

## Alternate Scene from the Slayer, Tino and Chuito bromance at the Miami party

Sometimes when I'm trying to get a key scene right, I'll write it several different times and the end result will be sort of a combination of my favorite themes.

I found this scene looking through my cuts and I thought it was interesting, because I see so much from this first attempt in what ended up in The Slayer.

This was a scene I wrote while working out how Tino and Chuito finally mended their friendship after the drama in the squat house. That was such a complex scene, a lot of plot had to be touched on. It took several layers, and this is just one of many. In the end, I changed it around so that Tino and Chuito walked out past Tony, and that was what opened up their dialogue instead of just jumping into their feelings like in this scene. The discussion of the dealing with the dead bodies gave it the hard edge I needed to handle some of the softer emotions. Plus, in this scene, Tino is the one to say he loved Chu, but in the final scene it was Chu who said it, which had much more impact. Still, in this scene, we see from the start that love was supposed to be there.

Also, side note, for symbolism reasons, I quite like that Tino was able to hug Tony before attempting his drunk apology to

Chuito. It's the first place in the series where we really see Tony as a character, and knowing a lot of the overall arc, that was a good place for him to stride in. So this scenes is one of those I'm glad got dumped, but I am also glad a lot of its spirit ended up in the final book.



“Have a seat.”

Tino frowned at him, his dark gaze penetrating. “What were you doing in that room?”

“Getting blitzed off my fucking ass,” Chuito said without apology. “But I promised Alaine I wouldn’t drink any more after today. So save your lecture.”

Tino seemed to consider that, some of the concern slipping out of him as he walked up the steps and sat next to Chuito. “Probably can’t give you shit. So drunk.”

“Yeah?” Chuito asked as he looked at Tino. “You weren’t dancing like you’re drunk.”

“I spent most of my time in clubs drunk and blitzed off my ass,” Tino said with a bitter laugh. “I dance best fucked up.”

“I bet that’s not true.” Chuito looked to Tino again, thinking of his good girl back in New York.

“Yeah, maybe not.” Tino took a drink out of a red cup that had somehow gotten into his hand between the dance floor and the porch. “I love you, Chu.”

Chuito rolled his eyes. “Okay.”

“No, really.”

“Don’t worry, I noticed.”

“You’re my best friend and--”

"You *are* fucked up," Chuito assured him. "Worse than me and I smoked a blunt. How much have you had to drink?"

Tino took another long drink to answer his question.

"Coño."

"I'm sorry." Tino's voice cracked as he said it. "What else could I do?"

"Nothing." Chuito sighed. "You saved Alaine. You did what you had to do. You did what I couldn't."

"Hearing her screams killed me too. Seeing you--" Tino set down his cup on the steps and covered his face. "I'm sorry."

"Gangsters don't get to cry in public," Chuito reminded him. "Your crew's out there. My crew's out there too. I'm sitting next to you, motherfucker."

"Fuck them," Tino said with the growl of a man who could take out five Russians like it was nothing. "I'll cry if I want."

Chuito used to think Nova was the reason Tino was so fucking spoiled. Now he knew it was something entirely different. Motherfuckers with aim like Tino got to cry in public and all Chuito could really do was hug him and let him cry on his shoulder hard enough that tears welled in Chuito's eyes and rolled down his cheeks too.

Tino was drunk off his ass.

Chuito was high as a kite.

It would have to be okay after the day they had and Chuito was inclined to agree with Tino about it for the moment.

If anyone had a problem with it, fuck them...They could talk to their Berettas if they had an issue with it, because together the two of them were bad ass enough to help Nova take down the king of the underworld.

And they both knew it.