

Guardian & Angel

by

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FADE IN

EXT. SAN DIEGO MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT - AFTERNOON

A Marine Corps service bus trundles past a platoon of marching Marines as it leaves the post gate bus stop.

INT. MARINE SERVICE BUS - AFTERNOON CONTINUED

Parker, a tall, hard-looking 42 in civvies with a back pack, moves down the aisle. The bus is half-filled with mostly fatigue-clad Marines. Several look over, point at him.

Parker finds an empty seat. Wipes his hand across a clean shaven face. Lets out a long breath. Turns to the window.

A Marine sitting behind Parker leans forward.

MARINE

Gunny? Heard you cashed out.

Parker ignores him, looks steadily out the window.

MARINE (CONT'D)

Man, we all figured you for a lifer. You got what? Twenty years a desert combat? All them medals.

Parker continues to stare intently out the window, as if searching for something.

PARKER

Don't mean nothin'.

MARINE

But, you the super sniper, Gunny.

Parker faces forward, and then slowly closes his eyes.

MARINE (CONT'D)

Longest kill shot ever! Man, CIA hire you in a flash. Big money.

(BEAT)

MARINE (CONT'D)

You quittin' over that kid thing?

Parker grimaces, puts a hand over his eyes.

SLOW DISSOLVE  
TO:

## FLASHBACK MONTAGE

- Parker in ghillie suit and ear phones lies in desert rocks aiming a scoped rifle at an Arab village in the far distance. His spotter lies nearby peering through binoculars.

- Close-up view through rifle scope as crosshairs center on the open, darkened window of a mud village house.

- The silhouette of a man's head and shoulders passes inside.

PARKER (OS)  
Is that our guy?

SPOTTER (OS)  
That's him. Is it too far a shot?

- Parker levers a cartridge into the breech, peers into the scope. A second head, a woman, passes by window.

PARKER (OS)  
What's the lag time?

SPOTTER (OS)  
Figure...two, maybe three seconds.

- Close up view of window. Woman's head disappears.

PARKER (OS)  
Lot can happen in three seconds.

SPOTTER (OS)  
This's the first time we've seen the bastard in a week, Gunny. What the hell. A bad guy's a bad guy.

- Parker sights, finger on the trigger.

- Close up of window with the man's head.

- Close up Parker's finger, slowly tightening.

- Parker FIRES. Rifle recoils.

- Close up of window, man's head remains inside.

SPOTTER (OS) (CONT'D)  
One thousand one.

- Close up of window. A woman's head appears.

SPOTTER (OS) (CONT'D)  
One thousand two.

- Close up of window. Both heads disappear as a third, a small child's head, is lifted into view.

SPOTTER (OS) (CONT'D)  
One thousand thr...

- Close up of window. The tiny head suddenly explodes. The woman reappears, hands to the side of her head, mouth shaped in a horrid SCREAM, eyes staring directly into Parker's own.

SPOTTER (OS) (CONT'D)  
Oh shit.

END FLASHBACK MONTAGE

SMASH CUT TO:

BACK TO BUS SCENE

Parker slowly removes a hand from his eyes as:

CHILD'S VOICE (OS)  
Dad?

Parker's eyes snap open. He turns and glares at the Marine.

PARKER  
What'd you say?

MARINE (OS)  
It's war, Gunny.

PARKER  
What?

MARINE  
War. Shit happens.

(BEAT)

PARKER  
What if it was your kid?

MARINE  
Yeah, well...so, what now?

PARKER  
Find a water hole. Empty desert somewhere. Away from...this.

MARINE  
Death Valley's not far. Got a whole lot a empty. But it's all bad ass.

The bus passes a row of used car lots. Parker stands, tells the driver to stop, gets off. The Marine yells out window.

MARINE (CONT'D)  
Just be sure you're packing, Gunny.

EXT. USED CAR LOT AND GARAGE - AFTERNOON CONTINUED

Parker walks back to a dented, un-painted, aluminum-bodied sports roadster with SCCA stickers, racing logos and white circles on the doors for numbers. It's a hard-used ex-racer.

A SALESMAN walks up.

PARKER  
She run?

SALESMAN  
Run? This here's a Shelby Cobra.  
Got the 427 cubic inch V-8 Ford.  
Same engine that won Le Mans in  
'65. She eats anything on the road.

PARKER  
I know. But, is she road legal?

SALESMAN  
You got lights, horn, turn signals,  
one wiper, California plates and a  
roll-bar. What else do you need?

PARKER  
What'll you take off for no top. No  
bumpers. No air bags. No heater. No  
radio. No air freshener.

SALESMAN  
You want all that crap, get a bus.

Parker smiles, reaches into his pack, pulls out three banded decks of cash, points to the sign on the wind screen.

PARKER  
This's what I got. Let me take her  
in back, use your tools, a welder  
and it's yours...tax free.

The Salesman looks over Parker with a grin and nods his head.

SALESMAN  
Hell. The two of you even look  
alike. You got a deal.

INT. CAR LOT GARAGE - NIGHT

Parker raises hood on Cobra inside the small shop.

Parker removes sparkplug, adjusts setting.

Parker turns wrench on suspension system.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE

CHILD'S VOICE (OS)

Dad?

INT. PARKER'S HOME GARAGE 1982 - NIGHT

PARKER's dad is working on his 1962 racing Austin Healy. He looks up and smiles at his five year old son.

CHILD

When are you gone?

INT. SHOP GARAGE - NIGHT CONTINUED

- Parker shakes head, adjusts front seat position.

- Parker welds steel box under passenger seat.

- Parker starts engine, listens to SOUND, smiles.

- Parker opens garage door. RUMBLES out into dawn rising.

CHILD'S VOICE (OS)

Dad?!

END MONTAGE

EXT. WAR-SURPLUS OUTDOOR STORE PARKING LOT - MORNING

Parker walks out carrying bundles and two collapsible fly rods to cram into the Cobra's small trunk. He starts the engine with a LOUD ROAR and RUMBLES out onto the busy street.

EXT. BUMPER TO BUMPER SO-CAL FREEWAY - MORNING CONTINUED

Parker sees Las Vegas turn off, PEELS away from the hectic traffic with a middle-fingered salute to the mass behind.

He ROARS off into the distance, the finger turns into a fist.

PARKER

Yes!

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT HIGHWAY - MORNING CONTINUED

Parker comes up to slow moving line of SUVs stuck behind an RV. He shifts down, stands on it. ROARS past like a rocket.

PARKER

Good girl.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT GAS STATION/MINI MART - DAY

Parker skids to a stop, blips the throttle with a ROAR and shuts down. A Pontiac GTO parks in front. Two PUNKS get out.

INT. MINI MART - DAY CONTINUED

Parker goes in to get coffee and pay. Both PUNKS check him out with dead-eyes as the aged woman CASHIER looks on.

Parker turns, eye-balls them back with a challenging stare.

CASHIER

Be with you in a minute, sir.

PARKER

I'm in no rush, ma'am.

Parker continues to return the dead-eye stare. One PUNK tugs at his partner's sleeve. They turn and leave without a word.

Parker steps up to pay for his coffee, a bag of do-nuts and a road map. The CASHIER smiles in relief.

CASHIER

What're you? The horse cavalry?

PARKER

(smiling to self)

Used to be. But just mustered out.  
How far to Death Valley, ma'am?

CASHIER

What part of it you looking for?

PARKER

The empty part.

CASHIER  
Ain't no bars or girly houses in  
them parts, mister.

PARKER  
All I'm lookin' for's an empty  
water hole.

The CASHIER, a weathered, wise-eyed 60ish, shakes a Camel out  
of an open pack, sticks it in the corner of her mouth unlit  
and studies Parker for a moment.

CASHIER  
(nods)  
Used to know a good one. But it was  
a lotta roads ago.

PARKER  
Been some changes?

CASHIER  
I figure you been around long  
enough to know all about changes.

PARKER  
Been out of touch a few decades.

She takes the cigarette out of her mouth and looks at him.

(BEAT)

And mashes it into an overfilled ash tray of unlit butts.

CASHIER  
Then, you jist might fit in. Stop  
in Furnace Creek. Talk to my 'ol  
man, Bump. Tell him, "Ma" sent you.

PARKER  
Where in Furnace Creek?

CASHIER  
Any bar that's open. It's kinda the  
end of the line. Got all the empty  
lonesome you could ever want.

PARKER  
Sounds good...thanks.

CASHIER  
You jist watch your six out there.

PARKER  
Yes, ma'am.



EXT. MOJAVE DESERT GAS STATION/MINI MART - DAY

Parker sits back in the Cobra and unfolds the map. Traces a finger across its expanse. Stops and taps the finger.

PARKER  
(to self)  
Death Valley? Ah...what the hell?

He sticks a donut into his mouth and starts the engine with another ROAR. Smiling, Parker pulls out and smokes the tires as he BLASTS down the highway.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY CONTINUED

Far ahead Parker sees a CAR stopped on the right shoulder. Two MEN tower over a boy, who tries to run, but is grabbed and shoved, kicking, into the same GTO he saw earlier.

Parker skids to a stop, charges a knife-wielding PUNK who manages to nick Parker's brow before he breaks Punk's elbow.

Parker charges the other PUNK, who's trying to pull a pistol, and kicks him, causing the knee to bend back like a snapped chicken wing. The Punk falls screaming to the ground.

The BOY lies huddled, arms over his head, as Parker pockets both weapons. Motioning the kid out, he throws the moaning Punks into the back seat of the GTO, and SLAMS the door shut.

The boy jerks at the sound, a pack clutched to his chest.

PARKER  
You okay?

The mahogany-skinned Boy, maybe 10 or 11, can only nod.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Hitching alone? You kidding me?  
Wait in my car if you want. I'll be  
right back.

Parker wipes blood off his brow and points to the external exhaust pipes under the Cobra's passenger door.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Mind the pipes, kid. Hot.

EXT. GULLY - DAY CONTINUED

Parker drives the GTO off into a near by arroyo. He rips a sleeve off a Punk, unscrews the gas cap, stuffs the rag in.

He drags both men outside, empties their pockets, takes their cash. Finding a cigarette lighter, he sets the sleeve afire and walks back toward the Cobra.

EXT. PARKED COBRA - DAY CONTINUED

The boy, a dark, scrawny adolescent, looks like a classic Arab ragamuffin terrorist with a pack full of TNT. He sits in the Cobra, his mop head barely visible over the hood.

Parker looks up the highway, then at his Timex. He wipes his brow again, notes the blood, shakes head in frustration.

PARKER  
Shit house mouse.

The Boy shrinks back into the seat. Holds his pack close to his skinny chest. Parker lets out a resigned breath.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
So...where you from?

The boy points a thumb back over his shoulder.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
That town behind us?

The Boy nods in the affirmative.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
You want to go back?

BOY  
To what?

PARKER  
Your family.

BOY  
No way.

PARKER  
Why not?

BOY  
Cause mom's dead and my  
stepfather's a rat.

PARKER  
Got any relatives?

BOY  
My mom's uncle. But he's drunk all  
the time. Why can't I hitch?

PARKER  
Look, kid. It's your family or the  
cops. I can't leave you here.

The boy sits, shaking his head. Tears fill his eyes.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Where's your house?

The Boy jerks his thumb back as before. Swipes his eyes.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Right...what's your name?

BOY  
Angel. What's yours?

PARKER  
Parker.

ANGEL  
What's your first name?

PARKER  
Parker.

Parker pulls out on the pavement, stops and gets out to walk  
back behind the car. ANGEL looks scared again. Grabs his  
pack, but can't figure out how to open the small door.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Lighten up, kid. I'm just gonna  
clean up the crime scene a bit.

Parker begins to scuff away the tire tracks the Cobra left on  
the sandy shoulder. Completing that, he climbs back in.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Okay. Hook up your harness.

(BEAT)

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Tighter. Alright. Hold on.

Parker spins the car back around. As they ROAR back down the  
highway a fireball explodes far in the background.

ANGEL (OS)  
Cool car.

EXT. RUN-DOWN TOWN OUTSKIRTS - DAY CONTINUED

Angel points and Parker stops in front of a tract home. A faded pickup truck with a roofing company decal is parked in the dirt driveway.

INT. TRACT HOME - DAY CONTINUED

Angel opens the front door with his key as GIGGLING is heard inside. Angel, with cell phone, leads Parker to bedroom door.

On a king-sized bed is a MAN and two barely teenage GIRLS, naked and intertwined in the tangled sheets.

Angel lifts his phone, filming the scene.

ANGEL

Hi, Daddy. I'm home. Miss me?

The three scramble around grabbing sheets, looking shocked.

STEPFATHER

Get outta here, you little shit.

STEPFATHER lunges off the bed, pulling on a pair of Levi's.

STEPFATHER (CONT'D)

(to Parker)

Who are you? Get outta my house.

Stepfather swings at Parker, who stops his fist in mid-air with one hand. Squeezing hard, he stares into the man's eyes.

STEPFATHER (CONT'D)

(whining)

Ow...

Parker picks him up and jams the man's waist band over a closet door hook. He's left hanging there, legs dangling like a helpless monkey, as the two girls cower under a bed spread.

PARKER

Is this your house or the boy's mother?

STEPFATHER

Wha-what? It's mine. That drugged out bitch didn't have a dime. Now get out before I call the cops.

PARKER  
Yeah, do that. Children's Services  
too, you pathetic pedophile. Cops  
are gonna love your act.

Parker turns to Angel.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Where'd your mother keep her  
papers? Get your Birth Certificate.  
We're outta this whore house.

Angel runs off and returns with a small metal box.

ANGEL  
If she had it, it'd be in here.

PARKER  
Then let's go. And if I hear a word  
outta you, daddy-o, I'm gonna redo  
your face...understand?

Parker points Angel out the door, as one of the GIRLS waggles  
her fingers.

GIRL 1  
Bye, Angel.

GIRL 2  
See ya in math.

PARKER  
C'mon kid. Where's your uncle at?

EXT. RUN-DOWN ROOMING HOUSE - DAY CONTINUED

The Cobra pulls up in front. Angel knocks on an apartment  
door. We hear a wheezing voice.

UNCLE (OS)  
It's open.

INT. CLUTTERED STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY CONTINUED

Inside is a wizened old man on a tattered Barcalounger. A  
dirty blanket is wrapped around his skeletal, dark-skinned  
body. Books are stacked and piled everywhere. Empty booze  
bottles and pizza boxes vie for the remaining counter space.

UNCLE  
Hello, Angel. And you, sir, must be  
from Child Services?

PARKER  
No. Should we call them?

ANGEL  
No way, Parker.

UNCLE  
Unfortunately, the closest thing to  
Child Services around here is a  
dirty blanket in the drunk tank.

Parker looks around in distaste.

PARKER  
Gotta leave him someplace.

UNCLE  
Not in this town, sir. Besides, you  
seem to be the only one who cares.  
Why can't you take him?

PARKER  
Take him? What, are you nuts? It's  
a hardcase zoo out there.

UNCLE  
Better than here. He has a chance  
with you helping him.

Parker wipes a dribble of blood from his brow.

PARKER  
Do I look like a nurse maid?

ANGEL  
I can take care of myself.

UNCLE  
Right now he needs a guardian. And  
you look like you could guard the  
devil out of most anybody.

ANGEL  
I don't need anybody.

UNCLE  
Yes, you do, Angel. Go look in my  
desk. Bring me that folder. And  
speaking of nurse maids, bring the  
first aid kit, too.

Angel returns with both the folder and aid kit. From the kit,  
the Uncle hands Parker a Band-Aid. From the folder he pulls  
out a single sheet of official looking print.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

I got this for that bum your mother married. But he wouldn't sign it.

Uncle holds out the paper as Parker sticks a Band-Aid over his nicked brow.

UNCLE (CONT'D)

All you have to do is sign here and here, and it's all legal like.

PARKER

What's all legal like?

UNCLE

You become Angel's de facto guardian.

PARKER

Guardian? You kidding me, old man? Nothing's that simple.

UNCLE

It could be, if you allow it to be.

ANGEL

I want it to be. Besides, you saved my life. Indians say you own me now. So, what's the difference?

Parker runs a frustrated hand through his hair.

PARKER

Good gawd.

UNCLE

It'll keep Social Services away until you can find him a place.

PARKER

Find him a place? For crissakes I'm trying to find me a place.

UNCLE

At least get him to Vegas. They've all kinds a support services there.

PARKER

Vegas?! That'd be nothing but trouble for a kid on his own.

ANGEL

I promise not to be any trouble.

PARKER  
Oh, you promise, huh?

Angel makes a two-fingered "V" sign behind his head, like two Indian brave feathers.

ANGEL  
Honest, injun.

PARKER  
Yeah, right, Kemosabe.

ANGEL  
Who?

PARKER  
Aw, man.

Parker blows out a breath in frustration.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
Just get in the car, kid.

EXT. COBRA BACK ON SAME DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY CONTINUED

In the distance ahead, smoke rises from behind a dune. A cop car, ambulance and fire truck are parked on the shoulder.

Parker shifts down, slows as any rubber-necker would.

ANGEL  
Can't we stop and go see?

PARKER  
Hell, no. Just act natural.

A cop now holds up a hand, allowing the ambulance room to turn around and head back to town. Parker stops the car.

ANGEL  
Never saw a car burn up. Are the rats in the ambulance, or the car?

PARKER  
Don't ask stupid questions, kid.  
You know nothing. Saw nothing.  
Heard nothing. Just act dumb, okay?

ANGEL  
I'll try, but I'm not good at dumb.

The cop signals them to continue as Angel removes from his pack a laptop computer and a tiny gizmo with a suction cup.



Angel attaches the gadget to the windscreen as Parker hands him a folded map and proceeds to ROAR down the road again.

PARKER

Here. Find Las Vegas and figure out how many miles we've got to go.

Angel fumbles with the map.

ANGEL

What is this thing?

PARKER

What's it look like?

Angel starts typing on the laptop.

ANGEL

Some kind of old timey chart?

PARKER

Old timey? It's called a map, kid.

ANGEL

M-m-map?

PARKER

If you know how far our destination is, you figure in the speed and work out what time we'll get there. It's called...math.

ANGEL

M-m-math?

PARKER

Yeah, smart guy. Didn't you learn this stuff in the third grade?

ANGEL

I skipped the third grade.

PARKER

Well, no wonder.

ANGEL

And the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th. I'm stuck in 8th 'cause I'm too young, or small, or something. It sucks.

PARKER

Then you oughtta be able to figure it out, smart guy. Right?

Angel points to the computer screen.

ANGEL

Right. We're 110.3 Miles from Vegas  
and we'll be there in 49 minutes.  
But you better slow down to 65.

PARKER

What? Why?

ANGEL

'Cause we're doing 135 miles per  
hour and there's a cop with a radar  
gun up ahead.

PARKER

What?!

Parker immediately shifts down and brakes, slowing the car to the legal limit. Ahead, hidden in the shadows beneath a stand of Mesquite, lies in wait a Nevada HP car with a radar gun.

The Cobra RUMBLES sedately past as the cop taps his radar gun in confusion.

ANGEL

Geez. Feels like I could get out  
and walk at this speed.

PARKER

How did you know a cop was there?

Angel points to the gizmo.

PARKER (CONT'D)

What is that?

ANGEL

A radar detector.

PARKER

Where did you get that?

ANGEL

I made it.

PARKER

Huh. You just saved me some big  
bucks.

ANGEL

Does that mean we can stop to eat?

PARKER  
Don't push it, kid.

INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - LATE AFTERNOON

Parker and Angel are sitting in the Cobra. Remnants of fries, burgers, and milk shakes lie in their laps or on the dash.

Parker keeps glancing around, touching parts of the car.

ANGEL  
You worried it's gonna fly away?

PARKER  
I just like looking at her. Is this a great looking machine, or what?

ANGEL  
Well, it's sure the loudest.

Parker shakes his head in disgust.

PARKER  
Why aren't you in school goofing with kids your age?

ANGEL  
It's July. Didn't they have summer vacations in the olden days?

PARKER  
Hey, I'm not your stepfather, kid. You keep giving me lip, I'll drop you off at the nearest cop shop.

ANGEL  
Sorry. It's just that most kids my age are morons. We don't...relate.

PARKER  
You're obviously smarter. Why not hang with older kids?

ANGEL  
Can't. They're all bigger 'n me.

PARKER  
So what? You ever notice how small and tough most Navy SEALs are?

ANGEL

All I get is pushed around, called Camel Jockey and Sand Bunny. And I can't join the Navy for six years.

PARKER

You don't look beat up.

Angel points to his teeth.

ANGEL

See these? They're all still there 'cause I run fast.

PARKER

That's your best defense?

ANGEL

It's that, or look like a hockey player before I reach puberty.

PARKER

You need a few new skills, kid.

Parker stuffs the empty food containers into a bag and hands it to Angel.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Go dump this. We need to find somewhere to crash.

ANGEL

Crash?

PARKER

Sleep. You never camped out?

Angel tosses the bag idly toward a dumpster and misses.

ANGEL

Not on purpose.

Parker dead-eyes Angel, who gets out, puts it in the trash.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT GULLY - MORNING

A camo parachute is tented over the car, two fishing poles act as tent poles. Parker and Angel sit on rolled up blankets by a small camp stove. Each holds a tin coffee cup.

PARKER

You sleep okay?

ANGEL

Yeah...except for all the howling.  
What was that?

PARKER

Coyotes.

ANGEL

Like in the Road Runner?

PARKER

Like in real life. We're on their  
front lawn.

ANGEL

So, they were having a war council?

PARKER

Probably bitching about who just  
moved onto their turf. Sort of the  
same thing you run into at school.

ANGEL

I'd rather deal with coyotes than  
those guys.

PARKER

Tell me how they hassle you.

Angel slumps his shoulders, lets out a big breath.

ANGEL

When I bike to school, a kid and  
his buddy jump out from behind a  
car and grab the handle bars.

PARKER

Yeah?

Parker stands and walks a few feet into the brush to return  
carrying the white skull and wide horns of a long dead steer.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Then what?

ANGEL

Then the other kid pushes me off  
and they both ride to school.

PARKER

And you walk.

ANGEL

Yeah. All the kids laugh at me,  
'What's the matter Angel, somebody  
steal your camel?' I hate it.

Parker grasps the ends of the horns and kneels down in front  
of Angel as if holding his bike's handlebars.

PARKER

So, the kid does this?

ANGEL

Uh huh.

PARKER

Then what do you do?

ANGEL

Nothin'. He's way bigger 'n me.

Parker shakes the horns.

PARKER

So what? He can't hit you if he's  
busy holding the bike...right?

Angel can only scuff his feet and look away.

PARKER (CONT'D)

It's the perfect time to punch him  
in the face. Hell, you might get a  
couple more shots in. Make him pay.

ANGEL

Yeah, sure.

Parker tosses the skull back into the brush.

PARKER

Look. Think of life as being in the  
ring. Like a prize fighter.

ANGEL

Ring?

PARKER

A boxing ring. And all fights have  
a referee, right? Someone to make  
sure it's a fair fight.

Angel looks askance at Parker.

ANGEL

Yeah? So?

PARKER

So, what's the very last thing the ref always says to both fighters before the first round?

ANGEL

What?

PARKER

Protect. Yourself. At. All. Times.

ANGEL

Really?

PARKER

It's life's most important lesson, kid. Take care of yourself. If can you do that, you can do anything.

Angel stands there with a confused look up at Parker.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Okay. Let's see how you punch.

Angel sits back down. A tear winnows its way down a cheek. He quickly swipes it away with a scowl.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Of course you don't know how to fight back. No one's ever showed you how. C'mon. Stand up.

Angel struggles to his feet to stand, head down, in front of the now towering Marine.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Ready? Now give me your best shot.

Angel just stands there, looking at his feet. His head barely comes up to Parker's chest.

PARKER (CONT'D)

C'mon, hit me in the stomach. Don't worry, you can't hurt me. I'm a big, hard-ass Marine.

Angel finally takes a wide swing and hits Parker's hip.

ANGEL

Ow.

PARKER

Okay, good. You did it. Now you're gonna learn how to do it right.

Angel can only stand there and rub his sore knuckles.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
 Now do it again. But, shoot your  
 fist straight into my belly. Not to  
 it, into it. And turn your knuckles  
 down. Make your wrist stiff.

Angel stands rubbing a hand. Parker points to his own belly.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
 C'mon, kid. Get pissed. Hard as you  
 can. Straight as you can.

Angel continues to rub his fist until suddenly unleashing a  
 punch straight into Parker's stomach. More frenzied blows  
 follow in a whirlwind of jabs and hooks until a final  
 breathless uppercut scores directly into Parker's crotch.

PARKER (CONT'D)  
 Ow.

Parker leans over and places his hands over his groin.

ANGEL  
 Sorry.

PARKER  
 (Gritted teeth)  
 Nice shot. Couldn't have done  
 better myself.

ANGEL  
 I had my eyes closed.

PARKER  
 No problem. Next time we'll work on  
 how to keep from getting hit.

ANGEL  
 You can teach me that?

Parker walks away bow-legged, shaking his belt buckle.

PARKER  
 Obviously not very well.

EXT. CRUISING ALONG DESERT HIGHWAY - AFTERNOON

Parker shifts down to ROAR quickly past a long line of SUVs  
 stuck behind another ubiquitous camper. His smile is wide.



PARKER

Sweet!

Angel sits playing some kind of card game on his computer.

ANGEL

What?

PARKER

That sound, kid. Don't you feel it?

Angel doesn't look up. Keeps playing.

ANGEL

Uh, huh.

Parker looks down at Angel's computer screen.

PARKER

What could be better than the wild  
ass sound a Cobra makes?

ANGEL

Making a wild ass pile of money?

PARKER

Money? Is that what you're doing on  
that thing?

ANGEL

We could be, if you wanted to.

PARKER

What's this about making money? You  
got a card scam working?

ANGEL

It's just an idea. I've never tried  
it in a casino.

PARKER

Why not?

ANGEL

Duh. Cause I'm too young. They  
don't let kids play.

PARKER

You haven't tried it out, yet?

ANGEL

No, but that was where I was going  
when those guys grabbed me.

PARKER  
Show me how it works.

ANGEL  
Can't. We gotta be in a casino.

The Cobra flashes past a Vegas casino billboard showing a family being showered by hundred dollar bills.

Parker notices the billboard, shakes his head.

PARKER  
You think it could really work?

ANGEL  
Yes!

Parker lets out a long breath.

PARKER  
What's that saying? In for a penny,  
in for...the whole megillah?

ANGEL  
What?

PARKER  
You just saved me the price of a  
cushy hotel room instead of a jail  
cell tonight. Maybe I could help  
you win a scholarship?

ANGEL  
Scholarship?

PARKER  
If your system works, you could win  
a full ride into a boarding school.

ANGEL  
Boarding school? Isn't that like a  
reform school?

PARKER  
Think of it as education with three  
hots and a cot. Like in the Corps.

ANGEL  
The Marine Corps? You're kidding.

PARKER  
Be good for you.

ANGEL

Ah, geez.

PARKER

So, you don't want to try it out?

ANGEL

No, no. I mean, yes!

Parker pulls out a fat wad of cash.

PARKER

Besides, those two idiots in the GTO chipped in a little.

ANGEL

Cool.

EXT. GAUDY VEGAS INDIAN CASINO - EVENING

Parker pulls under portico as a yellow '63 split-window Corvette stops behind. Both drivers give a short RESOUNDING BLIP on their throttles before shutting down.

Parker and Angel get out of the Cobra, both noting a WOMAN and GIRL exit the classic Corvette. Parker nods at Corvette.

PARKER

Beautiful.

WOMAN

Thanks.

PARKER

So's your car.

WOMAN

So's yours.

Parker grins, turns to the casino doorman in a CHIEF's gaudy feather headdress, beaded costume. Behind him are two THUGS dressed as indian braves with single feathered headbands.

We will soon find that the casino is mainly populated with New Jersey, Brooklyn and Queens mob types who have been religiously watching Godfather and the Sopranos weekly.

Parker hands CHIEF the Cobra key.

PARKER

See that odometer, Chief? If it moves one bead...one...I'm going to scalp your parking tribe.

CHIEF

I got it, sir. Dat's a Shelby  
Cobra. America's kick-ass racer.

PARKER

True.

CHIEF

If we'd a had dese instead a dem  
Mustangs and Pintos...we'd be  
sittin' in da White House now.

PARKER

And deservedly so.

DOORMAN

So, don't worry about youse ride.

PARKER

Appreciate it, Chief.

Parker hands the Doorman a dollar bill as he and Angel walk  
inside. The Chief looks down on it with scorn.

CHIEF

(to self)

Cheap shmuck.

The driver of the Corvette, CARLY, a svelte 35 and her  
daughter, KATE, a skinny 10, walk up. Carly hands her key to  
the Chief along with a twenty dollar bill.

CARLY

What he said, Chief.

CHIEF

Youse got it, Carly. Welcome back.