

ROMEO | JULIET

by Will Simmons

FADE IN:

EXT. KEY WEST, FL - DUSK

We PENETRATE the city.

A teardrop of land choked with liquor joints and tourist traps.

Downtown. The annual *FANTASY FEST PARADE* rages. South Florida's *Mardi Gras*. A *Midsummer Night's Dream* on ecstasy.

Streets BUZZING with COSTUMED REVELERS. Raptured in hedonistic embrace. An eyeful of flesh surging down DUVAL ST.

And in the midst of the mayhem, a MAN cuts through the crowd, against the grain --

ROMEO MORETTI (30's), thoroughbred handsome, a heartbreaker and a skullcrusher, equal parts charm and menace. His life is deception. He's whatever he needs to be, whenever he needs to be it.

And right now, he needs to get inside --

EXT/INT. SLOPPY JOE'S BAR - SAME

A retro saloon overrun by yuppy day-trippers. At the bar --

ROSALINE TORRES (30's), a roguish sexpot with razor smarts and a dark complexion, downing ice-water while she waits for -

Romeo, crossing over and saddling a stool beside her.

ROMEO

Two years in the dark and it takes
an SOS to see your face again.

His stare meets hers. A fickle history between them.

ROSALINE

You don't look half as bad as your
message implied.

ROMEO

And you look twice as stunning as I
remember.

ROSALINE

That's funny, 'cause *what I
remember* is you leaving me high-and-
dry during a riot in Caracas.

ROMEO
I was thrown in jail.

ROSALINE
On purpose.

ROMEO
(smirks, explains)
An opportunity presented itself, I
didn't have time to brief you on
details... it was nothing personal.

ROSALINE
Let's keep it that way.

Their playful rapport cooling over the embers of expired
lust.

ROMEO
Let me buy you a drink.

ROSALINE
Is that an *apology*?

ROMEO
It's a peace offering.

ROSALINE
I'm not interested in being
friends.

ROMEO
Then why'd you come?

ROSALINE
Call it a professional courtesy.
(off look)
So, did you drag me into the open
for a therapy session or do you
actually need my help?

ROMEO
What if I said *both*?

ROSALINE
There's a dozen other contacts you
could've harassed --

ROMEO
But you're the only one who's
better at keeping secrets than I
am.

She takes the compliment.

ROMEO (CONT'D)
Do you have what I asked for?

A subtle nod as her eyes scan the room.

ROSALINE
Where's your shadow?

ROMEO
On standby. Circling the block.

ROSALINE
Tell him to meet us at the White
Street Pier.

EXT. WHITE STREET PIER - MINUTES LATER

Setting sun bleeds onto a deserted concrete pier.

Romeo and Rosaline unload TWO CRATES with RUSSIAN MARKINGS
from a STINGRAY SPEEDBOAT.

ROMEO
(re: crates)
Do I need to take a look?

ROSALINE
Only if you don't trust me.

He grins with the warmth of a man who's been burned by blind
faith. Kneeling beside a crate, he cracks it open...

ROMEO
Everything's untraceable?

ROSALINE
As requested.

On cue, a HUMVEE rumbles onto the pier.

ROSALINE (CONT'D)
Time's up.

Rosaline slinks away from Romeo and into the Speedboat.

ROMEO
Sure I can't convince you to stay?

ROSALINE
 (smirks)
 You probably could...

VROOM! The engine purrs over her voice --

ROSALINE (CONT'D)
 ...but I'd rather leave before you
 have a chance.

VROOOOOM! Propellers carve a wake, thrusting Rosaline into the open ocean. Romeo watching her as the Humvee glides toward him. He pops the back hatch and loads the CRATES.

In the driver's seat, NEFF (50's), a bargain bin grifter full of wit and bullshit. Smoke lost in his lungs as he wolfs cigarettes like pixie stix. He glances back at Romeo.

NEFF
 Hurry-up. We're late.

INT. HUMVEE - MOMENTS LATER

Romeo rides shotgun. Neff at the wheel. Hotboxing the Humvee with Marlboros. Ashtray stuffed with burnt nubs.

ROMEO
 You smoking those or eating 'em?

NEFF
 Just killing time... Got me
 puttering around back alleys for
 three hours waiting for your call
 like a damn lackey.

Neff checks his watch, skin slicked with a nervous sweat.

NEFF (CONT'D)
 (re: buyers)
 You told 'em sundown, right?

ROMEO
 Last I remember. Had some drinks in
 me by the time we agreed on a meet.

NEFF
 Tossin' back highballs with the
 Cartel like it ain't no thing.

Neff sparks another Marlboro, warning Romeo --

NEFF (CONT'D)

You're playing with fire.

ROMEO

All part of the grind.

(pause, explains)

Few years back I was laying pipe in Nairobi, trading favors with a local hit and run crew. Our contact was this bagman named Damon -- low-rent hustler, always lookin' for a quick fix. So, he gets it in his head that he's gonna scam the natives on a batch of AKs -- boost the value and rip the split. But he doesn't know that we already set the price. Deal comes around and he's out shootin' the breeze with these buyers, actin' like they're blood brothers... but when he tries to renege the cost they call his bluff, take a pair of pliers to his eyes and turn his face into a Halloween mask...

NEFF

(agrees)

Hang too close to your mark and you're bound to get burned.

ROMEO

No, he wasn't close enough.

(beat)

If he'd been at the bar the night before, he'd have heard us negotiating the deal. Instead, he got sniffed out. Tried to take a shortcut, ended up blind.

(beat)

There's nuthin' "safe" about keeping your distance. More you draw back, the more *spotlight* you put on yourself.

Humvee speeds toward a DEFUNCT CONSTRUCTION SITE, encasing --

EXT/INT. ABANDONED THEATER - SAME

Roofless. Skeletal. Beams grated in mildew and rust. Dusk painting the STAGE in a fiery gloom where --

TWO BUYERS wait beside a BLACK ESCALADE...

FELIX CALDERON (20's), hardboiled smuggler raised on a steady diet of violence. Hair buzzed to his scalp. *Calderon Family Crest* inked on his arm. Next to him --

"DEUCE" RUIZ (30's), his eyes red-rimmed from too many sleepless nights. Type of "compadre" that'd slit your throat for a chuckle.

Humvee approaches with haste, then bucks to a halt. Romeo and Neff exiting through churned dust. Greeting the buyers...

ROMEO
You look like hell.

DEUCE
Figure I'm already headin' there,
might as well blend in.

Romeo bumps fists with Deuce -- a friendly gesture.

ROMEO
Sorry for the delay.

Felix, all business, not cracking a smile.

FELIX
We don't wait for anyone. If you
can't show up on time, then we'll
take our business elsewhere.

Unfazed, Romeo lifts the Humvee's back hatch --

ROMEO
Your choice.

OPENS a CRATE -- packed with three dozen AK47s. Enough firepower to start a small war, or end one.

ROMEO (CONT'D)
You wanna slum-it with some cut-
rate dealers up north, be my guest.

SNATCHES an AK --

ROMEO (CONT'D)
But don't come bitchin' to me when
your shit starts misfiring.

LOADS the BULLET MAGAZINE --

ROMEO (CONT'D)
I personally inspect every rifle.

PUMPS the CHARGING HANDLE --

ROMEO (CONT'D)

You buy from me, and you're getting
the highest quality weapons on the
market.

HANDS the loaded AK to -- FELIX -- inspecting the hardware --
peering down the sight --

RAT-TAT-TAT!

AK jackhammers -- BULLETS renovating the balcony -- Felix
nodding, satisfied.

FELIX

(re: AKs)

More where these came from?

ROMEO

Long as your money's good, I can
deliver whatever you need.

FELIX

Don't worry 'bout the money. Burn
through twice this much in a night
back home.

Felix tosses a DUFFLE filled with CASH to Romeo.

FELIX (CONT'D)

You operate in Miami?

Romeo counts the take. Neff still eating smoke, shaking his
head --

NEFF

Try to steer clear of major cities.
Keep our cover in the *Keys*; less
heat, more buyers.

FELIX

How long you been runnin' guns?

NEFF

Long enough not to brag about it.
Lived through our fair share of
turf wars.

FELIX

Must be good business for you.

Neff hacks phlegm. Moves to a GUTTED WALL. Spits.

NEFF

Death pays better than life --

Out of nowhere -- *BLAM-BLAM!*

BULLETS puncture Neff's chest. Lethal. Knocking him backward.

WHOOSH! Cannisters launch over the rafters. Geysers of TEAR GAS. Romeo and the others choking on the fumes.

DREADLOCKED HAITIANS stampeding down aisles with MAC-10s --

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM!

Leading the AMBUSH --

MAURICE (30's), a shrapnel-faced brawler with a mouthful of gold. MAC-10 jolting in his grasp, aimed at --

Romeo, Felix and Deuce -- DIVING behind the Humvee as --

Blinding HEADLIGHTS BLAST through the gutted wall. *VROOOOOM!* ENGINES SNARLING like chainsaws from --

A phalanx of DUCATI MOTORCYCLES blazing toward --

Romeo and the others. Pinned down. Disoriented. Faces swollen with snot and tears.

Felix SCREAMING at Deuce --

FELIX

HOW THE HELL'D THEY TRACK US?!

BLAM-BLAM! A symphony of GUNFIRE. MUZZLE FLASHES violating the darkness. BULLETS BOMBARDING Romeo as he SHOUTS --

ROMEO

(to Felix and Deuce)

IN THE TRUCK!

Hands groping for latches as they pile inside --

THE HUMVEE

Romeo squinting through puckered eyes, STOMPING the accelerator. Felix and Deuce SNATCHING AKs from the back.

SCREEEEEECH! Tires SPITTING rubble, FULL-THROTTLE, toward --

A HILLSIDE

Swarming with Ducatis. The Humvee BARRELING toward them. ACCELERATING. FASTER. RAMMING SPEED.

Haitians straddle their bikes. FIRING MAC-10s --

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM!

Bullets SPIDERWEB the Humvee's windshield, distorting Romeo's vision as --

WHAAAAAAM! Ducatis EXPLODE off the Humvee's grill. Twisted and tangled. Flashes jetting from smeared metal.

The Humvee muscling ahead. Shocks PUMPING. Romeo taming the wheel like it needs to be punished.

Haitians rallying on unscathed Ducatis. Two per bike -- one driving; the other GUNNING --

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM!

BULLETS scarring the Humvee as it --

SMASHES through a CHAIN-LINK fence -- BOMBING into --

DOWNTOWN KEY WEST

Ducatis SLINGSHOT on either side of the Humvee. GUNNERS unleashing --

A FLURRY OF BULLETS

Windows shattering. Shards blasting Romeo, Felix and Deuce. Can't see a damn thing so Romeo --

SLAMS THE BRAKES!

Then SWATS the drive gear --

REVERSE! SCREEEECHING onto --

DUVAL STREET

Clogged with the PARADE. Nowhere to drive except the --

SIDEWALK

Humvee JUMPS the curb. Still in REVERSE. RPMs peaking. Fumes bleeding from the bent tailpipe.

Terrified PEDESTRIANS hopscotch and scatter.

Ducatis drafting in the Humvee's wake. Mimicking its movements. Gaining ground as --

Felix and Deuce hang out the Humvee's windows with AKs --

RAT-TAT-TAT!

THE LEAD DUCATI --

WOBBLES in a blur of smoke. Tires SHREDDING. Rims BLADING. Out of control -- SMASHING through storefronts and --

BURSTING INTO FLAMES -- Ducatis swerving around the wreck.

ROMEO

White-knuckled. Pushing the Humvee to its limit. Trying to shake the Ducatis as he --

IMPALES A PARADE FLOAT -- BLASTING through -- RUMBLING into --

MALLORY SQUARE

The heart of Key West's historic district.

Romeo burns across the cobblestone plaza. Eyes locked on side-mirrors. Mind racing. Pulse thrashing between his ears, in rhythm with the AKs -- RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!

Then he sees an ESCAPE --

Behind him, lamps blooming in A SPRAY OF MIST. WAVES. OCEAN.

DUCATIS --

BULLRUSHING the Humvee. Close enough for a KILLSHOT as --

ROMEO --

BLINDS THEM WITH THE HUMVEE'S HIGHBEAMS.

SCREEEEEECH!

Then YANKS THE HANDBRAKE AND RIPS THE WHEEL. The Humvee fishtailing on a hairpin turn as --

Ducatis MISS THE TURN --

SOARING PAST THE HUMVEE AND LAUNCHING OFF A PIER. AIRBORNE. SWALLOWED BY THE SEA.

EXT. OVERSEAS HIGHWAY - MINUTES LATER

The HUMVEE -- heading north -- crossing the *seven mile bridge* -- vacant in the dead of night.

Romeo's pulse slows. A dark void widening in his eyes as --

FELIX SHOVES A GUN IN HIS FACE --

FELIX

Pull over!

Romeo hesitates, caught off-guard.

FELIX (CONT'D)

DO IT!

He swerves onto the shoulder. Jams the brakes.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Get out.

Felix follows Romeo outside, BULLYING him onto a RAIL -- perched high above the ocean.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Who are you?

Romeo's mouth opens but Felix stuffs it with the gun barrel.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Careful what you say next. Lie to me and I'll rip you open. Spill your guts one way or another.

Felix barking paranoia. Deuce intervenes, defending Romeo.

DEUCE

He was taking fire, same as us.

FELIX

Doesn't mean shit.

Romeo eats chrome. A finger-flick from death. Refusing to back down.

ROMEO

I just saved your life, and now you're askin' if I set you up?

FELIX

(re: Haitians)

There's no way they get the drop on us without someone tippin' em off --

ROMEO

The leak was yours, not mine.

FELIX

Prove it.

ROMEO

(combative)

My partner's got a belly full of lead and I'm 100K in the hole. So you tell me how this hijacking plays in my favor?

Felix strokes the trigger. Deliberating. Tension bristling.

DEUCE

C'mon. We can't stand here all night. We'll settle this later.

(re: Romeo)

I'll vouch for him to Bruno. Anything goes wrong, the blame falls on me.

A MENACING PAUSE before Felix lowers the gun.

FELIX

No. This was my score. I'll take the heat.

Romeo braces against the rail, hit by a STIFF WIND. His face is a mask of rippled flesh. Distorted. Unresolved.

EXT/INT. THE SETAI HOTEL - MIAMI BEACH - LATER

The apex of luxury. Five-Star amenities. A playground for the filthy rich. Sleaze festering beneath its slick veneer.

BALLROOM AUCTION

Tables occupied by dapper DAMES and GENTS -- POLITICIANS. SOCIALITES. CRIMINALS. Clinking glasses. Mouths sputtering in bursts of drunken chatter. Front and center sits --

BRUNO CALDERON (40's), a predatory Kingpin making a killing on the *American Dream*. Cunning. Ruthless. Handsome. A wolf cloaked in Armani, prone to unspeakable cruelty.

He glances at --

THE ENTRANCE

Where his daughter arrives, cutting through the crowd --

JULIET CALDERON (20's), eyes dark and glittery and endlessly deep. She's stunning, fiery, elusive. Blessed with maddening beauty and a body to die for.

A roomful of eyes on her as she sits beside Bruno.

BRUNO

Nice of you to show up.

She pecks his cheek. Not lovingly, but respectfully.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Where were you?

JULIET

Closing the gallery.

She grabs a glass of Champagne. Gulps.

Bruno offers his plate.

BRUNO

Have something to eat.

JULIET

(declines)

It's fine. I ate earlier.

BRUNO

By yourself?

JULIET

Same as every day.

BRUNO

You should've called. My afternoon was free.

JULIET

(dubious)

And you wanted to spend it with me?

BRUNO

Of course. I'll always make time for my daughter.

Behind her, mingling through the sea of tables --

Senator MORRIS HAYES (40's), a smooth operator with a D.C. pedigree and Ivy League good looks. Glad-handing suckers as he makes his way to --

His fiancée -- JULIET -- planting a showy kiss on her lips -- making sure everyone in the room can witness.

HAYES

(sarcastic)

Belle of the ball struts in fashionably late, as usual, and doesn't even say a word to her fiancée before she starts kissing champagne.

Juliet grins. Keeps drinking.

JULIET

Didn't think you noticed me.

HAYES

Everyone in this room noticed you.

JULIET

Even the women?

HAYES

Especially the women.

JULIET

Is that a problem?

HAYES

Not as long as you're on my arm.

Hayes snags a bottle of MOET. Refills Juliet's glass.

HAYES (CONT'D)

So, why don't you and I take a lap; shake some hands; charm the crowd; see if that smile of yours can drum up a few campaign donations.

(turns to Bruno)

You mind if I steal her for a bit?

BRUNO

After the auction.

An AUCTIONEER steps on-stage, standing at a podium.

AUCTIONEER

(through PA system)

Ladies and gentlemen may I have your attention please.

(beat)

Our final item tonight comes from an anonymous donor. Proceeds will benefit the Miami Restoration Project: a charity founded by our good friend, Senator Morris Hayes.

Rousing APPLAUSE for Hayes. Beloved. Reviled. He takes his bow. Grinning through bleached teeth.

TWO MODELS unveil the ARTIFACT, stripping its silk sheath.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

Here we have an exquisite piece of artwork, painted in 1928 by Belgian surrealist Rene Magritte. Titled, *The Lovers*; it depicts a tale of forbidden romance. Man and woman in the thralls of lust; their kiss hindered by separate veils. Scholars have praised the painting for its complex portrayal of death and passion. This is an essential piece for any serious collector.

The painting is as described -- enchanting and hopelessly passionate. The type of art that warrants reflection.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

Bidding will begin at one million dollars.

Across the room, a TYCOON lifts his bidding paddle.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

One million.

A DEBUTANTE makes her bid.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

One point one --

TYCOON

One point five million.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

One point five. Do I have one point six?

A hush lingers over the crowd.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)
 Very well. One point five
 million... Going once!

Bruno leans to Juliet, her eyes fixed on the art, entranced.

BRUNO
 (re: painting)
 What do you think?

AUCTIONEER (O.C.)
 Going twice!

The Auctioneer's voice booms in the banquet hall.

JULIET
 (to Bruno, re: painting)
 It's stunning.

AUCTIONEER	BRUNO
And SOLD --	(interrupting)
	Two million.

A surge of WHISPERED GOSSIP amongst the Attendees.

AUCTIONEER
 We have two million in the room.

TYCOON	BRUNO
Two point one --	(bullying)
	Three million.

Bruno stares daggers at the Tycoon. No contest.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)
 Three million is the bid.
 (silence)
 Going once... Going twice... SOLD!

Hayes smirks. Shakes Bruno's hand, as if this were all part of the plan.

HAYES
 Generous donation. I'll make sure
 the money's put to good use.

BRUNO
 I'd expect nothing less.
 (to Juliet)
 The painting's yours.

Juliet softens, warmed by Bruno's gift, pecking his cheek.

JULIET

I love it. Thank you.

TOASTING, Bruno raises his glass to Juliet and Hayes.

BRUNO

An engagement gift for my beautiful daughter and her fiance. May your troubles fade in the light of love.

They drink, lost in mirth as --

A burly MAN strides toward Bruno at a brisk pace --

TURK (40's), all paunch and venom, a natural-born jawbreaker, brutally loyal. He WHISPERS urgently to Bruno. Each sentence thawing Bruno's social mask, exposing the monster beneath.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

You'll have to excuse me.

Bruno stands crassly.

JULIET

Is everything alright?

BRUNO

Bit of business to attend to.
(kisses Juliet's cheek)
I'll see you at home.

He slices through the crowd, Turk following obediently.

EXT/INT. CALDERON FURNITURE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A nameless brick building in a district of doppelgangers.

Inside -- SOFAS, CHAIRS, TABLES, LAMPS. Stacked and organized on towering shelves. CUSHIONS gutted and discarded in piles.

Romeo, Felix and Deuce wait by the Humvee as --

Bruno and Turk arrive in a jet-black MAYBACH. Doors OPENING.

Bruno bear-hugs Deuce and Felix, seemingly jovial, then --

SLAMMING Felix against the chassis. Throttling his neck. Domineering. Close. Quiet. In control.

BRUNO

Tell me what happened.

FELIX

I swear, I did everything like you said.

BRUNO

Then how'd *they* find you.

FELIX

I don't know...

Felix croaks, swallowing his words.

Bruno tightening his grip, inflicting pain with the malice of a seasoned killer. His temper tipping in a heartbeat.

BRUNO

When I send you on a job, I expect you to get it done clean or come back offerin' a pound of flesh, beggin' for mercy. 'Cause this half-assed bullshit ain't gonna cut it. And now I'm hearing you let information slip, it makes me lose faith.

(pause)

Look me in the eye, son.

Felix's eyes bulging, blotched with burst blood-vessels.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

This isn't a birthright. You only inherit what you earn. And if you can't carry your weight then I'll cut you loose... Am I clear?

(Felix nods weakly)

Good.

Bruno releases Felix. Focus redirected at Romeo -- the outsider. Bruno and Deuce share a WHISPERED EXCHANGE, deciding Romeo's fate as --

Romeo waits by the Humvee, glancing at -- AKs -- two steps away -- he could lunge for a GUN if things turn bloody.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

What's your name?

ROMEO

Romeo.

BRUNO

Romeo. That a nickname?

ROMEO
If it is, no one told me.

Bruno inspects the WEAPONS, mildly impressed.

BRUNO
Some high-powered hardware. These
type of guns are tough to come by.

ROMEO
For some people maybe.

BRUNO
But not for you... So, who's your
supplier?

ROMEO
Friend of mine.

Bruno grabs an AK. Checks the clip. LOADED.

BRUNO
This *friend* have a name?

ROMEO
We don't use names. Safer that way.

SAFETY OFF. The weapon dangles menacingly at Bruno's side.

BRUNO
You ex-military?

ROMEO
Ex-con.

BRUNO
Where'd you serve time?

ROMEO
You name it, I've been there.

BRUNO
Humor me with the details.

A breathless PAUSE. Their eyes locked like antlers.

ROMEO
Did a year in Sing-Sing for armed-
rob. Three in San Quentin on an
assault charge. Few other stints
here and there.

BRUNO

Wasting valuable years behind bars. Either you're not very good at your job or you've been working with the wrong people.

ROMEO

Make a name for yourself in this business, and you're bound to get locked-up once or twice.

BRUNO

Then how come I've never heard of you?

ROMEO

Maybe you have and you just don't know it yet.

(beat)

In my line of work it pays to be anonymous... But if the money's right I'll always take a risk.

BRUNO

You've killed for money?

ROMEO

(rhetorical)

'What else?

The answer pleases Bruno. Eyes shifting to the Humvee.

BRUNO

How 'bout the guns? Gimme a rundown.

ROMEO

I've got contacts from Belgrade to Bogota. Death dealers sittin' on caches of every weapon under the sun: assault rifles, rockets, explosives -- if it kills, I know where to find it.

BRUNO

What's the turnaround?

ROMEO

Varies. Three weeks tops.

(beat)

Make an order and I'll get you the best price.

BRUNO
 (re: Felix)
 Unlike my son, I don't rush into
 business with strangers --

ROMEO
 Then don't waste my time. I deal in
 absolutes. You can cut me in, or we
 can go our separate ways.

Romeo bluffs hard.

Bruno studying him with eyes that've seen through lies and
 brought men to their knees.

BRUNO
 You got a place to stay?

ROMEO
 Not at the moment.

BRUNO
 (pause, considers)
 It's late. I'm sure all of us could
 use a full night's rest.
 (no choice)
 You'll stay under my roof. Get
 yourself cleaned up. We'll finish
 this conversation in the morning.

EXT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - NIGHT

An elegant LAIR built on blood money. Its features murky in
 the deepening night. Surrounded by sentinel hedges. SECURITY
 CAMS. MOTION SENSORS.

In the COURTYARD, a sampling of Bruno's exotic car
 collection. McLaren. Rolls Royce. Aston Martin. Ferrari.

Maybach glides to a stop. Romeo, Bruno and Turk exiting
 beneath a mast of copper light.

BRUNO
 Turk'll show you to the guest
 house.

Bruno disappears inside the mansion.

Romeo steals a glance at a SECOND FLOOR WINDOW --

Where JULIET studies him through the glass. Their eyes
 meeting. Distant. Magnetic. A glimpse of temptation.

And with a flick of her wrist, the LIGHT DIES.

THE PERIMETER

Turk and Romeo traverse the sprawling estate. Lavished with the finest luxuries. Cabanas. Grottoes. Infinity pools.

EXT/INT. GUEST HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Turk shows Romeo to his ROOM -- Marble floors. Slick decor. Stock art. Fresh linens.

LATER

Romeo. No sleep. Wide-eyed in the witching hour.

His CELL PHONE BUZZES. A TEXT MESSAGE. He checks it. Then --

Slips OUTSIDE -- nimbly evading CAMERAS and MOTION SENSORS -- and SPRINTING undetected out of the compound.

EXT. SOUTH POINTE PIER - PRE-DAWN

Charcoal sky looms over the sleeping sun. Waves battering a lonely JETTY -- skeletal rocks, cloaked in a hanging mist.

Breakwater frothing as Romeo ventures ahead. A DARK FIGURE blurred in the distance through sheets of fog.

Romeo treads cautiously, toward the Figure.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. Up ahead, a dull grind, barely audible.

DARK FIGURE
(to himself)
Dammit.

Through swirling mist, the Figure comes into view...

It's NEFF. ALIVE.

An unlit CIGARETTE dangling from his lips.

ROMEO
Thought I'd be folding a flag over
your casket after last night.

Neff turns. Faces Romeo. Livid.

NEFF

What tha' hell happened back there?! That was supposed to be a routine swap. You didn't say shit about an ambush.

ROMEO

If I'd known, we wouldn't have been there.

NEFF

(bitterly)

That's the last time I go out in the field with you. I'm always either a punching bag or a target dummy.

ROMEO

Better than a corpse.

Neff irritably flicks the wheel on his LIGHTER.

NEFF

Help me out with this.

Wind hissing as Romeo shields Neff. Lighter SPARKING. Flame licking ashes from Neff's first puff. Grimacing. In pain.

ROMEO

How's the chest?

NEFF

Broken ribs. Bruised ego. Feels like I'm gettin' stabbed in the back every time I take a breath. That flak jacket ain't worth shit.

ROMEO

Saved your life.

NEFF

Startin' to think I'd be better off dead than having to cover for your ass. Stress'll kill me before the bullets have a chance.

ROMEO

Wasn't the cleanest exit --

NEFF

I've taken shits cleaner than what you left behind.

Smoke soothes Neff. A bad habit in his laundry list of vices.

NEFF (CONT'D)

DEA coulda' blackballed you for that type of property damage. But lucky for you, they're under the gun from D.C, and they want you on a *fast track* to close this case. So I need to know where you stand?

ROMEO

Got my foot in the door, but it's not even 24 hours. Gimme some time.

NEFF

Not gonna happen.

From his trench coat, Neff retrieves a DOCUMENT: CLASSIFIED.

NEFF (CONT'D)

(re: papers)

They're giving you ten days to wrap up, then I got orders to pull you out.

Romeo flips through pages. Ink bleeding in the damp air.

ROMEO

What's the rush?

NEFF

Election's next month, and our friends in D.C. need some extra campaign-ammo.

ROMEO

(nods, pissed)

And corruption scandals make explosive headlines.

NEFF

That's the game.

ROMEO

I'm not playing on their schedule.

NEFF

They're footin' the bill -- means you're their bitch, and I'm stuck holdin' the leash.

ROMEO

There's no way I'm building a major case in ten days.

NEFF

Seen you do it before.

ROMEO

That was small-time. Buncha' hippies actin' like kingpins. No priors. No network. No blood on their hands.

NEFF

Same template. Bigger targets.

(beat)

You do this, and I'll make sure you get the pick of the litter next time around.

Neff hands Romeo a fresh CELL PHONE, urging his compliance...

No use arguing. Romeo bites his tongue and glances at --

INSERT -- CELL SCREEN: A FILE WITH ROMEO'S FALSE IDENTITY.

NEFF (CONT'D)

Your forged profile is active in our database. Anyone runs a background check on you and they're gonna find a career criminal with a badass rep.

INSERT -- CELL SCREEN: IMAGES/DOSSIERS OF BRUNO AND HAYES.

ROMEO

How's our intel?

NEFF

Spotty. These guys cover their tracks pretty well. But we know Calderon's suckin' on the Cartel's tit. Smugglin' pure outta' Colombia, cuttin' it thin then floodin' the ghettos, burbs, downtown -- he's got dealers spread across twenty counties. Empire runnin' from South Beach to Tampa.

ROMEO

And he's primed to expand.

NEFF

(nods)

No doubt. Guy's a titan. He's on the verge of becoming the biggest supplier in the US.

(continuing the debrief)

Money gets cleaned through legit biz -- mini-marts, packies... hell, he's even got a furniture store. Cocky bastard.

ROMEO

How's he stay off the grid?

NEFF

He doesn't. Everyone knows he's flauntin' blood money, but no one gives a shit, long as he keeps dumpin' cash into the community. Locals nibblin' outta his palm for a piece of the action.

ROMEO

And what about the Senator?

NEFF

Hayes. Makes Nixon look like a Boy Scout. He's got a solid base here in Florida. Probably lookin' to push nationwide. Maybe he makes a run at the White House next cycle. But right now, he's buildin' a brick wall around Calderon. Takin' bribes to keep the feds in the dark.

Romeo studies the DOSSIER.

ROMEO

So, why's he engaged to Calderon's daughter?

NEFF

Old-school formality. Keepin' it all in the family. To be honest, we don't know much about her.

ROMEO

Maybe she's a weak link.

NEFF

Could be. But don't let her mess with your head.

(MORE)

NEFF (CONT'D)

This girl ain't a saint. Trust me. She's hustlin' like the rest of 'em. Went AWOL for half-a-decade down in the jungle -- Cartel territory. Turned up stateside 'bout two years ago and opened an Art Gallery on Brickell.

ROMEO

Could be using it as a front?

NEFF

It's worth a look.
(re: Juliet)
Either way, she's wise to the game. So, don't go treatin' her like some damsel in distress.
(clarifying)
Our targets are Calderon and Hayes. But if you have to break the daughter to get to 'em, so be it. Just get it done quickly.

EXT. STAR ISLAND - DAY

Clouds flee the rising sun. A canvas of electric blue dawning over Miami. Postcard-worthy. Beach weather.

Romeo jogs toward --

A BRIDGE -- connecting Star Island to the MacArthur Causeway.

THREE GUARDS stationed at the SECURITY GATE.

GUARD

You lost?

ROMEO

I'm a guest of Bruno Calderon.

The Guard picks up a PHONE and DIALS.

GUARD

(into phone)
Yea, this is Winston at the gate. I've got a stray here who says he's staying with you.

Ear pressed to the receiver. Eyes scanning Romeo.

GUARD (CONT'D)

(into phone)
Yes ma'am. I'll let him know.

The Guard hangs up and OPENS THE GATE.

GUARD (CONT'D)

You're in.

Words lingering, unintentionally ominous. Romeo crosses over, committing to the mission, beyond the point of no return.

GUARD (CONT'D)

Oh, and I'd run if I were you.

Baffled, Romeo breaks into a sprint, halfway across the bridge when --

A firebrand MERCEDES SLS COUPE speeds toward him and SCREECHES to a stop. Gleaming. Red hot. Engine purring. Top down. In the driver's seat --

JULIET

A sheer sundress clinging to her curves. Bronzed skin. Lush hair, unruly in the breeze.

She eyeballs Romeo. Her words dripping with impatience --

JULIET

My father's been looking for you.

Romeo sucks wind as Juliet tosses him a NEON BATHING SUIT.

JULIET (CONT'D)

Get changed. We're late.

Awkward silence. Romeo perplexed. Juliet waiting for him to strip.

JULIET (CONT'D)

No time to be bashful.

ROMEO

Shouldn't I --

JULIET

(interrupting)

Don't speak. Just strip.

Juliet revelling in Romeo's discomfort.

JULIET (CONT'D)

What? You don't like the color?

ROMEO

Not really my style.

JULIET

Too bad. Put it on and get in the car.

Juliet turns away. Romeo hesitates. Then steps behind the fender, preserving dignity, shucking his wet pants.

Juliet glimpsing him in the rearview. Smiling wryly. Her eyes fixed on his pale backside as he puts on the bathing suit.

Passenger seat. Romeo hops in. No time to get settled. As soon as his ass hits the leather --

VROOOOM! Juliet peels out. Across the bridge. Burning rubber. More *Danica Patrick* than *Driving Miss Daisy*.

Romeo buckling his seatbealt. Mortified. Enthralled.

EXT/INT. MERCEDES SLS COUPE - DAY

SLS fireballs down the MacArthur Causeway. A blade of cement banked by emerald canals. The bottleneck to South Beach.

Juliet weaves though traffic. Aggressive. Fearless. Skirting the edges of sanity. Headwind buzzing. Sun glaring.

JULIET

You get motion sickness?

ROMEO

No.

JULIET

Me neither.

HORNS BLARING as Juliet wrenches the wheel. Stomping the gas.

JULIET (CONT'D)

Took this car for a spin before I bought it. Salesman's sitting next to me, beer-gut flopped over his junk. Few minutes into the ride and I'm burning down the highway, his face starts going green, dripping sweat. Guess he couldn't stomach my driving style. Ended up puking in the air vent. Stink's finally faded, so if you get the urge to blow chunks, make sure you do it out the window.

Speedometer hitting 100 MPH. And RISING. FASTER.

ROMEO

You always drive this fast?

JULIET

No point in owning a car like this if you're gonna obey the speed limit.

ROMEO

Cops 'round here must love you.

JULIET

(smiles)

I practically bankroll their precinct with paid tickets. Lil' pricier than a rollercoaster, but the thrills are better when you're the one behind the wheel.

(glances at Romeo)

If you want me to slow down, just ask.

Quick cuts. In and out of lanes. Panorama blurring. Juliet accelerating, toying with Romeo. He keeps his cool --

ROMEO

What's your top speed?

JULIET

Street or track?

ROMEO

Street.

JULIET

Pushed 197 on the interstate south of Tampa. Probably was closer to 205 but the needle maxed out.

Juliet feeling suddenly competitive.

JULIET (CONT'D)

What about you?

ROMEO

224 in a Bugatti Veyron on the A9 Autobahn. Near Munich.

Her eyes downcast. Jealous. Impressed.

JULIET

How'd you end up there?

ROMEO
Business.

JULIET
Selling cars?

ROMEO
Not exactly.

JULIET
So, what exactly do you do?

ROMEO
(pause, considers)
I find items in short supply.

JULIET
Such as?

ROMEO
Depends on the customer.

Juliet smirks knowingly, unfazed by Romeo's vagueness.

JULIET
Alright... Say I wanna buy ten *keys*
of coke... Are you my man?

Playful banter suddenly turning serious.

ROMEO
Are we talking business or
hypotheticals?

JULIET
You decide.

ROMEO
I don't give free quotes.

JULIET
And what if I made an official
offer?

ROMEO
Are you?

JULIET
No.

ROMEO
Then there's nothing to discuss.

JULIET

If you say so... But my father
doesn't make friends with reputable
men. So, odds are you're a smuggler
or a thief.

ROMEO

Suppose I'm both.

JULIET

Then the two of you will get along
just fine.

EXT. BAYSIDE MARINA - AFTERNOON

A checkerboard of YACHTS tethered to sun-scarred docks.

Romeo follows Juliet to a palatial SEA-CRUISER. Opulent.
Extravagant. Gleaming white. Bruno's prized possession.

Mid-summer festivities at a feverish pitch. Music BLASTING.
Booze flowing. Scantly-clad VIXENS cavorting on the sundeck.

Bruno, Hayes, Felix, Deuce and Turk in the mix. Savoring the
false affection. Brittle pleasures. Kings among harpy
sycophants.

Juliet steps aboard, Bruno aiding her, acknowledging Romeo --

BRUNO

Thought you might've skipped town
on us.

ROMEO

Went for a morning run.

BRUNO

(suspicious)
Where to?

ROMEO

South Pointe Pier.

Bruno nods guardedly. Dubious. Cordial. Tough to read.

BRUNO

Only so much you can do to beat
back *Father Time*.

(beat)

You should try the Ocean to Alton
loop. I'll show you next time.

ROMEO
'preciate it.

Bruno OFFERS HIS HAND. Romeo takes it.

BRUNO
Let's get you a drink.
(to Turk / re: ship)
Turk. Move this beast.

JAY-Z & Kanye West's *No Church in the Wild* leads us into...

EXT. BISCAYNE BAY - SERIES OF SHOTS - WEALTH, BOOZE, WOMEN

Propellers churn placid waters. The Yacht spitting froth in its wake. Miami's skyline in the distance.

Troubles fading with the city. Liquor loosening inhibitions. The lure of Paradise, warping realities. Passengers feeling the effects. Merriment bordering on debauchery.

Romeo partakes in the indulgences. Drinks. Music. Dancing. Conversations muttered beneath the THROBBING BASS -- racing like an anxious heartbeat, desperate for a reprieve.

He loses himself in the moment. And whatever skin he's wearing, it's not his own, except when --

He steals glances at Juliet. A raw, palpable connection between them -- the kind that sinks ships and sacks cities. A ruinous bond, best left dormant.

Bruno grabs Romeo's shoulder and leads him to --

THE UPPER DECK

A parasol-table-set where Hayes sits, puffing on a cigar.

BRUNO
I want you to meet my daughter's
fiance --

HAYES
Morris Hayes.

Hayes extends his hand. Romeo shakes it.

BRUNO
(clarifying)
Morris is a trusted friend. You can
speak freely around him.

Down below, one of the Gold Diggers BECKONS Bruno.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
 (to Romeo and Hayes)
 I'll leave you to it.

Bruno departs suddenly, mingling with jailbait.

Hayes motioning for Romeo to approach.

HAYES
 Come. Take a seat.

VINTAGE CHAMPAGNE and BOXED CIGARS on the table.

HAYES (CONT'D)
 You smoke?

Romeo sits as Hayes opens the HUMIDOR.

ROMEO
 Cigars all taste the same to me.

HAYES
Then you haven't met your match.
 (re: cigar)
 Try this.

Hayes snips the end off a stogie. Hands it to Romeo. LIGHTS IT. Tobacco wilting as Romeo puffs.

HAYES (CONT'D)
 So?

ROMEO
 Not bad.

HAYES
 That's a *Cohiba Behike*. Very rare.
 You're inhaling \$50 of tobacco with
 each breath.

Romeo HOLDS HIS BREATH. Then EXHALES. A river of smoke slipping into the wind.

ROMEO
 Maybe it's me, but \$50 tastes just
 as shitty as 10.

Hayes mouths his stogie, short breaths settling in his chest.

HAYES

Bruno tells me you're a man with rare connections.

ROMEO

I'm just a middle-man.

HAYES

Don't be modest. I know all about you -- *Birth Certificate; Social Security; Bank Statements; Medical Records; Arrest Warrants* -- I've seen everything you have to offer, and more than you'd like to share.

Romeo keeps quiet. Can't tell if Hayes is threatening him.

HAYES (CONT'D)

Relax. I won't sell your secrets unless you give me a reason to.

ROMEO

What do you want?

HAYES

Full disclosure.

(beat)

There's nothing about your past that I can't unearth. And I'll dig deeper if I have to, but it'd be in your best interest to come clean on your own. So, if there's any dirt under those fingernails, now's the time to scrape it out on the table.

Ashes flaking from Hayes' cigar. Wafting in Romeo's face.

ROMEO

Yea... I'm sittin' on about a decade's worth of back taxes, but I bet you already knew that.

Stalemate.

Hayes smirks. A bit ruffled. But doesn't seem too worried. He simply stands and smiles, brushing past Romeo.

HAYES

If you think of anything else, be sure to let me know.

Romeo, in the dark, maybe dead in the water, watching as --

Hayes chats with Bruno on the sundeck, trading secrets.

LATER

Romeo sits on a rail at the stern. Alone. Eyeing the party from afar as Bruno crosses over to him.

BRUNO
You like it out here?

ROMEO
Sure.

Straddling the rail, Bruno unties a SKIFF from the cleat.

BRUNO
(cryptic)
I wanna show you somethin'.

He boards the small vessel, gesturing for Romeo to join him.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
Let's take a ride.

EXT. STILTSVILLE - BISCAYNE BAY - LATER

Schools of BAIT FISH thrash in the turquoise shoal.

A scattered cropping of BUNGALOW HOMES erected on tall stilts, standing freely in the open ocean. Verandas stained with creosote and gull droppings.

Bruno ties the SKIFF to a dock. Romeo beside him, watching BAIT FISH swim the gauntlet beneath his feet. Their movements erratic. Desperate. Under the perpetual threat of death.

On the vista, not a soul in sight. Desolate. Isolated. Forsaken. The type of place where bad deeds go unnoticed.

Up the ramp, Bruno opens the PADLOCKED DOOR, leading Romeo inside --

INT. STILT HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A dank den. Rustic. Sparse.

Shingles leaking slits of sunlight, choked in darkness. Floorboards scarred with nail marks and speckled blood.

Piss-soaked mattress. Bed pan. Shackles. And in the center --

A METAL CHAIR, bolted down, fitted with LEATHER RESTRAINTS.

Bruno motions for Romeo to sit.

BRUNO

Go ahead.

Romeo hesitates. A hint of fear in his eyes.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

This is gonna happen one way or
another. You can cooperate or
resist... Your choice.

No turning back. Romeo squats in the chair while Bruno
retrieves a JUG OF GRAIN ALCOHOL. Hands it to Romeo.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Have a drink.

A BEAT. Romeo takes a swig. Puckers from the strident taste.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Finish it.

A caged moment. Bruno not fucking around.

Romeo tilts the jug, guzzling, nearly gagging then --

COUGHING hoarsely. Snot spattering. Neck throbbing.
Swallowing spit. Keeping his stomach at bay.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

How's it taste?

His face reddened from the hot rush of liquor.

ROMEO

Like gasoline.

(beat)

What is it?

BRUNO

Homemade truth serum.

Romeo blinks rapidly. Eyes rolling. Speech slurring.

ROMEO

(re: interrogation)

Thought we already crossed this
bridge.

Bruno binds Romeo's wrists with the leather restraints.

BRUNO

Trust takes time. And I need to be absolutely certain you're as filthy as you say you are.

In the far corner. A WAR CHEST. Bruno sifts through the contents -- Rusted tools. Knives. Pliers. Sheers. Hatchets.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I've been fooled before. Learned my lesson a long time ago.

(reflective)

Lies are like spare change, discarded then forgotten... Until one day the vault's empty, and you're starving. No coins left in your pocket. So, you take to the streets. Alone. Desperate. Drenched in your own stink. Pleading with strangers. Admitting all the truths that escaped you before. Baring your soul for scraps. But no one's listening.

(beat)

You find yourself wasting away at death's doorstep, and it's only then you realize that the lies can't save you anymore.

ROMEO

I've got nuthin' to hide.

BRUNO

Saying it is one thing. Convincing me is another.

ROMEO

Then let's get on with it. Ask away.

Bruno's eyes penetrating Romeo.

BRUNO

Who do you work for?

ROMEO

Myself.

BRUNO

You sure about that?

ROMEO

Positive.

BRUNO
 I'm not feeling the sincerity.
 (beat)
 Tell me again. *Who do you work for?*

Bruno slips a PAIR OF WORN LEATHER GLOVES onto his hands.

ROMEO
 You're gonna get the same answer
 every time.

BRUNO
 I hope so.
 (again)
Who do you work for?

ROMEO
 No one.

THWACK! Bruno WALLOPS Romeo. Mouthshot. Stung.

BRUNO
 CIA? DEA? NSA? Which one?

ROMEO
 This is a waste of time.

The haze of drunkenness upon Romeo. Bruno brings the pain --

WHAM! Air SMASHED from Romeo's lungs.

Bruno exuding a sadistic calm. Guiltless. Workmanlike.

BRUNO
 Admit that you're *undercover*, and
 I'll let you die with dignity.

ROMEO
 (catches his breath)
 You're making a mistake.

Bruno seething. Muscles pumped with blood.

BRUNO
 Five minutes from now, you won't
 even recognize yourself. This is
 your last chance to save face.

NO RESPONSE. A WALL OF SILENCE. Bruno breaks it --

THWACK!

BRUNO (CONT'D)
WHO DO YOU WORK FOR!?

ROMEO
I already told you.

BRUNO
Not good enough.

Bruno PUMMELS Romeo. Fists like meat cleavers.

WHAM! WHAM! Romeo shudders. Gulping. Grimacing. GROWLING --

ROMEO
C'mon... HIT ME!

Hurt hardening to hate. Romeo takes control. Defying Bruno. Provoking him. Dangling the DARE like bait.

Bruno lashes out. SEEING RED.

THWACK! WHAM! WHAM! A blur of knuckles. Rapid impacts.

Romeo's head is a hornet's nest. Full of pain and fury --

ROMEO (CONT'D)
AGAIN!

Bruno in the thralls of bloodlust. Berserk. Losing control.

ROMEO (CONT'D)
HARDER!

Mania bristling as Bruno LANDS A SHOT to Romeo's GUT --

Heaving. VOMITING. Pure liquid. Nothing of substance. Romeo is a shell. Hollow to the core.

Fatigue taking its toll. Bruno's strength sapped. Weariness birthing a glimmer of compassion. Respect.

Romeo, still retching. Doubled-over. Bruno pats his back.

BRUNO
(comforting)
Easy. Breathe. You're alright.
(under his breath)
You're alright.

EXT. STILT HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Gulls hovering the deck. Soaring. Casting WINGED SHADOWS on --

Romeo, lounging in a chair. His wounds soaked in golden rays.

The sun breathes life into him. A rejuvenating warmth. The kind you can appreciate only after a brush with death.

Bruno cracks TWO BEERS. Hands one to Romeo. Sits beside him.

BRUNO

(re: beer)

It's piss-warm, but it's all I got.

Romeo sips the brew. Savoring it. Never tasted so good.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

(re: beating)

You know why I stopped?

ROMEO

Probably something to do with the vomiting.

BRUNO

(reflective)

It was the way you looked at me... I've worn *that face* before. I've been behind *those eyes*. And I knew you weren't lying.

Bruno takes a deep breath. Eyeing the stilts homes.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

These houses were built during Al Capone's heyday. Used as offshore gambling havens. On any given night you'd find a handful of outlaws, bootleggers and bank-robbers risking their fortunes.

(beat)

But for Capone this was more than just a parlor. He'd spend weeks out here by himself. Isolated. Scanning the horizon. It was the only place where he could see his enemies coming from all directions. Spot 'em miles away.

Bruno pauses. Turning to Romeo. Getting down to business.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

There's something I need you to do for me.

(the job)

(MORE)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Last few months I've been bleeding supply. Shipments off the docks gettin' hijacked by some up-and-comers; same crew that jumped you in Key West. We've been switchin' truck routes, delivery dates; anything to throw 'em off. But they're always a step ahead. It's gone beyond coincidence or luck. Someone's feeding 'em intel. Someone close to me. And I need you to silence him.

ROMEO

Why me?

BRUNO

I couldn't ask one of my own men to do it.

(beat)

I need someone neutral. An *outsider*. Like you. No ties. No loyalties.

(beat)

Find the rat. Bring him to me, and I'll pay you more money than you can spend in a lifetime.

Bruno offers his HAND... Romeo pauses before accepting it -- a handshake sealed in sweat and blood.

EXT. BISCAYNE BAY - LATER

Clouds stitched across the ruby sunset, torn open like a wound. The YACHT speeding into the hemorrhage. Back to Miami.

The PARTY is dead. Passengers slumbering drunkenly.

Bruno helming the ship. Romeo sprawled on the deck below. Awake. Alone until...

Juliet sits beside him with a MEDICAL KIT. Close. Intimate.

JULIET

Let me see your face.

Her fingers are delicate against his bruised skin. Examining. Seeing his insides -- The cuts. The flaws. The darkness.

JULIET (CONT'D)

You'll heal.

Romeo's eyes glued to her as she patches him up.

ROMEO

Done this before?

JULIET

(nods)

Spent a few years volunteering for the Peace Corps in Colombia. Dressed plenty of wounds. Most of 'em worse than yours.

ROMEO

What part of Colombia?

JULIET

Cartagena.

(reminiscing)

I remember, there was this one boy. Skinny as a twig. Rags hanging off his shoulders. Poster child for one of those informercials you'd mute on TV.

(beat)

The older kids would always steal his shoes. But he didn't seem to care. Just kept smiling. Every morning he'd snarf down a plate of scraps, and go racing through the slums. Bare feet mangled on pebbles and broken glass.

(beat)

At night, he'd come back with his soles gashed like bloody stumps. Lying on the ground while I patched him up. But he wouldn't tell me where he went, so I started following him. Every day he'd go to the richest district in Cartagena, and he'd wander the streets. Locals spitting on him, treating him like a pest. So, I asked him why he kept going there... and he told me it was a reminder that if he ran hard enough through the pain, he couldn't be stopped; that the only thing standing in his way was himself.

She finishes cleaning his wound.

JULIET (CONT'D)

Good as new.

ROMEO

I owe you.

JULIET

How 'bout we settle that debt?

ROMEO

What'd you have in mind?

JULIET

Tomorrow. Midnight. Meet me at the
Fontainebleau on Collins.

Suddenly, a DISRUPTIVE VOICE --

BRUNO (O.S.)

Jules!... Come up here!

Bruno summons her to the helm.

JULIET

(shouting back)
Coming!

She rises, facing Romeo, repeating --

JULIET (CONT'D)

Tomorrow. Midnight.

-- then walking away, and with her goes the warmth. Romeo feeling an emptiness in her absence.

EXT/INT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - GUEST HOUSE - MORNING

Bedroom. Dawn creeps through the window. Romeo fast asleep...

WHACK! An abrasive rattling. Deuce BARGES inside.

DEUCE

Let's go. Get up.

Bleary-eyed, Romeo rolls over, still sore from his injuries.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Time to pound the pavement. Long
day ahead.

Romeo throws on his dirty shirt and pants.

ROMEO

Where are we going?

DEUCE

Givin' you the backstage tour. Full access to our operation.

ROMEO

This Bruno's idea?

DEUCE

(nods)

You musta' made an impression. He usually keeps a tight lid on new recruits. Guess he took a shine to you.

EXT/INT. CALDERON FURNITURE WAREHOUSE - LATER

Bustling. Hive-minded WORKERS keep busy. Filling orders. Operating forklifts. Loading furniture. It all seems legit.

Deuce takes Romeo on a tour of the facility.

DEUCE

We got sixteen supply outlets from Dade to Broward. A fleet of mules smuggling straight up the coast. But all of our product goes through here first.

The warehouse is massive. A maze of towering shelves, stacked with BEDS, SOFAS, TABLES, DRESSERS.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Most of the furniture is legit. Honest business keeps the feds off our back.

Far side, a haggard ACCOUNTANT pours over a BUSINESS LEDGER.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

We run a clean book. Pay our taxes on time. Keep everyone blind to the *real money-maker*.

Deuce leads Romeo through a series of HALLWAYS to --

MAINTENANCE CLOSET

Double-wide doors secured with an INDUSTRIAL LOCK. Deuce uses a MASTER KEY to open up. ENTERS with Romeo in tow.

The ROOM is excessively large. Spotless. Stocked with cleaning supplies and spare parts.

Nonchalant, Deuce smacks the FIRE ALARM -- SILENCE.

Then suddenly, a UTILITY SHELF sways outward, revealing...

FREIGHT ELEVATOR

Hidden behind the false wall. Deuce steps inside. Romeo trailing, impressed with the concealed entrance.

Deuce hits the DOWN BUTTON. ELEVATOR drops fast. Sinking into the depths. Then STOPPING. DOORS OPENING into...

THE TUNNEL

Vaulted ceiling. Wider than a subway. Blacktop underfoot.

Romeo and Deuce pace forward.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

The tunnel's rigged to blow.

On the walls, a runway of RED LIGHTS. Pulsing. C4 BOMBS.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

(hypothetical)

Vice starts sniffin' round here with a raid squad, and BOOM! Up in smoke. Thirty pounds of C4 to cover our tracks.

Up ahead...

UNDERGROUND LAB

Sterile workspace. Ventilation ducts. Bright lights. ILLEGALS cutting COCAINE on steel tables. Masks covering their mouths.

Romeo and Deuce enter.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Welcome to Santa's sweatshop.

A lingering hush. Soft murmur of shuffling hands and tools. The workforce is small compared with the room's size.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Normally busier than this, but we're at the end of our stock. New shipment coming in tomorrow night.

Romeo and Deuce observe the assembly line --

Illegals cut COCAINE with BAKING SODA. Weigh it on scales. Then sweep measured portions into VACUUM SEALED BAGS.

ROMEO

Any trouble with your mules?

DEUCE

A few hand-grabs. Nickel and dime shit. Everyone's lookin' to pad their pockets. But thieves don't last long in my shop.

Nearby, a pile of gutted CUSHIONS and MATTRESSES.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Cut product gets stitched into the cushions for local transport.

Deuce picks up two DUFFLES overflowing with PACKAGED COCAINE.

DEUCE (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

Long-distance shipments take some extra care...

EXT/INT. CALDERON AUTO-REPAIR - LATER

A high-end chop shop. Romeo and Deuce cut through the repair-pit, duffles in-hand.

DEUCE

...law's crackin' down on checkpoints and weigh-stations. Truckloads crossin' state-lines gotta be air-tight.

ROMEO

How far north are you shipping?

DEUCE

I told you -- all the way up the coast. Just closed a deal with a new crew in Brooklyn. Been runnin' bulk to 'em for 'bout a month now.

At the REAR GARAGE, a GUARD recognizes Deuce. Lets him pass.

REAR GARAGE

Two stock model TOYOTA CAMRYS. Stripped. Cavities carved under the engine and side paneling.

Deuce hands the duffles to a pair of WELDERS, who pack the COKE BRICKS inside the disemboweled vehicles.

DEUCE (CONT'D)
Cars come off the dock pre-packed.
But we always cut our product, then
repackage before sendin' it north.

Deuce sprays the vacuum sealed drugs with a synthetic scent.

DEUCE (CONT'D)
Smell keeps K9s from catchin' a
whiff.

The Welders align molded sheet metal over the false bottoms, sealing them shut with a blowtorch.

EXT. LITTLE HAITI, MIAMI / INT. MERCEDES G63 - DUSK

Romeo and Deuce cruise a VIBRANT GHETTO -- Adobe shacks.
Liquor joints. Gangland graffiti. Rampant poverty.

HUSSIES. JOHNS. JUNKIES. DEALERS. All of them fighting for
real estate on the corners.

DEUCE
(warning)
Don't ever come here without me.

Deuce parks across from a tattered BODEGA -- where --

A dozen dreadlocked HAITIANS post-up on the stoop. Sipping on
pints and sucking down smokes. GLOCKS poking out of their
waistbands.

Deuce and Romeo peep the rivals from a distance.

DEUCE (CONT'D)
You remember them Haitians.

ROMEO
(nods)
Same ones that hit us in Key West.

DEUCE
Ripped more than half our shipments
last month.

(beat)
They know you're with us now, so
they'll be gunnin' for you too.

(beat)
(MORE)

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Bruno's got bounties on their heads. \$10,000 a pop. Dead or alive.

ROMEO

No one's taken the bounty yet?

DEUCE

Alotta' swings and misses.

ROMEO

Why's that?

DEUCE

Same reason for any underdog: *home-field advantage*. They don't leave the nest unless they're taking a score.

(beat)

Look around.

TEENS, CLERKS, BUMS -- prying eyes fixed on Romeo and Deuce.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Every hungry-mouth within twenty blocks is on their payroll -- Kids. Hookers. Grannies. Bums. All of 'em are scouts. Makes it impossible to slip in here without gettin' tagged.

ROMEO

Then why don't you cut 'em a piece of the pie?

DEUCE

Tried to but they spit it out.

ROMEO

Maybe there's another approach.

(off look)

They gotta have a source in your crew.

DEUCE

(obviously)

No shit.

ROMEO

Anyone come to mind?

Frowning, Deuce stares at Romeo, decoding Romeo's objective.

DEUCE

Is that what Bruno's got you doin?
 Tryin' to pin our snitch?
 (off look)
 You better keep that to yourself.
 Word gets out you're huntin' for
 rats, they might come at you first.

Distracted, Romeo glances at the dash CLOCK.

ROMEO

Is that time right?

DEUCE

Yea. Why?

ROMEO

Shit. I gotta be somewhere.

MOMENTS LATER

As Deuce and Romeo leave Little Haiti, TWO DUCATIS tail them.
 Lights off. *Stealth mode.*

EXT. COLLINS AVENUE - MIAMI BEACH - NIGHT

A far cry from the ghetto. Glass monoliths gleaming in the
 moonlight, nestled against a crescent ocean.

On the AVENUE -- Boutique shops. Posh eateries. Neon
 nightclubs. Beautiful People.

G63 rumbles to the curb, Romeo exiting and leaning back
 through the open window.

DEUCE

Tomorrow night at the docks. Don't
 be late.

Romeo nods as Deuce speeds off.

HAITIANS parking their Ducatis down the street --

-- we recognize MAURICE from the ambush in Key West, and his
 backup, LEX (20's). They shadow Romeo as he walks into --

INT. FONTAINEBLEAU HOTEL - MIAMI BEACH - CONTINUOUS

A bulge of people waiting in line. The *up 'til dawn crowd.*
 All of them desperate to get inside --

LIV NIGHTCLUB

Romeo pushes his way through to a BOUNCER.

ROMEO
I'm supposed to meet someone here.

BOUNCER
What's your name?

ROMEO
Romeo.

Bouncer checks his list, then lifts the velvet rope.

INT. LIV NIGHTCLUB - CONTINUOUS

An asylum of infinite lust...

Its dreamscape of candy-colored lights pulsing at hypnotic intervals. Smoke gushing like dragon's breath.

Music so loud it devours you. There's no choice but to surrender.

Neon bedlam -- Romeo invades --

A swollen mass of warm bodies grinding to the beat. Slaves to seduction. Cosplay dancers on terraces.

And through the madhouse, he spots --

JULIET

Gyrating on a platform. Her body in rhythm with the music. Spellbinding. Carnal. An earthbound goddess.

Romeo can't take his eyes off her. Standing below her as she -

JUMPS into his arms. He catches her. Hands all over her. Keeping her from falling. Sticky. Hot. Intimate.

Hearts in their mouths as he loosens his grip. Easing her to the floor. Separating. Ambivalent.

Lingerie-clad BOTTLE GIRLS arriving with TEQUILA SHOTS --

JULIET
(to Romeo)
You're three shots behind.

Juliet toasts Romeo.

ROMEO
What're we celebrating?

JULIET
Tonight! This moment. Right here,
right now. Nothing else matters.

This is her escape. Her refuge from reality. She drains the glass in one gulp. Romeo still sipping as she GRABS HIM --

JULIET (CONT'D)
Let's go!

-- and whisks him into the raver pit -- a sea of GLOW BATONS.

The music amplifying. Louder. Smoke thickening. Everyone bouncing to the beat.

Juliet grinds against Romeo's body. Tighter. Closer. Sinking into him. He recoils, stiffening, holding back.

JULIET (CONT'D)
Why'd you come here tonight?

ROMEO
You asked me to.

JULIET
You could've bailed. So, why show up?

He can't find the answer. Maybe it's the mission. Or maybe it's something else. Something unexpected. Something dangerous, buried deep inside him.

Bass POUNDING in his ears. Harder. Demanding his obedience as she stands in front of him. Motionless. Her stare colliding with his. And there's nothing in her eyes except FIRE.

He can't help but be drawn to it. To her. Every fiber of his body tingling, pushing him toward her. Then suddenly he sees -

MAURICE

Cutting through the crowd -- quickdraws a GLOCK from his waistband as --

ROMEO

Lunges forward -- shielding Juliet -- shoving her away from danger when --

SMOKE ERUPTS from the ceiling ducts.

BOOM! Maurice fires -- losing Romeo in the chaos -- the pit swirling with plumes as --

Romeo comes out of nowhere.

WHAM! Knuckles SMASHING Maurice's eye-socket -- then his windpipe -- Maurice grappling with Romeo -- jabbing fists like pistons in the flickering darkness as Romeo --

SLAMS him onto the floor.

LIGHTS BLAST in epileptic bursts. Music CLIMAXING. The euphoric crowd TRAMPLING --

Romeo and Maurice -- knocking them apart as --

LEX hurtles into the fray -- GLOCK in hand -- about to kill Romeo when --

Juliet RAMS him sideways. *BOOM!* Bullet scarring the floor -- Lex still surging forward -- gunning at --

Romeo -- snatching a raver's GLOW BATON and --

BOOM! Swatting Lex's wrist -- using the baton as a weapon -- striking with ferocity -- a combination of hits -- *WHAM!* *WHAM!* *WHAM!* -- Lex dips low and --

POUNDS Romeo into the DJ BOOTH. Plexi-glass rattling. Romeo stunned from the impact as --

A SQUALL OF CONFETTI drops from the ceiling.

Romeo STABS Lex's eye with the baton -- then twists free -- contorting -- stripping the Glock and -- *THWACK!* -- drubbing Lex with a vicious pistol-whip.

Lex goes down in a heap -- Romeo turning -- gun drawn -- checking on Juliet -- then searching for Maurice -- but he's already gone -- and suddenly --

WHAM! BOUNCERS tackle Romeo and we SMASH CUT to --

EXT/INT. MIAMI POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Holding cell. Romeo and Juliet on the floor. Just the two of them. Her head in his lap. Passed out. Exhausted.

Opening the prison door --

JED PALMER (60's), a lawman-for-sale, dispensing justice to the highest bidder. MIAMI-DADE POLICE CHIEF BADGE pinned to his uniform.

Hayes trails behind, handing an ENVELOPE FILLED WITH CASH to Palmer, then casting an acidic glare at --

Romeo and Juliet, huddled together, too close for Hayes' liking. His face tightening with anger. Jealousy thick on his tongue --

HAYES

Get up.

Romeo rises, helping Juliet to her feet as Hayes turns to Palmer -- counting the PAYOFF.

HAYES (CONT'D)

Appreciate your discretion.

PALMER

Wouldn't mind *the same* from you. I got an ulcer's worth of bullshit to deal with 'cause your guys are poppin' off in public. Doesn't make my job easy.

HAYES

Is that a problem?

PALMER

Not yet. But if things keep going this way, you're gonna have a lot more to worry about than Miami PD.

(beat)

I could be of better use to you if you'd let me get in front of this.

HAYES

Not my call. That's between you and Bruno.

PALMER

Talk some sense into him. 'Cause there's gonna be a point when I won't be able to help you anymore.

Romeo passes Juliet to Hayes.

PALMER (CONT'D)

(re: Romeo)

He with you too?

Hayes full of spite. Staring at Romeo.

HAYES

No. He can spend the night.

Palmer pushes Romeo back into the cell and locks the door.

INT. MIAMI POLICE PRECINCT - MORNING

Romeo balled-up on the cement. Eyes twitching in the midst of a restless dream as --

Palmer opens the door.

PALMER

Your ride's here.

EXT. MIAMI POLICE PRECINCT - MOMENTS LATER

Romeo staggers into the daylight, down the front steps where -

Juliet waits for him, still weary from the previous night.

ROMEO

You alright?

JULIET

(shrugs it off)

Pounding headache and a sore neck, otherwise I'm fine. Details from last night are a bit fuzzy.

ROMEO

It's better you don't know.

JULIET

(beat)

How 'bout you?

ROMEO

I've seen worse.

And he means it. *A lot worse.*

JULIET

I'm heading to work if you wanna tag along. I can drive you back later.

INT. ART GALLERY - BRICKELL AVENUE - MOMENTS LATER

Whitewashed walls in contrast with raw, breathtaking ARTWORK.

Juliet turns on the lights as Romeo dawdles through the gallery -- pausing at one particular PAINTING --

Doomsday skies. The world collapsing. Gone to Hell. And at the center, a MAN covered in ash sits alone in a wicker chair. Waiting for THE END. Everything is crisp except his face -- a smear of disfigured flesh, mottled in fiery light.

JULIET

(re: painting)

One of my favorites.

(beat)

It's like an unwanted puppy.
Everyone stops and stares, but they
won't take it home.

ROMEO

You try lowering the price?

JULIET

It's not the cost, it's the
content.

ROMEO

Guess *fire and brimstone* isn't
everyone's cup of tea.

JULIET

(re: *fire and brimstone*)

Is that how you see it?

TIGHT on *The Man* in the painting.

ROMEO

World's crumbling around him, and
he's given up. Waiting to die.

JULIET

And what about his face? The
blurring?

Romeo takes a closer look.

ROMEO

He's disfigured by *regret* -- all
the things he's never done and the
things he wishes he could undo.

Juliet nods, then cracks a smile, lightening the mood --

JULIET
You ever consider therapy?

Romeo puckers, trying not to laugh.

ROMEO
You asked for an honest opinion.

JULIET
Didn't think you were gonna get all suicidal on me.

ROMEO
Are you saying I'm wrong?

JULIET
No comment.

ROMEO
If you've got somethin' better then let's hear it.

JULIET
(kidding)
Tough act to follow.

Juliet focuses on the painting. Eyes immersed in the image.

JULIET (CONT'D)
Just because he's sitting doesn't mean he's ready to die. I think he's deciding his next move. That's why his face is distorted -- he hasn't figured it out yet, but he isn't panicking. He's composed in the midst of catastrophe. And while everything around him seems inevitable and clear, his mind is racing to find a way out.

CUT TO:

A BOX CUTTER slicing a strip of tape on a cardboard edge.
Romeo removing a PAINTING packed in bubble wrap.

JULIET (CONT'D)
Careful.

He gently strips away the packaging, unveiling --

The PAINTING from Bruno's auction: *The Lovers* by Magritte.

ROMEO
I've seen this before.

JULIET
It's called *The Lovers*. By Rene
Magritte.

Romeo studies the image --

A MAN and WOMAN. Separate VEILS covering their faces. Locked in embrace. Their KISS hindered by cloth. Their LOVE unfulfilled. Tainted. Forbidden.

ROMEO
Where do you want it?

Juliet steps toward a naked wall.

JULIET
Right here.

Romeo mounts the painting, then stands at Juliet's side.

JULIET (CONT'D)
(re: *The Lovers*)
What do you think?

ROMEO
(beat)
Is it for sale?

JULIET
No, but I didn't feel right keeping
it to myself.

Romeo and Juliet stare at the painting. Their bodies aligned with the figures in the image. Motionless until...

Romeo glances at Juliet's ENGAGEMENT RING.

ROMEO
When's the date?

Juliet hesitates, a flicker of anxiety in her eyes.

JULIET
Next month.

ROMEO
Coming up fast.

JULIET

Had to schedule it close to the election.

ROMEO

Blushing bride for an extra push at the voting booth. Seems like a cheap trick, no offense.

JULIET

None taken. It wasn't my idea.

ROMEO

Then why go along with it?

JULIET

'Cause it's better than the other option.

ROMEO

Which is what?

JULIET

Saying "no".

Subtle tension in her voice. She changes the subject.

JULIET (CONT'D)

We're throwing an engagement party this weekend. You should come.

(off look)

Do you own a suit?

EXT. BOUTIQUE TAILOR - LATER

Couture fashion. Scores of SILK SUITS on mahogany racks. Cases filled with the finest CUFFS and WATCHES.

Mellow jazz. Warm lights. Plush chairs. Champagne in buckets.

Juliet sips from a flute, her eyes zeroed on --

Romeo, wearing a slim, midnight VERSACE TUX. Looking like a million bucks. Feeling like it too.

JULIET

It fits you well.

A TAILOR bows at Romeo's feet, chalking the pant legs.

ROMEO

What's the price?

JULIET
Don't worry. My treat.

He glances back at her, hesitant.

JULIET (CONT'D)
You can make it up to me someday.

Turning forward. In front of him --

A THREE PANELED MIRROR. Fanned out. All his sides on display. The faces of his profession. Reflections staring back him.

JULIET (CONT'D)
(to tailor)
How long for the tailoring?

TAILOR
I'll have it done tomorrow.

Juliet opens the DISPLAY CASE, removing a WRISTWATCH --

AUDEMARS PIGUET ROYAL OAK. Exquisite craftsmanship. A timeless timepiece. \$26,000 PRICE TAG.

Juliet steps to Romeo --

JULIET
Give me your hand.

She slips the watch over his wrist and fastens the clasp.

JULIET (CONT'D)
Any man wearing a suit without a proper timepiece is incomplete.

EXT. SAMBAL TERRACE - MANDARIN ORIENTAL HOTEL - NIGHT

A high-rise patio. Spectacular views. Neon skyline radiating across the bay. As beautiful as it is dark and dreadful.

Romeo dines with Juliet. Sipping fine wine. Tasting the good life. He seems calm. Content. At ease in her presence.

ROMEO
Is this how you usually spend your Fridays?

JULIET
What do you mean?

ROMEO

Opening your checkbook for
strangers.

JULIET

I wouldn't call you a *stranger*.

ROMEO

Then what would you call me?

JULIET

A *friend of the family*. Or maybe a
person of interest. But we can stay
strangers if that's easier for you
to swallow.

ROMEO

I don't think we've known each
other long enough to be anything
else.

Juliet stares at him. Dead serious. Maybe not. Tough to tell.

JULIET

So, if I offered to sleep with you
right now, you'd turn me down?

Stunned, Romeo swallows. Flustered.

JULIET (CONT'D)

C'mon, handsome guy like you, I'm
sure you've had a *one-night stand*
or two.

ROMEO

That's my own business.

JULIET

I'll take that as a *yes*.

ROMEO

You can *take it* however you want,
but you're not getting an answer
out of me.

JULIET

You strike me as the type of man
who makes a living off lies, so I
didn't expect an honest response
either way.

ROMEO

Then why ask?

JULIET

Because I wanted to see how you bluff. And given your tight-lip, I assume you'd rather trust a stranger with your body than your mind.

ROMEO

I don't trust anyone at first sight, especially beautiful women with cash to burn.

JULIET

Including me?

ROMEO

I didn't say that.

JULIET

But you implied it.

ROMEO

Just giving some friendly advice.

JULIET

Oh, so now we're *friends*.

Juliet twisting Romeo's words. Out-dueling him. He smiles, graceful in defeat.

ROMEO

As of this exact moment, *yes*.

JULIET

Glad we could clear that up.

(beat)

Truth is, I'd rather suffer a million heartbreaks than miss out on one perfect moment. And it's more fun to spend money on someone *in need* than on yourself.

ROMEO

Didn't realize I was a *charity case*.

JULIET

Well, as far as I can tell, you only have one pair of clothes, you're living in my father's guest house, and you haven't shaved in days -- How would you describe your predicament?

ROMEO
 (smirks)
A string of bad luck.

JULIET
 There's a fine line between *unlucky*
 and *homeless*.
 (beat)
 So, where are you from originally?

Romeo numbs his nerves with a sip of wine, letting his guard down.

ROMEO
 Brooklyn.

JULIET
 I didn't peg you for a New Yorker.

ROMEO
 Born and raised.

JULIET
 Your family still there?

ROMEO
 Sort of.

JULIET
 (blunt)
Sort of? -- Either they live there
 or they don't.

ROMEO
 They've got a permanent residence
 at the Calvary Cemetery.

JULIET
 (regretful)
 Oh, well now I feel like a bitch.

ROMEO
 Don't. I've been on my own since I
 was a kid...

JULIET
 What happened?

ROMEO
 It's not a story worth telling.

JULIET
 I'm all-ears if you wanna share.

Romeo shifts away from her, trying to change the subject.

ROMEO

Listen, I appreciate the concern
but you don't have to pretend to be
interested --

JULIET

(interrupting)

Just tell me one thing about
yourself that isn't slicked in
bullshit. It doesn't have to be
about your family, or your past, or
your deepest darkest secrets. I
just want to hear something honest
from you.

Romeo can't look away from her. Doesn't want to.

ROMEO

You ever heard of the Brooklyn
75th?

(off look)

Roughest Precinct in New York. My
father worked as patrolman. He was
a good cop. Maybe too good. As *old*
school as they come. Lived by the
law, died by the law. Never took a
day off. Didn't matter if you were
a first-timer or a hard-timer, he'd
book you just the same.

(fondly)

Used to tell me that *life's*
measured in failures -- one mistake
and you'll never live it down.

(beat)

That attitude sent him to an early
grave. A year away from his
pension, and he caught dirt on some
Gambino underboss lookin' to make a
name. Guy had half the precinct in
his pocket, but my old man wouldn't
take a bribe, so he took bullets
instead. Got mowed down on his way
home from a dinner with my mother.
Both of 'em died on the spot. Quick
and painless.

JULIET

(pause)

You ever think about being a cop?

ROMEO

When I was kid, sure. But if you're gonna live in the line of fire, you might as well get paid top dollar. Cops make scraps compared to cons.

Romeo's cynical outlook saddens Juliet.

JULIET

Can't beat 'em, join 'em.

ROMEO

(beat)

Yea.

Romeo buries the truth behind an apprehensive grin.

EXT. PORT OF MIAMI, FL - MIDNIGHT

Spotlights haloed in an asthmatic mist. Shipyard debris shelters a MACK TRUCK. Deuce and Felix standing guard while a CRANE lowers a CRATE WITH COLOMBIAN TAGS onto the flatbed.

Nearby, Bruno speaks demonstratively with Turk and several CARTEL HENCHMEN -- huddled by a fleet of BLACK ESCALADES.

Romeo approaches, catching Bruno's attention --

BRUNO

Get over here!

Romeo quickens his pace. Bruno unfurling a MAP on the Escalade's hood, continuing his lecture once Romeo arrives --

BRUNO (CONT'D)

There's no question we're gettin' hit tonight. It's not a matter of *if*, it's a matter of *where* and *when*.

Bruno draws on the map with a MARKER.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

There are three natural choke points on our route.

Bruno scrawls three "X"s to mark the choke points.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

We'll give 'em plenty of chances to boost us, and that's exactly what we want.

(MORE)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Because this time we've got the upper-hand. They're coming at us with bootleg street sweepers, and we're firing back with military-grade ARs.

In the Escalade's trunk -- RIFLES that Romeo sold to Bruno.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

They don't stand a chance. They're outpowered and outnumbered.

Bruno blusters, a demented *General Patton* marshalling his troops, blood boiling, eyes filled with venom.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Last three months we've been under attack. These Haitian knuckle-draggers wanna put you back on welfare. They're ripping dollars outta' your pockets, so why don't you do yourselves a favor and pump bullets in their mouths. Because right now it's your blood or theirs. We take no prisoners. This isn't a war, this is a *massacre*. No one survives unless they're on my side. You understand?... THIS ENDS TONIGHT!

Bruno's speech hits like a shot of novocaine, numbing his men to fear and instilling them with hate.

There's blood in the air, and it's bound for the street.

Bruno motions for Romeo to follow him to the MACK TRUCK.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Come with me.

Romeo tags along, behind Bruno.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Heard you've been spending time with my daughter.

(dead-serious)

Stay away from her. She's got nuthin' to do with my business, and that means you got no reason to be near her.

Bruno cracks open the SHIPPING CRATE, just a sliver, so only Romeo can peek inside --

There's nothing. Completely empty. No cargo. No drugs.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

This stays between me and you.

The door squeals shut as Bruno locks it.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Tonight is about one thing only;
taking control. I can't risk losing
any more product.

ROMEO

I understand.

BRUNO

Real shipment gets to port on
Sunday. With any luck, we'll be in
the clear by then.

Romeo follows Bruno to an Escalade. Leader of the pack.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

You're riding up front with me.

Bruno tosses an AK to Romeo along with an extra clip.

EXT. OPA-LOCKA - NORTHWEST MIAMI - LATER

A ghetto ghost town -- Wild West for the Jay-Z generation.

Brick and mortar tenements. Destitute. No street lamps.
FIGURES roaming dark alleys. Trash skipping like tumbleweeds.

The Cartel caravan rides on high-alert. Two Escalades up
front, two in back, with the Mack Truck guarded in between.

INT. CARTEL CARAVAN / EXT. OPA-LOCKA - SAME

Cartel Henchmen perched at open windows. Dripping sweat.
Rifles ready. Fingers twitching triggers.

LEAD ESCALADE --

Bruno sits up front. Eyes peeled. Turk at the wheel. Romeo
behind him. Nerves fried in the cruel heat.

UP AHEAD --

A JUNKYARD buffers the main strip. Mudbanks littered with
salvage. Bonfires in oil drums. Prime location for an ambush.

Bruno hops on the TWO-WAY RADIO --

BRUNO
 (into radio)
 Eyes open. Lock and load.

Time syrups. The caravan gliding to the choke point.

Suddenly, HOODLUMS bolt from the Junkyard. Streaking in front of the caravan. Glinted metal strapped to their bodies.

Startled, the Cartel crew takes aim. Time to kill --

-- but the Hoodlums snake away from the caravan. Just a bunch of kids stealing scrapped hardware. No danger here.

A wave of relief. Romeo sags in his seat. Breathing deeply.

EXT. GLADES BYWAY - LATER

Gator country. A desolate river of blacktop, flanked by --
 SPRAWLING SAWGRASS.

The Cartel caravan rumbles ahead. Veins of HEAT LIGHTNING pulsing in the rusty heavens. Flashes igniting --

THE GLADES --

Blurring at high speeds. Shadows playing tricks on eyes. FACES camouflaged in the sawgrass. Real or imagined.

Full-throttle, the caravan threads the dark gauntlet. A slender passage. Weeds creeping onto its shoulderless edges.

AROUND THE BEND --

A BLAZING FIRE! Rabid flames gutting an abandoned --

SCHOOL BUS

Blocking the narrow road. But there's NO ONE IN SIGHT.

A string of BRAKE LIGHTS flaring as the caravan slows down.

INT. CARTEL CARAVAN / EXT. GLADES BYWAY - SAME

Turk losing his cool, unsure how to proceed.

BRUNO

They want us to stop. Drive through
the bus!

Turk hesitates --

BRUNO (CONT'D)

NOW!

Escalade SLINGSHOTS toward the burning Bus.

Bruno dipping out the window. His AK talking smack --

RAT-TAT-TAT! Muzzle flashes slapping his face, disfigured
with rage. The SHOTS harmlessly ricochet off the Bus.

Confusion breeding panic. Trigger-happy Henchmen indulge the
chaos --

RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT! Spraying bullets into the thick glades.
Firing blindly. No targets. Just sawgrass and crickets.

Caravan whips forward. Gathering a head of steam --

Motors BELCHING. BLARING. BOOMING. LOUDER as the Caravan
accelerates. A muddy streak of headlights racing toward --

THE BUS -- flames gleaming in an OIL SLICK in front of it.

Romeo leans forward. Sees something. Eyes widening --

ROMEO

STOP!

But it's too late --

WHOOOOMP! A strip of tethered SWITCHBLADES -- GHETTO ROAD-
SPIKES SHREDDING TIRES --

SCREEEEECH! Sparks flaring as the Caravan bellies across
greased asphalt --

Like chariots on harsh rapids. Powerless. Careening toward a -

MASSIVE COLLISION.

LEAD ESCALADE --

RAMS into the Bus and CORKSCREWS, FLIPPING onto its side and
TUMBLING VIOLENTLY INTO THE GLADES.

Romeo, Bruno and Turk LAUNCHED in the impact -- human
pinballs rattling inside the roll cage.

2ND ESCALADE --

Pancakes against the Bus and IGNITES. Henchmen howling as their bodies burn. Scrambling to escape, but --

MACK TRUCK --

CRUSHES them and jackknives on the road-spikes, twisted vertically like a top-spinner. Then --

SMASHING downward -- BURSTING INTO FLAMES!

OIL SLICK catching fire as the 3RD and 4TH ESCALADES skid into the wreckage. Felix and Deuce hurtling through punctured windows as GAS TANKS EXPLODE --

BOOOOOOOOM! A VOLLEY OF FIRE sends Felix and Deuce sprawling into the muck.

BEHIND THE BUS --

MAURICE AND HIS HAITIANS emerge from the sawgrass, unleashing bullets from their MAC-10s --

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM! Felix ducks for cover behind a burning Escalade -- primed to explode. Deuce is nowhere to be found.

LEAD ESCALADE --

Upended in the GLADES. Water gushing through windows.

Romeo, Bruno and Turk dazed from the crash. HANGING UPSIDE DOWN. Hands sifting the rising muck for their weapons.

Haitians descending on them. MAC-10s ERUPTING --

BLAM-BLAM-BLAM! Sparks nipping at Romeo's face as he grips his AK. Swivels. Aiming --

RAT-TAT-TAT! Firing with tactical efficiency. Then unbuckling his belt -- crawling with Bruno and Turk into --

THE GLADES --

Hunched in a swath of sawgrass. Waist-deep water. Vegetation so thick they can't see anything beyond 5 feet.

DISSONANT SCREAMS AND GUNFIRE BELLOWING FROM ALL DIRECTIONS!

Romeo, Bruno and Turk strafe through the weeds. Under attack. A FLURRY OF BULLETS. They dive low for cover, spying the grass for movement, returning fire as --

RAT-TAT-TAT! Haitians streak through the glades and EAT BULLETS, plunging into the muck.

A late BLITZER takes dead aim at Bruno, about to fire --

But Romeo spots him first. No time to think. He shoves Bruno downward, defending his blindside --

RAT-TAT! The Haitian nose-dives in the slop. Lifeless.

Romeo recoiling, skin shriveling --

He's just saved the man he was sent to destroy.

Bruno breathes easy. Acknowledging Romeo's loyalty. Mustering a grateful nod. A solemn gesture for a spared life. *It's a look that Romeo will never forget --*

A HAUNTING STILLNESS ECLIPSED BY THE ROAR OF GUNFIRE!

Bruno and Turk rush toward the STREET. Romeo trailing. His face flecked with mud and remorse. White as a sheet.

BEHIND THE BUS --

HAITIAN GETAWAY VANS swerve to a halt. Foot-soldiers sprinting to the jackknifed Mack Truck. Cracking open the COLOMBIAN SHIPPING CRATE. Furious to find it empty.

3RD ESCALADE --

Felix trades SHOTS with the ransacking Haitians. Sparks bursting as the Escalade's gas tank ignites --

BOOOOOOOM!

The entire road ablaze. Doused in oil.

BLAM-BLAM! Haitians FIRING wildly at Felix as --

RAT-TAT-TAT! Bruno and Turk lunge from the glades. Laying suppression fire on --

MAURICE AND THE REMAINING HAITIANS --

Hotfooting back to their getaway vans, and HAULING ASS away from the blazing wreck.

Romeo stumbles ahead. The street on fire. Hellish flames flickering in his dark eyes -- dilated in the dead of night.

The wail of distant SIRENS --

BRUNO (O.C.)

Let's go!

Bruno grabs Romeo's shoulder and leads him away, along with Felix and Turk. Moving through the sawgrass and out of sight.

EXT/INT. MR. MOE'S TAVERN - AFTER HOURS

In the halcyon suburb of COCONUT GROVE --

A deep-fried dive-bar. The bastard of *Southern Twang* and *Miami Chic*. A trestle of steer skulls hung over the tap.

PATRONS lit on late-night liquor. Too drunk to notice --

NEFF sitting in a lacquered booth, mulling over a menu. His fingers drumming the cover. Lips clenched around a cigarette.

At the entrance, Romeo lumbers inside. Still bedraggled from the shootout. A black cap tipped over his face.

Neff barely recognizes him as he sits across the booth.

NEFF

Looks like you've been down in the trenches.

Romeo fidgets, eyes shifty, surveying the other patrons.

NEFF (CONT'D)

Assume you got some news for me.

ROMEO

(re: Cartel)

We need to move on these guys now.

NEFF

Whoa... Slow down... You hungry?

(off look)

Let's get you somethin' to eat.
Can't think straight on an empty stomach.

Neff flags down a buxom WAITRESS.

NEFF (CONT'D)

Hun, you mind fetchin' us a couple burgers and a bottle of Jack.

WAITRESS

You want the whole bottle?

NEFF
(smirks)
One of those nights.

Waitress shrugs and struts away.

ROMEO
Burger won't change my mind.

NEFF
Whiskey might.

ROMEO
I'm not messin' around.

NEFF
Neither am I, but no one's gonna sign off on a raid after three days of recon. Even if you've gathered enough scratch to mount a bulletproof case, they'll still wanna keep you undercover 'til the timer hits zero.

ROMEO
Might be too late by then.

NEFF
Too late for you, or for the *job*?

ROMEO
I can bust this thing wide open right now. I've seen more in three days than I usually get in three months.

NEFF
Like what?

ROMEO
Stash houses. Supply routes. Shipping methods.

NEFF
And you can paint a bullseye on Hayes and Calderon?

ROMEO
Calderon; definitely. Hayes; maybe.

NEFF
Then you got nuthin'.

The Waitress returns with a bottle of Jack Daniels and two shot glasses. Prompting silence. A contemptuous stare between Romeo and Neff. As soon as she leaves they continue --

ROMEO

Listen to me; this job is a dead end. The longer we sit on it, the bloodier it's gonna get.

Neff scowls, disappointed in Romeo.

NEFF

You better get your priorities straight. We aren't in the business of saving lives. I don't give a shit about collateral damage.

(beat)

We are a *bottom line* operation. And the only acceptable results are drugs on the table and smugglers servin' life. So, unless you got some hard evidence I can throw at *Division*, I'd suggest you get back on the grind and make the most of the time you have left.

ROMEO

Fine. But I need clearance to extract the daughter.

NEFF

Why? Can she testify?

ROMEO

(shakes his head)
She's just a passenger.

NEFF

You sure?

ROMEO

Positive. She's caught in the crossfire. Got nuthin' to do with her father's business.

NEFF

Then she's useless. Ditch her.

Neff senses Romeo's resistance, reminding him --

NEFF (CONT'D)

You've been assigned a task by the highest authority in this country.

(MORE)

NEFF (CONT'D)

If you fail to complete that task, then you're dead weight. No one will ever trust you again. And I'll personally make sure *that stain* follows you until the day you're buried.

(off look)

You're not the only one with a career on the line.

(beat)

I'm tryin' to steer you on the right path. But you gotta trust the hand that feeds.

Neff slides a shot of whiskey to Romeo.

NEFF (CONT'D)

There's always bumps in the road, but we navigate this shit together - and come out the other side lookin' like a million bucks.

Neff raises his glass.

NEFF (CONT'D)

I got your back as long as you stay the course. Finish the job at all costs.

The shot rests on the table like a thimble of amber poison -- a perilous promise sealed with a cheery smile. Neff grinning as Romeo downs the drink and stares into the EMPTY GLASS.

EXT. BAYSIDE MARINA - AFTERNOON

The ocean simmers beneath the afternoon sun. A parasitic heat sapping sweat from every living soul.

Bruno and Hayes stand on the YACHT. Drenched in their own excess. Feeling the heat. Maybe it's the sun. Or maybe it's the embers of their wounded business.

Bruno paces manically while waiting for a MYSTERY GUEST...

BRUNO

Where is he?

HAYES

He'll be here. Just sit down.

BRUNO

We shouldn't involve him anymore than we have to.

HAYES

You trust me, right?

Bruno glowers. Not exactly a ringing endorsement.

HAYES (CONT'D)

Well, I trust him. He's a friend to the highest bidder, and we're in position to pay a premium.

(off look)

This is a *last resort*. I realize that. But we've got too many eyes on us right now. We need his help.

Sauntering down the DOCKS -- JED PALMER -- Miami-Dade Police Chief -- whom we met earlier at the precinct.

PALMER

It's good you called...

Palmer climbs aboard. Sits across from Hayes. Avoids eye-contact with Bruno. Bad blood between them.

PALMER (CONT'D)

...Few more days and this might've been outta' my hands.

BRUNO

What do you mean?

PALMER

All of this *shoot 'em up gangster shit* doesn't play anymore. You can't defend your turf out in the open --

BRUNO

You expect us to lay down?

PALMER

I don't *expect* anything out of you. But if you wanna stay in business, this has to end now.

(beat)

Every day I've got someone new breathing down my neck, lookin' for intel -- and it's not just local; you're gettin' heat from the top of the hill; type of men who won't sleep 'til you're a notch in their belt.

(beat)

I've let this slide for too long.

(MORE)

PALMER (CONT'D)

You tried it your way and you failed. Now it's time to hand over the reins.

Hayes turns to Bruno, seeking his approval.

HAYES

Are you onboard with this?

BRUNO

(pause, reluctantly)
Give him the money.

Hayes passes an ENVELOPE FILLED WITH CASH to Palmer.

HAYES

So, how do we make this work?

Palmer counts the money, then pockets it.

PALMER

I've got one of the Haitians still in custody from the club shooting; use him as bait to round up the others. Then I'll bring 'em to your feet.

(beat)

We end this quickly and quietly. Then we go back to business as usual.

BRUNO

None of this can blowback on us.

Palmer takes offense --

PALMER

You've been using my city as a personal warzone, and now you're worried about *blowback*?

(beat)

Let's be clear, the only reason I haven't put you in chains is because of your friend here...

(motions to Hayes)

So, as long as you're in his good graces then you got nuthin' to worry 'bout from me.

BRUNO

Wish I could offer the same guarantee.

Hayes steps in, diffusing the confrontation.

HAYES

Alright. Let's push the personal bullshit aside. Focus on the job.

Bruno and Palmer hold each other's stare.

HAYES (CONT'D)

This needs to get done tonight.

PALMER

Sooner the better.

HAYES

We're expecting a shipment on Sunday and there can't be any interferences.

Palmer stands, departing ungracefully.

PALMER

I'll have 'em on the butcher's block by midnight. No problem.

EXT. RITZ-CARLTON - KEY BISCAIYNE - DUSK

We swoop over KEY BISCAIYNE -- a frail finger of land, sutured to Miami's coast by the RICKENBACKER CAUSEWAY.

The RITZ-CARLTON sits on a vast, wind-swept beach. Kissed with streaks of tangerine and lavender in the falling sunset.

INT. RITZ-CARLTON - PONCE DE LEON BALLROOM - SAME

JULIET'S ENGAGEMENT PARTY is held in a grand banquet hall. Fit for royalty. A black tie affair. No expenses spared.

But where the gathering excels in opulence, it pales in intimacy. A vapid celebration of the unrequited union between Juliet and Hayes --

Swaying on the DANCE FLOOR amidst a sea of unfamiliar faces, packed wall to wall. The MUSIC is upbeat, but Juliet wears a thin, listless smile, matching her strapless black dress.

Hayes breathing down her neck. His fingers prodding her bare back. Grasping her the way a man clutches a trophy or a pet.

AT THE ENTRANCE --

Romeo joins the ball. GQ in his Versace tux. An All-American Bond. Looking like a million bucks. Feeling like a fraud.

Bruno makes his way over, embracing Romeo as if they were kin. A solemn expression as he looks Romeo in the eye...

BRUNO

What you did for me last night,
I'll never forget that.

Bruno shepherds Romeo toward the bar.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

You're one of us now.

Weaving through the crowd, Romeo glances at --

THE DANCE FLOOR --

Hayes squeezing Juliet's torso, holding her preciously.

HAYES

You look flawless tonight.

She flashes a plastic smile.

JULIET

Not so bad yourself.

HAYES

Are you enjoying this?

JULIET

Why wouldn't I be?

Hayes reads her eyes, sensing distance, then whispering viciously in her ear --

HAYES

I can give you everything you want,
more than you can fathom... and you
don't have to love me. But I expect
you to convince everyone around us
that I am your King, your God, and
your Savior -- and without me you'd
be a shadow of a woman; unloved and
undesired.

(beat)

Together we can live like few have,
but I need you to believe in me.

JULIET

(beat)

And I do.

His touch sends a chill down her spine, but she keeps calm. As the MUSIC DIES, they share a cold, loveless kiss.

HAYES

I need to pay *lip service* to a few friends in the crowd. I'll circle back in a bit for another dance.

Juliet plays the dotting fiance, masking her disdain.

JULIET

Perfect.

AT THE BAR --

Romeo waits while Bruno carouses with a flock of VIXENS.

ECHOED LAUGHTER drifting from across the room where Felix, Deuce and their Cartel brethren blow off steam.

A slender hand SHOVES Romeo aside. It's JULIET. She reaches over the bar and cops a bottle of wine. Taking heavy swigs.

ROMEO

You alright?

She's too busy drinking to answer.

ROMEO (CONT'D)

You should take it easy. Long night ahead.

JULIET

If I blackout fast enough maybe I won't remember it.

Romeo snatches the bottle from her, earning a hard stare. Her feral eyes stripped of restraint in the wake of drunkenness --

We see the *real Juliet*. Fierce and tender, and full of life.

A lonely pause as she studies Romeo. Looking like she could kiss him and kill him in the same breath.

MUSIC SWELLING over the crowd noise. Dirty. Lush. Rapturous.

Without warning, Juliet grabs Romeo's hand and drags him to --

THE DANCE FLOOR --

Romeo tries to keep his distance but Juliet won't be denied. She pushes him deeper into the throng of party-goers. His eyes wandering anxiously. Searching for Bruno and Hayes.

JULIET (CONT'D)
No one's watching us.

She's drunk. Lusty. Burning for him. Lips grazing his neck.

JULIET (CONT'D)
Stop holding back.

She grabs the back of his head. Directing his stare to hers.

JULIET (CONT'D)
Look at me and tell me you don't
feel anything.

He can't. Stillness overcomes them. Bodies tangled, so close
it's tough to tell where one starts and the other ends.

Everything else blurs out of focus. And it's just the two of
them --

Romeo and Juliet, lost in each other's eyes. Captive.
Speechless. Not sure whether they're standing or falling.

Faces washed in the soft glimmer of chandeliers. An
inevitable force drawing them closer.

ACROSS THE ROOM --

Hayes watches them. His eyes BOILING WITH JEALOUSY.

THE DANCE FLOOR --

Music peaking to a CLIMAX as Juliet nuzzles against Romeo.
Lips like magnets. A heartbeat away from kissing when
suddenly ROMEO PULLS BACK. Stifling his desire.

ROMEO
I'm sorry... I can't.

He lingers at her side. Rueful. Not wanting to leave, but
knowing he can't blow his cover.

Her eyelids smeared with mascara as she watches him disappear
in the crowd. Crestfallen. Lovesick. ALONE.

EXT. RITZ-CARLTON - LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

A secluded alcove on the backside of the hotel. Miami-Dade
Police CRUISER rolls to a stop. Chief Palmer exiting along
with an OFFICER -- LYNCH (30's) --

Removing TWO CAPTURED HAITIANS -- MAURICE AND LEX -- from the backseat.

Nearby, Turk stands guard as Palmer steps to him.

PALMER

Tell Bruno we're ready.

EXT. RITZ-CARLTON - BEACH - LATER

Dark waves crash on the deserted beach. Shielded from the hotel by a dense cropping of palm trees.

Juliet's feet stamp the sand as she strides toward the water - lapping at her ankles. A shiver racing up her body.

But she keeps moving forward. Deeper into the ocean. Surf mauling her. Soaking her dress -- sculpted to her lean body. Froth swirling around her until she swims beyond the break.

The water is placid. Welcoming her to its depths. She looks up to the heavens. A nebulous void. Starless. Hopeless.

She takes a deep breath and DIVES BENEATH THE SURFACE.

INT. RITZ-CARLTON - PONCE DE LEON BALLROOM - SAME

Turk moves with haste, finding Bruno and Hayes huddled in quiet conversation. He interrupts, whispering in Bruno's ear.

Then suddenly, the three of them pad briskly toward the exit.

EXT. RITZ-CARLTON - BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

Palmer and Lynch guard Maurice and Lex -- face down in the sand. Their mouths gagged. Wrists cuffed.

Bruno, Hayes and Turk stroll onto the beach. A lengthy walk from the hotel. Plenty of privacy here. Not a soul in sight.

PALMER

Sure you wanna do this here?

BRUNO

We booked the entire hotel. No one's gonna bother us.

Bruno examines the subdued Haitians.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
We'll take it from here.

Palmer stays put.

PALMER
I'd rather stick around and make
you finish the job properly.
(off look)
We all got skin in the game. Loose
ends are as bad for me as they are
for you.

There's no use arguing. Palmer stands firm.

Turk passes a SILENCED GLOCK to Bruno and drags Maurice into
the rolling tide, stripping his gag.

Bruno prods the gun barrel into Maurice's skull.

BRUNO
This is real simple -- I'm gonna
ask you a question. And if I don't
like the answer, I'm gonna make a
hole in your head. You understand?
(off look)
Good... I know you and your
shithead friends have been jackin'
my trucks. And now I wanna know
who's been tippin' you off.

Maurice's accent is thick, garbled.

MAURICE
Don't know 'bout no trucks.

Wrong answer. Bruno seethes in silence. Gripping the Glock.

THE OCEAN --

Nearby, Juliet drifts inland. Spying on Bruno from a moderate
distance. WATCHING THE SCENE UNFOLD --

PING. Bruno's Glock recoils. Maurice dropping dead.

Juliet GASPS. Holding her breath. Terrified. Quivering.

THE SHORE --

Turk STAKES Maurice's body in shallow water. Bruno turning
toward Palmer --

BRUNO
Bring me the next one.

Sand kicking as Palmer shoves Lex into the sea. But Lex BUCKS LOOSE. SPRINTING down beach.

Turk CHASES him. Bruno remaining nonchalant, FIRING --

PING. Lex zigzags as BULLETS whiz past him -- and then he COLLAPSES, landing with a THUD. Swept into the tide.

Turk retrieves Lex's corpse. Diffused moonlight shimmering off the breakwater. He glimpses a --

FIGURE -- moving away from him. But it's too dark. He can't identify --

JULIET, sloshing through surf, down the shoreline. Thighs pumping. Dress splitting at the seams.

Lightning-fast, Turk tosses Lex and goes after Juliet. RUNNING at a predatory pace. SHOUTING back at Bruno --

TURK
GET OVER HERE!

Bruno breaks into a dead sprint. Palmer, Hayes and Lynch trailing. All of them in pursuit of --

Juliet, skirting the water's edge. Feet springing off the hard sand. She's fast. But not fast enough --

Turk closes on her. Linebacker-speed. No hesitation.

UMMPH! He tackles her. Their bodies CRUNCHING against the wet earth. Wind knocked from their lungs.

Juliet squirms free, clawing away until Turk snags her calf. RIPPING her like a ragdoll and PINNING her to the ground.

His eyes flaring as she --

SMACKS him with a fistful of sand. Salty grains sting and stun him. A BERETTA M9 dangling from his vest -- and as he lunges down at her --

She GRABS THE BERETTA and --

BOOM.

The shot is muffled in Turk's belly. He falls limply on Juliet. But she slips from under him and onto her feet as --

Bruno catches up to her. The others still far behind. She spins wildly, aiming the M9 at Bruno. He returns the favor --

FATHER and DAUGHTER, pitted in a standoff.

BRUNO

What are you doing out here?!

Bruno is livid. Heartbroken. Lowering the Glock.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Put the gun down. We can fix this.

Hands trembling, Juliet keeps the M9 on Bruno.

JULIET

Fix what?

BRUNO

Us... Everything.

Bruno steps closer to his daughter. Trying to mend the distance.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Don't run away from me. Not now.

(beat)

I can't protect you if you don't let me.

JULIET

There's nothing left to protect.

Juliet RACES AWAY FROM HER FATHER, discarding the M9 and slashing inland, toward the resort.

Bruno stands frozen, too distraught to give chase.

Lynch rushing past him, hounding Juliet, gaining ground as she hurdles the pool gate.

THE BEACH --

Palmer and Hayes convene by Bruno. Stunned and staggering. Hayes spitting fire, furious --

HAYES

WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPENED?!

Bruno is silent. Stone cold. Lost in thought.

PALMER

We need to contain this.

Palmer reasons with Bruno, stating his case --

PALMER (CONT'D)
 (re: Juliet)
 You can't think of her as your
 daughter anymore. She's a witness.

Bruno grasping at straws...

BRUNO
 I can control her.

HAYES
 She's already out of reach.

PALMER
 You can't guarantee that she'll
 keep her mouth shut.
 (off look)
 She won't take this secret to the
 grave unless we put her there.
 Better to do it now, before she
 does something that can't be fixed.

Hayes gulps, uneasy, but insistent --

HAYES
 He's right.

PALMER
 It's a business decision. Take the
 emotion out of it.
 (beat)
This is happening whether you like
it or not. The choice is already
made. It's over. Let go.

Bruno glares at them. His eyes darkening. Coal-black. Whatever shred of *decency* was in him is gone with his daughter. He simply NODS, ordering Juliet's execution.

Palmer chirps into his RADIO --

PALMER (CONT'D)
 Lynch. You copy?

LYNCH (PRE-LAP)
 Loud and clear.

EXT. RITZ-CARLTON - PERIMETER - SAME

BOUNDING and BREATHLESS along the hotel outskirts, Lynch races after Juliet, clicking his RADIO --

PALMER (V.O.)
 (through radio)
 No witnesses. Do whatever's necessary.

LYNCH
 Understood.

INT. RITZ-CARLTON - PONCE DE LEON BALLROOM - SAME

Romeo hangs by the BAR. Deuce swaggering up to him.

DEUCE
 You find our *rat* yet?

Romeo shakes his head distractedly.

ROMEO
 You'll be the first to know.

Deuce keeps rambling, but Romeo can't hear a word. He's too busy staring ACROSS THE ROOM -- as Bruno plows through the crowd and whispers urgently to Felix, then...

...abruptly turns, stepping to Romeo. Bruno barking orders --

BRUNO
 (re: Felix)
 I want you to go with him. Do whatever he tells you. No questions. No hesitation. Am I clear?

Romeo nods --

BRUNO (CONT'D)
 GO!

-- and follows Felix, hustling out of the ballroom.

EXT. RITZ-CARLTON - COURTYARD - SAME

Juliet scurries ahead -- fleet-footed -- glancing back at -- Lynch -- charging hard at her tail -- closing the gap.

THE VALET PODIUM --

Juliet busts open the LOCK BOX and frantically scans the array of CAR KEYS. Grinning slyly as she grabs a set.

Lynch veering around the corner as Juliet bolts into --

THE PARKING LOT --

Her fingers jabbing the key's PANIC BUTTON. A splash of LIGHT nearby. Followed by an ALARM --

BUGATTI VEYRON -- a million-dollar speed demon. Juliet unlocks it and mounts the driver's seat. Motor clearing its throat, GROWLING as she swats the clutch --

VROOOOM! Bugatti launches forward, smearing asphalt with rings of rubber. Lynch eating its fumes.

THE HOTEL ENTRANCE --

Felix and Romeo rush onto the scene. Just in time to see Juliet peel out of the lot.

They hop inside Bruno's jet-black MAYBACH and race after her.

EXT. STATE ROAD 913 - NIGHT

A velvety strip of HIGHWAY on the isthmus between Key Biscayne and Miami Beach.

BUGATTI --

Rockets through a headwind. Burning up the night. Juliet dominating the clutch. Eyeing the mirror --

MAYBACH --

Bustles onto the blacktop. Tires SCREECHING as Felix whips the wheel. No seat belt. No fear. BERETTA in his lap.

Romeo buckles-up. Baffled. Facing Felix.

ROMEO

What's going on?

FELIX

Just do what I say.

(beat)

There's an extra gun in the glove box.

Romeo pulls a REVOLVER from the box. Felix pounding the gas. A kaleidoscope of street lamps blurring as they hit 100 MPH.

HIGHWAY --

The two cars accelerate to suicide-speeds. A mile separating them. Sparse TRAFFIC up ahead.

BUGATTI --

Downshifting. RPMs peaking as Juliet zips from lane to lane.

She's soaked from the ocean. Makeup streaked like warpaint across her cheeks. Skin beating red through her ripped dress.

MAYBACH --

Follows Juliet's path. Bursting forward. Hedging past the scattered traffic. HORNS BLARING as it buzzes ahead.

Romeo holds tight.

BUGATTI --

Juliet checks the mirror -- Maybach on her tail, a quarter mile back. She banks on a HARD TURN. Drifting. Ramping up --

THE RICKENBACKER CAUSEWAY

A three-mile arched bridge stretching across Biscayne Bay.

CARS dawdle on the incline, blocking lanes, impossible to maneuver around. Juliet taps the brakes, pounding the HORN!

MAYBACH --

Bucks forward with the power of 500 horses. V12 humming. Felix muscling the gas pedal. Harder. FASTER. 140 MPH.

BUGATTI --

Slows to 80 MPH. Juliet riding the traffic. Hammering the HORN. Cars finally moving aside, but it's too late --

WHAAAM! Felix SLAMS the Bugatti's flank, pinning Juliet against the RIGHT GUARDRAIL. Sparks ERUPTING, sprayed like fireworks across her windshield.

She wrangles the wheel. White-knuckled. The car THRASHING between the guardrail and --

MAYBACH --

Burying Juliet into the cinder block. Rubble chunks rupturing from the frail divide -- separating her from a deadly plunge.

Romeo peeps her, side by side. Windows down. Felix screams --

FELIX (CONT'D)
KILL HER!... TAKE THE SHOT!

Romeo hesitates. Gripping the revolver. Eyes fixed on Juliet.

Felix aiming his Beretta at Romeo's skull.

FELIX (CONT'D)
If you don't do it, I'm gonna shoot
through you.

BUGATTI --

Juliet meets Romeo's stare. A caged moment. Death looming. She sees the Beretta pointed at his head. Then suddenly --

SCREEEEECH! She JAMS the brakes and SWERVES into the Maybach, clipping its fender, and sending it into a tailspin.

MAYBACH --

Skating sideways.

No hesitation, Romeo --

CLOCKS Felix with a flush fist. BOOM! Beretta blasts. Off-target. Spiderwebbing the windshield.

Smoke jetting from melted rubber as Felix yanks the wheel, overcompensating. The axle shuddering on two tires, tilted --

FLIPPING at 100 MPH

BARRELING down the bridge's backside. An avalanche of metal, spitting twisted parts as it SMASHES INTO A TOLL BOOTH!

And in the aftermath, HISSING fumes fill an eerie SILENCE.

BUGATTI --

A stone's throw from the wreckage. Juliet inches forward with caution, toward the --

MAYBACH --

Reduced to a smoldering hunk of scrap, wrapped around the toll booth's archway.

No sign of life.

Behind Juliet -- a SIREN WAILS off yonder -- Police CRUISER, flashing RED AND BLUE -- a mile away -- CLOSING FAST.

MAYBACH --

Felix tumbles from the debris, bloodied, hobbling to his feet, punch-drunk as he fires his Beretta --

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Bullets pockmark the Bugatti. Juliet ducking for cover.

Felix striding toward her. Angling for a clean shot...

BOOM! Gunfire erupts from OFF SCREEN. Felix GASPS, collapsing in a heap. Life drained from his face...

A few feet away, Romeo braces against the Maybach, clutching the SMOKING REVOLVER.

Juliet peering over the Bugatti's dash as Romeo shuffles toward her.

Time running out -- Police SIREN BLARING behind them -- the CRUISER whips over the Rickenbacker crest -- Lynch at the helm -- scuttling toward --

BUGATTI --

Juliet skids ahead, nearly sideswiping Romeo as she yells --

JULIET

GET IN!

He lunges into the passenger seat -- Juliet gunning the gas -- PLOWING through an open lane in the toll booth onto --

THE DOLPHIN EXPRESSWAY

Six lanes of high-speed mayhem. Vehicles surging EASTBOUND.

A BIG RIG hogs the merge ramp. Its HORN BLASTING as Juliet bombs onto the highway, narrowly avoiding demolition.

Romeo marvels at her tenacity. Rubbernecking to check their rear. His face lit with RED AND BLUE as the CRUISER fishtails behind them. Shadowing their every move. Relentless.

Juliet can't shake the Cruiser. Separated by a half mile.

Traffic jammed at ROAD CONSTRUCTION up ahead. No way out.

Juliet faces Romeo, dead-serious.

JULIET (CONT'D)

Hold tight.

Her fingers choke the HANDBRAKE, yanking UPWARD. WRENCHING the wheel. WHIPLASH. Turning on a dime. 180 DEGREES.

VROOOOOOOM! Full-throttle, Juliet SPEEDS INTO --

ONCOMING TRAFFIC! ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH --

CRUISER --

Heading straight for the Bugatti. Lynch hangs out the window with his GLOCK in hand, FIRING -- BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

BUGATTI --

Riddled with BULLETS. Romeo and Juliet shielding their faces. Headlights pouring through the windshield. A split second from IMPACT --

Juliet SWERVES into the BREAKDOWN LANE. The Cruiser flinging past her -- its BRAKE LIGHTS FLARING. SPINNING 180 DEGREES --

WHOOOOOMP! The Big Rig DECIMATES the Cruiser -- its mangled body SOMERSAULTING down the highway and out of sight.

Juliet redirects the Bugatti, rumbling over the median and onto the WESTBOUND side of the highway...

EXT. ORANGE GROVES - NIGHT

A rural safe haven. Cords of CITRUS TREES stitched on the hillside, lit softly under a starry night. A clear, balmy evening free from the intrusion of smog and artificial light.

Near the sloping ridge rests a sleepy FARMHOUSE. Thick stands of citrus guarding its tarnished face.

The Bugatti -- parked beneath an umbrella of tree limbs. Shadows wandering in the breeze. All is dark except for --

OUTDOOR SHOWER --

A LANTERN sways above a jet of WARM WATER -- streaming from a mildewed spigot. Romeo's tux draped over a wicket door.

Romeo leans forward, palms pressed against the weather-worn backboard as Juliet stands behind him, PLUCKING GLASS SHARDS from his bare skin. Water draining down his side. He winces.

JULIET
Easy... You're alright.

She scrubs his raw wounds with a grubby chunk of soap.

ROMEO
Where are we?

JULIET
We're safe.

Her hands lathering his spine.

JULIET (CONT'D)
When I was a little girl, I'd run away here... this was the only place I could hide where my father wouldn't find me... Twenty years later and he still won't let me go.

ROMEO
That's why you left Colombia?

JULIET
(nods)
A million dollar donation to the charity of my choice, on the condition that I come home... I realized I could do *more good* with my father's dirty money than I could by myself.

Steam curling off Romeo and Juliet's half-naked bodies. His underwear is drenched. Same with her dress. Tattered strands slicked to her chest.

Her breaths land heavy on his back. Lips pursed, dripping sweat. A feverish heat radiating between them. Enough to repel a sane person into the cool comfort of the orchard...

But Juliet stays glued to Romeo. Slipping beneath the spigot, and standing in his shadow. Challenging his stare.

Water spilling down their cheeks like a lifetime's tears shed in an instant. Releasing them from the burdens of their past. Eyes lucid in the *HERE AND NOW* --

ROMEO & JULIET, face to face, breathless, vulnerable, helpless to deny what exists between them: LOVE.

ROMEO
There's something you should know about me --

JULIET

I don't care.

And she means it -- silencing his confession with a KISS.

Their lips locked like puzzle pieces hewn from plump chunks of flesh. Never separating. Never taking air. Willing to die in this moment rather than risk another breath.

Bodies tangled under the gushing spigot. Entwined with lung-crushing intensity. Stung with a passion so vivid it hurts.

And when they finally come up for air, it's bittersweet. Lungs heaving. Hearts thumping. Anxiety prickling their skin. Breeding doubt. A fear of loving and losing...

...but their love trumps the fear. It's as primal as the urge to breathe. Without it, they're as good as dead. Halves to a whole. Fragments of a soul.

They KISS AGAIN. Faster. Probing. Breathing in each other. Tasting each other. Their bodies colliding in a frantic embrace as spattered water douses the lantern's flame.

CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. ORANGE GROVES - DAWN

Saplings of daylight burn low on the horizon. An acrylic dawn glistening off dew-soaked crops. Silk webs dusted over a knoll where Romeo and Juliet lay --

-- nestled against one another. Her head resting on his heart. Both of them AWAKE. Lulled into a blissful weariness. The kind where you refuse to shut your eyes because you're afraid you'll never feel this good again.

EXT. DOLPHIN MALL - MORNING

A vacant parking lot.

Bruno, Hayes and Deuce wait inside an ESCALADE as Palmer pulls up beside them in a CRUISER.

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Palmer enters. Shuts the door. Passes a MANILA FOLDER to Bruno -- examining the contents.

PALMER
 (re: folder)
 I had to burn some top-shelf favors
 to get my hands on this.

INSERT -- MANILA FOLDER: ROMEO'S OFFICIAL DEA PROFILE

PALMER (CONT'D)
 You let the DEA right into your
 nest.

Blistering rage flashes in Bruno's eyes.

Hayes shaking his head in disbelief.

HAYES
 Bullshit. I did a full check on
 him.

PALMER
 All of it was planted. Only a
 handful of people know this guy's
 real identity. He's a ghost. Been
 burying kingpins in South America
 for the better part of a decade.
 And now he's got his sights set on
 you.

EXT. FLAGLER DOG TRACK - DAY

A disco-era relic turned senile gambling mecca. Type of place
 where dreams go to die.

In the GRANDSTANDS, a bevy of hapless BOTTOM FEEDERS stake
 paychecks for chance. Asses sunk in piss-soaked seats.

Neff sits among the scum. Sucking down a Marlboro and a
 frosty brew. His brow beading sweat in the oppressive heat.

A BELL RINGS!

Muzzled GREYHOUNDS bolt from the STARTING GATE. Bony legs
 spurring dirt. Chasing the mechanized WHITE RABBIT. Running
 like their lives depend on winning. And they do.

A chorus of CURSES echo from the grandstands. Gamblers urging
 their chosen hounds toward the finish line.

Neff checks his WAGER STUB, mumbling obscenities beneath his
 breath as the hounds round their second lap.

A SUITED MAN takes the seat next to Neff. Smoking a Cohiba. Stetson hat crimped over his face.

MAN

Who's your money on?

Neff keeps his eyes on the track.

NEFF

Eight.

Hounds sprint across the FINISH LINE -- #6 is the WINNER.

MAN

Lousy bet.

Neff angrily crumples his wager stub and turns to start shit with the Man when suddenly his face goes *Casper*...

The Man sitting next to him is HAYES.

HAYES

I used to come here every weekend,
like you, pissing away paychecks
'til I bankrolled one of the
breeders on a bet. Turns out they
drop sedatives in doggie bowls
before each race to fix the winner.

Hayes flashes his wager stub: \$50,000 on #6. Neff tries to play it cool, but he's visibly unsettled by Hayes' presence.

HAYES (CONT'D)

I take it by your expression, you
know who I am.

NEFF

(rhetorical)
Who doesn't?

HAYES

Nowadays everyone's got a scoop,
but I've heard you know me better
than most. In fact, some friends of
mine say you've taken a special
interest in my daily routine.

NEFF

News to me.

Hayes scowls, frustrated by Neff's resistance.

HAYES

Since you're new to the game, I'll cut you some slack. But from now on, you should assume I've got the ear of every shotcaller who can make or break your career.

(beat)

So, we can play this one of two ways: I can step on you to get what I want. OR you can come onboard of your own free will. And I can make sure my pals in D.C. put you at the top of the pecking order for promotion.

Neff stays tight-lipped. Neutral.

HAYES (CONT'D)

You're gonna get dirty one way or another; might as well get rich while you're at it.

Hayes dangles his winning wager stub.

HAYES (CONT'D)

The ticket's yours if you want it. But I need you to take a walk with me first.

VIP BOX - MOMENTS LATER

A scuzzy booth overlooking the track. Neff and Hayes enter to find BRUNO and DEUCE sitting at a counter.

BRUNO

Grab a seat.

Rattled, Neff squats on a stool. His shirt dotted with sweat.

NEFF

You mind if I smoke?

BRUNO

Be my guest.

Neff bites a Marlboro and fumbles with his lighter. Deuce whispers to Bruno, recognizing Neff from the gun deal.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

My associate tells me he saw you die in Key West.

Neff hides behind puffs of smoke, glancing at Deuce.

NEFF

Can't always trust your eyes.

Hayes sits between them, initiating negotiations --

HAYES

We don't intend to hold you accountable for the past, as long as you can amend the present, and keep us informed in the future.

NEFF

All you politicians talk in circles. If you got somethin' to say, lay it on the table.

BRUNO

We know about Romeo. We just wanna find out how much damage he's done, and if you can fix it.

Neff fights his scrambled nerves, playing hardball --

NEFF

I don't know anyone by that name.

BRUNO

He's already exposed. We're gonna get him with or without your help. Makes it easier on everyone if you bring him to us.

Hayes doubles down on Bruno's proposition --

HAYES

There are better ways to get ahead than busting your ass thirty years for a decent pension. Do us a favor and we'll return it ten-fold.

BUZZ! Neff's cell VIBRATES. Ringing several times. Bruno, Hayes and Deuce watching ravidly as Neff answers the call.

NEFF

(into cell)

Yea.

ROMEO (PRE-LAP)

It's me.

EXT. RUSTY PELICAN: WATERFRONT LOUNGE - SAME

An anglers tavern, isolated on the coastal highway. Romeo stands at an archaic PAY-PHONE in the gravel lot.

ROMEO
(into phone)
We need to meet.

NEFF (V.O.)
(through phone)
Everything okay?

ROMEO
(cryptic)
I'm in the open. Could use some
shelter.

INTERCUT ROMEO/NEFF

NEFF
So let me bring you in.

ROMEO
No. We need to do a face-to-face
first.

NEFF
There's a safe house in Kendall --

ROMEO
Can't be DEA monitored.

NEFF
Where then?

ROMEO
You know the *Rusty Pelican*?

NEFF
Heard of it.

ROMEO
Be there at seven... Come alone.

EXT/INT. RUSTY PELICAN: WATERFRONT LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

The second-floor PATIO stretches over shallow waters. Juliet waits under the shade of a parasol, leaning against the rail as Romeo approaches.

JULIET
What's next?

ROMEO
We try to broker a deal.

JULIET
(re: Neff)
And your friend can help?

ROMEO
If he can, he will.

Romeo discretely hands Juliet the REVOLVER.

ROMEO (CONT'D)
When he arrives, I want you out of sight.

Juliet's eyes skim the infinite horizon.

JULIET
Feels like I could lose myself out there. Just melt into the sunset. Disappear without a trace.

ROMEO
(pause, considers)
I've spent most of my life hunting men who didn't want to be found. There's no peace in running. You can bury your head in the sand, but sooner or later someone'll catch your scent.
(beat)
The only real way to *disappear* is to die. And your father doesn't seem like the type to leave loose ends untied. If we run, he won't be far behind.

JULIET
(pause)
So, how does this end for us?

ROMEO
It doesn't.

EXT/INT. RUSTY PELICAN: WATERFRONT LOUNGE - DUSK

The sun surrenders to darkness.

A boisterous CROWD flocking to the PATIO BAR. Mini-bulbs spooled on rain gutters, shedding naked light onto --

Romeo, alone at a table at the FAR END OF THE DECK.

On the opposite side, near the OUTDOOR GRILL, Juliet lingers by A ROW OF MASSIVE PROPANE TANKS. She keeps an eye on Romeo.

Neff snakes through the crowd, spotting Romeo and sitting across from him. Shaking his head condescendingly...

NEFF

Why is it every time I get a call from you, there's a massive pile of shit for me to cleanup? Just once I'd like a heads-up before you decide to run *demolition derby* on the highway; wreckin' toll booths and gunnin' down smugglers on traffic cams. It's sloppy work brutha'. That *vigilante bullshit* doesn't fly with the bosses.

(beat)

You've got alotta' people losing sleep. And the only thing keepin' you outta' their crosshairs is me.

ROMEO

Then you can sleep easy knowing I'm done.

NEFF

Done?

ROMEO

I'm out. After we finish this job.
(off look)

Bruno's *pushin' weight* off the docks tonight. You need to call-in a bust and seizure, but keep it low-profile. There's leaks across the board; cops on Bruno's payroll; not sure how far it spreads.

NEFF

You want me to coordinate a full-blown sting-op on a hunch?

ROMEO

There's more; we've got Bruno's daughter in the fold. She's ready to cooperate. So am I. But we need *guarantees* --

NEFF
 (incensed)
 Whoa. Hold-up... We?

ROMEO
 Me and her.

NEFF
 So, you're together now?
 (livid)
 What'd I tell you? -- *MAINTAIN YOUR
 COVER AT ALL COSTS. Don't get
 suckered by your mark.*
 (beat)
 You broke protocol. Brought this
 shit on yourself.

Behind them, a MAN emerges from the crowd. Sitting at the table...

MAN
 Mind if I join.

It's DEUCE. Romeo and Neff both appear startled to see him.

DEUCE
 Keep your hands on the place-mats
 and your mouths shut. I'm double-
 fistin' under the table, so if one
 of you moves, then both of you are
 gonna get bloody.

Under the table, Deuce grips TWO GLOCKS. One pointed at Romeo. The other at Neff.

DEUCE (CONT'D)
 (to Romeo, re: Neff)
 Here's the deal... Your *friend* here
 sold you out for a shot in the
 dark. He's gonna turn you over to
 me, then I'm supposed to chop you
 into chum and do the same to him.
 (beat)
 But I've never been good at
 followin' orders. So, I figured
 we'd shoot the shit over a few
 beers. See if we can come to terms.

Neff's betrayal stings Romeo. They share a heated stare...

If looks could kill, Neff would be a corpse.

His eyes flick to the RUGER SR9 in his hip holster while Romeo turns to Deuce, trying to make sense of it all...

ROMEO
What's your play?

DEUCE
You remember that rat you were searchin' for?
(re: himself)
Well, you're lookin' at him.
(beat)
Seems like you and I got some common ground.

ROMEO
How so?

DEUCE
We both want Bruno out of business. Problem is, you're still tryin' to serve justice when the law's already turned on you. Leaves us with one solution.

ROMEO
What's that?

DEUCE
Kill the king and take the throne.
Bruno's had his run. It's my time now.

ROMEO
And you want my help?

DEUCE
Don't see that you have any other choice.

NEFF
What about me?

DEUCE
(re: Romeo)
Up to him.

Tables turned. Romeo holds Neff's life in his hands.

ACROSS THE DECK --

Juliet fights through a horde of Happy-Hour LUSHES buzzing toward the bar. Bodies crisscrossing in front of her, obscuring her view of Romeo.

She perches near the propane tanks. Peering over the crowd...

Catching the FAINT GLINT of Deuce's GLOCKS under the table.

PANIC flooding her face. She quickdraws the REVOLVER, extending her arm --

BOOM!

A bullet PUNCTURES Deuce's shoulder. His body jerking sideways, off balance. CROWD SCATTERING as --

Neff SPRINGS UPWARD and FLIPS THE TABLE.

BOOM! BOOM! Deuce unloads. Slugs compacting in the table, shielding Neff from the gunfire as he grabs his Ruger.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! His finger pulsing the trigger.

Romeo and Deuce lunging for cover -- toward the propane tanks -- behind a door -- Deuce and Neff trading shots.

Frantic patrons caught in the crossfire.

Guns BELCHING BULLETS. A melee of sparks and shards.

Romeo glimpsing Juliet through the frenzied crowd.

Neff FIRING in her direction, trying to hit --

Romeo, deadlifting a table and using it to bullrush Neff. GUNFIRE scarring the oak slab as he PLOWS FORWARD.

From a distance --

Juliet cycles the revolver, protecting Romeo, emptying the chamber on --

Neff, BULLETS ventilating his gut as Romeo SMASHES and SLAMS him downward. Bones CRUSHING under the table's weight.

But Neff keeps FIRING. Stray SHOTS spraying the patio until --

BOOOOOOOM! A BLINDING EXPLOSION. RUPTURED PROPANE TANKS BREATHING MASSIVE BURSTS OF FIRE. ENGULFING HALF THE DECK.

BODIES BLASTED. BURNING. SCORCHED AND CHARRED. FLAMES FEEDING ON DRY WOOD. THE BLAZE SPREADING RAPIDLY --

As Neff succumbs to his wounds, Romeo rushes to the wall of fire. His fear-riddled eyes searching for Juliet...

...but there's NO ONE LEFT ALIVE in the explosion's path. A WOMAN on the ground. Lifeless. Torched. Looks like Juliet.

Deck segments COLLAPSING as blistered floorboards plunge into the ocean below. Romeo sidles the edge, SCREAMING, FURIOUS --

ROMEO

JULIET!

But she's gone. Dead. His eyes spill tears in the gushing smoke. Its searing heat pelting him with thick waves of soot.

Juliet's death POISONS him. Grief hardening to hate. SEEDS OF LOVE RIPPED FROM HIS HEART, LEAVING ONLY VENGEANCE.

FIRE devours everything in its path. And soon it will take Romeo. But Deuce grabs his shoulder and drags him away.

DEUCE

C'MON! WE GOTTA GO!

The piercing cry of SIRENS in the distance --

INT. MERCEDES G63 - MOMENTS LATER

Romeo sits shotgun, Deuce at the wheel, speeding past a fleet of incoming FIRE TRUCKS and AMBULANCES.

Romeo is unhinged. Inconsolable. On a razor's edge between wrath and self-loathing. Next to him, Deuce winces, checking the bullet wound on his shoulder. Nothing serious.

DEUCE

This has to happen tonight. I can't let Bruno hit the streets with fresh supply.

Romeo fumes in silence. Staring dead-eyed out the windshield.

DEUCE (CONT'D)

You can sit there wishin' things were different, or you can help me send him to hell.

EXT/INT. CALDERON FURNITURE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Closed. Romeo and Deuce break inside, taking the --

FREIGHT ELEVATOR down to the UNDERGROUND LAB. Tunnel rigged with C4 BOMBS. Romeo and Deuce steal the explosives.

EXT. RUSTY PELICAN: WATERFRONT LOUNGE - NIGHT

Juliet's body floats stiffly in the placid water. Eyes shut. Lungs static. Then suddenly --

A PARAMEDIC hauls her onto the shore. Clamping an OXYGEN MASK onto her mouth.

Her EYES BURST OPEN. LUNGS HEAVING. Skin flush with life. The Paramedic tries to keep her subdued --

PARAMEDIC

You're gonna be okay. Don't move.

-- but she shoves him aside with unexpected vigor. Coughing as she stumbles to her feet.

JULIET

I'm fine. Let me go.

GRAVEL LOT - MOMENTS LATER

A makeshift triage. AMBULANCES and GURNEYS packed in the lot. Survivors receiving treatment from PARAMEDICS.

Juliet desperately searches for Romeo. Not finding him. Hope draining from her eyes when she sees --

A ROW OF BODY BAGS on the gravel. She hurries over. Unzipping the nearest bag when a bullish POLICEMAN intervenes --

POLICEMAN

Ma'am! You can't be doing that.

Juliet, berserk, in the delirium of lost love, fighting grief, not thinking clearly. She rummages through the bags.

JULIET

Is there anyone else left alive?
Anyone who isn't here?

POLICEMAN

Did you check the ambulances?

JULIET

Of course.

POLICEMAN

Then I'm sorry... there's no other survivors, and I can't have you digging through bodies.

Policeman grabs her shoulder but she irritably twists away --

JULIET

Don't touch me.

-- and staggers through the lot.

MOMENTS LATER

Juliet revs the battered BUGATTI and smears onto the highway.

EXT/INT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - NIGHT

Hayes lounges on a couch. Watching the *MUTED EVENING NEWS* --

On the TV: local coverage of the fire at the Rusty Pelican.

A soft rustle ECHOES in the distance. Hayes ignores it. Taps the remote control. Channel surfing. Bored. Until...

A SHADOWY FIGURE creeps from behind...

JULIET -- shoving a COLT 9MM in Hayes' face.

JULIET

Where is *he*?

Hayes weasels upward, about to plead for his life when Juliet PENETRATES his mouth with the Colt's barrel, silencing him.

JULIET (CONT'D)

(taunting)

That can't feel good; choking on your own lies. How's it taste?

Juliet racks the slide. Hayes gagging.

JULIET (CONT'D)

There's no charming your way outta' this. But I'll let you suck wind for a few extra minutes if you take me to *him*.

Hayes' teeth chatter on the cold steel.

HAYES

Who?

JULIET

My father.

EXT. PORT OF MIAMI, FL - NIGHT

Storm clouds roll over the shale-dark sea. Tide swelling rhythmically like a blackened heart, beating against --

PANAMAX CARGO FREIGHTER

COLOMBIAN FLAG flapping from its mast. A COLOSSAL MAZE OF SHIPPING CRATES stacked on the half-empty deck. Shoreside GANTRY CRANES offloading them one by one.

CARTEL MERCENARIES (*MERCS*), armed to the teeth, stationed at checkpoints throughout the massive ship.

Near the COMMAND TOWER --

Bruno and a CARTEL LIAISON crack open a CRATE containing two stock model TOYOTA CAMRYS --

Bruno takes a handheld COLD SAW to the spare tire hull. Rotary blade gnawing through the metal patchwork, revealing --

A HOLLOWED CAVITY -- stuffed with bricks of PURE, UNCUT COLOMBIAN COCAINE. Bruno switchblades a package and dabs the white powder on his tongue, testing the product.

BRUNO

How much in the load?

CARTEL LIAISON

Ten containers. Twenty cars. Forty *kilos* in each.

A brief pause before Bruno gives the nod of approval.

AT THE VESSEL'S STERN --

A GANGWAY connects the ship to the wharf. DUFFLE in hand, Deuce marches Romeo up the ramp, toward a MERCENARY.

MERCENARY

(re: Romeo)

Who's this?

Deuce plays along, aiming a SILENCED GLOCK at Romeo's head, as if he were a prisoner.

DEUCE

Present for Bruno. You seen him?

MERCENARY

Yea. He's by the command tower.

DEUCE

Thanks.

Without warning, Deuce RE-AIMS and -- *PING* -- executes the Mercenary. Romeo snatching the Merc's MP5 RIFLE, then following Deuce into the belly of the freighter.

THE HULL

Romeo and Deuce infiltrate the ship's innards. Through hatches and bulkheads. Burrowing deeper. Arriving at --

THE CREW QUARTERS

A Spartan cell clogged with bunk beds. Lit like a dungeon.

Romeo and Deuce prowl ahead as --

TWO MERCS emerge through a hatch on the far side.

Romeo and Deuce duck behind STORAGE CHESTS. Hidden in shadow as the Mercs move closer. Deuce whispering --

DEUCE (CONT'D)

Kill 'em quiet. No guns.

Romeo nods, peeking through steel bunk beams as --

A SHADOW ECLIPSES him from the rear. Another FOUR MERCS APPROACHING FROM HIS BACKSIDE. They've got the drop on --

Romeo and Deuce -- DIVING EVASIVELY over the storage chests and TARGETING THE TWO MERCS IN FRONT OF THEM --

RAT-TAT-TAT!

-- killing them at a dead sprint and LUNGING through --

THE HATCH -- swallowing GUNFIRE as Romeo LOCKS THE DOOR. Muffled curses of Mercs SHOUTING through the wall.

No time to waste. Romeo and Deuce hightail to --

THE CENTRAL HUB

Divergent paths. A LADDER descending into the ENGINE ROOM. And a STAIRCASE ascending to the COMMAND TOWER.

Romeo grabs Deuce. Stops him.

ROMEO

I need to make sure Bruno's dead.
I'm not leaving it to chance.

Deuce nods. Apprehensive. Unzips the duffle -- stuffed with C4 BOMBS. He sets a DIGITAL TIMER on the top bundle.

DEUCE

Just make sure you're off the boat
in ten minutes.

Romeo winds the dial on his WRISTWATCH -- *the one Juliet bought for him*. CLOCK HAND TICKING -- IN SYNC WITH THE TIMER.

Explosives slung over his shoulder, Deuce SLIDES DOWN the ladder while Romeo BOUNDS UP the staircase.

THE GANGWAY

JULIET walks the plank, holding Hayes at gunpoint, climbing onto the deck and traversing the maze of shipping crates.

JULIET

(re: Bruno)
You sure he's onboard?

DUCT TAPE covers Hayes' muzzle. He can only nod. YES.

THE ENGINE ROOM

Deuce stashes the C4 duffle behind HYDRAULIC MOTORS as --

TWO MERCS scour the premises -- Deuce vaulting onto a walkway then dashing through a hatch -- Mercs on his tail.

THE COMMAND TOWER

A grid of bright buttons and monitors. Mostly automated. Circuitry reflecting off PANORAMIC WINDOWS.

Romeo scans the array of marine controls. Finding a MANUAL CONTROL BOARD. He flips the PRIMARY THRUSTERS and pushes the PROPULSION LEVER to its limit -- *FULL AHEAD!*

No one is getting off this boat alive.

THE DECK

Bruno stands below a GANTRY CRANE -- snaring his CARGO CRATE when --

WHOOOMP! The freighter SPURS FORWARD with a start --

Mooring ropes SNAP as the massive hull SIDESWIPES the wharf, RIPPING concrete slabs that splash into the FROTHING CANAL.

The CRANE TIPPING and SLAMMING into TOWERS OF UNPACKED CRATES. Swinging like a wrecking ball --

WHAM! WHAM! Crates POUND and PUNCTURE the deck. SHATTERING on impact. Contents ROCKETING toward --

Bruno, sprawling to avoid projectiles, then lunging backward as his CRATE catapults from the MANGLED CRANE --

WHAM! SMASHING into a cluster of containers mid-ship. TOYOTA CAMRYS lurching from its split frame. Damaged but intact.

NEARBY

Crates SHIFT and COLLIDE like trash compactors.

Hayes TACKLES Juliet and RIPS the Colt from her grasp. On hands and knees, he pounces for the gun and --

BOOM! Fires as Juliet scrambles through the collapsing maze.

THE GANGWAY

Deuce races toward portside. A chasm between the wharf and hull, growing wider as the ship moves.

No way out except to -- JUMP -- but Deuce falls short -- into the water -- his body EVISCERATED BY THE PROPELLERS.

THE COMMAND TOWER

Romeo heads for the hatch but TWO MERCS block his path -- charging up the stairwell with MP5s raised --

RAT-TAT-TAT! Romeo turtles behind a stand. Pinned down. Can't move. Bullets whizzing past him. He checks his WRISTWATCH --

INSERT -- DIGITAL BOMB CLOCK: 6:29 -- 6:28 -- 6:27 --

Romeo looks for an exit. Eyes twitching. Locking on --

PANORAMIC WINDOWS. He breaks them with BULLETS -- and VAULTS through the shattered glass, onto --

CARGO STACKS

60 FEET ABOVE THE DECK. Romeo lands with a THUD. Tumbling toward the ledge. Regaining his balance in the nick of time.

BULLETS PEPPERING the surface as --

Mercs CHASE him from the command tower, onto the stacks.

Romeo LEAPS from pillar to pillar. A cityscape of crates, piled at vertigo-inducing heights, ROCKING as the freighter churns through the canal.

Romeo HURLING across chasms between stacks. Scanning the deck for Bruno WHEN SUDDENLY HE SPOTS --

JULIET --

Fleeing from Hayes. Sprinting desperately through the maze.

ROMEO --

On bended knee. Eyes down the sight of his MP5. Aiming at --

HAYES --

Vanishing behind a stack of crates. HUNTING JULIET as --

SCREEEEECH! The ship GRINDS the wharf's edge. RUDDERS TILTING and THRUSTING toward the CANAL'S MOUTH.

JULIET --

Stumbles and CRASHES into a toppled crate. Dazed. Vulnerable. With Hayes stalking her. Aiming the gun at her chest...

RAT-TAT-TAT!

ROMEO --

Saves Juliet. FIRING from atop the stacks. Raining death from above. MAIMING Hayes with leg shots as --

WHOOOOOMP! The ship's hull SLOSHES onto an even keel.

ROMEO --

Loses his balance. Face CRACKING against the crate's top. Body FLUNG sideways, losing his MP5 and GRABBING THE LEDGE.

Dangling 50 FEET ABOVE THE DECK. His fingers CLINGING to a thin rail as Mercs SHOOT at him from behind.

HAYES --

Hobbling forward. Gun raised. About to kill Juliet...

KERRRR-WHAM! A FALLING CRATE CRUSHES HAYES! SMOTHERING HIM.

JULIET --

Springs to her feet. Hurrying toward mid-ship. Running into --

BRUNO --

Shocked to see his daughter. Won't let her go. His hand strangles her wrist. But she CUTS LOOSE. RIPPING AWAY.

ROMEO --

Hanging from the stacks. His grip weakening. Fingers SLIPPING. BULLETS HOUNDING him from the --

MERCS --

Scuttling across pillars. Angling for a clean shot on --

ROMEO --

Barely holding on. Glancing down at Bruno and Juliet. His HAND QUIVERING on the rail, a heartbeat from falling when --

THE CRATE SEESAWS on edge -- then KNUCKLES downward -- WHIPPING Romeo toward the chasm as he --

THROWS HIMSELF against another stack -- AIR SMACKED from his chest -- HANDS GRASPING for purchase as he PLUNGES down a tight chute between pillars and --

SNAGS A RAIL. Redirecting his momentum -- thrusting and --

THWACK! MAULING BRUNO as he lands. The two of them CAROM off shuddering columns. A landslide of crates DAGGERING the deck.

Romeo and Bruno in the midst of the DOWNFALL. BRAWLING.

Nothing elegant about this fight. Just two men slugging it out. Letting their fists do the talking.

JULIET --

Halts near the CAMRYS. Mid-ship. Turning back to see --

BRUNO --

Throwing HAYMAKERS at Romeo. CHOKING him with one hand, and DRUBBING him with the other.

Romeo, reeling from the hits. Lips spattering blood. A boxer on the ropes, about to go down when --

He dips under a punch and BELTS Bruno with an UPPERCUT. His elbow flashes across Bruno's jaw. WHIPLASH --

UMMPHHH! Spearing Bruno onto the flat. Mounting him. Romeo's fists are gavels of justice -- HAMMERING Bruno's face -- then STRIPPING a GLOCK from his vest as --

RAT-TAT-TAT!

MERCS --

BOMBARD Romeo from atop the stacks -- driving him off Bruno -- Romeo scrambling into the open -- dead in their sights --

RAT-TAT-TAT! -- VROOOOOOOOM! A CAMRY SWERVES in front of the shots. Shielding Romeo. DEFLECTING GUNFIRE --

JULIET AT THE WHEEL. Shoving open the passenger door for --

Romeo DIVING inside the CAR as Juliet STOMPS THE GAS.

An obstacle course of crates impeding her. Starboard and portside jammed with stacks. No way off the ship except for --

THE BOW -- 300 yards in the distance. And TIME'S RUNNING OUT. Romeo checks his WRISTWATCH --

INSERT -- DIGITAL BOMB CLOCK: 1:13 -- 1:12 -- 1:11 --

ROMEO
(to Juliet)
GET US IN THE WATER!

He climbs into the backseat, FIRING out the rear windshield.

BRUNO AND THE MERCS --

In the OTHER CAMRY. BURNING RUBBER. Bruno manning the wheel. Hellbent on catching Romeo and Juliet.

THE FREIGHTER --

CLIPS A BULGE OF ROCKS at the canal's mouth, and bustles into the open ocean --

A SHOCKWAVE JOLTING THE DECK. STACKS TREMBLING. TOPPLING. DAMMING THE BOW. PLUMMETING LIKE BOULDERS.

JULIET --

SIDESWIPES one of the fallen crates. Then recovers quickly.

Momentum LAUNCHING ROMEO OUT THE REAR WINDSHIELD!

His hands CLAWING the headrest. Body FLAILING like a windsock. Hips SMACKING the trunk. WRISTWATCH TICKING --

INSERT -- DIGITAL BOMB CLOCK: :21 -- :20 -- :19 --

BRUNO AND THE MERCS --

SURGING forward and RAMMING the other OTHER CAMRY'S FENDER --

ROMEO Contorts. Rolling over. Nearly severed in the impact. Grasping onto a flap of seat fabric as --

KERRR-WHAM! A CRATE NOSE-DIVES INTO THE TRAILING CAMRY. Wrecking it. Mercs buried beneath the flattened metal.

BRUNO --

Prying a blood-slicked MP5 from one of the Mercs -- then staggering onto the deck -- FIRING psychotically at --

ROMEO AND JULIET --

Breathing on borrowed time. SPEEDING toward the bow. Seat fabric shredding in Romeo's grasp. HURLING him from the Camry. WRISTWATCH snapping as he tumbles across the deck.

JULIET --

Glancing back at him. Engine retching. Wheels blurring. Can't hit the brakes in time as she --

WHOOOOOSH! LAUNCHES off the bow. AIRBORNE.

ROMEO --

In pain. On his back. Bruno hunting him. Unleashing a HAIL OF BULLETS. Romeo stays calm. Glock in hand. Taking dead aim.

BOOM! The shot rips through Bruno's throat. Silencing him. His body planking limply against the deck.

Romeo hustles to his feet. Sprinting. LEAPING off the bow as --

JULIET --

PLUNGES into the sea. Camry FLOODING rapidly. She takes a deep breath and torpedoes out the window, spotting --

ROMEO --

Underwater. Far way. Closer to the FREIGHTER. PROPELLERS CHURNING VIOLENTLY BEHIND HIM.

He sees Juliet. Reaches out for her. Desperate. Pawing at the water as he's --

SUCKED INTO THE WAKE. A VORTEX OF CURRENT FUNNELING HIM TOWARD THE PROPELLERS.

Juliet frantically swims after him. She'd rather die than --

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

THE FREIGHTER EXPLODES. A RIPPLING BALL OF FIRE. SPREADING UNDERWATER. TENTACLES OF FLAME CONSUMING JULIET.

CUT TO:

THE WRISTWATCH --

Sinking into the ocean's depths. The clock hand bent and broken...

TIME STOPPED.

EXT. SOUTH BEACH - DAWN

Timid waves caress the shore. Raking and smoothing the sand. Eroding then mending. Hurting then healing...

Everything that's old is new again, until it's old once more.

The tide is constant. Cyclical. Always in motion.

The beach is empty. Abandoned. Devoid of life.....

Until a SOUL comes crashing through the waves --

JULIET -- ALIVE. Wearily trudging through waist-deep froth. The sea urging her to dry land as she --

STUMBLES ONTO THE BEACH. Her legs buckling. Too weak to walk. Collapsing. On her back. Laid to rest...

And there's nothing left in her eyes except *hurt*.

The tears come hard, and they sting, and they stain. Cheeks shuddering. Lips quivering. And she can't stop sobbing as --

The tide laps gently at her limp feet. Trying to *heal* her.

She swallows her tears. Sitting up. SALT BREEZE whispering sweetly. Drying her cheeks. Nudging her gaze eastward, where -

The SUN blushes beneath honeycomb clouds. A yolk of light blooming on the horizon... and in the distance...

A SILHOUETTE, on the shoreline, striding toward her. Walking, then breaking into a sprint. Still far away. Tough to see.

Juliet squints into the glaring daybreak...

RISING slowly to her feet... HER SMILE BRIGHTER THAN THE SUN... AS SHE RECOGNIZES HIM... ROMEO.

Bounding across the beach. Breathless. Desperate. They meet halfway. Falling into each other. Clawing. Kissing. Wanting to make sure this is real. That it isn't a dream. The pain is as welcome as the pleasure. Hearts thumping in their chests.

Black smoke swirling in the distance, above the demolished freighter. Romeo and Juliet glance at it, realizing...

ROMEO
We should be dead.

And they are, in the eyes of the world. BLINDING SUNLIGHT ECLIPSES THE LENS AND WE...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GENOA, ITALY - DAY

TITLE: SIX MONTHS LATER

A port-city steeped in history. Alpine cliffs cluttered with relics of the renaissance; villas and castles towering above an emerald sea kissed by the Mediterranean sun.

This is a place for lovers -- *old and new* -- where time is measured in heartbeats.

Anchored in the bay -- *BENETAU SENSE 50' SAILBOAT*. An elegant solution for mobile living. "*Di Amore*" etched on its hull.

A HAMMOCK strung on the bow where ROMEO and JULIET rest. Their bodies knotted in the hemp cocoon.

Breathing at a tranquil pace. Eyes half-shut. Skin glistening from a recent swim. Hair tangled and salty. Limbs entwined like ribbons as their lips meet in a --

KISS. Soft. Serene. Enduring. She gently places his hand on her belly, insisting...

JULIET
We should eat.

He nods, lost in her eyes.

ROMEO
I'll take us to port.

The hammock swaying as she rises and smiles mischievously...

JULIET
Let's wash-up first.

ROMEO
I'm right behind you.

She disappears into the cabin. Shower water running. Romeo lingers a bit longer. Savoring the moment. Then he hears *something* troublesome. Turns his head to see a --

SPEEDBOAT. Racing toward him from the port. He leans on the rail as the vessel nears...

It's ROSALINE -- whom we remember from the arms deal in Key West. Romeo welcomes her with an uneasy grin...

ROMEO (CONT'D)
Thought I'd seen the last of you.

ROSALINE
I wish that were true.

Her voice sharp with urgency. She tosses a rope to Romeo. Leaves the engine running. Climbs aboard.

ROMEO
How'd you find me?

ROSALINE
Everyone leaves a trail. Even
ghosts like you.
(beat)
If it's any consolation, you were
harder to track than most.

ROMEO
Hope you didn't come all this way
to say *goodbye*.

ROSALINE
Goodbye isn't an option for you.
Not yet.

From her satchel, Rosaline retrieves a DOCUMENT: CLASSIFIED.

ROSALINE (CONT'D)
You remember Caracas?
(off look)
(MORE)

ROSALINE (CONT'D)

When we left, your alias was still intact. Right now, all you need to know is that we need you back inside... I'll give you a full briefing on the plane.

She hands Romeo a PLANE TICKET. He declines...

ROMEO

Tell your bosses I'm dead as far as they're concerned.

ROSALINE

And *you will be* without our help.
(explaining)
You fled Miami with a bullseye on your back. There are men hunting you as we speak. And if *I* can find you, it's only a matter of time before *they* do the same. We can shield you from them, but you have to give us a reason to care.

Romeo turns toward the cabin. Listening to the shower's HISS.

ROMEO

(re: Juliet)

I'm not leaving her.

ROSALINE

There's no room for tourists.
She'll be safer without you.

Rosaline vaults onto the speedboat --

ROSALINE (CONT'D)

Our flight leaves Genoa at six.

-- and pushes the shift lever. *VROOOOOM!* Speeding away.

The ticket flapping in Romeo's grasp as a fortuitous wind blows westward.

Wrapped in a towel, Juliet emerges from the cabin. Glimpsing the ticket as Romeo tucks it in his pocket.

She moves close. Against his body. Not saying a word. Kissing him, then grinning slyly, as if she'd been eavesdropping on his conversation with Rosaline.

JULIET

So, where are we going?

CUT TO BLACK: