

Out of Aces: Pilot

FADE IN:

INT. CARD ROOM - LATE LATE NIGHT

A dirty, underground card room with three or four tables.
Smoke in the air.

There are still a few people playing at other tables but Our Table only has the DEALER and two players, an OLDER MAN and a younger man, LEO, 24, lean and usually handsome, but tonight it looks like he's been in a fight, and lost. Leo is first generation Filipino-American. The Older Man, a Caucasian, is gleefully raking in chips.

We hear the opening of Kanye West's Gold Digger:

SHE TAKE MY MONEY
WELL I'M IN NEED
YEAH SHE'S A TRIFLIN'
FRIEND INDEED
OH, SHE'S A-

OLDER MAN

Lady Luck. Well, you know what they say, "That's poker." One hand you're up and the next...

LEO

You're the big blind.

The Older Man posts his blind. The dealer deals two hole cards to each.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

The living room/kitchen of a small three bedroom apartment. A half-Asian, half-white woman, GRACE, 27, cute and sweet-faced is sitting at an upright piano playing scales. She is in a robe and her hair is up in a towel.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Grace! We're leaving soon!

Grace continues to play scales.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The voice, CYNTHIA, 54, Filipino, Grace's mother, is standing in the master bedroom, putting on an earring at the vanity. Handsome and small but fierce. There is also an older, good-looking but paunchy man, BONIFACIO, 58, also Filipino, wearing head phones and listening to a discman. He's grooving to music we can't hear.

CYNTHIA

(sighs)

The man is coming to look at the clog in sink #2 this morning. Please look presentable, he's nice.
(beat)
And single.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grace plonks hard on the piano.

INT. CARD ROOM - LATE LATE NIGHT

The flop is dealt: the queen of diamonds, jack of clubs and the 4 of spades.

OLDER MAN

That last hand. I thought I was beat-

LEO

You were.

OLDER MAN

But then that sweet, sweet river card came. And your hand looked a lot like your face. Check.

LEO

Sixty.

OLDER MAN

(looks Leo over)
Call.

DEALER

(dealing)
Turn card is the nine of hearts.

OLDER MAN

So. You one of those math guys? Hot shot MIT-Internet players?
(MORE)

OLDER MAN (CONT'D)

(beat)
No offense.

LEO

Actually, yeah, I quit MIT to come out here.

OLDER MAN

Really?

LEO

Yeah, funny story. One day right after violin practice, you know I'm a prodigy, but right before teaching karate class, I thought to myself, "Man I don't want to help my parents in our struggling but authentic Chinese restaurant tonight. I yearn for, no I burn to be...a poker player." And so here I am. Vegas. Living the dream, playing poker with you. It's your action.

OLDER MAN

Check.

Leo throws in a hand full of chips.

INT. SALON - EARLY MORNING

Bonifacio and Cynthia are downstairs in the salon, we can still hear scales from upstairs. Bonifacio is still wearing the headphones and jamming out.

CYNTHIA

(calling up to the apartment)
Okay! Good-bye! Remember, look presentable!

BONIFACIO

(yelling)
Why don't you leave her alone about that?

CYNTHIA

Lintek. You don't have to yell. And stop listening to that; Bing, it's bad for you.

BONIFACIO
(taking off headphones)
Lintek? You don't even understand
what is being said.

CYNTHIA
I know enough to know I don't like
it. Walang hiya. Grace is not
getting any younger-

BONIFACIO
Bwesit. If she marries, then she
goes off-

CYNTHIA
They can live with us.

BONIFACIO
(rolling his eyes)
Oh sure. Let's go, or those
vultures will get all the oxtail.

INT. CARD ROOM - LATE LATE NIGHT

DEALER
The river, gentlemen.

The dealer turns over the two of spades.

OLDER MAN
Living the dream? I been around a
while, kid. This ain't no dream.
Three hundred. Maybe you last a
little bit you'll find that out.

LEO
Raise. To Six.

OLDER MAN
(smiling)
Then again, maybe you won't last.
Some friendly advice, kid: don't
let your opponent rattle you with
talk. All-in.

The Older Man pushes the rest of his chips in.

LEO
Call.

Leo pushes his stack in as well.

OLDER MAN

I figured you out kid. Kings pre-flop. Trying to chase me out the entire time, cause you got burned last hand. Letting me goad you...shoulda taken my advice. That's poker.

The Older Man is about to about to turn over his hole cards when:

LEO

Don't bother. Trip fours. Some friendly advice: always bet your set. Don't let your opponent catch up with a free card. You tend to raise pre-flop with small pairs and suited connectors and when you make a hand sit back and slow-play, like you did four and seven hands ago. Don't confuse me "on tilt" with me building a pot.

Leo turns over the king and ten of spades for a straight. The Older Man turns over his cards, he indeed has a pair of fours. As Leo rakes in all the chips on the table:

LEO (CONT'D)

That's poker.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Grace finishes one last scale. On the piano we see a photo of Leo, Grace and their parents. She looks at the photo and smiles, then starts to play Scott Joplin's "The Entertainer". We hear this music over the following:

EXT. STREET - EARLY MORNING

We see Cynthia and Bonifacio finish loading their car with boxes. A small family passes by; they stop to shake hands; Bonifacio tousles the kid's hair.

BONIFACIO

Your hair grows so fast! I'll see you soon, hah?

YOUNG FATHER

We'll come by. Bing, Cindy.

The family continues on their way. Bonifacio and Cynthia pull out of the parking lot of the Western Beef into the street.

There is no traffic on the quiet morning. They stop at a red light.

INT. BAR BATHROOM STALL - LATE NIGHT

Leo is rewarding himself on the night's win with a few large bumps of coke. The camera pulls back to see that he is not alone. A sexy young thing does a bump of coke off his spoon and mounts him as he sits on the toilet.

EXT. STREET - EARLY MORNING

LEO (V.O.)

One hand you're up and the next-

The light turns green. The car moves out into the intersection. We hear a screech of brakes and a crunch of metal on metal as we

SMASH CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES