THE GUIDE

Screenplay by

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Based on the novel

"Shadow Woman"

by Thomas Perry

REV. SECOND DRAFT
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Any person, whether old or young, male or female, might become possessed of an evil spirit, and be transformed into a witch. A person thus possessed could assume, at pleasure, the form of any animal, bird or reptile, and having executed his nefarious purpose, could resume his original form, or if necessary to escape pursuit, could transmute himself into an inanimate object.

Lewis Henry Morgan, League of the Iroquois, 1851.

THE GUIDE

FADE IN:

WE ARE

low to the ground. Moving fast through the desert, scrubby hills. Something is chasing us. Something bad. We can hear the sound of feet, of panting breath, see the glint of teeth and wicked eyes.

Flashes of weird light pop up at the edge of frame. We don't know what it is or why.

We zig, zag, it comes closer, almost gets us. Some kind of horrible fanged, canine presence.

And at the last moment, sanctuary, darkness, safety.

OUT IN THE DESERT

we see the disappointed coyote, dig furiously for a moment or two then hmmph, give up and trot away.

After a long beat, a small rabbit head pokes out of the burrow and looks down at the weird lights that were popping in and out of frame. It's Vegas. A beat and ---

EXT. LAS VEGAS - STRIP - NIGHT

The strip. Crowds, lights, busy. PETE HATCHER works his way through. He is the rabbit. He knows it. Hatcher's late 30, early 40's. Vegas Successful. Perfectly shined shoes, great suit, gold cufflinks, and an out-of-place *horrible* orange tie. He's scared. Tries not to show it. Does a pretty good job. Keeps moving.

A hundred and fifty feet behind him is CAL SEAVER. Watching, following. On the other side of the street, fifty feet back, paralleling is LEW POMBO. Skinny, mean.

EXT. INSIDE STRAIGHT CASINO - NIGHT

Behind them looming up. Watching. Literally. On the exterior tower up top is a huge weatherized surveillance camera. As it WHIRS and tracks ---

INT. CASINO SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT

-- on the main screen is the view from the exterior camera. The zoom pushes in a quarter of a mile and finds Hatcher as he turns into the entrance of Caesar's. One of the watchers picks up a radio.

EXT. CAESAR'S - NIGHT

Hatcher pauses, not sure if his paranoia is real. Looks around for the barest moment. He might just be a guy getting a breath of night air. He's not. He's sweating in fear. Heads inside.

INT. CAESAR'S - CASINO - NIGHT

Hatcher knows where he's going, strides through the casino floor, ignoring the games, and comes to the box office. Pauses at the window, turns away moment later with a ticket. No money changes hands.

As Pete heads in we can see what the performance is, "The Marvelous Miranda." Magic to astound and amaze. Pete doesn't look that interested in magic. He hands his ticket to an Usher and steps into ---

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Miranda's no traveling act, the theater's been built for her. The Usher leads Hatcher to the best spot in the house, a velvet booth overlooking the stage and walks away. Pete's looking around, trying not to appear as nervous as he is when there's an assured voice over his shoulder...

VOICE (O.S.)
Kiss me.

Pete turns. Meet JANE WHITEFIELD. She offers her cheek, he's a little surprised, but kisses her.

Thirties. Long dress, probably quite expensive, but you can't figure out why. No jewelry. She slides into the booth, he follows as she explains ---

JANE
Dates want you to kiss them, hookers don't. If the management here thinks I'm in the business, they'll have their own people watching me.

Pete nods. Right. He knew that. Sure.

JANE
(softly)
Were you followed?

HATCHER
(shaky)
I don't know. Probably. I think my phone is bugged. Someone's been through my computer. (MORE)

HATCHER (CONT'D)
A man came to service my smoke detector; it wasn't broken. I think they put a camera in.

JANE
Good. If the bugs and cameras weren't still there, it would be because you were dead and they pulled them out before the cops found them.

Hatcher lets out a long low breath. He hadn't thought of it that way.

JANE
How you doing?

HATCHER
This has been the longest day of my life.

JANE
Stay calm for another three and half hours and everything's over.

Jane spots Seaver and Pombo as they come in, start working their way along the wall in opposite directions.

JANE
Don't look. Big guy, bad suit, skinny mean guy. They don't seem to have seats.

HATCHER
Seaver, head of security. Lew Pombo, his attack dog.

JANE
Good.

Hatcher looks at her. Good? The lights start to go down. Jane leans close.

JANE
The instant the box opens ---

HATCHER
What box?

JANE
Listen. Carefully. You get out and walk to the exit door in front of you. (MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)
There's black Ford in a reserved space. Drive north on I-15 until you get to Cedar City, Utah. It'll take a little over three hours. That's about all the time I can buy you.

Music is coming up, the lights are whirling madly around. Jane's forced to lean closer and shout.

JANE
Don't speed. Don't stop, don't pee, just drive. When you get to the airport, leave the car a couple of blocks away, hop the rental bus. There's a ticket at the Southwest counter, prepaid in the name of David Keller. There's new ID in a wallet under the seat of the car. A suitcase is in the trunk. Take it. People traveling carry a suitcase. You'll just make your flight you'll be in Denver by dawn.

HATCHER
What about...?

JANE
Everything else, diplomas, honorable discharge, bank books and so on are in your new apartment.

The music drops into silence. It's right before Miranda will appear. Hatcher whispers ---

HATCHER
What happens to you when they find out I'm not here?

Jane's oddly surprised. No one ever bothers to ask.

JANE
I'm good at this. And there's nothing you can do to help. Thanks for worrying.

The room plunges into total darkness --

JANE
(oddly amused)
That *is* a remarkably ugly tie.

UP ON STAGE

There is an EXPLOSION of white light as a flashpot goes off. In the middle of the stage, where no one was a moment ago is an old woman, a crone bent over in a long white robe.

Another flashpot EXPLODES. The old woman is gone, replace an attractive young woman in a sweet white dress.

Another flashpot EXPLODES. The dress is gone. Miranda wears something between a white bikini and lingerie. She shrugs. Oh well, no clothing.

Jane checks, Seaver and Pombo have been momentarily distracted by the display. Hell, so has everyone else in the room.

Miranda reaches down, picks up a large white sheet. It might have been the dress or the robe that fell off, but not anymore. She turns, hurls it up into the air. It flies out to twelve feet across. Another flash. The sheet falls to the ground.

A large white horse has appeared on-stage behind her. The audience cheers. She looks them over appraisingly, then straddles the horse bareback, turns to the crowd ---

MIRANDA
What? You expect the whole Lady Godiva routine?

She takes a long beat. Admonishes them good-naturedly ---

MIRANDA
Not this early in the show.

As the crowd laughs, the horse rears up on two legs and dances about the stage. She slides off, gives it a pat on the rump. It runs off into the wings. More applause.

HATCHER
Damn, she got my attention.

Jane checks on Seaver and Pombo again. They've managed to remind themselves to keep an eye on Hatcher. But it hasn't been easy.

JANE
She'll keep everyone's attention. She used to strip.

Miranda tosses another sheet in the air in front of her. It hangs there. She comes out from behind, surprised, looks at it. Gets an appreciative laugh. Steps behind it again.

When she emerges a moment later, she's dressed again. There's a moan of disappointment from the audience.

MIRANDA
Trust me, it'll come off again later.

Off the laughter, she gestures and a spotlight turns on the audience. Oddly, for a moment, brushes by Seaver and Pombo. Then narrows, searches about the audience, and finds --- HATCHER.

Miranda crooks a finger at him to come up. Hatcher didn't quite know how this would work, and indeed appears the perfect dupe from the audience.

JANE
Go. Good luck.

He goes.

As he does, a stand is wheeled on-stage. A column rising to a flat platform. As Hatcher climbs onstage, Miranda slides in three sides to the box and a top, each time showing the audience that there's nothing there.

Hatcher's reached her now. She looks him over lasciviously, then pulls free the ugly orange tie from his coat and shakes her head sadly at the audience. They laugh at Hatcher's embarrassment. She rejects him and points to the box. He hesitates, then good sport, climbs in. She slides on the final side.

INSIDE THE MAGIC BOX

Just enough light to see. We see how the magic works. A dancer slithers out of an eight inch wide Spandex opening in the floor. She's been concealed in the column. She wears only a tiny black bikini and an identical ugly orange tie around her neck.

DANCER
Roll to the back, press against the wall. The floor'll come up.

He does. The dancer rolls all the way to the front, releases a catch, and wham, floor comes up, Hatcher is gone.

ON STAGE

Miranda has spun the box once. Yanks it open and, to the audience's surprise, Hatcher is gone. A beautiful girl in a bikini and tie is left. Applause. Miranda looks over the girl suggestively...

MIRANDA
I don't normally. But that is an improvement. But that's gotta go...

A huge pair of scissors have appeared in her hand. She cuts the tie off. She looks at the crowd, pauses, about to cut the bikini top off as well, then changes her mind. The crowd MOANS.

Miranda looks at them, shakes her head at their low brow interests and then *just as she snips her assistant's top off...*

BACKSTAGE

The apparatus has been pulled backstage. Two stagehands help Hatcher from the box. The exit door faces him. No one says a word. He walks to it, exits, and disappears from sight.

INT. THEATER/LOBBY

Show's over. Crowd streams out. Seaver watches. Pombo dallies inside keeping an eye on Jane who remains in the booth. One of Miranda's assistants comes up and says something and walks away. Jane gets up, leaves the theater.

Seaver watches as she passes through the lobby. He's getting increasingly worried.

INT. CASINO

Jane walks into a bar. Orders two drinks. A martini is set in front of her. A scotch and water awaits Hatcher across from her.

Seaver and Pombo relax again. Slightly.

INT. CASINO - BAR - LATER

Jane's glass is empty now. Checks her watch impatiently. She's annoyed. Tosses a twenty dollar chip on the table and strides off towards the elevators.

Jane walks onto the elevator. The two guys have no choice, can't risk losing her, get on.

INT. ELEVATOR

Jane punches fifteen. Pombo hits fourteen.

INT. CASINO - FIFTEENTH FLOOR - ELEVATOR LOBBY

Elevator opens. Jane gets out, turns one way, Seaver gets out, turns the other.

INT. JANE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

No suitcase. Nothing but a pair of jeans, flat shoes, and a shirt on the bed. Jane picks up the phone.

JANE
Hi, this is Miss Seymour in 1592.
I'd like my car right away, please.

Jane's already changing as she puts down the phone. Kicks the dress under the bed and pulls on her flats as she sees the doorknob being tried. She's not that worried. It's a decent lock.

Jane looks up as a double-bladed knife quietly but effectively plunges through the door beside the lock. Now she's worried.

Jane glances at the connecting door. Locked. Takes the only other door onto ---

THE BALCONY

Pulls the curtains shut behind her.

She's misjudged them. Badly. Checks. It's too far to the balconies on either side. Looks down, fifteen stories to the street. Twelve feet to the balcony of the floor below. Uhhh... She can hear the door give way inside.

She steps over the railing. Crouches down, her backside hanging out into space and grabs the bottom rail. Slips her feet off, gasps, hangs there in the void.

No choice. She kicks herself out, her legs swinging further out into space and on the reverse sway, manages with small yelp of fear, to let go. Thumps onto the balcony below.

FOURTEENTH FLOOR

Jane runs through the empty hotel room. Out into the hallway. About to run to the stairs when she sees the elevator is there. Pushes the button, dives in just as Seaver emerges from the stairwell and dashes towards her. The doors just close on his snarling face.

INT. GARAGE LEVEL

The doors DING open. Jane is safe. For half a moment. And Pombo swarms in as the other elevator opens, smashes her against the far wall. The doors close behind him.

She throws up her hands, cringing in fear, takes a step back. Pombo smirks, moves in to grab her. But she knows what's gonna happen, she's drawn him in...

As he lunges, instead of continuing to cringe, she steps inside, throws out a palm, breaks his nose. His hands fly up. She steps aside, and accurately and precisely, breaks his knee. He crumples. She pushes the Door Open button. It opens.

He reaches out, grabs her ankle. Begins to drag her back in.

JANE
Think. If you drag me back in there alone with you and your broken leg, are things going to get better for you, or worse?

It takes him a moment, but he lets go. Jane hurries around the corner to the waiting car and the valet.

JANE
Here already? You guys are great. I love this hotel.

Hands him a ten. And she's gone.

EXT. CAESAR'S - NIGHT

Seaver shouts on cell phone.

SEAVER
No. Both gone. Get Mitnick and Littman over to McCarren now!
(thinks; then)
And call Wallace in LA and get some people out to LAX. If she's really clever she'll drive then fly out of there.

EXT. I-10 - DAWN

Jane drives. The sign read "Los Angeles 44 miles." The next sign reads "Ontario Airport this exit." She gets off. She's really, really clever.

INT. ONTARIO AIRPORT - TICKET COUNTER

Jane is helping the woman behind the counter do her job.

TICKET AGENT
I don't think...

JANE
Via Chicago. Leaving out of gate 2 now.

TICKET AGENT
Oh right. Do you have photo ID?

Jane opens her wallet. Driver's licenses for three different states in three different names. Holds one out.

BLUE SKY

Puffy white clouds. A 737 drops down into frame and ---

EXT. BUFFALO AIRPORT - DAY

Flight touches down.

INT. BUFFALO AIRPORT - GATE - DAY

Jane emerges from the plane. Goes to the nearest payphone. Dials. Punches in a code. A beat. We hear --

HATCHER'S VOICE
I'm... there. I'm okay. Thank you.

Jane's palpably relieved. Puts the phone back down.

EXT. BUFFALO - DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY

Jane parks a nondescript American car. Gets out and walks to a tobacco shop that's been there for sixty years. Goes in.

INT. TOBACCO SHOP - BUFFALO - DAY

Serious place. Cigars on one side, pipe tobacco on the other. Mozart playing. A youngish guy with a beard and wire rims puts down his book to tend to his customer. It's Jane.

TOBACCONIST
You've been here before. You want...

JANE
...a pound of the best you've got.

He looks around at the stock.

TOBACCONIST
The Latakia mixed with a little Virginian maybe? I'll cut it with some sumac?

She approves. He approves of her choice. As he mixes...

TOBACCONIST
You don't smoke.

JANE
It's a gift.

EXT. NUNDAWAONO INDIAN MONUMENT - DAY

An outdoor Indian museum. Life-size dioramas. A recreated longhouse. Yellow school busses out front and kids on field trips. DOCENTS explain the exhibits.

Jane walks up behind one group of third-graders. Stands and listens a moment. She's carrying her bag of tobacco.

DOCENT
In this valley behind me, there were a hundred and twenty buildings. Three thousand people lived here. The fields went on for miles, full of corn and squash and beans. Can you see it? The kids and dogs playing?

There are kids and dogs playing now. Some of the third-graders nod.

DOCENT (CONT'D)
The village was called Dayodehokto. Which means...

As Jane turns and walks away...

JANE/DOCENT
(softly)
"A bend in the creek."

Jane walks down a path and out onto a bridge that spans a stream. She bends down, calls softly ---

JANE
Jo-ge-oh, it's me. Jane Whitefield.

She sprinkles the tobacco off.

JANE (CONT'D)
Thank you for your help. He's safe now.

The wind, or something else, gathers it up and blows it all into the woods. Jane rises, shrugs wryly. Does it mean a damn thing? She's not sure.

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - DEGANAWIDA - DAY

Jane pulls up to her house. Gets out. Looks it over. No obvious signs of intruders.

IN THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR there's a slight movement behind the curtains. She takes note, but doesn't respond.

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Jane unlocks the front door. The alarm starts to BEEP.

INT. JANE'S HOUSE - ENTRY - DAY

She ignores the beeping. Crouches down, looks along the nap of the carpet. She can see the pattern of the vacuuming. A footprint would be obvious. She sees none. Lifts the phone, checks for dial tone. It's there.

Punches in the alarm code. Beeping stops. A half beat later, the phone RINGS. She picks it up, a little puzzled. We hear CAREY MCKINNON, but don't see him...

CAREY
Hi. Welcome home.

She grins. It's a happy surprise.

JANE
Carey, how'd you do that?

CAREY
I just knew? Maybe we have some kind of bond?

JANE
Or maybe Jake saw I was home and called you.

CAREY
There was that too...

She hears a SLOW HEAVY TREAD on the porch. She raises her voice just a little.

JANE
Old people are such busybodies. It's cause they've run out of things to do.

JAKE REINERT appears in the open door. Next door neighbor. Seventies. American Indian. Uninjured by the comment --

JAKE
Yeah. Like rake your lawn when you're gone. Here's your mail. Who's that on the phone?

She ignores him. As if he doesn't know.

CAREY (O.S.)
I was thinking I could come by?

JANE
Can I shower? Maybe sleep?

CAREY (O.S.)
You can shower.

He hangs up. So does she.

JAKE
I threw the junk mail away, took the free shampoo sample, brought you the rest. How was your trip?

JANE
Everything worked out.
(then)
I stopped to thank the Little People.

JAKE
Good. Can't hurt. They might still be there. Was that Carey on the phone?

JANE
You called him, don't pretend you didn't. It'll be on your conscience he causes any trouble.

JAKE
Lemme give you some advice, girlie. If you're going to have anything to live down, you better get started on it.

A beat. She laughs, kisses his cheek.

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - LATER

New Mercedes pulls up. DR. CAREY MCKINNON gets out. His tie off, good suit. The guy may know he's a catch, but knows that Jane is still way out of his depth. But you'd like the guy. Hell, Jane does...

He heads towards the house. Man on a mission.

INT. JANE'S HOUSE

Jane opens the door, hair still wet from the shower. She was hoping for a more time. But she's glad to see him. Kisses him on the cheek as she lets him in.

CAREY
You miss me?

JANE
It was terrible. It felt like a week.
(tweaking him)
Hnnn, it was a week. Maybe it wasn't that terrible.

Carey's already off his stride. She does this to him. He had a plan, but now he's floundering

CAREY
How, uh, how was your trip?

JANE
Fine. How exciting can consulting be?
(changing the subject)
What are you doing here? They fire you at the hospital? Or is it safer for the sick people if you're not there?

CAREY
Nice. Very nice.

He's about to launch into something when he's suddenly distracted. Looks at the side of her face, pulls a light over close and examines what he sees with serious concern.

CAREY
That's a nasty contusion.

JANE
You'd think a girl would have better make-up skills.

CAREY
What happened?

JANE
I got mugged. It was stupid. I should have seen him coming.

He's really shook. Takes her hand. She continues to blithely lie.

JANE
It was nothing really. Guy was hiding behind one of those pillars in a parking garage. Tried to take my purse.

But he's not just holding her hand. He's examining it. Sees a bruise, a cut mark. She pulls it away realizing what he's up to. Then ---

CAREY
What happened to him?

JANE
What do you mean? Why would ask that?

CAREY
(stern; re her injured hand)
Human teeth are a terrible source of infection. Hope you cleaned that out well. There's more this to story?

A beat. She's busted.

JANE
I broke his nose. I took one of those women's defense courses in college. It just came back without thinking. He ran away.
(shrugs)
Kept the purse.

Carey accepts all this. He's kinda proud actually.

CAREY
Remind me not to piss you off.

JANE
Don't piss me off.

Carey goes back to staring at her. He's got this cat that ate the canary look on his face. What??

JANE
Is there's something else you want?

CAREY
Yeah. You know what I want.

JANE
That isn't exactly our relationship.

CAREY
I know, I've been thinking about that too. All week. I believe that's an error.

Jane still doesn't take this seriously.

JANE
Look, you've been gone for what, six years...

CAREY
It was called med school.

JANE
...you come back, we go out a few times. I think you're wonderful but just cause I gave in in high school doesn't mean doesn't mean it should happen again.

CAREY
We could change that.
Will you marry me?

What? Even Jane is at a loss for a moment. He can't be serious. He is. Gathers up his courage. Pours out his big goofy heart ---

CAREY
Jane, I've been in love with you since the eleventh grade. I'm a big boy, I've looked around. I know what's out there in the world. And I know what I want is you.

Whoa. She tries to let him down easy...

JANE
Are you sure it's not more like you're a doctor now and you're looking for the last piece of the puzzle?

CAREY
I'm sure.

In the midst of it all, a remarkably large diamond solitaire wrapped in platinum has appeared. She backs away like he's holding a knife.

JANE
You're asking me, if I would like to be Mrs. Carey McKinnon and have tall fair-haired children and live in a big house and be mom.

Yeah, that is what he wants. He feels kind of stupid now for asking. But...

JANE (CONT'D)
You're not supposed to want anything like that anymore, are you? Though it does sounds kind of politically incorrect and wonderful.

She stares out the window at the little town, balancing it all.

JANE
I do love you. Though I didn't really notice you till senior year.
(then)
There's a lot you don't know about me, Carey. There's been a lot of time.

EXT. DEGANAWIDA - DUSK

Jane and Carey walk hand in hand. Tree-lined sidewalks, little houses. Kids on bikes, fireflies, crickets. Small town life.

CAREY
Where exactly are we going?

JANE
For a walk.

He shuts up and follows. She's got something on her mind and he's gonna have to wait to hear it. They reach the outskirts of town. A four lane road leads north and south, fields in one direction, the high school up on a hill in the other.

JANE
You know where we are?

CAREY
Ridge Road. Route 15. I did grow up here.

JANE
This is the Waagwenneyu, the great central trail of the Iroquois that ran from Hudson to Lake Niagara. Ridge Road was the name when they paved it. Guess they thought the old name was just too long for the sign.

CAREY
Third grade, state history. I think we grew corn for our project.

She takes him by the hand leads him out into the fields. Scraggly trees and low grass.

CAREY
This, I remember. From being nine. I'd come here with Billy Jenkins and steal fruit. It's an abandoned orchard.

JANE
Kind of. The trees aren't in rows. The Seneca planted them. When the white folk took the land after the revolution, they cut the hardwood trees and burned out the stumps so they could plow, but they left the fruit trees.

He's not sure where any of this is leading, but he is walking with a beautiful girl on a moonlit night. He goes with it.

JANE
My mother's mother was half Seneca. Wolf Clan.

CAREY
I didn't know.

JANE
Neither did I growing up. But the line's matrilineal. So, get this, through my grandma and my mom, *I have full tribal status*. It's become kinda weirdly important to me as the years go on. Most of what I learned at first was through books. In college, grad school. Then through the people here.

She heads down a slope towards a stream...

JANE
Follow me. I want to show you something. Don't worry, I think you'll like it.

So much for his good shoes. He does. Then she stops, pleased, amid a thick patch of ankle high plants. Bends down. Picks up a small red berry.

JANE
Knew we'd find some. Wild strawberries.

CAREY
Are we hungry?

He takes off his jacket, sits, watches as she picks. She's gathered a handful. She comes over, sits astride him. Feeds him as ---

JANE
In the old days, they used to court in strawberry patches.

CAREY
(pleased; this sounds good)
Oh.

JANE
They would slip out of their longhouses at night, and meet in a place like this. Maybe this exact place.

CAREY
Oh...

And as the strawberries are gone, she starts to kiss him. He's very happy.

JANE
I'll think about your offer. But I'll give you a yes to the rest of it right now...

He's in no condition to negotiate.

EXT. INSIDE STRAIGHT CASINO - DAY

Still looming over the strip.

INT. INSIDE STRAIGHT - EXECUTIVE FLOOR - CONFERENCE ROOM

THREE OLD GUYS sit around a huge expanse of rosewood. They run the place. They own it.

SEAVER
Peter, Bobby, Max.

MAX
Little problem last night.

SEAVER
Yeah. I lost the accountant. I've got my resignation if you want it.

PETE
Stick your resignation in your ear. This isn't the army where you get to hand in your commission. You got a problem. Now fix it. How'd he get away?

SEAVER
He had help. Good professional help.

BOBBY
So...

SEAVER
We hire somebody.

MAX
To find him.

SEAVER
No.

BOBBY
(cautiously)
Do we have people on the payroll who can take care of a problem like this?

SEAVER
No. But we can get someone. Freelance. High six figures, maybe seven. Cash.

PETE
This is about cash? We've got whole rooms full of it downstairs. Just make the problem go away.

Seaver considers, then ---

SEAVER
Okay, but if you find out tomorrow that Pete Hatcher was a totally loyal employee and you made a mistake, there's nothing you'll be able to do to stop this.

Max seems truly troubled by this.

MAX
That'd be terrible. You mean an innocent guy comes under suspicion and that's it? And he knew we thought this about him...
(shrugs; oh well)
Even if you could bring him home, what good would he be to us now?

Meeting's over.

EXT. MIDDLE CLASS HOUSE - CHATSWORTH - DAY

Northern rim of the valley. Houses are spread out. Big lots. High walls and security gate. Out back is a pool, a separate garage, and a fenced-off kennel. Maybe an unused stable as well.

EARL BLISS, a big raw-boned Okie of a guy, is in the kennel. He's scratching behind the ears of a bloodhound who's growling happily. Two rottweilers stand at attention at the far end watching.

Something bad is going to happen here.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

A face from a Kabuki drama stares at us in the mirror. Pale blue eyes, matching pale blue skin. There's openings around the mouth and eyes.

LINDA THOMPSON reaches up, peels off the mask. She's beautiful. Muscled. Naked. She sits at a vanity with a thousand dollars in perfectly balanced lighting.

She examines herself critically. Gets up, pulls on some sweats. Behind her is another room with enough Nautilus equipment to furnish a good-sized gym.

There's a sound from outside. It's TERRIBLE. Pain and fear and the shock of betrayal.

Linda runs to the window. What she sees angers and disgusts her. We don't have to see it.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Stainless steel heaven. It doesn't look like anyone ever used a thing in here. Linda yanks open a cupboard, pulls out a .45 and without breaking stride checks it's loaded and chambered. She's pissed.

EXT. YARD - KENNELS - DAY

Blood spurts. The bloodhound has one ear. Earl looks on critically. Linda strides angrily towards him. The gun is tucked in the waistband in the small of her back.

Earl sees her coming. Calls to the rottweilers ---

EARL
Halt! Aufhoren mit!

LINDA
What the fuck are you doing?

EARL
I wanted to see how the two of them work when they've got something cornered.

She looks at him in dull wonder.

EARL
I think it could come in handy sometime. I think I could beat two of them.

LINDA
And what are you going to do with this thousand dollar bloodhound now? You can't put it in a show, it's all chewed up. You can't put it out to stud. Any vet who sees it is going to call the police.

She takes out the gun. Shoots it twice in the head.

LINDA
You bury it. You fucked up.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Linda's cutting up a mango with her back to the door. Earl comes in. He's sweaty, dirty, annoyed.

EARL
Bitch. You shouldn't have shot my dog.

LINDA
(without turning)
Yeah? You gonna do something about it, Earl?

He moves towards her. She turns, still got the knife in her hand. He fakes right. She falls for it. Swipes at him with the knife, misses. He pins her hand to the counter, takes the knife away. They're both hot...

At first blush you can't tell if this is going to be sex or violence. It's a little of both.

LINDA
(warningly)
No marks, Earl.

He hungrily agrees. They begin to tear at each other and... The phone RINGS. They back off by mutual agreement. Earl picks up. Listens.

EARL
Yeah. Right. Twenty minutes.

EXT. FISH SHACK - MALIBU - DAY

Order inside. Sit outdoors and watch the ocean. And every approach. A secure place to meet.

Seaver joins Linda. She looks good, almost demure.

SEAVER
Where's Earl?

LINDA
Probably making sure you're on your own. Or dropping the cross-hairs of a scoped rifle on your forehead. You know Earl.

Seaver does. The thought doesn't comfort him. Earl appears a moment later. Never mind greetings, he's got something more important on his mind...

EARL
How'd you get to LA?

SEAVER
Flew. Private. Didn't feel like showing picture ID.

Earl approval is shown by his absolute lack of response. Seaver tosses a thick manila envelope onto the picnic table.

EARL
What's all that?

SEAVER
Photographs, surveillance videotape, two audio tapes -- one on the phone, one live -- his employment history. Thought I'd save you some time.

EARL
Must be important.

SEAVER
Four hundred.

EARL
Seven.

SEAVER
You start now.

EARL
You cover expenses.

SEAVER
Fine. I have no idea where he is. When he disappeared, he had professional help so he's probably got reasonably good cover in place by now.

EARL
How long ago?

SEAVER
Yesterday, midnight. Drove out of Vegas. Don't know anything about the car.

LINDA
The help?

SEAVER
Don't have much there either. Woman, mid twenties to thirties, dark hair, probably brown eyes. Very fit.

Linda laughs. Imitates his voice...

LINDA
Very fit. "Have I ever told you you're very fit? I want to look deep into your probably-brown eyes."

SEAVER
She beat the shit out of one of my security men. But even he said she was pretty.

EARL
Sounds interesting.

LINDA
Oooh, I'm jealous. She caught Earl's attention. Got tape on her, prints?

Seaver shakes his head "no."

SEAVER
Not a thing.

Earl looks to Linda. She nods. An almost imperceptible nod. Earl looks at Seaver. They're on.

INT. EARL AND LINDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Packing. Handguns. A British Arctic Warfare suppressed rifle with a 50 millimeter scope. ThinkPads, listening devices, linesman's phones, Kevlar vests. Cash, credit cards in a dozen names.

A none too bright steroid-bound guy named LENNY is there. We can see Earl back in the kennel giving him instructions.

Syringes, tranquilizers, handcuffs. The two of them are dressed way down, you wouldn't look twice. The most terrifying people in the world leave on vacation.

EXT. TWO LANE ROAD - DAY

Jane drives. Passes a sign. "You are now leaving Deganawida Township." The next one points the way to ---

EXT. TONAWANDA RESERVATION - DAY

Little frame houses. Nothing particularly Indian. Some American style poverty, rusting pickups, old tires on roofs. Jane pulls into a gravel driveway beneath a big hemlock tree. Beyond is a well-tended little white house. BILLY PETERSON, late sixties, square-chested, takes off his reading glasses, sets down a book as Jane gets out.

JANE
(in Seneca; subtitled)
Dodah, is this a good time?

BILLY
(in Seneca; subtitled)
There is no bad time.

She joins him on the porch.

JANE
What're you reading?

BILLY
Freud. University makes me teach the intro course every three years. I'm not sure who it's supposed to help, them or me.

They sit. Jane tries to figure out how to start.

JANE
So... I'm thinking about getting married.

Billy considers, solemnly shakes his head "no."

BILLY
You should find someone closer to your own age.

JANE
I wasn't talking about you, lecherous old man.

BILLY
Uhh. I thought that was a proposal. Congratulations.
(off her lack of enthusiasm)
There something else on your mind?

JANE
How much of the old stories do you believe?

BILLY
There are evil spirits and there is black magic. Don't believe me? Read the City papers.
(then)
Even here. John Cloud builds a lab to cook methamphetamines up in Running Fork, sells it to his own people. Is that so different than the cannibals in the old stories? He profits by eating up other men.

JANE
Sometimes I think this is stupid. I'm a white girl who went to public school.

BILLY
You know more than most of the people around here. What's worrying you?

JANE
You know what I do.
(he does)
I'm a guide. Fugitives come to me and I guide them out of this world to a safe one.

BILLY
You help Jimmy Two Feathers a few years back.

JANE
If I were to get married, I don't think I could continue.

BILLY
Why tell me?

Jane feels kinda New Age and stupid but...

JANE
I guess I'm not sure if I chose the path or... it chose me. I wonder if you can step off the path?

BILLY
(messing with her)
Destiny? Oh. Maybe it's your destiny to step off. Or try to step off. Or maybe whatever you do is fine.

That didn't help.

BILLY
A thousand years back, a woman lived in a bark lodge, not too far from here. Where the trail that runs below lake Ontario crosses east and west. One day a man comes, an exile from Canada. Paddles all the way across the lake cause he wants so bad to live. She takes him in. Helps to hide this fugitive. And he names her "Jigonsasee" which means...

Jane's a little stunned. She'd forgotten this story...

JANE
New Face.

BILLY
He has a message he wants to spread. That peace is better than war. His name is Deganawida.

Now she knows the story. But it would be rude to interrupt.

BILLY
And they meet another man, who's been driven insane by the murder of his two daughters. Who ends up being Hiawatha. And he hears the fugitive's message and they bind the five tribes together into the Iroquois.

Jane begins to shake her head "no" and laugh.

JANE
Oh Christ, Billy. I didn't really want to hear that I was reliving the life of a thousand-year-old Seneca woman.

BILLY
Then you shouldn't have come out here.

JANE
You are a pain in the ass, old man.

She continues to laugh. Heads back to the car, knowing that's all they help she'll get out of him. He calls out to her as she leaves ---

BILLY
(calling out to her as she leaves)
Daughter, whatever you do will be right.
(then)
But Janey, take care there are no wolves left on the trail behind you.

EXT. CONDOMINIUM COMPLEX - LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

High end. Swimming pool, health club, on the golf course.

INT. CONDO COMPLEX - LOBBY - NIGHT

Earl and Linda come in laughing, talking. Nod to an exiting tenant. Head over to the mailboxes. #6 - HATCHER.

Earl reaches over with a tension wrench and a pick. Opens it as fast as you could with a key. They take the mail, lock it again, and move on.

INT. CONDO COMPLEX - HALLWAY - HATCHER'S DOOR

It's got a good dead bolt. Earl hits it with an electric pick gun. Buzzes slightly, pops open. They step into --

INT. HATCHER'S CONDO - NIGHT

Two inch black masking tape emerges from Linda's purse. Heavy black tarps from inside Earl's jacket. They cover the windows up. Turn on every light in the place. Pull on latex gloves. Begin to search.

Linda goes through the mail. Tosses the meaningless stuff. Keeps the Visa bill, canceled checks, the phone bill.

There's a pile of ashes in the fireplace. Earl carefully sifts, nothing recoverable.

Check for prints. The place has been wiped down.

No prescription bottles in the medicine chest.

Linda starts making lists of everything. Brands of shampoo, every toiletry, foods in the fridge, magazines he subscribed to. She checks the labels on the remaining clothing. Notes the brands, the sizes.

They flip out every book in the bookcase. Flip through every page to see if there a scrap of paper. Everything in the freezer. They tear apart the bed. Linda finds and bags half a dozen hairs. That's it.

EARL
This bitch was good.

LINDA
Tell you what, I'll wipe down the apartment and go break this guy's other leg and you can act impressed some more.

As Earl chuckles...

CUT TO:

LOOKING OUT OVER THE STRIP at night. From way, way up.

EARL (O.S.)
What do we know?

LINDA (O.S.)
He drove.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - VEGAS - CONTINUOUS

Big window, the lights below. One of the ThinkPads is up and running.

EARL
Why drive?

LINDA
Airport's too easy to cover here. Not safe.

EARL
So where do you go...

He spreads out a map across the bed.

LINDA
(pursuing another thread)
What did he drive? She bought the car. A rental will pop back up when he returns it. In town. Cash. Used. In the last few days.

EARL
Yeah.

LINDA
And she repainted it.

Earl looks at her. Say what?

LINDA
Trust me. She did. *I would have.* You wouldn't have bothered Earl. You would have figured on some brute force solution like driving fast, shooting it out with the Federales.

Earl scoffs. She ignores him, peers over his shoulder at the map.

EARL
He's a dead end. Let's go back to her.

LINDA
You'd like that, wouldn't you. C'mon Earl, given the choice, would you fuck her or kill her?

EARL
Why do I have to choose?
(puzzled)
She stuck around. She got him out around midnight. And then she stayed around for two and a half hours.

Linda shrugs. So what. Maybe she's not so smart.

EARL
She was buying him time. You know any pro who hangs out to get in a fight in an elevator when they know the client's driving out with a big head start?

LINDA
No. Not unless she likes that sort of thing.

EARL
She wasn't sure he was safe until two thirty. She was willing to take the bruises to buy him the extra minutes. Which means he wasn't safe until a particular time.

LINDA
Then it can't be anything but an airport. He wasn't going to be invisible until the plane was in the air.

Linda's already on one of the ThinkPads, up and running. Plugged into the phone jack, NetScape churning.

EARL
How far can you get in two and half hours? Holding at the limit...

Earl's big hand marks off 200 miles on the map. Linda is pulling up a web site as ---

EARL
Kingman, Arizona on 93, Bullhead City on 95. Maybe Lake Havasu if he pushes on 15 North. Baker, California on 15 South. Utah, Cedar City.

Linda's working on the flight times.

EARL (CONT'D)
We need a flight that that goes out on a Tuesday night between 2 and 4 in morning. Can't be much.

LINDA
Isn't... any.

EARL
Fuck.

Dead end again. Beat. Earl's pissed, but ---

EARL
Not that many used car lots in Vegas. Won't be that hard to track the car.

LINDA
One of us could leave now, hit the airports, the other could start with the dealers in morning?

Earl checks his watch.

EARL
We can get two hours of sleep. No point rushing it.

He's not kidding. Leans back, shuts his eyes.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Dark except for Linda still lit by the soft glow of the ThinkPad screen. Types, considers. She's got airline schedules pulled up. A couple of windows open. She's not happy. And then a slow smirk spreads across her face.

LINDA
Wake up.

He does. Instantly.

LINDA
She's laughing at us. I figured out why none of the flights fit.

Earl's fully awake now.

LINDA
He takes the car. It's midnight. He drives two and a half hours to Arizona. What time is it?

EARL
Two-thirty.

LINDA
And nothing takes off for hours. Okay, instead drive to Utah. What time is it now?

EARL
Three-thirty. You go from Pacific to Mountain Time. Still doesn't make a difference.

LINDA
Now go to Arizona. Still Mountain time. *Except they don't do Daylight Savings*. Guess they've got enough daylight. So now, it's not three-thirty, it's four-thirty. And there's a flight 493 to Denver at 5:18.

EARL
Fuck.

LINDA
We can make the flight.

EXT. LONG TERM PARKING - CEDAR CITY AIRPORT - NIGHT

There's only twenty or thirty cars. Linda flips open a knife next to a black Ford. New paint job. Scratches it. It flakes off red underneath.

INT. CEDAR CITY AIRPORT - NIGHT

One gate. Earl and Linda are the first ones there. The AIRLINE REP is just opening up. Earl walks up to the rep.

EARL
I need to know who flew this flight yesterday.

She looks at him. Is he kidding? He's laid something on the counter.

EARL
That's a thousand dollars.

REP
I'm sorry, sir.

EARL
So am I.

He didn't mean to be cheap. Lays four more stacks on it.

EARL
That's five thousand dollars.

REP
I could lose my job.

He puts another bank banded stack down. $5000 more.

EARL
That's ten.

She looks at it. It's *ten thousand dollars*. She prints out the list.

INT. JANE'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Carey's half awake. Still pretty damned pleased with himself and the world. Jane returns with two mugs of coffee, hands him one. He takes it gratefully

JANE
We need to talk. Actually, *I* need to talk, you just need to listen.

Carey sips his coffee, waits.

JANE
Do you remember a few years ago, a John Doe was found down below River Road? Five hundred grand in a suitcase, bad hairpiece and three shots in the head?

CAREY
Yeah. They never found out who he was

JANE
I think he was looking for me.

CAREY
Somebody owed you a lot of money?

JANE
No.

Argh. She's about to wipe that happy look right off his face.

JANE
I'm gonna tell you about my consulting business.

There's no easy way to do this. She just launches in.

JANE
A man in Vegas calls me up. Chief controller of a casino. His bosses have quit trusting him.

CAREY
What'd he do?

JANE
Nothing. They just thought he had. And they decided he was a problem that was easier to get rid of than fix.

She has to set this up carefully so that he'll understand. It's still gonna be an uphill battle ---

JANE
Once he came under suspicion, *everything he did proved they were right*. When he asked why he was being kept out of meetings he was going to for years, it proved that he knew they knew about him. When he offered to find a new job, they figured he had something rigged with the competition. When he offered to just resign, they figured he'd stolen so much money he didn't need a job. And if he didn't try to leave, they figured it's only because the feds have forced him to stay and collect evidence for them.

CAREY
So he needed a new job.

JANE
They were going to kill him.

Carey didn't figure on this one.

CAREY
Kill him?

JANE
Probably in the next day or two.

CAREY
Don't they just fire people, or give them a crummy severance package?

She shakes her head.

CAREY
And he called you.

JANE
Yup.

CAREY
What exactly *do you do*?

INT. DINER - DENVER - DAY

Pete finishes his breakfast. Leaves his money on the table.

EXT. STREET - WORKING CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD - DENVER - DAY

Walks home. Every face unnerves him.

EXT. N.D. APARTMENT BUILDING - DENVER - DAY

Pete walks past a Red Toyota 4Runner out front. Turns in.

INT. N.D. APARTMENT - DENVER - DAY

Unlocks the door. Comes in. Relocks three locks. Breathes a relieved sigh. Takes a gun out of a holster in the small of his back. Sits in threadbare chair.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Through the window, we can see Pete sitting alone. So can --

EXT. ROOFTOP - ACROSS THE STREET

Linda who's watching him though binoculars, and Earl who's watching through the detached rifle scope.

EARL
Easiest seven hundred grand we ever made. Thought this'd be tougher.

Rolls over, opens a canvas carryall. Suppressed rifle is there in pieces.

EARL
I can take him from here.

LINDA
Few weeks, he starts to smell, they print him, figure out who he is. Missing accountant found with hole through head.

That doesn't sound real good.

EARL
All right. He just disappears again. One of those guys who goes out to the grocery store and never comes home again instead.

INT. JANE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jane's laid it all out for him. Carey's stunned, confounded.

CAREY
Jesus.

She nods, watches, waits. He bites the bullet. Doesn't lose it, instead asks ---

CAREY
How exactly do you get into a business like this?

JANE
I was sixteen years old. Camp counselor in Minnesota. I Got to know this local girl who worked at the DQ. 'Bout my age. Boyfriend used to beat her up. And we both kind of knew, the next time he'd got mad, he'd kill her. And there was nowhere to go. So one night, I put her in a canoe, paddled fourteen hours across boundary waters, and dropped her off in Canada. Nobody ever figured it out. I still get Christmas cards from her.

It seems obvious in retrospect, but....

JANE
Then one thing lead to another.

Maybe it's not as bad as he thinks...

CAREY
How many have you done?

JANE
About eighty.

It's worse.

CAREY
You made a living doing this?

JANE
Sometimes I don't make a dime.
Sometimes people give me presents.
I declare them on my income taxes.
There's a line for that.

He seems a little dismissive. She puts an end to that.

JANE
I've got four million three in the bank. Most of the presents tend to be in the six figure range.

He wasn't expecting that. She's come to a decision.

JANE
I don't think I can keep guiding if I get married. I don't think it would be fair.

CAREY
"Guiding." Anyone in particular you plan to be married to? Is that a yes?

JANE
It's getting there. If we do this, Carey. I'll never take another job.

He ponders for a moment, then ---

CAREY
You ever kill anyone?

She doesn't answer.

CAREY
Is anyone going to show up one day when we have two toddlers and arrest you?

JANE
No.
(then)
There are workers of evil. Hanegoaotegeh, the left handed twin destroys. Hawenneyu the right handed creates. I guess sometimes you pick a side.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Nice cars, well-dressed people going to some event. A man and his date pull up in a brand new Lexus. He gets out, lifts the remote to lock it.

INT. RENTAL CAR

CLOSE on a code grabber on Linda's lap. As the remote CHIRPS, the random digital code pops up on her screen. The unit's on receive. The man walks off. She switches it to send. The locks pop up on the Lexus as Earl gets out with a huge locking wrench.

INT. SMALL GROCERY STORE - DENVER - NIGHT

Pete Hatcher buys his lonely single guy groceries. A good looking women looks him over. He grimaces to himself. Doesn't dare do a thing. Pays and leaves.

EXT. STREET - DENVER - NIGHT

Pete walks along with his groceries. The most innocuous guy in the world. We see him from up high. We don't know why until ---

EARL (O.S.)
(over radio)
Here he comes.

Pete turns a corner. Two blocks ahead is the safety of his apartment building. In between, is a Lexus, hood up. He can see the backside of a woman bent over looking under the hood. It's a great ass. It belongs to Linda.

She touches something under the hood and pulls her hand back.

LINDA
Ow.

She sucks on the injured finger. There's no one on the street except her and Pete. She's a little frightened of him. Hatcher swallows hard. The streetlight makes her glow.

HATCHER
Didn't mean to startle you. You okay?

She looks him over. He looks safe enough with his bag of groceries... She's at a loss.

LINDA
Know anything about cars?

HATCHER
I used...
(stops himself)
A little.

She considers a moment, he looks pretty benign...

LINDA
Maybe you could just look...

He comes around, bends over, his shirt rides up. A half inch of pistol can seen in the small of his back. And then it's gone. She's taken it. And another has appeared in her hand. It's huge. It's pointed right at his head.

LINDA
Police officer. Don't move.

HATCHER
I can explain the gun. Really.

LINDA
You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say...

HATCHER
I...

LINDA
My back-up's a block away. You seem like a nice man. I don't want to have to shoot you. Get in the trunk.

HATCHER
I...

LINDA
Do it.

He does. She slams the trunk down. Hatcher's world goes BLACK.

Linda walks around to the front of the car. Proud, victorious, arrogant. That was easy. Slams down the hood. And reveals ---

THE DENVER POLICE CAR

as it pulls up behind. The YOUNG BLOND COP is already getting out, looking her over. Maybe she'll fall for the man in the uniform.

COP
Everything all right, ma'am?

LINDA
(quickly)
Thought I heard something in the engine. It was just my imagination.

COP
Why don't you start it up and I'll listen?

LINDA
Sure.

TWO SHOTS from the alley blow most of the top of the cop's head off. Linda doesn't seem all that surprised. Earl steps out.

EARL
He would have seen the broken steering column in a minute anyhow. He saw your face. And the missing Hatcher lived a block from here. He still alive?

The cop? No, he means Hatcher. Lights have come on in the windows in the buildings nearby. Half a beat later, SIRENS start up in the distance. Linda steps to the back of the Lexus. Reaches, shit... Stolen car, locked trunk, no keys. No time to fuck around either.

She fires eight shots in double taps in a pattern across the trunk. BLAM BLAM, BLAM BLAM, BLAM BLAM, BLAM BLAM. They turn and walk calmly off down the alley. For a moment the street is empty except for this tableau.

Linda and Earl EMERGE onto --

EXT. PEDESTRIAN MALL - 16TH STREET - NIGHT

Shops are open, gas lamps flicker, people stroll. Linda turns, admires a flowery summer dress in a window.

LINDA
Buy me the dress, Earl.

EARL
We're shopping?

LINDA
That's what people do on night like this. Or would you rather stand out here in the street?

She walks in. Earl follows.

INT. TRUNK - A MINUTE BEFORE

The WHANGING from SHOTS slowly diminishes. Eight beams of light penetrate from the bullet holes. A beat. Hatcher hears the footsteps recede. He is pressed way in the back of the trunk, against the back seat. Shaking.

He can see a safety release. His hand comes up, triggers it, the trunk swings open.

Looking in, we can see bullet holes in the floor of the trunk just forward of Hatcher's body. If the Lexus didn't have such a nice deep trunk...

EXT. STREET

He clambers out. Sees the scene. The dead cop, the blood, his groceries. He picks them up. Walks away. Half a block later, breaks into a run.

INT. HATCHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

He's freaked, but he's thorough. Moves fast, grabs his cash, grabs a remaining gun. Wipes down every surface he can find. Grabs every bottle and jar from the fridge douses them with hot water in the sink. Leaves it running.

Looks around, is that everything? Dials a phone number.

HATCHER
It's me. They found me. I'm out of here...

CUT TO:

INT. JANE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The voice laps over as Jane listens to her machine.

HATCHER (O.S.)
I'm gonna try to go north. Billings, Cheyenne. I'll call as soon as I know. They tried to kill me. There was a woman. And there's a dead cop now too. Christ... I... I gotta go.

The phone hangs up with a clutter. Jane's rewinding and double checking as she pulls out a map.

HATCHER
(repeated; on tape)
...north. Billings, Cheyenne. I'll call as soon as I know.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Carey answers the phone at the nurses desk. On rounds.

JANE (O.S.)
I'm gonna be gone for a couple of days. I didn't want you to worry.

He thinks he's kidding ---

CAREY
Can I get you anything, bail money? Weapons?

INT. JANE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jane's opened the burner door on the furnace. Flames roar. She hits the emergency cut off. She's got a pair of fireplace gloves on. Reaches past the still hot burner and drags out a fireproof box. Opens it.

Takes out five sets of ID. Puts the rest away.

INT. JANE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carey's there. He's freaked. She's packing.

CAREY
Don't go. You said you wouldn't do this anymore.

JANE
I won't.
(then)
This is something else.

CAREY
Jane. Everything is something else.

JANE
If Pete Hatcher came to me out of nowhere tonight, I'd tell him no. But he happened before I made a promise to you. He could be about to die, because I didn't do a good enough job. This isn't something I can walk away from.

CAREY
I am?

JANE
Don't make it like that. I can't abandon a person to be killed however much I love you.

CAREY
Is there anything I could say that would talk you out of this?

JANE
No. You could make me very sad, that's about all.

There's a long moment. He's got to make up his mind. She has.

CAREY
Promise you'll call...

She wraps her arms around him tight.

INT. COWBOY BAR - GOLDEN, COLORADO - NIGHT

Linda's wearing the new dress. She looks great. All the cowboys around think so. Earl's used to this crap. Sucks on his bourbon. The TV over the bar catches his attention. Eleven o'clock lead off is ---

PERKY NEWSCASTER
Tonight's top story. Downtown Denver, the senseless execution-style killing of young police officer.

EARL
Typical. They haven't figured out why it happened so they label it senseless.
(laughs to himself)
Made sense to me at the time.

ON THE TV

They can see the scene. Police tape, Lexus, open trunk. No Hatcher.

PERKY NEWSCASTER
Police are asking anyone who has information on the incident to contact them immediately. Although stolen, the Lexus had not yet been reported. Once again, a mysterious death this hour in downtown Denver. Next up, a baby llama at the zoo...

EARL

finishes his drink. Turns to her...

EARL
Well, I guess we better see where he's got off to now.

INT. HATCHER'S APARTMENT - DENVER - NIGHT

The door is kicked in. Earl sweeps in with two huge handguns, Linda half a step behind with a cut-down shotgun. The empty apartment stares back at them.

EARL
He's getting better at this.

They search. There is nothing useful there at all this time. Linda looks around.

LINDA
You're terrified. You should be dead. You run in, you grab what you got and before you blow out of here you...

She pauses, could it be, did they get lucky? She goes to the phone. Yeah, there's a redial button. Presses it.

Eleven number pop up on the screen. Long distance. She jots them down as ---

JANE'S VOICE
Hi. If you've got this far, you know what to do.

LINDA
(triumphant)
It's her.

She yanks out the phone book, turns the area code map.

LINDA
Six one six... Upstate New York. Near Buffalo.

EARL
Answering machine. Not voice mail. Probably a two digit code. Hundred possibilities. How long can that take? Let's see if he left a message.

INT. HATCHER APARTMENT - AN HOUR LATER

Linda and Earl have made themselves at home. Linda sipping tea. She punches redial and then another code.

MACHINE VOICE
You have one saved message. Push one for playback.

She does. Hatcher's message plays again. Linda keeps the message. Hangs up.

EARL
I gotta get going. You're gonna get on a plane.

LINDA
You're sending me home? Maybe *you* shot too soon and fucked up, Earl.

EARL
He saw your face. Having you around in Billings isn't gonna do any good. You're not going home. You're gonna go track this bitch from the other end.

INT. 747 - FIRST CLASS - DAY

Linda cracks open her laptop, plugs it into the skyphone.

ON THE SCREEN

We see Linda bring up a service called Information America. For a charge of $285, she backtraces Jane's phone number to a street address in *Deganawida, New York*.

INT. AIRPORT - BUFFALO, NEW YORK - DAY

Linda walks up the rental counter, rents a car with fake ID.

EXT. LAKESIDE STREET - DEGANAWIDA, NEW YORK - DAY

Linda gets out of the rental car. Looks up and down the street at the numbers. The address the phone number traces back leads to is a large vacant field. There's not even a telephone pole nearby. She's impressed.

LINDA
Tricky bitch.

She doesn't seem to mind at all. It just makes it more interesting.

EXT. AIRPORT - CHEYENNE, WYOMING - DAY

Jane walks out of the terminal over to her rental car. Her clothing marks her as out of place. She knows.

EXT. WESTERN WEAR SHOP - DAY

Jane emerges. Now she looks like everyone else on the street. She's got a bag full of other purchases. Looks down the hotel strip. There are a dozen or so hotels for the summer tourists. No telling which one.

JANE
Okay, Pete. Where the hell are you?

A hundred yards down the street Earl gets out of a truck and wonders the exact same thing.

JANE

keeps looking out over the strip looking for some clue. The signs are remarkably ticky-tacky. Cowboys, cows, buckaroos. Ads for cable, free breakfasts, pools. It comes to her. Nods to herself and...

EXT. WILD STEER HOTEL - FRONT

Guess what's on the sign.

EXT. WILD STEER HOTEL - POOL - DAY

Jane emerges from a dark hallway in a bathing suit. Towel over her shoulder, paperback in her hand. Like she's staying there. Kids play splash, pasty tourist parents watch. Keeps moving out the other side. Doesn't feel right.

EXT. BUCKING BRONCO MOTEL - FRONT

Yea-ha. The motif is everywhere.

EXT. BUCKING BRONCO MOTEL - POOL - DAY

Jane strolls out like she's staying here. Except no one else there is less than seventy. The old guys like what they see. She walks on through.

EXT. MOUNTAINEER INN

The sign's not quite as bad. Actually kinda subdued.

EXT. MOUNTAINEER INN - POOL - DAY

Better hotel. Better pool furniture, better class of people. Jane looks around. Feels right. She makes herself comfortable, lies down, opens her paperback. And waits.

EXT. SIDE STREETS - CHEYENNE - DAY

Earl cruises the streets in his truck. Up, down, back. Spots a red 4Runner. Wyoming plates. Except the truck is dirty and the plates are clean. Gets out. Moseys up. Unfolded map in the front, empty coffee cups. Checks the VIN. Bingo.

As the tourists wander by, Earl bends down, slips a motion detector onto the bottom of the truck. We see it, a ball of mercury resting at the bottom of a glass globe. Movement in any direction will complete the circuit.

EXT. CRAPPY MOTEL ACROSS THE STREET - DAY

No cute name. But up on the second story, Earl pulls aside the curtains and looks out over the street. He too gets comfortable and waits.

EXT. POOL AREA - MOUNTAINEER INN - DAY

Jane's peering over the edge of her book, spots Hatcher long before he knows she's there. He's come to sip iced coffee and check out the talent around the pool. Finally, he spots her.

He approaches. Dumbstruck.

HATCHER
Jane??

JANE
Hiya Pete.

HATCHER
How, you, must have gotten my message.
(then; worried)
How'd you find me?

JANE
Even coming in at two in the morning, scared out of your head, you chose the nicest hotel with the best pool.

He thinks this over. Maybe not so smart.

JANE
Where's your car?

HATCHER
On the street.
(then; proudly)
Three blocks away. *In front of another hotel.*

Good.

JANE
Everything you own up in the room?

HATCHER
Yeah. I took that suitcase you told me people travel with.

JANE
Give me the key.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Jane finds the suitcase, dumps it out. Cash, bankbooks, clothes, a gun. Takes the cash, bankbooks, gun, grabs a pair of jeans, drops it all into the bag over her shoulder. Leaves the suitcase. Walks out.

EXT. POOL - DAY

Jane returns, dressed, bag over her shoulder. He gets up, they start to walk out...

JANE
Here we go. If they managed to track you here, they probably haven't spotted you yet, just the car. Which way is it?

HATCHER
To the right.

JANE
We go left. Now tell me what happened in Denver...

EXT. ROAD - CHEYENNE CITY LIMITS - DAY

Sign says "Thanks for Visiting Cheyenne." They blow by.

INT. RENTAL CAR - MOVING - DAY

Jane drives. She ponders what she's just heard.

JANE
If they didn't shoot you right off, they were planning to drive out, bury you someplace where no one would find you. They're good.

HATCHER
Why do you keep saying they?

JANE
Did this woman look like she could carry your body by herself?

HATCHER
Huh. No.

JANE
And the dead policeman, it's harder than you think to draw on a cop and shoot him. He was shot by someone he didn't see. You're being hunted by professionals. Very good ones. The folks at the Inside Straight care enough to hire the very best.
(then; the bad news)
They're gonna keep looking.

Pete's fucking shook.

HATCHER
I thought it was over.

JANE
Not even close.

HATCHER
How'd they find me?

JANE
You left something behind on the trail. The tiniest spoor. They tracked it.

HATCHER
The car. I was late. There was an accident and traffic stopped. I was afraid I wouldn't make the flight. I left it in airport parking.

She's pissed, but it wouldn't help. Instead, she takes some blame ---

JANE
Maybe we cut it too close.

Jane cranks out a sudden left at a crossroad.

HATCHER
Where're we going?

JANE
I don't know. Which means I'm harder to follow.
(then)
You leave the slightest thing on the trail, the wolves can find you.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DEGANAWIDA - DAY

Linda stands a few blocks away from the lake in front of the telephone junction box. The doors are open. She's got a linesman's phone and pack of gum.

She puts three sticks in her mouth, starts to chew. Attaches the clips on the phone. Dials 5 numbers.

INTERNAL OPERATOR
SSC.

LINDA
(chomping on her gum)
Hi, this is Debbie in Repair Service. I've got a work order here that makes no damn sense. Can you give me the cable and pair on this line?
(listens; then)
Some fool must have RCF'ed this. It's forwarding through half a dozen switches. Can you back it up to the trunk for me, honey? Uh huh. So what's the originating number? You got a CNA on that? Yep, that's what's on the order. Thanks.

She disconnects. Takes out the gum. Becomes Linda again.

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - DAY

Linda pulls up. Hits send on her cell phone. After a moment, she can hear the phone ring in the house.

LINDA
Gotcha.

INT. VERY NICE HOTEL SUITE - BUFFALO - DAY

The Bellman helps Linda in. She's got quite a bit of luggage. She tips him well. Ignores everything else, throws open the laptop, plugs it into the dataport on the phone.

LINDA
All right, bitch, who are you?

EXT. TWO LANE ROAD - DUSK

Middle of nowhere. Rolling hills, ranch land, cows. An old rusted sign: "You are now entering Montana." The rental car with Jane and Hatcher does just that.

EXT. MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - MONTANA - DUSK

The town's got one motel, one flashing red light, and one phone booth. Jane hands Hatcher new ID. He's Max Perkins. She's Emily.

JANE
Why don't you go check us in. And put the car in front of a different room.

JANE

crosses the road and steps into the phone booth. Shuts the door, light comes on. That won't do. Opens the door and slips back into anonymity.

She stands there a long beat, considers. Digs out a handful of change. Thinks about it some more.

Plunks in the coins.

Dials.

EXT. CAREY'S HOUSE - DEGANAWIDA - NIGHT

Big, beautiful house. Expensive neighborhood.

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

Carey mutes CNN. Answers. Is happily surprised.

CAREY
Hey... I was hoping you'd call.

INTERCUT with Montana.

JANE
I've never had to call home before.

CAREY
You don't have to.

JANE
Wanted to.

Carey basks in that for a moment.

CAREY
I'll take that compliment. You okay?

JANE
Getting okay. I found him, pulled him out, got him a couple of hundred miles away. We're two good hops ahead of damn near anybody. The people who are after him are good.
(then)
Another day of random turns, watching my back, I'll start feeling like we dumped 'em.

CAREY
Where are you now?

Jane's taken aback. Stupid question. But he doesn't know.

JANE
Little town in the middle of nowhere.

CAREY
I mean...

JANE
I know what you mean. It's probably better you don't know.

The seriousness of it hits him. It's real out there.

CAREY
Right.
(trying for innocuous and safe)
So... How's the weather.

JANE
Oh, there's a trick. I tell you and then you narrow it down to the one place in the country there's a hailstorm right now and then you know.

CAREY
There's a nailstorm?

JANE
No. But I miss you.

CAREY
I miss you too.

BACK IN MONTANA - WIDE

on Jane and the phone booth and Big Sky. We can guess the rest of the conversation. I love you, etc. She hangs up, heads back across the road.

EXT. MOTEL - DUSK

Jane knocks softly on the door. Hatcher peer through the keyhole, lets her in.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Hatcher's shirt is undone, a bottle of soda hangs in his hand, the tv drones. He's shutting down. He's beat.

JANE
Let's say I'd been here to kill you...

Hatcher's had enough for the day.

HATCHER
Let's not. We'll say we did. Cause you see, I had people try to kill me. Recently. My life sort of blew up. And it keeps getting worse. Maybe I don't need another lesson right now.

Pete flops onto the one chair. Wallowing.

HATCHER
It's different for you. You get to be the hero. Come in, lead the frightened sheep around. But it is no fucking picnic being the sheep.
(then)
You don't get it.

JANE
I don't get it? You think if they show up, they just shoot you and I get a free pass? Some kind of professional courtesy? (MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)
Try not to be an ungrateful little shit, Pete. You get killed. *If I'm lucky*, I get killed. If not, I get tortured for the names and addresses of everyone I've helped for the last eight years.

HATCHER
Fine, maybe it's not worth the effort.

JANE
(gently)
Look in the past 36 hours, you've fled one life, almost been killed, and fled another. It's...

HATCHER
What? Okay if I'm not cheery? Like you? 'Hey Pete, more advice so you don't get killed.'

She could hit him. But that really wouldn't help. She picks up the only other piece of clothing he has, his shorts, and throws them at him.

JANE
Take off you pants. Put on your shorts. We're going for a swim.

HATCHER
We're what?

JANE
Do what I tell you.

EXT. POOL - NIGHT

Behind the motel. Pitch dark except for the moon. Jane's already silently breast-stroking across. Pete can't quite believe he's supposed to do this.

JANE
Get in. Swim.

Fine, whatever. He does. A little.

JANE
Under. Back and forth. Back and forth.

He does. Back and forth and back and forth underwater. Above him the moonlight dances on the water. He comes up.

Huge Montana sky. The stars everywhere. Jane treads water nearby. Damned if he doesn't feel a hell of a lot better. Knows he's been an asshole.

HATCHER
Nice night. I'm sorry?

JANE
You have two choices with cranky children. You can the slap them...

HATCHER
Which I'm sure you considered...

JANE
Or you can distract them. And get them out of their funk. And then maybe they realize maybe they're not so cranky after all.

HATCHER
I am sorry.

JANE
It is okay.

Hatcher floats on his back a moment. Admires the sky.

HATCHER
Why do you do this, Jane?

JANE
Anybody who knows how to swim will jump in and save someone who's drowning. I know how to swim.

He swims a little closer. And then a lot closer. Puts his hands on her shoulders. She can tell where this is going. Lets him down easy...

JANE
Pete. I'm glad you're happy you're alive again. And I'm flattered. I'm also engaged.

HATCHER
Engaged. I just somehow thought, you know...

JANE
That in my line of work, between the escape routes and the fake ID's that it would be hard to find time for a social life.

Hatcher feels stupid. She doesn't want or need that.

JANE
Hey, you asked a question. The answer is no, that's all.

She's kind of amused. So is he.

HATCHER
What does *he* think about what you do? Was he somebody you...

JANE
All things being equal, it's really important to me to keep my private life private. I do the same for you. It's safer for everybody.

Off his nod of understanding...

INT. LINDA'S SUITE - NIGHT

Linda's staring at the computer. Remarkable amounts of information are flickering by. Corporations in Delaware, the Bahamas, Caymans. Tax Assessor rolls. Probate files.

Each time she drops and drags information the price in the corner rolls up. It's already at 1400 bucks.

LINDA
Three shell corporations to own your house. All right, I'm impressed. You're more paranoid than Earl.

She finds and drags all the nine digit numbers in all the documents into the Social Security Number Search. Most spit back as invalid. A few spit back as real, but deceased. One is an active taxpayer ID number. She drags it over to the DMV box.

Doesn't take long. Up comes Jane's name, address and DMV stats. A half beat later, Jane's driver's license photo downloads beside it.

LINDA
Hello Jane. Nice to meet you.

The computer wants to know: Do full Nexus Search?

LINDA
Somehow I doubt there's a lot of press on you in your real name. But go ahead...

INT. CRAPPY MOTEL ROOM - WYOMING - NIGHT

Earl stares out at the truck. Chews up three small white pills. He's already pissed and wired. His cell phone HUMS. It's attached to the computer. It whirs on. The phone in the room RINGS a moment later. He answers.

EARL
Yeah.

LINDA
Her house is owned through three shell companies. But it came through probate fifteen years back.

EARL
Are you gonna get to the point.

The portable inkjet printer starts up beside him. Jane's picture spits out. He opens the lid to the laptop. The same thing is there and a lot more information besides.

LINDA
Say howdy to Jane Whitefield.

EARL
Is she there, or do I have to watch my back?

LINDA
I don't know for sure yet. My guess is she's out there with him. It's getting more interesting though. She got engaged last week. Her new hubby's mom put it in the local paper. He's a *doctor*.

EARL
Might be a cover. Explain the money she makes. Or maybe he's a client she's hiding.

LINDA
He's a real doctor, with a diploma under his real name who does real surgery. Pretty serious cover.

EARL
So find out.

LINDA
I just got this stuff. I'm fifteen miles away in the middle of the night. I'll know by tomorrow.

EARL
Maybe he's a plastic surgeon, changes all their faces.

LINDA
Maybe he's busy making Pete Hatcher look like Miss Arkansas right now and we're fucked.

EARL
Do whatever you have to do.

Linda plays him in her best little girl voice...

LINDA
Whatever??

EARL
Yeah. If she's there, take her if you can, kill her if you have to. If we can take her and twist her, that client list's worth serious money. If she's gone, squeeze the boyfriend till he pops.

LINDA
You want me to kidnap and torture a doctor, Earl?

EARL
Yeah. If you think he knows anything.

Even Linda's kinda taken aback by this. Not that she minds the idea.

EARL
I'm watching a fucking parked car in Billings, Montana by myself. I'm bringing Lenny out.

LINDA
(thinks; then)
Before he leaves, I need a clean ID that will stand a credit check of at least a million. Susan Powers. Get it out to me at this address FedEx.

EARL
What for?

LINDA
I may have to look respectable to kill a doctor.

EXT. EARL AND LINDA HOUSE - CHATSWORTH - NIGHT

The rottweilers pace restlessly.

INT. SPARE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phone rings. Lenny shakes himself awake and answers.

LENNY
Yeah?

EARL
It's me. You're coming out here. Rocky Mountain Lodge, Cheyenne, Wyoming. Leave now.

LENNY
Do I kennel the dogs?

EARL
(considers; then)
Hell no. Bring 'em.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MONTANA - NIGHT

Jane and Hatcher lie on a pair of aged twin beds. Jane rolls over, tries to get comfortable. Hatcher can hear she's awake. Something's been on his mind...

HATCHER
You're wrong.

JANE
What?

HATCHER
Most people even if they did know how to swim wouldn't jump in to save someone who was drowning.

EXT. HUGE TUDOR HOUSE - DAY

The REAL ESTATE WOMAN paces beside her leased Jag. A subtle "For Sale or Lease" sign in the front yard. Linda pulls up in huge black Lincoln. As she does, we can see the house directly across the street. It's Carey's.

REAL ESTATE LADY
It hasn't been on the market long. I'm not sure they're going to deal.

Linda ignores her, walks towards the house.

INT. TUDOR HOUSE - DAY

Linda's only real concern is that she's got a good view of Carey's house. She does. She makes the obligatory stroll quickly through the rest of the downstairs.

LINDA
Fine.

REAL ESTATE LADY
(assuming that meant no)
I could show you other...

LINDA
No. This is fine.

REAL ESTATE LADY
Don't you want to see upstairs?

LINDA
Is it nice?

REAL ESTATE LADY
Why yes...

Linda's already taken out a checkbook. She's filling out a check.

LINDA
I want to go month to month. I'll give you first, last and security.

Linda hands her the check. Flusters her good.

REAL ESTATE LADY
I'll have to check with the owners.

LINDA
That's a forty-five thousand dollar check. I'm not good at waiting. Don't waste my time.

As the Realtor yanks the cell phone out of her purse...

INT. TUDOR HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Linda's finishing her make up. Ties her hair back in ribbon. Examines herself in the mirror. Critically. Not so much like a woman going out, but examining a weapon.

Laura Ashley. Light summer frock. Yeah, she's pretty fucking adorable. Fine.

Sound of a car APPROACHING. Linda moves to the window. She's got a spotting scope set up. Sees: Carey's big black Mercedes. MD plates. She watches as he parks, gets out.

She's annoyed.

LINDA
A *good-looking* doctor. Of course, I got Earl.

Shakes off her annoyance and...

EXT. FRONT DOOR - CAREY'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Linda rings the bell. Carey opens the door and... There's a beautiful woman there with a bouquet of flowers.

LINDA
Hi.

Okay. Hi. Who is this woman.

CAREY
Hi?

LINDA
Susan Powers. I'm your new neighbor. Cross the street. I just wanted to say hello.

Carey's relieved. It's okay. Now he has to be polite.

CAREY
Carey McKinnon. Ahhh, come on in.

LINDA
What a lovely home...

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

She hands him the flowers.

LINDA
I have the basic silly neighborly questions for you. Gardener, alarm company, Chinese restaurant who delivers, that sort of thing...

CAREY
Hop Singh, Securitech, some guy named Leo. I'll find you the numbers. What brought you to Deganawida?

LINDA
Bad divorce, I was tired of the City, drove through, got charmed. You?

CAREY
I was born and raised here. Went off to med school, looked around, came back, and... got engaged.

She looks him over appraisingly.

LINDA
Pity. Where is the little woman?

CAREY
On the road, on business.

LINDA
What does she do?

CAREY
She's a... consultant.

LINDA
What kind of consulting?

It's all perfectly innocent. He thinks he's being clever.

CAREY
Executive resettlement.

Carey doesn't know it, but he may have just signed his death warrant. Linda considers. How much does he know. Too much to live probably. He's still standing there with the flowers.

LINDA
You should put those in some water.

He turns to do so. It's no accident she brought them...

LINDA
Can I look around, this is fabulous.

She's already going. Carey heads off to the kitchen to get a vase.

THROUGHOUT CAREY'S HOUSE

Linda moves down the hall, quickly, choosing, considering. She couldn't give a shit about the decor. She's checking the phones, placements, the lines.

She finally finds what she wants in a guest bathroom: a phone jack and no phone. She snaps off the cover. Reaches into her purse. She's got covers: white, ivory, beige, brown, black... And a small electronic transmitter that fits in. Plugs it in, slips a cover on. Pulls a cordless phone from her purse. It lights up green.

She now has an extension to Carey's house. Puts it back away. Strolls out.

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM

Linda's back to gushing neighbor. Carey puts the flowers on a side table.

LINDA
This is just charming. So how long have you been engaged?

CAREY
Three days.

LINDA
Just missed. Oh well. I can't wait to meet her, she has fabulous taste.

EXT. SCENIC OVERLOOK - SALMON PRAIRIE, MONTANA - DUSK

The rental car is tucked behind a stand of trees. Jane watches a long series of switchbacks leading up to where they are through a pair of binoculars. Hatcher calls out.

HATCHER
That's an hour.

She unfolds herself, stretches, gets up.

EXT. SALMON PRAIRIE - MOTEL - NIGHT

They pull up. Hatcher knows the drill...

HATCHER
You want to call home, Emily, and I'll go check us in?

She grimaces/rolls her eyes, but heads off with a kind of a grin for the payphone. Checks her pockets as...

JANE
Shit, you got any change?

He doesn't...

INT. CAREY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phone RINGS. Carey fumbles in the dark.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

The portable phone rings as well. But now it's connected to a speaker and a VOX recorder. We INTERCUT AS NEEDED.

CAREY
Yeah, I'll accept.

JANE
Hey doc. Hope it's not too late.

CAREY
I was hoping you'd call. How are you?

JANE
Tired. Missing you.

CAREY
That's what I wanted to hear. Exhausted, depressed, lonely...

JANE
Actually, I've got company. He's not bad-looking.

CAREY
Not what I wanted to hear. When are you coming home?

JANE
Soon, I hope. I really don't want to have to do this again. And I really don't want to see this guy's picture in the paper.

All this sentiment rubs Linda the wrong way.

LINDA
Don't worry, sweetie. When Earl finds you, you won't have to see anything anymore ever again.

JANE
As soon as I've got him tucked away, we'll start again. From the beginning.

CAREY
Get him done, come home soon.

JANE
I'd gotta go. I love you.

CAREY
Love you too.

She hangs up. Carey puts down the phone.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE

Linda hangs up too. She's irked. No one's calling to whisper sweet nothing's in her ear. She dials 0.

OPERATOR
Operator.

LINDA
Hi. Can I have the time and charge on that collect call please?

OPERATOR
Two minutes. Six dollars and eighty cents.

LINDA
Are you sure? That seems really high for Wyoming.

OPERATOR
The call originated from Montana. Salmon Prairie.

LINDA
Oh, I'm sorry. My mistake, thanks.

INT. EARL'S HOTEL - NIGHT

A rottweiler has his head in Earl's lap. Lenny is cleaning a gun in the b.g. Earl answers the phone.

LINDA
Hi hon, did you miss me?

EARL
What??

LINDA
Salmon Prairie, Montana. She's there now.

EARL
Did you have to hurt him?

LINDA
No, I got the information other ways.

EARL
How do you mean?

LINDA
You know how I mean Earl. You told me to do whatever I had to do.
(then; whispers)
I've gotta go. He's coming back.

She puts the phone down, starts to chuckle. Off Earl starting to twitch ---

EXT. MOTEL - SALMON PRAIRIE, MONTANA - DAY

It's a beautiful morning. Light filtering through the fir trees. Birds singing. Jane and Hatcher emerge from the room, enjoy it for a moment.

EXT. TWO-LANE ROAD - MONTANA

The rental car rolls by.

INT. CAR - MOVING - MORNING

They can see a sign for a lakeside cafe coming up.

JANE
Buy me breakfast, cowboy.

EXT. SWAN LAKE LODGE CAFE - MORNING

Swans, lake, terrace over the water. The HOSTESS greets them.

HOSTESS
Would you like to sit outside on the terrace?

JANE
Inside.

INT. SWAN LAKE CAFE - DAY

The hostess leads them in. There's a booth looking out over the water.

HOSTESS
I can seat you here by the window.

Jane gestures to the back.

JANE
Is that booth there taken?

HOSTESS.
No.

She leads them into the back and deposits them there with their menus. Hatcher's a little mystified.

HATCHER
Today we're practicing what it's like to be hung over?

JANE
Today, like every other day, we're practicing being cautious. It doesn't cost us anything.

HATCHER
The view.

JANE
You'll live. This has gotta become second nature. When there's a choice between a little bit of vulnerability and none, pick none.

HATCHER
I've noticed that about you.

Jane takes it good-naturedly. Waitress comes over.

WAITRESS
What can I getcha?

JANE
Coffee.

Hatcher nods for the same. The waitress leaves.

HATCHER
Now what?

JANE
I'm feeling pretty damn good. Anyone who's tracked us this far is probably supernatural. So now we just need to find you a new life. Something you can live with for the next twenty or so years. Think about what skills you've got. You're not going to be an accountant. Maybe you could teach math, be a stockbroker... (MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)
We can find you some kind of middle management position in a small company somewhere.

HATCHER
(doubtful)
You need references and a resume for that sort of thing, don't you?

JANE
I just happen to be the representative of an executive headhunting agency based out of Chicago. I'll be in charge of checking your references. Funny, they'll clear.

For the first time, Hatcher starts to feel optimistic. It could all work. The waitress comes back, pours their coffee.

HATCHER
I could get a job? Have a life?

JANE
Yeah.

HATCHER
This is great. It's like everything before was just some horrible dream.

Hatcher checks before he pours, the cream is totally coagulated. Looks about, the waitress has disappeared. He gets up to go to the coffee station to get a fresh cream. Jane, of course, takes hers black.

THE COFFEE STATION

is blocked from the window by a large pillar. Pete steps up, another man is filling a fresh cup of coffee in front of him. Oddly, about Pete's height, similar untucked flannel shirt. The first guy steps away in the direction Pete came from...

From the other side, you'd never know it was somebody else. Jane looks at the scene, something bothers her, she doesn't know what... Then everything SLOWS DOWN.

WAY WAY OFF in the distance, on the hillside across the lake, there's a brief flash, a reflection. A low THUD. Nothing for a moment, then the high-pitched CRACKLE as the entire huge picture window shatters. And the hollow WHUMP as a hole is blown through the man's chest. He totters there, far more dead than alive for a moment.

Hatcher gapes. Jane freezes, not quite sure for a moment what she wants to do. The decision is made for her. The next bullet blows the man's head all over the restaurant.

SCREAMS begin. A shard of glass sticks out of the hostess's arm. Jane yanks Hatcher out of his seat onto the floor. She considers for a moment. She's not proud of it but ---

JANE
We're all gonna die! We're all gonna die.

The pandemonium gets worse.

Jane takes two baseball caps from display by the register. Tucks her hair up in one, tosses the other to Hatcher. Strips off her flannel shirt, leaving the t-shirt underneath.

There's a back exit with an alarm, she kicks it open. On top of the rest of the screaming, the alarm starts to BLARE. The crowd stampedes. Jane's careful not to be the first out the door.

EXT. CAFE

The patrons pour out, dance and spin around wondering if more shots will come. A few run to their cars and flee.

JANE
Stay here. Stay down.

She crawls between the cars to the rental. Slithers in and guns it around the back. Throws the door open for Hatcher. Drops it into low, guns it out of there.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - MORNING

Earl's already breaking down the rifle. He can hear the faint screams across the lake.

Lenny's nearby looking through a pair of binoculars.

LENNY
Earl... You better look.

Earl's feeling pretty satisfied with himself. Picks up the scoped rifle for one more glance.

Dead couple, screaming, everything looks good. A car or two fleeing. *An empty parking space*. Something bothers him about it. What? The rental car *was* there. Looks quickly, way out the access road, the rental is brodying sideways before it disappears over a rise. Earl racks in a round, but it's too far, too iffy, doesn't take the shot.

Lowers the scope.

EARL
Son of a bitch. Wonder who I *did* shoot.

Not that he cares. Just that he didn't shoot the ones he wanted to. Packs the gun up and moves quickly towards the truck.

INT. RENTAL CAR - MOVING

As they fly along to the main road.

HATCHER
What happened? How'd they find us?!

JANE
I *don't* know. *I don't know.*

The main road's coming up. She nails a right. Punches it.

JANE
Take the wheel. Take the wheel.
Ready? Now.

She slithers back, he slides over. She grabs a map. The news isn't good. There are very few choices.

JANE
In a mile and a half at Big Fork, take route thirty-five. Christ, there's no fucking roads up here!

He's never heard her freaked. It doesn't help.

HATCHER
Say something.

JANE
I don't like this.

That's not what Hatcher wanted to hear.

JANE
Those ID's were clean. I built them and hadn't touched them for years. We made two dozen random turns over the last two days. Nobody followed us last night. And if there's a transmitter on this car, they just would have kicked the door in and shot us while we were sleeping. *I don't know...*

HATCHER
Is this supposed to make me feel better? Cause it's not working.

JANE
Try this. There's nowhere to go.

She stares at the map a moment more. Finds no answers. Throws it down frustrated and half-enraged.

UP AHEAD

Atop a tree, a huge crow rises from his perch, CAWS, and flutters off across the landscape. Jane stares at it flying off into the distance, harrumphs.

JANE
As the crow flies...?
(shakes her head in amazement; checks the map)
Thank you, Grandfather.
(turns to Hatcher)
You know the difference between an omen and a bad pun?

HATCHER
(doesn't get it)
No.

JANE
Me neither.

She stares back at the map. She finds something, but it's not much. Half-chortles. It ain't much of a plan, but it's gonna have to do.

JANE
You exercise at all, Pete?

HATCHER
I run a couple times a week. Play a little basketball...

Why the hell is she asking? She looks him over like he's livestock. Maybe it'll be enough, maybe not.

JANE
When we get to Joplin, we're gonna stop for a few minutes.

EXT. OUTFITTER - DAY

Ammo, camping supplies, propane, groceries. When there's only one store it town, it's all there.

Jane piles on compasses, canteens, sleeping bags, packs, matches, clothes, food, maps. And as some kind of afterthought, a fire extinguisher. Pete's concerned.

JANE
I hope you like it. This is only other idea I've got.

EXT. ROUTE 35 - DAY

Hatcher drives. The road forks. To the right leads to a port of Entry to Canada in 20 miles. It's closed as of Sept 15. To the left is Glacier park.

JANE
They both dead end. Go left.

HATCHER
(hoping)
These are great disguises.

JANE
They're not disguises.

HATCHER
I had had a real bad feeling you were going to say that.

But he doesn't sound worried. She looks, wondering.

HATCHER
Hey, at least we're doing something. What??

JANE
We're going to walk to Canada.

He begins to laugh. Half out of nerves and half for some kind of relief.

HATCHER
I'm so fucking glad I asked.

EXT. GLACIER PARK/INT. CAR - MOVING

They wind their way through the park. Past the Ranger station, past the nature interpretation center. Happy families take pictures at the scenic overlooks. Jane explains what she's thinking as they drive.

JANE
I saw something on the map. Or rather something I didn't see.
(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)
You don't have to stay on the lines that are there. And if the people who are chasing us do, we'll lose them.

The arrive at the end of the road. Park at a sheltered spot at the end of the parking lot. Get out. Suddenly, Hatcher gets it ---

HATCHER
We're going as the crow flies.

EXT. GLACIER PARK - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jane nods, starts sorting the gear. Hatcher keeps out of her way.

HATCHER
Well at least you picked a beautiful day for this. I don't think we're gonna need all that winter gear at all.

JANE
Petey, have you spent any time in the woods?

HATCHER
(unconcerned)
By the woods, you don't mean the trees next to the fairway? No.

JANE
Here, it's seventy degrees and sunny. We're at three thousand feet. By nightfall we're gonna be at seven thousand. We'll lose ten degrees for each thousand feet we climb.

He starts to do the math.

JANE
And the sun's gonna set. It'll be in the thirties. And then the wind'll pick up.

Pete thinks about this all very seriously. Then ---

HATCHER
Are you sure today's the day the teddy bears have their picnic?

JANE
(laughs; then)
You've lost your mind.

HATCHER
Probably. But no matter what happens to me after this, it won't be anywhere near as interesting.

JANE
Don't be so sure yet.

Jane takes the fire extinguisher, sprays the inside of the car down. Wipes the keys off, tosses them on the front seat.

HATCHER
What's that all about?

JANE
Fingerprints. Or maybe we'll get lucky and some juvenile delinquents on vacation will just take the damn thing. Go fill the canteens okay?

She walks over the payphones. Gets Carey's machine. Speaks quickly.

JANE
Hi it's me, I don't want you to worry. I'll be outta touch for a couple of days. Love you.

Hangs up. Hatcher returns with the canteens. She tucks them away, they turn and...

EXT. GLACIER PARK - DAY

Hatcher and Jane come over a small rise as they reach the trailhead. A forested valley floor lies below them, in the distance the Rockies and the Waterton Glacier begin. They head off down the Highline trail and...

HATCHER
All we need now is an Indian to guide us.

She gives him a look.

JANE
I got news for you. We're covered.

EXT. TRAIL - A HALF MILE LATER - DAY

They walk along. Jane's stride is sure and unhurried, conserving energy for the trip ahead. Hatcher just kind of skitters about. Catches up with her and ---

HATCHER
What if someone does follow us?

JANE
Every time we come to a fork, our chance of losing him is fifty/fifty. Next fork, another fifty. There's a lot of forks in these trails.
(then)
How do you feel?

HATCHER
Good. At least we're doing something.

JANE
You dizzy or light-headed, sick to your stomach?

HATCHER
No more than usual. What are you getting at?

JANE
Altitude sickness. You're probably okay. Feeling warmed up yet?

HATCHER
Don't tell me.

JANE
We've got three hours of light left. I'd like to put some miles behind us.

She starts to run. He follows. They clank along, gear rattling.

HATCHER
We making enough noise?

JANE
Let's hope so. It keeps the bears away.

HATCHER
Hell, if that's all I've got to worry about, things are looking up.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - MONTANA - DAY

Earl stands at the pay phone dialing the last few digits of the number on his pager. Linda answers. We INTERCUT with Linda making herself a cup of tea in Deganawida as needed.

LINDA
Earl.

EARL
Just shot two people in a restaurant. Four hundred yards out. Beautiful shot.

LINDA
(confused)
Ten minutes ago Whitefield called and left her fiancee a message.

EARL
I didn't say I shot the right two people, darlin'. What she say?

LINDA
That she wouldn't be able to call home for a few days.

Earl yanks out a map.

EARL
Now, why wouldn't she be able to call???

LINDA
I figure they're gonna be somewhere without access to a phone.

Earl figures it out on the map. Approves greatly.

EARL
She's going to Canada.

LINDA
They have phones in Canada, Earl.

EARL
But not along the way if you walk there. I like her. She's got spunk. I'm gonna enjoy this.

Linda's sick of Earl's admiration for this woman. Decides to teach him a lesson...

LINDA
It wasn't easy getting this stuff, Earl. Make it count this time. He's a doctor. He knows things about a woman's body. He brings me up, all the way up, then keeps me there, won't let me stop.

Earl's doesn't know it, but he's making these angry grunt animal noises. Linda enjoys them.

LINDA
It starts out being fun, but...

EARL
As soon as we've got her, do him. Got a video camera? Tape it for me.

He slams down the phone. He's got work to do. Linda puts back her head and laughs. Most fun she's had in ages.

EXT. TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

They're still running. Or at least trotting. Jane slows to a walk. Hatcher's hurting.

JANE
How do feel?

HATCHER
I'll live. Safer.

Pete turns, looks.

HATCHER
You think they're still back there?

JANE
If I did, I'd be running for my life. I think they'll find the car or what's left of it in a few days, and then I think they'll give up.

HATCHER
Really?

JANE
They're professionals. It's not a blood feud. At a certain point, you stop. The Inside Straight will decide you're no longer a threat and they've spent enough money. Probably.

They've come to a trail junction. Half a dozen trails.

JANE (CONT'D)
But there's no point giving up a chance to screw with them if they do try.

HATCHER
We switch all the signs. Like the Roadrunner cartoons...

Jane looks at him incredulously for a moment.

JANE
We're just gonna write that off to the altitude. They're not going to be following signs. They're gonna be following footprints if they're following at all. Take the far left trail. Try to get a quarter mile down or so then come back through the woods. Stay about fifty feet back.

Hands him a flashlight. She goes right, down another trail.

EXT. FAR RIGHT TRAIL - DUSK

Getting darker. Jane's traveled a far piece. Trail is getting narrower down a tiny canyon.

She steps onto the rock, then onto the rock wall itself. Edges her way back along the rock face.

EXT. TRAIL JUNCTION - DUSK

Dark now. Fifty feet off the trail. Jane flashes her light once. Hatcher returns. She moves towards him. Hands him a pair of socks.

JANE
Here, put these on.

HATCHER
(confused)
I'm wearing socks.

JANE
Over your boots.

She's already done so. He does. The footprints blur into nothing.

EXT. TRAIL - NIGHT

Jane and Hatcher emerge from the woods onto the right trail after half a mile. He looks behind. No trace.

JANE
It cost half an hour, but it's worth it. You gotta remember, the guy who's following us isn't a brain surgeon. He's just some guy who discovered early on that it was easier to pull a trigger than pass algebra.

It all sounds very consoling. Except the horrible SHRIEK of the screech owl that follows. Jane's not happy. She turns and stares back down the empty trail.

HATCHER
What?

JANE
Unless, of course, you believe we're being followed by witches who can change their shape at will.

HATCHER
They can do that?

JANE
Maybe.

AN ANGRY SCREECH OWL

rises into frame. It's been disturbed by...

EXT. GLACIER NATIONAL PARK - NIGHT

...the truck rushing by. Earl drives. Fast, pushing the truck through the turns.

EXT. PARKING LOT - GLACIER PARK - NIGHT

Jane's rental car blooms out of the darkness as it's lit by the high beams on Earl's truck.

EARL
That's it.

Pulls up and stops where the car stays lit.

EARL
Don't touch anything. Just let the dogs out.

The two evil black shadows clamber out of their travel cages, run around, pee, pant, smell. Earl walks over to the rental car, opens a door.

EARL
Get in. Einsteigen in.

The dogs leap in. Sniff the car, the upholstery, the steering wheel.

EARL
Give 'em a few minutes to get the scent.

Earl pops the trunk, nothing there. Takes a flashlight from the truck, goes to the nearest dumpster. Two suitcases beneath the garbage. He opens them. Treasure. Dirty clothes. Calls out ---

EARL
Herauskommen.

The dogs jump out of the car, await the next command. Earl tosses them the dirty clothes.

EARL
Fund.

The rottweilers sniff, puzzle, circle, run. And then agree. They trot across the parking lot towards the trailhead. Sit and whine, ready to go.

EXT. PARKING LOT - GLACIER PARK - NIGHT

Lenny is loaded down like a pack mule. Food, water, gear, ammo. His pack is a monster.

Earl's traveling light. The sniper rifle slung over his shoulders, a webbing belt with ammo, water, and some cold rations. He pulls a handful of tiny reflective markers from his pocket.

EARL
If there's a fork, I'll leave you one of these. Just keep moving. If you miss me, you'll hit the road in Canada. Hitch back and wait.

The dogs finish their meal.

LENNY
If you get killed, can I have Linda?

Earl doesn't dignify the question with an answer.

EARL
They got at least a six hour head start.
(turns to the dogs)
Raus!

The dogs run off down the trail.

EXT. TRAIL - NIGHT

Earl moves behind the dogs. His flashlight stays off. A pale moon lights his way. He pauses, sniffs the breeze like an animal, and disappears into the darkness.

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT

Jane has stopped by a rock outcropping. Looks it over with a couple of shaded bursts from the flashlight.

HATCHER
I could keep going.

Jane checks her watch. It's after one.

JANE
We've come twelve or thirteen miles already. We've got the glacier and the ridge next. You twist an ankle and we're done.

Hatcher silently agrees. It's cold, you can see their breath. She pulls out some food. Hands him some.

JANE
Try to eat. It'll keep you warm.

He chews on the power bar.

HATCHER
All that Indian stuff, you serious?

JANE
Flying heads, stone giants, naked bears? Smart man I know says it doesn't matter what you call it, destiny or karma, good or evil, it's still out there.

EXT. TRAIL JUNCTION - NIGHT

The dogs are angry. Unhappy, confused. Earl crosses the clearing to the signs.

He kneels down, brushes the ground with the beam of the flashlight. Jane and Hatcher's recent footprints are clearly defined.

He tracks them carefully, sees the split and go to different trails. Ponders.

He takes one dog by the collar leads him to the first trail.

EARL
Jagen. Hunt

Remaining dog whines in protest. Earl takes him to the second trail, issues the same command. He rushes off. Earl digs out a cigarette, crunches down a few more whites.

TWO CIGARETTES LATER

The dogs yip excitedly. Nearby again. And together. Earl wades through the brush to them. And finds footprints again. And then the soft round blobs of the sock-covered boots. Rewards the dogs.

EARL
Auf de ferse folgen.

The dogs trip out on the smell. Sniffing and going nutty. And off they go again. They rush off into the night.

A long dark pause and...

EXT. CAMPSITE - PRE-DAWN

Jane's eyes snap open. She doesn't know why. Five in the morning. Stars just beginning to disappear. She listens. Birds.

She slithers out of the sleeping bag. Stands. Way off in the dark, two or three ridges away, a flock of birds have risen, complaining into the air. Hatcher stirs.

HATCHER
What?

JANE
Something scared the birds.

There's a distant whine. A gurgled howl.

HATCHER
Are there wolves up here?
(she nods slowly; then)
Unless that guy turned into a wolf.

JANE
Dogs! They're tracking us with dogs!

She's yanking on her shoes. He follows. She frantically sorts and grabs some gear, abandoning most of it. He starts to grab a sleeping bag.

JANE
Leave it. We've got to make the ridge. It'll slow the dogs down. Run for your life.

They run. A distant howl echoes and...

EXT. TRAIL - NIGHT

Earl follows the dogs. They crest a hill. The stars are gone, the sky is beginning to brighten on one edge.

EXT. TRAIL - PRE-DAWN

Forest. Jane and Hatcher run. The sun just breaks over the horizon. Birds sing. It would be a beautiful morning if Hatcher didn't stop to hold onto a tree, vomit, and start to run again.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Lenny, in all his steroid muscle-bound glory tromps along. Comes to a fork, finds the marker Earl left and treads on.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

The dogs find it first. They're well trained, go into a slobbering point. Earl holds them there.

EARL
Stillgestanden.

He goes through what's left. Nothing important. Just that they blew out fast.

EARL
All right. Lose.

The dogs go nuts. It's the scent they've been tracking. Tear the sleeping bags to pieces, turn to Earl for approval.

He feeds them both. Drinks some water, eats some jerky himself. Then rouses himself and starts anew.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

The trail forks again. Signs point in either direction. Jane ignores them and heads right between. And up. The ridge climbs up to snow line and the glacier. They climb. In the far distance behind them BARKING echoes.

HATCHER
You know what I wish I had right now? A box of dynamite.

She considers. The idea is right.

JANE
Keep thinking.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Four miles later. Jane and Hatcher run, jumping from rock to rock. Jane pauses, raises a pair of binoculars, looks behind them. Nothing. Nothing. Then in the extreme distance, finds the two black wavy spots that are the dogs. The vertical slash that is the man. His arms are up in an odd akimbo fashion.

EARL

is staring through the scope of his rifle at the tiny image that is Jane. We hear his breathing, in/out, in/out. It stops. The thud/thud, thud/thud, thud/thud of his heart. With each heartbeat at this distance, the gun rises and falls minusculy. He times his shot, and *in between heartbeats*, FIRES.

Chips fly off a boulder ahead of Jane as the bullet ricochets into the sky. Fires again. Not good. They duck out of sight.

JANE
He can't get much accuracy at this distance.

HATCHER
Good?

JANE
He's seen us. If we run, he'll shoot. If we hide, he'll get closer. We gotta get outta the open.

Hatcher figures out the bad news for himself.

HATCHER
I guess we run.

He turns and starts to crash down the mountain towards a scraggly line of pine trees.

EARL STEADIES HIMSELF

takes his time, leads them. Decides it's not worth wasting the ammo. Grins. It's only a matter of time now. Starts after them.

EXT. TREE LINE - DAY

They plunge through, keep stumbling till they're hidden from sight. Push their way through thickets of berry bushes.

EXT. MEADOW - LATE AFTERNOON

The light's changing, fog gathering in the valleys. They push through a last stand of bushes. And stop dead.

The GRIZZLY is less than a hundred feet away, rooting, snuffling and grumbling to itself. Eating berries. Not at all happy about being disturbed.

Pete fumbles, digs the pistol out of the side of his pack. Jane shakes her head.

JANE
(softly)
That'll just annoy him.

The bear turns and gazes directly at Jane. Their eyes lock. Old Stories come back to her...

JANE
If the bear knows your real name, there is no escape.
(then to Pete)
Keep going. Don't run. Don't stop.

Hatcher can't quite believe it, but does what he's told. Slowly walks away, leaving Jane alone with the bear. It ignores him. Jane is what interests him.

Bear lifts its nose to the sky, sniffs. Smells her fear. Begins to walk slowly towards her.

Jane kneels, slips off her pack.

Rips open all the food. Honey, peanut butter, raisins, dried meat. All in one big mess in the bag.

JANE
Is it the truth, Nyakwai? Are the old stories true? They better be.

Her hands are shaking. The bear is almost on her when she springs to her feet. It rears back on its hind legs as she expects. It's nine feet tall. Even she didn't expect that. It's forelegs open wide to grab and crush her to death.

Jane flings the pack full of food hard at the bear's chest. The animal's reflexes kick in. Slams his paws together and catches the pack. Tosses it down, claws digging in and ripping it to pieces.

Jane pivots and sprints for the edge of the clearing where Pete has disappeared. Ten, twenty, thirty, sixty yards. She hits tree line, finally turns back to look and---

The bear is enjoying its snack. Muzzle covered with peanut butter. Lapping up the last of the food with its long pink tongue.

Jane turns back to the bear.

JANE
Stay right where you are, Nyakwai. Something is coming. Something evil.

EXT. BRUSH - DAY

Pete and Jane stumble along, both sapped from their exchange with the bear.

JANE
In the Old Days the trick was to get the bear to catch a small log and then crush its skull with a war club while it was busy.

Hatcher doesn't know what to say. Jane shakes off a little of the fear. They continue on.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Earl's covered the distance quickly. He plunges down the slope after the dogs towards treeline.

Earl chambers a round, carries the gun at ready. He doesn't like the approach. He doesn't have cover, they do. Progresses carefully, moving from cover to cover.

They reach tree line, the light fading the valley, mist gathering. Earl yanks out his flashlight.

EXT. HIDDEN VALLEY

A bit of light up ahead in the meadow.

Hackles rise, dogs growl softly. Almost buzzing in their hostility. Waiting for the command. Earl creeps forward. Holds rifle ready.

Earl silently hand signals them. One right, one left. The dogs streak into the clearing, growling, slobbering. Earl works his way in as they come at their prey in the grey half-light.

Fifty feet off, they stopped stiff-legged. Growling, snarling at a thicket. Earl can't see why. They're smarter than him, he just doesn't know it yet.

EARL
(softly)
Abschuss! Kill!

They streak forward. Earl rises up behind a tree. Flashlight in one hand, rifle in the other.

The first dog leaps for a throat, emitting a sound of half-growl half-joy. The other dives in low.

The next sound is enough to make Earl drop his flashlight in his haste to turn it on. Whatever it is, it doesn't come from a human throat.

The first dog flies back through the air. Earl finds his flashlight. Lights up the BEAR. Doesn't seem to bother him, but it blinds the nearby dog. The bear turns and smashes him with a heavy paw. Drags him off and disappears before Earl can get a clean shot. He fires into the thicket anyhow.

The first dog dazed, rises to his feet. Seems unhurt. But shocked. He's finally found something he can't kill.

The bear suddenly reappears, second dog in its jaws. Gives the dying body a neck-breaking shake, tosses it aside and comes after the remaining dog.

The dog turns tail, streaks home to Earl.

Earl aims, deliberates, <u>then shoots the dog through the head</u>.

Bear stops, paws it to be sure it's dead. Then considers, is there more to eat out there?

EARL

has emptied the magazine. Replaces it. Readies himself. Then looks. The bear is feeding on the dead dog.

Earl could kill it out of anger. Checks. Only has one more magazine beyond this. Abandons his dead dogs and slips away.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Fog is rolling in now. Sun is gone.

Earl moves carefully now. No dogs to help him, no one to cover his back. But he's not worried. If anything, he's energized by the loss of the dogs. Focused. He's tracking on his own now. Footprint by footprint, spoor by spoor.

Creeping silently through the woods. It's slow going. Roots, rocks, brush. And it's getting harder...

Then he stops. Thinks. Turns, straightens up and walks away from the trail. Half a beat later, breaks stride and starts to run.

We have not a clue what he's up to. Whether he's afraid and running away or has another thought in mind entirely. He disappears from view and...

EXT. RIDGE - NIGHT

It's cold. The wind screams. Tiny crystals of snow bounce off the rocks.

Down in a crevice, underdressed, cold, but convinced he's right, is Earl. Hands tucked under his shirt to stay warm. Rifle laid at the ready. Flashlight nearby.

The wind whips through again.

And then, down the ridge, a tiny glow of light. Coming towards him. He smirks, well satisfied.

The footsteps grow closer. Closer still. Earl takes his hands from under his shirt, grabs the rifle and inches up slowly. Peers through the scope.

Dark enough to make the shot difficult. He brings the flashlight up beneath the barrel and waits as they approach. Then flashes it on...

As he does ---

Jane stumbles forward hard onto her face. And Hatcher crouches and fires at the light. One, two, three times.

Earl has already turned off his flashlight and rolled to a new position. Checks quickly through the scope. Hatcher is running down the slope for the woods. But it seems wrong, weird, probably a diversion. Checks, Jane is still there.

JANE
Don't leave me here! Pete! Don't leave me here! Please...

Earl's unsure. Checks again. Hatcher's still fleeing. Earl's not worried. He won't be hard to find.

Jane still doesn't get up. She's dragging herself along, one leg not working. Earl pins her in the light, cross-hairs resting neatly on her forehead if she tries to do anything. She doesn't.

He moves towards her. Enjoying the hell out of this.

EARL
Now that's some pathetic crap, don't you think? You blow your ankle and the little shit leaves you here?

She struggles to rise to her knees, but keeps the weight off her bad ankle. He's loving this.

EARL
It's a common error. You trusted your accountant.
(that just cracks him up)
Don't worry. You're worth more alive than dead. *For a while*.

Jane grimaces, knows it's true.

EARL
You're gonna give up every client you ever had before you die. You're gonna buy me a house in the Caymans. And when it's over, I'm gonna gut you open and leave you to die like you did my dogs. You fucking bitch.

He comes over, jerks her head up by the hair. Looks her over.

EARL
But first, I'm gonna do to you what he's been doing to Linda.

He sets the flashlight down on a rock where it can still illuminate her. Rifle beside it. Snorts at her hopes, knowing she can't reach it and comes towards her. He reaches to unbuckle his pants.

Jane reaches beneath her shirt, pulls out Pete's pistol and shoots him with the three remaining shots through the chest.

He crumples. She gets to her feet quickly, uninjured, steps between him and the rifle so he can't get it. He lies there, clutching at himself. Can't believe he was shot. Starts to mutter something. She leans closer to hear.

And closer. He yanks down on her hair, smashing her head against the rock. As she bounces up, he wraps two bloody hands around her throat and starts to squeeze the life out of her as it leaves him.

She searches desperately with a free hand on the ground, finds the fallen gun. Puts it between his eyes and squeezes the trigger. It just clicks. All six shots fired. He continues to squeeze.

She batters him with the gun. Over and over until between the blows and his wounds he loses his grip and starts to die. He's a bubbling mass of sucking chest wounds. Can't believe this has happened to him. With his last breath ---

EARL
Fuck you, Jane...

Jane's stunned.

JANE
How do you know my name?

EARL
It's not over.

JANE
How do you know my name!?

But he's too busy dying to answer. She's shook. Shakes his dying body...

JANE
How do you know my name!?

But he dies -- grinning at her -- enjoying her fear.

Jane sits, shaken. The wind blows. The ice crystals spatter against her. This is not the way this was supposed to be.

She can hear as Hatcher returns up the slope. Shines the light to check. It's him. He joins her.

HATCHER
You okay?

She's not. But she's not about to tell him. Shakes off her own fears for a moment. Shines the light on him.

JANE
I'm gonna ask you a question. And no matter what the answer is, it's all right. Okay?
(he's not about to argue)
Do you know anyone named Linda?

HATCHER
(thinks; then confused)
A couple. A girl I dated in college... My old accountant... Ahhh... I don't know. Why??

Jane keeps the light in eyes.

JANE
Listen to me. No one will ever know, I don't care. But is there any reason anyone named Linda wishes she never met you?

HATCHER
(mystified)
No.

JANE
Swear it to me.

HATCHER
I swear it to you. Anything else?

JANE
No.
(then)
Let's search him. I want to know who this guy is. And then we bury him.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

With broken branches, Hatcher and Jane rake the last bit of earth over the grave. Earl's possessions are laid out nearby. Rifle, money, ID, food, map, compass, shattered pager. Nothing else. Jane doesn't like what she sees.

JANE
It's not what he has, it's what he doesn't: *no pack, no sleeping bag, no car keys*.
(only answer is)
He's got someone trailing with the heavy stuff.

HATCHER
Then let's get outta here. If they're carrying all that, it should be easy to stay ahead of them.

JANE
Yeah.

She hands Pete the map and compass.

HATCHER
Why do I get these?

JANE
Cause you're going to Canada. You walk that direction. You'll be there by dawn.

HATCHER
I can't leave you here, waiting for some assistant hitman.

JANE
You can't do anything else. I quit. You can be in Lethbridge by noon, and on a plane by dinner. Go to Dallas, go to Detroit... You've got fresh papers and money, you'll be safe. It's over, Pete. Go.

She hands him his pack. Then casually ---

JANE
In between the time you first spoke to me and now, you ever mention my name to anyone?

HATCHER
Your name? I only know your first name.
(she's still waiting for the answer)
No. Never. And I don't talk in my sleep. Why?

JANE
Just a precaution. You should get going.

He stands there for a moment, thoroughly disoriented.

HATCHER
I don't know what to say. I don't know how to thank you, Jane. I...

She's the stern mom. She's done this before.

JANE
I love you too, Pete. Like a brother. Now get out of my hair, I've got things to do.

There really is nothing left to say. He tries to think of something, can't, turns and walks away. Disappears off into the trees and darkness.

Jane's facade collapses. She leans against a tree, sinks to the ground, begins to shake...

EXT. TRAIL - MORNING

Lenny tromps along. Still weighed down by his giant load. Cheery in his steroid and HGH haze. It's cold. Frost on the leaves, but he's dressed for it. The SIG Sauer rides on his hip.

The trail straightens out through a clearing. A hundred yards away, a woman steps out of the shadows at the far end. He's not even sure she's real at first. She just watches silently.

There's a strap across her chest. He keeps walking. And then he realizes that the strap is to Earl's rifle.

He drops his pack, yanks out the pistol begins to run at her.

JANE
I just want to talk! I just want to talk to you!

Lenny begins to fire. At a run, with a handgun. A bad plan.

JANE
Please!

He shoots again.

She smoothly swings the rifle around onto her shoulder. Flips open the scope covers, racks in a round. He runs at her, still firing. Almost sadly, she blows a hole in his chest you could throw a basketball through.

Lowers the gun.

JANE
I just wanted to talk. Now I've got to bury you too.

EXT. PARKING LOT - GLACIER PARK - DAY

Jane returns. She's got Lenny's backpack on. The rifle broken down and stowed away. She's just another camper.

Rental's still there, keys in the front seat. She leaves it where it is. Digs out a set of keys she took off Lenny for the big Ford truck beside her car. She gets in the truck and pulls away.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The truck rolls along.

INT. FORD - MOVING

Jane's hands shake as tries to drive. Settles herself. Gets a firm grip on the wheel.

EXT. GLACIER GATEWAY MOTEL - DUSK

Truck's parked. She's unloading everything into the room.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DUSK

She gets the last case in. Shuts the door. Stares at it all.

JANE
Who were you? How'd you find me?

She starts to tear everything apart. Every seam in every suitcase, every stitch of clothing, linings, shoes, everything.

SEQUENCE

Jane is meticulous beyond belief. Nothing gets by her. The light slowly changes. She opens the frames of the backpack, waistbelts, splits the soles off the hiking boots.

Carefully disassembles and reassembles the computer equipment, scanners, etc. It's a frightening assemblage. And in the end ---

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Guns, weapons, poisons, syringes are piled on the bed. Off to one side, some cash, fake IDs, scraps of paper.

There's three ID's for Earl. All with different names. Two credit cards. A thousand dollars in cash.

Jane's stares at it all. Not happy. It all feels wrong.

There's a KNOCK on the door. She grabs up a gun. Slips to where she can peer sideways behind the curtains of a window and see who's at the door.

It's Hatcher.

She's pissed. And distressed. Yanks open the door. This is the last thing she needs. All her work was for naught.

JANE
What the fuck are you doing here?!
You're supposed to be in Canada.
You're supposed to be safe!

She lets him in, slams the door. He's never seen her like this. It frightens him a little, but he guesses at part of the cause.

HATCHER
You killed the other guy too.

JANE
I didn't want to.

HATCHER
Have you killed a lot of people,
Jane?

She's shook. Shaking. Not good. She's about ready to cry.

JANE
No.

He grabs her. She's going to resist, then yields, letting him hold her as she quakes for a moment. She gathers herself and pulls away.

JANE
Now. What the fuck are you doing
here?

HATCHER
You saved my life, Jane. For reasons I don't really understand, for beliefs that make no sense to me. But you did it. And you risked your own. And I'm supposed to send you some money and a thank-you note one day and think we're all square? I don't think so. And the more I walked along, the less I thought so. Whatever I owe you is bigger than a cashier's check and a Hallmark card.

Jane's surprised. Hatcher's turned into a hell of a better guy than the one she first met.

HATCHER
This isn't over, is it?

JANE
No.
(then)
The dead guy on the ridge knew who I was. *He knew my name*. I don't know how. Nobody's ever tracked me before.

HATCHER
I got you into this.

JANE
No, you didn't.

But she's faced with an immovable object. Fine. Gestures to the ID and cash on the bed.

JANE
The ID's aren't that good. And there's not enough cash, not enough credit cards. They didn't know how long they'd be on the road hunting you. But this wouldn't have covered it. This is enough to convince an amateur to stop looking, no more. I've looked everywhere and I can't find a goddamned thing.
(then)
You go through everything. I'm gonna go tear apart the truck.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Jane rips the inside door panels off with the lug wrench. An Elderly Guest getting ice stops to watch her.

JANE
There's this rattle that's driving me crazy.

He nods, understands, heads towards his room. Jane continues tearing apart the Ford.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Hatcher doesn't have any good news. Neither does Jane.

HATCHER
No.

JANE
I tore apart the body panels, the air filters, the vents, seats, headliner...

She flops despondently into a chair.

JANE
We're missing something obvious here. Or they're a hell of a lot smarter than us.

HATCHER
Maybe they didn't hide them. Maybe they gave them to someone to guard.

She looks at him. There's someone else?

JANE
Like who?

HATCHER
Maybe the dogs were guarding them. They scared the shit out of me.

She slumps back in the chair. That didn't help. Then...

JANE
Say that again.

HATCHER
If I had something I wanted guarded I would have given it to the dogs?

She thinks back to what she saw. No.

JANE
They just had choke leads...

And then without a word, Jane flicks open a knife and heads towards Hatcher. He steps back, half puzzled, half horrified. The dogs' travel cages are behind him in the corner. Jane rips off a false bottom. Forty thousand dollars, a dozen platinum and gold cards and two ID's fall out. These look real. One for Lenny with an address in North Hollywood. One for Earl in Chatsworth.

She nods her approval to Hatcher. Goes to the phone. Cracks the local phone book. Dials a number ---

KALISPELL AVIATION
Kalispell Aviation.

JANE
I'd like to go to Los Angeles. Tonight.

KALISPELL AVIATION
(condescending)
The last flight has left already for this evening. There's nothing out till tomorrow morning.

JANE
What's on the field?
(she talks the talk)
Something fast.

The woman at the other end changes her attitude immediately.

KALISPELL AVIATION
I've got a King Air here, five and half hours, thirty-two hundred for a one way drop. I've got a Lear standing by for six asshole lawyer fishermen who are late. Fifty-four hundred. Say three hours to LA if the wind is with you.

JANE
The Lear.

KALISPELL AVIATION
This time of night, hon...

JANE
I'll pay cash.

She looks over Hatcher. Makes up her mind.

JANE (CONT'D)
Two passengers.

Pete's in. Jane hangs up.

HATCHER
You think the woman's gonna be there?

JANE
Maybe. Or maybe they're running more than one job. Maybe she just had somebody else to kill.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE - DEGANAWIDA - NIGHT

Linda is pumping on a eighteen-speed road bike on a pair of rollers. She's holding at 35 mph. Bike shorts, racing jersey and cleats. Sweat drips. For those of you who like this sort of thing, you'll like this sort of thing.

A video camera is set up on Carey's house, monitor in front of her. ON THE MONITOR, we see Carey pull in.

Linda coasts to a stop, gets off the rollers as ---

INT. CAREY'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

Carey tries his garage door remote repeatedly. It doesn't work. He gives up, leaves the car in the driveway.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE

ON THE MONITOR we see as Linda tracks him with the camera. She zooms in, ignoring Carey, and pushes in on his right hand as he reaches up to the alarm panel by the door. The panel fills the screen. Punches in the alarm code. Light turns green.

EXT. CAREY'S HOUSE

He unlocks the door, goes inside.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE

Linda shuttles the tape back and forth. She's got it. Jots down the five number code.

Linda's done a full bio on Carey. His med school records, his high school yearbook photos. It's taped to the wall nearby. She's a little fixated. Okay, maybe she's a lot fixated.

LINDA
A doctor. I still can't believe you got a doctor. Well, let's see how long you can keep him, sweetie.

Linda towels off, mists herself with a sprayer, and wheels her bike out the front door. Now we see the full night lighting set up on the bike, she flicks it on and...

EXT. CAREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Linda adjust the bike and light to backlight her as she steps up to the front door. The entire effect is totally deliberate and premeditated. She reaches down, tweaks her nipples. Rings the bell.

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carey's changed, padding around in sweat pants and a ratty t-shirt. Can't figure it. Who's ringing the bell this late? Heads for the door, opens it. And wham... The effect Linda planned on works.

LINDA
Hi. Just wondered if your fiancée was back yet. I wanted to invite the two of you to dinner.

Carey picks his jaw back up.

CAREY
No. No, she's not back.

LINDA
Do you ride?
(off his befuddlement)
Bike?

CAREY
No. Not since I was little.

She just keeps standing there. Waiting. It'll take effect. It does...

CAREY
Ahh, would you like some water?

LINDA
Sure.

She steps in, closes the door behind her.

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carey rushes back to the kitchen. Half to get her a glass of water, half to get away from this magnetic object.

Linda reaches down, slips off her cleats. Maybe she's getting undressed, maybe she's just protecting his hardwood floors. Follows him into the kitchen.

Takes the water. Tilts her head back, swallows it in one long drink then *catches* him looking her over. He's embarrassed, she's amused...

LINDA
Something on your mind?

CAREY
No. No...

He backs away. They drift out into the living room.

LINDA
I wanted to thank you for all your help the other night.

CAREY
Well, dinner should cover that.

LINDA
I wasn't thinking about dinner.

She looks down out of frame; the sweat pants don't hide much.

LINDA (CONT'D)
I don't think you were either.

There's nothing he can do to deny it. Carey takes refuge in medical doublespeak ---

CAREY
That's a physiological response that I have no voluntary control over.

LINDA
(soothingly)
It's okay. You're not married yet. You deserve one last thrill before you settle down to the next forty years.

CAREY
I don't think so...

LINDA
Oh Lord, it's almost mandatory. You know it, I know it. We're both adults. It's perfectly okay.

CAREY
No, it's not...

She's toying with the zipper on her jersey. He turns away, finds something else to look at. Fiddles with turning on the lights in the backyard to light up the trees.

As his back is to her, she slips out of the jersey in one swift motion. Steps out of her bike shorts half a moment later.

Moves towards him. He turns, sees. He's stunned. Can't help himself, can't hold her eyes, looks her over.

LINDA
For someone who's not interested, you're sure taking a nice long look.

CAREY
It's hard not to.
(then)
Please stop. This isn't what I want. This could wreck my life.

Her nudity is power. She uses it as such. It only takes half a step to back him into a corner.

LINDA
No consequences. No winks at dinner. No nudges under the table. You don't have to call, you don't have to remember my birthday.

He gapes a few times like hooked fish.

CAREY
You're one of the most beautiful women I've ever seen in my life. And if I was ever going to do this, this would be the time. But I'm not.

He sounds a little unsure but...

CAREY (CONT'D)
You should put your clothes back on and go.

She looks him over. She can't believe it. This doesn't happen to her. Who the fuck does he think he is. She manages a last vestige of disdain...

LINDA
You're the first man to turn me down since I was fourteen.

She turns and leaves him trembling in the corner. As she walks out, slipping her clothes back on, she pulls a tin of wax from the pocket of her jersey, *takes a nice clean imprint of Carey's house key.* Leaves.

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - CHATSWORTH - NIGHT

Watching. From a distance. A couple of lights are on. Nothing happens for the longest time.

HATCHER (O.S.)
(impatiently)
It's been half an hour.

JANE (O.S.)
Almost.

A light goes on in a new room.

JANE
Now it's been half an hour.

JANE AND HATCHER

have been hidden in a drainage ditch across the street. She stands up unconcerned now.

JANE
Nobody's home.

HATCHER
I thought I just saw...

JANE
They're on timers. People don't move around the house on exact half hour intervals.

She crosses the deserted street carrying a huge pair of bolt cutters. Snips apart the fence. Slips in. Hatcher follows.

EXT. EARL'S YARD - NIGHT

Kennels are empty. House is one-story, five or six bedrooms. Jane walks around, looks it over carefully. There's no neighbors for a quarter mile in either direction.

She checks the house for motion sensors. None.

HATCHER
What about an alarm?

JANE
The last thing people like this do is wire their house to bring the cops. That's what the dogs were for. They just lived a nice quiet life.

She breaks the glass in the door to the kitchen, reaches in, opens the door.

INT. EARL AND LINDA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jane turns on the lights. Cold stainless steel. Spotless. It feels more like a place to dismember a body than cook.

The drawers and cupboards are showroom neat. Nothing human. They pass through to the ---

INT. LIVING ROOM

Marble and leather and state of art electronics. Line doublers, computers, ISDN lines...

Jane can't draw a full breath. Holds the wall for support. Hatcher looks at her wondering...

JANE
Don't you see? Don't you see? They're cannibals.
(he still doesn't get it)
Everything here was paid for by killing someone. We're surrounded by dead bodies. Trophies. These are all corpses.

Hatcher gets it. And is suddenly a little nauseous.

HATCHER
Should I look on the computers?

JANE
Don't waste your time. There'll be passwords and electromagnets. Two wrong tries and it'll wipe everything out on the disk.

INT. EARL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane slides open the closet. Every possible uniform you can imagine. LAPD; patrol, motorcycle and dress uniforms, Highway Patrol, DWP, military uniform, suits, homeless clothing bagged with the dirt on it...

INT. LINDA'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Pull back another door. Wigs of every shape and color.

JANE
Shapeshifters...

INT. BASEMENT

Locked weapon's cabinet. Racks of electronic gear. Handcuffs, thumbcuffs, garrotes. In a small medical fridge are vials of insulin, heroin, anectine. Two floor safes.

A credit card press and stacks of blanks. The backwards writing in the press reads Susan Powers. It means nothing to her.

Hatcher searches about elsewhere. At the bottom of a trash can, picks up a flimsy FedEx Receipt.

HATCHER
Know anyone named Susan Powers?
(still doesn't mean anything to Jane)
She lives somewhere with a weird name. Deg-an-awida.

Jane blanches, takes it from him, reads it. Gets down on he knees and throws up in the trash can.

Wipes her mouth off.

JANE
The address is across the street from the man I'm engaged to.

Jane's heart is sick. She never meant to bring Carey into this.

JANE
She's tapped his line. Every time I called home, they closed in on us.

She looks around.

JANE
Everything they know about you, about me, is here. We'll never get into the safes or the computers. There'll be thermite drops on the safes. Wrong combination and it torches itself.

She thinks about it a moment more. There are no choices.

JANE
We'll never get into any of it. We can't leave this on the trail behind us.

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jane and Hatcher drive off in a rental. The house behind them bursts into flame. The thermite drops catch. White magnesium flares forty feet into the air. They keep driving.

INT. 747 - DAWN

The sun bursts white through the windows. Jane watches the stewardesses do the seatbelt/oxygen mask dance. Silence. Doesn't hear a thing.

EXT. 747 - DAWN

The engines start. The whine builds in pitch until it is

EXT. LINDA'S HOUSE - DAY

...the BEEEP of the answering machine followed by ---

ANSWERING MACHINE
You have no messages.

There's the sound of a phone being dialed and ---

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Linda on the phone. The message she gets is strange.

RECORDED VOICE
The skypager for -- "Earl" -- is no longer active.

LINDA
Where the hell are you, "Earl?" How many days can this take you.

Linda rapidly dials another number.

ANOTHER RECORDED VOICE
The number you have dialed is no longer in service. If you feel you have reached this recording in error...

Linda slams down the phone.

CUT TO:

LINDA

now on the phone with the operator.

OPERATOR
Our lines are fine. The problem is with the customer equipment ma'am. Maybe a tree knocked down a line, it's impossible for me to tell here.

LINDA
Can you send someone by to check?

OPERATOR
(knows the answer)
Is there someone on the property to let the repair technician in?

She forgot. It's the phone company. All right...

INT. THAI RESTAURANT - CHATSWORTH

LU, the owner, answers.

LU
Bangkok Queen.

LINDA
Hi, it's Miss Thompson down on Canaan. I'd like...

LU
Brown rice/steamed vegetable.

LINDA
Yep. Is Jimmy driving? I'm having some trouble with the gate. Have him take a phone.

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Nothing but a smoldering wreck and JIMMY LU, 17, befuddled, standing next to his car. Answers the buzzing cell phone.

JIMMY
This some kind of joke, I don't get it.

LINDA
You don't get what, Jimmy?

JIMMY
There no house here any more. Burnt down. Look like a bomb went off.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE

Linda puts down the phone. Knows.

LINDA
Earl's dead and you burnt down my house, bitch.

She turns, spinning around as if she expects Jane to suddenly appear.

INT. BUFFALO AIRPORT - GATE - DAY

Jane and Hatcher emerge from the plane. They pass a bank of payphones.

HATCHER
His phones at work can't be tapped yet. Maybe you should call and...

JANE
Or maybe they are. And what am I gonna say? Hi honey, I killed two people and their friend or maybe the wife of one of them has moved in across the street from you. She wants to find and kill me and the guy I'm traveling with. But she'll probably just kill you as soon as she figures out what's going on. Don't wait up?

Hatcher's got no response to that. Jane thinks about it. It gets better...

JANE
And, oh yeah, and I just flew commercial and I'm unarmed.

INT. CAREY'S MERCEDES - EARLY EVENING

Carey pulls onto his block. Looks around to make sure Linda isn't out. Lights are on in her house. Pulls quickly into his driveway.

EXT. CAREY'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Moves rapidly to the front door. Disarms the alarm. Unlocks the door. Steps in, hastily shuts it behind him.

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - EVENING

Stands there for a second, relieved. Shakes his head at his foolishness. Steps out of the foyer into his own living room.

Linda appears around the corner. Before he can do anything but gape, she hits him with a 200,000 volt stun baton in the chest. He drops like a stone.

LINDA
Honey, you're home. How was your day?

She grabs him by the collar and drags him away.

INT. CAREY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Carey comes to. He's on his bed. His shirt is off. His pants are being tugged off. Left in his boxers.

Motor skills aren't back yet. Linda flips him over on his stomach. Face is buried in the pillow he can barely breath. She yanks his head up. Holds an ampoule and a syringe in front of his face.

LINDA
Try to focus, doc. Human adrenaline. Rather expensive. Out of Germany. Number 3 syringe. I'm gonna put all 15 cc's in here and jam the thing through your back into the vena cava. I'm gonna tape it in place. You displease me in any way, I'm gonna jerk all fifteen cc's in at once.

He struggles but he's not recovered enough to do anything about it yet. She draws up the adrenaline and jams the needle through the muscles of his back.

Draws up a little on the plunger to be sure she's hit a vein. Blood wells up. She tapes it in place.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - EVENING

Jane tosses two life vests, first aid kit and a pair of marine flare guns onto the counter. The OWNER rings them up.

OWNER
Never can be too safe.

Jane tries to smile in agreement. Doesn't do that well.

EXT. SPORTING GOODS STORE

She tosses the life vests and the first aid kit in the trunk. Hands Hatcher a flare pistol.

JANE
There's one shot. If you have to use it, don't miss.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

All is still. Then the faintest light plays over the pictures of Carey and Jane, the surveillance equipment, the rest of it.

Jane is there, with a heavily hooded penlight. She's sick at what she sees. Hatcher's not much better.

INT. LINDA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane examines the rest of Linda's gear. Ampoules of drugs, syringes. A tiny five shot derringer. Hatcher whispers...

HATCHER
Any idea where she is?

JANE
Yeah.

She looks out the window. At Carey's house.

JANE
She's waiting for me.

EXT. CAREY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Jane slips the lock on the kitchen door. Waves Hatcher off.

JANE
I'd feel better knowing you had a chance at her if I blow it.

He nods. She slips in.

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hatcher follows her just far enough in to get an angle on the staircase leading upstairs. Jane disappears up them.

Hatcher waits. As his eyes adjust, sees behind him is a set of servants' stairs. Considers, but does what he was told and stays put.

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jane creeps along towards the master bedroom.

INT. CAREY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

For all her efforts, Linda hears. She's pleased. Her hand rests on Carey's back beside the syringe. She's in nothing but a black bra and panties.

Carey's propped up against the headboard. Linda throws a leg over, sits astride him with her back to the door. Leans over and whispers into Carey's ear...

LINDA
Say anything and I'll pump you full of happy juice and you can do a little frenetic dance before your heart explodes. And then I'll kill her anyhow.

JANE

steps in. Flare gun extended. Freezes. This is not the tableau she expected at all. Clothes in piles, her fiancé in bed with another woman.

Linda turns languidly. She's got one hand hidden behind Carey's back, the other in his shorts.

LINDA
Oh no. Don't tell me.

Jane's still working to try to figure this out. Linda's surprised. A little embarrassed.

LINDA
Don't worry, it was nothing serious. He just wanted a last little hurrah before he got married. I guess it was supposed to be to you.

Jane's still trying to figure it out. Linda *sees* the flare gun now, and quickly slithers behind Carey. She's enjoying this. And now she's back out-of-range again.

There's a small black semi-automatic hidden between the pillows. Her free hand slips towards it. She's ever so frightened...

LINDA
Oh my. Oh my...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Hatcher emerges from the service stairs. Sees a door next to the master bedroom. Opens it.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane has put it all together now. But too late. She's mad at herself.

LINDA
Why don't you put that big gun down, sweetie? And I can get out of here, and you two can talk this over.

Carey just manages to croak ---

CAREY
Don't.

LINDA
That was a mistake, hon.

Linda's fingers tighten on the syringe. There's a voice from the bathroom door ---

HATCHER
Hi, remember me? You tried to kill me. Bitch.

Hatcher's got the flare gun pointed right at her.

A lot of things happen now in very quick succession.

LINDA

jerks the automatic out and shoots Hatcher.

HATCHER

is hit. FIRES the flare gun. And misses.

THE ROOM

lights up from the flare.

LINDA

manages to stay hidden behind Carey. Twists back around, levels the gun at Jane.

JANE

still can't get a clean shot at her without torching Carey. Admits defeat, tosses the flare gun on the bed.

Linda's astonished. Snorts with disgust and triumph. Except...

HATCHER

injured and bleeding profusely, still struggling to load another flare, *succeeds*. He lifts the gun and aims at Linda; her focus shifts momentarily so she can shoot him again. Her shoulder and arm slide out from behind Carey and

JANE

unveils Linda's derringer hidden in her other hand. Shoots Linda's exposed shoulder as she gets bead on Hatcher.

LINDA

is thrown back. The automatic drops from her hand.

CAREY

struggles out of her grasp. Twists away, crawls out of range towards Jane as Linda claws for the syringe. Fails. It's over. They're safe.

JANE

holds Linda at gunpoint. Thinks it all over for a moment. Puts the other four shots in the revolver through Linda's chest.

CAREY
Jesus. Jesus... Did you have to do that??

Jane thinks a beat.

JANE
Yeah.

She reaches over, yanks the syringe out of his back. Tapes over the puncture so it won't bleed.

CAREY
I never... I didn't...

JANE
I know.

Carey, ever the doctor, checks Linda's carotid artery.

CAREY
She's dead.

JANE
I would think so. I put five shots in her chest.

Jane checks, her wrist hurts, but isn't broken. Carey moves to Hatcher. He's unconscious.

CAREY
I should get him to a hospital.

JANE
Can you keep him alive without?

Carey probes, hesitates, nods. Then...

CAREY
We should call the cops.

JANE
No, we shouldn't. This woman killed people for a living. She moved in across the street to tap your phone. Find me, kill me, kill Pete. My picture ends up in the paper, there'll be others coming. Maybe who knew her, maybe who just want to find me.

CAREY
This is what it is, isn't it? It's not just finding someone a new place to live. This is part of what you do.

JANE
Very rarely.

CAREY
This is part of who you are.

Jane sees her life start to slip away.

JANE
I've got to get rid of the body. There's some people I know...

Carey doesn't even want to think about it. Turns to tend to Pete.

EXT. CAREY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A rattling pick-up pulls up. Billy Peterson gets out. Another Seneca drives.

Jane turns to Billy. She has only this instant to explain her case.

JANE
She was a witch, Dodah. It was the right thing. A tribal council would find me innocent. The State wouldn't understand.

Billy's not happy.

BILLY
If she was a witch, you should have done it on rez land.

JANE
I know. There wasn't a choice.

Billy deliberates.

BILLY
We take care of it.

INT. CAREY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - PRE-DAWN

Carey finishes bandaging up Hatcher. Outside the window standing alone in the backyard, we can see Jane.

EXT. CAREY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - PRE-DAWN

Carey joins her.

CAREY
He should walk into a hospital in some other city in a few days and get that changed. He'll make up some stupid story about a hunting accident.

There's a pause. The sky's just beginning to get lighter in the East. This is the hardest think he'll ever have to say.

CAREY
Jane, we should probably talk...

She knows what's coming.

JANE
It's okay, Carey. I still love you. But I understand, and it's okay.

She kisses him on the cheek, turns and walks away. He doesn't see, but the tears run down her face.

EXT. SIDE STREET - PRE-DAWN

Jane and Hatcher are standing beside the rental.

JANE
Take the car. Drop it in Syracuse. You can pick up a flight there.

HATCHER
So, is there a chance for me now?

Jane looks at him half amused, half askance that he would have the audacity to ask.

JANE
No.

HATCHER
I had to ask.

JANE
I would have been insulted if you hadn't tried.

HATCHER
Look, we're even. I'll send you a Christmas card, but you're not getting any damn check.

JANE
Don't want one. You're my brother, Pete. I don't like taking money from family.
(then)
You didn't have to do all that.

HATCHER
You're wrong. I did.

Jane nods. She entirely understands there are some things you have to do because you have to do them.

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - DAWN

Jane walks up the drive she shares with Jake. He's on his porch. She waves. Not really wanting to have to have a conversation right now.

He nevertheless comes down his steps, a little stiff, hugs her hello.

JAKE
Good to see you back.

She just nods.

JAKE
You should come in for some coffee.

JANE
I don't really feel like coffee.

JAKE
You should come in for some coffee.

Jane's confused by his insistence, but relents nonetheless.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN

Jane walks in. A frightened-looking woman and a young boy sit at the table. They look up. Jane has a brief crystalline moment to decide who she really is. She decides. Holds out her hand.

JANE
Hi. My name is Jane...

FADE OUT