

Bluff

by

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EXT. DESERT - DAY

The sun is glaring down on the barren desert, and dust is constantly being kicked up. A HITCHHIKER walks slowly along the only visible road, swiping away at the dust and dragging behind him two cases of luggage with great effort. He is quite clearly exhausted and suffering from the sweltering heat.

After uncomfortably walking for some time, a car passes the hitchhiker and stops some distance directly in front of him. The DRIVER extends his arm from the vehicle and motions to the hitchhiker to approach the car, which he does.

The hitchhiker looks like your typical blue collar worker, in a dress shirt and khaki pants, with rather funny-looking glasses. The driver, meanwhile, is a larger Latino man with tattoos, gold jewelry (most prominent a beautiful watch), and a dangerous expression. The contrast between them is pretty stark.

DRIVER

Hey, *gringo*. That your ride a few miles back?

HITCHHIKER

Uh, yeah ...

DRIVER

Okay, what the hell happened?

HITCHHIKER

I-I dunno' ... one minute I'm driving, and the next I'm not. The engine started smoking ... look, sir, I'm a computer guy, I don't really know much about cars.

DRIVER

Yeah, of course you don't, *amigo*. No offense, but all you white men think you know your shit about your whips, but half of you either work with money, or draw fucking cats' faces in peoples' coffee, man. Where you going?

HITCHHIKER

Las Vegas.

DRIVER

No shit!? What's a *pendejo* geek like you want in Vegas, brah? You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DRIVER (cont'd)
count cards or something? Again ...
no offense.

HITCHHIKER
Just hoping to get lucky.

DRIVER
Ain't we all? Man, look, you seem
alright. I'll give you a lift into
town, and call a tow for you when
we get there. Cool?

HITCHHIKER
Oh, absolutely. Thank you so much.

INT. CAR - DAY

The hitchhiker sits opposite the large Latino man, his luggage neatly tucked into the leg-space behind his own seat. The driver lets out a bellowing laugh following an apparently clever joke.

DRIVER
So I says to the guy, I says ...
you wanna' try jacking me, after I
paid all that money? Nah ... this
fool tried to rob me, see? I wasn't
having that.

HITCHHIKER
What did you do?

DRIVER
Man, what do you think I did?

HITCHHIKER
I don't know, Cruz ... I'm not
assuming anything, if that's what
you're thinking.

CRUZ
Assuming ... dog, what would you be
assuming? I didn't try and jump
this fool in the back for fucking
charging me extra for replacing my
air filter. I look like I'd do that
kinda' shit?

HITCHHIKER
Well ...

(CONTINUED)

CRUZ

Point is, man, I told him what I coulda' done, even though I never really would ... and let me tell you dude, this *pendejo* about shit himself. Trying to rob me like I wasn't on the up and up about it, damn. It was the funniest thing.

HITCHHIKER

Sounds like a real ... "you had to be there" kind of moment, huh?

CRUZ

Yeah, you did. But listen, what about you man, I didn't even catch your name.

HITCHHIKER

It's nothing special. Roger.

CRUZ

Roger. Fuck man, don't be so damn depressing. Roger what? And everybody's name is special, Roger.

ROGER

O'Malley. Roger O'Malley.

CRUZ

Was that hard man? Shit. But tell me, now that we know each other a little more intimately, why the hell is someone like you going to Vegas for? You said you worked I.T. or something?

ROGER

Yeah. I just need money, any way I can get it, that's all. It's a sensitive subject ...

CRUZ

Damn, okay, my bad *amigo*. You seem like a nice guy man, I hope you find the luck you're looking for.

ROGER

Thanks. You seem like a good guy too.

(CONTINUED)

CRUZ

Yeah. We gonna' be there soon.

EXT. BUILDING - DAY

Roger emerges from what appears to be a parking structure, again dragging his luggage behind him. This time he looks a little more put together, but just as exhausted. As he approaches the crosswalk, Roger turns his attention to a rather loud exchange nearby, between a MAN, wearing a smoky business suit and tie but slightly disheveled, and TWO POLICE OFFICERS.

MAN

You can't fucking arrest me, you know why? 'Cause I got rights. And I never did nothing wrong! I'm a millionaire, you assholes.

OFFICER #1

You were jaywalking, Mr. Pinkerton. It's minor, but it's still illegal.

MAN

You're illegal, you fucking spick! What? Going to try and arrest me for that too? You know you don't want the hassle. Fuck you.

OFFICER #2

Have you been drinking at all, sir?

MAN

None of your business, Officer Tutti Fruity. Get out of my face, and leave me alone for Christ's sake.

The man stumbles back and regains his composure as the cops decide he isn't worth it, and reenter their vehicle. Roger approaches the rude man and tries getting his attention.

ROGER

Uh ... e-excuse me, sir?

MAN

Fuck you want, white on rice?

ROGER

What? Uh, I overheard your argument with the police officers ... is it true that you're a millionaire?

(CONTINUED)

MAN

You're goddamn right I am. Those pigs don't wanna' acknowledge it but I could buy their momma's asses and make them cook me fucking pancakes every morning in my mansion, I'm so stinking rich.

ROGER

Oh ... okay. Look, I just got to town, and I kind of need help getting around, and playing the tables.

MAN

What? Kid, you're telling me you came to Vegas of all fucking places to gamble and you don't know what you're doing? Look at you. You count cards or some shit?

ROGER

No ... why does everyone think that? Look, I don't know much, so I was hoping maybe you knew more than I do. Can you help me?

MAN

Help you? Why should I?

The man brushes past Roger and begins walking quickly, pulling out a cigarette from his pack and lighting it. Roger trails behind, trying to keep up.

ROGER

Because if you help me win enough money for my mother's operation, I'll give you the extra. However much it is. Five thousand, twenty, a hundred. Five hundred. Doesn't matter.

MAN

You're willing to just give some dude you met two fucking seconds ago a shitload of money if he helps you play the tables? For your moms?

ROGER

It's important to me. I'm not greedy, and I'm willing to compensate you if you help me, yes.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

Everybody's greedy, man. You just must either be really fucking desperate, really love your momma', or both.

ROGER

What's it going to be?

The man stops suddenly, in the middle of a crossing lane on the street. Roger clings to the handles of his luggage for dear life as cars whiz past them, horns blaring.

MAN

Jackson Pinkerton, millionaire, card shark, and drug dealer extraordinaire, at your fucking service. My friends though, which you now are - a legitimate relation to business partner, which you are as well - call me Jack Pink though.

ROGER

Nice to meet you, I'm Roger.

They shake hands, Roger doing so rather nervously. They finally clear the intersection and Roger releases a heavy breath of relief.

JACK

You know, you should sell that watch if you're really desperate, could fetch a penny man.

ROGER

It was my grandfathers. Where are we going?

JACK

I'm fucking starving. Looking for a joint to eat at, and I'm open to suggestions. And so I can teach you how to win and join the rich and wealthy in America, like me.

INT. RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Roger and Jack are directed to their booth and seated, and soon approached by a pretty WAITRESS, who hands them both a menu.

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WAITRESS

(In thick Southern accent)
Hi boys, welcome to the Full House
Diner. My name is Cindy. Can I get
y'all started off with something to
drink?

JACK

Just coffee, honey, thanks. And you
know what, I'll uh ... I'll have a
slice of the lemon meringue pie.

CINDY

Great. ... pie. Okay, and for y-

JACK

Hey, if you don't ... mind me
asking, where are you from? I love
your accent.

CINDY

Oh, really? I'm from Alabama, you
know ... the Heart of Dixie and all
that.

JACK

Well honey, right now my heart is
singing a tune for you.

The two laugh flirtatiously, while Roger continues to stare
at his menu nervously, clearly not interested in their
conversation.

CINDY

And, uh ... for you, sir?

ROGER

What? Oh, I'm sorry, I'll uh-

JACK

Don't worry about my friend, first
time in Vegas!

CINDY

Aw, is that right? Don't worry
sweetie, I'm sure you'll be just
fine.

ROGER

Thank you? Uh, yeah, I'll have the
bacon cheeseburger.

(CONTINUED)

CINDY
Fries with that?

ROGER
No, thank you ... gluten makes me
sick.

Cindy shrugs her shoulders and walks away, giving a fleeting
wink to Jack. Roger finally relaxes a little in his seat.

JACK
God, you are a pansy through and
through Rog', but it's okay. You
did pick a nice place to eat,
though, I'll give you that much.
Listen, I'm here to make a man out
of you, show you how it's like out
here in the real world.

ROGER
Jack, I just want you to show me
how to win at the casino.

JACK
What? Listen champ, it's not all
about that. You need to have social
skills ... charm, you know, shit
like that. Especially before,
during, and after you become rich.
That chick? Bet she would a' given
me a lick for free. Know why?

ROGER
I'm sure you're gonna tell-

JACK
Because I can talk to people. And
it helps that I'm fucking loaded
too. Listen Rog, I don't mean to
sound like an insensitive prick
here, but people like you are the
easiest targets for people like me.
Meager, tiny, nervous people who
jump at the sight of a pretty
penny. You know why I'm still
stinking fucking rich? Because I
know how to play people, and play
the system.

ROGER
Don't you think that's a little ...
immoral?

(CONTINUED)

Jackson bursts out laughing, enough so that the whole diner can hear him. Cindy arrives with their food, but decides not to interrupt.

JACK

Potato, potato, Rog. There's no such thing as morality in the world. It's just a fucking myth, like gay rights, or global warming.

ROGER

But-

JACK

Look, there's only two things you need to worry about in this world, especially if you want to make some fucking dough. The first is making sure that the people ahead of you on the ladder meet their grisly fucking dooms at the bottom of it. The second ... is not to give a shit about what anybody says about you, or the way that you conduct business. Morality is a fairy tale champ, you get ahead in life by being a fucking asshole. That's the long and short of it, and I embrace that lifestyle.

ROGER

Is that how the casino owners feel?

JACK

Of course! Let me give you an example. Nicky Bones, they call him, owner of the Phoenix. Practically a slave-driver, the fucking guy, but people love him. That son of a bitch is so cocky he leaves his safe open all day and all night. Why? Because he's richer than God and badder than the Devil. Ain't nobody fucks with Nicky because they know if they do, they'll end up in the Sierra with snakes crawling up their asses.

ROGER

Wow ... so he really leaves his safe open? He's crazy.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

Would I lie to you? A wealthy, successful, scheming businessman like myself? Maybe, but not about that.

ROGER

Well, what are we waiting for? We should, uh ... you know, head to the casino next.

JACK

Come on, Rog, you're in Vegas for ... admit it, probably the only time in your miserable life. Enjoy it for a night, you son of a bitch!

ROGER

I told you, I'm only here to-

JACK

Yeah, I know, your mom's hair transplant or whatever. Blah blah.

ROGER

Heart transplant ...

JACK

You know what, stand up.

ROGER

What?

JACK

Fucking humor me, you Irish bastard.

Roger rolls his eyes and does as requested.

JACK

Good, now unzip your pants, pull 'em all the way down to your knees, and take your panties out of your ass. Have a little fun!

Roger groans and sits back down, nipping at his cheeseburger like an annoyed ten-year-old.

JACK

Fine, we'll go to the casino later tonight, you vagina. By the end of this adventure, Rog, I'll have you snorting coke off of the finest Brazilian chica in Vegas. Pie?

(CONTINUED)

ROGER
I don't like lemon meringue.

JACK
Jesus, you're no fun at all.

The two continue eating in total silence, with Jack occasionally glancing over at Cindy.

EXT. BUILDING - EVENING

Roger and Jack are walking along a street in a seemingly impoverished area of Las Vegas. Roger continues walking, trembling and seemingly frightened, and only seconds later notices that Jack had stopped and proceeded to ascend a set of stairs.

ROGER
Um ... h-hey Jack?

JACK
What? Where are you going man? Come the fuck on already. Jesus Christ ...

ROGER
What are we doing here? I thought we were going to the casino.

JACK
Yeah, we are. It's a couple blocks down that way, I just gotta' get something first. You'll thank me for it too, so don't get your fucking bra in a twist.

Jack fumbles with a set of keys and attempts to see the door lock in the poor light.

ROGER
Do you ... live here?

JACK
What?

ROGER
Nothing, I just ... I thought you were a millionaire. You have a key to this place and everything, and no offense, but-

Jack groans and throws his keys to the ground angrily, striking a glare at Roger and putting his hand up.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

Stop right there, Roger. I'm well aware that if someone says 'no offense,' they're gonna' say something fucking offensive. So just shut your goddamn mouth before I shut it for you, capiche? Good. Now if you must fucking know, even though it ain't any of your business, my place is being remodeled, so I'm staying elsewhere. Now, excuse me for a second.

He digs through his pant pockets and jack pockets until he finally finds his cellphone, dialing a number and tapping his foot impatiently while he waits for the answer.

JACK

(To person on phone)

Yeah, hey Alex, look ... what? No, I'm not telling you where the fuck it is, that's my shit! I don't care what you're gonna give ... Your cousin? For fucks ... look, shut up. Okay? I lost my key to the place, come and open up for me.

After rolling his eyes in disapproval, Jack hangs up, laughs, and pats Roger on the shoulder.

JACK

Fucking tweakers, am I right?

ROGER

Yeah ...

The door opens after a few moments of waiting, and JACK'S FRIEND opens the door slowly, glancing at Roger in a confused manner. The man is extremely disheveled, in a stained t-shirt and shorts, with no shoes on. He looks like he hasn't showered in days.

JACK'S FRIEND

Who the fuck is this? He a cop or something, bro?

JACK

No, you idiot. You think I'd bring a cop here? Open the goddamn door.

Jack says a few curse words under his breath toward his friend, and pushes him aside while opening the door for Roger.

(CONTINUED)

JACK
You coming, Rog'?

ROGER
No, I'm alright. Just ... get what
you need to get so we can be on our
way.

JACK
Whatever floats your boat.

He disappears into the apartment, and Roger notices the apparent junkie give him a few more dirty looks before the door shuts. Roger sits on the steps, avoiding stares from the impoverished people passing by, who in comparison looked far worse off. Eventually, Jack emerged from the apartment even more energetic and slapped Roger on the back.

JACK
(Yelling)
Let's go, man! The night is young
and I'm feeling fucking lucky.
Let's go win some money!

Roger can't even respond before Jack jogs off, and does his best to try and keep up with him.

MONTAGE - VEGAS NIGHT LIFE

-People walk by various large casinos on the Las Vegas Strip, such as the MGM Grand, Caesars Palace, Mirage, and Bellagio.

-Roger and Jack take a shortcut through a shady alley. Roger stops in front of a homeless man sitting by a trash-can fire, and digs through his pockets, but Roger pulls him away.

-Various players, seemingly in the Phoenix Casino, drink their cocktails and try their luck at craps, the slots, and some card games.

-Roger and Jack finally approach the Phoenix, taking a moment to survey the architecture and attractive lighting.

INT. CASINO - EVENING

Jack and Roger are sitting on elevated stools in front of a loaded bar. An electronic sign can be seen on a nearby wall with the logo and name of the casino, The Phoenix, quite visible. The BARTENDER approaches the two, shaking his head at the sight of Jack.

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BARTENDER

Mr. Pinkerton. How many times we gotta' throw you out of here before you realize you shouldn't come back?

JACK

This is America, Mick. You can throw me out all you want, I'll keep fucking coming back. I'm a parasite, man. Arrest me, and maybe I'll learn my lesson. Until then, it's your job to serve me a fucking drink.

ROGER

Jack, come on ...

BARTENDER

It's all right, sir. We're used to it. What's it gonna' be then, Jack?

JACK

Usual. White Russian, on the rocks, and whatever Roger here wants. Put it on my tab.

ROGER

Just a Jack and Coke, no ice. Thanks. Oh, and a straw please.

BARTENDER

Coming right up.

Jack scoffs and turns away from Roger, chuckling.

JACK

Fucking Christ ...

ROGER

What?

JACK

Nothing. Hey Mick, any news around the joint?

BARTENDER

A little something. Don't tell nobody, but I heard Nicky's trying to make a move on the guys at the Bellagio.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

No shit?

The bartender nods, and places their drinks in front of them. Before walking off, he places a finger to his lips, as if telling them to keep quiet.

ROGER

Wait, the Bellagio, Bellagio?
What's he talking about?

JACK

Shit ... walk with me, Rog'.

The two take their drinks in hand and proceed onto the gaming floor.

MONTAGE - NICKY BONES

-NICKY BONES is counting money in his office at the Phoenix, when the phone rings. He answers and proceeds to laugh boisterously, slamming his fists into the table.

JACK (V.O.)

As you already know, Nicky owns the Phoenix. He's a fucking crook, the guy. Violent, horny, and greedier than Scarface.

-Nicky is under the sheets, engaging in sexual activities with a woman.

-Nicky cuts up a line of white powder, probably cocaine, and snorts it, as the woman he just slept with exits the room.

JACK (V.O.)

On top of that, he's the biggest arms runner in Vegas. The city's not always so peaceful, and Nicky knows it.

-In the lot of a large warehouse, Nicky opens a briefcase full of cash, inspects it, and then calls over a few goons who deliver a few crates of merchandise to the buyer.

BACK TO SCENE

Roger and Jack have made their way to a table where blackjack is being played, and inspect for the time being.

JACK

Everyone knows what Nicky Bones is up to behind the scenes, but no one

(MORE)

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JACK (cont'd)
that isn't in his posse has any proof. Guys a fucking saint up front. This Bellagio move, though, if it's true, is gonna be public, and shit could go down.

ROGER
Well if it is true, then he's gonna' have a lot of enemies.

JACK
Already does, but Nicky can take care of himself. He's a prick, but no one can take him down. Guy's fucking invincible. Now, get the hell in on this Rog'.

ROGER
What? You want me to play now? I thought you were going to teach me all the tricks ... h-how to win, what the hell am I supposed to do here? I've only played blackjack online and ... and in my friends' basements!

JACK
You don't need experience, Roger. Tips and tricks? For fucking losers. You wanna' know how to be a winner in Vegas? You envision winning. You play. You cheat. When you've won enough and they haven't caught you, you walk away with your fucking money and you don't look back ... 'till next time. Oh, and you know what? You don't need this either.

Jack removes the drink from Roger's hand and sets it down, directing him toward an empty seat at the table.

MONTAGE

-Roger exchanges looks with the DEALER and cups his hands to his face, taking a deep breath.

-Roger glances at his cards as they're being dealt, and checks when its his turn.

-Jack reaches into his pocket with one hand while simultaneously grabbing what appears to be Roger's drink.

(CONTINUED)

-Roger throws his hands up, looking upset and throwing his cards back at the dealer while shaking his head. He grabs his drink and downs the remainder of it.

-Jack yells at Roger, his lips forming the words 'Double down' as he points furiously at Roger's cards.

INT. GAME FLOOR - NIGHT

Jack pats Rogers on the shoulders, pulling him up from the table and collecting the chips he's won. The casino is not as packed now as it was before, but still lively. Roger is slumped over in his seat and looks slightly ill or intoxicated.

JACK

Hey man, look, it's alright! You didn't win as much as you wanted, but it's all good. There's like two grand worth of chips here!

ROGER

(Slurring)

I know ... Jack. It ... it's just not enough. I feel ... kind of sick, man.

JACK

Come on, Rog'. You know what's gonna' make you feel better? Hitting up the slots. Lets fucking win some more money!

Roger slowly stands, but doesn't seem to have much say in the matter as Roger drags him away from the table. At that moment, Roger glances over and pushes himself away from Jack.

JACK

Hey man, what the fuck?

ROGER

Excuse me for ... just a moment.

He shakes his head, trying to regain his composure and walks toward a beautiful WOMAN, who is observing a bustling craps table with drink in hand. She is wearing a bright red dress that accentuates her features nicely, but doesn't reveal too much, and her jewelry, makeup, and hair suggest that she is high-class. As Roger approaches, she looks almost shocked, and steps away from the small crowd to meet him.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

Well, well. Would it be too cliché to say 'look what the cat dragged in?' Accurate, though, no?

ROGER

What are you doing here Margaret?

MARGARET

Same as you, most likely. Though, you don't look too well right now.

ROGER

(Chuckling)

Compliments of the chef, I'm sure.

Roger points backward at Jack, who is now approaching the two of them after hanging back, confused. He invades Roger and Margaret's space, eying her up and down.

JACK

Damn, Rog'! What a fine-looking lady you got yourself here. I didn't know you knew anything about the female gender.

ROGER

Yeah, there's a lot about me you don't know, Jack ...

JACK

And how do you know this beautiful creature? You know what, hold that thought.

Jack directs his attention to Margaret, taking her hand and kissing it.

JACK

The name's Jack Pink, miss. The most charming, handsome, rich man you'll ever meet in your life!

MARGARET

Oh, you're rich, huh?

JACK

Richer than the heavens above, gorgeous.

The two laugh, while Roger continues to look awkward and drowsy.

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MARGARET

I'm sure.

JACK

Enough about me though, I'm curious ... how is it you know good old Roger, here?

MARGARET

Roger? Oh, well ... we work in the same area, isn't that right?

ROGER

Yeah. Margaret is a, uh ... great sales coordinator for one of the top I.T. companies in the nation.

MARGARET

There's a conference being held ... tomorrow, close by. I decided to just stop by and, well, enjoy myself for the night. I'm surprised to see Roger here, though. I guess he's moved up in the world. We used to be in similar positions in the business.

JACK

Well it must be a wild fucking coincidence then, excuse my French. Roger's actually not here on business! How crazy is that?

MARGARET

Oh, he isn't?

ROGER

My mother ... she's sick. Needs money for an operation.

MARGARET

I'm sorry to hear that. Maybe you'll get lucky. Never know what's bound to happen in Vegas.

ROGER

Yeah, I'm sure you don't.

Roger and Margaret look at each other with almost familiar glances. After a few seconds of silence, Jack bursts out laughing and wraps his arms around the two of them, one in each.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

(To Margaret)

Well, hey, I've made a new friend. Roger's actually going to try his luck at the slots, what do you say we grab a drink and ... chat?

MARGARET

(Chuckling)

Chat? Thanks, but no thanks. I actually have something important to do right now. Later?

JACK

Okay. No big. You stick around for the night, I'll show you what's really important.

Margaret offers him a smirk, and removes his arm from her as if discarding garbage. She proceeds to walk off, but not before turning her head back around and looking at Roger.

MARGARET

I'll be seeing you later as well ... Roger.

Roger simply nods in response, and his eyes tail her before she disappears into the crowd of people, and the casino life. Jack sinks to the ground and hollers.

JACK

God ... fucking damn, Rog'! I've had some good woman, but that is the motherfucking Holy Grail right there! I really don't know how you know her, but you gotta' set me up. I'll owe you big. Just one fucking night.

ROGER

Trust me, it's more trouble than it's worth. Her, I mean.

JACK

Man, no amount of trouble is too much for that kind of woman, Roger. That's the first thing you should learn when trying to decide where your dick goes.

ROGER

Great advice, Jack ... I'm gonna' go take a leak, I don't feel too good.

Jack scoffs and lets him go, glancing down to the bag full of chips he's been carrying since the blackjack table - Roger's chips - and walks off as well, smiling.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Elsewhere, Nicky Bones stands by a large window overlooking the Vegas Strip, a drink in hand. There is a storm raging outside. Nicky is a man of about average height, but has a sort of aura about him that demands respect and power. He wears high-end clothing and expensive jewelry, but seems to be heavily tattooed underneath it. His phone rings, and he answers after taking a sip of his drink. A man, probably a GOON of Nicky's, can be heard shuffling on the other end.

NICKY BONES

What is it?

GOON

(On phone)

We got it, boss. It's done.

NICKY BONES

Good. Excellent. Where are you right now?

GOON

On the belt. We'll be there in no time.

NICKY BONES

Well hurry the fuck up. Things are moving faster than expected, I'm putting the plan in gear tomorrow.

GOON

You got it. On our way.

Nicky hangs up and sighs, shoving the phone in his pocket. Taking another sip of his drink, he sits down in his chair and closes his eyes, relaxing. A sudden noise in the adjoining room causes him to jolt up.

NIT

Hello? Anybody there?

Nicky becomes a little fidgety, standing up and placing his hand on the knob of a desk drawer.

NICKY BONES

I said, is anybody there? Come on out or I'll blow your fucking brains out, I swear to God! You know who I am?

(CONTINUED)

Silence for a moment, and then another noise, slightly louder this time. Nicky opens the drawer and pulls out a revolver. Checking the cylinder, Nicky snaps it shut after seeing it fully loaded, and proceeds into the main room. It is a very large, lavish room that contains a bar, kitchen, adjoining bathroom, bed and living area, and Nicky's place of residence. A large window decorates a large portion of a wall, overlooking the Strip like the one in his office. There is only one apparent door in and out of the room.

NICKY BONES

I'm Nicky fucking Bones! If there's someone in here, you better show yourselves! Shit ...

He cautiously approaches the door and exits out into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nicky peers out the door in one direction before looking in the other and noticing his personal BODYGUARD, a muscular African-American man, standing by the door, keeping watch. Deeming the situation safe, Nicky tucks the gun behind his belt and enters the hallway, saying hi to a few guests and staff before looking at his guard.

NICKY BONES

Leon.

BODYGUARD

Yes, Mr. Bones?

NICKY BONES

You see anybody come in or out of my room recently?

BODYGUARD

No sir ... why, something wrong?

NICKY BONES

(Chuckling)

Nah ... just paranoid I guess. Big day tomorrow.

The guard nods while Nicky clutches the handle of his gun and looks around the hallway some more.

NICKY BONES

Alright, well ... just make sure no motherfuckers enter this room without me knowing about it, understood?

(CONTINUED)

BODYGUARD

Of course, sir.

INT. NICKY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Nicky enters the room and removes the gun from behind his belt. Glancing around, he hangs his head before finally placing the gun on a table.

Taking a seat on the couch, he turns on the TV and breathes a sigh of relief.

Suddenly, the lights turn off and Nicky sits in complete darkness, thunder crashing outside.

NICKY BONES

What the fucks going on! Someone there? I swear to God I'm gonna kill you!

Then, total silence.

INT. GAME FLOOR - NIGHT

Roger steps back onto the game floor, looking around for Jack. He looks a little more put-together now after visiting the bathroom. Not being able to immediately spot him, Roger approaches the blackjack table he won at and takes a seat, looking relieved to find the same dealer sitting there. She is a thin, pale-faced woman who doesn't seem too excited about her job.

ROGER

E-Excuse me, ma'am. I played here not too long ago, and I was with my ... associate, Jack. Business suit, extremely loud and obnoxious-

DEALER

Oh, yeah. I remember ... what about him?

ROGER

You wouldn't happen to know where is, would you? Seems I lost him.

DEALER

There was just a pretty heated conversation over at the cashier's window. If I was on the opposite side of the table, I'd bet my chips on him being involved.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

Cashier's ... dammit. Thanks.

Roger rushes away from the blackjack table, looking around for the cashier's windows. Pushing his way past people, he finds them, but no Jack in sight. Turning his head frantically, he finally see a figure resembling Jack and makes his way toward him, grabbing his arm violently and turning him away.

ROGER

Jack!

Indeed it was, and Jack turns to look at Roger, slightly shocked at first, but then smiling and chuckling.

JACK

Rog'! What the fuck man, I thought the shitter swallowed you whole. I was about to go looking for you.

ROGER

Yeah, well, I'm okay. Thanks for your concern. Someone told me you were just over at the cashier's window?

JACK

Huh? Oh, yeah. Well you know, I've been in this godforsaken place more times than I can count, and there's this really fucking cute cashier that works here, Lauren is her name. Every time I'm in here, I ask her out on a date. You know, flowers, dinner, a movie, rough sex, the works man! Every time, she breaks my heart and rejects me ... well this time, the bitch explodes on me! I dunno' what the fuck got into her Rog'. Women.

ROGER

Maybe next time, Jack. Where's the bag?

JACK

What?

ROGER

The bag, Jack ... the fucking bag, man!

(CONTINUED)

JACK

Whoa, Roger! Sorry, man, just never heard you cuss before. That was intense.

ROGER

I'm sorry, just ... what did you do with it? The one that had my chips in it?

JACK

Oh, that bag! Look man, I just left it-

ROGER

You weren't trying to steal from me, were you Jack?

JACK

What? Are you fucking mental, bro? Do I look like I would do that to my friend? No!

ROGER

Jack, I swear to-

They're suddenly interrupted by an odd intruder. A person wearing a full bird costume approaches them, appearing to be a MASCOT of some sorts as he looks like a phoenix.

MASCOT

Whoa guys, everything okay over here?

Both men look extremely dumbfounded as they look at the mascot.

JACK

Who the fuck are you? No, no, more importantly, what the fuck are you?

MASCOT

I'm ... the casino mascot. Phoenix?

ROGER

But why?

MASCOT

(Grumbling)

I guess Nicky thought it would be good for merchandising, selling the brand, that sort of thing. T-That's not the point though.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

Well it kind of is when you're dressed like a stupid fucking bird, man. You should look for other work.

MASCOT

Look, I noticed you two were having a bit of a disagreement, I just thought I'd try and help ... okay?

ROGER

We appreciate it, but we're adults, we can handle it on our own.

JACK

Yeah, I'm sure we can reach a compromise, so buzz off, fag. Get it? Buzz off?

MASCOT

Hey, I'm supposed to be a phoenix, asshole, not a buzz-

ROGER

Look, it doesn't matter. Thank you, but we're fine.

The mascot sighs and places a feather hand on Roger's shoulder. Perhaps Roger had had enough of that as he brushes it away and steps back.

ROGER

Please don't touch me, okay? I-I get nervous when people do that.

MASCOT

Hey man, I don't mean anything by it. Just trying to get you guys to chill out.

ROGER

You think we're not chill?

JACK

Rog', I know I've had too much to fucking drink, but you might have too. What do you say we call it a-

ROGER

Screw you, Jack! I know what you were trying to do! I need that money!

(CONTINUED)

MASCOT

Hey, hey, come on, cut it out-

Again, he attempts to stop Roger's advances, now toward Jack. Roger breaks and turns toward the mascot, taking a swing at him and connecting with the side of his face, or at least what is assumed to be closest to his face through the mask he was wearing. Said mask falls off, revealing a young man, probably in his twenties, groaning in pain. The bystanders all murmur excitedly, while some women scream out, and they begin clearing the area.

JACK

Hey, what the fuck Roger!

Roger seems to snap out of his angered state and look at the man with a regretful stare.

ROGER

Oh, God, I'm so sorry ...

TWO SECURITY GUARDS approach the three men involved in the altercation.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Leon, Nicky's bodyguard, turns the corner of the hallway in which his boss's room is located. He's carrying a cup of coffee as well as a small sandwich, having taken a break. The hallway is quite clear now, aside from a few stragglers. Leon notices loud music playing from Nicky's room, as well as flashing lights.

LEON

Huh ... seemed like he didn't want to be disturbed. Fuck's going on?

Shrugging his shoulders, he knocks on the door.

LEON

Mr. Bones? Sir? You there?

After a few moments of knocking and no response, Leon checks the door handle and finds that the door is unlocked. Slowly opening the door, Leon enters the room. He finds an absolute disaster.

Furniture is knocked over everywhere, and blood spatters random areas of the room, centered near the couch by the TV and the rug in the middle of the room. There lay Nicky Bones, also covered in blood, dead.

(CONTINUED)

Leon hurries over to the body of his employer - or rather, former employer - and pats him frantically, trying to find the source of his death, and then a pulse. He puts a finger to his ear.

LEON
(Out of breath)
Security! Anyone! The boss needs
help up here ... I-I think he's
dead! Nicky's dead ...

He stands, scanning the room and pacing in front of Nicky's body.

INT. GAME FLOOR - NIGHT

The two guards snatch Roger, Jack and the employee in the mascot costume up and begin directing them to another location.

ROGER
Guys, look, it was just an
accident, okay? I-I lost my temper!

JACK
Yeah, he's an idiot! The bird dude
forgives him, right?

MASCOT
Fuck you, man, he punched me in the
face, I was just trying to help!

GUARD #1
Hey, shut up! You were involved in
a fight, it's against the rules of
the casino, so be quiet and accept
it.

JACK
Shit, man ...

The guards suddenly stop, a look of utter shock on their faces. The lights suddenly dim, and an alarm goes off. The other people on the game floor were already scrambling after the punch from Roger, but now everybody begins to head to the casino exits. People even descend from other levels of the casino in order to reach the exits. The guards shove the trio of Roger, Jack and the mascot up against a wall.

GUARD #2
You three stay put, you understand
me? Don't move a fucking muscle or
my friend will tase you, got it?

(CONTINUED)

The three nod their heads as the guard who just spoke ventures out onto the floor, trying to hold people back.

GUARD #2
(Yelling)
Everybody listen! This is an
emergency. We ask that you please
not leave the casino! Stay inside!

The people do not seem to listen as they push past the guard. There are other members of the security staff at the door, trying to prevent people from leaving, but there are simply too many guests and players panicking.

GUARD #2
Fuck!

Roger struggles against the grip of the guard, but is pushed back effortlessly.

ROGER
What's going on?

JACK
Yeah, what the fuck happened?

GUARD #1
None of your goddamn business! Shut
your mouths.

The guards finally shut the main doors to the casino, but it appears to be too little too late. There is hardly anybody left on the gaming floor, and probably anywhere else in the casino. The ones left seemed to be overrun or simply refused to be caught up in the madness. The second guard approaches the trio and his coworker. The alarm is still blaring.

GUARD #2
Not many people left in here
anymore. Shit ... I can't believe
this man.

GUARD #1
You think it's true?

GUARD #2
Not hard to tell when somebody's
fucking dead, is it?

JACK
Whoa, dead? Nobody said anything
about anybody being dead, the
fuck's going on?

(CONTINUED)

GUARD #1

We've got questions just like you,
but for right now, shut your
fucking mouth. I mean it. Casino's
on lock-down 'till further notice.

MASCOT

(To Guard #1)

Hey, man, I work here too, you
know, you can tell me!

GUARD #2

(To Mascot)

You're just the goddamn mascot,
kid. We're not telling you shit.
Now all of you, let's go.

The guards once again direct the group forward. The blackjack dealer and Mick, the bartender, appear to be two of the few people left on the game floor. The bartender approaches them.

MICK

Hey, what the hell is going on?

GUARD #2

None of your business, old man. The
rest of us are rounding up whoever
is left, I suggest you stay here
and cooperate.

MICK

Shit ...

He complies and backs off. Roger shakes his head and Jack glances over to the mascot.

JACK

It's all your fucking fault, you
know that right? Fucking bird ...

ROGER

Oh God ... I was gone the whole
time, taking a piss. They probably
think I did it.

JACK

(To Roger)

It's gonna' be alright, Rog'. We'll
get out of this, don't worry.

The guards give Jack and Roger a stern look. Suddenly, they all stop in front of a office-like door, and the first guard digs in his pockets to find his keys.