

LAST HAND

By

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INT. CIRCUS CIRCUS KIDS LEVEL -- DAY

Between the noisy arcade games, a circus performance, and hundreds of screaming kids running around -- this is a horrible place for someone with a hangover.

Even with a pained look on her face, AMA ZIEGLER(30s) is a beautiful Native American woman. She holds the hand of KIMI(7), a tiny darling miniature of herself.

AMA

He's not coming.

Kimi gets up on her tippy toes, bites her bottom lip and scans the mezzanine.

KIMI

He'll be here. Bet you a coke.

A CLOWN trudges up the stairs with great difficulty. There are children hanging on him, tugging at his costume, and basically making it difficult for a guy with size twenty shoes to climb the stairs.

A slot-machine jackpot pings out a stream of coins below and the clown stops and cocks his head. Kimi breaks loose from her mother's grasp and runs to the top of the stairs. She pauses for a moment and sniffs.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Daddy!

The clown pulls off his red plastic nose and oversized sunglasses. It's easy now to see by the matching sparkle in his eyes that this is the little girl's daddy, FLIP ZIEGLER (30s.)

Flip breaks free of the hanging kids and scoops Kimi up in his arms.

FLIP

How'd you know it was me, Pumpkin?

She buries her face in his chest and SNIFFS.

KIMI

English Leather.

She tugs on his big fake clown ear.

KIMI (CONT'D)

You also froze at the ping of a jackpot, your favorite sound.

FLIP
Which means an angel is getting his wings?

Ama crosses her arms and frowns. Flip gives her an innocent look that she doesn't buy.

FLIP (CONT'D)
I also love the sound of my baby girl's voice -- but my all-time favorite -- the best sound in the whole wide world is --

Kimi SQUEALS in delight as Flip presses his big fat clown lips to her forearm.

KIMI
Razzzzzberries.

He gives her a makeup-smearred raspberry with an accentuated wet-blowing sound. Ama looks at her cell phone.

AMA
I'm late for work. You said you'd be here by eleven.

Flip looks at Ama. Shame replaces the sparkle in his eyes. He looks back at an anxious Kimi and then leans in close to Ama to WHISPER.

FLIP
Join us for pizza? For Kimi?

Ama shakes her head.

AMA
Don't you think you're enough of a clown without renting a tacky costume?

But she looks down at Kimi who plays with Flip's huge shoes, putting her little shoes next to them. Ama squats down next to Kimi, and gives her a hug.

AMA (CONT'D)
Donadagohvi. We don't say goodbye in Cherokee.

KIMI
Until we meet again. I love you Momma.

INT. CIRCUS CIRCUS KIDS LEVEL PARTY ROOM -- DAY

There are a couple of half-eaten pizzas on the table, but the main attraction is the card game at the end of the table. Flip deals a game of blackjack to Kimi along with two other small children.

Kimi makes three small TAPS for more cards.

KIMI

One tap for luck, one for respect,
the third tap for the choices we
make.

Flip deals another card to Kimi and her two friends decide to hold. Kimi tosses in her cards.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Rotten luck, bad choices.

Flip leans in close to Kimi.

FLIP

You've got to slow down -- be calm -
- breathe deeply. Get in your zone.

Kimi closes her eyes.

KIMI

In my zone.

FLIP

It's just you -- you and Lady Luck.
When you're in your zone, you can
feel if the luck is there.

Flip looks up and sees two WOMEN (30s) coming his way.

FLIP (CONT'D)

Last hand, kids.

The women spot Flip and make a huffy beeline to the table. They pull their kids up and glare at Flip.

MOTHER#1

You're teaching our kids to gamble?

MOTHER#2

It's bad enough that your little
girl is a card shark and a...

The woman looks at Kimi and decides to cut her criticism short. They both make the normal disgusted sigh as they drag their kids away.

As a distraction, Flip pushes the cards to Kimi.

FLIP
What's the count?

KIMI
Plus thirteen which means that
there are more tens and aces left
which is good for me as a player
and bad for you as the dealer. I
should double my bet.

FLIP
Sure?

She's already counting them as Flip digs into his big clown
pockets and brings out a stuffed toy tiger.

FLIP (CONT'D)
I'll bet this tiger against you
taking out the trash all week.

Kimi flips over the last card triumphantly.

KIMI
I won. Exactly thirteen.

Flip spots a massive security guard, BUSTER (40s) coming at
him at a fast pace. Flip nods and smiles at the wall of solid
muscle, but Buster shakes his head as he confronts Flip.

BUSTER
Not good.

FLIP
We were only playing for these.

Flip grabs a handful of candy from the table. Buster looks
down at Kimi who deals the next hand of blackjack.

BUSTER
(whispering)
He's got the cops, just like I told
you he would.

Flip gestures toward Kimi.

FLIP
It's her birthday.

Kimi squeezes the tiger and closes her eyes.

KIMI
My best birthday, ever. I am so
lucky, lucky, lucky.

Flip hands a few bucks to Buster. Then Flip looks toward the stairs. Coming up is an amazingly ugly guy, ARNIE PRUETT (30s,) who would look better in the clown outfit than his expensive Italian threads.

He's trailed by two Las Vegas COPS. Flip grabs Buster by the arm.

FLIP
Get her some ice cream.

Buster nods. Flip squats down next to Kimi.

FLIP (CONT'D)
Daddy has to finish some stuff at
work. You go with Buster, okay?

Arnie gets closer, but Flip holds up a hand and looks beseechingly at Arnie.

FLIP (CONT'D)
Give me a sec?

Arnie glares at Flip who hugs Kimi. Arnie shakes his head and gestures to the cops. They move in quickly and tear Flip away from his daughter.

FLIP (CONT'D)
Can I see a warrant or something?

ARNIE
Is fifty thousand missing from your
table last night "something" enough
for you?

Kimi looks confused at the men surrounding her father.

Buster swoops her up into his massive arms. The tiger falls to the ground.

FLIP
Get her out of here.

Kimi sobs and screams. Buster carries her away down the aisle. Kimi kicks and squirms, but she's no match for the big guy.

KIMI
Daddy. Let go of my Daddy. My
tiger. Daddy.

Flip calls after her.

FLIP

Stay in your zone. You can make
your own luck if you stay in your
zone.

Arnie picks up the tiger and LAUGHS -- it's a snorting laugh, like a pig. He roughly tosses the tiger into the trash. Kimi bites her lip and tightly closes her eyes. Tears leak out anyway.

KIMI

Zone -- in my zone.

Title: "FIFTEEN YEARS LATER"

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO -- NIGHT

It's a grown version of the little girl who still bites her lips as her magical hands slide a round of cards to the players at her table. KIMI (20's grown up) is her zone as she deals blackjack -- calm and concentrating on each player's movements.

Even though it's a tacky off-strip joint, Kimi wears a pressed, starched, and pure white dealer's shirt. She stands erect with the pride of someone making ten times as much in a fancy super casino up on the strip.

Her jet-black hair is tied back in a ponytail. She's young, gorgeous, twenty-one and dealing twenty-one. Better known as blackjack, it's the only game where brains can give you an edge over the house.

It's a simple game. If you get closer to twenty-one than the dealer does, you win. The only problem is that if you go over twenty-one, you're busted and you lose.

MORT and SAMMY (70s,) two life-encrusted old codgers peek at their cards. Mort swipes his cards toward him, indicating "Hit Me," while the rest of the table slides their cards under their bets to hold.

Kimi deals Mort a nine. Mort GROANS and tosses the cards toward Kimi.

MORT

Busted again.

Kimi takes Mort's bet, flips over her hole card and finds that she has a total of fourteen.

The better half of the middle-aged COUPLE sitting next to Mort elbows her other suffering half.

WOMAN

She has to hit. I knew it.

Kimi deals herself another card and busts. Kimi flips each player's hole card and pays out their winnings, pausing at the last player, a handsome high-roller, SLICK (40s.)

Kimi cocks her head and sniffs, but then turns her attention back to Mort as she leans in close to him and whispers.

KIMI

You should have held.

MORT

I woke up feeling lucky this morning.

KIMI

They built these casinos off of people like you feeling lucky.

She leans in and continues to whisper.

KIMI (CONT'D)

We make our own luck in life.

Mort slides a chip out for his next bet. Kimi notices that Slick hasn't put out a bet for the next hand and waves her hand in front of him. He pushes out five one-hundred-dollar chips.

It's almost impossible to clash in Vegas, but these chips stand out amongst the little one and five-dollar chips on the table.

KIMI (CONT'D)

That's a pretty big spread.

SLICK

Spread? What's a spread?

KIMI

You've been betting one or two bucks each round and now that the deck is plus eight, you bet exactly our maximum.

SLICK
It's only plus six, you stupid
bitch.

Kimi leans in close to Slick and stares him down just as her pit boss, CLYDE (60s) comes out of the casino office. She waves him over. Clyde looks at the five one-hundred-dollar chips and shakes his head.

CLYDE
You're pretty far away from the
strip.

SLICK
This arm-pit of a joint is going to
refuse my bet?

Clyde turns to Kimi.

CLYDE
You plus on the deck?

KIMI
Six.

SLICK
I told her that it was plus six.
She thought it was eight.

CLYDE
You mean she told you it was eight.
Kimi has never been wrong on the
count.

SLICK
Dealers can't count and deal.

Clyde nods at Kimi.

CLYDE
All yours.

KIMI
Here are your choices. Either you
get back to your fancy strip hotel
and try this shit with their eyes
in the sky...

Kimi holds a hand over the chips.

KIMI (CONT'D)
... or you can keep that bet, but
I'm going to shuffle first.

Slick snatches his chips and flees the table. Clyde watches him leave and winks at Kimi.

CLYDE

I love it when you give him choices.

Clyde smiles at the remaining customers. A new dealer comes up behind Kimi.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

I'll get some drinks over here for you and we've got a new dealer coming on.

Mort tosses a fifty-dollar chip on the table.

MORT

Enough for me tonight. Thanks.

Sammy pulls out a fifty-dollar chip that was tucked in his sleeve and tosses it close to Kimi.

SAMMY

Here's a little something for your college fund.

They both look at the couple. The wife nudges her husband and he slides a ten-dollar chip out of his pile toward Kimi.

INT. SILVER BOOT COFFEE SHOP -- CONTINUOUS

Kimi catches up with Mort and Sammy in the coffee shop. She tosses their fifty-dollar chips back to them.

KIMI

You guys shouldn't do that.

SAMMY

If we didn't prime the pump, those grinders would stiff you every day.

KIMI

I meant that lie about me going to college.

MORT

I'm not sure everyone would appreciate that you're saving for dealer's school.

KIMI

I saw a dealer get a five hundred dollar tip yesterday.

MORT

Bali Raja? You been hanging out with Pokey?

Kimi nods.

SAMMY

Don't even think about it. I know she's your best friend, but...

KIMI

She's making ten times what I make here just for handing out drinks and letting guys look at her...

Sammy holds up his hand to stop her while Mort plugs his ears.

SAMMY

And you will too, once you complete dealer's school and get an audition on the strip. How much more do you need?

KIMI

A few more hundred. Then three months later...no more grinders.

MORT

Speaking of grinders, how were you able to figure out Slick?

SAMMY

You smelled him, right?

KIMI

Lord and Taylor.

SAMMY

Lordy who?

KIMI

The Venetian is the only hotel in town that has Lord and Taylor soap and shampoo.

Sammy pokes Mort.

SAMMY

I told you she smelled him -- pay
up.

Mort reaches into his pocket and pulls out a five-dollar chip and tosses it at Sammy. Sammy pulls a deck of cards out of his pocket and shuffles.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Double or nothing, high card wins.
You in, Kimi?

Mort pulls out another five dollars. Kimi angrily pushes the money back at Mort as she pushes her chair back. Mort pats her hand.

MORT

It's okay honey, Sammy forgot.

Kimi looks at a contrite Sammy who quickly puts the cards away.

KIMI

You two -- you'd bet on the color
of my panties if I'd let you.

Kimi grabs her purse and gets up.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Let's go. I'm driving you two home.
It's getting late.

Sammy holds up the five-dollar chip and pretends to sneak a peek as Kimi fakes anger and pulls him to his feet.

SAMMY

Sure beats the bus, and about those
panties...

INT. KIMI'S APARTMENT KITCHEN -- DAY

Kimi doesn't look like a morning person as she stares into her cup of coffee. Across the table is a stack of envelopes.

Every few seconds she looks at the pile. She takes a final sip of the coffee and then reaches over and picks up the pile.

She places one envelope at each place at the table. She then picks up a deck of cards and deals a hand to the envelopes.

KIMI

Let's see who wins.

She deals a hand of blackjack. She looks at the first envelope's hand.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Three. You have to hit.

Kimi deals a face card to the imaginary player.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Busted.

She reaches over and picks up the envelope.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Mastercard. You lost again this month. Let's hope the rent has better luck than you.

She deals another hand.

KIMI (CONT'D)
We have a winner.

She grabs the envelope, opens and reads it and then storms toward the door.

INT. THREE PALMS APARTMENTS MANAGER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Kimi stands with her arms crossed while Sammy pulls out a chair for her. Mort holds the letter.

KIMI
My rent is going up to twelve hundred a month?

Sammy takes the letter from Mort and puts it in his pocket.

SAMMY
Let us handle this. Must be a mistake. Stupid corporate stuff.

KIMI
You bet it's a mistake. It says that my rent is going from nine hundred to twelve hundred. Stupid company. Stupid letter. I only pay six hundred a month in the first place.

Sammy guides her into the chair while Mort pours her a cup of coffee.

KIMI (CONT'D)
I can barely afford that without dipping into my dealer's school savings. I called that number in the letter. I'm waiting for a supervisor to call me back.

She glances at her cell phone.

SAMMY
Don't do that.

He reaches for her cell phone and she slaps his hand away.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
Don't you worry, someday me and Mort are going get kissed by Lady Luck, hit it big and...

KIMI
You two just don't get it. There is no Lady Luck. Gambling is for losers and suckers. The only ones who come out ahead are the casinos.

She glances at her phone again.

KIMI (CONT'D)
The lady said she'd look it up and call me back in fifteen minutes.

MORT
We gotta tell her about him.

Sammy firmly shakes his head, but looks at Kimi's cell phone.

KIMI
Tell me what? Spill it.

MORT
Your rent. He's been paying the difference. Your dad. Flip.

KIMI
My dad? He's out of prison? You know my father? What is going on?

SAMMY
Flip didn't want you to know. Mort shouldn't have told you. Let me explain.

Kimi shoves her chair back and gets up to leave.

KIMI
No need to explain anything. I know
when I've been cheated.

Mort reaches out for her arm.

MORT
Let's talk. Give us a chance.

She pulls back from him.

KIMI
I can't deal with this now. I
borrowed Pokey's car and I have to
pick her up at work.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

Kimi watches the blackjack tables. A gorgeous cocktail waitress, POKEY(20s) comes over to Kimi. She hands Kimi a ginger ale. Kimi takes a sip without taking her eyes off of the tables.

POKEY
A "thank you, Patricia" would be
nice.

KIMI
Thanks, Pokey. And thanks for
loaning me your car. Sean figured
out my battery was dead.

POKEY
Patricia. Don't call me Pokey.

KIMI
The day you can go into a bathroom
and come out in less than thirty
minutes, I'll call you Madam
President if you want.

Pokey strokes her hair and looks at her nails.

POKEY
You can't rush a look like this.
And you...

She looks at Kimi. Her hair is in disarray and her eyes are red.

POKEY (CONT'D)
What's going on, sweetie?

Kimi shakes her head.

KIMI
Not here, not now. Still
processing.

POKEY
I know that look. You've been
processing since you bet me out of
my Twinkie on the first day of
school. Well, process that...

Pokey gestures to one of the tables.

POKEY (CONT'D)
What do you think of those two?

As if on cue, two GUYS with fake bake tans turn around and wave at Pokey. Now she has Kimi's attention.

KIMI
No, no, no.

POKEY
Come on -- a little water skiing,
they're bringing steaks and beer.

Kimi turns back to the tables.

KIMI
They've got to be forty.

POKEY
Mid-thirties -- forty at the top.

KIMI
Is that a comb-over on the fat one?

POKEY
You owe me. I got your foot in the
door. They said you can start as a
'tail next week.

Kimi looks at Pokey, her outfit, the tray of drinks and then shakes her head.

KIMI
I can't do that. I'm a dealer. I'm
good at it. I'm the best.

POKEY
I might not be the best, but I made
two thou last night at the baccarat
tables.

(MORE)

POKEY (CONT'D)

I bet you haven't gotten two thousand in tips for the whole month.

KIMI

More like the whole year.

Kimi sets the empty glass on Pokey's tray.

POKEY

Here's the deal. I was talking to our floor manager and with enough experience, and even without a dealer school certificate, they sometimes hire dealers off an amazing audition.

KIMI

Seriously? I'm amazing.

Pokey nods.

KIMI (CONT'D)

I've applied at every and I mean EVERY casino in town online and they all sent me the standard rejection email saying that my dealer school certificate was not attached. When I hang out at casinos, watching the floor - they won't even talk to me.

POKEY

That's why you need a sexy "in" like me who is only asking a small favor in return for me setting up your first meeting.

She gestures to the two guys.

KIMI

I hate dating.

POKEY

Not really a date. Meet me at the lake? Early Sunday morning?

KIMI

You'll talk to the floor manager? Ask about an audition? Tell him that I've been dealing for almost three years? Tell him how good I am?

POKEY
Consider it already done. Both
things.

Kimi gives Pokey the same look you give a small child who
just spilled her milk.

KIMI
You had already gotten me that
meeting and agreed to provide one
of those guys with a date?

Kimi manages to give her a side hug to not spill the tray.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Tell them to bring lots of beer.

POKEY
Since when did you start drinking?

KIMI
Never. I'm hoping they'll drink
enough to pass out and leave us
alone.

Pokey glances at her cell phone, and then texts a reply.

KIMI (CONT'D)
A hot date?

Pokey nods.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Let's get you home because I've got
one too. With two guys.

INT. THREE PALMS APARTMENTS MANAGER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Mort and Sammy have their heads down as Kimi opens another
box and dumps it on the table.

KIMI
These were my mom's.

She grabs a stack of pictures already in a neat pile.

KIMI (CONT'D)
That's him. That's you two with my
dad in this picture. You knew Flip
back then.

Mort picks up the picture and squints.

KIMI (CONT'D)
And you know him now. How long?

MORT
Well...we used to work with Flip at
Circus, Circus...when was that?

Kimi shakes the rest of the pictures out of the box and slams
it down.

SAMMY
He's been out for a few years.

KIMI
A few years? He's been snooping
around here, paying my rent,
watching me?

SAMMY
He made us swear not to tell you.
Flip doesn't even know that you
know.

Mort nods.

MORT
But now that you know, we'll tell
Flip. You two can...

KIMI
There is no "you two." My father
made that choice when he stole from
the casino and got caught. He
picked gambling and money over me
and my mom.

Sam and Mort hang their heads at the word "mom" and whisper.

MORT AND SAMMY
God, bless her soul.

MORT
We gotta tell him. He...

Kimi holds up her hand to cut him off and shakes her head.

KIMI
He doesn't exist. If you want to
stay my friends...if "friends" is
what we are calling this
babysitting for the past fifteen
years...then don't ever say his
name again.

They both nod in agreement.

KIMI (CONT'D)
I'm out of here. I think today is
going to be my best day ever.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- AFTERNOON

The super casino is alive with the excitement of the start of a weekend crowd. Kimi watches the blackjack tables. A heavy-set guy in a tuxedo comes over.

It's not easy for us to tell that this is Arnie, the same guy who had Flip arrested fifteen years ago. Time has not been kind to his waist or hairline. Kimi obviously doesn't remember him either.

ARNIE
You Pokey's friend?

Kimi shakes his hand but doesn't take her eyes off the tables. Arnie follows her eyes.

ARNIE (CONT'D)
Most of those dealers out there had
at least ten years of experience
before coming to a super casino.
You're not old enough to have that
kind of experience.

KIMI
Experience that lets me notice that
the high-roller on seventeen is
betting five big ones now that the
table is plus eleven?

Her eyes move around the room.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Experience to know that there's a
four-to-one betting spread on table
seven?

Arnie looks in that direction.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Or that your dealer on fifteen
pocketed that lady's room card?
Yeah, that's experience I just
don't have.

Kimi gestures at a table to their right.

KIMI (CONT'D)

I've been watching your tables for months while waiting for Pokey to get off shift. I know everything that goes on. Pokey said you could arrange an audition for me.

Arnie takes a step down from the rail level but turns his head back and gives Kimi a look from head to toe. He looks back at the sleazy dealer at table fifteen.

ARNIE

Come by tomorrow for an audition at six -- we might be looking for a new dealer.

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO -- DAY

Kimi has Mort and Sammy at her table. The rest of the casino is pretty sparse early in the morning.

MORT

If you've got to be there at six, you better leave a little early.

Sammy nods.

SAMMY

With all the traffic and giving yourself time to shower and get on a fresh shirt...

MORT

(interrupting)

Blouse, you moron -- can't you tell she's a girl?

Kimi taps the table.

KIMI

Bets, guys. We don't have any eyes in the sky here, but Clyde is still over there trying to stay awake.

Mort turns around and glances at Kimi's very bored boss.

MORT

Are you sure you want to leave? You must have the easiest job in Vegas.

KIMI

Easiest isn't always the best. Did you want to marry the easiest girl?

Mort pushes Sammy.

MORT
Sammy would have married any girl --
easy, sleazy, or Sneezy.

Kimi looks over at a sleepy Clyde and then gives Sammy a kiss on the cheek.

KIMI
I would have married you, even
after lying to me all these years.

Sammy sits up.

MORT
So we're forgiven?

KIMI
It's me that should be apologizing.
All you two did for the past
fifteen years was look after my mom
and me. After she died, you...

Her head drops. Mort pats her hand.

MORT
We know. But for us...

Mort looks over at Sammy who nods in agreement.

MORT (CONT'D)
You were the best part of our
lives. You and...

Mort looks at Sammy for some help.

SAMMY
You need to talk to him. He needs
to talk to you. Let us tell him. He
can then decide if he wants to let
you know where he is...

She shakes her head.

KIMI
He doesn't get to choose anything.
He lost that right fifteen years
ago. I don't need him. I'm the best
dealer in town.

SAMMY
Yup, and now you go to Bali Raja
and show them you're the best.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

It's her big audition and Kimi deals blackjack to FOUR PLAYERS as Arnie stands slightly behind her.

KIMI

Bets?

The chips move forward and Kimi is in the zone with her magical hands - dealing, flipping, taking the bets or paying out the wins.

After a few hands, a DRUNKEN PLAYER sits down at the table. He fumbles with his pocket but manages to come up with a couple of five-dollar chips to bet. Kimi taps the sign on the table.

"\$100 MINIMUM"

DRUNKEN PLAYER

If I put out a hundred bucks, then I'm going to want to see more than just my cards.

The drunk punches the guy next to him.

DRUNKEN PLAYER (CONT'D)

Ever seen a set like that? Aces the both of them.

KIMI

You in?

DRUNKEN PLAYER

I'd like to be in you.

The drunk fishes into his pocket and tosses out two hundred dollars in bills.

KIMI

Changing two hundred.

DRUNKEN PLAYER

Let's you and me take this little transaction upstairs and see how much I can change you.

He places his hand on her wrist. Kimi looks around at Arnie. He's talking on his cell phone. She looks for security. No guards in sight. She leans in close to him.

KIMI

You like to make choices? I have an easy "yes or no" question for you.

She looks down at his hand.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Would you like to remove that hand, or would you like me to remove it for you?

The drunk tightens his grip.

DRUNKEN PLAYER

Now we're talking. You just move that hand wherever you'd like. Down your pants would make me real happy.

Kimi reaches over and grabs the metal handle that is used to push cash into the lockbox. She smashes down on the drunk's hand. He grabs his hand and SCREAMS.

DRUNKEN PLAYER (CONT'D)

You bitch.

Finally, two GUARDS appear and whisk the drunk away from the table. Kimi gets a tap on the shoulder by another DEALER and she reluctantly stands back from the table.

INT. BALI RAJA OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Kimi sits across from Arnie as he studies the papers in front of him.

ARNIE

Players are different over here than at that grind joint of yours.

KIMI

Why didn't security come over the moment he touched me? Even at the Silver Boot...

ARNIE

If you can't handle some drunken slob who brushes up against you, then you better go back to the Silver Boot.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BAR -- CONTINUOUS

Kimi catches the eye of TOMMY (30s,) the gorgeous gay bartender. His tip goblet is stuffed full. Tommy pours a drink for her in one fluid movement.

TOMMY
Ginger ale with a twist of lime.

Kimi plops down on a barstool. Tommy studies her sad face.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Unless you'd prefer something stronger?

Kimi shakes her head.

KIMI
News travels fast.

Kimi looks over at the blackjack tables and notices that the drunk who harassed her is playing again.

KIMI (CONT'D)
That drunk is back. I better go tell security.

Tommy grabs her hand.

TOMMY
That drunk is security. Arnie wanted to make sure that Flip Ziegler's daughter never came back here looking for a job.

KIMI
Arnie knew about my father? Why didn't you tell me?

TOMMY
Would it have stopped you?

Kimi grabs Tommy's hand and smells it.

KIMI
I knew I smelled oranges on that drunk. You guys use a hand soap that smells like oranges.

Tommy smells his hands and nods.

TOMMY

It's a disinfectant. After Covid, Arnie's campaign is to cut down on people calling in sick. Over there at the sink, the employee breakrooms, the counting cages and in the employee restrooms.

KIMI

He'll want to bathe in that shit when I get done with him.

INT. BALI RAJA OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Kimi storms into Arnie's office and confronts him.

KIMI

You set me up? This was all about my father?

ARNIE

Father? Who's your father, kid?

KIMI

My last name is Ziegler.

Arnie looks up at the ceiling.

ARNIE

Ziegler, Ziegler. Doesn't ring a bell.

KIMI

Flip Ziegler? You think I'm a gambling thief like him -- so you got that drunk to attack me?

ARNIE

You're just like your dad, trying to blame someone else.

Arnie gets up and comes around the desk and looks down at Kimi.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Ever since your dad got out of prison both of you have been hanging around my casino.

KIMI

So, you do know my dad!

ARNIE

Like you didn't know who I was.
What's your game, kid? Is this some
twisted plan for revenge?

Kimi jumps up and runs toward the door of the office. She pauses for a moment at some photographs on the wall, glares back at Arnie and then leaves.

EXT. BALI RAJA -- CONTINUOUS

As Kimi leaves, she walks underneath a banner being strung across the entrance that says:

"ONE MILLION DOLLAR BLACKJACK TOURNAMENT"

She walks toward the parking lot. Flip comes out of the shadows to get a better view of her progress toward her car. He notices a flyer that dances across the sidewalk. He reaches down and picks it up.

As she gets close to her car, she quickly turns around. There is nobody there.

EXT. THREE PALMS APARTMENTS -- DAY

The next day, Kimi opens the car door for a reluctant Mort and Sammy to get in.

SAMMY

He's not going to like this. Flip
doesn't like surprises.

The two get in and Kimi leans into the car.

KIMI

Either you tell me where he lives
or we'll just drive around all day
until we run into him.

SAMMY

It's Saturday. Flip likes the
downtown joints on the weekends.
Fresh suckers.

INT. FREMONT CASINO -- CONTINUOUS

The trio walks through the blackjack tables. Mort and Sammy shake their heads each time Kimi points at a player.

As they walk by the breakfast buffet line, Sammy and Mort try to get Kimi to stop, but she drags them away.

INT. GOLDEN NUGGET CASINO -- CONTINUOUS

They rush through the blackjack tables until Sammy spots a COWBOY. They move a little closer.

SAMMY
It's hard with all his disguises.

KIMI
Disguise himself -- why?

MORT
Part of his probation was to never gamble again.

KIMI
Like the part of the divorce that said he was to never contact me. Why did he stick to one and not the other?

Sammy concentrates on the cowboy.

SAMMY
It's not him.

INT. FRONTIER CASINO -- CONTINUOUS

Again, they walk through the casino, but none of the players look like Flip. They start to leave, but Kimi passes a PRIEST and freezes. She SNIFFS.

She moves into a better angle and studies how he plays. The priest makes three small TAPS for another card.

KIMI
One tap for luck, one tap for respect, the third tap for the choices we make.

Kimi pushes past Mort and Sammy and approaches the table.

KIMI (CONT'D)
G'day, Father. This seat taken?

FLIP
It is now, my child.

He pulls out the stool for Kimi. She doesn't take the seat.

KIMI
Let's go, Padre. Outside. I want to
talk to you.

FLIP
Even a priest needs a few moments
of relaxation. Maybe you could come
by the church tomorrow?

KIMI
There ain't no church and priest
don't wear English Leather, Father -
- or should I say "Daddy?"

Flip gets up.

KIMI (CONT'D)
I thought that would get your
attention.

Kimi heads for the door pulling along Flip with Mort and
Sammy trying to keep up with her pace.

EXT. FRONTIER CASINO -- CONTINUOUS

Kimi still has Flip by the arm.

KIMI
What is your deal? Are you
following me around?

Flip nods.

KIMI (CONT'D)
You left me alone for fifteen years
so it shouldn't be too hard for you
to leave me alone now.

Two OLD WOMEN (80s) walk by and GASP at Kimi's outburst.

FLIP
I'll do whatever you want, Pumpkin.

This endearment hits Kimi hard. She drops her head.

KIMI
How come you didn't come to see me
after you got out?

FLIP
Out of respect.

KIMI
 Mom's been dead for years. Exactly
 how long have you been out of
 prison?

FLIP
 Almost three years. I was there on
 your first day at the Silver Boot.

He turns to Mort and Sammy.

FLIP (CONT'D)
 Remember how she sent the whole
 deck flying across the room?

The pair GIGGLES.

FLIP (CONT'D)
 Then, the first time I told the
 guys to give you that big tip --
 the look on your face.

KIMI
 That was your idea? Where were you?

FLIP
 The next table, over at the slots --
 I could even watch you from the
 Keno tables. I've been there.

Kimi grabs him by the arm.

KIMI
 You weren't there when I broke my
 leg, you weren't there when I
 graduated from high school, you
 weren't there when I buried Mom.
 I've gotten along fine without you.
 Leave me alone.

She storms away leaving her dad with Mort and Sammy.

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO -- DAY

Kimi deals to Mort and Sammy, but the silence is painful.

MORT
 Hit me.

KIMI
 (under her breath)
 Wouldn't I like to. Three years of
 lying.

Kimi tosses out a card. Mort looks at it and GROANS.

MORT

You can't blame us, Flip would have been so pissed if we had let you know.

KIMI

You lied to me to protect an old gambling buddy?

Both guys drop their heads.

SAMMY

You make us seem so disgusting.

Kimi softens as she pats Mort on the hand.

KIMI

It's hard when a memory becomes a reality.

Kimi looks around the casino.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Now he could be anywhere -- that old guy at Keno, that cowboy by the cashier, or even that fat lady.

Mort and Sammy look around.

SAMMY

Nope, that's not him. Flip disguises himself, but he always looks good.

Kimi stares into the distance.

KIMI

He was good, wasn't he?

MORT

Best dealer in town. You're just like him -- those hands, your concentration. Lots more super casinos in town. Let Flip help you.

Kimi shakes her head, no.

EXT. SILVER BOOT CASINO -- AFTERNOON

Kimi searches for her keys, digging down to the bottom of her purse.

KIMI
Damn, damn, damn.

She turns to head back into the casino, but Flip stands in her way JINGLING the car keys.

FLIP
You left them in the ignition.
Third time this year, but I always
sneak them into your locker.

He has been transformed from an elderly Catholic priest into a handsome man in his late forties. He tries to put a hand on her arm, but she pulls back.

FLIP (CONT'D)
I would have done anything to have
seen you, heard your voice, read a
poem or story that you wrote. Your
mom made the rules and I honored
them.

KIMI
You caused the rules. She didn't
want me to spend my weekends
hanging around a prison of thinking
about how you left us. Did you know
what her last words were?

Flip shakes his head and then drops it.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Give me strength for a straight
back and clear eyes, so when life
fades, as the setting sun, my
spirit may come to you without
shame.

FLIP
A Cherokee proverb?

Kimi nods.

KIMI
The shame of having a husband in
prison was overwhelming for her.
She wanted to move back to the
reservation, but she stayed here -
in case...

FLIP
It was all a mistake? That I could
be released?

Kimi nods.

FLIP (CONT'D)
I know she mad was ashamed of me,
but you? After you were eighteen,
you could have come on your own.

Kimi pushes him hard in the chest. He stumbles backward.

KIMI
Don't try to make me the bad guy --
you gambled, you lost, you cheated,
you got caught. I was a chip on the
table when you bet it all and lost.
You brought so much shame to this
family.

INT. KIMI'S APARTMENT KITCHEN -- AFTERNOON

Kimi drops her purse on the table and takes out her cell phone and places it on the table. She stares at it for a moment, and then SIGHS and hits the icon.

FLIP
(on cell phone speaker)
It's your fa -- I mean Flip. Can
we...

Kimi hits the delete button.

FLIP (CONT'D)
(on cell phone speaker)
Can we...

She presses delete again.

FLIP (CONT'D)
(on cell phone speaker)
Maybe instead...

She presses delete again.

FLIP (CONT'D)
(on cell phone speaker)
I thought that if...

Kimi walks over to the kitchen table and grabs a deck of cards, but they flip out of her hand and scatter across the floor.

Kimi squats down to pick them up and slips. She grabs a few, holds them to her chest and SOBS.

INT. FLIP'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Flip answers the door. Kimi stands with a look that is part contrition and the rest anger. He gestures for her to come in. She stands her ground.

KIMI

I'll give you a choice - you help me get ready for my next blackjack audition and I might give you a second chance.

Flip nods.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Here are the rules. No more disguises, no more following me around, no more secrets.

Flip shakes his head, no.

FLIP

My parole. I can't gamble. I need the disguise.

Kimi crosses her arms.

KIMI

We'll practice here.

Again, Flip shakes his head.

FLIP

You have to watch the players, it's not in the cards, it's not in the counts -- it's the other players you have to beat.

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO -- DAY

Flip sits next to Sammy and Mort as Kimi deals another round. He's disguised as an old man, but we know him by his voice.

FLIP

Deal them a little closer to the player. Don't make them reach.

Kimi corrects in the second round.

FLIP (CONT'D)

Look at Mort, he's playing with his chips.

Mort pulls a guilty hand back.

FLIP (CONT'D)
 Look at your cards, drop your head.
 Let him think you've got a bad
 hand. Don't smile.

Kimi's face is stripped of emotion.

FLIP (CONT'D)
 Slowly move your hand over the
 cards for bets. Slower, next time.
 Don't push. He wants to bet more --
 he needs to bet more -- he's
 feeling lucky.

Mort pushes all his chips in. The table breaks out in
 LAUGHTER.

MORT
 What?

Kimi checks her cell phone.

KIMI
 I'm off the clock.

FLIP
 Take this game home?

Kimi looks at him. She softens and nods.

EXT. APARTMENT POOL AREA -- DAY

Kimi deals blackjack to Flip with lightning speed at one of
 the patio tables. There is no conversation between them. A
 pile of candy mints is growing in front of Flip as he wins
 another hand.

A young COUPLE (20s,) passes by the table and stops to watch
 the action for a few minutes. They start kissing and then
 take off to their apartment. Kimi doesn't notice -- she is in
 full concentration, but Flip watches them go.

FLIP
 You date?

Flip does a triple tap for more cards. Kimi deals them.

KIMI
 Don't try to distract me. I'm in my
 zone. Those mints will all belong
 to the house in three more hands.

Flip pushes all the mints across the table to Kimi. He takes the cards from Kimi and tosses them into a pile.

FLIP

For three days you haven't said anything other than "bets and last hand."

KIMI

Our deal was that you'd help me get ready for my next audition and I'd let you.

FLIP

You were ready a long time ago. You're the best I've seen.

Kimi gets up and hastily gathers the cards.

KIMI

What was all this about? A trick? Control?

FLIP

Confidence. If I had told you that you were ready three days ago -- would you have believed me?

Kimi slumps down into the patio chair.

KIMI

Do I date? I don't date. During high school, I was afraid kids would find out my dad was in prison. I get asked out at the casino, but I turn them down.

FLIP

Not good-looking enough? I see you flirting with that gay bartender.

KIMI

They're gamblers.

Flip drops his head, but then reaches into his pocket and pulls out his cell phone and shows her a contact.

FLIP

I talked to an old friend, he's going to give you an audition tonight.

Kimi gets up to hug him, but pauses, turns and heads toward her apartment.

INT. MONTE CARLO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

Although still considered a super casino, the Monte Carlo is no longer the shiny penny in town. Kimi stands a few feet between two blackjack tables. A hefty man, JACK, comes up to her.

JACK
You Flip's kid?

Kimi nods without taking her eye off the table.

JACK (CONT'D)
What's the count?

KIMI
Plus ten. You've got a bad moon out there tonight, Jack.

JACK
Anybody up on it?

Kimi nods at the other table.

KIMI
That table is plus fifteen and both of those guys are doubling their bets.

JACK
You're counting both of them?

Kimi smiles, but keeps her eyes on the tables.

KIMI
If you'd move table six a little closer I could do three.

Jack shakes his head.

JACK
You're better than your dad was.

KIMI
So that audition?

JACK
You know I would if I could, but these guys don't forget. I should have told Flip when he called, but he was so adamant about giving you a shot. I agreed to meet you.

KIMI
Is it that way everywhere? Arnie?

Jack nods.

JACK
He's been calling around, warning
all of us. Maybe go to dealer's
school, change your name...

Kimi turns and walks out.

EXT. MONTE CARLO -- CONTINUOUS

Kimi walks toward her car where Flip leans against it holding
a bottle of champagne. When he sees her face, he tucks it
behind his back.

KIMI
I've spent my whole life training
to work in a super casino.

He grabs her hand.

FLIP
You could try Reno. Atlantic City.

KIMI
I don't have the money to move. I
can't afford dealer school. I can't
even pay my rent or get a lawyer to
change my name.

Flip head drops.

FLIP
Let me help you.

KIMI
Depend on you? Depend again on your
gambling? Pray to Lady Luck? Forget
it. I make my own luck.

Flip reaches into his pocket and pulls out the flyer from the
Bali Raja and hands it to Kimi. She studies it and frowns.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Blackjack tournament?

Flip points to the flyer.

FLIP

The player with the most chips at the end wins one million dollars.

KIMI

I don't play blackjack. I don't gamble. I'm a dealer.

FLIP

You deal and you count cards better than anyone I've seen. If you focus, stick to the basic strategy, learn the other players -- nobody can beat you.

Kimi looks at the flyer and almost goes into a trance.

KIMI

A million dollars.

FLIP

A million dollars won from Arnie's casino by my daughter.

Kimi grabs the flyer and crumples it into a small ball before getting into her car.

KIMI

Didn't you hear me? I don't gamble.

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO -- DAY

It's a quiet Sunday morning in the casino and only Sammy and Mort are at Kimi's table.

MORT

Wave him over. He won't come here unless you ask him to.

SAMMY

He knows you're mad.

KIMI

Who?

She deals out the cards.

MORT

Flip. He's over at the slots.

KIMI

I don't see anyone at the slots except some stupid cowboy.

SAMMY

You can't blame him. It's a fool that doesn't hire someone as good as you just because of what their dad did a long time ago.

KIMI

It's what my dad didn't do. He's never been there for me.

Mort gets up and tosses down his cards.

MORT

Been there? Sure he wears those disguises so he can come in here and watch you but he needs to gamble to get the money...

Sammy jumps up and grabs Mort's arm.

SAMMY

Shut up!

KIMI

What?

MORT

It wasn't just help with the rent. That good deal you got on your car... Flip. When it broke down and we got it fixed for twenty bucks...Flip. Who did you think would replace an engine for...

Kimi doesn't hear as she tosses down the deck and walks away.

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO BREAKROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Kimi storms into the breakroom and opens up her locker. As she pulls out her purse, the crumpled flyer falls out. Clyde comes out of the office.

CLYDE

Don't bother coming in tomorrow night.

KIMI

Have you heard something that I haven't?

CLYDE

You mean about you trying to get an audition all over town.

Kimi is excited.

KIMI
Someone called? The Venetian? Monte Carlo? I knew they'd reconsider.

CLYDE
Nobody called. Nobody is going to call. The only reason why you got this job was because no big corporation owns us.

KIMI
Then why aren't I coming in tomorrow?

Clyde just shakes his head.

KIMI (CONT'D)
You're firing me? I'm the best dealer in town.

CLYDE
I don't want the best dealer, I need a dealer that wants to work here.

KIMI
But if nobody will hire me then why are you firing me?

CLYDE
Even a grind joint like this has a little pride.

Clyde walks out of the room leaving a shocked Kimi. She picks up the crumpled flyer and smoothes it out.

INT. THREE PALMS APARTMENTS MANAGER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Kimi sits at the table taking notes as Mort scratches his head in thought.

KIMI
That's everything?

MORT
Every penny.

KIMI
Sixteen thousand, three hundred and twenty-seven dollars.

(MORE)

KIMI (CONT'D)

I'm going to pay Flip back and then get out of here. I'm off to Reno.

Sammy comes up behind Kimi and places his hand on her shoulder.

SAMMY

First and last month's rent, movers, utility deposits. You're going to need another couple thousand. How are you going to get that kind of dough? Mort and me are on Social Security. We depend on Flip...

Kimi shows the flyer for the tournament to Mort and Sammy.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

One million bucks.

KIMI

Playing blackjack. Gambling.

SAMMY

It's not really gambling -- it's a tournament. No debate.

Kimi looks at the flyer.

KIMI

It is a tournament. A contest. No risk. Happens only once.

Mort and Sammy get excited.

MORT

You could win this. You could show everyone that you're the best. Those super casinos would be breaking down your door offering you a job.

SAMMY

She wouldn't need a stinking job and she wouldn't need to eat at the two-ninety-nine-cent buffet anymore.

Kimi studies the flyer again.

KIMI

The best. The best dealer isn't enough, I'll have to be the best player. I haven't played since...

MORT
Flip. He's the best at blackjack.

Kimi nods in agreement.

KIMI
Flip.

EXT. APARTMENT POOL AREA -- DAY

Kimi deals to Flip. He does his triple tap.

KIMI
Luck, respect and choices. We had them all. It was magical.

FLIP
I know you don't believe in luck anymore and I don't expect any respect.

She sets down the cards.

KIMI
I make the choices.

FLIP
I'll take any part of your life that you're willing to share with me.

He picks up the cards and hands them to her. She starts dealing.

KIMI
With that settled, I've got good news and bad news.

FLIP
Let's have it.

Kimi sets down the cards, reaches into her pocket and hands the crumbled tournament flyer to Flip. He reads it and smiles.

FLIP (CONT'D)
What's the bad news?

Kimi points at the flyer.

KIMI
Twenty-five hundred dollar entrance fee.

INT. BALI RAJA BETTING CAGES -- NIGHT

Kimi stands at one of the cashier cages that has a big banner across the top that says "PLAY FOR A MILLION." A bored CASHIER pushes a form back toward Kimi and points to a section.

Kimi takes a folded check from her pocket and slowly pushes it back to the cashier. The cashier studies the check and picks up the phone.

A few seconds pass before Arnie comes up beside Kimi. He takes a long drag from his cigarette.

ARNIE

It's good?

The cashier nods. Arnie smiles at Kimi.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Easiest two bits the casino ever made.

KIMI

What did I ever do to you?

ARNIE

I helped put your dad in jail fifteen years ago and now here you are. Looks like another Ziegler with a gambling problem trying to rob me. How does someone come up with twenty-five hundred dollars so easily? Who did you steal it from?

Kimi pushes Arnie and his cigarette drops to the plush casino carpet.

KIMI

I am not my father.

With a slow and deliberate motion, Arnie brushes off his perfect suit and stomps out the cigarette. Within seconds, a casino EMPLOYEE rushes over and cleans up the mess.

ARNIE

Is the little girl going to try and get even with me?

KIMI

I don't get even...

Kimi takes her receipt from the cashier and puts it in her purse.

KIMI (CONT'D)
... I win.

He LAUGHS his snorting laugh as he spins around and leaves. Kimi starts to follow him, but is frozen in her tracks at the sound of that laugh.

KIMI (CONT'D)
My tiger.

INT. KIMI'S APARTMENT KITCHEN -- DAY

Kimi sits across from Flip staring into her coffee cup.

KIMI
Do you know what my name means in Cherokee?

Flip drops his head.

FLIP
(softly)
Secret. Kimi. Secret.

KIMI
No more secrets.

FLIP
Why is it important? It happened a long time ago.

KIMI
I want to know how you did it. How much did you steal?

FLIP
I was convicted for being short in the drawer by fifty thousand.

KIMI
Is that how you helped us out for years?

Flip shakes his head, no.

FLIP
I gambled in prison. You can't win a lot, but it was enough to send something to your mom every month.

KIMI
My tiger. Remember my tiger?

Flip drops his head but manages a slight nod.

FLIP

The symbol of power, courage and respect.

KIMI

I remembered every detail about that day, the count, my dress, your silly clown outfit -- everything except the tiger. The one Arnie took away.

FLIP

It all happened so fast, I can't believe you remember him now.

KIMI

He didn't have to arrest you on my birthday, did he?

Kimi picks up the deck of cards and starts dealing to Flip.

KIMI (CONT'D)

I'm going to win that million and make him eat that tiger.

INT. BALI RAJA OFFICE -- NIGHT

Arnie walks into his office and is surprised to find a tall and muscular young man in a dark business suit, BRAD (30s,) sitting in his chair.

Brad reaches into his pocket and pulls out a flyer.

BRAD

Let's talk about this tournament.

Arnie takes a chair across from Brad.

BRAD (CONT'D)

A million dollars. Limit of two hundred players paying twenty-five hundred dollars to play. Your math is off.

ARNIE

Since when does the gaming commission care if I lose money?

Brad gets up and pokes Arnie in the chest.

BRAD

I care about everything that you do.

INT. FLIP'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Kimi and Flip sit at the dining room table. Flip deals a hand. Kimi slides the card under to hold.

FLIP

No.

KIMI

There are three face cards left, the queen of clubs, the king of spades, and the king of hearts.

FLIP

Only three. The dealer has a four showing. You have fifteen. Luck is on your side.

KIMI

I hold.

Flip pushes his chair back and shakes his head. Kimi flips over the next card. It's a three.

FLIP

That would have been your card. There were seventeen cards left that wouldn't have busted you. Get in your zone. Feel the luck.

KIMI

I make my own luck. I use the count to size my bet. I use the basic strategy to hold or hit.

FLIP

You're wrong. It's the luck that makes a winner. A third of the players will know basic strategy and the count.

KIMI

Nobody will be able to count like I do. I'm the best there is.

FLIP

Some will be good enough and we need to figure out who they are.

(MORE)

FLIP (CONT'D)

The rest will feel the luck and they will win.

KIMI

Like you always said, "I'd rather be lucky than good?"

FLIP

Exactly.

KIMI

But trusting in luck lost you your family, your job, your freedom. I've been a quart low of luck most of my life. I'm not trusting luck.

FLIP

Then trust me. I know how to win.

Flip deals another hand while Kimi studies him without responding. Flip notices the silence.

FLIP (CONT'D)

I guess the trust will take some time. Let's work on the other players.

INT. BALI RAJA BALLROOM -- DAY

Sammy, Mort, Kimi and Flip stand along with a crowd of a couple of hundred. A small stage has been set up and an ANNOUNCER in a tuxedo approaches the microphone.

ANNOUNCER

Welcome to the million-dollar blackjack tournament.

The crowd CHEERS.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

In a few minutes, I'll announce your table and seat positions. In two days one of you will walk out of here -- a millionaire.

The crowd CHEERS. Kimi turns toward Flip.

KIMI

That's what we're here for? Table numbers? I don't have time for this, I'm going to watch the tables and practice my count.

As she turns around to leave, Flip grabs her by the arm.

FLIP

You're not here to find out your table number. You're here to confront your enemy. Look at the guy over there in the hat.

All three turn their heads back toward an older GENTLEMAN in a plaid hat.

FLIP (CONT'D)

What's his story? Why would he put up twenty-five hundred to win a million?

KIMI

You already made your point; there are only two types here -- those who feel lucky and those who are smart enough to know that luck has nothing to do with it.

FLIP

Okay, don't trust me, but you've dealt cards long enough to know that the other players can ruin your game. If they are frantic about winning, they'll suck up the good cards. Frightened players don't take the cards they should. Being a dealer, this is something you know -- you've seen it happen.

KIMI

I need to trust me?

Flip nods.

FLIP

Get to work.

INT. BALI RAJA BALLROOM -- LATER

Kimi approaches a group of three JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN. They make a little bow as she joins them. She holds up a card.

KIMI

Table sixteen.

One of the men, Yoshi, holds up his card.

YOSHI
Sixteen.

KIMI
You guys here on business?

YOSHI
We came for the tournament.

KIMI
Professionals?

The trio smiles at each other.

YOSHI
Pleasure.

KIMI
Twenty-five hundred each in this town could buy you a lot more pleasure than playing blackjack.

YOSHI
Only I am playing. These two gentlemen work for me.

The other two make another slight bow.

KIMI
I get it. These two watch the other tables and report back to you.

YOSHI
They watch only me.

KIMI
Weird.

YOSHI
If I win, they will admire my skill.

Kimi taps one of the two guys on the arm and LAUGHS.

KIMI
If you lose, this guy gets your job, right?

YOSHI
If I lose, hopefully they will respect my graciousness.

KIMI
So this whole thing is like some
super mental motivational seminar?

Yoshi bows at Kimi.

YOSHI
You will excuse us please. We must
check into our rooms.

As the trio leaves Kimi searches the room for the rest of the crew. She spots Flip talking to a couple of PLAYERS across the room.

INT. KIMI'S APARTMENT KITCHEN -- DAY

Flip makes notes on a legal pad while Kimi, Mort, and Sammy look at their own notes.

MORT
I'm surprised this kid found his
way to Vegas. All that
interbreeding of rich folks sure
left this sucker a few cards short
of a full deck.

SAMMY
Not the sharpest tool in the shed,
but let's hope he's feeling lucky.

Sammy winks at Kimi.

MORT
We also have two professionals at
Kimi's table. Don't know their
names, but I nicknamed one of them
Fast Money and the other
Professional.

KIMI
Fast Money?

Sammy nods.

SAMMY
I followed both of them to the
playing floor. Fast Money pushes
his money out so fast that I
thought he'd get whiplash.
Professional is just that - so very
professional and polite.

MORT

I asked around and Fast Money is the biggest winner and loser in town. He married the richest and ugliest woman in Philadelphia and he can't wait to go through all her dough so he can dump her.

SAMMY

Professional shouldn't even be here -- he's an accountant. Don't think either of them are a threat. Your problem is Yoshi.

KIMI

One problem, I can handle that.

FLIP

They are all your problems. Round one. Only the top two players at each table advance.

SAMMY

Soon as they do, we'll start our homework on the round two players.

FLIP

You can't. There isn't enough time.

Flip turns to Kimi.

FLIP (CONT'D)

Look at this list I made of the regulars.

KIMI

Regulars?

FLIP

About twenty that I recognize from the old days. Another ten or so that I heard are the new guys.

KIMI

You circled Jim and Slim and this Robbie? Why?

FLIP

Hottest players on the floor last night. Robbie bet big -- he's a producer from Los Angeles and his film is over budget. Jim and Slim are deep in debt in Atlantic City.

KIMI
Frantic or Frightened?

FLIP
That's for you to figure out.

Kimi holds her head.

KIMI
I need a break.

Kimi gets up and starts packing a small cooler with sodas from the refrigerator. Flip get up and joins her.

FLIP
We need to practice. I know it is Sunday, but...

Kimi shakes her head, no.

KIMI
I'm going to the lake.

FLIP
Good idea. Fresh air. We'll get a table at the marina, play a few hands.

Kimi gestures between Flip and herself.

KIMI
A break -- from this. Plus, I agreed to do this for Pokey and I'm the type of a person who keeps her word.

EXT. LAKE MEAD MARINA -- DAY

Kimi walks up to Pokey who is putting water skis into her boat.

KIMI
Where are the two Prince Charmings?

Pokey looks at Kimi and frowns. She tugs on the wide swimsuit strap that shows out of Kimi's tank top.

POKEY
Your swim team suit?

KIMI
We going water skiing or not?

The two guys from the casino, JEFF and MIKE (40s) come out of the marina store carrying a cooler. They are wearing expensive golf attire. They take an appreciative look at Kimi.

KIMI (CONT'D)
So which one of you is the married one?

JEFF AND MIKE
(in unison and pointing at each other)
He is.

They realize they've been made and shake their heads.

POKEY
You guys are married?

They shrug but hold up their cooler and look hopeful.

MIKE
Free beer.

JEFF
We filled your tank.

Kimi looks at Pokey who nods. Kimi reaches into their polo shirts and snatches both of their cell phones.

KIMI
I'll give you guys a choice. I call your wives and if they are okay with it, you're all in.

The guys look at each other, drop the coolers, grab their cell phones from Kimi, turn around, and leave the dock.

EXT. POKEY'S BOAT ON LAKE MEAD -- DAY

Pokey helps Kimi adjust her ski boot.

POKEY
How did you know?

KIMI
How didn't you figure it out? The Venetian isn't the most popular hotel for singles looking for a good time. Look at what they are wearing. It looks like their mother dressed them -- or their wives.

POKEY

Just like the other tails say, "the odds are good in Las Vegas, but the goods are odd."

KIMI

What about Sean? He fixes your boat for free, fills it every week, hauls your shit back to the car...

POKEY

He sells bait at a Marina. What do you think he makes? I want a guy who has something.

KIMI

We promised each other that we'd never be taken care of. This town is too easy for that.

POKEY

After ten hours on my feet holding that stupid tray, some of those rich guys start looking better and better.

Pokey pats on the ski boot to let Kimi know it's done. Kimi tests the fit.

POKEY (CONT'D)

It wouldn't be so bad for you to let your dad take care of you after all these years.

KIMI

How did you hear?

POKEY

For a million residents and visitors, it's a small town. Why didn't you tell me he was out of prison?

KIMI

You knew my dad was in prison too? Did other kids know?

Pokey nods her head.

POKEY

I'd shut them up if they tried to...

Kimi hugs her.

POKEY (CONT'D)

You know, you don't always have to be so strong. I had to burrow into your heart like a hedgehog to be your friend.

Kimi pulls her ski over the side of the boat and sits on the edge. She sits for a long moment, thinking. Then she shakes her head.

KIMI

That's just me. The cove?

Pokey shakes her head, no. Kimi jumps into the water as Pokey takes the wheel.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Please?

POKEY

I'll give you a choice. We'll go to the cove, but you stay behind the boat.

Kimi smiles as she grabs the rope.

EXT. WATER OUTSIDE POKEY'S BOAT -- DAY

Kimi is a fantastic water skier cutting back and forth across the boat and taking air whenever she crosses the wake. Kimi pulls out to the right of the boat coming even with it as Pokey cuts the boat sharply to the left.

Kimi leans heavily back into her ski and causes a tall rooster tail of water. Pokey makes a circular gesture and points to the right as she steers the boat into a cove.

Kimi moves behind the boat and they enter a cove with glassy water and a wide sandy beach. On the shore is a boat filled with some TEENAGE BOYS. As Pokey makes the turn, the boys HECKLE Kimi and make obscene gestures.

As she turns the boat to leave the cove, Pokey looks back at Kimi who is making a circular motion while holding the rope with one hand. Pokey shakes her head, no. Kimi keeps making the motion.

Pokey shrugs and turns the boat around. As they near the boat with the teenage boys, Kimi pulls out to the right as Pokey cuts the boat sharply to the left.

Kimi leans heavily back into her ski and causing another even bigger rooster tail of water.

She cuts back into the turn and the spray covers the boys with a sheet of water. They YELL as their drinks are saturated.

Pokey cuts back right and Kimi repeats the trick for one last drenching. They both make a ROOSTER CALL. As the boat leave the cove, Kimi is not back behind the boat, but rather enjoying one more jump across the wake.

Pokey looks around alarmed, just as Kimi loses control and hits a shallow area at the entrance to the cove.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM -- DAY

Kimi sits on an examining bed while a DOCTOR looks at her handiwork.

DOCTOR
Two stitches. Won't even be a scar.

Kimi gently touches her forehead.

KIMI
Do I need a bandage?

The doctor shakes her head.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Can I have one anyway? I'd like to squeeze some sympathy out of this.

The doctor laughs and gestures to the nurse by gesturing circles around Kimi's head.

EXT. BALI RAJA -- DAY

Flip stands outside the casino and glances at his watch while Mort and Sammy pace back and forth, barely missing each other.

Kimi crosses the parking lot, wearing an enormous bandage wrapped around her head. Flip rushes to her.

FLIP
What happened?

Kimi touches her bandage.

KIMI
I'm fine.

FLIP
It's almost seven. We said to meet
at five.

Kimi studies her father.

KIMI
For a moment, I thought you were
concerned.

She starts toward the entrance, but Mort and Sammy have spotted her and start fussing over the bandage. Kimi pulls it off and stuffs it in her purse as she goes into the casino.

KIMI (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Failed that test.

INT. ENTRANCE TO THE BALI RAJA CASINO -- DAY

Kimi heads over to the bar as Mort and Sammy turn toward Flip.

MORT
Where do you want us?

Flip scans the tables.

FLIP
Over there by that railing. Got
your notepads?

The pair nod.

FLIP (CONT'D)
I want a record of every hand --
what she hits and holds, the cards,
and the bets.

SAMMY
Where are you going to be?

FLIP
If I do my job right, you won't see
me until it's all over.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

Brad walks up to Arnie who watches his tables.

BRAD
Did he show up?

Arnie nods.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Registered?

ARNIE
His kid is.

BRAD
This tournament is too much of a
temptation for Flip.

ARNIE
Technically it's not gambling. The
chips aren't real.

BRAD
It's not gambling because you guys
already know the winner, right?

Arnie smiles at Brad.

ARNIE
We'd never do that -- it would be
against gaming commission rules.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BAR -- DAY

Kimi jumps on her stool and spots Tommy talking to Brad. Tommy glances nervously at Kimi. Puzzled, she starts to move in closer, but the look in Tommy's eyes tells her to stay put.

She waits impatiently for Tommy and then proceeds to empty the peanut bowl onto a napkin and starts counting them.

KIMI
One hundred and thirty-two. Two
off.

Tommy finally breaks away and comes down to her, empty-handed.

KIMI (CONT'D)
What? No ginger ale? Don't you love
me anymore? Who's that cute guy?

He looks cautiously back at Brad.

TOMMY
Outside. Five minutes.

EXT. BALI RAJA -- DAY

Kimi sits on a planter as Tommy comes out the casino door. He sits down next to her and puts his arm around her.

TOMMY
Sorry, Precious -- but I didn't
want that guy to see you.

She rubs his cheek affectionately.

KIMI
Why not? Want me all to yourself?

Tommy shakes his head.

TOMMY
Gaming commission. They got Flip
gambling on video.

Tommy gestures toward the ceiling.

KIMI
Arnie. We've got to warn my dad.

Tommy grabs her arm.

TOMMY
If you warn him and he runs,
they'll come after you. You could
lose your dealer's license.

KIMI
Then he goes back to jail?

Tommy nods.

Kimi sinks back onto the planter and SOBS. Tommy hugs her and she brushes away the tears.

TOMMY
Don't blame yourself.

KIMI
Blame?

She gets up and stands tall.

KIMI (CONT'D)
I'm not the one who violated my
parole. I'm not one who cheated and
got caught. You tell him if you
want, but it's his choice whether
he stays or runs.

(MORE)

KIMI (CONT'D)

This is my time, my moment and I'm not going to let you or Flip distract me from my game. I've got to concentrate, stay in my zone.

She leaves and Tommy smiles as he watches her go.

TOMMY

(to himself)

You go, my darling.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

Kimi finds her table with a number "16" sign on it. Yoshi bows to her and the rest of the players -- the KID, PROFESSIONAL, and FAST MONEY.

KIMI

Anyone want to change seats?

The DEALER settles into her spot.

DEALER

That's not allowed.

Kimi winks at the dealer.

DEALER (CONT'D)

Have a seat players. Thirty hands, single deck, and the two with the most chips at the end advance.

Fast Money reaches into his pocket. He pulls out a handful of hundred-dollar chips.

FAST MONEY

Looks like I'm the winner already.

The dealer reaches into her rack and sets five neat stacks in front of each player.

DEALER

These are special chips. You start with one thousand and you give back all the chips at the end.

FAST MONEY

A thousand? I thought we'd be playing with twenty-five hundred?

The dealer shakes her head.

DEALER

That was your registration fee.
Consider that gone right now.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BAR -- DAY

Mort picks up a drink from Tommy.

TOMMY

Give the darling my love.

MORT

What she needs is luck.

Tommy shakes his head.

TOMMY

If I had luck, I sure wouldn't be
bartending.

MORT

Speaking of luck, you see Flip go
by?

Tommy just wipes down the counter and smiles.

MORT (CONT'D)

I get it. Convention of blind men
and the bartender is the only one
who didn't see the murder.

Tommy nods as Mort takes a sip of his drink and leaves.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

Mort joins Sammy along the rail. Sammy looks at the drink
that Mort finishes.

SAMMY

Where's mine?

MORT

Still in the bottle. This is how it
works -- when I say, "I'm going to
get a drink", you say "Bring me
back something too." Then you hand
me a few bucks.

SAMMY

A true friend would just know.

MORT
I know that one of us has to stay
sharp.

Mort takes another sip.

MORT (CONT'D)
I can't think this early without my
medicine.

He looks toward the tables.

MORT (CONT'D)
Did they start yet?

SAMMY
You idiot -- they've already played
three hands.

Sammy shows Mort the notepad.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
She's low man.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

Kimi turns her cards over and tosses them toward the dealer.

KIMI
Busted again.

KID
You should have stayed. You ever
hear of basic strategy? I bought
this book at the airport.

He pulls out a tiny book.

KID (CONT'D)
Too bad it was the last one.

He pats it like it is made of gold, then returns it to his
pocket.

DEALER
Two more hands -- bets?

Kimi looks at her small pile and pushes half of them in. Fast
Money looks at her.

FAST MONEY
You know something we don't?

KIMI
I'm just tired of it all.

The cards are dealt and Kimi is dealt a nine. The dealer has a ten. Kimi flips her other card over. It's also a nine.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Split.

Yoshi leans in close to Kimi.

YOSHI
If I may...

Kimi cuts him off by holding up her hand.

KIMI
I know how to play this game.

The dealer gives Kimi a five and a face card.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

Sammy GROANS as he frantically writes in his notepad.

SAMMY
She's going to give me a heart
attack.

Mort covers his eyes.

MORT
I can't watch.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

The dealer flips over her hole card. It's a four. She deals herself a face card.

KID
Dealer busted -- I should have
stayed.

The kid looks over at Kimi, whose pile of chips are now closer to the level of stacks in front of the Professional and Yoshi.

KIMI
Can't learn everything from a book,
kid.

The dealer taps the table.

DEALER
Last hand. Bets.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY
Sammy tries to count up the amounts on his notepad.

MORT
Hurry, hurry.

SAMMY
Seven hundred, seven hundred fifty,
fifty-five, six, seven.

Sammy looks up.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
She's short.

Mort looks over at the table.

MORT
If she bets the same as Yoshi and
the Pro -- she'll be short?

SAMMY
Go, go, go.

Mort dashes around the railing.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- DAY

The other players have pushed in their bets. The dealer has her hand out in front of Kimi.

DEALER
Bet?

Kimi slowly moves her chips toward the circle. She looks over at Yoshi's and Professional's bets and then spots Mort waving from behind the dealer. He gives her a "thumbs up."

Kimi pushes all her chips in. Mort frantically shakes his head, and makes a cutting motion across his neck.

It's too late -- the cards are dealt. The kid has a face card showing.

KID
Hit me.

Another face card. The kid GROANS. Busted.

Kimi has a five showing. A triple tap for a hit. She gets a three. She takes a deep breath.

KIMI

Choices.

Another triple tap. She gets a six. Another triple tap for a hit. She gets another six. Kimi shoves her cards under her chips -- she's finally holding.

Yoshi taps his seven that is showing. He gets a face card and carefully slides his cards toward the dealer with a slight bow of his head.

Fast Money stares at his face card and then over at Kimi.

FAST MONEY

You sucked them all up, didn't you?

Kimi smiles. Fast Money taps his cards and gets another face card. He flips over his cards and tosses them at the dealer.

FAST MONEY (CONT'D)

You busted me, you little bitch.
You could have stayed with that
ace, but you wanted to grab any
cards that would have made our
hands.

The same thing happens to Professional.

The dealer has a face card showing. She flips the hole card, it's a four. She deals herself a six for twenty. She pays out a stack of chips to Kimi.

Yoshi, the Professional and Fast Money stand up from the table. The dealer flips over Yoshi's hand, revealing nineteen. The dealer sweeps in Yoshi's chips. Fast Money glares at Kimi.

FAST MONEY (CONT'D)

Screwed us all.

Fast Money points to the kid.

FAST MONEY (CONT'D)

You and brain dead go on to the
next round.

The kid is surprised.

KID

I won?

The dealer points to the kid's lone chip.

DEALER
Everyone else was all in. You and
Kimi advance.

She takes in Kimi's chips and the kid's chip. She hands them each a voucher. The kid looks at it, grabs Kimi and kisses her.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BAR -- DAY

Kimi, Mort, and Sammy are in a group hug -- jumping up and down.

MORT
I don't know how you did it.

Sammy breaks away. He pulls out his notes.

SAMMY
Your ace in the hole gave you
nineteen after your first hit. You
should have stayed.

KIMI
A new deck and a lazy shuffle. The
cards were clumped.

Mort shakes his head.

MORT
I almost joined Gerda up there when
you pushed all them in. Didn't you
get my signal? A thumbs up means to
up the bet. A fist is all in.

KIMI
Maybe I was feeling lucky?

SAMMY
No way. Wait until Flip hears that.

An old man sits on a bar stool behind them. He doesn't turn around. It's Flip in a new disguise.

FLIP
She was due for a little luck.

SAMMY AND MORT
(together)
Flip.

Kimi grabs him.

KIMI
 Didn't you talk to Tommy?

Flip nods.

KIMI (CONT'D)
 You need to go.

FLIP
 I've been gone too long.

KIMI
 I can do this on my own. I don't
 want to be the reason why you go
 back to jail.

She crosses her arms.

KIMI (CONT'D)
 I don't need you here.

FLIP
 I need to be here.

He kisses the top of her head.

FLIP (CONT'D)
 For luck.

MONTAGE - KIMI WINNING THE NEXT FEW ROUNDS

-- Kimi does her triple tap.

-- Mort holds up a fist and Kimi shakes him off. He holds up a thumb, she shakes him off again. He throws both his hands up in frustration.

-- A dealer pushes a big pile of chips toward Kimi.

-- Kimi leans over and hugs the dealer while another player throws his cards down in anger.

-- Sammy and Mort hug each other.

-- Arnie and Brad watch Kimi move to another table closer to the front.

-- Sammy and Mort try to do a "high five" and miss each other's hands. Sammy grabs his back in pain.

INT. BALI RAJA BALLROOM -- DAY

The announcer stands on the stage. The crowd presses closer.

ANNOUNCER

Two hours until the semifinal round
and good luck to all of you.

The crowd CHEERS.

Kimi, Mort, Sammy, and Flip stand off to the side in the ballroom. Kimi looks at her voucher.

KIMI

Position three, table two -- right
up front.

SAMMY

Going to be hard for you to see us.

MORT

What difference does that make? She
ignores us anyway.

Mort gives her a little boy pout. Kimi pulls Mort toward her, rubs his arm and kisses him on the cheek. Sammy leans over and does a little triple tap on his cheek. Kimi delivers a big kiss on Sammy's cheek.

Flip ignores them as he studies the ballroom. It's a much smaller crowd.

FLIP

Only one player from each table
advances to the final round. Five
tables, five finalists. There's
Slim and Jim -- just like I
thought. Damn. Robbie is over there
too.

KIMI

I can do this.

Flip shakes his head.

FLIP

Only thirty hands in this round.
Counting isn't going to help you.
We need to talk about the regulars.

He looks down at his watch.

FLIP (CONT'D)

Not enough time.

Kimi pats him on the arm.

KIMI

Relax. We all have the same amount of chips, cards, and talent. With all things equal...

Flip pulls her close. He's angry.

FLIP

It's never equal. Learn that now or go home and sign up for beauty school.

Flip storms away.

INT. BALI RAJA OFFICE -- DAY

Brad leans across the desk and pushes a list toward Arnie.

BRAD

She's in the semifinal round, you idiot.

ARNIE

I can only control so much. I put in new decks, called the shuffles, ordered a flash. She's good.

Arnie shakes his head.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

If only there was an honest gaming commissioner around...

Now Arnie smiles at Brad.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

... I'd be in here getting my ass chewed.

BRAD

It's a tournament. The players don't need protection from the house. It's them against each other.

Brad gets up.

BRAD (CONT'D)

You got your guy at her table this time?

Arnie nods.

ARNIE

With her temper, she'll be out
after four hands. It's her old man
that I'm starting to worry about.

BRAD

Leave Flip to me.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BAR -- DAY

Kimi sips her ginger ale and watches the blackjack tables. As
she sets her glass down, Tommy tops it off.

TOMMY

You ready, Sweetie?

Kimi picks at the peanuts.

KIMI

He didn't go. Did you tell him
about the video?

Tommy nods.

KIMI (CONT'D)

How can they even tell it's him on
the video? I can barely recognize
him.

Kimi scans the room, then turns toward Tommy.

KIMI (CONT'D)

I asked you a question. How did
they recognize him?

Tommy doesn't answer as he dries some glasses.

KIMI (CONT'D)

It was you. You pointed him out.
What's in it for you -- a better
location? Arnie?

Kimi jumps off the stool and pushes her glass toward Tommy.
He catches it before it falls off the bar.

TOMMY

All that glitters is not gold. All
who wander are not lost.

KIMI

Get lost!

EXT. BALI RAJA -- DAY

Kimi sits on a planter box outside and watches the SUNSET. Pokey almost walks past her and then turns around and joins Kimi.

KIMI

My mom used to tell me this Cherokee proverb, "When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life so that when you die, the world cries and you rejoice."

Pokey nods.

POKEY

She was an amazing woman. So are you.

Kimi rest her head on Pokey's shoulder.

KIMI

Thanks for coming.

POKEY

Don't think I'm getting all soft on you. My date is meeting me here.

Kimi GROANS.

POKEY (CONT'D)

Sean. Maybe you're right about those casino rats.

KIMI

You were major wrong about letting my dad take care of me.

POKEY

You're still a quart low in the trust department.

KIMI

What do you mean by that?

POKEY

Come on, Kimi. You are not called "second date death" for nothing. You make every guy pay for your dad running out on you by making them past some sort of test.

KIMI
You fix me up with these losers and
you want me to waste my time on a
third date?

Kimi storms into the casino as the sun makes a final beam
over the pink mountain tops and through the high rises.

POKEY
(to herself)
Still Daddy's little girl.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLE#2 -- NIGHT

Kimi takes a seat at position three at her table. She's the
first one there. She shakes her head at the dealer, PAUL, as
he walks up.

KIMI
It had to be you.

PAUL
Only the best for tournament play.
It's an honor to deal to two
generations of Zieglers.

KIMI
Only difference is that you won't
catch me cheating.

PAUL
No matter what you think, no dealer
likes to deal a guy his last hand.
I'm on your side.

KIMI
Then tell me about my table.

Paul looks down at a list.

PAUL
Big loudmouth brute of a Texan, a
smooth talker from Atlantic City, a
retired dealer, and some stupid
kid.

Kimi looks around and the Kid is chatting with a cocktail
waitress. Kimi smiles.

KIMI
The kid. One down, three to go.

She turns her attention back to Paul.

KIMI (CONT'D)
The retired guy -- anybody we know?

Paul shakes his head. As if on cue, a white-hair elderly man, MR. TERRYFIELD approaches the table. He tips his hat to Kimi, then takes it off and sets it on the position one seat.

MR. TERRYFIELD
Good day, madam and kind sir.

He's quickly followed by a large mass, the TEXAN. He glares at Kimi.

TEXAN
You're in my seat, Sweet Cheeks.

Paul looks down at his list.

PAUL
You're in position two, sir.

TEXAN
How the hell do you know who I am?

Paul smiles politely.

PAUL
I checked you in earlier.

TEXAN
Hell, you penguins all look alike.

The Texan looks Kimi up and down.

TEXAN (CONT'D)
But you, Sweet Cheeks...

Kimi shakes her head and gets up from the table.

KIMI
Be right back, Paul.

She winks at the Texan.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Got to go powder my cheeks -- I mean nose.

INT. BALI RAJA LADIES RESTROOM -- NIGHT

Kimi washes her hands and takes a cloth from the pile. She pauses a moment and then cups her hands and fills them with water. She throws them both into her eyes, then dabs the remainder from her face.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES#2 -- NIGHT

Kimi takes a seat back at the table. There is a new player, SMOOTHIE in the fifth position. Paul studies Kimi.

PAUL

You okay?

Kimi shakes her head.

KIMI

My boyfriend just broke up with me.

Mr. Terryfield pats her hand.

MR. TERRYFIELD

Probably wasn't worthy anyway.

The Texan puts his arm around Kimi.

TEXAN

You gotta give 'em a little to keep
'em, baby.

Both Smoothie and Mr. Terryfield glare at the Texan. Paul looks at his watch, then over at the kid.

PAUL

Five minutes.

KIMI

I'll get him.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

Kimi walks up to the kid who moves in closer to the cocktail waitress.

KIMI

Time to go, loverboy.

The kid looks at his watch.

KID

Two more minutes.

Kimi shakes her head and heads back to the table.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES#2 -- NIGHT

The other three have taken their seats and Paul starts the shuffle. Kimi pops into her seat. Paul looks over at the kid who finally tears himself away from the waitress.

TEXAN

Why the hell did you do that?

Kimi ignores him.

TEXAN (CONT'D)

Listen Sweet Cheeks, if he had missed the start time, he was out.

Kimi counts her stack of chips. The Texan puts his fat face in front of her.

TEXAN (CONT'D)

You are now first on my list. I'm getting you out of the game.

Kimi smiles sweetly at the Texan.

KIMI

Bring it on, big boy.

Kimi pushes out a small stack of chips in a bold move for the first hand. The Texan matches them, but the others only bet about half.

The cards are dealt. Kimi gets a blackjack and the others hit or stay -- enough to win -- except the big Texan. He busts and the dealer rakes in the Texan's chips.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Tough start, Sweet Cheeks.

INT. BALI RAJA HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Arnie pokes his finger into the chest of a gigantic SECURITY GUARD.

ARNIE

You lost him again?

The guard sadly nods.

ARNIE (CONT'D)
How fast can he run or how slow are
you?

SECURITY GUARD
It's not that he runs away...

The guard pulls out a notebook.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
... he disappears. Fifteen-twelve,
suspect at bar. Fifteen-seventeen,
suspect heads toward restroom.
Fifteen-twenty, suspect enters
stall three.

The guard looks up.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
Gone. He never came out.

ARNIE
Of the stall?

SECURITY GUARD
Of the restroom. I searched it
twice.

ARNIE
He's getting out the window.

SECURITY GUARD
Second floor?

ARNIE
This guy will do anything. He's got
a million disguises.

Arnie picks up the phone and dismisses the guard with a wave
of his hand.

ARNIE (CONT'D)
Get out. I've got an inside track
on Flip.

SECURITY GUARD
You want me to keep on...

ARNIE
Get out.

The guard quickly backs out of the room.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

Mort and Sammy maneuver into a position as close as they can get to Kimi's table.

SAMMY

Can you see how she's doing?

Mort shakes his head.

MORT

Between that fat ugly guy next to her and that slick guy on the other side...

Mort stretches his neck.

MORT (CONT'D)

I can't see anything.

SAMMY

This is driving me crazy.

Sammy flags over a COCKTAIL WAITRESS. The beautiful buxom blonde slides up to Sammy.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

What can I get you handsome?

Sammy is smitten.

SAMMY

You can get us away from this place.

Mort jabs him to life. Sammy pulls a fifty out of his pocket.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

A ginger ale for position three over there on table two and keep the change.

The waitress smiles at the fifty.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

For that fifty I'm going to need a little something else.

The waitress shakes her head and hands the fifty back.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Wrong store, honey. I can recommend a few...

Sammy blushes.

SAMMY

No, no, no. I need you to give me a chip count at table two in the tournament.

She smiles as she takes the fifty back.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES#2 -- NIGHT

Kimi studies her hand and the faces around the table. She does her triple tap for a bet. After receiving a card, she slides them under the chips to hold.

Paul finishes dealing. Kimi's hand is the only one that beats the dealer's hand.

KIMI

Yes.

Paul pays out.

PAUL

Two more hands. Bets?

The Texan looks over at Kimi, then pushes his whole pile of chips into the circle.

TEXAN

Let's see who's got balls.

The kid pushes all his chips in and so does Mr. Terryfield. Both Smoothie and Kimi count their chips.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

The cocktail waitress hands Sammy a napkin with some notes. Sammy takes a quick look.

SAMMY

She's ahead.

MORT

As long as she plays the system and doesn't do anything stupid...

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES#2 -- NIGHT

Smoothie pushes only half of his chips into the circle. Kimi hasn't made a move.

PAUL
You have to either bet or leave.

Kimi moves a single chip into the circle.

TEXAN
I knew it -- no balls on the little
girl -- just like her old man.

Kimi holds onto the chip and glares at the Texan.

KIMI
How do you know my father?

The Texan smiles.

TEXAN
I did my homework.

He gestures to Paul, as Kimi starts to push the rest of her chips into the circle.

TEXAN (CONT'D)
Little girl can't decide? Want me
to go find your daddy to get you
some more lessons?

Kimi pulls her pile of chips back and instead flips in just the single chip.

KIMI
I'm in.

TEXAN
Just what I hoped for. If I win
this hand, no way for you to catch
up.

Paul deals the cards. Almost all the players except Kimi takes a hit. Paul hits blackjack and all chips are forfeited.

The Texan throws his cards down in disgust.

TEXAN (CONT'D)
How the hell did you know that?

KIMI
I'm sorry -- but I don't have time
to give you lessons right now.

For the first time Smoothie speaks. He smiles warmly at Kimi.

SMOOTHIE
Just you and me.

Kimi studies Smoothie's stack and hers. They appear close. Kimi pushes the stack toward the circle but keeps a hand on them. Smoothie does the same.

SMOOTHIE (CONT'D)
Are we going to have to count to three?

Kimi pulls her hand back.

KIMI
No little kid games for me. I'm here to win.

Smoothie pulls his hand back.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT
Sammy has a pair of opera glasses and leans over the rail.

MORT
What do you see?

Sammy almost collapses and makes a Catholic sign of the cross.

SAMMY
She's all in -- but so is Smoothie.

The cocktail waitress stops by again and hands a napkin to Sammy. He's delighted and gives her his best wink as he reaches for his wallet. She stops him.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS
No charge, Handsome.

Mort grabs the napkin from Sammy and makes some notes.

MORT
Okay -- if Kimi gets blackjack and Smoothie just beats the dealer -- Kimi wins. If they both beat the dealer, Smoothie wins. What's she got showing?

Sammy shakes his head.

SAMMY
Can't see.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLE #2 -- NIGHT

Kimi looks over at the four that the dealer has showing. She has a three showing and Smoothie has a five.

KIMI
You got any more just like that in there?

PAUL
If you'll shut up and play, we'll all get to see what I've got -- and in this lifetime.

Kimi peaks at her hole card. It's a face card.

KIMI
Shit.

PAUL
You say hit?

Kimi tucks her cards under the chips.

SMOOTHIE
You're holding on thirteen with a new deck? What kind of strategy are you using?

He snaps his fingers at Paul.

SMOOTHIE (CONT'D)
Hit me.

Paul deals Smoothie a face card.

SMOOTHIE (CONT'D)
You busted me -- that was supposed to be your card.

Paul flips over his hole card. It's a face card. He deals himself another card - it's another face card. Busted.

PAUL
Congratulations, you're in the finals Kimi. Two-hour break and we'll see you back here.

Paul starts to clean up, but Kimi grabs his arm.

KIMI
Let me see.

Paul shakes his head.

PAUL

Let it go or you'll end up like
him.

Kimi reaches over and flips the next card. It's a seven.

KIMI

So that's how it was meant to play
out? Smoothie and me bust and you
get blackjack. How did you switch
decks?

Arnie walks up behind Paul. He looks at the table and smiles
at Kimi.

ARNIE

You know the rules, if both of you
bust with no money -- there's no
player from this table.

Paul shakes his head.

PAUL

She won.

ARNIE

What?

PAUL

She won -- he busted, I busted.

Kimi pokes Arnie in the chest.

KIMI

I messed up your little plan,
didn't I? Never dreamed I'd hold on
thirteen. You think that I can't
see a flash and a stacked shuffle?
I'm a dealer -- the best there is.

Arnie rubs his chin.

ARNIE

You might as well come with me over
to table five. I'm sure you'd like
to see your competition. I think
they're about to deal their last
hand.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLE #5 -- NIGHT

All five PLAYERS are still in for the last hand at table five. Four of the players are down to a handful of chips while the elderly MAN at the end has a huge stack of chips.

Arnie practically drags Kimi within view of the activities.

ARNIE

Amazing to see one player do so much better than the others in tournament play.

Kimi studies the man as he does a triple tap for a hit. He gets a three. Kimi GASPS.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

That's what I thought.

Arnie nods at two security guards standing to the side. They come up to the table and grab Flip by the arms.

SECURITY GUARD

Let's go, Flip.

Flip ignores them as the dealer turns over Flip's cards, he has twenty-one. The guards pull Flip out of his chair and stand him directly in front of Arnie.

ARNIE

Gambling is a parole violation, Flip. I've got some people waiting for you over there.

Arnie nods at some Las Vegas POLICE OFFICERS waiting by the door.

FLIP

You're mistaken. My name is Thomas Perryton. Let me show you my ID.

Kimi sticks a finger in Flip's chest.

KIMI

You wanted it all for yourself, didn't you? You figured if I was in the final round with you, then there would only be three others to beat, right?

Flip continues the act.

FLIP

There must be some mistake. I don't know you.

Kimi shakes her head.

KIMI

You never did.

Kimi bites her lip to hold back the tears. She walks away.

INT. BALI RAJA LADIES RESTROOM -- NIGHT

Pokey stands at the mirror putting on a little more makeup. Kimi walks in and sees Pokey and SOBS. Pokey holds her.

POKEY

I heard. I'm so sorry. You were right about him.

KIMI

Fuck him. I didn't mean to yell at you.

POKEY

It's okay. You can buy me a new boat with those million bucks.

KIMI

I can't win. My dad was in the tournament. He never wanted me to win, he was using me to play off of and win himself. It was all a head trip -- he made me think I was good -- He made me think that I can win. I'm not. I'm barely hanging on.

POKEY

Sorry, Kiddo.

Kimi SOBS again.

KIMI

It's worse, I thought he was willing to go back to jail for me. Now he's going to jail anyway, but not because of me -- because he wanted that money again.

POKEY

What was that Cherokee thing your mom used to say about enemies?

KIMI

Give me strength, not to be better than my enemies, but to defeat my greatest enemy, the doubts within myself.

POKEY

You are the best. You can win this. I know you -- you've never given up and never lost at anything. Remember the swim meet against Jefferson? Remember the power suit? You walked out of the locker room in that bright red swimsuit and...

Pokey holds Kimi out at arms length.

POKEY (CONT'D)

That's it. We just need a power face.

Pokey grabs her bag and dumps a mountain of makeup out on the bathroom counter.

POKEY (CONT'D)

How much time do we have?

INT. BALI RAJA OFFICE -- NIGHT

Arnie sits at his desk. Flip sits across from him, slowly removing his fake mustache.

FLIP

No deal.

ARNIE

Technically you're still in the tournament. Whether you get to play or not is up to me.

FLIP

All those theatrics out there were for Kimi's benefit?

Arnie shakes his head.

ARNIE

You're still going back to jail, Flip -- I get to decide when.

FLIP

Just like the last time.

Flip pulls out a mirror and rubs a little makeup off with a tissue.

ARNIE

Forget the makeup -- I need an answer.

FLIP

Just checking first to see if I have the word "stupid" written on my forehead.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

The other tables have been cleared out and a large banner that says; "ONE MILLION-DOLLAR TOURNAMENT FINALS" hangs above the lone table. Jim and Slim are already seated.

Along the railing a large crowd starts forming. Sammy and Mort have staked out a position close to the table.

MORT

Where is she? We should have followed her instead of stuffing your face at the buffet.

Kimi enters through the opening close to the table. She glows.

SAMMY

You look like a million bucks.

KIMI

That's right - that's what I'm taking home tonight.

SAMMY

I mean you look like...

She leans over and kisses him on the cheek. Mort leans in for his kiss.

MORT

You ready, Honey?

Kimi looks over at the table.

KIMI

I've been ready my whole life. You got some notes?

Sammy flips through a notebook.

SAMMY

Slim and Jim, just like Flip said. Not only are they deep in debt in Atlantic City, but kicked out -- banned for electronic card counting. Don't let their country bumpkin act fool you -- they are technology experts.

KIMI

Won't help them tonight.

MORT

Flip also predicted that Robbie would be in the finals. That's him over there with the overly white teeth. He's compulsive. Either on the phone or at the tables. He should be easy for you to lead around -- but watch him -- he's desperate for the money.

KIMI

Bring it on.

Mort hugs her.

MORT

Go get 'em.

Kimi breaks away and turns toward the table.

She freezes as she sees Flip pull out a player's chair. Mort and Sammy point.

MORT (CONT'D)

How can Flip be here? They didn't arrest him?

Kimi turns back to Mort.

KIMI

I'm going to find out.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLE #1 -- NIGHT

Kimi walks up to the table and grabs Flip by the arm.

KIMI

Let's go.

Flip nods toward two security guards, standing to the side.

FLIP
Buff and Puff over there go where I
go.

She pulls him to the side, away from the other players who
are arriving.

KIMI
What's the deal?

FLIP
Not a good time.

Flip looks back cautiously toward the dealer and other
players.

FLIP (CONT'D)
You're going to have to trust me.

KIMI
You're about two quarts low in the
trust department.

FLIP
I'm doing what's best.

KIMI
As always, best for Flip -- you'll
win, take the million, and then it
will be another ten years before I
see you again.

Paul comes up to the pair and taps on his watch.

PAUL
You two want to take your seats?

Kimi and Flip follow Paul back to the table and sit down.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Quick intros...

Kimi looks around the table.

KIMI
Let me. I'm Kimi, a local dealer.
This here is Flip Ziegler -- a
local legend. We round out the
table with Jim and Slim from
Atlantic City and of course, Robbie
-- fresh in from Los Angeles.

Jim punches Slim in the arm.

JIM
Bet you can't guess which of us is
Slim.

Robbie glares at Kimi.

ROBBIE
How come you know everyone?

KIMI
Are we going to open up a chat
session or play cards?

Paul starts the shuffle.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

Sammy leans over the rail.

SAMMY
That's him.

MORT
I can't believe he's playing
against Kimi.

SAMMY
Can't tell with Flip. Could have
something up his sleeve.

Mort nods.

MORT
He's going back to jail anyway.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLE #1 -- NIGHT

Paul deals the next round of cards. Kimi looks over at Flip's
stack of chips.

FLIP
Don't worry, an early lead can
sometimes be misleading.

KIMI
I'm not afraid of you.

FLIP
Good.

Flip does a triple tap for a hit.

KIMI
I wish you wouldn't do that
anymore.

FLIP
One tap for luck, one tap for
respect, the third tap for the
choices we make.

Paul pauses the deal at Kimi.

PAUL
You going to do a triple tap too?
Sure can tell you two are related.

Kimi looks at her dad and then back at Paul.

KIMI
It was you. You spotted Flip on the
video.

She tucks her cards under to hold. Paul deals to the rest,
turns over his cards and then deals himself a card that
causes him to bust. He pays out the winning bets around the
table.

Kimi pushes a large stack of chips into the bet circle. Flip
shakes his head.

FLIP
Lose the count?

Kimi pulls half of her chips back just as Paul deals the
cards.

All the bets look even, except Slim's large stack. Jim looks
at Slim's large bet and shakes his head.

JIM
Way too early.

SLIM
Time to shake things up.

Slim hits blackjack. The dealer has nineteen. All the rest
lose. The dealer pushes a large stack of chips to Slim. Slim
puts most of them in the bet circle.

SLIM (CONT'D)
I'm out of here -- anybody else
coming?

Kimi looks at her stack.

FLIP

Don't take the bait. Play your own game. The zone.

KIMI

Play the basic strategy, play your own game, play the house, play the other players.

Kimi pushes half of her stack in.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Can't you shut up and play?

Robbie looks at the large number of chips put out by Slim and Kimi. He pushes almost all of his chips in. Paul deals the cards and himself blackjack. He rakes in the losses.

PAUL

Five more hands. Ten-minute break.

Slim gets up and stretches as Robbie frantically counts his last few chips.

SLIM

Damn, I can't believe you losers have made it this long.

Slim tugs at his pants.

SLIM (CONT'D)

Better go water the plants before it starts flooding in here.

Kimi shakes her head as Slim ambles away.

KIMI

Just when you think the guy couldn't be more shallow, he manages to drain just a little more water out of the pool.

INT. BALI RAJA LADIES RESTROOM -- NIGHT

Kimi pushes the door to the restroom open and runs into a yellow sign. A guy with a mop frantically tries to stop the mess from an overflowing toilet.

MOP GUY

Closed, madam. There's a restroom in the lobby.

Kimi looks at her watch.

KIMI
I don't have time to make it to the
lobby and back.

The guy notices the stress on her face.

MOP GUY
Come with me.

INT. BALI RAJA OFFICE -- NIGHT

Brad paces back and forth.

BRAD
I can't believe you're not out
there.

Arnie taps his earpiece.

ARNIE
Just like being there, plus my guys
are winning.

BRAD
If you mess this up, they'll kill
both of us. What if Flip wins?

Arnie pats Brad on the back.

ARNIE
They won't kill us when I hand them
one million clean dollars. I'm
going to have one of these
tournaments every month. Who'd ever
suspect that we were laundering
money with this kind of publicity?

BRAD
Why didn't you just ban Flip and
his daughter from this casino? You
can do that, you know.

ARNIE
They are like cockroaches. If you
spray for them, they go away, but
then they come back stronger than
ever.

Arnie shakes his head.

ARNIE (CONT'D)
 But if you really want to get rid
 of a cockroach for good, you set a
 trap with bait and then squish
 them.

He laughs.

ARNIE (CONT'D)
 I should have killed her old man
 fifteen years ago instead of
 letting the gaming commission lock
 him up. That won't happen again.

BRAD
 You're going to have him killed?

Arnie opens the door and steps into the hallway. Brad follows him.

INT. BALI RAJA HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Kimi comes out of the employee restroom and freezes when she sees Arnie coming out of his office, followed by Brad.

BRAD
 That was never part of the deal.

ARNIE
 Cut the sentimental crap and come
 watch the last few hands. Nothing
 in the world like watching a
 cockroach get stomped on in front
 of a crowd.

They turn the corner and Kimi throws her hands over her mouth to prevent a GASP. She SNIFFS.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLE #1 -- NIGHT

Kimi is in trouble. She looks at her chips. There are only a handful.

PAUL
 Two hands left. Bets?

She looks over at Robbie. He has only one chip left which he moves into his circle. Slim has a large stack and so does Flip. They look back and forth at each other. Jim has a modest stack which he pushes forward.

JIM

Time for me to catch you guys.

Flip moves almost all of his stack to the bet circle.

FLIP

No way to catch me unless I stop to rest.

Slim taps nervously on the top of his stack. Kimi picks up a lone chip and looks at it.

PAUL

You have to bet each hand to stay in.

Kimi tosses the chip forward and Slim also tosses a lone chip forward.

INT. RAILING ALONG BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLES -- NIGHT

Sammy shakes his head.

SAMMY

Our girl can't win. Slim held back. After this hand it's basically just Slim and Flip.

Mort looks at his notes and does some calculations.

MORT

If Flip wins this hand, he'll have enough to take out Slim in the last hand.

Sammy looks over at Kimi.

SAMMY

If she wins, she'll have enough chips left to stay in.

Mort does a few more calculations.

MORT

But they can hold out enough chips to beat her. Her luck just ran out.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BLACKJACK TABLE #1 -- NIGHT

Paul deals the cards. Flip, Slim and Kimi hold. Jim and Robbie take hits and bust. The dealer busts.

He pays out to Flip, Slim and Kimi. Jim and Robbie get up from the table and stretch their legs.

Kimi looks at her meager chips.

KIMI
Enough for me to play the last hand
but not much more.

She looks over at Flip.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Plenty enough for you to beat Slim.

FLIP
Is that what you want?

KIMI
What I want? You're asking me now?

Flip nods.

KIMI (CONT'D)
I want you to eat shit and die.

FLIP
In that order?

Flip pushes all his chips into the bet circle. Slim looks at Flip's chips. Flip watches him counting.

FLIP (CONT'D)
That's right. We have exactly the
same amount of chips. It's all or
nothing.

Kimi pushes all her chips in. Flip GASPS and grabs her arm.

FLIP (CONT'D)
Hold back, Pumpkin.

She pulls her arm loose and lets go of the chips.

KIMI
Don't you ever call me that again.
You tell me to trust you and I'm
playing against you! If knowing the
other players is so important, then
how do I overcome that you are the
one person who knows exactly how I
play? You tell me to trust in luck.
Me? What kind of luck do I have? I
was raised by a drunk and deserted
by a cheater.

(MORE)

KIMI (CONT'D)

My only luck in this life has been
to be the best dealer and card
counter, but you've ruined that for
me. Nobody will hire me and now
I've lost the count. I don't know
if that deck is plus two or twenty.

Slim smiles and pushes all his chips in. Paul deals. Flip holds. Kimi does a triple tap for her hit. She's dealt a face card. She flips her cards over -- busted. Flip drops his head.

FLIP

The count was fifteen.

Kimi tosses her cards in. Paul finishes the dealer's hand -- he has blackjack. Slim shakes his head at Flip.

SLIM

I win unless you're hiding a
blackjack in there?

Slim pulls out one chip that was hidden under his arm.

SLIM (CONT'D)

Lucky for me, I always keep back a
little something for the dealer.

KIMI

That's cheating!

Kimi looks toward Paul, but he shakes his head.

PAUL

Chip was on the table.

Flip turns his cards over -- they add up to thirteen.

KIMI

You held on thirteen?

FLIP

It's your lucky number, isn't it?
Looks like Slim won.

From the side, Arnie and Brad move in with two security guards who grab Flip and head toward the office.

FLIP (CONT'D)

It was all in the cards, Pumpkin.

Kimi looks back at the deck and then grabs the cards from the table and runs after them.

INT. BALI RAJA OFFICES -- NIGHT

Two security guards restrain Flip as Kimi confronts Arnie. Brad sits behind Arnie's desk.

KIMI
He wasn't gambling. It wasn't even
a tournament. Nobody won.

ARNIE
Wrong. Read the rules. Slim was the
last one to have a chip left. He
wins.

She shakes her head.

KIMI
Slim is disqualified. Nobody wins.

Kimi deals out the cards that she took from the tournament table.

KIMI (CONT'D)
That stack there -- those were my
father's cards.

Brad flips them over and then grabs the next pile.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Those were mine.

Kimi grabs another pile.

KIMI (CONT'D)
These were Slim's. Smell them.

Brad SNIFFS.

BRAD
Smells like oranges.

KIMI
Exactly. Slim left the table to use
the restroom right before the last
hand. Only problem is that he used
the restroom that he's been trained
to -- the employee's restroom with
their orange disinfectant soap.

She points at Arnie.

KIMI (CONT'D)
Arnie makes all his employees use
it.

ARNIE
You can't prove that.

BRAD
But I can.

ARNIE
What the hell are you pulling?

BRAD
It's over.

Brad pulls open his shirt to show a wire.

ARNIE
You lying sack of shit. They're
going to kill me.

BRAD
I think we can make you a deal that
will allow you to live a long safe
life in your government's
protection.

FLIP
Three free meals a day.

Flip pats him on the back.

FLIP (CONT'D)
There's even a few old friends in
there that will remember you
fondly.

BRAD
One of the conditions will be that
you come clean about all the
dealers that you set up over the
years to save your own ass.

Brad nods at the security guards who then drag Arnie out of
the office.

KIMI
You were set up? You never stole
that money?

Flip shakes his head and then it drops a little.

FLIP
I stole it. I let Arnie bully me
into helping him. I was scared.

KIMI

Why didn't you tell us? We would have come to visit you. You would have had a family.

FLIP

Would I? I'd would have ruined your childhood. You grew up with your mom taking you to soccer games and birthday parties and not to a prison.

KIMI

I would have come. I would have grown up with a father.

FLIP

No, you would have grown up hating Arnie, seeking revenge, and eventually got yourself killed. Brad suspected Arnie of money laundering by shorting the dealers' tables and he contacted me after I got out of prison. This was my battle, but in the end, you ended up being the winner.

KIMI

I won?

Flip looks over at Brad.

FLIP

Brad?

BRAD

The rules say that the last qualified player with chips wins. Slim and your dad were disqualified, but Kimi must have known that to push all your chips in, right?

KIMI

I was feeling lucky.

Kimi thinks about this for a moment and smiles. She runs into her father's arms and hugs him.

KIMI (CONT'D)

I guess I won a lot more today than just a million dollars.

INT. BALI RAJA CASINO BAR -- NIGHT

Pokey and Kimi come out of the restroom, both looking like a million dollars. Pokey looks her protégé up and down and frowns at the huge bandage back on Kimi's head.

POKEY
You sure about this?

Kimi nods and walks toward the bar, stumbling, with Pokey helping her. Tommy spots them and Kimi collapses to the floor.

He runs out from the bar and kneels down next to her as he pulls out his cell phone.

TOMMY
Hang in there! I'm getting help.

Kimi grabs his cell phone and his hand.

KIMI
Why didn't you tell me that it was Paul that spotted Flip?

TOMMY
Because you look sexy when you're pissed.

She pulls her hand back, grabs him by the chin and kisses him. When he comes up for air, she holds onto him by the chin as she sits up.

KIMI
Now that I'm rich, maybe you'll go out with me?

Tommy freezes and then recovers as he takes her hand and kisses it.

KIMI (CONT'D)
The whole gay bartender is such a cliché. I know it gets you better tips, but I'm the best there is at spotting a gambler and a cheater.

He sits back on his butt and laughs as she pulls off the bandage.

TOMMY
I'm not a gambler, but I'm not sure if I liked this test.

He pulls her toward him and kisses her again.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
 Okay, you're forgiven, but you've
 got to start trusting some of us.
 Not everyone deserves to be
 constantly tested and measured.

Kimi nods.

KIMI
 How about just one more? Do you
 know how to water ski?

EXT. LAKE MEAD MARINA -- DAY

Kimi and Tommy walk up to Pokey who is climbing all over a
 bright red new boat. She spots them and makes a ROOSTER CALL.

POKEY
 You shouldn't have! How did you do
 this?

KIMI
 Easy, Tommy and I walked into a boat
 dealership early this morning and
 signed some forms. Amazing what
 they will do if you say, "only if
 it is there noon."

Pokey jumps to the dock and hugs her.

KIMI (CONT'D)
 I figure it's going to be hard to
 get Sean to fix that old boat
 anymore now that he's got you.

Tommy starts singing SINGLE LADIES (Put a Ring on It.)

TOMMY
 Once the ring is on the finger, no
 more free drinks, no more gas for
 that boat...at least, that's what I
 hear about married life.

Tommy hugs Kimi.

POKEY
 Seriously, I don't know how to
 thank you.

Kimi shows her cell phone to Pokey.

KIMI
 Help me win this one.

Pokey studies it.

POKEY

Five thousand dollars? What do you need with five thousand dollars?

KIMI

It's playing the game that's it is all about. Let's have some fun.

Kimi puts her arm around Pokey, but Pokey is all business as she starts pacing.

POKEY

We're talking about practicing seven days a week. You're going to need a new custom fitted ski, a new suit, waterproof makeup and a lot better moves than that old rooster tail.

Kimi does a thumbs up.

KIMI

I'm all in.

INT. FLIP'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Kimi looks at the beautifully framed photographs of herself on the shelf.

KIMI

I didn't notice these before.

FLIP

You were pretty angry each time you visited me.

Kimi picks up one of the photographs of a teenage version of herself playing soccer.

KIMI

You couldn't have taken this.

FLIP

A couple of old pals of mine needed some extra money. They looked after you while I was in prison.

KIMI

My whole childhood? They took pictures of me and sent them to you?

Kimi stares at another photograph.

FLIP
You go easy Mort and Sammy, they're
getting old.

Kimi sinks into a chair.

FLIP (CONT'D)
What about us? We good?

KIMI
I try to shake it off, but it's
hard to think of you as anything
but the clown that left me. You're
a gambler.

Flip nods and drops his head.

FLIP
I can't stop.

KIMI
Brad said the conviction stays, but
you're no longer on parole. But
you'll never be able to work in a
casino again.

FLIP
It's worse. I can't stick around.
The people that Arnie was
laundering for might come looking
for me and find you.

KIMI
I'm losing you again?

He nods.

FLIP
I'm going up to Reno for a while to
get myself on surveillance videos
around the casinos. Rent a place,
look like I'm living there.

He kisses her on the top of her head.

FLIP (CONT'D)
But, I'll be back. A lot. You won't
even know I'm around.

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO -- DAY

Kimi deals blackjack to Mort and Sammy. She looks at her watch.

KIMI
Last hand, boys.

SAMMY
I can't believe Clyde gave you your old job back.

KIMI
He had no choice, I'm the new owner.

Mort and Sammy look around in shock.

MORT
The whole casino?

KIMI
I've already improved the two-ninety-nine-cent buffet. Finally found out a way to get a job in a super casino. Buy this dump and make it the best.

SAMMY
It must have cost a lot more than a million.

KIMI
Which means that I'm going to have to work my tail off to make the loan payments. I'm also going to need some extra help.

Kimi rakes in their bets.

KIMI (CONT'D)
I thought since you two lost your old job, you'd like to come work for me.

Mort and Sammy look at each other.

MORT
Our old job?

KIMI
The photos of me at my dad's? You both have spent the last seven years following me around for Flip.

The guilty pair hold their hands up in surrender.

MORT
 Sure was easier when you got this
 job. Instead of sitting in the hot
 bleachers watching soccer and
 softball, we got to sit in nice air-
 conditioned comfort.

KIMI
 Pit bosses have to stand most of
 the day.

The two are excited.

SAMMY
 Us?

KIMI
 Pays good and sometimes you do get
 to sit and play.

MORT
 We're going to get paid for being
 here?

Mort sniffs in the air like it is the smell of warm cookies.
 The two jump up and hug each other.

SAMMY
 It's better than heaven!

Kimi looks across the room at her casino with pride. Her eyes
 meet those of an ELDERLY MAN playing bingo nearby. He tips
 his hat at her and Kimi whispers to the pair.

KIMI
 Flip?

Sammy and Mort look around and shake their heads, no.

A COWBOY passes slowly by Kimi's table and sits down at the
 Keno tables nearby. Kimi nods toward the cowboy and again
 Sammy and Mort shake their heads.

INT. SILVER BOOT CASINO LOBBY -- DAY

Kimi holds the first set of doors open for a young WOMAN and
 a little GIRL. Kimi looks at the little girl.

KIMI
 Did you have a good time?

LITTLE GIRL

We just come here to eat.

YOUNG WOMAN

The buffet. I know I shouldn't bring her to a casino, but we can eat for days...

Kimi holds up her hand to interrupt the woman.

KIMI

Best times of my life happened in a casino. There is no shame in being here.

EXT. PARKING LOT SILVER BOOT CASINO -- DAY

Kimi opens up her car door and there sits a proud stuffed tiger in the driver's seat. She picks it up and hugs it.

KIMI

My tiger. Power, courage, respect.

She looks around. There is a city worker picking up trash on the sidewalk. He stops and waves at her.

KIMI (CONT'D)

Daddy?

The man doesn't hear her and goes back to his job. Kimi looks at the elderly man from bingo who waits at the bus stop. She looks back toward the casino and notices the cowboy getting into his truck.

She looks back and forth at the three men until she notices the same young woman and little girl also waiting at the bus stop. Kimi watches them for a moment and then gets into her car.

As she drives away, she pulls alongside the bus stop and HONKS at the little girl. Kimi tosses the stuffed tiger out the window into the little girl's arms.

FADE OUT: