

TIMES SQUARE

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In the year 1980, 2300 crimes were committed on 42nd street between 7th and 8th Avenue, a block known as "The Deuce."

Fifty percent of these were violent felonies, including rape and murder.

EXT. ALLEY. DEN OF SIN -- EVENING

SUPER: 1980. TIMES SQUARE. NEW YORK CITY

Eleven-year old WILLIE O'HARA, Irish and auburn-haired, sucks in a deep breath, trying to find his courage. From the bar comes the murmur of drunken goodtimes, jukebox. We PAN over to its front door, where a large BLACK BOUNCER stands guard. The name on the door, "DEN OF SIN," stenciled in black. A doe-eyed HOOKER leads a stumbling BLIND MAN out of the back exit. Willie grabs the door a split second before it locks shut and sneaks inside.

INT. DEN OF SIN

Christmas season in Times Square. LOCALS stumble and dance against a faded oak bar, carouse in back booths. Everyone knows everyone here - hustlers, pros, union reps. It's packed.

An attractive--in a local sort of way--Irish woman, LYNN RYAN (20's), pours shots for two Vice detectives at the bar. CALE RYAN and DAVE MACDOUGAL (both 20's, neighborhood guys) raise their glasses.

CALE

To my lovely wife.

ON Lynn rolling her eyes at Cale's apparent drunkenness.

LYNN

Ex-. Couldn't never compete with the badge.

Cale shrugs as Lynn turns away. The empty glasses drop on the bar. Cale whispers to Mac, but looks straight ahead.

CALE

He's got to connect to Rothstein and DiBernardo. That's conspiracy. Obscenity charge won't cut it.

MacDougal nods at Lynn. Refill. As MacDougal reaches for his drink, Cale spots a cord peaking out from his waistline. He's wearing a wire. Cale glares at him.

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MacDougal's been in deep cover for two years, posing as a dirty cop -- too long. He's starting to forget which way is up.

CALE (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ. Tuck it away, Mac.
(BEAT) You do a good run tonight,
we grand jury Sin's ass and you
get your life back. No mistakes.

Cale is far from drunk and definitely on his shit.

MACDOUGAL

I got it, Cale. I fuckin' got it.

You wouldn't know it by the shaky way he slams his shot down on the bar. Cale watches with concern. There is A LOT riding on this.

Further down the bar, Lynn grabs the empty glass of the target, SINCLAIRE "SIN" RUBIX (40's, lean, attractive), and refills his scotch. He owns this place, along with many of the smut emporiums in Times Square. He's mob-affiliated but doesn't look it: ascot, tailored suit. When he talks, he sounds like a well-bred financier.

SINCLAIRE

Thank you, my dear.

Planted beside him is a hippie gone to seed, Vietnam vet EMMANUEL "MANNY" GOLDMAN (late 30's). Beret and a decades-faded tie-dye shirt stretched over an amorphous paunch. *Lebowski's* Dude if he were the right hand to a gangster.

At the bar, MacDougal, grin strung like Christmas lights from ear to ear, belts out an old Irish classic.

CALE

(shaking his head) Three shots and
he's fucking Pavarotti.

As MacDougal sings, the scene unfolds...

Lynn peers across the bar. Notices something.

LYNN

Ah, shit.

Sinclair and Manny turn around.

Willie, they see, sits alongside a group of rough-looking neighborhood guys: the WESTIES. On Willie's right, one of them is near-passed out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANNY

They won't lay a finger on him,
darlin'. Not in here.

LYNN

I ain't worried about him.

Lynn taps Cale on the shoulder, nods at Willie in the corner. Cale turns around, spots the boy. Sighs. *Not tonight.*

Back at the table, Willie passes out shots for the Westies. The men cheer riotously, tousling Willie's hair like a mascot.

The waitress returns with more shots. Willie slides them out. A quick cheers, and they're SLAMMED. By now the man next to him is completely passed out. CLOSE on Willie's hands under the table. He pulls out a straight razor, flips it open. Delicately, he SLICES a hole in the pants pocket of the drunken Westie beside him. The man's wallet falls into Willie's waiting palm. Just as Willie is sliding out of the booth, the Westie comes to and peers down to find his pocket ripped out.

WESTIE

What the fuck?!

He grabs for Willie, who goes sprinting towards the exit, weaving through tables. The Westie gives chase, but trips over the leg of a stool. He hits the ground with a THUD.

ON Cale as he jumps up, hot on Willie's heels...

ON the Westie as he picks himself up and comes barreling over to the bar. He calls to Lynn.

WESTIE (CONT'D)

Kid's gonna find himself in the
river.

Sinclair and Manny peer down at the man's shredded pants and share a grin. Solid play.

SINCLAIRE

(casually)
Not unless he's fishing you out.
(to Lynn)
Send another round, my dear. For
the inconvenience.

The Westie swallows his pride and heads back to his table. No one dares question the boss.

We stay ON Sinclair, curiosity piqued.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Who is he?

MANNY

O'Hara's boy. You want Mac to have a word?

Sinclair peers over at MacDougal, still singing, then notices Cale's empty seat. Screws his eyes. Not a fan.

SINCLAIRE

Seems the other one's taking care of it.

MacDougal milks the final note. When he finally lets it go, the bar erupts into applause. He smiles...until he locks eyes with Sinclair. The smile vanishes.

Sinclair slaps Manny on the shoulder and stands.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Besides, Officer MacDougal has a prior engagement.

EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

Cale and Willie walk silently down ninth avenue, a light snow shower spitting from above. The reflection of the Square a block away cast the two in a garish, otherworldly light: Mustard-yellows and robins-egg blue. HOOKERS call to Cale and Willie, shadows except for the fish-glint of hungry eyes and \$10 jewelry. PIMPS linger in alley ways, low-ride in Monte Carlos.

CALE

Two seconds late and that razor's in your neck.

WILLIE

Yeah, and some scientist on the news was saying if the sun gets too close the Earth'll blow up. Don't think it's happening any time soon.

Willie has a distinctive neighborhood edge to his voice.

CALE

(chuckling) Wise ass...

They stand before a wrought-iron fence surrounding a brick tenement and adjacent church. A sign reads **SACRED HEART HOME FOR BOYS**. An angry, sleep-deprived nun, SISTER MARGARET, awaits them, wrapped in a blanket...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIE

She's gonna use the big ruler...

CALE

Meeting with social services on Thursday, Willie. It won't be much longer.

Cale gets serious - thinking of the investigation against Sinclaire.

CALE (CONT'D)

A whole lot's about to change.
(BEAT) Got plans next Saturday?

WILLIE

Supposed to go sailing with my great Uncle.

CALE

(snickers) Too bad. Thinking you might wanna go to the Garden with me and Mac Christmas Day. Celtics in town. You can trim Bird's 'stache from where we sit.

Willie smiles with boyish excitement. Then he looks over at stern Sister Margaret. Slumps.

WILLIE

She ain't letting me go.

CALE

Let me handle her. (pointing to his badge) This comes with its privileges.

Willie pulls out the money he took off the WESTIE, extends to Cale.

CALE (CONT'D)

Keep it. You're buying franks.

Willie grins, then enters the courtyard, where Sister Margaret angrily yanks him farther inside.

INT. COP CAR -- LATER

Sinclaire sits in the passenger seat, MacDougal drives. The customary arrangement.

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CONTINUED:

SINCLAIRE

That do-gooder partner of yours -
what's his relationship to the
boy?

MACDOUGAL

Looks after him and shit, I dunno.
Guy's got a stick up his ass he
likes to call justice.

Sinclair chuckles.

SINCLAIRE

I'm surprised a boy scout like
Cale Ryan hasn't shown greater
interest in our affiliation.

MacDougal squirms. He's nervous.

MACDOUGAL

Cale? Please...third grade ain't
worthy of your radar, Sin. Trust
me.

We PUSH IN on MacDougal's waist and see the faint
blinking red light of the wire.

MACDOUGAL (CONT'D)

Listen, Sin. Johnny and Bobby are
both talking. FEDS are squeezing
'em on the Gambino rackets. We
gotta get in front of this. Put
'em down.

SINCLAIRE

(giggling) "Put them down?" I
don't recall asking for your help.

Sinclair sits back, studies MacDougal, who tries to mask
his frustration.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

You seem flush.

Sinclair eyes him suspiciously...

MACDOUGAL

Just the booze, Sinclair.

INT. RYAN'S BAKERY -- AFTERNOON

Willie sits at a table in his Catholic school uniform, a
textbook open, a plate of cookies before him. The kind
owner, ADELINE RYAN (50's), Cale's mother, oversees.

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CONTINUED:

A bell jingles as someone enters. Two chairs slide over joining Willie's table. Willie peers up, freezing when he sees Manny and Sinclaire. Sinclaire reaches for his homework, inspects.

SINCLAIRE
(to Manny) I think he might be
smarter than you already.

Manny snickers as Sinclaire grabs the lapel of Willie's Sacred Heart coat, inspecting the crest.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
(to Manny) Look at those freckles.

MANNY
Mom musta been Pippi Longstocking.

SINCLAIRE
What's your name?

WILLIE
Willie.

SINCLAIRE
William O'Hara. Irish as untimely
death.

Behind the counter, Adeline Ryan avoids eye contact with Sinclaire. Knows her place.

Sinclaire pulls out a handful of jellybeans and extends them to Willie, still frozen. Sinclaire happily trickles the lot into his mouth.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
The bar the other night. You know
that was my place?

Willie's eyes remain fixed on the table.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
Your father would have taught you
to look a man in the eye when he's
talking to you.

Willie looks up fiercely. Upset by the mention of his father.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
He would have also taught you that
it's rather poor judgment to steal
from my customers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIE
(barely audible)
I'm sorry.

SINCLAIRE
(smiles) Quite a hustle.
(to Manny)
"Live among the wolves, you have
to act like a wolf." Right,
Emmanuel?

Manny chuckles.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
You'll work it off. Saturday. Ten
AM.

WILLIE
Sister Margaret says we ain't
allowed in the Square.

SINCLAIRE
But you're allowed to cheat
gangsters after midnight?
(to Adeline) Ms. Ryan, you keep
this boy in muffins for me.

ADELINE
(barely looking up) Sure thing,
Sinclair.

Sinclair extends a hand, Willie shakes. Sinclair peers
down at his hand...

SINCLAIRE
You've got his fingers, you know.

Sinclair tips an invisible cap as he and Manny depart.
Adeline stares at Willie, concern on her face.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- AFTERNOON

Daylight in Times Square. TOURISTS, PANHANDLERS, PIMPS,
and RUNAWAYS, all bundled up. Willie weaves past the Port
Authority, dashes in front of one-run movie theatres
where a troupe of BREAK-DANCERS pop and lock. A game of
three-card monte goes sideways when a TOURIST chases the
HUSTLER who stole his money. Casually the HUSTLER turns
around and CLOCKS the tourist in the face. The tourist
crumbles in the middle of the street, out cold. His wife
screams, but no one helps. Willie keeps running, then
peers up at his destination...

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CONTINUED:

In blinking fluorescent lights a dangling plastic leg introduces: **SKIN WORLD**. Bright lights advertise 25-cent peep rooms, Live Sex, adult videos. Willie ascends a rainbow stairwell...

7 **INT. SKIN WORLD -- CONTINUOUS**

7

The main floor is a flight up from the street. Immediately Willie's eyes GO WIDE. Magazines, videos, sex-dolls. A mounted TV plays a video of a man kissing a topless woman's neck. A red sign points upstairs for the Live Sex Show and Private Booths. A creepy VOICE beckons customers for quarters over the P.A.

**Note: For the rest of this sequence Willie will be slyly hidden from the grimmer elements of Sinclair's universe. We experience Skin World as he does: A glamorous playpen.*

Manny stands behind the counter arguing with an attractive Italian, SKINNY LOU (20's).

MANNY

You're the only kid in America who complains about having to make love to beautiful women all day.

SKINNY LOU

You wouldn't be sayin' that if you saw how swole my--

Noticing Willie, Manny stops Skinny Lou before he can finish.

MANNY

(to Willie) Right on time. (to Lou) See that, Lou? Kid's a clock. (To Willie) Gimme a minute.

He starts walking. Thinks of something.

MANNY (CONT'D)

(to Willie) Keep your hands outta your pockets.

Manny winks then disappears through a door marked "private" in the rear of the floor.

ON Willie as he sees the parade of CUSTOMERS, middle-aged white men with furtive grins on their faces.

MANNY (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Can you handle a mop, kid?

(CONTINUED)

*The Talking Heads *Life During Wartime* kicks in over SKIN WORLD MONTAGE:

-PEEP SHOW BOOTHS: Willie stands outside of the booths, holding a mop. A red light signals occupancy. A line of MEN, every walk of life, wait. The lunch rush. A sign above the door reads: You drop it, we mop it.

An OVERWEIGHT MAN in a double-breasted suit emerges. Willie rushes in, sprays disinfectant, mops furiously. The velvet window has already slid shut. Inside is nothing more than a wooden chair, a coin slot, and a roll of toilet paper. Necessities.

-LIVE SEX SHOW: Willie spies through a cracked door where a busty Latina, MARIA, waits as a customer's hand pushes through a partition. Dollars fall as she grabs his hand, licks his fingers and shoves them towards her crotch.

ON Skinny Lou in the corner, in tighty whities, awaiting his invitation to perform. He turns and locks eyes with Willie. Willie freezes, then sprints away...

-FRONT DESK: It's early morning and Willie mans the front desk, reading from an algebra text book. Manny appears behind him and places an open porno magazine over his text book. They both crack up...

END MONTAGE

13 INT. DIAMONDS BURLESK -- WEEK LATER

13

A crowd of drunken MEN applauds as a young nubile BLONDE takes the stage, dressed in a silk negligee and feathered headpiece. Diamonds Burlesk is one of Sinclair's "classier" joints: strip club meets Burlesque theater.

Willie ogles the dancer as Manny escorts him to a private door. Manny makes a point of blocking his view as the REAL show begins: the woman produces a dildo and starts to fondle herself on stage.

INT. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE. DIAMONDS BURLESK -- CONTINUOUS

Sinclair discreetly lowers a blind over the one-way mirror in his office so that Willie can't see the rest of the show.

SINCLAIRE

(pointing behind him, toward the blind) Constance is a professional screen actress.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
 Changing the whole business,
 William. (to Manny) How's he
 doing, Emmanuel?

MANNY
 Kid's a worker.

SINCLAIRE
 (smiling) As I suspected. Consider
 your debt paid, William.

Sinclair strikes a more serious note.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
 Have a little Christmas present
 for you.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING -- MOMENTS LATER

*An eerie red glow suffuses the scene, but we're unaware of why. A DRUG DEALER, nude, badly beaten, duct tape over his mouth, is tied down to a chair. Manny stands before the man, holding a nine. Sinclair rests his hands on Willie's shoulders. The kid stares ahead, shaken.

SINCLAIRE
 Maurice is the jackal that sent
 you to that dreadful home. The man
 that made you a bastard, William.

The dealer pleads with his eyes, screaming through the tape. Sinclair grabs Willie's chin forcing him to watch.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)
 Crimes against our own do not go
 unpunished.

Sinclair nods to Manny who aims, as we pull out of the space to the other side of the lights...

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- EVENING

We're in the middle of Broadway where the Coca-Cola billboard hangs. In the fogged glass behind the sign appear the silhouettes of Sinclair, Manny, and Willie. Only Sinclair has this kind of access.

SINCLAIRE (V.O.)
 Merry Christmas.

BANG! BANG! The orange streak of two bullets pass behind the lights of the billboard. It's done.

EXT. SACRED HEART HOME FOR BOYS -- DAYS LATER

Cale, in his uniform, stands with Sister Margaret awaiting Willie and Sinclaire. Willie freezes when he sees them.

CALE

There he is.

Cale pulls an autographed Knicks hat from behind his back, hands it to Willie. Willie beams.

CALE (CONT'D)

Bill Cartwright, right there.

WILLIE

No fucking way! (looks at Sister Margaret) Freakin'.

CALE

(eyeing Sinclaire) Should've been there to meet him yourself.

Sinclaire ignores him.

SINCLAIRE

Sister, forgive our tardiness. We ended up at the movies.

The nun smiles wider than Willie's ever seen.

SISTER

As long as Willie enjoyed himself.

Willie stares at Sinclaire, awed by his power.

SISTER (CONT'D)

(to Willie) Sinclaire grew up in this very same building. Just like you. Though I wish he attended service more often.

Sister Margaret peers down at Willie gently.

SISTER (CONT'D)

Come along then. Time for bed.

SINCLAIRE

We'll see you Saturday, William?

Willie looks to Sister Margaret, who doesn't object.

WILLIE

You got it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Willie pops the hat on his head.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Thanks, Cale.

Sister Margaret and Willie disappear into the courtyard.

Cale stares at Sinclair, not with kindness.

CALE

Think it's wise to have a kid that young at the store?

SINCLAIRE

I'm failing to see how this is any of your business.

CALE

I'm trying to adopt the kid. Give him a shot. His father and I went back aways...

SINCLAIRE

You and Jimmy O'Hara? Man was a thief. A shitty one at that.

CALE

Product of his environment.

SINCLAIRE

That's what they call the weak.

CALE

Or those ain't born with the knack for exploiting his fellow man.
(BEAT) You just have a gift for it.

SINCLAIRE

(smiles) "The business of America is business," Cale. I'm just an obliging citizen.

They eye each other hotly. Nemeses.

CALE

Willie's a good kid, Sin. He's got a future.

SINCLAIRE

I couldn't agree with you more.

Just then a message goes out on Cale's walkie-talkie.
Shots fired at the Howard Johnson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sinclair's mask of goodwill tightens. Quickly.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Your commitment to doing "the right thing" is so precious, Cale, like quilting or a fondness for Ming plates. A hobby that means jack-shit in the real world. Your partner understands that, why can't you?

CALE

It won't always be like this, Sin. Just wait. Your words won't total half a shit when you're toothless at Rikers.

Sinclair screws up his eyes. His voice drops.

SINCLAIRE

Be careful. I'd hate for anything to happen to my favorite bartender because a blue got too blustery with his language.

Lynn - his ex. Cale tenses up, but there's nothing he can do.

Cale's walkie-talkie crackles again. He's gotta go.

CALE

Fuck you.

With that, Cale turns and marches into the night.

Sinclair calls to him.

SINCLAIRE

(taunting) A good evening to you, detective.

PAN UP to TENEMENT, where we can see Willie looking down at the men from his window.

EXT. PENN STATION -- NEW YEARS EVE EARLY MORNING

LT. CONRAD JORDAN (40's) waits before a coffee vendor as Cale makes his way over. Jordan's old-school New York, balding, quick lip. He hands Cale a black coffee, starts heading uptown.

JORDAN

You know what I like about this precinct?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN (CONT'D)

It's a fucking kennel for every half-cocked mutt in all the five boroughs. Equal opportunity for any desperate scum with his eye on the ring. You know what I don't like? When my own people get their dick in a knot --

CALE

Lieutenant--

JORDAN

The city's looking at over eighteen hundred murders this year, Cale, and right now I got a cop so ass-backward in deep cover he can't tell his right from his fuckin' left.

Cale nods. He's as impatient as Jordan for results.

CALE

Mac'll get us something.

Jordan looks him up and down.

JORDAN (CONT')

He better. You said Rubix was mob-connected. I can't sink two years into a smut peddler shmuck if it doesn't connect. Now bring me some fucking evidence or you and Mac can go make citizens arrests with the Guardian Angels. You'd look good in a Kangol.

To their right, a group known as the WAP, Women Against Pornography, stages a rally in front of a newly opened store.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

(appreciatively) God, I could use a piece...

He slaps Cale on the shoulder and saunters away, humming.

INT. DEN OF SIN -- MORNING OF NEW YEAR'S EVE

MacDougal, in uniform, slumps at the bar, his face riddled with nerves. He grips a half-empty Scotch. Concerned, Lynn studies him from the back of the bar, gearing up for the party later that night.

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The front door SLAMS open. Cale flies in, angry. He spots MacDougal at the bar, bee-lines.

CALE

(whispering) Two days and not a fucking word. I need something, Mac. NOW.

MACDOUGAL

(despondent) He knows, Cale. I can feel it.

MacDougal heads for the bathroom. Cale on his heels.

MACDOUGAL (CONT'D)

You gonna hold my dick?

EXT. SACRED HEART HOME FOR BOYS -- NEW YEARS EVE MORNING

Willie slams the gate and heads out. In a quick montage, we see Willie cruising across 42nd Street. Cops push the homeless away from the ball-drop barricades. The guardian angels patrol like Black Panthers, along with packs of disheveled commuters herding toward the train.

EXT. ALLEY. DEN OF SIN -- MOMENTS LATER

Cale has MacDougal pinned against the wall outside.

MACDOUGAL

I gotta fucking piss, Cale.

CALE

You gotta finish this, Mac. Guys like Sin don't get to win.

ANGLE ON WILLIE spying from the mouth of the alley.

CALE (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ. All the shit you've done--I.A. will have your badge if you don't deliver.

MACDOUGAL

Fuck I.A. and fuck the force. Sin's got people everywhere. I ain't sleepin' in the Hudson for your christly pursuits.

MacDougal begins to walk away. Cale jumps in front of him--a hand on his chest.

CALE

Give me your badge then.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACDOUGAL

Fuck you.

Cale puts out his hand.

CALE

You treat it like a fuckin' toy.
Give it to me.

MacDougal thinks about it. He scratches his head, looking like he's about to apologize then - WHAM! - he sucker-punches Cale.

MACDOUGAL

Fuck you.

As Cale stumbles back, holding his ringing head, MacDougal REACHES FOR SOMETHING AT HIS WAIST...

ON WILLIE who sprints over in a panic, grabs a lead pipe next to the dumpster. MacDougal turns to face Willie...

MACDOUGAL (CONT'D)

Kid, what the hell --

Willie takes a big-league swing, CLUBBING MacDougal in the head.

BOOM! Like that, MacDougal DROPS limply to the pavement. Face down. Blood leaking from the side of his head.

Cale looks at MacDougal, then Willie, then MacDougal. He crouches over the limp body, flips it over. We see what MacDougal was reaching for: His BADGE. It falls out of his death-loosened grip.

CALE

Mac...Mac...

Cale frantically checks for a pulse, lays his ear to his mouth. No vitals.

ON WILLIE who's white as a Klansman, shivering.

WILLIE

I thought he was going for his
gun, Cale. His fuckin' gun...

Cale bounces on his heels, wheels turning.

CALE

All right, all right...Think...

Willie's in shock. Staring into space.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIE

I killed a cop, Cale...

Cale stands, working out a plan. Thinking aloud.

CALE

All right...(thinking aloud) Wits inside saw me with Mac...ID'd you too...Fuck...

Cale has an idea.

CALE (CONT'D)

C'mon, kid. Grab his legs.

Willie's in shock.

CALE (CONT'D)

Willie, let's go! If Sin knows you knocked Mac, the shine he took to you won't mean shit next to the corpse of his inside guy. You got that? Now if we ship Mac outta here, we can make it look like he got jumped.

Willie doesn't move. Catatonic.

CALE (CONT'D)

Take his legs, Willie. Let's go!

Willie nods, crying. Makes a move toward the body. Just as they start to try to lift the body --

VOICES stream in from the bar, Sinclaire's and Manny's. FUCK! There's NO TIME.

CALE (CONT'D)

No, no, no!

Willie's in a state of shock. Muttering again.

WILLIE

I killed a cop....

They have NO TIME. Cale makes a decision. Resolved.

CALE

No, you didn't.

Cale grabs Willie by the shoulder, steadies him.

CALE (CONT'D)

I did.(shakes him a little) Listen to me, Willie.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CALE (CONT'D)

I was pressing Mac to turn on Sin.
He was drunk, we got into it. He
came at me, and I put him down.

Willie can't handle it.

WILLIE

What the fuck?!

CALE

I was pressing him to turn - okay,
Willie? You got to have the story
straight.

WILLIE

You'll go to jail.

CALE

I can handle it with the precinct,
but Sin will be after me. It means
--

Cale looks Willie dead in the eyes.

CALE (CONT'D)

Means I gotta leave town.

Sinclair and Manny's voices are getting closer. Willie
grabs his arm...

WILLIE

What about the plan? You can't
leave!

Cale looks back. He can hear them coming.

CALE

(urgent, all business) There's no
other way, Willie. But I'll send
for you, 'kay?

WILLIE

No!

Cale knows he has no other choice.

CALE

Sin will *kill* you. Understand
that, Willie? This is the only way
I can protect you.

Willie's crying.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CALE (CONT'D)

You gotta sell the story, 'kay?
(leading him) I was trying to...

Willie repeats after Cale, chocking back tears.

WILLIE

"make him turn..."

CALE

And I...

WILLIE

"Put him down..."

CALE

That's my boy. You'll sell it. I
know you will...

He musses Willie's hair. Sinclair's and Manny's voice
are all but upon them.

CALE (CONT'D)

Be strong, Willie...You'll sell
it...

Cale stealthily moves away, disappearing around the
alley.

Willie breathes deep, wipes his eyes. Getting ready to
tell his lie. Knowing that everything has changed...

INSERT: The lavender window of a peep booth slides open
and a NEWSREPORTER appears. We cut between snippets of
her reporting from various crime scenes in Times Square
through the years...

**"Midtown-South Cop Remains Missing" (PHOTO OF MACDOUGAL);
"Developers Circling Times Square"; "Missing Cop Found
Dead in Bronx Vacant" (PHOTO OF MACDOUGAL); "Vice Raids
Porn Establishment, Arrests 15"; "Tourist Robbed, Shot
Dead in Times Square"; "Mayor Wages War on
Pornographers."**

The lavender window closes, and that creepy voice beckons
for another quarter over the PA. We HEAR the trickle of a
quarter being deposited. The window reopens:

EXT. CITY HALL -- AFTERNOON

SUPER: 1994

On the steps of City Hall, mayor Rudy Guiliani, one year
into the job, concludes his Thanksgiving Day address.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GIULIANI

I made a vow to clean up this city, and I intend to honor that promise. It's not just the murderers, pimps and robbers. It's the street tax paid to drunk and drug-ridden panhandlers...

INT. SKIN WORLD -- EVENING

A RAID, absolute chaos. Enforcement COPS RUSH the door. The COPS swarm, violently grabbing bratty UPTOWN TEENS with fake ID's, nodded-out BUMS from video rooms, seedy OLD MEN, scowling DANCERS.

EXT. SKIN WORLD -- CONTINUOUS

The CUSTOMERS shiver in the early winter chill. In the storefront we notice that sporting apparel and comic books now share window space. A nod to new legislation requiring no more than 40% adult material.

GIULIANI (V.O.)

It's the trash storms, the swirling mass of garbage left by peddlers and panhandlers, and open-air drug bazaars on unclean streets...

EXT. DIAMONDS BURLESK -- EVENING

The COPS are more gentle ushering Sinclair's STRIPPERS/PORN STARS outside.

COP

What'd we tell you about the box lunch? This ain't the fucking 80's.

STRIPPER

Dollar-a-lick too pricey for you?

GIULIANI (V.O.)

It's the squeegee men shaking down the motorist waiting at a light...

EXT/INT. SIN -- EVENING

CLOSE ON black doors as they FLY open. Stenciled on the door, now simply "SIN". It's no longer a neighborhood dive. It's been transformed into a sleek lounge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GIULIANI (V.O.)

This administration has promised change to the people of New York, and today is the first step in that effort.

COPS charge in. PATRONS desperately try to ditch little bags of blow as they are TOSSED against the bar and searched. Gone are the rough and tumblers. This group is fashionable, trendy. The new locals.

INT. SIN -- MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON CONRAD JORDAN, now fully bald, a Captain and in plainclothes. Alongside him is a young detective, BRIAN STRONG (20's), Ivy league, shaved head, and a gym rat. They approach a banquette where neighborhood pimps once shared shots with local cops. No more.

SINCLAIRE, age only evident in the lines around his mouth, sits beside MARIA, the former dancer. Still in the game. Sinclair glares up at Jordan and Strong.

JORDAN

Can't say you weren't warned. I'm in your ass every night, Sin.

Strong grabs him by the arm, jerks him up violently.

SINCLAIRE

The courtship ritual of a government slug.

Jordan reaches down to grab Maria. She slaps his hand away.

MARIA

Get your fuckin' hands off me.

INT. BACK OFFICE. SIN -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The BOOM of the raid startles MANNY, a little rounder, but still holding tight to his hippie persona. He gets up from the edge of a couch where he's been sharing a joint with a nervous bartender, JESSE (mid 20's).

MANNY

We gotta move, kid.

JESSE

I can't just leave, I need this shift.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANNY

Wanna be stoned in cuffs?

Manny leads a reluctant Jesse through a backdoor, into a secret hallway, and then through a tunnel below the building.

With Jesse a step ahead of him, Manny grins to himself. Predatory...

EXT. SIN -- MOMENTS LATER

Sinclair is being shoved into the back of a waiting cop car. Strong closes the door on him and nods to two ROOKIE COPS who sit shotgun.

STRONG

Take this fuck the scenic route.

ANGLE ON: WILLIE rushing up to the scene. He's a man now, mid 20's, attractive and confident.

WILLIE

Whoah, whoah, whoah. What's the charge?

Strong whips around, purposely shouldering Willie.

STRONG

None of your fucking concern.

Willie pushes him back. Strong gives him an icy glare.

STRONG (CONT'D)

Do it, hotshot. Nothing would please me more.

Sinclair stares out his window, eyes locked on Willie.

A stunning socialite and Willie's lady, TAMSIN DUNLAP (20's), rushes up.

TAMSIN

Willie, don't!

She grabs Willie's arm, pulls him back. Tamsin's got style in spades. The girl who got kicked out of boarding school. Willie stands for a second, lost in the blare and wash of sirens, then grabs Tamsin's arm, pulling her away from the masses.

TAMSIN (CONT'D)

(off Strong)
What's his fucking problem?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Willie watches as the cop car pulls away with Sinclair in the back. He whistles for a cab.

Tamsin's face says it all. She's crushed.

TAMSIN (CONT'D)

Not tonight, Willie.

WILLIE

I'll meet you there. An hour...tops.

Willie jumps in the cab, rolls down the window.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

It won't always be like this, I promise.

He blows a kiss. The cab tears out, leaving Tamsin to stew on the corner

TAMSIN

(to herself) Why don't I believe you?

EXT. STREET. BROWNSVILLE, BROOKLYN -- LATER

A cop car screeches around the corner in a very sketchy neighborhood. The door FLIES open. Without stopping, Sinclair comes BARRELING out, SLAMMING and ROLLING on the pavement. A Rookie cop yells as they drive away...

ROOKIE COP

Try relocating, asshole!

Local THUGS in woolies and puffer coats pass a joint on a project bench. They glare at Sinclair, all but licking their lips.

EXT. STREET. BROWNSVILLE, BROOKLYN -- MOMENTS LATER

Willie's cab comes to a sudden halt. Willie jumps out, sees Sinclair surrounded by the THUGS.

Willie runs over, fists balled, ready for war, but instead finds Sinclair chuckling with the locals. He's scratched up, but nothing's broken.

SINCLAIRE

William! These men used to live next door to Fatima. Ass for days, as they say. (tips his cap) I'll be in touch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sinclair leads Willie back toward the waiting cab.

INT. CAB -- MOMENTS LATER

William and Sinclair sit side-by-side. Sinclair's in a foul mood.

WILLIE

They're after blood now, Sin. I'm telling you.

SINCLAIRE

(dusting off his coat) They can't even find the vein.

WILLIE

(to the cabbie) Can you step on it?

SINCLAIRE

(surprised) We late for something?

WILLIE

Tamsin's surprise party. I told you about it.

SINCLAIRE

(dismissively) That's what happens when you date the customer. Too much maintenance. Like a Mercedes - it's the repairs that bankrupt you.

WILLIE

(laughs) Play nice, Sin. You could use a drink.

SINCLAIRE

(shrugs) Getting thrown out of a car by two twats cuts down remarkably on one's desire to socialize.

Willie smiles and offers a quote - a parlor trick he learned from Sinclair.

WILLIE

"A great nation is like a great man. He thinks of his enemy as his most benevolent teachers."

SINCLAIRE

(grinning) Lao Tzu. (BEAT) That little slope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Willie taps Sinclair's knee.

WILLIE

One drink?

Few people can persuade Sinclair. Willie's one of them.

SINCLAIRE

Martinis do help.

INT. CHIC DOWNTOWN RESTAURANT -- LATER

Willie sits at a bar stool, halfway through a whiskey neat. Tamsin, drunk, slinks between his legs. The crowd around them is young, trendy, moneyed.

WILLIE

So I'm forgiven?

TAMSIN

For now. Every girl knows a surprise party trumps a police raid. Hell, it's right out of the Delinquent's Handbook to Romance.

WILLIE

(smiles) Fourth edition.

Tamsin's gaze wanders over to Sinclair walking slowly toward them. In the hip crowd, he sticks out like a sore thumb.

TAMSIN

(whispering) Look at him. Like a colonial right before the natives revolt.

Sinclair studies the crowd with disdain. He's a nobody in this world, and he hates that.

WILLIE

(whispering) Nah, he's the native. It's the land that's changed around him.

Sinclair heads straight towards them.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Play nice.

Tamsin straightens her expression just as Sinclair arrives. He barely acknowledges her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIE (CONT'D)

I know that look.

SINCLAIRE

My limit's met. 9 AM, my office.
(to Tamsin) Happy Birthday.

He tips his cap and saunters out. As he's leaving...

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Modest celebration for a modest
gal...

Tamsin sighs. NOT a fan of Sinclair.

TAMSIN

Creep. I don't know why you put up
with him.

WILLIE

We could sit here and bitch about
Sin or I could feed you shots and
take advantage of you. Which do
you prefer?

TAMSIN

(grinning) It's my birthday,
shouldn't I be taking advantage of
you?

WILLIE

As long as I get to pick the ball
gag...

Tamsin laughs, leads him through the party by the hand.

INT/EXT. APARTMENT -- DAWN

Adeline Ryan, now in her 70's, is shaken awake by the
vibration of construction next door. She slowly rises.
Beside her bed sits a picture of Cale as a young cop. She
gets up, opens the window.

She screams at TWO WORKERS drilling in the alley below...

ADELINE

You're supposed to start at seven-
thirty! It's not even seven!!
Every morning with this garbage!

The men don't even look up, pretending not to hear.

ADELINE (CONT'D)

My son's a cop, you assholes!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Enraged, Adeline slams the window. Her face contorts and she grabs for her arm. A heart attack. She reaches for the phone just inches from her fingers...collapse.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- AFTERNOON

The holidays in Times Square. Christmas colors and lights. HUSTLERS snap Polaroids for a quarter. Gangs of KIDS park in front of the arcade. POLICE on horseback parade down 42nd street. Among the chaos, the lights of a familiar sign...DIAMOND BURLESK.

INT. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE. DIAMOND BURLESK

CLOSE on Sinclair staring into a mirror. He dabs Neosporin on his elbow, courtesy of his ride to Brooklyn. An omnipresent bowl of jellybeans rests on his desk. In the one-way mirror, a STRIPPER, eyes blood-shot, shoves her crotch against a customer's face. Dollars fall from the man's palm. Box Lunch.

WILLIE

Sin, you hearing me? They sure as shit didn't sell the Pussycat. You see the padlocks they got up?

SINCLAIRE

The day I find myself trembling before a cunt in a blue uniform is the day I no longer live in the Greatest City in the World. (to Manny) Damage?

Manny's all business.

MANNY

We'll live. Couple misde's on the girls. They cleared the register at Skin.

SINCLAIRE

Classy.

WILLIAM

They're gonna keep coming, Sin. We can fight and get rolled over or play and get paid. On our terms.

SINCLAIRE

I know your position, Willie. Repetition won't improve it.

He nods to the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Be a saint and take care of these fines for us.

Willie, disapproving, leaves. Sinclair and Manny wait till the door shuts. Sinclair nods to a small headline in NY POST on his desk: "FALL FROM GRACE".

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

You call this a quiet denouement for our undercover?

MANNY

That pig raid hit right when I was doing my thing. (shrugs) Had to improvise.

SMASH FLASHBACK:

The night of the raid. Manny leads Jesse through the chaotic Times Square subway station (loud drum circle, sermonizing street preacher) towards the far end of the S train platform. The lights of the train beam into the station. Manny puts his arm around Jesse on the edge of the platform. They lock eyes.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Enjoy blue heaven.

The kid knows what's coming, but it's already too late. With a subtle shift of weight, Manny shoves Jesse, his body **TUMBLING** onto the track just as the train arrives. **BAM!** The train jerks violently...

JUMP BACK TO:

INT. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

SINCLAIRE

And you did, my brute. Like Monk himself. But I fear the boy's right, at least in the short term.(considering) Difficult as it may be, I need you to abstain from grislier pursuits for the time being. Once they've upped their arrest numbers and held some tacky press conference on New York 1, our men in blue will no doubt return to the cock-sucking indifference that is the natural state of our government. But until then, let's - as the kids say - hold our dicks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The figure rips open the doorway of a room. Cale follows closely, but he's losing steam. A large conference table separates Cale and the masked man. A face off.

CALE

I'm sendin' you my chiropractor bill.

The man peers in both directions. No escape. Then he turns around and JUMPS out an open window. Cale rushes over, looks down. At least eight feet.

CALE (CONT'D)

Fuck my ass.

Cale jumps...

OUTSIDE

Cale lands awkwardly, but hops up. He can see the masked man's gained some distance on him. Cale hops into a golf cart parked in front of the building and screeches out, his uniform illuminated by the street lamps above. It reads: Campus Security. We're on the grounds of a college campus. Cale's new world.

Cale weaves through buildings on the golf cart, takes a stairwell at full speed and then rounds a corner--BOOM! He BARRELS into the masked man with the front bumper of the golf cart. The masked man is laid out, groaning on the ground, Cale crouching beside him. Cale rips off the mask: He's a kid, maybe eighteen and scared shitless.

Cale reaches over and grabs a stolen exam. He reads it, with shock.

CALE

Exercise science? You fucking kidding me? Calculus, Chemistry-- Christ, make it count.

KID

(pleading)

I'm pledging Kappa Alpha. Please don't arrest me. My parents will shit blood.

CALE

Fucking fraternities. Your parents spend fifteen K a year so you can hump on each other and get gonorrhoea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cale picks the kid up off the ground, hands the test back to him.

CALE (CONT'D)

Just don't become a banker.

The kid nods, stunned that his life isn't over. Cale hops in the golf cart, pulls out.

EXT. SECURITY BUILDING -- MOMENTS LATER

Cale pulls the dented golf cart up to the small security office on campus.

A fellow cop emerges from the building, surveys the cart.

CAMPUS COP

(snickering)

Missed call, Van Damme.

CALE

If it's the folks at Powerball,
tell them I opt for the lump sum.

CAMPUS COP

Even more shocking: a woman. Said
her name was Lynn.

Cale turns, surprise on his face.

INT. CITY HALL -- MORNING

Willie, in a business suit, cruises through the hallways of City Hall. He shakes hands, nods, waves. Dude makes an entrance. Willie approaches a court CLERK, heavysset black woman. She shakes her head playfully: She's been a victim of his charm before...

CLERK

Unh, unh, unh. You ain't gonna
sweet talk your way out of this.
Boy opens his mouth and the whole
world stops.

WILLIE

Don't do me like that, Denise. If
I came to sweet talk, I'd have the
Harlem Boys Choir singing some
early Johnny Mathis.

She giggles, paging through the files in front of her, reading what she sees.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLERK

Possession. Possession. Underage.
Ooh, even got an intent to
distribute in here.

WILLIE

What's the closest you've been to
Mary J?

CLERK

My couch. Through my fat-ass
sister's cigarette smoke.

Willie produces two concert tickets.

WILLIE

Apollo. Fifth Row.

CLERK

(smiling) That mouth's gonna get
you in trouble one day.

Willie grins.

WILLIE

Hasn't yet.

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL -- WEEK LATER

Cale sits beside his mother. She's tubed up: a coma.
Flowers from the neighborhood clutter the table and
windowsill.

JORDAN (O.C.)

Sorry, Cale. She was a good one.

Cale looks up and sees Jordan standing before him.

Cale rises, and they shake hands. Cale doesn't know what
to make of Jordan's being there.

CALE

Thanks, Connie. You really didn't
have to visit.

Awkward BEAT. Jordan comes clean.

JORDAN

That's not exactly true.

CALE

Jesus. (BEAT) You're worse than an
ambulance chaser.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

It's about O'Hara.

CALE

And if I say, no?

JORDAN

Time don't erase debts, Cale.

Jordan puts on his cap.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Tomorrow morning. My office.

He quickly turns back...

JORDAN (CONT'D)

And my wishes for a speedy
recovery.

On his way out, Jordan notices a card from the local church. He points it out to Cale.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Believe this guy's a preacher now?

Cale picks up the card, studies it. It's from Sacred Heart Church, featuring a photo of Skinny Lou, the sex performer from back in the day, in a clerical collar. Older but definitely recognizable.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Lord works in mysterious ways, I
guess.

As Jordan leaves, Cale studies the card. Hmmm...

INT. JORDAN'S OFFICE. MIDTOWN SOUTH PRECINCT -- MORNING

JORDAN sits at his desk, Cale across from him. Behind Jordan, with the stiff bearing of military personnel, stands Strong.

JORDAN

(nodding to introduce) Detective
Brian Strong.

CALE

(barely looking up) Honored.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRONG

That makes one of us. Your partner disappears and two years later they find him dead in a vacant-- where the fuck you been, slick?

Cale jumps up, pushes back. There's an edge to Cale we haven't seen before. He whispers in Strong's ear...

CALE

All those protein shakes won't do you much good when I rip your tongue out, Princeton.

Strong steps toward Cale. Ready to go.

JORDAN

Take it easy, Strong. Cale was cleared by yours truly--what more you want? Operations get blown, people die. If he sticks around, who knows, maybe Sinclaire drops him in that same vacant.

CALE

Wanna tell me why the fuck I'm here, Connie?

Jordan grins.

JORDAN

Giving you another shot.

CALE

Yeah? At what?

JORDAN

The fucking crown, negro. Your wet dream.

(nods to Strong)

Fill him in...

Strong walks around the desk, facing Cale. He gets into it.

STRONG

Mayor wants to scrub the Square clean, Ryan. Hookers are off 9th avenue. Zoning laws are on the books for next year to kick out most of the porn shit. It's all going according to plan...except for, guess who?

Strong slides an image of Sinclaire before him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STRONG (CONT'D)
 Conservatively, we believe Rubix
 is responsible for six murders
 over the last four years.

SMASH INSERTS OF VIOLENCE:

Strong's voice-over narrates as he passes images of the
 deceased to Cale. We cut between INSERTS.

STRONG (V.O.)
 Donnie Wilkins aka "Donnie Gold",
 tried to rip off Sin for two G's.

-- A PIMP begs for his life before being dropped off a
 roof.

STRONG (V.O.)
 Alina Daciana, Ukranian broad,
 came over for fame, fortune, and
 what all.

-- A construction team builds a new office building. We
 go underground where a WORKING GIRL'S overdosed body has
 been built upon.

VO accelerates with MONTAGE.

STRONG (V.O.)
 In debt to Sin...

-- Screaming PUERTO RICAN drops off the Manhattan Bridge.

STRONG (V.O.)
 Stole from Sin.

-- A middle-aged WHITE MAN enjoying his morning cereal is
 strangled from behind by a belt.

STRONG (V.O.)
 Didn't deliver.

-- An ASIAN MAN is hung like a dead duck in the
 storefront window of a place in Chinatown.

STRONG (V.O.)
 Tried to get out of the game.

-- A young STRIPPER floats in a blood-red bath, gutted.

END MONTAGE

JORDAN'S OFFICE

Jordan sits on the corner of the desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JORDAN

He's still got four places going on the Deuce, plus a fucking nightclub catering to uptown cash and Hollywood types, of all people. The Mob's gone, but the same crew's in place.

Strong flips a bulletin board over: tacked to it are pictures of Sinclaire, Manny, Maria, Willie. Cale's eyes hold on Willie.

CALE

Great show, but I must be missing something. Fifteen years, and your best bet is a campus security guard with a prostate the size of Utah?

JORDAN

See this shit?

Jordan tosses Cale a copy of the NY POST, the same one Sinclaire had.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

He was one of mine. Had 'em undercover eight months bartending. Two nights a week. He was sniffing the shit out of some money leads. Let the press do their thing, but you and I know this ain't no slip and fall.

Cale tosses the paper aside.

CALE

What's this got to do with Willie?

INSERT: Willie roams through the club. He stops and chats with the bouncer, surveying the line of hipsters eager to enter the club.

JORDAN

The protege has become the prince, Cale. He's also become the goat.

Strong hands him a file: financial statements, bank account information.

STRONG

It's all in the kid's name. Bank accounts, mortgage payments. We've got him on laundering, tax evasion. You fucking name it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

STRONG (CONT'D)

Ten years minimum. A couple wits corroborate on the prostitution and drugs, and it goes up to fifteen (snaps) like that.

The emotion rises in Cale's eyes. He hides it well.

STRONG (CONT'D)

I'm thinking the prospect of shower time at Riker's makes him more of an extrovert.

CALE

(snickers)

You strike me as more of a respond/react guy than a thinker.

Strong aggressively steps to Cale again.

JORDAN

Take a walk, kid...

Strong, begrudgingly, leaves the office.

CALE

You giving 'em 'roids in orientation now?

JORDAN

Had a sister in the game so he's hot on this.

Cale nods, gets it.

Jordan looks into Cale's eyes. Levels with him.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Look, Cale. Our fucking Douglas MacArthur of a mayor says we got until New Year's to get Rubix out or else the corporates pick another neighborhood. We know the kid's a patsy, but we need some kind of head. Either you help us with Rubix or the kid eats the years. I don't care how you do it.

Jordan takes a .45 out of a desk drawer.

CALE

Think I can just waltz in? Way I recall, I ain't Sin's favorite face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JORDAN

Your mom gives you cover. Nobody is going to question your return. We're just seizing an opportunity.

CALE

Sick Mom or not, Sin will be none too pleased to eye my grill.

JORDAN

We're up Sin's ass too deep for him to get reckless, especially after the subway dive. Motherfucker's a maniac, but he's not dumb.

Jordan gets dead serious.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Immortal putz that I am, I'm betting you still got that fire for investigation. 'Cause we sure as hell could use it.

Jordan slides the gun across the table.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

If you ain't interested, just slide it right back.

INT. SIN -- EVENING

A DJ spins, MODELS, CELEBS, I-BANKERS buying bottles. A far cry from its humble beginnings.

Willie hustles behind the bar, unloading boxes.

CALE (O.S.)

A guy need eyeliner to get a whiskey these days?

Willie looks up. A HUGE smile blossoms on his face when he sees Cale at the bar. The grizzled ex-cop couldn't be more out of place.

Willie runs out from behind the bar, gives Cale a firm handshake, then a BIG hug, each patting the other's back.

WILLIE

As I fucking live and breathe.
(BEAT) I was sorry to hear the news.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Thanks for the flowers, kid.

Willie nods. Of course. Tamsin sidles up next to him.

WILLIE

(proudly) Cale Ryan, Tamsin
Dunlap.

TAMSIN

The Cale Ryan?

CALE

"The" is fine. No need for
formality.

Willie and Tamsin chuckle.

TAMSIN

Nice to meet you in the flesh. I
thought you were a myth the way
Willie talks about you.

She extends her hand. Cale shakes.

CALE

A parable, maybe.

TAMSIN

(to Willie)
Topper and his friends are in the
back. Come say hi when you have a
sec.

(to Cale)
It's an honor, Cale.

CALE

All mine.

Cale and Willie watch as she glides through the crowd and
takes a seat at a banquet next to four YUPPIES.

CALE (CONT'D)

Jesus. Girl like that doesn't even
have to wipe, I bet.

WILLIE

(grinning)
Still a sick fuck, I see.

Cale holds Willie at the shoulders, appraising him. He
squints, notices something.

CALE

You got mousse in your hair?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Willie smiles self-consciously, waving his hand through his hair. Cale slaps him on the back.

WILLIE
(sincerely) I missed you.

CALE
Yeah, I missed you too, kid.

INT. BAR. SIN -- LATER

Willie and Cale are reminiscing giddily over drinks. Old friends telling old stories. Cale is red in the face with laughter...

CALE
(cracking up, imitating the sergeant) "Be on your way, son." Jesus, there's a New York cop for you.

Cale shakes his head in amused disbelief.

WILLIE
So how's campus life? Postcards make it look like some shit out of Stephen King.

CALE
It is what it is. Bunch of snow. I got a nice little A-frame and that empty bedroom when you're ready.

Willie smirks. They've been down this road before.

WILLIE
Not sure the lady would appreciate me taking on a roommate.

CALE
(looking around, impressed)
Look at this shit. Surprised I ain't seen your name in *Page Six*.

WILLIE
Stay off the heavy literature, Cale. Don't want you hemorrhaging.

Cale snorts.

WILLIE (CONT'D)
I can't complain. Sin put me in charge of this place.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIE (CONT'D)

It's making money, which is good.
 Clientele's haughty as shit, but
 I'm working on something, Cale.
 Something big.

A BEAT as sadness creeps into Cale's expression. This kid, so full of ambition and spunk, could go away for A LONG TIME.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

How long you sticking around?

CALE

Couple weeks at least. (secretive)
 Think that's all right with the
 management?

WILLIE

(confident) Given the
 circumstances, I can get you a
 pass.

CALE

Wouldn't want you sticking your
 neck out.

WILLIE

Why not, I learned it from you...

They both smile. Willie looks up, spots someone.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

(whispering)
 You got company.

Lynn, still a local beauty after all the years, appears behind Cale.

LYNN

I got fuckwads in suits doing
 lines on the table and the new kid
 you hired keeps sneaking sips. We
 can't afford another citation,
 Willie.

WILLIE

Go easy on him. Christ, they're
 dropping like flies around here.

Cale turns around in his stool. He and Lynn lock eyes.
 Long time.

LYNN

Motherfucker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Willie jumps up, quotes a Bukowski poem. Very Sin-like.

WILLIE

"Ain't got no money, but we got
plenty of rain."

Cale double-takes. He can hear Sinclaire in him, and it stings. He turns back to Lynn.

CALE

You look good.

LYNN

You look like a friggin hillbilly.

CALE

Thanks for calling.

Lynn nods. Of course.

EXT/INT. THE LINX CLUB -- DAYS LATER

Willie, suit and tie, sits beside Tamsin in a stuffy uptown members club off Park. Dress code, butlers, backgammon tables. Place reeks of power. A laptop sits in front of them. Willie's nervous, but hides it well.

TAMSIN

How are you so calm? I think I
peed myself.

Willie smiles, pats her on the leg compassionately.

WILLIE

That's gross.

TAMSIN

Ass.
(looking up)
Here they are.

Tamsin quickly rises as four YUPPIES (30's) from the club saunter in. Willie jumps up and puts on his game face. The smug leader of the group, TOPPER, extends a hand.

TOPPER

The free bottle buys you a half-
hour. I'm prepared to be wowed.

Willie hands out NDA's to each of them, waits as they take their seats.

WILLIE

I appreciate you taking the time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOPPER

(a smug grin)
You have Tam to thank for that.
She and I go way back. Senior
formal. We had a time, didn't we?

TAMSIN

I was still in my cutting phase so
it's a bit of a blur.

The other yuppies chuckle lightly.

TOPPER

All right. I got a meeting at two.
What you got?

LATER

Empty coffee cups and small plates litter the table, as
the men page through the prospectus.

TOPPER (CONT'D)

It's a solid plan, but any Hunter
grad with an MBA can build a deck.
What's your vision? Why would we
want to work with you?

WILLIE

Because I know the history. Oscar
Hammerstein owned almost all of
forty-second street at the turn of
the twentieth century. He even
named it Times Square.

Topper stops him there.

TOPPER

This isn't Jeopardy, Willie. I
couldn't learn to care about Oscar
Hammerstein.

WILLIE

And your future tenants will know
that. You wanna throw up some
legoland high rise right out of
Miami Beach, do your thing. Know
what'll happen? In two years,
property value drops thirty
percent and some other white-
collar vulture - some asshole with
one foot in Fairfield county -
will swoop in and take his shot.
That's your 15 minutes right
there. Big splashy feature in the
Journal. Talk of the Town.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Then you're out. Just another absentee shmuck who briefly snatched the crown jewel before some other thief grabbed ahold.

He's got their attention.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Way I see it, the most valuable property in the United States of America is about to go on the market. The question isn't do you have enough money to buy it - there are plenty of grandiose shits with big pockets - the question is, do you know what to do once you have it.

They're listening to him now.

TOPPER

And your boss - he won't consider selling outright?

WILLIE

The point is we add value here. We know the alliance, the store owners, the tenants. On your own you're outsiders trying to profit and those guys will see your Gucci loafered-ass before you even get into the cab. As much as it might sting, you need us.

TOPPER

You talk a big game, Willie.

WILLIE

Yeah, well, there are some things a Hunter MBA buys that a Harvard one doesn't, and that's friends in low places. Without us, you got no shot.

TOPPER

What do you get out of this? Maybe Sinclair kicks you some dough, but you're working awfully hard for maybes.

Willie stares at Tamsin, considers.

WILLIE

Freedom...And a foot in the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Topper's impressed, though he tries to hide it.

TOPPER

You got a pinky-toe for now,
Willie. I'll think it over.

The businessmen stand, Willie and Tamsin with them.
Handshakes. Topper hugs Tamsin...

TOPPER (CONT'D)

You could have done worse, Tam.
I'll give him that.

Topper winks at Willie, as the group departs.

EXT. GREEK DINER -- AFTERNOON

Cale, sunglasses and hat, sits in a Greek diner sipping a cup of coffee when Strong, plainclothes, enters.

STRONG

You got a game plan for me?

CALE

Yeah, fuck off and don't blow my cover.

STRONG

(pissed) Play uncle with kid.
That's fine. But if you freelance for a heartbeat, you better fuckin' loop me in.

CALE

Just to be clear: when I said, "fuck off," I intended that to be the end of our conversation.

With that, Cale throws some money on the table. Strong watches him exit. We notice the familiar sight of the Sacred Heart Church across the street.

STRONG

(shaking his head) Dirtbag.

INT. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

Willie enters to find Sinclair in discussion with a nervous businessman BERNARD (40's, balding). The man stands, pleading with Sinclair.

WHAM! Sinclair smacks him. HARD.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SINCLAIRE

As I recall, you'd used the word "fool-proof" in your little piss-ant sales pitch, and now, Bernard, I have stooges tying laces around the coins and pulling them out after every cuntin'g show!

Sinclair pulls a blade from his back pocket, places it on Bernard's butt.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

I should just stick this up your ass right now...

Willie's seen enough. He places a calming hand on Sinclair's, lowers the blade.

WILLIE

What Sin's saying, Bernard, is it's on you to get those machines fixed. Twenty-five for the next four weeks seem fair?

Bernard nods. Willie throws his arm over him.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

I'll get him outta here.

Willie lightly shoves Bernard out of the office and follows him out, as Sinclair mumbles to himself...

SINCLAIRE

(worked up) Who has time for incompetent twats? It's the nineties!

EXT. HALLWAY. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Away from Sinclair, Willie changes his tone. Comforting, compassionate.

WILLIE

Get yourself cleaned up.

He hands Bernard a roll of bills.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Let me know if you want me to take a look at those machines, 'kay? I know some wizards in Flushing.

Bernard nods appreciatively.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BERNARD

It's just a glitch, Willie. I--

WILLIE

Shhh. Just don't even think of
being late on the payments.

Willie pats Bernard on the shoulder, returns to
Sinclair's office.

INT. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Sinclair faces the one-way mirror, watches the usual
show.

SINCLAIRE

I heard the Irish Setter paid you
a visit at the club.

WILLIE

(nods) In town for Adeline.

Sinclair pauses, arches an eyebrow.

SINCLAIRE

Didn't think that rated a mention?
The man did try to penetrate my
ass.

WILLIE

I was planning to before you
played tetherball with Bernard's
skull.

Sinclair chortles.

SINCLAIRE

Cale Ryan. His mother was a good
woman, but he inherited some kind
of rare shitbird gene from his
father.

WILLIE

You should see him now. The
man's been living in New Paltz
brown-bagging tallboys on a
Walmart stoop. He's not here to
stir shit.

SINCLAIRE

I should sure as hell hope not. He
should be kissing my fucking ring
before he steps foot in this town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIE

I'm doing the kneeling for him.

Sinclair mulls it over. Then nods. He's made a decision.

SINCLAIRE

Consider it a favor to you. But the *moment* the old lady's in the ground, I expect that worm on a Greyhound.

Sinclair is not playing around.

WILLIE

He will be.

Sinclair scoops a bunch of jellybeans, plops down in his chair.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

There's more.

Sinclair waits to hear.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Those developers. (excited) It's real.

SINCLAIRE

Have I not made it clear I'd rather watch Skinny Lou sport fuck than sell my land?

WILLIE

That's the beauty of it. This would be a full-on partnership. We retain control *and* get paid. Win fucking win.

SINCLAIRE

Eh. Partnership's a word MBA sluts use to make take-overs sound like summer camp.

WILLIE

Maybe. Or maybe we actually have something these guys want. What we own - it's about to be the most desired property in all of America. Every investor coast-to-coast's going to be buying us the filet at Luger's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sinclair scoops another handful of jellybeans into his mouth. He stands, walks over to Willie, hand on his shoulder. Paternal.

SINCLAIRE

You know what stood out to me the first night I saw you ripping off those paddy shmucks? Your ambition, William. It's as rare a thing in this world as beauty and as hard to fake.

(BEAT)

But like beauty, it can attract some undesirable suitors. (BEAT) I'll take the meeting, but I'm not promising anything.

WILLIE

(smiles)

All I'm asking.

Sinclair shows Willie to the door.

Alone, Sinclair slinks back to his desk and picks up the phone...

INT. BASEMENT. SACRED HEART -- MOMENTS LATER

Skinny Lou is on the phone with Sinclair, still firmly in the shit. Behind him Maria is ushering WORKING GIRLS--illegals--down the hall into various rooms: how they pay off their trip to the states.

SKINNY LOU

Cale Ryan? Shit, I thought that mook was croaked.

INTERCUT with Sinclair, on the phone:

SINCLAIRE

If the blue weren't up my ass, the man wouldn't last an afternoon in this city. (BEAT) Keep him close, Lou.

We PULL OUT of the church window...

EXT. WINDOW. SACRED HEART-- CONTINUOUS

*POV from outside. Skinny Lou peers down at a date book through the church window. Pacing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A lens closes on him - someone taking photos. ON Cale, behind a dumpster, photographing Lou in the window the church.

The tail following the tail.

BACK ON Lou, who hangs up and walks outside. There are three banker-looking types waiting in the alley. Johns. Lou impatiently ushers them inside.

Cale keeps taking photos. Smirks to himself.

CALE

A scumbag don't know how to change.

SERIES OF SHOTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY

--INT. KNICKS GAME. MSG -- EVENING

*The Manhattan's *Boy From New York City* pumps in...

Willie and Cale are being escorted to their seats by a burly LATINO man. The man stops three rows up from the court. Cale's impressed.

WILLIE

Thanks, Rene.

Willie and Cale pop down as the action between the Knicks and Suns heats up. Barkley and Ewing going at it.

CALE

Jesus. I can see Ewing's third foot from here. What's the hook-up?

WILLIE

I helped get Rene's wife over from Honduras.

CALE

(grins) You haven't changed.

Willie raises a beer.

WILLIE

Just happy we finally got in a game.

They knock beers.

--EXT. STREET -- EARLY EVENING

Sinclair shuffles his way through the neighborhood. Locals call to him, nod. In the courtyard of a Catholic school CHILDREN are playing in Giants and Jets jerseys--a gift from Sinclair. When they see Sinclair, they run over, screaming with delight.

--INT. SUBWAY

Willie and Cale chat as a 6 train jerks its way uptown.

CALE

He treating you aright?

WILLIE

He's nice, Dad. Hasn't even tried to finger me yet.

Cale frowns.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

You know Sin, come on. He's been good to me. He's stubborn as shit, but he's coming around.

CALE

Shit has a way of leaving a trail, kid. I hope you're being smart.

WILLIE

You a guidance counselor or a security guard? I keep forgetting.

Cale puts Willie in a playful headlock.

EXT. 11TH AVENUE -- EVENING

BOOTLEG KENNY stands in a fur coat on 11th Avenue by the mouth of the tunnel, watching three of his linebacker-sized, cross-dressing HOES holler at passing cars. He sucks on his trademark *Blow-Pop*.

Manny rounds the corner. Bootleg grins at him.

BOOTLEG

Beautiful boy, what's the noise?

Manny can't help but grin at the delightful character that is Bootleg.

MANNY

No more Port Authority?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOOTLEG

Not tonight. Jersey boys love a thick nigga in a dress. Gotta serve my constituents.

MANNY

Pockets light?

BOOTLEG

Light? Shit. Pockets so deep they got cousins living beneath the subway, baby. Check this shit--

He lifts a foot showing off a cowboy boot.

BOOTLEG (CONT'D)

Armadillo.

(laughing)

You lovin' this shit, Manny. I'ma get you a pair. Have you fucking a bitch and kicking her to the curb with the same toe, baby.

Bootleg pulls out a roll, hands it over. Manny counts, hands the money back. An offering.

MANNY

Sin doesn't like loose tongues so consider this payment for some temporary memory loss. I know you think you might've seen something newsworthy on the subway.

Bootleg gets it.

BOOTLEG

Shit I know the code and wrote the scripture. 'Mine eyes only seen, the glory of the green,' baby.

Bootleg salutes as Manny starts down the street.

BOOTLEG (CONT'D)

Ride or die, baby.

EXT. ROCKEFELLER CENTER -- AFTERNOON

Cale, incognito (hat and sunglasses), briefs Jordan and Strong under the massive Christmas tree, tourists buzzing around them.

JORDAN

(off tree) Yuletide spirit takin' hold?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Figured Manny ain't too keen on sightseeing.

STRONG

So you got somethin' for us?

CALE

(off Jordan) Kid's got the patience of a Jack Russell.

JORDAN

Hard to kick back when the Mayor's got rubber gloves named after your ass.

CALE

(serious) Skinny Lou ain't fearin' God. He's running pros out the church basement.

Jordan smiles. Proud of Cale's work.

JORDAN

(off Strong) I not fuckin' tell you he was police?

Cale hands a roll of film to Jordan.

CALE

Opening hours are still unclear, so wait on the raid. We hit at the wrong time, and the egg's on us. Plus, it don't link to Sin. Yet.

STRONG

(unimpressed) What about the kid?

CALE

He takes his morning shit at 9:15 - what the fuck you want me to say? I just drop outta the fuckin' sky, and he gives up Sin?

Cale starts walking away.

CALE (CONT'D)

You'll hear from me.

Strong mutters angrily to Jordan.

STRONG

Regular Clint Eastwood...

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- DAYS LATER

Establishing shot of the neighborhood. The pomp of the holiday season is now in full effect. A light snow shower. Bundled-up TOURISTS herding toward Rockefeller Center. Christmas is around the corner.

INT. WILLIE'S OFFICE. SIN -- EVENING

Willie's in his office going over paperwork with Sinclaire. Willie walks to a window, overlooking the bar below with a glint in his eye.

Willie's POV: The bar is empty at this early hour except for Cale who slides onto a bar stool. Willie smiles to himself. Like old times.

Sinclaire holds out a few forms for William. As he does, his eye catches a postcard from New Paltz on Willie's desk. A hint of jealousy.

SINCLAIRE

I need your signature on these.

Willie gives him a look...

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Don't look at me like that. I'm moving some accounts around.

BAR

Cale's alone, not a soul around.

CALE

Open for business?

A MOMENT before Lynn comes out from the back.

LYNN

Place doesn't open till eleven, pretty-boy.

CALE

Guess I'll help myself then.

Lynn rolls her eyes.

LYNN

You lookin' for Willie, he's upstairs with Sinclaire.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Just drinks for me.

Lynn nods, starts pouring a Jameson, slides it to him.

LYNN

Thirteen dollars.

CALE

Better come with a lap dance.

LYNN

(grinning)

Normally, but these are on the house. Give me a minute.

She slides him the whole bottle.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Honor code.

Cale nods, taking in his surroundings. A whole different world from what he remembers.

Lynn returns, slides on a stool beside him. They stare at each other. Hard. Until Lynn finally frowns.

CALE

You look good, you know.

LYNN

You said that the other night. Got any new material?

Cale pours himself another.

LYNN (CONT'D)

You gonna tell me what you're doing?

CALE

What do you mean? Man can't visit his ex?

LYNN

I'm not fucking stupid, Cale.

Cale nips at his glass. Decides to tell the truth.

CALE

Kid may be in some shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LYNN

Jesus. He ain't ten years old. You gonna show up and change his diapee?

CALE

What about you? What the hell you still doing here?

LYNN

(off Sinclaire coming down the stairs)

He ain't the type to write letters of recommendation.

Cale glares at Sinclaire and Willie coming down the stairs. Sinclaire and Cale lock eyes. The two surrogates sizing each other up after all these years. Sinclaire signals for Willie to give him a minute and starts over.

SINCLAIRE

Well, well. The rumors are true.

CALE

Good to see you, Sinclaire.

Willie studies their interaction with concern, curiosity.

SINCLAIRE

(toying with him) Is it, really?

A moment of tension. Cale thinks about it, speaks plainly.

CALE

No. Not really.

Sinclaire lets the tension linger, then laughs in a controlled way. Menacing.

SINCLAIRE

(smiling) You never were a good liar. (dead serious) Why I could never trust you.

CALE

Don't think your trust is selling too well on the market these days.

SINCLAIRE

They have markets in New Paltz? I thought it was all possum skewers and roadhouse incest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CALE

Lower scumbag density, I'll tell you that.

Sinclair smiles.

SINCLAIRE

I was sorry to hear about your mother. How is she?

CALE

Odds aren't great.

SINCLAIRE

Shame. The last of the Ryan's. I know she's a fighter. I wonder, down which dank back alley did those genes travel?

CALE

Probably one you been down plenty of times - carving out the heart of some fourteen-year-old whore.

Sinclair's smile disappears.

SINCLAIRE

If these were different times, a two-bit fuck like you wouldn't dream of talking to me like that. You think I forgot what happened?

CALE

(cavalier) But the times they are a-changin', Sin, ain't they? Right under our feet?

Cale meets Sinclair's angry gaze. Fiery look in Cale's eye. Willie comes over, as the two eye-fuck each other.

WILLIE

Sin, we need to run. Ling's on in five and she's been drawing Vice with the new routine.

SINCLAIRE

Ah, Ling. Only two months removed from firing ping pong balls from her twat in a Patpong brothel. Another success story.

Sinclair begins to leave, then quickly hisses to Cale.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

As soon as your mother passes to the other side, I expect us all to relish the pleasure of your absence. I trust you won't be needing a reminder.

Sinclair tips his invisible cap and heads off, Willie behind him, giving Cale a look. Cale's eyes remain locked on Sinclair.

LYNN

Let it go. No need starting a fight you can't win.

Cale shuts it off, grabs for her hand.

CALE

How about I start some shit with you?

LYNN

Is that your new material? Mother-a-fuck that's bad.

CALE

C'mon. Relive a fond memory?

LYNN

I remember you throwing up on my back.

CALE

It was the eighties. We were all into some weird shit.

Lynn laughs, then considers.

LYNN

Your dick even work?

CALE

Fifty fifty.

INT. LYNN'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Cale, pants still hooked around his ankles, grunts a final time as he collapses on top of Lynn, her blouse ripped. They barely made it to the bed...

They pant heavily. Cale kisses her on the forehead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

You ever think maybe we could give
this another shot?

Lynn raises her eyebrows.

LYNN

This was pity. Don't misinterpret.

They both bust out laughing.

PULL OUT of the apartment and down to the street where...

EXT/INT. SKINNY LOU'S CAMRY -- CONTINUOUS

Skinny Lou sits in his car peering up at Lynn's
apartment. Tailing Cale...

INT. RESTAURANT. NOLITA -- AFTERNOON

Tamsin sits alone, reading a Village Voice. Willie enters
the restaurant, concern on his face. She stands up to hug
him, tears in her eyes.

WILLIE

I got your message. What's going
on?

Tamsin sits down, wipes away tears.

TAMSIN

It's Topper, Willie. He won't do
it...He says you're beneath him.

WILLIE

What the fuck!? Why?

The anger is flush on Willie's face.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

That motherfucking cocksucker...

Just then, a huge smile appears on her face...

WILLIE (CONT'D)

What the fuck is so funny?

Tamsin can't keep a straight face.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Are you messing with me?

She cackles...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAMSIN

He's in! He wants to sit down with Sin and make a formal offer.

WILLIE

You little bastard! I literally thought my life was over.

He runs around the table picks her up. She tries to dodge him, laughing. They embrace, kiss.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

I can't believe this. We did it. We fucking did it.

TAMSIN

You did.

INT. DIAMONDS BURLESK -- EVENING

Sinclair sits with two PERFORMERS at the bar. Mid-grade pornstars. They fawn over Sinclair. On his right shoulder is draped a former PERFORMER, JUSTINE (26, feathery blonde hair, put together). Sinclair loves the attention. A true daddy-o.

Sinclair sings *Cheek to Cheek* by Fred Astaire...

SINCLAIRE

I'm in heaven...

The girls chime in...

SINCLAIRE/PERFORMERS

I'm in heaven...and my heart beats so that I can barely speak...

He smiles. Affectionate. Almost baby talk.

SINCLAIRE

(to the current performers) Never forget there's a life beyond the pole, my sirens. Look at Justine here - the most delectable beautician in all of Jackson Heights.

JUSTINE

(grateful) Couldn't a done it without you, Sin baby. Eight grand was a dream number till you became my sunshine daddy-o.

Willie enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SINCLAIRE

Lancelot!

The pornstars murmur hello to Willie, make their exit.

WILLIE

It's time, Sin.

SINCLAIRE

For what?

WILLIE

The future.

Willie leads him to a back table where Tamsin and Topper sit. They speak quietly as they approach...

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Now, I know you said be patient, but these guys are coming to the table with something real.

SINCLAIRE

You're springing this on me now, William? Men who relish control avoid surprise.

WILLIE

You kept putting it off, Sin. What other move did I have?

Willie claps him on the back, leads him to the table...

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Topper Stewart, my boss, Sinclair Rubix.

Topper extends a hand, which Sinclair accepts tentatively. Tamsin offers a less than enthusiastic hello.

TAMSIN

Hi, Sinclair.

SINCLAIRE

I should have known little Brooke Astor would be here.

He does little to hide his distaste.

LATER

Willie, Sinclair, Tamsin, and Topper sit at the booth. Topper addresses Sinclair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOPPER

Mr. Rubix, when Willie came to me I certainly had my doubts. Of course, you're in possession of some very attractive property. That said, I have some concerns about a working relationship. Willie's done a good job helping me come around. Most of the way.

SINCLAIRE

You talk like you're already my boss. Is that what they teach in business school? Presumption? If so, I'm sure your father's pig-in-shit pleased with his investment.

A conversational slap in the face. Topper clenches up.

Willie jumps in, desperate to save the meeting.

WILLIE

I think I can speak to Topper's openness and willingness to make this work...for all of us.

TOPPER

What Willie's outlined is a mix of commercial and moderately priced housing along forty-second street. I won't lie and say that if you were willing to go completely commercial there would be more money to be made here, but I recognize your needs to take care of the community. Frankly, that's what attracts me to you both as business partners. Willie says we need you. I actually believe the guy is right.

SINCLAIRE

Did William mention that our fair mayor is trying to graft his thumb to the inside of my rectum?

Topper's taken aback by Sinclair's tone.

TOPPER

I believe that's why we're all here, Sinclair. I read the papers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SINCLAIRE

(proud) Perhaps my young associate failed to mention that I am an institution in this neighborhood. That people count on me.

WILLIE

I think we all recognize what you've done, Sin, but we've got to get ahead of the curve here.

Sinclair flinches.

SINCLAIRE

Gentlemen. Lady Bracknell. I appreciate your interest, but the timing isn't right. Goodbye.

Sinclair stands up and leaves.

TOPPER

What the hell was that?

Willie tries to play it cool.

WILLIE

I'll speak to him. I think he's just overwhelmed.

TOPPER

I'll give you time, Willie, but not much.

Willie jumps up and follows Sinclair towards his office.

WILLIE

Sin, Sin!

Sinclair stops at his office door. We finally see Willie snap...

WILLIE (CONT'D)

What the fuck was that? These guys are as real as it gets.

SINCLAIRE

Real? (snickers) That wing-tip shit goes cradle to grave without ever touching something real. Excuse me.

William puts his hand on Sinclair's chest. Sinclair takes visible issue with the hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILLIE

They're giving us a shot to become real players here. No more cops. No more hassles. (looks around him at the club) This isn't going to last. Can't you fucking see that? The Pussycat, World, Circus, Peepland. All gone. We're dinosaurs, Sin, and there isn't a play in the world that's gonna save us from the meteor headed our way.

Sinclair eyes him coldly.

SINCLAIRE

This Mayor's not the first suit to dream of cleaning the Deuce. They say they want it *all gone*, these cops, but they don't have the fucking stomach for it. Like your do-gooder buddy, Cale. You think a cop knows what to do with a strung-out stripper who just got knocked up by her pimp schmuck boyfriend? You think a cop wants some fifteen-year-old whore crying on his shoulder cause daddy touched her wrinkle? You know what cops do? They shove these girls into foster care, social services, places you and I came from, and what does it do for them? Nothing, William. *Worse than nothing.* Me? I give them work, I give them purpose. I find a place for these bruised little dolls in a world that couldn't generate a single shit about them. Don't you see? I'm not a business man, William. I am a fucking economy. Don't forget it.

WILLIE

This time it's different, Sin. Tell me you can see that.

SINCLAIRE

I know you've got your finger in some uptown snatch, but that doesn't change where you came from. Remember who got you here.

Sinclair departs, leaving William furious. Willie turns back towards the table where he locks eyes with Tamsin. Shame on his face. Pity on hers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Sinclair storms into...

INT. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

He paces angrily, looking at the stage through the one-way mirror. A dancer is performing a burlesque routine in which every curve of anatomy is wrapped like a Christmas gift. She opens each gift, slowly, revealing more skin.

SINCLAIRE

(yelling to himself)

Can someone tell me why this new doll refuses to show snatch until the fifth song? It's Christmas for Christ's sake!

He slams his first, clearly worked up.

INT/EXT. SMITH'S BAR AND GRILL -- DAYS LATER

Cale and Willie are throwing back eggs and bacon at the Hell's Kitchen establishment. One of the few places left to grab a stiff drink at 8 AM.

WILLIE

I'm trying to stuff money in his pocket. He's so wrapped up in the old game he can't fucking see it.

Cale plays it cool.

CALE

You know Sin, Willie. He likes power. He wants to feel that command. Being some property owner ain't enough for him.

Cale pushes, just a bit.

CALE (CONT'D)

He'll burn down the Square if he has to. You worried you might get caught in the fire?

Willie cools down, self-conscious about discussing Sinclair in mixed company.

WILLIE

Whatever.

Cale and Willie drop some dollars on the table, nod at the grizzled bartenders. Relics.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

I gotta hit the head. Meet you
outside.

ON Willie as he walks outside, Bootleg Kenny appears from
the around alley.

BOOTLEG

Little Willie...

Willie turns, surprised to see him. Goes over.

BOOTLEG (CONT'D)

Ain't seen you in a minute-*rice*,
man.

Bootleg hands him a roll, which Willie refuses.

WILLIE

What the hell you doing?

ON Cale exiting the bar and spotting Willie. He walks
over and spies from a distance with interest.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

I don't fucking collect, you know
that.

BOOTLEG

Shiiit. Y'all came looking for me.
I'm doing my part.

WILLIE

Who came looking?

BOOTLEG

Manny, but he ain't nowhere at the
moment.

WILLIE

Then wait for him. I don't deal
with this shit.

Bootleg sighs, moves on.

BOOTLEG

Got up early, too. Think a nigga
like me don't need beauty sleep?

Willie walks back. Casually, Cale joins, as they walk
down 8th Avenue.

CALE

Tell me that wasn't Bootleg?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIE

Wish I could.

CALE

(smiling)

Fuckin' guy's a roach, huh? I'm impressed.

(BEAT)

Thought you weren't doing that type of work anymore.

WILLIE

I'm not.

Cale nods, not buying it.

CALE

You should take that girl and get outta here, Willie. Hell, come stay with me. Been asking you damn near ten years.

Willie brushes him off.

WILLIE

We missed our window, alright.

CALE

I'm serious, Willie. If Sin's not giving you a shot, then maybe it's time to move on.

Willie quotes Arthur Miller.

WILLIE

"The man's not an orange," Cale.

CALE

What the fuck's that even mean? Jesus, you even sound like him now.

WILLIE

It means I'm not in the habit of disappearing, okay?

That stings.

CALE

Don't forget why I did. So you could have a real future, kid, not play the slick little gangster.

Willie looks at him. Fuming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILLIE

Look. You're here on my good word.
I wouldn't push it, alright?!

Cale stands down. Heat in his eyes...

CALE

Fair enough.

EXT. ALLEY. SACRED HEART -- MIDNIGHT

Cale sits in the driver seat of a sedan, scoping the church through binoculars. Not much doing. Skinny Lou opens a back door, takes out a heaping bag of trash. Goes back inside.

A dull moment. Then the faint blare of a siren. Just then, four cop cars screech to a halt in front of the church. Strong, vested-up and raid-ready, emerges from one of them. Six rooks quickly follow.

Cale can't believe it: Strong is raiding the church. Blowing his investigation.

CALE

(furious) You dumb fuck...

Through the binoculars, we see Strong march into the church, followed by his eager soldiers. Cale punches the steering wheel. Infuriated.

INT. SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND MARY -- CONTINUOUS

COPS direct weeping NUNS to lie face down on the floor. Strong directs the rest of the team.

STRONG

Hit the basement.

Skinny Lou walks out to object, but Strong immediately SLAMS him against the wall.

STRONG (CONT'D)

You been running pros? Illegals?
Out of a motherfucking church?
It's hard to believe you're that
fuckin' sick.

SKINNY LOU

I have no idea---

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRONG
(elbowing him in the
spine) Shut the fuck
up!

Skinny Lou drops to the ground. One of the cops appear in the hallway...

COP
Clean downstairs.

Skinny Lou smiles to himself...

SKINNY LOU
Perhaps you'll leave a donation
for our trouble.

Strong grabs him by the clerical collar raises him to eye level. His anger is overwhelming, but he has no words. Skinny Lou grins through the pain. Strong tosses him back down and walks out. Failure.

EXT. MESSAGE PARLOR -- NEXT MORNING

Cale stealthily slides into a midtown massage parlor.

ANGLE ON LOU in his Camry, watching his every move.

INT. MESSAGE PARLOR

Cale is led to a back room by a slinky EUROPEAN GIRL in a nightgown. Jordan and Strong are waiting for him. The girl quickly departs.

Cale goes right at Strong, pushing him against the wall.

CALE
You meathead fuck!

Strong shoves him back, but Jordan quickly separates them.

JORDAN
Goddamnit, Cale!

CALE
Guy blew the whole fucking plan,
Connie.

JORDAN
I made the call, Cale, not Strong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

(stunned)

I told you to wait for my word.

JORDAN

I don't have time for your word. You were brought here to bring leads. I'll decide what we move on.

STRONG

All this loyalty, old-neighborhood horseshit. Maybe if you stop romancing the kid and make a fuckin' play we could end this.

Cale tightens up. Jordan intervenes.

JORDAN

Shut it, alright? The mayor's already up my ass about spooking nuns at evensong. Last thing I need is you two to fuck. Remember, Cale: Sin killed cops! My fucking people! We're not the enemy here.

Cale's not having it.

CALE

Police work might get somewhere if there weren't so many police to fuck it up.

He storms off...

STRONG

Guy's a cowboy complaining about us going rogue. Fuck him...

Jordan sighs. Strong stares off. He's done waiting...

EXT. BACK ALLEY - POLICE PRECINCT

Cale sneaks into the building through the back door - cautious as always to evade notice. He knocks twice on a locked metal door, and it opens to...

INT. POLICE HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

HOWIE FLAHERTY, 60 veteran cop, pot-belly, old pal of Cale holds the door. Doing a favor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Thanks again, Howie.

Howie waves it off. It's nothing.

HOWIE

Deuce without Cale Ryan's like a
Carnegie Deli without corned beef
for fuck's sake.

Howie hands him keys to the file locker. Cale slaps his
arm appreciatively.

INT. HALLWAY. SINCLAIRE'S OFFICE -- SIMULTANEOUS

Bernard, his shoulder in a sling, his face bandaged--the
victim of a brutal beating--walks down the hallway
towards Willie. He holds a manila envelope under his arm.

WILLIE

Jesus, Bernard. What the fuck
happened to you?

Sinclair pokes his head out before Bernard can respond.

SINCLAIRE

Two weeks in a row. You've
restored my faith, Bernard.

Willie and Sinclair lock eyes as the door slams shut.
Willie's shaken, angered.

INT. POLICE RECORDS ROOM -- TWO HOURS LATER

Cale sits amid a lake of opened files and papers, poring
over old arrest records now that the Lou lead has gone
cold. Murder. Prostitution. Rubs his eyes. Exhausted.
Then he comes across a file: DAVID MACDOUGAL.

Curiosity trumps trepidation: Cale grabs the file on his
old partner. Opens it, begins reading. He sees
MacDougal's face. Emotion in his eyes. Then shock.

His eyes zoom to key phrases: DIED FROM BULLET
WOUND...EXECUTION STYLE...45 SLUG...

Cale grabs his jacket, leaps out of the chair.

INT. SIN -- LATER

Cale BURSTS through the door, almost identical to his entrance years before. Lynn's behind the bar, stacking receipts.

CALE
Where's the kid?

LYNN
In the back. You alright?

Cale bee-lines to the back alley...

LYNN (CONT'D)
Cale, what the hell is going on?

Cale FLINGS open the alley door, Willie stands talking to a BUSBOY. Willie takes one look at him and knows it's serious.

WILLIE
(to busboy)
Give us a few minutes, alright?

The busboy disappears inside.

CALE
Did you know?

WILLIE
Nice to see you, too.

CALE
Did you know?!

WILLIE
What the fuck you talkin' about?

CALE
MacDougal! What happened?!

WILLIE
(sighs)
Jesus, Cale. You were there,
remember?

Cale grabs Willie by the collar, violently pushes him against the wall.

WILLIE (CONT'D)
What the hell is wrong with you!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

Don't bullshit me. Did you know
they shot him?

Willie just looks at him...he knew.

SMASH FLASHBACK INSERT: ALLEY. 1980. New Year's Eve

Willie and Sinclaire stand over the body. Lynn watches
from the doorway, tears in her eyes.

SINCLAIRE

(speaking to the
body)

I know that I shall meet my fate
Somewhere among the clouds above;
Those that I fight I do not hate,
Those that I guard I do not love.

Sinclaire looks up at Willie then at Lynn.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Cale wouldn't dare return...

Sinclaire locks eyes with Willie...then turns to Manny.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Make it go away.

Sinclaire puts his arm around Lynn. They shuffle inside.

A BEAT as Willie and Manny stand over the body.

MANNY

Grab his feet.

Willie, teary-eyed, grabs both legs, Manny the arms.

INT. BOMBED OUT BUILDING -- 1980. New Year's Eve

Manny tosses MacDougal's body to the floor of the empty
shooting gallery in the Bronx. Just then, MacDougal
gurgles and moans. ALIVE!

They both startle. Manny giggles.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Sounds like bong water.

WILLIE

(terrified) Maybe he'll be okay.

Manny shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANNY

It's way too late for okay, kid.
We're in the graveyard.

Manny pulls out a .45.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Do him a favor.

Manny sticks the gun in Willie's hand and walks him right up to MacDougal.

MANNY (CONT'D)

This is the way it works, kid. One
for you, one for us.

Manny guides Willie's hand until the gun is inches from MacDougal's forehead. Tears pour down Willie's face.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Steady.

Willie's hand SHAKES violently. Manny steps behind him, places his hand over Willie's...

MacDougal's eyes flash open! Creepy. They lock on Willie. Willie freezes, then quickly pulls...BANG!

A hum of cheers can be heard from outside, the pop of fireworks. Manny glances at his watch. Happy New Year.

JUMP BACK TO:

ALLEY -- PRESENT

Cale is speechless. Willie can barely look at him.

CALE

(shaking his head) All these
goddamn years I've been living in
the sticks covering for you. Why
didn't you tell me?

WILLIE

I was eleven years old burying a
fucking body, Cale. I was just
trying to move past it.

CALE

You were just a fucking juvi,
Willie. We could have put that
body on them. Christ! We could
have had our lives back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIE

Bullshit! You couldn't come back --
it didn't change shit with Sin.
You were a target no matter what.

CALE

Truth's good to know, Willie. Even
if you can't do shit about it.

Sinclair's voice can be heard from inside the club.
Willie pushes Cale off him, straightens his shirt. Upset,
angry.

WILLIE

Now are we done with the fucking
therapy session? Maybe Sin was
right - maybe this town is better
off without you riding in and
dusting up old melancholy
bullshit.

Willie walks back inside the club, passing Lynn who's
been eavesdropping the whole time. SHOCK on her face.

EXT. STREET -- MORNING

It's still early as Willie heads out from his apartment.
The square is scarce, save for a few homeless starting
their day. Willie walks up to a coffee shop, its grate
down. He bangs on the shop door to no avail...

WILLIE

Simon!

HOMELESS MAN (O.C.)

Mister Perna couldn't afford them
new rents. Man been here thirty-
seven years.

In a doorway a HOMELESS MAN with long stringy white hair
gathers his things. He mumbles to Willie...

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

They say we all goin' be gone by
the time the mayor done.

WILLIE

This place has a way of changing
on you. Like people, I guess.

It's a loaded comment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOMELESS MAN

Casualties of a good war, they
say. You show me a good war, son.

The homeless man grabs his things and moves on.

EXT. STREET. CHRISTMAS EVE -- MORNING

The commuter rush from the Lincoln tunnel jams the streets. Willie and Tamsin stand before a coffee vendor. A Unicef Santa rings his bell as people pass by.

The VENDOR hands over the two coffees, and they begin to walk.

Tamsin rubs Willie's back...

TAMSIN

You're awful quiet this morning.

WILLIE

Just in my own head, you know.

TAMSIN

Has Sin apologized yet? I cannot
believe he behaved like that. You
ever think he might just be
stringing you along?

Willie stares at her dead-on. Serious.

WILLIE

On my eighteenth birthday Sin put
each of these properties in my
name. He handed me the keys, Tam,
but his lawyers still have to sign
off on any move I make.

TAMSIN

Damned if you stay, damned if you
don't.

WILLIE

(nods) There are always options.
Sin taught me that. (BEAT) He also
taught me it's better to have them
than to need them.

TAMSIN

(smiles)
Well, you've got plenty.

WILLIE

Here we are...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The infamous Fascination Arcade on 8th Avenue.

TAMSIN

An arcade. This is your surprise?
How original: a twenty-six year
old who's into video games.

SERIES OF SHOTS WITHIN ARCADE:

- Tamsin is making a pinball machine blow up like slots. Willie watches with envy. The arcade is half full of GHETTO KIDS, NERDS, napping BUMS.

- Willie sits in an arcade racing car. The monitor shows he's lost. Tamsin casually walks past him...stops...bends down to tie her shoes and flashes a confident wink. Willie can only laugh at her posturing.

- Tamsin holds a rifle and with surprising skill takes out deer after deer in BUCKHUNT. She passes the rifle to Willie who proceeds to aim it at his own head and pull the trigger. Tamsin playfully pushes him.

EXT. ARCADE -- LATER

Tamsin rushes out, a huge grin on her face. Willie follows, defeated.

WILLIE

You probably had a game room as a
child.

TAMSIN

Nope, just gifted. (checks her
watch) I have to catch the 3:10.
The old man would never forgive me
if I missed pre-church cocktails.

WILLIE

I love it when you get all
Cheever.

She laughs and kisses him.

The Pogues' *Fairly Tale New York City* chimes in...

CHRISTMAS MONTAGE:

-LYNN'S APARTMENT: Cale knocks on the door. It swings open, Lynn behind it wearing a Santa hat and negligee, holding a glass of eggnog. A huge grin on her face. She pulls him inside, plants the Santa hat on his head, and they go at it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-BOOTLEG KENNY'S APARTMENT: In a rundown apartment Bootleg Kenny hands out gifts (fake gold chains, etc) to his flock of TRANNIES. They scream with delight.

-DIAMOND BURLESK: Sinclaire, dressed as Santa, sings while Manny ladles some egg nogg for the lonely JOHNS who've got nowhere else to go. STRIPPERS in reindeer costumes frolic about. Willie watches from the bar. A tradition.

-SACRED HEART: A group of young neighborhood children perform a Nativity play. Skinny Lou watches from the pulpit, turns his back to key some coke. We PAN to the congregation where Sinclaire, Manny, Maria, Willie and the girls smile in the front row. In the rear of the church, Cale and Lynn hold hands.

END MONTAGE

INT. SIN -- EVENING. DAYS LATER

Willie stands behind the bar. Tamsin sits on a stool, staring at a beautiful gold watch on her wrist.

TAMSIN

It's too much, Willie.

Willie peers up, takes notice of someone at the door.

WILLIE

You expecting company tonight?

Tamsin turns around as Topper heads towards them.

INT. SKIN WORLD -- SIMULTANEOUS

Manny leans on the counter. He pages through a personal photo album, larded with Polaroids of himself and the many pornstars he's come to know.

The door buckles open. Who else but Strong. Manny hardly looks up. Strong pulls out his badge and puts it in front of the album. Manny grins, slides the badge aside, continues paging.

Manny pulls out a polaroid of a beautiful porn queen.

CU: she's nude on his shoulders, circa 1987. Manny holds it up to Strong, smiling as he reminisces.

MANNY

First time I met Maggie she told me she was a psych major at MIT.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANNY (CONT'D)

We went rowboating on acid one day
in the park...sweet kid.

STRONG

Where she now?

MANNY

Made a couple pictures. Found out
she wasn't a star.

(shrugs)

AIDS, maybe. You hope they marry
the customers. Otherwise it ain't
a happy ending.

Strong pulls out a picture of the bartender, Jesse...

STRONG

You know him?

MANNY

Sure. Kid poured doubles like it
was charity. Found him like a rat
on the S train, way I heard.

Strong tries to play it off.

STRONG

We got wits all over that station,
say he wasn't solo when he
slipped.

Manny doesn't flinch.

MANNY

Maybe God was with him?

STRONG

(angry) He was one of our people,
you fat fuck. When I string you
up, I hope you remember his face.

MANNY

Anything else? I was in the middle
of an article.

Strong POUNCES, pure rage. He LEAPS over the counter and
grabs the rotary phone. He bashes it against Manny's
skull till he drops to the floor. Strong kicks him in the
gut, yelling.

STRONG

You think Sin's gonna take care of
you when the shit comes down,
huh?! Is that what you think?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STRONG (CONT'D)

'Cause it's fucking coming down.
And the sheep never survive!

He tosses the phone on the floor and exits.

MOMENTS LATER Manny picks himself up, bleeding profusely from his head. He grabs the phone and dials...

MANNY

Get me Lou...

INT. SIN -- LATER

Willie, Tamsin, and Topper sit in a banquet. No drinks, strictly business.

WILLIE

He doesn't mean any disrespect.
It's just his style.

TOPPER

The man's stubborn. He built a legacy and wants to preserve it. I get that. There will always be real estate. That's not why I'm here.

Willie can't figure out where this is going...

TOPPER (CONT'D)

I could use your drive. It wouldn't be glamorous but it's real.

Willie looks at Tamsin - she's glowing. He's completely caught off guard.

WILLIE

I appreciate the offer, but it's not that simple for me.

TOPPER

It never is, Willie. Think on it.
(off Tam)
A couple golf lessons and he'll have my job.

Topper kisses Tamsin on the cheek and pops up.

EXT. POLICE STATION -- NEXT DAY

Strong exits the station. He jumps into an unmarked Sedan. Call comes over the line. He picks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRONG

Be there in ten.

As we pull out, we recognize Skinny Lou's Camry following a few cars behind...

EXT. PROJECTS -- LOWER EAST SIDE

Strong parks the sedan in the courtyard of some projects.

ON A MAN IN A TRENCHCOAT, Cale, stealthily making his way to the Sedan.

INT. SEDAN -- CONTINUOUS

Cale jumps in the backseat, hiding.

CALE

Understand that I don't like or respect you or in any way honor what you are. I'm bringing you in because I can't do this alone.

STRONG

You got some Kleenex? This shit's right out of *Beaches*.

CALE

We can't go after anyone real after the church shit. We push Sinclaire or Manny right now and they'll button up before we get a shot.

Strong holds his tongue on going rogue.

STRONG

So who's that leave?

CALE

A pimp from back in the day. I saw the guy try to make a drop to Willie. We start with a soldier, he corroborates and the whole pyramid falls. It's our only option.

STRONG

Some pimp won't cut it. We need your boy.

Cale nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALE

I'll talk to Willie. He comes willingly or we pick him up.

STRONG

When?

CALE

Tomorrow.

STRONG

Fucking New Year's?

CALE

Calm down. Twenty-Four Hour Fitness will still be there the next day. I'll pick up the pimp after the ball drops. You grab Willie if he hasn't shown by morning. I figure by the time word gets back to Sinclaire we'll already have had them in the box for a while. Might give us the time we need to break 'em.

STRONG

Why you coming to me with this? You can deliver these two without my help.

CALE

Comes down to it, I can't put cuffs on the kid.

Strong gets it. Cale pops out of the car, looks back.

CALE (CONT'D)

I need to trust you on this.

STRONG

I got you. (BEAT) Mark my words. In five years, this whole town'll be spick and span.

Cale thinks it over.

CALE

Hate for it to get too clean. Cops and crooks can color a city just the same.

With that, he disappears.

INT. SKINNY LOU'S CAMRY -- MOMENTS LATER

Lou watches Cale from his car. He's got him.

SKINNY LOU
 (quoting scripture
 creatively)
 Your tongue plots destruction,
 like a sharp razor, you
 motherfucking worker of deceit.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE. NEW YEAR'S EVE -- EVENING

Absolute chaos. Mobs of people, balloons, confetti, reporters, police. Willie leads Tamsin by the hand through it all.

TAMSIN
 (screaming)
 This is insane!

WILLIE
 Just wait.

They cut down an alley off Broadway, slip through a construction barrier. Willie holds open a basement hatch for her to enter. Tamsin gives a questioning glare.

WILLIE (CONT'D)
 Trust me.

She descends into an...

UNDERGROUND TUNNEL

Willie leads Tamsin through the darkness. Rats squeak and scurry. Water drips. When they emerge, they are in a...

BUILDING LOBBY

Tamsin brushes herself off, examines her surroundings. They are on the first floor of a skyscraper under construction.

TAMSIN
 Should we be here?

WILLIE
 (smiling mischievously) Definitely
 not.

He rushes her to the elevator shaft and escorts her on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

From below, we watch as it ascends thirty floors to the...

PENTHOUSE

Through giant glass windows we see the chaos of Times Square thirty stories below, but this room is silent.

TAMSIN

(wow) How did you know about this?

WILLIE

As a kid, I was pretty well-schooled in getaways. (BEAT)
C'mon...

Willie leads her to the end of the abandoned floor and pushes open another door. They climb a small stairwell and emerge onto the...

ROOF

The sound of Times Square overtakes the entire scene. It's a hurricane of noise. They walk to the edge of the roof, standing directly in front of the Times Square Ball drop.

WILLIE

(screaming over the noise)

Nice view, right?

Tamsin is speechless. Willie reaches into a backpack, pulls out a bottle of champagne and pours two glasses.

The crowd below begins the countdown...

CHANT

Ten, nine...

WILLIE

To the Deuce...

TAMSIN

To new opportunities...

CHANT

Six, five...

WILLIE

I love you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAMSIN

You better...

They click glasses.

CHANT

Two, one...

EXPLOSION of noise, revelry, chaos below them. Willie drops his glass. It shatters on the roof. He grabs Tamsin by the face and kisses her like it was his last moment on earth. Her glass falls and shatters, joining the jubilant chaos of the square below.

INT. SIN -- LATER

Balloons dangle from the ceiling. Music fills the room as FRIENDS and FAMILY dance, drink, smoke grass, and eat. Feels like old times.

Cale sits at the bar nursing a drink, quietly chatting with Lynn. She stands with a tray of drinks and WE FOLLOW her to Manny, planted next to Sinclair at a corner booth, butterfly stitches in his brow. Their eyes trail Willie as he dances closely with Tamsin. ANGLE BACK ON Cale spying on Manny and Sinclair through the mirror on the bar. Everyone watching everyone.

SINCLAIRE

In the car? Really?

MANNY

What Lou said. Cop was pushing way too hard, they must be desperate.

SINCLAIRE

The definition of Cale Ryan....I knew it.

Lynn walks over and drops two drinks on the table.

LYNN

Gin and a whiskey.

SINCLAIRE

Where's my hug?

Lynn frowns as Sinclair stands to embrace her.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Thank you, doll. Always been my best.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON Willie and Tamsin, dancing playfully alongside Maria and others. Willie's sneaking looks at Manny and Sinclair.

TAMSIN

Forget him, Willie.

WILLIE

I got to, Tam. You know that.

He pulls her towards the table. Sinclair smiles.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Happy New Year, Sin.

Sinclair rises and gives Willie a hug, whispers.

SINCLAIRE

See our new mayor up there? We'll outlast him yet.

Willie's still sore from the failed meeting with Topper.

WILLIE

Not for long.

Not pleased with Willie's response, Sinclair eyes Tamsin. A mean glint comes into his eye.

SINCLAIRE

Eddie Sedgewick! A Happy New Year to you!

TAMSIN

(cold) You too, Sin.

SINCLAIRE

I wonder, have you ever considered dancing on the stage? Willie says you're between careers. Perhaps it would satisfy that itch for the wild side...

Willie's taken aback...

WILLIE

Sin, watch your--

SINCLAIRE

What, William? She's lovely. Perfectly built. Great ass!

Tamsin is VERY turned off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIE

What the fuck's the matter with--

Tamsin SLAPS Sinclair. Hard.

TAMSIN

Don't talk to me like that. I'm
not some stripper, you scumbag.

ANGLE ON CALE and LYNN at the bar still watching. Lynn
shakes her head, concerned.

LYNN

Christ...

BACK ON Tamsin as she storms off. Sinclair holds his
face, stung, emitting a creepy chuckle.

WILLIE

What the hell is wrong with you?!

SINCLAIRE

Just having a laugh, William. I
didn't realize the doll couldn't
take a joke.

WILLIE

Fuck you. It's a wonder you ended
up a criminal.

Willie walks off to catch up with Tamsin.

STAY ON Manny and Sinclair, as Sinclair's smile
flattens abruptly.

BAR: ON Cale as he stands to leave and follow Willie.

LYNN

Don't do it.

CALE

I got to, Lynn. You know that.

LYNN

I was just getting used to this.
To us. Don't disappear on me
again.

He kisses her forehead gently.

CALE

I like that worry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Cale and Sinclaire lock eyes as Cale's forced to pass Sinclaire's table to exit. Sinclaire reaches a hand out, grabbing Cale's wrist.

SINCLAIRE
(shaking head) I look at you,
Cale, and I see a swimmer paddling
in vain against a mighty current.

Cale's got to get a move on.

CALE
Funny, I look at you and see
exactly the same.

Cale takes a look around.

CALE (CONT'D)
Everything you got, Sin. This
club, Skin World, (pointing to his
clothes) that fuckin' suit. You
know what it's made of? The bones
of honest people. You can call it
a kingdom, you fuck. I call it a
scam.

With that, Cale makes his exist. Sinclaire watches coldly, speaks to Manny without taking his eyes off Cale.

SINCLAIRE
Cale's been on borrowed time for
years. His loan just ran up.

MANNY
Thought we were (big word)
abstaining?

SINCLAIRE
(decisive) Abstinence has no place
in our industry, Emmanuel.

Manny doesn't flinch, as they watch the door buckle closed behind Cale.

Lynn glares at Sinclaire as he exits, hatred in her eyes. "Old Long Syne" carries over the crowd.

EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

Willie chases Tamsin down the street, weaving through the crowd of revelers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIE

I don't know what the hell that was.

TAMSIN

Don't make any fucking excuses for him, Willie. He's threatened by me. By the fact that someone else believes in you.

WILLIE

I know.

TAMSIN

Then do something about it! He's a cancer.

WILLIE

I know! You don't think I fucking know that?! I know it's over, it's just not that easy for me.

Just then, Cale comes jogging up behind them.

CALE

I need to talk to you, Willie.

Tamsin tries to wipe away tears.

WILLIE

I'm in the middle of something here, Cale.

CALE

You owe me a minute, kid.

Tamsin rolls her eyes and storms up the stairs of Willie's apartment building.

Cale lets it fly.

CALE (CONT'D)

Jordan's taking you down. You got the rest of the night to start using your fucking head. I'm telling you this to give you a chance.

Willie shakes his head. His world, days ago full of opportunity, is falling apart.

WILLIE

(shakes his head) I should've fucking known...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Cale continues.

CALE

Vice has got you cold on the club for laundered money, tax evasion. It won't be long till the money connects to a whole suite of shit. We're talking ten inside, Willie. Maybe more.

Willie shakes his head, disgusted.

WILLIE

I let you back in. I put myself on the line for you, and this whole fucking time you've been on the job?!!

Willie shoves Cale.

CALE

The only reason I agreed was to try and save you. You gotta see that.

WILLIE

Jesus. I know you get a real hard-on for that father shit, but I don't need you, Cale. You get it? I'm not your fucking snitch. Put me in jail. I hope it makes your year.

Willie makes to turn away.

CALE

That bartender from your club they found on the tracks--he was undercover.

WILLIE

(disbelief, confusion) What?

CALE

Jordan had him inside. Just a coincidence he takes a fall?

WILLIE

Sin's not that fucking stupid. He wouldn't risk everything with the shield all over us.

Cale looks at him closely, angrily. He raises his tone.
WHY CAN'T WILLIE SEE...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CALE

You're too smart to see how dumb you are, kid. Everyone knows you're better than this. Sinclaire above all. That's why he's got his nails in your neck. (BEAT) You got till the morning.

Willie, frightened and betrayed, watches Cale storm away.

WILLIE

(calling out) Another fucking great New Year's with you, Cale!

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- MOMENTS LATER

Cale weaves through throngs of drunken tourists. A WOMAN screams that she's lost her son. A TEENAGER crawls on the ground searching for his wallet, convinced he's not the victim of a pickpocket. A MAN curses his WIFE; she retaliates by hitting him with her purse.

When Cale finally reaches his car, he peers at his side mirror, spots Manny's face among the crowd. He's a hundred yards back, but obviously following Cale. No local would be caught dead in this crowd.

CALE

(to himself)
Jesus Christ. Not tonight.

Cale steps back from his car, pockets his keys and continues through the masses. He doesn't have the time to deal with Manny.

Picking up the pace, Cale turns the corner on 42nd Street and slides into an immensely crowded hot-dog counter, the famous...

INT. GRAND LUNCHEONETTE

Drunken revelers line up out the door, as Cale makes a bee-line for the back exit. Cale locks eyes with the OWNER, who immediately senses the tension. Not the first time.

OWNER

Git yer hotdogs! Buck twenty-five. You'll feel a whole lot better in the morning with a few of these in your belly!

MOMENTS LATER

Manny pops in, surveys the crowd, searching for Cale. He calls out over the crowd to the owner's SON, a mentally handicapped twenty-something, working the grill.

MANNY

Adam, you see Cale Ryan come through here?

The son peers up from the grill. His father tries to make eye contact with him. Unsuccessfully. It's too late...

SON

(stuttering)

To-to-to-too busy too be-be, llllooking for ghosts, MMMMManny.

The owner smiles. Whatever his limitations, the kid knows the game. Manny heads for the back door, exits into the alley.

In the luncheonette, Cale removes a pair of absurd 1995 NEW YEARS glasses and a top hat with a blond wig, giving them back to a drunken lady in line. He was hiding in plain sight.

CALE

(to the son) Saved my ass, kid.

SON

Wa-wa-wouldn't be the first time.

Cale smiles, heads out the front door.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY -- LATER

Bootleg Kenny in fur boots and a top hat with streamers and ear flaps sits in the shadow of idling buses sucking on his usual *Blow-Pop*. He's got his arm around three of his TRANNIES as they sing "*Ain't No Stopping Us Now*," slugging champagne.

Abruptly, though, he stops, sensing a fast-approaching shadow. Alarmed, he grips the bottle of champagne and flings it at the wall, sending champagne and glass shards flying.

BOOTLEG

Run, hoes!

Bootleg Kenny hops up and SPRINTS inside the terminal, as the approaching figure - CALE - gains on him. The cross-dressers SCATTER down alleyways like running backs.

INT. TERMINAL. PORT AUTHORITY -- CONTINUOUS

Cale chases Bootleg inside, but can't spot him. It's an eerie place at this late hour. Nodded out bums and wayward teens. Cale makes eye contact with a TELLER who nods towards the bathrooms.

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM. PORT AUTHORITY -- CONTINUOUS

Cale doesn't even bother checking the men's bathroom. Too easy. He inches his way in, quickly scans underneath the stalls. No feet.

From underneath the baby-changing table, Bootleg emerges behind Cale, holding a switch blade to his throat, SLAMMING his face into a stall door.

BOOTLEG

Fuck you working for?! Seymour? I ain't try to poach that ho...

CALE

When you get so rugged, Boots?

Bootleg recognizes the voice.

BOOTLEG

Ryan?

Bootleg eases off just enough. Then gets pissed anew at the trouble.

BOOTLEG (CONT'D)

Muthafucka - I'll slit your shit just the same.

Cale spins around, disarms the pimp, and SLAMS him to the floor.

CALE

Good to see you, too.

EXT. ALLEY -- SIMULTANEOUS

Willie shoots down an alley off Ninth Avenue. He presses the buzzer on a metal door with a security camera above and is quickly buzzed into a building.

He's nervous. Pride swelling in his chest.

INT. BATHROOM. PORT AUTHORITY -- MOMENTS LATER

We are underwater on Bootleg's tortured face. Cale pulls his head up from the toilet. Bootleg gasps for air.

CALE

They're taking Sin down, Boots.
What side you wanna be on?

BOOTLEG

The side that breathes,
muthafucka. Ain't no snitch, you
know that.

CALE

Guy killed a cop, Boots. This
won't end well for you.

BOOTLEG

You ain't no cop, no mo', pale
Cale.

Cale grabs his head and jams it back in the toilet. Bootleg's whole body jerks. Cale brings him back up.

CALE

Don't play dumb. The undercover
that didn't make it crosstown...

Bootleg flinches. *How could Cale know that?* Cale immediately picks up on the tell.

BOOTLEG

I'm just a squirrel in this world,
Cale. Ain't know shit about shit.

CALE

How come I don't believe you?

INT. BEDROOM. BROTHEL -- MOMENTS LATER

Sinclair watches as a half-nude COUPLE makes out in front of him. It's an odd sight. Devious and eerie. An eight ball lies exposed in cellophane on a bedside table.

SINCLAIRE

On her nipple.

The young man dribbles a little coke on her breast, rips a line through a cut straw. Wiggles his nose.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Take his belt off, darling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A KNOCK...

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

What could possibly be so important?

RANDOM DEVIANT (O.C.)

A mister Willie. Says it's urgent.

SINCLAIRE

(frustrated)

A moment, please.

(nodding at the couple)

Cover up.

They grab satin robes and cover themselves.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Come on in.

Willie enters the large, loft-sized bedroom. The two teens scurry out. For the first time Sinclair isn't put together. His pants unbuttoned, his shirt untucked. He leans back on the bed, sipping a glass of red wine.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

You're here about Tamsin. How chivalrous.

Willie studies the room uncomfortably, not sure where to sit. Sinclair notices and slides over, making room.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

Don't be a prude.

Willie sits. Steaming. Wringing his hands.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

You've been thinking with your eggs ever since you met that broad. I need you focused, William.

WILLIE

That's why I'm here, Sin. I--I can't do this anymore. I don't want this. You don't listen to me.

SINCLAIRE

Even if I believed that, I wouldn't know what it meant.

Willie explodes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIE

You don't tell me anything. An undercover cop, Sin! You killed that bartender, didn't you?

SINCLAIRE

(snaps)

Fucking gossip! That's what you're here for?

INT. BATHROOM. PORT AUTHORITY -- MOMENTS LATER

Cale SLAMS Bootleg against the wall. Hard.

CALE

Stop wasting my fucking time. What did you see?

BOOTLEG

(weeping)

The train pull up, I hear the screamin'. Look out and I see Manny walking away. Then Manny come round and tell me to make sho' I keep my trap keyed. He ain't say shit about no undercovers. Nothin'.

CALE

Willie there?

BOOTLEG

Nah, Willie don't mess with that shit. Never did.

Cale nods, somehow comforted by that.

INT. BEDROOM. BROTHEL

WILLIE

Answer me, Sin. Is it true?

Sinclair says nothing. Willie's heart sinks.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

Jesus...

SINCLAIRE

Can I help it if you still need to be handled with velvet gloves?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIE

You're keeping *me* safe? That's rich. *I'm* the one who's been trying to take this whole business clean.

Sinclair explodes...

SINCLAIRE

This whole business is *MY FUCKING* business, William. I would recommend not forgetting that.

WILLIE

I'm trying to take a legit shot. You're playing best of 1983 on repeat. That shit is over.

Sinclair rises and pours himself a scotch at the sideboard.

SINCLAIRE

You fucking pup. You know it all now, right? You think that socialite bitch and her gang of banker boys give a shit about you? They give a shit about the property that *I* own. They give a shit about the clothes you wear with the money that *I* pay you. They are using you to get to me.

WILLIE

You don't know shit, Sin.

SINCLAIRE

Remind me, were those vampires in Chanel and Brooks Brothers--were they the ones who saved you from that shithole when you were a boy?

Willie eyes Sinclair down.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

The only difference between you and (pointing to the hall) that pair outside this door is *ME*.

INT. BATHROOM. PORT AUTHORITY -- MOMENTS LATER

Cale pulls Bootleg up by his shoulders and pushes him towards the door. He holds Bootleg's blade against his back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOOTLEG

You couldn't lemme have one more night? Had to step on my suede. Cold blooded, Pale Cale.

CALE

I'm buying you some time. Once Sin finds out I scooped you you're gonna be target practice.

BOOTLEG

I get witness protection or some shit? What about my bitches? They can't handle no Arizona heat. Get all musky and shit.

Cale pushes Bootleg through the bathroom door and into the...

TERMINAL

Bootleg continues to mouth off...

BOOTLEG

All y'all some evil niggas. You, Sin, Manny, all you muh'fuckas---

Just then, Cale spots Manny at the ticket counter, covers Bootleg's mouth, and pulls him back behind the wall. Bootleg peaks up and sees the teller pointing Manny towards the bathroom. Headed straight towards them. Fear contorts Bootleg's face.

As Manny nears, Cale and Bootleg slide around another corner, narrowly avoiding Manny's eye line. As soon as Manny gets to the bathroom, Cale grabs Bootleg. They desperately hustle towards the waiting buses.

CALE

Move your ass.

INT. BEDROOM. BROTHEL

Willie stands, furious.

WILLIE

They're coming tomorrow. For everyone. But it's my signature on those bank accounts. I'm the one that ends up doing a dime for your bullshit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SINCLAIRE

Cale tell you that?

Willie stops. *How did he know?*

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

You think I don't know what Cale is up to? This is why I can't let you make decisions. Because you're still far too rash. The only person that can hurt you is yourself. I can protect you, son.

He lays his arm on Willie's shoulder, who shrugs it off angrily.

WILLIE

(shaking his head)

You're a twisted fuck, Sin, and you come from a twisted world. Why would you ever wanna go straight? (chuckles angrily to himself) Your moral blueprint looks like some MC Escher shit. (BEAT) I'm not your son. I'm your employee, and I fuckin' quit.

SINCLAIRE

(raising his voice)

So what, you become a rat? Does dear Cale know, per chance, about the blood on your hands?

(a creepy chuckle)

That's if he sticks around...The man has a bad habit of disappearing.

A tense MOMENT as the realization hits Willie. Anger distorts his face. Sinclair put the hit out.

WILLIE

You motherfucker...

Willie rushes out of the room.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL. PORT AUTHORITY

A BUSDRIVER loading passengers calls out to them...

BUSDRIVER

You gentlemen coming? No ticket, no ride.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cale pulls Bootleg towards a corner of the terminal just as Manny comes jogging through the glass doors.

Manny scans each bus, walking up and down the rows, peering underneath. With each row he's getting closer and closer to Cale and Bootleg.

Bootleg slides off his boots.

CALE

Stop fucking moving.

BOOTLEG

Go kill that muthafucka.

CALE

And leave you? I'd rather see him rot in prison.

Bootleg squirms, wanting desperately to run, but Cale pulls him back. In the process a *Blow-Pop* falls from Bootleg's jacket. In slow-motion they both watch it hit the ground.

Manny hears the faint sound from a few rows over and picks up the pace. As he nears the back corner of the terminal, he pulls a long blade from his back pocket. Manny steadies himself, makes the turn and...

Nothing. Manny peers around. No Cale. He looks underneath the bus. Nothing. What the hell just happened?

INT. LUGGAGE UNDERCARRIAGE. BUS

Cale and Bootleg lie in the bus's luggage compartment, tighter than sardines. Bootleg's sweating bullets, cradling his boots in his arms. They can hear Manny's footsteps right outside the compartment.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL. PORT AUTHORITY

Manny casually walks away from the area, still searching.

INT. SIN -- CONTINUOUS

Willie rushes up to the bar, where Lynn is cashing out. A few REGULARS who nodded off in the corner are being pushed out by the BOUNCER.

WILLIE

Where is he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LYNN
(concerned)
He said he was coming to get you.

WILLIE
He found me, but where is he now?

Lynn grabs the bar phone and dials her home line, waits.

LYNN
He's not at the house.

WILLIE
Shit!

LYNN
Willie, what the fuck is going on?

Willie runs out the door. Lynn calls after him...

LYNN (CONT'D)
(concerned) Goddamnit, Willie!

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- MOMENTS LATER

Willie sprints across 42nd street. It's the same run he made as a boy, but the landscape's changed entirely. Mom and Pops are now chains; smut parlors now sell Disney-wears and I LOVE NY t-shirts. Pimps, Hustlers, and Hoes replaced by cartoon characters taking pictures with wide-eyed children in town for the ball drop.

INT. LUGGAGE UNDERCARRIAGE. BUS -- MOMENTS LATER

Cale opens the compartment and peaks out. Turns to Bootleg...

CALE
Fucking close.

Bootleg's eyes go wide with horror. Cale turns. Manny stands over him with the blade trained right at Cale's heart, holding the *Blow-Pop* in his other hand.

MANNY
Happy New Year.

Manny comes down with his full force, but Cale catches his hand just in time, holding him off.

CALE
Run...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bootleg tries to kick out the other side of the compartment, but it won't budge.

With his free hand, Cale reaches for Bootleg's blade in his back pocket. He swings it, slicing Manny's leg. Manny winces - but pulls back his knife again, jamming the blade deep into Cale's heart. Twists. Bootleg can't even scream he's so frightened. Many rips the knife from Cale's chest. We pull out, as Manny goes to work on Bootleg, stabbing violently.

Finished, Manny casually leans down and shuts the compartment door on the two mangled bodies. He backs away, blood on the arms of his shirt.

As he limps out of the terminal and on to the street, Manny hums *SUITE JUDY BLUE EYES*.

In the distance, we see Willie running to an intersection. He stops for a moment and looks both ways just as Manny turns the corner. Willie sprints on, yelling in vain...

WILLIE

Cale...Cale!

EXT. BUS TERMINAL. PORT AUTHORITY -- THE NEXT MORNING

A DETECTIVE stands at the edge of the bus terminal on his walkie. A group of tourists and locals crane their necks to see what's going on. A UNIFORM tapes off the scene. Beneath the bus, a pool of blood has formed from a leaking luggage compartment.

INT. JORDAN'S OFFICE -- LATER

Jordan is apoplectic, dressing down Strong.

JORDAN

So it's all gone to shit--is that what you're telling me? Two more bodies and no Sinclair?

Jordan slams his hand on the desk.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Jesus. Fuck!

A uniformed COP knocks and pokes his head in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COP

Got a kid here--O'Hara--says he's looking for Cale Ryan. You want this?

Strong and Jordan stare at each other.

JORDAN

He'll be right there.

The COP quickly leaves.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Get him to talk, Brian. We finish this now.

(shaking his head)

Fuckin', Cale. Any justice in this shit, and they'd put a billboard of that sad fuck all over the Square.

INT. OUTSIDE BULLPEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Jordan watches through the BULLPEN GLASS. We HEAR nothing. Strong stands over Willie sitting in a chair, worn out. Strong leans down, breaks the news: Cale's gone. Willie nods his head, then weeps quietly.

INT. BULLPEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Willie stares across at Jordan and Strong, his face is all business. A tape-recorder sits in the middle of the table.

JORDAN

You got one chance here, kid. And trust me, if it weren't for Detective Strong and Cale Ryan, I'd toss your dick to the wolves.

Willie stares across the table, puts himself together.

WILLIE

What do you want to know?

JORDAN

Everything you got on Rubix.

WILLIE

(nods)

I don't know shit about Jesse. That's Manny's side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRONG
Start with MacDougal?

WILLIE
Cale said you'd make a deal.

Strong looks at Jordan. Jordan considers.

JORDAN
Stand trial against Sinclaire and
you walk. But you better let
loose. Everything.

Strong clicks record.

A TIME LAPSE of Willie spilling everything. We hear snippets of sentences about MacDougal, his father, payoffs, Skinny Lou, etc...

LATER

Strong clicks the recorder to off.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
Cale know you popped Mac?

Willie nods his head...yes.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
(nodding)
Jesus, kid. Your conscience must
weigh more than my wife.

STRONG
You did good, Willie.

Willie sits there, numb. Meanwhile, Jordan smiles. They got what they needed.

JORDAN
Fuck my tits. Mount up, Strong.

RAID MONTAGE:

-Outside Sin, a parade of Midtown Enforcement COPS bash in a back door of the club. The place is empty.

-The basement door of a tenement is kicked in. Skinny Lou and Maria stand ready with the girls.

-Outside the tenement, Strong escorts all the girls to waiting cop cars. Maria tells each to say nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

-Officers escort a smiling Manny out of Skin World. Strong and a few other BLUES file out with monitors and hard drives. They padlock the doors as they leave.

END MONTAGE

EXT. DIAMONDS BURLESK

Strong escorts Sinclair onto the sidewalk. A crowd, including TV REPORTERS, watches the scene.

ANGLE ON Willie and Tamsin standing behind a few of the officers. Sinclair catches his eye and tips his head, his hands cuffed. Willie walks over to face him.

Sinclair seems strangely confident.

SINCLAIRE

You broke my heart twice, William.
That kind of thing can make a man
like me cause a whole manner of
pain.

WILLIE

"Moderation is the secret to
survival." You went too far, Sin.

Sinclair snarls at him. Not playing around.

SINCLAIRE

Dig this, you Irish cunt: This is
my neighborhood. Everyone here is
my fucking tenant.

Willie and Sinclair remain locked on each other for a BEAT before Strong finally pushes Sinclair into a car. Willie watches as the black and white peels away.

In the shadows of the alley, Lynn watches. Broken. Angry.

We FLASH to other strip clubs and Triple X stores in the area, all once owned by Sinclair. Midtown Enforcement Cops blast through each one. All of them now shuttered and empty.

EXT. GREENWOOD CEMETERY -- AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON a graphite casket being lowered into the ground.

PULL BACK to reveal MOURNERS for the funeral of Cale Ryan. A grief-stricken Lynn tosses a rose into the plot. Tamsin ushers her away, as people begin dispersing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Willie lingers, watching the coffin get lowered. Strong approaches.

STRONG
Posted bail this morning.

Willie nods.

STRONG (CONT'D)
We got Manny's blood at the scene,
but he ain't flinching. Neither is
Lou.

Willie shakes his head.

STRONG (CONT'D)
Sinclair might not do years, but
his reign is done.

Willie nods, crosses his chest and begins walking away.
Strong stays put.

STRONG (CONT'D)
I'm sorry about Cale.

WILLIE
Casualties of a good war,
detective.

Willie turns around, departs...

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING. MIDTOWN -- AFTERNOON

Topper and his partners depart a midtown high rise. A black town car creeps towards them, a tinted window rolls down: Tamsin, incognito. She waves Topper over.

TOPPER
Jesus, Tam. I thought the worst.

TAMSIN
Get in.

Topper slides inside, where Willie sits waiting.

WILLIE
I got a proposition for you.

LATER

Willie and Topper are in deep conversation. Tamsin sits beside them in the backseat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOPPER

You're asking a lot here, Willie.

WILLIE

I'm bringing a lot to the table.

TOPPER

How do you know this will work?

WILLIE

Desperation. Once the case hits trial, he'll have to unload.

TOPPER

Give me a day to get this cleared, all right?

The car stops and Topper opens the door.

TOPPER (CONT'D)

(to Tamsin)

You stuck with him even through the cloak and dagger, huh?

TAMSIN

(grinning)

I like a man with options.

INT. THE LINK CLUB

Sinclair enters the dining area of the posh men's club -- not the type that Sinclair normally frequents. Not a nipple in sight. He bee-lines towards a table where Topper sits alone.

LATER

Topper and Sinclair are discussing business, contracts laid out before them.

TOPPER

Let me be clear, Sinclair. While I'm happy you've reconsidered, this is no longer the deal I offered in December. I'm giving you a way out here.

SINCLAIRE

You sure know how to court a man before you cum in his eye.

Sinclair scribbles his signature on the contract.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOPPER

As you know, we'll also be requiring Willie O'Hara's signature as his name is also on the deed.

SINCLAIRE

I'm happy to have dear William sign, but I've heard he's become quite scarce around town --

WILLIE

Sorry I'm late.

ON Willie as he casually walks in. He and Sinclair lock eyes.

SINCLAIRE

You've got some nerve, child.

WILLIE

I see you finally came around.

SINCLAIRE

The meteor is imminent, my lawyers tell me.

Willie leans down and signs. Sinclair can't believe his moxie.

WILLIE

See you in court, Sinclair.

With that, Willie stands and departs. As he's leaving, Sin lets fly a guarded threat.

SINCLAIRE

Or before...

EXT. LINX CLUB -- MOMENTS LATER

Willie exits the club, where Tamsin is waiting for him.

TAMSIN

So?

Willie nods. Yup.

TAMSIN (CONT'D)

Does he know?

WILLIE

Not yet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She beams at him. Proud, impressed, elated.

INT. ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL

Willie walks up to Adeline's hospital room. Lynn sits beside her. Nothing has changed. She won't ever wake up. Willie drops flowers by the bed.

LYNN

They're pulling her next week. No family to argue.

Willie nods. Lynn starts to cry. Willie wraps his arm around her. She squeezes him tightly, whispers...

LYNN (CONT'D)

He could never let you go.

Willie nods. Adds to the sentiment.

WILLIE

He couldn't let *anything* go.

Lynn snorts. Willie chuckles. Together the grieving pair chuckle through tears. We pan to the bedside table, where a photo sits of Willie and Cale at the Knicks game from weeks earlier.

EXT/INT. SKIN WORLD

It's late evening. The stairwell lights are dim, the sign off. An eerie sight.

Inside, Sinclair, casual in chinos and a golf shirt, ambles across the empty main floor, pain in his eyes. He reaches behind the counter, picks up a lone polaroid of Manny and a STRIPPER.

CU on polaroid: Manny holds her ankles as she dangles backwards by his crotch. They laugh at the camera.

Sinclair smiles.

WILLIE (O.C.)

Figured you'd be gone by now.

Sinclair looks up, Willie, suit and tie, stands at the door. By the looks of it, they've switched places.

SINCLAIRE

What the fuck are you doing here?
Looking for some cum to mop up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Willie ignores him. Pulls out a camera, starts snapping pictures.

SINCLAIRE (CONT'D)

For your fucking scrapbook?

Willie continues clicking as he speaks...

WILLIE

You taught me a lot, Sin. The value of property. Loyalty.

Willie puts the camera by his side for a second.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

When you grow up like we did you just want something to call your own, right? A little piece of the world to point to.

Willie goes back to clicking.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

You didn't have to kill Cale.

SINCLAIRE

I don't know what you're talking about.

Willie snickers, Sinclair's precautions.

WILLIE

They're gonna call this "ESPN Zone." Five screens per wall.

SINCLAIRE

I guess they got their wish. Genocide in the Deuce. Where will you go, William? Maybe you can become a security guard at some shithouse university like your hero.

WILLIE

I'm actually staying here, Sin.
(he turns toward him)
You see I made a deal, too. I get you to sell the properties with no strings and I become an equal partner. A guy like Topper needs a guy like me to deal with people like you. To understand their vulnerabilities.

And it hits Sinclair. HE SOLD HIS PROPERTY TO WILLIE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SINCLAIRE

You dry twat!

WILLIE

You did it to yourself, Sin.

Sinclair looks at Willie with cold, murderous rage.

SINCLAIRE

You were always a petty little crook and you'll die like one. Just like Cale Ryan. Just like your fuck-up Irish cunt of a father. Maurice told me he begged like a crack-whore just before they tossed him. I wonder what you'll sound like?

WILLIE

At least you'll know where to find me, right? Now get the fuck off my property, Sinclair.

Sinclair gets close to Willie.

SINCLAIRE

I wouldn't get too comfortable, William. I still have a Rolodex of desperate men eager to do me a good turn.

Sinclair spits, storms off.

As soon as he opens the front door, his face contorts in shock. A guttural moan. Lynn stands before him, a knife firmly implanted in Sinclair's chest.

LYNN

(whispering)

We're supposed to look out for our own. Right, Sin?

She jerks the knife out, Sinclair slumps to the floor.

Willie jumps, looks over. Lynn stands over Sinclair's dying body. She stares at Willie. A silent understanding before she flees the scene.

EXT. SKIN WORLD -- LATER

Strong and Willie huddle on the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STRONG

You didn't get a look? Witness said they saw a blond sprinting down 8th.

WILLIE

(shaking his head)

No. It was definitely a guy. Probably a junkie.

STRONG

His wallet was still on him. Can you think of anyone who might want to hurt Sinclaire?

WILLIE

(smiling to himself)

"He hasn't an enemy in the world, but all his friends hate him."

Strong grins. He's gonna let this one go.

STRONG

If you think of anything else...

WILLIE

(smiling) Of course.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE -- EVENING

Willie and Tamsin walk hand and hand through Times Square. Lou Reed's *Walk on the Wild Side* takes us out.

From Willie's POV, we see the past and present meld together:

Bootleg Kenny stands in front of the Port Authority next to one of his "girls." He turns back, grins at Willie then slowly DISAPPEARS from frame, leaving nothing but the idling busses.

Willie continues walking, looks to another corner:

Skinny Lou stands on the church steps, broom in hand, and peers back, nods, a Menthol dangling from his lip. He, too, slowly DISAPPEARS, leaving the present-day church.

Willie stops across the street from what was SKIN WORLD:

A young Manny and Sinclaire depart Skin World circa 1980. Manny eyes the camera with contempt. Sinclaire wears a wide grin, tips his invisible cap. They both slowly DISAPPEAR, and Skin World fades into an ESPN ZONE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As they walk, Willie's POV:

Two cops, a young Cale and MacDougal in their blues stand on the corner, outside the subway entrance. The heart of Times Square. MacDougal winks. Cale calls out...

CALE

Stay safe, kid.

Slowly they both DISAPPEAR and we are back in the middle of Times Square, present day. Willie stops walking, stares at everything swirling around him, closes his eyes, breathes it in. Tamsin looks back at him.

TAMSIN

What is it?

WILLIE

(smiling) Just memories.

Tamsin walks back, grabs his hand and we watch as they slowly melt into the crowd...

PULL OUT: we're within the peep booth and the lavender curtain closes for the last time...BLACK.

POSTSCRIPT:

In the year 2010 there were only 800 crimes reported in all of Times Square.

Eighty percent of these were nonviolent.

Times Square is now home to over 39 million visitors every year.

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