

JOHNNIE

Prick.

Johnnie checks his hair in the mirror, carefully. Then he begins putting on the rings he had removed for the beating.

Mickey kneels down next to Shelly's ear and motions to Lou, who lifts Shelly's bound arms.

MICKEY

Shelly, I'm going to ask you ten times. You understand? Ten times.

Mickey grabs Shelly's pinky finger, putting it between the metal blades.

MICKEY

One. Where is our money?

Shelly whimpers, red-faced and sobbing. There is a sick crunch and Shelly howls into his gag as his pinky finger bounces to the floor amid the expensive leather footwear.

CAESAR

Aw ... Christ.

We hear Caesar retrieve a tissue and his hand enters the frame, scooping up the pinky.

He plunks the severed finger into the toilet and it sinks to the bottom.

Caesar drops the toilet seat down and flushes.

INT. BATHROOM - EMPTY APARTMENT - DAY

Corky can't stand it anymore. She throws her tools down, leaves the bathroom and finds --

Violet waiting in the main room. Both women stand apart in silence.

Violet seems on the verge of saying something but doesn't know how to start. Her lip begins to quiver; her eyes search the room, returning to Corky each time.

The violence in the next room can still be heard.

CORKY

Violet? Are you all right?

Almost unnoticeably, Violet shakes her head. Corky puts her arm around her.

CORKY

Come on. Let's go.

INT. BAR - DAY

It is the kind of bar businessmen drink at in the afternoon. Dark wood and padded leather.

The bartender, joking with a cluster of men, does not notice Corky as she moves up to the bar.

CORKY

Excuse me.

The bartender glances over.

CORKY

Draft beer and a TNT.

Corky eyes the men, who stare into their drinks.

The bartender says nothing as he puts the drinks in front of

*You can
do this
without
the men at
the bar*

her.

Corky heads for her table, ignoring the whispers and snickers.

Corky and Violet, the only women in the room, sit close together at a far corner table.

Violet's voice is hushed.

VIOLET

Shelly was skimming from the business. He came to see me yesterday because he was afraid Caesar figured it out. He wanted to run but he wanted me to come with him.

CORKY

Even though he knew about you?

VIOLET

Yes.

CORKY

He was in love with you, right?

VIOLET

That's what he told himself. But it wasn't even about me, it was about Caesar. He wanted what Caesar had. That's how they are. I understand them.

She glances around the room; a man at the bar smiles at her.

VIOLET

For Shelly, taking the money was a way to take from Caesar. He could have run at any time, but he didn't because he didn't want out.

CORKY

Sounds like he wanted to get caught.

VIOLET

Maybe he did. He would brag to me all the time. He was never afraid of Caesar because he didn't know him. Not like I do.

Two men sit down near them, laughing.

VIOLET

Caesar lives for these moments. He tells me it's just the business, but I know it's more than that. He likes it. The violence. I'll catch him in the bathroom mirror touching his scars. He says they remind him who he is. They're all like that. Except maybe Mickey.

CORKY

Mickey?

VIOLET

He's the part of the business that the rest of them pretend to be. |But Mickey doesn't like it like they do. I suppose that's why he's good at it.

Violet stares at her glass, at the melting ice.

VIOLET

I used to be able to block it out. I would tell myself that I wasn't really there so nothing really

mattered. But I can't do it anymore.

She downs the last of her drink.

VIOLET

I've been making the same mistake Shelly made. But now I know what I want.

She turns to Corky.

VIOLET

I want out. I want a new life. I see what I've been waiting for, but I need you, Corky.

CORKY

For what?

VIOLET

You made a choice once. Do you think you would make that same choice again?

CORKY

What choice?

VIOLET

If those quarters fell to the floor, would you still reach up to that cash register?

Corky stares at her, knowing where this is going. She glances around the crowded bar.

CORKY

Not here.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Corky's truck sits in a gravel parking lot.

INT. CORKY'S TRUCK - DAY

Through the back window of the truck, Violet and Corky are silhouettes against the street light.

VIOLET

Caesar is going to get the money and bring --

CORKY

How much money?

VIOLET

Shelly said it was over two million dollars.

Corky quietly swallows that pill. It begins to rain.

VIOLET

Caesar will bring it to the apartment to count and go through Shelly's books to figure out how he did it.

CORKY

Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Do you have any idea what you are saying? You are asking me to help you fuck the mob.

Violet nods.

CORKY

These people are serious, Violet. If you want to know how serious, ask Shelly. They're worse than any cop because they have lots of money and