

Tangled up in Blue
- Lou Benney

INT. BANK - DAY

The middle of hell -- a botched robbery in progress.
Shotguns BOOMING, glass SHATTERING, alarms CLANGING.

WHIP-PAN between two ROBBERS, in ski masks, firing at three
SECURITY GUARDS, firing back.

A guard spins in a mist of blood, drops to his knees...

One of the robbers is hit too, slammed by the force of the
bullets over the teller's counter.

The surviving robber crawls across broken glass. He lunges
for his dead partner's GUN, rolls out from behind the
counter, BLASTS the second guard.

But then --

VOICE (O.S.)

Drop your weapon!

The robber swings around. The last guard, a young guy, has
crept up from behind, has the robber cold.

YOUNG GUARD

Drop your fucking weapon!

FACE tight with fear. One fat floating second of pure
silence as the guard hesitates...

The robber's EYES -- cold, calm, pale blue ice.

The CRACK of a gunshot. The young guard SLAMS against the
wall, his white shirt blooms red.

EXT. BACK ALLEYS - DAY

The robber bursts out of the bank, flies down a series of
back alleys, hits a chain-link fence and vaults over it.

Finally the robber pulls up next to a dumpster, breathing
hard. He strips off his ski mask and we see --

He is a she. KATE MILLS, 30s, her face attractive but hard.

SIRENS, faint, in the distance. And suddenly, closer, the
SCUFF of footsteps as --

A LATINO GUY in a stained apron rounds the corner, a trash
can hiked onto his shoulder. He sees the GUN, the MASK, the
BLOOD.

Puzzled, he looks up at Kate's face and finds her looking back at him.

A split-second too late, he understands what's happened. Quickly he covers his eyes and backing frantically away.

LATINO GUY

I didn't see nothing. Please. Lo no
sieto. I don't know you.

Calm, impassive, Kate takes a step toward him. Lifts her gun. The cook, backing blindly away, stumbles.

LATINO GUY

Please, I don't know you...

Kate FIRES.

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

Crowded and grimy. The tracks SHRIEK and pulsing lights give everything an infernal red glow.

Kate hangs from a strap in the middle of the car, stone-faced, just another commuter on the way home from work.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Porn shops and garbage, panhandlers and dead storefronts.

Kate slips into a seedy bar.

INT. BAR (FRONT) - NIGHT

Even seedier on the inside. A junkie stripper works it half-heartedly on a makeshift stage.

As Kate winds through the room a couple of the male PATRONS turn and leer.

The BARTENDER pulls a bottle a tequila from the shelf and pours a shot. Kate knocks it back.

KATE

He call?

The Bartender holds up two fingers: twice.

INT. BAR (REAR) - NIGHT

A secluded alcove at the back of the bar. Kate drops coins in a payphone and dials.

I/E. CAR - NIGHT

A DRIVER and three PASSENGERS, all bad news. Cell phone twirps. The front seat passenger (SIMMS) flips it open.

INT. BAR (REAR) - NIGHT

Cross-cut between Kate and Simms.

KATE

It's me.

SIMMS

Where are you?

KATE

Morris is dead, the jerk-off. He went for the bait money in the drawer and tripped a wire.

SIMMS

You have the money?

KATE

Omar's got it. He split out the back when the shit hit.

SIMMS

Is that right?

Something's wrong. Kate senses it in his voice.

KATE

Omar.

SIMMS

Thin air. He was supposed to call an hour ago.

Calm, cold, furious...

KATE

I'll kill him.

SIMMS

Get in line.

KATE

Where would he go?

SIMMS

My question.

KATE

He split out the back. Like I said. I
had my hands full with the --

SIMMS

Of course.

Anger fades from Kate's face, replaced by something more
complicated.

KATE

He was supposed to call you. That's all
I know.

SIMMS

I believe you.

KATE

I swear to God, Simms. I'm not in on
this.

SIMMS

I believe you. I do.

(beat)

Where are you, Kate?

KATE

What?

SIMMS

I'll send Tony to get you. We'll have a
nice dinner. You've had a hard day.

KATE

Simms, I --

SIMMS

Where are you, Katie?

She hangs the phone up fast, stands frozen.

The phone RINGS. Reflex, she picks it up.

SIMMS

Star 69, baby. You can run, but you
can't hide.

Kate slams the phone down. Then, one quick savage motion,
she JERKS the receiver out by the cord.

INT. BAR (FRONT) - NIGHT

Kate shoves her way back through the crowded bar.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A concrete and steel high-rise.

INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - NIGHT

Kate pushes the button for the elevator, waits a beat, then
goes sprinting up the stairs.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cold, spare, modern.

Kate stuffs bundles of cash into a gym bag. Her life
savings. She's almost done when she hears, from the hallway,
the faint DING of the elevator.

Fuck.

A CRUNCH as the door to her apartment is smashed open and
four INTRUDERS enter, FIRING.

Kate drops the gym bag, dives behind the sofa, BLASTS back at
the intruders.

One intruder goes down. The others retreat to the hallway.

Kate checks her clip: only two rounds left. Clip out, she
dry fires until the CLICKING lures one intruder back inside.

She SLAPS the clip back in and takes him down with two shots,
then lunges for the window.

A round catches her in the leg, knocks her down. Somehow she
manages to scramble to the window, onto the fire escape...

Drops to safety.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A lonely two-lane highway surrounded by dense woods.

A CAR approaches, steady at first and then weaving, finally drifting to a stop on the gravel shoulder.

I/E. CAR - NIGHT

Fuel gauge on empty.

Kate, behind the wheel, holds a blood-soaked towel against her leg. She is composed, focused.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Kate puts her shoulder to the car and rolls it as far as she can into the woods, out of sight.

EXT. CREEK - NIGHT

Water up to her waist, Kate struggles upstream against the current, deeper and deeper into the forest.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE - MORNING

LONG SHOT of a beautiful, secluded college campus, nestled between rolling hills and surrounded by woods.

EXT. SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE - MORNING

A series of shots:

-- STUDENTS walk across perfectly manicured lawns, between stately old buildings.

-- A PROFESSOR lectures in a large classroom.

-- A FOOTBALL PLAYER at practice takes a hard hit as --

MATCH CUT TO:

Kate collapses to the ground.

EXT. CLEARING IN WOODS - MORNING

She lies there, exhausted.

Her POV: a STATUE of the Virgin Mary stands in the middle of the clearing. Nearby: the SOUNDS of football practice.

On KATE, wondering where the fuck...?

EXT. DORMITORY - MORNING

To establish.

INT. DORM ROOM - MORNING

PAN across the wall -- Playboy centerfolds and neon beer signs and a window suddenly SMASHED from the outside.

INT. DORM ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Same room, Kate inside now. She rifles through the desk, the closet, the dresser drawers.

JUMP CUT as she gathers what she's looking for -- scissors, needle, thread, pillowcase, a lighter, a bottle of rum.

INT. DORM ROOM/BATHROOM - MORNING

A needle, turned slowly in a flame until the metal glows.

Kate sits on the toilet, one leg of her pants ripped open to reveal a BLOODY MESS.

She takes a slug of the rum, then splashes some on her wound.

Carefully she stitches the torn flesh together.

Her hand remains steady, her face expressionless.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

A key CLICKS against a lock.

INT. DORM ROOM/BATHROOM - MORNING

Kate glances up at the sound of the key.

INT. DORM ROOM - MORNING

A FRESHMAN enters the room. He drops his backpack on the bed and heads for the bathroom.

INT. DORM ROOM/BATHROOM - MORNING

Kate has disappeared. The shower curtain is drawn, though, and the shower HISSES.

The freshman lifts the seat of the toilet and unzips.

FRESHMAN

Dude, you just now getting up? I thought you had that chem test at nine.

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Behind the curtain, Kate stands with the scissors clenched in one fist. She's coiled, calm, ready to strike.

FRESHMAN (O.S.)

That Courtney chick was in class today. She was all, We're having this party this weekend and you should come.

INT. DORM ROOM/BATHROOM - MORNING

OVERHEAD SHOT: Kate and the freshman separated by only a thin shower curtain, the scissor blades only inches from his neck.

FRESHMAN

Score! And she's a sophomore!

He flushes.

FRESHMAN

Check you at lunch, dude.

He exits. No idea how close he's come.

INT. SHOWER - MORNING

Kate waits for the door to SNAP shut, lowers the scissors.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

STUDENTS lounge on the grassy lawn.

Kate, dressed in sweats and a T-shirt stolen from the dorm room, walks quickly across the idyllic campus.

EXT. DANTE HALL - DAY

A large campus building.

INT. FACULTY OFFICE - DAY

Wall to wall books. WILEY LELAND, a professor, sits slouched in his chair, listening to a STUDENT read her essay aloud.

STUDENT

Throughout history many people have
yearned for excitement and adventure in
their lives.

Wiley ponders the possibility of a boredom-induced embolism. He's late 30s, handsome in a rumpled, corduroy-jacket kind of way.

STUDENT

In the Iliad there is a man named
Achilles and he is offered the choice
between an exciting life that's short and
a dull one that's not.

Wiley tunes out, gazes past the girl just as --

KATE passes his open door.

Wiley sees her and sits up, intrigued. Not the kind of woman he usually sees wandering the halls of academia.

She pauses, gives him a quick once-over, then continues on.

Wiley goes to the door and looks out into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Already empty.

STUDENT (O.S.)

Professor Leland? You want me to go on?

INT. FACULTY OFFICE - DAY

Wiley continues to gaze down the hallway, lost in thought.

WILEY

No.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Blue River Falls is a small, pretty town with tree-lined streets, a village square, lots of mom-and-pop shops.

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST - DAY

Kate enters the foyer of a Victorian bed and breakfast. An INNKEEPER tidying up behind the front desk beams at her.

INNKEEPER

Good morning!

KATE

I need a phone.

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST PARLOR - DAY

SENIOR CITIZENS play a spirited game of Scrabble.

Kate, in the corner, listens to a phone that's RINGING. A CLICK as someone picks up the line.

KATE

Worm?

INT. DIVE APARTMENT - NIGHT

WORM, a skinny, pock-marked man in his 40s.

WORM

Kate?

(panicked)

Oh, shit, Katie, you shouldn't, man, you shouldn't be calling here.

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST PARLOR - DAY

Cross-cut between Kate and Worm.

KATE

So you know?

WORM

You gotta -- this puts me in a very awkward position, Katie. Simms, he's very, man, he's worked up.

KATE

What did he say?

WORM

What did he say? He says, Hey, I'm gonna find her and carve out her fucking heart.

KATE

I need cash.

WORM

So I says, Simms, man. Katie, she don't have no fucking heart.

KATE

I need a passport.

WORM

He didn't think it was so funny either.

KATE

Something clean and fast.

WORM

What about the cash from the bank job?

KATE

Do you think I'd be calling you if I had the cash from the bank job?

WORM

Right. Yeah.

KATE

The cops. How hairy?

WORM

Serious hair. They got like a special task force and shit.

(beat)

You want the bad news, Katie?

KATE

That's not the bad news?

WORM

Simms put the word out, you know. Put the finger on you. Here, L.A., everywhere.

KATE

How much?

WORM

Half the jackpot. Finders keepers.

KATE

Dead or alive?

WORM

Omar too. It's like fucking deer season, on you and Omar.

KATE

You have any cash?

WORM

Me? Shit, Katie.

Kate's face is tight with pain, exhaustion, a creeping sense of hopelessness.

WORM

You don't have nothing from the bank score? Not even a little?

KATE

I can't risk a job. I pull a job and get snapped --

WORM

(agreeing)

Serious hair out there, Katie.

KATE

Everything I'd been saving. I had to leave it behind.

WORM

You just gotta disappear for a while.

Growing dizzier by the second, she forces herself to focus.

KATE

I can go to Vegas. I know a couple of people there who --

WORM

The same people Simms knows, right?

KATE

Fuck.

The senior citizens glance up, startled, from their Scrabble board. Kate lowers her voice.

KATE

So what am I supposed to do? No money,
no car, no ID --

WORM

You gotta drop off the face of the earth,
Katie. Somewhere he'll never find you.

Slowly Kate hangs up the phone. She closes her eyes and rests her forehead against the wall.

The innkeeper approaches, beaming, with a tray of coffee.

INNKEEPER

So, will you be staying long in Blue
River Falls?

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The next morning.

CLOSE on Kate, sleeping. Her eyes open. PULL BACK to reveal her in the middle of a big, frilly, four-poster bed.

Framed needlepoint on the wall, a bowl of potpourri on the bedside table.

For a moment Kate can't remember where she is or how she got there. Has she died and gone to heaven? Hell?

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The shower HISSES. Behind the pebbled glass we can make out the blurred contours of a woman's naked body.

Inside the shower: water swirls down the drain, tinged dark red from blood.

PAN up Kate's body. She's rinsing her hair and we realize: not blood -- hair dye.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Kate gazes impassively at her reflection in the mirror, then lifts a pair of scissors and starts cutting her hair.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

The Blue River Falls post office.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

No customers and only one CLERK. He greets Kate brightly when she enters. Her hair now is short, dark red.

CLERK

Afternoon! How you like this Indian summer we been having?

Kate glances through him, past him, surveys the room.

KATE

I'm going on vacation

CLERK

Vacation? All right! Where you headed?

Kate ignores him, reaches for a stack of yellow cards.

KATE

These?

CLERK

Bingo. Put down the date you're coming home -- right here, see? -- and we'll hold your mail till you get back. Going to Disney World by any chance?

Kate turns the card over, examines the back of it.

KATE

Your slot's jammed.

CLERK

Wife and I are going in December, why I ask, special package deal at the what-do-you-call-it, the Polynesian.

(beat)

Pardon?

KATE

Out front.

Understanding...

CLERK

Doggone it. Fill that out and I'll be
back in a flash.

He heads for the exit.

As soon as he's out the door, Kate flicks the card away and
swings herself over the counter.

INT. POST OFFICE (BACK ROOM) - DAY

Calmly Kate moves past the cubbyholes where the mail is
sorted by address, searching until she finds --

A yellow card, filled out and taped to a cubbyhole.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

The post office clerk tests the front mail slot. He
scratches his head. Odd: the slot's not jammed after all.

EXT. SYCAMORE STREET - DAY

A quiet residential neighborhood, a nice little cottage.
Address: 2821.

PULL BACK to REVEAL Kate, across the street. She glances
down at the vacation-hold card she's stolen.

INSERT: Address -- 2821 Sycamore Street. Mail delivery
halted until January.

KATE

Four months.

EXT. SYCAMORE STREET - NIGHT

Dark now. Lights glow in every house on the block except for
the cottage.

EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

A dark, quiet, empty backyard. A figure drops soundlessly
over the stockade fence. Glides like smoke across the yard.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

A motion sensor triggers a spotlight. Light splashes across the back of the cottage.

Kate drops into a crouch. Waits.

No alarm blares, no dogs bark. She continues cautiously on.

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Kate expertly slides a pick into the lock. Then pauses. She lifts a corner of the welcome mat and --

Sure enough: a house key hidden there. She shakes her head in disbelief.

KATE
Fucking Mayberry.

INT. COTTAGE (KITCHEN) - NIGHT

Kate slips inside and shuts the door behind her.

INT. COTTAGE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Warily Kate moves into the living room. Peers into the darkness and then pauses --

The shelves are empty and the walls bare, cardboard boxes are stacked everywhere. The furniture is dust-sheeted.

Strange: as if someone moved in, then departed before having a chance to unpack.

From the hallway: a single red light pulses in the darkness.

INT. COTTAGE (HALLWAY) - NIGHT

The message light blinking on a telephone answering machine.

Kate presses a button. A cheerful female voice plays.

VOICE

Hi, it's me, it's Lily, and I'm going to read you my poem for the day, part of a poem, actually, by one of my all-time favorite poets, Wallace Stevens, and then you can leave me a message and maybe part of a poem too. OK? OK. It's called --

Kate punches another button, cuts off the voice. After a couple of beeps, a second female voice starts to play, this one older and clearly distressed.

SECOND VOICE

Lily, honey, it's me. Can you call me? It's -- it's your dad, honey. He had another -- he's OK, they think he's going to be OK, but maybe you should fly back and -- I know you just got there, honey. Can you call me?

Kate listens, understands why the cottage is vacant.

Perfect.

EXT. SYCAMORE STREET - DAY

Early morning. Another sunny day in Blue River Falls.

INT. COTTAGE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

Kate is asleep on the couch, wrapped in a sheet.

Offscreen, a brisk TAPPING sound.

Silence, then the TAPPING resumes -- closer, louder.

Kate's eyes snap open.

VOICE (O.S.)

Yoo-hoo?

Awake instantly, alert, Kate rolls off the sofa and sees --

At the window, between the blinds --

An EYE --

Peering in.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hello? Oh, my, did I wake you?

Kate freezes, calculates quickly.

INT. COTTAGE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

ANGLE on a heavy iron fireplace POKER as Kate slides it from the basket.

INT. COTTAGE (FOYER) - DAY

The poker concealed behind her, Kate opens the front door.

EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

A middle-aged woman (CAROL) stands at the window, tapping and peeking inside.

When she hears the door open, she glances up, smiles at Kate.

CAROL

Lily?

Kate hesitates. Carol beams, quizzical.

CAROL

Lily Carson?

Finally...

KATE

Yes.

Carol bustles up the porch steps.

CAROL

So pleased to finally meet you. I'm
Carol, from across the street. Carol and
Tom and Tom Junior who's four.

Kate, tense, keeps the door between her and the woman.

KATE

What do you want?

CAROL

I read your name on the mailbox, in case
you're wondering. You're quite the
mystery woman, you know.

KATE

I've been out of town.

CAROL

I knew it! I saw the light in your driveway last night and I said to myself, I'll bet she's been out of town and just got home. Oops, almost forgot.

She laughs and pushes the plate of cookies into Kate's hand. Kate starts easing the door shut.

CAROL

This too, save you a trip to the box.

She hands Kate a stack of mail.

CAROL

Are you free for dinner this week? What night is best for you?

Kate's knuckles whiten on the grip of the poker.

KATE

I have to go.

CAROL

Remember now, I'm just across the street.

Kate shuts the door. She sniffs the cookies suspiciously, then dumps the whole plate, and the mail, in the trash.

INT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Shoppers stroll, flowers everywhere.

Kate moves through town warily. Everything is clean, sunny, cheerful -- it's as if she's landed on an alien planet.

A WOMAN smiles brightly as she passes.

WOMAN

Good morning!

Kate gives her a look -- what the fuck? -- then continues on without answering.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

PAN the CUSTOMERS waiting in line at the register: their baskets are filled with fruits, vegetables, whole grains.

Continue the PAN to Kate, who waits with her purchase: a carton of Marlboro Reds and a fifth of tequila.

The female CUSTOMER in front of Kate turns to her, smiles, notices Kate's stolen college T-shirt.

CUSTOMER

Oh my gosh, I have that exact T-shirt.
Is this your first semester?

Kate ignores her.

CUSTOMER

This is my third year. My dad's like,
your third year and your sixth major.
But I'm like, whatever, you know?

The girl studies Kate for a beat, then lifts her hand toward Kate's face. Kate, reflex, lashes out and seizes her wrist.

CUSTOMER

(startled)
Your hair...I was just...

Kate loosens her grip on the girl's wrist.

Tentatively the girl reaches up and brushes a wayward leaf from Kate's hair. Smiles nervously.

INT. COTTAGE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Kate paces, restless and edgy.

Finally she rips open one of the cardboard boxes.

Inside: scrapbooks, photo albums. Kate flips one open.

Pasted to the first page is a birth certificate. Lily Ellen Carson. Born in Kansas City, Missouri.

She turns the page, finds an elementary school report card.

The next page: a photo-booth picture of two little girls with bangs in their eyes.

-- A photo of the two little girls laughing as their father sprays them with a garden hose.

-- A mother helping a little girl blow out the candles on a birthday cake.

CLOSE on Kate, intrigued, despite herself.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

An old, homey place, lanes filled with families and league bowlers. There's a bar attached to the far end.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY BAR - NIGHT

A little run-down, but cozy. The jukebox plays vintage Stax. PATRONS sit at the tables, chatting and laughing.

Kate enters, takes a stool at the end of the bar, as far from the other patrons as possible. She motions to the bartender.

KATE

Tequila neat, double, and a beer chaser.

BARTENDER

Right up.

Kate changes the position of her stool slightly, so she can see the door in the mirror behind the bar.

The bartender delivers her drink. Kate watches closely -- predatory habit -- as he goes to the CASH REGISTER.

Such an easy score. Kate frowns. She can't risk it.

A man slides onto the stool next to Kate. Wiley, the professor she encountered earlier in his office.

WILEY

Hi.

She ignores him.

WILEY

I don't mean to bother you...

KATE

Then don't.

Without another word she picks up her drink and moves to an empty booth.

Wiley smiles. He waits a beat, then follows her. He sits down across from her.

WILEY

I deserved that. I suppose "hi" isn't the most intriguing conversational opener in the history of the English language.

WILEY(cont'd)

I was gonna say, "So, we meet again," but that's even worse.

Kate finally glances at him.

KATE

We've never met.

WILEY

Outside my office a couple of days ago. Your hair was blonde, and longer.

KATE

You're wrong.

WILEY

I never forget a cold, dismissive look.

She gives him a cold, dismissive look.

WILEY

Like that one.

Kate downs her tequila, goes back to ignoring him.

Wiley studies her: she's really striking.

WILEY

Maybe we can try this again. My name's Wiley.

Kate lifts her glass of beer to study it. Casually, then, she pours the whole thing into Wiley's lap.

He jumps back in surprise; she slides out of the booth and heads for the exit.

Wiley watches her leave, then can't help but laugh.

INT. COTTAGE (KITCHEN) - DAY

A few COINS, tossed with a clatter onto the kitchen table. A wrinkled five-dollar bill and a couple of ones follow.

Kate takes stock of her financial situation. Not good.

INT. COTTAGE (FOYER) - DAY

Kate fishes the stack of mail out of the trash, shuffles quickly through it.

Mostly junk, but one envelope catches her eye: something from Saint Michael's College. She tears it open and scans it.

A contract. Lily Carson has been offered a job at the college, Position G4: Level II.

Kate runs her finger down the page: no details on what the job is, but the salary is two thousand a month.

KATE
(contempt)
Must be a secretary.

She tosses the contract aside, but keeps her eye on it.
Contemplates.

INT. COTTAGE (BEDROOM) - DAY

Kate dumps the contents of a box onto the bed. Sheets and towels. She grabs another box, rips it open.

Inside she finds what she's looking for: clothes.

She pulls out a peasant dress with fitted bodice and flowing skirt. Frowns.

EXT. DANTE HALL - DAY

As the chapel bell tower tolls noon, Kate strides briskly up.

She's been transformed into a completely different woman -- the peasant dress, Birkenstocks, beaded leather choker.

Only her cold, hard EYES, as she strides into a CLOSE-UP, give her away.

INT. LIBERAL ARTS OFFICE - DAY

A harried, middle-aged administrative assistant (GAIL) is photocopying stacks of papers when Kate enters.

KATE
Excuse me.

Without looking up...

GAIL
Go away. All the sections for next quarter are already filled.

Kate checks the slip of paper in her hand.

KATE
Is this the Great Books Program?

GAIL
You should have pre-registered.

KATE
I'm here about a job. My name is Lily Carson.

GAIL
You're Lily Carson?

She eyes Kate suspiciously for a beat, then smiles warmly.

GAIL
At last!

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Gail chatters as they make their way down the corridor.

GAIL
I'm so glad you were able to join us after all, Lily. We've been interviewing replacements all week, but none of them have your qualifications. How is he, by the way?

KATE
Who?

Gail gives her a glance.

GAIL
Your father.

KATE
Fine.

GAIL
I'm so glad.

KATE
It was his heart. He's fine now.

GAIL
Here we are. Your home away from home.

Gail stops in front of an office door.

GAIL

It's strange, don't you think? Finally meeting someone you've spoken with so often on the phone.

She looks closely at Kate.

GAIL

You're not quite who I imagined you'd be, for some reason, but I suppose that's usually the case.

At that moment Wiley steps out of his office down the hall. Gail greets him cheerfully.

GAIL

Professor Leland! Just the man we were looking for.

Kate recognizes him, tenses. Wiley offers Kate his hand.

WILEY

Small world.

KATE

Small town.

GAIL

Professor Leland will be your supervisor.

KATE

My supervisor?

So much for her new job. But then Wiley gives Kate a friendly smile.

WILEY

Welcome to the program.

Kate studies him, tries to read the motive behind the smile.

GAIL

So, you're all set then, Lily. See you tomorrow morning!

INT. WILEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Wiley is going through a stack of student essays when Kate steps into the office, shuts the door behind her.

KATE

What do you want?

Wiley glances up, puzzled and amused.

WILEY

In general, like an end to world hunger?
Or more selfishly, like a new DVD player?

KATE

You didn't fire me.

Wiley realizes what she's getting at. He laughs.

WILEY

The bowling alley? I'm the one who
should apologize. Both for the pass I
made at you and the clumsy nature of it.

Kate eyes him coldly. The equation is clear to her: he has
the power to fire her; he will use that power.

KATE

What do you want?

Shaking his head, smiling...

WILEY

You to let me know if there's anything I
can do to help you get settled in.

CLOSE on Kate, still wondering what Wiley's angle is, unable
to believe he doesn't have an angle.

CUT TO:

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

A KNIFE BLADE...slicing slowly through paper.

Carefully Kate removes from the scrapbook -- Lily Carson's
BIRTH CERTIFICATE...

INT. DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES - DAY

...and slides the certificate across a counter.

KATE

I need to replace a lost driver's
license.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES - DAY

A soft POP, a FLARE of light, fading until it reveals...

Kate, sitting in front of a blue curtain.

The PHOTOGRAPHER adjusts the camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER

One more, Ms. Carson. Smile, now!

As Kate stares straight ahead, unsmiling, and the camera
FLASHES again...

INT. CAMPUS CREDIT UNION - DAY

FADING to reveal, an assistant bank MANAGER, filling out a
form, finishing, smiling up at Kate.

MANAGER

OK, then. Let's get you your ATM card,
and you'll be all set.

EXT. COTTAGE - EVENING

Kate, returning home, climbs the front steps. Stops
suddenly.

On the porch -- something -- in the shadows by the door.
Kate edges closer, wary, then realizes...

A pie, a basket of freshly-baked bread.

Kate picks up the pie. Still warm. She glances at the
"Welcome, Neighbor!" card. This place. Unbelievable.

VOICE (O.S.)

Now all you need is somebody to leave you
a pint of vanilla ice cream.

Kate turns. Sees the uniform first. The badge. The gun.

A female COP (ROSA), 40s, round-faced and pretty. She makes
her way up the steps. Smiling, she offers her hand.

ROSA

Rosa Wiesnewski. Town sheriff's
department. Last name's my husband's, so
don't even ask.

Kate -- heart pounding, but she stays cool. Shakes the hand.

KATE

Lily Carson.

ROSA
Just move in?

KATE
Few days ago.

Rosa studies Kate with a level of frank, friendly interest...

KATE
How can I help you, officer?

ROSA
Please. Rosa. No one around here calls
me officer.

She looks past Kate, admires the cottage.

ROSA
Cute place. Buying or renting?

Just the slightest hesitation before Kate answers. Does the
cop notice?

KATE
Renting.

ROSA
That's right. I remember the sign out
front this summer.

She turns her attention back to Kate.

ROSA
Notice anything out of the ordinary, the
last few days?

Kate's forces a small, tight smile.

KATE
Strange pies on the porch?

Rosa laughs.

ROSA
That's Blue River Falls, for you.
Friendly place.

KATE
I've noticed.

ROSA

State police found a car abandoned out by Channel Creek. They think it might belong to a fugitive they're after.

KATE

Fugitive?

ROSA

Family down your block thought they heard a prowler last week. Probably nothing to worry about, but we have to check anyway.

KATE

I haven't noticed anything.

ROSA

No. Figured as much.

(beat)

I hate to ask, but do you think I could borrow your facilities?

Blank. Then...

KATE

The bathroom?

ROSA

I've had a cup of tea at every house on this block, I think. If you don't mind.

She has no idea how much Kate minds.

KATE

Of course not.

Kate takes out the house key, feels the cop's gaze on her as she slides it into the lock.

Doesn't fumble it, but almost. Kate opens the door. They enter the cottage.

INT. COTTAGE - EVENING

Only a few of the boxes unpacked. Most of the furniture still dust-sheeted.

ROSA

Still unpacking, I see.

Kate can't tell if the friendly, relaxed demeanor is real, or just the surface of something more complicated.

KATE
Down the hall.

ROSA
Thanks.

Rosa exits.

Kate takes a seat on the sofa. Coiled, tense, mind working.
If the cop suspects who Kate is, Kate needs to strike first.

Does she suspect?

Finally, as Kate starts to stand --

Rosa emerges, pulling her hair into a pony tail.

ROSA
You're a lifesaver. I owe you one.

KATE
Don't mention it.

Rosa is almost to the front door. Notices the SCRAPBOOK on
the mantle. Smiles.

ROSA
Third-grade report card?

KATE
And first Valentine.

ROSA
Right. My little girl's just about old
enough.

Rosa reaches over. Touches the cover of the scrapbook...

If she opens it...

She doesn't.

Starts to leave again. Pauses again.

ROSA
So, Lily, did you move here for work?

KATE
The college.

ROSA
Really? What do you do?

Not the question Kate wanted to hear; she's not sure herself.

KATE

I have some tea, if you want a cup.

Lying, bluffing. It works. Rosa laughs.

ROSA

You trying to kill me? No, thanks, I'm outta here.

She exits. Kate waits a beat, then exhales slowly.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

The next morning.

INT. KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

Small but sunny, with a nice view of the campus quad.

Kate sits at the desk, looking through drawers, wondering what she's supposed to be doing.

Gail enters, plops a stack of papers in front of Kate.

GAIL

Ready for action?

KATE

Want me to file these?

Gail gives Kate a pleasantly befuddled look.

GAIL

Pardon?

Before Kate can answer, EMILY, a cheerful 19-year-old student, enters.

EMILY

Hi!

GAIL

There you are!

(to Kate)

Emily is one of our star sophomores.

EMILY

You must be Lily. Is it OK if I call you Lily? You can call me Emily, or Emmy, or whatever.

Kate doesn't know what's going on.

KATE

Fine.

EMILY

I'm supposed to lead you over to Galileo Hall, in case you get lost, though I bet you could do just fine without me.

KATE

Galileo Hall? I thought this was my --

Emily grabs the stack of papers off the desk.

EMILY

I'll get these for you.

GAIL

Break a leg!

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Kate and Emily walk across campus. Kate has no idea where they're headed. Emily chatters non-stop.

EMILY

I was born in Tucson, but when I was seven we moved to Minneapolis, which, yeah, is a serious climate switch. Oh, my God. Are you living in town?

KATE

(distracted)

What?

INT. GALILEO HALL - DAY

Emily leads Kate down a hallway, opens a door.

EMILY

Here we are.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Kate steps inside and finds herself suddenly facing a room full of STUDENTS.

Emily gives Kate the top packet off the stack.

EMILY
I'll pass these out, OK?

As Emily starts distributing the packets, Kate looks down at the document in her hand.

A syllabus. Introduction to Greek Thought. Lily Carson, Instructor.

STUDENT #1
Professor Carson? I had a question about Agamemnon? The play we were supposed to read for today?

Kate slowly realizes she is Professor Carson.

KATE
(softly)
Fuck.

Students glance at one another. Surely she didn't just...

Abruptly Kate slaps shut her syllabus and turns for the door. The students watch her wide-eyed.

STUDENT #2
Professor Carson?

KATE
Class dismissed.

INT. DANTE HALL - DAY

Kate hurries down the corridor...

INT. GAIL'S OFFICE - DAY

...flings open the door.

KATE
When will I be paid?

GAIL
Hello there! How was your first class?

KATE
When will I be paid?

GAIL
Oh, well, paychecks are issued on the
first and the fifteenth.

KATE
Next month.

Shit.

GAIL
(cheerful)
You can do direct deposit if you open an
account at the campus credit union, or...

Kate is already gone.

INT. DANTE HALL - DAY

Kate stands at a payphone, receiver pressed to her ear.

Busy signal. She hangs up, dials the number again.

KATE
Get off the fucking phone, Worm.

Still busy. She hangs up. Slams the heel of her hand
against the wall.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY BAR - NIGHT

Kate sits at the bar, smoking a cigarette and considering her
options, none of them promising.

BARTENDER
Another beer?

KATE
Can I run a tab?

BARTENDER
Just need to swipe a credit card.

KATE
Never mind.

She sighs, stands, exits.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Kate, head down, almost collides with SOMEONE entering. She looks up.

Wiley. Great.

WILEY

Hey!

KATE

Hey.

WILEY

Still in one piece? First week of Greek Thought is always an adventure.

Kate glances off into the darkness. She considers lying, then decides it's not worth the effort.

KATE

I don't know shit about Greek Thought.

WILEY

Thank goodness.

His response throws her. She looks at him.

WILEY

Lily, relax. We know your area is Modernist Poetry. Mine's 19th-Century American Fiction. First time I stepped into a classroom and had to teach Sophocles? I thought I was gonna have a heart attack. I hadn't read Sophocles since my undergrad days.

KATE

You don't understand.

WILEY

Your job is to get the students thinking for themselves. Ask the questions, let them do the heavy lifting.

KATE

Listen --

WILEY

It's an advantage, truly, that you don't know the material well. You come to it fresh. You come to it with the students.

He smiles and gives her a reassuring tap on the shoulder.

WILEY

Trust me.

She watches him enter the bowling alley. Shakes her head.

INT. CAMPUS LIBRARY - DAY

Hushed, cool, dim. STUDENTS in carrels, studying.

FOLLOW Kate as she moves warily through the stacks, narrow aisles between tall shelves packed with books.

Finally she finds the book she's looking for: Agamemnon. She pulls the book down, opens it, frowns.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

A park in the center of town. Kate sits on an bench, reading the library copy of Agamemnon.

VOICE (O.S.)

Afternoon!

An elderly man in a jumpsuit (HERB) lowers himself gingerly onto the bench next to Kate.

HERB

Care for an apple?

Kate ignores him. He peeks at her book.

HERB

Oh, my. The Greeks. You a student up at the college?

In no mood for company...

KATE

No.

Herb contemplates the sky. Softly...

HERB

'Dear gods, set me free from all the pain, the long watch I keep, one whole year awake...'

Kate gives him a look.

KATE
You know this?

HERB
Agamemnon? I do. How do you like him,
our friend Aeschylus?

Kate shrugs, flips through the pages of the book.

KATE
I don't know.
(beat)
It's not bad, actually.

HERB
Murder and revenge, blood, power, and
poetry. Sure you don't want an apple?
Pink Lady, most underappreciated variety
in America.

On Kate, just the barest hint of a smile.

KATE
No, thanks.

HERB
See those?

He points his chin at the flower bed in front of them. Late-
summer bloomers burst with color and fragrance.

HERB
Town has a program, you see, for seniors
like myself. We get our own little
patch, plant whatever we like.

Kate notices the flowers for the first time: they're
beautiful.

Herb studies her profile. After a beat, he reaches over and
puts his hand on top of hers.

Kate's face goes instantly cold. She should have known this
was coming -- a dirty old man; in her world, the only kind.

But then...

HERB
My daughter would be about your age.

Kate is surprised, but she's not about to let her guard down
again. Tight...

KATE

And I suppose I look just like her.

Herb shakes his head.

HERB

I'm sorry. I've become weepy in my old age.

He laughs suddenly, sadly.

HERB

You look nothing like her.

He gives Kate's hand a paternal squeeze and shuffles off across the park.

Kate, disarmed, watches him go.

CUT TO:

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST (RECEPTION AREA) - DAY

The little old lady who runs the place is on the phone.

INNKEEPER

Yes, that's right. You take the Montgomery exit off Highway 15, then go nine miles west and...

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The next morning. Kate sits at the front of the classroom, her copy of Agamemnon in front of her. She's tense, nervous.

MALE STUDENT #1

So Agamemnon's been away at war and he's coming home all happy to see his kingdom and his kids and Clyta -- Clyta --

The student looks to Kate.

MALE STUDENT #1

How do you pronounce it?

She has no fucking idea.

KATE

(cautious)

How do you think it's pronounced?

The right answer: every student in the class has faced this pedagogical strategy before.

Male Student #1 studies the page in front of him.

MALE STUDENT #1

Clyta -- Clytam -- Clytaemnestra?

KATE

Go on.

MALE STUDENT #1

OK, so he's coming home and --
Clytaemnestra -- she totally ambushes
him, for no reason.

MALE STUDENT #2

I felt sorry for him. To have this wife
who lies and cheats and then kills him
the minute he gets home from war.

EMILY

But didn't -- I mean, maybe Clytaemnestra
killed Agamemnon because he'd sacrificed
their daughter to the gods?

FEMALE STUDENT #1

(agreeing)

Maybe she thought she was justified.

MALE STUDENT #3

No way! She just wanted his money.

MALE STUDENT #1

She had no right to stab him the minute
his back was turned.

He turns to Kate. The class waits for her verdict. Kate
contemplates the question, shrugs.

KATE

He shouldn't have turned his back.

Silence as the students absorb her unsettling take.

INT. KATE'S OFFICE - LATER

She's reading Sophocles now, brow furrowed in concentration.
Wiley, passing in the hall, pokes his head into her office.

WILEY

I know a pretty good place for dinner.

KATE
Not interested.

WILEY
In dinner, or having it with me?

KATE
Either.

WILEY
You have to eat.

KATE
I have to read.

WILEY
First you have to eat. I promise to have
you home to Sophocles by seven o'clock.

Kate hesitates.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

A small-town diner. FOLLOW a middle-aged WAITRESS in a pink
uniform to the booth where Wiley and Kate are seated.

WAITRESS
Hiya there, Wiley.

WILEY
Sandy. What's good tonight?

She gives Kate a wink.

WAITRESS
I'm gonna tell him the skirt steak's
good, and he's gonna order the meat loaf
anyway, just like he does every time.

WILEY
(to Kate)
Their meat loaf is excellent.

KATE
Fine.

WAITRESS
One meat loaf. And for the gentleman? I
recommend the skirt steak, sir.

WILEY
I believe I'll have the meat loaf.

The waitress gives Wiley a swat with her order pad, exits.

WILEY

I don't want you to get the impression
that my life is predictable and boring.

(beat)

It is, of course. I just don't want you
to get that impression.

Kate sips her coffee and glances around the room. She's not
used to this situation -- a friendly dinner, small talk --
and she's not sure what to make of it.

KATE

There are worse fates.

WILEY

Tell me that after you've been here
eleven years.

KATE

Long time.

WILEY

(nods)

It was supposed to be just a year, at
first, two tops, until my second novel
hit it big.

KATE

Didn't happen?

WILEY

Didn't even hit it medium.

(beat)

I've got tenure now. It's a decent
college, even though no one's heard of
it. I actually like to teach, I do, and
there are times when I can close my eyes
and pretend this, what I have here, is
exactly what I want. But...

(laughs)

OK. I'm boring myself. Bad sign.

He glances up at Kate. She notices.

KATE

What?

WILEY

Nothing. It's just -- I don't know.
Modernist poetry. A.B.D. from Harvard.
You just don't strike me as the type.

The waitress arrives with their salads, which gives Kate a chance to quickly change the subject.

KATE
Looks good.

WILEY
You just seem, I don't know, a woman with more important things on her mind than patterns of phallo-centric imagery in "The Wasteland."

Kate shrugs. They eat in silence for a beat.

KATE
I don't think this town is real.

WILEY
Real?

KATE
No real place is like this. Clean, friendly, happy. You dig and I bet it's rotten underneath, like everywhere else.

Wiley shakes his head sadly.

WILEY
What you see is what you get. I wish there was an underneath. Sometimes I think I'd do anything for a little underneath.

The waitress returns, cheerful.

WAITRESS
You all doing OK over here?

EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Wiley and Kate stroll up to the front gate of the cottage.

WILEY
If you were inclined to invite me in for a nightcap, I'd be inclined to say yes.

KATE
Listen.

WILEY
I don't like the sound of that.

KATE
You're a nice guy.

He winces.

WILEY
Even worse.

Kate smiles slightly, opens the gate.

WILEY
You'll need a ride to the department
dinner on Friday?

As she's walking up the front path, leaving Wiley standing at
the gate...

KATE
Night.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Kate, rummaging idly through Lily Carson's boxes.

A collection of CDs. Tori Amos, Natalie Merchant. Not
Kate's style, but she finds one she can live with.

As MUSIC fills the house, another box, full of videotapes.
Curious, Kate pulls one out and plugs it into the VCR.

A silent image, colors faded, flickers onto the TV screen:
it's a tape dub of an old eight-millimeter home movie.

-- The Carson family on vacation, circa 1976. A little girl,
Lily, chases her brothers down a beach. There's a boardwalk
and a ferris wheel in the background.

-- A dad laughing as he tries to flip a steak on the grill, a
mom who looks adoringly on.

-- A small dog. The kids have fashioned a mask for him, a
cape, are pretending he can fly -- Superdog!

Kate watches, hypnotized by these images of a happy, loving
childhood so -- very -- different from her own.

INT. CAMPUS GYM - DAY

A long line of Stairmasters, occupied by wholesome young
COEDS plugged into their iPods and marching in lockstep.

As we PAN the line, though, the marching starts to falter, the girls remove their headphones and glance around, puzzled.

We HEAR it too, now, over the MUSIC -- flat rapid CRACKS, one right after the other, like gunshots.

The coeds turn and there's Kate, POUNDING the heavy bag with such skill and ferocity that everyone in the room stops and gapes.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Kate, wrapped in a towel, exits the shower. She's suddenly intercepted by Emily, bouncing cheerfully up.

EMILY

Lily! Hi!

KATE

Hi.

Kate continues on. Emily follows, chattering away.

EMILY

It is so fate that I just ran into you!
There's this movie I have to see for my
Film History course, and my loser
roommate bagged on me.

Kate opens her locker and starts to dress.

KATE

I don't think so.

Emily takes Kate's hand in a way that's so friendly and familiar Kate is a little startled by it.

EMILY

Oh, please, oh, please, oh, please.
It'll be fun. It's just across campus at
the Student Union.

KATE

I have a lot of work to do.

EMILY

Don't worry, it's not like one of those
deep symbolic Swedish ones. It's scary.

KATE

I don't know...

EMILY

I'm begging, in case you haven't noticed.
I'll buy the popcorn? Please?

INT. THEATER - DAY

Peter Lorre as the child murderer in M. Frantically he tries to escape the mob of criminals who have captured him.

Kate and Emily sit together in the auditorium. Emily is snuggled up against Kate, sharing her popcorn and pointing out details on the screen.

Kate glances at Emily, who is absorbed in the movie. The genuine warmth and casual intimacy coming from Emily -- Kate's never experienced anything like it. Kate finds it weird and suspicious and --

Kind of nice, actually.

CLOSE on Peter Lorre, his tormented face streaming sweat as he pleads to his jurors that he had no choice.

EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

Early the next morning. Kate sits alone on her front porch, smoking and watching the sun rise.

Herb, the elderly man from the park, comes around the corner, walking an old golden retriever.

HERB

Why, hello there!

Kate hesitates, then tilts her head at the pot of coffee on the table next to her.

KATE

Coffee?

Herb hitches up his pants, and makes his way over. The dog hobbles along, as happy for company as Herb is.

HERB

Another early-riser, I see. Another
afficiando of the all-American sunrise.

Kate pours him a cup and Herb sits down next to her.

KATE

Black?

HERB

And strong.

Herb's dog has flopped down between them and is panting happily. Kate strokes the dog's head with her bare foot.

They sit in silence for a beat, watch the sun spread across the horizon, the sky turn pink.

KATE

This is my favorite time of day.

Herb nods.

HERB

First light.

KATE

Last chance.

He looks at her, curious.

Kate is suddenly embarrassed.

KATE

I don't know what I mean.

Herb ponders.

HERB

Maybe you mean it makes you feel hopeful
and doomed all at the same time.

She glances at him: he's hit somewhere close to the truth.

INT. STINSON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Old and sprawling and charming. Hundreds of books,
mismatched antique furniture, vintage French movie posters.

Kate and Wiley enter. He's been here a million times, she's
never seen anything like it.

WILEY

(under his breath)

A little claustrophobic, I know.

Looking around in wonder --

KATE

It's amazing.

A tall silver-haired woman (JANET STINSON) sweeps down on them. She clasps Kate's hand in both of hers.

JANET

Ah, Lily Carson! Our newest addition.
Welcome to our home, dear, where you
shall always be welcome.

Kate studies her. Such warmth and kindness: it can't be real. Can it?

WILEY

Janet and Marvin are always taking in
strays. I slept here myself for the
better part of a month when...

He realizes where this is going. Oops.

WILEY

I forget the exact circumstances. It was
long ago.

JANET

It was last autumn, I believe.

Wiley blushes. Kate notices.

WILEY

Thank you for the clarification, Janet.

JANET

A star-crossed romance. Our Professor
Leland here, you see, is an unrepentant
New Critic, and the young woman in
question was a Post-Modernist of the
fiercest sort.

WILEY

The young woman in question kicked me out
of our apartment when I refused to
concede that the author was dead.

JANET

Being an author yourself.

WILEY

Exactly.

Janet winks and offers Kate her arm.

JANET

Shall we to table, dear?

INT. STINSON'S HOUSE - LATER

Three couples gathered around the big dining room table. In addition to Janet Stinson, there's MARVIN, her husband, plus NANCY, another professor, and her husband, CAL.

Good wine, good food, fire roaring in the hearth, conversations overlapping.

MARVIN
Do you really think so?

WILEY
What did you want to be, when you were a kid?

NANCY
I do. I think Lear is quite accessible, if you take it slowly.
(beat)
Oh, Cal, you have to tell.

CAL, is a big BIG roly-poly guy in his 40s, big bushy beard.

CAL
A jockey.

A pause in the whirlwind. Then laughter.

MARVIN
A jockey? Who rides racehorses?

CLOSE on Kate, watching as if from a distance, fascinated by the genuine warmth of the friendship in front of her.

JANET
Lear is so gloomy, though, don't you think? For 19-year-olds?

WILEY
King Lear's not gloomy. It's profound. It's heartbreaking. Not gloomy.

NANCY
I wanted to be a construction worker and build tunnels, which OK, I know, has all sorts of psycho-sexual implications.

Janet turns to Kate who is seated next to her.

JANET
Lily, dear, I have a question for you.

Kate tenses. A question about King Lear?

JANET

Do you think our students should be
coddled or cowed?

Everyone waits for her response. She thinks.

KATE

Yes.

Laughter. Janet beams, refills her glass.

JANET

Well spoken.

EXT. HILLTOP - NIGHT

Overlooking the town and the campus. Kate and Wiley sit on
the grass, sharing a six-pack and admiring the star-lit view.

WILEY

Survive it?

KATE

It was fine.

WILEY

Boring, I know.

KATE

It was fun.

She means it, to her own surprise.

WILEY

Sometimes the students come up here in
the winter and build a big bonfire. Or
so I've heard. No faculty allowed.

KATE

I'd hope not.

Kate stretches out on her back, as relaxed as we've ever seen
her. The alcohol, partly, but something more than that too.

WILEY

I could have sworn you had blonde hair.
The first time I saw you?

KATE

No.

WILEY

I like it dark, of course.

KATE

What a relief.

WILEY

Well. Yeah. Never let it be said that I don't know how to deliver a devastatingly charming compliment.

He is charming, in an endearingly clumsy and good-natured way; Kate is starting discover even she is not immune.

KATE

So did you bring, what was she, the Post-Modernist up here?

Shakes his head.

WILEY

Just once. Allergies. She swelled up, hives, the whole nine yards.

KATE

Romantic.

WILEY

She was allergic to I mean everything. Grass, cats, pollen, perfume, wheat. She lived on canned chicken, which let me tell you is not the most pleasant smell in the world. Hot day, small apartment.

KATE

I'll take your word for it.

WILEY

And remember, this is what lends the narrative its real tragic-comic punch...

KATE

She dumped you.

WILEY

Exactly.

Kate laughs and it's startling: until now we've never seen her do anything more than smile in the tightest, most guarded way possible.

This laugh opens up her face, provides a glimpse of something young and sweet and natural beneath the hard shell.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Kate stands in line. Her cart is filled, this time, with fruits and vegetables, pasta, milk.

CASHIER
Morning, Lily!

KATE
Hi, Sally.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

A YOUNG MAN holds the door for Kate as she exits with her bags. She catches a glimpse of her reflection in the store window.

Stops her in her tracks.

The clothes, the grocery bags, her own face, the edges of which seem somehow to have softened a little.

Kate gazes at her reflection with wonder, then turns and surveys the sunny, idyllic town behind her.

She can't quite believe it -- the life she's found herself suddenly living.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The kitchen, later that evening. PAN the counter loaded with cans, scrubbed vegetables, a collander, and finally --

One of Lily Carson's cookbooks propped open.

Kate CHOPS onions awkwardly, glancing occasionally at the recipe. She can pick a lock or steal a car, but this...

A SPLASH as a pot on the stove boils over. Kate grabs for it, laughing at herself.

KATE
Shit!

The doorbell CHIMES and the laughing stops on a dime.

Kate glides silently to the front door, peeks warily through the curtains. Relaxes.

She opens the door for --

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Emily, who stands on the front porch, head thrown back in a supermodel pose.

EMILY

You like?

New earrings. Kate smiles.

KATE

Yeah.

EMILY

Bitchin, huh? And they were only really expensive, as opposed to being ridiculously expensive.

Kate hesitates, then lifts a hand and tentatively touches Emily's ear, angles the earring to the light.

KATE

Definitely bitchin.

Emily is peeking around Kate into the cottage.

EMILY

You have such a great place. I hope I'm not interrupting anything or anything? I was thinking maybe you might want some company, maybe. Am I?

KATE

What?

EMILY

Interrupting anything?

Pause.

KATE

Do you know how to make spaghetti sauce?

Emily cocks an eyebrow at her.

EMILY

Do I know how to make spaghetti sauce?

Kate cocks an eyebrow back at her.

KATE

Do you?

INT. COTTAGE - LATER

LAUGHTER...

Kitchen table, the remains of dinner in front of them. Kate lifts the bottle of red and pours the last of it.

EMILY

I was so embarrassed. I just, you know, sat there.

KATE

Happens to everyone.

EMILY

You're lying.

KATE

Yes.

More laughter, fading as they pause to sip wine.

EMILY

Lily, do you think you're born who you are?

Emily's face has grown suddenly contemplative and sad.

KATE

What do you mean?

EMILY

Do you think you're born, you know, the person you're always going to be? And then you stay that person until you die?

KATE

Why do you ask?

Silence.

EMILY

My mom. She died when I was ten. She killed herself, actually. I mean. Yeah. She did. She was just so sad all the time. There was nothing we could do to make her feel better.

Kate doesn't know what to say. What can you say?

EMILY

I've always wondered, you know, if the same thing is going to happen to me. If I'm, like, destined?

KATE

Destined?

EMILY

Like Oedipus. I mean, he had no choice, did he? He was doomed because who he was, and he couldn't change that.

Interesting question. Kate gazes down into her wine glass.

EMILY

Is that the way life works?

Emily wants comfort; she wants to hear about the power of individual choice and how we all create our own destinies.

Kate, though, is lost in her own thoughts; maybe she needs to hear the same thing too.

KATE

I don't know.

EXT. CAMPUS AND SURROUNDING HILLS - DAY

Autumn is in full swing now, a snap in the air. The leaves of the trees are afire - brilliant reds, yellows, oranges.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A boisterous, good-natured discussion, in full swing.

MALE STUDENT #1

No way, no way, no way.

FEMALE STUDENT #1

Yes! Antigone stood up for what she believed was right.

MALE STUDENT #1

But that's not -- I mean, that's not necessarily a good thing.

He glances at Kate.

MALE STUDENT #1

Is it?

KATE

Is it?

MALE STUDENT #1

OK. Well. What if what Antigone thought
was right was really wrong? What if her
principles were, like, flawed.

Kate nods, encouraging him.

KATE

So what, then? Is Antigone a hero
because she stands up for her religion?
Or is she just this stubborn little
princess who wants her way?

Several students launch enthusiastically in at the same time.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

As Kate leaves her classroom, she's surrounded by adoring
students, asking questions and hanging on her every word.

When she finally finishes with the last groupie, Kate notices
Wiley leaning against the wall, watching and smiling wryly.

WILEY

Not good.

KATE

No?

WILEY

My streak of Most Popular Professor
awards appears to be in jeopardy.

KATE

You'll always be my favorite professor.

He blushes a little, despite his best efforts.

WILEY

Well. That's something, I suppose.
Though it's no imitation oak plaque,
embossed with a golden quill and my name
spelled, usually, wrong.

KATE

You didn't tell me there was an imitation
oak plaque involved. I better start
easing off on the homework.

WILEY

What till you hit Aristotle, mister.
That separates the men from the boys.

KATE

There's a difference?

He smiles. They walk.

WILEY

My life is in your hands. I warn you,
before you tell me you're busy tonight.

KATE

I'm busy tonight.

WILEY

Three of my students are in a band.

KATE

Uh-oh.

WILEY

Worse. Ska-punk with a hip-hop vibe.
Quote unquote.

KATE

Much worse.

WILEY

Two hours. Please. In the morning it'll
all just seem like a bad dream.

Kate smiles.

KATE

How can I resist?

INT. STUDENT UNION - NIGHT

Ska-punk band with a hip-hop vibe. Just as awful as you'd
expect, but lots of energy.

Big CROWD of kids pumping to the beat. Wiley and Kate, the
old folks, have retreated to the back of the room.

WILEY

They're not bad, actually.

A look from Kate.

WILEY

OK, they're bad, I know they're bad, but they're loud. Yes?

KATE

Which ones are yours?

WILEY

The lead singer, the bass player, and the girl who does the -- I'm not sure what she does.

Two YOUNG WOMEN bounce up and grab Wiley by the wrist.

YOUNG WOMAN #1

Professor Leland! You've got to come shake it with us!

WILEY

Do what? No!

YOUNG WOMAN #2

You too, Professor Carson!

KATE

Oh, no.

Both girls grinning --

YOUNG WOMAN #2

Can't hear you!

They grab Kate too and start dragging. By the time the song kicks into the bridge Wiley and Kate find themselves, somehow, in the middle of the mosh pit.

After a few bars they both surrender, start moving to the beat.

Not bad. The band has found, at least temporarily, a nice groove. Wiley and Kate dance. Laughing. Moving closer and closer to one another.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wiley and Kate in bed. Long pale limbs tangled in the moonlight, teeth against skin, sweat.

The sex is rough and gentle, hot and slow. Kate on top now, hair in her face. A sweet, wicked smile.

INT. KATE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Early morning. The room filled with a soft gray light.

Wiley lies in bed, propped on one elbow. Lightly he drags his fingers across Kate's naked body, admiring it.

Thigh, hip, waist, stomach -- it's a body worth admiring.

WILEY

Well, if I'd known it was gonna be that spectacular, I would have let you do me long ago.

She tucks her hair behind her ear and laughs -- once more we're struck: how sweet and young her face can be.

KATE

Yeah?

WILEY

How did you get this?

Drowsy, happy, she lifts her head.

KATE

Mmmm?

WILEY

This scar, on your leg.

Where she was shot; where she patched herself together.

KATE

That.

WILEY

Looks fresh.

KATE

Mountain biking. A few weeks before school started.

WILEY

And this?

A pale branch of forked lighting on her back, about three inches long.

Without missing a beat --

KATE

Family vacation when I was eight. We
spent the whole summer at the beach. I
remember

She closes her eyes.

KATE

-- there was a boardwalk, and a ferris
wheel.

Something familiar about this...

KATE

We had a dog, a lab, and my brothers and
I used to put a towel on him like a cape.
We called him Superdog, and we pretended
he could fly. I fell down, one time,
onto a piece of jagged old driftwood.

A scene stolen from the home movies she watched earlier.

KATE

My dad came running. He patched me up,
then lifted me up and went charging like
a wild man right into the surf,
hollering. I couldn't stop laughing.

Wiley smiles, kisses her ear. Kate keeps her eyes closed,
holds tightly to the memory until it's almost as if she
believes it really happened to her.

KATE

It was like I was never gonna stop
laughing.

EXT. CAMPUS STADIUM - DAY

The next day. Kate and Emily jog leisurely around the track.
Kate is practically glowing, she's in such a good mood. So
is Emily, for that matter.

EMILY

He's so totally gorgeous. He's in my art
class. He has this really dark hair, and
these really pale blue eyes.

Kate smiles.

KATE

Sounds OK.

They stop running and spread out on the grass to stretch.
Emily glances slyly over at Kate.

EMILY

So how about you? Who's the guy has you
so wrecked?

Kate blushes, flustered. Is it that obvious?

KATE

Nobody. I'm not...I'm just...

It is that obvious. Kate laughs, gives up on the half-
hearted denial.

KATE

It's weird. It's like I'm falling from a
thousand feet up and...I don't mind.

EMILY

Sounds like love.

Kate looks at her, sincere in her curiosity.

KATE

It does?

EXT. TOWN - DUSK

A Halloween jack-o-lantern in the window of the market.

A FAIRY PRINCESS and a WICKED WITCH skip, laughing, down the
sidewalk. MOM follows, smiling.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A candle-lit booth for two by the window.

WILEY

So, what about you? What about the men
in your past. Men who you loved or were
loved by. Or both, possibly.

KATE

Nothing too serious.

WILEY

No extra-special ex-boyfriend? The one from grad school you left behind and now lies awake pining for you, remembering the way your skin tastes when it's been warmed by the sun --

Teasing...

KATE

You want some privacy for this?

WILEY

Natural curiosity. I stand by it.

KATE

There was one guy. In high school. We went to the prom together. Under the Sea.

We're back to images from the home movies, the scrap book.

WILEY

With those lights that make it look like you're under the --

KATE

Right. We went sailing afterwards. His dad had a boat. A bunch of us, friends. It was a full moon and it was like the water had veins of silver running through it. Everybody laughing.

Vivid, happy memories -- not Kate's, of course, but she's inhabiting them fully.

KATE

He was my first, I think.

Wiley laughs.

WILEY

You think?

Kate realizes her slip-up, recovers quickly.

KATE

Well, define it, you know? Officially. It was pretty borderline.

WILEY

I had one of those too. Lots of fumbling.

KATE
(teasing)
Like you and me?

A PASSERBY taps on the window and waves to Wiley. Wiley waves back, then sighs.

WILEY
I hate this town.

There's something uncharacteristically sharp in his tone.

KATE
What's to hate?

He grins, reaches across the table, kisses her.

WILEY
Nothing now.

EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Laughing, Kate and Wiley, arm in arm, make their way up the front steps. Kate unlocks the door and they step inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

WILEY
And my Roman/Christian students persist
in pronouncing Aeneas as "Anus."

Kate laughs and flips on the light switch and --

-- nothing. The house stays dark.

Instantly Kate tenses.

VOICE FROM THE DARKNESS
Trick or treat.

A lamp clicks on and Kate sees --

SIMMS...

sprawled on the couch...

grinning...

a silencer-fitted .38 laid across his lap.

WILEY

What's going on here?

Kate moves to her left, but WORM steps out of the shadows...

Gun drawn.

WORM

(nervous)

Sorry, Kate. Nothing personal.

Simms smiles.

SIMMS

Worm here's the one, Katie, can you believe it? Running the call back, getting the number. Still has a few brain cells uncooked, apparently. The rest was just connect the dots.

Kate stares at Worm without expression.

KATE

You're a dead man.

Simms stands, takes a closer look at her, top to bottom.

SIMMS

Look at you, Kate. What happened here? You look like a fucking soccer mom.

WILEY

Kate? You've made a mistake. This woman, she's not -- her name is Lily Carson. She's, we're both professors, at the college.

Simms gives him a glance, laughs unpleasantly.

SIMMS

Did you check page two of your sweetie's resume, professor? Katie here's a bad, bad girl. Am I right, Worm?

Worm, shaky, doesn't need to be reminded how lethal Kate is.

WORM

Yeah, man.

Simms nods and Worm forces Wiley to his knees, starts lashing his hands behind his back with duct tape.

SIMMS

Bank guard in '98, Brinks driver in '99,
double points for a state trooper in '02.
And that's just the shit I was in with.

WILEY

What? What are you -- this is
ridiculous. This woman's name is Lily
Carson. I can assure you --

Simms gestures, bored, with the .38.

SIMMS

Tell Poindexter here to shut the fuck up,
Katie.

WILEY

You're making a --

Quietly, without taking her eyes off Simms, off the gun...

KATE

Shut up, Wiley.

Wiley, mouth open.

SIMMS

Tell me where your half is.

KATE

Or you'll kill me?

Simms shrugs.

SIMMS

I'm gonna kill you whether you tell me or
not.

KATE

You think if I had the money I'd be here?

SIMMS

Maybe you figured I'd figure that.

KATE

It was Omar who ripped you off, Simms.
Get him and --

SIMMS

Omar? Already cooked and cleaned. He
lacked your talent for going poof.

Worm, who's finished binding Wylie, is getting jittery.

WORM

C'mon, man. Let's do this.

Simms nods, lifts his gun.

Abruptly --

KATE

My third of the score is in the attic.

Simms lowers his gun.

SIMMS

Your third?

Kate looks over at Worm, meaningfully.

Simms follows her gaze.

Worm is the last person to realize what's happening.

WORM

What? No. Simms, man, she's --

KATE

Worm. You greedy fucker. Now we're both gonna die.

Worm swings his gun from Kate to Simms, then back again to Simms, unsure who he should fear the most.

SIMMS

Is this true, Worm? Have you too betrayed me?

He smiles calmly, but now he's got his gun on Worm.

WORM

No, man. She's lying, man.

Simms tilts his head, ponders.

SIMMS

Probably. Though there's a certain logic to the allegation. You rat Katie here, that gets rid of the one person who can rat you.

Worm's got his gun trained exclusively on Simms now.

WORM

(pleading)

She's fucking with your mind, man.

SIMMS
Is that right?

As Simms takes a step toward Worm --

Kate dives and rolls.

Worm, reflex, swings his gun around to follow her and --

Simms FIRES.

Worm drops his gun, drops to his knees, hit in the chest.
Face twisted, one hand pressed to his cheek.

Hoarse...

WORM
Wait.

Simms FIRES again. Worm falls, dead.

Simms steps over the body. Kate has vanished.

Coldly, softly...

SIMMS
Nowhere to hide, Katie.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

TRACK with Simms as he stalks silently through the rooms of
the darkened house.

Hallway. Bedroom. Dining room.

No sign of Kate until --

A CLATTER from the kitchen.

Simms smiles.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Simms whips around the corner, gun ready.

The kitchen is empty. The glass tea KETTLE sits on the
stove, water boiling.

Simms looks around, nonplussed.

The kettle begins to WHISTLE shrilly.

As Simms reaches to remove the kettle from the flame...

Kate steps out from behind the pantry door and flings a can of soup at the kettle.

The kettle SHATTERS, scalding Simms. He bellows in pain and drops his gun, which --

SKIDS across the linoleum.

Kate lunges for the gun, but Simms is on her before she can reach it.

She fights back, SLAMS him into the wall, tackles him to the floor amid the shattered glass, starts PUNCHING hard.

Simms manages to flip her. He gets on top and presses his forearm against her throat, starts to choke her.

VOICE (O.S.)

Freeze!

Simms glances up, at --

Wiley, in the doorway. Worm's gun in his hand.

Simms, amused...

SIMMS

Freeze? Like on TV?

Kate can't breathe. Her fingers claw the floor, trying to reach...

...Simms's GUN.

...hopelessly out of reach.

Wiley, tries to blink the sweat out of his eyes. His hands tremble, but he keeps the gun on Simms.

WILEY

Let her go!

Simms clenches his teeth and presses his forearm even tighter against Kate's throat. Grins over at Wiley.

SIMMS

Give me one second, professor. I'll be right with you. Take a number and --

Suddenly --

Simms's expression changes. He opens his mouth wide, as if he's about to yawn, and gazes, surprised, up at the ceiling.

SIMMS

Oh.

Wiley, confused.

WILEY

What...?

Kate YANKS hard...

A RIPPING sound...

Simms topples off her, BLOOD everywhere.

Kate, GASPING for breath, rolls onto him. In her HAND --

A jagged SHARD of the shattered glass kettle.

Wiley, stunned.

Kate crouches atop Simms, presses the shard to his throat.

Waits until she's sure he's dead.

CAMERA moves up and away, leaves her crouched there, a pool of blood spreading across the pale kitchen floor.

INT. DINING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Wiley, shaken, sits at the table. Kate pours him tequila.

Wiley's HAND shakes as he lifts the glass to his mouth.

Kate walks to the window, lights a cigarette, gazes out into the darkness.

Silence. Then...

WILEY

I didn't...I didn't know you smoked.

Among other things. The irony of the observation strikes him and he laughs weakly.

WILEY

What he said. It's true?

Without looking at him --

KATE

Give me an hour. Before you call the cops.

WILEY

It was self-defense. You can explain to the police that...

He realizes how absurd this advice is.

KATE

Give me an hour.

Wiley downs his drink. Makes a decision.

WILEY

Do you have a tarp or something?

A glance, finally.

KATE

What?

WILEY

Something we can wrap them in, the -- the bodies. We have to get rid of them.

He stands, nods to himself, resolute.

WILEY

And a shovel. The garage probably, right?

She puts a hand on his arm to stop him.

KATE

I'm not a good person.

She tilts her head at the house around her.

KATE

I'm not this person.

He continues past.

WILEY

I know a place.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Deep in the woods, the black hour before dawn.

The SCRAPE of a shovel, the HISS of dirt flung aside.

Wiley and Kate drag a body, wrapped in a painter's dropcloth, from his car to the hole they've just dug.

Wrestle it into the grave, drop it atop the other body.

Wiley pauses a beat, wondering maybe if all this is just a dream, then reaches for the shovel.

In the soft GLOW of the headlights, Kate starts stripping down to her underwear.

WILEY

What are you doing?

She kicks her blood-stained clothes into the hole, her shoes.

KATE

No loose ends.

He processes.

WILEY

Right.

EXT. COTTAGE - SUNRISE

Wiley pulls his car into the driveway, puts it in park.

INT. CAR - SUNRISE

He looks across at Kate. Awkward silence.

WILEY

Well, I guess I should...I'd better go.

KATE

Yeah.

Out and gone, before he has a chance to say anything else.

INT. SHOWER - DAY

Kate lets the hot water pour over, pretends it's just this easy -- to wash away the past like you wash away dirt, blood.

She rests her head hopelessly against the wall: her fairy-tale vacation from real life, from her real self, is over.

The RUSTLE of the curtain as someone else enters the shower.

Kate keeps her eyes closed because she's wished this, knows it can't be true.

HANDS on her shoulders as Wiley moves slowly up behind her.

Kate turns, tries to read the motive in his eyes.

WILEY

Kate.

He kisses her.

TNT. BEDROOM - DAY

Morning.

Kate sits on the side of the bed, watches Wiley sleep. Tries to understand this new twist her life has taken.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

STUDENT #1

I think Socrates knows exactly what he's doing. It just seem like he doesn't know the answer, so the other guy will have to, you know, figure it out himself.

STUDENT #2

Like Professor Carson does to us.

Laughter. Kate, distracted, glances up from her book.

KATE

What?

More laughter.

STUDENT #1

Exactly.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

The dining room. Kate and Wiley are finishing dinner.

KATE

More?

WILEY

Um...

She smiles.

KATE

I'm sorry.

WILEY

It wasn't bad, really.

KATE

You've had worse?

WILEY

Well.

A lull in the chit-chat. Not awkward, exactly, but there's something hanging in the air.

Kate refills her glass of wine, gazes into it for a beat.

KATE

I was 14 years old.

WILEY

You don't have to tell me this.

KATE

My mother died, which was a blessing, but the foster family wasn't any better.

WILEY

Stop.

She shrugs.

KATE

Not a very interesting story. Lots of cliches. One-dimensional characters.

WILEY

You don't need to tell me this.

KATE

The father who fucked me. The mother who beat me. The uncle who fed me ludes when he fucked me so I wouldn't put up a fight. I split the day after the second Christmas. Took a bus to California.

He reaches across the table, takes her hand in his.

KATE

I turned tricks for a couple of years. A few years. I did a lot of drugs. When I was, I don't know, maybe 19, I met this guy who robbed banks for a living.

WILEY

Simms?

She shakes her head.

KATE

This was strictly little league. Two or three grand a pop if we were lucky. But I liked it. I was good at it.

(beat)

I'd never been good at anything before in my life, you know?

WILEY

What happened then?

KATE

What happens. Your life becomes your life. I didn't give it much thought, one way or another.

Something in the way she cuts her eyes away from him...

WILEY

But now?

KATE

I don't know.

(beat)

When I came here I had no idea. I knew who I was. I knew what I wanted.

(beat)

I never imagined a life like this. I never imagined I could be this person.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Students hurry to class.

INT. KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kate gazes thoughtfully out the window.

A KNOCK. She smiles, stands, crosses to the door.

KATE

You're early, I thought --

But it's not Wiley. It's Rosa, the town cop.

ROSA

Hi, there! Remember me?

Kate's smile vanishes.

KATE

Rosa.

ROSA

Good memory. Me, I have to write
everything down or I lose it forever.

She displays her notebook as evidence.

ROSA

Such as: Lily Carson, works at college.
Didn't tell me you're a professor.
Impressive.

KATE

(tense)

Just one class.

ROSA

I barely squeaked through j.c., myself.
Too many parties. What do you teach?

KATE

Introduction to Greek Thought.

ROSA

Very impressive. Like, Plato?

KATE

And Aristotle. Aeschylus, Sophocles.

ROSA

I've never even heard of those last two.
I'd love to take a class. Three kids,
though, you know. Two dogs, a husband.
Not in order of highest maintenance.

Kate finally manages a smile.

KATE

Just in the neighborhood?

ROSA

I wanted to run this by you. We've got a photo, finally, of our fugitive-slash-potential-prowler. The FBI faxed it out.

KATE

A photo?

Kate's heart stops beating.

Rosa, cheerful, hands Kate the picture.

ROSA

Ever seen this guy around?

Kate looks down at the mug shot...

A heavy-set MAN with shaved head, tear-drop tattoos.

Kate's heart...beating again.

KATE

No.

ROSA

Name's Omar Morales. Wanted for a bank job last month. You sure?

Kate hands the photo back. Is her hand trembling with relief? Does Rosa notice?

KATE

Sorry.

ROSA

Don't be sorry. Personally, I hope he's a thousand miles from here.

Turns to go, then pauses.

ROSA

They think he might be with a pal from the bank job. She's even a harder case than Omar, if that's possible.

KATE

She?

ROSA

Five-ten, blonde hair, 30s. Her name's Kate Mills, aka Jessica Donoghue, aka Melissa Sanders, etc.

KATE

They have a photo?

ROSA

Nothing useful. She did some time, but
that was 10, 12 years ago. She'd be a
different woman now.

(beat)

Class?

KATE

Five minutes.

ROSA

I'd love to sit in some time, if that's
cool.

Watching Kate, smiling pleasantly...

CLOSE on Kate as she tries to read Rosa's expression, tries
to decide if she suspects.

Even CLOSER as Kate decides it doesn't really matter: she
can't take the risk.

A smile, now, to match Rosa's.

KATE

Any time.

INT. WILEY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Kate, on the sofa, gives Wiley a shoulder rub.

WILEY

Ouch.

KATE

Too hard?

WILEY

Too strong.

KATE

Sorry.

WILEY

You seem distracted tonight.

Watching the fire crackle in the fireplace...

KATE

No.

WILEY

Can I -- do you mind if I ask you a question?

KATE

Probably.

WILEY

What does it feel like? To walk into a bank. Knowing you might not walk out.

Not a question she was expecting. Ponders...

KATE

My first score, I remember, I was scared after it was all over. But during I felt -- I felt drowsy, actually.

WILEY

Drowsy?

He turns so he can look at her.

KATE

And every time since. A little drowsy. Just very, very calm.

She glances away, suddenly shy.

KATE

It's strange talking about it. I'm not, you know, I'm not exactly in the habit.

WILEY

Does it get easier, like they say?

KATE

What?

WILEY

Does it get easier, each time, the more people you, you know...

KATE

The more people you kill?

She shrugs, truthful, and starts rubbing his shoulders again.

KATE

The first time wasn't that hard.

EXT. WILEY'S PLACE - NIGHT

His front porch.

WILEY

Sure you don't want to stay the night?

KATE

Can't. Work to do.

WILEY

Euripides?

She kisses him.

KATE

Sleep tight.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A quiet, tree-lined residential street.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A two-story house. A little worn around the edges, but nice.

A tricycle in the front yard, tipped on its side.

EXT. HOUSE/SIDE YARD - NIGHT

Crouched, in the shadows...KATE.

She unzips a backpack, removes Simms's GUN.

Her face is expressionless as she screws on the silencer.

INT. HOUSE- NIGHT

CAMERA tracks slowly through the kitchen, finding first --

A LITTLE BOY, 8, sitting at the table, preparing a magic trick involving cups, quarters, a cone made from newspaper.

LITTLE BOY

Don't peek!

His SISTER, 6, waits patiently at the other end of the table, hands over her eyes.

SISTER

I'm not!

LITTLE BOY

Mom!

MOM (O.S.)

Are you peeking, Penny?

SISTER

I'm not!

LITTLE BOY

Mom!

Finally the CAMERA finds --

Rosa, the cop. She's the mom, laughing and doing dishes.

Teasing him...

ROSA

If it's magic, Charlie, why can't she
peek?

EXT. HOUSE/BACK YARD - NIGHT

Kate moves silently around the corner. Toward --

Sliding glass doors, spilling light into the dark yard.

Kate, only a few feet away from the doors. In the darkness,
she's invisible to those inside the brightly-lit kitchen.

The scene before her: mom and kids, gathered around the
table. The little boy performs his magic trick.

Kate lifts the gun.

Hesitates.

Then a shift in the light and the glass swims for an instant,
Kate finds herself gazing at...

Her own reflection...

Gun raised, face hard and expressionless.

A stranger's face?

The sound of LAUGHTER from inside.

INT. HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Voila!

Whoops. The quarters are still there.

The little boy scratches his head, puzzled. His sister claps anyway, laughs with delight.

ROSA

I see! You made them vanish, then you made them re-appear. Two tricks in one!

Uncertain...

LITTLE BOY

Yeah.

The DOOR BELL rings. Dogs, somewhere in the house, start to bark excitedly.

ROSA

I'll get it.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Rosa, trying to hold back a couple of friendly yellow labs, opens the front door.

Surprised...

ROSA

Oh!

Kate, standing on the porch.

KATE

It's late. I'm sorry.

ROSA

No, not at all. How did -- hold on?

She manages to get the dogs stuffed back into the house, steps out onto the porch and closes the door behind her.

KATE

I hope I'm not bothering you.

ROSA

Of course not. Is there -- do you want to come in? Have a cup of tea?

KATE

No, thanks. I just wanted to drop this by.

She reaches into her backback. Takes out a paperback copy of Agamemnon.

KATE

This is the one we start with. If you're interested.

ROSA

Wow. Thanks. I don't --

KATE

It's late. I better be going.

She turns to go. She's almost to the sidewalk when...

ROSA

Lily?

KATE

Yes?

ROSA

I was going to call you tomorrow. Not that you really care, but.

KATE

About?

ROSA

The guy whose picture I showed you? They found him. Bullet to the head.

Kate considers.

KATE

And his partner?

ROSA

She's dead too, they figure. Whoever got Omar. Case closed.

KATE

Case closed?

ROSA

Now I'll have time to read this. You
sure you don't want to come in?

Kate absorbs the information she's just received. Simms is
dead. Omar is dead. The case is closed: she's free.

A little dazed by the revelation...

KATE

No. Thanks.

EXT. TOWN - NIGHT

Early December now - the trees and storefronts along Main
Street are strung with twinkling Christmas lights.

No snow yet, but the promise of it is in the air.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

FOLLOW the RUMBLE of a 16-pounder down the alley, dead in the
pocket. The pins EXPLODE and --

Kate laughs -- she's rolled a strike.

The audience WHOOPS and CHEERS: Cal, Nancy, Emily.

Wiley smiles as Kate saunters past, takes her wrist and pulls
her onto his lap.

KATE

Don't feel bad, baby, I win at
everything.

Nancy picks up a spare. Kate cheers, then glances at Wiley.
Notices something, subtle, in his expression...

KATE

Why are you looking at me like that?

WILEY

Like what?

She shakes her head, then kisses him.

EMILY

Smile, you guys!

A FLASH of light as Emily, with a Polaroid camera, captures the moment for posterity.

I/E. WILEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Driving. Soft music on the radio. Kate's head on Wiley's shoulder.

Her face: eyes closed, peaceful, happier than she's ever been in her life, drifting off to sleep.

Suddenly, though, Wiley pulls the car over.

Kate lifts her head.

KATE

What's wrong?

He sighs.

WILEY

Nothing's wrong. Nothing's ever wrong.

KATE

I don't understand.

WILEY

Bowling, every Friday night for 11 years.
Department meeting every Wednesday.
Dinner at Janet and Marvin's. The same
people, the same conversations.

KATE

I like these people. Nancy and Cal. The
Stinsons.

WILEY

Janet: worried about spring enrollments.
Marvin: teach Hamlet instead of Lear?

KATE

They're nice people. They're nice, kind,
funny people.

WILEY

Nancy: who will be the department chair
when Lashof retires. Cal --

KATE

Do you know what a gift it is? Nothing
but spring enrollments to worry about?

Wiley looks at her, shakes his head. Yeah, sure, he understands what she's saying, at some level, but...

WILEY
Sometimes I envy you. I envy the...the
life you've led.

Kate looks at him. Is he joking?

WILEY
I mean, I don't envy all the, all the...
(beat)
You've been awake, Kate. You haven't
slept away years. That night with Simms.
I was terrified, but I was also
exhilarated. I felt alive.

Astounded: she doesn't know what to say.

Silently he starts the car again, pulls back onto the street.

INT. KATE'S OFFICE DAY

A female student (TAMRA) sits across from Kate with a stricken expression

TAMRA
I know, Professor Carson. The paper's
due in like two weeks and I don't know
what to write about.

KATE
What about the books interested you?

TAMRA
I don't know. Could you -- could you
maybe just tell me?

KATE
Tell you what interested you?

TAMRA
That would be so great.

Kate laughs, but warmly.

KATE
Give it a try, OK?

Tamra sighs, then brightens.

TAMRA

I thought the chorus was weird. How in
Aeschylus it's different than Sophocles?
I made little notes in my book.

Kate smiles. Tamra blinks.

TAMRA

I can write about that?

KATE

Why don't you give me a draft next week.
We can go over it before you have to turn
something in for a grade.

Tamra stands, excited, starts gathering her papers.

TAMRA

Thank you so much, Professor Carson.
I'll get started right away.

As she exits, she collides with Wiley, who is entering.

WILEY

Another happy customer.

KATE

Aristotle today. They like him. I like
him.

Wiley sits on the window sill, gazes down into the quad.

WILEY

Yeah? That's good. I'll try -- I have
to sit in next week, write up a report.

He seems distracted, a little distant.

KATE

Everything OK?

WILEY

Yeah. Just end-of-the-quarter crunch.
Essays to grade, that sort of thing.

He pauses a beat, then clears his throat.

WILEY

I came up with an idea for a novel.

Kate kicks off a shoe, runs her foot affectionately along
Wiley's leg.

KATE

Tell me.

WILEY

Sure?

KATE

What's it about?

WILEY

A brilliant heist.

She smiles.

KATE

Goes like clockwork, right?

WILEY

Implausible?

KATE

The clock's always five minutes fast, ten minutes slow.

WILEY

How would you do it, then, if you wanted to do it right?

She shrugs.

KATE

In general? Involve as few people as possible. The human element is always your weak link.

WILEY

The human element?

KATE

Your partners. Guns jam and alarms go off, but partners can screw you in a million ways. Greed. Panic. Pity.

WILEY

Pity?

KATE

Drugs. Stupidity.

WILEY

So you have to find good partners?

KATE

Good luck. It's a profession that attracts the exact people you don't want to work with.

WILEY

So just one partner would be best, then? Someone you could trust?

KATE

None's better, if you can manage it. You cut the fuck-up factor by half.

Wiley leafs absent-mindedly through some papers.

WILEY

Do you know that the campus credit union handles half a million dollars in cash the last Friday of every quarter?

Kate glances up from the book she's marking. She stops rubbing his leg with her foot.

Wiley comes and sits on her desk.

WILEY

Student loan checks for the next quarter. Issued the last Friday of the quarter. The day, of course, students come in to cash them.

Alarmed, suddenly, Kate rises, moves away, occupies herself with some books on the shelf.

KATE

I don't understand.

Wiley follows her.

WILEY

I was on the finance committee last year. I know when the cash is delivered. How. One guard and that's it. Less security than your average corner liquor store. Who's gonna hold up a college, right? Do you know how easy it would --

KATE

You're right.

She moves to the desk and starts gathering her things.

KATE

It would make a good novel.

Before he can answer, she's heading for the door.

WILEY

Wait --

KATE

I've got a meeting in a few minutes.
I'll see you tonight.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Kate and Wiley eat dinner in tense silence.

Finally...

KATE

You were serious, weren't you?

WILEY

I'm sorry. I didn't mean -- it was dumb
of me.

She considers this for a beat.

KATE

Is armed robbery something you think will
bring us closer together?

WILEY

Kate.

KATE

Because maybe we could take a tai-chi
class together instead. Learn ballroom
dancing.

He shakes his head.

WILEY

My life, Kate, it's -- it was supposed to
turn out differently.

KATE

Differently?

WILEY

More drama, I guess. A dash of the epic,
or if not the epic than at least the
heroic. The mock-heroic, even.

WILEY(cont'd)

Odysseus or Don Quixote, I'd settle for either one at this point. Something.

He sighs, pushes back from the table.

WILEY

Thirty-eight years on earth and the only mark I've made you can buy for three dollars in the remainder bin at Barnes and Noble.

KATE

You have a good job. You have good friends. You live in a beautiful place. What more -- I mean --

WILEY

Have you ever slammed your hand in a car door? Or sliced your finger chopping tomatoes? Before the pain hits there's this split-second when you look away and you hold your breath and you go numb.

KATE

I don't understand.

WILEY

That's how I live every minute of my life. Looking away and holding my breath and trying to ignore who I've become.
(beat)

More. There's more to happiness than a safe, complacent, comfortable existence. The life you used to lead. Life or death. Terror and adventure and meaning.

She stands abruptly and turns away from him. Sharply...

KATE

You have no idea what you're talking about.

From memory...

WILEY

"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; For he today that sheds his blood with me Shall be my brother; And gentlemen in England, now abed, Shall think themselves accursed they were not here."

Wiley waits a beat, then looks over at Kate, who has started rinsing the dinner dishes.

WILEY

Shakespeare. Henry the Fifth. Harry knows his men will cherish their scars from that battle far more than a thousand quiet nights back in England.

Kate turns suddenly, pulls up her blouse to reveal the small of her back...

...the scar there, the one Wiley had asked her about earlier.

KATE

This one?

In the harsh light of the kitchen, the scar looks much longer, uglier, and brutal than it did before.

WILEY

Your dog...

She shakes her head, laughs harshly.

KATE

Partner of mine, Manny Marcus. Generally reliable, but given to bouts of drug-induced paranoia. Beat me unconscious with the leg of a coffee table, I think it was, then handcuffed me to a toilet and carved his initials in me. Speed freak, shaky hand. You can't tell it's an M unless you look hard.

Horrified...

WILEY

Oh, Jesus, Kate.

KATE

Hold on.

She hikes up the leg of her pants.

KATE

This is another funny story. Back from my hooker days. You know what a ground wire is?

WILEY

Stop.

He goes to her and takes her in his arms. She resists, at first, then relents, presses her face against his neck.

KATE
(softly)
It's nothing like you think. You have no
idea what you're talking about.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

The next day. Kate, preoccupied, walks across campus.

A STUDENT waves to her.

STUDENT
Hi, Professor Carson.

KATE
On time today, OK?

Smiling as she strides briskly along. Suddenly her pace
slows, her smile fades. We PAN with her GAZE and see --

-- the campus credit union.

An old red-brick building, part of the student union,
STUDENTS sunning themselves on the front steps.

SLOW-MOTION as she passes by, then a BLUR of quick cuts as
Kate -- instinctively, before she even realizes what she's
doing -- cases the building.

-- entrance, windows, locks.

-- angles of approach, escape routes.

-- a tubby SECURITY GUARD helping a STUDENT hang a Christmas
banner.

Kate stands alone in the middle of the quad. All around her
the college goes about its usual cheerful bustle.

Finally she shakes herself, hurries on.

INT. KATE'S OFFICE - DAY

Kate sits at her desk, reading. Emily knocks and enters.

EMILY
Hi, Lily.

Kate looks up, happy to see her.

KATE

Hey! Want to get some lunch?

EMILY

Sure.

KATE

Let me grab my bag.

There's something off with Emily, who isn't her usual ebullient self. Kate notices.

KATE

Everything all right, Em?

EMILY

Yeah.

Kate closes the office door so they can have some privacy.

KATE

Bad liar.

EMILY

I'm fine, really. It's nothing, I just --

KATE

Emily.

Emily surrenders, sits, tucks her knees up to her chest. She's not crying, but close to it.

Kate, concerned, kneels in front of her.

KATE

Em. What's wrong? What happened?

EMILY

Nothing. It's silly. That guy? The one from my art class I hooked up with?

Kate goes taut; her eyes harden, her voice.

KATE

Did he hurt you?

EMILY

What?

Emily is startled. She's never glimpsed this side of Kate before, never imagined it could exist.

KATE

Did he hurt you?

EMILY

Oh, no. Lily, no. He's going home to Florida for Christmas. And my roommate's going home for Christmas. And I'm not, you know, going home. It's not my favorite time of the year, to tell you the truth. The holidays.

Relaxing, starting to slowly understand...

KATE

Your mom.

EMILY

Yeah. Ever since -- we've never really done the holidays, my dad and me.

KATE

I'm sorry. I thought --

EMILY

I don't know. I always get so sad this time of the year.

KATE

It's OK. It's OK to be sad.

EMILY

I get so sad and then I start thinking, you know, I start thinking this is how she must have felt, and there won't be anything I can ever do to --

Gently...

KATE

Emily, shut up.

EMILY

But --

KATE

Emily. Your life is your own. You choose the person you want to be. No one makes that choice but you.

Emily looks up at Kate, hopeful.

EMILY

Do you really believe that, Lily?

Does Kate really believe it? CLOSE on her, but her expression is inscrutable.

KATE
I've got a spare bedroom, you know. It's small and dusty right now, but --

EMILY
Are you serious? Oh, Lily!

She throws her arms around Kate and hugs her tightly.

EMILY
That would be so excellent!

Kate hugs back, her expression still inscrutable.

KATE
As long as you want.

INT. CAMPUS ART GALLERY - NIGHT

A faculty cocktail party in full swing. Kate is laughing at one of Janet Stinson's anecdotes when Wiley sidles up to her.

Whispering in her ear...

WILEY
Wanna get out of here?

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

The banks of the Blue River. A beautiful starry night. PAN down to Wiley's car, parked, lights off.

I/E. WILEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Kate and Wiley are in the front seat, making out. They come up for air, smiling.

WILEY
This is where the students come, apparently. When the roommate won't leave.

KATE
I see.

Another long kiss.

WILEY

Bet you haven't made out in a car since high school, huh?

Kate's smile flickers: her adolescent experience, we remember, lacked sweetly innocent moments like this.

Wiley realizes.

WILEY

Shit. I wasn't --

KATE

It's OK.

They sit in silence for a beat.

WILEY

The novel I was telling you about?

KATE

Yeah.

WILEY

Don't you want to know how it ends?

KATE

I know how it ends.

WILEY

The heist goes off. Just like they planned.

He moves closer to her.

WILEY

The guy and the gal, after it's over, it's amazing -- this incredible adventure they'll always share. This bond. And the money. Half a million cash. They can go anywhere in the world they want. Live happily ever after.

Her tone isn't angry, just weary.

KATE

Wiley. You need to understand. The kind of thing you're talking about -- there's no halfway.

WILEY

I understand that, I do. We --

She presses a finger to his lips, sad but affectionate.

KATE

You have to go cold, Wiley, if you want to do something like that. So cold you might never warm up.

WILEY

But --

KATE

Don't ask me to be that person again.

WILEY

Kate.

KATE

It's like a miracle, what's happened to me here. I never imagined that a life like this could exist for me. I can't just walk away from that.

He shakes his head.

KATE

Wiley --

Gently...

WILEY

It's not your life, Kate.

This stops her cold.

Wiley takes her hand.

WILEY

What happens when the real Lily Carson shows up for spring quarter?

Kate turns away. She knows she's been forcing herself to ignore some very difficult realities.

WILEY

When the college finds out who you really are, are they going to put you on the tenure track?

CLOSE on Kate: she knows he's right.

WILEY

Are the Stinsons going to say, 'Well, so
what if she's a bank robber and a killer
and --'

Turn back to him, cutting him off --

KATE

-- a whore.

Startled...

WILEY

No, Kate, that's not what I --

Wordlessly she gets out of the car. Starts walking away.

WILEY

Kate. Wait.

She ignores him, keeps walking.

WILEY

Kate! I didn't mean --

But she's gone, vanished into the darkness.

INT. COTTAGE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Dark. The electric blue wash off the TV marbles Kate's face.
She sits on the couch, smoking and watching --

Home movies. Lily Carson's childhood.

Kate's face: full of longing and sadness.

The phone RINGS.

Kate doesn't move to pick it up, doesn't glance at it. After
a few more RINGS the answering machine clicks on.

LILY CARSON (V.O.)

Hi, it's me, it's Lily, and I'm going to
read you my poem for the day, part of a
poem, actually, by one of my all-time
favorite poets, Wallace Stevens, and then
you can leave me a message and maybe part
of a poem too. OK? OK.

Kate watches the images flickering on the TV screen.

LILY CARSON (V.O.)

It's from "Looking Across the Fields and
Watching the Birds Fly." OK. 'To think
away the grass, the trees, the clouds/Not
to transform them into other things/Is
only what the sun does every day.'

A long BEEP, and then Wiley's voice.

WILEY (V.O.)

Kate? You there? Listen, I just want to
talk, and say I'm really --

Kate reaches over, hits a button, cuts off his voice.

She clicks off the home movies.

ANGLE on her face, expressionless, reflected in the dead dark
glass of the TV set.

INT. COTTAGE (STUDY) - NIGHT

Kate enters the study, where Emily is on the sofa.

Kate watches her sleep for a beat, then kneels and kisses her
on the forehead.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - SUNRISE

Herb works in his garden patch, carefully digging out the
dead annuals.

After a beat he glances up, over his shoulder, sees --

Kate, standing silently behind him, petting his dog.

Herb gives Kate a wink, turns back to his work.

HERB

Helluva watchdog, isn't she?

She nods at the bare garden.

KATE

All that work for nothing.

HERB

Nothing?

KATE
(shrugs)
Flowers die.

HERB
Oh, but while they live...

She thinks it over.

KATE
Bullshit.

Herb chuckles.

HERB
Yep.

KATE
Your daughter. What happened to her?

Herb continues working, doesn't miss a beat.

HERB
You want the truth, or the lie I tell
myself so I can sleep every night?

Kate nods, doesn't pursue. She, of all people, can imagine.

KATE
Will you do me a favor?

Herb pauses, wipes his brow, rocks back on his heels.

HERB
Name it.

KATE
This.

She hands him --

A Polaroid PHOTOGRAPH. The picture of Kate and Wiley,
smiling, taken at the bowling alley.

HERB
This?

KATE
Hold onto it for me, will you?

He looks at her closely, perplexed but intrigued.

HERB
I will, but --

KATE
Don't ask. I don't know.

He nods. Without another word he places the photo carefully in the chest pocket of his jumpsuit, goes back to work.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Kate sits smoking on the hillside above the town. She doesn't glance over when Wiley comes trudging up the slope.

WILEY
I thought I might find you here. Of course, I thought I might find you in the nine or ten other places I looked first.

He sits down next to her. Uncomfortable silence.

WILEY
I wanted to apologize. Profoundly so. For last night.

KATE
It's OK.

WILEY
And for -- for everything, I suppose.

KATE
It's OK.

WILEY
We'll move somewhere no one knows you. A new school. I'll teach and you can take classes and --

KATE
You were right.

He looks at her, surprised.

WILEY
Kate, I just think --

KATE
Let's do it.

He sits down next to her.

WILEY

I was being selfish. I was being stupid.

KATE

You know the schedule? When the money comes in?

WILEY

Yes, but --

KATE

Half a million. You're sure?

WILEY

Give or take. Maybe a little more.

KATE

Let's do it.

A moment of silence passes before he takes her hand.

WILEY

You won't regret this, Kate.

KATE

I know.

ANGLE on Wiley, the ambiguity of her statement lost on him entirely.

INT. KATE'S OFFICE - DUSK

Kate, smiling, goes over an essay with a STUDENT. A separate Kate VOICE OVER runs throughout this sequence.

KATE (V.O.)

First rule: no loose ends.

She finishes with the student and walks her to the door, gives her an encouraging pat on the shoulder.

KATE (V.O.)

Don't rush. Take your time.

INT. HALLWAY - DUSK

Kate grabs her gym bag and closes the office door behind her.

KATE (V.O.)

If you drop something, pick it up.

EXT. TOWN - DUSK

The sun sets as an ARMORED CAR rumbles down the street and passes through the campus guard gate.

KATE (V.O.)
If you hear something, check it out.

The SECURITY GUY at the gate gives the DRIVER a wave.

EXT. CAMPUS - DUSK

Kate, bag hoisted on her shoulder, strolls across campus. She smiles at everyone she passes.

KATE (V.O.)
If something seems wrong, it is.

INT. CAMPUS CREDIT UNION - NIGHT

The bank MANAGER glances at his watch, stands, walks to the front door.

KATE (V.O.)
Keep your mouth shut.

Flips the sign from OPEN to CLOSED.

KATE (V.O.)
Keep your mask on.

Searches through his ring of keys and locks the door.

EXT. CAMPUS - DUSK

Kate passes the gym, enters instead the Student Union.

KATE (V.O.)
Never let anyone touch you.

EXT. LOADING BAY - DUSK

The armored car driver sits on the bumper, a shotgun cradled in his arms, chatting casually with the bank manager.

KATE (V.O.)
Never let anyone look you in the eye.

Two uniformed CAR GUARDS move heavy bags of cash into the building.

INT. STUDENT UNION - DUSK

Kate shifts the gym bag to her other shoulder, strolls past the newsstand, turns down a long empty corridor.

KATE (V.O.)
Watch the corners.

She opens a door and enters the women's restroom.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - DUSK

She checks the stalls to make sure they're empty.

KATE (V.O.)
Watch the doors.

She takes an out-of-order sign from her bag and tapes it to the outside door.

KATE (V.O.)
Watch your back.

INT. CREDIT UNION - DUSK

The manager supervises the placement of the money bags into the safe.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - DUSK

Kate, in front of the mirror, pulls her hair back tight and ties it.

KATE (V.O.)
If something goes wrong, stay calm.

She starts unbuttoning her dress.

KATE (V.O.)
We'll have 15 minutes even if there's an alarm, which there probably isn't.

EXT. LOADING BAY - DUSK

The driver climbs into the armored car. It rumbles away.

KATE (V.O.)
Make sure the car has gas. Oil. Check
the brake lights and turn signal.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - DUSK

ANGLE on Kate -- transformed. Black sweater, black jeans,
black gloves. Her face is unsmiling now, implacable...

A little drowsy...

Very dangerous.

She stares at herself for a beat in the mirror, then pulls on
a black ski mask.

INT. CREDIT UNION - DUSK

The manager, in his office, shuts off his computer.

KATE (V.O.)
Hold it steady. Both hands.

INT. WOMEN'S RESTROOM - DUSK

Kate stands on the sink and pushes a ceiling tile aside,
hoists herself up into the crawl space.

INT. CREDIT UNION - DUSK

The SECURITY GUARD, a middle-aged guy with a belly, makes his
rounds, eating a candy bar as he does.

He pokes his head into the manager's office.

SECURITY GUARD
Working hard, Walt?

MANAGER
Hardly working.

The security guard lumbers on, down a hallway.

KATE (V.O.)
Squeeze the trigger, don't jerk it.

The security guard gives the back door a tug to make sure
it's locked. As --

-- behind him, Kate drops soundlessly from the ceiling.

KATE (V.O.)

Aim for the stomach.

When the guard turns, Kate presses a .38 to his forehead.

CUT TO:

INT. FIELD - DAY

A cold, empty field, middle of nowhere, just a few browning pumpkins left scattered around.

Wiley, sighting down the barrel of the .38, lowers the gun. He turns to Kate, who squats nearby, watching impassively.

WILEY

Pardon?

KATE

Aim for the stomach. When you're nervous you tend to miss high.

WILEY

Oh. Right.

He lines up a pumpkin, then lowers the gun again.

WILEY

But that won't be -- I mean, it won't be necessary, will it? As long as nothing goes wrong.

KATE

Something always goes wrong.

WILEY

So what's the key?

KATE

The key?

WILEY

You know. Something always goes wrong, but the key is to plan for any eventuality. (C) the key is --

KATE

Like in a game.

WILEY

No, I just mean --

KATE

There's no key. It's not a game.

WILEY

But --

KATE

No loose ends. That's the only key.
Stay cold, stay alive.

He nods.

WILEY

Right.

He turns back to the pumpkin, squeezes off a few rounds. The last one hits the pumpkin.

Grinning, full of boyish exuberance...

WILEY

Damn!

Kate watches him, impassive.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kate and Wiley in bed: the sex is fierce and sweaty. Muscles flexing, a strand of hair caught in her teeth.

A tumble, like a wrestling move, and Kate ends up on top, Wiley pinned beneath.

She takes charge of the rhythm, slows it down a little.

Wiley is smiling, breathing hard, out of breath.

WILEY

Just think...this time tomorrow...it'll
be done...

Kate gazes down at him. Says nothing.

WILEY

I can't believe we're actually going to
do this. It's like...it's like I can
feel the flood rushing in my veins...

Kate remains silent.

WILEY

We can invent a whole new life together,
Kate. You can be anyone you want.

KATE

Call me that again.

WILEY

(puzzled)

Call you what?

KATE

Whore.

His face: pained.

WILEY

Kate, Jesus, you know I didn't --

KATE

You were thinking it.

WILEY

No! Kate, I --

She's still in control of the rhythm, but working it faster
now, long and languid strokes.

KATE

Say it.

Even faster. Wiley is having a hard time concentrating.

KATE

Say it.

Her tone is playful, but edged with something more
complicated.

KATE

It turns you on, doesn't it?

Wiley, caught up in what he thinks is a game, nods.

WILEY

Yes. Yes.

He closes his eyes and climaxes, does not see Kate gazing
down at him, expressionless.

INT. CREDIT UNION - NIGHT

An EXPLOSION of movement as Kate SLAMS the guard against the back door and we...

PICK UP where the voice-over sequence was interrupted.

Gun on him, Kate forces the guard to unlock the door.

EXT. LOADING BAY - NIGHT

Wiley is waiting on the dock, crouched behind a dumpster.

When he hears the THUD against the door, he quickly pulls on his mask.

The door opens and he slips inside.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The bank manager is pulling on his coat when Kate bursts in.

MANAGER

What the --?

Kate grabs him roughly and drags him out of the room.

INT. VAULT ROOM - NIGHT

The guard stands against the wall, babbling in terror. Wiley stands behind him, cuffing his hands behind his back.

GUARD

Please, God, don't hurt me. Don't -- I have a family.

Kate shoves the manager toward the vault.

Wiley finishes cuffing the guard.

The guard's voice grows louder and more frantic.

GUARD

Please. I've got a wife. I've got -- oh, Jesus. Please.

Kate jerks her head at Wiley: shut him up. Now.

Wiley fumbles with the duct tape, unable to tear it with his gloves on.

WILEY

I can't --

GUARD

Oh, Jesus, oh, Jesus.

Kate steps over, lifts her gun, delivers a brutal CHOP to the back of the guard's head.

He crumples to his hands and knees but continues to whimper.

Wiley stares at Kate, his eyes shocked by the violence, by the way her --

EYES, have turned so cold, so hard.

They hold the look for a beat, then Kate bends down and delivers another BLOW.

The guard's whimpering ceases. Kate turns back to the manager, GESTURES to the vault: open it.

Hands trembling -- he can see her eyes -- he does.

Wiley stares at the fallen guard. Finally he rouses himself, remembers where he is.

INT. VAULT - NIGHT

Bricks of cash stuffed into laundry bags.

EXT. WILEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Laundry bags shoved into the back seat.

The door SLAMS shut.

INT. WILEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Kate drives. They've taken off their masks and look like just another pair of professors on their way home from work.

Wiley's heart is racing, but he's got a grip on it; he's managing to stay calm. Until --

They approach the campus guard gate and --

The GUARD leans out of the booth, motions them to stop.

Wiley tenses. He's just one breath away from full-fledged panic.

Kate senses it. Soft, sharp...

KATE

Be cool.

She slows the car, runs a hand through her hair.

The guard, on the passenger side, peers down at Wiley, who stares straight ahead, flushed and sweating.

Quickly Kate leans across Wiley and rolls down the window.

She gives the guard a friendly, calm smile that's utterly convincing, utterly terrifying.

KATE

Working the graveyard tonight, officer?

GUARD

You know is.

KATE

Me too. I've got two dozen essays to grade by tomorrow morning.

GUARD

That so? Good lord.

KATE

Well. Have a good one.

GUARD

You too. Don't forget to get your new parking sticker.

KATE

Will do.

He raises the bar and motions them through.

EXT. LONELY HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The two lane road that first brought Kate to Blue River Falls.

A few flakes of snow spit down through the black sky.

INT. WILEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Kate drives without speaking, focused on the road. Wiley gazes out the window, drained.

WILEY
I can't believe we did it. We did it.
When the guard at the gate...

His voice trails off.

Kate looks at him.

KATE
You OK?

WILEY
What? Yeah. I'm...I'm fine.
(beat)
I just -- I just didn't want anyone to
get hurt. You know. I just...

CLOSE on Kate's EYES as she impassively studies him.

WILEY
Maybe what we could do, we could send
some of the money to the guard in the
bank. Anonymously, of course, there
wouldn't be any risk...

He realizes Kate is watching him.

WILEY
Right. Dumb idea. Dumb idea.

She turns back to the road.

Quietly...

WILEY
This is what I wanted, isn't it?
Adventure and danger. Life and death.

Kate nods toward the heavy woods just off the road ahead.

KATE
You need to take a leak?

He manages a slight, wry smile.

WILEY
How'd you guess?

She pulls the car onto the gravel shoulder.

WILEY
Be right back.

Kate watches him get out of the car and walk, a little unsteadily, into the woods.

She turns and glances at --

the BAGS of money in the back seat.

One long beat, then Kate puts the car in drive.

Eases it onto the highway.

EXT. LONELY HIGHWAY - NIGHT

LONG SHOT of the Kate driving away, leaving Wiley behind.

But then --

The BURN of brake lights in the night.

INT. WILEY'S CAR - NIGHT

The car stops in the middle of the road. Kate, hands tight on the wheel, glances --

-- at the money again.

-- back at the tree where Wiley has gone.

CLOSE on Kate as she tries to fight off a change of heart, a change of mind.

Finally --

She makes her decision. She shifts into reverse. She's going back for him.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The snow sifts down faster now.

ANGLE from behind Wiley as he takes a leak.

Just as he's zipping up, he hears the CRUNCH of footsteps behind him.

WILEY
Hi. Almost done.

He turns, smiling. And sees -

Kate. Her GUN pointed at his face.

Kate's expression is calm, impassive.

It only takes Wiley a heartbeat to realize what's about to happen.

WILEY
Oh, God...

KATE
Nothing personal.

WILEY
Kate...

KATE
No loose ends.

WILEY
Kate...

KATE
I don't have a choice. This is who I am.

She cocks back the hammer of the gun.

Wiley closes his eyes. Barely a whisper now...

WILEY
Lily...

Lily. Kate hesitates, her finger tight on the trigger.

CLOSE on Kate as just a hint of something - hope, doom - flickers across her face.

KATE'S POV - FLASHBACKS

A series of shots, cut in rhythm to the slow BEAT of Kate's heart.

Kate --

-- Watching the sun rise over the town of Blue River Falls...

-- Laughing at the Robinsons' dinner table...

-- In class, reading a passage aloud to her students...

-- Kissing Wiley, smiling...

And finally, abruptly --

-- Wiley, in his ski mask at the credit union, looking at her.

EXT. WOODS - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Kate takes a step forward and presses the barrel of the gun against Wiley's forehead. She closes her eyes.

A long slow moment as she and Wiley stand motionless, snow swirling through the bare skeletons of the trees.

EXT. WILEY'S CAR - NIGHT

The headlights are still on and the driver's door is open.

The WHOOSH of the wind, the plaintive COO of an owl, the PING...PING of the door-ajar alert.

A beat later Kate returns to the car -- alone.

She gets in, shifts into gear, drives away.

EXT. LONELY HIGHWAY - NIGHT

OVERHEAD shot as the CAR speeds through a landscape transformed by the cash snowfall -- soft white drifts glittering in the moonlight.

KATE (V.O.)

Your life is your own. You choose the person you want to be. No one makes that choice but you.

INT. KATE'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK

EMILY

Do you really believe that, Lily?

Kate's expression is inscrutable.

INT. WILEY'S CAR - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Kate drives. A beat, then --

KATE

Maybe.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Wiley stands in the snowy clearing -- shaken, but alive and well.

He drops to his knees and takes a deep breath of the clean, frosty air.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT/TICKET COUNTERS - DAY

A long line of TRAVELERS wait to buy tickets, check baggage.

KATE stands near the end of the line. An OLDER WOMAN turns and smiles at her.

OLDER WOMAN

Where you headed today, hon?

The question catches Kate by surprise.

KATE

I don't know.

She looks up at the departure monitors on the wall, then turns back to the woman.

KATE

Somewhere new.

INT. AIRPORT/MAIN CONCOURSE - DAY

A pair of moving walkways, crowded.

KATE -- just another face in the crowd.

Her POV of the other walkway, moving in the opposite direction. Faceless STRANGERS glide toward her, then past.

But then: a WOMAN, far away but gliding closer.

Attractive, early 30s, French braids and wire-frame glasses. A stack of books in her arms.

ANGLE on Kate, noticing...

As the woman comes closer. A face that's vaguely familiar -- a face we've seen in scrapbook photos and home movies.

The real Lily Carson.

Directly across from Kate now. She glances up and for just an instant her eyes meet Kate's.

She smiles.

And then she's past, Kate is past, and the walkways carry them on to their respective destinations.

FADE TO BLACK.

END