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FADE IN:

**EXT. SKYLINE - DAY**

The city looms out of the desert like an infernal machine, lights flashing, skyline pulsing, a neon fortress.

**INT. BELLE'S CONDO - DAY**

The curtains are drawn so that the light is low. You can't hear the street. It is surprisingly small, swanky but understated..

**INT. BELLE'S CONDO - BEDROOM - DAY**

Barely any light, the room heaves with sensuality,

Random sex mirrors reflect all four walls. Erotic painting of elaborate coitus... pull-down shades showcase boudoir-themed portraits of panty-hosed legs and garter belts, a Jacuzzi tub, and a show shower that comes with the requisite stripper pole.

A strawberry blonde lies naked, facedown on the massive BED with its headboard sculpted to portray pants peeling off. Hair covers her face.

She's nude, passed out, whose figure still inspires all the boys' fantasies.

On a bedside table, a half-empty bottle of vodka, a tumbler. An empty bottle of pills....beside an envelope full of \$1000 dollar bills.

BELLE, 40s, stirs awake, It's not hard to imagine she was once a real looker, but tragedy and too much drink have dulled her features.

She sits on the edge of the bed. Nauseated. Hung-over as hell. Fishes for a cigarette, the pack's empty.

A long agonizing beat, Belle lifts the pill bottle, stares at it; Barbiturites.

Belle sighs, eyes an alarm clock: 4:36pm. She opens a bedside table drawer. Condoms, lots of them, a vibrator, ect...

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She stumbles around the room, checks the dresser, every drawer. Even under a chair cushion. No cigarette's. The armoire, finds a pack.

Refiring the stub of a joint, Belle draws hard on the glowing roach. Holding in the smoke until it burns.

She unscrews the bottle of scotch, fills a tumbler. She knocks it back, pours a chaser.

**EXT. LAS VEGAS - NIGHT**

Welcome to Sin City; the Luxor's sky beam, the Bellagio's dancing waters, pyrotechnics at Treasure Island. Vegas is the most dazzling show on the planet.

**EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT**

Off the gold glass tower of the Mandalay Bay to the entry drive, where one of its buses stop short, as --

Belle in a glitzy micro-mini dress; all arms, legs, and hotness, weaves through a crowd. Mostly tourists. A small designer purse.

She smokes, looks tired, like someone at the end of a long journey. But the dark circles around her eyes frame something else too. *Love?*

She stops outside a CASINO. The glittering spot is beckoning her, like heroine whispers to an addict.

After a long beat, Belle eyes traffic, crosses the road, passes the Alladin, as

A LIMO pulls into the ENDLESS LOVE CHAPEL, catering to drive-thru weddings.

She stares - shakes her head, a laugh, and she's gone.

**EXT. CASINO - NIGHT**

A small, dated-looking casino on the outskirts of town. Bigger, better, and nicer casino's flank it on every side.

The doors open and a BOOZER with flammable breath comes flying. He hits the sidewalk and rolls a couple of times before he stops.

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Right next to Belle, who stops dead in her track, can barely contain her smile...

FRITZ towers over him. He's in his early 50's. Buff and black. He wears a sharp suit. He yanks the toothpick out of his mouth.

The Boozer scraps himself off the ground, staggers off.

Beat. Fritz turns his attention to Belle, surprised to see her. Happy, too. They know each other.

FRITZ

Longtime no see. Where you been?

BELLE DE NUIT

Oh here and there.

FRITZ

Do you want to come in?

BELLE DE NUIT

I like it out here.

FRITZ

You can have some chips on the house.

BELLE DE NUIT

(smiles)  
Gave it up.

FRITZ

You never really give it up.

BELLE DE NUIT

I did.

FRITZ

That's right. You save your betting for what--? Love?

Fritz turns and disappears into the dark of the casino...

**INT. LICKETY SPLITS BAR - NIGHT**

A moody, midnight bar that provides patrons with the kind of lighting and view that makes one feel a little less lonely.

Belle breezes through the door, sidles up to the empty bar where the bartender -- SAM. 40s, mixes drinks.

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CONTINUED:

BELLE DE NUIT

Hi, Sam.

SAM

Good evening, Mrs. Moreau.

BELLE DE NUIT

Mrs. Moreau?

A beat

BELLE DE NUIT

You know my name.

SAM

It's not good business to get familiar with the guest --

BELLE DE NUIT

Oh, come on now, how long have I've been coming in here -- wait, don't answer that.

He sets down her drink as she lights a cigarette.

BELLE DE NUIT

I don't even have to order any more.

SAM

We all walk the same path day after day.

BELLE DE NUIT

Yea, and here I sit on the same stool night after night. And don't ask me why.

SAM

Maybe you like the view.

BELLE DE NUIT

Um, maybe I don't like to look at myself in the mirror is what you're trying to say.

SAM

Whatever you want it to mean.

BELLE DE NUIT

Where is everybody?

SAM

You're early.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A few stools down, ROD, an aged drunk fossil, taps his empty glass.

BELLE DE NUIT  
What's up with you, Rod?

ROD  
Belle. It's Naomi. She's been trippin' lately. Just some newly wed stuff, I guess.

BELLE DE NUIT  
Maybe she's having buyer's remorse.

He sees the smirk on Belle's face.

ROD  
I don know. It's deep.

BELLE DE NUIT  
It'll pass....

As Sam ref-fills his glass, Belle stops short....

And there, sitting alone at the end of the bar, is Marla. *Their eyes meet. It's a surprise to Marla.*

*A sly smile is exchanged. She is distracted by Marla's presence. Marla, as well, finds it difficult not to pay attention to Belle.*

As Belle's thinking about heading over, she hears a voice behind her.

JONESY (O.S.)  
Where were you last Friday?

Slowly she turns to face the voice.

JONESY, a short, wiry guy who looks like he could have done speed all his life but quit like two days ago.

BELLE DE NUIT  
On the road I guess.

JONESY  
You're lying. One of the boys in town saw you.

BELLE DE NUIT  
So I was in town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JONESY

I waited so long in front of that club they thought I was soliciting. Don't you ever keep a date?

BELLE DE NUIT

I didn't make no date. You did. I told you I wouldn't be there. And I'm telling you know I'll never be there.

JONESY

What's the matter with me?

BELLE DE NUIT

Nothing, except you've got a wife. And she's a good friend of mine.

JONESY

Don't be so narrow minded.

BELLE DE NUIT

One day she's going to catch you and burry you somewhere out in that desert.

JONESY

I don't know what I see in you. You're cruel, cold, and drink too much. And yet I can't say no to you.

She picks up her purse, turns to look at him one more time.

BELLE DE NUIT

Don't worry about it.

At the end of the BAR, Marla tries to get the BARMAID'S attention. No luck.

BELLE DE NUIT (O.S.)

I had to order this one online.

Marla LAUGHS, turns to see -- Belle -- we are with her, in her world -- as she controls the encounter.

BELLE DE NUIT

Is someone sitting here?

MARLA

No, please...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BELLE DE NUIT  
Are you waiting for someone?

MARLA  
No, I'm here alone. On business.  
Pleasure. You know... the  
standard.

BELLE DE NUIT  
You from New York, huh?

MARLA  
Is it that obvious. And you?

BELLE DE NUIT  
Paris. Rome. Atlantic City. Among  
other places.

MARLA  
Wow. You get around.

**INT. LICKETY SPLTS - MOMENTS LATER**

Belle and Marla have moved to a booth. There are fresh drinks in front of them, and they sit together in an easy, familiar comfort.

The barmaid, STELLA -- late thirties who doesn't look a day over fifty, approaches.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS  
What are you having?

BELLE DE NUIT  
She'll have a scotch and soda.  
It's excellent. I highly recommend  
it.

MARLA  
The same here.

Marla's cell rings, she sighs, answers the call.

MARLA  
No, because I've heard it all  
before. No i can't do this  
anymore, Phil. Just leave me  
alone okay.

She abruptly ends the call, looks at Belle.

MARLA  
Sorry.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

BELLE DE NUIT

Don't be.

MARLA

Well, we're done shouting.

BELLE DE NUIT

Is that why you're here?

MARLA

Yes, I'm divorcing him.

BELLE DE NUIT

Poor guy.

MARLA

He messed up.

BELLE DE NUIT

Stupid guy.

MARLA

You too huh?

BELLE DE NUIT

What? How'd you know?

MARLA

You have a tan line on your ring finger.

Stella returns with their drinks, leaves.

MARLA

Well, i like to think of myself as the easy going type... but there are some things that can never be forgiven.

BELLE DE NUIT

Tell me about it. My name is Belle by the way...

MARLA

I'm Marla.

They sip their drinks.

MARLA

Belle de nuit? That's interesting.

BELLE DE NUIT

It's an euphemism in French for "prostitute".

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BELLE DE NUIT (CONT'D)

It is a clever pun don't you think? A lovely lady of the night.

MARLA

Yes. Like the bored housewife who decides to make her services available during daylight hours, and therefore has to go under the name of "belle de jour", a lovely lady of the day.

BELLE DE NUIT

Ah, you know the movie.

BELLE DE NUIT

I think you're insanely hot.

MARLA

Thanks, that's so sweet.

BELLE DE NUIT

Want another drink?

MARLA

I'm sorry, I'm straight.

BELLE DE NUIT

So is spaghetti until it gets wet.

*Marla laughs, clumsily spills her drink. Some seep down her cleavage. She makes no attempt to clean up.*

*Instinctively, Belle grabs napkins. Marla looks surprised.*

MARLA

Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you wanted to lick it.

*Belle, genuinely amused,*

MARLA

I shouldn't even be here right now. I should go. I need to go home.

BELLE DE NUIT

I'll walk with you.

MARLA

No, it's alright. I'll be fine. It's not that far.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She's trying to size Belle up. But that's like a tic-tac-toe player trying to beat Gary Kasparov in chess.

MARLA

I don't pay for sex.

BELLE DE NUIT

Neither do I.

Another BEAT. Belle downs the rest of her drink, Marla takes another sip and pushes the rest away.

**INT. MARLA'S PENTHOUSE SUITE - NIGHT**

The only light comes of the Vegas strip. A well-appointed penthouse suite. Tastefully furnished. There's a small gourmet kitchen.

A key turns, the door opens, and Marla and Belle fumble their way inside. Marla turns on a lamplight, only.

MARLA

Forgive the mess.

BELLE DE NUIT

You should see mine.

Marla steps out of her heels, fiddling with the clasp at the back of her dress.

MARLA

Unhook me, will you.

As the clasp is undone, Marla catches her dresses seductively and looks back over her shoulder at Belle.

MARLA

Make yourself comfortable.

Marla goes to the bedroom to change.

Belle slips off her sexy shoes, of course, can catch a glimpse of her changing in the reflection of the living room mirror.

Belle can't tear her eyes away.

Marla returns in a casual, sexy slip, albeit a little too short and moves to the WET BAR laden with a liquor tray, and fixes drinks.

MARLA

Oh, I haven't any bourbon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLE DE NUIT

That's alright. I'll have a martini.

MARLA

I'm a terrible bartender.

BELLE DE NUIT

I like mine pretty wet.

MARLA

I know you do. You had enough of them back there.

BELLE DE NUIT

I haven't tasted it yet.

MARLA

I can tell just by looking at it.

Marla gives her the drink. Belle takes a big gulp.

BELLE DE NUIT

I wasn't talking about the drink.

You can cut the innuendo with a knife.

MARLA

Are you always this forward? Don't you think we should get to know each other first? As people?

BELLE DE NUIT

If you insist. How long you planning staying in Vegas?

MARLA

I don't know yet. How long have you been here?

BELLE DE NUIT

Too long.

Marla moves to the sliding glass door leading to the balcony, staring out at the Vegas strip.

BELLE DE NUIT

Can you imagine if they outlawed gambling -- what I ghost town this would be?

A beat,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARLA

Do you like it here?

BELLE DE NUIT

I hear they ask you in Heaven if you have any regrets. Yeah. I wished I'd never stepped foot in Vegas. I loathe, despise, and detest it.

MARLA

Then why do you stay? What's holding you back from getting out of this cesspool?

Marla clocks a nervous look in Belle's eyes. *Is she hiding something?* Belle sips her drink...

BELLE DE NUIT

Hell if I know.

MARLA

You're a lousy liar.

BELLE DE NUIT

Let's save time.

Belle reaches a hand out and touches Marla's cheek. It's like the contact creates a charge between them. A connection. It pulls Belle forward but she hesitates for an instant before kissing Marla.

And after some uncertainty, Marla's right there in it with Belle.

After a steamy beat, Marla steps back, breathless. The steps back in for another hot and heavy kiss and then pulls away again.

They both just stand there breathing. Marla clears her throat. Not to get our attention. To get the lump out of it.

MARLA

I'm a little nervous. It's been a while since I've been with a woman.

BELLE DE NUIT

I understand, but you invited me in, didn't you?

MARLA

Yes, I did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARLA

Are you going to be mad if we  
don't, you know...

BELLE DE NUIT

I'm really upset, can't you tell?

**INT. MARLA'S SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

The curtain is open. Lights of Vegas shines through the huge window-- glaring off silk sheets barely covering Belle, on top of Marla.

They're having slippery, sweaty, body-grinding, bed-squeaking LESBIAN SEX. Great sex too, from the looks and sounds of it.

MARLA

(breathless)

Oh, FUCK! I'm gonna cum again!!!

Off this, we TIME CUT TO:

Belle and Marla lie entwined, the sheets sticky with sweat barely covering their nude bodies.

Belle rolls over, lights a cigarette, then hands it to Marla, then lights one for herself.

MARLA

It's a treat to smoke in bed.

BELLE DE NUIT

Why?

MARLA

Because I'm not alone. All those terrible stories about people falling a sleep.

BELLE DE NUIT

So when was the last time you smoked in bed?

MARLA

That was a sneaky question.

BELLE DE NUIT

Strike that.

MARLA

Three months.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLE DE NUIT  
Regular or king size.

MARLA  
You find that funny?

Belle lingers a moment over Marla, letting her hair drape over Marla.

Belle wrestles free of the sheets, still naked, slips into the bathroom. A light comes on. Water runs.

Marla stubs out her cigarette, rolls out of bed, naked, the light from the bathroom silhouettes her as she stands in the doorway, obscuring much of Belle who takes a whore's bath at the sink. Naughty bits and arm pits.

MARLA  
What's wrong with the shower?

BELLE DE NUIT  
Habit I guess.

MARLA  
After you're with a client?

**INT. MARLA'S SUITE - DAY**

Marla in a nightdress that makes you look twice, pours two cups of coffee. Belle, dress back on, heels in hand, slides onto a kitchen stool.

BELLE DE NUIT  
Um, I was wondering... what are you doing? You probably have plans... or...

MARLA  
No, I'm just --

BELLE DE NUIT  
Because I was wondering... maybe... If you have no plans...?

MARLA  
I have no --

BELLE DE NUIT  
-- maybe you and me could...

A smile slowly creeps across her face...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARLA  
I'd be delighted.

**EXT. DESERT - DAY**

Marla and Belle ride shoulder to shoulder, galloping towards the rise of red rocks. A cloud of desert dust behind them.

We can't make out their conversation but it's animated.

**EXT. RED ROCKS BLUFF - DAY**

A tranquil desert plateau.

Belle and Marla arrive on horseback, dismount, take in the view. Vegas skyline in one direction, a sprawling desert ranch in the other.

**EXT. DESERT TWO-LANE ROAD - DAY**

Through ripples of heat rising off the asphalt, as a black Maserati with its top down, speeds down the road... Belle drives. Marla in the passenger seat.

**INT. LICKETY SPLITS - NIGHT**

Belle and Marla sits rather cozily in a booth sharing a cocktail or two.

MARLA  
You come here often, huh?

BELLE DE NUIT  
People need connection. Otherwise they just drift. Sometimes into places like this.

MARLA  
You're very restless tonight, darling, what's the matter?

Belle takes a sip from her drink, ignoring Marla's question.

MARLA  
I was just thinking---

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

BELLE DE NUIT

Don't think it'll spoil  
everything.

MARLA

The only other time I see you is  
when you find it convenient. Never  
want to be seen in the same place  
twice as if someone might surprise  
use together. What do you do,  
where do you go when we're not  
together?

BELLE DE NUIT

I said no questions. I don't ask  
about your life. Don't pry into  
mine.

MARLA

All right, if that's the way you  
want it.

She grabs her clutch. And she exits. Belle watches her  
go. And she keeps watching, long after she's gone.

Belle does the only sensible thing a right-thinking  
person should do on a night like this -- she downs her  
drink and holds up the glass...

BELLE DE NUIT

I'm dry over here.

The barmaid, STELLA -- late thirties who doesn't look a  
day over fifty, brings a bottle of bourbon.

STELLA

What happened?  
(as a joke)  
Bad date?

Belle stares, cracks her facade.

BELLE DE NUIT

Pour. More.

**INT. MARLA'S SUITE - NIGHT**

Marla enters her suite, slams the door shut. Kicks off  
her heels, goes to remove her earrings. At the SOUND of a  
knock, she pauses, goes to the door.

MARLA

Just a minute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She gets to the door, peers into the peephole, debates where to open up or not, then finally does.

Belle stands there.

MARLA

I never thought I'd be relieved to see you walking in here.

BELLE DE NUIT

Relieved? Not happy, glad, enchanted, intrigued?

MARLA

(giggles)

Been there, done that, got the t-shirt.

BELLE DE NUIT

Well, aren't we perky? Want some bourbon to drown out those giggles?

Marla moves to the KITCHEN.

She saunters up with a just opened bottle of Bourbon. Belle is standing by the patio door, peeking out.

Marla pours her a glass. Standing very close to each other, they both take a sip.

Belle flops down in a chair. Marla sits on the edge of the coffee table in front of her.

BELLE DE NUIT

I use to be a blackjack dealer. Monte Carlo, Atlantic city, and then here. Turned pro gambler. I couldn't loose. Then up kumped the devil.

MARLA

Up jumped he devil?

BELLE DE NUIT

It's an old gambling expression. When everything is going well until your luck runs out.

BELLE DE NUIT

Yeah, started losing big time, piled up a lot of debt I couldn't pay. They made me an offer I couldn't refuse.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BELLE DE NUIT (CONT'D)

So I started turning tricks for them with the high rollers until I can satisfy my debt with the casino owners. They take half of everything I make. It was either that, or end up like Jimmy Hoffa.

MARLA

How much you still owe?

BELLE DE NUIT

Roughly two hundred grand.

Marla looks up, wondering if she heard her right.

BELLE DE NUIT

Minus my savings. About twenty-five thousand in the bank.

**INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT**

Staring out the balcony doors and onto a panoramic view of the Reno strip. Belle strides into frame.

She walks all the way to the balcony railing and stops.

Now the Earth's rocking. She has to brace her hand to the railing to regain her balance and find the strength to turn around and face --

Marla stands there, stiff with anxiety, too.

MARLA

Are you okay?

BELLE DE NUIT

I'm having a bit of vertigo.

**EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT**

Facing street. Belle and Marla jaywalk across the boulevard. Marla is watching for cars. Belle takes her hand, darting through traffic. Horns honk.

MARLA

I don't gamble.

BELLE DE NUIT

You're playing with house money.

**INT. CASINO - NIGHT**

The casino is packed with players, gorgeous cocktail waitresses, pit bosses in suits.

**BLACKJACK TABLE--**

Marla is debating whether to double down. She looks up at the DEALER.

MARLA

What do you think? Double down?

DEALER

Well the book says no.

Belle shows up behind her.

BELLE DE NUIT

The book is written for chumps stopping at the truck stop right outside of Vegas.

MARLA

What should I do here?

BELLE DE NUIT

Do the math. Single deck card. Twenty seven cards out. Three of them tens. You have a fifty-seven percent chance of hitting the ten, which means you win. More likely than not.

Marla moves her chips in, doesn't take her eyes off Gail-- smiling Mrs. Robinson-style.

The dealer gives her a TEN.

DEALER

The lady wins.

MARLA

(grinning)

The lady wins...

**INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT**

A small chapel with a Crucifix and altar in the front. Belle goes and sits in the front pew. She looks around at all the religious symbols, the Crucifix, the opened bible on the altar. A beat.

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CONTINUED:

As Belle exits - she stuffs a wad of cash into the poor box. As he exits --

**EXT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Belle steps off the elevator first, ravishing in her DO-ME DRESS. She turns and holds the door for her date -- Marla looks absolutely STUNNING in a backless gown. She steps out, brushing her hair over her shoulder. Take your breath away.

**INT. CASINO - NIGHT**

Marla and Belle STOP in view of the jammed casino floor. Gamblers -- well-dressed and young -- crowd the craps and blackjack tables and roulette wheel. Screams and groans fill the air.

**INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT**

SECURITY AGENTS monitoring a wall of screens covering the casino react to --

AGENT

Security, xxx to baccarat.

The casino owner emerges from the shadows, eyes the baccarat screen, concerned to see -- Belle de Nuit, winning big.

AGENT

The nerve of that bitch! Where's Max?

MAN

She's down one hundred grand. Drunk and getting violent.

INTERCUT WITH...

**INT. PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT**

Belle de Nuit points to her diamond necklace.

BELLE DE NUIT

Bet it down. You deal.

XXXX eye-fucks the surveillance screen - Belle de Nuit worries him.

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The CROUPIER looks towards MAX, 40s, an intimidating Pit Boss who nods, deal.

Cards from the shoe. Brook draws an eight. The bank pulls a nine. The croupier reaches for her necklace. Belle de Nuit grabs it back.

BELLE DE NUIT

No. Fifteen thousand for this. I have one bet left in it.

Belle de Nuit will push until she wins. The Pit Boss pulls a chair up to Belle de Nuit, whispering --

PIT BOSS

Bad karma tonight. Walk away, we'll forgive the debt. A gift for a special client.

BELLE DE NUIT

No gifts.

PIT BOSS

One hand. You win, we're even. You lose, you leave, never to come back. And let's sweeten the bet.

BELLE DE NUIT

How much?

PIT BOSS

Her.

Being part of the wager startles Marla, who's now to happy about it. But betting sex appeals to Belle de Nuit's nefarious nature.

BELLE DE NUIT

That is a bet.

Marla - clearly upset goes to leave until another PIT-BOSS grabs hold of her. Tight.

PIT BOSS

Don't make a scene.

His eyes shift, drawing Marla's attention to the gaming floor, and strategically placed SECURITY AGENTS.

A BEAT, and Marla looks at Belle de Nuit as if to say "chime in whenever you want."

Belle de Nuit cracks a smile, but there's nothing happy behind it. Marla looks at Belle de Nuit in disgust.

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CONTINUED: (2)

*Cards from the shoe. Belle de Nuit - seven. The bank - eight.*

PIT BOSS

*Well Belle de Nuit, you lost, you leave, or we'll through you out.*

BELLE DE NUIT

*No. You comp me a suite.*

**INT. MARLA'S SUITE - NIGHT**

*Marla bursts inside, Belle de Nuit's on her heels, in the middle of a heated argument.*

BELLE DE NUIT

*I'm sorry.*

MARLA

*Sorry? Is that all you can say.*

BELLE DE NUIT

*Don't you trust me? My luck was bound to change..*

MARLA

*Trust you. That's a two-way street.*

*Marla moves to the kitchen, grabs an unopened bottle of BOURBAN from the cabinet, Belle's favorite drink, and tumblers...*

*Belle can't help but smile...*

MARLA

*You just dropped a hundred grand - that doesn't instill any confidence... you got lucky.*

BELLE DE NUIT

*My luck was bound to change.*

MARLA

*Uh huh! You got lucky. Just because you're a whore - don't make me out to be one.*

*Ouch.*

BELLE DE NUIT

*So the truth comes out.*

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CONTINUED:

Marla pours her a glass. Standing very close to each other, they both take a sip.

BELLE DE NUIT

*What if I had lost. Would you had?*

MARLA

*They didn't leave me much choice, did you?*

Marla's quiet. Belle de Nuit looks into her eyes, leans in to kiss her. She turns her head slightly to take it on the cheek.

Belle de Nuit looks at her again to show a slight but satisfied grin.

MARLA

*Christ. I'm loosing my mind and dignity on the same night.*

In a flash Penny lunges for him, digging her nails into his cheek and ripping flesh. Peter screams

He holds his hand over his face, but blood still seeps through his fingers.

She makes another move toward him, but this time he grabs her arm before it can reach it's target. There's a brief struggle, then Peter manages to push her away. Penny trips and falls hard on her ass. Peter immediately comes to her aid

BELLE DE NUIT

*I'm sorry. Are you alright --*

MARLA

*GET AWAY FROM ME!*

Belle steps back.

BELLE DE NUIT

*I'm sorry.*

Marla glares at Belle, who goes.

**INT. MARLA'S SUITE - DAY**

Marla is on her bed making a phone call. It rings and rings and rings. Finally, voice mail.

BELLE DE NUIT (VOICEMAIL)

*It's Belle. Leave a message.*

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MARLA

Hey. It's me. I... I... I'll see you when you get here. Hope you're okay. Bye.

She hangs up. Sad.

**INT. BELLE'S CONDO - NIGHT**

LOOKING OUT, over the balcony to the strip. The lights are off, and the room is dark. All we see is Belle's silhouette, lifting a drink to her lips...

**INT. MARLA'S SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

The curtain is drawn. Clothes have been tossed in the heat of the moment.

Backlit by a bedside lamp, Sex. Sweaty, passionate sex between Belle and Marla. But it's more than sex, it's easy to tell they're very much in love.

Belle' on top neither can take their eyes off the other.

BELLE DE NUIT

You may possibly be the most beautiful woman in the world.

MARLA

You're full of crap.

**EXT. RESTUARANT - NIGHT**

Belle and Marla in sexy party dress walk out of a fancy place. It's a chilly night. Marla snuggles close to Belle, her hand clutching Belle's as they walk down the glitzy nightlife of Reno.

MARLA

I hope you don't mind?

BELLE DE NUIT

You can warm your hands in mine anytime.

MARLA

When I looked over your webpage, I knew you were a woman who knew how to treat a lady.

An ATTRACTIVE COUPLE passes by.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLE DE NUIT

Shh.

MARLA

What?

BELLE DE NUIT

I've got enough business tonight.

MARLA

What's wrong with it? You're not one of those women with lots of secrets are you?

BETH

Where we off to?

MARLA

I want to see it?

INT. FUCK PAD - NIGHT

INT. FUCK PAD - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Random mirrors reflect all four walls. Erotic painting of elaborate coitus... the massive BED with its headboard sculpted to portray pants peeling off and pull-down shades that showcase boudoir-themed portraits of pantyhosed legs and garter belts,

this place heaves with sensuality, as Marla takes it all in... eyes a Jacuzzi tub, and a show shower that comes with the requisite stripper pole.

BELLE DE NUIT

You see, Shermichael is a real man, not some limp peckerwood. He ain't nothing like you, homeboy.

MAN

What...what're you saying?

BELLE DE NUIT

Are you stupid -- or do you just look that way? You know damn well what's I'm saying.

BELLE DE NUIT

Sometimes ther things we hoped would never happen, happen anyway.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BELLE DE NUIT (CONT'D)

And sometimes the things you'd wished you had said, get said anyway. Sometimes both in one night.

WOMAN

Who believe in love at first sight?

MAN

It saves time.

**INT. UBER - NIGHT**

Windshield wipers work against the washer fluid, the sound filling the chauffeured car. Passing city lights strobe the shadowy backseat where we FIND MARLA, 40s, She wears a sexy black dress, pearls and heels. The kind of New York style women envy but fall short of. She was once a real looker, in the right light, she still is.

Marnie, sultry in a see-through negligee, lifts a WEDDING PHOTO of Artemesia and her ex-husband and their daughter.

Belle drops her purse on the coffee table. As she does this - A ROLL OF HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS falls out it and hits the floor. Easily ten grand there.

She quickly sweeps up the money and tucks it into her purse, just as Marla returns. She didn't see the money.

**INT. MARLA'S SUITE - NIGHT**

Marla pushes open the door of the suite. The room is dark. Belle and Marla, who've been partying all night and wound up, fumble through the door. Marla, in a Versace dress. She's barefoot, holding her shoes.

Belle closes the door. Someone is standing out on the balcony, their back to the door.

Marla walks over.

**EXT. HOTEL BALCONY - NIGHT**

Marla steps out. The Man on the balcony turns to face him. ARTHUR, a graying-templed 50's, but a handsome son-of-a-bitch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know you'd be with somebody.

MARLA

It's okay, she's a friend. Belle, Arthur. Arthur, Belle.

Arthur covers his shock as they shake hands. Belle betrays no recognition of her.

ARTHUR

Pleasure to meet you.

(to Marla)

I'll be at the pool.

He exits.

BELLE DE NUIT

Babe,

MARLA

He's my husband. You wanna make something of it?

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

WOMAN

What're you going to do? What do you want?

MAN

Justice.

MAN

What about mercy.

MAN

They betrayed me.

WOMAN

Not Danny, just Phil and only after we seperated. Manny you know why?

MAN

Shut up.

WOMAN

Why does she have to suffer. You've thrown away every chance you've been given. And you blame them, And you blame me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN (CONT'D)

What are you trying to cover up now? That you destroyed yourself?

WOMAN

Funny, isn't it. This time yeasterday I wouldn't have cared if the world had ended.

MAN

What do you mean?

WOMAN

Yesterday when we meet I told you a sleep in late... well didn't that sound a little percuiler to you?

MAN

Maybe I didn't think it was any of my business... then.

WOMAN

And now/

MAN

A lots happened since then. Now I want to know everyhting I can about you.

WOMAN

Would it make any difference if I told you the reason why I slept in... cause I never intended to wake up. AT all.

WOMAN

I tried to kill myself the other day, xxx. With sleeping pills. Oh I know what you are thinking -- I wanted to live and he dioed. Or he died and I wanted to die --oh I guess it doesn't make much sense...

WOMAN

Suicide never does, buy why should a woman like --

WOMAN

--You don't know anything about me. I could be anyhting. A thief, a murderess or worse...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAN

I don't think so. Whatever you did there must be a very good reason...

WOMAN

You don't need a reason to die, Frank. Just one to live. Somehow I thought I didn't have one anymore.

MAN

You still feel that way?

WOMAN

I don't know why but everything's changed. Now it's too late to do anything about it....

WOMAN

Arty and I had an affair. Three months. No big deal.

MAN

Your ex husband.

WOMAN

After we were seperated while getting a divorce. See I'm basically a moral person.

MAN

Was manny Jealous?

WOMAN

Manny was impotent because of his drinking. He's had psychiatric problems before. When he was in the Navy.

MAN

When he began to drink?

WOMAN

Not then. No. He was fine. We were fine. He had a good job with a good company. It was a good job. Public relations. Then they were cruel enough to give him a promotion.

MAN

You lost me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WOMAN

Manny couldn't take it. Too much pressure. Too much responsibility. Too little of Manny. I guess.

A beat.

WOMAN

Anyway, he ducked into the bottle. And pretty soon he stopped being a man. And I stopped being a woman and I became a shrue.. he blamed me and I blamed him. And we turned into a pair of cannibals. So for a lot of wrong reasons I turned to Phil.

MAN

Did he see a psychiatrist?

WOMAN

For a little while and a lot of money. But eh thought liquor was a better option. I'll give him that. He tried but hated it.

MAN

And he waled away from it.

WOMAN

And me. Belle de Nuit, the hooker of Babylon.

WOMAN

Youm know what they say. You are what you eat.

LORENZO, 20s, a womanizer, nouveau cool... he whispers something intimately into her ear... she smiles.