

FADE IN:

MONTAGE: Series of old black and white photographs.

A man in a cap and gown is receiving a diploma.

Same man wearing a suit proudly stands in front of a motel.

Another photograph of the man this time bent over a table littered with brandy bottles. A caption on the bottle reads:

"Drunk Ass Cooter Brown."

END MONTAGE.

EXT. LOS ANGELES DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY

Summer heat simmers. Block after block of homeless people are asleep on the sidewalk. Some are nestled on top of cardboard boxes; others lie on plain old concrete.

Pedestrians hastily scamper to get to their destinations. They use tactical maneuvers to avoid the homeless.

EXT. SHELTER - DAY

Crowds of roofless people circle the historic building. A fight breaks out amongst two drunkards, a guard intervenes.

EXT. FIVE STAR HOTEL DRIVEWAY - DAY

Upper class folks make their way into the majestic tower.

The place is packed. Three stretched limos are parked on the manicured lawn. Bellmen with well-polished luggage carts fight for position.

INT. ANDERSON'S OFFICE

ANDERSON CHRIS (40s, handsome, sad) sits behind a massive oak desk. His desk is devoid of any personal items.

He signs several documents and puts them into folders. He leans back against his chair, then gets up and walks to the window, looking out over the city.

BENARD HEIGHTS (30s, grim, imposing) walks in.

BENARD
You wanted to see me, uncle?

ANDERSON
Benard, sit down.

He continues to look out the window. Benard sits.

ANDERSON
How long have you been my hotel
manager?

BENARD
Twelve years, uncle.

ANDERSON
And how long have you been loyal to
me?

Benard stands.

BENARD
Ummm, I don't know what you are
talking about-

ANDERSON
I know about the skimming...nephew.

BENARD
Look, it's-

ANDERSON
It's exactly what I think.

Benard stops. Anderson turns to him.

ANDERSON
There's nothing you can say to
defend yourself.

Benard glares at his uncle.

BENARD
Well then let me say this. You've
become soft, uncle Anderson. This
hotel has suffered too much because
of you.

ANDERSON
Because of me? What about you?

Benard is silent.

BENARD
I suppose that you'll have me
arrested then.

ANDERSON
No.

BENARD
No?

ANDERSON
I'm going to forgive you.

Benard spits out the coffee he was drinking.

BENARD
Forgive? Do you even know the
meaning of the word?

ANDERSON
Let's just say I've had a change of
heart lately.

BENARD
You have gotten soft. The Anderson
I knew would have-

ANDERSON
You're fired, Benard. Effective
immediately.

Benard stands there quietly.

ANDERSON
Now get out, I have a meeting. I
expect you gone by the end of the
day.

Benard begins to leave. He stops and turns.

ANDERSON
Yes, nephew, you're out of the
will.

Benard leaves. Anderson's intercom buzzes. He answers.

SECRETARY (V.O.)
Mr. Chris, a Mr. Conroy is here to
see you.

ANDERSON
Send him in.

DENNIS CONROY (40) enters.

DENNIS

Hello, Mr. Chris. Dennis Conroy. I understand you are in need of my services.

They sit down at Anderson's desk.

ANDERSON

I am looking for a man named Cooter Brown.

EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER - EVENING

Lines of homeless slowly make their way into the shelter. COOTER BROWN (40s, rumpled coat and fedora) hobbles over to the back of the line carrying a large trash bag.

He goes to the man in front of him and takes out a tiny old radio.

COOTER

Hey, James, I'll give you this radio if you let me get in your place.

James takes the radio and lets Cooter cut.

He goes to the next person in line, a huge black man covered in piercings and tattoos. Cooter takes out an old teddy bear.

COOTER

Hey, Charles.

Charles turns and looks down at Cooter. Cooter nervously holds up a teddy bear. Charles grins and takes the bear. Cooter takes his place.

LATER

Everyone in line has something, books, old cassette tapes, bootleg movies, food or toys. Cooter happily stands at the front of the line.

The door opens, a SHELTER WORKER comes out.

SHELTER WORKER

Sorry, folks, no more beds.

Everyone walks away, dejected. Cooter stands there in shock.

COOTER

Now, I know you kidding.

MAN

Sorry Cooter. Shoulda got here earlier.

Cooter looks around at everyone walking away, each one happily carrying Cooter's trade goods.

A shadow falls over Cooter, he looks up to see Charles. The massive man pouts and offers Cooter the teddy bear back.

COOTER

Keep it.

Charles grins and skips away happily.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Cooter nestles himself near some boxes on a sidewalk.

COOTER

(To himself)

It ain't the Ritz, but it'll do.

He covers himself with a dirty old blanket, takes a swig of brandy and lays down.

THUMP. Cooter hears something from a nearby alley.

Cooter jumps up and peers around the corner.

Halfway down the alley is a large parked Cadillac. Two large men are picking up a large heavy body bag.

GOON 1

What can I say? The dude's heavy.

GOON 2

Let's just get him in there, already.

Cooter watches in horror as the two men load a bloody body bag into the trunk of the car.

Suddenly, one of Cooter's brandy bottles falls out of a ripped pocked and SMASHES on the ground.

Both men look and see a scared Cooter. He runs.

CHASE SEQUENCE

Cooter runs down the street.

He looks back, no sign of them.

He stops to catch his breath.

Suddenly, the Cadillac SCREAMS out from a side street, headed straight for Cooter.

He runs down a side street, the car follows.

Cooter runs into a narrow alley. The car stops at the end and Goon 1 gets out.

Cooter trips over an old box and stumbles.

Goon 1 gets closer.

Cooter gets up and continues running. He makes it out of the alley and into a nearby store.

INT. SEX SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Cooter makes his way through the cluttered store and through the back.

EXT. BACK ALLEY

He runs away into the night.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Cooter lays on a park bench, he is covered in newspapers and snoring loudly. A corner flap of the newspaper rises and falls with each snore.

A shadow falls over the paper-covered Cooter.

MAN (O.S.)
Hey, buddy.

No answer.

MAN (O.S.)
Yo!

Cooter sits up quickly. Newspapers go everywhere.

COOTER
What?

A CONSTRUCTION WORKER stands there.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
You gotta leave. We're taking this
bench.

COOTER
What the hell for?

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
They're puttin' in some swing set
or something. You can't be sleeping
here no more.

Cooter gets up.

COOTER
But it's my bed.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Go find somewhere else to sleep it
off, buddy.

SNAP! Someone takes a photograph of Cooter from a distance.
He has no idea.

Dennis Conroy sits in a parked car in an alley across the
street.

Cooter sits back down on the bench.

COOTER
Well, I ain't goin' nowhere.

SNAP! Another picture is taken.

Dennis chews on a cigar as he aims for another shot.

Cooter sits on the bench and folds his arms in protest.

The construction worker rolls his eyes and turns back to his
crew.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Hey, Tiny! We got a problem here!

Cooter smirks.

COOTER
Tiny, huh.

His eyes widen.

SNAP! Another photograph is taken.

TINY walks out of the group of snickering construction workers. Tiny is 3'5" and all solid muscle with a crazed look in his one good eye.

Cooter looks down at the man.

COOTER

I don't want no trouble. I'm going.

In the car across the street Dennis prepares to take another picture.

SNAP! Someone takes a picture of Dennis from a building across the street. Dennis has no idea.

INT. ANDERSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Several glossy photos of Cooter Brown arguing with the construction workers plop down onto Anderson's desk.

Anderson flips through the pictures.

ANDERSON

That's him.

He slides a stack of hundreds over to Dennis.

ANDERSON

Good work.

INT. ELROY'S OFFICE - DAY

Several glossy photos of Dennis plop down onto Elroy's desk.

ELROY (50s, massive) flips through the pictures.

The PHOTOGRAPHER sits across from him.

PHOTOGRAPHER

This is the guy taking pictures of that Cooter guy you're lookin' for.

ELROY

Any idea why?

PHOTOGRAPHER

Wasn't my job to ask him. I imagine you got bigger guys for that, no?

ELROY

I do.

He puts the photos in a drawer. He pulls out a gun and SHOTS the photographer dead.

ELROY

Good work.

EXT. STREET

Cooter ambles down the street, pushing a shopping cart filled with junk.

He stops and finds an old shoe. He smells it and jerks his head away in utter disgust.

COOTER

That one's a keeper.

He puts it into the shopping cart and keeps going. Suddenly, he sees Goon 1 eating an ice cream cone. Cooter turns around and heads the other way but runs right into...

GOON 2

Where do ya think you're going?

Cooter turns back around, right into...

GOON 1

Yeah. What he said.

COOTER

Come on, guys. That was days ago. Besides, it was too dark for me to even see anything anyway. Can't we just be friends?

INT. ELROY'S OFFICE

Goon 1 and Good 2 drop Cooter onto the floor in front of Elroy's desk. He reluctantly looks around.

The place is a large warehouse filled with thugs and stolen goods. Elroy's desk is in the corner.

Cooter stands and brushes himself off, trying to act tough, but clearly scared.

Elroy stands, Cooter crouches.

ELROY

I've seen you around this neighborhood before. Looks like you saw a little too much the other night.

Elroy comes out from behind his desk. He looms over Cooter.

ELROY
What did you see?

COOTER
I ain't seen nothin'.

ELROY
Ain't seen nothin'?

COOTER
Sir.

ELROY
Well, then I guess we can just let
you go, now can't we?

COOTER
Guess so.

Elroy whips out a switchblade knife and puts the blade up
against Cooter's eyeball.

ELROY
With one flick of the wrist, I
could pop out your eyeballs, then
you really won't see nothin.'

Cooter gulps. Elroy puts the knife away.

ELROY (CONT'D)
But I'm not gonna do it.

COOTER
No?

ELROY
Nope. You know why?

COOTER
No.

ELROY
I'm gonna let you owe me instead.

COOTER
Owe you what?

ELROY
Any favor that I ask. Besides, you
look like you could use a little
work.

COOTER
What if I can't do it?

Elroy whips out a gun and holds it to Cooter's head.

COOTER (CONT'D)
Suddenly, I'm inspired.

ELROY
Good.

He puts the gun away.

ELROY
I'll be calling you. Don't go too far.

EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

Anderson sits in a parked car outside the homeless shelter.

He sees Cooter hobble into the building.

Anderson stares and smokes a cigarette.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Rain pours down. Lightning flashes and thunder rumbles. A much younger Anderson stands on the edge of a bridge, looking down into the black water below.

Tears run down his face.

Suddenly, he hears the sound of a man urinating. He looks over and sees a younger Cooter Brown standing next to him, urinating into the river below.

Cooter turns to Anderson and gives him a dumb grin.

ANDERSON
What are you doing?

COOTER
Um, do you need a diagram?

Anderson turns back to the river, disgusted.

Cooter finishes and lets out a loud belch.

ANDERSON
Are you done? I kind of wanted to be alone.

COOTER

When you really think about it,
you're never really done pissing,
are you?

ANDERSON

I guess not - why are we having
this conversation?

COOTER

Hey, you started it.

ANDERSON

No, you're the one who came over
here and started pissing into the
river when I was trying to...

He stares out at the river.

COOTER

Trying to what?

No answer.

COOTER (CONT'D)

Name's Cooter. Cooter Brown.

ANDERSON

Anderson Chris. Wait, aren't you in
my Business Ethics class?

COOTER

Probably. I'm usually too hung over
to go.

Anderson steps down. They walk down the street.

COOTER

I think this is the beginning of a
great friendship.

INT. ANDERSON'S CAR (PRESENT DAY)

Anderson continues staring at the homeless shelter.

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

Several car behind Anderson's, Benard sits in his own car and
watches.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER

Cooter lays in bed reading Shakespeare. An OLD PARANOID MAN
leans over and begins talking to him.

OLD PARANOID MAN
Do you want to know what I think of
the government?

Cooter doesn't look up.

OLD PARANOID MAN
Good, let me tell ya.

Cooter rolls his eyes.

OLD PARANOID MAN
I think the government is run by a
bunch of aliens.

COOTER
Really.

OLD PARANOID MAN
Yeah, really. Why else do you think
they built the Washington Monument?

Cooter isn't biting.

OLD PARANOID MAN
It's an antenna. They beam signals
from the Lincoln Memorial right
into the Washington Monument and
BAM! The signal goes right up to the
mother ship.

Cooter continues reading

COOTER
Where's the mother ship?

OLD PARANOID MAN
It's the moon. Don't you watch the
news, man?

Cooter pulls out a small bottle of brandy and hands it to the
man.

COOTER
Here, you need this more than me.

OLD PARANOID MAN
Thanks.

A man in a suit and carrying a briefcase stands at the door.
Someone points to Cooter's bed.

The man begins walking towards Cooter.

Cooter's eyes widen.

COOTER
Shit, they're back.

Cooter grabs his book and his bag and works his way through the crowd.

MAN IN SUIT
Excuse me, are you Cooter Brown?

COOTER
Nope, just missed him, he went that way.

The man looks to where Cooter was pointing. Cooter starts to flee. He is stopped by an OLD FRIEND.

OLD FRIEND
Hey, Cooter, haven't seen you in awhile.

The man in the suit turns and realizes. He approaches Cooter. Cooter turns and sees the man reach into his coat.

His eyes widen.

The man pulls out an envelope.

MAN IN SUIT
I'm a lawyer for Mr. Anderson Chris. He requested that I give this envelope to you.

The homeless man approaches Cooter.

OLD PARANOID MAN
Is it from the aliens?

Cooter looks at the old paranoid man for a moment and snatches the envelope.

MAN IN SUIT
Have a nice day, sir and congratulations.

Cooter sits down with the envelope. A group of homeless people gather around him. The man in the suit leaves.

Cooter opens the letter and begins reading.

EXT. FIVE STAR HOTEL

At the south end of the driveway, Cooter looks up at the beautiful, imposing building. He wears his usual old trench coat and a beat up fedora and totes a brown bag.

A white limo approaches, it passes Cooter then SCREECHES to a halt. Startled, Cooter jumps up and rushes towards it.

The limo goes in reverse. Cooter looks.

The window rolls down, revealing NORMAN CONDORS (30s, regal).

Norman waves Cooter off.

NORMAN

Beat it.

COOTER

Beat it?

NORMAN

Scram, before I call the cops.

Cooter puffs out his chest.

COOTER

Look mister, don't want any trouble.

Cooter turns away and heads for the hotel.

NORMAN

(To driver)

Follow him.

The limo catches up to Cooter, Cooter stops again.

COOTER

What you want?

NORMAN

You're on my property, buzz off.

Cooter turns to the hotel, looks up, and takes in the massive structure.

COOTER

You run these digs?

NORMAN

Bet your drunk ass I do.

The limo phone BUZZES. Anderson looks at it. He hooks back to Cooter then raises a finger.

NORMAN
Just a moment.
(Into phone)
Hello.

Norman ducks into the limo.

NORMAN
Dear, for the last time, I will
take your poodle for her Botox
appointment when I am finished
working for the day. Please, dear,
I'm busy.

Cooter listens in, shakes his head, then lifts the bag and takes a swig.

COOTER
(To himself)
Sucker.

Norman sticks his head back out the window.

NORMAN
Look--

Cooter raises a finger.

COOTER
--you look. First of all, what
decade was it when you last got
laid? You need to get rid of the
Botox poodle monster and get
yourself a freak. I know some
people--

NORMAN
Just don't loiter in the front.

Cooter scans the driveway.

NORMAN
(To driver)
Pull off.

The driver speeds off, stopping in front of the hotel. Cooter stands there.

The door opens. The driver hops out and opens the rear door. Norman rises from the limo and looks back at Cooter.

Cooter raises the bottle and takes a quick hit.

COOTER
You ain't so tough.

Norman fixes himself and dashes into the hotel.

Cooter smiles and heads into the hotel.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL LOBBY - LATER

A beautiful crystal chandelier hangs from the cathedral ceiling. Plush sofas are arranged for relaxation.

There are handcrafted vases on each of the many cherry wood stands throughout the lobby.

Unlike any other hotel, a large glass cabinet filled with stunning silverware sits near the elevator.

FRONT DESK

Norman stands reading a Wall Street Journal. Several stern and nervous workers check people in.

FRONT DOOR

A WEALTHY WOMAN SCREAMS and falls to the floor.

WEALTHY WOMAN
A mugger!

Everyone looks. Cooter shrugs and steps over the guest and heads into the lobby.

COOTER
Got any vacancies?

Norman scowls and crushes the paper in his hands.

INT. ANDERSON'S OFFICE

Norman opens the door for Cooter, they both enter.

Norman gestures for Cooter to sit. A flat screen television sits before him.

NORMAN
You could have told me who you were first, then we could have avoided the conflict.

COOTER

I just like to screw with people.
It's fun.

Norman glares at Cooter for a moment.

NORMAN

Mr. Chris instructed me to show
this to you upon your arrival, Mr.
Brown.

COOTER

So, where is ole' Andy.

Norman slips a DVD into a player and presses play.

NORMAN

Enjoy.

He leaves.

On TV:

Anderson sits at his desk, looking directly at Cooter.

ANDERSON

(On TV)

Hello, Cooter Brown, my old friend.
I'm afraid that by the time you see
this, I will be dead.

Cooter's eyes widen.

COOTER

You're shitting me.

ANDERSON (CONT'D)

And no, I'm not shitting you.

Anderson sighs deeply.

ANDERSON

I just can't do it anymore. I
finally had the courage to end it
all. I know that you tried to save
me that night on the bridge and I
don't want you to think that your
efforts are in vain. I just can't
live a lie anymore. This life isn't
for me.

Anderson gestures.

ANDERSON

On my desk you will see an envelope. In it you will see several papers. Once you sign those papers, this hotel and the life that comes with it will all be yours.

Cooter nearly chokes on his drink.

COOTER

Wha-?

ANDERSON

That's right. I know that you've fallen on hard times, my old friend, and I want to help you. Sign those papers and you'll be a wealthy man. My new manager, Norman Condors will show you the ropes and make sure that everything runs smoothly. That's all I have to say Cooter. You were always a smarter man than me, I think this will help both you and the hotel. Goodbye.

The video ends. Cooter sits there in awe.

INT. LOBBY

Cooter walks quickly through the lobby, Norman follows.

NORMAN

Going so soon?

COOTER

I'm gettin' outta here. You people are crazy.

NORMAN

Good. I always thought Anderson was a little crazy toward the end.

Cooter stops and turns.

COOTER

That's my old friend you're talking about.

NORMAN

Well, your old friend is gone and now the hotel can have a real owner.

COOTER
It had a real owner, fool.

NORMAN
Anderson started giving money to
people like you.

He looks Cooter up and down with disapproval.

NORMAN
Now the place can go back to
catering to real people. People who
matter.

COOTER
You know what I think?

NORMAN
You think?

COOTER
Yeah. I think I'll keep you on as
manager for awhile at least.

Norman scratches his bald spot nervously.

NORMAN
What...what are you talking about?

COOTER
I'm talking about those papers
Anderson left me. Let me see 'em.

Norman looks suspicious. Cooter smiles and takes a nip of
brandy. He heads back towards the elevator.

COOTER
Never mind. I'll just show myself
to ole' Anderson's office.

Norman stands there for a moment, then his eyes widen in
terror at what is about to happen.

He runs over to the elevator just as the doors are opening.
Norman makes it just in time to block the doors with his
body. Cooter just rolls his eyes.

COOTER
Outta the way limp dick.

NORMAN
You're not going up there.

COOTER
There's, like, a hundred other
elevators here. You know that,
don't you?

NORMAN
And I'll block every one!

People are beginning to get curious. Cooter takes another nip
of brandy, unimpressed.

COOTER
There's also stairs.

NORMAN
I'll trip you.

COOTER
Yeah, well, I may be a drunk but
I'm gonna get back up to that
office and I'm gonna be runnin'
this place. So why don't you do
yourself a favor and go home to
queen Botox.

Norman sighs and steps into the elevator. Cooter joins him.

INT. ELEVATOR

The doors close. Before Cooter can press the button for the
penthouse, Norman runs his hands down the panel, pressing
every button. He spins around to Cooter.

NORMAN
Okay, Mr. Brown, I'm sure we can
work something out here. I have
money, or I can give you stock
options. I even have friends at
some local casinos.

COOTER
You know, I get the feeling that
you may not want me to own this
hotel.

He belches lightly.

NORMAN
Oh, god.

He covers his nose.

NORMAN

Okay, Mr. Brown. I have a proposition for you. In addition to the hotel, you will have access to Anderson's personal finances. At the time of his death, Mr. Chris was worth 6.2 million dollars.

Cooter's jaw drops.

NORMAN

You do not need to run the hotel to have access to his money, Mr. Brown. You can take it and leave.

Cooter thinks for a moment.

COOTER

Why are you just telling me this now?

NORMAN

All you would have done is drink the money away. But if that's what it takes to get rid of you...Ownership can simply be transferred to a board of directors. You'll just have to sign some papers.

Cooter considers.

COOTER

You know, friend, that may just be a good idea.

Norman leans against the wall and slides down, utterly relieved.

COOTER

Nah, I'm just screwing with you.

Norman's eyes widen in horror.

TITLE: SIX MONTHS LATER

EXT. FIVE STAR HOTEL - MORNING

Four taxis and two gangster rides are parked in front of the hotel.

A black limo with 28-inch rims sits on the hotel lawn.

On the driver side door reads: Five Star Hotel.

Music fades.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL - COOTER'S ROOM - DAY

The room is huge and the decorations are very gaudy.

Empty liquor bottles are everywhere. A naked woman sleeps under the covers in the four-poster bed. Thousand dollar bills lie scattered on the bed.

Cooter looks like hell. He clutches his head as he feebly fixes himself in the mirror, he wears a three-piece suit and has slicked back hair. He still has a 5 o'clock shadow.

COOTER

Looking better and better.

He spits in his hand and slicks back his eyebrows.

Cooter looks at a table on which three miniature bottles sit. He walks over. He lifts grabs a bottle and a bottle, opens it and takes a swig.

COOTER

Best cure for a hangover.

He puts all the three miniatures into his coat pocket. He catches his reflection in the mirror as he does so.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL LOBBY - MORNING

The virtually deserted place looks nothing like it did. Many of the beautiful vases and furniture are either missing or broken. The beautiful chandelier is gone, only a hole remains.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL - FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

A MAN approaches the desk. The nervous and stern clerks have been replaced by Jaquita and SEDUCTION TATE (30, a part-time stripper). She wears a mini skirt and matching jacket with nothing underneath. Her boobs stand at attention.

SEDUCTION

Checking in?

The MAN man reaches into his coat pocket.

MAN

I guess.

SEDUCTION

Need a ho?

MAN

A what?

JAQUITA

A ho?, hooker?, prostitute?

Jaquita and Seduction smile and high five.

SEDUCTION

That was good, girl.

The man stands there, shocked.

FRONT DOOR

MR. and MRS. WHITE (very old, very wealthy) enter the hotel with FIFE, their poodle (with hair dyed pink). They stop and stare at the once beautiful lobby.

Jason approaches them.

JASON

Welcome back, Mr. and Mrs. White...
got any luggage?

MR. WHITE

What's going on here?

JASON

New manager took over.

MRS. WHITE

Really?

Jason points to Cooter.

JASON

That's him with the suit on.

Mr. and Mrs. White turn and see Cooter checking his teeth in a large mirror. Cooter looks over to Jason then back to the...

FRONT DESK

His eyes widen and he rushes over.

COOTER
 (To Seduction)
 Damn, girl. No!

SEDUCTION
 What?

He looks around.

COOTER
 Put on something different.

SEDUCTION
 What you mean, something different?
 I wear this to church. If it's good
 enough for Jesus, it's good enough
 for you.

Cooter stares at her breasts.

COOTER
 Your...headlights are showing.

Seduction looks at her boobs and jiggles them. Jaquita
 quickly glances up then returns to her nails.

JAQUITA
 They are kind of out there, girl.

SEDUCTION
 (To Jaquita)
 Look who's talking.

Jaquita pushes up her bust.

JAQUITA
 Yeah, but damn I look good--

COOTER
 Both of you! Put on some clothes!

He clutches his head in pain and takes a swig. A nearby woman
 looks and covers her children's eyes and ushers them away
 from the front desk.

COOTER
 Make me want to take a drink.

He lifts a bottle and takes a hit.

JAQUITA
 You can't just start drinking when
 you want. You got responsibilities
 now, Coot.

COOTER
This is my hotel.

He takes another hit.

JAQUITA
This is the first time you've even
come out of your room in three
days.

COOTER
I was busy.

JAQUITA
Right. Did you pay this one?

COOTER
I always--Just straighten that out.

SEDUCTION
Look, you want me to bring in the
johns or not?

COOTER
Johns?

SEDUCTION
Guests. I said guests.

COOTER
Just cover them up, will ya?

Jaquita chuckles.

JAQUITA
Good luck with that. Gonna need
lots of cloth.

Cooter looks at Jaquita.

COOTER
You too.

JAQUITA
Me too what?

Cooter looks at the desk, a salon now.

COOTER
Clear off the desk... all this
finger nail stuff... this ain't the
salon.

Cooter walks off. He heads towards the front door.

FRONT DOOR

Cooter makes his way to Jason.

JASON
Cooter, meet Mr. and Mrs. White...
they're regulars.

Cooter extends his hand.

COOTER
Pleased to meet you.

MR. WHITE
You're the new owner?

COOTER
Sure am.

Mr. White sniffs the air.

MR. WHITE
What's that smell?

JASON
Smells like ripple.

Cooter clears his throat.

Mrs. White scans the lobby.

MRS. WHITE
Was there a shoot out here? What
happened to the beautiful
chandelier?

Cooter looks up.

COOTER
What chandelier?

Jason looks up.

COOTER
Didn't notice it.

Mr. White scans the lobby.

MR. WHITE
The furnishings?

Mrs. White looks at the vases.

MR. WHITE
At least you kept the vase.

Cooter looks at the vases.

COOTER
Got to get one of those for my
room.

MR. WHITE
Where's the beautiful sofa?

COOTER
Oh, looked better in my room.
(beat)
Let's go, shall we?

EXT. FIVE STAR HOTEL DRIVEWAY - EVENING

A Limo SCREAMS up to the hotel, out comes LANCE JONES, 37. He is dressed as an Indy driver.

He opens the passenger door, a frantic, wild-haired LADY gets out.

LANCE
Did you enjoy yourself?

LADY #1
That was the worst trip I've ever
had!

LANCE
(Confused)
Thank you...

She darts off.

Lance helps a MAN out.

LANCE
And you sir, enjoyed it?

MAN #1
Hell no!

The man storms off.

LANCE
Remember, no swearing!

Lance helps out another LADY out.

LADY #2
You need to be put away before you
kill someone!

She begins to cry then scurries off.

LANCE
So touchy.

Lance helps the last MAN.

LANCE
Last but not least.

MAN #2
Say fellow, don't I know you?

LANCE
Don't know, do you?

MAN #2
What's your name again?

Lance closes the door.

LANCE
Lance Jones.

The man smiles.

MAN #2
The race car driver.

Lance smiles.

EXT. HOTEL FRONT DOOR

Cooter walks out.

The crying lady passes him.

COOTER
Madam.

LADY #2
That driver of yours is terrible!

COOTER
What happened?

LADY #2
He's terrible!

The lady continues into the hotel, shaken.

The man approaches Cooter.

MAN #2
Good job, Cooter. I admire taste,
hiring a legend.

The man enters the hotel. Cooter approaches Lance.

COOTER
What happened?

Lance begins to wipe down the limo.

LANCE
Guess I'm a legend.

Cooter smiles.

COOTER
I heard.

Lance nods.

Cooter exits the hotel, holding a miniature.

COOTER
Oh, and Lance?

LANCE
Yeah, chief?

COOTER
Careful with the customers.

LANCE
Not to worry, Chief.

He looks down and notices the limo tires smoking. Lance quickly steps in front of a tire, blocking it from Cooter's view.

LANCE
Driving record's clean as a
whistle.

Four beautiful women exit the hotel. Cooter smiles and squirts some breath spray into his mouth. Lance spots the women.

LANCE
Hey, let me get some of that.

Cooter accidentally squirts Lance right in the eyes.

LANCE

Chief!

Lance scrubs his face. The women approach the Limo. Lance squints at them.

LANCE

Folks need a lift?

Lance opens the door.

LANCE (CONT'D)

Fasten up.

The women get in.

COOTER

Have a nice day.

Cooter walks back towards the hotel. He sniffs the air for a moment, then continues walking.

Behind him, the limo speeds off, destroying two gardens along the way. Several people run for their lives.

EXT. DULLARD HOTEL - BENARD'S OFFICE

Benard's face is hidden behind a massive newspaper. He SLAMS the paper down onto the oak desk.

The headline reads: New Ownership at Five Star Hotel.

Benard looms over a news story featuring Cooter Brown. He appears drunk in the picture.

BENARD

Anderson has the nerve to fire me
and he brings in this DRUNK?

He crumples up the paper and walks over to the window. He sees the distant rooftop of Five Star Hotel.

BENARD

Anderson Chris has no idea what he
has done to that beautiful hotel.

He balls up the paper in his hands.

BENARD

He has no idea how vengeful Benard
Heights can be.

He walks over to a wet bar and puts the paper into a blender with some water.

BENARD

Who are you Cooter Brown? Who's
your devil?

He punches the blender on.

BENARD

No one messes with my ambitions. No
one defeats Benard--

MOTHER (O.S.)

Oh, Duplekins!

Benard stops the blender and pours the newspaper concoction
into a large glass.

BENARD

Yes, mother?

MOTHER

Where's my milkshake.

BENARD

Coming!

He heads for the door.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL LOBBY

Cooter approaches the elevator and stops.

Cooter turns and sees Seduction talking to a guest.

SEDUCTION

Come on, daddy, I got a girl for
you.

Seduction walks out from behind the counter. Cooter rushes
over to her.

COOTER

Where you going?

SEDUCTION

(Innocently)
Showing this nice gentleman to his
room.

The man stands with a huge smile.

COOTER

Sir, you okay with that?

The man nods quickly. Seduction smiles.

SEDUCTION

Come on.

Seduction and the man walk off. Jaquita files away on her nails.

JAQUITA

He's gonna get rocked.

COOTER

This place is turning into a
whorehouse.

JAQUITA

Not as classy as the one I worked
for in Texas, though.

Cooter looks at Jaquita; she stops and slowly turns.

JAQUITA

Sorry, you weren't supposed to know
that.

Cooter shakes his head and takes a drink.

JAQUITA

Oh, almost forgot, you got two
calls earlier.

COOTER

From who?

JAQUITA

Hotel's lawyers.

Cooter's eyes widen.

COOTER

Why didn't you tell me earlier?

JAQUITA

Busy.

COOTER

Doing what?

Jaquita studies her nails.

COOTER

Never mind.

He lays his head down on the front desk. Jaquita gives him a dirty look and moves some of her manicure supplies out of the way.

Cooter holds up his miniature bottle of brandy.

COOTER

(To the brandy)

You used to be so good to me. You used to make me so happy. Why don't you do work anymore?

COOTER

(To Jaquita)

What'd the lawyers say?

JAQUITA

Something about the books looking bad, closing the hotel...oh, and you're a total failure.

He slams his head back down on the table.

COOTER

Ow...

JAQUITA

Would have told you earlier but I was busy.

COOTER

Doing what? Don't tell me, your toes?

Jaquita looks at her feet.

JAQUITA

Nope, but they need it, huh?

Jaquita plops her feet onto the counter, right in Cooter's face. He winces.

JAQUITA

(To her toes)

Momma gonna polish you girls right up.

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

Sterile, colorless room. Cooter sits across the table from 12 serious LAWYERS and ACCOUNTANTS.

ACCOUNTANT
Let's get started, Mr. Brown--

COOTER
Cooter, please.

ACCOUNTANT
Yes, Mr. Brown. So we've been going over the numbers for the hotel and we'd like to speak with you about some issues.

COOTER
Shoot.

The man raises an eyebrow and turns back to the papers.

ACCOUNTANT
Yes, well, I'm afraid we will have to make some cuts in order to survive another fiscal year.

COOTER
What kind of cuts?

ACCOUNTANT
The pay of your entire hotel staff.

Cooter spits out his drink.

COOTER
Wha--?

LAWYER
We're broke, Mr. Brown.

COOTER
How can that be?

ACCOUNTANT
Frankly, I don't exactly know where the money has been going but if I were you I'd consider opening up an investigation.

COOTER
So let me get this straight, we're broke?

ACCOUNTANT
Pretty much.

COOTER
Broke broke?

ACCOUNTANT

Let me put it to you this way, Mr. Brown, you so broke, hookers will have to pay you for sex.

Everyone stops for a moment and looks at the accountant in confusion. He clears his throat, embarrassed and shrinks back into his chair.

Cooter gets up and paces back and forth.

COOTER

What can we do?

ACCOUNTANT

If you want to stay in business this hotel needs to bring in sixteen million dollars by the end of next month.

Cooter drops his drink.

EXT. FILTHY ALLEY - NIGHT

Rain drips down from a gutter, Mist drifts out from a street grate. Cooter treads lightly through the area, looking around, scared. He carries a large duffel bag.

He spots an old warehouse with a light on. Two large BOUNCERS stand on either side of the door. Both men wear flashy suits and stare ahead dangerously.

Cooter heads for the door. A bouncer holds out his arm to block Cooter. Another bouncer reaches into his coat.

BOUNCER 1

Whoa, whoa, whoa, where do you think you're goin'?

COOTER

I'd like to think I'm going inside.

BOUNCER 2

Who wants to know?

Cooter looks confused.

COOTER

Who wants to know what? I just wanted to go inside.

BOUNCER 1 looks at BOUNCER 2 in disgust.

BOUNCER 1

We talked about this, I said I'll do the talking, you just screw it all up.

BOUNCER 2

Sorry. Continue.

COOTER

Look, I just need to get in there to see Elroy. Tell him Cooter Brown has something for him.

BOUNCER 2

Who wants to know?

Cooter and BOUNCER 1 look at him.

MAN 2 (CONT'D)

Sorry, got carried away.

INT. ELROY'S WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Smoke lingers in the air. The place is filled with loud and rowdy people, screaming and cheering at the underground boxing match.

Hundred dollar bills litter the floor at the feet of the bloody boxers.

Elroy smokes a large cigar as he sits in his office watching the match through a window.

INT. ELROY'S OFFICE

Bouncer 1 escorts Cooter in, plopping him down in a chair in front of Elroy.

ELROY

Cooter Brown. Just the man I wanted to see.

Cooter takes a nip of brandy.

Elroy gets up and goes to the window.

ELROY

You have any idea how much money is littering that floor right now?

COOTER

Um, no.

ELROY

Nowhere near enough. These underground games aren't bringing in what they once were. Used to be that a guy could make a decent living watching birds, dogs or even people fight to the death.

He sits back down and blows a large smoke ring.

ELROY (CONT'D)

Now people can just watch this shit on Youtube. Don't need me anymore. You got what I asked?

Cooter puts the duffel bag down.

COOTER

This is getting harder and harder to do. When are you planning on ending this job you have for me?

Elroy unzips the bag, it's filled with stacks of money. He smiles down at the money through his cigar smoke.

ELROY

Right around the time you plan on dying, Mr. Brown.

He picks up a stack of money and flips through it.

ELROY

Yep, right around then.

Cooter gulps and looks out at the boxing match. A bloody fighter goes down.

INT. COOTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Cooter sits at Anderson's old desk and looks around the office.

He goes to the window and looks out at the beautiful view. He sees a family gathering down in front of the hotel, the children look up at the beautiful building in amazement.

Cooter sighs and takes a sip of brandy, looking down at the happy family.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Cooter and Anderson sit on the hood of a car, drinking.

ANDERSON

You know, you've been a great friend to me, Coot.

COOTER

You've been a great drinking buddy to me too, Andy.

ANDERSON

How the hell did you manage to graduate? You came to most of the exams drunk.

COOTER

That's how I do it. Can't think straight when I'm sober.

Anderson laughs.

ANDERSON

Don't ever change, man.

COOTER

Never.

BACK TO PRESENT

Cooter continues staring out the window. He throws the brandy bottle into the trash.

INT. LOBBY

Cooter comes out of the elevator and heads to the desk. Norman is there.

COOTER

Hey Norm.

NORMAN

It's Norman, and you know it.

COOTER

Good for you, hey I got a question for you. You said that Anderson used to give his money to homeless charities, right.

Norman scowls.

NORMAN

That's correct.

Cooter smiles.

COOTER
I got myself an idea.

INT. ANDERSON'S OFFICE

Cooter paces around the desk in excitement. Jaquita, Seduction, Norman and Lance all sit across from him.

COOTER
Thanks for coming, guys. As you guys may or may not know, the hotel's kinda hurting and we need to bring in some money, stat.

NORMAN
What do you propose? A car wash with naked strippers?

Seduction winks at him. He blushes.

COOTER
No, even better...well, almost as good.

He hits play on a powerpoint presentation.

On screen: Rags to Riches! A homeless talent competition!

COOTER
We hold the competition right here in the hotel. We get sponsors

SEDUCTION
You finally lost it now, Cooter.

NORMAN
There is no way that I will be participating in this ridiculous plan.

JAQUITA
How the hell this gonna work, Coot?

LANCE
I kinda like the idea.

NORMAN
I'm leaving, this is utterly absurd.

(MORE)

NORMAN (cont'd)

No one, and I mean no one will want to see a bunch of homeless losers trying to sing or dance for a few dollars. They can just do that on the street corner.

He begins to leave.

COOTER

Okay, Norm, but if you walk out of there don't expect to have a job tomorrow.

Norman stops.

NORMAN

You're serious about this.

COOTER

As a heart attack. Now if you're in, sit down and let me tell you something.

Norman reluctantly sits.

COOTER

Now you guys don't really know about this but someone's been stealing from the hotel.

Everyone gasps and murmurs amongst themselves.

COOTER

Calm down, calm down.

LANCE

Do you know who it is?

COOTER

I got my suspicions. But don't you guys worry nothing about that now. The main concern here is to save this place.

He looks down for a moment.

COOTER

I owe it to an old friend.

JAQUITA

Sounds like we got some work to do.

Cooter smiles.

EXT. SHELTER - AFTERNOON

Cooter enters the shelter.

INT. SHELTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Cooter sits with shelter manager TAYLOR EDWARDS, 40.

TAYLOR

Let's get this straight... you want everyone here to audition for some dumbass talent show for the homeless?

COOTER

That's right.

TAYLOR

Who's paying for this? The hotel?

COOTER

Not exactly.

TAYLOR

Who's paying?

COOTER

Don't worry about that.

TAYLOR

Oh, I'm not worried... in fact, I'm delighted.

Taylor stands.

TAYLOR

Look, Cooter.

Cooter stands.

TAYLOR

I'm happy that you want to help the others but...

COOTER

What?

TAYLOR

You got a good thing over there, don't screw it up.

COOTER
If I can't reach back and help, I
lose anyway.

Taylor extends his hand.

TAYLOR
Amazing.

COOTER
What's that?

TAYLOR
Life.

Cooter smiles and shakes Taylor's hand.

COOTER
Sure is.

Cooter lifts the miniatures from his pocket and tosses them into the trash. Taylor smiles. Cooter turns and leaves.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

Cooter sits at the end of a long table. The tops of several buildings can be seen out of the massive windows.

Cooter sits across from CHARLES SCHWARTZ. The man is very old and seems a bit paranoid as he looks out the windows.

COOTER
So as you can see Mr. Schwartz it's
very important that we have the
proper financing for this project.
Without it, we could very well go
under.

The man continues to nervously look out the window.

COOTER
Um, Mr. Schwartz?

MR. SCHWARTZ
Uh, yes, very important. Anderson
was a good friend of mine so I'd
like to help out in any way that I
can.

COOTER
Is there something wrong?

MR. SCHWARTZ
I just don't like heights.

COOTER
Sorry but we like to have meetings
in this room. You know, make it
official and all.

MR. SCHWARTZ
Um, sure. Yes, I will have a check
to you in a week.

Cooter gets up and shakes the man's hand.

COOTER
You got yourself a deal.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO

A NEWS ANCHOR sits at the news desk, reporting the news.

NEWS ANCHOR
The popular new owner of the Five
Star Hotel unveiled an interesting
new charity today.

ON SCREEN: Cooter stands before the hotel's front doors,
several microphones are in his face. A large covered sign
stands behind him.

COOTER
In an attempt to raise awareness of
the growing problem with
homelessness in this city, I am
proposing a contest, hosted by Five
Star Hotel. I present to you...

He pulls the sheet off the sign, revealing "Rags to Riches"

COOTER
...Rags to Riches, the homeless
edition of America's Got Talent!

REPORTER 1
What kinds of acts are you looking
for in this contest?

COOTER
Anything and everything! We don't
care!

REPORTER 2
Why is this only for the homeless?

Cooter hesitates for a moment.

COOTER

They've been forgotten for too long. A good friend of mine used to give a lot of money to the homeless and it's time that we honor his memory.

REPORTER 3

What will the grand prize be?

COOTER

500,000 dollars! But we need sponsors, we need advertisements. Coke, Pepsi, get off your caffeinated asses and get in on this!

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO

The female anchor chuckles.

NEWS ANCHOR

You heard him, Pepsi, get off your asses.

She chuckles again.

NEWS ANCHOR

Oh, I said a bad word. Next up, is your pet rabbit a secret killer?

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

The cots have been cleared out of the main room and a line of homeless people slowly wind their way towards the judge's table at the front.

Cooter, Jaquita, Seduction and Lance sit at the table.

A large, ANGRY HOMELESS MAN bears down on them.

ANGRY HOMELESS MAN

What you mean I'm not funny?

COOTER

Sorry sir, but abortion humor just isn't what we're looking for.

ANGRY HOMELESS MAN
But those are the only jokes I
know.

COOTER
Well, that kinda scares me.

ANGRY HOMELESS MAN
What? I oughta kick your ass!

Cooter glances at Seduction. She gets up and tries to escort
the man away.

SEDUCTION
Come on now, big daddy, don't want
no trouble.

ANGRY HOMELESS MAN
Get your hands off me, bitch. I got
more jokes to tell!

Seduction rolls her eyes with boredom, then PUNCHES the man
in the face, knocking him out cold.

Two large men drag the unconscious man away.

SEDUCTION
Anyone else?

Several people run away.

SEDUCTION
That's what I thought.

She sits back down and winks at Norman who is standing to the
side.

He blushes and dabs sweat off his brow.

LATER

The room is empty. Cooter is about to lock up. Suddenly, the
door opens, and LANA PERINE rushes in.

LANA
Oh my god, I'm so sorry I'm late.
Did I miss it.

Cooter doesn't look at Lana, he cleans up.

COOTER
Sorry miss you're too late. Come
back next year.

LANA
C'mon, you gotta at least hear me
sing.

COOTER
Miss, it's been a long day, it
ain't happening. Now--

Lana starts to sing a beautiful song.

Cooter looks up amazed and sees how beautiful the singer is.

Lana's song ends. Cooter smiles.

COOTER
Hi.

FRONT DESK - NIGHT

A door opens, Jaquita and a Jason come out.

JAQUITA
I think I heard something.

JASON
What?

JAQUITA
I don't know, something.

JASON
Girl, stop playing.

Jason begins to cover her with kisses.

JAQUITA
Let me make sure everything's okay.

She scans the lobby.

Jason unzips his pants, they fall.

Jaquita walks back to the desk. Jason grabs her and hoists
her up onto the desk.

JAQUITA
Boy, we can't do it here.

JASON
Why not?

Jason jumps onto the desk.

The lights flash on. Seduction approaches the front desk.

SEDUCTION

Get your ass off that counter,
freak.

JAQUITA

Seduction.

SEDUCTION

All these rooms in this hotel and
you two wanna do it on the counter?

JASON

Yes.

SEDUCTION

You better roll your ass on the
cart to a room.

Jason hops down from the desk.

SEDUCTION

With your little ding-a-ling ass.

Jaquita hops down.

SEDUCTION

And you, hot momma.

CHARLES

Quiet.

Jason grabs Jaquita by the hand and leaves.

Seduction watches as they walk off.

SEDUCTION

Got my eye on you two.

She dims the lights.

A nervous Norman emerges from behind the wall.

Seduction grabs his hand and guides him to the front desk.
They hop on top of it.

SEDUCTION

Come on, baby. I'm all yours.

NORMAN

Please be gentle, I went to
Harvard.

SEDUCTION

Gentle my ass.

She throws him to the floor. Ripping clothing can be heard.

NORMAN (O.S.)
Ow...do it again...

INT. DULLARD HOTEL OFFICE - DAY

Benard sits at his desk and talks on the phone to a Five Star OFFICIAL.

BENARD
I know something is going on over there.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
Anderson never should have fired you.

BENARD
I know, it was a bad move.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
Now that Anderson is out of the picture the Board wants to handle this now.

Benard swings around.

BENARD
I think I can help you.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
Please, how?

BENARD
Let me send one of my assistants over there.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
What will he do?

BENARD
You know, keep an eye on things.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
You mean spy on Cooter?

BENARD
Exactly.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)
I don't know.

BENARD

He's already got thugs and hookers
over there... who knows what's
next.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)

Let me run it by the Board.

Benard takes a small recorder from his desk.

BENARD

In the mean time, I'll send him
over.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)

Okay.

Benard hangs up the telephone. He smiles and spins in the
chair.

BENARD

Got you now, Cooter Brown.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL - FRONT DESK - DAY

Seduction and Jaquita are at the front desk.

JAQUITA

Someone got rocked last night.

Seduction looks at Jaquita.

SEDUCTION

What you talking about?

JAQUITA

I saw you.

SEDUCTION

When?

Jaquita grabs a roll of paper towels and a bottle of spray
and wipes the counter off.

SEDUCTION

Peeping tom.

Jason approaches with a guest, he looks at Jaquita and
smiles.

JAQUITA

Hi Jason.

Jason winks.

SEDUCTION
 Girl, that boy a bellboy.

JAQUITA
 A cute bellboy.

Jaquita smiles.

SEDUCTION
 You better get somebody with some money.

JAQUITA
 Money ain't everything.

Seduction looks at Jaquita.

SEDUCTION
 No, it's all things.

Cooter approaches the front desk.

COOTER
 Where's the vase that was here?

SEDUCTION
 Man, you know everything is disappearing around here.

He accidentally hits Jaquita's hand, she spills fingernail polish on the counter.

JAQUITA
 Fool, you gonna pay me for that.

INT. BALL ROOM - DAY

People are everywhere. Workers set up lights on a makeshift stage. Cooter worms his way through the crowd. A throng of reporters follow him. He is loving the attention.

COOTER
 Yeah, so we've got this big, beautiful stage, lights everywhere. It's gonna be as big as American Idol. Except, you know, a little smaller.

A REPORTER steps forward.

REPORTER
 How are you financing all of this?

COOTER

We've got some independent financiers in place. Not to worry.

REPORTER

What do you say to those people out there that think you're exploiting the homeless?

COOTER

I say look, what have you all done for the homeless lately? We're giving them a chance to become rich. So back off.

The reporters look a little nervous.

COOTER

Oh, not you guys.

They look relieved.

REPORTER

So it looks like the homeless have already arrived at the hotel, where will they be staying.

COOTER

What do you mean they've already arrived?

The reporter points to a homeless, bearded man at the other end of the room.

COOTER

'Scuse me a minute.

He heads over to the man. The man suddenly disappears into a nearby hallway.

HALLWAY

Cooter runs into the hall. The homeless man is fleeing down the hall.

COOTER

Hey! Get back here!

He starts running. The man disappears around the corner.

Cooter rounds the corner and looks down the hall, the man is gone.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL - FRONT DESK - MORNING

A crowd of people advance upon the front desk. Clearly, they are from the shelter.

Jason, holding the bell cart, is knocked over by the crowd.

Lots of CHATTER erupts through the lobby.

Cooter is behind the front desk along with Seduction and Jaquita.

Some of the homeless camp out on the floor.

SEDUCTION

Where did they come from?

COOTER

The shelter.

JAQUITA

The shelter?

COOTER

Yup. They're the contestants for the show. We're holding them here until it's over.

JAQUITA

The hotel will be full now.

COOTER

Good.

SEDUCTION

Good my ass, what about my guests?

COOTER

They got to find another hotel.

Norman enters the hotel and sees the crowd. He rushes over to the front desk.

NORMAN

What the hell is going on here?

COOTER

New guests.

Norman scans the room.

A kid tosses a beer bottle; Norman sees it and ducks.

The bottle flies across and misses him.

NORMAN
These are the contestants?

Norman rises.

SEDUCTION
Yeah, and they're moving in.

NORMAN
Who ordered this?

COOTER
I did.

Norman approaches Cooter.

NORMAN
Does the board know about this?

COOTER
Not yet.

NORMAN
I think you better get rid of these
people at once, are--

Cooter looks at Norman.

COOTER
I'm still the owner.

Norman storms out.

COOTER
Jaquita, go and get all the room
keys.

JAQUITA
For what?

COOTER
Do it.

Jaquita walks into the back room.

SEDUCTION
Cooter, are you serious?

COOTER
Serious as a heart attack.

SEDUCTION
That's what the board gonna have
when he gets here.

Jaquita returns with the keys. She lays them on the counter.
Jason walks over.

JAQUITA
A madhouse.

Cooter gives the keys to Jason.

JASON
What am I supposed to do?

COOTER
Your job. Check them in.

JASON
You're serious?

SEDUCTION
As a heart attack.

Lance walks into the hotel; Cooter sees him and rushes over.

COOTER
Lance, where've you been? I been
calling you.

Lance scans the hotel and smiles.

LANCE
Man you did it.

Cooter turns and scans the lobby.

COOTER
I did what you said, now what?

LANCE
I have a group of investors flying
in later.

COOTER
Investors...

LANCE
Trust me, Cooter.

Lance turns and leaves.

COOTER
Where you going now?

LANCE
Trust me.

INT. DULLARD HOTEL OFFICE - LATER

Benard is sitting at his desk. There's a knock at the door.

BENARD

Come in.

The door opens. We cannot see the man speaking to Benard.

MAN

Cooter has gone mad.

BENARD

What's he done now?

MAN

He's filling the hotel with bums
from the shelter. They are the
idiots from the competition.

Benard rises.

BENARD

What an idiot.

MAN

I know, huh?

Benard paces.

BENARD

Go back over there.

MAN

No way.

BENARD

You want to keep your job?

MAN

Sure.

Benard sits.

BENARD

Then get over there, now.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Cooter is walking down the hall. Suddenly a nearby room door opens and Lana comes running out, she runs right into Cooter.

LANA

Oh, my lord. I'm so sorry.

She looks up at him.

LANA

Oh, it's you, Mr. Brown.

Cooter looks away shyly.

LANA

I never had a chance to thank you for this chance and the chance to stay at this lovely hotel.

Cooter can't look her in the eye.

COOTER

Yeah, well, I guess I...yeah...

LANA

Mr. Brown, are you all right?

Cooter walks away quickly.

COOTER

I'm fine, yeah, I'll talk to you later, Miss Perine.

He disappears around the corner.

Lana stares in confusion.

Around the corner, Cooter has his back up against the wall. He wipes away the sweat and breathes heavily.

COOTER

(Whispering to himself)

Yeah, I'm fine. I'll talk to you later. What the hell are you doing, Cooter Brown. You're supposed to be suave and slick. You're the mack daddy with the ladies. You're the hipster of hipsters.

He starts pacing around in circles, berating himself quietly.

COOTER

But you can't even talk to this one good girl, can you? No, I'll answer that one for you, the answer is a bit fat N-

He turns and sees Lana standing at the corner staring at him and smiling.

COOTER

...Oh...

LANA

Sorry to interrupt, but you dropped this.

She hands him a small bottle of brandy. Cooter just stares in utter humiliation.

LANA

I'll just slip it in here.

She slips it into Cooter's jacket pocket and walks away.

He continues to stare.

INT. FRONT DESK - LATER

Jaquita works on her nails. Cooter runs up.

COOTER

Jackie, I need your help.

She looks Cooter up and down and smiles.

JAQUITA

'Bout time. I been waiting to hear that since the day I met you.

She calls into the back.

JAQUITA

Yo, Seduction. It's finally time for code red.

Seduction comes out with a box and plops it down onto the desk.

COOTER

What's all this?

JAQUITA

We took the liberty of making you up a little makeover kit.

SEDUCTION

Time to make that little lady notice what a fine piece you are.

INT. LOBBY - EVENING

Lana sits on a beautiful couch in the lobby reading a book.

Cooter comes out of his office, looking suave and handsome.
Jaquita starts to cry a little.

JAQUITA
My baby's all grown up.

Jaquita and Seduction hug each other.

COOTER
Okay, enough. Where is she?

Seduction points.

SEDUCTION
Right over there, Romeo.

Cooter takes a deep breath.

COOTER
Wish me luck.

MOMENTS LATER

He approaches Lana and clears his throat.

Lana is still engrossed in her book.

Cooter clears his throat again.

Lana still doesn't look up.

He clears his throat louder, then begins to cough uncontrollably.

Lana jumps up.

LANA
Oh my god, sir. Are you all right?

Cooter holds up his hand and continues coughing.

LANA
Would you like some water.

He shakes his head as he continues coughing. Slowly, the coughs die down.

COOTER
Sorry about that.

LANA
Are you all right sir?

COOTER
I'll be fine. Look, Miss Perine, I--

LANA
I'm sorry, do I know you?

COOTER
Um, it's me. Cooter, the owner?

Lana's eyes widen.

LANA
Oh, oh my god, I'm so sorry Mr.
Brown. I-I didn't recognize you.
You look so...so...

COOTER
Thanks. Okay, I wanted to ask you a
question.

He looks back at Jaquita and Seduction, they have already
covered their eyes.

He sits down.

COOTER
So, I was wondering if you, maybe
would...

LANA
Yes?

COOTER
Well, you know, people get hungry
sometimes and I was thinking...so
that we won't be hungry...maybe
you'd like to...

Lana stares at Cooter, confused.

COOTER
You know what? Not important.

He gets up and heads towards the front desk.

COOTER
Sorry to bother you, never mind,
Miss Perine.

Lana still looks confused.

Cooter stops and turns back around.

COOTER
Aw screw it, would you like to have
dinner with me tomorrow night?

Lana smiles.

LANA
I'd be delighted.

Cooter smiles.

COOTER
Would you be? I mean, you would be?
Well...so would I...I mean...

LANA
I'll meet you here tomorrow.

COOTER
I'll be there. I'll see you then.

He backs up into the side of a chair and flips over onto the floor. Lana comes rushing over. Cooter just laughs.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The gray steel door opens. Cooter leads Lana out onto the rooftop. Both are dressed formally. Lana's eyes widen in amazement when she sees what he had done.

The rooftop has been converted into a beautiful outdoor restaurant.

LANA
Oh my Lord, Mr. Brown--

COOTER
Cooter.

LANA
Sorry, Cooter. You did all this for
me?

COOTER
Sure did.

He pulls out her chair for her. Lana sits.

LANA
Thank you.

Lance comes over with a bottle of wine. Lana giggles. Cooter smiles.

MONTAGE

--Cooter and Lana share a fancy meal

--Cooter tells a joke, Lana laughs

--Music plays. Cooter and Lana slow dance

--Cooter and Lana sit on recliners and look out over the sparkling city

END MONTAGE

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Cooter walks Lana back to her room. She puts the key in the door and turns back to Cooter.

LANA
It was an amazing night.

Cooter smiles. They kiss awkwardly.

LANA
I should probably go.

Cooter still smiles dumbly.

COOTER
It was fun.

LANA
Good night, Cooter.

COOTER
'Night.

Lana goes into her room and closes the door.

Cooter strides down the hall.

COOTER
I still got it. Oh yeah, I still
gots it--

Suddenly, someone grabs Cooter and pulls him into a nearby room.

INT. ROOM

Cooter is thrown to the floor. Two thugs stand over him. One THUG puts a gun to the back of Cooter's head.

COOTER
Hey guys. Nice night, huh?

THUG
It's a little cloudy, but I hear--
don't change the subject!

COOTER
What is the subject, anyway?

THUG
You're late on your payment.

COOTER
Got a little caught up in some
stuff, but I'll get to him in a few
days--

THUG
You got 24 hours.

The other thug KICKS Cooter in the ribs. They leave.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL - FRONT DESK - DAY

Jason and Jaquita are making out at the front desk. Cooter walks over.

COOTER
Knock it off, you two.

JAQUITA
What's wrong with you? I though
Lana had--

COOTER
Just knock it off!

He walks quickly towards the office. Jaquita watches him go.

GREG, Jaquita's thug ex-boyfriend walks into the hotel and looks around, Cooter notices him.

COOTER
Who's that guy?

JAQUITA
Where?

COOTER
At the door.

Greg sees Jaquita and Jason, his eyes widen in rage. Jaquita sees him.

JAQUITA
Shit, Greg.

JASON
Greg? Where?

JAQUITA
Run.

JASON
You told me he was locked up.

COOTER
Oh, your ass in trouble.

Greg reaches the front desk, Jason runs. Jaquita tries to comfort him.

JAQUITA
Baby, when you get out?

GREG
Last month... who's that?

JAQUITA
No one... he's just a friend.

GREG
Your friend's dead.

Greg runs after Jason who makes it to the front door.

Jason runs out the hotel with Greg in pursuit.

INT. COOTER'S OFFICE - LATER

Stacks of bills cover Cooter's desk, he frantically arranges them in neat stacks. He glances at his watch and wipes sweat off his brow.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

It's late. The place is nearly empty and full of shadows. Cooter heads to his car, carrying a duffle bag. He glances around.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

A light rain falls as Cooter trudges down the alley towards Elroy's warehouse. As Cooter walks by the mysterious homeless man rises up from behind a dumpster and watches Cooter.

INT. BENARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The phone rings. Benard crawls towards it and answers.

BENARD
(Sleepy)
This better be good.

MAN (V.O.)
I got some pictures of Cooter Brown
you may want to see.

Benard smiles.

BENARD
Tell me more.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL PARTY ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lana is standing on stage holding a microphone.

Hotel workers put up banners. Cooter walks in and gives out orders.

COOTER
Move it to the left... that's it.

Cooter approaches Lana.

COOTER
Lana.

LANA
Yes, sugar?

COOTER
You sure the Mayor and his wife are
coming.

LANA
They better.

Lana hops from the stage.

COOTER
Where are you going?

LANA

Got to take a beauty nap.

Lana leaves Cooter stands there, smiling.

He looks up at the banner, it reads: "Homeless Hotel Talent Show."

Cooter shakes his head as he walks off.

EXT. FIVE STAR HOTEL DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lance exits the limo. He approaches the rear door and opens it.

A man dressed in a tuxedo and a woman dressed in an evening dress exit the limo.

LANCE

Watch your step miss.

The man is NASCAR owner JEFFERSON LAKE. The woman is his wife, GLADYS. With them is Dullard Hotel owner FRANK DULLARD.

JEFFERSON

Lance, you still have good driving skills.

GLADYS

Sure do.

FRANK

If the deal works out you'll be driving for me.

LANCE

Thank you Mr. Dullard, I'll be honored.

Exiting the second limo is MAYOR MILTON WASHINGTON and his wife, CLARE.

CLARE

Lana finally gets her big break.

MAYOR WASHINGTON

I hope she's good.

Cooter looks across and sees the limos. Cooter and Seduction reach Lance.

COOTER

Lance.

Seduction notices the Mayor.

SEDUCTION

What the Mayor and his wife doing here?

LANCE

They're friends of my business partners. That's my surprise. It's show time.

Lance dashes into the hotel. Cooter and Seduction follow him.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Music plays.

The hotel lobby is filled to capacity. The rich and the poor wait to enter the ballroom.

Music fades out.

COOTER

My god.

LANCE

Hotel is full.

Seduction approaches Cooter and points to the front desk.

SEDUCTION

Jaquita is swamped.

Cooter looks at the front desk.

COOTER

Come on, Seduction.

Seduction follows Cooter, they reach the desk.

JAQUITA

Cooter, you back.

COOTER

Where's Lana?

Cooter turns and sees Jaquita with Jason, he approaches them.

COOTER

You two got it together?

JASON
We're getting married.

Jaquita looks at Jason. She smiles and hugs him.

Cooter smiles but sees Greg approaching.

COOTER
What does he think?

JASON
Who?

Cooter points to Greg who's quickly approaching, Jason sees him and runs.

JASON
Help me!

JAQUITA
Baby!

Greg reaches Jaquita.

GREG
Baby huh?

Greg takes off after Jason, and he disappears into the crowd.

INT. BALL ROOM - DAY

The place is crowded with reporters. Cooter stands on stage, the contestants of Rags to Riches stand behind him.

Cooter glances back at Lana - she smiles.

He steps up to the podium. Cameras FLASH.

COOTER
Hey, everybody.

REPORTERS
Hey, Cooter!

COOTER
Thanks for coming today. Just wanted to show my face to your cameras and introduce you to our new show. The first ever...

A sign lights up above the stage: RAGS TO RICHES

COOTER
Rags to Riches!

Everyone applauds.

COOTER
Now, I'll take some questions, as long as they're easy. I didn't study.

Chuckles.

REPORTER 1
What will you be doing with the proceeds?

COOTER
Well, that one's easy...

Cooter looks across the room and spots Benard standing in the doorway, smiling evilly.

COOTER
...Yeah, in addition to going to Five Star Hotel, the proceeds will go to several homeless shelters...

Across the room, several men in suits and sunglasses approach the stage.

REPORTER 2
Sir? Are you alright?

COOTER
Course I'm alright. Now, as I was saying...

Several men in suits and sunglasses step up onto the stage.

Lana looks around, then back at Cooter, confused.

Cooter starts to sweat.

FBI AGENT 1
Cooter Brown, you need to come with us.

COOTER
I ain't going anywhere unless I'm being arrested.

FBI AGENT 1
You are.

COOTER
Well, when you put it that way...

Lana steps forward.

LANA
Excuse me, what's going on here?

FBI AGENT 2
Step back, miss.

He pushes her back.

COOTER
Hey! Don't touch her!

The reporters go wild. Cameras FLASH.

The FBI agents drag Cooter away.

LANA
Cooter!

COOTER
Lana!

Benard smiles.

Cooter is dragged out. Benard steps in front of the cameras.

BENARD
I'll be happy to answer your
questions.

REPORTER 1
What just happened? What was Mr.
Brown arrested?

BENARD
Cooter Brown was arrested because
the FBI has evidence against him
that he was laundering money from
the hotel.

The reporters go wild with questions. Benard tries to calm
people down, smiling the entire time.

BENARD
Please, one question at a time. We
also have evidence suggesting that
the money has been going to a local
crime lord. We believe that Cooter
has been working for this man for
quite some time.

Suddenly, Seduction leaps onto Benard and starts beating him.

BENARD
Get her off me! Get her off me!

The reporters just watch.

INT. LANA'S ROOM - EVENING

Lana watches the news in tears.

ON TV:

ANCHOR 1 reports.

ANCHOR 1
Chaos erupted at Five Star Hotel
today as the local celebrity Cooter
Brown was taken by the FBI.

We see footage of the incident.

ANCHOR 1
Dullard Hotel manager, Benard
Heights stated that Cooter Brown
has been working with top
underworld criminals for some time
now.

We see footage of Seduction attacking Benard.

ANCHOR 1
Soon after Heights' comments, he
was attacked by what appeared to be
a rabid stripper.

Lana turns off the television.

EXT./INT. CAR - NIGHT

Seduction and Cooter ride down the freeway.

COOTER
Thanks for bailing me out.

SEDUCTION
I didn't bail you out. Don't know
who did.

COOTER
Well, thanks for the ride at least.

SEDUCTION

Is it true what Benard said?

Cooter doesn't answer.

SEDUCTION

Well, I still don't regret kicking
his ass.

Cooter gazes out the window and sees a homeless woman pushing
a cart.

SEDUCTION

Just can't stop it, huh?

COOTER

I tried, guess not.

Seduction looks at Cooter.

SEDUCTION

You can do anything, Cooter.

Cooter looks at her.

EXT./INT. CAR STREET - CONTINUOUS

Cooter looks out the window, then at Seduction.

COOTER

There must be away to prove to
Anderson I can run the hotel.

SEDUCTION

Look, Cooter, Anderson is a freaky
man.

COOTER

He's a freak?

SEDUCTION

A freak, let me tell you.

Cooter turns to Seduction, interested.

COOTER

Go ahead.

SEDUCTION

He rocks my world like no other.

Cooter smiles at Seduction.

COOTER
He still is a businessman.

SEDUCTION
All businessmen are freaks.

COOTER
I wasn't. Just an old drunk.

Seduction looks at Cooter.

SEDUCTION
You can be a freak.

COOTER
Quit it.

SEDUCTION
No, I'm serious.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL LOBBY - LATER

Cooter slinks in behind Seduction. The lobby is busy but many stop to glare at Cooter. He hangs his head and rushes to the elevator.

INT. COOTER'S ROOM - LATER

The beautiful lights of the downtown buildings twinkle in the night.

Cooter looks out his large window at the buildings. He looks down at the bottle of scotch in his hand.

COOTER
(To himself)
You screwed up, Cooter. You really
screwed up bad this time.

MAN (O.S.)
You sure did.

Cooter spins around and clutches his chest.

COOTER
Holy shit!

The homeless man steps out of the shadows.

COOTER
It's you! You were Benard's spy.

MAN

No, that was actually one of the show's production assistants. But I have been watching you.

COOTER

Who are you?

The man steps forward and pulls off a fake beard - it's Anderson.

COOTER

Anderson?

Anderson sits down in a chair.

ANDERSON

Yeah, it's me.

COOTER

You're supposed to be dead.

ANDERSON

I tried. I really did. In the end, I just couldn't do it.

COOTER

You've been watching me this whole time? Why?

ANDERSON

I gave you everything. You're whole life back. I wanted to see what you would do with it. How you would handle it.

COOTER

How I would handle it? Well as you can see, I'm not handling it well.

ANDERSON

I know about you and Elroy.

COOTER

Oh, great. So you've been watching me sell out your hotel.

ANDERSON

It's your hotel now.

COOTER

Get out.

ANDERSON
Cooter, let me help you.

COOTER
I said get out.

Anderson points to the bottle in Cooter's hand.

ANDERSON
I thought you quit drinking.

COOTER
Yeah well it turns out that this is
the only friend I got left.

Anderson takes his beard and leaves.

EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

Cooter, looking more disheveled, approaches his old homeless shelter.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER

He walks through the doors and looks around furtively.
Several homeless people walk by.

COOTER
Hey, guys.

One woman hisses at him, Cooter backs away.

He walks into Taylor's office.

INT. TAYOR'S OFFICE

Cooter walks in and knocks on the door jam. Taylor sits at his desk, he looks up.

TAYLOR
Cooter.

COOTER
Got a few minutes?

TAYLOR
Actually, I--

Cooter sits down.

COOTER
I guess I really screwed up, huh?

TAYLOR
Guess you did.

COOTER
You've always been the smart one.
What should I do?

Taylor gets up and looks out the door, to the rest of the shelter.

TAYLOR
Cooter, I can't keep cleaning up
your messes for you.

COOTER
Just this last time--

Taylor turns to Cooter.

TAYLOR
Cooter, you can't keep doing this.
People don't even want to give this
shelter funding after what you did.
They know you was affiliated with
this place.

Cooter stands.

COOTER
I guess I understand.

He heads for the door.

TAYLOR
Take care, Cooter.

Cooter leaves.

INT. FIVE STAR HOTEL - LANA'S ROOM

Cooter nervously knocks on the door to Lana's room. He holds a dozen roses.

Lana opens the door.

LANA
Cooter.

She leaves the door open and walks in. Cooter enters. Lana angrily packs her suitcase.

COOTER

Lana--

LANA

Save it, Cooter.

She has tears in her eyes as she packs.

COOTER

I came to say that I'm sorry.

LANA

Oh you're sorry. Well, I guess that just solves everything.

She walks to the bathroom. Cooter follows.

COOTER

I'll fix this, Lana. I can fix this!

LANA

You ruined everything, Cooter. You and your selfishness. I had dreams! I need to see my son again.

COOTER

I can get him back to you.

LANA

How? From jail?

Cooter is quiet. Lana continues packing.

LANA

You can keep the flowers. Please, just leave. You've done enough damage.

Cooter walks out.

Seduction turns into the hotel driveway. She sees Norman crossing the street to the Dullard Hotel.

SEDUCTION

Where's he going?

COOTER

Who?

Seduction points to Norman.

SEDUCTION

Norman.

Cooter sees Norman.

COOTER
Wait a minute.

Cooter's eyes widen.

COOTER
That two-timing snitch.

SEDUCTION
Three-timing.

COOTER
I bet...

Seduction stops the car.

SEDUCTION
What?

COOTER
Come on.

Cooter hops out of the car and gestures to Seduction.

COOTER
Come on.

SEDUCTION
Wait.

Seduction gets out of the car. Cooter dashes across the street. Seduction follows, she nearly falls.

SEDUCTION
Damn heels.

Cooter ducks behind the building.

He looks at Seduction, she finally makes it across the street.

COOTER
Over here.

Seduction reaches him and looks at Cooter.

SEDUCTION
What? You think I'm Flo Jo?

Cooter looks at Seduction and holds.

COOTER
You could never be Flo Jo.

SEDUCTION
And you could never be Denzel.

HOTEL DRIVEWAY
Norman and Benard are in front of
the hotel; Cooter sees them and
closes in.

SEDUCTION
Hey.

COOTER
Shhh!

SEDUCTION
Don't shhh me.

Cooter points to Norman and Benard who are feet away.

NORMAN
Cooter's ass is in the slammer.

BENARD
Good.

NORMAN
Anderson and that slut walked in as
the cops were taking him out.

Seduction rises.

SEDUCTION
Who the hell...

Cooter grabs her by the arm and yanks her down.

BENARD
I called their corporate offices.
The Board is pissed at Anderson.

Cooter's eyes widen.

EXT. DULLARD HOTEL DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Seduction adjusts her boobs. Cooter looks at them and does a
double take.

COOTER
Damn.

Cooter quickly covers his mouth.

NORMAN
You heard that?

BENARD
What?

Norman looks around.

NORMAN
Thought I heard something.

Benard grabs Norman by the arm.

BENARD
Listen.

NORMAN
Uh, huh.

BENARD
Pretty soon, Anderson will be drunk
as Cooter Brown.

Cooter rises.

COOTER
Who the hell...

Seduction grabs him by the arm and yanks him down.

NORMAN
Let's go celebrate.

BENARD
It's on me.

Norman looks across the street as two limos pulls into the parking lot.

NORMAN
Look, two limos.

Benard looks over.

BENARD
Probably Board members coming to
take over the hotel. Tomorrow I'll
be the manager of both hotels.

Benard and Norman walk off, laughing. Cooter and Seduction stand.

INT. BENARD'S OFFICE - LATER

Benard sits at his desk watching the footage of Cooter getting arrested. He smiles.

EXT. ALLEY

A pigeon scuttles through a cluttered alley. It pecks at some seeds on the ground.

COOTER BROWN slowly rises up from behind a pile of boxes. He takes a nip of brandy and shoves the bottle back inside his coat.

He stares down at the unsuspecting pigeon hungrily, licking his lips.

He creeps out from behind the boxes and stalks the pigeon.

Finally he strikes, lunging at the bird. The pigeon gets the better of him and flies away as Cooter lands onto the ground.

The pigeon flies out of the alley, nearly hitting a passing car.

The limo stops beside Cooter. He stares into the back window and begins to pose. His reflection reveals a beaten man.

COOTER

I need to shave.

He rubs his face. The window rolls ELROY glares back at Cooter. Cooter just stares at the man.

COOTER

What? My pants down or something?

ELROY

Your pigeon almost hit my car...sir.

COOTER

Ain't my pigeon...sir!

ELROY

Sir, I don't want to quarrel with you.

COOTER

Well, sir, maybe you'll just have to...

The limousine's doors open. ELROY gets out - he's huge. Three more huge men get out. They stare down at Cooter.

COOTER
Oh, shit...

Cooter runs, they head after him.

He runs through one alley after the next. A thug suddenly cuts him off.

THUG
Where do ya think you're goin'?

COOTER
Back the way I came.

He runs off.

He is almost out of the alley.

Suddenly, a car blocks his escape.

JAQUITA sits in the driver's seat. She opens the passenger door.

JAQUITA
Get in.

Cooter gets in. The car speeds off.

INT. CAR

Jaquita cruises down the street. She does her nails as she drives.

COOTER
Guess I owe you one.

JAQUITA
Guess you do. What you doing out there, anyway.

COOTER
Tryin' to get myself some lunch.

JAQUITA
Damn, Cooter, I coulda loaned you a couple of bucks. You coulda had yourself a nice cheeseburger.

COOTER

Pigeon's a good meal if you cook it right.

EXT. SHELTER

They pull up to a rundown building. A line of homeless people slowly work their way inside.

JAQUITA

What's the matter with you, Coot?

Cooter takes a tiny bottle of Jack Daniels out of his coat and takes a swig.

COOTER

What do you mean? I'm fine.

JAQUITA

Like hell. If you were fine, you wouldn't be crossing Elroy's gang. You know what he's like.

COOTER

Guess I'm just tired is all.

He takes another swig.

COOTER

Just tired.

He gets out and heads to the line. He gets in the back.

Jaquita just shakes her head and drives off.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Anderson sits across from Lance.

LANCE

So, you and Cooter were in on it the whole time?

ANDERSON

He didn't know I was alive. I was going after Benard and Cooter contacted the FBI as soon as he took over the hotel. Eventually, our paths crossed.

JAQUITA

So there never was going to be a
Rags to Riches contest?

ANDERSON

It was all a ruse. He had to keep
it up to corner Elroy.

NORMAN

The man is actually smart...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Cooter lays in bed, hooked up to a variety of machines. A large bandage covers his abdomen.

Lana and Taylor stand in the doorway looking at Cooter. Lana has tears in her eyes. Taylor puts his arm around her to console her.

A nurse comes in to check Cooter's vitals. She turns to them.

NURSE

He's in a deep coma. I honestly
don't know what to say.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Cooter sits on the edge of the bridge looking out over the dark water. He clutches a bottle of brandy.

COOTER

(to himself)

You really did it now, Coot. Got
yourself killed and everything.

A limo pulls up behind Cooter. Anderson gets out and sits down next to him.

COOTER

You're not really Anderson. He's
still alive.

ANDERSON

True. But it's your mind.

COOTER

You come to take me away?

ANDERSON

Yup.

COOTER
Where my going?

ANDERSON
That's entirely up to you, Mr.
Brown.

COOTER
I screwed up everything. I had a
girl, I had money, a chance for a
real life. I lost it all.

Anderson sits down next to Cooter and takes a swig of brandy.

ANDERSON
You're getting your words confused.
You risked it all to help bring
down Elroy. You didn't lose it all.
Not yet anyway.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Lana sits down by Cooter's bed. She takes his hand.

LANA
Cooter, if you can hear me, I'm so
sorry I doubted you.

EXT. BRIDGE - SAME TIME

Cooter looks down at the black water, then back at the bottle
of brandy in Anderson's hand.

COOTER
I've always been a failure and a
drunk.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Lana takes Cooter's hand.

LANA
I-I never had a chance to really
get to know you.

EXT. BRIDGE

Cooter takes the bottle of brandy and stares at it, raising
it to his lips.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Lana squeezes Cooter's hand.

LANA
But you're a good man, Cooter
Brown.

EXT. BRIDGE

Cooter stops. He lowers the bottle and looks around.

COOTER
You hear that?

Anderson smiles.

ANDERSON
I suspect that was only for you to
hear.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Taylor has joined Lana. Lance, Jaquita, Seduction, Norman,
and Anderson all stand in the room.

LANA
The world needs you. Don't give up.

EXT. BRIDGE

Cooter looks around.

COOTER
I heard it again.

Anderson gets up.

ANDERSON
Would you like to go for a ride,
Mr. Brown. Find where that voice is
coming from?

COOTER
Yeah. Yeah I would.

They get up. Anderson heads for the limo. Cooter hesitates
for a moment.

He looks at the bottle of brandy, then down into the black water. He tosses the brandy down into the water and heads for the limo.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

The machines begin a steady beeping sound. Everyone looks up, confused.

JAQUITA
Is that good?

Seduction runs out into the hall.

SEDUCTION
(to the doctors)
Get your asses in here! The man's
beeping!

Cooter slowly opens his eyes. He looks at Lana and smiles weakly.

COOTER
Hi...

Lana bursts out in tears. Everyone cheers.

INT. 5-STAR HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

The place is packed with guests and the homeless. Spotlights illuminate the stage. Music plays.

Cooter and Anderson step out onto the stage. The crowd goes wild.

COOTER
Settle down, everybody, settle
down.

The audience quiets down.

COOTER
I'd like to welcome you all to the
grand re-opening of 5-Star Hotel!

Cheers erupt.

ANDERSON
As part of the restructuring of the
hotel, we've made a few changes to
the place.

COOTER

The place caters exclusively to the
homeless! For free!

Cheers.

ANDERSON

And we have a house band made up
entirely of formerly homeless
people! Give it up for Rags to
Riches!

The crowd is on its feet.

Rags to Riches, a pop band lead by Lana struts on stage. She
gives Cooter a kiss and the music starts. Cooter and Anderson
walk off stage and the performance begins.