

FIVE DEFIANT WOMEN

SCREENPLAY

PART ONE

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FADE IN:

INT. GUGINO ESTATE - KITCHEN - PRESENT DAY

Morning light pour into the vast gourmet kitchen opera plays gently throughout.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)
Sometimes shit happens and I'm one of them. This is my story of the dangerous and vengeful family I was born into.

SOPHIA GUGINO (late 30's) dark hair, dark eyes and eccentric, FRANCO GUGINO's wife and Stepmother to Francesca, wears high heels, a tight skirt, and a blouse that accentuates her curvaceous body.

SOPHIA
(Mutters loudly)
Well, well he is coming home after all. What did I do to deserve this second chance hm ?

Sophia is in her kitchen cooking unaware of everything else around her.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
The minute I know his memory is coming back, I will just have to kill him again, and this time it will be permanent. Ah, this needs olive oil and this should do it!

EXT. PAVE STONE DRIVEWAY - DAY

(P.O.V.) The opera carries through the kitchen window as the boots advance in rhythm then stop exact on the flourish.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sophia sways to the music, dropping bowls into the sink. Her burner phone vibrates inside her apron.

SOPHIA
(Angry)
Why are you calling me now ? I told
you I don't want to be disturbed
today! You deal with it, It's a
small situation. I am cooking right
now...ciao.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
(Sighs, Paused)
Stupid idiot.

A bullet tears through the open window and strikes Sophia in the side of her neck.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
(Cries Out)
Ahhh! What the fuck!

Glass shatters onto the marble floor as Sophia drops to her knees.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
(Terrified, In Agony)
No, no, you son of a bitch! You
won't get away. I will kill you
fuckers!

The door creaks open. Boots approach the fallen woman. The hitman presses the muzzle of the weapon to Sophia's chest.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
(Fighting to speak)
You! Do You think you'll get away
with this? You cunt you can't...
wait, argh!

Sophia's body hits the floor. Her eyes remain fixed, lifeless, as blood spreads rapidly around her.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)
(Cynical)
Well, Im not sorry I never liked
that woman, I never trusted her.
She was evil and jealous of me and
everyone that my father cared
about. She betrayed us all. Sophia
competed with my bond with my
father.
(MORE)

FRANCESCA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
She tried to break me, but I was
his daughter, his blood. I have the
reign.

INT. GUGINO ESTATES - LAS VEGAS - DAY

FLASHBACK:

FRANCO GUGINO (27), handsome like an Adonis, and his father
DON LUIGI (70), lean salt and pepper hair, sit in recliners
inside a half built house. A big color TV plays The Price Is
Right, eyes on models, as they wait for CARLO SANTO (27) and
GIUSEPPE CASTA (29) to arrive with Chinese takeout. Carlo
comes in carrying the take outs.

CARLO
(Apologize)
Sorry boss. I took so long... I had
to get gas before I picked up the
food.

Franco interrupts Carlo.

FRANCO
(Shouting)
Shut up, will ya. I'm trying to
concentrate on which door the car's
gonna be behind. Door one or two...
I think it's number three! Yes!
What did I tell ya. I know this
shit, I can read minds!

Luigi ignores Franco momentarily while he eats.

LUIGI
(Mocking)
Oh yeah, tough guy, you can read
Bob Barker's mind through the
fucking TV? Then read my mind right
now.

FRANCO
(Sarcastic)
What, you want me to read your mind
right now? Pops, it was a figure of
speech, Jesus christ.

Luigi glares at Franco while he devouring his meal.

LUIGI

(Scoffing, yelling)

Yeah, wise guy. You can't read anyone's mind, so don't ever say that. And don't ever tell me to shut up again. I don't care if there's chaos around us.. stay focused, keep your poker face. Learn to read the faces in front of you and the room you're in. None of this bullshit about reading minds.

FRANCO

(Defeated)

Alright, Pop, I got it. Let's move forward. I'm not mad at you for that lecture. Now stop busting my balls, you're embarrassing me.

INT. GUGINO ESTATES - DAY

Giuseppe, Franco's main Capo, begins cleaning up the pile of empty containers.

GIUSEPPE

(Smiling)

When's the remodeling on this house going to be done? And what'd did I miss? Never mind, boss, I don't want to know. Hey, you ready to head out? We've got business. I wanted to help out, before I fly home... that old man and his child bride in the kimono will be at the casino office. He's very interested having a meeting with you, so I set it up and confirmed it with JEFF O'CONNER (30) to get the contracts ready. The Yakuza speaks English just fine, you know. Hiromi, his wife, keeps her head lowered. She's a beautiful woman, you notice? I'm scared to even look at her, the guy might have a sword and cut my head off.

Franco keeps pace with Giuseppe, who won't stop talking.

FRANCO

(Listening)

No, you didn't miss anything, just Pops busting my balls.

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

Yeah, I've noticed. Used to imagine what she wears underneath that kimono.

Luigi gives Franco a wink, tapping his nose, as Carlo heads out. Franco turns back around.

FRANCO (CONT'D)

(Kiss Luigi's Forehead)

Bye, pops see ya later.

LUIGI

(Whispering)

Don't forget our intentions isn't to go backwards, it's to keep this family going, not end up the like families that are dead or locked up. The future is doing legitimate business. Here in Vegas, we do everything legal, the gaming, the gambling, whatever. You're the head Casino manager of The Atlantis and the Marquis. Make it so, Franco.

FRANCO

(Unsure, Confused)

What are you saying, Pop?
Legitimate? I like what we were doing. I don't know, Pops, I gotta have a meeting with everybody. If this is your wish, then I'll do it for now. We gotta hear what the others think. I was born to live and die in the streets.

Luigi and Franco stare at each other.

LUIGI

(Clears His Throat)

I was wrong to show you that life, Franco. Your mother... God bless that woman's soul. She suffered and and fought to protect you from greedy enemies. I don't want that life for your children, you hear me? We can live long, healthy, happy and prosperous... like what's written inside the damn Christmas cards.

Franco shakes his father's hand, and kisses him again, and exits.

FRANCO

(Tender)

Hey, Pops say goodbye to Giuseppe,
he's leaving us tonight. He's got a
flight back to Naples, his wife
Andrea's is having another boy.
Carlo will be taking over his post,
alright.

Luigi signal thumbs-up, and falls asleep.

EXT. JAR BRIDGE WILDERNESS - PRESENT DAY - DAWN

DON FRANCO (45), tall and fit, olive skinned, with brown hair, piercing dark eyes, wipes the morning dew from his mustache. He stands above his teenage daughter, FRANCESCA AKA FRANKIE (16) peers downfield through the scope of her hunting rifle at her prey, a trophy elk.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

Most girls my age don't wake up
excited one morning thinking, I
just can't wait to get out there
and shoot me an elk! But I do, I
love the power behind my rifle. And
if I had any complaints, my father
wasn't interested in my feelings,
or in negotiating.

FRANCO

(Exasperated)

Hey, Frankie, you gotta slow your
breathing kid, you know what I
mean? Come on Frankie, steady do it
already!

Francesca is perfectly still, focused on her kill. She ignores her father.

FRANCESCA

(Frustrated)

Shhh ... can you please be quiet
and chill out, Pops. I got this...
and... boom! Done! That's how you
do that.

A perfect Bull's- eye. Franco freezes, then lowers into a crouch, eyes locked on Frankie. Franco rises.

FRANCO

(Infuriated)

Listen kid, stand up.

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

Don't ever disrespect me like that ever again, and when I'm talking to you, you stay quiet and listen up. Don't get cocky. If you want to be respected like me, especially because you're a girl, don't get cocky, be sharp and observe. Show your poker face. It's important, especially for people like us. We survived because your grandfather Luigi was clever... we took it first, no questions asked. We outran the Tigers. You get it?

Francesca stares at Franco with defiance.

FRANCESCA

(Arrogant)

Yeah, sure, I get it. Now can I go? I've got Krav Maga private lesson in an hour... self defense techniques I can use in real world situations. And don't forget Uncle Carlo my ballet's tomorrow. Are we going to make it back on time ? I gotta be there time okay? See you back at the lodge.

Franco lifts a hand in a playful swat, but Frankie reacts quickly, retreating.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

(Chuckling)

See you later, Poppa! I can show you some moves if you want. I love you, Pops!

Franco glares at his only daughter as Frankie runs to the waiting car, flashing a peace sign. Carlo joins Franco as they watch Francesca.

FRANCO

(Chuckles)

What did I raise? That girl's trouble someday. I feel sorry for whoever crosses her. She's tough, Carlo. Yeah, lets go, we've got a meeting with Sakamoto at the Lodge. Zoom call in an hour.

Carlo nods his head in agreement.

FLASHBACK: (CONT'D)

INT. HALLWAY - CORRIDOR - DAY

Francesca walks down the hallway. Passing her father's Office. A noise stops her, and she slips into the guest closet next door, pressing her ear against the wall.

FRANCESCA
(To herself)
I don't care if I got caught. I
just need to know what is happening
in there. Oh my god.

Francesca pressed her ear to the wall a woman's voice with her father. She sat still, dozing off, then wakes.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)
(Worried)
Oh no, what the hell? Who is in
there with him...

INT. HOSPITAL DELIVERY AND LABOR - DAY

FLASHBACK: (CONT'D)

Franco holds his mistress's hand, beautiful STELLA JONES (late 20's) dark brown hair, blue eyes, a Las Vegas dancer as she gives birth to their child.

STELLA
(Screaming)
Oh my god! Franco, Franco, the
baby is coming.

Franco stays at her side, watching the Obstetrician closely until the baby's head emerges. He watches the nurses work around him.

FRANCO
(Excited)
Benvenuta! We have a girl, Stella
and she's a beauty, like you baby.
Un mondo di felicità .

INT. HOSPITAL DELIVERY AND LABOR (CONT'D)

STELLA
(Exhausted)
I want to name her Francesca.
Francesca Jones and Frankie for her
nickname, after you Franco.

FRANCO

(Disagreeing)

No, no, Stella, she's not a bastard. I'm right here. Her Poppa's is right here with his two favorites girls. Ah, she's so cute and beautiful she's got a strong grip! Francesca Gugino, long live!

EXT. MONTESSORI SCHOOL - DAY

Stella parks her Maserati. Four year old Frankie hops out in jeans a pink Supergirl T-shirt, and Converse high tops.

STELLA

(Softly)

Come on, my little princess. Frankie, you look so cute, I love what your wearing. Give me your hand baby it's your first day. Are you you excited?

FRANCESCA

(Sweetly)

Thank you mommy. No, I'm not excited. I like pink it's pretty. Are there other kids in there, are they nice, mommy?

Stella stops her pace and bends down to her level. She hugs her daughter.

STELLA

(Worried)

Frankie, are you scared baby? This is going to be exciting and you'll be busy... with lots of activities painting, learning to count and maybe planting a fruit tree. And you'll sing your ABC's, just like what we've been doing at home. Mommy has to work too, and sometimes Poppa will pick you up if I can't. Don't worry about the other kids, you know why? Because you're my supergirl, and you're tough. Now let's go and conquer the world!

Stella walks beside Frankie, their hands clasped, tears falling unseen behind her Ferragamo sunglasses.

FRANCESCA
(Smiling)
Thank you, mommy. Hugs and kisses,
mommy. I love you best.

EXT. STELLA'S HOUSE - DAY

Carlo arrives in his Mercedes with Stella and six year old Frankie. He helps a frail Stella out and unbuckles Frankie. Stella grips Carlo's arm while Frankie holds her other hand

INT. STELLA'S HOUSE - DAY

Franco sits on the couch using WhatsApp while he waits for his girls to come home.

FRANCO
(Scoffing)
Take care of the assets in that
account, Marco. It can't sit there,
You know what I mean? If you don't
have the guts, go rub the bulls
balls outside that building, or
I'll get someone else to handle
this. Don't get shaky my friend,
Calm down. It's time to buy some
shares, and I'll let you know when
to trade. You got it? Yeah,
alright. Ciao

Carlo and Stella steps inside, and Frankie races in to greet her Poppa.

FRANCO (CONT'D)
(Happy)
Alright, alright, you got me right
in my heart, baby girl. Now run
along with uncle Carlo into the
kitchen he'll make Pizza and ice
cream while mommy and I have a
chat, okay?

Frankie skips away with Carlo as Stella sits. Franco bends down before her taking her hand.

FRANCO (CONT'D)
(Concerned)
Whoa, Stella, honey, what's the
matter?
(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

What happened at the doctors? Did somebody mistreat you, baby? Just tell me and I'll take care of it.

STELLA

(Distraught)

Franco, I have Cancer. It's ovarian cancer. I have a couple of months maybe weeks. I need to know you'll care for Frankie, and make sure she doesn't inherit this shit.

Franco's face falls, drowned in shock, and frozen.

FRANCO

(Gutted, devastated)

What? What are you saying, Stella you're not going to survive this? We've got to get another opinion, a third Stella. You can't just die baby, we have Frankie to raise. she's gonna need you , I need you Stella

Franco's voice trailed off, as he sinks into her lap, Stella's tears pouring over him.

FRANCO (CONT'D)

(Emotional)

What are we going to tell our princess? We've got tell her something, my love okay?

STELLA

(Nodding slowly)

Okay, we'll tell her something. Promise me nothing sad. She's our supergirl, our hero, our miracle baby...

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

My father loved my mother, and he respected her. Stella wasn't like the other women he dated behind Sophia's back. I remember a lot, I was perceptive, and they told me something. I couldn't understand that something good was going to die, my beautiful sweet mother. My father changed after she died. He was angrier, and snapped at everyone except me.

(MORE)

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

He had to rely on Sophia to raise me, but he kept an eye on me, just in case my stepmother abused me. I never told him. I wanted to stand on my own two feet.

INT. FRANCO'S OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

HIROMI SAKAMOTO (mid 20's), a beautiful Asian woman, straddles Franco, as they continue to have sex. Franco tight grip on her hips draws a moan.

HIROMI

(Moaning)

I want you, please don't stop ...
harder, I like it that way ohhh,
yes.

Franco covers her mouth as their ecstasy peaks.

INT. FRANCO'S OFFICE - PRESENT DAY (CONT'D)

Hiromi smooths down her dress. Combs through her hair, and watches Franco button his shirt. She goes to him.

HIROMI

(Softly)

Franco, I'm three months pregnant,
and I'm to have our baby.

Franco stares at Hiromi in silence, and takes her hand.

FRANCO

(Whispering)

Are you sure? You want this baby? I mean, I'm happy to have another kid, but we have to keep this as a secret, do you understand? No one can know. I'm taking responsibility, don't worry about that. It's not going to be easy, I already have Francesca and another baby outside of my marriage... Oh my God, a baby. Do you know what the sex yet? What are we having?

Hiromi's eyes swells up in tears.

HIROMI

(Nodding)

Yes, we are going to have a boy,
Franco.

(MORE)

HIROMI (CONT'D)

You must keep Sophia away from me,
Or I'll have no choice but to
eliminate her. I can hide, but for
only one more month. I won't be
returning here until next year. You
already know that you have my
partnership on the Casinos, if
anything changes, don't hesitate to
discuss it with me. Now you have a
family in me. We have a bond.

Franco scoops Hiromi into his arms and embraces her.

FRANCO

(Teasing, growling)

Alright, tough momma-san, but you
swear nothing is going to harm you
and my unborn son? You got to be
careful. Trust no one, but me.
Otherwise, you'll stay in the
Atlantis Penthouse. Let's get you
both out of here. I'll come to your
room later, give you a proper send
off.

HIROMI

(Re-assuring)

We'll be fine. I have security
around me at all times, and
Takahashi is loyal to me. He'll
kill if, I ask him to.

Hiromi exits Franco's office. Takahashi Sato and the driver
rush to her side, quickly opening the door.

INT. HALLWAY GUEST CLOSET - PRESENT - DAY

Francesca, cracks the door and peers out, as Franco escorts
Hiromi down the hall

FRANCESCA

(Muttering)

Well, I guess it's been Hiromi all
along. I hope Sophia finds out,
that'll be loads of fun. Hiromi
Sakamoto, Poppa's secret lover. A
baby boy? A brother? What are you
doing Poppa? Holy shit.

Francesca inches out of the closet, listening, then breaks
into a run, racing to her room.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

Let me begin with Hiromi Sakamoto. She was a child bride, forced to marry at sixteen to a Yakuza Boss from Tokyo, an old geezer. Hiromi was beautiful, smart and obedient. By twenty two, she came regularly with her husband, AKIRA SAKAMOTO, wearing a kimono, walking behind him with her head down. Every six months they met with Franco, they were investors and partners in our Casinos. Then, the next couple of years later, Akira wasn't showing up at all. But, Hiromi did in beautiful dresses and high heels. She became the Yakuza Boss when Akira became sick, and eventually dies. She wasn't meek or quiet anymore. Sophia grew weary of her visits and suspected Hiromi was having an affair with Franco. I, over heard Carlo mentioning that Akira had a heart attack.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

Listen, these women I saw growing up, having them inside my home, was jarring. My stepmother Sophia, the evil one, Rapheala the kind one, and the stern dike Paola. They held executive roles my father created for them, after they fled their homeland in Sicily. Their husbands had worked for grandpa Luigi back then, serving long prison sentences before eventually getting killed. They were widows and needed help, so Grandpa Luigi made it his mission to get them and their families out, one by one. They left behind their husbands crimes, in racketing, drugs, extortions and murder. My father had to please grandpa Luigi. And eventually something big happened, and my father had to cut both women loose from his legitimate business.

INT. THE ATLANTIS EXECUTIVE OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

Franco is mid-meeting with the three women RAPHEALA MORONE (40's), a petite blond wholesome beauty and quiet personality, wears a Chanel business suit. Her only son, Antonio was killed in a car accident at sixteen.

RAPHEALA
(Pleasant)
Good morning everyone. It's going to be a busy day. I hope this won't take long, so what is this about?

PAOLA AGLIERIA (50's), tall and fit short silver hair, aggressive, openly gay, sits like a padrone in jeans and western boots, smoking.

PAOLA
(Agreeing)
Yeah, Rapheala is right, what are we doing here ?

Franco's wife, SOPHIA GUGINO (late 30's) from Naples - dark hair, dark eyes, buxom, joins the meeting. She's dressed in a Valentino suit. Sophia is the youngest amongst them. She waits for the meeting to begin.

CARLO
(Observes)
Good to see you all, ladies. Franco should be off the phone soon. Is everyone well?

RAPHEALA
(Smiles)
Yes, Carlo. I'm well, thank you for asking and hopefully you are too.

Carlo returns a kind smile.

The other two ignore him, busy on their phones.

INT. FRANCO'S OFFICE - PRESENT - DAY (CONT'D)

Franco approaches the table to begin commanding the room the women stop scrolling, attention shifting to him.

FRANCO
(Intense)
Hello, ladies thank you for taking the time away from your busy schedules to be here today.
(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

I have been carrying this weight on my shoulders for months. Before Luigi, my father died, he was insecure about how to protect our assets better. He was concerned about the future. And of course I always said that it is. Today I feel the same as he did. My heart is broken, but thats life no?

PAOLA

(Impatience)

Hey boss get to the point, what are you getting at, your making me nervous. What do you mean your heart is broken?

Franco pauses, breath catching then moves on.

So, like what I was saying before you interjected... we've have been doing well without paying out any cops or the feds or get us out of trouble, should we ever get into one. And so far, so good. That's why I have JEFF O'CONNER (60) Attorney At Law and his boys, and I want to keep it that way. Doing Legitimate business and my casinos are doing exactly that.

Franco studies them, their expressions shift to defiance edged with arrogant.

RAPHEALA

(Chuckles)

Legitimate? What about the Sakamoto's their not exactly legit, or are they?

FRANCO

(Smiling)

As far as our investors are concerned, it's not my business what they do over there. On our side, it is. They went into the Casino's with \$900 Million and the rest was in a cashier's check. They were very cautious with their investment, and I respect that.

FRANCO (CONT'D)

(Uneasiness)

The fact that I made you Rapheala and you Paola, when your husbands got terminated from the inside makes me want to change things around here quickly. Look, we're not from the old country anymore and we are Americans. I have zero investments over there or owe anybody anything.

But, if somebody tries to fuck around with me and my family, will that's going to be a problem. I don't want war... I'm not saying that we're a target for some families, I don't think so... but, let me be clear there is that jealousy out there. I'm a man of my word. I'm a business man who owns two successful casinos and I won't let anymore outsiders getting in. We already have Hiromi Sakamoto Family... we continue to be successful, they have no issue with us, I owe them my loyalty, billions of it.

Carlo rises and leans close, and whispers to Franco, all eyes on them. Sophia's face tightens, at the mention of Hiromi Sakamoto's name, her expression hardens disapproving.

FRANCO (CONT'D)

(Unnerved , Calm)

Paola, I want you to take the first step. Clean up your side business you have been operating behind my back. Don't think for a moment I didn't know about the heroine and whatever drugs you've got on the streets. Your business with the Cartels has nothing to do with me and my Casinos, do you understand? Make that distinction clear to whoever your associates and your distributor.

Paola was speechless for a moment.

Rapheala, did you think you can run a prostitution nightclub without people across town and not tell me?

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

Are you two out of your fucking mind? Where's all the money you've have been keeping from me?

PAOLA

(Angry, exposed)

What, you want us to apologize for being ambitious? You brought us in to help secure the casinos and run it with you, and now you want me and Rapheala to give it all up? Franco we could get killed. We've got families back home to feed too you know that.

Franco listens in silence until Paola sits back down, then slams his hands on the table.

FRANCO

(Outraged, betrayed)

I don't want it and I don't need it...you wanna know why? Because I'm the CEO of Atlantis and the Marquis. I will not have any connection to yours or Paola's corruption. I gave you both and your families the life you dreamed of, but you got greedy and deceitful, and now I am in a tough and tough position. Am I understood? I don't want any involvement.

RAPHEALA

(Trying to be convincing)

Rapheala speaks in Italian.

Mi stavo annoiando al casino e ho visto che Paola se la cavava bene con i soldi e non avevo niente di meglio da affaire. Quello che ho guadagnato al casino e cio che ho investito con Paola. E un bel club che ho aperto, tu e Carlo dovrete venire a trovarlo. Non posso chiuderlo Franco. Non si tratta solo di prostituire le loro ballerine professioniste!

Translation:

I was getting bored at the casino and I saw Paola was doing okay with her money and I had nothing better going on.

(MORE)

RAPHEALA (CONT'D)

What I earned from the casino is what I invested with Paola. It's a nice club I opened, come and visit. I can't shut it down Franco there are investors I can't do it. It's not just about the girls...their professional dancers too!

Franco sits composed, hands clasped on the table, Carlo to his right. The door opens... Jeff enters with WILLIAM and JOSEPH briefcases snap open, files come out.

JEFF O'CONNER

(Confident)

Here you go, Rapheala, and for you Paola. Please read and sign. If you need more time to go over this, myself, Bill and Joseph can help. They speak Italian very well.

Both women shifts to Sophia, who's visibly unsettled.

JEFF O'CONNER (CONT'D)

(Professional)

This is an Exclusion of the pre-existing contract you both had when you were hired at the Casinos. This is a legal Contract of Exclusion. You Rapheala, and Paola are being excluded, terminated from the Atlantis and the Marquis. You will not hold any positions, and you both keep the earnings you've made from your side businesses.

The Casino's are giving you both a hundred fifty thousand dollars as a good-will parting gift. This is a stipulation and condition agreed between parties... you and your associates are never to step inside or near the perimeter of the properties.

SOPHIA

(Pleading)

Oh, come on Franco, they're our family. They worked hard for us. You cannot let them go like this. Have some compassion.

FRANCO

(Calm)

I'm not banning them from being your friends. But from me. I've made this clear, and I've washed my hands from this betrayal. How should I cut them loose? The old way is terror at first, then quick and easy and no one ever feels a thing. That's compassion, and I'm being kind. Do you see the difference?

Rapheala quickly fills in the gaps before Paola cuts in.

RAPHEALA

(Glancing at Carlo)

Why are we being punished, can't you understand... you could have more than just your casinos, Franco. But I know you could do worse to me, and I will accept this offer and your gift. I'm sorry it went this way. I wish it hadn't thank you for your generosity.

PAOLA

(Exploding, furious)

Franco, your making a very big mistake. My business runs smoothly because I'm a godmother, and when a woman runs a business, it's like having a mommy. They'll do anything to please me. I appreciate what you and your Poppa did for us back then, and that won't be forgotten, but this? Che Dio ci aiuti!

FRANCO

(Suppressed anger)

I'm humbled by your kind words, but you see, you girls got very greedy and never discussed anything with me. You went behind my back, which could have compromised the reputation of my Casinos. That's a classic betrayal. Now sign the damned contract before I changed my mind. And get out.

After Paola's outburst, Franco rises, drifts to the window, and watches his attorneys reflected behind him.

JEFF O'CONNER

(Professional)

Alright, Franco, I will execute these immediately. Here are your copies. Thank you, and have a good rest of your afternoon.

The door slams Franco turns to see Sophia on her way out.

FRANCO

(Yelling)

Hey, where do think you're going? You can't go just yet. I'm not done especially with you. Go pour us a drink and come here.

Carlo collects the signed papers, slips them into Franco's briefcase. then exits, locking the door.

INT. FRANCO'S OFFICE - DAY (CONT'D)

SOPHIA

(Eyes Widened)

Yeah, sure whats this about? Am I gonna get a spanking? I haven't done anything, Franco... if your accusing me of something no?

Franco leans back nursing his scotch she made, eyes tracking Sophia with a small gesture, he signals her to stand in front of him.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(Playing obedient)

Now that you have me feeling uncomfortable... Look, I did know about their extracurricular business, but I didn't help them with anything.

Sophia stands vulnerable in front of Franco, who glares at her incredulously. He rises, circles behind her, close enough for his breath to touch her skin.

FRANCO

(Whispering in her ear)

So you knew. Get down on your knees and ask me for forgiveness, and while you're down there, unzip me and pray.

Time drags. Franco remains in control. Sophia exhales, conceding without a word.

FRANCO (CONT'D)
 Yeah, Sophia I can't hear you.
 Stand up and turn around, bend
 over.

Franco's hands moves under her dress, as she confesses. He
 hikes her dress up further and enters her.

SOPHIA
 (Moans in Pleasure)
 Please, please forgive me, I will
 never betray you, my love. I won't!

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Sophia meets Paola and Rapheala behind a towering statue of
 the Virgin Mary. Dark veils conceal their faces kneeling as
 light candles, murmur prayers, then they slip to a wooden
 bench in the rear.

SOPHIA
 (Whispering)
 Look we've got to stick together,
 don't give it away, Paola. I
 managed to tell Franco I knew, but
 I didn't help you. We can't afford
 to have him know that I bankrolled
 your businesses. He's a fake Saint.
 I smoothed him over, that
 cocksucker.

The women lower their voices as a priest takes notice. One of
 Paola's men steps in, blocking his approach.

RAPHEALA
 (Retorting)
 Easy for you to say, Sophia, but he
 could easily kill us. I never
 thought we'd be fucking banned.
 What are we supposed to do now?

Rapheala's forehead shines with sweat, her gaze tense and on
 edge. Paola sneers, cutting Rapheala down with a mocking
 glance.

PAOLA
 (Snapping)
 Ah, come on Rapheala, stop being
 such a little pussy. Have some
 balls like us will ya. It doesn't
 matter whether we never get to step
 inside that damned Casino...
 (MORE)

PAOLA (CONT'D)

we've got our own success happening right here, right now. I have a new crate of goodies Gonzales is bringing in tonight be ready with your best girls take the VIP clients to smoke in the private rooms. I want to see how fast this new shit hits.

SOPHIA

(Agreeing, chuckling)

Paola's right grow some balls, and stop sweating. what's the matter with you? Lets get out of here the heat's is making my clothes stick. Hey! Father, get a new A/C for fucking sake!

On the way out, Sophia linger's, pressing money into the priest's hand.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(Sternly)

Here, take this. Eight hundred dollars, put it toward a new A/C.

FLASHBACK:

INT. TOKYO, JAPAN - DAY

On the hot rooftop an older AKIRA SAKAMOTO, in a baseball cap, summer kimono, half dazed, carefully snips dead leaves from a bonsai, shears unsteady in his hand. Hiromi emerges onto the terrace balancing a tray of refreshments and a pitcher of ice green tea.

HIROMI

(Shielding her eyes)

Akira-san koko ni kite naniko
nomimono o nonde kudasi. Nan-jikan
mo atsui chugai ni dete itanode,
dassui shojo ni natte iru kanosei
ga arimusu.

Translation

Akira come here and have something
to drink. You've been out here in
the heat for hours, you could get
dehydrated.

Akira turns toward Hiromi's voice, and pauses, shears still in hand.

AKIRA

(Senile)

A, nomimono o motte kite kurete
hontoni arigato. Tsuma ga jibun de
okutte kite no kashiro? Gurasu ni
sosoide-chu ni haite, anata no
karada o misete agemashou. Wakai
itsuma to onaji kurai kawaii wa.

Translation:

Ah, so sweet of you to bring me
refreshments. Did my wife send you
instead of herself? Pour me a
glass, and lets go inside so I can
see your body. You're as pretty as
my wife.

(P.O.V.)- Akira waves off the tray, his attention caught by
the the young woman in front of him.

HIROMI

(Puzzled, apprehensive)

Yoshi, kiwotsusukete. Me ga mabushi-
sa ni nareru made, sukoshi yukkuri
shite. Daijobu? Sa, arate.

Translation:

Ok, be careful, take it easy for a
minute until your eyes adjust to
the glare. You alright? Now go and
wash up. You should drink some of
this.

INT. SAKAMOTO HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Hiromi guides Akira into their bedroom. He throws his cap on
the floor, lays his shear on the table, then steps away. When
he returns, he glares at Hiromi like she's a stranger.

HIROMI

(Alert)

Akira-san, kochira ni kite sukoshi
yasunde kudasai. Watashi mo sukoshi
hirune o shiyoi to omoimasu. Kono
atsusa de tsukarete shimatte.
Nanika otetsudai shimashou ka?
Tsumetai mizu o tsukaimashita ka?
Akira-san watashi no koe ga kikoete
imasu ka?

Translation:

Akira- san, please come here and rest for a while, I think I need a nap too, this heat is making me tired. Do you need my help? Did you use cold water? Akira-san did you hear me?

AKIRA

(Belligerent, violent)

He, ore no tonari ni netai tte?
Omae, shirigaru on'na ka? Ore to yaru tame ni tsuma ga yokoshita no ka? Owattara-kin o haratte yaru yo. Ore ga nani dekiru ka misete yarukara kotchi e koi yo. Kono shirigaru on'na-me omae wa marude ore no tsuma to isshoda na!

Translation:

Oh, you want me to lie beside you?
Are you a whore? Did my wife send you to fuck, then pay you after eh?
I'll show you what I can do. Come here then! you're just like my wife! Hehe...

Akira violently attacks and rips at her clothes. Hiromi falls backward. He bites down on her breasts, she fights him off and crawls to the center of the bed desperate to escape.

HIROMI

(Screaming in horror)

Stop, Akira! stop! argh you fucking asshole! Get away from me, stop!

Hiromi fights for her life, gets on top, yanks the pillow free and smothers him until his body goes limp.

HIROMI (CONT'D)

(Heavy breathing, crying)

Die, you fucking disgusting piece of shit! For so many years you abused me mentally and physically, and I took it over and over and over! I hate you! Go to hell you hear me! Now your finally dead.

Hiromi, disheveled, takes the pillow off Akira's face and tucks it back under his head.

HIROMI (CONT'D)

(Breathing heavily)

I should have done this a long time ago.

(MORE)

HIROMI (CONT'D)

I thought you would have change as you got older, but you got sicker... you only wanted me as your muse, taking pleasure of abusing me. You sick fuck. Now you're dead, and I will be more than just a figurehead in your seat. I will not step down. I will be better than you.

INT. THE EXTRAORDINAIRE CLUB - PRESENT - NIGHT

Rapheala sits in a spacious office, eyes on live surveillance covering the floor and private rooms.

RAPHEALA

(Paranoid)

Hey, Paola where the hell is your man Gonzalez? He was supposed to be here thirty minutes ago. It's getting late and it's very crowded, this is the perfect time. What? What? What do you mean? Ah, shit! What are you going to do? Does Sophia know?

Rapheala clicks off, deep in thought, fixed on the monitors, while the dancers performs.

RAPHEALA (CONT'D)

(Muttering)

Oh, Jesus, what the hell... how do I get out from this? Should I go to Carlo? Oh God, please let me find my way out of this.

The dancers were young and beautiful. Exceptionally handpicked by a professional choreographer. The women had to be experienced. They've signed an NDA contract stipulating they will see and hear nothing.

EXT: ALBUQUERQUE NEW MEXICO - NEVADA ROUTE I- 40 - EVENING

Two men inside a Lincoln Navigator tear down a desolate road toward Las Vegas. Latin reggae pounds through the speakers headlights ignite ahead blocking the road. Another car surges up behind them, high beams blasting into the cabin. They're boxed in.

LINCOLN DRIVER

(Bellowing in shock)

What the fuck, watch out!

(MORE)

LINCOLN DRIVER (CONT'D)

You motherfuckers! Holy shit...
turn! No!

The driver is blindsided the Lincoln skids off the road at high speed, flips multiple times, and lands upside down.

(P.O.V.) Toro and Nacho charge toward the Lincoln, breathing hard. They rip open the driver and passenger doors. Inside, both men hang upside down still buckled in. Toro and Nacho fire, executing them with shots to the head.

TORO

(Shouting)

Get the the two suitcases out, now
hurry up! Hey, I gotta an idea...
lets scoop up those dry weeds, come
on throw it inside. As much as you
can, fill the back and the front.

Toro, unaware that Nacho is already walking away with two suitcases, goes berserk, hurling weeds into the Lincoln.

NACHO

(Yells, pissed off)

Dude, you go and do that. I gotta
get these suitcases out of here
they're fucking heavy. Hurry up,
bro Lets go, light it up Pendejo!

The Lincoln's backseat ignites. They stand there watching the flames.

NACHO (CONT'D)

(Laughing)

Hey, man we better go, it looks
like it's about to blow big. Shit!

EXT. I-40 - DESOLATE ROAD - NIGHT

They run, putting distance between themselves and the inferno consuming the Lincoln.

TORO

(Heavy breathing)

Hurry up Nacho. Man come on... here
give me the other one. For being a
skinny dude you're slow.

NACHO

(Huffing)

Yeah, easy for you to say, Toro I
got an old injury on my back from
my boxing days.

(MORE)

NACHO (CONT'D)

Never got the treatment I should
have. Thanks for the help Pendejo.

The inferno swells, and within seconds explodes. A phone rings somewhere inside the Lincoln. Nacho and Toro continue running toward their cars, explosion debris slams down nearby, missing their heads by inches.

NACHO (CONT'D)

(Shocked)

Holy shit... it missed our heads!
Hey, Toro we should have checked
their pockets, It could have been
something important.

TORO

(Considering)

Nah, dude are you serious? We need
to drive, now. Forget about it
brother. Drive safe meet you back
at the casino. Wait for the phone
call. Arrivederci

INT. THE ATLANTIS CASINO - NIGHT

Franco and Carlo watch the surveillance monitor covering both casinos, faces lit by the flicker of security feeds. Carlo's phone rings, he answers.

CARLO

(Chuckling)

That's real funny, Nacho. Get back
here with the Suitcases and no more
dilly-dallying, understand? Boss is
waiting for your arrival.

Franco idly swirls the ice cube in his glass, In the the open desk drawer, his Smith & Wesson lies in plain view. Carlo relaxes in a large leather chair, reading a newspaper.

FRANCO

(Anxious)

You know, generally people read the
newspaper in the morning, during
breakfast and coffee. You're
special Carlo, you don't do
anything normal. When our friends
get here, don't open the suitcases
until they leave and you have their
envelopes ready... fifty K each.
That was a gigantic task.

CARLO

(Chuckling)

Aw, boss, I'm touched. I really am. You said I'm special. Yeah, just like you said, fifty K each. Why are you rethinking the payments? Is that why you've got your buddy over there? If I were you, I'd have it on top of the table in front of you.

Franco takes Carlo's advice and places his pistol on the table in front of him.

FRANCO

(Smirking)

Yeah, you're right, showing it is better. That's why I can't live without you, Carlo.

A knock at the door. Nacho and Toro are patted down, they smile for the cameras, their pistol are confiscated before they're allowed in.

INT. THE ATLANTIS CASINO OFFICE - NIGHT

NACHO, a tall skinny Latino with a bearded face enters with TORO, his heavyset friend, dragging the suitcases. Franco stays at his desk, as Carlo hands them their envelopes. The two men are speechless.

FRANCO

(Stern, direct)

Any problems that could follow you back here? Now this is going to seem unfamiliar to you two, because I'm warning you both and you know what I'm talking about...it's not going to be pretty around here. If the job you both got hired gets discovered. I suggest you men get out of town tonight and go in different directions. Understand? Carlo, give them a little more.

Carlo digs into his pocket and hands them five hundred each. Nacho and Toro nod and leave the Casino. Carlo unzips the suitcases, Franco snaps upright and moves beside him.

FRANCO (CONT'D)

(Whistling)

Holy fuck, what are we looking at here?

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

About two million, three million, Carlo? So this is Paola's and she supplies it to Rapheala's Extraordinaire. I'd would love to be a fly on their wall. White China, pure white Carlo... but then again it could have fentanyl derivatives mix in, deadly. Don't unpack it, put in the vault. We're Saints tonight Carlo.

Carlo closes the suitcases and steps to the corner. A panel slides open, scans his face, and a door opens revealing the vault room.

FLASHBACK:

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

(Narrating)

That's right... I remember when Poppa tricked me. He said, he needed my help to look for a red bunny. I was eight years old, excited, and standing on a chair. Poppa said to keep my eyes wide open. Then he helped me down and hugged me...it's for my future when get taller" he said. That didn't make any sense, and I told I didn't see a red bunny. Poppa went after me, and yelled, "I found it! Carlo laughed and took his turn. My father was no ordinary man.. he loved high technology. He figured enemies can cut off someone's hand and use their thumbprints, but no one can replicate a retina, so biometric security systems for The Atlantis was perfect. Then later we did the same thing for The Marquis. Poppa took a Bible, and place his hand down and Carlo and I followed. We took an oath and swore that no one could know about our secret vaults. No one, he repeated. From that day forward only the three of guarded the vaults.

INT. STELLA RISTORANTE - PRESENT - NIGHT

Franco and Carlo, dressed in their Armani suits, relax over red wine in their private corner booth set against burgundy seating, exposed brick, wood paneling and mirrored accents.

FRANCO

(Topsy)

Did I ever tell you, Carlo why I designed it with mirrors? You can see it all. I like sneaking a peek now and then at the people in each table, but most importantly, we sit facing every table. We have to be prepared at all times. And it was Stella's favorite color.

CARLO

(Chuckles)

Yeah, boss, I've heard it before. I love it here you know... its a special place.

A marble bar counter, dark wood accents, and an open kitchen give the space a warm inviting feel. Franco's tribute a memoir to Stella. Franco's general manager, ALBERTO COSTA(60), an employee for nine years and a good friend, met Franco and Carlo during trips to Sicily.

ALBERTO

(Cheerful)

Ciao, buonasera Franco, Carlo. How are you both? Can I start you gentlemen with something? You're both starving, waiting for the birthday girl. We've got everything ready, so don't worry... eat eat!

FRANCO

(Anxious)

Yeah, yeah, bring us that the fritto misto, focaccia and the little gem salad... but we gotta wait for Frankie to order the mains. I want the filet Mignon after. Oh, don't forget I want every table to have a glass of champagne to cheer Francesca. I'm tearing up Carlo, where is my handkerchief?

CARLO

(Laughing)

Alright, take it easy boss, you're gonna make me cry too. Here, take mine. I swear I didn't use it to blow my nose. Ah, shit we need food we drank too fast. By the way, isn't Sophia supposed to be here for this?

(P.O.V.) Francesca walks into her twenty-first birthday party, confident and poised, in a black chiffon organza dress gold heels, and a Chanel clutch. She draws every eye. Her shoulder length brown hair and sharp hazel eyes resembles both parents. Staff and patrons applaud as moves past the open kitchen whistles trailing behind her.

INT. STELLA RISTORANTE - PRESENT (CONT'D

She greets Franco and Carlo in their booth, and both men embrace her.

FRANCESCA

(Chuckles Happily)

Aww, Poppa this is so nice. I love you thank you for this party. I can't believe you guys did all of this for me. Uncle Carlo come here thank you so much. I'm sorry I'm late ... I'm so hungry.

The birthday celebration continues, a towering cake and champagne flowing at every table, Francesca is officially named Franco's successor, inheriting CEO title and partnered leadership.

FRANCO

(Melancholy)

I wish your mother could have been here today. Stella would be so proud of you. Hey, did you feel her here? Maybe I'm drunk but, I thought I felt her warmth sitting right here next to me. Ah, shit I'm sorry I'm emotional again. I almost forgot Carlo and I had this made for you. Happy Birthday sweetheart. Congratulations.

FRANCESCA

(Adoring gaze)

It's alright, Poppa to be emotional today.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Your only daughter turned twenty-one, I'm sure I will be the same. You know I never forget mommy I do feel her sometimes.

Francesca opens her gift. Both men watch quietly as Frankie slides the gold and diamond signet ring onto her right pinky FG engraved inside. Franco's and Carlo's phone vibrates Franco ignores his, Carlo takes his.

CARLO

(Serious)

Please excuse me, Frankie... boss I better take this call. I'm sorry.

Carlo takes the call and moves to the second level of the restaurant. The restaurant empties out. Franco waits for the right moment to speak openly to his daughter.

FRANCO

(Smiles)

Hey, kid did your old man do good tonight? You look beautiful Frankie, and I am so proud of you. Now that you have reached twenty-one, its serious time. You are my heir my firstborn, and you know about your brother Hiroshi...he is sixteen now. If something were to happen to me Frankie, you take over not Sophia or anybody else. Carlo will be at your side. Hiroshi is a good boy it's time for you both to meet. He knows of you too. Hiromi will see to it that you both eventually meet. You know she has been my anchor. She's a good woman, and she is faithful, my voice of reason. However, she is skeptical about Hiroshi living here.

(P.O.V) Francesca sits stoic, listening to her father's instruction.

FRANCESCA

(Chuckling)

Poppa, you've have outdone yourself you've given me the world and then some. What happened to mommy wasn't your fault. Please stop blaming yourself for her illness. I've been vigilant with my annual exams. I'm fine no worries there. Now, what can I do for Hiroshi?

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Hiromi is his mother, and he is a Japanese citizen. You should start applying for his dual citizenship. Have Hiromi come with him every six months and start establishing that. Is this what's troubling you and uncle Carlo?

Franco stares at his daughter.

FRANCO

(Concerned)

Yeah, that's a very bold and bright idea, Frankie. But, that means the boy has to be protected at all times. I'll have them stay at the Penthouse at The Marquis rather than the Atlantis. Our troubles are with Sophia and the other two. I found out Sophia fronts the money for Paola and she gets her cut of forty five percent cut. I filed for a divorce... she gets serve in a couple of days. I don't love her I never have. It was to help my father, and she's a scorned woman... I don't blame her. She didn't come to your twenty-first birthday party like I've asked her to. You know what she said? This place was named after my whore mistress and shame on me for naming it after her. That woman is a real piece of work. I can see it clearly now.

FRANCESCA

(Anxious)

What's happening up there with that phone call? Hey uncle Carlo! What's going on, come down already?

Carlo comes rushing down the stairs towards them.

CARLO

(Distress)

Yeah I coming, I figured you guys needed father and daughter time. Look, we've got trouble. Two young guys got caught working together, blackjack and roulette. Management recently hired two new dealers for the blackjack and the roulette. Security's holding them.

(MORE)

CARLO (CONT'D)

We need to go, Mark's waiting for us. Can you believe this shit, in this day and age... dealer collusion, my ass.

Francesca gets to her feet, serious and concerned. Franco moves into action.

FRANCESCA

(Smirking, joking)

And here I thought you were up there talking to a lover. You were taking too long, so I ate your cake.

The trio leaves their table.

FRANCO

(Uncertain)

Frankie, I think you should go back home. I don't want them seeing you when we interrogate. You know what I mean ? You never want to do this, even when you take over. I want your hands clean at all times. We have people to do this.

FRANCESCA

(Unyielding)

What? Come on, Poppa its my twenty-first birthday no? You said it yourself, I gotta take my place, and now it is as good time as ever. You're looking at me like, I've come unhinged... I haven't. I'am preparing for that time, and that time is tonight. I want to see how it's being handled. It's important for me to see what steps are taken, not violence, not chopping bodies and bagging them, alright? I'll stay in the monitor room to watch and listen.

Franco and Carlo are powerless against Francesca's authority and conviction.

INT. ATLANTIS CASINO SECURITY OFFICE - NIGHT

(P.O.V) Francesca sits alone, eyes on the surveillance monitors. Two young men are tied back to back while Franco and Carlo walks into the room.

FRANCO

(Smirks)

So, RUDY and EDGAR it's nice to meet you boys. I don't know why they tied you guys up. Did you fight them or something? Hey, guys untie them and leave us. Now we're alone, we can start.

Edgar and Rudy are untied by two casino security guards, who exit without a word. Edgar and Rudy immediately rub their wrists, shaking out the numbness.

EDGAR

(Mortified)

I'm really sorry, sir for doing this, but Rudy and I we were just testing our theory. We weren't trying to cheat or steal your Casino's money.

Carlo in the corner, shifted his weight. Franco takes notice.

RUDY

(Terrified)

Yes sir, Edgar is telling the truth. We are not crooks, we're really good people. We were just having stupid fun. We don't know the dealers, I swear.

FRANCO

(Smirking)

Well, looks like we'll be here all night, better get comfortable. What do you think, Carlo should we break off their fingers one by one? How old are you Edgar? And you, Freddy? Twenty-six and twenty-five and this is the first thing you boys wanted to do, in my Casino's dime?

Carlo corrects him on Edgars's friend name, then takes Franco's jacket.

CARLO

(Interjects)

Give me your jacket, Boss, I can see your sweating listening to this bullshit. You know why the two of us are dressed up in our best Armani?

(MORE)

CARLO (CONT'D)

Because we were having a great time celebrating his daughter twenty-first birthday, and I got a call and had to interrupt our time with her. Where do you guys live? Where are you guys from? Are you best friends? Where are your parents, siblings? Where do you work? I want everything that I just asked, answer now. Are there any other accomplices! Have you done this before? You'll notice my voice isn't asking you boys with questions. Start talking and don't stop!

Carlo's hands Crash onto the table. Edgar and Rudy flinch hard the rush into nervous, tangled explanations.

INT. MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

Frankie text message Franco and Carlo.

FRANCESCA

(Unconvinced)

Alright, I've seen and heard enough. Please come in, it's time to stop. Thank you.

Franco and Carlo receive the texts and exit without a word. Edgar and Carlo grab for water and drink too fast, spilling half of it. Edgar pours what's left over his head.

RUDY

(Staring)

Really dude?

EDGAR

(Distressed)

Oh, fuck, what did we get ourselves into Rudy? I'm sorry brother. I didn't think our hand gestures meant anything, but here we are, they think we're crooks. What a night. We didn't do anything, but if this continues we're going to need a Lawyer.

Next door, Francesca paces. Franco and Carlo enters.

FRANCESCA

(Chuckling)

You guys had me going in there.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Those guys are cute and stupid... amateurs, at best. Silicon Valley boys, geeks, no strategic move at all. What are we doing about this? Security thought they were card-switching and using hand signals, and that didn't look related to the game they were playing. It seemed they were saying that they were "we're losing too much, let's get the fuck out of here, I've no more money left." The floor security needs to be re-trained. This is a waste of time. They need to learn American sign language. I'm looking at this objectively, and with common sense. There's no way those two are capable of pulling anything off. Let's hold on to their ID's or passports, and have Mark at the Station check into their identities. In the meantime give them food, water, and bathroom breaks, throw them a blanket and a pillow. They can sit there for punishment and let them think about hand signals they were making. I don't want to have a Lawsuit thrown at us.

Franco and Carlo didn't argue and complied.

FRANCO

(Chuckling)

A pillow, seriously? Okay this has been entertaining. I gotta admit, that was fun huh, Carlo.

The three walks out amused, and give the security team instructions.

FRANCESCA

(Smiling)

I'll be here by 7:30a.m. to follow through on this. I have an idea what I want for Edgar and Rudy.

FRANCO

(Proudly)

Frankie, be careful, don't go soft just because Edgar's a hottie. But in all seriousness, happy birthday my darling daughter. I'm curious what you have up your sleeve.

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

Alright, Carlo you ready to drive me home buddy?

CARLO

(Chuckling)

Yeah, me too. Goodnight, Frankie drive safely. We'll follow you first, if thats alright with you?

FRANCESCA

(Smirking)

Yeah, sure... if I say no, you'll do it anyway.

Int. ATLANTIS CASINO SECURITY OFFICE -day

Francesca strides in wearing ripped jeans, a designer T-shirt, platform combat boots. The men sit up fast when they see her.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

(Polite Smile)

Good morning, guys. Here you go boys... this is yours Mr.EDGAR CRAWFORD, and here is yours Mr. RUDY BLAINE. Everything checked out, thank goodness. Are you two staying in this hotel? Ok great! After you guys get cleaned up, and had your breakfast, you're both requested to meet at the Executive suite office forty-fifth floor with the bosses by noon. Any question?

EDGAR

(Snarky, exhausted)

Thank you, and I'm sorry for the havoc we caused. Yes, we're staying here. Free again, Rudy old boy. What time did you say the meeting is? Do you know what it's about? I thought I was gonna sleep in my back is killing me, but yeah, I guess we'll there.

When Edgar and Rudy collects themselves, Francesca is already gone.

INT. CASINO EXECUTIVE SUITE OFFICE - DAY

Francesca, dressed in Valentino, stands behind Franco's desk. Franco and Carlo sit at the conference table when the receptionist opens the door. Edgar and Rudy step in, stunned to see the woman who secured their release.

EDGAR

(Stunned, smiling)

Alright, this is interesting.

FRANCESCA

(Smiling politely)

Thank you for being on time. I want to do a proper introduction. You met my father Franco Gugino Executive CEO and my uncle Carlo Santo COO and Partner. I am Francesca Gugino Executive CEO. Now that's we got that established, I'm sure your minds are racing, so I'll be quick about it. I am offering you both a real job within my Company. I'll start with you Rudy... with your programming skills, you'll be head of IT, network and systems administration, software development. How does that sound to you? Edgar, I need a personal body guard. You'll ride with me at all times, you'll accompany me in all my travels and meetings. I need you to continue with your workout routine and add Krav maga and firearms practice. I understand that you are a good marksman. We'll workout our schedule. I've put together an NDA and Confidentiality Agreement. If you both agree to the terms, then we will shake hands. Rudy, you will have a permanent apartment near the Casinos. Edgar, you'll stay at my guest house... that'll be your home. I need you near at all times.

Edgar and Rudy sit in silence and read the contract laid out on the table. Edgar shifts in his chair.

EDGAR

(Combing through his hair)
This is incredible, but I don't
think I understand why you're
sugarcoating... is this because of
last night.

RUDY

(Suspicious, shock)
How long is this contract for? And
if I don't accept this job...is
this a trick?

FRANCO

(Chuckles)

Rudy, why wouldn't you want this
job? Do we look like we are in a
carnival business? It's not a trick
Rudy. You'll have a place to live
and your working for a powerful
company making ten K a month...
you'll forget ever wanted to do
anything stupid for fun again.
That's the freedom I'm giving you
men. Plus, we needed an IT guy.
Francesca wanted to save you both
in the old days, me and Carlo, the
fingers get's cut off. Each
contract is for five years.

Edgar thumbs through the pages. Francesca sits besides her
father and Carlo.

FRANCESCA

(Quietly amused)

Alright, guys do we have a deal?

EDGAR

(Arms crossed)

I'm sorry, I don't know what to
say. I know that I have a choice to
say no, but I am also excited to do
something different with my life.
The clowning Rudy and I did last
night landed us an incredible
chance to do something special.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

Can I think about it for a few more
seconds? What happens in five years
when the contract ends?

Edgar concentrated and close his eyes.

CARLO

(Snores, chuckles)

Come on boys this is easy peasy.
And by the way we are retraining
people downstairs, If you know what
I mean?

FRANCESCA

(Eager, sweating)

Yes, of course Edgar, but I hope
it's not all day. If you guys would
want to stay with us then you tell
us or HR. The reason why you guys
didn't go through HR is because of
what happened last night, and we
wanted to give you guys a special
attention.

RUDY

(Smiles, content)

I'm good with this, and I'm
grateful for the opportunity and
thankful I won't let you guys down.
When do I start?

Rudy looks to Edgar's and waits for a response.

EDGAR

(Finally smiling)

Sorry for taking my time with this,
I'm still shocked from the
experience last night. I'm
embarrassed to be given this job...
are you sure you want me? I want
nothing more than to move forward.
Thank you for recognizing my skills
and for hiring us. I will do my
best for you, Francesca. So, hell
yeah let's do this.

Francesca stands the other exchange handshakes. Francesca and
Edgar approach each other with visible caution.

FRANCO AND CARLO

(Chuckles together)

Congratulations to you both.
Welcome to the family. Edgar you
have the biggest responsibility.
now.

CARLO

(Chuckling)

Wow, kid, you were making us sweat
there.

(MORE)

CARLO (CONT'D)

Your alright, you'll be fine.
Please don't forget to sign your
contract, I'll take it down now to
HR.

EDGAR

(Nodding)

Yes sir, I am fully aware of the
responsibilities that I have in my
contract. Thank you for the
opportunity. Wow, this is
incredible. Thank you again.

INT. GUGINO HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Franco walks into the kitchen and the manila envelope lays on
top of the marble counter. He takes out the destroyed divorce
documents.

FRANCO

(Disgusted)

Sophia! Sophia! "Never," my ass!

Sophia enters casually, half dressed in a short silk robe
silk stockings and stilettos.

SOPHIA

(Sultry)

Yes, Don Gugino, dear husband. I'm
here, please lower your voice, I
had a hard time sleeping over this
and seeing those documents...I went
rogue and stabbed it with the pen.

Sophia walks toward Franco with a slow, seductive sway Franco
stands with his arms folded, alert to both her presence and
state of mind.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(Attempting to Seduce)

You cannot blame me, my love, I
need you and you need me. You'll
miss all of this. I'm always ready
for you, Franco.

Sophia steps in close, reaching for his hand guiding it down
between her legs. He turns his head refusing the kiss.

FRANCO

(Repulsed)

No ... not this time. You disgust
me and our relationship was never
love.

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

It was a convenience you were for my father... but he got sick, and I did him a favor. Everyday he was tormented seeing you like this, and knowing he could never have you. He begged me to marry you, and give you a home and a place in my family. And what did you do? You disrespected me and you kept living in your lies. I know everything. Sign the fucking paper and be free.

Franco rips his hand free, puts a distance between them, and washes his hands at the sink.

SOPHIA

(Mortified, sniffing)

You are an asshole. Sei uno stronzo! You can forget about me signing the divorce papers, your stuck with me. Call it a punishment!

Sophia regains her composure and leaves the kitchen. Franco snatches up the documents heads to his office and shreds what's left.

EXT. HENDERSON EXECUTIVE AIRPORT - DAY

(P.O.V.) Hiromi watches the Gulf stream G650 land. She descends the steps with Hiroshi a tall handsome sixteen year old, as Takahashi guides them toward a private corridor for VIP customs and immigration clearance. Once cleared, they're ushered into a limo heading to the Marquis Casino Hotel.

INT. THE MARQUIS PENTHOUSE SUITE - DAY

Franco and Francesca waits for Hiromi and Hiroshi in their two bedroom suite. A knock, and the door flies open. Hiroshi and Hiromi walks in, while Takahashi's Bellman escorts him to his suite across from them.

FRANCO

(Excited)

Whoa, hello everyone! Wow you are almost my height, Hiroshi san. Come here let me look at you. Can I give you a hug? A bear hug! Hi my son I missed so you much. Thank you for my hug.

(MORE)

FRANCO (CONT'D)

Alright I want you to meet
Francesca your sister we call her
Frankie.

Franco leans in, kisses Hiromi, and wraps his arms around her.

HIROSHI

(Smiling politely)

Yes, Father. Frankie and I, we
often talk on WhatsApp and video.
I'm aware of my place in this side
of the family. Okaasan raised and
educated me to be happy to prepare
for a position alongside my
sister's position with you, father.
Thank you for everything.

Hiroshi bows his head. Francesca and Hiromi share a cordial exchange. Bellman in the background waiting for directions.

FRANCESCA

(Smiling)

Ah yeah... Ms Sakamoto is in the
Primary, and Hiroshi, your in that
suite. I believe Mr Takahashi
already took care of his?

BELLMAN

(Courteous)

Yes, Miss Francesca, he has. He's
across from here.

They sit, relaxed and content. Francesca gets to her feet.

FRANCESCA

(Overjoyed)

Are you ready, brother? Unless
you're too tired for a drive into
the town... we could do this
tomorrow?

HIROSHI

(Thrilled)

Hai! I mean, yeah! Wait, let me get
my camera. I am not tired, I slept
ten hours already, no way I'm
staying in my room! chotto matte
kudasai ne.

HIROMI

(Smiling)

Hiroshi san, yukkuri shite kudasai.
(MORE)

HIROMI (CONT'D)

I told him to please slow down.
Frankie Happy belated twenty-first
birthday...we have a gift for you
when you come back tonight. And
thank you for taking him out, a
sixteen year old teenager is very
restless.

FRANCO

(Anxious)

Yes, that's nice, Hiromi, dear.
Frankie make sure Edgar and your
driver keeps an eye out. Capise?

Francesca was about to retort and Hiroshi strides in.

HIROSHI

(High on adrenaline)

Okay, lets go itoshi Imoto! I'm so
excited to show my friends. I know
mother I'm cautious, I can't
announce where I am. Got it!

Francesca bolts to open the door, beating Hiroshi to it, and
comes face to face with Edgar.

EDGAR

(Startled)

Whoa, slow down bucko! You two
almost gave me a heart attack.

FRANCESCA

(Laughing hysterically)

Alright, old man, didn't mean to
scare your tighty-whities. Behind
me is my brother Hiroshi. Can we
pass now?

EDGAR

(Muttering)

Oh, yeah of course. I'm young and
fit and fearless ha ha, very funny.
Not at all an old man. Tighty
whities... really ?

HIROSHI

(Puzzled, Chuckling)

Nan desu ka? what did he say? He is
very handsome ne? Kare wa totemo
handsamuda. I will teach you much
Nihongo big sister okay? I have to
get a girlfriend here ok, I'll say
it to Edgar.

INT. THE MARQUIS EXECUTIVE SUITE - DAY

HIROMI

(Yawning)

Oh, I'm sorry, I did not sleep well on my flight coming here. I feel trouble is coming, but I don't want to speak ill of anything. I've missed you, my darling.

Hiromi moves closer to Franco and he stands in front of her and takes her hands.

FRANCO

(Whispering)

Come here, baby are you too tired to make love? I've missed you more you know.

They kiss hungry, urgent. Franco scoops her up kicks the suite door open, then slams it shut behind him.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - BENCH - DAY

Three veiled women kneel before the Virgin Mary praying ritual complete they rise and move back to their bench.

PAOLA

(Smirks)

What's on your mind, Sophia? What have you decided? Or is it already done? Once you do this, there is no coming back. Do you understand?

SOPHIA

(Sinister)

Yes, I have. It is the only way. I will not give him the divorce he desperately needs so he can marry that Yakuza whore. I won't give him have the satisfaction to casting me aside. It's the right thing for me to do.

Rapheala glares at the two women as they plot their grand scheme, a cold chill running down her spine.

RAPHEALA

(Apprehensive)

What do you mean? Just sign the divorce, you will be wealthy and be free. There is no love between you and Franco. Or is there?

(MORE)

RAPHEALA (CONT'D)

If there was, I've never seen it.
It's one sided, Sophia. What is
your strategic move here? Whatever
it is, your just going to end up
with a broken heart. Don't toy with
Franco, you'll have Carlo and
Francesca against you.

Paola and Sophia go silent.

SOPHIA

(Staring incredulously)
You're right, Rapheala, you see I
have grown bigger balls and I'll
take the risk and do what's
necessary. And I appreciate your
candor.

Rapheala stands, the other two follow.

EXT. RAPHEALA'S CAR - DAY

Rapheala sits in her car staring out of the window. A dark
expression haunts her face.

RAPHEALA

(Muttering to herself)
This is going to get bad ...argh
what the hell, Sophia.

INT. RAPHEALA'S BEDROOM - DAY

She takes out her backup Android, orders an Uber quickly
packs, clears the lockbox of documents cash jewelry, and her
passport.

INT. GUGINO HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sophia sits alone in the dining room table, drinking a glass
of red wine.

SOPHIA

(Looking ominous)
For better, for worse, for richer,
for poorer, in sickness and in
health, to love and to cherish,
till death do us part, according to
God's holy law. This is my solemn
vow. Our vows, Franco. Til death do
us part

FLASHBACK:

EXT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - WEDDING DAY

Franco and Sophia face other at the alter. Carlo and Luigi look on.

FRANCO

(Forced smile)

With this ring, I take you Sophia
to be my lawful wife, to have and
hold from this day forward

Five years later, he arrives with a six year old Francesca.

SOPHIA

(Hostile)

And who is this, Franco? Why is she
here? I don't want a child here in
my home. Oh, I see... is this your
whore's daughter? And now you want
me to care for her? No. No way.

Francesca clings to Franco, avoiding Sophia's cold
disapproving stare.

FRANCO

(Shouts)

Carlo! Please take Frankie to her
room or the kitchen, she must be
hungry by now.

Carlo moving fast grabs Francesca away from the scene.

Franco edges into her space, the air between them tight with
tension.

FRANCO (CONT'D)

(Threatening)

This is our home, and now
Francesca's. Her mother died this
morning. You give her a some
kindness is all I ask. She's a
child who has no fault in this. If
you try to harm her or touch a hair
on her head... that's kid my child.
I will throw your ass back where
you came from so fast you won't
have time to pack! Do you
understand me?

Sophia turns on her heels and leaves without a word.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

(Narrates)

My stepmother was no angel. Sophia was unforgiving, vicious and vengeful. She wanted her own child with Franco but couldn't. She tried liking me but, could only see Stella in me. One day I was brushing my hair when she was walking around with the housekeeper. She saw me struggling, then grabbed the hairbrush from my hand, and every brush strokes were painful and uncomfortable. She yanked harshly at the tangles and muttered under her breath. That my mother's blond hair were starting to come in. I said Stop it, I don't need your help. She continued to punish me. I screamed and she covered my mouth, and I couldn't breathe. I bit down into her hand and she slapped my face. I kicked her in the groin. I ran to my room and locked it. I heard muffled sounds of yelling followed by a slap. Since that day my father and uncle Carlo protected me. My food was always cooked by Poppa or Uncle Carlo. They would even take me out to eat with them at the Casinos. Sophia didn't want to help raise me. She wanted me gone.

INT. PAOLA'S HOME - PRESENT DAY

Paola sits upright against the headboard and lights a cigarette, and grabs her Android.

PAOLA

(Unnerving)

Hey, you wake up. Time to get moving, on your feet hurry up. I need to make a call. Grab your stuff and get out, take that envelope with you over there. Shut the door.

The naked girl scrambles to her feet, grabs her envelope shut the door.

PAOLA (CONT'D)

(Smirking)

What did you find out? Where is Rapheala? She wasn't in last night, and no one has seen her since Sunday. I hadn't thought that far Sophia. Do you think someone took her? It's not like her to just disappear without telling us. Ah shit, Sophia. She never mentioned a boyfriend. All these years I don't have a clue about that spineless bitch. If she comes back she has nothing, the club will close. She betrayed us. Fucking hell.

INT. GREENWOOD VILLAGE COLORADO - DAY

Rapheala, in a hoodie makes breakfast in an empty, modest two story ivy-covered house.

RAPHEALA

(Muttering to herself)

Oh god ... I did it I'm away from those fuckers. Okay, stop shaking Rapheala, you did good. No one knows where you are, no one. Should I call Frankie or Carlo? No, no don't do that... when it's time.

Rapheala freezes at a loud knock, she grabs her Glock, checks the security feed, then tucks the pistol into the back of her jeans.

RAPHEALA (CONT'D)

(Relieved)

Great, we have furniture. Just a minute. Okay Ralph, stay behind back. You never know.

Rapheala opens the door. Movers and designers flood in. She's left Las Vegas behind for a new life. A new name.

INT. FRANCESCA'S HOME - OFFICE - DAY

From her desk, Francesca watches over her open laptop her teenage brother and Edgar go at it in the pool a rough game of water basketball in the pool. Her phone vibrates, she answers

FRANCO (V.O.)

(Concerned)

Hey, Frankie, how are you? Is everything alright with your brother? What time is dinner, and you're not cooking, are you? Their scheduled flight is at ten p.m, and did you hear anything about Rapheala gone missing?

FRANCESCA

(Chuckling)

Hi, Poppa whats the matter, I hear something in your voice. Yeah, be here by six no, no, me cooking yea right, unless you want omelettes for dinner that I can do well. I've Alberto's cousin cooking for us and two Sous Chef with. Matter of fact their in the kitchen going insane right now.

Francesca drifts to the window, stealing a glance as Edgar and Hiroshi climb out of the pool.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

(Surprised)

What? What do you mean she's gone missing... dead? Kidnapped? I've really just been focusing on what's been in front of me. Hiroshi's a handful, and very funny kid. I love him, he is truly an awesome young man and Edgar's doing a great job. Where'd you hear this from?

FRANCO (V.O.)

(Concerned)

Carlo's informant, who goes in as a patron at her club, saw Paola pacing back and forth, overheard her yelling at somebody when he made his way to the restroom. Rapheala's been missing for several weeks. The Club was closed for two weeks, then reopened today under a new management. Makes me wonder what Rapheala's really been up to. I called Mark to look into it ... he got back to me and Carlo, and the new owners are X Incorporated.

(MORE)

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

Rapheala held very little investment and apparently relinquished her control and rights before she disappeared.

FRANCESCA

(Deeply sighing)

Wow, Poppa, I hope she'll try to reach out to one of us. I mean it's not really our concern anymore but, I've always secretly liked her. It's a lot to take in. I hope for her sake that there was no malice involved. When I was a kid she always showed me affection. Alright, thanks for the heads-up, see you at dinner. I better go and check on Hell's kitchen and the swimmers outside.

She lingers by the window, phone in hand eyes fixed on Edgar, unreadable.

EXT. PATIO AND SWIMMING POOL - DAY

HIROSHI

(Smiling, waving)

Hey, wave to my sister she's looking at us. Edgar, do you like my sister? Do you think she's hot, and very pretty, and smart, do we look similar?

EDGAR

(Lightly Chuckling)

Whoa, Dude you're being funny, so many questions. Ah, she's my Boss alright... and yes she is. And right now I can't look at her because I'm on the clock, making sure you are fine. Please dry off big guy, and go back inside. I'll get ready too, and change for dinner.

He text Francesca.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

(Smiling)

Hi, just got Hiroshi out of the pool. He'll get go in soon, after his interrogation lol.

(MORE)

EDGAR (CONT'D)

I'll be back as soon as possible.
Just need to get ready for dinner.
I can just order in. I don't want
to intrude on your family time.

Francesca text back.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

(Smirking)

Absolutely not, no food deliveries.
You're welcome to sit and eat with
us at all times Edgar. It's in your
contract. Hehe.

Edgar turns his attention back to Hiroshi.

HIROSHI

(Interjecting, Chuckling)

When I leave, you'll take care of
my sister very well, alright? She's
is important to me. You must
protect her from bad people, Edgar
san, okay?

Edgar hangs back, polite and listens.

EDGAR

(Compose, Smiling)

Yes, of course Hiroshi san I will
protect your sister always. She is
special, a kind woman, and I
respect her. Please don't worry.
Please go in and get ready.

Hiroshi bows to Edgar strides back into the house.

HIROSHI

(Shouting back)

Hey! Edgar san you didn't answer my
question! See ya man.

Edgar waves playfully.

EXT. HENDERSON EXECUTIVE AIRPORT - NIGHT

A black out Range Rover cuts through traffic, Carlo at the
wheel, Takahashi in the passenger seat in the back Hiromi and
Franco holds hands, quiet. Takahashi calls her Jet Captain.

TAKAHASHI

(Speaking in Japanese)

Maiku sencho kakunoko ni
chikadzuite imasu. Arigatogozaimasu

Translation:

Captain Mike we are nearing the
hanger. Thank you

The Porsche Cayenne follows close behind. They arrive to find
Captain Mike and the flight crew lined up.

HIROSHI

(Eyes moist)

Father, I will miss you. Thank you
for having us. It was the best
three months vacation. Everything
was wonderful spending quality time
together. Please call me everyday.
I like listening to your voice,
it's so cool. I'll see you soon.
Don't worry I'll take care of
Mother always.

FRANCO

(Smiling)

Thank you, my sweet son. I am never
too far away, we're always just a
phone call away. See you later. Get
rested school's back in session in
a few days. I love you son, and you
are so cool.

Then Hiroshi turns to Francesca and Edgar.

HIROSHI

Sister, I am grateful to have you
in my life, you truly inspire me.
Thank you for taking care of me.
Please practice your Nihongo. We
will talk later when I arrive in
Tokyo. Edgar remember what I said
alright ?

FRANCESCA

(Whispering)

I love you, brother and take care
of your mom. Focus on what's in
front of you and in the room you're
in. Always know where the exit is.
Talk to you later, bye.

Edgar gives Hiroshi a hundred-dollar casino chip.

EDGAR

Fist bumps, winks)

For luck, and a reminder of us,
your family. Yeah see ya later,
buddy.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

(Cool smile)

No worries, take care of yourself
and your mom buddy. Hey, study
hard.

Final goodbyes pass through Franco's family. Off to the side
Edgar and Carlo lean against against the cars outside the
hanger.

INT. GUGINO ESTATE - KITCHEN - DAY

One month later Franco grabs two bottle water, turns and
shuts the fridge. Sophia is right in front of him. He jolts.

SOPHIA

(Greets Pleasantly)

Buongiorno Franco, sorry I scared
you. Your ears are covered... are
you getting ready to ride out? The
sun is not even up yet, but you're
are a Rooster after all. Should I
join you and watch the sunrise
together, like the old days? The
weather will be cooler today. I can
make you breakfast first, or have
you already eaten?

Franco turns around to return pleasantries.

FRANCO

(Chuckling)

Yes, I've already eaten. Thanks for
the offer. Do you even own a pair
of tennis shoes nowadays, or work
out clothes? Since when did you get
interested in riding a bicycle
again, its been years you know?

Sophia keeps her distance from Franco.

SOPHIA

(Coyly smiling)

I can begin today. I have clothes
and I have tennis shoes. I've
learned many things in my life,
Franco, I still know how to ride a
bicycle. Maybe today isn't the day,
no? I've wanted to apologize for
the things that didn't go well in
this marriage. I've been thinking
of letting you go.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
It's the right thing to do after
all. Have a nice day.

Franco watches silently as moves to leave the kitchen.

FRANCO
(Taken aback, softer)
Hey, Sophia thank you for the
apology... yeah, me too, alright? I
had my responsibility in it.

SOPHIA
(Coldly)
Yes, Franco, you had much
responsibility in it.

Franco closes the distance, Sophia pulls back and keeps
walking.

EXT. RED ROCK CANYON - BIKE TRAIL - DAY

Sophia's rental Jeep Cherokee sits in a secluded turnout. She
waits below as Franco descends the private trail he carved
out himself.

(P.O.V.) Franco makes his way down his bike route, composed,
muttering under his breath.

FRANCO
(Shocked, braking hard)
God, thank you for everything...
the hell... is she doing here,
whoa...

A split second too late, Franco slams the brake. The bike
skids out beneath him.

SOPHIA
(Waving her arms)
Franco! Franco! Stop, stop!

Franco rushes to his feet, swiping dust off his bike jacket.

FRANCO
(Breathing heavily)
For christ's sake, Sophia. What the
hell are you doing up here? I could
have run you over!

Sophia hurries to him, quick and direct.

SOPHIA

(Teary eyed)

Franco, I just wanted to see you
one more time and say goodbye. I
knew you would be coming through
here, so I waited. See, I do have
workout clothes.

Franco softens his tone giving way as Sophia approaches. He drops his guard. Sophia fires twice at close range the bullets rip through his vest. He drops at her feet.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(Breathing hard, whispering)

This is my sweet revenge. And your
precious Hiromi will never have
you. Never!

Sophia breaks away, bolts for the rental jeep. Franco lies barely alive in the dirt.

(P.O.V.)Franco vision dimming, colors draining, a strained hollow wheeze. He murmurs for Stella, for his parents. His hand finds the phone in his side pocket. By voice command, "Francesca... Carlo...911.." Unseen to him, the phone already detected a hard fall initiates an emergency call.

FRANCO

(Breathing in agony)

Alright, Stella, I can't join you
just yet baby. Argh, help me, God
please. Poppa, Momma please I

FRANCO (CONT'D)

(Low, Crying out)

Hey, Siri ...

EXT. RED ROCK CANYON - BIKE TRAIL

Edgar drives, clean and controlled. Frankie, teary eyed holds on in silence. They arrive to choas, sirens, fire trucks, ambulances, police cars. They parked nearby snd sprint.

FRANCESCA

(Shocked in turmoil)

Hey! I'm Francesca Gugino listen
listen, I want my father airlifted
to UMC Trauma Center, It's our
hospital, we can't take a chance on
the road. I'll let the hospital
know now, have the Surgeons
standby. Edgar! Edgar, call Carlo
please .

EDGAR

(Takes her in his arms)

Yes, I've got you, Frankie, I already called him, He's pulling all the resources and he's on his way to UMC. Who did this? Never mind... please go and hold his hand. Keep talking to him. Tell him how much you love him. Come on, I'm here, I'm here.

Inside the ambulance, Franco is pale and still. EMT's press hard to stop the bleeding, IV fluids in his arm Francesca grips his hand.

FRANCESCA

(Controlled, emotional)

Poppa, listen to me, Poppa you hang in there, I know you can hear me. Hold my hand, feel my love and my warmth. Please, please don't leave me. You're going in the helicopter, okay? I will see you, when you open your eyes. I love you, Poppa

The Medical Heliport techs safely rapidly transports Franco. Francesca and Edgar was escorted by patrol cars toward the University Medical Center.

INT: UMC TRAUMA - EMERGENCY - DAY

The ER doors open wide. Franco's gurney rushes through the chaos, his family close behind, Surgeons already standing by.

CARLO

(Angry, frustrated)

Fred, Sal both of you will guard outside that door when he comes out of this. I'll be in his room at all times. Nobody gets in unless it's Francesca. I mean no one, I don't care if it's his wife Sophia. No one!

FRANCESCA

(Breathing heavily)

Uncle Carlo, did you get to see him before they took him in? It's bad, uncle Carlo, isn't it... who did this? Oh god, here comes Sophia.

SOPHIA

(Hysterical)

Where is he, I want to see him!
Please, let me ... who did this?
Why was he alone, Carlo! Oh God,
are they working on him now? Please
tell me!

FRANCESCA

(Outraged)

Shut the fuck up! I can't think
with you and your hysteria. That's
my father in there, my flesh and
blood not yours... so shut up, or
I'll have you thrown out.

Francesca walks away from the scene cries privately.

EDGAR

(Serious, comforting)

Hey, here, take mine it's clean, go
ahead, blow your nose. Listen,
Frankie, your Poppa is going to
make it out of this. There is is no
way.

FRANCESCA

(Emotional)

And if he doesn't...

Eight hours later, the surgeons come out to brief Francesca
and Carlo privately. Seeing Sophia approach, they continue
with the report.

DR. DAVIS

(Clearing his throat)

Franco was shot in close proximity,
We removed one bullet inches away
from his heart... it hit the
Sternum, anteriorly, which stopped
it from puncturing his heart. The
other bullet went through his colon
and out his back. He had luck on
his side. He is a strong, and
healthy man. Right now we're in a
waiting game...he had internal
bleeding and lost a lot of blood.
We medically induced coma, to give
his body and vital organs time to
heal. This was a very close call.
Franco has a DNR, should we come to
that.

DR.STANLEY

(Empathetic, concerned)

I'm sorry, Francesca. Please know that we're doing everything in our power to bring him back to a full recovery. He's in critical condition... expected recovery will be about 6 months to a year. He's not out of the woods yet. Franco is a high profile and we are being bombarded by the media. What do you want us to say? Okay good, we understand. Your father owns more than a half of this hospital, and we want to keep his integrity protected. Thank you both, I'm sorry this happened.

CARLO

(Eyes moistened)

Thank you, doctors. Yes, say as little as possible, we want this wrapped tight until we investigate and find the asshole who did this.

Sophia walks away to the waiting room and collapse down on the sofa.

SOPHIA

(Masquerading, weeping)

Oh Franco why?

Francesca watches Sophia across the crowded ER. Edgar stays inconspicuous into the background. Francesca follows her stepmother.

FRANCESCA

(Disheveled)

Sophia, when did you last see Poppa? Did he say anything to you or what was his mood like?

Sophia looks up, her eyes teary, giving nothing away.

SOPHIA

(Stoic)

Yes, I did see your Poppa very early this morning, when I went into the kitchen at five a.m. I was surprised seeing him standing there in front of the refrigerator, in his riding outfit.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

We had a nice moment, and I ask if he wanted company and watch the sunrise, but he made fun of me, asking if I even owned a pair of tennis shoes. I also offered to make him breakfast since he hasn't been home much. We apologized to each other, and that's how it ended with us. Now this... I have so much to do no? Oh Franco...

Francesca studies Sophia before answering.

FRANCESCA

(Smirking, bewildered)

What do you mean, you have much to do? You have no position in my father's company. I turned twenty-one a few weeks ago, I am Franco's successor, I am the Executive CEO, I am the head of my father's Realestate companies and Casino businesses. So you don't have to worry about any of it. We will work out the logistic of your share. You don't exactly have a marriage either...as a matter of fact, you were served with a divorce papers, and you refused to sign them. You don't hold the cards, Sophia, not one at all. Save your theatrics for your audience.

SOPHIA

(Scoffed)

You're wrong, Francesca, I am Franco's wife. And I am still legally a Gugino. If my husband does not pull through this... God forbid... I have an obligation to step in. And that's the logistic I'll will focus on.

Francesca glared down at Sophia, absorbing the weight of her word.

INT. FRANCO'S ICU ROOM - HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Francesca and Carlo stands beside DETECTIVE NORMAN SMITH and OFFICER MARK ALLEN

DETECTIVE NORMAN

(Smirking)

Yeah, we just got Sophia's statement. Who else knew his bike route? He was confident enough to go out riding on his own at such hour... did Franco have trouble lately? This was deliberate an attempted murder. Your father isn't safe as long as he is breathing. We're posting Police officers on this floor. Tire marks shows a car was parked near where he was shot.. not on the main road. They had to walk a half a mile to get to that spot, didn't want to risk being spotted near the victim with a car.

CARLO

(Angry)

No, he had no troubles, just the usual Casino business. Franco's has been happy and content, stays quiet, and helps everybody. He contributes to the Fire departments, the Police departments, the schools, hospitals, churches, The University etc... So you boys need to go catch the assholes who did this, or I will.

INT. FRANCESCA'S ESTATE - NIGHT

Francesca and Hiromi on whatsapp video.

HIROMI

(Voice breaking)

I'll fly in tomorrow night and will stay low-profile, but I am his partner. Will you receive us at the hospital, please? It would be easier if you and Edgar can escort me in, Takahashi will be with me. There is no sense in this to any of this, Franco's a good man, we have no debts to anyone, so I don't understand who could want him dead, Frankie. This is such a turmoil.

FRANCESCA

(Exhausted)

Say less, Hiromi san, I've already planned for that. Sophia is the problem she can cause a significant chaos. She said if Poppa does not make it, she will step in...I told her she does not need to be concerned, I have someone trailing her every move. Hey, got a text from an unknown number, I thought it was you, but there's no contact name. It says it's urgent, they speak to me. Anyway, I'm concerned about Hiroshi... does he know about Poppa getting shot?

HIROMI

(Soft)

Be careful and be cautious. I had to tell Hiroshi... otherwise, if he he saw or heard from the media, I'd will be a bad mother for not being honest. He has a mature nature. I raise him on a strong foundation. We cannot keep him in the dark. He's very upset and wants to come with me, but I can't allow that. He's anxious and will call you, I'm sure of it. Thank you Frankie, I'll will see you tomorrow night.

INT. FRANCESCA ESTATE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Francesca on the intercom for Edgar.

FRANCESCA

(Soft Voice)

Hey, can you come in the kitchen? I want to speak to you. Sorry if you were already asleep.

Edgar enters in the Kitchen, limping.

EDGAR

(Concerned)

Hey, is everything alright? I came as soon, as I could, but I stubbed my toe on something. Listen Frankie, I don't think living in the guest house is useful anymore.

(MORE)

EDGAR (CONT'D)

I've been meaning to speak to you about it. If there was an emergency, I'm too far away.

FRANCESCA

(Grimacing)

Alright, choose whichever room you want, I'm sorry . Are your toes okay, is it bad? Let me take a look at it after we talk. I called you in because Hiromi and Takahashi are flying in tomorrow evening. I gave specific order that there has to be someone at all times in the room with Poppa when Uncle Carlo has to be relieved. And...I keep getting a text from a number I don't have saved. Here, look at this, it's freaking me out a little.

Edgar moves closer and takes the phone to read.

EDGAR

(Grinning)

Hmm. I can have Rudy check into it. Do you want to text right back now? If you don't mind, can I pour myself a drink? Do you want a one? I can't sleep, I was gonna watch a movie or something.

Francesca nods his absently, her eyes staying on the screen as she quickly starts typing back the mysterious message.

FRANCESCA

(Voicing her text)

Who is this? And what do you want to tell me?

A quick reply comes back.

RAPHEALA (O.S.)

(Pleading)

Frankie, please listen, don't let anyone know who this is. Swear.

FRANCESCA

(Shocked, Unsettled)

What the fuck, Rapheala? Where the hell are you? What do you want to speak to me about?

Edgar leans in hovering near Francesca's phone.

RAPHEALA (O.S.)

(Voice shaky)

Frankie, I'm sorry for everything, I got pushed around by those two, and I couldn't take it anymore, I moved away. But before that I was with them, and It wasn't clear then, but they were plotting something. Especially that Napoletana puta... I believe she was the one who shot your Poppa. I want to see Carlo, to explain everything to him too. Please Frankie, I beg of you, I'm telling you the truth. I am using a burner phone Frankie because I am afraid .

Francesca stared at her phone, then looks up at Edgar, bewildered.

FRANCESCA

(Tensed)

Hey take it easy. I'll share this with Carlo quietly when I can trust that this is really you. You could be playing me, trying get information about my father. Or maybe Rapheala's really dead and you're trying to con me? Just call me, dammit. Do you have WhatsApp ? We can video call or call me from that burner phone.

(P.O.V.) Rapheala sits motionless on the couch and calling Frankie, her trembling hands tight around the phone.

RAPHEALA (O.S.)

(Trembling Crying)

Hello, Frankie, it's me, Raphe. I swear on my son Antonio my angel, and on my mother Teresa, I am Rapheala... can't you tell from my voice? I use to buy you beautiful head bands for your hair, pretty bras and underwear... who else would know that? Please believe me, that it was Sophia, she's the only one who knew Franco's bike trail. They used to picnic after he came down from that canyon. She used to boast about what they did on those picnic days. Frankie, she's is a scorned woman.

(MORE)

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

I have no proof, but I'm sure
that's it was what she wanted to
do.

Francesca and Edgar hold their silence, listening carefully.

RAPHEALA (CONT'D)

We were in our church the last
Sunday I spent with them. Paola
asked what was on her mind, and
what was she going to do. I thought
they meant the divorce papers... I
told her to sign it and be free,
she has plenty of money anyway. But
she only got angrier, cold and
scary. She mocked and ridiculed me
to grow some balls. So, I did. And
I feel incredible, healthier, and
will live longer. Think what I'm
telling you Frankie. Thank you for
taking my call. Please be safe. I
hope someday can meet again. God
bless you. Goodbye, my dear
Francesca.

Francesca's head drops. She wipes the tears while Edgar
stands close, she leans against him.

FRANCESCA

(Crying, sadden)

Oh my god... how are we going to
prove this, Edgar? Rapheala's voice
it was authentic, it's hers, raw
and truthful. I don't know what to
think, but it makes sense.

EDGAR

(Comforting Tone)

We can't, not tonight. It'll reveal
itself as it unfolds. Come with me.
But I suggest that you must say
something about this to Carlo he'd
want to know, Frankie.

INT: FRANCESCA'S ESTATE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Edgar picks a movie on Netflix while Francesca slowly falls
asleep next to him.

EDGAR

(Smiles, whispering)

Some date you are.

(MORE)

EDGAR (CONT'D)

Alright, I guess I'll just watch by myself... as long you are next to me.

Edgar wakes up to his own snore, turns off the TV, turns to Francesca asleep beside him, and carefully covers her with a blanket.

INT. FRANCESCA ESTATE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Francesca wakes to the smell of brewed coffee. Edgar walks in carrying a breakfast tray.

EDGAR

(Smiles)

Hey, Frankie, good morning. How'd you sleep? I'm guilty, I fell asleep next to you. I checked in with Carlo, Franco's fine. I have been thinking about what Rapheala told us, but it's only her word. Can you find out if Detective Norman and Mike took a statement from Paola?

FRANCESCA

(Sipping, coffee)

Oh, wow Edgar, this is so good, you'll have to show me how to work that espresso machine. Thank you for this lovely breakfast... Hmm you can cook too. You're going to make some girl happy one day.

EDGAR

(Chuckling)

Thanks, it's really simple Francesca, sure I'll show you. I learned to cook at an early age, to survive.

Francesca digs into the omelet with a huge bite.

FRANCESCA

Smacking Her Lips)

Oh, man how kind of you, I didn't realize how hungry I was. Yeah, it's only her word. I need extra energy today, feel like I lost a whole day. What do you think, If Rapheala's suspicion is right... Sophia has to be brought to justice.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Rapheala's voice wasn't rehearsed,
it was natural. I can always tell
when people are lying, that
instinct I've had since I was
a kid.

Francesca lowers her plate to the coffee table, then suddenly
springs to her feet.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

(Eyes wide)

Today's Sunday, she'll be at church
drive me to the main house, but
let's park at my secret spot at the
side gate, no one can see from that
angle. I need to get Poppa's
toiletries anyways.

EDGAR

(Farrowed brows)

How can we be sure Sophia's not
there? Yeah, I wouldn't sweep this
under the rug either, you know what
I mean? Rapheala sounds desperate
for you to trust her, Francesca.
Alright, let's forge ahead.

FRANCESCA

(Smirking)

Edgar, if she is, who cares... I'm
going to my father's room to grab
his dopp bag. Not hers. And you're
escorting me.

EXT. GUGINO ESTATE - SIDE GATE - DAY

Francesca enters the code. Sophia's perfume lingers in the
air. Edgar follows cautiously.

FRANCESCA

(Anxious)

It's never easy being here, in this
house. I had unusual childhood,
I'll be quick. The housekeeper
isn't here today either but stay
alert we don't want to run into
anybody.

INT: GUGINO ESTATE - DAY

Francesca exits Franco's primary bedroom, his Dopp bag in hand. She spots a faint smudge of dirt on the carpet.

FRANCESCA
(Crouching on all fours)
Hmm... Martha didn't do a good job.

Francesca rises and steps into Sophia's bedroom. She opens the closet and freezes inside the massive space.

(P.O.V.) Her mind flashes to Sophia's words, "He asked me if I owned a pair of sneakers." Francesca spots a pair of sneakers hidden in the corner. She pulls down one of Sophia's shirts and uses it to inspect them.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)
(Exhaling, sighing)
Oh, fuck ...

Francesca restores everything to it's place and hurries out.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)
(Whispers)
Edgar, let's go ... Uncle Carlo
just texted he's waiting, he said
Sophia wants to visit Franco today.
Good timing to get this out of the
way, and for us to escort Hiromi in
tonight.

Edgar pauses, gently touches her arm.

EDGAR
(Questioning)
Hey, what's the matter, I can feel
something's troubling you. What
took you so long? Did you get what
you wanted?

Francesca says nothing until they leave the Gugino residence.

EXT. GUGINO ESTATE - SIDE GATE - DAY

FRANCESCA
(Shrugging)
I feel totally gutted about what
happened to my father. I found
something. What if he doesn't make
it Edgar? I'm not prepared I
thought I'd be.
(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)
Sophia's threatening that she'll
step in... can she do that?

EDGAR
(Smiling)
Do you want to tell me what you
found? You're the smartest and
bravest woman I know. You've been
groomed by Franco since you were a
kid, don't let Sophia rattle your
mind. What you can do is sit with
your attorney, bring Carlo and go
through everything. Maybe she's got
something on Franco... his
infidelity, and the two
illegitimate children. Nevada's a
no-fault divorce state, so it can't
be that. Let's go.

Edgar opens the car door, she gets in.

INT. CAR - DAY

FRANCESCA
(Giggling)
How do you know so much about
divorces? Yeah...Rapheala's
suspicion might be true.

EDGAR
(Tensing up)
Okay... and what are you going to
do about it? Talk to Carlo and
Hiromi. You can trust me too,
remember? I have your back. I'm an
undergraduate in Law, but my
passion changed... and look where
that got me.

FRANCESCA
(Chuckling)
Ha, ha very funny. I'd say you did
very well... you have no mortgage,
you live for free in a beautiful
house, you drive expensive cars,
and you get paid handsomely. Nice
company too.

Edgar drives with ease and steals a glance in her direction.

EDGAR
 (Laughing wholeheartedly)
 Touche, Miss Francesca. Hey, I'm
 not complaining.

EXT. HOSPITAL BUILDING - NIGHT

(P.O.V.) The Hospital buzzes with reporters and cops. The reporters are kept out of the lobby, until Hiromi and Takahashi approach, all eyes on her.

TAKAHASHI
 (Grunting at a man)
 Move, don't come near, or I will
 hit you with your own microphone.

The Reporter halts and backs away.

HIROMI
 (Softly)
 Takahashi san, hontoni kowaidesu
 ne, Piranha kara sukutte kurete
 arigato.

Translation:

You are so scary Takahashi san
 thank you for saving me from the
 Piranhas.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - NIGHT

Francesca and Edgar wait in the lobby, standing behind the security guards.

FRANCESCA
 (Authoritative)
 Let them through, please , they're
 with us. Quickly, let them through
 thanks.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO'S ROOM - EVENING

Carlo and Francesca clear out, giving Hiromi privacy. Franco lies beneath the ventilator, fully dependent on respiratory support.

HIROMI
 (Emotional)
 Oh, my love, who did this to you?
 We were just together, how could
 you go out alone my darling?
 (MORE)

HIROMI (CONT'D)

Please come back to us. I will kill whoever did this to you, Franco, I swear it.

Francesca and Carlo re-enters.

FRANCESCA

(Pleasant smile)

Hiromi san, are you okay? I know it's hard to see him this way with all these machine keeping him alive. Tomorrow the doctors are going to gradually reduce the medication, allowing Poppa's brain activity and consciousness to slowly return. If you want we'll be here by ten a.m. You can also just rest, I will understand. I'll call you immediately. Listen, Hiromi this doesn't mean that Poppa's out from danger. We must prepare for either outcome.

HIROMI

(Nodding)

I will rest for a bit. I don't want a scene with Sophia, although I don't care. You and Carlo if you need anything at all I am here for a while... I don't like leaving Hiroshi on his own with his nanny and security. I think in this case he needs to be here, next to his father. I have my hands full with Akira's daughter who wants a war with me over my position as Head of the family and the businesses. Her name is Tami Sakamoto... the true heir from Akira's concubine, a rotten seed, and dangerous, no scruples. I fully understand the state that Franco is in. I will stay with him tomorrow and every day until he opens his eyes.

Francesca stays rooted in place, waiting for something to happen.

CARLO

(Exasperated)

What are you saying, Hiromi... That Franco's son could be in danger from a lunatic conspiring to take you down? Son of a bitches!

FRANCESCA

(Sighing deeply)

Will my brother be safe? You should should have him brought him already... Edgar and I could go get him. Once he's he can stay with me. I can make sure he finish his education. I know this is a lot to handle but, he could get caught in middle of your war with Tami. She might try to kidnap him, and use him as leverage. This is absolutely crazy, Hiromi san. He means the world to us too.

Hiromi keeps her eyes locked on Francesca, unblinking.

HIROMI

(Voice breaking)

Frankie, no, I know... I wanted to speak to Franco about what's happening on my side and get his opinion, but now this terrible tragedy. This is why I'm telling you three in this room. He is safe and he has an open first class flight with Japan Airline, if I need him to fly out immediately. No one know where he is. Hiroshi is a teenager, he downplays his image. He will be okay. We made this plan together not with anyone else... not even Takahashi san.

FRANCESCA

(Deep sigh)

Then please let me call him now. I'll WhatsApp him, and we all can see him, okay?

Edgar comes closer. Hiromi agrees and gives Francesca permission to call her brother.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

(Anxious)

Hey, brother, good morning, I'm sorry to wake you so early. Listen very carefully... please get to the airport this morning, your mother is here with us and Poppa. She's told us everything. See, everyone's here. Give me your itinerary. Are you okay? Please be safe and go now. Edgar and I will pick you up.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Love you brother. We will see you
in eleven hours.

Hiroshi on WhatsApp answers and see's his family.

HIROSHI

(Tensed, emotional)

I am awake now. I understand, I am
prepared, I will be on my way to
Narita Intl. Airport, there I will
grab ice coffee at the VIP lounge
and have small breakfast. Please
move closer to Father. Hey, Poppa I
will be there soon, you and Edgar
is picking me up, okay don't worry
so much. Okay mother, Carlos hey
Edgar ... bye everyone see you all
soon. Yes, I'll be safe, thank you
sister.

INT. PAOLA'S HOME - DAY

(P.O.V.) Paola's naked body is thrown into the bathtub, her
face and body brutally beaten, blood clouding the surface.

PAOLA

(Gasping in agony)

Help, help, please stop, please
help me...

Her cries go unanswered as the attack continues offscreen her
voice fading.

EXT. GUGINO ESTATE HOME - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Sophia checks her Android and calls Paola.

SOPHIA

(Angry)

Paola this is the fifth time I'm
calling, and again texting... where
the hell are you? Don't you fucking
abandon me now/ I need to talk to
you!

Sophia sits in silence then her phone rings.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(Shouting)

Hello! It's about time. What... who
is this? Slow down, I can't
understand you. You what?

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

What do you mean, dead? Oh fuck!
Call the Police, and don't tell
them that you called me first, do
you understand me? Or I will find
you, yes, okay good. Now call the
fucking Police!

Sophia snatches the pillow at her side.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(Angry, self- absorb)
Aaaaargh! ! What am I supposed to
do with all of this shit!

She presses her face into the pillow and lets the rage spill.

INT. HOSPITAL FRANCO'S ROOM - DAY

Sophia exits the elevator and walks to Franco's ICU room.

CARLO

(Concerned, wary)
Sophia, what is it? You look
distraught. Say something will ya?

Sophia stays rigid then theatrically breaks down.

SOPHIA

(Sobbing)
I'm sorry I canceled coming here
yesterday. Oh God, Carlo, didn't
you hear? It's Paola... she was
found beaten to death in her home.
All my friends are gone, now my
husband. Oh, Carlo, what am I going
to do, I'm alone. I need
protection. What happened here, why
did they take away the ventilator?
He can't breathe! Who did this, and
why wasn't I called, I'm his wife!

CARLO

(Scoffing)
Keep your voice down, and don't
start, Sophia... the surgeons only
speaks to Francesca. She's the next
of kin. Try to put this into
perspective. Franco is trying to
come back, so, will you shut up
now. He's being carefully
monitored, they even reduced the
medication so he can start to gain
consciousness.

(MORE)

CARLO (CONT'D)

It's been over two weeks, it's a risk, but he needs to fight his way home. I'm sorry about Paola. Hire several body guards. You've got the money plenty of it.

Sophia's face was unreadable. Then she storms out.

EXT: HARRY REID INTL. AIRPORT - DAY

Francesca and Edgar awaits Hiroshi Hiroshi's arrival.

FRANCESCA

(Anxious)

Strange, feels awkward waiting for Hiroshi to come out from this terminal...all his life he's flown in their private Jet. I can't wait for him to tell us about his experience .

EDGAR

(Chuckling)

Yeah, I bet. So he's never flown like a regular person before? Never mind, for asking that, It was a lame question.

FRANCESCA

(Smiling)

No, not a lame question. It's was because they didn't want to alarm anyone, and it was also to throw off Akira's daughter's attention away from him. And at the time, Hiromi thought it was a good idea.

The arrival doors open crowds surge out with their baggage Hiroshi emerges last striding through with a large Louis Vuitton baggage and Sennheiser Headphones over his head.

HIROSHI

(Unhappy)

Hey! Thanks coming to get me, that was too much waiting in line, Frankie. Never want to do that again. But nice, and beautiful stewardess though.

EDGAR

(Chuckling)

I'll take your luggage, you can walk closely with your sister.

(MORE)

EDGAR (CONT'D)

Whoa, dude, those are super cool headphones. Totemo takai desu ne. O nedan wa ikuradesu ka?

HIROSHI

(Cooling off, chuckles)

Edgar san very cool Nihongo dude, You have been studying. Frankie, you must do too. I'll get you a pair for your birthday, so we could be twinning...

(P.O.V.) Francesca's watches Edgar, drawn to his knowledge and charm, are impossible to ignore.

FRANCESCA

(Smiles)

Very impressive, Edgar san, that you make time for everything.

EDGAR

(Winking)

Ah, you like? Thank you so much.

FRANCESCA

(Flirting)

I like. Don't forget that I admitted to that.

EDGAR

(Chuckling)

Oh, I won't... especially when you kick me around in Krav Maga sessions.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO'S ROOM - DAY

Hiroshi enters the ICU and pulls Hiromi into an embrace.

HIROSHI

(Emotional)

Okasan, hontoni gomen nasai.
Oh, Father how could this happen?
I'm so sorry, I'm not grown up enough to have protected you from this shit. Oh, Father, please please wake up. Mother please wake him up, this is a mistake he shouldn't be like this.

Hiromi calms him down.

HIROMI

(Comforting)

Shhh shh, please calm down. Hiroshi san. I'm sorry you have to see your father this way. I know how you feel please don't cry okay? He needs for all of us to stay strong, he will come back to us, I promise. The doctors say he's recovering, and he's breathing on his own, he's healing. He feels all our positive energy. Soon he'll open his eyes.

Francesca, Carlo and Edgar stayed rooted in their place.

CARLO

(Smiles, moist-eyed)

Edgar, can you take Hiroshi san to the cafe downstairs, or maybe the Cafeteria it's open they close at midnight. I need to to speak to the ladies.

EDGAR

(Cheerful)

Sure, that sounds fun, let's go, my man. There are real slot machines at the Cafe, pretty girls, and delicious food.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO'S ICU ROOM - NIGHT

Francesca and Hiromi's faces wore a tight expression.

CARLO

(Uneasy, suspicious)

I got a visit from Sophia earlier this morning, distraught and asking for protection. I gather you two haven't watched the news... Paola was found dead in her house today. It's just beginning to surface, and I'm already getting calls from the detectives, probing me, giving me a bad headache.

FRANCESCA

(Troubled, wary)

Sophia must be terrified. Was there anything else?

CARLO

(Smirking)

Nope, she was whining about being alone, that everyone betrayed her. She ask me for protection. I said no. We're not getting involved in a war that she and Paola had created with the Cartels. They brought this on themselves, It's on their own pockets, not ours. Then before she stormed out, she wanted to know why Franco's surgeons did not include her about the ventilator being removed. The audacity of that woman.

HIROMI

(Interested)

Did she say how Paola was killed? Only because their could be a message in it. Was there? What forensic experts would find it's just science for them... for us it's a different code, in our line of work.

(P.O.V.) In the same instant, Francesca and Carlo realize why Hiromi belongs in Franco's class... she reads the room, measures the treat, and never blinks.

FRANCESCA

(Outsmarting)

Well, I know that we all have been focused with Poppa, but I still have to run the Casino's, and thank God for Edgar...he and Mark at the station have become buddies. What I know Hiromi, is that she was brutally beaten with a baseball bat until all her bones were broken, her face was disfigured. The report says they dumped her in the tub. She suffered from the torment, the excruciating pain they inflicted. And not only that... they ah raped her with objects.

HIROMI

(Grimacing)

It was the Cartels, for sure. I'm sorry they tormented Paola.

(MORE)

HIROMI (CONT'D)

Those people will get their Karma for raping a woman while they were killing her, defenseless, already dead. Sick and reprehensible no code of ethics.

CARLO

(Uncomfortable Grin)

I agree those assholes will get their Karma. Paola was a good kid when I first knew her. She was a tough broad, she just got sloppy.

FRANCESCA

(Contemplating)

Yeah, I finally found out who's been sending me messages.

Carlo and Hiromi hold their gaze on Francesca.

CARLO

(Sneering)

Frankie... who? Say it already. What have you been keeping from me?

FRANCESCA

(Smug Smile)

Wait, wait, don't get your undies twisted, uncle Carlo. I had my reasons for waiting until I saw fit to share. I didn't have all the details figured out. Now I do, okay?

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

So, listen... Rapheala was using a burner phone when she messaged me. Rapheala is very scared and alone. She completely re-located and changed her name... She'd been planning this escape for several months. Do you remember when Poppa banished her with Paola? She said, she played along spoke so they won't suspect she was a rat. She was never involved with the Cartels, never met anyone... Sophia and Paola only dealt with whoever, privately, and used her to cover for the Club. I believe her. When I went to Poppa's room at the house to grab his dopped bag, I saw a small smudge of dirt on the hallway carpet.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

I got curious and went inside Sophia's closet... and guess what I found? Her sneakers, the one Poppa thought she didn't own. It matched the dam dirt. She tried to clean them in a hurry but residue was still there, hidden away in a corner. Rapheala said she was bullied and abuse for being meek, for not having any balls. Before she left she was with them at the Church they go to. Sophia was very angry and scorned about the divorce papers. Paola asked what was she going to do, and whatever it is she can't turn back from it. Sophia said she will not grant him a divorce and will never step aside so that Franco can marry his Yakuza whore. Rapheala told her to sign it and be free and that Franco didn't love her anyway, to move on with her life. Sophia ridiculed her for that. She didn't know exactly what they were plotting. But then, she saw it on the News.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Rapheala swore on her son Antonio's grave and her mother Teresa that it was Sophia who did this to Poppa, she said Sophia would wait for him down the hill after he biked for four miles... Sophia bragged about it and would whisper to them in church what they did behind the bushes. She knew exactly where Poppa would be. It was premeditated. She was the only one that knew that trail he took. I'm sorry Hiromi.

Carlo and Hiromi freeze, their faces unreadable. Hiromi's eyes stone cold.

CARLO

(Clearing his throat)

Where is Rapheala now, Frankie? I need to know the real truth face to face.

The room falls silent, the beeping of the monitor are the only thing alive.

FRANCESCA

(Shrugging)

I honestly don't know, but she wanted me to convey everything to you. She wants to see you. You two had a romantic thing before, that I didn't know about? Because she wants to make this right. Edgar asked Rudy to see if he could trace it, it's impossible now, Sse only uses WhatsApp. Do you have WhatsApp Uncle Carlo... hey, are you listening?

Carlo stands, blows his nose, and spaced out.

HIROMI

(Infuriated)

I need to get some air, I will walk around the hospital. I will tell Takahashi to follow. I need to think clearly about all this. But, I think Frankie you are right about Rapheala, I believe her too.

Hiromi's face saddened.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)

(Narrating)

I am grateful for Uncle Carlo and his protection all these years. He's old school and it's hard to read him and know his past...but he's my second father and my father's blood brother, faithful to the core. Now I have a responsibility to protect my family's legacy, my brother, and Hiromi. She has been my father's equal, his anchor. I see that now. Maybe that's why Poppa's heart mended when he earned her love. My family is complicated and many complexities that still loom over us.

Hiromi steps back into ICU room. She holds his hand. Hiroshi is fast asleep.

FRANCESCA

(Sighing)

I'll take Hiroshi home to my house now. Edgar, wake him up we will go.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Call me for anything Carlo should
be back with your Tea Hiromi.

Francesca waits until Hiromi finishes with her request from
the nurses.

HIROMI

(Tenderly smiles)

I'm back darling. Won't you please
open your eyes now. Nurse, give me
fresh towels and a washing basin
with warm water and something for
his lips, thank you. That would be
great Frankie, Edgar san you have
become a friend, thank you.

EDGAR

(Chuckles)

Thanks for saying that Hiromisan
yeah, he is a special young man.

Hiromi alone with Franco, gently washes his face. With
careful fingers, she applies ointment to his dry lips, a low
murmur under his breath.

FRANCO

(Faint whisper, REM)

Hiromi, my love, you're here. It
was Sophia ...

Hiromi jolts up in surprise.

HIROMI

(Tears pouring)

Yes, my love I am here. I'm here,
Shhh, please don't speak so soon. I
know Franco. And Frankie knows.
Shh... it's wonderful to see your
eyes looking at me.

Franco fights hard to focus out of the fog. He gently squeeze
Hiromi's hand.

HIROMI (CONT'D)

(Group text messages)

Your Poppa is awake! Hurry come
back he wants to see you all!

Carlo bursts out of the elevator, spilling tea across the
floor. Another elevator opens, Francesca and Hiroshi rush
out, Edgar sprinting behind them, blocking the nurses.

CARLO

(Cursing)

Ah shit, this fucking tea, ouch!

Ah, to hell with it.

He dumps the cups in the trash. In the room, the doctors are already there.

DR. DAVIS

(Looks into Franco's eyes)

Welcome back, Franco. Do you know what happened to you? How many fingers am I holding up? Do you recognize everyone in this room... slowly, say their names. Ah, well done. Good job sir.

DR. STANLEY

(Smiling casually)

Now he'll be in rehab to regain strength in his muscles, and his back. His sternum will take time to heal, it's a big bone, so no hugging. We'll move him immediately to a bigger room tonight your graduating outta here from ICU to your VIP room. Yeah! Okay, I can answer any concerns.

CARLO

(Chuckles)

When can he stand to take a shower? And will he still have wrapping around his chest? What kind of food can he eat?

The concerns were clarified. The ICU team readies Franco for the move to an undisclosed private room. Franco's family walks behind, following.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO'S VIP ROOM - NIGHT

A spacious beautifully appointed room is arranged with reclining sofas for Franco's family. Outside, security remains on high alert.

EDGAR

(Whispering)

Hey, Frankie, I'll stretch out in the waiting room with my blanket. Just across, not far, I'd feel better to be in front of this door, and so would Takahashi san.

FRANCESCA

(Whispering)

Okay, are you sure, and you'll sleep some, okay? Bye, goodnight.

EDGAR

(Winking at her)

Yes, I'll sleep some, you try too. Goodnight.

A snore breaks out from Carlo. Hiroshi reclines with his headset, fast asleep next to Hiromi. Francesca sits close to Franco's bed.

FRANCO

(Whispering)

Frankie, Frankie, pssst, are you awake? Come closer honey. I need to speak to you.

FRANCESCA

(Waking, tears)

Yes, Poppa what is it, are you okay? Should I get Dr. Stanley? Poppa, I'm so happy I can hear your voice and see you again. Thank you for fighting so hard to come back to us... to me.

FRANCO

(Hoarse voice)

No, no I'm okay. Frankie, listen do not do anything about Sophia. She will get what's coming to her. I don't want you to avenge me. Do you understand? Do not go near her. Run our Casinos like you always have. Be better than me. Protect your brother, listen to Hiromi and Carlo if you need guidance.

FRANCESCA

(Defiant)

So, you know about it, huh? I don't need anyone's guidance just yours and God's. What about Rapheala you know about her too? Yeah, well she ran away escaped, God who knows where, but contacted me on a burner phone after she saw you in the news. She had evidence about Sophia's demeanor the last time the three of them met at their church.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

Sophia and Paola were plotting something. And I also found Sophia's sneakers hiding in the corner of her closet... she left a faint trail in the hallway carpet.

Franco holds his gaze on Francesca.

FRANCO

(Concerned)

Fucking hell, I should have cut the snakes head's a long time ago. She is a conniving, devious bitch. I didn't see it coming. Do not go near her, I know what cartel she's involved with. I want you and Carlo to go into the Vault and take every fucking thing concerning their contents what Paola had for the streets. Load up a truck, and designate an area out of town for it. We'll do this after Sophia's has been terminated. I want them to know we are not playing their games the last snake's head will be cut off. We'll gain their respect. They can't fuck with us Gugino's we want peace.

FRANCESCA

(Endearing smile)

Alright, I hear you, but I can't promise unforeseen circumstances regarding Sophia. What do I do about Rapheala? Did she and Uncle Carlo have something?

FRANCO

(Nodding)

Yeah, it was complicated. If I'd known about Rapheala was being abused and undermined, I wouldn't have been so harsh. She didn't have the balls then to speak then, I get Paola and Sophia were two peas in a pod, she was probably scared. Anyway, listen to what I have said, okay? Now come here and give your old man a kiss. Goodnight, Frankie. Oh one more thing ... leave Rapheala to Carlo, she knows how to contact him. Focus on the job kid.

Francesca returns to her sofa and closed her eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO VIP ROOM - DAY

FRANCESCA

(Wakes to noises)

Ahhh, wow I overslept. Oh, I need a cup of coffee. Good morning, everybody. Good morning, uncle Carlo Where is Hiromi and Hiroshi? And Poppa? I hope Edgar took them to the Penthouse so they can freshen up and have a proper breakfast.

CARLO

(Smiles)

Here's your cup of coffee, madam, you made a wise choice about Edgar. We're all in love with him. Your Poppa's is getting X-rayed, then his therapy. I understand that you guys had a long talk through my snoring about the plan. Are you ready Frankie? This has to be done soon. Sophia doesn't know where we are in the hospital. Next Sunday, when she comes back from Church is the date. Here, have some of my bacon. I'll order more breakfast from the cafeteria. Now that we know for sure who it was, I released the guys sent them back to work and to their families. Franco wants to sell the Gugino Estate, doesn't want to live there after this. We'll build another home for your Poppa and Hiromi, if she stays. Hiroshi should live here and be near you by the lakes. Now let's go over the Vault plan... I've put Roberto on renting a unmarked Van, no problem.

Francesca is mid bite on bacon when Franco slowly enters with his handsome filipino male nurse.

FRANCO

(Walking, chuckling)

I feel a little nauseous about it all of it. She wasn't all bad in the beginning alright. Johnny, tuck me back in, I'm already tired. What'd I miss? Hey, Johnny please close the door behind you thanks, buddy.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO VIP ROOM - DAY

Franco stays quiet until the door was closes.

FRANCO

(Exhausted, crying)

Hey, Carlo, did you go over the Vault? Yeah, okay. I don't want any of you avenging me I'm working on it. She's got to go, and I'll do it my way. She was my responsibility. Frankie, stay away from her. Carlo you hear me, you know she's fearless. I don't want to talk about this when Hiromi gets back with Hiroshi. I just want to enjoy this moment with you two. I've been living in hell and darkness when she shot me. Where did I go? My body was here, but where did my soul go? I can't remember, oh God where was I? It was so dark, and I was alone and lost ... floating, just floating.

Francesca and Carlo hold Franco's hand as he speaks through his fear.

FRANCESCA

Crying)

Oh, Poppa you're here with us now. You were never alone not for a moment... when you were asleep Uncle Carlo and I would take turns, or Hiromi. You were in a Coma so you can heal and not move around in agony. Your soul was still here Okay, I promise.

Carlo dabs his eyes with his Handkerchief.

CARLO

Reassuring)

Franco, its alright to let it out, it was traumatic. But you know what... you came back stronger and clearer. That's all that matters. We're a family. You're protected, my dear friend and brother.

Franco falls to sleep.

FRANCESCA

(Wiping her eyes)

He's been through so much, uncle Carlo. I think we've got to wait until Poppa's further along in his recovery... he's going through trauma mentally and emotionally. He needs to see a psychiatrist, which I think that's good idea, I'll speak to his doctors.

EXT. GUGINO ESTATE - NIGHT

(P.O.V.) A dark Lexus slows along the Gugino estate. The masked driver surveys the perimeter. In the back a gloved hand steadies a pair of binoculars, watching.

INT. CLUB X - NIGHT

Behind leans back behind the oversized desk, phone to her ear, in control.

SOPHIA

(Shouting)

What the hell are you saying? Don't fucking blame me for the lost merchandise, that was Paola's. I owe you fucking nothing. As matter of fact, I lost two hundred grand for a no-delivery. I need my money back. Who killed my partner Mateo? What? Why are you asking about Franco? I haven't seen him or been in the hospital I don't give a damn he is dying anyway. Their keeping him close guarded. Find out who killed Paola or you'll never see another dime from me!

Sophia pours herself a drink, eyes locked on the monitor, she grabs her phone and calls Carlo.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

(Rubbing her temples)

Buonasera, Carlo, how's Franco doing? I thought I would call first, since no one includes me in anything like my step daughter.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I haven't been able to go and visit my husband, there's so much security at the hospital and each time they see me, a fucking reporter shoves a mic in my face. He's awake? Has he said anything, does he remember what happened? Oh, I see I will have to agree with the doctors he shouldn't be rushed to remember, it'll over stimulate his brain. Did they say if he would ever get his memory back? When will he get released, when's he does, I'll need to get the house ready, and cook all his favorite food. Si, Ciao, Carlo.

INT. HOSPITAL- FRANCO VIP ROOM - NIGHT

Franco in an earshot, hears Sophia's phone call.

CARLO

(Clicking off speaker)
Well, boss you heard it all. She'll get the house ready for you. And make sure you don't overuse your brain trying to remember, my ass. what a crazy bitch.

FRANCO

(Sad)
I truly feel sorry for her, let her come and visit me for the last time, make sure she's alone with us, then leave and give her a private moment. I'll play along. Set it up.

EXT. GREENWOOD COLORADO - PRIVATE SCHOOL - DAY

Nine first graders sit painting with a teacher's aide in a small classroom. Rapheala sits at the front, watching her pupils.

RAPHEALA

(Smiles sweetly)
Harry, and David, are you both finish with your paintings? I see a lot of giggling over there ... If, you're done, you can go and wash your hands, please.

Rapheala circulates, murmuring encouragement, lifting each wet painting and hangs it neatly with decorate pins.

RAPHEALA (CONT'D)

(Sweetly)

Okay, boys and girls, don't forget to give your parents the invitation cards, put it inside your your backpacks. Thank you, Elizabeth for coming in today. Have a good weekend. Children, say thank you to Miss Elizabeth. Our art show collection is going to be great. Let's get ready to line up.

INT. RAPHEALA'S HOME - EVENING

Rapheala huddles under a blanket, lost in the fire's glow, until her phone rings.

(O.S.)

CARLO (V.O.)

(Chuckles)

Hello, sweetheart, how was your day Miss Angelia? What did you do at school today? Hey, listen Raphe, when it's safe I want you to come home here, okay to me? Franco and I, Frankie is on board. It's been discussed... you earned your place in this family forever. You never have to live alone anymore. When you're ready, you can call me. I want to hear your sexy voice again, and forever Raphe. I miss you

RAPHEALA

(Teary -eyed)

Oh, Carlo, do you know how long I waited to hear that? I don't know Carlo, I'm terrified, and I have traumas. Yes, I miss you too darling, you're the only man in my heart. I'm sorry we separated so long ago, but I never stopped loving or caring about you. It was just too much, that hard life, it distracted us and we let it destroy us. I wish you could come here... it's peaceful and beautiful Carlo.

(MORE)

RAPHEALA (CONT'D)

At night I get lonely, but I carry my friend all the time, when morning comes I'm happy, and oh Carlo, the children are wonderful my first graders. They fill my heart. How's Franco really doing? And are you taking good care of yourself? Well, I better say goodnight I'm crying now.

(O. S.)

CARLO (V.O.)

(Emotional)

Yeah, Raphe, it's all my fault, we should have gotten married, had kids of our own, a little boy or a girl. I'm sorry I made you cry, Raphe. You know what I mean? Our lives then was dangerous and full of drama, but we're going to change that. We're not getting any younger we need each other's companionship. I never stopped loving you either. Each time I saw you I still had a hard on for you. You're very brave and courageous and I'm very proud of what you've become. The children must be crazy about you Miss Angelia, I love it. Keep safe and good night baby, kisses.

INT. THE ATLANTIS CASINO OFFICE - NIGHT

(P.O.V.) Francesca inside the vault. Francesca takes it in, her father's collections, fine art, Stella's furs, glittering jewelry, cash, pistols, rifles, ammo and coin collections, confiscated drugs.

FRANCESCA

(Sighing, texting)

Hey, I'm standing in here now yes, of course I'm alone, uncle Carlo. Edgar's outside of the Office door waiting for me. What time are you getting here to load up? I want to be done with this before sunrise. Have you set the unmarked van pickup and drop-off? Are you going with them? No, I would prefer you take a different unmarked car and hang back to watch from the distance.

(MORE)

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

I'm sending Edgar with you on this... mission. He's your driver, and he'll have his eagle eye out in case anything goes wrong. The unmarked van and the driver you hired... what's your instruction? No, not a good idea, the Cartels will waste them, don't you watch any movies uncle Carlo? Yeah, I figured. Change the plan one driver for the van, one driver that follows the van. Once they reach the designated location, the Van driver leaves and drives away with the tailing car. Makes sure this happens exactly as I've instructed. I'll wait for you. See you soon. Good luck.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO VIP ROOM - NIGHT

Hiromi and Hiroshi remain on the sofa, vigilant watching over Franco.

CARLO

(Winking at Franco)

Yeah, duty calls at the Atlantis. gotta bounce. You kids behave while I step out alright. Be back for breakfast. Goodnight ladies and gents.

EXT. AN ALLEY - NIGHT

Carlo and Edgar load two heavy suitcases into an unmark van. Carlo hands Chico an envelope labeled, " Hot Chiles "

CARLO

(Serious)

Now make sure you leave this on the passenger seat and get the fuck out fast with Roberto... we'll be watching. Thank you, Chico, and good luck men.

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO VIP ROOM - DAWN

Hiroshi and Francesca fast asleep. Hiromi stands, to watch over Franco.

HIROMI

(Gently kissing Franco)
 My love I will go now. Please keep
 our boy safe. I'll call you after I
 land. Watashi wa kokorokara anata o
 aishiteimasu.

FRANCO

(Kissing her open palms)
 I will, be safe my darling. Please
 be careful, and take care of your
 health. Get back soon.
 e ti amo con tutto il mio cuore.

Then she bends down to gently kiss Hiroshi's forehead.

(P.O.V.)Franco follows Hiromi's silhouette fades into the
 doorway. Franco's misty eyes, gives nothing away.

EXT. GUGINO ESTATE - SIDE GATE - DAY

A pair of boots makes it's way towards the music streaming
 out of the kitchen window.

INT. GUGINO ESTATE - KITCHEN - SUNDAY

SOPHIA

(Preoccupied, humming)
 La la la ... argh! Oh no...no!

The assailant stands above Sophia her pistol aimed at her
 chest then shoots her dead.

EXT. HENDERSON EXECUTIVE AIRPORT - DAY

Hiromi and Takahashi steps onto the jet. At the window,
 Hiromi gazes out behind dark sunglasses.

HIROMI

(Casually smiling)
 Mica-chan, can you make me a
 scramble eggs with caviar,
 strawberries on the side and a
 glass of champaign and orange
 juice. And ask Takahashi san if he
 needs anything. Thank you Ms. Mica

INT. HOSPITAL - FRANCO'S VIP ROOM - DAY

Francesca and Hiroshi share breakfast with their father, quiet and composed.

CARLO
(Chuckles)
Hey, good morning, everybody. Did you save anything for me?

Carlo locks eyes with Franco and Francesca.

CARLO (CONT'D)
(Dusting off his Hands)
All done. Now, I want breakfast. Oh Edgar went to the flower shop.

FRANCESCA
(Worried, then softening)
Hey uncle Carlo ...the flower shop? What for? Oh, that's so sweet.

Edgar walks in with a large bouquet of flowers.

EDGAR
(Cheerful)
Aren't these beautiful? I thought all of us needed to embrace this beauty, and let's put it right there. Hiroshi san bijin-sandesu ne?

HIROSHI
(Chuckling)
Okay. Hana ka imoto ka?
Translation: Is that for my sister?

Edgar and Hiroshi laughs at their shared secret.

FRANCESCA (V.O.)
(Narrating)
This is what my family was like, the depths of our love for each other, compassion, struggles, respect for those who respected us. And it did not end here. The Saga continues with Hiromi's war with her step daughter Tami Sakamoto. Franco, my father, Uncle Carlo and Rapheala, Edgar and I, and the coming of age for Hiroshi Sakamoto-Gugino.

THE END

FADE OUT

