

DRINKING IN CHURCH

EXT. ST. MARK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - NIGHT

A serene, star-drenched night. Against it, a church steeple clambers toward heaven. And then...

Church bells CLANG, disturbing the neighbors.

They belong to St. Mark's Catholic Church, built in the late 19th century and located in the suburbs.

It has a traditional cruciform floor plan, so when viewed from above it assumes the shape of a cross.

Leafy maple trees guard the left and right sides of the building, their leaves exploding in vibrant colors.

It's fall--the season of change. And uncertainty. The weather: unpredictable. What to wear? A coat? A sweater?

Choose wrong: pneumonia.

EXT./INT. ST. MARK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - NIGHT

We travel up five steps to the front porch and pass through the double doors. We notice the doors are dented and their hinges cling desperately to the frame.

Once through the doors, we find ourselves in the narthex, or the entrance to the church. Church literature rests on small tables on either side of the door. To the right, a coat rack. To the left, a statue of the Mother Mary. Next to it, three rows of devotional candles, some lit.

We pass through another set of double doors into the nave of the church; looking down the aisle we see row after row of pews.

It's deathly quiet in here.

Three steps above the nave is the chancel, home to the pulpit, lectern, and high altar.

Above the altar, the figure of the crucified Jesus.

Separating the nave and chancel is the communion rail.

In a balcony above the narthex is the choir loft; a majestic organ resides here.

In the north arm of the church is the baptistry, in the south arm an auxiliary altar.

Along the north and south walls hang the 14 stations of the cross, tracing the spiritual journey of Jesus.

Toward the front of the church is the confessional.

Kneeling at the communion rail is JAMES "SNAPPER" McREYNOLDS, 38. He wears an expensive black leather jacket. His head rests on his hands as if in prayer.

Next to him, a cell phone teeters on the rail.

Snapper lifts his head. His face: pale and wan. His eyes gaze numbly at the figure of the crucified Jesus.

His lips curl in disdain, he snorts in disgust.

SNAPPER

I hate this frigging place.

Snapper elicits a painful smirk as he drifts back in thought.

INSERT - TWO DAYS EARLIER

EXT. RACE TRACK - DAY

We're in the grandstand. It's loud, dirty, and stinks of draft beer and hot dogs. Old women study racing forms, and men smoke cigars and make bold predictions. Thoroughbreds with jockeys astride parade to the gate.

KOKOMO BLACKWELL, 34, leans on the rail at the finish line. A befuddled bear of a man, he scours the grandstand, then anxiously checks his watch.

From out of the crowd, Snapper saunters up to him.

SNAPPER

Is it post?

Koko heaves a sigh of relief.

KOKOMO

Almost. And you're sure about this?

SNAPPER

It's ironclad.

KOKOMO

It better be.

Offscreen, we hear the voice of the RACETRACK ANNOUNCER.

ANNOUNCER (OFFSCREEN)
And the horses are approaching the gate.

Snapper and Koko tense in anticipation.

ANNOUNCER (OFFSCREEN) (CONT'D)
And they're off!

The horses break from the gate. The crowd goes wild. Snapper and Koko join in the pandemonium.

SNAPPER
Go, go, go!

KOKOMO
Break inside! Break inside!

SNAPPER
Use the whip! Use the goddamned whip!

KOKOMO
C'mon Bristol!

Snapper freezes, twirls Koko toward him, screams over the cacophony of the crowd.

SNAPPER
Bristol? Who's Bristol?

KOKOMO
Our horse, who else?

SNAPPER
Our horse's name is Henry's Angel.

Koko shows Snapper the racing form.

KOKOMO
No it isn't. Look, number 5:
Bristol.

They both look at the racing form, then at each other-- then realize they've made a massive mistake. Out of desperation, they turn back to the race.

SNAPPER
Go, Bristol, go!

KOKOMO
C'mon Bristol!

The race continues as the crowd drowns out their desperate pleas.

EXT. RACE TRACK PARKING LOT - DAY

Snapper and Koko slouch toward the car, broken and dispirited. Koko glances sheepishly at Snapper.

KOKOMO

I thought you said number five in the fourth.

SNAPPER

I said number four in the fifth.

KOKOMO

That lost, too.

Snapper and Koko climb in Snap's decrepit 1988 Ford Pick-up.

EXT. CASE MANSION - DAY

A stately red-brick, Georgian-style home with white pillars. The front yard is adorned with a sloping lawn, evergreen trees, and guarded by a stone wall.

EXT. CASE GUEST HOUSE - DAY

A converted carriage house. It sits near the Olympic-sized swimming pool.

INT. CASE GUEST HOUSE - DAY

On the wall, a crucifix.

We pan down to an end table. On it, a 6 x 9 four-color brochure. The front cover reads "Caribbean Fantasy! Your Dream Vacation," accompanied by photos of lovers lounging on the beach at sunset.

A pair of hands, young, soft, and feminine, enters the frame. They pick up the brochure and open it. Their fingers run sensuously over the photos.

We pull back to reveal an intense, good-looking young woman: ROBBIE, 23. She devours the brochure's photographs with her eyes, which seem to brighten her. But we sense a profound melancholy surrounds her.

INT. FORD PICK-UP - DAY

Snap swerves in and out of traffic, taking his anger out on his fellow drivers and any unlucky pedestrians.

KOKOMO

Slow down!

Snapper jumps on his brakes, leans on his horn, sticks his head out of his window.

SNAPPER

Watch where you're going, asshole!

Snap turns to Koko.

SNAPPER (CONT'D)

What am I gonna tell Bunny? I drained our bank account. Everything we have. Everything we ever made.

KOKO

You mean she made.

SNAPPER

She's gonna kill me.

KOKO

What about me? I hocked Kitty's engagement ring.

SNAPPER

That's no way to start a marriage.

KOKOMO

I don't even want to get married.

SNAPPER

I don't blame you. She's loud, she's pushy--

KOKOMO

She's your sister.

SNAPPER

Doesn't mean I have to like her.

KOKOMO

You introduced me to her.

SNAPPER

I introduced you to my uncle. I didn't tell you to marry him.

KOKOMO

She doesn't even like me--and I ain't crazy about her.

SNAPPER

Bunny barely tolerates me.

Snap stops at a light. He takes a long, hard, pensive drag from his cigarette.

SNAPPER (CONT'D)

I'm a good-looking guy in the prime of my life. I deserve better.

KOKOMO

We both do.

SNAPPER

Do you realize we're involved with women who have animal names? They're not even animals, they're pets. And they're not even good pets. Bunny and Kitty? What the fuck is that?

KOKOMO

It's pitiful. But Kitty's the only woman who'll have me.

Snap swerves to avoid a school bus, then continues recklessly on his way.

INT. EMMANUEL'S BAR - NIGHT

A hideaway for serious boozers. Worn, red leatherette booths face the long bar, scarred by dents from busted heads from brawls past.

Snapper and Koko sit at the bar. Before Snap, empty shot glasses. Before Koko, a diet Pepsi with a straw. Snap motions to the Bartender.

SNAPPER

Another.

KOKOMO

Kinda early.

SNAPPER

Lay off.

KOKOMO

What are we gonna do?

SNAPPER

I have a couple of plans in the works.

KOKOMO

You and your plans.

SNAPPER

Unlike you, I'm enterprising. And this plan will get us money. Fast.

KOKOMO

What is it?

Snapper glances around the bar, then whispers to Koko.

SNAPPER

A robbery.

KOKOMO

A robbery?!

SNAPPER

Shut up!

KOKOMO

But we aren't robbers.

SNAPPER

We are tonight.

The Bartender brings Snapper another shot, which he downs hungrily.

EXT. EMMANUEL'S BAR - NIGHT

Koko and a wobbly Snapper step from the bar and head toward the Ford Pick-up.

KOKOMO

This isn't good. It feels hasty.

SNAPPER

We need money in haste.

KOKOMO

But this isn't like jacking a car. This is a robbery.

SNAPPER

So?

KOKOMO

So it's a moral dilemma.

SNAPPER

First of all, you have no morals,
Secondly, you can't define
dilemma.

KOKOMO

I don't like it.

SNAPPER

You don't have to. That's the
price of business. You take risks.
Sometimes they pay off. Sometimes
they don't. But at least you have
hope. And that's what we have.
Because we're partners. And
friends. Separately, we're weak,
just couple of spineless
jellyfish. But together, together
we can do anything.

KOKOMO

Anything but succeed.

SNAPPER

When did you become so cynical?

KOKOMO

You don't like it, get a new
partner.

SNAPPER

I've invested too much in you. And
you in me. Our partnership, it's a
rare and beautiful thing. Over
time it's grown and matured. And
now it's about to blossom and bear
fruit. And to throw all that away
now would be tragic.

As they reach the truck, Snap bends over and retches
violently, expelling his five Jack Daniels.

INT. CASE MANSION, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

In the middle of the room is a burnished mahogany table
the length of a freeway offramp. An enormous, wilted
floral centerpiece sits in the middle of the table.

Enthroned at the table is MIRIAM CASE, a true-blue blue
blood. At 56, Marion's skin is a little too tight, her
lips a little too full, and her eyes a little too wide--
courtesy of her plastic surgeon.

Marion sips her 2005 Puligny-Montrachet La Garenne, then dabs her mouth with an embroidered napkin.

Next to her, in a high chair, is her shitzu, Jimmy. Around his neck, a bib. Before him, a monogrammed bowl.

Robbie breezes into the room wearing an apron and carrying a sterling silver serving dish and cover.

ROBBIE

I've prepared something very special tonight.

MIRIAM

Mmmmm...

ROBBIE

I'm so excited about our trip. I've never been on a plane before.

Robbie places the dish on the table, then removes the cover with a flourish.

ROBBIE (CONT'D)

Veal Milanese. Just the way you like it.

MIRIAM

It looks lovely.

ROBBIE

I breaded them. Then fried them in a little olive oil and butter.

Miriam's calorie alarm goes off.

MIRIAM

Butter?

ROBBIE

Not too much.

MIRIAM

They're golden, just perfect.

ROBBIE

You think so?

MIRIAM

Yes. Although--

ROBBIE

Yes?

MIRIAM

Didn't I mention I was having the
Puligny-Montrachet La Garenne
tonight?

ROBBIE

Yes, but-

MIRIAM

No matter. I'm sure they'll
complement each other perfectly.
Thank you, my dear.

Robbie blanches as she places the cover on the serving
dish and slinks from the room.

Miriam slices a piece of veal, gives it a quick, snooty
sniff, then drops it in Jimmy's bowl.

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

That's a good boy.

Miriam strokes Jimmy's head as he gorges himself on the
meat.

INT. MAL'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The next morning. In a corner booth, Snapper slurps down
coffee to sober up. Koko impatiently drums his fingers on
the table.

KOKOMO

So who are we robbing?

SNAPPER

This guy. Some hedge fund asshole.
Thinks he's a big shot. Always
flashing a wad.

Koko looks regretfully out the window at the graffiti-
covered buildings and trash-filled sidewalks.

KOKOMO

Snap, we gotta get out of this
life. It's polluting us. We gotta
surround ourselves with good
people, honest people. We should
move to the suburbs.

SNAPPER

The suburbs?

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