

NEVADA V-I

by
Simon King

WGA Registration #1647854
Copyright recorded with the United States Copyright Office

Clearstream Entertainment
17821 Tamara Avenue
Lake Oswego, OR 97035

503.453.5130
simon@vershke.com

FADE IN:

EXT. LAS VEGAS FROM THE AIR - AFTERNOON

Even in the light of day the place is dazzling. The Bellagio fountains are blasting and the Mirage volcano is erupting.

Cars jam the strip and tourists crowd the sidewalks.

The place is happening.

EXT. LAS VEGAS FREEWAY - AFTERNOON

Cars and trucks blast by at full speed. No traffic jam here.

Landmarks of the strip tower above.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - FREEWAY ONRAMP - AFTERNOON

Hot as balls.

Cars merge onto the busy freeway one-by-one from the controlled onramp. JORDI GRANT, barely 16, cute but less than confident, nervously grips and twists the pleather-wrapped steering wheel of an old VW BUG.

The light switches and Jordi pops the clutch, stalling the car.

The DMV TEST OFFICER squirms his whale-sized body against the vinyl-encased seats that were never intended for his mass. Drops of off-color sweat splatter onto his clipboard.

Despite the heat and Jordi's poor driving skills he remains calm.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S MOM'S CAR - AFTERNOON

DMV TEST OFFICER
Start the vehicle, merge on the freeway
and stay to the right.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - FREEWAY ONRAMP - AFTERNOON

The car restarted, Jordi puts it in gear and crawls forward into traffic, an accident waiting to happen. The car's speed is no match for the freeway traffic.

Vehicles jump to other lanes to avoid this bug creeping into their path while upset drivers show their frustration with blaring horns and screams behind air-conditioned windows.

Outside of his tiny prison and despite his level of personal discomfort the DMV test officer remains calm.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S MOM'S CAR - AFTERNOON

JORDI

Jesus!

DMV TEST OFFICER

Just take the next exit please.

Jordi starts to merge right but other cars are there refusing to let him in.

JORDI

I don't think I...

DMV TEST OFFICER

Signal. We use signals to indicate our intentions. Please use a signal.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - DMV OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Jordi pulls the car into a parking space.

CARLA GRANT, early 40s, slender and attractive mother of Jordi approaches the VW. Carla is dressed for her job as an assistant to an aging third-rate magician who plays the lunch buffet show at an off-off-off the Strip casino. Her future is not bright.

Jordi's older sister TALIA GRANT, 17 going on 21, walks with her mother to the parked car. Talia possesses all the confidence Jordi lacks and is dressed beyond her wealth.

As always, Talia's eyes are buried in her cell phone.

The DMV test officer struggles to squeeze out of the passenger door and makes his way to the air-conditioned comfort of the office.

CARLA

Did he make it? Did he pass?

He lacks the energy or will to speak in the hot sun.

DMV TEST OFFICER

Bigger car... can't merge... bigger car.

A smirk crosses talia's face who doesn't bother to look up.

TALIA

What a loser.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE STRIP - AFTERNOON

Carla is driving to her work. Talia sits in the front and Jordi sits depressed in the tiny back seat.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S MOM'S CAR - AFTERNOON

JORDI

I'm just sayin', if we had an automatic...

TALIA

I did it in this car.

JORDI

That's what I heard.

TALIA

You are so lame.

CARLA

Look Jordi, this is the only car we have for now so I suggest you learn how to drive it.

Carla pulls the car into the employee parking area and pulls to a stop. She takes a last look in the mirror and gathers her purse.

CARLA (CONT'D)

You guys go home and get ready for school. I want this school year to be a success. Is that understood?

TALIA

Am I picking you up?

CARLA

No sweetie, I'll get a ride from Mel.

TALIA

Ugh! That guy is a creepy old man.

Jordi leans forward, eager to move to the relative comfort of the front seat.

JORDI

Mel is a cool guy. I like him. You think every guy who is not on the football team is a creeper.

CARLA

He was a brilliant magician in his day. Anyway, I said I would get a ride from Mel. I'm not going to marry him.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CASINO PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Carla exits the car and as does Talia. Talia walks to the drivers door and gets in.

Jordi doesn't bother with doors and simply squeezes between the seats to gain the passenger position.

Having walked to the passenger side Carla puts her head back through the open window to address her children.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S MOM'S CAR - AFTERNOON

JORDI

Sorry mom.

CARLA

Don't worry, you'll get it next time.

TALIA

He better. Bye mom.

CARLA

Remember! Straight home and get ready for your first day.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S MOM'S CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Talia is at the wheel. She speaks into a cell phone with one hand while driving with the other.

TALIA

I know. It sucks but whatever. See you in like ten minutes.

JORDI

Where are we going? Mom said...

TALIA

I know what mom said but this is my last day of freedom from school.

JORDI

And?

TALIA

And if I take you home you will scream to mom that I went somewhere. So I have no choice.

JORDI

No choice? What, you gonna drive me into the desert and bury me?

TALIA

Intriguing idea... Nope, you're gonna get a chance to do the tunnel run.

This is not news Jordi wanted to hear.

JORDI

Oh...

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE OPEN DESERT - TEN MINUTES LATER

Talia stops in a cloud of dust next to other parked cars. A group of teens hanging out. The area is barren, desolate and altogether unappealing. The desert rocks and dirt emit unbearable heat.

Up on a hill a short distance away train tracks emerge from a dark tunnel that passes through a rocky crag.

Talia gets out of the car but Jordi stays in the passenger seat looking at the older kids outside as if they want his spleen.

TEEN NUMBER ONE, a typical high school jock sees Jordi and grabs Talia by the arm.

TEEN NUMBER ONE

Really? Are you serious here? You brought a freshman to the tunnel?

TALIA

It was that or risk having him run to my mom.

Jordi exits and stands nervously near the hood of the car.

TEEN NUMBER ONE

Well this should be interesting. Don't think a freshie has ever done the tunnel run... At least none that lived to talk about it.

TEEN NUMBER TWO, same age but far more obnoxious gets right in Jordi's face.

TEEN NUMBER TWO

Yer gonna die!

A deep, dry swallow slowly makes its way down Jordi's throat.

Talia looks to break the tension.

TALIA

So who's going?

TEEN NUMBER TWO

Seems like it should be Mr. Kung Fu.

MR KUNG FU, same age, trim, physically fit with no shirt, shorts that seem a tad dated, and the only Asian teen in the group steps forward.

MR. KUNG FU

Effin right it's my turn! Watch this ladies and see how it's done.

Mr. Kung Fu flicks the cig he was smoking into the dust, takes a slug of water, and begins sprinting up the hill toward the tunnel.

TALIA

Someone checked the schedule, right?

TEEN NUMBER ONE

It's all cool, shortie.

TALIA

Screw you. I am not your shortie douchebag.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - ENTRANCE TO TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME
AFTERNOON

Mr. Kung Fu arrives at the entrance to the tunnel out of breath and dripping in sweat. His bravado has disappeared and fear now shows.

Peering into the pitch black tunnel he snaps on his flashlight which promptly dims.

MR. KUNG FU
Shit! Cheap Chinese crap.

He raps the flashlight against the entrance to the tunnel and it comes back to life.

Mr. Kung Fu turns to the watching crowd below and raises his arms and lets out a banshee scream before proudly entering the tunnel.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE OPEN DESERT - SAME AFTERNOON

The crowd of teens relaxes into idle conversation.

Nothing to do now but wait for Mr. Kung Fu to exit the tunnel from the other end and signal his success.

TEEN NUMBER ONE
So fresh, gonna be a big man today, huh?

Surrounded by so much teen testosterone Jordi knows he needs to hold his own.

JORDI
What's the big deal? It's just an old tunnel.

TEEN NUMBER ONE
True dat. But the tunnel is not the issue.

Teen number two get right up in Jordi's face.

TEEN NUMBER TWO
Trains, fool. Trains.

INT. LAS VEGAS - TRAIN TUNNEL - AFTERNOON

In the blacker-than-black tunnel Mr. Kung Fu runs as fast as his sketchy flashlight will allow.

MR. KUNG FU

Come on man! When does this thing end?

His flashlight flickers on and off. He bags it on his hand and then the tunnel walls.

MR. KUNG FU (CONT'D)

Come on you piece of shit!

The light emits new life and he continues his fast paced run along the tracks.

Ahead blaring sunlight appears. The torture is almost over.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE OPEN DESERT - SAME AFTERNOON

All eyes are on the craggy mountain.

Incessant heat radiates out from the desert floor in waves.

TALIA

He should be out by now.

TEEN NUMBER ONE

It's cool. Kung Fu has it under control.

The wait is killing them.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - FAR END OF THE TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME AFTERNOON

Mr. Kung Fu steps from the darkness into the glare of the afternoon desert. He is covered in soot, frazzled, and clearly happy to be free of this prison.

MR. KUNG FU

Boo-yah! Done and friggin done!

He starts climbing up the rocks above the tunnel.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE OPEN DESERT - SAME AFTERNOON

Mr. Kung Fu becomes visible to the other teens. They see him raise his arms but can barely make out his banshee screams.

With the success of Mr. Kung Fu the mood is now lifted.

Lifted for all but Jordi.

TEEN NUMBER TWO

Hell yea!

Teen number one approaches Jordi.

TEEN NUMBER ONE

Fresh meat... I smell a train with your name on it!

Teen number two again gets right in Jordi's face.

TEEN NUMBER TWO

Choo-choo little man.

Talia walks back from getting a flashlight from her car.

TALIA

Don't worry, it's not that bad. You'll breeze it.

JORDI

You done it?

Talia hands Jordi the flashlight.

TALIA

Take this. I put new batteries in last night...

Jordi looks up toward the tunnel's entrance.

JORDI

No trains now, right?

TALIA

Don't let these jerks scare you.

Teen number one walks over to Jordi and Talia.

TEEN NUMBER ONE

Did you give him a clean nappie? Wouldn't want him to soil himself.

TALIA

I remember your first time asswipe so stop yappin.

Trying to show confidence he does not have, Jordi leaves the others and makes his way up the hill.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - FAR END OF THE TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME
AFTERNOON

Mr. Kung Fu slowly makes his way down from his high perch. He stops abruptly and spins around.

Something is not right.

MR. KUNG FU

Oh shit!

He scrambles back up to the high point and frantically waves his hands and screams.

MR. KUNG FU (CONT'D)

HEY! HEY! YOU GUYS! STOP! Shit!

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE OPEN DESERT - SAME AFTERNOON

Mr. Kung Fu can be seen in the distance but his screams are lost to the desert winds.

TEEN NUMBER TWO

Jeez Fu, give it a rest. We know you made it. Big whoop.

On the hill above Jordi nears the tunnel's entrance.

TEEN NUMBER ONE

Kung Fu prolly trying to scare the little guy. Cool!

TALIA

You guys are pathetic.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - ENTRANCE TO TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME
AFTERNOON

As he scrambles the final few yards to the tunnel Jordi looks back.

In the far distance Jordi sees Mr. Kung Fu running toward the others.

JORDI

I can do this. No big deal.

Jordi clicks his flashlight on and steps into the tunnel.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE OPEN DESERT - SAME AFTERNOON

Mr. Kung Fu races across the barren desert and collapses in a mess of sweat and dust near the cars.

He is out of breath and appears half-crazed.

TEEN NUMBER TWO

Showing off up there a bit don'tchya think?

Mr. Kung Fu frantically looks around. Counting heads. As expected, things are not good.

MR. KUNG FU

Where's the freshman? The kid... where's the kid?

TEEN NUMBER ONE

(ominous Darth Vader voice)

The young one is alone now. He has entered the darkness.

The humor is lost on Mr. Kung Fu.

TALIA

Why? What's the problem?

MR. KUNG FU

Problem? There's a friggin train! That's the problem.

TALIA

WHAT!? There are no trains today. Someone checked right? Why didn't you tell us?

MR. KUNG FU

You didn't see me screaming and waving my arms up there? You think I'm dancin'?

The group starts frantically running and screaming up the hill to the tunnel's entrance.

Mr. Kung Fu, still out of breath, struggles far behind the others.

INT. LAS VEGAS - TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME AFTERNOON

While the tunnel is quite tall the walls are only a little wider than the tracks themselves. Anyone caught in here with an oncoming train would have no place to hide.

Jordi steps carefully from one wooden cross beam to the next. His flashlight is strong and illuminates the tunnel well.

JORDI

Thanks for the new batteries, sis.

Looking far ahead Jordi can see the blazing afternoon light at the end of the tunnel. Another minute or two and he is a man.

But then... that daylight disappears.

Seconds later it is replaced by a singular powerful spotlight spinning in slow circles. The light is accompanied by the deafening roar of an oncoming freight train.

Hesitating for a split second Jordi takes in the situation.

JORDI (CONT'D)

Well that's not good.

His options limited, Jordi spins on his feet and starts leaping the crossbeams as fast as he can.

Flashlight beams dance erratically across the floor and from wall to wall. He is moving on pure adrenaline and hope at this point.

The train, now fully in the tunnel, blasts its horn making matters only worse.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - ENTRANCE TO TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME
AFTERNOON

Having reached the tunnel's entrance the teens are frantic. The distant train light profiles Jordi as he runs along the tracks. He has a long way to go.

TALIA

JORDI! Shit kid! RUN!

The screaming continues as each teen takes hesitant steps into the tunnel before their fear gets the better of them.

INT. LAS VEGAS - TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME AFTERNOON

Jordi is moving at breakneck speed but it is clear the train has the advantage.

He looks around hoping to find some place to hide.

The train is pounding down, letting out ear-splitting horn blasts which do nothing to relieve the situation.

Ten paces ahead Jordi's flashlight reveals a hollow spot on the wall. Big enough? What choice is there?

He makes the last few jumps between the crossbeams but catches his foot on one of them. He crumbles to the ground.

The flashlight flies ahead of Jordi, its beam illuminating a mysterious passageway leading perpendicularly away from the tracks.

No time left! The train is feet way!

Flashlight abandoned, Jordi lunges into the passageway which is blocked only a few feet in.

The train passes Jordi's position full of power, noise, oil, and general unpleasantness.

Jordi hunkers in against the wall. This will end. But when?

As the train's wheels screech by the flashlight's beams bounce through the train's undercarriage. Jordi's cowering body is flashed on and off like a bad elementary school health film.

As suddenly as it arrived the last of the freight cars blast pass. The sound dopplers into the distance.

All that remains is a filthy Jordi in his stone cell grimly lit from ground level by the flashlight.

JORDI

And then that happened.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - ENTRANCE TO TRAIN TUNNEL - SAME
AFTERNOON

The teens scramble to either side of the tunnel as the train's engine blasts out of the tunnel. Cars careen past at terrifying speed.

No one could have survived this onslaught of steel.

Talia is terrified.

TALIA
CRAP! SHIT! OH CRAP!

Talia's instinct tells her she must help her brother. She steps toward the entrance but is held back by Teen Number One.

TALIA (CONT'D)
Let go asshole! Jordi!

TEEN NUMBER ONE
Just wait Talia!

INT. LAS VEGAS - TRAIN TUNNEL - AFTERNOON

The scene inside the tunnel has reached an almost peaceful point.

Clambering over the tracks, Jordi recovers the flashlight and scurries back into the relative safety of the passageway.

Shinning the light around the walls and across the floor he confirms this passageway was built on purpose. The light hits the back wall and reveals a flat, even surface much different from the rock walls on either side.

Jordi beams the flat wall. He reaches over and raps it with the light. Steel.

Scanning it reveals it is a door of sorts but with no handle and no way to open it. It is covered in the dirt and grime of a thousand train passings.

But something is written there under all of this grime.

With his free hand Jordi scrubs away at the dirty, metal surface and reveals a simple, if un-telling pair of large Roman numerals, "V-I".

At the same moment the screams of the others break the tunnel's interior.

Feet bang their way along the tracks toward Jordi.

TALIA
Jordi! Shit Jordi, say something! Where are you?

TEEN NUMBER ONE
Hey kid, come on! Where the eff...

Gathering his strength and giving the steel door one last look Jordi steps onto the tracks.

JORDI

Yea, I'm here. I'm here.

INT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

A U.S. History class. Students sit as calmly as expected for freshmen on their first day of school.

The TEACHER, a presentable woman in her early 30s is walking among them passing out a paper while speaking.

TEACHER

Isn't this exciting? First day of school and you get history homework. Can it get any better?

The class reacts accordingly.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Come now, I am sure you have heard the saying that those who do not know their history are bound to repeat it.

Without bothering to raise his hand a precocious STUDENT responds.

STUDENT

When should we expect to see Pilgrims on the Strip?

TEACHER

Jessie, right? Bigger picture.

The teacher finishes distributing the paper seconds before the bell rings.

Students waste no time working toward the door.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Read the section on the growth of the railroads during the westward movement and write a paragraph on why the railroads were known as the Iron Horse.

Her words bounce around the room with little chance they settle into the ears of the students.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Well that won't happen.

INT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - SAME MORNING

As it is with every high school cafeteria across America students gather in their accepted groups and with their known friends.

A few teachers walk the room maintaining a semblance of order.

Jordi enters, spying the table he wants along a far wall, he pushes between older students who tower above him: beards and boobs like he has never seen before.

He is a manchild on a mission.

Jordi's closest and long-time friends, all freshmen, stand and sit around the table.

DEV, a buff, tall, too well-dressed and immaculately coiffed African-American boy is busy checking his reflection in the window.

RODRIGUEZ, a Hispanic of short stature eyes every girl within the confines of the cafeteria and perhaps beyond.

Skinny as a flagpole MARTY busies himself arranging his food on the table while rattling on nonstop about who knows what.

MARTY

What classes do you guys have next? I have my chemistry class. That will be so cool! I wonder what we...

JORDI

Guys, guys! You are not gonna believe what happened to me.

RODRIGUEZ

Did you get laid? Let me tell you... last night was something new.

DEV

What, a new box of tissue?

RODRIGUEZ

Shut up Dev. At least I know what to do with a girl.

DEV

As long as she has a place to inflate her.

JORDI
Would you guys listen to me?

DEV
Sup?

Jordi looks around careful to make sure no one outside his circle is listening in.

As if they would... they are freshmen after all.

JORDI
Yesterday I ran the tunnel and...

DEV
Dude! Seriously. That place is not for mortal men let alone young bucks like us.

RODRIGUEZ
Young bucks? What magazines DO you read?

Marty finishes arranging his food. Everything is in it's place so now he may commence eating.

The boy's conversation continues to be heard by no one else.

JORDI
Talia dragged me along and her friends made me do it.

His confidence growing.

JORDI (CONT'D)
It's not that bad, really.

DEV
I heard it was lined with the broken and charred remains of kids who didn't make it. Did ya see them? Did ya see the skeletons?

JORDI
There are no skeletons Dev.

Jordi takes a beat to make sure he has his friends' attention.

JORDI (CONT'D)
But there is one thing that I have never heard anyone speak about.

Jordi looks around again and leans in closer.

JORDI (CONT'D)

There is a door about halfway in. Looks like it has been closed for decades.

RODRIGUEZ

Why would there be a door in the middle of a train tunnel? You sure it wasn't like an air shaft or something?

JORDI

This was a door. And it was on the uphill side so wherever it leads, it goes deeper in the mountain. And that's not all...

Jordi reaches into his binder and pulls out a carefully folded sheet of paper.

Unfolding it on the table the Roman numerals he saw in the tunnel are written carefully on it in huge block style.

This reveal catches the eye of Marty who stops his eating to examine the evidence.

MARTY

V... I... What's it mean?

JORDI

Not sure. But why would there be a huge steel door painted army green with these letters on it in the middle of that place?

The boys are so focused on the sheet in front of them they have failed to see someone hovering over Rodriguez's shoulder.

A slender female hand descends upon the paper. Fingers with nails painted five different colors spread far apart cover the "V-I" Jordi has drawn.

JORDI (CONT'D)

Hey!

The boys are suddenly quiet. This was not some random freshman girl. They were in the presence of a much older and gorgeous... woman.

JESSIE KUDROW, an attractive junior who wants the world to know she could not care less is intimidatingly dressed in a short animal print skirt, too-tall heels and a top that most assuredly does not meet the school's dress code looks around the group of young boys.

She taps her fingers on the paper.

JESSIE

Where... did... you... find... this?

Rodriguez knows an opportunity when it stands in front of him. He gives Jessie the full elevator.

RODRIGUEZ

Hey there chica. You looking for a nice time?

Jessie ignores his stupidity.

JESSIE

Who drew this?

DEV

Jordi did. He saw it in the...

JORDI

Shut up Dev. It's just something I did in art class this morning.

Jessie somehow knows better.

JESSIE

Really? And what inspired this selection of numbers?

DEV

They're not numbers, they are letters. See...

He pulls the paper out from under her fingers.

DEV (CONT'D)

It's a "V" and an "I." They're not numbers at all. It stands for...

Marty is staring through the paper from the backside and seeing the image faintly. He tilts his head to better take it in.

MARTY

No, she's right. They're Roman numerals. That "V" stands for five and the "I" is a one. So it is a "five" and a "one."

Dev returns the paper to the table for all to see.

Jessie's attention is now solely focused on Jordi and not in a friendly manner.

JESSIE

Jordi, right? Your Talia's brother.

Jordi does his best to maintain composure but already Jessie has the upper hand.

JORDI

Yea. You one of Talia's friends? I don't think I...

JESSIE

Look kid, I can make your life a living hell here or set you up as someone not to be effed with. The choice is yours.

RODRIGUEZ

You know if there is any intercourse going on I want you to know... I am the man you need.

Her eyes never leaving Jordi's, Jessie gracefully grabs a carrot from Marty's perfectly arranged food display and in a singular motion slides it between Rodriguez's lips.

The movement is pathetically demoralizing and sexy as hell at the same time.

MARTY

Hey! That's my main vitamin source. I need that.

Rodriguez grins with the carrot between his teeth.

RODRIGUEZ

Now we're talking my darling but it is ME who should be slipping YOU the old love carrot.

Jessie is growing weary of this childish machismo. She looks to Dev while pointing at Rodriguez

JESSIE

Shut him up.

The situation is escalating. Dev does as he is told and steps between Jessie and Rodriguez.

Jordi pulls the paper back into his possession and examines it anew.

JORDI

I suppose they could be Roman numerals. So what? What does that mean?

JESSIE

You said something about a steel door
painted drab green right?

JORDI

Eavesdrop much?

JESSIE

There are plenty of those out in that
desert and I know the location of all of
them from 1-1 to 6-9. All of them...
except this one.

MARTY

You track down steel doors? Uh... why?

JESSIE

Not important. I need to know where 5-1
is.

Jordi mulls this over.

He looks to each of his friends for support. Each, in
turn silently agrees there is little to lose.

JORDI

You got a car?

EXT. LAS VEGAS - ENTRANCE TO TRAIN TUNNEL - LATE THAT
NIGHT

The Nevada sky is brilliant with stars despite the almost
radioactive glow of Las Vegas in the distance.

The blistering still heat of day has been replace by an
almost cool wind.

The only sounds breaking the desert calm are those of
Jessie, Jordi and his friends scrambling the final few
steps to the tunnel's entrance.

Ever stylish, Dev arrives at the entrance first. Brushing
dirt from his hands he looks into the blackness.

DEV

Why? Tell me again... Why are we doing
this?

The rest of the team arrive, flashlights in hand.

Making the mistake of turning to face his friends Dev is
blinded.

DEV (CONT'D)

Damn Marty! Could you be any more obnoxious?

Marty is a walking wall of light. He has headlamps strapped not only on his head, but also at each knee and elbow as well as a powerful L.E.D. flashlight in each hand.

Like the Luxor Hotel, this boy can be seen from space.

MARTY

You will thank me later. Once we are in the tunnel... with all the skeletons.

JORDI

There are no skeletons. Just stay behind us all, okay Marty?

INT. LAS VEGAS - TRAIN TUNNEL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jordi and Jessie lead the team along the tracks.

While their individual flashlights provide sufficient lighting for progress it as if there is a massive klieg light behind them.

A klieg light that won't stop talking.

Jessie and Jordi walk up front and close together.

JESSIE

What is it with the portable sun back there... does he ever shut up?

JORDI

His mom told me once he said his first words at six months and hasn't stopped since. Don't let it fool you... he is really smart. He got like a 4.0 in kindergarten.

JESSIE

I'm pretty sure you don't get a G.P.A. in kindergarten.

JORDI

He's a freshman, right? But he is taking AP calc, AP chem, and AP physics. And I promise you, he will ace all of them.

JESSIE

What about the other two?

Jordi looks back but quickly decides that was a bad idea.
He adjusts his near blind eyes.

JORDI
Dev and Rodriguez? I met them both last
year. Good guys.

JESSIE
The little one seems to think he is God's
gift.

JORDI
It's an act, I guess. He is actually very
polite and nervous when he gets face to
face with a girl.

JESSIE
Could've fooled me.

JORDI
And Dev... well, I guess he's part of the
10 percent.

A smile comes across Jessie's face.

JESSIE
He is not gay. Trust me.

JORDI
Shhh! He'll hear you!

JESSIE
Have you asked him? What does he say?

Not wanting to embarrass or anger his friend, Jordi
lowers his voice.

JORDI
I am not gonna ask one of my best friends
if he is gay.

Jessie stops short. Jordi looks nervous.

JESSIE
Hey chatterbox... face the wall.

Without even bothering to stop his incessant talking
Marty faces the wall of the tunnel. The light is so
bright it could melt the rock.

Jessie turns to Dev who has managed to remain runway
perfect despite their surroundings.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

I heard you had a girlfriend, what's her name again?

DEV

Oxana. Where did you met her?

Crickets.

Even Marty is speechless.

JESSIE

No, never met her. Just heard.

She flashes a look at Jordi who is blown away and embarrassed at the same time.

DEV

Why aren't we moving? Is this it?

The other boys scramble to regain composure not wanting to give hint that they had no clue about Dev.

Jessie has moved a few steps ahead of the others.

JESSIE

That's not it... but this is. Damn!

Jessie's flashlight shines into the short passageway that was Jordi's safe haven less than 24 hours earlier.

Just as Jordi described, there is a full-size drab green steel plate at the back of the small cave.

The "V-I" are now clearly visible where Jordi had rubbed the grim off. Something else is barely legible beneath the numbers.

Jessie rubs away the years of grime to reveal "U.S. ARMY - NO ADMITTANCE."

The boys have gathered behind her. Marty's multi-beamed body offering both crazed shadows and blaring illumination.

DEV

I can't focus... Marty, turn some of those off.

As the lights from Marty fade the passageway takes on an even light.

MARTY

Is that a door?

DEV

How do you open it? There's no handle...
or hinges for that matter.

Jessie is already examining the steel plate closely.
Running her fingers along the edges and across the top.

Nothing presents itself as the obvious way to open the
steel plate.

JESSIE

Step back guys. Hey light boy, Marty,
come here.

MARTY

(sheepishly but with
satisfaction)

She knows my name!

Jordi and Dev retreat to the back of the pack while Marty
takes point.

JESSIE

Hit this side wall with all the light you
got.

Proud to be of assistance, Marty faces the wall and
lights it up like a Major League stadium during the World
Series.

Nothing. Just roughly chiseled rock.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Try the other wall.

Marty spins around to light the other wall. Again blank.

JORDI

What's that? Up in the corner... what's
that?

Sure enough, Marty's lights reveal a small box attached
to the wall up high near the steel plates upper corner.

JESSIE

That... is what we need. Hey GQ, come
here.

Looking around the boys try to decipher what she means.

But not Dev.

DEV

Yes? How might I be of assistance?

JESSIE
Can you reach that?

Dev steps forward and using his height to advantage he pries open a rusted cover on the box to reveal a switch.

He looks back at the others. They nod approval so he flips the switch.

Nothing.

JORDI
Try again.

Dev returns the switch to its original position and flips it again. Once, twice... nothing.

JESSIE
I did not come this far...

Pushing Dev out of the way she uses all her height and might to swing her flashlight at the switch.

Sparks! Puffs of smoke! Snap! Crackle! Pop!

And then... an almost indiscernible "Click."

The right edge of the steel plate pops inward. Only an inch but it does move.

MARTY
I think you just broke like a thousand
Federal laws.

JESSIE
I've only started.

INT. LAS VEGAS - AREA V-I ENTRYWAY - SAME NIGHT

The steel door emits a painful squeal as Jessie pushes it open.

Stepping inside the kids find themselves standing on a metal platform with railings.

Every sound is amplified and echoes incessantly.

Flashlights search the darkness but nothing is revealed.

Suddenly wall lights start coming to life.

Jordi is standing near a light switch.

JORDI

This one works.

The lights show a stairway curving downward against the wall to a multitude of desks a hundred feet below.

They have discovered an abandoned bunker of sorts.

Cobwebs and dust everywhere. No one has been in here for many, many years.

Without waiting, Jessie charges down the curving staircase to the floor far below. Her feet banging on the steel staircase produce a reverberating noise that is almost unbearable.

DEV

Are you sure we should be doing this?

JORDI

Don't be a wus.

Jordi also makes his way down joined hesitantly by the others.

INT. LAS VEGAS - AREA V-I FLOOR - SAME NIGHT

The boys catch up to Jessie who is already making her way from one abandoned desk to the next. She is opening drawers and examining dusty papers.

The place is a ghost town. Dial telephones on desks. Old papers and calendars. A typewriter or two and the odd vintage, cold war computer terminal.

Other than that, not exactly a gold mine.

The boys are scattered around the room each hoping to find something... anything... of interest.

RODRIGUEZ

Tell me again why you dragged me out of bed for this.

MARTY

I think it's sorta cool in her.

DEV

I wondered when the Army stopped using this place. For that matter, I wonder why they used this place. What do you think it was for?

Jordi stands in the middle of the room looking upward. Nothing there but the staircase and what looks like a vent in the ceiling.

JORDI

How did people get in here? I can't believe they all came in through that train tunnel.

Marty stands besides a massive door. The sort of thing that could protect against a bomb blast.

MARTY

Look. This looks like some kind of sliding door.

Jordi and the other boys join Marty at the door. Dev bangs on the door and the sound reveals there is a hollow space behind it.

DEV

It's a door alright.

JORDI

Okay, but how do you open this one?

Again, no handle and no obvious lock.

The boys scan the wall.

A seemingly out of place military recruitment poster telling people to "Watch Out For Communism In Your Neighborhood!" hangs near the door.

Dev rips the poster down.

DEV

This is going in my bedroom!

Under the poster are the remnants of some sort of control panel. A multitude of wires hang useless from the panel.

RODRIGUEZ

I'm guessing this door was the way in and out of here. Looks like they didn't want anyone going beyond this room anymore.

DEV

They must have emptied the room, destroyed this keypad thing and left through the train tunnel.

Suddenly the relative quiet is broken by the sounds of metal-on-metal hammering.

RODRIGUEZ

What the...

Off in a corner Jessie has discovered a metal cage bolted to the wall.

Two padlocks on the cage intend to keep the wrong people out.

DEV

Again I ask... should we be doing this?

Jessie slams her metal flashlight against the first lock over and over. Finally the lock breaks and drops to the floor.

JESSIE

Half way there.

Jordi and the others now surround Jessie and watch her battle.

JORDI

Half way where, exactly?

JESSIE

Why would you put two locks on this metal cage? And why is it still locked when everything else has clearly been cleared out?

RODRIGUEZ

Because they didn't want the locks anymore?

JESSIE

Or... because they did not want THAT to leave this place.

Looking into the cage the boys see what has attracted Jessie's attention and determination.

High on a shelf inside the cage sits a metal box the size of a small army footlocker. The metal box also has two locks on it and on its side the words "TOP SECRET" are clearly visible.

DEV

Oh great! We break into a secret army bunker and now she wants to steal some top secret box. I will not do well in prison.

JESSIE

I haven't stolen anything...

She is working on the second lock. The echo of the banging is beyond eerie.

The lock breaks free and Jessie wastes no time rushing into the cage.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Yet.

Looking up at the box she plans her route.

Elegantly and smoothly straddling between two bookshelves like a gymnast, Jessie makes her way to the top shelf.

She attempts to move the box but clearly it is not full of cotton.

Looking down she assess her choices.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Which one of you is the strongest?

RODRIGUEZ

(full of confidence)

Now your talking my pretty lady. Whatchya need?

Turning on the secret weapon all girls have.

JESSIE

I need your big, strong muscles up here with me.... right now.

Rodriguez wastes no time. Bouncing from shelf to shelf like a Patas monkey he makes his way to Jessie's side.

RODRIGUEZ

It's great to finally be alone with you.

JESSIE

Cool. Help me get this down.

His machismo shattered, he helps Jessie wiggle the box to the edge of the shelf.

With no warning they allow the box to fall to the ground with a deafening THUD!

A mushroom cloud of dust fills the cage along with wheezing and coughing.

JORDI

Jesus! A head's up would be nice.

JESSIE

Whoops. My bad.

Jessie and Rodriguez climb down and join the other boys in examining the box.

MARTY

Maybe you busted it. Probably junk now, whatever "IT"... is.

DEV

I think this party is over. Let's get out of here.

Jessie starts dragging the box across the floor.

JESSIE

No problem. But THIS is my party bag. Come on lover boy, help me get this to the car.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - THE OPEN DESERT - LATER THAT NIGHT

The team arrives at the car tired and less than excited that the adventure was a bust.

Jessie and Rodriguez heft the box into the trunk while the others pile into her car.

DEV

What time is it anyway?

MARTY

Three thirty.

DEV

I still have a paper to write for English class. Perfect.

They drive off into the desert night, a vacuum of dust billowing up and slowly settling.

The desert returns to silence and darkness.

But in the trunk of the car an eerie green flashing light leaks through the edges of the box.

EXT. ENGLAND - CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY - ALMOST NOON

A light rain falls on the grounds of the elegant and prestigious campus.

Students with umbrellas make their way between buildings.

INT. ENGLAND - CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY - LECTURE HALL - ALMOST NOON

The lecture hall is full. A teacher's aid walk from row to row handing students the results of a recent exam. Not many smiling faces.

DR. WALLIS, well-attired, mid 70s, British, thin and sarcastic to the core sits patiently at the front of the lecture hall.

STUDENT #1 in the back raises her hand.

STUDENT #1

Dr. Wallis?

DR. WALLIS

Ahh... How did I know there would be questions?

STUDENT #1

This was a difficult test... will there be any opportunity to make it up if our scores were not good?

DR. WALLIS

No.

Another hand shoots up. Without waiting to be called on STUDENT #2 speaks.

STUDENT #2

I doubt Einstein could have done well on this test!

An audible laugh emits from the students.

DR. WALLIS

Well now, as I am the only person in this room and indeed on this campus who knew Dr. Albert Einstein I can assure you he would have done quite well on this exam.

Dr. Wallis turns to the whiteboard behind him and writes "Theory of Proton-Proton Collisions".

DR. WALLIS (CONT'D)

Now that you have seen what a physics test at Cambridge is like I suggest all of you put a little more effort into reading and study and less effort into draining the last drops of entertainment from your little red plastic cups.

A THIRD STUDENT raises their hand.

THIRD STUDENT

What's a proton?

DR. WALLIS

Oh dear God.

INT. ENGLAND - CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY - DR WALLIS' LAB - ALMOST NOON

More a working research lab than an office. A mixture of experiments and apparatus litter every available table surface.

A RESEARCH ASSISTANT sits at a computer crunching data. He is in his early 20s and looks haggard from lack of sleep.

Nothing extraordinary happening.

Suddenly the sound of a loud computer fan whirring to life breaks the relative silence.

The research assistant stops his data entry and looks around listening carefully to locate the source of the sound.

He peers around from behind his computer screen to see an ancient monitor at the back of the room. It seems to be the source of the noise.

The research assistant walks back to the monitor which has a large piece of paper covering it. A scrawled message on the paper warns "DO NOT TOUCH. EVER!"

He lifts the paper and the ancient green screen displays never ending lines of DOS code scrolling past.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Well that's weird.

INT. ENGLAND - CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY - LECTURE HALL -
ALMOST NOON

The research assistant enters through a door at the back of the room.

He pauses for a moment taking in the lecture and then calmly makes his way down the steps to the front of the class and stands anxiously near Dr. Wallis.

Dr. Wallis stands before his whiteboard now covered in a myriad of diagrams and calculations.

He addresses the class.

DR. WALLIS

Now, it is not enough to make spectacular collisions of ultra-energetic protons. We could, of course, pat ourselves on the back for the achievement, but we can't do any real science unless we figure out what is actually happening in those collisions.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Uh, Dr. Wallis.

Dr. Wallis is irritated to have his lecture interrupted. This is not how things are done at Cambridge.

DR. WALLIS

Yes... Why is it you always preface your sentences with "uh"?

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Uh... do I?

Placing the whiteboard pen on a table, Dr. Wallis uses a small towel to wipe his hands.

DR. WALLIS

You do see I am in lecture? Is this important?

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Well, I am not sure.

Dr. Wallis' patience is wearing thin.

DR. WALLIS

You are not sure but you took the time to disrupt the learning experience of this class? Can it wait?

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Uh... maybe. But, you know that old computer terminal at the back of the lab. The one between the boxes. It's been there like... forever.

Dr. Wallis is now intently focused on the research assistant.

DR. WALLIS

The one you and every other research assistant I have ever had has been told to stay away from? Yes, I am familiar with it. Tell me you didn't use it to log into Twitter...

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Twitter? Uh... no. It's just, well the monitor all of a sudden started running lines of code. I would not have noticed it except the fan on that thing is so loud and...

Dr. Wallis need hear no more. Gathering his notes and briefcase he bolts toward the steps.

DR. WALLIS

(abruptly)

The class is over.

Dashing up the steps at a pace quite respectable for his age, Dr. Wallis nears the exit.

The students sit in befuddlement looking to each other for a clue as to what to do.

STUDENT #2

Is there homework?

Dr. Wallis is almost out the door. He responds without stopping or turning back.

DR. WALLIS

Yes. Read the entire book and do every problem.

INT. ENGLAND - CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY - DR WALLIS LAB - ALMOST NOON

The lab lights are off and the room is dark with the exception of an almost antique computer monitor balanced on a shelf between stacks of boxes.

The monitor is scrolling a nonstop sequence of digits, its light casting an eerie green glow across the dark room.

The sound of keys being hastily forced into a lock.

The door flies open. Dr. Wallis hastily abandons his armful of papers onto a nearby table as he dashes to the computer monitor.

He studies it closely. The same line of code appears over and over again. Anyone else would dismiss it as junk.

DR. WALLIS

Well, well, well. I knew it!

EXT. CAMP PENDELTON MARINE BASE - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

Vehicles drive between buildings while groups of Marines do their morning exercises.

A helicopter passes overhead.

INT. CAMP PENDELTON MARINE BASE - GENERAL SCRANTON'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The office is the epitome of military utilitarianism. No polished desks and expensive wall hangings here; it's all army drab, metal cabinets, metal desks, squeaky chairs.

On the walls hang plaques, war pictures, and the requisite photograph of the President of the United States.

Behind an aged desk in an equally aged chair sits GENERAL SCRANTON, early 60s, polished, hair laser cut, dressed in military clothes and not particularly thrilled with his job.

General Scranton's dress jacket, decorated with little room to spare, hangs over the back of a nearby chair.

A knock on the door.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Yes.

A young SERGEANT enters the room and stands at attention in front of the general's desk. The sergeant is recruiting-poster perfect in looks and build.

SERGEANT

Sir, the morning report.

The sergeant places a thin folder on the general's desk and turns to leave.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Anything unusual this morning? Or same-old same-old, sergeant?

The sergeant turns back to face the general.

SERGEANT

Fairly standard report sir.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Fairly standard is not standard, is it sergeant?

SERGEANT

No Sir. This morning's report is standard, but with one anomaly. There was a travel pattern variance.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Look sergeant, I am weeks away from retirement, do you think you could explain this to me in words an old man can follow?

SERGEANT

Of course sir. The military maintains a list of people who, for various reasons, are monitored whenever they travel into or out of the United States.

GENERAL SCRANTON

I am familiar with this.

SERGEANT

Yes sir. Well, as you know these people are free to travel so it is not as if they are on a no-fly list. We just keep an eye on them.

GENERAL SCRANTON

So, someone we don't like for some reason we don't remember is on their way to a nice warm beach to sip on umbrella drinks. Is that what you're telling me?

The sergeant tries to suppress a smile with limited success.

SERGEANT

I am sure that is the case General
Scranton.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Very good. Thank you sergeant.

Saluting, the sergeant turns again to leave.

GENERAL SCRANTON (CONT'D)

Sergeant... what was the name of our....
what was your word... anomaly?

Again turning to face the General.

SERGEANT

Wallis, sir. Dr. Barnes Wallis.

The sergeant leaves and General Scranton goes about his
desk work.

But something is nagging at the general.

He picks up the report and scans it.

Not satisfied, he gets up and exits his office.

INT. CAMP PENDELTON MARINE BASE - HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE
GENERAL'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The general walks down the hallway. He finds the
sergeant's desk but he is not there.

In fact, no one is nearby.

The general is frustrated and calls out to anyone who
might be within hearing range.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Where is the Staff Sergeant?

His pace quickening, the general walks to a door and
steps into the blaring California sun.

EXT. CAMP PENDELTON MARINE BASE - AFTERNOON

The general spots the sergeant nearby speaking with other
officers.

Sensing the general's presence they all salute.

GENERAL SCRANTON

At ease men. Sergeant, that anomaly we spoke of... Where was he traveling to?

SERGEANT

According to the report sir...

GENERAL SCRANTON

Yes, yes. I scanned the report. Too many words and not enough details. I did not see his destination.

SERGEANT

Sir, he left London, England last night local time. I believe he was changing planes in New York and then had a direct flight to Las Vegas, sir.

The general's mind reeled. This was not expected and not what he wanted to hear.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Sergeant, I need a helicopter and four of our best.

The sergeant stands at attention.

SERGEANT

Yes sir!

GENERAL SCRANTON

No fatigues. I want those men dressed in civis.

SERGEANT

Where do you need to go to sir?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Las Vegas sergeant.

General Scranton turns quickly and walks toward his office.

GENERAL SCRANTON (CONT'D)

Now!

INT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - THE SAME AFTERNOON

The usual bedlam as students make their way between classes.

Jessie, again dressed to wobble on that line between impressive and edgy walks defiantly through the masses.

She spies Jordi struggling with his locker and beelines to him.

JORDI
Of course I get this one.

Jessie squeezes between Jordi and the stuck locker.

JESSIE
Hey!

JORDI
Uh... hi.

JESSIE
You got a place we can store that thing?

Jordi continues to do battle with the locker.

JORDI
The box? You mean the box?

JESSIE
No stupid. Not the box, the thing. Of course I mean the box.

The locker struggle is getting pathetic.

JORDI
I guess. Can't you keep it? You were the one who wanted it so bad.

JESSIE
I can't keep it in my car. And besides, we need to open it. You have any tools?

Jordi gives up on his locker.

JORDI
What is it with you and breaking stuff open? First that door, then the cage, now...

JESSIE
Whatever. Meet me at my car after school. You got a garage at your place?

JORDI
Yes, but...

Jessie is not interested in details.

JESSIE
Good. After school. My car.

A smile escapes her tough persona just before she elbows the locker and it pops open.

Jordi stands amazed.

JORDI

Uh... thanks. Hey! Where you parked?

Jessie turns and walks away, a mixture of confidence and sassiness.

JESSIE

Look for me. I'll be there.

Jordi finds himself distracted; the locker and its contents less interesting now.

JORDI

Sorta hard to miss.

Hearing this, Jessie smiles to herself.

JESSIE

Boys are so simple.

INT. MARINE HELICOPTER - AFTERNOON

The general, the sergeant and three marines dressed in civilian clothes sit strapped into seats as the massive chopper speeds over Los Angeles smog.

The San Jacinto Mountains loom in the distance.

The CHOPPER PILOT speaks into his helmet headset.

CHOPPER PILOT

General Scranton, I have that com line open for you sir.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Patch it through.

General Scranton adjusts his headset and speaks forcefully into the mic.

GENERAL SCRANTON (CONT'D)

Who is this?

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NEVADA ARMY COMMAND BASE - AFTERNOON

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD, mid 30s and less professional than the general sits outside at a picnic table casually enjoying his afternoon yogurt and coffee.

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

This is Captain Blanchard, security ops lead for Las Vegas Army Airbase zero-three-alpha. You calling from a chopper? Must be important. What can I do for you?

INT. MARINE HELICOPTER - AFTERNOON

GENERAL SCRANTON

It is important Captain. This is General Scranton. We're coming in fast and furious from Camp Pendelton.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NEVADA ARMY COMMAND BASE - AFTERNOON

Sensing his job might finally mean something, Captain Blanchard sits up straight and drops all pleasantries.

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

Sir!

GENERAL SCRANTON

(on the phone)

Have you had any security breaches in the past 72 hours?

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

Nothing too far out of the ordinary sir. We had a couple of dirt bikers breach the perimeter yesterday afternoon. Drunk as... well, sir, I don't really know how they could ride those bikes in their state. We are quite certain it was an accident rather than a risk situation. As a precaution I ordered a complete reassessment of our perimeter controls and...

INT. MARINE HELICOPTER - AFTERNOON

GENERAL SCRANTON

Don't care. That's not it. Any other breaches? Perhaps in an abandoned facility?

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NEVADA ARMY COMMAND BASE - AFTERNOON

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

Why, yes sir. We did have an apparent breach in one of the old Cold War bunkers. Quite a ways off base actually. Looks like some homeless guy managed to break down an access door on the railroad tracks.

GENERAL SCRANTON

(on the phone)

What was taken? Do you have the man?

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

Negative to both sir. We didn't even know about it until late yesterday as that zone is not monitored in real-time. We actually found out through an alert that came through the old TELEX system. Whoever got in there probably had a good night's sleep but nothing was taken. There was nothing to take. No one has used that facility for 50 years.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Do you have surveillance of the area?

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

As I said sir, that facility is a relic. We have no cameras or other monitoring equipment in there of any kind.

INT. MARINE HELICOPTER - AFTERNOON

General Scranton's frustration grows as he does not hear what he wants to.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Captain we will be there in 10 minutes. I want a couple of civilian cars and an expert on area geography ready and waiting. Am I clear? 10 minutes. Out!

The helicopter skims the top of the San Jacinto Mountains and drops precipitously down into the Las Vegas basin.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

A mixture of modern muscle cars and beaters make their way out of the lot. The usual cliques hang and talk.

Like a fish flopped from his bowl, Jordi walks hesitantly among the older students.

JESSIE

Jordi!

Jessie stands next to her car. She cares not for all the social activity taking place in the lot.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - JESSIE'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Jordi sheepishly approaches. Eyeing all the other cars and their drivers he feels compelled to show his maturity.

JORDI

Hi. You know I almost got my license the other day.

JESSIE

You're a freshman. What? Are you 16 and a freshman?

JORDI

I was born late or something. I missed the cutoff for kindergarten.

Jessie has lost interest. She opens the driver's door and gets in.

She rolls her window down and addresses Jordi.

JESSIE

Exciting. Get in.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JESSIE'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Jordi sits nervously in the passenger seat. He has never been in a car alone with an older girl before.

Sneaking peeks at Jessie he tries to break the ice.

JORDI

This your car or, like your parents.

JESSIE

Was my dad's. He died. Now it's mine.

JORDI

Oh that's cool. I mean the car... it's yours. It's not cool your dad died.

Jessie shoots Jordi a glance, assessing him.

JESSIE

No worries.

Jordi nervously fiddles with the glove box. It pops open and several tampons fall into his hands.

He scrambles to remedy the situation hoping somehow Talia did not see his dilemma.

She did.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

That time?

JORDI

What? No! I... sorry... I didn't...

Jessie wraps her hand around the offending implements and gently removes them from his hand.

Stuffing them back where they came from she closes the glove box and pats Jordi on the leg.

JESSIE

Like I said, no worries.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S APARTMENT BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Jessie pulls into the parking lot of a less-than-cute apartment complex. Clearly Jordi's family is not one of the richer ones in the neighborhood.

She parks the car near Jordi's garage door.

Jordi gets out and goes to open the garage door while Jessie walks back to the car's trunk.

JESSIE

Hey, help me with this.

Jordi returns to the car and the two of them carry the heavy box to the garage door.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S GARAGE - AFTERNOON

They set the box down inside the garage.

Jordi comes back to the door, looks around to see if all is safe and slides it closed.

The walls of the garage are crowded with stacks of boxes, bikes hanging from the wall and the usual plethora of odds and ends that seem to occupy every garage.

Jessie is standing over the box.

Jordi joins her and they both stare at the box.

JORDI

What now?

JESSIE

Now, dear boy, find me some tools.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NEVADA ARMY COMMAND BASE - AFTERNOON

Several black SUVs and military vehicles sit idling near a helipad.

Captain Blanchard steps out of one of the vehicles as a giant helicopter approaches.

The helicopter makes a perfect gentle landing. The rotor wash sends dust in all directions.

Without delay the door slides open and General Scranton jumps out.

Holding his hat against the gale, Captain Blanchard steps forward to greet him.

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

(yelling above the noise)

General Scranton, I'm Captain Blanchard.
We spoke on...

GENERAL SCRANTON

Yes, yes. Are these the vehicles?

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

Yes sir. Will they work for you?

The two men walk toward the cars and away from the helicopter as its rotor wind to a stop.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Yes, but I need a taxi.

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

A taxi sir?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Get me a taxi. Don't ask, just get me a taxi.

CAPTAIN BLANCHARD

Yes sir.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Let's go. I will brief you as we drive.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Airplanes taxi into position while others pull into the terminal.

INT. LAS VEGAS - LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Gamblers pull slots in a last minute attempt to go home with a jackpot.

Travelers wait everywhere for their flights.

Jetway doors open and weary passengers begin to exit a plane into the terminal.

Dr. Wallis emerges from the jetway looking tired but determined. No luggage but what he has in his hands, he proceeds confidently through the airport and directly to the taxi stand.

EXT. LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - TAXI STAND - AFTERNOON

Dr. Wallis walks through the sliding doors and, as if on cue, a taxi pulls up right in front of him.

Not one to complain, he opens the back door and climbs in.

In his late 20s, The TAXI DRIVER seems a little more buff than most.

TAXI DRIVER

Hi there. Welcome to Las Vegas. Where to?

DR. WALLIS

Not sure yet. Just start driving north of the city. I'll give you directions as we go.

TAXI DRIVER

No luggage today?

DR. WALLIS

No. I won't be here long.

The cab pulls away and Dr. Wallis retrieves a GPS-type device from his bag.

The device's screen shows a map of greater Las Vegas with a blinking signal on the northern edge of town.

INT. LAS VEGAS - TAXI - AFTERNOON

TAXI DRIVER

No luggage, eh? You just here for the day? All the way from England just for a day?

Never one for pleasantries, Dr. Wallis offers little of himself.

DR. WALLIS

At most, yes. Did I say I was from England?

TAXI DRIVER

Your accent. You're not from England?

DR. WALLIS

Oh, I see. Yes, I am.

TAXI DRIVER

There you go!

Dr. Wallis looks up from his device to address the driver directly.

DR. WALLIS

It looks like I need to be on Echo Street in North Las Vegas. You know the area?

TAXI DRIVER

Sure. Should take about 30 minutes. Do you have an address on Echo?

Dr. Wallis' gaze has returned to the device. He has no interest in the sites of Las Vegas.

DR. WALLIS

I will let you know.

TAXI DRIVER

Okay. You know I went to England once. Where are you from? London? I went to London. Sure is expensive.

DR. WALLIS

I appreciate your travel tips but I am afraid I must concentrate. If you don't mind.

TAXI DRIVER

What? Oh sure. I understand. Just trying to welcome you to Vegas.

Realizing he may have gone a bit too far with his abruptness Dr. Wallis pulls back.

DR. WALLIS

Thank you. Sorry for my rudeness.

TAXI DRIVER

Rudeness! Ha! You obviously haven't been to Vegas before! This town invented rudeness.

Despite his serious nature, this comment causes a smile to cross Dr. Wallis' face.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S GARAGE - AFTERNOON

CRACK! The hammer hits the chisel dead center and the first lock pops off.

JESSIE

You would think the government would have better padlocks.

Placing up the chisel on the second lock Jessie takes aim. Two strong blows and it too falls to the ground.

JORDI

Nice work... and nice strength.

JESSIE

Now then... what is the prize inside?

Jessie slowly lifts the heavy lid and a rhythmically pulsing green light burst forth illuminating her face.

She holds the lid for a moment before letting it fall backwards on its hinges.

JORDI

What's that green thing? Why is it glowing?

Jessie reaches in and removes a rectangular box with a single throbbing light.

JESSIE

It would seem our government wants to keep this piece of crap secret.

JORDI

Ya think? I mean it was buried in some secret room inside a mountain, inside a locked cage and inside a locked box.

Holding the small rectangular box in her hands she flips it over to examine all sides.

Nothing. Just a box with a flashing light.

JORDI (CONT'D)

Maybe it USED to be important?

JESSIE

I doubt it. Seems more like a warning device or something.

Jordi takes a step back.

JORDI

Warning... warning for what? Warning who?

Placing the small box on the floor she looks deeper into the heavy box.

JESSIE

Now this... is more interesting...

She removes a carefully wrapped thin package about the size of a cookie sheet out of the protective crate.

Jordi steps forward, concerned but still dying to know.

Jessie unfolds the cloth that covers the thin package reveals a thin metal plate.

The metal plate is brilliant silver in color and covered with an array of bright gold dots from edge to edge.

JORDI

Is that a cookie sheet? The army is hiding a cookie sheet?

The shiny metal sheet is polished to the highest degree. Talia's and Jordi's faces are reflected in its mirror-like surface.

JESSIE

Now what do you suppose this is?

JORDI
Probably the world's most expensive
cooking accessory.

The sound of a car pulling up outside startles the two
teens.

JESSIE
Who is that?

Jordi dashes over and peers through a crack in the door.

JORDI
Its some guy in a airport taxi. Weird...
I never see taxis in this part of town.

Talia quickly wraps the metal sheet in its protective
cover while Jordi continues to look through the crack in
the door.

JESSIE
Jordi, we gotta go. Something tells me
that box is more than a pretty blinking
light.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S GARAGE - AFTERNOON

Jordi and Jessie exit the garage through a side door and
make their way behind some bushes to the parking lot.

Walking past the taxi, Jordi glances at the driver. He is
unlike any Las Vegas taxi driver he has ever seen; a bit
to clean cut and buff with an earpiece to boot.

They cross the parking lot toward Jessie's car. Parked
behind her car is a full-size, jet black SUV. Similar
ones are on the street.

JESSIE
Oh yea. We need to leave.

Walking past the SUV Jessie can make out several men with
matching hair cuts through the smoked windows.

As Jessie opens her car door she looks back at the SUV. A
commanding figure in the passenger seat has his eyes
drawn on her like an eagle hunting prey: the General.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S GARAGE - AFTERNOON

The same side door cracks open and Dr. Wallis peers in.

DR. WALLIS

Hello?

No answer.

Dr. Wallis steps inside and quietly closes the door behind him.

A quick look around shows nothing unusual. Nothing that he wants.

But his GPS-locator says differently.

He steps gingerly among the boxes, bikes, and patio furniture.

He does a slow 360-degree spin.

DR. WALLIS (CONT'D)

Now... where are you?

His eyes freeze on a short stack of boxes in the far corner. All a bit too perfectly stacked compared to the other things in the garage. The box on the very bottom has an old beach towel covering it.

He carefully removes each of the boxes in the stack and places them elsewhere until only the bottom box remains.

Peeling away the towel reveals the heavy box with its green flashing light squeezing through the cracks.

He has his Holy Grail.

As he reaches down to open the box the room is suddenly filled with a blast of Nevada sunlight.

Almost blinded by the incoming light Dr. Wallis shields his eyes only to see the outline of several figures standing at the now raised garage door.

Lacking words he remains squat by the box.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Dr. George Wallis, you are under arrest for the possession of stolen classified military material.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JESSIE'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Jessie driving quickly. She knows they need distance.

Jordi can hardly stay still in his seat he is so hysterical.

JORDI

Who the eff were those guys? That taxi dude he... he had a friggin' thing in his ear. What taxi driver has a buzz cut and an earpiece? Oh we're screwed.

Jessie continues to drive, more composed and deep in thought.

JESSIE

Chill Jordi. They don't know we have this thing.

JORDI

It's my garage! Do you think they are that stupid? Do you think the United States Army is that dumb? My mom's gonna kill me. They found us once, you know they will find us again! Whatever this thing is we need to just give it to them. Tell 'em we... tell 'em it was a mistake... we found it. Yea, that's it. Tell them we found it somewhere. They can't kill us if we just...

JESSIE

No one is going to get killed today. I figure we have some time before they track you down and even then they don't know who I am.

Jordi bolts upright and stares at Jessie.

JORDI

Oh that's great! You're safe... in the clear even. But little Jordi, the freshman meat is about to have his spleen removed by some neo-Nazi taxi driver!

Jessie dramatically pulls the car over to the side of the road and leaves it idling.

JESSIE

That friend of yours... the guy with the food. What's his name?

JORDI

Food? What foo... what the eff are you talking about?

JESSIE

That kid who seems to organize his food before he eats. I think his mom is a chef or something.

JORDI

Marty? Why are we talking about Marty? I'm about to be sent to Guantanamo and you want to discuss Marty?

JESSIE

Text him. Tell him we are coming over. We need a place to meet.

Almost not willing to hear what has been said, Jordi retrieves his cell phone and punches in a message.

He has calmed down just a wee bit.

JORDI

Why do we need to go to his house?

His phone beeps with an incoming message.

JORDI (CONT'D)

Okay. He say's its cool.

Putting the car into gear Jessie pulls away from the curb.

JESSIE

Good. Where's he live?

INT. LAS VEGAS - GENERAL SCRANTON'S SUV - AFTERNOON

The general's team is on the move. Dr. Wallis sits squashed between two heavies in the back seat.

The general sits motionless and quiet in the front.

DR. WALLIS

I guess I do not need to ask how you located me.

GENERAL SCRANTON

No. No you don't.

DR. WALLIS

If my geography is correct this is America. I believe you have a document here called the Constitution. When do I see my lawyer?

General Scranton turn in his seat to look Dr. Wallis in the face.

GENERAL SCRANTON

What I want to know is why you got the case and why you put it in that garage.

DR. WALLIS

As usual. Military intelligence is anything but. I did not get the case and I did not place it in that garage.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Who then?

DR. WALLIS

Well, I would venture to guess that whoever rents that squalid hovel would be a good person to ask.

GENERAL SCRANTON

And you just happened to travel 5,000 miles on a whim to break into a garage in a suburb of Vegas?

DR. WALLIS

I must have been confused after my long flight. My taxi driver... or should I say YOUR taxi driver led me astray.

GENERAL SCRANTON

You realize everything you said in that taxi was recorded? We know why you were here.

DR. WALLIS

As for me... I am in Vegas just to do a little gambling. Maybe catch a show. Know any good shows general?

The general turns back and gazes to the front windshield.

GENERAL SCRANTON

I wouldn't worry. You wont be here long enough.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - MARTY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Jessie and Jordi stand at the front door of a nice home in a posh neighborhood several price ranges above his own apartment.

Jessie holds the metal sheet carefully wrapped in cloth.

JESSIE

Ring it again.

Jordi pushes the doorbell.

Just when it seems no one is home Marty walks through a side gate and approaches them.

MARTY

Hey there. Wow Jordi, you brought a date?

While Jordi looks awkward, Jessie lets a smile cross her face.

Things could be worse.

JORDI

Uhhh... no I... we needed to meet you guys. Are the guys here?

MARTY

Everyone's here. Even your sister.

JORDI

Why is Talia here!?

MARTY

Are you dumb? You do know my sister and Talia are BFFs? Come on, we're around back.

Jordi and Jessie follow Marty through the gate into the backyard.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - MARTY'S BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

Clearly no shortage of money here. The backyard is elegantly landscaped and a beautiful pool provides a focal point.

Talia, MARTY'S SISTER, and several other high school aged girls lounge in their bikinis texting each other.

Jordi and Marty walk by hoping to be ignored. This would have been the case if it were not for Jessie.

The girls stop their messaging to see who this girl is that has dared enter their rarified air.

TALIA

Jordi?

Jordi keeps walking.

JORDI
Hi sis. What's up?

TALIA
Uhhh... you tell me. One week as a
freshman and you have an upperclassman as
your girlfriend?

Jessie stops in front of Talia blocking her precious
sunshine.

JESSIE
You obviously don't know your brother
well. He is quite a, well let's just say
he not a little man.

A cat fight is eminent.

TALIA
Jessie, right? I think I've seen you at
school.

JESSIE
Really? That's weird because we have been
in the same classes since third grade. I
wonder you had the time to notice anyone.
Anyone beside yourself, that is.

Jordi and Marty watch the action play out like deer in
headlights.

The two girls share a stare for a moment or two before
Jessie turns away and joins the boys.

Jessie gets next to Jordi's and hands him the wrapped
metal plate.

She turns her head slightly so she can gauge the reaction
of the other girls.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Babe, can you carry this?

She wraps her arms around his waist and plants a sloppy
kiss on his cheek.

A final wink to Talia and Jessie wraps her arm in
Jordi's.

Walking away would have been more successful if it were
not for the fact that Jordi's feet seemed glued to the
ground.

Stumbling, he matches her pace.

Marty remains frozen. Did that really happen?

JORDI

Marty! MARTY!

MARTY

Coming. I... here... okay.

Marty takes several giant steps to catch up with Jessie and Jordi.

MARTY'S SISTER

What was that?

TALIA

My brother landed a skank.

INT. LAS VEGAS - MARTY'S POOL HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The room is as elegant as the pool area outside. A billiard table forms the focal point and a well-appointed bar is on one side of the room.

Dev sits in the corner texting. Rodriguez leers out a window taking in the panorama of bikini-clad girls that will forever be beyond his reach.

Jessie and the two boys enter. Jordi shakes free of Jessie as if the embarrassment would be too much.

Jessie walks to a billiard table, unwraps the metal plate and sets it down.

Marty gets right into Jordi's face. He wants answers.

MARTY

Dude!

JORDI

Shut up!

He will not be dismissed so easily.

MARTY

DUDE!

Not wishing to draw attention Jordi looks him in the face and speaks quietly.

JORDI

She was just... it was nothing. Just shut up.

Jessie ignores their banter. She has more interesting subjects on her mind.

JESSIE

Marty? Your mom's a cook or something right?

Marty and Jordi walk over to the table.

MARTY

Chef. She's a celebrity chef. Have you seen her show?

JESSIE

So she probably has a bunch of baking sheets that look like this, right?

MARTY

She has like drawers full of them. Not with those gold dots though.

JESSIE

Go grab a bunch and bring them here. Try and find ones about this size. And they need to be bright. Like aluminum or steel or something.

MARTY

Okay.

Marty starts to leave but stops as Jessie calls out.

JESSIE

Do you have any round stickers in your house? Gold ones?

MARTY

Not me, but I think my sister has some circle stickers that are gold. She seems to put stickers on anything that doesn't move. You want those too?

Jessie has still not taken her eyes off the metal plate.

JESSIE

Yea

MARTY

I'll see what I can find.

Marty leaves.

Rodriguez continues to monitor the view.

RODRIGUEZ

Hey Jordi, can I borrow your phone?

Jordi walks over and hands Rodriguez the phone. Rodriguez points it out the window and takes a picture.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

I know it's his sister but DAYMN! She can sure rock that little bikini.

JORDI

You're right, it's your friend's sister.

RODRIGUEZ

Hey, don't worry. Talia's a nice one too.

JORDI

You're an ass.

Even Jessie is bothered by Rodriguez's fascination with the girls.

JESSIE

Jeez Rodriguez. Don't you ever give it a break?

Realizing there is a woman in the room Rodriguez breaks his trance and approaches the billiard table.

He eyes Jessie up and down, motioning with his hands the curves of her body.

RODRIGUEZ

Don't worry sweetie, I bet you would look just fine in a nice thong.

JESSIE

Well, that's an image you will NOT have the pleasure of wanking to.

Somewhat disappointed Rodriguez sees the metal sheet on the table.

RODRIGUEZ

So, what are we cooking?

JESSIE

You think it's a cookie sheet? Good.

JORDI

Why are you so hung up on the whole baking sheet thing?

JESSIE

Look, whatever this thing is, people want it. But I am guessing no one has actually seen it for years. Why else would it have been hidden away in that cave.

Dev walks over and examines the metal sheet sitting on the billiard table.

DEV

Was this in that box you stole?

JESSIE

Borrowed. I borrowed it and now I wanna give it back. Or at least something that looks like this.

Marty returns with an armful of metal cooking sheets and several boxes of stickers. He drops them on the billiard table.

MARTY

Any of these work?

Jessie examines the stack. She pushes all but one aside which she then places on top of the metal plate. It is almost a perfect match for size and color.

JESSIE

Perfect. Let's see those stickers.

Flipping through several packs of stickers she picks one that has gold circle stickers almost identical in size to the dots on the metal plate.

While she is doing this Marty pulls Rodriguez aside.

MARTY

Did you see what happened out there?

RODRIGUEZ

Your sister? I wasn't looking at her man. I was just...

MARTY

No. With Jordi. Did you see that?

JESSIE

Hey Marty.

MARTY

What!? I didn't say anything.

Momentarily puzzled by his strange response Jessie presses on.

JESSIE

You seem pretty anal. Can you line up these stickers in the exact same pattern as these gold dots?

MARTY

Anal? Really? You think I'm anal?

The whole group eyes Marty. It is a consensus.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Whatever.

Marty snatches the stickers from Jessie, sits down and starts carefully placing dots onto the cookie sheet in a pattern that perfectly reflects what is on the metal sheet.

Done with his photography session, Rodriguez throws Jordi's phone onto the table and it lands on the metal plate.

DEV

You said people want that. What is it and who wants it?

JORDI

It was in that box Jessie brought back the other day. We opened the box in my garage about an hour ago and all of a sudden there was a carload of CIA guys outside.

Dev is shocked at what he just heard.

DEV

And now you brought it here?

JESSIE

Whatever it is they knew where to find it and it must mean something to them. But I don't think they can track it here. There was some kind of locator device in the box. They found the box but don't know where this is.

JORDI

Yet.

The door swings open and Talia marches in looking quite unhappy.

The other girls stand behind her as backup and just so they can watch the action they anticipate is about to go down.

TALIA

Okay douche. What did you do?

JORDI

What? Nothing.

TALIA

Nothing? Mom called me crying saying someone broke into the garage and then she got a call from some guy asking lots of questions.

JORDI

Who... called? What did they want?

TALIA

I don't know! Mom's been calling and texting you. Why are you not responding? I am not your friggin baby-sitter.

Jordi glances at the billiard table for his phone. Not seeing it he feels his pockets.

JORDI

I didn't hear any calls. Where is my phone, anyway?

Talia glances at Jessie but pays no attention to what is on the billiard table nor to what Marty is up to.

TALIA

Yea, well she wants you home now! You should bring your girlfriend. Oh yea, that would be great. I gotta be there for that!

Jessie walks over to Talia and addresses her like a little child.

JESSIE

Talia, I will be taking Jordi home in a few minutes. Please tell your mother not to be worried.

Jessie walks to the door and holds it open for Talia. Talia gives a look of disapproval and struts out.

RODRIGUEZ

I like it when she is mad.

JORDI

Bite me.

Jordi continues to search for his phone.

JORDI (CONT'D)

Where did you put my phone, perv?

RODRIGUEZ

It's on the table. I threw it there.

JORDI

Well it's not there now so where is it?

RODRIGUEZ

How should I know?

JORDI

Dev, call me so I can find it, okay?

Dev dials his phone.

DEV

It's ringing.

Everyone looks around but nothing is to be heard.

JORDI

Shit! Must be out of batteries. No thanks to...

Suddenly Dev flings his phone across the room and grabs his ear.

DEV

Jesus!

JORDI

What? What happened?

DEV

I don't know but I heard your phone pick up and then some crazy-ass high pitch scream just about blew my ear off.

Dev continues to rub his ear.

Marty places the final sticker on the cookie sheet and steps back to compare his work to the original.

MARTY

Done.

JESSIE

Great. Nice work.

MARTY

It's not perfect cuz I don't have any tiny green stickers.

JESSIE

Green stickers?

MARTY

Yes, look. See that row of green lights along the edge? I didn't see them at first either but then they flashed so I figured...

Jessi picks up the metal sheet.

JESSIE

They flashed? When?

MARTY

I don't know. A while ago I guess.

A quiet falls on the room.

Jessie places the metal plate back on the billiard table and everyone takes a deep look at it.

What was once unnoticeable now seems plainly obvious: a row of ten tiny lights line one edge of the metal plate.

MARTY (CONT'D)

What? You guys didn't see those either?

RODRIGUEZ

That's where I put it.

JORDI

What? Put what?

RODRIGUEZ

Phone. The phone. That's where I put your phone. I threw it on that metal thing.

Jessie is ignoring the conversation. Instead she draws in close to the metal plate and examines the lights.

JORDI

My phone?

RODRIGUEZ

Your phone. On the plate. I put YOUR phone on THAT metal plate thingie.

JORDI

Well... it's not there now.

Jessie looks around the room searching for... something.

RODRIGUEZ

I'm just saying I put it there so don't blame me.

Jessie's eyes return to the billiard table and she removes a billiard ball from one of the pockets.

JESSIE

So you placed his phone on that, right?

RODRIGUEZ

That's what I said.

JESSIE

And then what?

RODRIGUEZ

What, and then what? I just put it there.

JESSIE

Marty, was it there when you saw the lights?

MARTY

I... I don't think so. The lights were only on for like a second.

Jessie takes the billiard ball and places it in the center of the metal plate.

JORDI

What are you doing?

JESSIE

Probably nothing. But I wond...

As they all stare at the metal plate a single green light comes on.

And then a second.

And a third.

In one second intervals the row of lights changes from one light lit to all ten glowing brightly.

DEV

What the hell?

And then, one by one the lights go out as if counting down.

JESSIE
I gotta feeling...

She matches the countdown of the lights with words.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Five... four... three...

MARTY
That's what I saw!

JESSIE
Two... on...

The last light clicks off and with no warning the ball is gone.

Here one second, gone the next.

No flash.

No sounds.

No puff of smoke.

Just gone.

Everyone takes a step back. Rodriguez takes two and crosses himself.

DEV
Girl, what you be doin'?

JORDI
What... just... happened?

Jessie is the first to approach the metal plate. She moves her hand across it to see if the ball is there but invisible.

Nothing there.

One by one the others step forward trying to decipher what just happened.

MARTY
Where did it go? My dad's gonna freak if we lost that ball.

Excitement comes to Jessie's voice.

JESSIE

Find me other stuff! Come on! Find stuff!

A flurry of activity as everyone scatters around the room looking for just the right thing to test.

As if they had each run a mile they return to the table out of breath.

Arm's full of this and that.

RODRIGUEZ

My turn! I got something!

Rodriguez, as one might expect, throws a bikini top onto the metal plate.

It sits there not in a neat stack, but hanging off the sides.

JESSIE

Really? Are you just... twisted?

JORDI

Whatever, whatever! Just watch...

They stand eagerly watching for the green lights.

Nothing.

DEV

You broke it!

Jessie rearranges the bikini top into a pile in the center of the plate so nothing is hanging over the edges.

Bam! That does it.

As before the lights count up and down and once again, as the last light blinks out, the bikini top vanishes.

No one is silent now.

MARTY

Oh hot damn!

JESSIE

This thing is golden!

Jordi offers up the basketball he found.

JORDI

Put this on!

DEV
Where's all this shit goin'?

The kids stand mesmerized.

The lights go up and start back down.

JORDI
Five... four...

JESSIE
Three... two... one.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - MILITARY AIR BASE - AFTERNOON

A military transport plane sits on the runway. Huge wings with four props blowing dust everywhere.

The noise is deafening.

A flurry of activity as a line of black SUVs along with several military vehicles come to a screeching halt.

Everyone exits at once. Some head to the plane while others gather near one of the SUVs.

General Scranton holds court.

GENERAL SCRANTON
You two.

Two MILITARY MEN stand at attention awaiting orders.

MILITARY MEN
(in unison)
Sir!

Motioning to Dr. Wallis who stands in handcuffs with armed men at his side.

GENERAL SCRANTON
This man is your prisoner.

DR. WALLIS
(loudly, above the noise)
I am not a prisoner!

General scranton ignores Dr. Wallis.

GENERAL SCRANTON
He is your prisoner and your responsibility. Am I clear?

MILITARY MEN

Yes sir!

GENERAL SCRANTON

You are to sit on him until you arrive at our base in England. If the plane has to stop for any reason you do not let him out of your sight.

DR. WALLIS

You cannot do this!

The props pick up in speed and volume.

It seems every piece of sand in the Las Vegas desert is blasting through them.

GENERAL SCRANTON

(louder)

If this plane crashes this man is not to survive. Clear?

MILITARY MEN

Sir, yes sir!

GENERAL SCRANTON

Get him on that plane and secure him. I want him airborne in under five minutes.

The two men each grab one of Dr. Wallis' arms and perp walk him to the plane and up the loading stairs.

INT. LAS VEGAS - MILITARY PLANE - AFTERNOON

The cargo plane is not built for comfort. Jump seats line the walls of the hollow chamber.

The drone of the engines is slightly less obnoxious but raised voices are still required for communication.

Dr. Wallis is placed in a jump seat and strapped in. The men release his handcuffs from his hands and then cuff his leg to the base of the jump seat.

MILITARY MAN #1

Comfy? The flight attendant will be around later to ignore you completely.

DR. WALLIS

American humor. As usual, it lacks.

MILITARY MAN #1

Look, I don't know what you did to piss off the general and I don't care. Your ass is mine for the next ten hours so shut up and enjoy the scenery.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - MILITARY AIR BASE - AFTERNOON

The plane's door is closed and the stairs are pulled back.

While others seek refuge in the cars and SUVs General Scranton stands firm. He is a force of nature and nothing will move him from his spot until there is air rushing under those wings.

The plane revs its engines and starts a slow turning crawl onto the runway. It pauses for an instant and then picks up speed as it charges down the runway and into the red hot Nevada sky.

GENERAL SCRANTON

And that, is the last we shall see of Dr. Wallis.

General scranton turn and climbs into an awaiting SUV.

The chorus line of SUVs and military vehicles leave the runway area with precision.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JESSIE'S CAR - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Jordi sits with the cloth-wrapped metal plate in his lap. He is full of questions but silent as a mouse.

Jessie drives, full of thought.

JESSIE

It will work.

JORDI

It's the government. They're not stupid.

JESSIE

They probably haven't seen this thing for like fifty years.

JORDI

You don't know that.

JESSIE

I bet they don't even remember what it looks like and I feel confident they have no clue what it does.

JORDI

Why then, was it still in that room?

Jessie turns the car into Jordi's parking lot, pulls to a stop and turns off the car.

She turns to face Jordi.

JESSIE

Look, that room was empty. They had no clue they left some box on a shelf. They just forgot. I bet whoever put it there is dead and whoever invented this thing is dead too.

JORDI

Maybe. But why are they looking for it?

JESSIE

It's the government. They know something was taken and they want it back. We give them what they want... what they think they want, and all is good. Relax.

Jessie looks into the rearview mirror at her reflection.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Just relax.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S APARTMENT - THAT SAME AFTERNOON

The apartment is clean and comfy but far from luxurious.

Photos of Jordi and Talia line the walls and shelves.

Jordi and Jessie enter through the front door. Jessie has the metal plate wrapped in the cloth under her arm.

Carla calls out anxiously from another room.

CARLA

Jordi? That you?

Jordi spins and faces Jessie. He has never had a girl in his apartment before. Especially not one who is a... woman.

He looks at her scoop cut tee and exposed cleavage.

Jessie senses his concern, checks herself, and pulls the shirt up a bit.

JESSIE

Don't worry.

That's not possible.

JORDI

Yes mom. I uh...

Carla enters the room talking as she walks. She has been crying. She does not expect Jordi will have someone with him.

CARLA

Can you tell me what is happening? I had a call from...

Seeing that Jordi is with a girl who far more of a woman than he is a man, she stops short.

Talia bounds in from another room and flops herself down on the couch.

She points her phone toward Jordi and Jessie to make a video of the action.

TALIA

Front row. This is gonna be good.

JORDI

Sorry mom I lost my phone. I didn't...

But Carla is slightly distracted by Jessie's presence.

TALIA

There's always an excuse. And... who is this?

JORDI

This is Je...

Jessie knows it will be best if she takes control of the situation.

JESSIE

Hi, I'm Jessie. I'm Jordi's girlfriend.

The surprises just keep coming.

CARLA

You are? You're his... girlfriend?

JORDI

Nnnn... no she's not. You're not. She... she's not.

Talia is loving all of this.

TALIA

Oh hell yea!

Carla turns her full attention to Jordi.

CARLA

The other day you couldn't even pass a driving test and today you have the United States army... an army general no less looking for you and a college girl as a girlfriend?

JESSIE

Oh I'm not in college Mrs. Grant, I am a junior at Jordi's school.

TALIA

Yep, she's in my class. Oh yea...

JORDI

Army general? He was an army general?

Again, Jessie looks to diffuse the situation.

JESSIE

Actually, Talia and I have been in class together since third grade. I think you know my mom, Sandra Kudrow?

CARLA

You're Sandra's little girl? Well... I see you grew up.

JESSIE

You said an army general called? Did he say what he wanted?

CARLA

He says my son has something that belongs to them. Belongs to the United States Army. What the hell did you steal Jordi?

Jessie step forward with the cloth wrapped metal plate.

JESSIE
Actually, Mrs. Grant...

CARLA
Miss. Miss Grant, thank you.

JESSIE
Sorry. Jordi didn't take it, I did.

CARLA
So why are they looking for my son?

JESSIE
We hid it in your garage.

CARLA
What? You hid what?

Jessie unwraps the metal plate but does not offer it to Carla.

Carla eyes it with suspicion.

CARLA (CONT'D)
That? What is it?

JORDI
We uhh, we don't know.

There is a serious knock on the front door followed immediately by the doorbell.

CARLA
Talía, get that please.

TALIA
Ugh! Okay, but don't do anything cool while I am gone.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR - THAT SAME AFTERNOON

Talia opens the door and is confronted by General Scranton and several men in uniform.

GENERAL SCRANTON
Good afternoon. Are you Miss Grant?

TALIA
Yes. But I think you want my mom. Are you gonna take my brother away? Please say yes.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Can we speak with your mother please?

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S APARTMENT - THAT SAME AFTERNOON

Talia leads the men into the living room where Jordi and Jessie are sitting on the couch.

The covered metal plate now sitting at their feet under a coffee table.

Carla stands protectively in front of them.

TALIA

Mom, these guys are here to take Jordi to the Middle East and torture his ass.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Actually, we don't do that.

CARLA

I'm Carla Grant. Are you the man I spoke with on the phone?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Yes ma'am, I'm General Scranton with U.S. Army Intelligence.

Ever the protective parent.

CARLA

May I see some ID please.

General Scranton retrieves his identification and shows it to Carla.

Carla is appeased but still cautious.

General Scranton looks beyond Carla to see Jordi sitting on the couch.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Are you the young boy who entered the restricted area?

Jordi squirms a bit, looks at Jessie.

JORDI

Yes sir.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Well, the United States Government owes you a debt of gratitude.

Jordi perks up a little bit upon hearing this.

CARLA

But I thought...

TALIA

You're not gonna hang him by his balls?

CARLA

Talia!

GENERAL SCRANTON

Like I said miss, the United States government does not torture people.

CARLA

So... you're not angry with Jordi? Not going to arrest him? I don't need a lawyer?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Well, we are not pleased that he broke into a government facility but, in a way it is helpful that he did. It helps us identify weaknesses in our systems.

Carla steps aside a bit and lets down her defenses.

CARLA

I am sure he was just being a kid. You know how kids are. Thanks you so mu...

General Scranton moves toward the couch.

GENERAL SCRANTON

There is one lingering issue however.

CARLA

Issue?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Jordi is it?

Jordi hesitates, considering his options.

JORDI

Yes sir.

GENERAL SCRANTON

I believe you discovered a box...

The General motions to his men who come forward with the heavy metal box and place it on the table in front of the couch.

GENERAL SCRANTON (CONT'D)
This box. Do you recognize this?

JORDI
Yes. But I thought it was just some old
junky box.

GENERAL SCRANTON
Well, I believe you know it wasn't,
right?

Sensing it is her time to step in, Jessie speaks up.

JESSIE
Actually, I found that old box. I was the
one who took it out of your dirty old
bunker place.

General Scranton eyes Jessie carefully. He has found his
foil.

GENERAL SCRANTON
And you are?

JESSIE
My name is Jessie. You have your old box
so what else do you need?

CARLA
Jessie, I think they want that thing you
found.

General Scranton looks at Carla with confirmation and
then returns his attention to Jessie.

GENERAL SCRANTON
Thing? You found a thing?

Jessie knows she needs to play this just right.

JESSIE
It was in the box. Some old piece of
metal. I was gonna use it for an art
project. Cut it up.

GENERAL SCRANTON
Cut it up?

JESSIE
Yea. An art project. Like a Calder
mobile. cut it up and make a mobile for
art class.

General Scranton turns to his men and addresses them.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Calder? A Calder mobile?

JESSIE

Calder is an artist. He makes really cool mobiles.

Looking again at Jessie.

GENERAL SCRANTON

But... you didn't do that. Correct?

JESSIE

No, not yet.

Jessie reaches under the table and retrieves the cloth wrapped metal sheet.

Jessie places the wrapped metal plate on Jordi's lap while she opens the box.

GENERAL SCRANTON

May I?

Jessie takes the cloth wrapped metal plate and offers it to General Scranton. He takes the carefully wrapped plate and unwraps it.

Carla steps forward to see what all the fuss is about.

CARLA

That? Isn't that just a...

Jordi interjects hoping to cut short what might be happening.

JORDI

Mom, I am so sorry. I know I shouldn't have gone in there.

General Scranton eyes the metal plate carefully.

He rubs his fingers across the golden dotted surface and then turns his gaze onto Jessie.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Hmmm. Did you... did you really think?

JESSIE

Think what? Just seemed like a nice piece of metal for an art project. So shiny.

General Scranton re-wraps the metal plate in the cloth and pauses.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Yes it is. Shiny. Well, I am sure you can find another. This one is...

JESSIE

Is what?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Well, this one needs to go back in its box and we obviously need to find a new home for it.

The General places the wrapped metal plate in the box and shuts it.

Without turning to his men he orders them.

GENERAL SCRANTON (CONT'D)

Lock this up.

A government issue MARINE steps forward with two durable looking metal locks. Far better than the ones that previously secured the container.

He clasps each one on the box.

MARINE

Do you want this in the car sir?

The general nods.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Again, thanks for finding this and pointing out our security issue.

He turns to Carla.

GENERAL SCRANTON (CONT'D)

You have a good kid there. Smart. The United States Army has a place for him when he gets a little older.

CARLA

Thank you. I will keep that in mind.

With that, General Scranton and his men leave. The room is silent.

TALIA

Well that sucks. I thought they were gonna shave your head and waterboard you.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

The general watches his men put the box into his black SUV, takes a last look back at Jordi's apartment and then climbs into the passenger seat.

INT. LAS VEGAS - GENERAL SCRANTON'S SUV - AFTERNOON

The Marine sits patiently in the driver's seat awaiting instructions.

MARINE

Where to, sir?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Base V-I.

MARINE

Sir?

GENERAL SCRANTON

Five one. Area 51, Marine.

MARINE

I... I don't know where that is sir.

A smile crosses General Scranton's face.

GENERAL SCRANTON

Of course you don't. Just drive. I'll get you there.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Jordi and Jessie stand near Jordi's front door and watch the military cars drive off down the street.

Jordi starts to close the door behind them.

Carla's yells out from inside the house.

CARLA

Jordi, I'm not done with you yet! Don't be out there long.

JORDI

I know mom. I'll be right back.

Jordi closes the door and the two walk over to Jessie's car.

They reach the car and everything seems suddenly awkward.

JORDI (CONT'D)

So... about that stuff you said.

JESSIE

Stuff? Yea I...

JORDI

Did you mean it?

JESSIE

Well, I mean...

JORDI

I mean, it's not a bad idea, is it?

JESSIE

No. Not a bad idea. Maybe even a... good idea.

JORDI

Yea. It is a good idea.

JESSIE

You could do worse.

JORDI

I could do a lot worse.

The tension broken, They move closer. A kiss is imminent.

Suddenly a RAPPING noise comes from the front of the car.

MEL the magician stands there with his cane resting on Jessie's car. Mel is elderly, a little frail but dressed impeccable from head to toe.

MEL

Sorry to break the moment Jordi. I know how important they can be.

Jordi is startled but equally pleased to see Mel.

JORDI

Hey Mel! What are you doing here?

Mel eyes Jessie.

MEL

Who is your beautiful friend?

JORDI

This is Jessie. She's my...

Jordi looks directly at Jessie and smiles.

He has found his confidence.

JORDI (CONT'D)
Girlfriend.

MEL
You COULD do a lot worse. Nice to meet
you Jessie.

Jessie is rather taken. She is in the presence of a
legend.

JESSIE
Oh my God... hi. It is so cool to meet
you! My dad took me to see you when I was
like, five. You are amazing!

These are the sort of words Mel lives for.

MEL
And you are both kind and beautiful. I
only wish I now had the audience I had
back then.

Mel points his cane toward Jordi's apartment.

MEL (CONT'D)
Jordi, is your mother home?

JORDI
Yes. She's in there.

MEL
Good. I have something to tell her.
Wonderful to see you Jordi and equally
wonderful to meet you Jessie.

Mel turns and shuffles off. The cane is by no means a
prop.

JESSIE
Man! That is so cool that your mom works
with him!

JORDI
Yea, Mel's a great guy. He's been in
Vegas since... well, since forever I
think.

With little warning Jessie moves in and lands a kiss on
Jordi's lips.

INT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - THE NEXT MORNING

The cafeteria buzzes with high school chatter.

Students make their way to tables to eat their lunches.

A few teachers walk around monitoring the activity.

INT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - JORDI'S TABLE - MORNING

Jordi, Rodriguez, and Marty sit quietly around the table eating. As usual, Marty has his food carefully arranged in a neat order.

Jordi is especially quiet. Something is weighing on him.

Dev walks up with OXANA, a stunning Russian girl of his age who clearly is a model. She is dressed right from Milan.

DEV

Hi guys.

MARTY

Hey Dev. What's u...

This is Oxana, my girlfriend.

The table is silent. All eyes are on Oxana.

RODRIGUEZ

We thought you were...

Jordi, having more confidence than in days past, steps in to avoid the awkwardness.

JORDI

Cool. Hi Oxana. You go to this school? I haven't seen you before.

Like her looks, her voice could melt stone.

OXANA

I just moved here from Russia.

Rodriguez discretely gives Dev a "thumbs up."

RODRIGUEZ

Obviously not.

OXANA

Excuse me?

JORDI

Just ignore him. Come on, sit down.

Dev and Oxana join the others at the table and everyone digs into their lunches.

Dev can sense Jordi is not himself.

DEV

Jordi, you okay?

JORDI

I guess.

The ever-talkative Marty can not keep his trap shut.

MARTY

His mom is gonna be out of a job. That magician she works with... Mel, he's retiring or something.

JORDI

Yea, well... that and he has cancer.

DEV

That sucks. Sorry dude.

OXANA

That is horrible. Your mother is a magician, too?

JORDI

No, she's his assistant.

OXANA

Can she help another magician? Are there not many in Las Vegas?

JORDI

Oh, there are plenty of magicians in this town but they all have assistants already.

The table grows quiet and they all go back to eating.

INT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER

Students fill the hall making their way to class.

Jordi stands near his locker picking up materials for his next class.

Jessie approaches.

JESSIE

Hi Jordi.

Seeing Jessie was exactly what Jordi needed to lift his spirits.

JORDI

Hey!

JESSIE

Rodriguez told me about Mel and about your mom's job.

Jordi tries to seem relaxed about the situation.

JORDI

What, he didn't hit on you?

JESSIE

No, you were right, that kid can actually be nice once you get to know him.

Jordi closes his locker and the two of them walk holding hands down the now almost empty hall.

They get to Jordi's classroom.

JORDI

This is me.

Jordi stands with his hand on the doorknob but not yet ready to go in.

JORDI (CONT'D)

Sorry I am being such a downer today. I'll get better.

JESSIE

No worries. Something will work out. See you after school, okay?

JORDI

Okay.

Jessie gives Jordi a quick hug and a kiss on the cheek. His spirits lift even higher.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S CHEMISTRY CLASS - MINUTES LATER

Jordi and his classmates are wearing safety goggles and white lab coats as they conduct a freshman-level chemistry experiment.

The CHEMISTRY TEACHER, an attractive woman in her late 30s with long hair tied back and wearing a colorful dress sits at her desk speaking with a student.

The back door of the classroom opens a crack and Jessie sneaks in undetected. She grabs a lab coat from a rack of coats and puts on some safety glasses to blend in.

She looks around, spots Jordi and discretely makes her way over to him.

JESSIE
(quietly)
Jordi!

Startled, Jordi drops a test tube which breaks.

JORDI
Shit! Why are you here?

She is excited and can barely control herself.

JESSIE
I know what to do! I have an idea!

JORDI
About?

JESSIE
Mel. Your mom. The whole thing. I have an idea!

JORDI
Do you think your mom can get my mom a job?

JESSIE
No. Well, maybe. I don't know.

The chemistry teacher comes to Jordi's table to investigate the sound of breaking glass.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
How are we doing here?

The teacher looks down at the broken test tube.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER (CONT'D)
Looks like you win the prize for first piece of broken equipment of the school year.

JORDI

Uh... yea, I guess. Sorry. It was kinda slipperly.

The teacher turns her attention to Jessie.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

Jessie? Why are you in my class? I believe you are a junior not a freshman. Correct?

JORDI

I... I remember this experiment! I thought it was fun. I wanted to do it again!

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

While I admire your enthusiasm, I question your motives. Is there another place you should be? Somewhere other than a freshman chemistry class?

JESSIE

Yes. Yes there is. Sorry.

She backs up while removing her lab coat and safety goggles.

Her attention is focused on Jordi.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

So Jordi... meet me after school and well have a look at that plate thing, okay?

JORDI

Uh... okay.

Jordi watches her walk away when suddenly the teacher hands him a small broom.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

Here you go Romeo. Clean that up.

The chemistry teacher glances to see Jessie leaving the classroom.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER (CONT'D)

Impressive Jordi. Jessie's a very smart girl. You could do a lot worse.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Jessie waits anxiously by her car as other students leave the parking lot on foot and in cars.

JESSIE

Come on... where are you?

Jordi runs across the parking lot to Jessie and her car.

JORDI

Sorry. I couldn't get my locker open.

JESSIE

Man, you gotta abandon that thing. Get in. I gotta great plan. Do you know where Mel would be right now?

They climb in the car and Jessie blasts out of the parking lot.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JESSIE'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Jessie drives with determination while Jordi stares at her with jaw dropped.

JORDI

Are you crazy!? Why would Mel want to do that? Isn't that like murder? Or at least suicide?

JESSIE

Look, the guy has worked his whole life in this town and he is about to leave his career with no fanfare, no love, no recognition. This would make him a huge star.

JORDI

Not that he will know anything about it.

JESSIE

First, we don't know that. Maybe he WILL know exactly where he stands after he does this. Maybe he WILL see how huge a star he is.

JORDI

And maybe he will be dead.

JESSIE

He has cancer, right? This cuts that pain short.

Jordi can not believe what he is hearing.

JORDI
You scare me sometimes.

JESSIE
Good. Anyway, the second thing is, well second... this sets your mom up with a career that puts her right at the top of the pyramid.

Jordi takes this all in.

JORDI
Yea, well FIRST you gotta get Mel to agree and SECOND you gotta get my mom to agree. And the third thing... the third is...

JESSIE
Third is this is a brilliant idea and the coolest thing ever. Don'tchya love me for thinking it up?

JORDI
Well, you got balls.

Jessie shoots him a wink and a smile.

JESSIE
Let's hope not.

She whips the car onto a freeway onramp and floors it.

INT. LAS VEGAS - JORDI'S KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

Jordi and Jessie are in the kitchen drinking sodas and snacking on cookies.

Carla stands nearby incredulous over what she has just been told.

CARLA
What the heck are you talking about? Are you serious?

JORDI
Mom, Mel thought it was perfect. He wants to do it.

CARLA
Mel agreed? You went to Mel with this idea?

Jessie takes a big gulp of her soda and wipes her lips with a napkin.

JESSIE

My mom can arrange the whole thing. She knows who Mel is.

CARLA

Your mom agreed to this too?

JESSIE

She doesn't quite know all the details but that is what magic is all about, right?

CARLA

Magic? You think this is magic? First you break into a secret army facility, then you deceive the government... military intelligence no less, and now you want to help Mel end his career like this? This is not magic, it's stupidity.

JORDI

Look mom, it's Mel's decision, right? He wants to do this. He's not worried. He loves the idea. Jessie's mom can arrange a huge show for him in recognition for all he has done for the Strip and for Las Vegas. You just need to be his assistant.

Carla stares at the two children.

CARLA

I'm going to call Mel and check all this out.

JORDI

Mom, it's what he wants.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - IN FRONT OF THE MGM GRAND - EVENING

The four-way intersection is blocked to traffic and masses of people line the streets.

The walkway bridges are crowded with people. Everyone is waiting for a big announcement and a big show.

Police and police cars are detouring traffic which is backed up on the Strip in all directions.

Television reporters and camera crews mingle about shooting scenes of the people.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - IN FRONT OF THE MGM GRAND - IN THE CROWD
- EARLY EVENING

A FEMALE REPORTER, mid 30s and dressed the part is talking with an ELDERLY LADY who looks like she took time from her busy slot machine schedule to be there.

The reporter's camera crew records the interview.

FEMALE REPORTER

How many times have you seen Mel the Magician do his show?

ELDERLY LADY

Oh so many. I have been having lunch at the casino for years and always watch his show. Mel is great.

FEMALE REPORTER

What was the best part of the show?

ELDERLY LADY

The buffet. You know they have Jell-o with little fruit bits in it? Really wonderful.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CENTER OF THE INTERSECTION - SAME TIME

Mel stands quietly as city dignitaries chat nearby. He is dressed impeccably and has an odd sense of peace about him.

Carla stands near Mel. She is dressed to be his assistant but is less relaxed. She holds the wrapped metal plate under her arm.

CARLA

Mel, I don't... are you sure about this?

Mel smiles gently. He understands her concern but he is prepared.

MEL

Carla, sweetheart, don't worry. This is the best idea I have ever heard of. what a way to end the show.

Mel looks out at the crowds.

The place is packed.

A smile of complete satisfaction grows on his face.

MEL (CONT'D)

No one will ever forget what happens here today.

Jessie's mom, SANDRA KUDROW a professionally dressed woman in her early 40s, approaches Mel and Carla.

SANDRA

Hi, Mel, correct?

MEL

Yes sweetheart. That is me. Mel the Magician.

SANDRA

I'm Sandra Kudrow. I handle PR for the City of Las Vegas.

Mel gracefully takes her hand and kisses it gently as if he was a character in *Gone With The Wind*.

MEL

Wonderful! So I can thank you for this beautiful day.

SANDRA

Well, my daughter actually. She was the one who brought you to my attention.

MEL

Ah! Jessie! A wonderfully fine young lady.

Sandra notices Carla.

SANDRA

Oh my God! Carla, right? Jessie said she had become friends with your son. It's been so many years since I've seen you! How are you doing?

CARLA

Fine, thanks. Yes, I met Jessie the other day. She's grown into quite a woman.

SANDRA

Woman... yes I guess I need to start thinking of her that way, but she still seems like my little girl.

Sandra takes in Carla's clothing.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

So I understand you are Mel's assistant,
is that correct?

MEL

She is indeed. The world's best assistant
who is now ready to step into my shoes
and become the best magician Las Vegas
has ever known!

CARLA

Oh I don't...

SANDRA

That's fantastic! This city could use a
female magician. There's way too much
testosterone in this city sometimes.

The MAYOR'S ASSISTANT, a well dressed man in his 20s who
is doing nothing to hide his sexual orientation,
interrupts.

MAYOR'S ASSISTANT

We're ready Sandra.

SANDRA

Great. Okay Mel here's what will happen.
I will introduce the mayor who will give
a short speech and then he will present
you with a key to the city. After that
you may say a few things. Did you have
anything prepared?

Although there is no need to, Mel adjusts his tie in
preparation.

MEL

A good magician is always prepared.

SANDRA

Wonderful!

EXT. LAS VEGAS - IN FRONT OF THE MGM GRAND - IN THE CROWD
- SAME TIME

Jordi, Jessie and the other teens press their way forward
to the front of the crowd. They have the best seats in
the house.

In the background Sandra's voice is welcoming people and
introducing the Mayor.

JORDI

Man, look at all these people!

JESSIE

I told you. And they don't even know what is about to hit 'em.

OXANA

Hit them? What do you mean?

JESSIE

Surprise. It will be a surprise to all these people. Something pretty amazing.

Oxana takes this new piece of vocabulary in.

OXANA

Ah... hit them. Okay, I understand.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CENTER OF THE INTERSECTION - SAME TIME

THE MAYOR a stout man in his 50s with a bit too much spray tan stands at a microphone. It's now obvious why he chose to hire his assistant.

THE MAYOR

Thank you Sandra. And thanks to all of you for turning out this gorgeous evening to help the City of Las Vegas honor one of our most important citizens, Mel the Magician!

The crowd offers up a hardy applause.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - IN FRONT OF THE MGM GRAND - IN THE CROWD - SAME TIME

The Mayor continues to speak in the background.

JESSIE

So, do you think your mom will do this?

JORDI

The trick?

JESSIE

No, do you think she will take over and become a magician?

JORDI

I guess. I mean, it's not like she has much else lined up for work.

MARTY

Your mom's gonna be a magician? Cool!

Jessie and Jordi exchange a look of satisfaction.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CENTER OF THE INTERSECTION - SAME TIME

The Mayor's assistant opens an elegantly designed box for the Mayor.

THE MAYOR

Mel, it is a great honor and a privilege to present you with the key to the City of Las Vegas.

The crowd erupts in cheers and applause.

Mel steps up to the microphone with Carla nearby.

He takes the key into one hand and turns to the crowd.

The applause once again dies down.

MEL

Thank you so much Mr. Mayor. I am humbled by the show of appreciation here today. Over the past 60 years I have been fortunately blessed to have entertained thousands of you with my simple illusions. As I look out at this crowd I see faces... faces I recognize from yesterday, last month and from many years gone by.

Mel begins to choke up. Carla steps in and hands Mel a tissue.

Mel takes a moment to compose himself.

He motions toward Carla.

MEL (CONT'D)

My career would have ended many years ago if it were not for the dedication of my lovely assistant, Miss Carla.

He motions to Carla and the crowd applauds. Carla steps forward and gives Mel a gentle kiss on his cheek.

MEL (CONT'D)

Now, before I bid farewell to all of you I would like to perform one last illusion.

The Mayor and Sandra exchange a look of concern.

THE MAYOR

Sandra, we can't keep this intersection blocked much longer.

SANDRA

I know. I'll see what I can do.

Sandra walks up to Carla and speaks with her quietly.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Carla, we didn't plan for this. We really can't keep these roads closed any longer.

At first understanding the concerns of Sandra and the Mayor, Carla's attitude quickly changes. For once she is part of a really big show and she has more power than those around her.

CARLA

Don't worry. This illusion takes less than a minute.

Mel continues to address the crowd.

MEL

I must add this is not my illusion. This illusion was designed for me by Carla. Once you see what she has... invented, I am sure you will agree she will soon be the most famous magician in Las Vegas and the world.

More applause.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - IN FRONT OF THE MGM GRAND - IN THE CROWD
- SAME TIME

JORDI

Here we go!

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CENTER OF THE INTERSECTION - SAME TIME

Holding onto the key and his cane in one hand, Mel takes Carla by her hand and together they take several steps in front of the microphone.

Carla releases his hand and takes the key from Mel.

To show he stands on solid ground Mel POUNDS his cane on the asphalt.

Carla looks to Sandra who comes forward.

CARLA

Can you hold this for a moment, please?

Carla hands her the key.

She then carefully unwraps the metal plate.

It seems to glow in the early evening sunlight. She holds it up for the crowd to see.

Nothing but a bright metal plate.

Carla places the metal plate on the hot asphalt of the Las Vegas Strip, steps back and again holds Mel's hand.

Mel once again looks around the crowds, takes in the massive casinos that tower around him, and then locks his gaze on Carla.

Carla's eyes are getting wet. She is trembling.

MEL

Carla... you are an amazing assistant, the best any magician could ever wish to have.

CARLA

Mel... I...

MEL

Not a word. You will soon take this town by storm. Make me proud.

No longer able to hold back the tears Carla visibly sobs. She is hanging on to Mel's hands with all the strength she can muster.

CARLA

Mel, please! It's not too late. You can still...

MEL

Don't worry sweetheart. This is going to be amazing.

With that, Mel steps forward onto the metal plate. He is still holding Carla's hand and she stands beside him using him for a crutch as much as he uses his cane.

The crowd is silent. Pins could drop and people would complain.

The two of them stand there hand-in-hand.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - IN FRONT OF THE MGM GRAND - IN THE CROWD
- SAME TIME

Jordi and Jessie are also holding back tears.

In fact it would seem many have already lost that battle
but for what reason they do not know.

JESSIE

She has to let go.

JORDI

She can't. She just can't.

JESSIE

It won't work like that. They are holding
hands and she is off the plate. It won't
work when anything is off the plate,
remember?

Jordi concentrates on his mother as if to will his
thoughts to her.

JORDI

Let go mom. Just... let... go.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CENTER OF THE INTERSECTION - SAME TIME

Mel turn his gaze to Carla. He is the epitome of calm and
she is a near wreck.

MEL

Remember Carla, a magician never reveals
his... I mean to say, HER secrets.

With that, he releases her hand and stands triumphantly.

Both hands hold the top of his walking cane which is
planted firmly between his feet.

As if by instinct Carla does what she has done for years
and holds her arms out presenting Mel the Magician for
all the crowd to see.

Though no one can see it the lights on the plate have
already started to turn on.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - IN FRONT OF THE MGM GRAND - IN THE CROWD
- SAME TIME

Jessie has already started counting. She knows the pace of the lights.

JESSIE

Five... six... seven... eight... nine...
ten.

Jessie goes silent. This is Jordi's turn. He is mouthing the first part of the countdown but soon it is too much for him to be silent about.

JORDI

Six... five... four...

EXT. LAS VEGAS - CENTER OF THE INTERSECTION - SAME TIME

OFF SCREEN Jordi's countdown drifts mysteriously across the warm and perfect Nevada evening.

Mel stands stronger than he has ever stood before

JORDI

Two... one.

BLACK.