

**EAST COASTERS**  
Original Screenplay  
by Ken Luber

Reg. WGAw

EXT. BASTERVILLE U. FOOTBALL FIELD - OVERCAST FALL DAY

Rain clouds threaten. Wind sweeps debris across the muddy field. The only thing worse than the weather is the play of the Basterville University FOOTBALL TEAM. The sparsely filled, wooden stands are dotted with fans wearing brown paper sacks over their heads.

COACH MORRIS ("Moe the Toe") STONE, middle-aged, rotund African-American, fuzzy, pink earmuffs clamped to his head, paces the sidelines. He winces at the battle on the field, as...

ANGLE ON FOOTBALL FIELD

The BASTERVILLE QUARTERBACK drops back to pass as the opposing player chases him further back. The quarterback is running for his life, zigzagging towards his own goal line. Tackled on the two yard line, he FUMBLES the ball. Another opposing player picks up the ball and starts a spectacular ninety-eight yards run, jumping over players, dodging tackles, until he races across the goal line.

ON SCOREBOARD TOPPLING IN THE WIND

As the TD is reported on the board: PORT FALLS 72 - BASTERVILLE U.- 0.

ON COACH STONE

He throws his hands in the air, turning to the hang-dog looks on the young, overmatched crew that faces him.

MOE

Never give up! Never give up! Destiny is  
in our hands!

INT. UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

ELKINS

(slams the NEWSPAPER on his  
desk)

But the ball is always in the other  
team's hands. That's the problem!

President E.C. ELKINS, thin, square-jawed, not much taller than the back of his chair, screams.

CLOSE ON: NEWSPAPER HEADLINE

"DOUBLE DOZEN FOR BASTERVILLE U. - Twelve losses - Twelve losing seasons." And "BASTERS IN ANOTHER TURKEY."

ELKINS (CONT'D)

Ninety per cent of the alumni won't  
return my calls anymore! They're ashamed  
to be associated with Basterville U.

Elkins looks over to Coach Stone, slumped in the chair. Stone's rumpled look sinks into the folds of his bright pink and black sweatshirt with "THE BASTERS" scrolled across the front.

ELKINS (CONT'D)

We haven't sold a season ticket or a sweatshirt in three years. Enrollment is down sixty percent. Parents think we breed losers. Do you know what the Athletic Director of the Conference told me....

(a KNOCK on the door interrupts)

Just one minute! I'm busy!

(continuing)

He told me: The presence of Basterville University drags down the entire East Coaster Conference. And we've got three penitentiaries and a retirement home in our division!

(the KNOCK repeats; Elkins screams)

Come back after lunch! I'm busy!

E.C. has whipped himself into a rage, gyrating around his desk.

ELKINS

(continuing)

They don't want us back which means we lose our share of the conference revenue. We're broke, Moe! No endowment, no conference money, no alumni investments, nada, zilch, zed, we're running this school on my Mastercard! You can't take a shit with your shoes tied and you can't run a major university on plastic.

This time along with the KNOCK, the door OPENS a crack. PROFESSOR CHASE DIEGO WILLIAMS, a young African-American man, in a bright parka, earmuffs and wool cap, sticks his head in. Dreadlocks peak out beneath his cap.

CHASE

Excuse me, Dr. Elkins; we've got a twelve-thirty appointment and I've got a one o'clock Shakespeare class in ten minutes.

ELKINS

Cancel the class, Professor Williams. Cancel the entire drama department! I'm sorry we couldn't discuss this over lunch.

MOE

They've got the creamed tuna special in the cafeteria.

ELKINS

Creamed tuna's Wednesday. Chipped beef is Tuesdays.

CHASE

Chipped beef's Mondays. Mac and cheese is Tuesdays.

MOE

Mac and Cheese is...

ELKINS

Shut up! No more menu talk! We're not having lunch anyway! The fact is we've got to downsize our departments and our faculty. We're broke.

CHASE

(devastated)

Dr. Elkin, how could you? This has been my dream since I played Rodney the Rabbit in my pre-school Easter Parade show.

Moe gets up, clutching his pork pie hat.

MOE

I've given thirty years service to this school. How many times did the Ohio States and the Notre Dames come knocking on my door?

(off Elkins' blank look)

How many times did the Cowboys and the Packers call me out of retirement to play one more year?

(Chase thinks hard)

But I said no! I said I was a Baster till the day I died. Well, gentlemen, today the pigskin turned into a hamhock.

Moe sweeps past Williams, out of the office.

ELKINS

(shouting after him)

Hock, shmuck! We're just going with a younger coach. It's nothing personal. The alumni committee asked me to make the announcement on the Internet, ASAP!

(turns to Chase)

Don't smirk.

CHASE

I ain't smirkin'.

ELKINS

The man was a war hero, a POW, a professional football player. Sit down, Williams.

CHASE  
You're telling me I'm history, too?

ELKINS  
People do Shakespeare in the round,  
Shakespeare in the park. You did naked  
Shakespeare in the dark. No boobs, no  
booty. All we heard were voices. That's  
radio.

CHASE  
I was pushing the envelope, Dr. Elkins.

ELKINS  
This isn't the post office. The theatre  
has been a losing proposition since  
before you arrived. You're a genius,  
ahead of your time. Coach Stone is behind  
the times. I've always said that the man  
ahead of his time and the man behind the  
times, if given enough distance,  
eventually meet. Unfortunately, it's in  
the unemployment line.  
(desk PHONE RINGS)  
Hold that piece of shortbread.  
(grabs the receiver)  
Hello, Elkins here.

KASINSKI (O.C.)  
This is Meyer Kasinski, in Los Angeles.

INTERCUT: KASINSKI'S GAUDY BEVERLY HILLS MANSION

A squat MAN, with a dyed, reddish brown moustache and  
matching hairpiece, bellows with a broad European accent into  
the phone.

ELKINS  
Kasinski?

KASINSKI  
Kasinski!

ELKINS  
Oh, yes, the food service! Checks in the  
mail. We love your chicken salad.

KASINSKI  
You wrote me a letter about my son.

ELKINS  
Son? Oh, that Meyer Kasinski!  
(cups the receiver; to Chase)  
He's stuffed with money!  
(back to Kasinski)  
Yes, I read about the tragic passing of  
your son and was deeply touched. In fact,  
even though Meyer Jr.  
(MORE)

ELKINS (cont'd)  
 was only with us for half of one  
 semester, we've already started calling  
 our new entertainment center the Meyer  
 Kasinski Jr. Sports Dome-Yoga-Theatre  
 Complex.

ELKINS SEES: through the rain-streaked window to a BULLDOZER  
 sitting in an empty field. Coach Stone stands like a lone  
 sentry in the pouring rain.

ELKINS (CONT'D)  
 Of course, we'd like to make that  
 permanent.

Elkins shoots a look to Chase and motions him out of the  
 office.

CHASE  
 (grumbles as he leaves)  
 You've ruined my life. You've killed my  
 dream...

KASINSKI (O.C.)  
 Meyer Jr. loved sports.

ELKINS  
 (slams the door and braces  
 himself against it)  
 Yes he did. Enormous potential. We were  
 just talking about his athleticism.

KASINSKI  
 That coach.. what was his name.. with the  
 toe?

ELKINS  
 Toe, toe? Moe! "Moe the Toe" Moe Stone.  
 Morris Stone! A veritable fixture at our  
 institution.

KASINSKI  
 That's it! He used to say, Pop, that man  
 gave me a chance to play. Dr. Elkins,  
 that's what made me call. I'm thinking of  
 a donation to the University, but I'd  
 really like to talk this thing over with  
 Coach Toe. I'd like to look in his eyes  
 and see what my son saw. When you give  
 away five million fat ones you want to  
 know exactly whose mouth it's running  
 into.

ELKINS  
 Fi mi.. mi,mi, mi,mi,million dollars?

Elkins spins around, shooting a look to the rain pouring down  
 on the empty field. Elkins throws up his arm, waving, trying  
 to get Stone's attention.

ELKINS (CONT'D)  
 Fat ones, smackers, greenbacks,  
 bananas...

EXT. MOE STANDING IN THE FIELD

Rain streams down the brim of his hat. In the light of the President's office window, MOE SEES: A shadowy figure raising a fist towards him.

Moe raises his fist, shaking his arm defiantly.

INT. ELKINS THROWS OPEN THE WINDOW

Leaning out into the pouring rain.

ELKINS  
 (getting drenched)  
 Moe, it was just a joke! Come on back!  
 Let's do lunch!

KASINSKI  
 Lunch?  
 (shoots a look to Boris, one  
 of his armed Bodyguards)  
 Meyer never goes out. You come to papa!

INT. THEATRE OFFICE - NIGHT

Chase glumly packs his books, clears the walls of pictures and his diplomas. Then, tenderly, he removes a PHOTO of TRACY McNEIL (pretty, African-American, late twenties) from his desk. He looks at the photo with love in his eyes.

CHASE  
 Tracy...

EXT. FACULTY APARTMENTS - SUNNY WINTER MORNING

TAXI pulls up, horn barking. Dr. Elkins jumps out. Coach Stone, in a tight-fitting, Palm Beach white, 60's style suit, emerges from a ramshackle building, carrying his Basterville duffel bag.

Elkins throws his arm around him as they walk to the taxi.

ELKINS  
 I know you said Meyer Jr. never played a  
 down and was the worst athlete you've  
 ever laid eyes on, but the cross-country  
 flight should give you ample time to make  
 up splendid stories about him.  
 (MORE)

ELKINS (cont'd)  
 Miss Kirkland, the school comptroller,  
 will assist you with the financial  
 arrangements in every way she can.  
 (winks)  
 She's brilliant with money.

AT THE CURB

Stern, pointy-faced MISS KIRKLAND peers out the backseat taxi window.

ELKINS  
 Air tickets were the last thing I could  
 fit on my plastic.  
 (cups Stone's meaty hands)  
 The fate of Basterville U. is in your  
 hands, Moe. They either keep the doors of  
 Basterville University open or shut them  
 forever.

INT. RECEPTIONISTS OFFICE (UNIVERSITY BUILDING) - DAY

Elkins bursts in, brimming with joy.

ELKINS  
 (singing to himself)  
 We're rich, we're rich, we're out of the  
 goddamn ditch...

SECRETARY  
 Dr. Elkins, I've been calling all over  
 for you. Meyer Kasinski has already  
 called four times this morning!

INT. KASINSKI'S MANSION - DAY

Meyer is clutching a THEATER PLAYBILL, ranting on the phone.

KASINSKI  
 I was going through his stuff. He had  
 tons of crap. Don't ever give your kid a  
 six figure allowance. Anyway, I found a  
 theater playbill from..  
 (reads)  
 Shakespeare in the Dark.

INTERCUT: ELKINS' OFFICE - SAME

ELKINS  
 Shakespeare in the Dark? Oh no, that was  
 done without our permission. Off campus.  
 We fired the..

KASINSKI  
 (cutting him off)  
 Tony wrote in the margin: In the dark, I  
 saw the light.  
 (MORE)

KASINSKI (cont'd)  
 Thank you, Professor Williams. You're..  
 (breaks into sobs)  
 You're the bomb. I want to double my  
 donation...

ELKINS  
 (squeezing out the words)  
 Ten million!

INT. WILLIAMS'S OFFICE DOOR FLIES OPEN - MOMENTS LATER

Elkins bursts into the empty office.

ELKINS  
 Williams! Chase???

STUDENT  
 Dr. Elkins!

He spins around, facing the anguished, young student in the doorway, clutching a box of Kleenex.

STUDENT  
 Professor Williams is trying to kill  
 himself!

EXT. CHAPEL BELFRY - MOMENTS LATER

CHASE, in a long black duster and black turtleneck, stands on the ledge in the chapel belfry. The gusty wind blows his scarf. Terrified students gather on the ground, necks craned. Some carry hand-lettered signs: "JUMP WITH DIGNITY" ... "JUMP FOR JOY." Others are shouting.

STUDENTS  
 Don't jump, Professor Williams!

CHASE  
 (shouting)  
 Closing down the theatre was like drawing  
 the final curtain across my heart!

INTERCUT: ELKINS RACING ACROSS CAMPUS

Bolting over hedges, smashing through clusters of students.

EXT. THE BELFRY - CONTINUOUS

CHASE  
 We're all victims of big corporations.  
 Basterville doesn't care about truth,  
 beauty, or the avant guard! I was the  
 first generation of my family to get a  
 college diploma! They sacrificed.  
 (MORE)

CHASE (cont'd)  
They worked, sweat, saved for me. How can  
I go back and face them now?

ON ELKINS

Pushing through the gathered crowd, shirttails out, tie  
askew. He lets out a thunderous roar:

ELKINS  
Hold everything!!!!

A hush. The students turn to the wild-eyed President.  
Elkins drops to his knees, exhausted, throws up his arms.

ELKINS  
(screaming)  
You're going to California!

INT. MOTOR SCOOTER SPEEDING TOWARDS THE AIRPORT - DAY

Elkins zips through traffic, up embankments, over safety  
islands, avoiding collisions by a hairsbreadth.

ELKINS  
(shouting)  
You're a cinch to seal the deal! We're  
talking ten millions bananas.

Chase bounces on the rear seat, hanging on to his satchel.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Passengers stuff their luggage in overhead compartments. The  
Camera finds STONE and MS. KIRKLAND slipping into their  
seats. They take note of the Captain's overly cheery voice.

CAPTAIN'S VOICE  
This is Captain Jack "One-Eye" Johnson  
speaking. We have a minor delay. Nothing  
mechanical; don't get jumpy or grab puke  
bags. We should be taking off very  
shortly.

KIRKLAND  
What's a few minutes more when you've  
never been to sunny California.  
(grabs Moe's arm)  
I'm so excited.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Elkins charges down the aisle pulling Chase, in his black  
duster, a step behind.

KIRKLAND  
(looks up, surprised)  
Dr. Elkins!

ELKINS  
Ms. Kirkland, there's been a terrible  
mistake.

KIRKLAND  
We're on the wrong plane?

ELKINS  
Just you.

EXT. PLANE JETTING TOWARDS LOS ANGELES

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME

The rumpled coach and high-strung, young professor gobble down peanuts and soft drinks. Between thoughts, Chase BITES on the FOIL PEANUT PACKET, trying to tear it open with his teeth.

CHASE  
This should be a snap. We introduce  
ourselves, tell the old man how much we  
loved his son..

MOE  
(referring to the packet)  
Yank it.

CHASE  
And pick up the check. Catch the red-eye  
and be back on campus, ready to build the  
theater-sports complex by nine a.m.

MOE  
Just remember, I've recruited ball  
players for thirty-five years. I wrote  
the book on talking to moms and pops...  
(sees Chase still can't get  
the packet open)  
You've got to yank it.

Moe GRABS the peanuts, sets the packet between his teeth and gives a sharp yank on one end. Peanuts go FLYING from the bag.

CLOSE ON PASSENGER ACROSS THE AISLE

Staring at the peanuts floating in his wine glass. He turns to ...

MOE  
(smiling)  
You got the wine nuts.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - TAXI PULLS UP AT GATED MANSION - DUSK

Palm trees droop against the smoggy skyline. The Cabbie leans out the window, speaking into the security voice box.

CABBIE  
Coach Morris Stone and Professor  
Williams..

The huge iron gates stay shut. Nothing moves.

MORRIS  
(taps the cabbie; whispers)  
Moe the Toe.

CABBIE  
(again, into speaker box)  
Coach Moe "The Toe" Stone and Professor  
Williams.

The electronic gate swings open; the taxi drives through.

EXT. TAXI MOVING UP THE LONG DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lavish grounds set off the spectacular white colonnaded mansion.

INT. TAXI - SAME

MOE  
(taking in the view)  
I've got that end zone feeling.

A big smile wraps around his face.

EXT. MANSION DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Moe rings the doorbell. He's got a FOOTBALL tucked under his arm and the duffel bag in his other hand. Chase's gaze flits nervously.

CHASE SEES: The sun glinting off a GUN BARREL, poking out from behind a colonnade.

He takes a few steps away from the door. He now sees that the barrel is attached to a deadly KALISHNIKOV pressed across the burly chest of a uniformed SECURITY GUARD. The Guard's menacing stare and Chase's nervous smile meet. The young Professor turns away. HE SEES: Another ARMED GUARD, gazing into the distance.

CHASE  
Moe...

Moe swivels around. The blade-sharp PRONG of a large metal sculpture PIERCES the football, setting off an explosive POP! The Guards instantly RAISE their assault weapons.

MOE  
 (holds up the AIRLESS  
 football)  
 No problem.

Before he can get another word out, the FRONT DOOR swings open. MEYER KASINSKI, in striped silk pajama pants, lurches forward. His silk shirt, split to the navel, shows off a hairy chest and chunk of gold medallions.

KASINSKI  
 Welcome, gentlemen. Were you followed?

CHASE  
 No.

KASINSKI  
 Come in.

A European accent thickens his rough, edgy voice.

INT. MANSION - SAME

Moe and Chase enter the big Vegas-style foyer, done in pink and black marble slabs veined in gold.

MOE  
 Professor Williams.

KASINSKI  
 (embracing Chase, kissing his  
 cheeks)  
 This is such an honor. He loved you, he  
 loved you..  
 (turning to Moe)  
 And you must be Coach Toe...  
 (throws his arms out)  
 He worshipped the ground you walked on.  
 You were the father he never had when I  
 was here and he was there.

MOE  
 I certainly felt that way.  
 (looks down at his chest)  
 We're caught.

Kasinski looks down. One of his gold chains has HOOKED Moe's tie clip.

KASINSKI  
 It's like we were meant to be brothers.  
 (he yanks back)  
 Aiiihaa!

The tie clip STICKS to his gold chain, pulling off the clip-on tie in the same motion. Moe's tie dangles from Kasinski's chain.

KASINSKI (CONT'D)

This is a memory I must have.

MOE

It's definitely yours. And on behalf of the University, we'd also like to present you with the ball your son carried the last play of the last game of our championship season.

Moe holds up the PUNCTURED, DEFLATED BALL. Kasinski takes it tearfully from the coach's hands and clutches it against his chest.

CHASE

Pump it up and his whole name appears below the laces.

KASINSKI

(choking up)

It's worth ten million dollars to have this.

He notes that Chase's eyes are fixed on two more armed BODYGUARDS standing off to the side.

KASINSKI

Don't mind my friends. Were you followed?

TOGETHER

(again)

No.

KASINSKI

One can never be too careful in Beverly Hills. Come on; let's retire to the sitting room and eat some SoCal cuisine.  
(laughs, shakes his hips)

INT. WALKING DOWN THE LONG HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Following Kasinski. The Guards bring up the rear. Suddenly, the mobster stops short. The Guards nearly TOPPLE into Moe and Chase who have stopped to avoid bumping Kasinski..

KASINSKI (CONT'D)

Retire. Crazy English. Are we going to put a Goodyear tire on the sofa?

Kasinski spins around, laughs crazily with the Bodyguards and then resumes his march.

KASINSKI (CONT'D)

The cops stop you for breathing with your mouth open. What's wrong with that? I got allergies. They stop you for bad breath. What's wrong with that? I like garlic and onions. I got no time for cops. Am I right?

DAVID

(smiling)

We were just saying that on the way over.

MOE

No time, no time...

INT. AS THEY ENTER THE LIVING ROOM

A spectacularly tasteless room, filled with brocaded white furniture and splashy modern paintings. Windows and sliding doors look out to lush gardens dotted with a flock of pink and white plastic swans and a swimming pool with a giant plastic marlin jutting from the water.

Kasinski points to a huge oil-on-velvet PORTRAIT on the wall above the mantle. The face of a young man stares down. He wears dark glasses but otherwise looks amazingly like his father. The men pause for a moment, paying tribute to the youth.

KASINSKI

(holds up the deflated football)

He died ahead of his time, gunned down at the opening of the Karaoke Club I bought for him.

CHASE

We fell to pieces when we heard the news.

KASINSKI

He was so much more than a sport star. Please, sit down and help yourself to a libation and food. My daughter, Vessy, made special for you.

The massive glass coffee table has been turned into a gourmet buffet. Chase sits in the stuffed chair, opens his satchel. Moe takes a seat on the couch.

MOE

This sure beats airplane nuts.

CHASE

(pulls stuff from his satchel)

This is the pennant that hung in his room and this T-shirt he wore under his jersey, when he scored all those touchdowns. Am I right, Coach Stone?

Chase lays out the pennant and T-shirt and looks over to Moe, who has just helped himself to a big tortilla chip heaped with guacamole and cheese.

MOE  
(with a mouth full)  
That sauce is damn hot.

CHASE  
Like your son; he loved the spice of life.

KASINSKI  
(teary-eyed)  
A chip off the old box.

Kasinski can't stand it; he makes a decision on the spot. He walks over to the table and picks up the CHECK.

KASINSKI  
Gentlemen, I'm going to rip up this check and make out a new one for twelve million dollars.

CHASE  
(jumps up)  
Ten's fine, really. Don't rip...

MOE  
No one needs an unnecessary rip.

KASINSKI  
(holding up the check)  
Are you saying my son doesn't deserve a two million dollar bump?

CHASE  
No, we're not saying that. Bump two.

MOE  
Bump, bump, bump, is our school motto.

KASINSKI  
(ripping up the check)  
Boris, bring me my checkbook.

The bodyguard, BORIS, turns, takes a step, stops in his tracks, SEES: a HAND flop over the roof edge, dangling, lifeless. BLOOD DRIPS down the glass. Boris raises his KALISHNIKOV, spins. Before he can pull the trigger, a blast of automatic FIRE sends him sprawling to the floor.

A half dozen men in ski masks INVADE the room.

Kasinski's Security Forces react. All hell breaks lose. Someone shouts: "Get down!" A FIRESTORM erupts between the enemy invaders and Kasinski's crew. Bullets rake the furniture and walls.

CHASE scoots under the glass coffee table. STONE dives behind a chair. Blood spatters the cake-white furniture. A wild shot sends the deflated football skittering across the floor.

Kasinski grabs for a drawer, reaches for his gun.

A SKI-MASKED MAN circles behind. His eyes suddenly LOCK with Moe's terrified gaze, helpless behind the chair. The momentary pause gives Kasinski a chance to pull the GUN from the drawer, fire and miss.

The masked man turns his fire on Kasinski. The top of the killer's knit cap HOOKS on a hanging lamp, yanking it slightly up, REVEALING a jagged SCAR on his chin. He riddles Kasinski with a barrage of bullets. The millionaire collapses in a pool of blood.

The KILLER glances back at Moe. Their eyes meet. Moe sees the scar. The killer raises his gun. Moe's eyes fill with terror. Then, a sudden surge of FIREPOWER from the Security Guards forces the killers into full retreat.

Silence. Smoke-filled air. Shattered glass. Blood soaked furniture.

ON STONE BEHIND THE CHAIR

Eyes alert, listening.

MOE

Chase...

ON CHASE UNDER THE GLASS TABLE

Peering up, he sees above him, through the glass surface, a torn scrap of CHECK, with the number: \$10,000,000. He grimaces, shuts his eyes, pounds the floor with his fists.

EXT. MANSION DRIVEWAY - LATER

TV NEWS VANS jam the driveway along with a string of police cars and emergency vehicles.

ANGLE ON POLICE DETECTIVE AND CHASE

The buzz-haired, square-jawed cop scribbles on a note pad.

CHASE

(nervously)

We're East Coasters. We just met the man. I avoided his son. Write that down: I avoided his son. I talked to him maybe twice in my whole life.

COP

Never about drugs?

CHASE

Allergies. That's why I didn't talk to him. He was always sneezing, coughing, hacking. Phlegm coming up, snot on his nose, eyes crusty.

The cop looks up, with one of those "I've heard more than I need to" looks.

HIGH ANGLE - VANESSA KASINSKI'S POV

From a second floor mansion window, tall, voluptuous VANESSA "VESSY" KASINSKI, Meyer's bratty, beautiful daughter and only living heir to the Kasinski fortune, closely observes the two strangers from Basterville.

She draws the curtain closed, with a scrunched, thoughtful gaze.

EXT. SEEDY HOLLYWOOD HOTEL - NIGHT

Trash litters the sidewalk. Drug dealers lean against the graffiti-scarred walls. A black LIMO pulls up.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Broken shades cover the windows. Moe, wrapped in a towel, sits on one of the two sagging beds, his eyes riveted to the TV, housed in a metal cage, bolted to the table.

CLOSE ON TV SCREEN:

Moe interviewed by a TV Newslady.

MOE

I lined up against some mean suckers in the pros, and Vietnam was no picnic, but I never seen a scar on a chin as ugly as that...

The interview segment abruptly cuts back to the in-house NEWSCASTER.

TV ANOUNCER

The East Coasters were meeting with Kasinski in his heavily guarded Beverly Hills mansion when the murderous assault occurred. Remnants of a ten million dollar check, along with guacamole, hummus, and cabbage, a favorite Russian dish, were found scattered across the coffee table. Stone and Williams's claims of association with Basterville University have been forcefully denied by its president, Dr. E.C.

(MORE)

TV ANOUNCER (cont'd)  
 Elkins, who told Channel 2 in an exclusive telephone interview (ELKIN'S VOICE): "They haven't seen a paycheck in months!" Police are investigating a possible drug connection with Kasinski's son, a Basterville alumni, who was gunned down in front of his own Karioke Club three months ago....

BACK TO SCENE

Moe angrily clicks the OFF button on the remote.

MOE  
 We haven't seen a paycheck because the man only pays in I.O.U.'s!

Chase stands in the bathroom doorway, shower-wet, toweling himself off.

CHASE  
 You should never have mentioned you saw the guy's chin. That's number one rule in dealing with killers. No chins, no faces. I didn't see any chins or faces. I was just a visitor. You're a witness.

A KNOCK. The men's eyes shift to the door.

CHASE  
 (jumps back into bathroom)  
 The killers!

Moe jumps up and heads for the door..

MOE  
 Killers shoot the locks off. It's the pizza man.

CHASE  
 (shouting)  
 Pay for it; the discount coupon's on the TV.

MOE THROWS OPEN THE DOOR

His jaw drops, eyes pop wide. The voluptuous twenty-eight year old brunette, VANESSA "VESSY" KASINSKI, in dark glasses, a tight-fitting, short black dress and stiletto heels, enters. She speaks with an awkward, middle European accent, randomly MISPRONOUNCING words.

VANESSA  
 Vanessa Kasinski calling, Meyer's daughter and only living heir. May I come in?

Moe, speechless, takes a step back.

MOE  
We didn't kill him. We're strictly  
faculty. Educators.

INTERCUT: CHASE IN THE BATHROOM

Grooming, shouting:

CHASE  
Check my half for the pepperoni and  
pineapple!

BACK TO: MOE AND VANESSA

VANESSA  
What's your cute friend doing?

MOE  
Shaving. We're booked on a red-eye back  
East.

Stone can hardly get the words out.

VANESSA  
Perhaps that will change when I tell you  
why I'm here. My father wasn't a saint  
but he gave me whatever I wanted. I was  
born in the Valley..  
(she pronounces it "Walley")  
I'm a Walley girl, but at fifteen I was  
sent to a Swiss finishing school where I  
picked up a Continental accent. I can't  
shake it.

MOE  
We certainly hope the killers are brought  
to justice. We'll be rooting for you  
and.. your mom.

INTERCUT: BATHROOM

CHASE  
Make sure we get plenty of napkins and a  
receipt!  
(goes back to singing)  
Pizza, pizza pie; I'm not gonna die in a  
pizza pie...

BACK TO HOTEL ROOM

VANESSA  
My father blamed himself for Meyer Jr.'s  
tragic death. You and Professor Williams  
are the only people who saw the killers  
who, I guarantee you, whacked my jerky  
brother, as well. I want you to find  
them.

MOE

Us? We didn't see.. I was behind a chair. Professor Williams was under the buffet, which, by the way, flat out beats the Sunday brunch at Earl's Steak N' Fry in Basterville. They don't serve chunk guacamole except for Cinco de Mayo...

VANESSA

(cutting him off)

Please. You were closer than any of my father's stupid guards. You were a witness...

MOE

Witness...

Chase enters, wrapped in a towel.

CHASE

Moe, did you...

He stops in mid-sentence, his eyes locked into Vanessa's sultry gaze.

VANESSA

I'm Vessy Kasinski, Professor Williams.

MOE

Vessy wants us to find her father's murderers.

VANESSA

A week ago my father told me he intended to make a large donation in Meyer Jr.'s name. I'll write you a check for ten million spuds if you find out who was behind the murder of papa and my jerky brother.

MOE

(looks over to Chase)

I was just telling Vessy we don't take every job that comes our way.

VANESSA

You haven't had a paycheck in months. I heard the TV.

Chase and Moe exchange a look.

CHASE

That's the deepest cover. No paper trail.

VANESSA

Well, I don't twust the police. They think everyone's a drug dealer and they waste too much taxpayer time on parking tickets. My website, Parkyourass.com addresses this issue. Time is something I don't have much of.

A KNOCK on the door interrupts them.

DELIVERY BOY (O.S.)

Pizza man!

MOE

Pizza!

Moe makes a move for the door.

CHASE

The coupon!

VANESSA

My tweat.

She whips out a FIFTY DOLLAR BILL from her purse.

MOE

(stares at the bill)

I don't believe they carry change for a fifty.

VANESSA

Did I ask for chwange?

Moe nods, takes the money to the door. Vanessa turns her attention back to Chase.

VANESSA

You seem like a very intelligent, sensitive man, Professor Chase Williams. At another time, in another pwace, perhaps we could be lovers. But we're stuck in this life, aren't we?

CHASE

Stuck...

VANESSA

And I'm getting married to Lance Sennet in seventy-two hours. Then it's off to Schmertzinberg on our honeymoon.

CHASE

Schmertzinberg.

VANESSA

You know it? It's in the Alps where I went to finishing school.

(MORE)

VANESSA (cont'd)  
 If the honeymoon goes kaput, we could  
 meet at the Crazy Horse Spa off  
 Shmertzinberg Boulevard...

NEW ANGLE

As Moe enters scene with the pizza.

VANESSA (CONT'D)  
 It's almost midnight. I expect an answer  
 by ten o'clock tomorrow morning. I'll be  
 at 324 Old Malibu Road. Think it over  
 pizza.  
 (starts to leave, stops at  
 the door)  
 Don't forget: 324 Old Malibu Road, three  
 days, seventy-two hours, over three  
 million pepperroni a day. It's midnight.  
 The clock's twicking.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Slim rays of light poke through the broken shades. The empty  
 pizza box sits on a broken table. Moe, in his bed, stares  
 into the darkness. Chase rests in the next bed.

MOE  
 Let's go over it one more time. What have  
 we got to lose?

CHASE  
 Our lives, that's what.

MOE  
 Twelve hours ago you were about to jump  
 off a building; now you're a spokesman  
 for the survival society.

CHASE  
 I was born again under the buffet table.

MOE  
 (sits up)  
 That's the point. We could be living with  
 ten million avocados and a chair named  
 after us! You go back to Basterville, you  
 don't have a job.

CHASE  
 If I go back dead, I won't need one.

MOE  
 (gets off his bed)  
 You're not going to die. I was a Sergeant  
 in Nam, trained in deadly force. Piano  
 wire around the throat. Mushroom bullets.  
 Exploding cigars.

CHASE  
 Are you fucking nuts?!  
 (leaps from bed)  
 These guys are killers! You're talking  
 about piano wire and exploding cigars and  
 we can't even buy a stack of jacks for  
 breakfast without a coupon.

MOE  
 I've got nothing to go back to. Nobody  
 wants a sixty-five year old coach with a  
 losing record!

CHASE  
 Maybe you should have given that some  
 thought when you were drawing up X's and  
 O's.  
 (sees the hurt in Moe's eyes)  
 I'm sorry.

MOE  
 Maybe you've never had dreams.

CHASE  
 I've had my dreams...

MOE  
 If you weren't such a chicken, you'd say  
 yes.

From somewhere in the night, a screeching FEMALE VOICE shouts  
 back.

FEMALE VOICE  
 Shut the fuck up! Chicken, avocados,  
 pepperoni! It's not a salad! It's ten  
 million dead presidents!

They stop, listen. Moe's eyes rove the ceiling.

MOE  
 This place is bugged.

FEMALE VOICE  
 Just do it!

The Voice melts into silence. Chase and Moe exchange a look.

EXT. CHEAP HOLLYWOOD HOTEL - MORNING

The front doors fly open. Moe, in his gleaming white suit,  
 wide lapels, too tight across the chest, and Chase, in his  
 long black duster, step into the smoggy Hollywood sunlight.