

EYE CANDY

by

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FADE IN:

Blurred letters focus on the screen to spell out the words:  
The body is the soul perceived by the senses.

(William Blake)

DISSOLVE TO:

More letters spell out: A body is a terrible thing to waste.  
(Anonymous)

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

MARCUS and TINA CARSON, 20s, look like the proverbial happy couple in their wedding pictures on display on their living room mantel; the room itself -- with its dingy, second-hand furniture -- paints another picture.

INT. DINER - DAY

Tina, a waitress in an equally dingy-looking diner, approaches a COUPLE to take their order.

TINA

What can I get you today?

MAN

I'll have the meatloaf special and a Corona. She'll have a salad and a lite beer.

WOMAN

The meatloaf sounds good. I think I'll have that, too.

MAN

She'll have a salad.

(to woman)

You wanna look good for the wedding, don't you?

TINA

I think she looks pretty good now.

(off his look)

Fine. A meatloaf special and a salad.  
I'll be right back.

Tina goes to the pick-up window and calls the order through to GUS, the genial, middle-aged cook behind the grill.

TINA (cont'd)

I need a special and a....On second thought, make that two specials.

MOMENTS LATER

Tina sets the specials in front of the couple, then waits for the reaction she knows is to come.

MAN

What's this? She ordered a salad.

TINA

No, you ordered her a salad. She wants the meatloaf.

(to woman)

Take my advice and get out while you still can.

Tina turns perfunctorily and walks away.

INT. MEN'S CLOTHING STORE - CONTINUING

MARCUS exits a change room wearing a new suit and checks his appearance in a floor-length mirror as a SALESMAN looks on.

SALESMAN

If I may say, sir, this suit was made for you.

MARCUS

I'm just not sure my wife will like it. What's your return policy?

INT. DINER - DAY

Gus looks at Tina dolefully.

GUS

I'm sorry, Tina, but in this business the customer is always right.

TINA

Even when the customer's a jerk?

GUS

Especially then. You can't just go around telling people what you think all the time.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUING

Still wearing the new suit, Marcus enters with confidence.

INT. GROCERY STORE. MEAT COUNTER - DAY

A butcher points to a choice piece of veal in the meat case; Tina shakes her head and points to a cheaper cut.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUING

Marcus exits the office building, clearly disappointed.

INT. GROCERY STORE. CHECK-OUT COUNTER - DAY

As a CASHIER rings up her order, Tina realizes she doesn't have enough money to pay for all her groceries and starts putting some of them back.

INT. MEN'S CLOTHING STORE - CONTINUING

It's the salesman's turn to look disappointed now as Marcus reappears, wearing his street clothes and carrying the suit.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - EVENING

With SAM, her Jack Russell terrier, underfoot, Tina struggles to follow a recipe in a kitchen that looks like a war zone as MARLENE, her brash, outspoken neighbor, enters.

MARLENE

Okay, what have you done with Tina?

Holding up a head of garlic:

TINA

Is this a clove?

MARLENE

The little sections are cloves....So what is it? His birthday?

TINA

We haven't been getting along. I thought a nice meal would --

MARLENE

Get you laid? Nothing spoils a mood quite like food poisoning, you know. ...What's it been? Four months?

TINA

Five.

MARLENE

You're lucky. I was married once for eight days.

INT. POCKET'S POOL HALL - CONTINUING

An OLD MAN nurses a beer at the bar as Marcus makes a good break in a game of pool while his friend JASON WINWOOD, accustomed to playing catch-up, patiently waits his turn.

JASON

If only someone would pay you to play pool.

OLD MAN AT BAR

Then he'd have to pick on someone his own size!

MARCUS

Like you, old man?

OLD MAN AT BAR

If I didn't have these cataracts I could take you...no problem.

Jason checks his watch as Marcus sinks ball after ball.

JASON

Shouldn't you give Tina a call?

At the mention of Tina's name, Marcus sewers the white ball, prompting Jason to give him a 'just trying to help' look.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - LATER

With Sam sprawled out on the floor at their feet, Marlene finishes eating while Tina's plate remains untouched.

MARLENE

See? With a little help, anyone can cook. Even you.

Tina's eyes well up with tears as...

EXT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - CONTINUING

...a large sign with the flashing neon silhouette of a naked woman, the words GIRLS GIRLS GIRLS, and a large neon eye stand out amid the local stores, laundromat, donut shop, etc. In smaller print on the sign are the words: Couples Welcome.

INT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - CONTINUING

Marcus and Jason take a seat in the strip club that has a bar and stage along one wall and a partially-visible VIP room upstairs as SHEILA, their server, brings them their usual beer without their even having to order.

SHEILA

So what's it gonna be? A tab night or a hit'n'run night?

MARCUS

Ladies' choice.

SHEILA

Tab it is. By the by, we've got some new girls starting tonight so don't wear your eyes out too soon.

MARCUS

You know I only have eyes for you.

SHEILA

I know if bullshit was worth anything, you'd be a very rich man.

Sheila winks to show she's teasing, then exits.

JASON

So what is it this time?

MARCUS

Who knows? But whatever it is, she'll get over it. She always does.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - EVENING

Tina and Marlene polish off a second bottle of wine.

TINA

It's like I don't know him anymore. Maybe I never knew him.

MARLENE

He's a man, isn't he? What's there to know?

TINA

You don't believe that!

MARLENE

Pretty much. But it's biological so it isn't really their fault. Look, do you really care where he gets hungry as long as he comes home to eat?

(off her look)

Okay, I guess you do.

TINA

It wasn't even my idea to get married. It was his.

MARLENE

Blue balls?...Sorry.

TINA

Have you ever been to one of those places?

EXT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - CONTINUING

MARLENE (V.O.)

It was called The Cat's Meow, but  
everyone just called it what it was:  
The Pussy Palace.

WE PULL BACK TO SEE Tina and Marlene standing in front of  
Candy's.

MARLENE

Are you sure you want to do this?

TINA

No, so let's get it over with before  
the wine wears off.

INT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - EVENING

Marcus and Jason watch a dancer named SUGAR gyrate onstage.

MARCUS

I don't know why she'd think I'd cheat  
on her anyway. It's hard enough  
disappointing one woman, let alone more  
than one. Order me another beer?

Marcus exits as SERITA, a Latina dancer seated with a  
CUSTOMER, reacts to seeing Tina and Marlene enter.

SERITA

Please, tell me neither one of those  
women is your wife.

SERITA'S CUSTOMER

Neither one of those women is my wife.

SERITA

Good. I saw a wife catch her husband  
with a dancer once. She beat the shit  
outta her.

SERITA'S CUSTOMER

Did the dancer sue?

SERITA

No. She said if she'd been the wife,  
she'd have done the same thing.

TINA

(to Marlene)

There's Jason. Marcus can't be far.

As Tina and Marlene approach Jason:

MARLENE

Well, if the world isn't as small as your dick!

JASON

What are you guys doing here?

MARLENE

If you think we're guys, you haven't been paying attention. So what's her name?

JASON

Uh, Sugar.

MARLENE

Imagine a mother naming her daughter Sugar?

JASON

I think it's a stage name.

MARLENE

Really!

On his way back to the table, Marcus stops dead in his tracks when he sees Tina.

He tries waving at Jason to get his attention, then turns and exits when Jason is too pre-occupied with Tina and Marlene to notice.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Marcus pretends to read a book in bed when Tina enters and starts to undress.

TINA

Marlene and I went out for a drink.

MARCUS

A drink, huh? That's good.

TINA

Is it? We also gave Jason a ride home.

MARCUS

Good.

TINA

He seemed to appreciate it.

Marcus snuggles up to Tina after she climbs into bed, but she just stares back at him with an accusing look in her eyes.



MARCUS

What?

TINA

Exactly how many are in bed with us, Marcus? Two? Six? More than six? Maybe we should get a bigger bed?

MARCUS

For the last time, Tina, Candy's has nothing to do with us.

TINA

Then why do you go? It's not like it's a job and they pay you. Speaking of jobs, did I mention I got fired from mine today?...Oh, no. That would mean you would've had to be here.

MARCUS

I'm sorry. And I don't know why I go. Is this really what this is about?

TINA

Yes.

Tina turns over to go to sleep, then turns back again.

TINA (cont'd)

No. I want to know when we're going to become one, Marcus. When we stood in church on our wedding day in front of our friends and family, we promised to become one. When is that going to happen?

MARCUS

That's just something people say, Tina. It doesn't mean anything.

TINA

So what? Marriage is just a big joke?

MARCUS

Maybe you should see a doctor? This sounds like some sort of female problem.

TINA

Typical.

MARCUS

Whatever's wrong, we'll fix it.

He waits for a reply that never comes.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM/HALLWAY - THE NEXT MORNING

Marcus steps on a blender, toaster, iron, etc., left lying on the floor as he exits to the hallway in his bare feet.

MARCUS

What the -- ?

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Tina is seated at the table, calmly drinking a cup of coffee, as Marcus limps into the kitchen in pain.

TINA

They're the other things you said you'd fix since we've been married.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Tina overhears two WOMEN talking while shopping for produce.

FEMALE CUSTOMER #1

He told me I was low on potassium.

FEMALE CUSTOMER #2

And it worked?

FEMALE CUSTOMER #1

I eat a banana in the morning and another at night. I feel fine now.

MOMENTS LATER

Tina turns up an aisle, passively eating a banana.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. WRIGHT, a gynecologist, finishes examining Tina.

DR. WRIGHT

Everything seems to be in order. How do you feel?

(off her look)

Am I to understand the honeymoon is over?

TINA

It isn't like I thought it'd be.

DR. WRIGHT

Marriage rarely is. Usually, it's a lot of give and take, some overlooking this and that....I could recommend a good marriage counsellor if you like?

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tina VACUUMS around Marcus, channel-surfing with the TV remote until he feels in the way, turns off the TV, and stands.

MARCUS  
I'm gonna go out for a bit. Want me to pick anything up?

TINA  
We have an appointment at three.

MARCUS  
You aren't serious, Tina?

TINA  
You promised, Marcus.

MARCUS  
Fine. I'll meet you there.

Marcus grabs his jacket and exits.

INT. MARCUS' MOVING TRUCK - DAY

Marcus passes a store with a 'Help Wanted' sign in the window, then a clothing store advertising a sale on suits.

INT. MEN'S CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Marcus tries on another suit as SALESMAN #2 looks on.

MARCUS  
I'm just not sure my wife will like it.  
What's your return policy?

INT. TRUCK (PARKED) - DAY

Marcus struggles into the suit in the cab of his truck.

EXT. STORE - DAY

Marcus enters the store with all the self-assurance he can muster and removes the 'Help Wanted' sign from the window.

LATER

Marcus exits the store as a hand replaces the sign in the window.

INT. TRUCK (PARKED) - DAY

Marcus struggles back into his street clothes.

INT. MEN'S CLOTHING STORE - DAY

Marcus approaches Salesman #2, who looks at him suspiciously.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Tina looks at the clock -- 2:45 PM -- as she waits for Marcus; when it hits 3:15 PM, she gets up and leaves.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Marcus appears beside Tina in his truck.

MARCUS

You know I'm not good at talking to strangers, Tina.

TINA

I suppose that includes me.

MARCUS

Get in. I'll take you home.

TINA

Why don't I meet you there?

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

As they drink beer at a table, Marcus focusses on a pregnant woman seated across the room.

MARCUS

Maybe we should have a baby?

(off her look)

Fine. You want another?

Without waiting for a reply, Marcus motions to LOIS, the waitress, for two more beers, as he exits to the bathroom.

MOMENTS LATER

Lois brings the beer and reacts to the look on Tina's face.

LOIS

Not having a good day, huh?

TINA

He thinks we should have a baby.

LOIS

He would. But I have yet to meet a baby that ever did a bad relationship any good.

(more)

LOIS (cont'd)  
 Sure, sometimes it keeps a man from  
 leaving, but sometimes it's better to  
 just let him go.

LATER

Marcus is back now as Tina counts out money to pay the check.

TINA  
 I don't have enough for the tip.

MARCUS  
 So we'll make up for it next time.

TINA  
 We have to leave a tip, Marcus. We  
 come here all the time.

MARCUS  
 Okay, okay.

Turning to a man reading a newspaper at the next table:

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 Hey, buddy, I'll bet you five bucks I  
 can tell you where you got your shoes.

TINA  
 Marcus, we can't afford --

MARCUS  
 If I can't tell you, we'll pay for your  
 dinner. What d'ya say?

CUSTOMER  
 Five bucks! To tell me where I got my  
 shoes?

When the man places a five dollar bill on the table, Marcus  
 grabs it and throws it down on his table.

MARCUS  
 You got 'em on your feet. Come on,  
 Tina.

Tina MUMBLES an apology and follows Marcus to the door.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - MORNING

Tina gets out of bed as Marcus rouses, half-asleep still.

MARCUS  
 Good morning. And I'm sorry.

TINA

For what?

MARCUS

For anything I say or do today.

INT. POCKET'S POOL HALL - EVENING

Marcus sewers the white ball in a game of pool with Jason.

MARCUS

I don't wanna talk about it.

INT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - EVENING

Marcus and Jason watch sultry LANA onstage as she removes a pair of gloves, finger-by-finger, with her teeth.

MARCUS

Maybe if I knew what it is she wants.

JASON

What she wants is for you not to be here.

MARCUS

That's what she says she wants and it's probably what she thinks she wants, but what she doesn't realize is it's women like her who make men like me make women like her make men like me. You want another beer?

JASON

No. I'm going to go home and I suggest you do the same.

Jason throws money on the table, tucks another twenty into Marcus' shirt pocket, and exits.

LATER

Marcus has now been joined by two other MEN.

MAN #1

I went for counselling and my wife still left me. For the counsellor.

MAN #2

Don't listen to him, Marcus.

MARCUS

His wife didn't leave him for the counsellor?

MAN #2

She did, but the counsellor was a woman. Tina would never leave you for a woman. Would she?

MARCUS

I'm outta here. Have a good night.

As Marcus exits:

MAN #1

I never thought I'd see the day he'd be whipped.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - EVENING

Marcus pulls his truck into the driveway and parks as...

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BATHROOM - CONTINUING

...Tina soaks in the tub with Sam laying contentedly on the floor beside her, until, that is, he senses Marcus and runs out of the bathroom to the...

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUING

...and BARKS at Marcus as he enters.

MARCUS

Tell me something I don't know.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Marcus appears in the doorway and stares at Tina in the tub.

TINA

There's food in the oven.

Marcus continues staring for a moment, then takes off his clothes and joins her in the tub.

As he sits down, she stands and exits.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Tina tosses and turns in bed as....

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

...Marcus glances expectantly from the TV to the bedroom.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Marcus snuggles up to Tina in bed and she moves away.

When he does it again, she falls off the bed.

MARCUS  
Fine, if it'll make you happy, I'll go  
to the marriage counsellor.

As she climbs back into bed:

TINA  
I want us both to be happy, Marcus.

MARCUS  
I already am happy, Tina. It doesn't  
take much.

INT. MARRIAGE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Tina and Marcus sit facing marriage counsellor, SHIRLEY BARR.

SHIRLEY  
All couples argue, Mr. Carson --

MARCUS  
Please, call me Marcus.

SHIRLEY  
Well, Marcus, disagreement is a  
normal --

MARCUS  
See, Tina, we're normal.

TINA  
I told you he wouldn't take this  
seriously.

MARCUS  
I'm here, aren't I? Are you married,  
Shirley? May I call you Shirley?

SHIRLEY  
Of course. And no, I'm not married.  
Is that a problem?

MARCUS  
Only if you want to be taken seriously.

SHIRLEY  
You don't have to be a cow to know it  
gives milk.

MARCUS  
No, but you have to be one to give it.  
Come on, Tina, we're wasting our time --



SHIRLEY  
You're not helping by taking this  
position, Mr. Carson.

MARCUS  
I told you, call me Marcus.

As Marcus exits, Tina shrugs in resignation, and follows.

INT. MARCUS' MOVING TRUCK (MOVING) - DAY

Tina stares straight ahead from the passenger's seat as  
Marcus sneaks periodic looks at her while he drives.

MARCUS  
Wanna go to a movie?

TINA  
We can't afford it.

MARCUS  
Then we'll just have to do something we  
can afford.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUING

Marcus parks by the side of the road, then runs around to the  
passenger side and gently pulls Tina from the truck.

MARCUS  
Dance with me, Tina.

TINA  
No, Marcus.

MARCUS  
Yes, Tina. You used to love to dance  
with me or maybe you've forgotten that?

TINA  
I haven't forgotten anything.

Marcus dances with her as she passively stares at the traffic.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Marcus is in bed already as Tina climbs in next to him.

TINA  
You never intended to take the  
counselling seriously, did you?

MARCUS  
It doesn't mean I don't love you.

TINA

It doesn't mean you do.

MARCUS

Things'll get better once I find a job.  
You don't have to turn it into a --

TINA

Don't! You don't even look for work.

MARCUS

I don't feel like getting into this  
right now, Tina.

TINA

No, of course not.

MARCUS

What's that supposed to mean?

TINA

I don't feel like getting into it.

INT. LAWYER'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Tina enters a lawyer's outer office, sits, and starts  
flipping through a magazine as Marcus enters behind her.

MARCUS

What are we doing here, Tina?

TINA

I told you, we're having separation  
papers drawn up.

MARCUS

Haven't you taken this far enough?

TINA

Is that what you think?

MARCUS

I don't know what to think.

TINA

That makes two of us. I just know I  
don't want to spend the rest of my life  
not knowing what to think.

MARCUS

You're giving me a headache, Tina.

TINA

There's aspirin in my purse.

MARCUS

You know aspirin doesn't help.

Marcus sits next to Tina who, after a moment, puts down her magazine and starts massaging his temples from behind.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Tina is seated opposite lawyer GARY BENSON as Marcus scrutinizes the diplomas on his wall.

GARY

I'm sure you've both thought this through --

MARCUS

Not really, but it seems to be what she wants. Actually, why don't we just skip right to the divorce? Isn't that where this is leading anyway?

GARY

If you're sure that's what you want. Mrs. Carson?

TINA

It isn't a question of want anymore.

MARCUS

Then draw up the papers. Tina can have everything except my truck. Oh, and my National Hockey League mugs. I have the whole set, you know....Okay, then, I guess that just leaves visitation rights with Sam. How's once a week?

(off Tina's nod)

I don't know why people find this so difficult. I guess this is an ending, Tina. You don't want to be my princess anymore and God and we both know I've never been a prince....And if I sell a kidney I just might be able to afford it...although you'd probably prefer I sold my balls.

Marcus kisses Tina's hand with a gallant flourish, then exits.

GARY

I can see why you want a divorce.

INT. MARCUS' ROOM - DAY

Marcus is unpacking his meagre effects in a grungy-looking, partially-furnished room when there's a KNOCK at the door.

MARCUS

Come in.

Jason enters and looks around in dismay.

JASON

I always figured you'd end up living like this.

MARCUS

There's beer in the fridge.

Jason goes to the fridge to find that's all there is.

JASON

This is what you're gonna live on?

MARCUS

Of course not. There's a pizza place on the corner.

LATER

Marcus and Jason are eating pizza and drinking beer.

MARCUS (cont'd)

See? This isn't so bad.

JASON

Wait a couple of weeks.

MARCUS

You think it'll be that long? I know she's never taken things this far before, but --

JASON

But nothing, Marcus. You're not the easiest person to be friends with. I can't imagine living with you.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Tina looks at pictures of her and Marcus, then tosses them, one-by-one, across the room at which point Sam grabs them in his mouth, runs out of the room, then returns for more as...

INT. CANDY'S - CONTINUING

...Marcus and Jason watch ANGEL onstage.

JASON

I have a spare room, you know. You can always move in with me.

MARCUS

What about 'you can't imagine living  
with me?'

JASON

We've been friends a long time, Marcus.  
Friends help friends out.

MARCUS

Thanks, but Tina will come around.  
You'll see.

INT. MARCUS' TRUCK - EVENING

Marcus parks his truck down the street from Tina's house as...

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

Sam appears in the living room window again and BARKS.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

Sam runs into the bedroom and and licks Tina's face, then  
begins pulling the covers off the bed when she doesn't stir.

INT. MARCUS' TRUCK (PARKED) - THE NEXT MORNING

Marcus wakes, stiff and sore, and drives away as...

EXT. STREET - CONTINUING

...Marlene exits her house and goes to Tina's house.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Sam BARKS at Marlene as she enters with the mail and throws  
it onto an already burgeoning pile.

MARLENE

Don't tell me she's still in bed!

Sam BARKS again, then follows her down the hallway to the...

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

...where she throws open the curtains and floods the room  
with light, prompting Tina to cover her face with a pillow.

MARLENE

He's only a man for God's sake.

(off her MUMBLE)

I'm sorry, did you say something?

Tina removes the pillow from her face.

TINA  
I said, 'He's my man.'

MARLENE  
Haven't you heard? All great love stories end in tragedy because they can't survive the ephemerality of love. Not that I'm suggesting for one second that Marcus is the great love of yours or anyone else's life. Now when's the last time you ate?

TINA  
(flinging open top)  
Do you think I have good tits?

MARLENE  
Yes.

TINA  
You're not just saying that?

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

Tina sits slumped over the table with her many bills spread out in front of her while Marlene cooks breakfast.

MARLENE  
There's more to dancing than good tits, you know.

TINA  
These bills aren't going to pay themselves. Don't you think I can do it?

MARLENE  
I don't think you're in the right frame of mind to decide anything. Now how do you want your eggs?

When Tina hesitates, Marlene hands her high-heels to her.

MARLENE (cont'd)  
Here, try walking in these. They're the hardest part of a dancer's job and I've never seen you wear anything but running shoes.

Tina tries on the shoes and immediately stumbles, prompting Marlene to grab a newspaper and shove it into her hands.

MARLENE (cont'd)  
If you want a job, I suggest you start here.

INT. COFFEE SHOP. COUNTER - DAY

Carrying a newspaper open to the want ads, Marcus takes a seat next to a well-dressed MAN checking the same want ads.

MARCUS

You too, huh? What are you looking for?

MAN

At this point, pretty much anything.

MARCUS

Sounds like we're after the same job.

MAN

You'd think a B.A., M.A., and M.B.A. would at least get you a foot in the door!

MARCUS

You have a B.A., M.A., and M.B.A.?

The man nods and Marcus tosses his paper into the garbage.

EXT. TEMP AGENCY - DAY

Tina, dressed in interview clothes that include high heels, walks precariously into a temp agency as...

EXT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - CONTINUING

...Marcus enters Candy's with a resigned look on his face.

EXT. TEMP AGENCY - LATER

Tina exits the agency with a disappointed look on her face.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Tina is on the couch, massaging her sore feet, as...

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUING

...Marcus pulls his truck to a stop down the street from her house again and settles in for the night as...

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

...Sam, sensing Marcus again, runs to the window and BARKS.

TINA

What's wrong with you tonight?

Tina goes to the window, sees Marcus' truck...and smiles.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tina turns and reaches for Marcus in her sleep as...

INT. MARCUS' TRUCK (PARKED) - CONTINUING

MARCUS  
 (muttering to himself)  
 I'm sorry, Tina, for anything I say or  
 do....

INT. MARCUS' TRUCK (PARKED) - MORNING

Marcus wakes, stiff and sore, and drives away as...

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

...Tina and Sam watch Marcus leave, then Tina begrudgingly turns her attention to the newspaper want-ads.

INT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - CONTINUING

MARILYN, a Marilyn Monroe clone, is onstage and Serita is seated with another CUSTOMER at his table when Tina enters.

SERITA  
 That isn't your wife, is it?

CUSTOMER #2  
 I'm not married.

SERITA  
 Girlfriend? They can be dangerous, too.

Tina takes a seat and looks around the room as Lana approaches a MAN busily cleaning his glasses.

LANA  
 I hope you cleaned them for my show.

MAN  
 Are you kidding? You're poetry in motion.

LANA  
 Then you're in luck. I just happen to be available for a reading.

Passing Sugar with a CUSTOMER on their way to the VIP room.

SUGAR  
 The word of the day is legs. How would you like to go upstairs and spread the word?



They exit, too, as Charlene walks by Tina's table.

TINA  
(hesitantly)  
Excuse me! Would it be possible to buy  
you a drink?

Charlene pauses, smiles slightly, and sits down.

LATER

As they quietly sip their drinks:

CHARLENE  
Women don't usually come here alone.  
If you like, I could recommend a place  
where you might feel more comfortable.

TINA  
I don't think...Oh! You think I like  
women? No, I don't...I mean I like  
them, just not that way.

CHARLENE  
You must be thinking of dancing then.

TINA  
It's crazy, I know --

CHARLENE  
We live in a crazy world.

TINA  
Why did you start?

CHARLENE  
Dancing? Well, I grew up wanting to be  
a ballerina. Then I started developing  
and didn't stop, not in time to be a  
ballerina anyway.

TINA  
Would you dance for me?

CHARLENE  
You want me to dance for you?

TINA  
Is that allowed?

## VIP ROOM

Charlene puts her hands on Tina's shoulders, leans in close with her upper body almost touching her face, then unzips her dress finally and, with a full, body-rocking motion, lets it fall to her ankles.

CHARLENE

If you do decide to dance, you'll find the men become one big throbbing hand up here. Among other things.

TINA

You mean they touch you?

CHARLENE

They're not supposed to, but it doesn't stop them from trying. Fortunately, you're never really alone up here.

Charlene indicates a BOUNCER nearby as she runs her hands down her body, then lifts a leg so it's right by Tina's ear.

As the song ends, Charlene puts her dress back on, then sits daintily on Tina's knee.

CHARLENE (cont'd)

Zip me up?

## MAIN FLOOR

Charlene walks Tina back to her table.

CHARLENE (cont'd)

Not surprisingly, the way you feel about dancing has a lot to do with the way you feel about sex. Those who like it do better than those who don't. So would you like to meet the manager?

## INT. CANDY'S. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Tina nervously stands in front of GERRY, Candy's manager.

GERRY

The rules are simple: Be on time, call if you can't make your shift, don't bring boyfriends into the club, and don't date the customers or employees. Which, by the way, includes the other dancers. Any questions?

(more)

GERRY (cont'd)  
 (off her look)  
 That's what I like to hear, nothing.  
 The customers, on the other hand, like  
 to talk so talk to them. More  
 importantly, listen to them and when  
 you're onstage bend over a lot 'cause  
 guys love that. Alrighty, then...  
 (handing her a card)  
 ...this is where you go for a license.

INT. CANDY'S - DAY

Tina exits Gerry's office where Charlene is waiting for her.

CHARLENE  
 How'd it go?

TINA  
 I thought there'd be more to it.

CHARLENE  
 It's only complicated if you let it be.

TINA  
 What'd he mean, don't date the other  
 dancers?

CHARLENE  
 Dancing can sometimes put you off men.

TINA  
 Has it put you off men?

CHARLENE  
 I like 'em when I can find one that's  
 a human being still. That's why you  
 shouldn't date the customers, they tend  
 to check their humanity at the door.

EXT. MARLENE'S HOUSE - DAY

Marlene opens her door and knows by the look on Tina's face  
 that she's decided to dance.

MARLENE  
 Just tell me the fact this will make  
 Marcus go ballistic has nothing to do  
 with your decision.

INT. SEDUCTION - DAY - MONTAGE

Marlene helps Tina pick out various outfits in a sex store,  
 some of which embarrass them while others make them LAUGH.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Marlene executes a few classic stripper moves which Tina tries to copy, then stops in embarrassment.

MARLENE

If you can't do it for me, how do you expect to do it for strangers? Now try it again!

Again, Tina tries to copy Marlene and, again, she stops.

TINA

How do you know so much about this?... Wait! You were a dancer? At that place you mentioned, The Cat's --

MARLENE

Meow. It's not something I'm proud of, but I'm not ashamed of it either. It's also how I met the man I was married to for eight days.

INT. MARCUS' TRUCK - EVENING

Marcus parks down the street from Tina's house again as she continues practices her dance moves in the window.

When it looks like she's dancing out of happiness, he drives away again.

INT. CANDY'S - LATER

On his way to the bar, Marcus nods to Charlene onstage as...

DRESSING ROOM

...wearing a pink chenille bathrobe, fuzzy slippers and hair curlers, Sugar applies her make-up like a pro at a long dressing table in front of a mirror flanked by lights.

LINDA (O.S.)

"Every body is a miniature world that expresses the mystery of the person and of the human race."

We PULL BACK TO SEE LINDA and some of the other DANCERS doing breast exercises, putting Dermablend over tattoos, applying vaseline to their teeth to keep their lips from sticking, etc.

SUGAR

Don't listen to little Miss English major here, it's tits and ass and that's all it is.

(to dancer doing  
breast exercises)

For God's sake, just buy them.

MARILYN

Whatever you do, don't tell them anything personal.

SUGAR

And don't do an animal act 'cause they'll just wanna see you have sex with it, the fuckin' degenerates. That's why I'm outta here in a month.

LANA

You've been saying that for what? A year now.

SERITA

Yeah, we'll believe you when we don't see you no more. Am I showing yet?

Serita checks her profile in the mirror as Scarlett enters.

LANA

I know one dancer who worked right up to her eighth month. Of course, that was after Brittany posed naked on that magazine cover.

SCARLETT

Does anyone know anything about Schopenhauer? I've got a talker and that's all he wants to talk about.

DANCER DOING BREAST EXERCISES

He wants to talk about his dog?

LINDA

Not Schnauzer, Schopenhauer. He was a German philosopher who believed will rather than mind was the fundamental principle of existence.

SERITA

Really? The guys I get only ever want to talk about sex and the weather.

SCARLETT

Yeah, well...I hate the talkers.

SUGAR

You hate everyone.

SCARLETT

I hate the talkers most. After the groppers...and the cheapskates.

(to Sugar)

That reminds me, one of your regulars is asking for you.

SUGAR

What'd you tell him?

SCARLETT

I told him I'd tell you. What d'ya think I told him?

Scarlett exits as Charlene enters with a drink in her hand and approaches Tina sitting nervously in a corner.

CHARLENE

How are you doing?

TINA

I think I'm going to be sick.

CHARLENE

That's normal your first night. Here, sip on this.

Charlene hands the drink to Tina who gulps it down in one go.

SERITA

It took me three weeks to get over wanting to hurl. Then I took a home pregnancy test and it was hello, I guess it's not the dancing.

CHARLENE

Have you picked a stage name yet? It'll help you not to feel like it's you up there onstage. Even though it is.

SERITA

Some girls name themselves after their idols, like Lana and Marilyn here.

MARILYN

(imitating Marilyn)

Oop boopy doo.

SUGAR

Just don't call yourself fuckin' Lolita or Babydoll. There are too many of those already in the world.

CHARLENE

Language! We're ladies, remember!

SERITA

We wouldn't be in my country.

LANA

There are always the food names like Ginger, the animal names like Kitty, the perfume names like Jasmine....

TINA

None of them sound like me.

SUGAR

Then we'll just have to make you look like one of them.

SERITA

Really? You're going to give her a makeover? This is your lucky day, Tina. When Sugar makes you over, you make money.

SUGAR

Speaking of money, it's all out there so I don't know why you're all in here. Now give me room to work.

BAR

Marcus motions to the bartender for another beer as TANYA, the dancer onstage, winds up her set to a ROUND of APPLAUSE.

DJ (O.S.)

That's right, Ladies and Genitals, put your hands together for the tantalizing Tanya. I'd also like to draw your attention to the flyers on the tables because we're looking for a few good men to be in our amateur dance contest so if you could use five hundred dollars and think you've got what it takes, just ask our lovely server for an entry form.

(more)

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)

In the meantime, we've definitely got a few good women who have what it takes so put your hands together and welcome the dancers working tonight. Our first lady of the evening is the luscious Lana who likes nothing more than a day at the spa followed by an evening at the theatre. Next to dancing for you guys, of course.

As Lana parades down the staircase in evening dress:

CHARLENE

(to Tina)

How many people get applause just for showing up to work?

DJ (O.S.)

Next up we have Charlene who says she loves to cook. And not just in the kitchen.

MEN HOOT for Charlene as she takes her turn onstage.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)

Next we have someone who credits Sam, the man in her life, for her being here tonight and all I can say is he must be a special guy to share his good luck with us so, gracing our stage for the very first time, please welcome Lucky.

It takes Marcus a moment to recognize Tina when, after her makeover, she takes the stage as Lucky.

At the end of her show, he approaches the stage.

MARCUS

What do you think you're doing, Tina?

TINA

I'm sorry, but you must have me confused with someone. My name's Lucky.

MARCUS

This isn't funny. This is no place for you.

TINA

But it is a place for these other women? Not to mention all the men.



MARCUS

You know what I mean, Tina.

TINA

There you go, confusing me with this Tina person again. Who is she? Your wife? If so, why aren't you home with her instead of here with me?...And no, I have no idea what you mean. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to work.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Jason is having dinner with a good-looking man named RICHARD.

RICHARD

So I've come to the conclusion that either a person's stupidity or his integrity shines through, depending on which there's more of. In his case, it was stupidity, but of course, I couldn't see that until it was too late.

Politely ignoring his cell phone when it RINGS:

JASON

I'm afraid my life doesn't even come close to being that interesting.

RICHARD

It's okay. You can answer it.

JASON

Okay, if you're sure.

(into phone)

Hello?...Marcus, where are you?...

That's what it sounds like....

(stifling a laugh)

You're joking?...Okay, you're not joking....Yeah, I guess I can do that.

(hanging up)

I'm sorry, I have this friend --

RICHARD

Marcus....I couldn't help overhearing.

JASON

It's not what you think. I can't explain it, but if I promise you a make-up date, will you forgive me if I don't stay for desert?

RICHARD

As long as next time you're the desert.

JASON

I knew there was something about you I liked.

RICHARD

Please, just go. Before I stop being so magnanimous.

Jason lays money on the table, then kisses Richard's cheek.

JASON

That's for knowing the word magnanimous.

As Jason exits:

RICHARD

I know lots of words.

INT. CANDY'S - EVENING

Marcus motions to the BARTENDER for another drink as he checks his pocket for money and comes up empty.

MARCUS

Make it Scotch this time. A double.  
And I think I'll start a tab.  
(off his look)  
Jason's on his way with money.

The bartender serves him his drink as a MAN sits next to him.

MAN

The girls in here are hot!  
(to bartender)  
Hey, buddy, you think you could hook me up with the girl onstage?

PLOPPING the yellow pages down on the bar:

BARTENDER

This is a strip joint. What you want is an escort service!

MAN

He's kidding, right?

Marcus looks at the man in disgust and walks away as...

VIP AREA OVERLOOKING THE STAGE

...Charlene gives Tina the once over before her stage show.

CHARLENE

Oh, to be a new face again. That's where the real money is.

TINA

Tell me again why I'm here.

CHARLENE

You're just nervous. And when you're nervous, there's a tendency to take your clothes off too soon so try to pace yourself. Normally, I'd also tell you to keep your hands away from your flaws, but you don't seem to have any.

OVERHEARING them on her way down the stairs:

SCARLETT

Of course not! We're all perfect here.

CHARLENE

Don't let her get to you. She's critical of anyone who isn't her.

TINA

Remind me again about the pole?

CHARLENE

Think of the pole as your partner. Oh, and don't forget to look in the men's eyes because it lets them know you've made a conscious choice to dance. Besides which, it's the least you can do before you take their money.

ENTRANCE

Marcus is nervously pacing when Jason enters.

MARCUS

Jason, good! How much did you bring?

JASON

Three-hundred, but do you really think drinking's the answer?

MARCUS

It's for Tina. You don't think I'm going to let her dance for anyone else, do you? If she needs money, she's going to get it from me.

(off his look)

You'll get it back, I promise.

As the song ends, Scarlett grabs her clothes and exits.

DJ (O.S.)  
Put your hands together for  
the lovely Scarlett who  
doesn't have to be quite so  
far from you....And keep  
them together as we welcome  
Lucky to the stage.

CHARLENE  
(to Tina)  
See how she just grabs her  
clothes and runs off the  
stage? That tells people  
how you feel about your  
show and, let's face it,  
anyone can get naked. The  
art is in the details.

JASON  
I don't think I need to see this. Good  
night...and good luck.

Jason exits as Tina tentatively takes the stage.

LATER

As her set ends, Tina makes a conscious effort to acknowledge  
the audience...just like Charlene said...then carefully picks  
up her clothes and exits as Marcus approaches.

DJ (O.S.)  
That was Lucky who's now available for  
a private dance so don't be shy, she's  
not.

MARCUS  
Okay, Tina, you've made your point.  
And I have to give it to you, you  
really did it this time.

TINA  
Believe it or not, Marcus, not  
everything is about you.

Tina starts to walk away, but Marcus follows.

TINA (cont'd)  
Are you still here?

MARCUS  
Yes, yes, I am because I'd like you to  
dance for me.

Holding up Jason's money:

MARCUS (cont'd)  
I know what you're thinking, Tina --  
Lucky -- but I have money.

TINA

Well, then, maybe you'd like to lead?  
I'm sure you know the way.

With mixed emotions, Tina follows Marcus to the VIP room.

MONTAGE - TINA DANCES FOR MARCUS IN THE VIP ROOM

Tina goes from embarrassment to resignation to amusement, ...until, that is, Marcus runs out of money at which point she kisses him perfunctorily on the cheek and exits.

BACK TO SCENE - MAIN FLOOR

Marcus follows Tina through the club, all the while reacting to the smiles she gives to and receives from some of the men.

MARCUS

I really think we need to talk.

TINA

I'm sorry, but I'm a little busy  
...Marcus, isn't it?

Turning to DANIEL, a middle-aged man seated by himself:

TINA (cont'd)

Hi! What's your name?

DANIEL

Daniel.

TINA

Hi, Daniel! I'm Lucky.

DANIEL

Shouldn't that be my line?

TINA

Aren't you sweet? Is there any reason  
why we can't both be lucky?

Marcus grabs Tina's arm and pulls her aside.

MARCUS

If you don't mind, Daniel, she's kinda  
busy at the moment. Even if you do  
mind.

TINA

If I'm not mistaken, Marcus, you're  
all...spent. Now if you don't mind,  
there may be others who would like to  
feel the same way.

MARCUS

If you ask me, you're enjoying this a little too much, Tina. But as I told you, you've made your point so I won't come here anymore if you don't.

TINA

Come on, don't come, Marcus, I really don't care because I have bills to pay. You do remember what bills are, don't you?

When Tina starts walking away again, Marcus grabs her arm... just as MATT, the bouncer, grabs his arm and...

EXT. CANDY'S - CONTINUING

...pushes him forcefully through the door of the club.

MATT

You know the rules, Marcus. Touching's not allowed.

MARCUS

What do you call what you just did?

MATT

My job. From now on, you're out of here and I don't just mean tonight.

MARCUS

You don't understand. That was my wife.

MATT

All the more reason not to be here.

Matt notices the scuffle has dirtied his tuxedo.

MATT (cont'd)

Oh, man, I just had this cleaned.

Matt re-enters the club as Marcus looks around, lost.

INT. DONUT SHOP ACROSS FROM CANDY'S - CONTINUING

NANCY is doing a crossword puzzle and eating a donut at the counter as ELLEN sees Marcus through the window while wiping down tables.

ELLEN

Hey, there's your boyfriend.

NANCY

He's not my boyfriend.

ELLEN

That's because you're too afraid to talk to him.

NANCY

What am I supposed to do? Run over and ask him the time? I need a six letter word for licentious.

ELLEN

Wanton.

Nancy fills it in, surprised it fits.

NANCY

How do you know that? I've never seen you read anything but People and The National Enquirer.

ELLEN

I watched a woman doing the same puzzle on the subway this morning. I don't think your boyfriend's having a very good night.

NANCY

Why? What's he doing?

Ellen sees Marcus turn and head toward the donut shop.

ELLEN

HE'S COMING IN HERE!

Ellen and Nancy scramble behind the counter as Marcus enters.

MARCUS

Hi! I'd like a black coffee, please.

LATER

Ellen and Nancy watch Marcus watching the front of Candy's.

ELLEN

What do you think he's doing?

NANCY

He's drinking coffee. What's it look like?

ELLEN

Maybe he'd like a refill.

Ellen hands Nancy the coffee pot, then undoes the top two buttons on her uniform.

ELLEN (cont'd)  
 He's used to girls who aren't afraid to  
 show what they've got.

NANCY  
 (doing them up again)  
 I haven't got anything.

INT. CANDY'S. VIP ROOM - CONTINUING

...Tina table dances for a middle-aged man named HAROLD.

TINA  
 So, Harold, are you married?

HAROLD  
 Isn't everyone?

TINA  
 Does your wife know you're here?

HAROLD  
 Not exactly.

TINA  
 Not exactly, huh? Do you ever just stay  
 home and talk to her?

HAROLD  
 You haven't been doing this very long,  
 have you?

EXT. CANDY'S. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Matt finishes checking the license plates of the cars in the  
 parking lot against a staff list.

INT. CANDY'S - NIGHT

Serita approaches Angel as the dancers, including Tina, count  
 their earnings for the night.

SERITA  
 Is your boyfriend picking you up  
 tonight?

ANGEL  
 We broke up.

SERITA  
 He didn't like you dancing?



ANGEL

No, we broke up for religious reasons.  
He thought he was God and I didn't.

SERITA

My country is filled with men like  
that. Wanna go to a club tonight?

ANGEL

Should you be going to clubs in your  
condition?

SERITA

I need a father for my condition.

Matt enters.

MATT

All clear, ladies, have a nice night.

EXT. CANDY'S PARKING LOT - CONTINUING

The dancers exit and, AD-LIBBING good-byes to one another, go to cars which reflect their personalities, including Tina and Charlene who exit together.

CHARLENE

You need a ride?

TINA

Thanks, but I think there's a bus --

CHARLENE

Oh, no! You can either take the bus or  
you can be a dancer, but you can't do  
both. You never know who might be out  
there waiting for you. C'mon!

Tina follows Charlene to a sleek sports car.

TINA

This is yours?

CHARLENE

It's amazing what a pair of tits can  
get you nowadays.

INT. CHARLENE'S CAR - NIGHT

Charlene pulls her car to a stop in front of Tina's house as Sam appears in the living room window.

TINA

Thanks. For everything. I would never have gotten through tonight without you.

CHARLENE

I guess you'll wanna talk it over with Sam before you decide if you're gonna come back or not.

TINA

Sam?

CHARLENE

The DJ said he's the man in your life. Isn't he?

TINA

That's Sam.

Tina points to Sam BARKING in the window as she gets out of the car, prompting Charlene to LAUGH as she drives away.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Tina holds up the money she made as Sam runs to the door.

TINA

Look, Sam, we paid some bills tonight.

As he happily licks her face:

TINA (cont'd)

It's nice to know I can always make one male happy.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - LATER

With the money spread out on the bed, Tina rolls around on top of it as Sam BARKS at her, more agitated than usual.

TINA

What's wrong, boy? Are you okay?

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - EVENING

At the sight of a strange car parked in Tina's driveway, Marcus approaches a middle-aged MAN exiting the house.

MARCUS

Excuse me, but isn't it a bit late for a house call?

MAN

Not really, no.

MARCUS

Well, I happen to think it is.

Tina sees Marcus and quickly exits the house in her bathrobe, distracting him as the man goes to his car.

TINA

What the hell are you doing, Marcus?

MARCUS

You work one night and you're already bringing customers home?

(indicating man as he drives away)

Oops! Looks like your date's over.

TINA

Not that it's any of your business, but Sam wasn't himself when I got home.... That man was a vet, the only one I could get to make a house call at this time of night.

MARCUS

How's Sam now?

TINA

Fine.

MARCUS

Good.

Tina enters the house again as Marcus drives away.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Marlene enters to find Tina cradling Sam in her arms.

MARLENE

I take it Marcus knows you're dancing. So how'd it go?

TINA

Fine.

(off her look)

What?

Going to the fridge and retrieving a bottle of wine:

MARLENE

Obviously, if I want details, I'm going to have to get you drunk and, if memory serves, you're probably a little wired anyway.

LATER

TINA

So I asked him why we couldn't both be lucky and that's when he got kicked out.

Pouring the last of the wine into their glasses:

MARLENE

You're good. Just don't get too good. When a dancer gets too good she gets stuck and when she gets stuck, she gets old. Dancing should only ever be a means to an end.

TINA

What was it a means to an end to for you?

MARLENE

It gave me the confidence to be who I always knew I was, but was too afraid to be.

TINA

Alone and drunk?

MARLENE

The point is I'm not afraid to be alone or drunk. Besides, you should talk!

Pointing to Marcus' truck through the window:

TINA

I may be drunk, but I'm not alone.

INT. TRUCK - MORNING

Marcus wakes, stiff and sore again, and drives off as...

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

...Tina wakes, stiff and sore from dancing.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

Tina opens the door to Jason who enters as she self-consciously pulls her bathrobe tighter.

TINA

Thanks for coming over. Are you hungry? I could make breakfast....  
(off his look)  
My cooking really isn't that bad.

Indicating a pile of money on the table:

TINA (cont'd)  
I believe that's yours. It's the money  
you lent Marcus and you know you'll  
never get it back from him.

JASON  
But you earned that money.

TINA  
And then some.

JASON  
Really?

TINA  
You seem surprised.

JASON  
No. Not about the money anyway.

TINA  
Apparently it's good to be a new face.

Tina kisses his cheek.

TINA (cont'd)  
That's for leaving before my show.

INT. JOB CENTRE - DAY

Marcus prints off the details of a job posting on a computer terminal.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

With the job posting in hand, Marcus approaches a WORKMAN who, in turn, points to the FOREMAN.

Marcus then approaches the foreman who shakes his head 'no.'

INT. ROOMING HOUSE - DAY

Marcus is drinking beer and eating pizza when he suddenly throws the slice he's eating into the box, chugs the beer, crushes the can in his hand, and tosses it across the room where it lands next to more empty pizza boxes and beer cans.

INT. CANDY'S - EVENING - MONTAGE

The club goes from slow to busy with the dancers, in turn, going from bored working the empty floor to dancing for customers in a packed VIP room.

BACK TO SCENE - MAIN FLOOR

Tina is more relaxed onstage now as she hooks her leg around a CUSTOMER's neck to receive a tip, then moves to the other side of the stage where two rowdy young MEN are celebrating the engagement of a third, more reluctant MAN.

ROWDY YOUNG MAN #1

This is almost worth getting married for.

TINA

So which one of you is the lucky guy?

The rowdy men point to the reticent GROOM-TO-BE.

ROWDY YOUNG MAN #2

We are! He's the one getting married.

ROWDY YOUNG MAN #1

You totally have to dance for him. And he's a virgin so anything you could do to, you know, help him out would be greatly appreciated.

ROWDY YOUNG MAN #2

Especially by him.

The rowdy men GUFFAW and high-five one another.

VIP ROOM

Tina starts to dance for the still reluctant groom-to-be, then stops finally and sits down next to him.

TINA

Why don't you tell me about this girl you're marrying?

MAIN FLOOR

Tina walks the groom-to-be back to his table as the rowdy young men nervously check their watches.

ROWDY YOUNG MAN #1

We probably should have told you, we only have twenty bucks left.

TINA

Don't worry, this one's on the house.  
A man's first time shouldn't be rushed.  
(to groom-to-be)  
And your fiancée's going to be one happy woman!

Tina kisses the groom-to-be's cheek, then exits.

ROWDY YOUNG MAN #1  
Shit! You mean you did it? For real?

EXT. CANDY'S - CONTINUING

Marcus drives by Candy's in his truck...and keeps driving.

INT. CANDY'S. DRESSING ROOM - EVENING

Tina enters to find YVETTE, a feature dancer, adjusting her over-sized, silicone-enhanced breasts in her bikini top.

YVETTE  
Sometimes I think Lucy and Ethel here have a life of their own.

TINA  
You named them?

YVETTE  
Why not? They're the best investment I ever made. You wanna touch them?  
(as Tina does)  
We think men are the only ones fixated on breasts, but they're not, they're just more honest about it. Probably the only thing they are honest about.

TINA  
Don't they hurt your back?

YVETTE  
It's only for a couple of years, then I'll go back to the way they were, but with enough money to open the flower shop of my dreams.

DJ (O.S.)  
That was Angel, expressing herself as only she can. And now, Ladies and Genitals, what you've been waiting for, our feature act this evening. Prepare to give thanks.

A ROAR fills the club as Yvette's theme MUSIC begins to play.

DRESSING ROOM

YVETTE  
That's my cue. You might wanna think about supersizing, too. You know, if you wanna feature.

Tina watches Yvette exit, then looks at her breasts in the mirror...and LAUGHS.

MAIN FLOOR

The CROWD goes wild as Yvette takes to the stage.

EXT/INT. CANDY'S. PARKING LOT/ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Matt enters after his nightly check of the parking lot.

MATT

All clear, ladies, have a nice night.

EXT. CANDY'S - CONTINUING

Tina and Charlene exit together again.

CHARLENE

I'm afraid I can't give you a ride tonight so I want you to promise you'll take a cab home.

TINA

I promise. Do you have a date?

CHARLENE

Not exactly. But I don't want it getting back to Gerry.

TINA

Why? Gerry would only care if you were going out with a customer. Are you going out with a customer?

CHARLENE

I know I said they check their humanity at the door, but some of them are just lonely men who enjoy a little company now and then. And like I told you, it's only complicated if you let it be.

EXT. CANDY'S - CONTINUING

With a small tree propped up in the passenger seat next to him in his truck, Marcus watches Tina hail a cab.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tina enters the house as Marcus pulls into the driveway.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tina throws her nightly earnings onto the bed.



TINA

Some more bills taken care of, Sam.

She exits when she HEARS a KNOCK on the kitchen door.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Tina opens the door to reveal Marcus holding the tree.

TINA

Marcus!

MARCUS

I thought I'd come see Sam. We agreed on once a week and it's been a week --

TINA

It's also three in the morning. What's with the tree?

MARCUS

After the other night, I didn't think flowers would be enough.

Marcus looks expectantly at Tina who opens the door for him, then turns and starts for the bedroom.

TINA

Just don't forget to lock up when you leave. Good night.

Sam looks at them both, in turn, then follows Tina.

MARCUS

Is this really what you want, Tina? Is it?

When Tina doesn't answer, Marcus sets the tree down on the floor and exits.

EXT. CANDY'S - DAY

Marcus and Jason are standing outside Candy's.

MARCUS

You know what to say, right?

JASON

This may surprise you, Marcus, but I've never tried to get someone back into a strip club after being kicked out.

MARCUS

Ask for Gerry. He's the manager.

INT. CANDY'S. GERRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Marcus sits facing Gerry, Candy's manager, as Jason looks on.

MARCUS

You know I'm a good customer, Gerry.  
And all the time I've been coming here  
must count for something.

GERRY

This isn't charity work, Marcus. You  
don't get bonus points for being good.  
But I'll tell you what, we're still  
looking for men to be in our contest  
and, for some reason, not too many  
people wanna do it. It's only down to  
your underwear, or G-string if you have  
one, so what d'ya say?

MARCUS

You want me to be in a dance contest?

GERRY

As long as Lucky says it's okay. Since  
your altercation was with her, I figure  
she should have a say.

INT. CANDY'S - LATER

Tina passes the bar on her way to the dressing room.

BARTENDER

Gerry wants to see you.

INT. CANDY'S. MANAGER'S OFFICE - EVENING

Tina looks at Gerry in surprise.

TINA

You want him to what?

GERRY

Unless you have a problem with it,  
then the deal's off.

TINA

I don't have a problem with it. I'm  
just surprised he doesn't.

Tina goes to the door, then turns to face Gerry again.

TINA (cont'd)

I don't suppose this would be a good  
time to discuss working conditions?

Gerry shakes his head 'no' and Tina exits.

INT. ROOMING HOUSE - DAY

Marcus poses in front of a mirror in a pair of boxer shorts.

MARCUS  
Maybe this isn't a very good idea.

JASON  
The dance contest or you being in it?  
You just need to trade your boxers in  
for something...flashier.

Through a series of DISSOLVES, Marcus tries on various styles of underwear -- from white Jockeys to bikini briefs.

MARCUS  
What d'ya think?

JASON  
Have you considered a G-string?

CUT TO:

Marcus posing in a G-string.

JASON  
Is the money really worth all this?

MARCUS  
It's to get back in the club, you know  
that.

INT. CANDY'S - EVENING

A mostly female AUDIENCE excitedly waits for the contest to begin as...

BACKSTAGE

...MEN, some eager and confident, others visibly nervous, mill about as Charlene approaches Marcus.

CHARLENE  
Looks like we finally got you where we  
want you.  
(addressing everyone)  
How's everyone doing? As you can hear,  
we have a full house tonight so, who  
knows, we may even launch a new career.

TOMMY  
What if we puke our guts out onstage?

CHARLENE  
 It'll definitely hurt your chances so  
 try to relax, it's no big deal.

Several dancers look self-consciously at their crotches.

MAIN ROOM

The excitement and energy is palpable as the MC runs onstage.

MC  
 Are we having fun yet? 'Cause if we  
 have enough fun tonight we might just  
 make this a monthly event.

The women ROAR their approval now as we INTERCUT the dancers  
 nervously waiting backstage WITH those dancing onstage.

MAINSTAGE

Marcus takes the stage and begins dancing tentatively as Tina  
 and Charlene watch from a balcony area overlooking the stage.

CHARLENE  
 Have you met him yet?  
 (off her look)  
 Then you know. But thank God for the  
 bad boys. Bad men are bad news, but  
 bad boys? They make life interesting.

TINA  
 Does he ever get dances?

CHARLENE  
 Marcus? No. Not since he got married,  
 anyway. But even then, it only ever  
 seemed to be entertainment. As horny  
 toads go, he's one of the better ones.

Marcus finishes dancing to tremendous APPLAUSE.

LATER

The MC comes onstage after the last dancer's set.

MC  
 And now, ladies, you get to choose the  
 winner with your applause so may we  
 have all our contestants onstage?

One-by-one, the dancers walk onstage as the women APPLAUD.

MC (cont'd)  
 Will he be Matthew...Luke...Taylor...

Finally, only Marcus and JULIAN remain to be called.

MC (cont'd)  
...Marcus....

The RESPONSE for Marcus is huge, the best yet.

MC (cont'd)  
...and last, but not least...Julian.

The RESPONSE for Julian is through the roof.

MC (cont'd)  
Ladies, I think we have a winner.

Congratulatory MUSIC plays as Julian is crowned the winner.

VIP ROOM

The song ends and Tina grabs Marcus' last twenty dollars as she zips up her dress.

MARCUS  
First prize would have gone a lot further.

TINA  
You'd just spend it all on me.

MAIN FLOOR

Charlene sidles up to Tina as she and Marcus return to the main floor.

CHARLENE  
Looks like I was wrong about him getting dances. He was just waiting for you to come along.

As she continues through the club, Charlene OVERHEARS Lana with a customer.

LANA  
Thanks for the birthday drink.

As Lana and Charlene walk together:

CHARLENE  
Isn't your birthday in April?

LANA  
Whenever business is slow, I tell them it's my birthday. I've had three this month alone.

LATER

Marcus is back at the table with Jason who's wearing a suit.

JASON  
I'm not a bank, Marcus.

MARCUS  
Then you shouldn't dress like one.

Sheila arrives with two beers which Jason dutifully pays for.

SHEILA  
(to Marcus)  
Gerry wants to see you.

MARCUS  
Why? I'm being good.

SHEILA  
Gee, maybe you should ask him.

As Marcus exits, Sheila turns to Jason.

SHEILA (cont'd)  
So do you have a job? Apart from baby-sitting Marcus, I mean.

INT. CANDY'S. GERRY'S OFFICE - EVENING

Gerry is seated at his desk when Marcus enters.

MARCUS  
You wanted to see me?

GERRY  
You were good out there tonight.

MARCUS  
Apparently not as good as Julian.

GERRY  
You get used to someone always being younger than you, stronger than you, richer than you --

MARCUS  
I get the idea.  
(BEAT) Actually I don't.

GERRY  
I have a job for you if you're interested. It'd be dancing at another club, but the money's good --

MARCUS  
 I'm not a dancer, Gerry. I just did it  
 to get back in the club.  
 (BEAT) How good?

EXT. CANDY'S. PARKING LOT/ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Matt does his nightly check of the parking lot.

INT. CANDY'S - CONTINUING

The dancers are waiting to be dismissed as Matt enters.

MATT  
 All clear, ladies, have a nice night.

CHARLENE  
 Anyone hungry?

A few dancers AD-LIB 'I am' as Charlene turns to Tina.

CHARLENE (cont'd)  
 You're quiet tonight. Everything  
 alright?  
 (off her shrug)  
 Wait'll we get some of Fran's Pecan Pie  
 in you. It's better than sex.

INT. FRAN'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tina just listens as Charlene, Lana, Sugar and Serita vent.

SUGAR  
 When you see what some women marry, you  
 know they sure didn't like working for  
 a living.

CHARLENE  
 You don't think marriage is work?

LANA  
 All I know is I'd happily hang up my G-  
 string for the right man.

CHARLENE  
 And the right man would be...?

LANA  
 I only know who he wouldn't be. He  
 wouldn't be any man I've ever met yet.

CHARLENE  
 What about you, Tina? Do you think  
 there's such a thing as the right man?

SUGAR

Like maybe one of the men in the contest tonight? I almost peed myself watching them onstage.

CHARLENE

I thought Marcus was pretty good.

LANA

Marcus who never gets a dance Marcus?

CHARLENE

He did tonight.

Charlene looks at Tina and the others follow suit.

LANA

I've always wondered about him. Did he try to touch you?

SERITA

I wonder if he'd make a good father.  
(off their looks)  
What? He's better than nothing.

LANA

I figure he's like something you see in a store. You like it enough to buy it, but once you get it home, it doesn't go with anything else in the house.

SUGAR

Would you listen to us? You'd think they were anything but wallets on legs.

All but Tina LAUGH as three tough-looking MEN enter.

LANA

Don't look now, but there's trouble at two o'clock.

SUGAR

Maybe if we ignore them, they'll leave us alone.

Sneaking a peak, Serita sees them approaching.

SERITA

I don't think it's working.

CHARLENE

So we'll just have to have a little fun with them.

(more)



CHARLENE (cont'd)

(to Tina)

When a man finds out you're a stripper  
he'll first wanna come see you perform.  
Then he'll insinuate you're sexually  
insatiable and if you reject him?  
He'll condemn you for being immoral.

MAN #1

Isn't it kind of late for you, ladies?

CHARLENE

No later than it is for you.

MAN #1

Maybe you're looking for company?

CHARLENE

Thanks, but I think we have all the  
company we need.

MAN #2

(softly)

Maybe they're dykes.

SUGAR

We're strippers, actually.

MAN #1

Did you hear that? They're strippers.

MAN #2

A lot of strippers are dykes.

MAN #3

Where do you work? You know, if we  
wanted to come see you perform?

LANA

We work at Candy's. You know, where  
the customers melt in your mouth and  
not in your hands.

MAN #1

It sounds like you enjoy your work.  
You sure you're not looking for company?

CHARLENE

Serita here's looking for a father for  
the baby she's going to have in about  
seven months. Does that count?

MAN #3

Hey! We're just thinkin' 'bout tonight.

CHARLENE

Isn't that just like a man!

LANA

Let's not be hasty, ladies. Perhaps they're willing to pay to play?

MAN #1

Oh, no. There'll be no paying to play. Let's go, guys, they're just dickin' us around, the fuckin' cunts.

The dancers watch the men exit, quite pleased with themselves.

SERITA

Why do they always call us that? As if it's the worst thing they can think of?

SUGAR

Because in their minds it is. They're angry at the world and that's how they came into it.

INT. CHARLENE'S CAR - NIGHT

Charlene pulls her car to a stop in front of Tina's house, then turns to her with an accusing look.

CHARLENE

Okay, what's wrong?

TINA

I should've told you earlier, but Marcus and I...we're kind of married.

CHARLENE

Kind of married? And he doesn't mind you dancing?

TINA

We're sort of separated.

CHARLENE

Kind of married? Sort of separated? No wonder he looks like he's passing a kidney stone lately.

TINA

I thought by dancing I could pay some bills and maybe find out what he gets out of going there, apart from the obvious.

Charlene pulls a flask from her purse and offers Tina a drink.

CHARLENE

Why can't it just be the obvious? A place for men who don't like to date. No strings, no hassles, no --

TINA

Complications?

CHARLENE

Boys will always be boys, as apparently will a lot of middle-aged men. They're pretty funny if you think about it.

TINA

You really believe it's only complicated if you let it be?

CHARLENE

You set your limits, they set theirs, you meet somewhere in the middle. But at the end of the day it's just sex. What's complicated is what you're doing. Love. I'm assuming it is love?

Tina shrugs, then notices the peeling paint on the house as she gets out of the car.

TINA

I should have the house painted. And you were wrong about the pie.

Again, Charlene LAUGHS as she drives away.

EXT. LICENSING OFFICE - DAY

Jason notices the disappointed look on Marcus's face as he exits the licensing office.

JASON

What's wrong?

MARCUS

It costs a hundred and eighty-six bucks! Where am I going to get --

Jason pulls out his wallet and hands Marcus the money.

MARCUS (cont'd)

You're sure? Because I don't want you thinking you're a bank --

JASON

We'll consider it an investment in your future.

MARCUS

Maybe I should have married you instead.

Marcus turns and re-enters the office with a renewed spirit.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Tina opens the door to find Charlene standing in the doorway along with several male and female DANCERS.

CHARLENE

You did say you wanted to paint your house and we come highly recommended!

In MONTAGE, the dancers paint the house in outfits almost as skimpy as the ones they dance in, prompting attention from NEIGHBORS, PASSERS-BY in cars, BOYS riding bicycles, etc.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUING

Angel vents as she and the some of the other dancers paint.

ANGEL

There are dancers in hundreds, maybe thousands, of movies, but do they ever get to play the lead? Oh, sure, Demi Moore in Striptease, but all she wanted was to get out of the business so she could get her daughter back from her son-of-a-bitch husband. It sucks when a dancer isn't even as good as a son-of-a-bitch husband. And don't get me started on Showgirls or The Full Monty, which even made money but where were the dicks? Have you ever seen a movie about female dancers without tits and ass? No, you have not. And why not? Because movies are made by men in love with their own dicks, but afraid of everyone else's. God forbid, they should know what to do with a woman who steps out of her passive gender role to embrace her god-given sexuality and, trust me, I know from personal experience how showing a man how a woman can enjoy herself sexually helps him realize his potential in all his relationships with women...except for maybe his sister and his mother.

Angel stands back to admire her work.

ANGEL (cont'd)

There, this wall's done.

INT. MARCUS' ROOM - DAY

Wearing just his boxers, Marcus checks his appearance in a mirror, then drops to the floor for some push-ups, only to fall into a heap after only a couple.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUING

Tina and the dancers celebrate their work with beer and pizza.

INT. FURNITURE STORE - DAY

With a SALESMAN in tow, Sam jumps onto a sofa and BARKS as he and Tina shop for new furniture.

TINA

We'll take that one.

The salesman adds it to a list, then a chair Sam jumps on.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - DAY

A furniture truck pulls to a stop in front of Tina's house.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tina is in the midst of rearranging the new furniture when Sam runs to the window and BARKS, prompting her to take a look, too, disappointed to find he's just barking at a dog.

LATER

Tina takes one look at the furniture in the freshly-painted room and starts to CRY as Marlene enters.

MARLENE

I saw the men leave so I thought I'd  
come see how the furniture....I know,  
I cry when I get new furniture, too.

INT. CANDY'S. VIP ROOM - EVENING

Tina playfully slaps one of her REGULAR CUSTOMERS while dancing for him in the VIP room when he tries to touch her.

TINA

No means no.

REGULAR CUSTOMER

Sorry.

TINA

You should be. Isn't this your third  
visit this week?

REGULAR CUSTOMER

You could save me the trip and let me take you away from all this.

TINA

You don't want me. I have...issues.

INT. ADONIS - EVENING

In a dimly-lit club where the atmosphere is electric and the MUSIC infectious, MALE DANCERS chat up various MEN, including a MAN in a wheelchair and a DRAG QUEEN.

As Marcus enters, a DANCER flexing in a mirror turns and flexes in his direction, prompting Marcus to turn and start for the exit again when he bumps into Julian, the winner of Candy's Ladies' Night contest.

JULIAN

Marcus! Gerry got to you too, huh?

MARCUS

Julian! You work here?

JULIAN

For a couple of months now.

Indicating the drag queen with a nod of his head:

MARCUS

How do you make any money? There's only one woman in the whole place.

JULIAN

That isn't a woman, Marcus. Didn't Gerry tell you?

MARCUS

Tell me what.

JULIAN

This is a men's club.

Marcus focusses on the dancers who are trying to entice the men into a dance by rubbing their necks, backs, legs, etc.

MARCUS

You mean it's a....

JULIAN

Gay club.

MARCUS

So these men are....

JULIAN

Gay.

MARCUS

But I'm not.

JULIAN

Neither am I. Neither are most of the dancers here, except maybe for pay. But as long as you have a big dick -- hell, as long as you have a dick period -- the customers don't seem to care.

MARCUS

You mean the dancers take everything off?

CHEERING erupts as MEN tip TYLER, the dancer onstage.

JULIAN

It's not that different from walking round a locker room. Except for the tips...and the table dances.

MARCUS

Table dances?

JULIAN

It's not rocket science, Marcus. If you wanna feed your ego and get phone numbers, you dance for women. If you wanna make money, you dance for men. If you wanna make a lot of money, you do more than dance.

As the song ends, Tyler bows to the audience, gathers up his clothes, and exits the stage.

DJ (O.S.)

There you have it, gentlemen, another erection pointed in your direction so grab yourself a cock and a cocktail as we welcome Julian to the stage.

JULIAN

(to Marcus)

Why don't you grab a beer and watch my show? See what you think.

Julian bounds onstage and starts to dance with both grace and athleticism, removing his jacket and running his hand along his muscled body, then turning and flexing his sculpted, V-shaped back for his appreciative audience.

In perfect syncopation with the MUSIC, he lowers his shorts in tiny increments, prompting some of the men to hold their breath and others to lean forward in anticipation.

Finally, he lets his shorts drop, then turns and, placing one hand over his eyes like the 'see-no-evil' monkey, simulates jerking off with the other hand for their collective delight.

Marcus watches men line up to tuck bills into Julian's socks as he obliges them with a peck on the cheek and a big smile.

#### BATHROOM

Marcus splashes cold water on his face when he becomes aware of a MAN staring at him from the urinal.

When the man exits, Marcus moves to a urinal as another MAN enters and gives him the eye, too, prompting Marcus to exit.

#### MAIN FLOOR

Marcus OVERHEARS snatches of conversation as he walks by some of the DANCERS with CUSTOMERS.

DANCER #1  
Hi! I'm Billy.

CUSTOMER #1  
Peter.

DANCER #1  
Well, now that we're on a first name basis, Peter, how about a dance?

DANCER #2 makes eye contact with CUSTOMER #2 as he walks by.

DANCER #2  
Was it love at first sight, or should I walk by again?

DANCER #3 approaches CUSTOMER #3:

DANCER #3  
Is this our song?  
(off his look)  
Would you like to make it our song?

CUSTOMER #4 asks DANCER #4 questions like it's an interview.

CUSTOMER #4  
How old are you?

DANCER #4  
Twenty.



CUSTOMER #4  
How old are you really?

DANCER #4  
Twenty-two.

CUSTOMER #4  
What's your name?

DANCER #4  
Justin.

CUSTOMER #4  
What's your real name?

DANCER #4  
Scott.

DANCER #5 approaches CUSTOMER #5.

DANCER #5  
Why don't I start with my usual pick-up  
lines? Do you come here often or do you  
wait till you get home?

LATER

Marcus dials a number on a payphone, clearly agitated.

INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT. BEDROOM - EVENING

Jason GROANS, then answers his cell when it RINGS, as we  
become aware someone else is under the covers with him.

JASON  
Hello?...Marcus.

The other person -- a male -- GROANS, too.

JASON (cont'd)  
Don't stop.  
(into phone)  
No, not you, Marcus. What's wrong?

INTERCUT Marcus reacting to displays of affection, playful  
dry-humping between some of the men, outrageous costumes, etc.

MARCUS  
They want me to dance for men, Jason.  
And if you ask me, some of them are way  
too in touch with their feminine side.

JASON  
So what are you going to do?

MARCUS

I obviously can't work here.

As the person under the covers continues working his magic:

JASON

Things aren't so...uh...obvious to everyone, Marcus. A job's a job and...uh...you do seem to have a talent for it...Uh, I've gotta go, Marcus. There's someone at the door so call me tomorrow and let me know what happens. Okay?

BACK TO SCENE

Jason hangs up as Richard appears from under the covers.

RICHARD

Do you really have to go?

JASON

No. I don't have to go.  
(BEAT) Actually, maybe I do. I'm sorry.

As Jason gets out of bed and starts to dress:

RICHARD

It was the sex, wasn't it?

JASON

It wasn't the sex. I told you, I can't explain this.

RICHARD

You don't have to spare my feelings. I know it was the sex. It's not like this is the first time --

JASON

It wasn't the sex. I'll call you.

Jason gives Richard a quick kiss and exits.

INT. ADONIS - EVENING

Marcus looks around the club, clearly at loose ends.

DJ (O.S.)

I know some of you have been wondering why Barbie and Ken got a divorce so I'm going to tell you as we welcome James to the stage. It's because Ken came in a separate box.

JAMES bounds on stage and acts out the song with various hand gestures while a table of CUSTOMERS does a round of shots.

AT THE BAR

Marcus does shots, alone.

INT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB - CONTINUING

Angel approaches a MAN with her usual scowl firmly in place.

ANGEL  
Would you like a dance?

He shakes his head and she moves to a second MAN.

ANGEL (cont'd)  
Would you like a dance?

When he shakes his head, too, she moves to a third MAN.

ANGEL (cont'd)  
Would you like a dance? It's only three minutes.

When he, too, shakes his head, she joins SCARLETT at the bar.

ANGEL (cont'd)  
Here a deadbeat, there a deadbeat,  
everywhere a deadbeat.

SCARLETT  
Maybe if you tried smiling at them  
instead of looking like you want to  
stick a knife through their hearts!

ANGEL  
I refuse to be my mother.

BALCONY OVERLOOKING THE MAIN ROOM

Tina studies the varied faces of the CUSTOMERS as Charlene appears at her side.

TINA  
What are we doing here? What are any of  
us doing here?

CHARLENE  
Well, we're not all sort-of-married-to-  
kind-of-separated from Marcus so we're  
probably here for different reasons.

As Serita exits the stage after her set:

DJ (O.S.)

That was the scintillating Serita who's available to scintillate you as we welcome Charlene to the stage.

CHARLENE

Look, your bills are paid now, you have money in the bank. Do you plan to continue eating?

(off her look)

Well, then? If you look too deep, you just get hurt.

Charlene walks down the stairs and takes the stage as...

INT. ADONIS - CONTINUING

...Jason enters to find Marcus sitting at the bar, half-drunk.

JASON

You alright?

MARCUS

Jason! Come have a drink with me.

JASON

Don't you think you've had enough?

MARCUS

Do you believe this place? It's nothing but men....Look, here comes one now.

Marcus indicates MIKE who, in turn, recognizes Jason.

MIKE

Jason!

JASON

Mike. How've you been?

MIKE

Would you believe I finally passed the bar?

MARCUS

Not yet, you haven't.

Marcus indicates the bar and LAUGHS.

MIKE

Is your friend alright?

JASON

He just needs a little fresh air.

MIKE

I'm on my way out and you seem to have your hands full at the moment anyway, but call me sometime.

Jason nods and watches Mike exit before turning to Marcus.

JASON

How about that fresh air?

INT. MARCUS' TRUCK (PARKED) - EVENING

Marcus and Jason are seated in the cab of Marcus' truck.

MARCUS

Do you believe that guy? He thought we were friends.

JASON

We are friends, Marcus.

MARCUS

He thought we were 'friend' friends! Doesn't that bother you?

JASON

Should it?

MARCUS

Well, no, not if you're....

(off his look)

Sorry. We've never talked about it.

JASON

I figured you had a problem with it.

MARCUS

You think you know me so well. Well, thank you so very fucking much.

JASON

You don't have a problem with it?

MARCUS

Of course, I have a problem with it.

Jason gets out of the truck finally, then sets some money on the seat.

JASON

Make sure you take a cab home, Marcus. You shouldn't drive in your condition.

Jason leaves as Marcus' eyes fall on the money on the seat.

EXT. CANDY'S STRIP CLUB/STREET - NIGHT

Once again, the dancers AD-LIB their good-byes as they exit.

CHARLENE

I'm afraid I can't give you a ride tonight. But you're making good money now, you should think about getting a car.

TINA

I'd have to think about learning how to drive first

CHARLENE

You learned how to dance. Have a good night.

TINA

You, too.

Charlene exits as Tina flags down a passing cab.

EXT. JASON'S TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUING

Clutching what's left of Jason's money, Marcus stumbles drunkenly out of a cab and KNOCKS on Jason's door.

When Jason doesn't answer, he starts talking to him through the mail slot.

MARCUS

I took a cab, Jason, just like you said. And I brought you your change.  
(BEAT) Although how am I going to get home now?

(giggling)

I never thought of that.

Leaning against the door for support, Marcus slides to the ground, then falls backward into the hallway as Jason opens the door finally.

INT. JASON'S TOWNHOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Marcus MUTTERS to himself as Jason tucks him into bed.

MARCUS

I'm sorry I never asked you about your being gay. I guess I didn't ask because I was afraid you might be in love with me. Then what would we do.

Jason smiles and exits.

INT. JASON'S TOWNHOUSE. KITCHEN - MORNING

Jason enters the kitchen to make coffee and finds a note from Marcus on the coffee-maker that reads: "Thanks."

INT. ADONIS - EVENING

Marcus enters the club again, relieved to see Julian.

MARCUS

Julian.

JULIAN

You decided to take another kick at the cat, huh? C'mon, I'll give you the tour.

DOWNSTAIRS

Marcus follows Julian along a nondescript corridor to the

DRESSING ROOM

where one of the dancers is shaving his chest in the shower.

JULIAN (cont'd)

This is the dressing room. Lockers -- you can share mine tonight if you didn't bring a lock. Showers....

(to dancer in shower)

You're supposed to shave before you come to work. You know that.

The dancer shrugs and continues shaving as they exit to the

CORRIDOR

JULIAN (cont'd)

The hair clogs the drains.

MARCUS

Does everyone shave their chest?

JULIAN

No, but some dancers shave everywhere. (BEAT) They think it makes their dicks look bigger. Speaking of which, this is the inspiration room....

Julian opens the door to the

VIDEO ROOM

where a DANCER is watching straight porn to make wood in preparation for his stage show.

JULIAN (cont'd)  
 ...which pretty much speaks for itself.

MAIN FLOOR

JULIAN (cont'd)  
 Okay, I think that's about it. Except  
 for the VIP room upstairs. Now I've go  
 shake the old money-maker.

Marcus watches Julian approach a CUSTOMER.

JULIAN (cont'd)  
 Hi! Can I suck you...into a dance  
 tonight?

Marcus watches as the man smiles and follows Julian to the  
 VIP room, then goes to the bar where BIG BOB is tending bar.

BIG BOB  
 Well, look who's back!

MARCUS  
 Don't worry. I just want one.

BIG BOB  
 Too bad. You're kinda cute when you're  
 drunk, not that you aren't cute anyway.  
 Bud, right?

Big Bob sets a bottle of Bud in front of Marcus.

MARCUS  
 Thanks. For the drink.

MONTAGE - DANCERS GOING THROUGH THEIR MOTIONS ONSTAGE

-- a dancer twirls around and feigns surprise when his pants  
 fall down;  
 -- a dancer whips off a pair of tearaway pants;  
 -- a dancer takes his shoes off at the side of stage, then  
 does a back somersault onto the stage;  
 -- a dancer trips on his pants as he struggles to remove them;  
 -- a dancer hands his clothes to a customer who dutifully  
 folds them for him;  
 -- a dancer throws his G-string onto a customer's head;  
 -- a dancer goes onstage, smiles, and silently applauds for  
 himself before starting to dance;  
 -- a dancer mimics the facial expressions, hand positions,  
 etc., of some of the customers to the delight of the crowd.

BACK TO SCENE

Still at the bar, Marcus motions to Bob.



MARCUS (cont'd)  
One more and that's it.

LATER

Marcus nervously waits his turn as BRAD, the dancer onstage, finishes up his set just as the CD starts to skip.

DJ (O.S.)  
Sssorry about that. Working ever so hard-on for you, teasing and pleasing, that young stud's name was Brad who I'm sure would like to be close to you --

NORMAN  
And to your wallet.

The MEN seated with NORMAN LAUGH as Marcus continues to wait.

DJ (O.S.)  
If you've just arrived, feel free to join Norman in pervert's row.

Norman mimes being offended, then gestures to indicate he's not sitting in pervert's row anyway.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
It's pervert's row wherever you are, Norman. Now before we welcome our next dancer, I'd like to introduce tonight's staff. Big Bob's behind the bar....

CUSTOMER AT BAR  
How come they call you Big Bob?

BIG BOB  
You have to ask?

DJ (O.S.)  
...and Tony is your waitress.

TONY takes a little bow and approaches a CUSTOMER.

TONY  
Can I get you a drink, hon?

DJ (O.S.)  
Okay, we're about to do it to you once again, yes, we are. Coming to the Adonis stage for the very first time is Marcus. Make some noise for Marcus.

Bolstered by alcohol, Marcus takes the stage to the CHEERS of several men, especially when he removes his T-shirt.

When he removes his shorts, one MAN who obviously likes what he sees even drops his beer onto the floor.

At the end of his show, Marcus gathers up his clothes and exits to the change room, flushed with a mixture of emotions.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
That big boy's name was Marcus so  
treat yourself and get a dance.

LATER

Julian approaches Marcus as he returns to the main floor.

JULIAN  
Sounds like they liked you.

MARCUS  
I guess. Now what?

Julian nods his head toward the VIP room.

JULIAN  
Now you make some money.

LATER

Marcus OVERHEARS more conversations between the DANCERS and their CUSTOMERS as he walks through the club.

DANCER #1  
Why don't we go upstairs? I'll let you  
play with my toys.

DANCER #2  
Feel like getting naked?

DANCER #3  
Are you looking for some fun tonight  
'cause I'm all about having a good time?

As various customers follow dancers to the VIP room, Marcus works up the courage to approach a shy, MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

MARCUS  
Did you see my show?  
(off his nod)  
Would you like to go upstairs?

The man nods again and silently follows Marcus.

VIP ROOM

Marcus leads the man into a room with several cubicles in it.

They enter one of the cubicles which has a chair for the customer to sit on and a box for the dancer to stand on.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 If you don't mind, we'll just wait for  
 the next song.  
 (BEAT) So have you been up here before?

The customer shakes his head 'no.'

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 Me, neither. I guess that makes us  
 each other's first.

As the next SONG begins, Marcus stands on his box and peers into the adjoining cubicles, both surprised and shocked by the way the dancers and customers touch one another.

He starts dancing for his customer finally who begins to CRY.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 What's wrong? Did I step on you?

The man shakes his head 'no' again and hugs Marcus' legs.

LATER

Marcus dances for another, randier, CUSTOMER.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 Did you just stick your finger in my  
 butt? I'm sorry, but I'm here to show  
 you a good time, not give you one.

MAIN FLOOR

Marcus hurries to catch up to Julian.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 You might have warned me about some of  
 the things that go on up there!

JULIAN  
 So it's not exactly like Candy's. Just  
 be grateful they don't scratch the way  
 women do. Have you ever seen a woman  
 get really excited?

MARCUS  
 I'd like to think so.

LATER AT THE BAR

Marcus approaches Big Bob at the bar again.

BIG BOB  
Another Bud?

MARCUS  
Better make it bottled water.

BIG BOB  
You might work out, after all.

INT. CANDY'S - EVENING

Tina is just going through the motions in the VIP room as she dances for a MAN who notices she's distracted.

MAN  
You don't seem very happy tonight? Are you?

TINA  
Am I happy? I'm not sure you know me well enough to ask that.

MAN  
I'd like to.

Tina just shakes her head and keeps dancing.

DRESSING ROOM

Tina enters to find Lana fixing her make-up at the mirror.

TINA  
I'm only an hour into my shift and I've been propositioned three times already.

LANA  
And all I got is a yeast infection.

Charlene pokes her head into the dressing room.

CHARLENE  
Hey, I'm working a soaker. Can one of you take my stage show? Thanks.

Charlene disappears as quickly as she appeared.

TINA  
A soaker?

Rubbing her thumb and forefinger together:

LANA  
A man with money. Your innocent act really isn't an act, is it?

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tina stashes her night's earnings into a drawer, climbs into bed, and immediately falls asleep as....

INT. MARCUS' ROOM - CONTINUING

Marcus is eating pizza when he goes to the fridge, removes another beer, thinks better of it, and puts it back.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tina wakes in a cold sweat from a nightmare.

INT. MARCUS' ROOM - CONTINUING

Unable to sleep, Marcus stares at a picture of Tina.

EXT. GYM - DAY

Marcus enters with a look of grim determination on his face.

INT. GYM - DAY

Marcus tries to copy the bodybuilders as they work out on various apparatus, albeit with disappointing results.

EXT. GYM - DAY

Marcus exits the gym with a defeated look on his face, takes a few steps, then turns and enters again.

INT. CANDY'S/ADONIS - EVENING - MONTAGE

Tina continues to work at Candy's and Marcus continues to work at Adonis, with the emphasis on money changing hands.

INT. DRIVING EXAMINATION CENTER. PARKING LOT - DAY

Tina is nervously trying to parallel park as part of her driving test while her EXAMINER sneaks peaks at her cleavage.

DRIVING EXAMINER

Okay, just pull into that parking spot over there.

Tina struggles to pull into the spot he indicates, her face screaming failure as he fills out some paperwork.

TINA

I failed, didn't I?

DRIVING EXAMINER

On the contrary.

TINA  
I passed?

He hands her a form with 'PASS' written on it as he sneaks another look at her chest; she rips it up and hands it back.

TINA (cont'd)  
Thanks, but I'd like to pass because I can drive. Not because of how I look.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Marcus parks his truck and goes to the kitchen door.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

Sam runs to greet Marcus as Tina opens the door.

TINA  
He's already.

MARCUS  
Good.

TINA  
I'm going out...you know, if you want to spend your time with him here --

MARCUS  
That's okay. I thought I'd show him my place.

TINA  
He misses you, you know.

MARCUS  
I miss him, too.

INT. ROOMING HOUSE. HALLWAY/MARCUS' ROOM - DAY

Sam refuses to follow Marcus into his dingy room.

MARCUS  
It's not that bad, Sam.

When Sam BARKS without budging, Marcus looks around the room.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
You're right, it is that bad. Let's go to the park.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Marcus and Sam play ball like a couple of kids.

INT. CANDY'S - EVENING

At regular intervals during Tina's show, Tom absently lays down twenty dollar bills on the table next to the stage.

She exits the stage at the end of her show and approaches him.

TINA

You're crazy, you know.

TOM

Crazy for you.

TINA

Crazy's crazy, but apparently we live in a crazy world.

TOM

All I'm asking for is dinner. Say Chez Louie's, tomorrow night at eight?

TINA

Dinner?...Well, I am thinking of buying a car and, fortunately for you, I can't cook so tomorrow at eight it is.

Tina scoops up the money and walks away.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tina emerges from a cab and, despite her best intentions, looks down the empty street for Marcus' truck.

EXT. JASON'S TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUING

Marcus parks his truck in front of Jason's townhouse, goes to the door, and starts to knock.

He thinks better of it finally, slips an envelope through the mail slot, and exits.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tina looks for Marcus' truck again before closing the living room curtains.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE/MARCUS' MOVING TRUCK - CONTINUING

Marcus slows his truck down as he passes Tina's house, but keeps driving.

INT. MARCUS' ROOM - NIGHT

Marcus is listlessly eating pizza, clearly sick of it now.

INT. JASON'S TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

Jason starts for the kitchen when he sees the envelope from Marcus on the floor.

He opens it, surprised to find the money he's owed inside.

INT. ADONIS - EVENING

Wearing a suit, Jason enters and goes to the bar just as Marcus bursts a balloon onstage to get the attention of two MEN seated by the stage.

MARCUS

Hey, I'm not busting my butt up here  
for you not to pay attention.

They focus their attention on him, looking suitably chastised.

MARCUS (cont'd)

Hey, I'm just yanking your chain.

Marcus acknowledges Jason with a nod as he wraps up his show.

DJ (O.S.)

That hot young man was Marcus. Call  
him over, you'll be glad you did.

Marcus cups his hand to his ear to mime listening for a call, prompting a CUSTOMER to wave some money in the air.

CUSTOMER

Over here, Marcus.

DJ (O.S.)

There you have it, gentlemen, proof  
that he's not just a ham, he's the  
whole pig.

Marcus exits the stage and approaches Jason.

MARCUS

So what'd ya think?

JASON

You're good. And thanks for the  
money....

MARCUS

But?

JASON

You don't have to do this, Marcus. Not  
for me.



MARCUS  
Not everything is about you, you know.

A MAN approaches Marcus.

CUSTOMER  
Hey, Marcus, you free?

MARCUS  
No, but I am available.  
(to Jason)  
Can you stick around for a bit?

When Jason nods, Marcus leads the man to the VIP room as....

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM/HALLWAY/KITCHEN - CONTINUING

Tina MUTTERS to herself while rushing to get dressed.

TINA  
What's wrong with me? It's just dinner.  
...Who am I kidding? It's never just  
dinner, anymore than sex is just sex.

Sam runs into the room, grabs one of Tina's shoes in his mouth, and runs out again.

TINA (cont'd)  
Please, Sam, I don't have time for  
this. And I told you I'd bring you the  
leftovers.

Tina follows Sam to the living room where he jumps on the couch, cocks his leg, and threatens to pee on it.

TINA (cont'd)  
Go ahead, you picked it.

Sam puts down his leg, then runs to the hall closet and drops the shoe on top of the photographs he'd hidden there earlier.

Tina follows Sam...and finds the pictures.

TINA (cont'd)  
You're not being fair, Sam. If he's  
moved on, we should be able to as well.

INT. ADONIS - EVENING

Jason is seated at the bar, drinking a beer, when Marcus approaches him again.

He looks surprised when the bartender automatically hands Marcus a bottled water.

JASON  
Since when do you drink water?

MARCUS  
For two days now. It's easier than I  
thought it'd be. The dancing's not too  
bad either. And the dancers are really  
nice.

JASON  
Who knew?

MARCUS  
Even some of the customers...most of  
them, in fact are --

JASON  
In love with you?  
(off his look)  
You talk in your sleep.

MARCUS  
So, are you....?

JASON  
In love with you? No.  
(off Marcus' slightly  
disappointed look)  
Well, maybe a little.

Much to his surprise, Marcus kisses his cheek.

MARCUS  
Thank you. Now if you'll excuse me,  
it's time to shake the old money-maker.

Jason watches with amusement as Marcus approaches a drag  
queen and starts flirting with her as...

EXT. STREET/CHEZ LOUIE RESTAURANT - CONTINUING

...Tina exits a cab in front of a restaurant where a couple  
of HOOKERS are working.

She does a double-take when she notices she's dressed just  
like them.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Tina nervously approaches a MAITRE'D at the reservation desk.

TINA  
Hi, I'm meeting Mr. Douglas here.  
Could you tell me if he's arrived yet?

MAITRE'D

I'm sorry. Mr Douglas phoned to say he's been unavoidably detained but that he'd explain later. A table for one?

TINA

No, thank you.

Tina exits, clearly relieved.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUING

The hookers notice Tina finally as she looks around for a cab.

HOOKER #1

Hey! This is our corner. What d'ya think you're doing?

TINA

Excuse me?

HOOKER #2

Oooh, listen to her.

Jason pulls his to a stop suddenly in front of Tina and she jumps into the passenger seat.

HOOKER #1

HEY, THIS IS OUR CORNER. THAT MAKES HIM OURS.

INT. JASON'S CAR (MOVING) - CONTINUING

Jason speeds away to the MUFFLED SOUNDS of the hookers.

TINA

Thanks.

(off his look)

What? I was meeting someone for dinner. If you don't believe me, you can just drive back to the restaurant and ask the Maitre'd.

JASON

I believe you, I do.

TINA

Good.

As they drive past a church, Tina notices PEOPLE who are clearly dressed for a wedding, are entering.

TINA (cont'd)

Are you in a hurry?

JASON  
No. Why?

INT. CHURCH - EVENING

Jason reluctantly follows Tina into the church.

JASON  
What are we doing here?

Jason follows Tina to a pew and sits.

JASON (cont'd)  
Really, what are we doing here?

TINA  
Don't you love weddings?

JASON  
Not really, no. That's actually what made me decide to be gay. Of course, that was before men could marry.

As the GROOM and GROOMSMEN enter through a side door and take their place with the MINISTER at the altar:

TINA  
Sssh! They're about to begin.

As the BRIDE starts up the aisle to THE WEDDING MARCH, Tina wipes tears from her eyes.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Tina continues wiping tears from her eyes as she and Jason exit the church and go to his car.

TINA  
It was nice, wasn't it? Of course, the weddings are always nice. It's what comes after the wedding that you have to worry about.

EXT. CARSON'S HOUSE - CONTINUING

Jason pulls his car into Tina's driveway as she continues to vent.

TINA  
People should spend less time thinking about the wedding and more time thinking about the marriage. Maybe if Marcus and I had done that...Maybe if we'd both just had jobs....

JASON  
He has one now. Gerry got him a job  
dancing at a club called Adonis.

TINA  
Marcus is dancing?

JASON  
It's a gay bar.

TINA  
Marcus is dancing in a gay bar?

EXT. MARLENE'S HOUSE/TINA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Tina waves at Jason as he drives away, then enters her house,  
followed closely by Marlene who enters without knocking.

MARLENE  
Is everything alright?

TINA  
What do you mean?

MARLENE  
His truck's been conspicuously absent --

TINA  
He's been working.

MARLENE  
I'm talking about Marcus.

TINA  
So am I. He's dancing at a club called  
Adonis.

MARLENE  
The gay bar? This I've got to see.

TINA  
Jason says women aren't allowed.

MARLENE  
Then we won't go as women.

INT. LOLA'S HOUSE - EVENING

LOLA puts gel into Tina's hair as Marlene looks on.

LOLA  
I always start with a little gel, comme  
ça.

(more)

LOLA (cont'd)

Then for the sideburns, I use hair from clippings from my hairdresser 'cause ain't nothing like the real thing.

TINA

Are the sideburns really necessary?

LOLA

They help with the switchover from a woman's mindset to a man's. I know people say clothes make the man, but it's not true. They just help.

TINA

I can't believe we're doing all this ...just to get into a club.

MARLENE

You wanna understand men better, don't you? At least one man. Can you think of a better way?

LATER

Lola binds Tina's breasts with a tensor bandage.

LOLA

This not only gets rid of your breasts, but it also gives you the appearance of pecs. Can you breathe?

TINA

Not really, no.

She loosens the bandage slightly.

LOLA

How's that?

TINA

Better.

Lola secures the bandage with duct tape, then hands both Tina and Marlene various items of male clothing -- under-shirt, boxers, shirt, pants, blazer, shoes, etc., from her extensive collection, ending with a strap-on dildo.

TINA (cont'd)

What's this?

LOLA

The window on a whole new world. It entirely changes the way you move.

LATER

Tina and Marlene are both dressed as men now as Tina adjusts the dildo in her pants while walking around the room.

TINA  
How do I look?

MARLENE  
I'd do you.

TINA  
You'd do anyone.  
(to Lola)  
How do I look?

MARLENE  
You won't trust me, but you'll trust someone who only dates women.

TINA  
Is that true?

LOLA  
Yes, but they're all man when I need them to be.

TINA  
What does that mean?

LOLA  
If you have to ask, you wouldn't understand.

Staring intently at herself in the mirror:

TINA  
Can we really do this?

LOLA  
You're a drag king now. You can do anything.

EXT. ADONIS - EVENING

Tina and Marlene stand in front of Adonis, dressed like men.

TINA  
Let's get this over with.

MARLENE  
Deeper!

Lowering her voice:

TINA  
Let's get this over with.

MARLENE  
By the way, we're men now so not only  
is scratching okay, it's encouraged.

Marlene notices Tina's wedding ring.

MARLENE (cont'd)  
Your wedding ring!

Tina takes it off and puts it in her pocket.

MARLENE (cont'd)  
Okay, I think we're ready to have some  
fun.

INT. ADONIS - CONTINUING

As Tina and Marlene enter the club, Marlene reacts to a MAN  
giving Tina an approving glance as he walks by.

MARLENE  
Honey, you've just been cruised. He  
seems to like your basket.

TINA  
My what?

Marlene turns to see him looking back at Tina's ass.

MARLENE  
Oooo! Coming and going. You've got it  
going on, girlfriend.

TINA  
We're supposed to be men. Gay men.  
Remember?

MARLENE  
Someday you'll have to explain to me  
how you can be married to Marcus and  
still be so innocent.

Walking past a particularly hunky DANCER:

MARLENE (cont'd)  
Fuck me now! Fuck me forever.

HUNKY DANCER  
Sorry. I'm onstage next.

She continues admiring the dancers as Tina looks for Marcus.



TINA  
I don't see him.

MARLENE  
Who?...Oh, right, Marcus.

LATER

Tina looks surprised when Marcus appears on the floor with a CUSTOMER, kisses him on the cheek, then turns and wiggles his finger at another MAN.

MARCUS  
If I can do that with one finger, just  
imagine what I can do with my whole  
hand?

Marcus and the man exit to the VIP room as the DANCER onstage finishes his show.

DJ (O.S.)  
That good-looking guy's name was  
Jonathan which brings us to our nightly  
quiz. Okay, now, you know the drill.  
How many paws does a cat have?

VARIOUS CUSTOMERS  
FOUR!

DJ (O.S.)  
And how many tails does it have?

VARIOUS CUSTOMERS  
ONE!

DJ (O.S.)  
That's right. Now how many feathers  
does a rooster have?

The customers look at one another, dumb-founded, finally.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
Are you guys sure you're gay because  
you seem to care more about pussy than you  
do about cock? I guess we'll just have  
to do something about that by welcoming  
Marcus to the stage.

Marcus takes the stage, comfortable enough now that he even talks to CUSTOMERS while doing his pole work.

Tina watches with interest as he locks eyes with one man, then places one hand over his heart and makes a thumping motion, prompting the MAN to step up to the stage and tip him.

LATER

Talking in hushed tones, Tina appears to be trying to talk Marlene out of something when Marcus passes their table.

MARLENE  
 (to Marcus)  
 Excuse me, but my friend here would  
 like you to dance for him.

MARCUS  
 I'd love to.

Looking at Tina without any hint of recognition:

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 Is it your birthday?  
 (off her look)  
 Then it must be mine. Shall we?

With mixed emotions, Tina follows Marcus to the...

VIP ROOM

...and into one of the cubicles.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 I don't think I've seen you here  
 before.

TINA  
 This is...uh...my first time.

MARCUS  
 There's a lotta that going around....  
 Some guys like to talk while I dance,  
 others prefer I just dance. Which do  
 you prefer?

TINA  
 Uh, no talking, I think.

MARCUS  
 Okay.

TINA  
 No. Talking. Is that okay?

MARCUS  
 You're the boss. We'll just wait for  
 the next song if that's okay?

As they wait, a cell phone belonging to a DANCER with a customer in the next cubicle RINGS.

DANCER  
 (into phone)  
 Hello?...Yeah, I'm kinda in the middle  
 of something, can I call you back?...  
 Okay, like the ad says, I'm five-ten,  
 dark hair, clean-shaven....

The next song begins and Marcus starts to dance.

MARCUS  
 How ya doin'? Okay?

Tina nods, but keeps her eyes fixed straight ahead.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
 So what would you like to talk about?  
 (off her look)  
 How about favorite body parts? Do you  
 have one?

TINA  
 Uh...the heart, I guess.

MARCUS  
 That's a good choice. It's not usually  
 the first choice I get up here....You  
 know you can touch if you want?

TINA  
 No, that's okay.

She's surprised when he takes one of her hands in his and  
 slides it gently up and down his body.

MARCUS  
 It's not like the titty bars. In fact,  
 you'd be surprised at some of the  
 things that go on here.  
 (winking)  
 Then, again, maybe you wouldn't be.

TINA  
 Do you ever go to the...titty bars?

MARCUS  
 I used to. A lot. Too much if you  
 asked my wife.

TINA  
 You're married?

MARCUS  
 Yeah. I mean I was. It's kind of a  
 long story.

TINA

You didn't like being married?

MARCUS

No, I did. She just didn't seem to like being married to me.

TINA

Maybe it didn't have anything to do with you. Maybe it was marriage she didn't like.

MARCUS

I guess you'd have to ask her that. I just know she didn't seem very happy and nothing I ever did seemed to help.

The song ends, and Marcus indicates for Tina to slip the money for the dance into his G-string.

TINA

Thank you. You were very good.

MARCUS

Maybe we'll do it again sometime?

As Tina exits the cubicle, Marcus spots something shiny on the floor, picks it up, and recognizes it as her wedding ring.

MAIN FLOOR

Marlene is flirting with a DANCER when Tina appears suddenly and grabs her arm.

MARLENE

All I can say is God was having a good day when he made you.

TINA

We have to go.

MARLENE

But I'm just getting started!

TINA

Then you'll have to finish at home because we're leaving. Now!

MARLENE

(to dancer)

Men!

Tina drags Marlene through the club when a gay ANTHEM begins to play and all the men in the club start SINGING in unison.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Marlene follows Tina to Marlene's car.

MARLENE

So how was it? I think I deserve that much since you took me away from a perfectly charming conversation --

TINA

Can we please talk about this later? I just want to go home and take a shower.

MARLENE

That good, huh?  
 (stopping in her tracks)  
 Maybe I should get him to dance for me?

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Freshly-showered, Tina closes the curtains, then hits 'play' on her answering machine when she sees its' light is flashing.

VOICE ON ANSWERING MACHINE

This is John MacIntyre calling for Marcus Carson. It's about the job --

Fast-forwarding to the next message:

VOICE 2 ON ANSWERING MACHINE

Marcus, Chuck Strachan from Alliance Industries here. If you're still interested in the job you applied --

Tina hits stop on the answering machine when she realizes she's not wearing her wedding ring.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. VARIOUS ROOMS - CONTINUING

Tina checks the pockets of the pants she'd worn to the club, then, more frantically, the dresser, bathroom, kitchen, etc.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Tina hurriedly makes herself up like a man again.

EXT. ADONIS - EVENING

Tina emerges from a cab and enters the club.

INT. ADONIS - CONTINUING

Tina maneuvers her way as inconspicuously as possible to the

VIP ROOM

where she starts to walk past a BOUNCER keeping watch.

BOUNCER

You need to be with a dancer to come  
back here. It's actually a law.

Tina looks around in desperation, sees Julian, and approaches.

TINA

Would you dance for me?

Before he can answer her, she leads him to the

VIP ROOM

and the cubicle she'd been in earlier with Marcus.

She begins looking, albeit unsuccessfully, for the ring.

JULIAN

I take it you're not here for a dance.

TINA

It's nothing personal. I think I lost  
something when I was in here earlier.

Tina gives up looking finally and takes a good look at the  
cubicle instead.

TINA (cont'd)

They have a nerve calling this a VIP  
room.

MAIN FLOOR

Marcus is onstage as Tina walks through the club toward the  
exit...just as the music cuts out and Marcus stops dancing.

DJ (O.S.)

Sorry, guys, we seem to have a slight  
problem with the sound. Why don't you  
just talk amongst yourselves for a sec?

MARCUS

So, does anyone have anything he wants  
to talk about?

(to Tina)

How about you? You look like you have  
something on your mind.

Slowly, Tina realizes he's talking to her and turns to face  
the stage.

TINA

Not really, no. And it's late, I should really be going.

MARCUS

A good-looking guy like you probably has somebody at home waiting for him. Do you? Have somebody at home waiting? Because I kinda felt a connection when I danced for you.

Customers and dancers alike react with surprise.

CUSTOMER

I thought he was straight.

DANCER

Me, too.

MARCUS

If you don't, maybe we could get some coffee later? Do you drink coffee?

TINA

I do, yes.

MARCUS

But you have to go!

TINA

That's right.

MARCUS

Maybe you don't date dancers?

The MUSIC breaks in suddenly at an ear-busting level.

DJ (O.S.)

There we go, guys, I think we're back in business.

CUSTOMERS

TURN THE MUSIC OFF!

The DJ quickly turns the music off again.

MARCUS

I don't blame you if you don't. But if you're undecided, I can tell you that I haven't always been a good boy but I haven't been very bad either. Although I am a guy and I do like to look.

(to audience)

We all like to look, right, guys?

As several of the guys nod and/or CHEER:

CONFUSED CUSTOMER #1  
Hey, Marcus, when you said you were  
married, we assumed it was to a woman.

MARCUS  
(to Tina)  
I should tell you, too, that despite  
the looking I do believe in monogamy.  
I even practice it.  
(to customers)  
Sorry, guys.

Some of the guys look disappointed; others take it in stride.

MARCUS (cont'd)  
(back to Tina)  
So do you? Date dancers, I mean. Or at  
least be willing to make an exception?

Looking at all the expectant faces waiting for an answer:

TINA  
I'm sorry, I just came in for....

Tina turns and runs out of the club as....

EXT. STREET - CONTINUING

...Marcus follows, along with several customers and dancers.

MARCUS  
Please, wait!

TINA  
What?

MARCUS  
You said you came in for something. I  
just wondered if you'd found it.

TINA  
Uh...no. I didn't find it.

MARCUS  
Is this what you were looking for?

Marcus pulls Tina's wedding ring from one of his socks and  
holds it out for her to see.

TINA  
I'm sorry if I made you feel this was  
about you...or Candy's or....



A beat, as her eyes well up with tears.

MARCUS

So what is it about? If it's not about me or Candy's? And, please, don't say it's about becoming one because I don't know how to do that.

TINA

Why did you marry me?

CUSTOMER #1

I knew he was gay.

MARCUS

You wanna know why I married you? Well, I married you because I love you. Because I wanted to spend my life with you. Because I thought maybe there was a chance you could be happy with me.

TINA

Doesn't it bother you that we're only good in one room of the house?

When Marcus doesn't reply right away:

CUSTOMER #2

I think he means he wants it to be about more than just sex.

(to Tina)

Isn't that what you're trying to say, young man?

(off her look)

Well, there you go.

MARCUS

Thank you, but he's a she.

The look on Marcus' face prompts Tina to reveal herself finally as a woman, eliciting several GASPS, GROANS, and more than a few disappointed and 'I-knew-it-all-the-time' looks.

MARCUS (cont'd)

Is he right? Is that what this is about?

Tina shrugs...then nods.

MARCUS (cont'd)

It hasn't even been a year. We're supposed to be hot for one another.

He notices the disapproving looks on the faces of most, if not all, the men who are watching.



INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. BEDROOM - EVENING

Marcus lays back on the bed after making love with Tina.

MARCUS

...that was great!

(BEAT) I know it's only one room, but  
some people don't even have that.

Marcus looks expectantly at Tina who clearly has something on her mind.

TINA

I have a confession to make. That  
lawyer --

MARCUS

Wasn't a lawyer? I know.

TINA

He was an actor friend of Marlene's.  
(BEAT) You know?

MARCUS

His brother's a lawyer who let you  
borrow his office.

TINA

That's right, but how --

MARCUS

He's one of my regulars at the club.

They CHUCKLE, then start to make love again when Marcus stops suddenly.

TINA

What?

MARCUS

Will you marry me?

TINA

We're already married, Marcus. He  
wasn't a real --

MARCUS

Lawyer, I know. But I think we should  
still get married again. We're not the  
same people we were the first time,  
Tina, and this time we know what we're  
getting....Wait! Are you going to keep  
dancing?

(BEAT) You are, aren't you?

TINA

I thought until we could buy a house,  
maybe buy a car for me.

MARCUS

You'd have to learn how to --

She grabs her license from the nightstand and shows it to him.

MARCUS (cont'd)

What else don't I know about you?

TINA

It hasn't even been a year yet. You  
don't wanna know everything in the  
first year, do you?

MARCUS

So will you? Marry me?

INT. DONUT SHOP - NIGHT

Ellen is wiping down tables again and looking out the window  
at Candy's as Nancy works on another crossword puzzle.

ELLEN

Ever wonder what goes on in there?

EXT. CANDY'S - CONTINUING

Ellen and Nancy stand in front of Candy's with trepidation.

ELLEN

We can do this.

Ellen and Nancy enter Candy's, then...

MOMENTS LATER

...exit again, both convulsed with LAUGHTER.

INT. CANDY'S - EVENING

The club is bustling with a heightened level of excitement  
with more men and women than usual in attendance, including  
dancers and customers from Adonis and Jason and Marlene.

DJ (O.S.)

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and  
welcome to Candy's. We'd especially  
like to welcome those who may be  
visiting the dark side for the very  
first time tonight.

(more)

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
 We hope it's not too traumatic for you,  
 but it's all for a good cause so why  
 don't we get started by welcoming  
 Marcus to the stage.

Marcus bounds onto the stage wearing a tuxedo and does a short walkabout for the audience.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
 Let's hear it for the groom.

The on-lookers APPLAUD enthusiastically.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
 And now let's welcome the bride.

Tina appears at the top of the stairs in her wedding dress, then carefully walks down to the stage to face Marcus.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
 Let's hear it for the bride.

Again, the on-lookers APPLAUD.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
 We're gathered here this evening before  
 God, men and women --

Sam BARKS, to the amusement of everyone.

DJ (cont'd; O.S.)  
 ...and dog alike, to witness Marcus and  
 Tina Carson reaffirm their vows to  
 love, honour, and cherish one another.  
 I think Marcus has something he'd like  
 to say.

MARCUS  
 Thank you.  
 (to Tina)  
 You look so beautiful. You are so  
 beautiful, inside and out. I know I  
 said it doesn't take much to make me  
 happy and I meant it. It just takes  
 you.  
 (BEAT) That didn't exactly come out  
 right. I didn't mean --

TINA  
 I know what you mean.

CUSTOMER #2  
 That makes one of you.

TINA

And we have Candy's to thank for getting us this far which is why we wanted to do this here, in front of those who made it possible. You know, a wise woman...

(looking at Marlene)

...in one of her more sober moments, once said dancing should only ever be a means to an end. I don't know if that's true, but in our case, that end is a new beginning.

MARCUS

Speaking of new beginnings, I got a job! I mean, another job.

TINA

You did?

MARCUS

(to guys)

So I guess I'll be giving up showbiz.

(to Tina, as an aside)

I returned some of those messages you took. I actually had to choose between two offers.

CUSTOMER #1

In that case, how 'bout one last dance?

As many in the crowd begin to CHANT the word 'dance,' Marcus looks to Tina who, in turn, looks to the DJ in his booth.

After a moment, a SONG begins to play and Marcus and Tina, to the delight of the crowd, dance a duet show that includes Marcus removing Tina's garter with his teeth and throwing it into the crowd.

Tina, in turn, throws her wedding bouquet into the crowd which is caught by a middle-aged man who then turns to his lover with a 'I-guess-we're-next' smile.

INT. CARSON'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Marcus and Tina look like the proverbial happy couple again in a new, silver-framed wedding picture on their mantle.

Sam BARKS and the same picture appears, but with him in it, too, as we

FADE OUT:

THE END