

INT. DIVE BAR SET - DAY

A boxy raw space sits dim and empty. One half is dressed to look like a seedy bar, in a noirishly styled way.

SHUNCK. A metal door opens. CLICK. Neon lights BUZZ to life behind the bar. They flicker on a huge, fake blood stain.

Voices drift down the hall, caught up in an animated discussion that veers into fight territory.

AGNES (O.S.)

I already said no. That part of L.A
isn't like L.A at all. It's like a
commercial for L.A.

Agnes, a real looker who'd say she's five pounds over weight but certainly is not, strides right through the room.

She wears a well loved yellow hoodie and holds an enormous binder. Multi colored post-its jut out of every page.

AGNES

We've been murdering an authentic
look so far. We can't fuck it up now.

Pauline, 40's, short and sour, stops in the fake doorway. Agnes slaps her binder on the bar. A pint glass falls over.

PAULINE

Hot set, kid.

Agnes grabs a pack of cigarettes off the bar. She takes one out, lights it, and puts it back exactly where it was.

AGNES

Yes, I know. It's my hot set.

PAULINE

I'm saying no. We don't have the
money. And free is free.

AGNES

Take it out of my fee.

PAULINE

No way.

Agnes takes a frantic drag. The cigarette dangles way at the edge of her fingers. It's clear she's not a smoker.

AGNES

I'm pulling rank.

PAULINE

You've got no rank to pull, kid.

Agnes's free hand balls into a fist.

AGNES

Pauline. Just. God dammit.

PAULINE

Christ. Not this "don't call me kid" shit again. It's a term of endearment. That's all.

Agnes explodes. It's more flustered than angry. If you look close enough you can see Pauline suppressing a grin.

She makes absolutely sure Agnes doesn't notice.

AGNES

I'm not your kid. I'm your director and executive producer. I don't need terms of endearment. I need support, OK? We're halfway through week one and way past our "shit that can go wrong went wrong" quota. Everything is going wrong. Everything. And I know it's my fault, OK? So you don't have to tell me it's my fault. I mean. Duh. Obviously. So just - just - go fuck a duck, OK? Go take a duck out on a date, get it drunk, and have lousy sex with it. I need fifteen. OK? Can you give me fifteen?

From the word "duh" onward, Pauline is straight up turning red trying not to laugh. Agnes also kind of wants to laugh.

But she also wants to cry. Genuinely and for a good, long while. Pauline handles her shit

PAULINE

You've got ten.

She walks out immediately. Agnes lets out a series of sounds. A sigh. A grunt. A harumph. A melodic breath.

She stands up extra straight to get control of her breathing. There's a CREAK behind her.

CASSAVETES (O.C.)

Dude.

Agnes spins around. A sleepy Cassavetes stands behind the bar. He slips on a pair of sunglasses.

It's impossibly cool looking.

CASSAVETES

Yo.

Agnes forces an even expression to her face.

INT. DIVE BAR SET - CORNER BOOTH - DAY

There's a cot behind the bar. Cass been nappin'. The neon creates perfect pools of multi colored light.

Agnes and Cass face each other across a heavily dressed booth. Ashtray. Glowing mini-juke. Tons of empties.

Agnes plays with the corner of a Bear On Bear Ale label.

CASSAVETES

Is she supposed to talk to you like that or what?

AGNES

Yeah. I told her to go ahead and be as much of a dick as she needed to be to keep me on track. Turns out she can be a much bigger dick than I could ever have thought.

She shrugs.

AGNES

Meh. You know what though? It's her first time producing anything. We're both pretty overwhelmed.

She disappears into a private moment. Cass clears his throat. Agnes looks down to hide that she's about to cry.

CASSAVETES

Dude. Go ahead and cry. My old lady cries when we're out of milk. Skin. Teeth. None off mine. Etcetera.

Agnes takes a deep breath.

AGNES

So you can just nap like that? Whenever you feel like it?

CASSAVETES

Bro, these days are fucking long. I had no idea. Gotta catch those Z's whenever. I got other shit to do.

BLOOP BLOOP. Cass gets a few rapid fire texts. His whole posture changes. Like a rubber ball deflating.

Agnes uses the opportunity to switch focus from herself.

AGNES

Everything copacetic?

CASSAVETES

(Without thinking)

Dude, don't say copacetic.

He recognizes his rudeness instantly and looks to apologize for it. It's cool. Agnes just bursts out laughing.

AGNES

I knew there was a reason I cast you. You got sass, fella. I love it.

A walkie talkie HISSES. Agnes turns it off. Cass looks at Agnes so he's not looking at his phone when it BLOOPS more.

CASSAVETES

Why did you cast me, anyway? Penny I get. She's proper. But me? I just fart around with puppets and shit.

Agnes leans back. It's the most relaxed she's been.

AGNES

You have a great look. Obviously. You can act. But mostly you're pretty. I like pretty dudes. There's something so manly about pretty dudes. It's a confidence thing, I guess.

Cass is a little caught off guard. Not uncomfortable, necessarily - just surprised.

Before either of them can say anything SAMMI, a lean girl in a punk outfit, pops her head in.

SAMMI

Hi. So. Yeah. Sorry...ma'am. They want you back on set.

AGNES

Ten four, little homie.

Sammi nods and slips out. Agnes stands.

AGNES

Hey. We didn't get to spend a whole lot of time together during pre-production and rehearsals and stuff. You want to make lunch a somewhat regular thing? It's cool to say no.

CASSAVETES

Sounds good, chief.

AGNES

Seriously. I've got pretty thick skin. You can say no if you want.

CASSAVETES

We're good. See you tomorrow.

Agnes smiles. She's relieved he didn't say no. She hurries off. Cass strikes a kind of butch pose.

INT. DIVE BAR SET - BAR - NIGHT

Cass sits on a stool with a foaming, frosty cold one in front of him. Agnes stands behind the bar.

She tops off a second frosty one and waits for the head to settle. Cass chugs his.

Agnes is mid-laugh. It's almost a chortle. Mostly a chuckle.

AGNES

- seriously, I had no idea you had ovaries. None idea. Like. At all.

Cass grins over his mug. He's completely comfortable with her. He knows she's laughing at herself and not him.

AGNES

Are you on T? What about the boobies? Are you gonna keep your boobies? Wait. Wait. Sorry. I don't want to be pushy. Pay no mind.

CASSAVETES

Nah. You're good.

AGNES

Man. So terrific.

CASSAVETES

Did this beer come out of the budget?

AGNES

Nah. I paid to have a real keg put in last night. I figured one solid frosty pint of liquid gold in the middle of the day would get me through. Keep it under your hat, though. Paul would flip her lid. She's already bummed at how much of my own money I've spent so far.

CASSAVETES

Because of her ten percent?

AGNES

Oh, god no. She's more like a deranged aunt than an agent.

CASSAVETES

So she really loves you, huh?

Agnes nods through her first sip. A sip she really enjoys.

CASSAVETES

Cool. Cool. She doesn't trust you, though. Does she?

AGNES

Oh, fuck no.

CASSAVETES

Is that a bummer?

AGNES

Maybe. I choose to look at it as a challenge. How do I get her to trust me by doing what I think is best? It's like a stupid sodoku puzzle that might never get solved.

CASSAVETES

I can dig that.

He holds up his mug. She CLINKS it with hers.

AGNES

Not gonna lie. I got kind of a one beer queer going on. Gettin' woozy.

Cass reaches below him and plops a brown paper bag on the bar. It has "CASS" written on it with festive colors.

CASSAVETES
For what ails you.

AGNES
Your old lady?

CASSAVETES
Yeah. Lucy.

Agnes folds the bag open.

AGNES
Oh right. The red head. She's a
production designer or something,
isn't she? Why isn't she on this
again? She on something else?

She takes an apple out of the bag.

CASSAVETES
Nah. Her ex wrote it.

Agnes holds a nice sando in wax paper in the air.

AGNES
She's that Lucy. Lucy Lucy?

CASSAVETES
Yup.

AGNES
Dammmmmmmmmmmn.

CASSAVETES
Yup.

She takes a pudding cup out of the bag.

AGNES
So she's cool with your shit, huh?

Cass shrugs.

CASSAVETES
She says she is.

AGNES
Dude. I don't think there's any
"saying she's cool" with that kind of
thing. She either is or she isn't.
And she massively is. Right? I mean.
You're together. She has to be.

She takes a red envelope out of the bag. It says "Cass's Birthday Week - Day Two" on it.

AGNES

Your birthday is this week?

He takes the envelope.

CASSAVETES

Yeah. Tuesday.

AGNES

Nice.

CASSAVETES

Do not do anything on set. I hate that shit.

He takes a second before he opens the envelope. He clearly doesn't want to open it at all.

AGNES

Oh come on. Don't be a Gloomy Gus. A week of birthday shit? That's some special shit right there.

CASSAVETES

It's pressure, is what it is. It's just a way for me to fall short on her birthday, that's all.

Agnes snatches the card.

AGNES

Oh poo.

She opens it. There's a standard issue "I Wouldn't Want To Monkey Around With Your Birthday" hallmark card inside.

And a bandage of some kind, that drops on the bar. Cass picks it up and folds it open. It's smeared with red.

There's a vague heart shape and a line of rust brown that could be letters. Cass stares at it.

AGNES

I know what that is.

CASSAVETES

What, a fucking used maxi-pad?

AGNES

Uh uh. Someone got a tattoo.

CASSAVETES

Fuck you.

He stares at the bandage. Agnes laughs. JENNA, a young, vibrant woman in a catering uniform, pops her head in.

JENNA

Hey, is this where lunch is going?

AGNES

Down the hall and around the corner.

JENNA

Got it.

She pops out. Agnes does a double take.

AGNES

Wait. Lunch just got here? Shit.
That's not good.

She's already on her way out. Cass swivels slowly around on his stool and watches Agnes leave.

CASSAVETES

No fucking way Lucy got a tattoo of
my name for my birthday.

CLINK. The outer door closes.

CASSAVETES

I'm never topping that!

BLOOP. He gets a text message from Lucy.

INT. DIVE BAR SET - NIGHT

Agnes lies on the cot behind the bar. Her arm comes up to cover her eyes. Which is odd, as -

- all the lights are out. Cass walks from table to table lighting candles. There's an ethereal glow going on.

Agnes hugs her binder to her chest with her free hand. She's got camera-ready makeup and a wardrobe outfit on.

AGNES

Paul says we blew the power for the
whole block.

CASSAVETES

And for your scene, too. Baller.

Agnes takes her hand away from her eyes to stare at the ceiling. A lighter FLICKS at regular intervals.

AGNES

At least I spent two hours in hair and makeup. At least that happened.

The ethereal glow spills over the bar. Agnes pops up.

AGNES

Beer? I think beer.

CASSAVETES

I don't want no week old lager ale, no how. But you go ahead.

Agnes pulls herself a weak looking pint. Cass sits at one of the centered tables. The candles flicker real pretty like.

AGNES

Hey. You. Manly man. Why didn't you tell me your girlfriend was so god damn good at her job? I want to keep her on for the rest of the shoot.

CASSAVETES

Nah.

Agnes walks around the bar. Her eyes never leave Cass, whose eyes never leave the candle. She sits.

AGNES

You've been kind of a monumental prick to her. You know that, right?

CASSAVETES

I know what I'm doing.

AGNES

OK, slugger.

Cass faux mutters -

CASSAVETES

At least I didn't blow the power for an entire city street.

Agnes drops her head on the table dramatically.

AGNES

This beer tastes like ass.

Cass grins. He slips a MINI TWIX out of his pocket and taps it on the table. Agnes perks up.

AGNES

Snack.

She snatches it, opens it, and pops it in her mouth. A door outside the fake walls CLUNKS open.

Penny walks in, head down. Her eyes are red and puffy. Her fists clench at irregular intervals.

She stops dead when she see's Agnes. They lock eyes.

PENNY

Oh. Shit. I thought.

Agnes opens her mouth to speak. Penny turns her full attention on Cassavetes.

PENNY

Lucy's looking for you.

Agnes freezes. Penny walks out. The door SLAMS. Agnes unfreezes by letting out a huge, held breath.

AGNES

Ugh.

CASSAVETES

Dang. She's still pissed?

Agnes chews her thumbnail.

AGNES

Yeah. I really screwed the pooch. On so many things.

CASSAVETES

Nah.

Agnes straightens her posture. She folds her hands in front of her. She forces a very direct eye contact with Cass.

CASSAVETES

Sup?

AGNES

Am I doing a good job? You're at monitor all the time. Watching. You've seen as much of the movie as anyone. Is it gonna be any good?

CASSAVETES

Fuck. I ain't know about that shit.

AGNES

Yeah. You really do.

CASSAVETES

Come on, now.

AGNES

Dude. Cass. Not you, OK? Not you with the BS. Everyone else knows I'm the one paying them -

CASSAVETES

You're paying us?

AGNES

- ha ha. Yeah. No, I'm serious. I need to know. For my own sanity. For my own edification. For my own ego. Be as straight with me as you can. Be totes brutal.

(deep breath pause)

Amy I any good at this?

Cass studies her face. He can see she's not letting it go until he gives her his honest opinion.

He opens his mouth to do so.

EXT. SOUND STAGE - PICNIC TABLE - BRIGHT, BRIGHT MORNING

Agnes sits crossed-legged on top of a picnic table facing a parking lot.

A crowd of people gather by the craft service table on the other side of the lot. Cass is among them.

Agnes takes items out of a brown paper bag and balances them on her binder, which sits across her lap.

She watches Cass goof off with the crew. And eats. Alone.

CUT TO BLACK: