

ALL THE GOOD ONES GET AWAY

Written by

Elliott San

ON BLACK

A CD Player SUCKS in a disc. It CLICKS and SPINS, thinking... Then blasts "HOLE", Courtney Love beginning her gravelly screech through "Violet".

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY 10 - DAY

A Range Rover blasts down the highway, a PALM SPRINGS sign zipping past the car. The sun has just started its descent.

INT. RANGE ROVER

A newly french-tipped finger cranks the volume. Behind the wheel is HOLLY PIERPOINT, 42, California blond with a Cambridge education and a look that gently turns heads-- she's ten years past double-takes.

Windows down, we're mid-way through a therapeutic drive. The song fades-- Her phone RINGING through the speakers. She clears her throat. Answers.

HOLLY

Hey honey.

MR. PIERPONT (RUSSELL)

Hey, how's it going?

HOLLY

Good, should be there in an hour.

RUSSELL

Making good time.

HOLLY

Yeah, I can't resist an open road.

RUSSELL

Just watch out for those Santa Barbara cops. Wouldn't want to be late to your fiftieth conference this year. How many of these things are there?

HOLLY

I told you, It's not a conference. It's just a little consulting thing at their hospital. Free coffee, probably just a twin bed at the hotel-- the usual. It helps them.

RUSSELL

(dry)

You're such a saint.

Holly sighs, sensing his mood.

HOLLY

Thanks, Russ. Has Chelsea called?

RUSSELL

She did actually. She had a question about our phone plan I didn't know. Something about blocking callers. I told her she should defer to my better half.

HOLLY

Well, it's past five o'clock on the East Coast, she's probably had a cocktail or two. Think it can wait?

RUSSELL

None of that, she's at the library studying. But yes, I think you're fine.

Holly rolls her eyes.

HOLLY

She's allowed to have fun, Russell.

RUSSELL

Yes, she is. But, I know what's out there, ok? I know how guys think-- and it's not always pretty.

HOLLY

Yeah, well I know how girls think, and we're not all walking targets-- believe it or not, I think she'll be just fine.

A healthy dose of silence.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Sounds like you're driving.

RUSSELL

I'm going to Costco real quick.

HOLLY

I don't know why you still go there, it's so unnecessary.

RUSSELL

Honey, going to these conferences every other week is unnecessary. So let's leave it at that.

Pause. She fidgets with her wedding ring.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

I guess I just need to find some new hobbies to pass all this time I have to myself.

HOLLY

Yeah, that could be good...

RUSSELL

Or maybe we could do something together one weekend. Go somewhere? Big Sur or someplace, pack a trunk full of wine.

HOLLY

Maybe... I don't know, with this conference thing this weekend--

RUSSELL

--I thought it wasn't a conference?

HOLLY

(catching herself)

Look, I'm going to be exhausted after this weekend. It'll be nice to just rest at home, if you want to--

RUSSELL

Yeah, well, it was just a thought.

More silence. She taps the wheel, eyes the clock. He coughs, changing the conversation.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

You know what Chelsea did the other day? I don't know why I forgot to tell you. She sent me this sweet little email telling me how she was out to brunch with some friends last weekend and ordered coffee-- which, you know, she never does.

(MORE)

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

But she told me that ever since she was ten and I told her that little fib-- how you're *always* supposed to put as many sugars in your coffee as the number of people at the table that you love?

(laughs)

She said she ended up putting six packets of sugar in her coffee-- which actually made the taste bearable.

Holly can't help but chuckle.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

I wrote her back and said I told her that story because ever since she was born, I usually just had to put two sugars in my coffee-- one for each of my ladies.

HOLLY

Oh... That is cute.

She sighs, he has his moments...

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Alright, we'll talk later. Cell will be tough. I'll call you from the hotel when we're on break.

RUSSELL

Hold on, what's the code for the sprinkler system again? I'm sick of catching hell for withered roses.

HOLLY

You mean the only code we ever use? 9-18-91.

RUSSELL

(coy)

And what a first date it was. I was a little worried when you gave it up after just dinner and a movie. But you have that side of you...

HOLLY

Alright Casanova, goodbye.

RUSSELL

Alright, alright. Love ya.

HOLLY

Bye.

CLICK. Deep breath. She checks her makeup in the rearview mirror and CRANKS the music. Much better.

EXT. 10-W HIGHWAY

Holly's Range Rover blasts past another highway sign:

PALM SPRINGS, twenty-three miles.

INT. RANGE ROVER - LATER

Holly dials a number without looking, muscle memory. It rings... And rings. And rings. Voicemail.

VOICEMAIL

Hey, you've reached Everett Alan,
leave a message after the beep.
Unless it's a drunk dial, in which
case-- find me yourself and bring a
beer!

BEEP.

HOLLY

(sultry)

Everett, this is your professor,
Dr. Pierpoint. I just wanted to
let you know that I will be right
on time for our tutoring session.

(drops the act)

Ugh, does naughty teacher still
work after six months? And please
lose that childish voicemail intro.
Anyway, I see you're dead set on
this being a surprise, so, I'll see
you soon.

(devilish smile)

I can't wait.

EXT. BP GAS STATION

Holly gets out of her car, smoothing her dress.

INT. BP GAS STATION - BATHROOM

Holly fluffs her hair. Checks to make sure no ones around, unbuttons her blouse, nudging her cleavage to the forefront. She smacks some fresh lipstick, then steps back.

She looks at herself, pleased. This will be fun.

INT. RANGE ROVER

A PACK OF CONDOMS land on the passenger seat as the car starts. We linger, then...

CUT TO:

EXT. PALM SPRINGS RESORT - LATER

A gorgeous Southern California villa. Arching palm trees frame postcard worthy mountains. Crystal pools glimmer behind pristine Spanish architecture. The Upper Class comes here to slow down.

INT. RANGE ROVER

Holly clucks her tongue, her eyes feasting on her weekend getaway. He's done good.

EXT. RESORT VALET

Holly pulls up and gets out, the VALET attentively motioning for a BELLHOP to begin unloading her bags.

HOLLY

Thank you gentlemen.

She glides through the sandstone arches on cloud nine, a queen to her castle.

INT. RESORT - FRONT DESK

Holly approaches the front desk.

RECEPTIONIST

You must be Mrs. Alan.

Her smile flickers.

HOLLY

That's... Me.

RECEPTIONIST

Great. We're very happy to have you stay with us this weekend. Mr. Alan has already taken care of everything.

The Receptionist hands over a quaint, ornate key. She takes it-- why did he use his real name...?

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

You are in the Veracruz Suite. Of course, let us know if we can be of any assistance. Rodrigo will show you to your room.

HOLLY

Thank you, you're so kind.

She takes the key and follows Rodrigo, shaking off the unrest, soaking it all in.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

Rodrigo, early 20's, is the kind of effervescent, hard-worker every manager prays they stumble upon, the kind that takes pride in their work-- minimum wage or not.

Holly follows him through the halls, passing an open-air courtyard and pool. Extravagant fountains and gentle music set the tone.

RODRIGO

It's supposed to be a gorgeous weekend. Chilly, but clear.

Holly looks at him, pulled from her daydream.

HOLLY

I'm sorry?

He turns, smiling, pulling her bag.

RODRIGO

Oh, don't let me interrupt-- Sometimes I still get speechless walking through here.

He laughs at his own naivete.

HOLLY

Well, it certainly is something. I can't imagine what the room looks like.

He turns and smiles wider.

RODRIGO
Oh, you're in for a surprise.

HOLLY
I like surprises.

Rodrigo notices her wedding ring.

RODRIGO
Is this an anniversary stay? Or
special weekend?

Holly immediately covers up her ring.

HOLLY
Oh, no. Just a... Weekend
getaway.

RODRIGO
Well. He has good taste.

Rodrigo holds the elevator for her as they get in.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Rodrigo punches "five", then proudly holds up his wedding band.

RODRIGO
Gotta say, I'm pretty fresh. It'll
be our two-year next month.

Holly grins.

HOLLY
Oh, well, she sure is a lucky lady.

RODRIGO
Thanks. How long for you? If you
don't mind me asking.

HOLLY
Um. Well... Twenty-one years,
actually.

RODRIGO
Wow! That's beautiful!

Holly curtly nods.

RODRIGO (CONT'D)
How do you do it? I mean,
obviously you guys have your
escapes, but-- any tips for someone
just starting out?

Holly sighs. This is uncomfortable... But she thinks.

HOLLY
Physical distance may make the
heart grow fonder, but never be
distant in your wife's arms.
(beat)
And flowers. They do work.

Rodrigo smiles, genuinely taken. DING. The doors open.

RODRIGO
Wow. I feel like this was-- like
destiny or something. Thank you.
Your husband must be a very lucky
man.

They exit.

INT. THEIR ROOM - LIVING ROOM

CL-CLICK-- Rodrigo opens the door, ushering Holly in.

She freezes in her tracks, her hand clutching invisible
pearls. We track around her, revealing the suite...

A corner room, with two glass walls converging, pointing
directly at the mountains. In the opposite corner, a
stainless steel, fully equipped kitchenette anchored by a
marble breakfast bar.

The open living room extends from the entry to the windows
with room for couches and an ottoman.

A flat screen TV sits next to a mahogany bar, where a SINGLE
GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE awaits Holly.

Rodrigo walks into the daydream, shuttling her luggage into
the Master Bedroom. Holly lingers, still in shock. Bath
water RUNS. Rodrigo returns.

RODRIGO
Have a wonderful stay, miss.

She snaps to, breaking into a smile.

HOLLY
I imagine it will be.

She tips him a ten and meanders over to the champagne. Next to the glass lies a note.

TYPED: "You've made it this far, now relax and trust me. Take a bath, close your eyes, then afterwards-- open the envelope by the sink. I'll be back in an hour, finalizing some last minute plans."

Off her mischievously satisfied grin...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Holly enters, a king sized bed stands gentle guard in a bedroom bathed in hints of sunset. Holly runs her hand along the covers, as if gracing a piece of cloud.

A balcony extends from their room-- she peeks through the glass, yet another breathtaking view, five floors above Earth.

On the floor is Everett's SUITCASE. Big, black, bulky. One of shirts and pair of pants hang in the closet. She enters the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Candles. A bottle of wine. Oils. Separate shower and bath tub. The whole nine yards. She looks by the sink-- there's the note. One more satisfied sigh and she lets down her hair.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Holly lays in the gentle suds of her bath, Pinot in hand, eyes closed, content as can be.

Her phone RINGS. Digital chimes, tacky. Eye roll.

INT. LIVING ROOM

The phone vibrates and chimes, illuminating a picture of Holly, Russell, and daughter Chelsea-- all smiling on vacation. Her husband is balding and wrinkling, thick frames obscuring what was likely once quite the catch.

The phone stops. Missed call.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Wrapped in a plush bath robe, Holly picks up the envelope by the sink. She opens it and reads:

TYPED: "Go to the bed. Put on the blindfold. There are handcuffs in the dresser if you're feeling extra adventurous..."

A wry smile sends her into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Holly eyes the setup. CANDLES on the bedside table, as well as a paused IPOD, cued to SENSUAL MUSIC. She picks up a PLUSH BLINDFOLD, twirling it around her finger...

She lights the candles, plays the music, and crawls onto the bed. She arranges herself-- then re-arranges herself. Shows some thigh, opens the chest a bit. She looks gorgeous, inviting, a vision of heaven.

Holly holds the blindfold up, contemplating... She puts it over her head with a smirk, half laughing.

HOLLY POV: Looking straight out the bedroom door, the blindfold cuts us to BLACK.

She smiles, waiting. The smile starts fading... An unsettling feeling. Her breath quickens--

HOLLY POV: Blindfold up-- No one. Clear door frame. No one there.

She clutches her chest, breathing hard. She laughs it off, embarrassed. A beat. She puts the blindfold back on, growing more comfortable.

She sprawls out. Seductively spreading her legs...

She pulls the blindfold back off. No one. Curiosity takes her back to the bedside table. She pulls out a pair of FUZZY HANDCUFFS and their KEY.

She gives them a once over, first figuring out how to unlock them. She tries one wrist, squeezing-- it passes judgement. She looks over her shoulder, eyeing the bedpost... No, not there.

She puts her wrists on her lap, wiggling on the bed, raising her arms, testing what it would be like...

That'll work. She makes sure the key is close by.

She adjusts her robe, exposing her leg up her inner thigh, then CLICKS her wrists into the handcuffs. Lastly, she pulls the blindfold down and leans back against the bed.

And we wait.

HOLLY POV: BLACK. We listen. Footsteps, voices disappearing down the hall.

She smiles, still partially embarrassed with herself.

HOLLY POV: BLACK. Footsteps approaching. They stop outside the door. The lock opens, someone enters. They slowly move towards the bedroom. Holly's breath quickens. The footsteps stop at the bedroom entrance.

HOLLY

Everett?

No response.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Ever--

VOICE

Shhhh...

He enters. Holly squirms, now unsure, leaning forward.

HOLLY

Everett, seriously, just let me know it's--

He suddenly rushes down and kisses Holly on the foot. She jolts. Electricity runs up her spine. He walks over to the iPod, turning the music up-- loud. He returns to her feet, kissing, moving north, up her leg. The rush quiets her. His hands part her robe as he moves up her thighs...

Holly's breath quickens into low moans as he goes down on her. She's enjoying herself, jolts of pleasure contorting her face.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Oh, Everett... Yes.

He grabs her legs and pulls her to the end of the bed. He drops his pants, quickly entering her. She gasps, a fit of ecstasy. He starts slowly, almost unsure. She fights against the handcuffs out of passion as he pins her shoulders back, entering deeper. She loves it.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Yes, oh, yes Everett.

Her tone turns animalistic, as he thrusts faster, harder.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Yes, Everett, fuck me.

He pauses. Then flips her over, SPANKING her. She GROWLS, enjoying it. Cuffed hands in the air, he wraps his hands around her neck, squeezing, while he thrusts hard. Too hard. It's getting rough. But she stays with him, feeding his animal side.

Her moans turn to squeals. He stuffs his fingers in her mouth, but she bites down-- he GRUNTS, stuffing the sheets in, muffling her. We're now watching something very uncomfortable. She begins shaking, fighting to get free, yelling into the sheets-- he pins her, but she still fights back, to no avail.

A SHRIEK of pain as he inserts himself where he's not welcome. He thrusts slowly, but it's over. This is assault.

It doesn't last long. He stops, almost out of shame. He doesn't finish. They're both still.

He pulls his jeans up and turns, as we pan around to look into the living room...

REVEALING: A toned, tan, 28-year-old man. *THIS*, is EVERETT ALAN. Cuffed, gagged, and on his knees in his boxer briefs-- He's terrified, eyes wide as dinner plates. He saw the whole thing.

The man, now very clearly NOT Everett, walks up to him, sensual music peaking, blaring in the background.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The man squats down and leans into Everett's ear. We see his face up close. His forehead drips sweat, catching his breath, a look of distilled hatred practically dripping into Everett's ear.

Meet RUSSELL PIERPOINT, 47, Holly's husband.

RUSSELL
Now, let's see you lie.

He sneers at Everett, who can hardly look at Russell out of the corner of his eye.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
No one leaves this room. Not you,
not her. Your family is in danger.
I have Lydia and Jessica-- Jessica
must be, what, one year old?

He holds a finger up to his lips, a mock shushing.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
Not a word to Holly. Stay put till
I'm gone. Let's not forget the
importance of family... I'll call
you.

He follows Everett's gaze to Holly's curled up body.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
Enjoy my wife.

He pulls the gag out of his mouth-- and Everett doesn't say a word. Russell takes off his cuffs and slowly backs away. We hear the room door close.

Everett slowly rises, eyes glued to Holly... Adrenaline kicks in. He spins, looking around the hotel room. It's all new to him-- he dashes for the door, looking through the peep hole.

Empty hall. The music subsides as his hand reaches for the doorknob--

HOLLY
(weak, other room)
Take these off me.

He freezes.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Everett. Take these handcuffs off
me.

He turns, frozen in fear. He looks like a boy. She screams.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Everett! Take these fucking
handcuffs off me!

He dashes into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Holly's propped herself up on her knees, partially swaddled in bed sheets, her blindfold askew, one red, puffy eye glaring at him.

They lock eyes.

HOLLY

Get me out of these. Now.

He slowly approaches the chained beast.

EVERETT

Holly. I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry.

HOLLY

Now.

He circles around the bed, turning the music OFF.

EVERETT

Please, just listen to me. I didn't mean for it to get--

HOLLY

(growling)

Now...

He grabs the key, takes her hands, and UNLOCKS THE CUFFS.

She EXPLODES into a fury, SLAPPING, PUNCHING, SCRATCHING, anything to hurt him--

He covers his face, a scratch digging across his chest. Blood drawn.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

How! How could you TAKE ADVANTAGE of me like that!

Everett backs into the corner.

EVERETT

I, I thought you were enjoying it! Last weekend you said you liked the rougher stuff! I just...

It's a disembodied defense. She makes him pay for it.

HOLLY

That doesn't mean you can do THAT to me!

She hits him HARD. He has to go on the offensive, grabbing her by the shoulders, clamping down. She tries to break free.

EVERETT

STOP! I'm sorry! I'm sorry, ok?

She looks into his eyes, betrayed.

HOLLY

Goodbye.

With a snap, she's getting dressed, throwing her clothes back into her suitcase.

RING-- RING-- It's coming from the Living Room.

Everett watches Holly pack, dazed. He's still trying to grasp the situation.

RING-- RING-- He looks, it IS his phone, on the bar. He dashes for it!

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

EVERETT

Hello?

RUSSELL

(through phone)

What's the first thing I told you?

Holly is a disheveled mess, but rounding the corner, heading straight for the door. Shit...

Everett sprints to block her.

EVERETT

Holly, please. I'm sorry. Please, I... I wanted this to be special. I didn't mean for it to get out of control. Please, stay with me.

If looks could kill... She SLAPS him.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

I got caught in the moment, ok! I should NEVER, never have assumed you would want something like that. Please... I can't let you walk through that door. You mean too much to me. Baby.

She falters.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
All of this, this whole weekend--
it was supposed to be for you. I,
I'm so sorry. You're too important
to me to let one second, one
moment, be lost from our time
together...

She doesn't want to believe him.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
From this moment on-- I'm yours,
completely. Whatever you want.
Just not out that door.

A BEAT. She slowly backs away, heading back into the
bedroom, slamming the door. He hangs his head, bringing the
phone back up to his ear.

RUSSELL
Pretty smooth.

EVERETT
Why are you doing this?

RUSSELL
Your family thanks you.

EVERETT
Don't-- Please. Don't hurt my
family.

Silence.

RUSSELL
I wish I could say the same about
mine.

EVERETT
Look.
(cups the receiver)
Mr. Pierpoint, I'm sorry. I, I
know you're upset. But this is
crazy-- you can't just keep us in
here--

RUSSELL
You're right. But you can.

EVERETT
What am I supposed--

RUSSELL

That's up to you, Everett. You're smart. Six months of sneaking around? Well, five months and one week. I'm ashamed it took me that long-- but banks call about charges *that* big. I'm guessing that was your tuition?

EVERETT

Please, Mr. Pierpoint--

RUSSELL

Call me Russell.

EVERETT

What do you want me to do?

RUSSELL

You do what you want, Everett. Just as Holly will do as she wants. Just know that if she leaves, or if the police are called, or if anything happens that is NOT you two walking out of this hotel tomorrow afternoon like nothing happened-- I will kill your family.

A BEAT.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

I will start by killing your beautiful wife Lydia. What do you think about that Lydia?

LYDIA'S VOICE

Everett, help--

Everett's eyes bulge, just as Holly opens the bedroom door, heading straight for him.

RUSSELL

Don't test me.

CLICK, he hangs up. Holly tries to push Everett aside.

HOLLY

I need some air.

EVERETT

Wait, wait! Can we just talk for a second?

HOLLY

Later.

She leans on him-- He wraps her up in his arms, pirouetting away from the door.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Stop.

EVERETT

Please.

HOLLY

Let go.

EVERETT

Please!

He gets her to the couch, sitting her down.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Holly, I know that I can't begin to apologize, and, and, repair what--

HOLLY

Stop. You're a child. A little boy, Everett. Do you get that?
(beat)

I am a grown woman. Know that now. I don't need to be pet or coddled. And I don't need to be counseled after I've been fucked a little harder than half-speed. You're the pool boy. So don't think, *for a second*, that I need couch therapy. I'm a big girl, so don't think that your big dick has done anything but wandered too close to the sun-- so cool your tone before I break you off completely.

Speechless.

EVERETT

(deep breath)

Can we, just, start over?

She gives him a minute to sweat.

HOLLY

What made you think that was ok to do to me? What made you think that I wanted that? I want you to explain it to me, right now.

His eyes plead with her-- it wasn't me...

EVERETT

I-- I thought you were enjoying yourself. We've been doing, *this*, for six months, and-- I just thought we'd try something new.

HOLLY

Something new? Something new would be ordering my coffee black instead of with fucking cream and sugar!

EVERETT

I'm sorry! I really, I never would've done it, had--

HOLLY

Had what?

EVERETT

Had you not said what you did last weekend.

HOLLY

What did I say?

EVERETT

(exasperated)

You said you like to get fucked hard and that you like it when I do new things to you in the moment-- That's *your* fucking color commentary, ok? You planted the seed-- and that doesn't make it right, but please, can we let it go?

She glares at him. RING-RING-- Holly's phone goes off. It's a good reason to get up.

She crosses over to the bar where she left her phone. It's Russell. She reluctantly answers.

HOLLY

Hello.

RUSSELL

(stern)

Holly. Where are you?

KNOCK, KNOCK-- someone's at their door.

She looks over at Everett, who sits in his boxer briefs, eyes jumping to the door. He cautiously gets up to answer.

HOLLY
I'm at the hospital. Good timing,
just got on a break, what's up?

RUSSELL
In Santa Barbara?

A flash of concern, she walks to the window.

HOLLY
Yes...

Everett opens the door. It's a FRESH SECURITY HIRE.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
Good afternoon sir--

He notices his lack of clothing and can't help but chuckle, turning away.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE (CONT'D)
So sorry to bother, but, um, we did
have a noise complaint come to us
about your room.

EVERETT
Oh, I'm so sorry.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
Is, uh, is everything alright?

Everett looks at Holly-- she turns away.

HOLLY
Is something wrong?

RUSSELL
You're not in Santa Barbara, Holly.
And you are in a heap of danger.

She freezes. Everett starts closing the door on the security guard.

EVERETT
We'll keep it down, very sorry.

The Security stops him.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
Just doing my job. Please be
considerate of the other guests, we
do have a fine for repeat offenses.
I'd hate to have to come back.

Curt smile-- Door shut, Everett bears down on Holly,
mouthing: "Who is it?"

RUSSELL
Everett Alan is not safe. You need
to listen to me very clearly. Is
he nearby?

Paralyzed. She turns to look at Everett-- who can't hear the
voice, but he has a good idea who it is...

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
Holly, are you clear to talk to me?

She walks into the bedroom, shutting the door on Everett.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Holly leans against the door, hand to chest.

HOLLY
Yes. Honey, what are you talking
about. Who... Who's Everett Alan?

A beat.

RUSSELL
The man you're fucking that isn't
me.

HOLLY
Honey, what are you talking about--

ANOTHER KNOCK from the hallway door. Holly looks over her
shoulder. Who is that...

RUSSELL
(voice rising)
His name is Everett Alan, he's
twenty-seven years old, wife named
Lydia, same age, daughter named
Jessica, she's just a year and a
half old. You might have been
sneaking around for months, and
I've just caught wind, BUT, that's
regrettably not what's important
right now so *listen to me closely*.

She's stunned.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
He's a dangerous man.

HOLLY
What are you talking about, he's a
student of mine, he's--

RUSSELL
Do you really think you're his
first fling?

HOLLY
What?

RUSSELL
Or the only one he has right now?

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

EVERETT
Hey, baby, what's going on in
there?

HOLLY
Wait, but how--

RUSSELL
Girls have gone missing, Holly.
Even girls who didn't go all the
way out to Palm Springs for a
weekend getaway. Do you have ANY
idea what position you've put
yourself in?! STUPID! YOU'RE
FUCKING STUPID HOLLY!

Heavy breathing. Holly is petrified.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)
You need to get out of there--

EVERETT
Can I come in?

HOLLY
I'm changing, hold on--

The doorknob TURNS...

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Hold on!

RUSSELL

But leave quietly, only when you
have a chance. Don't just bolt or
arouse suspicion, just slip out--

EVERETT

I need to show you something.

The doorknob rattles violently.

HOLLY

(quiet, into phone)
Russell, is this real?

EVERETT

Holly!

Everett rams his shoulder into the door, knocking Holly
clear. They look at each other, a pregnant moment.

She hangs up.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Who was that?

HOLLY

My husband.

A beat.

EVERETT

What'd he want?

Holly eyes Everett up and down, his muscles now seem
menacing, his steely gaze hints at maniacal, not
mysterious...

HOLLY

Just checking in.

A stare down. A line has been drawn. He enters, moving to
the closet, pulling on his shirt and pants.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

I think I'm going to run down to
the front desk and grab some
brochures...

She gets up, pulling a jacket out of her suitcase. Holly's
hand pats her pocket, a reassuring JINGLE from her car keys.

EVERETT

Well, you can't.

She freezes. Fear turning her to him.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I did this for us.

He gestures out of the bedroom. She moves in slow-motion, afraid to turn the corner.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Everett calmly plants two hands on her shoulders and pivots her to reveal...

A MASSAGE TABLE-- wheeled into the room. Candles lit, a side table full of oils, warm stones, hot towels, everything.

She sighs in relief, until she realizes what this means.

EVERETT
Let me make amends. This is
supposed to be *our* weekend.

He senses her hesitation. BING! His hand flies to his cell.

NEW TEXT MESSAGE: "I would get her phone."

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Let me help you.

He approaches her slowly, methodically, as if to a hurt animal. She backs away, he steps closer. She covers up, he cups her hand. It's a delicate dance.

He extends a hand for her phone. She pulls back.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
It defeats the purpose if you're
texting while I work out your
knots.

She makes a point of turning the ringer volume UP, then sets it on the massage table.

He bows as she concedes and takes his hand, half out of fear, half out of disbelief to his possible true nature.

He takes off her jacket, running his hands down her neck as he unbuttons her SHEER blouse. She lets him, using the time he's not looking at her to size up the room.

One door exiting to the hallway... She eyes the kitchen drawers, what's in there? Turning over her shoulder-- she sees the balcony extending from the bedroom...

Everett gets her down to her jeans and bra. He diligently hands her a towel, turning his back. She pauses-- could she run? But he's right there...

She strips down to her underwear, pulling the towel around her, and climbs onto the massage bed.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
You can trust me. I promise, just
your back.

She looks around one last time, eyeing her phone, wishing it'd go off. Everett eases her down.

We see her face lowered into the awful, toilet-bowl face-rest. Her face exposed to the ground, her eyes dart, only able to see Everett's legs. His hands touch her back--

She JOLTS UP. Phone's still there.

HOLLY
It's not comfortable.

She lays face up, keeping Everett in sight.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Better.

Everett fumbles with some oil, callously drizzling it on his hands. He proceeds to work on her shoulders, her awkwardly looking right back at him.

EVERETT
I'm going to do my best with this,
I'm not really a masseuse.

She just looks back.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Relax. You're tight as a vice
grip.

Deal with it. He switches subjects.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
How'd I do on that thoracic exam?
Even with your help, I bet I land
around a C-minus...

HOLLY
How'd you afford all this?

BEAT.

EVERETT
Rule Number Three.

HOLLY
Well come on. This is a little
extravagant. Raises some red
flags.

EVERETT
Well, I do have a credit card. No
more questions, Rule Number Three
clearly states--

HOLLY
Will they call about such a large
charge? Will your wife see?

EVERETT
No, no... I, uh, I pre-cleared it
with our bank. Plus, she doesn't
have a head for finances. We're
fine.

He motions to turn her over-- she gives him a quarter turn,
laying on her side. He continues.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
What did you tell your husband for
this weekend?

HOLLY
(defensive)
Rule Number One.

EVERETT
(you started it)
Rule Number Three.

BEAT.

HOLLY
A consulting gig in Santa Barbara.

EVERETT
Is he still in LA?

HOLLY
Yes.

EVERETT
What does he do?

HOLLY
Now you're really breaking Rule
Number One.

EVERETT
Six months-- I think I've earned
the right to know. If he's a
professional boxer or cop, I gotta
know how fast I have to run.

He nervously laughs.

HOLLY
Trust me, there would be no running
from him.

It's a strange truth, half admission, half threat. Both of
them pause, unsettled.

EVERETT
What do you mean? Is that why he
called?

HOLLY
What do you mean?

EVERETT
I mean-- is everything ok? He just
called you.

HOLLY
Oh, yeah. He just, likes to check
up.

EVERETT
What'd he say?

HOLLY
(exasperated)
He asked if I was done with my
consultation session yet and asked
if I would call him later tonight
before I went to bed, ok? Does
your wife not do the same when you
go away for a weekend?

That shuts him up. He switches to a hot towel, dropping it
on her-- TSSSSS!

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Oww!

She jolts up! But he eases her back down, rubbing it in,
smothering the pain into heat. Fear settles back in.

EVERETT

Enjoy it. You're too tense.

HOLLY

What about Mrs. Alan? What does she do?

EVERETT

Well. With Jessica, my daughter-- she does what she can. Sort of odd jobs, on and off.

HOLLY

Like what.

EVERETT

She used to model. But, she sort of transitioned out with the pregnancy.

HOLLY

A super model wife, huh?

EVERETT

Hey, I didn't say "super".

HOLLY

It's ok, you can defend her.

Everett goes back to massaging.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

And what's the agenda for this weekend? Anything special planned?

He looks at the opulent massage table, working his hands up her back, up to her neck...

EVERETT

Well... I honestly planned a lot of stay-in activities. It's cold, and, you know-- there are fates worse than being in bed all weekend. If you'll let me.

She doesn't answer as she clenches her jaw, his hands dangerously close to gripping her neck.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Am I not enough?

Enough-- Holly sits up, rolling her neck, covering up. She forces a smile.

HOLLY
Of course you are.
(grabbing a towel)
I'm going to wash off real quick.
Excited to see what you surprise me
with next.

She hops off the massage table, grabbing her--

He SWIPES her phone.

EVERETT
No, no, no... Carry the calm to
the shower.

A twitchy smile from Holly.

HOLLY
Really, Everett? Come on, how old
are you? Give me my phone.

BEAT.

EVERETT
My room, my rules.

She glares.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Please, it'll be here when you get
out.

She retreats into the bedroom, pasted-on grin-- closing the
door behind her.

Everett snaps to attention. He pulls out his phone, looking
back through numbers. The last call...

"BLOCKED"

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Fuck.

We hear the shower run. He wanders over to the entry door,
hand to handle. He eyes his phone, waiting... He turns the
handle, still waiting... CREAKKKKK.

Door open, he stares at a long hotel hallway. Freedom. Held
back by an invisible force field.

He shakes his head, confidence growing-- there's no way
anyone could--

BING.

He looks down at his phone. "ONE NEW PICTURE MESSAGE".

Opens-- it's his WIFE, blindfolded by a white sheet, a knife protruding into frame, tight against her neck. She's crying.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
NO! No, I'm sorry! Please...

He slams the door. Fumbling back into the room. He punches texts back.

INSERT: NO STOP... I WONT LEAVE... I SWEAR!

He sits down at the dining room table, head in his hands.

BING.

NEW MESSAGE: I WOULD CHECK YOUR BALCONY.

He pauses-- head whips to the bedroom. He falls out of his chair, scrambling-- door's locked.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Shit...
(louder)
Holly? Holly, let me in.

EXT. BALCONY - SUNSET

The sun dies, spilling a crimson hue across Holly's face. The cold wind strangles her hair around her face.

Pulling out, we see-- their corner suite jutting out from the fifth floor, a sheer drop off to a jagged rock garden. Holly teeters over the railing.

Her goal: their not-so-nearby neighbor's balcony, a good body and a half away, with a privacy shield between, topped with iron spikes to keep the birds from perching. Would be a perfect go between, if you have really strong fingers.

The door RATTLES behind her. Fear drains the blood from her face as she leans over the abyss, contemplating stepping out.

HOLLY
(hissing)
Help! Is there anyone there?
Help, please. I'm in the Veracruz suite...

Her fingernails grate against the three millimeter lip. She puts her weight on her hold-- SCRRR-ICK!

Fingernails GRIND TO BLOOD, losing her hold-- she falls!

Her free hand slap-grabs her balcony, one leg wrapped around the iron spindle, the other in free fall.

EVERETT (O.S.)

(muted)

Holly! Let me in!

She grinds her teeth, pulling her bleeding hand back.

BA-DOOM. Everett rams the door.

BA-DOOM. She looks out at her escape, bleeding hand quivering. We hold on her gaze...

BA-BLAM-- He's in.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Holly closes the balcony door. She looks up at him, the doorknob broken through the wooden door.

HOLLY

Jesus, Everett. Knock next time.

EVERETT

(fumbling)

I didn't know if you maybe slipped and fell in the shower.

Mhm, sure. She slinks into the bathroom, shower still running, closing the--

He catches the door.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

I love it when we shower together.

INT. BATHROOM

Everett enters, Holly quickly turning to the sink, washing the blood from her fingers.

HOLLY

I'd really prefer to shower alone.

Everett advances, unsure. He wraps his arms around her.

EVERETT

Come on. Pretty please?

She tries to shrug him off.

HOLLY

I'm the one with oils on, you don't even need to shower. Why don't you look for a place for dinner?

EVERETT

Pretty, pretty, please...

He nibbles on her ear, working down to her neck. She cringes, every touch toxic.

She breaks free.

HOLLY

Stop! Please.

(easing into a smile)

Can I just clean myself in peace?

He takes a minute to think about it...

Then takes his shirt off. Then his pants. His muscled body on display, she's a pair of boxer briefs away from a show.

EVERETT

Your turn.

Her hands instinctively cover herself. Steam curls around the bathroom, beginning to fog the mirror. He closes the door, flicks off the fan.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Our own private sauna.

He opens the shower door, steam piling out. He pulls his boxers down.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Holly. I have nothing to hide.

Slowly, she peels off her clothing, gently stepping into the shower. He follows.

INT. BATHROOM - SHOWER

A cavernous, glassy affair. Enough room for three. Everett holds her from behind, resting his head on her shoulder.

EVERETT

Can we forget this whole thing?

She reaches for the soap. He reaches for the shampoo.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

May I?

She silently acquiesces. He runs his hands through her hair, a practiced act.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Since we've already broken Rules One and Three... May I ask what exactly your husband does for a living?

HOLLY

Why?

EVERETT

Curiosity. You haven't quite killed the cat.

Adding shampoo, he lathers.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Well, it can't be anything good. Otherwise you would've already told me.

HOLLY

You're getting warmer.

EVERETT

Cop.

HOLLY

Warmer.

EVERETT

Detective?

HOLLY

Warmer...

EVERETT

Detective with an itchy trigger finger that for some reason looks down on male doctors?

HOLLY

Surveillance. Albeit retired.

His hands fall from her hair, suds in her eyes.

EVERETT

You're kidding me.

HOLLY
Albeit *retired*. He's at a desk
now.

A beat. Everett BANGS his head on the glass.

EVERETT
Holly. You do realize you are
having a FUCKING AFFAIR-- AND YOUR
HUSBAND IS *RETIRED* POLICE
SURVEILLANCE!?

She steps back, frightened.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ, did you ever think
this would have been good
information for you tell ME, oh, I
don't know-- six months ago?!

HOLLY
Everett-- I, he promised me--

EVERETT
What? Let me guess, he promised he
would never use his powers for
"evil" as in, "I trust you so much
Holly, I would never follow you, or
bug you, or mic you, or whatever
THE FUCK "surveillance" can do!!

She's pressed against the far wall, just water between them.

HOLLY
Yes, he said that.

Everett's fists shake.

EVERETT
Holly. This is a problem.

HOLLY
Why?

EVERETT
Do I need to spell it out for you?

A door SLAMS in the living room-- both heads turn.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Stay here!

He sprints out of the bathroom.

Holly doesn't waste a second-- throwing a towel on, she flies through the drawers, pulling out soap, mouth wash, cups, tissues-- a RAZOR.

She SNAPS off the handle, cracking into the safety edging, digging into the marrow for the blades.

Teeth GRITTING, blood oozes from her thumb-- SNAP, one side free, the blades dangle, perilous, free. Footsteps-- she tucks it into her hair, pulling it into a loose bun.

Everett stands in the door, a pallor in his face.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I think room service made a
mistake.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Everett, toweled, cautiously wobbles out of the bedroom. Holly's behind, eyes darting to Everett's open neck. She runs a hand through her bun-- making sure her makeshift weapon is still there. Everett stops.

Then she sees it. A WHEELCHAIR. Empty, wheeled into the center of the common area, pointed ominously at them-- it has wrist and ankle bindings. The massage table is gone.

Holly takes a step back.

HOLLY
Why is that here?

EVERETT
I don't know.

HOLLY
Everett, why is that here?

He tries to keep his cool.

EVERETT
Babe, I don't know-- must be some
mix up.

He walks to it, attempting to laugh it off...

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I mean, they say Palm Springs can
be a bit of a retirement home.

...But he can't bring himself to touch it.

Holly beelines for the phone, punching for the front desk.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Hey, put that down--

HOLLY
Hi. I'm in the Veracruz suite and
we were just--

Everett snatches the receiver away.

EVERETT
Hi. I want to know *exactly* why we
were delivered a wheelchair.

His eyes widen, waiting to hear who answered Holly...

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
(through receiver)
I'm sorry sir.

Relief washes over him.

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We normally keep a wheelchair in
the storage closet in the Veracruz
suite. Room service must have
forgotten that you did not request
one. We can send someone to place
it in the closet for you...?

EVERETT
No, that's not necessary, I can
take care of it. Thank you.

Holly backs away, a look screaming bullshit.

HOLLY
Where's my phone?

Everett hangs up.

EVERETT
I guess they normally store a
wheelchair in the storage closet.
Seems fucking weird...

HOLLY
Yeah. Sure does. Where's my
phone?

Everett looks around. Shit.

EVERETT

Oh, they must have accidentally--

Holly reaches for the room phone...

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Oh! Sorry, no, I put it in the safe. Before I accidentally busted in. Just in case someone *did* come in.

(beat)

Glad I did.

They share a mutual gaze-- *Just how much do you know, and what are you planning?*

HOLLY

I'm going to put on some clothes.

(points at wheelchair)

Get rid of that. And have my phone in hand.

She saunters into their room, closing the door behind her.

BING. NEW TEXT MESSAGE: "I won't save you any more. Your wife loses one finger for every call she makes. Keep an eye on that balcony."

Everett erupts in caged, writhing rage.

EVERETT

Fuck! Fuck! Fuck you!

He tears the cable out of the room phone, ripping out the port. He casts a predatory look around the room.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

How'd you know...

He stands up, a new suspicion drawing on him. Whipping around, he looks to the corners of the room. No cameras visible...

He walks over to the windows, gazing out at the beautiful view. No more-- he grabs the floor-length drapes and pulls them closed, plunging the room into barely-lit darkness.

Next. The TV. He dashes over, running his hands along the sides, peering into the glass. He steps back, waving at his shadowy reflection...

INT. BEDROOM

Holly peers over her shoulder, then hunches down, examining Everett's suitcase.

A cheap lock holds the zipper shut-- Holly easily rips it out. Almost too easy. She pulls back the cover, revealing-- A CACHE of surgical instruments. SCALPEL, NEEDLES, CLAMPS, SWABS, BANDAGES, and a ROLL OF BLACK STRING.

Everett STOMPS in the other room. Holly quickly shuts the suitcase and hurries into the bathroom, a foreboding shadow across her face...

INT. LIVING ROOM

Everett stands in the center of the room, slowly turning, eyes falling on every nook and cranny. How is Russell doing this..?

INT. BATHROOM

Holly steels herself in the mirror, gazing at her body. She looks at her heap of clothes.

She picks out a black, lacy blouse, examining it in the mirror. She finds the tag still on, specially purchased for this "romantic" getaway...

She trembles, shaking, a terrible anger building, until-- she shoves the blouse against her mouth, muffling a primal scream.

Sets it down. Breathes. Deep breaths.

She rips the tag off, throws the blouse on, and lets down her hair. She tears out her meager weapon and a clump of hair along with it. Then she gives herself a new look, a determined, you-will-no-longer-fuck-with-me look.

INT. KITCHENETTE

Everett tears through the kitchenette, opening drawer after drawer.

Plates, bowls, coffee machine, wine glasses, drink shaker. All the usual suspects...

He opens the fridge-- a bottle of white wine with a complimentary note. His hand brushes and rattles the shelves, searching for something hidden.

He moves on to the island. Opens a drawer-- KNIVES.

Lots of knives. Clamoring all over each other. Every shape and size, ascending to a stunted looking machete, all gleaming in sinister fashion. It's too many knives.

Everett briefly grips one, gazing into its razor symmetry, unsure what purpose it would, or could, serve.

He moves on, crossing the room to go through the mini bar.

INT. BATHROOM

Holly, now dressed, glances down at her blood-caked finger nail. She gingerly bends it, wincing in pain. She rummages through the drawers looking for something...

INT. LIVING ROOM - MINI BAR

Everett digs into the mini bar. He slides back the doors: GIN, BOURBON, SCOTCH, VODKA, RED WINE, PILLS. Pills?

He pulls them out, reading the label. Eyes widen. A look that says, "these have no business being *near* a mini bar"...

A thought-- he grabs the bottle of wine and heads to the bedroom.

INT. BATHROOM

Everett rustles around outside in the bedroom, hastening Holly's fingers to the lip of the mirror. Smooth, until-- her hand catches something. CLICK. The mirror pops open, revealing...

Her. Her reflection looks back at her from a second mirror behind the cabinet shelves. A mirror behind a mirror. All empty-- except for a single prescription pill bottle, full. She turns it over in her hands, reading the label.

Holly's face echoes Everett's, what are these doing here?

EVERETT (O.S.)

Holly.

She jumps, turning-- and sees Everett standing in the bathroom door, *through the back of the open mirror*.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Hey, uh, would you care to join me out on the balcony?

From his view, Everett's seeing a reflection of himself, Holly behind the mirror.

She gently closes it, no pill bottle in hand, catching her terrified look in the trick mirror.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
You look nice.

INT./EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Night time. Two glasses of red wine, lit by a single candle, waiting patiently, as Everett leads Holly to the balcony. He shuts the doors behind them as she rolls up her sleeves.

He takes her hands, giving her a small twirl to the banister.

EVERETT
It's clear out. You can see stars
for miles. Not a drop of smog.

He picks up a blanket, draping it around Holly's shoulders.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
A little chilly, but that's what
the wine's for.

He reaches for the wine, hesitates, then hands one to Holly, taking the other for himself. He curls up behind her, wrapping his arms around her waist, kissing the small of her neck.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Hey, there's something I wanted to
talk to you about--

HOLLY
Do you have a white?

His smile fades.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Red might knock me out. It's been
a long day.
(beat)
Sorry to be a bother.

EVERETT
No bother, let me go check...

He unfurls himself from the blanket, and heads inside.

She desperately unrolls the cuff of her sleeve, spinning it down, unrolling and unrolling and unrolling, to reveal--

A pill, POPPING OUT OF HER SLEEVE! Sailing towards the balcony's edge--

HOLLY

No!

She snatches at it! CRASH-- At the expense of Everett's wine glass.

Shattered on the ground, she has her glass in one hand, and opening the other-- nothing. The pill's gone.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

No, no, no...

EVERETT (O.S.)

Everything alright?

Red wine drips off the balcony, opportunity missed.

Everett steps back out onto the balcony, white wine in hand.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Jesus, Holly!

HOLLY

I'm sorry, I was trying to adjust the blanket and, just, stupidly dropped it.

EVERETT

Well, be careful where you step, you're barefoot.

HOLLY

Here, you can just have mine, I wanted the white any way.

He pauses. She senses the hesitation.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

I haven't even taken a sip-- pure as can be.

She extends it.

EVERETT

Of course.

He takes the red, handing her the white.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Well, here, let me help you out of that... Mess. Just be careful where you step.

He sets a candle down on the ground, illuminating the shards of glass, delicately guiding her foot from harm. Safe, Holly raises her glass.

HOLLY

My knight in shining armor. Thank you so much for this wonderful weekend getaway, what a trip it's been.

EVERETT

(half-smile)

Cheers.

They CLINK glasses.

Both pause, glass to lips, waiting for the other to...

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

HOLLY

Now who's that?

EVERETT

Eh-hem. Let me go check.

INT. LIVING ROOM - ROOM DOOR

Everett opens the door. It's Rodrigo again!

ROOM SERVICE (RODRIGO)

Good evening sir! My name is Rodrigo and I am pleased to serve your dinner.

Everett gives him a quick once over. Holly peers over his shoulder. Rodrigo gives Everett a puzzled look, obviously not what he was expecting from Holly's husband...

EVERETT

That's it?

RODRIGO

Exactly to your specifications, sir.

EVERETT
(no idea)
Wonderful...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rodrigo wheels in the cart, quickly placing the silver-covered plates on the dining table. He sees Holly.

RODRIGO
Ah, hello again, Miss.

HOLLY
Hello. What's for dinner?

His smile falters a bit, casting a disappointed look at Everett-- then he cranks the charm back up.

RODRIGO
Sadly, I just push the cart. But I must say, it smells delicious. I am very jealous of your evening.

EVERETT
(eyeing Rodrigo)
A surprise honey, just hold on a minute.

All the accoutrements are set-- FRESH FLOWERS, more CANDLES. Last, the COVERED PLATES.

RODRIGO
(indicating one dish)
Madam's meal.
(indicating the other)
And, Sir, your meal.

He comes to a humble rest by the door.

RODRIGO (CONT'D)
Please let me know if there's anything I can do. You can ask for me by name at reception. I hope you both have a wonderful evening in our Veracruz suite.

EVERETT
Thank you.

RODRIGO
You know, my grandparents were actually from Veracruz, down in Mexico.

(MORE)

RODRIGO (CONT'D)

They were a loving couple-- it
blesses my heart to see another
genuine, loving couple such as
yourselves sleeping under el nombre
de mi pueblo.

HOLLY

Thank you, very much.

Everett reaches for his wallet--

HOLLY (CONT'D)

I got it.

Holly snatches up her purse, rummaging through with two
hands. Everett eyes Rodrigo, suspicious.

EVERETT

Any... Special instructions? From
the chef?

RODRIGO

Lo siento, I was just given the
tray to bring up. Would you like
me to ask?

EVERETT

No, no, that's ok.

Holly presses a small clump of bills into his hand.

HOLLY

Thank you so very much.

Rodrigo's smile falters again, but professionalism prevents
him from saying anything else.

RODRIGO

Muchas gracias, have a wonderful
meal and a beautiful weekend! Just
call when you would like the food
removed, or we will be by in the
morning. Adios!

And he's gone. Everett turns to Holly, both still clutching
their respective wine glasses.

EVERETT

He was nice. Shall we?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DINING ROOM TABLE

Everett and Holly sit at opposite ends, smiles begrudgingly fixed on their faces. She looks down at her cutlery, holding up a nasty looking paring knife. Small, concealable, sharp...

HOLLY

Will this be a do-it-yourself
dinner?

Everett looks down at his knives: A SMALL CLEAVER and a
BONING knife. He holds up the boning knife.

EVERETT

I went with the Chef's choice for
two. Let's see what we got.

They pull off their covers.

Everett's: A bloody, rare New York Strip.

Holly's: A bloody, rare New York Strip.

They look at each other's plate.

HOLLY

Well, the chef apparently doesn't
have much of an imagination.

(holding up her small
knife)

But one of you have quite the sense
of humor.

EVERETT

Here, let me get you a better
knife...

HOLLY

Oh no, this will actually do quite
fine. I do love a rare steak.

Everett cuts into his, the meat bleeding out.

EVERETT

You always were the more
adventurous one...

HOLLY

Am I?

They look up at each other.

EVERETT

Well, I can't help but wonder-- I'm not sure if I ever would have come aboard this wonderful, wild ride had you not been so... Forward with me.

She can't help but chuckle.

HOLLY

I was the forward one?

EVERETT

Well--

HOLLY

I noticed your borderline failing grade, asked if you needed, or wanted, some special assistance on the next chapter-- and you exuberantly accepted.

Everett ducks his head, hiding a smile.

EVERETT

You're a hell of a teacher, what can I say?

HOLLY

No, you can say that.

EVERETT

I remember my first day. I'll never forget your *exuberant* disapproval of the excessive use of anesthetics-- it was your passion that hooked me.

Holly laughs at the young pup's compliments.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

It was just some wonderful, cruel twist of fate that the chapter we began our first private study session was on the reproductive system.

HOLLY

An enchanting, mystical revelation in evolutionary science. How you, I, or anyone pops into this world is a roll of the dice.

EVERETT
And yet here we are.

A beat.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
You know, I don't think I've ever
thanked you for helping me... Get
by. I know you know, and I do too--
but I can be a great doctor. It's
just the labs--

HOLLY
I know that?

Everett's taken aback.

EVERETT
Well, I mean, why else would you..?

She pauses to think, then levels with him.

HOLLY
Because there are moments in your
life when you are weak and you
believe that all "good" things
require something in return.

He's astonished.

EVERETT
But I thought...

HOLLY
You said "cruel". That we owe our
current setting to a "cruel" twist
of fate. What's cruel?

EVERETT
Well, let's call it what it is.

HOLLY
What is it?

A beat. He's unsure... Then--

EVERETT
We're both married.

She let's it sink in.

HOLLY
We are.
(beat)
(MORE)

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Have you not enjoyed the last six
months?

He lets out a long breath, a quick glance around the room.
Suddenly he's on trial...

EVERETT
I have. I have quite a bit.

She smiles, somehow satisfied.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Have you?

She takes her time...

HOLLY
Perhaps.

EVERETT
Perhaps?

HOLLY
I have enjoyed... The fresh
emotions.

Go on.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
The feelings that have come
naturally, not born of any
predisposed days, months, or years
of "Yes, we have been through this
together and this is how I know I
should smile." I have enjoyed the
unknowable. The moments of pure
shock and chance. Smiles and
pleasure of both body and mind that
can only be felt by having never
felt them before, with someone
else. Someone who I do not know
how they will react. But ALL, are
intensified by the forbidden fruit
and the seed of knowing-- this is
wrong. And so every weekend, or
late-night rendezvous, some
terrible, optimistic impulse tricks
my brain and body and hands into
thinking-- maybe this is the rocky
road before something new and
wonderful will happen. All while
knowing full well that I would
never leap at that chance. I would
never take that risk.

(MORE)

HOLLY (CONT'D)
And so here I am. Here we are. A
pleasurable purgatory.

He looks back at her, message heard, loud and clear.

EVERETT
But it's been fun.

HOLLY
It has been fun.

ZZZZ-ZZZZZZ. Everett pulls his phone out of his pocket. NEW
PICTURE MESSAGE. He opens it.

The Picture: Everett's WIFE, tears staining her cheeks,
mouth bound, with a BLOODY, BANDAGED STUMP WHERE HER RING
FINGER SHOULD BE. She holds Holly's five-dollar tip.

Scribbled on the dollar: "HELP, 911, TRAPPED, HE'S DANGEROUS"

Text: "HOLLY GAVE QUITE THE TIP TO RODRIGO. TOO BAD LYDIA
HAD TO PAY THE REST. CHECK OUTSIDE YOUR DOOR NOW."

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Speaking of, where's my phone?

Everett looks up, teeth grinding, eyes watering.

EVERETT
After dinner. I promise.

He gets up and walks to their door, trying to calm his
shaking hands.

HOLLY
What are you doing?

He opens the door-- seeing Rodrigo's cart, a single COVERED
PLATE waiting for him. He surveys the hallway-- no one.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
What is it?

Reluctant-- he peeks under the lid:

HIS WIFE'S SEVERED FINGER, her WEDDING RING still on.

He SLAMS the top back on, holding down his breath. Holly turns
and eyes him.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
You ok?

He slowly re-enters with the covered plate, bee-lining for the sink.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
What's that?

EVERETT
Empty plate.

Everett sets it in the sink, lingering before returning to his seat. He immediately raises his wine glass. She raises an eyebrow.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
To us. And all our *fun*.

He CLINKS her glass. Hesitation-- then he takes a sip. She still waits.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Don't worry-- it's just wine.

He takes another sip.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
The bottle's in the fridge, if you want to take a look.

Fine. She takes a sip. He watches her swallow.

HOLLY
Chardonnay?

EVERETT
A twenty-ten.

They look at each other, waiting. He cuts into his steak, forcing a dripping piece in his mouth.

HOLLY
What were you going to tell me earlier? On the balcony?

EVERETT
Nothing.

He looks at his watch.

HOLLY
What's that?

EVERETT
Doesn't matter.

A beat. She gets up and walks around the table, extending her hand.

HOLLY

Well. I have something to tell you.

He hesitantly takes her hand-- his eyes latching on the paring knife in her other hand. He takes it from her, setting it back on the table.

She guides him to the couch, teasingly pushing him down-- but he pops right back up.

EVERETT

Hey, let's just finish dinner.

She shoves him back down, straddling him, leaning on his chest.

HOLLY

Oh come on, why delay the inevitable?

He pushes back against her hips, trying to create distance.

EVERETT

Holly...

HOLLY

What? A little dinner detour suddenly too risque for you?

EVERETT

No, I just figured that--

HOLLY

What? That your little display of power earlier was the end-all-be-all to our history of fucking?

He tenses, seeing the glimmer in her eyes. She lets her hair down.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Let's not forget who's worn the pants in this relationship.

She curls forward, pressing her breasts in his face, blinding him.

EVERETT

(muffled)

Hey-- come on. Get off.

HOLLY
Come on, what? Isn't it every
young man's dream to be smothered
to death by tits?

He suddenly freezes, hands raised, previously ready to shove
her off. She leans back, revealing *the razor blade pressed
against his neck.*

HOLLY (CONT'D)
But I think I'd rather slit your
throat.
(re: razor)
It ain't much, but it just needs a
doctor's touch.

He raises his hands, building into a tremble.

EVERETT
Holly, please, put the razor down.

HOLLY
No Everett, it's time for you to
tell me *exactly* what is going on
here. No more lies. And then I'm
leaving.

EVERETT
I can't, I'm sorry--

She adds pressure.

HOLLY
You don't really have an option.
Sexual assault won't be hard to
prove-- you're kinda fucked on that
one. Pun quite intended.

EVERETT
Holly. Please...

His eyes dart.

HOLLY
Please what? You baseless,
disgusting--

EVERETT
(whispering)
Lean down and kiss me.

HOLLY
What?!

EVERETT

(whispering)

Lean down, as if to kiss me, and I
will tell you what I was going to
tell you on the balcony.

HOLLY

Why--

He PULLS her towards him, taking her by surprise-- the blade
lightly cutting in, blood surfacing.

They're close. He grimaces in pain.

EVERETT

(barely audible)

Shhh... I think the room is
bugged. And there has to be
cameras. We need to be quiet. And
close.

Face-to-face, she looks at him, incredulous.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

None of what I've done to you has
been because I've wanted to, or
planned to. Please, try and
believe me.

His teeth chatter, as blood trickles from his neck. His
voice drops lower...

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Holly. It was your husband, he set
this all up.

HOLLY

Russ--

EVERETT

I LOVE YOU!

(begging, hushed)

He has my family hostage-- he's
punishing me for us, and I'm sorry,
I just, you're not supposed to know
and I can't let you leave, or else--

Holly suddenly fumbles the razor. Everett gasps for air.
She dabs her head, looking around the room, the light
suddenly glowing.

HOLLY

But, but... What?

She gets off Everett, wobbling. Everett closes the distance, embracing her, continuing the act.

EVERETT

Stay with me. Please believe me.
I never wanted this. We just have
to make it to tomorrow...

Holly rips an elbow into his gut, suddenly frantic. She runs a hand along her forehead, bats her eyes, then beelines for the door-- but falls. She knows these symptoms...

HOLLY

You... How? Help!
(short of breath)
Help. Help...

Everett stumbles after her, one hand holding his neck. He grabs her leg, pinning her. She tries to fight back but is fading fast, the drugs taking over.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

No... Why? Please don't...

HOLLY POV: Edges soften and light glares, she sees Everett fall beside her on the floor.

He rolls over to lean in her ear.

EVERETT

(whispering)
I'm so sorry.

Her eyes roll skyward, she's out. He looks up at the ceiling *the drugs also kicking in for him.*

EVERETT (CONT'D)

(mumbling, aloud)
Alright! I've played your game, no
more! We'll see you bright and
early, at the fucking check out
counter. And I'm walking away!
DON'T TOUCH MY FAMILY, YOU HEAR?!
I played by your rules...

He sticks his finger down his throat, trying to make himself vomit. He HACKS and COUGHS but just shudders, shutting down.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Please. Your rules... Please...

He lolls, then lands with a THUD.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

Shapes. Light. The CLINKING OF CHAINS AND METAL.

HOLLY
(muffled moans)

INT. KITCHENETTE

We pull back from Holly's blinking eyes-- She's fuzzy-cuffed to the towel rack on the buffet, arms above her head, sitting on the ground. Her mouth is gagged, but she's not physically harmed.

HOLLY
(muffled groans)

She kicks, yanking at the towel rack. She skirts around on the floor, trying to find...

EVERETT (O.S.)
(moaning)
Fuck...

INT. BEDROOM

Everett sits up in the bed, rubbing his temples. His eyes flutter open-- There's something in front of him... It's-- No...

It's RUSSELL. Bound and gagged, strapped into the wheelchair, placed at the foot of the bed, looking right back at Everett!

EVERETT
FUCK! What? What the fuck is
going on?

He looks out at the balcony. Still nighttime.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
No... How?

His head snaps to the corners of the room-- no one there. He hears Holly thrashing in the kitchen, but concentrates ahead.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Russell?

They lock eyes. Everett notices A BRAND NEW CELL PHONE in Russell's trembling hand. The cheap, burner kind. He leaves it for now.

He thinks... Then slowly reaches across the bed towards the DUCT TAPE covering Russell's mouth, but he stops, noticing--

Written in blood on his hand: "LEAVE HER THERE".

EVERETT (CONT'D)
(absent-minded)
Wait here.

He notices the handcuff key next to him. He grabs it and stumbles out into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where he freezes, seeing Holly chained to the kitchen island. He spins in place... She's locked there... And Russell's chained up in the bedroom... So...

EVERETT
Who did...

He spins around again, looking for invisible eyes, surveillance. He paces over to the room door, a cautious hand touching the door knob, unsure what's holding him back from leaving right now...

But he doubles back and kneels next to Holly.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Hold on, just listen. Do you
remember *anything*?

She thrashes, kicks, garbles, curses... Then shakes her head "No". He gingerly pulls the gag out of her mouth.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Easy... What's the last thing you
remember?

HOLLY
What's happened in there? When you
woke up? You yelled.

EVERETT
Was just... Confused. What's the
last thing you remember?

HOLLY

You saying my husband set this all up, and that he was watching us.

Everett nods.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

But he told me who you are...

EVERETT

And who did he say I was?

HOLLY

You know.

EVERETT

I don't. What'd he say?

HOLLY

This isn't your first time.

EVERETT

What do you mean?

HOLLY

You know.

EVERETT

I don't--

HOLLY

Your first affair, your first fuck buddy, the first woman you've done this to!

He clamps a hand down on her mouth-- she bites.

EVERETT

OUCH! Stop, calm down. That's--

HOLLY

You just be ready Everett. You better let me out of here. Because Russell's going to bring the whole goddamn force out here to ruin you.

Everett almost smirks.

EVERETT

Oh, is he?

He stuffs the gag back in, and heads back to the bedroom.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Stay right there.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Everett shuts the door and spins Russell around, reaching for the duct tape. Russell's head lolls, limp eyes fluttering shut.

EVERETT
Quiet, ok?

He gingerly peels off the duct tape. Everett grimaces as it tugs at his chapped lips, Russell doesn't register the pain. Everett holds Russell's head in his hands.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Hey, look at me. Come on. Hey,
what's going on? Are we done? Can
we go? Who's doing this?

Russell's eyes flit up to him, breath firing from his nose, chest swelling, working himself up.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Tell me. Tell me, or I swear to
God...

Russell issues a guttural MOAN.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
(hissing)
Talk to me, come on!

He rattles him, shaking till Russell opens his mouth--
Showcasing his *empty cavity*, his *TONGUE CUT OUT OF HIS MOUTH*.
The wound is fresh, but taken care of.

Everett drops his head, screaming into his hand.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
(muffled)
What the fuck! WHAT THE FUCK!?

His secret revealed, Russell's energy leaves him. Everett jumps up, but doubles back.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Hey-- No! Stay with me! Come on.

He shakes him again, forcing eye contact.

RUSSELL
Eh cahht... Eh-er.

EVERETT
What?

Russell swallows.

RUSSELL
Eh-her an en. En olly, bwing olly.
Eh-per an en.

EVERETT
Got it, ok, ok. One sec--

He dashes out...

INT. LIVING ROOM - BAR

And heads straight for the bar, grabbing the stationary and a pen. Holly kicks and thrashes, but Everett leaves her be.

INT. BEDROOM

Everett takes the cell phone from Russell and replaces it with a pen, lining up the stationary.

EVERETT
Ok. Go. Everything, what's going on?

But Russell's hand crumbles... He's losing strength fast.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
No, no, no...

BZZT! New text on the burner cell. Everett reads it: TWO PICK ME UP'S ON THE BEDSIDE TABLE. TWO CHANCES.

Everett looks behind him to the table-- TWO SYRINGES.

He dashes over and grabs one, looking at it for a second. Unmarked, already drawn, he hardly thinks... Then turns around and stalks over to Russell, flipping over his arm in one swift move-- the needle's in his vein in seconds.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
This will help...

Injection--

HOLLY
EVERETT!

He jumps-- the needle BENDING in Russell's arm, jolting him up.

RUSSELL
MmmmmNMMMM!

Everett pulls the needle out, letting it fall to the floor, dashing out--

INT. KITCHENTTE - CONTINUOUS

Sliding on the floor and once again covering Holly's mouth.

EVERETT
Stop. You have to be quiet.

He slowly pulls his hand away. She SPITS in his face.

HOLLY
Let me out.

Everett wipes his face.

EVERETT
I can't. Not yet.

HOLLY
Everett, listen. There is no scenario where you get away with this. None.

EVERETT
Holly. Did your husband--

HOLLY
Ev. You're done. We're done.
(softening)
Don't make this any worse than it is. I can help you. This can be a turning point for you. Think of your family. Think of how you can start repairing.

He looks up at her.

EVERETT
But I'm a psycho, right? I date em and dump em-- probably worse, right? That's what Russell said?
(MORE)

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I could give two shits about my
wife and kid, right? Pool boy's
don't have morals, right?

She swallows.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
And you really think Russell's
going to ride in on a big white
horse and save you from big, bad
me?

She sneers.

HOLLY
I can't wait for it.

He pulls the handcuff key from his pocket.

EVERETT
Well then I better not waste any
time.

The sneer falls from her face-- fear hits.

He hurriedly unlocks one cuff, and YANKS her towards the
bedroom. She fights along the way--

HOLLY
NO! Everett, please! No! Wait...

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

In her flurry, he doesn't give her time to register before--
BAM -- she's cuffed to Russell's wheelchair.

She falls to her knees, eyes slowly raising to see her
husband, head collapsed, body bound to the nightmare chair.

BEAT

HOLLY
Russ...?

Everett crosses his arms.

EVERETT
He should be ready to talk.

HOLLY
Baby?

With her free hand, she runs a hand through his hair. He musters all his strength, looking up at her.

We see his face again-- it's different. Veins bulge, his lip trembles, discolored... Something's not right.

Holly sees his mouth, tongue missing--

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Oh my God! Oh my God, baby, what
happened! Oh Jesus.
(turns to Everett)
WHAT DID YOU DO?

Everett realizes something's not right. Russell is convulsing, straining, body tightening up.

As Holly turns back to Russell, he quickly grabs the syringe off the table, pocketing it.

Holly and Russell find each other's eyes.

RUSSELL
(incomprehensible)
Uhm, arrry.
(beat)
Uhhm oh arrrry.

HOLLY
No, baby... What happened?

Russell falls into a coughing fit, a long spell. Holly fights with one hand to coddle him, and Everett looks on in growing horror.

Then, just like that-- his body seizes up, a chilling spasm trying to retract his bound appendages like a dead spider.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
No... No... Ev, Everett-- We have
to do something! What happened?!

Everett is ghost-like pale.

EVERETT
I, I... I woke up and he was like
that. I don't know, he... He
must've been drugged too-- I don't
know!

She spots the syringe on the ground.

HOLLY

What is this?! Did you give him this?!

EVERETT

No... No--

HOLLY

Everett, don't you FUCKING lie to me right now. What is this?

EVERETT

I... I don't know. It was there when I woke up. I swear.

SILENCE.

HOLLY

We need to flush him. Check your suitcase.

EVERETT

What suitcase?

She points. He dives down, flinging it open-- viewing "his" garish array of medical tools.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

(beat)

There's only tools. Just clamps, a scalpel, a saw. I mean, there's a sanitation kit and, and, and there's...

He turns to her, adrenaline pumping. But her hand cradles his wrist, both of their heads bowed. As still as death will let them be.

Everett, looks between the two, lost. Time stretches...

HOLLY

Everett. Let. Me. Out of these.

His head snaps to FOOTSTEPS in the hall...

HOLLY (CONT'D)

EVERETT!

He dashes over, shoving her gag back in her mouth.

EVERETT

Shhh... I'm sorry. Please. I need to figure this out. I-- I'm sorry. We tried.

HOLLY

(muffled yelling)

EVERETT

I tried.

Everett stares off, then looks at Russell. Then around the room. Who is doing this?

RING, RING. RING, RING. The new phone.

He picks it up and answers. A low robotic, voice crackles through, filtered by something.

PROCESSED VOICE

This is for both of you. Remember, you were *both* married. And affairs hurt *both* families.

Everett clicks it over to speaker so Holly can hear.

PROCESSED VOICE (CONT'D)

But I'm going to make an exception and change the rules. Now, only one of you will be checking out come morning. Figure it out amongst yourselves, but only one of you get to leave your little love nest and go home to see what's left of your family. The other, well, you will have taken care of them. Holly, let's just say Chelsea may have wound up in strange company after her wild night out last night. Her roommate Sammy is far too trusting.

Tears run down Holly's face as she realizes the severity of this strange game she's now in.

PROCESSED VOICE (CONT'D)

And Everett-- well, you already know how close I am with your family. Again, If either of you try to contact the police, or reach out for help, or both try to leave-- I will kill what's left of BOTH your families.

(MORE)

PROCESSED VOICE (CONT'D)

Then you two can truly run away
together-- because that's all
you'll have. Clock's ticking.
Time for someone to fall on their
sword. Or push the other on
theirs.

The call ends.

Holly's non-responsive. Everett collapses to the floor. He looks from Holly to Russell to his own hands. He hangs his head.

The room is quiet. Outside a woman LAUGHS LOUDLY, a world away. Someone's having a good time somewhere, not here...

Everett looks at Holly. A shared moment, now unsure. Fear, anger, suspicion...

EVERETT

Come on, I can't have you by him.

He un-cuffs her from Russell's wheelchair-- and she EXPLODES, arms and legs trying to claw her way back to Russell's side.

She gets a grip on the door frame, finger nails burying into the wood-- But he rips her through, stumbling over her uncaged rage and pushing her back to the kitchenette.

INT. KITCHENETTE - CONTINUOUS

Everett takes a sharp elbow to the stomach, but manages to cuff her back to the towel rack. He ties the gag with relish, shutting her up, her body slumping in defeat. But he bows and heads to the bathroom.

Holly weakly rattles her handcuffs. But what's the point?

INT. BATHROOM

Everett runs water, splashing it on his face, rubbing the bloody note off his hand. He eyes his reflection.

INT. KITCHENETTE

Holly looks up-- a fresh look of determination in her puffy eyes. She sits up into a squat, head tucked under the cuffs above her head. Dropping her shoulder, she *strains*, muscling herself around to face the kitchen island.

The handcuffs dig into her wrists as she tucks her knee in... Finally popping herself around. Wrists criss-crossed, she stands.

INT. BATHROOM

Everett clenches and unclenches his fist, thinking. He runs the water, trying to rub off the blood.

He splashes his face, looking into the mirror at his haunted visage. He reaches into his pocket, pulling out the second SYRINGE. He sets it on the counter, eyeing it.

INT. KITCHENETTE

Holly extends her leg, trying to use her feet to grip the nearby drawers, reaching for anything to help her. She strains-- but can't fully grasp it. But she pushes-- she has to.

INT. BATHROOM

Everett looks down at his wedding band. Then at the syringe. He knows what he has to do... Steeling himself, he grabs it and stalks out of the bathroom.

INT. LIVING ROOM - KITCHENETTE

Rounding the corner, he sees Holly, leg outstretched, trying to open a drawer. She freezes when she sees him.

He slowly walks toward her, hand behind his back. We see him holding the syringe-- she can't.

EVERETT

I'm sorry. Jessica's almost two years old.

A faint KNOCKING sounds from somewhere down the hall.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

I don't have any other options.

HOLLY

Everett. Wait, what are you doing? We're in this together now. Think about MY daughter! Stop!

EVERETT

Please, you have to understand.

He pauses, inches away, hand unfurling with the syringe--

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

They freeze. He steps back, the spell broken. Her legs give out as he runs up to the door.

POV PEEPHOLE: Security. SHIT. Two of them. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

EVERETT (CONT'D)
(out loud)
One minute!

He runs back over to Holly, digging the key out of his pocket. He holds it in front of her.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I'm letting you out.
Just keep Russell in the bedroom,
I'll handle this. Just promise me,
please, for our family's sake.
They're not safe. Just... We have
to lie. You have to believe me.
We have to work together now.
Whoever this is has already hurt my
wife, and your husband-- they can
and *will* hurt our kids. Ok?
Please?

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

IMPATIENT SECURITY
Mister or Missus? If you're in,
please open up. Hotel Security,
apologies for the inconvenience,
but we have a couple questions for
you.

A curt nod. CLICK, he lets her out. A frozen moment-- then she tersely walks into the bedroom, shutting the door.

Everett hesitates, unsure to let her go-- then springs to the door-- WAIT. He quickly rips off his shirt, pauses, then pulls the syringe from his pants.

Disgusted with himself, he dashes to the sink-- shooting the poison down the drain, then throwing the syringe into the garbage disposal.

Ripping off his pants, he steps over and opens the door.

EVERETT
 (out of breath)
 Sorry bout that!

Two security guards stand outside the door. The Fresh Security Hire from the earlier noise complaint, and now an ELDERLY SECURITY.

ELDERLY SECURITY
 Woah there-- sorry to interrupt, son!

EVERETT
 No, sorry it took so long. Can you give me a quick second?

ELDERLY SECURITY
 Absolutely. Get some pants on.

INT. BEDROOM

Holly kneels on the floor, her head cradled in Russell's lap, saying her sordid goodbye.

Everett bursts in, clearly suspecting-- not this. He relaxes.

EVERETT
 I'm, I'm sorry. But, if you could come out...
 (motions to his nakedness)
 We were, busy.

He dashes into the bathroom, grabs a towel, wraps it around himself and heads back out.

EVERETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Sorry for the wait!

Holly fingers Russell's wedding band, pulling it off. She treasures it-- then notices, written in slightly smeared ink, on his finger under where the ring was: 91891

Off her intrigued look...

INT. LIVING ROOM - ROOM DOOR

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
 Hi again.

EVERETT
 Hi, how can I help you gentlemen?

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
Another noise complaint.

EVERETT
Oh, jeez, I'm sorry. Sometimes we
just-- we get carried away.

ELDERLY SECURITY
Quite alright. Good to see a happy
couple. Don't worry.
(points, seeing the cut on
Everett's neck)
You alright there?

Everett runs his hand over it, still tender.

EVERETT
Oh, I was, uh, a little drunk
earlier and tried shaving. Bad
idea.

ELDERLY SECURITY
Uh-huh, I'll say... Anyway, sorry
to bother, but one of the wait
staff has gone missing. He sent a
couple strange text messages to one
of the other staff. So we're
talking to as many guests as we can
who he was in contact with.

Oh shit.

EVERETT
Oh my, well I hope he's alright.
How, uh, how can we help you?

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
His name was Rodrigo Mendez, just
19 years old. Kitchen staff said
he last delivered you guys dinner.
For two. Is your wife here?

INT. BEDROOM

Holly, stripped of her clothes, throws on a bath robe. She
ducks down by the bedside table, opening it, looking...
Nothing. She hops up, thinking.

Everett opens the door, sees her in her bath robe.

EVERETT
Hey. Can you come talk to security
for a second?

INT. LIVING ROOM - ROOM DOOR

Everett tows Holly to the door, hand-in-hand.

EVERETT

Again, you'll have to forgive our
dress, we were just--

HOLLY

(falling into character)
It's our weekend away. We don't
like to waste any time.

The older security chuckles.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE

Great. Mrs...?

HOLLY

You can just call me Holly.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE

Nice to meet you Holly. We were
just telling your, uh...

EVERETT

Everett's fine.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE

We were just telling Everett that
Rodrigo Mendez--

EVERETT

The bellhop's gone missing.

HOLLY

Oh my goodness! That's terrible.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE

It is. We were just wondering if
he mentioned anything-- if he was
going somewhere or if he was acting
strange when he was here?

Holly looks at Everett.

HOLLY

I mean, he was nice. Very
professional. He wheeled in the
dinner, set the table, we tipped
him and he left.

(hand-to-forehead)

Oh, this is just awful-- Honey, can
you finish with them?

(MORE)

HOLLY (CONT'D)
I just, I feel like I need to clean
this dinner up now.

She pecks him on the cheek and walks over to the dinner table, tidying up. Everett watches suspiciously.

ELDERLY SECURITY
That's fine. Have you left the
room any time after dinner? Go to
the front desk? Get ice?

He looks over his shoulder, seeing Holly pick up his large steak knife-- she flicks him a dangerous smile.

EVERETT
No... Uh, we've been pretty cooped
up. We just got in yesterday
afternoon and are leaving today.
He was in and out with dinner.

Holly moves the champagne bucket from the table to the bar, when she notices-- a sliding door. In the bar. She opens it. A SAFE. Holly eyes the safe's keypad-- Could it work?

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
Anything else you can give us?

EVERETT
(exasperated)
He mentioned his parents being
from Veracruz, and us
coincidentally being in the
"Veracruz" suite. That's it.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE
Interesting.

EVERETT
Hey Honey, that's it right?

She quickly stands up, hiding the safe from Everett's view. She grabs the plates from the table and crosses to the sink-- large knife on proud display.

HOLLY
Yeah, that's all he mentioned.

She sets the plates down, pausing.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
I'll feel terrible if something
happened. You just never know
what's going on behind a smile, you
know?

She looks at Everett, who grins to the officers, his eyes lingering on her knife.

ELDERLY SECURITY

Well, that seems like it for me.
Have a great rest of your stay.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE

(jumping in)

We'll be talking to a few more
guests, and we're always close if
you think of anything.

EVERETT

Thank you officers.

He shuts the door-- Then slowly raises his hands. She stands, knife poised.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

I'm going to go sit on the couch.
Let's talk about this.

He methodically walks backwards to the couch, sitting.

Knife out-stretched, she sits across from him. They feign comfort, ready to lunge at a moment's notice.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

So.

She eyes him up and down-- what's his play?

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Let's just-- put all the cards out
on the table.

HOLLY

I take it my phone's not in a safe.

EVERETT

Whoever it is took both of ours
when we passed out.

She nods.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Ok. Someone is holding us here.
Someone who can probably hear us
right now. Maybe even see us.

HOLLY

How convenient of them. How did
they manage that?

EVERETT
I have my theories. But your
husband's surveillance experience
would have been beneficial.

Too soon.

HOLLY
So who's doing this?

Everett shakes his head, despondent.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
And how do you know that this
person, is truly... Serious.

EVERETT
My wife's ring finger--
(gulps)
Was cut off. And sent to me with
dinner. As punishment for failing
to follow the previous rules.

She searches his eyes...

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Check the plate, in the sink.

HOLLY
And what were those rules?

EVERETT
Just go look.

She slowly moves to the sink, knife still trained on him.
She opens the lid, sees the greying finger--

HOLLY
Oh my God...

She throws Everett a new look, one full of fear.

EVERETT
The rules were you don't leave this
room and I don't tell you anything.
Now, only one of us leaves this
room. Your daughter isn't safe.
Neither is mine.

Holly's eyes lock back into Everett. She swiftly sits back
down, ready to pounce.

HOLLY

Which brings us to the task at hand.

EVERETT

Right.

HOLLY

Only one of us gets to leave.

EVERETT

Yes.

HOLLY

And let's be completely honest-- had those cops not shown up, you would have murdered me and walked straight out that door.

He pauses.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry. Does hearing that make you uncomfortable?

He shakes his head.

EVERETT

I'm not proud.

HOLLY

Good-- you shouldn't be.

EVERETT

I have a family! I have a baby daughter and wife, a wife that I provide for! I can't just leave them.

She digs her heels in.

HOLLY

Let me spell this out for you Everett. You've already left them-- every other week, for the last six months. To sleep with your professor. So you could pass your classes in the vain hope that somehow, you could ever, EVER, become a real doctor.

He glares at her-- fight in his eyes.

EVERETT

And what about you, doctor? You--

HOLLY

What about me, Everett? What? You think it's your chance to retort!? FUCK. YOU. You pup. You sniveling excuse for masculinity. The father of my child, the love of my life, and you just leave me tied up till he's about to die? We could have saved him Everett. YOU killed him Everett. You cunt. Whatever is going on here, it is your fault. Yours. You, Everett Alan, are the worst mistake I have ever, EVER, made.

Hysterical, she clutches her knife with both hands, ready to break at any moment. Everett lets her have her moment.

EVERETT

So you blame me? Let me tell you how this all started. It started with me, bound and gagged, watching YOUR husband fuck you. Do you know the last thing he said about you? Before he untied me and swore me to secrecy or he'd kill my family? He said, "Enjoy my wife".

She fumes, trying not to believe him.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

You were right. I am your pool boy. I'm your fantasy. You wanted me. ME! And you know what? FUCK YOU. It was fun. You used me and I used you. We're even.

HOLLY

You're pathetic.

EVERETT

We're pathetic.

HOLLY

You killed my husband.

EVERETT

You killed your husband just as much as you may have killed that Rodrigo kid!

HOLLY
How do we know what happened to
him!? You drugged me!

EVERETT
I drugged us, to save us both.

HOLLY
I don't trust you.

EVERETT
I don't expect you to.
(beat)
I'm not as dumb as your grade book
may have you believe.

A breath.

HOLLY
Who's doing this? How do they know
us?

Everett shakes his head. A moment of calm during the
storm...

EVERETT
I don't know.

HOLLY
Is this even, real?

She looks up at him. An earnest question. He nods his head.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
I'm going home. For my daughter.

He shakes his head-- I can't let you do that.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
They chose you. This is your,
your... Test.

He nods. It is. But she gets it-- A hush falls over them.

HOLLY (CONT'D)
(quiet)
Chelsea wouldn't have anyone.
She'd be an orphan.

EVERETT
I wouldn't see Jessica grow up.
Not even a first word. Lydia would
have to get a full-time job.
(MORE)

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Then, I mean, even she wouldn't see Jessica grow up.

HOLLY

Russell's parents are still alive.

EVERETT

My God... My parents never even wanted me to move out here in the first place.

HOLLY

(adrift)

Why did you?

EVERETT

Modeling.

They catch a look.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Or the idea of it.

A pause, levity, if for a second.

HOLLY

You couldn't have taken the 9AM class with what's-his-name?

EVERETT

Baby duty. Mom sleeps in. It's our deal. Yours was my only option.

A beat.

HOLLY

So how do you want to do this?

Everett eyes her knife, then looks down at his own hands, both empty, gripping each other.

EVERETT

Rock, paper, scissors?

KA-THUNK. Her knife almost magically appears-- LODGED just under his clavicle, right side of chest, askew.

He looks up-- SHE'S FLYING AT HIM!

IMPACT-- she flips the couch back, straddling him as his legs now dangle in the air. SLICKT-- she pulls the knife out, raising it above her head, SLICING DOWN straight into his-- FOREARM! He's able to block just in time.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
AGHHHHHHH!!!!

He yanks his arm back, knife still lodged in, disarming her. His left hand swings around, palming her face, THROWING her off him, KNOCKING her face into the wooden end table.

Everett leaps up, gasping for air. He looks at the knife in his arm, reaching gingerly...

Holly stumbles to her feet. He freezes, sensing her instinct to pounce.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Wait... Holly wait...

She pauses, swooping her head to the side, brushing hair out of her face-- Oh. That looks nice...

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Listen--

She snatches up a GLASS TABLE LAMP, flinging it at Everett, already two steps into her attack. He dodges-- glass SHATTERING against the thick curtains-- But she's on him.

She gropes at him, finding the hilt of the knife, clamping down on it--

EVERETT (CONT'D)
FUUUU--UGHHHHHHHH--CKKK!

He swings a wide, left hook-- CLOCKING her in the temple. She falls to the ground, her grip RIIIPING the knife out of his arm.

Everett falls to the ground, biting his tongue, then soundlessly SCREAMS at his filleted arm. A glance at Holly-- she lolls, a low moan.

Everett drags himself away, a trail marking his retreat.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
Fuck you... Now you're gonna get it. You-- BITCH.

He muscles himself to his feet, stumbling to the kitchenette.

INT. LIVING ROOM - KITCHENETTE

Everett grabs a WHITE TOWEL, grimacing-- then wraps it around his bleeding arm, synching it.

EVERETT
ERRRRRRRRMMMMmmmm....
(it passes)
Ok... Ok...

EVERETT POV: The towel runs RED, immediately soaking through. His vision blurs, the light pulsing.

He SLAPS himself with his free hand-- pull it together!

His pain turns to determination as he SLAMS open the knife drawer. They glint, nightmare tools to a deranged doctor. He grabs a CLEAVER, weighing it with a murderous look at Holly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Everett labors across the room, approaching Holly. Halfway, he fumbles, taking a knee. He bats his eyes, looking at his blood-soaked arm and body. She may have cut into an artery...

EVERETT
Come on...

Holly stirs, rolling onto her back, a SPUTTER of life. Her eyes POP open, her brain rebooting, just as-- Everett stands over her, swaying. His face is sheet pale. She sees the cleaver.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
I'm sorry it's come to this.

He stumbles backwards, cleaver outstretched. She takes the opportunity to wrench herself to her feet. He hardly notices, correcting slightly with his knife.

HOLLY
You're losing too much blood.

His balance is erratic. He looks down-- Blood is drizzled like a Pollak painting. He laughs.

EVERETT
How are we supposed to cover this
up? Huh? How do we lie about
this?

Holly keeps her gaze trained on him.

HOLLY
Everett. Put the knife down.

He deliriously looks towards the bedroom. A beat. Something clicks. He looks back at her, his face softening.

EVERETT

Did your husband go to heaven or hell?

HOLLY

I-- I don't know.

EVERETT

You better hope your husband did some bad things...

A moment of self-reflection, distilled through a taunt--

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Or else you'll never see him again.

He looks at her, at himself, at his strength giving out... The knife falls from his hand-- he doesn't notice. A coy smile curls his lips.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

I need a doctor.

They share a look, a cease-fire. He stumbles to the couch for his final moments. Holly cautiously walks over to him.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

We're bad people, Holly.

HOLLY

No, Everett, we...

She stops herself. Everett starts shivering.

EVERETT

I'm cold. I'm so cold. Can, can you give me a blanket, babe? Please? Just-- just be nice to me for one second. Just another minute.

She can't help it-- she lovingly drapes a blanket over him.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Can... Can you hold my hand? I, I know we aren't, we weren't supposed to be together but, just-- just for a couple minutes.

She takes his hand, sitting next to him.

EVERETT (CONT'D)
 I'm really scared, babe. But I'm,
 I'm so sorry. Don't tell my
 family. Please. I'm... I'm too
 ashamed.

She can't help but get swept up in his emotions.

HOLLY
 Me too Everett. Me too.

EVERETT
 Do you think they'll forgive me?

HOLLY
 I'm not sure. I don't know who
 does that.

EVERETT
 Can you forgive me? Can you
 forgive me for them, please?

She nods-- she has to. He relaxes, believing her.

HOLLY
 I'm scared too Ev... I don't know
 why this happened to us.
 (beat)
 And now you're gonna leave me and
 I'm gonna have to deal with all of
 it. And I don't know what to do...

Her armor's cracking...

EVERETT
 I'm fighting it. But I can't feel
 anything anymore. I'm just,
 just...
 (suddenly)
 Holly! Holly say something,
 Holly... Babe.

HOLLY
 Everett... I'm here.

But his eyes see through her.

EVERETT
 (mouthing)
 Holly?

His lips slowly close, a vacant stare lingering through
 Holly. She leans back, bowing her head, a silent moment to
 say goodbye. And in her arms-- Everett dies.

The room is a morgue. Not a sound...

BRRRRRING! BRRRRRING! She peers through her fingers. The new phone is lit up, buzzing in the kitchenette. She somehow pulls herself off the couch to go get it.

INT. KITCHENETTE

She answers.

PROCESSED VOICE

(same as earlier)

Congratulations-- you're one step away from freedom. All you have to do is destroy this phone. Smash it, put it in the skillet, add water, and turn to high heat for ten minutes. Voila-- you can go home.

(beat)

Or, you can come next door and meet me. And I will introduce myself and tell you why I did this. And then, I will let you go. You won't be harmed. Don't worry about the room. It will be taken care of. My room key is in your husband's pocket. Now, put this phone out of its misery.

The call hangs up. Holly sets down the phone, staring at it-- the final piece of the puzzle.

She casts a look at the stove, then the phone... Then around the room, looking for invisible eyes.

She slips it into her pocket, then mournfully heads into the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Holly pauses in the doorway, casting a formless look at Russell's hunched body. A shiver runs through her hands-- she leaps into motion, quickly moving to him and rummaging through his pockets, finding the key... But she pauses.

She looks at his ashen face, practically translucent. Her hands build into a shake, finally thrashing at his bindings, trying to free him-- but she collapses, numbly falling to the ground.

She crawls away, too defeated to free him and herself.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Holly makes her way to the exit. Halfway there-- BZZZZT.

She pulls the phone out.

NEW PICTURE MESSAGE: It's fuzzy... But it's a girl. Blond, college-aged, in a bar, drunkenly laughing.

PICTURE CAPTION: Chelsea says "destroy the phone Mom".

Holly gasps, dashing to the kitchenette--

INT. KITCHENETTE

--Where she lifts the phone above her head. Ready to be smashed...

But she gently brings it down, looking at it. What if-- she punches "9", then "1", then...

BZZZZT.

NEW PICTURE MESSAGE: A close-up of Chelsea, eyes rolling back in her head. Eerily close.

SMASH! The phone is in pieces in milliseconds. Holly's already whipping through the kitchen, flicking the stove on, grabbing a skillet, tossing the cellular bits with water.

HOLLY

There! You happy!? Now leave her
alone! Leave my family alone...

She devolves into tears. It is done.

All is quiet save the HUM of the warming stove.

Then-- she slowly looks at the safe. A thought. She walks over and crouches down.

She punches in: 9-18-91

It clicks open. She pulls, revealing--

A single MINI DV TAPE. She pulls it out. Written in black Sharpie on masking tape, reads: "FAIL".

She turns it over in her hands, unsure. Her eyes fall on the room door, freedom.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

We're looking at the outside of Holly's room door. Waiting. It CLICKS, the DEAD BOLT thrown back... The handle turns.

Holly peeks around the corner, afraid to cross the invisible barrier.

She pulls a LONG BLACK COAT around her, covering her blood-stained clothing. She's holding a ROOM KEY CARD.

We follow her gaze in front of her, down the long, sterile hall, a carpeted escape to freedom. But-- she cranes her neck to the right, looking to the only room next to her.

With a deep breath, she steps into the hallway, half-expecting another tragedy-- but nothing happens.

She tip toes to the door, eyes roving, looking for some hint, some clue... She slides the key-- Green light.

She opens it and steps in.

INT. NEIGHBORING HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Holly gently shuts the door behind her and looks down the corridor. Ahead is a desk, with a 9" PORTABLE MONITOR SET UP, a TAPE DECK askew, on it's side, moved. Cable sprouts out from behind the setup.

The small hallway has a partially closed bathroom door on the left, opening up to what looks to be a smaller suite...

HOLLY

Who's here?

Silence. She eeks open the bathroom door, hand cautiously groping for the light switch. CLICK.

INT. NEIGHBORING HOTEL SUITE - BATHROOM

An immaculate bathroom, practically untouched-- except for the tray of blood-tinged scissors, scalpels, and crimson-stained medical strips by the sink.

Her eyes fearfully move on to the main room.

INT. NEIGHBORING HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Holly walks the last few steps, finally seeing the body of the room.

Propped up on the bed is RODRIGO'S BODY. Head looking eerily straight ahead, life has long since left him. On the bed side table sits another empty syringe.

The sight rolls Holly's stomach, gagging, turning her head--

To the corner, where a crumpled, WOMAN is bound, gagged, blinded, and deafened with padding. Her left hand hangs limply, a bloody rag around a missing finger. This is LYDIA ALAN, Everett's wife. Once beautiful, she looks like a silk linen used to clean up after torture sessions.

Rooted, Holly scans the room. CABLE is coiled, PELICAN CASES and EQUIPMENT neatly stacked, on the verge of being loaded out... But no one else is here.

A DESK and COFFEE TABLE have been pushed up to the shared wall between their rooms. Both appear cleared off, remnants of an operation of sorts.

She cautiously approaches Lydia, pulling off the blinding and mute padding. Her face is a matte of hair and tears. She unravels the rope leashed around her neck to the bed post. Holly feels for a pulse.

HOLLY

You're ok. Stay with me.

Her hand moves to the nearby ROOM PHONE... but her eyes land on the tape deck. She reaches into her pocket, pulling out the "FAIL" tape. She gives a second look to Lydia-- hold on for one more minute.

She powers on the monitor and deck, and pops the tape in. Static snow turns to gritty surveillance footage.

ON MONITOR: It's Holly and Everett's hotel room. Daylight. Pristine and fresh. Without blood and violence it almost looks foreign. Suddenly, Russell crosses through frame, power tool in hand. He crosses by again, and again, cable coiled around his arm.

Suddenly-- he's in CLOSE UP, adjusting the camera we're looking out of. He looks over his shoulder, taking a cue from somewhere. He doubles back, adjusting the frame, then--

Lydia MOANS. Then SLUMPS FORWARD, hitting her head on the ground. Holly pauses the tape, jumps back, and helps her up. Lydia's eyes meet Holly's-- concern and fear slowly welling up.

LYDIA

...Everett?

Holly gulps. Lydia's eyes dance to the blood all over Holly. She suddenly throws her body away from her, the strange surroundings seeping in.

HOLLY

You're ok-- you're fine. We're going to get out of here, let me get someone.

Holly stands, her eyes falling on a PAINTING askew on the wall, light glancing through the crack.

She takes three steps, ripping it off the wall-- just as SHOUTS ring out from her room. She DROPS the painting, revealing--

HER BATHROOM. A perfect window-like cut, a one way-mirror placed to see through to their suite's bathroom. VOICES, someone's rummaging through her room, but she's transfixed...

SUDDENLY-- the Fresh Recruit police officer pops into view, staring straight through the mirrors at her. He wipes his brow, sweating-- then vomits into the sink.

FRESH SECURITY HIRE

(muffled, through wall)

Gerry!

(wretches)

We need the cops NOW!!

BAM-- Door kicked open, Holly turns to face the Elderly Security, his eyes a wild mix of fear and confusion-- they fall on Rodrigo's body. Retirement won't erase these images. He raises his hand.

ELDERLY SECURITY

Ma'm... Put, put-- please put your hands above your head.

Speechless, Holly does.

ELDERLY SECURITY (CONT'D)

Now, stay where you are.

Lydia comes CRASHING into view, having attempted to get up and walk. She knocks the monitor and tape deck off the desk, crumpling on the floor next to them.

ELDERLY SECURITY (CONT'D)

You! Freeze! Do not move.

LYDIA

Get me... Away from her...

Holly and the Sergeant share a look, both lost, confused, listening to the sound of Lydia struggling on the floor, knocking into the equipment.

ELDERLY SECURITY
Missus, step away from her.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - PRE-DAWN - HOURS LATER

The parking lot is a cacophony of red and blue light, a frenetic mixture of officers, ambulances, and astonished faces. Handcuffed, Holly is led to a squad car.

Bleary-eyed, she meets the eyes of STUPEFIED RESPONDERS, all casting the same question-- Could she have done this?

Holly's eyes linger on an ambulance, on a particularly enraged pair of eyes. It's LYDIA, Everett's wife. Tears running down her face, she rockets up at the sight of Holly-- searing hate into her gaze.

The officers pull Holly away, lowering her into the squad car.

FADE TO BLACK.

We hear a slow, rolling tide of breathing. Many lungs in gentle unison...

FADE IN:

INT. PRISON - COUNSELING WARD

SUPER: THREE MONTHS LATER

Holly sits in a silver aluminum chair, wearing an orange prison jumpsuit. She stares straight ahead. The last three months have clawed bags under her eyes and shrieked streaks of gray through her hair.

She sits, completely still, eyes sharply trained on nothing.

INSTRUCTOR (O.S.)
In... Out...

We slowly pull back, revealing Holly sitting in the center of a phalanx of FELLOW WOMEN INMATES, all in orange, all breathing in unison.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)
Gently in... Gently out...

The women have their eyes closed, the room filled with the faint purring of all manner of sins being exhaled into the air.

Holly, however, has no breath to give.

PRISON GUARD (PRE-LAP)
Holly Pierpoint, you have a
visitor.

INT. PRISON - HOLLY'S CELL

Holly looks up from her perfectly-made cot at the Prison Guard outside her cell. Her cell is barren, just dust to keep her company. This news surprises her.

PRISON WARD
Let's go. You're gonna take a
walk.

INT. PRISON - VISITING ROOMS

Holly is led past Plexiglas booths, some occupied. WIVES and GIRLFRIENDS talk to HUSBANDS, RELUCTANT BOYFRIENDS, and LOST CHILDREN.

She's led to the end of the row, where a door leads outside. Waiting for her is LYDIA ALAN, of the late Everett Alan. Bundled tight, she glares at Holly, breathing slowly as she palpably resists the temptation to break through the glass and murder her.

PRISON WARD
Alright ladies. Walk clockwise
around the fence, nothing passes
through. When you get to the end,
you're done.

BZZZZZT-CLICK. The locks pop open and they step outside.

EXT. PRISON - COURTYARD

Blustery, but somewhere inland. It's overcast, angry clouds circling the nearby mountains. Holly looks at Lydia through the fence, they size each other up.

Lydia looks good, dressed to remind Holly of the accoutrements of freedom, with a dash of vengeance. Holly slumps, conciliatory, just a hint of her old fire-- the ball's in her court.

HOLLY
Thanks for coming. I know it's not
easy.

Lydia nods.

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)
BEGIN YOUR WALK.

Startled, Holly takes the first stride.

HOLLY
I guess, I would just ask that you
hear me out.

LYDIA
I've heard your story.

HOLLY
I know, I just, I wanted you to
hear it from me. There's a couple
things that don't make sense, and
some things I wanted to ask you.

LYDIA
We've been through--

HOLLY
Please.

Four silent steps forward.

LYDIA
Ok.

HOLLY
First of all, I know all signs
point to me, but the fact is, there
had to have been someone else with
Russell.

LYDIA
(shaking her head)
The room was in his name. When he
came to our house, he was alone. I
could tell. When he made me pose
for the pictures, he was alone. He
never talked to anyone.

HOLLY
But how did things keep happening
after he died?

Lydia freezes.

LYDIA

Because you did those things,
Holly.

HOLLY

No... We didn't bring the medical
instruments, or the drugs, or, what
about the new phone, or...

LYDIA

Yes. Yes you did Holly. The phone
was traced back to Russell buying
it, My God, they have the footage
of him at CVS! And there were no
drugs detected in your system--

HOLLY

That's the point! Someone knew
they'd be untraceable within a
matter of hours!

Lydia's not having it.

LYDIA

Why do you want me here? We've
been through this a thousand times.
In court, out of court, on tape,
off tape... You are a *despicable*
person. I don't know how you've
done what you've done, or that MY
husband could have been any part--
but as far as I'm concerned, this
prison is as posh a stay as your
getaway in Palm Springs was.

Holly falls silent, then stops.

HOLLY

Do you honestly think I could kill
my husband AND Everett?! We were
held in that room, just, lured into
a game of lies and, and, and...

LYDIA

And your husband got suspicious.
And he set up a trap for you and
Ev, and when he confronted you, you
turned on him. Lord knows he may
have deserved it for what he did to
that poor boy.

Holly falls silent, the plot now meaningless.

HOLLY

Why would someone do this to us?

LYDIA

You mean, why would someone betray
the love and trust of the person
closest to them?

Holly casts Lydia a forlorn gaze. Lydia burns a hole back.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

What did you have that I don't?

HOLLY

It was never supposed to end this
way. Someone out there is a
monster. Why... How could they
have done this?

She's on the verge of tears, and for a second, Lydia almost
looks sorry for her.

LYDIA

You know. I've thought about this
a lot. And it does seem, just-- so
extreme. And intricate. I've
battled with your story, and your
insistence that there had to be
another person involved. And I've
run down a list of people Everett
knew who, *maybe*, for some awful
reason would do this.

HOLLY

I know! I've spent hours ticking
off names in my head...

LYDIA

They would have had to only talk *in
person*, to Russell. No email, no
messages. They would have had to
propose the plan, offering him
revenge or something. Something to
get him to play their game. Right?

Holly nods along.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Then, they would have had to
convince Russell to kidnap Everett
and head to the hotel separately,
so they could foul up Russell's
house, arranging it ever so nicely
to look like a man working alone.

(MORE)

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Then, after they played their dirty little trick on you, which was a despicably appropriate twist of fate, to be raped by your own husband-- the other person would have to drug Russell, I imagine. Probably a nice waft of chloroform while he was busy monitoring you two. That was probably when the phone calls from him stopped coming. Instead you only got messages or that weird voice calling you.

Holly takes a half step back from the fence...

LYDIA (CONT'D)

If you guys were drugged, or drugged each other-- a blessing to this person-- they probably used that time to re-set the room. Clean slate. Took your phones. Wrangled that waiter boy, took care of him. Lord knows things would've gone belly-up if he called the cops. Burned your ten dollar plea.
(she claps, getting excited)

And THEN, what poetic justice to send in your husband, tongue torn out from an operation that had to be painful AND messy. And so he's just sitting there, trying so helplessly to tell you the true nature of this mastermind. But instead, he tragically dies by your failed protege's over-eager hands. Two bumbling doctors, unable to save your savior.

Holly is dumbfounded, staring into the welcoming eyes of a monster, gorging on her victim.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

By that time, all this little terror had to do was bait you. And boy did you fall for that bait. But who wouldn't? It's just like needing to find out who's fucking your husband. Or your wife. You gotta *see it to believe it*. Proof. And then, once you have, it's too late.

(MORE)

LYDIA (CONT'D)

You've ruined everything you had,
and *nothing* can ever be the same.

(beat)

They just needed an anonymous tip
to the police, and then vanish.

(smiles)

Probably into plain sight.

Holly's hands tremble.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Adultery isn't a victimless crime
Holly. And you weren't Everett's
first victim. But fortunately, it
looks like you will be his last.

Lydia grins cheerily.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Of course-- I have to thank you.
You've set me free. You played
your part to a tee! His first two
or three girls were just, practice,
you know? They vanished like a bad
dream. But you. A grown woman.
With a family. And a doctor!

She pauses, eyeing Holly, her final verdict...

LYDIA (CONT'D)

But you *wanted* it the most.
Passion, adventure, *change*! Just
having a good life, and a good
love, wasn't good enough.

(clucks her tongue)

Well, we all paid.

(winks)

Some more than others.

Holly digests.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

You know, I wasn't sure which of
you two I'd be talking to through
this fence... Oh! Almost forgot.

She digs through her pocket, pulling out a single piece of
masking tape, scrawled on in black Sharpie: "FAIL"

HOLLY

You... You have the tape?

LYDIA

I wanted to play it back for you in person but, well, they don't allow cameras in here, and-- I kinda needed to destroy it. You understand.

Holly's transfixed. Lydia leans in close to the fence.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Between you and me, had you watched another thirty seconds of that tape, yours truly would've waltzed right into the middle of that video!

And that's the end of the fence. Lydia raps on the concrete wall signifying the end of their walk.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

It was a bitch trying to get that tape out of the player while I was tied up-- But thank God I did!

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)

EXIT THROUGH THE DOORS. YOUR VISIT IS OVER.

LYDIA

No...

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Russell recorded the whole setup. Never fully trusted me. Tape marked "fail" inside a safe? Get it? Man, you were so close to blowing it wide open. I owe you for pausing it to help me.

She balls up the masking tape and venomously swallows it.

HOLLY

No... No... NO! NO, NO, NO!

LYDIA

Exactly. No one fucks my husband and gets away with it.

She waves goodbye, wagging her four fingered hand. Holly's eyes lock onto the stump, where her ring finger should be.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

(re: her missing finger)

Not a day goes by where I miss it.

And with that-- she's gone. Holly rips at the chain link.

HOLLY

You monster! YOU MONSTER!!!

A PRISON GUARD rushes out of the nearest door, attempting to pry her off.

HOLLY (CONT'D)

You'll burn in HELL! YOU BITCH!

HOW could you, you MONSTER!

Holly's screams fade as we pull back from the fence, just as she's ripped from view, disappearing behind the concrete walls of her new home, the eyes of her new orange-clad family riveted on her.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END