

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN

The place is a wreck. Leftovers and dirty dishes everywhere. A small tornado of flies above the trash. Pile of bills held down by a half-eaten slice of pizza.

The DISHWASHER stumbles into the kitchen and looks around. We get the impression that he slept in his clothes, probably where he fell down. This is not a well person.

Dishwashers POV - an old gas oven.

He walks over and opens it.

Kneels down and places his head inside.

Reaches up and turns on the gas. Hold. The hiss of lethal gas filling a confined space.

And then he sneezes, banging his head around in the oven. He falls back on the floor in a sneezing fit - having an allergic reaction to the natural gas.

TV SCREEN

The TV is upside down as we see a documentary about deep sea exploration.

NARRATOR

At depths beyond the limit of human endurance, the submersible searches for the wreck.

INT. TIM'S LIVING ROOM

A young man in his mid 20's is asleep on the couch in front of the television. His head dangles upside down off the couch. He opens his eyes into a terrible hangover. In the background the documentary continues.

CAPTAIN BOB

Very limited in the water. 120 feet is the limit for sport divers.

Tim, head still upside down, puts a cigarette in his mouth and lights it awkwardly. His eyebrows raise (towards the floor) he is learning something new.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPTAIN BOB (CONT'D)

Anything below 300 feet might as well be on the moon. You can get to it, but it's very expensive.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Still and dark. The tables are beautifully set and give us the impression that this is an upscale restaurant. Then NICKELS walks through, carrying a bag of fast food. Nickels is in his late 30's, balding and overworked. We follow him.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

As he walks from the front of the house to the kitchen, the illusion of the clean and perfect dining room is quickly dispelled. As soon as he leaves the kitchen the unseen filth of a working restaurant becomes apparent. Broken, jury-rigged and dirty.

INT. KITCHEN

The chef, GEORGE, is here chopping vegetables. He's is 35 and has been working in the kitchen since he was 14.

NICKELS

Mornin' George.

GEORGE

Nickels, how you doing?

NICKELS

Feeling great. Got up early and went for a run. How about you?

He lights a cigarette.

GEORGE

We're gonna be short. Phil's under house arrest.

NICKELS

Failure to support?

GEORGE

Yeah, you should pay him more.

NICKELS

He should get divorced less. You gonna make it without him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

Yeah, Cisco's coming in. We should be fine. Unless it's Thanksgiving or Christmas or some shit like that.

NICKELS

Shit I hope not.

Nickels leaves and George continues prepping food. The noise of the chopping continues as the camera takes us on a tour of the kitchen.

Racks of pots, the soup station, the hot line, a rack of spices. Then just as we are passing a phone, it rings.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Hey Nickels. Nickels? Damnit.

George walks over and answer the phone.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Hello. What? Cisco? What? No, in English Cisco, Ingles. You shouldn't have been driving. Cocaine! What happened to Tim? Que, que. Okay, hold on, I'll get him.

INT. KITCHEN - WALK IN FREEZER

Nickels reaches behind some boxes and pulls out a bottle of vodka and takes a swig. As George opens the door he jumps and hides the bottle behind his leg.

GEORGE

What are you doing in here.

NICKELS

Inventory. Checking inventory.

GEORGE

(not buying it)

Cisco's on the phone from jail. Wants to talk to you.

INT. KITCHEN - PHONE

NICKELS

Another DUI, but didn't?

GEORGE

Yeah I had Tim take him home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKELS

So what happened? Wait, he's not
expecting me to post bail?

(Picks up phone)

Yo hablo no fucking way?

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN

The dishwasher struggles with a child-proof cap. After a
valiant fight he opens the bottle,

pours the entire thing in his mouth and chokes it down with a
glass of water.

A long beat. He is at a loss for what to do next. This was
not in the original suicide plan. He checks his pulse.

And then the phone rings. He answers.

DISHWASHER

Hello?

GEORGE

(through the phone)

Hey man, I'm glad I caught you. Cisco
just called me from jail. So he can't
work. Can you make it to wash dishes?

The dishwasher struggles to get a hold on the moment.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I know you've got plans, but I'm in a
real bind here. I'll give you time and a
half? Can you help me out?

DISHWASHER

Uh, sure.

INT. BAR

Tim enters, obviously hung over, wearing black pants, a white
T-shirt and carrying a freshly laundered Tuxedo shirt. He
hangs the shirt on a bar stool and pours himself a coke from
the soda gun.

He takes a sip, then sloshes half the coke out, pours some
rum in and sucks the whole thing down. He pours himself a
fresh coke and leaves, slightly rejuvenated.

INT. HALLWAY

Tim pulls his timecard out of a rack and punches in. In an
instant Nickels is upon him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKELS

What happened to Cisco?

TIM

What?

NICKELS

Why is Cisco in jail?

TIM

I don't know, I took him home.

NICKELS

But you stopped for a drink.

TIM

Nickels, I don't drink, I'm half-Mormon.

NICKELS

You can't be half Mormon and all bullshit at the same time. It doesn't add up.

TIM

Fine. We stopped at the Dahlia, and he disappeared.

NICKELS

Home, you were supposed to take him home.

TIM

I asked him if he wanted to stop.

NICKELS

Well, now Chef is fucked for tonight. Your fault.

TIM

You got this wrong man. (indicates self)
Waiter. Not babysitter, not chaperone.
Not my job.

NICKELS

You're turning out to be a real disappointment.

Exits.

TIM

Maybe you can get together with my parents and form a support group.

Tim turns to leave and bumps into the dishwasher who has somehow made it to work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TIM

Watch it.

The dishwasher sways over to the time clock and, after several unsuccessful attempts, punches in. He shuffles off to the kitchen as ANTHONY walks in and punches his card. Anthony is the epitome of smooth foreign waiters. The kind that manages to be both servile and contemptuous at the same time. We follow him to-

INT. BREAK ROOM

The sanctuary of all waiters. A table, a few chairs and always overflowing ashtrays. All of the furniture is broken in some way and therefore unsuitable for the dining room. Tim is doing a crossword puzzle. RICK sits smoking a cigarette. He is gay, in his 40's and a recovering alcoholic. NANCY, the bartender sits reading a romance novel. She is in her early 30's and used to be beautiful but too many hard nights have dragged her down to somewhat attractive. Anthony remains standing in the doorway with an unlit cigarette.

ANTHONY

Who was that?

RICK

Dishwasher I think.

ANTHONY

What's his name?

RICK

I never bother to learn a dishwasher's name. They're never around long enough to make it worth the effort.

Tim looks up.

TIM

You're a real human being.

RICK

What? Because I tell the truth?

Tim tosses Anthony a lighter.

TIM

See. Compassion. I care for the welfare of my fellow man.

RICK

Do you know his name?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
No, but I'll find out.

RICK
Good luck.

NICKELS walks in with ROBERT, a new hire, who has never worked in a restaurant before.

NICKELS
Robert, this is everybody. Everybody,
Robert.
(lights a cigarette.)
You smoke?

ROBERT
No.

NICKELS
We're gonna be getting a lot of work out
of Robert here. Tim, take him and make
sure the dining room is right.

Tim holds up a freshly lit cigarette in protest.

NICKELS (CONT'D)
Go. And start explaining to him how
things work around here.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tim is showing Robert how to set a table.

TIM
It's simple. The whole place runs on
contempt. The kitchen hates the waiters,
the waiters hate the kitchen, the
customers hate the waiters - and
everybody hates those assholes. The
bartender hates everybody, but
everybody's nice to her cause she's the
one with the alcohol. And the manager
hates himself, this place and everybody
in it because he has no life.

INT. WAIT STATION

Tim and Robert prepping table resets. They place silverware and napkins in water glasses so that they can be quickly taken out to the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM (CONT'D)

So the only thing that keeps this infernal machine going is money. The wheels are all greased with money. We faun over the customers, they tip. The kitchen gets us the food on time, we tip them. Bartender slips us drinks, tip her. And the manager drinks for free and skims from the till. Got it?

Robert is not at all sure about this job choice.

ROBERT

Uh...

TIM

Good.

We follow them to

INT. KITCHEN

George is prepping steaks. He has a mountain of work to do all by himself and he's struggling to get it done.

TIM

Just you tonight George?

GEORGE

Fuck you.

TIM

(to Robert)

See what I mean.

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

In the background an argument ensues between Tim and George.

The dishwasher is finishing up the last rack of dishes before the restaurant opens. In anticipation of a break, he places a cigarette in his mouth. He sways dangerously on his stool.

Manages to pull the lever to start the dishwasher.

And falls asleep sitting up. Wedged between his stool and the dishwashing machine. The cigarette remains in his mouth and bounces up and down with the action of the machine.

INT. KITCHEN

George and Tim stand toe to toe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

I should knock you into next week.

TIM

Who are you kidding, you couldn't even knock on my door.

GEORGE

You better make a will.

TIM

You better pack a lunch.

The both burst out laughing. The tension is quickly between them is quickly dissolved.

GEORGE

Pack a lunch?

TIM

You know, cause we're gonna go all day.

GEORGE

Pack a lunch?

TIM

So I was reaching. Sorry about Cisco. I turned my back and he was gone.

GEORGE

Hey man, just another day in paradise.

TIM

You gonna be okay without him?

George makes a handgun shape with his thumb and forefinger, places it in his mouth, and then delivers the line.

GEORGE

(garbled)

Yeah, yeah. Just great.

TIM

Well if it makes you feel any better, Nickels told me I was turning out to be a real disappointment.

Tim and Robert walk away..

TIM (CONT'D)

(to Robert)

Still hates my fucking guts though.

EXT. FRONT OF RESTAURANT

A muscle car pulls up. DOLLY, the hostess gets out. She is young, beautiful and not exactly the sharpest tool in the shed. She is being dropped off by her redneck boyfriend.

BOYFRIEND

I'm a pick you up at 11.

DOLLY

But

BOYFRIEND

Honey, we been through this. They just keeping you late cause they want in your pants.

DOLLY

Whatever.

She slams the door .

BOYFRIEND

Don't be slamming my door.

INT. HOSTESS STATION

Dolly checks the reservation book, then picks up the phone.

DOLLY

Hey, it's me. Yeah, he did it again. He doesn't even trust enough to let me work.

INT. BREAK ROOM

Close on Robert. A puff of smoke from the right, another from the left. Pull back and everyone is smoking but Robert.

RICK

They're the worst. I used to get them every night when I was working at Thursday's.

NANCY

What about the one where you forget a table.

RICK

Not that one.

NANCY

It's so stupid. Just as you're falling asleep, AHHH! You jerk awake.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY (CONT'D)

You tell yourself it's silly, it's 3 in the morning. There's not a table of people still sitting in the restaurant.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM - DARK

A flashlight beam reveals two couples sitting alone in the darkened restaurant. In the background we can see that the chairs have been turned up on the tables.

1ST PATRON

Have you seen our waitress?

INT. BREAK ROOM

NANCY

But when you try to go back to sleep,

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

1ST PATRON

Would you bring us our check! When you get a chance.

NANCY (O.S.)

There they are again.

ANTHONY (O.S.)

Waitmares, I hate them.

INT. BREAK ROOM

ROBERT

Waitmares?

TIM

Nightmares, but about waiting tables.

ANTHONY

You get them from working too much.

RICK

From working at all.

NANCY

What about you Tim? What's yours?

TIM

It's really weird. It starts off with this race car driver.

ANTHONY

Driver, which one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
Well in the dream I can't tell.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

A DRIVER, MANAGER and PRETTY WOMAN are sitting down at a table. The driver is wearing his racing suit and a closed faced helmet.

TIM
Can I get you folks something to drink?

DRIVER
(Very muffled)
The lady will have a glass of white wine.
I'll have a vodka tonic and

MANAGER
Black and Tan.

TIM
I'm sorry, did you want a Manhattan?

DRIVER
Vodka Tonic!

TIM
Of course sir, how silly of me.

Close on the driver, toasting and then attempting to drink without raising his visor. Liquid spills down the front of his helmet and suit.

INT. BREAK ROOM

TIM
And so it goes for the whole meal.

ROBERT
What happens at the end?

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

The driver is covered in his meal. It is a magnificent dining disaster.

INT. BREAK ROOM

TIM
Hunh? Oh, I don't know, it never gets that far.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY

I have one. Always the same.

INT. PRIVATE ROOM

Close on Anthony vacuuming up confetti. As he moves around the room we slowly pull back revealing that he is vacuuming in a huge circle, and every time he takes a step more confetti pours from the bottom of his pants.

INT. BREAK ROOM

ANTHONY

It means that I am here forever.

Dolly walks in.

DOLLY

Anthony, you've got a table.

ANTHONY

They go to the show?

DOLLY

No, I think they're going to the prom or something.

TIM

Prom already?

ANTHONY

(cursing in another language)
For this I give up crossword puzzle?

TIM

(pointing at Robert)
All right, all right, take...

ROBERT

Robert.

TIM

Bobby here with you.

ANTHONY - CONTINUOUS

He walks to the kitchen where he fills a basket with rolls and slams the drawer shut. Then through the swinging doors to

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Where he is faced with two couples, all dressed up and ready for the prom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They are awkward and uncomfortable in formal clothes. While Robert is filling their water glasses. Anthony sets down the rolls. Then Anthony steps back and gives them a hard look. A beat.

ANTHONY

Good evening, my name is Anthony, I will be your server. Can I interest you in some drinks.

(He realizes his mistake)

Perhaps a nice glass of soda?

INT. BAR

We follow MITCH into the bar. The first customer of the evening, Mitch is in his late 30's, a little soft around the middle and dressed in top of the line J.C. Penny's. Nancy puts down her book. In the background, some sporting event on the TV

NANCY

How you doing? Thirsty?

MITCH

Good and thirsty

NANCY

What can I get you?

MITCH

Scotch, Dewars on the rocks.

Nancy makes the drink.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Yeah, been a hell of a day.

NANCY

Quit your bitching, mine's just starting.

MITCH

Well technically mine never ends.

She sets the Scotch down in front of him

NANCY

Why's that?

MITCH

I'm in sales. Good salesman's always ready to close.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY

Well, please, don't try and sell me anything. I'm broke as it is.

MITCH

I sell TV's and as you already have one, I think you're safe.

Nancy returns to her book.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Is kind of a cheap TV though.

Anthony bursts in. Cursing under his breath he begins to dispense some sodas. Robert follows close behind.

ROBERT

What else should I do?

ANTHONY

You do fine. But next time, pour the water on them instead of in the glass.

MITCH

You got any peanuts or anything?

NANCY

Hang on, let me check.

Nancy bends down behind the bar and opens a cabinet.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Peanuts. Peanuts. Nope, no peanuts for the damned.

Stands up.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Sorry, fresh out.

INT. HOSTESS STATION

Dolly is still talking on the phone.

DOLLY

Un-huh. Yeah, that's what I told him, so then he said.

Nickels walks in.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Okay, well, I'm sorry sir, but we're not open on Sundays.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She hangs up.

NICKELS
I'm gonna ignore that.

Dolly giggles.

NICKELS (CONT'D)
So what do we have on the books?

DOLLY
About 15 so far.

NICKELS
Slow.

DOLLY
I wish something would happen.

NICKELS
Don't. Don't do that. Leave it at slow,
because what you're wishing for is
probably going to turn out bad. And stay
off that damn phone, that way we might
get some reservations.

Nickels leaves.

DOLLY
We've got call waiting.

She dials.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
Sorry about that. So anyway.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Anthony has returned to the Prom table. Robert watches quietly in the background.

ANTHONY
Are you ready to order?

BILLY
No, but these rolls are cold. Bring us
some more.

ANTHONY
Of course, sir.

INT. KITCHEN

Again Anthony fills the basket. He slams the drawer shut and hands the basket to Robert.

ANTHONY
If I take it, I will kill them.

ROBERT
Okay, okay.

ANTHONY
And if they are ready, you take the order.

ROBERT
But I'm training!

ANTHONY
What better training?

RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Follow Robert as delivers the rolls and runs off before they have a chance to say anything.

BILLY
But we're ready to order.

He ducks into the safety of

INT. BREAK ROOM

Tim is still smoking. He is the only waiter who doesn't have a table yet.

ROBERT
Anthony told me to take their order.

TIM
And?

ROBERT
I told him I couldn't, I'm just training.

TIM
And what did he say?

ROBERT
What better training could there be?

TIM
Can't argue with that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

But, but, but.

TIM

Look this table is Melrose Place. It's a Prom Table. No matter how well it goes, they're gonna stiff you. So just Cowboy up and take it like a man.

ROBERT

Uh, cowboy?

TIM

Is that what John Wayne would do?

ROBERT

John Wayne wouldn't be waiting tables.

TIM

Exactly. Now go forth secure in the knowledge that it's already so fucked up that you can't make it any worse.

RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Follow Tim as he walks through the kitchen, snagging a piece of food off a plate that Rick is bringing back to the dishwasher. He dodges around George carrying a stock pot full of something and winds up in

INT. WAIT STATION

Nickels is making coffee and doing the pull the pot out and stick the cup underneath stream of brewing coffee trick.

NICKELS

You gotta keep on this coffee. Coffee's got to be fresh and hot.

TIM

Nickels we've got two tables, and they haven't even gotten appetizers yet.

NICKELS

Just make sure there's coffee okay. Not paying you people just to sit around.

TIM

Okay, okay, but I really don't see why you don't cave and start drinking straight liquor. That Irish Coffee routine isn't fooling anybody. Kidding, just a joke. What's gotten into you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKELS
I'm edgy without my coffee.

TIM
No shit.

NICKELS
How's the new guy.

TIM
Great, he's got 4

NICKELS
I thought that was Anthony?

TIM
Well...

NICKELS
You're all children you know that?

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

The Prom Kids. They are obviously annoyed.

SEAN
Well my dad would never put up with this.

BILLY
Yeah, he's not getting any tip.

JILL
The service industry these days.

Awkward and unsure, Robert approaches the table.

ROBERT
Um, can I take your order?

SEAN
Where have you been?

BILLY
Let me handle this. Where have you been?

ROBERT
Look, it's my first day.

JILL
Well that's not our fault.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

I know, I'm sorry, can I just take your order.

SEAN

Aren't you going to tell us about your specials?

ROBERT

Uh, I... I'll go check on them.

Nickels stops Robert from leaving.

NICKELS

We have a nice salmon in a Rosemary Tarragon butter with shallots and fresh sea scallops in a white wine sauce. Chef is also doing his famous Lamb Osso Buco with cracked black peppercorns and a vegetable medley. So you've got some option. Think them over and Steve.

ROBERT

Robert.

NICKELS

Robert will be back to check on you. And be nice to him, it's his first night.

INT. BAR

Nancy has stepped out and Mitch is busy leering at a pretty young GIRL who is drinking a glass of wine, all alone, at the other end of the bar. She's trying her best to ignore him. When she does look at him, she smiles nervously and looks away.

MITCH

(to no one in particular)

I wish this bar had some peanuts.

It hangs in the air. A nervous sip of wine. Then JEFF, the girl's older, married lover comes to the rescue.

JEFF

There she is. Sorry to keep you waiting baby, got held up at the office.

Long kiss.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You taste just like a peach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GIRL
Un-hunh, its the wine.

JEFF
O-kay. Where's the bartender.

GIRL
She just left.

JEFF
So we're alone.

He moves closer, fondling her a little.

GIRL
JE-ff.

She nods her head towards Mitch and at the same time places his hand on her breast.

GIRL (CONT'D)
Later.

JEFF
(To Mitch)
Hey, how you doing?

MITCH
(raising his glass)
Just great, and you?

Jeff just laughs.

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

The dishwasher has not moved. Robert is trying to find a clear spot in the rapidly piling dishes. Tim walks up.

TIM
Come grab a smoke.

ROBERT
I don't smoke

TIM
Well come anyway, it's training.

ROBERT
But I've got to

TIM
Fuck 'em. They're gonna stiff you anyway.

INT. BREAK ROOM

Tim lights up a cigarette the minute he walks in.

TIM
So what do you think so far?

ROBERT
Sucks.

TIM
Yeah. Smoking helps, You should start.
Hey don't worry, it gets better.

ROBERT
It magically turns into a job hanging
drywall?

TIM
You just got a bad table. It goes the
other way too.

ROBERT
But if they're gonna stiff me, why am I
waiting on them in the first place?

TIM
Good question.

ROBERT
Well, then fuck it, I just won't go back
out.

TIM
Then we'd fire you. The reason you're
gonna wait on this one is so you can get
to the next one.

ROBERT
Which is better?

TIM
Maybe, maybe not. But if you wait long
enough, the good one comes along. Some
Oil Baron, or a plumber who just won the
lottery or a rich divorcee who takes a
shine to you. Point is, they will come,
Sooner or later, you will have one of the
dream tables.

Dolly walks in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLLY

Tim, you've got a duce.

TIM

And this could be it.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

A man and a woman sit at a table. RALPH and LUCY. They are young, healthy and look like they should be having a good time. They're not. This table has issues.

Tim walks up.

TIM

Hi. My name is Tim, I'll be your waiter tonight. Can I start you off with something to drink?

She glares at him.

LUCY

I'm fine with water.

TIM

And for you, sir?

RALPH

A bottle of wine, two glasses.

TIM

Any particular bottle of wine.

Ralph grabs at the wine list and indicates one.

TIM (CONT'D)

Okay. I'll be right back with that.

We follow Tim to

INT. WAIT STATION

Where Nancy and Rick are talking.

TIM

Man that's a weird table

RICK

17?

TIM

Yeah, look at them. I don't even know why people go out when they're like that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANCY
She's pregnant.

RICK
No way, he's gay.

NANCY
That's what you always say.

RICK
He's coming out of the closet and he's
going to tell her over this dinner.

TIM
She's right. Every time we start this
with a table, your guesses always involve
somebody smoking dick. It's your cliché.

RICK
And pregnant's not a cliché.

NANCY
Well, it's not just pregnant. She still
loves him, but he doesn't love her
anymore.

Underneath, Strains of Fleetwood Mac's *Sara* sneak in as we

CUT TO:

INT. APARMENT

We are seeing Nancy's story of the table. Ralph and Lucy sit
on the couch watching TV Lucy attempts to snuggle up to him.

But he brushes her off, so that he can pick up the remote and
change the channel.

NANCY (V.O.)
She's afraid of losing him.

We follow Lucy as she gets up and goes to the bathroom. She
cries a little. She opens up the medicine cabinet and takes
down a ring of birth control pills.

NANCY (CONT'D)
So she stops taking the pill.

Lucy dumping the pills, one by one into the toilet.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES AGO

Ralph and Lucy taking there seats at the table. Lucy looks like she's barely holding it together.

NANCY (CONT'D)

And now she realizes it's not going to work. And she's stuck with a child she doesn't want, a man who doesn't love her

Tim walking up to the table.

NANCY (CONT'D)

And a waiter who hasn't even gotten them rolls yet.

INT. WAIT STATION

TIM

They're not hungry. Rick? I think she's got you.

Rick opens his mouth to begin to speak and we

INT. APARTMENT

The same couch scene as before, except this time, Rick has taken the place of Lucy. And the music is some disco era song. Ralph and Rick cuddle lovingly and watch "The Jerry Springer Show"

RICK (V.O.)

Queer as a three dollar bill. But he's in the closet.

Ralph goes to kiss Rick, Rick pushes him away and gets up

RICK (CONT'D)

And he's picked tonight to tell her.

And we follow him to

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Where strangely Lucy awaits Rick in bed.

RICK (CONT'D)

but she already knows.

Rick slides under the covers with unmistakable intent

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM - A FEW MOMENTS FROM NOW

Lucy throws her water into Ralph's face and storms out. Ralph chases after her.

RICK (CONT'D)

And after they both storm out of here

THE JERRY SPRINGER SHOW

Rick walks out from the back and the crowd goes nuts. Rick waves and totally plays to the crowd. Ralph and Lucy are just seething in their chairs.

RICK (CONT'D)

we'll see them on Springer.

INT. WAIT STATION

NANCY

Too much daytime TV Rick?

RICK

Oh and yours wasn't?

TIM

(staring at table)

You're both wrong.

INT. LOBBY SHOP

Candy bars, racks of magazines and far in the back a reach-in soda cooler. Lucy walks past the bored attendant.

Outside on a bench, Ralph sits wearing a bad tie and eating a bag lunch. His eyes follow Lucy and we see just a brief flash of a metal garter belt clasp.

Lucy goes to the cooler, removes a soda and walks straight out without paying for it.

This takes Ralph aback.

He follows her out onto the street. And confronts her.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES AGO

Ralph and Lucy taking their seats at the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM (V.O.)

And now that they've gotten to this point, neither of them know what they are going to do next. But I know.

INT. WAIT STATION

RICK

What?

TIM

They're gonna stiff me.

No argument there. Rick and Nancy exit. Tim stays on for a moment, straightening a few things in the wait station.

INT. DISH STATION

The dishwasher, still dead on the stool.

GEORGE (O.S.)

Hey, Hey you. Man I'm talking to you. Dishwasher. Don't make me come over there.

Rick walks by and we follow him as he drops an order off.

RICK

Order in.

We see that George has his hands full.

GEORGE

All right, I'm in no mood for this shit.

RICK

I said order in.

GEORGE

Yeah, yeah, I got your order.

George grabs the slip and cooks even more frantically than before. One man doing the work of three.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Robert is delivering the check to the Prom Kids.

BILLY

Well, there he is. Didn't you think we might want something else?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

Well, uh...

SEAN

Aren't you even going to ask us?

ROBERT

Do you want anything else?

ALL (BILLY, SEAN, JENNIFER AND MARY)

NO!

They laugh. Robert slumps a little bit, begins to hand over the check and then freezes.

Sean reaches for it and Robert jerks it away.

ROBERT

I know you think this is pretty funny.
And until today I would have been
laughing with you, but there's something.

SEAN

Just give us the check.

JENNIFER

Yeah, we didn't order a lecture.

ROBERT

How old are you?

JENNIFER

18.

ROBERT

Seniors? Going to college next year?

BILLY

Yeah, like you should have.

ROBERT

I am in college.

MARY

Community "college".

ROBERT

No, State.

SEAN

Hey, I just got accepted there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROBERT

Tonight and to you, I'm just a waiter. But I can see the future. I see you standing right here handing the check to a bunch kids on there way to another high school beer blowout. And as you set the check down you're thinking to yourself. Please don't let me show how much I hate them. Then maybe they'll tip like real people. Then maybe I can graduate and not have to work this shitty job anymore. But it's okay. Because I just figured it out. It's not just me. I'm not the only one who has to suffer. Someday, it will be you.

A beat. The prom kids were not prepared for this. Robert sets the check down.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I'll take that whenever you're ready.

INT. BAR

Glass of scotch being set on the bar. Jeff picks it up with his left hand and we see that his wedding band is prominent. Nancy pretends to go back to reading, but we can see that she is eavesdropping.

JEFF

And she just keeps nagging and nagging.

GIRL

Well have you talked to the lawyer yet?

JEFF

No, I, some things came up.

GIRL

I don't want to talk about it.

JEFF

You don't want to talk about the way I feel?

GIRL

Look I thought you said you wanted to be with me. You said you loved ME.

JEFF

I do, I love and need you. But right now-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GIRL

What?

JEFF

Right now we have to be apart so that we
can be together later.

In the background Mitch begins tapping his glass on the bar.
Nancy does not notice. The conversation is now juicier than
her book.

GIRL

What are you talking about?

JEFF

It may be a while before I can see you
again.

MITCH

Help! I'm on fire! Yeah, there you go.
How about another one. Thanks.

Nancy starts making him another drink. Mitch is really
knocking them back.

GIRL

Excuse me.

She storms into the bathroom.

JEFF

(to Mitch)

Do you mind? You're bothering the young
lady.

MITCH

(under his breath)

You got that right.

JEFF

Excuse me?

MITCH

Young, yes, she certainly is young.

JEFF

Who are you?

MITCH

Mitch Spelleeta, TV salesman, well, until
recently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JEFF

You get the ax Mitch?

MITCH

(drinking deeply)

Yeah.

JEFF

Well, it happens. You know, drinking problem.

MITCH

Yeah. Not as bad as your marriage though.

Jeff jumps up ready to fight. Mitch tries to jump up, but at this point he sort of falls into a standing position.

JEFF

What was that?

MITCH

Sir I,

JEFF

What did you just say to me?

They face off. A tense moment. Then Jeff looks up at the game on TV, just to catch the score.

MITCH

I see you're looking at the 47-inch Omnivision. Good eye, that's the best on the floor. 1200 lines of resolution- Why Christ, reality's only got 700 tops.

JEFF

What are you talking about?

NANCY

He's just drunk. Sit down and forget about it?

MITCH

Oh, the price? A good price. So you want to brag to your friends what a good deal you got on the "big screen." Fine. Lie to them. They lie to you. Pay retail, pay wholesale, shoot me and steal the damn thing, the result's the same. If you get what you want, you're happy. What do you want? That's the only question that matters here. Do you want to be happy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A beat. Mitch returns to his stool. Jeff is very confused.

MITCH (CONT'D)
All I wanted to do was sell TV's.

Mitch slumps over and puts his head on the bar.

NANCY (O.S.)
Sir, you can't put your head on the bar.

MITCH
(without moving)
Fine.

JEFF
(quietly)
Sorry?

INT. WAIT STATION

Robert walks in with the check folder from the Prom Kids. He is peeking inside as Nickels walks in.

NICKELS
You did real well with that table. Those kids take care of you?

ROBERT
What?

NICKELS
How much did they tip?

ROBERT
\$16.

NICKELS
Good. Good for you. I could tell just from looking at them that they were nice kids.

Nickels walks away having inspired no confidence in Robert. We follow him through the restaurant.

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

Nickels looks at the rapidly mounting pile of dirty dishes and shakes his head. He walks over to the dishwasher.

NICKELS
(Conspiratorially)
Hey, smoke break. Need one of those myself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lights the dishwasher's cigarette and then one of his own.

NICKELS (CONT'D)

You know, I washed dishes once. Yeah, long time ago. And look at me now. I manage a place. Yeah I know. Same bullshit everybody tells you. Pull yourself up, ya ya ya. But I'll tell you straight. You been doing real good here. I been keeping an eye on you. And you keep this up, maybe another week or so, we're gonna move you up to salads. See what you can do on the cold line. You do good with that, well, then we'll see. So finish your break and then get back at it. Just know that this isn't a never-ending pile of dishes. I mean you gotta be moving up or what's the point. Might as well just kick off right now. Anyway, keep at it, we're really counting on you today.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

UNCLE MORT, MRS. SMITH, JOHNNY (age 8) and JANEY (age 3) have just been seated. While Mrs. Smith is getting her children settled Mort, her brother, is counting out a stack of one dollar bills.

MRS. SMITH

Oh, Mortie, not again.

UNCLE MORT

You know how I feel about this. I like to keep everything out in the open.

RICK

Good evening, my name is Rick, I'll be your server. Can I start you off with something to drink?

UNCLE MORT

Do you know what this is?

RICK

A stack of money?

UNCLE MORT

Your tip. 50% of my estimate of the bill for this table. Including tax.

RICK

Thank you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNCLE MORT

No.

RICK

No?

UNCLE MORT

It's not yours yet. You get it at the end. But every time you screw up- off comes a dollar. You understand?

RICK

Not really.

UNCLE MORT

Well proceed and it will come to you as we go along.

RICK

Okay. Can I get you something to drink?

A mistake. Mort removes a dollar.

UNCLE MORT

Ahhhhap! Ladies first, always ladies first.

A beat.

RICK

Ma'am, Can I get you something to drink?

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ricks is serving the drinks. And wouldn't you know it, he makes another mistake.

UNCLE MORT

Ahhhhap! Serve beverages from the right.

Another dollar comes off the stack. Rick flees to

INT. WAIT STATION

Where Anthony and Robert are fixated on a table at the other end of the restaurant.

RICK

I hate this job. I hate my life.

ANTHONY

We know, we know. Look at this

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICK
What?

ANTHONY
Tim's got one.

RICK
Yeah well, whoa.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

A beautiful couple, mid-60's, have gracefully take seats at a table. Tim stands close by like a very formal vulture. They are full of life and look to all the world to be healthy, happy and successful.

ATHENA
Why our son's named Timothy.

APOLLO
He's just finishing medical school.

TIM
You must be very proud. Can I get you something to start off with?

APOLLO
Champagne. So I can toast the most beautiful woman in the whole world.

TIM
Which champagne, sir?

APOLLO
Why the best, after all, 40 years of marriage is nothing to skimp on.

Tim barely keeps himself from running into the wait station.

INT. WAIT STATION

TIM
Hot Damn. Wedding Anniversary and they just ordered the Cuvee'.

RICK
Bastard, I'm suck with a Nazi.

ANTHONY
The Cuvee, that's \$120 a bottle.

TIM
And they're just getting started.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Tim opens the Champagne and pours.

APOLLO

My darling, to you for blessing me with
four beautiful children and being the
best part of my life for the last 40
years.

ATHENA

And to you for being the strong,
thoughtful, kind man I fell in love with
from the moment I met you all the way to
right now.

TOGETHER

Happy anniversary.

They drink.

INT. WAIT STATION

Rick and Anthony have been joined by Dolly.

DOLLY

This is disgusting.

RICK

Well isn't this what all little good
girls want when they grow up?

DOLLY

Who said I'm a good girl?

Tim returns from pouring the champagne.

TIM

Vultures, don't you have tables?

ANTHONY

Not like that one. It's the real balusk.

RICK

What do you think, 30 percent?

ANTHONY

Thirty? You must be kidding. Look at that
man. He is in love, strong, proud,
successful. Have you no fire in the
belly? No less than 45. Not for him, not
tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLLY

Which champagne did they order?

TIM

The cuvee.

ANTHONY

Bastard.

RICK

But we don't have a Seomollier.

TIM

So who wants to play the Seomollier?
Anthony, you look like a man with a
highly developed palette.

ANTHONY

I sound like a man with a highly
developed palate.

Tim grabs a wine list.

TIM

What's the most expensive bottle of wine
we have?

ANTHONY

Red or White?

TIM

Most expensive. All I care about is the
green.

RICK

But what about them?

He has motioned to Ralph and Lucy. Ralph says something. Lucy
laughs, gets up and walks out of the restaurant.

TIM

That problem seems to be taking care of
itself.

INT. BAR

Nancy sets yet another drink down in front of Mitch. Her
attention is still obviously on Jeff and his mistress.

JEFF

But we will be together. Now's just not
the time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GIRL

But when you say things like that it sounds like you don't love me.

JEFF

No baby, I do, I do love you.

NANCY

That's it!

GIRL

What?

NANCY

You don't actually believe this guy do you?

JEFF

Excuse me!

GIRL

You were listening?

NANCY

Of course I was listening. How can I escape it?

Mitch's head begins to sink back to the bar. Nancy throws a towel at him.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Head up!

GIRL

That's rude!

NANCY

Shut up. You're too stupid to be allowed the power of speech. And you! Do you know how many people would love to be in your position? A family, a wife that obviously loves you. Hell, just someone or something to go home to at the end of a hard day.

JEFF

How do you know my wife loves me?

NANCY

Well, your cheating on her with this 16 year old.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GIRL

I'm 20!

They both look at her in surprise. Nancy quickly takes her drink away.

NANCY

With this underage child and she hasn't divorced you.

JEFF

She doesn't know.

NANCY

Right. She doesn't know. Just like I wasn't listening to you.

Mitch's head begins to sink towards the bar again. This time Nancy whips an empty martini shaker.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Goddamn it! I said HEAD UP! Divorce? Look at him. He's not gonna get a divorce. If that's what he wanted he would have gotten one already. And what are you getting out of it? Does he give you money? Is he good in bed?

GIRL

Well...

NANCY

Ouch. Go find yourself some 18 year old marine on leave and ride him off into the sunset. And you- Go home to your wife. I'm tired of listening to you whine in my bar.

They leave. Nancy sighs deeply.

NANCY (CONT'D)

God that felt good.

Then she notices that Mitch is asleep with his head on the bar.

NANCY (CONT'D)

GODdammit!

INT. WAIT STATION

Tim watches Nickels schmoozing the dream table. We cannot hear what Nickels is saying but whatever it is he is laying it on thick. He finishes with a goofy little bow and walks back into the wait station.

TIM

What the fuck are you doing?

NICKELS

What?

TIM

That's my table you fucker. That's the one. Mine. They didn't sit in your section.

NICKELS

This is my restaurant.

TIM

Whatever, just try not to fuck it up for me, okay?

NICKELS

I was waiting tables when you...

But Tim walked and is already clearing appetizer plates from the Dream Table.

INT. KITCHEN

Rick paces around in front of the hot line.

GEORGE

Rick is this your food in the window?

Anthony walks by packing a fresh package of cigarettes.

RICK

Anthony, Anthony, you've got to help me.

ANTHONY

What have I told you about touching me?

RICK

Sorry, but would you please run this food for me?

ANTHONY

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

Somebody get this food outta here, I got another table coming up.

ANTHONY

Don't worry, Rick's got it.

RICK

Anthony, please this table is very hard for me.

ANTHONY

Rick, everything is very hard for people like you. Just accept it and try to be happy. I must go smoke now.

GEORGE

(holding up two plates of food)
Rick, if I put this food down anywhere other than this window, it's going to be to pick up a knife.

RICK

All right.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Rick sets a tray full of food down. Uncle Mort and his brood watch him like vultures, waiting for the slightest excuse to remove a dollar from the dwindling tip pile.

Rick hesitantly lifts a plate, realizes it's the wrong one and sets it down.

He selects another entree and walks behind Mrs. Smith and clears her plate from the left and presents the food from the right.

UNCLE MORT

Ahhhhap! Clear from the right, present from the left.

Another dollar.

Rick serves the rest of the food without incident.

RICK

Excuse me. But I don't think I can wait on you anymore. You're nothing by a mean-

JANEY

(interrupting)
Ahhhhap!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She is so young and bright that this would be adorable. If we were on the other side of the table. But not for Rick. Not tonight.

RICK
What?

UNCLE MORT
I agree.

RICK
But I didn't even!

Another dollar.

Rick turns in a huff. And trips over the tray stand and falls down. All the tables laugh. They all look to Uncle Mort and in unison

EVERYONE
Ahhhhap!

Another dollar.

Rick stands up with tears in his eyes and rushes from the room.

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

The dishwasher is still motionless. The cigarette is now nothing but ash and filter.

Tim brutally shoves some dishes into the pile that has accumulated in the course of evening night.

The dishwasher is unconcerned as several plates and silverware get knocked onto the floor.

TIM
Goddamnit, why don't you try washing something. Like some spoons.

Tim searches for spoons.

TIM (CONT'D)
All the spoons are dirty? All the spoons are dirty.

FOOD SHOT

A beautiful bowl of soup, delightfully garnished. In it rests a fork. Pull back to reveal

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

The bowl of soup is sitting in front of Ralph. Tim walks by the table in a rage.

RALPH
Excuse me.

Tim walks right past. Then stops, sighs and turns around.

TIM
Yes?

RALPH
Could I get a spoon?

TIM
A good question. I'd like to say "Yes",
but the way tonight is going...

RALPH
But how am I supposed to eat my soup?

TIM
It's a restaurant, which means we've all
got our little problems, don't we.

A crash. Rick runs by sobbing.

TIM (CONT'D)
See?

INT. BAR

Rick bursts in sobbing. He runs over to Nancy and begins babbling incoherently about Uncle Mort.

Nickels is next.

Followed by Tim who starts yelling at Nickels about the fact that the dishwasher hasn't washed any dishes.

Total chaos.

NICKELS
All right, everybody shut up but me. What
the hell is going on?

Everyone speaks at once. Nickels points at Tim.

NICKELS (CONT'D)
You.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

We're out of clean silver. The dishwasher hasn't washed a damn thing all night. And Rick's gone batshit over some table.

RICK

Fuck you.

NICKELS

Rick, what happened?

Rick opens his mouth to tell the story and we

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

The dishwasher finally falls off his stool.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR

RICK

And then they all started doing it and I just can't take it anymore.

Everyone is stunned. A beat. Which is interrupted by the the thud of Mitch's head hitting the bar.

NICKELS

Right. First thing is to bounce the drunk.

Nickels hauls Mitch off the stool and drags him into

INT. HOSTESS STATION

Dolly is still on the phone.

Nickels kicks open the front door and heaves Mitch into the bushes. At no point during this does Mitch regain consciousness.

NICKELS

I want everybody in the break room. Now. Very important.

Nickels starts to walk away and Nancy puts the phone back to her ear. Nickels turns around, removes the phone from her hands and rips it from the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKELS (CONT'D)

Right now.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Nickels walks through with the phone neatly tucked under one arm and the cord dragging along behind him.

RALPH

Excuse me, are you the manager?

NICKELS

(without breaking stride)

Yes I am.

Hold on Ralph. He looks around the dining room. Then he gets up and leaves.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Uncle Mort and his brood are about 1/3 of the way through their entree's

UNCLE MORT

This soup plate doesn't have an underliner.

JOHNNY

Ahhhhap!

Johnny reaches for a bill.

UNCLE MORT

No, no, Johnny. Wait until he comes back.

Waiters file silently into the dining room behind them. All is very formal.

They surround Uncle Mort's table and in one motion everything is cleared. One waiter for each person, plates are cleared.

One waiter even grabs a fork with food on it right out of Mort's hand.

Another frantically wipes the table free of crumbs.

While still another wipes a bit of red sauce from Johnny's mouth.

Two waiter's lift the children up in their chairs and slide them apart to make room for a fifth chair at the table. This chair slides into place just in time for Nickels to sit down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORT
What in God's name?

Nickels raises a hand. A beat.

NICKELS
Coffee? Dessert? Then get out.

INT. HOSTESS STATION

The entire staff looks on as Nickels escorts Mort and Co. to the door.

MORT
This is an outrage.

NICKELS
I understand just how you feel.

MORT
No one should endure this

NICKELS
I agree.

MORT
We will NOT be coming back.

NICKELS
Such a terrible loss.

The door shuts behind them and the entire staff bursts into applause.

NICKELS (CONT'D)
All right, all right. Back to work.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Anthony and Tim are poised in front of the Dream Table. Next to Anthony is a bottle of wine and decanter on a small rolling table. Anthony opens the bottle and decants it as says

ANTHONY
273 years ago, a few drops of water fought their way thorough a fortress of rich soil to couple with the first planting of the great vines of Burgundy. Since that moment, this wine has been in the making.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pours a taste for Apollo. He slurps the wine and approves. Anthony smiles.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

It is with great pleasure that I present you with the Gevrey - Chambrtin '69. I hope you enjoy your meal. I know that you will enjoy your wine.

He nods to Athena and shakes Apollo's hand.

APOLLO

Thank you.

ANTHONY

No, thank you sir, for having the taste to appreciate such a civilized treasure.

They walk away.

TIM

Laying it on a bit thick?

ANTHONY

Peasant. What do you know of Wine?

TIM

I know you just earned 20% of my tip.

ANTHONY

Then I shall commend you on your good taste.

INT. WAIT STATION

Tim and Anthony walk in. Most of the staff has been watching the Seomollier act.

RICK

That was amazing.

TIM

Now I need George.

ROBERT

You're trying to impress them more?

TIM

I'm not going to be satisfied with anything less than being written into these people's will. Ahead of their children.

INT. KITCHEN

George is still cooking like mad. Tim is trying to convince him to visit his Dream table.

GEORGE

Un-hunh. I'm strictly a back of the house man. Besides, I'm the only guy on the line.

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

Anthony facing the pile of dishes. The dishwasher is no longer visible.

ANTHONY

(swears in another language)
Nobody to do the dishes.

He walks around the pile, prepared to do some dishes himself. Then he sees the dishwasher lying on the floor.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Wake up you little bastard. No time for napping.

Anthony nudges him with his foot. No response. He kicks him. Again.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Wake up!

Wails on him, really giving him the slipper. When this fails to wake him up. He stops kicking and turns him over.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Shit. Holy Shit.

Tim walks up.

TIM

Well no wonder the little bastard wasn't doing dishes.

Rick pokes in.

RICK

Oh, that poor, poor man.

TIM

Fuck you, you didn't even know his name.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICK

How can you be so callous?

ANTHONY

You don't think I kill him, do you? I mean I kick him, but kill?

RICK

Well maybe he's not dead. Did you check his pulse?

TIM

I'm not touching him.

RICK

Oh for the love of

ANTHONY

He's dead. No need to go touching him with those hands of yours.

Nickels barges to the front.

NICKELS

What's going on- Shit. Is he dead or just faking?

ANTHONY

He is dead.

RICK

He might not be.

TIM

Just look at him Rick, he's fucking dead, dead as a doornail, dead, dead as fucking dishwasher.

NICKELS

Did anybody check his pulse?

ANTHONY

I kicked him.

NICKELS

Check his pulse.

ANTHONY

You check his pulse.

George leans in with a stainless steel mixing bowl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GEORGE

Try holding this over his mouth.

Tim takes the bowl and timidly leans into the dishwashing station. He holds the bowl over the dishwasher's mouth looking for signs of water vapor. A beat.

Rick takes a quick breath.

TIM

Rick, stop it.

RICK

What?

NICKELS

Well?

TIM

He's dead.

NICKELS

Well that's just fucking great. Anybody know how long he's been dead?

TIM

Probably since you hired him.

NICKELS

Not funny.

RICK

That's what I told him.

TIM

So what do we do now?

NICKELS

Call the police, let them handle it.

ANTHONY

No, you cannot. My visa expired two years ago.

TIM

I'm with Anthony. At least while my table is still here.

ANTHONY

If the police start asking questions, they will send me back home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NICKELS

Nobody's gonna ask you a bunch of questions, he's a dishwasher, he OD'd on something.

TIM

Yeah, but what about the health inspector.

NICKELS

You're right, the quieter we keep this the better.

TIM

'Cause somebody comes waltzin' through here with a stretcher, just imagine what that will do to my tip.

RICK

I can't believe you, a man is dead!

NICKELS

Yeah Rick, and he'll be just as dead at the end of the night as he is now. Right George?

GEORGE

This is a front of the house problem. I've got covers to put out. Y'all can sort this shit out amongst yourselves.

George goes back to work.

TIM

Okay, what about the dishes?

NICKELS

What's that kid's name, Robert?

ANTHONY

But what about him?

Indicates dishwasher.

NICKELS

Let's put him in the freezer.

INT. KITCHEN - WALK IN FREEZER

The door opens and Tim, Anthony and Nickels carry the body in. Rick follows close behind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They prop the dishwasher up in the corner and stare at him, not knowing quite what to do.

The dishwasher stares back.

RICK

Well isn't somebody going to say something?

Nickels produces his bottle of vodka from it's hiding place.

NICKELS

You know, I've been in this business a long time. And it can be a cruel mistress. But it's not without it's compensations, not without it's little moments of joy. And for... what's his name?

TIM

Ask Rick.

Rick is silent

NICKELS

Nobody knows his fucking name? Anthony?

Anthony shakes his head.

TIM

He was a dishwasher, nobody thought he'd work here long enough to be worth getting to know.

NICKELS

That's cold.

ANTHONY

It's the truth.

NICKELS

And for our friend here, the troubles of this world are over. Troubles like a state government that really sticks it to you by forcing you to spend \$500 bucks on a pre-heater for the water that you wash dishes with - even though the regular water is PLENTY hot enough to get them clean.

TIM

But life goes on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NICKELS

No, no, these are no his problems anymore. So we commend his soul to that place in the sky where the dishes are always clean, the food cooks itself and we get to be the customer.

ALL

Amen.

Nickels makes the sign of the cross with the bottle of vodka and takes a swig.

NICKELS

Ah-men.

The bottle is passed around.

TIM

If you'll excuse me, I've got my fortune to make.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Apollo and Athena are finishing up there entrees. Tim walks up.

TIM

How is everything?

ATHENA

It's fabulous, just fabulous. Is everything all right?

TIM

Of course. If everything is fabulous with the table then everything is fabulous with the waiter.

APOLLO

Now son, you can tell us if something is wrong. We're not going to punish you for something that wasn't your fault.

TIM

That's very considerate sir, but the only problem here is that you need another bottle of wine.

Smiles all around.

APOLLO

Dear?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ATHENA

Well, I shouldn't

APOLLO

That means she will. Another bottle.

ATHENA

But only if you have a glass with us.

TIM

Oh, I don't think.

APOLLO

I insist.

TIM

Well, if you leave me no choice. I'll go
get another bottle, and another glass.

INT. WAIT STATION

Dolly is here watching the dream table. Tim walks in and
pulls out the check.

DOLLY

Is the dishwasher really dead?

TIM

What? Yeah. Do you know if we have
another bottle of this?

Waves empty bottle.

DOLLY

Well how'd he die?

TIM

I don't know.

DOLLY

Wow, somebody died in this restaurant.
That's creepy.

TIM

Dolly. With these hands I picked him up
and hid him in the walk-in so that
nobody, least of all my table, would find
out about it until the end of the night.
So please, keep your voice down.

DOLLY

Do you think somebody could have killed
him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

I doubt it. But I really don't care. I just sold another bottle of the Gevrey - Chambrtin.

DOLLY

Wow. What are they up to?

TIM

Somewhere in the neighborhood of \$700.

DOLLY

For two people?

TIM

It's very expensive wine. And we've still got desert and cordials. He looks like a man who drinks painfully expensive Cognac.

DOLLY

I wonder what their credit limit is?

TIM

People like this don't have those kind of limitations.

INT. BREAK ROOM

Nickels and Anthony sit with the bottle of vodka between them.

ANTHONY

You know, I never liked you.

NICKELS

I never liked you either. But you're a good waiter.

ANTHONY

You are a good manager.
(takes a drink)
But you drink too much.

NICKELS

Yeah, yeah.
(takes a drink)
Holy fuck, kinda puts it all into perspective doesn't it?

ANTHONY

Where I come from, many people die, many people are killed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKELS

Yeah, but this is America. Fuck that,
this is my restaurant.

ANTHONY

That's why this country is so great. You
can disagree with someone and you don't
worry about them killing you.

NICKELS

What about, uh...

ANTHONY

Him?

NICKELS

Yeah.

Anthony leans in.

ANTHONY

If I go home they will kill me. I had a
disagreement with the government.

NICKELS

Damn.

ANTHONY

So I would be grateful if everyone forgot
I worked tonight.

INT. KITCHEN

Nancy and Dolly open the door to the walk-in freezer and peek
in at the dishwasher. In the background Robert is washing
dishes and George is still working like a dog.

DOLLY

I told you he was dead.

NANCY

Oh my God.

(to Robert)

Did you see what happened?

ROBERT

Far as I know, he's been dead all night.

NANCY

Wow, that's unbelievable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

What's really unbelievable is that the idiots moved the body before they called the cops. They are in deep shit.

DOLLY

What do you mean?

ROBERT

What if there's something the slightest bit shady about this? They are all suspects in a murder investigation. For that matter so are we. But they moved the body. Which look like they are trying to hide something.

NANCY

I was in the bar the whole time.

Nancy leaves.

GEORGE

You serious about all that suspect stuff?

ROBERT

Yes.

GEORGE

So if I was a wise man I'd just go home now?

ROBERT

Yes.

GEORGE

That's all the excuse I needed.

George takes off his apron turns off the gas and leaves.

INT. BAR

Nancy in the empty bar. She wipes a spot on the bar with a rag. Takes a long look around.

NANCY

Peanuts. Oh fuck this.

She grabs her purse and heads for the door.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Tim is sitting with the Dream Table enjoying a glass of wine. They sip wine and laugh as if they were family. It is a glimpse of the perfect evening out.

INT. BREAK ROOM

Anthony and Nickels are also drinking and laughing. A brush with mortality has brought them closer.

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

Robert washing dishes. It is hot, sweaty work. He fumbles a plate between heavy rubber gloves and pauses to wipe the sweat of his brow with his forearm. He sprays down a pot only to get a face full of water as it bounces back off of the inside of the pot.

He throws down the gloves and walks off.

INT. BREAK ROOM

Robert storms in.

NICKELS

Well hey, it's Bobby.

ANTHONY

I meant to tell you, you did well with those children.

NICKELS

You smoking yet?

ROBERT

My name is Robert and you're a couple of idiots.

NICKELS

I guess not.

ROBERT

By moving that body, you're both suspects in a murder investigation.

ANTHONY

(to Nickels)

But you said no one would ask questions.

NICKELS

And they won't. He doesn't know what he's talking about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

My father is a detective. And I don't know about the guy who's gonna get this case, but when he clues into you- holy shit.

NICKELS

He's a dishwasher.

ROBERT

Who mysteriously drops dead at work.

ANTHONY

But we didn't kill him.

ROBERT

There not gonna care. It offends their neat little minds when something doesn't make sense. So they make up something clear and clean cut and pin it onto the most convenient suspect.

NICKELS

But we're innocent.

ROBERT

Are you? More importantly, do you look that way? Why'd you move the body?

NICKELS

To hide him.

ROBERT

A cover-up.

NICKELS

I had no idea, it's my first murder, I mean...

Anthony and Robert give Nickels a hard look.

NICKELS (CONT'D)

You know what I meant.

ROBERT

No I don't. And I don't care. I quit. Washing dishes is just too risky around here.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Close on a dessert cart. Turtle Cheesecake, Carrot Cake, Creme Brulee, some horrendous triple chocolate death thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

And of course there's always Sorbet.

Tim at the table. Rick comes running up in the background.

ATHENA

Oh, it all looks so good.

RICK

Tim, Nickels wants to see you right now.

TIM

Who?

RICK

You know, the manager!

TIM

Excuse me for a moment.

APOLLO

Is there a problem?

TIM

No, no. Confidentially, he's talking about bringing me in as a partner.

ATHENA

Good for you.

Tim leaves. Apollo pushes back from the table.

APOLLO

Dessert?

ATHENA

No, no. I am perfectly sated.

APOLLO

Well I hope not too perfectly.

ATHENA

You old rogue.

APOLLO

With pride.

He gets up and offers his arm. She takes it and they walk out at a leisurely pace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ATHENA

"Dine and dash", it sounds so violent and sweaty. We should come up with a better term.

APOLLO

Hmmm.

INT. BREAK ROOM

Tim rushes in.

TIM

What the fuck do you want, we're in the middle of dessert.

NICKELS

We're in the middle of a big fucking mess.

TIM

What?

ANTHONY

Robert said that because we moved the body, we are all suspects in a murder investigation.

TIM

Well what does he know?

NICKELS

His father's a detective.

Tim sees the empty bottle of vodka and begins to put it together.

TIM

Well, my dad might be an airline pilot, but you don't want me landing the plane.

Vodka soaked brains turn this over for a minute.

NICKELS

We'll we've got to do something about the body.

TIM

Yeah, call the cops. And it's not gonna make it any easier to explain if your drunk.

Dolly walks in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLLY
Did you give 14 their check?

TIM
No.

DOLLY
They just left.

Tim realizes what has happened.

EXT. THE ROAD - NIGHT

A beautiful Lexus swerves gently back and forth down a long road.

Inside Apollo and Athena sing along with Tony Bennett as he belts out "The Good Life". They have not a worry or care in the world.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Their table stands empty, desert cart close by. Tim runs past.

EXT. FRONT OF RESTAURANT

Mitch is sleeping face down in the bushes. His feet stick out on to the sidewalk a little. Tim bursts through front door.

TIM
Damn it. God damn it. Damn it all to hell.

He walks back inside a beaten man. But the explosive cursing has awoken Mitch. He picks himself up out of the bushes and stumbles towards his car.

MITCH
Good thing I'm not married.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Nickels walks through the empty dining room. He walks over to the desert cart and grabs an expensive bottle of Cognac. A swig, right out of the bottle.

Tim runs in and kicks the dream table over.

TIM
MONKEY FUCK!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nickels walks over and tries to put his arm around Tim. Tim shakes him off and stomps on a wine glass.

TIM (CONT'D)
Those bastards.

NICKELS
Happens to everybody sooner or later.

TIM
I'm not paying for that.

NICKELS
No, no, the restaurant will take the hit.
Actually, I'll just take it out of the
dishwashers pay.

Tim tries to still be upset but laughter wins out. They laugh.

INT. KITCHEN - DISH STATION

Piles of unwashed dishes.

INT. KITCHEN - WALK IN FREEZER

The dishwasher propped up against some boxes. Very faintly we see breath coming from his nostrils. He is alive.

EXT. FRONT OF RESTAURANT

Dolly waits for her ride. Rick walks out the restaurant.

RICK
Honey, fuck the sidework, I am going
home.

DOLLY
I wish I could just leave.

RICK
Waiting on a ride?

She nods.

DOLLY
Rick, what are they gonna do?

RICK
About the dishwasher? Nickels will sober
up a little and the call the cops. What
else are they gonna do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The rumble of a powerful V-8 in the distance.

DOLLY
There's my ride.

INT. BAR

Close on Cognac being poured into a snifter. Nickels is making drinks for himself and Tim. Anthony walks in. Nickels grabs a third glass.

NICKELS
It's better in a glass.

They clink glasses and drink.

TIM
So who's gonna call the cops and explain this one?

NICKELS
I guess it's me.

ANTHONY
It cannot be me.

NICKELS
Don't worry, we'll cover for you.

ANTHONY
If I get deported.

NICKELS
I'll change the schedule and let everybody know you didn't work tonight. Quit your bitchin' you'll be fine.

TIM
Really, you'll be fine.

NICKELS
It's just not fair.

TIM
Don't talk to me about not fair.

NICKELS
I mean, here we are just doing our jobs and this guy drops dead. Could fuck everything up. It's the kind of thing that puts restaurants out of business.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

Yeah, well good riddance.

Anthony closes one eye

Anthony's POV - throughout the conversation he makes Nickels and Tim "disappear" by holding his thumb between him and them.

NICKELS

You know it's real easy for you to say that, but this place goes under, a lot of people are out of a job.

TIM

There are other jobs in other restaurants.

NICKELS

Well maybe it isn't as easy for some people to find another job. And maybe, some people actually like working here. Try thinking of somebody other than yourself.

TIM

I'm sorry, Vive la restaurant.

ANTHONY

I have it. We make him disappear.

TIM

You mean get rid of the body?

ANTHONY

Exactly.

TIM

You're a fucking loon.

Anthony moves his thumb over Tim and keeps it there.

ANTHONY

I cannot go home.

NICKELS

I don't feel like finding another job.

TIM (UNDER THUMB)

Look, there's no fucking way I'm doing this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NICKELS

Why not, it would be easy. Like dropping off the trash.

TIM (UNDER THUMB)

We should be calling the police right now.

NICKELS

So call. And then we're all in a world of shit. Right?

TIM (UNDER THUMB)

Well,

NICKELS

A world of shit.

TIM (UNDER THUMB)

Yeah. But we can't avoid that.

ANTHONY

We can if we get rid of the body.

TIM (UNDER THUMB)

Okay, let's say we gonna to do this.
(thumb comes off)
Hypothetically. Where.

EXT. BACK OF THE RESTAURANT

The dishwasher's body being thrown in the dumpster.

NICKELS (V.O.)

The dumpster.

TIM (V.O.)

Well that's stupid. Don't you think that's one of the first places they'd look.

A police car pulls up to the dumpster.

NICKELS (V.O.)

Yeah, but nobody's looking, so we just have to get rid of him.

And changes into a dump truck that picks up the dumpster and empties it.

ANTHONY

You have a better idea?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

I don't need a better idea, calling the police is the best idea.

NICKELS

You're just saying that because you can't think of anything better.

TIM

Fuck you.

NICKELS

Fuck you back, it's true.

ANTHONY

We could cut him up and serve him as the special.

INT. MAIN DINING ROOM

Close on a plate of "something" with an outlandish garnish being set down on a white tablecloth.

TIM (V.O.)

It's what those dine and dash fuckers deserve.

Pull back to reveal the Dream Table enjoying a delicious helping of dishwasher.

INT. BAR

Nickels lights a cigarette

NICKELS

I don't think that George would go for it.

TIM

I don't know, George is a pretty tough bastard.

NICKELS

I'm not saying he wouldn't go for it on principal or anything like that. George wouldn't go for it because it would be too much of a pain in the ass.

TIM

Yeah, I guess your right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY

We could drive out and leave him in the country.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The dishwasher being pushed out of a car at high speed. The body rolls over an embankment and into the woods.

INT. BAR

TIM

No.

NICKELS

Wait a minute.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

A butterfly in a beam of warm sunlight. Tim's voice narrates this sequence.

A girl scout with a butterfly net and specimen jar is chasing it.

The dishwasher propped up against a tree, very dead, but in the same position he was on the stool. The butterfly comes to rest on his nose. We hear the girl scout's eager little footsteps close behind. This is going to be bad.

TIM (V.O.)

You mean, leave the body out in the woods for some unsuspecting girl scout troupe to find like you always see on America's most wanted.

INT. BAR

A young girl's scream far in the distance.

NICKELS

I see your point.

ANTHONY

So what is your idea?

TIM

Bury him in a place that nobody will ever look.

NICKELS

And that would be?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

What about a cemetery, under another coffin?

NICKELS

You mean dig up a grave to put him underneath the coffin that's already there?

TIM

Or find an already dug grave and bury him in that.

NICKELS

No one would ever look for a body there.

ANTHONY

Because they already know a body is there.

Nickels raises his glass.

NICKELS

Gentlemen, we have a plan.

Anthony raises his glass. A beat. Tim raises his.

NICKELS (CONT'D)

All right then.

INT. KITCHEN

They remove the body from the walk-in and wrap it a tablecloth.

INT. VARIOUS

Anthony walks around the restaurant turning the lights off.

INT. HALLWAY

Close on time cards being punched out. Tim punches his, Anthony's and Nickels. One of the cards has "Dishwasher" scrawled across the top of it in black pen.

Excited by the prospect of learning the dishwasher's name, he pulls the card out. There is only "?????" in the name space. He shrugs and punches the card anyway.

EXT. BACK OF THE RESTAURANT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nickels pulls his car around back. The back door of the restaurant opens and Tim and Anthony emerge carrying the body. They struggle awkwardly with the door. As they drop the body, Nickels hurries over to help.

TIM

This fucker must have been stealing food.

NICKELS

Easy.

TIM

It's not gonna hurt him now.

Nickels opens the trunk by untwisting a rusty piece of bailing wire. In goes the body.

TIM (CONT'D)

This trunk is huge.

NICKELS

Yeah, it's at least a six body trunk, now c'mon.

ANTHONY

We should have more bodies.

INT. NICKELS CAR

They pile in. Nickels is driving, Tim shotgun and Anthony in the back.

TIM

Holy shit this is disgusting.

And it is.

NICKELS

You offering your car?

TIM

No.

ANTHONY

I ride the bus.

TIM

We should have just left him on a late night bus.

ANTHONY

They don't run the late night schedule anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Something catches Tim's eye.

TIM
Wait, is that an 8-track?

NICKELS
What?

TIM
An actual 8-track?

NICKELS
Yeah.

TIM
Holy shit Grandpa, I wasn't even aware
those things still existed. Hi-Fidelity!

NICKELS
What's the matter with my 8-track. It
still sounds great.

Nickels slams a tape into it. "Caravan" by Duke Ellington begins to play. Filled with God's madmen, the car roars into the night.

EXT. CEMETERY GATES - NIGHT

Nickels car pulls up and Tim and Anthony get out and leap the fence. The car drives off.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Tim and Anthony run into the middle of the cemetery.

TIM
You go that way.

Tim runs off in the opposite direction. Anthony waits a minute and then races to catch up with him.

TIM (CONT'D)
What are you doing.

ANTHONY
I am afraid.

Tim stops running.

TIM
Afraid?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY

Of the dead.

TIM

Your shittin' me. If we stick together it will take us twice as long to cover the place.

ANTHONY

I don't care. I am scared.

Anthony pulls out a cigarette.

TIM

There's nothing to be afraid of.

ANTHONY

That's easy for you to say.

Anthony lights his cigarette and SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! They are pelted by something that comes whizzing at them out of the dark.

Tim dives behind a gravestone.

Anthony loses it and starts running around in a circle falling about and screaming like a little girl.

TIM

Goddamnit that stings!

SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! Anthony continues to be pelted from the darkness. What ever it is, it's leaving bright blue marks all over him and his clothes.

Tim jumps up and tackles him.

Out of harms way Anthony begins to pray in another language. From the darkness a 14 year old boy yells

KID #1

Are you on the blue team?

TIM

What?

KID #2

Cause if your on the blue team we just got your ass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TIM
 No we're not on the blue team.
 (to himself)
 damn kids

Anthony is still in hysterics

TIM (CONT'D)
 Anthony! Anthony! It's kids, It's just
 kids with paintball guns.

ANTHONY
 We are not going to die?

TIM
 No we're fine.
 (to kids)
 Okay, we're leaving! Don't shoot us
 anymore, we're dead. Okay?

KID #1
 Okay.

They stand up and start to walk off. Tim cracks his shin on a gravestone.

TIM
 Fuck!

WHIZ! WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! This oath gives the little brats something to target. They open fire again. Anthony and Tim flee into the darkness.

EXT. CEMETERY GATES

Nickels pulls up and Anthony and Tim come limping out of the graveyard covered in dirt and paintball wounds. As they get in the car Nickels asks the obvious.

NICKELS
 What the fuck happened to you?

TIM
 Just drive.

Mercifully, he does.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - NIGHT

With the lights off, Nickels pulls up slowly and parks in a deep shadow.

INT. NICKELS CAR

Nickels turns around.

NICKELS
You gonna be okay?

Anthony nods. He does not look so good. Tim hands him a beer.

TIM
Just try and relax. We'll be right back.

They leave. Anthony leans back and closes his eyes.

EXT. CHURCH CEMETARY

Nickels and Tim trudge across the parking lot.

TIM
So when you first got to be a manager,
did you ever think it would come to this?

NICKELS
Oh yeah. Absolutely. We had a whole
training session about two weeks before
you started work.

TIM
Like that choking workshop the Red Cross
put on last month.

NICKELS
Exactly.

TIM
Well, shit. Why are we all so worried?

NICKELS
Well it's still new to you. After you've
hidden a few bodies, the novelty wears
off and it just becomes another part of
the job.

They walk a few steps in silence.

TIM
Scared?

NICKELS
Shitless. I'll go this way.

TIM
Good luck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They split up and head into the cemetery.

Tim picks his way through the cemetery, occasionally firing up his lighter to see his way.

Nickels, in another part of the cemetery, stumbling around feeling gravestones as he goes.

INT. NICKELS CAR

Close on Anthony fast asleep. We hear one of the car doors open. Anthony struggles back to consciousness.

ANTHONY

Did you find one? Ahhhhh!

Anthony shrinks into the corner in fear. Somehow the dishwasher is sitting next to him in the back seat.

DISHWASHER

Man I am sick of this waiting. You got a cigarette?

Anthony jerks awake for real. It was a dream. He looks around in terror and then lights up a cigarette of his own. It shakes in his hand.

EXT. GRAVEYARD

Nickels sees a dimly flickering light ahead of him.

NICKELS

Tim is that you?

TIM

Yeah?

Tim walks over.

NICKELS

Did you find anything?

TIM

I got dick. Doesn't anybody die in this town anymore?

NICKELS

Other than dishwashers?

They start walking back to the car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
I know of another cemetery just a couple
of miles

WHUMP! Nickels falls into a grave.

TIM (CONT'D)
Shit! You okay?

NICKELS
Found one.

INT. NICKELS CAR

Anthony is petrified with fear. He looks around frantically but it is difficult for him to see anything because his breathing has begun to steam up the windows. Another breath. Another breath.

Nickels knocks on the window. Which of course sends Anthony into another fit. And well is should he is a mess after his tumble into and scramble out of a grave.

Tim opens the back door and grabs him.

TIM
It's us, It's US! Calm down, it's just
us.

ANTHONY
Did you find one.

TIM
Yeah, we found one.

NICKELS
It's almost over.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT

They open the trunk and lift the body out.

EXT. GRAVEYARD

Nickels, Tim and Anthony haul the dishwasher through the cemetery.

NICKELS
(whispering)
Where is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
(whispering)
I don't know, you found it last time.

Anthony is trying not to be scared, but on the other side of the graveyard he sees a procession of white figures carrying torches walking towards them.

ANTHONY
(softly)
ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

NICKELS
What in the hell?

They all crouch down and watch.

ANTHONY
Ghosts.

TIM
(whispering)
They're not fucking ghosts. Now keep quiet.

The procession walks over to the open grave and place their torches in the ground around it. They begin some elaborate rite. One begins ringing a bell slow an rhythmically

HOODED FIGURE
An so it was written, with the earth of a freshly turned grave.

NICKELS
I can't fucking believe this.

TIM
It's cool, we'll just wait here until they go away.

HOODED FIGURE
And the tolling of the bell until first light.

TIM
Motherfucker.

NICKELS
That's our grave, we found it first.

TIM
Just be cool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANTHONY
We should go.

TIM
And you too.

ANTHONY
I don't like this.

In the distance, we hear the barking of dogs as flashlight beams play across the graveyard.

NICKELS
It's a fucking convention.

The lights come closer. The figures around the grave don't seem to care.

GROUNDSKEEPER
Get the hell out of my graveyard.

HOODED FIGURE
No mortal may disturb the unholy rites of

The groundskeeper racks a shotgun.

GROUNDSKEEPER
This is church land and you gonna get off of it.

The hooded figure stands silent with his arm stretched towards the groundskeeper. A beat. Then he turns and runs for it. The others follow him.

The groundskeeper fires the shotgun into the air

GROUNDSKEEPER (CONT'D)
And don't come back. I'll be waiting for you. You hear me, I'll be waiting!

Nickels, Tim and Anthony sneak off, dragging the body.

EXT. NICKELS CAR

Body being thrown in the trunk. The trunk lid is slammed. Nickels a turn in the wire and it breaks. He cuts his thumb

NICKELS
Fuck!

INT. NICKELS CAR

They all pile in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

There's got to be a better way.

They drive. Nickels holds his thumb up.

NICKELS

You think I'm gonna need a tetanus shot?

TIM

Yeah, and a new car.

NICKELS

So what do you want to do? Another cemetery?

Anthony whimpers

TIM

Fuck I don't know. Maybe that wasn't such a great idea. Anthony, you got any suggestions?

ANTHONY

No more graveyards?

TIM

Baby.

NICKELS

Maybe we should drive out to the country and look around.

TIM

That's not gonna fucking work.

Nickels slams on the brakes.

TIM (CONT'D)

What? It's not.

Nickels points out the window to a roadside bar.

NICKELS

Bar.

TIM

Oh.

INT. DIVE BAR

An empty little shithole in the middle of nowhere. One pool table, a few stools against the wall. The bar is made out of plywood and tended by a guy with more tattoos than teeth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKELS
Another round.

The bartender nods and smiles. It's kinda terrifying.

TIM
I don't know, you got any friends in the
mob?

Nickels shakes his head. Anthony looks deeply into his drink.

ANTHONY
Well that is it. You go to jail, I go
home to die.

NICKELS
Would you stop that?

ANTHONY
Is truth.

NICKELS
Not yet, we've still got another three
and half hours until dawn.

TIM
Yeah, shut up, we'll think of something.

EXT. DIVE BAR

BANG! BANG! BANG! Nickels trunk flies open. The dishwasher emerges with the sheet wrapped around him. He starts walking down the road, trips on a rock and falls into a ditch.

Nickels, Anthony and Tim get in the car and drive off.

INT. NICKELS CAR

NICKELS
We're gonna drive out to the country and
dump the body.

TIM
Nickels, that's not going to fucking
work.

Nickels takes a corner hard. Beer cans slide around in the back seat.

NICKELS
Well we're out of options.

A cop car pulls in behind them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
Way to go Steve McQueen.

NICKELS
Fuck.

ANTHONY
Not the police.

NICKELS
They don't deport people from traffic stops, calm down.

ANTHONY
How do you know?

Blue lights go on.

TIM
And the lights.

NICKELS
Should I try to lose them?

TIM
In this piece of shit?

Nickels is a little hurt by this.

NICKELS
Anthony, hide those beer cans, I'll do the talking.

Nickels pulls over.

TIM
Well that will fix everything.

NICKELS
Jesus! Would you lay off. Just follow my lead. OK

TIM
OK.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD

Officer MCGRUDY, a 26 year old city cop, walks up to the window and shines his light around.

MCGRUDY
Took that last corner a little fast didn't you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKELS

Yeah, just trying to get Anthony here home, but he's not so good with directions. His English is not so good.

ANTHONY

(With thickened accent)

I am new to being learned English.

MCGRUDY

Un-hunh.

NICKELS

He's got a bad habit of saying left when he means right.

MCGRUDY

Sir, have you been drinking?

NICKELS

Well Officer, I'm not gonna lie to you. I did have a cocktail with the boys. They work for me and we had a real hard night.

(leans out the window)

That's actually the only reason I'm driving, they really shouldn't be behind a wheel.

The cop motions him to lean back in the car.

MCGRUDY

I need your license and registration.

NICKELS

Yes sir. Just trying to do the right thing.

Nickels leans across to the glove compartment and begins fishing through it. The cop takes this opportunity to shine his light around on the inside of the car.

He sees something.

MCGRUDY

Hold it right there! Is that what I think it is?

NICKELS

What?

MCGRUDY

Right there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The flashlight beam is held on the 8-track player.

NICKELS
The 8-track?

MCGRUDY
I've never even seen one of those before.
Does it work?

NICKELS
Yes.

MCGRUDY
Can I hear it?

Nickels turns it on. Jazz issues forth from the speakers.

MCGRUDY (CONT'D)
Don't you have anything else? Some disco?
That's what they played on these things
right?

NICKELS
Do I have anything else? Officer I have
everything else. I have the largest
collection of vintages 8-track tapes.
Someday these baby's will be worth a
fortune.

MCGRUDY
So, put in another one.

NICKELS
Anthony, hand me that box of tapes.

ANTHONY
What box.

Nickels starts looking around in the backseat.

NICKELS
They were here. Hmm, maybe the trunk.

Close on Nickels as he realizes what he just said.

MCGRUDY
Okay, pop the trunk and let's have a
look.

McGrudy hurries back to the trunk. He is very excited by 8-track tapes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NICKELS

Fuck.

TIM

Just follow your lead? What the fuck is the matter with you?

NICKELS

We're dead.

McGrudy taps on the trunk with his flashlight. He's smiling and waving.

TIM

No, you're dead. You gotta take the fall.

NICKELS

I can't get another DUI, they'll send me to jail.

TIM

If you don't all of us are going to jail for a very long time.

ANTHONY

I will be sent home and be dead for a very long time.

McGrudy looks at the rusty wire with some curiosity. He begins to reach for it.

TIM

Do it.

Nickels opens the car door. He throws a empty liquor bottle at McGrudy

NICKELS

Fuckin' Pig! Keep away from my 8-tracks!

INT. POLICE CAR

Nickels sitting in handcuffs in the back seat. He has a large bruise over his right eye.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD

McGrudy leans on the roof of the car and talks to Tim, who is now in the drivers seat.

COP

Now you're sure your okay to drive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
Absolutely.

COP
You gentleman have a safe evening.

TIM
(pulling away)
Yes sir.

THERE'S A GREAT BIG HOLE RIGHT HERE!!!

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE

Nickels' car pulls up. Tim walks inside.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE

The light is unimaginably painful and florescent. Tim in the doorway. We get a good look at the toll that the evening has taken on him. A CLERK is here. He peers at Tim over the top of a "Bass Unlimited" magazine.

CLERK
Morning.

TIM
Morning.

Tim pulls a six pack out of the beer cooler. He passes a live bait well and looks at it, not quite understanding. Then he walks to the counter.

TIM (CONT'D)
This and a pack of Luckies. Where's the fishing around here?

CLERK
Well the nearest fishin's at the Quarry, 'bout two miles up the road.

TIM
Catfish, stuff like that?

CLERK
No. Too deep for catfish. Catfish's a bottom feeder.

TIM
How deep's too deep for catfish?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLERK

Oh, got to be round on 300, 400 feet,
something like that.

TIM

Hmmm. You have any lighter fluid,
charcoal starter, anything like that?

CLERK

Aisle three.

There are only three aisle.

INT. NICKELS CAR

Anthony looks around nervously. Tim opens the door and throws
a bag full of lighter fluid at him.

ANTHONY

Hey!

TIM

I got it.

ANTHONY

You do?

TIM

Viking funeral!

ANTHONY

What?

TIM

We're gonna light this bitch on fire and
push it out to sea.

Tim throws his head back and lets out a tremendous yell.
Anthony looks at him as if he has snapped. Tim cracks a beer
and drinks half of it in one swallow.

TIM (CONT'D)

Okay, let's go.

EXT. THE QUARRY.

The first light of day shows us a dirt road leading up to a
cliff where discarded beer cans stand a silent vigil over the
local fishing hole. The car comes to a stop and Tim and
Anthony get out.

Tim sprays the car with lighter fluid

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

wedges the gas pedal down.

And lights it.

He grabs the remnants of the six pack from the front seat, then knocks the car into drive.

It leaps forward and arcs into the dark waters of the quarry like a comet. They watch it descend into the depths.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Anthony and Tim trudge down a long dirt road. For a while neither speaks. Then Anthony starts sneaking looks at Tim.

TIM

What?

ANTHONY

What will we tell him about the car?

TIM

Whatever you want to.

ANTHONY

But, but,

TIM

Look, it's over. It's done. If this was a movie the credits would start rolling here.

The credits begin to roll over them.

ANTHONY

But what about the restaurant? What happens to Nickels?

TIM

You sound like Rick. Who cares, we got rid of the body. We didn't get caught.

ANTHONY

But do we still have jobs?

TIM

I don't care. It's over.

ANTHONY

But

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
No buts, it's over and that's all you
need for an ending.

INT. RESTAURANT - HALLWAY

Close on the time clock and punch cards. A hand moves into
the frame and punches the "Dishwasher" card.