

"Am I Dead Yet?"

by

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FADE IN

ESTABLISHING SHOT: THE BREATHTAKING COAST OF BELIZE

The most idyllic beach in the universe.

The camera PULLS BACK over the crystal clear ocean shimmering in the afternoon sun. A river of red liquid slowly dissipates throughout the water.

IRENE (V.O.)

"Am I dead yet?"

(beat)

"Am I dead yet?"

(beat)

It seems like that's all Nate says lately. "Am I dead yet?" No, Nate, you're not dead yet. Be patient. A little patience never killed anyone, Nate...

TRAILING above the water WE FOLLOW as the red stain among the clear blue intensifies. The sound of a boat's engine grows louder. Following the stain to a bucket hoisting chum off the back of a fishing trawler. Sharks are starting to gather.

CUT TO:

EXT. FISHING TRAWLER - DAY

CLOSE ON THE BACKS OF NATE and IRENE sprawled face-down on the floor, hands tied behind their backs. The boat powers across the waves violently bouncing their bodies like Mexican jelly beans. Waves periodically slam the boat splashing water up over the side and drenching Nate and Irene.

Irene, 30, beautiful but disheveled, shakes the water off her face and looks over to Nate.

IRENE

Don't say it. Don't even think of saying it. If you say it, I'll kill you.

NATE

Don't worry, I'm not going to say it. I don't need to say it.

He smacks his lips and wipes them off dramatically with his tongue.

NATE

(continuing)

Because I can taste the salt water
on my lips: so I'm pretty sure
that... I'M NOT DEAD YET.

IRENE

Fucking jerk.

A large pair of Docksidiers and black socks is firmly planted
in front of the steering wheel as the boat rapidly cuts
through the wide open ocean.

PAN UP to FRANK as he turns from the wheel totally irate.
BOOM!!! He fires a round from his Glock into the ocean.

FRANK

Shut the fuck up, Chumley! Just
another few minutes until the
feeding grounds. And then when
you see the sharks you'll beg me
to shoot you! Ha ha ha!!!!

IRENE (V.O.)

That's Frank. Frank has issues.

Nate throws Irene a nasty look. Yep. This is her doing.

IRENE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And right about this point I began
to wonder if it was all worth it.
And considering everything we've
been through, I'd have to say...
Yes.

(beat)

Nate might have a different story.

We hold on Nate's twisted face before we...

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S STERILE CUBICLE - DAY

NATE WENTWORTH frantically calculates thousands of numbers in
order to constantly maintain an up-to-the-second estimate of
his megalomaniac boss' net worth.

Nate's cubicle is more of a technological cage than a proper
work space. A small plaque reads "TEN YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE." He's surrounded by computers and adding devices
and spreadsheets and stock portfolio information and numbers
and numbers and numbers...

A digital clock on the wall steams towards 4:00:00 EST - the
closing of the NYSE - Nate's rhythm escalates to a frenzy. He
blinks furiously trying to keep up with all the data.

IRENE (V.O.)

That was Nate one month ago. God,
how someone's life can change so
radically in so short a time...

At precisely 4:00:00 Nate's boss, MISTER BIGGLESBY, steams in, BODYGUARD in tow. Without missing a beat Nate rips off the end of a ticker tape and hands the final tally to Mister Bigglesby. Exhausted, Nate crashes back into his seat and shakes his head as we...

CUT TO:

INT./EXT NATE AND KATHERINE'S MODEST HOME - NIGHT

Nate returns home from work. He pulls the mail from the box, sorting it as he steps inside. Nate freezes. The look on his face tells us everything. Scanning the room, there's an empty place where the couch once stood. Only the dustbunnies remain.

A yellow note is stuck to the counter. His expression seems to say, "This is far worse than I thought."

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Nate barrels down the highway. A HIGHWAY SIGN READS:

LAS VEGAS 487 MILES

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

THE WORLD IS STILL NUMBERS. THE ODOMETER ROLLS, THE CRUISE CONTROL SPEED, RADIO STATION'S CALL NUMBERS, THE SPEEDOMETER, ROADSIGNS, STREET ADDRESSES, LICENSE PLATES

Nate flips over playing cards two at a time as quickly as possible while he mouths numbers.

NATE (TO HIMSELF)

Minus 3.2638, minus 1.9573,
0.4253, minus 2.7629, .0931, plus
1.8978, plus 3.3348, plus 2.9765,
plus 4.5661...

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - SUNSET

From Nate's lone car on the desert highway, the MUSIC rises as we go through the rabbit hole to...

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

CREDITS ROLL OVER MONTAGE OF LAS VEGAS STRIP.

The neon wonder of the Vegas night. Vibrant colors blare in every direction. Headlights. Spotlights. The MGM Grand Hotel, Elvis Marriage Lounge, The Stardust Motel, Cheesy Souvenir Shops, \$4.99 Buffet Signs, Billboards screaming Roulette, Blackjack!

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Continue MONTAGE dazzle inside CASINO. Roulette wheels spin. Chips are placed. Slot machines roll, spewing change. Dice tumble. Drinks are poured. Gamblers cheer and double down. A dealer shuffles.

The roulette ball comes to a stop and the Dealer puts the glass peg down on an empty number

A POKER PLAYER reveals a straight flush and the other PLAYERS throw down their cards in disgust.

END CREDITS AND MUSIC

INT. CASINO - DAY

FOLLOWING a COCKTAIL WAITRESS carrying a tray of drinks as she weaves through the mayhem to CARD COUNTER 1 playing blackjack.

ECU on cards being quickly flipped over.

IRENE (V.O.)

Blackjack is a fascinating game.
If you play every hand
"correctly," by the standard
rules, then the house's advantage
is only .2% which means that you
can have some fun and not lose too
much money...

INSERT SHOT OF ROULETTE TABLE

IRENE (V.O.)

Unlike roulette where the house
will win 36 out of 37 bets. You
do the math. It's a sucker's bet.

BACK ON CARD COUNTER 1's TABLE

The DEALER is down to the bottom of the shoe, the Counter has a pair of sevens and the Dealer is showing a 6.

IRENE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But in blackjack, if you count cards you can actually shift the house's .2% advantage in your favor, which means that you can have the aforementioned fun and actually rake in some dough...

The Counter twitches a few times as if he's thinking hard... adding numbers as quickly as possible in his head.

IRENE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(continuing)

That's if you can manage to keep track of all of the cards in 7 decks in the shoe...

COUNTER (V.O., RAPIDLY)

Zero, minus 2, plus 1, minus 3, minus 1, zero, plus 2, plus 1...

Counter splits the 7s - pushes more chips next to the second 7 and points his finger at it.

The Dealer hits him: A jack.

Counter points at the second 7. The Dealer hits him: A king.

IRENE (V.O.)

However, if the casino thinks that you're counting cards, let's say you have a "tell" like a twitch or a wink, then they'll find some way to politely remove you from the table...

The Counter waves his hand over his cards - I'll stay.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASINO - DAY

IRENE heads toward the casino doors which are shaded to keep out the light. She looks fabulous, dressed to the nines - which in this type of down-scale casino makes her stand out like a high-priced call-girl.

CUT TO:

INT. CASINO - DAY

Irene takes one step into the casino...

FREEZE FRAME ON IRENE IN MIDSTEP

IRENE (V.O.)

And after you've been politely removed from the table once or

twice you end up in a backroom...

FLASH!

FREEZE FRAME: A camera flash exploding in the IRENE's face, DISSOLVING to Frank and a THUG manhandling her in a backroom.

IRENE (V.O.)

And your photo ends up in something called "The Griffin Book" which all the casinos get every month...

CUT TO:

INT. EYE IN THE SKY BOOTH - DAY

A GUARD turns the page of the Griffin Book from the Counter to the next page of Irene. He looks at the frozen image of Irene on the screen in front of him. The Guard picks up a walkie-talkie and starts to speak into it:

GUARD

Tony: white dress, ten o'clock.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CASINO - DAY

Pit Boss TONY MALLATO turns left and touches his earpiece to hear the Guard in the eye in the sky as the freeze frame starts up and Irene continues walking into the casino.

IRENE (V.O.)

Which means that if you even think of sitting at a blackjack table that somebody will have something to say about it and fairly quickly.

Irene looks as if she's heading right for the blackjack tables and then gets a stern look from Tony who intercepts her. She smiles and veers away from the tables.

GUARD (V.O.)

Yeah, it's her... Irene Halloway.

Tony nods to one of the cameras in the ceiling.

As Irene takes a seat at the bar she scans the room carefully surveying all of the blackjack players. Irene spots two large dowdy lesbians - MADGE and MAGGIE - playing blackjack and smiles inconspicuously at them - they subtly smile back as if they are all old friends.

Maggie nods in the direction of a MAN playing blackjack and Irene carefully scans the players and chips until she spots...

NATE

and her eyes light up.

Nate's Dealer busts and quickly pushes another mound of chips towards Nate.

Irene turns back to Madge and Maggie who have obviously been watching Nate. Irene raises her eyebrows with curiosity.

Madge comes over to the bar but expertly avoids any eye contact with Irene.

MADGE (TO BARTENDER)

Diet coke, please, honey - oh and
fill it up with Jack Daniels
first, please...

Irene looks out in the other direction - both of them speak out of the corners of their mouths.

IRENE

Who is he?

MADGE

Never seen him before. But he's
not bad...

IRENE

How not bad?

MADGE

EXTREMELY not bad.

The BARTENDER hand her the drink.

MADGE

(continuing)

Thanks, dear.

She leaves a chip for him and goes back to her table as an overweight drunk MAN in a leisure suit approaches Irene.

SCRUMP

Lean here often?

IRENE

Piss off, asshole.

Scrumpp scurries away. Irene's a woman on a mission.

ANGLE BACK ON NATE

The Dealer pushes another pile of chips to Nate. He nonchalantly scans the room hoping his winnings are unnoticed. Coyly slides some into his pocket. Irene catches his eye and gives a slight smile.

IRENE (V.O.)

Let me just catch you up to speed
on card counting before that new
guy gets tossed out of the
casino...

Nate freezes. Irene winks seductively like a pro. Nate
blinks a few times nervously and quickly turns back to the
game.

IRENE

OK, so when you're counting cards
every card is given a value of
either one, zero, or minus one.
Essentially what you're doing is
continually estimating the
percentage that the next card will
be a ten. When the count is
positive that means that there is
more than the natural 33% of tens;
if it's negative then there is
less than a 33% of the next card
being a ten. Tens work to your
advantage because the house must
hit between 12, and 16. You can
stick.

So if you know that if the next
card is more likely to be a ten
than a three, it will definitely
influence the way you play...
Simple - innit?

Irene glances back towards Nate who watches the Dealer as he
turns over the hole card: a 10. That makes 16. Nate
breathes a sign of relief then smiles to himself. The Dealer
pulls a jack and busts. He counts out \$28,000 to pay off
Nate as a overly sexy - sleazy - PROSTITUTE approaches Nate.

PROSTITUTE

Hey Baby, ain't you the lucky one
tonight?

Nate tries to stay focused on the game.

Nate's POV: about 30 cards left in the shoe. Nate
calculates, all too conspicuously.

IRENE (V.O.)

And that's that: in "eye-in-the
sky" lingo it's called an
"intervention." He won't even get
in another hand...

The Prostitute leans over so that Nate can get a glimpse of
the full extent of her cleavage.

PROSTITUTE

Hi, I'm Josey. Wanna buy a girl
a drink?

NATE

Not right now, Josey, uhhh... I'm
busy.

Josey leans in and whispers into Nate's ear.

PROSTITUTE

Then how about I lick your balls?

She displays her pierced tongue to Nate in the sexiest manner possible. Appalled and distracted, Nate struggles to regain the count.

The Dealer pushes the \$28,000 next to Nate's \$28,000 and waits for him to ante up. The Prostitute glides her hand into Nate's crotch and starts massaging him.

NATE

Stop it.

PROSTITUTE (IN HIS EAR)

Oh yeah, baby, I want to lick your
balls like they were Candied
Apples!

She flicks her piercing against his earlobe.

NATE

Hey, piss off!

Nate extracts her hand from his crouch inadvertantly dousing himself with his drink in the process.

NATE

(continuing)

Shit!

He stands and wipes it off.

PROSTITUTE

Oh, baby baby, let me...

NATE

No, you've done enough.

PROSTITUTE

But...

NATE

Please.

Josey winks to the Pit Boss then shuffles off as Nate picks

up his chips and puts them in his pocket. He nods to the Dealer, throws him a twenty-five dollar chip, and leaves.

Nate heads for the bar and grabs a napkin. Standing right there is Irene who subtly turns to him.

IRENE

Darn, just when you were up.

NATE

Me?

Nate finishes wiping the whiskey off of his pants. He's clearly attracted by her. However there are only two kinds of women in Vegas: showgirls and workin' girls. He assumes she's the latter.

IRENE

And I'd bet twenty of those last thirty cards in the shoe were 10s... what were you, about plus 3?

Nate's face drops.

NATE

I have no idea what you're talking about. Excuse me.

Nate heads towards other side of the bar and orders another drink from the Bartender. Irene follows.

NATE

(continuing)

Listen, I don't mean to be rude...

IRENE

Then don't be.

Time for a new approach.

IRENE

(continuing)

So what you're saying is that you're in a state right now and that if I come back in few minutes then we can get that drink - right?

Pit Boss TONY approaches Nate and Irene from behind with two SECURITY GUARDS that look like pit bulls.

TONY

Thanks for keeping clear of the blackjack tables, Irene.

IRENE

You're welcome...
(looking at his

nametag)
... Anthony...

TONY
Are you two together?

IRENE
No, he was just asking me
directions to that great pawn shop
with the dentures, wedding rings,
land deeds and used condoms that
people hawked in order to play one
more hand.

Tony ignores Irene's smartass response and turns intensely
towards Nate.

TONY
Tony Mallato: I'm with the hotel.

Nate fumbles awkwardly with his chips.

TONY
(continuing)
I just received word from the eye
in the sky that you would enjoy
yourself much more in our
establishment if you played
roulette.

NATE
But...

As the Pit Bulls inch closer to Nate, Irene steps in to save
his ass.

IRENE (TO NATE, HAPPILY)
Didn't you want to see the debtors
piranha tank I was telling you
about???

NATE
But...

TONY
Excellent. That's what I thought.

Tony starts to gently guide them towards the exit.

TONY
(continuing)
Well, it's been a pleasure and
really, just come see us the next
time you're in town.

IRENE
And we want to play

roulette -right?

NATE

But...

TONY

Best roulette tables in the
country, Irene.

IRENE

Don't sell yourself short, Tone:
those look like the best goddamn
roulette tables in the whole
fucking universe!

OK, the joke's over. They've been escorted to the perimeter.
Tony nods towards the street.

The Pit Bulls are ready to pounce if Irene pipes up again.
But they're outta there.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD - DAY

Nate squints as his eyes hit the light of day. Irene catches
up to him.

NATE

I had no idea it was daytime
already.

IRENE

You really are new around here.

They start to walk down the boulevard.

IRENE

(continuing)

C'mon, I'll let you buy me
breakfast.

NATE

Just like your associate said back
there, it must be my lucky day.

IRENE

I'm flattered, really, but I'm not
a pro. C'mon, I'll help you cash
in those chips so that you don't
have to report the winnings to
Uncle Sam.

NATE

What? And let you hold my money?
Do you know how many con artists
there are in this town?

IRENE

Takes one to know one.

NATE

Yeah, well, this "con artist" works hard for his money so he doesn't like to see it walk off so easily.

IRENE

For a confidence artist you really don't have much confidence - do you?

(beat)

Firstly, you blink your eyes when you count so the casino knows exactly what you're doing - you'll get tossed every time, just like you did today. Secondly, the hotel sent that hooker over to distract you and it worked, so you obviously still have the libido of a fifteen year-old which is also a liability when you're counting cards. Thirdly, if you want to beat the casinos then you have to have a strategy. And you can't work alone, you always have to have someone watching your back.

(beat)

If not, I'd be willing to bet that they make you disappear in less than six months.

(beat)

That's if nobody shows you the ropes.

NATE

Just like the fine lady in the casino said: today really is my lucky day.

IRENE

You're lucky they let you walk out with that fifty grand, but a better player would've been able to play to the bottom of the shoe. There was another hundred thousand there. So in my estimation, you didn't win fifty grand back there, you lost a hundred.

NATE

Yeah well...

IRENE

Yeah, well, buy me breakfast. I like the Foundation Room. You like the Foundation Room?

NATE

Never heard of it.

IRENE

Never heard of the Foundation Room? Well then you're in for a treat.

They head towards Mandalay Bay.

IRENE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

OK, so I had this plan and it was foolproof... all of the pieces were in place...

INSERT MUG SHOT OF CLARICE CRYING, MAKE-UP SPLAYED ALL OVER HER FACE

IRENE (V.O.)

I had scouted all of the casinos in Vegas for the most skilled counters...

INSERT MUG SHOT OF ROBERT ALSO IN TEARS, FAKE MUSTACHE FALLING OFF

IRENE (V.O.)

Everything was in place and ready to go... foolproof...

INSERT SHOT OF MAGGIE AND MADGE BEING LED AWAY BY THE POLICE

IRENE (V.O.)

All I needed to find was the last piece of my puzzle: a truly gifted card counter who wasn't yet listed in the Griffin book... then my plan would be complete...

INSERT SHOT OF TWO POLICEMEN LEADING IRENE OUT OF THE MGM GRAND IN HANDCUFFS

CUT TO:

INT. FOUNDATION ROOM - DAY

A stunning room. Chandeliers. White table cloths. Nate's dazzled. His polyester threads aren't exactly up to snuff.

The MAITRE D' approaches them with a winsome smile.

MAITRE D'

Good day, may I help you?

IRENE

We'd like a table please.

MAITRE D'

This dining room is for members only. I'm sorry.

IRENE

Listen Jackson, let my friend borrow a tie and give us a table by the window.

MAITRE D'

As I was saying, Madame...

IRENE

Room 56129 - the Penthouse.
Samantha Gates. Nice to meet ya.
And make sure the tie matches his shirt. We don't want him to stand out...

(to Nate)

more than he already does...

Irene brushes by him and heads for the table. Nate follows.

The Maitre D' signals to a WAITER who brings a tie over to Nate as they sit. The view is stunning - all of Vegas in its glory surrounded by mountains.

As Nate sits the Waiter attempts to tie the tie correctly around Nate's neck.

IRENE

(continuing)

Here, allow me.

She takes it from his hands and waves him away. She drapes the tie around Nate's neck like an old scarf.

IRENE

(continuing)

There. Perfect.

She picks up the menu.

IRENE

(continuing)

C'mon, let's order fast.

NATE

Don't tell me - you're not really staying here.

IRENE

OK, I won't tell you. The rooms
are so small here - you wouldn't
like it.

Nate sighs nervously, looking around - waiting to get ejected.

IRENE

(continuing)

So how long you been in town?

NATE (hesitantly)

Three weeks...?

IRENE

You sound like one of the
strippers.

NATE

Excuse me?

IRENE

Ask any stripper how long she's
been in Vegas and she'll always
say 'about three weeks' or 'going
on three weeks...' She could be
a hundred and sixty years old -
did lap dances during the civil
war - and she'll still tell you
that she's only been here for
three weeks.

(beat)

So how long have you been here,
Nate?

NATE

Going on three weeks.

Irene smiles as the tres affected waiter approaches.

WAITER

And what will you be having today?

NATE

The eggs, please - for both of us.

WAITER

What kind would you like?

Nate looks over at Irene curiously.

NATE

The kind that come from a
chicken...?

IRENE (laughing)

Excellent... you're my man,

Nate... you're definitely the one!

CUT TO:

INT. MANDALAY BAY HOTEL - DAY

Irene shops for Nate who's just along for the ride.

IRENE

So when did you start counting?

Nate looks around nervously - makes a shhhh sign with his finger over his lips.

IRENE

(continuing)

Do you not have a mirror in your house, Nate?

NATE

What?

She demonstrates - or rather violently mimics him.

IRENE

You blink when you count. Everybody and his brother knows that you count. You count your steps, for christsakes. Sometimes you count your own breaths... Next time just wear a freakin' sign: "I'm Counting Cards - Please Throw Me Out Now."

NATE

I dunno... I love numbers.
(beat, romantically)
They're pure. Simple... natural... I dunno, there's just something "right" about them... they don't judge you... yeah, they don't judge you...

Nate turns and looks in the store mirror.

IRENE (to herself)

"I love numbers...?"

Nate starts to count. And starts to blink. He turns to Irene who blinks one last time mockingly.

NATE

Ha ha - very funny.

Nate gets upset, turns and leaves the store.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANDALAY BAY HOTEL - DAY

Nate exits quickly and Irene follows him.

IRENE

Hey, how was I to know you were so sensitive? Sorry... I just don't want to see you end up like Max.

NATE

Who's Max?

IRENE

A counter. A GREAT counter. Seven decks - down to the decimals. Like a mainframe computer. Two hands at a time, sometimes three if they would let him.

NATE

What happened to him?

IRENE

One day he was just gone - erased, as if he never existed...

NATE

Bermuda Triangle?

IRENE

The powers-that-be. One afternoon Max was able to play to the bottom of the shoe and cleared a little over a million bucks. The next day he disappeared.

NATE

Cement shoes - right?

IRENE

Something like that.

NATE

Nobody does that stuff anymore. Just in the movies.

IRENE

No? Why don't you go ask Max?

NATE

Listen: you're really pretty and you seem nice but I'm going back to the tables in a few hours so right now I have to get some shut-eye.

Irene starts blinking furiously at him - she looks totally deranged. Suddenly she stops.

IRENE

Six hundred twenty four thousand
five twenty three.

NATE

What's that?

IRENE

How many minutes left in your life.

NATE

Darn! And I'm about to waste the
next hundred and eighty three of
them sleeping - what a shame!
Good luck finding a partner, Butch.

IRENE

I'm just here to help, Sundance.

Irene flicks her imaginary cowboy hat up then watches Nate walk off into the crowd of people as we...

FADE OUT

IRENE (V.O.)

Well that seems to have been a
colossal waste of time...

FADE IN

INT. SANDS CASINO - NIGHT

Dressed in slightly better clothing Nate is at another high stakes table as the Dealer finishes shuffling. Another poorly dressed man, ROBERT, is at the table with his bimbo, CLARICE, hanging off his arm sucking down free whiskey sours and giggling alot.

An OLD DOWDY WOMAN sits down next to Nate.

OLD WOMAN

Y'mind?

He minds.

NATE

Go ahead.

She sits and spills a few chips on the table - the way she fishes them out of her pockets makes it look like it must be her entire life savings.

The Dealer starts to deal and Nate starts to count. Nate gets an ace and the Bimbo chimes in her fascinating opinion.

CLARICE

An Ace! I like those!

Nate focuses on the cards going around the table. The Old Woman gets 14, Robert 9, Nate pulls a 19 and the Dealer has a six showing.

ROBERT

Hit me, partner!

A 2.

ROBERT

(continuing)

Hit me, partner!

A 3 - and Clarice giggles - that makes 15.

ROBERT

(continuing)

Uh... what should I do, honey? Is that 18? What do you do on 18?

CLARICE

5 and 4 and 2 and 3 - is that a 3?
I can't see that far without my glasses...

Nate sighs - these retards can't even add - and they're slowing down the game. He blinks to try to keep track of the cards.

OLD WOMAN

Uh... could you speed it up, kids... I think those prunes are starting to kick in...

Robert and Clarice must have thought that this was the Special Olympics Table because it's obvious that they're both seriously deficient - they're playing their own game. Clarice has a revelation:

CLARICE

We'll STICK! STICK!! Yes, we'll STICK.

OK, she must be wrecked in addition to being stupid. Nate

waves his hands over the cards - he stays with his 20.

The Old Woman sees the Dealer's 6, thinks for a long beat - it's not brain surgery - and then...

OLD WOMAN

Baby, be good!

She taps her card and the Dealer hits her - it's a ten: BUSTED.

The Dealer quickly turns over his card and it's a five - he pulls a 10 and that's 21. Everyone including Nate loses.

OLD WOMAN

(continuing)

Darn, I hate when that happens.

CLARICE (to Robert)

Did we win, baby???

Nate can't believe his eyes or ears - a table packed to the gills with mental midgets. He looks around for another table but now they're all full.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

Nate, the Old Woman, Robert and Clarice have amassed piles of chips by now. The Old Woman has built her 5 or 6 chips into about \$9000 while Robert and Clarice have about \$8000. Nate is farther off with about \$3500 and still blinking.

CLARICE (to Nate and the Old Woman)

We took that craps course the hotel gave this morning but couldn't understand a damn thing. Too many options - hard to keep track of all the places you can put your chippies.

ROBERT

"Chips," dear.

CLARICE (to Nate and the Old Woman)

Oh yeah, right. And I don't like the name of that game anyway - something just ain't right about it. I told them to teach me how to play blackjack... they must be great teachers...

The Pit Boss, ERIC, slyly evaluates the situation and makes a sign to the Dealer, who wipes his hands and shuffles off. Another DEALER replaces him and deftly shuffles the 7 decks. Eric the pit boss assess the players.

ERIC

Enjoying your stay in Las Vegas?

OLD WOMAN

It's a little smoggy outside -
can't they do anything about the
smog? Bad for my emphysema...

The Old Woman hacks up half a lung to demonstrate.

CLARICE

This is our first time...

ERIC

Where y'all from?

CLARICE

Kentucky.

She's not from Kentucky. Eric turns to Robert.

ROBERT

Yeah... what she said.

Nate is still counting - and blinking more intensely. Must've
lost track - can't concentrate on what Eric is saying but
heard something about "Kentucky." Eric looks queerly at
Nate's eyes.

ERIC

And you?

NATE

Excuse me - what did you say?

ERIC

Where are you from?

NATE

Uh... Kentucky.

ERIC

Oh, you're all together? I never
would've guessed.

OLD WOMAN

Hey, if I want to talk I'll go to
Denny's and sit at the counter
with my friends. I came here to
play! Yippee!

Eric looks intensely at her - something isn't right. He
looks down at the Old Woman's pile of chips.

Then he looks over at Clarice - who tries to distract him
with her sultriest "I WANT TO FUCK YOU, BABY" look.

Then he looks over to Nate who wipes an imaginary piece of lint from his blinking eyes in order not to give himself away. But it doesn't work. Eric knows that Nate has been counting cards.

ERIC

I'm sorry, folks, but we seem to be experiencing operating difficulties with this table. I'm going to have to shut it down while we repair it. Here are some vouchers for some free spins....

OLD WOMAN (flat, lifeless)

At the roulette table.

(beat)

Yippee.

Nate can't believe his ears when he recognizes the Old Woman's voice: Irene's. He's upset at himself for blinking but he's equally upset for not recognizing Irene.

NATE

What a lovely idea. I like nothing more than the challenge and thrill of a serious game of roulette. Thank you. You've made my night. Now I'll finally be able to see if the gods are with me or not. Thank you all very much.

Nate takes his vouchers and heads off with his chips. Irene follows him out.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS STREET - NIGHT

Nate hails a taxi as Irene catches up to him.

NATE

That costume is ridiculous.

IRENE

He didn't stop the game because of my disguise.

NATE

Just go away.

IRENE

What did I do?

NATE

You hit on fourteen when the

dealer had a six showing - that's what you did, you idiot!

IRENE

With five bucks on the table - the best five bucks I ever spent, asshole. Because that made the pit boss take a forty-five minute walk to the other end of the casino and let me rack up nine grand. It's called a "strategy" - you may have heard of it... What did you clear?

NATE

I did OK.

IRENE

About three - right, Einstein?

Clarice and Robert approach Irene. Clarice is no longer drunk, nor does she have an accent, nor is she a bimbo.

CLARICE

Hey Irene - you look great! Where did you get those earrings? At the pharmacy? They're fantastic!

ROBERT

You two know each other?

IRENE

Nate, meet Clarice Hopkins, Ph.D from M.I.T. Game Theory, Real Analysis, Differential Equations, and Special Attributes. And this is Robert, her beard.

ROBERT

That is so derogatory - if I didn't walk out of there with ten grand I'd be offended, I think.

They laugh - must be old friends. Nate is starting to get the picture.

ROBERT

(continuing)

What did you clear?

IRENE

Nine.

Nate is embarrassed. Looks down at his lousy 3K in chips.

IRENE

(continuing)

But this goddamn wig is cutting
off the circulation in my face.

Clarice pulls Nate aside so as not to embarrass him more.

CLARICE (softly, to Nate)
Y'know, I'm surprised they let us
play as long as they did...

Irene pipes in - while imitating Nate's blinking problem.

IRENE
You're not telling him about the
little barely-noticable-to-blind-
people BLINKING issue that he
has - how he's lucky that they
even let him in the fucking
casino, let alone play - are you?!
He may as well tap his foot...

ROBERT
Or just pull out a calculator, for
godssakes.

IRENE
It would be less conspicuous...

CLARICE
And why didn't you split those
threes? The count was plus 11!
I haven't seen it that high in a
long time!

NATE
It was never plus 11. The highest
it ever got was 9.65.

ROBERT
Oh, he does decimal points!

CLARICE
To two places!

ROBERT
Very impressive.

NATE
I thought that splitting on threes
would draw unnecessary attention
to me.

IRENE (shouting)
As opposed to the blinking, which
nobody notices!

SILENCE

Nate feels like a putz. After a moment he regains himself.

NATE

OK then, that's it. Pleasure
meeting you all. I'm outta here.

He heads off.

Irene, Robert and Clarice look at each other. Irene waves
goodbye to Clarice and Robert and runs after Nate.

IRENE (V.O.)

And it was then I knew that I had
to change my approach with Nate.
You know, be a little softer,
cheer him up - tell him that we
were all in this together... just
be nice to him, make him feel at
home... like he was loved...
y'see, Nate was like a delicate
flower, sophisticated in his own
innocent way... he needed to be
treated with warmth, surrounded by
sunlight and good cheer....

IRENE

Nate, wait, you fucking jerk!

She couldn't change even if she wanted to. Catches up to him
but he just keeps walking.

IRENE

(continuing)

I've got a funny story for you.
Lemme buy you a cup of coffee...
I may even apologize for my
behavior. And my salty tongue.
What d'ya say?

Nate looks at her suspiciously as we...

CUT TO:

INT. STRATOSPHERE DINER - NIGHT

Irene and Nate get coffee high atop the Stratosphere Hotel.

IRENE

OK, here goes: I was a therapist
for ten years - I specialized in
marital problems, relationships.

NATE

That must have been where you
developed those impeccable human
relation skills you've been
exhibiting. So if you know so

much about marriage then where's
your husband?

IRENE (under her breath)
Never been married...

NATE
Speak up, can't hear you.

IRENE
I said I've never been married...
(beat)
Never even lived with anyone -
except one guy and he... let's
just say that I may have some
intimacy issues now...

NATE
That's so odd - every time I see
you I just feel warm and fuzzy all
over.

IRENE
Ha ha ha.

NATE
OK, so how would you know what
your patients were going through
if you were never married? From
books?

IRENE
Well, as a matter of fact, that's
why I quit. I had the theory but
not the practice, the
experience... kinda like you in
the casino... see what I mean?

NATE
Well...

IRENE
You were always good with numbers
and then one day you stumbled upon
a book on card counting - just
like everyone else in all the
casinos here. And none of them
are getting rich quick. You need
a strategy, a long term strategy.

NATE
Well, I'm not really in it for the
money.

IRENE
Then why are you here?

NATE

I wanted to see the world... and
I told you: I love numbers.

Irene smiles, takes his hand.

NATE

(continuing)

Is that funny?

IRENE

No, it's beautiful. It's poetic.
And I'm going to let you in on a
little secret, Nate: the money's
not bad but I'm not here for it
either.

NATE

So why are you here?

IRENE

Why am I here? You mean, why am
I still here? Well, I'll tell you
why I'm here, Nate. I'm here
because of Frank Miteson. Frank
the psychopath Miteson.

(beat)

Old Frankie Miteson raped me: he
raped me emotionally, he raped me
mentally, he raped me spiritually,
and he raped me financially.

NATE

I'm sorry.

IRENE

I hate Frank Miteson more than
life itself. Every time I see him
I just want to go right up and
punch him in the neck.

NATE

Uh... you mean the nose.

IRENE

No, I mean the neck. Right here
in his adam's apple. Break his
windpipe, send him crashing to the
ground gasping for air - without
being able to make a sound, say a
word. Now that would be poetry,
that would be beautiful...

NATE

OK, so that's Frank. I imagine
you stay far away from him so that
you don't give in to these type of

destructive impulses...

Irene looks out, points out the window.

IRENE

He's right there. Y'see?

NATE

Please, don't tell me.

IRENE

OK, I won't tell you.

(beat)

But he's right across the street
at the MGM. Pit Boss, blackjack,
high stakes.

NATE

Oh great! And he knows you're in
town?

IRENE

Of course, silly. Why do you
think I wear the disguises? He's
had me banned from every table in
town.

(beat)

Which is why I need you.

NATE

What???

IRENE

To help me ruin him. Ruin him
forever...

Nate gets up to leave.

NATE

I'm not your guy. I'm just a guy
who loves numbers. Been here
THREE weeks. Drove SEVENTEEN
HUNDRED FIFTY NINE miles to get
here. My car is EIGHT months
old - gets TWENTY-THREE miles to
the gallon. In bed by TWELVE
o'clock every night. Eat TWO
square meals a day. No more than
ONE cup of coffee in the morning.
Just a guy who loves numbers.

IRENE

I need to settle this score. I've
got it all worked out and now I
have all of the pieces of the
puzzle. You're the only one who
can help me, you're the only one

I've ever seen do decimals so quickly and accurately...

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Irene follows Nate down the glitzy boulevard.

IRENE

C'mon Nate, don't shut me out...
you said you wanted to see the
world... well come see my world.

(beat)

Tell me what brought you to
Vegas - everyone has a story...

He hesitates for a second then decides to let her in.

NATE

... I quit my accounting job a few
weeks ago.

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S CUBICLE - DAY

The clock strikes 4:00 and Mister Bigglesby enters like
clockwork. Nate hands him what looks like the ticker tape
but really isn't. Instead it's a note that Bigglesby reads.

BIGGLESBY POV: I QUIT.

Bigglesby just stands there dumbfounded as Nates walks out.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Nate continues.

NATE

After 12 years at the same job in
the same office, I had accumulated
four hundred, twenty-eight
thousand, two-hundred forty-eight
shares of stock that had
quadrupled in the last year alone.
I decided that it was time to cash
out so I taught myself to count
cards...

IRENE

To two decimal points...

NATE

Actually I didn't know any better

at first so I was going out four...

IRENE

Four decimal points? That's alot of blinking.

NATE

Yeah, well, it was unnecessary so I cut it back to two in order to help me stay focused...

IRENE

You count aces too?

NATE

On good days... Anyway, I packed up all my stuff and hit the road. First the reservations then Reno...

IRENE

Then the single decks at Whiskey Pete's, the Frontier, and the Barbary Coast, then you made the jump to seven decks about a week ago...

NATE

What - are you psychic?

IRENE

Nate, everyone does the same thing.

And I'd say ninety percent of counters give up after about six months, when they realize that they have to put in ten hours a day with their minds at full throttle just to clear a hundred grand a year - in the long run. What's that old joke? "What's a surefire way to make money in Las Vegas?"

NATE

I give up.

IRENE

"Invest in the casinos."

NATE

Whatever. I'm not going to be a part of the ninety percent who gives up.

IRENE

No, you're going to be a part of

the ten percent who end up dead.
If you're perceived as a liability
to a casino then inevitably
somebody will take you out to the
desert and have a word with you.

NATE

It's still like that?

IRENE

Just ask Max. And Ted Stockwell.
And Sam Hurley. And Wally Bennett.

NATE

OK, OK, I get the picture.

(beat)

So now that you've wined and dined
me... what's your plan?

IRENE

You want to know my plan?

(beat)

Then let's get dressed...

CUT TO:

EXT. IRENE'S HOTEL - DAY

Nate exits the hotel with Irene who is disguised as a well-dressed businessman. She's wearing a short wig, mustache, glasses and an extremely sharp suit.

NATE

OK, so what else should I know
about Frank?

IRENE

Jeez, these shoes are killing my
feet - how can you wear them
everyday?

Irene refuses to divulge anything else about her personal life so she changes the subject.

NATE

Tell me about Frank - who is he?

IRENE

What did you say your ex-wife's
name was?

NATE

I didn't. As a matter of fact I
never told you I was married. But
I'll tell you one thing: I'm not
taking another step unless you
tell me everything about Frank

right now.

He stops dead in his tracks and just stands there.

IRENE

We were a team. Can we go now?

NATE

I'm all ears.

IRENE

I had just arrived in Vegas and I met Frank in line at the DMV. Actually I found out later that that's where he figured was the best place to meet someone who had just arrived and was planning on staying. I should've known better but I didn't. He scouted me right out...

NATE

Kinda like you did with me?

IRENE

Yeah well I had a good teacher. Anyway, Frank had read a card-counting book... wait, I take that back: Frank paid some whore to read the book to him - he's dyslexic.

NATE

Stop, you're gonna make me cry.

IRENE

He knew that I was bright and new in town so he gave me the book and promised me that we could make millions if I learned how to count, which I did. It only took a month or so until I could count seven decks. Frank was the high roller and he just followed my lead. If I bet even that meant the deck the plus and if I bet odd then the deck was minus. Simple yet efficient. We didn't even have to sit near each other, as so long as there were two open seats at a table we could play. He would let me get three or four decks into the shoe then mosey up to the table and bet large.

NATE

Sounds pretty good. What went

wrong?

IRENE

Frank was in deep with one of the local loansharks and one day that we did particularly well, Frank decided to cash out.

NATE

I don't follow.

IRENE

He beat the crap out of me and took all of the money I had saved. Every penny.

NATE

I'm sorry. Did you go to the cops?

IRENE

And tell them what? That I had cheated the casinos out of millions? There was nothing I could do and he knew it.

NATE

So then what happened?

IRENE

He squandered all my money on fast women and fast cars which he crashed on a weekly basis...

NATE

The women or the cars?

IRENE

Both. Anyway, I guess he couldn't find any more recruits so he decided use his only other god-given ability: spotting cheaters. He can spot a counter a mile away - he can just smell them.

NATE

"Takes one to know one," someone once said.

IRENE

Right. So now he works every day day right in the heart of it - and the casino loves him because he gets rid of all the counters as soon as they start to play.

(beat)

You're not worried about the blinking - are you? Don't

worry - I used to blink too.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

It may be daylight outside but the casino is thriving as if it were nighttime. Irene leads Nate around as they case the tables.

IRENE

We're just doing a little
reconnaissance so don't count,
just play.

NATE

OK.

They sit down at a table and Irene antes up. The DEALER looks at Irene and Nate then starts to deal.

IRENE (in a deep voice)

Here buddy, it's my money, so have
a good time!

She slaps Nate on the back like a fraternity brother and pushes some money in front of him.

IRENE

Make sure to save some so we can
go to one of them stripclubs later
and get ourselves some pussy!

Nate's face drops as the Dealer raises his eyebrows. Irene lights a cigar and smiles as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

Irene and Nate have amassed a few thousand dollars each. They're playing nonchalantly, very relaxed. Irene looks down at her watch then back over her shoulder and tenses up. Nate spots her and shrugs his shoulders "what?"

IRENE (whispering)

Employees entrance, over there.

Nate pretends to yawn and then stretch. He turns around and looks at the employees entrance just as...

Frank enters the casino in SLOW MOTION - smug and smarmy, pointing and winking and patting HOSTESSES on the ass like Elvis at Graceland.

FRANK

Jimmy D, looking good! Bobby

Jeano, how's it hangin'? Katie K,
my girl!

Finally he pats Nate's Dealer on the back and Nate gets his first look at the monster. Irene looks the other way.

Frank points an imaginary gun at Nate and pulls the trigger in SLOW MOTION - it's his own special way of saying "I know you're new around here and if you try anything funny you're a dead man."

Two HOOKERS straddle up to the table and sit down next to Irene and Nate. They don't realize that Irene is a woman so they go to work.

Nate turns back from looking at Frank to find a pretty young thing with her hand in his lap. And there's a hand in Irene's lap too - all the Hookers must have gone to the same finishing school.

HOOKER 1

You boys wanna have some fun?

HOOKER 2

We'll show you a time you'll never forget.

Nate is watching Frank do his job when Irene gets up and slaps Nate hard on the back signaling it's time to leave.

IRENE (to the hookers)

You girls couldn't handle us.
We'd ride you so hard you've be
out of commission for month! And
I bet you aren't exactly eligible
for unemployment benefits - are
you?!

Nate laughs and the Hookers just watch as Irene and Nate exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

Nate and Irene exit the casino.

NATE

That guy Frank gives me the creeps.

IRENE

That's why he's there. Just to
intimidate anyone who tries to
cheat the casino.

NATE

Which is exactly what you're
planning on doing...

IRENE

"We." And I don't want to just cheat the casino. I want to ruin Frank, make it so bad that they fire him on the spot.

And since he's banned from every casino in the world he would just have to get a job in a gas station and spend the rest of his godforsaken life there...

NATE

Listen, don't pull any punches, tell me what you really think.

Irene smiles.

IRENE (softly, lovingly)

Fuck you.

Nate smiles back.

NATE

That's what you used to talk like - right?

He's just joshing her - they're turning out to be quite a playful couple.

IRENE

You're in - right?

BEAT

NATE

Well... you only live once...

IRENE

If that, Nate... if that...

They smile at each other with complicity as we...

CUT TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene has assembled a crack team of players: Clarice and Robert, and Maggie and Madge, then Nate.

IRENE

Clarice and Rob, you've already met, but Maggie and Madge I'd like to introduce you to Nate.

CLARICE

Four decimal places.

MADGE

Four places???

MAGGIE

That's not possible...

ROBERT

It's amazing.

MADGE

Wow...

IRENE

Which is why he's here. To be our lead counter.

(beat)

You're all here today because you have one thing in common - well, really two things: one, I can trust you and two, you all hate Frank Miteson.

(beat)

Very simply, my friends, I have a plan. And if we all work together, Frank Miteson will get what's coming to him!

MAGGIE

It's payback time!

MADGE

Alright!

IRENE

Settle down, settle down... let's go over it...

Everyone leans in to listen closely as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

The others are gone and Nate and Irene are sitting at the table playing blackjack. Irene awkwardly shuffles eight decks together.

IRENE

OK, so we have time... let's take care of that little blinking issue that you've been experiencing... "Nothing up my sleeve, nothing in my hat..."

NATE

Here, let me.

Nate takes the cards away from her.

IRENE

A gentleman... I thought you'd never. OK so the blinking thing will be overcome by focusing on your breath to calm you down and make you just a tad less high strung...

NATE

Cut.

She cuts the cards, Nate hands her the huge deck of cards and she starts to deal.

IRENE

So riddle me this, Nate: what is the deal with your fascination with breasts?

NATE (laughing nervously)

What?

IRENE

I always see you checking out the chicks with fake yabs here.

NATE

Not me.

Nate pulls a 21 and Irene swipes his cards away without showing her hole card.

NATE

(continuing)

Hey hey hey... the hole card.

IRENE

Oh you saw that. Very good.

She flips it over - a 4 - he adds its value to his count.

IRENE

(continuing)

What do you have?

He blinks and she raises her eyebrows to let him know that she saw him.

NATE

Minus 1.3547.

She calculates the decimals quickly in her head.

IRENE

Impressive.

(beat)

You blink when you tally, not
actually when you're counting.

NATE

I guess...

She deals.

IRENE

So what was your wife like, Nate?

NATE

You ask alot of questions...

IRENE

For a therapist?

NATE

Oh yeah, I forgot: you're healing
me... did ye heal me?

IRENE

Not yet...

(beat)

High school sweetheart? Betsy?
Cassy? Melinda?

NATE

Just play.

IRENE

Oh yeah, I forgot... you're
sensitive.

(beat)

So what happened?

NATE

I came home one day and everything
was gone.

IRENE

She leave a note?

NATE

Uh-huh.

IRENE

What did it say?

NATE

Nothing.

IRENE

Nothing?

INSERT FLASHBACK OF NATE PICKING UP HIS WIFE'S NOTE: THIS TIME WE SEE EXACTLY WHAT'S ON IT. NUMBERS.

NATE (embarrassed)
It just had... numbers on it.
(beat)
She thought I loved numbers more than I loved her.

IRENE
I'm sorry.

NATE
She was wrong: I loved her. I guess I was too busy working...

IRENE
Number-crunching.

NATE
Yeah.

IRENE
Speaking of which...?

NATE
Plus 3.7865

Irene smiles, decides to lighten up the conversation a bit.

IRENE
I just wanted to know if you had been married because most men get over the breast thing when they're married.

NATE
What "breast thing?"

Trying to distract Nate, Irene grabs her own breasts for a second then continues dealing hands.

IRENE
I mean, they're functional - right?

NATE
What are you talking about?

IRENE
They're there for a purpose - right?

NATE
Yeah...

IRENE

Here, look:

Nate looks up.

And Irene flashes him.

Nate's eyes flutter.

IRENE
(continuing)
What's the count?

NATE
Uh... minus... minus...

IRENE
Breathe, just breathe...

NATE
... I mean, plus 2.7639.

IRENE
Good. Thought I had you there for
a second.

Continues dealing quickly.

IRENE
(continuing)
So I heard that when we were
primates, homosapiens, dragging
our knuckles on the ground when we
walked - before ATMs and fax
machines - the males would be
attracted to the females because
of their round rosy buttocks
jutting up in the air.

NATE
Fascinating...

IRENE
And when we decided that we could
run away faster from the hyenas
and Red Army - which happened
about the same time
incidentally - the females decided
to put those round rosy orbs on
the front, so as not to have to
bend over all the time to show
their wares. Cause that gets hard
on the back after a while.

She grabs her breasts again and looks down at them curiously.

IRENE
(continuing)

Count?

NATE

Plus 3.5981.

IRENE

You're not blinking as much...
good.

(beat)

So subconsciously -
theoretically - men would prefer
large breasts because they would
provide more milk and thus their
offspring would have a better
chance of survival in this cruel
cruel world.

NATE

Right...

IRENE

But when women get those portable
life preservers shoved under their
nipples they can't lactate
anymore... see what I'm saying?

NATE

What?

IRENE

You blinked there. Cut it out.
Breathe.

Nate gets a little flustered.

NATE

So what's your point?

IRENE

That men should be attracted to
the big orbs for the milk that
they could provide for the goops
but after you get those
volleyballs shoved in there
there's no more milk - it's
actually self-destructive to your
gene pool to be attracted to large
breasted women in Las Vegas...

NATE

Not to mention the fact that their
clothing costs more because the
sizes are bigger...

Nate's playing with her.

IRENE

Not necessarily but...

He knows she's going to ask him the count. Takes a breath.

NATE

Plus 4.7345.

She sweeps up the cards and smiles lovingly at Nate.

IRENE

You're alright, Nate... you weren't blinking...

NATE

You know what it is?

IRENE

What?

NATE

You're really talking to me.

IRENE

What do you mean?

NATE

I mean, my wife never really talked "to" me and my boss never really talked "to" me... they always spoke "at" me... but you treat me like a real person, an adult, a human being... so I'm not so nervous, I guess...

IRENE

So as long as you hear my voice then you won't blink?

NATE

I guess so...

She gets up and kisses him on the forehead. He blushes.

IRENE

Then I guess we'll just have to keep chatting...

The smile at each other lovingly. They look like they're about to kiss when...

There's a knock at the door and Irene pulls back.

IRENE

(continuing)

Enter.

Madge and Maggie rush in, flustered.

IRENE
(continuing)
Forget something?

MADGE
We were just walking through the
MGM...

IRENE
I thought I told you not to go
there before the big day?!

MAGGIE
Just to get the lay of the land...

MADGE
You're not going to believe what
we saw:

IRENE
What?

MADGE
Johnny Walker Red.

MAGGIE
Johnny Walker Red.

Irene's face drops and there's a BEAT of ominous silence.

IRENE
When did he get out?

MAGGIE
Must be some new work-release
program.

MADGE
He was in Frank's pit.

IRENE
Oh, SHIT!

Irene throws the cards down, gets up and starts to pace
nervously.

IRENE (thinking aloud)
OK, what are we going to do, what
are we going to do? OK, so you
two have to go back there and find
out what he's up to.

MADGE
We used to play with him. Back in
the day...

MAGGIE
He'll smell us out in a second.

IRENE

Shit! He knows me from Frank...
what the hell are we going to do?

Silence.

Then...

NATE

I'll go.

IRENE

What?

NATE

He doesn't know me. I'll go have
a talk with this Johnny Walker
fellow.

They all look at Nate as if he has gone mental.

IRENE

Johnny Walker Red. Frank's best
friend. Did a few years in county
after killing a busload of old
ladies while DUI.

MADGE

DUI? That's the biggest
understatement of the year!

MAGGIE

He had more Red Label than blood
in him when they finally pulled
him over.

NATE

I'm not seeing any other options.

IRENE

Nate, you'll be completely out of
your element. I mean, he's a...

NATE

He's just a guy. A guy that I'm
going to talk to.

Irene, Maggie and Madge look at each other with concern.

IRENE

You don't understand, Nate. He
eats guys like you for breakfast.

We hold on Nate's awkward trying-to-muster-up-courage face
until we...

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

Nate moseys around the pit looking for a lucky seat. He looks over to a table and sits down.

The Dealer is JOHNNY WALKER RED, a mean looking Irish drunkard with a bulbous red nose and ruddy complexion.

Nate puts two hundred dollars on the table. Johnny calls out to the Pit Boss, WALLY.

JOHNNY

Buying in! Two hundred!

WALLY

Two hundred.

Johnny hands Nate two hundred in chips.

JOHNNY

Good luck.

Nate thanks him with a nod as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

Nate has amassed a few thousand dollars. Finally Nate feels the time is right to speak to Johnny Walker Red.

Nate squints to see Johnny Walker Red's name tag:

NELSON ROCKEFELLAR

QUANTAS, MISSISSIPPI

NATE

So... I didn't know the Rockefeller made it that far south...

JOHNNY

Oh sure... we've been all over.

Nate blinks a few times and then uses his finger to conspicuously add numbers on an imaginary blackboard.

JOHNNY

(continuing)

You can't do that, sir.

NATE

Do what?

JOHNNY

Count - count cards. It's illegal.

NATE

Really?

JOHNNY

Well, actually... no. It's not illegal in the true sense of the word but if I call over the pit boss he'll ask you to leave.

NATE

Really? I had no idea.

(beat)

So you know something about counting cards?

JOHNNY

Me? No, not really.

Johnny smiles, he's lying egregiously.

NATE

Because I heard that if I meet the right people then I could get into a REAL game - if you know what I mean.

JOHNNY

I have no idea what you're talking about.

(beat)

But maybe I'll be able to jar my memory on my break in a few minutes... I usually go out back for a smoke...

Nate understands. He flips Johnny a hundred dollar chip and a five dollar chip at the same time. Johnny clicks the two chips twice on the table then slides the five dollar chip into the tip box. Slyly pockets the other hundred.

JOHNNY

(continuing)

Thank you, sir.

NATE

No, thank you, Nelson.

Nate clears his chips and exits.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DUSK

Irene is still pacing while Madge and Maggie drink coffee and play cards.

IRENE

Something's wrong, it shouldn't be taking this long.

MADGE

What do you want us to do?

IRENE

Just wait here. I'm going to take a look...

She heads for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DUSK

Nate waits out back for Johnny who soon comes out.

Johnny deftly lights a cigarette then jams Nate by the neck hard up against the wall.

After he takes a drag he holds the burning cigarette to the corner of Nate's eye.

JOHNNY

Who sent you, motherfucker?! My probation officer?!

NATE

No, nobody sent me!

JOHNNY

If you ever want to see again then you'd better fucking come clean!

NATE

I told you: nobody sent me! I just came in to play!

Johnny buys it. Lets him down.

JOHNNY

I just got out of the joint and I'm not exactly looking to go back in - if you know what I mean.

NATE

I understand. I'm just looking for a good game.

Suddenly Frank bursts out of the back door.

FRANK

Everything all right here, Johnny?

JOHNNY

Sure, Frank. This guy was counting at my table. He wants in on a little action.

FRANK

He does - does he?

Nate nods - he's nervous. Frank inches closer to him.

FRANK

(continuing)

You're not in the Griffin Book or I'd recognize you. Schoolteacher? Wife left you? Thought you'd get some R 'n R?

NATE

I'm just looking to play.

FRANK

What do you play?

NATE

Blackjack.

FRANK (to Johnny)

Is he any good?

JOHNNY

He's got a bad tell: he blinks.

FRANK

Oh, a blinker: I used to know one of them.

Nate tenses up.

FRANK

(continuing)

Hold him, Johnny.

Nate tries to resist but Johnny Walker Red pins Nate's elbows behind him. Frank starts to go through his pockets taking out all the chips, etc. Takes out Nate's driver's license.

FRANK

(continuing)

Nathaniel Wentworth, Seattle.

(beat)

You're a long way from home - aren't you, Nathaniel?

Nate nods, terrified. Frank throws the wallet and license on the ground.

FRANK

(continuing)
OK, let him go.

Johnny releases him, let's him drop to the ground.

Johnny and Frank turn to leave and Nate reaches for his wallet.

SUDDENLY FRANK FREAKS OUT, KICKS NATE VIOLENTLY IN THE RIBS THEN JUMPS ON HIM AND STARTS TO PUMMEL HIS FACE.

FRANK
(continuing)
Did I say you could move, bitch?!
Did I say you could move, bitch?!

Nate can't say or do anything, he just tries to protect his face the best he can.

Johnny just stands there smoking, as if this happens everyday. After a few punches Nate is barely conscious.

JOHNNY
Stop Frank! Don't ruin tomorrow!
You don't want the cops running

FRANK
You're right.

Frank releases Nate then kicks him one more time for good measure. Frank straightens himself up and then they head inside.

Nate rolls over, lifeless.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DUSK

Irene peeks her head in as inconspicuously as possible. She looks around furtively.

After a moment she sees Johnny Walker Red and Frank coming in from the employee entrance.

IRENE (to herself)
Shit!

She heads out quickly before they can spot her.

CUT TO:

EXT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

Irene runs around the building looking down alleys for Nate.

Finally she makes it all the way around back.

And there's...

NATE

Disheveled and beaten-up, lying on the ground. His cheek and eye are swollen and his shirt is dirty, torn, and a little bloody. Irene frantically hugs him.

NATE

I didn't know cards were a contact sport...

IRENE

I'm sorry, Nate, I'm so sorry...

NATE

Frank's job is... tomorrow...

IRENE

Shit! What kinda job?

NATE

I would've had to get rough with him to find out anything else...

Irene caresses his bruised face. Helps him to his feet.

IRENE

Oh baby, I'm so sorry...

NATE

I think I may sit the next dance out...

IRENE

What do you mean?

NATE

I mean that a bullet in my head would seriously hinder my counting abilities - know what I mean?

He starts to limp away - angry, hurt.

IRENE

Nate, you were so brave to go...

She catches up to him and helps him amble out of there.

CUT TO:

INT. NATE'S HOTEL ROOM - DUSK

Irene helps Nate into his shabby, ascetic hotel room. He reluctantly accepts her aid. Nate flops into the sofa and Irene runs to the bathroom. She comes back with some

hydrogen peroxide and cotton balls. Like a doting nurse she tends to his wounds lovingly.

IRENE

Nate, I know you feel that you may be in a little over your head...

NATE

A little?

IRENE

OK, alot. But I promise you. It's all going to be worth it.

NATE

I don't think I'm your guy....

IRENE

Listen, there's something I want to show you...

NATE

I think I need to be alone...

IRENE

If that's the way you want it then I'll just show myself out.

NATE

Thank you.

She gets up and heads for the door. Then stops.

IRENE

But if you want to know why your wife really left you then you'll at least come see what I have to show you...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Irene and Nate pull up to a hammock tied between two cacti in the middle of the desert. They get out of the car.

NATE

This is why my wife left me?

IRENE

Go sit down.

Nate tries out the hammock. Irene goes to the car trunk.

NATE

Did you put this here?

IRENE

I may have had something to do
with it.

Nate gets in and looks up at the sky.

Irene comes back over with a cooler.

NATE

I never knew there were so many
stars...

IRENE

Yeah well don't try to COUNT
them...

NATE

Very funny.

She pulls out a bottle of champagne. Hands him a glass and
gets into the hammock next to him.

NATE

(continuing)

I'm all ears, Irene. Why did my
wife leave me?

Irene has to look into her own heart, her own soul, and be as
sincere and loving as possible with Nate.

IRENE

Look up there, Nate.

NATE

Yes, it's very beautiful.

IRENE

Yes, it's BEAUTIFUL. But it's not
orderly. It's amorphous, it has
no shape, no lines, no cubby
holes, no boxes...

NATE

I don't understand what you're
saying...

IRENE

You - your mind - gives order to
the universe. The universe is
just out there. Period. The
math, the numbers, the lines, the
geometry - all that, is in here,
in your head.

NATE

Yeah, so?

IRENE

The numbers aren't romantic -
they're too orderly, too linear,
too neat... unnatural...

Nate raises his eyebrows.

IRENE

(continuing)

You have to learn how to "feel"
things, instead of just "thinking"
them and putting them into neat
little orderly boxes...

He understands. Irene holds up her glass.

NATE

A toast?

IRENE

No. I just want you to take a sip
and FEEL the champagne. Don't
THINK about it. Don't try to
pigeon-hole it. Just FEEL it.
TASTE it.

He slowly raises the glass to his lips. First he gently
feels the glass on his lips then raises the stem to let the
champagne melts over his lips towards his palate.

After a second of the sweet sparkly liquid bubbling around
inside his mouth his face lights up blissfully.

He gets it.

They stare into each others eyes. Move towards each other.

Kiss softly. So sweet, so tender, so innocent.

The camera pans up to the star-filled sky and lingers as we...

FADE OUT

IRENE (V.O.)

OK, so there were still some kinks
to be worked out of my plan but I
was confident that everything
would work out for the best...

FADE IN

INT. ROB AND CLARICE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Rob types an email on his laptop computer while Clarice sleeps in front of the television set.

IRENE (V.O.)

However, unbeknownst to me at the time, Rob and Clarice decided to cut themselves in on a little side action...

CLOSE ON COMPUTER SCREEN

Dear Roger,

How are you? Just a little note to say that you may want to take a look at shorting...

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

Rob had been in a fraternity when he was at the Wharton School of Business. And he took it upon himself to "suggest" - not advise or outright tell - but "suggest" to one of his fratboy buddies that he might look into shorting a few shares of MGM stock which may in fact respond unfavorably to the quarterly news on Friday morning. OK, for those of you who don't know what shorting a stock is - which I didn't until Nate later told me - it's essentially when you bet that the stock is going to go down. So Rob told one friend via email that after we hit the casino for 10 mil on Thursday night, when the company happened to announce earnings on Friday morning they might be a wee bit lower than expected.

INSERT ROGER SENDING email TO ALL HIS FRATERNITY BROTHERS

INSERT FRATERNITY BROTHERS FORWARDING email, ETC.

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

And this friend that Rob told, well, he told two friends. And so on... and so on... and so on...

As she says this the two INVESTMENT BANKERS'S faces become 4 faces, then 16 faces, then 256 (like that shampoo commercial

from the 70s - if you're old enough to remember).

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

So by the time Thursday had rolled
around I was the only person in
the free world who hadn't shorted
MGM.

Rob pulls the covers over Clarice, shuts off the TV and turns
off the light.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene mulls around the hotel room getting ready for the big
day when Nate enters.

IRENE (V.O.)

... which actually wouldn't have
bothered me if I hadn't actually
developed genuine feelings for
Nate.

Nate enters and stands there waiting for Irene to say
something.

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

I mean, he had a good heart. And
he was a truly great card
counter - one of the best I'd ever
seen - which I found kinda sexy....

INSERT SHOT OF NATE AND IRENE DRIVING OUT OF LAS VEGAS

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

So I guess this would have been
the perfect moment to give up all
that silly revenge stuff and drive
into the sunset with Nate.

INSERT SHOT OF NATE AND IRENE WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD A LOG
CABIN

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

Build a log cabin in the forest.
And try to cheat each other at
cards for the rest of our little
lives...

INSERT SHOT OF NATE AND IRENE PLAYING BLACKJACK IN FRONT OF
THE FIREPLACE IN THEIR LOG CABIN.

THEY SMILE LOVINGLY AT EACH OTHER

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

I dunno... it could've worked...

CUT TO:

EXT. FISHING TRAWLER - DAY

Irene and Nate are still lying face down on the bow of the boat. Hands tied behind their backs, water splashing onto their faces.

Frank comes over with a big bucket of chum and sets it down next to their heads.

FRANK

This is going to be fun.

Frank grabs some chum from the top of the bucket. The smell alone would make any reasonable person throw up for days. Frank throws down some bloody fish innards next to Nate's head. Dumps bucket over the side.

FRANK

(continuing)

You're next, Nathaniel.

Frank looks out for sharks then walks back to the other side of the boat. Both Irene and Nate look like they could throw up. Nate looks at the chum by his head - his eyes flutter back into his head and then he passes out.

Irene kicks him to wake him up.

IRENE

Nate, wake up. Wake up!

Nate comes back to life.

NATE

Am I dead yet?

IRENE

No, Nate, you're not dead yet.

NATE

What - do you have another great plan?

IRENE

No, no great plan.

NATE

Then why did you wake me?

IRENE

I didn't want you to drown.

NATE

As opposed to being gnawed and
mashed into baby food by a bunch
of sharks when I'm fully
conscious... so I could get the
full effect...? Didn't want me to
miss out on anything now did you???

IRENE

Jeez Nate, you're starting to make
me feel bad... if you're not
having a good time then just say
so...

NATE

You're really a piece of work.

IRENE

If I knew you were gonna be this
much of a whiner I wouldn't have
even let you in on the action.

Nate just shakes his head.

IRENE

(continuing)

OK, listen:

(beat)

I'm sorry. There, I said it.

NATE

Aw shucks... that's so sweet. I'm
touched. I'm moved. I may even
cry.

IRENE

Fuck you. I was trying to have a
little moment there and... forget
it.

(beat)

Well, at least you got to see the
world... or at least some of it -
right???

Nate just shakes his head as we...

FADE OUT

IRENE (V.O.)

So by the time Frank's shift

rolled around everything and
everyone was in place...

FADE IN

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene has a pad and pencil, a computer, a few video monitors,
speakers and a microphone in front of her.

IRENE (into microphone)
OK, stations everyone.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

MONTAGE OF ALL OF THE PLAYERS ENTERING THE CASINO IN SLOW
MOTION -

1. CLARICE AND ROBERT STUMBLE IN WHILE HUCKING IT UP -
disguised as tourists from a trailer park in the midwest.
Don't even look smart enough to tie their own shoes let alone
count cards.

2. MAGGIE AND MADGE, THE TWO LESBIANS, ACT LIKE CANADIAN
SISTERS - Eh? Whatcha say?

3. AND THEN THERE'S NATE LOOKING LIKE...UH... NATE with some
swelling around his cheek and a band-aid on his ear.

4. FRANK'S GOONS JOEY AND RONNY ARE ALREADY SITTING AT ONE OF
THE THREE NO LIMIT TABLES

5. IVAN, THE FLOOR MANAGER, SURVEYS THE TABLES - IT'S JUST
ANOTHER NIGHT OF WORK FOR HIM

Nate, Maggie and Madge head for one of the No Limit Tables.

Clarice and Robert are at the next table.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene looks at a monitor and tries to figure out what's up.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

The players are hooked up to tiny earpieces and have
microphones in their sleeves.

The Dealer shuffles as Nate joins Maggie and Madge at the table. Dealer finishes shuffling and Nate cuts.

IRENE (into microphone)
Maggie, straighten your shirt -
all I'm getting is floor...

Maggie adjusts her button so it's just above the table level pointing at the Dealer's face down card.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene watches the Dealer shuffle on a fuzzy digital image. Hits a button and freezes a frame: she can see the cards individually as they are being shuffled, frame by frame...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

Nate, Madge and Maggie ante up and the Dealer deals. Nate and the ladies look down at their cards: Nate has 14, Maggie has 20, and Madge has 11. The Dealer has a Jack showing.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene single-frames backwards to get a clear shot of the corner of the Dealer's face-down ("hole") card as he deals it to himself.

She can't get it this time - the image is too blurry.

IRENE
Maggie, stop moving around so much
for christsakes!

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

Maggie settles into place.

Madge doubles-down and pulls a ten - perfect.

The Dealer turns over his card, a seven.

IRENE (V.O.)
OK, folks, what d've have?

The Players take turns whispering or coughing inconspicuously into their microphones.

MADGE

Plus 3...

CLARICE

Plus 3.

IRENE (V.O.)

Nate?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene looks at the second monitor which is a feed from Roberts' hat camera: Nate moves his right pinky to his eyebrow to signal that Plus 3 is correct.

IRENE

We're solid. Good work.

(beat)

Next hand. Stay focused.

Again she single-frames backwards on the Dealer's hands.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - DAY

Nate's Dealer deals again.

IRENE (V.O.)

OK, I got it this time: his hole card is a four. And Nate, darling, if you blink one more time I'm going to come down there and rip your eyelids off... is my voice calming you now, honey???

She's joking - Nate smiles.

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

Just breathe, Nate, while I whisper sweet nothings in your ear...

While we continue to watch the inside of the casino, Irene recounts the play-by-play:

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)

OK, so this was the plan:

As she talks white circles and arrows appear over the screen like John Madden at the Superbowl.

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)

(continuing)

Nate was going to count cards to four places so as to be as precise as possible. Madge and Maggie were going to follow his bets with no apparent rhyme or reason until they got to the bottom of the shoe and then they would hit 'em hard. Maggie had her camera pointed at the face down card.

I was responsible for coordinating everyone's movements and keeping track of the bank so that they wouldn't call for new chips more than 3 times. When we were down to the bottom of the shoe and knew that aces and tens would be popping out like wildflowers Rob and Clarice would jump in, load the table with cash and then we'd all skdattle.

(beat)

In addition, I had hired three strippers and one known pro and dressed them up in shiny outfits so that Frank, the dealers, and the Floorman would be distracted by the blinding white light emanating from the mammary glands of these nubile young maidens.

Three STRIPPERS and one HOOKER enter and take their respective places to distract the Floorman and Dealers. They just kinda shuffle around, a little prance here... a little prance there... kinda like targets in a penny arcade...

FRANK ENTERS JUST LIKE HE DID YESTERDAY

There are many other PLAYERS already playing - Frank mulls around between the tables.

Nate covers his face with his hand when Frank walks by so that Frank doesn't notice him.

Frank looks over at the Strippers and Hooker and raises his eyebrows with interest.

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)

(continuing)

Frank's cronies, Joey and Ronny, were playing at Johnny Walker Red's table so I knew that we'd just have to wait 'n see what they were up to.

INSERT SHOT OF RONNY AND JOEY PLAYING - A FEW OTHER MEN WHO BEAR UNCANNY RESEMBLANCES TO THEM TAKE SEATS AT THE SAME

TABLE. THEY'RE ALL DRESSED ALIKE AND LOOK LIKE BROTHERS.

MONTAGE OF

Nate, Madge and Maggie playing at one table, Robert and Clarice playing at another, Frank looking suspiciously at some players, and Joey and Ronny playing.

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)
(continuing)
Everything was going fine...
slowly but surely building up the
war-chest and moving in for the
big kill...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Irene scrutinizes the video monitors. She looks at one monitor and sees that Nate has amassed a few hundred thousand and the two ladies are right behind him.

Robert and Clarice are piling up their winnings as well as acting like idiots in order to draw attention to themselves.

Irene thinks for a beat then rewinds the digital camera back to Johnny Walker Red's table.

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)
And then it hit me:

IRENE
FUCK ME!
(beat)
I CAN'T FUCKING BELIEVE IT!!!

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)
There it was... plain as day...

AGAIN WHITE CIRCLES AND ARROWS APPEAR ON THE SCREEN CIRCLING THE FACES OF THE PLAYERS AT THE ADJACENT TABLE.

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)
(continuing)
Joey, Ronny, and... Archy...
Sammy... Mikey... Billy.... and
Richie... all of Frank's buds...
OK, so now it was perfectly clear
what was going on.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

THE REST OF THE SCENE OCCURS IN SLOW MOTION WITH SPORADIC WHITE CIRCLES DRAWN OVER THE PLAYERS BY IRENE

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)
Exhibit A, the shoe. For this
game - known as "The Cooler" -
somewhere in the vicinity of the
table there is a second shoe. And
voila...

CLOSE ON DISGUISED WOMAN WITH A HANDBAG THAT HAS A LARGE HOLE.

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)
(continuing)
A few distractions are needed to
switch the shoes but since both
Johnny the dealer and Frank the
pit boss are in on the play the
distractions should be minimal.

BEHIND NATE A STRIPPER (DRESSED JUST LIKE ONE OF IRENE'S
FLASHY STRIPPERS) "ACCIDENTLY" PULLS THE DRAWSTRING BEHIND
HER NECK THAT'S HOLDING HER DRESS TOGETHER.

THE DRESS QUICKLY SLINKS DOWN TO HER ANKLES AND THE STRIPPER
JUST STANDS NONCHALANTLY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CASINO BEHIND
WEARING ONLY HIGH HEELS.

STRIPPER
Darn! I hate when that happens.

Her perfectly shaped 100% tanned body quickly becomes the
center of attention.

Nate, Madge, Maggie and everyone else's eyes almost fall out
of their heads.

The Stripper finally bends down to pull her dress back up.

Frank makes a b-line towards her.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EYE IN THE SKY BOOTH - NIGHT

In their corner of the "Eye in the Sky" security booth, CHRIS
(30) and SHERMAN (22) man the monitors for Frank's blackjack
pit. Behind Sherman and Chris the rest of the SECURITY TEAM
MEMBERS man the monitors for their respective poker tables
and slot machines.

Chris has caught the Stripper on tape and is rewinding it.

CHRIS
Oh my lord!

SHERMAN
Play it again! Play it again!

Rewind - play - rewind - play...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Meanwhile, the Disguised Woman slips the loaded shoe to Joey at first base and then Johnny pushes the old shoe towards Joey then bends over in the other direction.

A WHITE CIRCLE APPEARS AROUND THE TWO SHOES AS JOEY SWITCHES THEM AND DUMPS THE TABLE'S SHOE OFF TO A WAITRESS WHO HIDES IT UNDER HER TRAY

WAITRESS

Cocktails? Cocktails?

And the Waitress is outta there with the old shoe.

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)

And that's that. All blackjacks. They just need to get as much money on the table as possible before the Floorman notices that they're robbing the casino blind.

Frank grabs the Stripper and points her towards the door.

FRANK

Excuse me, MA'AM... but that kinda behavior is unacceptable.

STRIPPER (smiling)

Sorry...

Maggie and Madge shake their heads in disbelief...

MADGE

Now I've seen it all...

MAGGIE

What a body! Now I know what I want for Christmas!

IRENE (V.O.)

Uh... can we concentrate on the game, please, ladies???

Frank shuffles off towards the other end of the casino. He passes Ivan, the floor manager.

FRANK

Hey I-man, I'm going for a smoke - cover for me - OK?

IVAN

I thought you quit...

FRANK
Old habits die hard...

IVAN
So I've been told, Frank...

Ivan's referring to Frank's cheating - not his smoking.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Irene watches Frank exiting.

IRENE
Uh... Angie, would you be so kind
as to keep Frank distracted
outside until I say so, please?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

ANGIE follows Frank out.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Suddenly Irene notices Richie on the monitor get up from Johnny Walker Red's table and head towards the men's room.

IRENE (frantically into mic)
Listen guys, you're on your own!!!
Sorry!!! Just kick some ass!!!

She throws down the headset and runs as fast as humanly possible out of the room.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Richie goes into the men's room.

Robert and Clarice are still hucking it up at the second table while Nate, Maggie and Madge are intensely playing but trying to remain calm, focused and inconspicuous. All of them look at each other queerly, wondering what happened to Irene.

CUT TO:

INT. EYE IN THE SKY BOOTH - NIGHT

Chris checks out some other Strippers - zooming in on their

cleavage when he can.

Sherman spots something in one of the monitors.

SHERMAN

Well there's a no-brainer.

CHRIS

Jeez, what the hell is Irene
Halloway doing in here??? She's
knows she can't play...

Sherman picks up the walkie talkie.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Ivan gets a beep in his ear.

SHERMAN (V.O.)

Hey Ivan, check this out. Two
o'clock: IRENE.

Ivan turns slightly to the right. He can't believe his eyes.

Irene storms in and careens towards the table with all of
Frank's cronies.

Ivan heads directly towards her.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Angie is snuggling up to Frank as seductively as possible
breathing heavily on his neck and caressing him all over.

Frank gets a beep in his ear.

SHERMAN (V.O.)

Frank, come in. Where are you?

Angie has Frank's full attention.

Finally Frank gets fed up. He pushes Angie away for a second
and talks into the mic in his sleeve.

FRANK

I told you bozos that I'm on break!

He rips out his earpiece and pulls Angie back towards him.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Nate's face drops when he spots Irene rushing into the casino. Something must be terribly wrong. Maggie, Madge, Rob and Clarice can't believe their eyes either.

Ivan tries to waylay Irene but she's determined. She makes a preemptive strike as they walk towards the table.

IRENE

You gotta trust me on this one, I.

IVAN

You know I can't let you play, Irene.

IRENE

Five dollar bets, if I go to ten you can throw me out.

IVAN

No can do, Irene. My wife just had a baby and I can't afford to lose this job.

IRENE

I'm going to make you a hero tonight, Ivan. Trust me.

She smiles at him knowingly and he understands that something is up.

IVAN

5 bucks.

IRENE

I'm not in it for the money, Ivan...

Irene slides into the empty seat just as Richie returns.

Ivan moves behind Johnny Walker Red to oversee the table.

RICHIE

What the fuck, Irene? I'm sittin' there!

IRENE

I see you standing THERE, Richie.

RICHIE

Move it, kid.

She glances over to get Ivan's support.

IVAN

You picked up your chips, sir, and didn't leave a divet. This is a free seat.

Archie, Ronny, Joey and even Johnny Walker Red are visibly upset by this intrusion.

JOHNNY

But...

Ivan just stares him down.

IVAN

Deal, please, Mister Rockefeller.

Richie and the boys know that they're fucked - there's nothing they can do about it. Richie leans in to speak to Irene without Ivan hearing.

RICHIE

I'm going to be waiting outside
for you and when you come out...

IRENE

"and you're gonna rip off my head
and shit down my neck" - yeah, I
remember, Shakespeare.

RICHIE

You just wait, Irene...

Richie stands back.

BILLY

Uh... I'd like to buy some chips...

Billy pulls out a wad of hundreds - Irene isn't impressed.

JOHNNY (loudly)

BUYING IN. FIFTY THOUSAND.

Johnny lays the money on table to display for the eye in the sky.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EYE IN THE SKY BOOTH - NIGHT

Sherman looks up at the monitor.

SHERMAN

Jeez, fifty thousand dollars...

CHRIS

That's more than we make in a
year...

SHERMAN

Combined!

CHRIS
Let's watch this guy...

CUT TO:

EXT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Frank finishes up outside with Angie.

ANGIE (sexy)
No Frank, I want more...

FRANK
Later!

He pushes her aside and goes back inside.

ANGIE
Frank, wait!

But he's gone.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Nate, Maggie and Madge continue to play and pile up their winnings.

Nate appears nervous and little tired - shakes his head to wake himself up.

Maggie looks worriedly at Madge but there's nothing they can do to perk up Nate and keep him calm and focused - that was Irene's job...

Back at the other table Johnny starts to deal and Billy has put all fifty thousand on this first hand - all of the other Players pile all their chips on the places in front of them.

Blackjacks all around.

Johnny gets a 17, pays off everyone at 3 to 2.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EYE IN THE SKY BOOTH - NIGHT

Chris notices what's just happened.

SHERMAN
Holy shit! The no limit table is going berserk!

CHRIS
Which one?

Sherman looks at Nate's table, then Johnny Walker Red's table.

SHERMAN

Both of them!

CHRIS

Where the fuck is Frank?

SHERMAN

Right there.

Sherman points to the monitor as we...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Frank reenters and heads towards Johnny Walker Red's table.

And he can't believe his fucking eyes. Starts to seethe when he recognizes Irene sitting in Richie's place but can't let Ivan know anything is up.

Meanwhile back at Nate's table Nate and the Ladies are racking up the chips... But Nate's getting more fatigued and nervous. The constant adding of numbers is taking its toll.

He starts to blink.

From the other side of the pit Ivan starts to stare at Nate.

Maggie sees this and thinks fast.

MAGGIE

Oh dear, wait a second, I think
you may have gotten something in
your eye...

Maggie slaps him - hard.

MAGGIE

(continuing)

There we go - I think I got it...

Nate caresses his jaw as the Dealer deals another hand. He tries to remember the count but he can't! He just sits there - dazed, squinting off into space.

Nate gets a 15, Maggie has a twenty and Madge has 18.

The Dealer has a 3 showing.

Nate is so spaced that he inadvertently makes the hit sign. He realizes that he's made a mistake but it's too late.

MADGE

What are you doing, son??!! I

mean...

The Dealer hits him and it's a 10 - BUSTED.

The Dealer then flips his hole-card and it's a 4 - he pulls a 10 and everyone loses except Maggie. If Nate hadn't fucked up everyone would have won.

MADGE

(continuing)

Maybe it's time for you to take a break, sonny...

Nate understands what she's saying. He puts a divet down on his spot.

MAGGIE

Don't worry, the table will still be here when you get back.

Irene has her face in her hands as she watches Nate get up from the table. She knows that everything has suddenly gone very wrong, that Nate has lost count - not to mention whatever money was just on the table - and the tally for the table may be lost for good.

Irene turns to Ivan and puts a divet down.

IRENE

Save my spot, please, Ivan. I'll be right back.

Frank moves to follow her out (and kill her).

FRANK

Me too, Ivan.

IVAN

Frank, if you move you're fired! Watch the table...

Frank heels, but then realizes that the whole deck will be out of whack if Johnny deals to 5 rather than 6 players.

FRANK

Uhhh... Ivan, it's time to tally the chips... Nelson, please tally.

Ivan looks at Frank queerly but goes along with it.

IVAN

Make it fast, Nelson!

Meanwhile Irene follows Nate outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Nate goes outside to catch his breath. Irene rushes up to him.

IRENE

It's OK, Nate.

NATE

No, it's not! I can't do this!
I'm not your guy! I can only do
it when you're talking to me, to
calm me down!

IRENE

You're doing fine, Nate... you
don't need me... you can do it on
your own...

NATE

I'm cracking up, I can't keep the
numbers straight...

IRENE

Maggie signaled me that it's plus
7 and Robert has the ace count.
Everything's fine.

NATE

I can't... the blinking - I'm
going to blow it for everyone...

IRENE

No, you're not. You're just going
to breathe. You can do it. I
know you can do it. Just breathe.

Nate takes a deep breath and looks into his own soul.

IRENE

(continuing)

Last night I showed you the stars
and tomorrow I'm going to show you
the most beautiful fish you've
ever seen. We're going diving in
Belize. I've already got the
tickets.

She kisses him on the cheek.

IRENE

(continuing)

I'll see you in a little bit.

The camera holds on Nate's determined face.

NATE

OK.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Nate walks back in, takes out his earpiece confidently and takes his seat back at the table. He's a new man.

Irene heads back to her seat.

Robert and Clarice move over to Nate's table and put large bets down.

The Dealer starts to deal.

Maggie has 13, Robert has two jacks, Madge has a blackjack, and Nate has 9.

The Dealer's face card is a ten.

Maggie sticks.

Robert splits and pulls another jack - he splits again. Fuckin' crazy. It's obviously stupid to split a twenty which can only be beat by one hand, a 21. Robert pulls another two jacks - and splits again - now has over a three-hundred grand on the table, which is fucking insane since the Dealer is showing a ten.

ROBERT

Split.

The Dealer raises his eyebrows.

Robert keeps his calm poker-face and says nothing.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Ivan inches suspiciously over to get a better look at Robert.

Frank follows Ivan towards Robert and Nate. Nate covers his face again so Frank doesn't recognize him.

FRANK

I think they're up to something,
Ivan.

IVAN

Shut it, Frank! I can see for
myself!

Robert has pulled two aces on the last two splits so he can split no more.

Irene's plan has worked perfectly and Robert is going to clear \$800,000 on a single hand.

Meanwhile Nate decides to act ballsy and doubles-down on his 9 - against the Dealer's up 10 card - this is more than risky.

Ivan arrives and can't believe his eyes - he becomes increasingly suspicious.

Frank stands behind Nate and Nate feels someone breathing down his neck. He makes the mistake of turning around and Frank recognizes Nate - the guy he beat up yesterday - now taking down the house!

Frank starts to fume. But Ivan's standing right next to him so Frank can't do anything.

FRANK

Uh... Ivan... can I have a word with you?

IVAN

Not now, Frank!

Nate pulls an ace for a total of 20 - not bad.

The Dealer exposes his hole card - the 6 - which plus his 10 showing makes 16, the worst hand possible.

He pulls a ten and busts.

Ivan looks over suspiciously at Frank who has turned his attention back towards Joey and Ronny's table.

All of Frank's friends have been "letting it ride" so each of them has 30 to 40 stacks of \$100 chips - probably about \$500,000 each - riding on this hand - except Irene who puts down a minimum bet of \$5.

Frank comes back over to Johnny's table:

FRANK'S POV: ALL OF THE BETS - MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN CONTRAST TO IRENE'S LOUSY FIVE BUCKS.

All of the Goombas look at Irene queerly as the hand is dealt.

IRENE

I dunno, guys... I guess I'm just not feeling lucky this hand...

Ivan moves behind Johnny Walker Red as he deals twenties and blackjacks to everyone.

Johnny has a 6 showing.

Frank stands behind Irene and whispers so that Ivan can't here.

FRANK

You're going to pay for this,
Irene...

Johnny is about to flip his card when Irene clears her
throat - she's not intimidated by Frank anymore.

IRENE

Split, please.

Irene pushes another \$5 chip forward.

JOHNNY

Excuse me?

Nobody can believe it. All of the Goombas start to mumble
threats at Irene - each card has been precisely placed in the
deck so that Johnny always busts and the players always win.
Frank's players have probably rehearsed the whole evening
down to the last card. By splitting, Irene is going to throw
the whole deck out of whack.

And all of Frank's money has already been bet against
Johnny's hand.

There's no possible rationale or justification for splitting
a 20 - an almost sure winner - against a 6 showing which is
almost a sure loser since the deal must hit on 16 and there's
more than a 33% chance that his hole-card is a ten.

FRANK

You don't want to do that - it's
a bad bet.

IVAN

The lady said she'd like to split
her 10s. Seems like there's some
kinda epidemic going on in this
pit tonight.

RONNY (to Irene)

Yeah, I heard about this
epidemic - it's called Bullet-in-
the-head-ness.

IRENE

I dunno... maybe I'm feeling kinda
lucky after all...

JOHNNY

It's a bet that could cost you
alot, Ma'am!

IVAN

Shut up and deal, Nelson.

Irene looks down at her \$10 and smiles at Ivan who now knows that something is up.

IRENE

Y'know, my mother used to always say, "it's only funny until somebody loses an eye..."

RONNY

A smart woman.

IRENE

And then it's fucking hysterical - isn't it, Frank?!

Frank is about to rip Irene's head off but Ivan clears his throat letting Frank know that it's time to heel.

Awkward beat.

IRENE

(continuing)

Now hit me.

IVAN

Deal, Nelson.

Johnny doesn't want to move his hands - he knows it's going to ruin the deck.

IVAN (to Johnny)

We don't have all night, Nelson.

ANGLE ON

Robert who collects his \$800,000 and NATE who collects his \$400,000.

Maggie and Madge each pull down a couple a hundred grand also.

ANGLE BACK ON

Johnny who gives Irene an ace and a 3 - that's 21 and 13.

Irene pauses for a moment and then hits on the 13.

A 10 - she busts. Everyone is kinda relieved.

Johnny turns his hole card over and it's a 10 - whew... the whole table breaths a collective sign of relief - most likely Johnny will bust.

Ivan grows more suspicious. All of the Goombas have all of their money on their bets - it's well over a million bucks.

Now that Johnny has a twelve he's pretty sure he's going to pull a ten and bust then Ivan will shut down the game but the

team will have cleared a cool mil.

But Irene has thrown the deck out of whack so nobody knows what card is going to come out next.

Frank comes up behind Ivan waits tensely.

Johnny pulls one card...

And it's a big fat 9!

21!

The goombas can't believe their eyes. They all lose all of their money - or rather, Frank's money.

Frank almost falls over - he's shaking violently, he can't believe his eyes.

Irene pushes on one hand but loses the other.

IRENE

Jeez fellas... SORRY...

Ivan has to nudge Johnny to collect the chips from the goombas - they're all broke and now have to leave the table.

Johnny hesitantly starts to wipe all of the chips off the table while the Goombas start to get up while giving extremely menacing looks to Irene.

Irene turns back to Johnny Walker Red.

IRENE

(continuing)

Hey, I pushed on that hand, cheapskate.

UN-FUCKING-BELIEVABLE! Not only did she ruin the table for everyone, now she wants to collect on her \$5 bet! Frank just stands there delirious, fuming, blood rising to his face. Johnny can't believe his ears - he laughs nervously.

JOHNNY

You must be joking.

Irene looks at Ivan for reassurance.

IRENE

Do I fucking look like I'm joking, Johnny???

IVAN (to Johnny)

Johnny? Who's Johnny? Pay the lady, Mister Rockefeller!

In SLOW MOTION Johnny Walker Red tosses one FIVE DOLLAR CHIP

to Irene.

IRENE

Thanks.

Irene turns to the Frank who is still standing frozen, seething with anger, ready to explode and kill someone.

IRENE

(continuing)

Well, I've gotta cash my CHIP in.

Irene holds up her winnings - one chip - and smiles.

Frank can't take it anymore - FOLLOWING THE SAME TRAJECTORY AS THE SINGLE FIVE DOLLAR CHIP - good ol' Frank leaps over the table and attacks Irene, throttling her neck with both hands.

Ivan rushes over and starts to pull Frank off of Irene.

But then ten huge SECURITY GUARDS suddenly swarm around Frank, Ronny, Joey, and the boys and it's a melee.

Two SECURITY GUARDS pull Frank off of Irene - with great difficulty.

And two POLICEMEN approach Ivan.

IVAN

Everything is under control, officers.

POLICEMAN

This woman is coming with us.

IVAN

But...

POLICEMAN

There's an outstanding warrant for her arrest.

POLICEMAN 2

You're lucky she didn't take the whole casino down tonight.

IVAN

With five dollar bets???

POLICEMAN

She's very patient.

FRANK

I'm going to kill you, Irene!

IVAN

Can it, Frank!
(to Security Guards)
I want all these guys in the
backroom now!

GUARD
Even Frank?

IVAN
In particular, Frank!

The Security Guards start to drag Frank and his cronies
towards the backroom.

POLICEMAN (to Irene)
C'mon, let's go, Ma'am.

POLICEMAN 2
Don't make us get rough with you...

The Policemen handcuff Irene and drag her off.

ANGLE ON NATE, ROBERT, CLARICE, MAGGIE AND MADGE as well as
the rest of the gamblers who are watching Irene get escorted
out by the police and Frank being escorted away by security.

Maggie tries to ease the tension with a joke.

MAGGIE
Seems like some women can't handle
their alcohol...

Nate is visibly worried - actually he's totally freaking
out... everything has apparently gone to shit.

Robert and Clarice try to calm him down.

CLARICE
Are you alright, baby?

Nate looks at the shoe and there's only about 30 cards
left - this is the moment they've been waiting for. It's
make-it or break-it time, there's no turning back now.

Out of nowhere Nate starts to hear the voice of an angel.

IRENE (V.O., softly)
You can do it, Nate...

Robert, Clarice, Maggie and Madge wait for him to regain his
composure.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. EYE IN THE SKY BOOTH - NIGHT

Sherman and Chris have seen everything via the monitors and

Chris is single framing Frank flying through the air over the blackjack table.

As Chris stops on Frank looking like Superman, Ivan enters, furious.

IVAN

Consider this your last shift! I don't know how either of you retards got this job but you couldn't tell a cheater if he came up to you and kissed you on the lips!

CHRIS

For minimum wage I may as well go back to airport security - the food is better!

Ivan catches a glimpse of Nate in the monitor - he's staring up directly into the camera like a deer caught in the headlights.

Ivan runs out.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Nate stares up at the ceiling listening to the voices.

IRENE (V.O.)

You can do it, Nate... you can do it... just breathe, Nate...

Nate starts to look around, thinking that he's going insane.

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

Just breathe, darling, just breathe...

And then Nate fishes in his pocket and finds his earpiece - he looks at it queerly for a second then puts it in his ear.

CUT TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Irene sits at the microphone.

IRENE

Just think, Nate, we're going diving in Belize in less than 48 hours...

Having just dropped off Irene, the Policemen are grabbing

beers out of the mini-bar.

She turns to them and throws them each an envelope.

IRENE
(continuing)
Thanks, guys.

POLICEMAN
Any time, Irene.

They exit and Irene single-frames Maggie's camera looking for the Dealer's hole card.

IRENE
I don't have the hole card but it
doesn't matter... just play, Nate,
do your thing...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Nate antes up and all of the other players breathe a light sigh of relief - Nate is back on board.

But Ivan comes back out, heads straight over to Nate and taps him on the shoulder so that he has to turn away from the cards as they're being dealt.

IVAN
Good evening, sir, I just want to
make sure you're enjoying your
stay at the hotel.

He sizes Nate up, tries to look in his ear for a hearing device. He's almost dancing around Nate, from side to side.

NATE (nervously)
Not now, I'm right in the middle
of the hand.

But it's too late - the Dealer has already dealt...

Nate quickly pulls the earpiece out while Ivan is on the other side of him. Nate is completely freaking out - he has almost certainly lost count amidst all the confusion.

THE DEALER IS SHOWING A 10.

IVAN
I just wanted to give you some
vouchers to our Platinum
Presidents Club Breakfast Buffet
in case you get hungry...

Ivan is continuing to distract Nate, dancing around him to

try to figure out what the hell is going on.

Even Clarice, Rob, Maggie and Madge are starting to look really worried.

Nate blinks and Ivan looks at him suspiciously.

Uh-oh... is Nate going to lose it again???

IVAN

(continuing)

And this coupon here is good for
15% off in our Silver Elite Gift
Shop and Travel Agency...

Nate can't take it anymore.

NATE

Excuse me, but did I not tell you
to fuck off???

Ivan peaks over Nate's shoulder and sees that the Dealer is about to check his hole card.

All of the players have twenties so if the Dealer's hole card is an Ace then they all lose all of their money.

IRENE (V.O.)

NOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

All of the people with Irene's earpieces surrounding the table wince in deafening pain.

And even Ivan has heard Irene's resounding outcry through leakage in the players' earpieces.

IVAN

What was that?

Nate looks like a deer caught in the headlights - petrified.

THERE'S DEAD SILENCE

AS IVAN THINKS AND TRIES TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON - IS THIS ANOTHER PART OF FRANK'S SCAM?

THE CAMERA MOVES IN SLOW MOTION AS THE DEALER MOVES THE HOLE CARD TOWARDS THE SLOT TO SEE IF IT'S AN ACE

IVAN LOOKS DOWN AND QUICKLY ADDS UP THE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF BETS ON THE TABLE

THE HOLE CARD MOVES MILLIMETER BY MILLIMETER TOWARDS THE SLOT...

NATE, ROB, CLARICE, MADGE, AND MAGGIE ARE SWEATING BULLETS - THEY COULD LOSE ALL THE MONEY IN THE NEXT 3 SECONDS.

IVAN
(continuing)
NOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Suddenly Ivan lunges towards the table and the frame
FREEZES...

IRENE (V.O. TO AUDIENCE)
And that was that. Ivan shut the
whole table down - some excuse
about I dunno what... he let us
take back our bets but then he
scrutinized everyone when they
went to cash in their chips.
(beat)
Oh yeah... the hole card?
(beat)
Well, y'know, sometimes you're
better off not knowing...

The camera moves in on the frozen image of the Dealer's hands
one millimeter away from finding out whether or not the hole
card was an ace or not. Will we ever know????

CUT BACK TO:

INT. IRENE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Irene is on the balcony smoking a cigarette - thinking - when
Maggie and Madge enter and dump their winnings on the table.

IRENE
Nice work, guys... nice work.
Help yourselves to some drinks...

Irene tosses her single five dollar chip to Maggie who
catches it and smiles widely.

IRENE
(continuing)
I didn't have time to cash it in.
I guess you can go back tomorrow...

MAGGIE
Sure, kid...

Robert and Clarice enter - they're pooped, lifeless - no more
energy. They're peeling off their costumes as they enter.

Robert dumps another half million dollars on the table.

IRENE
Where's Nate?

CLARICE
Ivan was asking him a few

questions when we cashed out...

IRENE

Listen guys, clean up this mess,
return all the equipment to those
shops and divvy up the money.
I'll be right back...

Irene exits as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. IRENE'S HOTEL - NIGHT

Irene exits the hotel and crosses the street. As she approaches the front door of the MGM Grand the POLICE are bringing out Frank and his friends in handcuffs.

She tries to cover her face with her hand and turn away so that he doesn't recognize her but it's too late.

FRANK

YOU FUCKING BITCH! I KNEW IT WAS
YOU! YOU'RE RUINED. Irene...
when I get out the first thing I'm
going to do is find you and...

He lunges for her and two POLICE OFFICERS pull him back.

She heads cautiously into the casino.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Irene enters and looks around frantically. She heads towards the cashier as inconspicuously as possible.

She spots Ivan interrogating Nate who looks extremely nervous - he's blinking and wincing and it looks like he could blow the whole thing.

Irene takes a deep breath and waits - she knows that if Ivan spots her then they'll all end up in jail.

Nate spots Irene. She smiles lovingly at him, then blows him a kiss - he smiles and then turns back to Ivan, composed.

Finally Ivan frowns and hands Nate a few stacks of tightly wound hundred dollar bills.

Irene ducks out - relieved.

CUT TO:

EXT. MGM GRAND HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

Nate exits and Irene comes up behind him.

IRENE

Don't turn around.

She walks behind him as if they're not together - in case anyone is following them.

IRENE

(continuing)

You were great. See you back at the hotel.

She breaks off and Nate continues on.

IRENE (V.O.)

So that was that... a little rough around the edges but I guess all's well that ends well...

FADE OUT

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing; beat)

We split up the money and went our separate ways - kinda like bank robbers in the wild wild west...

FADE IN

INSERT SHOT OF THOUSANDS OF TINY FACES OF BANKERS

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

However, Rob's little stock tip to his two friends didn't work so well... because we only cleared about 3.5 million there was no fluctuation in the stock. But MGM did notice a large number of shorts coincidentally due that Friday and started an investigation of their own...

THE TINY FACES BECOME 256, THEN 16, THEN 4, THEN...

2: ROBERT AND CLARICE.

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

So while everyone else was basking in the sun someplace, Rob and Clarice got nailed by the SEC and

ended-up in Club Fed.

INSERT SHOTS OF ROBERT AND CLARICE CRYING WHILE HAVING THEIR MUGSHOTS TAKEN AND BEING LOCKED INTO SEPARATE CELLS IN A FEDERAL PENITENTIARY.

THE PRISON DOORS SLAM LOUDLY ON THEM: CLANK! CLANK!

IRENE (V.O.)
(continuing)

But being the Ivy-Leaguers that they were, Rob and Clarice quickly folded just like they teach you in Business Ethics and Personal Integrity 101 and recounted the entire story of Irene-Nate-Madge-Maggie-Frank and Alice's Restaurant in 4 part harmony.

INSERT SHOTS OF ROBERT AND CLARICE SIGNING AFFIDAVITS

THE PRISON DOORS OPEN SOFTLY ON THEM AND - THEY HUG JOYOUSLY WHEN THEY ARE REUNITED.

IRENE (V.O.)
(continuing)

Seeing how easy it was for Rob and Clarice to get out, the feds figured they should focus on finding Frank and his cronies since most of them jumped bail.

So while Maggie and Madge were tending their garden on their ranch next to Harrison Ford's in Wyoming...

INSERT SHOT OF EMPTY GARDEN AT RANCH - WE GO INSIDE TO SEE MAGGIE AND MADGE IN POST-COITAL BLISS SMOKING A DOOBIE IN BED

IRENE (V.O.)
(continuing)

Frank finally tracked Nate and me down to Belize where we were getting our diving certificates.

INSERT SHOT OF NATE AND IRENE SCUBA DIVING - THEY KISS UNDERWATER

INSERT SHOT OF NATE AND IRENE SLEEPING BLISSFULLY

FRANK ENTERS THEIR HOTEL ROOM CARRYING HIS PISTOL

CUT TO:

EXT. BELIZE HOTEL - DAWN

Frank pushes Nate and Irene who are both handcuffed towards the dock in back of the hotel.

IRENE (V.O.)

And I guess that kinda brings us up to speed...

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. FISHING TRAWLER - DAY

Irene and Nate are still lying face down with their hands behind their backs.

Frank is at the other end of the boat looking out for the sharks.

NATE

Twenty-seven.

IRENE

What's twenty-seven?

NATE

That's how many steps he takes every time he goes to the front of the boat and back.

IRENE

Yeah? So?

NATE

We're going to play high-low.

IRENE

High-low?

NATE

When he takes step 25 he'll be right in front of the anchor. You hit him high and I'll hit him low. When he grabs onto the anchor... well...

FRANK (V.O.)

Shut the fuck up, Chumley! We're here.

Frank shuts off the engine, pulls out his gun and starts to move in with a big mean smile to finish off Nate.

Irene is nervous as Frank steps towards Nate.

Nate counts his steps.

NATE

Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen...

Irene watches Nate's lips as he mouths the next numbers.

FRANK

Say your prayers...

Frank approaches them.

Nate and Irene look at each other and then...

NATE

NOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Nate whirls his legs around and kicks Frank as hard as possible in the knees sending him towards Irene who...

Kicks Frank from the opposite direction in the ankles.

BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM!!!

Frank inadvertently squeezes the trigger firing all the rounds of his gun up into the air as he tries to regain his balance.

But he can't.

Instead he comes crashing down onto the anchor which detaches and goes spinning off into the water.

Along with Frank who's holding on for dear life.

JAWS MUSIC RISES

Frank's hands rise up and grab the side of the boat for a moment but he gets yanked back into the ocean by a shark.

Irene and Nate watch Frank's hands gripping on for dear life as he becomes the shark's lunch.

Off we hear some gnawing and Frank's gasps as his bones are crushed like popcorn shrimp at Mardi Gras.

JAWS MUSIC FADES

Nate and Irene regain their composesures. They smile at each other then squirm over to each other to kiss...

A HELICOPTER swarms overhead.

VOICE OFF

This is the FBI. Stop the boat
and put your hands up where we can
see them...

Both of them hold their handcuffs up in plain sight...

IRENE (V.O.)

OK then... Nate's not dead yet and
I'm not dead yet... And my old
chum Frank got what was coming to
him...

(beat)

The FBI was looking for Frank, not
us, so we were free to go...

INSERT SHOT OF FBI TAKING THE HANDCUFFS OFF IRENE AND NATE
AND LETTING THEM GO.

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

... and live happily ever after...
in our little log cabin...

INSERT SHOT OF IRENE AND NATE - INVETERATE GAMBLERS - PLAYING
BLACKJACK AT THE MOST THE ASTONISHING CASINO IN THE WORLD

AS THE FINAL MUSIC RISES...

INSERT SLOW MOTION FLASHBACK OF THE DEALER SLOWLY INSERTING
HOLE CARD INTO THE CHECK SLOT

IRENE (V.O.)

(continuing)

Oh yeah, the hole card? Truth be
told, some things really are
better off not knowing...

INSERT SHOT OF DEALER SLOWLY TURNING OVER THE HOLE CARD...

IT WAS AN ACE, BLACKJACK!

Irene and Nate would've lost everything if Ivan hadn't
stopped the game.

FADE OUT

The end

