

OFF THE METER

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FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Secluded, narrow.

Stray headlights provide brief illumination.

Soon, a yellow cab CRUISES along, passing empty sidewalks and closed businesses.

Flashing neon sign looms. Sensual female caricature decorates the bold, colorful words: HOT GIRLS! EXOTIC DANCERS!

Two businessmen, COLIN PLISSKEN, 38, coke addict, handsome, and BEN PLEASANCE, 41, stout, disorderly, stand next to it.

Suffocating cigarette smoke surrounds them.

Colin coughs before hailing the taxi.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Cramped. Ugly.

PENNY ARTHUR, 25, pretty, tough, flamboyant company jacket, handles the wheel.

The disheveled Colin and Ben slouch in the back.

BEN

Man.

Colin spots the clock: 3:14.

BEN (CONT'D)

Fucking tired.

Colin confronts Penny.

COLIN

Know where it is, right?

PENNY

Yeah.

Ben retrieves his metal flask. Drunk hands struggle to unscrew.

Colin GROANS and collapses.

COLIN  
Fuck, what a night.

After taking a SWIG, Ben nods at Penny.

BEN  
What ya think?

Colin smiles and sits upright.

COLIN  
Not bad.

Ben leans forward. Shit-eating grin.

BEN  
Hey, what's your name, baby?

Penny smirks.

PENNY  
None of your business.

BEN  
Hey, come on, girl. Just being  
friendly-

COLIN  
Yeah, just curious.

Like horny schoolboys, they continue pressing, aggravating Penny.

COLIN  
Don't have to be rude and-

PENNY  
Penny.

Another CHUG.

COLIN  
What-

PENNY  
Penny!

Her subtle anger elicits immature SNICKERS.

BEN  
Penny. Okay-

Colin nudges him.

COLIN  
 Hey, uh, wasn't chick at the club  
 named Penny?

More GULPS. Stronger buzz.

COLIN  
 Serious-

BEN  
 Damn, was she?

Penny turns the RADIO up. Top 40 HITS greet tortured ears.

COLIN  
 Yeah, man! She-

BEN  
 Shit, don't remember.

Next SWIG SPLASHES booze over his suit.

COLIN  
 Had the, uh, piercings, ya know.

BEN  
 Shit, don't-

COLIN  
 Ya know, she had them, uh, had them  
 like...

He glimpses at Penny before finishing.

COLIN (CONT'D)  
 Like on her pussy and tits and  
 shit.

Nausea strikes Penny.

Ben chuckles.

BEN  
 Shit, man, you're right! Remember  
 her now.

He CHUGS again.

COLIN  
 Yeah, dude.

BEN  
 Name was Penny!

He shakes the flask, not much left.

BEN  
Had a nice ass too.

Colin nods his head.

COLIN  
Yeah, man.

Display card catches his eye. Picture shows LAWRENCE TALBOT, 52, athletic.

COLIN  
Thought your name was Penny?

Penny squirms.

PENNY  
It is.

Colin leans forward, inspecting the card.

COLIN  
Who's, uh, Lawrence?

Ben CACKLES.

During the interrogation, Penny glances at the photo.

PENNY  
Oh, uh, that's my husband.

She faces Colin through the rearview mirror.

PENNY  
Got sick, so we switched shifts.

COLIN  
Don't mind his lovely wife being out this late.

Colin drapes his hand over Penny's shoulder.

She cringes.

COLIN (CONT'D)  
Intermingling with the customers-  
Quick rejection. Penny shrugs him off.

PENNY  
No.

COLIN  
Really? Why-

Penny smirks.

PENNY  
Knows I'm not into drunks.

Ben HECKLES Colin.

Like a jilted lover, Colin glares.

BEN  
Whoa, think ya just got shot down,  
man-

Colin shoves him away.

COLIN  
Naw, man, fuck you!

BEN  
Whatever-

Colin focuses on Penny.

COLIN  
Just playing hard to get.

He grabs a cigarette, ready to ignite.

COLIN (CONT'D)  
Ain't that right, Penny?

Her eyes narrow upon spotting the cig.

PENNY  
No smoking.

The command stops Colin mid-flick. He glowers.

COLIN  
Come on, really?

Penny grins, enjoying her authority.

PENNY  
Company policy.

Colin reaches out.

COLIN  
Come on, babe, thought we were  
having fun. Ain't gotta worry  
about fucking policies and shit.

Penny grimaces and evades his perverse touch.

PENNY  
Gotta keep my job.

Colin chuckles and turns to Ben.

COLIN  
What the fuck-

BEN  
Bitch's sitting ya down.

After concealing the cigarette, Colin smiles.

COLIN  
Well, looks way better than that  
other Penny.

BEN  
Yeah, probably no piercings either.

Colin caresses her hair.

COLIN  
Yeah, bet this Penny's all natural.

Penny escapes his grasp once more. She glares.

PENNY  
God, leave me alone-

BEN  
Damn!

Colin puts his hands up, feigning innocence.

Ben SNICKERS.

COLIN  
Shit, babe, ain't gotta get all mad-

PENNY  
Doing my job, alright! Just stay  
back-

COLIN  
Shit, sorry.

BEN

Wow-

Colin leans in.

COLIN

Hey, let's stop somewhere.

Drunk smirk accompanies hair groping.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Let me make it up to ya, huh?

BEN

You're crazy, man-

COLIN

Promise won't tell Lawrence-

Penny shoves Colin's hand away.

PENNY

Stop, creep!

Colin shakes his head and retreats.

COLIN

Ah, missing out, Penny. Ben and me, we'd show ya a good time.

BEN

Definitely!

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Few cars. Sparse streetlights.

Cab STOPS. Dark corner. Isolated.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Colin and Ben go quiet. Such seclusion surprises them.

Ben hides his flask.

Colin grins and shoots forward.

COLIN

Alright, looks like Penny wants to play.

He snags the headrest.

COLIN (CONT'D)  
Nice private spot.

Silver FLASHES.

Switchblade emerges, JAMMING through Colin's face.

COLIN  
Ah, fuck!

He screams.

Blood GUSHES everywhere.

Helpless hands flail, missing the handle.

BEN  
Shit, man!

Colin collapses, EXHALING heavy breaths.

BEN  
Fucking bitch!

Ben charges after Penny.

The two struggle while Colin's painful CRIES provide a disturbing soundtrack.

Finally, Penny holds Ben's head down. She leans back and YANKS the blade.

COLIN  
Aw, fuck! Goddammit!

She pushes Ben.

BEN  
Fucking bitch-

Swift SWING SLICES his throat, silencing him.

Blood SPEWS and SPURTS.

Ben CRASHES against the window, redness SPLASHING the glass like a bad paint job.

Colin struggles and opens the door.

He stumbles out, LANDING with a harsh THUD.

COLIN  
Aw, fuck! Motherfucker!

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

No one else around. Quiet.

Blood trails Colin. He crawls away. Pitiful attempt.

Penny follows, brandishing her malevolent blade.

COLIN

Help! Somebody help, please!

Penny snags the back of Colin's head. No escape.

She smiles and SLAMS his face again and again, BATTERING it to a pulp.

Weapon SLIDES underneath his chin, finishing the kill.

She PULLS it out, SPLOTCHING her jacket with redness.

She BREATHEs heavy and glares at Colin.

After searching, Penny snatches his wallet.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT (LATER)

Cold WIND blows.

Penny OPENS the trunk.

LAWRENCE TALBOT, real cab driver, awaits in his boxers. Stab wounds cover his chest.

LAWRENCE

No-no, please.

Switchblade rises.

LAWRENCE

No!

JABS HIT hard, puncturing his stomach and face.

Soon, Penny stops and lowers her weapon, exasperated.

She glances around, double-checking. Nothing.

Penny's jacket LANDS on Lawrence, hiding the hideous sight.

She snags her purse. Two wallets TUMBLE inside.

Next, she retrieves a handkerchief and wipes away all fingerprints.

She cleanses herself, scrubbing off the splattered blood.

Old hoodie conceals her fit bod.

Trunk SLAMS, and, with that, Penny leaves the massacre behind.

Fingers TWIRL the blade before JAMMING it in her pocket.

She smirks upon spotting a looming sign: BUS STATION.

FADE OUT.

THE END