

She walks off quickly to a nearby classroom building. Angle on Riley, still in his car, watching her go.

RILEY

My name's Riley. Pleased to meet you. Ama.

Riley drags his large frame across the front console and passenger seat, opens the passenger door and exits. Grabs his own backpack from the rear seats, and watches Ama walk off to her class.

Camera moves from Riley's face to the back of his head & continues around to the other side of his face, leaving one side of the frame to show the background of scene, for Edit Point.

CUT TO:

11 INT. CLUB JADE-NIGHT 11

Edit Point continued from behind a Bouncer's head instead of Riley's, and continuing to move to the other side of his face to show an OTS shot of the club.

Ama, holding another dress in plastic dry cleaning, walks down the hallway from the employee entrance to her dressing room. The throbbing club music vibrates the walls.

12 INT. CLUB JADE - WOMEN'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 12

Camera follows Ama into the dressing room, where a few other girls are in various states of dress, undress, putting makeup on and taking it off.

Another dancer, QUINOA, tries to use some passive aggressive methods to stir up the pot inside the dressing room.

QUINOA

That all I'm trying to say. You hear me girl? If we all supposed to be family, and we all supposed to be equal in here, why is it that one person in the family can do whatever she wants, whenever she want?

All eyes are fixed on Ama, who's doing her best to ignore this ignorance flowing from Quinoa.

QUINOA (CONT'D)

I can't miss work a few days because I'm busy studying for college. Can you Kale? How about you, Saffron? Can you come and go as you please here at Club Jade?

SAFFRON and KALE both answer.

Nope.

SAFFRON

Uh-uh.

KALE

QUINOA

So how can Caesar act like everything here is equal if...

As Ama stands to say something to Quinoa, LILY, Ama's only ally and friend, stops her. She too has had enough of this bullshit.

LILY

That's enough out of you. You know why shit ain't equal? Because you ain't equal. Maybe that *ONE* person, you won't say by name, can say something if you would stop pussy-footing and call the girl out. That way you can finally see that she is all capital letters and you are just lower case. You just below her, bitch. So instead of hating on education, maybe your dumb-ass should be trying to go to college and you wouldn't be wasting our time with this ear littering.

Quinoa, followed by Kale and Saffron, rush towards Lily and Ama.

QUINOA

What'd you say, bitch?

LILY

Now you're uneducated and deaf? Bitch you falling apart? Body parts breaking on you and shit.

Caesar appears at the door.

CAESAR

(jovial)

Ladies, good evening.

The ladies offer various greetings. Ama does not.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Ama.

AMA

Yeah?

CAESAR

I didn't hear you say hello.

AMA

Sorry, I was just... Trying to get ready, you know?

CAESAR

A guy might think you didn't appreciate his presence, you don't say hello back to him.

AMA

Hello, Caesar. I'm sorry. I didn't mean no disrespect.

Caesar smiles at her, then turns to cold stone as he addresses the entire dressing room.

CAESAR

Seems to me we have some confusion around here at Club Jade. Where some girls think it's okay to...

Caesar turns to Ama and smiles again. Then turns to the rest of the girls.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Some girls think it's okay to talk a bunch of trash, because they think it's not equal around here. Well I got two words to say about that: Head Liner.

Caesar walks up to Quinoa and stares her in the eyes.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Do you know what that means, to be a headliner? Of course you don't. When Puff Daddy puts on a concert, he don't get treated like the other opening acts before him. Do you know why that is?

QUINOA

Yes.

CAESAR

Well that good. That's real good, Quinoa. And if Puffy doesn't like the way one of the opening acts is singing or even breathing in a way he doesn't like, do you know what he does. He tells his handlers and the opening act is replaced. Just like that. Do you understand, Quinoa?

QUINOA

Yes.

CAESAR

What was that?

QUINOA

Yes, Caesar.

Caesar turns around and walks back to Ama.

CAESAR

You feeling okay?

AMA

Sure, yeah. Sure.

CAESAR

You need the night off?

AMA

No, sir. Nothing like that.

CAESAR

You're ready to go?

AMA

Absolutely.

CAESAR

Because I have some gentlemen here tonight who are very interested in Club Jade. Interested in the future.

Caesar holds her gaze. Then breaks out in a huge grin.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Well, very good! Very good. I count on all you very beautiful ladies to move your bodies just so. To captivate the eye.

(MORE)

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 To mesmerize the guests. And
 tonight, that will be especially
 important. Understood?

Ama doesn't answer him. But Caesar doesn't push it.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 Good. That's my girl.

Caesar gives Ama a kiss on the forehead then turns to the
 other girls.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 Saffron, Kale, and Quinoa... Don't
 make me make a beat salad out of
 you bitches. Know your role around
 Club Jade and open your act. All
 you girls... Go mesmerize!

Ama looks in the mirror. The other girls look at her as if
 she's crazy.

CUT TO:

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 13 | INT. CLUB JADE - STAGE | 13 |
| | Slow, pulsating, seductive R&B music... And then Ama enters the stage. The lights are vibrant and rich, and as she dances she loses herself. Clearly she is a special talent. | |
| 14 | INT. CLUB JADE - DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS | 14 |
| | Reaction shots of men and women watching Ama do her thing. Everyone pays attention to her, her presence is so strong. | |
| 15 | INT. CLUB JADE - CAESAR'S TABLE - CONTINUOUS | 15 |
| | Caesar takes pride in Ama's work, as his associates watch her with uniform looks of lust and excitement on their faces. | |
| 16 | INT. CLUB JADE - STAGE - CONTINUOUS | 16 |
| | When Ama finishes, the club erupts in huge applause and whooping. | |
| 17 | INT. CLUB JADE - CAESAR'S TABLE - CONTINUOUS | 17 |
| | Caesar gestures to his Bouncer, who acknowledges and walks away. | |

18 INT. CLUB JADE - HALLWAY OFFSTAGE

18

Camera follows Ama from the stage entrance to the dressing room. She collapses in her chair before the mirror, and looks at the reflected face looking back at her. She puts her head down.

The Bouncer appears at the door and gets Ama's attention. Yet another thing Ama doesn't want to do.

Slow Dolly into Ama's face as Edit Point.

FADE TO:

19 INT. CLUB JADE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

19

Edit Point continued to Slow Dolly out from Ama's face, as she is making friendly as the only woman at Caesar's booth, with Caesar and five other Men laughing and generally having a good time.

A young man, ED (18) passes the table, and is bumped into by another patron. He loses his balance and spills his drink on Caesar.

Response from everyone at the table, and the young man looks terrified.

ED

Oh shit, man! Caesar! I'm sorry let me clean this up for you.

He makes a ham-fisted attempt at putting napkins on Caesar's suit. Clearly making one bad choice after another. The other men at the table are laughing.

CAESAR

(amazed)

What are you doing, man?

ED

I'm just... I'm so sorry, that guy bumped into me...

CAESAR

You know you're touching me, right?

ED

I'm sorry.

CAESAR

You keep saying that. That's like the third time you're saying that.

ED

I'm sorry.

CAESAR

That's four. You got that thing, man? You can't stop repeating the same shit over and over again? What is that?

One of the Men at the table, GUIDO, a slick European-type, speaks up in amusement.

GUIDO

Turret's.

CAESAR

Nah, fool! That's when you swear and shit, say crazy shit because you can't help it. What's the thing where you repeat the same stupid fucking shit again and again, like "I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry..."

GUIDO

You mean like a stutter?

CAESAR

Could be a stutter. I'm thinking of something else. Ama here is a college girl, takes classes and shit. What am I thinking of?

AMA

I don't know. Nervousness, you mean?

CAESAR

Nah. Fuck it.

(To the young man)

You don't have anything else in that brain of yours?

Ed is paralyzed. Stupid smile.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Nothing else? Like a fucking knock-knock joke or something? Tell me a knock-knock joke.

Reaction on Ama, looking very uncomfortable.

ED

I don't know any.

CAESAR
You don't know any KNOCK-KNOCK
jokes, man? Jesus. I got one for
you. You ready?

ED
Sure. I mean...

CAESAR
Knock knock.

Ed is frozen.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
Knock. Fucking. Knock.

ED
Who's there?

CAESAR
Caesar.

ED
Caesar who?

Caesar grabs his crotch in a vice grip.

CAESAR
Seize your fucking balls, man. You
know I just got this suit dry
cleaned? You know I hate fucking
going to the dry cleaners?

Ed is gasping.

ED
I'm sorry.

Men at the table cracks up, Ama is horrified.

CAESAR
That's FIVE, motherfucker! FIVE
FUCKING TIMES you're telling me
you're sorry! There is something
wrong in that head of yours, bitch,
I'm telling you! I think you'd
better see a doctor. You know what
for?

ED
Ahhhhhhh! What?

CAESAR
For this.

Caesar beats the living crap out of the Ed until he's on the ground with blood all over his face, close to unconsciousness. The crowd moves away in fear and amazement.

Dolly in on a terrified Ama as the beating continues, the music rises, and Caesar's Associates laugh it up.

Ama is horrified but trying to keep it together. At least enough to hold back the vomit and some screams.

22 Boom Up from Caesar beating Young Man to a painting of a 22 happy couple on the wall with a sun in the background as an Edit Point.

FADE TO:

20 EXT. ANYWHERE - DAY 20

Edit Point continued from an actual sun in the sky to Riley, as he parks his car. He gets out and opens his trunk to take out a backpack and two large duffle bags full of stunt pads and equipment.

He walks past some movie lights and equipment being brought out of the grip and electric truck.

Riley walks toward where two of his fellow stuntmen, MIKE and MORRISON are there already sitting in director's chairs watching a scene in progress.

RILEY

Hey man how's it going?

MORRISON

Same shit. Different flies.

MIKE

Good morning.

RILEY

Let's not get ahead of ourselves.

MIKE

Yeah. I hear you. Morrison already blew up our honeywagon. You do not want to go in there.

RILEY

Is that why you guys are out here?

Mike nods in absolute agreement as he subtly moves his eyes towards Morrison.

AMA
The owner, Caesar.

RILEY
Heard he was some kind of a
gangster.

AMA
He has his hands into some things,
but nothing serious.

Riley looks at Ama and gives her a kiss.

RILEY
Okay.

79 ANGLE ON Caesar watching them drive off. He's fuming. 79

79 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT 79

Caesar walks in the warehouse and sees TODD (20"s), one of his thugs on payroll, sitting in a chair flanked by two Henchmen, XAVIER and ROMAN. He's beaten up and scared out of his mind.

CAESAR
So is this him?

XAVIER
Todd Allen. Low-level mule trying
to work his way up to a soldier.

ROMAN
Took us a while to find him.

CAESAR
So, Todd... You want to tell me
what the fuck happened?

TODD
We were at the docks waiting for
the shipment from Detroit. I can't
believe it. Everyone's dead.

CAESAR
Stay focused.

TODD
We... We were ambushed. As soon as
we made the transfer. All I heard
was gun fire.

CAESAR

So you lost the dope and the money?
And you're the only one that got
out... Why is that?

TODD

They left me alive to give you a
message.

Todd watches Roman give Caesar a message on a sheet of paper.
It reads:

**"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.
[Matthew 7:12]."**

Caesar moves around behind Todd.

CAESAR

So they left you alive to give me
this?

TODD

Yes Caesar. Please, I didn't know
what the was happening. We were set
up. I swear to you...

Caesar quiets Todd down with a calming gesture. Then grabs
the arm of Xavier and gently plants it on Todd's shoulder.
Then the same for Roman's and plants his hand on Todd's arm.

Todd is confused but has calmed down. This could be a way out
for him. Caesar circles Todd like a hungry shark in the
water.

CAESAR

Well, I guess your mission is
complete.

Caesar gets Todd in a headlock. And with a vice-lock grip
around his throat, he slowly drains the life from a writhing
Todd.

When finished, he glares at both Xavier and Roman, who are
more confused than scared as to what just happened. They
stare at Caesar with their hand still touching Todd's
shoulder and arm.

CAESAR (CONT'D)

Both of you are now accessories.

Xavier and Roman both look at their hands on Todd and slowly
look at each other as they realize what just happened.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 So keep that in the back of your
 minds when dealing with this
 situation.

As he is about to exit the door, Caesar stops with his back
 to the Henchmen.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
 Now... Get rid of him.

CUT TO:

80 INT. CLUB JADE - CAESAR'S OFFICE - NIGHT. 80

Caesar and a few of his Associates.

VIN
 Maybe this is a plan to take over
 an area of the city by one of the
 local gangs.

CAESAR
 No it's something else. Someone
 trying to fuck me over. This feels
 personal.

VIN
 I'll fly to Detroit to square this
 away in person.

CAESAR
 No, don't do that. I have a
 different idea.

81 INT. RILEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 81

Riley and Ama are getting ready for bed.

RILEY
 Ama?

AMA
 Yes.

RILEY
 Do you want to leave?

AMA
 To go where, at this time of night?

AMA (CONT'D)

That's why he borrowed money from Caesar to pay for my ballet and jazz school. I miss him. You never realize how important someone is until they're gone.

RILEY

I know.

AMA

The last thing he bought me was the red dress you saw me in when we first spoke at the computer lab.

Ama smiles and gives Riley a kiss.

AMA (CONT'D)

I guess you should be thanking my father.

RILEY

I will. Every day.

86 INT. CLUB JADE - NIGHT

86

Ama walks out of the club and is called back by the lesser Bouncer, Leon.

LEON

Ama.

AMA

Yeah?

LEON

Caesar wants you.

Ama walks back in the club, and back to Caesar's office.

87 INT. CLUB JADE - CAESAR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

87

Caesar sits behind his desk with a blank expression on his face. Then he stands and comes in front of his desk, closer to Ama.

CAESAR

I know.

AMA

Know? Know what?

CAESAR

I know that you're planning on leaving.

AMA

I...

CAESAR

Don't talk. I asked you before if you remember our deal, and you said you did.

AMA

I do remember, Caesar. But how much is enough? I've been working here two years. How long do I pay the debt for my father? It's not like he tried to screw you over. He got cancer.

CAESAR

Everyone's got their story, Ama. I have a story, too. Everyone has their sad little fucking story. How long do you pay the debt? Until I fucking say it's paid.

AMA

Well I've never asked for an accounting, I didn't want to know. I wanted to believe that this was something else.

CAESAR

What?

AMA

Something about me and dancing. I couldn't come here every day and have it be about a debt.

CAESAR

I wanted to believe this was something else, too.

AMA

Oh yeah?

CAESAR

Yeah.

AMA

What?

CAESAR
What do you think?

It dawns on her. She gets very uncomfortable.

AMA
Caesar. No. I'm sorry. It can't be that.

CAESAR
It can be whatever I say it is. Because you know what? I think this guy you're with, he's fucking with your head. You were fine before this guy.

AMA
I was not fine.

CAESAR
You were fine. And we were getting closer. I could feel it.

AMA
Caesar.

CAESAR
You leave this city and he's fucking dead. Understand?

Ama is shocked. Can't answer.

CAESAR (CONT'D)
I have eyes everywhere. I don't want to have this conversation again. Okay. Now go.

88 EXT. CLUB JADE - NIGHT

88

Ama walks to her car, looking at the engagement ring on her finger.

AMA
I'll always love you, Riley.

Ama takes off her ring and puts it in her pocket. She gets in her car and drives home.

89 INT. AMA'S APARTMENT - DAY

89

Ama calls Riley.

102 EXT. CAESAR HOUSE - FLASHBACK - NIGHT 102

Caesar and Athena run to the car and fly off so fast they leave tread marks.

103 EXT. TRAFFIC LIGHT - FLASHBACK - NIGHT 103

Caesar's car pulls up to a red light.

104 INT. CAESAR'S CAR - FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS 104

Caesar looks over at his wife and notices that she is looking at him. He brushes her hair over her eye and gives her a kiss.

CAESAR

I love you.

Lights shine into the car from both sides. One car has pulled up hood-to-hood with Caesar, and another directly behind him. A Thug, DAMIAN (19), taps the driver window with a gun. Athena gasps in fear.

DAMIAN

Get out the car slowly.

Caesar and Athena follow the direction.

105 EXT. TRAFFIC LIGHT - FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS 105

Damian is getting Caesar and Athena out of the car a few feet away.

DAMIAN

Get down on the ground. On your knees. Look at the ground.

Caesar doesn't follow the instructions.

DAMIAN (CONT'D)

I said now!

ANGLE ON another two figures, JONES (30's) and a YOUNG VIN (15), as they approach.

JONES

Is that him?

YOUNG VIN

Yeah that's him.

JONES

You sure?

YOUNG VIN

Yeah, he was talking to Donny after
it all went down.

Jones bends down to Caesar, who's back is facing the group so
he can't see who is there. His face is down.

Caesar is trying his best to calm his Athena down.

CAESAR

Baby. Just look down at the ground,
baby. If we don't look at them, we
won't be able to identify them. So
just keep looking dow...

JONES

Caesar, right?

CAESAR

Right.

JONES

Busy night, Caesar. You know where
Donny is?

CAESAR

No.

JONES

My boy there says you didn't fire a
shot, didn't take any money. Is
that right?

CAESAR

That's right. Donny called me last
second, I owe him a favor. I had no
idea what he was planning.

JONES

You know who I work for?

CAESAR

You're Jones the Reaper. You work
for Jefferson Parks.

JONES

That's right, bitch. You know what
that means?

CAESAR

Yeah.

JONES

Where's Donny?

Caesar's eyes are shut tight as he is summoning the courage to speak these next words.

CAESAR

I know who you are by voice. Not by sight. I know what you've done to those other guys, the places you leave their body parts behind at. I know your legend. So please, believe me when I say I don't know. I swear.

JONES

I'll tell you where he is: He's in many places at once, because we already caught him and cut him up. His head's in the river. His torso we fed to dogs. His arms and legs are in various dumpsters. And you know what?

CAESAR

What?

JONES

He gave you up, bitch. That's how I know your name. But... You didn't fire a shot. And you didn't take any money. You know what that gets you?

CAESAR

No, sir. What?

JONES

You get to choose which of you dies. Instead of my blowing both your fucking heads off right now.

CAESAR

Please, no, sir.

JONES

Choose.

CAESAR

Take me. Let her go. She's pregnant. She has nothing to do with all this.

JONES

There has been a lot of dying tonight. Maybe you're right. Maybe we let the girl go. Got another life inside her, right?

CAESAR

That's right. Athena, get up, go ahead.

JONES

Yeah, Athena, you get up, go ahead.

Athena, terrified, gets up slowly and heads to the car.

JONES (CONT'D)

Changed my mind.

CAESAR

Nooooo!

Jones shoots Athena as she gets up. Caesar runs to catch his wife before she falls to the ground.

JONES

Now you will feel true pain. Take him.

Damian shoots Caesar several more times. Caesar and Athena are both left for dead.

106 INT. HOSPITAL - FLASHBACK - DAY

106

Caesar is in and out of consciousness. Tubes everywhere. He's barely alive. Athena sits near him, holding his hand.

ATHENA

Caesar, Caesar. Stay with me.

CAESAR

Athena.

ATHENA

Don't worry about me I'll be okay.

CAESAR

But I won't.

ATHENA

I will always be with you. Leave this place and be happy.