

C U R V E

by

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Original Film  
Benderspink

**OVER BLACK:**

A VOICE MAIL BEEP!

ELLA (O.S.)

Hey, Mal - you're probably halfway between here and Virginia right now... I just wanted to say I'm sorry again. If he makes you happy then, you know, who am I to judge-- Well, I'm you're sister and the officially most awesome person on the planet, but still...

(exhaling)

Shit, I suck at apologies... Let's just pretend I was very eloquent and you caved immediately and accepted and leave it at that. Call me when you get in and tell me how the drive went. Love you.

BEEP!

ELLA (O.S.)

Hey, it's me. Call me and let me know you got my message yesterday.

BEEP!

ELLA (O.S.)

Mallory, don't make me call you at home - you know I hate taking the risk I'll end up stuck in a conversation with the "Bradley Assault Vehicle". You really shouldn't have told me he calls his penis that... I'll be up late, call me back.

BEEP!

ELLA (O.S.)

I'm starting to take this personal, be-yotch. You know I can whip your ass. I'm like wiry and shit.

(pause; concerned)

Fuck it, I'm calling you at home.

BEEP!

ELLA (O.S.)

(worried)

Okay, Mal, you need to call me.

(MORE)

ELLA (O.S.) (cont'd)  
 Brad says he hasn't heard from you  
 since you left New York... I'm  
 officially freaked, okay? If  
 you've met a guy, if you've run out  
 on Brad, if you've developed a  
 crippling meth habit, fine, great,  
 I'll kick in some cash, just let me  
 know you're okay, okay?

BEEP!

ELLA (O.S.)  
 (CRYING; then)  
 ...If you're alive, *call*. Please.  
 (pause)  
*Please*. 400 miles of road; the  
 police don't even know where to...  
 (SILENCE; crying; then)  
 It's been three days, you have-

Interrupted by a cheery ELECTRONIC VOICE:

ELECTRONIC VOICE  
*Memory full.*

SILENCE. Our title pops up - small, one word:

***CURVE***

Goes away. BLACK again. Then

***Three Days Earlier***

SMASH TO:

ASPHALT

Flying past beneath us. Doing at least 70.

TILT UP --

As we blow past a sign that reads *ROUTE 62 TO NEW JERSEY*  
*TURNPIKE*. As we listen to a PHONE CONVERSATION:

ELLA (O.S.)  
 A shortcut?

MALLORY (O.S.)  
A shortcut.

INT. MALLORY'S CAR (MOVING) - MORNING

A high end luxury car. As we listen to the following conversation we see VARIOUS SHOTS of THE INTERIOR --

Wedding magazines and taco wrappers in the passenger footwell, a burned CD saying POSSIBLE WEDDING SONGS on the seat next to papers reading GREGOR ANTIQUES - DEED OF SALE...

ELLA (O.S.)  
How did you find a shortcut?

MALLORY (O.S.)  
I used Brad's GPS thingy.

ELLA (O.S.)  
I wish *I* had a GPS thingy.

MALLORY (O.S.)  
You live in New York and ride a bike.

ELLA (O.S.)  
And because of that I can't be in your ubercool "retask a satellite when I'm lost" club?

And at the wheel MALLORY GREGOR. Late 20's, beautiful, put together. Laughing on the phone with her sister ELLA.

MALLORY  
Yeah, and it's too bad too, our meetings rock. We drink champagne, we listen to Foreigner...

ELLA (O.S.)  
Okay, all kidding aside, really wish a club like that existed.

Mallory laughs.

ELLA (O.S.)  
So when are you getting here?

CUT TO:

EXT. UNION SQUARE - NEW YORK CITY - MORNING

Mallory, hurrying out of her now PARKED CAR - we see it bears the license plate "**BRAD 2**". She hustles along the crowded sidewalk with harried New Yorkers, self consciously out of place as she speaks into her CELL PHONE.

MALLORY

You're the best sister in the world  
for doing this, Elle...

EXT. FILENE'S BASEMENT - NEW YORK - MORNING

We finally meet Mallory's sister ELLA (20s) stands in a long, serpentine line of women, mostly 20s-30s. For some reason, Ella wears a green foam STATUE OF LIBERTY HAT.

ELLA

You're right, I totally am.

It's begun to sprinkle and the ladies cover up with plastic ponchos. Some open large, intrusive UMBRELLAS. An OBLIVIOUS WOMAN opens a huge UMBRELLA which grazes Ella's face.

ELLA

I'd like it noted for the record I  
didn't make you do this for me-

Ella pushes the WOMAN'S UMBRELLA away from her face.

MALLORY (O.S.)

You eloped, Elle.

ELLA

And saved you and I both from this  
fresh hell--

(to Umbrella Woman)

Seriously, *stop* with the umbrella,  
okay? First and last warning.

EXT. UNION SQUARE - NEW YORK - MORNING

Mallory stops dead in her tracks as she comes upon the mob scene that is known as the "Running of the Brides" at Filene's Basement.

MALLORY

Oh my God... I'm *here*...

With awe, Mallory regards the line of women which curves around the block. It seems to go on forever. Women hold SIGNS that indicate the size and type of gowns they're looking for. There is a buzz of excitement in the air...

MALLORY

Where are you? Are you wearing the hat?

Mallory pulls on a green foam Statue of Liberty HAT...

EXT. FILENE'S BASEMENT - NEW YORK - MORNING

ELLA

Check, am wearing designated loser hat, toward the front of the line...

EXT. FILENE'S BASEMENT - NEW YORK - MORNING

Mallory bites her lip as she searches for Ella...

MALLORY

This is *nuts*...

A SECURITY GUARD fends the women back...

SECURITY GUARD

(into bullhorn)  
Back off ladies!

The tension is palpable as women push toward the front of the building...

EXT. FILENE'S BASEMENT - NEW YORK - MORNING

ELLA

(yells)  
I see you!

Ella waves...

EXT. FILENE'S BASEMENT - NEW YORK - MORNING

... And then Mallory spots Ella as she waves emphatically.

Mallory and Ella simultaneously hang up their PHONES and embrace. It's clear from the hug that they haven't seen one another in quite awhile.

The embrace completed, Mallory steps back and takes a CELL PHONE picture of Ella in the foam hat.

ELLA  
So not cool.

MALLORY  
This year's Christmas card!

Ella responds with a brief sneer.

ELLA  
Okay - I did some recon yesterday.

MALLORY  
Recon, excellent, very crafty.

ELLA  
Thank you. And I stashed a few dresses under a rack.

MALLORY  
So when you say "recon" you really just mean "hid shit".

ELLA  
Pretty much. Hopefully they're still there. When the doors open I'll go for them, while you break left and grab as many dresses as you can just in case. We'll rendezvous at the far East corner of the store...

Mallory grasps onto Ella's arm as the line moves forward...

ELLA  
It really *is* great to see you...

MALLORY  
You too, sweetie.  
(smiling)  
Now give them no quarter.

A beefy SECURITY GUARD raises his BULLHORN...

SECURITY GUARD  
*Go! Go! Keep your heads, ladies...*

Mallory and Ella hold onto each other as the women stampede into Filene's Basement, SQUEALING and SCREAMING...

BRIDES practically knock over an ELDERLY WOMAN as they trample into the store...

INT. FILENE'S BASEMENT - NEW YORK

They storm past the racks of plastic sheathed GOWNS... And now we see why the matching HATS are a good idea: the women separate in the frenzied rush as they snatch dresses.

Hungry hands strip the racks bare. They grab as much as they can as fast as they're able, without assessment...

Ella peeks into a dress RACK and spies her hidden dresses!

Within seconds, all the GOWNS are clutched in hands and hung over shoulders... The store is a chaos of yelling and bartering...

CRAZED BRIDE

I'm looking for a size twelve  
Monique L'huillier-- help, anyone?  
Size twelve! *Size twelve!*

We find Mallory grabbing GOWNS amidst the anarchy... she heads towards the East Corner of the store..

MALLORY

*Ella?*

Ella appears with her GOWNS...

ELLA

The dresses were still there!

Mallory and Ella unzip GOWN BAGS like kids opening presents on Christmas Day...

MALLORY

(gleeful)  
Lazaro...!

Ella unzips a GOWN BAG...

ELLA

You like it?

MALLORY

Oh my God... It's perfect!

Mallory hoists the DRESS up like a prize...

BRIDE BULLY (O.S.)  
*I'll give you ten thousand dollars  
 for it!*

MALLORY  
 (to Bride Bully)  
 Not a chance.

Mallory takes the GOWN and happily marches away...

CUT TO:

INT. MESA GRILL - NEW YORK - EVENING

The sisters enjoy dinner. We linger over the details. Fine china. Candlelight. Expensive wine. Lobster.

Civilization at it's most civilized.

Mallory and Ella are currently both laughing so hard that they can't catch their breath.

ELLA  
 Y-You have to be lying-

MALLORY  
 Swear to God...

Tears rolling down Ella's cheeks. She finally manages

ELLA  
 "Brad 2"?

Mallory can only nod.

ELLA  
 Is... is there... a "Brad 1"?

Mallory can only manage to shake her head "no" which sends Ella into more hysterics.

MALLORY  
 Let me take you through his line of thinking as it was explained to me...

ELLA  
 Please...

MALLORY

If the license plate reads "Brad 2"  
people will *assume* there's an  
equally expensive "Brad 1".

Ella stares at her.

ELLA

That is the dumbest fucking thing  
I've ever heard...

MALLORY

I know...

The women break into fresh gales of laughter. Calming  
themselves a little as A WAITER refills their wine.

ELLA

I can't *believe* you guys are moving  
to the West Coast... Now we'll  
never see each other.

Mallory frowns as she swallows a forkful of baked LOBSTER.

MALLORY

Sure we will.

ELLA

What are you gonna do about Mom and  
Dad's store?

MALLORY

(shrugs)  
I guess I have no choice but to  
sell it...

ELLA

You *guess*?

Mallory picks at her LOBSTER. Still smiling, softly:

MALLORY

Don't start, Elle.

A beat. Ella lets it go.

ELLA

So you must be looking forward to  
Rome, right? Vespas, grappa, hot  
outdoor Vatican sex...

MALLORY  
 (not looking up)  
 We're actually going to honeymoon  
 in Barbados.

Ella puts down her fork.

ELLA  
*What?*

MALLORY  
 We decided together-

ELLA  
 You've been wanting a honeymoon in  
 Rome since before Rome *existed*.

MALLORY  
 And now I'm going to Barbados, so  
 let's drop it.

ELLA  
 So how long did it take him to talk  
 you out of your dream vacation?

Mallory looks up at her. Steely:

MALLORY  
 Don't do that...

ELLA  
 Do what?

MALLORY  
 Paint me as some Donna Reed fucking  
 doormat. You don't know my life-

ELLA  
 And you know mine?

MALLORY  
 You're the one who ran away after  
 they died-

ELLA  
 So clearly, I'm not qualified to  
 comment on *anything* that's occurred  
 since then. You sit here and make  
 fun of him with me, and *I'm* the  
 bitch?

MALLORY

You've never made a secret about the fact that you hate him-

ELLA

I don't *hate* him, I just know that you can do better-

MALLORY

Well, if you think that, it *obviously* must be true-

ELLA

He proposed right after Mom and Dad died, didn't he?

This stops Mallory cold.

ELLA

And you said yes, because at the time--I don't know, it probably sounded like a good idea. But now-

MALLORY

Don't-

ELLA

I know you, Mallory. Now you feel trapped.

Mallory's eyes flick up at this.

ELLA

Because you're the nice girl who always does the right thing. But you don't have to do this, you have a choice here...

(pause)

I just want you to be happy-

MALLORY

And what gives you the right to judge whether or not *I'm* happy? Not everything has to happen like a goddamn *romance novel*-

ELLA

Mal-

MALLORY

Seriously--My fiance. My honeymoon. My life.

(MORE)

MALLORY (cont'd)  
But please, explain to me how I  
could live it better.

ELLA  
Don't get married to a douchebag.

Mallory stares at her sister. Shocked. Instantly, Ella  
knows she's crossed the line. Trying to repair:

ELLA  
I'm sorry-

MALLORY  
Fuck you.

ELLA  
Mal-

MALLORY  
You pick *this* of all weekends to  
bring this up?

She's tearing up a little. Ella, honestly:

ELLA  
I really am sorry.

Mallory just stabs at her food. Dinner continues in silence.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAR - NEW YORK - MORNING

Mallory lays her wedding DRESS inside and slams her car  
TRUNK...

MALLORY  
I guess that's it.

Ella nods. Still awkward.

ELLA  
Drive safe...

Mallory and Ella hug goodbye.

ELLA  
I'm sorry about... everything.

Mallory nods, softening.

MALLORY  
I'll call you later. Love you.

Mallory gets into her car. Waves goodbye through the window.  
 ELLA'S P.O.V. - Watching Mallory drive off down the street...

CUT TO:

THE OPEN ROAD

Route 62. The shortcut. Empty for miles. Mallory's car  
 BLASTS past us...

INT. CAR - MOVING

Mallory speaks into her CELL PHONE as she drives. Smiling.  
 Bag of chips open on the passenger seat.

MALLORY  
 It's in the trunk...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MALLORY AND BRAD'S APARTMENT

Her fiancée BRAD types at his desk computer. Squarejaw  
 handsome workaholic. At first glance, looks like what your  
 Mom would call a "great catch".

BRAD  
 What's it look like?

Mallory takes a sip of soda from a FAST FOOD CUP...

MALLORY  
 It's fire engine red and comes with  
 a Pope hat. You *know* that I'm not  
 going to tell you what my wedding  
 dress looks like...

She pops a chip in her mouth. Brad, listening:

BRAD  
 Are you eating in the car?

Mallory stops mid-chew. Mouth still full.

MALLORY  
 No...

She tries to swallow as quietly as possible.

BRAD

I heard that. Mal, I asked you specifically-

MALLORY

They're potato chips, Brad, not plutonium.

BRAD

You want to make fun of me, fine, you pay to get the interior shampooed next time.

He continues to type. Mal, sick of taking shit:

MALLORY

(coolly)

You could at least do me the courtesy of not typing on your computer while you're "scolding" me.

He stops typing. Frustrated:

BRAD

What's wrong.

A beat. Should she open up that can of worms?

MALLORY

You just went and bought the tickets-

BRAD

I *knew* it.

MALLORY

Knew what?

BRAD

I knew that you'd be pissed off coming back from seeing your sister.

MALLORY

My *sister* has nothing to do with this--You *know* that I've always wanted to go to Rome and you just made Executive Decision Barbados without even *talking* to me first...

We can HEAR Brad's cell phone as it BEGINS TO RING in the bg... RING...

BRAD  
*Damn... I have to take this, hon.*

No response.

BRAD  
*I'll call you right back...*

RING...

END INTERCUT:

Mallory looks at her CELL PHONE display:

"CALL ENDED."

Mallory shakes her head. Drops the CELL PHONE back into her PURSE, then retracts her hand like something bit her.

MALLORY  
 Ow, shit!

She raises her HAND and we see a NEEDLE stuck in it.

Mallory reaches back into her PURSE and puts the NEEDLE back into a MINI-SEWING KIT.

Drums her fingers on the steering wheel. Stewing. Finally:

MALLORY  
 (deciding)  
 Fuck this.

She pulls her CELL PHONE from her purse, punches in REDIAL.

We see the phone - "CALLING BRAD"... BOOP.

"CALL FAILED."

MALLORY  
 (to herself)  
 Dammit.

Squinting at the phone, Mallory redials...

...Then JOLTS with the impact of an unexpected BUMP!

Mallory swerves as she tries to regain control of the CAR.

EXT. CAR - MOVING

The CAR fishtails... Then straightens out.

INT. CAR

Mallory struggles with the shaking wheel as she pulls over roadside...

We HEAR the car ENGINE DIE: Mallory's face registers the "oh, shit" moment.

She turns the ignition KEY...

... The car REVS, but fails to start.

She pounds the WHEEL with her fists...

MALLORY

Oh, come *on!*

She makes repeated failed attempts to turn the car over...

... soon enough the car's making no REV at all.

Mallory regards her CELL:

"NO SIGNAL".

MALLORY

Perfect. That's just... yeah.

Mallory sighs and, pulls a dash lever...

...Pops the HOOD of the car.

EXT. CAR

MALLORY'S POV - wires, tubes, canisters, gaskets... A mechanical mess to her.

We can see it in Mallory's scrunched face: she doesn't know shit about cars. But still, she unscrews the CAP to the oil chamber...

Dips the STICK and checks it:

CU STICK: Plenty of OIL slicked on it.

Mallory replaces the STICK...

Takes a step back, hands on hips.

MALLORY'S POV - The land of nothing. What is she supposed to do now?

She slumps back into the CAR. Nothing to do now but wait for a passing car...

MALLORY'S POV - through windshield, then rearview mirror,  
Nothing but road, as far as the eye can see...

FADE TO:

EXT. CAR - DAY - (TIMECUT)

Mallory is in the process of trying to get a CELL signal; making varied waving movements around the CAR...

... But it's no use.

As she regards the "NO SIGNAL" display on her cell, we...

FADE TO:

EXT. CAR - DAY

Mallory is sweaty. She sits propped against the passenger side TIRE in the shade of the CAR. Reading up on the differences between Red Velvet Wedding Cakes. She sighs. Tucks the wedding magazine away. Pulls out something else.

The DEED OF SALE for GREGOR ANTIQUES. She regards it. Close on the Seller's Signature Line. Still unsigned...

... we HEAR a car in the distance.

Mallory pops up as the CAR approaches... And SLOWS.

Appears to be a bunch of ROWDY KIDS who hoot and holler as they pass at about 15 MPH...

ORANGE CRUSH KID  
You look thirsty!

And with that, the KID douses Mallory with ORANGE SODA!

The ROWDY KIDS chortle as the CAR speeds away...

Leaving Mallory stunned, orange-soaked with SODA. Agape...

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Mallory sits in the front seat, legs hanging out from the car. She removes her orange stained T-SHIRT and wrings it out over the pavement...

... As we see a FIGURE appear on the horizon of the road. Walking toward us...

... Mallory does not.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Mallory moves toward the TRUNK for a clean shirt when...

She spots the hitch-hiking MAN in the distance, moving toward her.

She was going to change but in light of the impending company she hastily pulls the shirt back on.

Realizing - She's alone in the middle of nowhere being approached by a strange guy.

MAN  
(calls from a distance)  
Hello there!

Mallory doesn't call back. A beat. She decides.

She gets back IN THE CAR. Tries to power lock the doors - no power. Does it manually. Tries to roll up the windows - again no power. Nothing to be done about that. Her driver's side is two-thirds down.

She watches him in the rearview mirror as he approaches.

He's scraggly but good-looking in a rough-edged sort of way. Stubbly-faced. Before we know it, the MAN reaches the CAR...

CHRISTIAN  
(pleasant)  
Hi.

... Adjusts the BACKPACK which is slung over his shoulder.

MALLORY  
(cautious)  
Hi...

CHRISTIAN  
You're... covered in orange soda.

MALLORY  
(trying to maintain  
dignity)  
I am.

An awkward beat.

CHRISTIAN  
Orange Slice?

MALLORY  
Orange Crush, I think. Kids pulled  
a drive-by on me.

CHRISTIAN  
Right.  
(re: raised hood)  
You been stuck out here a while?

MALLORY  
A little while, yeah...

CHRISTIAN  
Did you try calling Triple A?

MALLORY  
I can't get a signal.

CHRISTIAN  
(motions to the hood)  
I could take a look if you want.

Mallory shrugs. Nervous, but trying not to show it.

MALLORY  
Sure.

Christian nods. Walks around the front of the car.

MALLORY'S POV - He's disappeared behind the hood. Silence...  
For awhile. Mallory, getting more nervous...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
I'm Christian, by the way...

MALLORY  
Mallory.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
 You mind if I ask where you're  
 heading, Mallory?

MALLORY  
 I was headed home to Virginia  
 Beach.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
 Shouldn't you be over on I-95?

MALLORY  
 Took a short-cut... Traffic is so  
 bad around the city...

Christian reappears from behind the hood.

CHRISTIAN  
 You don't have to tell me. You  
 mind if I take a look underneath?

MALLORY  
 You know a lot about cars?

CHRISTIAN  
 Oh, *lord*, no. I'll just be ripping  
 out coils and hoses wherever I see  
 them.

A beat... and Mallory smiles.

MALLORY  
 Funny guy, huh?

Christian smiles back.

CHRISTIAN  
 My Uncle owned a garage. Don't  
 worry, I'll have you fixed up in no  
 time.

With that, Christian slides under the car.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
 So where you coming from?

A beat. Mallory, still trying to get a signal...

MALLORY  
 New York.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
 What's in New York?

MALLORY  
My sister. Sort of a visit...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
Sort of?

A beat.

MALLORY  
It's kind of ridiculous...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
Trust me, you haven't *heard*  
ridiculous...

MALLORY  
There's this place in New York that  
holds this outrageous wedding dress  
sale every year-

CHRISTIAN  
You're getting married?  
Congratulations!

MALLORY  
Thanks.

CHRISTIAN  
Did you find a dress?

MALLORY  
(smiles)  
Yeah, it's perfect. A designer  
dress, ten grand, marked down to  
just two hundred-fifty dollars.

Mallory resumes waving the CELL PHONE in search of a signal.

CHRISTIAN  
Long way to drive for a dress, but  
it sounds like it was worth it.  
And at least you're frugal-- My  
sister Charity spent thirty grand  
on her wedding. Thirty grand!

MALLORY  
Well-- that's what credit cards are  
for, right?

Christian laughs and re-emerges from underneath the car.

CHRISTIAN  
You sound like my ex-fiancee.

MALLORY

Ex?

CHRISTIAN

Candy. She was a great catch.

MALLORY

*Candy?*

CHRISTIAN

(allowing)

Yes, I know, it's a stripper's name.

MALLORY

(laughs)

I wasn't going to say anything-

CHRISTIAN

It's okay, it didn't work out.

MALLORY

Sorry to hear that.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not. Neither is Candy. She's in a better place now. I think we both are.

He begins walking back around the front of the car.

MALLORY

Well, that's good that you could stay friends with her.

CHRISTIAN

Oh, no-- She pretty much hates my guts.

Mallory laughs. Christian again disappears behind the hood.

On Mallory - It's weird having a conversation like this and besides, he seems like an okay guy. Mallory gets out of the car and joins him by the engine.

MALLORY

So, what're you doing out here?

CHRISTIAN

You've deemed me get-out-of-the-car worthy. I'm touched.

MALLORY  
Nice try, but we're talking about  
you now. Where you coming from?

Christian CHUCKLES. He *is* cute...

CHRISTIAN  
You have a tool kit?

Mallory retrieves the kit. Handing it over:

MALLORY  
Now spill.

CHRISTIAN  
It's embarrassing...

MALLORY  
I was recently attacked by a roving  
band of soda throwing teens--You  
don't *know* from embarrassing, my  
friend.

Christian crosses his arms, leans against the CAR.

CHRISTIAN  
Okay. You know anything about  
baseball?

MALLORY  
It's a long boring pointless sport.

CHRISTIAN  
(smiling)  
To *some*. My brother and I are big  
baseball geeks and we've been  
touring the stadiums, cross-  
country. Ever since Chad was...

MALLORY  
(raises eyebrow)  
Christian, Charity, and Chad?

Christian waves her off...

CHRISTIAN  
Forget it, I'll walk...  
(over his shoulder)  
Nice to meet you...

MALLORY  
(laughs)  
Oh, Come on!

Christian smirks. Returning to work on the engine...

CHRISTIAN

Okay, so Chad and I had a little bit too much Scotch last night, he started bragging about how he had hitch-hiked through Europe last summer. So we made this bet...

MALLORY

Oh, no.

CHRISTIAN

Oh, yeah. I'm a little soft on the details but I think I bet him I could hitch-hike into Richmond by five o'clock today...

MALLORY

Nobody picks up hitch-hikers in this country.

Christian points at Mallory, like "Bingo..."

CHRISTIAN

That was *his* point, exactly. So I wake up this morning with a killer hangover and Chad's nowhere to be found. And first I have to do is figure out where in the hell *Richmond* is... So as you can see, it hasn't really been my day.

A beat. Mallory smiles at him. Then:

CHRISTIAN

Wait a minute...

MALLORY

What?

CHRISTIAN

I think *maybe*...  
(grunts)  
We might be in business...

MALLORY

(excited)  
Are you serious?

CHRISTIAN

Let's not count our cluckers just yet...

Christian gestures for her not to get too excited. Mallory hops behind the wheel and touches the KEYS in the ignition...

She pauses and makes eye contact with Christian.

CHRISTIAN  
Hold your breath...

Mallory closes her eyes as she turns the KEYS...

... The car REVS but won't catch...

CHRISTIAN  
(shouts)  
C'mon!

... REVS, and...

STARTS!

Both Mallory and Christian CHEER!

Then an awkward *beat*... What now? Then Christian holds up his hands.

MALLORY  
I'd give you a ride but...

CHRISTIAN  
(palms up)  
It's cool.

MALLORY  
I'm sorry...

CHRISTIAN  
If I was your fiancée, I'd tell you to do exactly the same thing. It was nice meeting you.

Mallory looks like she feels guilty.

MALLORY  
You too. And thank you.

Christian salutes her.

CHRISTIAN  
De nada.

He hoists his sack and resumes ambling down the road.

INT. CAR - DAY

MALLORY'S POV - Christian walks away from her...

After a moment, Mallory puts the car into drive. Pulling out. She gives him a wide berth as she passes him. She feels *really guilty*.

IN HER REARVIEW

Christian raises one hand in a farewell wave...

That's what does it.

She presses down on the brake and stops the car.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Reversing slowly back to Christian. Putting it in drive again, she pulls up alongside and paces him. Christian smiles.

CHRISTIAN

I have this effect on women.

Mallory smiles back in spite of herself.

MALLORY

You're not a nutjob, right?

CHRISTIAN

No. And as you know, all nutjobs are required by law to tell you if you ask them, so good thinking.

Mallory laughs.

CHRISTIAN

I'll make you a deal. I'll give you my wallet and you can hold it till we get to the next town. It's got my license, cash, everything.

MALLORY

And when we reach that town?

CHRISTIAN

I will call my brother to come pick me up and be out of your hair.

(offering his wallet)

Deal?

Mallory wipes sweat from her brow as she considers, then...

MALLORY

Deal.

EXT. CAR - MOVING

The CAR revs and zooms fast back onto the road.

INT. CAR - MOVING

Christian's WALLET sits on the car dash. Mallory switches the RADIO dial around and lands on a pop station.

MALLORY

You can switch the station if you're not into this...

CHRISTIAN

No, it's okay. I'm a big Mariah Carey fan...

MALLORY

This isn't Mariah Carey.

CHRISTIAN

I know. I'm just stating it as a fact. Up front.

Mallory smiles.

CHRISTIAN

So what's your fiancée's name?

MALLORY

Brad.

CHRISTIAN

That explains the ridiculous license plate...

(off her laugh)

So Brad wasn't up for the big wedding dress hunt?

MALLORY

No, Brad wasn't up to see my sister.

CHRISTIAN

Huh. That kind of sucks.

MALLORY

She feels the same way about him.

(pause)

She thinks I'm settling.

CHRISTIAN

Are you?

A beat.

CHRISTIAN

None of my business, sorry.

Mallory remains silent. Then she begins to spill...

MALLORY

My sister's married. Younger sister. She thinks he's her '*soul mate.*'

CHRISTIAN

You don't think so?

MALLORY

I don't know. It's just-- suddenly, she's the expert and everyone has to be swept off their feet just like she was. And if they're not...

CHRISTIAN

(getting it)

She doesn't think it counts.

MALLORY

It's like - You meet people, you get to know them, they're a certain percentage of what you're looking for...

CHRISTIAN

So what percentage is Brad?

Mallory's brow furrows.

MALLORY

High.

Her voice raises that few octaves. The ones that tell you that a person is lying.

CHRISTIAN

Like ninety percent?

A *beat*.

CHRISTIAN  
Eighty-nine?

He says it with a smile. And suddenly, Mallory is GIGGLING uncontrollably. A release of her fight with Ella, a release of everything...

CHRISTIAN  
(laughing too)  
Eighty-eight?

That gets her going even more. Both laughing together. Mallory finally exhales, still grinning...

MALLORY  
Sorry. You must think I'm crazy...  
This has just been such a fucked up  
day...

She sighs. More relaxed now. Christian pulls an APPLE from his pack...

MALLORY  
Let's just talk about something  
else.

Christian pulls a SWITCHBLADE from his jeans. SHIK!  
Switches it open, peeling the apple with it.

CHRISTIAN  
Sure.

Christian pops a piece of the APPLE into his mouth...

CHRISTIAN  
So... what do you think you  
would've done if I hadn't come  
along?

Mallory, watching the BLADE...

MALLORY  
I don't know. Waited for another  
car to pass, I guess.

Christian's eyes glint with mischief as he works the knife...

CHRISTIAN  
I think you would've been waiting a  
while. You were the first car I  
saw all day.

Mallory glances over at Christian.

MALLORY'S POV - The SWITCHBLADE, cutting, peeling...

MALLORY  
Can you put that away?

CHRISTIAN  
What?

MALLORY  
The knife-- Can you please put it  
away?

CHRISTIAN  
Why?

MALLORY  
Because it's making me  
uncomfortable.

Christian wrinkles his nose.

CHRISTIAN  
I'm eating an apple with it.

MALLORY  
Please just put it away.

He says it very simply:

CHRISTIAN  
No.

Christian slices another hunk of apple off. A big one.

MALLORY  
What do you mean 'no?'

Christian pops the piece into his mouth.

CHRISTIAN  
No.

He smiles. Chews. Mallory grips the wheel.

A beat.

She pulls the CAR over to the road shoulder.

Swallows hard as she regards Christian.

MALLORY  
 Seriously. Put the knife away.

Christian smiles.

CHRISTIAN  
 Or what?

On Mallory. An awkward moment. Then, business-like:

MALLORY  
 Look, no offense, but I just don't  
 feel comfortable with this...

CHRISTIAN  
 Comfortable.

Mallory pulls her WALLET from her purse.

MALLORY  
 I appreciate the work that you did  
 on my car...

Mallory pulls out a TWENTY dollar bill as Christian chews the  
 APPLE, amused.

MALLORY  
 This is all I have but...

CHRISTIAN  
 (pissed)  
 You're offering me *money*?

A beat. Mallory, delicately:

MALLORY  
 Look, you seem like a really nice  
 guy but you're *scaring* me here-

CHRISTIAN  
 Am I now?

Another beat...

MALLORY  
 Get out of my car.

For a moment, it's a Mexican stand-off...

And then Christian GRINS at her. The kind of grin that lets  
 us know he does horrible fucking things to people.

In an instant, Mallory grabs her door handle in attempt to make a break and run for it...

... But Christian POUNCES. Grabs her ARM. YANKS her back so hard she SCREAMS.

CHRISTIAN

Drive.

MALLORY

No!

CHRISTIAN

I'll break it, Mallory.

He CLAMPS DOWN on her wrist. Mallory SCREAMS.

CHRISTIAN

(calmly)

You'll hear it snap and then I'll do the driving. So put it in gear and *let's go*.

EXT. ROUTE 62

Mallory's lone CAR pulls back onto the road. No other CAR in sight. Totally desolate...

INT. CAR - MOVING

Mallory glances down at the CELL PHONE in her purse.

CU CELL display: NO SIGNAL.

Mallory looks around as she thinks about what to do...

CHRISTIAN

Who the *hell* picks up a stranger out on the road in the middle of nowhere?

Christian's anger is sudden. But more of a mock-anger. Textbook "shallow affect." Pretend emotion.

CHRISTIAN

Who does that in this day and age? All the crazy people out there, roaming around...

MALLORY  
 (suddenly)  
 So now what?

Christian shakes his head, wearily.

CHRISTIAN  
 So impatient. All you people are  
 the same...  
 (exhales)  
 You mind if I turn on the radio?

Is he actually *asking*? A beat as he waits for the answer...

MALLORY  
 ...go ahead.

He turns on the radio. WEATHER REPORT:

RADIO D.J. (O.S.)  
 ....Again, we have a *flash flood*  
 warning for the following counties-

Christian turns the dial. Scanning through stations, he looks out the window, up at the sky...

CHRISTIAN  
 (shakes head)  
 It does look kind of crappy...

Twists the radio dial. Lands on a music station. "Hip to Be Square," by Huey Lewis. Christian smiles.

CHRISTIAN  
 I love this song.

Mallory keeps her gaze focused on the road. Christian bops a little to the song. Mouthing the words.

They drive along for a bit, Mallory stuck in a surreal nightmare with an 80's pop accompaniment. Then, suddenly:

CHRISTIAN  
 So here's what I'm thinking...  
 Anyone with a license plate like  
 Brad 2 *has* to be a vapid prick.  
 Right?

Christian peers at Mallory. She nods.

CHRISTIAN

Right. So your sister's probably got a good point. You shouldn't marry him.

A beat.

MALLORY

Okay.

CHRISTIAN

Don't fucking condescend to me...

Mallory, fighting to keep her tone as neutral as possible.

MALLORY

I'm sorry.

CHRISTIAN

I'm trying to help you out.

MALLORY

I'm sorry - really.

Christian seems to relax at this.

CHRISTIAN

It's okay.

(sympathetic)

I know all you need is a big hard dick up in you. Right?

A beat. Mallory, trying to process this...

CHRISTIAN

(raises voice)

Right, Mallory?

MALLORY

(quickly)

Right.

CHRISTIAN

Right. You be nice to me and I'll be nice to you.

(pause)

There's a curve up ahead. Take it then turn left down the first dirt road...

Mallory nods. Jaw tight.

CHRISTIAN  
 I'm gonna be so nice to you.  
 (rubs hands together)  
 Make that pussy so wet...

MALLORY'S POV - the curve coming up ahead...

Christian turns his attention back to the SWITCHBLADE.

CHRISTIAN  
 You agree?

MALLORY  
 (quickly)  
 I do, but...

CHRISTIAN  
 But, what?

MALLORY'S POV - Christian is UNBELTED in his seat...

MALLORY  
 There's this one thing.

CHRISTIAN  
 What's that?

MALLORY  
 I took a self defense class once...

CHRISTIAN  
 (amused)  
 And what'd they teach you in your  
*self defense* class?

MALLORY'S POV - her own seatbelt snug across her chest...

MALLORY  
 They said most people who are  
 kidnapped are murdered at the place  
 they're taken to next-- the second  
 location...

CHRISTIAN  
 Really.

MALLORY'S POV - a sign dead ahead that says...

**C U R V E**

MALLORY  
 They taught us *never* let yourself  
 be taken to a second location.

And with that, she FLOORS IT.

The CAR ROARS FORWARD...

Mallory grasps the steering wheel *as we see that she's headed straight toward the SIGN...*

CHRISTIAN

*What the fu-*

EXT. CAR - MOVING

WHAM!

As the Car SMASHES through the sign doing near 70, it's BLASTED into KINDLING...

BEHIND IT -- A serious DROP. *More than we bargained for.*

The CAR careens off the roadside...

And soars over the embankment! We can HEAR Christian's HOWL - he didn't expect this maneuver...

CUT TO:

BELOW

Woodland critters. Flora. Fauana. Peace.

And then UTTER DESTRUCTION enters from above.

Like a WRECKING BALL, the car enters frame -- twisting and turning -- crashing and smashing it's way down the embankment -- RIPPING A COURSE through the underbrush!

We CRASH and FLIP...

And ROLL...

INT. CAR - ROLLING

... GLASS and DEBRIS fly everywhere.

We HEAR smashing glass and twisting metal...

MALLORY'S POV - TWISTING... An underwater sensation as gravity shifts... *The ground coming up fast, too fast, and*

WHAM!

SLAM TO:

BLACK SCREEN

Silence. Then, very softly... chirping.

FADE IN ON:

AN EYELID.

Blinking OPEN. Darting around. Trying to reorient it self.

We begin to PULL BACK to take in both eyes...

Fluttering awake. Mallory. We are

INT. CAR - DAY

And as the camera continues to pull out but BEGINS TO ROTATE 180 DEGREES Mallory realizes two important things

1). She's stuck in her seatbelt...

2). THE CAR IS UPSIDE DOWN.

Her eyes dart around panicked...

*Where is he?*

MALLORY'S POV - The passenger seat EMPTY. The upside down woods, devoid of life. Christian is nowhere to be seen...

Mallory heaves forward a bit and GROANS-- the slightest movement is painful.

GLASS shards, BLOOD, and DEBRIS litter the CAR.

Her body is twisted. Stuck.

MALLORY'S POV - the seat-belt BUCKLE:

Her breath quickens...

MALLORY'S POV - the BUCKLE, as she puts her finger on the seat-belt button...

She reaches one ARM down to brace herself for the fall and with the other...

The BELT unbuckles, releasing her body...

So much for bracing herself. She CRIES OUT as she SLAMS down onto the roof of the CAR, which is now her ground.

Mallory GROANS in pain. Lies on her back...

She shifts as she tries to free herself from the flipped car.

But something is wrong...

MALLORY'S POV: Her LEG --

Which is *stuck* in the twisted metal of the CRUSHED DASHBOARD.

Mallory SCREAMS out as she tries to pull her leg from the grip of the CAR...

MALLORY  
(chokes)  
*Help!*

She sweeps GLASS away from herself.

MALLORY  
*Help!*

Her screams ECHO.

Mallory pulls and yanks at her LEG and CRIES OUT in pain as her skin tears.

A few *beats* as she struggles to yank her LEG from the car dash...

But it's no use - her LEG is hopelessly stuck in the METAL.

She slumps into the most comfortable position she can muster...

Sweeps GLASS and pooling BLOOD away from her.

As she does, something seizes her gaze

MALLORY'S POV - the CELL PHONE

Display read-out that tells us the phone is *in signal range!*

It rests amid broken glass outside the car. Mallory stretches and struggles to reach the phone...

And YELLS again in hurt surprise. Looking to see the source of the pain...

...a gaping, BLOODY GASH in her arm from the fall. She grits her teeth and reaches for the phone again...

But it is several feet out of her reach.

Mallory CRIES OUT in frustration...

The gathers herself. Taking stock.

MALLORY'S POV - the ignition.

She tries to turn the CAR over. No luck...

Reaches for the HORN, stretches up...

... And presses the HORN. It doesn't work.

She pounds on it a few times to no avail...

... Then a twig CRACKLES O.S. Did she really hear that?

Should she actually call out? What if it's Christian? But what if it's not Christian? She needs help...

MALLORY

Hello?

Silence.

MALLORY

*Help! Can anyone hear me?*

More crackling SOUNDS from nearby...

MALLORY

*Help!*

Mallory's breath quickens... Is someone coming to her rescue?

Then TWO FEET suddenly appear next to the CAR!

Mallory, hoping against hope that it's someone else, anyone else, but

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)

I don't think so.

Mallory closes her eyes as she recognizes his voice. She keeps her eyes on THE FEET as they approach. Blood on his cuffs.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)

What goes around *comes* around, huh?

MALLORY

*Listen--*

(coughs)

I'm stuck here, I can't get out--

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)

(shouts)

And that's exactly what you  
*deserve*, you bitch! Driving off  
the road like a fuckin' crazy  
person! Hell of a plan, really!

MALLORY

Please, help me...

He's getting worked up. Mallory watches THE FEET PACE...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)

I just *stole* these jeans!

Circling the CAR... She's totally vulnerable...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)

Now I got *blood* all over 'em...

The FEET STOP. Standing right in front of her. He kneels  
down... And we get the full picture.

Christian's clothes are torn and has bits of GLASS stuck in  
his matted hair. Blood runs down his face.

CHRISTIAN

Look at me.

He looks like a terror.

CHRISTIAN

Who's gonna give me a ride *now*?

And before she can respond, Christian suddenly *springs at*  
*Mallory*...

... And CHOKES HER.

Both hands. Around her throat. Squeezing the life out of  
her...

Mallory gasps, but no air comes.

He smiles. His teeth flash.

He clamps down HARDER.

Her eyes BULGE.

She's going to die.

Seconds away from blacking out...

And he stops.

His hands relax. RELEASING her. Shaking his head, reconsidering...

Mallory, GULPING AIR in so loudly, she almost doesn't here him say

CHRISTIAN

Nah, too easy on you...

He moves back a little from the car and sits. Studying her as she gasps in great lungfulls of oxygen. After a bit:

CHRISTIAN

(calmly)

When I was little, I saw a girl drown in our apartment complex pool.

*What?*

CHRISTIAN

She splished and she splashed and then she finally sank down to the bottom of the deep end. She struggled and bubbles came out of her nose and then all of a sudden, she stopped struggling. It took a long time for her to go. Right at the end she reached out to me...

He MIMICS THE MOVE - reaching his arms out to Mallory.

CHRISTIAN

From the bottom of the deep end, she reached her hands up...

(pause)

I wanted to see if God would intervene, but he didn't. Nuthin'. I spent a lot of time wondering what it was like for a person to go and that day... I just pulled up a chair and watched.

(emotionless)

It was interesting.

He nods towards her bloody arm.

CHRISTIAN

I wonder what'll happen to you, Mallory.

(MORE)

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)  
 Trapped here with all these natural  
 forces 'round. You think God's  
 gonna help you?

Mallory stares at him. Christian smiles... looking around.

CHRISTIAN  
 You're gonna die out here. And I  
 hope it takes a long goddamn time.

Christian spits on Mallory, then stands.

Leaves CRACKLE as Christian moves away from the car and we  
 TRACK WITH HIS LEGS as he leaves the car behind, revealing  
 the GEOGRAPHY...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
 Fate's fickle finger, bitch!

... As he climbs the embankment, we take in the full view of  
 Mallory's predicament:

The lone CAR rests upside down at the bottom of the TALL  
 EMBANKMENT. THICK WOODS surround it. Completely out of  
 sight of any passersby on the road above.

*She's been left for dead in the middle of nowhere.* The full  
 impact of this, hitting her, and off her PANICKED SCREAM FOR

MALLORY  
 HEEEEEEEL...

CUT TO:

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

MALLORY  
 (hoarse)  
 ....eeellllllllp!

She trails off, throat rough.

At it for hours. Frogs and crickets CHIRP. The flipped CAR  
 is enveloped by the SOUNDS of the woods.

The CAR HEADLIGHTS provide the only illumination. Mallory  
 FLASHES them on and off in an effort to signal anyone who  
 might see them.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory takes a deep breath to scream again... and then stops. Shivering. The screaming hasn't worked so far.

And it's getting cold...

She takes in her situation. Pinned upside down in a car. Freezing. What's available to her? An old SWEATSHIRT. Within reach. She stretches to get it:

MALLORY  
(groans)  
Goddammit...

MALLORY'S POV - her gaping ARM WOUND, still bleeding.

Something is going to have to be done about it. She looks at the sweatshirt - warmth or medical attention? Deciding, she ties the SWEATSHIRT around her upper arm in attempt to makeshift tourniquet her limb...

... And applies pressure.

There. One thing taken care of. Now, what else can she use to her advantage?

MALLORY'S POV - her PURSE, which is barely within her grasp.

With her good arm, she digs through the contents. Extracts and views:

A LIPSTICK

A hair RUBBER BAND

A tin of ALTOIDS

A crumpled PAPER note

A WALLET

A PEN

A CHAPSTICK

A MINI-SEWING KIT, and

A compact MIRROR.

She debates. Then grabs the compact MIRROR...

... Clicks it open and takes a look at herself.

MALLORY'S POV - her face is CUT, and blood mats her hair.

She looks expectably like a wreck.

Mallory bites her lip and turns her head as she clicks the MIRROR closed. As she does, her eyes fall on:

THE GLOVEBOX.

She reaches over and pulls it open...

... Her useless CELL PHONE CHARGER falls out along with,  
A PENTHOUSE MAGAZINE.

MALLORY  
(sighs)  
Fucking Brad...

She shakes her head.

We HEAR an animal SQUAWK in the night - Mallory JUMPS.

Wild Animals are out there.

... Another SQUAWKS back.

Not cool.

Mallory doesn't really want to think about animals right now, but also doesn't want to be surprised by an attack.

MALLORY'S POV - SCANNING around the outside of the car. Except for where the headlights point, just INKY BLACKNESS. But then her eyes fall on:

CHRISTIAN'S WALLET.

CU WALLET - as Mallory grabs it and opens it...

MALLORY'S POV - Christian's LICENSE...

... the name beside his photo says "*Christian Foster.*"

Mallory flips through the WALLET...

A series of LICENSES. Each of different girls in their 20s, pretty and promising smiles... *His victims.*

CU LICENSE - a young brunette girl named "CANDY HOFF..."

On Mallory, realizing - "Candy". Christian's "fiancee" was actually one of his victims.

Mallory removes CHRISTIAN'S LICENSE...

... Then tosses the WALLET away from the CAR like it's poisonous.

MALLORY'S POV - the smiling photo of Christian...

She pockets Christian's LICENSE.

Then shivers again. She needs to get warm.

She spots the dash LIGHTER and pops it in...

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory scrapes leaves toward her in bunches as her teeth chatter... She piles twigs, grass, and dead leaves a few feet away from her...

... Tries to ignite the pile with the dash LIGHTER.

But the pile fails to ignite.

SERIES OF SHOTS -- A few failed attempts...She pops the LIGHTER knob into the dash... It pops back out. She tries to ignite the pile but the leaves are too damp. No luck...

CUT TO

Mallory shivers as the dash LIGHTER pops out and she ignites...

BRAD'S PENTHOUSE.

The pages catch fire and burn successfully...

MALLORY'S POV - the pornographic images distorting and disintegrating.

She warms her hands against the small FIRE and rests her head. Mallory stares into the FIRE. She closes her eyes. Then, abruptly...

SCREAMS!

MALLORY  
*Help! Help! Help! Help!*

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

Echoing throughout the otherwise still embankment...

MALLORY (O.S.)  
*Help! Help! Help...*

Mallory SCREAMS continuously...

FADE TO:

EXT. EMBANKMENT - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

A bright morning. Birds CHIRP. Grass sways in the breeze.  
 The sun beats down on the road above.

We HEAR a SLURPING SOUND...

INT. CAR - MORNING

Mallory blinks... opens her eyes.

She tries to adjust her eyes as the SLURPING continues...

*... Realizes what's going on: a wild ANIMAL is at the car  
 WINDOW, licking her bloody arm!*

Mallory SCREAMS.

The ANIMAL jumps back...

ANIMAL  
 (scared)  
 Rrroaw!

As Mallory struggles up onto her elbows she waves her ARMS  
 and HISSES in attempt to scare the creature...

And we see that it's just a grey MANGY CAT.

MALLORY  
 (angry)  
 Get away!

Mallory's arm is wet where MANGY CAT had been licking her  
 fresh BLOOD.

MALLORY  
 Ssss! Get out of here!

MANGY CAT regards Mallory with mild curiosity. Stares, wide-eyed.

Then rubs its back against a piece of car DEBRIS.

MANGY CAT  
(petulant)  
Meow.

MALLORY  
Mangy goddamn cat...

Mallory wipes at her bloody ARM. Then looks around.

Her eyes focus on her CELL PHONE. Still a few feet away.  
Her eyes narrow...

CUT TO:

THUNK!

MALLORY'S POV - the CELL PHONE, a few feet out of her grasp.

Mallory flings her PURSE handle outward, in attempt to snag the CELL PHONE...

No luck.

Another fling... and she almost hooks it.

Another fling...

... And Mallory GROANS in pain. She grasps her ARM and grits her teeth...

MALLORY'S POV - the gaping WOUND has worsened...

The WOUND seeps PUSS... It's really looking gross.

Something has to be done about it. The tourniquet and pressure haven't worked. She climbs back INSIDE...

INT. CAR - DAY

Mallory spills the contents of her PURSE: the LIPSTICK, compact MIRROR, and...

SEWING KIT

She opens it. Really has no choice...

She threads the NEEDLE...

CU THE WOUND: Looking really bad. She holds the needle above the top of the wound. Wavering...

She takes a deep breath...

And PLUNGES THE NEEDLE THROUGH HER SKIN.

SCREAMING... And pulling it BACK OUT.

Breathing hard. Tears in her eyes. Shaking from the pain. She puts the needle down.

She can't do it.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

THUNK!

Mallory continues to fling her PURSE from the CAR in attempt to snag the CELL PHONE - but still no luck.

It's become an exercise in futility, because there's really no way she can get to it.

Her arm wound, soaking through the sweatshirt...

Worse than ever. And every time she throws the purse it howls with pain.

THUNK! Not even close. She cringes as bolts of pain shoot up her arm. Looks up into the sky...

The SUN, SINKING...

Night will be coming again soon.

And Mallory begins to quietly cry.

She's been here over 24 hours.

No one knows.

No one's coming.

*This is where she'll die...*

... The CELL PHONE RINGS!

MALLORY'S POV - Her sister ELLA'S NAME on the cell display!

MALLORY  
(cries out)  
Ella!

RING...

But no way to reach it. Complete torture...

RING...

Mallory's looks around desperately. Something, anything...

MALLORY'S POV - the SHOELACE on her free foot!

She grabs at it. Rapidly unlacing it from her sneaker, gritting her teeth as she does so, *hurrying*...

RING...

She ties the SHOELACE to her purse STRAP, fashioning a sort of hook...

Mallory pulls her upper body out of the car, along with the shoelace-strapped PURSE...

RING...

... She grasps the PURSE, holds onto the SHOELACE, and takes aim with intent:

Tosses the PURSE as she holds onto the lace...

MALLORY'S POV - the PURSE lands right on the CELL PHONE...

The CELL PHONE is nudged aside a bit as Mallory reels in the PURSE for...

... Another aimed toss.

MALLORY'S POV - she's overshot the CELL PHONE just enough to *drag it toward her with the PURSE!*

RING...

Mallory's face betrays her excitement... She may just get the phone.

Mallory clutches the PURSE... Another toss/drag or two could deliver the cell phone.

She tosses the PURSE... But this one goes awry, knocking the CELL PHONE FURTHER AWAY from her...

Mallory struggles and GRUNTS... One last toss:

... And she's able to snag the CELL PHONE!

She drags the CELL PHONE toward the CAR!

Reaches it, and answers...

MALLORY  
(desperate)  
Ella? Ella!

We HEAR a CRACKLING, breaking up NOISE emit from the CELL PHONE...

MALLORY  
*Ella!*

More STATIC NOISE, then...

ELLA (O.S.)  
Hello? Mal?

Mallory CRIES OUT...

MALLORY  
*ELLA!*

ELLA (O.S.)  
Hello, Mal? I think... ...out of range...

And then the worst:

The CELL PHONE breaks up, and DIES.

MALLORY  
ELLA?

MALLORY'S POV - the cell phone BATTERY GONE DEAD...

MALLORY  
(frustrated)  
FUCK!

She pounds the ground with her fists in frustration.

MALLORY  
FUCK! FUCK! FUCK!

So goddamn close...

Then she remembers - THE PHONE CHARGER.

In a frenzy, she scrambles looking for it. Finds it and plugs it into the DASH...

The phone screen comes to life - "BATTERY CHARGING"...

She presses and holds the POWER BUTTON...

The phone, POWERING UP...

...and the WELCOME SCREEN appears! It's holding a charge!

Now "SEARCHING FOR NETWORK"...

MALLORY

Please...

She shifts position to try and get a signal..

*Revealing A PAIR OF LEGS through the window behind her, walking toward the car!*

We HOLD on Mallory, her back to the approaching LEGS...

She stares at the cell phone - "NETWORK LOCATED"! And TWO BARS of SERVICE appear as...

*WHAM! A LEG kicks the car door behind Mallory!*

She JUMPS, immediately protects the CELL PHONE from his view by wedging it underneath herself.

Christian ducks his head into view.

CHRISTIAN

(cheery)

I *thought* I saw some movement in there! I can't believe you're still alive!

(pause; considering)

Well. This changes things a bit.

We see that he's clad in a new pair of clothes. He takes a swig of a BEER...

CHRISTIAN

Bet you're wondering what I'm doing back here...

Mallory notices the CHARGER is still plugged into the DASH, dangling...

CHRISTIAN

Forgot my wallet. Really could've queered the deal when they found your body. Seen it around?

Mallory immediately points in the direction of the WALLET. Christian's smile disappears. He doesn't move.

CHRISTIAN

So you're just gonna give it to me?  
(pause)  
You're not going to try and bargain with it?

*Shit.*

CHRISTIAN

What's going on here, Mal?

A beat... and Mallory begins to SNIFFLE.

MALLORY

I just... I don't want you to hurt me...

CHRISTIAN

(not buying it)  
Really.

She BEGINS TO CRY.

MALLORY

I have my own business... some money saved...

CHRISTIAN

Shut up.

MALLORY

If you get me out of here... I can give you my bank account number...

CHRISTIAN

(interrupts)  
All you people are the same, you know that? Think you can buy your way out of anything. You know how much money that woman up the road offered me not to kill her husband?

Mallory is frozen as Christian saunters over and retrieves his WALLET as he continues to talk, enjoying himself again:

CHRISTIAN

Dane. Nice guy. Stranger knocks on his door, just been in a car accident, and he was all set to give me a ride to the hospital. Until *she* butted in. "Give him money for a cab, Dane. You don't know him, Dane." I've just been in a wreck and you wanna put me in a cab? Fuck her. You know she only offered me five grand not to kill him? I did it in front of her just to teach her a lesson-- cheap fucking bitch, Mal, I tell you. Katie. Not Kate but Katie. Seems like a strange name for a full grown woman, doesn't it?

He kneels down next to Mallory's window.

CHRISTIAN

Anyway, Katie and I have been having a nice time of it. Kinda time you and I could have.

(pause)

Why'd you give me the wallet so quickly, Mallory?

He stares straight at her. Trying to gauge the genuineness of her tears.

MALLORY

(weeping)

Please don't leave me out here...  
*Please...*

He hovers over her, almost drinking in her terror. Making sure of it. It seems to take forever...

Finally he rises, satisfied that she's not faking.

And that's when THE PHONE RINGS.

In a flash he sees: The CHARGER plugged in, dangling from the DASH! At once, Christian is upon Mallory...

CHRISTIAN

*Where is it?*

He grabs Mallory by the shoulders...

CHRISTIAN

*WHERE?*

He shakes her vigorously...

... And reveals the CELL PHONE underneath her!

MALLORY

*No! No!*

She fights to keep it, but WHAM! Christian PUNCHES HER so hard in the THROAT that she can't even get a breath in to gasp at the pain. He grabs the phone in victory.

Holds it up to her, just out of reach. STILL RINGING.

Ella, trying her back...

He waits till the rings CEASE.

CHRISTIAN

(halfway impressed)

You're a sneaky bitch, Mal...

Then he KICKS HER IN THE CHEST. She sucks air...

CHRISTIAN

Let's see what we got on this bad boy.

CHRISTIAN'S POV - the CELL PHONE, as he presses a few buttons...

CHRISTIAN

(smiles)

Oooo... Nice!

Christian turns the CELL PHONE toward Mallory revealing a picture on the CELL display: ELLA caught off-guard in the silly HAT.

CHRISTIAN

Pretty clear which one of you's the President of the Itty Bitty Titty Commitee, eh?

Mallory, finally able to choke out words again:

MALLORY

I made a call.

Christian STOPS. Looks at her.

MALLORY

I called for help before you got here.

(MORE)

MALLORY (cont'd)  
(fixing him with a stare)  
They're coming *right now*.

CHRISTIAN  
Bullshit.

But he doesn't look positive.

MALLORY  
911, you *fuck*. You run now, it's  
only attempted murder...

CHRISTIAN  
You're lying...

He takes a menacing step towards her...

MALLORY  
"Christian Foster, born 9/23/78".

Christian stops moving.

MALLORY  
I gave them your name, your  
description, *everything*. You run,  
you got a shot. Kill me and it's  
the fucking gas chamber.

Christian, looking unsure for the first time we've ever seen.

A long pause...

And then he raises the phone.

CHRISTIAN  
Let's check "Sent Calls", shall we?

Mallory's FACE FALLS.

Christian punches a few buttons and then smiles.

CHRISTIAN  
Huh. Last call you made was  
yesterday to Percentage Man.  
(smiling)  
Nice try, though.

She holds his gaze.

MALLORY  
People are going to come looking  
for me-

CHRISTIAN

(interrupts)

People don't go missing for *days*, a week sometimes. Trust me, I know. As for 911?

He drops the CELL PHONE near her...

... Then abruptly stomps on it with his heel - *smashes the CELL* to bits...

Mallory watches. Her one chance at calling for help. GONE.

CHRISTIAN

Aww-- don't be sad, Mallory. You want me to cheer you up?

MALLORY

Go fuck yourself.

CHRISTIAN

Fuck myself. That's... an interesting choice of words. Maybe I should make you do that, what do you think?

He tips the bottle and pours some beer onto her face. She tries to spit it back at him.

CHRISTIAN

What would you do to get out of here, huh? Chew off your own leg, like an animal? Or maybe something with this beer bottle, just to make me happy.

She SWIPES at his leg. He dances back laughing. Then kneels down on all fours. Staring at her in the car.

CHRISTIAN

I don't think you got it in you. When you get right down to it, we're all fuckin' animals. And I don't think you got the stones to get down in the mud with me. To get fucking *mean* with me. Cause this shit is nothing compared to what's coming next.

MALLORY

(low, hoarse)

Why don't you just kill me?

Christian stares at her. And then very slowly and deliberately shakes his head "no."

CHRISTIAN

Here's the plan. I'm gonna go back to my cabin, fuck my girl Katie, get some shut-eye. And in the morning, I'm gonna put together a little bag of tricks. Some party favors that you and I can have fun with. And then I'm gonna come back here and we'll see what you're really made of.

POP! Christian kicks out the front left HEADLIGHT...

CHRISTIAN

(smiles)

Something for you to look forward too.

POP! He kicks out the right HEADLIGHT. Mallory watches his outline as it disappears into woods...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)

Sweet dreams.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - SUNSET

Almost completely dark.

Mallory working in near silhouette. She cuts a piece of CLOTH from her SWEATSHIRT...

... and rubber bands the CLOTH piece around the base of a GLASS SHARD from the rearview mirror. We realize

*She's constructing a weapon.*

She grasps the GLASS SHARD weapon. Stabs it down into the dirt. Not bad. Again into the dirt. And again...

She keeps practicing as the DARKNESS ENVELOPS HER...

FADE TO:

INT. CAR - MORNING

A rustling sound. Mallory awakens. Opens her eyes...

MALLORY'S POV - blurry, as her eyes adjust to:

A stiff DEAD RAT, its feet in the air.

Mallory pops back and GASPS! She adjusts onto her elbows as she sees the MANGY CAT crouched a few feet from the CAR.

MALLORY  
(disgusted)  
Great.

MANGY CAT watches Mallory, pleased with himself and his nice present to her.

MANGY CAT cocks his head.

MANGY CAT  
Meow.

Mallory wrinkles her nose as she lifts the dead RAT by its tail...

... And flings it as far away from the CAR as she can - SCREAMING in SURPRISE about how much it hurts her arm!

MANGY CAT chases after the dead RAT... Sniffs at it, baffled. Then picks it up and brings it back to Mallory.

MALLORY  
No!

Mallory chastises the CAT. But this gives her an idea...

She pulls PEN and PAPER from her PURSE...

CU - NOTE as Mallory scrawls:

*"Help! Car accident roadside embankment, near CURVE sign."*

Mallory pauses, continues...

*"Reward."*

MALLORY  
C'mere, Kitty!

Mallory TAPS her fingers pleasantly against the car.

MANGY CAT glances at Mallory...

... Then diverts his gaze, uninterested.

Mallory snatches the Altoid TIN from her PURSE...

... Rolls an ALTOID back and forth between hands. In the nice voice you use on pets when you're trying to disguise the fact that you want to kill them:

MALLORY  
 (through gritted smile)  
 C'mere, you fucking mangy rodent  
 bringing tabby from the tenth level  
 of hell... Over here...

This alerts MANGY CAT. Mallory, coaxing:

MALLORY  
 Who smells like shit? Who smells  
 like shit? You do! That's right!  
 You do! Come here...

He pops up and saunters over to Mallory...

Mallory smiles, entices and pets him as he nears her.

MALLORY'S POV - a tag which says "EM."

MALLORY  
 Is that your name? Em?

Carefully, Mallory folds the HELP NOTE into EM CAT'S COLLAR.

EM CAT doesn't mind. He's preoccupied with the ALTOID, which he soon bats away from the car.

Mallory shoo's at EM CAT. Wincing at every move...

MALLORY  
 Go cat... Go home, Em!

But EM CAT is obsessed with the ALTOID.

He bats it around...

... scampers and rolls in play.

But soon tires of the game and plops down in the grass near a tree. Time for a nap.

Mallory shudders in frustration. Rubbing her wounded arm...

CUT TO:

Mallory's WOUND. She's peeled up the sweatshirt.

It looks *awful*.

She holds the NEEDLE above it. This time it has to be done.

She can't fight off Christian with this.

She takes a deep breath...

And threads the NEEDLE through her bleeding CUT.

MALLORY  
(stifles scream)  
Aghh...

Sweat beads on her brow as she pulls the thread tight...

CU CUT: as *the thread breaks!*

She fights tears of pain and frustration...

MALLORY'S POV - the thick THREAD spun around the steering WHEEL cover...

She unspools the wheel cover THREAD...

And finishes off the sewing job with the thick THREAD...

... Then SCREAMS!

Continues to SCREAM until she hears

*Something in the distance.*

Mallory cocks her head. EM CAT twitches his EARS. Raises his head... As we HEAR the soft HUM of a vehicle.

Mallory freezes in fear for a *beat*... is Christian back?

We can make out that it's country MUSIC...

MALLORY'S POV - she grabs the GLASS SHARD weapon...

... And HIDES IT in the seat beside her.

As the car pulls to the side of the road, we briefly hear two VOICES shouting over the MUSIC!

Mallory begins to SCREAM continuously...

MALLORY  
Help! Help! Help!

EXT. EMBANKMENT - DAY

Mallory leans outside the CAR as an old orange MUSTANG rolls by above...

Country MUSIC blares...

MALLORY  
Help! Help! Help!

The orange MUSTANG pulls to a HALT.

Idling about a hundred yards away from the spot where Mallory's car went off the road.

Mallory continues to SCREAM...

... As PISSING GUY (30s) hops out of the MUSTANG.

He unzips his jeans as he moves to the roadside...

The MUSIC completely drowns out Mallory's SCREAMS.

PISSING GUY pisses in the dirt near the MUSTANG.

INT. CAR - DAY

Mallory continues to SCREAM her head off. To no avail...

She desperately scans around for something to aide her...

Suddenly has an idea, grabs the compact MIRROR... Opens and raises it in attempt to reflect the sun.

She struggles to flash the MIRROR upward toward the MUSTANG.

CU - the GLARE, as the MIRROR reflection bounces around the embankment...

Mallory strains but she just can't get the angle...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - DAY

Pissing Guy's friend SMOKING GUY lounges in the passenger seat of the MUSTANG.

He PUFFS on a cigarette, oblivious to Mallory's SCREAMS and the mirror flashes...

SMOKING GUY nods his head in rhythm to the blaring MUSIC.

... As PISSING GUY zips up his jeans. Turns back to the car JUST AS the MIRROR FLASH dances onto his back...

To no avail. He hops back into the MUSTANG...

... And the men pull away back onto the road.

The MUSIC fades as the car disappears...

It's as if they were never here.

INT. CAR - DAY

Mallory hears the MUSTANG zoom away but continues to SCREAM...

CUT TO:

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT - (TIMECUT)

Almost pitch black. A bare sliver of moon.

Off in the distance, we see a few bolts of LIGHTING. And hear low, rumbling THUNDER...

We can see an oxidized red TRUCK as it slows to a stop...

Pulls over.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory shakes. She's weakened and looks awful. Eyes like a trapped animal.

A FLASHLIGHT illuminates the embankment as a FIGURE approaches...

Mallory squints as the FLASHLIGHT glares in her FACE.

CHRISTIAN

Howdy!

Christian gleams the LIGHT underneath his chin and makes a mock-eerie LAUGH...

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory grasps her hidden GLASS SHARD weapon...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

Christian plops himself down onto the ground near the CAR.  
He sets a brown grocery BAG next to him...

CHRISTIAN

Sorry I'm late. Took a lot longer  
to put this together than I  
thought.

He pats the bag.

Mallory stares at it. *Really* not wanting to know what's  
inside.

CHRISTIAN

Figuring what to bring, what not to  
bring, what you're into, what I'm  
into...

He positions the FLASHLIGHT so that it illuminates them both.

CHRISTIAN

So, let me begin by asking - how  
was your day?

Mallory RASPS an attempt to speak but cannot... She has  
completely lost her voice.

CHRISTIAN

Screamed yourself dry, huh?

Mallory shifts her gaze away from Christian.

CHRISTIAN

Too bad-- Thought we could have a  
nice chat. I don't really know  
that much about you, you don't know  
that much about me but, fine...

(sighing)

I *guess* we can just skip to the  
bag...

Mallory SHAKES HER HEAD in fear...

CHRISTIAN

So you *do* want to know about me?  
Well, that makes me feel good, Mal,  
thank you....

He pauses. Debating something. Deciding:

CHRISTIAN

You know what, though? Let's do the first thing from the bag and *then* we'll talk.

And he reaches into it...

Mallory's fingers tighten around the glass shard, ready for an attack...

And she holds her breath...

As he PULLS OUT...

What appears to be a ham and cheese sandwich.

CHRISTIAN

Now, I didn't know if you liked mustard or not - I, myself, am a *huge* mustard fan, but some people aren't into that, so I went pretty light. Hope that's okay.

He holds it out to her. Mallory stares at the sandwich, almost uncomprehending.

CHRISTIAN

It's doesn't mean we're going steady, Mal, it's just a ham sandwich. You haven't eaten in two days.

A beat...

And then Mallory takes it. Releasing the weapon, she devours it messily with both hands. Christian watches, amused.

CHRISTIAN

See, we can be friends. You be nice to me and I'll be nice to you...

Mallory's not even listening, just eating.

CHRISTIAN

Okay. Me. Let's see. I was born in Florida. Dad named Ron, mom named Sue. Was really into cars...

Mallory finishes the sandwich and licks her fingers. Christian pulls out a jug of water from the bag and hands it to her as he keeps going.

CHRISTIAN

My best friend was Erik, until he moved away. I never had a pet. I lied about having a brother. That girl who drowned in the pool was my sister...

Mallory stops drinking the water.

CHRISTIAN

Oh, didn't I mention that before?

Mallory, stone still. Not moving a muscle.

CHRISTIAN

You can't blame me. She would've told. She would've told about all the nice things we did together...

Mallory looks sick. Christian leans forward, almost like he's pleading.

CHRISTIAN

I know I'm different. I know I'm fucked up and into some stuff sexually that maybe society in general frowns upon. But I also know I can *save you* Mallory. I can get you *out of this car*. You be nice to me and I'll be nice to you.

He gets into a kneeling position in front of her. Just out of her arms' reach.

CHRISTIAN

I want you to touch me.

Mallory doesn't move. She's got the shard in her hand. He needs to move just a little bit closer...

CHRISTIAN

You touch me and I'll let you go.

CU - Mallory's fingers tightening around the weapon...

Christian reaches into the bag...

CHRISTIAN

But if you hurt me...

... And pulls out a NAILGUN.

Mallory's eyes widen at the sight of it.

He raises the NAILGUN, puts it close to her free hand...

CRACK! The NAILGUN goes off like a gunshot.

Mallory CRIES out as the SHOT CRACKLE reverberates throughout the surrounding area.

Christian PRESSES the NAILGUN onto the PALM of her left hand, the plate still hot from firing...

CHRISTIAN

Give me your other hand.

The one with the weapon. But if she stabs at him now, he'll fire the nailgun. She shakes her head "no-

CRACK! Mallory SCREAMS...

He fired the nail between her fingers. No damage. He grabs her other arm violently as her head reels, causing her to DROP THE SHARD.

He takes that newly free hand in his own...

...and places it on his crotch. He begins forcing her to massage him there. It's awful.

CHRISTIAN

Take it out.

She shakes her head violently - NO!

He slowly moves the NAILGUN up her arm, caressing...

CHRISTIAN

Unzip me and *take it out*.

...jabbing it into the crook of her NECK. Putting pressure on it, jamming it in there...

A horrible moment...and then we hear a ZZZZZIP. And a sigh.

CHRISTIAN

Put it in your mouth, Mallory.

*Oh, God, no.*

CHRISTIAN

Just suck it a little...

CU - The NAILGUN. Moving up to Mallory's temple. Brushing her hair aside from her face...

CHRISTIAN  
 ...but if I feel one fucking  
 tooth...

He presses with the nailgun, urging her head downwards when  
 thankfully

WE HEAR a POLICE SIREN SQUAWK!

Christian springs into action - he flips the FLASHLIGHT off  
 and tosses the NAILGUN out of Mallory's reach...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

A POLICE CAR slows near Christian's TRUCK! Pulls over...

...And a young male COP hops out, FLASHLIGHT in hand.

Christian reemerges from the embankment, FLY UNZIPPED...

CHRISTIAN  
 Howdy, Officer--

The COP flashes his LIGHT in Christian's face.

COP  
 (carefully)  
 Evening.

CHRISTIAN  
 (smiles)  
 Had to stop for a piss--

The COP shines the light down - Christian's fly, still  
 UNZIPPED. Corroborating the story. Christian zips up.

The Cop nods towards the truck. Drawling:

COP  
 You related to the Logans?

CHRISTIAN  
 (mimics drawl)  
 Yessir-- in town for a visit.

The COP flashes his FLASHLIGHT around the truck interior...

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory's attempts to scream are futile...

She picks up the nearest piece of DEBRIS and starts clanging it against the car door...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

We can barely hear the clangs.

COP'S POV - his flashlight illuminates some food wrappers and TRASH inside the truck...

CHRISTIAN

I apologize, Officer-- You know how it is when you gotta go. Dane and I been playin' cards all night and I owe the boy a bottle of Scotch.

The COP assesses Christian.

COP

You been drinkin' this evenin'?

Oh, shit.

CHRISTIAN

(cooly)

I do admit Dane and I had a few beers during that last game, but I was careful about it. I'd be more than happy to take that test if you want me too.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory throws everything she can get her hands on, in attempt to get the attention of the COP...

She pounds on the car to make some noise...

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

... But the SOUNDS can't be heard up here above.

The COP stares into Christian's eyes for a long moment to see if he's sober. Finally:

COP

That won't be necessary.

As the COP moves his FLASHLIGHT out of Christian's face:

We can see the CAR TRACKS where Mallory's car went off the road... Christian also sees the TRACKS and tries to distract the COP...

CHRISTIAN

Say, you wanna drop by and get a game? Katie just made some cookies...

Unfortunately, the COP does not see the CAR TRACKS.

COP

I'm on duty. Let me just take a gander at your license and I'll let you be on your way.

Christian smiles and nods.

CHRISTIAN

Of course.

He pulls his WALLET from his pocket and opens it...

CHRISTIAN'S POV - his license is missing!

He closes the WALLET and quickly re-pockets it...

CHRISTIAN

(quickly)

Seem to have left it back at the house.

The COP suspiciously regards Christian.

COP

Guess I'd better go ahead and drop on by there with you then, after all.

CHRISTIAN

Yessir.

COP

I'll follow you...

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory throws a piece of DEBRIS. We HEAR a CLANG...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

The COP halfway into his car when he HEARS IT. He starightens up. Looks off toward the embankment...

Christian sees that the COP has heard the SOUND...

CHRISTIAN  
You hear that?

The COP flashes the light off into the embankment...

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory can see the FLASHLIGHT beams from above!

A raspy GROAN is all she can muster...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

As Christian and the COP listen...

CHRISTIAN  
Sounds like a dying animal...

The COP peers into the darkness for a bit longer... and then LOWERS THE FLASHLIGHT.

COP  
Probly' a raccoon.

Christian shrugs.

The COP turns and moves back to his CAR...

As Christian climbs into the truck we HEAR another CLANGING noise from the embankment below...

But the cop doesn't. The COP gets back into his CAR as Christian pulls off in the TRUCK...

The COP CAR follows Christian...

INT. CAR - NIGHT

... And Mallory watches as the lights fade to nothing again.

Leaving her IN THE DARK. Again.

CUT TO:

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

KEEE-RACK! A LIGHTNING STRIKE not too far away.

A LIGHT RAIN sprays the embankment...

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory listens to the rain begin to PATTERN. And then...  
SQUEAK!

MALLORY'S POV: bunches of RATS infiltrate the CAR...

The RATS surround her. They scamper around...

... And begin to attack Mallory!

Insult, meet injury.

She flails her arms at the RATS... SQUEAK SQUEAK... A RAT  
jumps on her and *bites her*...

MALLORY

*Fuck off!*

She brushes the RAT off her...

SHOUTS as she fends off the RATS...

MALLORY

*Get the fuck out of here!*

MALLORY'S POV - the GLOWING EYES of several RATS.

They infest the CAR... dart around... and then we see

SEVERAL RATS - *going after her trapped leg*. Trying to BURROW  
into the dash...

... Mallory SCREAMS...

HISSES...

... But the RATS outnumber Mallory, and they know it.

They simply stare back at her with their glowing yellow eyes.

More RATS scurry into the CAR... They seem to be multiplying. Seeking shelter from the rain? Or have they come to feed?

Mallory grabs the GLASS SHARD to defend herself...

MALLORY  
*Get the fuck away!*

But the RATS do not scare. They SQUEAK as they scuttle around the CAR...

... Another couple of RATS jump onto Mallory.

She SCREAMS, and brushes them off...

... Waves the glass SHARD as a RAT leaps onto Mallory and clings:

Mallory *stabs the RAT with the glass SHARD.*

The RAT SCREECHES, shudders, and dies.

As Mallory fights the RATS away...

We HEAR a distant BUZZING.

Mallory whips the glass SHARD through the air as the BUZZING continues. Gets closer... a vehicle?

*Sounds like a chainsaw* - BUZZING closer and closer...

Mallory SCREAMS for help as the RATS leap at her from every direction...

MALLORY  
*Help!*

The BUZZING grows louder as Mallory pulls her upper body out of the car...

MALLORY'S POV - something GLINTS in the distance in the embankment...

We see that it's a dirt-bike type MOTORCYCLE approaching...

... Drawing closer and closer to Mallory's flipped CAR!

The MOTORCYCLE swerves the gully toward Mallory...

MALLORY  
*Over here!*

The MOTORCYCLE finally skids to a stop in front of Mallory's flipped CAR...

... REVS to a halt.

BIKER hops off the MOTORCYCLE...

BIKER  
What the hell...?

As BIKER removes her HELMET, we see that she's a woman. Her short hair is spiked out in all directions from sweat.

MALLORY  
Help me!

BIKER approaches the flipped CAR, horrified. Drops her HELMET...

... And opens a small, square BASKET attached to the back of the bike:

EM CAT hops out of the basket!

BIKER  
(stunned)  
What the hell happened? Are you  
okay?

EM CAT storms into the CAR like a superhero, here to save the day...

EM  
Meow!

EM bats at a RAT. HISSES...

BIKER  
(stunned)  
I got your note in my cat's  
collar... Thought it must've been  
some sort of prank!

EM chases a RAT off into the tall grass...

BIKER has yet to remove the huge GOGGLES from her face - gives her a sort of alien or Spaceman look.

BIKER  
How long've you been out here?

MALLORY  
Two days!

BIKER

*Two days?*

MALLORY

My leg is *stuck* and I can't get out!

BIKER

You're *stuck*?

BIKER grasps her spiky head with her hands.

MALLORY

My leg is stuck in the dash!

A beat. BIKER seems to be in a bit of shock, here. Everything takes a few moments to register...

BIKER

I'll help you! Just stay calm...

Mallory stares at BIKER.

BIKER stares back.

MALLORY

Call 911 on your cell phone!

BIKER

I don't have a cell phone...

MALLORY

Who the *fuck* doesn't have a cell phone?!

Biker turns back towards her cycle.

BIKER

I'm sorry! I'll go for help!

MALLORY

No! Listen-- there's this guy...

BIKER

What guy?

MALLORY

There's this crazy guy! He kidnapped me-

BIKER

(dubious)  
He kidnapped you and then left you?

MALLORY

You have to get me *out of here!*

BIKER

Okay!

BIKER rummages through a PACK on her bike...

Pulls out a long WRENCH...

Biker grasps the WRENCH as she moves to the CAR and drops to her knees. Pokes her head through the window,

Biker assesses where to try to pry at the metal...

BIKER

I don't know if I can pull you out...

MALLORY

You have to try!

BIKER jams the WRENCH into the metal near Mallory's LEG...

BIKER

(grunts)

Grr...

Tries pulling. No budge.

BIKER

... I don't know, I think I should go for help...

MALLORY

If you leave, he'll kill me!

BIKER

I don't work well under pressure!

But she tries again. Stabs at the metal. She huffs and puffs, sweaty...

CU MALLORY'S STUCK LEG...

No dice. Biker slumps. Sighing:

BIKER

I don't think this is gonna work...

BIKER regards the WRENCH...

BIKER

Hmmmpf!

BIKER suddenly drops the WRENCH...

... Falls onto her elbows.

BIKER stares at Mallory wide-eyed. Something is wrong...

BIKER

(grunts)

Huuuph...

BIKER winces. Collapses...

... And BLOOD trickles out of her mouth.

*CHRISTIAN pops his head into view!*

MALLORY

NO!

Christian drags BIKER from the CAR by her legs...

... Drops a big HATCHET.

MALLORY

NO!

Christian dumps her body in a heap.

CHRISTIAN

(to Mallory)

*This is for my license, you cunt!*

Mallory CRIES out in anger and frustration...

Christian picks up the HATCHET...

BIKER stirs. GROANS...

A beat as Christian locks eyes with Mallory...

... *Then he hacks BIKER.*

BLOOD spatters the CAR and embankment...

Mallory SCREAMS...

*We can HEAR the sound of BIKER's skull splitting as Christian heaves the HATCHET down again...*

Mallory searches the car, as her hate-filled eyes dart around...

She finds and grasps her GLASS SHARD WEAPON...

He snags Mallory's PURSE and flings each PURSE CONTENT over his shoulder as he tears through it like a man possessed:

CHRISTIAN

*Where is it?*

Christian extracts Mallory's WALLET from her purse...

... Then smiles as he shows Mallory her own LICENSE - like it's some sort of prize.

CHRISTIAN

When I'm done with you, I'm gonna visit hubby-to-be and cut off a percentage of him...

MALLORY's POV - as he leans in the window, almost close enough to slash at...

CHRISTIAN

... And then I'll go see sister Ella, check if the carpet matches the drapes-

Mallory emits a PRIMAL SCREAM as she SWINGS THE WEAPON at Christian's face with all her might...

...and he CATCHES HER WRIST.

The blade, halted INCHES FROM HIS EYE.

Snarling, he twists it, smashing her arm against the ground and she screams in pain, *releasing the shard...*

Grabbing her hair and YANKING her head back! The knife blade out, holding it to her neck screaming:

CHRISTIAN

*Fate's fickle finger, bit-*

*Mallory punches him in the nuts!*

Christian CRIES OUT as she punches him there twice more, then *grabs hold and twists them!*

He grabs Mallory's throat with both hands!

He chokes her as her eyes dart around, looking for some way to fend him off...

CU Christian's enraged FACE, as he grasps her throat...

MALLORY'S POV - she spots the dash LIGHTER!

She flails and punches at Christian as he chokes her...

... And is able to reach out and POP the dash LIGHTER in.

Christian growls as he CHOKES HER...

CLICK! They both look up to see LIGHTER POP OUT. Mallory snags it and *jams it right into Christian's EYE!*

He SCREAMS in pain, but continues to throttle her...

Mallory GRINDS the LIGHTER into Christian's EYE socket... It SIZZLES... It's a stand-off as to who will give in first...

Mallory's eyes roll back into her head.

Her arm holding the lighter FALLS...

Christian withstands the pain as he CLAMPS DOWN on her throat with all his strength...

Mallory convulses...

Shakes and shudders...

And is then FINALLY STILL.

Christian releases Mallory's LIMP BODY.

He leaps from the car...

... And paces angrily. His EYE is a bloody mess...

CHRISTIAN  
(shouting at Mallory)  
*Why'd you make me do that?*

Christian seethes at having lost control as he paces away from the car...

He snatches his BAG as he retreats, leaving Mallory for dead as the rain builds...

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT (TIMECUT)

The RAINSTORM HAMMERS the embankment in a deluge...

Mallory BLINKS AWAKE...

... To find herself *chin deep in rising rain WATER!*

She COUGHS and chokes on the WATER, near drowning...

... The rain WATER covers her body up to her chest.

MALLORY'S POV - a few RATS scamper around, trapped in the car by the storm...

Mallory splashes in the WATER... Pulls her upper body outside the window of the CAR...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

She COUGHS and sputters...

Tries to scream for help. ONLY GUTTURAL now. An animal.

The RAIN pelts her face...

Mallory grasps the side of the car to stay afloat...

The RAIN beats down on Mallory and her CAR...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

A steady stream of WATER rushes down the embankment...

INT. CAR - NIGHT

... The WATER rushes through the interior of the CAR.

SQUEAK...

... The few lingering RATS dart around the seat area above Mallory.

Bodies of DEAD RATS float all around her...

THUD!

Mallory GASPS as BIKER'S BODY is washed against the car.

MALLORY'S POV - as she stares up at her ceiling. This has gotta be it. She's not going to make it...

RAIN beats down onto the CAR. The SOUND gets louder...

The rising current rushes through the car...

Mallory shivers as she strains to sit upright, as far forward as she can...

She reaches up to the bottom of the driver's side SEAT, which is now the highest point in the CAR...

... And grasps onto the car SEAT...

DEBRIS and DEAD RAT bodies wash past her...

Mallory grasps the car SEAT with both hands...

... Stretches her body as much as she can in a chin-up of sorts.

As she clutches the SEAT...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

... The flash flood current rushes over the CAR.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Mallory's chin bobs in the WATER, which washes over her shoulders...

She struggles to keep her head above the sloshing WATER...

But it rises steadily over her face...

Mallory GASPS a last breath as water covers her head...

Then SILENCE.

On Mallory, underwater. Nowhere to go. Nothing to do. Except wait for her to drown.

BUBBLES come out of Mallory's nose...

We hold on her...

When we hear a metal grinding GROAN...

... And suddenly, *the water current moves the CAR!*

MALLORY'S POV - WATER sloshes as the car angles...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

... The rapid shifts the CAR in the embankment.  
The CAR is soon swept up with the current...  
And it GROANS as it's sucked into the rapids...

INT. CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Mallory, gasping at the air as she thrashes around in the CAR...

... She accidentally swallows. Chokes on the WATER.  
The CAR *spins*...  
Twists and turns in the roar of the rapids...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

... And SMACKS against the side of the gully.  
The CAR bounces off the gully...

INT. CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Mallory spews WATER as she is tossed around...  
Her upper body whiplashes, then suddenly...

**CRASH**

Mallory is hurled against the SEAT of the car...  
... As it finally SLAMS TO A HALT.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

The CAR rests against the gully curve, lodged on its side at a 90 DEGREE ANGLE.

MUDDY WATER gushes around the car...

INT. CAR - NIGHT

... And Mallory is now tilted at more of a side angle, but in a *nightmarish replay of the same predicament*:

WATER RISING AGAIN

At chest level, now at her shoulders...

DEAD RATS and TRASH and float around her...

As the WATER reaches her neck, Mallory emits a guttural SCREAM!

Then she spots it amongst the TRASH and RATS:

The fast FOOD CUP and STRAW.

Mallory grasps the CUP and STRAW as WATER rises over her head...

She grabs the STRAW and sucks air through it...

... As she disappears into the dark WATER.

We HEAR Mallory's intermittent BREATHS.

In and out through the STRAW...

Inhale... exhale... inhale... exhale...

... Then BLACKNESS.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

... As the WATER *washes completely over the car*.

Immersed by the flood.

It's as if Mallory's CAR were never here.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - DAY

A bright, sunny day. Birds CHIRP. The morning sun beats down on the shiny road above.

We can see Mallory's CAR below at an angular tilt in the gully.

A stream of WATER rushes past the CAR... But it's already ebbed down to a knee-high flow.

We HEAR a vehicle on the road above...

... See and hear the car ZOOM by, ignorant of Mallory's defunct CAR below.

INT. CAR - DAY

Mallory lies limp and dejected.

We see that her LEG is still stuck in the car... Every inch of her caked with mud. Looks like she's been through hell and back. But she's *alive*.

She still clutches the little plastic STRAW that saved her.

CU MALLORY'S FACE - Blank.

As though she's lost the will to live...

EM (O.S.)

Meow.

EM trots carefully through the mud on the side of the embankment, near the CAR...

EM

Meow?

EM calls out to Mallory. Looks concerned...

... Suddenly leaps in through the window and onto Mallory's chest.

Mallory tries to shirk EM off of her.

EM jumps onto the CAR SEAT above Mallory.

Mallory stares at EM, emotionless.

EM

(intent)

Meow!

It's like EM is trying to tell her something...

Mallory shifts position and...

... Sees that amid trash and debris, *Biker's WRENCH* has come awash next to the car.

... Mallory opens her eyes wide - *the WRENCH is within reach!*

She is rejuvenated! Grabs the WRENCH and...

Pries at the DASH...

MALLORY  
(growls)  
Rrrr...

As she pries at the metal with the WRENCH, we see that her leg has loosened...

... The growling from within Mallory becomes louder and more insistent...

EM  
(excited)  
Meow!

Mallory tugs at her LEG...

MALLORY  
(roar)  
Rrrrr!

... She pries, *twists with all her might...*

Lets out a BATTLE CRY...

... And ***pries her LEG from the metal!***

FLESH tears as Mallory rips herself from the mangled dash...

She pulls herself out through the CAR window, emerging through the MUD like a zombie from a grave.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - DAY

Mallory crawls out of the CAR through the MUD...

... And FINALLY STANDS. Props herself against the CAR.

She is free. Looks up to the heavens...

It's a beautiful day.

An animal SQUAWKS nearby. Another calls back.

MALLORY'S POV - the pair of BIRDS.

So they're the ones that have been making all the squawking racket. Mallory can finally see them in the woods.

EM hops out of the CAR to join Mallory...

... Rubs against her hurt LEG, which is scraped and BLOODY.

EM  
(pleased)  
Meow!

Sounds like a congratulations.

Mallory lets this all wash over her. She's *free*. She's muddy and looks fresh from the grave. *Alive...*

Mallory makes an attempt to step and her leg buckles...

... She struggles to limp.

EM CAT trots alongside her as she regains her balance.

Before she goes far, Mallory comes across the bloated body of BIKER. Washed to the side of the embankment.

A beat, as she regards the open-eyed, hacked body of BIKER.

EXT. CAR

Close on the TRUNK as it opens...

MALLORY'S POV - her white, puffy WEDDING DRESS falls out of the trunk and into the mud.

She scoops up the DRESS and turns...

EXT. EMBANKMENT - DAY

... Covers BIKER with the DRESS.

Looking down at her:

MALLORY  
I'm sorry.

BIKER is almost completely covered by the white DRESS.

EXT. EMBANKMENT - DAY

Mallory drags herself up the side of the hill...

EXT. ROAD - DAY

... Stands roadside with EM CAT beside her.

Wrench still clutched in her hand. Either for protection, or she just plumb forgot to drop it.

In the state she's in, either are possible.

She looks left, then right... Decides which way to go...

A beat. Then Mallory turns right - begins to trudge along...

EXT. ROAD - DAY

She shuffles along the road...

... As EM CAT ambles beside her, falling back to sniff things here and there. EM keeps up with Mallory.

Mallory shuffles along and looks like *hell*, as one can imagine. Bloody, dirty, matted hair, clothes torn...

She hobbles along, blank-faced...

EXT. ROAD - EVENING

The sun is going down.

EM CAT trails Mallory as they approach a bend in the road.

And then EM pricks up her ears.

The sound of something up ahead. Faint, but there. The CRIES of a BABY? An ANIMAL? It's in the distance...

Mallory's fingers tighten around the wrench.

But she keeps walking. Coming around the bend to find

A WOODED CABIN.

Set back from the road. Cozy.

A gravel driveway leads around to the back of the place - a reverse house, so that the house's rear faces the road.

Mallory regards the CABIN. First thing she's seen in miles. It's where the SOUNDS are coming from.

Not a baby. Not an animal. The SCREAMS of a YOUNG GIRL.  
*Katie.*

Mallory pauses on the drive as Katie continues to SCREAM...  
 MALLORY'S POV - the road, that she can continue along...  
 ...Or the cabin.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - CABIN

A barely clothed KATIE (20s) is bound to the bed, SCREAMING.

Clad in a nightie; dirty, sweaty, and mussed from days of abuse. Dried blood around her mouth.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
 Oh, c'mon Katie.

CU KATIE - SCREAMING wildly...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
 You trust him, right? And he says  
 to trust me, so I don't understand  
 why you don't just *listen* to the  
 fucker...

And as we DOLLY AROUND, we REVEAL what Katie's SCREAMING at:

*Dane.*

HER HUSBAND, dead as a doornail, propped up in a chair at the foot of the bed. Throat cut like Christian said.

Christian stands next to him. Pretends to move Dane's mouth, like a kid puppeting a large toy.

CHRISTIAN  
 "Hey, it's me, Dane! Christian's  
 the best, and even though his cock  
 is bigger than mine, you should  
 totally let him be your back door  
 man!" See? *Dane* thinks it's a  
 good idea...

Katie just KEEPS SCREAMING. Christian begins to undo his PANTS...

CHRISTIAN

Now, I'm not gonna lie to you -  
this is gonna hurt a fair fucking  
amount, but don't worry...

He taps his chest and we see he's wearing the COP'S BADGE.

CHRISTIAN

...I'm an officer of the law.

He begins moving towards her...

...and if it's possible to SCREAM more hysterically than  
before, Katie begins to do it now...

*Then the DOORBELL rings.*

Christian grabs her and PUNCHES HER...

CHRISTIAN

Stay quiet or the next one breaks  
your jaw.

Katie is wild-eyed but silent.

Christian rises...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CABIN

Christian walks into the living room of the upscale hunting  
cabin, whistling.

We TRACK WITH HIM through, noticing things --

The NAILGUN on the kitchen counter.

The ceremonial SHOTGUN mounted over the fireplace.

... Christian grabs a FILET KNIFE from a counter-top.

DOORBELL.

He moves carefully to the front door...

... And opens it:

Nobody there.

A beat.

CHRISTIAN

Hello?

Nothing.

Christian pokes his head out to look around outside...

A WIDE PORCH with a cozy looking swing. We see the RED TRUCK and the COP CAR from earlier parked there--

CRASH!

We HEAR the sound of GLASS BREAKING O.S... Coming from the back of the cabin...

Christian moves swiftly through the cabin with the KNIFE...

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

He carefully approaches the back of the cabin...

CHRISTIAN  
Whoever it is, I've already called  
the police!

Slides around the corner against the wall...

CHRISTIAN'S POV - a broken WINDOW...

... The WIND blows the curtain aloft into the room.

Christian wields the KNIFE as he brushes the curtain aside from the WINDOW...

... To reveal nothing. Nobody there.

A tense *beat*...

Then another sudden CRASH from the living room O.S...

... Followed quickly by the DOORBELL!

Katie SCREAMS! Christian jumps at it.

CHRISTIAN  
Shut the fuck up!

Katie is shaking as we TRACK with Christian back into

INT. LIVING ROOM - CABIN

Christian marches into the living room, moving so fast that he almost doesn't notice

*The shotgun is missing from the wall.*

He's halfway across the room when it registers. He STOPS in his tracks. Realizing. Like a deer in headlights...

... Slowly turning his head to see

MALLORY

Standing in the doorway.

SHOTGUN clutched in her hands. Levelled at him.

Silence.

Christian puts on his best smile...

CHRISTIAN

Well, wel--

Mallory pulls the trigger.

BOOM! Christian, BLOWN OFF HIS FEET.

PROPELLED BACKWARDS through the air by the blast, SMASHING down through an end table clutching his gut...

Christian hits the ground as Katie begins SCREAMING again O.S....

Mallory tries to cock the SHOTGUN...

CLICK.

No more shells.

Christian grasps his stomach, blood pumping through his hands, buck-shotted to hell...

... As Mallory scans the room for a new weapon.

MALLORY'S POV - the NAILGUN.

She grabs it from a table as Christian groans...

She walks over. Presses the NAILGUN to his skull.

Christian pants heavily...

CHRISTIAN

You don't have the balls...

A long beat... Mallory lowers the nailgun. Christian grins for a brief moment...

...until Mallory grabs Christian's right HAND...

CRACK!

*... And nails it to the floor!*

Christian CRIES OUT...

The SOUND of the NAILGUN echoes like a shot...

CRACK!

... She nails his left hand to the floor!

Katie SCREAMS wildly O.S...

MALLORY  
*I hear you!*

Christian is shocked and immobile...

... As Mallory jumps to her feet and backs into the bedroom holding Katie...

INT. BEDROOM - CABIN

Katie hyperventilates as Mallory hurriedly unties her...

MALLORY  
*It's okay...*

We HEAR Christian cursing O.S...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
*You bitch!*

Katie quivers and CRIES...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
*You fucking bitches!*

Mallory quickly unfastens Katie's arms...

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
*I'm bleeding to death out here!  
Goddamn it! FUCK!*

... And Katie holds her knees to her chest. Mallory steps back from the bed, helping Katie up.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
*Either kill me or CALL A FUCKING  
AMBULANCE!*

Mallory gathers up Katie and steps back into the doorway--  
*Christian is gone.*

Mallory takes a step backward but...

... Before we know it, Christian lunges at Mallory from the side! Screaming BLOODY MURDER...

... *He stabs her with the NAILS still embedded in his hands!*

Once, twice, three times in the stomach!

Katie SCREAMS...

... As Mallory SLIDES to the floor, GURGLING. Shocked expression plastered to her face.

Christian, standing over her, raising his hands for the kill when...

KATIE jumps up from the bed and leaps on Christian like a wild animal!

She punches and claws at him...

... As Mallory CRAWLS from the room...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CABIN

Mallory, clawing her way across the floorboards...

INT. BEDROOM - CABIN

Christian tries to shirk Katie off him but she's in wild attack mode...

She scratches and claws at his face...

And he backs into the wall, slamming Katie against it...

*Katie's head cracks against the wall!*

... She drops to the floor, out cold.

Christian recovers and checks out his wounds:

He CRIES OUT as he yanks the thick NAILS from his HANDS...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CABIN

Christian LURCHES into the living room with purpose...

... But Mallory is nowhere to be seen.

CHRISTIAN'S POV - a blood trail leads out the front door...

He stalks toward a cabinet, clutching his gut...

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Mallory practically FALLS off the porch towards the COP CAR.

She makes it to the driver's side on her HANDS AND KNEES.  
Blood POURING from her wounds...

She rips open the driver's side door open to reveal:

THE COP.

Pale, dead, agape... a bullet through his head.

She reaches up towards the steering wheel. It'll be a miracle if she even has the strength to pull herself up into the seat...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CABIN

... Christian screams as he yanks a box of SHOTGUN SHELLS from a drawer.

As he loads the SHOTGUN...

We HEAR a CRASH across the room O.S.

Christian spins with the SHOTGUN and FIRES...

EM CAT  
(hisses)  
*Rraow!*

CHRISTIAN'S POV - EM CAT leaps from a book shelf and scampers off...

He cocks the SHOTGUN as he heads for the door...

CHRISTIAN  
(guttural)  
*Mallory!*

Christian steps out DOOR open to find:

MALLORY.

In the COP CAR. The ENGINE RUNNING...

*She floors it, driving straight toward him!*

He raises the gun in wide-eyed shock but before he can pull trigger--

WHAM! Mallory SLAMS INTO HIM with the COP CAR, CRUNCHING him against the side of the house!

Christian is PINNED AT THE CHEST against the house, right next to the door...

... As the CAR WHEELS continue to spin.

Mallory and Christian lock eyes as Mallory continues to accelerate...

Christian SCREAMS in pain... but raises the SHOTGUN!

Mallory DUCKS as Christian pulls the trigger--

BOOM! The WINDSHIELD EXPLODES INWARDS and the DEAD COP and seatbacks are SHREDDED...

BELOW THE DASH - Mallory SMASHES the ACCELERATOR DOWN with BOTH HANDS...

CU - The TIRES, SPINNING FASTER... we hear the HOUSE GROANING...

CU - Mallory's determined face as...

The WALL behind Christian GIVES! He falls beneath it as the car moves forward...

*... And plows over Christian's body!*

A CRUNCH! As the driver's side WHEEL CRUSHES Christian's chest cavity.

Mallory releases the accelerator.

Silence.

She pokes her head up. Opens the car door. Limpes out...

... And looms over the bloodied mess that is Christian.

He lies on his back. The same position that Mallory did in the flipped car...

Christian REACHES his HANDS OUT to her. Up to her.

Reaching out for help.

The same motion his dying sister made.

Mallory doesn't move. Just watching him.

After a bit, his arms lower. His breath shortens.

...and then he DIES.

EXT. PORCH - CABIN - NIGHT

We can HEAR sirens as cop cars approach...

Katie has a BLANKET around her shoulders. She stares out into space from her seat on the porch swing.

MALLORY  
(reassures)  
It's okay.

Katie regards Mallory blankly... In shock.

EM CAT trots up to Mallory...

EM CAT  
Meow?

Mallory scoops up the CAT... Pets him on the head.

MALLORY  
You take care of Katie, Em Cat.

EM CAT cocks his head at Mallory. Mallory takes a seat on the swing next to Katie, and hands the CAT over.

MALLORY  
(to Katie)  
He'll watch over you.

Katie cradles the CAT in her lap...

... Strokes the CAT'S head.

SIRENS blare as a COP CAR skids to a halt in the driveway.

Mallory sits on the swing with Katie as the cops come running. Their blue and red flashing lights blurring...

FADE TO BLACK...

**OVER BLACK**

SILENCE. THEN - A VOICE MAIL BEEP!

MALLORY (O.S.)

Hey, it's me. I'm sorry it had to go like this, but we both know it's for the best. There's always a choice, and this is mine. I hope you understand.

(pause)

Sorry about the car.

SMASH TO:

LIGHTS ON A FLIGHTBOARD

One word lit up. "ROME". We're in

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

An AIRPLANE takes off in the b.g. as a pair of legs move toward a gate...

... Pull back to reveal that the legs belong to MALLORY.

Face healing, bruises barely visible under make up. She stands at the end of a line of passengers boarding the PLANE.

Just ahead in line, an ELDERLY WOMAN seems to be having some trouble with her own SUITCASE. Struggles with it...

MALLORY

Let me help you with that...

Mallory adjusts the ELDERLY WOMAN's SUITCASE so that it rolls freely.

ELDERLY WOMAN

(pleased)

Oh-- thank you, dear.

The ELDERLY WOMAN smiles as she assesses Mallory.

ELDERLY WOMAN

People these days are so suspicious  
of strangers. I don't know why.

Mallory manages a polite smile at the ELDERLY WOMAN, who  
frowns when she gets a look at the bruises on Mallory's face.

A beat. Mallory, realizing what she's looking at:

MALLORY

Oh.

(pause)

You should see the other guy.

ELDERLY WOMAN

I know it's none of my business,  
but you should leave the son of a  
bitch.

Mallory smiles.

MALLORY

I did.

The Woman nods, satisfied, and moves on. A HAND taps Mallory  
on the shoulder. ELLA. She smiles as she joins Mallory in  
line. And hands her a COFFEE.

ELLA

Sorry, the line for coffee started  
back where we parked.

MALLORY

Thanks.

ELLA

You ready for this?

Mallory looks at her sister. Takes a deep breath...

MALLORY

(definitively)

I'm ready.

Ella smiles... A cheery FLIGHT ATTENDANT greets the sisters  
and passes their tickets through the machine...

Mallory does look ready.

... A promising smile forms at the corners of her mouth.

They step forward and board the AIRPLANE.

Mallory follows Ella...

... and disappears into the tunnel.

We HEAR the roar of a 747 taking off...

THE END.