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# Leaving Las Vegas

By Mike Figgis

**DISSOLVE TO:**

1 INT. SMART BAR IN BEVERLY HILLS - NIGHT

It is the kind of bar where the well-to-do folks of LA go to pick up - or be picked up. Lesser-known actors, agents and executives of all ages.

Into this bar comes Ben.

Ben is in his thirties. He is wearing an Armani suit

shaved in the last twenty-four hours (but neither has any of the actors in the bar). He is a good-looking man but is clearly in trouble of some kind. Although still in control of his faculties, it becomes clear in the following scene that he is much the worse for wear with drink. He looks around the room until he sees someone he recognizes and then walks over to a table where two couples are seated. The men are young execs, the girls, both blonde and busty, have very white teeth and smile all of the time. The camera follows Ben over to the table. One of the execs looks up as Ben gets close. He recognizes him but delays his recognition until the last moment in the hope that Ben is not looking at him.

**BEN:**

Peter

**PETER:**

Ben... how are you, man?

They shake hands. Ben is not invited to take a seat and Peter waits for a while before being forced to introduce him to the table.

Ben Sanderson, Marc Nussbaum, Sheila, Debbie.

**MARC:**

Nice to meet you. I think I spoke to you on the phone a

you both at MGM with Laddie?

**BEN:**

at ICM?

**MARC:**

**BEN:**

beautiful dress, Debbie, and those are fabulous earrings, Sheila.

There is an awkward silence. Ben does not make a move and is not invited to join them. The girls smile.

**MARC:**

fan of your writing. I loved Bay of Pigs.

**BEN:**

actually write it, I just got the credit. I was fired.

(to Peter)

Can I talk to you for a moment?

Peter gets up and he and Ben walk to the door together. Peter speaks very quietly.

**PETER:**

any more. Do you understand?

**BEN:**

This is the last time.

Promise. I just need some cash tonight. I lost my

on your desk first thing

coming along? I here you got Richard Gere.

friends are looking at them, as are other people in the room. Peter takes out his wallet and extracts some

notes.

**PETER:**

This is all I have in cash.

**BEN:**

messenger it over to you  
tomorrow.

**PETER:**

think it would be best if you

And he turns and walks away, back to his table.

**CUT TO BLACK:**

**FADE UP ON:**

2 EXT. HELICOPTER SHOT - DAY

Las Vegas. A blaze of color in the middle of a desert.  
Credit sequence begins.

**CUT TO:**

3 INT. LOBBY OF EXPENSIVE HOTEL - NIGHT

A mixture of businessmen and gamblers creates a sense  
of activity and superficial excitement. Music wafts  
across the soundtrack, almost drowned by the dense  
texture of thousands of slot machines, creating an  
insane New Age symphony.

Credit sequence ends.

Into the lobby from the street comes Sera.

twenty-five and thirty-five. She is a beautiful American  
girl. Her face has the freshness of a model in a Sears  
catalogue. She is dressed simply in a short black skirt  
and matching jacket. High heels complete the picture.

clear they find her very sexy. She acknowledges their  
glance with a half-smile and steps into the elevator.  
She could be a secretary, or a PA to one of the many  
execs here in Las Vegas at a convention. The body language

is a bit different, though.

4 INT. PENTHOUSE SUITE OF HOTEL - NIGHT

A view of night-time Las Vegas through a window. Traffic up and down The Strip; bright, gaudy neon flashing and winking. We hear the sound of men laughing and the camera pulls focus and we see reflected in the glass...

... a group of people.

On the table are bowls of potato chips and dip and sandwiches. The TV is on at a sports channel and two boxers pound the shit out of each other.

**CUT TO:**

5 INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Sera looks at herself in the gold-tinted mirror in the elevator. She takes out a lipstick and freshens her lips. Some people get out and the elevator climbs higher. We see from the indicator that she has punched the Penthouse button. Camera moves in tighter and we see that she is nervous but concealing it well. The elevator stops, the doors open and she steps right into the Penthouse.

6 INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

A bottle of Scotch is almost empty. The man talking is Yuri. He is Russian, in his early forties, a little overweight, a big man wearing a blue silk suit. His thick black hair is greased and combed back. He wears a lot of jewelry, all gold. Rings, a bracelet and a Rolex. Two men in business suits and a weird stoned woman in her late thirties listen to him.

**YURI:**

...but please, my friends,  
call me Yuri. It is my  
American name... I picked it  
myself.

The three people laugh. There is a hint of contempt in the way that they speak to Yuri.

FIRST BUSINESSMAN

Where are you from, Yuri? I

the woods.

Yuri smiles at them.

**YURI:**

(silky voice)

No... you are right, my friend. How very observant you are. I am from Latvia.

**WEIRD WOMAN:**

Tough place.

**YURI:**

Yes, I hear this too. But I am not a tough man. I am a simple man who is here to learn from my new American friends.

The door opens and Sera comes in. Everybody stares at her.

**WEIRD WOMAN:**

(turned on)

Is this your friend, Yuri?

**YURI:**

Ah, yes... Sera.

The second businessman takes out a small manila envelope from his inside pocket.

Sera is my gift to you, my friends from New York City. You may do with her as you wish in this beautiful room, which is also my gift for the night to my friends. You will find her a very willing girl,

arranged.

Yuri smiles again as the Second Businessman hands him the envelope. The rest of them just stare at Sera, aroused by the idea of her.

**SECOND BUSINESSMAN**

Of course, Yuri. I think

discussed.

Yuri gets up.

**YURI:**

So, my friends... I have other business to attend. Enjoy.

He heads for the door, passing Sera. She holds out his arm as he passes.

**SERA:**

(whispering)

Yuri... please! Can I talk to you for a moment.

bedroom.

**YURI:**

My friends... excuse me for just one moment.

7 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mirrors reflect mirrors.

**SERA:**

to do groups.

**YURI:**

(playful)

I want this, Sera. I need this!

**SERA:**

Please, Yuri.

He holds put his arms. Sera goes to him. He hugs her with one arm. He pulls up her skirt so that her panties are exposed.

**YURI:**

(seductive)

These are pretty.

Sera watches in the mirror as he pulls her panties to reveal her buttocks. He strokes her there gently with his other hand. We see that there are two fine scars there. He speaks gently, like a father to a daughter.

Is this how you would repay

me for coming all this way to find you again? Driving through the desert to protect my little Sera.

**CUT TO:**

FLASHBACK-SILENT-GRAINY BLACK AND WHITE

8 INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Yuri and Sera - different time, different place. Sera looking frightened, backing away from Yuri, who pulls a switchblade from his jacket and opens it.

**CUT BACK TO:**

9 INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Yuri enters from the bedroom. The weird woman is doing a line of coke.

**YURI:**

(cheerful)

Sera wanted me to ask if she might undress at once for you. She has a very beautiful undergarment witch she would like you to see.

ANGLE ON BEDROOM DOOR

Sera comes into the room. She smiles and begins unbuttoning her jacket.

She takes it off and drops it on the floor, and then unzips her skirt and steps out of it. Sera is now in control and playing the room. In the background. Yuri leaves the room.

**WEIRD WOMAN:**

(strange voice)

Come here.

Sera walks over and something strange takes place between them.

**CUT TO:**

The bar is dark but through a small window we see that it is a very bright sunny day outside. The bartender reads the Los Angeles Times. The bar surface is red vinyl. There are five customers, all single men. One of them is Ben and he is sitting at the bar watching TV. A game show is in progress



and the TV sound is loud. Ben finishes his drink and grimaces

Barman pours him a whiskey - Cranberry - and the camera moves in closer to Ben, ending in a close-up. Ben takes a big hit from the drink and concentrates on the TV. We hear from the TV sound that it is a word game with a big prize. Ben smiles to himself.

The talk show hostess, an American TV beauty, is showing the

**ANGLE ON BEN:**

As he finishes that drink and asks for another. The camera moves in close on his eyes.

She turns from the prizes and looks straight into the TV camera, which starts zooming into her. At first, what she is

**HOSTESS:**

(smoky, sexy voice)

Just look at this studio, Ben, filled with glamorous merchandise, including an extra special prize chosen just for You! A big, bad, BMW motorcycle, complete with saddle bags stuffed with thousands of US dollars.

**HOSTESS:**

So, Ben,

(tosses her hair)

and go for a ride.

The studio lights dim.

**HOSTESS:**

Then we can get a suite somewhere and order up a case of champagne while we fuck ourselves silly.

Close-up on males in the audience doing the grunt.

**HOSTESS:**

This is it, just for You,  
Ben.

She unbuttons her top, licks her fingers and makes her  
nipples hard.

**HOSTESS:**

patient, and because I want  
to fuck you, take care of

nothing else in the world  
worth doing.

Section of the audience clapping - some women dabbing their  
eyes.

**HOSTESS:**

to Las Vegas. The bars stay  
open twenty four hours night  
and day. Just you, just me,  
Ben, think about it, all  
right?

**ANGLE ON BEN:**

Lost in his fantasy

**BEN:**

He looks back at the screen, but the show has returned to

attack of nausea hit him. He takes a deep breath and rolls  
his neck and his head. The barman puts down a fresh drink.

**BARMAN:**

You should go on that show.

**CUT TO:**

11 INT. SMART BUSINESS SPACE - MORNING

Ben sitting at a desk with a phone wedged on his ear, a cup  
of black coffee on the desk. The walls are covered with  
framed film posters and one complete wall has shelves jammed

with scripts. He nods from time to time and sometimes says the other end. He drinks from the coffee cup. A woman comes up to his desk, a business colleague. She puts a wad of messages down on the desk.

**BEN:**

through with P and A, the above-the line is going to take it to about fifteen and with something like this... I

for it... can I call you back on this? OK... chow for now.

(to the woman)

Good morning.

**WOMAN:**

(cautious)

Ben... Mr. Simpson was looking for you. I said that you had

said for you to go in as soon as... are you OK?

**BEN:**

(pulling himself together)

out now... very important meeting, could make a couple million for the company.

Ben gets up and as he passes her he grabs her and dances a few steps. It is clear that she likes Ben, but when his face gets close to hers she smells the alcohol on his breath and she turns away. Ben stops dancing and smiles sadly.

**WOMAN:**

(tender)

Ben?

**BEN:**

What?

**WOMAN:**

You should go now.

She leaves the room and Ben goes through some routine at the desk. He opens a drawer of a filing cabinet and puts in his whole arm, looking for something at the very back. He pulls out a small vodka bottle and opens it and then pours the contents into his coffee cup. With cup in hand he leaves the room.

**CUT TO:**

12 INT. SMART OFFICE - DAY

Ben is sitting opposite his boss, Mr. Simpson, who is very upset. He hands Ben an envelope. Ben opens it and pulls out a check. He looks at the amount.

**BEN:**

(genuinely moved)

This is to generous Peter.

**SIMPSON:**

(close to tears)

Well... we liked having you around, Ben, but you know how it is.

**BEN:**

(ashamed)

Ben takes a swig from his coffee cup.

**SIMPSON:**

(trying to cheer things along)

Well... what are you going to do now?

**BEN:**

I thought I might move out to Las Vegas.  
Simpson looks puzzled.

**BEN:**

The bars never close.

**CUT TO:**

Ben drives through Beverly Hills. He pours the content of a small bottle of vodka into an empty Coke can, puts the empty bottle under the seat and then drinks from the can.

At a traffic light a cop on a bike pulls up next to him and Ben takes a pull from the Coke can and smiles, mouths the words "thanks" to the cop. They both pull away.

**CUT TO:**

Ben carries a brown paper bag which clinks. Camera follows him as he walks down the street. He looks at...

A girl walking ahead of him in the same direction. She is thinking about her thoughts.

**BEN:**

(voice-over)  
Beautiful, not just the shape which is nice, but the whole walk, the feeling, the movement. This girl is pleased with herself. Maybe this is the only art I can

this is good or bad, but right now she is really beautiful. When I was a boy it would have been really important that she have a pretty face, to go with this body, I mean. I still would like to see her face, but her beauty is not dependent on her face.

The dog gets interested in something on the sidewalk and she bends down to pull at its collar.

**BEN:**

(voice-over)

I wonder what kind of panties

too specific, but... on the other hand, you can never be too specific... but then, the infinitesimal must be, by definition, as infinite as the infinite.

Suddenly the girl stops. Ben catches up with her and cannot resist looking into her face.

**BEN:**

(voice-over)

The girl sees Ben and smiles an innocent smile,

**GIRL:**

Hi!

**BEN:**

Hi...

**CUT TO:**

Ben walks up to his house still carrying the paper bag. A young boy of about thirteen years of age is fixing a beat-up bike. Ben greets him.

**BEN:**

**BRAD:**

Hey Ben. There were a couple of guys looking for you.

**BEN:**

What did they look like?

**BRAD:**

anything. You know anything about gears?

Ben takes a look. The gear mechanism is all bent out of

shape. He bends down to have a look. It is clear from the way

chain and gear mechanism to get to the problem.

**BEN:**

**BRAD:**

I was going real fast down on  
the beach and something  
slipped and everything got  
jammed up.

**BEN:**

The news is not good, kid.  
This bit here... see

a new one.

**BRAD:**

(upset)  
How much, do you think?

**BEN:**

though.

Ben gets up, picks up his bottles and heads for his house. He  
looks back and Brad is sitting still by the bike, looking  
totally dejected. This really seems to upset Ben.

**CUT TO:**

Ben is naked and the shower can be heard in the background.  
The house is austere, only the minimum of furnishing. He  
pours a large tumbler of vodka and takes a gulp, then tops up  
the glass. He turns on the stereo, selects a record - Miles  
Davis, Kind of Blue - and puts it on the turntable. He turns  
on the cassette recorder and inserts a new blank tape. He  
puts the machine into the record mode. He kneels down next to  
the deck and with complete precision puts the needle on the  
second track without any problem. The music starts and  
continues through the next sequence.

17 INT. SHOWER - DAY

Ben is in the shower with the glass in his hand.

18 INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Ben shaving with the glass in his hand. He does the area around his mouth first so that he can drink while he does the rest.

19 INT. LIVING SPACE - DAY

Showered and shaved and wearing a smart dark suit, Ben looks handsome and normal. He selects another record and again sets up the cassette machine to record. He turns the stereo up full and dances by himself while watching MTV silent. He tries a turn which is a bit ambitious and loses his balance. In slow motion we see him fall. Ben lies still on the floor. He smiles to himself and decides to stay there for a while...

**FADE OUT:**

**FADE IN:**

Sera wakes up in bed next to Yuri. (The camera is high above the bed looking down.) She is completely drenched in sweat. A thin shaft of light comes from the crack in the drapes and falls across their bodies. Other than that, the room is in darkness. To get out of bed she would have to climb over him. She lies still. Yuri speaks without opening his eyes...

**YURI:**

I missed you, Sera. You have been lonely?

Sera blinks and turns her head towards him.

**SERA:**

He puts his hand between her legs, over the sheets and grasps her there.

**YURI:**

You have been lonely?

**SERA:**

(tensing a little)

**YURI:**



I will keep you safe. We are both older.

He climbs on to her and mounts her. Familiarity.

**YURI:**

You have been lonely?

**SERA:**

(flat voice)

I am lonely, Yuri.

He begins thrusting into her.

**YURI:**

Yes... so am I.

Camera move slowly into a tight portrait of Sera.

**SERA:**

(voice-over)

I had a new dress... we were at the fair, Daddy bought me an ice-cream and I spilt it on my dress...

**CUT TO:**

Sera is sitting on a sofa talking to an unseen person.

(Although it is no entirely clear when this is taking place, the sense of it is that we are in present, i.e. all the events in the film are in the past tense.)

**SERA:**

... Mom was with Helen, and Dad looked around first to see if she was watching and then he scraped it all off and threw it on the grass and then he kissed me and hugged me and told me it was all right...

Yuri is tucking into a hearty breakfast. Sera plays with her food.

**YURI:**

(planning his day)

This is such a small apartment, Sera. I cannot stay here. We will find a big apartment. You know how much money I can bring you. I belong in...

(laughs)

... wealth and luxury.

He suddenly looks up from his food and smiles at her.

**YURI:**

Why did you run away from me in Los Angeles?

Sera says nothing.

**YURI:**

Because you are sly. Mmm? You knew all along that there was more money in Las Vegas.

Sera nervously plays with her food.

**YURI:**

You have nothing to fear from me. You know why? Because we

we?

Sera forces a smile.

**SERA:**

(quietly)

Yes.

**QUICK CUT TO:**

**FLASHBACK:**

23 INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Grainy black-and-white image. Sera on a bed, pinned down by Yuri, who has a knife.

**CUT BACK TO:**

**YURI:**

Sera... how you have moved up  
in the world. I showed you a  
glamorous world when I took  
you off the streets...  
(shaking his head)  
and how you repay me.

**SERA:**

Where have you been staying?

**YURI:**

With an old friend.  
He drops his fork.

**YURI:**

But that is none of your  
affair. You will call this  
morning and book me into a  
hotel suite where I will make  
new contacts for us.  
The mood has changed and Sera does her best to move out of  
these dangerous waters.

**SERA:**

Yuri nods. Sera rises goes to a kitchen drawers and finds  
money.

**YURI:**

(becoming angry)  
It is, after all, Sera, my  
money.

**SERA:**

(calmly)  
Yes, of course. How much do  
you need?

**YURI:**

(shaking his head)  
All of it. I need to buy many  
things... all of it!

Yuri is very angry and as Sera hands him the money, he hits her, hard, knocking her back into the refrigerator. His ring cuts her cheek.

**YURI:**

(shouting)

And then his anger goes and he becomes quite tender with her. He takes her face in his hands to look at the cut.

**YURI:**

nothing.

(whispers)

I need money, Sera. I need it fast. You must go on the street tonight. For me.

He sits down with shaking hands. He suddenly seems more vulnerable than she is. He goes to the window and looks out, left and then right, as if he expects to see something.

**YURI:**

I need money fast, Sera. I want you back on the street. Tonight.

**FADE OUT:**

FADE IN SLOWLY - SOUND FIRST:

Ben opens his eyes. The only light comes from the TV. The Miles Davis record has got caught on a scratch and is repeating the same phrase over and over again. He looks at his gold Rolex and then fingers the wedding band on his finger.

**CUT TO:**

Ben is sitting at the bar. He drinks a large glass of something very quickly and then immediately orders another. He drinks this a little slower but still too quick, finishes it and then orders another. He looks around the bar and sees a woman sitting by herself, thirtyish, pretty and receptive. She looks and sees Ben, and he smiles at her. She smiles right back. Ben talks across the bar.

**BEN:**

(charming)

Good evening.

**PRETTY WOMAN:**

(pleased)

Hi.

**BEN:**

**PRETTY WOMAN:**

Ben walks over to where she is. She is pleased that this good-looking man has come over to make a play. She makes a noise with her straw to indicate that her glass is empty.

**BEN:**

one... and me too. Mind if I  
join you?

She watches him walk to the bar. He gets the drink and walks back to her. He sets the drinks down on the table and sits down. As he does so, his face gets close to hers and she smells the booze on him.

**PRETTY WOMAN:**

Wow... been drinking all day?

**BEN:**

But of course.

She looks at him, a disappointed expression on her face. She is no longer interested in being seduced by this man and this much is clear to Ben.

**BEN:**

go to my apartment on the  
beach?

**BEN:**

mix you up a gooey blender  
drink.

Ben winces at his own words. He shakes his head.

**PRETTY WOMAN:**

I have to get up pretty early

this and go. Thanks anyway.

They drink in silence for a while. Ben takes a deep breath.0

**BEN:**

(pathetic)

bed... believe me... you smell  
good too...

He stops and frowns as he stares into his empty glass.

**BEN:**

No, OK.

Ben tries to stand and has to pull himself up by holding the

great sadness comes over her.

**PRETTY WOMAN:**

I have to go now. Thanks  
anyway.

She stands to go.

**PRETTY WOMAN:**

much.

She walks to the door and Ben turns to the bar, watched by the  
barman, who is a little concerned.

**BEN:**

(to himself)

much, Teri. Ha... ha.

**BARMAN:**

(sever voice)

closing up.

Ben gets out his wallet but his hands are shaking so much that he cannot extract any bills. He is very embarrassed and tries again, but to no avail.

**BEN:**

Would you...?

The barman shakes his head in disgust as he goes into the wallet and takes some money.

**CUT TO:**

27 EXT. LA STREETS - NIGHT

Ben is cruising in his car, listening to music on his stereo.

**CUT TO:**

28 INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Ben comes into the club and sits down next to the stage, where a dancer is doing her thing accompanied by a live blue trio. A swimsuited waitress comes to the table.

**WAITRESS:**

**BEN:**

problem.

**WAITRESS:**

What do you want?

**BEN:**

What are my choices?

**WAITRESS:**

**BEN:**

No alcohol?

**WAITRESS:**

No alcohol. You gotta get

ten dollars. What do you  
want?

**BEN:**

What do you think I should  
get?

**WAITRESS:**

Non-alcoholic malt beverage?

**BEN:**

... Noooo.

**WAITRESS:**

Orange soda?

**BEN:**

No.

**WAITRESS:**

Coffee?

**BEN:**

No.

**WAITRESS:**

Sparkling apple cider?

**BEN:**

No.

**WAITRESS:**

Water?

**BEN:**

Water?

**WAITRESS:**

One drink minimum per show.

Now... tell me what you want



**BEN:**

(decides)

Water.

She writes down W.A.T.E.R. and walks away. Ben calls her back.

**BEN:**

Just how much would it cost  
for you to eighty-six me?

ANGLE ON THE STAGE

A tough black girl dances in a world of her own, impervious to the men who stare at her. The trio grinds out a dirty blues. A man opposite Ben places a dollar bill on the stage and as the dancer squats down to pick it up he stares between her legs and winks. The Waitress puts down a styrofoam cup and a bottle of water in front of Ben but refuses to look at him.

**WAITRESS:**

(hostile)

Three-fifty.

Ben puts down a hundred on to her tray.

**BEN:**

(polite)

Could I have fives please?

Keep one for yourself.

This throws the Waitress for a loop.

**CUT TO:**

29 INT. BATHROOM OF STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Ben drinks all of a fifth of bourbon. Other guys come and go, pissing against the urinal. Ben offers one of the guys a drink, the pianist from the trio. He takes a shot.

**CUT TO:**

30 INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Ben sits next to another man watching the show. On stage a tall blonde dances with her own reflection in a mirror. Ben turns to his neighbor.

**BEN:**

To me nothing is more  
beautiful than the

relationship between the reflection of a woman and the woman who has created it.

**NEIGHBOR:**

(completely uninterested)

No shit!

30A EXT. LA STREETS - NIGHT

Ben drives in his car.

**CUT TO:**

31 EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - LATER THAT NIGHT

when he slows down she ducks into a doorway.

He looks in his rear-view mirror and sees a cop car coming up fast. Ben panics for a second. There is a bottle between his legs. The cop car draws level and cruises alongside him for a while, but then puts its lights and siren on and speeds off, doing a U-turn.

Ben continues and then sees an Hispanic girl and stops. He winds down the window. He is by now almost incoherent.

**BEN:**

Good evening.

32 EXT. KERBSIDE - NIGHT

The girl looks up and down the street and then walks over to the car and bends down to the window.

**HISPANIC GIRL:**

You wanna date? You wanna date me?

then back again.

**BEN:**

(cut to the chase)

dollars for a straight forty-five minutes. You get the room.

Ben shows her the money.

**HISPANIC GIRL:**

(trying to take him)

The room is twenty. You pay  
for it.

Ben laughs.

**BEN:**

OK... but only because I think  
that the concept of surrender  
fits in with the big picture  
right now. How about over  
there?

He gives her a twenty and indicates a motel across the  
street. She sets off and he gets out of the car. As he does,  
a wave of nausea hits him. He shakes his head violently and  
then lurches across the street, causing two cars to hit their  
brakes. The camera follows him into the dark parking lot of  
the motel, where the Hispanic girl is waiting.

**BEN:**

(slurring badly)

I canremember... if  
mywifeleffme... or Illeff  
her... bufuckittanyway...

The girl laughs at Ben and says something in Spanish.  
Slowly the picture gets darker, until all that can be seen is  
the headlights from the passing cars on Sunset... and then...

Ben wakes up on the kitchen floor. The fridge door is open  
and its light is what lights Ben. Inside the fridge are one  
green pepper and four bottles of vodka. Without too much  
effort Ben feels for his wallet and sees that it is still  
there, as are his car keys. He closes the fridge door and in  
the green light from the window he lies still. The first  
birds start singing. (the birdsong continues through the  
following sequence, which does not have sync sound.)

**CUT TO:**

**FLASHBACK:**

34 EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD MOTEL. PARKING-LOT DUMPSTERS - NIGHT  
At the rear of the motel. Next to some garbage hoppers, the  
Hispanic girl hugging him and kissing his neck. He tries to  
kiss her on the mouth, but she turns her face away.

**CUT TO:**

Ben lying on the floor, thinking.

**CUT TO:**

**FLASHBACK:**

36 EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD MOTEL. PARKING-LOT DUMPSTERS - NIGHT  
The Hispanic girl kneeling in front of him, unzipping his  
trousers. Through a gap in the fence, we see traffic going up  
and down Sunset.

**CUT TO:**

Ben lying on the floor, thinking...

**CUT TO:**

**FLASHBACK:**

38 EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD MOTEL. PARKING-LOT DUMPSTERS - NIGHT  
The girl takes his hand and kisses it. She begins sucking the  
fingers, taking the whole hand into her mouth.

**CUT TO:**

Ben suddenly sits up and looks at his hand. His wedding ring  
has gone. He thinks about this for a long time.

**CUT TO:**

40 INT. BANK - MORNING

Ben waiting in line to cash a check. He looks unwell and is  
having difficulty standing straight. At last it is his turn.  
He goes to the counter and hands over a check to the girl.

**BANK GIRL:**

OK... four thousand, six  
hundred dollars... one moment,  
sir...  
She looks at her computer read-out.

**BANK GIRL:**

your account. Would you sign  
the back of the check,

please?

**BEN:**

(surprised)

like it is?

**BANK GIRL:**

(puzzled)

problem?

Ben picks up a pen and tries to sign, but his hands are shaking so much that he cannot do it.

**BEN:**

(embarrassed)

Well... to tell you the truth,

I just had a brain

feeling a little better? We can take care of it then.

**CUT TO:**

Ben seated at the bar, a pile of bills in front of him. The Barman sets down a vodka, picks up the empty glass and takes some bills, shaking his head in disapproval. The TV is on, some game show as before, and Ben watches carefully, looking for a sign from the girl, but the show proceeds in its

attention.

**BEN:**

tonic... Bombay gin and tonic.  
The Barman loses it

**BARMAN:**

(angry)

You should be having coffee.

Do you know what time it is?

(calmer)

if you could see what I see,

yourself.

Ben is taken aback by the emotion in his voice. In his mind, cynicism and the desire to cry fight it out. He holds the emotion back, and looks down at the bar.

**BEN:**

saying... I appreciate your concern. Its not my intention to make you uncomfortable. Please... serve me today and I will never come in here again.

(cheerful)

If I do, you can eighty-six me.

**BARMAN:**

Sure, sure, I can eighty-six you now if I want to. Stop

a fuck what you do.

He picks up a bottle of gin, fills a glass, slams it on the counter in front of Ben and knocks twice with his knuckles on the bar.

**BARMAN:**

On the house, son.

Ben looks at the TV for a sign. None is forthcoming.

**CUT TO:**

42 INT. BANK - DAY

Ben waiting in line again. The same Bank girl is there and she is dealing with her customers in the same inanely cheerful way that the game-show Hostess dealt with her prize-winners. She notices Ben waiting and an irritated look flashes over across her face. Ben studies her. She is pretty

over (or maybe he says them out loud to himself).

**BEN:**

(voice over)

Are you desirable? Are you irresistible? Maybe if you drank bourbon with me, it would help. Maybe if you kissed me and I could taste the sting in your mouth, it would help.

Close-up on the Bank Girl as she does her thing, efficiently counting money, smiling, perfect teeth framed by a Cupid mouth. She is wearing a white blouse through which frilly lingerie can just be made out.

**BEN:**

If you drank bourbon with me naked... if you smelled of bourbon as you fucked me, it would help... it would increase my esteem for you.

If you poured bourbon on to your naked body and said to me... drink this...

Camera moves in tighter on her face as she chats with a customer about the weather.

**BEN:**

... if you spread your legs and had bourbon dripping from your breasts and you vagina and said drink here... then I could fall in love with you, because then I would have a purpose, to clean you up, and

worth something. Id lick you clean so you could go away and fuck someone else.

**BANK GIRL:**

Next!

Ben takes a moment to come out of his reverie. He smiles and

comes to the counter, completely in control of himself.

**BEN:**

to sign.

He flips the check over, makes sure she is watching and signs with a flourish.

**BEN:**

There... Steady as a fucking rock, excuse my French.

(serious)

Wanna have dinner with me?

She counts the money out and glares at him as she hands it over.

**BANK GIRL:**

better. Do you need a validation?

Ben looks at her and smiles.

**CUT TO:**

43 INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Ben throws items into a trolley. Garbage bags, firelighters and charcoal lighter fluid.

**CUT TO:**

Ben putting all the kitchen utensils into a large garbage bag. Three other bags are already filled and the kitchen is looking empty.

**CUT TO:**

Ben is stuffing all the bedding into a garbage bag. Next he opens a drawer on the dresser and begins taking out clothes and stuffing them into another bag. He pauses for a moment to take a drink from a tall glass.

**CUT TO:**

All the books from the bookcase go into another bag. Then all



the records. But he selects certain favorites and as this sequence progresses we can see that Ben is making tapes of these tracks. As soon as he is done with the recording, he throws the album into a garbage bag.

**CUT TO:**

Ben pours lighter fluid on to a pile of photographs and then throws a match on to it. It bursts into flames. He throws more stuff on and the fire blazes. A curious neighbor watches from a safe distance, not wanting too get involved.

**ANGLE ON THE FIRE**

A watercolor, a poem to his wife, photograph of him and his wife, a Polaroid of a naked woman, his medical records, his birth and marriage certificates, divorce papers, strips of photographs from booths, postcards from Hawaii. Two small children (his?).

**ANGLE ON BEN:**

Now the flames are high and Ben has to stand back as he throws things on to the fire ... his camera, an engraved box,

**CUT TO:**

stacked up on the sidewalk. Ben comes out of his front door

gets in and drives off.

**CUT TO:**

49 EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE WITH ROAD - DAY

A high wide shot shows a small black car making its way across the frame.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

50 INT. CAR - DAY

Through the window we see a dead straight road stretching to infinity.

The sunlight is painfully bright. On the soundtrack we hear

next shot.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

51 EXT. GAS STATION IN THE DESERT - DAY

Ben is filling his car. A town car drives in and stops next to the BMW. Three men get out. They look like Russian Mobsters. Ben nods at them and they nod back.

**CUT TO:**

52 INT. CAR - NIGHT

Same angle through the window but this time we see Las Vegas at night as Ben drives down the main drag. An overdose of neon.

52A EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

in front of the car. She gives Ben a look of real attitude because he is over the line and she has to change course to cross in front.

**CUT TO:**

53 EXT. HOTEL FORECOURT - NIGHT

Sera is talking to Yuri. A middle-aged man gets out of a cab and Yuri shakes him by the hand and introduces him to Sera. He hands Yuri an envelope and then Sera and he go into the hotel together. Yuri looks around thoughtfully before getting into a cab and driving off.

Improvised scene.(1)

INT. MOTEL RECEPTION - NIGHT

Ben waits to check in while the manager explains the house rules to a family of large people from the Midwest.

**MANAGER:**

All rooms to be paid a week in advance, maid service is optional, use of the pool is at your own risk, there is no lifeguard on duty.

Year Inn. Ben stares at it and then smiles.

**CUT TO:**

56 INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Ben has almost filled a trolley with bottles of various brands. He is whistling and seems happy.

Improvised scene.(2)

**CUT TO:**

58 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

Ben driving. He sees Sera and follows her, then drives up on the sidewalk. She sees him.

**BEN:**

Hello!

**SERA:**

Hello.

**BEN:**

Are you working?

**SERA:**

(tough)

Working? What do you mean,

And she walks a few steps to prove it, stopping on the passenger side of his car. They pause for a moment and Ben is confused. He is quite taken with her beauty, but this is not going according to plan. He reaches into the car quickly and picks an open can of beer, draining it before tossing the empty back on to the rear seat.

**SERA:**

drive?

**BEN:**

(laughs)

(seriously)

hundred and fifty dollars to  
fuck me?

**BEN:**

room for an hour, I will give  
you five hundred dollars.

**SERA:**

pretty drunk.  
He bites his lips as he waits for her to respond.

**SERA:**

(softer)

**BEN:**

(factual)

far. The Whole Year Inn. You  
can drive with me if you  
want...  
She makes no response.

**BEN:**

give you cab fare.  
Takes out his money.

**BEN:**

Whatever you want.  
She touches the door handle.

**SERA:**

It takes a moment or two to register that she is saying yes.  
He comes around the car to open the door for her.

**BEN:**

They shake hands.

**SERA:**

She gets in. Ben gets in.

**CUT TO:**

59 INT. CAR - NIGHT

Ben hands her the money.

**BEN:**

Sarah - with an H?

**SERA:**

No - S.E.R.A.

They grin at each other.

**SERA:**

You wanna start the engine?

They drive off.

60 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

They sit in the car for a while before speaking.

**SERA:**

fifty... not that I mind... I

hotel?

**BEN:**

prefer.

**SERA:**

No, this is fine. I was just wondering.

Ben switches off the engine but makes no move to get out of the car.

**BEN:**

drunk who tends to pass out at odd hours for

going to a hotel soon. A room

with a balcony to pass out  
on... or off.  
He falls silent.

**SERA:**

Umm. We can stay in the car  
for an hour if you want. But  
I really have to go then.

**BEN:**

tend to fade in and out  
lately.

**SERA:**

I guess I do too.

**BEN:**

You what?

**SERA:**

I sometimes fade out.

**BEN:**

Oh... well, maybe we better  
synchronize our spells... or  
stagger them.

**SERA:**

(gently)

You were going to get my  
door.

He gets out and she waits for him to open the door. She gets  
out and he offers her his arm. She takes it and they walk  
into the motel.

**CUT TO:**

As Ben closes the door. Sera surveys the room.

**SERA:**

(amused)

What this room needs... is

more booze.

There are bottles everywhere. Ben has gone to a lot of trouble to lay them out in a pleasing way.

**BEN:**

Do you think so?

all business, in control, and Ben likes it.

**SERA:**

Mind if I use the bathroom?

**BEN:**

Of course.

She goes into the bathroom.

**BEN:**

SERA (off-screen)

A shot of tequila, if you can spare it.

**BEN:**

Of course.

order ready and then he takes a big swig from a bourbon bottle. He sits on the edge of the bed.

The bathroom door opens and Sera comes in wearing a black bra

**SERA:**

For two-fifty we can do pretty much what you want.

might be better if I got on

too. I have some jelly in case you want to fuck my ass,

too, just try to keep it out of my hair, I just washed it... and my eyes, it stings.

She walks to the table and downs her tequila in one. Then comes to the bed, where Ben is sitting. She kneels, unzips his fly and begins sucking him. Ben watches her, looks at her reflection in the closet mirror, reaches for the bottle and drinks some, being careful not to disturb Sera. After a while Sera comes up.

**SERA:**

Do you want to fuck now?

**BEN:**

(confused)

Maybe another drink first.

More tequila?

**SERA:**

OK... whatever.

She takes the bottle and drinks. She goes down again. Ben stops her.

**SERA:**

drunk to come?

**BEN:**

(sincere)

have more money. You can  
drink all you want. You can  
talk or listen. Just stay,

She looks at him, confused. She sees a strange look on his face. It throws her.

This is a turning point. Both of them are momentarily exposed.

Ben lifts the sheet and moves to one side, indicating that gets in with him and he hands her the bottle.

**CUT TO:**

62 INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Yuri is losing at one of the tables. He continues to bet though, putting half of what he has left on one number. He



lose again. He mops his face with a red silk handkerchief and places another bet.

63 INT. SOMEWHERE IN THE CASINO - NIGHT

The three Russian Mobsters we saw in the desert are walking through the casino, looking for someone.

**CUT TO:**

They are both in bed, drinking.

**SERA:**

So, Ben, what brings you to Las Vegas? Business convention?

They both laugh and Ben hands her the bottle.

**BEN:**

No, I came here to drink... myself... you know...

**SERA:**

To death?

**BEN:**

He looks at her, she at him, not sure whether to believe him or not.

**BEN:**

I cashed in all of my money, paid my AmEx card, gonna sell the car tomorrow.

**SERA:**

you to drink yourself to death?

**BEN:**

I think about four weeks, and hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars a day.

**SERA:**

Yes... that should do it. What am I? A luxury?

**BEN:**

Yeah. And your meter just ran out.

Ben looks at his watch.

**SERA:**

Talk some more.

Ben yawns, suddenly deeply tired.

**BEN:**

In LA I kept running out of booze and the store would be

look at my watch... so I decided to move here because nothing ever closes and because I got tired of getting funny looks when I would walk into a bar at six

started preaching.

(yawns again)

town so no one cares, no one is overtly fucking up

**CUT TO:**

LATER.

**SIDE ANGLE:**

Sera is in focus, Ben is asleep.

SERA (voice-over)

I guess I was intrigued by him... There was a lot of stuff that I wanted to ask

interested in a trick. But I felt as if a relationship was

being forged very quickly.

Improvised scene. (3)

**CUT TO:**

Sera gets out of a cab and makes her way towards her apartment, changing out of her high heels as she walks.

Sera lets herself in. Yuri is standing in the shadows. She gets a fright when she sees him.

**YURI:**

Where have you been?

**SERA:**

It was a slow night. I went to a hotel for a few drinks. Yuri holds out his hand for her bag. She gives it to him. He finds the money and counts it.

**YURI:**

A full night on the street and this is all?

**SERA:**

Like I said... it was a slow hard to score. Yuri slaps her.

**SERA:**

**YURI:**

What do you think... you are sixteen years old on Hollywood Boulevard? Yuri talks in Russian, becoming angrier, and slaps her again. He spits on the floor. Sera falls against the kitchen table and picks up a lethal-looking knife. Yuri stops.

**SERA:**

Maybe nobody wants to fuck a chick with a cut on her cheek.

She throws the knife to Yuri, who catches it. She bends over the table and pulls up her skirt.

**SERA:**

There, go ahead!  
She mimics him.

her. He tries to regain his dignity by putting on a coat.

**YURI:**

I could kill you. You know that.  
He goes to the door.

**YURI:**

Work, tonight, bring me money, no matter the hour.  
And he exits. Sera is still on the table.

**SERA:**

I will Yuri. I will.

**CUT TO:**

67 INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

The proprietor is handling over some cash to Yuri, whose jewelry is on the counter. He pockets it and as he turns to leave, Ben comes in. They pass without taking much notice of each other. Ben removes his Rolex and shows it to the man.

**CUT TO:**

68 EXT. STREET, LAS VEGAS - DAY

Yuri is walking in the hot sun, sweating. We see him through long-lens heat haze. The camera wanders into the traffic and we see the black towncar crawling along behind him, three men inside.

**CUT TO:**

Improvised scene. (4)

**CUT TO:**

70 INT. MAIN BAR, HOTEL - NIGHT

A lounge singer belts out a fair rendition of a Tony Orlando number. Sera sits at the bar, an empty seat on either side of her. She watches a younger hooker in the final moments of pulling a dangerous-looking man. The girl is aware of Sera without even looking at her. The guy she is with looks around and sees Sera. The girl shoots an icy look. A man sits next

**to Sera:**

**CONVENTIONEER:**

About ready for another drink?

**SERA:**

Yes, that would be great. Are you her for the convention?

**CONVENTIONEER:**

Do I look that obvious? My

They shake hands.

**SERA:**

No, of course not, just a

The barman is already pouring. The young hooker leaves with her dangerous guy. She pauses long enough to give Sera a nasty smile. The conventioneer pays for the drink and is a little lost for words. Sera tries to help.

**SERA:**

So... are you alone, or are you just using me to make someone else jealous?

**CONVENTIONEER:**

(laughs nervously)

**SERA:**

(friendly)

Where are you staying?

**CONVENTIONEER:**

(suspicious)

Right here at the hotel. Why?

**SERA:**

(moving a little closer)

Well... I thought you might be looking for a date.

**CONVENTIONEER:**

(shocked)

A date. What, are you a hooker?

(voice getting louder)

What do you mean a date?

(and louder)

just came over to talk for a few minutes.

**SERA:**

(quietly)

misunderstood.

She looks around.

**SERA:**

about it again.

**CONVENTIONEER:**

(calmer)

Sorry. Look... you seem like a

everyone in this town trying to get my money.

He gets up.

**CONVENTIONEER:**

Here, have another drink. I gotta go.

He leaves. Sera is uncomfortable. People are watching her,

aware that something has been going on. The Barman comes over to where Sera is sitting.

**BARMAN:**

Maybe you should give it a miss for this evening.  
He walks away. Sera finishes her drink and leaves.

**CUT TO:**

71 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

Sera at work is looking more carefully than usual, hoping to see Ben. A huge silver limo pulls up and, after some negotiation, she gets in.

**CUT TO:**

72 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

Long-lens shot of Ben, very drunk on the street. He falls and lies still for quite a long time before getting up. He falls into the road and tries to hail a cab, but none stops. A cop car cruises to a halt and Ben more or less imitates a normal person as he walks out of shot.

73 EXT. THE POOL, MOTEL - DAY

Ben dives in and swims a length under water. He pulls himself out and sits next to the large Midwestern family. The father says hello and introduces his family to Ben. They are all

for a moment Ben even looks healthy.

**CUT TO:**

74 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

A limo pulls up and Sera gets out. She sees something.

Ben sitting at a bus stop, drinking out of a cocktail glass. When he sees her he gets up, a little unsteadily.

**BEN:**

happened last time. I was afraid that I might have been rude, or mean to you.  
He looks at her.

**BEN:**

**SERA:**

**BEN:**

going to take cabs from now  
on in.  
Sera looks up and down the strip.

**BEN:**

**SERA:**

(defensive)

not a cop, so what is it  
tonight? Another two-fifty to  
watch you sleep?  
Ben sits down, a little hurt.

**SERA:**

**BEN:**

I was looking for you

have a boyfriend...

He thinks.

**BEN:**

... or a girlfriend, but if  
you have some free  
time... maybe we could have  
dinner.

**SERA:**

(tough again, but pleased)

Are you serious.

**BEN:**

(deadly serious)



you.

**SERA:**

you.

And she hails a taxi, which stops immediately and she gets in.

**SERA:**

The Mojave Hotel, please.  
Ben watches the cab drive off.

**CUT TO:**

75 INT. CORRIDOR OF HOTEL - NIGHT

Sera walks along, checking numbers on the doors. She finds the right one and knocks firmly.

YURI (v.o)

Yes? What?

**SERA:**

The door opens a crack and Yuri peers out.

**YURI:**

He looks around for a clock.

**YURI:**

Sera comes into the room, takes her purse out and counts out seven hundred dollars.

**SERA:**

Sorry, Yuri... good  
night... lots of tricks... I  
think things are picking up.

Yuri sits on the bed. He looks unwell and disoriented. His face is covered with a thin film of sweat. He seems to be listening for something, because he stops her talking by putting his fingers to his lips. He looks at her and then beckons her to the bed. Sera is nervous. As she walks to the

bed, she begins unbuttoning her blouse. Yuri stops her with a wave of his hand. Sera is puzzled and frightened now. Yuri seems to be deranged.

**YURI:**

here?

**SERA:**

No.

her to the wall. He presses her head to the wall.

**YURI:**

Do you here that?

He looks at her.

**YURI:**

He pulls himself together.

**YURI:**

Go, Sera.

(whispers)

Go. Stay at home. I will call you tomorrow.

**SERA:**

Yuri... are you...

**YURI:**

(patiently)

Sera... please go.

He indicates the wall.

**YURI:**

This is very important... and

I must listen. Now go.

They face each other for a moment and then Yuri does an almost comic gesture to tell her to go. He hustles her to the door and shoves her out as she is still buttoning up her blouse. He slams the door.

**YURI:**

(through the door)

back here. I will not see you again.

Sera stands there for a while, almost in shock, and then she begins to walk. The camera follows her as she makes her way down the endless corridor of doors. Ahead of her, three men are walking towards her, checking the door numbers as they

a corner. We recognize them as the men from the black towncar.

**ANGLE:**

we see Sera down the other corridor getting into the elevator.

**FADE OUT:**

Ben is lying on the bed watching a game show, drinking. A coughing fit hits him. He is very short of breath. We see how ill he really is. There is a tap at the door.

**BEN:**

The tapping persists and eventually Ben gets off the bed and unlocks it, but keeps the chain on. It is Sera.

**SERA:**

Still want to have dinner?  
Ben stares at her for a while.

**BEN:**

Yes.

**SERA:**

I have to change and take a shower first. If you want to come home and wait.  
Ben opens the door.

**SERA:**

We should pick up a bottle of

tequila on the way. I owe you one.

**BEN:**

You do?

**CUT TO:**

Sera is finishing in the shower and Ben is sitting at the kitchen table. He gets up and walks around the house, trying to get a sense of her. The furniture is very plain and there is spartan quality about the house. He looks with interest at the bookshelf, which has a good selection of literature.

**BEN:**

(to himself)

This is the home of an angel.

SERA (off-screen)

You OK out there?

**BEN:**

fine.

He pours himself another drink.

SERA (off-screen)

Pour yourself another drink.

He sots down and she comes in, toweling her hair.

**SERA:**

You OK?

**BEN:**

Of course. Wow... you look extremely beautiful.

**SERA:**

Thank you. What time is it?

**BEN:**

way of the car.

He holds up his empty wrist for her to see. Then looks up and sees her watching him.

**BEN:**

you. You make me want to  
it is.

**SERA:**

I like hearing you talk.  
(businesslike)  
If you feel up to a short  
around the corner. All the  
food in Vegas is terrible so  
matter. How does that sound  
to you?

**BEN:**

Do they have drinks?

**CUT TO:**

79 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

Ben and Sera walk and talk.

80 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ben and Sera are eating. He plays with his food, eating very  
little of it. Finally he pushes it away and orders another  
drink.

**SERA:**

college, did an arts course.  
I now live in Vegas. I think  
of it as home. I came here  
deliberately to carve out a  
life. I was in LA before, but

(pause)

The tough times are behind me  
now. I can deal with the bad  
things that happen. There  
will always be dark  
characters. But my life is  
good. It is as I would want  
it to be. So, why are you a

drunk?

**BEN:**

Is that really what you want  
to ask me?

**SERA:**

Yes.

**BEN:**

(worried)

Well, then I guess this is  
our first date... or our last.

was either.

**SERA:**

Very clever.

Sera thinks for a while and decides to give in to him on  
this.

**SERA:**

just concerned. So... why are  
you killing yourself?

**BEN:**

Interesting choice of words.

that I want to.

**SERA:**

Want to kill yourself? Are

drinking as a way to kill  
yourself?

And she leans across the table to be close to him, listening  
intently. Ben becomes uncomfortable and tries to joke it off.

**BEN:**

Or killing myself as a way to  
drink.

Sera continues to stare at him, wanting to know the real  
answer. He takes a slug from his drink. She sits back.

**BEN:**

other time maybe. OK?

Sera relaxes and continues with her food. We hear her thoughts for a moment.

SERA (v.o)

I mean, he never asked me why I was a hooker, and that was impressive. I really liked him. So I decided to just

good to help someone once in

being alive, and that was my plan... to stay alive. I suddenly came to a decision.

**BEN:**

What are you thinking? Are you angry with me?

**SERA:**

(decides something)

place tonight? I mean... look,

I trust you.

**BEN:**

look...

**SERA:**

I hate to think of you in that cheesy motel. I mean... And she folds her arms and grins at him.

**SERA:**

are you doing in Las Vegas?

**BEN:**

(overwhelmed by her)

you feel better.

(looks at her)

Wanna do something?

**SERA:**

(warmly)

Sure... tonight. Then please  
stay at my place.

**BEN:**

good in the sack.

**SERA:**

make you up a bed on the  
sofa. Do it for me. We can  
talk till late and then sleep  
till late. As you know, I am  
my own boss.

laugh as infectious, and Sera join in. Other diners turn to  
stare at them. They seem like a couple.

**CUT TO:**

81 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

Ben and Sera walk and talk, holding hands.

82 EXT. DESERT - DAY

A wide shot. The black towncar makes its way across frame.  
Left to right.

**CUT TO:**

Ben is asleep on the sofa. As he wakes up, he becomes aware  
that Sera is watching him from across the room. They smile at  
each other.

**BEN:**

How long have I been her?



**SERA:**

Three nights, two days. When  
is your rent coming up at the  
motel?

**BEN:**

(sits up)

room for me. You can pick it  
out, a tower on the strip.

**SERA:**

your money on a hotel room.

**BEN:**

What do you mean?

**SERA:**

What I mean is that you  
should bring your stuff over

time together... what the  
fuck!

**BEN:**

Sera...

**SERA:**

done so much talking in my  
life.

**BEN:**

Me neither.

**SERA:**

formalities. I want you  
here... now!

**BEN:**

Sera you are crazy.

**SERA:**

with long term plans.

**BEN:**

little bored living with a  
drunk?

**SERA:**

That is what I want. Why

stuff?

**BEN:**

been very controlled. I knock  
things over... I throw up all  
the time.

(looks at her)

Now I feel really

of antidote that mixes the  
liquor and keeps me in

it really quickly. Believe  
me.

They sit in silence for a while.

**SERA:**

OK, you go back to your hotel

glamorous life of being  
alone.

She walks out of the room, and into the bathroom, where she  
sits on the toilet to pee.

**SERA:**

(to herself)  
The only thing I have to come  
home to is a bottle of  
Listerine to wash the taste

She finishes, wipes herself and flushes the toilet. Pulling  
up her panties, she walks back into the bedroom, where Ben is  
putting on his shoes.

**SERA:**

**BEN:**  
(devastated)

Ben is unable to deal with the fact that he is absolutely in  
love with her. He walks out of the room. She follows.

**SERA:**  
We gotta decide this... right  
now. Before we go any  
further. You either stay here  
with me or...  
Ben turns to look at her.

**SERA:**  
  
any more.  
Ben and Sera look at each other for a long time.

**BEN:**  
  
understand is...

**SERA:**  
What?  
Ben is deeply troubled. He comes to a decision.

**BEN:**  
You can never... never... ask  
me to stop drinking. Do you  
understand?

**SERA:**

(dead serious)

I do. I really do.

(smiles)

OK. I have to do some shopping alone. You go out for a few drinks and then

you to let you in.

Sera grabs him in a big embrace that knocks him off balance and into the wall. She kisses him all over his face and squeezes his skinny frame.

**CUT TO:**

Ben is packing his liquor into his suitcase. The almost-empty bottles he pours into a large cup, which he drinks from. The

packed any clothes. They are all in a pile on the bed. He talks to himself.

**BEN:**

after all.

He tries to put clothes in with the bottles, but the lid

conversation with Sera.

**BEN:**

Listen, angel... the thing is

this is a bad thing... because my real plan is to die here and you were never even part of my plan... but like I said,

minute, I have an idea, angel.

And he opens the closet and finds some plastic laundry bags, which he puts his clothes in.

85 SCENE CUT.

**CUT TO:**

her house. They stop her. They are also her landlord.

**HUSBAND:**

call the police or not.

And they indicate the sleeping figure of Ben, in the doorway, clutching a bottle of bourbon, using hi suitcase as a pillow.

**WIFE:**

half an hour. My husband

together, but I thought it best to wait until you got home.

**SERA:**

he just had a little too much to drink.

(smiling uncomfortably)

(puts down her packages)

Thanks for the concern. Sorry to trouble you.

**HUSBAND:**

(gallantly)

anything I can do.

They go to their own house. Sera opens the front door, kneels down next to Ben and shakes him gently.

**SERA:**

Can you wake up?

Ben opens his eyes and looks around with a pleasant, cheerful expression.

**BEN:**

Hi!

**SERA:**

down. I have some gifts for  
you.

**BEN:**

Right... OK...

Ben stands and almost loses his balance. He picks up his  
suitcase and attempts to pick up her packages as well, but  
she stop him.

**SERA:**

Ben staggers in with his case. As Sera enters, she looks  
around and sees Husband and Wife at the window, still  
watching.

BEN (off-screen)

Want a drink? Great nap.

Wanna go out tonight?

**SERA:**

Seriously, Ben... I need to  
keep pretty low-key around  
here. Maybe next time you  
could nap this side of the  
door. That was the landlord.

**BEN:**

Of course.

She reaches into her purse.

**SERA:**

Gift number one.

And she gives him a newly cut key. He takes it and tries it  
in the lock, then drops it into his pocket.

**BEN:**

I used to carry a lot of  
keys, but one by one they all  
fell victim to the great  
condensation. Now I have just  
this one... which is...

And he tails off and stares at the floor. She waits for him  
to continue and then comes to him and touches him on the arm.

**SERA:**

Ben?

**BEN:**

Sorry.

He shakes his head.

**BEN:**

I was miles away.

He sees the parcels.

**BEN:**

Ah... more gifts. I have to  
sit down for this.

He strides into the living room and flops on to the sofa. She  
follows.

**BEN:**

Sera, I love that  
name... S.E.R.A. Before we  
proceed onwards, there is  
something I need to say. OK?

**SERA:**

OK.

**BEN:**

am, in your house. I want you  
to let me pay the rent for  
this month. All right?

And he stares at her as if to say that nothing can happen  
until this matter is resolved.

**SERA:**

Why?

**BEN:**

that way. OK?

**SERA:**

Well... OK...

She is uncomfortable.

They sit in silence for a while.

**BEN:**

Sera... I hope that you  
understand how I feel about

welcome to my money. We can  
buy a couple of cases of  
liquor and you can have the

now about money.

**SERA:**

(smiling)

No?

**BEN:**

with you... but, be that as it

twisted life into your soul.

**SERA:**

I know that...

**BEN:**

your attention to the point  
where it changes your life.

that seems to be all right  
with you. And I know that

who is totally at ease with  
this... which is not to say

simply means that I trust and



accept your judgement. What

you understand that I  
understand.

**SERA:**

Thanks, I do understand. I  
was worried about how that

And you should know that  
included with the rent here  
is a complimentary blow job.

**BEN:**

Ah, yes... I suppose sooner or  
later we ought to fuck.

**SERA:**

Whatever that means. Open  
your presents.  
She hands him the larger of the two parcels.

**SERA:**

Open this one first.  
Ben awkwardly unwraps the present, a large, colorful shirt. A  
genuine smile comes on to his face.

**BEN:**

Very nice.  
He holds the shirt against himself.

**BEN:**

This should work very nicely  
with my suit, which, by the  
way, is the only item of  
clothing I brought over from  
the motel with me.  
Sera raise an eyebrow.

**SERA:**

Right... the suitcase was  
clinking. So what did you do  
with your clothes?

**BEN:**

(laughing)

I threw them into the  
garbage., which was perhaps  
immoral, but I wanted to come  
to you clean, so to speak. I  
thought we could go shopping  
and pick up a pair of jeans  
and forty-five pairs of  
underwear and just throw them  
out each day.

**SERA:**

(smiling)

Nice talk, Ben. Keep  
drinking. In between the  
hundred and one proof breath  
and the occasional drool,  
some interesting words fall  
from your mouth.  
She hands him the last present.

**SERA:**

Now, try this one.

Ben unwraps the smallest gift. It is a silver hip flask. He  
is very touched and a little tear trickles down his cheek.

**BEN:**

the right girl.

He turns it in his hands.

**BEN:**

impressed that you would buy  
this for me. I know you

thinking about it.

Funny... you did just what I  
would have done.

Ben stands and tries the flask in his pocket for fit. It is  
fine. He walks to the door.

**BEN:**

now.

**SERA:**

Do you want to go gambling tonight? We could go out and play for a few hours.

Ben comes back into the room, takes the flask out of his suit pocket and has a drink.

**BEN:**

gamble... but if you would keep the bulk of my money here, then I could safely blow a couple of hundred bucks.

He takes out all of his money, peels off a few hundreds and then gives her the rest.

**BEN:**

Giving you money makes me want to come.

**SERA:**

Then come.  
(pause)

And she leaves. There is a slight edge to her voice and Ben is not sure if he offended her or not. He watches through the small angle of the door as she changes.

**SERA:**

I am planning to go out and do some work.

**BEN:**

When?

**SERA:**

Tomorrow night as a matter of fact.

88 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

Ben and Sera walking. The camera follows them. He is wearing his new shirt and looks good in it. She is wearing a green dress and mismatched earrings and looks great. They walk and talk.

**BEN:**

I like your earrings.  
He changes sides.

**BEN:**

I like women who wear  
mismatched earrings.

**SERA:**

run into any tonight.

**BEN:**

(laughs)  
What do you mean?

**SERA:**

I expect some kind of loyalty  
here. Just because I fuck for

to start picking up women and  
leaving me looking silly.  
And she stops and looks at him, smiling but serious.

**BEN:**

And I only have eyes for you.  
And we both know that you  
would never become  
romantically involved with a  
trick, right?

89 INT. CASINO - NIGHT

They walk around the huge space, which is full of people and energy, and suddenly Ben grabs Sera and pushes her against a slot machine and kisses her deeply. At first she resists and then she gives in to him and responds. They knock over some change, which falls to the floor, and Ben pulls from her a beat to bend down and scoop up all the change and hand it to

They break for air and then Ben leads her towards the bar. As

arm.

**SERA:**

(quietly)

I love you.

ANGLE ON CASINO ACTIVITY

On long lens we see Ben and Sera at the bar. Suddenly Ben seems to fall asleep. Sera tries to wake him and then he goes crazy and falls backwards off his stool, knocking a waitress and her drinks over. Security Guards appear and begin arguing with Sera.

**CUT TO:**

Ben wakes up on the sofa, fully dressed. A night-light gives a soft glow. He rolls off the sofa, landing on all fours on the floor. He crawls to the kitchen, opens the fridge door and takes out a vodka bottle and carton of orange juice. With difficulty he gets to his feet, finds a glass and pours a drink. He swallows the mix and then stands over the sink just in case he has to vomit.

Sera wakes and Ben comes in and gets into bed with her.

**SERA:**

How are you doing?

**BEN:**

Very well... umm... I never expected to have to ask you this again... but how did our evening go? I remember getting to the casino... I remember kissing you... that was really nice but everything after that is a blank.

**SERA:**

Well - I was prepared for

We were sitting at the bar,

talking about blackjack. You seemed just fine, a little drunker than usual, but nothing really strange, but then your head started to droop and I put my arm on your shoulder and then, wham, you swung your arm at me, and fell backwards off your stool into a cocktail waitress. You smashed everything on her tray, it was a real mess. You kept yelling and yelling.

**BEN:**

Oh, and what did you do?

**SERA:**

I tried to shut you up and help you to your feet but you kept swinging at me - not like you wanted to hit me, but more just waving me away. Security came and when you saw them you stopped yelling. They wanted to carry you out and dump you on the street, but I talked them into letting me walk you out.

**BEN:**

you do that?

**SERA:**

I told them you were an alcoholic and I would take you home. I also promised that we would never come in there again.

**BEN:**

We?

**SEAR:**

Yes, we.

**BEN:**

(holds her hand)

What happened then?

**SERA:**

You were OK for a while, so we walked for about a block and then you said you wanted to go home and fuck, but I think even you knew that

got a cab and you asked him to stop at a liquor store, even though I told you that we had plenty at home. In the store you gave the kid a hundred and told him to keep the change. I asked you if you knew it was a hundred. You said you did, so I let you do it. We got here, you fell asleep on the couch and I covered you up and came to bed.

**BEN:**

I warned you...

(kisses her hand)

**SERA:**

(kisses his hand)

acceptable to m, but it is.

that your trouble is very

think you need me to do.

Falling down in casinos is

bother me. It has nothing to do with us.

**BEN:**

Some sort of angel visiting me from one of my drunk fantasies? How can you be so good?

She turns away to the wall and curls up like a small girl.

**SERA:**

need you. Can we not talk about it any more, please. Not another word.

He thinks about this. He gently pushes her until she is lying on her front and then he pulls up her nightdress and strokes her naked back. He kisses her in the small of her back.

**BEN:**

some breakfast.

**SERA:**

Be careful. He stands and goes to the door.

**BEN:**

As he leaves the room, she calls after him.

**SERA:**

He opens the door and smiles at her.

**BEN:**

I know.

**CUT TO:**

92 EXT. SIDEWALK - EARLY MORNING



Ben gets out of his cab and walks up to the doorway of a grocery store. It is locked. Ben looks at his wrist and then remembers that he no longer has a watch. He looks around, sees something and exits frame.

**CUT TO:**

93 INT. ROUGH ENGLISH BAR - EARLY MORNING

Ben enters and makes his way to the bar. This is a dirty, dark place. An ageing blonde in leather hot pants is dancing by herself at the jukebox. A very drunk Biker Couple argue noisily in a corner, slurring their words. There ins not much gambling taking place at the eight slot machines. Ben sits at the bar and the Bartender slaps down a paper napkin.

**BEN:**

A beer and a double kamikaze please.

**BARTENDER:**

Sure thing. Anything to eat?

**BEN:**

Not quite yet. First I have to drink myself sober, then... a few crackers, maybe an egg and toast...

anyway.

**BEN:**

breakfast together, and

about my condition...

Ben is interrupted by the arrival of the Biker Girl. She is young tough and pretty. She puts an arm around him and presses against him.

**BIKER GIRL:**

Who the fuck are you talking to, Mr?

(laughing)

Why are you all dressed up,

fine.

She runs her tongue around her mouth.

**BIKER GIRL:**

I am very bored with my date.

Would you like to buy me a  
drink?

Ben looks around and sees the Biker staring at the two of  
them.

**BEN:**

(loudly)

Do you mind if I buy her a  
drink?

**BIKER:**

the fuck you do with her.

**BEN:**

Maybe I could buy you both a  
drink?

**BIKER:**

motherfucker. Fuck off. Go to

drink.

The Biker walks over to the slot machine and begins dropping  
in quarters, never taking his eyes off Ben and the Girl.

**BIKER GIRL:**

See what an asshole he is.

(big smile)

**BEN:**

Barman? A rum and Coke,  
please.

The Girl leans with her back to the bar, closer to Ben , who  
is facing the bar on a stool. She brings her face closer to  
his.

**BIKER GIRL:**

Can I stay with you for a while?

**BEN:**

You mean move in with me?

**BIKER GIRL:**

stuff.

**BEN:**

(smiling)

dig it too much.

She moves to his ear to whisper.

**BIKER GIRL:**

Maybe we could just go find a room and fuck all day. You

wife about that, would you? I could suck you like this.

And she begins sucking on his lobe. Behind them. At the slot machine the Biker is still watching. His face fills with a drunken rage.

**BEN:**

See, the thing is... fucking you would be wonderful, but I am deeply in love with Sera...

The Biker throws down his beer can and walks towards the bar.

**BEN:**

for me to imagine being with someone else...

The Biker arrives at the bar and grabs Ben.

**BIKER:**

gonna just sit around and

watch her suck on your ear.

The Biker is about to hit Ben then holds back. He leans in

**BIKER:**

Now, I know that she came  
over to you, like she does,

one chance to walk out of  
this place... right now.

**BIKER GIRL:**

(to biker)

Get lost, jerk.

The Biker slaps her and then grabs Ben by the collar.

**BIKER:**

What do you say?

about it for a couple of beats and then decides.

**BEN:**

have decided to spend a few  
hours together in a mo -

The Biker headbutts Ben in the face, sending him crashing off  
his stool to the floor. His head cracks against the tiled  
floor. The Biker walks over to him, picks him up by his shirt  
front and punches him in the nose. Blood sprays on to his  
face. The Biker walks out of the bar. The Girl follows him  
quickly. The Bartender takes a wet towel and walks over to  
where Ben is struggling to get up, holding his face.

**BARTENDER:**

He gives him the towel.

**BARTENDER:**

going to have to ask you to

back.

**CUT TO:**

Ben lets himself in with his key. He is carrying a big bag of groceries. His clothes are bloodstained. The Landlady watches from poolside.

**BEN:**

He walks into the living room and finds Sera reading on the couch. She looks up and sees his face and his bloodstained shirt.

**SERA:**

Oh, no! Oh, fuck, Ben, look at your face. You get in a

fight. Goddammit. How do you feel? Wait here. Sit down.

She goes to the bathroom and we hear her rummaging in the medicine cabinet.

SERA (off-screen)

Did you stop at the bar?

She comes back into the room, armed with bottles and cotton wool.

**SERA:**

Did you say something stupid to someone stupid?

She goes to work on his face, dabbing an open cut with some mercurochrome.

**BEN:**

Absolutely not... ow... I was defending the honor of some poor wayward maiden.

She thinks about this for a moment and then kisses him on the forehead.

**SERA:**

this in the bathroom. Take a shower and put on your other

get some new clothes. I think  
this suit must be unlucky.

**CUT TO:**

95 INT. MALL - DAY

Ben and Sera come out of a clothing store. Ben is wearing  
black jeans, red socks and a white dress shirt. They go up

**SERA:**

Very creative. Now we can get  
you a black bow tie and you  
can look like one of those  
casino dealers.

**BEN:**

OK, but remember that they  
wear it because they have to.  
I wear it because I want to.

higher level.

**SERA:**

Ben?

**CUT TO:**

96 INT. SHOPPING MALL BAR. DAY

Ben needs a drink badly but this is not the best place.  
Mothers with children, old people and a Waitress with  
attitude. Ben tries to order but becomes angry when she

next table a dignified older man sits alone.

Ben hands Sera a small package.

**CLOSE ANGLE:**

**BEN:**

There was no time for me to  
write a card, with you  
breathing down my neck all

wing it, baby.

He laughs and this induces a coughing fit. He downs his drink and holds up the empty glass to let the waitress know she should bring another.

**BEN:**

Open it.

She does so. It is a pair of onyx earrings. Black onyx set in white gold.

**SERA:**

(pleased)

Your color.

**BEN:**

I think you should wear one at a time. One of these... and one of your others. In fact, I was going to buy just one,

fly... as a gift, I mean.

His new drink arrives and he takes a swallow straight away.

**SERA:**

of them.

She looks at him, aware of what she has said, wondering how he is reacting. She smiles and Ben takes a deep swallow, finishing his drink. His mood suddenly changes.

**BEN:**

Yes... tonight. Put it on.

She does so. Ben helps her, bringing his face down close to hers.

**BEN:**

sharp and hot under your ear, as one of the brothers is driving your head, face down into one of the penthouse pillows.

They are both suddenly deeply shocked by what he has said.

They sit in silence for a while. Sera is close to tears. Ben gets up suddenly, puts down a couple of bills and walks away from the table. When he is almost at the door Sera gets up and quickly tries together up all of the packages.

**SERA:**

Ben, wait... please wait for me.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR

**MAN:**

Maybe you should wait for her, sir.

**BEN:**

Why?

**MAN:**

Because... you can hear in her voice that she really wants you to.

Sera catches up and the Man lets go of Ben. Ben takes the packages from Sera and the two of them step out into the mall.

97 INT. MALL - DAY

They walk together.

**SERA:**

What was that all about?

**BEN:**

Can we just forget it?

**SERA:**

that.

**BEN:**

Can we just ignore it?

They stop and look at each other. The PA system gives an inane message.



**BEN:**

Please!

**SERA:**

**BEN:**

Thank you, Sera.

**SERA:**

Do you want me not to go  
tonight?

**BEN:**

No... we already talked about  
that.

**CUT TO:**

Sera is preparing for work. In the background we can hear the  
TV next door. She dresses carefully. Black underwear,  
stockings, heels, a tight black skirt.

99 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ben is watching TV and drinking.

Sera at the mirror, putting on her make-up. Her make-up is  
more pronounced than we have seen it before . Everything is  
more extreme.

101 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sera comes into the room. Ben looks up at her and sucks in  
his breath.

**BEN:**

Wow.

She walks over to him and takes his head and places it  
between her breasts and kisses the top of his head.

**BEN:**

Maybe I should follow you  
around and ask one of your

sleep with you.

**SERA:**

She comes on to him.

**SERA:**

Maybe you should ask me

show you.

She goes to the door.

**SERA:**

we can watch TV or

saying is... that I hope you  
are back when I get home.

Please be careful.

**BEN:**

to miss you.

**SERA:**

Shall we go away for a couple  
of days?

**BEN:**

**CUT TO:**

102 INT. SMART HOTEL - NIGHT

Sera walks through the lobby, looking for business.

103 EXT. A STREET - NIGHT

Ben lying down with people walking past and over him.

A big smile appears on his face. He starts to laugh.

**FADE OUT:**

**FADE IN:**

104 EXT. DESSERT - DAY

A blue car drives across frame. The sun is bright.

105 EXT. DESERT MOTEL, POOL - DAY

Sera is a very good swimmer and we see that Ben must have

been quite an athlete. They look at each other under water.

him towards the surface.

Ben and Sera come to the surface. Ben has swallowed water and has a coughing fit. Sera hugs him until the fit passes. The camera moves in tighter on them and music gives the moment a strange chill.

**SERA:**

frighten me like that.

**CUT TO:**

106 EXT. POOL - NIGHT

Ben and Sera are watching the TV next to the pool. They are sitting in reclining chairs. In the distance a coyote howls.

**SERA:**

Years ago, in LA, I turned a trick on Sunset and Western.

argue about the price. He parked his car and I took him to a house that I had an arrangement with. A fat Mexican woman was watching a TV and I told him to give her the twenty for the room. There were three or four small naked children playing on the floor and we had to step over them to get into the room. The room had a bed and a dresser. He lay on his back on the bed and I put a rubber on him and sucked him for a while until he was hard and then I eased on to him. About twenty minutes later there was a knock on the door and it was the woman saying our time was up. I felt kind come and I offered to reason

with the woman and get another ten minutes, but he said it was all right and began dressing. When we were ready to leave the room he stopped me and... hugged me and kissed me on the cheek. He gave me an extra hundred as a tip and went back to his car. I remember being

to work again that evening.

**BEN:**

Last spring I happened to walk past a house that I had once patronized. There was a cool breeze blowing off the ocean and through the window I could see a bare leg. The girl must have been taking a break between customers. It was a strange moment for me because it reminded me of my mother and despite the fact that I was late for something already I just stayed there, loving the atmosphere of it and my memory and... the

epilogue is that I felt that

**SERA:**

Where was that house? The one in LA, I mean.

**BEN:**

Fifth and Mayflower. You know it?

**SERA:**

Yes. One of my friends was there. I wonder if you ever

clipped her.

They watch the TV in silence for a while. Sera holds his hand.

**BEN:**

I like it here with you.

**SERA:**

**BEN:**

OK.

**CUT TO:**

107 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Ben mixes a cocktail for himself, then one for Sera. The camera follows him as he goes...

108 EXT. POOL-SIDE - DAY

...to the side of the pool, where Sera is sunbathing. He lowers himself unsteadily into the chair but avoids spilling a drop of the drinks, which he puts down on to a glass-topped table. He is pretty loaded. Sera turns over and moves out of his shadow.

**SERA:**

did you have to pawn your watch?

**BEN:**

it again.

Sera gets up, takes a drink and then walks to the diving board. As she takes a position at the end, she pulls the bathing suit out from her bottom, does a very natural dive into the pool, swims a length under water and then comes out near Ben, pulls herself out of the pool in one move and bends down and kisses Ben for a long time. Ben responds and kisses back. There is no one else around the pool.

The kiss becomes heated and urgent and Sera sits on Ben, making him wet from her. He pushes the top of her suit down and kisses her breasts. She picks up the glass and drinks, letting the alcohol spill from her mouth, over her breasts. Ben drinks from her.

**BEN:**

Take this off.

He tries to pull her swimsuit down.

**SERA:**

Maybe we should go inside.

Come on.

She stands up, covering herself. Ben stands up, laughing, loses his balance and slips on the wet concrete. He falls backwards, half on to the chair, which he breaks, and then on to the glass table. The table goes over and it and the glasses all shatter on the concrete. Ben falls on the broken glass and cuts himself all over his back and his arms. Glass goes into the pool. Blood mingles with the water on the steaming cement.

**BEN:**

Whoops.

Sera picks up her towel and lays it down next to him. She kneels and helps him up, trying to pullout the little bits of glass sticking to him. Ben stands unsteadily.

**BEN:**

you could take care of this.

He indicates the mess, then walks to their room. Sera begins carefully picking up the broken glass. The desk clerck appears with a broom and a dustpan.

DESK-CLERK

(cheerfully)

Everybody OK?

**SERA:**

clean all this up, the pool  
too.

DESK-CLERK

He begins sweeping the broken glass into the pan, cheerfully ignoring Sera.

**SERA:**

You seem prepared for  
accidents.

DESK-CLERK

(still smiling)

Yeah... we get a lot of screw-  
ups here.

He looks directly at Sera.

DESK-CLERK

Now, you two keep you loud  
talk and your liquor to your  
room. Check out first thing  
tomorrow and after that I

you paying for the chair or  
cutting your pretty hands on

that.

Nodding firmly, he goes back to the mess, indicating that the  
conversation is over.

DESK-CLERK

See ya in the morning.

**CUT TO:**

109 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Sera comes into the room.

**SERA:**

Ben?

She sees that he is already asleep on the bed, his half-naked  
body covered with countless bits of bloodstained tissue. The  
image has an almost religious feel to it. The TV is on and a  
sitcom is playing.

on the bed next to Ben.

SERA (voice-over)

I think we realized that we

it. My charm, for him, was  
that I accepted him exactly

him to change. I think we  
both realized that about each  
other. Ben needed me and I

liked his drama. I loved him.

**CUT TO:**

110 EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - DUSK

We see Las Vegas lighting up. The blue rental car passes through frame and drives towards the town.

**FADE OUT:**

**FADE UP ON:**

Ben wakes from a dream. He is fully clothed and very agitated.

**BEN:**

Sera?

112 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sera is cooking.

**SERA:**

right now, but I bought some plain rice. I thought it might be something you could eat. So if you get hungry later on, just let me know.

Ben comes in from the kitchen and takes vodka bottles from the fridge.

113 scene cut.

114 scene cut.

115 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

hold of the bottle as he drinks. He gets most of it down and then he hunches over the sink and immediately vomits. He takes the second bottle and tries again.

**CUT TO:**

116 INT. SHOWER - NIGHT

Still holding the bottle, Ben stands in the shower. He drinks some more and closes his eyes.

**CUT TO:**

117 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT



Ben enters, smartly dressed and smiling.

**BEN:**

rice!

**CUT TO:**

118 INT. DINING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Ben and Sera sitting opposite each other. He has a bowl of rice, which he is pretending to eat in between sips of vodka. She has a bowl of vegetables and rice. She sits, silently for a while, and then puts down her chopsticks.

**SERA:**

Ben looks away.

**SERA:**

What are you going to do?  
She folds her arms.

**SERA:**

I want you to go see a  
doctor.  
He thinks for a while and then turns to meet her gaze. They

**BEN:**

doctor.  
Sera continues to look at him almost defiantly.

**BEN:**

hotel.

**SERA:**

And do what... rot away in a  
room?  
(becoming angry)

that. Fuck you! I will not  
staying here. You are not

moving to a hotel.

**BEN:**

Will you lighten up, please?

**SERA:**

(close to tears)

One thing... one thing... this  
is one thing you can do for

free will here! You can do  
this for me.

She leans right forward.

**SERA:**

alive.

She stands up

**SERA:**

I have to go to work now.

of rice.

**CUT TO:**

119 INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Ben walks by himself. He is deep in thought.

**CUT TO:**

120 INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Ben recklessly bets two hundred dollars at the craps  
table... and wins. As he leans forward to collect his  
winnings, he sees...

**ANGLE:**

...a Blonde in a very low-cut outfit. She smiles at Ben and  
walks around the table to pick him up. Ben puts all of his  
winnings on one bet and wins again. This pattern repeats a  
few times and drinks are on the house.

**BLONDE:**

Hey... that was quite a play.

You in for the convention?

Ben gets to the point.

**BEN:**

A few people hear Ben and the Blonde is almost put off, but he does have about eight thousand dollars in winnings and so she leans in very close so that she can talk quietly.

**BLONDE:**

**BEN:**

How much to lick your pussy?

The Blonde picks up a sizeable stack of chips and looks at Ben.

**CUT TO:**

Sera lets herself in, looks around and opens the bedroom door.

**ANGLE:**

In one fluid movement the naked blonde gets off the semi-conscious Ben, pulls her dress over her head and walks past Sera. Moments later we hear the front door slam. Ben comes to and looks at Sera. He is more or less unaware of what has just happened.

**BEN:**

Hello...

**ANGLE ON SERA:**

Her eyes are wet.

**SERA:**

There are limits.

**BEN:**

(remembering)

Yes... I guess I knew that.

Ben gets out of the bed. He picks up the bottle on the bedside table and stands.

**BEN:**

Perhaps I could crash on the couch for a few hours... and

He walks out of the room and closes his the door. Camera moves in on Sera. She covers her face with her hands. She drops her purse and slides down the wall to the floor, weeping quietly.

SERA (v.o)

I heard the door slam a couple of hours later and he was gone.

**FADE OUT:**

**FADE IN:**

122 EXT. STREET - DAY

Ben coming out of a liquor store with a large brown bag.

**CUT TO:**

123 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sera getting out of a car. The car drives off. Sera examines her face in a pocket mirror. Puts on more lipstick.

**CUT TO:**

124 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Ben is on all fours in the bathroom trying to vomit. His thin frame is heaving. Bottles everywhere.

**CUT TO:**

125 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

Three college boys with beer bottles walk the The Strip. They are all wearing the same numbered jersey. Nice middle-class boys looking for an adventure. They see Sera and go into a huddle before walking over to her.

TALLEST COLLEGE BOY

How much will it cost us to fuck you?

The other two College Boys titter. Sera starts to walk away and then hesitates.

**SERA:**

what you mean. Anyway, I

never date more than one guy  
at a time.

SMALLEST COLLEGE BOY

Come on... we got money... show  
her the money.

The other College Boy gets out his wallet and opens it to  
show her. Sera hesitates, not somehow comfortable with the  
situation, then goes ahead.

**SERA:**

How much of that money did  
you guys want to spend?

TALLEST COLLEGE BOY

How much you want? How about  
two hundred for an hour?

**SERA:**

(becoming annoyed with them)

(no answer)

Try three-hundred for a half  
hour.

OTHER COLLEGE BOY

(nervous)

Three hundred for the hour.

**SERA:**

how it goes. Where are you  
staying?

TALLEST COLLEGE BOY

The Yukon, room twenty-four.

**SERA:**

minutes. You can pay me then.

OTHER COLLEGE BOY

A shower? In fifteen minutes?

**SERA:**

you at a time. RIGHT?

UNDERSTOOD? So... the other

there. OK?

They walk off in a huddle, giggling - three small boys.

**CUT TO:**

126 EXT. YUKON MOTEL - NIGHT

Sera drinks from a beer bottle as she approaches their room.  
She talks to herself.

**SERA:**

Where are the boys this  
weekend, Frank? Why, hell,

learn the one thing I

She looks at the numbers and finds the room. She knocks and a  
moment later the Tallest College Boy opens the door in his  
jockey shorts.

127 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Sera steps in. One boy is coming out of the bathroom wearing  
a towel and the third is sitting in a chair smoking a  
cigarette, which he passes to the boy in the towel. The other  
boy is fooling around with a video camera. The atmosphere is  
weird and Sera is suddenly alert.

The Tallest College Boy hands her the money. He is very well  
built, a football player. Sera hesitates, holding the money.  
The Tallest College Boy closes the door and then leans  
against it. They are all staring at her now. No one says  
anything. Sera smiles suddenly and puts the money in her  
purse. All business.

**SERA:**

They all look at each other.

SMALLEST COLLEGE BOY

I want to fuck her in the  
butt...

He looks at the other.

SMALLEST COLLEGE BOY

...you too, right?

**SERA:**

SMALLEST COLLEGE BOY  
(looking at tallest)  
You said I could fuck her in  
the butt.  
OTHER COLLEGE BOY  
Shut up.  
SMALLEST COLLEGE BOY  
(shouting)

**SERA:**

The Smallest College Boy gets off the bed and comes over to  
Sera.

SMALLEST COLLEGE BOY

The Tallest Boy is still standing in front of the door and  
things are getting strange. The Other Boy turns on the video  
camera. Sera loses her cool.

**SERA:**

(to the Smallest Boy)

of your friends in the butt  
instead.

The room goes very quiet. The kid tears up. Sera tries to  
back-pedal.

**SERA:**

The kid punches her hard in the stomach, knocking her to the  
ground.

**CUT TO BLACK:**

**QUICK FADE IN:**

her body being pounded from behind. The naked legs of two of

the boys behind her. We hear voices, filtered, from a long way off.

**VOICE:**

Go on... fuck her ass...

**OTHER VOICE:**

Look at me... look at me... look at me.

A hand comes into frame and pulls her head up by the hair. A pair of legs moves in. There is the sound of a punch.

**FADE OUT:**

**FADE IN:**

hastily pulled on to legs. The boys exit with sport bags. The last one turns out the lights and closes the door.

**FADE OUT:**

128 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAWN

In the half-light Sera gets up and walks with difficulty to the bathroom.

129 INT. BATHROOM - DAWN

She clicks on the mirror light. Her face is awful. One eye is swollen almost shut. Her top lip is cut.

**CUT TO BLACK:**

130 INT. CAB - EARLY MORNING

Sera gets into the cab with considerable difficulty. The cab driver is a cynic.

**CAB DRIVER:**

a back-door delivery you

be able to pay the fare?

Without speaking she takes out a twenty, leans forward and drops it on the front passenger seat. He drives. Looks at her in the mirror.

**CAB DRIVER:**



ass. What the hell do you

that... dressed like that? You  
oughta be glad the creep

**CUT TO:**

As the cab drives off, Sera walks slowly to the door.

**CUT TO:**

Sera is slumped on the floor of the shower, her arms hugging  
her legs, the water pounding down on her.

**CUT TO:**

Sera opens the door and we see the Landlord. Behind him, on  
the sidewalk, we can see his wife. He is embarrassed.

**ANGLE:**

Sera, wearing dark glasses. She looks terrible. Her mouth is  
swollen and some of the bruising around her eye is visible.

**LANDLADY:**

out by the end of the week.

**CUT TO:**

134 EXT. WHOLE YEAR INN - DAY

Sera gets out of a cab and goes into reception. She is  
wearing huge dark glasses to hide the black eye and the  
bruising.

**CUT TO:**

135 INT. HOTEL - DAY

from an earlier scene.

**DESK CLERK:**

checked back in.

**CUT TO:**

136 EXT. THE STRIP - NIGHT

137 INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Sera comes to an elevator and waits. She is wearing a thin black top without a bra. Her bruised face makes her suddenly very conspicuous and vulnerable. A big man in a white stetson stands next to her. He looks at her and grins. She smiles, coldly. He takes from his pocket two black, hundred dollar chips, places one in each hand and deliberately places each one against her nipples. Other people see this and stop and watch. Sera looks down at his hands and stares until the man becomes uncomfortable.

**STETSON MAN:**

honey?... You on strike?  
And he walks away laughing.

**CUT TO:**

138 EXT. 7-ELEVEN - DAY

Sera is sitting on a freshly-painted red kerb. She smokes a somewhat revealing. Opposite her a bum is sleeping on the pavement. For a moment it looks like Ben. The camera comes in seen her. She drinks coffee from a styrofoam cup. The sun is bright and hot and traffic is noisy.

Improvised scene. (5)

140 INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Sera comes in and the camera follows her as she makes her way to the bar. She has covered up much of the bruising with make-up but it is still pretty obvious. In wide shot we see her strike up a conversation with the man next to her at the bar.

CLOSE SHOT - THE BAR

A hand comes in to shot and grips her arm firmly. We see that it is a casino security guard.

**SERA:**

**SECURITY GUARD:**

And he jerks her arm. People are watching now.

**SERA:**

want to be in here. Just let  
out of here.

**SECURITY GUARD:**

now.  
He steers her firmly across the floor.

**CUT TO:**

141 EXT. CASINO. NIGHT

They reach the sidewalk and, without relaxing his grip, he  
grabs her between the legs with his free hand and says in her

**ear:**

**SECURITY GUARD:**

fucking easy.  
And he pushes her towards the street and walks back into the  
Casino. Sera is shocked. She looks around and the group of  
people who have stopped to watch the event move away.

Sera is throwing clothes into a suitcase. The phone rings.  
She thinks about it for a long time and then it stops. She  
carries on packing and then the phone rings again. She pick  
it up.

**SERA:**

Hello... hello...  
(suddenly alert)  
Ben? Where the fuck are you?  
Give me the address.

**CUT TO:**

143 INT. CAB - LATE AFTERNOON

The driver is black and friendly. The radio drones quietly -

**BLACK DRIVER:**

What in the hell happened to you, Miss?

**SERA:**

Oh... it was an argument.

**BLACK DRIVER:**

Leave him, Miss. Pretty girl like You could get any man that You wanted.

The door opens. Ben is naked. His body looks bad. Leaving the door open, he retreats to the bed.

Sera comes in, closing the door behind her. The shades are drawn and the room is gloomy. Ben has got back into bed. She comes to the bed and sits.

**SERA:**

You. Have You been here since You left? It smells bad in

She clicks on the bedside light and is truly shocked by his face.

**BEN:**

I wanted to see you...

**SERA:**

Oh, Ben... you look so very

pale.

She goes to the bathroom and returns with a wet face-cloth. She wipes his face.

**BEN:**

my angel.

He sits up painfully and finds a bottle, summoning up some

last strength to drink. His entire body shudders as he drains the bottle. He puts it down and focuses on her for the first time. H sees her damaged face, touches her face, looks at her questioningly.

**SERA:**

OK.

Ben begins to cry and that sets her off.

**BEN:**

She shakes her head, unable to speak for the moment. She gets into bed with him, kissing his face. She caresses his whole body, which is shaking, possessed by an uncontrollable fever.

**BEN:**

See how hard You make me  
angel.

She excites him with her hand, kissing his face gently. When he is about to come, she straddles him and brings him inside. As he comes, he opens his eyes wide and looks at her.

**BEN:**

You know I love you... yeah?

**SERA:**

(she comes)

Yes.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK:

**FADE IN:**

Sera is sleeping. A sudden gasp wakes her. Ben is having a spasm. Suddenly his body relaxes. He turns his head, opens his eyes wide and looks straight at her.

**BEN:**

He smiles and turns his head away. He is very still.

**SERA:**

Ben... Ben... Ben?

**CUT TO:**

In the darkened room we can just make out Sera sitting on the bed, looking at the still form of Ben.

**CUT TO:**

147 EXT. STREET NEAR MOTEL - DAWN

Sera walking. A paramedic van goes past with its lights flashing. The soundtrack is empty - silent. We slowly fade in theme music and titles start to roll.

**FADE OUT:**