

BORDERLINE

Written by

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Our movie begins like all movies should.

With "Nothing Compares 2 U" by **Prince** (not Sinéad O'Connor)
over black.

It's been 7 hours and 13 days

Since you took your love away

*I go out every night and sleep all
day*

Since you took your love away

INT. HOLLYWOOD FLOWER SHOP - EVENING (1993)

PAUL DUERSON futzes with shit at the counter and can't seem to keep still. Like a kid waiting for the bathroom.

He's in his early 40s with stringy, sweaty, brown hair.

The FLORIST hands him a cheap bouquet. Duerson hangs for a beat too long, smiling, nose breathing. It's off putting.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD FLOWER SHOP - EVENING

Duerson walks to his car. The ground is damp, there's a little drizzle.

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE - NIGHT

"Nothing Compares 2 U" continues as Duerson drives a tan Buick too fast up Mulholland.

EST. SOFIA'S ESTATE - NIGHT

A 1920's **MANSION** towers over a massive estate with a long, winding driveway that leads down to the main road. The mansion has a tremendous view of Hollywood and sticks out like a sore thumb.

The neighbors fucking hate it and for good reason.

From bird's eye, we see an atrium in the center of the mansion. It's a beautiful, open-roofed garden with statues and a pissing cherub fountain at the center.

The grounds aren't as secure as we'd like them to be. No wall, no gate. Anyone could just roll up and kill you.

INT. DINING ROOM - SOFIA'S MANSION - NIGHT

Close on a JIGSAW PUZZLE BOX of people on the beach in Maui. A thousand loose pieces next to it on the dining room table.

WILLIAM BELL (40s, white, broad) sifts for corners.

Bell's got a packed lip and a tin of Skoal beside him. We also notice a NCAA Football championship ring on his finger and a GUN on his belt.

A phone rings distantly.

INT. BELL'S OFFICE - SOFIA'S MANSION - SECONDS LATER

A monitor sits on the desk with a live feed of the front steps. Bell enters his crammed office and moves some papers to find the phone. Picks up--

BELL
This is Bell.

INT. BELL'S KITCHEN - **INTERCUT**

ABBY (11, black, Bell's self-assured daughter) sits at the kitchen table with the phone to her ear. She's got a Pittsburgh Pirates ball cap on backwards.

ABBY
Two scientists walk into a bar...

Bell smiles then checks his watch.

BELL
You should be in bed. Where's Mrs. Baxter?

Behind Abby, **MRS. BAXTER** (Abby's 4,000-year-old babysitter) is passed out on a LA-Z-BOY.

ABBY
She could be dead. Two scientists walk into--

BELL
What is the point of even having a babysitter if she's going to sleep the whole time?

ABBY
I've been saying that for years. It's not like I'm going to sneak out. You kinda need friends for sneaking out to be less lonely than staying at home.

BELL
You have friends.

ABBY
Name them.

BELL
Gary and Bob.

ABBY
Your football buddies?

BELL
Our football buddies.

ABBY
They don't count. Can I tell my
joke?

BELL
But you get along.

ABBY
It's not like I'm going to invite
Gary and Bob to my birthday party.

BELL
What birthday party?

ABBY
Hypothetical.

BELL
Well, I think they'd be pretty hurt
by that, Abby.

ABBY
Dad.

BELL
(smiling)
Tell your joke then bed.

ABBY
Two scientists walk into a bar. One
says, "I'll have H₂O, please" and
the other goes, "I'll have H₂O,
too." The Bartender, who is also a
scientist, gives them their drinks.
Well, dad, I'm sorry to say but the
second scientist died.

Beat.

ABBY (CONT'D)
The second scientist said "H₂O,
too," dad. H₂O₂. Hydrogen peroxide.
If you drink it, you die.

BELL
Why is the bartender also a
scientist?

ABBY
Specificity?

BELL
Wouldn't he have a job at a lab or something?

ABBY
You suck, dad.

BELL
Don't say "suck."

The doorbell **rings** and it's startling.

ABBY
Never? In any context?

END INTERCUT.

INT. BELL'S OFFICE - SOFIA'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Bell looks at the security monitor and his expression turns serious when he sees **Duerson at the door**.

ABBY (ON PHONE)
Dad?

He hangs up. Then, realizing he just hung up on Abby, he quickly picks up--

BELL
Hello? Shit.

Oh well. Bell grabs a black windbreaker from the back of the desk chair. It reads "The Depraved Tour" in red cursive on the front and "SECURITY" in block yellow on the back.

SLO-MO: HE THROWS IT ON LIKE A FUCKING CAPE

INT. HALLWAY - SOFIA'S MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

Bell passes a long line of framed movie, album, and concert posters in the hallway. All with the same young woman, Sofia (to be introduced properly soon), front and center:

- . "Sofia Benoit is Medusa" and "Benoit is Joan of Arc"
- . "Sofia: Depraved Tour" and
- . "Lu's On First: Baseball's First Female" [A romcom co-starring Kevin Costner.]

INT. FRONT DOOR - SOFIA'S MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

Upon entering the mansion, you'd first notice the massive "Daddy Warbucks" master staircase with golden railings.

The spindles on the stairs are compiled of little stacked golden heads, made to look like Sofia, each with her trademark high ponytail.

Bell enters from the back quarters. He unlocks one measly lock on the door and opens it to find--

Duerson holding the flowers.

A beat.

DUERSON

So... what do you think?

Duerson shows off his suit and twirls.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

Brand new duds.

(then)

William. You look white. Can I come in?

Bell's serious.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

She didn't tell you I was coming? Doggone space cadet. Well, tonight's the night, William. She thinks I'm cooking dinner but...

(leans in, whispers)

I'm proposing.

BELL

I told you the next time you came around here I'm calling the police.

Duerson continues to smile without breaking eye contact.

DUERSON

You know, we've been meaning to talk to you about something.

BELL

Who?

DUERSON

Me and Sofia. You know... my girlfriend, who you work for.

BELL

She's not your girlfriend, Paul.

DUERSON

(not hearing him)

--I know you're a lonely guy since your wife died. And Sofia has a lot of patience for you because of it. And you deserve patience. A wife dying is no small thing. And your poor daughter, growing up with no female influence. It's not right. And that's why Sofia does those puzzles with you. Because she feels bad that your wife died in a cycling accident and you don't have anyone to do puzzles with anymore.

BELL

How do you know about the puzzles?

The drizzle turns to rain.

DUERSON

Sofia doesn't have much of a relationship with her father -- we have that in common, we bond over that -- So she sees a dad in you. She's got a certain love for you. But **not** the kind you want. You can't control who she loves. You can't control who she marries.

BELL

I really don't want to call the cops, man.

DUERSON

Is she here?

BELL

You know I can't tell you that.

DUERSON

I don't want to hurt you, William.

This doesn't worry Bell. He's much bigger than Duerson and, remember, he's also got that gun.

BELL

Please leave.

Long beat. Then Duerson nods. We relax.

BELL
Okay, okay. You know her.

DUERSON
You.

BELL
What?

DUERSON
You're Sofia.

Bell takes a step in.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
Don't.

BELL
We'll get you some help.

DUERSON
Say you're Sofia.

The knife dimples Duerson's neck. Not quite breaking skin.

BELL
I'm Sofia.

DUERSON
And you love me.

BELL
(small step, *careful*)
I'm Sofia and I love you.

DUERSON
I have a ring. It was my mama's.

BELL
(another step)
That's really nice of you.

Duerson reaches into his breast pocket. The rings not in there. He worries for a moment that he lost it. Then feels his pants pocket and, relieved, he pulls out

AN INVISIBLE RING.

Duerson mimes holding it in his fingers, looking at it like it's worth a million bucks.

DUERSON
Baby...

Duerson holds it out to Bell... "Take it."

BELL

I--

DUERSON

Put it on.

Duerson presses the knife further into his neck.

Bell takes the invisible ring and slips it on.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

(real and loving)

It's perfect, baby.

BELL

...

Duerson softly sings the lyrics to a Sofia song.

DUERSON

*I am broken
But my heart has spoken
you are broken too.
I've been saved
know I'm depraved
But no one's depraved like you.
(smiles)
Marry me. Make me the happiest man
in the world.*

Bell notices the knife has pierced Duerson's neck.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

Say yes.

Blood drips down Duerson's hand and wrist. He wipes tears from his eyes and laughs a little.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

Shoot. Look at me. I can be a big pussy sometimes. Come on, sweetie, you can't keep a guy waiting this long for an answer.

Bell looks at Duerson with true compassion and sadness.

BELL

Okay.

Duerson stops smiling briefly.

DUERSON
Really? You love me?

BELL
Yes. Please give me the knife.

Duerson smiles again and lowers the knife. Bell exhales.

Then

FFT-FFT-FFT

Bell's eyes go wide and looks down to see

DUERSON STABBED HIM IN THE GUT.

BELL (CONT'D)
Who should we tell first? My family
or yours?

Bell collapses to the ground.

It's really raining now.

Duerson steps over him.

Bell grabs his leg but Duerson shakes him off easily.

He takes off his shoes before he enters the house.

On the ground

Bell summons the strength... unholsters his gun.

He aims it at Duerson's head.

His finger hovers over the trigger.

It's getting blurry but he's got a good shot. But

He doesn't shoot.

He looks up to the stars.

And passes out.

Now

Hit me with that Prince again, baby.

PRINCE
*It's been seven hours and thirteen
days...
Since you took your love away...*

INT. KARAOKE BAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Duerson passionately serenades a Hollywood Karaoke dive. Wet from the rain, jacket off, tie flung over his shoulder.

DUERSON

*I go out every night and sleep all
day...
Since you took your love away...*

A few PATRONS watch as he sings. Some confused, some amused.

A WOMAN notices something that seems a bit off about him. She leans over the bar and whispers something to the BARTENDER.

The Bartender looks over at Duerson as he sings. Scan down Duerson's right sleeve.

IT'S SOAKED IN BLOOD

He finishes the performance.

One person claps then stops immediately.

Duerson steps off and makes eye contact with the bartender.

Then he looks to the door as

Cops enter.

FADE TO BLACK

...six months later

EXT. SOFIA'S ESTATE - EVENING (1994)

The grounds are fortified with a tall, steel gate. There's now a small security booth at the entrance. They're not fucking around after that shit with Duerson.

We hear some giggles and a pre-lapped conversation:

WOMAN (V.O)

DeVante Rhodes is the best
rebounder to ever play the game of
basketball...

(wait)

Let me do that again.

MAN (V.O)

Why?

A Camry pulls up to the security booth.

WOMAN (V.O)
The cap is still on.

The gate opens. The Camry pulls in.

MAN (V.O)
It's recording. The red light's
blinking.

WOMAN (V.O)
Ok but the cap's on.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MANSION - EVENING

We hear some shuffling, the lens cap is removed and we enter
HANDHELD CAMCORDER POV to find the woman from those posters:

SOFIA BENOIT

[Affectedly pronounced "Ben-wa"... but "Ben-oyt" by anyone
who knew her before the fame.]

She's 28 and white with a blonde high pony. She sits on the
couch, wearing an open silk bathrobe over a tank and shorts.
She's calm and cool, much more herself on this couch than
Letterman's or Arsenio Hall's. Entitled but she worked her
ass off for it. She earned everything and fuck if she'll let
anyone take that from her. Seeing her like this is intimate.
A rare glimpse at Sofia the person and not *SOFIA* if that
makes sense.

MAN (O.S.)
Ok. Who is DeVante Rhodes?

SOFIA
DeVante Rhodes is the best
rebounder ever to play the game of
basketball.

EXT. SOFIA'S MANSION - EVENING

The Camry stops in front of the mansion. A man exits and it's
not long before we realize

IT'S BELL

He's alive and standing in the same spot he was stabbed six
months earlier. He looks down at the gravel and digs his heel
in. *Fuck this spot.*

INT. BELL'S OFFICE - MANSION - LATER

Bell waits inside his old office. It's now well organized with a brand new surveillance monitor on the desk. Much more high-tech and involved than six months ago.

KAYLOR (25) bounds in. She's Sofia's wholesome, nervous, and over-caffeinated personal assistant.

KAYLOR

So sorry to keep you waiting. I'm Kaylor. Gloria's replacement.

BELL

Nice to meet you.

An awkward beat.

KAYLOR

I'm so lucky to have this job. I love it. I love working here.

BELL

Yeah? That's good.

An unenthusiastic response that Kaylor takes as a green light to elaborate:

KAYLOR

I mean, she's Sofia Benoit for crapsakes. She's perfect. You know she gets up at 5AM everyday? Every frickin' day. And anyone who knows Kaylor, knows Kaylor's a runner. I'm a shell of myself if I don't get my miles in. So I've been getting up at 3:30 so I can get here in time to bring her a Green Goblin smoothie when she wakes up. Makes for a heck of a long day.

BELL

You live nearby?

KAYLOR

West Hollywood.

BELL

Just run here and shower in the guest house. Sleep in a little more. Gloria used to do that.

KAYLOR
 (smiles)
 She said you looked out for people.

INT. SOFIA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Back to Sofia on the couch in CAMCORDER POV. (We can safely assume it's DeVante Rhodes' voice behind camera.)

RHODES (O.S.)
 Where'd you hear that? That I'm the
 best rebounder ever.

SOFIA
 Overheard a guy on the bus.

RHODES (O.S.)
 You don't take the bus.

SOFIA
 Tour bus.

RHODES (O.S.)
 Is that why you had your people
 call me yesterday? Because of
 rebounding?

SOFIA
 I don't even know what a rebound
 is.

RHODES (O.S.)
 What else he say?

Sofia lights a cig and takes a drag. Intentionally dramatic.

IN **QUICKIES**, we're briefly introduced to DEVANTE RHODES.

. *Highlights of Rhodes, a power forward, playing basketball.*

. *He throws a chair across the court, punches a coach in the stomach.*

. *He gets called for a technical foul and gets ejected. He kisses the REF on the lips and takes off his shirt.*

END QUICKIES as Sofia exhales.

SOFIA
 He said you're on the Trailblazers.

RHODES (O.S.)
 I was traded to the Nuggets.

Sofia snickers.

RHODES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What?

SOFIA
Silly name for a basketball team.
Where do The Nuggets play?

RHODES
Denver.

Sofia snorts.

SOFIA
Sorry. Sorry. It's just so stupid.
"Denver Nuggets." You're a Nugget.
I've never been out with a Nugget
before.

RHODES (O.S.)
You call me up to make fun of me?

SOFIA
I saw your picture in The Times.
The one of you kissing that referee
during a game and thought it was
the sexiest fucking thing I'd seen
in just about ever. And I don't
often get turned on by newspapers
so... thought I'd see it through.

RHODES (O.S.)
That's not really me. It's an act,
you know?

SOFIA
Too bad. You seemed like fun and I
like to have fun.

RHODES (O.S.)
Is that why you wrote that song? I
like that one.

SOFIA
What song?

INT. BELL'S OFFICE - SAME

Bell looks at the security monitor.

KAYLOR

They updated everything after you... you know. He should've gotten the death penalty if you ask me. Frickin' savage piece of bunk.

Suddenly

THE LIGHTS GO OUT.

KAYLOR (CONT'D)

Crap.

INT. SOFIA'S BEDROOM - SAME

The lights go out in here as well.

SOFIA (O.S.)

Shit.

INT. BELL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

KAYLOR (O.S.)

Keeps happening. Surges from all this new stuff. One sec, Waylon will get them back--

The lights turn back on.

KAYLOR (CONT'D)

SO, Monday sound good for you to start back up again?

BELL

Yeah. Great.

KAYLOR

Stick around for a minute. She wanted to say hi.

INT. SOFIA'S BEDROOM - EVENING

HANDHELD POV: Sofia wrestles the camera away and flips it around and we finally get a look at

DEVANTE RHODES

Black. 30, 6'8". No shirt, sweats. He's got a short, blonde mohawk. He's more nervous with a camera pointed at him than he would be with a gun. Shy, blushing, hand over his face.

SOFIA (O.S.)
Tell our viewers at home what we
did today.

RHODES
You gave me a mohawk.

Sofia points the camera down to the hair on the floor. Back
up to Rhodes, who smiles--

SOFIA (O.S.)
Now we look the same.

RHODES
We don't look the same.

SOFIA (O.S.)
We're both blonde. Move your hand.

He does. She zooms in on his face. He's self-conscious.

SOFIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I heard something else about you.

RHODES
Yeah?

Sofia turns off the camera and we END HANDHELD POV.

We finally see the two of them together. Their hands are
intertwined.

SOFIA
You like to wear women's clothes.

RHODES
My sisters used to dress me up.
Happens to boys with sisters.

SOFIA
I heard it's deeper than that.

Rhodes smirks.

RHODES
Nah.

SOFIA
Yeah it does. Wanna try some shit
on? I got some big fucking skirts
from the 80s.

RHODES
Maybe.

SOFIA

Enough about you. What do you know about Sofia?

RHODES

I know you're a singer.

SOFIA

And actor.

RHODES

And I know what I've seen on TV. But I don't like people thinking I am what I am from the television, so I don't wanna pretend I know you.

That's too deep of an answer for Sofia so she'll just respond to the first part.

SOFIA

What's your favorite song of mine?

RHODES

I told you. "Girls Just Want to Have Fun."

SOFIA

Yeah, you're confusing your white singers. That's Cyndi Lauper.

RHODES

"Like a Prayer"?

SOFIA

Jesus Christ.

RHODES

I guess I don't know any then.

SOFIA

I've won two Grammys and have more number one hits than any female artist and you can't name one fucking song? How about "Depraved"?

RHODES

No.

SOFIA

"Perfume for no one"?

RHODES

Nope.

SOFIA
 (*hmp*)
 You're a shit.

KNOCK-KNOCK

KAYLOR (O.S.)
 (meek, outside the door)
 Ms. Benoit? It's Kaylor.

SOFIA
 Sofia's fine.

KAYLOR (O.S.)
 Ok. *Sofia*. It's Kaylor...
 Your new personal assistant.

SOFIA
 I know who you are, Kaylor. What is
 it?

KAYLOR (O.S.)
 William's here.

Sofia's face lights up. She ties her robe, and throws Rhodes' shirt at his face.

RHODES
 Who's William?

SOFIA
 He goes by Bell.

RHODES
 That doesn't answer my question.

SOFIA
 (shouts)
 I'll come down in a sec. Does he
 seem okay to you?

No answer.

KAYLOR (O.S.)
 Oh, you're talking to me? What do
 you mean?

SOFIA
 You know, healthy. Mentally.

KAYLOR (O.S.)
 You mean, like, is he twitchy?

SOFIA

Sure.

Sofia opens the door, surprised to find Bell standing in the hallway with Kaylor.

Kaylor looks Bell up and down.

KAYLOR

He seems fine.
(to Bell)
You twitchy?

BELL

Hey, Sof.

Sofia wraps Bell in a hug. She exhales in his arms -- safe.

SOFIA

How's Abby?

BELL

Good, thanks.

SOFIA

Good to have you back. Come on. I
want to show you something.
(pointing back)
That's Rhodes.

BELL

From the Blazers?

SOFIA

He's a Nugget now.

INT. DINING ROOM - MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

Sofia, Rhodes, Bell, and Kaylor enter.

Bell smiles when he notices the Maui puzzle completed on the dining room table.

BELL

Look at that.

SOFIA

Took me every bit of the six months
you were gone, too.

Kaylor hands Sofia a puzzle. Sofia gives it to Bell without looking at it.

SOFIA (CONT'D)
And here's our next challenge.

The puzzle is the poster for the movie "JUNIOR" where Arnold Schwarzenegger gets pregnant and Danny DeVito is his doctor.

Sofia sees it and looks at Kaylor -- *really?*

SOFIA (CONT'D)
You said I could choose.

Bell smiles.

BELL
I have something for you too. Abby and I were at the record store and she found these.

Bell hands Sofia a **STICKER BOOKLET** of her album covers.

BELL (CONT'D)
She's worried it's weird to give you stickers of your own albums but I told her--

SOFIA
I love them.

Sofia puts them in her robe. There's a ton of mutual respect and love here. They've been through a lot together.

RHODES (O.S.)
There's a piece missing.

They turn. Rhodes looks over the puzzle.

SOFIA
I know. Driving me nuts. I looked everywhere.

Zoom in on the open spot with a piece missing: *a sunbathing woman is missing her head.*

INT. BELLS CAR - SUNSET

Bell waves to the security guard, **WAYLON** (60s, cowboy hat), as he pulls out of the estate.

EXT. BELL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bell pulls into his driveway.

INT. BELL'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Bell shows Mrs. Baxter (the babysitter) to the door.

MRS. BAXTER
That man called again today.

Shit.

BELL
Does Abby know?

MRS. BAXTER
Who do you think talked to him?

She leaves.

Bell walks to a kitchen cabinet and looks at the liquor for a moment before moving to the fridge for a beer.

EXT. HALFWAY HOUSE - NIGHT

A gigantic man in overalls named **J.H. CALHOUN** (50s) exits a halfway facility in East Hollywood.

He walks across the road to a parking structure.

A few moments later, he pulls out in a pickup truck.

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - NIGHT

J.H. smashes a crowbar down onto a combination lock. He misses left twice then he finally breaks it open.

FLIP AROUND to notice

J.H. is missing his right eye.

Might be why his aim is off. He doesn't bother with a patch so we see it's scarred over with some dried puss and eye boogers accumulating around the edges.

Inside the unit is a bunch of creepy, odd shit. We immediately notice a cot and

A LARGE RED TRUNK with a golden phoenix painted on the side.

There's a framed photo on the floor. He picks it up: It's of two boys, arms wrapped around each other, smiling.

He removes the photo from the frame. Folds it. Pockets it.

INT. ABBY'S ROOM - BELL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bell opens the door to check on Abby but she's not there.

BELL

Abs?

He sees her window is open -- leading out to the fire escape. This doesn't worry him.

EXT. BELL'S ROOF - NIGHT

Bell climbs up the fire escape to find Abby on the roof with a telescope. He holds his beer and a bottle of Coke.

BELL

I'm boarding up that window when you get to high school.

Abby doesn't respond.

BELL (CONT'D)

Figured I'd get the silent treatment. But I came with reinforcements.

He pops her coke open using his beer and holds it out to her.

ABBY

I'm not supposed to drink coke this late.

BELL

Says who?

ABBY

You.

BELL

I won't tell if you don't.

Abby barely smiles and takes it.

BELL (CONT'D)

Ready?

She nods.

BELL (CONT'D)

Ok... Let's see. You're upset because... the Pirates lost their third straight today.

Abby says nothing.

BELL (CONT'D)
Not about the Buccos, huh? Hm. Oh,
then it must be because I'm going
back to work.

Abby takes a sip.

BELL (CONT'D)
And you were looking forward to
spending time with me this summer.

ABBY
You're not that cool.

BELL
(pause, serious now)
You're worried I could get hurt
again.

Beat. Abby takes a sip of coke. It's her turn.

ABBY
You've been seeing someone.

Bell takes a sip of beer.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I knew it!
(then)
You like her.

Bell takes a sip of beer. Abby smiles a little.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Your turn but say this:

Abby whispers something in her dad's ear. Bell smiles.

BELL
You just want me to be happy.

Abby takes a sip of coke. Bell smiles.

ABBY
That guy who's been calling. It's
him isn't it? Paul Duerson.

**QUICKIE: Red alarm lights flash against the white walls of a
corridor.**

BELL
I think.

ABBY
Why does he keep calling?

QUICKIE: Guards burst through doors and run through the corridor toward camera.

BELL
I don't know.

QUICKIE: Officers and canines search the woods.

Bell looks at Abby deeply.

BELL (CONT'D)
You're more like her every day, you know.

ABBY
If that's true then I feel it's my duty to tell you something very important.

BELL
What's that?

ABBY
You need to shave your ears.

BELL
Time for bed.

ABBY
What the heck is going on with those things? Have you been watering them?

BELL
Bed.

EXT. ALLEY - HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

A line of RAVERS outside a door with no sign in an alley. A few of them turn and we needle drop something hot...

IN SLO-MO, Sofia and Rhodes cross the street toward the alley, holding hands.

They're in matching sunglasses and pink wigs.

And they're both wearing skirts.

INT. J.H.'S PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

Duerson gets into the front seat. J.H. lights up.

DUERSON

James Harold. You got the trunk.
See? Knew you could do it all by
yourself.

J.H.

I f-forgot the combination, Paul.
Had to smash the lock. I'm sorry.

Duerson gets a good look at J.H.'s eye. He forgot how
disgusting it was.

DUERSON

Do you want to...

J.H.

Sorry.

J.H. puts his hand over his missing eye and it remains there
for the rest of the scene. His voice is deep and his hand is
gigantic... like Richard Kiel or Michael Clarke Duncan.

DUERSON

I told you to write the combination
down.

J.H.

I copied it wrong. I had to smash
it.

DUERSON

Long as you got the trunk. Drop me
off first, would you?

J.H. nods.

PENNY PASCAL (female, french, 30s) gets in the back.

J.H.

(confused)
Paul... there's a woman.

Penny sneezes.

DUERSON

That's Penny. We met on the inside.
She's good people. Wants to help.

J.H.

She's part of the mission?

PENNY
(French accent)
I am just along for the ride.

J.H. starts the car and pulls away.

DUERSON
You're drifting, J.H.

PENNY
What happen to your eye?

J.H.
I lost it in a sword fight.

DUERSON
You can tell her the truth. She's a friend.

J.H. doesn't say anything. Duerson turns back to Penny.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
He had a parasite. A worm.

PENNY
"Asticots" where I am from.

J.H.
Where is that?

PENNY
Nice. In France.

DUERSON
Spelled like "nice."

J.H.
That's stupid.

J.H. continues to drive with his hand over his eye.

INT. BELL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The phone rings and it startles Bell awake. He looks at his watch. It's late. Good phone calls don't come this late.

BELL
(answering phone)
Yeah.

EXT. RAVE - NIGHT

Rhodes and Sofia leave the rave, holding hands. They get into the back of a Lincoln Nav.

INT. BELL'S CAMRY - NIGHT

Bell drives with purpose. He's worried but not the type of person who ever shows it. Years of working as a bodyguard will teach you that.

Abby is beside him in galaxy pajamas and her Pirates hat. She looks at her dad, concerned. He just looks at the road with a packed lip. He spits into a water bottle.

They pull up to an apartment building to find

ELEANOR (30, black), waiting outside.

ABBY

Wait, who's that? Is that your--
Goddamnit, William.

BELL

Don't say "Goddamnit." Her name is
Eleanor.

ABBY

No way I'm going with Eleanor.

BELL

Would you rather Mrs. Baxter?

That's what I thought. Bell rolls down the window.

ELEANOR

Hey.

BELL

Hey.

ABBY

Gross.

BELL

Sorry it's so late.

ELEANOR

It's fine. Do they know where he-

Bell looks at her. *Not in front of Abby.*

Abby gets out with an overnight bag.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
 You must be Abby.
 (to Bell)
 We'll be fine.

BELL
 Be good.

ABBY
 You be good.

They watch as Bell pulls away.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 You're my dad's new girlfriend. Amy
 is it? You're a doctor right?

ELEANOR
 No, I--

Eleanor realizes Abby is messing with her.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
 Nice try.

Down the street, they watch as Bell dumps his tobacco filled
 water bottle out the window.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)
 Nasty habit.

ABBY
 The worst.

EXT. SOFIA ESTATE - SECURITY BOOTH - NIGHT

Bell waves to Waylon and he opens the gate.

A squad car is parked in the driveway outside the mansion.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Bell exits his car. He's greeted by **OFFICER PARKER** (60s).

OFFICER PARKER
 We're doing everything we can.

BELL
 She inside?

OFFICER PARKER
 Waylon said she went out.

BELL

Alone?

OFFICER PARKER

With her driver. And some guy.

BELL

DeVante Rhodes.

OFFICER PARKER

The basketball player?

EXT. MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Headlights reflect off Parker's face. Bell turns.

The Lincoln Navigator pulls through the gate and rolls to a stop in front of Bell.

The back door opens. Out walk Sofia and Rhodes.

SOFIA

Hey, I thought you went home.

Sofia finally registers Officer Parker's presence.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

What happened?

BELL

Let's get you inside.

SOFIA

Bell.

Beat.

BELL

It's Duerson.

Bell's mouth moves but we only hear a pitched ring. And it hits Sofia like a punch to the nose.

She straightens up and walks into the house.

INT. ELEANOR'S APARTMENT - LATER

Eleanor flips a grilled cheese sandwich onto a plate and sets it in front of Abby at the counter.

Abby inspects it.

ABBY

Cheese is well melted. Fairly even distribution. Oozing but I can probably get through it with one napkin. Bread is perfectly browned... Not bad, woman. But there's one thing missing.

Eleanor slides the hot sauce across the table, right into Abby's open hand.

ABBY (CONT'D)

You're good.

ELEANOR

I am the absolute best.

Abby takes a bite. It's good but she tries to hide it.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

So?

ABBY

Eh.

A BLACK LAB crawls out of the bedroom and sits next to Abby. Good doggo.

ELEANOR

That's Barry.

ABBY

Ugh.

ELEANOR

What?

ABBY

I think I like you a little bit.

Abby flips her Pirates hat backwards and goes back to her grilled cheese.

ELEANOR

You always wear that hat?

ABBY

(mouth full)

It's my good luck charm.

Eleanor moves over the counter and gently removes the hat.

ABBY (CONT'D)

My dad doesn't know how to do my kind of hair.

Abby picks up her cup of water and sips it. She can feel Eleanor's gaze. She fights the urge to make eye-contact but loses the battle. And for the first time, Abby's without confidence.

ELEANOR

I doubt your dad knows how to do any kind of hair. Want some help?

Abby sets down her water and

PRELAP a knock at the door.

EXT. TIM'S HOME - LATER

A spry grandpa, **TIM** (70s, sweater, khakis), opens the door.

TIM

Can I help you?

Penny stands on the steps. She notices a crucifix on the wall behind him.

PENNY

Hello. My car broke. Do you mind if I use the phone?

TIM

I'm pretty good with cars. Why don't I take a look?

Penny nods.

CUT TO:

SOFIA'S SECURITY CAMERAS:

FRONT DOOR CAM: Coast is clear.

FOYER CAM: All is quiet.

SECURITY BOOTH / GATE CAM: Officer Parker pulls out. Waylon closes the gate, gives a thumbs up to the camera.

INT. BELL'S OFFICE - MANSION - NIGHT

Bell opens the closet to find some stacked boxes. He grabs one and rummages through it on the floor.

Rhodes knocks on the open door, still wearing a skirt.

BELL
How's she doing?

RHODES
Sleeping.

Bell grabs another box and digs through it.

BELL
There should be some sweats in the
guest room closet if you want to
change.

Rhodes nods.

RHODES
Lot of guys roll through here?

BELL
No.

Bell's no snitch.

Rhodes notices his NCAA Championship ring.

RHODES
What position?

BELL
Fullback. You woulda been a hell of
a tight-end if you didn't choose
basketball.

RHODES
We had to buy our own equipment and
the old man wouldn't pony up for
it. But no problem spending money
on women and bar tabs.

BELL
Sounds like we had the same father.

RHODES
I had to share the same pair of
sneakers with my older sisters.
(MORE)

RHODES (CONT'D)
 They decorated them and shit with
 marker and glitter just to mess
 with me. I was still 5'6" senior
 year. But God didn't want me to be
 my pops so that summer--

Rhodes whistles and twirls his finger to the ceiling.

RHODES (CONT'D)
 I got my shoes for free after that.

BELL
 Five-six. No shit?

RHODES
 Lonely ass prom night.

BELL
 You and me both.

RHODES
 You can tell a lot about a person
 based on if they had a good prom
 night.

INT. ELEANOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eleanor closes the door to her bedroom and sits by the window
 with a book. She bends over and takes her shoes off and when
 she sits back up, through the window, we see

J.H. Calhoun

Standing on the street below with no expression.

Just looking up at her.

Eleanor reads. Turns a page. Then senses him.

She turns and almost jumps out of her skin when she sees him
 just fucking glaring at her from the street.

INT. BELL'S OFFICE - MANSION - NIGHT

Bell finds a first-aid kit, sets it on the desk, and goes
 back to looking for whatever it is he's looking for.

RHODES
 You try for pro?

BELL

I used to tell people I blew out my knee but I just didn't have it to be honest.

RHODES

My roommate in JuCo was from Pittsburgh. Funny accent. What's it called? "Pittsbese"?

BELL

"Pittsburghese."

RHODES

That's it. Like Chinese but for people from Pittsburgh. He always used to say "ovader." Like, "pass me the clicker ovader."

Bell finally finds what he's looking for -- his "Depraved Tour" Security jacket.

RHODES (CONT'D)

What's that?

Bell throws it on like a cape. Then

The phone rings.

Again, it's late for phone calls. They both look at it for a beat before Bell reaches for it.

BELL

Yeah.

(then)

What? Slow down.

INT. ELEANOR'S APARTMENT - **INTERCUT**

Eleanor's on the phone, frightened.

ELEANOR

My apartment. He's just... standing outside.

She pulls back the curtain but

J.H is no longer there.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Or he was. He's not there anymore.

BELL
What does he look like?

ELEANOR
I don't know. I couldn't tell.

BELL
Call the police. I'm coming.

Bell hangs up and exits. Rhodes follows.

RHODES
What's going on?

Slowly zoom in on the gun he left on the desk.

Oh, Bell. You dumb bitch.

After a beat, he comes back in and grabs it.

Ok, you're not a dumb bitch.

INT. FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Bell hustles to the door, Rhodes behind.

We notice there are now many different **PARANOIA LOCKS** on the door (chains, bolts, latches). Bell unlocks them.

BELL
Lock these behind me.

RHODES
Where you going?

But Bell's out.

Rhodes closes the door and locks the **SLIDE LATCH LOCK** at the top of the door.

EXT. SECURITY GATE - MOMENTS LATER

Bell speeds through the gate. Waylon shuts it behind him.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - MANSION - NIGHT

Rhodes grabs a pair of sweatpants out of the drawer.

He begins to exit when he notices the window by the bed is open. It's silent and black outside.

Push in on the darkness

For a brief moment, we think maybe we see something. Movement or the shimmer in the eye of someone outside.

Rhodes shuts the window.

Fingers crossed it was nothing.

INT. SOFIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sofia sleeps in all of her clothes on top of the bed.

Flip around to find Rhodes at the door. The sweatpants are far too small and barely reach his calves.

The vanity drawer is open. He notices a scrap book inside. He looks at Sofia, she's fast asleep.

He opens the book to find it's full of polaroids, photo booth pics, newspaper and tabloid clippings of

Sofia's relationship history:

- . Keanu
- . Michael Douglas
- . Oliver Stone
- . Robert Smith from The Cure
- . Laurence Fishburne

The book crackles with every turn of the page until Rhodes's had enough. He shuts it.

He shouldn't have snooped. He didn't like that at all. He feels gross. Used. Like what they shared wasn't as unique for her as it was for him.

SOFIA (O.S.)

Hey.

Rhodes sets the book down inside the drawer and slowly turns.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

He shuts the drawer with his ass as he casually leans back on the dresser.

RHODES

Just um--

SOFIA

Those sweatpants look ridiculous.

RHODES

I know.

SOFIA

Sorry if you're bored. Don't feel obligated to stay.

Confirmation to Rhodes that this was a one night stand and he'll end up like the rest of the trophies in that book.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Bell's here and Waylon's up front so I'll be fine.

RHODES

Bell left.

SOFIA

What? Where'd the fuck did he go?

EXT. HILLS - NIGHT

Bell races through the hills in his car.

INT. ELEANOR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Abby's asleep in bed with a scarf over her hair. Eleanor gently wakes her.

ABBY

Second time I've been woken up tonight.

ELEANOR

It's okay. Your dad's coming, can you grab your things?

Eleanor pulls back the curtain and looks outside again.

ABBY

What's going on?

ELEANOR

Nothing.

ABBY
It's him, isn't it?

Then, there's a **knock** at the door.

Eleanor gets up.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Don't.

ELEANOR
It's okay.

INT. ELEANOR'S FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Eleanor looks through the peep hole to find **OFFICER CARTER**
(35, male, not stoked).

OFFICER CARTER
Yellooo. Got a call.

She opens the door. Carter straightens up a bit when he gets
a good look at Eleanor.

OFFICER CARTER (CONT'D)
(clears throat, lower)
Got a call.

ELEANOR
Yes, there's a strange man here.

Carter reaches for his gun.

OFFICER CARTER
Inside?

ELEANOR
Outside.

OFFICER CARTER
So, there's not a man *here* here
then?

ELEANOR
No.

OFFICER CARTER
Is that out of the ordinary? For a
man to be outside?

ELEANOR
No.

OFFICER CARTER

This seems to be a fairly busy block. People walk. People stroll. Ms...?

ELEANOR

The guy was creepy, alright? And it's late. I don't call the police willy-nilly.

Abby peeks out of Eleanor's room. Carter sees her.

OFFICER CARTER

That him?

ELEANOR

What?

OFFICER CARTER

Is that the man who was outside?

ABBY

I'm not a man.

ELEANOR

You think this is funny?

OFFICER CARTER

No. Look, I'll hang out here with you. Make sure you're safe. Wanna put on some coffee?

Beat.

ELEANOR

We'd feel safer if you protected us from your car outside.

OFFICER CARTER

Bicycle.

Abby chuckles.

OFFICER CARTER (CONT'D)

What?

ABBY

Nothing.

INT. SECURITY BOOTH - SOFIA'S ESTATE - NIGHT

A bowl of chili spins in the microwave.

The security guard, Waylon, leans back in a swivel chair in the cramped booth. He's got his cowboy boots crossed on the desk next to a photo of his wife.

He tosses a baseball in the air above his head. He's got a **taser** on his belt.

The microwave beeps. Waylon places the ball on the desk and retrieves the chili. He sticks a bag of popcorn in next, sets it to five minutes and presses start.

He looks for a spoon but can only find a fork. He eats the chili. *Fuck, that's some good chili.* His wife made it for him and she's a great fucking cook.

The sound of a **car's squeaky breaks** interrupts his meal.

He gets up.

INT. KITCHEN - MANSION - SAME TIME

The kettle whistles and Sofia fixes herself some tea.

INT. DINING ROOM - MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Rhodes stands in the dining room. He stares at the Maui beach jigsaw puzzle and the brand new "Junior" puzzle on the edge of the table. Stewing over that fucking scrap book.

Sofia enters.

SOFIA
Something wrong?

RHODES
No.

SOFIA
What is it?

RHODES
...You worked so hard on it and we're just gonna clean it up.

SOFIA
That's how it works. We'll start the new one.

Rhodes looks at the puzzle.

SOFIA (CONT'D)
Are you... crying?

Barely but, yeah, he is.

RHODES

Nah.

SOFIA

Yeah, you are. You're crying.

A long beat.

Then, he looks up at her with a profound realization:

RHODES

I'm a puzzle.

SOFIA

Excuse me?

RHODES

You built me up for a minute. Made me feel nice and whole and comfortable. Told me it was cool to dress like a girl. Now you're finished with me.

SOFIA

I didn't say we were finished.

RHODES

Yeah, but we're finished. I can tell. Put me back in my box.

SOFIA

I'm not sure what this is but you got some stuff to deal with, man.

RHODES

Nah. You're just not used to people speaking their mind to you.

That's kinda true.

EXT. SECURITY GATE - SOFIA ESTATE - SAME TIME

Waylon scans with a **heavy-duty flashlight** with a long handle.

WAYLON

Hello?

He shines the light through the gate. There's no car but he does see...

The red trunk with a golden phoenix painted on the side.

He opens the gate and approaches it -- *what the heck?*
 He hears a sneeze, whips the flashlight but sees nobody.
 Then, **THE LIGHTS GO** out on the property.

INT. MICROWAVE - SAME TIME

The microwave loses power. The popcorn stops popping.

INT. DINING ROOM - MANSION - SAME TIME

The lights go out in here as well, leaving Sofia and Rhodes in the dark.

SOFIA
 Fantastic.

EXT. SECURITY GATE - CONTINUOUS

Waylon knows that when the power goes out, the gate automatically closes and locks. He makes for it and just barely slips in before it closes.

WAYLON
 Christ.

INT. DINING ROOM - MANSION - SAME

In almost complete darkness:

SOFIA
 They were supposed to fix this shit weeks ago.

We hear some rummaging around then the flip of a zippo.

RHODES
 Who is "they"?

Flick-spark. Nothing.

SOFIA
 The light people, I don't know.

Flick-spark. Nope.

RHODES
 Where's the circuit breaker?

Flick-spark. Zilch.

SOFIA
I don't know.

Then, finally: Flick-spark-**FLAME**.

Sofia lights a cigarette first with a **PINK ZIPPO** then lights a few candles.

RHODES
You don't know where the circuit breaker is?

SOFIA
Do you know where the circuit breaker is?

RHODES
This is your house.

SOFIA
I have many houses and many circuit breakers.

RHODES
(PSH)

SOFIA
What?

RHODES
That was such a Sofia thing to say.

SOFIA
Excuse me?

RHODES
Talking about how many circuit breakers you have is a rich person thing to say.

SOFIA
I'm pretty sure it's not. Plus, you're rich so don't talk.

RHODES
It's not about money. Rich is a state of mind.

SOFIA
What the fuck does that mean?

Rhodes grabs the candle and exits.

SOFIA (CONT'D)
Where are you going?

INT. ENTRANCE - MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Rhodes bends down next to the staircase and puts the candle to one of those golden Sofia head spindles.

RHODES
Like these creepy golden faces for example.

SOFIA
You think I bought those? They were a gift from Liberace.

The candles cast their shadows on the walls behind them. Sofia's is much larger than his.

RHODES
I didn't even know people gave these little staircase legs as gifts. But I guess fancy clothing designers do.

SOFIA
They're called spindles and Liberace was a pianist. You're thinking of Versace.

RHODES
Again, a very Sofia thing to say.

SOFIA
I'm beginning to realize you're a fuck. Frankly I'm getting annoyed by it. It's annoying and kinda weird for someone like you to be so... UGH.

RHODES
A black guy you mean?

SOFIA
Please. You're not like what they say about you. You're more of a--
(should she say it?)
You know what? Yeah. You're a little bitch. Crying over puzzles or whatever that was.

Rhodes stands up, now his shadow is much larger than hers.

RHODES

I told you that was an act. You were deaf to it because you just want to have your fun. But not with the same type of guys you usually go out with. This time you wanted a different flavor. You're not looking for anything real. You just want to have sex.

SOFIA

Don't tell me what I want but, yeah, maybe I want a screw. SO WHAT. Burn me at the stake. I die through you.

RHODES

That's just how it is with you. People exist for Sofia. I'm here for your pleasure. Fuck my feelings, right?

SOFIA

I have other things to consider right now. Like the fact that the man who tried to kill me is on the loose.

RHODES

He tried to kill Bell. You weren't even home.

That pisses her off.

SOFIA

You asshole. He's delusional! He gets confused but that doesn't change the fact that he thought he was stabbing **me**. He wanted **me** dead. Why are you still here? I don't need you to protect me.

RHODES

Yeah because you already got armed guards, a twenty foot wall, and a security system from the future.

SOFIA

GET OUT.

EXT. SECURITY BOOTH - NIGHT

Waylon walks back to the security booth, breathing heavy.

INT. SECURITY BOOTH - NIGHT

Waylon enters the dark booth.

He stops when he hears it: the sound a baseball makes when you toss it up and catch it in your hand.

Toss

Catch

Toss

Catch

He slowly pans the torch to the corner of the room...

Toss

And the flashlight picks up glimpses of the **baseball flying towards him** --

CRACK

WAYLON

SHIT!

Waylon gets nailed right in the fucking face.

He drops to his knees and holds his nose.

The flashlight falls to the floor

and it rolls to her feet.

Penny's feet.

She picks it up and shines it on Waylon:

His hands to his gushing nose. It looks like he's squeezing a jelly donut into his face.

INT. FOYER - MANSION

Sofia shows Rhodes out. He unlocks the door's many locks.

RHODES

It was fun while it lasted.

SOFIA

It wasn't that fun.

RHODES

I was just being nice.

Rhodes leaves and Sofia closes the door. She slides a stool over, steps up, and bolts the lock at the top of the door.

Suddenly

SNAP

The stool's leg breaks and Sofia falls to the ground.

SOFIA

OWSHIT.

She lies there for a beat then begins to laugh at how hilariously ungraceful -- how un-Sofia -- that was.

INT. SECURITY BOOTH - SAME TIME

Penny approaches Whimpering Waylon. She takes his cowboy hat off, then grabs the taser from his belt.

PENNY

I enjoy this American hat.

She puts it on then

She zaps him in the neck.

He spazzes out and knocks the bowl of chili off the desk.

Penny negotiates his jaw open with her hand.

PENNY (CONT'D)

Open the sesame.

He doesn't.

She electrocutes him again.

He does.

She slides the butt of the flashlight into his mouth.

WAYLON

No. No. N---

It's a big fucking flashlight and it doesn't go in easily.

EXT. SOFIA'S DRIVEWAY - SAME

Rhodes walks up the driveway toward the front gate, mumbling to himself.

INT. SECURITY BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Waylon's nose blood drips onto Penny's hands. His teeth rattling against the thick, steel handle of the flashlight as Penny pushes it further and further into his mouth.

His eyes bulge as the handle enters the top of his throat. Like a snake eating a mouse.

PENNY

Down hatch. Glug-glug-glug.

Waylon chokes on the flashlight. Gagging and gurgling.

But wait. Oh shit... No, please no. Not the chili.

WAYLON THROWS UP HIS WIFE'S DELICIOUS CHILI

Beans, meat, and melted cheese seep through the corners of his mouth onto the flashlight and Penny's hands.

It doesn't gross her out at all. Penny likey.

Waylon no likey. But Waylon is a cowboy. He's not going down without a fight. He reaches around and

finds the fork from the floor and

STABS PENNY IN THE FOOT

PENNY (CONT'D)

MERDE!!

He pulls the flashlight out of his throat and drills her in the knee cap with it.

He drops the flashlight to the floor. It rolls and stops.

SPOTLIGHTING THEM:

Waylon pulls Penny to the ground. He straddles her and hits her in the face and tits and stomach. Over and over and over and over and over and over again.

Pieces of chili hang from his mustache like dingleberries.

As Waylon wails on her, she starts to lose consciousness.

Or so he thinks. Because actually, her hand has grabbed hold of a cable...

Follow that cable up the wall, leading to the microwave that sits on the shelf just above them.

Yank. The microwave falls and

NAILS WAYLON IN THE HEAD.

She kicks him off her and reverses positions.

Who's the cowboy now, bitch.

EXT. FRONT GATE - NIGHT

Rhodes shakes the gate but it's locked. He looks at the security booth and walks towards it.

INT. SECURITY BOOTH - NIGHT

Straddling Waylon, Penny picks up the flashlight and...

SHOVES THAT HANDLE BACK INTO HIS MOUTH AND PUSHES IT IN.

SLOWWWLLLLLLY PENETRATING HIS THROAT AGAIN.

WAYLON POV: The flashlight shines on Penny's face. She looks fucking nuts. She lifts the microwave above her head and...

BRINGS IT DOWN ON THE FLASHLIGHT.

The flashlight goes out and we hear a...

CRACK-CRUNCH

END POV.

[That was fucked. I'll warn you next time.]

Now, the booth is completely dark again just as Rhodes pokes his head in.

RHODES

Hey man, can you open the gate?

Penny's on the floor with the dead cowboy, completely still.

Rhodes flips the light a few times. Nothing.

RHODES (CONT'D)

Waylon? Hello.

No answer. Rhodes leaves.

Penny puts the microwave back on the shelf.

INT. ELEANOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eleanor's by the window watching Officer Carter sit on the curb next to his bicycle. Her mind is somewhere else.

ELEANOR

Have you met Sofia before?

Abby's scarf is off and we see her hair is now braided. She grabs a soda from the fridge.

ABBY

We're very close. Best friends, you could say.

Abby plops down on the couch and grabs the remote.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Why do you ask?

Eleanor doesn't answer.

ABBY (CONT'D)

He loves her. But not in love. Besides, he only dates black women and she's the furthest thing from black.

Eleanor laughs and grabs Abby's hand and takes the coke.

ELEANOR

You'll never fall asleep.

Eleanor takes a sip.

ABBY

Did you know I was in the "Father May I" music video?

Eleanor looks at her.

ABBY (CONT'D)

With the choir. I was in it. I've been on MTV like a million times. I bet it comes on within the hour.

Abby turns the TV on and takes the coke back. Eleanor takes a seat next to her.

INT. BELL'S CAMRY - NIGHT

Bell sits in traffic on Hollywood Blvd. A movie production is blocking traffic.

BELL

I hate LA.

He makes an illegal U-turn, drives for a second on the sidewalk, and pulls out onto a side street. Takes off.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MANSION - NIGHT

Sofia lights candles. She hears commotion and stops.

SOFIA

Hello?

INT. DINING ROOM - MANSION - CONTINUOUS

SOFIA

Rhodes?

Nothing. She imagined it.

She lights the candelabra on the dining room table and it brings light to the puzzle.

She looks at it for a long moment, rehashing her conversation with Rhodes in her head.

Then, she notices the missing piece of the woman's head on the beach is now in its spot.

The puzzle is now complete.

Her breaths shorten as her mind begins to race: *Who found it? And when? Was it there when she and Rhodes were just discussing it? Is... is someone in her house?*

Then, movement behind her.

Yeah. Someone's in her house.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

WHO'S THERE!?

She walks into the kitchen, candle in hand like Geppetto.

EXT. GARAGE - MANSION - NIGHT

Rhodes approaches the garage attached to the house. He tries the door but it's locked. He sees a window, slightly open.

INT. KITCHEN - MANSION - NIGHT

Sofia enters the kitchen. She hears movement, turns around quickly and

her candle goes out.

It's dark again. There's a lot of dark in this movie.

Sofia flips open her pink zippo:

Flick-spark. Nothing. She does it again. This time, in the brief spark, we catch a glimpse of

SOMEONE BEHIND HER

But the flame dies before we can confirm who.

The flame finally catches and she lights the candle again but nobody is there.

She sees the refrigerator is open. Another weird thing. She walks around the island and closes it but

The breeze from the door blows her candle out again.

Here we go again with this shitty fucking zippo:

Flick-spark. Nothing. This lighter sucks.

INT. GARAGE - MANSION - SAME

Meanwhile, Rhodes walks through the dark garage. Finally finding the fuse box. He flips a few switches and

Lights turn on one by one. Each one spotlighting a different VINTAGE CAR.

INT. MICROWAVE - SAME

The damaged microwave starts back up. The popcorn spins.

INT. KITCHEN - MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Still dark in the kitchen, Sofia keeps working the lighter.

Flick-spark. Nothing.

Flick-spark--

THE HOUSE LIGHTS TURN ON AND

DUERSON'S RIGHT BEHIND HER.

She doesn't notice him. But we fucking do. That fucker is smiling and breathing and having trouble containing his excitement. It's too much for him and

he squeaks a little...? Like something you'd hear out of a mouse or an improvisationalist trying not to break on stage.

And now she knows he's there without needing to look. She shuts her eyes and swallows. If she stays completely still, maybe she could just fucking will him away.

He blows on the back of her neck. We can almost hear her goosebumps erupt.

Is it really him?

DUERSON

Hey, puddin'.

Yep.

He gently puts his hands around her waist and onto her stomach. He rests his head on her back.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

I missed you a lot a lot a lot.

She slowwwwwlllyyy turns around to face him. Every therapist and family member said he was locked away for good but she knew he would come back. Those fucking idiots.

She holds her breath. *Don't breathe. Breathing makes it real.*

Finally, she opens her mouth... but nothing comes out.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

I owe you an apology. I'm so sorry for leaving, honey.

She still has no words, slowly backing away.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

She backs up faster. Opening drawers between them. He closes them as he moves toward her. He reaches his hand out.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
I missed you.

SOFIA
DON'T TOUCH ME.

Duerson's hurt.

DUERSON
I... I don't understand.

SOFIA
Don't come any closer.

She grabs two hanging pans from above the stove and...

BANG BANG BANG BANG

SOFIA (CONT'D)
HELP!!! HELP!!!

Duerson covers his ears and closes his eyes. Confused.

INT. GARAGE - MANSION - SAME

Rhodes sits in the driver's seat of the BABY BLUE 1978 VOLKSWAGEN VAN.

Then, he hears the banging.

He gets out and runs to the door that leads into the house.

LOCKED.

INT. KITCHEN - MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Sofia screams for help and runs out of the kitchen.

Duerson still covers his ears, eyes closed.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - MANSION - NIGHT

Rhodes reaches the front door.

Through the window in the door, he sees Sofia, pot and pan in hands, running toward him. Screaming.

RHODES
What's wrong?!

He jiggles the door.

SOFIA
(shouting shit through
window, muffled!!)

RHODES
Open the door!

INT. FRONT DOOR - MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Sofia unlocks the locks fast as she can but there are so many.

INT. KITCHEN - MANSION - SAME

Duerson finally releases his ears and opens his eyes.

They're glossy again.

That same gloss from when he stabbed Bell.

INT. FRONT DOOR - MANSION - SAME

Sofia turns the last lock, pulls the knob. It doesn't budge. She forgot about the slide latch at the top of the door.

SOFIA
SHIT.

RHODES
(muffled through door!!)

She instinctively reaches for the stool but -- *oh yeah* -- the leg snapped before.

She gets on her tiptoes and reaches for it. Her finger tips just barely reach the bolt.

SOFIA
F U C K I N G T H I N G .

EXT. FRONT DOOR - MANSION - CONTINUOUS

RHODES

Come on!

AND

CRACK! Sofia's forehead hits the window in the door. The window spiders. She falls to the ground out of frame.

Duerson stands behind her.

Rhodes looks into Duerson's glazed-over eyes.

He sees there's a little Sofia blood left on the glass.

He licks his thumb and scrubs it off. It makes an inane squeegee noise.

INT. SECURITY BOOTH - SAME

Penny, bloodied and bruised, eats popcorn with her feet up on the desk and watches this all go down on the monitor.

EXT. ELEANOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bell turns the corner and double parks outside Eleanor's apartment.

PRELAP: *knock-knock-knock-knock.*

INT. ELEANOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eleanor opens the door for Bell.

BELL

Hey, you alright?

ELEANOR

Yeah. The cop might have scared him off.

BELL

So the cops came? Good.

ABBY

Just one cop. If you could even call him that. He was on a bike.

Abby stands at the bedroom door.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Feel for him though. I bet he arrived on the first day of duty like "Hell yes. This is gonna be awesome." Then they give him a bike. He 100% lies to his friends about it.

Bell and Eleanor look at Abby.

ELEANOR
Your daughter is--

BELL
--I know.

ABBY
Dad, what the shit is going on?

BELL
Don't cuss.

ABBY
I'm crisis cussing. Figured it was okay.

BELL
Did the cop on a bike leave?

ELEANOR
He's out there.

ABBY
Eleanor made him wait outside.

BELL
I didn't see anyone out there.

Eleanor walks over to the window and looks outside but Officer Carter is **NO LONGER THERE**.

ELEANOR
He was supposed to be keeping an eye out.

BELL
He left?

Bell goes into the bedroom and grabs Abby's backpack.

ABBY
He was a bit of a shit.

BELL
Ok. No more crisis cussing.

Bell grabs Abby's hand.

BELL (CONT'D)
Come on.

ELEANOR
Where we going?

BELL
Police station.

Eleanor looks out the window, down to the curb.

ELEANOR
He was *just* there.

Crane down from the window and...

SUPER: 10 minutes earlier

EXT. ELEANOR'S APARTMENT - 10 MINS EARLIER

Camera finds Officer Carter standing on the curb.

He's bored, singing softly to himself. Sort of tap dancing, channeling Gene Kelly. Subtle enough that if someone saw him, he could be pretending to do something else.

OFFICER CARTER
*Well, the bottle was spilled
on the barroom floor
and the bar was closed for the
night.
When out of his hole
came a little brown mouse
and he sat in the pale moonlight.*

He stops, looks up to Eleanor's window. Everything seems cool. He continues, getting more into it.

OFFICER CARTER (CONT'D)
*Heeee... lapped up the bottle on
the barroom floor
and on his haunches, he sat.
And all through the night
you could hear him shouuuut...
(jazz hands)
Bring on the God damned cat!*

That was weirdly kind of amazing. He chuckles to himself then looks at his bike and notices

The chain is broken.

OFFICER CARTER (CONT'D)

Shit.

When did that happen? He flips the bike over and works it.

J.H. (O.S.)

Need some help, Officer?

Carter turns his head and looks up at

J.H. Calhoun and his one eye.

Carter knows this could be the guy Eleanor called about, he proceeds with care.

OFFICER CARTER

I got it. Thank you.

J.H.

I really liked your song. Are you professional?

Carter slyly unbuttons his gun holster.

OFFICER CARTER

No. I used to dance.

J.H.

Well you're really great at it.

OFFICER CARTER

Thank you.

J.H.

What are you doing out here?

Carter cloaks his fear as J.H. stands just behind him.

OFFICER CARTER

I'm a cop. Just following orders.

Carter reaches for his belt but

J.H. beats him to it.

J.H.

Me too.

J.H. takes the gun and tosses it into the bushes.

Then, he grabs the bicycle.

It doesn't weigh much to him.

He lifts it up over his head and swings down but misses left.

He lifts it again and

[WARNING: If you don't like this sort of thing, skip ahead to the big X]

ABSOLUTELY FUCKING LEVELS OFFICER CARTER WITH IT.

Carter didn't even have a chance to scream. The bike's rear strobe light switches on.

QUICKIES IN FLASHES: J.H. rips off the chain and wraps it around Carter's neck. He pulls tighter and tighter. Carter's neck is covered in grease and blood. One final squeeze and

CRACK.

Carter dies real quick.

X

J.H. looks down at his work...

The bike is as mangled as the cop.

He puts his hand on the wheel and it stops spinning. Then:

HEADLIGHTS

Bell's car pulls around the block as J.H. drags the cop and the bike into the alley.

Bell gets out of the car and enters Eleanor's building.

A FEW MINUTES LATER:

Bell exits with Abby and Eleanor.

INT. BELL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The three pile into the car. Abby's in back. Bell puts the car in drive when

VIRGIL (homeless, 30s) trips out into the road and falls in front of the car.

ABBY
Dad! Look out!

Bell slams on the breaks.

VIRGIL
WHAT THE FUCK.

Virgil crab-walks away from the alley. Trying to catch his breath as Bell rolls down the window.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
(hysterical)
I--I'm gonna-- I can't get-- I
can't go down for that. This shit's
not good.

BELL
It's okay. Just slow down.

VIRGIL I can't--
BELL (CONT'D) Slow down. What happened?

Virgil breathes.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
A cop. He... he... I don't know,
man. He's not great.

Eleanor looks at Abby.

ELEANOR
Was he a young guy?

VIRGIL
Like a baby.

ABBY
Is he dead?

VIRGIL
I don't know for sure. He looked
pretty fucking dead, little girl.

BELL
You see anybody else?

VIRGIL
I didn't kill him. I promise--

Virgil runs away.

Bell looks to the alley to see the bicycle leaning against the dumpster. He gets out.

ELEANOR
Don't. Let's just go.

BELL
I have to see if he's alive. Leave
the car on and just drive if
anything happens.

Eleanor climbs over to the driver's seat and hits the wipers.

ELEANOR
This windshield is filthy.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Bell walks down the alley with his gun out.

He sees: The cop's legs dangling out of the top of a shopping cart. Bell checks him. He's pretty fucking dead.

EXT. ELEANOR'S STREET - NIGHT

Bell walks back to his car. He can see Eleanor through the glass of the windshield.

The wipers go back and forth.

As he moves closer, the wipers stop.

And he registers Eleanor's expression: **horror**.

Then, backseat light is switched on and we see

J.H. -- in the back-middle seat, covering one eye.

Bell approaches the passenger's side. J.H. removes his hand from his eye and rolls down the window a few inches. We get another great look at that fucking thing.

J.H.
Can I please have that gun?

Bell looks at Abby, J.H.'s left hand around her neck.

ABBY
His hand is cold, dad.

J.H.
Let go of her.

J.H. does. Bell hands him the gun then gets in the passenger's seat.

INT. BELL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

J.H.
Ma'am, please drive us to Sofia's house.

Eleanor looks at Bell and he nods. She puts the car in drive.

BELL
You work for Paul Duerson?

J.H.
We are brothers sort of.

ELEANOR
How did he know where I lived, William?

J.H.
I've been following you guys around for ages. I saw that you like to cook, ma'am. I really love to cook too... Oh, oops.

J.H. covers his eye again.

J.H. (CONT'D)
(to Abby)
It's okay. Don't be scared.

ABBY
I'm not scared. My dad's here. Can you move over? There's so much room on your side.

EXT. SOFIA ESTATE - NIGHT

Rhodes hides his massive body behind a tree and watches as Penny drags the red trunk across the front yard.

She turns, he hides.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - MANSION - NIGHT

We're inside Sofia's awesome home recording studio.

There's a switchboard, a few couches, and a kitchenette outside of a LONDON RED TELEPHONE BOOTH that's been retrofitted into a RECORDING BOOTH.

Sofia's inside it, unconscious.

INT. BELL'S CAMRY - NIGHT

Eleanor drives up Mulholland. Bell's next to her. Abby and J.H. are in the back.

BELL
What are we doing?

J.H.
I'm not supposed to talk much. Paul is such a great planner he doesn't want me to ruin anything.

BELL
Just let them out. Please.

J.H.
Pull over here.

Eleanor does. Bell's relieved.

J.H. (CONT'D)
Get out.

BELL
Thank you.

J.H. puts the gun to the back of Bell's neck.

J.H.
You get out.

ABBY
Dad.

BELL
It's okay.

Bell gets out of the car.

EXT. ROAD SIDE - CONTINUOUS

J.H. gets out and easily tosses Bell to the ground.

J.H.
On your knees.

Bell does as he's instructed.

ABBY
Dad, no!

Abby gets out, but Eleanor grabs her.

J.H.
No closer.

BELL
Get back in the car, Sweetheart.
(to J.H.)
Why are you doing this?

J.H.
He doesn't want you screwing
tonight up for him.

J.H. puts the gun to Bell's head. Execution style.

BELL
Abby, turn around. Can you do that
for me? I love you.

Abby and Eleanor slowly turn around.

We stay on Abby's face. Tears flood and

BANG.

Bell drops to the ground in the background.

Abby turns and attacks J.H., screaming as he carries her back
in the car.

INT. BELL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Abby screams and smacks J.H. in the face. He lets her.

J.H.
Sofia's house please.

Abby looks out the back window, crying, as they pull away.

INT. RECORDING BOOTH - MANSION - LATER

Sofia's chin to chest and slowly comes to.

SOFIA
Wh-- OW. *Shit.*

She touches her forehead and we see her injury has been
kindly tended. She tries to push the door open. Won't budge.

SOFIA (CONT'D)
HELLO!?

She grabs the mic stand and slams it against the window but it just bounces off.

SOFIA (CONT'D)
HELLO! LET ME OUT!

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

In the studio, Sofia's screams are muted through the glass.

INT. RECORDING BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

SOFIA
Help! Someone!

Suddenly, the door in the studio opens and in walks Duerson, holding frozen peas. He starts to speak but Sofia can't hear a thing inside the booth.

SOFIA (CONT'D)
I can't hear you.

Sofia slides open a slat on the door of the booth, about the size of a mail slot.

DUERSON
Did you catch any of that?

SOFIA
No.

DUERSON
Should I start over?

SOFIA
Are those for me?

Duerson holds the peas up.

DUERSON
Yes.

Duerson slides the peas through the slat. Sofia puts them to her head.

SOFIA
Thank you.

DUERSON
I figured you'd still be napping.

SOFIA

I wasn't napping. You knocked me out, Paul.

DUERSON

I love it when you call me by my name.

SOFIA

You haven't done anything wrong yet.

Lol.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

We can still walk away from this.

DUERSON

Together?

SOFIA

What?

DUERSON

You want to walk away from this together?

Sofia doesn't respond.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

I know you're mad that I left you but I really needed some time to focus on me before I could focus on us. But now I'm ready to be with you forever. If you could just let bygones be bygones... Tonight's a clean slate.

Sofia contemplates the best path forward.

SOFIA

You really want things to go back to the way they were?

DUERSON

(not angrily)

That's what I've been trying to tell you!

SOFIA

Okay then. Let's be together, Paul. Let me out.

(Duerson's unsure)

(MORE)

SOFIA (CONT'D)

So we're going to spend the rest of our lives together but, what, you'll just keep me in this box? Come on, Paul. Let me out and I'll give you a tour of the house. I'll show you the jacuzzi.

DUERSON

You're hilarious, Sofia. Like I don't know where the jacuzzi is. I've been here a bazillion times.

That's terrifying.

Then, a bloody Penny enters, carrying a suit bag.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

This is Penny. We met on the inside. Don't worry, we're not together. She's from Nice in France. It's spelled like "nice."

SOFIA

Nice.

DUERSON

Hilarious again, Sofia. Truly. Now, time to get ready.

Sofia watches Duerson leave. She locks eyes with Penny.

MONTAGE: Cue "Borderline" by the Flaming Lips with Stardeath and White Dwarfs. [A cover of the Madonna song. Pull it up.]

. Duerson carries chairs out of the dining room. Then he drags the red trunk down the hallway.

. Eleanor looks at a devastated Abby in the rearview.

. Duerson blows bubbles out of his hands in the jacuzzi.

. Penny slowly unzips the suit bag in the recording studio.

. Duerson shaves in Sofia's sink using her pink razor. A drop of blood hits the faucet. He doesn't notice. More blood falls from Duerson's face as he ties his tie in the mirror. The sink covered in blood. Same with the towels.

. Duerson exits Sofia's room just as... The balcony door opens and Rhodes climbs in. Rhodes walks into the bathroom and sees the blood soaked counter.

. Duerson buzzes the gate open from Bell's office and the camry drives through. The camry pulls up to the mansion.

. Penny unzips the bag revealing... **A WEDDING DRESS.**

SOFIA
 ("what the fuck?")

END MONTAGE.

EXT. ATRIUM - MANSION - NIGHT

The open-roofed atrium is located in the center of the mansion. There's a cherub fountain in the center of a beautiful garden. Mismatched chairs from around the house face the fountain.

Patent leather shoes enter frame. Climb up the legs to reveal Duerson in full tuxedo. His face patched up from his terrible shave job.

INT. MASTER STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Rhodes sneaks down the stairs from Sofia's bedroom. He stops when he hears the front door open.

RHODES POV: Abby and Eleanor enter, holding hands. J.H. is behind them with the gun.

DUERSON (O.S.)
 Welcome!

INT. ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Duerson greets them from down the hall. He sees J.H.'s gun.

DUERSON
 Put that away. What kind of way is that to treat our guests?

J.H.
 I killed a cop with his bicycle.
 And her dad with this gun here.

Abby wants to burst into tears. She holds it together.

DUERSON
 Just put it away. Now...

Duerson bows. Eleanor and Abby grip each other's hands.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
 Don't forget to sign the guest book before you leave! Please follow me.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Duerson leads them through the corridor with many doors to different rooms. He opens the door to the recording studio.

DUERSON
T-minus five?

Inside, Penny nods.

Abby and Sofia make eye-contact just as the door closes.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Rhodes checks every room down the hall, searching for Sofia.

INT. TROPHY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rhodes enters a self-congratulatory trophy room. Inside are framed records, some grammys, and other shit. No time to admire it, he turns to leave when something catches his eye:

A large display case with a mannequin wearing Sofia's baseball player outfit from "Lu's on First." Like something you'd see at the Arclight. Rhodes opens the case and reaches for **A BASEBALL BAT**.

Dope. Weapons.

It has "Love, Kevin Costner" carved into the barrel.

Dope. Kevin Costner weapons.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - NIGHT

Penny walks the wedding dress to Sofia in the booth. She opens the door just a crack and slides the dress in.

PENNY
You have a wonderful skin and body.
You will be pretty for Paul in this
dress.

Sofia grabs the dress. Penny's about to close the door...

SOFIA
*Wait... Can you-- grab my makeup?
It's in the master bath, left of
the sink.*
(then)
(MORE)

SOFIA (CONT'D)
I need my makeup to be pretty for Paul.

Penny thinks, nods, and shuts the booth door.

She walks to the door but turns back--

PENNY
I am excitement to live here with you and Paul. With some small change, this can be my room.

Penny exits.

Sofia waits. Then opens the booth door and

peels off an album sticker that she taped over the lock.

She did good.

She sheds her robe and slaps the sticker proudly on her tank.

She grabs an ELECTRIC GUITAR from a stand.

Dope. Music weapons.

She waits for Penny.

SOFIA
Let's go. Come on.

She sees a shadow on the other side of the door.

Sofia grips the guitar. The door opens slowly and

SHE SWINGS

SOFIA (CONT'D)
AHH!

CRACK!

SOFIA (CONT'D)
No!

We hear the sound of a bat hitting the tile.

Turn around and

RHODES FALLS TO THE FLOOR.

He's out cold, wearing that silly "Lu's on First" cap.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

FUCK!

EXT. ATRIUM - MANSION - NIGHT

Eleanor is tied to a chair with rope and a duct taped mouth.

We notice a small table with CHAMPAGNE AND GLASSES set up.
The FIRST AID KIT sits below it on the floor.

Duerson and Abby drag the red trunk down the make-shift aisle
and place it at the fountain.

DUERSON

Thanks for your help.

ABBY

You're the one who keeps calling
me.

DUERSON

Yes.

ABBY

Why?

DUERSON

I wanted to ask you to be the
flower girl.

Abby looks at Eleanor -- *Just do what he says.*

ABBY

Okay. I'll be your flower girl.

Then, we hear muffled crying.

ABBY (CONT'D)

What is that?

Abby searches for the source as the crying continues.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Paul?

DUERSON

Yes, flower girl?

ABBY

Is someone... in the trunk?

DUERSON

Yes, flower girl.

ABBY
Can-- can we let him out?

DUERSON
Of course.

Duerson bends down and unlocks the trunk, opening it to reveal the spry grandpa...

DUERSON (CONT'D)
Tim! Welcome!

It's Tim. (The old man that Penny asked for help)

He's got a plastic bag around his neck and some dried blood on his nose. Duerson comes into focus.

TIM
Paul?

QUICKIES (FLASHBACK):

. Penny stands outside as Tim opens the door, looks at the crucifix on the wall. (The scene we saw before.)

. Penny and Tim walk toward J.H.'s pickup truck, parked on the street.

. Penny throws a plastic grocery bag over Tim's head and pulls it tight. He struggles but she's got him. He sucks in plastic a few times.

. Penny punches Tim in the face. His nose bleeds in the bag.

END QUICKIES.

DUERSON
Tim! You made it!

Abby approaches the trunk and looks at Tim, who is absolutely fucking horrified. She helps him out and he immediately falls to the floor.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
I want you to meet Tim Lutzer from
Saint Clement Church in La Cañada.

Duerson smiles.

EVERYONE ELSE

...

DUERSON

(to Tim)

Please help yourself to champagne
and first aid.

ABBY

You... put a Priest in a box?

DUERSON

No. I put a *Minister* in a box. Tim
was my Minister growing up. He also
coached the church's softball team.
Isn't that right Tim?

Abby helps Tim to his feet.

TIM

This is insane.

ABBY

You have no idea, man.

DUERSON

Let's get started. Where's the
bride?

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - NIGHT

Rhodes is passed out. Sofia lightly slaps his cheeks.

SOFIA

Come on. Wake up. Wake up.

Rhodes eye's flutter open. Sofia comes into focus.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Hey.

RHODES

I'm sorry I left you.

SOFIA

I'm sorry I hit you in the face
with a guitar.

RHODES

Was it on purpose?

SOFIA

No.

RHODES

We're probably both going to die tonight.

SOFIA

I know.

Then, Rhodes violently shoves Sofia off of him just in time to protect her from the Kevin Costner baseball bat that's barreling toward them.

Penny swings it like a golf club and

NAILS RHODES IN THE JAW.

He's out cold again.

Penny swings at Sofia. She dodges then kicks Penny in the chest. Sending her falling back

onto the piano.

Her ass inadvertently plays a chord. It is undeniably the first chord of the intro to Billy Joel's "Piano Man."

They pause.

Sofia approaches the Piano

and finishes the intro...?

Then, they duet the entire song. Sofia sings beautifully. Penny ain't bad herself.

PENNY

La la la, di da da!

SOFIA

La la, di da da da dum!

Rhodes comes to on the floor and watches this go down. *Is this really happening? Probably not.*

He passes out again.

Then

SOFIA LAUNCHES AT PENNY.

They fall through a blackout window shade and break glass--

Landing outside on the second floor deck.

EXT. SECOND FLOOR DECK - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

They roll around on top of each other... swapping advantages a few times... then, Sofia kicks Penny off and crawls toward the charcoal grill.

She grabs a FORK THERMOMETER from the grill to protect herself. This doesn't worry Penny. She attacks without a weapon and sure enough...

SOFIA STABS PENNY IN THE GUT.

Sofia lets go. She can't believe she just did that.

SOFIA
Holy shit.

Penny looks down at the fork thermometer in her gut.

It reads 80°F. Cold blooded I guess. She leaves it in.

Then punches Sofia in the face.

Sofia hits the floor, trying to shake it off but that was a powerful blow.

PENNY DOUSES SOFIA IN LIQUID.

It not until Sofia tastes it that she realizes it's not water.

IT'S LIGHTER FLUID.

A lot of it. It creates a pool around her.

She tries to get up but Penny sends her back down. She climbs on top of her -- MATCHBOOK in hand.

She lights a match but Sofia blows it out. She lights another but Sofia blows it out again.

Sofia looks at Penny's stomach then... sits up with all she has and pulls Penny's torso toward hers... driving the fork thermometer even further inside the frenchwoman's tummy.

PENNY HOWLS IN PAIN.

She falls off Sofia, into the pool of lighter fluid. She tries to remove the thermometer but it's fucking deep and far too painful. Penny looks up.

Sofia douses her in lighter fluid and holds up her zippo.

She thinks for a long ass time about whether to set this fucking asshole on fire.

PENNY

Do it.

But, no. That's not her.

SOFIA

Sofia doesn't light people on fire.

So she leaves her there to bleed out instead.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

Sofia limps in. She turns around to check on Penny through the broken window... still lying on the deck in pain.

Sofia returns to Rhodes. He's breathing but not moving. She props him up against the wall. She turns around to check on Penny once more but...

PENNY'S GONE.

SOFIA

What the f--

She turns back to Rhodes and

PENNY

AHHHHH!

Penny's standing behind her. She puts Sofia into a headlock and drags her into the recording booth.

INT. RECORDING BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Penny's still got that fork thermometer in her gut.

They exchange blows and take turns slamming each other's faces into the booth walls.

Penny straddles Sofia, choking her out until

Penny sneezes and blood explodes from her nose and paints Sofia's face. Penny's about the sneeze again when

Sofia kicks her off.

And uses the mic stand to choke Penny out.

It's working.

Penny gasps for breath as Sofia pushes harder and harder.

And again, considers if she's a murderer or not.

She's not.

She lets go and Penny falls to the floor, holding her neck.

Sofia climbs out of the booth, slides the baseball bat into the door and **locks Penny in.**

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Sofia and Penny stare at each other for a beat before Penny starts hysterically laughing. Blood seeps through her teeth and dark red bubbles percolate from her nose.

Once again, Sofia considers the type of person she is:

To murder or not to murder?

And this time...

SOFIA CHOOSES MURDER!!!

Sofia grabs the "Lu's on First" hat from the floor and retrieves the pink zippo from her pocket.

And this time, that fucker lights first try.

SHE SETS THE HAT ON FIRE.

She walks it over to the booth and slips the flaming production swag through the slat, shuts it, and holds it closed.

INT. RECORDING BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

The hat falls to the floor of the booth but it doesn't have quite the desired effect.

Penny laughs at the impotent flame. Then

FLAME

The hat catches on some errant lighter fluid and makes its way to Penny's legs. *Oh shit.* Penny stands up.

PENNY

Out! Out!

Her shoe catches fire first.

PENNY (CONT'D)

NO!

The fire crawls up her leg. The fork thermometer temperature climbs rapidly and...

PENNY'S COMPLETELY ENGULFED IN FLAMES.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

This is way more fucked up than Sofia expected but she can't hear Penny's screams in the booth so I guess that's good.

Sofia grabs a FIRE EXTINGUISHER from the closet... then waits about three Mississippis for Penny to die. She's not taking any chances. Then, finally

PENNY DIES

Sofia places the hose through the slat and extinguishes the remaining flames.

Another three Mississippis and

RHODES (O.S.)

Fuuuuccckkkkk.

Sofia drops the extinguisher and runs over to Rhodes who just watched that whole thing.

SOFIA

Hey, you okay?

(then)

It was me or her.

RHODES

Yeah, cool.

SOFIA

Seriously, she's a psycho.

RHODES

I said cool. Let's get out of here.

SOFIA

I have to get Abby.

Sofia gets up.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Meet me outside.

EXT. ATRIUM - MANSION - NIGHT

Duerson's antsy by the fountain next to Tim, Abby, and J.H.

Abby stares daggers at her father's murderer. She looks at the champagne table then to the first aid kit where she sees

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE (H2O2!)

Duerson checks his watch even though he's not wearing one.

DUERSON

She's very late. What do you think she's doing? She's not having seconds thoughts you don't think. She loves me. We're going to be together.

Abby notices his eyes are glossy.

J.H.

I'll get her.

DUERSON

No. She needs me.

Duerson exits.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

Rhodes's finally made it to his feet after two brutal blows to the head.

DUERSON (O.S.)

Honey, are you ready?

Duerson enters with glossy eyes and finds Rhodes.

Rhodes looks at the baseball bat lodged in the booth door.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

You're not having second thoughts are you?

Duerson's got a knife in his hand. Rhodes clocks it.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

I know it's scary to take this leap. But it's a leap of faith. I love you Sofia.

Wait...

THIS MOTHERFUCKER THINKS RHODES IS SOFIA.

So Rhodes decides to play the part.

RHODES
I'm... nervous?

Duerson tenderly approaches Rhodes.

DUERSON
No need to be scared, baby.

He rubs Rhodes's hand. What the fuck.

EXT. ATRIUM - EARLY MORNING

Abby pours champagne into a glass. While J.H. isn't looking, she slowly pours the hydrogen peroxide into the glass and swirls it around.

Sofia enters the atrium and runs straight for Abby.

SOFIA
Abby! Are you okay?

Abby's eyes are trained on J.H.

Sofia wraps her in a hug and Abby tries not to spill the champagne peroxide.

J.H. steps forward.

J.H.
Shouldn't you be getting ready?
Where's Paul?

SOFIA
Who are you?

J.H.
I'm the best man.

SOFIA
(then, noticing
everything)
He really thought we were getting
married?

ABBY
He put a Minister in a box, Sofia.

Abby points at Tim.

ABBY (CONT'D)
That's Tim.

Tim waves.

SOFIA
Where's your dad?

Abby doesn't answer.

SOFIA (CONT'D)
What happened to your father?

Abby tears up.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE - EARLY MORNING

Find Bell motionless on the side of the road.

Suddenly

Movement.

He slowly climbs to his feet, holding the left side of his head. He looks at his fingers and sees blood.

J.H. missed left but

He shot Bell's ear clean off.

Then, we hear barking as a woman, CAT (60s, pink tracksuit, Angelyne-type) approaches walking her dog.

CAT
Tori, quiet!
(noticing)
Are you ok? Looks like someone clipped you pretty good. People drive like freaking maniacs up here.

EXT. ATRIUM - EARLY MORNING

Abby eyes J.H., who waits patiently at the altar for the ceremony to begin. She slowly walks toward him with the Champagne Peroxide in hand.

ABBY
Champagne while we wait?

J.H. looks at Abby then to the champagne.

He slowly reaches for it. Then, he chucks the glass and it smashes to bits on the Cherub statue.

J.H.
I don't drink anymore. You'd know
that if we could just get to my
speech already.

Shit.

ABBY
Coulda just said no.

Duerson enters.

DUERSON
OK! She's coming!

Duerson and Sofia make eye contact.

But he doesn't see her as Sofia anymore.

Rhodes is his Sofia now.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
Take a seat.

SOFIA
I--

DUERSON
You're a guest. Today's not about
you.

OK... Sofia takes a seat next to Eleanor. Then removes the duct tape from her mouth.

ELEANOR
Thank you.

SOFIA
Who are you?

DUERSON
Places! Give me a thumbs up when
you're all set flower girl.

Abby's now at the other end of the aisle. She gives him a thumbs up.

Duerson's got a gigantic smile on his face. He presses play on a small radio and it plays a processional song.

EXT. CAT'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Bell and Cat run up the hill, arriving at Cat's house with a PINK COVETTE parked outside. Bell gets in passenger-side.

INT. CAT'S PINK CORVETTE - CONTINUOUS

Bell picks up the CAR PHONE that sits in the center console and has gigantic buttons. He dials 911.

CAT
(getting in)
Car needs to be on for that to
work.

Cat starts the car and revs the engine. Bell dials 911 and puts the phone to his half-blown off ear. He winces.

CAT (CONT'D)
Want me to get you some ice for
that?

BELL
Do you have a gun?

CAT
No?

EXT. ATRIUM - EARLY MORNING

The processional music continues as Abby slowly walks down the aisle.

DUERSON
Drop the flowers please.

Abby mimes dropping flowers then takes a seat next to Sofia and Eleanor.

The music changes to "Here Comes the Bride"

Everyone turns as

RHODES APPEARS AT THE DOOR.

He's wearing the wedding dress. It's wayyy too small, tearing in multiple parts. A veil covers his face.

Duerson swoons.

Tim the Minister thinks he's just about seen it all.

Same with Eleanor and Abby and Sofia.

J.H. is confused.

Rhodes walks slowly down the aisle.

INT. CAT'S PINK CORVETTE - EARLY MORNING

Cat drives Bell in a PINK CORVETTE up Mulholland.

Cat puts a cig in her lips.

CAT
Would you?

Bell leans over and grabs the car cigarette lighter and lights Cat up.

EXT. ATRIUM - EARLY MORNING

Rhodes finally reaches Duerson and Tim at the fountain.

J.H. tries to wrap his mind around what's happening.

Duerson removes Rhodes's veil and nudges Tim to start.

TIM
... Do you, Paul, take...

Tim looks at Rhodes.

TIM (CONT'D)
Your name?

Beat.

RHODES
Sofia.

TIM
Sofia?

J.H.
Hey, uh, Paul.

DUERSON
Shush down, J.H.

J.H.
I think you're confused, Paul.
That's not Sofia.

DUERSON
What are you talking about?
(then, to Rhodes)
You are Sofia, right?

RHODES
Yes.

J.H.
That's a black man. He's like seven
feet tall.

Duerson's getting confused.

J.H. (CONT'D)
That's Sofia.

J.H. points over to the real Sofia. Duerson looks--
Sofia avoids eye-contact.

DUERSON
Her?

Rhodes grabs Duerson's hand.

RHODES
Come on, baby. It's me.

Beat.

DUERSON
... No.

Fuck.

Duerson walks toward the real Sofia.

Then:

RHODES (O.S.)
(singing)
Disarm you with a smile...

Duerson turns back to Rhodes. He's standing up straight at
the altar. He's found some confidence.

A long beat as everyone turns their attention to him.

He continues:

RHODES (CONT'D)

*And leave you like they left me
here
To wither in denial
The bitterness of one who's left
alone
Ooh, the years burn
Ooh, the years burn*

Duerson turns to the real Sofia then back to Rhodes.

But now, in DUERSON POV, he sees...

SOFIA AT THE ALTAR

IN A WEDDING DRESS

SINGING BEAUTIFULLY WITH STRING ACCOMPANIMENT

SOFIA (DELUSION)

*I used to be a little girl
So old in my shoes
And what I choose is my choice
What's a girl supposed to do?*

Duerson begins to cry. This moment means everything in the world to him.

SOFIA (DELUSION) (CONT'D)

*The killer in me is the killer in
you
My love
I send this smile over to you.*

[FYI, that's The Smashing Pumpkins' "Disarm." We'll use it until we find someone to write an original.]

END POV.

This is truly weird but everyone is slightly moved? Rhodes is Rhodes again as Duerson approaches him at the altar.

DUERSON

Tim. You may begin again.

TIM

Do you Paul take... Sofia... to be
your lawfully wedded wife?

DUERSON

I do.

TIM

Do you Sofia take Paul to be your
lawfully wedded husband?

RHODES

I do.

EXT. SOFIA'S ESTATE - EARLY MORNING

Bell and Cat sit in her pink Corvette outside of the gate.

THREE SQUAD CARS PULL UP. No sirens, no lights.

EXT. ATRIUM - EARLY MORNING

TIM

By the power vested in me...

INT. FOYER - EARLY MORNING

The door is open. Bell and six OFFICERS quietly walk into the
Sofia's house. An officer hands Bell and gun.

EXT. ATRIUM - EARLY MORNING

TIM

... and as witnessed by friends and
family, I now pronounce you husband
and wife. You may kiss the bride.

And then **DUERSON KISSES RHODES**

EVERYONE

...

ELEANOR

Shouldn't we do something?

SOFIA

This is all he wanted.

INT. CORRIDOR (LEADING TO ATRIUM) - EARLY MORNING

Guns drawn, Bell and the officers count to three and burst
into the atrium but...

NOBODY'S THERE. The trunk, radio, and chairs are there but
the wedding is gone.

SUPER: 10 MINUTES EARLIER

Off Bell, we FLIP AROUND to find --

Duerson and Rhodes at the fountain with Tim. Duerson grabs Rhodes's hand and holds it in the air.

DUERSON

Ladies and Gentleman, for the first time ever. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Duerson!

J.H. is the only one who claps.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

Now, if you'll all follow me. We'll take the bus to the after party then Sofia and I will consummate.

RHODES

(low)
For fuck's sake.

INT. GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Cans are now tied to the bumper of the baby blue 1978 Volkswagen van.

The wedding party piles in.

ELEANOR

(to Abby)
Buckle your seatbelt.

The garage door opens. J.H. stomps on the gas.

EXT. CAT'S PINK CORVETTE - JUST EARLIER

Back to the scene we saw earlier from a different angle. Cat puts a cig in her lips.

CAT

Would you?

Just as Bell leans over to grab the lighter, through the window, in the distance, we see...

The baby blue 1978 Volkswagen Van turn around a corner at blistering speed.

Bell lights Cat's cig without noticing.

EXT. GATE - EARLY MORNING

We're all caught up now.

The four squad cars pull out of Sofia's. Sirens and lights on full blast.

EXT. MULHOLLAND - EARLY MORNING

It's around 4:30AM. And we know that because Kaylor (Sofia's assistant) is jogging up Mulholland. She's carrying a green goblin smoothie, trying not to spill.

EXT. MULHOLLAND - OTHER

The VW wobbles a little as it careens around a corner at top speed.

INT. VOLKSWAGEN VAN - CONTINUOUS

SOFIA

Slow down!

Then, through the windshield, they see

Kaylor

Oh, shit.

EVERYONE

Watch out!

J.H. SLAMS ON THE BREAKS.

EXT. MULHOLLAND - CONTINUOUS

Before reaching Kaylor, the van tailspins and flips.

THE VAN ROLLS OVER

MULTIPLE TIMES

BARRELING TOWARD HER.

INT. VOLKSWAGEN VAN - SAME

Everyone holds on for dear life. Eleanor holds Abby tight.

EXT. MULHOLLAND - CONTINUOUS

The van flips upside-down, spins, and **CLIPS KAYLOR**. The smoothie goes flying. So does Kaylor. She hits a tree, and ~~her neck is impaled on a branch~~ lands facedown in the dirt. ~~She's dead.~~ She'll be okay. Then--

Bell arrives in a squad car and gets out. The cop goes to check on Kaylor. Bell runs to the van.

BELL

Abby?! Can you hear me? Abby are you okay?

INT. FLIPPED VOLKSWAGEN - SAME

Abby comes to.

Then, she hears it.

It's the sound of her father's voice. She thought she'd never hear it again.

ABBY

Dad. DAD!

She pulls herself out with Eleanor's help.

EXT. FLIPPED VOLKSWAGEN - CONTINUOUS

Abby and Eleanor spill out.

ABBY

Dad! You're alive.

She wraps him in a hug and holds him tight. Tears rolling down her cheek.

BELL

Are you hurt?!

ABBY

Eleanor protected me.

Sofia struggles to climb out. Bell helps her. Then Rhodes and Tim the minister.

BELL

Everyone okay?

RHODES

He's still in there.

Bell nods. He kicks in a window and climbs inside.

INT. FLIPPED VOLKSWAGEN - CONTINUOUS

There's glass and blood everywhere and

J.H. IS DEAD IN THE FRONT SEAT.

Then... Meekly...

DUERSON (O.S.)

William.

Bell sees Duerson. He's trapped but alive. Covered in blood.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

You missed the wedding.

SCAN DOWN to Bell's waste, where his gun is tucked. Bell reaches for it... but instead pulls out a handkerchief.

Bell wipes Duerson's face then unbuckles him.

DUERSON (CONT'D)

Best night of my life. You should have seen her, William. Most gorgeous bride in the world.

Duerson shivers.

Bell takes off his "Depraved" jacket and wraps it around him. Kindness for the man who has caused so much chaos.

BELL

Let's go, Paul.

EXT. MULHOLLAND - MORNING

Bell carries Duerson out of the van as more cop cars and ambulances arrive on the scene. Sirens, lights, helicopters and we CUT TO...

LATER

Duerson gets loaded into the back of an ambulance.

DUERSON

A limousine? You shouldn't have. What a fantastic gift.

A PARAMEDIC closes the door. And the ambulance takes off.

Bell stands with Abby and Eleanor nearby.

ABBY
Dad. Permission to crisis cuss?

BELL
Sure, baby.

ABBY
That was the craziest fucking thing
I've ever seen. And I know I'm only
13 but I'm pretty sure it the
craziest thing I'll ever see.

BELL
Let's hope.

ABBY
Fucking shitting nuts, dad.

BELL
Okay. Enough.

CUE: "Borderline" by Tommy Emmanuel and feat. Amanda Shires.

Bell smirks and hugs his daughter.

He opens his embrace and Eleanor joins them.

Unit.

INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING - MORNING

Duerson lies in the gurney and speaks to the paramedic.

DUERSON
You can drop us at the Hilton. We
got a penthouse suite with a view
of the city. Then off to Maui
tomorrow.... What a night.

Duerson leans back, closes his eyes, and smiles.

The cue continues. It's got a happy and content feel to it.

And Duerson's got a happy and content feel to him.

DUERSON (CONT'D)
What a night.

EXT. MULHOLLAND - MORNING

Rhodes, still in the wedding dress, sits with his back to a tree. Sofia approaches.

SOFIA
You look good in a dress.

RHODES
I know.

SOFIA
I murdered tonight.

RHODES
Yeah.

Sofia takes a seat next to him. Beat.

SOFIA
I knew you knew my music. You're clearly a huge Sofia fan... Can't sing for shit though.

RHODES
I sing good enough to convince him I was you. So maybe you can't sing for shit.

Smiles.

SOFIA
What do you think, should we give this a shot? You and me?

Rhodes shrugs -- *I don't know*. Sofia moves closer to him. He turns his head...

AND THEY KISS.

RHODES
This'll never work out.

SOFIA
Why not?

RHODES
I'm a married man.

Sofia laughs and they kiss again.

The end.