

DEAL

By
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DEAL

BY

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EXT. NEVADA DESERT - NIGHT

Driving I-15 north through the dark and starry desert to
Laaaaaaaas Vegas:

DALE (O.S.)

So my buddy in Detroit, Phil Roselli,
Who's the smartest guy I know--

MIKE (O.S.)

I thought I was the smartest guy you
know?

DALE (O.S.)

OK, Phil Roselli, the second smartest--

MIKE (O.S.)

Whadabout you? Don't you know you?

DALE (O.S.)

Phil Roselli, the third--

MIKE (O.S.)

Y'puttin' y'self first or second?

DALE (O.S.)

Second, a course...

INT. CAR -

We can actually hear big, satisfying gulps from the J.D.
bottle in Mike's hand.

DALE

Anyway, Phil Roselli, after bummin'
'round for years an' years finally
decides to settle down--

MIKE

Oh gawd!

DALE

--an' decides to go to law school.

MIKE

OH GAWD!!

DALE

During the summer he has to do a summer internship in the public defender's office. So one day he's sittin' in the courtroom, like a spectator or somethin', an some ollllllld, grizzly...y'know...old black guy is facing the judge. An' the judge goes, "Ok Mr. Funches--by the way sir, how do you spell your last name?"

(old black man's voice)

"Uhhhhhhhhh...F...uuuuuuuuu...nnnnnn
...uh...F-u-n...f-u-n-c-h-e-s..."
An' the judge goes: "Wait sir, are you telling us your name is Mr. Funfunches, or Mr. Funches?" "Uhhhhh
...Mr. Funches sir." "Ok Mr. Funches. You say you went to traffic school. When did you go to traffic school?" "Uhhhhh--I don'ts rightslys recalls sir." "You can't remember when you went to traffic school?" "Well, I'ze believes it was the twelf sir." "The twelfth ... the twelfth ..."
"Yes sir." "The twelfth of what month sir?"

Ricardo and Mike burst out with giggles.

DALE (CONT'D)

"Well I don'ts rightly knows sir, but I knows it was the twelf." An' Roselli lost it! He fuckin' laughed his fuckin' head off! He hadta run outta the courtroom before the judge could admonish him ... Ok. So this old geezer goes to the confessional--

RICARDO

Black guy?

DALE

No, white guy. This old, old guy hobbles into the confessional and says: "Father, last night I had stinky, grimy, sweaty, filthy, raunchy sex with an eighteen year old girl." An' the father says: "Oh my! Ok, do 10 Hail Marys an' you'll be absolved of your sin." An' the ol' guy goes: "Father, I can't do that."

DALE (CONT'D)

"Why not?" "Because I'm Jewish."
 An' the Father goes: "Then why
 y'tellin' me?!" An' the old guy
 goes: "Hell! I'm tellin' everybody!"

INT. CAR - ENTERING VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

ELVIS BLASTS:

DALE/MIKE/RICARDO

...so Viva Las Vegas! Viva Las Vegas!
 Vivaaaaaaaa...Vivaaaaaaaa...Las
 Vegaaaaaaaaassssssssssssss!!!!!!

MIKE

YEAH!!

He downs the rest of a liter of J.D. The tape is Dale's,
 and it plays one song over and over again:

ELVIS/DALE/MIKE/RICARDO

Bright light city gonna set my soul
 gonna set my soul on fire! Gotta
 whole lotta money that's ready to
 burn so set those stakes up higher!

INT. CAESARS PALACE MAIN CASINO - \$5 BLACK JACK TABLE - WEE
 MORNING HOURS

The guys are at a full table, Mike at third base, as usual,
 though he seems to be snoozing. As the dealer deals the
 rest of the table listens, giggles:

DALE

So this farmer has a brown cow an' a
 white cow. An' he decides to get a
 bull and stud him out. So he says
 to his son: "Son, go out an' keep an
 eye on the bull, an' if he fucks the
 brown cow or the white cow, you run
 back an' tell me." An' the son goes:
 "Ok," an' scampers off.

Dale passes on his 19 against a 5, and it's now Mike's turn,
 but he's asleep, his slobbery chin bobbin' on his chest.

PATRICK THE DEALER

Mike?

DALE

Mike!!

Mike kinda wakes up, mumbles some gibberish.

Dale sees he's got a 20, so he takes Mike's limp, sleepy hand and waves the pass sign over the chips.

DALE

Mike passes Patrick.

Patrick the dealer busts, pays the table and deals another hand from the shoe.

FIRST BASE

So the farmer has the bull...

DALE

Yeah. So the son's out watchin' the cows and in the meantime the priest comes over for a visit. An' right in the middle of the tea, the son comes rushin' in and yells: "Pa! Pa! The bull just fucked the white cow!!" An' the priest looks all shocked an' the farmer takes his son to the side an' says: "Son, son, the priest is here an' we can't use that kinda language 'round 'im. Tell ya what: instead of saying that, let's say ...'surprise.' If the bull fucks a cow, you tell me the bull 'surprised' the cow." "Like a code right daddy?" "That's right son." So the son goes out an a little while later he comes racing back in. "Pa! Pa! Guess what happened!" An' the priest turns to the boy, an' the farmer turns to the boy, an' the farmer says: "Did the bull surprise the brown cow now?" "He sure did he FUCKED the WHITE one again!!"

Once again the play has reached Mike:

PATRICK THE DEALER

Mike?

MIKE

Ppppppppppppasssssssssssssss ...

Everyone looks at Mike's cards.

PATRICK THE DEALER

You have 10 sir.

MIKE

Ppppppppppasssssssssssss ...

PATRICK THE DEALER

Mike, you have 10.

DALE/TABLE

You got 10!!

MIKE

Ppppppppppasssssssssssss ...

PATRICK THE DEALER

I'm giving you a card Mike.

Everyone laughs as he does. Patrick busts, everyone cheers, and Patrick starts paying. Dale jumps up and high fives everyone:

DALE

THE HAPPY TABLE!!!

TABLE

THE HAPPY TABLE!!!!

Mike FALLS off his chair then immediately JUMPS up and faces everyone:

MIKE

Whoa.

PATRICK THE DEALER

I think Mike it's time for you to go to bed.

Mike turns to Dale and Ricardo:

MIKE

I'm sorry guy's I just gotta...I jus' gotta...

DALE/RICARDO

Go! Go!

MIKE

Can y'play without me?

DALE

It's ok go, go ...

Mike collects his chips and bumps off a few slot machines as he wanders to the room, his precious J.D. firm in his greedy, protective hand.

FIRST BASE

Funny thing is, he was winning.

DALE

Hale! He's 500 up!

PIT BOSS

Five forty...

INT. BINION'S POKER ROOM - DAY

There they are, all the greats: Johnny "The Yellow Scourge" Chan. Brunson. Reese. At the last table of the No Limit Hold Em World Series Championship of Poker. TV cameras zoom in on every card, every bet. A huge crowd watches silently, fearful of disturbing these great mental athletes.

In the crowd the guys watch too. They watch Chan push a mountain of chips in the pot. Brunson studies Chan. The dealer has checked the bet:

DEALER

Six hundred thousand.

Brunson looks at the pot. Then he pushes in \$600,000, plus all the rest of his chips. The crowd audibly gasps. Unger tosses in his cards. Others fold. It's now to Chan.

DEALER (CONT'D)

Bumps it five hundred thousand.
He's all in.

Chan as usual leans aggressively over the pot. His face is grim, determined, all business. He pushes in half a million bucks and calls. The crowd gasps again.

Chan shows. Brunson looks. Doesn't show. He tosses his cards. Stands. Nods to Chan. To the dealer. And walks away. To THUNDEROUS applause from the crowd. Brunson has the style to turn and wave slightly to the crowd.

INT. BINION'S BAR - LATER

The guys lean against the bar, stunned. Mike pushes himself off the rail, faces Dale and Ricardo. He's never been more serious in his life:

MIKE

Some...fuckin'...day...we're gonna
play in The World Series of Fuckin'
Poker!

INT. CAESARS PALACE MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - LATE NIGHT

The pit boss hands Mike a marker for his signature.

PIT BOSS

That's your limit sir.

MIKE

Yeah yeah I know I know.

The dealer pushes \$1000 to him. Dale and Ricardo stand behind Mike at third. Huddle:

RICARDO

We really gotta get going if we're gonna make work.

MIKE

WhadamI gonna do? I'm down two thou an' can't cover. Y'guys go. I'll call in sick, take the bus or somethin'.

INT. CAESARS \$5 TABLE - AN HOUR LATER

The dealer pays Mike a couple of hundred bucks. Ricardo scoots up, nervous as hell, holds up his hands like, "well?"

DALE

He's doin' ok. Needs 'bout a thou more to get even.

Insert - Mike's hand: two 3s. He's let the bet ride, has about \$500 out there. The dealer shows a 5.

When the play comes to Mike he pushes another \$500 out for the split. Dale and Ricardo gasp. The \$5 table shuts up.

8 on the first 3. Mike pushes out another \$500 for the double, cool as an olive in a martini. He takes a steady drink. Players hold their glasses in mid-drink. The pit boss hovers over Mike.

4 on the 11 for a fucked 15. 7 on the other 3.

Everyone looks at Mike's chips. Only two black remain. He looks back to Dale who is staring, stunned white.

Dale hesitates just a moment, then in a zombie trance hands over 3 bills. Mike pushes it out for the double. The dealer changes the cash, stacks the 5 blacks next to the other, then gives Mike a 3 for a fucked 13.

The dealer turns over an Ace: 6 or 16. 6...2...

Dale and Ricardo watch in stunned terror--

...2...6 BUST.

DALE (CONT'D)
YES!!!!!!!!!!!!

The entire table SCREAMS. Dale dances his big, wobbly, blubbery form around the table.

DALE (CONT'D)
YES!! YES!! YES!! YES!!!!

TABLE
Well done!! Way to go!!!

Mike quietly and coolly turns to the pit boss:

MIKE
I'd like to take down my markers
please.

INT. OFFICE - MONDAY MORNING

Mike is the lowly 27 year old mail boy at the evil cosmodemonic office corporation, standing with his stupid little mail cart at Dale's evil, cosmodemonic cubicle. Dale is a lowly, puny clerk. Ricardo is the pitiful computer tech who's lived in Dilbertowne for 10 million years.

DALE
An' the amazing thing is we all won!

That NEVER happens!

JANET walks up.

MIKE
Whoooooooooooo are fuckin' youuuuuuuuuu?

She was going to stop but now looks totally shocked and baffled and wanders past them.

MIKE (CONT'D)
See the gamoobas on that one!

RICARDO
That's Janet. Barbie's new secretary.
I installed her computer today...
(yuk yuk)
Under her desk...

INT. MIKE'S '71 VW VAN - NIGHT

They're driving 405 south, Ricardo in back, on the bed. He looks at all the clothes hanging from a make-shift rack. He looks at Mike's little piss jar, half full with piss sloshing around. He looks at Mike's extra shoes near the piss jar. It's Mike's tiny mobile home.

INT. HOLLYWOOD PARK POKER ROOM - NIGHT

The guys play at different tables.

Mike: 3-6, 7 stud. Stacks of chips in front. He hauls in another pot.

Ricardo: 1-2, hold em. Who knows what he's doing?

Dale: 3-6, hold em. Dale gets called, shows his hand. He watches as the dealer pushes all the chips to another player, again.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD PARK POKER PALACE - WEE MORNING HOURS

The guys mope to Mike's van.

DALE

...two...

MIKE

That still leaves your Vegas.

DALE

That's on top of ALL my Vegas.

MIKE

Fuuuuuuuuck... How'd y'do?

RICARDO

I won.

DALE

Y'didn't win.

RICARDO

Well...I...

DALE

He didn't fuckin' win! He does this every fuckin' time.

RICARDO

Well...I was winning...

MIKE

Retardo, y'got more money now than when you came, or y'got less?

DALE

He didn't win I'm tellin' ya he didn't win.

RICARDO

Less.

MIKE

How much less?

RICARDO

'Hundred.

MIKE

Then y'didn't fuckin' win whadaya talkin' 'bout?!

DALE

He does this every fuckin time ...

RICARDO

I WAS winning but there was this One guy--

DALE

Jus' fugetit Retardo jus' fuckin' fugetit.

MIKE

I won.

DALE/RICARDO

You always win!!

INT. JANET'S COSMODEMONIC CUBICLE - DAY

MIKE

So, we're goin' ta Vegas this weekend.

JANET

You guys always go to Vegas.

MIKE

Why don't you come along?

JANET

Maybe.

MIKE

Really?

JANET

Any other girls going up?

MIKE

Maybe...

JANET

Why don't you have a girlfriend?

MIKE

Believe me, I'm trying...Hey, y'know what? I gotta van here with a bed in back. On lunch hour y'wanna go up, have a little J.D., get messy?

JANET

Now I'm for sure not goin' to Vegas.

INT. DALE'S TORMENTING CUBICLE - DUSK

JANET

Mike asked me to go to Vegas with you guys.

DALE

Great!

JANET

Well...do you want me to go?

DALE

Of course! I'd love it!

JANET

You would?

INT. DALE'S CUBICLE - NIGHT

Dale and Janet talk quietly and intimately after hours. The office is dark but for Dale's little light at his skimpy, vile, sick cubicle.

INT. HOLLYWOOD PARK POKER ROOM - NIGHT

Mike plays 5-10 hold em. There's a king sitting on the flop, nohelp on 4th street.

A player bets \$10. Others fold. Mike raises 10. Bettor calls.

River: king.

Bettor looks to Mike. Checks. Instantly Mike hurls in \$10. The sap calls. Mike turns over cowboys. The table ooohs, aaaahs, whistles at his four of a kind. The bettor doesn't even show.

Mike stacks the chips on an already high city of towers.

INT. HOLLYWOOD PARK POKER ROOM - PAY PHONES - NIGHT

DALE'S MACHINE (O.S.)

...leave a message or just send money.
BEEEEEEEP.

MIKE

Where the fuck' r'you I'm at the
Park this is my THIRD message if you
fucuses went to Vegas without me
I'll kill ya!

INT. JANET'S LIVING ROOM -

They sit on her couch. She shows him snapshots.

JANET

That's when I was 17. And...

DALE

...mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm...

JANET

...that's my last boyfriend...

DALE

The guy who just dumped you?

She nods.

DALE (CONT'D)

He's got Popeye arms!

JANET

He's a drummer.

INT. JANET'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dale tosses and turns on Janet's couch with a pillow and
blanket. This has never happened to him before!

INT. DALE'S VINDICTIVE CUBICLE - DAY

Mike with his stupid little mail cart. Ricardo pants like a
hyena nearby.

MIKE

At HER place?!

DALE

Yeah. But jus' on the couch. We
didn't do anything. Anyway, she's
coming to Vegas.

MIKE

But now she's after you! How can
she take YOU over ME?!

Just then Janet walks up.

MIKE (CONT'D)

How can you take HIM over ME?!

JANET

If you had one redeeming quality besides your skin I might be interested in you. But you have none.

INT. DALE'S CAR - ENTERING VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

ELVIS(O.S.)/DALE/MIKE/RICARDO/JANET

...even if there were 40 more I wouldn't stay a minute away!!

INT. CAESARS PALACE ROMAN TOWER ROOM - NIGHT

Janet dances naked in front of the big mirror in the room to a pop song. Despite being an office worker she's got a damn hot figure.

INT. MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE -

MIKE

Have y'poked her yet?

DALE

No.

MIKE

Well where the fuck is she?!

DALE

She says to leave her alone. She wants to dance in front of the mirror.

MIKE

Whatever...

He turns to a fairly attractive girl next to him who they've obviously already been flirting with.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Texas)

So Cat, you're from Texas. Y'got thar horses an' them thar cattle an' olllllll that? Cowpoke?

CAT

Suuuuuuuuure Pardner. Oil wells too!!

Mike whistles "The Yellow Rose of Texas."

CAT (CONT'D)

So what do you do cowpoke?

MIKE

Oh, I work at a large music company
in LA. I'm a Vice President in the
A & R department. I sign the bands.

INT. CAESARS ROMAN TOWER ROOM - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dale, Ricardo, Mike and Cat at the door.

CAT

Cat's comin', meow!

DALE

My fuckin' key doesn't work.

Mike tries his card key. It doesn't work either. He knocks.
Cat kisses Mike on the neck. Really sucks his blood. Dale
knocks.

DALE (CONT'D)

Janet...

CAT

Hey! Let's git some FraU Angelico!
Y'ever have FraU Angelico?!

MIKE

My mammy's teets flowed with Fra
Angelico cowgirlllllllllll!

The door cracks. Dale whispers to Janet.

DALE

Mike's picked up a girl.

JANET

(sleepy)
No kidding. I can hear her.

She opens the door and they all pile in.

CAT

Cat's comin', meow...Oh, we woke
y'up cowgirl!

MIKE

Little filly.

CAT

Leeeetle filly!

INT. CAESARS ROMAN TOWER ROOM - LATER

The lights are off. Ricardo lays on the couch. Janet and Dale share one double bed, acting like they're asleep, arm in arm. Cat sits on the edge of Mike's bed. He lays next to her. She sips some Fra Angelico.

MIKE

(whispers)

Cat believe me y'can go I don't wantchya to do anything y'don't wanna do...Didn'tchya come here with some guy anyway?

CAT

Fuget'im. He's just some ol' guy, a friend a my dad.

MIKE

Well, like I say, everything's cool. I'd love it if you stayed, but if you think y'better go, ok, that's cool.

CAT

Will you kiss me?

MIKE

Where? Just kiddin'. A course I'll kiss you.

Mike kisses Cat on the ears, then moves to her lips. Cat leans into him, then lays on him, and they start making out, taking off each other's clothes.

CAT

There's another thing.

MIKE

What?

CAT

Well, it might hurt.

MIKE

What?

CAT

I had an abortion the other day.

Angle: Janet and Dale's eyes explode open WIDE.

MIKE

Yeah..?

CAT

Well, that might bother some guys.

MIKE

Shiiiiiiiiit, I don't care...cowgirl.
Jus' so long it daren't hurts youuuuu.

ANGLE: Janet and Dale giggle.

ANGLE: Ricardo on the couch pokes his ears out of the blanket.

Mike and Cat start fucking, and Cat's a moaner, like those girls in pornos.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Shish shish shish shish shish...

CAT

Mmmmmmmmmmmohhhhhhhhhhhhyeahhhhhhhmm
mmmmmmmm...

ANGLE: Janet moans quietly to Dale, rubs her ass on his dick.

MIKE

Shishhhhhhhhh hon...y'ok?

CAT

You are totally hot an' don't tell
me nobody's ever told y'that before
mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmahhhhhhhhhhyeahhhhhhh...

ANGLE: Janet and Dale fuck silently.

ANGLE: Ricardo pokes his ears out of the blanket, wondering if what he thinks is going on is really going on.

EXT. CAESARS POOL - DAY

Mike leaves Dale, Janet and Ricardo to recover by the pool.

INT. HALLWAY - DOOR -

It cracks open:

MIKE

Where's your boyfriend?

Cat opens the door.

CAT

Gambling. An' he ain't my boyfriend.

They immediately kiss. Mike pulls down her top.

CAT (CONT'D)

We better go to your room.

INT. CAESARS BACHANAL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Everyone's dressed to the nines at this oasis of antiquity splendor recreating the ancient Roman Emperor feasts. Veiled virgins clink copper castanets by a babbling pool to harps and flutes. In high, long, arcing streams a beautiful pourer fills their goblets with the nectar of Bacchus himself. Another rubs Ricardo's head and neck, pressing her luscious breasts in the back of his head. She finishes, moves on to Mike.

RICARDO

Uh, excuse me, can I have another?

DALE

This is the closest he's come to a woman in 10 years!

MIKE

An' he's married!

JANET

You're married?

DALE

He's been getting a divorce for the last 10 years.

RICARDO

I don't wanna talk about it.

Cat plunks down her fork, doesn't try too hard to hide the fact that she grabs Mike's dick under the table:

CAT

Y'can stick a fork in me 'cause I am done!

INT. CAESARS ROMAN TOWER HALLWAY - THEY'RE ROOM - NIGHT

DALE

My key still doesn't work!

Mike tries his.

MIKE

I thought they fuckin' fixed this!

We'll go find a fuckin' phone...

INT. CAESARS ROMAN TOWER HALLWAY - THEY'RE ROOM - LATER

Ricardo, Janet and Dale wait by the door.

DALE

Caesar jus' better comp us this is
ridiculous!

INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR ROOM -

Cat blows Mike as he lays against the wall. They still
haven't found the phone.

EXT. CAESARS FRONT DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Mike watches a cab chug away. Then he scampers down the
sidewalk.

EXT. MIRAGE -

Mike walks up the moving sidewalk as Seigfried and Roy talk
about their boring, drugged up tigers.

INT. MIRAGE POKER ROOM - 5-10 HOLD EM TABLE -

Mike lays down pocket jacks, making it three with the jack
on the flop. Players shrug. Agitate. The dealer pushes
the pot to Mike. He stands.

PLAYER

Leavin' already?

MIKE

(shrugs)
Gotta see the white tigers "frolic
an' play."

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - NIGHT

Mike bounds up to Janet, Dale and Ricardo at the table.

MIKE

Well she's gone to the Alamo.

DALE

Didjya see the guy?

MIKE

Jus' the back a 'im. He actually
bumped his head on the cab when he
got in! ... I went to the Mirage.

DALE

That's where y'been!

JANET

We thought you guys were doin' it
one more time under some slot
machines.

MIKE

(to whole table)

This is the great thing 'bout Vegas.
It doesn't hide it in stupid, fake
social conventions but says it right
out loud, loud an' clear, it's based
on two things, money an' sex--

MARY THE DEALER

Neither of which I have!!!

MIKE

(in Dale's ear)

How ya doin'?

DALE

(in Mike's ear)

Hangin'.

MIKE

Looks like you're down like 400.

DALE

More--I went to the ATM. How can I
lose on my first trip with Janet?!

INT. CAESARS SLOT MACHINES - LATER

Clandestine: Mike hands Dale a few black chips.

DALE

Jus' don't tell Janet! Don't tell
anyone!!

INT. CAESARS MEN'S BATHROOM - LATER

Dale, Mike and Ricardo at urinals:

DALE

All...

MIKE

Shit! Shit shit shit shit shit.

I dunno. Y'want some more?

DALE

(waaaaay over anxious)
Can you spare it?!

MIKE

I'm up.

INT. THEY'RE ROOM - MORNING

Mike and Ricardo pack up. Dale enters. They look at him. He pauses, then shakes his head.

MIKE (whispers)

15?

DALE (whispers)

The ATM cleared at midnight.

MIKE/RICARDO (whispers)

18...

MIKE

12 to me.

DALE

I'm gonna work out a payment schedule.

MIKE

Don't worry 'bout it. I didn't say it for that. I wish I jus' had something to show for my winnings. Shit.

Janet enters from the bathroom. She looks at Dale--

DALE

Back up to EVEN thank gawwwwwd!

JANET LEAPS:

JANET

Yey!!!

MIKE/RICARDO

Unbelievable! Way to go dude!

EXT. 10 FREEWAY - NIGHT

Dale's car descends into LA.

EXT. 15 NORTH - APPROACHING VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

ELVIS/DALE/JANET/MIKE/LISA/RICARDO

(O.S.)

...there's black jack and poker and the roulette wheel...

INT. BALLYS MAIN SHOW ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone's dressed to the nines in the center primo booth. The regular gang's joined now by LISA, Mike's new girlfriend, and another couple, MARCIA and MARCUS BLUMBERG.

DALE

(leans to table)

That's his wife and Paul Anka in the next booth! Everyone thinks we're somebody.

MARCIA BLUMBERG

How'd you get these seats, anyway?

MIKE

Susan, at work. She told em I'm a vice president in finance.

LISA

It's so neat to see you outside the office! I didn't even know you were married!

The lights dim. The band hits "Come Fly With Me."

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Ladies and Gentleman, Mis...ter...
Frank...Sinatra!!!

SINATRA (O.S.)

"Come fly with me come..."

Marcus Blumberg stands and shoves his fist in the air like a Yankee fan:

MARCUS BLUMBERG

Yo we love you Frankeeeeeee!!!!

All the guys sink under the table...

INT. CAESARS BACHANAL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Everyone EXCEPT for Marcia and Marcus Blumberg is there:

JANET

I was so embarrassed.

A wine pourer fills Dale's glass. He's clearly sloshed. Another just finishes massaging Ricardo's neck.

LISA

People from New York are just more courageous. Men in LA are cowards.

MIKE

Even me?

RICARDO

(to wine
pourer/masseuse)

In a little while may I have another?

Dale leans into Janet, slobbers all over her:

DALE

I'm gonna' take you up to the room
and fuck the shit outta you!

Caesar and Cleopatra come up to the table:

CAESAR

I Caesar welcome you to my
Bacchanalian Feast!

DALE

Are you two married?

CAESAR/CLEOPATRA

We ARE but not to each other!!

They laugh maniacally and shake their little pinkies.

INT. CAESARS BACHANAL RESTAURANT - LATER

They're all leaving. Dale's drunker than shit and waving
wildly to everyone:

DALE

Goodbye Mario the Waiter! Goodbye
Tanya the Wine Pourer! Goodbye Caesar
the Emperor! Goodbye Victor the Bus
Boy! Good--AHHHHHH!!

BING! BOOM! SPHLATTT! Dale in front of the entire
restaurant tumbles down a flight of stairs.

INT. THEIR ROOM - BATHROOM - LATER

Dale's blubbery belly hangs over his BVDs. He tries to hug
Janet who's still in her evening gown.

JANET

LET...ME...GO!!!

She shoves him down on the floor and storms out of the room.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Mike charges in. Dale's still sitting on the floor like a drunk Buddha in his underwear.

MIKE
There you are!

DALE
(bawling)
Janet left me!

MIKE
Why?!

DALE
Cause I'm a drunken slobberin' loser
fool!

MIKE
So...

He rushes out. Rushes back in with a pipe.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I got some pot. It'll make you feel
better.

DALE
I don't want any pot!

MIKE
You need it! (Fires up) Jus' tell
her you're not used to drinkin'.
It's the truth even! They keep
pourin' the wine and you're jus' not
used to it.

DALE
She spent \$50 on her hair...an' she
wore her best dress...

MIKE
Here--

DALE
I never even smoked pot...

MIKE
I know. It probably won't work.
But it might.

Dale tries the pipe.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - NIGHT

An uproarious table. A lady by the name of ESTHER YANK plays first. The dealer busts. The whole table high fives each other.

DALE
THE HAPPY TABLE!!!!!!

TABLE
THE HAPPY TABLE!!!!!!

A middle aged man sits down meekly next to Esther.

ESTHER
What's YOUR name?!!

FRANK
Uh, Frank...

ESTHER
Are you FUN Frank?!!!

AS THE DEALER PAYS AND DEALS:

DALE
So this happened to my buddy Darryl Thompson when he was a student at USC. There was an early morning class and Darryl was standin' with a friend of his at some roach coach or food stand or somethin', right? They're both accounting students, kinda dull, bespectacled guys, ok? So Darryl's standin' there with his buddy. He's got a cup of coffee in one hand, a donut in the other. An' he's talkin' with his buddy, talkin', talkin'. Suddenly the buddy without warning lashes out and knocks the donut out of Darryl's hand. So without thinking, just as a reaction, Darryl tosses all his coffee in the buddy's face. And the buddy starts crying. And the buddy's sobbin', and he takes off his glasses and wipes them, and through his sobs he says: "There was a bee on your donut."

The dealer busts again.

DALE (CONT'D)
THE HAPPY TABLE!!!!!!

TABLE
THE HAPPY TABLE!!!!!!

Frank quietly slips away after he collects his money.

ESTHER
Byyyyyyyyye Frank...

TABLE
Byyyyyyyyye Frank...

MIKE
Hey first base what's your name?!

ESTHER
Esther Yank!!

DALE
Oh that's gotta be short for
something!

ESTHER
Yankovich! I'm Jewish!!

MIKE
You wear it well!!

ESTHER
AHHHHHH!!! Y'guys gotta meet my
daughters!

MIKE
We're there! Wait! We've got women
right here!!

DALE
It's so rare we forgot about 'em!

DALE LEANS OVER TO MIKE:

DALE (CONT'D)
You're doing terrific!

MIKE
I...have...not...lost a hand this
entire shoe.

Esther points across the pit to a dreary table:

ESTHER
Look!! Frank found a whole table
full of deadbeats!!!!

INT. MIKE'S BOSS' OFFICE - DAY

MIKE
I'm quitting.

BOSS
Why?

MIKE
Why shouldn't I?

BOSS
Did you get another job?

MIKE
Nope. I'm moving to Vegas to be a professional gambler.

BOSS
Are you sure you want to do this?

MIKE
I'm encouraged by...

INT. EL COMPADRE MEXICAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mike, Lisa, Dale, Janet, Ricardo:

MIKE
...last weekend...

LISA
(crying)
One big win doesn't mean anything!

MIKE
I've been on a roll for months.
Y'all admit I'm a great player.
Even dealers tell me. (To Lisa) An'
it's anti-wimp. A New Yorker would
do it. It's what I've always aspired
to. I'm not gonna be an old fart
crying "what mighta been."

EXT. DALE'S FRONT DOOR - LATE NIGHT

Dale opens the door to find little Ricardo sulking there with a bag.

RICARDO
Joanie kicked me out.

DALE
An' y'think y'can move in here?

RICARDO

I'll pay rent.

INT. DALE'S HOUSE - 3 A.M.

A ringing phone attacks every corner of the house with it's naggy, whiney caw. Finally the answering machine picks up as Dale mopes out of his bedroom, and Ricardo, and their other room mate, and they all converge on the phone in the kitchen.

JOANIE

(phone, O.S.)

Listen you fucker! You fucker fuckin' fucker! You're not gettin' any money you losin' fuckin' fucker fuck! I'm gonna sue your fuckin' ass you fuckin' asshole! I've got an attorney you fuckin' fuckin' fucker..!

DALE'S RICH DOCTOR ROOM MATE

This has gotta stop...

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - DAY

Mike at third loses the hand. The dealer scoops up his chips. He's cleaned out. He slowly stands, nods once to the dealer, then crawls away like the loser he is.

INT. MIKE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Mike works quietly at a small, spotlighted desk, entering figures in his gambling ledger.

INSERT - ledger page: Mike writes -220. In the column there are far more negative entries than positive. The last entry in the running total column is -1840.

INT. FLAMINGO CASINO - \$5 TABLE - DAY

Mike sits at a dull table in a quiet casino on a midweek day, learning the most predominant characteristic about the profession of gambling: boredom.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

Mike mopes along the empty sidewalk under all the lights on this dull mid-week night.

INT. COLLEGE BAR - NIGHT

Mike hits on a girl at the bar. She quietly--and most definitely--ditches him.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - IN FRONT OF IMPERIAL PALACE - NIGHT

Mike mopes again along the empty Strip. At the driveway a girl driving is looking the other way for traffic and plows right into Mike. He bounces up on the hood, then rolls over and tumbles to the ground.

The girl stares at him, mute and stunned stiff. He jumps up:

MIKE

I'M OK!! Don't worry 'bout it!
Story of my fuckin' night!!

EXT. DALE'S CAR - ENTERING STRIP - NIGHT

ELVIS/DALE/JANET/RICARDO

(O.S.)

...a fortune won and lost on every
deal...

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - NIGHT

The regular gang reunited at a dull table. The only one with chips in front of him is Mike. The dealer busts.

MIKE

(quietly)
...the happy table...

Mike and Dale high five their pinkies drearily.

INT. CAESARS ROMAN TOWER ROOM - THEIR ROOM -

Janet dances naked in front of a mirror.

INT. CAESARS CAFE ROMA - 4 A.M.

DALE, RICARDO, MIKE:

DALE

Stop looking at me like that!

RICARDO

Well...

DALE

You haven't paid rent in months!
Y'think I'm gonna lend you more
money?! Why can't you try winning
for a change?! Win the fuckin' rent
you owe me.

RICARDO

I've got a new theory--

DALE

Don't tell me! That's an order.

MIKE

How much y'down?

DALE

8.

MIKE

What? Now YOU'RE lookin' at me!

DALE

Well...

MIKE

Aw geeeeeeese. I'm down. This is the first time I've been up in weeks!

DALE

We bring you luck. Y'should show your gratitude.

MIKE

But I'm way down overall! I lost a third of my bank the first week. Now I'm just treadin' down a waterfall.

DALE

Yeah, but you're in Vegas, livin' the dream...

MIKE

Vegas SUCKS! Off strip, it just sucks! It's dead. Mid-week, it's jus' dead. Livin' here sucks. It's only fun to stay on weekends in hotels. Be a fuckin' tourist. An' y'know what? Gambling's actually boring. It's boring. It's hours of Boredom sparked with a few seconds of excitement!

DALE

Geeeeeeese, I never thought I'd hear YOU say that!

MIKE

Maybe if I was winnin', it'd be different. Fuckin' show girls, throwing bills all over the clubs... But if you don't got dough, it's one miserable place.

Mike places 5 blacks on the table near Dale's second helping of fries.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What's that: 2700 total?

DALE NODS. RE RICARDO:

DALE

Lookit 'im! Now he's gonna hover over me like a vulture waiting for me t'win!

INT. CAESARS JEWELRY SHOP - NIGHT

DALE

What about that one?

SALES LADY

That is \$625.

DALE

And that?

SALES LADY

750.

DALE

Let's cut to the chase. What's your least expensive?

INT. CAESARS SLOTS - NIGHT

Janet pulls the handle. Thud. Dale shoves in 3 more coins.

JANET

Forget it hon. This is never gonna hit.

She pulls the handle--JACKPOT. Dollar coins clank! Clank! Clank! In the tin well.

JANET (CONT'D)

IT HIT! IT HIT! YIPPEEEEE!!

For a brief second Janet looks around to see who's watching and that's when Dale shoves his hand in the coins. Janet gleefully grabs fistfuls of coins and throws them in the cup.

Then she looks in the cup. Her mouth falls.

JANET (CONT'D)

Look what's in here!!

She fishes out a little diamond ring. Dale falls to his knees.

DALE

Janet, this is a double jackpot. I love you with all of my heart. If you will spend the rest of your life with me, I would be the luckiest guy in the world. Will you marry me?

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - NIGHT

Dale and Janet find Mike and Ricardo at a table.

JANET

LOOK!!!

She shows her ring.

DALE

EVERYBODY!! It's the most unbelievable jackpot in the world but this lady has agreed to marry me!!

The whole table except Mike and Ricardo WAHOOOOOO!!! So do pit bosses, the dealers, calling them by name because they're there so often. Mike whispers to Dale:

MIKE (hissing)

I can't believe you used the money I lent you to buy a ring! It was for gambling!

RICARDO

I really wouldn't advise marriage y'guys...

IN. LA COURTROOM - DAY

JOANIE

He is evil! He's cruel! He's a loser! He's dull an' stupid an' lazy an' boring an' horrible an' cruel an' stupid and what's more he's awful in bed jus' awful the thought of that little hairy body all over me makes me want to puke I can't stand the sight of him he's put me through hell my life's a living torture hell and he smells an' he--

JUDGE

Ma'am...ma'am...he's being kicked out of his house because he can't afford the rent. Is there some way we can work out some living arrangement so that he has a roof over his head until we reach a resolution of the disposition of your house and other assets?

Joanie takes a long look to her side to Ricardo quivering like a mouse at the other table. She emits a long, sorrowful, tearful sigh . . .

JOANIE

Well...maybe we can give it one more try...

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - NIGHT

Mike in the middle of a huge crowd again watches the final table of the World Series from the loser sidelines.

INT. POKER TABLE - NIGHT

Mike tosses in the last of his chips. A player quickly calls. They show.

DEALER

Jacks full.

The dealer pushes the chips away from Mike. The guy next to him just shakes his head. Mike mumbles to him:

MIKE

Got it on the river...

Mike crawls away, the loser he is...

INT. CAESARS \$5 TABLE - DAY

Two spoiled frat-type guys yuk it up and bet thousands and win while Mike places his last impotent \$5 out there.

He gets an 11, but can't even double he's so broke. He hits. 6. Of course.

The dealer turns over a 19, takes Mike's last 5 bucks, pays the frat jerks a coupla thou on their 20s. Mike could strangle them with barbed wire.

EXT. LAS VEGAS BLVD. - OUTSKIRTS OF VEGAS NIGHT

Mike's van pulls over. He stumbles out. He's so wasted he can barely stand.

He downs the rest of a jug of J.D., heaves it back at Vegas, falls back in his van and heads back to LA.

INT. EVIL COSMODEMONIC FILE ROOM DAY (INTERCUT)

Mike gets up from the demonic file drawers and answers the Dilbert phone.

DALE
How's the new job?

MIKE
Sucks little diseased test mice up
your asshole...

DALE
Viva.

MIKE
No jack.

DALE
I got some for ya...

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

ELVIS/DALE/JANET/MIKE/RICARDO
(O.S.)
...even if there were 40 more...

INT. CAESARS CAFE ROMA 5 A.M.

Janet stands.

MIKE
Gonna dance in front of the mirror
again?

JANET
I'm going to sleep.
(to Dale)
What are you doing?

DALE
I gotta try...don'tchya think?

JANET
Jus' win, ok?

She leaves. Mike takes a big forkful of burrito, grimaces.

MIKE
Whatchya gonna play with?!

DALE
Y'sure y'got nuttin'?

MIKE
Zip. This burrito tastes weird.

DALE
And you?

RICARDO
Smoke.

DALE
Well...I can go to the ATM.

MIKE/RICARDO
Really?!!

DALE
There's nothin' in it, but the machine
doesn't know that. Some checks
haven't cleared yet.

They all think about that awhile. Mike takes another forkful
of burrito.

MIKE
It's what a true gambler would do...

They all think about that too...

MIKE (CONT'D)
Man this burrito tastes weird!

Dale tries a forkful and instantly his face explodes and he
gags and hacks, tears pour down his cheeks.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Fuck what is it?!!

DALE
(pain)
Hack hack it's horseradish whewwww!!

Mike tries the sour cream.

MIKE
They gave me horseradish instead of
sour cream! Shit I'm so wasted I
didn't even notice!

DALE
My nose is burnin' off my fuckin'
face!

INT. CAESARS CASINO - ATM MACHINE -

Dale punches a few buttons as Mike and Ricardo breathe down his neck.

MIKE
Unfuckin' believable!

Dale holds up 3 bills.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - DAY

Dale stands as the dealer scoops up the last of his chips.

DEALER
Sorry Dale, no happy table today.

MIKE
I gotta drink comin'.

DALE
I don't even gotta dollar for the waitress!

MIKE
Y'gotta dollar?

RICARDO
Smoke.

As they leave, drinkless.

MIKE
Fuuuuck, think this is rock bottom?

INT. CAESARS PUBLIC PHONES -

Dale on the phone. Mike and Ricardo sit away at the slot machines.

DALE
Yeah I've learned my lesson! Jus' don't tell Dad whatever you do ok..? Yeah...ma, ma, it was stupid, I know it's not gonna...ok, yeah, jus' be sure it's the Bank of America...They're open on Sundays! I'm positive! Jus' don't tell Dad!

INT. PEPE'S SUPER MARKET - SUNDAY - DAY

Believe it or not there's a little stand there that serves as a B of A branch, and it's open on Sundays. The clerk looks at Dale. Dale grins, nervous as hell. The stupid clerk looks at Dale's ID. The clerk looks at Dale.

EXT. PEPE'S PARKING LOT - DALE'S CAR - DAY

Dale plops in the car. Mike and Ricardo peer at him like puppies at a Thanksgiving table.

MIKE

Y'got it. I can tell.

DALE

I've never borrowed from my mom before. And certainly not for GAMBLING!

MIKE

So now...y'got 800 on ya...

Dale pauses...looks back at Mike and Ricardo...thinks...

DALE

No way! It's coverin' the rent check!
No way!

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - DAY

The guys parade through all the beautiful gambling action of the main pits.

DALE

It's my mom's money for fuck's sake!

INT. ELEVATOR -

They all glumly ride the elevator as an imbecilic, YOUNG, nerdy couple gibber maniacally about the great win they just had of 80 lousy bucks.

INT. THEIR ROOM -

The guys enter to find Janet packing.

MIKE

Janet! You missed it! It was unbelievable! He won it all back!

JANET

Oh thank gawwwwwwwwd...!!!

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

ELVIS/DALE/JANET/MIKE/RICARDO

(O.S.)

...I wouldn't stay a minute away...

INT. CAESARS CASINO - PUBLIC PHONES - NIGHT

DALE

Oh man Dad you're a lifesaver jus'
don't tell mom ok I'm too ashamed!

INT. DALE'S CAR - DAY

Driving from Pepe's super market.

DALE

I'm lower than a fuckin' slug.

MIKE

I know, y'never borra'd from your
dad before.

DALE

I asked for an extra 3 an' he gave
it thinkin' it's all goin' for rent.

MIKE

Right on dude! Smart thinking!

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - DAY

Wading through pits:

DALE

Ok, this is what I'm thinkin'. I
wanta give you some. Y'want it?

MIKE

What's the deal?

DALE

Whatever you win, we split. I figure
it might be better to spread the
risk around.

MIKE

What if I lose?

DALE

Um...nothing. It's a risk I'm taking,
but a benefit too, y'know, like a
stock fund vs. just puttin' all your
money in one stock.

RICARDO

What about me?

DALE

I only got enough for two.

MIKE

I can't let y'eat a loss. I'll deduct it from your debt.

DALE

Well, that's not fair either.

MIKE

Ok, deduct HALF from the debt. I'm gonna win anyway don't worry 'bout it I can feel it.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - DAY

Dale's got an 11 against the dealer's 5. But no more chips. He looks at Mike's pile, but he's got a double too and not enough to cover. Ricardo can only sit on their shoulders like a pigeon.

DALE

(to Ricardo)

You really got nothing?

RICARDO

Smoke.

He looks to Mike.

DALE

I know. Y'gotta double.

MIKE

Shit I gotta double for less!

Dale sighs, slowly extracts his wallet and takes out 3 bills.

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's the right play.

DALE

This is money I can't touch.

But he lays the cash down and the dealer drops it in the box. Dale puts \$250 next to the original, then gets a 9 for a total of 20.

Mike doubles for less...

DEALER

Doubling for less!

...and gets a 10.

The dealer turns over a 6 for an 11. Dale's eyes sink.

...2...they brighten...3...they widen even more...5: 21.
The dealer whisks away Dale's can't lose dough. Then he has
to shuffle.

HUDDLE:

MIKE

Well, now y'might as well put it all
at risk. Y'can't cover the check
anyway.

DALE

No shit Einstein! Can y'fuckin'
believe the 5?

RICARDO

Maybe if you spread the risk around
a little more.

DALE

Even he's losin'!

MIKE

I can't get anything but stiffs.
Look, the fact of the matter is we're
playin' with desperate dough. If we
had a big enough bank, like 5 or 10
thou, none a this would be a problem.

DALE

If y'haven't noticed we don't got 5
or 10 thou. (Rhetorically) Why
can't you be winning?

A line of dealers are walking by and one--Benny--suddenly
jumps over to them:

BENNY

Dale! Mike! Ricardo! How're ya
doin'?

GUYS

...oh...okayyyyyyy...

BENNY

Too bad. Hey Esther gave me a message
to give ya!

GUYS

Esther?

BENNY

Esther Yank!

GUYS

Esther Yank?!

BENNY

She said she really wants you to meet her daughters. They were gonna be here first week a November.

DALE/MIKE

It's December.

BENNY

Yeah, too bad huh?

MIKE

Didjya see the daughters?!

BENNY

Babe city out the wazoo!

MIKE

Oh GREAT!

DALE

I can't believe...that was like in May we saw her.

BENNY

Hey see y'guys later come over to my table y'gotta tell me the brown cow joke again I can't 'member how it goes.

GUYS

Bye. Bye. Bye Benny.

MIKE

Are y'gonna put the rest at risk?

DALE

What else can I do? I'm in this deep...

SERIES OF VERY FAST SHOTS, AS FAST AS THE MONEY VANISHES -
\$5 TABLE -

- 1) A stiff hand, 13 against dealer's 10.
- 2) Players' chips being scooped up.
- 3) Mike drinking J.D. heavy, dropping a buck on the waitress' tray for another.
- 4) Dale shaking his head.

5) A double down gets a 5.

INT. BENNY'S TABLE -

DALE

(yawn)
He sure did he fucked the white one
again...

No one laughs. Well, Benny the Dealer gives a polite chuckle
'cause it was his damn request in the first place.

BENNY

...yeah...uh...I 'member it as
funnier...

DALE

The jokes get funnier when the cards
get better.

Now the table laughs!

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE -

Dealer's card: 5. Turns over a 2. 2, 2, Ace, Ace, 3, 5=21.

Mike and Dale's jaws fall to the chipless felt in front of
their loser, mopey, palooka faces.

INT. THEIR ROOM - LATER

Janet was packing but Dale makes her stop and sit on the
plush couch.

DALE

Y'still got that jackpot y'hit?

JANET

I'm not giving you any more to gamble.

DALE

Uh, y'know the rent check I sent
Thursday?

MIKE

It's all my fault Janet! You can
hate ME but not HIM! I made 'im do
it! I made 'm I made 'm take money
outta the machine against the check
an'--

JANET

You what?!!!

MIKE

It's not his fault! It's my fault
tell her Ricardo y'were there!!

Ricardo mumbles...something. Obviously a supporting argument for Mike's, but the specific contentions are vague.

MIKE (CONT'D)

See! It's not his fault! I'm tellin'
ya!

JANET

How much are we short?

DALE

All. Do you still got the jackpot?

JANET

Of course. But I was gonna buy a
dress. Maybe a new microwave...

MIKE

I'll buy you a dress, when I get
some dough! It's all my--

JANET

Don't make me laugh you despicable
drunk!

MIKE

But with good skin...

DALE

He does have good skin. Y'gotta
give 'im that.

Janet actually cracks a sad grin.

INT. DALE'S EVIL COSMODEMONIC CUBICLE - MONTHS LATER - DAY

Months later from the last scene, but YEARS since the guys first started going to Vegas and losing together, years of precious, irrecoverable youth wasted in satanic office corporation companies. Dale hands Mike cash.

DALE

Big day!

MIKE

I gotta say I'm very amazed at you
you stuck to it. I'm very proud a
you.

DALE

Y'gonna take me out ta dinner with that?

MIKE

Can't--gotta help my sister move tonight an' the whole weekend. I'll be stuck with her the whole fuckin' weekend if y'can believe it.

Janet walks up.

JANET

It's weird seeing you back here.

How's the new job.

MIKE

Why even ask such stupid questions y'know I hate every job ever devised my man on the face of the earth!

INT. BANK - LATER

The teller counts out about a grand to Mike.

INT. MIKE'S VAN - NIGHT

Mike drives up the dark highway, happy as a monkey, guzzling his J.D.

INT. MIKE'S VAN - ON LAS VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

Mike turns left into Caesars Palace.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - NIGHT

Mike downs his drink just as the waitress brings another.

If only his drinks were chips! The dealer swoops up another pile of blacks. Mike leans over to the pit boss.

MIKE

I'd like another marker please.

PIT BOSS

I'm sorry Mike, you've reached your limit. The computer won't let me.

Mike ponders that glumly for a while. He looks at his flaccid last few reds. He gets up, leaving them at his spot:

MIKE

(to dealer)
I'll be right back.

INT. CAESARS CASINO HOST'S OFFICE -

CASINO HOST

But sir, your limit is your own self imposed limit. It's what you told us not to go above.

MIKE

Well, let's jus' say I want to increase my self-imposed limit, at least just for this one time.

CASINO HOST

That would take another review of your financial records, a couple of days at least--

MIKE

Well it's just temporary, just this one time...

The casino host sighs. She studies her computer screen.

CASINO HOST

We don't make temporary limits...

MIKE

But y'can see I've been a loyal customer for a long time and I believe I have a good record...

CASINO HOST

Yes, a spotless record...Ok sir, we can advance you \$1000 tonight, and I'll put in a request to raise your limit by a thousand.

MIKE

Oh great! Thanks!

CASINO HOST

It will be a few days until the increase goes through permanently.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - SAME \$5 TABLE - LATER

Clearly, Mike's last bet. Two sad little red chips. He hits his 16 against the 10.

Busts with a 10, but he knew it all along! He stumbles out of his chair, bumps along, passing the cage.

INT. CAESARS GARAGE -

Mike stumbles along to his van.

MIKE
(muttering)
Stupid fuck! Stupid idiot! Stupid
losin' idiot fuck!

EXT. FLAMINGO RD. NIGHT

Mike's dumpy van turns not south but NORTH up the 15.

INT. VAN - 15 NORTH - LATER

Mike guzzles J.D. and curses himself. He's on the verge of tears. He even wants to cry, but can't force it out!

His headlights illuminate the road sign:

"SALT LAKE CITY"

"475 MILES"

EXT. GAS STATION/TRUCK STOP - LATER

Mike's van pulls up and parks between two semis.

EXT. GAS STATION/TRUCK STOP - SUNRISE

A beautiful pale sunrise on a clear, chilly desert morning.

INT. VAN -

Mike lays in the bed in back, thinking. It's obvious he's been thinking for awhile.

INT. TRUCK STOP - PAY PHONE - MORNING

MIKE
Hey. It's Mike. Hey, I'm sick man.
I don't think I can come in.

BOSS
(phone, O.S.)
If you're in Vegas you're fired!

MIKE
I'm sick! I'm really sick! I'm all
sweaty and feel like I wanta throw
up!

BOSS
(phone, O.S.)
You jus' better be.

CUT - SAME PHONE -

DALE

(phone, O.S.)

I can't believe you first lied to me
about your sister and then actually
went to Vegas without me!

MIKE

Is that all you can say?! I'm in
the crisis of my life and that's all
y'can say?! I went psycho last night!
I'm actually 'bout 200 miles NORTH a
Vegas--

DALE

(phone, O.S.)

NORTH?!

MIKE

YEAH! I'm at some truck stop in the
middle of Nevada somewhere, I don't
even know where! Y'shoulda seen me
last night, drivin', I got it in my
fucked head my life was over an' I
was jus' gonna chuck it all and
vanish, abandon my sisters,
everything, jus' vanish, move to
Reno or somewhere and be a bus boy
or something until I got enough to
buy back in an' jus' be an anonymous
gambler on the run from Caesars till
I could pay 'em back or something!

DALE

(phone, O.S.)

Geeeeesus...

MIKE

So that's where I'm at but I'm comin'
back to LA. So, y'got nothin'?

DALE

(phone, O.S.)

Nothin'. I just paid you everything
I had...

CUT - SAME PHONE -

MIKE

Yeah, who's this?

HARRY (phone, O.S.)

Harry in the cage.

MIKE

Yeah, Harry, listen. This weekend I took out some markers an'...I'm gonna have a hard time payin' 'em off right now...

HARRY

I see. How much are the markers for, sir?

MIKE

Three thousand...

Harry actually can't stifle a quick CHORTLE SNORT--

HARRY

Well, I thought you were talking real money! When do you think you can pay this (mocking)
three...thousand...doll...ars..?

INT. RICARDO'S LITTLE CAR - UP 15 - NIGHT

Ricardo drives grimly in the blackened car.

JUDGE (O.S.)

600 dollars...600 dollars...600 dollars...

FLASHBACK --

A gavel clacks down on the bench.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

I hereby order defendant to pay plaintiff 600 dollars, or 60% of each pay check, whichever is greater. Based on the evidence of the bank and casino records from Las Vegas, I have decided that payment will be made via automatic deposit arranged with defendant's employer and plaintiff's bank...

Shot of the evil bitch Joanie smirking her mousy smirk at Ricardo who's WEEPING at the defendant's table.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - \$5 TABLE - NIGHT

Something's weird here: there's towers of chips in front of Ricardo. Even HE looks shocked. He hauls in another big win, stacks it on the towers.

INT. SLOTS OF FUN HOT DOG STAND - NIGHT

Ricardo munches one of their world famous--ok, they're only locally famous--foot long, 25 cent hot dogs. He finishes, wipes his little cheery satisfied face.

Meanders over to the black jack table...

INT. SLOTS OF FUN BLACK JACK TABLE - LATER

Ricardo's collected MORE stacks of chips like Monopoly hotels. He hauls in yet another big win.

PIT BOSS
(offering card)
Would you mind supplying us with
your name and address sir?

RICARDO
(terrified!)
Why! I mean...uh, what for?

PIT BOSS
To put you on our VIP list sir.

That way we can send you information on special tournaments we're having, open up a line of credit, give you special rates.

Ricardo's chest SWELLS with the alien feeling of pride. But his hand still trembles as he fills out the card.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - ROULETTE TABLE - LATER

Bing Boop Blat the ball falls on 17.

DEALER
17! Number's 17! Pay the winnahhhhhs!

To Ricardo's shock a dealer pushes a stack of chips to his 35 to 1 bet on 17.

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO - CRAPS TABLE - LATER

Ricardo watches a table full of hollerers and whoopers.

TABLE
8! 8! 8! 8 the hard way! Double 4s!

Ricardo summons all his courage and throws a black on the table.

DEALER
What's that fer player?!

Ricardo mumbles something.

DEALER (CONT'D)

WHAT?!

RICARDO

8 the hard way!

DEALER

Hard way down!

TABLE

8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8..!!!!!!!

Shooter hurls the dice right in front of Ricardo. The table ERUPTS!--

DEALER

EIGHT! EIGHT THE HARD WAY! Eight eight pay the come slay the don't come. Eight hard...eight hard...

INT. GLITTER GULTCH STRIP JOINT - LATER

Ricardo gets a table dance from a gorgeous babe. He's shy, can barely grin like the sick letch weirdo he is. He nervously slips cash in her G-string.

INT. RICARDO'S CAR - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Ricardo gleefully counts loads of Franklins.

INT. RICARDO'S CAR - SOUTH ON 15 - NEVADA BORDER

Ricardo spots the big Prima Donna casino sign:

"25 CENT HOT DOGS!"

INT. PRIMA DONNA CASINO - HOT DOG COUNTER -

RICARDO

I'd like one of your 25 cent hot dogs please.

HOT DOG COUNTER OPERATOR

Can y'wait a sec we're jus' cleaning the machine.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Yeah...ok...

Ricardo wanders around the casino. Sees a \$2 table. Well, what the fuck. He throws out a coupla bucks. The dealer changes it, places the two gray chips on the spot, then deals. Ricardo gets an 11 against a 5.

Double.

He gets a fucked 4. Dealer: 5, 5, 4, 2, 4=20. He whisks away Ricardo's big 4 bucks.

Ricardo bets \$5. The dealer lets the cash play. Ricardo gets a 12 against a 10. He hits. 10. Bust. The dealer slams his 5 bucks down the slot.

Ricardo throws a 20 on the spot.

DEALER
Money plays sir?

RICARDO
Yeah, ok.

The dealer deals him a hard 17 against an 8. Of course the dealer has a fuckin' 18 and whisks away Ricardo's 20.

Ricardo sits. (HE SITS!) He buys in for \$100.

JUMP CUTS:

- 1) Ricardo's 14 against a 10. He hits, gets an 8 to bust. The dealer grabs his chips.
- 2) Ricardo places another bet.
- 3) The dealer scoops up his chips.
- 4) Ricardo buys in again.
- 5) Ricardo buys in once again!
- 6) Hours later, Ricardo gazes at the 25 cent hot dog counter. There's now a line of people merrily chomping delicious 25 cent hot dogs.
- 7) The dealer scoops up another bet, slams the chips in his tray.
- 8) Ricardo takes out his wallet. He extracts his last \$100.

His last Franklin. He lays it on the table. Through the glass doors he can see the sun has risen to mock and ridicule him with the life giving light of morning.

INT. PRIMA DONNA \$5 TABLE - SHORTLY LATER

The dealer scoops up the last of Ricardo's money. Ricardo stands. Zombielike, he wanders to the hot dog counter. Pulls out coins from his pocket. Fingers through the pieces of metal--he doesn't even have the 2 bits any more for the fuckin' hot dog!

He stumbles out the doors.

INT. BACHANAL - NIGHT

DALE

Not tonight Shari, sorry. We're celebrating our 6 month wedding anniversary.

SHARI THE MASSEUSE/WINE POURER

Congratulations.

Dale toasts Janet.

DALE (CONT'D)

To 6 months of bliss I never knew was possible...

INT. CAESARS MAIN CASINO \$5 TABLE - NIGHT

DALE

Didjya hear 'bout the guy who stayed up all night trying to figure out how to get rich, an' he thought and thought all night till it finally dawned on him.

He hits his 12 and busts. Janet hides her eyes.

INT. CAESARS PUBLIC PHONES - NIGHT

DALE

(on phone)

Oh man I owe you Paul you're a lifesaver jus' don't tell ma or pop or sis I really owe you...yeah besides that, an' this, I owe you my life..!

INT. CAESARS SLOT MACHINES - NIGHT

DALE

Here it is!

JANET

Yeah...

DALE

Our machine...

He plunks 3 dollars in their slot machine and pulls the handle. THUD.

DALE (CONT'D)

Well...unlucky at--

JANET

Dale?

DALE

Yesssssss my love my dear love on our
6 month wedding anniversary at our
very own love machine...

JANET

I'm divorcing you.

He stares at her.

JANET (CONT'D)

I'm not joking. I've met someone
else. An'...I'm leaving you...and...
moving in with him.

DALE

Him..? Who..? Him?! What do you
mean HIM?!

JANET

See! You don't even know! I've
been seeing him for 3 months.

DALE

3 months?! What do you mean "seeing
him"?

JANET

Yes. We've been sleeping together.

DALE

Sleeping together?! Like on separate
couches--

JANET

Fucking! Fucking Dale! We do it so
much I'm nervanically sore! We do
it everywhere. In his jacuzzi. In
his studio.

DALE

His studio..?

JANET

He's a musician. A drummer. Listen,
I gotta go. I gotta plane to catch.

DALE

A plane?! To go back to him?!

JANET

Yeah. You'll get the papers delivered.

DALE

Why didjya even come up here?!

JANET

I thought if you won for once--

DALE

Our marriage rests on the turn of a card?!

JANET

Your whole life rests on the turn of a card! You lost. Again. I can't fuck you anymore. I can't even stand the thought of your loser dick inside me, shooting me with your loser sperm. I'm going home to Claudio--

DALE

Claudio?!

JANET

--an' suck his beautiful, fantastic long penis till it's dry as this fuckin' desert. I love sucking his penis. I love it when he pounds my pussy with it. Even when he pounds my ass. I'm gonna have him pound me all night tonight. I'm so happy. Gawd what a relief! Bye. You'll get the papers.

INT. THEIR CALAMITOUS CUBICLES - DAY (INTERCUT)

DALE (on phone)

Well, it's over. The divorce went through. Can you believe the divorce took longer than our fuckin' marriage?

MIKE (on phone)

Does that mean you don't have any money for me?

DALE

Are you kidding?!

INT. RICARDO'S/JOANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

The phone rings. Ricardo instantly goes to answer it.

JOANIE

Don't you DARE answer that phone you
loser fucker slimeball!

Ring...ring.

PHONE MACHINE

(Joanie's voice)

If this is a call for that fucker
Ricardo, FUCK YOU. (sweet) However,
if you're calling for poor, suffering
Joan, please leave a message.

CLERK'S VOICE

This is All American collection
services. Your VISA, Master Charge,
Bullocks, Union 76, Mobil Gas,
American Express and Sears charge
accounts have been turned over to us
for...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DALE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Dale listens to his machine:

CLERK'S VOICE

...collection. You are hereby
instructed to destroy your VISA and
American Express charge cards and
make full payment...

Dale wanders out his door, briefcase in hand:

CLERK'S VOICE (machine) (CONT'D)

...on both accounts today or legal
action will be commenced...

EXT. DALE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Dale stumbles down the stairs, pulling out his keys. He
stops at the curb. Looks at the curb. He looks to his left.
He looks to his right.

INT. DALE'S HOUSE -

Dale rushes in:

DALE'S PHONE MACHINE

(his roommate's voice) If you're a
woman (Dale's voice) or you have
money, (both voices) or both, don't
be shy, COME RIGHT OVER!

(MORE)

DALE'S PHONE MACHINE (CONT'D)

Otherwise, if you really have to,
leave a message. BEEEEEEEP.

CLERK'S VOICE

This is Tip-Toe Financiers. If you're
wondering where your car is deadbeat
we've repossessed it because you're
3 months delinquent on your account
and you have not returned numerous
calls to rectify...

INT. MIKE'S VAN - DRIVING - PREDAWN

MIKE (O.S.)

I jus' asked you for dough!

DALE (O.S.)

They've repossessed my fuckin' car!

MIKE (O.S.)

If only that chink hadn't gotten
that Jack on the river...

DALE (O.S.)

Fuckin' river card killed me...

MIKE (O.S.)

Sorry dude. I've got 50 bucks to my
name an' only half a tank a gas.

Mike TEARS down the 10 freeway.

Suddenly his little VW motor EXPLODES. Smoke fills the back
and rushes into the cab in thick, gray, billowy puffs.

Mike quickly opens his window and pulls off to the side. He
spots a towering UNION 76 GAS STATION sign off the side of
10. He chugs along the breakdown lane, limps down the exit,
turns the corner and rolls into the gas station.

An old, spiritless attendant was squeegeeing a windshield at
the pumps. He spots the flames flickering out of Mike's
van:

ATTENDANT

OH MY GAWD!!!!

The poor guy instantly drops the squeegee on the car and
grabs the bucket of squeegee water.

INT. VAN

Mike scrambles around the smoky back of the van, throwing all his clothes, a book, and half a Big Mac in a clothes hamper basket. He leaps out of the van.

MIKE
My van's on fire!!

ATTENDANT
No shit Shirley!!

The attendant flings open the back and hurls the squeegee water on the motor.

MIKE
Think it will explode?!

ATTENDANT
Yew got that new non-flammable gas,
right?!

They hear sirens.

Two fire trucks scream up to the van. Instantly fire men jump off, grab hoses and FLOOD the van. The van rocks back and forth from all the pummeling of the water.

EXT. 76 GAS STATION - DAY

Mike signs a form, hands it to a fireman. The fireman boards his truck and rumbles off.

The whole back end of his van is blackened, the paint's curdled off. Stray smoke drifts from the exposed, charred motor. Water pours from every crack and hole in the body and creates a streamlet down to the street. Mike holds all his belongings in the open clothing hamper basket. He turns to the attendant:

MIKE
Well, I guess you're pretty handy
with cars. Y'wanta buy it?

ATTENDANT
Y'can't leave it here. If my boss
shows up, I'm dead meat.

EXT. MOBIL STATION - LATER

Mike holds his clothing hamper and pitches a mechanic:

MIKE
100 bucks I can let it go for.
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

The motor's a little burned, but
you're probably real good with cars.

EXT. CHEVRON STATION - PAY WINDOW - LATER

MIKE

50 bucks I guess would be good.

CASHIER

(Indian, from India)

I know nothing about cars.

INT. AM/PM - LATER

Mike stands in the middle holding his clothing hamper basket.
Working men, mechanics, that type, mope around getting coffee,
donuts, shit like that before work.

MIKE

(shouts)

Anybody who's adept at car repair I
got a great deal a '71 VW van that
just caught fire! We saved most of
it! It's right over there at the 76
station! I'll let it go for 25 bucks!

EXT. 76 STATION - MORNING

Mike mopes back up carrying his clothing hamper basket.

ATTENDANT

Y'sell it?

Mike shakes his head. The attendant hands him a business
card.

EXT. 76 STATION - LATER

Now the van is on a flat bed tow truck. "Sals Salvage."
Mike signs a form.

SAL

I usually charge 18 bucks for a tow.

MIKE

The transmission's still good! The
tires alone are worth, what, 25?

SAL

Maybe. Jus' send the pink slip when
y'git home. Goooooo luck.

Sal climbs in his truck and lumbers off the lot. Mike watches wistfully as his old van and only home leaves his life forever.

Mike mopes to the attendant's greasy office and grabs his clothing basket. The attendant munches on a donut.

MIKE

Where's the nearest bus station?

ATTENDANT

Riverside. 10 miles.

MIKE

10 fuckin' miles..?

The attendant points to the donut shop next door:

ATTENDANT

I think that's Pedro's car. He delivers donuts to Riverside every morning.

INT. PEDRO'S RICKETY, OLD, DRAFTY CAR - DRIVING 10 FWY - MORNING

MIKE

So, you like snuck over the border?

PEDRO

Si. Over Rio Grande.

MIKE

Well, I'm curious, jus', y'know, for intellectual purposes, but what attracted you to this country?

PEDRO

I make 5 dollar hour here! Look! I have a car! I gonna put rahdio in it! No one have that in Mehico...

INT. PEDRO'S CAR - AT RIVERSIDE BUS STATION - DAY

MIKE

I don't have much money at all, but will a coupla bucks--

PEDRO

No no please Mikey.

Mike offers a few bucks.

MIKE

No, please. You went outta your way.

PEDRO

No. Please. I happy to do it.

Mike pockets his cash.

MIKE

Well man, that's awfully big a ya. I hope America's good to you. I wish you all the best in America.

PEDRO

Thanks Mikey. Eet a great country. Have yourself better luck.

INT. RIVERSIDE BUS STATION - TICKET WINDOW -

TICKET AGENT

48 dollars round trip.

Mike takes out his money. He hands over 50. That leaves 3 measly bucks in his hand.

EXT. RICARDO'S/JOANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Sheriffs scoot in and out, palaver on the dry grass, guard the door. Joanie and Ricardo face a grim man in a smart suit and tie.

BANK REP

Only the structure and land is now the property of the bank. All your belongings inside are by law rightfully yours. But we've given you 3 months, it's already the second week of the 4th month, to vacate. We don't like to do this. Believe me. But you leave us no other choice.

Joanie yanks Ricardo aside:

JOANIE

This is all your fault you fuckin' fucker fuck!

RICARDO

If you would've signed the divorce agreement--

JOANIE

DON'T talk back to me!
(MORE)

JOANIE (CONT'D)

Grab the sewing machine. That's the most important thing. Take it to my sister's. And you better just not get in an accident you fuckin' fucker fuck if that sewing machine's damaged in any way I'm gonna have Dad personally kill you you fuckin' fucker fuck!

EXT. LAS VEGAS BUS STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

A bus turns into the downtown bus station.

INT. LAS VEGAS BUS STATION LOCKERS --

Mike jams his clothing hamper basket in a locker, slams home the door, drops a quarter in and takes the key.

INT. LAS VEGAS CITY BUS - LATER

Mike boards.

MIKE

How much?

BUS DRIVER

One fifteen.

Mike takes out his puny 3 bucks, feeds one in the slot, feels around his pocket for the coins.

EXT. CAESARS - NIGHT

Mike walks up the long driveway along the fountains.

INT. CAESARS CAGE - NIGHT

MIKE

(writing)

I'd like to cash a check please.

CASHIER

For how much sir?

MIKE

Two thousand. I think that's my limit. Is it higher?

CASHIER

Let me check.

She spins his check book around, gets the name and checks her computer.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Um, we're not allowed to cash checks for you anymore, sir.

MIKE

Whadaya mean? I'm on the VIP line.

CASHIER

Yes. But it says now "cash only play." If you want to talk to a casino host--

INT. CAESARS CASINO HOST'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The casino host turns from her computer:

CASINO HOST

Apparently you had some trouble paying off some markers--

MIKE

But I paid 'em! An' that was like a year an a half ago!

She sighs.

CASINO HOST

Let me call your bank.

She takes Mike's checkbook, dials. Mike just dumbly watches her, a lug, knowing this ain't going to work.

CASINO HOST (CONT'D)

Good evening this is Cybil Danning with the cashier cage at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. I need to verify a balance...01346 85270.

The casino host watches Mike. She half smiles. Then her smile falls . . . She looks meanly at him.

CASINO HOST (to phone)

Thank you very much.

She hangs up.

CASINO HOST (CONT'D)

Your average account balance for the last 12 months is less than 10 dollars. What are you trying to pull?

EXT. CAESARS - NIGHT

Mike scoots the fuck out of there, down the sidewalk.

EXT. SLOTS OF FUN - LATER

Mike mopes up, passing happy, laughing, fun loving, young, gorgeous, having loads of fun people.

INT. SLOTS OF FUN HOT DOG STAND -

Mike forces down one of their 25 cent foot long hot dogs.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS - LATER

Mike chugs past pawn shops and check cashing offices.

INT. LAS VEGAS BUS STATION - NIGHT

Mike checks the schedule for the next bus to LA. He leaves.

EXT. BINIONS -

Mike enters. Big sign: "50 cent Heineken!"

BIGGER SIGN:

*"Binions Horseshoe Welcomes the
Greatest Poker Players in the World!
Binions Horseshoe World Series of
Poker!"*

INT. BINIONS BAR -

Mike pays 50 cents for a beer. Guzzles it. Next to him an old ruffled loser wavers over a whiskey:

LOSER

(muttering)

Gotta play big now...gotta play big
now...

INT. DALE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

His room mate wears doctor's white; a stethoscope hangs around his neck.

DALE'S ROOMMATE

Man am I beat. Here. Here's my rent.

He hands over a check.

DALE

Hey...um...things are a little--

DALE'S ROOMMATE

Don't even ask. I'm not lending you
any more money. We've talked about
this.

DALE

But--

DALE'S ROOMMATE

Dale!

He turns to go to bed. Turns back:

DALE'S ROOMMATE (CONT'D)

You're gonna make your rent, right?

DALE

Oh yeah! I got that covered! All the bills are covered. Barely. I just need a little to get by till my next pay check.

DALE'S ROOMMATE

What 'bout my deal?

DALE

I don't gamble for a year and you'll lend me, what \$4000?

DALE'S ROOMMATE

We didn't say a figure.

DALE

I'll think 'bout it.

His roommate wanders away.

DALE'S ROOMMATE

(mumbling)

...gotta crash...been in emergency since yesterday...

After his rich doctor roommate is gone Dale sits alone in the kitchen, fingering the check. There's a knock at the door. Dale opens it to find Ricardo.

DALE

Y'got money for me?

RICARDO

The police kicked us out today.

DALE

Y'got money for me?

RICARDO

Smoke.

DALE

I guess you wanna stay here. It'll cost you four thousand dollars.

RICARDO

Can I owe it to you?

DALE

(whispering, hissing)

I don't got anything for rent! They're gonna shut off the water and phone 'cause I haven't paid the fuckin' bills in three fuckin months! An' my millionaire roommate doesn't even know yet! You got that! I owe my mom, my dad, my sister, my brother, my ex-wife and my roommate! And they repossessed my car!

RICARDO

I got 12 dollars and 23 cents. An' I got paid this week.

EXT. LA BUS STATION - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

For some ungodly reason the LA bus station is situated in one of the worst areas of town, the heart of skid row.

Mike comes out, carrying his clothing hamper basket. He stops a moment among the mutts and scoundrels of skid row to get his bearings. Then he chugs up 7th Ave.

EXT. 7TH AVE - NIGHT

Mike struts all big chested along the deserted street. He shifts the clothing hamper basket to his other arm.

He passes three beat black guys sharing a stogy in a beat doorway. They glance at him, then look away.

He crosses a street. A small fire flickers in the middle of the street. Just a fire, nothing else.

Mike stops, holds out his palm. It's starting to rain.

EXT. SKID ROW STREETS - NIGHT

Mike chugs along in a thunder storm. A raspberry (hooker who'll fuck for crack) stands in a doorway out of the rain.

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

The street's vacant. Finally a bus arrives and Mike climbs in, fishing out his last buck.

INT. DALE'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Dale opens the door to find Mike, holding his clothing hamper basket, soaked like an catfish.

MIKE

My van exploded and burned down.
I've got nowhere else to go. All my
clothes burned. I don't even have
underwear . . .

DALE

Geeeeesssssss. . .

MIKE

. . . yeah . . .

DALE/RICARDO

Viva.

MIKE

I got 17 cents.

DALE

We got you covered.

INT. RICARDO'S CAR - DAWN

They cross the Nevada state line while Elvis sings ALONE on the stereo.

INT. CAESARS MAIN PIT - \$5 TABLE - DAY

Mike and Dale play. Ricardo's already cleaned out and can only watch from the side.

DALE

So an American, a Russian and an
Israeli are standing in line and a
guy comes up and says, "Excuse me,
is this the line for the meat?" And
the American goes: "What's a line?"
And the Russian goes: "What's meat?"
And the Israeli goes: "What's excuse
me?"

The dealer whisks away their bets.

EXT. VEGAS PAWN SHOP - DAY

They get out of Ricardo's car, head for the trunk:

DALE

What the fuck am I gonna do?!
(MORE)

DALE (CONT'D)

I lost his rent check!! I lost his
fuckin' rent check!!!

As they heft Joanie's sewing machine, which is still in it's
box, out of the trunk:

MIKE

Well...it wasn't all you. We lost
it too.

DALE

That's gonna make him feel so much
better! "Yeah Steve-O I'm not all to
blame THIS TIME the guys got twos on
their double downs too see I'm getting
MUCH better!"

They carry the sewing machine into the pawn shop.

MIKE

There's still hope!

DALE

Yeah the big one can hit LA an'
everyone I owe will die!

INT. PAWN SHOP -

OWNER

Sorry man, don't even want it.

RICARDO

But it's brand new. The box hasn't
even been opened.

OWNER

Sorry.

RICARDO

It's an overlocker. The best machine
made. Look at the receipt--\$800.

The guy looks at the receipt, hands it back to Ricardo.

OWNER

Sorry. We don't do sewing machines.

EXT. PAWN SHOP -

As they carry the machine back to the car:

MIKE

What's an overlocker?

RICARDO

I don't know. Some special machine.
She's gonna open a seamstress business
with her sister.

DALE

Not any more she ain't!!

EXT. SECOND PAWN SHOP - LATER

The guys heft the sewing machine inside...

INT. SECOND PAWN SHOP -

OWNER

We do jewelry, art, guns. We don't
do sewing machines.

EXT. SECOND PAWN SHOP -

The guys lug the fucking sewing machine back to the car.

EXT. THIRD PAWN SHOP -

They lug the sewing machine inside.

INT. THIRD PAWN SHOP -

OWNER

What am I gonna do with a sewing
machine?

MIKE

It's worth 800 bucks! It's brand
new, never been outta the box!
AND...it's an overlocker.

The owner sighs:

OWNER

40 bucks.

MIKE

40 BUCKS?! It's worth 800! Look at
the receipt!

OWNER

Yeah, I seen the receipt. Aw geeese
y'guys...45.

MIKE

45?!...50!

OWNER

45's best I can do.

GUYS

...ok...

INT. CAESARS MAIN PIT - \$5 TABLE - LATER

Ricardo buys in for 45 bucks.

MIKE

Y'sure you wouldn't want me to play instead?

RICARDO

It's my sewing machine an' I'm playing.

Ricardo puts out \$5. Deal. He hits. Busts.

Another \$5 bet. Deal. Ricardo stays. The dealer wins with his 20.

Another \$5 bet. Deal. Ricardo hits. Hits. Hits. Busts.

INT. CAESARS CAFE ROMA - LATER

The guys chow down.

MIKE (sarcastic)

At least we got a comped meal!

DALE

Thanks to me.

RICARDO

Nine hands in a row...Joanie's gonna kill me...

MIKE

Fuck Joanie!

DALE

This has gotta stop. We have got to stay away from Vegas for awhile. I'm serious. We have got to stay away.

RICARDO

But I must come back. They have my sewing machine.

DALE

Why in the fuck do we put ourselves through this shit?!

Mike chomps a big chopstick pile of his kung pao chicken:

MIKE

Well, y'know Dale, I've given this some thought. I don't know how're y'gonna take this, but I think it's because we can't accept our lives as being mediocre. They must flourish! They must be special!!

DALE

I love it! Why'd you think I wouldn't love that?!

MIKE

'Cause it's a little too deep. Too much in your face truth.

They think about it awhile, chomping their food with big noisy chomps.

MIKE (CONT'D)

An' you may ask--a la Talking Heads-- "and you may ask yourself"--(back to normal)--OK, if we can't accept shit, Dilbert lives, then why didn't we become doctors? We're certainly smart enough. Fuck, I was a National Merit Scholarship finalist! Top point 5 percent in the fuckin' nation. I finished high school with, if you can believe it, a 4.5 average-- straight A pluses four years running.

DALE

Yeah, fine, y'have to keep sayin' it tell it to the pit boss maybe he'll let you play on your 4.5 average.

MIKE

I never tell people! It makes the fall that much greater! An' y'know what?! I was also all-league football and baseball!

DALE

I got a 4.0...

MIKE

I laugh at your 4.0. Your 4.0 is Pee Wee Herman an' my 4.5 is John Fuckin' Holmes!

DALE

My 4.0 is NOT Pee Wee Herman! At least Ron Jeremy or something.

MIKE

Whatever. OK. Ron Jeremy. Maybe even better, but I don't know any more porno stars. You're the porno addict you weirdo.

They eat quietly. Mike pats Dale's monstrous gut.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Any sports? The marathon? Maybe high diving? Ha ha ha!

DALE

I was thin then. But no sports. I was in the drama group.

MIKE

That's my point! Why didn't we go into medicine, or politics, try to help society at large with good legislation, become priests--NO, I guess not priests. You could go on stage, make people laugh, bring a little joy into their miserable Dilbert lives.

DALE

Well...I guess a guy's gotta choose, suburbs or like y'say, flourish. I admire the guy who wears the Super Bowl ring. I despise the guy who goes to an office every day.

MIKE (laughing)

Like us!

EXT. RICARDO'S CAR - 15 SOUTH - DAY

It pulls off at the sign: "Barstow Next 4 Exits."

EXT. B OF A VERSATELLER MACHINE - BARSTOW B OF A - DAY

Ricardo tears his check from his checkbook, gives it to Dale. Dale punches a few numbers, inserts the envelope with Ricardo's check, waits, punches a few more keys.

DALE

Fuck! It'll only give me 200 bucks. Some checks must've already gone through.

He grabs the 200 bucks, then his card.

DALE (CONT'D)
(to Ricardo)
I'll write you a bad check.

As he scribbles a check, Ricardo inserts his card and punches keys.

RICARDO
It'll only give me a hundred.

DALE
We'll take it!

EXT. NEVADA STATE LINE - 15 FWY. - DAY

Ricardo's little car once again crosses into Nevada.

INT. CAESARS MAIN PIT - \$5 TABLE - DAY

As they sit:

MIKE
Y'guys sure you don't wanta let me
play with jus' the whole 300?

DALE
Will you shut up even you're losing!

They buy in. Lay bets. Play the first hand, hitting, passing, whatever. The dealer busts. They all settle in.

WAITRESS
Anyone care for a drink?

MIKE
Surrrrrrrrre...J.D., two cubes of
ice.

The play has come to Mike again. He passes. Dealer busts, pays everyone.

The guys all bump their bets to \$25. Deal. Ricardo stays. Dale splits Aces. Gets two 10s. Mike doubles, gets a 10. The dealer turns over a soft 17, pays everyone.

Mike and Dale leave \$50 out, Ricardo, \$25, as Mike's drink arrives. He tips her a silver dollar. Ricardo hits, stays. Dale and Mike stay on 20s. The dealer turns over a 5 on his 10, busts, pays everyone...

INT. SAME TABLE - LATER

The dealer busts. Dale jumps up, high fives the table.

DALE
THE HAPPY TABLE!!

TABLE
THE HAPPY TABLE!!!

INT. SAME TABLE - LATER

Dale doubles on an 11, gets a 10. Mike at third also doubles an 11, gets a 10. They're betting blacks.

And the dealer busts. The guys all nod to each other.

INT. SAME TABLE - LATER

Ricardo and dale have made their plays, are still in. Mike doubles, gets a 10 on his 10.

The dealer turns over a 5 on his 6, gets a 10, takes everyone's dough. He has to shuffle.

Mike signals for a conference; they huddle near some slot machines.

MIKE
We've established our superior intelligence and the table's cooled. The smart thing to do is walk winners. The table's gone way south.

DALE
What're we gonna do?! We need John Holmes dough, not Pee Wee Herman!

RICARDO
I can get my sewing machine.

MIKE/DALE
Fuck your sewing machine!!

DALE
I need 4 thou jus' to break even in life!

MIKE
So...the World Series is goin on. I say we enter a satellite.

DALE
That's DOA! Those are the best players in the world!

MIKE
Don't get cowardly on me.
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

We've dropped a thou back so from a high we're sittin' on a thousand. We're gonna lose it all back at Black Jack, right? We all agree?

DALE/RICARDO

(nodding)

Probably...seems likely...

MIKE

Let's shift the battle front. Hit 'em quick with some aerial black jack. Change up on 'em--bring in the ground forces.

DALE

Why don't we just go over to the Mirage?

MIKE

We're not gonna get John Holmes dough in a 5-10 game at the Mirage. Time for the heavy artillery.

RICARDO

But those are the best players in the world...

MIKE

So are we!

DALE

What in the fuck ever led you to believe that?!

MIKE

Well I am!

DALE

What makes you think you're the one playing? I think I should play.

RICARDO

I think I should play!

MIKE

Now y'guys are just talkin' Swahili. It's obvious I'm the one who should be playin'.

DALE

Noooooooooooo, it's obvious I'm the one who should be playing.

RICARDO
I think I should play.

MIKE
Uh, y'guys, when I formulated this
suggestion I assumed I--

DALE
You assumed wrong.

INT. CAESARS CAGE -

MIKE
Pack a cards please.

The cashier hands over the old cards with the holes punched
through that they give to tourists.

INT. CASINO - CLOSED BLACK JACK TABLE -

Mike spreads the cards all over the felt. The guys look at
each other.

MIKE
I'm goin' last!

DALE
Aw fuck I'll go.

He takes a jack of spades.

DALE (CONT'D)
Beat fuckin' that!

Ricardo takes an Ace of diamonds. Dale groans.

MIKE
He can't play! That's ridiculous!
No comment on your talents bud, but,
well, this is life or death!

RICARDO
(smug)
Pick a card. Jus' pick a card.

MIKE
Aw fuck.

He grabs an Ace of hearts, slams it on the table.

MIKE (CONT'D)
TITS!!!

DALE
Well, that's probably a good omen.

EXT. CAESARS ENTRANCE -

DALE

We should walk, save the dough.

MIKE

We're not walking to the World Series!
I got six extra bucks.

DALE

4...37.

RICARDO

2...12.

EXT. BINIONS - CAB - NIGHT

Mike pays the cabby:

MIKE

Sorry 'bout the tip bud. Getchya
next time.

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - SIGN UP WINDOW -

Mike signs in. Plunks down \$1000. Gets World Series chips.

INT. SATELLITE SECTION -

HOST

Game?

MIKE

No limit hold em.

As the host leads him to a table:

MIKE (CONT'D)

How many entrants so far?

HOST

Around 250. We're gonna close the
satellites pretty soon. The tournament
starts tomorrow morning.

At the table:

HOST (CONT'D)

Ok ladies and gentlemen--

PLAYER

Who you calling a gentleman?

WOMAN PLAYER

Who you callin' a lady?

HOST

That's a full table. Good luck.

ANOTHER PLAYER

Luck's got nothin' to do with it.
I'm the best player in the country.

MIKE

Too bad this is the city.

INT. SATELLITE TABLE - LATER

A player stands as the dealer pushes the pot to Mike:

KNOCKED OUT PLAYER

Good luck everyone.

That leaves 7. Deal.

INSERT - Mike's hand: jack, two, off suit.

A couple of checks. A player bets \$300. Players fold. Mike is obviously up close to a thousand. He calls. The rest fold.

FLOP: jack, two, seven, all spades.

Bettor: \$500. Mike raises \$300. Bettor pauses. Calls.

4th street: 2.

Bettor checks. Mike goes all in.

DEALER

Bets 900. He's all in.

The bettor gazes at him. Players shake their heads, totally confused. Finally the bettor calls, shaking his head.

Both players turn over their cards. The bettor of course has spades in the hole for a flush. Players whistle, agitate in their chairs, grumble:

PLAYERS

(to themselves)

Jack two?! How can he play jack
two?

River: 8 (nohelp).

The dealer pushes the pot to Mike and his full house. Players shake their heads, grumble to each other.

Dale calls Mike over to the rail. The dealer throws the "out" puck at his spot and Mike heads over to Dale:

DALE

(pissed, whispering)

What the FUCK y'playin' a jack, two off suit?!

MIKE

I won didn't I? (apologetic)
I know, I know. Heyyyyyyy, don't worryyyyyyyyyyy...

DALE

Don't worry?! My LIFE depends on your jack, two off suit!

MIKE

Jus' keep easin' the pressure off like that!

DALE

It's a jack, two! I saw some other boner plays, like that 7, 3. Your dumb luck ain't gonna last!

MIKE

OK! OK! Fuck. It's not my main game. But thanks for the advice. It takes a big man to admit a mistake and, well, I guess you've heard women talk 'bout me.

DALE

Fuck you! My whole life is ridin' on you and you're acting like you're at a Pink Floyd concert!

MIKE

(dead serious, finally)

OK! Fuck. I'm serious. Stealth bombings for now on. Ok?

He turns, but turns back:

MIKE (CONT'D)

But y'guys, I gotta tell ya: this is a fuckin' blast! You've gotta enter sometime. Don't worry--the Bls are in the air.

INT. SATELLITE TABLE - LATER

The best player in the country goes all in. Only Mike faces him and he calls. Mike shows: 3 queens.

The best player boils and grumbles and agitates and finally CRUMBLES his cards in his big, meaty fists and--

PLAYERS/DEALER
HEY! HEY! WATCH IT!

--HURLS them down the felt where they bounce off Mike's chips and the best player stands kicking his chair to the ground and stalks off.

PLAYER
Well, in all my years of playin'
poker I've NEVER seen that!

MIKE
He's the best player in the country
but he's been in a slump for 20 years.

The table laughs. The best player in the country stalks back and points his fierce, quaking finger at Mike:

BEST PLAYER
YOU LAUGH AT YOUR MOTHER FUCKER! YOU
LAUGH AT YOUR MOTHER!

Pit bosses move in--

PIT BOSSES
What's your problem sir?!

--but the psycho rumbles off.

Mike leans to the lady next to him:

MIKE
You'll protect me, won't you?

LADY PLAYER
Y'got the hot hand handsome. Won't
last forever.

INT. SATELLITE TABLE - LATER

Only four players remain. Two bet. Mike tosses his cards.

INT. SATELLITE TABLE - LATER

The dealer pushes the pot to another player. Another stands, grabs his cigarette, nods to Mike and the two remaining players, and leaves.

Mike's chips: about \$6000.

INT. SATELLITE TABLE - LATER

Dale and Ricardo stand at the rail and watch Mike's table.

Mike, the lady and other player show:

MIKE

Ouch!

DEALER

Straight. 7 high.

The lady is out, stands.

MIKE

(to remaining player)

You played the 2, 3...

PLAYER

(chuckles)

You be doin' that oll night!

LADY PLAYER

Not lately he hasn't. Good luck gentlemen.

Mike tosses in his blind bet. Deal. The player raises 500. Mike folds.

The player tosses in his blind. The dealer shuffles, cuts. Deal. Mike raises the blind \$100. The player raises \$300. Mike folds.

The dealer pushes the pot to the player, shuffles, cuts, deals. The player raises Mike's blind \$500. Mike raises \$500. The player doesn't hesitate: he goes all in with his last two thousand.

DEALER

He's all in. Fifteen hundred to you sir.

Mike gazes at the player. He calls, then turns over his cards to show two jacks. The player lays down two kings.

Flop: 2, 7, 10. Burn. 4th street: 7. Burn. River: nohelp. The player's kings hold and the dealer pushes the pot to him. The player lights a cigarette.

Blind, shuffle, cut. Deal. Mike tosses his cards and the dealer pushes the blind back to the player.

Deal. The player raises the blind \$1000. Mike raises \$1000. The player goes all in. Mike matches and they both turn over their hands, Mike's Aces against the player's pocket kings.

Dale and Ricardo jump with excitement.

Flop: the player gets a third king.

Dale and Ricardo hang their heads, can barely peak through their hands to watch.

Turn: nohelp. Fifth: Ace.

DALE
YES! YES! YES!

He high fives Ricardo as the dealer pushes all the chips to Mike.

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM --

DALE (CONT'D)
This is what I say we do: walk.
Cash in an' walk.

RICARDO
I agree.

DALE
We talked about it while you were playing.

Mike shakes his head.

DALE (CONT'D)
Mike! We got 10 thou! All our problems are solved!

MIKE
Uh, well, guys, I didn't tell ya this, I only learned it when I bought in, but--you can't. These are only World Series chips. Y'can't cash 'em in.

DALE
You're fuckin' shittin' me!

MIKE
Ask 'em dude. Fuckin' ask 'em. The ship's sailed, we're on it, an' we're in the middle of the ocean.

DALE
I don't fuckin' believe this!

MIKE
Aren't y'guys even gonna congratulate me?

DALE
Yeah yeah how'd you ever get me in this?

MIKE

Dale, one word: Dilbertland.

DALE

Yeah yeah you jus' better get in the fuckin' money!

INT. BINIONS KENO SEATS - WEE MORNING HOURS

A guard passes by the guys. Mike slumbers between Dale and Ricardo. Dale's leaning over Mike to Ricardo. His mouth is yabbering away, but no sound's coming out. As soon as the guard leaves, Dale quits the show and flops back in his chair.

He leans to Ricardo again:

DALE

Don't fall asleep on me! I need you!

RICARDO (whispers)

I can't do it anymore...

Dale leaps from his chair, shakes Ricardo:

DALE

Wake up you little Egyptian! Think of me! I haven't eaten in a day!

MIKE

(eyes closed)

You could use a few days of fasting. A few years maybe.

DALE

Shut up! Get some sleep!

Mike opens his eyes.

MIKE

I can't. I'm too excited. Tell me a joke. That'll put me to sleep.

Ricardo laughs.

DALE

Oh you're pretty cocky Mr. Satellite Winner!

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - MORNING

Hundreds of players mill about, smoke, gab, laugh. The head of the poker room, dressed in a tux, grabs a microphone at the scoreboard.

POKER ROOM MANAGER

Ladies and gentlemen may I have your attention pleeeeeeeese! (he waits)

Will all contestants in the no limit hold em tournament please take your seats at your tables.

The huge crowd of spectators whoops and applauds.

POKER ROOM MANAGER (CONT'D)

Now ladies and gentlemen, the tournament you've all been waiting for! NO LIMIT HOLD EM! Or as the great Doyle Brunson called it: Blood, Sweat and FEARS! This year we have 267 of the best players in the world competing for the first prize money of...one million...five hundred and fifty thousand dollars!

(crowd whoops)

And this year 22 players will finish in the money, the highest number of money finishers we've ever had. There will be no ante until the final championship table. Small blind is \$100. Big blind: \$300. And as the game is so appropriately named, the only limit to the bets is the amount of money you have in front of you. This year the tournament is being televised to 33 countries. So play hard, but clean. And always keep the proper perspective: it's just a game. Did I just say that? If no one's gonna stop me from wasting everyone's time, I'll stick my own sock in my mouth: I hereby declare the NO LIMIT HOLD EM TOURNAMENT OPEN! Good luck to all a ya! Now deal those damn cards!

The crowd whoops and hollers as the players settle in.

ANGLE--THE GUYS:

MIKE

Have y'seen Johnny Chan?

DALE

Fuck Johnny Chan! Focus on your job! How y'feel?

MIKE

Heyyyyy, it's jus' another poker game.

RICARDO

That our whole lives depend on.

MIKE

Stop saying that! Geesus fuck!

Mike finds his seat. Lines up his \$10,000 in chips. Looks around the table at a variety of, to be truthful, rather average looking people. The dealer slides the "Dealer" puck to the player to his immediate left. Small and big blinds throw in their dough.

DEALER

Good luck players.

He deals. First 3 players fold. So does Mike. A few bet. The dealer rolls the flop. A player bets a grand. Another raises a grand. Everyone else calls. Mike watches it all. The turn. More betting, all fast and forceful. Players fold and the winner tosses in his cards, not showing.

Deal.

INSERT--Mike's hand: two eights.

A player bets \$500. Mike raises \$500. Two others hang. The rest fold. Flop: two spades and another 8. Bet: \$1000. Mike raises \$2000. One player calls. Turn: 4 of spades. Mike bets a grand. The other player raises \$5000. Mike folds, knowing he's got a spade flush, though the winner doesn't show his cards.

After two hands Mike's down five grand. Half of his original ten. He turns to Dale and Ricardo, grins grimly.

Mike tosses in his \$300 big blind bet. Deal. Players bet and raise. Fast and forceful. No one's foolin' around here. Mike tosses in his cards. Watches the hand.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

Dale and Ricardo watch with sad sack faces.

There's still ten players at Mike's table. Mike calls on fifth street, shows two jacks to trip up with one on the table. Tough shit--he loses to pocket kings with the third sitting on fourth street.

As he watches the dealer push the pot to the trip kings, we see he only has about three grand left. And he has to throw in another blind of \$300.

Deal.

INSERT - Mike's hand: Ace, king, both spades.

A couple of bets, fortunately small: \$500. Mike calls. Flop: two more spades and a nohelp. Betting reaches \$3000. Mike tosses in his \$1500.

MIKE

All in.

The dealer creates two pots separating out Mike's \$1500 and the players', then pushing the rest in another pile. Turn: Ace diamonds. Mike watches the two other players bet, raise, re-raise and call. Their money goes in the bigger pot.

River: spade. A player goes all in. The other calls. Show cards--player 1: two pair, kings high. Player 2: jack high spade flush. Mike: Ace high spade flush. The dealer pushes the smaller pot to him, the bigger to the jack flush. The guy who went all in stands and mopes away.

Mike glances back to Dale and Ricardo. Dale rolls his eyes, whistles, like: "close one." Mike nods.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

INSERT - Mike's hand: two 10s.

There's a 10 on the flop. It's the highest card in the flop. And an Ace sits on 4th street.

Mike stares at the bettor. The bettor grabs chips, drops one, grabs it, then throws in \$3000. Mike stares him down. He throws in \$3000, plus all his chips.

DEALER

Raises 45 hundred. He's all in.

The player hesitates, shakes his head, then tosses his cards.

INT. POKER ROOM - LATER

Mike huddles with Dale and Ricardo:

DALE (whispering)

He coulda had pocket aces!

MIKE

He didn't. I know he didn't.

DALE

How the hell y'know?!

MIKE

I knew man. He was bluffin', an' I knew. How're y'guys doin'?

DALE

I haven't eaten or slept in 40 hours!

MIKE

Well I haven't eaten, slept or had a drink in 40 hours!

RICARDO

He coulda had pocket Aces...You went all in.

MIKE

In life every breath can be your last and in this game every hand can be your last. Guys, this ain't Dilbertland, it's the real thing. We better get used to it. It's fuckin' outta sight!

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - NIGHT

As the dealer pushes the pot to Mike and his king high two pair, a player stands, out, leaving only four. A pit boss walks up:

PIT BOSS

Ok gentlemen. We're gonna move you to another table. Congratulations.

Mike and the three players collect their chips, follow the pit boss to another table of six players.

Mike sits. Stacks his chips. Looks around the table. Johnny Chan himself sits across from him. Mike instantly glances away, but then musters his courage and turns his gaze back at The Great One, The Yellow Scourge, The China Express.

Chan doesn't even acknowledge him. He's mean, totally focused, hard, hating this interruption. All he wants to do is see the next fucking cards and take everybody's money. Chan has about 100 grand in front of him. Mike: about 30.

ANGLE - DALE, RICARDO:

DALE

I fuckin' don't believe it. That's Johnny Chan...

RICARDO

Oh no...

DALE

An' I think the other guy with the hair is Reese.

Deal.

A player raises the blind \$2000. Others fold. Mike folds. Chan tosses in \$5000. No. He doesn't "toss." He bombs. When Chan plays he leans over the table like he's going to kill every greasy enemy and eat them with his won ton soup.

Players fold. Reese calls. Flop: king, jack, nine, off suit. Reese bets 10 thou. Chan raises 10 thou. Reese doesn't hesitate but calls immediately. 4th street: king. Reese bets 20 gs. Chan raises 30.

Mike glances back to Dale and Ricardo, making sure they're catching this.

DEALER
Raises 30 large.

Reese smiles. Calls. River: 2

REESE
Check.

Chan goes all in:

DEALER (to Reese)
30 to you sir. He's all in.

Reese smiles:

REESE
Oh Johnny-boy I'd love to give you
the boot right now. (tosses cards)

But y'got it.

The dealer pushes the humongous pot to Chan.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

Mike folds. Again.

CHAN
Y'a spectator kid or y'gonna play
with us sometime?

Mike simply shrugs, smiles. After the flop he watches Chan throw in five grand.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

Mike folds again. Others bet. Chan and Reese call. Everyone's now ignoring Mike.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

Before the flop Reese bets five gs. Players fold. Mike calls.

CHAN

I'd forgotten you were there kid.

He calls. Flop: three kings. Reese bets another \$5000. Mike calls. Chan folds. Turn: nohelp. Reese looks at Mike. Can't figure him out. Checks.

MIKE

Check.

Fifth street: nohelp. Reese bets \$5000. Mike calls. Mike turns over a 10, 3, off suit. The entire table looks at him in shock. Chan actually laughs. Reese flips over a pair of sevens. He looks around the table:

REESE

Ooooweeoooooweeooooeweee I think we've entered the twilight zone.

POKER HOST

Ok players! First sleep break. Play resumes in five hours.

INT. BINIONS KENO CHAIRS - LATER

DALE

10, 3?! They were laughing at you!

MIKE

These guys are fuckin' tough.

DALE

Where's Mister Every Breath Can Be Your Last? My grandma who's dead could beat a 10, 3! Why even wait 'till you lose? I might as well kill myself right now!

MIKE

Well that'll clear one debt.

DALE

(to Ricardo)

You're my witness. If I kill myself this 10, 3 player owes me four thousand and it goes to my Dad.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - MORNING

As Mike sits:

CHAN

I didn't think you'd even come back
10, 3.

Mike ignores Chan.

Deal. Bets and folds. Mike folds.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

Mike folds again on the first two cards as chips fly from other players.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

A player bets 10 grand. Players fold. Mike calls. Players notice. Chan calls. Flop: Ace, 10, 7, off suit.

The bettor bets 10 grand. Mike goes all in with a raise of \$5000.

ANGLE - Dale closes his eyes.

Chan calls. The rest fold. Chan shows: pocket 10s. Mike shows pocket Aces. Turn: jack. Burn. Fifth street: 9.

The dealer pushes the pot to Mike.

CHAN

Good hand kid.

MIKE

Thanks pops.

Chan glares at him, then chuckles.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

Felt: three spades on the flop, one of which is a king.

Chan looks at Mike's chips. He bets 10 thou. Everyone folds. Mike goes all in with his 10 thousand. He lays down his cards: Ace, 10, both spades. Chan lays down cowboys. Turn: 2 (nohelp). Burn. Fifth: 8. No pair. The dealer pushes the pot to Mike.

Chan watches Mike stack his chips, then looks away.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

INSERT - Mike's hand: 10, 3, off suit.

Players fold. Chan bets 10 thou. Reese calls. Mike raises 10 grand. Chan calls. Reese folds.

Flop: Ace, jack, 3, off suit. Chan bets 10 thousand. Mike matches, then goes all in.

DEALER

Raise...18 thousand. He's all in.

Chan glares at Mike, but tosses his cards. Mike tosses his cards, cool as the icy moon of Io. He just bluffed Chan, but no one will ever know.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - NIGHT

Mike shows Ace, king to match an Ace, king on the board.

DEALER

Two pair, Aces.

He pushes the pot to Mike. A player stands, knocked out by Mike.

INT. BINIONS KENO SEATS - NIGHT

Ricardo snores in a chair.

MIKE

'Member that 18 thou all in?

Nobody's shaved or showered for 2 1/2 days. Nobody's slept. Nobody's eaten.

DALE (dead)

Yeah...

MIKE

I had a 10, 3.

DALE (too tired)

Don't even tell me...

MIKE

I bluffed Chan!

DALE

What's food? What's sleep? I'd eat a falafel an' I HATE falafels...

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - MORNING

Half the tables are now empty, would be champs up in their rooms sleeping like babies: sleep for an hour, wake up and cry for an hour, sleep for an hour, cry for an hour.

Mike, Chan, Reese and another player are led to another table:

GABE KAPLAN

Johnny! Chippy! You hackers made it
this far?!

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER

Now, because three of the world's top players are at one table, including "Mr. Kotter," who's also a big poker player, a TV camera covers the play.

Deal. A player bets 10 grand. Reese calls. Others fold. Mike calls. Chan raises 10. The player, Reese and Mike all call. Flop: jack, jack, queen. Bettor bets 10 gs. Reese folds. Mike calls. Chan looks at Mike, stares him down:

CHAN

How much y'got left kid?

MIKE

Enough.

Chan counts out his bet:

CHAN

Looks like 'bout 50.

The bettor actually calls.

MIKE

Good eye pops...

Mike goes all in with his 50 thou.

Dale and Ricardo hold each other desperately for dear, fractured life.

TV SCREEN - SHOWING THE TABLE:

TV COMMENTATOR

(British accent, a la
golf tourney, O.S.)

The pot has now reached 250,000,
with one player all in. Mr. Chan
apparently has decided to try to
eliminate the player from the
tournament.

Turn: 10. Bettor checks. Chan bets 50 thou. The bettor calls. Fifth: 10. Bettor bets 50 thou. Chan checks bettor's chips, then raises 25 thousand.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And now it appears that Mr. Chan is
trying to eliminate two players in
the same hand...

The better goes all in with his 25 thou.

Chan's hand: two queens for a full house, queens up. Bettor shows pocket 10s to make four of a kind. Mike lays down pocket jacks.

Dale and Ricardo JUMP up and down still holding each other.

DEALER (pushing pots)
Four tens...an' four jacks...

TV SCREEN - shots on Chan, his suddenly shrimpy chip towers, Mike, the bettor, the table.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Well Mr. Chan certainly took an injurious pummeling there!

EXPERT COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Johnny plays tough. There's no doubt he saw the possibility of a player holding jacks, but took the gamble that since two players were still in the jacks were split between 'em an' they were both bettin' their trips after the flop. The jacks played it beautifully, soft bettin' even though he already had the four of a kind on the flop. Man that was a beautiful sucker bet.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Do you recognize this young upstart who just suckered as you say one of the world's greatest players?

EXPERT COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Nevah seen the guy, but what play-- he kept Chan in, and kept the 10s, who, to be honest, shoulda nevah been in at all. He had to figure at least one player had at least a hole jack an' his 10s were beat. He jus' got real lucky on the river when he shouldn't even a been playin' the flop!

Chan's pissed. He's dismissed the 10s because he got it on the river. But he's glaring down at Mike as Mike calmly stacks his \$250,000.

MIKE
Nice hand, huh pops?

Chan nods. Calms down. Winks. Everyone in the world knows Chan's gonna take his time then bomb the shit out of Mike.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - AFTERNOON

A player goes all in. Chan and Reese call. All show. The dealer pushes the pot to Chan. The all-in player stands.

TV SCREEN - Chan's chips: he's making a comeback. The camera zooms in on his steady hands stacking the win like they're skinning a lion.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATER (AFTERNOON)

Mike shows a heart flush he caught on the turn. Beating Chan's three queens and another player's two pair aces high. The player stands, bumped, mutters away. He reaches the rail and hugs his wife, who's weeping in a handkerchief. The booted player starts to sob on her shoulder!

HOST

Fifteen minute break gentlemen.

Most players stand and stretch. Mike and Chan lock eyes as Mike stacks his chips. It's a stare down Mike refuses to lose.

Then a jacket sticks a microphone in Mike's face:

TV REPORTER

Can we get your name sir, for the viewers?

MIKE

Mr. Vegas.

EXPERT COMMENTATOR

(chuckles, O.S.)

I'd say that's good tax planning...

Chan stands, leaves.

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - BREAK - AFTERNOON

MIKE

If I had the money I'd get a fuckin' razor.

DALE

You're gettin' pretty cocky, and cavalier.

MIKE

I'm still in the tournament an' you're questionin' my play?

DALE

First off, there's other players at the table besides Chan--

MIKE

Y'know Dale, you're afraid.

DALE

Now wait--

MIKE

No. You wait. You're afraid a winnin'.

DALE

Fuck you!

MIKE

No, fuck you! That's why you're still in the office. All you fuckin' Dilberts like to hang together for comfort. A bunch a loser refugees who lost the fuckin' war losers huddled in their little life boat cubicles--

DALE

Fuck you--

MIKE

No. Fuck you.

RICARDO

C'mon y'guys...

DALE

You're still a nine dollar an hour office boy--

MIKE

No! I'm not. You fuckin' got it? I'm not. That's your hang up. An' that's why you're at that Dilbert rail watchin' while I'm playin'. (suddenly smiles) Awwwww Daly you're jus' doin' this to keep me all riled for the table.

DALE (dead serious)

Y'get too cocky you're gonna get shot down.

MIKE (dead serious)
Y'guys better know one thing: I'm
not playin' jus' to get in the money.
I'm playin' for first place. I'm
playin' for the million an' a half
fuckin' bucks. Chan's in my way an'
I'm gonna move 'im. Reese's in my
way an' I'm gonna fuckin' move HIM.
Every one of those guys in there are
in my way an' they're gettin' moved.

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - LATER (AFTERNOON)

By now there's only seven tables still in play. A couple of
players at different tables stand, slither away.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
And now a player each at table five
and at table seven have been
eliminated leaving sixty-seven...

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - NIGHT

On the felt there's a king and a queen. The remaining three
cards are nohelps. Chan bets 70 thousand. Chip Reese looks
at him. Tossing cards:

CHIP REESE
Aw Johnny I always know when y'got
it.

Mike stares down Chan. Then he counts out 70 grand and lays
it in the pot.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
And Mr. Vegas as he calls himself
doesn't seem to believe Mr. Chan...

Mike shows pocket queens giving him trips. Chan lays down
pocket cowboys.

ANGLE - DALE AND RICARDO:

DALE (hissing)
That fucker everyone knew he had
kings.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
That must be a devastating loss to
Mr. Vegas. He still has a bit on
the felt but the loss may be more on
the mental ledger.

EXPERT COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

This game is all mental. This young player's been playin' some great cards but he pushed too hard there an' it's gotta hurt. An' I tell ya from goin' up against these guys myself, pros like these guys in this tournament an' at this table can smell weakness like sharks.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATE NIGHT

A player bets 25 thou. Chan raises 50. Mike folds.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATE NIGHT

Mike calls Reese. They show. The dealer pushes the pot to Reese.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATE HOURS

Mike shows against another player. He watches the dealer push the pot away. Everyone stands for the sleep break.

INT. BINIONS KENO CHAIRS - LATE NIGHT

GUARD

Y'guys gotta go I seen ya heh three nights in a row.

Dale and Mike shrug, nod to the guy. Mike wakes up Ricardo.

MIKE

C'mon, we're goin' to rock bottom...

INT. BINIONS SLOT MACHINES -

Walking aimlessly:

MIKE

Y'happy? I lost the edge.

DALE

Noooooo...That doesn't make me happy. I want you to win. Not only do our lives depend on this round, I...you're right. I don't wanta go back.

MIKE

An' maybe I was too cocky...

Dale and Ricardo nod.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Cool...There's 39 left...

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - MORNING

As Mike joins the rest at the table:

DALE (O.S.)
At your table there's three with
about 25 thou.

SHOTS OF THE PLAYERS:

MIKE (O.S.)
I figure Reese and Mr. Cigar for
about 50.

RICARDO (O.S.)
A coupla guys got about 30.

DALE (O.S.)
An' Chan's back up there at about
150.

MIKE (O.S.)
An' I'm fuckin' low man with 20.

Deal. Folds. Bets.

DALE (O.S.)
You're gonna be the first one they
go after.

Mike folds.

MIKE (O.S.)
I know.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - MORNING

Flop: Ace spades, king spades, king. Three players bet.

DEALER
15 to you.

TV SCREEN - Mike goes all in.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
And now Mr. Vegas is the second player
to go all in on this hand.

Dale and Ricardo can only look down at their stinky feet.

Turn: 10 spades. Chan opens with 50 thousand. Players fold.
One guy goes all in with his 50 thou. The dealer creates
the second pot while Mike and the other all in player can
only watch.

Fifth: Ace. Everyone's all in but Chan. One player shows a spade flush, high hole 10. The other shows spades, high hole queen. Chan shows a king for kings up full. Mike turns over pocket Aces for four of a kind. (His Aces full on the flop would have won anyway.)

TV SCREEN - the two all ins crawl away. The big pot to Chan, the small pot to Mike.

EXPERT COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
Oh that river Ace killed the flushes!

Johnny actually won on the river!

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)
And that leaves now just 28 players
left in the tournament.

INT. POKER ROOM -

A host escorts four players over to Mike's table, leaving only three tables in action. Because of the celebrity players, all cameras are now on their table and a huge audience hovers over the rail.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - LATE MORNING

Mike lays down a queen, 10 to match a queen, 10 on the board. There's an Ace on the flop. But the other player simply tosses his cards, stands, and takes the boot in the ass. Mike makes a victory fist under the table to the guys at the rail.

INT. MEN'S ROOM -

All three at the piss pots:

MIKE
220 to be exact.

DALE
I see three guys with less than 75.

That guy with all the gold on his neck has less than 25.

RICARDO
Reese has got 240 exactly. I counted.

DALE
An' Chan's got 310--

Jus' then The China Express himself walks in and takes the urinal two down from Mike. The guys clam up.

CHAN

That guy coulda had Aces up.

MIKE

That's what he wanted me to think.

Chan smiles, nods.

CHAN

Where you play kid?

MIKE

Hollywood Park. An' a lotta black jack up here.

CHAN

Black jack's all luck. Poker's a talent game. You should play poker exclusively. You've got the talent. Name's Johnny.

MIKE

Mike.

CHAN

See ya out there.

He leaves.

RICARDO

What a nice guy!

DALE

That was way cool a 'im.

MIKE

Are y'guys fuckin' crazy he just played a sucker bet! I've sat across his fuckin' eyes for three days. He's the smiley hit man. I'm beatin' that fucker's ass!

TV SCREEN - another table: a player stands, leaves to light applause.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

And now we've reached the "down and dirty" as the locals say out here in the west. 23 players remain. One more will leave empty handed...

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - AFTERNOON

Deal. Mike bets 50 thousand. Players fold. Chan raises 25. Another player calls. Flop: three spades.

Mike hesitates, then checks. Chan checks. The player bets 50 thousand. Mike counts the player's chips, raises 75 thousand. Chan tosses his cards staring real steady at Mike.

DEALER

Bumps 75...

TV SCREEN - the player goes all in with 75.

EXPERT COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

Check raise, man Mr. Vegas ain't taking no prisoners...

Players cards: king, 10, both spades. Mike's: Ace, 7, both spades. The player hangs his head, then stands, not even waiting to see the dealer finish, as the audience starts a low ovation which grows. Burn, fourth, burn, fifth, and it's official.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

And there you have it ladies and gentlemen! Mr. Vegas has just bumped number 23 and all remaining players will finish in the money!

The spectators applaud.

Dale and Ricardo WEEP and HUG and WEEP some more.

DALE

YES! YES! YES! YES! YES!

Mike stands and faces the guys; he holds his fist up for victory.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - NIGHT

Reese lays down two jacks to trip up on the board. A player stands and waves to the crowd which applauds him. Mike turns to the guys for the thumbs up and they wave him on.

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - NIGHT

A player stands at another table to applause.

ANGLE - Dale and Ricardo whoop it up.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - NIGHT

Mike lays down Ace, king to match on the flop. A player stands.

INT. MIKE'S TABLE - NIGHT

Deal. Chan bets 50. Reese raises 50. Mike raises 50. Chan calls. Reese calls. Flop: queen, jack, king, off suit. Chan: 100 grand. Reese calls. Mike: raises 50. Chan raises 50. Reese folds. Mike calls.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

This is certainly the biggest pot of the tournament. It has now reached the starry heights of eight hundred and fifty thousand dollars...

Turn: jack. Chan counts Mike's chips. Smiles. Counts out his bet.

DEALER

150,000 to you...

Mike studies Chan's eyes. Smiles. He goes all in with 150,000.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

And now Mr. Vegas has gone all in for a pot totaling one million one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Mike lays down his cards: two queens for queens over. Chan reluctantly lays down a king, queen for kings up.

Dale and Ricardo JUMP. Their eyes bug out. The crowd gasps, oooohs and aaaaaahs...

EXPERT COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

Ohhhhh Vegas's got guts he pegged Chan on the bluff an' put his money out there an' now's got him beat on the board!

Mike fights a smug smile struggling across his face.

Burn.

Fifth: king.

The air in every lung in the entire room gets sucked out. An eerie silence hangs over the casino.

Dale and Ricardo CRUMBLE.

Then the crowd CHEERS.

TV COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

King on the river! The bloody bloke gotta king on the river!

TV SCREEN - Mike stands. He waves to the cheering crowd.

TABLE - Mike nods to Chan in congratulations. Chan nods back.

MIKE (to table)
Good luck gentlemen.

He leaves the table and faces the crowd who pound him with a THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

He LEAPS the rail and JUMPS into Dale's and Ricardo's arms. Fans clap him on the back. A girl kisses him.

MIKE (CONT'D)
The fucker got it on the river! He got it on the RIVER!

INT. BINIONS POKER ROOM - SCOREBOARD -

Mike talking with the poker room manager:

MIKE
Where'd I finish up?

MANAGER
Eighteenth. Congratulations Mr. Vegas.

DALE/RICARDO
How much?

MANAGER
One hundred and ten.

The guys all high five each other, joyous like it's the second coming.

MIKE
Great! Ok. Well, where's the money?

MANAGER
The prizes are distributed at the awards ceremony Sunday.

GUYS
SUNDAY?!

MIKE
But today is Friday...

MANAGER
It's quite an event. Televised live. Black tie. Great buffet. Open bar.

MIKE

Sounds great but we would really like the money now.

MANAGER

It's in the by laws. Can't get around it.

Mike puts his arm around the manager's shoulders:

MIKE

Ooooooooookayyyyyyyyyy, then can you put us up in a room until then?

MANAGER

Surrrrrrrre. For a money player the hotel's yours! We'll do you up right!

MIKE

An' a girl each for the three of us?

A suit confronts Mike. He's accompanied by a Binions official.

SUIT

Mr. Vegas I'm with the Internal Revenue Service and we're going to need your real name and you're going to have to sign this declaration form...

MIKE

Awwwww fuck...

INT. BINIONS SUITE - NIGHT

The guys charge in to the most lavish suite outside of Arabia. Champagne ices in silver buckets. Food steams from buffet trays. Two waiters stand at attention waiting for orders. No chicks though.

GUYS

YEAHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

INT. BINIONS SUITE - LAVISH SAUNA/SHOWER - LATER

The guys all pig out on plates in their hands in the sauna, soaking up the beautiful steamy shower...

MIKE

I spit in his kung pao chicken! River card...I knew he was bluffin' an' I called 'im an' y'know what I saw guys: fear in his eyes.

CLOSING CREDITS OVER THE FOLLOWING:

\$100 BLACK JACK TABLE -

Cards are dealt. The clanking of slot machines in the background. Hands placing BLACK and WHITE chip bets, passing, staying.

DALE (O.S.)

So this happened a coupla years ago when we were hacker players an' still had DAY jobs. It was a big weekend, Super Bowl or New Years or something, and we just couldn't get a room anywhere except at this place called the Casablanca wayyyyyyy out by Nellis Air Force base. Anyway, in the morning we're drivin' back to Vegas an' we're passing the Air Force base and Mike here goes: "Hey! Let's go check out the Air Force base! I've never seen one before!" So we drive over and at the gate there's a lane next to the booth where the MP sits and there's another lane farther to the side, for tanks or something, I don't know. An' Mike goes: "Hurry! Hurry! Take that one! We don't wanta talk to this guy!" So we're drivin' past the guy in the booth and he's waving at us, waving frantically and Mike here is waving back "Hiiiiiiiiii" playin' like he's a dumb tourist or something. And we get on the base. So now we're on the base and drivin' around and we're not on the base more'n TWO minutes when I see lights in my mirror an' it's an MP in an MP car tellin' us to pull over. So I pull over. And if you haven't noticed by now just sittin' at the table for the last hour or so, Mike's a big drinker. And it's 'bout 10 am so he's had a few an' he's got one of those big 40 ounce Budweisers in his hand. So I pull over. He screws on the top to the Budweiser, stashes it under the seat and leans into me an' says: "Don't worry, I'll handle this." So he gets outta the car an' starts to walk to the MP and the MP draws his gun. An' the MP's got the gun pointed at Mike and his hand is quaking and his trigger finger's shakin' and the MP shouts: "What I NEED you to do sir is get back in
(MORE)

DALE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
the car!" An' Mike right away shouts
back: "YOU'RE NEEDS?! WHAT ABOUT MY
NEEDS?!"

ESTHER (O.S.)
Dale..? Mike..? Ricardo..? Is that
you?

DALE (O.S.)
Oh my gawd Esther! Esther Yank!

ESTHER (O.S.)
Oh my gawd!!!

DALE (O.S.)
It's been years!

ESTHER (O.S.)
These are my daughters! Minny and
Debbie!

MIKE (O.S.)
Why hello Minny, helloooo Debbie...

THE END