

TELL ME ABOUT IT

One-Hour Pilot

Written by

Jack Maxwell

PAGE International Screenwriting Awards – Semifinalist 2026
(Top 1.7%)

Austin Film Festival – Second Rounder

Final Draft Big Break – Quarterfinalist 2026 (Semifinals pending)

Nashville Film Festival – Semifinalist 2026

Seven wins – Best Pilot/TV Script

Registered WGAw 2346588

FADE IN:

EXT. COTAI STRIP - MACAU - NIGHT

TOURISTS on tilt, hypnotized by hope.

Casinos crowd the Strip.

One rises above the rest -

QUEEN'S PALACE

Blazing PURPLE against the night.

EXT. ROOF - QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - NIGHT

TITLE: 500 FT. ABOVE MACAU

CRACK!

A BIG MAN'S fist finds the face of a blackjack dealer.

He crumples.

HO CHAN (50s), a small man. Chinese. Pocket square.

CEO of Queen's Palace.

HO CHAN
(Cantonese, subtitled)
Tell me. Who is the thief?

No answer.

Chan bends, studies the man's face.

Dealer spits blood...

Doesn't break.

A THIN WOMAN (30s), Japanese, approaches with a tea set.

It clinks.

Chan gropes.

Finds her elbow.

Then the cup.

A long sip.

A spray of blood on his pocket square.

Next to panting BIG MAN.

HO CHAN
(Cantonese, subtitled)
How?

Chan's milky eyes –

One blue. One brown.

Into the eyes of...

INT. HALLWAY - POLICE STATION - DAY

MAC ALLEN (late 40s), handsome and haggard. Crumpled khakis.

An officer leads him in.

TITLE: LOS ANGELES

Puke-green hallway.

Mac clocks:

Corkboards.

Scuffed linoleum.

Fluorescent hum.

On a crossing gurney –

MARIA GARCIA (late 30s), FBI. Mac's ex-girlfriend.

Wincing.

He grabs her hand.

MAC
Maria!

MARIA
Some crisis negotiator, huh?

MAC
What happened?

MARIA

Lousy shot. Grazed my hip. You
shouldn't be here.

Her SAPPHIRE RING snags his cuff.

Holds.

A shared look.

He works it loose.

Gurney moves.

Mac walks.

CAFETERIA

A SWAT sniper aims into the wire-mesh window.

CHIEF ADAMO (65), dress blues. Four stars.

Jaw tight.

CHIEF ADAMO

Frank Adamo. No time. My daughter's
in there with a gun to her head.
She's a patient of yours.

Chief Adamo pulls up a photo on his phone —

MAC

Ellen.

CHIEF ADAMO

Talks about you all the time.

MAC

Why is there a gun—

CHIEF ADAMO

Filed for separation. Husband took
her hostage. He's, uh—one of mine.

MAC

I'm not that guy.

CHIEF ADAMO

You're the only one who's ever
reached her.

Chief Adamo takes Mac aside.

CHIEF ADAMO

(low)

She told me they screwed you on
your custody. Do this, I'd be very
grateful.

Mac peeks into the cafeteria window:

BUCKLEY (late 20s) unshaven, red-eyed. A ball of nerves.

Laser dot dancing on his chest.

ELLEN BUCKLEY (late 20s), next to him.

Gun to her temple.

MAC

Look, I'm—

CHIEF ADAMO

Please.

Chief Adamo grips Mac's shoulders.

CHIEF ADAMO

Get her out of there.

An officer holds out a Kevlar vest.

Mac ignores it, walks away.

CHIEF ADAMO

She's my baby girl, for Chrissakes!

Mac stops short.

INT. MAC'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

TITLE: TWO YEARS AGO

JIMMY FLYNN (50s), a porcupine in a wheelchair.

Rosary wrapped around his right hand.

Crisp shirt — monogrammed JF.

SCARFACE (30s), Jimmy Flynn's enforcer. A box of muscles with
a bat.

A scar runs down his face.

His size-13 boot grinds Mac's face into the carpet.

JIMMY FLYNN
What'd my daughter tell you?

No answer.

The bat comes down...

CRACK!

On Mac's back.

MAC
AHHHHH!

WALL: Mac Allen.

Licensed Professional Counselor

END FLASHBACK

Police station.

Mac still.

He turns, brushes past Chief Adamo.

Stops at the cafeteria door.

Inhales.

MAC
(in his head)
One. Two—

CHIEF ADAMO
Thank you.

MAC
(in his head)
Three. Four.

Exhales.

MAC
I just deal the cards. How they
play 'em— That's on them.

Mac pushes through.

— END OF TEASER —

INT. CAFETERIA - POLICE STATION - DAY

The door clicks shut behind Mac.

He reaches to his back.

BUCKLEY

Freeze!

Mac shows his hands, lifts his shirt -

A metal-lined, sweat-stained back brace.

Mac clocks:

An overturned table.

Shattered mug.

Hip-level bullet hole in the wall.

He slips off his shoes.

Eases into a chair like a hot bath.

Hot coffee from a shattered mug creeps toward his foot.

Eyes locked on Buckley.

Buckley's phone blares - CASINO JACKPOT ringtone.

Mac's heart thumps.

His left leg twitches.

MAC

(in his head)

Gambler. Great.

Coffee seeps into his sock.

He ignores it.

Buckley shuts the phone off with his left hand.

Gun in his right.

Watch on his right wrist.

MAC

(in his head)

Southpaw. Off hand.

BUCKLEY
So you're the shrink. What'd she
tell you?

Mac relaxes his shoulders.

MAC
She told me about Kauai.

Buckley thrusts the gun toward Mac.

MAC
In the soft mist. Double rainbow.
You proposed.

BUCKLEY
I'll kill you both!

MAC
The ring was in the lei.

BUCKLEY
Stop it!

MAC
Wailika was it?

Face twisted.

BUCKLEY
Wailua.

MAC
Right. Best day of her life.

Mac moves to their table.

Buckley's gun follows.

Through the wire-mesh window: Chief Adamo whispers to the
sniper.

The laser dot slides off Buckley.

BUCKLEY
She was leaving me.

MAC
I've been there.

BUCKLEY
I can't do this without her.

MAC
Tell her.

ELLEN
(soft)
I'm listening, Peter.

Ellen's hand moves to Buckley's – fingers splayed over his wedding ring.

BUCKLEY
I took cash out of the evidence
room. To buy your ring.

ELLEN
Just wanted you.

ELLEN'S RING FINGER: Tan line.

Buckley sees it, jams the weapon into Mac's face.

BUCKLEY
ALL IN!

Buckley cocks the gun.

Too close.

Spent gunpowder.

MAC
What if I could get you one more
hand?
Clean game.
No vig.

Silence.

BUCKLEY
You know?

Mac reaches across the table.

Both palms up.

Ten seconds.

Buckley looks at the gun.

At Ellen.

Places the gun into Mac's hands.

Mac feels its weight.

Buckley lets go – deflates.

Mac stands.

Helps Ellen up.

Buckley makes it to his feet.

Broken.

Mac in the middle. One hand on each shoulder.

INT. HALLWAY - POLICE STATION - DAY

Mac, Ellen, Buckley emerge.

Stunned silence.

ELLEN

Daddy!

Chief Adamo and Ellen embrace.

Buckley is dragged away.

Mac bends, hand on his back.

Ellen is escorted out.

CHIEF ADAMO

I could use a guy like you.

MAC

So could I.

CHIEF ADAMO

You've got some gift.

MAC

Gift, curse.

Still bent.

Socked feet.

Straightens.

Pauses.

Walks back into the cafeteria.

Door closes behind him.

INT. MAC'S OFFICE - DAY

Dust floats in morning light.

License gone - worn outline.

Mac ushers CARL JENKINS (40s) toward the door, a hand on his back.

MAC
You'll be fine.

Carl looks at Mac a second too long.

Hands him \$100.

Slumps out.

Scarface strides in.

A POSTER: The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride. Greed. Wrath. Envy. Lust. Gluttony. Sloth.

SCARFACE
Which one's you?

MAC
Throw a dart.

Scarface traces Wrath with his finger.

SCARFACE
Last job. Guy's skull.

MAC
Who was that?

SCARFACE
Jimmy's daughter Tina had a best friend. Her father. Jimmy thought he was hiding her.

MAC
Would you like to talk about it?

Scarface points to Mac's back.

MAC
I know. It's okay.

Mac turns, opens a cabinet.

FRAMED PHOTO: Mac and his 6-year-old daughter at a carnival.

He counts out cash.

Turns back.

WHACK!

Scarface backhands Mac, money flutters.

MAC

Ahhh!

Scarface's eyes drop.

SCARFACE

Sorry. Had to.

Mac scoops up the hundred-dollar bills, hands them over.

Jimmy Flynn rolls in. Rosary around his fist.

Mac's red cheek.

Flynn smiles.

JIMMY FLYNN

Ho Chan's baccarat tables are
torturing me. Now he's on me for my
markers.

Scarface hands over Mac's money.

JIMMY FLYNN

Twenty grand. Doesn't cut it.

Flynn looks at the HALF RING FINGER on his left hand.

JIMMY FLYNN

Someone inside's bleeding his
casino. You find out who, get him
off my back.

MAC

I'm not that guy.

Flynn waves the cash.

JIMMY FLYNN

I'll let you bet again.

MAC

If I say no?

Jimmy Flynn leaves a burner phone on the desk, rolls out.

Scarface follows.

Mac stuffs mail into his shoulder bag.

Takes one out.

Rips it open.

Ruby Allen College Fund: \$68.14

The letter floats to the ground.

BOOK: A Day at a Time – Gamblers Anonymous

Mac pulls the bookmark –

A \$1.25 slot machine ticket.

In his head:

MAC (V.O.)
(phone filter)
Tina, it can wait till our session.

TINA FLYNN (V.O.)
(phone filter)
What if Friday never comes?

INT. CUBICLE - FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY

PLAQUE: Special Agent Maria Garcia – Extreme Courage

Maria at her desk.

PHONE SCREEN: Facebook Memories. Mac & Me.

Her finger hovers over the delete button.

SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE COX (50s) approaches.

Pulls a pill bottle hidden in her tissue box.

COX
I'll give you a week.

Tosses her the bottle, moves.

Maria alone with it.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY

Maria alone in a conference room.

PHOTO TRIANGLE:

Jimmy Flynn

Tina Flynn

Mac Allen

Maria's eyes on Mac's photo.

To Tina's.

Back to Mac.

INT. BEDROOM - HO CHAN'S HOUSE - MACAU - DAY

HO CHAN'S POV:

Dark shadows.

He enters.

Freezes.

Sniffs the air -

Sex and Cedar Musk.

Nostrils flare.

Chan yanks the comforter off his bed.

His wife and a bearded white man huddle on PURPLE satin sheets.

Chan's eyes ablaze.

Then -

Chan inhales the scent.

Holds it.

Goes ice cold.

Slips off his wedding ring.

Lets it go.

It spins on the shiny hardwood floor.

Still.

INT. BREAK ROOM - QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - MACAU - DAY

A lineup of pit bosses, dealers, cocktail waitresses and cashiers.

Arms out. Palms up.

Ho Chan is guided by EDWIN LEE (30s), big man bodyguard from the roof.

Chan puts two fingers to each wrist -

Feeling pulses.

His thumb brushes palms -

Checking for sweat.

Eyes dart.

INT. COUNTING ROOM - QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - DAY

An employee glances at her phone.

Taps a link.

The red light on the security camera goes dark.

She stuffs an envelope with cash - JF on the front.

Throws it in a drawer.

Taps a link.

Red light flicks back on.

INT. HO CHAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Chan on a call.

HO CHAN
Find me someone.

Edwin's eyes swing from Chan to his own HALF RING FINGER.

He pushes his wedding ring down tight on the stump.

His face contorts.

INT. BEDROOM - MAC'S TINY APARTMENT - NIGHT

WALL: The Scream, Edvard Munch. Same contortion.

Mac on one pillow, back brace on the other.

Straps reaching out.

Scars on his back like a Keith Haring.

INT. MAC'S OFFICE - DAY - DREAM

In session.

TINA FLYNN (14), fragile. Jimmy Flynn's daughter.

Mac sits.

MAC

See? Better this way. So, what's on
your mind?

TINA

I wish I coulda just told you on
the phone.

She looks at the door.

TINA

If my father knew I was here.

She fiddles with her dress hem.

Mac catches a bruise on one knee.

Then the other.

The door kicks open.

Tina screams.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

Mac wakes with a jolt.

CLOCK: 1:11 a.m.

- END OF ACT ONE -

INT. MAC'S OFFICE - DAY

In session.

Anxious PATIENT (40s).

PATIENT

I snap at my wife. I don't know.

Mac studies the man playing with his ring.

MAC

(gentle)

You're afraid she'll walk out the door. The way your mother did when you were five.

Patient freezes.

PATIENT

I muttered that. The door.

The burner buzzes.

Mac tightens his back brace.

Checks the phone.

Too quick.

MAC

My kid's teacher. One sec.

Answers.

MAC

Hi. Everything all right?

JIMMY FLYNN (V.O.)

You're goin' to Macau. Tighten your straps.

CLICK.

Flynn gone.

MAC

I'm in session. I'll have to call you back.

Burner buzzes.

SCREEN:

Mac's daughter RUBY (6) on a playground swing set.

The floor drops.

Mac pales.

He texts Chief Adamo—

SCREEN:

Custody hearing?

PATIENT
Are you okay?

MAC
I'll be fine.

INT. MAC'S CAR - MOVING - SUNSET

Mac speeds down the freeway.

CASINO BILLBOARD

Framed by lightbulbs. Some burnt out.

Mac's phone buzzes.

SCREEN:

My husband, Carl Jenkins, won't be in therapy any longer. I'm sorry to say he killed himself after his first session with you. I know you tried.

Mac's hand to his back brace.

His breath catches.

MAC
You'll be fi—

HORN BLASTS!

MAC
AHHH!

An 18-wheeler barrels by.

INT. MAC'S CAR - CASINO PARKING LOT - SUNSET

Mac rolls to a stop.

CASINO SIGN

Lights flicker.

Memory triggers.

EXT. CARNIVAL - DAY - FLASHBACK

Bustling, noisy.

YOUNG MAC (8), in a white First Holy Communion suit.

On a bench.

Legs swinging.

A chubby kid sits, goes to work a foot-long hot dog.

Young Mac fixed on the Men's Room across the midway.

Door opens —

YOUNG MAC
(in his head)
Next.

Wrong.

He waits.

A puddle of lemonade under his shiny white shoes.

The chubby kid downs the last bite, walks off.

A bee lands on Young Mac's hand.

He ignores it.

Locked on the door.

It opens —

YOUNG MAC
(in his head)
Next.

A man stumbles out.

Young Mac springs up.

Splashes through the lemonade.

Doesn't notice.

YOUNG MAC

Dad, guess what? I was right!

His father —

Hollow.

Gaunt.

Pale.

ANGLE: Dad's far arm, hidden from Young Mac's view.

A fresh needle mark.

Blood beading.

YOUNG MAC

(in his head)

But I won.

END FLASHBACK

Mac sits parked.

Casino neon spills through.

Hand on the door, knuckles tight.

Pained.

MAC

...ah.

INT. MARIA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

PHOTO: Helicopter ride — Maria smiles, Mac terrified.

Maria sets her service weapon beside a potted cactus.

A text from Mac.

She texts back.

Breath shallow.

MARIA

Being with you is like walking on
black ice.

Maria puts her phone down.

INT. MAC'S TINY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mac puts his phone down.

A Buddha on the coffee table.

Mardi Gras beads around its neck.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Mac's high beams on Maria.

Silver chain around her neck.

He kills the engine.

Exhales.

Steps out.

Maria stands thirty feet away.

Dust blows between them.

Ten feet apart now.

MAC	MARIA
How's the hip?	Jimmy Flynn, Mac?!

MARIA
You think this ends in Macau?

MAC
I, uh—

MARIA
You take too many chances.

MAC
Maybe you don't take enough.

Maria twists her ring.

MARIA
What did Tina Flynn tell you?

MAC
She ran out. You here to work me?

MARIA
If I don't—

MAC
Flynn's threatening my daughter!

Maria looks away, shivers.

Mac pulls off his sweatshirt — a 33 on a shamrock.

Tosses it.

She catches it.

Slips it on.

Hangs loose — sleeves long.

She pulls the collar to her nose.

Eyes closed.

MARIA
How's Ruby?

MAC
I don't know.
(beat)
How's your father?

MARIA
Slipping away. Forgets the Bureau.
Spanish only now.

Her sapphire ring glints.

MAC
Same one I gave you?

MARIA
Never take it off.

Mac hops onto the hood.

Pats the space next to him.

Maria hesitates, joins him.

They sit.

She touches his shoulder.

A shooting star streaks by.

MAC
Remember that wish thing we used to
do?

MARIA
You planned our whole day around
11:11. "Four aces," as you called
it.

MAC
Yeah, fell for you like a blind
roofer.

Maria chuckles, swats Mac's leg – a reflex.

MARIA
Forgot what that felt like.
(beat)
You ever fix that leak?

MAC
Still drips.

He reaches for her hand – stops.

MAC
A little.

MARIA
Why, Mac?

MAC
The gravity of the ledge, I guess.

He tightens his back brace.

MARIA
From a guy who's afraid of heights.

Maria slides off the hood.

MAC
(in his head)
The... door.

Gets in her car.

She grips the wheel.

Engine on.

MARIA
(to herself)
I brought you juice every morning.

She peels out.

Dust cloud red in the brake lights.

Mac blinks.

He clocks something.

An SUV in the distance.

Engine idling.

SUV DASHBOARD: A stuffed envelope – JF on the front.

– END OF ACT TWO –

INT. MAC'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOCK: Ten till.

MAC (O.S.)
That's our time. Why do you come if
you don't talk?

Jimmy Flynn glances at Mac's back.

JIMMY FLYNN
Maybe you will.

Flynn tosses an envelope.

Mac reaches to catch it — shirt rises, back brace exposed.

JIMMY FLYNN
Still milking that?

Mac opens the envelope — a Macau travel visa.

JIMMY FLYNN
Chan's getting skimmed. You go find
the employee who's doing it.

MAC
Why would he want me?

JIMMY FLYNN
Violence didn't get him the truth.
You'll be able to.

MAC
What makes you think I can do that?

JIMMY FLYNN
You cracked my daughter like a
safe. Now she's gone.

MAC
Because you killed her.

Mac tosses the visa back.

Flynn lets it drop.

JIMMY FLYNN
I don't kill girls.
(beat)
Ruby loves those swings, huh?

Mac picks up the visa, resigned.

JIMMY FLYNN

You open a man, he tells you what
he feels.

Throws the blanket off his legs -

Limp and useless.

JIMMY FLYNN

I can feel everything. Just can't
move.

Flynn spins.

Snagged on the blanket.

The joystick grinds - impotent.

Flynn reaches - too far.

He rocks the chair.

Stuck.

A look.

Mac doesn't move.

INT. CUBICLE - FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY

Post-It: Tina Flynn

MARIA'S LAPTOP:

Case File - Jimmy Flynn - RESTRICTED

She slams it shut.

A beat.

Opens it.

Looks around.

Inserts a flash drive.

Types.

Pulls it out, pockets it.

Knocks on her desk.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - MAC'S TINY APARTMENT - MORNING

Knock. Knock.

Mac answers.

Maria.

She peeks in.

Luggage.

MARIA
You going somewhere?

MAC
Macau. Flight's at ten.

MARIA
Window seat?

MAC
Funny.
(beat)
He killed her, you know?

MARIA
Officially, she's missing.

MAC
Unofficially, we both know.

MARIA
Game's rigged.

MAC
I'll make a wish.

MARIA
At 11:11?

Silence.

Maria walks away — sunrise brushes her profile.

MARIA
"You'll be fine."

INT. MAC'S TINY APARTMENT — CONTINUOUS

Mac walks back in.

Grabs his phone.

Takes a long sip of coffee.

MAC
You'll be—

Swallows.

MAC
...fine.

A car horn beeps outside.

Mac grabs his luggage and shoulder bag.

INT. SCARFACE'S CAR - MOVING - MORNING

Silence.

SCARFACE
I do therapy, you won't talk?

MAC
Tell me something true.

SCARFACE
Jimmy already knows who's stealing
from Chan.

MAC
Then why me?

SCARFACE
Think about it on the plane.

Scarface scribbles a PHONE NUMBER on Mac's palm.

SCARFACE
Jimmy's private line. He'd bury me
for this.

Mac silent.

SCARFACE
Need to heal, Mr. Allen.

MAC
It's Mac. You got a name?

SCARFACE
Thomas Alan O'Donnell. Tommy.

Hand to his scar.

INT. EDWIN LEE'S HOUSE - MACAU - DAY

Speakerphone.

HO CHAN (V.O.)
(Cantonese, subtitled)
Pick up this American therapist.
Read him.

EDWIN LEE
(Cantonese, subtitled)
Yes, sir, Mr. Chan.

Edwin hangs up.

Rubs his temples.

FRAMED PHOTO: Edwin Lee, his wife, his daughter — all smiling.

INT. HO CHAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Chan hangs up the gold phone.

Picks up a family photo.

Squeezes.

The glass shatters.

A shard slices his finger.

Blood.

Drip.

Drip.

Chan is still.

Drip.

INT. MARIA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Maria lost in her sapphire ring.

Slips it off.

Into her pocket.

Eyes find the mirror.

INT. CUBICLE - FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE COX (50s) approaches.

Pulls a pill bottle hidden in her tissue box.

COX

Bloodwork catches everything.

Maria silent.

COX

He's obsessed with the Flynn girl.

MARIA

She was his patient.

COX

His left leg. Twitches when her name comes up.

Maria looks at him.

COX

Turn him. Or we will.
I'll give you a week.

Tosses her the bottle, moves.

END FLASHBACK

Maria takes a long look around -

Pushes her gold badge deep into the dirt of the potted cactus.

MARIA

Unofficially.

Silhouette on the shades.

Maria feels it - a presence.

Turns.

Nothing.

A truck door slams.

An engine starts.

- END OF ACT THREE -

INT. GATE - LAX - MORNING

People crossing, never touching.

GATE AGENT (O.S.)
Final boarding call for Flight 888
to Macau.

Mac's cellphone rings.

FaceTime:

His daughter Ruby, in pajamas.

MAC
Ruby! Hi love!

RUBY
(FaceTime)
See my picture I made?

She holds up a drawing:

A blue stick-figure.

RUBY
(FaceTime)
It's you, daddy. Not my new daddy.
(whispers)
I won't tell mommy. Okay, bye.

Gone.

MAC
(small voice)
"Okay, bye."

Shattered.

He clocks the jetway.

Passengers stream in.

Mac inhales.

MAC
(in his head)
One. Two. Three—

Men's room across the concourse.

Mac freezes.

Door opens -

MAC
(in his head)
Next.

A man emerges.

Hollow.

Gaunt.

Mac's left leg twitches.

The man walks away.

Mac follows.

In his head:

TINA (V.O.)
(phone filter)
What if Friday never comes?

He stops.

The man walks on.

Mac calls the number on his palm.

JIMMY FLYNN (V.O.)
How did you get this number?

Silence.

Heavy metal security door -

Gate Agent kicks the wedge out.

Mac runs to the jetway.

Mac hangs up, slips through the closing door -

CLANG!

INT. FLYNN'S DEN - MORNING

BANG!

JIMMY FLYNN
Who the fuck is it?!

Jimmy Flynn bangs the phone on his wheelchair.

Nerves fire – violent, involuntary.

He tips.

CRASH!

On his back.

Flailing.

Rosary breaks.

Beads scatter, hide under the table.

INT. AIRPLANE - MORNING

DING!

Mac in First Class.

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT sets down a glass of juice.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
From a passenger.

Mac looks around.

The engines roar.

Hands on the armrests – death grip.

BACK OF THE CABIN

Maria in a blonde wig and sunglasses.

The back of Mac's head.

He turns, searching.

She watches.

Opens her bottle –

One pill left.

Exhales.

Dry-swallows the last pill.

Skyward.

EXT. MACAU - NIGHT

TITLE: MACAU - 22 HOURS LATER

Loose roosters run through a dirt road slum.

A street vendor hawks egg tarts under crumbling colonial facades.

Queen's Palace Casino glows PURPLE in the distance.

INT. MACAU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

Mac passes a glowing Queen's Palace ad -

Shuts his eyes.

CAROUSEL

Edwin Lee holds a whiteboard:

Mac Allen

Mac approaches.

MAC

That's me. You Chan's guy?

No answer.

MAC'S PHONE -

CHIEF ADAMO:

Custody hearing.

Week from today.

Cannot change!

Mac pockets the phone.

Sizes up Edwin -

Black suit. Yellow socks.

Scarred knuckles. Kind eyes.

Luggage slides down the chute.

Edwin Lee reaches, half finger visible.

MAC
I got it.

Mac grabs his bags, heads for the exit.

INT. EDWIN'S LIMO - MACAU - MOVING - NIGHT

CLICK! Doors lock.

Mac reacts.

Edwin jockeys through taxis, buses, cars.

RED LIGHT:

Four CPSP officers jump out of a black truck.

Locals shoot dice in the alley.

Batons crack skulls.

A die skids through blood.

Red light turns green.

EDWIN LEE
Gambling only in casinos now.

MAC
How's the food in this goddamn
place?

EDWIN LEE
Goddamn good!

MAC
Prove it. On me.

EDWIN LEE
I was told not to stop.

MAC
This Chan must be a big, scary guy.

Edwin laughs.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MACAU - NIGHT

Laughter echoes as Maria enters.

Her phone buzzes —

COX:

Where are you, Agent Garcia?

Maria tosses the phone and the blonde wig.

Puts on a red wig.

Smooths the hair behind her ear.

MARIA
¿Dónde estoy?

OPEN SUITCASE

She lifts Mac's 33 sweatshirt –

A SILVER-FRAMED PHOTO:

Maria graduating from the FBI Academy – her father beaming.

She sets it on the dresser.

MARIA
Estoy aquí, papá.

Maria pulls the sapphire ring from her pocket.

Slips it on.

Opens her laptop.

Inserts the flash drive.

Taps the keys.

Surveillance video jumps to her phone.

Macau.

Live.

She exits.

INT. BLUE DRAGON RESTAURANT – MACAU – NIGHT

Chinese-Portuguese fusion.

Sea monsters on blue tile.

Koi drift through lit ponds.

A server refills water glasses –

EDWIN LEE
Obrigado.

MAC
You grew up here?

EDWIN LEE
Mostly.

Food arrives.

Peri-Peri chicken glistening with chillies.

Minchi over rice.

Golden cod cakes.

Steam rises between them –

A truce.

They eat in silence.

MAC
Can I ask you something?

Edwin doesn't answer.

MAC
What's with the socks?

EDWIN LEE
Yellow. Every day. It was my little
girl's favorite color.

Edwin rubs the wedding ring on his half finger.

EDWIN LEE
Two days after her seventh
birthday. Typhoon Hato. Her mother,
too.

No expression.

EDWIN LEE
In Portuguese. Saudade.

A server approaches. Mac waves him off.

EDWIN LEE
Do you have children?

Mac shows a photo:

Ruby.

Big smile.

Two front teeth missing.

MAC

I lost her. The way my father—

Left leg twitches.

EDWIN LEE

(gentle)

Saudade.

Silence.

All eyes wet.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - SMALL TOWN, ARIZONA - DAY

TINA FLYNN (now 16) walks to her sun-baked mobile home.

A black SUV idles three trailers down.

Tina watches from the door.

She slips inside.

The deadbolt clicks.

A lizard does push-ups on the splintered porch.

INSIDE THE TRAILER

Tina writes in looping cursive —

Dear Mr. Allen,

My father is a—

A dog barks outside.

Tina freezes — pen suspended.

The dog stops.

She resumes.

Slower.

EXT. EDWIN'S LIMO - NIGHT

Mac and Edwin walk from the restaurant to the limo.

Edwin opens the front passenger door.

Mac looks at Edwin.

Gets in.

INT. EDWIN'S LIMO - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

SkyCab Cable Car glides past.

Its light catches a crystal bottle of Cedar Musk in the cupholder.

MAC

Hot date?

EDWIN LEE

No. No dates.

Silence.

EDWIN LEE

I take it from the employees. Chan forbids the scent. His wife's, uhm...

Edwin looks away.

MAC

Lover.

EDWIN LEE

Traição!

Edwin slaps his own mouth.

Mac picks up the bottle -

EDWIN LEE

Mac!

Sprays his neck.

His wrist.

Edwin wipes his sweaty palms.

Lights from the Cotai Strip ripple on the windshield.

EXT. ROOF - QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - NIGHT

Lights ripple across Chan's hazy eyes.

He looks out over the Cotai Strip.

A gust blows the roof door open.

EXT. QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - NIGHT

An Uber door flies open.

Same gust.

Maria jumps out - red wig and glasses.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - SMALL TOWN, ARIZONA - DAY

A GIRL'S HAND slips a thick letter into a mailbox.

INT. EDWIN'S LIMO - NIGHT

Mac pulls mail from his shoulder bag.

Between the phone bill and a pizza coupon.

The same thick letter.

Heavy in his hands.

He opens it -

TINA (V.O.)
Friday never came.

CLOSE ON LETTER: "I think he'll find me soon."

- END OF ACT FOUR -

INT. QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - NIGHT

Mac and Edwin wind through tables and slot machines.

A jackpot explodes.

Mac's heart kicks him in the throat.

His left leg twitches.

Thin Woman approaches.

Smile rehearsed.

THIN WOMAN

Greetings, Mr. Allen. Welcome to
Queen's Palace!

She escorts Mac away.

EDWIN LEE

Até breve, amigo.

BACCARAT TABLE

A chilled bottle of Dom.

Dealer pops the cork.

Pours.

\$5,000 in black chips.

THIN WOMAN

With our compliments, Mr. Allen.
While we wait for Mr. Chan.

Mac sits.

He lifts the chips.

His heart races.

Breath quickens.

He feels the weight.

The cool clay texture.

Thin Woman walks away with a smile.

Her gold dress into -

INT. HO CHAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gold lamé curtains.

Crystal chandeliers.

The beaten blackjack dealer slumps in a chair.

Red surgical markings circle his ring finger.

A thug lights a cigarette.

Offers it to the dealer.

INT. QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - NIGHT

Maria spins through the revolving doors.

Players yell.

Dealers bark.

Slot machines ring.

Maria swipes through LIVE CASINO CAMS on her phone –

Blackjack.

Roulette.

Cashier.

She sidles up to several black-suited security guards.

Tilts her phone.

One spots her screen.

His eyes narrow.

Maria walks away.

They all follow.

MARIA

Here we go.

A hand clamps Maria's arm.

Her phone clicks to 11:11 p.m.

She taps RECORD – red dot blinks.

Security drags her away.

Her sapphire ring glows under the lights.

Shoes slip on the marble.

No traction.

MARIA

Hey, watch the hip!

Maria looks straight into a security camera – flat.

The feed glitches.

BACCARAT TABLE

Mac squeezes the chips.

His hands move forward – palms up. Like with Buckley.

Thin Woman returns.

Watches from behind.

Mac quivers.

Veins popping.

Ten seconds.

He turns his palms over.

Chips splash.

MAC

Rain check.

To Mac's back –

Thin Woman's grimace creeps back into a smile.

THIN WOMAN

This way, Mr. Allen.

Mac flips one black chip back to the dealer.

MAC

For you.

Mac and Thin Woman leave.

The dealer racks the chips and the tip.

ELEVATOR BANK

Waiting.

MAC'S PHONE —

CHIEF ADAMO:

I need you to do something for me.

Mac blinks.

MARIA (V.O.)
(in his head)
You think this ends in Macau?

Doors open.

Thin Woman inserts a key, pushes ROOF.

Bows out.

Cantonese leaks from her earpiece.

ELEVATOR

The car rockets through the glass shaft.

Mac braces himself against the walls.

The lights of Macau swirl.

He shuts his eyes.

Lets go.

Cinches his back brace tight.

The elevator stops.

Doors don't open.

Mac's eyes snap open.

Doors open.

EXT. ROOF - QUEEN'S PALACE CASINO - NIGHT

Mac emerges.

Heat hits him like a blow dryer.

The roof door slams shut behind him.

Chan looks out.

HO CHAN
Welcome, Mr. Allen.

Gravel crunches under Mac's feet.

COTAI STRIP:

Tiny cars.

Blinding lights.

Mac sways.

HO CHAN
There is a traitor in my kingdom.
You will uncover him.

Chan gropes, finds Mac's left hand.

Two fingers find his pulse.

MAC
I'm not that—

Chan SNATCHES Mac's ring finger, twists.

MAC
Ruby!

Chan pulls Mac close.

HO CHAN
Yes!

Cedar Musk hits Chan.

Eyes wide.

He releases.

His hand to his ring finger.

Naked.

He yanks anyway.

Again.

Nothing there.

A tear slips down Chan's cheek.

Mac flinches.

MAC
(in his head)
Saudade.

Chan's knees buckle.

Breath shallow.

Mac steady.

Chan's watch buzzes –

SCREEN:

The blackjack dealer sits.

Blood drips into a silver ice bucket.

Half a ring finger at the bottom.

Thug on one side, Maria on the other.

Chan holds his watch to his ear –

THUG
(Cantonese, subtitled)
Mr. Chan. Lady spy.

Composure returns.

HO CHAN
Now we will see.

Mac exhales.

MAC
Tell me about it.

Mac reaches for the Velcro on his brace.

A long RASP.

Refastens.

LOOSER.

BLACK.

– END OF ACT FIVE –

TAG

EXT. MOBILE HOME - SMALL TOWN, ARIZONA - DAY

A dog barks.

A figure dressed in black peers into the window.

A black SUV. Black windows.

Engine idling. Back door wide open.

SUV DASHBOARD:

An envelope - JF on the front.

Maria's gold badge, encrusted with soil.

INSIDE THE TRAILER

Tina under the table.

Knees pulled to her chin.

Holding her breath.

Looks up -

A swamp cooler sputters and coughs - too loud.

A bottle of grape soda on the table - tipped over.

Purple fizz runs along the edge.

Onto Tina's head.

She shuts her eyes.

Drip.

Drip.

Silence.

Drip.

BLACK.

- END OF PILOT -