

"STRIP GIRLS"

Written by

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"STRIP GIRLS"

FADE IN:

EXT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY- DAY

A depressing sight. The lobby is EMPTY, DESOLATE. Two hip young executives (EXEC #1 and EXEC #2) step out of the doorway and stand out in front of the empty theater.

EXEC #1

I don't get it. Our studio's first big summer movie. No fans, no critics... no nothing...

EXEC #2

This film is going to video faster than the Rodney King beating...

EXEC #1

Marketing says the title may have something to do with it. Maybe it's too subtle...

They walk out underneath the marquee, which reads "CLOSED FOR REPAIRS" - as do all of the posters in the windows and the sign above the ticket counter.

EXEC #2

We need a hit - fast. I've set up a meeting with Paul and Joe - they have a pitch...

EXEC #1

Those hacks? They represent everything that's wrong with Hollywood - big budgets, lame ideas... Besides, I still think this film can make money...

A car slows under the marquee, the driver turning to the other passengers.

DRIVER

Hey - the theater's closed...
Bummer!

He drives off as Exec #1 sighs.

EXEC #1

You're right - I need a hit...

GRAPHICS SCROLL DOWN THE SCREEN:

In 1995, a desperate Hollywood studio paid four million dollars for a movie pitch. The film was to be about the empowerment of women, the sexual politics of life in the latter twentieth century, and a portrait of a modern, sexual heroine...

... It ended up being about a bunch of sleazy strippers sleeping around in Las Vegas. This is the story of how that film was made... and why that studio was up for sale a month later.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

An attractive couple in bed as obnoxious Kenny G-like music blares on the soundtrack. The beautiful WOMAN sits up, her lingerie strap dangling seductively off her shoulders. The MAN sighs contentedly.

MAN

Thank God it's over. Strange how a master detective like me could mistake you as the "slice 'em, dice 'em killer" who mutilated men and served their private parts to them on a plate - when it was obviously my cousin Doris, the federal judge, all along...

WOMAN

You'd think she'd have understood the laws better.

MAN

I'm going to miss you, babe. I fly to New York tomorrow to break the bad news to Aunt Tooti...

WOMAN

Don't feel bad - I'll take a little piece of you wherever I go...

The Woman pulls a FILET KNIFE out from under the mattress. The Man SCREAMS as we...

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

The scene we were just watching is playing on a monitor. A title flashes on the screen, reading: "The End - A Joe and Paul Production." EXEC #1 hurriedly turns off the TV, shivering with distaste.

EXEC #1

What a load of crap! Dull characters and ridiculous situations, writing that's barely competent, and direction without an ounce of emotional resonance - not to mention the same ending as in Joe and Paul's other six films...
 (sighs unhappily)
 ... You're right. They've got a hit.

Over the intercom we hear the voice of JANEANE the secretary.

JANEANE (O.S.)

(over intercom)

Sir, your two o'clock is here...

Exec #1 groans, motioning to a framed photo of both Execs posing with an older man in front of the studio.

EXEC #1

Four years at USC film school, two years as a mail boy, four years as a development executive and six months of pretending to like my father - just so I can greenlight two imbeciles who are going to make more money than me...
 (over intercom)
 Janeane, send them in... Let's get this meeting over with.

The door bursts open, and JOE, an overweight child of the sixties wearing silver jewelry and a loud Hawaiian shirt, enters confidently. Behind him is PAUL, a frazzled, unshaven man in a turtleneck. The Execs greet them with huge, fake smiles.

EXEC #1 (CONT'D)

Joe! Paul! My favorite filmmakers!

JOE

Greetings, gentlemen. Are you ready to make history?

EXEC #1

We just saw your new film, "Penal Justice." Awesome!

PAUL

Danka!

EXEC #2

What was your inspiration?

JOE

I wanted to rip the lid off the food service business, and expose it as a cesspool of avarice, castration, and deceit. Plus - I love how Paul handles my dialogue.

Paul says something UNINTELLIGIBLE. The Execs stop, look confused, then politely turn back to Joe.

JOE (CONT'D)

I heard your new film was showing downtown, but when I got there the theater was closed.

The Execs exchanged embarrassed looks, Exec #1 changing the subject.

EXEC #1

Enough about that - what's the new project about?

JOE

I'm going to rip the lid off Las Vegas, and expose it as a cesspool of crime and deceit.

EXEC #2

Doesn't everybody already know that Las Vegas is a cesspool of crime and deceit?

JOE

(annoyed)

Okay, a bigger cesspool of crime and deceit... I call it... "STRIP GIRLS!"

Joe gets comfortable on the couch as he lets the brilliance of his idea wash over the Execs.

EXEC #1

"Strip Girls"... I like it... a movie that brings cold scrutiny to the sleazy side of adult burlesque, where women are exploited by shameless, greedy, immoral hucksters...

EXEC #2

Plus they're naked for most of the movie!

EXEC #1

Excellent. Who can we get - Julia Roberts ... Sandra Bullock?

JOE

Let's get real here - we're on a budget. Those women get twelve million a film... Who'd be stupid enough to pay an actress twelve million dollars to take her top off?

They all laugh heartily, agreeing.

EXEC #1

Right. We need talent more than star power. Somebody that the audience won't be viewing with any preconceived notions.

EXEC #2

How about Shannen Doherty?

Joe and Exec #1 give him a look.

EXEC #2 (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm just trying to be realistic...

Joe leans forward on the couch, in story telling mode.

JOE

This is an important film that needs to be made. It's all about a girl named Raquel...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SUITCASE - DAY

A large, battered old suitcase, the name "RAQUEL" scrawled across the weathered vinyl covering. The suitcase is dragged away, gravel flying to reveal...

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A small desert community sits before a picturesque mountain range. A road sign reads: "You are entering Gravelton, Nevada; Population 413; Home of the world's largest dirt clod!"

A BEAUTIFUL BRUNETTE (RAQUEL) carrying a large suitcase laboriously drags it along the dirt road, finally reaching the sign.

JOE (V.O.)

We need a strong female character that's bold, unashamed of her body, yet child-like. She symbolizes all of the ennobling qualities of the female gender: heart, courage, ambition. Alluring, yet the girl-next-door. A brave-but-naive young girl, who's had her share of trouble...

She pulls a marker from her pocket, crossing out "413" on the sign and changing it to "412."

EXEC #1 (V.O.)

You say she's naive?

Raquel's hair CHANGES FROM BRUNETTE TO BLONDE. She holds up a sign reading "VEGAS," and sticks out her thumb to hitch-hike. Cars WHIZ past, ignoring her.

EXEC #2 (V.O.)

So... how's she built?

JOE (V.O.)

Major rack.

Raquel's BREASTS SUDDENLY GROW, her top busting a few buttons, and a push-up bra displaying them prominently. Suddenly we hear TIRES SCREECHING, VEHICLES COLLIDING, GLASS SHATTERING AND METAL TWISTING.

EXT. ROADSIDE

Raquel lowers her thumb and picks up her bag, walking past the pile-up of cars, trucks, campers, motorcycles and semi's that have tried to pull over to pick her up. She reaches a rusty old Firebird, leaning in the passenger side.

JOE (V.O.)

Raquel has no money or friends. She survives by instinct and intuition...

CUT TO:

INT. FIREBIRD

In the driver's seat is a DERANGED looking ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE wearing dark glasses, a huge greasy pompadour, a hideous facial twitch and wears a jewel encrusted jumpsuit.

ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE

Hey little sister you look moody-blue. I'm-a headed to Vegas... so if you want a lift baby doll...

Raquel throws her bag in the back seat and hops in.

RAQUEL

(thrilled)

Oh wow! Are you an Elvis Presley impersonator?

ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE

Elvis Who? You mean there's somebody else who dresses like this? Damn! I really thought I was on to something with this look...

He FLOORS THE ACCELERATOR as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT

The car skids back onto the road, passing various billboards featuring large depictions of Elvis: "Elvis Chapel, 400 miles ahead," "Elvis Lives at the Frontier 'Legends Revue'," and "All Shook Up? Visit the Elvis Pharmacy, Las Vegas, Nevada."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - DAY

The Firebird moves down the strip. Lights flash, volcanoes erupt, pirates attack, Chinese tourists pray to the reclining Buddha, Amway salesmen head into a convention at the Pyramid. They drive by the "Circus-Circus" hotel. Jeff Foxworthy is on the marquee, which reads: "You Might Be A Redneck if.. you stay here."

ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE (V.O.)

Feast your eyes on the cultural
center of the desert wasteland,
baby - Las Vegasss!

RAQUEL (V.O.)

That's funny - it looks just like
Reno...

ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE (V.O.)

Sshhh!!! We're on a budget...

INT. FIREBIRD

Raquel gawks as the signs from various Vegas shows flash by in the reflection of her window. She sees bright lights with all the headliners: Engelbert Humperdink; Rich Little, Liza, Tony Danza, Robert Goulet; Seigfreid and Roy! Raquel watches awe-struck at a sign: "RIP TAYLOR!" and, in smaller letters, "BEATLES REUNION."

RAQUEL

Oh my gosh - Rip Taylor!
(dreamily)

I'm going to become a dancer in my
own Las Vegas show, and one day my
name will be up in lights - just
like his!

ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE

Like Rip Taylor? Don't kid
yourself!

(serious and fatherly)

You don't just become a Rip Taylor.
For every Rip Taylor, ten Gary
Muledeer's lie writhing in a
festering pool of their own filth
on the sidewalk!

(looks out)

See?

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP

A haggard GARY MULEDEER lies in a pool of his own filth, wearing a sign that reads: "Will shoot an arrow into an apple with my guitar for food." Nobody pays any attention.

CUT TO:

INT. FIREBIRD

The car passes by the TROPICAL NUGGET casino, with a billboard advertising their show "PUSSYCATS! starring CRYSTAL GOBLET". In smaller letters it reads, "THIS SHOW HAS NO RELATION OR FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE FAMOUS BROADWAY SHOW CATS." Raquel looks at the ad longingly.

RAQUEL

You'll see—one day that's going to be me up there.

ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE

In "Pussycats?" That's the hottest show on the strip...

(to camera)

... although it has no relation or financial responsibility to the famous Broadway show "Cats."

(makes a POPPING noise)

Oops - car trouble! I keep my tools in the glove compartment - could you hand me the hacksaw?

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP

The Firebird TURNS INTO A SANDY VACANT LOT and is suddenly SURROUNDED by Las Vegas POLICE CARS, Officers pulling the Elvis Look-alike out through the driver's door window.

POLICEMAN #1

Out of the car, Psycho!!!

The Policemen throw him to the ground and begin BEATING him with clubs as Raquel hops out of the car.

RAQUEL

Hey - what's going on?

POLICEMAN #2

You are very lucky lady - this guy is a psychotic serial killer, responsible for the deaths of dozens of aspiring exotic dancers!

RAQUEL

I guess I can understand why you're beating him.

POLICEMAN #1

We're beating him because he's an unlicensed Elvis impersonator. We've got standards here in Vegas.

ELVIS LOOK-ALIKE

Can't we all just get along!

Raquel throws the first of her many over-the-top, hysterical tantrums as the police continue to pound on the Elvis Look-alike.

RAQUEL

(hysterical)

It isn't fair! This is just my luck! I can't believe how bad my life sucks!!! ... I'm not going to be able to go on...

POLICEMAN #2

Relax, ma'am - they're taking him into custody...

RAQUEL

Right - now I have to walk!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - HIGH NOON

The sun glares hotly as Raquel trudges through the sand, wiping the sweat from her brow.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - ANOTHER ANGLE

Raquel falls to the ground in exhaustion as the sun beats down on her. She looks up to see vultures gliding overhead.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - STILL ANOTHER ANGLE

As Raquel CRAWLS across the sand, near-death, we PULL BACK to reveal that the POLICE ARE ONLY TWENTY FEET BEHIND HER, standing exactly where they were when she started off.

POLICEMAN #1

Are you sure you just don't want a ride?

WIPE TO:

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - HOTEL CASINO

A hotel/casino with the marquee reading: "ROBERT GOULET - ONE NIGHT ONLY," then in smaller letters, "WE HOPE." The Cop car PULLS UP and Raquel climbs outside.

RAQUEL

Thanks for making room, you guys.

POLICEMAN

Don't worry about it. I hope you didn't mind sitting on my lap.

RAQUEL

Sure, I understand... even though there was nobody sitting in the back.

The Policeman grins, closing the door behind her as the Police car peels away. Standing in the parking lot, Raquel stops with a sudden realization.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

My suitcase is back in Elvis' car!
Nooooo!

She begins to openly weep, POUNDING ON THE PARKED CARS around her, setting off car alarms. She reaches inside an open driver's side window, pulling out a CLUB from off of the steering wheel. She begins SMASHING UP every car in the lot, screaming.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

Isn't there one kind, decent, gentle, caring person in this town, other than me?

CUT TO:

EXT. STRIP - DAY

A cab motors down the strip. On the side of the cab an ad with a beautiful girl is posted, reading "Live Nude Dancers In Your Hotel Room: \$200. Dead Nude Dancers Half Price."

CUT TO:

INT. CAB

VINCENT BONFIGLIONO, in black sunglasses, sits in the back seat reading the paper, the headline reading "STRIP GIRLS INTRODUCES LOVE INTEREST - AUDIENCE BAFFLED." He lowers the paper, to REVEAL he's the spitting image of Clark Gable.

JOE (V.O.)

Enter our hero - A Clark Gable type... a man who has seen his best days, but he looks good enough for us to realize that his better days were absolutely great.

EXEC #1 (V.O.)

Who do you picture in the part?
Say, Nicholas Cage?

EXEC #2 (V.O.)

Yeah - perfect!

Clark Gable MORPHS into Nicholas Cage.

EXEC #1 (V.O.)

You know how much Cage gets per film now?

EXEC #2 (V.O.)

All right, a Nicholas Cage type, then...

He MORPHS again - this time into OUR HERO. He TOSSES the newspaper onto the seat and starts GUZZLING a bottle of booze.

VINCENT

Where can a guy get a drink in this town?

CABBY

Everywhere.

VINCENT

Oh yeah...
(grins)

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

... that's why I love this town.
Take me anywhere...

Vincent looks out the window and sees Raquel SMASHING car windows as if she was in a Michael Jackson video.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Hold it!
(hands the cabby a twenty)
That poor woman must be locked out
of her car! Pull over - she needs
help!

CABBY

Sure - say, aren't you an ex-hitman
for the mob, who for some unknown
reason has lived the last few years
in a haze of alcohol and despair?

VINCENT

That's me...
(tipping him)
... Here's an extra twenty for the
expository dialogue.

CABBY

Just doin' my job...

CUT TO:

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - CHEAP HOTEL

The Cab PULLS OVER, the advertisement on its top for Elizabeth Berkeley in "Driving Miss Daisy; Totally Topless." As Vincent opens the door HUNDREDS OF EMPTY LIQUOR BOTTLES POUR OUT. He hurries over the bottles to Raquel, grabbing the Club before Raquel can take another swing.

VINCENT

Hold on! What's the problem?

RAQUEL

I lost everything I own - my shoes,
my dresses, my earrings, my
switchblade, my serrated Ginzu, my
ice pick, my cleaver...

VINCENT

Look at the bright side....
(grabs her hand)
You don't own any of these cars.
Come on - we'd better get out of
here...

Police sirens begin to blare as he leads her into his waiting cab.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - BACK SEAT

Vincent watches Raquel bawl for a moment, then hands her a silk hanky.

VINCENT

Here. It must be awful to be in a new town, broke and destitute.....

She suddenly perks up and PUNCHES HIM IN THE FACE.

RAQUEL

Prostitute? I'm no prostitute!

VINCENT

Ow! No, I said 'destitute' - you know - an adjective meaning poor, indigent, worthless, no-account, good-for-nothing, miserable?

RAQUEL

Oh... I thought you were insulting me.

VINCENT

Not at all...

RAQUEL

I'm going to own this town someday! I'm going to be a major star of the Vegas musical dance theater, in the tradition of Isadora Duncan, Twyla Tharp, and Charo!

(she grabs Vincent's paper)

All I need is a chance...

CUT TO:

INSERT CLASSIFIED ADS

An ad reads:

DANCERS WANTED: EARN BIG CASH NOW BY FEIGNING AROUSAL FOR DRUNKEN LOSERS AND LAP DANCING. CONTACT: THE BOTTOMLESS PIT. AUDITIONS TODAY!

CUT TO:

INT. CAB

Raquel grins, determined, as Vincent holds a bottle to his swelling eye.

RAQUEL
Hey - the first step in my assault
on the Vegas stage...

She leans into the front seat, speaking with the Cabby excitedly.

RAQUEL (CONT.) (CONT'D)
Driver, how far are we from the
Bottomless Pit?

CABBY
The Bottomless Pit, that hideous
cesspool of moral degradation that
you must claw your way out of
before ultimately achieving your
life's dream, is coincidentally on
the next corner.

VINCENT
Best expository Cabby in the
business.
(turns to Raquel)
Can I see you sometime? I'll pay...

Raquel AGAIN punches Vincent in the face. The cab pulls to a stop.

RAQUEL
I told you, I'm no hooker! I've
worked too long and hard to resort
to such depravity! I'd never sell
myself for sex!!!

VINCENT
Sell yourself? I was just talking
about a simple first date...

RAQUEL
So was I!

VINCENT

Before we go any further I must warn you about my tortured soul, my dark and beguiling essence... I am a drunk. I will be a drunk as long as I live, and the one thing you must promise to never do is to ask me to stop drinking...

CABBY

No problem...

Vincent looks around to find that Raquel has LEFT THE CAB, and he is talking to the cab driver.

CUT TO:

INT. 'THE BOTTOMLESS PIT' - DRESSING ROOM

Strippers of all shapes and sizes are rushing around, primping before mirrors, adding make-up, injecting collagen into their lips, one even pulling on SURGICAL gloves as she digs into a box marked "AT-HOME IMPLANT KIT." One particularly well-endowed woman, PAMELA, pulls off her sweater to reveal a huge pair of breasts about to burst from their wonderbra, and studies them in the mirror. A second girl, WYNOTTA, walks up in disbelief.

WYNOTTA

You got another boob job?

PAMELA

(trying to adjust them)
Yeah... Got the saline ones this time...

WYNOTTA

Well, it's good that you got rid of that silicon, anyway...

Pamela turns to Wynotta, her new breasts sweeping everything off her dressing table as she spins.

PAMELA

Are you nuts? I paid three grand for those bags - I left them in there, too...

WYNOTTA

What about the stuff from that first cheap-o job?

PAMELA

Hey those wood chips got me my
first gig... I'd never give them
up...

On Wynotta's reaction, the door bursts open. The manager,
EDDIE VELCRO struts in with his new acquisition - Raquel. She
is taken back by the heavy smell of perfume and unhidden
shame.

JOE (V.O.)

Now we meet Eddie Velcro - Club
Owner and Evil Exploiter. Here we
discover the dark world of the
professional stripper, with its
unique and authentic dialogue...

EDDIE

Hey you groovy, way-out babes, I
have some new talent I want you to
meet: Raquel... She's auditioning
today and promises to make the rest
of you look like the non-with-it
squares you are. Raquel? These
ladies are The Bottomless Pit's
finest...

A veteran dancer, VULVIANA, doesn't look, but speaks while
applying her lipstick.

VULVIANA

Whoop - de - fucking- doo...

PAMELA

Stay away from my chubs, green-ass.

The rest of the strippers giggle knowingly.

EDDIE

I told you they were great. Now
get yourself ready to flash those
"breasts" of yours!

(makes quotation marks
with finger)

You'll follow Pamela on-stage
today, hep cat...

PAMELA

(to Raquel)

Good luck, flatsy!

Raquel looks around uncomfortably as the other girls laugh.
She turns to Eddie.

RAQUEL

Thanks for seeing me Mr. Velcro - I really need this job.

EDDIE

Oh yeah? So tell me a little about yourself.

Raquel takes an empty seat at one of the dressing tables.

RAQUEL

I've never been a SHOWGIRL. I'm just a SLIVER of a girl, living by my F.I.S.T.s with NOWHERE TO RUN. I used to FLASHDANCE for some BIG SHOTS at a place called the MUSIC BOX, but I got BETRAYED there after a ONE NIGHT STAND and became JADED. So I just followed my BASIC INSTINCT and decided I was CHECKING OUT of town - which brings me here...

EXEC #1 (V.O.)

Hey - wait a minute...

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Exec #1 cuts off Joe's story, looking at him suspiciously.

EXEC #1

This is all starting to sound familiar. Didn't all that stuff happen in your other films?

EXEC #2

In fact it sounds like something I saw in AN ALAN SMITHEE FILM a few years back...

JOE

This is all first-time material - I swear... Ow!

(jumps)

This chair's got a JAGGED EDGE!

EXEC #1

Sorry - this furniture is old...

JOE
 HEARTS OF FIRE! What a feelin'...
 (readjusting)
 ... So anyway, Raquel makes her way
 towards the stage...

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE

Raquel stumbles through the curtains, heading for the stage. She is stopped by the large, outstretched arm of the bouncer (ROMERO).

ROMERO
 Are you my new girl?

Raquel tries to PUNCH him, offended

RAQUEL
 Your girl? I'm no hooker! I've
 traveled too far and worked too
 hard to--

ROMERO
 ... Settle down there sweet buns,
 I'm not asking if you're a hooker -
 I'm the bouncer! Don't worry - this
 is a class place. Why, if you look
 in the back row, we have every
 politician, foreign dignitary and
 out-of-town celebrity you can
 imagine sitting there in
 disguise...

He PULLS THE CURTAIN AWAY to reveal...

CUT TO:

INT. AUDIENCE - BACK ROW

A line of men sit with fake noses and glasses, bad wigs, cheap theatrical costumes, and other cheap disguises, tipping Pam.

ROMERO (V.O.)

...Look - just tonight we've got the Vice President, the Governor, the President of U.N., a Cardinal, half of the Kennedy clan, and most of the crew from this movie...

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE

A new song begins, Raquel stepping out on-stage to little fanfare. Taking a deep breath, she begins to DANCE - to tap dance. The patrons all look to each other confused as Raquel taps out a bouncy rhythm. She smiles plastically as she scuttles across the stage, and finally GRABBED by Eddie. She continues to tap awkwardly as they converse.

EDDIE

What the hell do you think you're doing?

RAQUEL

Dancing. Like the ad said...

EDDIE

We don't want this! We need girls that can strip - grind, lap dance...

RAQUEL

(horrified)

Lap dance? I thought it said tap dance. I had no idea I was in that kind of a place...

CUT TO:

EXT. BOTTOMLESS PIT

LARGE NEON SIGNS surround the structure, flashing and glowing with the words "NUDE LAP DANCING"; "FEMALE STRIPPERS AND COUCH DANCERS"; "GIRLS STRIP DOWN TO NOTHING FOR MONEY"; "THE SLEAZIEST PLACE ON EARTH"; "OVER ONE MILLION AROUSED!"

And in smaller letters, at the bottom:

"EXPERIENCE FEMALE EMPOWERMENT NOW..."

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE

The audience is starting to BOO and THROW drinks.

EDDIE

Well take off something, before
we're all killed...

RAQUEL

Take of my clothes? I can't do that
- I'm a poor midwestern girl,
raised by an abusive, alcoholic
father--

EDDIE

-- And you symbolize all of the
ennobling qualities of the female
gender: heart, courage, ambition -
I know all that, but the audience
hates you! Just take off your
top...

Raquel is shocked, instinctively covering herself with the curtain. Eddie jumps off the stage, indicating with his hands for her to "take it off." She looks at him confused, so he PULLS HIS SHIRT OPEN and pumps his naked chest out and back - audience members STUFFING DOLLAR BILLS into his clothing.

INT. RAQUEL

Completely wrapped up in the curtain. The audience is still throwing stuff on-stage: Fruit, chairs, an inflatable sheep. Raquel ducks them all, realizing what she must do...

INT. STAGE - RAQUEL (REAR VIEW)

She RIPS HER TOP OPEN! The crowd GASPS and goes silent.

CUT TO:

INT. PATRONS

All stop, open-mouthed and awe-struck.

PATRON #1

Amazing!

PATRON #2

She symbolizes all of the ennobling qualities of the female gender: heart, courage, ambition—she's the perfect metaphor for independence, self-reliance and economic empowerment—

PATRON #3

With big jugs.

We PAN over to Raquel, who can only grin. They begin to applaud. Slowly she begins to smile. As the cheering continues she begins to DANCE.

JOE (V.O.)

So that night Raquel becomes... a strip girl.

The audience GOES WILD as she gyrates to the music. Eddie TURNS TO THE CAMERA.

EDDIE

I still would have preferred Shannen Doherty...

The audience cheers louder as we...

CUT TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Raquel lap dances on a patron - she is now more assured and in control.

JOE (V.O.)

So Raquel begins lap dancing and becomes an instant sensation. She starts off slowly but is soon more sure of herself...

OFF-CAMERA, she is thrown items to JUGGLE: first ORANGES, then FLAMING TORCHES and KNIVES. Everyone applauds.

WIPE TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB - LATER

Raquel does a VENTRILOQUISM ACT on-stage, the dummy is topless as well.

WIPE TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB - STILL LATER

A topless Raquel mud-wrestles a GRIZZLY BEAR IN A THONG.

JOE (V.O.)

She rules the club, but nothing
really changes in her life, until
one night, when a face from the
past reappears...

CUT TO:

EXT. BOTTOMLESS PIT - NIGHT

A cab pulls up in front - the advertisement on its top for
"Demi Moore in 'Godspell' at the Vegas Marriot." Vincent, in
black sunglasses, steps out, surveying the establishment.

CUT TO:

INT. BOTTOMLESS PIT - NIGHT

Vincent enters to see Wynotta on-stage as her song fades to
little fanfare. DJ DOUG, a dead ringer for HOWARD STERN,
fills the silence between songs to little fanfare.

DJ DOUG

All right gentlemen - that was
Wynotta - belle of the ball, queen
of the lean, the beauty with the
booty, with her second of two -
come on boyz - she's working hard
out there - let's give it up for
the jumpin' bumpin', had-a-one-
nighter-with-Donald-Trumpin'
Wynotta!

The place is DEAD SILENT. The song is over and the only
discernible sound is the dancer's high heels as she walks
around the front of the stage indifferently, picking up the
sparse, crumpled, and strewn dollar bills off the wood floor.
A TUMBLEWEED rolls past her on the stage as she finally
sachets off through the back curtain.

DJ DOUG (CONT'D)

(perking up)

... And now - she's sweet, she's
indiscreet, she gives tax
receipts-she's movin', groovin',
ever improvin', dancin' prancin'...
er... fan of Ted Dansen, Raquel!!!

The music BLARES back on and Raquel steps on-stage. Vincent is mesmerized by the jiggling and gyrating Raquel.

JOE (V.O.)
So Vincent sees Raquel, his despair
turning to adoration...

INT. VINCENT - CLOSE UPS

Vincent's face turns from despair to adoration.

JOE (V.O. CONT.)
... then awe...

Vincent's face changes emotions with Joe descriptions.

JOE (V.O. CONT.) (CONT'D)
... then grief... then
fascination... then hopelessness,
then indifference, then
humiliation...

The face changes get wild, exaggerated and ridiculous.

JOE (V.O. CONT.) (CONT'D)
... envy, grief, boredom, contempt,
joy, hatred, pity, lust,
impatience, loneliness, back to
grief for a minute, admiration,
curiosity, anger...

VINCENT
(to camera, angry)
All right!

JOE (V.O. CONT.)
(after a beat)
... He watches her from the back
row; that one special guy who sees
her not in the typical lurid way
but as a virginal beauty wearing a
garland of orchids, dancing a
delicate ballet. He begins dressing
her with his eyes.

INT. FANTASY SEQUENCE - VINCENT'S P.O.V.

As Raquel dances, clothes begin to appear. She is eventually fully clothed in his fantasy, and then is wearing an overcoat, fishing boots, wool mittens and a floppy hat.

We cut BACK AND FORTH between them, Vincent finally reaching for his shades.

CUT TO:

INT. BOTTOMLESS PIT - REAL TIME

The song ends, Vincent slack-jawed, as a waitress stops in front of him. Looking tired and unhappy in her halter top, she's a little too haggard to dance - one of her breasts actually sagging into a large Margarita glass on her tray.

WAITRESS

Drink?

VINCENT

I'm sorry, but if we are to continue this relationship, you can never ask me about my drinking.

WAITRESS

I meant would you like a drink? There's a two-drink minimum...

VINCENT

Excellent... I'll have nine shots of Jack Daniels.... twice.

She leaves as Raquel approaches with a sexy outfit on.

RAQUEL

Well look who's here - my knight in shining polyester...

VINCENT

Very nice - that was some performance.

He tries to stand, but it's uncomfortable.

RAQUEL

Don't get up.

VINCENT

It's a little late for that...

She sits next to Vincent as he looks around the room, impressed.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

This place is wild. Do you like it?

RAQUEL

Well the hours suck, but it pay's good - and it's the only job where you can claim a boob job as a medical expense on your HMO program.

VINCENT

So how does this place work?

We PAN AROUND THE ROOM in a very Scorsese-esque manner, as Raquel describes the operation of the club.

RAQUEL

In Vegas everybody's gotta watch everybody else...

A girl dances on-stage as we focus on the CUSTOMERS. They sit at tiny tables, which RISE IN UNISON as they watch the girl.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

... First there's the customers - they're watching the boobs...

PAN to the bar. He cleans a glass with a dirty rag, then spits in it and stacks it with the others. He grins lasciviously at the stage.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

...Behind them you've got the bartender. ... he's watching the boobs, too...

PAN to the exits. The Bouncers all stare at the dancer hungrily, too - dozens of patrons slipping inside for free behind them.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

... Behind him you've got the bouncer... he's always watching the boobs...

PAN to Eddie's Office. He watches intently from the doorway, his head bobbing rapidly along with the boobs.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

... Then there's the manager, who... well, who are we kidding - Everybody's watching the boobs...

We PAN BACK past everyone watching the boobs, waitresses, the DJ, etc., to Raquel and Vincent, while in the background, a STRIPPER is on-stage working the brass pole, climbing and sliding seductively.

VINCENT

So basically, I pay you to spend time with me. Have a drink with me. Tease me, rub on me and at the end of the night I go home with blue balls and an empty wallet?

RAQUEL

Just like a regular date.

VINCENT

This is an interesting concept. Instead of dinner and a movie, I give the money directly to you, thereby cutting out the middleman.

The STRIPPER'S act gets more and more ACROBATIC. Eventually working into a FULL-BLOWN OLYMPIC GYMNASTIC ROUTINE; rotating and flipping around the poles, doing the Iron Cross, holding herself out parallel to the floor, etc.; and releasing with a pike-position, double-twisting full gainer into a perfect dismount.

RAQUEL

We're the gladiators of the economy. Think of it as a factory outlet for sex. However, we are not prostitutes. I don't do anything I don't want to do.

The crowd goes nuts and several guys hold up scores like they were judges. One guy looks like he's from an Eastern Block country and holds up a really low score.

VINCENT

I can't believe you enjoy dancing in a cheesy nude revue in this run-down strip club?

RAQUEL

I'm just doing this until I achieve my true goal.

VINCENT

What's that?

RAQUEL

To dance in a cheesy semi-nude revue in a big casino...

Romero steps onstage, trying to UNWIND the girl's leg, which has WRAPPED ITSELF AROUND THE POLE six or seven times.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

So how long have you been in Vegas?

VINCENT

Six years...

RAQUEL

What have you been doing?

VINCENT

I came to Las Vegas to drink myself
to death.

RAQUEL

And you've been here six years?

VINCENT

Yeah well let's see you try it in
Vegas. The drinks are so watered
down, I can't even catch a buzz...

The WAITRESS brings Vincent's multiple shots of JACK DANIELS.
He slams down all nine whiskeys, then waits motionless for a
beat.

RAQUEL

Anything?

VINCENT

Nothing.

A new song begins to blare. Another STRIPPER starts her act,
behind her DOZENS OF FIREMEN COME SLIDING DOWN THE POLE,
running across the stage as if they were in a drill.

RAQUEL

Look, I might as well give you a
lap dance - you're paying for it
anyway....

VINCENT

How much?

RAQUEL

Twenty dollars a song; or you -
whichever comes first. I'll see if
I can get any of the producers,
investors, or studio brass doing
walk-ons in this film to give up a
couch...

CUT TO:

INT. LAP DANCE BOOTHS

Raquel and Vincent search for an open space along a row of booths, each containing a tiny couch: in one Wynotta grinds on a customer so hard that smoke rises from underneath her; in the next booth Kato Kaelin sleeps alone, snoring softly; in the next, a man rails to a psychiatrist during a therapy session. Finally Raquel finds an empty booth, setting Vincent on the couch.

VINCENT

So I just sit here, then...

RAQUEL

Keep your hands at your sides. No touching. No squeezing me between your legs. No tongue. No kissing. Don't move!

VINCENT

What if it moves?

RAQUEL

Oh, it'll move. Don't worry about that. It'll move; it'll twitch, it'll jump, it'll pulsate, it'll salute, it'll sing the national anthem. But most of all, it'll just hurt.

VINCENT

Jeez, this is like a real date... Any other rules I should know about?

RAQUEL

Yeah - no cuts, no spinzies, no slams, no one-hands, no set-ups; and lines are out.

VINCENT

Those are "four square" rules...

RAQUEL

Sorry - I've been going to regression therapy. Must have been a flashback.

The music starts to kick in, and Raquel begins to GRIND on Vincent's lap. He tenses. Raquel grins as she SPINS around, CLIMBING on top of Vincent. He obviously likes it.

VINCENT

(looks around
contentedly)

Maybe I'll just live here. I could
set up a mail box at this corner,
and a 'fridge over here...

RAQUEL

(grins)

What do you do for a living, Vince?
Besides drink, I mean...

VINCENT

Swallow. Digest. The usual...
Actually I used to be a hit man for
the mob. Maybe you've heard of me -
Vincent "Ten Fingers" Bonfigliono.

RAQUEL

(skeptical)

"Ten Fingers?"

VINCENT

Mobsters aren't very creative nick-
namers. A few years ago I was on my
way to Hollywood to take care of
some business for the mob... But
while driving through the desert...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - DUSK

A sign reads "WELCOME TO NEVADA - LAND OF BARREN DESOLATION"
A 1940's Buick convertible roars down a lonely Highway.
Vincent, dressed in a checkered silk sport coat, ascot,
sunglasses, and white Fedora, drives with two companions—a
Mobster (HARVEY 'ONE HEAD' MOLLINO) and a pretty Moll ("TWO
BREASTS") with what a severely pointed '40's-style brassiere.

HARVEY

Listen, Ten Fingers - Hollywood
isn't like other towns - they won't
buckle to the mob. What you're
trying to do is too evil - too
cruel.

VINCENT

I've got my orders - I do what I'm
told, and they will do what I tell
them, One Head.

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I don't care how wrong they think it is, how debased - even if it destroys the film industry: Pauley Shore will have a movie career.

The Moll grumbles from the back seat, bored.

TWO BREASTS

How much further is it? This desert is dull - there's nothing to look at but stupid nature in all of it's awesome splendor. Isn't there some place fun we can stop?

HARVEY

Quiet, Two Breasts. Why would anybody want to stop here, in a state with legalized gambling and prostitution, when they can have more fun doing it illegally in Arizona or California?

Suddenly Vincent hits the brakes, the car SQUEELING to a quick stop.

VINCENT

Hold it! I've had a vision! Forget about Hollywood...

Vincent hops out of the car and runs into the desert. He stops to view the sunset, raising his arms as if he was experiencing a religious conversion. Harvey climbs out of the car and onto the sandy shoulder of the road, near a sign reading "DISNEYLAND - 284 MILES." At the foot of the sign is a sun-bleached ANIMAL SKULL WITH LARGE ROUND MOUSE EARS.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I can see it now - a casino resort! We'll call it the "Tropical Nugget," and we'll replace this gorgeous desert view with an oversized art deco hotel! We'll cover the fine desert sand with concrete and asphalt - corrupt nature's paradise with tourists, gambling, free liquor, bad-tasting four dollar buffets, strip shows, fraud, extortion, and prostitution. Then to top it all off, we'll hire top-flight entertainers to perform there, like Wayne Newton and Fred Travelina.

HARVEY

Fred Travelina? We better put the top up - you're getting too much sun...

Vincent continues to stare out into the distance as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LAP BOOTH

Vincent finishes his story as Raquel sits on his lap, reading "Strip Tease."

VINCENT

... And so the "Tropical Nugget" was created. You know, I still have friends there - maybe I'll put in a good word for you. What are the odds that we go on a regular date when you're done here?

Raquel puts the book away, checking a BOARD ON THE OTHER WALL THAT IS SET UP LIKE A SPORTS BOOK. It lists major sporting events like:

CUBS WIN WORLD SERIES - 4.8 Million/1
 MIKE TYSON IQ - over/under - 12
 BILLY MARTIN RE-HIRED BY YANKEES - even
 DARRYL STRAWBERRY NEXT SENTENCE - 5 to 10
 TOMMY LASORDA'S WAISTLINE over/under - 54
 RAQUEL GOES ON DATE WITH VINCENT...

RAQUEL

It's currently 5-2, with the over/under at 69.

VINCENT

Is it cold in here or what?. When do you get off?

RAQUEL

Never. Don't kid yourself, slime! This is strictly business for me - I'm able to keep my emotions and feelings completely separate. No offense, but this isn't a turn-on for me. That's why the owner likes to keep it cold in here - so it looks like we're aroused, when really, we're just colder than hell.

As they converse, THE BOARD CHANGES ODDS on them going out on a date to "10 -1."

VINCENT

I meant - when do you get off work.

RAQUEL

Oh in about fifteen minutes

VINCENT

C'mon - take a chance, you're my angel...

The ODDS CHANGE TO "2-1."

She gives him once last long and hard grind, then jumps off.

RAQUEL

All right, I guess...

VINCENT

(slightly dazed)

Great! I'll get my car...

Vincent stands up - with some difficulty - and in HIS EXCITED STATE turns to leave, KNOCKING OVER TABLES, CHAIRS, DRINKS AND OTHER ITEMS. He excuses himself, hands in the air, as he "pokes" a waitress by mistake.

WAITRESS

Hey - you can't bring a gun in here!

Vincent continues on, knocking a whole row of items off a shelf, breaking the glass in the juke box and PULLING THE EXIT CURTAIN OFF IT'S RINGS.

CUT TO:

EXT. CASINO - NIGHT

Vincent and Raquel approach the Tropical Nugget. There's a huge crowd of people, valets, doorman and cars jamming the front entrance.

RAQUEL

Oh wow, it's packed.

VINCENT

Everyone is trying to get into see "Pussy Cats". It's the hottest show on the strip.

(turns to camera)

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

... although it has no relation or financial responsibility to the famous Broadway show "Cats."

RAQUEL

I'd give my left tit to dance in that show.

VINCENT

Talk about a catch-22...

He throws the car into reverse and backs down a side street, parking in a back alley. Vincent hops out and opens her door.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Let's go pussycat!

RAQUEL

They're gonna tow you if you leave it here.

VINCENT

I have an understanding with the towing union...

Vincent pulls out a huge wad of money, just as a tow truck cruises by slowly and casually hands the driver a twenty as he passes.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER

Evening, Mr. Bonfiglione...

Vincent opens the trunk and pulls out a crowbar.

RAQUEL

Besides, we can't get into the show - it's probably been sold out for weeks. We'd be lucky to even get near the door.

He jams the crowbar in the edge of a manhole cover and lifts it out of the pavement.

VINCENT

I like going in this way, you don't have to stand in line.

They crawl down a ladder into the sewer and are greeted by a doorman at the bottom.

DOORMAN

Evening, Mr. Bonfiglione...

Vincent slips him a twenty and offers Raquel his arm. They walk off into the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. SEWER PIPE - SAME

Vincent and Raquel trudge through knee deep water as maintenance men, sewer workers, an alligator and various characters greet and lead them through - Vincent tipping them all twenty.

SEWER WORKER #1
Mr. Bonfigliono!

SEWER WORKER #2
Hiya, Mr. Bonfigliono!

SEWER WORKER #3
Good to see you again, Mr.
Bonfigliono!

The CAMERA follows them in a CONTINUOUS SHOT into...

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET - BATHROOM

A large drain in the floor opens. Vincent and Raquel climb out and are greeted by an attendant in a tux. He towels them off as Vincent hands him another twenty. They pass people sitting in open stalls who greet them, Vincent slipping them all twenty as well. They step out into...

MAN IN STALL #1
Hello, Mr. Bonfigliono!

MAN IN STALL #2
Yo, Mr. Bonfigliono!

MAN IN STALL #3
(grunts)
Hi Mr. Bonfigliono...

The CAMERA follows them through the door into...

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET - KITCHEN - SAME

Cooks unpack bags of Chinese, Italian and Mexican fast food, laying it all out on silver platters to serve to customers. A BARTENDER is making mixed drinks. He wear's a CHEMIST'S LAB COAT and gently squeezes LIQUOR OUT OF AN EYEDROPPER into the drink glasses.

Raquel and Vincent are led past Bouncers dragging an irate customer into the room, beating the crap out of him. Vincent tips them all - even the guy getting beaten.

THUG #1
Greetings, Mr. Bonfiglione!

THUG #2
Salutations, Mr. Bonfiglione!

VICTIM
Good to see you again, Mr.
Bonfiglione!

They all smile, thanking him, then resume the beating.

BEATING VICTIM (O.S.)
Can't we all just get along?

The CAMERA follows them into...

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET - SHOWROOM - SAME

Vincent and Raquel are greeted by a bouncer in a tux, who leads them into the dining area. Waiters remove a table - as well as the two people sitting there. A new table, with lit candles, and silverware is quickly set up for them. Vincent greets the MOBSTERS who are sitting around them.

VINCENT
Bobby Two Ears Gentilli! Good to
see you. Jackie Average-size Penis
Corlucci! And Ricky Foot-in-his-
forehead Grandazzo!

A gangster with A FOOT STICKING OUT OF HIS FOREHEAD shakes his hand and sits back down. A waiter rolls a serving cart with a TWO DOZEN CHILLED BOTTLES OF CHAMPAGNE to their table. Raquel looks at Vincent quizzically.

RAQUEL
Are you sure you're a retired
mobster?

VINCENT

Well, I guess I didn't get around
to telling everybody just yet...

They turn to the show on-stage, seeing...

CUT TO:

INT. "PUSSYCATS" STAGE

Showgirls dance on-stage in CAT COSTUMES - FOUR GLITTERING
WONDER-BRAS on each cat. They go through various CATLIKE
MOTIONS as they sing.

DANCERS

Pussycats are and pussycats do...

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWROOM

Raquel IMITATES THE STUFF GOING ON ON-STAGE. First with arm
movements, then clawing, sniffing and trying to lick herself,
etc., as the owner of the Tropical Nugget and big-time
gangster (MICKEY CARDILLICCHIO) approaches. He and Vincent
stare at each other intently - there's no love lost between
these men.

MICKEY

Ten Fingers! Good to have you back
here. Things have really changed
since you left town. Vegas has
turned into a putrid swamp of
thievery, larceny and crime.....
we're doing much better now, huh!
And who's your lovely date?

VINCENT

Her name's Raquel - she's a dancer.

Mickey kisses Raquel's hand, obviously to needle Vincent.

MICKEY (CONT.)

Please to make your acquaintance,
Raquel - are you currently working?

She DECKS HIM with right cross.

RAQUEL

Working? I'm not a hooker! Screw
you, you pizza-brain...

Everyone in the place goes for their guns, but Mickey - climbing up off the ground - puts a hand up to stop them all. They all put their guns back and resume eating, dancing, serving, sweeping, etc.

MICKEY

(gathering himself)

I meant are you currently dancing anywhere?

RAQUEL

Oh, yeah - over at the Bottomless Pit - every afternoon.

MICKEY

Ahh - you should be doing nicely, you're so... sexy...

The surrounding crowd murmurs in agreement.

RAQUEL

(still smiling)

What do you mean, I'm sexy?

MICKEY

Sexy, you know - you're a sexy girl...

RAQUEL

(serious)

You mean you like my tits, or what?

MICKEY

(backpedaling)

You're just sexy - the way you look, you know, it's sexy.

RAQUEL

(getting upset)

How? I mean what's sexy about it?

VINCENT

Raquel - you got it all wrong...

RAQUEL

(interrupting)

... Hold - hold - wait a minute - he's a big shot - he's knows what he said - what did you say? Sexy how?

MICKEY

(scared)

Just ... sexy - you're sexy...

She grabs him by the tie, pulling him into a chair. The place goes silent.

RAQUEL

(sarcastic and cold)

Let me understand this - maybe it's me - I'm a little screwed up, maybe. I'm sexy how? Like I'm a slut? I titillate you? I make you excited? I'm here to friggin' arouse you? What do you mean, sexy how? How am I sexy?

MICKEY

Just the way you hold yourself, you know?

She pulls him closer and is pissed off.

RAQUEL

No - no; I don't know - you said it. How do I know? You said I'm sexy? How am I sexy? What is so sexy about me? Tell me - tell me what's sexy?...

MICKEY

(realizes)

Get the hell out of here...

Raquel smiles, stands up and looks around.

RAQUEL

I almost had him!

Everyone has a good laugh until a drunk patron stumbles up to their table.

PATRON

Ha, ha, ha - you really busted his balls lady - you're really funny!

The place goes silent again, Raquel glaring at the drunk furiously.

RAQUEL

Funny?!!!! What do you mean...funny?

VINCENT

(head in hands)

Oh, I wish you hadn't said that...

Before another confrontation begins, the lights dim, and everyone turns to see...

INT. "PUSSYCATS" STAGE

The star of the show CRYSTAL GOBLET emerges out of a glittering litter box, in simulated moonlight. She is playing the part of "JIZZABELLA."

CRYSTAL
(singing)
Mammaries
All alone in the moonlight;
So much more than a handful...

Jizzabella stretches up into the night, screeching like an alley cat at the moon, after the next line.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)
... You can see they are lovely...

VOICE (O.S.)
(yelling)
Shut up out there!

An OVERSIZE SHOE comes flying out of the wings, which Jizzabella ducks perfectly. She recoils and hisses loudly at the unseen insomniac.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWROOM TABLE

Raquel is mesmerized by Crystal, her tongue even wagging a little. Mickey leans in next to her.

MICKEY
What do you think of our little
production here?

RAQUEL
It's unbelievable, spectacular - I
love it!

MICKEY
You better believe it baby - it's
the hottest show on the strip...

EVERYONE IN THE ROOM nods, adding...

EVERYONE (IN UNISON)
 ... although it has no relation or
 financial responsibility to the
 famous Broadway show "Cats."

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE

Jizzabella is seductively stripping and dancing like a cat as she sings.

CRYSTAL
 Cough up phlegm and fur balls,
 The stale cold smell of rat guts;
 Lick myself 'cause I can,
 Then sniff some other cat butts...

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWROOM

Vincent POPS OPEN the last bottle of champagne. The CORK GOES FLYING AND KNOCKS OUT A PASSING WAITER, WHO FALLS ON TOP OF A PILE OF UNCONSCIOUS WAITERS. Raquel looks back at Mickey, who TOASTS her, then she turns back to Vincent.

RAQUEL
 Who is Mickey, anyway? You guys
 don't seem to like each other...

The people around them tense, preparing for another FLASHBACK.

VINCENT
 Raquel, I told you - you must NEVER
 ask me to tell you about my sordid,
 deeply conflicted past.

The people around them relax, relieved.

RAQUEL
 No - you told me never to ask you
 to stop drinking...

VINCENT
 Oh... okay then...
 (starts musing)
 ... Mickey is the one who replaced
 me at the casino, as well as in
 some other places... It's a long
 story, but it goes like this...

Raquel and everyone at the tables around them groans, preparing for the worst.

VINCENT (CONT.) (CONT'D)
 ... You should have seen me in the old days. At that time, Vegas was a place where millions of suckers flew in every year and left behind about a billion dollars. Of course most of it was in nickels, so the local bank hated us on deposit day. But you should have seen it at night..

He stares off into the distance, misty-eyed, as we...

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

A plane's POV high up in the sky - giving us an overhead view of the city through the clouds - shining through the darkness like a glittering jewel on black velvet.

VINCENT (V.O.)
 I used to love to fly in at night.
 It was beautiful, and the ride was smooth...

THWACK! The plane plows into a flock of PARACHUTING "FLYING ELVIS'," and a few are deflected off the windshield. An Elvis Impersonator GLIDES PAST - the VIEW SUDDENLY SHAKING.

VINCENT (V.O.)
 ... Except for those damn Flying Elvises getting caught in the engines. At night, you couldn't see the desert surrounding Las Vegas; but it's in the desert where a lot of the town's problems are solved...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Dry, arid - forbidding. We TRACK along, until reaching Vincent and Harvey One Head filling dirt into two large holes in the sand with shovels.

VINCENT (V.O.)

... We got a lot of holes in the desert, and a lot of problems are buried in those holes: rival gangsters, G-men, telephone sales people, stereo salesmen, mimes, bad waiters, anybody appearing with a monkey act...

Beyond them are MANY more holes - a STEAM SHOVEL digs furiously.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Except you gotta do it right - I mean you gotta have the hole already dug before you show up with a package and a truck, otherwise you're talking about a half hour or 45 minutes of digging. And who knows who's gonna be coming along in that time before you know it you gotta dig a few more holes - you could be there all night...

Vincent and Harvey One Head pat down on the mounds in the sand with shovels as along the roadside we see a long line-up of empty cars - and a lot more holes behind them.

VINCENT

That's it - the whole Cowsill family - no more "Hair" revivals or "Getting Into that Sunny, Sunny Feelin'" in my town...

HARVEY

We're running out of holes, though - we had to bury them on top of the King family...

Now a bus pulls up. Several bright faced family members poke their heads out of the windows.

TONY DEFRANCO

Hi! We're the DeFranco family, and we'll be performing our hit "Heartbeat - It's A Love Beat" at the Sands - can you direct us to Las Vegas?

Both men sigh and start to dig fresh holes.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET CASINO - NIGHT

Glittering with neon and thousands of blinking light bulbs under the marquee. A limo pulls up, Vincent, looking handsome and confident, steps out of the car in perfect, shiny Goodfellas suit.

VINCENT (V.O.)

My friends in the mob backed me with the money required for a new Las Vegas pleasure palace and a license from the Gaming Commission for the Tropical Nugget Casino. Suddenly I was royalty.

Vincent notices that ONE of the light bulbs is out.

YOUNG VINCENT

Wankowski - we need a new light bulb screwed in!

WANKOWSKI, a janitor, steps forward with a ladder, looking the problem over and shaking his head.

WANKOWSKI

No telling how many guys this is gonna take...

Vincent steps inside, where he's greeted by YOUNG MICKEY.

VINCENT (V.O.)

So I went to work. I hired an old casino pal, Mickey Cardillicchio, as my manager. Mickey was a real killer then.

CUT TO:

INT. WORK ROOM

Mickey and a few thugs hold a man across a work table, his head squeezed in a VISE. A sign on the wall behind him says "Tropical Nugget Employees: Please Put Tools Away After Torturing Customers."

VINCENT (V.O.)

No matter how big a guy might be, Mickey would take him on. You beat Mickey with fists, he comes back with a bat. You beat him with a knife, he comes back with a gun.

(MORE)

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

And if you beat him with a gun,
he'd come back with... a bigger
gun. Mickey wasn't too bright...

Mickey rotates the lever, tightening the vise.

MICKEY

Talk! Talk!

THUG #1

He can't talk, Mickey - the vise is
too tight...

Mickey slaps his own forehead, realizing his mistake.

VINCENT (CONT.)

Mickey handled all the dirty work,
to keep me clean with the cops...

Suddenly police burst into the room, guns drawn.

COP

Hold it! Vise-squad!!!

They all raise their hands as we...

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET CASINO

Vincent looks down over the casino downstairs, confident and handsome, with his Moll Two Breasts by his side.

VINCENT

Then Vegas changed - it became a
family town...

On the floor below a purple dinosaur (Barney) runs a CRAPS TABLE, surrounded by KIDS; ALL SMOKING, BETTING AND THROWING DICE.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Even so, I ruled the strip. I
worked 18 hour days, but I had
money... power... and I had my girl
Two Breasts...

Two Breasts kisses him good-bye, poking him in the chest, and leaving as we...

WIPE TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Two Breasts emerges from the bathroom in a silk bathrobe - her breasts still sharply pointed by her '40's bra - gliding over to Mickey, who proudly surveys the view of the Las Vegas Strip through the picture window.

VINCENT (V.O.)
 ... Or so I thought, until Mickey
 got out of jail...

They kiss as the DOORBELL rings. Two Breasts hides as Mickey answers the door. Vincent steps in - noticing TWO PUNCTURE MARKS on the chest of Mickey's sport coat.

VINCENT (V.O.)
 My best girl and my best friend. I
 never saw it coming...

Vincent pulls his gun on Mickey and notices Two Breasts' brassiere POKING THROUGH the closed doors of the armoire. When he opens the doors she looks back at him, distraught with shame.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHOWROOM

Back in the present. Vincent notices everyone around him dozing off, and shouts loudly.

VINCENT
 ... So that's my story!!! I really
 don't want to say anything more...

The other customers applaud as Raquel looks at him, concerned. Behind her the injured WAITER SETS FIRE TO A FLAMBE DISH behind them.

RAQUEL
 Are you putting me in danger,
 introducing me to all these people
 in the mob?

VINCENT
 Are you kidding me? I told you I'm
 an ex-mobster - besides - this
 isn't a mob town anymore. There's
 absolutely no danger...

Vincent rises for emphasis, knocking over the WAITER who immediately CATCHES FIRE, running frantically around the room in flames. In the FOREGROUND, Vincent moves in closer to Raquel, their lips almost touching.

RAQUEL

Tell me something, Vincent. Are you hitting on me?

VINCENT

I am not here to force my twisted soul into your life. We both know I'm a drunk, and I know you're a stripper. I hope you understand that I am a person who is totally at ease with this – which is not to say that I'm indifferent, or I don't care. I do. It simply means that I trust and accept your judgment ...

RAQUEL

That's too bad, because I was hoping for a guy who doesn't care to ravage me for a couple hours of spontaneous, guilt-free, irresponsible sex...

VINCENT

(thrilled)

Good, 'cause I was just making all that other stuff up!

He tosses his bottle, RE-IGNITING the man behind them, and kisses her passionately. Suddenly Raquel pulls back.

RAQUEL

No! It's all too fast! I have plans! Ambitions! Goals! Plus I can still smell the sewer on you!

She turns and runs toward the exit, slamming into Mickey.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

Get your hands off me you bent-nose, Mafiosi, jailbird, racketeering, goodfella, wiseguy, evildoer!

MICKEY

Your point being...?

Flustered, Raquel rushes out.

JOE (V.O.)

So begins our lovers' triangle...
actually in this case it's more
like a pentagonal dodecahedron, but
I digress. We next find Raquel back
at work...

CUT TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB DRESSING ROOM - EVENING

Raquel is perfuming herself using a giant bug-spray gun
labeled "Obsession." Pamela kicks the backstage door open,
all sweaty, with wads of dollar bills all over her person.

PAMELA

You're up plywood...

Raquel grumbles to herself as Pamela passes by, then is
approached by a studious looking, yet gorgeous stripper,
DIONNE.

DIONNE

Don't pay any attention to them -
they're just jealous of anybody new
who could cut into their earning
power.

RAQUEL

I'm not trying to take anyone's
job, this is just temporary.

DIONNE

Me too. My name's Dionne. I'm
working my way through school.

RAQUEL

That's great! What are you
studying?

DIONNE

I have a B.S. in Aeronautical
engineering, a Masters in Quantum
Mechanical Physics and now I'm
working on my PHD...

RAQUEL

What's your thesis?

DIONNE

(rather blasé)

I'm developing a theoretical propulsion system that will allow space travel to be advanced exponentially by exploiting the common properties of time dimensions.

RAQUEL

(shrugs)

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to do that...

DIONNE

Yourself?

RAQUEL

I want to dance topless in a really big Vegas show.

DIONNE

Oh, I envy you so much... You know exactly where you're going. I have no idea what my future holds. I could end up teaching advanced nuclear physics at Cambridge or splitting atoms at Fermi Lab or crunching theoretical evidence in some think tank somewhere - it's frightening! You... you're my heroine - my Pagan role model...

RAQUEL

You're so nice. Thanks. If there's anything I can do for you - don't be shy.

DIONNE

Actually, I can't afford daycare, so could you watch my son for me while I'm on stage?

RAQUEL

Sure, sweetie where is the little darling?

Dionne points toward a SEVENTY YEAR OLD MAN slobbering over all the nude women in the corner of the room. She shrugs apologetically.

DIONNE

I adopted...

(turns back)

(MORE)

DIONNE (CONT'D)

... Oh, and stay away from my chubs
or I'll rip your head off.

Eddie Velcro enters - all smiles.

EDDIE

Hello Ladies! Come on - let's get
out there; everybody - next song is
ladies choice. C'mon - let's go -
sell, sell, sell... all ladies on-
stage...

WYNOTTA

Eddie could ya' turn off the A/C
already. It's freezing out there.

EDDIE

No way, baby - we gotta keep them
nipples hard.

PAMELA

It's so friggin' cold I think my
left one froze.

EDDIE

The colder the better. Remember the
Velcro credo:

ALL OF THEM

The bigger the nips - the bigger
the tips...

EDDIE

Aw - I love it! I'm gonna drop it
down another ten or fifteen
degrees. Besides - my new girl
doesn't seem to complain.

(like a football coach)

Now c'mon, let's go - let's go! Go!
Go! Move it - move it - move it!

The girls jump to their feet and run out the door like
they're leaving the locker room at half-time, with Eddie
slapping their butts as they go. The last one is a MALE
FOOTBALL PLAYER in full pads.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE -SAME

It's so cold on-stage, you can see the performers' breath. DJ
Doug can barely speak in his booth, bundled up like an arctic
explorer.

DJ DOUG

A-a-a-and now w-w-w-elcome D-D-Dionne... m-m-movin'-est, g-g-groovin'-est, ch-ch-ch-ch...

Dionne starts seductively licking one of the brass poles and gets her tongue stuck to it. WE PULL BACK, and there are five or six of them stuck to different poles. Icicles are forming on their various appendages.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDIENCE

The customers have mittens and winter coats on. A couple of them brave the cold without shirts; their faces and chests painted team colors like those drunken idiots in Green Bay or Pittsburgh at an outdoor football game in winter. They stand up revealing the letters: S.T.R.I.P. on their chests. They let out loud whooping noises. Eddie steps out and looks around, frowning.

EDDIE

Okay, I'll turn it up... five degrees.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB - LATER

DJ Doug is going through his paces.

DJ DOUG

All right boyzz; how about that lady - she's moovin'; she's groovin'; her breasts are improovin' - let's hear it for Pamela... She's heading back to that couch area and will give you a lap dance that will take your breath away... so - remember to turn your head sideways every once in a while.

He throws in a few sound effects to highlight his "joke." Robin Quivers laughs plastically.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVATE BOOTH

Pamela (whose breasts are now even larger) is dancing for a yuppie in a three-piece suit. He flashes his gold card, which he inserts and slides between her cleavage. A receipt prints out.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE

Raquel twirls on the brass pole, her SPINNING LEGS KNOCKING several of the closer customers out of their chairs. She climbs up higher as a DELIVERY BOY approaches the stage, holding a bouquet of roses.

DELIVERY BOY
Flower delivery for Raquel...

RAQUEL
(waving)
That's me.

He CLIMBS UP the pole underneath her, handing her the flowers, then a delivery order.

DELIVERY BOY
Sign please...

She does so, still twirling. The Delivery Boy slides down again, where a DISGUISED POLITICIAN JUMPS over from the marked 'Disguised Politician' section, BASHING the Delivery Boy over the head repeatedly with a WINE BOTTLE.

DJ DOUG
(tiredly - he's read this before)
Will all Disguised Politicians
please refrain from attacking the
other customers with wine bottles?
Thank-you...

Romero pulls the politician away as Raquel reads the card, which says:

"LOVELY RAQUEL, PLEASE COME TO THE TROPICAL NUGGET TOMORROW FOR AN AUDITION.

MICKEY CARDILLICCHIO - OWNER OF THE TROPICAL NUGGET & BIG-TIME GANGSTER.

Raquel emits an ear-piercing high-pitched squeal, breaking the wall mirrors behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET - NEXT DAY

Raquel enters the Tropical Nugget and walks through the casino, looking around in amazement.

JOE (V.O.)

She enters the casino. She is enthralled by the noise, the bright lights - like every Hollywood movie she ever saw about glamorous Las Vegas...

She passes various VEGAS MOVIE CHARACTERS: Someone looking like ALBERT BROOKS wandering around in his pajamas, complaining that his wife lost the nest egg; Someone like NICHOLAS CAGE asking directions to the Flying Elvises; TWO MEN IN SHINY SUITS - one autistic and mumbling "Rainman counts cards... definitely counts cards."

Raquel moves on, suddenly locking eyes with an incredibly HANDSOME MILLIONAIRE in a tuxedo.

HANDSOME MILLIONAIRE

Excuse me, but would you sleep with me for a million dollars?

Raquel PUNCHES him in the eye.

RAQUEL

I'm no hooker! I've worked too long and too hard to... wait, did you say a million dollars?

HANDSOME MILLIONAIRE

Yes - would you sleep with me for just one night If I gave you one million dollars?

RAQUEL

(enthusiastically)
Sure!!

HANDSOME MILLIONAIRE

Thanks... Just checking.

The incredibly HANDSOME MILLIONAIRE walks away.

JOE (V.O.)

... But as she moves through, she finds this is not the casino of shallow Hollywood movies. This is the real casino, with the stench of stale smoke and desperation choking her senses as she steps through...

Raquel walks down a row of housewives playing SLOT MACHINES. One of them paying off, filling the tray with quarters. She moves past a TELEPHONE BOOTH - suddenly IT pays off too - filling the booth with quarters.

Raquel passes a large wheel with money on it. A crowd places bets on different denominations.

GUY #1

I'd like to buy a vowel...

She passes a craps table, the roller throwing the dice

GUY #2

Yahtzee!

The crowd cheers, while at a blackjack table a player checks his cards and scratches the table with them.

GUY #3

Hit me.

The dealer gives him a right cross to the forehead, knocking him off his seat. The other players quickly say "I'll stick" and "I'm good," etc.

She passes by a roped off high roller area; the BACCARAT TABLE. We see tuxedoed European men and stunningly attractive women in evening gowns sitting around the table cautiously eyeing their cards. A suave, dangerous looking JAMES BOND TYPE raises his cards and says:

JAMES BOND TYPE

Go fish!

We PAN UP to the "eye in the sky," a camera that's following RAQUEL'S every move.

CUT TO

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET - PENTHOUSE

Raquel walks through the Casino on a TV screen. PULLING BACK, we see there is a bank of monitors. A thug (ONE LINE) grins.

ONE LINE

She's here, Mr. Cardillichio, just like you predicted...

Mickey sits nearby, receiving manicures and pedicures by several girls. His eyes are covered by CUCUMBER SLICES, and his face has been SMEARED WITH A WHITE FACIAL CREAM.

MICKEY

Excellent, One Line. Soon that has-been Vincent Ten Fingers' girl will be mine! I took his job, his girl Two Breasts - and I'll take this one, too!

Mickey laughs, as does everyone around him. They all continue to laugh until Mickey stops, pausing to pull the cucumber slices off of his eyes.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Hey - what's this...

He wipes the CREAM from his face and looks up to find another thug EATING a SALAD directly over him, slopping everywhere.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Didn't I tell you to eat that in the kitchen?

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET SHOWROOM

Raquel walks in to see dancers stretching and warming up on-stage for the audition. They INSERT MOUTH GUARDS, TAPE FOIL ACROSS THEIR KNUCKLES, and SLIP HORSE SHOES INTO BOXING GLOVES. She stares at the group of women from afar, as the Big show's producer, LLOYD WEBSTER, enters. He's the Marine sergeant from "Full Metal Jacket."

LLOYD WEBSTER

Fall in!

The girls scramble to form a line and Lloyd Webster starts down the row, yelling at them.

LLOYD WEBSTER (CONT'D)

I am Lloyd Webster, producer of "Pussycats": Because I am a prick, you will not like me, but the more you hate me, the more you will learn. I want you to dance and to stimulate. If you ladies survive this audition, you will become a Pussycat, a sex-object, a tease. You will be a high-priestess of titillation, praying for lust. But until that time, you are just a bunch of chicks with nice gams, you are the lowest form of life in Vegas. I have one interest here - the show. I am here to weed-out all the wide-eyed wannabes who do not possess the skills nor the magnetism to serve in my beloved "Pussycats" - the hottest show on the strip...

(turns to the camera)

... although it has no relation or financial responsibility to the famous Broadway show "Cats." (back to girls)

Do you sorry excuses for dancers understand that?

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

Sir - yes, sir.

LLOYD WEBSTER

I can't hear you.

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

Sir - yes, sir

He stops and looks at a dancer's cleavage. He whips out some calipers.

LLOYD WEBSTER

(measuring)

You call those breasts? Drop down and give me twenty pectoral stretches.

She does. He goes on to another nervous candidate.

LLOYD WEBSTER (CONT'D)

What is your name?

DANCER #1

Sabrina Turzac...

LLOYD WEBSTER
 Turzac? I hate the name Turzac!
 From now on you're "Sugarpuss." Why
 are you here Sugarpuss?

DANCER #1
 To dance, sir.

LLOYD WEBSTER
 So you're a dancer, huh? Let me see
 you pout!

She pouts.

LLOYD WEBSTER (CONT.) (CONT'D)
 I said pout! Like you mean it! Let
 me see your bedroom face!

She pouts harder, sucking in her cheeks.

LLOYD WEBSTER (CONT.) (CONT'D)
 I'm not turned on - I'm not even
 aroused! Off my stage!

He goes down the line to a very tall, buxom blonde.

LLOYD WEBSTER (CONT'D)
 Where are you from, stretch?

DANCER #2
 Dallas. I just graduated from
 Baylor.

LLOYD WEBSTER
 Baylor? They don't allow dancing
 at Baylor! It's a sin to dance at
 Baylor! I need sinners! Get the
 hell out of here you virtuous,
 pure, moral, chaste, upstanding,
 incorruptible virgin!
 (to next girl)
 ... and where did you graduate?

DANCER #3
 (frightened and
 embarrassed)
 ... O - O - Or....

LLOYD WEBSTER
 Out with it!

DANCER #3
 Oral Roberts...

LLOYD WEBSTER
Now that's more like it!

He continues down the line, pontificating.

LLOYD WEBSTER (CONT.) (CONT'D)
The sexiest thing in the world is a
Tropical Nugget Showgirl in her G-
string. These hormones must be
harnessed if you expect to survive
two shows a night, seven days a
week, with a midnight show on
Saturdays. If your sexual instincts
are not strong, your audience may
become flaccid at the moment of
truth. Do you understand?!?

DANCERS (IN UNISON)
Sir, yes sir...

LLOYD WEBSTER
I can't hear you!

DANCERS (IN UNISON)
Sir, yes sir!!!

He steps over to Raquel.

LLOYD WEBSTER
What do we have here? What is your
name, showgirl?

RAQUEL
I am Raquel, sir! I symbolize all
of the ennobling qualities of the
female gender! Heart! Courage!
Ambition...!

LLOYD WEBSTER
I'm sure that's fascinating, but
what can you do for me? Do you
think I'll let just anyone dance in
my company? What could you possibly
have to offer me?

Raquel whispers in his ear, then opens her leotards a little,
the EERIE GREEN GLOW EMANATING FROM INSIDE, like the
briefcase in "Pulp Fiction," singeing his eyebrows. Argument
over.

LLOYD WEBSTER (CONT.) (CONT'D)
Okay - you've made the first cut.

INT. STAGE - VARIOUS SHOTS

The dancers are subjected to a rigorous audition. They spin, leap, kick, crawl under barbed wire. Some girls can't cut it and are drubbed out of the audition. They do the splits to his cadence.

LLOYD WEBSTER

Our producer is a grouch...

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

"Our producer is a grouch..."

LLOYD WEBSTER

That's why we have the casting couch...

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

"That's why we have the casting couch."

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - LATER

With their hands up in front and elbows bent, the dancers squeeze their breasts together with their forearms to his cadence.

LLOYD WEBSTER

Compress; disengage - compress;
disengage - compress; disengage...

INT. STAGE - CAT BOX

There's a huge litter box in the middle of the stage and the dancers are jumping in one-by-one, squatting like a cat momentarily, then rising and scratching at the sand, covering up the unseen cat poo.

LLOYD WEBSTER

Pinch and cover; pinch and cover;
let's go - let's go - let's go,
pussycats are tidy animals - go!
go! go!...

INT. STAGE - SAME

The dancers are grinding their pelvic regions into each other to his cadence.

LLOYD WEBSTER

Up everyday at the crack of noon..

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

"... Up everyday at the crack of noon."

LLOYD WEBSTER

We just love to shake that poon...

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

"... We just love to shake that poon."

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - LATER

Only a handful of dancers are left. They all stand in formation, presenting tiny G-strings for Lloyd Webster's approval.

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

"This is my G-string. There are many like it, but this one is mine. My G-string is my best friend. It is my life. Without me, my G-string is useless. Without my G-string, I am useless. I must bump and grind my hips better and deeper than the competition on the strip and downtown. My G-string and myself are the gladiators of our showroom. We are the masters of Las Vegas. We are the saviors of Nevada. So be it, until there are no more gamblers - and the casinos have all the money. Amen."

They toss their G-strings in the air like hats on graduation day, cheering their victory. Raquel shrieks in excitement, breaking more glass.

CUT TO:

INT. BOTTOMLESS PIT - BACKSTAGE - DAY

Pamela reads a Cosmo magazine with the articles like: "Penis Envy: Does Your Boyfriend Have It, Too?" and "Satanist's Diet, More results with fewer Sacrifices." Eddie Velcro steps up, looking over her new boob job.

EDDIE

You got another boob job?

Pamela lowers her magazine to reveal an EVEN MORE GROTESQUE BOOB JOB. She smiles proudly, adjusting her top.

PAMELA

Check 'em out. They're the latest models - "Air-Pumps" by Reebok...

Pamela PUMPS the nipple, her breasts GROWING EVEN LARGER as Raquel BURSTS IN.

EDDIE

You're late.

She gathers her few belongings.

RAQUEL

I quit Velcro!

EDDIE

And just where the hell do you think you're going?

RAQUEL

I got a REAL job at a place where women aren't exploited: a topless show at a big time casino!!!

EDDIE

You're dreamin'...

RAQUEL

My dreams have come true! You can take your crummy tit bar and your bad breath and your pathetic little penis and stick it up your ass...

Eddie is momentarily stunned and embarrassed by the penis comment, but thinks of something to say just as she's almost out of earshot.

EDDIE

(yelling)

Yeah, well if I could do that, it wouldn't exactly be little...

SUDDENLY - wild cheering emanates from the main room. They all stop and listen. The loud screams continue, even though there is NO MUSIC playing.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
 (looking around)
 What the - who's on-stage?

DIONNE
 (confused)
 Nobody - we're on intermission...

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB - STAGE

The place is going nuts. Horny guys are whooping it up with open mouths and wide eyes. They're throwing money at the stage, stomping their feet and doing that annoying "Arsenio" thing with their fists as a CLEANING WOMAN is on-stage Windexing the brass pole. Money flies all around her as she bends over to brush a pile of dirt into a dustpan.

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

The Execs sit at the edge of their seats, enthralled, as Joe continues.

JOE
 All of Raquel's dreams have come true. She's quit her job working at the sleazy topless club, to work topless in the lavish Tropical Nugget casino.

PAUL
 Da - hare frauline controls her owns destiny. No longer are ze drunken low-class men gawking at her nakedness, ya?

JOE
 (annoyed that Paul is chiming in)
 Ya - a much higher class of drunken slobs are now gawking at her nakedness. She's making her own choices, being shrewd, living by her wits, acting street smart...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET CASINO - DAY

A yellow cab pulls up, Raquel climbing out of the back seat. The DRIVER rolls down his window, calling to her.

DRIVER
Hey you - twenty bucks!

RAQUEL
I'm no hooker!!!

Raquel punches him through the window.

DRIVER
Ow! No, you moron. You owe me
twenty bucks for the cab ride!!!

RAQUEL
(digs in her purse)
Oh yeah... thanks!

She giggles and pays him. Gathering herself she takes a deep breath and walks inside.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE

The following is SHOT EXACTLY LIKE THE BACKSTAGE SCENE AT THE STRIP CLUB: Strippers of all shapes and sizes are rushing around. One particularly well-endowed woman, HEIDI, pulls off her sweater to reveal a huge pair of breasts about to burst from their wonderbra, and studies them in the mirror. The LINE CAPTAIN struts in with Raquel, her new acquisition. Raquel is taken back by the heavy smell of perfume and unhidden shame.

LINE CAPTAIN
Girls, I have some new talent I
want you to meet: Raquel... She'll
be starting today and promises to
make the rest of you look like the
slut-puppies you are. Raquel?
These ladies are the Tropical
Nugget's finest...

A veteran dancer, ROXY, doesn't look, but speaks while applying her lipstick.

ROXY
Whoop-de-fucking-doo...

HEIDI

Stay away from my chubs, green-ass.

The rest of the showgirls giggle knowingly.

LINE CAPTAIN

(to Raquel)

You'll follow Heidi up the stairs
to the stage...

HEIDI

(laughs)

Good luck, flatsy!

Raquel looks around, shaking her head.

RAQUEL

This is all so new to me...

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWROOM - STAGE

Raquel and the Line Captain approach other dancers, who are warming up.

LINE CAPTAIN

Everyone - this is Raquel. Watch a
couple numbers, until you catch up.

The chorus line starts going through their paces in rehearsal.

LINE CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

... and six, seven, eight ... And
purr, meow, and turn, chow-chow-
chow...

Mickey approaches Raquel, sliding his arm around her.

MICKEY

Welcome to my little show, Raquel.

RAQUEL

Mr. Cardillicchio! The line captain
is showing me the ropes.

Mickey grins, his hand working its way down her back.

MICKEY

Make me proud and I'll show you
some ropes, too - later up in my
suite.

LINE CAPTAIN

Raquel! Get out here and start your warm-ups!

Relieved, Raquel runs out and begins warming up as CRYSTAL GOBLET walks in to watch the rehearsal. In her early thirties, Crystal is still the Queen of Vegas... but her days are numbered, and she knows it. She signs some autographs for adoring fans as the handsome Millionaire approaches.

HANDSOME MILLIONAIRE

Will you sleep with me for a million dollars?

CRYSTAL

Sure!

(digging through purse)

I don't know if I have that much on me. Will a check be okay?

She pulls a checkbook out of her purse, ready to sign - until she locks eyes with Raquel. The dancers take their places as the song "Maniac" from the film "Flashdance" begins to play. Raquel starts to warm up. We see a series of QUICK CUTS:

INT. RAQUEL'S FEET

Rapidly running in place to the music.

INT. RAQUEL'S LOWER TORSO

Grinding to the music, it twists 360%.

INT. RAQUEL'S UPPER TORSO

Completely disassociated, popping her gum; doing her nails.

INT. CRYSTAL

There is instant chemistry: Nostrils flare; smoke wafts through her parted lips.

INT. RAQUEL'S UPPER TORSO

Finishes shaving her armpits; Begins flossing her teeth.

INT. RAQUEL'S FEET

Moving faster; knees higher; pounding the floor.

INT. RAQUEL'S LOWER TORSO

Spinning a hula hoop on her hips.

INT. RAQUEL'S UPPER TORSO

Filling out a tax form, writing "NOT A HOOKER!!!" under 'Occupation'.

INT. CRYSTAL

Burning with desire - her eyes glow red. Her southern accent even more pronounced, her breasts rise upwards, standing erect. She turns to the Line Captain.

CRYSTAL

Tell the new dancer that I want to see her in my dressing room after rehearsal.

LINE CAPTAIN

(checking clipboard)

I'm sorry—Mr. Cardillicchio is scheduled to seduce and defile her in an abusive power relationship after rehearsal. Didn't you check the work schedule? Here, I can pencil you in for Thursday...

CRYSTAL

I run this show, not Mickey - and I have a "guaranteed defilement of new girls" clause in my contract! So just do it, or I walk.

She looks to the back of the auditorium, where Mickey tries to break a pencil in anger. Unable to, he hands it to a bodyguard, who breaks it for him and places the pieces back in Mickey's hands, as if he did it.

CUT TO

INT. BACKSTAGE - LATER

The room is a madhouse. Girls prepare for the next show as monkeys run around everywhere.

RAQUEL

What's with the monkeys - are they from the warm up show?

HEIDI

No. Some places are infested with cockroaches or rats - we have monkeys. Don't mind them...

Raquel walks through the dressing room, girls STICKING THEIR FEET UP on all the available chairs until she finds the only empty seat at the end of the room. Sitting at the next table is Susan, an intelligent-looking showgirl.

SUSAN

Don't worry about them - they're just jealous of anybody new who could cut into their earning power.

RAQUEL

I'm not trying to take anyone's job, this is just temporary.

SUSAN

Me too. I'm working my way through school.

RAQUEL

That's great! What are you studying?

SUSAN

(rather blasé)

I'm developing a theoretical propulsion system that will allow space travel to be advanced exponentially by exploiting the common properties of celestial attraction.

RAQUEL

You should meet my friend Dionne! She's working on a new theory that will allow space travel to be advanced exponentially by exploiting the common properties of time dimensions.

SUSAN

That bitch! Everyone knows that time dimensions and celestial attraction are merely inverse variations of the same phenomenon.

(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

She ripped-off all of my working theories to advance her own dancing career!

(grumbling)

... plus she stole my chubs.

RAQUEL

I'm sorry. This is all so new to me. I come from a totally different world than this...

The Line Captain enters - all smiles.

LINE CAPTAIN

Get ready ladies! The next show is in ten minutes...

HEIDI

Could ya' turn off the A/C already? It's freezing out there.

LINE CAPTAIN

No way, girls - we gotta keep those nipples hard. Remember the "Pussycats" credo:

DANCERS (IN UNISON)

The bigger the teats - the bigger the receipts...

LINE CAPTAIN

(laughing)

Aw - I love it! I'm gonna drop it down another ten or fifteen degrees. Besides - my new girl doesn't seem to complain.

(to Raquel)

Crystal Goblet would like to see you in her dressing room...

The other girls wink to each other knowingly.

CUT TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S DRESSING ROOM

Raquel steps inside to find Crystal sitting in a chair, her back to us, being worked on by various make-up people. They add a wig, eyelashes, implants, false teeth - even her nose and ears. Crystal finally spins around and they lock eyes once again. We see still ANOTHER series of QUICK CUTS:

INT. CRYSTAL'S MOUTH

Lips parting invitingly.

INT. CRYSTAL'S COSTUME

Subtly caresses her wonderbras, squeezing the eight cat breasts on her costume together seductively.

INT. RAQUEL

makes a circle with two fingers from one hand and "pokes" the hole back and forth with a finger on her other hand.

INT. CRYSTAL

makes a "V" with her middle and index finger, holding it just under her chin and flicking her tongue through the gap.

INT. RAQUEL

performs "here's the church, here's the steeple, open the doors, and see all the people."

INT. MONKEY'S MOUTH

parts it's lips invitingly.

CUT TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S DRESSING ROOM

Crystal shoos the monkey off.

CRYSTAL

Out!!! When are they going to do something about these damn monkeys?!?

There is a signed photo of RIP TAYLOR on her dressing table. Raquel loses it.

RAQUEL

That's Rip Taylor! I love Rip Taylor!!!

CRYSTAL
 Maybe I'll introduce you one day,
 darling...

RAQUEL
 I'd do anything to meet Rip Taylor!
 I think he's so sexy...

CRYSTAL
 Would you pick up a spider?

RAQUEL
 Yup.

CRYSTAL
 Eat a booger?

RAQUEL
 Yup.

CRYSTAL
 Shop at Target?

RAQUEL
 Yup.

CRYSTAL
 Just what is it you want, darling?

RAQUEL
 I want Rip Taylor!

CRYSTAL
 (shouting)
 You can't handle Rip Taylor! Rip
 Taylor has a dozen girls like you
 for breakfast, then tosses them
 like so much confetti out of his
 celebrated bucket full of comedy.

Raquel throws the picture of Rip Taylor against the wall in a
 fit, the glass and frame exploding. As it settles on the
 ground, we can see that the impact has also BLOWN BACK RIP'S
 TOUPEE IN THE PHOTO. Crystal steps over, comforting her.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)
 Darling, I was just like you once,
 a young dancer grinding it out
 every night, while some old windbag
 with tits that looked like a couple
 of tennis balls in a pair of socks
 got all the glory.

RAQUEL

Really? How did you get your big break?

CRYSTAL

I was an understudy in a Hollywood legend tribute. The lead got elephantiasis. A tragedy really - though I'd kill for breasts like hers...

RAQUEL

That was unfortunate for her....
But lucky for you.

CRYSTAL

You do what you gotta do. Life is a zero-sum game my little sweet butt. The cowards never go, the weak die on the trail and the strongest survive...

(stops and faces her,
threateningly)

But don't get any funny thoughts,
darling...

We ZOOM IN on Raquel's forehead and...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - RAQUEL'S POV

On the TV Bob Sagget is introducing one of America's Funniest Home Videos.

BOB SAGGET (ON TV)

"... Next we have a series of tiny children falling head-first out of dangerous playground sets..."

The unseen crowd laughs hysterically at a three-year-old crashes, somehow avoiding a serious head injury.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S DRESSING ROOM

Raquel is giggling out of control, until she notices Crystal looking at her like she's nuts.

CRYSTAL

Are you about done, there? Have
some brunch...

Crystal scoops some caviar onto a cracker and offers it to
her seductively as the MUSIC SWELLS....

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

You're a very... beautiful
dancer... for a pretty girl with a
great body and firm breasts... So,
darling, where'ya from?

RAQUEL

Nowhere, really...

CRYSTAL

Oh - I'm from the midwest too!

They grab mangos, squeezing them into pulp, licking the
juices off each other's hands.

RAQUEL

I can't believe we have so much in
common! You're a very...
beautiful... dancer too. But I can
only dream of becoming so
successful in my dancing that one
day I too can wear an animal
costume.

CRYSTAL

We're more alike than you think,
darlin'. I was down and destitute
once... I was so low I even had to
strip for a while—just until I
could get back up on my back again.

She leans over a large round globule of pink jello, sucking
it up hungrily in one quivering hunk.

CRYSTAL (CONT.) (CONT'D)

I was so poor that I actually ate
dog food!

Raquel barks with delight as she languidly drips an oyster
into her mouth.

RAQUEL

Me too! My favorite was Alpo!

CRYSTAL

I loved Alpo - I loved them all -
Purina, Kennelration, Gravy Train,
Science Diet...

RAQUEL

... Kibbles & Bits!

CRYSTAL

(deadly serious)

No - Bad! Bad Kibbles & Bits!
Sick... swollen... can't breathe...
must-get-head-through-door...
mommy!

RAQUEL

Crystal - are you okay? What's with
Kibbles & Bits?

CRYSTAL

(recovering)

Oh, nothing, I just... was a little
allergic, I guess...
(happy again)
But I loved drinking out of the
toilet!

RAQUEL

Me too - except when we only had an
outhouse.

CRYSTAL

I loved toilet water - for years
people thought I was just wearing
blue lipstick.

RAQUEL

Tell me something Crystal... are
you hitting on me?

Their eyes meet, they lean in for a kiss, but... the Line
Captain rushes inside.

LINE CAPTAIN

Raquel - there are some people
waiting to meet you out in the
audience.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWROOM - STAGE

Raquel hurriedly follows Crystal across the empty "pussycats" stage. But Raquel stops, viewing the elaborate and tacky junkyard setting for the first time as a dancer. She looks it over proudly, spinning and twirling.

JOE (V.O.)

Rushing out onto the stage, Raquel realizes she has finally made it. She thinks back over the years of hard work that it took her to get here, flashing back to her third grade ballet class...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

Raquel as a child, dressed as a ballerina, walks through a backstage door into a dressing room filled with a dozen other little ballerinas, primping and dressing for a show. She has a frightened look, as the ballet instructor notices her.

TEACHER

Girls, I have some new talent I want you to meet: Raquel... She'll be starting today and promises to make the rest of you look like the slut-puppies you are. Raquel? These ladies are Franklin Elementary School's finest...

A cute little pixie, CYNTHIA, doesn't look, but speaks while putting in her hair barrette.

CYNTHIA

Whoop-de-fucking-doo...

Another little dancer walks by her, purposely bumping into her as she passes.

JULIE

Stay away from my chubs, green-ass.

The rest of the little girls giggle knowingly, as A TEAR FORMS in little Raquel's eye. A loud voice IS HEARD as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHOWROOM - STAGE

A tear streams down Raquel's cheek. The voice of the Dionne snaps her back into reality.

DIONNE

Raquel!

RAQUEL

(hiding her face)

I'm busy!

DIONNE

Raquel - you have some visitors...

Raquel turns to see Dionne, Pamela, Wynotta and Eddie Velcro from the Bottomless Pit walking over to her. Pamela wears a large shawl, covering her latest boob job.

RAQUEL

Oh my god... I'm so glad to see you guys! Hey Pamela - new boobs again?

PAMELA

Actually if have to see the doctor again - my last job settled...

Pamela lifts the shawl to reveal that her breasts now PROTRUDE FROM HER STOMACH instead of her chest.

RAQUEL

Nice form, though...

(to Dionne)

You skippin' school just to see me?

DIONNE

I finally got the guts to quit that lousy, go-nowhere P.H.D. You were my inspiration Raquel. I'm foregoing an academic career for the visceral, sordid life of a stripper.

RAQUEL

You go girl!

(to all of them)

Are you going to stay for the show?

EDDIE

Yeah - why not?

RAQUEL

Thanks Eddie... But if you're all here - who's at the Bottomless Pit?

Realizing, the group looks at each other, confused, as we...

CUT TO:

INT. THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

Romero the bouncer is on-stage topless, with his huge belly exposed. He hugs and grinds on one of the brass poles, causing it to bend under the pressure. The crowd is dousing him with beer and hooting.

DJ DOUG

He's spry, he's shy, and... ew...
he's a guy... it's Romero!!!

(no response)

... Remember guys, these ladies are
working for tips only, so don't be
shy with that green stuff... this
is too pathetic - I'm going back to
afternoon drive at the radio
station....

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET SHOWROOM - LATER

As the house lights dim, the room hushes and a booming announcers voice and drum roll fills the room with anticipation.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And now, the fabulous Tropical
Nugget in beautiful Las Vegas
presents the hottest show on the
strip - although it has no relation
or financial responsibility to the
famous Broadway show "Cats"...
Ladies and gentlemen: Please
welcome; "Pussycats!"

The curtain opens to reveal a pitch black stage. As the beautiful opening song to a Broadway classic begins, WE HEAR A VOICE, which interrupts.

EXEC #1 (V.O.)

Whoa, whoa, whoa - wait a minute.

The FRAME FREEZES and the MUSIC STOPS like a record being turned off.

EXEC #1 (V.O.)

We could never get the rights to
the music from "Cats."

EXEC #2

Yeah. We'd have to get something
more... affordable...

The FILM STARTS AGAIN, as the pitch black stage flickers
with a strobe light to a dramatic Las Vegas version of the
theme from "Gilligan's Island."

SINGERS

Just sit right back... and you'll hear a tale;
A tale of the feline type;
And if you've read our great reviews,
You'll find it's mostly hype...

Lights follow several pussycats running across the stage,
jumping, clawing and interacting along with the lyrics.

SINGERS (CONT.) (CONT'D)

We love to tear up furniture,
We stink when we're in heat,
And if you drop us on our backs,
We'll land on our feet; We'll land on our feet.

Thunder and lightning á la Gilligan's Island theme kicks in.

SINGERS (CONT.) (CONT'D)

Drag home a half uneaten rat,
Get stuck up in a tree,
And when it comes to cat food,
We're finicky as can be, we're finicky as can be,

The stage goes dark again. Spotlights highlight the dancers'
introductions.

SINGERS (CONT.) (CONT'D)

There is a two-drink minimum,
And plenty chow-chow-chow;
With Scabbyshanks,
The Siamese Twins...
A neutered pet, and a Stray;
The Parvo Queen...

Raquel runs out into the spotlight, obviously excited.

SINGERS (CONT.) (CONT'D)

... And the rest;
Are here in 'Pussycats'!!!

INT. BACKSTAGE

Raquel removes her make-up at her dressing room table - now covered with flowers and cards from admirers. Mickey steps up, proudly looking at his latest find.

MICKEY

Look at this - after only one week and those eight breast enhancements, you're already our most popular dancer...

RAQUEL

Mickey, I need a new flea collar - this old one doesn't work anymore.

MICKEY

Try licking your fur... or perhaps I could lick you...

Raquel SLAPS him across the face.

RAQUEL

What do you take me for? I'm no hooker!!!

MICKEY

I wasn't calling you a hooker. You misunderstood - I'm not asking you to sleep with me for money! I'm asking you to sleep with me for the lead understudy job.

RAQUEL

Oh.... that's different!!!

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Mickey and Raquel step off the elevator, which opens directly into the penthouse. Raquel is taken back by the luxury and splendor. Mickey tips the OPERATOR, the grated door closes and it goes back down.

RAQUEL

Mmmm, I just love your pad...

They embrace for a long, wet kiss. As they do, THE ELEVATOR SLOWLY CREEPS BACK UP, just high enough for the operator to peek at them, the top of his head just above floor level.

After a few beats, Mickey SHOTS THE CABLE above the car, CAUSING IT TO PLUMMET TO SURE DEATH. Raquel continues kissing, not cognizant.

He leads her into a large den with couches and a view of the strip. A ROLLER COASTER AT THE TOP OF THE TOWER CASINO DERAILES, plunging all the passengers to certain death. She sits as he brings some champagne and glasses.

MICKEY

Say, do you have any Italian in you?

RAQUEL

No.

He raises a glass to her.

MICKEY

The night is young...

RAQUEL

Mickey - my whole life, I've dreamed of a night like this - with a man like you. An exotic setting, surrounded by opulence, culminating in a romantic evening of sensuous love-making...

MICKEY

I just have one request...

RAQUEL

What?

MICKEY

Bend over, grab your ankles and make the sound of an oven door slamming...

RAQUEL

You know, being the understudy is nothing if Crystal sticks around forever.

MICKEY

Yeah? Well forget it, Crystal will never give up her spot...

RAQUEL

I'll get her spot... No matter what I have to do.

MICKEY

Maybe it would help if you let me get to your spot, if you know what I mean...

RAQUEL

(confused)

No - I don't. Was that meant to be some sort of double-entendre?

MICKEY

Hell if I know. But don't worry - Joe can fix it in the re-writes...

Mickey steps up behind Raquel and caresses her body: one hand massages her neck, another kneads her stomach - still ANOTHER one reaches over her shoulder and down her top. But Raquel suddenly pulls away.

RAQUEL

Wait... this is too fast...

MICKEY

Aw, come on baby. What's wrong? Too fast?

RAQUEL

Too slow. The story's losing momentum. Our producer's mind is distracted. Look at him—he's got one of those fake smiles plastered on his face like a character in a "Speed Racer" cartoon...

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Exec #1 snaps back to attention, a fake smile growing even more obvious.

EXEC #1

No, it's great! How big are her boobs, again?

CUT TO:

INT. DESIGNER WAREHOUSE LOFT

Raquel is off Mickey, looking at the CAMERA.

RAQUEL

And his male secretary has stopped doodling boobs on his note page and is scratching his nose like he wants to sneak a quick pick...

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Exec #2 quickly pulls his finger away from his nose.

EXEC #2

Yeah - I mean hey! It's just an itch... And I'm not a male secretary - I'm an executive assistant!!!

Joe shrugs, unconcerned.

JOE

I haven't completely worked out this section yet. Why don't we skip ahead a little, to the Tropical Nugget. It's the next day, and Crystal is preparing for her next show...

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET - DAY

Crystal cruises through the backstage area, watching as Wankowski sets a HUGE MOUSE TRAP - placing a BANANA on the catch for bait. The Delivery Boy, carrying a massive load of roses, enters the room. She grabs the roses, assuming they're for her.

CRYSTAL

Thank- you, darlin; I'll take those - they're for me, I'm the star. Probably some rich admirer...

DELIVERY BOY

Wait - are you...
(reading from list)
Raquel?

CRYSTAL

(mad)
... No... Over there.

The delivery boy sets them down on Raquel's dresser. He sticks his hand out for a tip.

DELIVERY BOY

Thank-you.

After a beat, where he looks around and sweats a little, Crystal takes her gum out and sticks it in his open hand. He turns and sulks away. After sneering at the roses for a moment, she casually grabs the note off them and reads: "To the beautiful and sexy new understudy - thanks for the cat bath; Mickey."

CUT TO:

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - DAY

Vincent wanders down the strip, desperately trying to get drunk on a watered-down martini and daydreaming about his love for Raquel.

VINCENT

Raquel... Raquel...

He grabs a PEDESTRIAN by the collar.

VINCENT (CONT.) (CONT'D)

I remember it like it was
yesterday...

PEDESTRIAN

(fights him off)

It was yesterday you idiot. Find
some other loser for your endless
flashbacks, you drunk!

Vincent stumbles on as SUPERIMPOSED neon signs glide past him, reading "Cocktails"; "Less Watered-Down Cocktails"; "Last Watered-Down Cocktail For Ten Miles"; "Not Really - More Cocktails." He crosses the street - not seeing an oncoming cab.

INT. TAXI CAB

Raquel sits in the back, her flowers crushed by a huge dog sitting on top of her with its head out the window.

CAB DRIVER

Sorry about my dog - he's been car sick, so I didn't want him in the front seat.

Suddenly Raquel sees Vincent walking in front of the moving cab.

RAQUEL
(screams)
Watch out!

EXT. TAXI CAB

Raquel screams, jumping out and sees the prone, but not badly hurt Vincent, laying on the hood with a confused look on his face.

RAQUEL
Vincent - are you okay?

VINCENT
(almost happy)
I don't know - I can't feel a thing...

RAQUEL
(shaking him in panic)
Oh my god! Vincent - do you know what that means?

VINCENT
(realizing)
Yeah - after six years, I think I may actually be tipsy...

They both look at each other blissfully. The cabdriver sticks his head out the window like nothing unusual has happened.

CAB DRIVER
You want me to leave the meter running?

CUT TO:

INT. CAB

Vincent and Raquel now both ride in the back seat with the dog. He is just able to take a swig from a liquor bottle as Raquel looks on, concerned.

RAQUEL
What happened to you, Vincent? You look awful.

Vincent stiffens, uncomfortable with the subject.

VINCENT

Raquel, Raquel - I thought we'd agreed that you would never, ever ask me why I look so awful!

RAQUEL

No, I don't remember saying that.

VINCENT

(oops)

Oh. Well, let's see... where did I leave off last time...? You should have seen me in the old days. At that time, Vegas was a place where millions of suckers flew in every year and left behind about a billion dollars...

RAQUEL

Yeah, yeah you told me that already. Skip ahead...

Raquel and the Cab Driver groan, the dog beginning to heave as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

VARIOUS SHOTS - VINCENT'S STORY

As if run through an editor's machine, we get quick glimpses of Vegas at night, the desert, the Casino, Vincent and Mickey, Two Breasts, the Barney craps table, and the penthouse.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Let's see, I told you about Vegas in the old days, meeting Mickey, how Vegas has changed...

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Mickey and Two Breasts kissing again as the DOORBELL rings. Two Breasts once more hides as Mickey answers the door. Vincent steps in - noticing two puncture marks on the chest of Mickey's sport coat.

VINCENT (V.O.)

Oh yeah - my best girl and my best friend. I never saw it coming...

Vincent pulls his gun on Mickey and notices Two Breasts' brassiere poking through the closed doors of the armoire. When he opens the doors she looks back at him, distraught with shame, as Mickey GRABS for Vincent's gun. They fight for control of the weapon as Two Breasts tries to AVOID THE GUN. Unfortunately, wherever Two Breasts moves the barrel seems to FOLLOW her. She finally ducks as it passes by, but it WHIPS BACK, striking her as she stands back up - SENDING HER BACK THROUGH THE PICTURE WINDOW!

VINCENT

No!!!

He and Mickey run over to see...

EXT. PENTHOUSE

With a burst of "Godfather"- like orchestral music, Two Breasts bursts through the window in SLOW MOTION, glass flying everywhere.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - VALET PARKING

A TOURIST steps out of his Cadillac, handing his keys to a Valet, along with a nice tip - but the Valet is looking up to see...

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - VALET'S P.O.V.

Two Breasts still falling high above in SLO-MOTION - falling directly down on them...

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - VALET PARKING

Two Breasts LANDS on the Tourists car, blowing out the windows and crushing the top. The Tourist and Valet exchange looks. The tourist looks inside the cab, to see two large pointy breasts piercing the roof. He turns back to the valet.

TOURIST

I want my tip back.

The Valet just stares at him as we..

CUT TO:

EXT. PENTHOUSE

Vincent looks down on her through the open window, a tear running down his cheek.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAB

Still in the speeding cab, Vincent finishes his story with that same face, a tear once again rolling down his cheek. THE DOG IS ASLEEP, and Raquel sleeps beside him - head back, SNORING SOFTLY. In front of her the Cabby is in the same position. Vincent speaks up, waking them both with a start.

VINCENT

That was it - I quit the business, and Mickey took over for me at the Tropical Nugget. Meanwhile I grabbed a drink, and I've been guzzling it ever since...

RAQUEL

How awful. I promise I'll never hurt you that way, Vincent...

VINCENT

Don't worry about it - I mean what could you possibly do - outside of sleeping with Mickey...

RAQUEL

(oops!)

Enough talking about the past - let's have some fun! You wanna get something to eat?

VINCENT

I'd love to - what are you in the mood for?

RAQUEL

Actually, I have a craving for something...

"Viva Las Vegas" begins to play as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Vincent and Raquel sit on a park bench with a big bag of dry dog food. Raquel laughs as she snacks on the Puppy Chow. Vincent picks up A STICK, and tosses it out onto the grass. She runs out of frame excitedly, then after a moment, returns with the STICK IN HER MOUTH. He tries to get it back, but she won't drop it and he has to grab the end and wrestle her, until she lets go.

CUT TO:

EXT. SWIMMING POOL

A typical Vegas pool - glass windows on the sides allow us to see in. Vincent dives into the water in cut-off shorts, DRINKING FROM A BOTTLE OF LIQUOR as he hops into the water. Raquel follows him under, and they kiss - never noticing the DEAD BODIES IN CEMENT BLOCKS under there with them.

CUT TO:

EXT. DINNER THEATER - DAY

Vincent and Raquel run out of the exit, hand-in-hand. The Play on the marquee reads "Gallagher in 'Death of a Salesman'."

CUT TO:

EXT. INDOOR SHOPPING MALL - DRESS SHOP WINDOW

Vincent and Raquel pass the dress shop. Raquel stops, pointing out some expensive Versace dresses in the window. Sighing, Vincent follows her inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. INDOOR SHOPPING MALL - LIQUOR STORE WINDOW

Vincent and Raquel pass the elegant liquor store. Vincent stops, pointing out some expensive alcoholic beverages in the window. Sighing, Raquel follows him inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

Vincent and Raquel run toward the ticket booth, but read "Closed For Repairs" on the marquee and turn back around, disappointed.

CUT TO:

INT. FIRING RANGE - DAY

A sign reads "Mafia Firing Range - Only Fair-To-Goodfellas - No Beginners." Vincent hands Raquel a pistol, pointing to A "SIDEWAYS SHOOTING ONLY" sign. She takes the gun back, carefully turning it sideways like a John Woo film, and rips off several rounds. Vincent reels in the target... to reveal a SLUMPING HUMAN TARGET hanging on the line. Raquel jumps up and down excitedly as Vincent looks at the body, impressed.

CUT TO:

INT. CASINO - DAY

Raquel and Vincent gamble at the blackjack tables. A COCKTAIL WAITRESS brings them each a drink. Vincent inspects his glass - a coconut shell with umbrellas, pineapple slices, and a curly-cue straw.

VINCENT

Waitress... is this the drink I ordered?

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

(checking her notes)

Let's see... Cool Coconut Cocktail with pineapple slices, umbrellas, and a curly-cue straw for the tall Nicholas Cage type drinking himself to death... yup - that's it.

Vincent drunkenly KNOCKS HER TRAY AWAY.

VINCENT

I said no curly-cue straw! You think I want to look like a tourist!?!

He UPENDS the Blackjack table as Security Men THROW HIM TO THE GROUND.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI CAB

Vincent and the dog now both have their heads out the window, as Raquel tries to breathe through a crack in the opposite one.

JOE (V.O.)
But Raquel has other problems to
deal with...

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET SHOWROOM

The "Pussycats" show is in full bombast. The dancers are reenacting their Purina Cat Chow "Chow Chow Chow" set piece. Raquel PUSHES Crystal down a flight of stairs on-stage.

JOE (V.O. - CONT.)
... like Crystal.

WIPE TO:

INT. STAGE

Crystal limps around on-stage. Raquel sneaks up behind her, FIXING A PAPER BAG around her head with a rubber band. Crystal is disoriented, unable to see - backing up into the wall like a cat.

WIPE TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S DRESSING ROOM

Crystal stands as the costumer works on her, making alterations in her cat suit. Raquel quietly pokes her head through the door, then lets in a pack of wild dogs. Frothing and growling, they SPRING at Crystal.

WIPE TO:

INT. STAGE

A dancer bounds on-stage in a Tweety Bird outfit, the Pussycats chasing it down and plucking it - large yellow feathers flying everywhere. Meanwhile Raquel LIGHTS A LARGE FIRECRACKER underneath Crystal's tail, and it EXPLODES.

WIPE TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE

Raquel takes some money from a man in a white suit as Crystal limps off stage following a performance. A POLE slips a WIRE LOOP around Crystal's neck, and tightens. Two men in the white outfits, the logo for "Floyd's: Animal Suppliers for Scientific Experiments" on their backs, try to drag her away.

JOE (V.O.)

But it seems that no matter what she tries, Crystal survives. Then one day, Raquel gets an idea...

WIPE TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S DRESSING ROOM

Raquel sneaks into the empty room, poring a box of Kibbles'N'Bits into Crystal's food tray. She sneaks out as a battered Crystal hobbles inside.

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET - BACKSTAGE

The Pussycats are all rushing to get ready for the next act. They line up on the stairs that lead to the stage. Crystal is noticeably missing.

LINE CAPTAIN

Let's go let's go - everybody ready?

DANCER

Where's Crystal?

They all look around.

LINE CAPTAIN

Crystal? Crystal!

The Line Captain runs in a panic over to Crystal's dressing room and knocks on the door.

LINE CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Crystal? The third act is about to start. Crystal? Are you in there?

She opens the door tentatively.

CUT TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S DRESSING ROOM

Crystal sits slumped over her chair as the Line Captain comes in.

LINE CAPTAIN
Crystal - we're ready for you...

CRYSTAL
(sobbing)
I can't go on...

LINE CAPTAIN
Of course you can - you're the star
Crystal... You must - it's the last
act.

CRYSTAL
(shouting)
I can't!

LINE CAPTAIN
But Crystal.. dear... why not?

CRYSTAL
This is why! I had an allergic
reaction to something on my food
tray!

Crystal sits up - her HEAD THE SIZE OF A WATERMELON.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE

Crystal's door shutting behind her, the Line Captain runs to the group of awaiting dancers.

HEIDI
What is it?

LINE CAPTAIN
(aghast)
Crystal has a swollen head.

ALLYSA
Du-uh...

LINE CAPTAIN
No - she really has a swollen head.

The dancers react in disbelief, except Raquel - who's eyes light up.

MICKEY

Well, it looks like we need a new
star... gosh, who should I
select...?

RAQUEL

(stepping forward)

Well, I never imagined....

Raquel walks out, ALREADY WEARING CRYSTAL'S COSTUME. A
million-dollar smile, complete with twinkling of the teeth
and eyes wipes over her face, as we...

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - ENTRANCE

Vincent wanders through the backstage area, drink in hand.

VINCENT

Raquel?

Finishing his drink, Vincent passes a group of VENDING
MACHINES. PASSING Coke and Pepsi, he stops at J&B SCOTCH -
pressing a button and waiting as a mixed drink emerges. The
Line Captain passes by, Vincent tapping her shoulder.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Do you know if Raquel is working
tonight?

LINE CAPTAIN

Working? Oh, yeah - she'll be
working... the boss!

She nods over to Raquel, who has come backstage and is
admiring the flowers on her dressing table. Before Vincent
can say anything, Mickey sneaks up behind Raquel, putting his
hands over her eyes. She smiles and spins, throwing her arms
around him. They smooch a little.

LINE CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Looks like she's gonna be putting
in a little O-T ...

(deviously)

That stands for "On Top"...

Vincent looks back at her stunned.

VINCENT

Betrayed!

(fighting back tears)

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

As long as I live, I'll never
forget this moment...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - ENTRANCE

Two seconds earlier, Vincent fighting back the tears.

VINCENT

As long as I live, I'll never
forget this moment...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - ENTRANCE

Vincent snaps back into reality, wiping a tear from his eye
and staggering out as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. VEGAS STRIP

Wankowski finishes plastering RAQUEL'S FACE over Crystal's on
the Tropical Nugget BILLBOARD, then crosses out Crystal's
name with a paint brush, scrawling "RAQUEL" over it.

JOE (V.O.)

So Raquel hits the jackpot and her
face adorns billboards everywhere!
She has achieved the kind of super
semi-stardom she has always yearned
for. But her new found happiness is
short lived.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Raquel rides up into the penthouse, calling out through the
gate.

RAQUEL

Mickey - Mickey!

After a moment, Mickey opens the elevator gate, but only
partially.

MICKEY
Oh... uh, hi Raquel...

RAQUEL
Mickey - Mickey I did it!

MICKEY
Yeah... uh, that's great... Did
what?

RAQUEL
I got the lead in Pussycats!

A MAN'S VOICE is heard from inside the bedroom.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Mickey?

Raquel suddenly realizes what is going on. She pushes by him
and into the bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM

Raquel walks in and sees the handsome millionaire in Mickey's
bed, through the cracked bedroom door.

HANDSOME MILLIONAIRE

Mickey - where are you? You got about \$700,000 bucks to go
yet, the way I figure it...

She retreats to the door, but Mickey stops her.

MICKEY
Wait - hey, it's not what you
think....

RAQUEL
You gonna stand here and tell me
you didn't sleep with him so you
could get a million dollars to
further finance your show and
promote me into a superstar - even
though the prospect of prostituting
yourself goes well beyond your
principals and integrity?

MICKEY

(a beat)

Turns out it's exactly what you think...

RAQUEL

You and I are through Mickey! I made it to the top on my own - using my talents as a dancer - and I didn't have to debase myself with anyone...

(she thinks for a beat)

... except you...

(another beat)

... and the producer...

Mickey looks up at her, confused.

RAQUEL (CONT.) (CONT'D)

... and the floor manager, and the doorman...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - LATER

A few hours later. Mickey pushes Raquel out of the door.

RAQUEL (CONT.)

... and the head accountant, his brother, the pit boss, two bus boys...

Mickey presses "Lobby" and shuts the gate, Raquel continuing as she goes down.

RAQUEL (CONT.) (CONT'D)

... the valet, you know that security guard by the sports book - him, the stage hand...

CUT TO:

EXT. CHEAP HOTEL - DAY

The sign in front of the hotel reads "Welcome Shriners, Elks, Consumer Electronics and Mafia Hitmen."

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Vincent sits in a seedy hotel room, a tiny tear forming in his eye. We PULL BACK to find him drinking and reading "The Bridges of Madison County." There is a knock on the door and he instinctively whirls around with lightning speed and UNLOADS SEVERAL ROUNDS OF GUNFIRE through the door. Old habits die hard. When the smoke clears we see the corpses of a MAID AND ROOM SERVICE WAITER.

VINCENT
(remembering)
God Damn - I gotta stop that...

Two Mafia hitmen step over the bodies nonchalantly and enter. They wear black sunglasses, black suits and sport little WHITE NAME TAGS that read "Hello My Name Is Louie 'Two Hands' Gato" and the other: "Harvey 'One Head' Mollino".

LOUIE
Yo Vinny.

HARVEY
(re: the bodies)
Hey Vincent - don't shoot! It's us -
"One Head" and "Two Hands!" Hey, I
thought you gave up the business?

VINCENT
Hey guys - yeah, I did. Fortunately
those were innocent victims...

HARVEY
Hey - we're going over to the
hitman convention - wanna come
along?

VINCENT
I don't think so guys...

LOUIE
We're going to a seminar:
"Extortion in the nineties."
Followed by a light lunch and a
shake-down refresher course.

VINCENT
Sounds like fun, but I just can't
make it... I'm brooding.

HARVEY
Is it about... Two Breasts?

Vincent winces at the mention of the name and faces call out to him, echoing as they swirl around his head.

TWO BREASTS' HEAD

(echoing)

You made me kill myself... self...
self...

RAQUEL'S HEAD

I promise I'll never hurt you that
way, Vincent... Vincent...
Vincent...

EXEC #1'S HEAD

Could we hurry this up? I've got
another meeting at three...
three... three...

Vincent snaps out of his trance, turning back to Harvey.

VINCENT

It's not that - somebody has helped
me conquer those demons - but she's
in love with somebody else. I'll
never forget how I found out...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - ENTRANCE

The Line Captain JUGGLES THREE TORCHES as VARIOUS CELEBRITIES
walk past.

LINE CAPTAIN

Looks like she's gonna be putting
in a little O-T ...
(deviously)
That stands for "On Top"...

Vincent looks back at her stunned, wearing an astronaut suit.

VINCENT

Betrayed!
(fighting back tears)
As long as I live, I'll never
forget this moment...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Vincent snaps back into reality as Harvey tries to console him.

HARVEY

You want we should bust his head open? I went in for a new persuader yesterday.

Harvey pulls out a club, embossed with the words; "I LAS VEGAS"

VINCENT

Thanks guys, really, but no, I'm gonna win this broad over the time-honored, old fashioned way... I'm gonna get wasted and beg.

The "Rocky" theme begins as we...

CUT TO:

INT. CASINO

Two rows of old ladies play the nickel slots, back-to-back. Walking quickly between them, Vincent alternately SWIPES THEIR DRINKS off the machines, downing them before they can notice, then running off to...

CUT TO:

INT. MEN'S BATHROOM

Vincent hurries to the attendant, grabbing HIS JAR OF BLUE DISINFECTANT holding all the combs, brushes and scissors. He takes all the instruments out, tosses them aside and chugs the blue liquid.

CUT TO:

EXT. K-MART - NIGHT

Vincent runs up to the front entrance, passing several bums. He grabs a brown bagged bottle from each one - until trying to drink from the cup of the last one and spitting out a lot of change.

INT. K-MART - NIGHT

Vincent wanders through the aisles of K Mart, desperately drinking anything he can - rubbing alcohol, paint thinner, Miracle Grow. He grabs A MENNEN "SPEED STICK" and reads the ingredients on back. Seeing that it "CONTAINS ALCOHOL," he takes the cap off, twists the knob on the bottom until most of the solid deodorant is out, breaks it off, pops it in his mouth and starts chewing as we...

CUT TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S DRESSING ROOM

Now it's Raquel's dressing room. A disappointed Raquel sits in her chair as the make-up girl adds the finishing touches to her cat make-up, her assistant emerging from behind the chair with a full pooper scooper and moving off.

RAQUEL

... the tenor sax, the set designer, the gaffer's dad, and that is it! Hah!

Mickey steps in, motioning for the make-up people to leave.

MICKEY

Raquel - there have been some changes in the show...

Raquel pops a piece of cat chow from the hors d'oeuvre dish into her mouth.

RAQUEL

It's an honor to star in this show, sir - even though it has no relation or financial responsibility to the famous Broadway show "Cats."

MICKEY

Forget it - we're not doing that show anymore.

RAQUEL

Why...?

MICKEY

(sheepishly)
Somebody from "Cats" saw it and they're threatening legal action. We've had to change the show.

RAQUEL

It doesn't matter, Mickey - the important thing is that I've finally clawed my way out of cold, sleazy clubs that only cared about the size of my breasts to finally reach this, the pinnacle of the American semi-nude stage. I've made it.

MICKEY

Great. Here's the new show...

He shows her a new poster: "Raquel in BOOBS ON ICE!"

RAQUEL

Ice skating?!? But I can't skate...

MICKEY

The dance sequences are inspired by the works of Moses Pendleton, Laurie Anderson, Twyla Tharp... although there are some bad parts are inspired by Marlon Brando in "Guys and Dolls." Trust me - you'll be fabulous...

(grins knowingly)

... Plus the cold temperature will keep your nipples hard, and you know what they say--

RAQUEL

-- I know what they say. But I've come too far for this. I've overcome too much to--

MICKEY

-- Do it, or you're fired.

RAQUEL

Okay!

Mickey leaves. Terrified, Raquel pulls out Vincent's business card (VINCENT BONFIGLIONO: Gangster & hopeless drunk -- "Never ask me to stop drinking") and runs to a pay phone. She calls, but he's not in. Raquel anxiously listens to the ring as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOBIL GAS STATION - NIGHT

Under the "full-service" sign, VINCENT GUZZLES HI-TEST 'GASOHOL' straight out of the nozzle, the "Rocky" theme still playing.

CUT TO:

INT. TROPICAL NUGGET SHOWROOM

A sparsely attended showroom with a few drunks, two couples eating and a table of Vietnamese tourists, picking unhappily at their food. The opening act, a COMEDIAN, pops through the curtain with no introduction. A belated rim-shot starts him off.

COMEDIAN

Evening folks! I started out at the craps table, then I went to the blackjack table, and I ended up at the buffet table. Good news! I broke the buffet!!! First I ordered a number one and the waiter peed on me. I was afraid to order a number two!!!

The audience push their meals away in unison. They are stone-faced.

COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

They're opening a new casino called New York New York with a New York theme. You have the choice of craps, roulette, slot machines, or you can threaten Bernie Goetz with a screw driver and win \$43 million. Thanks - I'll be here 'till Sunday - try the veal...

It is silent except for one of the Vietnamese tourist repeating the name "Bernie Goetz" in broken English.

COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

Ma'am - you having a good time - yeah? Tell your face!

He pauses for a reaction: nothing.

COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

Sir - Helen Keller called - the check bounced...

Another belated rim shot as he waits for it.

COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

All right - what a great crowd -
 what do you say - let's have a big
 Las Vegas welcome for the lovely
 Raquel in... "Boobs On Ice!"

Suddenly a huge group of DISGUISED POLITICIANS JUMP ONSTAGE, cracking the Comedian over the head with wine bottles. The crowd applauds wildly as they bow and drag him offstage, the curtains opening to reveal...

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE

Organ music that they used to play at the roller rink bellows out, as a dozen or so skaters dressed like German schoolgirls with push-up under-wire bras, gracefully glide around the ice on-stage, singing and forming a row in front. They skid to a halt - shards of ice shooting out at the crowd, their screams of pain drowned out by the music: the song is sung to the tune of "Edelweiss" from The Sound Of Music...

SKATERS

Boobs on ice;
 Boobs on ice,
 Feast your eyes on paradise...

A giant spotlight highlighting her, Raquel skates out into the middle of the ice in pasties - but obviously doesn't know how to stop. She glides slowly out on-stage, ankles wobbling...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And now the star of the show...

The geriatric audience members look up momentarily from their meals, applauding politely. Raquel keeps sliding...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

... the beautiful Raquel !!!

The aged crowd is still applauding, but getting nervous... Raquel waves her arms, trying to get the audience to jump out of the way. She slips off the stage and across the laps of the octogenarian crowd - who cry in pain as Raquel CLOMPS across their laps. Raquel continues out - SLIDING THROUGH THE ENTRY WAY and OUT INTO THE CASINO, screams and crashes accompanying her as she slips out of sight.

CUT TO:

INT. SIDE ENTRANCE

We hear CARS CRASHING outside as the door BURSTS OPEN, Raquel clomping back inside on her skates. With some difficulty, she climbs back up on-stage. The chorus line skates by, the last one in full hockey gear. Raquel hip-checks him off the ice.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Ladies and Gentlemen – the
beautiful Raquel !!!

The crowd is getting ugly, throwing stuff on-stage: Fruit, chairs, walkers. Raquel ducks them all, realizing what she must do...

INT. STAGE – RAQUEL (REAR VIEW)

She RIPS HER TOP OPEN! The crowd GASPS and goes silent.

CUT TO:

INT. PATRONS

All stop, open-mouthed and awe-struck.

OLD MAN
Amazing!

OLD WOMAN
She symbolizes all of the ennobling
qualities of the female gender:
heart, courage, ambition—she's the
perfect metaphor for independence,
self-reliance and economic
empowerment—

OLD MAN #2
Good veal tonight.

We PAN over to Raquel, who can only grin. The audience applauds wildly, including two showgirls in the penalty box. Someone throws an octopus onto the stage as a Zamboni rumbles out to clean the ice – the driver topless, wearing pasties. Gary Glitter's "History of Rock & Roll, Part II" is playing.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE - LATER

A huge backstage party for the show opening is in progress. Raquel works her way through the crowd, people grimacing in pain as she steps on their feet, as she still has her skates on. Mickey greets her, presenting her with flowers.

MICKEY

Let's hear it for Raquel - the ice queen!!!

Raquel curtsies as everyone applauds, Mickey rewarding her by pulling a small fish out of his pocket and tossing it into her mouth.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Congratulations, kid - you finally made it... Just remember how you got here -- there's always some understudy waiting in the wings...

He motions over to TONYA HARDING, dressed in her Olympic skating outfit, PATTING an IRON BAR as she stares at Raquel jealously. Mickey quickly spirits Raquel away.

MICKEY (CONT.) (CONT'D)

... Now I've got a surprise - I want you to meet someone very special...

Rip Taylor himself steps up, fighting off a monkey as it leaps on him.

RIP TAYLOR

Damn monkeys!!! Your casino is infested with these things, too?

Raquel notices and jumps up.

RAQUEL

Rip Taylor! Oh I love you!

Raquel throws her arms around Rip and squeezes against him. He looks at THE CAMERA and HOLDS OUT A LARGE CARDBOARD MACKEREL WITH A HOLE IN IT, and mouths the words; "HOLY MACKEREL," as she continues to hug him. After a beat, she lets loose, steps back and they drink each other in.

RIP TAYLOR

Perhaps Raquel here would be interested in attending a little get together I'm throwing in my luxury suite later?

She screams, breaking glass all around her.

RAQUEL
Would I? Would I?

RIP TAYLOR
(pointing)
Fake boobs! Fake boobs!

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE - ENTRANCE

Two huge BODYGUARDS - both wearing the polyester suits, Hawaiian shirts, handlebar mustaches, and blonde wigs like Rip Taylor - stand out front as Rip and Raquel approach them.

BODYGUARD #1
Evening, Mr. Taylor.

RIP TAYLOR
Back off, flunky...

He backs away from Rip, intimidated.

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

Raquel enters, and is greeted by Rip Taylor.

RIP TAYLOR
Hello, dear - glad you could make
it... and so are my friends!!!

As Rip closes the door, His two guards grab Raquel.

RAQUEL
Ouch! The show wasn't that bad, was
it? I'll learn to skate...

Three more men (CARROT-TOP, GALLAGHER and GARY MULEDEER) come out from behind the door and approach her. She shudders in recognition.

RAQUEL (CONT'D)
Prop comics!

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE

Vincent stumbles toward the entrance, looking up to see...

CUT TO:

EXT. PENTHOUSE - VINCENT'S P.O.V.

Raquel pounds against the window, screaming.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - BACKSTAGE ENTRANCE

Vincent RAMS the door twice - then reads a sign on the door reading "RAM THREE TIMES BEFORE BREAKING DOOR DOWN." Backing up, he RAMS the door a third time and forces his way inside...

INT. BACKSTAGE

Vincent bursts through the back door and into the backstage party, to find Mickey surrounded by beautiful dancers.

VINCENT

Somebody call the cops - Raquel's in trouble!

MICKEY

Call the cops - here? You are a deluded lush, Ten Fingers. Besides, Raquel doesn't want you. She's fulfilling her dream to meet Rip Taylor!

VINCENT

I just saw her - she was screaming out the Penthouse window!

MICKEY

Oh man - I told Rip not to take his hairpiece off. Well, it's none of your business, anyway. I guess you weren't enough of a man for her... or Two Breasts...

Vincent punches him, sending him sprawling, and pulls a gun. He levels the pistol at Mickey's forehead - remembering to hold the gun sideways, but hesitates.

VINCENT

You aren't worth a bullet,
Cardillicchio! You can take your
lousy casino, your mob ties and
your little penis and stick it up
your ass.

Vincent hurries off and leaves an embarrassed Mickey, who now stands deserted and alone - the party girls all gone.

MICKEY

... Well it may be little, but it
satisfies me. Besides, it's
quality, not quantity... and
quality isn't that important
either!

(gives in, watching them
go)

... Did I mention that I'm rich?

He is suddenly surrounded by party girls again.

INT. PENTHOUSE

Raquel is gagged and tied to a chair while the three crazed prop comics torture her with various props. Gary Muledeer shoots arrows at her with his guitar. Rip Taylor gets his jollies by throwing confetti from a bucket into her face. Raquel spits the gag out and screams.

RAQUEL

Help me!!! It's like my TV's stuck
on "Comedy Central" and I can't
find the remote!!!

RIP TAYLOR

It's your turn, Gallagher - finish
her off...

Gallagher pulls out a large mallet, heading towards Raquel. Suddenly Rip's guards, burst through the doors, falling to the ground as lifeless lumps. Vincent dives through the doorway in SLOW MOTION and FIRES pistols in both hands. A bullet rips through Gary Muledeer in SUPER SLO-MO, blood splattering as he lurches back. Carrot-Top is lifted in mid-air by the force of the bullets, slowly gliding through the air as Joe, Paul and the Executives walk through the carnage in REAL TIME.

JOE

Blood flies everywhere... Paul is great at this sort of scene - he really makes gratuitous bloodletting and violent death an art form.

Exec #1 smiles approvingly as Carrot-Top slowly flies past.

EXEC #1

Violence is good - very John Woo. And after all of this sex we need something to titillate the audience.

Muledeer flies out a window as bullets spatter his chest. He screams, the SLO-MO turning it into a deep, twisted wail that continues as Exec #1 goes on.

EXEC #1 (CONT.) (CONT'D)

But this blood-letting in slow-motion might be a little too much for the censors. Maybe we should speed it up...

Now in REAL TIME, Vincent ROLLS across the floor as three pies smash against the wall where he landed. He continues to fire both pistols - holding them sideways as bad guys are wont to do in movies nowadays. A bullet rips through Gary Muledeer before he can launch an arrow with his guitar, blood spewing out of his chest. Blood spews out of Carrot Top. A bullet crashes into the wall, missing Rip-blood spewing out of the wall too. In fact everywhere the bullets land-on paintings, furniture, wall fixtures-blood pours out of them like a stream from a faucet. Gallagher gets hit, flying backwards through the picture window.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - VALET AREA

Mickey nurses his jaw as his limo pulls up, the Valet opening the passenger door for him. Mickey tips him and slides inside. He looks up through the sunroof to see...

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - MICKEY'S P.O.V.

Gallagher falling directly towards his car.

EXT. TROPICAL NUGGET - VALET AREA

As Gallagher falls, bystanders hold up plastic sheets to avoid getting sprayed. Gallagher lands on the limo, CRUSHING the cab of the limo, with Mickey inside.

VALET

In the end, he was his own Sledg-a-matic...

A crowd applauds wildly as we...

CUT TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE

Vincent and Raquel watch the scene from above through the broken window. Raquel turns to Vincent, tears welling in his eyes.

RAQUEL

Vincent! You saved my life!
 (inspects the blood
 splatters on outfit)
 You've ruined my clothes, but
 you've saved my life.

VINCENT

And you saved mine! You've given me
 purpose! You've made me feel needed
 and useful again.

Raquel embraces him.

RAQUEL

My hero...
 (jumps back)
 ... Oops - one of the bullets is
 still moving in slo-mo.

They step back, moving around a bullet that is slowly passing between them, and re-embrace. Tears streaming down her cheeks, Raquel kisses Vincent one last time.

VINCENT

You'd better get out of here Raquel
 - get out of Las Vegas! There's
 nothing here for you - forget about
 dancing, forget about me. And don't
 come back until they offer you a
 sequel!

Joe watches proudly as the Execs stand in a corner, tears streaming down their cheeks, too.

EXEC #2

That's beautiful.

EXEC #1

(wipes blood spatter with
finger)

I hope we shoot this on a sound
stage - the cleaning bill for this
set would be huge on location.

Vincent and Raquel still embrace.

RAQUEL

I love you Vincent.

VINCENT

(pulling away)

Don't make this any harder for me.
Just go.

RAQUEL

Will I ever see you again?

VINCENT

(nobly)

Wherever there is injustice, I'll
be there. Wherever there's a guy
getting stabbed in the ear with an
ice pick, I'll be there. Wherever
there's drugs, racketeering, and
prostitution, I'll be there... And
hopefully I'll be making a couple
bucks off it...

RAQUEL

I should have told you Vincent;
this world was never meant for one
as beautiful as you...

She exits. Rip Taylor lies bleeding in the corner, calling to
her as she leaves.

RIP TAYLOR

You'll never strip in this town
again...

Vincent takes aim at Rip Taylor's forehead...

RIP TAYLOR (CONT'D)
 Can't we all just get along?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A cab pulls up front - the advertisement on its top for Divine Brown in "Evita" at the Vegas Howard Johnson Motel. Raquel gets out. The hospital sign is a pair of DICE that says "HOLY ROLLER MEDICAL CENTER."

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Raquel enters to see Crystal recovering in bed. There's a sports book board with the odds on her surviving displayed. Her head is in traction, with an IV set, tubes, wires and sensors running everywhere. She smiles upon seeing Raquel.

CRYSTAL

Well, if it isn't the new lead
 Pussycat. I have one question
 darlin', why did you do it?

RAQUEL

I only did what you did lo, those
 many years ago to become a star,
 Crystal...

(turns to camera, in
 soliloquy)

... In a sense, it is what we all
 do - we sacrifice our integrity,
 leading our sordid lives in quiet
 denial as we lose those qualities
 that make us most appealing - and
 most human...

(back to Crystal)

... Besides, someone had to put a
 stop to your obviously fake
 southern accent and your annoying
 habit of saying "Darling" every
 time you open your mouth.

Crystal's voice suddenly seems normal and unaffected.

CRYSTAL

You've grown, Raquel. You started
 this movie as an immature,
 untalented little girl...

(MORE)

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

and you're ending up as a much more
mature untalented girl.

Raquel steps over to the window, where PAINTERS ADD A BLACK
EYE AND BRUISES to the billboard of RIP TAYLOR.

RAQUEL

Yes, but I'm heart-sick... I chose
my career over love, and let the
nicest man I've ever known
disappear from my life - and now
I'll never see him again. I'll
never make those same mistakes
again...

CRYSTAL

Good... You wanna make out?

RAQUEL

Sure...

Raquel leans forward for a kiss. We CROSS-CUT between their
yearning lips, their wet, open mouths, their anxious tongues
darting out flirtatiously. Suddenly the machinery in the room
starts beeping and Crystal's head begins to grow even bigger.
Medics rush in, applying paddles on her forehead and yell
"clear!" Raquel turns to the CAMERA...

RAQUEL (CONT'D)

(to the camera)

Let's recap:

(using her fingers)

Vincent and I are through, Crystal
and I are over, Rip Taylor tried to
abuse me and Mickey screwed me over
for some floozies... What happened
to all the empowerment crap the
writer was talking about?

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe pauses to catch his breath, noticing a tear running down
the cheek of each Exec's face.

JOE

Now I realize there are a few plot
holes to fill yet, and some
inconsistencies, some threads left
hanging, but I'm thinking of a
nice, compact scene to resolve the
other plot lines...

EXEC #1

I've got it - an audience-friendly happy ending that should tie up the loose ends...

CUT TO:

EXT. GREYHOUND STATION - DAY

A new suitcase, the name "RAQUEL" scrawled across the leather covering. A newspaper blows up against it, reading "RAQUEL QUILTS! EMPOWERS WOMEN EVERYWHERE!!!" Underneath, a smaller headline reads "Stripper Movie a Smash - Young Execs Ousts Father." We PAN UP to Raquel, who is hitchhiking in front of the Greyhound station. A car screeches to a halt in front of her, the passenger side door swinging open.

RAQUEL

(sighs, rolling her eyes)

Thanks, but I never take rides from strang--

She looks inside to see Vincent smiling back at her from behind the wheel - the back seat COVERED IN MONEY. Vincent smiles lovingly.

VINCENT

How about taking a ride from a rich, good-looking boyfriend...?

RAQUEL

Vincent! What a strained plot twist it is seeing you here! There are drinks inside at the lunch counter...

VINCENT

No Raquel - I didn't come here to get loaded... I came back for you.

RAQUEL

Me?

VINCENT

(summoning up his nerve)

Raquel... I am now an ex-alcoholic. I want you to quit this sleazy life in Las Vegas and run off with me. I know giving up the glamour of performing in a partially nude revue to settle down and become a hitman's wife is a big decision.

(MORE)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

And times will be tough for a while
- I may even have to take a second
job shaking down mob informants or
turning state's evidence - but
somehow we'll get by.

RAQUEL

Vincent! But why? Who? What?
Where? When? How?
(to camera)
And I thought Joe's dialogue was
bad...

VINCENT

I got my courage back. You
inspired me to get back into the
gangster biz. I just knocked off
the Tropical Nugget casino about a
minute ago, so I'm kind of in a
hurry. Need a lift?

Grinning, she hops inside. They exchange a knowing glance and
speed off. A phalanx of cop cars race after them, firing
bullets and sirens wailing.

RAQUEL (V.O.)

You know Vincent, in some strange,
under-motivated way I think I love
you. Where to now?

VINCENT (V.O.)

I don't know - let's just drive
around until there's a sequel.

They drive into the desert, passing a billboard reading
"RAQUEL! BOOBS ON ICE!" and featuring two feet upside-down in
broken ice skates, as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe mulls it over, shaking his head.

JOE

I don't want to be a Demi-gogue
about this, but I think we can get
Moore out of it if we do what most
Striptease movies do. Shoot
different endings - then if it
bombs with tests audiences we have
something else to fall back on...

EXEC #2

No - I've got it - a proven commercial ending - lots of special effects! How about this...?

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

There is a loud whistling sound, everybody looking toward the window.

CRYSTAL

What's that whistling sound?

Telegrams and get-well cards begin to blow around the room. Raquel runs to the window and gasps.

RAQUEL

Twister!

CUT TO:

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - VARIOUS SHOTS

We see various STOCK FOOTAGE clips of typical disaster footage: high winds, tornadoes, and sandstorms; Buster Keaton battling high winds in "Sherlock Jr."; even the Bikini Island atomic bomb test. Las Vegas residents run for shelter, carrying their possessions - suitcases, TV's, pets - one even lugging a large refrigerator. The tornado is merciless, sucking up Vegas landmarks, cows, gaming tables (with the gamblers still betting as they fly beside them), even blowing the toupees off a photo of Seigfreid and Roy on a billboard. It reaches four teenagers playing a game of "TWISTER".

TEENAGER

Right hand - Green!
Aaaaah!

The huge tornado SUCKS THEM UP INTO THE SKY, then heads toward the Bottomless Pit!

CUT TO:

INT. BOTTOMLESS PIT

The tornado rips through the strip club as dancers hold on to the brass poles for dear life. Dollar bills, napkins and other debris fly wildly through the club as patrons struggle to watch the show.

As the strippers grasp the poles, their feet begin to leave the ground. A customer FIGHTS THE HIGH WINDS to get to the stage and PUT A DOLLAR IN A STRIPPER'S G-STRING, but he is blown away.

EXT. BOTTOMLESS PIT - DAY

Eddie and all of the strippers run outside to see the oncoming tornado. Newspapers, cars, and even some of the film crew are blown past. Eddie clings to the door for dear life.

EDDIE

It's a twister - get to the basement!!!

They open the storm cellar doors that have now appeared at the base of the building and hurry inside, Pamela's boob job getting stuck in the entryway, and Eddie trying to ram them inside.

CUT TO:

SUPERIMPOSE - NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers spin into frame: "LAS VEGAS DESTROYED BY TORNADO!" Then: "NEVADA DISAPPEARS UNDER LAYER OF SAND! PROPERTY VALUES RISE!" Finally, "RICH LITTLE DISAPPEARS; NOBODY NOTICES!"

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT

Now just a desert. Vincent and Raquel ride up on a horse. Vincent suddenly halts as they come across the HEAD AND HAND OF THE NEON COWBOY SIGN from the Vegas strip poking out of the sand. Vincent dismounts, stepping over to the sign... then falls to his knees, pounding the sand - doing his best Chuck Heston.

VINCENT

You did it, didn't you! Damn you!
Damn you all to hell!!!

RAQUEL

Maybe I can still dance in L.A....

INT. EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Exec #2 looks at their reactions and winces.

EXEC #2
 (backing off)
 It's an idea, anyway... Maybe a
 large alien invasion...

JOE
 (thinks for a minute,
 then grins)
 ... Gentlemen, I've got it: an idea
 that nobody will expect...

They all congratulate each other, shaking hands as a TITLE
 reads:

AND SO THE FILM WAS MADE...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MOVIE SCREEN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

An attractive couple in bed as obnoxious Kenny G-like music
 blares on the soundtrack. SHANNEN DOHERTY sits up, her
 lingerie strap dangling seductively off her shoulders. The
 MAN sighs contentedly.

MAN
 Thank God it's over, Raquel.
 Strange how a master detective like
 me could have mistaken you, a Las
 Vegas stripper, as the "Topless
 Terrorizer" who leaves men
 literally topless by
 decapitation—when it was obviously
 my cousin Doris, the Appellate
 Judge, all along...

SHANNEN DOHERTY
 You'd think she'd have understood
 the laws better.

MAN
 I'm going to miss you, babe. I fly
 to New York tomorrow to break the
 bad news to Aunt Tooti...

SHANNEN DOHERTY
 Don't feel bad - I'll take a little
 piece of you with me wherever I
 go...

The Woman pulls a CHAINSAW out from under the mattress. The
 Man SCREAMS, the Woman SAWING AWAY as we...

PULL BACK to reveal the cameras and crew of the movie set.

DIRECTOR
(yelling)

Cut!

Shannen Doherty instantly comes out of character and starts throwing a tantrum as the crew moves in to deal with the next shot.

SHANNEN DOHERTY
This is the worst piece of crap
I've ever worked on! I am going to
kill my agent! This guy's giving me
nothing to work with and I told
them to move that backlight...

Paul quickly hurries her off, making excuses.

EXEC #1
I love this. A character like this
really focuses on what Hollywood
should be doing for the modern
woman - empowering her! This is
ripe for a sequel. Janeane!

Janeane runs over with a clipboard. She is the SPITTING IMAGE of RAQUEL as she appeared in the pitch.

EXEC #1 (CONT.) (CONT'D)
Call Joe and tell him to get
started on 'Stripgirls' II. Raquel
empowers herself in the lesbian
porno industry!

EXEC #2
And this coffee is horrible - brew
a new pot!

They check her out as she rushes off to do their bidding. We read on a SCROLL:

"STRIP GIRLS" was released to universal ridicule later that year. Both Executives were fired, vilified, and weren't even invited to Christmas dinner by their father, the CEO. The studio went bankrupt and was put up for sale...

... then the "STRIP GIRLS" video was released, selling more copies than "ET," The "Star Wars" trilogy, and "Debbie Does Dallas" combined. The studio was bought for an enormous sum, the two Executives were re-hired to run the studio - and their dad can't even get a pitch meeting with them...

... Oh yeah - and Janeane the receptionist still takes constant ridicule from them - but that's okay, because she has the janitor pee in their coffee.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END.

AND STAY AWAY FROM OUR CHUBS, GREEN-ASS...