

Kass & Makeup

"Pilot"

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN (PLAYBACK)

A clip from an old hit show, 'The Family'. The Wire meets Sopranos. VINCENZO (VINCE) CANTONE, a Mafia Don trying to deal with the dual worlds of his underworld family and his rapidly disintegrating family at home.

On screen, Vince's wife GINA can barely contain her hurt and rage as she confronts Vince.

GINA

Is he dead?

Vince remains cold and silent.

GINA (CONT'D)

Did you kill him?

VINCE

Don't ask me about the family, Gina.

GINA

He is my family! He's my sister's son!
You're my *husband* - you are not my
blood!

VINCE

I'm not your blood?!

GINA

DID YOU KILL HIM?!

VINCE

...No.

GINA

Swear it to me. Swear on your mother
and your children.

VINCE

I swear... on my mother and our
children - I did not kill your
sister's son.

CLOSE on Michael for his 'catchphrase' from the show.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCE (CONT'D)

Nothing is more important than The Family. You know that.

Gina breaks down and pulls Vince tight, hugging him.

GINA

I don't believe you.

The SOUND of a bottle breaking O.S. takes us out of the playback.

INT. OLD MAN'S APARTMENT - OAKWOODS - NIGHT

An OLD ASIAN MAN is watching "The Family" on TV.

He glances out his window onto the courtyard of the apartment complex. A LOUD PARTY is in full swing around the pool.

He looks annoyed. He picks up a phone and dials.

OLD ASIAN MAN

Hello... this is the second time I'm calling... you have to come over here... everything too loud...

CAMERA MOVES outside with the old man's look.

EXT. OAKWOOD APARTMENTS - POOL - NIGHT

Would-be STARLETS, touring MUSICIANS, a transient mix of Hollywood hopefuls mingle at a pool party in the complex courtyard. They are drinking, smoking weed, dancing.

Among the crowd, A MAN carries an unconscious YOUNG BLONDE over his shoulder. Noticeable but not noteworthy.

TIME LAPSE - NIGHT DISSOLVES TO DAY.

EXT. OAKWOOD APARTMENTS - MORNING

The morning light reveals the tawdriness of the scene - broken bottles; a few partiers sleeping it off on deck chairs.

Welcome to Hollywood - no glitter, no tinsel. In the glaring California sun we spot a SIGN: 'Oakwood Apartments. Short term/Long term Furnished Suites'.

CAMERA DRIFTS across the courtyard to focus on an apartment.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

A large studio apartment - kitchen, dinette and large living room/bedroom. A lot of life is crammed into a little space.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There are photos and other memorabilia of a once prominent actor's life -- a few Golden Globe and Emmy Awards.

The place is mess - dirty laundry, food containers, mail, bedding and towels strewn about.

MICHAEL KASS (46) - the actor we saw as Vince in the clip, is sleeping atop the bed, still fully clothed.

A PHONE RING startles him awake. He's hung over.

MICHAEL

Hello?

HOWIE

So did you get my messages?

MICHAEL

Who is this?

HOWIE

Who is this? It's Howard Simon, your agent.

MICHAEL

Jesus, Howie. What time is it?

HOWIE

It's 8:15 - 45 minutes before your nine AM *audition*. I sent you 3 texts last night. Tell me you got them. And don't call me Howie.

He has no clue... about much of anything right now.

MICHAEL

Yeah. I, uh, I got em... I think... I must have had a rough night.

HOWIE

I thought you stopped drinking.

MICHAEL

I wasn't drinking, I had a couple of drinks.

HOWIE

That's drinking. Look, don't blow this audition. It's not so easy getting you seen these days.

Michael turns towards the bed.

MICHAEL

I know, I know... you're a genius.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He now notices there's a NAKED GIRL in his bed, stomach down, head turned away from him. A distinct tattoo of an angel is visible on her exposed shoulder.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Oh...

HOWIE

What?

MICHAEL

There's a girl in my bed.

HOWIE

Another hooker?

MICHAEL

No, I think it's my neighbor.

HOWIE

Good for you.

MICHAEL

No, shut up... This is weird.

HOWIE

Well, get her on the walk of shame and don't be late for the audition.

MICHAEL

Okay, Howie, I got it.

HOWIE

Howard!

Michael hangs up. Walks towards the bed tentatively.

MICHAEL

Vanessa? I think we got a little wasted, kid. Look, no need to be embarrassed, I don't think anything happened. Vanessa?

Michael gets to the other side of the bed and finally sees Vanessa's face.

Her eyes are open and glazed over. Her skin is unnaturally pale. There's no question she's DEAD.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Oh God...

He completely freaks out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He looks around the room, desperately. Goes to the front door, opens it to yell for help, then changes his mind.

He closes the door and goes for the phone. He dials 911.

911 (O.S.)

Nine one one, please state your emergency.

MICHAEL

I'm... There's a girl. I woke up and she's dead...

911 (O.S.)

What's your name, Sir?

He thinks about this for the first time.

MICHAEL

My name? Why?... No, it's okay, I'm wrong. We're good.

911 (O.S.)

Sir?

MICHAEL

I'll call you back.

He hangs up, even more rattled.

His eyes go directly to the Fridge. A BUSINESS CARD is attached under a 'The Family' fridge magnet.

He grabs the card.

INSERT: KASS SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

A 1994 Mercedes SL500 that has seen better days starts out of the garage and SLAMS ON THE BRAKES as a CITY BUS suddenly appears directly in front of his car, and pulls to a stop.

On the side of the bus is a MASSIVE AD for 'THE FAMILY' COMPLETE SERIES BOX SET DVD - Starring MICHAEL KASS.

'NOTHING is more important than The Family.'

The IMAGE of Michael as Vince pointing a gun is aimed directly at Michael. An unsettling sight.

One of the BUS RIDERS, looks out the window at Michael and recognizes him. Waves tentatively.

Michael slinks down in his seat as the car screeches away.

EXT. KASS SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS - DAY

A strip mall in the San Fernando Valley.

INT. ALI'S OFFICE - KASS SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS

ALLISON (ALI) KASS, 40's attractive, tough and clever is in her private office talking on speakerphone, while making a coffee.

ALI

So you think your husband's having an affair?

CUSTOMER

A GAY affair.

ALI

Uh-huh. What makes you think your husband might be gay?

Photos on the wall show Ali in LAPD uniform as a younger woman. Commendations for making Detective first grade. Commendations for bravery.

CUSTOMER

He hardly touches me anymore. We have relations maybe once or twice a month.

Photos from a 'retirement' party. Prominent among the photos are shots of her with a strapping, handsome detective we will later know as her partner, HARRISON (HARRY) POTTER.

ALI

And how long have you been married?

CUSTOMER

Forty years.

ALI

And you're getting it twice a month?
Honey...

Close on a photo of Ali with her TWO CHILDREN, JAMES, 9 and KENDRA, 15.

ALI (CONT'D)

...what makes you think he's seeing a man.

CUSTOMER

Please... No woman would have him.

EXT. KASS SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS

Michael comes to the front door, only to find it locked.

He looks inside and locks eyes with HARRISON POTTER.

Though a bit older than the photo in Ali's office, he is still an imposing figure, hard muscled and yet clearly graced with an innate sweetness - like a somewhat intimidating Labrador.

Michael bangs on the door and Harrison approaches.

HARRISON

Hey! Michael Kass!

MICHAEL

Yeah. Open the door!

HARRISON

Do you remember me? Harrison Potter? I used to work with Allison in Homicide?

MICHAEL

Sure. Whatever. Open the door!

HARRISON

Yeah, in about 15 minutes, Mike.

MICHAEL

What? No. Open the door.

HARRISON

We open at nine. It's policy.

MICHAEL

What are you, the secretary?

HARRISON

No, partner. I've been working with Allison about 3 months now. God, this is amazing. I'm such a big fan, Mike.

MICHAEL

You're a fan? Great, listen to me. Go to your heart. I'm asking you to go to your heart.

(shift)

AND OPEN THE GOD DAMN DOOR!

INT. KASS SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS - OUTER OFFICE

Harrison is leading an edgy Michael through the outer office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON

I really should have you wait till we open but... what can I say... I still watch the reruns every night, it's a religious thing with me.

MICHAEL

That's great.

HARRISON

Hey, can you do the line? You know, nothing... nothing is more important-

MICHAEL

Kind of in the middle of something, Harry.

HARRISON

Yeah, right. Oh, Harrison, please. Or Potter. Or Potts. I get a lot of crap being named Harry Potter these days.

MICHAEL

Sure.

HARRISON

Thanks. Let me just check with her that it's an okay time.

MICHAEL

Sure Harry. You go check first.

HARRISON

Harrison.

MICHAEL

Absolutely.

INT. ALI'S OFFICE

Harrison peaks his head thru the door.

HARRISON

Allison, your ex is here. Is it okay if...

Michael comes crashing past Harrison.

MICHAEL

Ali, you have to help me.

Ali immediately launches in at Michael. No one is listening to anyone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI

Are you kidding me? How the hell do you have the nerve to walk into my office? I've been calling you for 6 weeks. Where's my checks, Michael? Three months of alimony and child support. I know it's easy for you to blow me off, but the kids? You don't even care about them anymore? I can't keep making excuses for you to them.

MICHAEL

Some things happened and I swear to God Almighty, Allison, I had nothing to do with this. You know me. I'm a screw up sometimes, yes, but you know I'm not a bad person. You know I would never hurt anyone. Would you please listen to me? Ali...

Harry backs away, uncomfortable and sensitive to the situation. He retreats to the outer office.

Michael realizes he needs to shut up if he's going to get anywhere.

ALI

You have responsibilities. Do what you have to do but don't make your family suffer just because you decide to live your life like some spoiled, stupid...

Ali suddenly realizes Michael is not putting up a defense.

ALI (CONT'D)

What's wrong? If you're actually listening to me something happened.

MICHAEL

There's this girl, Vanessa Blake-

ALI

Oh Jesus, pregnant?

MICHAEL

No. She's this young girl, separated from her husband. She moved into the complex a month ago, wannabe actress, We talk sometimes about the business and acting. I was just trying to help her out. No strings.

ALI

Uh-huh. And now there's a string?

MICHAEL

She's dead. In my bed!

ALI

(lost for words)
Yeah, that's a string.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MICHAEL

But I swear to God, Allison - I don't know how she got there. We were friends. That's all. We went out for dinner last night, *as friends* and we wound up at some club -

He shows her an ink stamp on his hand.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

CLB, that's the stamp they do at the door.

ALI

Who goes clubbing with a hot, little friend?

MICHAEL

Who said she was hot?

Ali just stares at him a moment.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Okay. But I'm telling you there is no way she would have wound up in my bed.

ALI

Michael, what do you want from me? Go to the police. Call a lawyer.

MICHAEL

And say what? I've got no answers for anything. I don't know how I got home. I don't know how she got there. I don't know what happened.

Harrison enters the office.

HARRISON

Sorry. Michael, did you call 911?

MICHAEL

Yeah, but I got scared - I hung up.

HARRISON

I just heard on the scanner - CSI and the coroner are at The Oakwood.

MICHAEL

But I hung up.

ALI

You can't just hang up. They trace the call.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARRISON

This girl didn't just die, she was murdered.

MICHAEL

I know! That's why you've gotta help me.

ALI

(frustrated)

Dammit, Michael - Why do YOUR problems still become MY problems? What am I supposed to do - break the law for you? Harbor a suspect? Innocent people go to the police - they trust the system.

HARRISON

But he's not just a person, Ali. He's a public figure. One that's been to jail and in and out of rehab.

Michael gives him a questioning look.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

I'm a fan. He won't be treated like everyone else. The media will crucify him before sunset.

ALI

That doesn't mean he gets to change the rules.

Harrison comes over to her for a private moment.

HARRISON

Do you not want to help him because you don't believe him or because he's your ex-husband?

Ali searches for a moment, then...

ALI

I believe him. He's not that good an actor.

Michael has overheard.

MICHAEL

Allison, I know I haven't made things easy... for anybody. I'm not asking you to forgive me. I'm asking you to *believe* me and to help me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ALI

(finally)

Eight hours. I'll give you eight hours and after that, no matter what, you go to your lawyer or the cops, I don't care. You don't move from this office. You answer only that phone on only that line. Don't go near the door, don't look out the window, don't move until you hear from me or I swear to God, I'll kill you myself.

She walks out. Harrison grabs his coat.

MICHAEL

(to Harrison)

Hey - Thank you.

HARRISON

Sure... That line about 'you don't have to forgive me just help me' - was that from the finale of season 2?

Michael doesn't acknowledge anything. He just indicates that Harrison should hurry.

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. OAKWOOD APTS. - CONTINUOUS

Harrison's car turns onto the property where several POLICE CRUISERS have already parked alongside a NEWS VAN.

EXT. OAKWOOD APTS. - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Ali and Harrison stand beside a bank of mailboxes and a tenant directory.

LAPD and CSI are working the outside of Michael's apartment. Several officers are interviewing tenants.

ALI

What are the chances we'll be greeted with open arms?

HARRISON

Well, let's see - you're the ex-wife of the prime suspect and I'm despised by at least half the LAPD.

ALI

That's not true. You're despised by more than that.

They share a knowing smile. Harrison registers the directory beside him.

HARRISON

What did Michael say the victim's name is?

ALI

Vanessa Blake.

He runs his finger down the list, passing Michael's name. He stops on "Ruiz/Blake".

HARRISON

Worth a shot.

EXT. AMANDA'S APT - CONTINUOUS

They ring the bell. No answer. Harrison knocks, hard.

HARRISON

Ms. Ruiz?

AMANDA (O.S.)

Who is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI

We'd like to talk to you about your roommate.

The door opens, still chain locked. AMANDA RUIZ (26) no doubt quite pretty when you put on the paint. Right now, she looks wary, wan and frail.

AMANDA

You cops?

HARRISON

We're investigators. Can we talk to you for a few minutes?

AMANDA

What's going on over there?

This is odd.

HARRISON

You don't know?

ALI

Vanessa is dead, Ms. Ruiz.

Amanda reels a bit.

ALI (CONT'D)

We'd like to ask you some questions.

Amanda SLAMS the door closed and yells from inside.

AMANDA (O.S.)

Leave me alone.

ALI

Ms. Ruiz....

AMANDA (O.S.)

GO AWAY!!

ALI

(to Harrison)

Well, that was some top-notch detective work right there. Ready?

Harrison nods "yes" and they reluctantly head toward Michael's apartment.

EXT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

A line of POLICE TAPE isn't all that keeps Ali and Harry from crossing into the apartment. PHIL ROSEN, a squirrelish, unpleasant looking Homicide Detective blocks the entrance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROSEN

You gotta be kidding me.

ALI

Hey Phil, you mind asking Reese to come over?

ROSEN

What are you doing here, Potter? You want to take out another one of us?

ALI

C'mon, Phil, ease up, okay?

ROSEN

And you sure as hell shouldn't be here, Kass.

REESE (O.C.)

Hey, what's going on here.

NATHAN REESE, a burly veteran cop in his fifties - paternal, imposing - now stands in the doorway.

REESE (CONT'D)

Ali, Potter. I didn't expect I'd see you guys here.

ALI

Heard the all points on the scanner. Kind of hard to stay away.

REESE

You seen your husband today?

ALI

Ex-husband. He owes me alimony, child support... I'm the last person he's looking for right now.

HARRISON

Think we could take a look, Nate?

ROSEN

You can take a walk, s'what you can take.

REESE

Shut up, Rosen! Go inside and pretend you're useful.

Rosen moves off, giving Harrison an evil look.

HARRISON

Can we take a look, Nate?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REESE

Now how do I justify that?

ALI

Reese, I know Michael. He didn't do this.

REESE

Okay. Then where is he? Why run?

ALI

You don't know that he *has* run. You can't even be sure he's been here, at all. Let me have a look. I've been here before, I might see something you guys wouldn't pick up on. Come on, Reese, I've got kids. If this is going to hit the press, I'd like to have something to tell them.

REESE

You got five minutes. Come on.

They follow him in.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A cadre of COPS and CSI TECHS, taking pictures and searching about. Reese calls out.

REESE

Yo! Everybody knows Kass and Potter. They're here on my say-so. Anybody got an issue with that, you can report me.

They begin looking about. Harrison can't help but react to the small trove of memorabilia from Michael's career.

HARRISON

Jesus. Is that an actual Emmy?

ALI

Please God, don't nerd out.

REESE

Anything notable?

ALI

He's not blowing money on a maid.

Ali focuses on Vanessa's CORPSE, her lifeless eyes staring into space.

She and Harrison begin examining the body closely from opposite sides of the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI (CONT'D)

Cause of death?

REESE

Asphyxiation. Strangulation.

ALI

Expose the neck, please.

A CSI-TECH lifts Vanessa's head to show the FINGER IMPRINTS on her neck.

HARRISON

The attack was from the rear. Splayed imprints, most likely from the perp wearing gloves.

ROSEN

You're a freakin' genius, Potter. Should we go arrest OJ?

HARRISON

Gloves would mean the murder wasn't spontaneous. It was pre-meditated.

ALI

And who plans to bring somebody to their *own house* to kill them?

HARRISON

Something else weird. Only nine impressions on the throat.

Ali crosses to him and places her hands around his neck.

ALI

Which one's missing?

HARRISON

Right ring finger.

Ali lifts the matching finger away.

ALI

Hard to exert pressure and keep that finger raised.

HARRISON

One other thing...

He crosses to the body.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

The impressions are clean, very exact.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REESE

So?

HARRISON

The victim couldn't be moving or the marks wouldn't be that well formed.

ALI

So she may have been unconscious *before* the attack. There are no signs of any kind of struggle. Was there any bruising? Lacerations? Any material under her fingernails?

REESE

Nothing. Just some faded letters on her left hand. Can't make it out.

ALI

No struggle. Got an explanation for that, Rosen?

ROSEN

Gee, Kass, I'd be completely stumped if it wasn't for the roofies.

HARRISON

Roofies?

Reese walks over and takes several baggies, each containing different loose pills or powder from another cop.

REESE

We found junk all over the apartment - bathroom, kitchen, night stand.

He holds up a particular bag.

REESE (CONT'D)

Rohypnol. Found several in the bed table drawer.

HARRISON

A date-rape drug?

ROSEN

And hence your vic being out cold.

ALI

(to the CSI-Tech)
Any signs of intercourse?

The CSI tech shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ALI (CONT'D)

Then none of it makes sense.

She strides over to Reese, as Harrison takes some shots of the room and the victim with his cell.

ALI (CONT'D)

You want some insight into Michael Kass, here it is. He has screwed up in more ways than I can count on two hands but he has never touched a narcotic. Two, his interest in a beautiful girl like her is sexual. Given half an opportunity, he'd take it. This guy didn't. Three, Michael is a lot of things, but violent is not one of them. Never. Four, he cannot plan more than a minute ahead and whoever did this had to think about it.

REESE

Pretty passionate defense for someone you don't see anymore.

HARRISON

You're looking for the wrong guy, Reese.

ROSEN

Well that's your specialty, isn't it, Potts? The wrong guy? Maybe when we find this one, you can shoot him, too.

Ali grabs Harrison and starts to head away.

ALI

Ignore him, he's an ass.

REESE

Ali, this was a professional courtesy - for old times. If you hear from your ex, I'd appreciate the same.

No response. They walk away.

INT. ALI'S OFFICE - KASS SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS - DAY

Michael is sitting at Ali's desk, lost and waiting.

A PHONE RING. Michael startles and picks it up, without speaking.

INT. HARRISON'S CAR (DRIVING)

INTERCUT:

Ali and Harrison are talking into the speakerphone.

ALI

Michael?

MICHAEL

Yeah? What'd you find out?

ALI

It's not good. She was strangled to death, probably while unconscious.

MICHAEL

Oh my God.

ALI

There were drugs all over the apartment, Michael. Pills, roofies.

MICHAEL

What?! I never used that crap. Roofies?

ALI

Somebody is working very hard to set you up for this. Who'd you piss off?

MICHAEL

Nobody. I mean, I've got some outstanding business with a couple of people but nobody that would pull this. Vanessa had big issues with her husband. Isn't the spouse always a suspect?

ALI

Yes, but we have no jurisdiction to question him. Cops will get around to it eventually.

MICHAEL

So, what now?

HARRISON

We trace backwards. We're heading over to CLB to see what if anybody knows something there.

MICHAEL

Great, I'll meet you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI

What are you talking about?! You've got CNN, TMZ and the LAPD looking for you. And your damn face is on billboards all over town. You stay put. We're on this. You don't move, you understand me, Michael?

MICHAEL

Yeah. I understand.

Michael hangs up. He looks tired and feels worse.

INT. OFFICE WASHROOM

Michael enters and runs the tap, splashes water onto his face and head. Specks of soap fly onto the mirror as he does this.

He looks at his reflection and notes how the soap spots occlude bits of his face. An idea sparks.

He wipes the mirror clean and takes the bar of soap. With the soap, he draws a mustache over his reflected lip and considers it.

MICHAEL

(changes his voice)

Hello... Michael Kass.

Now he heavies his eyebrows and sideburns.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(changes it again)

Hello... Michael Kass.

He swabs a mass of white hair on his reflected head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(several voices)

Hello... Michael Kass. Michael Kass.
I'm Michael Kass.

He now turns from the mirror, a determined set to his face.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Not... Michael Kass.

Michael leaves the bathroom in a hurry.

EXT. GASLIGHT CREATIONS - DAY

Establish a medium-sized warehouse in the midst of an industrial park. The building exterior has been "tagged" repeatedly. There are all kinds of junked vehicles strewn about - jeeps, a helicopter, some futuristic vehicles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

This is a serious cinema FX house and everywhere you look is a left-over from some past project.

Michael exits a TAXI and heads in.

INT. - GASLIGHT CREATIONS - STUDIO

Michael passes an array of CREATURES, ALIENS, ROBOTICS, and several plaster castings of famous actors.

A large open space surrounded by shelves of equipment, body parts, make-up, wigs, wardrobe, hand props, chemicals and various paraphernalia.

VILMER SANTINI, 50's, looks like some odd mix of Einstein and Charles Manson. An artist and engineer, he is part philosopher/part guru - depending on which left over drug from the 80's kicks in at any given moment.

As Michael enters, Santini is testing an explosive effect on a plaster head loaded with stage blood and brain.

SANTINI

Fire in the hole!

The EXPLOSION obliterates the head.

SANTINI (CONT'D)

Superior. Hey, Mike.

MICHAEL

Santini, I need your help.

INT. GASLIGHT CREATIONS, SANTINI'S OFFICE - LATER

Santini is rolling a home-made cigarette, having just heard Michael's tale. In the background, an odd Jamaican influenced hip-hop is playing.

SANTINI

Somebody is punking you hard, my brother. This is a real crossroads for you, man. Two worlds colliding. Y'know? Everyone faces their trail... This is your trial.

MICHAEL

Actually, I'm trying to avoid a trial.

The music finally gets to Michael.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Jesus, can you turn down the music?
What is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANTINI

You don't know Jimarcus? Reggae fusion
hip-hop? Step into serenity, bro.

Santini adjusts the volume.

SANTINI (CONT'D)

So, what do you want to do?

MICHAEL

I gotta get out there but everybody is
looking for me.

SANTINI

And you're easy to spot, Starman.

MICHAEL

Yeah. So how about we make it harder?

Santini knows what he means and likes it.

SANTINI

Superior. Inspire me.

MICHAEL

(thinking it thru)

I got to get to that club. Some kind
of exec. European flavor. Metrosexual.
No threat. Has money. Connections.

Santini smiles and crosses to a mirrored make-up table that
has been covered with a drape. He sweeps off the smock,
revealing the items underneath.

SANTINI

Ignition!

A SERIES OF RAPID CUTS...

As Michael is transformed in phases of makeup, wigs and facial
hair.

In the final shot, Michael regards himself in the mirror as
Santini removes the smock from his shoulders, admiring.

Michael is a different man - one with new life and purpose.
But just who he is....

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. CLB - DAY

A sophisticated nightspot on the Sunset Strip. You don't come here without cash. Valet parking is twenty bucks.

INT. CLB - CONTINUOUS

This is *the* place - four star dining and the hottest bar and dance floor in LA. At present, a crew of workers are prepping the main room for the night. *

Ali and Harrison are waiting at the bar. An ATTRACTIVE HOSTESS comes up to them. *

HOSTESS

Mr. Galindo can see you now.

She leads them into the main room. As they walk, Harrison leans into Ali.

HARRISON

Don't use your last name right now.
Just a precaution.

They approach a strikingly handsome, very well-dressed Cuban man in his 40's. This is VICTOR GALINDO, the owner of CLB. Clearly powerful, he wears it with ease and charm. Off to the side, but ever present are TWO BODYGUARDS. *

Galindo approaches, hand extended, oozing easy charm.

GALINDO

Hello, I'm Victor Galindo.

HARRISON

I'm Det. Potter.

ALI

Det. Jaworski. Thank you for taking the time to see us.

GALINDO

My pleasure. How can I help you?

HARRISON

We're investigating the death of a young woman. We believe she was here last night.

GALINDO

I assume this was an untimely death?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ali holds up her cellphone showing a photo of Vanessa.

ALI

Does this girl look familiar?

GALINDO

I'm sorry, I couldn't say.

ALI

Why not?

GALINDO

On any given night, there are close to 500 people in this club. Many very attractive, young ladies. I'm afraid they all start to blend in the mind. Occupational hazard.

HARRISON

Maybe you'd recognize a name? Vanessa Blake?

GALINDO

No, I'm sorry. It's not a name I know.

The Hostess waits beside A MAN that we can't quite make out.

GALINDO (CONT'D)

Excuse me. Yes, Ramona?

HOSTESS

There's a mister Dovess.. Doovesser...

"CAMERON"

Douvassier. Cameron Douvassier. Not easy to get from the spelling.

This is Michael, transformed and adorned with a smart, trendy suit, glasses on a neck chain and some jewelry.

As he moves forward into the scene, no one - not even Ali or Harrison - have any idea he is anything but what he presents himself to be. It is a perfect and complete disguise.

"CAMERON" (CONT'D)

I'm with Rousse Parfait Entertainment. Apologies for no appointment but I'm in town for a split and my calendar is an abomination. If you might have a few moments to discuss an opportunity.

*

*

GALINDO

I'll be with you in a minute, Mr...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

"CAMERON"

Douvassier. Cameron, is fine.

GALINDO

Make yourself comfortable, Mr. Douvassier.

"CAMERON"

May I peruse?

GALINDO

Please.

Cameron wanders off onto the dance floor. Galindo redirects his attention to the detectives.

HARRISON

Vanessa was here with a celebrity last night. Maybe that would help you remember.

GALINDO

Perhaps. We do seem to be popular with the Hollywood elite.

HARRISON

Michael Kass.

GALINDO

I don't know that name.

HARRISON

(incredulous)

Michael Kass - the actor. You never watch The Family?

GALINDO

I'm sorry. Is that a cartoon?

A CLATTER OF EQUIPMENT.

"Cameron" has been "perusing" by the DJ stand and has toppled some items. He quickly covers.

"CAMERON"

Apologies. Excellent acoustics, B-T-W.

GALINDO

I regret I cannot be more helpful.

ALI

Perhaps we could speak to other members of your staff?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GALINDO

This is the day shift. I doubt they
would know anything about this.

*

HARRISON

We could come back tonight.

GALINDO

Detective, put yourself in my
position. I cannot have my staff
distracted nor my clientele
inconvenienced.

ALI

Commerce over compassion, Mr. Galindo?

GALINDO

(all smiles)
Javier will show you out.

One of his BODYGUARDS steps forward toward Ali.

GALINDO (CONT'D)

Good day, detectives.

*

Galindo heads off toward 'Cameron'. Ali and Harrison head to
the door.

HARRISON

Are you going to hug the man goodbye?

ALI

I'm afraid I would slide off.

They exit.

GALINDO

Now then, Mr. Douvassier. What did you
wish to speak about?

"CAMERON"

I have a client. Gi-normous music
talent. Debut American tour. Launch
party. Headaches and heaven. I need
the perfect venue. Not right, not best
- perfect - as in only. I'm looking.
I'm liking. I'm asking.

GALINDO

Do I know this artist?

"CAMERON"

(searching, then...)
Jimarcus? Reggae/fusion/hip-hop?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

GALINDO

I'm not familiar.

"CAMERON"

Hm, Jimarcus and Michael Kass. Have you been living under a rock, Mr. Galindo?

GALINDO

Mr. Douvassier, to close this club for a private reception...

"CAMERON"

...would cost several times your net for an average night. Non-issue.

GALINDO

Then perhaps we should go to my office and look at calendars.

"CAMERON"

Pause. Issue. My client has certain sensitivities regarding law enforcement.

GALINDO

We supply our own security, I can assure you.

"CAMERON"

Splen-doo. However, I couldn't help notice your previous guests.

GALINDO

What makes you think they were police?

"CAMERON"

Mr. Galindo... Victor?... We're in specialized fields, you and I. We develop certain skill sets, yes?

GALINDO

We do. They are investigating an unfortunate death. Someone who had been in the club last night.

"CAMERON"

Tragic. You knew her?

GALINDO

Not well.

"CAMERON"

You told them - "not at all".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Galindo raises a curious brow.

"CAMERON" (CONT'D)

Excellent acoustics.

GALINDO

The young lady... had an escort. I am extraordinarily protective of our well-known clients.

"CAMERON"

Ah - clarity. Celebrities and their... *escorts*, can you assure me such a crowd on any night?

GALINDO

I can do better than assure.

INT. GALINDO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

This is a plush, upscale private office.

Galindo shows "Cameron" footage from surveillance cameras set up around the club - a whole deck of seven or eight monitors.

GALINDO

This footage is just from last night. I think you may recognize some faces.

"CAMERON"

Quite the assemblage. Ah, Snooky. Quell shock. Tyra. Nice to see the former governor relaxing. Is that Charlie Sheen?

GALINDO

No, John Stamos.

"CAMERON"

Whew.

"Cameron" now spots himself on one of the monitors, being pulled toward the dance floor by Vanessa Blake.

GALINDO

Ah, that is the young lady the detectives were asking about.

On the monitor, a Barmaid brings two drinks over to Michael and Vanessa. They accept and toast a silent "thank-you" to some unseen someone off camera.

"CAMERON"

A shame - she looks lovely.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GALINDO

She was. Her friends will be devastated at the news.

"CAMERON"

Friends?

Galindo points out several stunning girls on different monitors.

GALINDO

There. There. That one. Many more.

"CAMERON"

Stunning. Are you a collector?

GALINDO

They are here every night. I've come to believe there is no party without them. Perhaps you should see for yourself. Tonight. As my guest. We can finish our business then.

Galindo hands him a card.

"CAMERON"

I pray it won't be all business, Victor.

GALINDO

Amen.

EXT. CLB - DAY

Michael crosses Sunset and heads for a pay phone. He dials. *
Waits.

MICHAEL

(disguised voice)

This is a friend. I have information about your dead girl... Meet me at Greenblatt's Deli. Fifteen minutes.

Michael hangs up.

EXT. GREENBLATT'S DELI - DAY

Establish.

INT. GREENBLATT'S DELI

Ali and Harrison stride past the counter and booths, looking to connect with the mystery caller.

As they pass a booth, Cameron's hand shoots out to stop them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"CAMERON"

If I were paranoid, I might say you
two were stalking me.

HARRISON

You're the guy who came into CLB.

ALI

Did you call us? Do you know something
about last night?

"CAMERON"

I know your ex-husband is innocent.

HARRISON

How do you know that?

"CAMERON"

Because he's family.

(Vince Cantone)

And nothing... is more important than
the family.

Harrison clues in.

HARRISON

Holy Sh-

ALI

Michael!

Michael smiles, he doesn't see that Ali is angry.

HARRISON

That's unbelievable. UNBELIEVABLE!

Ali starts slapping and kicking at Michael who can do little
to fend it off. Then Ali starts striding off.

MICHAEL

Ali, wait...

ALI

Is this a game to you? I'm risking my
ass every second I help you and you're
playing dress-up?

MICHAEL

I'm not playing. But I couldn't just
sit and do nothing.

ALI

No, that would waste a perfectly good
opportunity to SCREW EVERYTHING!!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MICHAEL

Hey could you YELL A LITTLE LOUDER so we can make more of a scene?

(to the onlookers)

Sorry to disturb, everyone. Anger management therapy. Field trips - so critical.

He moves her back toward their booth.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'm trying to help. You did great at my apartment cause you're cops. But you struck out at that club *because you're cops.*

ALI

We're not cops anymore.

MICHAEL

Detectives, same thing. You're bound by rules. I'm not. I can be anything I want. And admit it, I fooled you. I fooled Victor Galindo. And I got good information. So, I'm crazy? Fine, this whole situation is crazy. Now you can stand there and hate me or I can tell you what I know.

Ali sits, but she's still upset.

ALI

I choose both.

HARRISON

Very mature. Good work.

ALI

Shut up, Potter. Go fly your broomstick.

HARRISON

And thus endeth the maturity.

MICHAEL

Galindo absolutely knew Vanessa. He just wasn't copping to it.

Harrison's cell rings and he answers it.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Vanessa hung with a group of girls that the club caters to - free drinks, lots of perks, intros to the big players, that sort of thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ALI

I knew he was lying.

MICHAEL

Those girls will be back there tonight. Maybe they know something.

HARRISON

(on phone)

Thanks man, I owe you.

Harrison hangs up and scribbles something on a napkin.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

The lab confirms Rohypnol in her system. She was roofied. They probably nailed you, too, Mike. LAPD is sending a team out to talk to the husband.

MICHAEL

Finally.

*

HARRISON

My guys will tell me if he becomes "of interest".

*

ALI

I want to sniff around the Oakwood some more. Maybe someone will talk to me.

MICHAEL

Wait, aren't you going to check out the husband?

ALI

LAPD are all over it and we're not supposed to know about a husband, remember? We have no jurisdiction. Come on.

MICHAEL

You guys go. I'm going back to Santini's.

Ali starts to protest.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

He's safe. And he has the stuff to get this disguise off me.

ALI

Then you stay there, do you hear me? No more excursions. We'll connect in a few hours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

She heads out, leaving Harrison to linger.

HARRISON

You're right, by the way. She and I would never have gotten that information. You might want to wipe your mouth, you got a little something on your face.

Harrison heads out. Michael reaches for a napkin on the table. It's the one Harrison was scribbling on.

INSERT: 'Dan Blake, 17731 Cloverdale Rd. Husband.'

Michael looks up just in time to see Harrison shoot him the tiniest glance before heading out.

INT. GASLIGHT STUDIOS - SANTINI'S OFFICE

Michael and Santini work the computer. Google Maps ZOOMS in on a particular house. The Napkin is there for reference.

INSERT SCREEN: A satellite view of a suburban house.

Santini hits the 'Street View' button. There is a truck parked in front and gardeners working.

MICHAEL

What do you think?

SANTINI

How's your Spanish?

MICHAEL

I can order a burrito.

SANTINI

Good enough.

A SERIES OF RAPID CUTS...

As Michael is again transformed in phases of makeup, wigs and facial hair.

In the final shot, Michael regards himself in the mirror as Santini removes the smock from his shoulders, admiring.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - STREET - DAY

An LAPD CRUISER is parked out front. A battered PICK-UP TRUCK pulls up and parks.

A MEXICAN GARDENER removes some tools and walks towards the back yard. Only we can tell this is an unrecognizable Michael.

EXT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD

Michael walks along the house glancing into windows until he spots DAN BLAKE, being interviewed by 2 LAPD COPS.

Blake(40) is a hefty man, barely hanging onto what must have been real good looks just a few years ago.

The window is slightly open. Michael moves to hear the conversation inside, all the while trimming hedges without paying attention.

INT/EXT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Blake sits, clearly shaken by the news of his wife's death.

COP#1

When was the last time you spoke with Vanessa?

BLAKE

I'm not sure. Uh, we spoke often. At least once a week. Maybe more.

The Cop makes a note. Blake feels he needs to explain.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

We were working it out. Vanessa just felt like she needed to get away... Think things through. We were working it out.

COP#2

Did she ever mention any other relationships? Friends? Boyfriend?

BLAKE

Yeah, she had some friends, I guess - a roommate. I don't know how close they were.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COP#1

Did she ever mention the name, Michael Kass?

BLAKE

The actor?

Michael stops and strains to listen

COP#1

Yes, sir.

BLAKE

He lives at those apartments. I mean, I *think* he does. I'm not sure. Why?

COP#1

Your wife's body was discovered in his apartment.

Blake, seemingly devastated turns to the window. He locks eyes with this unknown gardener.

Michael, caught unexpectedly, over-compensates by clipping away like a madman. In his zeal, he manages to CUT HIS FINGER. He moves off from the window.

Michael continues pruning while eyeing the officers and Blake in the house. As their conversation ends, Blake leads them to the front door.

Michael tracks them, moving toward the front door to catch the final snippet of conversation.

COP#1 (CONT'D)

If you think of anything that might be useful, please call. And you'll hear from our department in the next 24 hours to follow up.

BLAKE

Follow up? Follow up on what?

COP#1

This is an ongoing investigation, Mr. Blake. I'm sure we'll need some additional information.

BLAKE

Of course. Thank you.

Michael watches the Officers move off. He turns back as Blake hurries to shut the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Michael trails him from outside. Blake hurries past windows on his way back to his office.

Once there, Blake closes the drapes. But he is unaware of the gap at the split of the curtains.

Michael steals up to the window and works to look inside. He gets only glimpses.

Michael's POV: BLAKE AT HIS DESK. He rifles through a drawer.

BLAKE stuffs his laptop in a bag. HE CROSSES to a closet door. Has to unlock it with a key. A light goes on inside. There are SOUNDS of file cabinets, papers rifling, etc.

Blake emerges from the closet with several FILE FOLDERS and a large trash bag stuffed with something. He leaves the office.

Michael races to intercept him at the front path.

He reaches the front path and starts randomly clipping as Blake comes pounding out the door with his bundles.

As Blake tries to hurry past, Michael surreptitiously jams his clippers into the trash bag, splitting it open and spilling it's contents to the ground.

A quick glance reveals them to be INSURANCE RECORDS.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

God damn it. You idiot, what the hell are you doing?

Michael now adopts a thick, Mexican accent - the finishing touch on his transformation to the character of "ERNESTO".

"ERNESTO"

Lo siento. Lo siento. Sorry.

Ernesto bends to help Blake gather his papers. Blake shoves him back, hard.

BLAKE

Don't touch that. Who are you?

"ERNESTO"

Ernesto, senior.

BLAKE

I don't know you. Where's Jorge?

"ERNESTO"

Jorge necesito... another job. I finish.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Blake looks at the butchered hedges for the first time.

BLAKE

Finish? You've destroyed the goddamn place. I should call those cops back and have them lock you the hell up.

** As Blake fumes, he gesticulates wildly with his hands. Michael, being a keen observer and mimic, notes that Blake holds both his ring fingers in a peculiar way when he gestures. The audience is unlikely to note it now, but they will later.

"ERNESTO"

Jorge tell me... como esta. He say to make good.

BLAKE

This is not good! Comprende? Not good!

He gathers his fallen items.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

You get your tools and get the hell off my property. You hear me?

Blake is moving quickly to his car, tossing the items in.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

I see you again, I'm calling the police.

Blake climbs in his car and speeds off.

"ERNESTO"

I sorry. Sorry.

(then, as Michael)

Sorry I didn't kick your ass, you son of a bitch.

Michael turns back toward the house.

EXT. OAKWOOD APARTMENTS - DAY

Establish.

EXT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT

Police have left, but the door is sealed with crime scene tape.

AMANDA, Vanessa's roommate, stands peering through a window into the apartment. She moves to the door, stands for a moment with her hand on the knob, then tries to open it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI

I wouldn't do that.

Amanda whirls around in surprise to find Ali.

ALI (CONT'D)

Tampering with evidence... that's a big ole felony. I was hoping to find you, Ms. Ruiz. I thought this might be a better time to talk.

AMANDA

How did she die?

ALI

I was hoping you would tell me.

Amanda moves to rush past her, but Ali grabs her arm.

AMANDA

I didn't do anything.

ALI

Then stop acting like you did. Do you know something, Amanda? Did you see something?

AMANDA

I told her to go. She walked away once. She just didn't stay away.

ALI

From who? Her husband?

AMANDA

I don't have to talk to you! Leave me alone!

Amanda pulls away and runs off. Ali just stands there, she knows better than to pursue at this moment.

As Amanda disappears, Ali surveys the area. For the first time, she notices several SECURITY CAMERAS around this common area. The OLD ASIAN MAN from the opening scene sidles past with his oxygen tank in tow.

OLD ASIAN MAN

Next time you come when I call.

ALI

I'm sorry? I think you have me confused with someone else.

Ali turns to go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OLD ASIAN MAN

No, you cop. I see you with other
cops.

This stops Ali in her tracks.

OLD ASIAN MAN (CONT'D)

You all come today. But nobody come
last night. Music too loud. Everybody
making too much noise. I see. I call.
But nobody come. You come next time.

Ali regards this man, then the cameras. Interesting.

EXT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - GARDEN

Michael is awkwardly climbing through the open window.

INT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

He lands and looks around the room for a second, then makes
his way towards the office.

INT. BLAKE'S OFFICE

Michael scans the room. PHOTOS OF VANESSA are everywhere - the
walls, the desk, the shelves. Adoring or obsessive?

Michael moves to the closet Blake had gone into. The door has
been left slightly ajar and the light on.

INT. OFFICE CLOSET

A standard utility closet. But there are also shelves of
MEDICAL SUPPLIES: syringes, swabs, gloves, braces, etc.

In the rear of the closet is a FILE CABINET. Several drawers
are haphazardly open. Michael begins rifling through them.

INSERT: MULTIPLE CLAIMS made to different insurance carriers
for the same individuals or companies.

Michael takes some cell phone pictures, then crams a few files
into his pockets.

As he does, he sees his BLOOD has stained the cabinet. He
swipes at the spot with his sleeve, leaving a streak.

He turns to the shelves of medical supplies, pushing aside
boxes in search of a bandage, when he begins to notice all
kinds of PHARMACEUTICAL SAMPLES.

One package in particular catches his eye - Rohypnol. He
stuffs the sample into his pocket.

INT. BLAKE'S OFFICE (CONT.)

He moves back to Blake's desk. It's a mess of papers with an ANSWERING MACHINE flashing in the corner.

Michael hits the play button.

ANSWERING MACHINE

You have... no... new messages. First saved message...

Michael fast forwards through, stopping only for...

VANESSA (O.S.)

It's Vanessa. Look, I saw your car tonight. And I saw you at the club the other night. I want you to stop it, Dan. Stop following me. Stop calling me. I don't want to hurt you but we both know I have more than enough information to do that. Don't make me use it.

The message ends. Michael is stunned by the evidence. Unsure what else to do, he TAKES THE MACHINE and goes.

INT. KASS SECURITY - EVENING

Michael "Ernesto" enters the outer office, drawing Harry's attention.

HARRISON

Sorry, not open.

Ernesto responds in a torrent of nonsense Spanish.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

No, no... amigo, no en casa.

Ernesto drops the accent and assumes Michael's regular voice.

MICHAEL

Really? What if I told you I've cracked this case wide open?

Harrison lights up.

HARRISON

GET OUTTA HERE! GET OUTTA HERE. That is UNBELIEVABLE! I thought you were... holy Moses.

MICHAEL

Muchas gracias, Senor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON

Amazing, you're like a 'human'
recording device.

MICHAEL

(imitates Harrison)

Amazing, you're like a 'human'
recording device.

HARRISON

SHUT UP! THAT IS UNREAL!! You went to
the husband's house?

MICHAEL

Yeah. He's the guy, Harry. Cops tell
him his wife is dead, he puts on some
dog and pony show of grief. They leave
- bang. He's pulling files into a
trash bag. He's way deep into some
kind of insurance scam.

HARRISON

Insurance?

MICHAEL

Vanessa knew all about it. She must
have been holding it over him and he
snapped. The guy's a lunatic. Comes
running out of his house, gets right
in my face.

(imitates Blake)

"You've destroyed the goddamn place. I
should call those cops back and have
them lock you the hell up."

Michael does an uncanny impression, right down to Blake's odd
hand gestures.

HARRISON

What's with your hands?

MICHAEL

I don't know. That's what the guy
does.

HARRISON

His ring fingers are bent in like
that?

MICHAEL

Yeah, why?

HARRISON

It could make something make sense.
It's just... the time-line is weird.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MICHAEL

What do you mean?

HARRISON

LAPD checked his movements last night based on cell phone pings. They put him at the Oakwood Apartments. Only not at the time of death. Coroner's office says Vanessa was killed between one and three a.m., this morning. But they only have Blake there around 7:30 last night.

MICHAEL

Doesn't matter, it's him. Look...

Michael starts unloading his booty.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Photos, files - and check this.

He reveals the bottle of Rophynol.

HARRISON

Rohypnol.

MICHAEL

He's got a closet full of that and other stuff.

HARRISON

Wait a minute - this stuff was in his house? How did you get it?

MICHAEL

I broke in.

HARRISON

Oh, no no no....

MICHAEL

What do you mean, no, no, no? I've got him - motive, method, everything.

ALI (O.C.)

You don't have crap!

Ali stands in the doorway. She's heard all she needs.

MICHAEL

Ali, before you get angry, just hear me out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ALI

I heard you. Wanna know what I heard? The *prime*... the *only* suspect in this murder illegally entered the husband's home. So it is easy to assume that EVERYTHING in his home that points to his guilt, was planted there by YOU.

MICHAEL

You know that's not true.

ALI

Prove it.

Michael is at a loss.

ALI (CONT'D)

You can't! Did the gardener wear gloves?

Ali grabs his hands and holds them in front of his face.

ALI (CONT'D)

FINGERPRINTS! Oh and look, a fresh cut. Drop a little DNA evidence while you were looking around?

Michael understands and his mood darkens.

ALI (CONT'D)

Unless *something* places Dan Blake in your apartment at the time of the murder, than this is a purely circumstantial case and you have just tainted every piece of evidence that *might* have supported you. You handed him a free pass.

HARRISON

Allison...

ALI

Because you don't *listen!* You don't *think!* Actions have consequences, Michael. But you never learn that! After all the lying, the gambling, the cheating with other women, throwing away your career, our family - after all that, I hung my ass out there for you again. Because I believed in you. Well, you're a good actor, Michael, I'll give you that. You fooled me. I hope you're happy with that, cause I have nothing left to give you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MICHAEL

SO I'M A SCREW-UP! But what would you do? You tell me, Allison, what would you do? I know all about consequences. I have nothing left! I lost it. My fault. Fine. I have to deal with it. But I didn't do this. I come to you. You tell me you'll give me a couple of hours and "sit still, Michael". "Behave, Michael". Well, I can't. I can't. I'm too scared. I saw a chance and I went for it. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I dragged you into this.

The anger drains out of Ali. She goes and holds him for a moment.

ALI

Oh, Michael. (a laugh) Maybe we can blame it all on the gardener.

HARRISON

We can blame it on me. I encouraged him to check out Blake.

ALI

What? Why?

HARRISON

Because we can't. I didn't know he'd break into the house. I just thought he'd find a way to learn something. And he did.

Ali still looks at him, unsatisfied.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

I used to play by the rules. I did everything the right way. And in the end, what did it do for me?

ALI

But if we get tied to this...

HARRISON

I'll keep you out of it. I'll say you had no idea I was working for him. They can't touch you.

Ali is overwhelmed. Her heart tugged in every direction. Finally...

ALI

Okay. I promised you a day, Michael. So we keep going.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

ALI (CONT'D)

I'll head back to CLB, see if
Vanessa's girlfriends can tell me
anything. I won't tell you what to do.
Because frankly, I don't know anymore.

(to Harrison)

I'll check back with you later.

MICHAEL

Ali --- thank you.

ALI

Don't thank me, because unless you can
find somebody to squeeze a confession
out of Dan Blake, I think you're in
for a very tough time.

Ali heads out. Michael and Harrison exchange looks before
Harrison follows her out.

Michael walks to the bathroom and stares at himself hard in
the mirror.

IN A SERIES OF SHOTS, he peels fake facial hair, nose, wig and
begins to wipe the pancake makeup from his skin.

What's left is a Michael more lost, yet determined than we
have ever seen him.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. BLAKE HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael stands outside the front door, repeatedly ringing the bell and banging at the door.

BLAKE (O.S.)
I don't care who you are, I am going
to rip your head...

Dan Blake swings the door open violently.

MICHAEL
(dead serious)
Off?

Blake goes to slam the door shut but Michael kicks it back inward. He pushes into the entryway and slams the door.

INT. BLAKE HOUSE ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

BLAKE
I'll kill you.

MICHAEL
Too late. You should've taken me out
when you killed Vanessa.

BLAKE
What? What did you say?

MICHAEL
I know all about your little insurance
scam, asshole. I have your files. I
have your phone machine. I know where
you were last night and I can prove
it. Wanna rip my head off now? Or do
we start talking?

Blake stands, dazed and cornered.

EXT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - OAKWOODS - NIGHT

Harrison looks thru the window. Amanda is hurriedly throwing things into a suitcase and a duffle bag.

Harrison moves back toward the door and knocks. From inside, a voice...

AMANDA
Who is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON

It's Det. Potter, Ms. Ruiz. I need to talk to you.

Amanda opens the door, still chained.

AMANDA

I told the woman, I can't talk to you.

Harrison holds up his cell with a photo of Vanessa's corpse.

HARRISON

You wanted to know how she died. This is how. Strangled to death while she was unconscious. She never had a chance. There's no way you did this, so why are you acting like a killer?

She starts to close the door but he blocks it.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

Amanda, the person you're running from is the person I want to get. Help me.

We can almost see the surrender in her eyes.

INT. CLB - NIGHT

A cacophony of bodies, lights, haze, booze, sexuality - all gyrating to a pounding, non-stop beat.

Ali moves her way through the crowded dance floor, dressed to kill. Suddenly, a young PRETTY BOY comes up behind her and grabs her hips, pressing himself inappropriately close.

ALI

I don't believe you asked me dance.

PRETTY BOY

I don't believe I need to, mama.

Ali turns around seductively and grabs the guy, hard, by his nipple. It does not feel good.

ALI

Do I still remind you of your mama?

PRETTY BOY

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Let go.

She releases him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRETTY BOY (CONT'D)

Damn. You don't have to go all Angelina on me. I thought you were one of Victor's girls.

ALI

Victor's girls?

PRETTY BOY

Yeah, I thought you were on the menu. My bad.

Ali takes it in, plays dumb.

ALI

Hey, it's all good. I'm looking for a girlfriend of mine. Maybe you know her - Vanessa Blake?

PRETTY BOY

Amanda's friend?

ALI

Yeah, that's right.

PRETTY BOY

I haven't seen her tonight. But her crew are over there by the bar.

Ali turns to see a GROUP OF UNBELIEVABLY ATTRACTIVE YOUNG GIRLS, dressed to be seen. They are largely of Latino descent.

INT. BLAKE HOUSE ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Little has changed.

MICHAEL

I know you were at my apartment last night. The cops know you were there, too.

BLAKE

I just wanted to talk to her.

MICHAEL

Hard for her to talk with your hands wrapped around her throat.

BLAKE

Are you insane? You murder my wife and you're trying to pin it on me?

MICHAEL

DROP THE ACT! YOU STALKED HER! YOU THREATENED HER!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

And when she still wouldn't back down,
you *choked her to death*, you son of a
bitch.

BLAKE

Listen to me, you piece of garbage -
you want to play psycho games with me?
Fine. Let's call the cops. Have them
hook us up to a couple of lie
detectors. You tell your story, I'll
tell mine. I loved that girl more than
anything. I never raised a hand to
her, ever. And if I have to spend the
rest of my life in jail for the crap I
am guilty of, I'll do it -just to put
you away for what you've done.

Michael is desperately trying to make sense of the man and the
story before him.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - OAKWOODS

Amanda is sitting with Harrison.

AMANDA

I didn't know her that long. She left
her husband, I needed a roommate...

HARRISON

Why did she leave him? Was she afraid
of him?

AMANDA

No, she was angry. He was into some
bad stuff. I don't know what. She was
so damn righteous all the time.

(full of emotion)

She ruined everything.

HARRISON

How?

INT. CLB - CONTINUOUS

Ali arrives at the circle of "Victor's" girls. These girls are
barely out of their teens.

ALI

Excuse me. I'm looking for Amanda.
Have you guys seen her tonight?

This elicits some giggles from the girls.

GIRL#1

She doesn't come here anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI

Really? What about her roommate,
Vanessa?

GIRL#1

You know Vanessa?

ALI

I do. I'm her friend.

Ali is reading an odd vibe from the girls.

ALI (CONT'D)

Are you her friends, too?

GIRL#2

(stiff, tense)

You should talk to Victor. Vanessa
doesn't come here anymore.

ALI

I know she doesn't.

Ali takes out her cell phone. A PICTURE of Vanessa dead in the
bed. The girls stagger. Now there is fear, in all of them.

GIRL#2

Who are you?

ALI

A friend. This shouldn't have happened
to Vanessa. I'm trying to make sure it
doesn't happen to anyone else. So
maybe you can talk to me?

The girls eye each other, looking for a response.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - OAKWOODS

AMANDA

She wanted to be an actress. I took
her to the club. I thought... She
would meet people. Maybe they would
give her a chance. I didn't think he
would notice her.

HARRISON

He?

AMANDA

Victor. He wanted her. Like he wanted
the rest of us... for himself. And to
share.

*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON

To share?

AMANDA

With his friends. His clients. With everybody.

Harrison knows he's onto something.

INT. CLB - CONTINUOUS

Ali is still with the girls.

ALI

You're all illegals?

The group is clearly afraid to answer.

ALI (CONT'D)

How does he find you?

GIRL#2

He has ties to very powerful gangs. They know who our families are.

ALI

So, you all... work... for Galindo.

GIRL#2

Men come here. Important men. They expect to have a good time.

GIRL#1

Victor takes care of us. Whatever the men give us, we keep.

ALI

But you don't have a choice. You can't say no. You can't walk away.

Their silence is the answer.

INT. AMANDA'S APT. - CONTINUOUS

AMANDA

Victor started introducing Vanessa around. He knew she was on her own, he even gave her some money... told her she could pay it back later.

HARRISON

By servicing his friends.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMANDA

She didn't know. One of the men..tried... Afterward, she went crazy. She confronted Victor at the club, called him a pimp, embarrassed him. He blamed me.

HARRISON

So he threw you out.

AMANDA

Because of her. All because of her.

INT. CLB - CONTINUOUS

GIRL#2

Victor threatened Vanessa. She didn't care.

GIRL#1

She was here last night. She said she wanted to show us that Victor couldn't hurt us. That we could leave anytime we want. She didn't know... he owns us.

GIRL#2

She stood up for us. But there was nothing we could do.

ALI

You just did. Thank you.

Ali moves away from the group.

ALI (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

You get all that?

EXT. CLB - STREET

An LAPD Mobile command vehicle is parked.

INT. LAPD COMMAND VEHICLE

Reese is with several COPS, he's listening in. Ali is obviously wearing a wire.

REESE

It's smoke, but I need a fire.

ALI

One inferno, coming up.

INT. AMANDA'S APT. - CONTINUOUS

HARRISON

Why didn't you talk to the police?

AMANDA

I was afraid.

HARRISON

Why? Galindo threw you out. You're free.

AMANDA

(breaking down)

In this country, I am never free. Someone called last night. I didn't recognize the voice. They said if I knew what was good for me I'd get out of my apartment... And leave the door unlocked.

HARRISON

Amanda, what time was that call?

AMANDA

I don't know, maybe midnight. I was scared. I ran. And God forgive me, I opened the door for her killer.

Amanda dissolves in tears.

INT. BLAKE HOUSE, ENTRYWAY -CONTINUOUS

The men are drained, sitting on the floor.

MICHAEL

You're not lying. Everything you did today - you were just covering your tracks.

BLAKE

What are you talking about?

MICHAEL

It wasn't me, Blake. Whatever happens, I want you to know that. It wasn't me.

Michael heads out the door.

EXT. BLAKE HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Michael reaches into his jacket pocket and removes his cell phone. He had been using it to record what he hoped would be a confession. He turns it off, switches the phone on and dials.

INT. AMANDA'S APT. - CONTINUOUS

INTERCUT between Michael and Harrison.

**As Michael describes the action, we see it play out in FLASHBACK.

HARRISON

Hello.

MICHAEL

It's not Blake. He didn't kill her.

HARRISON

Mike, last night, walk me through it.

MICHAEL

I told you what I remember. Vanessa asked me to dinner. We left around seven-thirty.

HARRISON

How long do you stay at dinner?

MICHAEL

I don't know. We talked a lot. Three hours, maybe.

HARRISON

Ten-thirty, okay. You get up to go. You feel okay?

MICHAEL

Yeah.

HARRISON

Whose idea to go to the club?

MICHAEL

Vanessa's. I didn't want to go. She said it would be good for both of us. "We should be seen in that crowd". Like she's trying to help *my* career. I get us a couple of drinks.

HARRISON

From where?

MICHAEL

The bar. I go to the bar. She's talking to this group of girls, for awhile. Then a couple of guys came up to her. Looked like they got into something for a minute. I thought they were hitting on her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON

Then what?

MICHAEL

She comes back. I ask her if everything is okay. She says yes. Then, she wants to go on the dance floor. I don't want to. People are looking at us.

HARRISON

You said when you were there today you saw tapes of you and Vanessa.

MICHAEL

Uh... yeah. We were kinda dancing and then a waitress came with drinks...

HARRISON

You said it was a fan. A fan sent you drinks.

MICHAEL

Maybe.

HARRISON

You saw yourself toasting somebody. Who, Michael? Think. Who were you toasting?

Michael struggles to remember. Then, it hits him hard.

MICHAEL

Galindo. The drinks came from Victor Galindo.

A BEAT of realization for both of them.

INT. CLB - VIP LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

A dimly lit, ultra plush exclusive enclave.

Victor is present, entertaining a handful of guests. His Bodyguard is beside him.

Ali approaches Galindo. He is amused by her tenacity.

GALINDO

Detective Jaworsky, I almost didn't recognize you.

ALI

Well I'm under cover as it were.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GALINDO
(amused)

Ah, and whom, may I ask, has the pleasure of having you under their covers?

Galindo's guests enjoy a laugh.

ALI
The LAPD, actually. They find you fascinating, Mr. Galindo. Your connection to a number of Cuban gangs and drug smugglers. That fact you are harboring illegal aliens whom you prostitute, or even better - barter into sexual slavery.

Galindo's mood changes readily.

GALINDO
Manuel, would you see our guests downstairs and set them up with complimentary drinks? Javier, please remain here.

One Bodyguard escorts the group away, leaving Ali alone.

GALINDO (CONT'D)
You have become a very serious intrusion into my business, Detective.

ALI
Really? I paid for my drink.

GALINDO
I do not appreciate your accusations. I have many acquaintances. Their affiliations or legal status is not my concern. As for your claim of prostitution - they are ridiculous. I have fostered careers, nurtured talent. The girls I take an interest in thrive. How can that be prostitution?

ALI
When you offer them up like candy as one of the perks of elite club membership and they can't refuse for fear of deportation or physical abuse, that is prostitution.

GALINDO
I take nothing from them. I introduce them to important, powerful men.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GALINDO (CONT'D)

What they do with those men - what they *get* from those men, is their business. They are nothing when they meet me. I give them lives.

ALI

And Vanessa Blake... did you give her a life, too? Or did you take it?

INT. LAPD COMMAND VEHICLE

Reese leans in.

REESE

Come on scumbag...

INT. CLB, MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Harrison is walking through the club, making his way to the bar. Beside him, is it? Yes - **Cameron Douvassier**.

They approach the BARTENDER.

"CAMERON"

Pardon. Late beyond forgiving. Mr. Galindo would be...?

BARTENDER

Is he expecting you, sir?

"Cameron" shows him Galindo's business card.

"CAMERON"

Unfinished business.

BARTENDER

VIP Lounge, upstairs, on the left.

He and Harrison head off.

INT. GALINDO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

GALINDO

Vanessa Blake - you keep insisting I know this girl.

ALI

And you keep insisting I'm stupid.

GALINDO

A girl came into the club named Vanessa. *Perhaps*, she is the one you are talking about. And *if* it was her, anyone would tell you I did everything I could to help her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI

But she wasn't terribly grateful, was she?

GALINDO

No, she was not. I do favors for my friends. When they think it is beneath them to return favors...

ALI

And when they tell your little amigas downstairs that they don't have to do you favors either... that there's not a damn thing you can do about it... that's not something you can let go unaddressed, is it?

They both know that it is a chess game now.

GALINDO

Detective, you have no idea how many powerful friends I have.

ALI

Good. You're going to need 'em. Where were you last night between midnight and two a.m.?

GALINDO

I don't have to answer your questions.

ALI

Pretty please?

GALINDO

This establishment closes at 4AM. I was here until closing.

ALI

I noticed there are security cameras throughout your club. I assume they will verify that you were here?

GALINDO

Unfortunately, I was working in my office most of the night. There are no cameras in there.

ALI

That is unfortunate. Do you know where else they have security cameras? All over the communal areas of the Oakwood Apartments. You know, the laundry room, the game room... the pool.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALI (CONT'D)

Where there was such a loud party last night, an old man couldn't sleep, and noticed someone carrying a sleeping woman in his arms and headed right towards the apartment where Vanessa Blake was found. I have to say Mr. Galindo, you look much better on camera than you do in person.

The air is tight with tension.

The door opens unexpectedly and "Cameron" and Harrison come striding in.

"CAMERON"

Victor, my associate, Laszlo thinks...
Is this a bad time?

INT. LAPD COMMAND VEHICLE

Reese tilts his head sideways. What is going on?

INT. CLB - VIP LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Cornered and frantic, everybody moves fast.

Ali goes to grab a pistol from her thigh holster. Galindo intercepts her, grabs the gun and pulls her into him. He's now got the gun at her head.

Harrison starts to move toward them as the Bodyguard slams him back against the wall and pulls a gun to *his* head.

"Cameron" is frozen between all of them.

"CAMERON"

Victor, security issues suddenly
abound.

GALINDO

Shut up!

*

ALI

You want to shoot me? Do you have the guts to look me in the face? Or will you be the same coward you were with Vanessa?

GALINDO

SHE WAS NOTHING! She comes to my place. She *defies* me! She *humiliates* me. Challenges me in front of my people. And *still*, I let her walk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALI

Because you had nothing to hold her with.

GALINDO

I LET HER WALK! And that *bitch*, that *whore* comes back and *threatens* me?

INT. LAPD COMMAND VEHICLE

REESE

GO! GO! GO!

His men storm out.

INT. VIP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

GALINDO

What does she think I am? Walks in here to play me - with this Michael Kass - a loser who acted like a tough guy on TV? The whore brings a clown to take me down? Screw her! And screw him, too. I should have killed them both.

"CAMERON"

I agree.

Everyone freezes, out of confusion if nothing else.

"CAMERON" (CONT'D)

I've never trusted clowns. They rarely amuse. And why? Because they are silly men beneath silly masks. But remove the mask...

"Cameron" removes his wig and prosthetic pieces as he speaks...

"CAMERON" (CONT'D)

And they're not so silly anymore. Hello Victor, I'm Michael Kass.

Galindo and his guard are both stunned.

In that split second, Ali grabs at Galindo's gun and spins away from him. But what she's holding onto is not his gun, BUT HIS PROSTHETIC FINGER.

Galindo aims at Ali.

The guard has been distracted by all the action. Harrison deftly deflects the gun from this head, grabs the Bodyguard's arm and uses the weapon to SHOOT Galindo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Galindo hits the ground as Harrison disables the guard.

Reese and LAPD burst in, guns drawn.

REESE
Everybody freeze!

HARRISON
Reese! Situation contained.

Michael runs over to Ali. They stare at each other a moment.

MICHAEL
I couldn't get that confession you
wanted.

Ali pulls out the conceal wire.

ALI
(glowing)
I did.

All they can do is smile at each other.

EXT. CLB - NIGHT

SEVERAL OFFICERS are making arrests and taking statements.

A LARGE CROWD AND REPORTERS are held back from the scene.

Victor is wheeled out on a gurney and placed in the back of an ambulance.

ALI
(holding the fake
finger)
You might want to give this back to
him.

Reese examines it for a second.

REESE
What's with the phony finger?

HARRISON
A little souvenir from his days in
Cuba. Turf war got lost, winner took a
trophy. He's worn a prosthetic ever
since. Hence the odd impressions on
Vanessa's throat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHAEL

I still don't understand. There was no evidence that tied Galindo to my apartment. He's smart enough to know that. How'd you get him to break?

ALI

He forgot about the security cameras there.

MICHAEL

What are you talking about? Those cameras haven't worked in years.

ALI

I know that, but Victor didn't. By the way, you owe your neighbor, Mr. Lee, a signed photo. He's a big fan.

Galindo reacts as the ambulance pulls away.

HARRISON

I got a question. When did you bring Reese in on this?

ALI

After I talked to the old man. His description of Galindo was spot on. The rest of it was just a hunch. But it was one Reese was willing to play.

HARRISON

(to Reese)

I didn't think you were on our side.

REESE

I'll always back a good cop. That includes you, boy wizard. You were a good cop. Not everybody knows that. Give it time.

(to Michael)

Mr. Kass, I always liked your show.

(to Ali)

Detective, maybe we can help each other out again sometime.

Reese heads off to his officers.

MICHAEL

How do I thank you?

ALI

You pay me the 2 months alimony and child support you owe me. Then I bill you for today.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MICHAEL

How about I work it off in trade?

ALI

What?

MICHAEL

We did more than save my butt today. We did the right thing for a pretty stand-up young lady. She was a great girl. And maybe she didn't die for nothing. I like being part of that.

ALI

Michael....

MICHAEL

I was good. Come on, admit it. You couldn't have done this without me.

HARRISON

That's true.

ALI

Shut up!

MICHAEL

This could be great for me, Allison. It's real acting again. It was alive and dangerous. I haven't felt like this in years. And it meant something. We did that. And we could do it again.

ALI

Michael, listen to me...

MICHAEL

Plus, we could spend some time together. It'd be good for us. Good for the kids.

ALI

Michael - listen to me - we're over. I love you. You're the father of my children. I'm so glad you're trying to straighten out your life. I'm hopeful you'll make it this time. But there's no us. There's no this. This was insanity today. And I left you because I don't want any more insanity in my life.

She kisses his cheek, sweetly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ALI (CONT'D)

You've got the kids, Saturday. Don't be late. And stay out of trouble, ok?

MICHAEL

Hey, nothing is more important than the family.

Ali smiles and walks to Harrison.

ALI

Potts, I'll see you tomorrow. We have to find out if a 68 year old married man is having a gay affair.

HARRISON

Ok, but if you want someone to dress up as rent boy to lure him out...

(gestures to
Micahel)

Ask him.

*
*
*
*
*

ALI

Shut up.

(quite tenderly)

Thank you for taking the shot in there.

HARRISON

What's Harry Potter without his Hermione?

ALI

(all smiles)

'Night.

Harrison moves to Michael as a group of reporters and paparazzi call for Michael to come over and talk.

HARRISON

Fans, huh?

MICHAEL

Hey, everybody loves you when you're up. A fan loves you when you're at rock bottom. Thanks for believing in me, Harry.

They shake hands.

HARRISON
(smiling)

Harrison.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MICHAEL

Keep an good eye on her, ok?

Harrison nods. He begins to walk away and turns back.

HARRISON

Michael... I hope it's okay if I keep
your number in my cell. I never know
when I might need a really crappy
gardener.

The men smile at each other - message received.

The paparazzi are calling to Michael.

He walks over and the flashbulbs start blazing. Everyone is
calling his name, trying to get his attention.

MICHAEL

(to himself)

I'm back, baby.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE