

## STUMPTOWN

"C'mon dude, it's Stumptown."

1/4/19

Written by

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*"We always return to our first love."*

Tribe Unknown

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EXT. PORTLAND/INT. CAR - DAY

TRACK DOWN on an off-orange, 1984 Mustang GT; a veritable mustard blob rolling down an empty road.

INSIDE: Two thugs (30'S), DILL and WHALE, names doubling as physical descriptions. Dill drives, gun on his lap, gripping the leopard skin wheel. Whale sips a thermos, gruffly noting -

WHALE

Caramel, macadamia, hints of black currant... tart yet earthy in the finish. Ethiopian..?

DILL

Kenyan.

WHALE

Pour over?

DILL

(*what am I, an asshole?*)  
Dude... French Press.

Off Whale - *Whatevs* - we hear POUNDING coming from the trunk.

WHALE

Sounds like someone's getting antsy back there.

DILL

Pre dirt-nap jitters.

As we realize there's a person in that trunk they are going to kill, the car THUNKS over a pothole and the tape deck kicks on, playing Neil Diamond's *SWEET CAROLINE* --

DILL (CONT'D)

The hell..?

Whale hits buttons, trying everything, but --

WHALE

Damn thing's stuck on!

So they sit there. Irsome. But what happens next is unexpected. Almost subconsciously, their fingers start tapping to the beat. And then, because really, who can resist, these two killers begin humming along with Neil --

***Where it began, I can't begin to knowing...***

And while their captive kicks around in the trunk, this goon duo starts singing along --

DILL & WHALE

***Was in the spring. Then spring  
became the summer. Who'd have  
believed you'd come along..?***

They approach a bridge and are now so full-throated into it,  
that they don't notice --

A NOZZLE poke through a crack in the back seat. Before we  
can ascertain what it is - WHOOSH! The car instantly fills  
with WHITE FIRE RETARDANT, blinding the thugs, who gasp and  
cough as Neil sings:

***Hands, touching hands...***

Whale desperately wipes his eyes, now stunned to see in the  
rear view --

A WOMAN

rising in the back seat - our hero, DEX PARIOS (30'S), who at  
this moment is covered in white powder, looking like a ghost.

***Reaching out...***

Dex gets Dill (the driver) in a headlock. The car swerves  
erratically onto the bridge. Neil crescendos --

***Touching me...***

Whale draws his gun on Dex, but before he can shoot, Dex  
looks through the dust covered windshield at --

***Touching you...***

A DRAW BRIDGE AHEAD, opening over the Willamette river. At  
this speed it's too late to stop, so Dex yells --

DEX

PUNCH IT!!!

Dill PINS the gas. And as Neil Diamond belts out the chorus  
to his anthem --

***Sweet Caroline, da-da-da...***

The Mustang goes airborne, sailing over the gap in the draw  
bridge, retardant billowing out like a contrail, the Portland  
skyline beaming in the B.G, which morphs into our TITLE CARD:

**"STUMPTOWN"**

**INT. WHISPERING WIND CASINO - NIGHT (3 DAYS EARLIER)**

Amid ringing slots and casino din, we settle on a casino bar where a CASINO DRUNK (65), down on his luck, sips his beer --

CASINO DRUNK

She left. No note, no nothing. Jan 14, '86. Something ever happen that stopped your life in its tracks..?

Reveal Dex beside him; cool, Han Solo mojo, been *there* eyes, and a magnet for a smile. Dex swigs her beer --

DEX

You mean where before it felt like you were in the car of your dreams speeding toward the life of your dreams? And after it felt like you were in a clunker stuck on the side of the road, without gas or wheels, staring in the rear view wondering how the hell you got here?

CASINO DRUNK

Exactly!

DEX

Yeah, I wouldn't know about that.

CASINO DRUNK

They say we always return to our first love. Think she'll come back?

Though there's no way in hell, Dex smiles mercifully --

DEX

...I'd put money on it.

As we SMASH TO: DICE - tumbling across green felt --

DEX (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Snake eyes!

**INT. WHISPERING WIND CASINO - TABLES - NIGHT**

Dex is at a craps table, an hour later, a tad lit, and a hot mess. She hi-fives a gaggle of trucker hats cheering her on --

DEX

That's water and power, boys...  
Now we play for beer and cable!

She pushes in half her chip pile. The DEALER is dubious --

DEALER

Sure you wanna do that, honey?

DEX

Maybe you're right. I'm feeling  
lucky tonight. Eight the hard way.

Dex antes the rest of her chips, blows on the dice and rolls.

DEX (CONT'D)

Gimme eight, Eight, EIGHT!!!

DEALER

Seven out!

Ride's over. Dex deflates as the dealer rakes up her chips. The fan boys dissipate, revealing the Floor Manager, HOLLIS GREEN (55), Northwest dapper and a consummate gentleman.

HOLLIS

Know why you're such a bad gambler?

DEX

Because your dice are loaded?

HOLLIS

Because you don't know when to  
quit. ...Boss wants a word.

DEX

Maybe some other time.

But as Dex turns, two large security guards step in her path.

DEX (CONT'D)

Or now is good, too...

**INT. CASINO - POSH BACK OFFICES - NIGHT**

Dex stands before SUE LYNN BLACKBIRD, Native American, a matronly (65), but don't let the knitting needles fool you. She's Angela Merkel meets Don Corleone meets your grandma.

DEX

C'mon, Sue Lynn, how about a  
marker? A measly two G's.

SUE LYNN

You already owe us eleven.

DEX

I'm good for it.

SUE LYNN

My dear, there's 93 dollars and 46 cents in your bank account, your credit cards are maxed out, and you just blew your military pension check at the craps table.

DEX

You're point?  
...Look, you'll get your money, you don't have to knit me a noose.

SUE LYNN

This isn't a collections call.  
(ashamed to say)  
My rather rebellious granddaughter has run away. ...Again.

DEX

Nina? Cancel her credit cards, she'll be back in an hour.

HOLLIS

She left three days ago. *Without* her cards or her car, and she's not answering her phone.

DEX

Did you call the police?

SUE LYNN

We prefer to keep them out of our business. And we can't afford a scandal. Not with so many eyes on us. As CEO of this casino and elder of the Confederated Tribes, it is my responsibility to ensure this family's image is upheld.

DEX

How is that my problem?

SUE LYNN

You're going to bring Nina back...

DEX

Ha! Have Hollis do it.

HOLLIS

Our people have been out there day and night, trying to find her --

DEX

-- And you think I can do better?

SUE LYNN

You were Military intelligence.  
Isn't that why they gave you a  
medal, for finding people?

DEX

Those were enemy combatants. In  
Afghanistan. Slight difference...

SUE LYNN

I'd think you'd want to help, given  
how close you were to her father.

That hits a raw nerve in Dex, who's eyes fall on a family  
photo atop Sue Lynn's desk of a NATIVE AMERICAN MAN (25), his  
pretty Native American wife, and baby --

DEX

Benny and I were close. But you put  
an end to that. So you could put a  
perfect picture on your desk...

SUE LYNN

You're still bitter.

DEX

Just mystified. I wasn't good  
enough for your son but now I'm  
good enough to track down his  
daughter? That's your thinking?

SUE LYNN

I can think of eleven  
thousand other reasons...

DEX (CONT'D)

Intimidation. How un-you.

SUE LYNN

She's my only grandchild!! ...This  
is not easy for me. Coming to you.  
...I have nowhere else to turn.

DEX

The war was a long time ago. I'm  
not up to it. Sorry.

Dex walks out. Off Sue Lynn, looking desperate, we CUT TO:

**EXT./INT. DEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Dex pulls her off-orange, '84 Mustang GT in the drive of a  
modest, Portland typical clap-board, needs-a-paint-job house.

INSIDE: Dex enters and a soccer ball comes flying at her!  
She has to drop her keys to catch it --

DEX

Ansel, c'mon, not in the house!

She tosses the ball back to her brother, ANSEL PARIOS (19), in a soccer jersey; a sweet natured kid with Downs Syndrome.

ANSEL

Wanna play?!

DEX

It's midnight, bro. You shouldn't even be up this late.

ANSEL

I wanted to see how much you lost.

DEX

*Punk.* At least I got a job offer.

ANSEL

Now we both have jobs! I think we're gonna need another lunchbox.

DEX

Hey, I didn't say I took it --  
(off Ansel about to say--)  
I know, we're behind on rent, we need the money. Now c'mon, it's late. You know the drill...

Dex takes the soccer ball. Ansel places his right hand on it.

ANSEL

I, Ansel Parios, future midfield menace for the Portland Timbers, hereby promise to brush, floss --

DEX

-- And not sleep with your boots on..? Again?

ANSEL

I swear.

DEX

Good. Bedsky! Go!

### **INT. DEX'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Dex sits on the couch with a beer, lost in thought. She slides open a drawer where we see a 45 pistol (trigger locked), 3 condoms, a silver star combat medal, parking tickets, and an old photo, which she pulls out. It's of --

Dex with that man from the family photo on Sue Lynn's desk. Younger here, (20'S BOTH), college sweethearts. Dex stares at it, hesitant. ...but she dials her cell --

DEX (INTO PHONE)

It's Dex. Clear my debt, give me a grand for expenses, a list of Nina's friends, and I'll do it.

She hangs up. She then pulls a small box from the drawer. She opens it revealing A DIAMOND ENGAGEMENT RING. Dex sips her beer eyeing the ring with deep trepidation, as we PRELAP:

GREY (V.O.)

That break-up with Benny was the whole reason you joined the army.

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NEXT DAY**

We move through a wood and brass bar, which is being restored, finding GREY MCCONNELL (LATE 30'S) ruggedly handsome, two full sleeves of tats. He hands Dex a beer.

GREY

Sue Lynn ruins your life and now you're gonna bring home her spoiled brat granddaughter?

DEX

Hey, it's not Nina's fault she grew up without a dad.

GREY

It's not yours either. I'd be careful turning over old stones.

DEX

I can handle it. C'mon, it's a milk run. I almost feel guilty taking the money.

(off his dubious look)

Don't you have a bar opening to worry about?

GREY

T-minus three days and still so much to do. We're gonna stain the bar top later, right bud?

On Ansel, sweeping the floor, looking unsure because --

ANSEL

Dex gets mad when I stain stuff.

Dex and Grey share a smile. His lingers longer than hers.

GREY

Offer stands. Still looking for a head bartender. All the beer you can drink...

DEX

I haven't held down a steady job since I left the service. I'd screw up, you'd fire me; it'd only be awkward till hardcore resentment kicked in and before you know it, six years of BFF-dom is down the toilet. But I will take you up on the *All the beer I can drink* part.

GREY

Naturally.

DEX

Thanks for helping out with Ansel. Don't know what I'd do without you.

Dex gives him a peck on the cheek. Off Grey, watching her go, perpetually unrequited, we CUT TO:

**EXT. LAUREL-HAVEN, PORTLAND - DAY**

Dex pulls up to a large house. She gets out and heads up the walk where an Asian girl (17), sits on the steps, stink-eying Dex's car. She's rich, pretty, smart, and her name is --

DEX

Lucy Chen?

LUCY

I actually ordered an Uber select?

DEX

I'm not your ride. Detective Parios, Portland PB. I'm looking for your friend, Nina Blackbird?

LUCY

Bull.

DEX

Excuse me?

LUCY

I call bull. Cops don't drive piece of crap cars.

DEX  
I'm undercover.

LUCY  
Then lemme see your badge.

DEX  
...Alright, fine, listen, I'm a friend of Nina's grandmother, okay? Sue Lynn is really worried --

LUCY  
I already told Hollis, I haven't talked to Nina in a week.

DEX  
So if I look through your phone, I'm not gonna find anything from Nina? No calls, texts..?

LUCY  
No. But even if they were on my phone, I wouldn't give you the password. So it's, like, moot.

DEX  
*(I know you're lying)*  
Thanks for all your help. Really, you've been invaluable.

Lucy smirks, *Anytime*, and Dex walks back to her car. It takes 3 tries to start before she drives off. Soon as Dex turns the corner, Lucy's on her phone. What happens next happens fast --

LUCY (INTO PHONE)  
Answer, answer, come on, answer..!

NINA (V.O.)(THROUGH PHONE)  
Hi! It's Nina, leave a message...

LUCY (INTO PHONE)  
Hey, it's me! Listen, there's someone looking for you. I think your grandmother sent her...

Behind Lucy's back, we see Dex's car BURN around the opposite corner, having circled the block. Dex hops out of her car, unseen, crossing the lawn, approaching Lucy from behind, as --

LUCY (CONT'D)  
...Call me as soon as you --

SNATCH! Dex yanks the phone out of Lucy's hand. Lucy whips around stunned to see Dex going through her phone, finding --

DEX

What have we here? Text messages from Nina, who's been hanging out with a boy, I see. *Michael*. Don't suppose you know his last name..?

NINA

I'm not telling you anything.

ON A TEXT SELFIE of Nina, arm in arm, with a YOUNG MAN (22).

DEX

Is this Michael?

Lucy zips her lip. Which is a yes. Dex blows up the photo, alarmed to see a motel sign in the B.G., '*PDX FLYAWAY INN*' --

DEX (CONT'D)

(alarmed)

Lucy, are they going somewhere?

Off Lucy's silence, Dex heads off, with --

LUCY

Hey! You can't take my phone!

DEX

Got a problem with it? Call the cops!

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Grey and Ansel hang an old framed black and white photo of --

GREY

Greyson Powell McConnell the first.

ANSEL

...But that's your name.

GREY

Sure is, pal. That handsome gent is my grandfather. Standing in this very bar. He used to own it.

ANSEL

He has a funny haircut. Is he dead?

GREY

Before I was born. Never got to meet him, but after saving so long to buy this place and fixing it up, I feel like I know him pretty good.

ANSEL

Me too.

They trade a satisfied smile as a man enters (40), sport coat, tie, not a hair out of place.

GREY

Sorry, don't open for a few days.

MAN

Can't drink on duty anyway.

He flashes his badge, I-D-ing himself as DETECTIVE MILES --

HOFFMAN

Hoffman, PPB. As long as we're looking through old photos...

Hoffman lays a mug shot on the bar of a surly Caucasian man (50's). Grey stiffens slightly. Hoffman clocks it --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Recognize this guy?

GREY

Something tells me you already know the answer.

HOFFMAN

I'm interested in what you know.

GREY

Samuel Kane. Irish guy I knew in the joint. I did six months for --

HOFFMAN

Grand theft auto.

GREY

Mostly mini vans. Didn't feel so grand at the time. Haven't spoken to Kane in fifteen years. He's doing life.

HOFFMAN

For killing a cop.

GREY

Yeah, I heard it was a pretty nasty shootout.

HOFFMAN

Is that what Kane told you? He'd just robbed a couple of dealers.

(MORE)

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Had half a million dollars in the trunk. Only the cop didn't know that when he pulled Kane over for a busted tail light... Was only gonna write him a fix-it ticket.

GREY

Then I guess Kane is in the right place.

HOFFMAN

Was. Two days ago he escaped from a transport bus in Washington State.  
(off Grey's concern)  
He might be looking for a friend to help him lay low.

GREY

Kane was my cellmate but, trust me, he wasn't the friend type.

HOFFMAN

He may try and buy a friend. Cops never found that half mil...  
(handing over his card)  
Either way, if he makes any attempt to contact you...

GREY

You'll be my first call.

Hoffman nods, *I'd appreciate it*, then goes.

ANSEL

What's a cellmate?

GREY

Kind of like a roommate they give you when you get in trouble.

ANSEL

I had a roommate at the home while Dex was in the army. He smelled like peanut butter.

GREY

Well, I think those days are way behind us, aren't they pal?

Grey smiles, shrugging off his concern as he tosses Hoffman's card in a junk drawer, and we CUT TO:

A JET AIRLINER - descends overhead, taking us to a sign above a dodgy, two story motel: 'PDX FLYAWAY INN'

**INT. AIRPORT MOTEL FRONT OFFICE - DAY**

Dex shows that cell phone photo of Nina and her boyfriend Michael to the MOTEL MANAGER, (60, East Indian) --

DEX  
Seen these two?

MOTEL MANAGER  
Are you a police?

DEX  
(firmly)  
Yes, sir.

MOTEL MANAGER  
Where's your badge?

Off Dex, *Gimme a break*, we CUT TO:

**EXT. AIRPORT MOTEL/INT. MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

SMASH! - Dex elbows the glass, pulling a fire alarm. RIIING! She walks into the pool area, taking in a view of all the rooms as guests drift out to see what the fuss is about.

Dex spots Michael. Bingo! Seeing no emergency, Michael enters HIS ROOM and shuts the door, but Dex barges in --

DEX  
Room service...

She sees suitcases packed and airline tickets on the table. MICHAEL MORGAN (22, boyish innocence), politely tells her --

MICHAEL  
Uh... we didn't order anything.

DEX  
(no worries)  
This is more of a pick-up --

Off his confusion, NINA BLACKBIRD (17) going on know-it-all, emerges from the bathroom, not happy to see --

NINA  
Dex, what are you doing here?!

DEX  
Taking you home.

NINA  
Michael, call the police --

DEX

Go ahead. Though I'm pretty sure transporting a minor across state lines is jailable.

NINA

I bought my own ticket! We're eloping!

DEX

Where's your ring?

MICHAEL

I'm saving up for it.

DEX

Gee, what a catch... The honeymoon'll have to wait.

Dex drags Nina past Micheal, and we CUT TO:

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - DAY**

The wipers drag a piece of paper across the windshield. Dex reaches out the window and plucks it off, seeing --

DEX

Crap! Seventy three bucks...

NINA

Tsch! More than the car is worth!

Dex crumples the ticket, tossing it into the back seat, where we see ten more. And as she drives Nina away, they pass two men just pulling up. We recognize them immediately as DILL AND WHALE, the thugs from the intro, as we CUT TO:

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - DAY**

Dex drives. Nina pouts, arms crossed and petulant --

NINA

This Totally blows. You blow!  
You're ruining everything!

DEX

Wanna blame someone? Blame grandma.

NINA

You of all people. Is she paying you?!

DEX  
Not nearly enough. Clearly.

NINA  
Don't you hate yourself just a little, doing to me and Michael what she did to you and my dad? I mean, what does that make you?

Off Dex, trying to hide the growing self loathing --

DEX  
Employed.

NINA  
*Hypocrite*, is more like it!

DEX  
When you're 18 you can make all the stupid choices you want. Until then, your family makes them for you.

At that moment, a car BUMPS them from behind --

DEX (CONT'D)  
Seriously?!

-- triggering Elton John & Kiki Dee's *DON'T GO BREAKING MY HEART*. As Dex pulls over, Nina tries to turn it off, but --

NINA  
Your radio is broken!

DEX  
It's a cassette. Songs of the Seventies. It came with the car. Don't antagonize it and it might go off on it's own.

NINA  
Your car's an ugly piece of junk!

DEX  
Hey, she don't look like much, but she's got it where it counts, kid.

Nina huffs as Dex cuffs her to the wheel --

DEX (CONT'D)  
Enjoy the music.

*Don't go Breaking my Heart* plays as --

**EXT. PORTLAND - DAY**

Dex gets out of the Mustang, seeing a ding in her fender. But we realize this is no accident as Dill and Whale emerge from the offending vehicle.

DEX

Lucky for you that dent matches the others. How about give me twenty bucks and we'll call it a --

BAM! Dill cold-cocks Dex across the face. It's shocking. Dex drops to her knees, punch-drunk, everything a blur. As the song plays au-surreal, she blinks in --

Dill and Whale moving toward the Mustang. Something in Dex ignites. She teeters up and CHARGES, yelling for Nina to --

DEX (CONT'D)

RUN!!

But Nina is cuffed to the wheel. She tugs futilely at the chain as Dex tackles Dill over the hood.

As Dill reaches for his gun, Dex's combat training kicks in - she punches him square in the solar plexus, stunning him, then goes for his weapon. As the two struggle for control, Dex yells to a horrified Old Lady watching from the sidewalk.

DEX (CONT'D)

Call the cops!

The Old Lady fumbles for her phone, as Whale pulls out a tac knife, about to kill a terrified Nina, we think, but instead -

Whale pops the steering wheel panel and jams the knife in the retaining nut, furiously unscrewing it, as --

Dex gets both hands on Dill's gun, but he KNEES her in the ribs, bowling her over. He then delivers a final blow combo, GUT! JAW! GUT! DEX drops to the ground, squinting up at --

DILL

You gotta learn when to quit, lady.

The thugs grab Nina, still cuffed to Dex's steering wheel, which they also remove. They throw Nina in their car and tear off, as --

Dex staggers to her feet to Elton and Kiki, no steering wheel, a bloody nose, maybe a cracked rib, and no clue what the fuck just happened. So much for the milk run, we --

END ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

EXT. PORTLAND STREET - DAY

We move through a busy crime scene, passing cops stringing tape, detectives interviewing the old woman witness, settling on an ambulance, where EMT's tend to...

DEX, black and blue and staring off, utterly shell shocked --

MAN (O.S.)  
Ms. Parios..?

Dex looks up to see --

HOFFMAN  
Detective Hoffman, PPB. Looks like you've been through the ringer.

DEX  
Hope you don't use that line on all the ladies.

Hoffman suppresses a grin as he glances at her license --

HOFFMAN  
Dexedrine... interesting name.

DEX  
Hippy parents, the 80's, but enough about me. I already gave a description of the suspects and their car. Didn't catch a plate.

HOFFMAN  
APB went out hot. Every cop in the city is looking for them.

DEX  
Except you, I guess.

Now he's thrown, albeit clearly intrigued by her spunky edge.

HOFFMAN  
Can you tell me what happened? --

DEX  
Look, I already told two other cops the whole story --

HOFFMAN  
Kidnapping is serious business, so you'll probably have to tell a few more down at the station.

DEX

I don't think so. As long as she's out there I need to be looking. The station is *up*, FYI, not down. Why do people always say that?

Hoffman looks stumped. He thinks a beat, then nods to --

HOFFMAN

Your vehicle, Ma'am?

DEX

That's a fancy word for it. And don't call me ma'am. It's Dex.

HOFFMAN

Very well, Dex, I'm placing you under arrest --

DEX

For what, getting beat up?!!

HOFFMAN

You have 14 unpaid parking tickets. Apparently there's a warrant out. Guess we're going *UP* to the station--

As Hoffman puts her in cuffs --

DEX

When do I get my phone call?

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Grey plants a HOUSE PHONE on the bar, telling Ansel --

GREY

Go ahead, give it a try.

ANSEL

It has to ring first.

GREY

Right. RING! RING!

ANSEL (INTO PHONE)

Bad Alibi, I'm Ansel. Can I help you?

GREY

Dude, that was the perfect answer!

Ansel is pleased with himself. Then, out of the blue --

ANSEL  
You like Dex.

GREY  
Sure I do. We're best buds.

Ansel laughs to himself like he's onto a secret.

GREY (CONT'D)  
Hey, I don't know what you're thinking, but whatever you're thinking, big guy, it's not what you think it is.

Grey frowns, having confused himself. But Ansel is clear --

ANSEL  
Yes it is.

Grey smirks and the phone RINGS for real. Off Ansel, *UH OH!*

GREY  
Come on, dude, it's showtime.

ANSEL  
(answering)  
Bad Alibi, I'm Ansel. Can I..?  
Hi, Dex! Me and Grey were just talking about how much he...

Grey SNAGS the phone before Ansel can OUT his feelings --

GREY (INTO PHONE)  
Uh, hey, what's up?

**INTERCUT/INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING - DAY**

Dex is on a pay-phone --

DEX  
I'll explain everything later but I need you to come bail me out. Oh, and bring a steering wheel.

Off Grey, *WTF?* We CUT TO:

A STEERING WHEEL - bolt cutters SNAP the handcuff-chain, as --

**INT. DINGY ROOM - DAY**

Light creeps through drawn shades, revealing Nina kicking and flailing as Whale pushes her onto an old, ratty mattress, struggling to tie her to a radiator pipe.

NINA

You jack-wads touch one hair on my  
head and my grandmother will --

Dill rolls DUCT TAPE over Nina's mouth, silencing her. But her eyes widen fearfully as Whale pulls out that knife. He cuts through Nina's sweater, tearing it off. The thugs stand over her, like they may do something unspeakable, until --

DILL

Burger?

WHALE

We had burgers yesterday. How  
about Pho?

With that, the two exit with the orange sweater, leaving Nina bound, gagged, and writhing, as we CUT TO:

**INT. POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY**

Dex sits, tapping her foot, anxious, worried. Hoffman enters with LT. ROBERTA VOLK (50'S), a no-nonsense, big city vibe.

LT. VOLK

Ms. Parios, I'm Lieutenant Volk,  
thanks for coming down.

Down? Dex shoots a *Told-you-so* smirk to --

DEX

You can thank *Kauffman*, here.

HOFFMAN

*Hoffman*. ...*Ma'am*.

DEX

Whatevs. Any word on Nina?

VOLK

We found the suspects' car. It was  
stolen last week out of Bend.  
Kidnappers must have dumped it and  
changed vehicles.

HOFFMAN

Our techs are processing it as we  
speak. If they left prints --

DEX

You won't find any. They were  
wearing gloves. ...I just  
realized, I have to tell Sue Lynn --

VOLK

The grandmother's been notified.  
Right now we're interested in what  
you can tell us.

DEX

I've been over it a hundred times --

VOLK

The boyfriend claims you forced  
your way into their motel room and  
took Nina against her will.

DEX

She's 17. She's not allowed to  
have her own will. Besides, I was  
hired by Sue Lynn.

HOFFMAN

So you're a P.I.?

DEX

A what?

HOFFMAN

Private investigator.

DEX

Ha! That's hilarious. Just a  
friend of the family. *Ish.*

VOLK

Care to elaborate?

DEX

Not really.  
(off Volk's look)  
Nina's father, Benny, we dated in  
college.

HOFFMAN

How did it end?

DEX

With him marrying someone else.

VOLK

So not well. For you.

DEX

Or Benny. His marriage didn't last.

HOFFMAN

Yet you remain close to the family?

DEX

That's a stretch. I see them now  
and then when I play the tables.

VOLK

Do you have any idea who might have  
a beef with Nina's family?

DEX

They run a Casino. I imagine  
there's a lot of people with beefs.  
A *plethora*. But why waste your time  
talking to me about it?

VOLK

The kidnapper's vehicle was spotted  
at the motel when you were leaving.  
You either led the them to Nina, or  
just happened to get to her first.  
(off Dex, stunned)  
That's why you call the police for  
something like this. Hire an  
amateur, you get amateur mistakes.

Off Dex, now feeling like shit and perhaps blaming herself --

HOFFMAN

Any gambling debts we should know  
about?

DEX

You ask that like I'm a suspect.

HOFFMAN

Everyone's a suspect until we  
establish the facts. Spurned  
lovers, disgruntled employees,  
inside jobs; we've seen it all.

**INT. SUE LYNN'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

ON HOLLIS, setting down NINA'S TORN ORANGE SWEATER in a box.  
Sue Lynn eyes it, her stoicism tested, as --

HOLLIS

Security found it at the parking  
lot entrance. Cameras don't cover  
that part of the property.

SUE LYNN

It's always been a balancing act,  
preserving who we are. I've tried  
my best to have faith.

HOLLIS

Faith has never served us. Only self reliance.

(off her sharp look)

Respectfully, those are your words, not mine.

SUE LYNN

Yes. The police will be here soon. We mustn't let them get in the way.

**EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT**

Dex exits *Processing* to find Grey waiting --

DEX

Thanks, I'll pay you back.

GREY

I'll add it to your tab. What the hell happened to your face?

DEX

Long story. Tell you in the car --

They turn a corner and Grey is a bit thrown to see --

HOFFMAN (O.S.)

Interesting. So you two are..?

DEX

Friends.

Which rankles Grey. But now Dex is wondering how --

DEX (CONT'D)

You guys know each other?

GREY

Long story. Tell you in the car.

HOFFMAN

Listen, Dex, I'm sorry Volk went so hard on you in there. We all want to see a happy ending on this one.

DEX

I know the drill, good cop bad cop. But which one are you trying to be?

They have a fight-flirt stare off, which Grey picks up on. Grey clears his throat, *Ahem*, and they go. Hoffman watches her off, a bit enamored, as Volk drifts in --

VOLK

A kidnapping, a connection to Samuel Kane. It's all too coincidental, don't you think?

HOFFMAN

I'm not sure what to think, L-T.

VOLK

Look into her. Never know, she may be our key to finding the girl and the man who killed your partner.

Off Hoffman, conflicted now, perhaps hoping Dex is neither.

**INT. GREY'S CAR - NIGHT**

Grey drives, Dex looks at her black eye in the visor mirror.

DEX

You wanna punch me in the other eye? Maybe it'll look better if they match.

GREY

You're lucky they didn't kill you.

DEX

I screwed up, Grey. First losing Benny and now Nina. You were right about turning over old stones. It's like everything I touch --

GREY

Hey, what happened with Benny wasn't your fault.

DEX

Yeah, well that's not how it feels. I gotta do something to fix this.

GREY

C'mon, what can you possibly do?

DEX

I don't know. Something. Talk to Nina's boyfriend, maybe. I can't do anything until I fix my car...

She reaches down, pulling up a leopard skin steering wheel.

DEX (CONT'D)

Seriously..?

GREY

Hey, beggars can't be choosers at this hour. It's the only one I could get that would fit. And you're welcome.

DEX

Sorry. And thank you. ...And what's up with you and Hoffman?

GREY

I could ask you the same question.

DEX

Please... I'm not into cops. Especially ones who arrest me. And don't change the subject.

GREY

It's no big deal. Hoffman's looking for a guy I knew in the joint. He recently got out.

DEX

Paroled?

GREY

Escaped.  
(off Dex's look)  
Don't worry. There's a lot of heat on him. He wouldn't be stupid enough to come back to Portland.

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT**

Ansel dribbles his soccer ball around the bar. The phone RINGS! No one else around. It's up to him. He breathes deep, then as rehearsed, answers --

ANSEL

Bad Alibi, I'm Ansel. Can I help you?

And when we hear the Irish accent --

KANE (V.O.)

Evening, Ansel. I'm looking for an old friend...

-- we know it's Samuel Kane.

END ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT

Grey enters, seeing a WOMAN behind the bar -- a stranger. (28), tats, black rimmed glasses; beauty with a smart edge.

GREY  
Uh... can I help you?

MYSTERY WOMAN  
Have a seat. Maybe I can help you.

GREY  
(*this is weird, but*)  
Okay...

Grey sits on a stool. The woman eyes him a long beat --

MYSTERY WOMAN  
Stress. Lack of sleep. Vitamin D  
deficient. I know just the thing.

She opens the fridge and places a cocktail on the bar.

GREY  
What, you made this? Here?

MYSTERY WOMAN  
I had some time to kill --

GREY (CONT'D)  
Right! Bartender interview,  
sorry, I just came from this  
whole big...

MYSTERY WOMAN  
Try the drink.

Grey nods, *Right*. He sips the drink, and --

GREY  
Wow...Rum, coconut water, nutmeg,  
and I can't put my finger on it...

MYSTERY WOMAN  
Pisco shrub. I call it the Shrub  
Down.

GREY  
We don't have pisco shrub.

She flips open a briefcase where various bitters, herbs, and mixology tools are strapped in. Grey is amazed --

GREY (CONT'D)  
You're serious.

MYSTERY WOMAN

Mixology. It ain't for kittens.  
Toni. Toni James. I know, two  
first names. Some people call me T-  
J, some people call me Doc. I'm  
also a psychology major. How are  
you feeling after your drink?

GREY

Like I just found a bartender. Why  
don't you go pick out a locker?

TONI smiles, *Perfect!* Then closes her briefcase and goes.  
As Grey ponders his unbelievable fortune, Ansel walks up --

ANSEL

I cleaned the mirrors in the  
bathroom and ate a pickle sandwich.

GREY

Great work, buddy.

ANSEL

Thanks. Oh, and also your roommate  
they gave you when you got in  
trouble called. He'll be coming to  
see you so you should make sure and  
have his stuff ready and I didn't  
even need to write it on a napkin.

GREY

(utterly ashen)  
Do you know what a secret is, pal?

**EXT. AIRPORT MOTEL - NIGHT**

A JET ROARS overhead. Michael sits on the steps, looking up  
at a string of lights, cued in the sky. Dex walks up --

MICHAEL

The police think I'm involved.

DEX

I'm a suspect too, if it's any  
consolation. There's a lot of  
people looking for Nina. Sue Lynn  
is a powerful woman.

MICHAEL

That's why we had to leave. Guy  
like me. Mechanic. No money. Out  
of the bloodline... no way I'm good  
enough for the family empire.

Though it clearly mirrors her own story, Dex hides any hint --

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Nina didn't care. She was gonna choose her own life. And for some reason she chose me. Crazy, you meet in a club, month later you're running away together to some dream you didn't even know was possible.

DEX

I understand.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Bullshit. You ruined it!

DEX

And sorry won't mean anything! But maybe I can make it right. Michael, if you have any idea who --

MICHAEL

The cops grilled me for five hours. I already told them everything!

DEX

You wouldn't know it to look at me, but I used to interrogate people in the service; enemy fighters mostly. I'd get this sense when someone was holding back on me. A feeling. It was always right. Problem is, I'm getting that feeling now. ...Nina trusted you. She told you things that you swore not to tell anyone --

MICHAEL

Then why should I trust you?

DEX

Because I know from experience, if something happens to her, you'll never forgive yourself.

MICHAEL

(considers her, then)

...Sue Lynn was into it with this gangster, Baxter Hall. Works out of a club in Old Town.

DEX

What, like a feud?

MICHAEL

Baxter supplied the casino with building materials. Lumber, steel; black market stuff.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

He thinks Sue Lynn cheated him.  
Nina thought someone might have  
been skimming off the top.

DEX

So maybe this Baxter guy is trying  
to collect his money another way...

Off Michael's shrug, *Maybe*, and Dex, hot on a lead, CUT TO:

**INT. SUE LYNN'S OFFICE - CASINO - NIGHT**

TIGHT ON HOLLIS, reading a note --

HOLLIS

Two million dollars, cash. If we  
see the police, the next box will  
contain your granddaughter's  
fingers. Expect instructions.

REVERSE on a room full of cops. Sue Lynn suspiciously eyes  
Volk and Hoffman as a CSI TECH examines the sweater --

VOLK

Mrs. Blackbird, we need to ask --

SUE LYNN

If I knew who was responsible, Nina  
would be home already. And you'd  
be counting their fingers in a box.

VOLK

We'd like to speak to her parents.

SUE LYNN

Nina's mother is too distraught.

HOFFMAN

What about the father?

HOLLIS

He was killed in Afghanistan  
serving his country. Sue Lynn  
speaks for the family.

CSI TECH

Looks like some hair, dirt, saw  
dust maybe...

SUE LYNN

Blood?

Everybody trades eyes, perhaps shocked by the bluntness.

CSI TECH

No, ma'am.

VOLK

We'll need to review all Casino  
footage, monitor incoming calls.  
Our team can set up right here --

SUE LYNN

You'll do no such thing.

HOFFMAN

Ma'am, in any abduction, the first  
twenty-four hours are critical.

SUE LYNN

They said no police.

VOLK

That's expected. We are experienced  
law enforcement officers --

SUE LYNN

Out there, I have no doubt. In  
here, you have no jurisdiction,  
pursuant to any number of self-  
governance treaties I'd be happy to  
cite. In here, you are guests of  
the Confederated Tribes. I will be  
handling negotiations, thank you.

With that, Sue Lynn resumes knitting. Off a room full of  
cops, trading awkward eyes, CUT TO:

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Grey is doing paperwork, trying not to look at Toni, perched  
on a ladder, shelving bottles. Their eyes catch, a smile is  
shared. We get the sense something could be brewing, until --

JAKE (O.S.)

Nice place!

Grey looks up, not so happy to see a man, (35) rail thin,  
weathered, and two decks of GOLD FRONTS. He is --

GREY

Jake Feeney, in the flesh.

MOMENTS LATER: Grey and Jake sit in a corner over a beer.

JAKE

What's it been, a dime and half?

GREY

Plus or minus. Been back inside?

JAKE

Few times. Nothing real. Guys like us can't even scratch our balls without looking at time.

GREY

(laughs, then soberly)  
I got the call, too, Jake.

JAKE

We shouldn't have agreed to babysit his money for him.

GREY

It's not like we had a choice. Two kids in that prison, we'd have been torn apart without his protection.

JAKE

Two fifty k's a lot of scratch to just sit on. Days, months go by, you start gettin' ideas...

GREY

Jesus, you blew it all, didn't you?

JAKE

Kane was in for life! I never thought he'd get out! ...You still sittin' on the other half?

GREY

You're looking at it. How do you think I bought this place?

JAKE

We're cooked, bro! You got a car? We gotta get out of town A-Sap.

Grey eyes Ansel outside, cleaning the window with a squeegee.

GREY

I can't. Everything I got is here. Jake, listen to me, we stick together, we double our chances.

JAKE

Yeah? What's zero times two? Good luck, brother. You never saw me.

With that, Jake exits. Off Grey, walls closing in, CUT TO:

**INT. COUNTER CULTURE CLUB - NIGHT**

Dex walks through a nightclub befitting its name; designer beards and tats mingle with goth garb, gypsy chic, and skin. This place is definitely helping to keep Portland weird. She approaches a VIP area, where Bouncer mans a velvet rope.

DEX

I'm here to see Baxter.

The Bouncer eyes her and steps aside. Off Dex, *That was easy -*

**INT. COUNTER CULTURE CLUB - VIP AREA - NIGHT**

Dex enters the VIP loft overlooking the club where BAXTER HALL (35), hipster kingpin of the Portland underground, holds court. Think Zach Galifianakis with tats.

BAXTER

You bring the money?

Dex's eyes FLARE!! She plays along --

DEX

Money's nearby. But I'll need to see the girl first.

BAXTER

Girl is nearby. But I'm gonna need some assurances first. You a cop?

Opting for an new tactic, Dex gives a firm --

DEX

No.

BAXTER

Exactly what a cop would say.

(off Dex, *I can't win*)

We'll need to check for a wire.

DEX

Good thing I wore my 2nd best bra.

BAXTER

(a blank stare, then--)

That's hilarious. When something's not funny I don't laugh. When something's kind of funny, I laugh. When something's very funny... I don't laugh. Check her out, fellas.

Off Dex, thinking this Baxter guy might be a psycho, CUT TO:

**INT. STAIRWELL/INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

As Baxter leads Dex down a stairwell, armed posse in tow --

BAXTER

Lotta of people looking for the girl. Wasn't easy getting her here.

DEX

Bet she put up a fight too.

BAXTER

Nah, she had lousy security. It was practically a milk run.

Off Dex, absorbing the snub, they enter a MASSIVE GARAGE full of classic cars, a steel roll-up door seals off the far end.

DEX

So... where is she?

Baxter nods to a thug who pulls the cover off a beautiful --

BAXTER

1971 Pontiac GTO Judge Convertible.  
Only 17 ever Produced. Ain't she adorbs?

It is at this moment that Dex realizes she wandered into the wrong deal and that *THE GIRL* is not Nina, but a rare car.

DEX

Oh, Tsch! You kiddin? Gorgeous.  
I mean look at that... her. Wow!

BAXTER

Right? Go on, do your inspection thing and we'll count some money.

DEX

Cool. I'll just...take a peekaroo --

As Dex gets in the car, trying to figure how she'll get the hell out of this one - *Shit* - she sees what Baxter cannot as one of his men ushers in another WOMAN (45) with a briefcase.

DEX (CONT'D)

Mind if I listen to her purr?

BAXTER

(handing Dex the keys)  
Be my guest. It's your half mil.

Dex turns the engine and REVS the gas --

DEX  
Oh yeah, listen to that baby.

But at that moment, Baxter notices the other woman --

BAXTER  
Who the hell are you?

OTHER WOMAN  
Your buyer. Why is that woman in  
my vehicle?

A beat, then Baxter's entire crew draws on DEX - who STOMPS  
ON THE GAS, peeling out, tearing through the garage toward --

BAXTER  
She's gonna hit the door. Door,  
door, door, open the GODDAMN DOOR!

One of Baxter's men punches a button. The door rolls up, Dex  
barely clears it, tearing out of the garage onto the street.

BAXTER (CONT'D)  
Can somebody tell me that didn't  
just happen? Anybody..? Anybody?

But they all avoid eye contact.

BAXTER (CONT'D)  
How about we find out who she is?!!

**INT. PONTIAC (MOVING) - NIGHT**

DEX drives away in shock. Her cell RINGS. She fumbles for it.

DEX (ANSWERING PHONE)  
Yeah?

HOFFMAN (V.O.)  
It's Hoffman. I have some good  
news. Nina has been returned.

DEX  
She what..?

HOFFMAN  
She's back. With her family.  
Thought you'd want to know...

Off Dex, stunned by this news and exhilarated by what just  
happened, *Holy Shitballs*, we --

**END ACT THREE**

## ACT FOUR

INT. CASINO - OFFICE SUITE - NIGHT

Hollis walks Dex through the casino --

HOLLIS

Dropped her off a half mile down  
the road. Not a hair out of place.

DEX

That doesn't make any sense. Why  
would they do that?

HOLLIS

Sue Lynn has earned her reputation.  
Maybe they came to their senses.

They arrive at Sue Lynn's office. She sits at her desk,  
knitting. Hollis exits. Sue Lynn never looks up --

DEX

I'm sorry. I let you down.

SUE LYNN

You came to apologize? How un-you.

DEX

I'd like to tell Nina, in  
person --

SUE LYNN (CONT'D)

She's with her mother. Maybe  
now is not the best time.

SUE LYNN (CONT'D)

I hear rumors of an incident with  
our associate, Mr. Hall... and a  
woman fitting your description?

DEX

I was trying to do the right thing.

SUE LYNN

When I was a child, we had a snow  
storm. Blistering cold. My father  
called a man to fix the chimney. A  
plumber. He was all we could find.  
But before he could finish the job,  
he fell through the roof leaving us  
completely exposed with no chimney.  
Let's hope you haven't escalated  
our troubles with Mr. Hall...

DEX

(pulling out --)

The advance you gave me. Keeping  
it wouldn't feel right.

SUE LYNN

That won't be necessary. It was my mistake. You don't hire a plumber to fix a chimney.

Crushed, Dex leaves the cash on a table and goes, CUT TO:

**INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT**

Hoffman sits amid a web of color-coded post-its. Dex drops keys (from the stolen car) on his desk --

HOFFMAN

What's this?

DEX

Found them next to a car out front.  
(off his suspicious look)  
The post-it thing's a tad *creepy*.

HOFFMAN

Maybe, but it helps me keep track of things; leads, mysteries...

DEX

I like a good mystery.

HOFFMAN

Here's one I've been working on. Maybe you can help me with *The Why?*  
(reading from post-its)  
Subject's marriage falls apart. Marriage was practically arranged, so that's no surprise. But here's where it gets interesting...

Though Dex clearly knows where this is going, her eyes beginning to cloud, she never even blinks as --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Subject has a job in the family business, yet he joins the army and deploys to Afghanistan. Six months into his tour, he gets leave but doesn't go home. He goes to Kabul. On his way into the city his Humvee is hit by an I-E-D. He's killed instantly. But *why* is he in Kabul?

DEX

First rule of interrogation: never ask a question you don't know the answer to.

HOFFMAN

(pulling a copy of--)

DD 1076 Personal Effects Form for one PFC Benjamin Blackbird. Items found on the deceased: Eighty-six dollars in cash, photos of his three year old daughter, and one diamond engagement ring.

Dex looks like she's barely holding it together --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

You're the reason Benny was there. *The Why*. You were stationed in Kabul. His death left you feeling responsible. You thought saving Nina would make up for losing him.

DEX

Pieced that together on your own?

HOFFMAN

We had to know how you fit in.

DEX

So I'm no longer a suspect.

HOFFMAN

...Just a person of interest.

They hold a charged look till Dex sees Nina's sweater in an evidence bag. She picks up another bag containing --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Saw dust. Maple, according to the lab. We thought they might have held her at a construction site.

DEX

Nina couldn't offer any clues?

HOFFMAN

Sue Lynn wouldn't let us talk to her. Casino is on tribal land, so --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

We threw it to the Feds. They have jurisdiction where we don't! --

DEX

You're just gonna pass it off?!

HOFFMAN

You can't always get closure, Dex! At least the girl is home. It's time to move on.

DEX

I'm not really the *move on* type.  
Put that on a post-it.

As Dex goes, Hoffman's eyes drift to an old photo on his desk of he and another cop in uniform -- his partner. As we're asking ourselves if this is the cop that Kane killed, PRELAP:

DEX (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They must be hiding something...

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Dex and Grey roll silverware in napkins. Grey's are perfect. He picks up one of hers, it's cockeyed --

DEX

I can feel it. Why else wouldn't  
Sue Lynn let the cops talk to Nina?

GREY

You're right. I'd have fired you.

DEX

I know Sue Lynn enough to know  
she'd want to string the kidnappers  
up by the balls. Something's off...

As Toni walks by, Grey picks up a paper and --

GREY

Can we talk about this invoice for  
two grand? Who's Cow-tow Spirits?

TONI

No one.

GREY

Then why'd we pay them two grand?

TONI

We didn't. Our distributor wouldn't  
cut us a deal on the Saison you  
wanted, so I told him we were  
getting it from a competitor for  
cheaper and sent him a fake invoice  
to back it up and he agreed to beat  
the price so now you can sell it.

Dex jumps off her stool, grabs Toni, and kisses her --

DEX

False flag! She's amazing!

GREY

Right?! Wait, what..?

DEX

False flag... a deception creating the appearance of one party being responsible, while disguising the actual source of responsibility.

TONI

It's just an old bar trick --

DEX

It's the only answer!

Toni and Grey trade eyes like Dex is losing it --

DEX (CONT'D)

We ran an op in Afghanistan, trying to nab this bad guy but he went underground. So we announce he'd been arrested. Thinking we had the wrong man and the heat was off, the guy emerged and we captured him.

TONI

I don't know what you're saying.

DEX

Sue Lynn didn't want the police involved. What if she lied about Nina's release so she could sideline the cops and handle the ransom herself? What if the kidnapers are still holding her?

GREY

(grabbing Dex's beer)  
...I'm cutting you off.

**INT. WHISPERING WINDS CASINO - NEXT DAY**

Dex sits at the bar, ball cap pulled low over her brow as she watches Sue Lynn and Hollis walk to the Casino count room. When they emerge, Hollis carries two large briefcases --

**INT. DEX'S CAR/EXT. PORTLAND STREETS - DAY**

Dex follows Hollis' car through the streets, keeping her distance, sure he's on his way to trade the ransom for Nina. Hollis turns a corner and a car cuts Dex off. Two men open her door and yank Dex out as Hoffman rushes up with Volk --

VOLK

You're gonna blow this whole operation.

Hoffman pulls her 45 pistol from her belt --

HOFFMAN

You have a permit for this?

DEX

Dog ate it.

HOFFMAN

Then I'll have to confiscate it.

VOLK

What did I say about amateurs?

DEX

Yet we both came to the same conclusion. So if I'm an amateur, what does that make you?

Volk peels off. Dex dagger-eyes Hoffman --

DEX (CONT'D)

Threw it to the Feds, huh?

HOFFMAN

Yeah, I lied... for your own good. You're in way over your head, Dex. And you're the only one who doesn't see it. You really want to do what's best for Nina? Go home.

**INT. DEX'S HOUSE - DAY**

Dex sits on the couch, staring at that old photo of her and Nina's father (Benny), guilt stirring. Ansel walks up --

ANSEL

That's you.

DEX

Used to be, bro.

ANSEL

Who is he?

DEX

A good friend. Who I miss a lot.

Ansel observes her for a beat, sensing her deep sorrow --

ANSEL

When I get sad about mom and dad moving away I go to the park and kick the ball and pretend I win the game and I always feel better.

DEX

Hey, you got me, don't you?  
...I could use a win. Get your ball. We're going to the park.

Ansel grins and runs off, elated. Dex drops the photo back in the drawer... hangs a beat, then reaches for that small box which she flips open, revealing the ENGAGEMENT RING.

DEX (CONT'D)

We're just gonna make a quick stop!

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG/EXT. AIRPORT MOTEL - DAY**

Dex pulls into the lot. She hands Ansel her phone --

DEX

You can play a few games, if you want. I'll just be a minute.

**INT. MICHAEL'S MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

Michael and Dex stand in the doorway of the small room --

DEX

Nina is gonna be okay. Don't ask me how I know, but I know. You said you were saving up for one, so...

With that, she hands him the small box. He opens it and as his eyes WIDEN, seeing the ring, INTERCUT:

BACK IN THE CAR: ANSEL pockets Dex's phone and gets out with his ball. He begins kicking it against a wall but the ball rolls down the ramp. As Ansel goes after it, CUT BACK TO:

MICHAEL'S MOTEL ROOM

DEX (CONT'D)

The guy who was gonna give me that? He let some people talk him out of it. By the time he listened to himself it was too late.

MICHAEL

I don't know what to say.

DEX

Say you won't make the same mistake  
he did.

Dex smiles, proud of herself, but that smile fades as she  
dials in on TWO SAW DUST SHAVINGS on Michael's hoodie... like  
the ones she saw on Nina's sweater. She hides her suspicion --

DEX (CONT'D)

Okay, then. I gotta, you know...

But she turns, stunned as DILL and WHALE step in her path --

DEX (CONT'D)

False flag...

MICHAEL

This is bad... What do we do?!

DILL

What do you think, genius?!

MICHAEL

No one gets hurt! That was the  
plan. This was my idea!

DEX

And right now it's still just a bad  
one. Call it off before it turns  
into something you can't undo--!

Dill grabs Dex, cupping her mouth, silencing her --

DILL

We're in this together, man. We  
don't stick together, we're all  
going to jail. That what you want?  
Or you wanna go get our money?

Michael hangs in indecision until, regretfully, he nods --

WHALE

Relax, dude. It's just a hick-up.  
No one's ever gonna find her body.

Whale arches back to pistol whip Dex, and we SMASH TO:

**EXT. MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

Dex's car TEARS out of the lot, Dill and Whale in the front  
seat. Off Ansel, holding his ball, as Dex's car WHIPS past --

END ACT FOUR

## ACT FIVE

INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - DAY

Dill drives, Whale rides shotgun, and it's déjà vu all over again as Dill hands Whale his thermos --

DILL

Fresh batch. Fifty bucks says you can't name the roast...

But this time, we INTERCUT THE TRUNK as Dex comes to, groggy and claustrophobic. She POUNDS on the lid, and we PRELAP:

TONI (V.O.)

I call it *Elderberry Me Alive*...

INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY

Toni awaits the verdict as Grey samples her new cocktail, secretly eying her body in the mirror behind the bar --

TONI

You know, *Bad Alibi*, playing with the whole crime theme...

GREY

A little macabre, but clever. I like it. Try a little blood orange.

TONI

To fight the gin. Good idea. And how's my ass look in that mirror?

GREY

What?! I was *not* looking at your --

TONI

It's okay. You're cute. And we'll be spending a lot of time in here. Alone. But the mirror's as close to my ass as you're gonna get.

GREY

Hey, I'm not one of those bosses --

TONI

I don't care about that. I do bosses all day long. Just not bosses hung up on other women...

GREY

Dex!!! Please. We're just friends.

TONI  
No, she's just friends. You  
are trapped in a Pavlovian  
cycle of social rejection --

GREY (CONT'D)  
You're diagnosing me now?

TONI  
-- Which triggers the same part of  
the brain as physical pain, thus  
releasing an endorphin painkiller,  
making you addicted. I'm not gonna  
compete with that. More vermouth?

The phone RINGS!

GREY  
That's insane. You're insane.  
(answering phone)  
Yeah?

ANSEL (V.O.)  
You answered wrong.

GREY  
Ansel..? You okay?

INTERCUT: ANSEL, holding his soccer ball, outside the motel,  
talking on Dex's phone.

ANSEL  
Dex's car left without me.

GREY  
What do you mean, where'd she go?

ANSEL  
I don't know. She wasn't driving.

GREY  
Stay there. I'm coming to get you!

TONI  
Hard habit to break...

Grey smirks and reaches over the bar. He pulls out Hoffman's  
card, considering it, as we PRELAP:

HOFFMAN (V.O.)  
Maybe he knows we're onto him.

**INT. HOFFMAN'S CRUISER (MOVING) - DAY**

Hoffman sits at the wheel of an unmarked cruiser. Volk rides  
shotgun, looking at Hollis' moving car through binocs --

HOFFMAN  
He's been leading us in  
circles all day.

                  COP (V.O.) (ON RADIO)  
Target making a left. Let's  
swap the follow on my mark...

\*

                  VOLK  
If he knew, he'd abort. Kidnapper's  
are just being extra cautious...  
Hold on. He's making a move --

Hollis pulls into a parking lot of the Nite Hawk Cafe &  
Lounge. He pops the trunk pulling out the briefcases. As he  
heads inside the iconic local diner --

VOLK'S BINOC POV through the window. Hollis sit at a booth.  
When another man sits down across --

                  VOLK (INTO RADIO) (CONT'D)  
Let's move, folks. And careful,  
we've got civilians in there...

**INTERCUT: INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - TRUNK - DAY**

Dex jams her hand into a crack in the seat, peering through,  
making out Dill and Whale up front. But the light illuminates  
a FIRE EXTINGUISHER, nestled at her feet, as we SMASH TO:

**INT. NITE HAWK CAFE - DAY**

Swat cops flood in, from every doorway, yelling --

                  SWAT COPS  
LEMME SEE YOUR HANDS!

                  SWAT COPS  
POLICE! POLICE..!

Patrons duck, terrified, as Hollis and the other man raise  
their hands, staring down gun barrels. Volk throws a nod to  
Hoffman, who opens a briefcase, finding, Native American --

                  HOFFMAN  
Rugs..?

                  HOLLIS  
I'm a collector. This man is here  
to verify their authenticity.

Off Hollis' grin, Volk and Hoffman trade eyes, *We've been  
tricked.* Hoffman's phone RINGS. He steps away to answer --

                  HOFFMAN (INTO PHONE)  
Hoffman.

                  GREY (V.O.)  
Hey, it's, Grey McConnell, from...

HOFFMAN (INTO PHONE)  
I remember who you are. Look, I'm  
a little busy here --

GREY  
I think something happened to Dex!

Off Hoffman, teeth gnashed, damn sure he's right, SMASH TO:

**EXT. WHISPERING WINDS CASINO - DAY**

Sue Lynn looks at a briefcase full of cash, set in the trunk of her Caddy beside a similar case. She closes the trunk and as she gets in her car, her phone RINGS! She answers --

SUE LYNN (INTO PHONE)  
I'm listening.

KIDNAPPER (V.O.)  
Your decoy worked out.

INTERCUT: ECU OF MICHAEL (The Kidnapper), disguising his voice through a modulator to hide his identity.

MICHAEL  
Police have been taken care of.

SUE LYNN  
Of course they have. That's what  
you asked for. I've held up my  
end. You'd better hold up yours.

With that, she hangs up and drives off alone, as we CUT TO:

**INT. DINGY ROOM - DAY**

Nina, hard at work, furiously scrapes her worn wrist ties against the pipe - SNAP! She's free. She moves to the door. Locked! Then to the window, seeing a three story drop.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR: A GUARD hears a SMASH! He pulls a gun, unlocks the door, and enters the room, seeing the window broken, a blanket-rope threaded out. As he walks to it --

Nina emerges from behind the door with Dex's steering wheel. She CLOCKS him over the head, knocking him cold. She then rushes out, down the steps, around a corner, and right into --

NINA  
MICHAEL! Thank god!

-- who takes her in his arms, her rescuer, she thinks --

NINA (CONT'D)

We have to get out of here! He'll  
wake up..!

She tugs at him, but he just stares back, crestfallen, like  
it's all falling apart now.

NINA (CONT'D)

Michael, what's wrong with you?

MICHAEL

Remember when you said you saw me  
for who I really was? I liked that.

And just as it dawns on Nina, Michael palms her mouth. As he  
muscles her, kicking and fighting, back upstairs, we PRELAP:

NIEL DIAMOND (V.O.) (SINGING)

*Then spring became the summer...*

INT. DEX'S CAR - DAY

DILL and WHALE, up front, heads bobbing as they sing --

DILL & WHALE (SINGING)

*Who'd have believed you'd come  
along..?*

BACK IN THE TRUNK - Dex threads the nozzle through the crack  
in the seat. She pulls the lever and WHOOSH! - holds on for  
dear life as the car starts swerving wildly --

Dex pulls the seat latch, emerging into the cab awash in fire  
retardant, as - **Reaching out...** She gets Dill in a headlock --  
**Touching me...** Whale pulls his gun on Dex -- **Touching you...** -  
- who now sees THE BRIDGE TIPPING UP AHEAD, as we INTERCUT:

A KAYAKER, under the bridge, on headphones, listening to --

MINDFULNESS COACH (V.O.)

Watch every thought come and go, be  
it a worry, fear, anxiety...

-- unaware of the Mustang, soaring over his head.

THE MUSTANG hits the other side of the bridge, careening down  
onto the road, where it spins to a stop. The thugs bail out,  
coughing white powder. Dex climbs out after them.

Echoing their first encounter, Dill swings at Dex. But this  
time, she blocks the blow, kicks out his knee and sends him  
to the ground, pulling his gun. As Whale comes at her, she  
wheels the barrel around to meet his face. He freezes --

DEX  
 Wise move, big fellah. Phones.  
 Gimme.

The Thugs pull out their phones, trade a look, then huck them into the river. Off Dex's grimace, they laugh. As she pats them down --

DEX (CONT'D)  
 Where're you keeping her?

WHALE  
 We're not telling you Jack.

DEX  
 You don't have to.

She pulls out a SECURITY GATE PASS for 'PARSON'S MILL & LUMBER YARD.' Off Dex's eureka --

DEX (CONT'D)  
 Saw dust.

WE CUT TO:

*PARSON'S MILL & LUMBER YARD ESTD' 1912*

on a huge sign above a now defunct industrial complex.

**EXT. PARSON'S LUMBER MILL - DAY**

Sue Lynn pulls her caddy into the deserted yard. She exits the car and barely holds her composure as Michael, manic and desperate, emerges with Nina, her mouth duct taped. CUT TO:

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG/EXT. PORTLAND - DAY**

As DEX tears through the streets we INTERCUT: THE TRUNK: Dill and Whale are tied up, laying like sardines, as --

Dex BLOWS a red light - A RED LIGHT CAMERA FLASHES. As Dex's car BUMPS over a curb, the TAPE DECK KICKS ON, blasting LOVE TRAIN by the O'JAYS. Off Dex, Really?! We CUT TO:

**INT. HOFFMAN'S CRUISER - DAY**

Hoffman and Volk are on the move. From over the radio --

COP DISPATCH (V.O.)  
 All units, Orange Mustang, GT,  
 heading East on Holgate...



Michael takes off on foot. As Dex pulls along-side him, she throws open her door, KNOCKING Michael to the dirt. She SLAMS on the breaks, jumping out, as --

MICHAEL crawls for his gun. Just as he grabs it -- STOMP - a SNEAKER pins his hand to the ground. He looks up at --

DEX

I was right about you holding back on me. I was just wrong about what it was you were hiding.

As the two become awash in the dust of encircling cruisers, Hoffman and Volk jump out, guns trained on Michael --

HOFFMAN

We got him from here, Dex!! You okay..?

DEX

Yeah. There's two more in my trunk.

Hoffman and Volk trade a look, a bit amazed as we SWING TO:

Nina shaking, clutching her relieved grandmother. Dex approaches looking contrite. But Nina embraces Dex --

NINA

Thank you!

-- who is completely thrown, perhaps just now realizing she saved the day... albeit a tad uncomfortable with the emotion.

DEX

Okay, kid, don't get all huggy, I'm just doing my job.

SUE LYNN

And I suppose you *might* have been the right person for it.

Sue Lynn smiles, but the smile fades --

SUE LYNN (CONT'D)

I hope you understand why I did what I did all those years ago. I know we've certainly both had to live with the consequences.

DEX

You always were the master of the non apology apology. I'm just glad Nina's okay.

Dex and Sue Lynn hold a smile, signaling, not peace, but perhaps detente between two iron willed women.

As Hoffman cuffs Michael, Dill and Whale, Volk approaches.

VOLK

Some people find trouble. Other people, trouble finds them.

DEX

You saying I'm one of those people?

VOLK

Girl, you're both. Don't take this the wrong way, but I hope I never see you around.

They share a grin, definitely mutual respect. And off Dex, locking eyes with Michael as he's loaded into a cruiser, his look betraying relief that it's all over, we CUT TO:

A WHITE STAG

In neon, leaping over the words 'PORTLAND OREGON.' We move off the iconic 1940'S era sign to a street below, where a crowd gathers outside THE BAD ALIBI.

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT**

The place is grand-opening packed. Ansel heads through, hauling trash-bags and he is *The Man*, bikers and hipsters high-five him on his way out the back door. We SWING TO: THE BAR, where DEX and GREY clink beers --

DEX

Safe to say someone's off to a pretty good start.

GREY

Yeah, so far so good, I think.

DEX

And Grey. Thanks.

GREY

For what?

DEX

For how you are with Ansel, all the times you get me out of trouble...

GREY

The free beer --

DEX

That too.

GREY

It's nothing.

DEX

No. It's not. It's something.

Their smile holds, hinting maybe, just maybe there is a lane for them. Down the bar, Toni clocks them, unexpectedly begrudging the connection, but the moment is interrupted by --

ANSEL

Grey, someone's here to see you.

GREY

Not now, Ansel.

ANSEL

He says it's important.

GREY

Who says?

ANSEL

...You're old roommate.

Off Grey, eyes flaring, we CUT TO:

**EXT. BAD ALIBI - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT**

Grey walks out, chilled to see, emerging from the shadows --

GREY

Kane?

A hard (45), every line on his weathered face a story, none with a happy ending. Grey tries to hide his fear.

KANE

Congrats on your big night.

GREY

Glad you could make it.

KANE

No you're not. With all the cops looking for me, this might be the only place I'm not wanted.

Kane looks down the alley, on edge --

KANE (CONT'D)

Jake sent his best. He wanted to be here but a rather catastrophic error in judgement led to a conflicting engagement.

Kane opens his fist, eerily revealing Jake's gold fronts, which he jostles in his palm like dice, as --

GREY

Give me some time. I'll get your money.

KANE

Already used up all my spare time, Greyson. So if you don't mind, I'd like to collect. I'm supposing you have fire insurance...

GREY

You want me to burn down my bar?

KANE

It's my bar, son. Every beer glass, fucking pool ball, and lightbulb belongs to me. You'll do what I damn well say --

GREY

Or what?! You'll kill me too? How you gonna get your money then?

GREY (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll tell the cops everything. I don't give a rats ass what happens to me --

KANE

Yeah, you do that, go be a martyr --

KANE (CONT'D)

I treated you like family in there! Protected you from those animals...

GREY

We're not inside anymore!

KANE

(wild eyed)

That's right. And I'm the animal out here. With nothing to lose. That's my leverage. I'd hate to see that sweet Ansel boy get eaten alive.

Kane drops the gold fronts in Grey's shirt pocket. He gives Grey a patronizing muss of the hair, and goes. CUT TO:

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT**

Shaken, Grey walks to the bar and stops, seeing Hoffman enter, heading right for him. Grey stiffens, sure he's about to be busted. But Hoffman merely nods on his way to --

HOFFMAN

Ma'am...

DEX swivels around on her bar stool, surprised to see him --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Michael admitted he and the others had been planning the kidnapping for months. Idea was to break up with her after, then they were all just gonna sit on the money for a while until suspicion faded away.

DEX

Best laid plans...

Off Grey, looking like they could be talking about him as Hoffman pops open a small box, revealing her engagement ring.

HOFFMAN

Thought you might want this back.

DEX

Aren't you gonna get on one knee?

HOFFMAN

Maybe we could start with dinner.

DEX

Sorry, I don't date cops.  
Especially ones who've disarmed me.

Hoffman grins, *Fair enough*, then --

HOFFMAN

Things could have ended badly on this one. Why didn't they? You. You're *The Why*. I don't know how you did it. I get the sense you don't either. Maybe that's your secret sauce. But if you're gonna do it again, do it by the book.

He drops an envelope onto the bar --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Change your mind about dinner, your friend has my card.

Grey watches Hoffman out, piqued by an inevitable rivalry, as we SWING TO:

BAXTER HALL and his HIPSTER HENCHMAN in the crowd, ducking Hoffman as he walks by. Baxter eyes Dex --

BAXTER

Ex military operator on Sue Lynn's payroll; first she steals my car, now she's kickin it with the cops. What's her game?

HIPSTER HENCHMAN

You hire a soldier for one reason.

BAXTER

Sha-mon, sha-mon... If Sue Lynn wants war, we'll give her one.

Off Baxter, tipping to the coming storm, we SWING BACK TO: DEX, opening the envelope, pulling out --

DEX

It's an application. For a P.I. license...

GREY

You, a P.I? You can barely find your keys half the time. It's not something you just jump into out of the blue.

But Dex eyes the engagement ring with a touch of melancholy --

DEX

Maybe it's not so out of the blue. Maybe everything that's happened in my life; the war, the crappy jobs, maybe they were all just stepping stones, guiding me to something I'm *actually* half decent at.

Dex can't help but smile, considering what might be a new vocation, but --

DEX (CONT'D)

On the other hand, how much trouble can there really be around here? I mean, c'mon dude... it's Stumptown.

She swigs her beer. Off Grey, if she only knew --

END PILOT