

13 DAYS

Written by

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Based on *5 Days* by Gwyneth Hughes

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One murder.

13 Days.

A taut crime drama unfolding over thirteen nonconsecutive days. Each episode comprises a single, pivotal day. These thirteen days will change everything.

BLACK SCREEN

PRELAP the sound of BREATHING. Rhythmic. Lungs expand, contract. COME UP ON --

A GIRL'S HANDS as they reach out, push aside a tree branch, only to find another. Leaves cascade down, filling in the gap she just made. Almost like drowning... We're --

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Could be morning or noon. Impossible to tell. The dense brush forms a canopy overhead, blocking out the sun.

GIRL'S POV -- as she cuts through the maze of lush growth at a sprint, her breath coming in quick spurts. Is she running from something? *Someone?*

Chokecherry and Gamble Oak give way as she races forward, shoving their branches aside -- until she hits A CLEARING. Sunlight dazzles, momentarily blinding us.

CUT TIGHT ON THE GIRL'S FACE as she catches her breath. She's 15, going on 16. Long blonde hair tangled by the wind. And she's standing on the ledge of --

CRYSTAL RIVER QUARRY

Her dirty Converse sneakers peek out over a sheer, dizzying 450 FOOT DROP. The mountain's being mined for marble, leaving sharp crags and crevices for miles in both directions. And at its base, A LAKE with water a brilliant shade of turquoise.

The Girl stands on the precipice, looking out into thin air. The sound of bird cries from above. Then, without hesitating

SHE JUMPS

SMASH CUT TO MOLLY PATTERSON (39, pixie brunette, slight frame belies a rock solid constitution). She JOLTS AWAKE in bed, OUT OF HER NIGHTMARE, gasping for air --

CUT TO BLACK

Two words fill the screen...

DAY ONE

Come up on --

INT. PATTERSON HOME - BEDROOM - NEW YEAR'S DAY - 6:42 AM

Curtains drawn, the room is dark. Molly's alone in bed, sheets twisted around her, pulse still racing from her nightmare. Caught in a place between reality and her dream, Molly doesn't see what we do --

A MALE FIGURE standing by the door, watching her...

Every woman's greatest fear. Play the tension as he moves slowly towards the bed, towards Molly... We can make out that he's tall, built, and African American. That's right, let every assumption, racial stereotype and expectation bubble to the surface as he moves towards the bed, slowly raising his hand...

JUMP SCARE as Molly sees him, RECOILS --

MOLLY

Jesus -- !

THE FIGURE steps up to the end of the bed REVEALING... IT'S A BOY. Molly's foster son, JOEY (15, high functioning but somewhere on the spectrum).

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Joey, what's the -- ? What's wrong?

Oblivious that he just scared the living shit out of her.

JOEY

We're out'a milk.

Joey holds up an empty milk carton, CUT TO --

INT. PATTERSON HOME - KITCHEN - 7:10 AM

MOLLY stands at the stove making pancakes. Take a minute with her, get to know how she moves before she goes to rinse her measuring cup in the sink REVEALING A BRUISE on her face, just below the eye, it's fresh.

AND SHE'S 8 MONTHS PREGNANT

MOLLY

You want me to sprinkle in some chocolate chips?

JOEY'S at the table. Doesn't look up from his manga.

JOEY

I'm not a baby.

MOLLY
It's chocolate, Joey. Not an
insult.

Molly flips pancakes. Keeps her voice light when she asks --

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Fun night?
(gets nothing)
Heard you coming in past 2 AM.

JOEY
It was New Year's Eve. Are you
really gonna bust my balls for --

MOLLY
Language.

Into the room pushes a ball of life named AMELIA (15, African American, Joey's twin, good girl) --

AMELIA
You seen my sweatshirt? The one
with the stripes?

MOLLY
I'm making pancakes.

AMELIA
I took the 8 o'clock shift at
church -- I'm gonna miss the bus.

MOLLY
Sit. Eat. Five minutes won't make a
difference.

But she's talking to Amelia's back, buried in the pantry. She comes out with a power bar.

AMELIA
Breakfast of champions.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
That's not even real --

AMELIA
Love ya, bye --

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Stop right there!

Amelia knows the drill and secretly loves it. Comes back and kisses Molly on the cheek.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Least let me pick you up?

Amelia gives in, nods, then bends down and plants a kiss on Molly's pregnant belly.

AMELIA
Happy New Year, baby girl.

With that Amelia grabs her ski parka, a hat and gloves...

AMELIA (CONT'D)
I'll text when I'm done. See ya,
Joe.

Joey grunts from behind his comic as Amelia bails. Molly places three professional grade pancakes in front of Joey. She's just settling in across from him with her coffee when her cell *chimes*. She checks it...

MOLLY
It's Dad.

Joey picks up his plate, stands. Molly deflates...

MOLLY (CONT'D)
I thought we could have breakfast
together.

Molly's cell *chimes again*.

JOEY
Don't tell him I blew curfew.

A moment when he needs her, Joey softens.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Please?

Beat.

MOLLY
OK. We'll let it go. Start the year
fresh.

Molly's cell *chimes* a third time, Joey heads back to his room and Molly answers, her voice flat --

MOLLY (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
Hey.

INTERCUT with Molly's husband DAVID PATTERSON (44, life hasn't managed to strip away his golden boy good looks).

DAVID (INTO PHONE)
Hey.

PULL BACK to find David's --

INT. BEAVER CREEK RESORT - BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

DAVID stands on the dance floor in the center of a massive, empty, ballroom. Streamers and cracked confetti at his feet. New Year's revelry not so pretty in the morning light.

DAVID
Wanted to be the first to wish you
a Happy New Year.

MOLLY
I was making breakfast for Joey.
Amelia's already up and out.

DAVID
Course she is.

Something's clearly off. A loaded pause before --

DAVID (CONT'D)	MOLLY
Hey, Molly I --	So what was the head count?

DAVID
263. Better than last year.

MOLLY
Shit. We didn't pack enough
tumblers for that many people.

DAVID
After midnight I broke out the
flutes. Made it festive, actually.

David's forced positivity is met with awkward silence.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm sorry...

HOLD ON MOLLY alone in the kitchen. Is David apologizing for the nasty bruise on her face? We should wonder.

MOLLY
It's fine. Can we not get into --

DAVID
I jumped the gun without thinking
it all through and when you called
me on it... the way I acted...
Won't happen again.

Molly's listening... But up on the mountain, miles between them, David doesn't know how to read the silence.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Molly, you still -- ?

MOLLY
Yeah, I'm... We'll talk once you're home tonight.

DAVID
Right... What're you up to today?

MOLLY
Oh I... didn't get much sleep. Baby was kicking. Thought I'd lay low here at home... Text when you're heading back down the mountain?

DAVID
'Course. Love you.

But Molly's already hung up. David stands in the cavernous ballroom.

HANK (O.S.)
Molly doesn't k-k-know you were gonna sell the party store, does she?

FIND DAVID'S ASSISTANT HANK (32, awkward in a way that can come across as shifty) as he straps a helium tank to a dolly.

There's a shift in David, from warm to hardened. It's subtle. Blink and you'd miss it.

DAVID
If she knew... I gotta clean the whole mess up quick.

HANK
But I thought this was what you wanted. F-f-fresh start.

DAVID
Yeah, well... With the twins, the baby on the way...
(wistful)
Seems my timing's off again.

David grabs a push broom, glides it through fallen confetti.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Opposite of you. No strings, no obligations, free as a bird.

HANK

In debt and on p-p-parole.
Bachelor's paradise.

Hank went in to serve three years for aggravated assault.
Came out with the stutter. Don't ask.

DAVID

Saw you hanging out with the Valet
crew last night... rough bunch.

HANK

They're alright.

DAVID

Guess that depends on your end
game.

David pushes New Year's debris across the floor with the
broom. More to himself when he says...

DAVID (CONT'D)

Comes a point a man has to ask
himself what he's in it for...
(loaded)
What he's willing to risk.

A bright voice breaks into his thoughts --

ROXANNE (O.S.)

Hey - ya!

In breezes ROXANNE LeVINE (early 40's by birth, but parts of
her anatomy are brand spanking new). Born trash but with a
pretty face, she married up. Her husband owns the Resort.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

Heard you were looking for my
husband?

David checks to see his shirt's tucked.

DAVID

Mornin' Roxanne. Yeah, I was hoping
to have a word.

ROXANNE

He's sleeping off a bender. One
hell of a party last night.

DAVID

We aim to please.

ROXANNE

Do you now?

If Roxanne's words feels loaded, they should...

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

Gonna be hours before that man
drags his ass out'a bed and he'll
be in no mood for work talk. Guess
you'll have to deal with me.

HOLD ON DAVID, not liking his options as we hear --

RTD P.A. (PRE-LAP)

Line 34 with service from Denver
now arriving at platform three.

CUT TIGHT ON MOLLY. Her eyes dart, nervously searching for something. She's --

INT. RTD BOULDER BUS TERMINAL - 8:25 AM

The terminal is open for business but basically empty seeing as it's New Year's Day. A bus pulls to a stop, spills out a handful of undergrads in snow boots and parkas, heading back to campus a few days early.

Molly stands at a distance. *Having clearly lied to her husband David about staying home today, she's furtive, on edge as she surveys the terminal. Winter coat wrapped around her pregnant belly, beanie pulled down almost to her eyes. She doesn't want to be seen. But why?*

Play the tension as Molly walks the perimeter of the bus terminal, staying away from travelers, prying eyes...

ANGLE OVER TO THE BENCHES where a motley group of Homeless 20 somethings spent the night. High, drunk -- probably both -- one's got a guitar and they're ushering in the New Year with an off pitch rendition of *Auld Lang Syne* when a STREET DUDE (19, dreads) spots Molly moving past --

STREET DUDE

Happy New Year!

Molly keeps moving, head down, clearly trying to avoid eye contact. Cat nip to Street Dude, he breaks off from his crew, starts to follow her.

STREET DUDE (CONT'D)

What's your hurry, pretty lady?

Molly doesn't turn but she can feel him behind her, her pulse quickens...

STREET DUDE (CONT'D)
Just wanted to wish a beautiful
woman good tidings.

Molly picks up her pace, her breath coming in spurts -- She can hear his feet just behind her -- Catching up --

STREET DUDE (CONT'D)
Hey, what's your name?

Molly SPINS TO FACE HIM -- in her trembling, outstretched hand A TASER --

STREET DUDE (CONT'D)
Whoa...! All I said was --

Dude starts to back away --

STREET DUDE (CONT'D)
Just trying to be friendly.

His voice holds accusation. He turns, walks away.

Wide-eyed and terrified, Molly holds the taser out long after he's gone. Rattled to her core, she sips air, tries to calm her breathing. She places both hands on her pregnant belly, closes her eyes...

MOLLY
It's ok... we're ok...

Any woman would react to being harassed, but something about Molly's reaction, her *readiness*, should make us wonder...

Molly starts walking again. At the end of the terminal she turns a corner to find--

A LONG LINE OF OUTDOOR LOCKERS

Standard issue metal boxes with dial knob locks. Identical. Molly walks the line, she knows where she's going. Why is she here? Why did she lie to David? A sense of foreboding as she comes to a stop at LOCKER 49. No hesitation, she spins in a code, the locker swings open. WTF?

ANGLE INSIDE -- A BACKPACK. Molly pulls it out, rifles through it, searching... Until she finds what she came for. A PHOTO. Warped by age at its edges but the image is clear.

IT'S THE GIRL FROM MOLLY'S DREAM. She's 15, going on 16. Long blonde hair tangled by the wind.

The *buzz* from A TEXT pulls Molly away from the girl's image. She checks her phone... color instantly draining from her face. It's as if she's seen a ghost (in a way she has).

GO TIGHT ON THE TEXT EXCHANGE --

Unknown: Any chance we could meet up now?

Molly: I told you never to text me.

CUT TIGHT ON MOLLY, her breath comes quickly. Hands tremble as another TEXT *chimes*. She reads it...

Unknown: I know. Sorry. Going to be hard for me to slip away later.

Molly: Find a way.

CUT BACK TO MOLLY, determination mixes with dread in her eyes as she types...

Molly: This can only happen once. 5 o'clock like we agreed. Then it's over.

OFF MOLLY, hoping to god that's true...

END TEASER

ACT ONE

OVER BLACK

Metallica's *Master of Puppets* BLARES. Come up on MOLLY behind the wheel of her SUV. Hands gripping the wheel, she's...

INT. MOLLY'S SUV - 8:38 AM

Parked at the curb as the music BLASTS. Windows steamed up against the cold outside. Molly stares ahead, the stereo's bass is cranked up so high it vibrates the seats, the dash...

A TAP AT WINDOW

MOLLY JUMPS, SPINS to the window, heart in her throat -- did Street Dude follow her? Or is it whoever sent those texts?

Play the creepy as Molly reaches out... tentatively rubs a circle in the fogged up window REVEALING --

A SALT TRUCK DRIVER looking in through the glass. Ski parka over waterproof overalls, nose red from the cold --

SALT TRUCK DRIVER
No parking. I need access.

MOLLY
Oh my -- of course. Sorry I'll...
I'm moving right now.

Molly throws the car in drive and we CUT OUTSIDE --

SALT TRUCK DRIVER'S POV as Molly's tail-lights disappear down the street in the cold haze...

INT. CHURCH - COMMUNITY ROOM - 9:06 AM

The congregation's annual New Year's breakfast for the homeless. A line snakes out the door. Up front on eggs is --

AMELIA
We've got plenty so don't be shy.

A Homeless Man smiles as AMELIA loads his plate up. He moves on, another plate lands in front of Amelia who scoops eggs.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Don't forget there's coffee in...

Amelia looks up and the words evaporate before they can even get to her lips. REVERSE ANGLE to find --

LATISHA

Hey, baby.

LATISHA GRANT (29, African American, rough around the edges). She's smiling, but for Amelia it's like the air's been sucked out of the room.

AMELIA

You can't... I'm not supposed to talk to you. The judge said --

LATISHA

I don't mean no trouble.

Latisha's jumpy. Agitated. Is she tweaking?

LATISHA (CONT'D)

Just came in for breakfast. Imagine my surprise at seeing you.

AMELIA

You saw me. Now go.

LATISHA

You really gonna talk to your mother like that?

LaTisha is the twins' birth mother.

AMELIA

Molly's my mother.

Like flipping a switch, LaTisha goes from sweet to bitter in those three words.

LATISHA

That woman ain't your mother!

People turn. All eyes on the duo, LaTisha's eyes rim with tears.

LATISHA (CONT'D)

I made you. Gave birth to you. She don't know you like I do!

AMELIA

Because she's not black?

LATISHA

(ice)

'Cause she's not blood.

Latisha comes around the table, takes Amelia by both arms, squeezes hard. Venom in her voice --

LATISHA (CONT'D)

I was supposed to get you back!
They promised!

AMELIA

You went on a binge, left me and
Joey alone for three days with no
food. We were 8 years old!

LATISHA

I slipped up that one time. But
they said when I got clean --

AMELIA

You're hurting me!

THE CHAPLAIN races over, places his hands over LaTisha's.

CHAPLAIN

Alright now, that's enough.

Snapped out of a haze, LaTisha lets go.

LATISHA

I'm sorry. Baby, I... They treating
you ok? You know you always have a
home with me.

CHAPLAIN

(to Amelia)

Why don't you go help out in the
kitchen?

Shaken to her core, Amelia retreats. LaTisha shouts --

LATISHA

I'm gonna get you back, Baby!
Whatever it takes.

LaTisha's promise/threat hangs in the air, CUT TIGHT ON --

A disembodied woman's head. A mannequin. We're --

INT. WEAVE IT WIG STORE - 9:23 AM

PAN FROM the head to another, and another... a row of them.
Each sporting a lipstick smile and a different head of hair.

THE SOUND of door bell *chimes* as MOLLY pushes into the wig
store. She looks around at the smiling heads, overwhelmed,
until a friendly voice calls out --

STORE OWNER

Knew I was right to stay open
today.

Up walks a plump, 50 something woman with a warm smile.

STORE OWNER (CONT'D)

Happy New Year. What can I help you
with, Honey?

Molly reaches into her coat pocket, pulls out *the* PHOTO OF
THE YOUNG BLONDE GIRL FROM HER DREAM.

MOLLY

I uh...Do you have something like
this?

The Store Owner takes the photo.

STORE OWNER

I've got something close... Is it
for you?

The cell in Molly's pocket *buzzes*. She checks Caller ID.

MOLLY

Sorry, I should...
(into phone)
Hey. Everything ok?

INTERCUT WITH TANYA HARRIS (19), a college student and the
twins' math tutor. She's apoplectic --

TANYA

He pulled a knife on me! Is he off
his meds or something? I left you,
like three messages!

CUT BACK TO MOLLY as the world around her tilts...

MOLLY (INTO PHONE)

Ok. Slow down a second. Don't...
I'm on my way.

TANYA

Good, cause so are the cops.

MOLLY

(stunned)
You called the police?

TANYA

You weren't answering. I didn't
know what else to do!

MOLLY
I'm coming.

The day like a noose that keeps tightening around her neck,
Molly hangs up.

STORE OWNER
Everything ok?

MOLLY
(lies)
Everything's fine. I, uh -- I'll
have to come back later.

Shaken to her core, Molly races for the door. Store Owner
realizes she's still holding the PHOTO, shouts --

STORE OWNER
Honey, don't forget your --

But Molly's gone in a flurry of *door chimes*...

JOEY (PRE-LAP)
Bitch - that's a lie!

SMASH CUT TO:

Chaos on the front porch as everyone shouts at once. We're --

EXT. PATTERSON HOME - FRONT YARD - 9:44 AM

In a circle are MOLLY, TANYA and JOEY facing off --

<p>MOLLY We don't use that language in this house!</p>	<p>TANYA I thought he was gonna kill me!</p>
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<p>JOEY Good thing we're not <i>in</i> the house!</p>	<p>TANYA (CONT'D) One minute we were talking, the next he was coming at me!</p>
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Standing on the steps quietly observing is DETECTIVE GABRIEL
PRATT (late 30's, would be a daddy's boy -- if only his daddy
liked him).

Tanya's an emotional river that can't be dammed --

TANYA (CONT'D)
And there was, like -- no warning!
Absolutely no trigger. Not like
last time.

JOEY
 You're kidding me, right? You were
 all up in my face -- Tell them!

Violence in his voice. Tanya steps back --

TANYA
 See? He's dangerous!

MOLLY
 You don't get to talk right
 now!

Gabriel simply raises an evidence bag containing a KITCHEN
 KNIFE and the group falls silent.

GABRIEL
 We're looking at Reckless
 Endangerment. Possible criminal
 possession of a weapon.

MOLLY
 Please, Officer --

GABRIEL
Detective.

Molly takes the correction, and a breath.

MOLLY
 Detective, I just want you to...
 Joey suffers from ADHD, he
 struggles with anxiety --

TANYA
 And serious anger management
 issues.

MOLLY
 'Cause his birth mother used Meth
 straight through her pregnancy...
 We got Joey and his sister when
 they were 8 and the damage was
 already... I'm not making excuses,
 this is --
 (shoots Joey a look)
 Inexcusable. I just, I want you to
 have the full picture.

The Detective looks to Tanya.

GABRIEL
 Do you want to press charges?

Tanya looks from the knife in the bag to Joey, panic in his
 eyes... A loaded beat. Tanya shakes her head no.

TANYA

I'm sorry but... It was different when he was little but he's bigger than me now and I don't feel safe.

She takes the steps quickly, shouts back over her shoulder --

TANYA (CONT'D)

You can VENMO me!

Once she's gone, Molly turns to Joey.

MOLLY

We talked about this. You got physical. That can't happen.

JOEY

You're gonna send me away. You think I'll hurt the baby.

A mixture of hurt and futility. His words cut to the bone.

MOLLY

What? Joey, no.

JOEY

(ice)

I won't go back into the system. I'm not gonna let that happen.

A threat that will come back to haunt him. Joey slams inside.

GABRIEL

Any guns?

(off Molly's confusion)

In the house. You keep any firearms inside?

MOLLY

Oh. My husband... there were some break-ins in the neighborhood last month and he... Yes, we have a gun. But it's locked up.

GABRIEL

Keep it that way.

Too much, Molly sits down right there on the ground. Rests her pregnant belly in her hands.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Ma'am?

MOLLY
I'm alright. Just tired.

GABRIEL
(has to ask)
Where'd you get that bruise?

Molly instinctively touches the mark under her eye...

MOLLY
Oh I...Got the munchies in the
middle of the night. Corner of the
pantry jumped out at me... I should
have turned on the lights.

She's obviously lying. Gabriel decides not to push it.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
He's not what you think... Joey,
he's... smart and kind and oh my
god is he funny. He and his sister,
they changed my life...

Molly sits there criss cross apple sauce on her front porch
and asks Gabriel, herself, God, and whoever's listening...

MOLLY (CONT'D)
What am I supposed to do?

Gabriel reaches into his pocket, pulls out a BUSINESS CARD.

GABRIEL
This... It's someone you can talk
to.

Molly reaches up, takes the outstretched life line. Gabriel
turns, walks across the snow dusted lawn to his squad car
leaving Molly alone, in the cold...

CUT TO a mug of coffee, steam rising. We're --

INT. PATTERSON HOME - KITCHEN - 10:12 AM

MOLLY sits alone at the kitchen table, pen in hand. She looks
off into space, searching for the right words...

ANGLE DOWN to her personalized stationery as Molly writes in
practiced cursive...

"If you're reading this, something has happened to me..."

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

OVER BLACK

NATALIE (PRE-LAP)

You picked a hell of a way to ring
in the New Year.

COME UP ON NATALIE JUDD (early 30's, African American,
empathetic, quick to trust - a blessing and a curse).

HOLD TIGHT ON NATALIE long enough to get familiar with the
angles of her. Gaze level, unflinching. She's in the moment,
all focus. For good reason. PULL BACK TO FIND she's --

EXT. DARLEY TOWER - UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO - 10:26 AM

153 feet above pavement. NATALIE sits on the roof, legs
dangling over the ledge of the University dorm. Sitting
beside her is JUSTIN, a Freshman more than ready to jump.

He's terrified. She's serene.

NATALIE

I'm not gonna waste time
questioning your reasons, or your
resolve -- you're up here so... I
mean, there's no doubt you've
thought this through. Probably
pretty much all you've been
thinking about the past few days.

JUSTIN

Please... leave me alone.

NATALIE

And you spent the holiday on an
empty campus so... I'm guessing
there's not much at home for you.

Nat looks out over the University campus, trees dusted with
snow. She can see her own breath in the cold air.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Maybe college... it didn't turn out
to be the time of your life they
sold you on the tour?

A beat. Justin admits, lost...

JUSTIN

Yeah.

NATALIE

You've already made a decision and
I respect that.

Justin studies Nat, thrown by her...

JUSTIN

I thought you were here to stop me.

NATALIE

Your life, your choice, right?
(to the point)
Just not like this.

Below, squad cars and an ambulance wait, cherries flashing,
prepared for either outcome.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

There are people on campus...
Professors cutting vacation short
to prep for classes. And there's a
daycare half a block away... You're
not doing this in a bubble, you
know. People, they're gonna be
affected by how this goes down.

JUSTIN

So you don't care if I kill myself,
you just don't want me to jump?

Natalie chooses her words carefully. Speaks from experience.

NATALIE

Your actions... they've got
consequences, that's all I'm
saying.

(considers)

Only, I mean if I'm being honest,
your options are limited.

Matter of fact. Almost like reading a grocery list...

NATALIE (CONT'D)

The problem with pills is timing
and dosage. Too risky, plus you
might just barf 'em up. Gun to the
head is way messy. Best bet is a
hose to the exhaust pipe. You have
access to a private garage?

JUSTIN

That's...

NATALIE

A lot to consider, I know. But you considered this, right?

(hangs there)

Like I said, it's your call. We'll try and be respectful, cover you up quickly, but we're required to leave your body as is until we fully process the scene so... No way of avoiding it, a lot'a people are gonna see you. Is that really how you want to go out?

HOLD ON NATALIE TAKING A MASSIVE RISK, her legs dangling 153 feet above pavement... CUT TO --

EXT. PARKING LOT - 10:47 AM

NATALIE walks away from the ambulance where Justin sits being checked by an EMT. She passes a squad car --

COP

Interesting method.

NATALIE

Got him off the ledge.

Nat walks to her Toyota pick-up truck, climbs inside --

INT. NATALIE'S PICK UP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

NATALIE peels off her parka but doesn't move to start the truck. The cab is freezing, we can see her breath, but Nat sits in the driver's seat, eyes ahead... HOLD ON NAT finally digesting the intensity of what just happened up on that roof. Or is it something else?

Nat reaches up to her neck, gently pulls a gold chain out from under her shirt... linked to the chain is a simple GOLD WEDDING BAND. As Natalie rolls the ring between her fingertips the tears come. Quiet but fierce and she lets them. Giving way to everything she's holding just under her skin.

Her cell buzzes, startles Nat out of her daze. She tucks the ring on its chain back under her shirt, uses a sleeve to wipe her eyes as she answers --

NATALIE (INTO PHONE)

Hello?...

INTERCUT WITH MOLLY on the other end. She's --

EXT. PATTERSON HOME - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Snow blankets the grass like insulation, city sounds are muted. MOLLY stands in the back yard, cell pressed to her ear, Natalie on the other end...

NATALIE (THROUGH PHONE)
Hello...? I can hear you breathing.

Skittish, MOLLY HANGS UP, looks at the BUSINESS CARD in her hand. The one Detective Gabriel gave her. *It's Natalie's card.* Coat pulled tight around her against the cold seeping into her bones, Molly dials a different number, gets...

DAVID'S VOICEMAIL
Sorry I missed you. Leave me a message at the beep and I'll get back to you just as soon as I can.

MOLLY (INTO PHONE)
(raw)
I think you might be right... about sending Joey to that camp? I don't know -- I keep telling myself I can fix it, fix everything before the baby comes but...

OFF A TREMBLING MOLLY in the frozen back yard --

INTERCUT WITH DAVID'S HOTEL ROOM AT THE RESORT. Start a SLOW PAN ACROSS the empty room...

MOLLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'm so tired of this, of pretending...

Words we'll remember when we look back on today.

PAN TO David's duffle bag sitting open on the bed, half packed.

MOLLY (V.O.)
(unraveling)
Where are you...?

HOLD ON DAVID'S EMPTY HOTEL ROOM. Then we hear him...

DAVID (PRE-LAP)
This is far enough.

Come up on DAVID standing amid blinding white. He's --

EXT. BEAVER CREEK RESORT - TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

A good mile from the Resort, snow covers the ground and the towering trees. Just up the trail is a smiling ROXANNE.

ROXANNE

What're you worried no one can hear
you scream?

DAVID fills his lungs with the fresh air.

DAVID

Beautiful...

ROXANNE

And all mine. Who would'a thought,
right? People pretty much wrote me
off by 9th grade.

DAVID

People change.

ROXANNE

No they don't...

Familiarity between these two. Not exactly ease, but history.

DAVID

I was, uh... hoping to talk to you
about our contract?

ROXANNE

Don't have one. You broke it.

DAVID

Yeah, well... plans changed. We're
not selling the store.

ROXANNE

But I thought you had some fancy
job all lined up in San Francisco.

DAVID

Timing was off. We got the twins'
adoption pending and the baby on
the way... It's not the right time
to pick up and move.

ROXANNE

You never were any good at
following your dreams.

Clearly she knows David well. Better than we do.

DAVID

We've done every major holiday for
the Resort for the past 12 years.

She plays with David's desperation like a cat does string...

ROXANNE

What we need is a younger crowd, ya
know? Fresh blood. I'm not sure you
can bring that to the table.

DAVID

Come on, Roxie. This is me
asking...What do I need to do? Cut
you deal? Beg? If that's what --

It happens in an instant -- Roxanne's across the path,
PRESSED UP AGAINST DAVID, her lips on his, her hands running
down his back to his ass... Notice David doesn't pull away.

ROXANNE

I missed that taste.

These two have fucked. When and for how long? We'll find out
soon enough. But right now David's choice is clear -- start
the affair up again or lose the account and Molly will find
out all the secrets David's been keeping...

CUT TIGHT ON MOLLY'S LETTER (*the one we saw her writing in
Act One*). It's tucked into Molly's sweater pocket, stamped
and ready to post. PULL BACK to find she's --

INT. MOLLY'S SUV - DRIVING - 11:17 AM

MOLLY drives. JOEY rides shotgun, looks out the window.

MOLLY

Just gotta run by the Post Office,
mail a letter. Then we'll grab
lunch. Chinese sound good? I'm
craving Kung Pao.

JOEY

Uh-huh.

They drive for a minute... then Molly reaches over, takes
Joey's hand. He doesn't pull away. Off their silent truce --

INT. BOULDER POLICE PRECINCT - 12:46 PM

Into the bullpen strides NATALIE, carrying a massive cake box. She snakes through desks with an ease that says she knows the room. Smiles as she passes a Detective:

NATALIE
How's it goin', Jack?

But Jack keeps walking. *Note: conversations quiet as Nat passes and she gets more than one sideways glance.* Nat does her best to hold her head high but we see the strain of it.

She lowers the cake box onto a desk where a Detective is bent over paperwork.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Someone order a sugar induced coma
in a box?

GABRIEL looks up (*he's the Detective who responded to the call when Joey pulled a knife*). Nat opens the cake box lid to REVEAL -- scrawled across the top in cursive...

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT!

GABRIEL
He'll hate it.

NATALIE
(smiling)
I know, right?

Nat scans the room... Up front someone's hanging a BANNER:

ADIOS BUT NOT GOODBYE LIEUTENANT PRATT!

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Where's he at, anyway?

GABRIEL
Probably crouched behind some bush with a speed gun. You know he loves pulling DUI's on New Year's Day.

NATALIE
No way Lieutenant doesn't know we're throwing him this party. He's just giving us time to set up.

GABRIEL
Heard about the jumper. Nice job.

NATALIE

Thanks.

GABRIEL

Me, I stopped a kid from perforating his math tutor with a butter knife. Could be you're the smart one -- trading in your service weapon for a therapist's couch.

Natalie used to be a cop.

NATALIE

Please. Boys love their guns.

GABRIEL

Gotta admit, I thought you'd be begging for yours back by now. After Mike's funeral, when you told me you were leaving the --

NATALIE

(re cake)

Gotta get this in the fridge.

Clearly uncomfortable with the conversation, Nat deflects with a smile. She picks up the cake box but Gabriel stops her with --

GABRIEL

Pratt was crushed when you quit the squad. He wanted it to be you. For the Lieutenant gig.

His words hold jealousy, but also a reluctant understanding.

NATALIE

Yeah, well... Find a way to prove him wrong.

Nat turns to go when someone yells '*Incoming!*' Everyone in the room quickly gathers. The bullpen stands ready, facing front as into the fray walks an unsuspecting --

LIEUTENANT CHARLES "*Chuck*" PRATT (62, force of nature). A man of few words, all of them precise, pointed, and always right.

Pratt stops where he's standing, stunned. Pants damp to the knees with snow, boots soaked, he takes it in...

The room breaks into a roaring rendition of *'For He's A Jolly Good Fellow'* as Pratt stands motionless, caught completely off guard by the surprise. Nat walks up, carrying the cake, big smile...

And Pratt breaks down. Cries.

The song dwindles to an awkward silence. Not a word, Pratt walks to his office and shuts the door behind him. Not sure what to do, the room slowly, gradually, goes back to work.

Natalie and Gabriel are left looking at Pratt's closed door.

GABRIEL

I've never seen him (cry)...

HOLD ON NATALIE, stunned... CUT TO --

INT. CHURCH KITCHEN - 12:53 PM

AMELIA hangs her apron on a hook, pulls out her cell and texts Molly...

"Just finished my shift. Come get me?"

She hits send. STAY WITH AMELIA as she pulls on her coat, gloves... preps to go out in the snow and wait for Molly.

PRE-LAP THE SOUND of a CAR DOOR DING. You know, like when you leave a door open by accident?

Ding... Ding.

Come up on...

EXT. PINE RIDGE ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Outskirts of town. It's started to snow and it's beautiful, like a postcard. A SALT TRUCK turns onto the street, navigates the curb.

INTERCUT INSIDE THE CAB where THE SALT TRUCK DRIVER who tapped on Molly's window sits behind the wheel, eyes ahead --

SALT TRUCK DRIVER

You gotta be...?

DRIVER'S POV through the snow crusted windshield -- up ahead sits MOLLY'S SUV, parked at the side of the road.

SALT TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)
 (pissed)
 No parking Thursdays. Read the
 f'ing sign.

The Driver climbs out into the snow that's coming in flurries now. He treks towards Molly's SUV, careful to avoid ice patches.

START A SLOW PUSH IN ON MOLLY'S SUV to find it's not parked. It's SLAMMED into a tree.

SALT TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)
 Oh, man...

The Salt Driver picks up his pace, RUNNING towards the car. Through the window he sees MOLLY in the driver's seat, head draped at an awkward angle. Bloody, covered in shattered glass and barely alive. *But still breathing.*

SALT TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)
 Hey, Lady! You ok?

He throws open the car door to REVEAL --

MOLLY'S BEEN SHOT TWICE

SALT TRUCK DRIVER (CONT'D)
 Holy mother of -- I'm calling for
 help.
 (pulls out his phone)
 No service?! Christ! I'm gonna...
 Hang in there, k? Hey lady, can you
 hear me? I'm going to get help.

The Salt Driver takes off at a dead sprint through the falling snow.

PAN DOWN to Molly's sweater pocket...THE LETTER IS GONE.

And so is Joey. The passenger door is wide open, there are tracks in the snow, and JOEY IS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. CHURCH - 1:04 PM

Out front by the bus stop, AMELIA waits for Molly. She looks up the street, then checks her watch. Has that feeling in her gut, the kind you can't explain. Something's not right...

CHAPLAIN (O.S.)
You miss your bus?

She turns to find the CHAPLAIN walking up behind her.

AMELIA
Mom's coming to get me.

The Chaplain studies the sky.

CHAPLAIN
It's really coming down. Why don't you wait inside?

AMELIA
She'll be here any minute.

After a beat...

CHAPLAIN
You alright? What happened in there should never have --

AMELIA
It's ok.
(clearly it's not)
I'm fine.

A beat.

CHAPLAIN
Mind if I wait with you?

Amelia shrugs, then checks her watch again, her eyes drifting up the road as she and the Chaplain wait silently for Molly, unaware that she's not coming...

INT. BOULDER POLICE PRECINCT - BREAK ROOM - 1:16 PM

NATALIE finds GABRIEL polishing off a piece of retirement cake. She can feel him watching her as she pours herself coffee.

GABRIEL
It's my second piece.

NATALIE
Secret's safe with me.

Natalie adds in non dairy creamer.

GABRIEL
You're good with 'em... secrets.

Adds sugar.

NATALIE
Better be. Job security and all.

She turns to face him, takes a sip of coffee then...

NATALIE (CONT'D)
I have no idea what that was about
with Pratt.

GABRIEL
(dismissive)
Sure.

NATALIE
He's under a lot of pressure.

GABRIEL
Uh-huh.

NATALIE
Jesus, what's your --

GABRIEL
He *talks* to you, Nat. Trusts you.
He has to have said something.

NATALIE
He hasn't.

GABRIEL
It's bullshit. I mean if anyone has
a right to break down it's *you*.

NATALIE
(warns)
Ok. Let's not --

GABRIEL
I mean, you went to bed married and
woke up with Mike dead on the
bathroom floor. I can't even
imagine --

NATALIE

(sharp)
Gabe, stop!

And now we know... *Nat's husband Mike is dead.* How and why we'll find out soon. But right now Gabe's hanging out Nat's personal dirty laundry and she's pissed off and hurt. Does her best not to show it.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

This has *nothing* to do with Mike.

GABRIEL

Sorry, sorry. You're absolutely right.

He feels like an ass, holds up his hands in surrender.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

It's just... What the hell, Nat? Pratt's been shot, *twice*. Buried his mother. Spends his off time feeding and bathing a wife who can't do it on her own. We give him cake and he cries?

NATALIE

Go ask him yourself. He's your old man.

Bam. Gabriel is Lieutenant Pratt's son. Nat brings her coffee, sits down beside him.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

As long as you act like this is Pratt's kingdom and you're just visiting, he wins.

GABRIEL

You don't get it. Why would you? To him you walk on water and I can't catch a break.

NATALIE

Keep thinking like that and you never will.

Gabe lets his guard down, confides...

GABRIEL

It's different with you...he respects you. I don't know what he wants from me.

NATALIE

To take ownership. Grab the bull
buy the horns.

GABRIEL

Whatever.

NATALIE

Come on Gabe, you're about to make
Lieutenant and not because of your
dad. You're a driven, compassionate
Detective in your own right. You
don't clock out, you take the job
home cause... each case? Each
victim? You take it personal. And
somehow you juggle that with
raising three terrific kids. My
hat's off to you, for real.

Gabe can't meet Nat's gaze, admits...

GABRIEL

Yeah, well... Hold off on the
parade. Rebecca and I, we're
talking about taking a break. Trial
separation.

Nat's genuinely stunned. Gabe's like family and this stings.

NATALIE

Oh, Gabe. I'm sorry.

Nat reaches out, rests her hand on his. An act of kindness
that Gabe completely misinterprets. He looks down at where
they touch... turns Nat's hand over, clasps it in his, starts
to run his fingers over hers...

Completely thrown by his advance, Nat PULLS her hand back --

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Gabe? What are you --

GABRIEL

I thought --

NATALIE

You're like my brother. I was
just trying to be --

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Fuck, I'm sorry!

Just then another DETECTIVE pushes in, out of breath --

DETECTIVE

Caught a shooting out on Pine
Ridge. Vic's critical, on the way
to St. Jude's. It's all hands on
deck.

Shoving aside his embarrassment Gabriel stands. Nat's up and on her feet --

NATALIE
Hey. Come on, talk to me. I know
you didn't --

GABRIEL
I gotta go.

Gabe moves around her and pushes out leaving Natalie alone.

EXT. BEAVER CREEK RESORT - PARKING LOT - 1:22 PM

Assistant HANK climbs out of the Party Store van, his cell phone in his hand. He's jittery, off.

CUT TIGHT ON HANK'S CELL SCREEN where we see 5 missed calls from Molly and one voicemail. HE DELETES ALL OF THEM.

Hank starts back towards the Resort when his cell *rings*, clearly startling him. He answers with notable hesitation...

HANK MAN'S VOICE
Hey. Where the hell have you been?

Hank nervously brushes leaves from his pants. We should wonder what he's been up to...

HANK
Had to take c-c-care of something.

Clear from his tone the MAN on the other side of the line is calling the shots and he doesn't give a flying fuck.

MAN'S VOICE
It'd better be a sale. You're
behind. In the red. I own your ass.

HANK
I k-k-know and... I think I caught
a big fish.

MAN'S VOICE
You t-t-think, spastic?

HANK
Guy named Randy. Runs Valet at the
Resort?

MAN'S VOICE
I don't give a wad about his job
description, just that he's buying.

HANK

I gave him a taste of the Oxy. He could be our hook up to other g-g-guests, resort staff...

MAN'S VOICE

Make magic happen or I put in a call to your parole officer.

The line goes dead. HOLD ON HANK, trapped. Apparently he traded prison for a different kind of cage. CUT TO --

INT. BOULDER POLICE PRECINCT - PRATT'S OFFICE - 2:10 PM

NATALIE knocks but doesn't wait for LIEUTENANT PRATT to respond, walks in. Pratt's buttoning up a crisp, dry shirt --

PRATT

Don't.

NATALIE

What?

PRATT

Head shrink me.

NATALIE

Who said I was --

PRATT

It's what you do now, isn't it? Department psychologist. Even got your own cards, I hear.

Pratt seems more himself, but Nat isn't letting something so out of character as the tears go. She's too smart for that. Also too smart to come at Pratt directly --

NATALIE

Heard you caught a shooting?

PRATT

Yeah. Heading out there now.
(shifts gears)
Janine's pissed you skipped Christmas.

NATALIE

I wasn't exactly in a jolly mood...

Natalie lowers herself into a chair. Clear Nat respects Pratt and he adores her.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Wasn't she set to start new meds
for the MS?

Pratt shakes his head, disgusted and disappointed.

PRATT

Yeah... Turns out they didn't mix
well with the ones they got her on
for the seizures so... Word of
advice -- never get sick. Or old.
They fill you with poison and throw
you f'ing surprise parties.

NATALIE

You can't tell me you didn't see it
coming? You don't retire after 40
years without cake.

Pratt leans against his desk, pulls off his wet boots.

PRATT

On the plus side it got you back in
the building. How's it feel?

NATALIE

Like ass, thanks.

PRATT

Look, I know you went through hell
after Mike died but it can't be --

NATALIE

Oh but it is. Guys I worked
beside... they're looking at me
sideways.

PRATT

I trained you better than this.
Work gossip, it's as natural as
taking a piss. If it gets under
your skin, that's on you.

NATALIE

I know but... The crap part is, I
don't blame 'em. I'd do the same.

PRATT

I highly doubt that.

NATALIE

Come on, Chuck... My husband OD'd.

PRATT
 You finished feeling sorry for
 yourself?

NATALIE
 It feels good.

PRATT
 Wallowing in bullshit?

Nat looks up with a vulnerability she hasn't shown before...

NATALIE
 How'd I miss it? I mean... I was a
Detective. It was my job to read
 people. Was I blind? Stupid? Both?
 It was going on right in front of
 my face.

PRATT
 End of the day... there's just one
 person you gotta look in the mirror
 and answer to. Only thing that
 matters is what *you* think.

Not used to Pratt being this thoughtful, Nat falls back on
 their usual banter.

NATALIE
 Now who's the shrink?

But Pratt's not playing along. His words carry weight.

PRATT
 You have to believe you did the
 best you could with the hand you
 were dealt.

OFF PRATT, INTERCUT WITH --

Windshield wipers as they move rhythmically, pushing the
 falling snow to the side and revealing DAVID. He's --

INT. DAVID'S CAR - DRIVING

Behind the wheel, David's not at the Resort like he should
 be, but on the road somewhere between Beaver Creek and
 Boulder. As he drives through the falling snow, tears make
 their way down his face.

HOLD ON DAVID. It plays surreal and suspicious. Nothing but
 the sound of the wipers against the windshield...

PRATT (V.O.)
 Thing is... Only the people
 involved will ever know the truth.

Off David's mysterious tears and Pratt's haunting words --

EXT. PINE RIDGE ROAD - 3:06 PM

Molly's SUV sits empty now, cordoned off by yellow tape. Her blood soaking the driver's seat. Police cars block the road in both directions, cherries flashing in the snow.

Lead Detective on this one, GABRIEL squats by the open passenger door examining footprints (Joey's) in the fresh snow.

GABRIEL
 I want Uni's canvassing North and
 Northeast. Any structure,
 residential or otherwise, needs to
 be searched.

PRATT (O.S.)
 Some folks might take issue with
 that.

FIND Gabe's father LIEUTENANT PRATT standing by the side of the road, watching. Judging.

PRATT (CONT'D)
 Private property and all.

GABRIEL
 (to Uni)
 You hit a wall, call Judge
 Burkholder, tell him you need a
 warrant ASAP. He's ready and
 waiting.

The Uni heads out. It's love - 15 with Gabriel in the lead but Pratt's not backing down that easy. Like a cat untangling a ball of yarn.

PRATT
 You call the husband?

GABRIEL
 Soon as I secure the scene.

PRATT
 What'd you include in your
 perimeter?

Gabe knows he's being tested. Also knows better than to get rattled.

GABRIEL

Protocol calls for 100 feet, but I extended it to 300 in case our shooter was camped out, waiting. Could find prints, DNA. Don't want it compromised.

PRATT

(condescending)

DNA on a bush watered down with snow. Huh. Stranger things have happened...

Pratt walks along the side of the road. Then, casually...

PRATT (CONT'D)

Only 300 feet, huh?

GABRIEL

It's rush hour. Folks would go ape shit if I shut down the highway. Figured I'd save us the headache.

PRATT

A few angry emails vs solving a possible homicide? Interesting choice.

Gabriel can feel the eyes of his subordinates watching him get dressed down by Daddy. It's humiliating.

GABRIEL

You wanna take over as lead on this one?

Pratt smiles as he raises his hands in mock surrender.

PRATT

Just here to observe.

GABRIEL

I'm gonna go get a number for the husband.

Distracted by his father's ribbing, Gabe's about to step directly onto one of Joey's footprints in the snow --

PRATT

Careful!

Gabriel freezes, foot mid air. Pratt adds insult to injury by spelling it out for anyone who might have missed it.

PRATT (CONT'D)

Almost contaminated the scene.

Pratt's words ringing in his ears, Gabe pivots, walks in the opposite direction. Livid that his father got the last word. And in commiseration or irony, it STARTS TO SNOW AGAIN.

CUT TIGHT ON:

A half eaten piece of cake being dumped into a trash bin. PULL BACK to find NATALIE cleaning up after Pratt's Retirement party. She's --

INT. BOULDER POLICE PRECINCT - BULLPEN - 3:28 PM

The room is basically empty. All hands on deck for Molly's shooting, only the skeleton crew remains. It's oddly quiet. Could say eerie. Only sound the occasional phone ringing.

Left behind, NATALIE walks between desks, picking up plates of unfinished cake. She slows beside a series of FRAMED PHOTOGRAPHS hanging on the wall. A year by year class shot of the DENVER DETECTIVE SQUAD.

NATALIE'S POV -- she *finds herself* in a photo from two years ago. Nat's in uniform, standing beside Lieutenant Pratt, smiling big. Unaware life was about to blindside her... That she'd find her husband dead on their bathroom floor.

Across the room a DETECTIVE stands, grabs his coat.

NATALIE

Heading out to the scene?

DETECTIVE

(yes)

They're expanding the perimeter.
Need more bodies.

NATALIE

Out on Pine Ridge, yeah?

He nods, pulls on his parka then hands Nat his cake plate.

DETECTIVE

See ya round.

And he's gone, leaving the bullpen all the more quiet. Natalie can't help but feel like an interloper as she dumps the cake plates in the trash can.

Her eyes fall on the BANNER hanging on the wall --

ADIOS BUT NOT GOODBYE LIEUTENANT PRATT!

Nat pulls a chair over, climbs up and starts to take it down, one side of it falling to pool on the floor. Standing up on the chair, Natalie takes in the room... She used to belong here. A piece of her still aches for it.

HOLD ON NATALIE, starting to feel a familiar tug...

CUT TO:

A thicket of trees, heavy with snow. PAN DOWN to find MILES (early 30's, Peter Pan in denial of the real world) he's --

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SIDE YARD - 3:42 PM

MILES trudges out through the yard. The sound of his boots crunching ice below his feet as his dog runs in happy circles around him.

MILES

What're you -- No. We're not going for a walk.

Miles walks up to A SHED. His dog sniffing at the door, tail wagging.

MILES (CONT'D)

Can you back it up? Job interview's in half an hour. I need to get a shovel, dig my car out'a the...

He swings the shed door open to REVEAL JOEY CROUCHED INSIDE

MILES (CONT'D)

What the fuck?!

Joey's shivering from the cold, and COVERED IN BLOOD.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

OPEN TIGHT ON LATISHA talking directly to camera --

LATISHA

Once you have 'em... once that
baby's out in the world and you
hold it in your arms...? You never
wanna let go.

She's sitting on a bench --

EXT. PARK - 5:05 PM

Other people's children play on the slide all bundled up
against the cold. Up, down and laughing.

LATISHA

It's my job, my responsibility to,
you know... look out for them.

She turns to face someone we don't see...

LATISHA (CONT'D)

Thanks for telling me where to find
Amelia. How much did we say?

REVERSE ANGLE TO REVEAL TANYA, the twin's math tutor.

TANYA

Fifty bucks.

LaTisha rummages in her purse as Tanya pulls her too light
for snow jacket tighter around her. Rocks in the cold.

TANYA (CONT'D)

(irritated)

Left my flippin' scarf at the
Patterson's. I texted Molly twice
to ask if she's seen it...

(odd)

She usually texts me right back.

Tanya takes Molly's radio silence as a blow off. We know
better. Soon so will she...

TANYA (CONT'D)

Hey, just so you know I quit
today... So I won't be able to keep
tabs on the twins for you anymore.

Latisha pulls out crumpled bills, hands them to Tanya. A
cryptic smile spreading...

LATISHA

That's ok. I got it covered.

Words that should send a chill down our spine. Off LaTisha, desperate mother and possibly Molly's killer?

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE RIDGE ROAD - 5:43 PM

Tucked back and away from the road, GABRIEL crouches by a bush. In his gloved hand, A BULLET CASING. A UNI walks up, crunching snow --

UNI (O.S.)

Husband's on his way. He was working up at Beaver Creek. That's what, two hours away?

He sees the casing, lets out a slow whistle.

GABRIEL

.243 Winchester.

UNI

Sporting rifle? You think it's the gun that shot our vic?

GABRIEL

Or could be someone was out hunting deer... Maybe saw what happened.

Either way's a win. Gabriel turns THE CASING over in his fingers, the first piece of the jigsaw puzzle...

REVERSE ANGLE as Gabriel stands, brushes snow from his pants, Pine Ridge Road stretching out in front of him. Cordoned off by police tape, squad cars are parked in a half circle.

Beyond them, parked almost out of sight is a PICKUP TRUCK that looks familiar --

CUT TIGHT ON NATALIE in a parka and beanie, her warm breath visible in the cold air. She's --

INT. NATALIE'S PICKUP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Parked at the side of Pine Ridge Road with the engine cut, NATALIE looks out through the windshield...

NATALIE'S POV -- a good two blocks up, GABRIEL trudges through the snow, barking orders. Molly's SUV sits unmoved, hood crumpled right up to the dash, doors hang open.

Natalie drove to the crime scene.

She's surreptitiously parked far enough back not to be noticed. Like a kid finding her dad's porn stash, she's fascinated but doesn't want to get caught.

Nat's cell phone *buzzes* on the dash. She picks it up to check it, GO TIGHT ON THE PHONE SCREEN --

It's a junk text. A New Year's deal on Verizon. She deletes it, then sees she has a MISSED CALL and VOICEMAIL.

Nat hits play and THE VOICE OF A GHOST fills our ears...

MOLLY (VOICEMAIL)

Hi. Um...I'm Molly. Molly
Patterson? I -- uh, got your number
from a police detective.

Molly's voice is tentative but rich with need.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

There's just... It's a lot right
now and I thought maybe if I talked
through it? I called you before
but...

TIGHT ON NAT as this woman, this stranger, speaks her truth. Everything Nat's been holding inside since her husband Mike died, Molly puts into words...

MOLLY (CONT'D)

I'm just...holding on super tight
to all these little things I can
control cause if I don't... then
it's just going to break apart and
it's his fault, it's because of him
and somehow I got stuck holding it
all together and... I'm alone.

HOLD ON NAT, like all her secrets are being spoken aloud.

MOLLY (VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)

God. How did I get here?

Molly's question connects these two women. There's an awkward silence, then...

MOLLY (CONT'D)

This -- I'm totally rambling...
Never mind. Sorry to bother you.
Happy New Year.

And the line goes dead.

Natalie sits in the quiet of her truck as snow falls outside. No way of knowing the crumpled SUV up the street belonged to the woman who left the voicemail. Or that she may be the last person Molly called before getting shot. Not yet...

The truck's passenger door SUDDENLY FLINGS OPENS --

NAT SPINS -- all instinct SHE PULLS A 9 MM FROM HER WAIST BELT, takes aim at --

PRATT

Turn the heat on, would ya? Cold as
a witch's tit out there.

Completely unfazed by the weapon pointed directly at his temple, Pratt climbs in, slams the door. Nat lowers her gun, beats him to the punch --

NATALIE

Go ahead.

PRATT

And what?

NATALIE

Bitch me out. We both know I've got
no right being here.

PRATT

Seems you don't need me to hold up
my end of the conversation.

They sit in silence as the heater kicks in, warming the truck. Pratt looks at Natalie. Senses something's off.

PRATT (CONT'D)

You good?

NATALIE

Me? I'm fine.

Still rattled from Molly's call, Natalie falls back into her comfort zone...

NATALIE (CONT'D)

How many points of contact?

PRATT

Two. One to the shoulder, the second to the torso.

NATALIE

Fatal?

Pratt hesitates before answering. Blink and you'd miss it.

PRATT

Uh... don't know yet. We'll have to wait and see.

NATALIE

That's a soccer mom car.

PRATT

Vic's a mother of two. Early 40's.

Nat takes that in. The humanity of it.

NATALIE

Jesus. That's... I hate it when there are kids. What're you thinking for motive?

Pratt starts to spin a plausible version of the crime.

PRATT

My guess is wrong place, wrong time. Bad actor out on a bender. Maybe taking in some New Year's Day target practice?

Pratt and Natalie both look out through the windshield at the crime scene.

PRATT (CONT'D)

You miss it?

Nat answers by turning the tables...

NATALIE

Will you?

The two are well matched. Will be to the bitter end.

PRATT

I should head over to the hospital.

NATALIE

No offense, but you look tired as hell. Gabriel can handle the --

PRATT

(sharp)

I wanna keep an eye on things.

There's an edge to Pratt's voice. He softens it when he asks -

PRATT (CONT'D)

Drive me?

Nat puts the truck in drive, eases out onto the road.

THE SOUND of a HIGH PITCHED WAIL slices through the quiet.
CUT TIGHT ON --

A TEA POT, water has reached a boiling point inside. FIND
MILES as he lifts the pot, pours water into a mug. He's --

INT. MILES' APARTMENT - KITCHEN - 6:17 PM

MILES walks past his dog sleeping on a pillow under the
kitchen window. He holds out the mug of tea.

MILES

Careful. It's crazy hot.

REVERSE ANGLE TO FIND JOEY sitting at the kitchen table. He's
showered off the blood. Warm and dry, but when he reaches
for the tea, his hands shake.

MILES (CONT'D)

Dude, you gotta tell me what
happened. If you're hurt we should
go to the ER. Or I can call the
cops and --

JOEY

(frantic)

No! They'll send me away.

Joey curls up in a tight ball and starts to rock back and
forth. We've seen his rage, the physical threat of him. But
right now Joey's a lost little boy.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry... I'm so sorry.

Miles watches helpless as Joey dissolves in tears...

INT. HOSPITAL - PRIVATE ROOM - 6:23 PM

DAVID races in to find MOLLY in bed hooked up to a myriad of
machines, clinging to life. Dissolving in tears and sweat,
panic and pain, eyes trace his wife's broken body... He stops
when he realizes, stunned --

DAVID
Did she have the baby?

NURSE
Sorry I -- I just came on 15
minutes ago. Let me -- Justine?!

A second NURSE, JUSTINE, comes racing in panicked --

JUSTINE
What is it? Is she crashing?

Justine's over to Molly's bed-side, checking Molly's vitals.

NURSE
No, that's not... This is the
husband and he's asking --

JUSTINE
Get Doctor Ford.

The Nurse runs out and Justine turns her focus to David.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)
Mr. Patterson, your wife sustained
major injuries, lost a lot of
blood. We're doing everything we --

DAVID
Where's the baby?

JUSTINE
(totally confused)
I'm sorry?

DAVID
Molly... she was 8 months pregnant!

Justine's stunned, trying to digest.

JUSTINE
But that's... We did a full exam --
your wife was clearly postpartum.
We assumed she'd already delivered.

David's out of his mind --

DAVID
Where's my baby girl?

8 month pregnant Molly came to the hospital NO LONGER
PREGNANT. OFF DAVID, completely lost --

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - 6:36 PM

A Man walks to the curb carrying out the trash. Empty booze bottles clink from inside the Hefty bag, it was one hell of a New Year's Eve. He lifts the lid on his trash bin --

ANGLE INSIDE THE TRASH BIN TO REVEAL, mixed in with other garbage and neighbor's dog shit bags is...

MOLLY'S LETTER

The envelope is torn open, someone clearly read it. The ink is smeared, but there is no question it's the same letter we last saw in Molly's pocket just before she was shot. *Someone went out of their way to get rid of it.*

The Man hoists his trash bag into the bin, burying the letter. He lets the lid fall and walks back to his house unaware that Molly's cry for help is mixed in with empty booze bottles and neighbor's dog shit.

CUT TO:

EXT. ST. JUDE'S HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - 7:21 PM

Natalie's pickup truck navigates into a parking spot. The engine cuts, goes silent. CUT INSIDE --

INT. NATALIE'S PICKUP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

PRATT opens the passenger door, starts to climb out --

PRATT

Thanks for the ride.

But Natalie doesn't respond. She sits at the wheel, her eyes on the hospital's entrance. Sliding doors separating the sick and dying from the rest of us. Molly's voicemail triggered something deep inside her.

NATALIE

Last week I hit a deer out on
Dorset Road.

PRATT

Car ok?

NATALIE

That's... everyone asks that. Car's fine but -- I got out and sat with it. The deer... while it died.

PRATT

You do realize it was the deer's fault. Stupid animals should stay out'a the street.

NATALIE

(with irony)

Yeah, well. Guess I'm drawn to the ones who make bad choices.

PRATT

I gotta get inside. It's cold as shit out here.

Nat doesn't hear him. Talks more to herself when she asks...

NATALIE

Was that -- did I want to fix him? Is that why I didn't see what was going on? He'd been using for months...

PRATT

You beating yourself up won't bring Mike back.

Hangs there... Then Nat speaks her deepest fear.

NATALIE

I can't... Since Mike died I don't trust my instincts.

(lost)

What am I without them?

Pratt's cell buzzes. He hesitates, then answers.

PRATT (INTO PHONE)

Pratt... Right. You get a hold of Mr. Patterson?

CUT TIGHT ON NATALIE. Like she's waking up from a dream. One she's been having since Mike died.

PRATT (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)

Yeah. Be right in.

Pratt hangs up, steps out into the snow.

PRATT (CONT'D)
You get home safe now.

But Natalie's head is spinning a mile a minute, connecting the dots. Her eyes are wide and wild when she asks --

NATALIE
Is that her name?... Patterson? The woman in the car?

PRATT
Yeah. Molly Patterson.

Like the air has been sucked dry from Nat's lungs.

NATALIE
She... oh my god she called me. Earlier today... I've got a voicemail from her.

Nat holds up her cell phone like it's a lifeline. Pratt stands outside in the snow staring at the outstretched phone. His words come haltingly, cautious...

PRATT
That's... Molly Patterson called you? You know her?

NATALIE
No... she got my number from a detective.

A beat.

PRATT
What did she say?

NATALIE
Just that she was looking for someone to talk to.

The enormity of it hangs there between them.

PRATT
I'm going to need your phone. It's evidence.

Pratt holds out his hand.

NATALIE
Of course.

Natalie places her cell phone in Pratt's open palm. He wraps his fingers around it. HOLD ON PRATT as he considers...

PRATT
I want you on this.

NATALIE
What?

PRATT
Husband's already here. He'll need
someone to lean on and I'll need
someone to help diffuse the
situation.

Pratt doesn't mince words.

PRATT (CONT'D)
You good for this?

Nat wills herself to believe it when she says...

NATALIE
Yeah, I'm good.

PRATT
I'm gonna need you close, Nat. Be
my eyes and ears. Can I count on
you?

She nods, of course. Satisfied, Pratt heads inside. But once
he's gone Nat's look of confidence fades to doubt...

INT. ST. JUDE'S HOSPITAL - PRIVATE ROOM - 8:12 PM

No words.

DAVID watches helpless as MOLLY'S body gives up. He holds her
hand tight as the Doctor calls Time of Death.

DOCTOR
TOD 8:12 PM.

OFF DAVID devastated, holding tight to Molly's hand but
completely alone...

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - 9:05 PM

FIND DAVID sitting in a plastic chair in the hallway staring
at the floor, eyes swollen from crying. NATALIE sits down in
the chair beside him. The two stay like that in silence.
David doesn't look up when he asks --

DAVID
What do you want?

NATALIE

I'm Natalie Judd. I'm a psychologist. I work with the police Department.

DAVID

(desperate)

My baby, my little girl -- she's out there somewhere with god knows who...

NATALIE

And my colleagues are doing everything they can to find her. I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm here if you want to talk.

David's voice is even but full of rage.

DAVID

Molly... My wife. She's...

Can't bring himself to say the word.

DAVID (CONT'D)

And they're saying Joey might have had something to do with it?

A Nurse walks past. Life goes on around them.

NATALIE

I'm not going to even try and pretend that I understand how you're feeling, but I know breathing hurts.

For the first time David looks at her, a world of loss in his eyes. He's listening.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

My husband, Mike... He died suddenly a little over a year ago.

The two sit there connected through an understanding of tragedy, of loss...

DAVID

I want to go home.

NATALIE

I can drive you.

INT. PATTERSON HOME - 9:27 PM

We end where we began. NATALIE trails through the dark, silent house behind DAVID. Not a word, David goes into his bedroom and shuts the door leaving Nat alone in the quiet.

She walks slowly down the hall, stopping in a doorway...

NAT'S POV - THE BABY'S NURSERY. Walls a subtle pink, crib built, waiting and empty.

Natalie continues down the hall passing framed family photos hanging on the wall. Molly, David and the twins smile out from behind glass.

Nat moves on to the kitchen. There on the table sits Molly's coffee cup, right where she left it this morning. A beat as Nat stands, staring at it... Imagines Molly must have assumed she'd take care of washing it later. But there will be no later.

Natalie carefully picks up the cup, raises it and inhales the smell of coffee and sugar. A physical connection to the woman who called her for help...

THE SOUND of the front door opening. Nat startles as A VOICE calls out --

AMELIA (O.S.)
Why's it so dark in here?

LIGHTS FLIP ON and Nat comes face to face with a confused --

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Who are you? Where's my mom?

HOLD ON NATALIE, where does she start...? Knows she's about to embark on a journey with this family.

NATALIE
I'm so sorry.

CUT TO BLACK. Two words fill the screen --

DAY THREE

COME UP ON MOLLY'S LIFELESS BODY. We're --

INT. MORGUE - DAY THREE - 8:13 AM

The MEDICAL EXAMINER works on Molly when the phone on his desk *rings*. He pulls his gloves off, answers --

M.E. (INTO PHONE)

Morgue.

ADMINISTRATOR (OVER PHONE)

Hey, it's Ray over in Records. You working on Molly Patterson?

M.E.

As we speak.

Beat.

ADMINISTRATOR (OVER PHONE)

There's a problem with the Death Certificate.

M.E.

I sent the paperwork over yesterday. Shouldn't be any --

ADMINISTRATOR (OVER PHONE)

Yeah, well... Turns out Molly Patterson died in 1986.

A beat to digest.

Stunned, the M.E. turns to Molly lying on the metal table...

GO TIGHT ON MOLLY'S LIFELESS FACE

M.E. (O.S.)

Then who the hell's the dead woman lying on my exam table?

OFF MOLLY, the only one with all the answers...

END PILOT