

Bronx, Inc. Pilot

By

Frank Picciotto

Email: fpicciotto@optonline.net
Phone: 201.819.0117

IN BLACKNESS:

EXT. SKY - DAY

Aerial shot: New York City.

City traffic, HORNS and SIRENS fill the air.

MUSIC UP: - "Stayin Alive" by The BeeGees.

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A pair of crusty booths seen walking on a busy city sidewalk. Rico Russo (23), wiry frame, Italian and Puerto Rican, is city educated with a big heart. He wears a white ginny tee, open blue work shirt, Yankee cap with headphones, and holding all his gear an small ladder. He struts down the street, losing tools, sipping a soda, checking out women while side stepping dog excrement.

MUSIC OUT.

Rico struggles with his gear near the entrance to a small midrise building.

EXT. ALARMAS SECURITY STOREFRONT - DAY

Boom boxes blare loud MUSIC.

A distant verbal argument becomes dominant.

Two PUNKS watch an ELDERLY BLACK LADY (late 60s) as she walks along the sidewalk. The punks strike. She pulls her purse back and swings it with all her might. She connects with the head of one of the punks.

ELDERLY LADY
You assholes don't scare me!

The door of Alarmas Security opens as the owner, FRANK RUSSO (50s) steps out.

Frank wears SUNGLASSES, a checkered blazer and white shoes. He's your stereotypical low-level Italian con man.

RICO (V.O.)
This is my dad, Frank Russo. A Sicilian narcissist from the upper East side. I admit it, he grew up in a rough neighborhood, in a tough time. I heard all the stories.
(MORE)

RICO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 How poor he and his family were,
 the shitty jobs he worked... The
 stolen merchandise he and his
 brothers had to move for his wise
 guys friends. The good news is
 Crime is up and business is
 booming.

Frank watches the scene in front of him but does not react.
 He turns to check his reflection in the darkened glass of his
 store window, patting down his hair.

The Punks knock the Elderly Lady to the ground, rip her
 JEWELRY from her neck, snatch her purse and run.

The woman gets up on her feet, glares at Frank.

ELDERLY LADY
 Didn't you see me in trouble?

Frank puts a fresh stick of gum in his mouth.

ELDERLY LADY (CONT'D)
 They could have killed me!

Frank takes a few calculated strides closer.

FRANK
 Sounds like you could use some
 protection.

ELDERLY LADY
 PROTECTION! What I need is a gun to
 cap their ass!

Frank nods towards the window. The woman reads the sign.

POV SHOT:

ALARMAS SECURITY SIGN.

ELDERLY LADY
 I'm an old woman on welfare, I
 can't afford anything expensive.

Frank fake pouts, then lowers his sunglasses until his eyes
 peek over the rims.

FRANK
 (condescending)
 I'm sure we can come to an
 agreement. Ma'am, why don't you
 come inside for a minute and speak
 to our security expert.

Frank guides the woman into the shop as she brushes off herself.

INT. ALARMS SECURITY - DAY

The two walk in to the shabby, semi crowded store to phones ringing. In the shop are some regular faces.

DAISY (20s) a busty, multi-talented employee, counts SCREWS and ALARM SWITCHES on a desk.

CARMINE (60s) Frank's older, mob-reject brother with greasy thin hair. He's wearing a moblike shirt holding unlit cigar in his mouth.

He stares at Daisy with the NY POST in hand. Headline reads 'GUN VIOLENCE ON THE RISE'.

MECHANICS play cards and alarm bells ring.

FRANK
(sarcastic)
Ma'am, you can speak about getting a cheap alarm system to our security expert, Mr. Carmine who is hiding behind the newspaper.

Frank glares at Daisy as he grabs the RINGING phone. Daisy stares back, chomping on a piece of gum, clueless. Franks listens, then:

FRANK (CONT'D)
Now what? What! Where's the freggin van? Listen to me, you've been gone long enough. Get the job done and get your ass back here!

He SLAMS the receiver down hard.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch!

The Elderly Lady looks at him with concern from across the room.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Don't worry, we have flexible financing and the smartest and best mechanics in the Bronx.

RICO (V.O.)
Bullshit! Our alarm systems suck.
(beat)
A little about me.
(MORE)

RICO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I got a D in English, failed
 Algebra, and most of my classes was
 in a small trailer. Here's my
 story...

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A MAN walks out of the apartment building.

RICO
 Hey! Hold the door!

Two KIDS race by Rico and slip in just before the door shuts
 behind them.

RICO (CONT'D)
 For crying out loud, thanks!

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - DAY

Rico finally shuffles towards the elevator door. He stretches
 a finger through the ladder's rung to hit the elevator
 button.

The boy runs up to Rico and watches him wait. He giggles to
 himself.

RICO
 YO! What's so funny?

BOY
 It's broken.

The boy runs up the stairs. Rico groans again, aggravated.

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWELL - DAY

The walls of the stairwell are covered either with WATER
 STAINS or 80s style GRAFFITI. LOUD MUSIC can be heard from
 the floor above. Rico reaches the second landing.

RICO
 (muttering to himself)
 'Easy installation' my ass.

He kicks GARBAGE as he trudges up more stairs and reaches the
 source of the now blaring music - an opened apartment door
 near the landing. Two rough looking STONERS are sitting in
 his way on the next flight of stairs.

RICO (CONT'D)
 Move!

The stoners leer at him then move aside.

Finally, he makes it to the fourth-floor landing and exhales.

INT. FOURTH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Rico looks at the apartment number on the door in front of him.

POV SHOT:

APARTMENT NUMBER 4A.

Rico looks down the endless hallway.

RICO
Sweet Jesus, kill me now.

INT. APARTMENT 4J DOORWAY - DAY

Rico KNOCKS on the door. It swings open and a rode hard Hispanic woman, MRS. VEGA (late 20s) stands with a CIGARETTE dangling from her mouth.

She holds a TODDLER by the arm. She speaks with a strong Hispanic accent.

RICO
I'm Rico from Alarmas Security. I'm
scheduled to--

The toddler tries to make an escape. Mrs. Vega yanks him back.

MRS. VEGA
Get back in the fuckin' house!

The toddler CRIES and runs into the apartment.

MRS. VEGA (CONT'D)
You're late.

Rico follows her inside.

INT. APARTMENT 4J LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Vega ashes her cigarette on the floor. She points Rico towards the windows near the fire escape.

RICO
Anything I need to know? Damage and
whatnot?

MRS. VEGA
Just get the job done.

Mrs. Vega grabs the toddler and heads into a bedroom,
SLAMMING the door shut.

TWO BOYS run around, chasing and hitting each other.

RICO
Seguro.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - AFTERNOON

Carmine sits reading the paper.

GENO, late teens, dark hair, Frank's younger son and spitting
image, wears a bandana around his head and always has a gold
chain around his neck.

Geno sits behind the counter tinkering with an ALARM PANEL as
staticky police reports come through a police scanner.

GENO
Ay, Uncle Carmine. Whaddya think of
me asking Daisy out this weekend?

Carmine doesn't look up from his paper.

CARMINE
She's too old and expensive for
you, kid.

GENO
I'm mature! I have money.

CARMINE
Please. She needs a real man; I'd
have a better shot than you. Shit,
when I was your age, I was knee
deep in broads.

GENO
You?

Carmine looks up and smiles.

GarCom International commercial appears on TV set showing
their globe reach and wealth.

Frank enters from his office.

FRANK
Is this what you two chooches are
going to do all friggin day?
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

Talk about broads and loaf around on company time? Now, throw out those dead rats in the back room, put a quarter in my meter, and get me a slice.

Geno gets up and leaves.

CARMINE

It says here that Bernard Goetz bought his .38-caliber revolver in Florida.

(beat)

You realize that guy was a hero.

Frank picks up Carmine's note and begins reading.

FRANK

Good, this woman lives on Fordham road.

(beat)

You idiot! You only wrote down six numbers for her phone number. That was a potential sale.

Carmine shrugs and goes back to his paper.

Frank looks at his watch. Then he picks up a handful of service slips and shakes them towards Carmine.

FRANK (CONT'D)

We need to call Artie the Snake and Mitch to do some of these service calls.

CARMINE

Louie Lump says place money on Fresh Frankie to show on the third race at Belmont. He's a 7 to 1.

FRANK

Today! I need this shit done today, fathead.

Carmine huffs and reluctantly takes one slip from Frank.

INT. APARTMENT 4J LIVING ROOM -DAY

Rico is up on his ladder connecting wires and sensors. He smiles getting a glimpse of Yankee stadium from the window and briefly dreams. The two boys start running around the ladder, grabbing onto the rungs shaking the ladder.

RICO

YO! Watch the friggin ladder!

The boys run away.

Rico hops down from the ladder, hitting the window causing cockroaches fall out and scurrying everywhere.

RICO (CONT'D)
(Shouting)
 Shit! Mrs. Vega! Hey, come here!
 tenemos un problema.

The two boys run back in and start stomping on the scattering cockroaches. Mrs. Vega enters.

MRS. VEGA
 Que paso?

Rico points to the cockroaches, then the window frame.

MRS. VEGA (CONT'D)
 So?

RICO
 So! I can't finish wiring this window until someone fixes the frame and gets rid of these.

He gestures to the cockroaches.

MRS. VEGA
 Okay. Are you done then?

Rico nods. He glances out the window and sees some street PUNKS messing around his car. He sticks his head out the window.

RICO
 YO! Get the fuck away from my car!

Rico packs up his gear quickly.

MRS. VEGA
 Here is the money. Your tip is in there too.

Mrs. Vega holds out an ENVELOPE. Rico grabs it quickly, puts it in his mouth, then rushes passed her to the door with all of his things.

RICO
 (to Mrs. Vega)
 Thanks.

EXT. APARTMENT STOOP - DAY

Rico rushes with his gear down the front steps. A few bicycles are leaning up against Rico's car. The punk kids grab their bikes and take off up the street.

RICO
What the fuck is wrong with you!
Ay!

RICO (CONT'D)
(yelling after them)
Freggin' kids! I should kick your
asses! All of ya!

On the side of the car, there's deep scratches.

RICO (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch.

Rico slams his trunk shut after loading all his equipment. Rico's pager goes off.

RICO (CONT'D)
What now?!

Rico checks the pager. It's a message from his (ex) girlfriend. He rolls his eyes and flies into a rage.

RICO (CONT'D)
Find another boyfriend you evil
bitch! Leave me alone!

Bystanders stare at him in his freak out.

INT. RICO'S CAR - DAY

He plops himself into his car.

He throws the envelope from Mrs. Vega in the passenger's seat and a JOINT flies out, landing on top of a COMMUNITY COLLEGE FLIER.

He looks to and from the joint and the flier.

Music plays - "Hard times" by Run DMC plays.

EXT. RICO'S CAR - DAY

Rico drives off through the streets of The Bronx.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - DAY

PAPER PLATES and NAPKINS are scattered across the counter. Carmine sits scanning his newspaper while Geno eats a slice of pizza straight from the box.

Frank paces in front of the window, wiping his hands with a napkin and occasionally checking outside as a police scanner is heard.

FRANK

Where the hell is Rico? He shoulda been back by now.

CARMINE

Maybe there was a problem with the install?

GENO

(with a mouthful of pizza)
There's always a problem with him. Are you sure you picked up the right kid at the hospital?

FRANK

(to Geno)
Will you quit eating like a gavone, you got schmutz all over your face.
(beat)
Shush!

FRANK (CONT'D)

Did you hear that, a robbery at 1249 Walton Ave. Get your ass ready for your service call, and call Irish to check out that building. That building sounds hot.

Geno grabs a stained napkin then quickly leaves.

CARMINE

Speaking of Rico, there he is.

Frank looks out the window and they all watch as Rico tries to find a parking spot.

FRANK

Shit! He can't double park there; they give tickets there all Goddamn day! When is he going to freggin' learn?

INT. RICO'S CAR - DAY

After shoddily double parking his car, Rico sits for a moment, reflecting on his life choices.

He picks up the educational flier in his front seat.

EXT. ALARMAS SECURITY - DAY

Frank steps outside of the store to light a CIGARETTE.

INT. RICO'S CAR - DAY

Rico notices Frank standing outside and his demeanor changes. He folds up the flier and puts it in his pocket, along with the envelope from Mrs. Vega.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ALARMAS SECURITY - DAY

Rico exits his car and heads towards Alarmas. On his way, he passes two women:

VANESSA, a tall, beautiful Puerto Rican woman in her 20s. She's kindhearted but blunt. She, like Rico, yearns for something more.

FRAN, a smaller, stocky Black woman also in her 20s. She's fiery and a little rough around the edges.

Rico slows and gawks at the women as they pass. He catches up to them and matches their pace, walking backwards while facing them as he strikes up a conversation.

RICO

Hey, excuse me, name's Rico. I work for that alarm company right over there. I'm sure two beautiful women like you could use quality security and I can get you a great deal.

Vanessa and Fran exchange a "Can you believe this guy?" look.

Rico leans in closer to Vanessa.

RICO (CONT'D)

And you know what, I'll *personally* do your in home-hook up, on the house.

Vanessa scoffs.

VANESSA

Save your breath, hot shot. We're not interested in your cheap-ass alarms--

FRAN

--Or whatever else you're offering.

Fran looks Rico up and down. The women CHUCKLE and keep walking. Vanessa peeks back at a dejected Rico.

Rico stops and mournfully watches the women walk away.

RICO

(calling after them)

If you ever need protection, you know where to find me!

His smile vanishes as he sees his reflection on a store window.

Frank saunters up behind Rico. He stands over his shoulder watching the two women walk away, then looks at his son with disappointment.

FRANK

You better move your car before you get a ticket, Romeo. And hurry up, we got work to do.

Frank turns around and starts walking back to Alarmas. Rico sighs and heads to his car.

He finds a TICKET stuck on his windshield.

RICO

Fuck!

Frank is in the distance and calls out to Rico.

FRANK

I told you not to park there, numbnuts.

Rico angrily rips the ticket off his windshield along with the wiper blade.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Let's go, I got a lead. You're driving.

Franks tosses a set of keys at Rico.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

Rico drives his father's unmarked car down a busy street.

FRANK

What took you so long? It was a simple job.

RICO

Simple my ass. Rotten windows, roaches everywhere. Please, the next time, send someone else.

Frank CHUCKLES while reading the store business numbers and watching the city action.

PUNKS eye the unmarked car and continue with a drug deal.

RICO (CONT'D)

Jesus, right in broad daylight. I hope driving this car gives us protection.

FRANK

I hope I'm right too. Pull behind that Con Ed truck.

Rico parks the car.

FRANK (CONT'D)

See that building there? We lived on the third floor, 3F. You were about five. Look around.

Rico looks at the world around him.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Two PROSTITUTES hang out on the corner smoking cigarettes. A gang of TEENS are roughhousing in the middle of the street. SIRENS blare from a few blocks away.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - DAY

FRANK

You know this business will be yours one day.

RICO

Please don't threaten me.

FRANK

Ay, I busted my balls providing for you and our family.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
 I did alright for myself. You
 should be grateful that I'm willing
 to hand it over to you so you don't
 have to go through what I did.

Frank gets out of the car, leaving Rico sitting alone.

INT. TITO'S BODEGA STORE - DAY

A bell attached to the door rings as Rico and Frank enter.
 There's a messy CANDY RACK and OLD MAGAZINES on display.

Frank walks up to the store's cluttered counter. We see Rico
 in the background over Frank's shoulder.

FRANK
 Alarmas!

CHE (30s) strides out from a makeshift curtain behind the
 counter, chest puffed, aiming to make an entrance. He has a
 thin mustache and wears a black beret.

Che opens his coat just a little to reveal a HANDGUN in a
 holster at his waist.

Rico cranes his head passed Frank's shoulder. They both clock
 the gun.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (sarcastic)
 Nice place you got here.

Che speaks with a heavy accent.

CHE
 You hooked up my friend Chino last
 month with cameras and sensors.
 That's what I want, cameras and
 shit.

Frank fakes some notes on a clipboard.

RICO
 (nodding towards the gun)
 Nice piece, nine-millimeter?

Che just glares at Rico without answering.

FRANK
 Rico, why don't you wait for me by
 the car.

RICO
 Why?

Frank looks over his shoulder hard at Rico. Rico leaves, Frank smiles at Che.

CHE
I pay cash.

FRANK
Cash only.

EXT. TITO'S BODEGA STORE - DAY

Rico leans against the car reading the college flier.

INSERT: FLIER READS- CAREER COUNSELING AT BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE CALL TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT.

Rico looks up and spots a payphone on the corner. He checks the window of the store to see his father still dealing with the store owner.

EXT. PAYPHONE - DAY

Rico dials the number on the brochure and makes the call.

RICO
Hi, my name is Rico. I've been sending out resumes but no one is biting. I, uh, wanna meet a career counselor.
(he listens, then:)
No, I'm not a student. Yeah, tomorrow afternoon, I can do that.

Rico waves off a pan handler, pulls a pen out of his pocket and scribbles a note on the flier. He sees Frank hurrying out of the shop.

RICO (CONT'D)
I gotta go, thanks.

Rico quickly hangs up the phone and rushes over to the car.

FRANK
What were you doing?

RICO
Nothing. I got a bowling match against Rudy Rev on Saturday.

Frank eyes Rico, then the payphone.

FRANK
You need to quit that goddamn sport
and focus more on making money.
Let's go, we got work to do.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - DAY

Rico slips the flier into the sun visor.

RICO
Did you see that guy's pocket nine?

FRANK
Of course. It was an ASP nine. I
don't know how the hell he got it.
They're hard to get.

EXT. FRANK'S CAR - DAY

Rico pulls down the shifter, then chirps the car's tires as
he drives away.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - DAY

Frank looks out the window to see YOUNG MEN playing a pick-up
game of basketball.

FRANK
Nobody fuckin' works anymore. When
I was twenty-two, I was already
married, working, and had you.

A silence. Rico treads lightly with his words.

RICO
Y'know, Dad, I was reading that
computers are going to
revolutionize the security
business. Maybe we should think
about getting one.

FRANK
Here we go again about computers.
For what?

RICO
I heard computers are powerful
machines, they can save
information. Didn't you see the
movie Terminator?

FRANK

No, I didn't, and besides what happens when the government decides to make a surprise visit? All I need is friggin' records. And no one knows how to work those things anyway.

RICO

I can learn. Bergen Community college offers courses, cheap too.

Frank scoffs.

FRANK

Yeah, right, learn. Remember that time I bought you that Bowmar Brain? Took you weeks to turn the damn thing on.

RICO

I figured it out!

At a stop sign, a PROSTITUTE walks up to Rico's window, opening her coat, revealing her naked body to Rico.

PROSTITUTE

Lookin' for some lovin'?

RICO

No thanks. You know, you should think about shaving.

She hastily covers up and walks away.

Rico looks at his father.

RICO (CONT'D)

Seriously, how can anyone be happy surrounded by this? I wanna get away from all this, this insanity.

Rico gestures to the city around him. Frank, not listening, turns the radio volume LOUDER as a subway passes.

RADIO V.O.

The last few months has seen an increase in guns and gun violence--

FRANK

--Did you hear that? There's an increase in gun trafficking. Shit, the city better start crackin' down or its gonna be difficult to make an honest living.

EXT. CARDIOLOGY OFFICE - DAY

Establishing shot.

INT. CARDIOLOGY OFFICE - DAY

Lots of movement from a mix of office STAFF and MEDICAL ASSSISTANTS going about their daily business.

Vanessa sits behind the counter, across from her sits MRS. WEISS, (80s), a sweet old lady in her wheelchair holding her dated pocketbook.

Her grandson TED (40s), Grateful dead shirt, pale, malnourished burnout, stands behind her fidgeting impatiently.

VANESSA

You're all set Mrs. Weiss. Medicare will cover today's visit.

MRS. WEISS

Oh, thank you, sweetie.

Vanessa hands Mrs. Weiss her insurance card. Mrs. Weiss takes it, then holds out a few dollars in cash to Vanessa.

MRS. WEISS (CONT'D)

This is for you. I forgot to bring you cookies today.

VANESSA

Oh, I couldn't do that, Mrs. Weiss, but thank you. Save your money, buy yourself a nice hat.

MRS. WEISS

Yes, my cat is fine. I was a nurse many years ago you know.

Vanessa raises an eyebrow. Ted huffs.

TED

Granny, can we go? Pipes is coming over the house to jam.

MRS. WEISS

Yes, yes.
(to Vanessa)
Bye now.

Vanessa waves. Ted wheels Mrs. Weiss away like Richard Petty.

FRAN

Look at that maniac pushing her!
What a jerk.

VANESSA

I know. She's so sweet, she always
brings me cookies. Tells me I'm too
skinny.

FRAN

You are skinny, girl, but not where
it counts! Shit, if I had your ass-

VANESSA

Fran!

FRAN

I'm just sayin'! God didn't give
you that thing for it to go to
waste sitting in that rickety-ass
stool all day.

VANESSA

You know, you're right. We deserve
better chairs.

FRAN

No! I meant we should go out! Get
that thang on the dance floor, you
feel me?

Fran hums a tune and starts moving and grooving. She gets
closer and closer to Vanessa. Vanessa smiles and starts
grooving along.

VANESSA

Yeah, I'm feeling you, Mamacita!
Vamos á Club Cafe, mañana por la
noche.

Enter DR. FERRARI, a smug, condescending, middle aged silver
fox with expensive taste. He strides up behind the women
enjoying themselves.

DR. FERRARI

I see you two are having a good
time.

Vanessa and Fran stop and turn around quickly, embarrassed.

VANESSA

Dr. Ferrari, we were just--

DR. FERRARI

--No, no please. Who am I to
interrupt your dance party?

(MORE)

DR. FERRARI (CONT'D)
I'm just a cardiologist trying to
do my trivial job with the help of
my competent employees.

Dr. Ferrari looks at Fran. He directs his questions to her.

DR. FERRARI (CONT'D)
Did we get the new Gitect twelve
lead cable from PaceTech?

FRAN
No, we didn--

DR. FERRARI
--Then remind them. Did Dr. Reiner
call?

VANESSA
No.

DR. FERRARI
I didn't ask you.

Fran is about to explode. Vanessa jumps in before she can get
a word out.

VANESSA
We'll take care of it, doctor.

DR. FERRARI
Good.

Fran gets up with a few DOCUMENTS in hand, giving Dr. Ferrari
a dirty look and giving him the finger behind his back before
exiting.

Vanessa gets up and goes to the copier.

Dr. Ferrari stands close behind her and whispers in her ear.

DR. FERRARI (CONT'D)
I have something for you.

Vanessa shrugs her shoulder to her ear and moves away from
him.

VANESSA
I'm sure you do.

DR. FERRARI
What's the matter?

She turns to face him. He adjusts the name plate on her
chest. She swats at his hand.

VANESSA

Cut it out! I'm in no mood.

Dr. Ferrari's face hardens. A few other employees walk by. He brushes off his lab coat.

DR. FERRARI

(irritated)

Then I better not find you slacking off again, Miss Rios. This is a place of business, not some strip club. Get it together.

He walks away. Vanessa looks over at a few employees who witnessed the interaction. They laugh amongst themselves about it.

Vanessa closes her eyes and sighs, embarrassed and enraged.

INT. RICO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rico enters a two-family house through the basement door. It's quiet and the lights are mostly out. Rico hears a voice coming from outside before he shuts the door.

VOICE (O.S.)

Rico! Tell your dad I'll have the rent money by Monday!

Rico puts down his box of things next to some bowling pins. He notices voicemail light on his message machine is blinking.

Rico hits the play button on the machine. He goes through a collection of voicemails-

JOE VA (V.O.)

Ricon-ay! I got those Gucci bags you needed. Come pick 'em up Friday. You owe me--

Skip.

REGINA (V.O.)

I miss you. When are you going to call me ba--

Skip.

PAULIE (V.O.)

Ay, stunad, we going out this weekend or what? When's the last time you got lai--

Skip.

GARCOM (V.O.)
 Hello, this message is for Rico
 Russo. I'm with GarCom
 International. We have received
 your resume, and we'd like to set
 up an interview.

Rico leans towards the machine, confused but intrigued.

GARCOM (V.O.)
 If you're interested, please give
 us a call back at 856-555-1328.
 Thank you, and we hope to hear from
 you soon.

BEEP.

Rico stands deep in thought, debating his next move.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - DAY

Carmine sits in his usual spot reading the NY Post.

A young MECHANIC flirts with Daisy.

Frank is in the middle of a phone conversation.

A GAY COUPLE enter the store. Both men are Hispanic and thin.
 HECTOR carries a bright pink pocketbook that matches his
 outfit. ANGEL has a blonde afro and bright athletic wear.

They approach Carmine, looking to make an alarm payment.

HECTOR
 Excuse me, Señor, we're here to
 pay.

Carmine folds down the corner of his paper to study the men.

CARMINE
 Hey, Frank! Customer.

Frank looks up.

CARMINE (CONT'D)
 These, uh...customers are here to
 make a payment.

FRANK
*(to the person on the
 phone)*
 Hang on.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (to Carmine)
 Can't you see I'm busy, moron.
 Handle it.

Carmine shrinks behind his paper. The headline reads GAY
 COUPLE SLAIN. Hector and Angel look at each other.

The door to the shop opens, Rico enters.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Thank God, Rico, handle these
 customers. Your uncle is a
 degenerate.

RICO
 Dad, I can't, I gotta go--

FRANK
 --It won't take long.

Frank waves the men over to Rico.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (back to his phone call)
 Sorry, Ralphie, my good-for-nothing
 brother is slowly ruining my
 friggin' business. Where were we?

Rico places down his tools, tosses an envelop on a desk, then
 shows the men to a desk with two beach chairs. The men avoid
 a MECHANIC carrying in a parking meter and sit on the chairs.

Frank is across the store in the background behind Rico's
 shoulder.

RICO
 (to the men)
 Give me your account number?

Hector's high voice barely recollects their account number
 and writes it down on a piece of paper.

FRANK
 (to Carmine)
 Did we get anything from Bronx
 Dentistry?

CARMINE
 Bronx Dentistry?

Frank's eyes fill with rage.

FRANK

If we don't get money from those rat bastards, so help me God, I'm yanking out that alarm system and shoving it up their--

RICO

(to the customers)

--Ah, your account is three months past due.

NURSE ANGEL

Yes, you see, the hospital cut down my hours, and Hector lost his job at the salon. He has been looking every day but nobody is hiring.

RICO

I'm sorry. Look, we understand your situation--

Frank, overhearing Rico's conversation, shouts from across the room.

FRANK

No we don't!

Frank storms over to the desk.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You're paying your Goddamn bill.

NURSE ANGEL

We are paying?

Hector gestures to the money he handed Rico.

FRANK

What the hell is that? That's friggin' peanuts.

NURSE ANGEL

We can't afford the full payment right now.

FRANK

Then you won't be getting our full services. Rico, pull their alarm system.

NURSE ANGEL

No, please! Our building is very unsafe. We need protection.

FRANK
 You need protection? I'll give you
 protection.

Frank opens his jacket and reveals a pistol in a holster on his hip. Before he even touches it, the men grab each other's arms, terrified.

NURSE ANGEL
 Don't shoot us!

FRANK
 I'm not gonna shoot you, doll. All
 you gotta do is give us the money
 you owe, and we won't pull out the
 system and I won't shoot.

NURSE ANGEL
 (to Hector)
 Pay him!

Hector frantically searches his pocketbook. It starts to buzz.

FRANK
 What the hell is that?

NURSE ANGEL
 Turn it off!

Hector pulls out a large buzzing sex toy and wiggles out of control.

Frank and Rico stare, bewildered.

Hector finally turns off the toy. He then finds a crisp \$100 bill in his bag and hands it to Frank. The two men are relieved. Frank and Rico are flustered.

NURSE ANGEL (CONT'D)
 That covers it, yes?

Rico clears his throat.

RICO
 Uh, yep, yeah that covers it.

The two men SIGH in relief. They get up and exit the store.

Rico gets up from the desk and starts heading towards the door.

FRANK
 Ay, where do you think you're
 going?

Carminc peaks out from behind his paper.

RICO
I got somewhere to be.

FRANK
If you think I'm letting you leave
after that fiasco, you're out of
your damn mind.

Rico turns around.

RICO
What?

FRANK
I don't run this business on this
"We understand, we're sorry"
bullshit. When the hell did you
start going soft?

RICO
I'm not going so--

FRANK
--Because you sure as hell didn't
learn it from me.

CARMINE
Oh boy.

Carminc hides behind his newspaper. Rico looks at Carminc,
then back to Frank.

RICO
Look, I was just trying to make
them feel like we actually give a
damn about their safety.

FRANK
We're a business! If we listened to
everyone's Goddamn sob stories, I'd
be broke! I thought you knew that.
Don't ever lose my money again.

Frank starts walking away.

RICO
It's all about you, right?

Frank stops in his tracks. He looks over his shoulder back at
Rico.

RICO (CONT'D)
Everything's always about you, your
business, your money.
(MORE)

RICO (CONT'D)

You really couldn't give two shits
about anyone else.

Frank turns around to face Rico.

FRANK

When are you going to get it
through your thick skull that this
money, my money, is what saved you,
and your brother, and your mother
from the streets.

RICO

Oh, I know, believe me. Everyone on
the fuckin block knows, you won't
let me forget that, will you? But
God forbid I try to get a real
education, a real job and make my
own money.

Rico pulls out a check from a client and slams it onto the
counter.

RICO (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

Here, from Mr. Ortega. I don't
wanna bleed you dry.

Rico turns to head out the door again.

FRANK

You have no idea how fucking good
you have it here.

RICO

You think this is good?! We're in
the slums conning people out of
their hard-earned money! Customers
tip me with weed, and getting held
at gunpoint is Goddamn occupational
hazard at this point! I can't keep
living like this!

FRANK

You got a fuckin problem with
everything; you have no idea how
much worse it could be! I saved you
from the life I had, the life that
people come in here begging for
protection from!

RICO

You didn't save me from shit,
you're throwing me right back in
it!

FRANK
You wanna get outta here so badly?

Frank nods towards the door.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Go ahead.

Rico hesitates. Frank strides closer to Rico.

FRANK (CONT'D)
See? It's not the job, or me, or this, that, the other thing that's the problem here. You don't have the balls to go.

After an intense stare down between the two, Rico storms out of Alarmas. Frank watches him go with his hands on his hips.

Carmine folds his paper and sits up.

CARMINE
Shit.

FRANK
He'll be back.

Frank turns his back on the door and looks at the check from Mr. Ortega. He crumbles up and throws the check at Carmine.

FRANK (CONT'D)
He knows we don't take checks and stop encouraging him.

EXT. RICO'S CAR - DAY

Rico walks across the street to his car. He rips a ticket out from the windshield causing the wiper blade to fly off.

INT. RICO'S CAR - DAY

Rico gets in the car, SLAMS the door shut. He looks at the time, then starts angrily POUNDING on his steering wheel. Soon, he maintains his composure then breaks a grin.

RICO V.O.
Hi, my name is Russo. Rico Russo.

INSERT: Rico's fantasy - James Bond lighting up a cigarette saying, "Russo, Rico Russo."

END FANTASY.

EXT. PAYPHONE - DAY

RICO
 Yeah, I got a call yesterday about
 an interview
 (beat)
 Monday?...Monday morning is
 perfect. Thanks.

Rico hangs up the phone's receiver. He looks across the street at Alarmas, sees his reflection in the window glass.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - DAY

Frank stares out the window at the street. He sees Rico looking in, then watches him drive away.

INT. RIOS HOME - NIGHT

MR. RIOS (late 50s), sits in the living room watching TV while MRS. RIOS (early 50s) mops the floor of a two family home in a rough part of the city.

Vanessa hurries in the front door, kicking off her shoes.

She kisses her mom on the cheek.

VANESSA
 Hola, Mommí.

Vanessa takes down her hair as she rushes into her bedroom.

MRS. RIOS
 Mija, where are you going so
 quickly?

VANESSA
 I'll be out with friends, Mami.

Vanessa stops in the doorway.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
 Do you need my help with anything
 before I go?

MRS. RIOS
 No, no, go have fun. Dios te
 bendiga (*God bless you.*)

Strange noises come from behind a closed, bedroom door. Mrs. Rios rushes into the room. Vanessa watches her exit, then immediately closes her bedroom door.

INT. VANESSA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vanessa starts pulling out clothes and accessories and hurriedly placing them on her bed.

She goes to her desk and realizes something is off. She opens an old jewelry box and sifts around, then pulls out a small wad of cash. It's too light. She calls out to Mrs. Rios.

VANESSA

Mom?

No response.

INT. RIOS KITCHEN - NIGHT

VANESSA

Mom? Did Jimmy come in my room today?

The kitchen phone starts to RING. She rushes over to answer it.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Hello?...Oh, hi Sammy...Yeah, I'm getting ready now...Oh?...Oh no, I see... No problem...Maybe next week...I was feeling tired anyway...Okay, I hope he feels better, bye.

Vanessa hangs up the phone in thought. She goes back into her room and softly sits on the foot of her bed. Suddenly, she jumps up.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Fuck this, I'm going out.

Vanessa picks up the phone and dials.

EXT. PAULIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rico's car pulls into the narrow driveway of his cousin PAULIE, 20s, scrawny, tall. A mound of building debris sits in the driveway.

Rico blows the HORN twice. Moments later, Paulie jumps in the front seat with two beers.

PAULIE

Rico! What's happenin'

RICO
What's with all the crap in your driveway?

PAULIE
Basements getting refinished. The builder left all that shit there.

RICO
I hope you didn't pay this guy yet.

Rico pushes the car's drooping headliner up.

PAULIE
I think we did. Why?

RICO
Rule number one, never pay up front for any service. My Mussolini of a deranged father taught me that.

INT. RICO'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

The engine finally turns over and the two drive away, narrowly missing a passing jogger.

Rico hands Paulie a joint.

RICO
Tip from a customer.

PAULIE
Nice! Benefits of working in the Bronx. You have it made.
(beat)
Why are we going this way? I thought we were going to Roxie's.

RICO
I'm tired of strip clubs.

PAULIE
Well, I'm not! I like boobs.

RICO
I figure we go to a popular club and act like humans for a change. Find some nice, respectable girls, maybe even have a real conversation.

PAULIE
Yeah, right. Your dreamin'.

RICO
They got boobs there, too.

PAULIE
Why didn't you start with that?

Rico rolls his eyes.

Paulie lights the joint and takes a puff, then offers it to Rico.

INT. RIOS HOME - NIGHT

Vanessa emerges from her bedroom dressed in a short, tight, dark blue dress, black nylons, and an oversized black leather jacket. Her hair is down and big, Fran Drescher style. She wears red lipstick and dangly jewelry.

Vanessa grabs her purse from a kitchen chair. Then, she walks into the living room and gives her dad a kiss on the head.

VANESSA
Buenas noches, Papi.

Vanessa sees her mother tending to her ailing Grandmother through a partially open bedroom door. Vanessa exits through the front door.

INT. CLUB CAFE - NIGHT

Loud bass MUSIC, neon LIGHTS, and TRENDY YOUTHS fill the club. There's lots of MOVEMENT, from the dance floor to people chatting by the bar.

Rico and Paulie stand at the bar, drinks in hand. Rico wears a gray sports jacket with the sleeves pulled up over a button up shirt with skinny tie and jeans. Paulie's in a ripped muscle tee, loose dress shirt, and black jeans.

Two SHAPELY WOMEN are moving to the music near them. Rico and Paulie eye them up. Rico dusts himself off and steps a bit closer to them. He talks loudly over the pounding music.

RICO
Hi, my name is Rico. I couldn't help but notice you, that's a beautiful--

The two girls leave before Rico finishes his sentence.

Rico awkwardly steps back to his spot.

RICO (CONT'D)
Nice talkin' with you.

PAULIE
Real smooth. If we were at Roxie's
right now--

Rico sips his drink, disgruntled. Paulie pats Rico on the
shoulder.

PAULIE (CONT'D)
I'm going to check out the scores.
(like Schwarzenegger)
I'll be back.

Paulie leaves Rico alone at the bar. Rico gazes out into the
sea of dancing bodies searching for someone, anyone, that
will catch his eye.

Finally, he sets his sights on a tall, attractive brunette
dancing with her shorter friend.

RICO'S POV:

Vanessa and Fran groove to the music. A TALL BLOND MAN
scotches passed them, winking at Fran as he passes by.

FRAN
Oof, did you see that! I'd like to
take him home with me.

VANESSA
Go talk to him!

FRAN
Not yet. I'm saving him for later.
Right now, we dance.

Fran strikes a dramatic pose. Vanessa CHUCKLES.

A familiar voice is heard from behind the two women.

RICO
Hi, there. You come here often?

Vanessa turns around revealing Rico.

FRAN
(to Vanessa)
Oh, no, it's him.

RICO
What?

A lights goes off both in Rico's and Vanessa's head.

VANESSA
Oh, God.

RICO
I remember you!

Rico reflects on not his finest moment.

RICO (CONT'D)
Oh, God. You remember me.

VANESSA
Are you following me or something?

RICO
Wha-- no, I'm--

FRAN
--Don't you work with security cameras? He could have been watching you all along.

VANESSA
Orwell might have been onto something.

Vanessa and Fran give each other a knowing look.

RICO
Orwell who? I'm not following you, I happen to be here with my cousin.

VANESSA
(sarcastically)
Fate has brought us together again.

RICO
Sure.

VANESSA
(aside to Fran)
Este idiota no sabe lo que es en para. *This idiot doesn't know what he's in for.*

RICO
So, you think I'm an idiot because I find you attractive?

VANESSA
Oh! You understand Spanish?

RICO
Yeah, the monkey knows more than one language, who woulda thought.

Fran LAUGHS. Vanessa smiles - intrigued and impressed.

MUSIC: "Tell it to my Heart" by Taylor Dayne

Paulie approaches Rico but before he can even open his mouth, Fran grabs his hand and yanks him away into the crowd. Vanessa and Rico watch them go off.

VANESSA

You know, you don't look like a traditional Italian chauvinist. Where all that gold jewelry.

RICO

Not me, I'm simple. A cheap chain and a bowling ring. That's enough for me.

Vanessa grooves to the music again. Rico nods his head towards the dance floor.

VANESSA

OK white boy, show me your moves.

She drags him further into the crowd on the dance floor.

Rico does his best but is enamored with her beauty. Vanessa is horrified by Rico's dancing.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Boy, where the hell is your rhythm?

RICO

I left it in the car with my collection of gold chains.

VANESSA

This is painful to watch. I mean, I'm embarrassed just standing next to you.

RICO

If I buy you a drink, will you stop hurting my feelings?

VANESSA

I won't make any promises.

Vanessa turns to Fran and Paulie and lets loose dancing. Rico leaves for bar.

Scene: Dance Floor - Night

The air is thick with the bass of the music. Bodies sway and grind, a sea of movement.

Vanessa moves with a grace that defies description. Her hair, cascading around her face, her body fluid and powerful.

Across the room, Rico watches, mesmerized. His eyes trace the lines of her body as a slow smile plays on his lips. He raises his glass in a silent toast to her.

Vanessa catches his gaze across the room. Her smile widens, a mischievous glint in her eye.

Rico takes a large gulp of his drink, the music washing over him. He feels a surge of pride, of awe, of pure, unadulterated love.

FADE OUT.

Vanessa returns to Rico at the bar.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
So, you work with alarms?

RICO
No, actually I'm a choreographer
for the Broadway play Cats.

Rico hands her a drink.

RICO (CONT'D)
It's my father's business. But
guess what, I got an interview
lined up with a big company.

VANESSA
What do they do at this company?

RICO
I don't really know. To be honest,
I don't even remember sending my
resume.

Rico picks up his drink and takes a sip.

VANESSA
Dios mio, you don't even know what
it's for?

RICO
I can handle it. I've talked my way
through plenty of tough situations.

VANESSA
(sarcastic)
Sure, with your sharp wit and
charm.

Vanessa sips from her straw and looks out to the dance floor.

RICO
I had to take it, alright. It's my
only shot to get outta there.

Vanessa looks back to Rico, studying him.

VANESSA
Is it that bad?

RICO
Only on days that end in 'day'.

VANESSA
Well, what's been holding you back?

Rico looks at her, thinking hard on her question.

RICO
My dad. I wanna get outta there,
but every time I try to leave, I
think, what's he gonna do without
me?

Vanessa looks away in thought, comparing his words to her own
life.

RICO (CONT'D)
And maybe part of me thinks 'what
am I gonna do without him?' He
taught me everything I know,
started all of this for me and our
family. What if I really can't do
anything else? He wants me to take
over the business someday.

VANESSA
What do you want?

They look at each other intensely for a beat.

RICO
I just want more out of life,
y'know? I want to do somethin'
good, be good at somethin'.
Somethin' that I get to choose.

Vanessa smiles softly, then it turns into a smirk.

VANESSA
Hey, as long as you don't choose
dancing, I think you'll be okay.

Rico LAUGHS.

RICO

What about you, huh, what do you do?

VANESSA

I'm a medical technician at a cardiology office.

RICO

Do you like what you do?

VANESSA

Y'know, I ask myself that question a lot. Where I work, the ceiling is always leaking, the stools are always broken, and the people...

She shakes her head in a "don't even get me started" kind of way.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

But, some of these patients that come in, they're terrified, y'know, they have no idea what comes next. No one should have to feel like that. They put their faith in us to help them. A lot of times you go to a doctor, hospital, you wait hours and hours for some comfort, for some answers just to be dismissed in less than five minutes, with more questions and no one else to go to, no hope. So, I show up every day for them. So, they know that somebody is on their side. Somebody cares.

Vanessa looks down, a reflective tone in her voice as she plays with the rings on her fingers.

RICO

Wow, that was beautiful.

Vanessa blushes but tries to hide it with a laugh.

VANESSA

Hey, stop it. Don't look at me like that. Remember, I can stop your heart without touching you.

RICO

I'll keep that in mind.

(beat)

What you do for people, that's pretty incredible. I mean, you, you're--

VANESSA

--You don't know me that well.

RICO

Not yet. But I'm sensing your
Puerto Rican...That's a good thing.

They both take sips of their drinks and squint at each other.

EXT. CLUB CAFE - LATER - NIGHT

PEOPLE come and go through the entrance of the club. Rico, Vanessa, Fran, and Paulie exit together.

Paulie and Fran say their goodbyes, Rico and Vanessa do the same.

RICO

Hey, listen. I had a nigh-- great
night. Can you have my number?

Rico catches a belch.

VANESSA

You're not on any medications, are
you?

Rico LAUGHS. Vanessa pulls a PEN out from her purse, grabs Rico's hand and writes her number. She smiles at Rico, then begins walking with Fran to the street. Rico watches her go.

Vanessa turns around, calls out to Rico.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Rico?

RICO

Yeah?

VANESSA

Call me after your interview.

Rico nods. Vanessa turns and walks out into the night.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - MORNING

Frank stands studying a concentration of push pins on a LARGE WALL MAP of the Bronx. Carmine flirts with Daisy at the counter while she paints her nails. Mechanics tinker with alarm panels and hang out in the shop.

The phone RINGS, no one answers. Frank throws a magazine towards Daisy to get her attention. She looks at him but doesn't budge.

FRANK
Why the hell did I hire you?

Daisy gives a suggestive look and continues her nail polishing. Frank picks up the phone.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Alarmas...Yeah, what do you got?...
Okay...Ah, shit...Alright...Yeah,
yeah...Alright.

He hangs up the phone.

FRANK (CONT'D)
They got rid of all the merchandise
from City Island. And get this, the
gun found at that hit on Jerome Ave
was Russian.

Daisy, now bored, walks away from the desk, leaving Frank and Carmine conversing.

CARMINE
Russian? Jesus Christ. That's the
third imported gun I heard used
this month; times really are
changing.

FRANK
This fuckin' country is changing.

CARMINE
That's all we need, those communist
pricks selling guns over here.

Frank scrutinizes the wall map while taking a sip from his coffee mug. Carmine picks up his newspaper.

FRANK
Do we have anyone at the bike shop
in Queens? We got a shit ton of
installs today.

CARMINE
No, Mitch is in Manhattan and
Roberto is in Queens. Where's Rico?

EXT. GARCOM BUILDING - DAY

Rico gets out of his car. He puts on his sunglasses, checks his gray capezios, then marvels at the building's grandeur.

INT. GARCOM THIRD FLOOR - DAY

A few employees snicker at Rico's appearance as he meanders through GarCom's third floor.

A young, fit, Black RECEPTIONIST greets him.

RECEPTIONIST
Good morning, may I help you?

RICO
Yeah, I have an interview with a guy whose last name begins with a G. Oh, my name is Rico Russo. That's Russo with an R.

RECEPTIONIST
Perhaps you're thinking of Mr. Jamerson.

RICO
Yeah! That's him.

She reviews her planner.

RECEPTIONIST
Your appointment was scheduled for 8:30 this morning.

RICO
I'm a little late, I know.

RECEPTIONIST
Sir, you're fifty minutes late to an interview.

RICO
Do you dance? Because I swear you look like a girl that...

The receptionist looks up through her trendy bifocals without the least bit of interest.

RICO (CONT'D)
Is that your Gucci bag? What if I told you that I can get you that very same model in Taupe for forty bucks.

RECEPTIONIST
I'd say you're dreaming.

RICO
Squeeze me in and I'll make it happen.

The receptionist squints at Rico.

RICO (CONT'D)
Cross my heart.

The receptionist sizes him up before making her decision.

RECEPTIONIST
Right this way, Mr. Russo.

INT. GARCOM HALLWAY - DAY

She takes him down a hall of offices and leads him to a door near the end of the strip.

Rico takes a card out of his wallet just before they stop at the door.

RICO
Call this number, ask for Chino.
Tell him Rico from Alarmas sent
you. He'll take care of you.

The receptionist conspiratorially takes the card as if it's a drug deal, then shoves it in her bra.

A pair of Yankees tickets stick out of Rico's wallet. The receptionist swipes them.

RECEPTIONIST
I'm gonna need these too. Thank
you.

She opens the door for Rico and thrusts him through the doorway.

INT. GARCOM OFFICE - DAY

RICO
Ay!

The door quickly closes behind him.

Sitting behind a large desk is MR. JAMERSON, a thin, neatly groomed yuppie.

Mr. Jamerson stands patiently, sporting an expensive, fashionable, tailored suit and an artificial smile.

MR. JAMERSON
Hi, Chip Jamerson. Pleased to meet
you.

Mr. Jamerson offers a strange palm up handshake. Rico tentatively shakes his hand.

RICO
I just wanna let you know, I'm not gay.

MR. JAMERSON
Okay. Please, sit down.

The men sit in their respective seats.

MR. JAMERSON (CONT'D)
Did you have any problems finding our building?

RICO
Nope, no problem. I know the guys who pick up the garbage across the street.

MR. JAMERSON
I see.

Mr. Jamerson reviews Rico's resume. Rico takes a commemorative golf ball of his desk display and inspects it. Mr. Jamerson glances up at Rico, then back at the resume.

INT. ALARMS SECURITY - DAY

Frank slams the phone down after a frustrating conversation.

FRANK
What is this friggin' country coming to? No one wants to friggin work anymore.

CARMINE
What do you expect? Welfare is ruining this country.

FRANK
Who the hell am I going to get to do all these installs? Rico is MIA and the rest of the fuckin circus clowns already got jobs.

A skinny, Hispanic boy, JUNIOR (20s) wearing a wrinkled green and white polo shirt and a gold earring walks into the store.

JUNIOR
Hi, my name is Junior. I fixed Rico's flat tire a few days ago, he said that you were hiring.

Frank and Carmine look at each other then back at Junior.

FRANK

We certainly are, come here and sit down.

INT. GARCOM OFFICE - DAY

MR. JAMERSON

Our company just converted from VisiCalc Microsoft suite. Have you heard anything about the release date?

RICO

Microsoft? Oh, yeah, that's that guy, uh, Bates, Norman Bates, he's the rich guy. Nah, I haven't heard if they released him.

Mr. Jamerson, slightly stunned, takes Rico's application and leans back in his chair. He glances back at Rico, who is grooving to a song only he can hear.

MR. JAMERSON

Your application shows that you bowled four 300 games. Gee, that's very impressive. I can see how that would be useful in corporate America.

Rico nods in agreement.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - DAY

FRANK

Tell me, what type of experience do you have?

JUNIOR

Well, I worked at Manny's Tires on Jerome Avenue near the stadium. And before that, I drove a cab for Nino's on Webster Ave, but that guy never wanted to pay me.

Junior displays his forearm.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

This is the tattoo I got when I was there.

FRANK

Nice. I like the snake head and the dripping blood.

(beat)

What kind of skills do you have?

Junior produces a folded and stained resume from his pocket and hands it to Frank, who then shoos away a cockroach with it.

JUNIOR

I learned how to use a drill press at Rikers. Before that I used to put in car alarms.

FRANK

And did any of them work?

JUNIOR

Hell yeah. I know my shit.

Frank hmms in thought.

INT. GARCOM OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Jamerson continues to go over Rico's resume in silence.

RICO

I also have a little sales experience and know about landscaping.

Mr. Jamerson clears his throat.

MR. JAMERSON

You realize that GarCom has a drug policy.

RICO

Hey, if you guys are into that thing, that's your business.

Mr. Jamerson takes a deep breath.

MR. JAMERSON

As impressive as your bowling skills are, I'm afraid, you're NOT a good fit for the position we're looking to fill. I'm still perplexed as to how your resume made it this far.

RICO

How can you say that? You didn't even ask me any questions about the job.

MR. JAMERSON

That's correct.

Rico chuckles, then calmly removes a cigarette pack from his pocket. Mr. Jamerson watches him while writing, moron on his resume.

RICO

Ya know, one time, I punched a guy square in the mouth for being snotty.

While making eye contact with Mr. Jamerson, Rico calmly walks over to the other side of the desk and grabs Mr. Jamerson by his necktie.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - DAY

FRANK

Look kid, I don't hire thieves or drug addicts. I run an honest place here with highly intelligent workers.

A junky pops his head into the front door and flashes a few stolen VHS tapes. Carmine waves him over.

JUNIOR

Word! I've been clean for five months. I play softball over by Morrisania without vomiting.

FRANK

Good.

Frank goes back to Junior's resume and continues drawing a pair of boobs. Carmine reviews the VHS tapes and hands the junky money.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Alright, you're hired. Here's twenty bucks for traveling expenses.

JUNIOR

You don't want me to pee in a cup?

FRANK

No, those tests aren't accurate. And stay off the weed.

JUNIOR
Yeah, thanks. I'll be the best
mechanic. You'll see.

FRANK
Good, 'cause you start right now.
Throw out that box of rats in the
corner.

INT. GARCOM OFFICE - DAY

The office door opens and MR. CAPUTO, an older, distinguished corporate man walks in to see Rico holding Mr. Jamerson by his tie. Rico releases him. Mr. Jamerson fixes himself.

MR. JAMERSON
Mr. Caputo! To what do I owe this
splendid surprise?

Mr. Jamerson looks beyond the door in hopes of seeing security waiting.

MR. CAPUTO
Mr. Jamerson, would you mind if I
take over? Corporate feels it
necessary for upper management to
get more involved in day-to-day
operations.

MR. JAMERSON
Yes! Go right ahead, I was just
leaving.

Mr. Jamerson, flush with embarrassment, swiftly leaves the office. Mr. Caputo moves to the desk picking up the resume.

MR. CAPUTO
Rico. Please sit down.

RICO
Nicky! You work here? I'm
impressed! I remember when--

MR. CAPUTO
(sternly)
--Sit.

Rico unbuttons his suit jacket and sits.

MR. CAPUTO (CONT'D)
My name is Mr. Caputo and you will
address me as Mr. Caputo. Do you
understand?

Rico's smile disappears.

RICO

Yeah.

MR. CAPUTO

Good.

Mr. Caputo sits down in the desk chair.

MR. CAPUTO (CONT'D)

How's your dad doing? The last time I saw him was at Mrs. D'Vanaco's funeral.

RICO

He's the same. I mean, his diabetes gives him fits because he can't eat cannolis, and his prostate acts up occasionally. Doesn't stop him from bustin' my cogilones though-

Mr. Caputo gestures for Rico to stop talking. He takes a breath and leans forward on the desk.

MR. CAPUTO

Look, Rico. This company employs over thirty-four thousand people globally. This is serious business. I wouldn't even be here if it wasn't for a friend of mine who took a chance on me. He gave me one shot, and I took it and never looked back. I've made an entirely new life for myself and for my family, and I'm glad I did.

RICO

Wow.

MR. CAPUTO

Your father and I go way back. I know the type of business he runs. It's very different from what we do here.

RICO

What are you saying?

MR. CAPUTO

Rico, the corporate world has rigid rules that I'm sure you're not accustomed to, and being involved in your father's business...

RICO

Are you saying that I can't do this?

Mr. Caputo leans back in his seat.

MR. CAPUTO

I'm saying that when I walked in here, you were holding Mr. Jamerson by his necktie. Your patience will be tested every single day here, and we absolutely do not tolerate that kind of behavior no matter what the circumstance is. This is a place of quality business, and we must respect each other. And if you're anything like your father, then maybe it's not the best place for you to be.

Rico looks out the window in thought.

RICO

I'm tired of this life. I want to move forward, but every day's the same.

He looks back at Mr. Caputo. He sits up on the edge of the chair.

RICO (CONT'D)

Look, I met this girl, and well, she's smart, she's beautiful, she's just...I can't explain it, I never met anyone like her before.

RICO (CONT'D)

And I started thinkin' that if I ever wanna have the life that I want, somethin' that means somethin' y'know, I gotta get out of that place.

Mr. Caputo rests his chin on his fingers.

RICO (CONT'D)

I always hung out with the cool guys, the ones that didn't give a shi- crap about learning or rules or anything like that. That's where I thought I fit in. But now I don't really feel like I fit in anywhere. And if I don't find somewhere to go, I'm gonna end up being a carbon copy of my dad. I don't want that. I wanna do this for me, y'know. I wanna be successful on my own and I wanna do it the right way.

Mr. Caputo studies Rico, seeing a reflection of his younger self in him. He sits up again and rests his elbows on the desk, folding his hands in front of him.

MR. CAPUTO

Rico, do you think you can dedicate yourself to this job and atmosphere?

Rico thinks hard about the question.

RICO

I can't keep waking up every day wishing I was somewhere else. And if that means following some rules, then yeah. I can learn.

Mr. Caputo studies him, then takes a deep breath.

MR. CAPUTO

You've got guts, kid. Let's see if you've got what it takes. I'd be taking a substantial risk on you, you know that?

(beat)

This will be an entry level position. There is no drinking or gambling, capisci?

Rico smiles, gets up. Mr. Caputo goes for a handshake, but Rico embraces him instead.

RICO

You won't be sorry Nic- Mr. Caputo.

Rico pats Mr. Caputo on the arm.

MR. CAPUTO

You better mean that.

INT. CARDIOLOGY OFFICE - DAY

Vanessa worriedly grabs Fran's arm and pulls her into electrophysiology exam room two. Vanessa points to the monitor.

VANESSA

Check this shit out. When I was measuring Mrs. Weiss's ventricular therapies data, I noticed this.

Fran studies the monitor.

FRAN

Looks like she's totally pacemaker dependent.

VANESSA

Now look at the atrial capture.

FRAN

Wow! At this rate, she has about two or three more months left on that device. She will definitely need a new bi-ventricular device.

VANESSA

Get this, you know that my mom works part-time at Demaris Palmero's law office cleaning up?

FRAN

Yeah.

VANESSA

My mom knows Mrs. Wiess from years ago as part of some school fundraiser. The receptionist told my mom that Mrs. Weiss's idiot son came and questioned her about power of attorney stuff.

Fran grimaces.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

If Ted gets power of attorney, then we may not be able to replace the old pacemaker.

Fran's head moves a bit closer to the monitor seeing an amplitude graph depicting a downward angle.

FRAN

That shit's murder.

VANESSA

Exactly! And check this out; my mom knows that Mrs. Weiss owns a bunch of houses over by Paxton St.

The two girls look at one another.

FRAN

Her son will inherit her estate.

Vanessa looks at her watch.

VANESSA

She's got an appointment with us soon.

FRAN

What can we do?

VANESSA

I'm going to ask Dr. Ferrari if he can change her pacemaker during her next appointment.

FRAN

Are you crazy woman? He'll never agree to do that.

VANESSA

What choice does that poor woman have? Ferrari has a few used pacemakers here, with plenty of battery life.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

In fact, I learned that Ferrari has a nice little operation with local morgues and Ortiz funeral home. He had Janice picking up the devices. The devices are supposed to be removed before cremation to prevent battery explosions.

FRAN

Wow! But he'll never agree to it.

VANESSA

I will appeal to his sense of moral values.

INT. CARDIOLOGY - DAY

Dr. Ferrari lifts his head from Vanessa's chest.

DR. FERRARI

You want me to do what?

VANESSA

You heard me.

Vanessa seductively fondles Dr. Ferrari's stethoscope.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Just slowly stick it in. Nobody needs to know.

Dr. Ferrari pauses.

DR. FERRARI
It's too risky. If the board finds out, I could lose my license.

VANESSA
Mrs. Weiss will die within four months if you don't change her pacemaker. Look for yourself.

Dr. Ferrari looks at a computer screen.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
What about the pacemakers Janice gets from Rodriquez funeral home or Downtown hospital.

DR. FERRARI
(nervously)
What are you talking about?

VANESSA
I'm no fool.
(beat)
Think about the time you took me to the Meadowlands Cardiology expo; the steamy hot tub, that expensive bottle of Pinot, soft music.

Dr. Ferrari nibbles on his pen cap.

DR. FERRARI
Are you sure that the end of life for that Pacemaker is four months?

Vanessa points to values on a computer monitor.

Dr. Ferrari pulls out a pack of cigarettes.

DR. FERRARI (CONT'D)
What about if we decrease the Ventricular pulse width to .5?

Vanessa confidently shakes her head no. She then softly removes the cigarette from his lips.

VANESSA
Do the right thing. She deserves to live.

Vanessa unwinds the stethoscope from the doctor's neck.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
Awe look, its limp.

Dr. Ferrari bites his lip in thought.

DR. FERRARI
Schedule her back Thursday. You're
closing up tonight. Got it?

Vanessa smiles and jumps with joy.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Rico sits at the bar in a smoke-filled bowling alley with a beer in front of him. He's already had a few. A SPORTS GAME plays on the TV set, a few BARGOERS huddle around it watching intensely.

BARTENDER, (30s) thick, Irish looking, fast talker, works swiftly behind the bar.

BARTENDER
Oh, congratulations on bowling 800
the other night. Was that your
first 800 series?

Rico stays silent. He's in his own little world.

RICO
Did I tell you I got a new job
today?

BARTENDER
I heard Richie shot 300 last night.

RICO
Did I tell you that I met a
wonderful Spanish girl?

Bartender abruptly leaves to service a waiting customer.

SLUGGO, 40s, uneven mustache, blue working jumpsuit, bowling alley mechanic, approaches Rico.

SLUGGO
Hey Rico, give me fifty bucks on
the Knicks tonight. I'll take the
under at four points.

RICO
I got a new job today. I work at a
corporation. You see them on T.V.

Sluggo LAUGHS.

SLUGGO
Fifty on the Knicks. And lay off
the hard stuff.

Sluggo, hears a call over the loudspeakers to repair a lane and dashes away. Rico gets up and heads to the bar's pay phone.

Rico dials Vanessa's number from memory and checking the faded number on his palm. He waits for her to pick up.

INT. VANESSA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Vanessa is home ironing when the phone rings. She answers and continues ironing.

VANESSA
Hello?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

RICO
Hi, uh, hi, it's Rico.

Vanessa stops ironing.

VANESSA
Oh. Hi.

Rico covers one ear, then smiles sleepily at the sound of her voice.

RICO
Hi.

VANESSA
Wow, you got a way with words.

Rico CHUCKLES. There's a brief silence.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
So...

RICO
So, I'm calling you after my interview, like you said.

VANESSA
That's right, I did say that.
(beat)
Well?! How'd it go?

Nothing.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
Come on, I'm dyin' over here!

Rico LAUGHS, then:

RICO
I got the job.

VANESSA O.S.
You did?

VANESSA
Rico, that's amazing.
Congratulations.

Vanessa continues ironing.

RICO
I was thinkin' if you'd wanna go to
the batting cages with me or
something.

VANESSA
Why would I want to do that?

Rico hits himself in the head with the phone.

RICO
Okay, forget the batting cages. I
just meant, maybe you could come
out and we could celebrate.

A small smile forms on Vanessa's lips. She looks down,
thinking, then takes a deep breath. Her smile disappears.

VANESSA
I'm sorry I can't, I've got a lot
to do tonight.

RICO
Well, what about tomorrow night?

VANESSA
I have plans tomorrow night.

RICO
Can't you change them? I was really
hoping to celebrate with you.

Vanessa takes a second to think out her response.

VANESSA
Tell you what. Call me later on and
I'll let you know, bye.

RICO
Okay. I'll call--

Vanessa abruptly hangs up the phone, then reflects.

INT. GARCOM LOBBY - MORNING

Rico, wearing a white collared shirt and a Def Leppard tie, stands in the lobby studying the buildings security camera placement.

STEWART O'BRIEN, a timid, reserved, small framed, Black man in his late 20s, enters and sees Rico spinning in circles looking in the air.

STEWART
Uh, Rico Russo?

Rico stops and looks him over.

RICO
Who wants to know.

STEWART
My name is Stewart O'Brien. I was instructed to meet with you and welcome you aboard.

They shake hands. Stewart hands Rico a business card.

RICO
You don't look Irish.

Rico is still perplexed with the building's cameras.

RICO (CONT'D)
Who did your security system?

STEWART
I'm not sure, but I can find out for you later. Just follow me and I'll take you to our department and help you get set up.

INT. GARCOM OFFICE/CUBICLE AREA - DAY

Stewart walks Rico into a large, fluorescent-illuminated, stale area with several cubicles. He approaches a vacant cube. Rico studies his new surroundings.

STEWART
Here is your new work area. Please, make yourself comfortable. I suggest getting familiar with the GarCom handbook and applications on your PC. I'll get you access to our network.

Rico picks his teeth with the business card with a dirty look.

RICO
What are you sellin'?

STEWART
Selling? I don't quite follow.

Rico shrugs, nods.

STEWART (CONT'D)
Just learn what you can. I'll be
right back. Coffee is in the
kitchen area over by the copier.

Stewart leaves with a perplexed look.

Rico meanders throughout the office absorbing his new environment. He peeks in a large, conference room and beams as he pictures himself speaking to a group of GarCom employees.

INT. GARCOM HALLWAY - DAY

JOYCE, 30s, a red head, department manager, speaks with KIMBERLY LEE, 30s, Korean, attractive, powerful GarCom corporate attorney. Stewart approaches the two women.

STEWART
Morning Joyce. Good morning, Kim.

JOYCE
Stu! I happened to see your memo explaining your oversight on our monthly Q3 reports...

STEWART
Yes, I know. Don't rub it in.

Joyce smiles and nudges him playfully.

STEWART (CONT'D)
(to Joyce)
What do you think about the new
hire on our team?

JOYCE
Well, nothing yet since this is the
first I'm hearing about this. Why
am I the last to know about
everything?

Stewart gestures towards Rico.

STEWART
There he is, over there by the
conference room.

JOYCE

Huh. What do you know about him?

STEWART

Not much, only that he's from the city and may have attended community college.

JOYCE

What experience does he have with computers?

The two look over to Rico again. They witness him removing his coffee cup from the computer's CD-ROM drive.

STEWART

Does that answer your question?

JOYCE

Oh, boy.

STEWART

I need coffee.

Stewart leaves with a smirk.

KIMBERLY

Looks like you'll have your work cut out for you.

JOYCE

Yep.

KIMBERLY

At least he's cute.

JOYCE

Ms. Engaged, excuse me!

KIMBERLY

Just making an observation. You know how I like 'em. Handsome and dumb.

JOYCE

Does Alan know about this problem that you have?

KIMBERLY

Not a clue. Why do you think I agreed to marry him?

Joyce CHUCKLES. Kim eyes Rico one last time. From a corner office window, a blond male employee is seen quietly watching the action.

INT. RICO'S CUBICLE - DAY

Rico stands up, stretches, then takes notice to a picture on a neighboring desk.

SALLY, 20s, blonde, friendly, but not flirty, enters a nearby cubicle and takes notice to Rico just as he takes notice to her.

RICO
Hi, I'm Rico. Just started working here.

SALLY
I'm Sally, nice to meet you.

Rico notices the picture on her desk.

RICO
Nice photo. We used to have a Shepard too, but we had to put her down because of her hips going bad.

SALLY
Oh, that terrible.

Joyce approaches.

JOYCE
Well, I see your acclimating nicely and you've met precocious Sally.

Sally goes back to work and Rico turns around to face Joyce.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
I'm Joyce Donahue, one of the department's managers and administrative analysts.

RICO
Cool. Nice to meet you.

Joyce takes notice to Rico's attire while shaking hands.

JOYCE
Likewise. Is it Rico or Enrico?

RICO
Rico is fine.
(beat)
You know something, you guys run a nice place here.
(beat)
But you gotta do something about that coffee. Is there a cappuccino maker around?

JOYCE
Yes, it's right next to the hot dog
& pretzel stand.

RICO
That's great, I love a good Sabret
hot dog.

Joyce checks her watch, gives Rico a smile, then:

JOYCE
Well, I have a meeting to attend.
You're in good hands with Stewart.
Welcome aboard, Rico.

Joyce politely rushes off. Rico looks to Stewart, who approaches with a mug filled to the brim with coffee.

RICO
Alright chief, where do we start?

STEWART
We should start at the beginning.
Let's reboot the PC, start from
scratch.

Rico spins around to face the computer.

RICO
Okay, yeah, reboot.

Rico wiggles his fingers, unsure where to put them.

RICO (CONT'D)
Right. Stu, what exactly is a
reboot?

Stewart reaches over and holds the power button on the PC.
The screen goes black, then turns back on.

RICO (CONT'D)
Woah, hang on, what did you do?

STEWART
I restarted the PC.

RICO
Oh! Well if you'd said it like
that!

Stewart stands behind Rico, waiting for the PC to power back on. Rico studies him.

RICO (CONT'D)
Stu, can I ask you a question?

STEWART

Sure.

RICO

Could you teach me to be a nerd?

Stewart raises an eyebrow.

RICO (CONT'D)

I really think I can do it, but I don't got a lot of practice. Just give me a few guidelines, y'know, and I'll figure it out and shit.

Stewart looks around like he's being punked and wines.

INT. GARCOM/STEVE'S OFFICE - DAY

STEVE OLSON, 30s, blond hair, slick and aspiring director, sits at his corner office desk talking on the phone.

RALPH, 20s, Steve's accomplice, stands by Steve's desk and navigates through Steve's PC.

STEVE

I expect the Goldman contract here by Friday or we will begin litigation. Do I make myself clear? Good.

Steve hangs up the phone.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Give me good news or I might get an ulcer.

RALPH

This should take care of it.

Steve studies the screen.

STEVE

You're sure?

RALPH

Yep. I watched Seansky do this last year. But don't let him know, I don't want him breathing down my neck.

STEVE

Hmm.

Steve leans back in his chair toying with an expensive paper weight. He looks up through the window and sees Mr. Caputo in the hall speaking with an employee.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Look at Caputo's suit. \$800 Armani, who does he think he is? You know, I was the one who landed the Lamarca account. They gave him all the credit, that prick.

RALPH

I heard he Caputo hired a new guy.

STEVE

Really! Who?

RALPH

Some greaseball, Rico. He looks like he just came off a boat. He's over by titless Sally's cubicle.

STEVE

Rico! Is that short for The Racketeering Influenced and Corrupts Act?

RALPH

Who knows. Probably some guinea spick.

Steve looks back out the window, plotting nefariously.

INT. GARCOM/KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Stewart pours himself another cup of coffee. Mr. Caputo enters and grabs a coffee mug from a cabinet. Mr. Caputo periodically glances over at Rico's cubicle.

STEWART

Oh, Mr. Caputo, I just checked in with Mark Innis about the Orlando project. He says preliminary mockups should be ready by tomorrow.

MR. CAPUTO

Oh good. How's our other project coming along?

STEWART

Uhh...

Mr. Caputo nods towards Rico's cubicle.

STEWART (CONT'D)

Oh, Rico. Yeah, he's uhm...I guess you could say he's coming along. Though, computer science doesn't exactly seem like a strong suit of his.

(rambling)

Of course, I would never question your reasons for hiring someone--

Mr. Caputo is preoccupied with keeping an eye on Rico.

MR. CAPUTO

--Please tell me you went over the policies with him.

STEWART

We didn't exactly get to that yet but--

MR. CAPUTO

--Keep an eye on him. Make sure he gets to work on time. Remember, you're responsible for him.

Mr. Caputo slaps Stewart on the back.

STEWART

Yes, sir.

Stewart sighs. He walks out of frame.

INT. RUSSO HOUSE - EVENING

Frank and Geno sit at a cluttered dinner table, Frank at the head. Tina hands them each a plate of food.

GENO

Thanks, Ma.

Geno starts shoveling food into his mouth.

The backdoor that leads into the kitchen opens and Rico enters.

RICO

What, you're starting without me?

Tina rushes to greet Rico. Rico gives her a kiss on the cheek.

RICO (CONT'D)

(to Tina)

Hiya, Ma.

GENO
What are you doing here, fuckface?

TINA
Watch your mouth at the table.

Frank and Rico exchange a look, tension still high.

FRANK
I wasn't expecting you tonight.

TINA
I asked him to join us.

RICO
I can't stay long. Just wanted to stop by and pick up my envelope I forgot last week.

TINA
Well, here, at least have some meatballs.

Tina scoops some meatballs out of a pot on the stove and into a small bowl. She gives the bowl to Rico.

Rico sits at the other head of the table, across from Frank. He locates his envelope, then starts picking at his food. Tina brings her plate of food to the last empty seat and sits.

FRANK
(to Rico)
Where the hell you been all week, huh? Geno's been working his ass off at the store picking up your slack.

TINA
Frank, don't start. Rico has some big news to share with us.

Frank leans forward, concerned.

GENO
What did ya do this time, huh?

RICO
Pipe down.

TINA
Please.

Tina nods to Rico, encouraging him. Rico makes eye contact with Frank before speaking.

RICO
I got a new job. A corporate job.
GarCom International.

Tina smiles, pleased, and squeezes Rico's arm. A silence befalls the rest of the table. Then, Geno snorts.

GENO
So, they're just handing out jobs
to any degenerate that walks in?

Tina swats Geno with her napkin.

FRANK
A new job? What's wrong with the
one you got?

RICO
You want the full list?

FRANK
Don't be a smartass.

Tina glares at Frank before taking a bite of her food.

GENO
What kind of place gave you a job?

Frank looks at Rico expectantly.

RICO
What, you think I can't get a job
myself?

GENO
I know you can't, what'd you put on
your resume? Professional Shithead?

RICO
At least I'm professional
something, what can you do,
asswipe?

Geno farts at Rico

RICO (CONT'D)
That's the most intelligent thing
you said all week.

TINA
The two of you, ENOUGH!

Everyone goes back to eating their food.

RICO
Nicky hired me.

FRANK
Nicky?

GENO
I knew you didn't get it yourself.

Rico rolls his eyes. Frank and Tina exchange a look.

FRANK
Did you get paid yet?

RICO
There's more to life than money you know.

GENO
Like what?

RICO
Like...your health.

Frank and Geno stare blankly at Rico. Tina turns to Rico.

TINA
I for one, am very proud of you Rico. They're lucky to have you working for them.

RICO
Thanks, Ma.

FRANK
Tina, get me the grated cheese.

TINA
You don't have anything else to say to your son?

FRANK
What, that he'd rather make peanuts than work for his family? What am I supposed to say about that?

RICO
(to Tina)
Don't bother, Ma.

Rico gets up, grabs the Parmesan off the counter and slams it on the table in front of Frank.

RICO (CONT'D)
Thanks for the meatballs, but I gotta go.

TINA
Already?

RICO
I got a date tonight.

GENO
Who's the lucky guy?

FRANK
She better not have kids. You can't even afford diapers.

RICO
That's it, I'm leaving.

FRANK
Take out the garbage on the way out

Rico grabs his envelop, then slams the door, cutting Frank off.

FRANK (CONT'D)
What was in that envelop?

TINA
His recent stool sample.

Frank slams his hand on the table.

INT. VANESSA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Vanessa sits at her desk, hair pulled back in a high, messy bun. She applies a green face mask. Stuck on her desk mirror is a newspaper ad of a two-family house. A worn copy of 'The House on Mango Street' with sticky notes sticking out from the pages as if it's been annotated.

Mrs. Rios enters with a dish towel draped over her shoulder and a jar of Vicks menthol. She brings it to Vanessa.

VANESSA
Aye, Mommí, I said I have a headache. Why are you giving me this Spanish voodoo cream?

MRS. RIOS
Vicks is good for you. When I lived in Puerto Rico--

VANESSA
--Do you hear that? I think it's Abuela coughing.

Mrs. Rios is about to leave, then realizes there was no coughing. She whacks Vanessa with the dish towel.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
(laughing)

Ow!

Mrs. Rios sits down on the bed behind Vanessa.

MRS. RIOS
Your brother didn't come home last night. I worry he's with bad people again.

VANESSA
Don't say that, please, I don't even want to think about that again.

Vanessa massages her temples. Mrs. Rios sighs deeply.

MRS. RIOS
What did I do wrong?

Vanessa turns to face her mom.

VANESSA
What do you mean?

MRS. RIOS
Your brother, he has so many problems. But you, you turn out fine. You do everything yourself, you take care of this family. What did I do wrong with him?

Vanessa sighs deeply.

VANESSA
Mommí, Jimmy just got wrapped up in the wrong crowd. He made his own choices. You didn't do anything to make that happen.

MRS. RIOS
I worry so much about him, I can't sleep when he doesn't come home. I will pray for him tonight.

VANESSA
You can pray all you want. Just don't give him any more money.

Vanessa turns back to her mirror and continues applying her face mask.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
Speaking of money, I paid the gas and electric bill today.
(MORE)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

When I get my next check we can buy a new phone.

MRS. RIOS

No necesito telefono nuevo. *We don't need a new phone.*

VANESSA

Sí, esta necesito, *Yes, we need it, everyone has push buttons, not that ridiculous circle thingy.*

A beat.

MRS. RIOS

I worry about you too, Vanessa. You take good care of us, but I want for you to have a life, a family.

Vanessa pauses, looks at herself in the mirror, then at the newspaper clipping. She shakes a thought out of her head.

VANESSA

I have a life, Mamá. I love what I do, and I need to be here for the family. I don't want anything different right now.

MRS. RIOS

I know, corazón. But I wish you did not have this responsibility.

Vanessa swallows a knot in her throat.

Mrs. Rios looks at Vanessa's reflection in her desk mirror. She gets up and hugs Vanessa from behind.

Vanessa holds back tears.

VANESSA

Te amo mucho, Mommí. *I love you so much, Mom.*

The phone RINGS from another room. Mrs. Rios answers. She calls into Vanessa's room.

MRS. RIOS O.S.

Vanessa! It's for you.

Vanessa composes herself, then walks into the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Vanessa takes the phone from Mrs. Rios.

VANESSA

Hello?

INT. RICO'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rico plops down on his couch while opening a can of soda. He holds the phone to his ear with his shoulder. The Daily News, an ashtray, and some mail scattered on the coffee table.

RICO

Hey. It's Rico.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

VANESSA

Rico. Hi.

Mrs. Rios raises an eyebrow at Vanessa. Vanessa waves her off. Mrs. Rios exits.

RICO

You sound surprised.

VANESSA

No, I'm no- you know what? I am a little bit surprised.

Rico sips his soda.

RICO

Why do you say that?

VANESSA

I don't know. Just thought maybe you'd get caught up in your fancy new job and forget to call.

RICO

I couldn't forget you. You were on my mind all week.

Vanessa smiles, then rolls her eyes.

VANESSA

Yeah? How many times have you used that line, Casanova?

RICO

Honest to God, never.

VANESSA

(sarcastically)
Sure.

RICO

Well, I never meant it before
tonight.

Vanessa bites back a smile as she shakes her head.

Rico smiles. He leans up and sits on the end of the couch.

RICO (CONT'D)

Listen, I'd really like to see you
again. Any chance you can come out
tonight?

Vanessa checks the clock on the wall across from her. She
thinks.

VANESSA

Well, I'm pretty hungry.

RICO

I know a great place. I can pick
you up at seven?

VANESSA

Ok. Be here at Eight. 634 Main
Street, Paterson. Got it? Bye.

They both hang up.

EXT. RIOS HOME - NIGHT

Rico finds a parking space under the train's elevated station
and in front of Vanessa's house.

INT. RICO'S CAR - NIGHT

Rico quickly splashes on some cologne and gargles with
Mountain Dew. He looks up at the red Italian horn hanging
from his rear-view mirror for luck, then exits the car.

EXT. RIOS HOME - NIGHT

Rico stands at the front door ringing the bell and taking in
the neighborhood. Moments after, a silhouette of a tiny woman
appears. Many locks are undone before the door opens.

RICO

Hello. I'm Rico, I'm here for
Vanessa.

MRS. RIOS

Hello, I Vanessa's madre.

RICO

Hola!

MRS. RIOS

Hola, entre.

INT. RIOS HOME - NIGHT

Rico enters the narrow, dimly lit hallway, marveling at the hall's 1930's floral wallpaper. Mrs. Rios leads him passed the living area, where Mr. Rios is sitting comfortably on the sofa.

MRS. RIOS

This is Vanessa's padre.

RICO

Hola!

Mr. Rios does not respond. He laughs at a Spanish news station. Mrs. Rios directs Rico to the dining area.

INT. RIOS DINING AREA - NIGHT

MRS. RIOS

Please, sit. Excuse, I have cooking on the stove.

Mrs. Rios returns to the kitchen. Rico sits at the table.

A phlegm gurgling cough refocuses Rico's attention to a partially closed door down the hall.

Rico waits, bouncing his leg and tapping his fingers on the table. Then he gets up and goes into the living room.

Rico watches Mr. Rios blankly staring at the TV.

RICO

Hola, Mr. Rios. Mi llamo Rico. I'm here to take your daughter out tonight.

Rico extends his hand out for Mr. Rios to shake. Mr. Rios glances at Rico's hand, then back at the TV.

RICO (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I'll have her home early.

Mr. Rios still doesn't acknowledge Rico. It clicks in Rico's head that Mr. Rios is not mentally there.

Rico starts examining the room, walking around with his hands in his pockets, stopping to look at PICTURES and things on the walls.

RICO (CONT'D)

I'm taking her to a quiet, Italian place called Buonasera. They got fantastic Fettuccine pomodoro, and a butternut asiago tortellini that's outta this world.

He stops to look at a picture of Vanessa.

RICO (CONT'D)

This high school picture of her is wacked. She looks better with her hair down.

Rico picks up a LETTER from the coffee table and looks it over.

RICO (CONT'D)

Maybe after dinner we'll go back to my place. Few glasses of wine, slip on some Moody Blues, and get busy if you know what I mean.

Rico puts his hand out for some skin from Mr. Rios. Mr. Rios suddenly bursts out laughing, leaving him dry.

RICO (CONT'D)

I'll take that as "Scoreee!".

More coughing and gagging sounds from the partially closed door catch Rico's attention.

INT. RIOS HALLWAY CONTINUOUS

Rico wanders down the hall to the door. Suddenly, Vanessa emerges wearing a short, tight, black dress with a sweetheart neckline, black nylons, and heels. She quickly closes the door behind her and is startled by Rico standing there.

VANESSA

Jesus! What the hell are you doing here?! You're early.

She notices he's holding a letter and rips it out of his hand.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Do you mind?!

RICO
 I didn't know how long it'd take to
 get here, I thought there'd be
 traffic, but wow, you look
 stunning. Are you going out dressed
 like that?

VANESSA
 (deadpan)
 No, actually, I still need to put
 my tunic on.

Vanessa adjusts her dress.

RICO
 Forget I said anything.

VANESSA
 Can we move away from here, please.

Vanessa grabs Rico's arm and pulls him out of the doorway and
 back into the dining area.

INT. DINING AREA - NIGHT

She puts the letter down on the table, grabs a pair of
 EARRINGS and puts them on, then hands Rico a GOLD BRACELET.

VANESSA
 Here, help me with this.

She holds out her wrist as Rico wraps the bracelet around it.

MRS. RIOS
 (calling from the hall)
 Vanessa, before you go, don't
 forget, tomorrow I need to deposit
 my social security check, and to
 pick up groceries at Corrado's.

VANESSA
 (calling back)
 I know, Ma, you told me twice
 already.

Rico struggles with the clasp.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
 So, where are you taking me
 tonight? It better be a nice place
 since you got a corporate job.

RICO

Yeah, there's this nice place in the city called 'Blanca Castle', very expensive, five-star cuisine.

Rico smirks and glances at Vanessa.

VANESSA

Strike two, wise guy.

Rico finally gets the bracelet on. For the first time since he arrived, they are able to get a good look and really take each other in.

Then, Mrs. Rios squeezes through the small space, walking right between them with a catheter bag filled with yellow liquid. Rico jumps out of the way.

Vanessa looks up at the ceiling, her pain-riddled face and voice redirects Rico away from the horror.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Okay, I don't care where you take me, as long as we leave right now.

Vanessa turns Rico around and pushes him towards the front door, then grabs her purse off the table.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Adios, Mamá, Rico is leaving now! And never coming back!

RICO

Adios, Mrs. Rios. It was nice meeting you. Mr. Rios, maybe we can go bowling!

Vanessa keeps shoving him until they've reached the front door and pushes him out.

INT. GARCOM STEVE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Steve sits in front of his office computer speaking on the phone. His PC monitor shows a schematic of a weapon.

STEVE

Yes, I'm looking at the image as we speak. I just need a little more time to iron out the logistics with the receiving department...Yes, I understand that we can't jeopardize this opportunity. I'll do everything I can to...

Ralph pokes his head inside Steve's office.

Steve abruptly hangs up the phone, then presses a button on the PC monitor.

RALPH

Sir, I just got approval with the shipping department. It's all set. Let me know about your special delivery so I can inform Doug Engle in receiving.

STEVE (O.S.)

That info would have been useful thirty seconds earlier.

RALPH

What?

STEVE

Nothing. Get me an update from Bob Higgins on the AutoTech financials.

Ralph nods, then exits the office. Steve watches him walk away through the window then picks up the phone again.

INT. BUONASERA'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Rico and Vanessa sit at a table in a dimly quaint Italian restaurant while soft music plays. They look at their menus.

A WAITER brings a basket of bread to their table. Rico immediately pours olive oil into a small plate, seasons it with pepper, then grabs a slice a bread and dips it in the oil before taking a bite.

Vanessa watches him like she's studying wildlife.

RICO

What?

VANESSA

Nothin'.
(beat)
What's good here?

RICO

Get the butternut asiago tortellini. No, wait, the shrimp scampi with linguini is--

Rico does a chef's kiss hand gesture.

The waiter comes back to their table with a notepad, takes their orders, and leaves.

RICO (CONT'D)

So, uhm, back at your place, that was--

VANESSA

--Look, we don't have to have this conversation, alright? Not now. It is what it is at home. End of story.

Vanessa SIGHS. Rico picks at his bread.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

I'm just not ready to invite someone else into that part of my life. Usually people I'm dating have no idea what's going on at home.

RICO

Really? How does that work?

VANESSA

Well, I'm here with you, so what does that tell you?

RICO

So maybe it's not the worst thing that I know.

Vanessa looks at him, serious at first, but then she softens at the thought.

She grabs a piece of bread from the basket and reaches over the table and tentatively dips it in the plate with olive oil. Rico watches her and admires her beauty.

VANESSA

So, what about you, huh? What's your story?

She takes a bite of the bread and enjoys.

RICO

I had a typical upbringing. Born in Manhattan, raised in the Bronx. We spent the weekends in the Hamptons, summers in the South of France, I played polo when I wasn't doing charity work at church for the blind.

VANESSA

(deadpan)

Right.

(MORE)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Now, did you become a smartass before or after the charity work?

RICO

Definitely after.

VANESSA

Uh-huh. Am I gonna get the real story or do I have to sit through your comedy act first?

RICO

You want comedy? My life began as a joke. I was born on April first. I like music, bowl a lot, and I work for my pain-in-the-ass father.

Vanessa studies him.

The waiter comes back with a bottle of wine. He pours them each a glass.

VANESSA

How's your relationship with your father now?

RICO

He can't stand that I got this new job. It's like I can never do anything good enough for him.

VANESSA

I can see why that bothers you.

RICO

Yeah, it bothers me. Drives me up the freggin' wall.

VANESSA

The people at your new job, do they think you're good enough?

RICO

I dunno. I kinda think they're all waiting for me to mess somethin' up so they can kick me to the curb.

VANESSA

Do they think that, or do you think that?

RICO

Are you a shrink or something?

VANESSA

I'm just saying, maybe not everyone is watching you ready to pounce the second you make a mistake. I mean, they're giving you a chance to prove that you are good enough to be there. That's gotta count for something, right?

RICO

I guess.

VANESSA

Look, I'm not gonna bullshit you. You're not always gonna be good enough at everything.

Rico looks at her, confused.

RICO

You're real good at this comfort talk thing.

VANESSA

Shh, I'm saying, you're not the only person in the world that's ever made a few mistakes. What matters in the long run is how you deal with it afterwards. Do you do the same thing again, or do you learn from your mistake and do something different?

Vanessa shrugs.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Maybe your dad's right. Maybe you are a screw up, maybe you don't know what you're doing. What are you gonna do to be better?

Rico takes in all of her words. Vanessa takes a sip of wine.

RICO

Y'know, maybe you should be a shrink.

VANESSA

And go through another three years of school? Yeah, no thanks. I already went through nursing school, that was tough enough. Thank God Dr. Ferrari helped cover some of the expense. Sometimes I feel that I owe him and take some of his stupid nonsense.

RICO

I feel the same way with my dad.

The waiter comes back and serves their food.

RICO (CONT'D)

You musta been a good student for a heartologist to pay for your school.

VANESSA

Cardiologist.

RICO

See? You're smart.

VANESSA

That's because as a kid I spent my time either reading or at church.

RICO

So, how's a smart, beautiful, respectable girl like you still single? Most Puerto Rican girls have about two or three kids at your age.

Vanessa drops down her fork.

VANESSA

Hello! Must all Puerto Rican women have children by the age of twenty two?! Are you ready to be a father right now?

RICO

No! I--

VANESSA

--So, what makes you think all women are ready to start a family? Or even want that! Like we don't have our own lives to figure out first! And don't even get me started on financial stability, especially being a minority.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

You see the neighborhood I live in, the position I'm in right now, and you're really going to ask me a question like that?

RICO

Look, I'm sorry, that's not what I mean--

Vanessa waves it off.

VANESSA
--Just forget it, alright.

Vanessa starts eating her food. Rico dejectedly starts picking at his plate.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Rico and Vanessa cross the street to Rico's car. Vanessa walks with her arms crossed and head down, silent.

RICO
Are you still mad at me?

He looks at her.

RICO (CONT'D)
Yeah, you're still mad at me.

VANESSA
No, I'm not. Let's just go.

Vanessa rushes ahead of Rico across the street to his car.

RICO
Wait. Wait!

Vanessa stops at the car, but doesn't turn to face Rico, who stands in the street in the background behind Vanessa.

RICO (CONT'D)
I'm really sorry about what I said back there.

A car comes and Rico steps out of its way.

RICO (CONT'D)
When I said what I said, I didn't mean it the way it came out, 'cause what I was really thinking is 'God, this girl is incredible.

RICO (CONT'D)
She's smart, beautiful, funny, she likes Italian food. She's the whole package. How come nobody noticed that yet? And how did I get so lucky to be the one here with her now?

Vanessa turns her head, just barely looking over her shoulder.

RICO (CONT'D)
 I wanted tonight to go well, and I wanted you to have a good time, 'cause I can't get you outta my head and if I fuck this up, it'll be the stupidest thing I ever do...

Vanessa takes that in...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RICO'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Rico and Vanessa drive back. Music plays - "New York state of mind", by Billy Joel.

EXT. RICO'S HOME - NIGHT

Rico's car pulls up to Vanessa's house. Rico puts the car in park, then gets out to open Vanessa's door. Rico walks Vanessa up to the front gate.

VANESSA
 Well, Rico, despite a few things, I had a really nice evening.

RICO
 Yeah, me too.

Vanessa opens the gate and closes it behind her.

RICO (CONT'D)
 Again, I'm sorry. What can I do to be better?

Vanessa walks back to him, looks him in the eyes, grabs his head giving him a powerful kiss.

VANESSA
 Don't fuck up.

Rico, stunned, just nods. He watches her walk into the house as he leans on the fence. His shirt gets stuck on the fence and as he turns to leave, it tears off the pocket.

MONTAGE:

Rico does his best to balance both Alarmas and GarCom responsibilities.

INT. GARCOM OFFICE SPACE - MORNING

Rico walks to his cubicle holding a can of Coke, an envelope, and a half eaten bagel in his mouth. On his desk is a manila envelope with a post-it that reads

"Give to Ralph".

Just then, Ralph passes by with STACY and ALICE, two other employees. Rico makes mumbled noises to get Ralph's attention as he passes. Ralph and the others turn.

Rico puts his drink down and takes the bagel out of his mouth.

RICO

Hey Ralph, I got an envelope here for you.

Rico grabs the envelope and holds it out to Ralph, then continues to sloppily eat his bagel.

RALPH

Stacy, Alice, this is Rico. He's GarCom's newest, brightest mind. Rico, we were just reminiscing about college reunions, tell us, which college did you attend?

RICO

Actually, I took a few courses in physical education at-

RALPH

Now there's a fruitful curriculum! Hey, why don't Bruce Jenner run to my office, put the envelop on my desk, then run back and I'll time you.

Stacy and Alice giggle as Ralph takes the envelope from him. The three leave just as Stewart approaches Rico.

STEWART

Why's Ralph laughing? He never laughs.

Rico irritably picks up the desk phone's cord in both hands, as if he were to use it to strangle someone.

STEWART (CONT'D)

Okay, let's continue learning about our network token-ring infrastructure.

Rico sits down in his seat and scoots over to make room for Stewart. Stewart leans over and starts typing on Rico's computer.

RICO
Hey, Stu.

STEWART
Yeah?

RICO
I just wanna let you know that I appreciate what you're doin' for me. You know, helpin' me and shit. I was never good at school.

STEWART
I'm just doing my job.

RICO
Maybe, but you're not treating me like these other pricks. You're a good person.

STEWART
(Bronx accent)
Ah, fuhgeddaboutit. OK, let's move on.

Rico nods in agreement while spinning a floppy disk with his index finger. He looks up and notices Ralph and Steve looking right at him, laughing every now and then.

RICO
Stu, I got a feelin that those two dicks are in cahoots with each other. They look like they're up to no good.

STEWART
Well, they're not exactly the best people to be around, but I wouldn't say they're colluding.

Stewart studies Steve and Ralph again. Rico sits, conspiring.

RICO
Is there any way we can go into Steve's office and take a look at his computer? You're a computer geek, right?

STEWART
No! Well, that's not entirely true. I can look, but no one else here can. What are you thinking?

RICO
My gut's tellin' me that Steve is
up to something.

STEWART
So you want to go through his
computer until we find something
shady? I don't think it's a good
idea.

RICO
Come on, Stu. No one's gotta know,
we'll be in and out. If we don't
find anything, I won't bring it up
again. Cross my heart.

Stewart looks back at Steve and Ralph, who walk away from the
office door.

STEWART
They usually go for a coffee break
right about now. If we do this, we
do it quickly and quietly.

RICO
My two specialties.

Rico pats Stewart on the shoulder.

Music plays - "The Mission Impossible" theme plays.

INT. STEVE'S OFFICE DOORWAY CONTINUOUS

Rico and Stewart approach Steve's office door, trying to be
inconspicuous. Stewart closely stand behind as Rico pulls out
a lock picking set from his jacket pocket and removes a tool.

RICO
When I was a kid, our dad taught us
how to pick open a door lock.

Stewart calmly grabs the doorknob and opens the door.

STEWART
When I was a kid, my dad taught me
how to open a door.

Rico frowns then shoves him inside.

Music - Mission impossible music abruptly ends.

INT. STEVE'S OFFICE CONTINUOUS

Stewart rushes over to Steve's computer. He turns on the monitor.

Rico browses baseball memorabilia hanging on the walls, then focuses on a paper on Steve's desk.

RICO

Wow, this consultant makes that much? Guess my high school teachers were right.

The gun schematic that Steve was previously viewing pops up on screen.

RICO (CONT'D)

Woah, that's a Russian PSM semi-automatic pistol with a double action trigger. And an eight round detachable clip.

STEWART

Wow! How do you know that?

RICO

Ah, I watch a lot of Magnum P.I. Why would Steve be looking at handguns?

Stewart ejects the floppy diskette.

STEWART

The writing on this looks Russian, that explains the Russian gun.

Rico takes it from him and inspects it.

RICO

Huh. I thought that the Russian's were like cold enemies and shit. Why does he have a Russian diskette?

STEWART

I'm unaware of any international projects GarCom has with Russia.

Suddenly, Steve's voice is heard outside the door.

Stewart quickly takes the diskette from Rico and puts it back in the drive, then shuts the monitor. Rico takes a trophy bat off the wall just as Steve enters.

STEVE

What the hell are you two doing in here?

Rico test swings the bat's weight.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Give me that.

Steve tries snatching the bat from Rico, but Rico pulls it away. Rico holds the bat out to Steve, who grabs it. Rico holds on a bit longer, then lets go.

STEWART

I was just finished updating your PC with the newest anti-virus definition and cleaning out temp files. Didn't you get the memo?

STEVE

NO! I didn't. Now get the hell out, both of you.

Stewart rushes out of the office.

Steve grabs Rico by the shoulder before he can leave.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Hey, you, clown?

RICO

You talkin to me?
(Rico say the line from
the movie, 'Taxi driver')

STEVE

You must think you're real hot shit 'cause Caputo risked his career by hiring you. I don't know what the hell you're doin' here in this company but you better watch your back. You don't want to make an enemy of me.

Rico smirks then again repeats the line from the movie, 'Taxi driver'.

Steve points with his imaginary gun finger.

INT. GARCOM CAFE - AFTERNOON

Stewart, Sally, and MIKE (20s, chubby nerd) sit at a table.

Mr. Caputo stand on the cafeteria food line.

Rico rushes into GarCom's cafeteria in search for Stewart repeating the phrase, 'you talkin to me', but spots Mr. Caputo paying at the register. He walks over to Mr. Caputo.

RICO
Hello, Mr. C.

MR. CAPUTO
Just the person I wanted to see.

RICO
You got a nice place here, but I gotta tell you it looks like a freggin' circus seeing these people eat.

MR. CAPUTO
I've seen you eat; you don't even chew your food. Is that all you came here to tell me?

RICO
No, actually, I wanted to ask you your take on Steve Olson.

MR. CAPUTO
I'd rather not discuss other employees. But Steve is a smart, rising manager with a strong personality. Just be professional, watch what you say. Is there anything else?

RICO
No. I just got a funny feelin' he's up to somethin'. Somethin' don't smell right about him.

Mr. Caputo shakes his head, amused.

MR. CAPUTO
Just like your father.
(beat)
By the way, how the fuck does your stool sample end up in a corporate meeting. Please keep personal items out of this building. CAPISCI!

Mr. Caputo smacks Rico with his stool envelope and leaves.

Rico approaches Stewart, Mike, and Sally sitting at a table.

MIKE

The mass is usually harder when near the Rectal sphincter, but softer higher in the alimentary canal.

RICO

What the hell are you talkin' about.

Rico leans over and whispers to Stewart.

RICO (CONT'D)

Stu, about last night. Let's keep this information on the down low. I don't want Mr. Caputo to know. I got a hunch...

Rico studies the groups food.

RICO V.O.

FISH STICKS! You guys are so uncultured.

(beat)

Let's get the hell out of here. I'm takin' you to a real place to eat.

The group looks hesitantly at each other.

INT. RICO'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Sally sits in the passenger's seat nervously watching the road. Mike plays a hand held video in the back seat.

Stewart looks out the window while holding loose bowling balls on his lap.

STEWART

Uh, Rico, where are you taking us?
We've been driving for a while.

Rico peaks at an Alarmas Service slip, then slams on the brakes. A grenade rolls between Sally's feet.

RICO

Before we grab lunch, I need to make a quick stop.

STEWART

Hey, maybe you shouldn't read while your driving.

The grenade rolls again.

SALLY
 (freaked out)
 Please tell me that's not real.

RICO
 Relax, Artie the Snake gave it to me. There's no gunpowder in it. It's a riot when I bring it to a party.

Mike leans over and whispers to Stewart.

MIKE
 Stu, exactly what did Rico do before working at GarCom?

STEWART
 I don't know, but does the Witness Protection Program sound reasonable?

EXT. RICO'S CAR - AFTERNOON

INSERT SIGN - NEW YORK CITY NEXT EXIT

EXT. ALARMAS SECURITY - AFTERNOON

Rico parks the car in front of Alarmas. Carmine sits on a beach chair flanked by Geno standing around with a few Alarmas associates. Police officer passes by eyeing the crew.

Rico parks, quickly gets out of his car, and rushes towards Alarmas. The others inside the car hurry and lock the doors in fear of the neighborhood. Cars locks CLICK.

RICO
 I'm not stayin', I'm here to talk to dad.

Geno peaks into Rico's car as Rico goes to open the front door of Alarmas.

GENO
 What are you a tour guide now?
 What's with the geeks?

RICO
 Just keep an eye on the freggin' car.

Carmine notices Sally through the window and approaches the car. He knocks on her window.

CARMINE

Hello beautiful, I'm Uncle Carmine.

Sally looks out at Carmine and smiles nervously and eyes the car lock for reassurance.

INT. ALARMAS SECURITY - AFTERNOON

Rico enters to find Frank and LOUIE LUMP (60s, crooked nose, dated suit, long Tiparillo cigar) in mid conversation.

RICO

Hey, Louie.

FRANK

Look who it is. Are you here to work?

RICO

No, Dad, listen I wanted to ask you about somethin.

FRANK

Of course it's 'cause you need something.

RICO

Please. Don Vito, it's important.

LOUIE

Look what I have for your pretty girlfriend.

Louie moves his holster and pulls out a black velvet cloth.

RICO

That relation was over long ago.

Louie opens a black velvet box reveling a pair of glistening, diamond earrings. Rico peaks closer.

RICO (CONT'D)

Yeah, right. How much? Eighteen hundred?

LOUIE

These are a one carat, white gold, studded with a F color rating. Try thirty-two hundred. But for you, three thou.

FRANK

Are you freggin' kidding? The kid can't even afford to take his girl to Red Lobster.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

(beat)

Louie put the jewelry away. Rico, seriously, I need you here to open on Saturday to set up the mechanics for a big job in Brooklyn.

RICO

Fine! Dad, remember on the radio, we heard there's a rise in gun violence? Have you spoken to the G. about that?

FRANK

Why do you want to know? You herd something?

RICO

No.

FRANK

Don't lie to me.

RICO

I'm not, I swear. But I got a gut feeling about something, I just want to know if I'm right.

FRANK

What did Nicky get you into?

RICO

Nicky don't know anything about this. I got a feelin'.

Frank sighs, then moves away from a customer waiting to pay.

FRANK

All I know is, lately, there's lots of imported guns surfacing. Mostly Russian. That's all.

RICO

Russian?

Rico hands his dad an envelope, then rummages through a box containing phones and wires.

Frank holds out a service slip to Rico. Rico takes it and reads it.

RICO (CONT'D)

Roxie's! Really?

FRANK

I got no one else I can trust. If I give it to Mitch or Artie, they would never leave.

(beat)

Sounds like a motion detector.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Make sure to bring extra magnetic contacts for the back door. You can take your time there.

Frank winks at Rico.

INT. RICO'S CAR - AFTERNOON

STEWART

Anyone else feel like we're in a Scorsese movie?

SALLY

That slimeball was still staring at me.

MIKE

How much longer do you think Rico is going to be? I need to be back at GarCom to back up Marketing's server and migrate the data tables.

SALLY

Oh! He's coming! Thank God.

Rico acknowledges the crew, opens the car door, and jumps in.

RICO

Alright, who's ready for lunch?

INT. ROXIE'S STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

We follow two YOUNG MEN into the smoky atmosphere of Roxie's club. The room is dimly lit with neon pink and purple lights.

Rico stands near the DJ booth repairing the alarm system. He's people watching as he finishes closing up the panel with a screwdriver.

Rico sees a RUSSIAN MAN squeeze past a group of people behind the DJ booth. His jacket opens slightly, revealing a weapon.

The man quickly covers it up and continues maneuvering through the bar. He then sits on the far side of the bar next to a man in a business suit, who's face is blocked. They begin talking to each other conspiratorially.

Rico keeps an eye on them until the man in the suit is revealed to be STEVE.

BAR AREA

Rico approaches the BARTENDER.

RICO
Hey, Nancy. Could you let Joe know
I'm done here?

The Bartender, notices Rico's expression change, then follows what Rico's eyes are targeting. She points towards a lounge area.

LOUNGE AREA

Rico enters a lounge area, where Joe Va sits on a leather couch speaking with a dancer.

RICO
Hey Joe, I gotta talk to you for a
second.

Joe stands up with SAMONE, 20s, brunette, exotic dancer.

JOE VA
Oh, I'd like you to meet Samone.
She just started working here...

RICO
Yeah, hi. Nice cross, it's nice to
see you're a practicing Christian.

Rico grabs Joe's arm and pulls him to the side.

RICO (CONT'D)
Listen, don't make a stink, but I
saw a strange guy that came heavy,
I mean tucked in his pants heavy.

JOE VA
No shit.

RICO
He's across the bar, near the
cigarette machine talkin' to
someone that I work with.

JOE VA
Really? I thought your company was
a joke. Alright, let me get Kenny.

RICO

No, don't get that maniac involved, he'll beat the crap outta them. I need to know what's going on with these guys. I got an idea.

BAR AREA

Steve and the man converse.

STEVE

So, there were no issues with the shipment?

The man's stone face shakes no.

STEVE (CONT'D)

A contact I know at Port Newark says the bureau's paperwork is sloppy... he altered the carrier's manifest before they began computerizing their system.

STEVE (CONT'D)

If we keep the weight under 50 kilos, we avoid attention from Interpol.

BAR AREA

Samone slinks through the performing dancers and approaches Steve and the gun-toting man. Steve continue his one way conversation as Samone dances sensually around them.

Stewart rushes up to Rico, breathing heavily.

STEWART

Wow, what a great gentleman's establishment. Thanks for inviting me out for a drink.

Stewart tenses nervously as a DANCER passes by, dragging her finger across his shoulders.

RICO

You ever been to a place like this?

STEWART

Can't say that I have. But I know that I'm ready now. My parents prohibited this type...

Rico points behind Stewart towards Steve. Stewart turns.

STEWART (CONT'D)
Holy molly. Is that?

RICO
Steve Olson.

STEWART
What's he doing here? If GarCom...

RICO
That guy he's talkin' to is strapped. I'm telling you; Steve is up to somethin' and it's nothin' good. And if he's doing something at GarCom, don't you want to know?

Stewart huffs, then nods.

STEWART
Okay, okay.

Samone returns and approaches from behind Stewart.

RICO
(to Samone)
What do ya got for me?

SAMONE
They mostly spoke in a foreign language. The only thing I understood was that a ship is going to Gar..Gar--

RICO
--GarCom?

SAMONE
Yes! And the foreign looking guy's name is Illian. I'm sorry, but that's all I got.

Stewart is in a trance staring at Samone's cross buried between her breasts. Rico smacks him in the arm.

RICO
You hear that, buddy?

STEWART
What?

Rico looks up to see Steve and his contact leaving.

RICO

It's show time. Listen, I'm going to find out what this scumbag is up to. You can stay here with Samone and I'll catch up with you later.

Stewart nods to Rico while gazing at Samone's breast.

STEWART

I guess you know what is best for me. Whoa, it's getting hot in here.

EXT. ROXIE'S PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Steve and Illian exit through the back into the parking lot. They get into separate vehicles. Rico pulls out his keys and decides to follow the van.

EXT. TRACKSIDE BAR - NIGHT

Situated alongside railroad tracks sit several, large dumpsters, stripped cars, and the Trackside bar.

Rico's car follows the van to the bar's parking lot. The van turns the corner and goes to the back.

EXT. TRACKSIDE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Rico parks the car near the front, then stealthily gets out. He peaks through a burnt out, abandon car to get a view of what is going on in the back parking lot. Illian gets out of the van. Two LARGE MEN approach the back of the van, open the rear doors, and begin removing unmarked crates.

RICO (O.S.)

What do we have here?

A face suddenly emerges from the car surprising Rico causing a ruckus. The men stop to investigate. Rico then flees the scene.

INT. MR. RUSSO'S HOME - NIGHT

Frank lies comfortably in his family room watching a Hitler documentary. Mrs. Russo hands Frank a cup of coffee.

MRS. RUSSO

With the thousands of channels you get from that ridiculous television, why must you always watch the same old crap?

FRANK

This is not crap. This was real history. Besides, the Jerry Springer show doesn't start until eleven o'clock.

MRS. RUSSO

Pick up the phone, it's for you.

FRANK

Who is it?

MRS. RUSSO

Do I look like your secretary?

FRANK

At least my secretary gives great head, so I'm told.

Mrs. Russo slaps the back of Frank's head with a paperback book.

MRS. RUSSO

There, you got head.

Frank picks up the phone.

FRANK

Speak. Carmine, STOP chewing in my freggin' ear. OK, first give me the good news. Good, now ditch the car. What else... Louie Lump said that the G. is upset about what surfaced at the club? Shit!

Television shows the News about the increase of gun trafficking. Frank jams the phone down.

INT. GARCOM - SERVER ROOM - NIGHT

Ralph stealthily types on a computer mumbling. Mr. Caputo's name appears on a financial account statement. Ralph completes his task and develops a grin.

EXT. CITY THEATER LINE - NIGHT

Vanessa and Fran stand squished outside on a movie theater line.

FRAN

Any luck with Dr. Ferrari and Mrs. Weiss's procedure?

Fran flirts with two ogling men from afar.

VANESSA

I hope that idiot comes through.
Mrs. Weiss deserves to live.
(beat)
Holy shit! It's Tomas?

Vanessa suddenly sees a fashionably dressed man holding a scantily dressed, red-haired woman, tightly around the waist.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

This ought to be fun.

FRAN

No me diga. I knew it. Jessica was right about that slimeball and look at the way he's holding that bitch.

Vanessa grabs hold to Fran's arm.

VANESSA

No, we are not going to start this all over again. I know. Why don't we just go to the Marriott?

Fran flips them the finger while Vanessa whisks her away.

INT. MARRIOTT BAR - NIGHT

Inside the Marriott, Vanessa and Fran sit at a bar enjoying their cocktails. Vanessa sees Paulie nearby, then scans the room for Rico.

EXT. MARRIOTT BAR ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Rico and Kimberly arrive at the same time. Kimberly is wearing a modest, royal blue evening dress.

KIMBERLY

Well, hello Mr. Russo. I'm glad you could make it.

RICO

Nice dress.

KIMBERLY

Thank you for that oleaginous observation.

RICO

What? Oh, I forgot, you don't speak English.

KIMBERLY

I'll have you know that I minored in Latin at Cornell. My vocabulary is quite extensive, far more comprehensive than your remedial catalogue of twelve, trifling words.

RICO

Have you been drinking already?

Kimberly chuckles then grabs Rico's arm.

INT. MARRIOTT BAR - NIGHT

Kimberly and Rico enter. Fran looks up and stops grooving to the music. Vanessa follows Fran's focus then sees Rico.

Rico removes Kimberly's arm. Vince sees Paulie.

RICO

Listen, you're here on your own. Go play, I'm getting a drink.

KIMBERLY

Rico, it's time that you see the big picture. If you want to be a player and climb the corporate ladder, you must mingle with the right people. Rising, young employees would be envious and kill for this opportunity. Come, I want to introduce you to the Director of Marketing.

Rico moves to a bar and orders a drink. Steve and two middle-aged businessmen, TOM and GARY (40s) approach Kimberly.

KIMBERLY (CONT'D)

Good evening gentleman. I would like to introduce you to one of our newest employees, Rico Russo.

They shake hands with Rico and Steve keeps his distance.

TOM

Welcome to GarCom. Rico. So, what's your take working for GarCom so far?

RICO

So far, it's been fun.

Rico raises his glass to Mr. Caputo who's across the room socializing.

TOM

Fun? Amusing adjective!

STEVE

Gentleman, this is the very man who when asked about 401 contributions replied, the detergent? The same man when asked about the IT department's migration to Oracle replied, is that country in Europe?

Steve's comments cause LAUGHTER. Rico turns and whispers to Kimberly.

RICO

(whispers to Kimberly)
Why do I sense you're enjoying this?

Rico sees Vanessa then hastily leaves.

INT. MARRIOTT BAR - NIGHT

Stewart suddenly crosses Rico's path.

RICO

What the hell are you wearing?

STEWART

This is my new black leather jacket. What do you think?

RICO

Fantastic! Now you can be an extra in a Michael Jackson video.

STEWART

So, what happened when you followed Steve.

RICO

I'll tell you later. Don't mention this shit to anyone. Got it?

Stewart follows Rico to Fran and Vanessa.

RICO (CONT'D)

Oh, great. I'm glad you guys are here.

VANESSA

So, who's the bimbo you walked in with?

RICO
Oh, her, well she works for GarCom.
She's an attorney.

VANESSA
Am I supposed to be impressed?

RICO
This is Stu. He's a genius and can
vouch for me.

Vanessa frowns at Stewart's attire. Rico rolls his eyes in
pain as a scruffy man, HARRY (30s) GarCom maintenance man,
recognizes him from across the room and enters the circle.

HARRY
Rico Pots-and-Pans, What's up?
Hello O'Brian.

Harry tips Rico's drink with his beer. Rico leans over and
whispers to Harry.

RICO
Don't call me that here.

Harry and Stewart scrutinize each other's attire.

HARRY
I thought I recognized you in
GarCom's front lobby last week. But
I thought to myself, what would
Pots and.., excuse me, Rico, be
doing here. So, what's the spread
on the Knick game tonight?

Rico walks Harry a few feet away. Vanessa scrutinizes Rico.

RICO
Not involved taking numbers
anymore.

HARRY
They're on a roll! They've won
seven of eight and they're home
tonight. They are a five-point
favorite. I'll take the over.

Vanessa looks coldly at Rico. Rico monitors Steve's actions.

STEWART
Vanessa, how did you and Rico meet?

VANESSA
(*indignant*)
Rico and I met at a club.

Rico looks towards Vanessa.

HARRY
I just want to put fifty dollars on
the Knick game!

RICO
Did you hear what I said? I'm not
taking bets anymore!

HARRY (CONT'D)
Come on, I got a good feeling on
this one.

RICO (CONT'D)
Look at yourself. Do you remember
what happened the last time I took
your bet?

Rico shakes his head in embarrassment.

RICO (CONT'D)
See that skinny guy with that
ridiculous shirt standing by the
bar? That's Paulie. He'll take
your action.

INT. MARRIOTT BAR - NIGHT

Kimberly unexpectedly enters the circle. Harry flees away
seeing Kimberly.

KIMBERLY
Hello Mr. O'Brien.
(beat)
And who do we have here?

STEWART
This is Vanessa. She's Rico's
friend.

KIMBERLY
Hi, Kimberly Lee McFeeny. I happen
to have the good fortune of working
alongside Rico. He's such a
remarkable person.
(beat)
That's funny, Rico never mentioned
he had a girlfriend.

Vanessa stares coldly back at Kimberly.

KIMBERLY (CONT'D)

I'm terribly sorry but I thought you knew that Rico and I work closely together. I didn't intend to startle you.

VANESSA

Oh dear, I didn't mean to startle you. I know all about you rich, uptight, spoiled, brats. You think you can fool people with those pompous, polite wisecracks, and that cheap ass dress. You don't fool me. Now get those fake tits out of my face before we go at it girl.

Stewart chugs his beer bottle.

KIMBERLY

Well, it seems that you and Mr. Russo may have some romantic ties. Had Rico been forthcoming about your relationship, perhaps this entire conversation could have been avoided.

Rico returns to Stewart and Vanessa.

Vanessa gives Rico a cold look then storms away.

RICO

Great! What did you say to her?

KIMBERLY

I told her the truth.

RICO

I don't believe you. Why must you be such a bitch?

Kimberly chuckles, grabs a Jell-O shot from a passing waitress, and salutes Rico.

PHONE BOOTH

Steve converses on a hotel phone keeping his eyes on both Mr. Caputo and Rico.

INT. MARRIOTT BAR - NIGHT

Vanessa returns to where Fran is sitting.

FRAN

Uh-oh, you got that look. What happened over there?

VANESSA

Ah dose mios, dame pacencias. I don't know who is more idiotic, that blond bitch or this idiota. I should kick both their asses.

FRAN

Hey, hey, easy. I thought you like him!

(beat)

So what did he say?

VANESSA

I don't understand how someone can be so clueless.

Rico returns.

RICO

Vanessa, we need to talk.

Vanessa turns and stares at anything other than Rico. Fran begins talking with a tall, stylish man.

RICO (CONT'D)

Vanessa, please! There's something you should know.

VANESSA

Yeah, that you're a swine?

RICO

Vanessa, I'm begging you. Let's go outside where it's quiet.

Vanessa studies Rico with trepidation.

VANESSA

(*indignant*)

Fran, I'm leaving. Let me hear what this idiot has to say.

FRAN

No problem girl.

Fran looks up and down Rico with suspicion then smiles at her new male friend.

Rico updates Paulie to his situation and hands him his keys.

Vanessa and Rico leave.

EXT. MARIOTT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

RICO
Listen, my house is a few minutes
away. Let's just go there and talk
like two civilized adults.

VANESSA
How will Fran get home?

RICO
Don't worry about it. My cousin
Paulie will take good care of her.
Paulie is probably all over her
now.

INT. RICO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vanessa and Rico stand in front of his building apartment
door.

VANESSA
I thought you came from money?

Rico shakes his head and leads her into the building.

RICO
Make yourself at home.

VANESSA
Wow! Nice place.

RICO
Thanks. I know how to use tools.
What are you having, red or beer?

Vanessa examines a photo.

VANESSA
I can't stay long. I got to be at
work early tomorrow. I just want
to hear what this asshole has to
say.

(beat)
Wow, who's the dick with the orange
bell bottoms and long hair?

Vanessa removes a VHS tape from the couch.

RICO
Funny! OK, we are even.
(beat)
I think you're reading too much
into this.

(MORE)

RICO (CONT'D)

Like I was trying to say before,
Kimberly is a little manipulating
bitch.

VANESSA

Her expensive acrylic manicure and
her studded, hoop diamond earrings
are inviting for most weak-minded,
primitive men.

(beat)

RAGING BULL? Do you realize this
movie doesn't portray women well.

RICO

It's just a freggin' movie. Relax,
and turn around. I'll give you a
shoulder rub to relax you.

VANESSA

Are you kidding? You're Sicilian
and Puerto Rican. I'll get
pregnant just sitting next to you.

RICO

So, you think I have no willpower?

VANESSA

Think! Shit, I know you don't.

Rico places their drinks down near his blinking answer
machine, takes Vanessa's hand, and looks into her eyes.

RICO

Please listen. My intensions
weren't to get you jealous. I
really enjoy being with you and I
think you're great. I would never
do anything to hurt you. That's the
honest truth.

MUSIC PLAYS - "NEW YORK STATE OF MIND" BY BILLIE JOEL

Rico softly kisses her hand, then with both hands, tenderly
moves her hair from her face, tucks it behind her ears, and
moves in for a kiss.

Rico's answering machine picks up and we hear the BEEP.

The message plays

"Rico this is Stu, something terrible happened to Mr. Caputo
and..

Rico quickly picks up leaving Vanessa cold.

RICO (CONT'D)
 Stu, slow down. What! When? Where
 is he now? St. Joseph's Hospital?
 Alright, thanks for letting me
 know.

INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION AREA - NIGHT

Rico and Vanessa arrive at St. Joe's hospital's busy ER.

VANESSA
 Stay here, I know the women at the
 front desk.

Rico stands by a cigarette machine waiting as Vanessa returns
 with badges.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
 Here, put this on.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Rico and Vanessa locate Nick resting. A NURSE tends to Mr.
 Caputo.

RICO
 Aye, Nicky, can you hear me?

Mr. Caputo slowly opens his eyes and acknowledges Rico.

RICO (CONT'D)
 What the hell happened?

MR. CAPUTO
 I was run over by a fuckin car,
 that's what happened.

RICO
 Really! Have you noticed any un
 unusual things going on at GarCom?

MR. CAPUTO
 Nothing out of the ordinary.

RICO
 What about Steve lately and his
 butt plug friend Ralph? Anything
 odd about them?

MR. CAPUTO
 Steve? No! The last conversation we
 had, concerned a new consultant
 working in his team, but nothing...

RICO

Was the consultant's name Illian?

MR. CAPUTO

Yeah, how did you know?

RICO

I came across an invoice with his name on Steve's desk, and get this, Illian carries a piece.

MR. CAPUTO

I don't believe it... Steve's preparing an important presentation for a big client. I can't image he would hire someone shady...

(beat)

How do you know this? Oh, I forgot, you're Frank's son.

Rico's facial expression changes Mr. Caputo's outlook.

MR. CAPUTO (CONT'D)

That can't be. That weasel. Funny! All the years I worked in the Bronx with your father, not once were we taken advantage of... All I know is that I can't focus on this right now - we got this AutoTech presentation. We agreed to come up with solutions to market the company's global audience. How am I going to help...

(winces in pain)

...develop and pitch a presentation lying here? I'm not Steve's biggest fan, but, if his team gets the contract, I'm afraid things here will get dicey for me and our team.

RICO

I'll come up with an idea and pitch the presentation. It's a slam dunk. Stewart explained a lot to me. Stu can help me. Don't worry. I'll figure this shit out.

Mr. Caputo stares at Rico pacing around the room.

RICO (CONT'D)

I know you think I'm not ready, but I can do this.

VANESSA

He has great ideas.

RICO
Oh, I forgot, this is my friend, my
girlfriend, Vanessa.

MR. CAPUTO
So, this is the girl who turned
your life around.

Rico looks at Vanessa and smiles. Mr. Caputo studies Rico.
Nurse returns and nudges everyone out.

MR. CAPUTO (CONT'D)
You do have a competent team.

Mr. Caputo slowly nods in favor. Rico develops a smile.

NURSE ANGEL
Don't worry. We will take good care
of Mr. Caputo. And by the way,
Pedro and I are thankful for
Alarmas' protection.

Nurse Angel winks at Rico. Rico's eyes widen as he suddenly
recognizes the nurse.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Rico is quiet as he and Vanessa drive from the hospital.

VANESSA
So, I'm your girlfriend. That's
strange, I don't recall discussing
a long-term relationship with you.

Rico nibbles on a fingernail. Vanessa stares down Rico,
waiting for a response.

RICO
It's that presentation that worries
me, ALRIGHT! I don't believe Nicky
talked me into this. Executives!
(beat)
Board room! What the fuck was he
thinking?

VANESSA
HIM! You told me before that all
you wanted was a chance to prove
yourself. Well, here's your
chance, not only to Mr. Caputo and
your father, but to yourself. That
you have the ability to compete at
the corporate level.

RICO

Yeah, but I'm not a smooth talker like all those smart business guys. I sound like I received speech lessons from Sylvester Stallone.

VANESSA

Rico... I know you can. If fact, if you go down, we all go down.

Rico looks to Vanessa, absorbs her words, then softly kisses her hand.

INT. RICO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rico arrives home exhausted. He grabs a drink and plops down. His eyes intensively scan the room in thought.

He picks up a Mad magazine from his coffee table and desperately scans through it. He thumbs pass a few pages and suddenly, his eyes widen. He reaches for a napkin and begins drawing.

EXT. VANESSAS HOUSE - MORNING

Music plays - Hip Hop Early the next morning, Fran pulls up to Vanessa's house honking her horn.

Vanessa rushes into her car and the two quickly drive off.

FRAN

So how did it go last night with the Italian stallion? Was he two timing you?

VANESSA

Please, he's cute, but he ain't no stallion. And no, I don't believe he's got a thing for this witch...

(beat)

entonces, we had some wine, some soft music, we held each other. I thought he'd be all over me, but he just held and kissed me.

FRAN

That's it? What's wrong with him?

Vanessa internalizes.

VANESSA

I hope this pendejo knows what he's doing.

FRAN

Well, you told me that he's intelligent.

VANESSA

No, I told you that he says some intelligent things, that doesn't make him intelligent.

(beat)

Do you know that he stopped by my house when I wasn't home and installed a new phone line for my mother? She was very happy. Who does that shit?

Vanessa wipes away a tear.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I just happen to have a lot on my mind.

(beat)

My brother is on one of his benders, Mommi's health issues, Papi's Alzheimer's, and my student loan payment is not allowing me to save for that two-family house. Do you think it's me?

FRAN

Hey, it's not you, so don't even go there. By the sounds of this Rico character, he seems like a project.

Fran drives by and points to a run-down, house with a for sale sign.

FRAN (CONT'D)

Vanessa, is that the one you are interested in?

Vanessa remains solemn and quiet.

FRAN (CONT'D)

Didn't you say that sweet Mrs. Weiss lives somewhere on this street.

(beat)

Yeah, only ten percent to qualified buyers, in your dreams.

INT. GARCOM/RICO'S CUBICLE - MORNING

Car keys, bubble gum, and a drawing on paper are tossed onto a desk.

An energized Rico picks up his desk phone and makes calls.

BEGIN MONTAGE

-- In a GarCom conference room, Rico's napkin drawing of his idea is taped to an easel. He stands in front of a group explaining his idea.

-- Mike disconnects a computer and swiftly takes it.

-- Rico, inconspicuously, steals an office phone.

-- Stewart reviews plans.

-- Sally creates financial graphs at her desk.

-- Sluggo and Rico review a schematic in the back of a noisy bowling alley, and near a broken Spy Hunter video game.

-- Rico scoots a few union workers, with hard hats and tools, through GarCom's shipping bay.

-- Ralph speaks to Steve as Steve watches nefariously from his office, Caputo's team working.

END MONTAGE

INT. CITY CARDIOLOGY - MORNING

Vanessa speaks on the phone filing away a patient folder.

Fran walks up to Vanessa.

FRAN

Look! Mrs. Weiss and her dumb-ass son just waked in. What do you want to do?

Vanessa abruptly hangs up the phone.

VANESSA

Hello, Mrs. Weiss! It's nice to see you. Oh, what a beautiful blouse you're wearing today.

MRS. WEISS

Yes, I came from my house.

Ted sticks his fat head in the small window opening.

TED

These are signed Power of Attorney forms for my grandmother.

Vanessa finds a smile and takes the papers from Ted. Ted catches a glimpse of Fran's figure. Vanessa closes the reception window on his fingers.

TED (CONT'D)

Ouch!

VANESSA

I'm terribly sorry.

(beat)

Mrs. Weiss, it's time to come in.

I'm going to take you into room

two. We are going to check your

pacemaker.

Vanessa pushes her towards a room and purposely past her son causing Mrs. Weiss's cane to jab Ted in his private area.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Sorry, my fault.

Ted, and his High Times magazine, looks over Vanessa's shoulder with a look of worry.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

There's no need to worry Ted. Wow.

You must work out.

Her touch temporarily paralyzes him. Vanessa slowly guides him back to the reception area.

INT. STEVE'S OFFICE - MORNING

Steve is behind his desk listening to a phone conversation.

RUSSIAN MAN

The packages are being loaded for shipment as we speak. I'll contact you once all parties are satisfied.

The man hangs up.

Steve hangs up his phone. Ralph pops his head into Steve's office.

RALPH

The presentation is about to start.

STEVE

Is everything set?

Ralph nods then quickly vanishes.

Steve opens a draw revealing a German Lugar and drugs. He reaches into the draw.

INT. GARCOM - MAIN CUBICLE AREA - MORNING

Sally, Mike, and Stewart, worried, congregate near a cubical. Mike plays with his handheld video game.

SALLY

Where's Rico? The meeting is about to start.

STEWART

Maybe he had a stupid service call in the Bronx.

(beat)

Check out who arrived.

The group observe a team of business executives slowly entering the conference room.

RICO

Who's calling my service calls stupid?

SALLY

Oh, Rico, thank God you've--

--Sally is galvanized by Rico's rich business suit and newly stylish appearance. She hands him a folder.

RICO

Mike, is everything set with you and Sluggo?

MIKE

Wait... Wait... YES.

RICO

Stu, are we good?

Stewart nods. Rico extends his hand out. The others place a hand onto Rico's hand.

RICO (CONT'D)

We all worked hard on this presentation. Everyone, stick to the plan. Kick ass on three, ready! One, two...

INT. CITY CARDIOLOGY - EXAM ROOM - MORNING

Vanessa changes a setting on the medical programmer while eyeing Mrs. Weiss and Dr. Ferrari.

DR. FERRARI

We've made some small changes. How do you feel now Mrs. Weiss?

MRS. WEISS
That's better. I feel much better,
thank you.

Mr. Ferrari pats Vanessa's rump. Vanessa looks up to the ceiling in disgust then purposely opens a cabinet door, smashing Dr. Ferrari's forehead.

INT. GARCOM CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Rico enters Garcom's conference room. Inside, GarCom and AutoTech executives are slowly finding their seats.

Rico, confident, makes his way to an available seat. Sitting regally at one end of the table and with his is AutoTech team is CEO, JEFFERY DICKINSON. He's plump, tan, 60's, cowboy hat.

STEVE
What are you doing here and where
is Caputo?
(beat)
Oh, that's right, he received a
boo-boo and perhaps having some
legal issues with corporate.
Typical criminal.

Steve LAUGHS. Rico ignores Steve's sarcasm and soaks up the moment.

RICO'S FLASHBACK:

While Autotech executives sip water, review documents, and converse, Rico recalls Alarmas employees drinking alcohol, devouring Chinese food, and counting cash like animals devouring their prey...

END FLASHBACK.

Steve begins the marketing presentation by signaling for the projector to be started.

EXT. ALARMAS FRONT - MORNING

Army truck pulls in front of Alarmas. Louie Lump and a few Alarmas employees stand waiting. Artie The Snake jumps out of the truck eating a White Castle hamburger.

ARTIE
Louie, Rico was right on.

Artie gives Louie Lump five.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
 We arrived at the place just like
 Rico told us.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
 That shit was off the hook. Those
 guys saw we weren't playing and
 drop their guns faster than Hearn's
 dropping Duran.

Series of shots showing ARMY MEN rustling up a few gun
 traffickers' and securing the gun crates. Artie opens the
 truck's rear curtain.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
 Tadaa!

Sitting alongside a few armed Army Men, and on top of several
 crates, are bound and beaten gun traffickers.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
 Once we unload the merchandise,
 we'll bring them to the Army annex
 on 189th street. It's boxing and
 martial arts day. We can use them
 for practice.
 (beat)
 OK you faggots, unload this shit
 into the store.

INT. GARCOM CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

STEVE
 ... then the AutoTech logo follows.
 We have two Academy award actors on
 board jockeying for the voice over
 advertisement dialogue.

The conference room's lights are turned on.

STEVE (CONT'D)
 Gentleman, if you turn to page
 three in the presentation report
 you can see that our team's data
 shows projected revenue...

All eyes focus on Mr. Dickinson.

Mr. Dickinson repositions his large cigar to the other side
 of his mouth.

MR. DICKINSON
 I understand and respect GarCom's
 stellar reputation.
 (MORE)

MR. DICKINSON (CONT'D)

This presentation is touching
targeting human emotions during
difficult times.

(beat)

Is there anything else you have?

Rico takes a deep breath then stands.

RICO

(composed)

Men, and women, my name is Russo,
Rico Russo. I'm filling in for Mr.
Caputo who unfortunate couldn't
make it today.

(beat)

We all know the reason you're here.
It's to regain control of your
product market. Let's face it,
last year you guys blew it with
that ridiculous commercial.

Mumbling noises is heard as some executives become
appalled. Kimberly Lee looks down in embarrassment.

STEVE

I apologize for Mr. Russo's
marketing insensitivity.

(beat)

I assure you sir that GarCom's
recent financial position in last
month's Crane magazine list has
nothing to do with Mr. Russo's
desperate attempt to--

MR. DICKINSON

--Sit down son.

Rico sits down.

MR. DICKINSON (CONT'D)

Not you, Mr. Olson.

Steve uncomfortably sits back down.

MR. DICKINSON (CONT'D)

Mr. Russo, I'm waiting.

The conference doors burst open. Stewart rolls in a large
device covered with a black satin cloth.

STEVE

What's going on here?

RICO

Mr. Caputo was the lead for our
concept design.

(MORE)

RICO (CONT'D)

Mr. Caputo felt that this device could fill a niche in the PC industry and add money, I mean, revenue using some of AutoTech's subsidiaries.

Rico removes the black cover while Stewart plugs the device into a wall.

RICO (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Millennium, the AutoPOD 2000.

All eyes are glued to the device that resembles a morphed video gaming machine and an office cubicle on steroids.

RICO (CONT'D)

Please excuse its crudeness. Due to Mr. Caputo's sudden accident, we didn't have time to make it look pretty. But check this out. This machine not only has a computer, but the capability to generate electricity while working.

The crowd moves closer to the device.

RICO (CONT'D)

Mounted inside is a GarCom or AutoTech computer. This device also contains the Merlin phone system, coaxial cabling for advanced data communications, and all other necessary amenities...

The suits marvel at the devices' interior technology.

RICO (CONT'D)

Employees sit comfortably in a swivel, leather chair. Workers push the racing pedals creating an electrical charge. That charge is sent through a standard cable to an inverter receiver down in the utility room. This receiver then redirects the charge back to the utility company collecting energy credit from various energy suppliers.

Rico smiles at Stewart.

RICO (CONT'D)

And if you have been paying attention to local news, you would know that there's a shortage of power spreading. Imagine a product which not only benefits the workers, but saves the environment saves the company money.

Many executives share their enthusiasm.

RICO (CONT'D)

We wouldn't have to outsource our business to companies overseas. Stewart has all the data and logistics, is that the right word?... and cost manufacturing.

Stewart gives Rico a thumbs up.

AUTOTECH EXECUTIVE #2

We can create energy credits.

AUTOTECH EXECUTIVE #3

I recently read an article about human energy driven power generators. This could lead into large, grid energy storage.

AUTOTECH EXECUTIVE #2

This type of renewable energy can be big.

RICO

I don't know a lot about energy, but what I do know is that electricity is produced, not found like gas and oil. Prices of electricity are bound to increase.

Rico points to Mr. Dickinson to enter the POD.

Mr. Dickinson carefully sits. The POD's computer screen illuminates showing the Auto-Tech logo. The monitor then shows a surveillance video of Steve standing at the buildings loading docks.

VIDEO PLAYS:

The guns will be arriving from our Bronx facility for distribution. The crates will be ready for departure. I've got Ralph assisting me with our off-shore accounts. All the blame will be pointing to Caputo and that idiot Rico.

RICO

I noticed that the shipping bays where not adequately fitted with current surveillance cameras, so my father's company donated a few, free of charge. Mike helped with the setup, Sally investigated, and Stewart help bring it all together with some interesting footage as you can see.

Everyone turns to Steve and Ralph. Rico looks at a wall clock.

RICO (CONT'D)

And as we speak, friends of my father are working alongside law enforcement assisting in the recovery of Mr. Olson's merchandise.

Series of shots showing army men rustling up a few gun traffickers' and securing the gun crates.

INT. GARCOM FRONT ENTRANCE - MORNING

Geno is standing looking at surveillance photos. Ralph rushes through GarCom's main lobby.

Geno trips Ralph and grabs him by the hair.

Steve stealthily passes by and exits the front entrance.

EXT. GARCOM FRONT ENTRANCE - MORNING

CARMINE

There he is! Get the fuck over here you rat bastard.

Carmine throws the rest of his food at Steve. Joe Va drops a surveillance photo and quickly grab hold of Steve.

STEVE

You have nothing on me. I know my rights. My lawyer--

--Carmine punches Steve in the stomach dropping him to his knees. Carmine stands over him wiping his mouth.

CARMINE

I was all set to meet Daisy and get some action. I'm ready to conquer the world, but, no, I get a service call from my fathead brother.

(MORE)

CARMINE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Nicky was right, you look like a weasel.

The men take Steve outside and thrust him into a car. Steve screams as the door catches his ankle.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

You better not get any blood on these seats.

GENO

Nicky says to drop him off at the 43rd precinct. Tape this note to this scumbag's body. Nicky will follow up, just uh, don't leave any marks on him.

INT. GARCOM CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

RICO

So, what do you think?

MR. DICKINSON

Well, Mr. Russo, I was very moved by your presentation. You speak from the heart, I like that. And I like your ideas. If this company doesn't recognize your true worth, then you can work for me.

RICO

Thanks, Mr. D. for listening. My father once told me to give it to them straight.

Mr. Dickinson is suddenly surprised by Rico's city hug.

RICO (CONT'D)

I'd love to continue this, but I have some business with my father.

MR. DICKINSON

That's wonderful to see. City folk still embracing family values.

INT. GARCOM LOBBY - MORNING

Vanessa scoots past two security guards holding Ralph in the main lobby. She sees Rico sauntering up to her.

VANESSA

Rico, I have wonderful news. You would never believe what happened this morning... Oh, before I tell you, how did your presentation go?

RICO

It went good. Wow! For the first time in my life, I feel I accomplished something important. I did something good without screwing up... Thanks for believin' in me. It was your encouragement that inspired me.

Rico reflects in thought.

RICO (CONT'D)

It somehow feels like the movies where the good guy spoils the crime and gets the pretty girl at the end.

Vanessa smiles and gives Rico a big hug.

INT. GARCOM LOBBY - MORNING

Frank and Nicky Caputo enter GarCom's lobby. Frank slowly takes in the surroundings.

FRANK

I got to handed to you Nicky. I was pissed that you left Alarmas, for this... After a while, I sensed that you were happy with your life. That's what I want for Rico.

MR. CAPUTO

It's hard for us to let go.

They both nod at one another. Rico approaches them holding Vanessa's hand.

RICO

Nicky, Dad! Cool. Dad, listen. before you start bustin' my balls, there...

FRANK

No. Stop and you listen. It looks like I might have been wrong about what is best for you. Nicky filled me in on what happened. By you taking care of those bastards, the G. is very appreciative.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Makes all of us look good.
 (beat)
 You might have a future with this
 Mickey Mouse Company After-all.

Frank and Nicky salute Rico with their Styrofoam cups.

RICO
 Dad, thanks. All this time I
 thought you were against me working
 for a legit company. It was you who
 sent Nicky my resume.

FRANK
 Thank your mother. She kept bustin'
 my cogliones.
 (beat)
 By the way, do you have something
 for me?

Frank signals with his fingers for the cash. Rico reluctantly
 reaches into his wallet and hands his father cash.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 You must be Vanessa? Wow. I can
 see why my son is suddenly
 successful.

Rico yanks the box from Frank's hand, then softly hands the
 velvet box to Vanessa. Vanessa opens the box and marvels at
 the gift.

VANESSA
 WOW!

RICO
 A little something for being so
 wonderful and believing in me.

VANESSA
 ...and intelligent, sophisticated..

RICO
 Let's get outta hear. I want to
 hear all about this wonderful news.

Rico reaches for her hand and the two exit the building.

Music plays - "Like gold" by Angie Rose

Mr. Dickinson waves his cowboy hat towards Rico to enter his
 parked limo.

Rico signals Vanessa to join him towards the limo.

THE END