes, walk to the stream and
sit with their feet in the water silently eating their
watermelon. Jana lifts one leg out of the water HUMMING a
melody.

CRUISE

You have lovely legs. With your
permission.

Cruise lifts one of Jana's legs out of the water and
caresses her ankle.

CRUISE

It's not just the softness of the
leg, but the slope of its curve and
its length that make them beautiful.

JANA

Loud warning bells are going off.

CRUISE

Did you ever notice Italy's shaped like a leg? Down here you have Catanzaro, a lovely small village at the heel.

Cruise gently caresses Jana's foot.

JANA

That tickles.

Cruise moves his hand up Jana's leg to her ankle.

CRUISE

And, here you have Naples, with all it's breathtaking seascapes.

JANA

We're taking a trip through Italy, are we?

Cruise moves his hand up to her calf.

CRUISE

And right up here you have Rome with its "amore, amore" and more "amore". Makes me want to kiss it.

JANA

Ah...NO!

Cruise moves his hand up to the beginning of Jana's thigh.

CRUISE

And here's Florence with all it's breathtaking landscapes, art, and wineries.

Jana grabs Cruise's hand.

JANA

Stop, before you get to Milano.

Cruise removes his hand, smiling.

CRUISE

A simple touch reveals a wealth of information to the skin; hot, cold, smooth, rough, pressure, tickle, itch, pain.

Jana looks at Cruise suspiciously.

JANA

A huh!

CRUISE

It seems like I'm leaving out something. Oh yeah, pleasure.

JANA

You can forget that one. Pick another subject and surprise me.

CRUISE

Okay, on to plan B; a glass of red wine it shall be.

JANA

Seamless without missing a beat. Your reputation is well deserved.

Cruise and Jana return and dry themselves off.

CRUISE

Now, for a little Barbaresco red wine from Gaja, a 154 year old Italian winery to tide you over for the close call you just had.

JANA

Are there any more coming, close calls, that is?

Cruise smiles and shakes his head.

CRUISE

I brought an extra bottle just in case.

JANA

Is there anyway I can halt the seduction in progress?

CRUISE

You misjudge me. It's just my way of getting to know you better.

JANA

Fine, but, no one ever gets to know you, the ever elusive Cruise.

Jana grabs her guitar.

JANA

Maybe this will soothe your soul and
loosen your tongue.

Jana begins SINGING, strumming her guitar.

JANA

*Until there was you I walked the
earth alone No hand to hold in mine.
My heart was all my own. Until there
was you true love was just a dream.
Dreams of wonder and tears Dreams of
hope and fears, until there was you,
but, no, no, you never let me near.*

Jana puts down the guitar.

CRUISE

Lovely. A message in there for
someone, maybe?

JANA

Just that I'd like to take a peek
behind the mask to get to know the
real Cruise.

CRUISE

We all wear masks to protect us from
who we really are.

JANA

I suspect there's a deeper hidden
side that you're keeping oh so close
to your vest.

CRUISE

Just a guy living in the moment
trying to squeeze all the good juice
out of that bottle we call life.

JANA

Looks like you're going to white
knuckle that bottle and never let
anyone else drink from it.

Cruise pours the wine and raises his goblet.

CRUISE

A toast. *The tart and dryness, begin
to matter less, when the glass is
empty.*

JANA

A metaphor about your life, perhaps?

CRUISE

I think it's traditional to return a toast when one's given.

Jana raises her goblet as well.

JANA

He danced along the dingy days. What liberty a loosened spirit brings.

Cruise locks his arm into Jana's arm and pulls her into him. They drink the wine quietly looking into each others eyes.

JANA

I want to know you, but you won't let me.

CRUISE

What you see is what you get.

JANA

You need to take a journey into your heart to see what's there.

CRUISE

If I knew the way, I's take that road.

JANA

Everyone needs to keep looking until they find that road.

CRUISE

I'm thinking this is the perfect time for a soft kiss. You know, like the period at the end of an elegant sentence.

JANA

Okay, but just don't make it an elegant paragraph.

Cruise leans in and gives Jana a very short tender kiss. Jana closes her eyes and smiles.

JANA

Thank you.

They continue drinking the wine with their arms linked looking deep into each others eyes.

INT. PRIVATE EYES DETECTIVE AGENCY - DAY

Cruise KNOCKS on a door, but no answer, He slowly opens the

door and sees a man sleeping on a nearby sofa. The office is in disarray.

CRUISE

Hey, you open for business?

The figure on the couch moves a little.

CRUISE

I SAID YOU OPEN FOR BUSINESS?

ZOOM MCELROY, a thirty something, disheveled man lifts his head and opens one eye. He rubs his eyes and rises. He looks up at Cruise and nods.

ZOOM

Yeah, yeah, man. Sorry I nodded off there for a moment.

CRUISE

The sign outside said Private Eyes Detective Agency.

ZOOM

That be me. The best detective agency in the Village. Actually, the only one.

CRUISE

That's why I picked you. I want someone who knows all the ins and outs of the area.

ZOOM

You can mention my name anywhere in the Village. (beat) No one's ever heard of me.

CRUISE

So you know the area well?

ZOOM

Like the back of my foot.

CRUISE

What's your experience?

ZOOM

I break down each and every investigative task into a finite space and time algorithmic continuum.

CRUISE

I feel so much better knowing that.

Zoom and Cruise shake hands.

CRUISE
Cruise Monticello.

ZOOM
Ah, my name, my name.

Zoom peeks over at a stock of letters on his desk.

ZOOM
Occupant?

CRUISE
It says Zoom A. McElroy outside your door, if that helps any.

ZOOM
That's the one. I think I am, therefore I am, I think.

CRUISE
I have a pretty simple assignment for you.

ZOOM
Yeah, yeah, no job's too easy.

CRUISE
I want you to tail a guy and report back to me where and how he spends his days...and nights.

ZOOM
No sweat, a breeze.

CRUISE
What's your fee?

ZOOM
Paying my back rent would be good for starters.

CRUISE
We've got a deal.

Cruise hands Zoom a photo.

CRUISE
Here's a picture of a Mr. Bobby Seymour who you'll find on the street a lot with the homeless or at

the Salvation Army's soup kitchen,.

ZOOM

Why would you want me to tail this guy? Kind of an innocent looking dude.

CRUISE

Let's just say we all have our secrets.

ZOOM

You can rest assured that I'll stay in his front pocket, day and night.

CRUISE

He, also, hangs out at the Null and Void Pub in the Village to watch a lady friend who performs there.

ZOOM

Hmmm, a lady friend. May not be so boring after all.

CRUISE

I want you focused on the guy, not the girl.

ZOOM

No need to worry about me and women. Whatever they want I don't got.

CRUISE

It's just a matter of matching up.

ZOOM

Naw, it bothered me so much I went to a shrink and after many lengthy expensive sessions and extensive research she finally figured what my problem with women was.

CRUISE

What was it?

ZOOM

"Whatever they want I don't got".

CRUISE

Here's my business card. Memorize my cell phone number because you'll be using it a lot.

ZOOM

Thanks.

CRUISE

I want you to pretend you're the best detective in the whole world.

ZOOM

To pretend, I don't actually have to do anything. I have therefore only pretended to pretend.

CRUISE

Call me when you have something.

ZOOM

Ten five.

INT. UNICORN FINANCIAL OFFICE - DAY

Greg enters Cruise's office.

CRUISE

What did you find out about that Seymour guy and his so called charity?

GREG

You referred to him as a boy scout with more than a hint of sarcasm, but you may want to reconsider. He's a straight arrow, squeaky clean, All American boy much to your chagrin as I can see from your face.

CRUISE

How deep did you go?

GREG

Boss man, just let it go. He's just an idealistic religious kid living a righteous life.

CRUISE

The real measure of a man is defined by what he hides.

GREG

Well, he did go to the Cheetah Club recently, but he wasn't there long.

CRUISE

Cheetah Club? Hard to believe. How'd you know that?

GREG
(sheepish grin)
A little friend told me.

CRUISE
You sly dog. I'm going to have to
tell Louise.

GREG
She already knows. She likes it when
I get home and kick the bedroom door
down.

CRUISE
Why would he go there?

GREG
Maybe he's just looking to convert
us sinners

CRUISE
Okay, you're off the case. Just stay
on the Cassandra Trevor file.
There's real dirt there.

GREG
Will do.

INT. NULL & VOID PUB - NIGHT

Cruise enters the pub and approaches Jana who's tuning up
her guitar near the stage.

CRUISE
Hey there.

JANA
Hi. Glad to see you. We go on in few
minutes.

CRUISE
I can't stay. I thought you might
want to hang with me later after you
finish here.

JANA
Bobby's coming to watch me tonight
so, sorry, can't make it. I do need
to tell you that he was furious when
I told him I went out with you.

CRUISE
He'll get over it.

JANA

He's been good to me, Cruise. He was there once when I needed him. There's a goodness in him that's hard to find these days.

CRUISE

People are like icebergs, one eighth above water and seven eights below. The seven eights below are what defines them.

JANA

I've known Bobby for a long time and the only weakness I've found is his addiction to iced tea.

CRUISE

Decaffeinated, no doubt.

JANA

And, no sugar either.

CRUISE

Like all humans, we all have our frailties and he's no exception.

JANA

What are you saying?

CRUISE

It not fair to slam someone when they're not around to defend themselves especially when I might gain something by doing it.

JANA

I don't believe you.

CRUISE

Good, let's leave it at that.

JANA

So, what are you implying?

CRUISE

I don't think you would look at me kindly if I told you.

JANA

I won't look at you kindly if you don't.

CRUISE

It's really a nothing thing?

JANA
Let's hear it.

CRUISE
I dug into his life to see if his
professed sanctimony was earned.

JANA
You what? You snake! How could you?

CRUISE
You can rest easy. His halo is only
very slightly tarnished.

JANA
I don't want to know it, probably a
lie anyway.

CRUISE
Look, he just proved he's human so
you don't need to think too badly of
him. Frankly, I was disappointed.

JANA
The only person I'm thinking badly
of right now is you.

CRUISE
Hey look, no one's perfect.

JANA
I always knew you were a womanizer,
but I didn't think you were a creep
too.

CRUISE
Look, I didn't tell you what he did
just that he isn't as squeaky clean
as he makes himself out to be and
only at your insistence.

JANA
You went way over the line by prying
into his private life. That's
inexcusable.

CRUISE
My hunches are usually right, but
this was the one time I kind of got
it wrong.

JANA

You know, you halfway had me believing you were a guy worth knowing or maybe even more, but now you're just nothing but a huge disappointment.

CRUISE

Sorry. You asked and I told you.

JANA

Isn't it ironic that you're the wizard about touching but don't know anything about feeling.

CRUISE

You're wrong. The one thing I do know about is feeling; you might call it my specialty.

JANA

If you want to learn a little more about little critters you might want to study up on the cockroach, but then again, that's right in your wheelhouse.

Jana storms off. Cruise watches her leave rubbing his chin.

INT. POOR NEIGHBORHOOD APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cruise enters JOSEPH MONTICELLO apartment. He's embroidering a bird on a cloth. Joseph rises.

CRUISE

Don't stop for me.

JOSEPH

It's okay. I can finish it anytime.

CRUISE

Pops, I need to share something personal with you.

JOSEPH

Sharing something personal with me? I feel good that you've come to me.

CRUISE

I've met someone who when I see her it's hard for me to look away.

JOSEPH

She must be beautiful.

CRUISE

Yes, but it's more than that.

JOSEPH

You're on a path to happiness.

CRUISE

And, winning her love is the other half, I know.

JOSEPH

To finish, "Love is a truck with an open road in front of you".

CRUISE

Not a good metaphor, Pops, because I've come to a dead end.

JOSEPH

You always value things more when you can't have them.

CRUISE

The other thing is, I'm not sure if I'm right for her. She needs someone who's not a wild card and can match her values. You know the problems you and mom had raising me.

JOSEPH

At the core, son, you're, a good person.

CRUISE

I've been going so long in the other direction, I'm not sure I can turn the corner.

JOSEPH

Tell me more.

CRUISE

We went on a picnic recently and she spent the whole time commenting on the birds and flowers and was even excited to see a yellow butterfly flutter by, if you can believe it.

JOSEPH

What flowers?

CRUISE

A wild honeysuckle. She even recited a verse from an old poem about it.

JOSEPH
I like her already.

CRUISE
She's new territory I've never been
in before.

JOSEPH
And you're looking to me for help?
You can't be that desperate.

CRUISE
Well, you did win Mom over.

JOSEPH
To this day I don't know how.

CRUISE
There had to be something you did.

JOSEPH
She could of had her pick from
anyone of a bunch of guys who were
wooing her; rich, handsome,
powerful, you name it, but somehow,
she picked me.

CRUISE
A choice she never regretted.

JOSEPH
All those handsome rich guys with
their fancy cars couldn't believe
it, her going out with a short ugly
wop with no money.

Joseph turns his face away fighting tears.

CRUISE
Don't sell yourself short, Pops.

JOSEPH
I asked her if I could make her a
temporary wooden wedding ring until
I could afford a better one. So, I
make one with our initials etched
into it and she never wanted another
one.

CRUISE
I remember.

JOSEPH
Every morning when I'd wake up I'd

kiss her and tell her how much I
loved her.

CRUISE
Her name is Jana and she's nine
years younger than me.

JOSEPH
Jana is it? Maybe that's Italian.

CRUISE
It's not Italian, Pops.

JOSEPH
Catholic?

CRUISE
No.

JOSEPH
Doesn't matter. It's a sweet name.
And don't worry about the age thing.
Now what kind of help are you
looking from me?

CRUISE
You already gave it to me.

JOSEPH
But, I didn't give you anything.

CRUISE
Yes, you did. It's in there
somewhere when you were talking
about mom.

JOSEPH
If I make present for her will you
give it to her?

CRUISE
Sure, pops.

JOSEPH
Good. Come share some Pignolata with
me. I'll get the tea kettle going.
Bring your girl friend over and I'll
serve her some too.

CRUISE
A fried chocolate pastry isn't going
to win her over, Pops.

INT. UNICORN OFFICE - DAY

Cruise enters his office.

CRUISE

So, get me up to speed on the Bareda drama.

GREG

It's a flat liner. Maybe your friend should have another talk with his inside contact.

CRUISE

And their financial track record?

GREG

A slow steady decline going back five years.

CRUISE

Dig a little deeper. Some of our Pharmaceutical accounts may have some inside skinny.

GREG

Can do. By the way, Trevor has been calling and wants you to meet with him, pronto.

CRUISE

The devil peddling evil morsels.

GREG

He's insisting you meet him at his Avondale Estates home. I have his address.

CRUISE

May be lots of money there for the taking. I'm tempted.

GREG

So, what's holding you back?

CRUISE

My father's a socialist and was a union leader in a steel mill. He always felt the rich folks exploited them. With tears running down his cheeks, he made me promise never to succumb to greed.

GREG

Did you?

CRUISE

I was only eleven, but I remember thinking here we are living in near squalor and he thinks this is noble, somehow.

GREG

So you promised, but with your fingers crossed behind your back?

CRUISE

I promised and have a clean record so far, but Trevor's dangling some tempting low hanging grapes.

GREG

Maybe you should remind yourself "Money's the root of all evil".

CRUISE

Actually, it's the lack of money that's the root of all evil

GREG

Remember, It's better to shun the bait, than struggle in the snare.

CRUISE

He's a fat greedy sleaze who has too much money.

GREG

And, you'd like to relieve him of that condition.

CRUISE

Yeah, but, how do you do it without getting yourself dirty?

GREG

He Fed Ex'd the contract to you. All it needs is your signature and you're good to go.

Greg throws the contract on Cruise's desk. Cruise stares at it, slowly nudges it away from him, hesitates and then quickly picks it up and throws it into his briefcase.

CRUISE

Call Trevor back and tell him I'll be there in 30 minutes.

INT. EL DORADO ESTATE - DAY

A butler escorts Cruise to Trevor's luxurious den. Trevor strides over with an outstretched hand.

TREVOR
Welcome, welcome to my humble abode.
I just had it restyled with all the
finest money can buy.

CRUISE
Yeah, I know, it's not much, but
it's home.

Cruise ignores the outstretched hand.

TREVOR
(pointing)
That's a Vintage Rosendo rug.

CRUISE
Anyone would know that at a glance.

TREVOR
And, that's a Bergoti sun dried ash
desk straight from Italy. Very
expensive.

Cruise pulls out the contract and places it on a table.

TREVOR
Wonderful, wonderful. This is the
beginning of a very lucrative
relationship. I knew in the end
you'd come into my warm fuzzy
cubbyhole.

Trevor picks up the contract.

TREVOR
I can tell you without reservation
that you won't regret...

Trevor's smiles turns to a frown.

TREVOR
You didn't sign it.

CRUISE
I can't do it.

TREVOR
What? I don't understand.

CRUISE
Your offer is tempting, but it's

toxic with potentially dangerous consequences.

TREVOR

Nothing we can't work out.

CRUISE

When the airplane wheels leaves the ground you own the ride. Not a ride I want to take.

TREVOR

You're wrong, wrong, WRONG!

CRUISE

I made a promise once to someone I respect that my walk would always be on the straight and narrow and to never compromise my integrity.

TREVOR

What fool told you that?

CRUISE

My father. This deal is dishonest at many levels. He might never know I did the deal, but I would.

TREVOR

You mean the dithering old geezer living in a dump, espousing socialism is who you look up to?

CRUISE

Why do you know so much about my father?

TREVOR

I like to know who I'm dealing with and knowing their loved ones is a good place to start. Keep that in mind when you're trying to fuck with me.

CRUISE

If that's a veiled threat against me or my father, just know that I will pound that mound of flabby flesh into a bloody pulp.

TREVOR

He's a weirdo low life who spends his time embroidering birds.

CRUISE

This from a slime ball who recruits desperate vulnerable women peddling their flesh to the depraved.

TREVOR

Ha! Sanctimonious words spoken from the fuck em and leave em lover boy. Hypocrisy is oozing out of every pore in your body.

CRUISE

We're done here.

TREVOR

Tread lightly here. This ain't my first rodeo.

CRUISE

You know I have no fear of you.

TREVOR

As sure as wild cats roam dark alleys, there will be a reckoning if you don't make that trade.

CRUISE

And, just what will you do to me, fat boy?

TREVOR

Squeeze your neck with my bare hands.

Trevor lifts his fingers in front of him making a squeezing motion. An indistinguishable guttural SOUND explodes.

TREVOR

ARRGH!!

CRUISE

Nice try. And, by the way, I really like your decor, early grotesque I believe.

Trevor glares at Cruise as he exits.

INT. NULL & VOID PUB - DAY

Cruise enters and approaches Danzel and Martin at the bar.

CRUISE

Hey, guys.

DANZEL
Hi. What's happening?

CRUISE
Where's Jana? She's not answering
my voice mails.

MARTIN
Same here. She never even showed for
practice yesterday.

CRUISE
That doesn't sound like her. So
when's the last time you saw or
heard from her?

DANZEL
Monday.

CRUISE
That's two days ago. What's going
on?

MARTIN
Last time I saw her, she said
something about meeting some guys
uptown about a gig.

CRUISE
Uptown where?

DANZEL
She mentioned it, but don't remember
the name.

CRUISE
Think about exactly what she said.
She may be in trouble?

MARTIN
It'll eventually come back to me.

DANZEL
The fact that she's not answering
her phone isn't a good sign.

CRUISE
Call me when you have something.

Bobby enters as Cruise is leaving and rushes over to Danzel
and Martin.

BOBBY
What's he doing here?

MARTIN
He's looking for Jana.

BOBBY
HEY THERE. YEA, THAT BE YOU.

Cruise turns as Bobby scurries over.

BOBBY
Jana told you to stay away. Can't
you take a fucking hint?

CRUISE
You can stand down, big boy. I was
just making sure she's alright.

BOBBY
She thinks you're a jerk and
wouldn't touch you with a ten foot
pole, so get out and don't come
back.

CRUISE
Look, you little dweeb, this isn't
about who's on top this week. It's
about making sure she's okay. She's
been missing for over two days now.

BOBBY
I'm on top of it, so keep your
filthy body away from her.

CRUISE
The only reason I'm not squeezing
your pointed head is because of
Jana, so back off.

BOBBY
Isn't it funny that you, the rich,
hot shot ladies man got aced out by
a poor, nobody with nothing but a
bible and a sincere love for her?

CRUISE
Not to mention the light that
emanates from your holy body.

BOBBY
Maybe, you don't hear so good. So
let me say it again, STAY AWAY FROM
HER, ASSHOLE. Did you hear that?

CRUISE
I dare you to stand up and say that.

Oh, wait, you are standing.

Cruise exits.

EXT. NULL AND VOID ENTRANCE - DAY

Cruise's cell phone vibrates.

CRUISE

What is it, Greg?

GREG OS

You just got a call from your father. Apparently, someone jumped him on the street and roughed him up a bit. He's okay, but you might want to check it out.

CRUISE

Damn, I told him this would happen in that neighborhood. I'm on my way.

GREG OS

Before you hang up, you need to let me read you this note that was just delivered to you a few minutes ago.

CRUISE

What is it?

GREG OS

It says "Watch ye therefore: Lest coming suddenly he finds you sleeping."

CRUISE

Now, isn't that nice. One of my fans, no doubt.

GREG OS

Better keep your head down, boss man. Something's getting crazy out there.

CRUISE

Crazy and dangerous.

INT. POOR NEIGHBORHOOD APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cruise enters his father apartment finding him on the sofa reading the Bible.

CRUISE

Did you get the license plate number

of the truck that hit you?

JOSEPH
He put a hurt on me, son.

CRUISE
Pops, I warned you about staying here. Why won't you let me get you a better place. You know I can afford it.

JOSEPH
I've lived here for fifty years. No, this is where I belong.

CRUISE
Are you okay? Let me take a look.

JOSEPH
Just a few bruises. My friends chased him away, so I'm okay.

CRUISE
How'd it happen?

JOSEPH
I was just going to Luigi's for some Bresaola.

CRUISE
What happened?

JOSEPH
Well this biker guy comes over and slaps me on top of my head. When I fell down he kicked me.

CRUISE
He just came up to you without saying anything and just started beating you?

JOSEPH
Yeah. I got up and started calling him nasty names in Italian and got a good kick in.

CRUISE
Geez, Pops. You should have just ran for help.

JOSEPH
A Monticello never runs. You know that.

CRUISE
And, he never said a word?

JOSEPH
He said, "Watch ye therefore: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping." It's from the Book of Mark, Chapter 13, verse 36.

CRUISE
Describe him.

JOSEPH
He was a tall ugly looking guy, shaved head, wearing a black leather jacket with some red cross stitched on it.

CRUISE
Sounds like a gang biker.

JOSEPH
And he had a swastika tattoo on his forehead.

CRUISE
When I find him, he'll have more than that a kick to remember us by. Can I get you anything, Pops?

JOSEPH
Can you make me a salami sandwich with cheese and olives?

CRUISE
I guess you're okay if you have an appetite. I'll promise you, Pops, I'll find this guy and dispense a little Italian "giustizia" for you.

JOSEPH
Be careful, he's dangerous.

CRUISE
I think I know who set this up and I'll make sure he never has a chance to do this to you again.

INT. CIT STREET- DAY

Cruise calls Raleigh driving down a city street.

CRUISE
Do you have anything yet on who

jumped my dad?

RALEIGH OS

We found him. Pretty easy with that swastika tattoo on his forehead clue. He belongs to the Iron Cross biker club. and goes by the name "Buzz" as in Buzzard.

CRUISE

Buzzard! Nothing like truth in advertising.

RALEIGH OS

He's one mean, psycho mother fucker. Rides his hog barefoot without a shirt or helmet and has a rap sheet so long it could be published.

CRUISE

Just point to the sewer where I can find and repay him in kind. I wouldn't want him to think I'm ungrateful.

RALEIGH OS

He hangs out at the Hogs Heaven Saloon on Tumbleweed Avenue, a biker joint.

CRUISE

I need your help on something more pressing, Raleigh. Jana's disappeared, vanished without a trace for two days now. Not answering her cell phone, completely dropped off the face of the earth.

RALEIGH OS

What about Buzzard?

CRUISE

It will have to wait until we find Jana. She could be in serious trouble.

Cruise ends the call. Cruise's cell phone RINGS.

DANZEL OS

Cruise, Danzel here. I remembered something Jana told me in our last meeting that might help.

CRUISE
Great. Give it to me.

DANZEL OS
The name of the place she was going to had the name "Fox" in it. And, it was some sort of nightclub and was uptown.

CRUISE
That gives me something to work with. Thanks. I'll keep you posted.

Cruise calls Greg.

CRUISE
Greg, I want you to look up any bar, nightclub or strip joint that has the "Fox" name in it in the Uptown area.

GREG OS
Shouldn't be too hard. Hang on. Give me a few seconds on my computer. (pause) Here we go, "The Fox Hole" a strip joint uptown on 23rd and Indian Trail.

CRUISE
Good work. Text me the ownership and any contacts listed. I'm on my to Uptown.

GREG OS
I'm on it.

EXT. FOX HOLE CLUB - DAY

Cruise's parks his car near the Fox Hole Club. His cell phone BUZZES.

CRUISE
Yeah, Greg, what you got?

GREG OS
The Fox Hole opened two years ago with no unlawful incidents reported to date.

CRUISE
Who's the owner?

GREG OS
Your number one friend with the

manicured fingernails and powerful perfume.

CRUISE

Trevor. Figures. All roads lead to Rome. And, the manager?

GREG OS

The grease ball with bad breath.

CRUISE

Maldo Penzi. Gather all the information you have on Jana and text it to Raleigh Rollins at the County Detective Agency.

Cruise calls Zoom.

CRUISE

Hey, Zoom. I want you to head over to "The Fox Hole" a nudie joint uptown on 23rd and Indian Trail. How soon can you get here?

ZOOM OS

Uptown? I'm not very far. I can meet you there before you can say "Gobbling gargoyles gobbled gobbling goblins".

CRUISE

No, I can't go in. The manager knows me. Go in there and show Jana's photo to all the servers and tell them there's a C spot for anyone who can give us useful information.

ZOOM OS

Ten five.

CRUISE

Call me when you have something.

INT. FOX HOLE CLUB - NIGHT

Zoom enters the Fox Hole Club. Numerous scantily clad woman are gyrating on the stage. Dance music BLARES. An attendant checks Zoom's ID. Zoom sits at a table. A WAITRESS arrives.

WAITRESS

Whatcha want?

ZOOM

To taste the essence of all that is

*good and beautiful, perchance to
wallow forever in their sweetness.*

WAITRESS
C'mon, get real?

ZOOM
Okay, a beer.

Zoom pulls out a photo of Jana and lays it on the table and deliberately nudges it off the table. The waitress picks it up.

WAITRESS
You don't want to lose this one.
She's cute.

ZOOM
Yeah, she's been missing for
awhile. There's a big reward for
any info leading to her.

WAITRESS
Reward? Really, how much?

ZOOM
More than a month of tips your best
dancers make here.

WAITRESS
Really?

The waitress looks at the photo a little closer. Zoom puts a hundred dollar bill on the table.

ZOOM
This is for you just to let you know
there's more where that came from,
if any of your friends here can
help.

WAITRESS
Hmm! Mind if I show it to some of
the gals?

ZOOM
Not at all.

The waitress picks up the photo and leaves.

EXT. FOX HOLE CLUB - NIGHT

Zoom dials Cruise.

ZOOM
Hit the mother lode.

CRUISE OS
You have something?

ZOOM
Yeah, one of the girls saw Jana at the club briefly with two big shot guys who were all over her.

CRUISE OS
Anything else?

ZOOM
Their server said the girl got tipsy after one drink.

CRUISE OS
One drink; they spiked it.

ZOOM
She said they had to help her up she was so unsteady.

CRUISE OS
Did she notice anything about the guys that stood out?

ZOOM
Yeah, she said she recognized one of the guys from the VIP Penthouse Club at the Plaza Hotel when she worked there.

CRUISE OS
Good work. The plot thickens.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Cruise calls Greg from his car.

CRUISE
Greg, got another one for you. See what you can find on the VIP Club in the Plaza Hotel; the usual suspects.

GREG OS
Hang on. Let me check my sources.

CRUISE
Like we've always suspected. They recruit vulnerable desperate women and then use drugs to control them.

GREG OS

Okay, here it is. A private club for the super rich, powerful elite. "Escorts Available" listed so they probably provide a little strange stuff on the side for the horny ones.

CRUISE

So, who's pulling the strings?

GREG OS

Think a touch of rouge on his cheeks and an obnoxious amount of jewelry all over his corpulent body.

CRUISE

Trevor again. The disease with no cure.

GREG OS

His evil tentacles are everywhere.

CRUISE

It all ties together. Having his goon beat up my father wasn't enough revenge. Now he wants to hurt me through Jana too.

Cruise calls Zoom.

CRUISE

Zoom, put on some nice threads and meet me in the Plaza Hotel lobby.

ZOOM OS

What's your plan?

CRUISE

To rescue Jana from a fate worse than death.

ZOOM OS

In the belly of the beast we pluck our fair maiden to safe harbors.

CRUISE

Something like that, especially the beast part.

Cruise speeds down the road.

INT. VIP PENTHOUSE CLUB - NIGHT

Cruise and Zoom approach the Penthouse VIP Club. BRUNO CONO blocks the door.

BRUNO
Members only.

CRUISE
Benjamin invited me.

Cruise hands a \$100 bill to Bruno who promptly pockets it. Beautiful people abound the elegant upscale bar. Cruise and Zoom make their way to the bar next to PENNY STARR.

PENNY
Hi, I'm Penny.

CRUISE
Cruise, and this is my friend Zoom.

JANA
Welcome to the VIP Club.

CRUISE
Looks like powerful men and beautiful women are the order of the day here.

PENNY
Thank you.

CRUISE
Any entertainment here?

PENNY
It's supposed to be a secret, but there's exotic strip tease dancing in the Purple Room.

CRUISE
Sounds like my kind of fun.

PENNY
It's by invitation only. You know, for the extra fat cats.

CRUISE
Where is this mysterious place?

PENNY
I really shouldn't be talking to you about this.

Cruise signals the BARTENDER.

CRUISE
A tequila shooter for me and what
ever the lady wants.

PENNY
Sauvignon Blanc, please.

BARTENDER
(to Zoom)
And, what's your flavor, mister.

ZOOM
Do you have any drinks with a little
umbrella in them?

BARTENDER
Mai Tai or Pina Colada?

ZOOM
(to Penny)
The umbrella keeps unstable alcohol
molecules from evaporating too
quickly.

PENNY
Interesting.

ZOOM
I love drinks that have colorful
umbrellas. The rainbow is my
favorite.

PENNY
(sarcastically)
You're such a whiz bang guy. How'd
you get that way?

ZOOM
Well, as my Poppy once told me
"You've got to have a good focus on
the appropriate variables". (pause)
I never forgot that.

CRUISE
ZOOM!

ZOOM
A Mai Tai, please.

The bartender exits.

CRUISE
Who runs the show here?

PENNY
Cindy Sendowski. She knows all her
customers down to their underwear
size. That's her over there.

Penny points to CINDY SENDOWSKI, at the other side of the
bar. Cruise shows Penny a Jana photograph.

CRUISE
Ever see this lady here?

PENNY
A huh. She came in with two of our
bouncers a couple of days ago. They
talked to Miss Sendowski briefly and
left.

CRUISE
With the lady?

Penny nods.

CRUISE
Where did they take her?

PENNY
I don't know. She wasn't here long.

The bartender brings the drinks.

CRUISE
How can I get into the Purple Room?

Penny bites her lower lip, looking frightened.

CRUISE
No one knows us here and they'll
never even know we were here when we
leave.

Cruise puts a hundred dollar bill and nudges it to Penny.

CRUISE
I think she's in trouble, bad
trouble.

PENNY
(whispers)
Okay. It's on the top floor and
you'll need a code number to get the
elevator door to open.

CRUISE
Do you know it?

Penny looks around the room and nods.

PENNY

It's 13894 and the star button. I danced up there once. Never again. But, you can't get in without being a member or an invitation from a member.

CRUISE

I know a member of this club who can get me that invitation. Excuse me.

Cruise moves to the next stool.

PENNY

Why are you looking at me that way?

ZOOM

I think you've got the most lovely eyelids.

PENNY

Eyelids? Really? That's a new one.

ZOOM

The shape, the color, how they hover sensuously over your eyes.

PENNY

Thank you, I think.

Cruise is TALKING to Raleigh on his cell phone.

CRUISE

Raleigh, I may have found Jana.

RALEIGH OS

Where?

CRUISE

At the VIP Penthouse Club on 10th Avenue, top floor of the Plaza Hotel.

RALEIGH OS

How'd you find her?

CRUISE

An escort lady who works here ID'd her. Two of their bouncers hustled her to their Purple Room where they showcase exotic dancers.

RALEIGH OS

What's your plan? I can't get a search and seize warrant without reasonable cause.

CRUISE

Once we're in and see her then you can call your guys and serve the warrant.

RALEIGH OS

If she's there I shouldn't have a problem. I'll bring back up just in case.

CRUISE

I'll meet you in the lobby.

Cindy spots Cruise and walks toward him.

CRUISE

Looks like we've got company.

PENNY

I smell trouble.

Cindy approaches with a big smile.

CINDY

Hi, welcome to VIP. Are you new members?

CRUISE

Mo, we're not.

CINDY

What? Then, how'd you get in?

CRUISE

I greased your gatekeeper.

CINDY

Not members. I'm afraid I'll have to ask you to leave. And, I'll deal with our doorman later.

CRUISE

As you wish. Thank you, Penny for being such a fantastic hostess.

CINDY

And, Penny you know our rule about confirming memberships. You and I will have our little talk later.

PENNY

That won't be necessary. I know what's coming. I'll be leaving, too.

Cindy YELLS to the doorman.

CINDY

BRUNO, ESCORT THEM OUT OF THE CLUB!

CRUISE

C'mon, guys let's get some clean, fresh air.

Penny joins Zoom and Cruise as they exit.

EXT. PLAZA HOTEL STREET ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Cruise hands Penny his business card.

CRUISE

Here's my business card. If you need any help give me a call.

PENNY

That's very nice of you.

CRUISE

How are you getting home?

PENNY

The number 10 bus. It's no problem.

CRUISE

Zoom, when opportunity knocks you need to answer?

ZOOM

Ah yes, I see my task set before me, my mission clear and true. There will be black knights and dragons, girl. Will you join me in my horseless carriage for a jaunt through the meadows?

PENNY

How gallant of you my fair knight. Take me with great dispatch to my castle just beyond the cherry orchard.

ZOOM

Maybe I'll even recite some poems to tickle your soul.

PENNY
(giggling)
How nice, it hasn't been tickled in
ages.

Zoom smiles and offers his arm to Penny who takes it as they
exit. Cruise calls DEVON WHITFIELD.

CRUISE
Hello, Devon. Cruise here.

DEVON OS
Hello Cruise. This is a surprise.
What, got a hot stock tip for me?

CRUISE
Not business, Devon. Just a personal
favor to ask.

DEVON OS
Sure. Let's hear it.

CRUISE
I have a lady friend who we suspect
has been kidnapped and drugged.

DEVON OS
You need to call the police if it's
that serious.

CRUISE
Can't do that until I find her. It's
possible she's performing at the
Purple Room.

DEVON OS
I'm a member so I know it well.

CRUISE
I figured. Then you know we need
passes to get in.

DEVON OS
When do you need them?

CRUISE
Tonight.

DEVON OS
TONIGHT? You're asking for a lot on
a very short notice.

CRUISE
I know, but danger has a habit of

not waiting.

DEVON OS
Let me make a call and you'll have
those invitations.

CRUISE
Just call me and confirm when
they're ready.

DEVON OS
I don't need to confirm. The hotel's
concierge will have them for you
within a half an hour. And, you owe
me one.

CRUISE
Of course. Thanks.

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Raleigh and Cruise are in an elevator. The door opens and a
BOUNCER greets them.

BOUNCER
This is for club members or by
invitation only.

Cruise hands him the invitation cards.

BOUNCER
Raise your arms.

The bouncer runs a metal detector up and down their bodies.

BOUNCER
You're good to go.

The bouncer leads them to another door.

INT. PURPLE ROOM - NIGHT

Ten men are watching a scantily dressed sexy lady gyrating to
music on the stage. Cruise and Raleigh are escorted to a
table. The MUSIC ends. The men APPLAUD. The lady exits.
Maldo takes the stage.

MALDO
Now, a big applause for our latest
senorita, Miss Jana Teamo. That's
Spanish for "I love you".

Jana emerges dressed in white lingerie panties and a loose
transparent white blouse. Cruise leans forward.

RALEIGH
Not yet. Not until I alert my
people.

CRUISE
I can't hold back much longer.

Raleigh punches some numbers on his cell phone.

RALEIGH
It's a go. You have the elevator
password for the top floor.

Jana begins SINGING a soft ballad to background music.

JANA
*I'm feeling high when I know you're
near. I'm feeling low when you're no
longer here. I want to feel your
touches in all my happy faces. And,
your kisses in all those forbidden
places.*

Her eyes are dazed and her movements wobbly.

CRUISE
She's so high she can barely walk.
How much longer till they get here?

RALEIGH
Any minute now.

Jana leans over the edge of the stage, still SINGING and offers a thread from her blouse to one of the men who pulls it. The blouse falls away revealing Jana's breasts with fancy tangles on her nipples.

CRUISE
I'm giving it ten more seconds.

RALEIGH
Hold on just a little longer.

Jana leans over with her fanny hanging over the stages edge with a thread hanging from her panties. The man pulls the string and the panties collapse with only a "G" string left. The men APPLAUD. The door opens and four policemen and SAM HARVEY enter. The bouncer's in handcuffs. Raleigh rises.

RALEIGH
WE HAVE A SEARCH WARRANT FOR A
SUSPECTED KIDNAPPING SO EVERYONE
STAY IN THEIR SEAT UNTIL ADVISED
OTHERWISE.

Maldo emerges, agitated.

MALDO

What in the *puto* hell's going on here?

RALEIGH

We have a search and seize warrant for a Miss Jana Klein who's that lady on the stage.

MALDO

You have no right. We have a license. Let me see warrant.

Sam pulls out a document from his coat pocket and hands it to Maldo.

SAM

You'll find it's all in order.

Maldo studies the document.

MALDO

I'm calling my lawyer. You be in big trouble.

Jana is on the stage looking dazed. Cruise jumps on the stage, takes off his coat and puts it over Jana's shoulders.

CRUISE

Are you alright?

JANA

Do I know you?

CRUISE

Cruise, your friend.

JANA

Cruise, Cruise? I don't know you.

CRUISE

(to Sam)

Call an ambulance. She's totally gone.

SAM

I'm on it.

Sam calls for an ambulance.

RALEIGH

Can she make it down to the lobby?

CRUISE
I'll carry her.

RALEIGH
THE REST OF THE GUESTS HERE CAN
LEAVE NOW.

The guests collectively exit. Cruise lifts Jana and carries her out. Sam and Raleigh follow him.

MALDO
WE SUE YOU. YOU HEAR FROM MY
LAWYER.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A siren BLARES in the distance.

CRUISE
(to Jana)
It won't be long now.

An ambulance with it's lights flashing parks in front of the Plaza Hotel. The EMS attendants jump out and open the rear doors. Cruise and the ambulance attendants slide Jana on a stretcher into the ambulance. Cruise joins her.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

AMBULANCE ATTENDANT
What's the story?

CRUISE
She's been drugged.

The ambulance barrels down the road, sirens BLARING. The ambulance attendant checks Jana's pulse and flashes a small flash light into her eyes.

AMBULANCE ATTENDANT
Her pulse is elevated and her pupils
are dilated.

CRUISE
What does that mean?

AMBULANCE ATTENDANT
She's got a dangerous amount of some
kind of drug in her body.

CRUISE
Is she going to be alright?

AMBULANCE ATTENDANT

We'll know more when we check her
into the emergency ward.

JANA
Where am I? What's going on?

CRUISE
You're in an ambulance on the way to
a hospital.

JANA
I don't understand.

CRUISE
You've been drugged, but you're
going to be okay. Here, grab my
hand.

JANA
Where did we meet?

CRUISE
Remember you once quoted me a verse
from The Wild Honeysuckle poem?

JANA
(slurred voice)
The Wild Honeysuckle, my favorite.

Jana nods then begins reciting a verse with her eyes closed.

JANA
"By Nature's self in white arrayed.
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by.
Thus quietly thy summer goes, Thy
days declining to repose".

Jana grabs Cruise's hand, closes her eyes and falls asleep.

CRUISE
Is she okay?

The ambulance attendant checks Jana's pulse and listens to
her breathing.

AMBULANCE ATTENDANT
She's okay. Just exhausted.

The ambulance accelerates with it's siren ROARING.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cruise is sitting by Jana's bedside. She slowly wakes up.

CRUISE

Hey, girl.

JANA

Cruise. I dreamed about you last night.

CRUISE

The nurse said you're going to be alright and can be released today.

JANA

What happened to me?

CRUISE

You were drugged, kidnapped and forced to dance in a nudie club.

JANA

A nudie club? And you rescued me?

Cruise nods and hands her a single Honeysuckle flower.

CRUISE

Since you recited a Wild Honeysuckle poem verse in the ambulance, I think you deserve a real one now to keep you company.

JANA

Thank you. It's lovely.

Jana smells the flower and then looking at it RECITES a verse.

JANA

"Smit with those charms, that must decay, I grieve to see your future doom; They died--nor were those flowers more gay, The flowers that did in Eden bloom; ...Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power ...Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

CRUISE

It appreciates your attention.

JANA

Thank you, Cruise for rescuing me. I hope you'll have it in your heart to forgive me for my mean words.

CRUISE

You can't buy a good reputation.
This is just a small down payment.

JANA

It's really weird, I half remember
dancing on stage and everything, but
it's more like a dream than real.

CRUISE

After kidnapping you, they kept you
drugged up to control you.

JANA

Will they get away with it?

CRUISE

You don't remember much and we don't
have many witnesses so it won't be
easy.

JANA

I'm just glad it's over. Have you
told Bobby?

CRUISE

He's on the way over. You kept
repeating his name in the ambulance
in your sleep, so I now know how
important he is to you.

JANA

I'm sorry, Cruise. I'll always think
of you fondly.

CRUISE

No worries. If you fall I will catch
you, always.

Bobby enters and rushes over to Jana and hugs her, SOBBING.
Jana starts CRYING also, stroking his head.

BOBBY

I'm so sorry. I should have
protected you better.

JANA

I don't think anyone could have
prevented it.

BOBBY

I'll never let you get into harms
way again, I promise.

JANA
I'm okay, Bobby. Everything's
alright now.

Jana and Bobby hug again with Bobby WHIMPERING softly.
Cruise quietly backs out of the room.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Cruise is driving down the highway. His cell phone RINGS.

CRUISE
What is it, Greg?

GREG OS
Raleigh left a message asking you to
be at his office at eight sharp
tonight for the raid on the Hog
Heaven Saloon.

CRUISE
Call him back and tell him Zoom and
I will be there.

GREG OS
Will do.

CRUISE
Also, see if Bareda International
made their scheduled announcement on
their new Alzheimer's drug.

GREG OS
I already checked. They submitted a
press release. Paraphrasing, it's a
drug still in research with no FDA
approval anticipated this year.

CRUISE
And, their stock?

GREG OS
In free fall, crashing and burning.

CRUISE
It was all too pat. Fortunately,
Trevor took my advice, or is it
unfortunately?

GREG OS
Want me to continue following it?

CRUISE
No, the hand's already been played.

No more cards to turn over.

Cruise speeds down the highway.

INT. HOG HEAVEN SALOON - NIGHT

Cruise, Raleigh, Sam and Zoom enter. BUZZARD and three of his biker friends are throwing knives at a wooden board target.

RALEIGH

That swastika on his forehead is a dead give away.

CRUISE

Good. Cover me.

RALEIGH

Not yet. Might be prudent to wait until they put their knives down.

CRUISE

I'll give him one more minute.

BUZZARD

(fondling his knife)

Here you go, baby. Right down your throat.

A young man nearby SNEEZES. Buzzard gives him a dirty look.

BUZZARD

Take your filthy germs out of here.

The young man moves down a few stools. Buzzard throws the knife and it bounces off the board. His buddies LAUGH.

SKIN HEAD 1

Looks like you're mojo's running a little low tonight.

BUZZARD

It was right on.

The skinheads make derisive NOISES.

BUZZARD

I got spooked. I deserve another shot.

SKIN HEAD 2

My old lady throws better.

SKIN HEAD 1

Give it up, Buzz. You laid it down.

Buzzard glares at the young man.

BUZZARD

It's your fault, shit head. You got into my head. Now you need to pay.

YOUNG MAN

Sure, sure. Let me buy you a beer?

BUZZARD

More than that. Let's have your wallet.

YOUNG MAN

No.

Buzzard pulls him off the bar stool.

BUZZARD

Maybe you don't hear so good.

YOUNG MAN

Please, sir.

BUZZARD

I'm going to ding you up a little bit to teach you a lesson.

Buzzard cocks his fist, but Cruise grabs it and jerks him around roughly.

CRUISE

Where you going, crud?

BUZZARD

What the...

Cruise grabs Buzzard by his shirt and pulls him in close to his face.

CRUISE

I said where you going, crud?

BUZZARD

Get out of my face.

CRUISE

(softly)

You like beating up old men and young guys don't you?

BUZZARD

What's your problem, dude?

CRUISE
SHUT UP!

Cruise slaps his face with his forehand and backhand repeatedly and then throws him to the ground.

BUZZARD
HEY, HEY, HEY, C'MON. I didn't do nothing.

CRUISE
GET UP!

Buzzard gets up and throws a punch at Cruise who blocks it hitting him in the face. Gangrene goes down bleeding.

BUZZARD
I'm going to mess you up, mo fo.

Buzzard grabs a nearby bottle breaking it on a chair leaving a jagged edge. One of Buzzard's skin heads approaches Cruise. Zoom pulls out a toy gun from his coat and squirts ink in his face. The skinhead GASPS, rubbing his eyes.

RALEIGH
An ink gun?

ZOOM
The blackness bubbles on his face bringing darkness and fear... etched forevermore.

Raleigh flashes his badge to the skin heads.

RALEIGH
BACK OFF!

Buzzard swipes the broken bottle at Cruise's face, but misses. Cruise backhands Buzzard's face followed by another strike to his head. Buzzard staggers back falling back onto the floor. Cruise kicks the bottle out of his hand.

CRUISE
GET UP!

BUZZARD
No.

Cruise lifts Buzzard up by his shirt and shoves him against the bar choking him. Raleigh steps in between them.

RALEIGH

That's enough, Cruise. You're going to kill him.

CRUISE
Okay, okay. He's all yours.

BUZZARD
(gasping)
He tried to kill me. You saw that, right?

RALEIGH
(to Sam)
Read him his rights.

SAM
You have the right to remain silent.
Anything you say can and will be
used against you in a court of
law...

Sam continues READING Buzzard his rights and handcuffs him.

BUZZARD
You've got no proof. This is police brutality.

RALEIGH
Book him.

Sam grabs Buzzard and drags him out of the room.

CRUISE
(to the young man)
You might want to vacate this place.
Not good for your long term health.

The young man exits with Cruise and Raleigh.

INT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE DETECTIVE BUREAU -DAY

Cruise is sitting in Raleigh's office.

RALEIGH
Buzzard is willing to tell us who paid him to beat up your father if we reduce the charge from 2nd degree assault and battery to third degree for minor injuries.

CRUISE
I hate to let the scumbag off easy, but he's our key to connecting the dots to Trevor.

RALEIGH

We can make it conditional on what he's got to offer. He's waiting outside.

Cruise nods.

RALEIGH

(hitting an intercom button)
Bring him in.

Buzzard is led into the room in handcuffs and prison garb.

RALEIGH

Sit.

Buzzard sits next to Cruise.

RALEIGH

You get one chance to spill your guts. If you tell us who set you up, you have a deal. If not, start working on your ten year plan.

BUZZARD

(looking at Cruise)
First off, just so you know, it wasn't personal, dude. It was just another job for a fat payday.

Cruise grabs Buzzard by his shirts and pulls him in.

CRUISE

Look slime ball, all I want to hear out of your filthy mouth is the name of who paid you.

BUZZARD

Okay! I'll give it to you real. I got this call from this dude who said if I could rip an old man a new one, he's get me five hundred dollars worth of primo Blue Sky Blond?

RALEIGH

Blue Sky Blond?

BUZZARD

Strong Colombian shit. We made the deal, he emailed me a photo and told me where and when I could find him. He delivered when I delivered. That simple.

RALEIGH

So who was the he and where did he deliver?

BUZZARD

The Brighton Heights Condo's, an upper East Avenue address.

RALEIGH

And, the he?

BUZZARD

The doorman. Not blowing smoke.

RALEIGH

Doorman, smoreman. C'mon.

BUZZARD

I couldn't make this shit up. The package had my name on it and I even had to use a password to get it.

CRUISE

What was the password?

BUZZARD

"God moves in mysterious ways".

CRUISE

Sounds like the Bible.

RALEIGH

Write the address of the condo.

Raleigh hands Buzzard a pad and he scribbles on it.

BUZZARD

Someone in that condo had to be the source. Shouldn't be that hard.

RALEIGH

(in the intercom speaker)
We're done here.

A policemen enters.

BUZZARD

Wait a minute. What about our deal?

RALEIGH

If and when we find the person who set it up, not a nanosecond before.

Buzzard is escorted out.

CRUISE
Remember Al Gorman from our high school days; big black man no one ever messed with? He's dealing in that area. Maybe he can help.

RALEIGH
Do you know where he is?

CRUISE
(nods)
We were halfway friends in school.

INT. HOMBRES LOUNGE - NIGHT

Cruise enters the Hombres Lounge. A muscle man stops him.
MUSIC blasts throughout the Lounge.

MUSCLE MAN
This is a private club.

CRUISE
I'm looking for Alabama Al.

MUSCLE MAN
Who's asking?

CRUISE
Cruise, a friend of his.

MUSCLE MAN
I'll see if he's available. Wait here.

He disappears into the club. A man is parading across a stage wearing an outrageous decorative hat while the patrons CHEER him on. Muscle man returns.

MUSCLE MAN
I need to check you for weapons.

He pats Cruise down.

MUSCLE MAN
Last booth on the right.

Cruise goes to the last dark booth on the right. A large black man is sitting alone, smoking a huge cigar. ALABAMA AL GORMAN GREETs Cruise.

ALABAMA
Hey Cruise, out slumming today?

Alabama stretches his large fist to Cruise who bumps it.

CRUISE

If you recall we were both on the same wrong side of the tracks.

ALABAMA

(giggling)

I could never figure why they kicked you to the curb right along with us niggers. I mean you're a pretty white boy.

CRUISE

Even the red neck, white trash guys didn't like me. My Pops told me I had an attitude problem. In fact, if you recall you tried to put a hurt on me once, too.

ALABAMA

I never did like pretty white boys with an attitude, but after our fight I learned you weren't one of them.

CRUISE

Looks like you're doing okay with your club here and the street stuff.

ALABAMA

I know you're not here for the shit I deal in so maybe you just want to be part of the Easter parade show we put on here every year.

Gay men continue to parade across the stage with outlandish woman's hats to loud CHEERING.

CRUISE

Lovely. but actually I'm here to get info on one of your customers.

ALABAMA

Like I said we never were really friends and I wouldn't even tell you if we were.

CRUISE

The guy I'm after is providing drugs to young women and after they're hooked, using it to control them for prostitution and porno sex clubs.

ALABAMA

I don't get involved in my

customer's affairs.

CRUISE

One of the women that was drugged and kidnapped and nearly killed is a close friend.

ALABAMA

Cutting close to the bone, eh?

CRUISE

Very close.

ALABAMA

So whatcha want from me?

CRUISE

Some biker I had to lean on said he got his stuff from the doorman at an upper East Avenue condo.

ALABAMA

So who is he?

CRUISE

That's what I'm trying to find out. All I have is the building he lives in. And since you're the main man in these parts I figured you might be his source and point me in the right direction.

ALABAMA

I'd have to take a month of stupid pills to admit to that.

CRUISE

You won't need to admit to anything. I just need the doorman to confirm that someone in his building arranged for deliveries of nondescript untraceable packages.

Alabama puffs on his cigar intently.

CRUISE

I'm asking for you help, Al.

ALABAMA

Okay. If you've got that address, that should be enough. Where is it?

Cruise pushed a piece of paper in front of Alabama.

CRUISE

All I've got is the address, no
condo number.

Alabama studies the paper.

ALABAMA

I know the building well. He gets
the money to us like clockwork and
we get shit to the doorman within an
hour.

CRUISE

Doorman, not a condo?

ALABAMA

That's what I said.

CRUISE

Do you know which condo was ordering
it?

ALABAMA

I make it my business to know. It
cost me big, but it's insurance I
got to have.

CRUISE

All I need to know is the room
number.

ALABAMA

666.

CRUISE

Strange number.

ALABAMA

It's in the Bible's Book of
Revelations. The number represents
the "Mark of the Beast".

CRUISE

The Beast?

ALABAMA

It's the mark the Antichrist used to
control people to his evil ways.

CRUISE

Why the number 666?

ALABAMA

666 AD was the date for the advent

of the Antichrist.

CRUISE

Interesting. Now I can tell my father I've learned something about the Bible today.

ALABAMA

Maybe you should just stick around and join the party. But then, you didn't bring a hat.

CRUISE

All the ones I have would clash with your friends here.

ALABAMA

Customers. They don't bother me no never mind.

CRUISE

Thanks for your help.

ALABAMA

If we happen to run into each other on the street you can pretend you don't know me.

CRUISE

That I won't do, no matter where I run into you.

Alabama Al smiles. Cruise and Alabama bump fists. Cruise grimaces, shaking his hand as he exits.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Cruise rides down a street on his cell phone.

CRUISE

Raleigh, I think we're finally scratched our way into Trevor's evil rabbit hole.

RALEIGH OS

Let's hear it.

CRUISE

Alabama Al confirmed he not only delivered drugs to the condo doorman, but also gave me the room number that's paying for them.

RALEIGH OS

So who's the rabbit?

CRUISE

The one that lives in condo number 666.

RALEIGH OS

The condo management probably won't divulge who lives there unless they're legally forced to.

CRUISE

Trevor's business office is only a few blocks away so this must be his city place to avoid the long commute to his Estate home.

RALEIGH OS

I think I've got enough evidence to get a search warrant for his condo.

CRUISE

Get the legal wheels in motion and let me know when you'll be there.

RALEIGH OS

I'll present the search warrant to the building manager and get the entry code to that 666 condo.

CRUISE

I prefer to wait for Trevor alone in his condo until he returns from work. I'll beep you from my phone when it's time to come up.

RALEIGH OS

We'll be waiting in the lobby, incognito.

CRUISE

I'm heading there right now.

INT. UPSCALE CONDO BUILDING HALL- NIGHT

Cruise walks down a condo hall and punches a code number into condo number 666. It opens.

INT. PENTHOUSE ROOM - NIGHT

Cruise enters, turns on the light and rummages through the bar den drawers. He pulls out a metal object from a drawer, BANGS it with a heavy knife and returns it. He turns off the lights, sits in a plush den chair and dozes off. The

SOUND of the door opening wakens him. Bobby enters, turns on the lights, goes to the bar, pulls out a bottle of whiskey and pours himself a drink. He pulls out some money from an envelope and smells it.

BOBBY
Sweetest smell in the world.

CRUISE
Make sure it's all there.

BOBBY
WHO GOES THERE?

CRUISE
Cocky Mother.

Bobby turns more lights on and spots Cruise.

BOBBY
YOU!

CRUISE
Haven't you heard, frowns cause wrinkles?

BOBBY
What the fuck are you doing here and you'd better have a damn good explanation?

CRUISE
I just wanted to see who would walk through that door. Before, it was just this fuzzy mystery man who was doing lots of bad shit, a faceless person who I could never quite get into focus.

BOBBY
You've made a big mistake breaking into my home.

Bobby pulls out his cell phone, punching some numbers.

CRUISE
The selfless crusader giving it his all to help the poor and destitute. Who wouldn't be impressed?

BOBBY
(into his phone)
Hello, I'd like to report a break in into my home. (pause) Yes, the thief

is still here. If you hurry you can catch him.

CRUISE

Let me talk to them? I can tell them how you defrauded millions from your supporters with a phony charity or do you prefer the part about exploiting young homeless women for sex clubs?

BOBBY

(into his phone)

Let me get back to you.

CRUISE

I'm afraid I'm going to have to tell Jana your boy scout resume is slightly exaggerated.

Bobby pulls out a pistol from the bar drawer.

BOBBY

I tried to give you hints to back off, but no, you just kept on coming.

CRUISE

Sorry, I didn't take the hint of having your thug beat up my father, but I thought it was coming from someone else.

BOBBY

Maybe I should have left my calling card carved onto his face.

CRUISE

Let's see if I've got it right. You used the charity as a front for access to young vulnerable homeless women who you could sell to Trevor's sex clubs and then, to ensure you still had control, continue to sell them drugs that got them under your thumb to begin with.

BOBBY

I like to think of it as getting them a job that paid well. And, the drugs did make them perform better on and off the stage, if you know what I mean?

CRUISE

The part that puzzles me is why you would throw Jana, your virgin love queen, into that jungle?

BOBBY

It was just an unfortunate mis-communication. My mother thought she was distracting me from my main job and a threat to the operation. I love Jana so I'll find a way to make it up to her.

CRUISE

Your mother, that be Cindy Sendowski, the flesh dealer for the rich and famous?

BOBBY

She could see through the hypocrisy of all those so called good, self righteous Christian men and found a way to exploit that truth.

CRUISE

You know science has figured out how to bend light, but bending the truth is a little bit harder.

BOBBY

You don't need to be worrying yourself about that anymore, not where you're going.

Bobby pushes out the cylinder holding the bullets and pulls one bullet out.

BOBBY

I tell you what I'm going to do, just to show what a good sport I am. We're going to play Russian roulette with a twist, with only one bullet out of the chamber.

CRUISE

And, here I was thinking it was Trevor the whole time.

BOBBY

I've got a gun pointed at a head with the life span of a firefly and you're still running your mouth.

CRUISE

All the pieces are now in place and it's not a pretty picture.

BOBBY

You have no idea how much I'm going to enjoy putting a bullet into your smug face.

CRUISE

Now we have a glimpse of the real Bobby. Not only a flesh peddler, but a cold blooded murderer, too.

BOBBY

You're the kind of guy I always hated. Everything handed to them on a silver platter; cocky, handsome, rich. But, no one will miss you, except maybe that old kook father of yours.

CRUISE

You're going down Bobby. First degree attempted murder will bring you a long stretch in a very small, dark, lonely cell

BOBBY

Attempted murder? Ha, ha, ha! You are one stupid mother fucker.

Bobby cocks the hammer and pulls the trigger to a loud CLICK. Bobby looks surprised, but then begins smiling.

CRUISE

Like you said, "God moves in mysterious ways".

BOBBY

You won't be seeing him, not with the life you've led.

CRUISE

"And rides upon the storms".

BOBBY

God spared you a few more seconds for your last words so let's see what eloquence you can produce in your last living moments.

CRUISE

You don't need to be worrying about serving much time in the slammer.

With that young baby face and pink cheeks it'll be much shorter. Think fresh gang bang meat for all those horny jailhouse bad boys.

Bobby cocks the hammer again, pulls the trigger and again a loud CLICK. Bobby looks at the gun confused.

BOBBY

What the fuck's going on here?

CRUISE

Naturally, I took the precaution to see if you had any weapons around and took out the firing pin.

Cruise goes to the door and opens it. Raleigh and two policemen are in the hall. They enter the condo.

CRUISE

I think we have enough evidence to put him away for awhile.

BOBBY

Officer, I demand you arrest this man for breaking and entering my home.

RALEIGH

We have a legal arrest warrant. Suggest you get a good attorney.

BOBBY

It's his word against mine.

CRUISE

It's no use, Bobby. I taped the whole thing.

Cruise pulls out a tape from a small tape recorder from his coat pocket.

RALEIGH

Drop the gun and put your hands behind your back.

Bobby complies. A policeman handcuffs him.

RALEIGH

Read him his rights.

POLICEMAN

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be

used against you in a court of
law...

The policemen READS Bobby his rights as they lead him down
the hall.

BOBBY

I want my lawyer. I demand my right
to call my lawyer.

RALEIGH

Take him and book him for first
degree attempted murder.

BOBBY

DID YOU HEAR ME? YOU NEED TO UNTIE
ME SO I CAN CALL MY LAWYER.

The policemen walk Bobby into the elevator.

RALEIGH

You took a big chance. How'd you
know it was him?

CRUISE

I didn't. I just knew whoever walked
through that door was the man we
wanted and his days of depravity
would be over.

RALEIGH

His passion to destroy you ended up
being his downfall.

CRUISE

After getting away with his crimes
for so long he got careless and
begin to make mistakes.

RALEIGH

So, I can finally tell Allie that
you actually did something good for
a change.

CRUISE

And, spoil all the fun she's been
having trashing me. I wouldn't think
of taking that away from her. It'll
be my wedding present.

RALEIGH

Much better then a crock pot.

CRUISE

I won the battle with Bobby, but
lost the war with Jana.

RALEIGH

She'll come around. They always do
with you.

CRUISE

Not this time. Bobby's shiny veneer
has brainwashed her.

RALEIGH

She'll have second thoughts by the
time we get through with him.

CRUISE

How much time will he have to serve?

RALEIGH

With no priors they'll probably go
easy on him. With good behavior and
a good lawyer, probably a minimum of
5 to 6 years with probation. Why do
you ask?

CRUISE

If he acknowledge his crime any
chance for a suspended sentence?

RALEIGH

You going soft on me? Wait a minute,
this doesn't have anything to do
with that girl you guys are fighting
over, does it?

CRUISE

Not exactly. I just don't want to be
the heavy that keeps her from her
true love. If she later leaves him
it has to be on her own terms.

RALEIGH

And, you'll be waiting in the wings
to pick up the broken pieces.

CRUISE

More like "All the king's horses and
all the king's men couldn't put
Humpty Dumpty back together again".

RALEIGH

You know, I think you've finally
fallen in love. A day I'd never
thought I'd live to see. I can't

wait to tell Allie.

CRUISE

Don't do it. She might be sympathetic and that would ruin everything.

INT. TAVERN ON THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Cruise enters the tavern and stands by the bar. Jana is onstage with her band. Monica approaches.

MONICA

The usual?

CRUISE

With a hemlock chaser.

MONICA

I've fantasied a long time about seeing you get your comeuppance, so let's go ahead and make it a hemlock double, just to be sure.

JANA

Here's a new song dedicated to someone I've known for a long time, but still don't really know.

The band begins PLAYING.

JANA

You walk with a confident flair and talk like millionaire. Your clothes are all made by Ballyare and there's lots of waves in your hair.

Cruise sits at a table near the stage. Jana focuses on him.

JANA

You live in a fancy apartment off the boulevard of Santa Eclair, where you play your music soft to your adoring ladies fair.

Jana PLAYS a melody riff on her harmonica.

JANA

But where do you go my old friend when you're alone and in bed. You talk Wall Street palaver and everyone is always impressed. You sip your tequila grande, but never get your lips wet. Young ladies give

*you inviting glances and hang on
every work you say. But where do you
go my old friend when you're alone
and in bed.*

Jana ends the song. The crowd CLAPS. Jana exits the stage,
and walks to the far end of the bar. Cruise joins her.

JANA
I didn't think you'd have to guts to
talk to me.

CRUISE
I don't have the guts not to.

JANA
Bobby called from the County jail
and told me the whole story.

CRUISE
From the hate in your eyes I suspect
his version was a tad light on the
truth.

JANA
Your version was all venal lies
spoken by a low life cockroach.

CRUISE
I studied up on the cockroach and
learned they date back to the
Carboniferous period, some 320
million years ago

JANA
It figures, you're still here.

CRUISE
He'll be convicted and do time.

JANA
You can't convict someone if they're
innocent.

CRUISE
His homeless hero facade won't hold
up in a trial where they only deal
in hard evidence.

JANA
You're lying. You never liked Bobby
and were going to keep digging until
you found dirt

CRUISE

A bit more than dirt. He was recruiting homeless young woman for strip Clubs like where you were drugged and kidnapped. His so called bogus Untouchables charity gave him access to desperate homeless women he preyed on.

JANA

I refuse to believe he would put me through that.

CRUISE

It was all taped. Just go to the County Detective Bureau and ask for Detective Rollins and hear it for yourself.

JANA

Why would he want to kill you?

CRUISE

I unmasked his dark side, a side he didn't want anyone else to see.

JANA

I do know that Bobby loves me, an emotion I doubt you've ever had for a woman.

CRUISE

I've always loved those feel good stories. And, "They lived happily ever after" is my favorite.

JANA

You have contempt for that sentiment because you don't feel it. And, for all your glamor and personality it's what, in the end, makes you profoundly sad.

CRUISE

"If nothing once, you nothing lose, For when you die you are the same". Isn't that what your poet said?

JANA

When you're old and gray and your memory fades, there won't be a single woman who'll remember your name. And, your pick up line won't work anymore, either. You'll find

yourself alone, unloved, wondering
how it all went so bad.

CRUISE

Eternal love and bliss is the
delusion the masses feed on; rose
colored glasses, one size fits all.

JANA

If you take an honest, hard look at
yourself you'll uncover what you've
become and where you're headed?

CRUISE

No illusions. Any road, any place,
makes no difference cause I'm just
passing through.

JANA

But, all roads come to an end and
then there's nowhere to go.

Jana returns to the stage. Monica returns with two tequila
shots.

MONICA

A brush back pitch and you jumped.

CRUISE

I should have let it hit me.

Cruise drains the tequila shooters.

MONICA

Tequila shooters won't help what's
ailing you.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Cruise approaches Eddie who's painting a landscape.

CRUISE

(looking at the painting)

Nice.

Eddie looks up, surprised.

EDDIE

Well, look what the cat dragged in.

Eddie continues painting.

CRUISE

If you ever take the time to look,

there's beauty all around you, free
for the taking.

EDDIE
What do you want, Cruise?

CRUISE
Last time out we said some nasty
things to each other.

EDDIE
Totally erased from my mind.

CRUISE
I'm here to apologize for my unkind
words, not something I do very
often.

Eddie stops painting and looks at Cruise.

EDDIE
You look like Cruise, sound like
Cruise, but who are you really?

CRUISE
I was recently knocked back a bit
and it's forced me to take a long
hard look at myself.

EDDIE
You make the bed you sleep in.

CRUISE
Once, you were sitting on my knee
hoping to glean some wisdom from me
about women, but maybe it was I who
should have been listening to you.

EDDIE
What do you mean?

CRUISE
My attraction for women was shallow,
physical, and, in the end, not
satisfying. Art conveys beauty,
truth, wisdom; lasts longer.

EDDIE
I don't know if my hearings gone bad
or if it's my cold medication that's
blurring my senses.

CRUISE
Are there any Honeysuckle flowers in

this park?

EDDIE

Sure, the hummingbirds love their nectar. It's the perfect metaphor for your life, you being the hummingbird with the long beak sucking up the nectar. And we both know what the nectar and long beaks represent.

CRUISE

I guess apologies only go so far.

EDDIE

You didn't come here to just apologize and whine.

CRUISE

Okay. A friend of mine has a boyfriend who can't see him for the dangerous, low life he is.

EDDIE

Is this friend the "giggle" girl?

CRUISE

The one and same. I gave her my best shot and right now I'm ranked somewhere between Attila the Hun and Jack the Ripper.

EDDIE

(giggling)

The irony of it all is too rich. God's gift to women being shot down by the one woman he comes to love.

CRUISE

You're more her type; walking through the park holding hands, reciting poetry about the meaning of life in ten words or less.

EDDIE

If you would have said that with a little less sarcasm, I would've tried to have taken it as a compliment.

CRUISE

It's a default mode I find hard to resist.

EDDIE
So, what do you have in mind?

CRUISE
She's coming to see me at the Tavern
around six. Come on by and I'll try
to kindle some fire between you two.
She's going to be needing a good
friend about now.

EDDIE
I'll think about it.

CRUISE
I'll be at the bar if you show.

Cruise turns and begins walking away,

EDDIE
CRUISE!

Cruise looks back at Eddie.

EDDIE
If you mix 100 parts yellow, 3 parts
magenta and 1 part blue you get
gold.

CRUISE
Thanks. I'll be sure to rush home
and write that down.

EDDIE
And, gold represents "forgiveness"
while you're writing.

Eddie smiles and Cruise smiles back. Cruise exits.

INT. TAVERN ON THE BRIDGE BAR - NIGHT

Cruise and Zoom are at the bar. Trevor and Maldo enter.

TREVOR
There he is, the big lover boy. He'd
fuck a fence post and send it
flowers in the morning.

CRUISE
I hear the kidnapping scandal has
done wonders for your VIP and Purple
Room.

TREVOR
He's taken "the one night stand" to

a whole new dimension, gutter
dimension, that is.

Maldo giggles.

CRUISE

I prefer to think of it in terms of
a new art form.

TREVOR

You're a know nothing, do nothing
who needs to go to the North Pole
where, like you, there's nothing.

ZOOM

Except for the pole, of course.

MALDO

I bring my *perro* to bite your fat
white *nalga*.

ZOOM

Oh, you have a killer chihuahua?

TREVOR

Let's go. I see some young flesh
coming our way.

CRUISE

Don't forget to take the most
interesting sleazeball in the world
with you.

MALDO

Put a cabron, up your *cula*.

Maldo thrusts his middle finger in the air.

ZOOM

Compassion for humanity above the
clouds doth soar. Profanity is the
last refuge for haters galore.

Maldo and Trevor exit.

CRUISE

By the way, Penny called and said
she was coming over to see you.

ZOOM

Penny, to see me? Oh, here she comes
now.

Penny approaches.

PENNY

Hi, everyone.

ZOOM

What are you doing here?

PENNY

Remember you told me about a bird on your window sill who chirped a happy song to you? That's when I knew you were different, but a nice kind of different.

ZOOM

The Song Sparrow is only one of a handful of birds that use both external and internal calls to announce they're ready for breeding.

PENNY

Maybe she just wanted to make sure he got the message. If I flutter my eyelids will that be too obvious?

ZOOM

If you do, I'll be putty in your hands forever.

PENNY

Let's go to my place and see what wild fantasy I can conjure.

ZOOM

(anxiously)

Your place, alone?

PENNY

Just you and I and my night stand.

ZOOM

Cruise, HELP ME?

CRUISE

You're on your own, kid.

ZOOM

(to Penny)

Promise you'll be gentle with me?

PENNY

I'm making no promises.

Penny and Zoom begin walking toward the exit.

PENNY

But, you've got to tell me
everything you know about birds.

ZOOM

Well, I saw this woodpecker today
whose whole head was red from top to
bottom.

PENNY

What are they called?

ZOOM

Red headed woodpeckers.

PENNY

We're going to have so much fun.

Zoom and Penny exit. Eddie enters.

CRUISE

I was hoping you'd show.

EDDIE

If I recall you did say she was
beautiful.

CRUISE

Inside and out.

EDDIE

So, you want me to warm up to her,
the one that got away?

CRUISE

Yeah, she's more your type,
sensitive, compassionate, an artist.

EDDIE

I don't get it. She was everything
you ever wanted in a woman.

CRUISE

Yeah, but I fell a little short.
Think the Grand Canyon.

EDDIE

The ugly toad loves the princess,
but can the lovely princess ever
really love an ugly toad?

CRUISE

Something like that. Here she comes
now.

Jana spots Cruise and joins them at the bar.

CRUISE

Jana, this is my friend Eddie.
Eddie, you've heard me talk about
Jana. Now you can meet her in the
living flesh. Damn, I wish I hadn't
used that word.

JANA

You can't help it. It's in your DNA.
Nice to meet you Eddie. I never
suspected that Cruise might actually
have male friends.

An awkward silence follows.

EDDIE

I once heard that "two can be a
match made in heaven", while three
is likely to end in nasty gossiping
all around." Excuse me.

CRUISE

Don't go too far.

Eddie exits.

JANA

Bobby broke down and confessed.
He's out of my life now and I hope
he can change his.

CRUISE

Don't hold your breath.

JANA

I feel like I've come to a fork in
the road with a new life ahead of
me.

CRUISE

So, maybe you can now finally take
that ribbon out of your hair and let
it fall free against your face.

JANA

I apologize for all the mean,
despicable things I called you.

CRUISE

No apologies are necessary when
they're true.

JANA

It's strange because someone came out of nowhere and got the charges against Bobby dropped. Something about a missing tape.

CRUISE

Oh?

JANA

His lawyer didn't know who he was. Just said he didn't want to keep him from the woman who loved him.

Cruise shakes his head.

JANA

He wouldn't leave his name. Bobby's lawyer said he was one of those rich, executive Wall Street types; hard to figure.

Jana looks down, thinking.

JANA

Said he was, a pretty boy, ladies man type. Someone you'd ne...ver...ex...pect.

Jana's looks up at Cruise her eyes tearing up.

JANA

(softly)

You. It was you.

Cruise remains silent.

JANA

Why'd you do it, Cruise?

Cruise shrugs.

JANA

I want to know, please.

CRUISE

"No roving foot shall crush thee here, No busy hand provoke a tear."

JANA

I came here to shame you and now the shame's all on me. All my life I've wanted to find a good man I could trust and love with my whole heart.

CRUISE

I've heard there are some of those kind of guys still around.

JANA

Way down deep I once hoped you could be that man, but you were forbidden fruit, forbidden fruit I was afraid to take a bite out of.

CRUISE

There's a reason forbidden fruit is forbidden.

JANA

You're the mystery man I don't think I'll ever get to know.

CRUISE

If I ever find him I'll let you know.

JANA

On the surface a guy who's insensitive, selfish, borderline immoral.

CRUISE

Only borderline? I'm slipping.

JANA

But then, you do something noble for a man you detest.

CRUISE

I just wanted to make him available in case you still wanted him. It's the romantic in me.

JANA

My opinion of you keeps changing so fast it's hard for me to know which one is the real you.

Jana walks away, pulling out her cell phone. Monica WHISPERS to Cruise.

MONICA

She's calling a cab.

CRUISE

I know. She doesn't have a car.

MONICA

I always pegged you as a jerk, but I didn't know you were an everyday common, run of the mill coward too.

CRUISE

Trust me, I'm doing her a favor.

MONICA

Let's try a different version. A hot shot guy trying to fuck any woman who walks, crawls and hasn't been dead over three hours.

CRUISE

Sometimes I can stretch it to four.

MONICA

A bravado act for one and all to see and enjoy. Lights up, applause, please.

CRUISE

More like exit, stage left.

MONICA

Flashy exterior, all aglow, but if you look a little closer it's all just lights and mirrors; an empty shell hiding behind a manicured facade. Too scared to take a chance on love.

CRUISE

It's a high fastball on the inside corner. I'll never get to it.

MONICA

Don't be a fool. If you let her slip away now, you'll never get a another chance.

CRUISE

She deserves someone more on the straight and narrow; a place I've never been and not likely to go.

MONICA

Don't worry, it won't take her long to nag you into shape.

Cruise begins spinning his coin.

CRUISE

Heads, I go to her. Tails, I stay.

Monica slams her hand on the coin.

MONICA

(without looking)

It's heads. For once, muster up some sterner stuff in that thing you call your spine.

CRUISE

You're saying maybe it's time I stop running.

MONICA

No maybe, GIT!

Cruise stares long and hard at the coin, then slowly nods his head.

CRUISE

JANA?

Jana turns to Cruise who approaches.

CRUISE

Your poem, you never finished it.

JANA

The Wild Honeysuckle?

CRUISE

The last stanza.

JANA

"From morning suns and evening dews.
At first thy little being came. If
nothing once, you nothing lose".

CRUISE

"For when you die you are the same;
The space between is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower."

JANA

It's about life's fleeting precious moments.

CRUISE

Or, maybe it's about me finally coming clean since you may not be coming back through those doors again.

JANA

Oh?

CRUISE

I always considered relationships a trap sucking up your freedom; emotional baggage I didn't need.

JANA

And now?

CRUISE

I'm now ready to put my love for you on the line and let the chips fall where they may.

JANA

What are you saying?

CRUISE

That I hope you'll keep your door slightly open so you can get to know me at a deeper level.

JANA

And, finally find out who the man behind the mask really is?

CRUISE

No more masks. Just the core guy with all his sins and foibles in full view.

A beautiful sexy lady, REBECCA BROOKS approaches.

REBECCA

Hey, Cruise. I see you're still doing your thing with the lovely ladies. Come by and say hello when you have some time later.

CRUISE

Sure, baby, sure.

REBECCA

Love you, baby.

Rebecca exits, blowing Cruise a kiss.

JANA

Just another notch on your gun and I think we both know what kind of gun we're talking about.

CRUISE

A reputation I deserve, but I don't know that guy anymore.

JANA

There's a corner in my heart I'm
saving for love that no one can
enter until I trust they've come to
me to stay.

Jana bites her lip.

JANA

Thank you for being my friend. I
give thanks with all I have. But,
sorry...

Jana shakes her head. Cruise nods, hangs his head and then
slowly looks up.

CRUISE

If the going ever gets tough along
the way, just call out my name and
I'll be there.

Jana smiles, caresses Cruise's cheek and exits.

CRUISE

EDDIE!

Eddie comes over.

CRUISE

She's outside and needs a ride.

EDDIE

What about you?

CRUISE

I'm not going that way.

Cruise grabs a package on the bar next to him.

CRUISE

Oh, I forgot to give this to her.

EDDIE

And message to go with it.

CRUISE

Just tell her it's something my
father wanted her to have.

EDDIE

So, what it is?

CRUISE

Don't know. He didn't say. You'd

better get going.

Eddie exits. Monica approaches.

MONICA

You know, I've been waiting a long time for this moment, but now that it's here I'm not savoring it nearly as much as I thought I would.

CRUISE

It was a one at bat, one pitch ball I couldn't quite get to.

MONICA

You know, a passed ball on strike three still gets you on base.

CRUISE

One day she'll wonder what ever happened to me; what might have been, but no, time washes clean.

MONICA

I'd like to buy you a drink right now, but I best leave it to the coin god.

Monica spins Cruise's dollar coin.

MONICA

Heads I get you one, tails I don't.

The coin finally falls, heads up.

MONICA

The coin god has spoken.

CRUISE

You know it's a two headed coin?

MONICA

Of course.

Monica pours tequila in two jiggers.

CRUISE

I think a toast is in order.

MONICA

One word about a new friendship and I'll hit you.

CRUISE

Even I know my limitations.

Cruise raises his jigger, but hesitates.

CRUISE

For once my eloquence has deserted me.

MONICA

Let me. Here's to recognizing the truth about yourself and coming together with it.

They CLINK their tequila jiggers.

CRUISE

Some people come together, some go their own way, riding the breeze.

They drain the tequilas. Monica exits. Cruise focuses intently at the empty jigger, rotating it slowly, oblivious to the ladies strolling by, giving him inviting glances.

MONICA

Extra inning.

Cruise looks up. Jana's by the door holding an embroidered cloth of a red honeysuckle and yellow butterfly with the words "My son loves you." Jana approaches.

CRUISE

I...

JANA

I know.

Jana rushes into Cruise's arms and hugs him tightly.

JANA

I can hear your heart and now I know it's a good one.

Jana lifts her face up to Cruise.

JANA

Please take the ribbon from my hair.

Cruise pulls the ribbon from her hair and it falls loose on her face. He pulls her in close and kisses her softly.

MONICA

Three two count and...looks like he got all of it. And, it's going, going..., yes, it's out of here.

Jana clings to Cruise tightly. The crowd CHEER and CLAP.

FADE OUT