

Issues
Screenplay
By
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FADE IN

INT. BEDROOM-MORNING

BRENDA is 35 years old, delicate-featured. Beautiful and smart. Has a strength deeply hidden that she doesn't know about yet.

Brenda lays in bed, her eyes barely open. She looks at the photograph on the nightstand by her bedside as her vision becomes clearer. Brenda kisses her hand and puts it on the photograph.

TITLE CARD: BRENDA

BRENDA
Good morning.

A 12-year-old girl enters the bedroom. LOLA, Brenda's only child. The young girl prefers to wear boys' clothes rather than the girls' ones. She is gracious and intelligent. Lola holds a bulky cup of coffee for her mother with both hands.

LOLA
Mom! It's time to get up?!

BRENDA
I know. Do you want to go to work for me?

LOLA
That's child labor and it's a crime.

Brenda sits up. Lola hands Brenda the cup of coffee.

BRENDA
When did you become such a smart girl?

LOLA
When I learned to talk.

BRENDA
Give me a minute?

Lola leaves the bedroom. Brenda puts the coffee on the nightstand and lies back down.

LOLA
Mom!!

Brenda gets back up.

BRENDA

I'm up!

EXT. COURTYARD-HIGH SCHOOL-MORNING

SHELLY OWENS is 21, A gambler and hustler. She is crafty, and a slick woman. She is very streetwise. A derby hat on the top of the woman's head. Her purple and black striped tank top.

Gray pants and black combat boots. The eyes on the girl are attractive enough that you would think she is meant to be a model. The gloves on the other hand only hide the cuts on her wrist. Her feathery and glowing blonde hair is blowing in the wind.

TITLE CARD: SHELLY

Shelly crouches to the ground and rolls a couple of dice. 3 BOYS at the age of 15, 16, and 18 gather around the circle.

Their money in hand. Shelly grins wickedly, feeling it is the easiest money she can make.

INT. HALLWAY-HIGH SCHOOL-MORNING

An 18-year-old girl, with blonde hair. JOY, a foreign exchange student from Russia. She hides her face away from people, humbling herself.

Joy walks through the hallway. She looks around for the office.

TITLE CARD: JOY

INT. OFFICE-MORNING

Joy approaches the counter. The RECEPTIONIST approaches the counter. A young lady in her 20s.

RECEPTIONIST

Can I help you?

JOY

My name is Joy? I'm a foreign student from Russia?

RECEPTIONIST
Oh, yes. The Principal is expecting
you. Come and follow me?

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE-MORNING

Joy sits across from the PRINCIPAL. A man in his early 40s,
and a 20-year educator.

PRINCIPAL
It's so good to meet you.

JOY
Thank you.

PRINCIPAL
I trust that you can find all your
classes on your own.

JOY
Yes.

PRINCIPAL
If you need any other help, don't
hesitate to come and see me?

JOY
I won't.

INT. CLASSROOM-MORNING

Joy opens the door. The SCIENCE TEACHER looks at Joy. A man
in his late 40s, and 30-year educator.

JOY
Sorry, I'm late?

SCIENCE TEACHER
No, it's alright. Please take a
seat?

JOY
Thank you.

Joy steps to an empty desk. She sits her backpack on the back
of the chair and sits down.

INT. CAR-MORNING

A DRIVER behind Brenda honks his horn. A man in his 30s. His road rage and impatient attitude and starts to irritate Brenda. Lola sits her feet on the dashboard, rocking her feet to the music on the radio. The driver yells.

DRIVER
Move your ass!!

BRENDA
Screw you asshole!!

LOLA
Mom, language!

BRENDA
I hate Monday drivers!

LOLA
Drive around them.

BRENDA
I can't. I don't want to break the law.

LOLA
Chicken!

BRENDA
I'm not a chicken.

EXT. COURTYARD-MORNING

The Principal approaches the boys as they are playing craps.

PRINCIPAL
You boys, get to class! You again!
I thought I told you I didn't want
you hanging around here anymore?!

SHELLY
You said that. I must have not
given a shit at the time.

The Principal points Shelly to leave.

PRINCIPAL
Get off the property before I call
the police?

SHELLY

Maybe I'll be back at lunch and
take all the teenagers' lunch
money.

PRINCIPAL

Go!

Shelly runs.

EXT. ROOFTOP-AFTERNOON

Shelly sits on the roof of the school. She eats a sandwich
and chips.

SHELLY

(laugh)

EXT. COURTYARD-AFTERNOON

Joy walks through the courtyard and looks up at Shelly.
Shelly looks down at Joy. Joy smiles.

INT. GIRL'S LOCKER ROOM-AFTERNOON

Joy sits on a bench and looks around. The other girls begin
to leave.

GIRL #1

Hey, Joy? Are you coming?

JOY

I'll be right there?

Girl #1 leaves the locker room.

Joy lifts and pulls off her t-shirt. A **butterfly tattoo** on
the center of her back.

INT. GYMNASIUM-AFTERNOON

The GYM TEACHER, in her late 50s. A 30-year educator. Joy
runs in.

GYM TEACHER

So nice of you to join us?

JOY

Sorry.

GYM TEACHER
 Alright, girls, it's time for a
 game of basketball!

The Gym Teacher tosses a ball to Joy.

GYM TEACHER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Lead the way.

EXT. COURTYARD-AFTERNOON

Joy dribbles the ball around and she makes it past the other girls.

EXT. ROOFTOP-AFTERNOON

Shelly looks down at the courtyard and watches Joy. BOYS at the age of 16 and 17. They watch the game with Shelly on the rooftop.

SHELLY
 What was it you were you saying
 about girls? They can't play
 basketball.

BOY #1
 Where'd she get those moves?

SHELLY
 I don't know but I like her. Pay
 up?

BOY #2
 What?!

SHELLY
 You made a bet and you lost. Pay
 up?!

Boy #2 hands Shelly 40 dollars. Boy #1 hands Shelly 60.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
 Pleasure doing business with you
 boys.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

Joy lies on her bed and does her homework.

RYAN is 21. He is a self-absorbed young man, selfish and self-centered. He's a speed-addict and substance abuser.

His masculine and built body peeks through the tank top and boxer shorts.

Ryan walks into Joy's bedroom and gently closes the door. Joy stands up and backs away. Ryan puts his finger to Joy's mouth.

JOY
What are you doing?

RYAN
Shh!

JOY
I'll scream!

RYAN
Come on, you know you want it?
Don't deny it?

Ryan pulls his hand downwards and rips Joy's shirt. Ryan turns Joy's face to the wall. He presses himself against her.

INT. CLASSROOM-MORNING

Joy sits at her desk. Her arms crossed and her head covered with a hood.

INT. OFFICE-EVENING

The Receptionist leans herself up against the front desk, and the Principal has his groin pinned against her bottom. He raises her skirt and yanks her underwear down.

The Principal wraps his arm around the Receptionist's throat and unbuckles his belt. He kisses her with extreme passion and uncontrollability. He plows himself up against her.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL-EVENING

Shelly looks through the window, watching the Principal perform his adulterous act.

INT. OFFICE-CONTINUOUS

The Principal looks at Shelly but does not stop what he is doing. Shelly runs away from the window.

EXT. STREET-EVENING

Shelly leans herself up against the fence. Joy walks down the sidewalk and goes towards Shelly.

SHELLY
Hi?

JOY
Hello?

SHELLY
You got some nice moves out there
on the basketball court.

JOY
Thanks.

SHELLY
Word on the street is that you're a
foreign exchange student?

JOY
Something like that. What's your
name?

SHELLY
Shelly. What's yours?

JOY
Joy.

SHELLY
Do you want to hang out, Joy?

JOY
Sure. What do you want to do?

SHELLY
How about we go back to your place?

JOY
What about your place?

SHELLY
I don't have a place.

JOY
Okay, we can go back to my place.

Joy walks and leads the way and Shelly follows.

INT. KITCHEN-EVENING

Joy opens the refrigerator door. Shelly peeks in. She grabs the lunch meat, cheese, and the mayonnaise.

INT. BEDROOM-EVENING

Shelly and Joy sit on the bed across from each other.

JOY

So, tell me a little bit about yourself?

SHELLY

Not much to tell.

JOY

What comes to mind? What about your family?

SHELLY

I don't have a family. My father took me to a gas station and never returned.

JOY

And your mother?

SHELLY

I don't like to talk about her.

JOY

So, who takes care of you?

SHELLY

I take care of myself.

JOY

Do you want to stay the night?

SHELLY

I'm not sure.

JOY

You can. We can share the bed.

SHELLY

What about the family here?

JOY

I can say we're lab partners and we are going to pull an all-nighter.

SHELLY
Sounds good.

The door opens. The MOTHER walks in. A woman in her late 40s.
A domestic woman that loves her family values.

MOTHER
Oh, I'm sorry? I didn't know you
had company.

JOY
This is Shelly. She's my lab
partner. Can she stay the night?

MOTHER
Sure.

SHELLY
Thank you.

JOY
We are going to share the bed if
that's alright.

MOTHER
That's fine.

INT. BATHROOM-NIGHT

Shelly stands in front of the sink and washes her face. The door opens and Ryan walks in. Shelly looks at Ryan. Ryan grabs Shelly by her bottom. She turns and grabs Ryan by his groin. She yanks it and has it in her grasp.

SHELLY
The next time you touch her or me,
I'll cut it off and I'll stick it
in your ass! Got it?!

RYAN
Ahh!

Ryan slides down the door and holds onto his groin.

SHELLY
Nice to meet you too.

INT. BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Shelly and Joy lie in bed together. Underneath the covers.

JOY
Good night, Shelly.

SHELLY
Good night.

INT. CLASSROOM-MORNING

Joy holds her hand underneath her chin. She listens to the Science Teacher. Shelly appears on the outside of the window.

She waves at Joy. Joy waves back.

EXT. COURTYARD-MORNING

Shelly smiles. The Principal walks towards Shelly. OFFICERS in their 30's.

PRINCIPAL
Didn't I say to stay off school property?

Shelly looks at the Principal. The Officers approach Shelly.

Shelly puts her hands on her head.

OFFICER #1
You are under arrest. You have the right to remain silent.

PRINCIPAL
Students reported you to me. Told me you cheated them. You also sold them fake merchandise.

SHELLY
I'm not the only one guilty here.

The Officers walk Shelly off school property.

INT. CLASSROOM-CONTINUOUS

Joy stands up and walks to the window.

SCIENCE TEACHER
Sit down, Joy?!

JOY
Hold on?

INT. BEDROOM-EVENING

Joy lays on her bed, asleep. The door opens. Ryan and his friend walk in. RYAN'S FRIEND is 16 and has the same hormones as Ryan. Both are sexual predators.

RYAN'S FRIEND
What are we doing here?

RYAN
We're going to have a little fun
with this girl.

RYAN'S FRIEND
We? I'm going home.

RYAN
You walk out of this room, you're
just as responsible. You chose to
walk in.

RYAN'S FRIEND
You're sick.

RYAN
Yeah, so are you. Hold her down?

INT. BATHROOM-NIGHT

Joy sits in the tub, with the showerhead wetting the top of her head. She scrubs her body with a bar of soap. Joy feels violated and dirty from what Ryan and his friend did to her.

Joy sobs.

INT. OFFICE-MORNING

Brenda sits at her desk. Her cell phone rings. Brenda puts the phone to her ear.

BRENDA
Hello?

WOMAN (V.O.)
Wow, I finally got a hold of you,
Brenda? You already know why I'm
calling.

BRENDA
What do you want me to do?

WOMAN (V.O.)

I want you to do what your husband couldn't and take responsibility. She's been suspended 3 times and doesn't respect me or my rules.

BRENDA

What makes you think she'll listen to me? Nick is dead! I'm not blood-related to her.

WOMAN (V.O.)

But you are a lawyer, right?

BRENDA

Right. So?

WOMAN (V.O.)

Go and meet her in the park. She likes to hang out there with her friends.

BRENDA

You're putting me in a tough position right now?

WOMAN (V.O.)

I already told her I hired a lawyer in case she gets in more trouble.

BRENDA

Yeah, that makes it a lot easier.

Brenda ends the call and tosses her cell phone into her purse.

EXT. PARK-AFTERNOON

Brenda walks up towards the duck pond and looks around for the group of girls. A girl's laugh comes from the playground area.

A 15-year-old girl, wearing a red baseball cap. Her ripped jeans, and a black tank top. NICOLA is rebellious and troubled.

All NICOLA'S FRIENDS #1, 2, and 3 sit on the swings. All the ages of 14, and 15.

Nicola has her eyes glued to her cell phone. Brenda walks towards the playground. Nicola looks at Brenda and looks away.

NICOLA
Oh, man!

NICOLA'S FRIEND #1
What?

NICOLA
I'll see you guys later.

NICOLA'S FRIEND #2
Bye.

NICOLA FRIEND #3
Later.

Nicola walks past Brenda and goes towards the duck pond. Brenda follows Nicola. Nicola sits down on the bench and crosses her arms. Brenda sits and looks around, then at Nicola.

NICOLA
Is she paying you to watch me too?

BRENDA
She wanted me to come and talk to you.

NICOLA
About what?

BRENDA
You being suspended and she wants me to talk to you about having more respect for her.

NICOLA
She doesn't respect my privacy.

BRENDA
In her house, you don't have any right to privacy.

NICOLA
What do you think I should do?

BRENDA
Do what she says. Okay?

Brenda's cell phone rings. She looks at the caller ID.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
I got a client that needs me. Are you alright to go home on your own?

NICOLA

I'm cool.

BRENDA

Okay. Stay out of trouble.

Brenda gets up from the bench and walks towards the crosswalk.

INT. COURTHOUSE-MORNING

Brenda walks with Shelly.

BRENDA

I highly recommend that you stay off of school property.

SHELLY

I can't do that.

BRENDA

Why is that?

EXT. COURTHOUSE-MORNING

Brenda and Shelly walk out of the courthouse.

SHELLY

There is a girl, and she needs my help.

BRENDA

Whoever she is, she needs more than your help. Can you tell me what happened?

SHELLY

She's a foreign student and I believe she is being assaulted by a man under the same roof.

BRENDA

How can you tell?

SHELLY

Because he tried doing it to me.

BRENDA

The best thing to do is to get her out of that situation.

SHELLY
I got a better idea.

BRENDA
What?

SHELLY
Can you give me a ride?

Brenda gives Shelly a look of concern.

EXT. COURTYARD-HIGH SCHOOL-AFTERNOON

Joy rocks her feet together. Her eyes in a daze. Joy's cell phone rings. She answers.

JOY
Hello?

SHELLY (V.O.)
Hey?! Glad I caught you?

JOY
Where are you?

SHELLY (V.O.)
Can you meet me at the bus station?

JOY
What for?

SHELLY (V.O.)
I have a plan but you have to trust me. Do you?

JOY
Yes.

SHELLY (V.O.)
Good. Now I need you to go back to the house and grab your stuff?

JOY
No! I can't go back there!

SHELLY (V.O.)
Just trust me! Get your stuff and meet me, okay?

JOY
Okay.

Joy gets up and walks off of school grounds.

INT. RYAN'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

The bedroom door opens. A woman figure stands in the doorway. She pulls out a switchblade.

INT. BUS STATION-NIGHT

Shelly stands in line, waiting for the bus to start loading people aboard and looks around for Joy. Joy walks towards Shelly.

JOY

Hey!

Shelly turns to Joy.

SHELLY

You made it!

JOY

Where are we going?

SHELLY

Vegas.

JOY

Why Vegas?

SHELLY

It just sounds good. It's easy money.

JOY

Whatever you say.

INT. RYAN'S BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Ryan moves around in his bed. He moves the blanket off of him.

A blood-stained sheet covers his legs.

RYAN

(moan)

Ryan looks down and sees blood. He reaches for his behind and feels what is jammed in.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Ahh!!!

INT. BUS-MORNING

Joy leans up against the window, asleep. Shelly looks out the window. She smiles.

SHELLY
Beautiful.

EXT. STREET-AFTERNOON

Joy walks behind Shelly. Shelly looks around.

JOY
What are you doing?

SHELLY
Getting us a room and food. Just be cool, okay?

JOY
Okay.

INT. CASINO-AFTERNOON

Shelly rolls dice at a craps table.

Joy sits and watches from a table. She drinks her soda.

SHELLY
Yes!!

Shelly rolls again. Joy leans forward and gets up from her seat.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
Yes, baby!!

JOY
Yes!

Shelly turns to Joy. Joy sits down.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-AFTERNOON

Shelly opens the door. Joy steps into the hotel room, excitement in her face.

JOY
Wow! This is beautiful.

SHELLY

It is.

Joy sits down on the bed.

JOY

How much did you win?

SHELLY

150 thousand dollars.

JOY

What are we going to do now?

SHELLY

We're going to get ourselves a place of our own and we're going to live our lives the way we want.

JOY

What about everything back in California?

SHELLY

Don't worry.

INT. WAITING ROOM-HOSPITAL-AFTERNOON

An OFFICER, in his 30s, a 10-year veteran. DETECTIVE, in his 40s, a 20-year detective. Brenda sits in the waiting room with the Officer and the Detective.

OFFICER

Do you know where Shelly Owens is?

BRENDA

For the last time, I do not.

DETECTIVE

Then why did a neighbor see a blonde-haired girl walk into the house on the same night of the incident?

BRENDA

I know nothing about that.

DETECTIVE

We're looking for the girl, the foreign girl. She went missing and we believe your client took her. Look at the pictures?

The Detective shows Brenda a picture of Joy. Brenda squints her eyes and looks deeply at the picture.

BRENDA
That's her?

DETECTIVE
She calls herself Joy and she came from Russia. We believe your client; Shelly Owens ran away with her. I just want to make sure they're both alright.

BRENDA
I haven't heard anything.

DETECTIVE
If she contacts you, please call us?

BRENDA
Of course.

INT. VACANT APARTMENT--MORNING

Shelly looks around the apartment. PROPERTY MANAGER, in her late 40s. A real estate agent for over 20 years. Nice and friendly.

PROPERTY MANAGER
It's a 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Large front room and kitchen.

SHELLY
Perfect!

PROPERTY MANAGER
It's a 1,000 a month.

SHELLY
I'll take it.

PROPERTY MANAGER
It's 25 dollars for each person. Please return the applications with a money order for you and your roommate?

SHELLY
Will do.

Shelly looks at the applications and walks out of the apartment.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Shelly sits at the desk and fills out the applications for the apartment. Joy lays in bed, asleep. Shelly looks at Joy's back and sees the tattoo.

INT. RESTAURANT-MORNING

Shelly sits across the table from Joy. A coffee mug in her hand.

Joy eats her food, enjoying every bite.

SHELLY

How'd you get that tattoo on your back?

JOY

What does it matter, it's a tattoo?

SHELLY

I told you everything about me. Tell me something about you?

JOY

I got it when I was 15. I didn't choose it, the man that took me in decided. I wanted to make some extra money to pay off my mother's medical bills.

INT. ROOM-BROTHEL-NIGHT-FLASHBACK

Joy lies on a table.

XANDER, 45. A ruthless and dangerous man. Xander enters the room and leans his head against Joy's. His tight grip around her mouth, forcibly kissing Joy.

JOY (V.O.)

I was stupid. I made a bad choice at that age.

INT. RESTAURANT-BACK TO PRESENT

SHELLY

But you got away?

JOY

My mother put me into the student program, picked the family and the rest is history.

SHELLY

To be honest, it isn't looking so great. Here, take the key and go back to the room.

Shelly hands Joy the card key and Joy takes it.

JOY

What are you going to do?

SHELLY

I'm going to go turn these applications in and then I'm going to go look for a job.

Shelly stands up and leaves the table.

INT. GROCERY STORE-AFTERNOON

Shelly leans on the counter and fills out a job application.

INT. OFFICE-HIGH SCHOOL-AFTERNOON

The Receptionist stands at the copy machine. A message comes through to all the fax machines in the office.

The Secretary, late 40's. A secretary for ten years. All the staff in the office stand up.

The Receptionist turns, and all the members of the staff look at her. A disgusted look on their faces.

RECEPTIONIST

What?

STAFF MEMBER #1

How about you tell us?

They all show her the picture of the Principal and her having sex. The Receptionist looks at the picture. She yanks all the pictures from their hands and tosses them into the garbage can.

INT. GROCERY STORE-CONTINUOUS

Shelly smiles.

SHELLY
Mess with me and you get a
surprise.

INT. APARTMENT-AFTERNOON

The Property Manager hands Shelly the keys to the apartment.
Shelly shakes the Property Manager's hand.

INT. LIVING ROOM-APARTMENT-NIGHT

Joy and Shelly lay on the floor. She looks at Shelly.

Shelly's eyes are closed. Joy closes her eyes. Shelly opens
her eyes. Joy opens her eyes.

SHELLY
You can't sleep?

JOY
Trying. It just feels weird.

SHELLY
Having your own place?

JOY
Yeah.

SHELLY
The furniture is coming tomorrow.
So, you get to sleep in your own
room.

JOY
What are you going to be doing?

SHELLY
I'll be working.

JOY
For how long?

SHELLY
8 hours.

JOY
Oh.

SHELLY
You can do something too.

JOY
No one will hire me.

SHELLY
Sure they will. Find something your
good at.

EXT. STREET-AFTERNOON

Joy walks down the street. She stops and looks at the buffet restaurant.

INT. OFFICE-AFTERNOON

The HIRING MANAGER looks at Joy's application. A man in his late 40s.

HIRING MANAGER
It says here that you worked for a
restaurant back in California. Are
you good with the fryers?

JOY
Yes, sir.

HIRING MANAGER
You look so young?

JOY
I may be young but I'm a fast
learner.

HIRING MANAGER
I'll look this over and get back to
you in a few days?

Joy stands up. She shakes the manager's hand.

INT. KITCHEN-APARTMENT

Joy stands over the stove. She sticks a **wooden spoon** in the tomato sauce and puts it to her mouth.

Shelly walks in. She looks around and sees the new cookware.

SHELLY
Where'd all this come from?

Joy puts the spoon down.

JOY
I went and bought some kitchen
supplies.

Shelly walks into the kitchen. She grabs the wooden spoon and
tastes the sauce.

SHELLY
mmm --

JOY
--Is it good?

SHELLY
Yes.

Shelly puts the spoon down.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
You never told me you could cook?

JOY
I guess I left that part out.

SHELLY
I'm going to go and take a shower.
Maybe take a nap. Can you wake me
up when dinner is ready?

JOY
Sure.

Shelly walks out of the kitchen and walks into her bedroom.

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Brenda sits on the sofa. She looks through her paperwork.

LOLA
Mom?

Brenda looks up.

BRENDA
Yes?

LOLA
Can you come to my school and tell
my class about your job?

BRENDA
I'm sorry but I'm swamped with
work.

LOLA
Dad would do it in a heartbeat.

BRENDA
I'm not dad.

LOLA
Whatever!

Lola walks away.

BRENDA
Lola! Come here?!

Lola walks back to Brenda. Brenda hugs Lola.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

Brenda kisses Lola on the cheek. Lola wipes her cheek.

LOLA
Oh, mom! You got slobber on me!

Lola runs to her room. Brenda looks at the photograph on the table.

INT. CAR-MORNING-FLASHBACK

Brenda sits in the car and looks at her husband, NICK. A 38-year-old man. Blue coveralls, and his black leather jacket on. Nick gets out of the car and shuts the door gently. The 2 of them look at each other like high school sweethearts.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL-MORNING

She can almost smell him from where she is sitting. His **OLD SPICE fragrance** goes through her mind and the way she feels when she says goodbye to him before he goes to do his custodian job. Nick kisses his hand and waves at Brenda.

Brenda waves back.

NICK
I love you.

BRENDA
I love you too.

Nick turns around and walks towards the school.

INT. LIVING ROOM-BACK TO PRESENT

Brenda wipes away the tears and sobs.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

A glow in a dark lamp sits on Shelly's new desk. **A brand-new bed frame** and mattress. Shelly lies in bed, on her side. Her eyes closed. Joy climbs into bed with Shelly. Shelly opens her eyes.

SHELLY

What's wrong?

JOY

I can't sleep.

SHELLY

Nervous?

JOY

A little.

SHELLY

No reason to be. Go on back to bed?

Joy gets out of bed and walks back to her room.

INT. GROCERY STORE-MORNING

Shelly leans herself on the counter of the check stand.

INT. BREAK ROOM-AFTERNOON

Shelly sits and eats a sandwich at a table. She looks at the TV screen.

ON-SCREEN

A sketch description of Shelly's face, along with a phone number to call.

BACK TO

Shelly looks around and looks behind.

INT. LIVING ROOM-APARTMENT-EVENING

Shelly walks into the living room and shuts the door.

SHELLY

Joy!!

INT. JOY'S BEDROOM-EVENING

Shelly pushes the bedroom door open and looks around. Joy is nowhere to be found. She rushes and looks through Joy's bag.

Nothing but dirty socks and a *rusted butterfly knife*.

SHELLY

What the hell!

Joy walks up behind Shelly.

JOY

Did you find anything?

Shelly jumps out of her own skin, scared.

SHELLY

Ahh!

Shelly shows Joy the knife.

JOY

My knife? What are you doing going through my stuff?

SHELLY

I wanted to see something, that's all. Where were you?

JOY

I was working. I got a job.

SHELLY

Is that so.

Shelly gets up and walks out of the room.

INT. SHELLY'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Shelly's cell phone rings and she answers.

SHELLY

Hello?

BRENDA (V.O.)
Hey? How are things?

SHELLY
Kind of weird. What about you?

BRENDA (V.O.)
Things are rough. Did you get settled?

SHELLY
Yeah. How rough?

BRENDA (V.O.)
Bad news. Do you have something to tell me?

SHELLY
No. What's going on over there?

BRENDA (V.O.)
What really happened in that house?

SHELLY
I told you; my friend was raped.

BRENDA (V.O.)
I drove you to the bus station that night. Are you sure you don't have to tell me something?

SHELLY
No.

BRENDA (V.O.)
So, you didn't go into that room?

SHELLY
I did not!

BRENDA (V.O.)
He said that you cut off his penis and shove it up his ass! That's what they told me.

SHELLY
I did not do that!

BRENDA (V.O.)
This is serious, the police are looking for you?!

SHELLY
Can I call you back?

BRENDA (V.O.)
No. Don't hang up on me!

Shelly ends the call.

INT. JOY'S ROOM-NIGHT

Shelly opens Joy's door.

SHELLY
Joy?!

Shelly looks down at the floor and sees Joy's bag is missing.

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Shelly walks into the Living Room and steps to the front door
Shelly opens the door and steps outside. An OFFICER rushes
towards Shelly. The Officer aims his gun at Shelly.

OFFICER #1
Freeze!

Shelly puts her hands on the top of her head.

OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
Get down on your knees?!

Shelly gets down to her knees and she rolls her eyes.

INT. POLICE CRUISER-NIGHT

Shelly leans herself up against the window of the door.

INT. ISOLATION CELL-AFTERNOON

In her cell, Shelly sits on her bed. A GUARD, in his 30s and
10 years on the job. The Guard approaches the cell door. The
door opens.

GUARD
Your lawyer's here to see you?

Shelly stands to her feet.

INT. COUNTY JAIL-VISITING AREA-AFTERNOON

In the Visiting Area, Brenda sits. The Guard walks Shelly in.

Shelly approaches the table and sits herself down on the seat.

The Guard raises Shelly's arms and takes the handcuffs off.

Shelly puts out her fist and the Guard fist bumps Shelly's fist. The Guard backs away and stands by the door.

BRENDA

Are you okay?

SHELLY

As far as you can tell, I am. Did you set me up?

BRENDA

No, I didn't. Your friend did. What do you know about her?

SHELLY

She's from Russia. She's a foreign student.

Brenda reaches into her briefcase and pulls out a photograph of the butterfly knife. Brenda holds the photo close to Shelly's eyes.

BRENDA

Do you know what this is?

SHELLY

Yeah, her butterfly knife. How did you get it?

BRENDA

I found it in one of the bedrooms. She must have dropped it.

Brenda puts the photo back into her briefcase and slams her arms down.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

That knife is stained with a man's blood. My husband's.

SHELLY

What?!

BRENDA

It was 2 years ago...Nick was the type to help out anyone. He brought one home one day. She of course gave him a sob story. Something that made him stick up for her.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)
I told him not to be manipulated by
her, but he didn't listen.

EXT. BACKYARD-EVENING-FLASHBACK

Nick and Joy sit on the deck of the Backyard. Joy stabs Nick in the back with her butterfly knife. Nick's eyes on Joy. Joy smiles and pulls the knife from Nick's back. Joy gets up, and Nick pulls at Joy's leg. Joy kicks his hand away and runs.

BRENDA (V.O.)
By the time I got home, he was
dead.

INT. COUNTY JAIL-VISITING AREA-BACK TO PRESENT

Brenda wipes the tears from her face.

SHELLY
I'm sorry.

BRENDA
Don't feel sorry for me. Just tell
me where she is?

SHELLY
I don't know where she is.

BRENDA
Am I supposed to believe that?

SHELLY
You can believe whatever you want.

BRENDA
I'll see you tomorrow. Be ready to
talk some more.

Brenda grabs her briefcase and walks to the exit door. Shelly looks away.

INT. LIVING ROOM-APARTMENT-EVENING

The living room is a mess. Clothes and blankets. Brenda steps into the living room. A DEPUTY, early 30s, 5 years on the force.

Brenda looks around.

BRENDA
What happened here?

DEPUTY

Someone broke in. Looks like they stole a brand-new flat screen.

BRENDA

It could have been her. Why wasn't anyone watching this apartment?

DEPUTY

I didn't think this would happen.

BRENDA

It's time that we all stop thinking.

INT. COUNTY JAIL-VISITING AREA-MORNING

Shelly sits at the desk. Brenda walks in and sits down.

SHELLY

Good morning to you.

BRENDA

How about we cut to the chase and find out about each other?

SHELLY

I thought we did know each other.

BRENDA

We know each other by name but not personally. Why do you play the craps game so much?

SHELLY

I enjoy it.

BRENDA

You came all the way to Las Vegas to play a game and you won close to 200 thousand dollars. Do you know what that tells me?

SHELLY

What?

BRENDA

You grew up here. I believe your mother and you lived here. Tell me about her?

SHELLY

Why are you making me get into this?

BRENDA

Just answer the question?

SHELLY

She had red hair and brown eyes. Every time she walked into a room; men went crazy. She was beautiful.

BRENDA

She taught you every move in the game. That's how you got so good.

SHELLY

Is there a point to this story?

Brenda waves her hands to come forward.

BRENDA

Come on?!

A fiery redhead woman walks into the Visiting Area. 40 years old and looks good for her age. MAGGIE OWENS. A casino worker and an expert gambler. The Guard's eyes on Maggie.

Brenda gets up from the chair. Maggie hands Brenda her purse and she sits down. Shelly looks away.

MAGGIE

Oh, how beautiful you are.

Maggie reaches to touch Shelly's face. Shelly pushes Maggie's hand away.

SHELLY

Don't touch me!

MAGGIE

Your friend told me everything.

SHELLY

How did you find her?

BRENDA

I went to one of the casinos and there she was. A craps dealer.

SHELLY

Where were you when I needed you?

MAGGIE

I was right here, waiting for you
to come back.

SHELLY

You never came looking for me?

MAGGIE

Your father took you away when you
were 11. Along with his girlfriend.

EXT. GAS STATION-AFTERNOON-FLASHBACK

11-YEAR-OLD SHELLY stands near a man. SHELLY'S FATHER, late 30s. An out of work construction worker. His hand grips onto the receiver, and he tries to figure out what to do with his daughter.

The GIRLFRIEND is in her early 20s. A stripper. She argues over with Shelly's Father over what should be done with 11-Year-Old Shelly.

SHELLY'S FATHER

I took her, and now what am I
supposed to do with her?

The Girlfriend whispers.

GIRLFRIEND

Leave her!

Shelly's Father grabs 11-Year-Old Shelly and hands her 5 dollars.

SHELLY'S FATHER

Baby, go get yourself a soda and
some candy?

11-YEAR-OLD SHELLY

Okay.

11-Year-Old Shelly runs towards the gas station. Shelly's Father and the Girlfriend walk towards the car.

INT. GAS STATION-AFTERNOON

11-Year-Old Shelly takes the bottle of **COKE** and the **BUTTERFINGER** from the counter and walks out to the outside.

EXT. GAS STATION-CONTINUOUS

11-YEAR-OLD SHELLY
Daddy? Where are you?

11-Year-Old Shelly looks around and sees no sign of her father or the Girlfriend. She begins to sob.

INT. COUNTY JAIL-VISITING AREA-BACK TO PRESENT

SHELLY
I was left with no one.

Shelly's eyes on Brenda.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
What happens now?

BRENDA
They're letting you out. Turns out,
you are not the suspect.

MAGGIE
Let's go home.

Maggie rubs her hand on Shelly's cheek and Shelly feels Maggie's hand.

INT. DINING ROOM-MAGGIE'S APARTMENT-AFTERNOON

At the dinner table, Shelly and Brenda sit. Maggie takes their plates and walks towards the kitchen.

SHELLY
What happens with Joy?

BRENDA
We're going to continue to look for
her.

SHELLY
She could still be here.

BRENDA
Could be.

SHELLY
Let me help you?

BRENDA
I think you have been through
enough.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 It's time for you to live a life. I
 got to go home. I have a daughter
 that misses me. You take care. The
 both of you.

Brenda stands up and steps towards the front door.

SHELLY
 Hey?

Brenda looks at Shelly.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
 Don't be a stranger.

Brenda opens the front door.

BRENDA
 I won't.

Brenda walks out of the apartment and closes the door as she
 walks out.

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Shelly lies down and Maggie covers Shelly with a blanket.
 Maggie kisses Shelly on the forehead.

MAGGIE
 I'm glad your home.

SHELLY
 Can I ask you a question?

MAGGIE
 Sure?

SHELLY
 Is it true that a girl likes a high
 roller?

MAGGIE
 Why do you ask that?

SHELLY
 High rollers are usually too stupid
 to realize that all the girl wants
 is the money. That's where we find
 our girl.

MAGGIE
 Please, don't get involved in it?

SHELLY
I'm only helping.

MAGGIE
Get some sleep.

Maggie stands up and switches off the lights.

INT. CASINO-AFTERNOON

Shelly looks around. Her hand touches her face as she looks at the major distractions. She looks at the high roller girls.

INT. DINING ROOM-APARTMENT-NIGHT

At the table, Shelly sits. Maggie sits across from her.

SHELLY
I have a plan.

MAGGIE
Forget about it.

SHELLY
But if you give it a chance, it might work.

MAGGIE
It's a chance of getting yourself killed over.

SHELLY
If Brenda brought me closure, don't you think she deserves the same?

Maggie looks at Shelly with a sincere look.

MAGGIE
You really care about her, don't you?

SHELLY
I do.

MAGGIE
Okay. I will be watching you.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

Shelly stands in front of the mirror and looks at herself to wonder what will go great as a dress for her to wear.

MONTAGE

--A red dress on Shelly.

--A blue dress on Shelly.

--A black dress on Shelly.

BACK TO SCENE

Shelly appears to be wearing a silver dress. Maggie walks into the room.

MAGGIE

Oh my. Who are you?!

SHELLY

Shut up.

Maggie grabs a brunette wig from her closet.

MAGGIE

If you want to walk in there like a high price girl, you should look like one.

Maggie puts the wig over Shelly's head. Shelly tucks her hair underneath the wig. She tilts her head.

SHELLY

This is going to work.

Maggie goes into her closet.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

All I need now is makeup and --

Maggie steps towards Shelly with a Fox Fur Coat.

MAGGIE

This!

Shelly looks at the coat.

SHELLY

This is totally gonna work!

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Shelly sits on the sofa. She puts her phone to her ear. The ringing goes silent.

BRENDA (V.O.)
Hello?

SHELLY
Brenda? I know where she is.

BRENDA (V.O.)
You do? Where?

SHELLY
She's one of the girls that escorts
one of the high rollers.

BRENDA (V.O.)
Wait, how did you figure it out?

SHELLY
The day we came here, I saw the
look on her face when I won that
money.

BRENDA (V.O.)
Just because she was excited,
doesn't mean she would do that type
of thing.

SHELLY
It's something I'm going to do.
I'll talk to you later.

BRENDA (V.O.)
Don't, please?!

Shelly ends the call.

INT. LIMOUSINE-NIGHT

MONTAGE

--Driver opens the door for Shelly.

--Her silver pumps hit the side.

--Driver helps Shelly up.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. STREET-NIGHT

Shelly walks towards the **HIGH ROLLER FERRIS WHEEL**.

EARL, 25. A black man with opposing height and his built body shows through his black suit. Earl slowly approaches Shelly.

EARL
Excuse me?

Shelly turns to Earl.

SHELLY
Yes?

EARL
Are you going to the High Roller
Ferris Wheel?

SHELLY
I am. Why do you ask?

EARL
I'm going up there. Will you join
me?

SHELLY
Sure. What's your name?

EARL
Earl.

SHELLY
Earl, just call me Sasha?

EARL
As you wish. Shall we?

Earl reaches for Shelly's hand and Shelly grabs onto Earl's.

Earl walks with Shelly.

INT. HIGH ROLLER FERRIS WHEEL-NIGHT

Earl helps Shelly onto the platform. Joy turns to Earl.

Xander looks at Shelly and Earl.

XANDER
Excuse me but we were on this
first?

EARL
Is it alright if we share?

XANDER
No!

Earl balls up his fist.

SHELLY
Gentlemen, take it down a notch?!
We can share, can't we?

XANDER
Very well. Come on, Joy?!

Shelly and Earl step closer.

The doors close.

EARL
Do you care to have a seat?

SHELLY
How about we both sit down
together?

Earl sits down, while Shelly sits on his lap and Earl looks Shelly in the eyes.

EARL
So, what brings you down here?

SHELLY
I came here from California. I was
homeless. I got a job. Got
arrested. Next thing you know, I
found my mother. Thanks to my
lawyer. I had a hell of a week. How
about you?!

Joy looks back at Shelly.

EARL
My wife cheated on me with a high
roller. I came here to have a
divorce party.

SHELLY
I guess we both have been screwed.

Shelly rubs her hands-on Earl's chest.

EARL
Who screwed you?

SHELLY

It was someone that I thought was
my friend, but it turns out. She's
just a liar!

Xander walks towards Earl and Shelly.

XANDER

Shut your bitch up!!

MONTAGE

--Earl lifts Shelly.

--Earl drives Shelly's feet into Xander's chest.

--Shelly kicks Xander in the nose.

BACK TO THE SCENE

Xander lies on the ground. Earl puts Shelly down and Shelly's
eyes are on Earl.

SHELLY

I love you.

Joy stands over Xander. Shelly steps towards Joy.

JOY

Shelly?

Shelly punches Joy.

EARL

You have a mean hook.

Shelly looks at Earl with a smile on her face.

SHELLY

Thanks.

Shelly takes off the wig and shakes her hair.

EARL

I'm guessing she was your friend.

SHELLY

Was. Could you do me a favor, can
you call the police?

EARL

Sure.

SHELLY
You do have some moves, Earl.

EARL
Thanks.

INT. STREETS-NIGHT

Shelly stands, wrapped in a blanket. Earl wraps his arm around her.

EARL
Shelly, is it?

SHELLY
Yeah.

EARL
I hope I will see you again.

SHELLY
Definitely.

Earl hands Shelly his contact card.

EARL
Just in case?

Shelly smiles. Earl steps away. Maggie rushes to Shelly.

MAGGIE
What happened?!

Shelly hands the blanket to an Officer. Maggie walks with Shelly and they approach Maggie's car.

SHELLY
I got her.

Joy is in handcuffs and is being walked to a police cruiser. Joy looks at Shelly.

MAGGIE
Come on, let's go home?

Shelly looks back at Joy.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

Shelly holds her cell phone to her ear.

SHELLY

Well, it's all over. They have her.

BRENDA (V.O.)

Thank you. You put yourself in danger.

SHELLY

How did I do that?

BRENDA (V.O.)

Joy didn't just kill Nick for money. It was an initiation. Her boss is part of the Russian mafia and is someone that you don't attack.

SHELLY

What?!

A loud slam comes from the living room. Shelly rushes in.

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

RUSSIAN GOON #1 holds Maggie, with a gun pointed at her head. Russian Goon #1 is in his late 30s. A mean look on his face.

RUSSIAN GOON #1 (SUBTITLE)

(in Russian)

Move and she dies!!

SHELLY

Let her go!

Earl walks up behind Russian Goon #1 and grabs the gun. Earl slugs him over the head. Maggie runs behind the sofa.

Shelly smiles.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Am I glad I called you!

Earl holds out a boutique of roses.

EARL

So am I.

Maggie stands up and looks at Earl.

SHELLY

Mom, meet my date, Earl?

MAGGIE
Hello, Earl?

SHELLY
Pack your stuff, mom? You're going
to a hotel.

INT. RESTAURANT-NIGHT

At their table, Shelly smells her roses and puts them down
gently.

SHELLY
Thank you for the roses, they are
beautiful.

EARL
Not as beautiful as you.

SHELLY
You're too kind. Why in the world
would any woman want to let you
go?!

EARL
I don't know. Who was that guy?

SHELLY
Remember the couple from the Ferris
Wheel? Turns out, they are part of
a mafia.

EARL
Do you need a place to stay?

SHELLY
I'm sure I will. Do you care if I
have a million Russian men after
me?

EARL
Your problems are my problems now.

Shelly smiles.

INT. HOTEL ROOM-NIGHT

Earl and Shelly lie on the bed. Earl leans over Shelly,
kissing her. Shelly wraps her arms around Earl's neck.

INT. CAR-MORNING

Earl sits in the car with Shelly. Shelly grabs Earl's hand and looks at him. A smile on her face. Maggie slides herself into the backseat and shuts the door.

MAGGIE

Good morning you two! Can we go get some breakfast; I'm starved!

Maggie looks at Shelly, then at Earl.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Great, you two had sex.

SHELLY

Mom!

Earl hands Maggie a bag of donuts.

EARL

Here you go?

MAGGIE

Thanks.

Maggie takes the bag.

EARL

What do you want to do now?

SHELLY

What about your place?

EARL

My place is a little small.

SHELLY

Any rooms?

EARL

Two.

SHELLY

Kids?

EARL

Just my ex-wife.

SHELLY

That works.

INT. LIVING ROOM-COTTAGE-NIGHT

Shelly sits on Earl's lap. A glass of wine in her hand.

Maggie walks into the living room.

MAGGIE

This is someplace you have here,
Earl.

EARL

Thanks.

MAGGIE

What do you do?

EARL

I'm a bouncer. I used to be a
bodyguard, but I quit. I used to
play football in my college years.
It didn't work out.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry.

EARL

It's alright.

MAGGIE

I'm going to bed. Good night!

Maggie walks out of the living room and walks into the spare bedroom. Shelly puts her glass of wine down. Earl lifts her and stands to his feet. He carries Shelly to the master bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

Shelly sits on the bed. Earl pulls Shelly's shirt up and over her head. He tosses the shirt to the floor. Earl rubs his hands all over Shelly's face, kissing Shelly's lips. He leans his head against hers.

INT. OFFICE-NIGHT

Joy stands beside Xander.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)

(in Russian)

How hard is it for you idiots to
find one little girl!!

Xander shows his men a photograph of Shelly and Earl.

RUSSIAN GOON #2 (SUBTITLE)
 (in Russian)
 The black man came to her rescue.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
 (in Russian)
 Go out and look again!!

RUSSIAN GOON #1 (SUBTITLE)
 (in Russian)
 They disappeared!

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
 (in Russian)
 Then go look again!!

Russian Goon #1 and #2 get up and walk out of the office.

Xander reaches his hand up to Joy's head and pulls her down by her face. A mean look on his face.

XANDER (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
 (in Russian)
 This is your fault! You brought
 that little bitch into my business.
 Go do your job!!

Xander pushes Joy. She looks at Xander and walks out of the Office.

EXT. FRONT PORCH-MORNING

Shelly sits on the steps. She drinks her coffee from a small mug. Earl stands right in front of her.

SHELLY
 What are you thinking about?

EARL
 Is this just a fling or is this
 something more?

Shelly sits the mug down and steps towards Earl.

SHELLY
 This is something more to me.

EARL
 You're not like other women.

SHELLY
You bet I'm not.

EARL
What do you want to do?

Shelly wraps her arms around Earl.

SHELLY
I can't think of anything just yet.

Earl caresses Shelly's head and Shelly hugs him tighter.

INT. LIVING ROOM-APARTMENT-AFTERNOON

Joy stands in the apartment and looks around. A knock on the door.

BRENDA (O.S.)
Shelly!! Come on, answer the door?!

The door opens and Brenda steps in. She closes the door and looks around the apartment. Joy walks out into the living room.

JOY
Hello, Brenda?

BRENDA
You!

JOY
Get her!

Russian Goon #1 rushes towards Brenda.

BRENDA
Help!!

Brenda grabs a hold of the doorknob. Russian Goon #1 pulls Brenda from the door.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Shut her up!

The Russian Goon #1's hand goes over Brenda's face and a rag is pressed over her nose. Brenda drifts to sleep.

JOY (CONT'D)
Good. Now, take her to the car!

INT. PARKING GARAGE-AFTERNOON

Lola leans herself onto her mother's car, with her eyes on her phone.

JOY (O.S.)
We caught her at the right time.

Lola ducks and hides alongside the passenger door. She peeks over the hood. Russian Goon #1 carries Brenda over his shoulder.

RUSSIAN GOON #1 (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Hurry up!

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Don't rush me, idiot!

Lola sits down on the ground. She looks at the license plate number and the model of the car.

INT. LIVING ROOM-COTTAGE-AFTERNOON

Shelly's cell phone rings.

EARL
Babe, someone's calling you?

SHELLY
Can you answer it for me?

Earl answers.

EARL
Hello?

LOLA (V.O.)
Hello? Is this Shelly?

EARL
Hold on? Shelly, you better take this?!

Shelly rushes to her phone. Earl hands Shelly the cell phone. The phone in her hand and close to her mouth.

SHELLY
Hello?

INT. PARKING GARAGE-CONTINUOUS

LOLA
Shelly, this is Lola? My mom --

SHELLY (V.O.)
--What is it, honey?

LOLA
They took her.

INT. LIVING ROOM-COTTAGE-CONTINUOUS

SHELLY
Can you describe them to me?

LOLA (V.O.)
A blonde woman and a big guy.

SHELLY
Can you tell me where you are?

LOLA (V.O.)
I'm in a parking garage. Close to
where you live.

SHELLY
Okay. Sit tight, we're coming to
get you?

LOLA (V.O.)
Okay.

Shelly hangs up the phone.

SHELLY
Can you --

EARL
-- Sure.

SHELLY
Thank you.

INT. PARKING GARAGE-CONTINUOUS

Shelly gets out of Earl's car.

SHELLY
Lola?!

Lola gets up from the ground and runs to Shelly.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Kiddo?

Lola wraps her arms tightly around Shelly's waist.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Nice to see you too. Come on?

INT. BEDROOM-COTTAGE-EVENING

Earl walks into the bedroom, carrying Lola to the bed. Shelly moves the covers over, while Earl lays Lola down. Shelly covers Lola.

EARL

Come on. The poor girl had a rough day.

INT. LIVING ROOM-COTTAGE-EVENING

Shelly and Earl sit on the couch together. Shelly looks at the pictures on Lola's phone.

EARL

She was smart for taking pictures.

SHELLY

Yeah, she was. What do you think we should do?

EARL

I say we go get her.

SHELLY

Now that we have the address.

INT. BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Shelly sits in the bedroom and Maggie sits in a recliner.

SHELLY

If anything happens, get the girl out of here? Don't look back.

MAGGIE

I'll take care of her.

INT. OFFICE-EVENING

Brenda sits in a chair. She starts to wake up. Xander touches Brenda's face and slowly caresses it. Brenda bites onto his hand.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Ahh! You bitch!!

Xander steps close to Brenda and raises his hand.

JOY (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
No! We need her unharmed.

Xander walks out of the Office.

JOY (CONT'D)
You almost got yourself hurt there
--

Brenda spits in Joy's face. Joy wipes the spit from her face.

BRENDA
-- That's for Nick.

JOY
You're not making this easy for us.

Joy's cell phone rings.

JOY (CONT'D)
Look who it is! Your client.

Joy puts the phone to her ear.

JOY (CONT'D)
Hello?

INT. CAR-EVENING

SHELLY
First, I want to talk to Brenda?

JOY (V.O.)
No --

SHELLY
-- Shut up and put her on the phone!

INT. OFFICE-CONTINUOUS

Joy puts the phone to Brenda's ear.

BRENDA

Yeah?

SHELLY (V.O.)

We have Lola? Are you alright?

BRENDA

I'm fine. I'm glad she got to you first. Do me a favor?

SHELLY (V.O.)

Anything?

BRENDA

Save Joy for me?!

SHELLY (V.O.)

No problem.

INT. CAR-CONTINUOUS

Shelly ends the call. She looks at Earl.

SHELLY

Here come the fireworks.

INT. HALLWAY-CASINO-NIGHT

Shelly and Earl lean up against each other. On her tiptoes, Shelly kisses Earl on the lips.

EARL

Are you ready?

SHELLY

Yes.

Shelly walks towards the office door. Earl walks behind her, holding a **bat** up against his shoulder.

INT. OFFICE-NIGHT

A knock on the door.

JOY

Who is it?

SHELLY (O.S.)

Pizza?!

Joy steps towards the door. A gun in her hand. Joy pushes the door open with her foot. A pizza box on the floor. Joy leans down and picks up the box.

Joy closes the door and turns around. Shelly stands in front of Joy, catching her by surprise.

JOY

Shelly?

A punch from Shelly. Joy hits the floor.

SHELLY

In the flesh!

Shelly grabs Joy by the back of her shirt.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Get up!

JOY

Please, stop?!

SHELLY

Shut up!

JOY

Please, listen!

SHELLY

What?!

JOY

She's in the Surveillance Room!

SHELLY

I figured that. On your feet!

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM-NIGHT

Xander's crouched down behind Brenda, his arm wrapped around her throat. A gun in his other hand, pressed against Brenda's chest.

INT. HALLWAY-NIGHT

Earl steps towards the door. His hand turns the doorknob. the door opens and Xander fires off 5 shots.

Russian Goon #1 falls forward. Earl reaches onto the back of the goons' neck, using him as a shield. Xander shoots 13 bullets into the Russian Goon #1's corpse.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Xander throws the gun at Earl in frustration. Earl drops Russian Goon #1 and Xander pulls Brenda back, using her as his shield.

EARL
Let her go?!

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Do you want her?! Come and get her!!

Shelly walks into the surveillance room.

SHELLY
With pleasure!

Shelly pulls up a gun and fires a shot into Xander's leg. Xander falls to the floor with Brenda. Brenda pushes Xander off her.

BRENDA
Get off me!!

Earl steps towards Brenda and helps her up. Earl walks Brenda away from Xander.

XANDER (SUBTITLE)
(in Russian)
Do you think this is over?! This is just the beginning of more pain!!

Shelly shoots the gun. Nothing but silence in the room.

SHELLY
The guy was giving me a migraine!

BRENDA
How's Lola?

SHELLY
She's fine. Come on.

Shelly, Brenda, and Earl walk towards the door, leaving the surveillance room. Russian Goon #2 runs straight towards Shelly and Earl swings the bat, knocking Russian Goon #2 unconscious.

EXT. COTTAGE-MORNING

The car pulls up to the driveway. Brenda gets out and steps towards the front porch. The front door of the cottage opens, and Lola runs towards Brenda.

LOLA
Mom!!

Brenda crouches down and wraps her arms around Lola. Shelly and Earl get out of the car.

BRENDA
My girl.

Brenda looks at Shelly and Earl.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Thank you.

SHELLY
Your welcome.

Brenda stands to her feet and walks towards the trunk of the car.

BRENDA
Can you pop the trunk?

Earl presses the button on his key. The trunk pops up and Brenda peeks her head in. Enough light from the outside.

Brenda looks Joy in the eyes.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
I really should kill you but that is something Nick would not do. I see you again, and I'll kill you. Got me?!

Joy nods her head. Brenda lets the trunk down and looks at Shelly.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
You can let her go.

SHELLY
How do you know she won't retaliate?

BRENDA
She won't.

SHELLY

What now?

BRENDA

I go home. Thank you, both of you.

EARL

Anytime.

Lola steps towards Earl and hugs him. Brenda reaches her hand out.

EARL (CONT'D)

Be good, baby girl.

Lola grabs Brenda's hand. They walk towards a taxi. Brenda looks back at Shelly, with a smile on her face and tears in her eyes. The taxi drives away. Shelly looks back at the trunk.

SHELLY

Get your ass out of the trunk!!

Joy pushes the trunk open and gets out. She falls to the ground, her hands raised.

JOY

Don't, please!!

SHELLY

Shut up! Get out of here before I shoot you myself.

JOY

It's not over.

SHELLY

You think so.

3 cars speed towards the driveway. A scared look on Joy's face. The cars park and surround Joy.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

She wasn't lying.

EARL

Get to cover!

Earl ducks behind the front of the car. Shelly opens the back doors and lies on her stomach, aiming her gun. Joy looks back and sees no one in sight.

JOY

Shelly!!

12 RUSSIAN THUGS, all in their 30s and 40s. The Russian Thugs get out of the cars and walks towards Joy. All heavily armed with automatic weapons, tattooed, and opposing with force.

They shoot Joy, killing her instantly. Shelly looks at Joy's corpse. Earl stands to his feet and fires shots at the Thugs.

5 shots to 5 of the gang members. 7 left. Shelly aims her gun and shoots 1 in the foot.

Another shot from Shelly to the thug's head. Earl walks towards the rest of the thugs and fires his shotgun. He fires off 6 shots and kills 5.

The last thug fires a bullet into Earl's chest. Shelly's eyes grow with a shock. Shelly gets a mad look on her face and fires off 2 shots into the last thug's chest.

Shelly runs to Earl and leans down. A saddened look on her face. Shelly caresses his face. Blood coming down Earl's mouth.

EARL

..Go.

SHELLY

No.

Maggie runs towards Shelly and pulls her up by her arm.

MAGGIE

Let's go!!

Shelly leans down and kisses Earl for the last time. Maggie and Shelly run to the car and get in. The car pulls away from the cottage. Shelly looks back at Earl.

INT. CAR-AFTERNOON

Shelly looks out the window and then at Maggie.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry.

SHELLY

Why?

MAGGIE

I know you loved him.

SHELLY

Love is just another word for stupid.

MAGGIE
What do you want to do?

SHELLY
I don't know.

EXT. PARKING LOT-BUS STATION-AFTERNOON

Shelly leans herself up against the car. Maggie pulls Shelly close and hugs her.

MAGGIE
Take this?

Maggie hands Shelly an envelope.

SHELLY
What's this?

MAGGIE
A cashier's check for 150 thousand.

SHELLY
What about you? Don't you want to go with me?

MAGGIE
No. I belong here. I have a job and friends.

SHELLY
Take care.

MAGGIE
You too. I love you.

SHELLY
Love you too.

INT. BUS-AFTERNOON

Shelly leans herself up against the window, watching everything pass by.

INT. LIVING ROOM-MORNING

A knock at the door. Lola steps towards the door and opens it.

LOLA
Shelly!! Come in?!

Lola pulls Shelly in by her arm.

SHELLY
Where's your mom?

LOLA
In her office, do you want me to
get her?

SHELLY
No.

Brenda walks into the living room.

BRENDA
Shelly?! What brings you here?

SHELLY
I was just in the neighborhood.

BRENDA
Lola, why don't you go do your
homework?

LOLA
I did it already?

BRENDA
Then go play on the computer!

Lola walks out of the living room. Shelly sits down on the
sofa.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Something happened, didn't it?

SHELLY
Earl's dead. So is Joy.

BRENDA
Your mom?

SHELLY
She made it back home.

BRENDA
I'm sorry about Earl. Joy, she knew
what she was getting herself into.
Do you need a place to stay?

SHELLY
Yes.

BRENDA

You can stay here until you get on your feet.

SHELLY

There is one last thing.

Shelly feels around her stomach.

BRENDA

I'll help you. Whatever you need, I'll be here.

SHELLY

Thank you.

Brenda stands up.

BRENDA

Let me show you to your room?

INT. BEDROOM-MORNING

Brenda opens the door. Shelly walks into the bedroom. She looks at all the pictures on the wall. Shelly sits on the bed and looks at Brenda.

SHELLY

This isn't right. I shouldn't make you change anything for my sake.

Shelly stands back up and proceeds to walk out. Brenda raises her hand, stopping Shelly from making another step.

BRENDA

Whoa! Hold on there. Please sit down?

Shelly sits at the edge of the bed.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Do you know why I helped you this year?

SHELLY

Why?

BRENDA

Because Nick would have done it. You proved me wrong, that not everyone is like Joy. You didn't intrude on my family or make me choose you over my daughter.

SHELLY

Thank you for your help.

BRENDA

Thank you for getting me and my daughter out of that situation. I'll let you get some rest.

Brenda steps out of the bedroom and closes the door. Shelly lies back on the bed and closes her eyes.

INT. DINING ROOM-EVENING

Lola sits at the dinner table. Brenda walks a pan of chicken to the center of the table. Shelly walks into the dining room.

SHELLY

Smells great.

BRENDA

Thank you.

Shelly sits across from Lola. Lola reaches her hands to Brenda and then to Shelly. Shelly hesitates but grabs a hold of Lola's hand anyway. Lola closes her eyes.

LOLA

Dear Lord, thank you for this food and our many blessings you have bestowed upon us. In your precious name, Amen.

Shelly looks around.

SHELLY

Amen.

BRENDA

Amen. Now, dig in?!

Brenda reaches over to the mashed potatoes. Lola hands Shelly the vegetables.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

How'd you sleep?

SHELLY

Pretty good.

BRENDA

Could you do me a favor?

SHELLY

Sure.

BRENDA

I have to go out for a client. Can you watch Lola for a bit?

SHELLY

Sure.

LOLA

What did she do?

BRENDA

Shoplifting.

LOLA

How old?

BRENDA

15.

LOLA

What about her parents?

BRENDA

It's just her and her grandmother.

LOLA

What's her name?

INT. HOLDING CELL-POLICE DEPARTMENT-NIGHT

Brenda steps into the cell and sits down next to Nicola.

BRENDA

Nicola?

Nicola looks at Brenda.

NICOLA

Where have you been? I have been waiting for too long.

BRENDA

Your grandmother told me to tell you she's tired of your troublemaking days. She wants you out of her house.

NICOLA

Where am I supposed to go?

BRENDA
I gave her an option. I told her I
would take you in.

NICOLA
Why?

BRENDA
Because if I don't, you'll end up
dead.

Nicola looks at Brenda.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

Lola lies on the floor. She reads her book. Shelly sits in a
recliner and looks through a baby book. Lola looks at Shelly.

LOLA
So, you like babies?

SHELLY
What?

LOLA
Do you like babies? The book your
reading?

SHELLY
I guess. I'm babysitting you. So,
you're close to a baby's age.

LOLA
I'm almost 13.

SHELLY
You're correct.

LOLA
Why didn't Earl come with you?

SHELLY
He died.

LOLA
I'm sorry.

SHELLY
It's alright.

LOLA
Do you miss him?

SHELLY
Everyday.

LOLA
I liked him.

SHELLY
Me too.

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Nicola sits on the sofa. Brenda brings blankets and pillows out to the sofa and sits them down.

BRENDA
You should have everything you need.

NICOLA
Is this allowed?

BRENDA
What do you mean?

NICOLA
Are you allowed to take me in if you are my lawyer?

BRENDA
I am. You were signed over to me.

NICOLA
How is this going to work?

BRENDA
Let's worry about that tomorrow. For now, get some sleep.

NICOLA
Good night.

Nicola lies down, kicks off her shoes, and grabs a pillow. Her headrest on the pillow.

EXT. BACKYARD-MORNING

Nicola sits up, on her knees, planting flowers in the garden. Lola sits on a lounge chair, reading a book.

NICOLA

I don't see why I have to do this
shit. Why can't the bookworm over
there do it?

LOLA

Because I did it last week.

NICOLA

Oh, just read your book.

BRENDA

When you are done, I want you to
come with me to go clothes
shopping.

NICOLA

Why? I have clothes.

BRENDA

New clothes.

Shelly steps outside and looks at Nicola.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Did you have a nice sleep?

SHELLY

Awesome.

Brenda looks at Nicola, then at Shelly.

BRENDA

Her grandmother didn't want her,
and I had to make the right choice.

SHELLY

Poor girl.

Nicola looks at Shelly.

NICOLA

The name's Nicola by the way.
What's yours?

SHELLY

Shelly.

NICOLA

Good to meet you.

Shelly looks at Brenda and whispers.

SHELLY

Nicola?

BRENDA

Let's talk in private.

INT. DINING ROOM-MORNING

Brenda and Shelly sit at the dinner table.

BRENDA

She is Nick's daughter.

SHELLY

Wow.

BRENDA

She doesn't know and for her own sake, I don't want her to feel like she can't trust anyone.

SHELLY

Sure. My lips are sealed.

BRENDA

Thank you. Do you want to go with us?

SHELLY

Where to?

BRENDA

She needs clothes and I figure since we are going to the mall, you might need to look at the baby cribs. You can get one at a low price.

SHELLY

I'll go get ready.

INT. SHOPPING MALL-AFTERNOON

At the cribs, Shelly walks through the aisle. An EMPLOYEE approaches Shelly, in his late 20s. His presence gives off a good vibe and positivity.

EMPLOYEE

Can I help you with something?

SHELLY

Yes, I want to pay and have this
crib delivered?

EMPLOYEE

Sure. Just meet me at the register
when you're ready.

SHELLY

Thank you.

INT. FOOD COURT-AFTERNOON

In the line for pizza dishes, Brenda and Lola stand. Brenda
looks around.

BRENDA

Do you see where she went?

LOLA

No.

Nicola sits at a table, her cell phone in her hands. Her
friends laugh as she tells them jokes.

NICOLA'S FRIEND #2

He wanted me to tell you that
you're invited to his party.

NICOLA

Cool!

NICOLA'S FRIEND #1

He's in college too.

Brenda steps towards Nicola.

BRENDA

Excuse me?

Nicola looks at Brenda and rolls her eyes.

NICOLA

What is it this time?

BRENDA

You can't be around them?

NICOLA'S FRIEND #1

What a buzz kill!

BRENDA

Come on, now!

NICOLA
I'll check you guys later.

Nicola gets up and walks away from the table. Brenda walks towards the line and Lola.

NICOLA (CONT'D)
Why do you have to embarrass me?

BRENDA
You were just arrested for shoplifting. They got a slap on the wrist, while you took the fall!

NICOLA
You're not my mother or my father!

BRENDA
I'm your father's wife!

NICOLA
(steely calm)
What?

Brenda's eyes grow with shock at what she just revealed to Nicola.

NICOLA (CONT'D)
You bitch --

Nicola runs.

BRENDA
Nicola!

LOLA
Is it true?

BRENDA
I --

LOLA
-- I'll take the bus home.

Lola leaves Brenda, not a word can be said.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL-AFTERNOON

Shelly walks towards the parking lot and looks around. Brenda raises her hand.

BRENDA
Hey?

SHELLY
I was looking for you.

BRENDA
I'm a lousy mother.

SHELLY
What happened?

BRENDA
I said something I shouldn't have.

SHELLY
Oh, I see.

BRENDA
Did you get what you needed?

SHELLY
Yeah.

INT. BEDROOM-EVENING

Lola sits on her bed, headphones over her ears. Brenda steps into the bedroom.

BRENDA
I brought you dinner.

Lola looks away from Brenda with a mad look on her face.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Take off the headphones!

Lola pulls the headphones off her head and tosses them.

LOLA
What!

BRENDA
I know your upset but don't get mad about it. Talk?

Brenda sits on the bed.

LOLA
Why are you so cool about dad cheating on you?

BRENDA
He didn't cheat on me. He was in another relationship before he met me.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Your dad wanted to wait for marriage before he and her, even. They went ahead and did it. Next thing you know, she's pregnant and she dumps your dad. After Nicola was born, her mother managed to use it as a way to get child support.

LOLA

What happened to her?

BRENDA

She died in a car accident.

LOLA

Why didn't dad try to get custody of her?

BRENDA

Her grandmother reported him as unfit and responsible for all the bad stuff that happened. We all know the truth.

Brenda looks at the clock.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I better go find that girl.

Brenda stands up and walks out.

INT. LIVING ROOM-EVENING

Shelly sits on the sofa and watches television. Brenda grabs her keys and purse.

BRENDA

I'll be right back. Can you watch Lola for me?

SHELLY

Sure.

BRENDA

Thanks.

Brenda walks towards the door, opens it, and walks out.

INT. CAR-EVENING

Brenda drives the car. She looks around the neighborhood.

BRENDA

Park!

EXT. PARK-EVENING

Nicola's Friends sit on the bench. Brenda steps towards them.

BRENDA

Where is she?

NICOLA'S FRIEND #2

How the hell are we supposed to know! You're the psycho that made her runaway!

Brenda grabs Nicola's Friend #2 by her shirt.

BRENDA

Listen you little shit, if anything happens to her, I'm coming to kick the shit out of you. All 3 of you!

NICOLA'S FRIEND #1

Honestly, we don't know where she is!

BRENDA

Okay.

Brenda runs.

NICOLA'S FRIEND #1

She's crazy!

INT. LIVING ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Shelly sits on the sofa with Lola.

LOLA

Has mom texted you yet?

SHELLY

No.

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

The window opens. Nicola pulls and lifts herself through the window and falls to the floor.

NICOLA

(laugh)

INT. LIVING ROOM-CONTINUOUS

Shelly looks at Lola.

SHELLY
Did you hear that?

LOLA
Hear what?

SHELLY
Stay here?

Shelly gets up and walks towards the hallway.

INT. BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Shelly opens the door.

NICOLA
What are you doing in my sister's
room!

Shelly steps towards Nicola.

SHELLY
Your drunk --

NICOLA
-- I'm not drunk!

SHELLY
Come on! --

INT. BATHROOM-NIGHT

Nicola crawls to the toilet. Shelly holds Nicola's hair back as Nicola faces the toilet. A pill bottle falls out of Nicola's pocket.

Shelly grabs the bottle, throws it to the ground as she realizes what Nicola has taken. Her hand goes down Nicola's throat. Shelly pulls her hand out, and Nicola let's all of it out.

INT. BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Nicola lays in the bed, under the covers, sound asleep.

Shelly sits on the floor; her eyes look down. Brenda rushes into the bedroom. She looks at Nicola, then at Shelly.

BRENDA

Thank you.

Shelly gets up.

SHELLY

She'll be alright. I'll see you in the morning.

BRENDA

Good night.

Brenda sits in a chair across from the bed. She leans herself back and continues watching Nicola sleep.

INT. BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS

Nicola sits up in bed. She looks at Brenda.

NICOLA

Hey!

Brenda opens her eyes.

NICOLA (CONT'D)

What happened?

Brenda gets up and rushes towards Nicola and touches her face.

BRENDA

How do you feel?

NICOLA

Like shit.

BRENDA

I'll go make you something to eat?

NICOLA

No, stay.

Nicola grabs a hold of Brenda's arm.

BRENDA

I'm not going anywhere.

Brenda sits down on the bed.

NICOLA

What was he like?

BRENDA
He was gentle, caring, and generous.

NICOLA
Did he want me?

BRENDA
Of course.

NICOLA
Then why wasn't he trying to see me?

BRENDA
Your mother wouldn't allow it.

EXT. PARK-AFTERNOON-FLASHBACK

NICOLA'S MOTHER, 25. A waitress, now deceased. Cocaine and crack addict. Uses child support to buy drugs.

Nick sits on the bench near the playground. NICOLA'S MOTHER steps towards Nick, pushing a stroller.

NICOLA'S MOTHER
Hi.

Nick gets up.

NICK
Where have you been?

NICOLA'S MOTHER
I just lost track of time. Do you want to see her?

Nicola's Mother moves the stroller towards Nick. Nick steps towards the stroller and she pulls it back.

NICOLA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Not so fast, papa!

NICK
What is it this time, you want more money?

NICOLA'S MOTHER
I'm getting full custody.

NICK

Do you really think they are going to give you custody when they see you under the influence?

Nicola's Mother wipes her nose.

NICOLA'S MOTHER

I'll get a good lawyer.

NICK

Not before you give him a good head.

Nicola's Mother slaps Nick. Nick glares at her.

NICK (CONT'D)

Let me see my daughter, now!

Nick pulls the stroller towards him and leans down. He touches the top of the baby's head.

NICK (CONT'D)

I'll see you soon.

Nick looks back up at Nicola's Mother.

NICK (CONT'D)

Bye.

Nicola's Mother pulls the stroller away. Nick looks away.

INT. BEDROOM-MORNING-BACK TO PRESENT

Nicola sits up on the edge of the bed.

BRENDA

Whatever your grandmother told you, it wasn't all true. He wanted you. I wanted you because you are a reflection of him. A beautiful reflection of him.

Nicola hugs Brenda. Brenda rubs her hand on Nicola's back and kisses her on the cheek.

INT. DINING ROOM-MORNING

Brenda and Nicola walk towards the dining room. Brenda looks at the table and sees that the table is covered with platters of food. Platters of **eggs, bacon, sausage** and **pancakes** sit in the middle of the table. Shelly walks into the room.

SHELLY

I took the common courtesy to help
out and make you breakfast.

BRENDA

Thank you, again. Wow!

Brenda walks up to the table and pulls out her chair. She sits. Nicola sits. Lola sits by Nicola. Shelly sits at the end of the table.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I want to thank you for saving
Nicola's life. She told me what you
did for her.

SHELLY

No problem. So, are you gonna eat
or just look at it?

BRENDA

I had one other thing to say. I
want you to stay and be a part of
the family.

SHELLY

I'm honored. Okay.

BRENDA

Let's dig in!

Brenda sticks her fork into the pancakes.

INT. BATHROOM-AFTERNOON

The pill bottle on the floor of the bathroom. Shelly leans down and picks it up. She looks at the name on the bottle.

SHELLY

(reads label)

Ryan!

INT. ELEVATOR-STATE COLLEGE-AFTERNOON

The elevator doors open. Ryan walks in and looks at the
POLICE OFFICERS. All in their early 30s and 20s.

5 of them stand in a line, surrounding Shelly. Ryan turns to
face the doors and hits the 2nd-floor button.

SHELLY

Hello, Ryan?

Ryan looks back at Shelly.

RYAN

You!

The elevator doors open and the Officers push Ryan out of the elevator.

INT. HALLWAY-AFTERNOON

Ryan is forced to the ground and his eyes look up at Shelly.

The Officers handcuff Ryan. Shelly hits the first-floor button and the elevator doors close.

INT. CRAWLSPACE-AFTERNOON

Brenda crawls through the crawlspace, a *flashlight* in one hand, and mouse traps in the other.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Remember that guy, Ryan?

Brenda sits on her knees, setting the mouse traps.

BRENDA

Yeah?

SHELLY

He got arrested.

Brenda peeks her head out.

EXT. FRONT YARD-AFTERNOON

BRENDA

Why and who helped with that?

SHELLY

Me and because he is responsible for Nicola being drunk and nearly dying of an overdose.

Brenda sits down on the ground and looks at Shelly. She crawls to the grass and stands to her feet.

BRENDA

Wow. Thank you. How'd you find this out?

SHELLY

There was a pill bottle that Nicola dropped, and his name was on it.

Brenda cleans off her hands by rubbing them together.

BRENDA

You really looked out for her. I appreciate that.

SHELLY

No problem.

INT. LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

Together in the living room, Shelly and Brenda sit on the sofa. A bowl of popcorn between the both of them. Shelly digs her hands into the popcorn, eating it as if she is extremely hungry.

BRENDA

Someone's hungry.

SHELLY

Is that normal?

BRENDA

Oh yeah.

Shelly feels her stomach.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Have you figured out any names yet?

SHELLY

Sara.

BRENDA

How do you know it's a girl?

SHELLY

I just know.

Brenda lifts the remote.

BRENDA

Let's watch something else?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-NIGHT

Shelly sits up and holds her newborn daughter. Brenda steps into the room, with a *gift bag* in her hand.

BRENDA
Hi?

SHELLY
Hi there.

Brenda looks at the newborn.

BRENDA
She's beautiful.

SHELLY
Thanks. She does take after her
mama.

BRENDA
Yeah, she does.

SHELLY
Do you think she'll be any trouble
when she grows up?

BRENDA
I believe she'll have the right
guidance.

SHELLY
I guess she will.

Nicola and Lola walk into the room and approach Shelly.
Nicola feels the baby's head.

NICOLA
She is adorable.

SHELLY
She's going to be a great woman
someday.

BRENDA
I do have someone else here to see
you.

Shelly looks at the door. Maggie walks into the room. Strings
to **balloons** in her hand.

SHELLY
You're here!

Shelly looks at Brenda.

BRENDA
I booked a flight for her the first
chance I got.

SHELLY

Thank you.

Maggie sits close to the bed and rubs the newborn's head.

BRENDA

Come on, girls? They need some time
to catch up.

Nicola and Lola walk towards the door, exiting the hospital room. Brenda steps outside, joining the girls, and shuts the door.

EXT. PARK-AFTERNOON

Nicola's Friends #1, #2 and #3 sit on the bench. Nicola walks towards them.

NICOLA'S FRIEND #1

Hey?

Nicola moves her head to the music coming from the **iPod** and the **Pill Speaker**.

NICOLA

That's a cool song, who is that?

NICOLA'S FRIEND #2

MAD FVN, Skeletons.

NICOLA'S FRIEND #3

Sit down and join the party?

NICOLA

What party? You're all a bunch
dumbass girls with no purpose in
life. You go to parties, get drunk,
and waste your time on guys that
only want you for one thing. I
haven't heard from you in a couple
of days, and I haven't gotten so
much of a voice of concern. I
almost died from an overdose from
pills I took. You suck!

Nicola turns away.

NICOLA'S FRIEND #2

Wait!

Nicola looks back.

NICOLA
Shut up! I'm done with all of you!

NICOLA'S FRIEND #1
We didn't know. We're sorry.

NICOLA'S FRIEND #3
Can we call you later?

NICOLA
I don't know. I'm still on
restriction. Fine. Call me later.

Nicola walks through the park, with her iPhone in her hand.

She puts her earphones over her ears. The volume goes up, and "SKELETONS" by MAD FVN plays as Nicola makes her way through the park.

EXT. BACKYARD-AFTERNOON (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Brenda sits on her knees, with her gloved hands deep into the soil. Planting flowers.

Across from Brenda, in a **GAZEBO**, is Nick. He turns his head and looks at Brenda. Nick grabs a **red rose** and yanks it off the rose bush. He walks towards Brenda and kneels down. He brushes his hand through her hair.

NICK
You'll always be beautiful to me.

BRENDA
Why can't it be like this forever?

NICK
It will.

Nick kisses Brenda on the lips and whispers.

NICK (CONT'D)
Bye.

Brenda looks at Nick and looks at his eyes. As his mouth speaks with Lola's voice.

NICK (CONT'D)
Mom!

EXT. BACKYARD-AFTERNOON (END DREAM SEQUENCE)

LOLA
Mom!

BRENDA
What?

LOLA
Can we go to the mall?

BRENDA
Did you do your homework?

LOLA
Yes.

BRENDA
Just give me a minute.

Brenda gets up from the ground and walks towards the gazebo. She cuts a **white rose** from the rose bush.

INT. LIVING ROOM-AFTERNOON

Brenda steps towards to the **fireplace mantel** and sets the rose down with Nick's portrait above.

BRENDA
I love you too.

FADE OUT:**THE END**