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The Senator's Wife

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The Senator's Wife

A Screenplay

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Film & Television,
Loyola Marymount University of Los Angeles, California

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Fine Arts

By

Matthew Schlissel

APPROVAL TO ADVANCE TO CANDIDACY

The following student has met all the criteria to advance to candidacy
for an M.F.A. in Fine Arts with an emphasis in Screenwriting

Student: Matthew Schlissel Date: 5/7/15

Committee Co Chair (690):  Date: 5/7/15

Committee Co Chair (691):  Date: 5/7/2015

Advanced Screenplay Project Title:

The Senator's Wife

Criteria for advancement to candidacy:

Student has demonstrated sufficient ability and knowledge to complete the thesis project.

Approved to Candidacy

Not Approved to Candidacy

Comments:

ADVANCED SCREENPLAY PROJECT APPROVAL

The Advanced Screenplay Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Screenwriting submitted by the candidate fulfils the requirements and standards set forth in the University Bulletin by the Division.

Screenplay Title: The Senator's Wife

Student: Matthew Schlissel Date: 5/7/15

Committee Co Chair: SCWR 690 BETH SERLIN

Signed: Beth Serlin Date: 5/7/15

Committee Co Chair: SCWR 691 Karol Hoeffner

Signed: Karol Hoeffner Date: 5/7/15

Graduate Director: Karol Hoeffner

Signed: Karol Hoeffner Date: 5/7/15

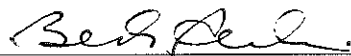
Dean: Stephen Ujlowski

Signed: Stephen Ujlowski Date: 5/7/15

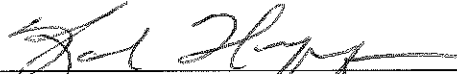
This feature length screenplay written by
Matthew Schlissel

under the guidance of a faculty committee
from the School of Film & Television at
Loyola Marymount University, and approved
by the members of the committee, has been
presented to and accepted by the Graduate
School in partial fulfillment of the thesis
requirements for the degree of Master of
Fine Arts in Screenwriting.

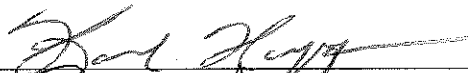
Advanced Screenplay Project Committee:



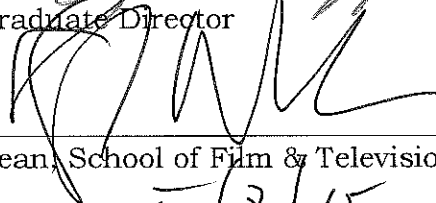
Committee Chair: SCWR 690



Committee Member: SCWR 691



Graduate Director



Dean, School of Film & Television

5/2/15

Date

THE SENATOR'S WIFE

by

Matthew Schlissel

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OVER BLACK:

PANTING, heavier and shallower with each breath.

DEVIN (V.O.)
He's fucking dying man.

KYLE (V.O.)
What do we do?

FADE IN:

EXT. SIDEWALK - EARLY MORNING

A MAN is limp on the ground, the dark blue tint of the early morning behind him. He starts CHOKING, vomit pouring out of his mouth like puss from an infection. His face is pale as a clam, sweat dripping down his face, he tries to speak with blue-tinged lips, GURGLING in between the vomit.

KYLE and DEVIN, (17) two Caucasian teens, far away from the wealthy world they belong to, look down upon the dying man.

DEVIN
I'm taking off.

KYLE
We can't just leave him here.

DEVIN
What the hell are we going to do?
He's pretty much gone.

KYLE
Hospital?

DEVIN
They'll fucking rat on us the
second we get there.

The man's GURGLING gets louder.

DEVIN (CONT'D)
Fuck this shit dude, I'm out.

Devin takes off down a vacant street.

Kyle stands still, unsure of what to do, can't take his eyes off the dying man.

KYLE

(takes out his cell phone)

Fuck-fuck-fuck...

(into phone)

Hello? Yes, there's a man, and he's-

-fuck--he's not breathing and--fuck-

-I'm at Atlantic and fourth.

Atlantic and fourth. Did you get

that? My name? You want my name?

He looks at the body, still as a rock...

KYLE (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Atlantic and fourth. Please Come

soon.

Kyle throws the phone far away from him, takes off into the dark blue abyss of the morning.

The Washington monument stands tall in the background.

EXT. LINCOLN HEIGHTS PARK - MORNING

The sun is barely out, a warm glow cutting through the icy sky. Winter hasn't quite set in yet but its chilling grip is closing in on D.C.

The park is sparse and shoddy, it stands as a symbol for the poor neighborhood it belongs to. Bars on windows. Liquor stores. Gun stores. Trash on the sidewalks.

The residents of Lincoln Heights gather around to watch news vans and black SUV's surround the park. They're unfamiliar with the choreography of a D.C. Public Relations Extravaganza. It's going to be a big one.

Hungry reporters practice in front of portable mirrors, cameramen get their equipment locked and loaded, bodyguards with earpieces scan the area. It's a circus. And every circus needs a ringleader:

MARY

(shouting to press corps)

Twenty minutes until the Senator is ready. Two. Zero. If any of you are not ready in twenty, I promise you, you will be watching the event from the inside of your van. Everyone copy?

MARY COTTINGTON, (mid 40's) lean, mean, a machine that spits political fire.

She is beautiful and distinguished, rocking a black cashmere-infused wool blend double-breasted peacoat. She loves her husband a lot, she loves the D.C. politics even more. She looks like Hilary Clinton and moves like General Patton.

MARY (CONT'D)

Where, in the love of all things
Christ, is Katie?!

KATIE ADAMS (25) perky, attractive, slightly disheveled, a splitting image of Mary ten years junior, comes running up.

KATIE

Sorry Mrs. Cottington. I was with
Eric, going over his remarks.

MARY

He's Senator Cottington when we're
out in public.

KATIE

Yes, ma'am. Sorry.

MARY

This way.

Mary starts leading her around the park. Katie takes notes as Mary talks. There's precision to all of this.

MARY (CONT'D)

My husband will start the walk and
talk here. They'll be tracking,
he'll be talking. "I came here
today to talk about community..."
etc, etc, etc. "As a Senator, I
have always made families my
priority" etc, etc, etc.

KATIE

Fielding questions?

MARY

Yes, but only a select few. If
anyone starts going off-book then
I'll pull the plug.

KATIE

Who picks the select few?

MARY

You're looking at her.

They turn left, passing a graffitied jungle gym and broken monkey bars.

MARY (CONT'D)

(gesturing)

I saw a homelessman on the other side of the park. Put him closer to the jungle gym, he'll make great background. Also, I want networks to come down on the left flank by the monkey bars. I want local affiliates front and center-- they're the whole reason we're doing this in the first place. Make 'em feel big, important--

KATIE

I gave them VIP access ID's.

MARY

Laminated?

KATIE

Yes, ma'am.

MARY

Good girl.

KATIE

Print media?

MARY

(bemoaning)

They can have a little bit of room but they're taking a back seat. New York Times can kiss my you know what after the Op-Ed they did on him.

Katie giggles, and then throws out her hand, stopping Mary in her tracks.

KATIE

Mrs. Cottingham. There's needles down there.

Syringes, used and abused.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I'll get someone to clean it up.

MARY

No. Leave them. This is great.

Mary uses the tips of her high heels to collect the needles around her, bringing them closer together.

MARY (CONT'D)

This will be great B Roll. We can even have Eric point to one. It'll be a great segue for his speech on drugs.

KATIE

Genius.

MARY

(checking watch)
We got ten minutes. Where's Kyle?

KATIE

I thought he came with you.

MARY

(taking out her phone)
Dammit-Dammit-dammit.

KATIE

What's wrong?

MARY

(holding phone to ear)
He's going to be a no-show. I can feel it.

INT. DUMPSTER - ALLEYWAY - DAY

Darkness.

BUZZ, BUZZ. BUZZ, BUZZ.

A cellphone illuminates, revealing the caller: MOM

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

The buzzing goes off inside a dirty old dumpster.

The dumpster is yards and yards away from the scene we saw earlier, now turned into a crime scene:

- yellow tape
- CSI Officers mark the area
- EMT's load a dead body into a bag.

The dumpster is too far for anyone to hear the buzzing.

EXT. LINCOLN HEIGHTS PARK - MORNING

Mary pockets her phone.

MARY

We're going to have to go without him.

KATIE

(panicked)

Oh my god, are you sure? Do you want me to try his cell? I can run and go get him. Where is he?

MARY

(calm)

Katie, I'm going to need you to calm the fuck down. Do me a favor. Go tell Senator Cottingham that the press corps is waiting for him and that everything is a go.

KATIE

And what about Kyle?

MARY

It's okay, I have a good idea where he is.

KATIE

I meant, what if the press ask about Kyle?

She thinks for a second.

MARY

Tell them that he's sick.

Katie runs off on her mission.

Mary looks down upon a used heroin needle. Stares at it. The filth. The grime. She's repulsed by it.

PRELAP DIALOGUE:

ERIC

We are a family of values.

ONSCREEN FOOTAGE:

ERIC COTTINGTON (40's) a man who's been able to hide behind his good looks and family name his entire life. He's giving his press conference at Lincoln Heights Park, Mary at his side.

He's walking and talking down the exact path Mary laid out.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I came here today to talk about community. And community is just another word for family. As a Senator, I have always made family values my priority. I want to make sure I continue to do that, no matter what office I'm in. We can't let our children go to sleep to the sounds of gunshots.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - ERIC'S OFFICE - DAY

A round table of politicians watching the footage. Aids, experts, Mary and Eric.

BACK TO FOOTAGE

ERIC

We can't let them play on playgrounds where the only toys available to them are dangerous monkey bars and--oh, geeze, just look at that--

He points to a dirty syringe.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Drugs! Drugs are destroying are families, drugs are destroying are communities, and as Senator I am making it my priority to see that those who push drugs into our children's lives are met with the full extent of the law.

Footage of Eric minimizes into a corner of the screen, a NEWS ANCHOR taking center screen.

NEWS ANCHOR

That was Senator Cottingham conducting a press conference this morning at Lincoln Heights Park, trying to address the drug crisis.

The screen goes MUTE.

BACK TO SCENE

ERIC

That guy looks pretty good, if I do say so myself.

The group chuckles. Mary's in work mode.

MARY

Who wants to start?

KATIE

I would, if that's okay. I think we need to address the Kyle problem.

Mary perks up at the phrasing.

ERIC

What Kyle problem?

KATIE

Well he's been missing a lot of press events, including the one this morning, and the media is asking a lot of questions. He also hasn't been in school for two weeks now.

Mary's caught off guard on that one.

ERIC

(to Mary)

Is this true?

MARY

No. I don't think so.

KATIE

It's not her fault, Senator. I got the call from the school principal while she was working the event with you.

ERIC

This is something we need to address.

ADVISOR #1

It'll only be a matter of time before the press get a hold of his attendance record.

ERIC

What's the first step?

Mary snaps back to reality.

MARY

We issue a statement. We drop you from one or two of the events on tomorrow's itinerary and we say that you're staying home to tend to your sick son.

ADVISOR #1

Sick with what?

ADVISOR #2

Measles?

MARY

Too severe.

ADVISOR #1

Mono?

MARY

Implies certain sexual things I don't want to get into.

KATIE

Flu?

Mary hates that it came from her but--

MARY

Yep. Flu. It's safe, clean. And everyone gets it. It's relatable. Danny, work on the statement and run it by me by five tonight. Rose, talk to the Principal at his school and make sure he knows that Kyle's record is confidential information protected under The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. If a Xerox copy finds its way to the press, tell him we will be seeing him in court. Everyone got it?

They all nod their head.

Eric grabs Mary's hand.

ERIC

We have to talk about Kyle.

MARY

I know. Tonight.

Mary looks up, looking for someone.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hey, Katie. Can you hold up a sec?

Katie walks up to Mary, passing by Eric on her way.

ERIC

Good job today.

KATIE

Thank you.

She makes her to Mary.

MARY

I just wanted to say that you are doing a splendid job.

KATIE

Oh my god. Thank you. That's so kind of you. I have been such a fan of you and your husband for so long and it means so much--

Mary watches for everyone to leave the room and--

MARY

Hey Kate.

KATIE

Yeah.

MARY

If you ever refer to my son as a problem again, I will have your ass selling knick-knacks at the Washington Monument gift shop. You understand?

KATIE

I'm sorry--I just.

MARY

Do you understand?

KATIE

Yes.

(off Mary's look)

Yes, ma'am.

Mary's flashes her Christmas-card smile.

MARY

Keep up the good work.

And with that, Mary leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - THE SHOOTING GALLERY - DAY

Kyle follows Devin through a puke-stained hallway, eyes peering from the opening in doorways. YELLING heard in the distance.

They get to their room.

KYLE

You sure we'll be okay here?

DEVIN

Yeah, it's all good. I know the guy who owns the place.

Devin opens the door to a darkened abyss.

DEVIN (CONT'D)

It's safe here.

INT. ST. REGIS HOTEL - CONFERENCE HALL - DAY

The WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COALITION is underway. Any female who is even remotely important in D.C. is at this conference, including our girl Mary. She sits a table where the placement of the silverware was tediously thought about. She is among hundreds of other women, all dressed to the tee, staring up at MRS. WELLS (60), FORMER FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES, a stunner in her day.

She stands at the podium, speaking with certitude, capturing the attention of every pair of ears in the room.

MRS. WELLS

"We are not the sum of our parts," my husband said in his first Inaugural speech. "We are a collage of our ideals". Now I don't want to brag, or steal any of the spotlight away from my husband, but I wrote that line.

The crowd CHUCKLES.

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)

I thought of it while I was watching my little one run around the oval office.

(MORE)

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)
 I thought about family and I
 thought about America and I
 realized: There is no difference
 between the two. America is family.
 Family is America.

The crowd starts APPLAUDING.

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)
 And there shouldn't be a gap
 between the person who runs the
 country and the person who runs the
 family.

The crowd is on their feet now.

Mary's eyes are wide, enamored by the First Lady's presence.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SHOOTING GALLERY - DAY (LOOKS LIKE NIGHT)

A soda can is held up, a serrated knife STABS AT IT, crudely
 cutting off the bottom of the can.

Brown water DRIPS from the ceiling in a Chinese water-torture
 rhythm.

Drip, drip.

White powder is placed into the bottom of the can, lit up by
 a lighter. It begins melting.

Devin is lighting the soda can, Kyle next to him, and a THIN
 JUNKIE in the corner.

THIN JUNKIE
 (stuttering, quickly)
 Hey-hey! Just a little skag, just a
 little, want just a little, k, k,
 just a little.

DEVIN
 Shut the fuck up!

Drip, drip.

DEVIN (CONT'D)
 (to Kyle)
 It's almost ready man.

KYLE
 Mind if I borrow your phone?

DEVIN
You can go first.

KYLE
Your phone, can I borrow it? I
ditched mine.

Devin wipes his nostril and flicks the can.

Drip, drip.

DEVIN
Yeha-yeah. Go for it.

The Junkie in the corner stands up.

JUNKIE
I want to hit it!

DEVIN
(raised fist)
Sit the fuck down or I won't give
you shit.

Junkie cowers back into his corner.

KYLE
Where's the phone?

DEVIN
I don't know man, it's like around.

Devin places a chewed up syringe into the bottom of the can,
pulls the plunger back.

KYLE
Where is it man?

Devin rolls up his sleeve, slaps the veins looking for a good
one....finds it. He STABS THE SYRINGE into his vein.

Almost immediately Devin looks lighter, elated.

DEVIN
I had it when I was taking a shit.

Devin chuckles to himself.

KYLE
Thanks...

Kyle starts to get up.

DEVIN
I'm sorry man.

KYLE
For what?

Kyle makes his way over to the bathroom.

Devin, losing himself in the high, continues talking to Kyle, as if he was still there.

DEVIN
I just...I just....

KYLE (O.S.)
Found it!

DEVIN
They paid me, man. They paid me.

Drip, drip..

INT. ST. REGIS HOTEL - CONFERENCE HALL

Mrs. Wells is making the rounds, greeting everyone who came to see her speak. Mary patiently waits in line. The First Lady is getting closer, only a feet away now.

BUZZ BUZZ

Mary feels the vibration. She pulls the phone from her purse. It's an unknown number.

MRS. WELLS
Mrs. Cottington. Good to see you again.

Mary hits IGNORE on the phone and puts it away.

MARY
Such an honor to hear you speak.

MRS. WELLS
I would love to sit down and talk with you.

MARY
Oh, yes, of course. Me too. When were you thinking?

MRS. WELLS
How about right now?

Mary smiles, caught off guard.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SHOOTING GALLERY - DAY

Devin is almost off into dream land. Kyle's voice is muddled in the background, he's talking on the phone.

DEVIN
Sorry...Kyle...

BAM!!!

The bathroom door flies open. TWO HUGE THUGS burst into the room.

Devin is just conscious enough to raise his finger and point towards the bathroom.

Devin is dropped to the ground, a placid smile pasted onto his face. The world around him is blurry and muffled.

In the background, Kyle is taken from the bathroom, kicking and screaming. He screams for help, but they fall on deaf ear...Devin is too far gone...

Just like that, Kyle is gone.

Silence.

Devin, serene and smiling, is off into a whole other world.

Drip. Drip...

Drip. Drip...

INT. ST. REGIS HOTEL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Completely empty, save for an EMPLOYEE setting the tables. He notices who just walked in, freezes.

MRS. WELLS
(to employee)
Mind if we have the room? Promise
we'll give it right back.

The employee hurries out of the room.

Mrs. Wells takes a seat, Mary follows suit.

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)
My teleprompter broke up there. Had
to fly off script.

MARY

You couldn't tell. Looked completely natural.

MRS. WELLS

That's the trick isn't it?

They both smile.

BUZZ BUZZ

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)

Do you have to get that?

MARY

No, I'm okay.

BUZZ BUZZ

MARY (CONT'D)

Let me just turn it off.

Mary checks her phone: new voicemail. She turns her phone off.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm here.

MRS. WELLS

Good. I've been meaning to talk with you for a while now. We've been watching you.

MARY

That's slightly arresting but still flattering.

MRS. WELLS

(chuckling)

It's not as NSA-y as it sounds. I've been speaking with the WLC and we're all in agreement that if we want a woman in the oval office in four years, we need to start backing that horse, NOW.

MARY

I agree.

MRS. WELLS

You do? Great.

MARY

I know great some great women who would make wonderful candidates -- if you're looking for name, that is.

MRS. WELLS

We're talking about you, Mary.

MARY

Me?

MRS. WELLS

Yes. Welcome to the meeting.

MARY

Mrs. Wells, I'm flattered but I'm not the politician, that's Eric. I'm the one--

MRS. WELLS

You're the one who takes care of the son, you're the one who runs his campaign, and you're probably the one who pushed him into politics in the first place. Am I right about that last one?

MARY

He always wanted to do it.

MRS. WELLS

But he needed the push, right?

Mary smiles. First Lady inches closer.

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)

Behind every great man there is an even greater woman. Let's go over the facts: You're an excellent mother, a loving wife, you got the body of a twenty year old, and you're smart as a goddamn whip. We all know you're the Wizard behind Eric Cottingham's Oz. Isn't it time to come out from behind the curtain?

Off Mary's face, flattered and deeply moved.

INT. SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

Gunshots FIRE OFF in repetition.

BAM. BAM-BAM. BAM. BAM-BAM.

Mary is firing a 9MM along with her best friend JEANIE, a sorority girl who found the perfect man before he became rich. She's the happiest woman in the world...on the outside.

She fires her gun like a mad postal worker -- eyes wide, face like a cheetah, SCREAMING with each burst of bullet.

JEANIE

YEAHHHHH!!! You saw that one? Went right into that asshole's mouth.

Mary points to her earmuffs.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

DID YOU SEE THAT?!!!!

Mary nods her head, gives a thumbs up.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

He won't be eating dinner tonight.

Mary fires away--not as driven as Jeanie but she's not a bad shot either. She can handle a gun.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Get him in the face! Get him in the face!

MARY

What?

Mary takes off her earmuffs.

JEANIE

I said, get him in the face.

MARY

The bullseye is on his chest.

JEANIE

Yeah, but you want to get him in the mouth.

MARY

Why?

JEANIE

So he can't ever talk back to you.

MARY

I think it's break time.

EXT. GUN RANGE - REST AREA - DAY

Jeanie and Mary find a bench in a secluded area. Jeanie takes a swig from her flask.

JEANIE
That's amazing!

MARY
I know.

JEANIE
She always looks so poised. What she poised?

MARY
Yeah.

JEANIE
I wish I had that kind of poise.

She swigs from her flask.

JEANIE (CONT'D)
What did you say?

MARY
You mean after I came to? I said yes. Of course, I said yes.

JEANIE
So what does this mean? Are you going to run for office?

MARY
I don't know. I think we're going to start off slow. I want to do to it but...

JEANIE
But what?

MARY
Kyle's using.

JEANIE
Again?! I thought you took him to rehab.

MARY
It didn't work. Nothing seems to work.

MARY (CONT'D)

I just don't know how to make it stop. He keeps going back to it. I don't know what to say to make him stop.

JEANIE

I'm really sorry, honey.

MARY

I just don't think he's got it in him to get better.

Jeanie's phone RINGS.

JEANIE

(into phone)

Hey. No, no. I'm at the hair salon with Mary. Well I'll pick up the kids when I'm done. No!

Jeanie steps away.

Mary stare at the flask. Takes a big deep swig. She likes it. She takes another one...letting the warm screwdriver wash over her...

INT. ART GALLERY - DAY

A high-profile auction is underway. Armani-clad women in Jimmy Choo's sip mimosas and bid on priceless pieces of art and vacation homes in Martha's Vineyard.

Mary is smack-dab in middle of them, happy to be the sun of this solar system. She shakes hands, kisses cheeks, and smiles like a pro.

MARY

Eric didn't want to come but I dragged him here.

They all giggle.

FRIEND

Where is your husband?

MARY

Preparing his speech. He'll be up there soon.

Jeanie sidles up next to her, extra mimosa in hand.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (holding her drink up)
 I'm covered.

JEANIE
 (pushing it on her)
 Deborah is about to go into her
 "Thoracic Surgery Story". You'll
 thank me.

Mary accepts the drink, sips it, and grimaces.

MARY
 What's in this?

JEANIE
 Extra.

MARY
 Extra what?

JEANIE
 (smirking, sipping hers)
 Just extra.

DEBORAH (60) a socialite trying to avoid the fact that people eventually grow older, steals the group's attention.

DEBORAH
 I swear on my life. Max was only seven or eight years old when he said, "Mother, mother--I want to be a great doctor, just like daddy!". He was the cutest little thing and of course it doesn't stop there--no, no, no--when he was a Junior at Johns Hopkins and he heard about my mild case of asthma he said, "Mother, I am going to become a Thoracic Surgeon, so you never have to worry about breathing ever again."

Deborah takes out a handkerchief to wipe away what is either a tear or a leak from one of the Botox injections.

DEBORAH (CONT'D)
 (through the tears)
 He graduates next weekend. They say he's going to be the greatest surgeon in the history of the world.

MARY
 (chugging her mimosa)
 Dear God.

JEANIE
 Told you.

DEBORAH
 (to Mary)
 How is your little prince doing? I
 haven't seen Kyle around lately.

MARY
 He's been in bed all week. Flu.

Jeanie gives a glance to Mary.

DEBORAH
 Oh no, I'm sorry to hear that. I
 heard that was going around. Has he
 mentioned which field of study he
 wishes to major in?

MARY
 No, not exactly.

DEBORAH
 What about colleges? Are you two
 looking at colleges?

MARY
 We have. Yes.

DEBORAH
 You can't wait too long, dear. They
 grow up so fast.

MARY
 Yes, they do.

Mary sips her drink.

The crowd starts cheering, Eric steps up to the podium, ready to give another speech. He flashes that great politician smile. Make eye contact with Mary.

EXT. STREETS OF WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

Moonlight shimmers off wet pavement. Homeless find their beds for their night on city benches. The capitol building is lit up like a prestigious light bulb in the darkened city.

INT. BLACK SUV - NIGHT

Mary and Eric ride home. Eric loosens his tie. Mary stares out the window, studying her city, a mixture of prestige and tragedy.

ERIC
How was the speech?

MARY
Good.

ERIC
Pacing?

MARY
Good.

ERIC
Delivery?

MARY
It was a good speech, Eric.

ERIC
(noticing her gaze)
He always comes home. I'm sure he'll stumble in at two am, high out of his mind, making excuses for himself. Remember when he knocked over the porcelain statue we got from Venice? You almost tore his head off.

MARY
Yeah...

ERIC
This time is no different.

He holds her hand.

Off her look, a slight smile.

INT. MARY'S BEDROOM - COTTINGTON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Again, Mary stares at the ceiling. Eric is fast asleep.

The clock on the night stand reads: 2:30 am.

She gets out of bed.

INT. HALLWAY - COTTINGTON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

She makes her way over to Kyle's room. Hand slowly touches the doorknob. She turns and opens the door--

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bed is freshly made with no one in it.

The moon's blue light pouring into the room. A sad coldness.

Mary sits on his bed, grief stricken. She lies down, curling up against his pillow.

INT. KYLE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Yellow light splashes onto Mary's face. She wakes up.

A clock reads: 7:00 am.

INT. MARY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Mary enters. Eric's not there. Another empty bed.

She grabs her cell phone and starts her routine.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Bluetooth in ear. Click.

Tea kettle on stove. Ignite.

Bread in toaster. Set.

Mary cycles through voicemails while doing all of this:

- Jeanie called; she's complaining about her husband and her kids and yadda yadda yadda. Delete.
- The office of the first lady called. She wants to arrange another sit down with Mary. Interesting.
- The YMCA of Washington wants Sen. Cottingham to come speak. Ehh, maybe.
- An unknown number called. It's a lot of static...until--

KYLE (FILTERED)

Mom...Mom...?

Mary stops in her tracks.

KYLE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
 Are you there...?
 (starts crying)
 I didn't know that guy was going to
 get sick. He just asked for some
 and we gave him what we had and I
 called the cops, I swear I called
 the cops when I saw him foaming at
 the mouth. I did what I thought you
 would want me to do. Mom, I'm
 really, really, so--

Mary is frozen in the kitchen. The toast is starting to burn,
 tea kettle starting to WHISTLE

Mary leans into the phone--

KYLE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
 (DOOR BUST OPEN!)
 What's going on...? HEY! Hey-
 HELPPP. HELP MEEEEEE. DEVIN! HELP
 MEEEEEEEE--
 (THUMP)

Mary listens intently, hoping to hear Kyle's voice again...

VOICEMAIL LADY (FILTERED)
 End of voicemail. Please press one
 to delete. Press two to save.

The tea kettle ROARS LIKE A FREIGHT TRAIN. Kitchen filled
 with smoke. Mary can't move. Can't breathe. She is a dear
 frozen on the tracks.

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Mary races up the stairs at building at breakneck speed.

INT. CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

She approaches the metal detectors.

GUARD
 Looking wonderful as usual, Mrs.
 Cottingham.

She races through the metal detection process. No reply.

INT. WAITING ROOM - SEN. COTTINGTON'S OFFICE - DAY

She runs through the room.

SECRETARY

Good morning, Mrs. Cottington. I
made lemon blueberry--

Mary is already gone. Vanished into --

INT. SEN. COTTINGTON'S OFFICE - DAY

-- Eric behind his desk, Katie sitting near him.

KATIE

Good morning Mary. I had a great
idea for the--

MARY

Get out.

KATIE

I'm sorry?

MARY

Get. Out.

Katie looks to Eric. Eric motions for her to leave.

Katie walks out.

ERIC

You want to explain what that was
about?

Mary holds up her phone. Voicemail plays.

KYLE (FILTERED)

(starts crying)

I didn't know that guy was going to
get sick. He just asked for some
and we gave him what we had and I
called the cops, I swear I called
the cops when I saw him foaming at
the mouth. I did what I thought you
would want me to do. Mom, I'm
really, really, so--

Eric sits down, complete shock.

KYLE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

(DOOR BUST OPEN!)

What's going on...? HEY!

(MORE)

KYLE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
 Hey-HELPPP. HELP MEEEEEE. DEVIN!
 HELP MEEEEEEEE--
 (THUMP)

Mary pockets the phone.

MARY
 It ends there.

ERIC
 (sotto)
 ...Oh my god...

MARY
 I can't just sit here. I need to do
 something. I need to act.

Eric is catatonic. Mary leans in--

MARY (CONT'D)
 ERIC! I need you to pick up the
 phone so I can do what I do.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Eric!
 (he snaps back to reality)
 Tell me where I'm going.

ERIC
 County police station.

MARY
 They'll be expecting me?

ERIC
 As soon as you leave, I'm making
 the call.

MARY
 Thank you...

Mary starts to leave--

ERIC
 Honey. I love you.

MARY
 I love you too. Now make the call.

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Mary bites her nails. Something she hasn't done since
 childhood.

DRIVER

We'll be there shortly, Mrs.
Cottingham.

Mary nods her head. Places her black leather gloves over her hands to cover the biting.

MARY

Take me through the garage when you get there.

DRIVER

Yes, ma'am.

INT. GARAGE - POLICE STATION - DAY

Dozen and dozens of police cruisers line the parking spots. This is where officers park and enter the building, and no one else.

The SUV parks in a spot reserved for the Chief Of Police.

Mary gets out of the car, her Jackie Onassis shades still on.

She is greeted by CHIEF OF POLICE, MCDERMOTT (60'S).

MCDERMOTT

Mrs. Cottingham, right this way.
Just got off the phone with your husband.

MARY

Does anyone know I'm here?

MCDERMOTT

No.

MARY

Good.

They approach a throng of off-duty officers, laughing and joking around.

MCDERMOTT

Officers--Clear a path!

They stop laughing, part a red sea for her.

MCDERMOTT (CONT'D)

(to Mary, softly)

We're going to take the service elevator. It's less...public.

MARY

Thank you.

They pass under an archway with a sign that reads:
DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL ONLY, entering into--

INT. SERVICE ELEVATOR - DAY

Cold. Wide. A gurney sits to the side.

The elevator RATTLES.

Shades still on, looking straight ahead Mary does her thing--

MARY

I want to cross reference the daily
arrest logs but let's check the
drunk tank first, maybe a freshman
officer picked him up without
knowing who he was. Have one of
your guys check for--

MCDERMOTT

Mrs. Cottington. Please forgive me,
but we're not going to the holding
cells. I've already checked.

He shakes his head.

She gulps.

MARY

Where are we going then?

It's too painful for McDermott to say.

The elevator doors open, revealing--

INT. D.C. MORGUE - DAY

The cold refrigeration hits her skin immediately. She takes
her shades off, stunned by the sight before her.

ROWS AND ROWS OF TEENAGE CORPSES LAY BEFORE HER.

Cold. Pale. Blue. Toes tagged. Only a thin white sheet to
cover their naked bodies. It's a horrific site. Something you
would see at a holocaust museum.

She moves at a glacier's pace. Breathing slow and heavy.

McDermott hangs back, having trouble with this as well.

MCDERMOTT

I had the examiner pull out all the underage john does.

She roams the aisles, examining the faces.

MARY

Homicides?

MCDERMOTT

Only a few. The majority are drug related. OD's.

MARY

These are all minors.

MCDERMOTT

Unfortunately, yes.

Mary takes in the details of all the bodies she passes:

- a young girl with pony tails
- a boy with braces
- A boy who looks similar to Kyle. It's not him but he has that same sweetness in his face.

Mary keeps moving. Trying to focus on her mission at hand.

She stops at a boy, 17, maybe 18. Could've been a football star, a lawyer, a U.S. Senator. Instead he ended up on a silver slab. She notices marks on his arm. Track marks.

MARY

Heroin?

MCDERMOTT

Yes, ma'am.

Mary examines the track marks. She ever so slightly grazes her finger tip, cloaked in black leather, along the track marks.

She doesn't look down with disgust, this time there is something different in her eyes. Sympathy.

The WHISTLING of the tea kettle comes SCREAMING back into this scene, crashing us into:

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Mary's on the phone.

MARY
He wasn't there.

ERIC (FILTERED)
Thank God.

MARY
I don't know if it's a good thing
or a bad thing.

ERIC (FILTERED)
It's a good thing.

MARY
He could be in a ditch somewhere.

ERIC
Don't go there. Do not go there.
We're going to find him. I promise.
(off her silence)
Mary..?

MARY
Yeah...

ERIC
This isn't our fault.

Mary pulls phone away, looks out the window. She comes back to the phone.

MARY
McDermott told me an anonymous
caller reported an OD down by
Lincoln Heights. I'm heading down
there now.

ERIC (FILTERED)
You're going down where?!

MARY
The OD can tell us something.

ERIC (FILTERED)
You are not going down there by
yourself.

MARY
I got Mike with me.

ERIC (FILTERED)
Mary, Please wait for me. We can
get a police escort to take us--

MARY
I'm going Eric. It's done.

ERIC (FILTERED)
Be safe.

MARY
Always.

ERIC (FILTERED)
If there was an overdose then the
police already turned it into a
crime scene and swept the area.
What do you think you're going to
find there?

MARY
A bread crumb.

EXT. WHITNEY YOUNG MEMORIAL BRIDGE - DAY

Mary's SUV drives east along the long narrow strip of
concrete that separates the two D.C.'s.

The black SUV crosses over the Anacostia river, entering
into:

EXT. EASTERN D.C. - DAY

Mary looks out her window, noticing the changes.

Parks go from well kept to neglected.

Schools go from pristine to run-down.

Windows become barred or broken.

Liquor stores, gun stores, adult video stores occupy every
corner.

Children play in the streets instead of being in school.

EXT. CAPITOL HEIGHTS - DAY

Black SUV pulls up to the corner of Southern Ave and H
Street.

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Mary checks the address on her phone.

MARY

Thank you, Mike. I'll just be a minute.

MIKE

Want me to come with you?

MARY

No thank you. I'll be fine.

She takes a deep breath in and --

EXT. STREET CORNER - CAPITOL HEIGHTS - DAY

-- exits her SUV. Shades still on. She takes them off and takes in her surroundings.

She's near a park eerily reminiscent of the one she held the press conference at.

She walks up to the sidewalk, constantly checking the address on her phone.

She finds a scrap of YELLOW POLICE CAUTION TAPE, still attached to a street pole.

This is no longer a crime scene. People walking up and down the sidewalk as if nothing horrible had happened here recently.

She looks down at her feet, beneath her Gucci heels, examining the pavement. She kneels down and sees the discoloration on the sidewalk. The rain has since washed away the blood and vomit stains, but it's still faintly there. She even notices finger nail scratches.

She stands up, finds a HOMELESS MAN, panhandling. He's unwashed, unshaven, and reeks of bourbon. He jiggles his cup.

MARY

How are you, sir?

HOMELESS MAN

(re: the cup)

A little bit goes a long way.

Mary drops some change into his cup. He frowns at the amount.

MARY

You sleep out here a lot? On this corner?

HOMELESS MAN

You a cop?

MARY

No.

HOMELESS MAN

I'm out here when they won't let me
in the shelter.

MARY

What do you know about this corner?

PEDESTRIAN

It's a corner.

MARY

You see people selling drugs on
this corner?

HOMELESS MAN

You sure you not a cop? You asking
questions like a cop?

MARY

I'm a concerned citizen.

HOMELESS MAN

Well fuck you, I ain't your mayor.
Call the fucking government if you
got a problem. They won't do shit
though. I still waiting on my
checks.

The homeless man gets close to her, exhaling his bourbon
breath into Mary's face. His teeth rotten yellow.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

You a pretty lady to be asking so
many question.

Mary takes out her phone. Holds up a picture of:

INSERT: Kyle's school picture; happy, joyful, before he
turned to drugs.

MARY

Have you seen him?

HOMELESS MAN

Maybe. You gotta put up more than a
couple quarters if you want the
answer to that question.

Mary takes out a twenty dollar bill, places into his cup.

MARY

Have you seen him?

HOMELESS MAN

Yeah, I seen him. Him and his buddy
always popping up around here.

MARY

Were they buying drugs?

HOMELESS MAN

You got nice shoes on. I seen Katie
Couric with them shoes.

He jiggles his can. She puts in another twenty.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Yeah. Dey buying drugs. Baggies.

MARY

They were here a few days ago and
ran away.

HOMELESS MAN

Yeah, I seen that.

MARY

You did. Do you know where they
went?

Homeless man licks his lips and nods. Jiggles his cup. Mary
puts in a fifty. He smiles. He motions for her to come
closer. She slowly moves in. He moves towards her ear.

HOMELESS MAN

(whisper)

I like to like pussy.

She moves back, disgusted. SPAT! He spits in her face and
takes off running down the street.

Driver comes running up from car.

Mary takes out a handkerchief, wipes off the saliva.

DRIVER

Did he hurt you at all?

MARY

No. Can you just give me a minute?

Driver heads back to the SUV. Mary continues wiping, her hands shaking. She bends down, having trouble breathing. She crouches down to the ground, trying to compose herself.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (to self)
 Breathe, just breathe.

She gets a hold of her breathing. Staring at the sidewalk she notices a patter. It's a pattern of little black stars, from the sole of a shoe. It's a shoe print with a logo at the center. The whole thing is faded but she can make it out: CONVERSE ALL STARS.

She follows the shoe prints, away from the sidewalk and into:

INT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

She keeps following the shoe prints, though the ground is getting dirtier and making it more difficult to see.

She tries to keep following the prints but they are fading, fading, and they are gone....

She stands in the middle of the alleyway. A ship without compass.

MARY
 (to self)
 Where did you go, sweetie? Give me something.

DRIVER (O.S.)
 Mrs. Cottington, is everything alright?

MARY
 (lost in thought,
 shouting)
 Yes...

DRIVER (O.S.)
 I'll be right out here. Call me if you need me.

MARY
 (shouting, processing)
 What was that?

DRIVER (O.S.)
 I said, I'll be right out here.
 Call me if you need me.

She takes out her phone and calls Kyle's cellphone. She listens to her surroundings. Nothing but the noise coming in from the street -- construction, car's honking, people chatting, it's nothing but street noise and--

BUZZ BUZZ.

She hears it.

BUZZ BUZZ.

It's faint but she hears it. She moves towards the buzzing, a bloodhound finding the scent.

She ends up at a dumpster.

She stares at it. She looks as if she might cry, imagining what she's going to find inside. She pulls it together.

She pulls over a wooden crate, stands on top of it, opens the dumpster lids and peers inside -- a mess of trash, she hears the buzzing but can't see the phone.

She starts wading through the trash -- food containers, cigarette butts, condoms. She clears the area. Sees the cellphone screen. Buzzing with blue hope. She reaches her hand deep into the dumpster -- can't quite reach it. It's too far down.

She pulls out her hand, covered in muck and filth, rubs it on her beautiful creme-colored skirt.

Fuck it.

She takes off her heels, sets them aside.

She slowly climbs into the dumpster, leg by leg, trying her damndest to ignore the grossness.

She mauls the trash, tearing pieces away, getting ever closer to the blue screen. The buzzing gets louder. And louder and louder.

She goes into a blind rage, clearing the area, looking for the very last thing a mother would ever want to find.

MARY

(to self, panicked)

Come on, come on, please, please,
don't be here, don't be here.

She keeps clearing and clearing. Endless supply of trash.

MARY (CONT'D)
COME ON! COME ON!

SEARCHING. SEARCHING. BREATHING.

MARY (CONT'D)
WHERE ARE YOU?!!!

Cling! She hits the bottom of the dumpster. No sign of Kyle. But there's the phone -- beaming and buzzing - MOM showing up on the screen. She picks it up, letting out a huge sigh of relief.

She laughs, almost in tears, trying to compose herself.

She climbs out of the dumpster, catches her breath.

Scrolling through the phone she sees all the missed calls and texts. Most are from her, except one stands out. It's from a contact named DRIZZLE.

The text message simply reads: Yo Kyle. You looking for a tenth?

MARY (CONT'D)
(to self, still catching
her breath)
Who the fuck is Drizzle?

EXT. PREP ACADEMY - DAY

A gorgeous five story old-brick building. Prestige and history oozing out of its walls.

PARKING LOT

The cars range from Lexus to Benz to BMW back to LEXUS and then to one car that doesn't fit -- an old beat up Camry.

ARIANA (O.S.)
You gotta do the loopy-dee-loop
thing.

INT. CAMRY - DAY

ANTHONY "DR. DRIZZLE" WILLIAMS (25), a baby face makes him look younger and more innocent than he really is. He struggles to tie a tie.

In the driver seat is ARIANA (18) beautiful and young, a deadly combination in the wrong hand. She loves Drizzle more than life, though not right now.

ARIANA
You're doing it wrong!

DRIZZLE
I know how to do it okay. I don't need you telling me all do this and do that and then it gets me all turned around and I don't need it okay. I'm a man and the man ties the tie.

He continues tying the tie the wrong way. Silence.

ARIANA
You're going to be late.

DRIZZLE
I want to be late.

ARIANA
Why?

DRIZZLE
Because it's better that way.

ARIANA
If I can just help you.

DRIZZLE
I did it once.

She takes the tie from him, fixes it.

ARIANA
No, you fucked it up once and I saved your ass.

Drizzle checks his pockets.

DRIZZLE
Why do I only have half a gram?

ARIANA
I don't know.

DRIZZLE
You smoked my shit?

ARIANA
I was craving it.

DRIZZLE
Fuck Ariana! I was gonna sell that shit today.

(MORE)

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

What the fuck am I going to make
off of half a gram. 100? Maybe 2?

ARIANA

I'm sorry.

DRIZZLE

We don't do this shit. Remember? We
just sell.

ARIANA

I just had a taste.

DRIZZLE

You had more than that. Who hooked
you on this shit, huh? You hanging
with Cesar again? I told you to
stay away from him.

ARIANA

You're a paranoid freak, you know
that?

DRIZZLE

And you're a fucking junkie, you
know that?

Ariana starts SMACKING him.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

Ow! Ow!

ARIANA

Get the fuck out of my car.

DRIZZLE

Fine. Fuck you!

He gets out.

EXT. CAMRY - PARKING LOT - DAY

Drizzle tries to walk away but can't -- his shirt is caught
in the door. He tugs and tugs, can't get it loose.

DRIZZLE

God Dammit.

INT. CAMRY - DAY

He taps on the glass.

DRIZZLE

Baby. Can you open the door? My shirt got caught.

(she ignores him)

Baby! Come on baby I didn't mean it. I'm sorry. Can you please open the door? I got folks staring at me and I'm going to get busted.

She rolls down the window.

ARIANA

What do you say?

DRIZZLE

I'm sorry.

ARIANA

Good.

She opens the door for him. He's free. He tucks in his shirt.

DRIZZLE

Love you forever, babe.

ARIANA

Love you forever.

Drizzle starts to walk away.

ARIANA (CONT'D)

Drizzle!

He turns back. She tosses him the tie.

ARIANA (CONT'D)

Don't get caught, don't get shot.

DRIZZLE

Don't get caught, don't get shot.

INT. PREP ACADEMY - DAY

Drizzle runs through the halls HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY textbook in hand, sporting a backpack, tie, blazer with the academy's seal on it. If you didn't know he was a drug dealer, you would think he was just a normal kid at this school.

INT. LARGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Drizzle enters a room full of 200 kids taking their final. He's late for the exam. He makes his way towards a seat in the back.

He reaches into his backpack, frantically searches for something, can't find it. Sighs loudly.

DRIZZLE

Dammit!

He gets the attention of the PREP KIDS next to him. They go back to their exams.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

(loudish whisper)

Fuck-fuck-fuck. I'm so screwed. I'm so--

A blue exam book is handed to him.

PREP KID

Here you go man. I always get extra.

DRIZZLE

Thanks dude.

Drizzle fakes like he's taking an exam.

INT. BATHROOM - D.C. PREP ACADEMY - DAY

Drizzle pretends to wash his hands. He stares at the shoes in the stall behind him. FLUSH!

Drizzle starts to really wash his hands, head down. PREP KID comes out of the stall.

DRIZZLE

That exam was fucking tough man. It was no joke.

PREP KID

Yeah, it blew.

DRIZZLE

I wanted to say thank you man. If you need anything, I don't know, like pills or something. Just hit me up.

PREP KID
I'm all good on pills.

DRIZZLE
What are you taking?

PREP KID
Oxy.

DRIZZLE
Sick. I was taking that for a while
and then it got kind of, I don't
know, boring. Had to find something
else. Something better.

Drizzle goes back to washing his hands, letting the hook
dangle, dangle, until --

PREP KID
What do you mean something better?

DRIZZLE
Oh, nothing, it's just. I found
this hook up that got me some dope
ass shit man. Some china.

PREP KID
H?

DRIZZLE
I'm talking shit that would blow
your mind and send you to another
motherfucking planet. Being at this
piece of shit school -- we need it,
right?

PREP KID
Fuck yeah.

Prep Kid is on the hook.

DRIZZLE
Well, thanks again for the blue
book. See ya around.

He starts to walk away, really playing hard to get.

PREP KID
Hey man. You wouldn't happen to
have some. China. Would ya?

He bit the shit out of the bait. Drizzle reels him in.

DRIZZLE
You looking to buy?

PREP KID
I don't know, I mean, if you say
it's as good as it is, maybe I
should try.

DRIZZLE
It's kind of expensive.

PREP KID
Money's not a problem.

DRIZZLE
Well, I can sell you my stash and
then if you like it I'll get some
more from my guy.

PREP KID
Really? Oh fuck dude. That sounds
dope.

DRIZZLE
(pulling out the baggie)
I only got half a gram though, so--

PREP KID
What's that, like 600 bucks?

DRIZZLE
You know what, it is 600, but for a
friend who saved my ass today, I'll
cut it down. How does 5 sound?

PREP KID
Let's fucking do this.

Prep Kid whips out a wad of cash, exchanges it for the baggie. Drizzle smiles like a kid at a really fucked up candy store.

Drizzle hands him his cell phone.

DRIZZLE
Put your number down. I'll text
you. Hit me up if you want more.

PREP KID
(punching in numbers)
You trust the guy who sells this
shit?

DRIZZLE
Yeah, I trust the guy.

PREP KID
Thanks, bro.

DRIZZLE
No prob. Bro.

Prep Kid leaves with his newfound habit. Drizzle counts his earnings.

He loosens his tie and checks himself in the mirror.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
(into mirror)
Good work, Doctor.

He starts to walk out when --

POLICE OFFICERS storm into the bathroom, guns raised.

OFFICES
ON THE GROUND. NOW. HANDS ON THE
GROUND.

Drizzle drops to the floor.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Drizzle, tattered and pissed, sits in a big comfy chair, hands handcuffed behind his back.

He stares at OLD FAT MAN in a really nice sweater vest. The old fat man stares back.

DRIZZLE
What the fuck is this? Am I in
detention?
(off his silence)
Are you deaf? Are you one of those
mute people?

The door swings open and in walks Mary, changed into fresh clothes. Old fat man gets up.

MARY
(to old fat man)
Thank you, Principal Walker.

He leaves. Mary takes the big seat behind the wooden desk.

The two strangers from opposite worlds stare each other down. Drizzle is antsy. Mary is calm and collected. A slyness to her this time around.

DRIZZLE

Are we just going to eye fuck all day or what?

She smiles. Takes out a manila folder.

MARY

Are you Anthony Williams, AKA Drizzle?

DRIZZLE

Doctor Drizzle?

MARY

Excuse me.

DRIZZLE

It's Doctor Drizzle.

MARY

Noted. You are in deed Anthony Williams, AKA Doctor Drizzle--
(reading from folder)
--born July 12th, 1989, in Baltimore Memorial Hospital to a Denise and Frederick Williams, deceased in March of 2001--

DRIZZLE

Do you have a point to this?

MARY

--moved from family member to family member and currently lives at 641 Westbrook Lane Apt. 11 with a Ms. Ariana Roderiguez. I met her by the way, really cute. Priors include possession, battery, assault, verbally and physically assaulting a police officer -- ooh, that's not good. They don't like that.

DRIZZLE

If you're going to arrest me just fucking arrest me.

MARY

No one's arresting you.

DRIZZLE
(jiggling the handcuffs)
Really?

MARY
Well, not yet. It depends.

DRIZZLE
On what?

MARY
On how much you want to help me.

DRIZZLE
You want help with your wardrobe,
'cus it looks a little boogie to
me? I can help you with that.

MARY
I'm looking for my son.

DRIZZLE
You try the bathrooms? I hear kids
here like to skip class in there.

MARY
And I hear drug dealers like to
trespass on private property so
they can sell drugs to underage
minors. Did you hear about that,
Doctor?

DRIZZLE
Nah, didn't hear about that.

MARY
Did you also hear that intent to
sell heroin is a Class B Felony -
up to 10 years in prison? Throw in
Selling to minors and you've just
doubled your penalties.

Drizzle's cockiness fades away.

DRIZZLE
What's your son's name?

MARY
Kyle. Kyle Cottingham.

DRIZZLE
Oh shit. Little Kyle? I love that
dawg.

MARY
(offended)
Do you know where he is?

DRIZZLE
I haven't seen him in weeks.

MARY
Are you screwing with me?

DRIZZLE
Nah, I'm telling you the truth.

MARY
I saw your text message.

DRIZZLE
Yeah, I hadn't heard from him so I
texted him. I thought -- shit,
maybe he found another dealer.

MARY
You didn't sell to him a few days
ago?

DRIZZLE
Nah...

Mary looks like she lost all the hope she gained from finding
the phone.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
You gonna let me go right?

Mary is lost in thought.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
Hey, lady.

She snaps back to reality.

MARY
Do you know where he might be?

DRIZZLE
Nah.

MARY
Think. Don't just answer right
away. Think about it.

DRIZZLE
I don't fucking know, okay? I
don't. If I did, I'd tell you.

She's steaming now.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
You gonna let me go, right? I told
you what you wanted to know.

She locks eyes with him. She would kill him if she could.
Wrap her hands around his throat. Stab him with his own
poison.

MARY
(slow and deliberate)
No.

DRIZZLE
(like a little boy,
genuinely shocked)
What? What the fuck? You said you
would let me go if I helped. I told
you what I know. I helped. You said
you would let me go.

MARY
I lied.

She rises from her seat, exits.

ON SCREEN:

Black. A white smiley face pixelates. It speaks in a
computerized voice, deliberate and pleasant.

SMILEY FACE
Hello, Senator Cottingham. Good to
virtually meet you. I am sure you
wondering why I contacted you.
First, let me say that I am a big
fan of yours.

INT. SEN. COTTINGTON'S OFFICE - CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Eric, Mary and crew are watching the footage around their
conference room table.

ERIC
What the fuck is this?

BACK TO SCREEN

SMILEY FACE
I am one of the "vermin" of the
D.C. streets that you plan on
exterminating.
(MORE)

SMILEY FACE (CONT'D)

Over the past year, we have seen
what happens to people like me.
This is what happens to people like
you.

A photo de-pixelates: Kyle on his knees, blood dripping down
his face, a gun to his head.

BACK TO SCENE

Everyone sits up in their chair.

ERIC

What the fuck?! Who sent this?

Mary grabs Eric's hand.

BACK TO SCREEN

SMILEY FACE

Don't worry, we're taking care of
him. He's a great kid. Listen
carefully, Senator. I don't want
money. I want legal immunity. I
want a signed affidavit from the
department of Justice that protects
me against any charge at any time.
I am not going to rot in jail like
the others. Got it? You have twenty-
four hours to respond to the email
address that sent this video WITH
the signed affidavit. Just so you
know this is real, here is the
video CNN will be receiving in
their inbox shortly.

VIDEO FOOTAGE:

Kyle, beaten up and bruised, holds a lighter under a spoon.

BACK TO SCENE

Mary's eyes go wide.

VIDEO FOOTAGE

Kyle takes a syringe and dips the tip of the needle into
liquefied heroin. He retracts the plunger, sucking up the
heroin.

BACK TO SCENE

MARY
(sotto)
No...

VIDEO FOOTAGE

Kyle searches his arm, tapping it a few times to find the vein.

He found it.

BACK TO SCENE

Mary's face goes from calculating to pained. She can't take her eyes off --

VIDEO FOOTAGE

The arm. The needle. It pierces the skin. The plunger goes down --

BACK TO SCENE

-- A tear streaming down Mary's face. She's can't look away.

ON SCREEN

Video footage cuts out. Black. The smiley face appears.

SMILEY FACE
I'll be waiting for your email. It
was good to meet you. Senator.

Pause on creepy smiley face. The video has ended.

BACK TO SCENE

The entire room is in shock. Mary still standing, catatonic.

The room fills with a grim, uncertain silence.

ERIC
...Where did this come from?

ADVISOR #1
We don't know sir. The FBI are on
their way, we can have them trace
the IP address as soon as they get
here.

ERIC
...Okay...

ADVISOR #2

Sir, do you want me to contact the chief of police as well? Put out an APB?

ERIC

I um...Will they be able to tell me if that was real?

ADVISOR #2

Excuse me, sir?

ERIC

Will the FBI be able to tell me if that was real? I mean do we know if that was really Kyle and not some--some--some, I don't know, some kid who looks like him?

ADVISOR #2

Yes sir, they have a verification process for these kinds of things. I'm sure it takes some times but there is a way they are able to determine the veracity of the video.

MARY

It's real.

All eyes on her.

MARY (CONT'D)

That was Kyle.

KATIE

Mr. and Mrs. Cottington, I am so sorry for your grief. I know this is a difficult time. I want to highlight the ticking clock on this matter. Not only did the perpetrator want this affidavit within twenty four hours but he also threatened to release a video tape to the press which means he could do that in a few hours or he could be doing that as we speak.

ADVISOR #1

She's right. We need to consider the media repercussions of what this means and what kind of ripple effect it might have.

ERIC
Ripple effect?

ADVISOR #2
It's possible that if one station has it then all the other stations will pick it up.

KATIE
Possible?

ADVISOR #1
It's probable.

KATIE
We also need to consider social media. This is something that will spread within a matter of minutes, if we're not on top of this.

ERIC
What do you suggest?

KATIE
We get out on ahead of it. Attack the criminals responsible for the video. Attack them for their thinly veiled threats on the son of a U.S. Senator. Call this for what it truly is --

Katie's moving at full team now, similar to Mary during the press conference at the park.

KATIE (CONT'D)
-- Domestic Terrorism. Short and sweet. That should be the sound bite and that should be the banner running on every news outlet in America.

ADVISOR #2
I can get the post to print something in an hour.

KATIE
Tell them to do it in thirty and we'll give them an exclusive quote.
(to Eric)
Senator. We can stop this thing if we get out in front of it. Trust me.

MARY

What in the hell are we talking about?

Mary rises out of her seat.

MARY (CONT'D)

You want to get the post on the phone? You're talking about media strategies? My son had a gun to his head and you're talking about fucking strategy?

ERIC

Mary--

MARY

We need to do one thing. Just one. Meet their demands. There is nothing else on the table--
(to Katie)
NOTHING!

ERIC

Mary, it's okay.

MARY

What are you doing, Eric?

ERIC

I'm trying to figure this out.

MARY

What is there to figure out? Call the head of the Justice Department, if he's not in his office, try his home, if he's in bed, then WAKE HIM THE FUCK UP.

Eric nods for everyone to leave.

The advisors and Katie exit the room.

ERIC

Mary. This is going to be okay. This isn't different than any of the other issues we've had to deal with. And how did we deal with them? We stayed calm, we kept a good head on our shoulders, and we worked the system so the system didn't work us, right?

MARY

This is not any other issue. This is our son. You need to call the head of the Justice Department and tell him--

ERIC

I think you should have the driver take you home so you can relax.

MARY

Why are you dragging your feet?
 (thinking through it)
 Because you're scared? No...
 (she's got it)
 Because you don't want to waste the political capital.

ERIC

I am worried about us making the wrong decision based on fear and panic. I want to weigh my options.

Mary takes a step back, seeing him for what he is.

MARY

Who are you? You are not the Eric I married.

ERIC

I am exactly the Eric you married. That's the problem. You're just not the Mary I married.

MARY

We will call the Justice Department, we are going to work with the FBI--

ERIC

There is no "we".

Eric gets up, starts to walk out.

ERIC (CONT'D)

The driver will take you home. Please rest up.

She watches as Eric walks into his Main office where his advisors and Katie are waiting. He closes the doors on Mary.

Off her look, disillusioned.

INT. HALLWAY - THE CAPITOL BUILDING - EVENING

Mary steps in quick strides -- she looks like she just got out of a car accident. Everything around her is a tunnel of blurs. She struggles to breath -- taking in quick bursts of air.

She's trying her hardest not to collapse in the middle of this crowded government building.

The TEA KETTLE WHISTLE stars ringing in her ears --

She tries to keep up her pace. Can't stop. Can't stop.

Mary rummages through her purse, fumbles with her cell phone -
- CRASH - phone drops to the floor. People staring. Heart pounding. Tears welling up in her eyes. She scrolls to the first contact she thinks of --

INT. LIVING ROOM - JEANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Mary sits plump in the middle of a large Italian-suede couch.

She's calmer now, placid. She takes in all the photographs of Jeanie with her family -- vacation in France, rafting in Colorado, Jeanie and her husband with the Clintons.

The CLICKING-CLACKING of expensive high-heels echo throughout the large room. Mary quickly places gloves on her hands, sits up.

Jeanie enters --

JEANIE

(to the help)

I want the carpet to smell good when I enter the room, Okay? Right now it smells like formaldehyde and it makes me want to gag.

(to Mary)

Mary-berry. So good to see you. I'm having one of a hell of a day, you have no idea.

Jeanie makes her over to the bar, raises a bottle of Vodka.

Mary nods, Jeanie pours.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

When does Kyle get out?

MARY

Excuse me?

JEANIE

For spring break. Mine are off on the second. I was thinking we could go somewhere. Have a girl's weekend.

Jeanie sits down next to Mary, hands her the glass.

Mary holds it, stares at it.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

You okay, hun? You look, ashen.

MARY

We got a video today.

JEANIE

(gleeful)

Oooh, what kind of video?

MARY

Jeanie, they --

(taking deep breath)

-- they took Kyle. They have him tied up and blindfolded and there was blood all over his face and he was so scared and he was crying and they said --

(holding back tears)

-- we have twenty four hours
Jeanie, twenty four hours until...

Mary lowers her head. Jeanie sits next to her friend on the couch, holding her.

JEANIE

I don't even know what to say. This is -- this is -- I'm sorry Mary. Who took him?

Mary composes herself.

MARY

We don't know. The FBI are looking into it.

JEANIE

This is horrible.

MARY

Jean, I have a plan but I need your help.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I think I can talk to the deputy director of the DOJ and get the documentation they're asking for but I need someone who can get it into the hands of the people who have Kyle. I need someone who knows where these people might be.

JEANIE

What can I do to help?

MARY

Who do you know from your old life?

JEANIE

What?

MARY

Who can you contact from your old life?

JEANIE

No one.

MARY

Jean.

JEANIE

Mary.

MARY

You were on that stuff for a whole year.

Jeanie looks over her shoulder, making sure coast is clear.

JEANIE

That was a long time ago and --

MARY

You didn't wear a short sleeve shirt for the entire sophomore year, Jean.

JEANIE

You don't talk about that. Not in here.

Beautiful, bubbly LITTLE GIRL (6) comes running into the room.

LITTLE GIRL

Mommy, mommy. Do you know where my horse went?

JEANIE

Honey, the adult are talking right now. We'll find your doll later.

LITTLE GIRL

It was here before. I know it's here.

Little girl rummages through the couch cushions, looking everywhere for her little horse doll as --

Jeanie and Mary stare each other down. Waiting.

Each one hold their drinks in hand like gunslingers waiting to shoot.

Little girl climbs in between the two, searching.

Mary breaks the ice, speaking slow and deliberate.

MARY

This is--
 (Jeanie's eyes narrow)
 This is more important than what people know or don't know.

JEANIE

Don't.

MARY

You must know a guy who used to...*help you out*.

JEANIE

(to daughter)
 Honey, I need you to go play in the other room.

LITTLE GIRL

But mommy, I--

JEANIE

Go!

Little Girl leaves.

JEANIE (CONT'D)

Can't Eric help you find someone?

MARY

This has to be just you and Me.
 Eric can't know about this.

JEANIE

Why?

MARY

Because.

JEANIE

Because isn't a good enough reason.

MARY

It should be when you're talking to your best friend.

JEANIE

I am sorry about Kyle, Mary. I really am. I want to help you, but I am not throwing myself under the bus just so you can drive it off the cliff.

MARY

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

JEANIE

I bet you every god-damn penny in my bank account that Eric has a plan and you don't like it because he's the one leading it and not you.

MARY

You think I'm doing this for me?

JEANIE

I think, no one solves a problem like Mary Cottingham. At least, that's what the first lady said.

MARY

Jesus, that's what this is about?

Mary collects her coat.

MARY (CONT'D)

I always thought you were so strong. Now I see, it wasn't strength I was looking at, it was cynicism.

Mary starts walking out, eyes forward, trying ignore --

JEANIE (O.S.)
 (shouting after her)
 Do everyone a favor and listen to
 your husband.

VIDEO FOOTAGE:

The plunger of a syringe - in SLOW MOTION - slides down the
 barrel, pushing --

Milky-way colored heroin - through the hub, into --

The shiny silver needle - piercing the vein --

Kyle's eyes light up - PAIN. PLEASURE.

MRS. WELLS (V.O.)
 Mary, are you with me?

INT. ART GALLERY - DAY

Mary walks with Mrs. Wells, they are touring Washington's
 finest art museum.

MARY
 Yes. Sorry.

MRS. WELLS
 We're auctioning off some of pieces
 for charity tomorrow night. I would
 like to you introduce me.

MARY
 Me?

MRS. WELLS
 I see so much untapped ferocity in
 you, Mary. Like a lioness in a
 cage. You can say a few words about
 who you are, your life, your
 family, what you believe in. I want
 the public to start seeing you, the
 real you.

MARY
 I don't think I can. I'm having
 family issues.

Mrs. Wells stops the walk in front of a gorgeous portrait of
 a battle from the Revolutionary War.

MRS. WELLS

This is one of my favorites.

The portrait depicts:

A WOMAN IN BLOOD-RED COLONIAL GARB, STANDING TALL AS SHE USES A LONG CAST-IRON SPONGE + RAMMER TO LOAD THE BARREL OF THE CANNON.

BOMBS EXPLODING IN THE DISTANCE.

THE CANON CREW ARE CROUCHED BEHIND THE CANON, IN FEAR.

THE WOMAN STANDS IN FRONT OF THE CANON, FEARLESS.

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)

No one ever talks about the Women of the revolution. I love her...what's the word?

MARY

Attitude.

MRS. WELLS

Yes. Yes. Attitude.

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)

Mary, there are always family issues. The personal and the political are always intertwined and they cannot be divorced. That is just the reality of the world we live in. I think you know that, though. In fact, I think you thrive off it. Women like us were never meant for a "normal" lifestyle. We could never work a nine-to-five job. We could never stay at home-- cleaning dishes, signing permission slips. You and I are meant for the battle field.

MARY

Is that you're way of saying you forget about my family.

Mrs. Wells places her hand on Mary's back.

MRS. WELLS

I know how important family is to you. That's why I want you to introduce me tonight. That's why I chose you.

(MORE)

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)
You are a mother and nothing can
stop a mother on a mission.

The two woman, siloutetted, face the vast portrait of the
woman who gave her life for something more.

MRS. WELLS (CONT'D)
Watch out Washington D.C., Mary
Cottingham has been let out of her
cage.

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Mary is chewing on her nails, she stops -- stares at it.
She's done being nervous.

DRIVER
Where to ma'am?

MARY
D.C. Preparatory Academy.

INT. HALLWAY - PREP ACADEMY - DAY

Mary is on a mission. She speed walks with determination.
She turns down one corridor. Then the next. She's only been
here once but she knows exactly where she's going.
Without a moment of hesitation, she keeps her momentum going
and walks right into --

INT. BOY'S BATHROOM - PREP ACADEMY - DAY

-- door swinging open, revealing STUDENT putting a baggie in
his backpack, handing cash to Drizzle.

STUDENT
You lost lady?

MARY
Get out.

Drizzle just smirks.

STUDENT
What the fuck? This is the boy's
bathroom.

MARY

Get. Out. Or I will have the campus police search your bag. You want that?

Student shakes his head, starts to walk out. Mary grabs the backpack from him, gestures with her head -- Keep walking!

Students walks out, she throws the bag in the trash.

Drizzle lights up a cig, sits on the counter.

DRIZZLE

Good to see you again, Mary. What do you want? Or are you here to threaten me again? Who do you have out there this time -- the police, a SWAT team, is it SEAL team six?

MARY

I want to find my son.

DRIZZLE

I don't know if your memory is starting to go because your kind of old but like, I told you, I don't know where Kyle is.

MARY

You don't know exactly where he is but you could make an educated guess, right?

DRIZZLE

I don't know, man. I really don't want to get all caught up in your shit.

MARY

I will give you half a million dollars to find my son.

DRIZZLE

Yeah, I can make an educated guess. I have a good hunch-feeling-thing about where he could be and shit, so yeah, I can do that.

MARY

Okay then. We have a deal then.

DRIZZLE

But.

MARY

Yes?

DRIZZLE

I'm not trying to get shot saving some rich ass kid, no offense. Whoever has him has a lot of guys and those guys have guns. I'm happy to do my Sherlock Holmes thing and help you find out where he is but once I do -- someone else has to get him out.

Mary thinks, fidgets, process.

MARY

I'll go with you.

DRIZZLE

You. You're going to do it? You're going to pull him out of wherever he is.

MARY

Yes.

DRIZZLE

You got balls Mary, I'll give ya that.

MARY

(extending her hand)
We gotta deal?

DRIZZLE

(shaking it)
When do we start?

MARY

Now.

INT. METRO STATION - DAY

Drizzle leads Mary down the stairwell. She tries to keep up with him but the crowd is massive and Drizzle is zigzagging through the massive crowd like a shark in water.

DRIZZLE

Watch out for the beggars on your left?

MARY

Watch our for who?

He zigs left, she pushes people out of the way to keep up.

DRIZZLE

Move it or lose it, Mary.

MARY

Can you just, hold up, one second?

DRIZZLE

The first thing we thing we gotta do is fix how you look.

MARY

How I look?

Mary gets cornered by several homeless people asking for money.

DRIZZLE

Yes, How you --

(rescuing her)

-- look. You stick out like a sore thumb. You look like you wipe your ass with hundred dollar bills.

MARY

Drizzle!

DRIZZLE

What?

(stopping, realizing)

Oh, I'm sorry. That wasn't very proper of me: You look like you *exfoliate* your ass with hundred dollar bills. Better?

He lead her onto the --

PLATFORM

-- crowd is even bigger and LOUDER -- making it extremely difficult to hear.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

(holds out his hand)

So you don't get lost.

MARY

(shouting)

I'll be fine.

Drizzle scans the directory for the next train going his way. Checks his phone. Checks the board. Finger points to one he wants.

DRIZZLE

Shit. We just missed it.

MARY

Just missed what?

Drizzle spots the train he wants down the platform. Still loading passengers.

DRIZZLE

Can you run in those?

MARY

Can I what?!

Drizzle takes off running. Mary high tails it after him.

Running in a crowded station is already difficult, doing it in high heels is near-impossible.

Mary trucks along, pushing people out of the way, keeping her sights on the back of Drizzle's head. It's mayhem:

A parent with a little girl walks in front of her, she side-steps in the nick of time, coming close to crushing the little girl.

A man carrying a bicycle over his shoulder swings it around - WHEEL COMING RIGHT FOR HER HEAD - Mary ducks while continuing to rush forward.

She raises her head and can't see Drizzle anywhere. She turns left - nothing. She turns right - nothing. She lost him before it even --

An arm grabs Mary and pulls her into --

INT. METRO TRAIN - DAY

-- Mary falls onto the floor of the train. The doors close. She looks up to find Drizzle standing over her.

DRIZZLE

(smiling)

That was fun. Need a hand.

MARY

No. Thank you.

Mary stands up and dusts herself off.

MARY (CONT'D)

Where are we going?

DRIZZLE

We are going south of the green line, Mary. South east, to be exact.

MARY

What's south east?

DRIZZLE

A very bad place.

MARY

Can you please be more vague?

Drizzle searches for a seat, Mary holds onto the bar as she follows.

DRIZZLE

We're going to the shooting gallery.

(off her look)

A popular hide-out for junkies to go and shoot up.

MARY

And that's where Kyle is? At this shooting place?

DRIZZLE

Gallery. Shooting gallery. My educated guess is that he is there.

A YOUNG KID (13), black, innocent, eager for trouble, comes up to Drizzle.

YOUNG KID

Hey yo, doctor! What's happening dawg? Can you hook me up?

DRIZZLE

Whatchu say?

YOUNG KID

I said can you hook me up, doc? I got a hundy on me. I'll take a gram.

DRIZZLE

Let me see the dough.

Kid raises a wad of cash. Drizzle studies it.

Mary looks at the exchange, wondering if she should jump in, say something.

Drizzle snatches the cash -- SLAPS the kid upside his head.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

You ever try to buy smack from me
or anyone else again I will kick
your ass all the way back to
Lincoln Heights, you hear me?

YOUNG KID

(shamed)

Yeah...

DRIZZLE

I said, you hear me?

YOUNG KID

Yes, yes sir.

DRIZZLE

Get out of here.

Kid runs away. Drizzle pockets the cash.

MARY

Only rich white kids, huh?

DRIZZLE

You know the saying, don't shit
where you eat?

MARY

Yeah...

DRIZZLE

Well I don't sell where I live.
Where was I?

MARY

Shooting Gallery.

DRIZZLE

That's where you go if you trying
to run away and shoot up. Maybe he
ran into some psycho-high addicts
there who found out who is parents
were, they roughed him up and tried
to blackmail your senatorial asses.
Excuse the french.

Drizzle finds a seat, takes off his tie and dress shirt.

MARY

Why do you look nervous?

DRIZZLE

I'm not nervous. This is the look of a man who is thinking.

MARY

What are you thinking?

DRIZZLE

You don't want to know.

MARY

I want to know.

DRIZZLE

Nah, women always say that but they don't mean it.

MARY

This not about women or men. This is about the fact that I am hiring you for a service, I am your employer and therefore you have an obligation to tell me what you are thinking.

DRIZZLE

Last time I was at the shooting gallery, I had a revolver pointed--
(points to his temple)
--right here. And he pulled the trigger and the gun jammed and I ran and I just barely made it out alive.

MARY

Yeah, you're right, I didn't want to know that.

EXT. METRO TRAIN - EVENING

The train sails south bound, darkness starting to creep in on Washington D.C.

INT. PLATFORM - METRO STATION - EVENING

Drizzle and Mary exit their car, step onto the platform. It's still quite busy -- people heading home from work.

MARY

We almost there?

DRIZZLE

Not quite. I called someone.

MARY

What, why?

DRIZZLE

I told you. We need to fix--
 (points her whole outfit)
 --this.

MARY

Who did you call?

ARIANA (O.S.)

My baby!!!

Ariana pops out of the crowd, runs up to Drizzle, jumps into his arms, legs crossed around his body.

They kiss. And Kiss. And kiss. They're making it pretty hard.

ARIANA (CONT'D)

I missed you, babe.

DRIZZLE

I fucking missed you so hard, babe.

They go back to making out. Tongues everywhere. Mary stands there, unsure of where to look or what to do.

She clears her throat.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

Oh babe, meet, Mary.

Ariana climbs off Drizzle. She stares Mary down, SMACKING her gum.

ARIANA

You the lady who's gonna make us rich?

DRIZZLE

If all goes well.

MARY

Which it will. Why is she here?

DRIZZLE

She's going to give you a makeover.

MARY

Why do I need a makeover?

DRIZZLE

Mary. You look like a lawyer.

MARY

What's wrong with that?

DRIZZLE

Lawyers get shot.

(to Ariana)

Darling. Please show her the fitting room.

ARIANA

With pleasure.

Ariana YANKS mary's hand and takes her into --

INT. WOMAN'S BATHROOM - METRO STATION - DAY

-- the grossest bathroom you've ever been in. Piss and feces everywhere. Leaky pipes. Puddles of sewage water, urine, and other bodily fluids pool together.

Mary tries her best to step over the puddles.

Ariana leads the way, she's got a huge back trash bag with her.

ARIANA

Take off everything you're wearing.

MARY

You brought clothes for me to change into, I hope.

ARIANA

(smacking her gum)

I'm going to make you look fabulous.

(digging through the bag)

This is from our spring collection--

(holds up faded shirt)

It's called purple mystique. We also have--

(torn sweatpants)

--comfort wear, for when you just want to relax around the house.

Mary inspects them, a good amount of stains color the pants. She sniffs it -- OH GOD! It's gross!

ARIANA (CONT'D)
This just came in from the factory.
Really hot this time of year.

Ariana hands her an oversized hoody with holes in it.

ARIANA (CONT'D)
(smacking gum)
There's socks 'n sneaks in the bag.

She hands the bag to Mary.

ARIANA (CONT'D)
(forced smile)
Anything else I can get for you?

MARY
No...Can I get a little...?

ARIANA
Privacy?

MARY
Yeah.

ARIANA
I'll go take a piss.

Ariana goes into one of the stalls.

ARIANA (CONT'D)
Put your electronics and jewelry in
the bag. And Hurry up. We still
gotta fix your face.

Mary rolls her eyes.

Ariana starts PISSING.

Mary looks at the clothes in her hand, she scans her surroundings, she can't believe the position she's in.

Mary starts takes off her coat. Unbuttons her blouse.

POUNDING and SCREAMS bleed through the walls. Ariana's pissing doesn't help the ambiance.

Mary slides her skirt off. She is now incredibly naked and vulnerable as the bizarre sounds of the station, and Ariana's pissing, violate her. She's lost in thought. Dazing out.

Mary looks up and catches herself in the mirror -- a large crack runs down the mirror, splitting mary's face.

She stares at herself -- already, she is far from the Mary she recognizes. She is bare. Exposed. Scared.

A POUNDING on the door wakes her up.

DRIZZLE (O.S.)
Hurry up. We gotta get going.

ARIANA
SHUT THE FUCK UP BABE. WE'RE GOING
AS FAST AS WE CAN.
(still pissing)
Fucking men, am I right?

Mary slides off her heels, watches them drown in the pools of urine. Steps on coat as to not step on puddles of urine.

Slides on sweatpants. Shirt. Hoody. Socks that don't cover the toes. Dirty running shoes with holes in them.

FLUSH. Ariana is done.

ARIANA (CONT'D)
You look hot.

BUZZ. BUZZ.

Mary checks her phone -- It's MRS. WELLS.

ARIANA (CONT'D)
(holding up the bag)
Everything in the bag.

Mary hits IGNORE and throws the phone in the bag.

ARIANA (CONT'D)
Makeup time.

INT. METRO STATION - EVENING

Drizzle is sitting, waiting.

Mary and Ariana come out of the bathroom. Mary comes out looking wildly different -- all of her make up has been washed away, she's been given spots of makeup to look sickly, pale, dirty and even a little bruised. Her clothes are three times her size and makes her look even more homey.

DRIZZLE
Better. How ya feeling, Mary?

MARY
Can we get going now?

DRIZZLE
 (to Ariana)
 Can we do something about the hair?

ARIANA
 What do you want to do?

DRIZZLE
 I don't know it's just a little too
 clean.

Ariana spits her gum directly into Mary's hair, tussles it
 around.

ARIANA
 There ya go.

DRIZZLE
 Great. Let's go sneak into some
 drug dens, shall we?

ARIANA
 Wait a minute.

Ariana points to Mary's finger, her wedding ring still on.

DRIZZLE
 Ah, come on Mary. You can't go in
 with jewelry.

She takes it off and hands it to Ariana.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
 I promise you will get everything
 back once this is all over.

MARY
 I don't care about the ring. Let's
 go.

Drizzle hugs Ariana, kisses her.

ARIANA
 Don't get caught --

DRIZZLE
 -- Don't get shot.

They kiss one more time before departing.

ARIANA
 Good to meet you, Mary. Hope you
 find your son.

Drizzle and Mary head up the stairwell.

Ariana places the wedding ring on her hand, smiles. She walks way -- throwing the rest of Mary's items into a dumpster.

INT. BUS - EVENING

Sun setting, casting it's warm glow on the traveling bus.

Mary and Drizzle ride in the back, crowded. Mary stares straight ahead, blank expression. Drizzle takes note.

DRIZZLE

This line will take us pretty close. Then it's just like a ten minute walk.

MARY

K.

DRIZZLE

You aight?

MARY

Fine.

DRIZZLE

You know when we get there, if you want me to, I don't know, go in first and make sure the coast is clear, I can do that.

MARY

Drizzle?

DRIZZLE

Yeah.

MARY

I'm not scared. Before the sun comes back up, I will have my son in my arms. Do you understand me?

DRIZZLE

Yes, ma'am.

EXT. SHOOTING GALLERY - SUNDOWN

In a vacant parking lot stands a tall but decrepid motel, every single inch of it covered in graffiti, windows blown out, furniture and broken TV's create a yellow brick road up the entrance.

Drizzle and Mary walk up to the building.

They walk past heavy-coated DEALERS, hallow-eyed JUNKIES and a LITTLE KID circling the building on his bicycle. he RINGS his little bell.

DRIZZLE
Just keep moving, avoid eye
contact...

They approach a boarded up front door--FORE-FUCKING-CLOSED--
sprawled in graffiti.

Mary tries to open it up.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
No-no-no. This way.

Drizzle leads her to the side where he shows her a wall with
a Little Mermaid blanket on it. He lifts the blanket to
reveal a child-sized hole in the wall.

Mary stares into the small abyss of darkness.

MARY
Yeah?

DRIZZLE
Yeah.

Mary hesitates.

MARY
After you...

Drizzle creeps into the hole, disappearing into the darkness.
Mary takes a huge breathe in and enters--

INT. SHOOTING GALLERY - NIGHT

Mary stands in a vat of darkness. Water DRIPPING around her.
SCREECHES and SCREAMING echo around her.

MARY
(stuttering)
Dri---Drizzle?...Drizzle?

DRIZZLE
Mary?

She turns to find him on a dimly-lit stairwell.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
This way.

MARY
Yep.

She wades through the pools of water, following him up the--

INT. SHOOTING GALLERY - STAIRWELL - DAY

Light flickers. Mary follows the strobe-light rhythm of Drizzle climbing the stairs. He's there, he's gone. He's there, he's gone.

DRIZZLE
Follow my voice.

Distant SCREAMS find their way into this stairwell, multiplying with each echo.

Mary pauses, gasping shallow breaths.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
Keep moving, Mary.

She's paralyzed.

Drizzle holds her hand.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
It's aight...

She catches her breath, looks up at him.

MARY
Let's keep moving.

She follows him up onto--

INT. SHOOTING GALLERY - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

A long and narrow stretch of despair.

RAP MUSIC blares from an unknown location.

They make their way past blown out motel rooms, missing walls, missing doors.

DRIZZLE
Watch your step.

Mary looks down and notices the river of trash she is wading through: needles, condoms, bottles, shards of glass, open containers of food infested with flies.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

Watch out...

A SKINNY DRUGGY speeds past them, muttering to himself.

Mary notices the streaks of feces across the walls, like waves ebbing and flowing over handprints of blood leading up to finger-drawn writing: FUCK YOUR FEAR.

Knives jut out from the walls. Live wires hang loosely from the ceiling. Rats scatter across the floor.

The peer into each room as they pass them:

- A man sits in a bathtub in the middle of his room, watching Spongebob on a TV from the 70's, laughing hysterically.

- A NAKED JUNKIE masturbates in a chair as a young girl trips for him.

- A LITTLE GIRL (8) covered in filth runs out of her room, into another.

- A JUNKIE HUSBAND and WIFE SCREAM at each other. The man grabs the woman by the throat and threatens to kill her.

Our guys keep moving.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

If you wanna head back I wouldn't blame ya.

MARY

Are there more rooms?

DRIZZLE

Yeah.

MARY

Show me.

They take a right into--

ANOTHER HALLWAY

Just as dark, just as fucked up.

THIN JUNKIE, from before, comes running after them, manic.

THIN JUNKIE
 Help me, help me. Please, help me,
 help me.

Drizzle pushes him back.

THIN JUNKIE (CONT'D)
 Please, no I need your help!

MARY
 What's wrong?

THIN JUNKIE
 I need it, I need it--have you seen
 it?

MARY
 I'm sorry, I don't know where it
 is. Please leave us alone.

THIN JUNKIE
 Where is it, bitch? YOU STOLE IT,
 DIDN'T YOU?!

Drizzle stands in between them.

DRIZZLE
 HEY! YOU'RE SHIT IS OVER THERE!!
 (pointing behind him)
THEY TOOK YOUR SHIT!!!

THIN JUNKIE
 They took it????

DRIZZLE
 GO GET IT!! GO!!

Thin junkie takes off. Drizzle looks and mary's got her eyes
 closed.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
 Don't close your eyes. Close your
 eyes and your dead.

MARY
 Got it.

DRIZZLE
 Keep 'em wide and keep moving
 froward.

MARY
 Got it.

DRIZZLE
And don't talk to them directly--

MARY
I said, I got it!

DRIZZLE
Okay...

MARY
(sarcastic)
Where they fuck else would I go?

BAM!

A JUNKIE HUSBAND crashes into Mary, knocking her to the ground. Not far behind is JUNKIE WIFE, barreling towards them, knife in hand.

JUNKIE WIFE
YOU FUCKIN COCKSUCKER--DON'T EVER
FUCKING TOUCH ME!!!!

Drizzle helps Mary up, they are caught in the middle of this. They try to run into one room but the door is locked.

Junkie Wife swings knife at husband. He dodges it, grabs Mary from Drizzle's grip, uses her as a shield.

JUNKIE WIFE (CONT'D)
Is this your whore???

Wife lunges the knife at Mary, Drizzle pushes Mary out of the way. Mary gets knocked into--

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mary tumbles onto the ground, door shutting behind her. The muffled sounds of FIGHTING continue on. Mary gets up and tries to open the door, can't.

DEVIN (O.S.)
You can't open that one from the
inside. Only outside.

Mary turns around to find Devin in a hazy state, sprawled out on lawn chair, drugs and food around him. His words slide out like Syrup.

DEVIN (CONT'D)
Doors are weird. They only open
when you want them to.

MARY

I know you.

DEVIN

Everyone knows me. I'm Mr. Cool.

MARY

(approaching him)

You're Kyle's friend. Devin, right?
your name is Devin? I've seen you
at school.

DEVIN

School's for suckers, I'm no
sucker. I'm Mr. Cool.

She kneels down next to him.

MARY

Devin, have you seen Kyle?

DEVIN

Kyle was here.

MARY

(smiling)

He was here?

DEVIN

Yep, before they took him. They
were mean.

MARY

Who??? Who took him?!

Gun shots RUNG OUT in the hallway. The door BUSTS OPEN,
Drizzle rushing in, blood on his arm and shirt.

DRIZZLE

Mary, we gotta go!

MARY

Hold on.

He grabs her, picks her up.

DRIZZLE

We gotta go, RIGHT NOW! There are
cops, raiding this place right
fucking now!

Gun shots continue to RING OUT, police are getting closer.

MARY
 (escaping his grip)
 One second.

DRIZZLE
 WE HAVE TO GO NOW!

Mary runs over to Devin.

MARY
 Who took him????

RAID OFFICER (O.S.)
 COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP OR WE
 WILL SHOOT YOU!

DRIZZLE
 Fuck, fuck, fuck.

Drizzle grabs Mary, pulls her into--

INT. CLOSET - NIGHT

Drizzle holds his finger up to her lips.

DRIZZLE
 Shushh....

The only sounds are their heavy breathing and the ever
 encroaching footsteps of the police.

Through the closet door slots they see:

A RAID OFFICER, vest on, rifle raised, enters the room.

Our guys try to quiet their breathing...

Raid officers approaches Devin, gun raised at his head. Devin
 doesn't register the situation.

RAID OFFICER
 Put your fucking hands in the air!!
 I will shoot you!

Raid officer kicks Devin off the chair, stomping onto his
 arm.

DEVIN
 What are you doing man?

RAID OFFICER
 You want to be a badass, you piece
 of shit? Is that what you want?

Raid officer twists his boot on Devin's arm harder and harder.

RAID OFFICER (CONT'D)
I will happily take you downtown.

MARY
No...

DRIZZLE
Shushh...

Raid Officer lowers his gun, takes out plastic zip ties, reaches for Devin's hands when--

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mary BUSTS out of the closet, grabs the GLASS BONG and SMASHES the Raid Officer's head. He crashes to the ground.

DRIZZLE
What the fuck, Mary??!!!!

Mary picks up the gun, hands it to Drizzle.

MARY
Guard the door.

DRIZZLE
What the fuck is going on, we need to bail!

MARY
Guard the door!

Drizzle accepts, Mary heads over to Devin, helps him up onto the chair.

MARY (CONT'D)
You okay?

DEVIN
That fucking guy, hurt me man. He hurt me.

MARY
Devin, I need you to concentrate. Who took Kyle?

DEVIN
You kind of look like my mom, you know that....

Devin is reaching for a nearby syringe filled with heroin.
She picks up the syringe.

MARY

Devin, I will give you this but
first you have to tell me who took
Kyle?

DEVIN

Caesar...I called Caesar. I'm sorry
mom....

Raid officers continue YELLING as more gun fire is unleashed.

Drizzle runs over to a window and SMASHES it with the butt of
his gun.

DRIZZLE

Mary...

MARY

(to Devin)
Thank you...

DEVIN

(to Mary, reaching for
syringe)
I'm sorry, Mom. Do you forgive me,
mom?

DRIZZLE

Mary, let's go!

Mary stands up and...

MARY

Yes...

She STEPS ON THE SYRINGE, runs over to the window and--

EXT. SHOOTING GALLERY - NIGHT

BACK OF THE BUILDING

Drizzle and Mary climb down the fire escape.

The ladder ends about six or seven feet above ground. Drizzle
dangles and lets go, crashing down onto the floor.

A black Buick pulls up quickly.

DRIZZLE

Mary, come on!

She dangles from the fire escape, scared to fall...

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

Let go!

She does and she comes crashing down to the ground, twisting her ankle. She SCREAMS in pain.

Drizzle picks her up.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

We gotta go, we gotta go. Our ride is here.

The Buick pulls up to them.

MARY

Wait-wait-wait! Where are you taking me?

DRIZZLE

Do you trust me?

Mary notices the knife wound on his arm. He's drenched in blood and sweat, his panic-stricken eyes locking into hers...

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

Do you...?

She nods her head.

He helps her into the backseat, he jumps in behind her.

The buick takes off, leaving a cloud of dust and blood in their wake as the front of the building is overtaken by Raid Officers.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DRIZZLE'S APT. - NIGHT

A pitch black abyss...glimmers of lights...headlights coming right towards us:

KYLE (V.O.)

Mom....Mom...where are you?

BANG!

Mary slowly opens her eyes, taking in her surroundings.

She's lying down on a dilapidated couch.

She scans the room: graffitied walls with wallpaper peeling off, takeout boxes everywhere, piles of trash next to piles of clothes, an opened soup can collecting DROPS of water falling from the ceiling.

She hears more banging coming from the other room.

Mary hoists herself up, she almost falls over, still having trouble with her sprained ankle -- she catches herself, stopping her foot just inches short of stepping onto a DIRTY SYRINGE. They are littered around the apartment as if they are part of the decor.

She hears BANGING of pots and pans, follows the sounds into --

INT. KITCHEN - DRIZZLE APT. - NIGHT

-- even more cluttered than the room she woke up in

Ariana is at the stove, pouring water into a pot with one hand and texting on her phone with the other. She giggles to herself.

Mary clears her throat.

Ariana jumps up, startled.

ARIANA

Jesus!

MARY

Sorry.

ARIANA

I thought you were dead.

MARY

Where's Drizzle?

ARIANA

Sleeping. That man could sleep through a tornado.

MARY

Do you mind if I use your phone?

ARIANA

Calling your hubby?

MARY

I don't want him sending out a search party for me.

ARIANA

I hear ya. My Drizzle would go crazy if I didn't check in with him. He's so protective of me, it's sweet.

She lights up a cigarette. She shakes and twitches the way a junkie would when they're craving.

MARY

You know, you really shouldn't smoke. It'll kill you.

ARIANA

(blowing smoke towards Mary)

I already have a mom and that's one too many.

MARY

Can I use your phone?

ARIANA

Doesn't work.

MARY

Your cellphone?

ARIANA

Yeah, I dropped it in the water days ago. Silly me.

Mary looks at the cellphone on the counter.

Ariana glances over at the front door.

MARY

You sure your cellphone doesn't work?

The BUBBLING of the boiling pot of water on the stove cuts through the silence.

ARIANA

(smirking)

You calling me a liar, Mary?

Ariana stares at Mary, smoke pouring out of her mouth and nostrils like a demon.

MARY

I'm not calling anyone anything. I saw you using it. That's all.

ARIANA

You know what's crazy about you, Mary? Even with all the crappy clothes and no make up, you still look rich. Weird how money can make you look different, huh? Do you ever just sit back and figure out how much you're worth? I'll bet your worth a whole lot.

MARY

I'll use Drizzle's phone.

Mary steps towards Drizzle's bedroom. Ariana stands in her way.

ARIANA

He needs his rest.

Ariana's eyes glance over towards the door.

MARY

Why do you keep looking at the front door?

ARIANA

I've got tea coming up. You want tea?

The water SIZZLES as it overflows and burns on the stove-top.

ARIANA (CONT'D)

Did you tell someone I was here?

ARIANA (CONT'D)

Of course not.

Mary studies Ariana's face, a false politeness that hides an addict's rage.

Mary runs towards --

INT. LIVING ROOM - DRIZZLE APT. - NIGHT

-- the front door. Ariana jumps in her way, YANKING her hair, pulling her back.

MARY

DRIZZ--

Ariana covers Mary's mouth with her hand. Mary struggles, twisting and turning her head in all directions.

ARIANA

Shut up-shut up-shut up.

Mary bites down on Ariana's hand. Ariana SCREAMS in pain, SHOVES Mary to the ground. Mary crawls away.

DRIZZLE

What the fuck is going on in here?!

He stands between them, both women try to catch their breath.

ARIANA

She's on her fucking period,
Drizzle! Fucking psycho bitch just
attacked me out of nowhere.

MARY

Drizzle, that is not--

DRIZZLE

(to Mary)

Shut up!

(To Ariana)

You saying she attacked you?

Ariana nods her head.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

Her? The mother? The lady we're
trying to help? Who's got a
sprained ankle?

ARIANA

Ya, she's fucking psycho.

DRIZZLE

Why the fuck would she do that?

ARIANA

I don't know, she was asking all
sorts of questions about you. I
think she's working for the cops.

Drizzle steps over to Mary, kneels down. Mary looks frightened.

Drizzle extends a hand, helps her up.

DRIZZLE

(to Mary)

I'm sorry.

ARIANA

What are you doing?!

DRIZZLE

You are off the deep end of the fucking pool if you think she is psycho. What the fuck is she going to attack you for?

ARIANA

I am trying to look for us.

DRIZZLE

What does that mean?

Ariana bites down on her nails.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

Don't look down, look at me. What does that mean?

ARIANA

We could help ourselves Driz. We could do so much better than our place.

FRONT DOOR

POUND. POUND.

DRIZZLE

Who did you tell?

ARIANA

I was looking out for us. He said we could make a lot of money.

DRIZZLE

Who?

(off her silence)

WHO?!

ARIANA

Cesar...

DRIZZLE

Fuck Ariana. Fuck! I bet he threw in a little smack too, huh?

ARIANA

Maybe...

DRIZZLE

You are such a Junkie.

ARIANA

It's not my fault. He said he was going to hurt us and he said he could make us this deal, I swear.

DRIZZLE

He gave you a taste and you couldn't say no to the meal, is that it?

ARIANA

I was thinking of you.

DRIZZLE

Is there anything more pathetic than trying to lie to a drug dealer.

POUNGING.

MAN (O.S.)

OPEN UP!!!

MARY

(whisper)

Drizzle...?

Bullets FIRE through the front door. Mary ducks her head and makes her way to the fire exit.

Drizzle dives down.

Gun SHOTS ring out.

BAM! They're trying to bust through the door.

MARY (CONT'D)

Drizzle!

DRIZZLE

Ariana, come on!!!

Drizzle looks back to find --

Ariana, on the ground, face up, blood pooling out of her mouth. Eerily reminiscent of the man we saw dying in the beginning. She GURGLES, blood spilling out of mouth.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

NO. NO. NO! ARIANA!

MARY

Drizzle!!

He stands up, frozen. BULLETS flying all around them. He can't take his eyes off her. She's stopped moving. Her body sits lifeless in the midst of chaos.

MARY (CONT'D)
Drizzle we have to go!

Drizzle drops to his knees, stunned.

Mary grabs Drizzle, helps him up, leads him out to --

EXT. APARTMENT - FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

- rickety fire escape ladder. She drops herself into the snow.

She MOANS in pain over her ankle.

She looks up at Drizzle.

Gun shots follow close behind them, lighting up the window of the apartment.

Drizzle let's go, falling into the snow.

Mary helps him up. He shrugs her off of him.

MARY
Drizzle, we have to--

DRIZZLE
Get off me!

Drizzle stands frozen, eyes down, fist clenched. She can't tell if he's going to hit her or if he's going to scream.

Their breath, visible in the winter night.

They make eye contact.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)
This way...

He stomps off, towards a --

DARKENED ALLEY

-- Mary follows close behind. They disappear into an abyss where even the whitest of snow gets gobbled up by the darkness.

INT. METRO STATION - NIGHT

An absolute ghost town, save for the bums making this place their home for the night.

Drizzle sits on the stairwell, defeated.

Mary uses the public payphone.

MARY

Because I don't want you to find me or stop me. I'm just calling to let you know I'm safe.

ERIC (FILTERED)

I guess I should be grateful.

MARY

I know where he is.

ERIC

Me too.

MARY

What?

ERIC

The FBI was able to trace the email back to a source and the source ratted out the guy behind it.

MARY

Cesar?

ERIC

How did you find out?

MARY

We're on the same team, Eric.

ERIC

Mary...

MARY

Yes...

ERIC

I ordered the FBI to take the house.

MARY

What? They will kill him, Eric. If they even suspect the police of the Feds are coming in -- they will kill him!

ERIC

He's already gone, Mary.

MARY

How do you know?

ERIC

They released the video of Kyle using. My FBI liaison as well as my advisors all agree that this matches the timeline of kidnappings. They don't believe they're going to get the money so they kill the hostage and release the blackmail -- a form of last ditch retaliation. I want to nail this Cesar guy. We're going in, Mary. I'm sorry. Please come home. I miss--

CLICK. Mary hangs up the phone, stunned.

INT. METRO TRAIN - NIGHT

Drizzle and Mary ride through the night. Their devastated faces reflect in the window against a bleak backdrop of a somber D.C.

The car is empty. The music that carries them through the city is the squeaking of the rails and the shaking of the car. Grief rides with them. A steel-entrapped mausoleum.

MARY

I'm sorry. I'm sure you hate me and I know I don't have a reputation as the most sincere person but I promise you that I am so, so sorry. I never intended for that to happen to her. And I know how much you loved her. It's rare to see love like that these days. It's been a long time since I've seen anything like that.

Drizzle maintains his glance, looking straight ahead.

MARY (CONT'D)

I think it takes courage to be that honest with someone. I've never had that kind of courage. I'm worse than a coward -- I'm a horrible mother. I drove my son to drugs. I left him to the wolves. I'm so good at fixing things, I thought I could fix this. What an idiotic thought.

(holds out her hand)

Thank you for services, Drizzle. I'm going to take the green line back.

He stares at her hand, then up at her.

DRIZZLE

Put your hand away. We're not done yet.

MARY

What?

DRIZZLE

I don't hate you. I hate him.

MARY

Who?

DRIZZLE

Cesar. I always kept my supply away from her. She was fine, until she met Cesar. He fed her that poison, he pushed the needle into her arm and he used that addiction to turn her against you. She was his prey. Mary, we are not done by a long shot. We are going to find your son and I'm going to wrap my hands around Cesar's neck until he's blue in the face.

MARY

But Eric said?

DRIZZLE

I don't give a shit what Eric said. And neither should you. Did you really come all this way to listen to your asshole husband?

MARY

No.

DRIZZLE

Do you believe your son is still
alive?

MARY

Yes.

DRIZZLE

Then what the fuck are we even
talking about?

Mary looks a little lighter, relieved.

MARY

You know where he lives?

DRIZZLE

I went there once to buy some
supply.

MARY

We can't just walk in.

DRIZZLE

If we try to sneak in we're dead
before we set one foot inside that
mansion.

They ponder the dilemma...Mary's got it.

MARY

He's paying people to bring me in,
right?

DRIZZLE

Yeah.

MARY

So bring me in.

EXT. METRO STATION - NIGHT

Our couple stand under a blinking piss-stained street lamp.
Drizzle is fidgeting. Mary stands in place, stoic.

DRIZZLE

I don't know if I can do this.

MARY

It's gotta be believable that you
kidnapped me. They're not going to
buy that I came willingly.

DRIZZLE

There's gotta be another way.

MARY

Drizzle. Listen to me. I'm giving you an order. Mess me up good.

Mary closes her eyes. Drizzle cocks his arm back, hesitating.

MARY (CONT'D)

One...

DRIZZLE

Mary, please...

MARY

Two...

DRIZZLE

We can figure out another--

MARY

DO IT!!!

The lamp silhouettes are couple. Drizzle fires away. She MOANS in pain.

MARY (CONT'D)

Please, keep going...

His silhouette lays into her's -- Mary SCREAMS, echoing out into the night.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

The bus is filled with people who had the graveyard shift, on their way to their loved ones. So is Mary.

Mary and Drizzle sit in the back. Mary's head is covered by her hoodie, lowered.

EXT. BUS STATION - PARKING LOT - EARLY MORNING

Blue is starting to pierce the black sky.

Our couple find a beat up old car.

Drizzle takes off his jacket, wraps it around his elbow and ELBOW-SMASHES the window. The car alarm goes off. He opens the door, plays with a couple wires under the hood and the alarm stops.

EXT. CAESER'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

DRIVEWAY

The beat up old car rolls up to the drug den masquerading as a beautiful lake house. The nearest neighbor is miles away.

FRONT DOOR

Drizzle BANGS on the front door three times, Mary in tow, head down.

The door swings open.

THUG

Who the fuck are you?

DRIZZLE

You know me.

THUG

(closing the door)

Fuck off here before I blow your ass away.

DRIZZLE

Wait, wait, wait. I got a delivery for Cesar. He's going to want to see this.

Drizzle lowers Mary's hoodie to reveal her horribly bloody and bruised face. Swollen cheeks. Bloody nose. Scars around her eyes. It's barely recognizable that it's her.

INT. CESAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

The thug leads them through the maze of people having sex on the couches, heroin being cut in on the dining room table, cocaine being packaged. The entire room glowing purple from the black lights.

THUG

Wait here.

They pause.

They look at each other, back towards the action.

Cesar strolls down the stairwell, comes face to face with Mary.

CESAR
 (delighted)
 I have been wanting to meet you for
 the longest time. I'm a huge fan.

She wants to spit in his face.

CESAR (CONT'D)
 (to Drizzle)
 I thought Ariana was bringing her
 in. Where is she?

DRIZZLE
 She got held up.

CESAR
 She was always a precocious one,
 wasn't she?

Drizzle wants to spit in his face.

Cesar leans in towards Mary's face, studying it.

CESAR (CONT'D)
 You really did a number on her.

DRIZZLE
 You wanted her here, I got here.

CESAR
 That I did.

CESAR (CONT'D)
 (to Mary)
 You got it worse than your son did.
 But alas, he will be happy to see
 you regardless of your facial
 features.

Mary lights up. He's still alive!

CESAR (CONT'D)
 We'll make a little videotape for
 your husband and then--

THUG
 Sir!

CESAR
 What is it?

THUG
 (listening to his walkie)
 We have activity outside the house.
 (MORE)

THUG (CONT'D)

Several trucks. Vans. SWAT TEAM. We have Feds approaching sir, we have Feds.

CESAR

Fuck!!!

(to Drizzle)

You lead them here didn't you?!

(to thug)

Handle them and then meet me by the tunnel.

(to Mary)

Your husband shouldnt've done this. I'm putting a bullet in your son's brain.

Cesar starts heading upstairs...

THUG

What do you want me to do with them?

CESAR

Put 'em down.

He's gone.

Drizzle places his hand on Marys' back, lifts her hoodie and pulls out a piece of glass, hiding in her waistband.

The Thug raises his gun, points it at Mary and --

Drizzle SLICES the thug's arm, wrestling the gun away from him. The Thug drops the gun but kicks it away and gets drizzle into a choke-hold, SLAMMING him into the wall. Drizzle tries to break free but he's can't. The thug picks up the piece of glass, lowers it to Drizzle's neck --

BAM! BAM! BAM!

The thug goes down hard, blood pooling from his back. Mary stands behind him, gun raised.

DRIZZLE

Good shot.

MARY

I practice.

Drizzle checks the thug and finds another handgun.

DRIZZLE

I'll take upstairs, you take down.

MARY

Be careful.

DRIZZLE

You trying to mother me?

They give each other a knowing glance before parting ways.

Mary heads down

INT. HALLWAY - DAWN

She keeps her gun steady, staring straight ahead. Her hands start to shake, legs start to buckle --

MARY

(to self)

Come on, Mary. Keep moving forward.
Keep moving forward.

WHAM! A door FLIES open -- A MANIAC RUNS OUT WIELDING A SIX INCH STEAK KNIFE.

Mary jumps back against the wall, holding the gun up like it's magical shield.

The maniac flies right by Mary, running down the hall, shouting nonsense.

Mary's eyes are closed, she's clutching the gun to her chest like it's a prayer book. She is not in control.

MARY (CONT'D)

(to self)

Open your eyes, Mary. You're going to die if you keep them closed.
Open wide, stay alive. Open wide, stay alive.

She slowly opens them.

MARY (CONT'D)

(to self)

'Atta girl. Open wide, stay alive.

She starts moving again. She's back in control. She raises her gun into firing position. She makes her way down the hall.

MARY (CONT'D)

Kyle?! Kyle?!

She peers into the open rooms.

MARY'S POV:

- Empty room
- Empty room
- room with junkies fucking

BACK TO SCENE

She continues into --

INT. KITCHEN - CESAR'S MANSION - DAWN

-- finding two women scratching each other's eyes out. Mary tries to move past them undetected.

SEARCH LIGHTS shine through the windows. The WHIRRING of helicopter propellers.

MARY

Oh, fuck.

Mary's gotta haul ass. She runs into --

INT. DINING ROOM - CESAR'S MANSION - DAWN

-- a thug is piling mounds and mounds of heroin into a duffle bag. He looks up. Spots her. He reaches for his gun -- she FIRES three rounds at him. Doesn't stop to see the damage. She knows she got him and she's gotta keep moving.

HALLWAY

She keeps moving, catching her breath along the way. POUNDING, YELLING and GUNSHOTS ring out behind her. She doesn't even stop to look back.

FRONT DOOR

BREACHED -- SWAT storms in, throws a flash bang and the entire place goes up in a flash -- people SCREAMING -- raid officers with masks on, storm through, rifles at the ready.

HALLWAY

Mary opens a door -

MARY

Kyle?!!!

No luck.

She sees another door with a padlock on it. She aims the gun at the bar of the lock - BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! She got it. Knocks the lock off. She props open the door and sees a long dark stairwell. She begins her descent --

INT. STAIRWELL - DAWN

Mary can't even see the step before her -- she feels with her feet.

MARY
(trembling, sotto)
Kyle...? Kyle....?

She finally makes it down to the platform of --

INT. BASEMENT - CESAR'S MANSION - DAWN

No light makes it's way into this room. There is the occasional glimmer of light from lighters -- little flames pop up.

MARY
Hello...? Kyle...?

KYLE
Mom?!!!!

MARY
Kyle??!!!!

KYLE
Where are you?

MARY
I'm here. I'm here!

She's trying to find his voice.

MARY (CONT'D)
Find my voice. Find my voice.

A small flame ignites a few feet from Mary.

MARY (CONT'D)
Kyle?

It lights up the face of a manic junkie. All that Mary can make out is his hollowed out eyes and jagged teeth.

MARY (CONT'D)

I have a gun....

Junkie LUNGES for Mary. She FIRES off a couple rounds -- they miss the junkie but some of the bullets hit the windows, allowing the early morning light to sneak in. The junkie gets a hold of her. They wrestle for the gun.

Mary drops the gun. The Junkie looks like he's about to eat her when BAM! The junkie is sideswiped to the head by a large wooden panel. He goes down like a bag of bricks.

The pale blue light shines on the face of Kyle, holding the wooden panel. He's out of breath and looks disturbingly thin, but as soon as he makes eye contact with his mom, he smiles.

She's got tears in her eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)

Kyle...

KYLE

You came for me.

They embrace.

MARY

I'm never going to let you go again.

She cries as she holds him tight.

CESAR (O.S.)

This is sweet. A real Kodak moment.

They look up to find Cesar at the top of the stairs.

CESAR (CONT'D)

You've ruined me.

He raises his gun towards them.

SHOT fires out --

Cesar stands there with his gun in hand. Stunned. The shot didn't come from him. He looks down to find an exit wound in his stomach. Blood forming a circle on his shirt.

A few more SHOTS ring out, effectively putting Cesar down.

Drizzle stands behind him with his gun raised.

Drizzle sees Mary with her son, lets out a soft smile.

He steps towards them and SMASH! The windows break above Mary and Kyle -- glass shattering -- two flash bang grenades are thrown into the basement -- BOOM -- EVERYTHING GOES WHITE.

Everything goes quiet.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - DAWN

Eric picks up the phone.

ERIC
(into phone)
How'd it go? What?!! Is she
alright??? Keep her there. I'll be
right there.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAWN

Mary sits on a cold steel bench, her face all bandaged up.

The bars open.

OFFICER
Mary Cottingham. You're being
released.

She stands up and is greeted by Eric.

They embrace.

ERIC
I was so worried about you.

MARY
Eric, is he okay? Did you see him?
Did you talk to him?

ERIC
He's being treated at Sibley
Memorial. He's okay.

MARY
I thought I lost him again.

ERIC
He's okay. We're all okay.

INT. JAIL CORRIDOR - DAWN

Officers lead the couple out the back. On their way, Mary sees the other prisoners, one of them being Drizzle.

MARY

You need to release that man. He helped me find Kyle.

OFFICER

He is a known drug offender.

MARY

He saved my life. Eric, get him released.

ERIC

I will, but right now we need to go see Kyle. He's waiting for us.

Eric escorts her out of the jail corridor.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Mary sits by Kyle's bedside. Eric paces around, on the phone. She watches Kyle sleep, holds his hand. He's all bandaged up, IV drip plugged into him. He looks like he's been through hell and back.

MARY

Look at what we did to him.

ERIC

I know you've been through a lot but you can't blame yourself for this.

MARY

Anything short of saying this is our fault is a lie. I'm tired of lying.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The team sit around the table, watching the news coverage.

ON SCREEN:

Mary and Eric walking out of the hospital. Mary tries hid her face, get to the car. Eric waves to the camera.

ERIC

Thank you for your support in this time of need. We appreciate it.

NEWS BANNER: AMERICAN FAMILY IN CRISIS.

BACK TO SCENE

KATIE

I think you can do the morning shows.

ERIC

It's not too soon?

KATIE

Never too soon.

Mary sits in her usual number two spot, but she's in a daze, replaying everything she went through in her head. She's in a whole other space.

ERIC

I want to make sure we don't look weak while also soliciting the right amount of sympathy. Is that doable?

KATIE

Very doable.

ADVISOR #1

The polling suggests that the American public sees you...

The chatter of the room fades into nothingness as Mary thinks about --

FLASHBACK

INT. BASEMENT - CESAR'S MANSION - DAWN

Kyle's face is revealed in the blue light, it lights up ever so softly at the recognition of his mom.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Kyle lies in bed, trying to recover. Color is starting to come back to his cheeks.

BACK TO SCENE

ERIC

Mary?

MARY

Huh?

ERIC
What do you think?

MARY
Ummm, what?

ERIC
What do you think about doing the
morning shows. Pros? Cons?

MARY
I don't know...

She stands up...

ERIC
What do you mean you don't know?

MARY
I mean, I don't care.

She walks out.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Drizzle sits in the corner of his grimy cell.

The bars open.

OFFICER
You. You're up.

Officer points to Drizzle.

DRIZZLE
Where am I going?

OFFICER
Anywhere you want. You're released.

EXT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Drizzle walks down the front steps. Still in his usual get
up, covered in dried blood.

He spots a Black SUV at the bottom of the steps. He walks up
to it. The back seat door flies open. He gets in.

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

He takes a seat next to Mary. She's back in her usual professionally glamorous attire. Sunglasses and gloves too.

DRIZZLE

You're really good at being shady,
you know that?

MARY

Thank you.

She takes off her shades.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I didn't get you out
earlier.

DRIZZLE

You had me worried there for a
minute.

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

I know.

MARY

It's just -- Eric is always --

DRIZZLE

It's aight.

MARY

No. I wan't to explain.

DRIZZLE

You don't have to. We are who we
are.

MARY

You are not nearly as bad of a
person as you think you are.

She hands him a manila folder.

MARY (CONT'D)

You're a smart kid. I hope you do
something smart with it.

He looks inside the folder, nods his head.

MARY (CONT'D)

I keep my word.

DRIZZLE

I was thinking about going to college.

MARY

That would be great.

DRIZZLE

Maybe studying Political Science.
(grinning)
What do you think?

MARY

Dealing drugs would be more ethical than that.

He extends his hand.

DRIZZLE

It was a pleasure working with ya.

She shakes his hand.

He steps out of the car --

DRIZZLE (CONT'D)

I don't know too many mothers who would do what you did for your son. You're not nearly as bad of a mother as you think you are. If you ever run for office Mary, you got my vote.

MARY

Thanks Drizzle. Take care.

He closes the door. She's still reeling in what he said.

INT. CONFERENCE HALL - DAY

A banquet is underway. Hundreds of D.C.'s wealthy and elite. At the podium, a speaker is delivering a powerful speech. Rallying the troops.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Mrs. Wells is well-dressed and ready to give her speech. Mary looks like her normal self.

MRS. WELLS

You're looking well, Mary. We're lucky to have you here.

MARY

Mrs. Wells, I want to say thank you for the interest you've taken in me.

MRS. WELLS

You're the future, Mary. I can't wait to hear your speech.

MARY

I'm not going to give one.

MRS. WELLS

Excuse me?

MARY

My son is being taken to a rehab facility today. I don't want him to be alone.

MRS. WELLS

That's great, say that in your speech.

MARY

I'd rather say it to him. I'm sorry.

Mary starts to walk away.

MRS. WELLS

Mary! Don't you want to be president?

MARY

Not today. Today, I've got a sick son to take care of.

She walks off. Mrs Wells is left pissed, thrown.

EXT. DRIZZLE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Drizzle finds yellow police tape on his door, tears it down.

INT. DRIZZLE'S APARTMENT - DAY

He walks through his old home, slowly, it's not the same. He kneels down at the blood stain on the carpet.

He undoes his tie, takes off his white collar prep-academy shirt, throws it in the trash.

He finds his backpack, empties all the drug paraphernalia, places the manila folder into it.

He opens his front door, looks back, scans the room --

DRIZZLE

Peace...

He walks out.

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Mary and Kyle are on the way to the rehab facility. Kyle is all bandaged up, looking a little better. They both stare forward.

KYLE

You don't have to come with me.
I've don't this before.

MARY

I know.

KYLE

And you don't have to walk in with me if you don't want to. I know there'll be press.

MARY

I know.

KYLE

Mom. I love you.

She looks at him, caring eyes.

MARY

I know.

She smiles warmly. She holds his hand.

DRIVER

We're here ma'am.

EXT. REHAB - DAY

The black SUV pulls up. Camera crews, reporters, photographers are hungry and waiting to pounce.

ON SCREEN:

The black SUV pulls up.

NEWS BANNER: SEN. SON - DRUG CRISIS

Mary gets out of the car, reporters go crazy. She gestures for them to move back.

INT. JEANNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Jeanie watches the news footage on her TV. She's nursing a screw driver. Her kids run around in the background, she tunes it out. She stares at her friend, in awe and in sadness.

INT. ERIC'S OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The news footage is on but barely anyone is paying attention - the team is in action working on polling, cold calling, press releases, media relations.

Eric sits at his desk, wrapped up in a conversation with Katie, who's sitting in Mary's number two chair.

EXT. REHAB - DAY

Mary is pushing the press corps back like a lion tamer. She's still got it. She turns back towards the car --

INT. BLACK SUV - DAY

Kyle is frozen in the backseat, terrified to come out and face the angry press mob, the rehab, everything.

Mary leans in --

MARY

You can do this. I promise.

She extends her hand. He takes it.

EXT. REHAB - DAY

The press corps goes NUTS. Mary shields her son, ushering him through the chaos, holding him close, moving him forward.

FADE OUT:

THE END