

I ROBBED THE DALAI LAMA

By

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version 2

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FADE IN:

EXT. SULLIVAN HOME - NIGHT

Limestone and granite palace on the expensive side of town.

Windows dark - no one home.

INT. FOYER

Winding central staircase, tastefully extravagant furnishings.

A jade statuette glows in an amber spotlight.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 I'm a thief. It's my business. It's
 my pleasure.

CLAUDE RADKE (30s), wiry and intense. Moves like a spider.

Face hidden by a black knit mask - eyes only, and they miss nothing.

He plucks the statuette from the shelf, drops it into a duffel bag.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 A man should enjoy his work.

Swarovski crystal knickknack - goes in the bag.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 It's a game, really.

ARMOIRE: SILK TIES.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 They buy stuff ... I take it away
 from them.

JEWELRY BOX: CUFFLINKS, TENNIS BRACELET, COCKTAIL RING.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 They get to buy more stuff.

"HER" BEDSIDE STAND: IPAD, IPHONE.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
For these kind of people,
shopping's better than sex.

Finds a dildo - tosses it back.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Believe me.

"HIS" BEDSIDE STAND: ROLEX, CIGAR CUTTER, GUN.

Claude carefully inspects the gun, puts it back.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
And they will defend to the death
their right to own --

KITCHEN

Fabulous. Never been cooked in. Claude pulls open a drawer.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
A gold-plated pickle fork.

Claude holds up the tiny fork, admires it.

LIVING ROOM

Grabs the programmable remote. Scans the DVDs - throws one in the bag.

BATHROOM

Door open. Claude sits on the toilet, his mask pulled up. A restless, searching face. He leafs through a copy of CIGAR LOVER magazine. Checks his watch.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
I've got nothing against the --

He glances at the mailing label on the cover.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Sullivans. They were recommended to
me by this person.

INT. LUXURIOUS HOME - NIGHT

SASHA FU (30s), sleek, sexy Asian woman at the center of a beautiful people party - much posing, drinking, air kisses.

She chats with the gals, flirts with the guys, keeps an eye on who's arriving or leaving.

Social butterfly with a stinger, she works the room like a pro.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Sasha Fu. She's not a thief - she's my business partner.

Sasha calls out to a newly arrived acquaintance. More air kissing.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

And while Sasha trades gossip with the aging debutantes and schmoozes insider trading tips from shit-faced stock brokers ... she listens.

Sasha pecks the dusty cheek of a bejeweled old lady, one ear cocked to a nearby conversation.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

She hears who's going on vacation.

FLASH - CLASSIC ENTRY HALL

Claude passes a side table, stuffed duffel in hand. Nods at some travel brochures for ITALY. Impressive.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Who's just bought a Warhol.

FLASH - MODERN LIVING ROOM

Claude pulls a print of Warhol's CAMPBELL'S SOUP off a wall. He frowns at it. This is art?

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Or added to their wine cellar.

FLASH - WINE CELLAR

Claude takes a swig from a champagne bottle. Stuffs a Merlow into his bag.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Or who doesn't believe in burglar
alarms. Like our friends the
Sullivans.

FLASH - MASTER BEDROOM

Opulent. Claude dumps the contents of a jewelry box into his bag.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
I take anything worth more than the
price of a steak dinner.

He fishes out a Hello Kitty watch. Frowns, tosses it aside.

INT. SASHA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Claude and Sasha - silk sheets, wine, mutual satisfaction.

Sasha extends a supple leg. Claude adorns it with a sparkling ankle bracelet.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
And sometimes I take requests.

INT. SULLIVAN HOME - BATHROOM

Claude flips through COSMO. Stops at a page. Lingerie. Takes a better look.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
For thirty percent of the take, she
points me at who ever's ripe for
the picking. And then she tells me
everything I need to know.

He continues flipping pages. Checks his watch.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Except this time. When she forgot
to mention the fucking --

GROWL - Claude's head snaps up. At the end of the hall, the red reflecting eyes of a DOG.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Dog.

KITCHEN

Claude digs through the fridge, growling dog clamped onto his leg. A Shar Pei - one big wrinkle.

There's nothing in the fridge for a Shar Pei.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Dogs are a hazard of the profession. Sometimes you run ...

He opens the freezer. Grabs a container.

CLAUDE

Why not.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOME

Claude drives off.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Sometimes you improvise.

KITCHEN

Dog slobbers through a gallon of ice cream.

Sound of front door RATTLING open.

MRS. SULLIVAN (O.S.)

I've got such a fucking headache.
Michael - where's the decanter?
Where's my fucking five thousand
dollar crystal decanter?

FOOTSTEPS enter kitchen.

MR. SULLIVAN (O.S.)

Mister Bubbles, oh my god, what are
you eating?

SEQUENCE OF BURGLARIES:

1. DARKENED ROOM

RATTLING at the door.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 It's not a bad life.

2. WALK-IN CLOSET

Claude walks in - expensive suits, racks of shoes. About twenty STAR TREK uniforms. Claude checks one for size.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 You get to know all sorts of
 people.

1. DARKENED ROOM - AGAIN

More RATTLE RATTLE.

3. LARGE STUDY

Claude enters.

Floor to ceiling DOLLS. All eyes on Claude. He leaves.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 In all kinds of places.

1. DARKENED ROOM - YET AGAIN

Rattles become BAM BAM BAM.

4. TV ROOM

Claude eats popcorn, watches something on an expensive TV. The show ends, he unhooks the TV and carries it away.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 Without ever meeting them.

1. DARKENED ROOM - FINALLY

BAM BAM BA -- the door pops open, the lights come up - red lights. Claude stands there, crowbar in hand.

BDSM equipment. A rack, chains hanging from the ceiling. Various sex toys and implements of abuse mounted on the walls.

Good times.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
And some people, well ... you
really don't want to meet.

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Post-modern, pretentious. Entire neighborhood the same.

Claude crouches next to a utility door, hidden from the street by an exotically pruned bush.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
So far, it's been a good living.
Excitement, rewards.

He produces a small metal tool, probes the lock.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
A little larceny is definitely good
for the soul.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Marble-lined, huge mirror.

JANE (30s), Naked, beautiful ... and bald. Toweling off after a shower.

She gazes at herself with an open, searching face. Traces of melancholy.

She timidly slides open the vanity drawer. An impressive array of lipsticks, eye shadow, eyebrow pencils. The expensive stuff.

She stares in wonder.

She picks up a gold-tubed lipstick, slowly twists up the glistening tip. A moment of hesitation. Then, mouth "O" - she sets to work.

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Claude's CELLPHONE vibrates.

He checks the name.

CLAUDE

Shit.

He cradles the phone by his ear, continues with the lock.

CLAUDE

Yes?

SASHA (V.O. PHONE)

Hey baby. You find the house okay?

CLAUDE

Just one question, Sasha - are there any fucking dogs?

INT. SASHA'S CONDO - NIGHT

Expansive, tasteful with a touch of garish.

Sasha lounges on the sectional in a Gucci track suit, watching something inane on TV and chatting on a blinged-out cellphone.

SASHA

No, Claude. Of course not. Could you see if they have a garlic press?

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Claude's incredulous.

CLAUDE

A garlic press? I told you I'm busy. I'm busy with your job --

INTERCUT:

SASHA

I really need a garlic press.

CLAUDE

Go to the store and buy one.

SASHA

Oh, and she has this hot little Chanel number that I can move right away. It's toward the back of the closet, it's kind of a gray white thing with --

CLAUDE

You went shopping in her closet during the party?

SASHA

So?

CLAUDE

I don't steal clothes, dear. Or garlic presses, or Tampax or nail polish or whatever other incidentals you might be out of at the moment. Go to the fucking store.

Sasha shifts to light sarcasm.

SASHA

Is this a bad time, Claude? Have I caught you at a bad time?

So does Claude.

CLAUDE

No, sweetheart. It's always a good time with you. At least that's what I hear.

Claude scowls - the lock's not cooperating.

Sasha flounces to a different section of the sectional.

SASHA

Asshole. Are you coming by later?

CLAUDE

If I ever get started. Where's Mitchel?

SASHA

He isn't there?

CLAUDE

No. Not that I'm missing him.

SASHA

Be nice.

CLAUDE

Not my job.

The lock finally gives

CLAUDE

Bye.

INT. SASHA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sasha clicks off.

SASHA

Asshole.

She hits speed dial.

Puts the phone to ear. Sighs. Someone answers.

SASHA

He doesn't steal clothes.

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

A car door SLAMS. MITCHEL (20s) tip-toes shakily across the street, his scrawny frame draped in faddish attire. He's drunk.

Claude silently entreats Mitchel to keep quiet.

Mitchel shrugs apologetically. Giggles.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Sasha has asked me to teach her nephew Mitchel the trade. I agreed to take him on. Silly me.

Mitchel joins Claude at the door. They whisper.

CLAUDE

What's your fucking problem, Mitchel?

MITCHEL

Sorry Claude, I --

CLAUDE

It wasn't a question. Christ, have you been drinking?

MITCHEL

Some. Just, some. And a little blow. That's all.

CLAUDE

Great.

Claude opens the door a crack. Peers inside.

MITCHEL

(normal volume)

What about the alarm?

Claude clamps a hand over Mitchel's mouth - hisses in his ear.

CLAUDE

They let their fucking service lapse. Now shut up, Mitchel, or wait in the fucking car.

Mitchel nods. They slip inside.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE BATHROOM

Jane continues. Eye shadow, blush. She goes slowly, savoring the experience.

STORAGE ROOM

Claude and Mitchel sidle in past garden tools, coiled hoses.

They take off their shoes, pull on black knit masks.

Claude locates the electrical service box - padlocked.

He pops off the small lock with one jerk of a steel bar.

Finds the master switch and flips it. Darkness.

BATHROOM

The lights go out on Jane.

JANE (O.S.)

Oh god.

WATER RUNNING. Frantic SPLASHING, SCRUBBING sounds.

STORAGE ROOM

Pitch black. Claude and Mitchel wait and listen.

Mitchel just won't shut up.

MITCHEL (O.S.)

Won't they notice the power's off?

CLAUDE (O.S.)

They're in Holland, buying tulip
bulbs.

MITCHEL (O.S.)

How do you know?

Claude switches on a flashlight, shines it into Mitchel's face. Mitchel BELCHES.

MITCHEL

Sorry.

BACK HALL - FIRST FLOOR

Claude glides towards the center of the house. Mitchel follows. Claude runs his flashlight over the scene.

Spacious, wood-lined living room, two stories high with a mezzanine office. Exposed stairs ascend.

Claude consults a slip of paper, moves towards the office.

OFFICE

A businessman's inner-sanctum, graced with antique totems of prosperity.

Claude inspects a large gold Vishnu statue.

Mitchel takes a samurai sword from the wall, grins.

He brandishes it, nearly taking Claude's ear off.

Claude SLAMS him against the wall.

BATHROOM

Jane's lit a candle. At the noise downstairs, she YELPS and frantically grabs for a robe.

OFFICE

Claude has Mitchel by the collar. Growls.

CLAUDE

I'm gonna chop off your fucking party piece if you don't fucking behave, got it?

MITCHEL

Sure, Claude.

Mitchel chuckles.

Claude sighs, releases him. Gives him the swag bag.

CLAUDE

Everything that'll fit. And no crap.

MITCHEL

Crap?

From the desk, Claude picks up one of those lacquered frogs playing the bongos. Out of place, it's obviously --

CLAUDE

Crap.

MITCHEL

Right. Got it.

Claude heads out.

MITCHEL

Where are you go --

Claude holds up a finger. Mitchel stifles. Claude leaves.

Mitchel picks up the bongo frog, grins as he stuffs it in the bag.

BEDROOM

Darkness. The door opens slowly. Claude enters, notices a fiberglass and metal shipping CASE by the door.

The size of a large toolbox, used for transport of fragile items.

He leans over, tests the weight. Nods - something inside?

He straightens up, Case in hand. Sees --

Approximately fifteen bald Asian gentlemen asleep on mats on the floor, wearing identical maroon wraps. They look like Buddhist monks.

CLAUDE

Shit.

UPSTAIRS HALL

Claude heads for the stairs. The bathroom door opens, Jane emerges in a monk's robe, candle in hand.

She stops abruptly, locks eyes with Claude - her face a fright-mask of poorly removed makeup and soap.

CLAUDE

Fuck.

He stares.

JANE

What are you --

She touches her cheek.

JANE

Oh god. Does it look awful?

CLAUDE

Excuse me.

Claude takes off.

She fumbles the candle.

JANE

Ow!

She spots the Case in Claude's grasp.

JANE

Hey!

Claude executes an expert butt-slide down the stair rail and hits the floor running.

Jane starts down the stairs after Claude - he's already clear across the living room and down the far hall.

Claude skids to a stop and yells toward the mezzanine office.

CLAUDE

Come on!

JANE

Wait!

Mitchel appears at the office doorway, arms full and still clutching the samurai sword. He puts his finger to lips.

MITCHEL

Shhh. Be quiet, Claude.

Exasperated, Claude gestures for him to come on.

Mitchel takes a few steps, the sword starts to slip.

Jane makes it to the bottom of the stairs.

JANE

(to Claude)

Hey! Give that back. There's nothing in there you want. It's very important --

Startled, Mitchel drops the sword. He grabs for it and slips on the high-gloss wood floor. Legs up!

MITCHEL

Whoa!

THUNK - lands on his back, passes out.

Claude freezes. What now?

JANE

Please.

Claude looks at her - checks her out. Not bad.

She gets it. She tilts her head mockingly.

JANE
Take a picture it'll last long --

He splits.

JANE
Hey!

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Claude bursts out the service door in his stocking feet - tears his mask off, leaps in the car, sets down the Case, and -- no keys.

CLAUDE
Mitchel you stupid --

He clambers back out, the Case still on the seat.

He fidgets in frustration, looks at his empty hands. Nothing for a night's work.

CLAUDE
Goddammit.

He grabs the Case and takes off running through a nearby yard.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mitchel still unconscious on the floor. The house lights come on.

He squints, opens his eyes.

Several monks lean over him, wearing the maroon and gold robes of Tibetan Buddhists. Some smile. Some don't.

MITCHEL
Holy crap, I've gone to Kung Fu heaven.

Jane pushes through the group, yanks the mask off Mitchel's startled face.

MITCHEL
Ma'am?

JANE
Where did your friend go?

MITCHEL
I don't know, Ma'am.

JANE
You tell us or we're calling the
police.

Mitchel sits up, grabs the back of his head in pain.

MITCHEL
Ow -- what are you guys doing here?

JANE
We're trusted guests of the
Randolph family. This is their home
you've broken into. Now we've
violated that trust, thanks to you.
They're supporters of Tibetan
independence and they -- anyway,
now look --

She leans in menacingly.

JANE
You'd better --

An older monk, ASSAM (60s) gently draws Jane back.

ASSAM
We'll find out more in good time.
We should tend to his wound.

Mitchel's eyes widen.

MITCHEL
Wound?

INT. PETER PIPER PAWN - NIGHT

Hole in-the-wall, stuffed full of desperate people's meager
valuables. Musical instruments, rings, watches.

Lights are off.

Claude stands at the counter, banging on the service bell.

A cranky PHIL RADKE(60s), stomps in from the back room,
carrying a baseball bat. Phil's hard used, angry because of
it.

PHIL
We're closed, asshole.

He sees it's Claude.

PHIL
Oh.

Claude slides the Case across the counter. Phil looks at Claude.

PHIL
Come back tomorrow.

He notices Claude's soaked stocking feet. Gives him a look.

CLAUDE
Never mind. Just tell me what it's worth and I'll get out of your hair.

PHIL
I'm not touching anything you bring in here, Claude. You know that.

Claude unlatches the lid, turns the Case towards Phil.

Phil frowns - puzzled.

A wooden BOWL nestles in the high tech protective foam.

PHIL
It's a ten-cent bowl in a fifty dollar case.

CLAUDE
Why would someone put a bowl like that in a case like this?

PHIL
Family heirloom?

CLAUDE
It's a wooden bowl.

PHIL
Not everything of value is worth money, Claude.

Claude slams the lid, closes the latches.

CLAUDE
A pleasure as always, Dad.

Claude stomps off.

PHIL
Lock the damn door!

SLAM

Phil's face drops.

PHIL
Kid can't even steal the good
stuff.

INT. SASHA'S BALCONY - DAY

ERNESTO, muscle-bound masseuse, works on Sasha as two
beauticians paint her toenails, five toes apiece.

Claude sits on a large yoga ball, irritably shifts his
weight back and forth.

SASHA
Monks? What monks?

CLAUDE
That's what I'm asking you. I would
have appreciated a little warning.

SASHA
The Randolphs are supposed to be
buying tulips in Denmark.

CLAUDE
No kidding. I guess they did a
timeshare with some monks.

SASHA
What kind of monks?

CLAUDE
I don't know, dearheart. Monks.

Sasha rolls up on an elbow.

SASHA
Like ... Jesuits? Lutherans?

CLAUDE
No. Asian monks. Buddhists, or
something.

SASHA
Tibetans.

CLAUDE
What?

SASHA
Tibetan monks. They're always
wandering around.

Sasha lies back down. Ernesto continues.

CLAUDE
I don't know - Christ - it was dark
-- and this bald woman, this woman
monk was --

SASHA
Bald wo -- and where's Mitchel? I
haven't heard from him, neither has
Jayda.

CLAUDE
I don't know. He fell down.

Sasha sits up.

SASHA
Fell. Down?

CLAUDE
He's still there, maybe. I don't
know. I drove by a few times,
didn't see any cops and --

Sasha waves her jeweled cellphone menacingly.

SASHA
You let my nephew get caught? By
Buddhists?

CLAUDE
I don't know if he got "caught", he
fell down, you know - unconscious.
I didn't wait for the Red Cross to
show up.

SASHA

What if he needs a doctor? My sister will kill me. Fix this Claude. This is a major fuck-up.

Claude starts to leave. Sasha softens.

SASHA

You get anything nice? They have some good stuff, right?

CLAUDE

Sure they do. I got none of it. Except a bowl. In a case.

SASHA

A bowl? Cut glass crystal? One of those hand-blown Italian --

CLAUDE

A little - wooden - bowl. In a case you'd ship a Ming vase in. A wooden fucking bowl. I think I'll go home and piss in it.

SASHA

When you're done, come by.

She extends an arm.

Claude seems less excited than he should be.

He takes her hand, kisses it.

CLAUDE

Sure.

Claude splits, Sasha lies back down, the massage resumes.

SASHA

Wooden bowl? Tibetan monks?

Sasha looks up at Ernesto. He smiles blankly. She turns away.

SASHA

Never mind.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Early morning. A sparkling chef's kitchen - stainless steel and acres of granite counter, untouched by human hands.

Mitchel slouches on a bar stool, swigging from a bottle of Scotch.

Assam and Jane watch while a MONK dishes out a muddy concoction from a bowl, gently patting it on the back of Mitchel's head.

Mitchel looks up, winces.

MITCHEL

A wooden bowl?

The mud poultice starts sliding down his neck. The Monk daubs at it, trying to keep it on Mitchel's head. Mitchel shrugs him off.

MITCHEL

Geez, I'm okay. It's just a little bump.

JANE

Let him help you -- yes, actually it's a sacred artifact of the original Dalai Lama, a symbol and a very important part of the selection ritual for determining the next Dalia La -- look, I don't understand why your friend thinks it's --

MITCHEL

Hey, I didn't say he was my friend.

JANE

Well considering he abandoned you and ran, it doesn't seem like --

MITCHEL

Claude wouldn't --

Mitchel stops. Oops.

JANE

Oh ... Claude. Claude who?

MITCHEL

Never mind.

JANE
(re the bottle)
Where did you get that?

MITCHEL
The desk drawer. Why? You want
some?

Jane gives him a cold stare. He shrugs, drinks.
He rubs the bump, gets his hand covered in goo.
He sniffs it. Blech.

MITCHEL
Look, can I take a shower before
you guys turn me in?

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER

Mitchel lounges in the kitchen, wearing a monk's robe.
He's reading "WORLD CRUISES" magazine, still drinking and
getting sloppy.
Jane walks in, lugging a basket full of laundry.
She sets it on the counter, pulls out Mitchel's clothes.

JANE
We did your laundry.

MITCHEL
Thanks, though I'm kinda diggin'
the robes. Are you going to call
the cops on me?

Jane sighs with exasperation.

JANE
It's not up to me, Mitchel. Do you
think you could stop drinking while
you're here?

Mitchel starts taking off the robe.

MITCHEL
Hey no problem, mind if I get
dressed?

He realizes he's naked underneath, stops at the waist.

MITCHEL

Uh-oh better cover up the old
action item.

Mitchel giggles.

MITCHEL

Guess I'll go find a bathroom.

JANE

Do that. And find some coffee.

The Monk returns with more mud, sets it down on the counter
and turns to Mitchel.

MITCHEL

Oh no, no more swamp goo. That shit
stinks like nothing on earth.

JANE

It helps heal.

MITCHEL

Heal what? It's just a bump.

JANE

Are you sure?

Mitchel looks alarmed.

MITCHEL

What?

BATHROOM

Mitchel stands in front of the mirror, still half in robe.
Jane holds a hand mirror behind Mitchel's head.

MITCHEL

I can't tell. You look.

JANE

How does it feel?

Mitchel tentatively pokes at the bump.

MITCHEL

Kinda squishy.

JANE

Maybe it's infected.

MITCHEL

It's only been like a day. How
could it be infected?

Jane brings up an electric clipper in her other hand.

JANE

Let's take a closer look.

Jane clicks it on. BUZZ. Mitchel flinches, then grins a
drunken grin.

MITCHEL

Cool.

COCKTAIL PARTY - NIGHT

Rich people, ritzy pad. Sasha and Claude on the prowl.

Sasha holds court, surrounded by people with more money than
sense.

Claude peruses the expensive knick knacks, stops in front of
a small drawing, elegantly framed.

A DOLT in Versace swaggers up.

DOLT

You've got a good eye. That's a
genuine Picasso.

Claude smirks.

CLAUDE

I know. I've got one.

The Dolt is only momentarily set back.

DOLT

I picked it up in Spain, in Malaga,
the actual town where Picasso was
actually born. Where did you get
yours?

CLAUDE

About ten miles ...

Claude sticks out a finger, finds the direction.

CLAUDE

That way.

DOLT

Really. In town? I suppose you've got a little ink sketch, hm? Something like this?

CLAUDE

Actually ...

Claude strolls off.

CLAUDE

Mine's bigger.

Sasha, cell phone to ear, pushes her way through the crowd and grabs Claude's arm.

SASHA

Claude, my sister is very concerned about Mitchel. You have to go get him.

CLAUDE

He's with monks, how much trouble can he be in?

SASHA

Give them back the fucking bowl. Alright? She hasn't seen him for three days, she's a little concerned.

CLAUDE

For chrissakes.

He grabs the cell phone, growls into it.

CLAUDE

He's all grown up, Jayda, get over it.

Sasha grabs the phone back.

SASHA

This is family, Claude. Go get him.

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Claude, service door, lock, pick.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

One of my rules - never hit the same place twice.

He starts probing the lock.

A NOISE. Claude flattens against the door.

He peers around the corner of the house.

Jane by the side entrance, pensively nursing a cigarette. She blows smoke into the night air.

He watches her, smiles a little. Shakes it off - back to work.

With a final triumph twist, Claude beats the lock.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Darkness.

Claude sets the Case down on the sofa.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 Another rule - never put anything
 back.

Something on the sofa stirs, emerges from under a blanket.

 MITCHEL
 Hey!

Claude clamps his hand over Mitchel's mouth.

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 And the most important rule of all.

Claude removes his mask.

Mitchel mumbles something. Claude removes his hand.

 CLAUDE
 What?

 MITCHEL
 I said, how do I look with no hair?

 CLAUDE (V.O.)
 Always work alone.

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Claude leads Mitchel across the lawn, towards the car.

CLAUDE
You can come back for your clothes,
I'm not waiting.

Jane stands at the head of the driveway.

Mitchel notices her, lags.

CLAUDE
Come on, let's get you home to
mommy.

Claude sees Jane. He's unphased.

CLAUDE
Say goodnight, Mitchel.

Mitchel blushes apologetically.

MITCHEL
Goodnight. I'll return the robe.
I'll have it dry-cleaned.

JANE
Don't bother.

Jane stares pointedly at Claude. Cocks her head. Checks him out.

Claude flinches, reaches up -- he's not wearing the mask. He grimaces.

CLAUDE
I brought it back. Now you can eat
your Wheaties again.

She barely reacts.

JANE
Thank you, Claude.

Claude glares at Mitchel.

CLAUDE
Claude?

Mitchel shrugs. Claude yanks his arm.

CLAUDE

Come on.

INT. CLAUDE'S CAR - NIGHT

Claude drives, Mitchel on the passenger side.

MITCHEL

I'm twenty-three.

CLAUDE

I know, Mitchel.

MITCHEL

I can do whatever I want.

CLAUDE

I know, Mitchel.

MITCHEL

They're really nice people, very accepting.

CLAUDE

Well, if they accepted you, then they must be saints.

Mitchel looks hurt. Claude relents.

CLAUDE

Never mind. I hope they're happy now, I brought their damn bowl back.

MITCHEL

It's more than just a bowl, Claude, it's a symbol of their ancient --

CLAUDE

Mitchel, I get it. Okay?

Mitchel shuts up, moodily adjusts the robe. Claude looks at him, mellows.

CLAUDE

Well ... your mom's gonna freak when she sees that hairdo.

INT. SASHA HOME OFFICE - DAY

A high end bling shop with a fax machine and a desk.

Ceramic good luck kittens and laughing Buddhas mingle with designer bags and extravagant cocktail rings.

Sasha lounges on a fabulous designer loveseat, chatting on her cell while she taps on her iPad - pictures of the Bowl, Tibetan monks, the Dalai Lama.

SASHA

I could let you have it for a quarter mill.

She frowns irritably at the phone.

SASHA

Yen? Are you out of your mind?
Bucks, fool -- not Yen ... well then think about it, alright? Okay ... right on, screw Tibet, whatever. Whatever, get back to me -- and hurry up, there's a line if you know what I mean.

She tosses the cell phone, notices Claude at the door.

SASHA

Hey, baby!

Claude is less enthused.

CLAUDE

Well I gave it back to them. And Mitchel's reunited with Mommy Dearest.

SASHA

Yeah, Jayda say's he's bald. They shaved his head?

CLAUDE

It's a rule. You stay overnight, they shave your head.

Sasha rises from the fabulous designer loveseat, sashays to Claude, purrs.

SASHA

Now I'm gonna need that bowl back again, sweetie.

CLAUDE

Are you out of your Daiquiri-soaked
little mind?

Sasha tightens up.

SASHA

Just do it, alright?

CLAUDE

No, not all right. I'm not breaking
into the same damn house three damn
times. It's bad luck.

SASHA

Christ, it's not like they're armed
to the teeth or anything. They're
pacifists, right? Fuck, they'd
probably give it to you if you
asked nicely.

CLAUDE

What do you want it for anyway?
It's just some old relic they drag
around every --

He notices the images on the iPad

CLAUDE

Hello. You've got a buyer. You
scheming little harlot.

Sasha takes this as a compliment, purrs some more.

SASHA

And you get your cut.

Claude shrugs.

CLAUDE

Of what? Jesus, I gotta steal it
again?

SASHA

Some where around a quarter mil,
I'm thinking. Fuck, even the
commies are interested. Nice chunk
of change for a little wooden bowl.

Claude shakes his head. Sasha stops purring.

SASHA

What? What?

CLAUDE

I'm not stealing it again. Forget it.

SASHA

Look, baby. A quarter million bucks. An easy job. You steal - I sell. What part of this equation is a problem for you?

CLAUDE

They could've called the cops on us, but they didn't. They could've --

SASHA

Coulda what - taken us to court? Had us thrown in jail? They don't even know what it's worth.

CLAUDE

Of course they do.

She motions to the iPad.

SASHA

Nope. I've been reading all about it. They don't believe in material things.

She giggles, caresses Claude's face.

SASHA

But I do.

Claude shakes her off.

CLAUDE

Forget it.

He walks out.

SASHA

Okay, well fuck you. Go back to jacking car stereos for five bucks a hit and see how you like it. Go back to living in a little crap apartment and eating burritos while you wait for your fence to pay you twenty percent of nothing. Asshole.

He's gone.

SASHA
Ernesto!

The musclebound masseuse appears.

SASHA
Get me the Four Changs.

INT. SASHA HOME OFFICE - DAY

Sasha sits behind her desk, holds up her iPad showing a picture of the bowl to 4 Asian gentlemen (20s to 30s) dressed in tacky tough-guy chic and dark glasses.

The Four Changs:

HEAD CHANG - In charge, irritable.

SMART CHANG - No dummy, level-headed.

SILLY CHANG - Childish, easily distracted.

MEAN CHANG - Aggressive, violent.

Silly Chang pokes through a pile of gold chains. Smart Chang inspects a stack of iPhones.

Mean Chang stands by Head Chang, arms folded.

HEAD CHANG
Fifty-fifty.

SASHA
Five grand.

HEAD CHANG
Sixty-forty.

SASHA
Five grand.

MEAN CHANG
This sucks.

HEAD CHANG
Shut up. Seventy ... uh.

Smart Chang looks up --

SMART CHANG

Thirty.

-- and goes back to browsing.

SASHA

Five grand.

Mean Chang leans in towards Sasha.

MEAN CHANG

What's your fucking problem?

Sasha shoots up out of her chair, Mean Chang finds a bejeweled automatic staring him in the face.

SASHA

I don't have a problem. What's your problem?

MEAN CHANG

No problem.

Silly Chang smiles, models a gold chain.

SILLY CHANG

How's this look?

Sasha groans with frustration. Sits.

SASHA

All right. Six grand.

Mean Chang grins.

MEAN CHANG

Yeah!

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Jane by side entrance, smoking.

One of the respected elders, ASSAM, opens the door.

Jane hurriedly taps out the butt, waves away the smoke.

JANE

Uh, good evening, Brother Assam.

Assam smiles sweetly, joins her.

Assam breathes in deeply.

ASSAM
Night air is so fragrant.

Jane fidgets in embarrassment.

JANE
Uh, yeah. Sorry. I was just ...
thinking.

ASSAM
Thinking is good. Sometimes not
thinking is better.

Jane affects a studious tone.

JANE
Hmm, yes.

Assam looks at her closely, she cringes but stands her ground.

Assam waves his forefinger and middle finger at her.

Jane frowns, confused. She pulls out a pack, tentatively offers him a cigarette.

He expertly tosses it to his lips. Turns to her. Light?

INT. FOUR CHANGS CAR - NIGHT

Smart Chang drives, Head Chang rides shotgun. Mean and Silly in back.

MEAN CHANG
Monks?

HEAD CHANG
Yes, Monks. How many times do I
gotta tell you?

SILLY CHANG
I don't think I could hit a monk.

HEAD CHANG
You don't hit a monk, you just ask
nicely. They can't refuse.

Head Chang looks to Smart Chang.

HEAD CHANG
Right?

Smart Chang shrugs indifferently.

Head Chang looks at Mean Chang.

HEAD CHANG

See?

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Jane and Assam smoke on the stoop.

JANE

So I just don't know.

ASSAM

Sometimes it's better not to know.

Assam takes a puff, smiles at the burning embers of the cigarette. He enjoys the vice.

ASSAM

When your mind is empty, the truth can enter. People with too many thoughts believe they must already have the answers.

JANE

So what do I do?

ASSAM

Wait.

JANE

What if I never figure it out?

ASSAM

Don't ... figure. Wait ... and be ready.

A car pulls up the drive.

Jane and Assam rise and approach.

The Four Changs get out.

Assam smiles. Offers the cigarette.

ASSAM

Smoke?

Smart Chang grabs it, the Changs head for the house.

JANE

Hey!

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

All the monks are assembled in the living room, Jane and Assam at the front.

Head, Mean, and Silly Chang wait.

Smart Chang descends the stairs, carrying the Case.

HEAD CHANG

Is it in there?

Smart Chang gives him a "Do you think I'm stupid?" smirk.

HEAD CHANG

All right, let's roll.

Jane loses it.

JANE

Give it back, that's not yours to take, assholes!

Mean Chang turns around, smacks Jane a hard one across her face. She falls to the floor.

Mean Chang winds up for round two, when Assam moves - and in the blink of an eye has Mean Chang on his knees. By the pinky finger.

Assam whispers in his ear.

ASSAM

You will not do this again.

Mean Chang, close to tears, nods assent. Assam releases him.

Mean Chang clumsily rises, rubbing his hand.

Head Chang scowls at him.

HEAD CHANG

Idiot.

Head Chang turns awkwardly towards the monks.

HEAD MONK

My apologies ... uh, fathers.

Smart Chang smirks, prompts him.

SMART CHANG

Brothers.

HEAD CHANG

Brothers, I mean. My brother
sometimes loses his head. Uh ...
brothers.

Smart Chang fidgets restlessly.

HEAD CHANG

We mean no disrespect.

SMART CHANG

Say goodbye now.

HEAD CHANG

Goodbye now.

The Changs leave.

Jane groggily sits up, starts to cry.

Assam crouches next to her, caresses her cheek. Smiles.

ASSAM

No more cigarettes, okay?

INT. NIGHTCLUB RAVE - NIGHT

Glass and chrome, lights and liquor.

A mob of the superficial gyrate on the dance floor.

A young woman enters, street urchin cap, dark glasses,
dressed down compared to the fabulous surroundings. It's
Jane.

She takes a seat at the bar. The BARTENDER approaches.

She mumbles.

JANE

A Sex On The Beach.

BARTENDER

What?

She speaks up.

JANE
Sex On The Beach.

The Bartender moves off, Jane surveys the room.

Fun times. A sleek party boy carrying cocktails over to his friends eyes her, swivels his hips and leers. She ignores him.

She spots Mitchel dancing in the mob, surrounded by girls.

Drunk off his ass, he motions to his bald head.

MITCHEL
Rub it for luck!

He spins and bounces between them like a human pinball.

He stumbles, catches himself. Spots Jane.

Mitchel frowns, approaches her.

MITCHEL
Hey.

The Bartender sets her drink down.

BARTENDER
One Sex On The Beach.

MITCHEL
Huh?

Jane fishes out a five dollar bill.

BARTENDER
That'll be nine fifty.

JANE
Jesus.

She digs deeper in her purse.

MITCHEL
Oh hey, I'll get it.

He pulls out his wallet. Jane slumps, embarrassed.

Mitchel tosses a ten on the counter.

MITCHEL
Keep the change.

The Bartender smirks.

BARTENDER

Thanks Mitchel, now I can retire.

Mitchel sits tipsily on the next stool, shouts over the din.

MITCHEL

Did you quit?

JANE

No.

MITCHEL

Is this some kind of homework or something? A field trip?

JANE

No.

Jane pulls Mitchel's neatly folded clothes out of her bag, hands them to him.

MITCHEL

Oh, wow. Thanks -- uh, I owe you a robe, don't I. I think it's somewhere under the bed, or maybe it's --

JANE

Never mind. I need to find Claude.

MITCHEL

Claude? How did you know I was here?

She produces a card advertising the club.

JANE

I found this in your pocket. I called. I guess you're a regular.

Mitchel blushes idiotically.

MITCHEL

Yeah, I like the music.

Jane smiles skeptically.

JANE

Uh huh.

MITCHEL

Hey - dig the glasses.

JANE
Thanks. Can we go?

INT. CLAUDE'S LOFT - NIGHT

A few luxury items, some furniture, kitchenware. A lot of empty space.

A sketch by Picasso (as evidenced by the style and signature) occupies its own wall.

Claude sprawls on the leather sectional, cramming popcorn into his mouth while he watches something inane on the plasma screen.

A BUZZER sounds from an intercom panel next to the sliding fire door.

Claude sighs irritably, sets down the popcorn, goes to the buzzer.

 CLAUDE
Yeah?

 MITCHEL (V.O. INTERCOM)
Claude?

 CLAUDE
Yes?

 MITCHEL (V.O. INTERCOM)
It's Mitchel. I'm downstairs.

 CLAUDE
No kidding, what do you want?

 MITCHEL (V.O. INTERCOM)
Um. Can I come up?

 CLAUDE
What the hell for?

 MITCHEL (V.O. INTERCOM)
Just for a minute?

Claude sighs again.

 CLAUDE
Fine.

Claude pushes the door open button, turns and waits by the fire door.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
 Sometimes it's better to not answer
 the door. Might be a bill
 collector. Might be the cops. Or a
 crazy bald chick in an ugly hat.

KNOCK KNOCK.

Claude opens the fire door. Mitchel saunters in.

CLAUDE
 You're drunk. Don't be bringing in
 that gin-soaked odor to my house,
 get the --

Jane enters.

CLAUDE
 Who the hell are you --

Jane hauls off and pops him in the jaw. He barely moves,
 rubs his chin, realizes ...

CLAUDE
 Oh. Hello.

Jane takes off her sunglasses, glares at Claude with her two
 eyes. One blackened.

CLAUDE
 Christ, what happened to y --

JANE
 Your asshole friends did this to
 me, Claude. Your asshole fucking
 friends did this.

CLAUDE
 Hey, hold on now --

MITCHEL
 Jesus, I didn't see that. Is that a
 black eye?

CLAUDE
 Mitchel, go make some coffee.
 Better yet, why don't I make some
 coffee - you might burn yourself
 frothing the milk.

Claude goes to the kitchen area, Jane follows.

JANE

I want the bowl back. I'm sick of
this fucking bullshit.

Claude sorts out the coffee maker.

CLAUDE

You pray to Buddha with that mouth?

Mitchel flops down on the couch, turns up the TV. Loud.

CLAUDE

Mitchel, would you turn it down - I
do have neighbors, you know.

JANE

I want the sacred bowl of the Dalai
Lama back right now, or I'm going
to the police.

CLAUDE

Let me guess, this little outing
was all your idea? Does his high
holiness know you're out slumming
with the natives?

JANE

Fuck you.

CLAUDE

Sweetheart, I don't know what
you're talking about.

Claude continues to make coffee.

JANE

Don't call me sweetheart.

CLAUDE

Should I call you Doris? Ethel? The
Bride of Frankenstein? We haven't
been properly introduced.

Mitchel hollers over from the couch.

MITCHEL

Call her Jane, Claude. Name's Jane.

Claude looks her in the eye. Teasing.

CLAUDE

Jane the monk. Or is it monkette?

JANE
Give me the fucking bowl!!

CLAUDE
Read my lips. I-don't-have-it.

JANE
You mean you sold it?

Claude offers coffee. Jane shakes her head, takes it anyway.
Everyone sits.

CLAUDE
Now --

Claude grabs the remote, turns off the TV.

MITCHEL
Aw ...

CLAUDE
Let's start at the beginning. What
happened?

Jane collects herself, centers herself. Begins.

JANE
Four Chinese gentlemen --

Claude sets down his cup.

CLAUDE
Stop right there.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Entertainment district. Bars, more bars, and some clubs.

Claude stands on a street corner, hands jammed in pockets.
He scans the area irritably.

A limo pulls up, side door opens. Claude climbs inside.

INT. SASHA'S LIMO

Claude sits between Smart Chang and Mean Chang. Opposite sit
Head Chang and Sasha, quaffing champagne. Sasha smiles
serenely.

CLAUDE
Aren't we missing a Chang?

HEAD CHANG
We had to leave space for you. He's
at the arcade.

CLAUDE
Good for him.

Claude turns to Sasha.

CLAUDE
What the fuck's happening with this
fucking bowl? You sent the Chang
brothers? I got smacked by a bald
woman with a black eye for
something I didn't do. Did you --

SASHA
You wouldn't play. So I took care
of it myself.

CLAUDE
With these clowns? Terrific. So
which one of these heroes hit Jane?

SASHA
Who the hell is Jane?

CLAUDE
The girl.

SASHA
Girl?

She looks at the Changs.

SASHA
One of you hit a girl?

She turns to Claude.

SASHA
Who the fuck cares?

Head Chang looks sternly at Mean Chang. Claude catches this.
He turns to Mean Chang.

CLAUDE
Aw ... did she make fun of your
tiny eggroll?

Mean Chang boils, entreats Head Chang with his eyes. Head Chang shakes his head.

CLAUDE

Did she kick you in the fortune cookies?

Smart Chang laughs. Head Chang barks at him.

HEAD CHANG

Shut up!

SASHA

Claude, this is getting boring. You want in or what?

HEAD CHANG

What do you mean by that? How does he get a cut when he didn't do anything?

CLAUDE

Hey - Chang - if it weren't for me you wouldn't be sitting in this fucking limo drinking bubbly with my, mm --

He gestures at Sasha.

CLAUDE

My --

SASHA

Your what, Claude?

CLAUDE (V.O.)

There comes a time in every man's life when he just has to speak his mind.

CLAUDE

-- my mattress.

Sasha flings her champagne at him, pulls out her bejeweled pistola. Aims it at Claude's junk.

SASHA

What the fuck does that mean?

Claude smiles warmly.

CLAUDE

Nothing, dearest. Just, it occurs to me that we've gone about as far as we can with this relationship, and it seems best that we part as friends, before I have to make you eat that stupid fucking prop you call a gun.

Sasha tries to maintain her cool. Head Chang frowns.

HEAD CHANG

Prop? Like fake?

SMART CHANG

Fake.

CLAUDE

Fake.

MEAN CHANG

You point a fake gun at me? And we get a lousy six grand?

CLAUDE

Six grand? You gentlemen are certainly major members of the corporation.

He turns to Sasha.

CLAUDE

What did you tell me? At least a quarter million take?

All Changs look mighty peeved.

Sasha punches the intercom.

SASHA

Ernesto! I need your help.

The limo screeches to a halt.

Mean Chang pulls out a gun. Claude punches him, grabs the gun.

Ernesto opens the side door.

Claude hands the gun to Ernesto.

CLAUDE

Here. I was just leaving.

Claude starts to walk off, turns around.

Ernesto's ejecting the Changs from the limo.

Claude walks up to Mean Chang, socks him - he tumbles back into the limo. Claude turns to Sasha.

CLAUDE

We have to talk.

SASHA

Asshole.

CLAUDE

That's a start.

He walks away as Sasha and the Changs argue.

INT. PETER PIPER PAWN - DAY

Mitchel, enters as Phil listens to a KID's sob story. Phil sends him on his way.

KID

Cheap fucker!

PHIL

And watch your mouth.

Mitchel comes to the counter. Phil looks him over.

PHIL

You're Sasha's kid, aren't you?

MITCHEL

Nephew.

PHIL

Well, blood's blood. What the hell happened to your hair?

MITCHEL

This girl -- well, it's complicated. I'm trying to find Claude. He's not at his place and he isn't answering his phone.

PHIL

I expect he's out trying to move that bowl.

MITCHEL

Actually I -- we were hoping he'd bring it back.

Phil smirks.

PHIL

Good luck with that. It's actually worth something?

MITCHEL

Well it's worth more than money.

PHIL

Then I guess he'll be disappointed. Claude's only interested in things that are worth money.

Phil straightens out the contents of a display Case.

MITCHEL

And you're not?

Phil turns on Mitchel.

PHIL

Hey, smartass. I provide a service. These people got no bank accounts and no jobs. Otherwise they wouldn't be coming to me. Some of them have families and bills to pay. You think they like being humiliated by crawling in here?

MITCHEL

No. I guess not.

PHIL

You guessed right, Mitchel. It's not like Claude's teaching you to break into people's homes and put things back, is it?

Mitchel clams up.

Phil cools off, goes back to straightening shelves.

PHIL
You and Claude getting along?

MITCHEL
Not really.

PHIL
He's a hard case.

MITCHEL
Part of the job, isn't it?

PHIL
It's not a job, Mitchel. He's a crook.

MITCHEL
Yeah, I know. I didn't mean --

PHIL
I went to jail for being a hard case. A macho asshole.

He smirks.

PHIL
Now I'm a successful entrepreneur.

MITCHEL
So why does Claude --

PHIL
He thinks I fucked up his life - as if I wanted to do fifteen years and not be there for him. He steals like he's trying to fill some hole inside, like he's saying "fuck you". To me. I'm still his Dad, why can't he ...

Phil turns away, fumbles with a row of kitchen appliances.

Mitchel lingers awkwardly.

MITCHEL
I better go. If Claude shows up, well, ask him if he'd think about getting it back for them - they're Buddhists, right? Real nice people, but they won't ask for it, you know? It's against their religion, or ... so he's gotta --

Phil mumbles.

PHIL

Yeah, sure.

MITCHEL

Thank you ... thanks, Mr. Radke.
Take it easy.

Mitchel heads out.

INT. FABULOUS HOUSE - NIGHT

Full-on air-kiss art crowd mixer in a stylish old money mansion. DJ with twin laptops, expensive hors d'oeuvres, complicated drinks.

Sasha chats loudly with some POSEUR dude who holds his martini with pinky extended.

SASHA

It's bogus. It's completely bogus.
If you buy the V twelve, you're a
sucker, you'll spend half your time
getting the damn thing fixed.

The Poseur feigns a knowing smile, hasn't a clue.

SASHA

Besides, the sport suspension only
comes on the V eight. And you get
the Italian leather either way. I'd
get the built in --

Mitchel enters, anxiously wends his way through the crowd.

A DEBUTANTE in a Betsey Johnson nightmare outfit spots him.

DEBUTANTE

Mitch! Baby! Where have you been?
What happened to your hair?

Mitchel grimaces, pushes by.

Sasha sees him coming, bald head and all. The Poseur retreats.

Sasha waves a champagne toting waiter over. Mitchel shakes his head, the waiter moves on.

They shout over the music.

MITCHEL

You need to give back the bowl!

SASHA

I like your new hairdo.

MITCHEL

Sasha, what's going on? Why did you let --

SASHA

What? What are you talking about?

MITCHEL

The bowl! Did Claude talk to you about the bowl?

SASHA

A bowl? Over there on the table.

She gestures towards the hors d'oeuvres, giggles at her little joke.

Frustrated, Mitchel gets in her face.

MITCHEL

The bowl! The sacred bowl!

Sasha scowls.

SASHA

I never see you any more, Mitchel.
Why don't you come by and visit,
after your hair grows back.

She feigns seeing someone calling to her. Smiles broadly at thin air. Turns to Mitchel.

SASHA

Excuse me.

She starts to leave, turns to Mitchel again, darkens.

SASHA

And don't you dare judge me,
Mitchel. Don't you fucking dare.

She sidles off into the crowd.

Mitchel watches her go. Slumps resignedly.

He takes in the manic crowd, the deafening, pounding music.

Grabs a glass of champagne off a passing tray. Downs it in one gulp.

And reaches for another.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Very late. Living room in darkness.

BAM BAM BAM at the door.

From outside, faint sound of singing.

BAM BAM BAM BAM.

Jane descends the stairs, opens the front door.

Mitchel's peeing into a potted plant, yodeling to himself. He turns on wobbly legs, drunk. Sprays the door frame.

MITCHEL

Oh, shit. Sorry.

JANE

What is it Mitchel?

MITCHEL

Um. I had this thought. See, I was thinking. I thought. Well. Maybe I'm a little confused. You know. About all the --

JANE

Maybe you should go home.

MITCHEL

Hm? Oh.

Crestfallen, he turns away.

MITCHEL

Yeah, you're probably right.

Assam appears behind Jane.

ASSAM

Come in, young man.

JANE

He's drunk. I don't think --

ASSAM

He came here for a reason. Let him stay.

Mitchel staggers in, Jane takes his arm.

He stares at Jane. There's a smear on her --

MITCHEL

Lipstick?

Jane frantically rubs at her mouth. Assam suppresses a grin.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - MEDITATION ROOM - DAY

A converted bedroom, with a shrine at the front, mats on the floor.

Early morning. Monks chant in low, guttural tones.

Jane and Mitchel enter with robes on. Mitchel yawns and rubs his head.

MITCHEL

God I've got a headache.

JANE

Shhh.

They kneel at the back, Jane guiding Mitchel into the correct position. Mitchel totters, falls over.

MITCHEL

This isn't natural, no human can sit like this. When's breakfast?

One of the monks glances back at the two of them. Mitchel notices.

MITCHEL

Oh ... sorry.

Jane places a floor cushion behind Mitchel.

JANE

Try sitting on this.

Mitchel tries to use the cushion. Puts his hand over his mouth. Spasms.

JANE

Oh no.

Mitchel bolts.

BATHROOM

Mitchel finishes barfing, rinses his mouth. He raises his head, looks at himself in the mirror. Loathing.

MITCHEL

You stupid fucker.

Jane enters.

JANE

You all right?

Mitchel smirks at his reflection.

MITCHEL

Yeah, sure.

MEDITATION ROOM

Jane watches from the door.

Assam appears behind her.

ASSAM

You're not joining in?

Jane lowers her head, ashamed.

ASSAM

Every journey is different.

INT. OLD MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

A tiny old woman of about 90 years snores in the huge canopied bed, at sea among several layers of quilts.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

I find work to be quite soothing,
after a few rounds with the dragon
lady.

Claude carefully slides out the vanity drawers.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Just me and the pretty things.

He stuffs his duffel with pearls, silver brushes, an antique cigarette case, a gold-plated pocket watch --

Claude pops open the watch cover.

A photo inside of a happy couple, taken long ago. The woman is ravishing.

Claude looks over at the dessicated specimen in the bed.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Time is the ultimate thief. It
takes away everything and everyone
you care about. It steals your
youth and robs you of your dreams.

He reads the engraving on the back.

"To my darling Harold ... Love always, Celeste"

Claude mumbles the unfamiliar words.

CLAUDE
Love always.

Another glance at the sleeping Celeste.

Claude snaps the watch shut.

Tests the weight of it in his hand.

Back to business.

EXT. CLAUDE'S LOFT - NIGHT

Claude stops outside his door. The padlock's been picked.

Sounds like someone's rummaging around.

Claude gingerly slides the door open.

INT. CLAUDE'S LOFT

Claude scans the room.

Phil looks up from digging in a filing cabinet.

Claude steams.

CLAUDE
What the hell are you doing? You
broke into my home.

Claude inspects the picked padlock. Nods with approval.

CLAUDE
Nice touch, Dad. Barely a scratch.

PHIL
I'm not proud of myself, but you
did something to people who did
nothing to you. I can't believe --

Claude realizes.

CLAUDE
Are looking for that goddamn bowl?

PHIL
What do you need it for? It means
something to those people. It's not
just a --

CLAUDE
I got it, okay? It's been
sufficiently explained to me.

PHIL
Are you gonna tell me where it is,
or do I have to go on digging
through your stuff?

CLAUDE
I don't fucking have it. The Changs
have it. They've probably already
sold it, so it's too late to --

Phil holds up the pocket watch Claude took from the Old
Woman.

Claude shuts up.

PHIL
This is nice. A family heirloom.

CLAUDE
You can put that back now, Phil.

Phil pops it open, sees the photo.

PHIL
Christ Claude -- what the hell?
Where'd you get this?

Claude cringes. Phil gets it.

PHIL
Right. Good call - don't say
anything. I can spot liars a mile
away.

CLAUDE
Dad --

Phil drops the watch back in the drawer.

PHIL
Not that it makes any difference.

CLAUDE
No one died and made you god, Phil.

Phil slams the drawer shut.

PHIL
You think god gives a fuck?

Phil pulls open a drawer full of Rolex watches.

PHIL
You think god really gives a damn
about worthless assholes like us?

He starts throwing them at Claude. Claude catches them.

CLAUDE
Fuck you, Phil. I don't care if he
gives a damn or not. And neither do
you.

The watches start slipping from his hands, he clutches at
them.

PHIL
Yeah, well your mother wouldn't
want to --

CLAUDE
Don't you start about Mom, don't
you say one goddamn word.

A watch hits the floor hard.

Claude crouches down, picks it up. Frowns at the cracked crystal.

CLAUDE
Holy shit. A fake.

Phil gives him one last look, walks out.

EXT. SASHA'S BALCONY - DAY

Sasha on the massage table. Ernesto works her shoulders. She moans appreciatively.

Mitchel fidgets on the giant yoga ball chair.

MITCHEL
You sure get a lot of massages.

SASHA
I've got a lot of responsibilities, Mitchel. A lot of stress. You should come work for me.

MITCHEL
Yeah, I heard you and Claude broke up.

SASHA
It was a business relationship. We just stopped doing business.

Mitchel nods. Smirks.

SASHA
Really, I could use a new man.

Mitchel looks a bit nauseous.

Sasha turns her head away as Ernesto moves to a different set of muscles.

SASHA
So what happened to your bald friends? They take their toys and go home?

Mitchel shrugs.

MITCHEL
They don't get out much.

Sasha laughs.

SASHA
Not your kind of tribe, huh.

Mitchel walks over to the massage table.

MITCHEL
Guess not.

Ernesto rubs in some oil.

SASHA
Mmm ... well think about doing some
jobs for me, 'kay?

MITCHEL
I'll think about it.

SASHA
There's a lot of money, a lot of
fun.

MITCHEL
Well, that's what I'm all about.

Mitchel points.

MITCHEL
Looks like you missed a spot, big
fella.

As Ernesto looks, Mitchel slides Sasha's cellphone into his
pocket.

MITCHEL
Later.

SASHA'S OFFICE

Mitchel pulls out Sasha's cell, scrolls through text
messages.

Finds what he's looking for.

"Downtown Hilton rm 2621 930 2moro"

SASHA (O.S.)
Well keep looking!

Mitchel clicks out of text mode and sets the phone on her
desk.

He grabs a cocktail ring, pretends to admire it - just as
she appears. She frowns.

SASHA
Mitchel, what the fuck?

MITCHEL
Just admiring the merchandise. Nice stuff.

Sasha spots her phone on the desk. Grabs it.

SASHA
Yeah, well you have to steal it before you get to handle it.

MITCHEL
Gotcha.

Mitchel puts the ring back.

SASHA
You wanna catch something to eat?

Mitchel backs out.

MITCHEL
Sorry, gotta party to go to. Gotta go home and sleep first.

SASHA
A party? I like parties. Where?

Michael stops.

MITCHEL
Oh it's just a little get-together. More like hanging out than full-on ... you know.

SASHA
Uh huh. Just you and your little friends.

MITCHEL
Uh ... yeah.

She cracks an oddly warm smile. He fidgets uncomfortably.

SASHA
Well have a good time, Mitchel. We'll talk, alright?

MITCHEL
Yeah, sure.

He leaves.

Sasha's phone RINGS - it's a hip-hop extravaganza. She answers.

SASHA

What? ... yes. Tomorrow at seven.
Now stop fucking bothering me. No,
you get the thirty percent like we
said. A joke? Yes, very funny, ha
ha.

She closes the phone.

SASHA

Morons.

INT. MODERN MANSION - NIGHT

One of those "DWELL" magazine castles - huge open floor plan, floor to ceiling windows.

A sliding glass pane overlooking the back yard rattles, slides open. Claude stops half-way in. Listens.

He sidles in, slides the door closed.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Who needs a business partner? These lovely people take the same trip to the same timeshare the same month every year, reliable as clockwork. No dogs, no pathetic old ladies, no fat cut for the black widow.

He creeps across the deep shag.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Just Claude the house cleaner's annual visit.

UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

Claude checks the bedside stand. Nothing.

He flashes his penlight over the bookshelves. Nothing.

He turns to a valet chair in the corner.

There's Mitchel.

CLAUDE

Jesus. What the hell are you doing here?

MITCHEL

Sasha's taking me on, since you two split up. Told me about some solid hits. Like this one. You're right on time.

CLAUDE

Oh. So the Buddhism thing didn't work out?

MITCHEL

I wouldn't say that.

Claude looks around the room. Finally gets it.

CLAUDE

You've already done the job?

MITCHEL

Well I learned from the best.

CLAUDE

Why are you still hanging around?

Mitchel hands him a slip of paper.

MITCHEL

I want you to get the bowl back.

Claude glances at it, stuffs it in his pocket.

CLAUDE

Again with the fucking bowl. What do you want it for?

Mitchel gives him the "duh" look.

CLAUDE

Oh, right, so you still love Buddha. Two words, Mitchel, move - on. You tried it, it's over. Now let's get out of here.

MITCHEL

Oh wait. Nearly forgot.

Mitchel holds up his cell phone. Presses a button. A ring. An answer. Mitchel puts it to his ear ...

MITCHEL

Nine - one - one?

Claude bolts for the stairs, down to the --

LIVING ROOM

He hits the ground running, gets to the sliding door. Turns around.

A carefully arranged pile of loot sits by front door.

Mitchel walks down the stairs.

CLAUDE

What the hell did you do? You're not even taking anything?

MITCHEL

Go ahead. It's all yours.

CLAUDE

Fuck you, Mitchel. I've had enough of all you goddamn holier-than-thou assholes. You're a fucking drunk, son. You're a coke-head party boy.

MITCHEL

Here --

Mitchel throws Claude some keys.

MITCHEL

You wanna rip someone off? Go over to my place. Take everything. I don't want it anymore. I'm giving up my stuff, drugs, money, booze, all of it. It's just poisoning my life.

Through the front glass wall, Claude can see a squad car roll silently up.

CLAUDE

Well good luck with that.

MITCHEL

Goodbye, Claude.

Mitchel saunters towards the front door.

CLAUDE
Where the hell are you going?

MITCHEL
I broke into someone's home,
Claude.

Mitchel's almost to the door.

CLAUDE
Sasha finds out I left you here,
she'll eat me alive.

Mitchel turns and smiles.

MITCHEL
Good luck with that.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Why is he doing the right thing?
Why am I doing the wrong thing? I'm
a thief, I'm supposed to do the
wrong -- screw this.

As Mitchel opens the front door, Claude sprints out the back.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Mitchel bought his ticket, let him
take his chances.

MITCHEL (O.S.)
Hello, officer.

EXT. PETER PIPER PAWN - NIGHT

Claude leans against a car, watching Phil inside, arguing with the same Kid again. Phil motions him out. The Kid sasses, skedaddles before Phil can hit him.

Claude bumps the Kid as he passes.

KID
Hey, motherfucker.

The Kid puffs up with 'tude. Claude's unimpressed.

CLAUDE
Go do your homework, big shot.

Claude stops, turns around.

CLAUDE

And if I see you hassling my Dad
one more time with your stolen crap
and your disrespectful attitude,
I'll smack you down so hard you'll
wake up in China.

KID

You can suck my dick, grandpa.

Claude starts after him, the Kid bolts.

INT. PETER PIPER PAWN - NIGHT

Claude enters, as Phil starts turning off lights.

PHIL

We're closed. What'd you say to the
kid?

CLAUDE

Nothing his mother shouldn't be
saying to him.

PHIL

His mom's in jail. That much of his
bullshit is true.

CLAUDE

That's unfortunate. Where's the
trombone?

Phil scowls.

PHIL

Sold it.

CLAUDE

You sold it?

Claude scans a wall of band instruments. Aha.

CLAUDE

Liar.

He grabs a worn trombone case from way in back and flips it
open. Removes a scary-ass shotgun, with rubberized grips and
a fold-over stock.

PHIL

What the hell you want that for? Is
that bitch getting you in over your

(MORE)

PHIL (cont'd)
 head? Armed robbery's a ten year
 minimum, Claude.

CLAUDE
 Well, like father, like son.

Phil goes grim. Claude checks the gun.

CLAUDE
 Just need to put the fear of god
 into some heathen ne'er do wells.

PHIL
 Don't come back dead.

Claude stuffs the shotgun in his duffel bag.

CLAUDE
 I never do.

Claude slams the door behind him.

INT. DOWNTOWN HILTON HALLWAY - NIGHT

Duffel in hand, Claude briskly checks room numbers. A WOMAN
 bumps into him, sidles right past.

She slinks down the hall in a hot little glittery number,
 disco wig and 6 inch heels.

He admires her..outfit.

A BELL BOY squeezes past Claude, pushing a room service
 cart.

The Bell Boy catches up to the Woman, they hurry on.
 Together.

Claude continues on in the other direction - he reads the
 last number on the last door. Wait a minute.

CLAUDE
 Wait a minute.

INT. DOWNTOWN HILTON HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The Four Changs lounge, eating strawberries, holding out
 champagne glasses expectantly.

Jane - in glittery sexy dress, disco wig, and copious
 amounts of makeup, clumsily flirts with Head Chang.

Mitchel, the Bell Boy, fumbles nervously with the champagne bottle.

MEAN CHANG

What's the problem, haven't you opened a fucking bottle of champagne before?

HILTON HALLWAY

Sasha saunters down the hall, clicking through messages on her cellphone.

Claude ducks into the elevator lobby.

Sasha enters the room.

Claude follows.

HOTEL ROOM

Mitchel finally loosens the champagne cork.

It pops out, bounces off the ceiling, and hits Jane in the head. Her wig falls off. Head Chang jumps up.

MEAN CHANG

It's you!

Sasha enters.

SASHA

Mitchel? Mitchel, what the hell are you doing here?

Claude enters, shotgun raised.

CLAUDE

Hello, everybody.

HEAD CHANG

What's going on?

Claude spots Jane.

CLAUDE

That's not a good look for you, sister.

He turns to Mitchel.

CLAUDE
I thought you went to jail.

MITCHEL
I didn't actually steal anything.
Jane bailed me out.

CLAUDE
Why the hell did you bring her?

HEAD CHANG
I asked what the hell is going on?!

SASHA
Just cool it. Mitchel?

MITCHEL
She was going to call the cops on
this whole thing if I didn't. Nice
of you to show up.

CLAUDE
I'm not being nice. Just curious.
Cute outfit, by the way.

SASHA
Mitchel, what the hell are you
doing here?

MITCHEL
You know, I kind of like the wide
lapels, it really gives it a sort
of retro --

SASHA
Mitchel, I asked you a fucking
question - what are you doing here?

CLAUDE
Answer her Mitchel, or she'll have
to call your mother.

Mitchel glares at Claude, turns to Sasha.

MITCHEL
We're here to get the bowl.

Claude chuckles.

CLAUDE
What were you going to do, Mitchel?
Kill'em with room service?

Sasha realizes ...

SASHA

You looked at my phone messages,
you little creep.

Sasha slaps Mitchel. Jane flinches.

CLAUDE

Sasha, why don't you pick on
someone your own age. Of course I
don't see anyone in this room who
comes even close to --

SASHA

Enough! You missed it. Okay?
Already done. Show's over. We sold
the damn bowl.

MEAN CHANG

Yeah!

CLAUDE

For what? Magic beans? Where's the
money?

JANE

Claude. Let's go. This was a bad
idea.

CLAUDE

I want the money.

SASHA

Fuck you.

MEAN CHANG

What the fuck's going on?

SASHA

Nothing, just shut up for a minute.

CLAUDE

Dear, let's not have a domestic row
in public.

SASHA

Asshole.

Claude approaches her, shotgun raised.

CLAUDE

Eat this.

Sasha snaps her fingers, motions.

Smart Chang pulls out a briefcase.

MEAN CHANG

We get thirty percent.

CLAUDE

You can have thirty percent of her brains down your shirt.

MITCHEL

Jesus, Claude.

CLAUDE

Take the case, Mitchel.

JANE

We don't want the money, we want the bow --

CLAUDE

Didn't you hear, woman? The deal's done. You can have the next best thing ... minus my cut, of course.

Head Chang rises.

HEAD CHANG

You're not going anywhere with our money!

MITCHEL

She's right, Claude. We don't want the money.

SASHA

So fucking leave it here.

Claude's getting a bit testy. So are the Changs.

CLAUDE

Okay. You don't want the money? I want the money. Now get me the fucking money, Mitchel.

MITCHEL

Claude, I'm not going to help you do this.

That's it. The shotgun's getting a bit heavy.

CLAUDE

Fuck! Fuck this. Kick it over here. Now.

Silly Chang gives the briefcase a swift kick, it tumbles right to Claude's feet.

Claude backs over to the desk, grabs the trash bin, tosses it to the Changs.

CLAUDE

Okay. Guns in the trash. Pants off.
Under the covers. Up to your necks.

No one moves. Claude brandishes the gun.

CLAUDE

Now!

The Changs follow the drill, climb into bed and pull up the covers.

CLAUDE

Mitchel, flush the guns.

MITCHEL

Flush?

Claude sighs.

CLAUDE

They don't have to go down the drain, just get them wet.

JANE

Mitchel ...

MITCHEL

At least no one'll get shot.

He eyes Claude.

MITCHEL

I guess.

Mitchel gingerly picks up the trash bin, carries to the bathroom.

FLUSH

The Changs, tucked under the bedsheets like pigs in a blanket, look at Sasha expectantly.

SASHA

No fucking way.

MEAN CHANG

Do it, bitch.

SILLY CHANG

Yeah, do it!

Claude turns the gun on Sasha.

CLAUDE

Come on, honey. Let's see those
tighty whiteys.

JANE

Claude, let's just go, I don't want
to do this if it means --

CLAUDE

Shut up, Jane.

SASHA

Yeah Jane, shut the fuck up.

Jane loses it.

JANE

Hey! Fuck you, bitch. All we wanted
was our fucking bowl. You send
these assholes around to intimidate
a bunch of really nice, really cool
people and shithead there gives me
a black eye, and, and ... cunt!

Mitchel returns.

MITCHEL

Jane? Did you just say --

Sasha grabs her purse off the couch, pulls out the bejeweled
automatic.

All the men smirk.

Sasha points it at Jane.

SASHA

Take that back. Right now.

Jane backs up, eyes wide.

MITCHEL

Holy crap, Sasha.

From the bed, Head Chang giggles. Jane looks quizzical.

JANE
What's so --

Claude asides.

CLAUDE
It's fake.

JANE
Wha -- ?

CLAUDE
It's fake. The gun - it doesn't
work.

MITCHEL
It's fake?

Smart Chang snickers.

SMART CHANG
Fake.

Sasha clenches her jaw, doesn't back down.

SASHA
Apologize, bitch.

JANE
Apologize?

She stops to think.

JANE
You know what? I should. I really
should. This is what I believe in -
feeling loving kindness toward all
living things.

Mitchel sniffs, smiles proudly. Claude rolls his eyes.

Jane grabs the shotgun out of Claude's hands.

CLAUDE
What the hell are you doing?

Jane shakily points the gun at Sasha.

MITCHEL
Jane ...

JANE

Okay. I apologize. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I used the word cunt. And fucking, and --

CLAUDE

Give me the gun, Jane.

JANE

Shut up, Claude. I'm not done apologizing. Anyway, I'm sorry.

Jane raises the shotgun.

JANE

Now tell me where the bowl is or I'll blow your fuck -- freaking head off.

Sasha sighs wearily.

SASHA

Claude, can't you do something here? If I tell you who I sold it to, they'll kill me.

JEAN

Oh yeah?

SASHA

Yeah, Jane. Compared to them, I'm a fucking Girlscout.

JANE

You don't think I'm serious?

She raises the shotgun to the roof, for the "warning shot". Claude tries to grab it.

CLAUDE

Wha are you --

CLICK

Jane frowns. What? She squeezes the trigger again.

CLICK.

Smart Chang laughs.

MITCHEL

No bullets?

HEAD CHANG
What the hell?

Sasha glares at Claude.

SASHA
You asshole!

Claude grabs the shotgun out of Jane's shaking hands, shoves it into his duffel bag, shoulders the bag.

Sasha jumps him. He tosses her onto the bed, atop the Changs as they try to climb out.

He grabs the briefcase.

JANE
Oh my god, I could've killed someone.

CLAUDE
Shut up, Jane.

Jane turns to the Four Changs, halfway out of the bed.

JANE
I'm so sorry, I'm really so --

MITCHEL
Come on, Jane.

Claude grabs her arm.

CLAUDE
Come on, Jane.

They split.

The Changs pull their pants on.

MEAN CHANG
Let's go blow those assholes away!

SMART CHANG
Shut up idiot.

Head Chang looks at Sasha.

HEAD CHANG
Well?

SASHA

You want your thirty percent, go get it.

HEAD CHANG

We find it, we want fifty percent.

Silly Chang emerges from the bathroom, carrying the trash bin full of wet guns. He grins.

SILLY CHANG

Got 'em!

Sasha flops resignedly onto the couch.

SASHA

Whatever.

INT. CLAUDE'S CAR - NIGHT

Claude grips the wheel tightly, pissed off. Mitchel and Jane sit in back, overwhelmed.

MITCHEL

Wow. That was a trip. You didn't bring any bullets, Claude.

CLAUDE

Bullets kill people, Mitchel. I was trying to be subtle.

He eyes Jane in the rearview.

CLAUDE

I guess subtlety wasn't the plan.

JANE

Sorry.

Claude snorts.

CLAUDE

You're lucky they didn't send you two to Buddhist heaven.

JANE

Buddhists don't believe in heaven. They believe in reincarnation.

CLAUDE

Reincarnation? You gotta be kidding me.

JANE

No.

CLAUDE

So can I come back as a billionaire with a Lear jet and a jacuzzi full of lingerie models?

Mitchel laughs. Jane glares at him. He clams up.

JANE

How you come back depends on how you've lived your life.

CLAUDE

Great, I'll probably come back as a fucking cockroach.

JANE

Wouldn't surprise me.

MITCHEL

Jane.

CLAUDE

Very nice. If I return as a cockroach, I'll be sure to crawl up your fucking --

MITCHEL

Claude.

CLAUDE

Fine.

Claude shuts up.

JANE

Where are we going?

CLAUDE

Back to the clan, unless you've got a better idea. I mean, I could drop you on a street corner and you could make a few bucks for Free Tibet.

Claude glances in the rear view mirror, catches Jane's eye.

CLAUDE

You walk in those heels like a pro.

MITCHEL

What? What do you mean, "pro"?

Jane stares back, turns to the window.

Mitchel gets it.

MITCHEL

Oh.

EXT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Claude pulls into the drive, Mitchel and Jane get out.

Claude grabs the briefcase off the seat, gets out.

MITCHEL

What are you doing?

Claude hands the briefcase to Mitchel.

CLAUDE

Take it, I don't want it.

Mitchel grins. Takes it.

MITCHEL

Really? Wow!

JANE

We don't want it.

MITCHEL

What?

JANE

Give it back to ... that woman,
your girlfriend --

MITCHEL

Sasha.

CLAUDE

She's not my --

JANE

Give it back to her.

Claude steams, grabs back the briefcase, heads into the house.

MITCHEL

Hey!

MEDITATION ROOM

Assam meditates at the shrine, a group of monks gathered behind him.

Claude marches in with the briefcase.

Mitchel and Jane stop at the doorway. A number of monks eye Jane's outfit.

JANE

Oh crap, I forgot.

She darts down the hall.

MITCHEL

Claude?

Mitchel takes off his shoes, points one at Claude.

CLAUDE

Shoes off?

MITCHEL

Yeah.

Claude kicks off his shoes. His socks are hard-used.

Mitchel suppresses a laugh.

Claude bends over awkwardly, presents the briefcase to Assam.

Assam looks up, impassively.

CLAUDE

Um ...

Claude sets down the briefcase.

Assam glances at it, looks back to the shrine.

CLAUDE

It's for you. A quarter million bucks.

Mitchel frowns.

Assam ignores Claude.

CLAUDE
It's just a bowl. They grow on
trees.

Assam doesn't respond.

 CLAUDE
Fine.

Claude picks up the briefcase, kicks his shoes on, marches
out of the room.

Mitchel kneels next to Assam, looks at him imploringly.

 MITCHEL
He's just trying to do the right
thing, he doesn't mean to be such a
jerk about it -- well, he's not a
jerk, it's just that --

Assam turns stoically to Mitchel. Looks over the bell boy
outfit. Grins.

LIVING ROOM

Claude stomps down the stairs, cracks open the briefcase and
dumps out packs of bills on to the living room floor. He
looks around, starts angrily throwing them into the
fireplace.

Mitchel watches from the top of the stairs, aghast.

Claude disappears into the office, Mitchel frowns.

 MITCHEL
Claude?

Claude reappears with a bottle of whiskey.

He unscrews the cap, and takes a swig. Not bad. He examines
the label. Starts pouring it over the money.

 MITCHEL
Claude?

Claude tosses the empty bottle, grabs a box of matches from
the hearth. CRACK - lights one.

 MITCHEL
Claude, don't.

Grins maniacally.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
 Money's worthless if no one wants
 it. After all, it's just paper.

He lights the bills. They flame up, turn to ash.

MITCHEL
 We could've given it to the poor!

Claude watches the embers smolder.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
 Jesus, he's right ... typical,
 Claude - always doing the wrong
 thing for the wrong reason.

He turns red with embarrassment. Looks up at Mitchel
 defiantly.

CLAUDE
 Too bad. You assholes didn't want
 it, no one gets it.

The bluster doesn't help, he still feels stupid.

He eyes a large Buddha statue smiling serenely from atop the
 hearth.

Shaking with frustration, he gets in its face.

CLAUDE
 FUUUUUUUUUCK YOOOOOOOOOU!

He marches out the door. SLAM!

Assam and Mitchel watch from the stairs.

Mitchel's on the verge of tears. Assam quietly smiles.

EXT. CLAUDE'S LOFT - NIGHT

Claude pulls out his key, reaches for the -- padlock's cut
 open. He stops cold.

He goes to one of a thousand bricks, down near the floor. He
 tugs at it until it comes loose, pulls out a gun.

He gently slides the door open, moves to the side of the
 doorway. Scans the room.

Enters. No one. And nothing.

Smashed dishes, missing TV, leather couch with cushions ripped open.

FLASHBACK: CLAUDE'S LOFT - NIGHT

The Four Changs push a large rolling hamper into the room. It's the size of a jacuzzi, and they immediately start tossing things into it.

Silly Chang slices open the couch cushions.

Mean Chang pulls the Picasso off the wall. Frowns at it. Frisbees it into the hamper.

SMART CHANG

Hey!

Smart Chang rushes over and pulls it out of the hamper, hugs it protectively.

Mean Chang pulls on the TV, trying to pry it off the wall mount.

Head Chang watches with growing frustration.

HEAD CHANG

Just find the fucking money!

END FLASHBACK

Claude opens his empty armoire, slides open a drawer. He searches frantically through a pile of boxer shorts, all that's left behind.

CLAUDE

Where's my Rolexes? Where's my
fucking Rolexes!

FLASHBACK: EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Head Chang watches from the car as the other Changs empty the hamper into a dumpster. Lamps, appliances, clothes.

Head Chang cradles a Cuisinart, a multitude of Rolex watches up his arm.

The other Changs pile in. They wear an assortment of bling from the Claude collection - rings, watches, women's pearls. Smart Chang carries the Picasso.

MEAN CHANG

What do you want with the fucking picture?

SMART CHANG

It's a Picasso, asshole.

END FLASHBACK

Claude takes in the mess, the missing stuff. He spots a watch on the floor, examines it. The fake Rolex. He throws it across the room, it ricochets off the brick wall.

He notices the spot where his Picasso used to be.

CLAUDE

Huh.

His shoulders sag.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

So this is what it feels like.

CLICK - Mean Chang puts a gun to Claude's head.

Claude sighs.

CLAUDE

What does the queen bitch want now?

Mean Chang cocks the gun.

CLAUDE

Oh ... right.

EXT. SASHA'S BALCONY - DAY

Claude's on his back, zip-tied to the massage table.

Sasha straddles him, takes a swing.

SLAP

SASHA

Where's the fucking money?

CLAUDE

I burned it.

SLAP

SASHA
Where's the fucking money?

CLAUDE
I burned it.

SLAP

SASHA
Where's the fucking money?

CLAUDE
I burned it.

SLAP

CLAUDE
Okay, that's enough! I keep telling
you --

MITCHEL (O.S.)
He burned it.

Claude cranes his head around to see --

Mitchel, in his robe, Mean Chang with a gun to Mitchel's
head.

CLAUDE
Oh Christ, what now? Mitchel, I
don't need your help with the
she-devil.

SLAP

Sasha resumes.

CLAUDE
Would you please stop doing that,
you goddamn ballbusting psycho
bitch?

Sash screams in his face.

SASHA
You burned a quarter of a million
dollars?? You're supposed to be a
fucking thief!

CLAUDE
Yes. I admit it was out of
character, but there you are.

SASHA

Asshole!

Sasha turns to Mean Chang.

SASHA

All right.

Mean Chang cocks his pistol.

CLAUDE

Jesus Christ, woman, what the hell are you doing?

SASHA

You're going to go steal that bowl back.

CLAUDE

Oh, Jesus Christ almighty, again with the fucking bowl? Enough already.

SASHA

You're stealing it. I'm selling it.

CLAUDE

To who?

SASHA

Some - body - else!

Mitchel shakes - he's scared shitless.

MITCHEL

Claude?

Claude takes a reassuring tone.

CLAUDE

It's okay Mitchel, nothing's going to happen to you. She's your aunt for crying out loud. She's not going to whack her own flesh and blood.

Sasha laughs devilishly.

SASHA

Tell him, Mitchel.

CLAUDE
Mitchel?

 MITCHEL
Claude?

 CLAUDE
Yes?

 MITCHEL
I'm adopted.

Sasha cackles evilly. Claude sighs with frustration.

 CLAUDE
So what? He's adopted? Somehow I'm
not convinced.

Sasha calls.

 SASHA
Ernesto!

Jane appears, struggling in Ernesto's grasp.

 CLAUDE
Oh this is just great. Fucking
swell. Tweedle Dee and Tweedle
dumbass. And the Bride of
Frankenstein.

He winces, but the slap never comes. He squints up at her.
She gives him a cold stare.

 CLAUDE
Murder? You wouldn't.

Sasha leans in, whispers.

 SASHA
Try me.

Claude smirks.

 CLAUDE
I already did. Is there anything
else on the menu?

SLAP

Claude GROANS.

CLAUDE

Fine. Fine, I'll steal the stupid
fucking bowl for you. Again. Leave
the two hairless wonders alone.

Sasha cools off. A little.

CLAUDE

So where is it? Who'd you fucking
sell it to? You know they're gonna
be kinda pissed off, since they
already paid for it.

Sasha smiles.

SASHA

I'll let you deal with that.

INT. CLAUDE'S CAR - NIGHT

Claude cruises through downtown. Leans back. Takes his time.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

I guess I got in a little too deep.
A little over my head.

INT. LUXURY HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

No one around.

SHOUTS

A GUNSHOT

Claude sprints down the hall, carrying the Bowl Case.

Two well-groomed and armed BODYGUARDS in track suits chase
after him.

Claude pushes through a stairwell door.

INT. HOTEL STAIRWELL

Claude clatters down the steps. Bodyguards follow.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Never been chased by armed gunmen
before.

FLASHBACK - STREET CORNER - DAY (MOS)

YOUNG CLAUDE (10) rips around the corner, sprints down the sidewalk. Cop follows.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Been chased by everything else.

INT. HOTEL BASEMENT

Claude bursts out of the stairwell, runs through the hotel laundry. Machines churn and bang. Bodyguards follow.

INT. CLAUDE'S CAR - NIGHT

Claude changes lanes, settles back.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
With all that running around ...

FLASHBACK - STREET - DAY (MOS)

A dog has joined in the chase. Young Claude cuts down an alley.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
You'd think I'd have learned my
lesson a long time ago.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING RAMP - NIGHT

Claude races up the ramp, dodging cars. Only one Bodyguard follows.

FLASHBACK - BACKYARD - DAY (MOS)

Young Claude turns into a back yard, leaps up the stairs, tears open the screen door.

Uh oh.

MOM (30) sternly blocks his way.

She's pretty when she smiles. Not smiling now.

He pleads with his eyes. No go.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

Back when someone at least tried to
straighten me out.

He sighs, turns around. Cop's standing there, out of breath.
Squad car pulls up behind. Claude looks terrified.

Mom puts a firm hand on Claude's shoulder. Claude produces a
cheap music player and a squashed candy bar from his pocket,
hands it to the Cop. Cop's still not satisfied.

Mom argues with the Cop. Another Cop and a man get out of
the squad car - the man looks like an angry STORE OWNER. She
argues with him too.

General throwing up of hands. The Cops and the Store Owner
acquiesce. This time.

Claude receives a cuff on the back of the head. He jerks
back angrily, but takes his medicine.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING RAMP - NIGHT

Claude sprints for the ramp stairwell door, leaving the one
Bodyguard navigating a knot of cars vying for parking.

INT. CLAUDE'S CAR -NIGHT

Claude slows.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

But hell --

He stops at a RED LIGHT.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

-- it's what I do.

The light changes to GREEN.

He continues on.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING RAMP - NIGHT

Claude flies through the door and clatters down the stairs
-- there's the other Bodyguard.

Claude throws the Case at his head.

The Bodyguard falls back against the wall, goes down.

Claude grabs the Case and leaps over him as the Bodyguard staggers up - raising his gun as Claude hits the landing.

INT. CLAUDE'S CAR - NIGHT

He shifts his weight, checks his side. Brings back a bloody hand.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Of course the thing about stealing
is - it's a short cut. It's a way
around the rules.

He steers with one hand, watches the city glide by.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
If you never get caught - you never
take the blame. So ... you win.

He turns a corner, winces.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
You get to work alone. No one to
thin your percentage, or screw up
the job. You scurry around like a
rat, stealing from the people with
normal lives while you laugh at
them for being normal.

Claude parks, gets out. Reaches in and grabs the Case from the passenger seat.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
Because you can't respect someone
while you're robbing them blind.
The minute you care about them, you
lose. You're better off going it
alone.

INT. PETER PIPER PAWN - NIGHT (MOS)

The front door swings open. Claude enters, carrying the Case. Phil runs in from the back room, baseball bat in hand.

Claude drops to his knees. Phil scrambles around the counter, lowers Claude to his lap.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
And if you go it alone, you may
just die alone ... to hell with
that.

Claude slumps in Phil's arms. Phil tries to revive him. No luck.

FLASHBACK - BACK DOOR - DAY (MOS)

As the cops pull away, Mom frowns but lets Claude into the house. Smiles behind his back. Closes the door.

INT. PETER PIPER PAWN - NIGHT (MOS)

Sasha and the Changs enter. Phil screams at them.

Sasha struggles to remain stoic, takes the Case and leaves.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - NIGHT

Assam, Jane, and Mitchell watch Sasha walk out the door.

Assam holds the Case, touches the blood - bewildered. Jane bursts into tears.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - MEDITATION ROOM - DAY

Monks kneel in rows before a shrine surrounded by incense and candles.

One monk begins chanting, and the others follow.

Mitchel - in monk's robes - walks to the shrine, carrying an urn.

He sets the urn before the shrine, joins the young monks in the back row.

Phil sits at the back of the room, stoically looking on.

Jane watches from the doorway, dressed in street clothes.

Phil gets up, walks over to Jane. He whispers.

PHIL

You won't come in?

JANE

No.

PHIL

I don't understand what they're doing.

JANE

They're praying for Claude to return on a higher plane of existence. And to some day break the cycle of reincarnation and achieve nirvana.

Phil thinks about this.

PHIL

Reincarnation, huh.

JANE

Yes. Each lifetime is a journey to a higher plane. Towards enlightenment. Some times it takes a thousand lifetimes or more.

PHIL

Maybe in his next life he won't be so angry. Maybe he'll be happy.

JANE

They don't believe in happiness. Just living. Just being.

She turns sad.

JANE

That's about it.

Phil gives Jane a kind smile.

PHIL

I guess sometimes that's all you can hope for.

Phil returns to his chair. Jane looks on.

Finally - Jane pulls up a chair, sits next to Phil.

INT. RENTAL VAN - DAY

The Monks, crammed in tight, Mitchel at the wheel. Grim silence.

Assam rides shotgun. Mitchel ventures conversation.

MITCHEL

That was some crazy stuff, huh.

Assam just nods. He picks the Case up from the floor of the van. The blood's been cleaned off. Assam frowns.

MITCHEL
Crazy stuff.

Mitchel bites his lip, tears up.

Assam leans over.

ASSAM
He has re-entered the cycle of
life. Always returning.

Mitchel nods. Grips the wheel.

Assam forlornly studies the Case, rubs its surface. Stares
at it blankly.

MITCHEL
He wasn't a bad guy you kno --

ASSAM
Stop!!

Mitchel yanks the van to the curb, slams on the brakes.

MITCHEL
Wha -- ? What'd I say?

Nowhere in particular. A small strip mall, a gas station.

Assam climbs down from the van, deposits the Case on the
sidewalk. Climbs back in. Sits stoically, eyes forward.

Silence. Mitchel stares at Assam with confusion.

Assam finally speaks.

ASSAM
Wrong bowl.

MITCHEL
What?

ASSAM
I must have brought the wrong bowl.

MITCHEL
What do you mea --

ASSAM
Anyone can make a mistake ...
please drive.

Mitchel pulls away from the curb, still confused.

The Case is left behind.

INT. RANDOLPH HOUSE - DAY

Giant mesh bags of tulip bulbs rest on the couch. Gucci luggage by the door.

MRS. RANDOLPH (70s) examines the charred remnant of a \$100 bill. She sports a stylish jeweled tulip brooch and a \$5000 Chanel outfit that doesn't fit.

Jane looks on, gnawing a handful of knuckle - mortified.

MRS. RANDOLPH

Now, Jane, you know my husband and I fully support the Free Tibet cause, and I --

MR. RANDOLPH (O.S.)

We're all out of liquor!

MRS. RANDOLPH

-- don't want to pry into anyone's private affairs, but --

MR. RANDOLPH (O.S.)

I thought they didn't drink?!

MRS. RANDOLPH

Arthur, you drank on the plane. Continuously.

Mrs. Randolph frowns at Jane.

MRS. RANDOLPH

Aren't those my Gucci pants?

JANE

Well I'll just go then.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Jane sits on the bench, digging through her duffel bag, one eye out for the bus.

A car slowly cruises by, the driver leers at her.

CLAUDE (V.O.)

I suppose ... if you go through enough lifetimes, you end up living the life meant for you.

Jane scowls, takes off her cap.

The driver stares at her bald head, rolls on.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
And I suppose the trick is to know
when you're living it.

She replaces her cap.

She places a change purse on the bench next to her, resumes digging through her bag.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
I'm a thief.

A dog runs up, snatches the purse in its mouth, races off.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
It's my business. It's my pleasure.

JANE
HEY!

Jane takes off after the dog, who playfully dodges as she lunges, teasing her on with a gleam in its eye.

CLAUDE (V.O.)
A man should enjoy his work.

FADE OUT.