

CASSIDY'S GIRL

by
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TEASER

EXT. PAN AM FLIGHT #1-10 IN AIR, APRIL 15, 1948

"CLIPPER EMPRESS OF THE SKIES", CONSTELLATION LOCKHEAD L-049 encounters engine problems over London, England.

JAMES CASSIDY, a dashing pilot, WWII Bomber Captain, takes evasive action as ENGINE #3 cuts out and starts to burn.

CASSIDY

Damn! #3 couldn't hold out this time!

GEORGE HENDERSON, his co-pilot, watches the flames and flashes back to a WWII mission.

HENDERSON

We're going down, Captain! The Jerrys got us!

Engine blasts into flames.

CASSIDY

Take it easy, Henderson! There's no Jerrys out there! We have a fire in #3. We can handle it.

Cassidy switches on the radio.

CASSIDY

Shannon Field, this is Pan Am One Ten coming from Heathrow. We have big problems and we're going to have to set down on your field.

AIR TRAFFIC

(O.S.)

That's a Roger, Pan Am One Ten.

CASSIDY

Clear out a tarmac! We have an engine out and we're flying blind!

AIR TRAFFIC

(O.S.)

Take whatever field you like! We'll ground everything!

Henderson flips out, pulling the radio away from Cassidy.

HENDERSON
RADIO SILENCE!

Henderson rips the headset to the ground and pokes Cassidy.

HENDERSON
TWELVE O'CLOCK HIGH!

CASSIDY
KNOCK IT OFF GEORGE! WE GOT TO
HANDLE THIS. GET A LIGHT ON THE
INSTRUMENTS. I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING.

Henderson reaches for the controls and the plane sinks in the air quickly as Engine #3 flames wildly out-of-control.

HENDERSON
CAN'T YOU SEE THAT ONE-O-NINE
HEADED STRAIGHT FOR US!

Cassidy punches him square in the jaw.

CASSIDY
I said knock it off Lieutenant! Get
to your senses.

HENDERSON
We're gonna die!

CASSIDY
We will if you don't get back with
me and right the fuck now!

HENDERSON
OKAY! OKAY! Tell me what to do!

CASSIDY
First find me some light so I can
see these goddamn controls then cut
the fuel line to number three.

HENDERSON
Aye Aye!

The Flight seems to gather itself as an air field comes into view. Henderson tries to cut the fuel line, but nothing.

CASSIDY
We're not going to make it if you
don't cut that fuel line. We got no
landing gear.

HENDERSON
THAT MESSERSCHMITT'S BACK ON US!

He reaches for the controls and the plane heads down, fast.

CASSIDY

What the hell are you doing!

The Plane goes down. Wings fall off. Fuselage rips into pieces as it belly flops through stone fences and burns out.

BLACK OUT.

FADE-IN

INT. LUNDY'S BAR JUNE 1954 -- 9:00 PM

A dark, dank New Orleans bar filled with SERVICE MEN, DOCK WORKERS, HOOKERS. BAR PATRONS jabber.

The House Un-American Activities Committee(H.U.A.C.) Hearings, led by Sen. Joseph McCarthy, are on the News, blaring from a TV set.

PIANO PLAYER plays a blues piano that haunts the next scenes.

Lightning crashes and heavy rain accompany the music, throughout.

INT. CASSIDY'S APARTMENT -- 9:00 PM

Mildred wanders through a wrecked apartment. Her bloody hand reaches out.

EXT. CANAL STREET -- 9:00 PM

A tattered old BUS trudges through the rain and traffic. An annoyed TRAFFIC COP yells at a CABBIE.

INT. BUS -- 9:00 PM

CASSIDY, now older, aged gray face, still a captain drives his decrepit BUS, bursting at the seams. His yellow aviators reflect traffic.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREETS -- NIGHT

The bus maneuvers through New Orleans traffic and pulls into...

INT. BUS DEPOT -- NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

BUS pulls in. The McCarthy H.U.A.C. Hearings are on the News there too.

Cassidy greets PASSENGERS as they depart. OLD WOMEN, YOUNG MEN, GIRLS FROWNING, STOUT MAN. Cassidy leaves the bus, knowing their troubles.

He moves across the platform, smokes a cigarette, and turns in his trip report, noticing the TV set and rain outside.

CASSIDY
(under his breath)
Pinko commie bastards.

Cassidy runs out into the rain.

EXT. NEWSSTAND(CORNER OF MAGAZINE ST.)

Cassidy runs to a NEWSSTAND. The NEWSPAPER headline reads: "STORMS PLAGUE GULF COAST", and "McCARTHY VS. THE ARMY". Cassidy buys a paper, slants it over his head and runs off.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET

Cassidy runs past a TV store playing McCarthy on five sets.

EXT. TROLLEY

Cassidy catches the trolley on St. Charles.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREETS

Cassidy exits the trolley, into rain. He notices his window from the street. Dark.

INT. TENEMENT STAIRS

Cassidy bounds up a dark stairwell.

INT. HALLWAY

Cassidy cautiously creeps down the dark, looming hall.

INT. DOORWAY

Cassidy gently pushes the ajar door open. The completely wrecked room glows from a dim lamp on the floor. Streetlights flicker inside. Blood lays in a small pool on the floor.

CASSIDY

Mildred?

INT. LIVING ROOM

Cassidy opens the door cautiously, and enters. Eventually the bedroom door creaks open.

MILDRED, Cassidy's wife of six years, a sexy Creole woman, wearing only a long stained CAMISOLE, stumbles into the room.

MILDRED

What? So I decided to throw a little party. And the guests kinda wrecked the place. Wanna make somethin outta it?

Cassidy moves in and cracks her across her mouth. Mildred walks past and throws an empty whiskey bottle at him. Cassidy lunges. She lifts another bottle and swings. He trips over broken furniture.

MILDRED

You aint worth the trouble.

She drops the bottle, and creeps slowly back into the bedroom. Cassidy stands up, and searches for a cigarette. He looks around and finds a whiskey bottle with 2 drinks left. He drinks them down, then gazes into the bedroom.

INT. KITCHEN

He walks in to find rampant cockroaches running over a sink ready to collapse from too many dirty dishes.

INT. KITCHEN, FROM INSIDE OVEN

He finds a half-eaten MEATLOAF. He slams the oven shut. Finding a loose cigarette on the table, he lights it, takes several furious puffs, and charges out.

INT. BEDROOM

Mildred paints her mouth with bright red LIPSTICK. She watches in the mirror, as Cassidy charges in, and then haunches her ass in the air, so he can see it well.

CASSIDY
TURN AROUND!

MILDRED
If I do, you won't get such a nice view.

CASSIDY
I ain't lookin'

MILDRED
You're always lookin' at it.

CASSIDY
Well It's so big!

MILDRED
(Syrupy)
If it wasn't, it wouldn't interest you.

Mildred reveals herself in a sexual manor. His eyes gulp. She drops her slip; throws a clean red dress over her body. He can't take his eyes off her. Mildred swings her hips as Cassidy sits in bed. Rain pummels the window, outside.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. BED DURING ELECTRICAL STORM -- NIGHT

Mildred and Cassidy violently mate as lightening rages.

INT. BEDROOM -- TONIGHT

Mildred finishes her face. Cassidy blocks her escape.

CASSIDY
Where do you think you're going!

MILDRED
OUT!

Cassidy jumps up and grabs her wrist.

CASSIDY
You're stayin' here!

Mildred smiles, knowing he needs her sexually.

MILDRED
You're pathetic.

Cassidy drops his grip.

CASSIDY
You got it all wrong, Mildred,
dear. What I need is food. I
haven't had a decent meal all day.
You go out there and find me
something worth eating!

MILDRED
You're no gimp! Fix it yourself! I
aint your maid?

Cassidy grabs her again, and spins her around.

CASSIDY
I pay the rent around here! I buy
the food! When you wreck my supper,
you gotta fix me something else!

Mildred jerks herself free, and leaves. Cassidy follows.

INT. FRONT DOOR OF APT.

Cassidy rushes past Mildred, blocking her path.

CASSIDY
Nothin' doin''! You're staying
right here!

Mildred scowls.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. SOMEWHAT UN-WRECKED APT.

A battle with Mildred rages. Dishes fly. The two interlock
in physical combat which leads into the bedroom. . .

INT. LIVING ROOM -- TONIGHT

Mildred stares with contempt, knowing what's on his mind.
Cassidy directs their attention to the blood on the CARPET.

CASSIDY
Who's is that!!

MILDRED

Somebody's nose . . . or mouth. I don't know. My friends got into an argument.

CASSIDY

I don't like your friends coming around here! You know that!

MILDRED

Tonight. (beat) We're not going to fight about it!

CASSIDY

(changing his tone)

What is it? What's the matter?

Mildred backs up.

MILDRED

YOU, Cassidy! You're what's the matter! I'm fed up with you!

He can't find the right words.

CASSIDY

Go on Say it!

MILDRED

You got ears? I'm saying it! I'm telling you I'm fed up. That's all.

CASSIDY

For what? You got a reason or it's the booze talkin'?

Mildred starts to walk away from him.

MILDRED

You figure it out!

CASSIDY

Now look. I don't go for these cockamamie games of yours.

Mildred studies Cassidy struggling for words. She knows what he really wants.

CASSIDY

This is something new! You haven't tried this before, and I'm not going to let you start now!

(MORE)

CASSIDY (cont'd)
 If you got a beef with me, I want
 to know what it is.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. BED DURING ELECTRICAL STORM -- NIGHT

Mildred and Cassidy make wild love.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- TONIGHT

Cassidy steps towards Mildred. She shakes her head no.

MILDRED
 Not tonight, I'm not in the mood.

Cassidy takes an other step towards her.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. LIVING ROOM/BATTLE RAGES ONTO THE BED

INT. LIVING ROOM -- TONIGHT

He forcefully drags her into the bedroom. She doesn't care.

INT. BEDROOM -- TONIGHT

Mildred puts up no fight. He pushes her down. She falls
 like a ragdoll. He slaps her.

Finally, he takes her.

Mildred gets up off the bed, and walks out. Cassidy follows.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- TONIGHT

Mildred lights another cigarette. Cassidy wants to talk.

MILDRED
 (matter-of-factly)
 Today is my birthday. . . That's
 why I threw the party.

CASSIDY
 Oh. I knew you were pissed about
 something. I guess I should have
 remembered.

Cassidy reaches into his pocket and hands her a \$10 bill.

CASSIDY
Here. Buy yourself something.

MILDRED
What's this?

CASSIDY
It's your birthday present. . .

MILDRED
You sure about that? Maybe you're
just paying me off for what just
happened in the bedroom. If that's
it, you're cheating yourself.
'Cause it wasn't worth a dime.

Mildred crumples the \$10 Bill and throws it at him. She charges out. He slowly walks over and picks up the lamp off the carpet.

INT. KITCHEN

Cassidy finds some potatoes, and fires up a coffee pot.

EXT. DECATUR STREET -- NIGHT

Bums come out as the rain stops. Mildred clicks loudly away.

Cassidy watches from his balcony.

INT. KITCHEN

Cassidy rushes finds his old scrap book, and dusts it off. He notices clippings from a Univ. of Oregon newspaper, a picture of him surrounded by screaming fans.

CASSIDY
Brilliant achievement in the halls
of learning and on the gridiron.
Majoring in mechanical engineering,
James Cassidy, third in his class.
In his final season on the Webfoot
Eleven made All-American. . .

Cassidy makes a sound like the crowd screaming as he leafs through the scrapbook.

<<BEGIN B&W
FLASH CUTAWAYS>>

B&W SHOT -- EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD/CASSIDY ON FIELD -- NIGHT

B&W SHOT -- INT. DORM ROOM/COLLEGIATE CASSIDY -- NIGHT

B&W SHOT -- INT. COCKPIT/CASSIDY AS WWII PILOT -- NIGHT

B&W SHOT -- EXT. LAGUARDIA PAN AM FLIGHT 1-10 -- SUNNY DAY

Capt. Cassidy climbs down the stairs from the cockpit and reaches an ADMINISTATOR, waiving him down.

BOSS (V.O.)
How's the round-the-world trip
going? Here's your paycheck!

B&W SHOT -- INT. NIGHTCLUB/CASSIDY IN A FINE SUIT -- NIGHT

Debutantes surround Cassidy. CHAMPAGNE flows at a party.

B&W SHOT -- EXT. PLANE CRASH SITE -- NIGHT

PAN AM FLIGHT #1-10 crash lands near Shannon Field, Ireland. Engines burn out of control as the ship tumbles to bits.

EDWARD R. MURROW (V.O.)
CASSIDY (mocking)
...being called the worst tragedy
in aviation history. Tonight
marked the crash of a transatlantic
flight from London, which suddenly
careened into stone fencing near an
airport in Ireland, ripping the
engines from the fuselage as. . .

B&W SHOT -- INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

Cassidy sits at the defendant's table. An arm jumps into frame, pointing at him, then another, then another. He falls off his chair. Arms push him against the wall. He cowers, completely surrounded by pointing fingers. Camera ascends to the ceiling as it spins slowly, like a corkscrew.

CASSIDY (V.O.)
It's absolutely true I swear it!!
The copilot. He had some kind of
fit. The fusing of negative
elements that break a man. I saw it
during the war.

(MORE)

CASSIDY (V.O.) (cont'd)
 He turned into a rabid dog! Pulling
 me away from the controls!

B&W SHOT -- INT. PRESSROOM -- DAY

NEWSPAPERS roll over the press. Headlines overlap: "Drunk
 Pilot Kills", "Families demand Justice", "Air Tragedy".

EDWARD R. MURROW (V.O.)
 It seems the aftereffects of a
 Champagne party, Captain James
 Cassidy had attended the night
 before the crash could have left
 a lingering effect, damaging his
 ability to fly his plane. Cries
 can be heard as far as. . .

CASSIDY
lingering effect.....

B&W SHOT -- EXT. DARK HIGHWAY/CASSIDY WANDERS -- NIGHT

B&W SHOT -- EXT. SHACK/CASSIDY DRINKING BOOZE -- NIGHT

B&W SHOT -- INT. MUG SHOT WALL: ATLANTA, GA.(ON CASSIDY)

A flashbulb captures Cassidy's MUG-SHOT.

B&W SHOT -- ON HOSPITAL REPORT: BROKEN NOSE, GALVESTON, TX

B&W SHOT -- INT. GAMBLING HALL/CASSIDY LOSES -- NIGHT

B&W SHOT -- INT. MUG SHOT WALL: NEW ORLEANS(ON CASSIDY)

JUDGE(V.O.)
 TEN DAYS! Vagrancy!

B&W SHOT -- INT. MUG SHOT WALL: MOBILE, AL.(ON CASSIDY)

JUDGE #2 (V.O.)
 Mobile County court finds you
 guilty of assault.

B&W SHOT -- INT. COURTROOM/JUDGE'S HAND SLAMMING GAVEL

JUDGE #3 (V.O.)
SIXTY DAYS! ASSAULT!

B&W SHOT -- INT. TRAIN YARD -- DUSK

JUDGE #4 (V.O.)
Chain gang. Twelve days . . .

Cassidy jumps a freight train.

B&W SHOT -- INT. CRUMMY ROOM -- NIGHT

Cassidy sits on a crummy bed and puffs out smoke.

B&W SHOT -- INT. LUNDY'S BAR -- HIGH NOON

Cassidy enters and notices Mildred, who looks hot. Cassidy pounds down 4 shots before he moves in.

B&W SHOT -- INT. WEDDING CHAPEL, FRENCH QUARTER -- 3:00 AM

Cassidy places a cheap ring on Mildred's finger. The JUSTICE-OF-THE-PEACE and WIFE are in their pajamas.

B&W SHOT -- INT. BUS DEPOT -- SUNNY DAY

Cassidy waltzes in for the first time.

SUPERINTENDENT
Here's your cap.

SUPERINTENDENT hands Cassidy a cap. Cassidy puts it on.

SUPERINTENDENT
26 passengers a trip, to and from
Baton Rouge. Now, get outta here,
before I change my mind.

B&W SHOT -- EXT. LUNDY'S BAR -- LATE DAY

Mildred and TWO SAILORS stagger out of the bar. Cassidy swats his leg with his new hat, and walks away.

MILDRED
Where ya going? The party's just
getting started!

B&W SHOT -- INT. BUS -- DAY

Cassidy drives his bus down the highway.

CASSIDY
 (muttering)
 There is one thing left in this
 world I can control: it's this
 goddamn bus.

<<END FLASHES>>

INT. CASSIDY'S KITCHEN -- TONIGHT

Cassidy stares blankly, looks around, then violently swishes
 the scrapbook across the floor, and he

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Runs in, frantically searching for booze. Finding a half full
 bottle, he pours back a big slug.

CASSIDY
 A toast to the captain of the ship!
 The pilot of the plane! The driver
 of the bus! (beat) Now then. . . A
 toast to Captain James Cassidy!

This time he drinks heavier.

CASSIDY
 And a toast to the four wheels of
 the bus!

Another drink.

CASSIDY
 Or better yet! To each wheel!
 Everybody Drink up! Drink! Drink!

Cassidy kills it, then smashes the bottle. He runs out.

EXT. DECATUR STREET -- NIGHT

Cassidy staggers along the water front, drunk as hell.

CASSIDY
 (still muttering)
 They'd better get the hell outta
 my way!! Whoever the hell they is.
 (MORE)

CASSIDY (cont'd)
 They'd better get the hell outta my
 way!!

EXT. FRENCH MARKET/FISH MARKET -- NIGHT

Suddenly a shutter opens and a mess of fish guts flies
 through the air, hitting Cassidy on the leg.

CASSIDY
 You better watch where the fuck
 you're throwin' things FAT ASS!!

FISH GUY
 Watch your own damn self!!! You
 lousy drunk!!

Cassidy breaks the half-opened SHUTTER off.

CASSIDY
 Drunk hun! C'mon outta there!!
 (beat) Fish fucks...

INT. LUNDY'S BAR -- NIGHT

Mildred and KENRICK, overweight traveling salesman with shiny
 shoes and a failing toupee,

laugh, drink, flirt. Piano player pounds out honky-tonk
 melodies. TV set plays the news recaps.

EXT. WATER FRONT -- NIGHT

CASSIDY
 (muttering)
 I'll drag her ass home . . .

INT. LUNDY'S BAR

Mildred, on Kenrick's lap, sucks on a Maraschino cherry.

EXT. WATER FRONT/LUNDY'S BAR

CASSIDY
 She's given me as many black eyes.
 (beat) If I had a dime . . .

Cassidy walks through the shadows. He stops cold.

INT. LUNDY'S BAR

Kenrick hands Mildred a \$100 bill from a thick sheaf.

KENRICK

Go buy yourself some of that nice
French face stuff you've been
skwackin about.

EXT. LUNDY'S BAR(LOOKING IN)

Cassidy looks through the window, eyeing an enemy trench.
Lundy moves down the bar. Kenrick puts his fat arm around
Mildred.

CASSIDY

The bastard. (beat) The dirty,
(beat) fat, (beat) greasy bastard.

INT. LUNDY'S BAR

Mildred laughs louder. He notices his friends SPANN, PAULINE,
SHEALY, LUNDY, and a newcomer DORIS. He decides he must meet
her in front of his wife. Cassidy walks inside.

SHEALY

(to Spann about Pauline)
Leave her alone. No matter what
you do, she'll just say it anyway.

SPANN

I think I better keep her quiet.

CASSIDY

Hello Shealy.

SHEALY

It stop raining?

Cassidy smirks, dripping wet, and takes a seat.

CASSIDY

(to Lundy)
Fifth of Rye.

Doris and Cassidy exchange suggestive glances. Lundy arrives
with a bottle. Cassidy refills all the glasses.

SHEALY

Her name's Doris.

DORIS
What's his name.

SHEALY
His name's Cassidy.

SPANN
(to Pauline)
You shut up, you hear. You just
sit there, and shut your trap!

PAULINE
You can't tell me to shut up!

SPANN
I'm tellin you I get real annoyed
when you butt in when you're not
concerned.

PAULINE
I am concerned. Cassidy, here, is
my friend. I don't like to see my
friends get loused up. That's all.

DORIS
Does Mr. Cassidy drink?

CASSIDY
Sometimes.

DORIS
I drink all the time.

PAULINE
You listen, Cassidy .

Doris stares at Cassidy until he fills her glass to the rim.

PAULINE
You listen carefully to what I have
to say. We were up at your place
today. Mildred threw a party.

CASSIDY
I know all about that.

PAULINE
And the fight?

CASSIDY
I figured there was a fight.
Who hit you, Shealy?

PAULINE

I'll tell you who hit him. That fat pig over there, clawin' your wife.

Cassidy slams his fist down and stares at Pauline.

SHEALY

Now, take it easy, Jim. Just let it ride.

PAULINE

And, I'll tell you what happened. Haney had his hands all over her. Squeezing and feeling like he was pricing oranges. And Mildred? She just stood there and let him do it to her.

SHEALY

That isn't exactly correct. Mildred was drunk and didn't know what was happening.

PAULINE

Like hell she didn't. She was right there with it, and if you want my opinion, she was getting into it.

SPANN

Keep it up. Just keep it up. Before the night's over, I'll have your hair out by the roots!

PAULINE

You won't do nothin' like it. You're a zero. A nothin'. If you was one tenth of a man, you'da proved it today, when Kenrick began pitting Shealy. But what did you do? You looked on like you was watching a prizefight.

SHEALY

I guess I spilled some blood on your floor.

PAULINE

It was awful! Shealy wasn't lookin' for no trouble. All he did was make a quiet request. Like the gentleman he is. You are Shealy, you're a real gentleman.

SHEALY

I merely asked Kenrick to stop what he was doing. I pointed out that Mildred was. . .

PAULINE

And Kenrick laughed. Then Shealy told him again. Without any warning, he banged Shealy right in the face.

Cassidy pulls away from the table. Kenrick invites him over.

SHEALY

Easy, Jim. . .

CASSIDY

One thing bugs me. I don't like the fact that he hit you.

SHEALY

(mildly laughs)

It was nothing. Just a punch on the nose.

PAULINE

What about Mildred? You heard what he was doing with Mildred.

CASSIDY

The hell with Mildred!

PAULINE

She's your wife!

DORIS

May I have another drink?

Cassidy pours, as before almost to the top.

PAULINE

You hear me Cassidy? I'm telling you something. She's your wife.

CASSIDY

That ain't the issue. It don't matter.

Cassidy gulps his drink down.

CASSIDY

Everybody drink up.

They concentrate on their drinking.

PAULINE

Well, Shealy's quite a gentleman.
And that's what I have to say
about it.

SHEALY

I wonder . . .

SPANN

And what about me? What am I?

PAULINE

You're a lizard!
(to Doris)
For Chrissakes, say somethin.

Doris drinks her Rye like water. Cassidy stands.

SHEALY

Please, now . . . Take it easy.

CASSIDY

I'm Fine.

SHEALY

Don't. Jim. Please. Sit down.

CASSIDY

It's alright.

SHEALY

No, Jim.

CASSIDY

He hit you. Ain't that what he
did?

SHEALY

Please.

CASSIDY

But don't you see? You're my
friend, Shealy. Times you talk
like a book and you get on my
nerves, but you're my friend.
(beat) You're a no-good drunken
wreck, but you're my friend, and he
had no right to haul off and hit
you.

Cassidy walks straight to Kenrick, who pushes out a chair.

KENRICK

What took you so long? We been waiting for you. Here, sit down. Have a drink.

CASSIDY

Alright.

KENRICK

Lundy!

Kenrick signals Lundy, then points to his empty bottle.

KENRICK

Well, Jim old boy, how's it going?

CASSIDY

Fine.

KENRICK

How's the old bus running?

CASSIDY

O.K.

Cassidy and Mildred stare at each other.

KENRICK

How's things up in Baton Rouge?

CASSIDY

It's a nice town.

KENRICK

That's what I hear. I hear Baton Rouge is a great old town. They tell me it's great for installment routes.

CASSIDY

I wouldn't know.

KENRICK

Well, I'll tell you. I figure in terms of the number of streets. Low Income bracket. Civil Service people. Good steady jobs. Lots of kids. That's what does it. You put your facts together, size up an area, and you go out and sell.

CASSIDY

I don't know anything about it.

KENRICK
It's something you learn. It's
very interesting.

CASSIDY
Not for me. I drive a bus.

KENRICK
And good hard honest work it is
too. Not a thing to be ashamed
of. It's just good plain simple
hard work.

Lundy arrives with the bottle. Kenrick pours a round.

CASSIDY
Say it, Kenrick.

KENRICK
Say what?

CASSIDY
The toast. The toast you were
going to say.

KENRICK
What toast?

CASSIDY
To Mildred. To Mildred's birthday.

KENRICK
Birthday?

CASSIDY
Sure, didn't you know it was
Mildred's birthday?

KENRICK
Well, yes. . . Yes, of course.

Kenrick suspiciously raises his glass to make a toast.

KENRICK
To Mildred's birthday.

CASSIDY
And to Mildred's arms.

Kenrick stares at Cassidy .

CASSIDY
Mildred's soft white arms.
(pause)
(MORE)

CASSIDY (cont'd)

Say it Kenrick! To her sweet soft arms!

(pause)

And Mildred's tits. We gotta toast those titties of hers. Take a look at those big luscious giants. Look at them will you.

KENRICK

Well, now really, Jim. . .

CASSIDY

Look at them. Take a good look at them. Tremendous ain't they? And look at the way her hips curve out. Look at that pair of hips. Nice, full, and round. Look at that gorgeous meat. Ever see anything like it?

Kenrick sweats, and swallows between Cassidy's words.

CASSIDY

Go on, Kenrick, Look. Keep Looking. She's right there. You can see her. You can touch her. Put your hands on her. I ain't stopping you. Put your hands all over her. Go on, Kenrick.

KENRICK

Now stop it, Jim. This woman is your wife.

CASSIDY

Since when did you figure that one out? Did you know that this afternoon?

Mildred abruptly stands up.

MILDRED

That's enough, Cassidy!

CASSIDY

You sit down. . .

MILDRED

Cassidy, you're blind drunk and you better get out of here before you start a riot.

KENRICK

He'll be alright.

MILDRED

He's blind stinking drunk. He's a mess.

CASSIDY

Sure I am. A good for nothin bum. Not good enough for you. Don't make enough money. Can't buy you things you want. You know I'll never be anything more than what I am. You figure you can get something better. Like this here.

KENRICK

Go home, Jim. Go home and sleep it off.

CASSIDY

If I go home, where will you go? With her?

KENRICK

Don't worry about that.

CASSIDY

You can be damn sure I won't worry. Why should I? What do I care what she does? You think I'm sore because you had your fat hands all over today? I ain't sore about that at all. To me, it don't matter. I tell you it don't matter!

MILDRED

All right. You're telling us it don't matter. Now, what else?

KENRICK

Let's leave it alone. He'll be alright. He'll behave himself, and he'll go home.

Kenrick stands up, and takes Cassidy's arm. Cassidy stumbles.

KENRICK

Now, be nice, Jim.

Mildred grabs Pauline's wrist.

MILDRED

Alright you troublemaker. You aint happy unless you got your big mouth open. Now I'll close it for you.

Mildred yanks Pauline up, and smacks her across the face. Pauline shrieks and flies at Mildred. Shealy moves in.

KENRICK

Stay out of it, Shealy.

Shealy ignores Kenrick. Kenrick grabs Shealy. Cassidy grabs Kenrick by the arm. The entire bar stares.

CASSIDY

Turn around, Kenrick. Look at me. You had your fun with Shealy this afternoon. Tonight, it's you and me.

The fight between the women ends abruptly. Pauline sits down. Spann ignores her. Kenrick looks worried.

CASSIDY

You're a slob, Kenrick. You're a cheap slob.

KENRICK

Now, Jim, we don't want no trouble. You got no legitimate complaint against me.

CASSIDY

Let's just say I don't like you. And tonight, I especially don't like you. It bothers me to know you gave Shealy a slamming. Shealy's my friend.

Mildred moves right in, right up to Cassidy's face.

MILDRED

It ain't because of Shealy and you know it. You're jealous, that's all. You're just plain jealous.

CASSIDY

Of you? That's a laugh.

MILDRED

Is it? Then let's see you laugh!

Cassidy smashes his palm into her face. She staggers, loses her balance, and lands square on her big round butt.

MILDRED

Alright Haney. Get him for that. Don't let him do that to me.

Kenrick grabs Cassidy's legs from under him. Cassidy goes down. Kenrick hopes he's won. Cassidy has trouble standing.

KENRICK

Now don't be stupid Jim. You'll
wind up in an ambulance.

Cassidy spits at Kenrick, followed by a couple of good solid whacks to the face. Kenrick grabs him in a bearhug, and both men go down to the floor. Kenrick winds up on top.

KENRICK

You done?

Cassidy head butts Kenrick's chin. They both stand again, and Cassidy pummels Kenrick into collapse. Cassidy grins, then tumbles on top of him, and passes out too.

BLACK OUT

INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S -- NIGHT

A bucket of cold water splashes Cassidy awake.

SHEALY

Are you alright.

CASSIDY

I need a drink!

Cassidy drinks and stares at Mildred.

CASSIDY

You get the hell out of here.

MILDRED

I'm taking you home.

CASSIDY

(to Shealy)

You're not in it.

Cassidy stares down Mildred.

SHEALY

It's not fair. She's trying to
meet you half way.

Cassidy cups his mouth; finds blood.

CASSIDY

Where's our friend Kenrick

SHEALY
They took him to a doctor.

They head downstairs to the bar.

INT. STEPS DOWN TO BAR

CASSIDY
You know, that bastard put up
a good fight. I could stand
another drink.

SHEALY
I think you better call it a
night. We'll take you home.

CASSIDY
Home? Who said I had a home?

MILDRED
C'mon Let's Go. . .

Cassidy pushes her away.

CASSIDY
Keep away from me. I mean it.

MILDRED
Alright. Alright. Any way you
want it.

Mildred turns and walks out.

SHEALY
That was wrong, Cassidy. That
wasn't fair.

CASSIDY
I said I wasn't going home.

Cassidy heads to the BAR. Shealy leaves.

INT. LUNDY'S BAR(AT THE BAR) -- VERY LATE NIGHT

CASSIDY
another round . . . Lundy.

Lundy pours a SHOT, and waits for his money.

CASSIDY
 O.K., This time, why not. Drinks
 for everyone! Drinks on me!
 Everyone!

Cassidy turns and realizes he is the only one left in the bar
 except Doris. Cassidy weaves over to her table.

CASSIDY
 I can't remember your name.

DORIS
 Doris. . .

CASSIDY
 Yeah. . . That's right. . .

DORIS
 Sit Down. . .

CASSIDY
 If I sit, I'll fall asleep.

DORIS
 You look tired.

CASSIDY
 I'm drunk . . .

DORIS
 So am I . . .

CASSIDY
 You don't look drunk. . .

DORIS
 I'm very drunk . . . I always
 know when I'm very drunk. . .

CASSIDY
 That's bad. That means you're
 a bad case. . .

DORIS
 Yes, I'm a very sick person.
 They tell me I'm drinking myself
 to death.

Cassidy reaches for a chair, and with trouble eventually sits
 down.

CASSIDY
 I never seen you in here before.
 Where you from?

Doris notices Cassidy for the first time, really notices.

DORIS

You've had an accident. You're face is all cut up.

CASSIDY

Well for chrissakes. Where were you? Didn't you see what happened?

DORIS

I heard all the excitement. . .

CASSIDY

Didn't you see it. Didn't you see the fight?

Doris lowers her head.

CASSIDY

I don't know how to figure you.

DORIS

I'm easy to figure. I'm just a sick person. That's all. The only thing I want to do is drink.

CASSIDY

How old are you?

DORIS

Twenty-Six.

CASSIDY

You're very young, you know that? You're just a girl. I bet you don't weigh more than ninety pounds.

DORIS

Ninety Five. . .

CASSIDY

You're young and little and it's a shame.

DORIS

What's a shame? Drinking? You mean I shouldn't drink like that. You want a drink?

CASSIDY

Lundy!

Cassidy stumbles, looking for Lundy. Doris tries to help.

CASSIDY
Let's get outta here.

The two slowly help each other out of the bar.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE LUNDY'S BAR -- LATE NIGHT

Cassidy and Doris stumble through the misty dark night. A cop sees them, and figures "The hell with 'em."

CASSIDY
(Breathing heavily)
What I need is . . . Just one
more drink. Let's buy a drink. . .

Cassidy realizes Doris is shivering, and can barely stand.

CASSIDY
I'm with you, Doris. It's okay.
(beat) Guess I'll go home.
(beat) Should I go home? Take
you home?

DORIS
Can't. . . .

CASSIDY
Can't?

DORIS
Can't remember the address.

INT. DORIS' APARTMENT -- 5:00 AM

Cassidy sleeps on the floor. He awakens to find Doris asleep in bed. He falls asleep again.

INT. DORIS' APT. -- 10:00 AM

Cassidy wakes up. He turns on the radio playing the Hearings.

CASSIDY
Doesn't he ever shut up?

Cassidy switches off the Radio and walks into the bathroom.

INT. DORIS' BATHROOM

Cassidy splashes water on his face, then exits.

INT. DORIS' APT.

Cassidy walks past bed. Doris sleeps. He enters the kitchen.

INT. DORIS' KITCHEN

Cassidy notices the clock and hunts for coffee. He gazes out the rain-filled window, and hears Doris wake up. Sitting at the table, Cassidy enjoys a cigarette, waiting for the coffee to boil. He finds a self-help book on curing Alcoholism and notices notes in the margins. Doris weaves in and exchanges smiles with Cassidy.

DORIS
How do you feel?

CASSIDY
Recovering.

DORIS
I took a cold bath. It always works.

Doris pours herself a cup of coffee.

DORIS
Where did you sleep?

CASSIDY
On the floor.

DORIS
You must be sore. I guess you didn't get too much sleep.

CASSIDY
I was out like a light.

DORIS
You sure?

CASSIDY
I'm doing fine.

DORIS
Would you like a drink?

CASSIDY
Don't mention the word.

DORIS
Would you mind if I had one?

CASSIDY
 (slowly)
 Do you need one?

DORIS
 Badly.

CASSIDY
 Try to get past it.

DORIS
 I can't. I really can't get past
 it. I need it to pick me up.

CASSIDY
 How long have you been on it this
 time?

DORIS
 I don't know. I never count the
 days.

CASSIDY
 You mean weeks. Alright. If I
 tied you with rope, I couldn't
 stop you.

DORIS
 Why should you stop me.

Cassidy watches as Doris enters her bedroom and lifts a
 bottle to her lips. Soon, he runs into after her.

INT. DORIS' BEDROOM

Booze drains into Doris. Cassidy grabs the bottle, and
 smashes it on the floor. Doris rushes to the broken glass.

DORIS
 JIM, NO!! Why'd you go and
 do that!!!

CASSIDY
 To help you.

DORIS
 HELP ME!! What do you know
 about helping anybody!!

CASSIDY
 I don't know. I'm trying to
 figure it out myself.

Doris stands, walks to Cassidy, touching his face gently, almost saying "You'll never understand."

DORIS

There's nothing to figure. What do you think you can do for me anyway?

Doris walks to the bed, sits, stares out the window, and clutches the headboard. Cassidy watches from a distance.

DORIS

Three years. I've been on it three years. In Nebraska I was married. (pause) I had a child.

Doris dreamily studies the rain fall against the glass. Cassidy slowly sits next to her. He falls in love.

DORIS

I loved Tom. I guess I've know that all along, but then I said I didn't. I never let him take me. Not fully. You see, I hated the farm. I loved him, but I couldn't stand that farm. I told him I wanted more: to live in a big city like New York, but he told me I was dreaming. Sure I was. But I hated living out there with his stupid cows. So I took it out on him. I started smoking cigarettes late at night, staring from my bed at the strange shadows on the ceiling. Waiting till I could be free again... Waiting... And smoking...

FLASH CUTS:

B&W SHOT -- EXT. FLAMING FARMHOUSE -- NIGHT

Flames shoot from Doris' house, as a MAN carries her away.

B&W SHOT -- EXT. PLANE CRASH SITE -- NIGHT

Flames shoot from Cassidy's crashed airplane.

<<END B&W>>

INT. DORIS' APT.(RETURN)

Cassidy takes Doris in his arms.

DORIS

When I woke up a man was carrying me. I saw all the people. I saw the house on fire. I looked for Tom. For Cindy-Lou, for Jonathan. But I couldn't see them. How could I see them when they were still in the house? All I could see was the house burning down!

(sobbing)

Maybe I did it purposely. I don't know. If God would only tell me I didn't do it on purpose. . .

CASSIDY

No, Doris you didn't mean to.

DORIS

Make me believe I didn't.

Cassidy holds Doris tightly, kissing her neck.

CASSIDY

It's not true. Doris you're good. It was an accident.

DORIS

Oh God, Jim, tell me again...

Cassidy kisses Doris, around her face, neck, down, slowly...

CASSIDY

No, Doris, you didn't.

DORIS

I didn't do it on purpose?

CASSIDY

No, Doris, it was all just a terrible mistake. You loved them. It would have all worked out.

DORIS

Tell me again..

CASSIDY

You're a good woman, Doris, let it go. I'm here now.

DORIS

Oh Jim...

Cassidy kisses down Doris' chest. Doris raises her chin, and floats back on the bed. Cassidy kisses Doris' knee. Tears slip from her eyes.

INT. KENRICK'S ROOM -- MORNING

Mildred smokes in bed, wearing dominatrix lingerie. Kenrick kneels beside her in his underwear, pleading.

MILDRED

Get away from me, you make
me sick.

INT. DORIS' BEDROOM -- LATER

Cassidy smiles at the rain. Doris and Cassidy lie in bed.

DORIS

Listen to it raining.

CASSIDY

Doris --

DORIS

Listen to the rain.

CASSIDY

I want you, Doris.

DORIS

Me?

CASSIDY

I want you. I want to be with you.
Here. I want to go on like this.
You and me.

DORIS

Jim. . . What can I say?

CASSIDY

Say yeah. Say it's alright.

DORIS

Sure it's alright. It's just fine.

CASSIDY

But you don't think it's fine.
You think it's all wrong.

DORIS

I'm just trying to think.

CASSIDY
WHAT? What's bothering you?

DORIS
You have a wife.

CASSIDY
Listen, Doris. Just look at me and listen. Let me tell you something. I ain't been living with a wife. Married sure, but she ain't no wife. I'll tell you what she is. She's a tramp. A no-good big easy whore. You hear? I'm finished, I'll never go back to that woman. Never again.

Doris places her head on his chest.

CASSIDY
From now on, it's just you and me.
Us.

DORIS
Us.

They kiss intimately.

EXT. DORIS' TENEMENT BUILDING (STREET VIEW) -- MORNING
Cassidy bounds out the front door eating a roll.

EXT. CRESCENT CITY SHIP CHANDLERY -- LATE MORNING
Cassidy notices Shealy stocking shelves, and goes in.

INT. CRESCENT CITY SHIP CHANDLERY
A TV plays the Hearings. Shealy climbs down a ladder.

SHEALY
For Chrissakes, where you been?
All day yesterday I waited at
Lundy's. Figured you'd show up
to tell me what happened.

CASSIDY
Nothing happened.

SHEALY

We know you didn't go home.
We asked Mildred and . . .

Cassidy plays with merchandise on the counter.

SHEALY

It sums up. I should have figured.
It sums up.

CASSIDY

What's with you? All right. Let's
hear the music. . .

SHEALY

Leave her alone, Jim.

CASSIDY

For what good reason?

SHEALY

She's helpless. She's a sick girl.

CASSIDY

I know that. That's why I won't
leave her alone. That's why I'm
staying with her. I won't be
going back to Mildred.

Shealy moves back to the ladder, and examines rain gear.

SHEALY

That's great Jim. That's just
great. Why not take it further
than that? If you're out to help
out all the poor creatures of the
world, why don't you found a
mission?

CASSIDY

Why don't you just go to hell.

SHEALY

James Cassidy's mission for
weathered shipwrecks. Cassidy
starts to leave.

CASSIDY

I come here to say hello to my
good friend Shealy. And what do
you give me? Nothing but a big
sack of shit.

Shealy follows Cassidy to the front door.

SHEALY

(overlapping)

You come in here because you want assurance. You want me to tell you that you're doing right.

CASSIDY

YOU? I need you to tell me. What makes you so important?

SHEALY

The fact that I'm out of it. Entirely out of the show. Just a one-man audience, sitting in the balcony. That gives me the full view. I can see all the angles.

CASSIDY

Quit with the academics.

SHEALY

Alright. I'll lay it out for you in plain English: I'm an alcoholic, slowly rotting away. But there's one thing left alive in me, one thing working, holding me in line. That's my brains. You might not know it by looking at me, but it's true. And my brain tells me one thing: Get the hell away from Doris!

CASSIDY

Bless me father O'Shealy, for I have sinned.

SHEALY

Don't give me that. I lost any sense of morality a long time ago. This is just plain simple math. To survive in this world, you take one and add one and you get two.

CASSIDY

What in the hell you talkin about?

SHEALY

If you don't lay off, she'll die.

CASSIDY

C'mon Shealy, come on downstairs. Come out of the clouds.

SHEALY

Jim . . . Before last night, I'd never laid eyes on that girl. I sat there at that table, and I watched her take one drink. That told me everything.

SHEALY

Jim, it takes a drunk to know a drunk. You're wasting your time. I'm telling you, all this girl needs is Whiskey. Just Whiskey. Nothing else.

CASSIDY

You might as well open an office. Put out a sign: Doctor Shealy, for ten bucks a visit, he'll teach you how to screw up your life.

Shealy takes Cassidy by the arm and leads him outside.

EXT. SHIP CHANDLERY FRONT DOORWAY

Shealy points to the grimy street; takes a deep breath in.

SHEALY

There it is, buddy. It's your life. It's my life. Nobody dragged us down here. We dragged ourselves here. Wanting it. Knowing it was just what we wanted and we'd be comfortable. Like pigs in shit. No bumps. Just nice soft shit to lay around in.

CASSIDY

You know somethin Shealy, it sucks. It stinks here. I'm sick of it. I want out. I'm tired of it.

SHEALY

Your dreaming again. I've been here 18 years. I've heard a thousand stories. And they're all the same. I'm getting the hell out of here. I'm climbin out. I'm taking my baby, and we're going to hit the highway. . . Yeah, that shining silver road in the sky.

CASSIDY
I swear I don't know why I even
bother trying to talk to you.

Cassidy charges into the murky street. Shealy walks inside.

SHEALY
(watching TV)
Poor son-of-a-bitch, never had
a chance.

EXT. GRIMY ABANDONED LOT -- DAY

Cassidy stops to watch a cat traps a big rat. Kenrick throws
a brick at him from across the street, then runs off.

EXT. TROLLEY -- DAY

Cassidy catches a trolley on St. Charles.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW ORLEANS -- DAY

Cassidy walks to work.

EXT. ST. ROCH STREET -- HOT CLOUDY DAY

Cassidy passes a JAZZ FUNERAL PROCESSION. Mildred stands
across the street. MARCHERS stop to stare at her.

MILDRED
Cassidy . . . C'mere I wanna
talk to you.

Cassidy stops moving. His heart freezes.

MILDRED
You hear me? . . . Come over
here. I want to talk to you.

Cassidy, ice-cold, watches Mildred slink over to him.

CASSIDY
What's on your mind?

MILDRED
I've been waiting here for you.

CASSIDY
And?

MILDRED
I want to know where you been.

CASSIDY
Call information.

MILDRED
Now listen here, you BASTARD!

CASSIDY
We're in public. . .

MILDRED
FUCK the public!

CASSIDY
Okay now. How 'bout it's too
early in the morning for this.

MILDRED
Not for me it ain't! It ain't
too early for this!

Mildred searches for something to throw.

CASSIDY
That's over with, now.

MILDRED
What's over with?

CASSIDY
The fights. The Hell-raising.
All of it.

MILDRED
Look at him over there. Like a
priest. Who took you to church.

CASSIDY
It wasn't church.

MILDRED
You think you're so damn smart,
don't you. You think you're pullin
somethin don't you. Well let me
tell you somethin, I got eyes. I
know what's going on!

Mildred prods his chest. Cassidy grabs her wrists.

CASSIDY
Lay off! I'm warning you!

MILDRED
Let go of my hands!

CASSIDY
So you can swing at me?

Mildred tries to twist away.

MILDRED
I said LET GO! I swear to God,
I'll tear your eyes out!

CASSIDY
(calmly)
No, you won't.

Mildred stops struggling. He releases his grip.

CASSIDY
I'm going to say this once, just
once. We're through, Mildred. . . .

MILDRED
Listen, Cassidy

CASSIDY
NO. Don't you hear. Don't you get
it. We're done. Through. Finished.

MILDRED
You're going to move out?

CASSIDY
That's the general idea. When I
get off work, I'll come over and
pick up my things.

MILDRED
Just like that!
(snaps fingers)

CASSIDY
Like that.

MILDRED
You'll be back.

CASSIDY
You think so? Just sit there
and wait.

MILDRED

What do you want, Cassidy? A
performance. You want tears?
Should I get down on my knees?

Mildred grabs him as she drops to her knees. She begins to
undo his zipper. He isn't getting excited. She jumps up, and
starts slapping his face wildly.

MILDRED

You low down rotten Bastard!

CASSIDY

People are watching.

MILDRED

Let em look! C'mon you assholes!
Take a good look as the mighty
Cassidy dumps his wife! Go fuck
yourselves!! Sure, that's me. I'm
a bum with no manners. I got no
breeding. I'm just a piece of ass.
But I got my privileges.

Mildred lunges at Cassidy , grabbing his hair.

MILDRED

I got a right to know! Who is she!
Who is the stinking cunt!

CASSIDY

Alright! Alright! I'll tell ya.

Cassidy grabs her arms and pulls her off.

CASSIDY

Calm down. I'll tell you. . . .
(pause)
It's Doris.

MILDRED

Doris? . . . Doris? That zilch?
That skinny little drunk. . .
nothing. Jesus Christ don't tell
me that's my competition!

CASSIDY

I've made up my mind about this.
I want Doris. I want to marry
her. I want a divorce.

Mildred spits at Cassidy, turns, and walks away.

MAN ON STREET

Daaaammn!

INT. BUS DEPOT -- LATER

McCarthy blares from the TV. The bus waits like a faithful dog. Cassidy stops to touch the door. Cassidy checks the carburetor, cleans his hands, and walks to the locker room.

INT. BUS DEPOT -- PASSENGERS BOARDING AREA

Cassidy, in a clean uniform, greets boarding passengers.

OLD WOMAN

He's so polite. It's so nice
when they're courteous.

EXT. BUS DEPOT/BUS PULLS OUT

INT. BUS/WINDSHIELD

Cassidy, wearing sunglasses, weaves expertly through traffic.

EXT. BUS TRAVELS DOWN HIGHWAY 61

The bus passes Billboards, high grass and FREIGHT TRAINS.

EXT. BUS CROSSES HUEY P. LONG BRIDGE

BUS climbs the ramp into surging oncoming traffic and passing trains, squeezes over the old, rickety bridge, a hundred feet above the mighty Mississippi river.

INT. BUS/ON PASSENGER

MAN

He sure knows how to run a
bus. First time I ever felt
safe the whole time.

Cassidy overhears the man, and feels a surge of pride.

INT. BUS CROSSING BRIDGE

CASSIDY (V.O.)

Now let's take it easy. . .
20. That's it. . . Not too fast.

(MORE)

CASSIDY (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Easy. Perfect. . . Watch for
 oncoming cars. . . You got it kid.
 Not too much gas. . . Ease up on
 the stick.

B&W SHOT -- INT. BOMBER/CASSIDY FLIES

CASSIDY (V.O.)
 Watch out for bogies...three
 minutes to drop zone...watch
 those clouds. . .

EXT. BUS -- LONG SHOT -- SUNNY DAY

The bus clears the BRIDGE, and crosses serene fields.

INT. BUS/ON CASSIDY

CASSIDY (V.O.)
 You're a damn fine bus. You're
 the finest thing on four wheels

EXT. DUSTY ROADWAY/ON ROADKILL(DEAD ARMADILLO)

3 FLASH CUTS:

B&W SHOT -- INT. LUNDY'S BAR(MILDRED DRUNK)

B&W SHOT -- EXT. THE GRIMY CITY(URBAN GHETTO)

B&W SHOT -- INT. THE MARRIAGE CHAPEL(SURREAL VERSION)

Pulp Horror Cover: Fire explodes through stained glass
 windows. A DANTE DEVIL french kisses Mildred, and pushes her
 half-naked body into Cassidy's bound torso, as he screams.

EXT. DUSTY ROADWAY -- SUNSET

Bus passes a billboard advertising Whiskey, and disappears
 into the setting sun.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS -- FULL MOON NIGHT

Cassidy walks down the street headed to his apartment.

INT. CASSIDY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Cassidy opens the door. The empty room is still a mess.

INT. CASSIDY'S BEDROOM

Cassidy notices a cigar stub in the ashtray. He opens his empty closet. He finds a note: "IF YOU WANT YOUR CLOTHES GO DRAG THE RIVER". He crumples it. He kicks the door shut. NEXT, he opens Mildred's closet; also empty. This note reads: "GO FUCK YOURSELF". The note falls from his hands.

EXT. CASSIDY'S APARTMENT HOUSE

Cassidy leaves even more pissed off than when he arrived.

EXT. DECATUR STREET (NEAR LUNDY'S BAR)

The dark misty street looms with growing danger as Cassidy walks alone. THREE THUGS jump Cassidy:

THUG #1: tall, bald, huge hands.

THUG #2: mashed nose, twisted ears, a former boxer.

THUG #3: short, wide, carrying a lead pipe.

#3 swishes the pipe, just missing Cassidy who gets the pipe. #1 & #2 charge, but Cassidy plugs #3 in the guts with the pipe. #1 smashes back. Cassidy drops the pipe, but grins as they advance. He pounds #1 in the eye, again and again until #1 collapses. #2 connects with left hook that sends him down. #2 Picks him up, so he can knock him down again. #3 gets his pipe back. #2 holds Cassidy in a bear lock.

THUG #3

Now let me have him.

THUG #2

Naw. . . This is mine

THUG #3

You're just playing with him

THUG #2

(not looking at Cassidy)
Playin? I wouldn't say that. I think I'm doing a pretty fair job.

Cassidy is not through. He hits very low, and hard.

THUG #2

Oh Jesus.....No.

THUG #2 lets go; clutches his groin; falls down. Thug #3 drops the pipe and runs off. Cassidy approaches THUG #2.

CASSIDY
Who paid you!

THUG #2
I can't talk.....hurts too much....

CASSIDY
You'll talk alright . . .

THUG #2
FUCK OFF.

CASSIDY
You either talk to me or the cops.
I don't care which.

THUG #2
Not the cops. C'mon gimme a break.

CASSIDY
The name, asshole.

THUG #2
Named Kenrick. Haney Kenrick.

Cassidy walks away. #2 still can't get up. #1 lies nearby.

INT. LUNDY'S BAR

Pauline, Spann, and Shealy sit at their table, watching TV. Cassidy wipes blood from his mouth. TEN PATRONS fill the smoke filled room. Piano player plays a melancholy song.

SPANN
(about the TV)
You get a load of this?
(suddenly to Cassidy)
Jesus, Who jumped you?

CASSIDY
(to Shealy)
You got anything my size down at
the store?

Shealy Stands up.

SHEALY
Should I bring them here?

CASSIDY
 (sarcastically)
 No, bring 'em to the Morgue.

SHEALY
 It'll save time if I just take
 them over to Doris'.

CASSIDY
 You stay away from Doris!
 (To group)
 You all stay away from her.

PAULINE
 What gives?

SHEALY
 (To Spann)
 A reformation.

CASSIDY
 CAN IT! I'm in a hurry. I don't
 have time for this crap. You gonna
 get me some clothes or ain't you?

Shealy nods, then leaves the bar.

CASSIDY
 (to Spann)
 Tell me where that overgrown
 hunk of shit Kenrick lives!

Spann opens his mouth, and Pauline grabs his arm.

PAULINE
 Don't tell him. Look at his eyes.
 He's gonna kill em. He'll just be
 in trouble then.

CASSIDY
 FADE!

PAULINE
 But look at his eyes!

CASSIDY
 I said FADE!

Pauline bumps into a table on her way out.

SPANN
 She's right, you look like shit.

CASSIDY
Where does that hump live?

SPANN
You're too hot to poke around
there now. You look nuts. Here,
have a drink.

Spann pours a drink. Cassidy pounds it down.

CASSIDY
You gonna tell me?

SPANN
If I'm sure you won't do anything
stupid.

CASSIDY
I just wanna have a talk with the
guy.

SPANN
You want Kenrick fixed? You want
it arranged so he leaves the neigh-
borhood? Let me do it. I can make
that adjustment.

Spann examines his long thin switchblade.

CASSIDY
Not that way.

SPANN
Just carve him up a little bit.
Give him the general idea.

CASSIDY
NO!

SPANN
It won't cost you a dime. All I'll
do is let him taste it. After that,
he won't be no problem at all.
It'll guarantee him stayin' away
from Mildred.

CASSIDY
I don't give a crap about that.

SPANN
That's the issue? Ain't it?

CASSIDY

That ain't nowhere near the issue. He about had me in the hospital twice today. Maybe even the undertaker. I gotta find out why.

SPANN

Why? That's easy. He knows you're losing a nut over this thing with Mildred. He just figures he wants to beat you to the punch.

CASSIDY

No way! He knows it's over between me and Mildred. For all I care, he can bang her three times a day. I mean, you want her? Take her.

SPANN

You mean that?

CASSIDY

You want me to print up flyers.

SPANN

Naw? . . . Really?

Spann pours himself a drink, and downs it.

CASSIDY

Listen, Spann. I got a new babe.

SPANN

Yeah I heard all about it. Shealy told us. That's the way I like em too. Thin, real thin, like a reed. Like that one over there.

Spann points at Pauline. Cassidy eyes the bottle.

SPANN

I didn't know you liked em like that. How was she? When they're real thin, it's like a snake. They sort of coil up around you, get their legs going, sort of. Thin like a snake. And coiling. I get into that. When they get a coiling. Did Doris do it that way? (beat) I'll tell you how Pauline does it. She reaches back, and grabs the bedpost, then she arches her back...

CASSIDY
Spare me, Spann. Where the fuck
does Kenrick live.

SPANN
Oh that. Sure, sure. 1132
Esplanade. And she can really
wrap her mouth. . .

Cassidy leaves before Spann can finish.

EXT. RAMPART STREET ROOMING HOUSE(BROTHEL)

LANDLADY: part-time Madame, very old, chubby, opium head,
blank expression, opens front door.

LANDLADY
You want a girl? Sure you do. We
got beautiful young girls here.

CASSIDY
Kenrick! Where's Kenrick. Kenrick.

LANDLADY
Yeah, Mr. Kenrick pays his rent.

CASSIDY
I didn't ask you that. What room
is he in?

LANDLADY
He pays his rent and don't bother
nobody. I know he pays his rent,
because I'm the landlady. He pays
his rent, and he better pay, or out
he goes. All of em. I'll throw
them all out.
(to no one in particular)
What you laughing at?

Cassidy pushes past her into the parlor.

INT. ROOMING HOUSE PARLOR

The lounge hosts: TWO PENSIONERS play cards; and TWO OLD FAT
HOOKERS sit on a FADED BENCH.

CASSIDY
What room is Kenrick in?

PENSIONER
Basse mon cul!! Merde tete!!

GIRL, twenties, cut, comes downstairs, wearing lingerie.

GIRL
You looking for a little piece
of somethin' special, mister?

CASSIDY
Kenrick.

GIRL
Friend of his?

CASSIDY
Not exactly.

GIRL
Well alright. Just so long as you
ain't no friend of his. I hate him.
I hate that man! You know what he?
(beat) You got a cigarette?

Cassidy gives her a cigarette; lights it for her.

GIRL
Third floor, last room in the back.

Cassidy walks up the stairs, lightly brushing past GIRL.

INT. HALLWAY

Cassidy walks down the hall, slowly. He creaks open the door.

INT. KENRICK'S ROOM

Kenrick lays face down in bed, laughing, and weeping.

KENRICK
All right so you're here. You came
here to kill me. So kill me.

Cassidy shuts the door. He approaches Kenrick.

KENRICK
I don't care. I don't give a damn.

CASSIDY
You sound like a fucking baby.

KENRICK
I wish I was one. I don't care
if I die. I want to die.

Cassidy lights up, listening to Kenrick cry.

CASSIDY
O.K. I give. What's eating you?

KENRICK
I can't stand it.

CASSIDY
Whatever it is, I'm sick of you taking it out on me!

KENRICK
I know. I know.

CASSIDY
That's why I'm here. I'm gonna make damn sure you know it. This morning, you got pretty fancy with that brick thing, and tonight out on Press street. You paid those three slobs to jump me!

Kenrick sits up in bed and blows his nose.

KENRICK
Look Jim, I swear I don't have anything against you. It's just that these last few days have been hell on me.

CASSIDY
Man, you are one sorry son-of-a-bitch.

KENRICK
Alright. I'm gonna level with you here. For the last two days, I haven't had anything to eat. Every time I start, I just choke.

CASSIDY
Try a cigarette.

Cassidy hands Kenrick a cigarette. Kenrick lights three matches before he can get it lit. His hands tremble.

KENRICK
I've had it coming. I asked for it and I got it. Oh did I get it. Am I getting it. Can I talk to you, Jim? Can I tell you what she's doing to me? But then again. . .

(MORE)

KENRICK (cont'd)
maybe I better not. Maybe it's
better if I keep my mouth shut.

CASSIDY
No. It's alright if you want to
talk.

KENRICK
Are you sure? After all, she's
your wife. I had no business -- -

CASSIDY
Listen, did you hear me? I've said
it's all right. I've tried to tell
you, it's over between Mildred and
me. I told you that at Lundy's Bar,
and I though you got it.

KENRICK
Then you're really done with her?

CASSIDY
Yeah, yeah. Finished. Finito.
Arrivederci. Adious. Auf
Wiedersehen. Bon Voyage, baby.

KENRICK
I don't know. I can't get it. It's
making me bug out. It's the first
time in my life, I ever hit
anything like this. I've had all
kinds of women you know, they've
given me all kinds heartache. But
never anything like this.

CASSIDY
Why you singing the blues. You're
getting it ain't you?

KENRICK
Getting it? . . . Getting what?
Getting a hard-on that's ready to
rip through my crotch. But getting
it? She's playing me like horse
and a carrot. She's got me so
going even my eyes are turning
blue.

CASSIDY
You mean you're not bangin her?

KENRICK
Here's how I been bangin her.

Kenrick opens his shirt, and reveals nasty, deep scratches.

CASSIDY

You better put something on that.
Those look deep.

KENRICK

It's not those that hurt. It's
here, right inside here that
really hurts.

Kenrick points to his heart, pride.

KENRICK

I tell you Jim, she's ripping me
apart. She's taking me down. She
gets me so turned on I just gotta
get some, but then she pushes me
away. And she laughs. Jim, tell
me what am I supposed to do?

CASSIDY

Stay away from her.

KENRICK

I can't. I just can't.

CASSIDY

Well, that's up to you.

Cassidy stands up and moves towards the door.

CASSIDY

The only thing I can tell you is:
Bashing my brains in ain't going
to solve your problem.

KENRICK

Jim, I am sorry about that. Believe
me, I'm sorry. It won't happen
again.

CASSIDY

Aright. . . We'll forget it then.

Cassidy walks out, satisfied,

INT. DORIS' APT. -- LATER

Doris lets Cassidy in the front door. He takes Doris in his
arms, ready to kiss her, but smells booze. He stops cold.

DORIS

What's wrong Jim?

CASSIDY
Did Shealy bring that?

DORIS
He said you needed clothes.

CASSIDY
I told Shealy not to come over
here.

DORIS
What is it? Jim, what is it?

CASSIDY
I told that white-haired idiot
to stay away from here.

DORIS
But why? I don't understand.

Cassidy walks into the kitchen.

INT. DORIS' KITCHEN

Cassidy eyes a half-empty bottle, and two glasses.

CASSIDY
Come in here. Take a look. Then
you'll see what I mean.

Doris enters the kitchen sheepishly.

CASSIDY
It didn't take you long.

DORIS
Oh, please Jim? With Shealy?
We just had a couple of drinks
that's all.

CASSIDY
Whose idea was it?

DORIS
To do what?

CASSIDY
To drink. Who opened the bottle?

DORIS
I did.

CASSIDY

You did? Just to be polite. Well then, Mr. Shealy would you care for a drink. Oh yes, Doris dear, that would be fine. Don't give me that crap. Shealy brought it didn't he? It wasn't here when I left this morning.

Cassidy bangs the bottle on table then exits.

INT. DORIS' FRONT DOOR

Cassidy opens the door, and Doris grabs his sleeve.

CASSIDY

Let go!

DORIS

Jim, please don't! Don't act this way. Shealy only brought it because he knows I need it.

CASSIDY

Dousing yourself with whiskey ain't going to do anything for anybody. He thinks he's doing you a favor, but he might as well give you a gun. I'm going over there and I'm telling him to stay away from here! And to stay away from you!

Cassidy accidentally knocks Doris to the ground.

CASSIDY

I didn't mean to do that.

DORIS

I know. It's O.K.

Cassidy kneels down to pick her up.

CASSIDY

I'm so sorry. How could I do a thing like that.

DORIS

I deserved it.

CASSIDY

Don't say that. I was out of control.

DORIS

But I did bring it on. I told you
I wasn't going to drink anymore.

CASSIDY

That was for your own good.

Slowly, a moan comes from the depths of her broken soul, as
tears well up in her eyes.

DORIS

After the fire... They were very
nice to me. My family. My friends.
They tried to make it easy on me,
tell me it wasn't my fault and what
a shame it all was. But they
couldn't help me sleep. They
couldn't get me to shut my eyes
(beat) without seeing. . .

(pause)

I cut my wrists and tried to jump
out of the hospital window. Then,
they gave me a drink. And that
tasted good. Had a burning taste.
It burned.

CASSIDY

You don't need it anymore.

Doris breaks off the embrace, takes Cassidy by the cheeks and
gazes at him. She then eyes the booze bottle.

DORIS

Until last night, that was the
only way I could get to sleep.

AS they kiss, Cassidy believes in her, and in his love for
her. Doris believes she can quit drinking now.

INT. BUS DEPOT -- NEXT A.M.

A NEW MECHANIC works on a bus. Cassidy watches the TV
Hearings with the Super.

CASSIDY

What the hell are they doing?
Can't they just nail the bastards?

SUPER.

I'm beginning to think they may
not be so right anymore.

CASSIDY

Oh yeah?

Cassidy takes a renewed interest in the NEW MECHANIC, then walks over to the bus, and pushes him out of the way.

NEW MECHANIC

What's the big idea?

Cassidy places his head inside the engine compartment. The NEW MECHANIC stands aside, looking like a jackass.

CASSIDY

Where did you learn to do this, the army? You really screwed it up now!

NEW MECHANIC

I'm getting the boss.

CASSIDY

You do that son! I've got a hell of a job here to fix what you and your skilled craftsmanship have made of my bus.

The NEW MECHANIC walks away in a huff.

INT. BUS DEPOT -- LATER

The bus, now ready, awaits its passengers to board. Super finishes his Sandwich and pulls himself from the TV.

SUPER.

Okay everyone, She's ready to board.

Cassidy runs from the locker room in a fresh uniform. PASSENGERS board.

OLD WOMAN #1

It is such a nice morning for a bus ride.

OLD WOMAN #2

I hope we'll get to Baton Rouge in time to lunch at the Pheasant.

OLD WOMAN #1

Oh I think the Hickory will be much nicer. They just redecorated.

OLD WOMAN#2

Really? Are they already open again?

OLD WOMAN #1

Gee I'll be glad to get out of this town.

OLD WOMAN #2

Baton Rouge is nice, this time of year.

OLD WOMAN #1

Any place beats this rat hole we live in.

YOUNG CHILD

Grampa! I want some Candy!

GRAMPA

No, Timmy not now.

OLD WOMAN #1

Hey Gramps, let the little brat have some. What'll it kill you?

GRAMPA

Shut your trap, you old goat!

OLD WOMAN #1

Who you calling a goat!

OLD WOMAN #2

Oh come on Ethel! Is that any way to behave.

OLD WOMAN #1

He really should give up that candy. That's the only way we'll get any peace on this trip.

PASSENGERS enter the bus. Kenrick, stinking drunk, walks up to the back of the line. Kenrick hands Cassidy his ticket.

CASSIDY

Nothing doing, Kenrick.

KENRICK

But look, here's my ticket. I'm going.

CASSIDY

You don't want to go to Baton Rouge.

KENRICK

Why sure I do. I figure I'll work the capitol today.

CASSIDY

Door to door selling needs a car.
Where's your car? Where's your
sample case?

KENRICK

Well, it's like this. Today, I'll
just case the town. Just kind of
look it over.

Cassidy notices the Super. watching, so he lets it go.

CASSIDY

Alright. Move it then.

INT. BUS

Cassidy follows Kenrick in and settles behind the wheel. He
shuts the door, and starts the engine. Kenrick pushes Old
Woman #1 away so he can get seat right behind Cassidy.

EXT. BUS DEPOT -- DAY

The bus pulls away from the depot. The morning includes
traffic and heavy overcast smog.

EXT. CANAL STREET

The bus fights early morning traffic. ONE PASSENGER has a
radio broadcasting the McCarthy Hearings.

INT. BUS

The bus stops at a red light. Kenrick lights a cigar.

CASSIDY

O.K. Kill it!

KENRICK

No smoking?

Cassidy points to a sign over his head.

KENRICK

Why no smoking?

CASSIDY

Company rule. There's another rule:
No talking to the driver when the
bus is in motion.

Kenrick extinguishes his CIGAR, and puts it in his pocket.

KENRICK
But look here, Jimbo, I got a few
things on my mind. . .

CASSIDY
Save it.

KENRICK
It can't wait.

CASSIDY
It'll have to.

EXT. UNIVERSITY STREET -- TRAFFIC LIGHT

Light turns green, a SPORTS CAR darts out in front of bus.

INT. BUS

Cassidy slams on the breaks to avoid a crash.

KENRICK
Jim -- -

CASSIDY
For chrissakes!

KENRICK
Whassamatter Jim? I thought we
cleared everything up last night.

CASSIDY
So did I! Now you start the day
with a new round of bullshit.
(pause)
Look Kenrick, I'm working. Just bug
off me when I gotta work, O.K.?

KENRICK
All I wanna say is . . .

CASSIDY
Can it! Just sit there and shut
the fuck up!

EXT. HIGHWAY 61

Heavy traffic. Another AUTO passes the bus dangerously.

INT. BUS

Cassidy watches the AUTO pass in the mirror, then catches Kenrick drinking from his flask.

KENRICK
No drinking?

Cassidy stares down Kenrick until he closes the flask.

KENRICK
I don't see no sign.

CASSIDY
Keep that damn flask away, or I'll
stop the bus, and toss you out.

KENRICK
Alright! Alright. No offense.
Really.

Kenrick places his flask into his breast pocket.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- COUNTRY

BUS crosses a canal surrounded by bright green marshes and darkening skies. Cassidy notices and looks concerned.

INT. BUS

KENRICK
Jim, we might as well talk it over.

CASSIDY
I said not now. Not here.

KENRICK
It's important. I was up all night
thinking about it.

CASSIDY
What the hell do you want Kenrick?

KENRICK
I figure there's a way we can help
each other.

CASSIDY
Listen, Kenrick. . . There's only
one way you can help me. Leave me
the fuck alone!

Kenrick looms in the rear view mirror, drunk, pink faced.

KENRICK

Well it's up to you brother. You can settle it one way or another.

CASSIDY

Settle what?

KENRICK

The situation.

CASSIDY

There's no situation, see. There's nothing to settle.

KENRICK

You are so wrong, Jim. You've got no idea what kind of deep shit you're in.

CASSIDY

Oh yeah? Well what kind is it?

KENRICK

The worst kind. When a woman hates you. I mean when she really has it in for you. I'm in the room with her. She's sitting on the bed. She's talking aloud like you're there. And man, the names she was calling you!

CASSIDY

That ain't nothing.

KENRICK

You didn't hear it the way I did. I tell you Jim, she means to give you some kind of hell.

CASSIDY

Do you know what's cooking in that demented little mind of hers?

KENRICK

I can't say for sure, she won't tell me. But she was going off about that skinny peeler girl Doris.

CASSIDY

Doris? That bitch better not think of putting a finger on Doris.

KENRICK

Mildred ain't the type to think too much. She's wild. She's vicious.

CASSIDY

You don't have to tell me.

KENRICK

You sure? Maybe I know her better than you do? Mildred hits hard. She's a slugger. She can do damage.

CASSIDY

Tell me something I don't know.

KENRICK

She's out to smash you, Jim. She wants to make you crawl. Crawl on your knees. Crawl on the floor. So she can pound you til you're squashed. And then, I'd hate to think what she'd do to poor little Doris.

CASSIDY

I don't get you. If you're playing poker, you lost me.

KENRICK

This sure ain't poker. I'm showing you all my cards. You know I want Mildred. I'm dying a creeping death because I can't have her. I see it now. There's only one way I'll ever have a chance with her.

CASSIDY

That's what I don't get. You're flaming to be with the bitch, it's killing you. But then you chew my ear off why I gotta go back to her.

KENRICK

Hey, I didn't say that!

CASSIDY

You sure as hell let me know she wants me back.

KENRICK

Crawling, crawling back. That's all. She don't want you.

(MORE)

KENRICK (cont'd)

She's just itching to see you flat on your belly, crawling back to her. So she can haul off and kick your teeth in! And then she wants to send you crawling away. That'll be her satisfaction. And she'll get it Jim. She's the type.

CASSIDY

So what do you think I should do?

KENRICK

Make it easy on yourself. And I gotta say it: For Doris. You'll be doing it for Doris.

CASSIDY

Doing what? Say it, Kenrick!

KENRICK

Go back to Mildred! But not like a man. Go to her like a worm. Go on your knees. Go crawling, on your belly. And when she kicks you out, then it'll be over. Then you'll have peace. And not before.

EXT. HUEY P. LONG BRIDGE APPROACH

Trestle work looms in the near distance as a TRAIN trudges high above the bus. A TRUCK lurches right at the bus; just barely missing it. Lightening cracks, and rain falls.

INT. BUS

CASSIDY

Close!

KENRICK

Jim?

CASSIDY

I haven't gone anywhere.

KENRICK

So. C'mon, what do you say.

Cassidy laughs a long, hard, sour, laugh.

KENRICK

Don't laugh. Please, Jim, don't.

Kenrick takes a drink from his flask.

KENRICK

You got to do it! Don't you see it's the only way we can get on with our lives?

CASSIDY

Jesus, cut it out, will you?

Kenrick takes another drink.

KENRICK

It's got to be this way, Jim.

Kenrick drinks more.

KENRICK

I need her so bad. It's the only way I'll ever get her. Right now, it's all she has on her mind. She's got to have her satisfaction. Do it Jim! Give it to her. Crawl to her. Make her throw you out.

Cassidy laughs again. Kenrick drinks more.

KENRICK

I've got money in the bank.

CASSIDY

I told you to cut it out!

KENRICK

I've got close to six thousand.

Kenrick places his hand on Cassidy's shoulder.

KENRICK

Exact figure is five thousand, eight hundred eighty nine. My life's savings.

CASSIDY

Take your hand off me.

KENRICK

I'll pay you to do it, Jim.

Cassidy pushes Kenrick's hand away.

KENRICK

Did you hear what I said! I'll pay you!

CASSIDY

Drop it!

KENRICK

You could use the money. It's good money.

CASSIDY

Will you just fucking drop it!
And shut up!

EXT. BUS -- HUEY P. LONG BRIDGE/TORRENTIAL RAIN

Kenrick drinks. RAIN overpowers the WINDSHIELD WIPERS.

KENRICK

Alright! How about seven?

KENRICK

I know what you're doing. You got me on the run. Okay okay. I'll make a final offer.

EXT. BRIDGE -- LONG SHOTS

The roadway curves down, the raging river on one side, rocks on the other. Rain and Gail force winds rage out of control.

BUS nears the central structural support. BRIDGE shakes. The Bus speeds as it climbs. The engine roars. CHILDREN giggle with delight. Elderly people grip their seats.

INT. BUS

KENRICK

Do you mean to tell me you won't do it for eight thousand dollars cash?

CASSIDY

I told you to sit fucking down. And put that goddamned flask away already.

Kenrick loses his balance and spills whiskey on Cassidy. The DOOR flies open. Wind and rain pour inside. Bracing himself, Kenrick accidentally smashes Cassidy with his flask. Cassidy passes out on the steering wheel, his foot jammed on the accelerator. The PASSENGERS freak.

EXT. BUS CRASH

The Bus careens off the bridge and over the embankment. Kenrick and Cassidy are thrown, as it rolls over, and over. It splashes into the water. Its gasoline ignites, and it explodes. Rain pummels the flames, but cannot extinguish them, as trapped faces press against sealed windows.

EXT. ROCKS BY CRASHED BUS

Kenrick forces whiskey down Cassidy's throat. Cassidy doesn't realize what is happening, and soon completely loses consciousness again. Rain falls like a hurricane.

<<FIRST PERSON CAMERA(CASSIDY P.O.V.) UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE>>

EXT. CRASH SITE

Cassidy regains consciousness, encircled by a DOCTOR(aged face, narrow lips, 70 years old), and STATE TROOPERS dressed in rain gear, holding flashlights, Cassidy sees a sea of angry faces and glare. The rain is over.

TROOPER

How is he?

DOCTOR

He's alright.

TROOPER

Any broken bones?

DOCTOR

No! I tell you he's all right.

(To Cassidy))

GET UP!

TROOPER

He looks hurt.

DOCTOR

You're not hurt at all. You know it. Come on and get up!

Cassidy sits up, sees the wreck, MOTORCYCLES, OFFICIAL CARS, A CROWD. Kenrick talks to TROOPERS.

DOCTOR

You stay where you are.

CASSIDY
What do you want with me?

DOCTOR
You Drunk Punk Bastard.

CASSIDY
Drunk?

DOCTOR takes a SYRINGE from his BAG.

TROOPER
You don't need to do that here.

DOCTOR
I'll make the test right here,
right now.

DOCTOR takes Cassidy's arm, and draws blood viciously.

DOCTOR
Go on and break down. You will
sooner or later. Go ahead. Do
it now.

DOCTOR holds the syringe up, a trophy, then puts the blood in
a storage vial.

DOCTOR
(To Cassidy)
That's it. We got you.
(To Troopers)
He's all yours.

TROOPER
Let's go, bud.

TWO TROOPERS take Cassidy to a patrol car.

INT. PATROL CAR

Cassidy's speechless. PATROL CAR passes many staring faces.

INT. STATE TROOPER STATION/INTERROGATION ROOM

Cassidy sits handcuffed to a chair.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- EXT. BUS CRASH

INT. STATE TROOPER STATION/INTERROGATION ROOM

TROOPER, one foot on a chair, lights a cigarette.

TROOPER
You're in one hell of a mess.

CASSIDY
How do you know.

TROOPER
You were drunk. We got your blood
to prove it. Well, it's blood and
whiskey. Or should I say it's
whiskey and blood.

TROOPER blows out a long billow of smoke.

CASSIDY
I wasn't drunk when I was driving.

TROOPER
Really?

CASSIDY
Before the crash, I didn't have a
drop. I have witnesses.

TROOPER
Do you?

CASSIDY
What witnesses? That fat fuck in
the suit. He's one.

TROOPER
He's not your witness. He's ours.
He said you were guzzling the stuff
all the way from Jefferson parish.
He said you even got him loaded.

CASSIDY
(softly)
What about the others.

TROOPER
What others?

CASSIDY
That can't be.

TROOPER
 Can and is. All of them. Every last
 one. 26 men, women, children. All
 dead. They couldn't get out of the
 bus. They burned to death.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- BUS CRASH/EXPLOSION

INT. STATE TROOPER STATION/INTERROGATION ROOM

TROOPER
 You realize what you did? You
 murdered them. . .

CASSIDY
 Can I lay down somewhere?

Cassidy searches his UNIFORM and finds a crumpled cigarette.

CASSIDY
 Got a light?

TROOPER
 Sure. . .

TROOPER strikes a match, lets it burn.

TROOPER
 Look at it. . .Look at it burning.

Cassidy leans over and lights his cigarette. TROOPER lets
 the match burn all the way down.

TROOPER
 I wouldn't call it justice. For
 them, the fire ends everything. For
 you, it just lights your cigarette.

CASSIDY
 Grow up.

TROOPER
 They died hard, buddy!

CASSIDY
 Fuck off! If it was my fault I'd
 let you pound my face in. I'd help.
 But it wasn't! Listen to me, I'm
 no murderer.

TROOPER
 Don't tell me. Tell yourself.
 Keep telling yourself and maybe
 you'll wind up believing it.

The DOOR opens, SERGEANT enters. They lead Cassidy out.

SERGEANT
 C'mon. The Lieutenant wants to see
 you.

INT. STATE TROOPER STATION -- MAIN OFFICE

LIEUTENANT talks to TROOPERS, PLAIN CLOTHES MEN, Kenrick.

LIEUTENANT
 He even fed this Kenrick fellow
 some of the stuff. I don't see we
 have much more to do, boys. . .

Cassidy lunges at Kenrick, grabbing his throat. Cops pry
 Cassidy loose. Two TROOPERS hold him.

LIEUTENANT
 Hold him! If he moves, slug him.

CASSIDY
 TELL THE TRUTH, Kenrick!!

LIEUTENANT
 He already told us the truth.

CASSIDY
 How the hell do you know!

LIEUTENANT
 Now, don't get tough with me.

CASSIDY
 You got the wrong guy! Call off
 your apes. Let me go.

LIEUTENANT eyes Cassidy hard, then slowly signals TROOPERS to
 let go. They do slowly. Cassidy calms a bit.

CASSIDY
 You've got no right to hold me!
 What's the charge?

LIEUTENANT
 Driving a public vehicle while
 Intoxicated, that's one. Vehicular
 homicide makes two.

CASSIDY
What did this man tell you?

LIEUTENANT
He just did his duty.

CASSIDY
His duty to save his own ass!

LIEUTENANT
He said he was sitting right behind you. He said you were pounding down a bottle the whole way up, bitching about your wife. He said you gave him some too. He said you were so smashed it's a miracle the bus didn't crash sooner.

CASSIDY
That's a crock of shit and you know it, Kenrick! Tell them the truth about the flask!

KENRICK
What flask?

CASSIDY
Don't give me that! You had that flask alright! I was out cold on the rocks. You brought me to, and emptied it down my throat.

KENRICK
The guy's full of shit! Yeah, sometimes I do carry a flask. But not today!

LIEUTENANT
You two men know each other?

KENRICK
Somewhat. . . I seen him around.

CASSIDY
You lying son-of-a-bitch! It ain't gonna work! Sooner or later, you'll spill the truth!

LIEUTENANT
What's he talking about?

KENRICK
I guess he must be trying to protect himself.

(MORE)

KENRICK (cont'd)

Like I set up some kind of frame. I really can't blame the guy. If I were in his shoes, I guess might try to sell you some wild story too.

LIEUTENANT

I'm not buying. Lock him up.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- COURTROOM FROM PREVIOUS.

INT. STATE TROOP STATION -- MAIN OFFICE

Cassidy freaks out. He slugs TROOPERS, charges into an office, and jumps on top of a desk. He hits troopers with a telephone then kicks out the window and dives through.

EXT. STATE TROOPER STATION

Cassidy stands up, and runs across a parking lot, into grass, and into woods. TROOPERS exit the building and give pursuit.

LIEUTENANT

GET THAT BASTARD! SHOOT THE SON-OF-A BITCH! WALLACE! HARDY! ROUND UP THE DOGS!

EXT. SWAMP

Cassidy runs faster through the trees. Ground becomes slush, then SWAMP. Cassidy wades out deep. BLOODHOUNDS howl.

EXT. UNDERWATER (INTERCUT WITH NEXT SERIES)

Cassidy dives in the dark murky fluid. Alligators swim towards him. He sinks completely to evade them. SWAMP gives way to RIVER or WATERWAY.

B&W FLASH CUTS:

INT. BUS/KENRICK IN REAR VIEW MIRROR

INT. BAR -- NIGHT/MILDRED LOOKING LIKE A SEX TIGER

EXT. BUS EXPLODES

INT. BAR -- NIGHT/DORIS FIRST LOOKING AT CASSIDY

INT. DORIS' APT./DORIS' NAKED TORSO, FROM BETWEEN LEGS

INT. DORIS APT./DORIS AT FRONT DOOR

<<CAMERA SWITCHES BACK TO DETACHED PERSPECTIVE>>

EXT. RIVER -- ON CASSIDY

Cassidy surfaces and inhales. Shore seems a mile away.

EXT. WOODS -- ON COPS

BLOODHOUNDS sniff the water, bark, and follow a trail.

EXT. RIVER -- ON CASSIDY

Cassidy suddenly finds a drifting log, and holds on tightly.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- ON DOGS

BLOODHOUNDS lose his scent.

EXT. RIVER -- ON CASSIDY

Cassidy reaches an eddy. COPS and DOGS are upwind.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- ON COPS

LIEUTENANT and TROOPERS reach river's edge, and look around.

LIEUTENANT

Quit site-seeing! Get a move on!
He's got to be around here
somewhere. He can't be in that
SWAMP!!! Wallace! Get a team out
to the river!!

TROOPER WALLACE

I'll get on it, sir!

LIEUTENANT
MOVE IT! C'MON PEOPLE I WANT TO
SEE ACTION HERE!! I WANT THAT PRICK
BACK IN MY OFFICE PRONTO!

EXT. RIVER -- ON CASSIDY

Cassidy carefully evades from the COPS, clutching the log.

EXT. BOAT -- MID-RIVER/SUNSET

LIEUTENANT stands on deck with binoculars, watching an armada of quickly gathered VESSELS frantically searching the river, and riverbanks. The setting sun glitters off the water.

LIEUTENANT
GET THAT TUB OFF OUR BOW! WHAT
THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE
DOING, MISTER?

EXT. RIVER -- ON CASSIDY

Cassidy watches, unseen, and hides just off shore.

EXT. BOAT -- MID-RIVER/SUNSET

TROOPER WALLACE
We traced him to that spot up
there, so I figure he must be still
be in the water near here.

LIEUTENANT
QUIT FIGURING!!

EXT. RIVERBANK -- ON CASSIDY

Cassidy watches as boats work their way back home. POLICE BOAT shines a feeble searchlight on shore. Cassidy hides in the flotsam and jetsam.

EXT. MIDRIVER

POLICE BOAT gently floats away, as the silvery moon shimmers on the black water. The search light still makes its rounds as it disappears.

B&W SHOT -- INT. WEDDING CHAPEL(DREAM)

Doris, pregnant and crying, stands next to Cassidy. Mildred, now the J.O.P., pulls out a shotgun and blows Doris apart.

EXT. RIVERBANK -- 12:20 AM

Cassidy wakes up, and realizes he is safe and alive.

EXT. LEVEE -- NIGHT/FULL MOON

Cassidy climbs up the levee and jogs into the woods.

EXT. STATE ROAD -- NIGHT

Cassidy, in his filthy sopping wet uniform, watches as a truck passes by. Cassidy follows the road into the unknown.

EXT. NIGHT -- BUSHES NEAR ROADHOUSE

Cassidy pushes branches away and watches BOUNCER struggle with a ROWDY PATRON. He runs past the scene and hides.

INT. ROADHOUSE -- NIGHT

DRIVER sits at the counter, eating pie, drinking coffee. A BAND happily plays in the joint.

INT. PRODUCE TRUCK -- PAYLOAD

Cassidy evades the ROWDY PATRON and jumps into the back of a truck.

EXT. ROADHOUSE -- PRODUCE TRUCK

DRIVER exits ROADHOUSE, gets in his TRUCK, starts his engine, and drives away. Cassidy eats some lettuce, and tomatoes.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

TRUCK gets stopped by a roadblock, but Police don't see Cassidy hiding in the back. The TRUCK drives into the night.

INT. PRODUCE TRUCK PAYLOAD -- NIGHT

Cassidy awakens as the truck screeches to a stop. Cassidy exits and escapes down an alley into New Orleans.

INT. DORIS' APT. -- KITCHEN

Cassidy crawls in through the kitchen window. He sits at the table. He lights a cigarette and stares into the flame.

TROOPER (V.O.)
I wouldn't call it justice. For
them the fire ends everything. For
you, it just lights your cigarette.

Cassidy lets the match burn his fingers before dropping it.

B&W FLASH CUTS:

EXT. BUS CRASHES

EXT. FLAMES FROM BUS

EXT. TARMAC -- PLANE ON FIRE

TROOPER (V.O.)
All of them. Every last one.
Twenty six men, women, and
children. all dead.

EDWARD R. MURROW (V.O.)
Being called the worst tragedy
in aviation history.

EXT. BUS FLIES THROUGH AIR.

OLD WOMAN#1 (V.O.)
It is such a nice day for a bus
ride.

EXT. TARMAC -- AIRPLANE LOOKING SWEET.

<<END B&W>>

INT. DORIS' KITCHEN

Cassidy stands up and exits despondently.

INT. DORIS' APT.

Cassidy walks into the bathroom, and fills the tub.

INT. SHO-BAR NIGHTCLUB -- NIGHT

Doris works a customer. He pays up gladly. DEVIL-GIRLS do an act on stage.

INT. DORIS' BATHTUB

Cassidy Lays in the tub, picks up a razor, and moves a mirror close. His hands tremble too much to shave.

CASSIDY

Captain Cassidy at the controls.

Cassidy puts the razor down, then slips below the surface.

B&W SHOT -- INT. LUNDY'S BAR/MARRIAGE RECEPTION

Searchlights rotate through the bar. DEVIL-GIRLS do a kick line on the bar. The father of the bride (SATAN) bartends. Mildred, in a bloody Bridal gown, waltzes past men all dressed like Kenrick (candy striped suits and cane hats) who laugh, and smoke cigars. Kenrick himself waits at the alter at the end of bar. Mildred caresses the men on her way over.

MILDRED

This is a celebration! And a celebration calls for drinks! I'm buyin! Drinks for everybody! Drinks from me! Everybody drink up! Give Doris a double! And Haney! You're the man of the hour! A perfect job!

Mildred stops to look Kenrick in the eye.

MILDRED

(Laughs)

We sure got him, you and me! It feel so good! So free! He's getting it and he's getting it good! That bastard is finally down, and out for the count, crawling on his belly. And Tonight you're going to get the royal treatment as only Mildred can give it to you. You'll have it like you never had it before! There'll be thunder and there'll be lightning!

INT. DORIS' APT.

Cassidy leaves the tub. The front door opens. Shealy enters.

SHEALY

I knew you'd be here.

CASSIDY

I wonder how long'll before
the cops get the same idea?

SHEALY

I'm your friend!

CASSIDY

I've got no friends. I don't
want any. Get outta here.

SHEALY

What you need's a plan. Got one?

CASSIDY

Not yet. How'd you find out about
it.

SHEALY

It's all over the papers! C'mon
you're the top story.

CASSIDY

I guess I'd be worth quite a bit
of money to anybody who wants to
tell the papers where I am.

SHEALY

Relax will you!

CASSIDY

Oh sure I'm all relaxed. My bus
wrecked and I killed twenty six
passengers. I'm doing just fine.

SHEALY

Sit down. Take it easy. There's
a lot of heat on to find you.

CASSIDY

(slowly)

Yeah I know. But did they say
anything else?

SHEALY

They're running with one story.
It's great headline stuff.

(MORE)

SHEALY (cont'd)

They'll never ever listen to you.
They got that blood sample. They
got Kenrick's statement. No one
wants to hear anything outta you.

CASSIDY

Kenrick! That lying cock sucker.

SHEALY

I thought he was lying! What
happened, I mean really!

CASSIDY

It was Kenrick! He caused the
crash! He was drinking and going
off about Mildred. I should have
kicked him off the bus, but I
didn't. So, I guess I am to blame
too. But he framed me! Tossed
booze down my throat when I was
passed out. He did that to finish
me. And that fat pig got me better
with his tongue, than his fists or
his money'd ever get.

SHEALY

I figured it was something like
that. What now?

CASSIDY

I skip.

SHEALY

I don't see you skipping.

CASSIDY

I came here to rest up, and change.

SHEALY

and?

CASSIDY

O.K. Let's drop it.

SHEALY

Jim?

CASSIDY

I said we can drop it.

Cassidy puts on his shirt, sits down with his boots.

CASSIDY
I owe you for these clothes. How
much?

SHEALY
Let's forget that.

CASSIDY
How much?

SHEALY
About eighty, but.

Cassidy finds 8 soggy bills. Shealy reluctantly takes them.

SHEALY
What you got there?

CASSIDY
Eighty-five.

SHEALY
That isn't much.

CASSIDY
It'll be enough the way I'm going.
I won't be buying tickets.

SHEALY
What about booze?

CASSIDY
I won't be drinking.

SHEALY
Like hell. You'll be doing about
a quart a day. That's about average
when you're on the run.

CASSIDY
You little white haired Bastard.

SHEALY
I have some money in my room. Maybe
four five hundred.

CASSIDY
Stick it!

SHEALY
If you wait here, I'll get it.

CASSIDY

I said stick it! I don't want no favors. I'm alone, and that's the way I'm staying!

SHEALY

Damn, you're a sorry case.

CASSIDY

Yeah! I like it when I'm beat!
I get a real kick out it!

SHEALY

Like all us bums and fuckups. We keep going down and we like it. Until we hit bottom, where the nice cushy shit is. Nice and soft.

CASSIDY

That's what you said the other day. I didn't believe you then, and I don't believe you now. I don't believe in nothing!

SHEALY

Yeah you've got it. Wake up every morning, smell the coffee. Whatever happens. Let it happen. No matter what you do, it'll happen anyway. Let it take you.

CASSIDY

down.

SHEALY

yeah, down! That's right. That's what makes it so easy. No effort. Just slide down the rope and enjoy the trip on down into that big pit of hog shit.

B&W FLASH CUTS:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY/CASSIDY DRESSED AS PREPPY

INT. ARMY BOMBER/CASSIDY FLIES

EXT. AIRLINER/LA GUARDIA AIR FIELD

INT. RESTAURANT/DINNER OUT WITH A DEBUTANTE.

<<END B&W>>

INT. DORIS' APT.

CASSIDY
No, there's more.

Cassidy walks to the front door. Shealy stops him.

SHEALY
I know what you're thinking.

CASSIDY
Get outta my way, old man!

SHEALY
I won't let you go there.

CASSIDY
I'm going down there and getting
Doris. I'll sober her up here.
And then we'll go together.

SHEALY
You won't get a half mile of that
place before they nab you and you
damn well know it.

CASSIDY
I'll take my chances.

SHEALY
Assuming you can sober her up
this time, you can't keep her
clean long enough for the trip
you got coming.

CASSIDY
Get away from the door.

SHEALY
It'll kill her!

CASSIDY
What?

SHEALY
Don't you see, you can't give
Doris anything! There's only
one thing she needs and that's
(MORE)

SHEALY (cont'd)
whiskey. You take her away from
that, and she'll die.

CASSIDY
I don't need that kind of bullshit
right now.

SHEALY
I can't fight you. All I can
do is tell you the truth. If
you're too stubborn to see it
then it's your own fault, and
you'll kill her.

CASSIDY
You fucking drunk asshole! I
outta bash your tiny brains in!

SHEALY
O.K., Jim I had to at least try
to tell you. Later, when you
figure it out for yourself, you'll
know I at least tried.
(pause)
I'll get Doris. I'll put you on
the boat first. But then I'll get
Doris.

CASSIDY
You better not be fucking with me!
(beat) What boat?

Shealy opens the door.

SHEALY
Come on, there's a freighter on
Pauline street wharf waiting for
you. Leaves at five this morning.
I know the captain.

CASSIDY
Who would that be?

SHEALY
Adams, an old friend of mine.
Makes a haul to South Africa four
times a year. Way far from here.

They leave apartment together.

EXT. PAULINE STREET WHARF -- 3:00 AM

A freighter readies for embarkation. Cassidy and Shealy work their way towards the ship. A WATCHMAN heads them off.

CASSIDY

Damn.

SHEALY

Cool it.

WATCHMAN stops them. Cassidy pulls up his collar.

SHEALY

We got business with the captain.

WATCHMAN

Yeah? What kind?

SHEALY

Are you blind! You're talking to Shealy! From the Crescent City Chandlery.

WATCHMAN

Oh sure, go on up.

WATCHMAN goes back to his sandwich. They climb the gangway.

EXT. SHIP'S DECK -- NIGHT

Cassidy and Shealy climb over the rail of the ship. Cassidy waits for Shealy to find CAPTAIN ADAMS, as SEAMEN pass by.

SEAMAN #1

Nice job on the frog tat.

SEAMAN #2

Monahan in the tenderloin did it.

SEAMAN #1

That prick uses dirty needles.

SEAMAN #2

The place looked alright when....

Shealy and CAPTAIN ADAMS approach Cassidy.

SHEALY

I'm telling you he's alright.

CPT. ADAMS

I said NO! I'd like to help you
but I just can't afford the risk.

CASSIDY

What risk?

SHEALY

Jim, This is Captain Adams. I've
known him for years. I trust him.
I told him the truth.

CPT. ADAMS

You did that because I can always
smell a lie.

SHEALY

The Captain is really quite
intelligent. He's highly educated,
and he has a sense about people.

CASSIDY

I don't have much time. If we
can't do business, I'll try another
boat.

CPT. ADAMS

I wouldn't advise that. If I were
you, I'd --

CASSIDY

Save it, skipper.

Cassidy starts over the ship's railing. CPT. ADAMS grabs him.

CPT. ADAMS

Just for the record. Was it your
fault, or are you being railroaded
like Shealy says?

CASSIDY

Like I told Shealy. . .

CPT ADAMS stares long and hard into Cassidy's eyes.

CPT. ADAMS

If you're coming, come on. I don't
need this.

Cassidy climbs back over, slowly.

SHEALY

Well I guess this is it, Jim.

CASSIDY

Now look Shealy you know I can't make you do anything. (beat) I know you've gone to bat for me tonight, and I've got to thank you for that. But a favor ain't a favor, unless it goes all the way. Promise me Shealy, what we talked about, I mean it.

Shealy nods carefully; then climbs over the SHIP'S RAIL.

INT. SHIP'S CABIN -- LATER

Cassidy stares out the porthole at black water.

B&W FLASH CUTS:

INT. SHIP'S CABIN:CASSIDY WITH DORIS

EXT. BUS FLYING THROUGH AIR

EXT. COMMERCIAL PLANE CRASHES AT LA GUARDIA

INT. AIRPORT/CAPETOWN -- DAY

STEWARDESS/DORIS

(British Accent)

Good morning Captain Cassidy.

Cassidy and Doris(both in uniform) jump into each other's arms.

INT. CAPETOWN RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Cassidy and Doris dine on lobsters and toast with fine wine.

<<END B&W>>

INT. SHIP'S CABIN -- 4:35 AM

Cassidy hears the hatch open, expecting Doris. Mildred enters and looks Cassidy up and down. Cassidy backs away.

MILDRED

Where do you think your goin'?

CASSIDY
I'm goin on a little boat ride.

MILDRED
You think so!

CASSIDY
I know so!

MILDRED
But you're wrong (beat) It ain't
like that (beat) it ain't like that
at all.

CASSIDY
It ain't like what?

MILDRED
Ain't that easy.

Mildred tests the mattress and lights a CIGARETTE.

CASSIDY
How did you find me?

MILDRED
Shealy.

CASSIDY
You're a liar, you had me tailed.

MILDRED
Is that what you think? Go ahead
and think it.

CASSIDY
Where is Shealy?

MILDRED
Your friend Shealy is at Lundy's
Bar.

CASSIDY
What's he doin' there?

MILDRED
What he's always doing, drinking.

Cassidy grabs Mildred's arm.

CASSIDY
You lying whore! Tell the truth!

MILDRED

Let go of my arm or you get this
cigarette in your eye!

Cassidy releases her arm. Mildred takes a heavy ASHTRAY from
the table, and places ashes in it.

MILDRED

I'll finish this cigarette then
we'll go.

CASSIDY

We'll what!

MILDRED

I said... we'll go.

CASSIDY

We?

MILDRED

You think you know everything.
That's your big trouble.

CASSIDY

So where do you think we're going?
What kind of game is this?

MILDRED

This ain't no game. You belong to
me. That's all.

CASSIDY

Listen we had that out. So I'm
telling you whatever it is you had
in mind, just forget it.

MILDRED

You heard what I said. I said you
belong to me!

CASSIDY

You better get lost before you get
hurt.

MILDRED

When I go, you go.

CASSIDY

Let me wise you up to a couple of
things Mildred. First, I don't
want to go with you. Second, I've
got nowhere to go but this boat.

(MORE)

CASSIDY (cont'd)

Or maybe you haven't heard what happened today.

MILDRED

I heard. Your in a tight jam but if you listen to me, you play it the way I tell you...

CASSIDY

If I play it like you tell me I'm an idiot. If I go along with you, I might as well just jump overboard.

MILDRED

Oh come on Cassidy , are you high? Did you take something? Or are you just plain crazy.

CASSIDY

I'm straighter than I have been in a long time honey, and I got my eyes open wide. I know what you want, you want to see me crawl. You'll do anything to see me crawl. (beat) You know I hit it, right on the bull's-eye. You don't want me, you never did. All you want are your kicks. You really get off on me getting mad. Or when I get home, after a sixteen hour shift you got your fun getting me all worked up. Pushing your big fat, tits into my face. You've had yourself a fine time.

MILDRED

I didn't hear you complaining.

CASSIDY

Do you hear me now? Do you hear me now? Do you fucking hear me now? Do you understand what the hell I'm telling you? You can jiggle and jiggle, all you want, but you know what I see. I see a fat lazy slob, doing the shimmy in a dress two sizes too small.

Mildred grabs him and swings him around.

MILDRED

Don't you call me a fat slob! You take it back!

Mildred poised for battle, stares into Cassidy. He sees a sexy babe.

CASSIDY

(softly)

Alright, I take it back.

(pause)

You see the way it is. The switch is busted there's no ignition. You can't turn me on and off anymore

MILDRED

Can't I?

CASSIDY

No, you can't.

MILDRED

And you're glad about that.

CASSIDY

It feels great. It feels like I can breathe again. When they take the chains off and open up the doors, and let in the fresh, clean air.

MILDRED

I don't believe you! How can you see it that way?

CASSIDY

It's my way.

MILDRED

Alright that's your way, and this is my way. And now what?

CASSIDY

You can do me one last favor.

MILDRED

Like what?

CASSIDY

Get off this boat.

MILDRED

(sinister)

Is that all?

CASSIDY

That's it. Nothing more.

MILDRED

You can ask for more. Go on give it a whirl and maybe I'll come through for you.

CASSIDY

Mildred.

MILDRED

You don't need to build it up, just say it, just say it! What's the last thing that I can do for you?

CASSIDY

Bring Doris!

Mildred pummels him with the ASHTRAY until he collapses.

INT. INSIDE SACK -- ON CASSIDY

Cassidy is dragged through the piers, up an alley, upstairs.

INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR -- JUNE 9, 1954

Spann and Shealy play cards on a portable table and watch the H.U.A.C. Hearings on a small TV. Cassidy lays on a cot, eavesdropping on their conversation, pretending to be asleep.

SPANN

(about the TV)

Look at him go!

SHEALY

I think he's the criminal.

SPANN

What are you, a pinko fairy?

SHEALY

I don't like that man's methods.

SPANN

Who gives a fuck. Those rotten Reds deserve everything they get.

SHEALY

He wears a dress.

SPANN

What are you talking about?

SHEALY

Sure. He and J. Edgar have parties all night long. In their basement.

SPANN

You're really asking for it, now.

SHEALY

Big Joe and little Coen do more than hunt for reds together.

SPANN

You're sick. You know that!

Pauline enters with a half empty bottle. Spann stands to confront Pauline.

SHEALY

(to Pauline)

I don't know, maybe I did wrong by Jim.

PAULINE

I think you did.

Spann watches Pauline sit across from him. She pours drinks.

SPANN

(not watching the TV)

Shut up, I'm watching this!.

PAULINE

No, I wont shut up! I say it was a rotten thing to do.

SPANN

You'll shut up or I'll reach inside your mouth and rip your tongue out.

PAULINE

We know what's going to happen now. We all know it. She's no good. Never was. Never will be, and you let her. . .

SHEALY

That isn't what bothers me.

PAULINE

It should bother you.

SPANN

Okay! You asked for it!

Spann aims the heel of his palm at Pauline's face. He misses. Pauline grabs Spann's ear.

SHEALY

Oh, come on. Stop it you two.

Pauline lets go. They return to their seats.

SPANN

Now the next time you do that, I'm gonna kill ya'. I'll grab hold of your throat and I won't let go until I've squeezed every inch of life outta your worthless body.

PAULINE

(to Shealy)

Sure it was a mistake. I can't understand why you just didn't do what he asked.

SHEALY

I had my reasons. I'm beginning to think my reasons weren't good enough. I ruined it didn't I? I've ruined everything for him.

Shealy pounds down a long shot.

SPANN

I'll think I'll go down and bring another bottle.

PAULINE

Bring a bottle of the special stuff.

SPANN

That' ain't for now. That's for later, when we can't taste it.

PAULINE

I want it now! I'm sort of upset and I need it now. Oh god, look at Cassidy over there. Poor Cassidy, look at him. Sleeping over there. They'll find him and they'll snatch him, I know they will. Look at him; he wrecked the bus that killed twenty-six people.

Pauline threatens Spann with the empty bottle. Spann glares.

SPANN

Put it down.

Pauline lowers it, and sits down crying.

SPANN

Now listen sweetie, you know better than to say a thing like that. You know it wasn't Cassidy's fault.

PAULINE

What difference does it make? The point is he's the one they're looking for. And he's the one they'll find. Oh and what they'll do when they find him.

SHEALY

What do you think Spann? What do you think he'll get?

SPANN

It's hard to say. They could make it rough. After all he broke out, he's on the loose and like it says in the papers. He's got that airplane crash on his record.

PAULINE

What airplane crash?

SPANN

Didn't you know? He drove an airplane.

PAULINE

You mean Cassidy ?

SPANN

Sure a plane. One of them big jobs. One of them great big silver jobs. He was a driver. They say, one day he was loaded, and when his plane took off, instead of flying away, it just kinda goes down and starts to burn, a lot of people killed. So they put Cassidy , under the microscope and after a while they let him go. But it's on his record.

PAULINE

What else?

SPANN

On the record?

PAULINE

No. Just about Cassidy. What else do you know about Cassidy ?

SHEALY

(to Spann)

She means the good things. The things they don't put on the record. The bright stuff, like his family, where he went to school, what college he attended.

SPANN

College? Did he tell you he went to college?

SHEALY

No, he never mentioned it. But I'd wager on it. He has a college education.

SPANN

He sure don't talk like it.

SHEALY

I'll tell you why. It's something under the order of oxidation. When the bright polish comes off and for a while there's only a dull surface, but then suddenly it arrives. The rust. Its a special kind of rust, the kind that gets under the surface, and goes deep down inside.

PAULINE

(to Shealy)

Will you do me a favor? (beat)
Will you please tell me what the hell your talking about.

SPANN

We're talking about Cassidy .

PAULINE

I didn't ask you, you lizard. Go get us that bottle.

Spann exits, not sure if he should leave them alone. Pauline walks to the cot. Cassidy seems to be sleeping.

PAULINE

Look at him. Look at the poor devil. They'll get him, I know they'll get him. Just like those poor fellas on the TV. They'll give him 100 years.

SHEALY

Not that long.

PAULINE

How long? Tell me Shealy, how much of a stretch will he get.

SHEALY

Spann knows more about that than I do.

PAULINE

Spann never took a rap like that. Spann went up for forgery and embezzlement; for passing bad checks and mail fraud. He was up for. . .well nothing like this. For godsakes, he's up for mass murder!

SHEALY

I wish you'd sit down and shut up for awhile. You're not helping me any.

PAULINE

Helping you? What do you mean helping you?

SHEALY

Good Christ what did I do? What did I do?

PAULINE

I'll tell you what you did, you took your good friend Cassidy and sent him on a trip straight up the river. You even admit it. You made him a promise, a simple little promise, and you broke it. He had his golden opportunity to get away. So what did you do. You said you'd bring Doris to that boat. But who did you go and bring?

SHEALY

But I knew. . .

PAULINE

You knew too damn much. You always know too much. You go around telling everybody what you know, but here's what I think Shealy. I think you're just a bitter lonely, drunken, old excuse for a drop-out fake. Now how do you like that?

SHEALY

I don't like it at all, but I'm afraid its true.

PAULINE

Ya' god damn right its true. Ya' can't no longer weigh yourself in terms of pounds. Now it's quarts. No, ounces.

SHEALY

No! Please. Come on Pauline.

PAULINE

Please my ass, I say what I think. I ain't no hypocrite. Look at that man over there in that cot. Just look at him. My heart bleeds for him. I can see them sending him up for twenty, thirty years.

SHEALY

Maybe we can -- -

PAULINE

There ain't a damn thing you can do and you know it. You had your chance to help him Shealy, you had a great chance for him, and Doris, but you blew it. Instead of helping him, what did you do? Instead of telling Doris where he was, who did you tell? You told that filthy whore, that shit hen with the big mouth, that sloppy troll, who has the colossal balls to say that she's married to him.

SHEALY

But they are married. They're man and wife.

PAULINE

Says who? Because someone got paid to stand in front of them and say some words? Because Cassidy went out and bought a ring? You telling me that made it sacred? That put a blessing on it? I don't see it that way. I say Cassidy was cursed. Yeah, Goddamn it. She put a curse on him.

SHEALY

You say that because you hate Mildred. You envy her. She's got the body, the looks.

PAULINE

Looks? If that's what they call looks, I'll stay thin as a rail. I'll get thinner, I'll live on water and figs. You see these.

Pauline squeezes her breasts.

PAULINE

They're little aren't they, they hardly show. But I'll tell you what they can do. They can hit my boyfriend, Spann. Like bullets shot from a gun. They hit him and he staggers and gets dry in the mouth. He looks at 'em and he gulps like he's choking on something. But then when I give it up to Spann, I give it to him to keep him alive. Like he's my baby and I'm feeding him. And sometimes I cry, I cry real soft, but there's tears. And I whisper in his ear. I say: Spann you're an evil motherfucker. You're a lizard. But you're my baby.

SHEALY

If that's the way it is, you shouldn't envy anybody.

PAULINE

(not hearing Shealy)

Yes. Of course I'm thin. After all, that's the fashion. To be like a straw, like a reed. To be slender like you see them in the magazines advertising the dresses.

(MORE)

PAULINE (cont'd)

To be like that. Built like that.
Not like a goddamn battleship!

SHEALY

You're jealous!

PAULINE

I'm sick. That's why I'm so
skinny. I'm sick and skinny. But
Mildred? She's healthy. Why is it,
the meaner they are, the healthier
they are.

Pauline sits, Shealy rests his head on his arms.

PAULINE

I'll tell you why. Because they're
takers. Bloodsuckers.

SHEALY

Not Mildred.

PAULINE

Sure she's a bloodsucker. The
worst!

SHEALY

What do you know about it?

PAULINE

I ought to know about it, I'm the
one who lost out. I remember the
way it was, four years ago. The day
Cassidy came walking into Lundy's.
We were all there, all us girls,
and we all noticed him come through
that door. Me, especially, cause
Spann was doing a stretch, and I
hadn't had it in months.(beat) So,
I'm sittin there, and I see that
curly, hair, and that big fine
chest, and all that solid beef
muscle, that big, fine man. . .

SHEALY

Oh cut it out! You're drunk.
You're on a two day drunk, and
you're seeing things.

PAULINE

Am I? I'm telling you like it
happened. I'm sitting there, hoping
he'd notice me. My legs are
crossed.

(MORE)

PAULINE (cont'd)

I'm wet, just thinking about him coming over to me. But what does he see? Those big cantaloupes sticking out of a blouse.

SHEALY

Forget it.

PAULINE

I was sitting there smoking. I weighed ninety eight pounds.

SHEALY

It was a long time ago.

PAULINE

It was four years ago! And I sat there, and watched him go to her. I watched them go out together. Later, I went back to my room and wrote a long letter to Spann. Then I tore it up.

SHEALY

All right, alright. . .

PAULINE

But let me tell you. Will you let me tell you? (beat) It was after Mildred got him to marry her. That's when I got the other feeling. Feeling sorry for him. Maybe just wanting to touch the fuzzy golden hair on his thick wrist, or lightly kiss his cheek. Maybe knit him a pair of socks. To go to his bed, and check to see if his sheets were clean. Just to take care of him, because I know she never did. I remember once in the winter he had a bad cold, and he treated it right here, at Lundy's Bar. His throat was so bad he could hardly talk and he stood at the bar and drank shot after shot, until he puked. And where was his wife? She was ripping it up in Chinatown, drinking that rice slop!

SHEALY

You mean rice wine. That's stuff's good.

PAULINE

How can she call herself his wife?
What did she ever do for him, that
a wife should do. I'll tell you
what she did. I'll tell you what
she gave him. Pure hell!

Spann walks in with a fresh bottle. He pours, and Pauline
drinks hers down, slamming the glass to the table.

PAULINE

So, that's what you did. Instead
of telling Doris where he was, you
told his wife.

SPANN

Are you two still at it?

PAULINE

I want him to know what he's done!
Shealy, it's only that I've known
you for so long. It's that I'm so
fond of you, that I don't go over
there and rip your eyes outta your
head!

Shealy stands up, and walks out of the room.

SPANN

That about does it!

Spann takes Pauline's wrist to kiss it, but bites instead.

PAULINE

Hey! What'ya doin!

SPANN

I told you to lay off Shealy! Why
do you have to drill into everyone?

PAULINE

Look what you did to my hand!

SPANN

It's a start. You keep up at
Shealy, and you'll get the rest.

PAULINE

Why wait? Why don't you give it to
me now? C'mon, give it to me!

Spann flies at Pauline biting her shoulder.

PAULINE
OH JESUS CHRIST! Look what he's
doing? He's biting me!

Pauline and Spann fight. Spann runs out. Pauline remains, on her knees, weeping.

INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR(PAULINE/CASSIDY) -- JUNE 9, 1954

Cassidy intently watches TV. His face turns pale as he witnesses the interchange between WELCH and McCARTHY. Pauline stands in the doorway, watching Cassidy.

JOSEPH N. WELCH
(from TV set)
"Until this moment, senator, I think I never gauged your cruelty or recklessness. . . Have you no sense of decency, sir, at long last? Have you left no sense of decency?"

CASSIDY
Get me a drink! (beat) Go on, go downstairs and get me some Rye. (beat) I need a drink.

Pauline leaves. Cassidy realizes his hero is really a jerk.

CASSIDY
Tell Lundy to charge it.

Cassidy looks for his pants. Cassidy stands unsteadily, rubbing his head. He switches off the TV, and sits down. Pauline re-enters with RYE and CIGARETTES. They rip into it.

CASSIDY
Oh this is great. Just what the doctor, you know. . .

PAULINE
Now listen, if there's anything you want me to do, tell me. Anything.

CASSIDY
Just sit with me. Here, drink.

They continue to drink. OUTSIDE:thunder and lightning.

PAULINE
Don't get the wrong idea. It ain't that I don't want Spann. I guess I'll always want Spann.
(MORE)

PAULINE (cont'd)

But, if you wanted to take me from Spann, I guess I would go. Anyway you could try.

Thunder grows louder. Cassidy puts his arm around Pauline.

CASSIDY

It's nothing! Just a little rain.

PAULINE

(quivering)

Listen to it! When it does that, it scares the hell out of me. Like it's the end of the world.

CASSIDY

Maybe it is.

PAULINE

Oh, don't say that.

CASSIDY

What if it is? Who the fuck cares?

PAULINE

For God's sake Jim, don't talk like that.

Pauline spills whiskey on Cassidy's boxers. She gets down on her knees and starts to wipe it up.

CASSIDY

Hey what's this about?

PAULINE

It ain't that I don't want Spann.

CASSIDY

Then what do you want?

PAULINE

Just give it to me one time.
Now. C'mon Jim, just let me. . .

Pauline works her hand on Cassidy until he grabs her.

CASSIDY

No! Look if you can't hold you booze. . .

PAULINE

I'm not drunk!

CASSIDY

Well then cut it out!

PAULINE

(crying)

Look at me. I'm crying. Look how shaky I am. It's a lot of things. I see you here all banged up. You're caged up here, like an animal on the run. I want to do something for you, make you feel better. Because, well I gotta tell you, you don't have a chance.

Pauline presses her cheek against his thigh.

CASSIDY

Pauline what are you doing?

PAULINE

Don't you see, your time's run out.

Cassidy halfheartedly tries to push her away. As Pauline puts her lips on his lap, the door opens, and Mildred enters.

MILDRED

What's the rush?

Mildred glares at Cassidy and blocks Pauline's hasty exit.

PAULINE

Let me out!

MILDRED

Just what's going on here?

PAULINE

What's it to you! No one asked you here!

Mildred grabs Pauline and takes her into a choke hold.

MILDRED

Answer me! What the hell's going on!

CASSIDY

Let her go!

MILDRED

I'll break her fucking neck!

Mildred knocks Pauline down, but Cassidy rushes to help her.

PAULINE

Ow! It feels like I broke something. Excuse me, Mildred. I should have told you. Your husband was sending me out on an errand.

MILDRED

What kind of errand?

PAULINE

He wants Doris.

MILDRED

All right Dearie. That's just fine with me. Go ahead. Go bring Doris.

Mildred moves away from the door. Pauline slams past her. Cassidy sits on the cot, and lights up. Thunder crashes.

MILDRED

I guess there won't be any Doris. She'd be crazy to go out in this rain.

CASSIDY

When Doris gets here I want you out!

Mildred walks slowly to the table, sits down and pours a drink; turns towards him to show off her breasts. She raises her arms, reaches her fingers through her hair. Gradually, she unbuttons her BLOUSE. She reveals her bra. Cassidy turns toward the window. Then he stands, and saunters over to the table and gets whiskey and cigarettes. He lights a one, and walks back to the cot. He sits down.

Mildred throws her blouse at Cassidy. He looks down and sees it at his feet. Cassidy drinks some more whiskey, and puffs on his cigarette.

Mildred unzips her skirt. She throws it at Cassidy. THUNDER crashes outside, now more often. The lights waver.

Mildred stands, wearing a hot purple bra, panties, and garter belt SET which hold up net stockings. She poses, and the thunder crashes outside. Cassidy drinks again, not wanting to look at her. He hurls the glass at the door, hitting the LIGHT SWITCH. The LIGHT goes out as LIGHTNING fills the room, revealing her in strobe lit confusion.

Cassidy stumbles to find the light switch. THUNDER crashes again, and the light goes back on. He faces the window, and sees Mildred's reflection.

Mildred removes her bra, and throws it at him. It lands on his shoulder. All he sees is bright purple. Cassidy throws it down; walks back to the cot, sits down, pulls the blanket to cover himself.

Mildred places a chair against the doorknob. Cassidy's heart pounds louder than the insistent THUNDER outside. He turns to see Mildred poised in the center of the room, hands on her hips, thrusting her breasts towards him.

MILDRED
(Voice like taffy)
Come here. I want to tell
you something.

CASSIDY
Keep away!

MILDRED
What's the matter? Don't you like
what you see?

CASSIDY
I've seen it before.

Mildred cups her hands under her breasts.

MILDRED
Aren't they gorgeous?

Cassidy stares contemptuously.

MILDRED
Look at them.

Cassidy concentrates hard. Eventually he speaks.

CASSIDY
(brutally)
Yeah, they're not bad. What do
you charge?

Mildred lets it slide. She steps closer to him.

CASSIDY
I guess names won't do it. I
guess the only thing for me to
do is slap you down.

MILDRED
You won't do that.

Mildred slinks over, wraps her arms around his neck, sits on his lap, and kisses him.

MILDRED

You still want that other woman?

Her kisses send fire into him. She works her fingers into his hair.

MILDRED

You still want Doris?

She twists her legs around him, driving him crazy with her kisses. He fondles her, and tosses her onto her back.

MILDRED

Well? You still want her?
You sure?

Mildred slips off her shoes. She touches her girdle.

MILDRED

Take it off.

Cassidy takes the elastic of her girdle in his hand.

MILDRED

Do it slow.

He starts to pull it off.

MILDRED

Slower. I wantcha to do it real
slow. Nice.

He eases it down her stockings, and over her ankles. She lays on the cot, smiling. He leans down to kiss her breasts.

MILDRED

Take them.

They start to have sex then suddenly Mildred pushes him away.

CASSIDY

What?

MILDRED

Get up.

CASSIDY

What for?

MILDRED

Just like that.

CASSIDY

Like what?

Mildred pushes him away. She gets up off the cot, walks to the table, takes a cigarette, and ignites it.

MILDRED

Let me have my girdle.

Cassidy stares, then slowly picks it up.

CASSIDY

Should I bring them to you?

MILDRED

Just let me have them.

CASSIDY

I think you want me to bring them over. I think you want me to crawl over there on my hands and knees. That's it isn't it?

The girdle burns into his hand. He throws it at her.

CASSIDY

I ain't crawling!

Cassidy stands and walks up to Mildred.

MILDRED

No?

CASSIDY

The Hell You Say!

He closes in, then she jabs him with her fingernails. She throws her cigarette at him. She scratches, punches, and kicks. He picks her up, and takes her back to the cot. He throws her down. She tries to get up. He pushes her down. His knees force open her legs. His hands grab her wrists.

She screams, but by now, the thunder screams too. He takes her. Then the screams give way to passion. The rain roars outside, lightning fills the room. They go at it with fury.

INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR -- 10:30 PM

Cassidy works his head deeper into his pillow. Pauline enters the room carrying a bowl of Gumbo.

PAULINE

Come on, get up. I brought you something to eat.

CASSIDY
What time is it?

PAULINE
Around Ten-thirty. It's time
you put some food in that stomach
of yours.

Cassidy opens his eyes, and starts to get up.

CASSIDY
Where are my clothes?

PAULINE
There's your tee-shirt on the
chair.

CASSIDY
Where's the rest of it? My pants
and shoes?

PAULINE
They're downstairs.

CASSIDY
Could you get them?

PAULINE
Shealy said if you had your
clothes, you'd leave. And you
can't walk out there now. Shealy
said you've got to stay here.
And Spann. . .

CASSIDY
What's the matter Pauline, are
you afraid of Spann?

PAULINE
Now, you know better than that. If
Spann tries anything with me, I'd
knock him down and kick his teeth
in.

CASSIDY
Good! Now go down there and
get my clothes.

Pauline moves to the door, stops and faces him.

PAULINE
I'll hide them under a blanket.

She exits. Cassidy puts his tee shirt on. He sits down at the table, and devours the Jambalaya. It cheers him up.

Pauline comes back in, carrying a folded blanket. He stops eating to put his clothes back on.

CASSIDY
What's bothering you?

Cassidy sits back down to the Jambalaya.

PAULINE
I don't think I should have done it.

CASSIDY
(mouth full)
Look honey, All you're doing is helping me.

PAULINE
But Shealy said -- --

CASSIDY
Fuck Shealy! Fuck what he said. Ain't it Shealy who screwed me in the first place?

PAULINE
Well yeah, but --

CASSIDY
But what?

PAULINE
Maybe there is more than one angle to this thing?

CASSIDY
Oh come on, Pauline! That's Shealy talking and you know it!

PAULINE
They're keeping you here so they can try to work something out. It's for your own good.

Cassidy finishes his Jambalaya.

CASSIDY
Nobody keeps me.

Cassidy looks out window, noticing the downpour outside.

CASSIDY

This afternoon, I asked you to do something for me. You said you would. Well? What happened? Did you find her?

PAULINE

Sure.

CASSIDY

Where is she then? Didn't you bring her up here?

PAULINE

I did.

Cassidy puts his hands to his face.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR -- EARLIER

Doris walks in on Cassidy and Mildred having sex.

INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR

PAULINE

Don't worry about it. Doris didn't mind.

CASSIDY

What do you mean she didn't mind?

PAULINE

She was out of her mind, blasted.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR -- EARLIER

Cassidy nailing Mildred. Doris, Pauline observe, then exit.

INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR

Cassidy paces, turns on the TV again, watching the News.

CASSIDY

You know what I am? I'm an artist.
A letdown artist. I build them up
and rip them down.

PAULINE

Oh honey, don't -- -

CASSIDY

I let everything fall apart.

PAULINE

Listen,

CASSIDY

I'm a fuckup. Worse.

PAULINE

Now sit down a minute.

CASSIDY

I'm a real asshole to do that to
that sweet girl. I'm a cheap bum,
that's all. A hypocrite.

Pauline fixes him a drink. They drink throughout.

PAULINE

You need something to pick yourself
up.

CASSIDY

I need something to bash my brains
in. I'm a liar. What's worse, I'm a
fake.

PAULINE

Here. Take the bottle.

CASSIDY

Gimme the damn bottle! I'm the
worst kind of hypocrite.

PAULINE

Don't say that.

CASSIDY

I'm like one of those radio
preachers. I know I'm a bastard.
That's why I'm getting kicked
around. I deserve it. I'm getting
exactly what I deserve.

(To the Bottle)

Hello!

PAULINE

Ease up, Jim. You're going crazy!

CASSIDY

Maybe I'd be better off if I were.
It would make things a lot easier.
Just not to know what's going on
around you.

PAULINE

Go on. Take another drink.

CASSIDY

To get drunk? It'll take a gallon!

PAULINE

Well, try to get some sleep.

Cassidy lifts the bottle to his mouth, and drains it.

CASSIDY

See! Nothing! It tastes like water!

Pauline stands and drags Cassidy over to the cot.

PAULINE

Come on now, try to sleep.

CASSIDY

(softly)

I can't even taste it.

Cassidy falls onto the cot. Pauline covers him.

PAULINE

That's it. Now go to sleep.

CASSIDY

Aviation.

PAULINE

What?

CASSIDY

Aviation. I used to be in aviation.

PAULINE

That's fine honey.

Pauline leaves the room and turns out the light.

PAULINE

Now why don't you go to sleep.

CASSIDY
 Aviator. Captain. Captain pilot.
 Chief pilot. Captain bus driver.
 Make the trip with Captain Cassidy
 and we give you a guarantee you
 won't come back alive!

Pauline shuts the door.

CASSIDY
 Hey Mildred. I've got something
 to say to you. Nothing bad. Really,
 I swear. I mean maybe I got you
 figured all wrong.

INT. LUNDY'S BAR, BACK ROOM -- 4:00 AM

After-hours drinkers crowd the room. Mildred and Kenrick sit together, laughing.

INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR -- 4:05 AM

The laughter eats through Cassidy like a blazing hot poker. He springs out of bed with murder on his mind. The light pattern on the wall reminds him of a jail cell.

Cassidy yanks on the light, casting an evil shadow across his face. He paces, goes for door, reconsiders, then goes to the window. He opens it and climbs out.

EXT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR -- 4:20 AM

Cassidy climbs out the window and scales down the drainpipe.

EXT. LUNDY'S BAR, BACK ROOM

Cassidy stands by a window, looking inside.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- EXT. ESCALATOR DOWN

Cassidy's friends go down a subterranean escalator.

INT. LUNDY'S BAR, BACK ROOM

Cassidy watches the laughter fade from the after-hours drinkers. Their faces turn gray and dark.

Pauline takes a cigarette from Spann's case. Shealy and Doris drink together, oblivious. Mildred and Kenrick sit across from one another, staring. Kenrick chews on his unlit CIGAR.

KENRICK

Now what goes on here? Why the sudden freeze? What happened to the party? Ain't we having ourselves a party.

MILDRED

Sure we are. We just need a refill, that's all.

KENRICK

By all means! A refill, for the house!

MILDRED

You hear what the man says? Drinks for everyone.

Kenrick loses his smile. Twenty faces stare at him. He grabs Lundy's sleeve.

KENRICK

Now wait a minute.

MILDRED

Wait nothing! The house drinks, and it's on Kenrick!

Mildred stands and everyone stares at Kenrick.

KENRICK

I'll order for the house. We'll have whiskey! A bottle for every table.

Lundy scurries away. He returns with a case of booze. Kenrick pays with a wad of cash. Mildred opens her bottle, then holds it up and slowly empties it onto the floor.

KENRICK

What are you doing?

EVERYONE else pours out theirs too. Kenrick leaps up.

KENRICK

Now look, we've all been drinking and having a good time, and I like a good time as much as anyone. But this is going too far. This ain't my idea of a joke!

MILDRED
Well it is to me.

KENRICK
I guess I must be stupid or something.

MILDRED
You? Not you, Kenrick? You're not stupid! You're a very smart engineer.

Kenrick plays with his CIGAR.

MILDRED
That's why you got money. That's why you got good clothes. Because you got it up here. You're so much smarter than us. It's a cinch for you, isn't it.

KENRICK
What's a cinch?

MILDRED
To put something over.

KENRICK
On who? On you?

MILDRED
Look at me Haney!

Kenrick bites on his CIGAR.

KENRICK
All right! I'm looking! Do I look worried?

MILDRED
No you don't look worried. You look scared stiff.

KENRICK
Scared of what?

MILDRED
You tell us.

Kenrick sits down, fumbles for a match and lights his CIGAR, puffing violently. He stands and moves to the door. The room is dead quiet. He grabs the doorknob. No one stops him.

KENRICK

(slamming door)

You think I'm scared? When a man is scared, he runs! You see me running?

Kenrick moves across the room, table to table.

KENRICK

I ain't running from nobody! Y'hear! I can look at each and every one of you. I can look you right in the eye. I can tell you all "I got a clear conscience!"

Kenrick backs away from Spann's table.

KENRICK

Now listen. Listen carefully to what I have to say. If I didn't have a clear conscience, would I have come here tonight?

Mildred leaves her table and moves in on Kenrick.

MILDRED

You came here to sell us something.

KENRICK

Sell? What do you mean? All night I been telling jokes!

MILDRED

And making us laugh. Giving us a great good old time. As if we're a bunch of stupid animals. As if we got no brains and don't know nothin.

Mildred closes in.

MILDRED

You made a mistake. You priced us too cheap.

Mildred pounds Kenrick in the mouth twice. Shealy signals her to stop. She sits down and lights a cigarette. Kenrick whirls himself at Shealy, colliding with Lundy. Spann plays with his switchblade. THE MEN begin to rumble, and stand up. Shealy motions them to sit down.

KENRICK

Don't do me no favors. If they want to jump me, let them try. There

(MORE)

KENRICK (cont'd)
ain't one of them I can't take.
(beat) C'MON! HERE I AM! ANYONE
WANTS SOME!! COME AND GET IT!

SHEALY
(calmly)
This can be settled peacefully.

Shealy and Kenrick stare each other down. Doris is lost in her own world, with her lover, the bottle. Cassidy watches and knows now that he'll never be able to reach her. He realizes the truth: He was trying to be gallant, for his own ego. Kenrick changes his attitude. He walks pompously to the center of the room, a courtroom.

SHEALY
You lied to the police. You
can't lie to us.

KENRICK
I don't know what you mean.

SHEALY
ANOTHER LIE!

KENRICK
What makes you call me a liar?

MILDRED
We know the truth.

KENRICK
Yeah? Tell me about it!

MILDRED
(pointing)
There's a phone over there. You
see it, Kenrick? Here's what we
want you to do. We want you to
go over to that phone, and put
a nickel in it.

Mildred, arms behind her back, slowly moves to Spann's table.

KENRICK
What?

Mildred motions Spann to give her the knife.

MILDRED
The Police!

Spann places the SWITCHBLADE into Mildred's palm.

MILDRED

Call the police and tell them
the truth.

KENRICK

You sound like you're begging me.

MILDRED

ALRIGHT! I'm begging you to do it!

KENRICK

That ain't the way I beg. You know
the way I beg. When I beg, I get
down on my knees. Remember,
Mildred. Remember how I got down
on my knees. Let's see you do it.
Let's see you get down on your
knees and beg me to do it! Get
down on your knees.

MILDRED

I would if it would work.

KENRICK

Well it wouldn't work! Nothing
would! Now I've got you like you
had me. Now, I'm doing it to you.
I'm really fucking you, Mildred!
I'm shoving it right up your ass,
and you're taking it! And you're
begging for it! Begging me to do
it! Begging me to slam you good and
hard!

Mildred pulls the SWITCHBLADE and points it at his gut.

MILDRED

I fucking mean it you prick! You
put my Cassidy on the hook, and now
you'll take him off! You'll do it
or I'll rip your fat gut apart!

Cassidy looks at Mildred and remembers.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. ROOM OVER LUNDY'S BAR -- EARLIER

Mildred works her fingers through Cassidy's hair.

MILDRED

You still want Doris?

INT. LUNDY'S BAR -- BACK ROOM

Kenrick surveys his situation carefully. Mildred stares.

FLASH CUT:

B&W SHOT -- INT. SHIP'S CABIN -- 4:35 AM

Mildred looks at Cassidy with understanding pity.

MILDRED
 ...Yer in a tight jam but if'ya
 lissen to me...

INT. LUNDY'S BAR -- BACK ROOM

Kenrick panics and in an insane move, charges Mildred.

Cassidy instinctively decides he must defend Mildred, at any cost. He struggles with the window. It won't open.

Kenrick knocks the SWITCHBLADE from Mildred's hand and throws his arm back to hit her. Cassidy panics. Kenrick wants to kill. The window gives, but not enough.

Kenrick bears down and sees an opening for a punch.

Cassidy crashes through the window, and startles Kenrick. Cassidy charges, like from his football glory days. Kenrick goes down, and Cassidy picks him up, then smashes him again. Cassidy drags him by the neck to the phone, as Shealy places the call to the police. THE MEN close in around Kenrick.

KENRICK
 NO!

CASSIDY
 NO?

Cassidy squeezes tighter.

KENRICK
 Alright!

SERGEANT(V.O.)
 Jefferson Station. Sergeant Rourke
 here.

MEN grumble as Kenrick is forced to the TELEPHONE RECEIVER.

SERGEANT(V-O)
 Hello, hello. Speak more clearly.

KENRICK

This is Kenrick, the witness
from the bus crash. I gotta
talk to the Lieutenant. . . .

Cassidy breaks away from the group, which hold Kenrick.

PIANO PLAYER gently smiles, licks his lips, and shuffles into the front room. He climbs behind his PIANO and segues into "Georgia". Kenrick continues talking on the phone, as THE MEN stand around him, acutely listening.

BREAK OF DAWN SUN tears through the thick smoke of the BACK ROOM and backlights Mildred in a soft glow. She sits alone, holding a blackened matchstick, aimlessly drawing on the table. Her mind is a blank, thinking about nothing in particular, at ease, calm.

Cassidy watches from a distance, vaguely listening as THE MEN hang up the phone, and take Kenrick from the room. The walk Cassidy takes across the room seems like Gilgamesh's journey through the underworld. He sees Mildred in tunnel vision, and can only hear his own breath and heartbeat, which seem as loud as a ball-peen hammer. He knows he belongs to Mildred, this woman, this entity, capable of the greatest depravity and the deepest love. He moves closer to her like the moth's final flight into the candle.

CASSIDY

Where you staying?

MILDRED

I came back to the apartment.

Mildred stops drawing.

MILDRED

I'm sorry I threw your clothes
in the river.

Cassidy stands, unsure how to react, or what to say...next.

MILDRED

I saved your scrapbook.

Cassidy tries to sit down and act as cool as Mildred, but his heart pounds, and his body holds him captive. He simply looks at Mildred, and discovers another woman, the woman he always knew she was. Suddenly, he becomes the Airline Captain from his past (or future?).

MILDRED

What's the matter, Cassidy? (beat)
What is it?

CASSIDY

It's all right.

Cassidy sits down next to Mildred, and he adjusts himself. Blood courses through his arteries like cool water over a parched desert floor. He is truly emotionally broken up, but his voice remains in control. Mildred observes him carefully.

CASSIDY

I'll be alright in a minute.
(pause)
Let's go home.

The PIANO MUSIC gently plays in the background. Cassidy stands and takes Mildred by the waist as they walk out.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS DAWN

The SUN rises over the Mississippi river, a breathtaking view, full of potential.

END