

Out Calls - Pilot

A Screenplay

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Out Calls — Pilot (2012)

INT. KITCHEN — NIGHT

Jerry and Rita are sitting at the kitchen table. Between them, a cell phone sits. They are both staring intently at it. Jerry looks over at Rita, whose gaze remains intensely on the phone.

JERRY

How long do you think it will be?

Rita unwillingly turns her attention from the phone to Jerry.

RITA

I told you I don't know. It could be days...

JERRY

Weeks?

RITA

No, probably not weeks. Probably not days, but maybe.
But not weeks.

JERRY

What if it is? Weeks, that is. What if it's never?

RITA

Then I guess you're going to have to go work at Walmart.

The phone rings, and both of them jump at the sound. Jerry gets up as Rita takes the phone and answers it. Jerry walks over to the doorway while she speaks to the caller.

RITA

Hello, this is A Cut Above, can I help you?

(pause)

Sure, of course we do. So can you tell me what type of girl
you are looking for?

Rita continues talking in the background, as Jerry stands at the doorway facing away from her.

JERRY

Thank God.

CUT TO OPENING TITLE SEQUENCE.

LEVON'S CAR — NIGHT

As Levon drives, Casey sits in the front seat, staring ahead. She turns toward.

CASEY

Is there anything else you think you should tell me?

LEVON

Yeah. Don't be so nervous. Calm down. God forbid he actually believes that it is your first time he might just freak out and send you home. And we can't have that, now can we?

CASEY

I know. But how do I calm down?

LEVON

I don't know, we're almost there, it's a little late for you to take up or take a Xanax, you know? You're going to just have to pull it together, and make this guy happy. I mean, it's your first time, but it's not like your first time ever with a man, right? It's not, is it?

CASEY

No it's not.

LEVON

Okay then, you're going to be fine.

Levon pulls up to the front of the hotel and puts the car in park. He turns toward Casey.

LEVON

Just stay calm, and keep your phone close by at all times, okay? It's room 213, right?

(she nods yes)

and what's your name?

CASEY

My name is Candy. Not Casey. Close enough so I can remember.

LEVON

Good. I'll be right here. I'm not going anywhere.

CASEY

Okay. Thanks.

Casey smiles nervously, opens the door, and steps out of the car. Levon watches her as she walks to the motel.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM — NIGHT

Casey walks up to the door of room 213, pauses a moment, then lightly knocks on the door, which is opened almost immediately by Oldman.

OLDMAN

So, you must be Candy, right?

CASEY

That's me. Are you Mr. Oldman?

OLDMAN

That me! Come on in.

Oldman opens the door and steps aside so that Casey can enter. She hesitantly does so, and stands next to the TV as Oldman closes and locks the door. He walks over to the table and pours himself a drink.

OLDMAN

Do you want a drink?

CASEY

No that's okay, thanks though.

Oldman drinks and looks at Casey for a long moment as neither says anything. Casey inches toward him, while clutching her cell phone in her right hand.

CASEY

Sorry. I'm not great at making conversation.

(pause)

Would you believe me if I told you something?

OLDMAN

Probably not. But you can give it a shot if you want.

CASEY

This, you, are my very first call. Ever.

(pause)

So do you believe me?

OLDMAN

No. I don't. I think you make great conversation.

Oldman finishes his drink quickly, puts his glass down on the table loudly, and steps over to Casey. Reaching into his pants, he pulls out a wad of bills. As he approaches her, he hands the money to her, and she accepts it.

OLDMAN

Here take your money. I know that's what you want.

CASEY

Thanks.

(pause)

So, what do you want me to do?

OLDMAN

Well, for openers, how about you relax? Have a seat.

He takes off his watch, and places it next to the TV. He turns around toward Casey and begins unbuttoning his shirt as she watches nervously.

INT. HALLWAY — NIGHT

Casey has already left the room, and is calling Levon on her phone as she walks down the hallway.

CASEY

I'm done. I'll be out front in a minute. Bye.

She ends the call, and slips the phone into her purse.

INT. MOTEL ROOM — NIGHT

Oldman is standing outside the bathroom, wearing only his underwear. The shower is turned on, and steam is flooding out into the room around him. After Oldman enters the bathroom, the camera pans over the table where his wallet is sitting next to the TV. We see a police detective's badge on top of his wallet.

INT. KITCHEN — NIGHT

Jerry is sitting at the kitchen table having a drink, and Rita finishes some work at the kitchen sink, drying her hands with a towel. The cell phone is between them on a table, and they both jump when it goes off. Jerry answers the phone this time, looking first at the caller ID on the phone. It informs him that Casey is calling.

JERRY

It's her.

(He answers the phone.)

Hello? How are you?

(pause)

Is everything okay?

(pause)

Good. Are you on your way back? Okay. See you soon.

Jerry turns back toward the kitchen table and sits down. Rita is standing at the sink.

RITA

Well?

JERRY

She's fine. She'll be back soon.

Jerry picks up his glass and has a drink.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. STREET — AFTERNOON

Fade up from black. Jerry is walking down a street as a title fades in: "Six months earlier." After the title fades out, we cut to a close up of Jerry speaking on his cell phone.

JERRY

Okay, so we need to add a projector to the meeting in the ballroom on Saturday night. Is that it? Okay, I'll take care of that and I'll get you a revised invoice in a few minutes. I'm on my way back to the office from lunch. Okay, call me if you need anything else. Bye.

Jerry ends his call, but before he can place his phone back in his pocket, it rings again. He answers it quickly.

JERRY

Okay Beth, what did you forget this time?

The caller is not who Jerry assumed, it is his boss, Bill.

BILL

Jerry? This isn't Beth. It's Bill. Don't you have caller ID?

JERRY

Hey, hi Bill, of course I do, I was just talking to Beth, the catering director, and she always does that to me. She'll call me back right after I hang up with her because she forgets something she needs to tell me. Sorry about that.

BILL

Jerry, I understand. Don't worry about it. But we have to talk.

JERRY

Okay. What did I do now?

BILL

You didn't do anything, Jerry. We know everybody at the hotel thinks you're great, that's not it. The company lost the contract to Audio Visual Central. Now you could try to get a job with them, but under your noncompete agreement...

JERRY

I can't accept a job from another AV company at that hotel for the next two years.

BILL

Yeah. That's what it says. Listen Jerry, I got you a month's severance pay, plus of course you're eligible for unemployment benefits. We're really sorry about this, Jerry. I don't know what else to say.

JERRY

That's okay Bill, I've been through this before. Thanks.

We cut to a wide shot of Jerry standing as he ends his phone call.

INT. MOTEL ROOM — NIGHT

Later on, Oldman is lying on the bed, awake. The phone in the room begins ringing. Oldman looks down at it curiously. After four rings, he picks it up.

OLDMAN

Yes?

CAPTAIN

What are you doing in there?

OLDMAN

What do you mean, sir? My apartment is getting fumigated, I had to spend the night at a motel.

CAPTAIN

Shut up, you goddamn idiot. If you think I'm that stupid I may as well hang up right now.

OLDMAN

No sir, I don't, I'm working. I know that I'm not supposed to be, but I got a lead. I think you'll be very pleased with the lead I'm working.

CAPTAIN

Detective, the only thing you're working is your dick in some whore in another shithole motel. As usual. I don't get you, Oldman. You're like a goddamn narc who gets hooked on heroin. You lost your head a long time ago. You would save yourself, and the department, a lot of trouble if you would just resign. But you're not going to do that, now are you?

OLDMAN

I promise, I didn't do anything inappropriate, sir.

CAPTAIN

We'll see.

The captain hangs up abruptly. Oldman hangs up the phone, and stares off blankly.

EXT. APARTMENT — AFTERNOON

Jerry is standing outside the apartment, behind a metal gate. Rita approaches from the across the street, and opens the gate that Jerry is standing behind.

RITA

What's wrong? Are you okay?

JERRY

It happened again. I think we might be in trouble this time.

Rita doesn't say anything, and they both stand in silence.

INT. LIVING ROOM — DAY

The living room is empty, but we can hear the front door open. Casey and Rita enter the living room a moment later. Casey sits on the couch.

RITA

So how did it go? Are you okay?

Casey reaches into her purse and pulls out the money. She hands it to Rita.

CASEY

I'm fine. Here you go. I know that's what you want.

Casey realizes what she has just said, and looks away from Rita, who takes the money, places it on the coffee table, and sits down next to Casey.

RITA

Casey, are you sure you're okay?

CASEY

I'm okay, I think. It wasn't so bad, I guess. How did you feel, the first time?

RITA

Me? Are you kidding? I was terrified.

Rita smiles, and then reaches over and hugs Casey.

EXT. APARTMENT — DAY

From behind the gate that is in front of Jerry and Rita's apartment, we see Oldman park, get out of his car, open the gate, and ring the doorbell. A few moments later, Jerry cracks open the door.

OLDMAN

Where's your partner, Jerry?

JERRY

Can I ask who you are?

Oldman removes his wallet and shows his badge to Jerry.

OLDMAN

Does that tell you enough? Go get her. Rita. Your partner.

JERRY

Give me a second.

Jerry closes the door and reappears a few moments later with Rita, cracking the door open only wide enough for them to see Oldman.

OLDMAN

That didn't take long. So would you like to have this conversation here, or can we step inside?

RITA

Do you have a warrant?

OLDMAN

If I had a warrant you would be in handcuffs right now. Okay I guess we're not going to have this conversation here. You two clear your schedule, and plan on meeting me tomorrow at 6 o'clock, at the bar two blocks down the street. Got it?

Jerry and Rita look at each other, then at Oldman, and both nod yes. Oldman says nothing else and quickly walks away.

INT. KITCHEN — DAY

Jerry is sitting at the table, working at a laptop computer. Levon comes through the back gate and opens the back door. Jerry rises to meet him, and they shake hands.

LEVON

Hey, boss. How's it going?

JERRY

Well we started off slow, but it's definitely getting busier.

Jerry picks up a piece of notebook paper from the table and hands it to Levon.

JERRY

Casey already has three calls for tonight. Here are the names and address. Call me if you get lost.

Levon looks over the list.

LEVON

No, I know all of these places. Not a problem, boss.

JERRY

You know you don't have to call me boss, Levon. You just have to remember that I am your boss. Okay?

LEVON

Oh, I will. Don't worry about that, Jerry. And I don't want to make you angry, you know I really appreciate this opportunity, but I just can't figure out one thing about this whole deal. I know Rita knows her way around this game, she's been in it since she was a kid. I told you my father knows her, right? Yeah I did. But I just can't figure out, where do you come into all this, Jerry? Up until this, I never heard of you getting so much as a parking ticket.

JERRY

Where do I come in? Let's just say that I have the business acumen, but she knows the business. Just do your job, and we'll all make some money. Now, you remember what I talked to you about? Have you been looking for some other girls?

LEVON

Don't worry about it, brother. I'm all over it.

Levon smiles wide, and Jerry sits back at the table. Levon turns to leave, but Jerry stops him.

JERRY

Levon, how's your father doing?

LEVON

Oh, he's just fine, I guess. I went to see him last week. Two more years.

JERRY

Good. If he needs anything, let me know.

LEVON

I sure will. I sure will.

INT. LEVON'S CAR — AFTERNOON

Levon and Casey are driving in his car.

CASEY

Hey, can I ask you a question?

LEVON

You know that you can, sweetheart. What you got?

CASEY

How long do you think it is before it happens? What we were talking about? How long until I have a rough call?

LEVON

It might never happen. Then it might happen twice in a row. It doesn't have to happen. But what you have to know, every time you go on a call, that this might be the time. If you get too relaxed, or if you put your phone somewhere and you can't get to it quickly, the second you stop paying attention to everything he's doing or saying, then it might happen. But it doesn't have to.

CASEY

So, I have to be relaxed and alert all at the same time.

LEVON

That's it. It's all an act. And you have to be the best actor that you can be, every time you step into that room.

CASEY

Great. Maybe I'll get nominated for an Academy Award.

Casey doesn't say anything more, turns her head, and stares out the window.

INT. OFFICE — DAY

Jerry's lawyer is sitting behind his desk as Jerry sits in front of him. The lawyer is shuffling papers and folders around, until he finds the one he is looking for.

LAWYER

I know you told me that you had your licenses all in place last time you were here. When did you start operating?

JERRY

Three nights ago.

LAWYER

Good. So how is business?

JERRY

It's fine. But we already had a vice cop pay us a visit.

LAWYER

Really? That was fast. Since I haven't arranged a bond for either of you, I assume he just wanted to talk?

JERRY

He wants to talk to us. Tonight. Can you give me any tips about what I should say to him?

LAWYER

Well, for starters, say as little as possible. Listen and see what he has to say. Maybe he's just sniffing around for some money. Beyond that, just remember plausible deniability. You are charging a fee to arrange a meeting between your clients and your employees. That is all. No other service is implied. Anything else that happens between a client and one of your employees is a separate contract. And if anything illegal should happen, you know nothing about it.

INT. BAR — NIGHT

Inside a bar, Jerry and Rita are sitting together, across from Oldman.

OLDMAN

I knew about you two from your very first call. How is that for great police work? I have a friend who works in the license department downtown, she told me about you two. Jerry and Rita Middleton, application for an "entertainment license." After that it was just a matter of waiting until you answered the phone. You've got a lot of competition around here, do you know that? Now, some of them would never try to hurt you. But some of them will. Now, they won't hear about you two from me. But they will hear about you eventually. You're in a small market here. There's only so much business to go around.

JERRY

I think we understand what you want. Are we talking about a percentage of what we make, or just a certain dollar amount every month?

OLDMAN

I don't want your money. Not yet. From what I can tell there probably isn't much to get. Now, maybe if you're alive, or in business, a week and a half from now, we'll see. What I need is, well I want is... I want to see something in you, see that you have what it takes. You put some nice ass on the street, now, okay, that's a start. Now you have to keep that ass, find some more, deal with the competition, and then we'll see what happens.

RITA

So you don't really care what we are doing, you just want to make sure that we're good at it?

OLDMAN

Yes, actually. Think of me like the Better Business Bureau. I want the good agencies to stay around, and the bad ones to disappear and die. Now, what's wrong with that?

JERRY

Nothing, but what do you get out of it? If we do survive, you just want to tap some of our nice ass, whenever you feel like it?

OLDMAN

Well I hadn't thought of it that way. But sure. Why not?

Oldman cracks a wide smile. Fade to black.

EXT. HOTEL — NIGHT

Levon is sitting in his car outside a hotel. His car is parked on the side away from the front entrance, pointed toward the hotel. His gaze is fixed on a third floor room, the only one with the lights on. He yawns for a moment, then checks his watch.

LEVON

You're about to go into overtime sweetheart. I hope your guy up there has some more money.

Levon looks up toward the hotel room. A moment later what looks like a lamp is thrown onto the floor. The lights go out in the room. Levon gets out of his car and puts his keys in his pocket. He approaches a side entrance to the hotel and opens the door.

EXT / INT. HOTEL ROOM — NIGHT

Once on the third floor, Levon removes his wallet from his back pocket as he walks toward the room. Leon takes a hotel key card out of his wallet and stuffs his wallet into his back pocket. Carefully, Levon inserts the key card into the door, and removes it. The light on the door turns green. Levon slowly opens the door and slips into the room. Once inside, he sees that Casey is sitting on the floor in the corner fumbling with her cell phone. The client is holding part of the broken lamp in his hands. He sees Levon and starts walking toward him.

CLIENT

Who the hell are you, asshole?

LEVON

I'm the guy who's about to kick your ass for touching my girl.

CLIENT

Get the hell out of here before I kill you.

The client jumps toward Levon, who just raises his right hand, smashing it into the client's face. With his left hand, Levon takes the client by his neck, and smashes it into the table next to the TV. He holds the client down on the floor, as he looks toward Casey.

LEVON

Baby, are you okay?

CASEY

I guess so.

LEVON

Did this asshole pay you yet?

CASEY

No.

LEVON

Okay. Baby, you get dressed and get your bag and go down to the car. You. Asshole. Money. Now.

The client reaches into his back pocket, removes his wallet, and holds it up. Levon grabs it, placing his knee on the client's neck, while he removes all of the money from the wallet. He looks at the client's driver's license for a moment. Then Levon throws the wallet down on the floor, puts the money in his pocket, and lifts the client up with his left hand, still not letting him go.

LEVON

Okay, asshole, good job. Now what you are going to do is tell the front desk that you broke a lamp, which you are going to pay for, and then you are going to lose our phone number. Because I know where you live: 437 Chestnut Lane? I know exactly where you live. I know every goddamn street in this city. Do you understand me?

CLIENT

Yes, okay, yes. Just let me go.

Levon throws the client onto the bed, looks around, and exits the room.

INT. KITCHEN — DAY

Casey is sitting at the kitchen table. Rita walks over from the stove with a cup of tea, and places it down in front of Casey. Casey is sniffing a little, a few tissues in her right hand.

RITA

Are you feeling any better?

CASEY

I don't know. I guess so.

RITA

I'm sorry this happened so soon. But you know what that means? It will probably never happen again.

CASEY

Did it ever happen to you?

RITA

Sure. Once. But just once. After that, my instincts always kicked in. Just like yours will now. And the next time, you'll know before it's too late, and you'll walk out of that room. And you'll be fine. Do you know what it's like? It's just like ice skating. Have you ever been ice skating?

CASEY

No. How is it like that?

RITA

The first time my mother took me ice skating, she said, "If you don't fall down at least once, then you're not really trying." She said that to me, and I got very frightened. I thought, what if I fall down and broke my ankle? What if the pain is unbearable? And so we got to the ice skating rink, and I refused to get on the ice. But she wouldn't let me go home. She said, "If you start everything in your life being so afraid of what might happen, you'll never finish anything." And she was right. So I got onto the ice, and thirty seconds, boom. I fell right on my face. And it hurt. But my ankle wasn't broke, and the pain wasn't too bad. And I got up, and the next time I was able to skate a little farther, and before an hour had gone by, I felt like I was a professional ice skater. I still fell down, every now and then. But I always got back up.

Rita puts her hand on Casey's shoulder to comfort her.

EXT. COURTYARD — DAY

Casey is standing outside the apartment in the courtyard, talking on her cell phone. She starts crying a little when her call is connected.

CASEY

Hi Mom? Hey, it's Casey.

(pause)

No, no, I'm fine, really. I just miss you guys. But I have good news.

(pause)

Yeah, I finally found a job.

(pause)

Oh, it's just a server job at a restaurant. But the tips are really good.

(pause)

Yeah, I'm really happy. I can finally pay my rent. So, how is everything going at home?

Cut to a wide shot as Casey continues her call.

EXT. ALLEY — DAY

Kristi enters the alley behind a hotel, tears running down her face, her makeup smeared from crying. She is holding her cell phone in her right hand as her friend picks up. As she talks she is clearly both angry and afraid.

KRISTI

It happened again. Some goddamn son of a bitch beat the shit out of me and didn't even pay me! I am so tired of this bullshit! I am out of this right now, I'm done!

(pause)

I don't know, I don't think I need to go to the hospital. I just needed someone to talk to.

(pause)

I don't know. I'll go work at Family Dollar, what am I supposed to do? I either keep dealing with assholes like the one I just left, or I go to work for an agency and have someone else keep most of the money I make.

(pause)

I know, I know. Listen, I'll talk to you in a little while. I have to go.

Kristi puts her phone back in her purse and stops walking for a moment, looking through her purse for something. She has stopped just beside Levon's car, which is parked behind another hotel in the same alley. Levon calls out to her.

LEVON

Hey, are you okay, sweetie?

KRISTI

No. Some asshole just beat me up.

LEVON

Well, do you want me to return the favor for you?

KRISTI

No. I kicked him in the balls and got out of there.

LEVON

Well why don't you talk to me about it? I promise I'm not going to hurt you. My name is Levon, by the way.

Levon extends his hand to Kristi. After a moment, she shakes his hand.

EXT. CITY STREET — EVENING

Jerry and Rita are walking home from their meeting at the bar with Oldman.

RITA

I don't know. I'm nervous. This guy is trouble.

JERRY

I know. But I think we can deal with him, at least for now.

RITA

And how do you propose we achieve that?

JERRY

I don't know. Give him something. Maybe someone?

RITA

We have one girl working for us, and he's already had her.

JERRY

Then we find someone else. Make an offering to him. A peace offering perhaps?

RITA

Oh what would that be? A piece of ass offering?

JERRY

For the record, you're the one that put it that way.

RITA

I hope you know what you're doing.

JERRY

So do I.

INT. MOTEL ROOM — NIGHT

Oldman is sitting fully clothed on the bed in the motel room after Casey has left. He begins to think about his encounter with her, and flashbacks begin to flood his mind. He closes his eyes, unbuttons his pants, slides them halfway off, and begins touching himself.

OLDMAN

My god... she... was... perfect. Everything... was... so right. I could please her. I could make her... I could make her wet all over. I could... Let me. Let me.

Oldman has an orgasm, falls silent, and just lays there.

CUT TO BLACK.

ROLL END CREDITS.