

# UNTITLED MIAMI PROJECT

"Pilot"

by  
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FADE UP ON:

THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

Six nautical miles from the shores of South Beach. Just minutes after dawn and distantly, a SCHOOL OF DOLPHINS burst from the ocean, hurtling through the air and then diving back in a synchronized display of rhythm and beauty.

ROMAN (V.O.)

South Florida has been a smuggler's paradise since the day the Conquistadors landed in 1578.

IN THE FOREGROUND

We sense movement under the azure sea, more than just current, a LARGE OBJECT hurtling forward.

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

Back then, it was smuggling slaves and emeralds back to Spain.

Now a DORSAL FIN rises from below the murky depths, heralding something more dangerous than a killer whale.

A NARCO SUB

Rises from several meters beneath sea level. Nicknamed by its Colombian manufacturers "The Coffin" - because that's exactly what it is.

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

During Prohibition, rum-runners hauled illegal liquor from the Caribbean islands to the coast of Florida.

Made of welded fiberglass, painted blue like the sea, the Narco Sub is a semi-submersible fifty foot craft powered by a 225 kilowatt diesel engine and manned by a crew of two.

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

In the 60's, the hippies discovered marijuana and smugglers flew the "fine Colombian" into Florida by the ton, where it was hauled to every corner of the country.

We realize now that the dorsal fin was in fact the escape hatch for the two man crew. The hatch opens and a LATIN MAN clambers onto the top of the sub.

ROMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Then came the drug that changed  
everything. *Cocaina.*

WIDER NOW

As the sub slows to a near halt before a weathered TRAWLER with the signage "DIXIE FISHING TOURS." There are four sun-baked GOOD OLE BOYS to welcome the sub.

FISHING CAPTAIN  
Welcome to Miami!

LATIN MAN  
("I have to piss")  
*Tengo que pinche orinar.*

He takes a leak into the ocean. From below, a second CREWMATE hurls shrink-wrapped COCAINE PACKAGES (25 kilos per package) from the hatch into the ocean, where the packages bob buoyantly in the waves.

ROMAN (V.O.)  
The marijuana routes became cocaine routes, and the money hit Miami like a tidal wave.

CLOSE - on a symbol stamped in RED INK on the floating packages: a SCORPION.

ROMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
So much cash the Florida Federal Reserve had a five billion dollar surplus, and cocaine profits changed Miami's skyline overnight.

One of the Good Ole Boys grabs a long snare hook to retrieve the packages, but he's interrupted by the Captain--

FISHING CAPTAIN  
(looking starboard)  
What the hell's that?

From a distance, a high speed POWERBOAT angles toward the fishing trawler.

GOOD OLE 2ND MATE  
Too fast for Coast Guard.

FISHING CAPTAIN

(to Latin Man)

Did Morales say he was gonna send  
someone out?

LATIN MAN

(I don't know)

No se.

AND NOW - WE'RE IN THE SPEEDING POWERBOAT

Four HAITIAN PIRATES are on the boat, one pilot and three men  
holding Uzi submachine guns.

ROMAN (V.O.)

And with the money came, well, you  
can probably guess...

They power down on the fishing trawler and narco sub. Spraying  
bullets everywhere, a barrage of death.

FISHING CAPTAIN

Get below--!!!

He and his three Good Ole Boy cohorts are shredded by bullets,  
lethal swipes of blood crossing ample guts, their legs giving  
out from under them, dropping like turd sacks.

ON THE NARCO SUB

Latin Man desperately tries to jump back down the hatch, but  
a hail of bullets launch him into the surf. His body bobs  
beside packages of cocaine.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Over time, I would come to learn a  
hard Miami lesson, a lesson none of  
us wanted to hear.

A SECOND CREW-MATE reaches out from the sub and desperately  
slams the escape hatch shut. Too late.

FROM THE POWER BOAT

One of the Haitian pirates, BAPTISTE, fearsome (we'll meet  
him again later) jumps from the boat onto the top of the sub,  
Ingram machine pistol in hand.

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

So listen close while you sniff that  
yeyo, pop a pill, fuck that person  
(MORE)

ROMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 who isn't your wife or husband, make  
 sure you don't forget...

Haitian Pirate rips open the top of the hatch and fires into  
 the hold. There's a scream... then silence.

ROMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Every pleasure has a price.

As we HOLD on the BOBBING COKE and LIFELESS BODY in a frothy  
 blood-soaked sea.

CUT TO:

A FAT LINE OF SHIMMERY PINK COCAINE. A rolled up hundred  
 enters FRAME and the line gets hoovered. We are--

INT. THE MUTINY CLUB - NIGHT

Hoovered by a BEAUTIFUL BLOND in a shimmering silver lamé  
 outfit that leaves little to the imagination.

BEAUTIFUL BLOND  
 Holy shit.

CUBAN PLAYBOY  
 Straight off the boat.

The Mutiny Club is built like three plush apartments that run  
 together on three separate levels with mirrors, swimming pool,  
 bars, eight piece band, hundreds of tropical plants, a dance  
 floor, and a four star restaurant.

ROMAN (V.O.)  
 The hottest pleasure palace in Miami -  
 no, the whole damn world - was a  
 place that made Studio 54 look like  
 a church picnic...

CAMERA TRAVELS through a crowd that's equally Caucasian and  
 Latin, mostly rich, young and coked-up. The waitresses, called  
 the "Mutiny Girls," wear little coco channel hats along with  
 the shortest of shorts and high heels.

ROMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 The Mutiny Club.

At the door, there's a long line. Sexy GUESTS flash metallic  
 club cards embossed with the logo of a WINKING PIRATE. Large  
 speakers blast "Disco Inferno."

Lines of coke get snorted off tables, Dom Perignon pours by the gallon, the best food in Miami.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Fueling it all was cocaine: *yeyo...*  
*toot... blow... sniff... sugar...*  
*bump... nose candy.*

We PAN across an array of well-heeled guests, a who's who of rich, famous, and *infamous*. We catch LIZA MINELLI doing a bump with a bell-bottomed DRUG DEALER.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

There's Liza Minelli, she'll be up all night. The President of Argentina, hitting on a Mutiny Girl. And last night Paul Newman drank so much Chateau Lafitte he had to be carried up to his suite by a hostess.

More coke lines, more Dom, sexy people, a heightened hedonism that makes us kinda jealous.

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

The year was 1977 and the cocaine wars of Miami stop at our entrance. We were Switzerland, neutral territory, where drug dealers sent drinks over to DEA agents and avoided killing each other because everyone was having too much fun.

Toots from the mirror, toots from a vial, toots from a McDonald's plastic spoon.

EXT. MUTINY HOTEL - NIGHT

Our first WIDE view of the hotel, a twelve story, 138 room boutique pleasure palace framed by palm trees.

ROMAN (V.O.)

If you were lucky enough to book a room, you could stay at the hotel, a hundred thirty-eight rooms, each with its own sexy theme...

Along a curved driveway, an array of arriving cars: Bentleys, Ferrari's, Aston Martins, etc., overseen by a dozen VALETS.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

If the walls of this hotel could  
talk, they'd tell an epic story.  
But since they can't, I guess it's  
up to me.

Sexy girls in skimpy outfits march toward the entrance, ogled  
by rich young playboys in Porsches.

INT. MEN'S EMPLOYEE LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

ROMAN COMPTE, 38, checks himself in the mirror to the AM radio  
strains of the BeeGee's "Stayin" Alive." As for any Latin  
man, hair is important. He carefully adjusts his coiff.

ROMAN (V.O.)

My name's Roman Comppte, and I'm the  
General Manager of the Mutiny Club  
and Hotel.

BEEGEES

(on radio)

Whether you're a brother or whether  
you're a mother, you're stayin' alive,  
stayin' alive.

His open locker features PHOTOGRAPHS of Roman and a beautiful  
young DAUGHTER, her age ranging from five to fourteen in the  
various pictures.

ROMAN (V.O.)

That's my daughter Valeria. Isn't  
she pretty?

(then)

Everything I do is for her.

Roman's a handsome Cuban expat happy to be living free in  
America. To get here he's had to endure many hardships.

BEEGEES

(on radio)

Feel the city breaking and everybody  
shaking, and we're stayin' alive,  
stayin' alive.

Satisfied with his hair, he joins the Beegees.

ROMAN

Ah ha ha ha, stayin' alive, stayin'  
alive, ah ha ha ha stayin'  
aliiiiiive...

Energized, ready to attack the day, he shuts the locker door as the MUSIC plays over..

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Roman bursts into a busy, thriving kitchen where breakfast for many guests is being prepared. He exchanges greetings with sous chefs and dishwashers.

ROMAN

(to various)

*Miguel, ¿cómo está tu padre? José  
Luis, tarde en la noche? ¡Parece que  
el gato te arrastró! Chico, por favor  
hombre, usa una red para el cabello.*

They variously respond. It's clear he's beloved by the "downstairs" staff of this establishment. Roman taps the shoulder of a florid, overweight chef MANNY.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

What's the special, Manny?

MANNY

(passionately)

Chicken Florentine! It's gonna blow  
their minds!

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Roman bounds down a corridor, where he spots a MAID'S CART and LATIN MAID.

ROMAN

*Buenas dias, Angelica. How's your  
mamacita doing?*

MAID

Much better. Thank you for sending  
the flowers.

He continues down the corridor to find another MAID (Carmella) waiting for him by the door of a suite.

MAID #2

There was an orgy in the Arabian  
Nights Room. I found a whole bunch  
of stuff.

They share a look - he knows what that means.



INT. ARABIAN NIGHTS ROOM - NIGHT

Clearly post-orgy: scattered clothes and undergarments, empty bottles of champagne and uneaten food everywhere. Three NAKED WOMEN are sprawled on the water bed.

ROMAN  
Are these guests?

MAID #2  
Staff.

ROMAN  
Oh. Let 'em sleep.

MAID #2  
I found these under the bed.

Roman receives a COKE BAGGIE, a bag of PILLS, and a sizable LID OF GRASS.

MAID #2 (CONT'D)  
This too.

She hands him an oversized, ugly GLOCK pistol.

ROMAN  
I'll put it in the Lost and Found.

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - ROMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Roman slides into his cramped office, just a small desk and a couple chairs, surrounded by crates of paper towels and other hotel amenities and supplies.

He grabs the edge of a Cuban flag and pulls it away to reveal a large clawfoot FLOOR SAFE. This is the "Lost and Found." He quickly twirls the combination.

HIS P.O.V. - INSIDE THE SAFE

WE SEE a couple bags of coke, bags of quaaludes and other pills, and a half pound of grass. He adds the new drugs and carefully inspects the gun - removing the bullets.

Just then OMAR enters, Afro-Cuban, 30's, a maitre'd with a serious problem on his hands.

OMAR  
Roman, dig it. We're almost out of champagne.

ROMAN  
How's that possible?

OMAR  
Blackbeard and his crew just ordered two hundred bottles to fill their hot tub. Three cases left.

ROMAN  
Don't worry, push the tequila, wine or anything else. I'll send the plane to pick up a couple hundred cases from the Hyatt in Seattle.

Omar nods, still uncertain.

ROMAN (CONT'D)  
And Omar, smile. Life is good.

Omar calms - Roman's confidence is infectious, as we CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - LOBBY - DAY

Roman bursts into a sexy, grand lobby, thriving with activity and energy: bell-bottomed guests checking in and out, men's hair indistinguishable from the women's, a palpable sense of excitement. Roman takes it all in, loves this job.

He saunters through the lobby, spots a rag tag group of BRITS are checking out, one has a guitar case stenciled with the logo of LED ZEPPELIN.

JOHN BONHAM  
Hey, Roman!

Roman salutes the drummer, JOHN BONHAM.

ROMAN  
Mister Bonham, I trust you enjoyed your stay.

JOHN BONHAM  
(sheepishly)  
We had a bit of a mad evening. Everyone went bonkers really. Did a bit of damage to the room.

ROMAN  
Don't worry. I'll let maintenance know. Good luck with your tour.

JOHN BONHAM

Thanks. I'll want the Tiger Suite  
again when we get back.

INT. THE MUTINY CLUB - NIGHT

Roman enters the club proper, the colored lights and music washing over him, the effect the same on everyone who steps into this place: PURE EXCITEMENT.

The merriment has escalated to new heights. "Le Freak, C'est Chic" thumps through the speakers. Roman's eyes scan the room with practiced precision.

ROMAN (V.O.)

My job was to keep everyone happy at  
the pleasure palace. Especially my  
boss, owner Burton Greenberg.

Just then a very anxious BURTON GREENBERG approaches him, wearing sandals, a hippy robe, eyes dilated like saucers from coke - he speaks in quick nervous outbursts.

BURTON

Very important guest in the Lunar  
Dreams Suite. Hunter Thompson, you  
know him?

ROMAN

No.

BURTON

He's writing a piece on this hotel  
for Rolling Stone, he's my favorite  
fucking writer in the world. This  
is the greatest thing that's ever  
happened to me. Give him whatever  
he wants. Understand?

ROMAN

Of course--

BURTON

Oh... and the DEA is asking for you.

Burton points to two OBVIOUS DEA AGENTS who stand uncomfortably in the corner.

ROMAN

What do they want?

BURTON

How the hell should I know?!  
 Whatever it is, get `em out of here  
 or tell them to change their clothes.  
 They're stinking up the vibe.

And Burton is off. Roman approaches the two AGENTS, all smiles. He recognizes one of them immediately.

ROMAN

Hello, Tom.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

(embarrassed)

Hey Roman. Sorry about this, but  
 this is Agent Bill Crane from the  
 D.C. office.

AGENT CRANE

(to Hofstadter)

What the fuck are you apologizing to  
 him for?

(to Roman)

We want to talk to you about Nestor  
 Cabal.

FREEZE FRAME: ON ROMAN.

ROMAN (V.O.)

And that's when I knew the party was  
 over...

FADE TO BLACK.

UP WITH TITLES:

"HOTEL COCAINE"

The TITLES are meant to evoke a long ago time and place, edited with the freneticism of a coke binge. Miami of the late seventies. Blow, sexy people, Kama Sutra positions, meditation poses, the Bicentennial, streaking, gas lines, Fidel Castro, Jimmy Carter, Leonid Breznev, Cuban boat lifts and CIA spies, the "Me Decade" wrapped in one glorious bundle.

And now we--

FADE UP ON:

INT. ROMAN'S SMALL OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

AGENT TOM HOFSTADTER (30's) is a West Virginia boy with a likable drawl and years of surveillance at the Mutiny. Agent BILL CRANE (40's) is a career-climbing Washington prick whose sees every Latin in America as a probable drug dealer.

AGENT CRANE

When was the last time you saw Nestor Cabal?

ROMAN

Not for many years. He never comes to this hotel.

Roman sits at his small desk, beside the floor safe covered with the Cuban flag.

AGENT CRANE

Why not? Every other drug dealer in Miami does.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Roman, how come you never told me your brother was the biggest trafficker in Miami?

ROMAN

You never asked.

AGENT CRANE

Is that why you changed your name from Cabal to Compte?

ROMAN

I came to this country to start a new life. So I chose a new name.

AGENT CRANE

Really? You fought together at the Bay of Pigs. Spent two years in a Cuban prison. You, him and your little girl came to the U.S. on a boat together.

ROMAN

And went our separate ways. I'm not like him. I know nothing about what he does.

Crane pulls from a briefcase a photograph of the ruddy-faced Fishing Captain who met his death on the trawler.

AGENT CRANE

Tucker Tomlin. He was a Washington DEA agent on an undercover mission to discover the submersible routes the Cubans and Colombians are using to ship cocaine.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Killed this morning off the coast of South Beach. Your brother was the owner of the submersible and the fishing boat crew was hired by his men to haul the load to shore.

ROMAN

Got nothing to do with me.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Look, Roman, I've told Bill what an upstanding guy you are. But you know what happens when one of our own goes down. It's the fucking Cavalry.

ROMAN

What'm I supposed to do? I don't even know where he lives.

Crane digs back into his briefcase.

AGENT CRANE

Yeah, well, here's the deal. We've just made you a person of interest in the death of a Federal agent.

ROMAN

What does that mean?

AGENT CRANE

It means you're gonna do whatever the fuck we say, asshole.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Look, we just need you to gather some information.

ROMAN

He's not stupid. If I just show up out of nowhere and try to buddy up he'll see right through it.

AGENT CRANE

That's your problem, not ours. Give him a story. You miss him, you wanna patch things up.

ROMAN

No, I can't. I won't.

AGENT CRANE

Then we'll deport you and your daughter. And if we send you back to Cuba, I'm guessing you'll be shot on sight.

Off Roman, fucked, as we MOVE TO:

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - LOBBY - NIGHT

Roman trudges into the lobby, swagger gone, a man carrying a heavy load. He barely has time to take a breath before the Concierge steamrolls up.

CONCIERGE

Roman, lights are out on the disco floor again. Burton called to ask if you've accommodated Hunter Thompson's requests. And we have some guests with a complaint.

(gesturing)

The Feldmans.

This is the last shit Roman needs right now, but duty calls. He approaches an elderly Jewish couple, waiting impatiently by the front desk.

ROMAN

Hello, Mister and Missus Feldman. I'm the General Manager. How can I help you?

MR. FELDMAN

Our room's too noisy.

MRS. FELDMAN

People were having sex next door. Lots of them.

MR. FELDMAN

We were here twenty years ago. This place sure has changed.

ROMAN

I'm so sorry, let me see if I can move you. What room are you in?

MR. FELDMAN

The Hot Fudge Suite.

Roman motions for them to wait, approaches the Concierge.

ROMAN

Anything available?

CONCIERGE

(shrugs)

Roman, we're completely sold out.

Roman expected as much, returns to the couple.

ROMAN

Mister and Missus Feldman, the Mutiny Hotel would be happy to provide a complimentary suite at the Fountainebleau Hotel and we'll arrange your transportation over there. Would that be satisfactory?

MRS. FELDMAN

Oh yes, thank you.

They're clearly overjoyed to leave as soon as possible. Roman snaps his fingers for a bellhop.

INT. THE MUTINY CLUB - NIGHT

Roman enters the jam-packed club with a MAINTENANCE MAN by his side. The Hues Corporation is playing and the unlit disco floor is jammed with dancers.

HUES CORPORATION

(singing)

*So I'd like to know where, you got  
the notion, Said I'd like to know  
where, you got the notion.*

Before entering the maelstrom on the dance floor, Roman notices two people in a nonprime booth: the DEA Agents Crane and Hofstadter. Sipping beer, waiting...

HUES CORPORATION (CONT'D)

*Rock the boat, don't rock the boat  
baby, Rock the boat, don't tip the  
boat over.*



Roman and the Maintenance Man gingerly work their way through the crowd on the unlit disco floor. We see FLASHES of ecstatic faces, hot bodies, sinewy legs, ample cleavage. Everyone's having FUN. They reach the wall behind the floor, and Maintenance Man begins to work on the breaker box while Roman keeps the area clear of dancers.

ROMAN

Sorry for the inconvenience, it'll just be a moment.

Maintenance Man tinkers, and then as if by magic, the disco floor LIGHTS UP to a swelling cheer.

NEW ANGLE - ROMAN

He angles out of the club when he notices the occupant of a prime center banquette. This is CHUCHO, 20's, a wide lapel suit with open collar and coke spoon. He's smart, feral and ambitious. A human pit bull. The table's filled with four girls and two other guys. Roman approaches.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Mister Ramirez--

CHUCHO

It's Chucho - and get me another bottle of Dom.

ROMAN

Right away. But I need to send a message to your boss.

CHUCHO

I'm not your messenger boy, *hijo de puta*. Go fuck yourself. Get me that Dom before I wipe this floor with your ass.

Chucho and his coked-up friends laugh uproariously, but Roman fixes him with a cold stare.

CHUCHO (CONT'D)

You got a problem?

Roman's job is to diffuse situations like this, otherwise he'd take a swing at Chucho. Instead, he turns away.

EXT. MUTINY HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Roman commandeers a room service cart with a silver-domed plate.

He taps on the door of the "LUNAR SUITE". Giggling Mutiny Girls and their guests walk by as he knocks.

ROMAN

Hello. Mr. Thompson? Are you there?

After a few beats, Roman uses his pass key to enter.

INT. LUNAR DREAMS SUITE - DAY

A spaceship/UFO-themed suite with star constellations painted on the ceiling. Sitting in a flying-saucer shaped jacuzzi nursing a quart bottle of Chivas Regal and a painful hangover is HUNTER THOMPSON, 40's, cantankerous.

HUNTER THOMPSON

That better not be food.

ROMAN

This is from Burton Greenberg, owner of the Mutiny Hotel, as per your request.

Roman opens the silver dome off the plate to reveal a pile of pills, grass and cocaine.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Marijuana, Quaaludes - Lemmon 714s - and cocaine. Sorry I couldn't locate any Orange Barrel Sunshine, but I'm told this acid is very strong.

Roman holds up a sheet of paper. Thompson, intrigued, rises from the jacuzzi, NAKED, and heads towards the cart.

HUNTER THOMPSON

And who are you?

ROMAN

Roman Compte, I'm the General Manager. If there's anything else you need, please let me know.

HUNTER THOMPSON

Yeah, there is something else...

Hunter points to a typewriter in the corner with a ream of empty paper nearby.

HUNTER THOMPSON (CONT'D)

Tell me why I'm writing an article about a fucking Hotel?

ROMAN

I don't know, sir.

Hunter grabs the acid and heads back into the jacuzzi.

HUNTER THOMPSON

Because my editor at Rolling Stone  
thinks this place is the new Las  
Vegas. Bunch of bullshit.

ROMAN

Will that be all?

HUNTER THOMPSON

Where you from, Cuba?

Hunter tears a few tabs of acid off the blotter and sticks  
them beneath his tongue. Roman, stuck in the room, feels  
obliged to answer.

ROMAN

Yes sir.

HUNTER THOMPSON

And how's the American Dream working  
out for you? Slave to a bunch of  
hedonists.

ROMAN

I came to this country with nothing.  
Worked my way up from dishwasher, to  
busboy, bartender, now I'm general  
manager. So far, so good.

HUNTER THOMPSON

The three most important men who  
ever existed are Muhammad Ali, Bob  
Dylan and Fidel Castro. If I were  
you, I'd go back home.

ROMAN

The CIA trained me to kill Castro,  
and because I failed, he destroyed  
my home and murdered my wife.

There is a pregnant pause between the two men.

HUNTER THOMPSON

Well shit, maybe I'll write about  
that.

Roman bites his tongue at that, exits. Off Hunter, as the acid and ideas take shape in his fevered head...

INT. MUTINY HOTEL - WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Think backstage at a Broadway show: racks of shimmering dresses, makeup tables ringed with lights, the low thump of seventies disco in the background. The women have a range of attire, all with a nautical theme.

JANICE (O.S.)

Sometimes you don't want to do cocaine, but a certain type of customer will insist.

JANICE NICHOLS, 35, a gorgeous brunette, is the den mother to the MUTINY GIRLS, a multi-national collection of attractive women in their 20's. Right now she's coaching TRINI, 25, buxom and bubbly, a young Penelope Cruz.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Refuse, your tips go down the drain. Accept, and you're lying in bed tossing and turning, listening to the birds chirp at dawn.

TRINI

Janice, it's crazy. I get offered all night long.

JANICE

Here's the trick. The "fake snort." Lick your thumb and lean down as though you're doing the line, but press your thumb directly onto it.

She leans down to snort the line, but presses the inside of her thumb onto the line itself.

JANICE (CONT'D)

Inhale just to the right of your thumb, and voila.

She raises her hand to show the coke sticking to her thumb, then dusts the line off on the back of her jumpsuit.

JANICE (CONT'D)

The customer's happy, and you get to sleep on time.

TRINI

That's a good trick.

JANICE  
You'll learn lots of `em.

She notices Roman's entered the room, where his presence is welcomed regardless of the state of dress or undress of the Mutiny girls. Many of them wave hello as he passes.

ROMAN  
Got a minute?

JANICE  
Sure.  
(to Trini)  
Gimme a sec.

They move to a more private area.

ROMAN  
You know Chucho, the guy who takes  
Table twelve all the time?

JANICE  
How could I not? He's all over every  
girl in the place.

ROMAN  
Yeah, he's a fuckin' asshole. But I  
need an address. I gotta find out  
where his boss lives.

JANICE  
He works for Nestor Cabal, you know  
that right?

ROMAN  
That's who I'm looking for.

JANICE  
What on earth do you want with him?

ROMAN  
I can't explain right now. Chucho's  
sweet on you. Try to get the address.  
He'll give it to you, not me.

She studies him, senses his desperation.

JANICE  
Don't worry. I know how to work  
that asshole.

Off Roman, a glimmer of hope...

EXT. LITTLE HAVANA - CALLE OCHO - DAWN

The sun barely peeking over a neighborhood of somewhat ramshackle bungalows, made joyful by the bright pink, orange and yellow in which they are painted.

Roman pilots his beat-up, dented Ford Pinto to the front of a modest bungalow painted brilliant blue, with tended flowers, in the heart of historic Calle Ocho.

INT. ROMAN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Roman quietly enters. It's been a long night and the grueling hours are apparent on his exhausted face. He tiptoes down a corridor to a room with closed door. He opens it.

INT. MODEST BUNGALOW - VALERIA'S BEDROOM - DAWN

He stares at his daughter VALERIA, 14, girlishly pretty, still fast asleep. He watches her, love in his eyes - but doesn't want to wake her. He quietly closes the door.

INT. MODEST BUNGALOW - ROMAN'S BEDROOM - DAWN

He enters to find his girlfriend, MARISOL, 30's Latina, sleeping with perfect legs peeking out from under the sheets. Exhausted, he crawls into bed without taking off his clothes. She rolls over and snuggles with him.

MARISOL

You're still wearing your clothes.

Roman nods, preoccupied.

MARISOL (CONT'D)

Long night?

ROMAN

(nods)

Happy to be home.

MARISOL

You'll be even happier once I take off your pants.

Marisol starts to undo his pants, but Roman stops her.

MARISOL (CONT'D)

Amorcito, you okay?

ROMAN

Tonight the DEA came to me and asked me to dig up information about my brother.

Alarmed, Marisol sits up in bed. The romantic mood killed.

MARISOL

What?

ROMAN

Some agent got killed, they got their sights set on Nestor.

MARISOL

You told them no, right?

ROMAN

I said yes. I have no choice.

MARISOL

But you told me he's a sick, murdering bastard.

ROMAN

I have to try to play their game, at least for a while. Hope they catch him some other way.

MARISOL

Mi amor, he'll kill you if he finds out you're talking to the DEA. We should leave. Right now. I have family in New York.

ROMAN

No, *querida*. Valeria loves it here, her friends are here. My job is here.

MARISOL

It'll be very tough to do your job with a bullet in your head.

ROMAN

(beat)

Don't worry, I can take care of myself.

INT. ROMAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - AN HOUR LATER

Valeria is at the breakfast table, going over her homework as Roman is making eggs for them both. The decor features a spice rack and placard reading: "I'll See You in Cuba."

ROMAN

You didn't finish your homework last night?

VALERIA

I did. I'm just studying for a test.

ROMAN

About what?

VALERIA

The American Revolution. And all the reasons we hated the British.

ROMAN

Good. Gimme one reason.

VALERIA

They taxed us, when they shouldn't have.

ROMAN

All Americans care about is money. They should teach Cuban history.

VALERIA

I already know all about that.

ROMAN

And the reasons why Castro is a monster.

VALERIA

Castro isn't on the test. Besides, who cares about Castro. We're in America now.

Roman slams pan down on the stove, startling her, just as Marisol enters in a pretty yellow sundress.

ROMAN

Never say you don't care about Castro. Cuba's our homeland, it's where you were born. And Castro's the reason your mother was imprisoned and murdered.



Valeria starts to tear up and runs out of the room.

MARISOL  
What's wrong with you?

ROMAN  
I'll go talk to her.

MARISOL  
Whatever your problems are, don't  
take it out on her.

Roman nods, feels terrible.

INT. MODEST BUNGALOW - VALERIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Valeria is on her bed, crying - hugging a picture.

ROMAN  
I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.

VALERIA  
I miss mom so much.

ROMAN  
I know. I do too...

Roman hugs her, as the picture lays on the bed. The CAMERA goes over to discover it's a photo of a younger Roman, and a younger Valeria (5) with his beautiful Cuban wife, Valeria's deceased mother, in Havana.

EXT. MODEST BUNGALOW - DAY

Roman climbs into his Pinto. He holds a scribbled note paper in his hand. On it is an address:

INSERT - ADDRESS: 24 STAR ISLAND DRIVE

Roman pulls the car out of the driveway. Flips on the radio to a pop station, we hear the inimitable Donna Summer.

DONNA SUMMER  
(singing)  
Ooh I'm in love, I'm in love I'm in  
love, I'm in love, I'm in love...

Roman's face is hard and determined, as we CUT TO:

EXT. MIAMI - DRIVING MONTAGE - DAY (MONTAGE)

From an AERIAL VIEW of SEVENTIES MIAMI, we get a glimpse of the "Magic City": downtown with emerging mirrored skyscrapers, construction cranes everywhere as the cocaine boom literally reshapes Miami's skyline.

DONNA SUMMER

(singing)

Ooh I feel love, I feel love I feel  
love, I feel love, I feel love...

CRANING DOWN, to find the Pinto on Biscayne Boulevard. Past a movie theater with a marquee that advertises "Saturday Night Fever" and "Star Wars."

EXT. MACARTHUR CAUSEWAY - DAY

The Pinto nudges onto the MacArthur Causeway, the turquoise waters of Biscayne Bay glimmering in the noonday sun.

DONNA SUMMER (V.O.)

Ooh fall and free, fall and free,  
fall and free, fall and free, fall  
and free...

EXT. STAR ISLAND ENTRANCE - DAY

Roman cruises onto the man-made island, where palatial homes tower above the sand.

DONNA SUMMER (V.O.)

(singing)

Ooh you and me, you and me, You and  
me, you and me, you and me...

EXT. 24 STAR ISLAND DRIVE - DAY (MONTAGE)

Roman reaches the heavily-fortified, gated entry of a large mansion with fortress-like walls. He buzzes the entrance buzzer and waits.

MALE SECURITY VOICE

Who is this?

ROMAN

Roman Compte. I'm Nestor Cabal's  
brother.

It seems like an hour passes before the gates swing open.

EXT. CIRCULAR DRIVEWAY - DAY (END MONTAGE)

Roman pulls into a large, circular driveway that defies our expectations. There are cars in the driveway, but not luxury autos - they're exquisite, gleaming Chevy cars, imported from Cuba, some being worked on by mechanics.

The house itself is a large terracotta-roofed plantation style home like one might see in the pastoral areas outside Havana. Roman gets out of the car, walks up to the doorway where Chucho approaches with a crooked grin.

CHUCHO

I was expecting a Mutiny Girl, and hotel boy shows up.

He roughly pats Roman down to make sure he has no weapons.

CHUCHO (CONT'D)

Think you can play me like a fool?

Chucho gets rougher, hurting Roman - who pushes him away with surprising force.

ROMAN

Get your hands off me!

Chucho's about to punch Roman in the face when--

NESTOR (O.S.)

Chucho! *Para!*

NESTOR CABAL, immaculately-tailored, an older fiercer version of Roman, stands at the front door of the mansion. He regards Roman like a ghost back from the dead.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

(to Roman)

Come in.

INT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - DAY

Nestor leads Roman through a foyer and past rooms that while expansive, have an unostentatious, "casita" vibe. Long wooden benches, Cuban art, comfy couches, all of which lend the place a convivial, family-friendly environment.

ROMAN

Vaya! Reminds me of the house we grew up in.

NESTOR

The house that Castro stole from us.  
That's why I bought this place.  
Let's talk out here.

INT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - VERANDA - DAY

A covered veranda with a terracotta table, bowls of fruit and other treats on top. They sit and stare at each other, for a long, uncomfortable beat.

NESTOR

(re: fruit)  
You hungry?

Roman shakes his head.

ROMAN

I see you've done well for yourself.

NESTOR

It wasn't easy. I could have used your help.

ROMAN

I would have gotten in your way.

Nestor smirks as they both dance around a very touchy topic.

NESTOR

Still work at the hotel?

ROMAN

Yes. The hours are long, and the guests are needy.

NESTOR

I hear you're General Manager now.

ROMAN

Been keeping tabs?

NESTOR

It's important for what I do to know a lot of things. Many of my enemies go to your hotel.

(leans in)

What do you want from me, Roman?

ROMAN

A long time ago, in Cuba, we made a promise. We'd never leave each other. We would give our lives to protect each other.

(then:)

I broke that promise.

Nestor listens as he lights up a cigar.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

When we came to this country, I thought for the sake of my daughter I should be an American citizen who played by the rules, followed the law. I turned my back on you. I was wrong.

Roman searches Nestor for a reaction, but he remains inscrutable.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Years later we're still not citizens. The money I make is shit. Valeria wears second hand clothes. It's obvious to me now your way was better.

NESTOR

So now you come to apologize? For what, money?

ROMAN

A job. I want to work for you.

Nestor laughs.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You have enemies at the Hotel? I can be your eyes and ears. Every drug dealer in Miami comes to the Mutiny. Please Nestor. I'll never turn my back on you again.

(beat)

Valeria hasn't seen her uncle in years. And I miss my brother.

It's a damn good performance. But if this was meant to soften Nestor's heart, it does the opposite.

NESTOR

I made all this with my blood and sweat. I risked my life everyday for years, where were you? You judged me, called me a murderer, a scumbag. A criminal no better than Castro. I don't forget. And I don't forgive.

Roman looks crestfallen.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

Get the fuck out of my house.

A moment, then Roman turns and leaves. Off Nestor, a swirl of mixed emotions, as we--

CUT TO:

A PASTRAMI SANDWICH, being eaten.

AGENT CRANE (O.S.)

You just ate.

We are--

INT. WOLFIE'S RASCAL HOUSE - DAY

A classic Jewish delicatessen in central Miami. Agent Hofstadter eats a well stuffed Pastrami sandwich while Crane, nursing a coffee, looks on in disgust.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

We're at Wolfie's, you can't not have their pastrami sandwich.

Just then, Roman - agitated and worn - enters and sits at the booth across from them.

AGENT CRANE

What'd you find out?

ROMAN

My brother won't have anything to do with me. He hates me.

AGENT CRANE

Get him to un-hate you.

ROMAN

How the fuck do I do that?

AGENT CRANE

I don't know and I don't care. Suck his dick if you have to.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

We're running out of time. Those Haitians are gonna try and sell the cocaine back to Nestor.

AGENT CRANE

We need to know where and when.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Once we arrest him, you're done.

ROMAN

Do you hear me? I can't do shit.

Hofstadter signals Crane that it's his turn.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Roman, I know from our conversations over the years how you've been wanting permanent citizenship for you and your daughter. If you deliver for us, we can make that happen.

ROMAN

Is this how it works in America? I'm supposed to risk my life to pledge allegiance to your flag?

AGENT CRANE

You should be so lucky. You immigrants come here with your drugs and guns and fuck up the streets of our city.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Bob, please--

AGENT CRANE

A DEA Agent is dead because of your brother and people like him. So yeah, in my book you owe us that.

Roman can't stand this fuckin guy, but--

ROMAN

Fine. But no matter what, my daughter gets citizenship. I want that guarantee.

The Agents look at one other, Crane shrugs.

AGENT CRANE

Done.

INT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - VERANDA - DAY

Nestor stubs his cigar in the ashtray. Chucho approaches, notes that his boss is upset.

CHUCHO

Got news. Those Haitian motherfuckers set the meet for tonight.

Nestor just nods, preoccupied. Chucho figures it has to do with Roman's visit.

CHUCHO (CONT'D)

So he came to ask for a handout?

NESTOR

My brother doesn't ask for handouts. He has principles. There's something else going on.

Off Nestor, mulling what that might be, as we CUT TO:

EXT. MUTINY HOTEL - NIGHT

It's many hours later. The sun's fallen, the crackling excitement of a night at the Mutiny Club heralded by a line of sleek expensive cars pulling into the driveway.

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - MEN'S EMPLOYEE LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Roman changes in the locker room. Depression and worry etched on his face. He lingers over pictures of his daughter Valeria pasted to his locker.

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Roman rambles through the busy kitchen as before where breakfast and other treats are being prepared at a frenetic pace. His friend Manny, the Chef, calls out to him.

MANNY

Hey Roman, I got a butterfly shrimp special today that's going to make them scream. You wanna try?

But it's as if Roman doesn't hear him, a dead man walking.



INT. HOTEL MUTINY - LOBBY - NIGHT

Roman enters the grand lobby; many guests checking in and out, a buzz of energy and excitement. But not to Roman. Burton comes up and tries to button-hole him.

BURTON  
Does Hunter Thompson have everything he wants? Is he writing?

ROMAN  
Yeah.

BURTON  
Good, good.

Burton relaxes, as Roman rolls past, on toward--

INT. MUTINY CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Roman gazes at the partiers, and spots Janice who's finishing a conversation with Hunter Thompson. In the background, a TOPLESS HARPIST plays soothing music.

JANICE  
This job saved my life. I was lost. Especially after the judge awarded the kids to my ex in the divorce.

HUNTER THOMPSON  
All because you starred in a porn movie?

JANICE  
Ruined my life. I was young, stupid. Wanted to be an actress.

HUNTER THOMPSON  
"Head Nurse" was a cultural touchstone of the sexual revolution. You have my respect.

Just then, Roman approaches.

HUNTER THOMPSON (CONT'D)  
And here's the guy who inspired me to write about the staff instead of this ridiculous hotel.  
(to Roman)  
Thank you both. I'm going back up to the room to finish.

He exits, leaving them behind.

JANICE  
Sweetheart, you look terrible. I've  
been worried sick about you. Can  
you tell me what's going on?

ROMAN  
I will. Just not right now.

Just then, Chucho enters and marches toward them.

JANICE  
Uh-oh. He's probably mad I never  
showed up to see him.

Roman has fire in his eyes, waiting to confront or even fight  
Chucho if necessary.

ROMAN  
Don't worry, this man won't touch  
you. Go, call security.

But before she can leave, Chucho arrives. Instead of a fight,  
however, Chucho smiles, friendly.

CHUCHO  
Hello Janice.

ROMAN  
(steely)  
What do you want?

CHUCHO  
I have a message from Nestor.

ROMAN  
So you are a messenger boy after  
all.

Chucho shrugs off the insult.

CHUCHO  
I have to take you to him.

ROMAN  
I'm working.

CHUCHO  
You don't understand. Your brother  
wants to speak to you. Now.

He casually opens his jacket to reveal his gun.

JANICE  
Your *brother*?

ROMAN  
(shrugs)  
You can't choose your family. Cover  
me while I'm gone, okay?

He exits with Chucho. Off Janice, stunned by what she's seen  
and heard, as we MOVE TO:

EXT. MIAMI - NIGHT

Chucho's flashy Mercedes cruises down the boulevards, the  
shimmering night reflecting off the bay.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT (DRIVING)

Chucho drives. Roman in the passenger seat. The radio plays  
a Cuban station.

CHUCHO  
When a man makes money, why do his  
relatives suddenly show up like rats?

ROMAN  
I wouldn't know.

CHUCHO  
People who never gave a fuck about  
you. They think they can play you,  
am I right hotel boy?

Roman shrugs, doesn't want to engage.

CHUCHO (CONT'D)  
Your brother is a very rich man.  
Maybe you'll get lucky. But if I  
were your brother?

Chucho points a finger gun at him and clicks. Roman's made  
uncomfortable by this. Chucho grins and turns up the radio  
to Celia Cruz's "Quimbara."

EXT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - NIGHT

Roman and Nestor stroll a couple of pastoral acres more  
reminiscent of the Cuban countryside than a highly-manicured  
estate. In a moonlit pasture fifty yards away, MEN can be  
seen in some form of para-military training.

NESTOR

I thought about our conversation.  
And I realized maybe I was being too  
harsh with you.

Behind them is Chucho, who keeps his hand on his gun - eyes  
on Roman like a hawk.

ROMAN

I'm glad to hear that.

NESTOR

Truth is, I miss you too. And, being  
the Manager of the Mutiny Hotel could  
be very useful for me.

ROMAN

More than you realize. The kinds of  
people that come there.

NESTOR

Problem is, I need to trust you.  
Completely. You know, in this  
business, it's hard to trust anyway.  
With all the money, people get greedy.  
They forget the promises they made.

They come to a shed, where a group of men, Nestor's disciplined  
and well-trained soldiers, stand waiting.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

Open the door.

His men swing open the doors. Inside a MAN has been brutally  
tortured. It's horrible - tied up naked, beaten and bloody  
beyond repair. His eyes bulge upon seeing Nestor.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

Take Roberto for instance, in my  
employ for...

(to Roberto)

Cuántos años, Roberto?

But Roberto can't speak, as his tongue has been cut out.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

(to Roman)

At least five years. We went on  
many dangerous drug deals. He even  
saved my life a few times.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

And yet, he sold me out to a bunch of fucking Haitians who stole four hundred keys. Now they want to sell it back to me. Isn't that right, Roberto?

But again, Roberto can't speak. Roman looks sickened.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

(to Roman)

But you're my brother. And if I can't trust you, who can I trust?

ROMAN

Yes, that's true.

NESTOR

A long time ago you said many hurtful things to me. Accused me of being a murderer.

Roman reacts as Chucho takes out his gun and cocks it. Is he about to be assassinated?

NESTOR (CONT'D)

So I need to see if you're willing to do what it takes. Chucho?

Chucho extends his gun to Roman. Of course, there are many armed men with rifles who will slaughter Roman if he tries something against Nestor. Roman refuses the weapon.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

If you want to work with me, you have to prove you're a murderer, just like me.

(re: Roberto)

Kill him.

ROMAN

But why? I'm sure he's told you everything you wanted to know.

NESTOR

Which is why I don't need him anymore. I saved him. For you.

(then:)

Do it.

Roberto starts pleading for his life with moans, as best he can. Roman shakes his head, he doesn't want to.

Chucho and some of the other men laugh.

CHUCHO  
 ("He's a pussy")  
*El es un marica.*

NESTOR  
 (to Chucho; sharply)  
 You don't get it, *cabron*. On that beach in Cuba, he fought a battalion of Castro's soldiers and saved six men. He doesn't brag about himself, but you're looking at a fucking hero.

This shuts Chucho up and the other men up. Nestor takes the gun from Chucho and offers it to Roman.

NESTOR (CONT'D)  
 Prove you're like me. If not, I'll know where we stand.

Roman faces an agonizing moment of decision. Perhaps knowing that Roberto is a dead man anyway tips the scales. He accepts the gun, raises it and fires - **BAM!!!** - hitting Roberto squarely in the forehead.

NESTOR (CONT'D)  
*Bueno.*

Roman nods, sick to his stomach.

NESTOR (CONT'D)  
 Look, I know this shit's coming at you pretty fast, but the Haitians want to meet at midnight on the footbridge at 54th and First Avenue. I'd like you to come. Need all the good men I can get.

ROMAN  
 I have to go home and arrange for someone to look after my daughter. Valeria always comes first.

Nestor scrutinizes him for a beat, then--

NESTOR  
*Está bien.* Give her a kiss for me. Be back in an hour.

INT. THE MUTINY CLUB - NIGHT

It's early-ish, perhaps ten PM, but even at this early hour the club's humming. CAMERA FLOATS past banquettes filled with hedonists of every stripe... landing on--

AGENTS CRANE AND HOFSTADTER

Seated in a banquette, quietly sipping beers and observing the celebratory atmosphere with distaste. Omar the Maitre D' appears at the table carrying a phone.

OMAR

You have a call.

AGENT CRANE

From who?

OMAR

Roman Compte.

There's a jack built into every table, into which Omar plugs the 1977-era clunky telephone. Crane picks up.

AGENT CRANE

Hello?

ROMAN (O.S.)

I have information.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MODEST BUNGALOW - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Roman's back home, speaks on a wall-mounted phone.

ROMAN

The exchange is gonna be on the footbridge at 54th and First Avenue.

AGENT CRANE

Excellent.

ROMAN

But he wants me to go with him.

AGENT CRANE

So go. We'll be watching.

ROMAN

It's Little Haiti - you can get shot on the street on a good day.

AGENT CRANE

Don't worry. We'll bring an army.

ROMAN

You better.

Roman slams the phone. Marisol has appeared in the doorway.

MARISOL

Who was that?

ROMAN

This thing I have to do will be over tonight.

MARISOL

Roman, I don't like this--

ROMAN

The DEA will protect me. If I pull this off, I'll be getting full citizenship for me and Valeria. And then I'll ask you to marry me, and you'll be a citizen too.

Although she's longed to hear these words, she's more concerned for him right now.

MARISOL

Just be safe, please. That's all I care about.

She hugs him tight.

INT. LUNAR DREAMS SUITE - NIGHT

A smoking, inspired Hunter Thompson crouches at his typewriter, furiously pounding the keys. We hear some KNOCKS on the door, which Hunter ignores. Burton Greenberg uses a passkey to slink in, pleased to see Hunter is busily writing.

BURTON

Sir? Hello?

No response, Burton edges a little closer. In his eagerness, Burton reads over Hunter's shoulder, startling him.

HUNTER THOMPSON

Who the fuck are you?



BURTON

Burton Greenberg, owner of the Mutiny Hotel.

Interested now, Hunter scrutinizes him closely.

HUNTER THOMPSON

Do you know that eighty-five percent of the workers at your hotel are undocumented immigrants and only six percent have a green card? This whole ship, with its oblivious guests in the upper steerage, is propelled by the hard work of people who don't even have a stake in what this greedy, shallow money trench of a society has to offer.

BURTON

I hope that's not in the article.

HUNTER THOMPSON

You're fucking with my concentration. Get out of here. And send up some more `ludes. Lemmon 714's.

BURTON

Yessir.

Thompson swivels back to his typewriter. Burton, concerned by this exchange, hurries for the door.

EXT. STAR ISLAND - NIGHT - TO ESTABLISH

One of those weird Miami nights when the ocean breezes carry a misty fog that blankets the low-hanging moon and the gorgeous mansions on this man-made island.

EXT. STAR ISLAND MANSION - NIGHT

The back trunk of Chucho's Mercedes swings open and two suitcases are placed inside. A HENCHMAN opens one for a final check, and we see banded stacks of THOUSAND DOLLAR BILLS.

NESTOR (O.S.)

Four million bucks. Can you believe that's what I have to pay for my own shit? I'd still make a fortune off that load even with the skim.

WIDEN, to reveal that Nestor and Roman stand in the circular driveway with its fancy cars.

We might also notice a larger VAN where NESTOR HENCHMAN make preparations, checking the engine, tire pressure, etc.

ROMAN

We're not taking any weapons?

NESTOR

No. They'll frisk us anyway.

It's not so easy for Roman not to worry. His agitation is interrupted when Nestor turns to him.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

Hey... don't worry. We been through worse than this.

ROMAN

I'm fine.

NESTOR

Hermano, you don't know how much it means to me you're here. To have my brother back.

Unexpectedly, he pulls Roman into a hug, which only exacerbates his sense of guilt. He hugs Nestor back - firmly - and when they separate he sees dampness in his brother's eyes.

ROMAN

I feel the same.

NESTOR

Do you?

ROMAN

(hesitant)  
Of course.

Nestor turns to inspect the final preparations, the Mercedes trunk is now closed, the van engine idling.

NESTOR

("We're ready. Let's  
go to the party")  
*Estamos listo. Vamos a la fiesta.*

And off this, we SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. EDGE OF LITTLE HAITI - NIGHT

Several nondescript BLACK VANS pull to a stop at the border of Little Haiti. We go inside the lead van--

INT. BLACK VAN - NIGHT

Agents Crane and Hofstadter are accompanied by four other AGENTS wearing field gear and armed to the teeth. We can hear RADIO CHATTER from various DEA units.

DEA UNITS/VARIOUS  
(over radio)  
307, we're not seeing movement over here. Streets are clear.

Agent Crane checks his watch.

AGENT CRANE  
Getting close to H hour.

AGENT HOFSTADTER  
(on walkie)  
304, what're you seeing?

UNIT 304  
(on radio)  
I got several Haitian males in a white Plymouth on 52nd.

AGENT HOFSTADTER  
(on walkie)  
Run a tag on the plate.

UNIT 304  
Copy.

The Agents settle in, tension mounting.

EXT. LITTLE HAITI - NIGHT

Chucho's Mercedes cruises past squat, ugly tumble-down storefronts. There are murals on the walls of Victorian buildings, fierce skulls and voodoo symbols.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT (DRIVING)

Chucho drives. Roman's in the passenger seat. Nestor is in the back, a high-tech walkie-talkie by his side. The mood is focused, intense. Roman's eyes roam the streets, perhaps searching for signs of his DEA back-up.

INT. BLACK VAN - NIGHT

The radio crackles with static.

UNIT 304

(on radio)

License check on white Plymouth is negative, they've left the perimeter, they're not our bad guys.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

Copy. Stay alert.

Crane checks his watch again.

AGENT CRANE

Two minutes to H hour.

AGENT HOFSTADTER

(on walkie)

All units, we're ready to engage.

The Black van takes off into Little Haiti.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT (DRIVING)

Chucho pilots the car, but we're focused on Roman. His eyes glancing at the passing street signs: 54th Street, but the Mercedes keeps cruising. Roman, nervously--

ROMAN

Hey, that was 54th.

NESTOR

Yeah, so?

ROMAN

Wasn't that the location?

NESTOR

54th, did I say that? I meant 94th.

(to Chucho)

Hear that? I must be getting old.

This lands hard on Roman - *does Nestor know?* Unsure, he fixes nervous eyes on the eerie streets outside.

SMASH CUT TO:

BLACK VANS screech to a stop at 54th, tires smoking.

AGENT CRANE (O.S.)

Move out!

We're--

EXT. LITTLE HAITI - 54TH AND 1ST AVENUE - NIGHT

AGENTS spill from both vans, heavily-armed, ready to shoot at the first sign of distress. Other AGENTS appear from parked cars. Crane and Hofstader lead the charge to the footbridge that Roman indicated as the exchange spot.

Though eerily coated with fog, it's clear that the footbridge is empty. No one around, save a mewling scrawny cat.

AGENT CRANE

What the fuck?

Everyone's in a panic now. *Are they caught in a trap?* Agents scan every building, rooftop and alley. Nothing.

AGENT CRANE (CONT'D)

We have been royally fucked.

EXT. LITTLE HAITI - 94TH AND 2ND AVENUE

The Mercedes pulls to a stop before another footbridge, similar to the one on 54th, also eerily blanketed by fog.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Nestor grips a walkie-talkie. Growls to Chucho.

NESTOR

Okay, wait for my signal, do not do anything until I see the yeyo.

CHUCHO

Si, jefe.

NESTOR

(to Roman)  
Let's go.

EXT. LITTLE HAITI - FOOTBRIDGE - NIGHT

Nestor and Roman exit the car. The Mercedes cruises away, Roman and Nestor approach the footbridge. It's hard to see anything with the fog. Then--

THEIR P.O.V.

From the mist, a FIGURE emerges like an apparition, and they react to the sight of--

A VERY OLD HAITIAN WOMAN

Seventy years old, cloaked in garments of a voodoo priestess.

NESTOR

What the fuck?

She beckons them to follow with a crooked finger, then retreats into the mist.

ROMAN

What's going on?

NESTOR

They're being cautious. She's taking us somewhere else.

Nestor strides toward the bridge. Roman follows.

EXT. LITTLE HAITI - 95TH AND 2ND - NIGHT

Nestor and Roman emerge onto a new street, even darker and more foreboding than the last. They can see the Haitian Priestess walking ahead at a fast clip.

Roman's eyes cast a glance and now we see that on various corners there are HAITIAN PIRATES, sentries really, rifles slung casually over their shoulders.

ROMAN

*Mierda.* We're unarmed.

NESTOR

Just keep walking. They want money - not us.

Roman's trepidation, but Nestor seems to delight in the adrenaline that this provides.

EXT. LITTLE HAITI 96TH AND 2ND - NIGHT

The Priestess turns onto another block. A bonfire rages in a trash can. There are other HAITIAN PIRATES strategically placed on various corners.

The Priestess finally comes to halt and gestures toward a white stucco building. *This is the meet spot.*

"CHURCH APOCALYSE DE MIAMI"

She quickly hurries off down the street, eager to get away from whatever's going down. Nestor and Roman stare at the crumbling edifice.

ROMAN

A church?

NESTOR

I don't think they do a lot of praying  
in here.

He heads inside. Roman follows.

INT. HAITIAN CHURCH - NIGHT

They step inside the church, and it's clear that this building has abandoned its initial purpose. The inside is adorned with creole religious symbology.

THEIR P.O.V.

It's dark, lit only by hundreds of candles which flicker menacingly to reveal fifteen pews, and beyond that, three men waiting near the long-forgotten baptismal area. We recognize one of these men as BAPTISTE, the pirate seen at the top.

The second man, with expressionless eyes and piles of dreads is appropriately-named "DEADEYE." The third is "JOKER" - so named because of the gruesome scars extending from either side of his mouth.

BAPTISTE

(Haitian accent)

How ya doin', mon?

NESTOR

I'm Nestor Cabal.

BAPTISTE

(to Deadeye)

Check dem.

Deadeye approaches them, and Nestor gives Roman a nod that it's okay to be searched. Deadeye gives them a thorough pat-down, and finding no weapons, nods to Baptiste.

BAPTISTE (CONT'D)

Bring dem money?

NESTOR

I have the money, but yeyo first.

BAPTISTE

Money first.

NESTOR

It's not going to work that way.  
Yeyo first, then I'll call for the  
money to be delivered.

Baptiste doesn't like his tone at all.

BAPTISTE

Fuck you.

NESTOR

No, fuck you.

Joker doesn't like this disrespect. He approaches with a  
pistol and sticks it in Nestor's left ear. Roman reacts with  
alarm, Nestor raises a hand to quiet him. Doesn't even blink.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

Go ahead. Blow my fucking brains  
out. You won't see a dime.

Baptiste grunts, knows Nestor is right.

BAPTISTE

*Meté zam la desann.*

Joker lowers the gun in response, steps back.

NESTOR

Show me the load, I'll pay you four  
million dollars.

BAPTISTE

("I should kill you")  
*Mwen ta dwe fout touye ou.*

Baptiste mutters a few more curses, but gestures to Deadeye  
to follow these instructions. Deadeye moves to a large  
ornamental chest against the wall. And now we see something  
even more alarming--

FROM THE PEWS

Four more HAITIAN PIRATES rise from their hiding spots, all  
armed with M-16s.

As Deadeye opens the chest, the Pirates take offensive  
positions, guns leveled at Nestor and Roman.

INSIDE THE CHEST



Stacked in neat rows are FOUR HUNDRED KILOS OF COCAINE, on a small trolley, all marked with the red-ink SCORPION we saw earlier. The door to the chest swings closed.

BACK TO SCENE

Baptiste is no longer in the mood for games.

BAPTISTE (CONT'D)

Da money.

Nestor raises his walkie to his lips.

NESTOR

(on walkie)

*Chucho, trae el dinero.*

Nestor, Roman and the Haitians Pirates wait, a prickly tension building every moment.

EXT. LITTLE HAITI - CHURCH - NIGHT

Under the watchful eyes of various HAITIAN PIRATES on the perimeter, the Mercedes pulls to the front. Chucho gets out and goes to the trunk. He opens it to reveal TWO SUITCASES.

INT. LITTLE HAITI - CHURCH - NIGHT

Chucho enters with the suitcases in hand. The Pirates are on high alert, guns leveled.

NESTOR

Over here.

Chucho places the suitcases by Nestor's feet. Nestor opens the first suitcase. Inside: stacks of thousand dollar bills.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

That's half. You can inspect it.

He hands the suitcase to Joker, who brings it to Baptiste. There's a quick and practiced examination of the money, and satisfied, Baptiste focuses back on Nestor.

BAPTISTE

Da rest?

Nestor gestures to Chucho, who opens the suitcase to reveal there are two Mac-10 compact submachine guns inside.

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A BLOODY CONFLAGRATION

Chucho grabs one weapon, Nestor the other. They lay a vicious barrage of gunfire on the Haitians, who have relaxed their guard just a bit following the first exchange.

BAPTISTE (CONT'D)  
 ("Fire back! Kill  
 them!)  
*Dife tounen! Touye yo!*

What follows in short order:

- Three Haitians drop immediately, eviscerated by bullets.
  - The Haitians retaliate with gunfire.
  - Roman dives for cover under a pew.
  - Outside, we can HEAR the screech of tires and crackling gunfire from unseen forces.
  - Now, from outside four NESTOR HENCHMEN, fresh from killing the sentries outside, enter the church.
  - They're professional hitters and they're fucking good. They annihilate Haitians with pinpoint accuracy.
  - You see, THIS WAS NESTOR'S PLAN ALL ALONG. See the cocaine, destroy the enemies. But now more HAITIANS emerge from other pews and the gunfire gets more intense.
  - Roman, hidden under a pew, sees a bullet-riddled Haitian drop to the ground four pews away.
  - Nestor and Chucho return fire with their professional hitters. Screams, shouts, *rat-tat-tat-tat-tat*.
  - Roman crawls underneath the pews toward the dead Haitian, and we see what's in the man's hand: a rifle.
  - Nestor's hitters expertly pick off the remaining Haitians, leaving the floor slick with blood.
- And almost as quick as it started, IT'S OVER. Gun smoke fills the air, wafting upward.

Nestor and Chucho arise from their cover positions.

NESTOR  
 (to his men)  
 Vale. Good job. Get the yeyo and  
 the money.

Nestor's Henchmen immediately retrieve the trolley with the cocaine. Chucho exults in the slaughter.

CHUCHO  
We did it, jefe! *Destruimos a esos hijos de puta!*

NESTOR  
(all business)  
Get the money, *pendejo!*

He indicates the suitcase with two million.

HOLD TIGHT - ON CHUCHO

He looks at the dead Haitians. Then the cocaine. And then the money before him. Calculating.

NESTOR (CONT'D)  
The money!

Chucho makes a decision. He turns his Mac-10 on the unsuspecting Nestor Henchmen and mows them down in a burst of gunfire. He swings the Mac-10 toward Nestor.

CHUCHO  
I'm sorry, Jefe. It's my turn to be the boss.

He pulls the trigger - and **BAM!**

Chucho's head explodes. He sinks to his knees as we RACK FOCUS to -- ROMAN, standing ten feet behind him with the dead Haitian's rifle in his hands. Now he and Nestor are the only people in the room left alive.

Nestor stares at Roman in shock... and gratitude.

ROMAN  
(shrugging)  
I guess you were right. It's hard to find men you can trust.

And off this, we CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL MUTINY - LOBBY - NIGHT

Hunter Thompson hurries toward the exit with purpose, bags in hand. Burton chases him down, alarmed.

BURTON  
Mister Thompson, where are you going?

HUNTER THOMPSON

Home.

BURTON

You finished the article?

Thompson stops and turns to Burton.

HUNTER THOMPSON

Hell no. I called my editor and bailed out.

BURTON

What?

HUNTER THOMPSON

This Hotel doesn't deserve an article. I'm writing a book.

BURTON

(gobsmacked)

A book?

HUNTER THOMPSON

The Mutiny, like America, is the Titanic headed for an iceberg. Fuck the upper deck, I'm interested in the refugees who swam, paddled and crawled through scum and shit to get here, who care more about this country than the privileged few, even though they sweep our gilded floors and vacuum the breadcrumbs that drop from our bloated mouths, scrub the shit-encrusted toilets after our explosive diarrhea. They deserve what this country stands for more than your glitterati who take their citizenship as a birthright, not a privilege.

Burton is stunned speechless. Then--

BURTON

Can you also do a very short article about the hotel?

HUNTER THOMPSON

Not interested. But I have a great title for the book.

(then:)

"Fear and Loathing in Miami."

And with that, he turns and leaves. Off Burton, his dreams of immortality fading fast, as we CUT TO:

EXT. MODEST HOUSE - KENDALL, FLORIDA - NIGHT

There are several cars parked out front of this nondescript tract stash-house in a heavily-Latino neighborhood. One of them is the Mercedes we saw earlier.

INT. MODEST HOUSE - KENDALL, FLORIDA - NIGHT

Roman and Nestor are seated at a card table with a couple of shot glasses and a bottle of rum. There are several mattresses on the floor, but right now no one's sleeping.

NESTOR

I suppose I should thank you.

ROMAN

No need.

Behind him, HENCHMAN have removed a panel of sheet-rock from the wall, where other WORKERS are carefully stacking the Scorpion kilos of cocaine. Nestor pours Roman another shot of rum. He smiles.

NESTOR

So... what're you going to tell the DEA when they ask about tonight?

The blood drains from Roman's face.

ROMAN

How'd you know?

NESTOR

Thought it was strange you came to me for a job. So I did a little sniffing around. Made a few calls.

ROMAN

They said they'd deport me and Valeria.

NESTOR

Worse things can happen.

He raises a gun from beneath the table.

ROMAN

What're you gonna do? Kill me?

NESTOR

I'm going to make you an offer.

Nestor places the gun on the table between them.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

You were right. You're perfectly placed at the Mutiny. A lot happens at that hotel. More than you realize.

ROMAN

I'm not a drug dealer.

NESTOR

You would help me move the product for the larger purpose.

ROMAN

And what purpose is that?

NESTOR

To avenge the people Castro murdered, including your wife. That's going to take money and men I can trust.

He pushes the weapon to Roman's side of the table.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

Or you can be the DEA's man in return for "citizenship," at the expense of your own flesh and blood.

This hits Roman hard.

NESTOR (CONT'D)

You see, *hermano mio*, both are valid options, and for each there is a price.

As Roman broods over this choice, he's distracted by a kilo of coke that falls errantly from a Worker's hand.

CLOSE - ON THE KILO

The shrink-wrapped surface is STAINED WITH BLOOD.

CUT TO:

A FAT LINE OF SHIMMERING COCAINE

And a rolled-up hundred descending, the blow disappearing off the lacquered table and up someone's nose.

ABBA (V.O.)  
 (singing)  
*Ooh, you can dance,  
 You can jive, Having the time of  
 your life!*

INT. THE MUTINY CLUB - NIGHT (HOURS LATER)

GORGEOUS GIRL snorts the blow, tilts her head back at the euphoric rush. CUBAN PLAYBOY pours more Dom. ABBA'S "Dancing Queen" plays and the PACKED CROWD is going INSANE.

BEAUTIFUL GIRL  
 Ooh wow.

CUBAN PLAYBOY  
 Ninety-six percent pure.

People dancing on tables, girls flashing breasts.

ABBA  
*Ooh, see that girl,  
 Watch that scene, Digging the dancing  
 queen oh yeah!*

More blow, more Dom, blowjobs under tables!

NEW ANGLE - ROMAN

He enters the Club, different suit, freshly showered, a duffel bag slung over his shoulder. It's probably 3:30AM but everyone's still here: the traffickers, spies, celebrities, diplomats and dignitaries.

ABBA (CONT'D)  
*Friday night and the lights are low,  
 Looking out for a place to go!*

Burton storms up to Roman, coke-eyed and furious.

BURTON  
 Where the hell have you been?

Roman pushes past, leaving an apoplectic Burton behind.

ABBA  
*Where they play the right music,  
 Getting in the swing, You come to  
 look for a king!*

Roman soldiers forward, past the banquettes of Dom, fuckable girls and snow, snow, snow. Omar appears out of nowhere--

OMAR

Boss, ten cases of champagne left  
and it's only three ayem!

Roman ignores him and smoothes away.

ABBA

*You are the dancing queen,  
Young and sweet, Only seventeen,  
Dancing queen, Feel the beat from  
the tambourine, oh yeah!*

Roman reaches a second tier banquette in a dark smoky corner of the Club. DEA Agents Crane and Hofstadter are waiting with boiling blood. He slides into the booth.

AGENT CRANE

Where the fuck were you, shitbird?

AGENT HOFSTADTER

No one was there. You lied, Roman.

AGENT CRANE

Better start talking or pack your  
fucking bags. We're gonna deport  
your ass tomorrow--

ROMAN

Calm down. He suspected I might be  
working with you, so he gave me the  
wrong address. We made the exchange  
at a church on 96th. It was a shit  
show, but he trusts me now. I'm in.

AGENT CRANE

(skeptical)

He suspected you were with us, now  
he trusts you. How exactly did you  
manage that?

ROMAN

I saved his life.

The two Agents share a glance. Not what they expected to hear. They're about to pepper him with more questions when Crane notices the duffel that sits beside Roman.

AGENT CRANE

What's in the bag?



ROMAN

Clothes, asshole. I had to change.  
Can't exactly walk in here with blood  
on my shirt.

Roman detects Crane's still-lingering skepticism. He turns  
instead to Agent Hofstadter.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Tom, you know me. I don't care he's  
my brother. He's a greedy, murdering  
drug dealer. I'll take him down in  
exchange for citizenship.

("Deal?")

¿Acuerdo?

Off Agent Hofstadter, nodding, as we MOVE TO:

INT. ROMAN'S SMALL OFFICE - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

Roman enters the office, humming, holding the duffel by its  
strap. He pulls the Cuban flag from the Lost and Found safe.  
His humming becomes intelligible while he kneels, spins the  
combination, and opens the door.

ROMAN

Ah ha ha ha, stayin' alive, stayin'  
alive, ah ha ha ha stayin'  
aliiiiive...

He opens the duffel and we see his blood-stained shirt. He  
lifts it to reveal what's underneath: EIGHT KILOS of cocaine.  
He begins to stack them neatly in the safe, giving us a view  
of the red-ink SCORPION.

SMASH TO BLACK.

(TO BE CONTINUED)