

"THE MANEUVER"

Written by

Matthew H. Emma

36 Sierra Vista Lane, Valley Cottage, NY 10989  
845-348-9356

EXT. AMPHITHEATRE-DAY

A BAND ends its rendition of a jazz song. A TALL, CURVY, VOLUPTUOUS WOMAN with dark-brown hair mopes toward a table and surrenders into the seat across from AN OLDER MAN.

MAN

I knew you wouldn't miss the Paco de Lucia set.

The Band plays Flamenco music.

WOMAN

Papa? I was serious.

PAPA

You're not coming home. I won't allow it.

A FEMALE SERVER places two glasses of water on the table.

SERVER

It is so good to see you again  
Countess Maria? What would be your  
pleasure?

The Server hands COUNTESS MARIA DE CANADAS, 45, a laminated folder encasing a piece of paper titled: "DRINK MENU."

MARIA

Water's fine. I'm trying hard to  
stay off the harder stuff. And it's  
simply Maria darling.

The Server shuffles off. The Band finishes the tune and disperses.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Papa Please?

PAPA

Fight to regain your reputation and  
stop crying victimhood.

MARIA

But I'm tired of it.  
Everything's...I just need a  
different purpose.

PAPA

You've already got one. Become that  
beautiful, intelligent, strong,  
titled woman again.

Papa faces the stage. Band Members return. The Band croons again.

INT. COURTROOM-DAY

A THIN MAN extracts several folders from a briefcase. A TALL, UNSHAVEN MAN wobbles through the door and stumbles in the Dark-Haired Man's direction.

THIN MAN

Whoa. You're breath should be preceded by an air-raid siren.

A WOMAN emerges from the Judge's chambers and retires to a seat behind the bench. A MALE BAILIFF clumps in front of the bench.

BAILIFF

All rise.

The Thin Man skyrockets up.

JUDGE

The case of the people versus Phillipe DePuis. How do you plead Mr. DePuis?

PHILLIPE, 43, is asleep. The Judge pounds a gavel.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

How do you plead Mr. DePuis?

Phillipe continues to slumber. The Judge throttles the gavel.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Ted? Wake the narcoleptic, platinum, capped-toothed brat up.

TED, 46, snatches Phillipe's shoulders and drags him upward.

PHILLIPE

No contest Your Honor.

Ted slogs toward the bench.

TED

My apologies. Anyway, their attorney agreed to our deal and...

JUDGE

I'm aware. But I'm losing my patience.

(MORE)

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Keep Rip Von Billionaire upright or  
I'll slap him with contempt so fast  
it'll hurt.

TED

Yes Your Honor.

Ted trudges back toward Phillipe. Phillipe slips a piece of  
chewing gum out of his jacket pocket and unwraps it. Ted  
slaps the gum out of Phillipe's hand.

TED (CONT'D)

Someday you'll regret all this  
bull...

JUDGE

Mr. DePuis? Would you please  
approach the bench?

PHILLIPE

To my knowledge, someday hasn't yet  
been added to the calendar.

Ted and Phillipe mince toward the bench.

JUDGE

Phillipe DePuis has pleaded no  
contest to the charges of  
misdemeanor assault. Is that  
correct?

PHILLIPE

Yes Your Honor.

JUDGE

You are hereby sentenced to two  
hundred hours of community service  
and a five thousand dollar fine. Do  
you understand these terms?

PHILLIPE

Yes Your Honor.

The Judge strikes a gavel.

JUDGE

Case dismissed.

Phillipe stomps toward the door and flings his hands in the  
air.

PHILLIPE

It's so fucking good to be DePuis.  
I can get away with anything.

The Judge punishes the gavel again and springs to her feet.

JUDGE  
Mr. DePuis?

Phillipe moseys toward the exit.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
Stop damn it.

Phillipe halts and pirouettes around.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
Another second of that repulsive  
outburst and you'll have a rhyming  
nickname called jailee. Understood?

Ted shoves Phillipe through the exit.

INT. OFFICE SUITE-DAY

Ted slinks through a door housing a placard which reads:  
CLAUDE DePUIS, CEO. Behind a desk is a GREY-HAIRED MAN.

TED  
Everything went well Mr. DePuis.

CLAUDE, 75, yanks a cabinet's drawer open, extracts a bottle  
and two glasses.

CLAUDE  
Forget Johnny Cochrane, you're  
David Copperfield. Only a magician  
could manage to keep him out of the  
license plate making business as  
many times as you have.

Claude pours the bottle's contents into the glasses and  
raises one. Ted plods toward the desk. Claude presents the  
glass to Ted. Claude and Ted throw back the booze. A banner  
adorning a back wall reads: DePUIS FOR GOVERNOR.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
Hopefully the idiot won't wander  
into any more quick sand before  
November. More than a bullet, we  
dodged a missile this time.

Claude kills and replenishes his drink.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
I want you to ensure he stays away  
from any beaches.

TED

Between running the campaign and my own crap, I can't...

Claude lifts a book off the desk and chucks it at Ted. Ted ducks and surrenders into a chair.

CLAUDE

This's your most important job. If he gets into serious shit again, we're all done...Or did you forget about...

TED

No...I didn't.

Ted broods toward the door.

CLAUDE

See ya at tonight's shindig?

TED

Once again, I'm obligated. Correct?

CLAUDE

Yes.

INT. BALLROOM-NIGHT

Ted escorts Maria inside. HUNDREDS OF MEN and WOMEN in formal dress mingle. Ted and Maria wiggle through the crowd.

TED

We can stop pretending now.

Ted flicks Maria's hand away and stomps toward a vacant table. Several Revelers pore over Ted.

TED (CONT'D)

Go find your purpose.

MARIA

What's eating you darling? Afraid you'll have to condescend to living off that more than adequate lawyer's salary now?

Ted huffs back into the crowd. Maria storms to the bar and beckons A MALE BARTENDER.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Glass of champagne please.

Phillipe sneaks a vile of cocaine from his shirt pocket, pops the cap, snorts the substance and stumbles toward Maria.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Don't expect me to keep you off the floor.

The Bartender hands Maria a glass of champagne.

PHILLIPE

It'll give me a more panoramic view of you indulging in one of your more dangerous habits. Remember? Murderer.

Maria offers Phillipe a middle finger and sips her champagne. Phillipe attempts to slide onto a stool, but tumbles to the ground. Revelers on surrounding stools scamper away from the bar.

MARIA

Wipe your nose.

Phillipe snorts, ingests the cocaine residue under his nose, vaults upward and pushes Maria.

PHILLIPE

Watch it bit...

Maria pushes Phillipe back. Phillipe stumbles to the floor again. A THIN, BLONDE-HAIRED WOMAN races toward Phillipe.

MARIA

Darly? Please?

DARLY, 27, grips Phillipe's hand and hauls him upward.

DARLY

Come on.

Phillipe shoves Darly. Revelers quiet to a hush and observe the scene. Claude lumbers toward Phillipe.

PHILLIPE

I'll go when I'm...

CLAUDE

No. Now.

Claude grabs Phillipe.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Darly? Take him home immediately.

Ted hides behind Claude.

PHILLIPE  
Oui (Yes in French) Daddy.

Claude extends a hand to Maria.

CLAUDE  
Please accept my apologies.

Maria ignores Claude's gesture. Darly rushes Phillipe out.  
Maria confronts Ted.

MARIA  
And how's your wife? Oh that's  
right...

Maria grabs her purse, yanks out a set of keys and her  
wallet.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
It's tonight's allowance time.

Maria extracts five hundred dollar bills and flings the money  
at Ted. Ted drops down and collects the money.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
The Bank of Maria will reopen  
during normal business hours  
tomorrow, so be sure to save some  
for a taxi darling.

INT. MOVING VEHICLE-NIGHT

Maria motors down a two-lane highway and passes a black  
Mercedes.

MARIA  
Sorry Eloise. Want to get home  
before light.

AN SUV gains speed, swerves into the opposite lane, cuts off  
Maria and races by her car.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Asshole.

In the distance, a large truck approaches from the opposite  
lane. The SUV and truck steam towards each other.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Come on. Somebody flinch please.



The SUV and truck speed towards a collision. Maria slows up. The SUV veers into the other lane, avoids the truck by inches and skids onto the shoulder.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Shit.

The truck's cab turns sideways and weaves into Maria's lane. Maria floors the gas to avert a head on.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Fuck.

Maria loses control of her vehicle, zig zags and plows into an embankment several hundred yards away. The black Mercedes crashes under the truck and has its roof ripped off. The truck and two other vehicles crash and burst into flames.

EXT. ROADWAY SHOULDER-NIGHT

Phillipe staggers out of the SUV's driver's seat and stumbles onto the road. Darly forces herself through the passenger's side door.

DARLY

I'm okay by the way. In the likely event you forgot someone else was in the car.

Phillipe wanders down the road. A WOMAN screams.

TRAPPED WOMAN (O.C.)

Help. Please. I can't see. Help me please.

PHILLIPE

Thank God this's a private highway.

Darly bursts toward the car containing the trapped woman. Phillipe corrals Darly.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Are you fucking nuts?

DARLY

We can't leave...

PHILLIPE

Yes...We can. I'm drenched in booze.

DARLY

Damn. How selfish can...

Phillipe drags Darly away from the carnage.

PHILLIPE

Let's go.

Darly struggles with Phillipe, eludes his grasp and tromps back toward the accident scene.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

The road won't be isolated forever.  
Translation necessary?

Darly jams a hand into her pocket and retrieves a phone.

DARLY

I don't care.

Phillipe squeezes Darly's wrist.

DARLY (CONT'D)

At least let me call nine-one-one...Please?

PHILLIPE

Quickly...

Phillipe faces away from the accident.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

And as we stroll that way.

Darly dials. Phillipe strengthens his grip on Darly's arm. Darly and Phillipe sprint away from the accident scene.

DARLY

Yes...Yes. Um...There's been a bad accident on the Northhampton Highway. Vehicles on fire. People dead. Please hurry.

EXT. ROADWAY EMBANKMENT NEAR ACCIDENT SCENE-NIGHT

Three Police vehicles representing the "NORTHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT" surround Maria's car. Maria slumps over the steering wheel.

MARIA

A truck. Into my lane.

A MALE POLICE OFFICER with Sargent epaulettes affixed to his uniform's collars attempts to open the driver's side door. Maria inches away from the steering wheel.

POLICE SARGENT  
Ma'am. This's Sargent Michael  
Sullivan. Can you hear me?

MARIA  
A truck. Into my lane.

SULLIVAN, 35, wrenches open the door and unstraps Maria's  
safety belt. An ambulance speeds on scene.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Out of nowhere. Please believe me.  
Wasn't my fault. Please don't blame  
me.

SULLIVAN  
Relax Ma'am. We're gonna get you  
out.

TWO FEMALE PARAMEDICS disembark from the ambulance's rear  
door. Maria attempts to force her way out of the car.  
Sullivan restrains Maria.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Don't. You may have internal  
injuries.

Maria struggles with Sullivan.

MARIA  
Who cares? I must clear my name.  
Right now. You see, they're gonna  
blame me.

SULLIVAN  
Who?

MARIA  
I wasn't drunk. I wasn't drunk.  
Have to prove it wasn't my fault.  
They're gonna blame me. Like they  
did before.

The Paramedics wheel a gurney towards Maria's vehicle.  
Sullivan and the Paramedics load Maria onto the gurney. TWO  
MALE POLICE OFFICERS mince towards Sullivan. Maria is placed  
into the ambulance. The ambulance speeds off.

SULLIVAN  
So?

POLICE OFFICER  
Horrible. Only one other survivor.  
Old woman who blacked out. But we  
also found something interesting.

FIREFIGHTERS douse the burning vehicles with water. SEVERAL  
POLICE OFFICERS investigate wreckage and scribble down notes.  
Sullivan trails the Officer to the SUV Phillippe and Darly  
abandoned.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)  
Other victims? Expelled during  
impact perhaps?

Sullivan brandishes a flashlight and examines the vehicle's  
exterior.

SULLIVAN  
If you see any impact, I need an  
Optometrist.

POLICE OFFICER  
Shocked witnesses then?

Sullivan sneaks open the front, passenger-side door, clicks  
open the glove compartment, removes and peruses through  
several documents before pocketing the New York State Vehicle  
Registration for Darly Cederstrom.

SULLIVAN  
Maybe.

INT-HOSPITAL ROOM-NIGHT

Maria lies awake with her head bandaged. Sullivan slides into  
a chair near the bed.

SULLIVAN  
Can you remember anything else?

MARIA  
How could this be happening again?

SULLIVAN  
Why do you keep saying again?

Ted stomps to the bed and inches his face toward Maria's.

TED  
Because she's a damn drunk with  
more DUIs than bucks.

Maria snares and chucks a pillow at Ted.

MARIA

I had one glass of champagne.

TED

Bullshit you did. A ma4jor car accident and you just happened to be involved...Again.

A MALE DOCTOR rushes in.

TED (CONT'D)

Add a zero to one and you'll get a more accurate...

DOCTOR

What the hell's going on here?

A large identification tag inscribed with the name: DR. PHILLIP YARMOUTH is pinned to the doctor's white coat.

MARIA

My husband's a fucking creep.

TED

I hate you.

Ted lunges toward Maria. Sullivan and YARMOUTH, 34, restrain Ted.

YARMOUTH

Sir. Your wife may have suffered head trauma. The last thing she needs's excitement. Why don't you go home and let her rest?

TED

My pleasure.

SULLIVAN

If there's anything...

YARMOUTH

You as well Sargent.

Sullivan slides his wallet out of a back pants pocket, extracts a card and places it on a table.

SULLIVAN

For when you're able.

Yarmouth leads Sullivan toward the door and breezes out of sight.

MARIA

Sargent?

Sullivan lingers in the doorway.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Don't let them blame me...Please?

INT. FENCING VENUE-DAY

Claude dons a mask, brandishes an epee and joins his OPPONENT on a mat. Phillipe minces in and trudges toward the mat. The Combatants square off. Claude strikes the epee into his Opponent's mask. The Combatants break. Claude sheds his mask.

CLAUDE

Why're you here?

PHILLIPE

To strategize how to quiet loud survivors.

CLAUDE

One's in no condition to speak. The other we've handled before. Besides, no would suspect you.

PHILLIPE

How do you...

Claude flails the epee to within inches of Philippe's neck.

CLAUDE

What a fool. The check I send to Motor Vehicles every two years? For a car not in your name?

PHILLIPE

Yeah. But what if someone saw us pull out? I think...

CLAUDE

That's always been a delayed response impulse with you. Might've been better had you done a little the other night.

Claude slaps Phillipe's face.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

I'd call you shithead, but that wouldn't be fair to shit.

Phillip drops to the mat and cowers.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Get up.

Phillip skyrockets upward.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Maria will be the prime suspect.  
But as far as we're concerned, try  
and work something out with your  
flame.

PHILLIPE

Work what out?

CLAUDE

Some might call it cooperation  
money.

INT. MARIA'S HOME-NIGHT

Atop a couch, Maria observes a local news broadcast. A graphic labeled: "HAMPTONS ACCIDENT" flashes on a television's screen. Maria snares a remote and jacks the volume.

FEMALE ANCHOR

One of two surviving accident  
victims, Eloise Peterman remains in  
a coma. In other news...

Maria snares the remote again and powers the television down. Ted slogs into the room. Maria grabs her head.

TED

What's wrong?

MARIA

I don't know.

Maria tightens the grip on her head and squints her eyes.

FLASHBACK-NIGHT OF THE BENEFIT

By a valet stand, Maria waits alongside AN ELDERLY COUPLE in front of a large sign that reads: "NORTHHAMPTON COUNTRY CLUB." A black Mercedes pulls up. A FEMALE VALET emerges and hands an Elderly Man a set of keys.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Good night Maria.

MARIA  
Buenos Noches (Good night in  
Spanish) Eloise.

ELOISE, 74, and the Elderly Man enter the Mercedes. A blue Beamer speeds curbside. A MALE VALET hops out and presents a set of keys to Maria.

VALET  
Safe travels Countess.

Maria tips the Valet and slides into the driver's seat.

MARIA  
Gracias young man.

Maria drives off.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Maria opens her eyes. Ted hovers over Maria.

TED  
What?

MARIA  
Eloise. She left before me.  
That's all I can remember.

TED  
Why do you want to remember any of  
that shit?

MARIA  
And why don't you want me too?

EXT. CAFE-DAY

A MALE SERVER places two glasses of water on a two-seated table Phillippe and Darly share. Darly flings a small piece of folded paper at Phillippe.

DARLY  
Absolutely not.

PHILLIPE  
You won't face any jail time. Maybe  
your license will be suspended.

Darly edges her seat away from the table.



PHILLIPE (CONT'D)  
 And you'll be paid enough to afford  
 a limo service for a year.

DARLY  
 Sorry.

PHILLIPE  
 Don't forget you've also got  
 something other than luxury to  
 consider.

Phillipe holds up and swings a bank check for \$500,000, made  
 out to Darly, back and forth.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)  
 It could make that task much  
 easier.

DARLY  
 Don't you ever...

Darly darts away from the table. Phillipe bolts after Darly.

PHILLIPE  
 Listen bitch.

SEVERAL DINERS pore over Phillipe.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)  
 My father's more persuasive.

INT. OFFICE-DAY

Sprawled across a leather sofa, Maria's eyes are closed and  
 her head is propped up on a pillow. A HEAVYSET, BALD MAN  
 towers over Maria.

MAN  
 Maria?

MARIA  
 Yes Dr. Goldstein.

GOLDSTEIN, 59, drags a chair away from a desk, positions it  
 near the sofa and plops down.

GOLDSTEIN  
 Do you remember anything?

FLASHBACK-NIGHT OF THE BENEFIT

Maria traverses a parking lot. Several rows of parking spots down, Phillipe and Darly lean against the side of an SUV pounding booze from a glass bottle. The vehicle's stereo system blares dance music.

PHILLIPE

Damn that stuff's strong.

Ted charges after Phillipe and pries the bottle out of his hand. Phillipe snatches the bottle back.

TED

I'm driving you home.

Phillipe shoves Ted and stomps to the SUV's other side. Ted chases Phillipe.

TED (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Your father wants...

PHILLIPE (O.C.)

I could give two fucks. Anyway, I believe his next anal cavity massage's scheduled for midnight. Hurry and ya might be on time.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Maria grips the sofa's edge.

MARIA

Only some symbol.

GOLDSTEIN

Okay. Good. Specifics if you can provide them.

FLASHBACK-NIGHT OF THE BENEFIT

Maria passes the SUV. A round object containing the logo for the Paris St. Germain Football Club dangles from the SUV's rear view mirror.

BACK TO THE PRESENT DAY

MARIA

Don't know what it stands for, but Paris St. German, St. G something.

GOLDSTEIN

I'm guessing you're not a European soccer fan?

MARIA

What do you mean?

Goldstein shuffles to a water cooler and fills a plastic cup.

GOLDSTEIN

It's a joke my dear.

MARIA

What could it have to do...

GOLDSTEIN

Your mind recalls it for a reason.  
Only, it isn't obvious right now.

Goldstein presents the cup to Maria. Maria gulps.

MARIA

We gotta work harder Doc. They're  
preparing the scapegoat for  
slaughter.

INT./EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS-DAY

Sullivan marches through a door adorning a placard labeled:  
"MRS. IRENE KYPRIANOU, PRINCIPAL." A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN plods  
toward Sullivan.

SULLIVAN

Thank you Mrs. Kyprianou.

MRS. KYPRIANOU, 55, snares a microphone.

MRS. KYPRIANOU

She in any trouble?

SULLIVAN

Just need to ask her a few  
questions.

MRS. KYPRIANOU

All right.

Mrs. Kyprianou flips a switch labeled: "PA SYSTEM" and  
presses one of the microphone's buttons.

MRS. KYPRIANOU (CONT'D)

May I have your attention please?  
Would Ms. Cederstrom please report  
to the Principal's office?

Mrs. Kyprianou places the microphone on her desk and slogs  
toward the door.

SULLIVAN  
You don't have to leave.

MRS. KYPRIANOU  
I'm a hear nothing, see nothing  
type personality Sargent.

Mrs. Kyprianou shuts the door. A gentle knock reverberates.  
Sullivan edges the door back.

SULLIVAN  
Ms. Cederstrom?

Darly bolts out of the office.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Shit.

Sullivan chases Darly. Darly plows through an exit. Sullivan  
chases Darly.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Stop running.

Sullivan brandishes his gun. Darly and places her hands up.  
Sullivan tucks the gun back into its holster.

DARLY  
I don't know anything.

SULLIVAN  
We wouldn't need a lie detector  
test to prove that's crap.

Darly sneaks toward a flight of stairs.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Don't even.

Sullivan snares his weapon at aims at Darly again.

DARLY  
We didn't know what to do. We...

SULLIVAN  
Who's we?

DARLY  
You bringing me downtown?

SULLIVAN  
Only if you run again.

Darly trudges toward the building.

DARLY

Then I got the right to speak to a lawyer or somebody?

SULLIVAN

Speak to whoever you want.

DARLY

I'll wait. Besides, I don't want to deny tomorrow's trust fund brats their geography lesson.

Sullivan marches toward a parking lot and enters a police vehicle. Darly yanks out her phone, clicks the message icon, scrolls down a contacts list until reaching Phillippe and texts: "Had special visit 2day and not from angry parents."

EXT. YACHT-DAY

Claude sips a beverage and reclines atop a lounge chair. Phillippe huffs a cigarette.

PHILLIPE

She's nervous. They'll get her to squeal.

Claude buries his drink.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

We should offer her more...

Claude snares a land line phone off a small table and dials.

CLAUDE

I'll handle this. Yes, have the car ready in about fifteen minutes.

Claude dumps the phone on the table.

PHILLIPE

Where're you going?

CLAUDE

To solve yet another simple problem you can't.

INT. DARLY'S HOME-NIGHT

In the kitchen, Darly tosses a salad, grabs the salad bowl, sidles toward a table and positions the bowl in its center. The table is decorated with two place settings.

DARLY  
Adam? Dinner.

The doorbell rings. A YOUNG BOY skips to the front door and places his hand on the knob. Darly darts into the foyer and smacks ADAM's, 10, hand away from the door's knob.

DARLY (CONT'D)  
What'd I warn you about this stuff?

ADAM  
Sorry Mommy.

DARLY  
Okay. All washed up?

ADAM  
Yep.

Darly unfastens the top and bottom locks.

DARLY  
Then go sit down.

Adam slips into the kitchen. Darly glimpses through the peephole.

DARLY (CONT'D)  
Shit.

Darly rotates the knob and yanks the door back.

DARLY (CONT'D)  
Please come in.

Claude minces into the living room. Reappearing at the border separating the living room and kitchen, Adam studies Claude.

DARLY (CONT'D)  
Mr. DePuis. I don't think you met Adam before.

Darly turns toward Adam.

DARLY (CONT'D)  
Say hello to Mr. DePuis.

ADAM  
Hi.

CLAUDE  
Good evening young man.

Darly rushes into the kitchen.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
 Hope I wasn't...

DARLY (O.C.)  
 Unfortunately, you were. I was just  
 about to serve.

A phone rings. Darly shuffles into the living room, removes a land line phone from a charger and glances at the screen.

DARLY (CONT'D)  
 Work related. Mind watching Adam  
 for a minute or two?

CLAUDE  
 Sure thing.

Darly bolts into a bedroom. Adam grabs a coloring book and crayons off a coffee table and settles onto a couch.

ADAM  
 Wanna help me doodle?

CLAUDE  
 I'd love to.

Claude occupies space adjacent to Adam. Adam hands Claude a red crayon.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
 You know how we colored when we  
 were kids?

Adam shakes his head. Claude scribbles onto his wrist.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
 We'd decorate each other's skin.  
 See?

ADAM  
 May I try?

Claude places his arm out. Adam draws a kite on Claude's other wrist.

CLAUDE  
 My turn.

Claude writes the words: "TAKE THE DEAL" on Adam's forehead. Darly sneaks back into the kitchen. Claude vaults up.

DARLY  
 Mr. DePuis? I'm really hoping we  
 could do this...

CLAUDE  
Understood. I'll have my secretary  
call you in the morning.

Darly rambles out of the kitchen.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
Don't worry. I'll see myself out.  
Good night young man.

ADAM  
Bye.

Claude exits. Darly backtracks into the kitchen and dumps a  
pot of spaghetti into a serving dish. Adam treads into the  
kitchen.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
Guess what Mom?

DARLY  
What dear?

ADAM  
Mr. DePuis taught me a new way to  
color. Look.

Adam points at his head. Darly lifts the dish, glimpses up at  
Adam and drops the dish on the floor.

DARLY  
My God.

INT. TEA BAR-DAY

At a table, Maria empties a teapot's contents into her and A  
MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN's cups. A television mounted to a wall airs  
New York One Afternoon News. A FEMALE ANCHOR with salt and  
pepper-colored hair named: ZARA O'REILLY appears on screen.

ZARA  
We now move to the latest  
developments in the Northhampton  
Highway accident story.

The Woman at Maria's table snares her cup and rises.

WOMAN  
Let's go outside.

MARIA  
No. It's okay.



ZARA

Though no suspects have emerged,  
Northhampton Police Captain William  
Rollins is calling Spanish Countess  
Maria de Canadas the most  
noteworthy person of interest.

The Woman reaches across the table and grips Maria's hand.  
Maria dabs her eyes with a napkin.

WOMAN

I don't believe...

MARIA

Doesn't matter darling. When in  
doubt, blame the one with the past.  
And if I can't remember things  
soon, I've got no future.

Maria edges her chair back.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Heading home. I got this.

WOMAN

I'm sorry. So much for a relaxing  
afternoon out.

MARIA

You didn't choose the entertainment  
darling.

Maria reaches into her pocket, snares her wallet, removes a  
wad of cash and drops a fifty dollar bill on the table.

INT. MARIA'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Upright atop a bed, Maria is wide awake. Ted slumbers next to  
Maria. Maria clutches her head.

MARIA

Shit. Not again.

FLASHBACK-MOMENTS BEFORE THE ACCIDENT

Maria motors down the highway. An SUV passes Maria's vehicle.  
The Paris St. Germain logo dangles from the rear view mirror.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Maria clicks a light on.

MARIA (CONT'D)

It was them.

Ted rolls over and illuminates a light situated on a night table.

TED

Who?

MARIA

Phillipe and Darly.

TED

Now let's not...

MARIA

Shut up.

Maria vaults out of bed, hops into clothes and snares her phone.

TED

Who're you calling?

Maria pounds the phone's keypad and places the receiver to her ear.

MARIA

Sargent Sullivan? Yeah it's her...And she's got something important to tell you. Yes. Now. Meet me at the Bridgehampton Diner in an hour.

Maria ends the call. Ted leaps out of bed.

TED

I think...

MARIA

You should go back to bed darling.

Maria nabs a set of keys and races out. Ted rushes to a window. Maria barrels into her vehicle and skids off. Ted grabs a phone off a dresser, scrolls down a contacts list until reaching Claude and taps the entry.

TED

I'm heading to your office. I suggest you meet me there.

INT. DINER-NIGHT

A FEMALE SERVER hands Sullivan a plate filled with scrambled eggs and bacon. Sullivan grabs a bottle of ketchup and douses the food.

SULLIVAN  
Not hungry?

MARIA  
No. Thanks darling.

Sullivan shovels a forkful of food into his mouth.

SULLIVAN  
It's a big break, but one tiny fact remains.

MARIA  
I know. Wish that was part of the vision.

The Server returns with a bottle of hot sauce and refills Sullivan's coffee cup.

SULLIVAN  
I think it was her.

MARIA  
Any particular reason?

SULLIVAN  
Cause she did everything but shit herself when I questioned her.

Sullivan drowns his eggs in hot sauce.

MARIA  
I'm getting an ulcer just watching that. Gross.

SULLIVAN  
I'll inform the Captain. What's your plan?

INT. MOVING VEHICLE-DAY

Maria motors down a highway, positions on a blue tooth headset, connects the device to her cell and dials.

INT. DARLY'S HOME--SAME TIME

Darly packs belongings into a box. The living room is empty except for several boxes. A phone chimes. Darly shuffles toward a charger and grabs a land line. The caller identification registers Maria de Canadas. Darly hits talk.

DARLY  
Can I help you?

INTERCUT--Phone Conversation

MARIA  
You most certainly can darling.

Darly places a finger over the phone's END button.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Tell your boyfriend hypnosis's very effective.

Darly activates the phone's speaker mechanism, places the phone down, yanks a cigarette out of a pack on the table and ignites the butt using a lighter.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Haven't gone away I hope?

DARLY  
I'm...Here. But, I don't know what you mean.

MARIA  
We're both too intelligent to believe that darling.

Darly ingests a huge puff and exhales a cloud of smoke.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
I'm going to New York One. They might be interested in a twist in our little Village's big news story. You care to make the twist even bigger?

Darly clicks end.

DARLY  
Fuck.

Darly dials another number.

DARLY (CONT'D)

All right. I'll take it. Two things. I want out tonight and, just as a little going away courtesy...

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO-DAY

Maria and ZARA, 53, enter a side office.

MARIA

I appreciate your time.

Zara shuffles to a desk, snares and sips from a mug labeled: NY1 News.

ZARA

And while I appreciate your sharing this revelation even more, I'm afraid it's not enough.

MARIA

Why?

A YOUNG MAN rushes in, hands Zara several papers and races out.

ZARA

Let's gab during make-up.

Zara and Maria march towards a make-up table. Zara settles into a seat. A MALE MAKE-UP ARTIST applies rouge to Zara's face.

ZARA (CONT'D)

DePuis's people have threatened legal action. The lead, while obviously valid, will come across as nonsensical hokum, unless...

MARIA

What?

ZARA

You. Me. Exclusive. Tonight.

Zara glances at her watch. The time is five minutes to noon.

MARIA

I...

ZARA

My position's not open to negotiation. Need a decision. I'll want to make the announcement on the afternoon news.

MARIA

Oh all right darling.

ZARA

Be back here at seven. We go live at eight.

EXT. PARKING LOT-DAY

Claude edges out of a limousine's rear door. A police cruiser representing the NORTHHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT pulls up next to the limo. A UNIFORMED MAN with a mustache inches out and plods toward Claude.

CLAUDE

Fuck you doing Rollins?

ROLLINS, 60, confronts Claude.

ROLLINS

I don't have enough evi...

CLAUDE

Then manufacture some.

A cell phone buzzes. Claude accesses his phone and examines the screen.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Shit.

ROLLINS

What?

Claude flips his phone to Rollins.

CLAUDE

Read the damn text.

A message from Phillippe says: "OUR FAVORITE CONTESSA'S YAPPING TO THE PRESS TONIGHT."

ROLLINS

Fuck.

CLAUDE

Yeah. We could all be doing that on our knees in a federal pen if someone doesn't quell her.

ROLLINS

I don't know what the hell else to do.

CLAUDE

Already told you. If she was over the limit, great. If not, let's make it so. Keep me informed.

Claude brandishes his phone.

ROLLINS

I'll have the hospital fax the reports over. What're you doing?

CLAUDE

Setting up my evening entertainment.

Rollins barrels into the cruiser and speeds off. Claude places the phone to his ear.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Yes. Forward me to Zara O'Reilly's voicemail please.

EXT. TELEVISION STUDIO-NIGHT

Zara and Maria settle into stools positioned adjacent to each other. A YOUNG WOMAN rushes in, places a chair next to Maria and hurries out. A MALE CAMERAMAN hones in on the set.

MARIA

Who's that for?

CAMERAMAN

Back on in  
five...four...three....two...one.

The Cameraman pans on Maria and Zara.

ZARA

We return to New York One's Evening Edition and our conversation with Countess Maria de Canadas. What's your response to those who think you're fabricating?

MARIA

I couldn't give two loose pieces of mierda (shit in Spanish) darling. I know what I remember.

Claude charges onto the set and confronts Maria.

CLAUDE

Shit is right. It's all bullshit.

Zara forges in between Maria and Claude and shoves Claude back.

ZARA

Go back stage and cool off.

Claude hesitates.

ZARA (CONT'D)

Your reprehensible interruption's coming precariously close to eighty-sixing our agreement Mr. DePuis.

Claude stampedes back stage.

MARIA

Please explain his presence.

Zara pursues Claude. Maria corrals Zara's wrist.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Expound darling.

ZARA

Like I said before, it ain't merely for ratings. Sorry.

MARIA

Fine, but when he comes back, it's my turn.

ZARA

Nothing physical I beg.

Maria returns to the set and recaptures her stool. Zara and Claude reappear. Zara whispers in Claude's ear. Zara positions herself next to Maria. Claude takes the seat adjacent to Zara.

ZARA (CONT'D)

Combatants rise and raise your right hands.



Maria and Claude spring to their feet and toss their right hands up.

ZARA (CONT'D)

I do solemnly swear I will not turn  
my set into a remake of Geraldo.  
Mr. DePuis?

CLAUDE

I swear.

ZARA

Countess?

MARIA

Si darling.

The Cameraman hones in on Zara, Maria and Claude.

CAMERAMAN

We're on.

The Cameraman shines his equipment's lights.

ZARA

We're back on and have restored  
order...At least I believe so.  
Since Mr. Depuis spoke last, Maria,  
your response please.

MARIA

I think Mr. DePuis might wish to  
consider speaking to his son  
because I know what he was involved  
in and will do whatever it takes to  
prove my innocence...

CLAUDE

Countess...

MARIA

Whatever it takes darling.

Maria glances at her watch.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Early zumba class tomorrow. I must  
skedaddle.

Maria prances off set.

EXT. POLO MATCH-DAY

Two teams engage in play. Claude and Ted observe the action from seats in the first row of spectators. There is a break in play.

TED

I'll keep trying, but you know how adamant she is.

Play resumes. One of the team's scores a goal. The Crowd rises and offers polite applause. Claude and Ted settle back down.

CLAUDE

I've always admired your resourcefulness. Now's the time to utilize every bit.

TED

You're insinuating?

Play resumes. A MALE SPECTATOR shuffles by Claude and Ted.

CLAUDE

Come up with a creative quieting technique.

TED

You're not suggesting I...

CLAUDE

Not at the moment. But if...

TED

I'll think of something.

The Crowd reacts to a play executed by one of the Competitors.

CLAUDE

I know you will.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE-DAY

Claude greets Rollins before a large, unfinished structure. A large sign on the property reads: "FUTURE HOME OF THE NORTHHAMPTON LUXURY CONDOMINIUM COMPLEX." Rollins brandishes a folder.

ROLLINS

Point zero one aren't the numbers we were hoping for.

CLAUDE

Well, hopes are meant to be raised...And I know just the guy.

Rollins shoves the folder into Claude's chest. Claude peruses through the documents contained inside the folder.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Solid work.

ROLLINS

Now what?

CLAUDE

Call a press conference and reveal...

ROLLINS

Not until I've got confirmation your man did his job.

Claude removes several papers from the folder and presents them to Rollins.

CLAUDE

Got what I need. Put these in your sharpest shredder.

ROLLINS

I know how to...

CLAUDE

I'm not quite sure anymore.

Rollins stomps toward his vehicle.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Stop.

Rollins ignores Claude's command. Claude scoops up a rock and flings it inches from Rollins's head.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Turn around.

Rollins cringes and mopes back toward Claude.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Make the media gathering at 10 a.m. You'll get the confirmation before.

Rollins scurries toward his vehicle and barrels inside. Claude snares his phone and pounds the keypad.

A limo crawls up the street and pulls into the driveway. Claude inches into the limo's rear. The limo backs out and speeds off.

INT. RESTAURANT-NIGHT

Ted and Maria share a table. A MALE SERVER clears away several empty dishes.

SERVER

I'll return with dessert menus.

A FEMALE BUS PERSON refills Maria and Ted's champagne glasses. Ted gulps down his glass's contents.

TED

Please rethink your involvement in...

MARIA

My favorite restaurant and expensive bubbly. Papa's right. I am still that naive.

The Server returns carrying a pen and note pad.

SERVER

Have we decided on what goodies to sample?

MARIA

How' bout a new husband?

Maria vaults out of her chair and tosses the contents of her glass into Ted's face.

SERVER

Take all the time you need.

The Server scampers into the kitchen.

TED

That's right. Make your usual Broadway spectacle.

Maria lumbers to Ted's side of the table and strikes his face.

MARIA

It's never about your wife.

Ted leaps out of his seat and edges his face to within inches of Maria's.

TED

Wrong. It is. You don't know how far these people'll go to...

MARIA

I don't care darling. Because I'm right.

TED

Come back now...Or I'm done.

MARIA

Like you weren't already?

EXT. OUTSIDE NORTHHAMPTON POLICE STATION-DAY

Numerous microphones are positioned at a podium. JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS assume positions behind the podium. Flanked by TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS, Rollins emerges and glances at his watch. The time is five to ten.

ROLLINS

Fuck is it?

INT. CUBICLE-SAME TIME

At a desk, A MAN pounds the keyboard of a laptop computer. The screen reveals a document titled: "NORTHHAMPTON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL PATIENT RECORD FOR MARIA De CANADAS."

MAN

Okay.

The Man scrolls down and reaches the entry for Blood Alcohol Content and changes the number from .01 to .10 and clicks save.

MAN (CONT'D)

Too easy.

The Man yanks a phone out of his pocket and dials.

EXT. AREA OUTSIDE POLICE STATION-SAME TIME

Rollins ambles toward the podium. A phone chimes.

ROLLINS

It better be...

Rollins jams his hand into a pocket, yanks out a phone and glances at the screen.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
Yes. We good?

INTERCUT--PHONE CONVERSATION

MAN  
We great. Check your email.

Rollins ends the call and gestures at one of the Uniformed Officers. The Uniformed Officer approaches Rollins.

ROLLINS  
The computer. Log in, print it and  
get it out here.

The Uniformed Officer hurries inside. Rollins's phone chimes again.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
Ah. Fuck's this now?

Rollins examines the phone's screen. The caller is identified as CDP.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
I learned the pleasant development.  
No. I didn't forget and will  
include that also. Good bye.

Rollins hits end and shoves the phone into his pocket. The Uniformed Officer returns with a folder and hands it to Rollins.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
Let's be convincing guys.

Rollins and the Uniformed Officers surround the podium. Rollins grips a microphone.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
I've brought you here today to  
announce two major breaks in the  
Northhampton Highway accident  
investigation.

Photographers snap several shots of Rollins.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
The first's accident survivor Maria  
de Canadas's blood alcohol content  
was measured at .10, well above the  
legal limit.

Several cell phones chime.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

In addition, we've good reason to believe Darly Cederstrom was behind the wheel of the SUV found abandoned at the scene. I'll take a few questions.

A throng of Journalists launch their hands skyward. Rollins acknowledges a FEMALE REPORTER.

FEMALE REPORTER

As you know, the Countess...

ROLLINS

I know what the Countess said, but evidence's evidence.

Rollins's phone vibrates. Rollins reclaims the phone. A text from Claude reads: "Press Conference is over."

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

Sorry folks. Got more urgent business to attend to.

The Uniformed Officers lead Rollins away from the podium.

INT. MARIA'S HOME-DAY

Maria nabs a land line phone off a charger and pounds its keypad. A muted television is tuned to New York One. A scroll running across the screen's bottom reads: "De CANADAS FOUND TO BE INTOXICATED."

MARIA

Eso es mierda Sullivan.

Maria places the phone on speaker and thwacks the device onto the counter.

SULLIVAN

Gonna guess that's Espanol for...

MARIA

This's absolute horseshit.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

Ya sure you just don't remember...Maybe having a couple more glasses?

MARIA

Fuck no darling. Recovering alcies  
with bad reps keep tabs on their  
consumption.

A stock photo of Maria is displayed on the television. Maria  
nabs a remote and shuts the set off.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

The only other explanation's that  
someone...

MARIA

Wrong darling. It's the only one  
from the start and I'll prove it.  
Would you help me? Please?

A pause ensues.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

All right. But why don't we first  
start with the other theory. At  
least there, we got someone else to  
confirm it.

MARIA

Okay? How're we...

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

Sit down and exhale.

Maria plops onto a sofa and takes several deep breaths.

SULLIVAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Calm?

MARIA

Si darling.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

I'll pick you up tomorrow and we'll  
swing by her place. Say about four?  
She should be home from school by  
the time we get there.

Maria minces to a cabinet, extracts a liquor bottle and a  
glass.

SULLIVAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Okay.

Maria uncaps the bottle and fills the glass.



MARIA

Yeah.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

So I'll see ya at four?

Maria snares the phone, places it under her shoulder, shuffles into the kitchen, drops the phone on a counter top, hovers over the sink and places the glass to her lips.

SULLIVAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Ya okay?

Maria sets the glass down on the counter.

MARIA

Yes darling...On all counts. See ya at four.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

Great. Good evening Countess.

MARIA

Dulces suenos Sargent.

A pause follows.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Sweet...

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

Dreams. Google Translate's pretty damn good. Same to you Countess.

Maria hits end and empties the glass's contents down a drain.

EXT./INT. DARLY'S HOME-DAY

A Police vehicle representing the Northhampton Police Department pulls into the driveway. Sullivan and Maria exit the vehicle and mince toward the house. The garage door is open. The space inside is empty.

MARIA

Perhaps she's on detention duty today?

SULLIVAN

Got her cell number?

MARIA

Nah. Only the house.

Sullivan reaches the front door and rings the bell. Maria peeks through a window.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Darly?

Maria places her feet atop a doormat adjacent to Sullivan's. Sullivan positions a hand on the doorknob and rotates it a deliberate pace.

SULLIVAN

Wow.

MARIA

What?

Sullivan revolves the knob all the way to its right and edges the door ajar.

SULLIVAN

Think we should?

MARIA

You're the cop darling.

Sullivan prods the door forward. Maria and Sullivan tiptoe inside. Maria flips a light switch.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Darly?

SULLIVAN

Ms. Cederstrom? Sargent Sullivan of the NHPD. We'd like to speak with you.

The foyer and living room are empty. Maria wanders down a hall. Sullivan inspects several empty closets and roams into the kitchen.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Interesting.

The room possesses no furniture. Sullivan opens a pantry door. The cupboard is full. Sullivan inches open the fridge. The fridge is full.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Another break...And not a good one.

Maria bolts into the kitchen.

MARIA

Bedrooms empty also. Wonder who made her split?

SULLIVAN

The possibilities ain't limitless.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP-DAY

Darly and Adam mosey towards a vehicle attached to a UHAUL container. A BEVY OF CAMERA CREWS accost Darly. Darly brandishes and clicks a car starter. The vehicle's lights flash.

DARLY

Adam? Get in the car and lock the door.

Adam bolts to the front-passenger's side door, flings the door open, leaps inside, slams shut and locks the door. The Crews push microphones and cameras into Darly's face.

MALE REPORTER

Ms. Cederstrom? Can you explain to us why you're leaving town? Does it have anything to do with Captain Rollins's revelation?

Darly attempts to enter her vehicle. The Crews block Darly's path. Darly retreats.

DARLY

Okay. You want a statement?

The Crews quiet to a hush a position their cameras on Darly.

DARLY (CONT'D)

Everything Captain Rollins said was true. I was the driver of the vehicle and am prepared to accept whatever punishment awaits.

FEMALE REPORTER

Then why're you running like a fugitive?

Darly brushes by the Crews, charges into the car, ignites the engine and races away.

INT. DELI-DAY

Sullivan and Maria wait in line. A YOUNG MALE EMPLOYEE greets Maria and Sullivan at a counter.

DELI EMPLOYEE  
How can I help you folks?

MARIA  
Tea. And for mi amigo...

SULLIVAN  
Coffee. Heavy cream, three sugars.  
And to eat, a toasted bagel with  
lots of butter packets on the side.

The Deli Employee fulfills the drink order and hands Sullivan two large paper cups. Maria reaches into her purse and accesses her wallet.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Put it away. My treat.

MARIA  
In ten years of marriage, my  
husband hasn't said that once.  
Thanks.

Sullivan hands A FEMALE CASHIER a twenty dollar bill. The Cashier tenders Sullivan's change. Maria and Sullivan retire to a table near the exit.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
So?

SULLIVAN  
Her little impromptu's a definite  
blow.

MARIA  
I could hire a PI and...

SULLIVAN  
Forget it. Even if you did, she's  
now either too rich or too  
intimidated to yack.

The Deli Employee brings Sullivan a bagel.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

MARIA  
Ever full?

SULLIVAN

Rarely.

MARIA

Goodness darling.

Sullivan rips open a package of plastic silverware and uses a knife to butter the bagel.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Then?

SULLIVAN

It's back to refuting report gate.  
Drop by the precinct later and  
we'll strategize.

Maria clutches Sullivan's hand.

MARIA

Such a different feeling.

SULLIVAN

What?

MARIA

Having someone on my side.

INT. POLICE STATION-DAY

Maria snakes by Rollins and slinks into Sullivan's office. Sullivan inches the door closed. Rollins slithers toward Sullivan's office.

SULLIVAN

Speak softly.

MARIA

Why don't I head to the hospital  
and see if I can get a copy of my  
medical reports?

Rollins places an ear on Sullivan's office door.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

Why not? If someone cooked the  
records, I'm sure they tapped into  
the hospital's computers.

MARIA (O.C.)

I'm gonna bank on...More like pray  
they kept the original hard copies  
darling.

Rollins frolics back, rushes toward an isolated corridor, snares his phone, scrolls down a contacts list until tapping the entry for CDP.

ROLLINS

The Contessa and her new minion, better known as my best officer, are espousing conspiracy theories about doctored papers.

CLAUDE (O.C.)

Real simple. Make another request from sick bay and ask for all medical documents associated with people involved in the accident, whether computer or paper.

ROLLINS

Okay.

INT. HOSPITAL-DAY

Maria mills around an office. Yarmouth enters.

YARMOUTH

I've never seen so many people interested in a doc's sloppy copy.

Yarmouth shuffles toward a filing cabinet, yanks a drawer back and fingers through several folders.

YARMOUTH (CONT'D)

Perhaps you might know why the police chief made the same request a few hours ago?

MARIA

You're not that new to this community Doc. You know I was...

Yarmouth slams the cabinet shut.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Did I give any indication I was blitzed?

YARMOUTH

Honestly. No. But also being truthful, I don't remember any of the findings...Though everyone will be happy to know I did also write them down.

MARIA

Great. Then you can give them to...

YARMOUTH

Yes...I can. But since they're part of a criminal investigation, I must also comply with his request.

Yarmouth yanks open a desk drawer and rummages through its contents.

MARIA

Doc? I'm telling you. When you find it, I know I'll be proven correct.

Yarmouth shuts the desk drawer.

YARMOUTH

Okay.

MARIA

Thanks.

Flamenco music chimes. Maria retrieves her phone and examines the screen. A text from Sullivan reads: "NEED TO HAVE A FEW WORDS. MEET ME AT THE BATTING CAGES, 811 FLATBUSH AVE IN BKLN, 8 P.M. TONIGHT."

EXT. BATTING CAGES-NIGHT

Sullivan executes several practice swings inside a fenced in structure labeled: "FAST PITCH." A machine fires a ball. Sullivan swings and misses. Leaning against a fence, Maria observes. The machine fires again. Sullivan connects.

SULLIVAN

Last one.

Sullivan digs in and bends his knees. The machine hurls another ball. Sullivan flails his bat and wallops the ball over a wall.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

If Yarmouth's findings come back the way we'd bet big bucks on, we're talking conspiracy.

MARIA

I understand.

Sullivan snares a towel and bottle of water from a duffel bag.

SULLIVAN

Then you must also realize this may go deeper than either of us can envision right now?

Sullivan dries off his arms and forehead, uncaps the bottle and chugs.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Powerful people with secrets don't like their shit sniffed.

MARIA

There's no risk I'd be scared away from taking. It's really you who has to decide and, if you don't...

SULLIVAN

I do.

Maria leaps into Sullivan's arms.

MARIA

Gracias darling.

INT. PHONE BOOTH-NIGHT

Yarmouth rifles through his pocket, yanks out a handful of change and places it on a small stand near a pay phone. Some of the change falls to the floor.

YARMOUTH

Shit.

Yarmouth retrieves the coins, shoves several quarters into the phone's money slot, rips a crumpled paper out of his pocket containing the information: "MARIA'S CELL," 1-917-439-2286 and dials.

INT. MOVING CAR-SAME TIME

Maria races down a highway. A phone on the front, passenger's-side seat vibrates. Maria snares the phone and offers a quick glance at its screen. The caller ID registers: "UNKNOWN CALLER." Maria hits talk.

MARIA

This's Maria.

INTERCUT--PHONE CONVERSATION



YARMOUTH

Good.

MARIA

Doc?

Maria activates the speaker mechanism and tosses the phone back on the front, passenger's-side seat.

YARMOUTH

Where're you now?

MARIA

Driving home.

YARMOUTH

Pull over immediately.

Maria slows down, swings onto the highway's shoulder and shifts into park.

MARIA

This call isn't about my blood sugar. Is it darling?

YARMOUTH

Let's just say you're more Nostradamus than Oliver Stone.

MARIA

I can be at the hospital at...

YARMOUTH

No.

The pay phone cuts out briefly.

FEMALE COMPUTER-GENERATED VOICE

Please deposit another fifty cents please.

MARIA

Are you in some kind of trouble or being followed?

YARMOUTH

Don't know, but as you can see, I'm not neglecting the art of discretion.

Yarmouth nabs two quarters and pushes the coins through the pay slots.

YARMOUTH (CONT'D)

Let's meet tomorrow morning in as private a place as you can think of. I mean where you go to think private. Text me the details and I'll be there.

A dial tone follows. Maria scrolls down her contacts list until reaching Sargent Sullivan, taps the entry and texts: "MEET ME TOMORROW. NINE A.M. AT THE NORTHHAMPTON PRIVATE BEACH NEAR THE MARINA" and crosses her fingers.

MARIA

Come on. Answer quick.

Maria's phone chimes. The screen displays the message: "CALL FROM SARGENT SULLIVAN."

MARIA (CONT'D)

Yes.

Maria hits talk.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Hope there're no scheduling conflicts?

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

I take it we're in full conspiracy mode?

MARIA

Yarmouth es flipando. (Spanish for is flipping out)

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

There's no way I'll let you go alone. I'll even drive you.

Maria blows two kisses into the phone.

MARIA

Bendiciones Para Usted (Blessings to you in Spanish) darling.

EXT. BEACH-DAY

Maria and Sullivan occupy a picnic table off the sand. The time is ten minutes past nine. Maria glimpses at her watch.

MARIA

I hope my husband or the bad cops didn't get to him already.

In the distance, Yarmouth slogs toward Maria and Sullivan.

SULLIVAN  
Worries unfounded.

Yarmouth carries a folder.

MARIA  
Hoping that's the proof?

Maria gestures at the folder.

YARMOUTH  
You told me we'd be doing this in  
private.

MARIA  
He can be trusted.

Yarmouth sets the folder on a table and places a hand over  
it.

YARMOUTH  
The original's here. I made several  
more copies just in case...Am I  
safe Sargent?

SULLIVAN  
Probably. Play dumb for a while and  
don't share this with anyone else.

YARMOUTH  
Okay.

Yarmouth slides the folder to Maria. Maria removes several  
documents from the folder and scans.

MARIA  
Vindicacion (vindication in  
Spanish).

Yarmouth's hands tremble.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Hope you don't have any surgeries  
today darling?

Maria brandishes a pack of cigarettes and lighter, slides a  
butt out, ignites and slips the cigarette between Yarmouth's  
fingers. Yarmouth ingests a puff and exhales a cloud of  
smoke.

YARMOUTH

Whoever did this's got mega pull  
and...Mega cash. With HIPAA  
Compliance, hacking into a  
hospital's database's impossible  
these days.

MARIA

DePuis fits those profiles.

A phone rings. Maria, Sullivan and Yarmouth grab their  
mobiles.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Not mine.

SULLIVAN

Neither.

Yarmouth shuffles onto the sand. Maria slides the folder to  
Sullivan. Sullivan boomerangs the folder back to Maria.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

The only person you give this to is  
O'Reilly, but not yet.

YARMOUTH (O.C.)

Mother...Fucking unbelievable.  
When?

Maria and Sullivan race onto the sand and surround Yarmouth.

YARMOUTH (CONT'D)

On my way now.

Yarmouth pockets his phone.

YARMOUTH (CONT'D)

Gotta go.

MARIA

Because of?

Yarmouth darts off.

YARMOUTH

A pleasant, but utterly surprising  
development.

INT. HOSPITAL-DAY

Yarmouth bursts into a room. Eloise is wide awake. A muted  
television is tuned to New York One.

ELOISE  
The news's lying. Maria didn't  
cause it.

Eloise thrashes about the bed.

ELOISE (CONT'D)  
I remember Doc.

A FEMALE NURSE rushes to Yarmouth's side.

YARMOUTH  
How're her vitals?

NURSE  
Steady.

YARMOUTH  
Then prepare 10cc's of Valium.

Eloise springs out of bed.

ELOISE  
I don't need any more sleep.  
Someone please listen.  
Please bring Maria to me.

Yarmouth backtracks toward the door.

YARMOUTH  
Okay. I will.

EXT. HOSPITAL COURTYARD-DAY

Maria and Yarmouth pass a flower garden.

MARIA  
She mention anything specific?

YARMOUTH  
Just that she'll only speak to you.  
She's in the wheelchair by the  
benches. Good luck.

Yarmouth scampers into the building. Maria trudges toward  
Eloise.

ELOISE  
It's all right. Don't be afraid.

Maria snakes onto the bench.

MARIA

I'm glad you pulled through. Sorry about your...

ELOISE

Not as sorry as those DePuis' are gonna be.

MARIA

What do you recall?

Eloise wheels closer to Maria.

ELOISE

The most important fact.

MARIA

That being?

ELOISE

Phillipe was driving.

Maria rockets off the bench and sprints off.

ELOISE (CONT'D)

Where're you going?

MARIA

To share this wonderful news with a friend darling.

INT. POLICE STATION-DAY

Maria and Sullivan stampede into Rollins's office.

SULLIVAN

It's a tremendous break. We should...

ROLLINS

Not base a whole damn investigation on a septuagenerian ten minutes out of a coma.

Rollins snares a plastic cup off his desk, huffs to a water cooler and fills the cup.

SULLIVAN

But...

ROLLINS

Nothing damn it.

Rollins chugs the water and crumples the cup.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

Now out.

Sullivan stomps out. Maria trails Sullivan into the main precinct area. Sullivan places his hand over Maria's mouth, escorts her into his office and shuts the door at a deliberate pace.

SULLIVAN

Come closer.

Sullivan positions his lips by Maria's ear.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

He's on the DePuis payroll.

MARIA

Then?

SULLIVAN

We become a force of two.

A phone chimes Flamenco music.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Gonna guess that's yours?

Maria snares her phone. A text from Yarmouth reads: "ELOISE'S ASKING FOR YOU AGAIN." Maria responds: "TELL HER I'LL BE THERE SOON" and bolts for the door.

MARIA

Talk later.

SULLIVAN

Where're ya headed?

MARIA

To hopefully increase our force.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY-DAY

Maria pushes through sliding, glass doors and marches toward an elevator.

FEMALE VOICE (O.C.)

Maria? Maria?

Maria halts and reverses her field. A DARK-HAIRED MAN propels Eloise's wheelchair toward Maria.

MARIA

Oh...I don't want to interrupt your company so...

ELOISE

Nonsense. Maria, please meet my nephew, Jason Kelvin.

KELVIN, 38, extends his hand. Maria and Kelvin make acquaintances.

MARIA

May I be honest with you?

ELOISE

The way you phrased that question suggests we'll need to be more comfortable.

MARIA

At least sitting down...No offense intended.

Kelvin wheels Eloise into a lounge. Maria follows and rests down on a sofa next to Kelvin.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Our finest aren't buying you darling.

ELOISE

Not the least bit unexpected. That's why Jason's here. If you would...

KELVIN

Yes Auntie. Countess?

MARIA

It's Maria darling.

Kelvin checks his phone and tosses it into a briefcase.

KELVIN

Maria? It's a simple equation. Your innocence plus my experience as an Assistant Manhattan DA equals the end of the DePuis clan. Care to help us solve the problem?

MARIA

Math I actually understand. But...

A FEMALE NURSE stations herself behind Eloise's wheelchair.



NURSE  
Time to get you upstairs.

ELOISE  
All right.

The Nurse wheels Eloise toward an elevator. Kelvin doubles back toward Maria.

KELVIN  
I'll walk you out.

Maria and Kelvin meander towards the sliding doors.

KELVIN (CONT'D)  
She's scheduled to be released in three days barring any major setbacks. At that time, we'll be holding a press conference detailing our plans.

MARIA  
Sounds great darling.

KELVIN  
We want you to be there. It'll be Wednesday at the Northhampton Courthouse steps at noon. You don't seem too enthused.

MARIA  
Maybe that's because DePuis has pretty confident lawyers also darling.

EXT. COURTHOUSE STEPS-DAY

Flanked by Maria and Eloise, Kelvin occupies the space behind a podium holding a microphone. A HORDE OF JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS crowd a cornered off area.

KELVIN  
I'm confident we'll be able to push for an arrest and hopefully an indictment.

Several Journalists toss their hands skyward. Kelvin singles out a FEMALE REPORTER. The Reporter prances forward.

REPORTER

Aren't you concerned the credibility of your witnesses is a little bit...Perhaps not so credible, if not completely inadmissible?

KELVIN

On the contrary. When law enforcement concludes its investigation, the real perpetrator of this horrific tragedy will be held accountable.

Another bevy of Journalists raise their hands.

KELVIN (CONT'D)

That's all we have time for. Thank you.

Kelvin escorts Maria and Eloise into a building.

INT. POOLHOUSE-SAME TIME

Behind a bar, Claude prepares a drink. Phillipe buries the last sips of a beverage and chucks the glass into a wall, shattering it into tiny pieces. Claude places his drink down, removes a robe and dives into a pool.

PHILLIPE

I'm fucked and he swims.

Claude splashes a lap and wades to the pool's edge.

CLAUDE

Why not? The muddled recollections of questionable witnesses offering even more questionable testimony won't interrupt my relaxation time.

Claude leaps out of the pool, shuffles to a lounge chair and snares a towel.

PHILLIPE

If I'm in prison, at the very least you're not a public servant come the fall. Remember that Daddy.

Claude snares a phone off an adjacent chair and dials a number.

CLAUDE  
Yes. Get me the *New York Times*  
Editorial Desk please.

Claude places the phone down.

PHILLIPE  
What's there?

CLAUDE  
Our answer to Mr. Kelvin...And my  
remedy for you.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING-DAY

Maria huffs out of an elevator, stomps to a door labeled 4C and pounds the bell numerous times. Maria yanks a newspaper out of her purse.

MARIA  
Sargent? You in there?

Maria makes a fist and raps on the door.

SULLIVAN  
Coming. Goodness, give it a...

Sullivan edges the door back.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Rest...Oh. Good Sunday Countess.

Maria flails the newspaper, storms by Sullivan and parades into the apartment.

MARIA  
Those fucking DePuis'. Always using  
their bucks and influence to sway  
peoples...No way. Not with this  
bitch.

Maria flings the paper at Sullivan.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Oooh. I hate them. Read the op-ed  
page.

Smoke billows out of the kitchen.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Something's burning.

SULLIVAN

Shit. My French toast.

Sullivan flips the paper back to Maria and races into the kitchen. Maria trails. On the table is a spread of eggs, bacon, pancakes, fried potatoes and fruit.

MARIA

Dios Mio (My God in Spanish). Your appetite certainly doesn't rest on Sunday.

Sullivan snares a pan off the stove and dumps several pieces of burnt French toast into a trash receptacle.

SULLIVAN

Okay.

MARIA

What?

SULLIVAN

The paper.

Maria shoves the paper into Sullivan's chest. Sullivan skips to the op-ed section and skims through an article titled: "ROYAL MANIPULATOR" By Claude DePuis.

MARIA

Can you believe him darling?

A sentence in the article's first paragraph states: "IT IS SAD A WOMAN WITH SUCH A CHECKERED PAST MUST USE AN ELDERLY ACCIDENT VICTIM TO FABRICATE A STORY." Sullivan chucks the paper on a counter top.

SULLIVAN

Police have a saying: The truth's the best alibi.

MARIA

Understood, but...

SULLIVAN

Ep...No more. Sunday mornings are strictly for breakfast.

Sullivan shuffles to a cabinet and yanks out a plate.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

So? Will it be eggs? Home fries?  
Bacon? You probably want fruit.  
Right?

Sullivan spoons fruit onto a plate, presents the dish to Maria and skips into another room.

MARIA

Don't tell me you're getting more food darling?

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

Nope. I'm fetching our beverages.

Sullivan returns with a bottle of Vodka.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Bloody Mary?

MARIA

I prefer Bloody Marias.

Maria sidles to the fridge, flings the door open and studies its contents.

MARIA (CONT'D)

You must have it.

Maria continues to search.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Got it.

Maria extracts a bottle of Worcestershire sauce. Sullivan removes a large can of tomato juice from a closet, pops the top, empties its contents into two cups and splashes some Vodka into both glasses.

SULLIVAN

Salud.

Sullivan raises his glass. Maria drowns her beverage in Worcestershire sauce and holds up her glass. Sullivan and Maria clink glasses.

MARIA

Want a taste?

SULLIVAN

Not yet.

INT. LIBRARY-NIGHT

At a table inside a study room, Maria is engrossed a novel. An iPad positioned on a desk chimes. Maria snares the device and glances at the screen. An email titled: "URGENT COMMUNICATION" flashes.

MARIA

WTF?

Maria clicks the email. The sender's email address is mysteryally1@gmail.com. Inside the message box are the words: "AN ACCOMPLICE, THEN...AND NOW" over a photo of Rollins.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Okay?

Maria clicks reply and types: "WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN THEN...AND NOW?" The sender retorts: "I'M WHO MY ADDRESS IMPLIES AND, AS FOR THE SECOND QUESTION, YOU'LL SOON LEARN. UNTIL WE SPEAK AGAIN." Maria grabs her phone.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Just got a bizarre email. Got time to talk. Good. Where're you? Should've known.

INT. ICE CREAM PARLOR-NIGHT

A YOUNG GIRL hands Sullivan two cones filled with chocolate ice cream. Sullivan presents a cone to Maria.

SULLIVAN

Seems like something positive for us.

Sullivan shuffles to a counter, retrieves a handful of napkins and places a bunch in Maria's palm. Maria wipes her face.

MARIA

DePuis' are quite shifty darling. It could be a ploy.

SULLIVAN

I don't think so. They need Rollins...At least for the time being.

Sullivan sidles back to the counter, pours a load of sprinkles into a cup, returns to the table and dunks his ice cream in the sprinkles.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

His or her tenor suggested they'll be further contact. Why don't we wait until then?

MARIA  
 Okay. And save some of those  
 sprinkles for me.

EXT. MARIA'S DRIVEWAY-DAY

Maria moseys toward her car. A vehicle zooms onto the street,  
 pulls up and skids to a stop. Ted bolts out of the car and  
 accosts Maria.

MARIA  
 Playing good little message boy  
 again?

TED  
 I'm begging you to listen.

Maria unlocks and flings open her car's driver's-side door.  
 Ted snatches Maria's wrist and hauls her away from the  
 vehicle.

TED (CONT'D)  
 There's more to this...Please? If  
 not for yourself than that woman  
 and her slick-haired nephew.

Maria breaks Ted's clutches and huffs into her car.

MARIA  
 Is that...

TED  
 Take it any way you want. Just  
 please take it.

Ted blitzes into his vehicle, speeds into reverse and races  
 off.

INT. POST OFFICE-NIGHT

Sullivan waits in line and slides a card out of his pocket. A  
 FEMALE POSTAL WORKER'S station opens up.

POSTAL WORKER  
 Next in line please.

Sullivan sidles to a counter and places the card down.

POSTAL WORKER (CONT'D)  
 Evening Sarge. Off the  
 Mediterranean diet yet?

SULLIVAN

Yep. I sent it back to Greece about a month ago.

POSTAL WORKER

Which of our services do you require this fine evening?

Sullivan lifts up and glimpses at the card.

SULLIVAN

The dreaded certified mail. Looks like a package?

The Postal Worker snares the card, plods toward a shelf, ducks down, reappears holding a Manila envelope, returns to the counter and presents the envelope to Sullivan. Sullivan places the envelope under his shoulder and signs a form.

POSTAL WORKER

Thanks Sarge. Be good.

SULLIVAN

Likewise.

Sullivan reclaims the envelope. The sender is listed as: "MYSTERY ALLY" with no return address. Sullivan retires to a corner and slides to the floor.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

And this game has just gotten a bit more interesting fans.

Sullivan tears the envelope open. Inside are several photocopied newspaper articles. The article topping the is titled: "BILLIONAIRE'S SON CONNECTED TO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF QUINTAL" followed by the words: "SPEAK TO THE COUNTESS."

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

What's that hot, little empenada been keeping from me?

Sullivan springs to his feet, accesses his phone and makes a call.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Your other half around? Good. Have several cold beers ready.

INT. MARIA'S HOME-NIGHT

Maria and Sullivan settle into seats at a kitchen table.



MARIA

But what could they want with you?

Sullivan removes the envelope from his pocket, places it on the table and slides it to Maria.

SULLIVAN

Probably to act as a conduit.

MARIA

I don't...

SULLIVAN

Read what's inside.

Maria removes and scans the newspaper articles.

MARIA

No. Not again. Please.

SULLIVAN

Tell me who Sylvain Quintal is?

Maria slams the articles down and shoves Sullivan.

MARIA

Don't ever mention that name.

SULLIVAN

Why? Who? What's...

Maria bolts into another room. Sullivan tails Maria.

MARIA

The guy who ensured my seat in the country club dining room was away from everyone else's. Okay?

SULLIVAN

Would you care to...

MARIA

The only thing I want explained darling, is how any of that relates to now?

SULLIVAN

I'm sure our secret friend knows the answer.

A phone atop a counter vibrates. Maria snares the phone. The screen displays a text from Kelvin, which relays: "MEETING IN MY OFFICE, 10 A.M. TOMORROW." Maria tosses the phone to Sullivan.

MARIA

You're turn to read.

Sullivan scans.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Please come with. Can't take any further unsettling news alone.

SULLIVAN

Be glad to.

INT. OFFICE-DAY

Maria, Sullivan, Eloise and Kelvin mill around a desk.

MARIA

Gonna gather wagering huge money on the fact this has something to do with the investigation wouldn't yield a big profit?

KELVIN

Brought you all here to brainstorm because...

Kelvin shuffles to the desk, lifts a land line phone off a charger, dials a number and clicks the speaker button.

KELVIN (CONT'D)

Everyone listen to the esteemed Captain of the NHPD.

COMPUTER-GENERATED VOICE

Received yesterday at six seventeen p.m.

ROLLINS (V.O.)

I've grown tired of your rebel rousing. This department will conduct this investigation as we see fit. Good evening.

KELVIN

That's a euphemism for never. I'm right. Aren't I Sargent?

On the recording, Rollins thwacks the receiver down.

SULLIVAN

Yes and my advice...Though you didn't hear it from me, conduct a private investigation.

KELVIN

How?

SULLIVAN

By hiring the II team.

KELVIN

The what team?

Sullivan shuffles to a marker board and writes the words Independent Investigation "II" Team.

SULLIVAN

A collection of former cops. All have loads of experience and their testimony's valued by any court. Expensive though?

MARIA

It's a good thing I'm rich.

KELVIN

And an even better thing I am too. We'll both cover the costs.

Sullivan motions to the desk, grabs pen and paper, scribbles down the name: Jeffrey Wellickson, backtracks toward Maria and presents her the paper.

SULLIVAN

He's the contact person.

MARIA

I'm on it now. Thanks Sargent.

INT. BAR-NIGHT

Maria occupies a stool, sips a glass of water and glances at her phone. The time is a quarter to seven. A LARGESSE, BALDING MAN holding a stuffed Manila envelope captures the stool next to Maria.

MARIA

Mr. Wellickson?

A FEMALE BARTENDER serves Wellickson a draft beer. WELICKSON, 67, downs the beer in one gulp.

WELICKSON

Would you care for...

MARIA

Water's fine. Tell me Mr. Wellickson, are your efforts worthwhile or the dog and pony movies you Americans are always talking about?

Wellickson slides several documents out of the folder and scans them.

WELICKSON

Your buddy Sully snuck us the police reports. A preliminary theory looks upon you favorably.

The Bartender serves Wellickson a refill.

MARIA

Yes, but will those assertions convince the right people darling?

WELICKSON

I've been an investigator for a quarter-century and all I can guarantee's that they won't hurt you.

MARIA

That's all I can ask for. When do you think your work will be completed?

WELICKSON

Given the nature of the accident, I'd say about four weeks, maybe less.

EXT. SEASIDE RESTURANT-DAY

At a table, Phillipe and Claude enjoy breakfast. A MALE SERVER carrying a land line phone approaches Phillipe and Claude's table.

SERVER

Mr. DePuis? Phone call from your office.

CLAUDE

Told you I didn't want to...

SERVER

Your Secretary said it's urgent and for both of you.

Claude sticks out his arm. The Server places the phone in Claude's hand. Claude positions the phone on the table and activates speaker.

PHILLIPE

Who is it?

INT. KELVIN'S OFFICE--SAME TIME

Kelvin, Maria and Eloise hover over Kelvin's desk.

KELVIN

The people who refuse to go away  
there junior.

INTERCUT--PHONE CONVERSATION

KELVIN (CONT'D)

Both listening?

CLAUDE

Yes.

KELVIN

I'm afraid to inform you someone  
other than your glorified security  
force better known as the NHPD will  
now be investigating sonny's little  
mishap.

Phillipe springs up.

PHILLIPE

What does...

Claude snares Phillipe's wrist and shoves him aside.

CLAUDE

Tais-toi (shut up in French).

Phillipe clicks the speaker mechanism off and plods toward the water.

KELVIN

An independent, can't be bought,  
professional team of investigators  
will conclude who was to blame.  
Bonne Journee (good day in French).

A dial tone follows. Phillipe rushes toward Claude. Claude strikes Phillipe's face and tosses the land line to Phillipe.

CLAUDE  
Bring this back inside.

Phillipe collects the phone and races indoors. Claude brandishes his cell and strikes the keypad.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
Got some work for you. It's...

SEVERAL PEDESTRIANS march by. Claude places a hand over his mouth and settles onto a bench near the water.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
You'll have to figure it out...By no later than tomorrow night.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET-DAY

TWO MUSCULAR MEN lean against a van labeled: "NEW YORK GAS AND ELECTRIC." The larger of the two men wears an identification tag with the name: ORRIN etched into it. The other man bears an ID tag inscribed with the name: LARRY.

LARRY  
Being visible for so long could arouse suspicions. We should try and lure him outside ASAP.

ORRIN, 27, flings open the van's front, passenger's-side door, removes two hard hats and flips one to LARRY, 26.

ORRIN  
The big man doesn't want any possible hints of deliberateness.

LARRY  
Then?

ORRIN  
I play groundhog and find a nice manhole to settle under. You play Hawk and keep your eyes peeled to that building. When he emerges, I do it and we go home.

Orrin and Larry disperse.

EXT. ROOFTOP-DAY

In the prone position, Larry observes a building's entrance through a pair of binoculars. Kelvin bursts through the door and veers leftward. Larry snares a walkie-talkie.

LARRY

K. Finally. Hope you're set.

ORRIN (O.C.)

I'm on it. Grab the scopes. Ten seconds.

Larry reclaims the binoculars and hones in on the street. Kelvin prances away from the building. A manhole cover blows up. Kelvin is propelled into the air and crashes to the concrete. Static screeches through Larry's walkie-talkie.

ORRIN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Direct hit. Get to the van and let's jet.

Larry darts toward a fire escape, leaps onto the street and disappears into A CROWD OF PEOPLE. SEVERAL BYSTANDERS tend to a bloodied Kelvin. A MAN feels Kelvin's neck and shakes his head.

EXT. STREET SURROUNDING A CHURCH-DAY

Maria and Sullivan watch as A PRIEST leads a casket carried by PALLBEARERS followed by A PROCESSION OF MOURNERS outside. Heading the line are A YOUNG WOMAN and TWO SMALL CHILDREN. Eloise veers out of the procession. Maria embraces Eloise.

MARIA

Lo siento (I'm sorry in Spanish) darling.

The Pallbearers load the casket into a hearse. The Young Woman heading the procession collapses.

YOUNG WOMAN HEADING PROCESSION

No. No. This can't be. Please.

Maria and Eloise amble towards a limo. Sullivan minces behind Maria and Eloise.

MARIA

We won't let them...

Eloise grips Maria's hand.

ELOISE

No dear. You won't.

MARIA

Why? We...

ELOISE  
Losing your elderly husband's one  
thing.

Eloise gestures at the hearse.

ELOISE (CONT'D)  
Young man. Young family. I escaped  
once. I'm too old to test fate's  
patience again. Please understand.

MARIA  
I do darling.

A MALE CHAUFFEUR exits the limo and opens one of the  
vehicle's rear doors. Eloise wiggles inside.

ELOISE  
Good luck...And be careful.

The Chauffeur shuts the door. Sullivan joins Maria.

SULLIVAN  
It's a big setback, but you can't  
fault her.

A phone chimes. Maria reaches into her purse and snares a  
phone. A text from Zara reads: "SORRY ABOUT KELVIN. IF UP  
2IT, WILL BE ON 710 WOR TOMOR NITE TO DISCUSS THE LATEST ON  
ACCIDENT. HOPE TO SEE U THERE."

MARIA  
Would you hold me for a while?

Sullivan places his arms around Maria.

INT. RADIO STUDIO-NIGHT

Maria and Zara both wear earphones and share a small table.

ZARA  
There're some who believe Kelvin's  
death will impact your decision to  
continue on.

MARIA  
Oh it has darling.

ZARA  
And I can't wait to hear...After  
these words. Stay with us.



Zara flips a switch. An "OFF-AIR" sign flashes. Music croons in the background.

ZARA (CONT'D)

Well?

MARIA

No special dispensation for the host. Hurry back from commercial break.

Zara cuts the music and illuminates an "ON-AIR" sign.

ZARA

We return to Zinging with Zara. Countess, we await your admonition.

MARIA

It'll only take my death darling. I've decided to fund the II Team's investigation myself. And when it's over I'll be exonerated. The little DePuis will be incarcerated.

ZARA

I'm hearing the II team may conclude their investigation much sooner than expected.

MARIA

Why shouldn't they? It's clear who to blame.

A panel lights up.

ZARA

Countess Maria de Canadas. As determined and defiant as I've ever seen her. Got time for some calls?

MARIA

I got time for whoever'll listen darling.

EXT. STREET-NIGHT

Maria and Sullivan stroll hand in hand down a sidewalk. A car follows Maria and Sullivan at a slow pace. Maria and Sullivan stop and share a quick cheek peck. The car pulls to a curb and idles.

MARIA

Want a ride home?

SULLIVAN

Nah. I'll walk for a while. Gotta do something to counter that appetite you poke fun at.

MARIA

Much more pleasurable calorie burning exercises exist darling?

SULLIVAN

See you tomorrow Countess.

Maria yanks a set of keys out of her purse and meanders across the street. The idling car zooms down the road and blitzes toward Maria.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Countess?

Maria dives to the ground to avoid being struck. Sullivan brandishes a weapon, charges after the vehicle and shoots. The vehicle races out of sight. Sullivan darts back to Maria, drops to the pavement and cradles her.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Hurt?

MARIA

Don't think so.

SULLIVAN

You're getting checked out anyway. AN EMS substation's right off the road up there. Somebody call nine one one.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

Already did.

A burgeoning Crowd protects Maria. Sirens wail. An ambulance races on scene. TWO MALE PARAMEDICS disembark and wheel out a gurney. Sullivan pushes through the Crowd and greets the Paramedics.

SULLIVAN

The lady suffered a nasty fall.

Sullivan shoves rubberneckers out of the way and directs the Paramedics to Maria.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Check her neck and back.

MARIA  
I'm fine darlings.

The Paramedics slide Maria onto a gurney. Sullivan grips Maria's hand.

SULLIVAN  
I'll stay with you as long as  
you're there, but first.

Sullivan scoffs away.

INT. POLICE STATION-NIGHT

Sullivan confronts Rollins.

SULLIVAN  
It was a grey...

ROLLINS  
License plate number?

SULLIVAN  
Didn't have enough time to...

Rollins stomps away from Sullivan. Sullivan tracks Rollins down and snares his arm.

ROLLINS  
Let go.

Sullivan strengthens his grasp. THREE PLAIN CLOTHES OFFICERS wearing badges swarm around Sullivan and draw their weapons.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
Unless you want your blood's lead  
content to grow exponentially?

Sullivan relinquishes his grip and retreats.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)  
Stay away from this...And  
especially her.

SULLIVAN  
I can't...And won't.

ROLLINS  
Then consider yourself officially  
suspended and, quite possibly,  
terminated pending a review by  
internal affairs.

Sullivan brandishes his badge, chucks the insignia at Rollins and steams toward the exit.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM-NIGHT

Sullivan stampedes through a pair of sliding doors.

SULLIVAN  
Countess Maria de Canadas? Who's  
taking care of her?

A FEMALE NURSE confronts Sullivan.

NURSE  
She's in Examination Room Three.  
Follow me.

SULLIVAN  
She okay?

A MALE DOCTOR emerges from Examination Room Three and shuts the space's curtains.

DOCTOR  
Sir?

Sullivan attempts to brush by the Doctor.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
Sir?

The Doctor separates the curtains.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
She had the wind knocked out of  
her. She'll be kept overnight for  
observation, but should be released  
early in the morning...Go on in  
Romeo.

Sullivan minces toward Maria. Maria props herself up. The Doctor closes the curtains. Sullivan grabs a chair and settles down beside Maria's bed.

SULLIVAN  
I'm looking for work.

MARIA  
I'm sorry. This...

SULLIVAN  
I'm glad. Our job's the most  
important.

MARIA

Come here.

Sullivan inches up and hovers over Maria.

MARIA (CONT'D)

A little further.

Sullivan leans down. Maria pulls Sullivan's neck toward her face.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Creo que te amo. (I think I love you in Spanish). Comprende? (Understand in Spanish).

Sullivan caresses Maria's hand.

SULLIVAN

I mo thuairimse, is breá liom tu ro.

MARIA

Que? (What in Spanish).

SULLIVAN

The same thing you said, only in Gaelic.

INT. SULLIVAN'S APARTMENT-DAY

Maria leaps off a couch.

MARIA

I don't want to wait for the II Team.

Sullivan shuffles out of the kitchen holding two beer bottles and presents one to Maria.

SULLIVAN

You might not have to, assuming...

MARIA

Please expound darling.

Maria and Sullivan clink bottles and chug.

SULLIVAN

You initiate the game of email tag with our silent partner. Use my computer.

Maria chugs from the bottle and marches toward a desk housing a laptop computer.

MARIA  
What should I say?

SULLIVAN  
Grannie Sullivan always told me be simple and direct.

Maria logs onto her gmail account, clicks compose and enters mysteryally1@gmail.com on the send to line and types: "HAVEN'T HEARD FROM YOU IN A WHILE. ANYMORE INTERESTING PICS OR NEWS? MARIA."

MARIA  
Let's hope Abuela (grandmother in Spanish) Sullivan's right.

Maria skips back into the kitchen and retrieves another beer. A loud chime rings out.

SULLIVAN  
Gotta love that Irish wisdom.

Maria bolts back into the living room. Maria and Sullivan surround the computer. Sullivan drags a digital arrow over an email highlighted in black from the sender: MYSTERYALLY1 and the message titled: RE: HI.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
I'll let you do the clicking.

Maria opens the communique. The message contains photos of Claude and Phillipe over the words: "EXPERT COVERUP ARTISTS." Maria types: "I'D REALLY LOVE TO MEET" and hits send.

MARIA  
Now we'll never hear from her again.

SULLIVAN  
How could someone so beautiful lack that much confidence?

Mystery Ally responds. Maria clicks the email. The message reads: "NOT YET. BUT THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE WHO COULD EXPLAIN EVERYTHING." Maria types back: "WHO?" and enters send. Mystery Ally returns the message.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
What unsuspecting soul's about to be thrust into this contest?

Maria clicks the message. It reads: "SOMEONE WHO USE TO BE VERY CLOSE TO YOU."

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
That's a big fucking help.

MARIA  
I know who she means.

Maria types: "TED?" Mystery Ally answers with a yellow thumbs up emoticon.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
So shithead's the link?

SULLIVAN  
Then we're wasting time.

MARIA  
How're we...

SULLIVAN  
Got that covered. What's his cell?

Sullivan slides open a drawer, extracts a notebook and paper and hands the implements to Maria. Maria scribbles something down, rips out a sheet and creates a paper airplane.

MARIA  
Catch darling.

Maria sails the paper airplane to Sullivan. Sullivan catches and unfolds the paper. The words: "SHITHEAD'S CELL," followed by the number (212)-386-4492." Sullivan snares a land line, dials, places the phone on a table and clicks speaker.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Be extra Grannie Sullivan.

The phone rings several times. Midway through the fourth ring...

TED (O.C.)  
Yes.

SULLIVAN  
This's Sargent Sullivan of the NHPD. I'm here with your wife. She needs to speak with you immediately.

TED (O.C.)  
About?

SULLIVAN  
Something to do with the accident.

A pause ensues.

TED (O.C.)  
Why isn't she telling me this?

SULLIVAN  
Q and A session's up.

TED (O.C.)  
Okay.

SULLIVAN  
Parking lot of Northhampton  
Library. Half-hour. Come alone and  
no brown-nosing to your boss.

Sullivan hits end.

MARIA  
But you didn't wait for his answer.

SULLIVAN  
Because I already know it.

Sullivan darts toward a hall closet, flings the door open and  
snags a box off a shelf.

MARIA  
I pray there's more to this  
strategem darling?

Sullivan pulls a pistol out of the box and holds it up.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Now I pray there's less.

Sullivan opens the gun's chambers and empties the bullets.

SULLIVAN  
Won't be loaded. It's for  
assurance.

MARIA  
O...kay.

SULLIVAN  
Good. Now let's move.



EXT. PARKING LOT-DAY

Sullivan leans against the side of Maria's car. Ted slips out of a vehicle.

SULLIVAN

Over here.

Ted rushes toward Sullivan.

TED

Where...

SULLIVAN

The car. Get in.

Sullivan flings open the front, passenger-side door of Maria's vehicle, forces Ted into the front, passenger's seat, hurries back to the driver's side door, opens it and plops into the driver's seat.

TED

Where is she?

Maria pops up off the back seat.

TED (CONT'D)

So spill.

Maria brandishes Sullivan's pistol and points the weapon at Ted.

MARIA

I boomerang that thought darling.

Ted attempts to unlock the door. Sullivan flips the ignition and skids off.

SULLIVAN

Even at twenty miles an hour,  
extractions can be fatal.

Ted removes his hand from the lock.

TED

All right. All right.

INT. TOOL SHED-DAY

Maria and Sullivan toss Ted into a small space containing an empty workbench and walls covered with a variety of tools. Maria points the gun at Ted and gestures at the table.

MARIA  
Lie down darling.

Ted breaks for the door. Sullivan drives Ted back, snares the pistol from Maria and aims the weapon at Ted.

SULLIVAN  
There're three bullets remaining.  
Where should I lose them?

Ted leaps onto the table and assumes the supine position.

TED  
What's she gonna do?

Sullivan holds Ted down. Maria snares a drill and cranks it full blast.

MARIA  
Give your skin a few deep  
blemishes.

Sullivan pulls up one of Ted's pant legs knee high. Maria inches the spinning drill bit toward Ted's skin.

TED  
All right. Just stop.

Maria edges her thumb away from the drill's power button. The bit stops whirling. Maria places the drill down.

MARIA  
Sylvain Quintal, the recent  
accident and me. How're they  
connected darling?

Ted jerks forward. Sullivan drags Ted back into the supine position.

TED  
I don't...

Maria snatches the drill and re-positions her thumb over the power button.

TED (CONT'D)  
Fine. The question's what chapter  
to begin with.

Maria socks Ted's stomach.

MARIA  
I don't care.

TED

Then we might as well start on page  
one. June 10, 2014...

MARIA

The day of...

TED

That's right...

FLASHBACK MONTAGE

INT. COUNTRY CLUB LOBBY-DAY

A YOUNG, BROWN-HAIRED MAN empties a vile of cocaine onto a table, folds a sheet of paper, divides the drug into two lines, brandishes a straw, snorts a line and presents the straw to Phillipe. Phillipe snorts. Footsteps clump.

PHILLIPE

Shit.

Phillipe brushes cocaine residue off the table. Claude stomps toward Phillipe. Ted trails.

TED (V.O.)

The brat and Quintal were having  
another one of their binges. Claude  
was informed and well...

Claude grabs Phillipe's shirt collar and drags him out of his seat.

CLAUDE

Fucking disgrace. I'd trade you for  
any other child in the world. Now  
get out.

Claude plows Phillipe to the ground.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Now.

Phillipe and SYLVAIN QUINTAL, 24, bolt towards the exit and stagger out.

TED (V.O.)

Once that bomb was diffused, you  
might remember...

## INT. COUNTRY CLUB-BAR-DAY

Maria buries a cocktail's last drops and stumbles off a stool. Ted attempts to corral Maria's arm. Maria pushes Ted aside.

TED

Isn't that enough?

MARIA

Not when married to you.

Maria brandishes a set of keys. Ted tries to commandeer the keys. Maria foils Ted's attempted snare.

TED (V.O.)

You may recall that like Claude, I took the fuck it approach and let you leave. There's no way you could've forgotten the next sequence of events.

MARIA (V.O.)

No.

## INT. MOVING VEHICLE-DAY

Maria zig zags down a road. A car veers off the shoulder. Maria slams on the brakes, but rams into the car's rear. Maria and Phillipe barrel out of their vehicles at the same time.

MARIA

Ustedes platanos? (Are you bananas in Spanish).

PHILLIPE

If you're okay. Let's forget about it.

Phillipe rushes back into his car's driver's seat and races off.

TED (V.O.)

About an hour later...

## EXT. OCEANSIDE MANSION-DAY

Ted and Claude enjoy drinks atop a patio.

TED (V.O.)

We we're relaxing when...

Phillipe's banged up car traverses a long driveway. Phillipe stomps out of the vehicle and stampedes toward the patio. Claude and Ted rush toward the driveway.

CLAUDE

Look what you did to this car.

PHILLIPE

Sorry Daddy. But he damage to your empire might be a little more severe if you don't do something.

Phillipe bolts back to the car and flings open the front, passenger's-side door. Claude and Ted trail Phillipe. Quintal foams at the mouth and experiences violent muscle tremors.

CLAUDE

When'd this start?

PHILLIPE

Right after you banished us.

Quintal's tremors cease. Phillipe examines Quintal.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Shit...He's dead.

TED (V.O.)

Then Claude displayed those unwavering CEO qualities.

Phillipe surrenders to the ground and vomits. Claude grabs Phillipe by the scruff of his neck.

CLAUDE

Get the car in the garage. Do it.

Phillipe blitzes into the driver's seat, flips the ignition inches the car into the garage, hops out of the vehicle and wobbles back onto the driveway. Claude brandishes a remote and shuts the garage door.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Police? Anyone else know?

PHILLIPE

Only the driver of the other car knows about the accident of course, but nothing about Sylvain.

CLAUDE

Who was the other driver?

Claude's phone chimes. Claude answers the call and minces toward the patio.

TED (V.O.)  
That's when Phillipe took me aside.

Phillipe whispers in Ted's ear.

TED  
Go inside and cool off. I'll speak with your father.

INT. MANSION'S LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Claude kills the last sips of a drink.

CLAUDE  
We'll have to bury the body.

TED (V.O.)  
I tried to talk him out of that notion, but...

Ted confronts Claude. Claude shoves Ted back.

CLAUDE  
There's no other choice.

EXT. WOODED AREA-NIGHT

Claude, Phillipe and Ted hover over a dug out pit.

TED (V.O.)  
Before I knew it, we...

CLAUDE  
Help me with the corpse.

Phillipe, Ted and Claude wrap Quintal's corpse in white sheets, dump it into the pit, grab shovels off the ground and cover it with dirt.

TED (V.O.)  
And to think we haven't reached the worst parts yet. Several days later...

INT. OFFICE-DAY

Ted and Claude review several documents strewn across a desk. A PALE, EMACIATED WOMAN sneaks in.

TED (V.O.)  
Her name was Helene. Asking the  
obvious questions.

Claude escorts HELENE, 43, into a private room.

TED (V.O.)  
I know it's hard to imagine, but  
she was a bigger scum bag than all  
of us combined.

Claude and Helene emerge from the private room.

TED (V.O.)  
I'd like to think it was Claude's  
negotiation skills, but know it was  
more of Helene looking for a way to  
feed a worse drug habit than her  
unfortunate offspring had.

HELENE  
I won't hold Phillipe accountable  
or go public, so long as he never  
gets into any serious trouble  
again.

MARIA (V.O.)  
And this shitty tale relates to me  
in what way darling?

TED (V.O.)  
Eventually, Quintal's disappearance  
hit the media who were pressing the  
police for answers. Claude knew he  
needed to act fast.

INT. POLICE STATION-DAY

Claude hands Rollins a check.

TED (V.O.)  
The emotional, alcoholic Countess  
couldn't have provided the profile  
for a better fall person.

RETURN TO PRESENT TIME

Maria throws her hands around Ted's neck and chokes him.  
Sullivan drags Maria back and restrains her.

TED  
Claude and I agreed you'd never be  
prosecuted.

Maria snares the drill, cranks it full blast and storms at Ted.

MARIA

So what? Want your Husband of the Year nomination now? Bastard. How could...For two years. To make me...And everyone else think I killed a man.

TED

You wanted to know. I wasn't begging you to leave this alone for me. So, when you get killed, at least now you'll know why.

Sullivan snares the drill from Maria's hand and renders Ted unconscious with a blow to his head. Maria surrenders to the ground.

MARIA

How could he...

SULLIVAN

Who cares. Listen...

Sullivan drops to the floor and shakes Maria.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

You've got everything you need to take them down.

MARIA

What're you...

Sullivan shakes Maria again.

SULLIVAN

Think. Rehash the events and you should figure out the identity of our mystery ally.

Maria rockets up.

MARIA

Shit darling. It's Helene.

SULLIVAN

Right. So let's draft our next email.

MARIA

There's something else I'd like to do first.



## INT. SULLIVAN'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

Sullivan bursts through the front door holding Maria in his arms. Maria and Sullivan smooch. Sullivan tightens his grip on Maria and carries her into his bedroom.

SULLIVAN  
I know I love you.

MARIA  
Prove it already.

Sullivan sets Maria down on the bed. Maria and Sullivan rip each other's clothing off and engage in intercourse. Maria and Sullivan lie face to face. A doorbell rings, followed by several forceful knocks. Sullivan vaults out of bed.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Damn. I hate tryst interrupters.

SULLIVAN  
In the event their visit's for more sinister purposes...

Sullivan darts toward a closet, yanks out and cocks a pistol. Maria hops out from under the covers, skips into panties, a bra and one of Sullivan's shirts and trails Sullivan into the living room.

MARIA  
Please watch out. I don't want that to be our only time.

Sullivan draws his weapon and tiptoes toward the door.

SULLIVAN  
Who's there?

There is no response. Maria leans over Sullivan's shoulder. Sullivan nudges Maria backwards.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Who is it?

There is no response. Sullivan unfastens the door's top and bottom locks in an unhurried manner. Maria sneaks toward the door.

MARIA  
Get back.

Maria retreats. Sullivan flings the door open and aims his weapon. Helene waits in the doorway.

MARIA (CONT'D)

We were just about to email you.

Sullivan drags Helene inside and slams the door. Maria tromps into the kitchen. Sullivan pursues Maria.

MARIA (CONT'D)

If she could feel so little for her son, think of the ways she could betray us.

Helene minces toward the kitchen and lingers on the border between the kitchen and living room.

HELENE

I understand your argument, but...  
I'm clean now...I wasn't then.  
Okay?

Maria brushes by Helene and stomps into the living room.

MARIA

Up to you Sarge.

SULLIVAN

Excuse us.

Sullivan and Maria retire to the bedroom for a moment and return.

MARIA

Fine. You don't have to respect your ally, just work to defeat an enemy you respect less.

Maria trudges toward Helene and extends a hand. Helene takes Maria's hand.

SULLIVAN

Great. Now that the pact's been signed, can we start formulating some battle plans?

MARIA

I already have. Shall we sit down?

A land line phone rings. Sullivan retires into the kitchen, retrieves the call, returns to the living room and holds the phone out.

SULLIVAN

Tell her yourself.

MARIA  
Who's telling me what darling?

SULLIVAN  
Wellickson.

Maria snares the phone.

MARIA  
Well?

WELICKSON (O.C.)  
Be at our headquarters. Tomorrow at  
ten a.m.

A dial tone follows.

SULLIVAN  
And?

MARIA  
Not before a good night's sleep and  
a nutritious breakfast. In the  
meantime, here's how we become free  
of DePuis.

Maria marches to a table and settles into a seat. Sullivan  
and Helene remain upright.

SULLIVAN  
Shouldn't we hold off until...

MARIA  
No. Because I know I'm not guilty  
darling. Now ensuring Phillipe's  
downfall's most important. I'm  
gonna do that by forcing Claude  
into making a deal.

Sullivan slides his chair back, scurries to the fridge,  
retrieves three bottled beers, slides back into his seat and  
slews back to the table.

SULLIVAN  
Countess? Have your diamonds  
acquired a few flaws over the last  
few hours? The DePuis don't accept  
deals, they say take it or else.  
And you've seen what the or else...

MARIA  
This time, I'm pretty sure he will.

Maria pops the bottle's cap with her tooth and hurls the cap into a sink.

HELENE

I'm with her.

SULLIVAN

And why's that?

HELENE

I've learned not to argue with women who can open beer bottles with their mouths...The hard way.

Maria gulps her beer.

MARIA

The key word's sell darling. Either he sells Phillipe out, or he shares a homonym with him.

Sullivan kills the contents of his beer and thwacks the bottle down.

SULLIVAN

K. How do we do it?

MARIA

Your job's to make sure the police are covered.

Maria reaches into her purse, extracts a folder and hands it to Helene.

MARIA (CONT'D)

And yours's to get this to New York One and tell Zara O'Reilly everything.

HELENE

What's in here?

MARIA

More bad news for the DePuis.'

Sullivan races out of the room, returns with a gun and slaps the weapon into Maria's hand.

SULLIVAN

Cops, not high society women gamble with...Shit, I'm just not comfortable. Take this.

MARIA

Comfort's not your concern darling.  
Only acceptance. And no.

Maria returns the gun to Sullivan.

SULLIVAN

Suit yourself. When're we doing  
this?

MARIA

Tomorrow morning. Soon as we're  
done with Wellickson. Now let's all  
go to bed. Manana (tomorrow in  
Spanish) ain't gonna be a siesta  
(nap in Spanish) darlings.

INT. II TEAM HEADQUARTERS-DAY

Wellickson strides toward Maria and Sullivan. Across the room  
are chalkboard diagrams of accident scenarios.

SULLIVAN

What's the verdict?

A YOUNG MAN lumbers in toting a large box and presents it to  
Wellickson.

YOUNG MAN

Where do you want these Chief?

WELICKSON

Any table's good.

The Young Man drops the box onto a table, brandishes a box  
cutter and slices open the box's top. Wellickson shuffles to  
the table housing the box and removes a stack of thick  
documents.

MARIA

It was that comprehensive darling?

WELICKSON

Indeed.

Wellickson hands two reports titled: "NORTHAMPTON HIGHWAY  
INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS TEAM FINAL SUMMARY" to Maria and  
Sullivan. Maria flips through the first several pages.

WELICKSON (CONT'D)

Let me save you some time Countess.  
It's mostly good news. You've  
been...

Maria tosses the report on a chair.

MARIA  
Found zero percent liable.

SULLIVAN  
Why's that not entirely good news?

WELICKSON  
We couldn't fully conclude who was driving the SUV.

Maria lifts up the report and slams it down.

WELICKSON (CONT'D)  
That said...That vehicle bears one hundred percent responsibility and with the evidence put forth, it should be more than enough to prosecute DePuis.

A YOUNG WOMAN enters.

YOUNG WOMAN  
Chief?

WELICKSON  
Excuse me for moment.

Wellickson scampers off. Maria brandishes a pack of cigarettes from her purse, ignites one using a lighter and steams around the table housing the reports. Sullivan chases Maria around the table and finally corrals her.

SULLIVAN  
It's enough.

MARIA  
Yeah...Time to turn plans into actions. Right? Let's go.

INT. PHONE BOOTH-DAY

Maria sneaks inside, lifts the receiver, deposits several coins into a money slot and pounds the keypad.

INT. MANSION'S LIVING ROOM-SAME TIME

Claude pours himself a drink and offers Rollins one.

ROLLINS

I don't think it's a good time to  
be imbibing.

Claude buries his drink. A land line phone chimes. Claude yanks a phone off a charger and examines the screen. The caller identification reads "NEW YORK."

CLAUDE

Probably a business call.

Claude presses talk.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Yep.

INTERCUT--PHONE CONVERSATION

MARIA

DePuis?

CLAUDE

With whom...

MARIA

Don't play around darling.

Claude clicks speaker and positions the phone on a table.

CLAUDE

Countess.

Rollins and Claude hover over the phone.

MARIA

I'm gonna give you the chance to  
remain amongst the non-  
incarcerated.

ROLLINS

On what basis do you make such an  
out...

MARIA

Oh Rollins...Shut up and listen  
darling. This's for your ears also,  
but not that other DePuis man.  
Ergo, the only way out of this's to  
sell him out, like you all did me.

Phillipe lurches in a doorway with a land line phone to his ear.

MARIA (CONT'D)

I know everything you didn't want me to find out, as well as developing news you won't want to hear.

CLAUDE

Okay. The terms are?

MARIA

No darling. We meet face to face and all alone. I've got the media and police covered so any untoward crap...Deal's off and so are you...Likely to Sing Sing.

CLAUDE

Fine. One o'clock at the Northhampton Luxury Condo Site.

Claude hears a dial tone. Phillipe scurries off.

INT. GARAGE-DAY

Claude unlocks a vehicle. Phillipe draws a gun, sneaks up on Claude and flails his weapon at him.

PHILLIPE

I'm permanently derailing the Albany Express Daddy.

Phillipe aims the gun at the ground and fires.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

You forget how good I am at sneaking around.

CLAUDE

Settle down.

Claude places his hands in the air and plods toward Phillipe.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

I'll handle her.

PHILLIPE

How?

Claude inches nearer to Phillipe.

CLAUDE

Just relax.



Claude attempts to but fails to dislodge the weapon from Phillippe's hand.

PHILLIPE

Of course.

Phillipe hurtles Claude into a car door, points the gun at Claude and fires. The bullet rips through Claude's chest, killing him instantly. Phillippe drops to the ground and tears through Claude's pockets.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Where ya hiding them Daddy?

Claude continues to rip through Claude's pockets.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Come on.

Phillipe spots a set of keys on the ground adjacent to Claude's corpse.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Oui.

Phillipe grabs the keys, barrels into the driver's seat, flips the ignition, throws the car in reverse and skids onto the driveway.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Au revoir Daddy...And soon you too  
Countess.

Phillipe clicks a garage door operating device attached to the rear view mirror. The garage door shuts. Phillippe races off.

EXT./INT. NORTHHAMPTON CONDOMINIUM PROPERTY-DAY

Maria exits a vehicle and pussyfoots across the ground.

MARIA

DePuis? DePuis?

Phillipe slithers out of a building's side door, snatches Maria and chokes her to unconsciousness.

PHILLIPE

Quiet. A new wrinkle for you, but a  
welcome one nonetheless...Darling.

Phillipe drags Maria into an unfinished condo unit and ropes her extremities to a wooden chair. Maria comes to.

Before Maria can scream, Phillipe snares a roll of duct tape off the floor, detaches a piece and affixes it to Maria's mouth.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

If you're wondering about Daddy,  
you and bunch of others will soon  
be able to give him my regards.

EXT./INT. CLAUDE'S MANSION-DAY

Rollins exits a police cruiser and makes a call using his cell. The phone rings four times...

CLAUDE (V.O.)

If you need to be told what to do,  
you'll never work for me.

A beep follows.

ROLLINS

Tried your cell three times. By now  
you must know about the II Team's  
findings? I'm outside and coming  
in.

Rollins tucks his phone away and draws his weapon. Blood seeps through the garage door and trickles down the driveway. Rollins bolts toward the door and fails to open it by hand.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

Shit.

Rollins slides a nightstick off his belt, charges to a side door, breaks a window, reaches his hand inside, unlocks the door, rotates a knob and barges inside.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

DePuis?

Rollins edges down a hallway and reaches a door.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

DePuis?

Rollins places his hand on a knob, rotates it at a deliberate pace, pushes the door ajar, minces into the garage and sees Claude's corpse.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

Damn it.

Rollins blitzes toward Claude's corpse, falls to his knees and feels Claude's neck.

ROLLINS (CONT'D)

Fuck.

Rollins yanks out his phone, scrolls down a contacts list, stops at Sullivan and presses the entry.

INT. POLICE STATION--SAME TIME

Sullivan and a MALE OFFICER with Lieutenant Epauettes pinned to his uniform's collars share a table.

SULLIVAN

Those who're quick to dismiss may  
have an ass to save.

A phone atop the table vibrates, Sullivan snares the phone and examines the screen. The caller identification reads: ROLLINS.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Guess the old wives tale's true?

Sullivan hits talk.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

There's a plethora of reasons why  
you'd be calling.

Rollins skips back inside the mansion.

INTERCUT--PHONE CONVERSATION

ROLLINS

Well, I bet saving your  
girlfriend's life wasn't among  
those you'd suspect?

Sullivan retires to a private corner.

SULLIVAN

What?

Sullivan activates his phone's speaker mechanism and storms back to the LIEUTENANT'S, 55, desk.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Listen up.

Sullivan positions the phone on the Lieutenant's desk. Police Officers gather around the desk.

ROLLINS (O.C.)  
 All available units to the  
 Northhampton Luxury Condo Complex  
 site. I'm heading there now.

Sullivan and a number of Police Officers rush out of the station.

INT. CONDO PROPERTY-DAY

Phillipe removes a corner of the tape affixed to Maria's mouth and places a gun to her head.

PHILLIPE  
 Promise not to pierce my eardrums?

Maria nods. Phillipe removes the entire piece of tape from Maria's mouth. Maria vomits.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)  
 If you're wondering about Daddy,  
 you and bunch of others will soon  
 be able to give him my regards

Phillipe re-aims the gun at Maria's head.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)  
 You should be complimented. That  
 little maneuver was some nifty  
 driving. But alas, it only delayed  
 your untimely demise.

A vehicle pulls up to the building. Phillipe re-affixes the tape over Maria's mouth, sneaks toward the window and observes Rollins exiting a police cruiser.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)  
 The second member of the body count  
 has arrived. Incompetent lackey.  
 Let's get rid of him quickly.

Phillipe fires a bullet through a window, stomps toward the front door, pushes it ajar and crouches down inside a closet near the door. Rollins edges the door forward, draws his weapon and tiptoes inside. Maria struggles.

ROLLINS  
 My God.

Rollins breaks toward Maria. Maria continues to struggle. Phillipe sneaks out of the closet.

PHILLIPE

I'm surprised.

Rollins whirls around. Phillipe fires. The bullet rips through Rollins's skull. Phillipe hovers over Rollins.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

You could do something without my father's help.

Maria hyperventilates.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Oh settle down. It's not your turn yet. But in the interest of displaying a little humanity...

Phillipe tears the tape off Maria's mouth. Maria vomits again.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

I'll let you enjoy a few more breaths. But, if you scream...

Phillipe positions the gun at Maria's head.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

You'll become quite scatterbrained.

Sirens wail in the background.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Too many bodies, not enough body bags...Need your phone.

Phillipe reaches inside Maria's pants, yanks a phone out of her pocket, taps the contacts icon and scrolls down to Sullivan.

MARIA

None of my friends would be interested in you darling.

PHILLIPE

Cute. No...But your newest and closest friend might wish to know my plans for our date.

EXT. STREET SURROUNDING THE CONDO PROPERTY-DAY

A bevy of police vehicles representing the Northhampton Police Department surround the complex.

Sullivan and a number of Police Officers charge out of their vehicles. Sullivan's phone vibrates. The caller is identified as "COUNTESS."

SULLIVAN

Thank God.

Sullivan hits talk.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

You all right?

INT. CONDO PROPERTY--SAME TIME

Phillipe lumbers toward Rollins's corpse, rips the badge off the deceased's uniform and dips it in Rollins's blood.

PHILLIPE

She will be til I kill her...and  
then you Sargent.

INTERCUT--PHONE CONVERSATION

SULLIVAN

If you...

PHILLIPE

Save the blow hard cop talk.

SULLIVAN

Where're...

PHILLIPE

Right here.

Phillipe rushes toward a window and slides it open. Several Police Officers react and point their weapons.

SULLIVAN

Wait.

The Police Officers lower their weapons.

PHILLIPE

In fact, I'm so close I can toss  
you a souvenir.

Phillipe motions back towards Maria, hauls her chair toward the window and flings Rollins's badge onto a patch of earth.

POLICE OFFICER

Fuck's that?

A Police Officer darts toward the ground where the badge landed. Sullivan pulls the Police Officer back.

PHILLIPE

No. Let him retrieve it.

Sullivan relinquishes his grip on the Police Officer. The Police Officer collects the badge.

POLICE OFFICER

Shit.

The Police Officer positions the badge in Sullivan's palm. Phillipe observes the scene.

PHILLIPE

Now that I've got your attention. I suggest you face me...Right now.

Phillipe forces Maria's head out the window.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Anyone tries to...Well, I think you guys can figure it out. Here's what I want.

Phillipe grabs Maria's neck and pulls her head back inside.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Everyone's spoken to Zara, but me. One hour. If not, the next thing I chuck's her head.

Phillipe shuts the window. Sullivan hears a dial tone.

EXT. CONDO PROPERTY-DAY

POLICE OFFICER

Now what? There's no way we can sneak in without warning.

Sullivan notices a large, unfinished drainage system surrounding the complex.

SULLIVAN

Yes there is.

Sullivan gestures at the drainage tubing.

POLICE OFFICER

How you gonna sneak through there?

SULLIVAN

With extreme discomfort. Call New York One and get Zara O'Reilly down here immediately just in case. And, before I make like a mole, get the peanut butter jar out of my car.

POLICE OFFICER

A snack? Now? Even you can't be hungry at this...

SULLIVAN

Trust me.

The Police Officer races to a police vehicle, collects a jar of peanut butter, bolts back and tosses the jar to Sullivan. Sullivan ducks down and wiggles into the drainage tubing.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

When I come out, have the orange marmalade and two giant slices of bread ready.

Sullivan drops to his stomach and inches his way down the tubing.

INT. STUDIO-DAY

Zara studies a paper. Helene settles onto a chair across from Zara's desk.

ZARA

Why am I not hearing about this from the Countess?

HELENE

She's a bit predisposed.

A land line phone atop Zara's desk chimes. Zara lifts the receiver.

ZARA

Yep? Goodness. Yeah...Yeah. I...I'm on my way.

Zara slams the phone down.

HELENE

What happened?

ZARA

Countess will be disposed of if...



Zara rushes out of the office. Helene chases Zara into a hallway.

HELENE

I'm coming with you.

ZARA

No...

HELENE

Perhaps you don't want an exclusive with someone who can offer the tastiest dish on the DePuis clan?

ZARA

All right. Fine.

INT. DRAINAGE TUBING-DAY

Light shines from above ground. A dirty-faced Sullivan attempts to snake his way toward the end of the tubing, but gets stuck. Sullivan struggles, but is unable to move. Sullivan's watch flashes two thirty-seven.

SULLIVAN

Time to get sticky.

Sullivan sneaks his hand under his shirt and nabs the container of peanut butter.

INT. CONDO UNIT-SAME TIME

Phillipe snares a vile filled with cocaine out of his shirt pocket and empties the substance onto the floor. Maria loosens her hand restrictions. Phillipe glances up at Maria. Maria ceases her escape attempt.

PHILLIPE

Never mind cops. There's never a straw around when you need one.

Phillipe drops to his knees, leans over and vacuums the cocaine into his skull. Maria frees herself and slithers out of the chair. Phillipe glances up. Maria bolts out of the chair and darts off.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

You're in for a big shock.

Maria bolts into a room. The space is boarded with no windows.

MARIA

Shit.

Maria flies into another room. The space is boarded with no windows. Phillipe sneaks down a hall and drops to the floor.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Fuck. No view. Who'd buy any of these places?

Maria creeps out of the room, veers her head left and right and snakes down the hall. Phillipe lies in the fetal position and experiences violent muscle tremors.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Muy bien (very good in Spanish).

Maria zooms down the hall.

PHILLIPE

Realmente no (not really in Spanish).

Phillipe springs up, brandishes and points the gun at Maria. Maria freezes.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

The coke head isn't as dumb as Daddy advertized.

INT. DRAINAGE TUBING--SAME TIME

Sullivan applies the last of the peanut butter to the tubing's top, drops the container, propels himself through the tubing's end, pushes up until toppling out above the earth and staggers toward the complex.

EXT. STREET SURROUNDING CONDO PROPERTY--SAME TIME

A TELEVISION CREW establishes position. Zara snares a microphone. The CAMERAMAN hones in on Zara. A Police Officer rushes toward Zara.

POLICE OFFICER

Got here just in time.

ZARA

Where is he?

POLICE OFFICER

Don't know. But it's only a few minutes from the deadline, so get prepared.

INT. CONDO PROPERTY-SAME TIME

Phillipe grabs Maria's wrist and inches the gun toward her face.

PHILLIPE

Don't breathe.

Someone bursts into the unit.

SULLIVAN (O.C.)

Countess?

PHILLIPE

See why you like him. The Sargent's got impeccable timing. Now move.

Phillipe shoves Maria down the hall. Sullivan points his gun and edges down the hall. Sullivan, Phillipe and Maria converge.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Lose it...Or you can lick the pieces of her exploded skull off that fucking floor.

Sullivan chucks his weapon to the ground. A phone chimes. Phillipe snares Maria's phone.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Time for my exclusive.

Phillipe hurls Maria at Sullivan, minces toward and glances out a window. A bevy of Police Officers surround the complex with weapons drawn.

PHILLIPE (CONT'D)

Of course.

Phillipe flails his weapon and stomps toward Maria and Sullivan. Sullivan leans his head toward Maria's ear.

SULLIVAN

Give me a quick push.

MARIA

What?

SULLIVAN

You heard me.

Maria nudges Sullivan forward. Sullivan tumbles down, rolls toward Phillipe and sweeps Phillipe's legs out. Phillipe crashes to the ground and relinquishes his gun. Sullivan and Phillipe struggle for control of the weapon.

PHILLIPE

I'll kill you both.

The gun slides toward Maria. Maria snares the weapon and aims it at Phillipe.

SULLIVAN

No Countess.

Maria inches the gun toward Phillipe's face. Sullivan plods toward Maria and extends a hand. Maria flails the weapon at Sullivan.

MARIA

Why not?

SULLIVAN

Because forty years of brown showers with killers is a better punishment for this...Brat.

Maria aims the gun at Phillipe again.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Okay. How 'bout this reason? I'd rather feel you in my bed than view you behind bars.

Maria lowers the weapon. Sullivan pries the gun out of Maria's hand and tucks it under his shirt. Maria and Sullivan embrace.

MARIA

I love you darling.

Phillipe reaches behind his back, snares and hurls a knife. Sullivan wrenches the gun out and fires at Phillipe.

SULLIVAN

Get down.

Maria dives to the ground. The bullet rips through Phillipe's shoulder. Sullivan dodges the knife's path. Phillipe collapses and blacks out. Sullivan hands the gun to Maria and bolts toward the front door.

MARIA

Where're...

SULLIVAN

To beckon the reinforcements. If he comes to and gets fresh, you've got my permission.

Maria aims the gun at Phillipe.

EXT. STREET SURROUNDING CONDO PROPERTY-SAME TIME

Sullivan limps out of the complex. The Police lower their weapons.

ZARA

Ladies and gentlemen. This drama has taken a turn. Northhampton Police Sargent Michael Sullivan has just emerged from the building.

Zara and Crew dart closer towards Sullivan.

SULLIVAN

The Countess's fine. Phillipe's badly injured. Guys. Take over.

Sullivan and several Police Officers rush inside the unit.

ZARA

Again. We're watching this ever evolving drama develop live.

The Police Officers escort a handcuffed Phillipe out. Sullivan and Maria stumble out hand in hand. The Police applaud.

ZARA (CONT'D)

And the Countess's safe. She looks a bit shell shocked, but is alive and in seemingly good condition.

An ambulance speeds on scene. TWO PARAMEDICS open the vehicle's rear, slide a gurney out, strap down and load Phillipe onto the gurney. Sullivan bolts toward the ambulance and gestures at two Police Officers.

SULLIVAN

You ride with him and make sure he receives immediate care.

Sullivan leans over Phillipe.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Don't even think of dying.

Phillipe is loaded into the ambulance. The ambulance speeds away. Sullivan fights through a crowd of Police until reaching Maria. Maria hurtles into Sullivan's arms.

MARIA

I've got only one question darling.

SULLIVAN

Shoot.

MARIA

Why the fuck do you smell like peanut butter?

SULLIVAN

It'll make a funny story to be told during a lazy, Sunday breakfast several years down the line.

EXT./INT. COURTHOUSE-DAY

Zara and A NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS set up positions surrounding a podium. Zara places a microphone under her mouth. The Cameraman pans in on Zara.

ZARA

We await a press conference from Northhampton District Attorney Timothy Fredericks.

Sullivan, SEVERAL UNIFORMED OFFICERS and a TALL, DARK-HAIRED MAN hurry to the podium. Sullivan lifts a microphone off a stand.

SULLIVAN

Good afternoon ladies and gentleman. I know you're all waiting for the District Attorney. Mr. Fredericks.

FREDERICKS, 52, receives the microphone from Sullivan.

FREDERICKS

Phillipe DePuis has been arrested on the charges of murder, attempted murder, conspiracy to commit murder and bribery...

ZARA

What about the rampant corruption allegations levied against the NHPD?

Fredericks uncaps a water bottle and swigs.

FREDERICKS

Give us a second Zara.

Fredericks points at a MALE REPORTER.

MALE REPORTER

Do these charges stem from both now and 2014?

FREDERICKS

Yes.

Fredericks acknowledges a FEMALE REPORTER.

FEMALE REPORTER

What's the status of the Countess?

FREDERICKS

She's no longer a person of interest in any event she may have been previously connected to.

Zara minces toward the podium.

FREDERICKS (CONT'D)

All right...Zara.

Sullivan stomps forward. Fredericks presents Sullivan the microphone.

SULLIVAN

Internal Affairs's working with Mr. Fredericks and if anyone else on our force's is culpable, they'll be punished.

Sullivan hands the microphone back to Fredericks.

FREDERICKS

Thank you.

Sullivan, Fredericks and the Uniformed Officers march into the Courthouse. Inside the lobby is a set up for a buffet breakfast and a makeshift bar. Maria emerges from behind the bar holding two drinks.

SULLIVAN

Wow.

MARIA

How' about a Sunday breakfast on a  
Thursday? My treat for a job well  
done darlings.

Fredericks and the Uniformed Officers grab plates and peruse  
through the buffet. Maria presents a drink to Sullivan.  
Sullivan sips the drink.

SULLIVAN

Bloody Mary? You remembered.

MARIA

Uh uh. Bloody Maria. Want a taste  
this time?

SULLIVAN

For sure.

Maria and Sullivan embrace and kiss.

FADE OUT