

PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN

Written by

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A bleak, provincial nightclub on a Thursday night. The kind of last-resort place people end up after accidentally drinking ten "just one" drinks after work. 2-For-1 shots and a sticky floor.

A bored DJ plays 'Sexy Bitch' by Akon, flipping through his phone while the crowd dances to his resolutely basic playlist.

We linger on the men dancing in particular, their bodies, the sweat running down their backs as they grind and thrust. The slow-mo, the lascivious pan-up, the sort of erotic gaze normally reserved for oiled-up music-video hotties. Except we're looking at regular dudes in chinos with absolutely no dancing ability.

Among the sweat, by the bar, is a group of guys still in their work suits, ties loosened. They're mostly good-looking, in their early-thirties, bantering and eyeing up the diminishing talent pool. Among them are JEZ, a shy, sweet guy who is clearly dying to leave, and PAUL, a sweaty, British, Alpha-bro whose super-fragile masculinity is always one rejection away from shattering to pieces.

PAUL

Fuck her. It's how things are done.
It's just a fucking round of golf!
You'd think we were taking clients
to a strip club or something-

PAUL'S FRIEND

-which we can't anymore anyway-

PAUL

-Exactly we can't anymore because
of last year's christmas party.

JEZ

I think it's because the golf club
doesn't let women play there.

The guys stare at JEZ.

PAUL

So?

JEZ

So...it means we're having client
meetings without her.

PAUL

Look she should focus on closing
her own shit. Not whining because
we're all doing better than her.

Something catches PAUL'S eye.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Bloody hell.

The guys follow his gaze. Across the club, sprawled on a damp
leather sofa is CASSANDRA, late-20s. She is hammered, her
hair plastered to her face, mascara under her glazed eyes,
her short dress riding up.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Look at the state of that.
Disgusting. Have some dignity,
love.

The guys all laugh, except JEZ.

PAUL (CONT'D)

You see. They put *themselves* in
danger, girls like that. If she's
not careful someone's going to take
advantage and then she'll be the
one in tears tomorrow morning.

PAUL'S FRIEND

She's kinda hot.

PAUL

She's a hot fucking mess.

CASSANDRA moves on the sofa, we see her underwear.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I mean look at that.

They all look. We feel that slow, animal shift in the group,
from disgust to desire, to a heady sense of opportunity.

JEZ

(trying to divert
attention)

Hey guys, I was thinking maybe we
should talk to Brian again. I think
he might be coming round to-

The guys aren't listening. They are all mesmerized by
CASSANDRA and the possibility she represents.

PAUL

I mean that is *asking* for it. You'd think they'd learn, wouldn't you? Where are her friends? Fucked off somewhere and left her lying around for anyone to pick up.

PAUL'S FRIEND

Sounds like a challenge, Paul.

PAUL eyes her up, thinking.

PAUL

Yeah. Maybe.

JEZ intervenes.

JEZ

I'll go over.

The guys whoop.

PAUL

Yes, mate!!

PAUL'S FRIEND

Didn't know you had it in you!

JEZ

To see if she's ok.

PAUL

Sure, sure. Absolutely.

PAUL winks.

2

INT. LIQUID NIGHTCLUB - MOMENTS LATER

2

CASSANDRA is haphazardly looking through her purse. JEZ approaches.

JEZ

You ok? What are you looking for?

CASSANDRA looks up woozily.

CASSANDRA

Phone.

JEZ sits down next to her. CASSANDRA continues to look.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

S'not here.

She starts to look around the couch, he helps.

JEZ
Could you have left in...in the
bathroom maybe?

CASSANDRA
I...maybe...

JEZ
I'll go look.

CASSANDRA watches him go. So do his friends, who are watching them both with great interest. CASSANDRA looks back at them warily.

3 INT. LIQUID NIGHTCLUB - LATER

3

JEZ returns. No phone.

JEZ
No phone in there. I'm sorry. Are
you going to be ok?

CASSANDRA
Oh yeah.

She gives him a thumbs up.

JEZ
How are you going to get home?

CASSANDRA
Uber.

JEZ
I think you need a phone for that.

CASSANDRA
...Oh...

JEZ looks nervously over at his friends. He makes a decision.

JEZ
Look, I'm going home now anyway. I
can drop you?

CASSANDRA
No...

JEZ
Honestly. It's fine.

CASSANDRA looks up at him gratefully. He gives her his hands and hoists her up.

JEZ (CONT'D)

There we are.

She falls onto him, leaning on him as they walk out. He looks back at his friends who are all laughing and miming jerking off and thrusting. JEZ rolls his eyes at them.

4

INT. UBER - LATER

4

The Uber driver glances at CASSANDRA in the mirror. The window is down and the wind is in her face, she's desperately trying to sober up.

UBER DRIVER

(suspicious)

I just got car cleaned.

JEZ

She's fine.

CASSANDRA

I'm not going to throw up...I don't think...

JEZ

There you are, sir, she's not going to throw up.

CASSANDRA gives herself a little 'Whoo!'.

JEZ laughs. She looks over and smiles hazily. Is there...a spark here? She is really pretty. And she seems cool, from the five words she's said...

JEZ (CONT'D)

Hey, you know, my apartment is only a few blocks away. You wanna...um...maybe have a drink before hitting the hay?

CASSANDRA

Um...

JEZ

I mean, it's literally just here. One beer?

CASSANDRA

Well...

JEZ
(to the driver)
Hey, could we go to 242 Raleigh
Drive instead? It's a couple of
blocks.

The UBER driver looks at JEZ, then over at CASSANDRA in the
mirror. She is obviously very drunk.

UBER DRIVER
Put the address in the app.

5 INT. JEZ'S APARTMENT - LATER

5

A nice apartment, if a little messy. JEZ comes in and turns
the lights on, picking up a few things from the floor and
throwing them on a chair. We've seen this move in many a bro
movie: this could be the start of any dude-skewed romance.

JEZ
Sorry...it's a mess. Embarrassing.
I wasn't expecting...

CASSANDRA ignores this, and slumps down on the couch.

JEZ (CONT'D)
What can I get for ya, milady?

He rummages through the fridge and cupboards.

JEZ (CONT'D)
We have beer...vodka...and...

He takes out a disgusting looking bottle of orange liqueur.

JEZ (CONT'D)
And a kumquat liqueur my parents
brought back from Greece.

CASSANDRA
Kumquat...?

This is a question. Not a request.

JEZ
OK.

He pours it. CASSANDRA looks around his apartment.

CASSANDRA
D'you...live alone here?

JEZ

No. But don't worry. My roommate's
out of town.

JEZ sits down next to her and hands her the bright orange
drink. He's poured her significantly more than he has
himself. CASSANDRA drinks it. She chokes on it a little.

CASSANDRA

Ugh. That's disgusting.

JEZ looks at her, he gently wipes the mascara from under her
eyes.

JEZ

Wow. You're so beautiful.

CASSANDRA

Thanks.

CASSANDRA isn't seeing straight. JEZ leans in to kiss her.
She does not respond, but she does not push him away. The
kiss is entirely one-sided, but JEZ doesn't notice.

He pulls away, looks down at her lovingly.

JEZ

Wow. You're amazing.

CASSANDRA looks on the verge of vomiting.

CASSANDRA

I need to lie down.

JEZ

Oh...yeah of course!

6

INT. JEZ'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

6

CASSANDRA falls down onto JEZ's bed. JEZ looks down on her.
Gets on the bed beside her. Trailing his fingers up and down
her stomach. She closes her eyes.

JEZ

Hey, hey. Don't go to sleep.

She opens her eyes a crack. He starts to kiss her, up and
down her neck.

JEZ (CONT'D)

God, you are so gorgeous.

He kisses her. She doesn't respond. He starts unbuttoning her dress. He kisses her body gently.

CASSANDRA

What...

JEZ

Shhh...

He continues to unbutton her, pulling down her bra. CASSANDRA starts to get a little concerned.

CASSANDRA

Wait...

JEZ

Don't worry, hey, it's ok, you're ok. You're safe.

He really believes that she is.

CASSANDRA

What...

JEZ

God, your body.

CASSANDRA

What are you...

JEZ begins to gently pull underwear down her legs.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

(confused, super drunk)

What are you doing?

Her underwear is around her knees, JEZ is staring between her legs.

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

Hey.

JEZ looks up. CASSANDRA is sitting, looking directly at him.

She is stone, cold sober.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I said: what are you doing?

JEZ looks back at her, his hands still holding her underwear, terrified.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN.

EXT. STREET - DAWN

Cassandra walks through the streets in last night's dress, barefoot, high heels in one hand, cigarette in the other. She walks past the GARBAGE MEN who are working the street.

GARBAGE MAN
Walk of shame!

The other guys sniggers. Cassandra stops. Stares at them. They're suddenly a little embarrassed.

She just keeps staring silently for a long while. Until, a little spooked, they move on.

She carries on walking. Satisfied.

7

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

7

An ordinary, middle-class kitchen. CASSANDRA has cleaned up and is eating cereal. Like last night never happened. Her father, STANLEY is sitting opposite her, reading the paper, while her mother, SUSAN, makes coffee.

STANLEY
Didn't hear you come in last night.

CASSANDRA continues to eat her cereal.

STANLEY (CONT'D)
Everything alright?

CASSANDRA
I had to work late.

Her parents glance at one another.

STANLEY
The coffee shop closes at nine.

Beat.

CASSANDRA
We had to do inventory.

SUSAN comes to sit down. There's a pause as they all eat.

SUSAN

You have to do a lot of inventory
at that place. You should speak to
the manager.

CASSANDRA

I will.

8

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

8

CASSANDRA sits behind the cashier's desk of a hipster coffee shop. She stares at the wall. Her boss, GAIL, 40s, is cleaning the coffee machine.

GAIL

You look tired, Cassie.

CASSANDRA

Aw. Thank you, Gail.

GAIL

Want a coffee? Head office sent
over this new blend from Zanzibar
to try.

CASSANDRA shrugs.

GAIL (CONT'D)

You know, I was actually talking to
Graham earlier. He says there's a
position opening up over there.

CASSANDRA

Yeah?

GAIL

And- don't freak out- I want you to
know I recommended you for it.

A pretty, HIPSTER GIRL comes into the shop. She waits
patiently at the till, CASSANDRA makes no attempt to serve
her.

CASSANDRA

(to GAIL)

Why did you do that?

GAIL

Because I thought you'd be perfect
for it. Honey, you've worked here
for seven years. This is a summer
job it's not a career move.

CASSANDRA
I like it here.

GAIL
No you don't.

CASSANDRA
Well, no, I don't. But I like you.
And I like...

She gestures to the HIPSTER GIRL.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Working in a customer-facing role.

HIPSTER GIRL
Great, could I have a-

CASSANDRA
No.

The HIPSTER GIRL storms out.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
See?

GAIL
Cassie.

CASSANDRA
Don't 'Cassie' me. I come here to
get away from that.
(beat)
I'm fine, Gail. Really. I know
everyone finds this impossible to
believe but...I like working here.

GAIL
Yeah well, I think you only like it
because I turn a blind eye every
time you come in late.

CASSANDRA
I have trouble sleeping. Probably
something to do with drinking
thirty cups of coffee a day.

GAIL
Johnny said he saw you at Liquid a
few nights ago. Said you were
completely hammered. He was
worried. Look, it's none of my
business but-

CASSANDRA

He must have seen someone else.
I've never been there.

GAIL doesn't buy this for a second. But she lets it go.

9

INT. GENERAL STORE - LATER

9

CASSANDRA is in line to buy some groceries behind a couple of OLDER GUYS. A young TEENAGE GIRL, maybe 13 or 14, walks in and starts perusing the aisle. The OLDER GUYS immediately notice, start looking over at her- she's wearing super-short jean shorts.

The TEENAGED GIRL notices the GUYS looking at her, you can feel her immediately shift from confidence to self-consciousness. She walks around the store, the GUYS surreptitiously watching her. She tries to ignore them.

She needs something from one of the lower aisles, near to the GUYS, but it will mean bending down- she glances up at them: they are now staring openly at her. Waiting. We can see the struggle- maybe she'll just leave it. Get it at another store.

CASSANDRA goes over to her.

CASSANDRA

What do you need?

TEENAGE GIRL

Um. The rice. The white one, yeah.
That one.

CASSANDRA leans down and gets it for her.

TEENAGE GIRL (CONT'D)

Thanks.

CASSANDRA

(low)

Do you want me to freak those
fuckers out?

The TEENAGE GIRL glances over at them.

TEENAGE GIRL

(low)

No, no! Please don't! Please don't
say anything. Please.

She is bright red with embarrassment. Almost in tears.

CASSANDRA

It's alright. Don't worry. Don't worry about those creeps. Come stand in line with me.

TEENAGE GIRL

(small)

Thanks.

They step back in line. CASSANDRA stares the guys down. They turn away, and resume their conversation. Not remotely fazed. The TEENAGE GIRL is shaken.

10 INT. THE CHOP HOUSE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT 10

A different, but just as depressing, nightclub. Everyone is hammered. CASSANDRA is in the thick of the dance floor, dancing, her hair wet with sweat, her make up running.

A red-haired, OLDER NICE GUY watches her from the bar. She notices him watching her, and dances even harder.

11 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 11

Later that night. We are under Cassandra's bed. The door opens, and she creeps in, we see just her bare feet and bruised legs. She throws her shoes on the floor. She kneels down, reaches under her bed and takes out a little book, with a pen tucked into it. She opens it at the back.

She has been counting something. There are rows and rows of little tally marks. The odd line in a different colored ink: whatever this is has been going on for a while.

She adds another line.

12 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY 12

CASSANDRA is looking after the coffee shop, reading an old copy of 'Deep Water' by Patricia Highsmith. She yawns. The bell jingles a customer comes in- she ignores it.

MAN (O.S.)

Can I get a cappuccino please?

CASSANDRA

Mmm hmm.

She looks up at her customer. He's her age, kind, nice-looking. This is CHRIS. She starts making his drink.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
You want chocolate?

CHRIS is staring at her.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
What?

CHRIS
Cassandra?

CASSANDRA stops what she's doing.

CASSANDRA
(warily)
Yes?

CHRIS
It's Chris Cooper. We were in the
same class together at Franklin!
Doctor Hadid's class.

Beat.

CASSANDRA
Oh. Yeah. Chris. Hi.

CHRIS
(surprised)
God. What are you doing working
here?

CASSANDRA raises her eyebrows.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Wait. No. I'm so sorry. That was so
rude. I didn't mean-

CASSANDRA
You didn't mean what's a promising
young woman like me doing working
at a shitty coffee shop?

CHRIS
No, I didn't mean...I just
thought...Oh man. There's no way
out of this, is there?

CASSANDRA
Nu-uh.

CHRIS
Can I go out and come back in
again? I can do better next time.

CASSANDRA
Did you want chocolate?

CHRIS
What?

CASSANDRA
On your cappuccino?

CHRIS
No. But you can spit in it if you
want to. I'd completely understand.

CASSANDRA looks him dead in the eyes and spits in it. She
hands it over. CHRIS doesn't know what to say except-

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Do you want to go out sometime?

BEAT.

CASSANDRA
What?

CHRIS
On a date?

CASSANDRA
Seriously? I just spat in your
coffee.

CHRIS looks her right back, and drinks it.

13 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

13

CASSANDRA is putting on make-up in the mirror. She's wearing
a sparkly, body-con mini-dress. Her laptop is open, and she
is following a Kardashian-style make-up tutorial on youtube.

MAKE UP VLOGGER
OK so you just line you lips like
so. You always want your liner to
be darker than your gloss.

CASSANDRA lines her lips in porno pink.

MAKE UP VLOGGER (CONT'D)
Wonderful. Now add the gloss. I
like to use the cheaper glosses and
save the money for my highlighter
and base...

CASSANDRA puts on a pastel gloss.

MAKE UP VLOGGER (CONT'D)

And voila! The perfect Blow Job
Lips!

CASSANDRA looks at her reflection. She looks hot in a highlighted, feather-eyed, instagram way.

She takes her thumb to her lips and smudges the meticulously-applied lipstick all round her mouth.

14 INT. THE CHOP HOUSE NIGHTCLUB - LATER

14

CASSANDRA is against the bar. Head lolling, her lipstick still blurred around her mouth. A guy, NEIL- 30s, plaid shirt, nerdy, slightly pretentious- walks up to her.

NEIL

You doing ok?

CASSANDRA looks blearily back at him.

15 INT. NEIL'S APARTMENT - LATER

15

A small apartment. Something unforgivable is playing on LP (a Bowie cover in Spanish?). Neil's decorating style is Lit-Student-chic: a poster of a french movie, paperbacks stacked everywhere, a glass table on which he lines up some coke. CASSANDRA watches him.

NEIL

Seriously, you need to read it.
'Consider The Lobster' is one of
the fucking greats, man. Cracked my
head open...like...like a lobster
claw.

He is momentarily awed by his own perceptiveness.

He takes a snort of coke.

NEIL (CONT'D)

You know I'm writing a novel. Well,
uh, kinda. I'm a perfectionist, you
know, it's just taking forever. I
keep going over and over and over
it. Picking at it like a scab. It's
about, I guess, what it is to be a
guy right now? Like, how to be a
guy in this world? Kinda a fucked-
up, dirty, low-life, love story.

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

It's all set in New York over the course of one night and it's all, like, interwoven first person strands which...

CASSANDRA stares at him, glassy eyed.

NEIL (CONT'D)

You know what. I shouldn't talk about it. Don't want to jinx it!

(beat)

You do coke, right?

CASSANDRA

Not really...

NEIL

Oh come on!

CASSANDRA

I got work in the morning...

NEIL

Eh. So do I.

He scrapes the coke onto a record and brings it over to her, handing her the rolled up note. She looks at him, unsure. Then after a moment, snorts a line messily.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Hey! You missed most of it!

He licks his finger, getting the bits she missed and rubs it in her gums. CASSANDRA stares at him as he does this. We have the feeling she might bite his finger off. NEIL doesn't notice.

NEIL (CONT'D)

There you go.

He moves her hair from her face and looks at her.

NEIL (CONT'D)

You're so, so pretty. Why are you wearing all that make up? Do you mind me asking?

(not waiting for a response)

I never understood why girls wear so much make up. You all look way more beautiful without it, you know. I just feel like women feel so much pressure to look a certain way now.

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

All the extensions and fake
eyelashes and porno nails. It's
like, guys don't even like it, you
know? It's just a soul-sucking
system designed to oppress women.

(another line of coke)

I wanna see you, you know. The real
you. All your freckles and
imperfections.

He kisses her nose. She doesn't respond.

CASSANDRA

I don't feel well. Could you get me
a glass of water?

He looks at her for a sec.

NEIL

(frustrated)

Sure.

16 INT. NEIL'S APARTMENT - LATER

16

A few minutes later and NEIL is bringing back a glass of
water. CASSANDRA is passed out face down on the couch.

He looks at her, sleeping. He's kind of annoyed. Then-

He nudges her.

NEIL

(gentle)

Hey.

She stirs.

NEIL (CONT'D)

(louder)

Hey!

She wakes.

NEIL (CONT'D)

(sappy)

There you are! Hi. You fell asleep.

He gives her the water, she drinks it.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Good girl.

He takes the glass from her hand. Strokes her back.

NEIL (CONT'D)
Feel better?

CASSANDRA
Not really.

NEIL
You know, I nearly didn't come out
tonight. I'm so glad I did. I feel
such a connection to you.

CASSANDRA
I should get a cab.

NEIL
Don't go...come on...we're having
fun, aren't we?

He kisses her gently.

CASSANDRA
I...should go...

NEIL
We can play hooky tomorrow, stay in
bed all day. I'll make you
breakfast...eggs benedict. I make
my own
(french pronunciation)
hollandaise...

He kisses her neck. She is rigid. He ignores it.

NEIL (CONT'D)
You are so amazing.

He starts pushing up her skirt.

CASSANDRA
I need to go...

NEIL
(kissing)
You don't wanna go home. C'mon.

He pushes her panties to one side.

She drops the act.

CASSANDRA
Hey. Neil.

He ignores her. She grabs his face and stares into his eyes.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I said: I need to go home.

NEIL stares at her for a second and then jumps away from her.

NEIL

Holy shit!

He's practically on the other side of the room.

CASSANDRA

What?

NEIL

Woah. What...what is this? Are you some kind of psycho or something?

CASSANDRA

Why d'you say that?

NEIL

I thought you were...

CASSANDRA

Drunk?

NEIL

Yeah!

CASSANDRA

Really drunk?

NEIL

I guess...yeah.

CASSANDRA

Well, I'm not. But that's good, isn't it?

NEIL is starting to panic.

NEIL

You should leave.

CASSANDRA

Oh now you want me to leave?

NEIL

No I...Look I'm really high. I don't know what I'm doing. You should go.

She walks towards him. He backs away from her.

CASSANDRA
I mean, a second ago you were
determined for me to stay. Pretty
insistant actually.

NEIL
(begging)
I'm a nice guy-

CASSANDRA
Are you?

BEAT.

NEIL
I thought we had a connection, I
guess.

CASSANDRA
A connection? OK. What do I do for
a living?

No response.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Sorry. Maybe that one's too hard.
How old am I? How long have I lived
in the city? What are my hobbies?
(beat)
What's my name?

NEIL cannot answer.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
You're right! This connection is
electric!
(beat)
Of course, I know all about you.
Your mom, your sister, your job at
a digital marketing agency which it
sounds like you completely suck at,
by the way, and, oh yeah...
(she stifles a smile)
Your novel. Good luck with it,
sounds like a winner. About a guy.
And set in New York! Woah.

NEIL
ALRIGHT. Alright. Fuck. I take your
point. What do you want from me? To
say I'm an asshole? Fine, I'm an
asshole.

CASSANDRA

Why are you so freaked out, Neil?
Wow. You really need to calm down.

She keeps coming closer. He's scared.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

At least you didn't try to have sex
with me while I was passed out. You
do get points for that. I want you
to be proud of yourself. A few
guys...eh they don't mind so much.
But you, you woke me up before
putting your fingers inside me.
That was sweet.

NEIL

What are you saying, that I'm some
kind of...predator?

CASSANDRA

I don't know. Are you?

BEAT.

NEIL

(small)

I'm a nice guy.

CASSANDRA

(kind)

You keep saying that. And there are
plenty of nice guys just like you.
You're not as rare as you'd think.
You know how I know?

NEIL

No.

CASSANDRA

Because every week I go to a club.
And every week I act like I'm too
drunk to stand. And Every. Fucking.
Week. A nice guy just like you
comes over to see if I'm ok.

NEIL is silent.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You can still fuck me if you want
to.

NEIL
(lip wobbling)
No thank you.

CASSANDRA
Huh. No one ever does.

She opens his front door. Then-

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
This music is terrible. Only a
drunk person would have sex to this
music.

She leaves. NEIL leans against the wall, shaking. His Spanish
Bowie LP playing softly in the background.

17 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

17

CASSANDRA arrives at breakfast. STANLEY is reading the paper
silently, SUSAN is making tea. As CASSANDRA sits, she notices
a large, neatly wrapped present by her place. She looks at
her father: nothing.

CASSANDRA
What's this?

Silence.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Mom, what's this?

SUSAN
What do you mean?

CASSANDRA
This gift!

SUSAN and STANLEY exchange a glance.

SUSAN
It's your birthday, Cassie.

CASSANDRA had completely forgotten.

CASSANDRA
Oh... yeah.

There is a tense silence. SUSAN is suddenly on the verge of
tears.

SUSAN

What kind of person forgets their
30th birthday?

STANLEY

Sweetheart-

SUSAN

Don't, Stanley.

CASSANDRA

It was a mistake, Mom. You know I'm
terrible with dates. It's not a big
deal.

SUSAN

Not a big deal? Not a big deal. You
just forgot your birthday! Not a
big deal. Ok! You don't want to
have a party? Don't want to see
your friends?

CASSANDRA

(dry)

You know I don't have any friends,
Mom.

SUSAN

Don't joke about it! You know how
strange that is? You still living
at home, working in that stupid
coffee shop? Out all hours of the
night doing god only knows what. No
boyfriend. No friends.

CASSANDRA

Mom! You should have saved all this
for my card!

STANLEY

Let the kid celebrate how she wants
to-

SUSAN

Celebrate! Is this a celebration?

(beat)

My friends all ask about you and I
don't know what to tell them. All
their children are getting married,
having children. I don't know what
happened...

A tense silence. They all know what happened.

STANLEY

Why don't you open your gift,
honey?

CASSANDRA calmly opens her present. It is a large, beautiful
suitcase.

18

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

18

CASSANDRA and GAIL are unpacking boxes.

GAIL

Woah.

CASSANDRA

Yeah.

GAIL

That's direct.

CASSANDRA

A reeeal kick in the cunt.

GAIL

Is it a nice suitcase, at least?

CASSANDRA

Oh yeah it's definitely the
fanciest "get the fuck out of our
house" metaphor I've received so
far.

Beat.

GAIL

Then why don't you?

CASSANDRA

What?

GAIL

Get out of their house?

CASSANDRA

I can't afford it, Gail. Not on
what you pay me.

GAIL

So take this other job then. Take
any job.

CASSANDRA

Are you firing me?

GAIL
Maybe I should.

Beat.

CASSANDRA
Look. You're making the assumption that I want any of it. If I wanted a boyfriend and a pilates class and a house and kids and a job my mom could brag about I'd have done it. You don't think I could walk into any bar in this town wearing a slightly-too-short floral dress and get all that for myself? It would take me ten minutes. I don't want it.

GAIL
But you must want something?

Beat.

Suddenly, the door opens. CHRIS walks into the coffee shop.

CASSANDRA
Oh. You. Hi.

CHRIS
Hey. Cappuccino please. Hold the spit.

GAIL watches, intrigued.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
So I just wanted to come in because I *think* you gave me a fake number the other day.

CASSANDRA
That doesn't sound like me.

CHRIS
Which meant that I spent hours composing a witty, romantic text and sent it to a oil rig worker called Red.

CASSANDRA
Was he into it?

CHRIS

Surprisingly into it. But we couldn't make it work because of, y'know, the oil rig so...I thought I'd try you again.

GAIL

Oh! Did I just hear the phone ring in the back?

CASSANDRA

No.

GAIL

Yup. I'm sure I did.

GAIL goes out back.

CASSANDRA

She has to take a few imaginary calls a day.

CHRIS

Look, I don't want to bother you so if you're not into this then I totally get it. Just tell me.

CASSANDRA

I'm not really looking to date anyone at the moment.

CHRIS

Ok. Then can I tempt you into a friendship with a man who is secretly pining after you?

CASSANDRA laughs.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Hey. Dating is horrible. Everyone is horrible. I went on a date with a woman last month who wanted to euthanize the homeless.

CASSANDRA

You went on a date with my mom?

CHRIS

It's bleak, ok? Dating now is post-apocalyptic. It's 'The Road', just, with cocktails.

CASSANDRA

You're really selling it.

CHRIS

But I like you. I can't stop thinking about you spitting in my coffee. Go out with me. Please. If you hate it we can have a safe word and you can leave, no questions asked.

CASSANDRA considers it.

19

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

19

CASSANDRA is wearing a pretty, slightly-too-short floral dress. She says goodbye to her parents.

SUSAN

You're going out early.

CASSANDRA

It's 7.30.

SUSAN

Early for you.

CASSANDRA

I'm going out for dinner.

Her parents look at her, surprised.

SUSAN

With who?

CASSANDRA

A friend.

She leaves. Her parents look at one another. They can barely dare to hope.

20

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

20

CASSANDRA and CHRIS are mid-date and it's going well.

CASSANDRA

How did she get a mannequin hand up there?

CHRIS

She stole it from the teaching model in the staff room. And here's the worst part, she looked at me right in the eyes, took it out ...and waved it at me.

CASSANDRA

And I am done with my mushroom
chicken surprise!

She pushes it away.

CHRIS

And I am wondering why I started
telling that story...

CASSANDRA

Hey, there is nothing more romantic
than a disturbed woman pulling a
mannequin's hand out of her vagina.

CHRIS

Right!

CASSANDRA

People never pull anything out of
anywhere where I work.

CHRIS

So, yeah, you didn't want to...

CASSANDRA

What?

CHRIS

Carry on with med school?

CASSANDRA goes back to her chicken.

CASSANDRA

Nah.

CHRIS

Why not?

CASSANDRA

I wanted to do something else.

CHRIS

Really? What?

CASSANDRA

I don't know.

CHRIS

You were so good though. You knew
everything.

CASSANDRA

I didn't know everything.

CHRIS

You did! You were brilliant! I didn't know anything. I was terrible. Remember when I accidentally removed the wrong kidney from my cadaver?

CASSANDRA

(proud)

And look at you now. Operating on children.

CHRIS laughs.

CHRIS

Yeah. I got better, thank god. But you, you were always way ahead of everybody. You'd have been fantastic.

CASSANDRA

Just. Didn't want it anymore, I guess.

CASSANDRA shrugs. CHRIS senses he's crossed a line.

CHRIS

Hey, you want desert? I can tell you about the guy who got his dick trapped in a tambourine.

21

EXT. STREET - LATER

21

CHRIS and CASSANDRA are walking down the street. There's a somewhat awkward, expectant silence.

CHRIS

Oh. This is a weird coincidence.

CASSANDRA

What?

CHRIS

I think this is...yep! Huh. This is my apartment.

CASSANDRA immediately cools. The wall goes right up.

CASSANDRA

That *is* weird. What a weird, weird coincidence.

CHRIS

I mean...since we're already here.
You wanna come up for a drink?

CASSANDRA

(coldly)

Sure. Why not.

CHRIS

Oh. It's too soon, I'm sorry. I
shouldn't have-

CASSANDRA

Nope. Let's go upstairs.

CHRIS

I don't want you to come up unless
you want to. I'm not... look, I
misread what was happening, I'm
sorry. Let me walk you home.

They start walking in silence, CASSANDRA is kicking herself.
She stops.

CASSANDRA

You know what. You're at your
place. I can get home by myself.

CHRIS

Are you sure? But-

CASSANDRA

I'm sure.

CHRIS

I feel like I fucked this up. I'm
sorry. What can I-

CASSANDRA

You didn't. It's not you.

CASSANDRA walks off. Chris watches, confused. He let's
himself in.

Further down the street, CASSANDRA is almost in tears of
frustration, she kicks over a garbage can, tipping its
contents over the street.

Breakfast. Everyone in their spot. CASSANDRA looks hollowed
out.

SUSAN

So you and your friend had a nice time?

CASSANDRA

Mom-

SUSAN

You were pretty late!

CASSANDRA

Yep.

SUSAN

You two go out after?

BEAT.

CASSANDRA

Yep.

SUSAN and STANLEY exchange excited glances. CASSANDRA pulls her sweater sleeve over a nightclub stamp on her hand, and above it, a significant bruise and scratches.

23

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

23

CASSANDRA is reading. A couple sit in the corner. They are laughing hysterically.

GAIL

Look at them. Take your happiness elsewhere please.

CASSANDRA looks over at them.

CASSANDRA

You and Richard must have been like that at some point.

GAIL thinks.

GAIL

He did make me laugh. Lucky for him I find farting hilarious otherwise we'd have been over after the first date.

CASSANDRA

He farted on the first date?

GAIL

I made him laugh so hard he farted.

CASSANDRA

Fuck.

(beat)

That is so romantic.

24 EXT. HOSPITAL - EVENING

24

CASSANDRA is waiting nervously outside the hospital when CHRIS comes out.

CASSANDRA

Hi.

CHRIS

Cassie! What are you doing here?

CASSANDRA

I just came to pick up my herpes medication.

CHRIS

You have herpes too. That saves us an awkward conversation later.

CASSANDRA

So. I came here to see you. Obviously.

(deep breath)

I'm not good at this stuff. I'm trying.

CHRIS

If you're not interested-

CASSANDRA

No it's not that.

CHRIS

You sure?

She nods.

CASSANDRA

(huge effort)

So, I'd like to see you again...if that's cool. But we'll need to take it slow. I understand if-

CHRIS

Of course that's cool.

CASSANDRA

Thank you.

CHRIS

What are you doing now? You wanna go somewhere? Get something to eat?

CASSANDRA

Aren't you working?

CHRIS

Eh, it's only a kid with leukemia. She can wait.

(beat)

I'm kidding. My shift has finished. Let me just get my stuff.

CASSANDRA is watching him, she can barely stop smiling.

25

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

25

GAIL and CASSANDRA are cleaning the shop listening to the radio. CASSANDRA starts singing along. GAIL stares at her.

GAIL

Oh my god.

CASSANDRA

What?

GAIL

Are you seeing that guy?

CASSANDRA

No!

Beat.

GAIL

Good for you.

CASSANDRA feigns outrage, but is delighted.

26

INT. CAFE - EVENING

26

CASSANDRA and CHRIS are drinking coffee talking.

CHRIS

If I was still living at home I'd throw myself out the window.

CASSANDRA

I've thought about it. Not high enough.

(MORE)

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
I'd just end up breaking my legs
and my mother could finally go the
full 'Misery'.

CHRIS
You know that guy from our class,
Eddie? He committed suicide. Shot
himself on his birthday.

CASSANDRA
God. Eddie who?

CHRIS
The one with the unibrow? I can't
remember.

CASSANDRA
You kill yourself and people still
don't remember your name.

CHRIS
Eddie, we hardly knew ye.

CASSANDRA
To Eddie Whassisname. Rest in
peace.

They clink coffee cups. CHRIS remembers something.

CHRIS
And wasn't there a girl too. God,
our year did not have a good
record.

CASSANDRA changes the subject.

CASSANDRA
I might order a drink.

CHRIS
Do you still see anyone from back
then?

CASSANDRA doesn't really want to get into this.

CASSANDRA
No.

CHRIS
Really? No one?

CASSANDRA
Really. No one.

CHRIS

Man, that is some expert friend culling. I can't seem to shake them off.

CASSANDRA

You're all still friends?

CHRIS

Pretty much. You know Alison McPhee just had twins?

CASSANDRA

I don't remember Alison.

CHRIS

I thought you guys were close?

CASSANDRA

Nope.

CHRIS

Huh. Oh yeah, oh my god, Al Monroe is marrying some kind of model. She was in a show on the E! Channel. Small part- but still! Classic Al. Landing on his feet.

CASSANDRA tries to keep calm.

CASSANDRA

Al Monroe?

CHRIS

You must remember him-

CASSANDRA

Do you see him a lot?

CHRIS

He's in the group, I guess. And we cross paths occasionally because of work.

CASSANDRA

He's getting married?

CHRIS

I know. God help her!

CHRIS laughs.

27

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

27

CASSANDRA is in her bedroom trying to avoid looking at the laptop on her desk. She's trying to stay calm, but we can feel the tension building in her. A self-harmer on the brink of cutting herself emotionally.

To stop herself, she reaches for the book under the bed, and looks at the tally marks. She counts them like a mantra under her breath.

CASSANDRA

One two three four five six seven
eight nine...

It's not working. She finally goes to the computer and opens it. Dreading what she'll see.

Shaking, she types in Al Monroe's name into the search bar. A few options come up, she scrolls through them until- there he is.

She clicks.

Beautiful home, beautiful fiancée, beautiful car, beautiful holidays: a beautiful life.

She scrolls through his photos compulsively, and finds one of him and his gorgeous fiancée, her showing off her engagement ring. CASSANDRA reads the blurb Al has written underneath it:

"SO HUMBLLED TO BE MARRYING MY BEST FRIEND, AND THE LOVE OF MY LIFE. DOESN'T HURT THAT SHE'S A BIKINI MODEL EITHER
LOLOLOL!!!!"

She scrolls down to the comments beneath the photo. "WAY TO GO BRO!!!", "OMG YOU GUYS!!".

She stops at one comment:

"I cannot believe my two favorite people in the worrrrrld are getting hitched!!!"

CASSANDRA clicks on the girl who wrote it, ALISON MCPHEE. She's CASSANDRA'S age. Very pretty, married with two adorable twins. Like Al, she is living a middle class dream life.

She shouldn't have looked.

28 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 28

Later CASSANDRA lies in bed, wide awake. She sits up. Gets her notebook out. Looks at her tallys. It's not soothing. It's not enough anymore.

So CASSANDRA turns to a fresh page in her book, and starts to write. An idea is forming.

She combs facebook, looking at photos, writing things down, taking notes. And then she clicks on an event-

"AL MONROE'S LAST WEEKEND AS A FREE MAN"

It's AL's bachelor party.

"LOCATION TBC BITCHEEEEEES"

She stares at it. A picture of AL being covered in champagne.

Thinking. She writes something down.

Then she goes back to ALISON MCPHEE's page.

And clicks the "Send Private Message" button.

29 INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY 29

CASSANDRA looks nervously at her phone. She is dressed for success, her hair has been blown out, and she looks completely at home in the luxurious surroundings.

WAITER

Can I get you anything?

CASSANDRA

Could I get a bottle of champagne?

WAITER

Of course.

CASSANDRA checks her at her reflection in a mirror nearby: she looks good. The WAITER shows her the champagne bottle. He begins to pour it.

CASSANDRA

Don't worry. I can do that.

WAITER

But-

CASSANDRA

Thank you.

The WAITER leaves. CASSANDRA pours two drinks. She drinks hers down fast, and then refills her glass.

ALISON (O.S.)

Cassie?

CASSANDRA looks up. There is ALISON! She's gorgeous- wearing tasteful but obviously very expensive clothes. On the surface ALISON is all warmth and sunshine, but is one of those people who has a way of making every compliment sound like a burn.

CASSANDRA

Alison. Hi.

ALISON

Oh my gooooooooood! You look amazing!

They hug, and sit back down.

CASSANDRA

So do you.

ALISON

You're sweet! But I look so OLD!
That's what having twins will do to you. You look exactly the same!
After ten years!

CASSANDRA

You too, honestly.

ALISON

Do you have kids?

CASSANDRA

No.

ALISON

Oh. Well that explains it.
(beat)
Lucky you!

She sees the champagne.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Oh wow. What are we drinking to?

CASSANDRA

To old friends.

They clink.

30

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - LATER

30

CASSANDRA and ALISON are just finishing their lunch. They have clearly been having a nice time. ALISON is drunk, CASSANDRA holds up an empty bottle of red wine to the waiter—another please.

ALISON

I thought I'd be literally bored out of my mind. But it's great actually. And TBH, I know guys always say they want their wives to work, but it's not true.

CASSANDRA

Come on...

The WAITER brings another bottle of wine. CASSANDRA fills ALISON'S drink to the brim, puts a tiny splash into hers—she's hardly drunk a drop.

ALISON

I'm sorry! They all want a feminist in college, maybe in their early twenties, because it's cool to have a girlfriend who cares about something. And feminists are more likely to have pierced nipples and do anal. That's a literal fact by the way. But when it comes down to it, all guys want the same thing.

CASSANDRA

And what's that?

ALISON

A good girl.

CASSANDRA

I don't seem to remember you were that much of a good girl at college!

ALISON

Cassie! Shut up! Fred didn't know me at college. He met me when I was working at L'oreal.

CASSANDRA

Poor Fred!

ALISON

But d'you know the really strange part?

She leans in.

ALISON (CONT'D)
I love it. I thought I'd miss my
job but...I really don't. I love
being a housewife. It's a turn-on
actually.

ALISON looks at her glass. She is getting super drunk.

ALISON (CONT'D)
Jeez. How much have I had of this?
Such a lightweight.

CASSANDRA
I'm glad everything's worked out so
well for you, Alison.

ALISON
Thanks.

CASSANDRA
Really. It's wonderful.

BEAT.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
You know. I actually wanted to meet
today, to talk about something in
particular.

ALISON
I did wonder. No one has heard from
you in, like, forever.

CASSANDRA
I wanted to talk to you about why I
dropped out.

ALISON takes nervous a swallow of her drink.

ALISON
Ok. Sure.

CASSANDRA
You remember what happened, right?

ALISON
It was such a long time ago now...

CASSANDRA
I know. But you remember?

ALISON is uncomfortable.

ALISON
I mean...vaguely.

CASSANDRA
Do you ever think about it?

ALISON
Why would I?

CASSANDRA
Right. Why would you. Then do you
mind if I ask something else?

ALISON
Um...

CASSANDRA
If a friend came to you now,
tomorrow, let's say, if they turned
up at your house tomorrow morning,
and told you that they thought
something had happened to them the
night before, something bad-

ALISON
Cassie-

CASSANDRA
-something bad. What would you say?

ALISON
We were kids...

CASSANDRA
What would you say?

ALISON
I guess, I guess I'd ask them if
they were sure.

CASSANDRA
What if it was your best friend.
Someone who you trusted. But the
person who hurt them was also your
friend.

CASSANDRA fills ALISON's drink. ALISON drinks nervously.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Would you tell her to go to the
police?

ALISON

It's complicated...Ugh. I feel a little...weird. I'm sorry.

ALISON is getting drunker and drunker by the minute.

CASSANDRA

Would you believe her? Or, or, would you roll your eyes behind her back and dismiss the whole thing as drama. And tell her to shut up and forget about it.

ALISON

It wasn't just me...

CASSANDRA

I know.

ALISON

I don't know why you're mad at me! It wasn't just me who didn't believe it, you know! When you have a reputation for sleeping around then maybe people won't believe you when you say something's happened! I mean...it's crying wolf.

CASSANDRA

You thought it was crying wolf?

ALISON

I don't make the rules, ok? Don't get blackout drunk every night and then expect people to be on your side when you have sex with someone you didn't want to!

She shouts this a little louder than she meant to. She's sloppy drunk.

CASSANDRA

So...you wouldn't behave differently...if it happened again now?

ALISON

No...I mean... I'm sorry about what happened but...y'know, if you get that drunk then...shit happens. Everyone knows that.

CASSANDRA
Right. I was hoping you'd feel differently.

ALISON
He's a good guy, y'know. He's really sweet.

CASSANDRA
For your sake. I really was hoping you'd feel different by now.

CASSANDRA blinks. She is hammered.

ALISON
You're mad. I'm sorry. Why don't I get the cheque? My treat.

ALISON tries to get her purse, she's so drunk, she's having trouble.

CASSANDRA
You ok, Alison?

ALISON
Yeah...no. I've drunk too much. How did I...my head is spinning.

ALISON knocks over her glass.

ALISON (CONT'D)
Oh my god. Shit.

CASSANDRA gets up, throws some cash down on the table.

CASSANDRA
Nice seeing you again.

She looks down at CASSIE, who is struggling to see straight.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
You really haven't changed at all.

She leaves.

31 INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT- LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

31

CASSANDRA walks up to a HANDSOME YOUNG MAN. She gets an envelope out of her purse.

HANDSOME YOUNG MAN
So...?

CASSANDRA
She's in there. Blue sweater.

She hands him the envelope.

HANDSOME YOUNG MAN
You sure about this?

CASSANDRA
(ice cold)
I'm sure.

She leaves the hotel. The HANDSOME YOUNG MAN, disturbed,
watches her go.

32 INT. CAR - LATER 32

CASSANDRA waits in traffic. Thinking. There's no going back
from this now.

33 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER 33

CASSANDRA is writing in her book again. Thinking. Her phone
goes: CHRIS. She looks at it, considers. Then ignores it.

34 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY 34

CASSANDRA is staring into space. GAIL is saying something,
but CASSANDRA doesn't hear it.

GAIL
Cassie!

CASSANDRA
What?

GAIL
I said Chris seems nice.

CASSANDRA
Oh yeah. Yeah he's nice.
(beat)
Gail, would you mind if I took a
couple of days off? I need to do
some stuff.

GAIL
Sure. You feeling ok?

CASSANDRA

Yeah. It's just. Some old shit I need to take care of. Spring cleaning, y'know.

GAIL

Oh man, I don't envy you. Of course. Take whatever time you need.

CASSANDRA

Thanks.

CASSANDRA's phone rings. She looks. ALISON: 13 MISSED CALLS.

35

INT. COFFEE SHOP - STORE ROOM - LATER

35

CASSANDRA slips into the dark of the store room and listens to her voicemail.

ALISON (O.S.)

(voicemail)

Cassie...hi...wonderful to see you for lunch yesterday...uh...hey I was pretty drunk, I can't...reallylook have you heard from that guy friend of yours? He said he was your friend. Just trying to piece some things together...

CASSANDRA skips to the next message.

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

Cassie please call me back...I freaking out a little...just...will you call me...I was in a hotel room...I think something might have happened...

CASSANDRA hangs up, emotionless.

36

INT. CAR - DAY

36

CASSIE sits inside her car. It's a mess- full of papers and a huge, professional-looking make-up bag. Her book is there too, among the debris. She looks different, hair in a pony tail, pink sweater: pretty, young and unthreatening.

She's parked outside a high school, watching teenaged girls as they walk out at the end of the day, giggling and talking.

A girl walks out, alone, texting on her phone. She's super-beautiful, honey-blond hair, she looks way older than her fourteen years. This is AMBER.

CASSANDRA leans over and gets her attention.

CASSANDRA

Excuse me? Hi! Sorry! Excuse me!

AMBER looks over.

AMBER

Me?

CASSANDRA

Yeah!

AMBER

What's up?

CASSANDRA

I'm so sorry to bother you- my phone has died and I'm really late for work. Do you live round here? You know the area?

AMBER

(impatient)

I guess.

CASSANDRA

Can you tell me how to get to the Castle Diner?

AMBER

Sorry. I'm late, so...

AMBER begins to walk off.

CASSANDRA

Wait! Please, I'm supposed to be shooting this music video and I've got to get-

AMBER

Music video?

CASSANDRA

Yeah. I'm a make-up artist and it's my first time working with these guys and if I'm late I may as well-

AMBER looks into the car. She sees CASSANDRA'S papers, they are covered in a One Direction-style boyband's headshots and info.

AMBER

Oh my god.

CASSANDRA hastily covers the papers.

AMBER (CONT'D)

OH MY GOD.

CASSANDRA

Oh shit. You didn't see that.

AMBER

I know where the Castle Diner is!

CASSANDRA

Don't worry about it! I can find it myself.

AMBER

No way! NO WAY! Are they there? Oh my god.

CASSANDRA

Look, keep your voice down, please.

AMBER

I can direct you!

CASSANDRA

No way.

AMBER

Please, please, please!

CASSANDRA

If you could just tell me which way-

AMBER

If I don't come and direct how will you find it?

CASSANDRA thinks, she's desperate.

CASSANDRA

I can't risk it, I'm sorry. If you tell anyone or post this online I'll never work again.

AMBER

I swear I won't. I swear. Here!
Take my phone!! Seriously.

She takes out her phone. CASSANDRA relents.

CASSANDRA

Oh god. OK get in. But you have to
be cool about this.

AMBER

OF COURSE I WILL!!!

AMBER gets in. She hands over her phone to CASSIE- it's got
the sparkly boyband phone case.

CASSANDRA

Woah. You really are a fan.

AMBER

I'm ob-sessed. I have a whole insta
dedicated to George's dog.

CASSANDRA

What a weird coincidence.

AMBER

You know what. This is fate.

CASSANDRA

Sure seems like it.

CASSANDRA pockets AMBER'S phone. And locks the doors.

37

INT. CAR- LATER

37

CASSANDRA is driving, AMBER is checking her face in the
mirror.

AMBER

Jessica M. is going to shit her
fucking panties. Her dad got her
VIP tickets to see them in Vegas
and she did not stop bragging on
and on about it. This is going to
be so much better. I cannot wait to
see her face. Do you think George
will fall in love with me? I just
know we'll have a connection.

CASSANDRA drives straight past the diner.

AMBER (CONT'D)

Hey! Wait. We just passed it!

CASSANDRA ignores her and keeps driving.

AMBER (CONT'D)

Excuse me! Hey! We just passed the diner.

CASSANDRA keeps driving. And AMBER realizes she's locked in a stranger's car with no phone.

38 INT. FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY WAITING ROOM- EVENING

38

CASSANDRA disdainfully reads the university's prospectus. Slogan: "Franklin College: Let Us Dream With You".

SECRETARY

The Dean is ready if you'd like to go on through.

CASSANDRA gets up.

39 INT. FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY- DEAN'S OFFICE- MOMENTS LATER

39

A gorgeous, wood-paneled office. Behind the desk is DEAN WALKER, a well-dressed and polished woman in her late-fifties. She has the patient warmth of a psychiatrist: a woman used to smoothing over her students problems. A kind, clever and reasonable person.

DEAN WALKER

Daisy?

CASSANDRA

That's me.

DEAN WALKER

Come in.

CASSANDRA sits down.

DEAN WALKER (CONT'D)

My assistant tells me you're thinking of resuming your studies in-

She consults her notepad.

DEAN WALKER (CONT'D)

Medicine. You say you left the course ten years ago?

CASSANDRA
That's correct.

DEAN WALKER
Ok. So what prompted this desire to finish your studies now?

CASSANDRA
I guess I couldn't stop thinking about my time here.

DEAN WALKER
I understand. It's an extraordinary place. Of course, we'd love to accommodate you if we can. But, you have to understand, this is a little unusual.

CASSANDRA
Yes. But I left in unusual circumstances.

DEAN WALKER looks at her blankly.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Because of what happened to Nina.

Nothing.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
Nina Fisher.

DEAN WALKER
I'm so sorry, I'm not following you.

CASSANDRA
You don't remember her?

DEAN WALKER
We have so many students. I wish I could remember them all. But-

CASSANDRA
The maybe you remember Alexander Monroe, Al Monroe?

DEAN WALKER
Oh yes! Of course I remember Al! He came and did a talk for the med students not long ago. Nice guy. Very smart. Is he a friend of yours?

CASSANDRA

No. So, you don't remember the
accusations made against Al Monroe
in 2008?

DEAN WALKER frowns- she genuinely can't remember.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

He took a girl- Nina Fisher, the
girl you don't remember- back to
his dorm where he had sex with her,
repeatedly and in front of people,
while she was passed out.

DEAN WALKER

I don't-

CASSANDRA

It was so bad she was bleeding the
following day.

DEAN WALKER takes this very seriously.

DEAN WALKER

I'm so sorry. That is terrible. Was
it reported?

CASSANDRA

Yes.

DEAN WALKER

Who did Nina go to?

DEAN WALKER opens her book to note it down.

CASSANDRA

You.

DEAN WALKER is silent. She puts her pen down.

DEAN WALKER

Oh.

CASSANDRA

But you can't remember so...

DEAN WALKER looks at CASSANDRA sympathetically.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You felt there wasn't sufficient
evidence. It was too much of a 'he
said/she said' situation.

(MORE)

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You interviewed Al Monroe, and
thought that his version of events
seemed, what word did you
use..."credible".

DEAN WALKER is genuinely saddened.

DEAN WALKER

(gentle)

We get so many of these
accusations. There's usually one or
two a week- one every day in the
early in semester when everyone's
partying. I have to take each claim
on its own merits. I'm sorry that I
don't remember this individual
case, but I can assure you that I
would have looked into it
thoroughly at the time.

CASSANDRA

His friends were all watching. Some
of them maybe even joined in.

DEAN WALKER

I understand it must be very hard.
But if Nina was drinking, if she
couldn't remember fully, it's
terribly complicated.

CASSANDRA

So she shouldn't have been drunk?

DEAN WALKER

I don't mean that. I just mean that
it isn't always a good idea to go
back to a dorm room full of boys
after a party. It gives them the
wrong idea...We do advise against
it. We try to warn girls to be more
careful. To teach them about self-
respect.

CASSANDRA

So it was her fault.

DEAN WALKER

(kind)

None of us wants to admit when
we've made ourselves vulnerable.
And sometimes these kind of
mistakes are very damaging. It's
much more common that you'd know.

CASSANDRA
I know how common it is.

DEAN WALKER
Of course, it's...regrettable.

CASSANDRA
Regrettable.

DEAN WALKER
(patient, kind)
What would you have me do? Ruin a young man's life every time an accusation is made? Have them expelled? That wouldn't be fair. Accusations like that, they ruin lives.

CASSANDRA
But when girl's lives are ruined? When they drop out because they're not believed? When on top of everything else they're accused of lying and they can't face going to class anymore because everyone's staring.

DEAN WALKER
It's very complicated. It's not black and white.

CASSANDRA
But you're happy to take the boys word for it?

DEAN WALKER
I have to give them the benefit of the doubt, yes.

CASSANDRA
Of course you do.

DEAN WALKER
Innocent until proven guilty. It has to be.

CASSANDRA
No arguing with that.

DEAN WALKER
I'm afraid not.

CASSANDRA gets up.

CASSANDRA
Thank you for your time.

DEAN WALKER
I wish I could do more. Is your
friend ok?

CASSANDRA
No. She's not. But Al Monroe is,
you'll be glad to know he's doing
really well. He's getting married.

DEAN WALKER doesn't respond.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
So you did the right thing, I
guess. We have to give these boys
the benefit of the doubt.

Beat.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
That's why I know that you won't
mind that-

She glances at her watch.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
-three hours ago I picked your
daughter Amber up from school and
introduced her to the boys who live
in that dorm now.

BEAT.

DEAN WALKER
What did you say?

CASSANDRA
She is really pretty, huh? And she
looks a lot older than she is.

DEAN WALKER
I don't believe you.

DEAN WALKER is trying not to panic.

CASSANDRA
I noticed that they had a few
bottles of Vodka in their room too.
But I'm sure they'll take good care
of your daughter. She seemed
excited actually!

DEAN WALKER
Is this a joke? What is wrong with
you? You're sick!

DEAN WALKER, shaking, picks up her phone, tries her
daughter's cell.

CASSANDRA's pocket rings.

The DEAN looks at her, horrified.

CASSANDRA
Oh right! Here it is. She'll be
wanting that later.

DEAN WALKER
Oh my god.

She gets the phone out of her pocket and places it down on
DEAN WALKER'S desk. DEAN WALKER starts to completely lose it.

DEAN WALKER (CONT'D)
Oh my god. Are you crazy?

CASSANDRA
No.

DEAN WALKER
Which room is she in?? Tell me
right now! What kind of monster are
you? TELL ME?

CASSANDRA
I told you. The same room Nina was
in.

DEAN WALKER is totally freaking out.

DEAN WALKER
I don't remember it! I already
said...

CASSANDRA
That's a shame. Then I sure hope
you're right to trust those boys.

DEAN WALKER
Please. Please! Which room? You
can't do this. Oh my god.

CASSANDRA
Hey. Calm down! It's her choice,
remember? She'll be fine! Well- she
might be fine.

DEAN WALKER
JUST FUCKING TELL ME!!

CASSANDRA raises her eyebrows. DEAN WALKER has shocked herself. She's on the verge of tears.

DEAN WALKER (CONT'D)
Please. Please tell me. Look,
you're right, Ok? Is that what you
want to hear? You're right.

She means it.

DEAN WALKER (CONT'D)
You're right.

Beat.

CASSANDRA
See. Look how easy it was! You just
needed to think about it properly,
didn't you? I guess it feels
different when it's someone you
love. Shame you didn't think of it
like that ten years ago for Nina.

DEAN WALKER
(begging)
Jesus christ, just tell me which
room she's in.

CASSANDRA waits. Watches her panic. Let's her freak out.

CASSANDRA
Hey! Relax! Honestly, Dean Walker.
Did you really think I'd do
something like that? Luckily I
don't have as much faith in college
boys as you do!

(beat)
Amber is sitting in a diner waiting
for her favorite boyband. It's the
Castle Diner if you want to call
and check. You should probably call
actually, otherwise she'll never
figure out they're not coming.

(beat)
She's kind of an idiot, huh?
Gorgeous though. Who needs brains?
They never did a girl any good.

DEAN WALKER is shivering with shock. Mute. CASSANDRA opens the door.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
There's a girl outside in the
waiting room. I hope you'll listen
to her if she's coming to talk to
you about something serious.
(beat)
Good to see you again, Dean Walker.

CASSANDRA leaves. DEAN WALKER watches her go.

40 INT. CAR - NIGHT 40

CASSANDRA drives, shaking.

FLASHBACK:

41 INT. BATHROOM- NIGHT 41

Pieces of memory. A bathtub. Hands. A razor on skin. Blood in
the water.

BACK TO:

42 INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER 42

CASSANDRA is crying now. A guy in a douchebag car cuts her
up. She beeps.

CASSANDRA
Hey! Fuck you!

He blows a kiss at her as he passes.

CASSANDRA puts her foot on the pedal. She tails him, inches
from his bumper. She beeps, flashes her lights. She's gripped
with rage.

Red light. She screeches up beside him. He yells at her
through his window.

CAR GUY
Hey! HEY! You're a terrible driver,
honey.

43 EXT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER 43

CASSANDRA grabs a gym weight and calmly gets out of her car.
She goes over to CAR GUY'S car and smashes his window.

CAR GUY

Hey! What the hell are you doing?

She smashes in his break lights.

CAR GUY (CONT'D)

You crazy fucking bitch!

CASSANDRA goes around to his window, holding the weight.

CASSANDRA

What did you call me?

He looks at her. He actually looks scared.

CAR GUY

Fuck you!

He speeds away. CASSANDRA is left standing in the middle of the road surrounded by broken glass.

44 EXT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

44

CASSANDRA pulls up into her drive. CHRIS is waiting on the steps.

CASSANDRA

What are you doing here?

CHRIS

We had a date.

CASSANDRA

Oh. I'm sorry.

CHRIS

You weren't answering your phone.

CASSANDRA

Did we miss the movie?

CHRIS

Lil bit.

CASSANDRA

I'm just...so busy with work.

CHRIS

Ok.

(beat)

Because I stopped by the coffee shop and you weren't there. Gail said you've taken a few days off.

CASSANDRA doesn't know what to say.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Look. I like you. I think you know how much I like you, Cassie. I've made it embarrassingly clear. But...I get the feeling maybe this thing is a little one sided. And that's ok, really.

CASSANDRA

It's not that. Really.

CHRIS

Then what?

CASSANDRA

I'm just working on this project, and it's taking up all my time. I'm sorry. It'll be done soon. I promise.

CHRIS

Like a school project?

Beat.

CASSANDRA

Yeah.

CHRIS

OK. You sure you don't need a break though, you seem kind of wired?

CASSANDRA snaps.

CASSANDRA

Oh my god! Yes! I'm sure, Chris. I'm fine.

CHRIS

Got it.

He gets into his car, a little pissed.

45

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - HALL - MOMENTS LATER

45

CASSANDRA enters her house. Leans her head against the front door. What is she doing?

46 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

46

SUSAN is sitting at the table, waiting. CASSANDRA tries to pass without stopping.

SUSAN

Hey! Did you catch that boy outside?

CASSANDRA reluctantly enters.

CASSANDRA

Yeah. Sorry.

SUSAN

Don't be sorry! I wasn't scolding you. Come sit.

CASSANDRA

I've got to do some stuff.

SUSAN

Come on. You just got in.

CASSANDRA sits. SUSAN is stealing herself for something.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Are you going to be ok?

CASSANDRA

What do you mean?

SUSAN

Is this boy...is he making you feel better? I'm sorry to pry. It's just...we've tried everything. Me and your dad. We've been so worried.

CASSANDRA

Please, mom. Please can we not talk about this now. Please.

A silence.

SUSAN

When then? We have to talk about it someday.

(beat)

We think about her all the time too, you know. She practically lived here when you two were girls. If you think that it didn't affect us...

CASSANDRA

Then why didn't you ever talk about it?

SUSAN

Because you were so angry, Cassie. We couldn't touch you. You have no idea what it's like, your anger.

CASSANDRA

Of course I'm angry!

SUSAN

Yes but...it's taken over everything. Over all of our lives. And these night time...excursions. You don't need to tell me what... but...well they seemed to work for a while. And then...

SUSAN spreads out her hands.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

So if this boy is making you feel good then, oh god, Cassie...

SUSAN starts to cry.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I just want you to be happy. I want you to feel better.

CASSANDRA reaches for her mother's hand kindly.

CASSANDRA

Momma.

(cold)

Nothing makes me feel better.

47

INT. BANANARAMA NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

47

Another terrible nightclub. CASSANDRA is on edge. Pretending to be drunk again, but it's scary this time. She's vibrating with anger- it's coming off her in waves, scaring the guys away. Finally, a guys comes up. It is PAUL, the British guy from a few weeks before, whose colleague took her home.

PAUL

Alright?

CASSANDRA

Mmm hmm.

PAUL
You with anyone?

CASSANDRA
Nope.

PAUL
I've seen you here before, haven't I?

CASSANDRA
Maybe.

PAUL
You like to drink, don't you? Want another?

CASSANDRA
Maybe.

PAUL
(to the bartender)
Oi. Two tequila shots.

He glances over at CASSANDRA, swaying next to him.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Actually make that four.

48 EXT. BANANARAMA NIGHTCLUB - LATER

48

PAUL is walking CASSANDRA out, her head is lolling. PAUL looks at his phone.

PAUL
Fucking surge prices.

He looks at CASSANDRA.

PAUL (CONT'D)
It's not far, can you walk?

CASSANDRA
Um. I think so...

PAUL
Good girl.

They start to walk down the street. PAUL's practically holding her up. Then-

CHRIS (O.S.)
Cassie?

CASSANDRA turns around. CHRIS is carrying a bag of groceries.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

CASSANDRA is immediately sober.

CASSANDRA
Chris. I can explain.

CHRIS
No need. I think it's all pretty clear.

PAUL
Sorry, mate, I didn't know she was taken. All yours.

CASSANDRA
Chris, please, it's not what you think.

PAUL
Hold on. Are you sober?

CASSANDRA
Look, why don't you just fuck off now ok? You're very lucky you didn't take me home.

PAUL
(realizing)
Oh my god. You're the psycho who went home with Jez.
(to CHRIS)
Keep away from her, mate, she's a fucking nutcase.

CHRIS
You know what? I'll take that advice.

CHRIS goes. CASSANDRA turns on PAUL, she is terrifying in her fury.

CASSANDRA
Your friend Jez is a creep. And so are you, Paul. And I'm not the only girl who does this, ok? So be very, very careful the next time you get a girl too drunk to walk and take her home. Because some us are a lot angrier than others.

PAUL
Bullshit. I don't believe you.

CASSANDRA
Then try it out.

PAUL looks nervously at her.

PAUL
Fuck this.

He leaves. She watches him go. Her eyes gleaning in the neon of the club lights.

49 INT. LAW FIRM - LOBBY - MORNING

49

CASSANDRA, dressed in a suit, walks into the lobby of a fancy law firm. She approaches the receptionist. She's carrying her book.

CASSANDRA
Hi. I'm here to meet with Jordan Green.

RECEPTIONIST
Oh, I'm sorry, ma'am. Mr Green is on sabbatical.

CASSANDRA
Oh. For how long?

The RECEPTIONIST leans in conspiratorially.

RECEPTIONIST
Indefinitely.

50 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

50

CASSANDRA steps up to the door of a beautiful country house. She rings the doorbell. A good looking, middle-aged man opens the door. Unshaved, a little red around the eyes. This is JORDAN.

JORDAN
Can I help you?

CASSANDRA
I really hope so.

JORDAN
I'm sorry. I'm no longer practicing the law, if you've come for-

CASSANDRA
It's not about that.

JORDAN senses something in her. Maybe even has a feeling of what's coming.

JORDAN
Come in.

51 INT. JORDAN'S HOUSE- LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

51

JORDAN leads CASSIE into his beautiful lounge. It is in a state of terrible disarray. A mess. He notices her surprise.

JORDAN
My wife left.

CASSANDRA
And you don't know how to operate a dishwasher?

JORDAN laughs bitterly.

JORDAN
I guess not.

He lights a cigarette. His hands are shaking.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
(off the cigarette)
You mind?

CASSANDRA shakes her head. There's a silence. He's nervous. CASSANDRA is still, calm. Malevolent.

CASSANDRA
Your office told me you're on sabbatical. It was very easy to get your address. They just gave it to me actually.

JORDAN
I told them to give it to anyone who asked.

CASSANDRA
That seems safe.

Beat.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
I wanted to talk to you about
something that happened ten years
ago.

JORDAN braces himself.

JORDAN
Ok.

CASSANDRA
Do you remember a client of yours.
Alexander Monroe?

JORDAN
Al? Yes. His father is an old
friend.

CASSANDRA
Of course he is. You probably won't
remember why Al Monroe and his dad
employed your services back then.
And you almost certainly won't
remember the girl who you
threatened and bullied until she
dropped her case.

JORDAN
I remember her.

CASSANDRA is shocked.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
Nina? Was that it?

CASSANDRA tries to hold it together.

CASSANDRA
(whisper)
Yes.

Beat.

JORDAN
Have you come here to hurt me?
If you have then just do it.
Please.

CASSANDRA
Do you want me to hurt you?

JORDAN bites back tears. He nods. Finally-

JORDAN

I had a...well...I think of it as an epiphany. The doctors called it a psychotic episode. It was at work. So... I'm on "sabbatical".

(beat)

You know I got a bonus for every settlement out of court. And a bonus for every charge dropped. All of us did.

Silence.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

We had a guy who combed through their social media accounts for compromising information. Contacted friends and past sexual partners. It is amazing how much easier the internet has made digging up dirt. In the old days we'd have to go through the girls' trash. But now it's just one drunk photo at a party and you wouldn't believe how hostile that makes a jury.

CASSANDRA can barely breathe. JORDAN is breaking down.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. You've got to help me. I can't sleep. I can't sleep. I haven't slept in...

He clutches at her hands.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

You are real, aren't you? I haven't totally lost it?

CASSANDRA

I'm real.

JORDAN

I'll never forgive myself. I hope you know that. I'll never forgive myself for any of it.

CASSANDRA looks down at him. A mixture of pity and scorn, but also, somewhere, deep relief. This is it.

Then finally, quietly-

CASSANDRA

I forgive you.

52 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - LATER 52

CASSANDRA gets into her car. She's shattered.

A BURLY MAN has been waiting in the passengers seat.

BURLY MAN
Do I go in now?

Beat.

CASSANDRA
No.

BURLY MAN
I'm still getting paid though,
right?

CASSANDRA starts the car.

CASSANDRA
Yeah.

She drives.

53 EXT. NINA'S HOUSE - EVENING 53

CASSANDRA is parked across the street from Nina's old house.
Two LITTLE GIRLS play in the front yard. CASSANDRA watches
them. It's YOUNG NINA and YOUNG CASSANDRA.

Her phone rings. It's ALISON. She cancels guiltily. This
whole thing is starting to feel horrible.

When she looks back at the yard it's empty.

54 INT. CHRIS'S APARTMENT - HALL - NIGHT 54

CHRIS opens the door to CASSANDRA.

CHRIS
Oh great. You.

CASSANDRA
Please.

The desperation on her face makes him relent.

55 INT. CHRIS'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 55

CHRIS leads her into his apartment. For the first time we see she's really nervous. She's hovering, unsure where to stand.

CASSANDRA
I'm sorry.

CHRIS
Yeah. Well. What can you do?

CASSANDRA
Chris-

CHRIS
You could have just told me you weren't interested.

CASSANDRA
I am interested. I've been trying to think about how to explain.

CHRIS
Looked pretty clear to me-

CASSANDRA
Will you just let me...let me try to tell you. Please.
(a struggle)
I go out at night and I pick up guys.

Beat.

CHRIS
What?

CASSANDRA
That's what I was doing last night. I go to clubs. Once a week. Maybe more. I pretend to be drunk, then I wait for someone to pick me up.

CHRIS
Jesus Christ, Cassie. Are you kidding?

CASSANDRA
Do I look like I'm kidding?

CHRIS
What the fuck?

CASSANDRA

Chris-

CHRIS

I don't need to hear about this, Cassie. If you want to sleep with strangers then...whatever. But, god, I wish you'd let me know before I...

CASSANDRA

I don't sleep with them.

CHRIS is confused.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I wait for them to take my clothes off, and then I tell them I'm not drunk.

CHRIS is baffled.

CHRIS

But. Why?

CASSANDRA

To see if they still want to.

CHRIS

I'm sorry. What? Is this some kind of self-esteem thing? You want them to beg you?

CASSANDRA

No. No not at all. I'm proving to them that they don't want to sleep with me when they know I'm sober.

CHRIS

Why?

CASSANDRA

Because they're ashamed that I see what they're doing.

CHRIS

OK. Yes. But, again, why? What's the purpose?

CASSANDRA

It started...I was trying to prove a point.

CHRIS

And did you?

CASSANDRA

Yes. But then I couldn't stop. It just kept happening. They kept taking me home, night after night after night. Even when I couldn't walk. They'd carry me. I thought they'd stop. But they didn't. All those nice guys. And I guess it made me feel better for a while.

CHRIS thinks.

CHRIS

It can't be that common, it can't-

CASSANDRA

It is.

CHRIS

Jesus, Cassie. It's not safe!

CASSANDRA

Oh I know it's not safe, Chris. You don't need to tell me.

She is speaking from experience. CHRIS is dumbstruck.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I just. Something happened today-

CHRIS

Are you ok? Did someone hurt you?

CASSANDRA

No. No. The opposite really. It was...it doesn't matter. I just needed to tell someone.

A long beat. Chris thinks.

CHRIS

Well, thanks for telling me, I guess.

(beat)

Sorry I don't know what to say.

CASSANDRA

It's okay. You don't have to say anything. I'll see you around.

She leaves.

56 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER 56

CASSANDRA stares at AL MONROE'S BACHELOR PARTY PAGE. She spots Chris on his timeline. "Sorry I can't make it, bro! Have a great time."

She looks at AL's stupid face, all his douchy friends. She consults her book. Thinking.

57 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY 57

CASSANDRA is alone. The bell rings, she doesn't look up.

CASSANDRA
We're closed.

CHRIS (O.S.)
At three in the afternoon?

CASSANDRA looks up warily. CHRIS is standing in front of her.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Can we talk?

58 EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON 58

CHRIS and CASSANDRA sit on a bench.

CHRIS
Girls come to the hospital all the time. They don't know what's happened.

CASSANDRA
Sounds about right.

CHRIS
I never really...god. I never really thought about it.

CASSANDRA
That's honest.

CHRIS
But why not...campaign? Why not, I don't know, try and implement some real change?

CASSANDRA
I am implementing real change. Those guys will never pick up another drunk girl again.

CHRIS

Look. I'm trying to understand. I am but...this. If this is something. You and me. I can't do this if I'm worried about where you are every night. You gotta see that, right?

Silence.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

You've done enough. Don't you think you've done enough now?

CASSANDRA nods.

CASSANDRA

Yeah.

59 INT. CHRIS'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EVENING 59

CASSANDRA is standing in front of CHRIS. She's nervous.

CHRIS

You're sure?

CASSANDRA nods. Gently, slowly, kindly, CHRIS kisses her.

60 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY 60

CASSANDRA looks at AL MONROE's facebook page. She deletes it. She deletes her whole profile. She throws her book in the trash.

61 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 61

CASSANDRA and CHRIS are a little dressed up.

CASSANDRA

You don't have to do this.

CHRIS

I know.

CASSANDRA

Really. It could get intense.

CHRIS

I can handle it. I cut kids heads open for a living.

They arrive at a restaurant. They pause outside. CASSANDRA is really anxious.

CASSANDRA
This is your last chance, ok?

CHRIS
I know.

He pushes open the door.

CUT TO:

62 INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - LATER 62

CASSANDRA and CHRIS are sitting at a table with STANLEY and SUSAN, they are all laughing. It's lovely. And normal. And happy.

63 INT. CAR - NIGHT 63

CASSANDRA gets into her parents car with SUSAN and STANLEY.

SUSAN
What a lovely evening.

STANLEY
He seems very nice, Cassie.

CASSANDRA
Eh. He's ok.

SUSAN
You're allowed to like someone, honey.

CASSANDRA
I know.

Outside, CASSANDRA sees girls lining up for a nightclub. She looks away.

64 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 64

SUSAN has gone up to bed and CASSANDRA and STANLEY are turning out lights. Something is on STANLEY's mind. What he's going to say is a struggle.

STANLEY
Thank you for introducing us to
Chris, honey.
(MORE)

STANLEY (CONT'D)

I know it must have been hard. You
mom is so...we are both so glad.

CASSANDRA hugs her father. They are both in tears.

STANLEY (CONT'D)

We miss her, Cassie. But god, we've
missed you too.

65

INT. COFFEE SHOP - GAIL - DAY

65

GAIL is pretending to be a businessman, prepping CASSANDRA
for her interview.

GAIL

And why do you think you are right
for this job?

CASSANDRA

Well, I have no qualifications but
I have a gorgeous rack.

GAIL

Welcome to the company!

CASSANDRA

I won't let you down, sir.

They shake hands formally.

GAIL

They'd be crazy not to hire you.
You'll be perfect. You've worked
for them for years- they want to
promote someone inside the company.
You'll absolutely walk this.

CASSANDRA

I'll miss you though.

GAIL

I'll miss you too.

CASSANDRA

Gail. This friendship...has
meant...

GAIL

No...don't...Cassie...

CASSANDRA

Just shut up I'm trying to tell you
I love you you stupid bitch!

GAIL

Hey! You're the stupid bitch. And I love you too.

They hug. CASSANDRA hastily wipes a tear.

CASSANDRA

Jesus, I don't know what's wrong with me lately!

GAIL

Go on. You don't want your face to be all puffy. It's your only selling point.

CASSANDRA puts on a suit jacket.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Good luck, honey. They'd be lucky to have you. I mean it.

66 INT. CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - LATER 66

CASSANDRA waits nervously in the waiting room.

67 INT. CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS - OFFICE - LATER 67

CASSANDRA is shown in by a secretary. She sits down. Looks up at the panel, and finds herself staring at one of the men from the club that she has gone home with and frightened. The OLDER NICE GUY who we saw watching her dance. There is an awful pause, he looks shocked, quickly covers it up.

NICE GUY

Well, Cassandra, thank you very much for coming in to talk to us.

CASSANDRA

You're welcome.

NICE GUY

Why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself?

CASSANDRA tries to cover how crestfallen she is- there's no way she's getting this job.

68 INT. CHRIS'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER 68

CHRIS and CASSANDRA are in bed.

CHRIS

Oh man.

CASSANDRA

It's okay. I didn't really want the job anyway.

Beat.

CHRIS

Can I tell you something?

CASSANDRA

Sure.

CHRIS sits up on his elbow and looks at her. He's nervous.

CHRIS

I think you're amazing-

CASSANDRA

Oh no, Chris-

CHRIS

Let me finish, you shrew. I think you're amazing. And think I'm falling in love with you.

CASSANDRA is silent.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

It's too soon. Oh god. I've blown it. I'm sorry. You misheard me. I didn't say anything. I don't even like you. Get out of my apartment.

CASSANDRA

Shut up. I think I love you too.

CHRIS is about to celebrate-

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

DON'T make a thing of it. Just be cool.

CHRIS calms down.

CHRIS

Okay. I'm cool. I'm cool.

He's not though. He kisses her. And she kisses back.

69

EXT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY

69

The following day, CASSANDRA is walking home, elated, when a woman gets out of her car and runs across the street to her. It is ALISON MCPHEE.

ALISON

Hey!

CASSANDRA

Alison! What are you doing here?

ALISON looks terrible, she hasn't slept for weeks.

ALISON

I'm sorry, I just...I tried calling. I left messages. I don't know if your number worked. Maybe I had an old one.

ALISON is on the verge of tears.

ALISON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I know this is crazy waiting for you in my car like some kind of stalker or something...

CASSANDRA

No, Alison, I'm sorry. I should have called you back. Nothing happened with that guy, he just put you in bed.

ALISON

Are you sure...it seemed like...

CASSANDRA

I know what it seemed like. But it wasn't. He didn't touch you. I promise.

ALISON is almost sick with relief.

ALISON

Oh thank god. I've been...so worried that I...that we...

CASSANDRA

I promise. He just put you in bed, that's all. Made sure you were in the recovery position. Nothing happened, Alison.

Alison believes her. The relief. She wipes away a tear. Takes a deep breath.

ALISON

Look there's... It's hard to explain. I need to show you something.

70

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY- MOMENTS LATER

70

CASSANDRA and ALISON walk up the stairs.

CASSANDRA

Me and Alison are just going upstairs, Mom.

SUSAN emerges from the kitchen.

SUSAN

Alison? Oh my goodness! Alison! How are you?

ALISON

I'm alright, Mrs Thomas, how are you?

SUSAN

Oh you know. I saw you had twins. On facebook.

ALISON

Yeah. Girls.

SUSAN

Well, congratulations. You want to stay for lunch? There's enough food.

ALISON

I'm ok. Thank you. I gotta go soon.

SUSAN

Well alright. It really is wonderful to see you again.

SUSAN squeezes ALISON tightly.

CASSANDRA

Alright, mom.

They go upstairs, leaving SUSAN beaming.

71 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

71

CASSANDRA is sitting on her bed, ALISON is pacing, super edgy.

CASSANDRA
I'm really sorry I didn't call
sooner. I didn't mean to scare you
this much.

ALISON
Yeah. Well.
(beat)
I don't know how to say this.

CASSANDRA
What?

Beat. Alison is dreading this. It's a struggle.

ALISON
After...after we had lunch and
I...got so drunk. And I woke up in
a hotel room with... I thought
about it, about what you said about
Nina. About how we all...you know.
Just. Acted like... And I
remembered something.

CASSANDRA
What?

ALISON can't say it.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
What?

ALISON
He taped it, Cassie. Al. He taped
it happening.

CASSANDRA might have been hit by a truck.

CASSANDRA
What?

ALISON
I'm so sorry.

CASSANDRA
He can't have. How do you know?

ALISON

Because it got sent round. I got sent it. In a text. It was just...at the time it was just, gossip, you know?

CASSANDRA

Gossip.

ALISON

I haven't thought about it in so long because so much...stuff happened back then, you know. Like, all the time. I wondered if I imagined it being taped so I...I went through all my old stuff. I kept all my old phones for photos and whatever.

She gets out an old blackberry. She can't stop crying.

ALISON (CONT'D)

It's so awful, Cassie. I don't know how it could have happened. I don't know how I could ever have watched it and thought...

CASSANDRA

What?

ALISON

And thought it was her fault.

ALISON wipes away a tear.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Look. You can have the phone, ok? You don't have to watch it...I really wouldn't watch it but...I don't know. You could take it to the police. Whatever you want. Just leave me out of it.

ALISON leaves. Stops at the door.

ALISON (CONT'D)

And please, Cassie, will you do me a favor?

CASSANDRA

Yeah.

ALISON

Never fucking contact me again.

ALISON leaves.

72 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

72

CASSANDRA looks at the phone. She has to watch it. She knows she has to. It's the proof she's been looking for ten years. She takes a huge drink of vodka and steels herself.

She starts to play the video. We can hear it but not see it: we stay on her face. It is terrible, horrifying.

CASSANDRA
(whispers)
Oh, Nina.

And then, her expression changes, to complete, earth-shattering shock.

We see part of the video- Nina is off-camera. But a group of guys are cheering AL on, among them in the back, cheering as loud as the rest, swigging a beer, is CHRIS.

73 INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

73

CASSANDRA is waiting in a hallway for CHRIS, she's swaying, a little drunk. CHRIS comes out.

CHRIS
Cassie, are you ok? What's happened?

He hugs her. She does not respond.

CASSANDRA
Can we go somewhere to talk, privately?

A couple of CHRIS'S COLLEAGUES look over at them.

CHRIS
Cassie, I'm working.

CASSANDRA
(calmly)
We need to talk. Right now.

CHRIS can see that she's not kidding.

74 INT. HOSPITAL - STAFF ROOM - LATER

74

CHRIS takes CASSANDRA into the near-empty staffroom. There is one older DOCTOR in there reading a book.

CHRIS
Hey, Phil, could you give me and my
girlfriend a second?

The DOCTOR looks between them, rolls his eyes and leaves.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
What's going on?

CASSANDRA looks at him, heartbroken.

CASSANDRA
I've been so, so stupid.

CHRIS
What do you mean?

CASSANDRA
I really thought for a second it
was all going to be ok.

CHRIS
Cassie-

CASSANDRA
Look at this.

She passes over Alison's phone. CHRIS watches.

CHRIS
What are you showing me? Is
that...Al Monroe? Is that his
dorm...what...

Suddenly he remembers. He passes the phone back, angry.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
You've got to stop with this. I
don't want to watch this, Cassie.
My god!

CASSANDRA
Why not? You were happy to watch
back then.

CHRIS
I don't know what you're talking
about, I wasn't-

Then he hears his own voice on the video. It's undeniable.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Cassie, it's not how it looks, ok?
She was into it I swear, she was-

CASSANDRA

Don't. Even. Think about saying
what you're about to say. Or I
swear, I will kill you.

CHRIS is silenced.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I need you to do something for me.
And I want you to think about it
very carefully. I have this video,
ready to send to everyone in your
address book. Your parents. Your
colleagues. All your old college
buddies and their wives.

CHRIS

Cassie, please. For god's sake. It
would ruin my life.

CASSANDRA

Yeah. It's funny how that happens.

CHRIS

It was ten years ago. We were kids.

CASSANDRA

So, I can send it out right now. Or
you can tell me where Al Monroe's
bachelor party is.

CHRIS is stunned.

CHRIS

Why?

Beat.

CASSANDRA

You don't need to know why.

CHRIS

Cassie, what are you going to do?

CASSANDRA

It depends.

CHRIS

On what?

Beat.

CASSANDRA

Do you think they'll fire you here?
You work with kids so...they have
to be careful.

CHRIS

Think about this. Please.

CASSANDRA

I cannot begin to tell you how much
I've thought about it.

She stares him down. Finally, he writes down the address on a
piece of paper, hands it over.

CHRIS

There. They're all going up
tomorrow night.

CASSANDRA folds up the paper and puts it in her pocket.

CASSANDRA

Bye, Chris.

CHRIS

(tearful)

You don't...you don't think I'm a
bad person now, do you? I love you,
Cassie. You'll forgive me won't
you? Tell me you'll forgive me.

CASSANDRA

No.

Beat.

CHRIS

Are you going to tell everyone?

CASSANDRA

I don't know.

CHRIS

I just don't...I don't know if I
can live with the threat of this
hanging over me.

Silence.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
You're not going to hurt anyone are you?

CASSANDRA
I hope not.
(beat)
Don't think about warning any of them that I'm coming. I'll send the video around just the same if you do.

CHRIS is quiet for a second.

CHRIS
You're crazy.

CASSANDRA smiles, and leaves.

75 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

75

CASSANDRA is packing a bag. SUSAN puts her head round the door.

SUSAN
Dinner in ten. Oh. You headed somewhere?

CASSANDRA
Going away for the weekend.

SUSAN
With Chris?

CASSANDRA
No actually. There's this...coffee symposium thing...it's lame...but Gail thought it might be good for work.

SUSAN tries to downplay her pride.

SUSAN
That doesn't sound lame at all.

CASSANDRA
Thanks, mom.

SUSAN hovers in the doorway.

SUSAN
You look so pretty, honey.

76 INT. CAR - NIGHT 76

CASSANDRA is on an old highway in the middle of nowhere. No cars in sight. No houses. Just the woods. We see her taking the license plates off her car and throwing them in the woods, getting changed in her car. Doing her make up in the mirror- it's super heightened. Big red lips, big eyes. Her old book is on the seat next to her.

77 EXT. CABIN - LATER 77

We follow CASSANDRA as she walks up to a huge, expensive house in the middle of the woods. She is wearing a wig, a PVC nurses uniform, and carrying a matching PVC nurses bag and a huge bottle of vodka. In her thick make up she is barely recognizable.

78 EXT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER 78

CASSANDRA rings the doorbell. A super hammered guy, JOE, answers.

JOE
YESSSSSSSSSSS! THE DOCTOR IS IN THE
HOUSE!!!!

We hear cheering from inside.

79 INT. CABIN - LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER 79

ALEX leads CASSANDRA into the house's huge lounge. It is full of drunk dudes playing poker and listening to terrible EDM. Among them is AL MONROE, preppy and very embarrassed. CASSANDRA is momentarily floored seeing him again. She covers it.

JOE
This is what I'm talking about,
man! It's stripper time, baby!!

DUDE
Nurse, I'm feeling sick, can you
take my temperature?

AL MONROE
I thought I said no strippers, you
guys! Anastasia will lose her shit.

His friends all boo him.

AL MONROE (CONT'D)
Who ordered her?

The dudes all look innocent.

JOE
Don't look at me, man!

AL MONROE
No one owning up, huh? Well when
Anastasia finds out it's your
funeral.

CASSANDRA
I take it you're the groom?

AL MONROE
Yeah.

CASSANDRA
Then sit the fuck down.

She grabs a chair and sits AL down on it roughly.

AL MONROE
Hey!

JOE
Uh oh! You're in trouble, bro.

The guys are giddy with excitement. CASSANDRA gets out the
vodka.

CASSANDRA
Now I'm going to need you all to
kneel in front of me like the
naughty boys you are. Is everybody
here? Don't want anyone to miss
out.

The guys kneel down eagerly, giggling.

JOE
We're all present, nurse!

CASSANDRA
Good. Then I think it's time for
your medicine.

CASSANDRA pours vodka down into their open mouths one by one.

AL MONROE
Don't I get any?

CASSANDRA

No. You get something way better.

She turns on the music and starts to dance. But we don't see her, only the men looking at her cheering and jeering. Super-slo mo. Super detailed. We can see the bloodshot eyes and the sweat. And the hard-ons underneath the chinos. It's frightening, animal: violence and desire are in the air.

We speed back up to normal and AL is getting very flushed as CASSANDRA gets closer. She leans in and whispers.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Time to go upstairs.

AL MONROE

I don't think...

CASSANDRA

(whisper)

Look, I won't do anything if you don't want to, but I only get paid if I go upstairs with you.

AL MONROE

OK.

CASSANDRA takes him by the hand and triumphantly leads him up the stairs, the guys go crazy.

JOE

I wanna see her crawl out of here in the morning, Al!!

DUDE

Leave some for us!!!

80

INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

80

A huge four poster bed. We can hear the music thumping from downstairs.

AL MONROE

So. What do I...

CASSANDRA

Get on the bed.

AL MONROE

Ok.

(jokey)

I'm a little scared of you.

CASSANDRA

You don't need to be scared. Get on the bed.

AL does. She gets some pink, fluffy handcuffs out of her nurse's bag.

AL MONROE

Wait. Sorry. I'm not sure.

CASSANDRA

It's for my safety.

AL MONROE

What do you mean?

CASSANDRA

When I give private dances...guys can get a little handsy so...

AL MONROE

Oh. Right. Of course.

He lets her put on the handcuffs.

AL MONROE (CONT'D)

You know...you don't have to...I'm a gentleman.

CASSANDRA

Are you?

AL MONROE

Yeah.

CASSANDRA

You might be surprised to hear that gentlemen are sometimes the worst.

She finishes cuffing him.

AL MONROE

Ow. Can you loosen them?

CASSANDRA

You'll get used to it.

AL MONROE

Look. I don't want to sound like a pussy but...you're not going to...do anything, are you? It's just, I love my fiancée. We're getting married so...I don't want any...um...

CASSANDRA
Hey. Do I look like someone who
would make you do something you
don't want to do?

AL MONROE
No.

CASSANDRA
Exactly.

AL MONROE
What's your name?

CASSANDRA
Candy.

AL MONROE
I mean. Your real name.

Beat.

CASSANDRA
Nina. Nina Fisher.

AL looks like a ghost just walked into the room.

AL MONROE
What did you say?

CASSANDRA
I said my name is Nina Fisher.

AL starts to struggle against the cuffs.

AL MONROE
Can you let me out of these,
please?

CASSANDRA
I'm sorry I can't.

AL MONROE
Did one of the guys put you up to
this? Was it Joe? Jesus Christ that
is dark, even for him.

CASSANDRA
I don't follow.

AL MONROE
You are not Nina Fisher.

CASSANDRA

Why not?

AL MONROE

Because...she's dead.

Beat.

CASSANDRA

Must be another Nina Fisher. A coincidence.

AL MONROE

I don't think so. Please let me go. This isn't funny.

CASSANDRA

Why would I give you a dead girl's name?

AL MONROE is panicking.

AL MONROE

This is fucked up, ok? Stop it.

CASSANDRA

But, I'm not doing anything.

AL MONROE

(shouting)

GUYS! JOE! BRANDON! GUYS! CAN YOU GET UP HERE!

The music is throbbing.

CASSANDRA

I don't think they can hear you. And even if you could shout out loud...

AL MONROE

What?

CASSANDRA

They're all passed out by now.

AL MONROE is really scared now.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Because if there is one thing that I learned at Franklin College, it is how easy it is to slip something into a drink. You'd think they'd remember that. Especially Joe!

AL MONROE

Do I know you?

CASSANDRA

I'm not sure you'd remember me, Al.
You were so popular.

It dawns on him.

AL MONROE

You're Nina's friend. Oh fuck.
You're Nina's friend.

CASSANDRA

So you DID notice me after all. I'm
surprised. I wasn't super-fuckable
at college so, I thought I kind of
slipped your attention.

AL MONROE

What do you want? Money? Are you
blackmailing me? You can have
anything.

CASSANDRA

No, I don't need money. I just want
a conversation.

AL MONROE

Anything you want, ok?

CASSANDRA

I want you to tell me what you did.

AL MONROE

I didn't do anything! It was at
college! We were kids!

CASSANDRA

If I hear that ONE MORE TIME.

CASSANDRA is really, really angry. It's all coming apart now.

AL MONROE

Look maybe she regretted it after
but-

CASSANDRA

Oh yeah she regretted it.

AL MONROE

Please, what do you want?

CASSANDRA

I told you. I want you to tell me what happened. I mean, I've seen the video, so I know-

AL MONROE

You have the video? How the hell-

CASSANDRA

Don't you worry about it.

AL MONROE

I'll give you anything. I'll do anything.

AL is close to tears.

CASSANDRA

Aw don't cry.

(harsh)

Really. Don't fucking cry. Tell me what you did.

AL MONROE

I didn't do anything!

CASSANDRA

WRONG!

AL MONROE

What do you think the fucking story is?

CASSANDRA

Different to you I imagine.

AL MONROE

I don't know what you want me to say.

CASSANDRA

She dropped out. Top of her class, and she dropped out. I did too to take care of her. The two of us, gone. You graduated Magna Cum Laude though. Did you ever feel guilty? Or did you just feel relieved that she'd gone?

AL MONROE

I was affected too, you know? It's every guy's worst nightmare, getting accused like that.

CASSANDRA

Can you guess what every girl's
worst nightmare is?

AL's lip wobbles.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

The thing is, you thought you'd
gotten away with it because
everyone had forgotten. But I
haven't.

She opens her PVC nurses bag. In it are all of her surgical
instruments from college.

AL MONROE

Oh my god- you're out of your
fucking mind!

CASSANDRA

I was so sad to leave, you know.
I'd wanted to be a doctor my whole
life. And lately, I've been feeling
like I might want to get back into
it.

She picks up a scalpel.

AL MONROE

Stop! Please!

She sits on the bed.

CASSANDRA

You know. Nina was extraordinary.
So smart. Weirdly smart.

He struggles.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Shhh. I want you to know what she
was like, ok? But she's so
difficult to explain because she
was just so completely herself.
Always. Even when she was four. She
was fully formed from day one. A
whole person. Same face. Same walk.
And funny like a grown up was
funny. Kind of, shrewd. Perceptive.
So smart. I was just in awe of her.
Always. She didn't give a fuck what
anyone else thought, except me.
Because she was just...Nina.

(beat)

(MORE)

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

And then she wasn't. Suddenly, she was something else, she was yours. It wasn't her name she heard when she was walking around, it was yours. Your name all over her. All around her. All the time. And it just...squeezed her out.

(beat)

So when I heard your name again. Your filthy fucking name. I wondered when was the last time someone had said hers. Or thought it even. Apart from me.

(beat)

And it made me so sad. Because, Al, you should be the one with her name all over you.

AL MONROE

No.

CASSANDRA

Don't worry. I've sterilized everything.

AL MONROE

You're insane.

CASSANDRA

You know what? I honestly don't think I am.

CASSANDRA unbuttons his shirt slowly.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I'll do this as quick as I can, ok?

She's about to cut him, when-

BAM!- He breaks a hand free from a handcuff and grabs her by the throat. CASSANDRA is caught off-guard.

He turns her onto the bed, to get both hands around her throat. She struggles. He's choking her.

AL MONROE

You asked for this. You fucking asked for this. This is your...fault.

CASSANDRA is looking at him. She can't breath.

She somehow slips out of his grasp. There's a struggle, with Al's hand tied to the bed they're evenly matched, she manages to get her hand free again and she raises the scalpel.

It looks like she might win when, at the last second, Al catches her arm and twists it. The scalpel falls to the ground.

He wrestles her back down onto the bed. One arm on her neck, pushing down. He's starts to cry.

AL MONROE (CONT'D)
This is your fault...

He can't look at her. He grabs a pillow puts it over her face.

He climbs onto her head, kneeling on the pillow, smothering her with his knees. The one hand still handcuffed to the bed. It's clumsy. It is going on for much too long. It feels like forever as she struggles underneath him. Every second we're waiting for her to turn things around.

She tries to fight back, her hands scrabbling over him. Her face hidden. AL is really sobbing now, kneeling on top of her.

Finally, after a long time, her body goes limp. Her arm falls, lifeless, to the ground.

AL stays on top of her. Crying.

He climbs off tentatively.

We wait for the Final Attraction moment when she springs back to life. It never comes.

81 INT. CABIN - BEDROOM - MORNING

81

A bluebottle fly against the window.

AL is still on the bed, one hand still handcuffed to a post. He's been up all night, unable to get out of it: his wrist is bleeding.

He has covered CASSANDRA with a blanket, but we can still see her hand. He is shivering, crying. We hear footsteps in the hallway. Then JOE barges in.

JOE
Oh man, what a night-

He stops. Sees the lump and the handcuffs. Starts giggling.

JOE (CONT'D)

Oh my god!! Is that the fucking nurse? Are you kidding me? Noooooice!

AL MONROE

Joe-

JOE

Don't freak out. Come on. Anastasia will never know. Okay? What happens in the cabin, stays in the cabin.

Beat.

AL MONROE

She's dead, Joe.

JOE looks at him, then laughs.

JOE

Come on.

AL MONROE

I'm not kidding.

Beat.

JOE

Ohhh. Fuuuck. You're being ironic.

AL MONROE

(desperate)

What?

JOE

Killing a stripper at your bachelor party? What is this the 90s?

(beat)

You want me to get her outta here so you can sleep? Her money's downstairs, although I'm not sure she got a big enough tip now I see what's been going on here.

JOE whips the blanket away. AL looks away, squeamish. Cassandra's face is still hidden. It takes JOE a few seconds.

JOE (CONT'D)

Oh my god.

AL MONROE

I told you.

JOE

Oh my god. Oh my god. The fucking
stripper is dead! YOU KILLED THE
STRIPPER! How did this happen?

AL starts to cry again. Blubbering like a child.

AL MONROE

I don't know.

JOE goes around to comfort him. This is the beginning of
every bro comedy where a guy accidentally kills/hits/hurts a
sex worker. We've seen this trope before. Guys hurting women.
Guys covering for their friends. We are familiar with this
scene.

JOE

Hey man. This is not your fault ok?

AL MONROE

I don't know...it kinda seems like
it is...

JOE

No, it's not!

AL MONROE

(crying)

Am I...am I going to jail? What
about the wedding? What about my
job? Anastasia is going to be so
upset. No one will understand...

JOE

It was an accident though, right?

AL MONROE

I mean-

JOE

(firm)

It was an accident, Al.

AL MONROE

Yeah. Of course. I mean, of course
it was.

JOE thinks.

JOE

Listen to me. No one is going to
jail ok? Because no one is going to
know about this.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)
If anyone asks, we all saw her
leave last night. She stripped and
she left.

AL MONROE
(faint)
She left...

JOE
Exactly. We'll take care of it. We
just need to hide the body til the
others go.

AL nods gratefully.

JOE (CONT'D)
AL, hey, look at me.

AL looks at JOE.

JOE (CONT'D)
This is not your fault.

AL MONROE
(whisper)
Thank you.

82 EXT. WOODS - EVENING

82

Everyone else has gone home. In the twilight of the woods,
JOE holds onto a crying AL. They are standing in front of a
bonfire. JOE throws on another branch. AL can't look. He's
too sad. JOE comforts him. JOE nudges CASSANDRA's hand back
onto the fire with his foot.

83 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

83

The fire is dying out. JOE throws CASSANDRA's car keys into
the embers. He gently leads AL away. Poor AL is feeling very
sorry for himself.

BLACK.

84 INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

84

The cops are interviewing SUSAN and STANLEY. They are
terrified.

SUSAN
Can't you track her phone or
something?

COP

I'm sorry, ma'am. It was turned off before she left. Seems like she really didn't want anyone to know where she was.

SUSAN

It's not like her to just...disappear like this.

STANLEY

Well, honey, that's not entirely-

SUSAN

(stern)
Stanley.

Susan starts to cry.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

She was getting better. She was getting better, wasn't she?

STANLEY comforts her.

STANLEY

Of course she was. She'll come back. You know what she's like. She always comes back.

The cops look at Stanley. They can see from his face he doesn't believe this.

COP

Was she seeing anyone? Did she have a boyfriend?

85 INT. HOSPITAL - STAFF ROOM - LOBBY

85

CHRIS is doing some work when the cops arrive. He is terrified.

COP

Are you Chris Cooper?

CHRIS

Yeah.

COP

Is there somewhere we can talk?

86 INT. HOSPITAL - STAFF ROOM - LATER

86

CHRIS tries to keep cool as he sits opposite the cops.

COP

Sorry to bother you at work,
doctor. Do you know a Cassandra
Thomas?

Beat.

CHRIS

(wary)

Yeah. Yes. Why?

COP

How do you know her?

CHRIS

We were seeing each other.

COP

'Were' seeing each other?

CHRIS

Yeah. We...we broke up a few days
ago.

COP

Define a few days.

CHRIS

Friday.

COP

Have you had any contact since?

CHRIS

No...I'm sorry what is this
regarding?

COP

Cassandra's parents have filed a
missing persons report.

This is a surprise.

CHRIS

Why?

Beat.

COP

Because she's missing.

Chris is reeling.

CHRIS

Oh my god. Since when?

COP

Since Friday.

CHRIS

Jesus. Why didn't anyone tell me?

COP

You said you were no longer her boyfriend.

CHRIS

I'm not but...

COP

She told her parents something about a work trip, but her colleague didn't know anything about it. Do you have any idea where she might have been going to this weekend?

CHRIS

I-

He stops. If he tells then he could be hugely compromised. They could find the video. What he's about to say is terrible.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Yeah she...said she was going on a work trip.

COP

Any idea where?

CHRIS

No. I'm sorry.

COP

It's alright, son. Between you and me, it sounded like she wasn't feeling so good. Mentally, I mean. Her father seemed to think she was...

Beat.

CHRIS

Yeah. She was...not in a good place.

COP

You saying you think she might have...

The COPS glance at each other.

COP (CONT'D)

Wanted to hurt herself?

This is the get out CHRIS needs. He's happy to believe it too. It'll absolve him.

CHRIS

(relief)

Yeah. Yeah, I guess. She could have.

COP

Poor girl.

(beat)

Well, thank you for your time, Doctor. We don't want to bother you anymore, but if you wouldn't mind coming to the station tomorrow, you know, for an official statement.

CHRIS

(earnest)

Of course. Anything I can do to help.

COP

Thank you, sir.

They leave. CHRIS is shellshocked.

87

EXT. BEACH - DAY

87

A beautiful day. A beautiful wedding. AL kisses his beautiful wife. They walk down the aisle. As AL passes JOE, JOE winks at him. We reveal that sitting behind JOE is CHRIS. JOE turns.

JOE

Hey. You wanna grab a drink? There are a couple of bridesmaids over there with our names on them!

Beat.

CHRIS
(exhausted)
Sure. Why not?

They get up, and walk through the gorgeous, immaculate crowd, to the bar. A BEAUTIFUL GIRL smiles at CHRIS. He smiles back.

Just then his phone goes. It's a message, he looks at the screen.

CASSIE.

Holy shit. He looks around, furtively reads the text.

"Scheduled Message from CASSANDRA THOMAS pending".

What?

His phone beeps again. It's a video attachment.

Then he hears everyone else's phones start to vibrate.

CHRIS doesn't need to look at the video to know what it is. People are taking their phones out one by one and watching in horror. We can hear the cacophonous, nightmarish sound of the video as it's played on multiple phones.

AL MONROE drops his phone as it dawns on him: it's only a matter of time until the whole thing unravels now.

Chris's phone beeps again amidst all the chaos. He looks at it, dazed.

From CASSIE:

"Lucky I got insurance. Enjoy the wedding! ;)"

It's over.

THE END