

HONEY

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INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

We drift through a small old house. A slow rhythmic SCRATCHING echoes through the rooms. Past stacked crusty dishes and dust covered curtains. Through towers of old newspapers lining the halls.

The pipes creak and the wallpaper peels. It's haunting.

There's a hint of a radio humming in the background--repetitive JAZZ meant for dinner parties.

EXT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

OFFICER MCGOWAN, smiling and cocky, a frat-boy just past his prime--he slams a body against a police car. Tightens handcuffs around a perp's wrists.

OFFICER MCGOWAN
Breakin' and enterin', really? At least go for an uncondemned house next time.

He pulls their hood back. This is MIA--20s, knotted hair, a street rat with soft edges. She struggles against the cuffs.

Officer McGowan grabs a wallet from Mia's pocket. Shoves her in the back of the police car and slams the door.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

He gets in the front seat. Plays with the radio. Quickly skips past the same jazz station we just heard.

OFFICER MCGOWAN
Shit as always.

He shuts off the radio. Cracks his knuckles. Thumbs through the wallet.

MIA
You made them too tight.

OFFICER MCGOWAN
You'd know then? Wouldn't you?

He looks back at her. Scans her whole body--slowly.

McGowan pulls her ID from the wallet.

OFFICER MCGOWAN (cont'd)
Wait, I know you.

She turns away from him. He chuckles. Tosses her wallet to the passenger seat.

OFFICER MCGOWAN (cont'd)
Captain's street rat. Tell me I'm
wrong.

MIA
I don't know what--

OFFICER MCGOWAN
--So I have a shit ton of paperwork
tonight for you? Jesus. Probably will
just get out tomorrow.

MIA
Save us both a lot of time and just
let me out now.

OFFICER MCGOWAN
Funny. Not gonna happen.

He looks at her chest. She catches him but pretends not to
notice. Avoids his gaze.

MIA
I was just looking for a place to
sleep.

OFFICER MCGOWAN
Not my problem.

MIA
Please I--

OFFICER MCGOWAN
--would do anything to not go in
tonight. Right?

He winks at her. She doesn't respond.

OFFICER MCGOWAN (cont'd)
Paperwork it is then.

He nods, smiles at himself--that's the end of it. McGowan
switches the radio back on and plays with the dial.

A red PICKUP TRUCK drives past them. We follow it out and
away from the police car.

EXT. DOWNTRODDEN CITY - NIGHT

The truck drives slowly through desolate streets.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The truck pulls up to a small home on a worn suburban street--the outskirts of a city wasting away.

FRANK, 60s and burly with a beer belly, parks the truck. He's the kind of guy you'd see sulking alone in a hardware store.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

The radio hums quietly.

RADIO PERSONALITY # 1
Can't believe everything you hear,
you know.

RADIO PERSONALITY #2
Unless you live on the Southside.
Then I wouldn't want to go out at
night alone.

Frank fusses with his flannel shirt to smooth the wrinkles.

RADIO PERSONALITY #1
This gang crime is gonna die down
again by next week and then we'll be
complaining about police violence or
political corruption again. I'd say
it's just routine.

RADIO PERSONALITY #2
There's been a dozen drive-bys,
muggings, stabbings. I don't see how--

Frank shuts off the engine.

FRANK
Sick fucks.

He grabs groceries from the truck. Walks towards the house.

The front door is lined with half a dozen bolts and locks. He opens each quickly. Frank eagerly steps inside.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Frank looks around the dark dingy home and smiles. This is the home we started in and it's his palace.

FRANK
Honey, I'm home.

A soft KNOCKING comes from a back room in response.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

He drops the groceries at the kitchen table. Dented canned goods tumble out onto the floor.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - LATER

Frank cooks at the stove, setting up two neat plates for him and the Misses.

He places two yellow PILLS on one of the plates beside mashed vegetables.

A bleached-white bony HAND curls around a doorway directly behind Frank. It's frozen, unnatural, and waiting--the nails bloody nubs. But he doesn't see it.

The lights flicker and Frank slams a stiff wrinkled hand on a nearby switch.

The lights flicker back on. The hand is gone from the door.

FRANK

Damn power.

Frank walks out of the kitchen with the food.

INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Frank strides down the hallway towards a bedroom door. Open just a crack. He peeks inside to see a LUMP shift in the bed.

The lights in the house convulse and quiver.

FRANK

I'll be right there, Honey. We'll have our supper.

He leaves the plates at a nearby table.

FRANK (cont'd)

I made your favorite. Just sit tight.

Frank stomps off to the basement door. Grabs a toolbox and flashlight by the stairs. It's dark and ominous below, but he goes down without hesitation.

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT - NIGHT

At the foot of the stairs, Frank stops. Tries to turn on a light--no luck. The light bulb is shattered on the floor.

He walks through the wet cramped space. The ground is littered with debris. Thin streams of light from the flashlight seep into the corners. *But something's off.*

A stained bare mattress with torn blankets sits in the corner. Piles of clothes, toys, and books are strewn over the cold cement. Someone has lived down here before, but Frank doesn't react.

He swings the fuse box open. Some wires have been ripped out and cut. Thin sparks nip at Frank's fingers.

FRANK

What the--

A figure fills the doorway of the basement, casting shadows.

Frank runs to the stairs.

Looking down at him is a gangly outline of a WOMAN. Her hair matted and clothes ripped.

FRANK (cont'd)

Honey??

They both stare motionless at each other. Frozen in time.

He dares to take one step up the stairs. She grabs the door with a trembling hand. His face turns sour; his body stiffens--a current cutting through his veins.

FRANK (cont'd)

YOU BITCH!

Frank charges up the steps towards her. She slams the door shut and loud locks click shut from the other side. He rams his body into the door but can't break it down.

Frank shudders in total darkness. He stumbles back down the steps and grabs the flashlight on the floor.

He's alone.

INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

The bony unnatural hand glides along the sturdy metal locks on the frame and rests on the thick door. The fingernails are badly broken and bloody--the skin raw.

FRANK (O.S.)

(whispers)

You can't keep me down here.

Soft shuffling can be heard from the basement--rummaging.

FRANK (O.S)
LET ME OUT.

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Frank digs through his toolbox. Tosses rusty tools across the floor.

He finds a crooked CROWBAR and charges up the stairs again.

He whips the warped metal against the wood, splintering its edges and sending thin streams of light into the basement.

The door hinges fracture and pull at the frame.

INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Frank's thick arm punches through the ruined wood, digging deep cuts along his flesh. He doesn't seem to notice.

His bloody arm clears the remaining door from the frame. He stumbles out into the hallway.

He is alone, bleeding and savage.

Frank tosses the crowbar and rushes to the bedroom.

FRANK
Are you still here?

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank swings the door open wide and bounds into the bedroom.

There is a lone sweat stained mattress. Thick ropes and chains hang from the bed. Deep bloody scratch marks in a bedpost are filled with bits of broken nail and skin.

The windows are blacked out. This isn't just a bedroom--

It's a prison.

INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Frank runs through the house, searching, and freezes. The front door is wide open. The cold night air rolls in.

He tiptoes to the front porch.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

He wavers at the threshold. Searches the dark street.

FRANK

HONEY?

There is absolute silence as he waits--his entire world spiraling. He crumples to the ground.

A dog barks viciously down the street.

FRANK (cont'd)

(softly)

I made your favorite.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Frank carefully locks each bolt. He turns a worn recliner to face the door. Sits with a SHOTGUN across his lap.

He waits, his calloused fingers tracing up and down the barrel. Thick tears stream down his face.

SIRENS can be heard in the distance. Frank stiffens in his chair. He switches on the radio and it hums to life.

Frank croons softly along with the music. He perches the shotgun between his legs.

A car parks outside the house.

...swift FOOTSTEPS coming closer.

A loud KNOCK KNOCK on the door.

FRANK

Honey, is that you?

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Officer McGowan is at the door. Smiling ear to ear. Looks like he's about ready to score that game-winning touchdown.

Mia's in the back seat of the police car parked in the driveway. She watches McGowan on the steps of the house.

OFFICER MCGOWAN

Sir?

No answer.

OFFICER MCGOWAN (cont'd)

Franklin Smits?

FRANK (O.S.)

Who wants to know?

OFFICER MCGOWAN
I'm from the local PD. We just need
to talk...

He cocks his gun.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Mia fidgets in her cuffs. Nervous. Trapped.

She strains to see what's going on outside. Through a window,
she spots Frank inside the house.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

OFFICER MCGOWAN (O.S.)
Can you just come out and talk to me,
Sir?

FRANK
My wife's missing...

A long silence.

OFFICER MCGOWAN (O.S.)
That's what I came to talk to you
about, Franklin.

FRANK
You found her? She wants to come home?

OFFICER MCGOWAN (O.S.)
We need you to come down to the
station to pick her up.

Frank softly sobs. He sits with the shotgun aimed straight
at the door with McGowan on the other side.

OFFICER MCGOWAN (O.S.) (cont'd)
I'm going to come in now, Mr. Smits.
Is that okay?
(a moment)
I'm going to come in and take you to
her. Do you have any weapons?

No answer.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Mia watches Frank from the car. Sees the faint outline of
the shotgun on his lap. It points towards an unsuspecting
Officer McGowan on the other side of the door.

OFFICER MCGOWAN
I need to hear you, Franklin!

There's an impending doom to this silence.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Frank clears his throat. Stiffens his body to support the angle of the gun at the door.

FRANK
No. No weapons here, Officer.

OFFICER MCGOWAN (O.S.)
Good. Good. Coming in now.

The door knob turns. Frank aims. Finger to the trigger.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Mia's eyes go wide.

MIA
STOP!!!

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The doorknob stops. Frank spins wildly toward the window.
Frank SHOOTS. Thick bullets shatter the wooden door.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank throws the front door open. McGowan's on the front steps--back to the ground. Eyes wide in shock.

Frank pulls his uniform open to reveal a large dent in the cop's bulletproof vest.

McGowan coughs, blood at his lips in an instant. Frank pulls open the Officer's collar to reveal a slit in the side of his neck from the second bullet.

Frank pulls him inside.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Mia watches Frank drag McGowan into the house. She bangs at the car door, but it won't budge.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank comes back to the steps. Looks out to the cop car. Sees the OUTLINE of a woman in the back seat. Can't help but smile. He runs to her. Throws the door open.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Frank's face drops.

FRANK
You aren't...where is she?

Mia shrinks back from him.

MIA
I don't. I don't know who--

FRANK
WHERE IS SHE?

Frank roughly grabs at Mia. Tries to pull her from the car. She kicks back. But he's larger. Stronger.

He drags her from the car and to the house.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Frank throws her to the floor. She stumbles onto Officer McGowan's body. He's eyes dart to her. Soft gurgling coming from his throat. But his body is still--unmoving.

Frank storms through the rooms. Tearing the house apart.

She tugs at McGowan's radio strapped to his chest. Tears stream down her face.

MIA
(into radio)
Officer down. Officer down at...I
don't know. Please help--

Frank rips the radio from her hands. Smashes it on the wall.

FRANK
NONE OF THAT.

He grabs a fistful of her hair. Mia screams. Fights back. Can't free herself from his grasp.

In the scuffle, a single SHOT rings out.

Frank falls back. Mia curls to the ground--a bullet in her leg. Heavily bleeding.

SIRENS echo in the distance.

McGowan squirms on the floor. Frank shoots him in the face. Mia screams.

FRANK (cont'd)
Let's get going.

Mia doesn't move. She wouldn't dare.

FRANK (cont'd)
I SAID LET'S GO.

He grabs Mia by the hair. Drags her from the house.

EXT. HOUSE, FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Frank pulls her down the steps. She trips behind him, barely keeps up with her wounded leg.

FRANK
You took her! Shouldn't have done that. Stupid! STUPI--

MIA
(through sobs)
I didn't take anyone.

FRANK
LYING FUCKING BITCH!!!

He nuzzles the gun against her throat to keep her quiet.

Lights in the neighborhood twinkle to life.

The SIRENS in the distance come closer.

Frank throws open the passenger door of the truck and tosses Mia inside. She scrambles to escape but he shoots through the window--narrowly misses her head.

FRANK (cont'd)
Keep still.

He goes to the driver's side. Gets in. Rests his trembling hands with the gun TAP TAP TAPPING on the steering wheel.

Frank tosses her a withered rag from the ground. It's covered in grime and sweat.

FRANK (cont'd)
Wrap that up, with you? Can't have you dying on me yet.

And with that, he speeds away.

Neighbors shuffle out from nearby houses, tying their robes and rubbing at sleep-deprived eye. Heads in the windows.

Up the street, Frank turns at the first corner. Just out of sight.

Police cars speed down the street and OFFICERS rush inside Frank's house.

We stay there outside for a while at a distance. Letting the police inspect the house. The street comes alive with neighbors and cops.

A lone black car comes up to the house, this is CAPTAIN MORRIS--50s and aging well, but worn at the edges. Wanting to get a personal view of the scene. He's trying to be expressionless--standing there at the edge of the property.

A shaky YOUNG COP comes from the house and straight to Captain Morris. Careful not to get too close. We don't hear what he says, but his hands wring, head down and a single shake.

It's enough to see Captain Morris react. Stiffen, back on duty. The Captain takes a moment before he walks towards the house and dares to cross the threshold.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Frank speeds through the dark streets.

Mia's thigh is tied tight with the rag--now stained with blood. She nurses the leg in her trembling hands. A cry caught deep in her throat.

FRANK

Stop making that noise!

He pulls over sharply. Glares at her. Leaves the truck and locks the door. She blinks wildly, sweat beading on her face, about to lose consciousness.

FRANK (cont'd)

Now don't try anything.

He waves the handgun at her.

She watches him through the shattered window. Frank walks up the street.

He leans down at a car. Pretends to tie his shoe. Frank unscrews the license plate and walks back to his truck.

Changes out the license on his vehicle with the new one.

He gets back in the truck, tosses his old license plate onto Mia's lap.

FRANK (cont'd)
Bet you'd want me to keep going?
Wouldn't think of that. And get found
real fast. They can't go pullin'
every red truck over in the city.

Mia turns, looking back onto the dark street, away from him.

He grabs her roughly by the arm. Turns her to face him. Her tears brimming over. He softens.

MIA
They'll find me.

Frank stiffens.

FRANK
Now don't go make me put another hole
in you to shut that mouth.

Frank backhands her with the gun.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Frank peers through a smudged window. Musty curtains tight around his face. Letting little to no light in the room.

He spins at a SOFT NOISE behind him. Follows it across the room to--

INT. MOTEL ROOM, BATHROOM - DAY

Mia's in the tub, unconscious. Down to her underwear and bra. Hands tied to a safety bar. She squirms--just starting to wake. A large purple bump on her head.

Her body is covered in old white SCARS and cigarette burns. The skin used and abused--someone else's punching bag.

He grabs a piece of thick tape from the counter and rips a piece. Covers her mouth.

Leaves the bathroom.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Frank goes back to the window. Mia's faint movements grow louder. He flinches at every noise.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, BATHROOM - DAY

Mia wakes up, slowly at first, then jerks alive. Finds her hands tied above her head. She has been stripped down to her underwear--her injured leg bandaged but bruising. Her feet thrash against the linoleum tub.

She tries to scream through the tape.

Mia hyperventilates. Controls her breathing. Quiets. Tries to think of a way out of this. And then footsteps...slow at first, then at the door.

She sees Frank hovering. Waiting. Almost expecting her to talk first. He cleans his face at the sink.

FRANK

Thought you wouldn't make it for a little while there. Not enough blood in 'ya my mother would say. Too frail.

(beat)

Didn't do anything...you know.

Looks to her bandaged leg and frilly undergarments. He approaches her. Mia curls up in the tub, hiding herself.

FRANK (cont'd)

I'm a married man. Wouldn't do that. Ain't nothing I haven't seen before.

He carefully reaches for her, she flinches at his touch. Pulls the tape from her mouth.

FRANK (cont'd)

You're smart right? A good cop. No one wants anyone runnin' in here and getting hurt. Right?

MIA

I'm not a--

FRANK

--I'm not stupid. You're working with them to keep her from me.

She takes a deep breath. Grunts at the pain in her leg.

FRANK (cont'd)

Hungry? Thirsty?

Mia nods. His face turns red. He BACKHANDS her.

FRANK (cont'd)

You answer me. Out loud. Do you understand?

She nods--thinks better of herself.

MIA

Yes.

He cuts her restraints loose from the safety bar. Leads her from the bathroom.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The blinds are fully shut. Bits of garbage, clothes, and food spread on the bed.

She eyes the door--a chair propped against the knob. Loud voices chat outside. Frank notices. Plays with a switchblade. A handgun is tucked into his pants.

FRANK

Don't get any ideas.

He turns on the TV. Drowns out the voices. Mia shuffles around the room. Works at the restraints on her wrists.

FRANK (cont'd)

What's your name?

MIA

Why's it matter?

He motions her to sit on a nearby chair. She complies.

FRANK

Why'd you want to be a cop?

MIA

I'm not a cop.

FRANK

Then why were you with the police?
Unless--unless maybe they're looking
for you just like me.

A smile cracks on his face.

MIA

I'm nothing like you.

FRANK

Well, that's it then. Isn't it?
You're a criminal. This city is going
to shit because of you.

(beat)

Either way I can use you to get her
back.

Frank looks back to the TV.

FRANK (cont'd)
I'm not the bad guy here either, they
just won't understand.

Mia's silent. Works at her restraints. Stops when he looks
her way.

FRANK (cont'd)
They stole something that isn't
theirs. She's my responsibility!
They're keeping her locked up. Away
from me!

MIA
She ran away from you.

He stands abruptly. Fists clenched. She bolts up, tries to
make distance between them. But can't match his gaze.

FRANK
I'm gonna get her back. And you're
gonna help me.

Frank pushes her back to the bed. She crawls back, terrified.

INT. POLICE STATION, OFFICE - DAY

Captain Morris is at a large desk buried in paperwork.

There's a soft knock on the closed office door. INSPECTOR
PHILLIPS on the other side, 30s with a buzz cut--closer to a
military man than a cop and he likes it that way. He enters.
Waits for Captain Morris to look up.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS
We've brought Ms. Williams from the
hospital.

CAPTAIN PHILLIPS
Her statement?

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS
More to get, of course. Years more...
but nothing else about where Franklin
or Mia Estrella might be.

The Captain finally looks up from his desk.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
How is she?

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS
Wants to talk to you. You ready to
finally meet her?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I've been ready for ten years.

INT. POLICE STATION, HALLWAY - DAY

Captain Morris waits outside of a closed door. His hand hovering over a knob.

He catches OFFICERS staring at him. Goes inside.

INT. POLICE STATION, INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Three people all look up as the Captain enters.

MR. & MRS. WILLIAMS--straight from a 50s sitcom, middle aged. They hold dearly onto SHARON--now cleaned, hands bandaged. Barely recognizable as the gangly woman from before.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Mr. and Mrs. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS
It's been a long time, Sergeant
Morris.

Morris won't dare take another step.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Captain now.

Mrs. Williams' cautiously leaves her daughter's side. She hugs Captain Morris with all her strength. The tension in the room subsides. The Captain falls into the embrace.

MRS. WILLIAMS
You found her.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I just wish it could have been
sooner...or under better circumstances.

Mrs. Williams pulls away.

MRS. WILLIAMS
We heard about that girl. Have you
heard anything?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Nothing yet...I actually wanted to
talk to--

He motions to Sharon. She perks up at the table.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Sharon...I want you to meet Serg--
Captain Morris.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Your parents never stopped looking
for you. They never lost faith they'd
see you again. Not for a second.

MR. WILLIAMS
Neither did you.

The men share a nod.

SHARON
He has someone?

Her quiet voice brings deafening silence the room.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Yes. A girl. Was being brought into
custody when Officer McGowan got the
call. He shouldn't have gone in. She
shouldn't have been there. Mr. Smits
killed our Officer and took...Mia.
Her name was Mia.

SHARON
You knew her?

He's expressionless.

SHARON (cont'd)
You'll find her though, right?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
We're looking.

SHARON
And he'll come after me again too,
won't he?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
We aren't going to let him get you
ever again. I promise.

SHARON
But her...

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I will do everything within my power
to find Mia. But we need your help.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Frank closes the motel door and locks it. He's bundled in a heavy coat. His face hidden underneath a baseball cap.

He cautiously checks the surrounding lot for any onlookers, but he's alone. Frank rests his gaze just beyond the lot. Across the street is a police station.

Cop cars cover the parking lot. A news van is permanently camped near the door. Frank walks in the opposite direction.

INT. POLICE STATION, HALLWAY - DAY

Captain Morris exits the interrogation room. Closes the door behind him. Takes a moment to collect himself.

Inspector Phillips approaches him. Keeps his distance.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

So what's our next step?

CAPTAIN MORRIS

She wants to help us.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

That's great news.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

I just don't know if it'll be enough. Every hour that goes by Mia's chances go down. If she's even still alive.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

We'll find her.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

That's what I told Sharon's parents every day. But I didn't believe it. Not really.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

I've heard the stories. I know this is personal for you but--she can handle herself, can't she?

Captain Morris chuckles to himself, some horrible secret.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Mia's the last person I'd wish this on besides Sharon in there. She shouldn't have been there last night at all. And no...I'm not sure she'll get out of this.

Inspector Phillips stares at him questioningly.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS
What don't I know?

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mia's in bed. She's been wrapped tightly in a blanket. Her whole body restrained. Tape over her mouth. She squirms violently, screams silently--tears overflowing.

She kicks at the bed frame loudly--trying to make any noise.

The knob on the door stirs. She freezes. Frank enters. He shakes out his coat. It's been raining.

He roughly unties the restraints from Mia's body. Uncovers her mouth. He leaves her hands tied. Lightly touches the raw skin at her wrists.

FRANK
Turn the TV on.

She listens. Gets up and turns it on.

FRANK (cont'd)
Keep going.

Mia flicks through the channels.

MIA
What are you looking for?

FRANK
Shut up--wait. Stop!

Mia stops on Local News. REPORTERS hover around a podium.

FRANK (cont'd)
This is important. Can't just rush in guns blazing.

Frank tosses food on the bed. His eyes don't leave the TV.

FRANK (cont'd)
Eat something.

MIA
I'm not hungry.

FRANK
Then get out of the fucking way!

She sits on the far side of the room. He passes glances at her. Mia rubs at the ropes on her wrists.

FRANK (cont'd)
What is it??

MIA
Can you loosen the ropes?

FRANK
No. Absolutely not.

A hum comes from the crowd of press on TV. Frank perks up.

FRANK (cont'd)
Not a peep.

They both watch in silence.

Captain Morris enters the screen. Takes a moment at the onslaught of cameras. There's a flash of recognition on her face at the sight of him. Frank notices.

MIA
Captain?

CAPTAIN MORRIS (TV)
21 hours ago a woman approached a patrol car at 342 Crescent Ave. She was dehydrated and malnourished...

Mia watches Frank. His face twists in anger. Fists balled.

FRANK
Lies!

CAPTAIN MORRIS (TV)
...but had no immediate life-threatening injuries. She told officers at the scene that she had been held hostage for years.

Frank stiffens.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (TV) (cont'd)
Sharon Williams had been missing for almost 10 years. She has been under medical evaluation and is already with her family.

REPORTER #1 (TV)
Captain, is there any information--

CAPTAIN MORRIS (TV)
Questions after.

The crowd settles.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (TV) (cont'd)

While Sharon Williams was being brought to the hospital, Officer Peter McGowan responded immediately to the location that Ms. Williams had reported being held. At the time, a local girl, Mia Estrella was detained in the back seat of his vehicle. McGowan was closest to the residence at the time and responded immediately. We had reason to believe that Sharon's captor was still at the location.

(collects himself)

Officer Peter McGowan was shot and killed at the residence.

The reporters speak up again. Louder this time. The Captain talks over them.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (TV) (cont'd)

What happened leading up to his death and immediately after is still under investigation. But we believe that Mia Estrella was injured and taken from the scene before backup could arrive.

Frank gives Mia a look of disgust.

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

REPORTER #2

I'm hearing reports that there were children and other women at the house.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Absolutely not. And I won't give those rumors any ounce of credibility.

(beat)

Ms. Williams was able to confirm the identity of the man as Franklin Smits, 57 years of age, 6' 1". A photo of both Mia and Franklin have been distributed. We ask that anyone who hears or sees anything to report it immediately. We're just trying to bring her home safe now.

REPORTER #3

What do you say about her--

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Mia's background is not up for review. She is not a criminal or a suspect. She is a victim and only a victim in this case. Myself, this department, and Sharon Williams herself want Mia back home safe. In fact, Ms. Williams wanted to make a personal statement.

The doors of the station open. Sharon walks out, timid to the flashing lights. Her parents at her side--nearly keeping her from floating away.

The reporters grow silent. As if their screams could wipe her from existence.

Sharon takes the podium, doesn't dare look into the cameras. A stack of notecards in her shaking hands.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank goes the window. Looks out at the surrounding street. Mia tries to see outside, but Frank whips the blinds shut.

SHARON (TV)

(a nervous chuckle)

I never could really do this in school...stand up in front of the class.

Frank's eyes lock on the TV, on his wife. Her frail figure, her shaking voice. He walks towards the television.

SHARON (TV) (cont'd)

I asked to talk today...I just wanted to do something...anything.

Frank traces her outline on the dusty glass of the TV.

She stops. Breathes heavily. Almost like she can sense his touch. Feel him watching her. She sobs.

SHARON (TV) (cont'd)

I want Mia back safe. I don't want any harm to come to her. I know she is alive. I know it in my heart. And I just want him to return her...I don't want her to be forgotten...I don't want to hear about her in 10 or 20 years...I can't bear the thought of...

Frank's face drops--his hand frozen on the screen.

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Sharon's parents immediately come to her side.

SHARON

Frank Smits took me when I was 17. I
was hurt every day. Scared. Helpless.

Sharon tries to continue. Shuffles the cards. Her bandaged hands pull at the worn edges of the cards. Blood stains through the tips of her fingers.

She dares to look at the camera. Tears brimming over. But her gaze is harsh and cold. It's only meant for one person.

SHARON (cont'd)

Frank. Just give up. Let her come home. Don't let what you think we had ruin another person's life.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The TV shuts off. Sharon's image fades to black.

Mia watches from the other side of the room. Tears spilling down her face, watching Frank.

Frank's still motionless, stunned. Shaken to his core.

He starts to clean up the room. Not an ounce of emotion. He gets to the bloody pile of Mia's clothes on the bed.

Frank looks at her.

FRANK

You did this!

She doesn't respond.

He rushes her.

FRANK (cont'd)

YOU DID THIS! YOU TURNED HER AGAINST
ME! IT'S ALLLLLLL LIES!

Frank violently throws furniture around the room.

There's BANGING on the wall--a neighbor angry at the noise.

With his back turned, Mia grabs for the knife on the bed. Tries to get a good grip on it.

Slices into his stomach. He beats her. She violently kicks herself free.

Scrambles towards the door. Her last chance--

MIA
HELP ME! SOMEONE HELP ME!!!

She reaches the door. Nearly there. Fingers at the knob. When she's yanked back by her hair. Dragged away across the floor. Frank beats her. Covers her mouth with more tape.

Frank ties her legs.

FRANK
That was stupid. VERY STUPID!

He goes back to the TV. Rips the box from the wall. Drops it next to Mia's face. She flinches back.

FRANK (cont'd)
Why'd they have to go make her say those things? We were happy. I did everything for her. RISKED EVERYTHING! Tell me! How can they do that? Why would she--

There's a loud KNOCK at the door. Mia's eyes go wide. She tries to scream.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The MANAGER is at the door. Halfway through a collapsing burrito. He swings a large ring of keys. Checks a clipboard.

MANAGER
Mr. Smith, can I have a word?

The door opens a crack. The chain still on. Frank's sweaty hidden face on the other end.

MANAGER (cont'd)
I've received some complaints.

FRANK
Fell asleep with the TV on, Sir.
That's all. Be better next time.

The Manager looks like he's gonna give up. His shift is almost over.

MANAGER
Just keep it down.

He turns to go. But freezes. Looks back to Frank and the thick chain in between their faces.

MANAGER (cont'd)

Sir, I'm going to have to ask you to step out of the room for a minute.

FRANK

I'd really just like to go back to bed. I'll keep the volume down.

The Manager tries to peek into the room behind Frank. Kicks at the door.

MANAGER

If you think you're gonna squat here it's not gonna happen! Puttin' chains on the door before we even get around to kickin' you out!

The Manager kicks again. The hinges on the door fracture.

MANAGER (cont'd)

You want me to get the police?

FRANK

No! I wasn't going too--I'll let you in.

Frank shuts it and unlocks the chain.

MANAGER

Faster!

The door opens slowly. The Manager storms in.

MANAGER (cont'd)

Get yourself packed up now. I'm serious--

The Manager spots Mia on the floor. Tied and bloody. Eyes screaming.

MANAGER (cont'd)

What the--

He spins towards Frank. The tip of a knife cracks through the back of the Manager's head. He drops the burrito. He blinks one last time. Frank tugs the knife from his thick skull and the Manager crumbles to the ground on Mia.

Mia tries to push the body off, but it's no use. The dead eyes and bloody gaping hole stare down at her.

Frank kicks off the Manager's body. Pulls Mia up to face him.

FRANK

Do you see what you made me do!?!
THIS IS YOUR FAULT!

He drags her to the window by her hair. Throws the drapes out of their view. Presses her face to the glass.

FRANK (cont'd)

Yell a little louder next time. No one's gonna hear you ever again where we're going. And you were sooo close.

Her eyes go wide at the sight of the police station.

There's loud BANGING on the wall next door--the original complainer. Frank drops his hold on her. She falls away from the window.

He looks down at Mia, crawling away with her arms and legs still bound. Tears overflowing past the tape on her mouth. Frank looks back to the window--out to the bustling station--like saying goodbye to a dear friend.

FRANK (cont'd)

It won't be so bad. We'll get through this.

Frank takes a single step towards her, but sees her cowering in the corner. Goes to the Manager's body instead.

Frank stuffs his body under the bed.

He comes up behind Mia and pulls her across the room--carefully this time.

Frank opens a small window in the bathroom. Climbs through.

EXT. MOTEL, BACK LOT - DAY

Rusty old car parts litter the ground next to a woods. A forgotten dumpster nearby. There's an old Chevy parked right at the window.

He looks around. Makes sure no one's in sight.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mia's alone. She tries to crawl away again.

--But Frank reaches back inside to pull her out. Grabs her by the neck, yanks her through the window.

EXT. MOTEL, BACK LOT - DAY

Frank drags her over to the dumpster and carefully leaves her on the ground. Goes to start up the car.

She kicks and tries to cry out.

The engine hums to life. Frank hovers over her. His thick fingers twist a gold band on his finger--an old habit.

Her eyes screaming. Can barely breathe. Restrained.

FRANK

Shhhhhhh...

He waits for her to calm. He's patient.

It starts to lightly rain.

Her muffled screams quiet.

FRANK (cont'd)

Good.

He carefully picks up her small frame and brings her to the car. She tries to kick but it's no use.

Frank packs her in the trunk.

FRANK (cont'd)

Let's go, Honey.

He slams it shut.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Cameras flash on Sharon. She flinches at them. Captain Morris takes the podium, raises a hand to block the blinding lights.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

No more questions for now, please.
Ms. Williams needs her rest.

Sharon's parents lead her back towards the building. Reporters shout after her with questions.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)

For now, if anyone sees anything we strongly encourage them to reach out.

Sharon gingerly walks back into the station. Her parents pushing her along, blocking the cameras.

She tightens her coat against a rising wind. The Captain and reporters voices become muffled behind her. Just empty noise.

Sharon looks up at the dark sky. Single large raindrops hit her face. She stops. Life being breathed back into her. She dares to look back at the crowd, but something catches her attention. An old Chevy pulls out from the motel across the street. Nothing remarkable about it, the driver shadowed.

Reporters shout at her, trying to get any answer or response--their voices deafening.

INT. TRUNK - DAY

Mia screams at the top of her lungs. Bangs and kicks wildly against the trunk till she's red in the face.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Sharon's gaze is locked on the Chevy drifting silently away from the roaring crowd.

Inspector Phillips lightly touches her arm, urging her forward. She flinches at it, hurries along--forgets the car. She follows him into the police station.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Frank drives slowly down a congested highway. A hand pressed tight to his side, blood seeping through his shirt.

INT. TRUNK - NIGHT

Mia bangs at the lid of the trunk. She breathes heavily. Hyperventilating--but it's no use.

EXT. SUPERMARKET, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Frank walks through the parking lot. He passes rows and rows of empty spots. The Chevy is parked in the far corner.

He can hear soft KNOCKING coming from the trunk--an exhausted plea for help.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Frank jerks awake in his seat. His hands grip the steering wheel tighter. He's sweating, tired, and weak.

The radio on the car reads 4:00am.

He feels for the wound at his side again and grimaces. His new make-shift bandage isn't doing too much to help him.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

Frank watches TRUCKERS across a lot chatting. The trunk of his car is silent.

The truckers drive off.

Frank grabs a bag of supplies and opens the trunk.

Mia's unconscious inside. Her tied hands are badly bruised from trying to escape. She's curled in a ball to keep warm.

Her eyes flutter open. Frank watches her.

MIA

Please...

He roughly grabs her and pulls her from the trunk. Leads her to a small building nearby. Pushes her inside.

INT. TRUCK STOP, BATHROOM - NIGHT

She stumbles to the floor. Blinded by the harsh fluorescent lights inside.

Frank follows her in. Barricades the door with a trash can. She crawls away from him. He goes straight to the sink. Throws water on his face. Winces.

FRANK

Come here.

She doesn't listen. Frank lifts his shirt to look at his side. A poorly placed bandage, already bled through, taped to his skin. He lifts the bandage to reveal a deep open cut.

Mia slowly stands, tries to get a better look. Thin streams of blood come from Frank's wound. He's hunched over, trying to get out a labored breath.

FRANK (cont'd)

Happy with your handiwork there?

(beat)

Get over here!

They lock eyes through the mirror. Mia bolts to the door.

Frank spins. Pulls the handgun and shoots at the door. Shatters the knob. Mia falls back. Curles into a ball.

FRANK (cont'd)

I SAID GET OVER HERE!!!

She just cries. Frank shoots at a tile near her foot. Mia listens this time. She crawls towards him.

He drops the bag at her feet.

Mia goes through the supplies, pulls out bandages and gauze.

FRANK (cont'd)

Not that.

He motions to a small sewing kit. She picks it up with trembling hands.

MIA

No. No I can't--

Frank shoves the barrel of the gun in her mouth. She freezes.

FRANK

I didn't ask.

Mia doesn't dare move.

FRANK (cont'd)

Do you know what kinda mess this will make if I pull the trigger?

(beat)

Double wrap the thread. It'll hold better.

Her eyes wide. Gun still in her mouth. Mia opens the sewing kit. Tries to pull the thread out.

FRANK (cont'd)

Double it up.

She listens. Doubles the thread but doesn't have the strength to break it from the spool.

Frank grabs the thread from her and tears it with his teeth. Gives it back to her. She tries to put it through the needle while staring down the barrel of the gun.

FRANK (cont'd)

My wife--she always said it was like a bow n' arrow. Take a breath, release and go.

Sharon tries it. The thread goes straight through.

FRANK (cont'd)

She loved sewing. Did it whenever I let her. Better than TV I always said, doesn't rot the brain.

Mia waits with the threaded needle. Frank shoves the gun deeper. Her teeth nearly at the trigger. She gags.

FRANK (cont'd)
I didn't say to stop!

Mia's hand trembles wildly with the needle. Close to Frank's wound but not daring to break the skin. A flash of compassion across his face.

FRANK (cont'd)
Shhhhh...

He touches her hand. Guides the needle toward the open wound. Squeezes her hand to steady it.

Tears stream down Mia's face. She starts sewing him up. He grimaces at the pain but bares it.

He watches her carefully as she sews. He looks at her leg, bandaged but still bleeding.

FRANK (cont'd)
We'll fix you up when we get there.
Be good as new.

INT. TRUCK STOP, BATHROOM - LATER

Mia throws up in a toilet. Frank checks her handiwork in the mirror. Thick black thread crisscrossed at his side.

FRANK
First time, aye? You'll get better
with practice.

MIA
I need to go to the bathroom.

He shoots her a wicked glance. Balls up his shirt and changes it out for a fresh one from the bag.

FRANK
Not stoppin' you.

MIA
Please. I...

FRANK
Fine.

He approaches her. Holds her trembling bloody hands.

FRANK (cont'd)
You should wash up too. Just be quick
about it.

He packs the supplies back in the bag and leaves.

EXT. TRUCK STOP, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frank exits.

He looks around the lot. It's still empty.

INT. TRUCK STOP, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mia turns on the faucet. Throws murky water on her face. Goes back to the door. Listens for Frank on the other side.

She surveys the bathroom, looking for any escape--any hope.

Mia spots a small window near the ceiling. Drags her injured leg behind her toward it. She stands on the toilet. Pries at the lock, but it won't budge.

FRANK (O.S.)

Want me to come back in there? Hurry it up!

MIA

Coming.

Mia falls to the floor. Looks around hopelessly.

MIA (cont'd)

(whispers)

Not again...

Her trembling fingers pound at the stained tile beneath her. And then she stops. Mia roughly digs her hand underneath the bandage on her leg, pulls at the wrappings. Her hand comes out bloody.

She crawls to a corner and moves her crimson hand swiftly across the tile. Steady. Precise.

Her eyes dart nervously to the door every few seconds.

She pulls away to see her handiwork. "**HELP**" is spelled on the ground in her own blood.

Mia reaches her hand inside her bandage one last time. Pulls it out and places her palm to the ground again--flat this time. A full HANDPRINT. Clear fingerprints.

EXT. TRUCK STOP, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frank is getting impatient. He kicks at the crumbling asphalt. A truck pulls into the lot. He moves to open the door when Mia steps out. Blocks his view inside.

MIA
I'm ready.

FRANK
Well...good.

He grabs her by her arm and pulls her back to the car.
Swings the trunk open. She hesitates.

MIA
Please. Don't make me go back in
there. I--

FRANK
--Just till we're out of here.

He eyes the truck nearby. Looking for any hint of movement.
Shoves the gun to her spine. Pushes her into the trunk.

FRANK (cont'd)
I SAID GET IN.

He slams it closed.

INT. TRUNK - NIGHT

Mia breathes heavily in the pitch blackness. She listens for
Frank shuffling around outside. A small smile on her lips.
But it gets quiet. And the car doesn't start just yet.

INT. TRUCK STOP, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frank heads back into the bathroom.

He spots Mia's bloody message in the corner. Her mark crisp
and red. He kneels at it. Let's his own palm hover over
Mia's small crimson HANDPRINT.

Something wells up inside him.

And then he touches it. Let's his hand fall on the cold red
tile. He smears the bloody message.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

Frank walks back to the car. Dries his freshly washed hands
with a paper towel.

He passes a TRUCKER on the way to the bathroom. Nods at him.

Frank gets in the Chevy and drives off.

INT. POLICE STATION, OFFICE - DAY

Captain Morris is asleep at his desk.

A file for Mia Estrella open on his desk, a young picture of her attached to the outside. Newspaper clippings spill out.

There's a knock on the door. The Captain jerks up. A worried SECRETARY is at the threshold.

He wipes at his red glassy eyes.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Yes? Anything?

SECRETARY

No, not yet.

She doesn't leave.

SECRETARY (cont'd)

You should head home, Captain. We'll let you know if there are any changes.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

If I wanted to be home I'd be there.

SECRETARY

Other Officers are starting to talk...

The Captain glares at Officers in the pen watching him. They all shuffle back to work.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Will that be all?

She starts to leave.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)

Wait! Have you sent the new photo for Mia out yet? The better one.

SECRETARY

We'll get right on it.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Good.

She leaves. Captain Morris looks at the young photograph of Mia and tucks it back into the folder.

INT. TRUNK - DAY

Mia wakes up in the trunk. Sweating bullets. She feels for her injured leg and reels back at the pain.

She pounds at the lid. The car slows to a stop.

Loud FOOTSTEPS against gravel.

The trunk opens. Frank stares down at her. She blinks wildly at the blinding light.

FRANK

Well, look who's awake.

She tries to talk. Her lips chapped and mouth dry. Dangerously dehydrated. Her condition deteriorating.

Mia shudders. He holds her face in his hands.

FRANK (cont'd)

Are you alright, Mia?

She's disoriented. Tries to get out of the trunk.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

FRANK

Hold on. Hold on.

He checks the surrounding road. It's an empty two-lane highway off the beaten path.

FRANK (cont'd)

Come on.

He helps her out. She tries to run, but can't get more than a couple steps before she falls back onto him for support.

FRANK (cont'd)

Don't worry. I got you. I got you.

He leads her to the back seat of the Chevy. Lays her down.

INT. CAR - DAY

He pulls at her pant leg and opens her soaked bandage.

She tries to stop him but doesn't have the strength to hold him back.

Her leg is discolored around a poorly closed bullet wound.

FRANK

Dammit. It's infected. We're almost there. I told you I'd fix you up then.

Her eyes roll to the back of her head. Her lips smack. Frank pulls a canteen from the front seat and puts it to her lips. She drinks eagerly, but coughs most of it up.

FRANK (cont'd)
Shhhh. Drink slowly.

He makes her drink slower. Pace herself. She stops shaking. Eyes close.

FRANK (cont'd)
Good.

Frank rummages in the front seat for the medical bag. Pulls out the sewing kit. Thinks better of himself.

He gags Mia's mouth with his old bloody shirt.

Frank carefully cuts a bullet with the tip of his knife. He taps fresh gunpowder over her open wound.

She writhes but doesn't wake up.

FRANK (cont'd)
I'm so sorry, Honey.

He lights a cigarette. Holds it just over the gunpowder. Lets the faint flame lick at the gray powder and spark.

Mia bolts up. The pain startling her awake. Her leg sizzles. She desperately reaches for her burning flesh.

Frank holds her down. She claws at his face.

--And she crashes. Eyes roll back in her head. Her body weak and limp.

Frank cleans off the freshly burned skin on her leg. Traces the scar with his calloused fingers.

FRANK (cont'd)
I didn't want to scar you. It won't happen again. We'll get you better.

He touches a deep fresh scratch across his cheek.

Frank pulls out a small syringe and an old bottle of penicillin from the medical bag.

He hesitates. Pulls up his shirt and checks his fresh stitches. They're neat. No sign of any discoloration.

Frank jams the needle into her leg.

EXT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

Captain Morris pauses on the crumbling cement steps. Opens a rickety screen door and enters.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

Captain Morris drifts through the dreary interior.

He tears open the blinds. Light pours in, touching the room for the first time in years. Dust unsettles.

He moves back into the living room. There's a dried blood stain on the carpet. He avoids it.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

The Captain hovers at the threshold. The bare mattress covered in books and tattered blankets. Chains still hang from the bedpost.

There's a smashed TV in the corner.

The Captain tears down blackout curtains over the window. Blinding light pours into the room.

He digs through a desk in the corner.

A car door SLAMS outside.

EXT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

Captain Morris exits the house.

Inspector Phillips is there. Leaning against his car.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

We've been looking for you, Captain.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

You wanted me out of the station, didn't you?

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

We wanted you to get some rest. To go home. Sherry says you haven't been there since--

CAPTAIN MORRIS

--you're calling my wife now?

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

What are you doing here again?

CAPTAIN MORRIS

I think we're missing something. I was looking over his finances again.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

Those have already been checked.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Every week he'd have the same routine. Friday, like clockwork. Deposit his paycheck at the bank. Then once every two months he just wouldn't.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

So he was saving cash on the side. He could've been using that for anything.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

The first time he did it was the week Sharon Williams went missing.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

And? What are you getting at?

CAPTAIN MORRIS

He didn't grab anything from his home before he left.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

He knew the police were coming.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Frank Smits lived in this house since he was a child. But he didn't take one thing. Yet there're no pictures inside. No deeds or paperwork. There's no suitcases--but empty closets and drawers. I think he was planning on taking Sharon away.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

Then he didn't tell her about it.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Can't figure that bit out.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

You need to stop.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Excuse me?

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

The broadcast backfired.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS (cont'd)
What? You thought he'd come straight to
the station and just give himself up?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I was trying to get Mia back.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS
Why does it matter? She's just a
criminal.

The Captain punches him in the face. Phillips stumbles back
to the sidewalk. Feels at his broken lip.

Inspector Phillips pulls out Mia's file and throws it at the
Captain. Not daring to take another step towards him.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS (cont'd)
Everyone knows where that girl came
from. What she was going to become.
She has no family. No one that'll
miss her.

(beat)

Any you think that just because you
pulled her from a couple crappy
foster homes that you're some big
savior. Hero cop, right? Needed to
focus on some innocent girl all those
years cause you couldn't find Sharon.

Phillips heads back to his car.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS (cont'd)
But you can't find Mia either. Just go
home, Captain. You're too close to
this. Leave it to the rest of us.

He drives off.

The Captain waits. Crumples up the file. Tears down caution
tape hanging from the mailbox.

A NEIGHBOR comes outside dragging a bin of garbage to the
curb. They nod at each other.

The Captain walks off down the street. We follow him. Past
rows of downtrodden houses.

He turns at the end of the road. Not looking up from the
ground--a familiar path.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The Captain walks to the end of the street and stops outside a small well-kept house. Walks up the drive-way. Pauses.

Decides not to go in.

He grabs keys from his pocket and goes to the garage. Drives out in a beaten up station wagon. A middle-aged woman stares solemnly at him from the front window of the house, SHERRY.

Captain Morris stops. Can't bear to look her in the eye. She doesn't expect him to.

He drives off.

INT. GAS STATION, FOOD MART - DAY

Frank drifts through the aisles of a gas station market.

He avoids a STATE TROOPER at the other end of a shop. Pours himself a cup of black coffee from a burnt pot. He heads to the counter.

The CLERK sees the deep scratch marks on Frank's face.

CLERK
You okay, sir?

FRANK
Wife getting a bit frisky, lately.

He winks at her.

CLERK
This all?

FRANK
Ohh, wait.

He grabs a candy bar from a shelf. Drops it on the counter.

FRANK (cont'd)
Her favorite.

EXT. GAS STATION, FOOD MART - DAY

Frank strolls across the lot. Towards the Chevy.

He peeks in the backseat. Mia's unconscious. Wrapped tightly in a blanket--just looks like she's taking a nap. Frank smiles at the sight of her. Taps lightly on the window.

INT. GAS STATION, FOOD MART - DAY

The Clerk calls over the Trooper. Points at Frank. They talk in hushed whispers. Watch Frank drive off.

INT. CAR - DAY

Frank's driving. Mia stirs in the backseat.

She wakes. Pushes off blankets. Finds her hands restrained.

FRANK

You're looking so much better, sweetie.

She feels at her bandaged leg. Looks down at herself. She's dressed in fresh clothes. Floral prints 10 sizes too big.

FRANK (cont'd)

I have some nice clothes for you at home. They should fit you better. You're about her size.

(beat)

Got you somethin'.

He tosses her a candy bar. She pushes it away.

MIA

...water?

FRANK

Come on. You'll like it.

MIA

I don't want it.

He slams on the breaks.

FRANK

Eat the damn fuckin' candy. I bought it for you.

MIA

No!

He roughly pulls at his seat belt--about to go after her, when he gets distracted. Spots a vehicle coming up the road behind him. He waits. Looks closer. It's a Trooper car.

Frank stiffens.

FRANK

You're feeling better. Get back in the trunk.

MIA
What? I didn't--

FRANK
GET IN THE BACK NOW.

He reaches back and squeezes her injured leg. She shrieks.

FRANK (cont'd)
Unlatch the seat and crawl back there
or I'll cut your fucking head off.

He pulls out a knife. Waves it wildly at her.

She shrinks back. Tries to unlatch the seat to the trunk.
Mia spots the Trooper's car at a distance. Hesitates.

FRANK (cont'd)
Don't make me come back there.

She scrambles. He pushes her into the trunk.

INT. TRUNK - DAY

She kneels in the trunk. Holds the latch on the seat from locking. Frank speeds off.

FRANK (O.S.)
We'll be home soon. I'm sorry I
snapped at you, Honey. I'll get you
something you like more. You don't
like chocolate? What's your favorite?
(beat)
I'll remember, I promise.

Soft SIRENS hum behind them. They grow louder.

Frank slows down.

INT. CAR - DAY

He makes room to let the Trooper pass.

--but the Trooper stays with him. Waves an arm out the window for Frank to pull over.

INT. TRUNK - DAY

FRANK (O.S.)
...nothin' better to do...

Mia feels the car stop.

INT. CAR - DAY

He watches the Trooper pull up behind him.

Frank checks his loaded handgun.

FRANK

If I hear one fuckin' peep... Do you understand me, Mia?

She doesn't answer. He's pissed, but can't show it. He slams a fist on the backseat. The trunk latch locks shut.

FRANK (cont'd)

You don't want another death on your hands, do you? He'll just get in our way. We'll never get home.

INT. TRUNK - DAY

Mia listens from the trunk. She pushes lightly on the seat, but it won't budge.

She waits. Listens for the Trooper's FOOTSTEPS.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The Trooper walks towards the Chevy. He's cautious. Talking on his radio. Keeps his distance for now.

Frank steps out of the car. The Trooper becomes alert.

TROOPER

Get back in your vehicle, Sir!

FRANK

Is there a problem?

TROOPER

Just get back in.

Frank weighs the man in front of him. Resigns and gets back in the car. Closes the door behind him.

The Trooper approaches the car. Unlatches his holster.

INT. TRUNK - DAY

Mia hears Frank in the front. Softly mumbling to himself.

FRANK (O.S.)

Don't want any trouble. Just wondering what the problem is, Officer.

TROOPER (O.S.)
No problem. You were just going over
the limit.

FRANK
I wasn't.

The silence holds for a moment.

TROOPER (O.S.)
I need to see your license and
registration.

FRANK (O.S.)
Fine, fine. Just give me a minute.

Frank shuffles around the front seat.

TROOPER (O.S.)
I'm gonna need you to take the keys
out of the ignition too, Sir.

FRANK (O.S.)
This nonsense is what my taxes are
going to? 60 in a 55? Come on!

TROOPER (O.S.)
Your keys, registration, and license.
Please. Then we'll get you back on
your way.

FRANK (O.S.)
Really? Just like that?

TROOPER (O.S.)
Just like that.

Mia pushes at the seat again but the latch is locked. She
collects herself. Takes a minute.

FRANK (O.S.)
Here they are.

Mia screams and pounds at the seat with all her strength.

SHOTS FIRE OUT.

FRANK (O.S.) (cont'd)
STUPID BITCH!

Mia kicks at the seat. SHRIEKS at the pain in her leg.

The latch on the seat splinters and breaks. She tumbles out
into the back seat.

Frank and Mia stare at each other. He waves a smoking handgun.

Mia rushes to the window and bangs on the glass. The Trooper is on the ground--a gaping hole in his cheek. He catches sight of her. Reaches out a hand helplessly...

Mia digs at the lock on the door but it won't open.

Frank backs up and drives over him. Mia shrieks.

Frank speeds off.

Mia attacks Frank. Wraps her restraints around his neck.

He swerves. Tries to keep on the road.

He SHOOTS at the backseat.

But she won't give in this time.

He SLAMS on the breaks.

She comes tumbling to the front seat, her restraints loose from his neck.

Her head hits the windshield hard. Her eyes flutter and close.

The windshield is cracked and bloody. Frank pushes her limp body to the ground of the passenger seat.

He looks back at the Trooper's body on the street in the distance.

Frank pounds the steering wheel.

He points the gun at Mia--about to boil over.

But he can't bring himself to do it.

FRANK

You're gonna regret that.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Captain Morris parks outside. Nods at a nearby police car. An UNSEEN OFFICER behind the wheel. A small heard of PRESS nearby sip coffee.

The Captain goes to the front steps. Hesitates. About to knock, when the door opens abruptly.

MR. WILLIAMS

We weren't expecting you, Captain.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Just wanted to stop by. See how she
was doing.

MR. WILLIAMS
As good as can be expected.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Good. Good.

An awkward silence.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)
And you two?

MR. WILLIAMS
Thrilled of course. But we're all
trying to cope here.

Mrs. Williams comes up behind her husband. Smiles at them.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Any news on that girl?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
None yet.
(beat)
I was actually wondering if I could
speak with Sharon.

Mr. Williams blocks the threshold.

MR. WILLIAMS
You already spoke with her.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I just have a few more things I'd
like to--

MR. WILLIAMS
--She's sleeping.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Please, I--

MRS. WILLIAMS
--We said no.

Captain Morris takes a step back.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Of course, I understand.

Mr. Williams nods and closes the door. The Captain waits on
the steps. Uncertain of his next move.

Heads back to his car.

A frail figure catches his attention from the backyard. Sharon sways on a tree swing.

He looks back to the house for any movement. None. He dredges into the backyard. Across dewy unkempt grass.

Sharon turns at his quiet footsteps. Her wide eyes soften at the sight of him. Red-rimmed eyes and a lofty gaze.

SHARON

Captain...

Her whimsical voice carries. She strangles the grass with her bare toes to come to a stop. Sharon smiles softly. Her eyes unfocused and head heavy--heavily medicated.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

It's good to see you again, Sharon.
How are you feeling today?

She doesn't answer.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)

Your parents said you were sleeping.

SHARON

Shhhh. They're just worried.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

That's understandable.

SHARON

--worried Frank is going to come back for me now. Because of what I said.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

We won't let that happen.

SHARON

He won't though...

She twirls herself on the swing.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Why do you say that?

SHARON

I know him better than anyone. He'll never come after me now.

He kneels down next her. Holds the swing taut. A smile cracks on her face.

SHARON (cont'd)

He hates me...and he has someone new.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

We'll find her. I promised you I--

SHARON

No. You won't. He's not gonna let her go. He's just gonna start where he left off....and he trusted me. I got smart. I made him trust me. He believed in us. And now he's angry...

CAPTAIN MORRIS

We wanted him put away. Wanted him to give himself up.

SHARON

Nothing can hurt him...Nothing can keep him away. Bars wouldn't have held him...so I had to protect myself.

He drops his hold on the swing. Tries to read her unsteady gaze.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

You wanted him to leave with her?

SHARON

I'll never have to see his face again now. People will just forget and everything will go back to the way it was.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Not for Mia.

SHARON

She's not my responsibility.

She leans back--her gaze on the spiraling tree above. Takes a deep breath of fresh air.

He grabs Sharon roughly by the shoulders. Shakes her.

Sharon tears up.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Do you know where he took her?

SHARON

It's not my fault!

CAPTAIN MORRIS

TELL ME!

SHARON

I don't know.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

He trusted you. You have to know something!

SHARON

He wouldn't tell me. He'd just go.

He tightens his grip on her.

SHARON (cont'd)

You're hurting me!

CAPTAIN MORRIS

WHERE DID HE GO?

SHARON

He'd just leave for a couple days. Say he'd be going to our new home.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Where?

SHARON

I don't know! He'd say he was fixing it up for us. Making it perfect for me. Said he hated seeing me locked up...wanted a place for our family.

The Captain drops his hold on her, steps back. Sharon loses it. Tears spilling over. Shaking uncontrollably.

SHARON (cont'd)

I said I didn't want to go. Ever. And then I'd get in trouble...If she's there then I don't have to be. He has someone else. And he won't let her go. So I'm free, right?

She looks to him for an ounce of sympathy--but he's not about to give it. Sharon tucks her knees to her chest.

SHARON (cont'd)

I'm free, Captain. I'm free. I'm fr--

MR. WILLIAMS (O.S.)

HEY!

Mr. Williams comes running out of the house towards them.

INT. CAR - DAY

Frank pulls into a hidden driveway on a desolate back road.

A large rusted gate blocks his path. He gets out, moves it and drives through.

Weeds burst through old gravel on the forgotten path. Thick trees in every direction.

He looks down at Mia, still unconscious and crumpled on the floor of the passenger side.

An old hunter's cabin comes into view at the end of the driveway. Frank sighs. Stops the car. Pauses--calmed by the sight of it.

FRANK

Told you we'd be here soon.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Frank gets out of the car and goes to the passenger side. He pulls Mia out and cradles her in his arms.

He carries her to the cabin. Crosses the rotting porch.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Frank enters. Dust unsettles.

Something small and unseen scurries off. Guns and stuffed animal carcasses line the walls. This is the kind of place you go to get away--no solicitors or bible thumpers. Not even a neighbor.

The far side of the room is different though. Stacks of neatly packaged boxes waiting to be opened.

He gently lays Mia on a sagging couch. Goes to open the blinds and windows.

FRANK

Finally home, Honey. Let's just get some fresh air in here for you.

(beat)

It's been locked up for too long. We should've moved here years ago. Really. The city's gone to hell. The crazies there...It was dangerous. We'll clean it up though. Sweep up the cobwebs and make it feel like home. We'll love it here.

He walks slowly towards her. Feels the back of her head-- sticky blood matted hair.

FRANK (cont'd)
 You have to be more careful though.
 Less reckless. You're very lucky.
 (beat)
 Do you know that? No one has this.
 What we have. We'll be happy. You'll
 have whatever you want here...

He holds her unconscious face in his hands. Lets his bloody finger trace her red lips.

FRANK (cont'd)
 ...and I'll have you.

Frank kisses her softly.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Frank cooks over the stove. He rubs at his tender neck.

Mia wakes up on the couch. Not quite sure where she is. Frank whistles loudly on the other side of the room.

She feels the back of her head--dried matted blood.

FRANK
 You must be hungry. It's been days
 since you ate a proper meal.

He sets a table neatly with silverware. Places two plates of dinner for them.

FRANK (cont'd)
 Hope you're not a vegetarian. Won't
 have that under my roof. Need protein
 and red meat to keep your mind sharp
 these days.
 (beat)
 Well, come on. I won't bite.

Frank motions her over. She sits up.

MIA
 Where...where are we?

FRANK
 Home.

MIA
 Where's home exactly?

His face sours.

FRANK
--where the heart is. That's what
mother always said.

He waits for a smile, but doesn't get it.

FRANK (cont'd)
A ways away from where we were
before. Let's leave it at that.
(beat)
Come on before it gets cold.

Mia hesitantly stands. Finds her ankles in shackles.

FRANK (cont'd)
It's just for now. Don't want you
getting any silly ideas. But...I'm
not a monster, I don't want you tied
up in the back or in the basement. I
want you out here with me. Free.
That's why we came here.

MIA
(shaky)
That's very considerate of you.

He gives her a disapproving look--but brushes it off.

FRANK
And I know that's sarcasm.

She stands. Shuffles through the room. Keeps her distance.

FRANK (cont'd)
Sit--or I'll make you sit.

Mia listens. Sits at the table. He comes next to her.

FRANK (cont'd)
I got to check your head there. You
got a nasty bang.

He gets a first aid kit from under the sink. Stands over
her. Pauses.

FRANK (cont'd)
Well, you aren't one, right?
A vegetarian?

MIA
Once...but...no.

FRANK

Good. Then eat.

She takes a fork. Nibbles at the mushy food. He looks at her head. Starts to clean and bandage it as she eats.

FRANK (cont'd)

Sharon was a good cook. Better than me at least. But you'll be better. Get the hang of it. Everyone does.

MIA

It's very good.

He gives her a wide grin. Flattens a thick bandage on her head. She winces at his touch.

FRANK

Almost...there.

Frank claps his hands together. Sits down across from her.

FRANK (cont'd)

Not so bad. Good as new.

He starts eating. Shoveling down his food. Mia watches him in silence. Frank catches her look.

FRANK (cont'd)

What are you looking at?

MIA

Noth--nothing.

He doesn't buy it.

FRANK

Tell me about yourself, Mia. Mia Estrella. What kind of name is that? Where does that come from?

MIA

I don't know.

FRANK

That's not an answer. Who gave you it?

MIA

I don't know.

He chews slowly. Takes a bit gulp of water.

FRANK

A mutt then. Got a mix of somethin' in ya? Look like it. That's a good thing. Healthy.

Her gaze hardens.

FRANK (cont'd)

So why were you in the back of the cop car? What'd you do?

MIA

Nothing wrong. Why do you care?

FRANK

Cause you're a very pretty girl. We'll have plenty of time together. I'd love to know everything about you. And you'll learn everything about me.

MIA

I know everything I need to know.

FRANK

And you probably think everyone's looking for you. The whole cavalry.

She silent.

FRANK (cont'd)

But is anyone really missing you?

Mia looks to her meal.

FRANK (cont'd)

That's what I thought.

He pushes his plate towards her.

FRANK (cont'd)

If you're done eating you can clean up. Sink's over there.

EXT. GAS STATION, FOOD MART - DAY

The Clerk talks to a LANKY TROOPER smacking gum. Captain Morris walks in. Looks around. Locks on her and walks over.

The Trooper nods at him.

LANKY TROOPER

Captain Morris?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Thanks for the call.

He nods. Leaves it at that. The Trooper gives him a moment with the Clerk.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)
You must be Annalee Wilson?

CLERK
Yea.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I just have a few additional questions for you.

CLERK
I've already answered all 'yer guys questions. Doubt you can think of any more.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Just humor me then. I've driven a very long way.

CLERK
It happened a few miles north of here. That's where all the other cops are.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Just came from there. It's a bloody mess. Couldn't look at it much more.

The Clerk looks away from him. He expected that.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)
You recognized Mr. Smits then?
Pointed the Trooper in his direction.

CLERK
Didn't know he'd hurt him. I was just trying to help.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
It was very good of you to say something. No one blames you.

CLERK
His face is all over the TV. Someone else'll spot him too. They'll find that girl I bet.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
That's what we're hoping for. Didn't see any sign of her though?

CLERK

Naw, but he had scratches on his face. Think a woman made them. Said it was his wife.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Just one more question. Frank Smits has never come here before, right?

CLERK

Why would he--no, I would've remembered him.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

It would've been over a couple years. Like clockwork. Might've stopped in for gas or food. He could've been coming by here for a long time.

CLERK

So many people come in here. All sorts...

CAPTAIN MORRIS

I have dates...weekends he might have come through.

The Captain nods at a security camera in the corner. Blinking red.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)

How far do those go back?

EXT. GAS STATION, FOOD MART - DAY

Captain Morris leaves, a box of tapes under his arm.

His cell phone buzzes. He looks at the caller ID: SHERRY. Dismisses it. Makes a call to someone else.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

(on phone)

Yes. Phillips? I'll be back in a few days. Taking some time off like you said...Just clearing my head...Yea. Fine...Call me if there's any news on Mia...or Frank...Thanks.

The Captain hangs up. Walks to the road.

He looks in both directions.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Frank's at the road, looks in both directions. Not a car in sight. He pulls bundles of letters from an overflowing mailbox.

He secures the metal gate and walks back down the driveway.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Mia's chained to a radiator in the corner. Her eyes red from crying. She peeks out a nearby window, looking for any sign of Frank. Nothing.

She collects herself. Takes a big breath and screams at the top of her lungs.

MIA
HELP ME! SOMEONE. PLEASE!

She shakes uncontrollably. Pulls at her restraints--no use.

Mia looks around the room desperately. Finds a rusted crooked nail in a buckling floorboard.

Crawls to it. But it's just too far away. She pulls. Kicks at the radiator--can just barely get her wrists to the nail.

Mia scratches the rope on the nail. Fraying the edges.

And then, soft rhythmic WHISTLING from outside.

Getting louder.

Her eyes wide, she moves faster. Desperately trying to cut through the bondage.

Kicking at the radiator to get herself closer.

Behind Mia, Frank looks through the window. Her body's arched to reach the nail. Sprawled across the floor. Trying to cut at her rope. He watches her intently.

And then, the whistling stops.

Mia notices. She shrinks back to the corner. Wipes the tears from her eyes.

Frank slowly moves away from the window.

The door swings open. Frank stomps in, all smiles. He tosses the mail on the table. Goes to kneel next to her.

FRANK
See, said I'd only be a minute.

He feels the frayed rope on her wrists. Pulls out a knife from his pocket.

FRANK (cont'd)
Must have rats.

Her eyes go wide at the sharp point.

He cuts the rope on her wrists. It falls to the ground.

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DUSK

A loud rushing spout fills a grime-stained tub.

Frank stops the drain, feels the temperature of the water. Satisfied with it.

He tries to stand. Grips his side in pain. Lifts his shirt. The stitches are bloody and black but hold.

INT. CABIN - DUSK

Frank leaves the bathroom. Sees Mia curled up on the couch.

FRANK
You're gonna have to speak to me at
some point. I'm a good listener.
Everyone always says so.

He takes a step towards her. She shrinks back.

FRANK (cont'd)
I bet washing up might make you feel
a bit better.

Frank kneels in front of Mia. Forces her to look up.

FRANK (cont'd)
It's warm. Not too hot though.

He waits for any sign from her. She stares at him. Seeing his face tense--frustration starting to build again.

She nods. Stands slowly.

FRANK (cont'd)
It's in the back.

She walks towards the bedroom. He's at her heels.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DUSK

Mia stops in the bedroom. A large bed staring back at her.

FRANK
It's not much...but we'll make it
better. Dress it up.

He points to a bathroom in the corner.

FRANK (cont'd)
Right through here.

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DUSK

Mia steps in. Feels the broken tile under her bare feet.

She can feel Frank standing behind her. Can see him staring
at her through a shattered mirror.

She turns. Tries to smile--just at the corners.

MIA
Thank you.

He likes that. Smiles back at her and backs up.

FRANK
I'm happy to--you're welcome. I'll
give you some privacy.

Mia moves to close the door, but his foot stops it.

FRANK (cont'd)
Not all the way, please.

Her hand tenses on the knob, but she gives in. Leaves the
door open a crack.

The water pours loudly next to her. The tub half full.

She waits. Listens for any sound of Frank outside--none.

Mia quietly moves to a small upper window. Kneels on the
counter to get a better lift. It's locked. Nailed shut from
the inside.

She scratches at the frame. Tugs at the lock, but no luck.

Mia tries to control her raspy breathing. Take control of
the situation.

She searches through the medicine cabinet. It's been cleared
out. Under the sink, nothing to help her.

FRANK (O.S.)
How's it going in there?

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DUSK

Frank waits at the door. His ear pressed to the wood.

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DUSK

Mia spins. Almost expecting him to enter. But the door is still.

MIA
Good. I'm good.

No answer from him.

The water pours loudly. The tub about to overflow. She turns it off.

FRANK (O.S.)
I left some clothes on the bed.

Soft footsteps outside the door. He's walked off. Muddles with something in the kitchen.

Mia takes off her clothes, gingerly. Aching all over. Bruised and battered.

She unwraps the bandages from her wounded leg and head. Winces at the pain. Checks herself in the mirror--but can't bear the sight. She covers herself.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DUSK

Frank lightly traces a ribbon on a floral nightdress folded neatly on the bed.

Listens for any sound from Mia in the bathroom. Water lightly SPLASHES.

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DUSK

Mia steps in the tub. Splashes water onto herself. Sits. Letting the heat embrace her.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DUSK

Frank can't stand it anymore. He fidgets impatiently, stands, and paces. He peeks through the crack in the door. Watches Mia in the bath.

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DUSK

Frank barges in, covers his eyes.

Mia curls back. Knees to her chest. Hugging her shoulders-- covering herself.

MIA

You said I could have some privacy.

His fists clench. Face twitches.

FRANK

Please...let me help.

Frank squints through his cracked fingers. Smiles sweetly.

He sits on the toilet. Pulls a bucket from the floor and fills it with water from the tub.

FRANK (cont'd)

Close your eyes.

He waits until she listens. Drips some water lightly over her wounded head. Lets it go slowly at first, a soft stream...then empties the rest of the bucket.

She gasps when the water stops--expecting something worse.

He waits for her to tell him to stop, but it doesn't come. He fills the bucket again, pours it over her head and body.

Mia shudders at the warm water, taking it in. Letting it cover her. Her long dark hair sticks to her face and neck.

Frank reaches out. Touches her bare shoulder. She freezes. He lightly touches the WHITE SCARS on her back.

FRANK (cont'd)

No one should have done this to you.
I wouldn't have let them if I was
around...well it doesn't matter now.
You're a survivor. Strong.

He kisses her forehead.

FRANK (cont'd)

...my girl.

Frank starts with the bucket again. Carefully, like bathing a child. Douses her in warm water as she cradles her knees-- not daring to stop him.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mia steps out of the bathroom alone. Tightly wrapped in a fresh towel. Her hair soaked and skin wet.

On the bed is the nightgown waiting for her. Outside the sky's turned dark. She dries her hair and gets in the gown.

Frank knocks on the closed bedroom door.

FRANK (O.S.)

Would you like some tea before bed, Mia? It might help you sleep? I'm making some for myself.

MIA

No, thank you.

Mia checks the door. Listens to make sure Frank isn't on the other side.

She goes to the only window. Tries to pry it open but it's been nailed shut.

Mia searches the room for any kind of weapon. Digs through cluttered drawers. Stops at a framed PHOTOGRAPH of a woman and a baby. It's been ripped and taped back together many times. The glass on the frame is broken.

--but she can almost tell who it is.

FRANK

You weren't supposed to find that.

Mia spins. Frank's at the door. Cups of tea in each hand.

MIA

I'm sorry I didn't mean to--

FRANK

NO.

He throws the mugs across the room. Mia drops the picture back in the drawer. Steps back from Frank.

FRANK (cont'd)

No. I'm sorry.

He sits at the foot of the bed. Face in his hands.

FRANK (cont'd)

I don't want you to think badly of her. She had bad days. I couldn't make her happy.

MIA
That's Sharon...

FRANK
The baby made her so sweet at first.
But it just got bad after that. I
thought I could trust her.
(beat)
Maybe we should've moved here sooner.
But she never wanted to leave...I
didn't think she'd hurt him.

MIA
I didn't know.

FRANK
Was just trying to make her happy. But
she *never* let me. It'll be different
with you. No one will get in the way
this time. You wouldn't do that.

He wipes a single tear from his eye.

FRANK (cont'd)
Let's get ready for bed. It's been a
long day.

Frank leaves. Mia stares down at the bed. Her fear boiling
to the surface.

He comes back with an armful of heavy blankets.

FRANK (cont'd)
It gets cold here at night.

He catches her look. Shamed. Places the blankets at the foot
of the bed.

FRANK (cont'd)
We don't have to--I mean, I'm a
gentleman. The bed is yours. I
wouldn't...not until you ask me to.
I'm going to be on the couch until
you want me here.

He tenses. Getting angry at her silence.

FRANK (cont'd)
SAY SOMETHING!

MIA
I'd love some tea before bed, Frank.

Frank smiles a boyish grin. Happy to please.

FRANK
And I'd love to get you some, Mia.

INT. RURAL MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Captain Morris unlocks the door. Turns on the lights. Throws a briefcase and box on the bed.

The room has seen better days. And probably hasn't had an occupant in months.

He sits at the foot of the bed. Face in his hands.

He tosses the tapes from the box onto the bed. Pulls out paperwork from the briefcase.

The Captain organizes them on the bed. Unfolds a marked-up map. He's been busy: towns have been circled or crossed out.

He settles in for a long night.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mia stirs in bed, wide awake. Her arms and legs restrained.

She hears a door open and close.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Frank's on the porch. Looks to the driveway and dark trees. No movement.

He walks to a nearby shed. Opens thick wooden doors locked with a bolt.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

He pulls a string hanging from a bulb and the full room comes into view.

Canned food and bottled water line the walls.

He opens a rusted utility cabinet in the back. Pulls out a thick envelope. It's filled with cash.

Frank fishes a wallet out of his pocket. Pulls out his ID.

Frank rummages through the bottom of the cabinet. Yanks out a duffle bag.

He grabs a different wallet from inside. Holds up a new ID. A man, roughly his age and size. A thick beard and a trucker hat--the name ROGER DILLMAN.

He slips it into his own wallet.

Frank looks behind him. But he knows he's alone. Shuts the light off, about to leave--and turns back. Looks inside the duffle bag, bleached white bones shine in the moonlight.

Frank closes and locks the cabinet.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DAY

Mia wakes up slowly. Groggy. Rubs her red eyes at the bright sun bleeding through the blinds.

It takes her a moment to remember where she is.

And her hands are untied. Her legs unrestrained. She slowly gets out of bed. Tiptoes to the closed bedroom door.

Loud pots and pans clang from the other side.

She tries the knob. But it's locked.

Mia knocks lightly.

The pots quiet. Silence from the other side. Then footsteps. Frank opens the door a crack. A wide smile on his face.

FRANK

You're awake sleepy head.

(beat)

Well, come on out, don't be a stranger. You like eggs?

Mia walks out of the bedroom.

INT. CABIN - DAY

MIA

Yes, thank you.

He likes that. Mia sees chains and restraints on a chair--just waiting for her.

She shivers. He notices.

FRANK

Let me warm it up in here. Winter's dying out there, but with that frost it gets bitter.

He adds some logs to a crackling fireplace.

FRANK (cont'd)
How'd you sleep?

MIA
Fine.

FRANK
You were having trouble nodding off
at first. Wanted to give you
something to help.

Mia puts a hand to her forehead--her grogginess slipping away. She notices a ring of KEYS looped in his belt.

She wanders around. He's been unpacking the boxes. The room looks different. She lets her gaze linger on a stack of mail. The name ROGER DILLMAN printed on the front.

MIA
Who's Roger?

FRANK
An old friend.

MIA
Will he be coming by?

FRANK
No, he's retired.

MIA
Someplace warm?

She smiles at him. Frank doesn't--weighing her response.

Mia moves past the letters. Her fingers tickle the drooping petals of a fresh flower in a cup at the table.

MIA (cont'd)
How pretty...

She gives him a childish grin. He likes that. Approaches her slowly with a blanket.

Mia plants her feet strong to the floor. Doesn't dare flinch. He drapes the wool blanket over her shoulders.

FRANK
So how do you like 'em?

MIA
Hmmm?

FRANK
Your eggs?

MIA
How do you like yours?

FRANK
Fried.

MIA
That sounds good for me too.

He gives her shoulder a squeeze. Goes to the stove.

Frank's back is to her. She tiptoes to the front door. Tries the knob. It's locked. Deadbolted.

She sits at the kitchen table. Pretends to be distracted by the flowers again when he looks back at her.

MIA (cont'd)
Can I help?

FRANK
You any good?

She shakes her head shyly.

FRANK (cont'd)
Don't worry. We'll get you there.

He bends over for a skillet. Winces at the pain in his side. She notices.

MIA
Here, let me help.

She comes up behind him. Pulls the skillet from the drawer.

He watches her cautiously.

FRANK
I should put the chains on.

She doesn't even look up.

MIA
Eggs?

He points to the fridge. She goes to it. Grabs the carton.

MIA (cont'd)
Do whatever you feel you have to. But the metal...it's probably very cold. Can we warm it up first?

FRANK
Yes, yes absolutely. Wouldn't want
you to freeze your toes off.

MIA
Could I get some socks too?

She wiggles her toes. That makes him smile.

FRANK
Yes, of course. I didn't even--I
didn't think. I'm so sorry. Freezing
you out of your new home.

Mia cracks an egg in the skillet. His face sours.

FRANK (cont'd)
You got a shell in there.

He pushes her away from the stove. Scoops the shell out of
the droopy egg.

FRANK (cont'd)
Just go by the fire and warm yourself.

MIA
Sorry. I--

FRANK
Just go.

She stumbles away from him.

MIA
Can I set the table?

He's too focused on the eggs. Brushes her off.

FRANK
Fine.

She searches through the cabinets. Pulls out dishes and
utensils. He watches her like a hawk.

Mia sets the table. He comes over. She sits to get out of
his way. He fixes the placement of the dishes and utensils
by millimeters.

Frank comes over with the skillet. She stands. Pretends to
help him. Intentionally gets in his way.

--Bumps his wounded side.

He WAILS. Drops the splitting skillet to the ground.

Eggs splatter on the floor.

MIA
I'm so sorry. What did I do?

She tears up. Face in her hands.

MIA (cont'd)
I'm so sorry, Frank. I'm so sorry.

FRANK
It's not your fault.

He's angry. Tries to control it. Fists at his side.

FRANK (cont'd)
Are you okay?

MIA
Yes. Are you?

She points to blood spotting on his shirt. He sees it.

FRANK
Shit! Clean this up.

He stomps off. Goes to the bathroom. Leaves the door open a crack behind him.

She braces herself on the table. Letting her facade fade. She shakes.

Mia slips a blunt butter knife in her sleeve.

She tiptoes to peek inside the bathroom.

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DAY

Mia watches Frank in the bathroom through the ajar door. He looks at the stitches at his side. Gingerly touches the crusty thread.

He catches her looking in at him.

They stare at each other.

FRANK
Do you need something?

MIA
Can I help?

He softens. Nods slightly. She comes in the bathroom.

MIA (cont'd)
Can I take a look?

He's hesitant, but lets her.

She leads him to the toilet. Gets him to sit down; she kneels in front of him.

MIA (cont'd)
It needs a fresh bandage. Something
to help pull the skin together.

She opens the cabinet under the sink.

MIA (cont'd)
This should work.

He winces as she lightly touches his wound. She tightens her grip on the butter knife tucked into her sleeve.

FRANK
I appreciate this.

He pats her cheek.

Mia rips the last bits of an old bandage from his wound. He pulls back in pain. Reaches for her hand. Grips it tight.

Frank looks at her warmly...then stiffens. Mia's eyes go wide.

His thick fist tightens at her wrist. The silverware within his grasp.

Her face hardens. She pushes forward with all her strength.

PLUNGES the blunt knife into Frank's stitches.

He HOWLS. She reels back--pulling the loop of keys at his belt with her.

Crawling away from him. He swings at her. Kicks. Scratches. Clings to her ankles.

But she heels him in the face. He drops his hold on her.

She slams the bathroom door.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DAY

Mia runs through the bedroom.

INT. CABIN - DAY

She desperately tries the ring of keys at the front door.

One by one she throws them to the ground.

Frank screams loudly from the bathroom. Splintering wood and angry cursing.

Getting louder.

Coming for her.

And a key CLICKS. Turns like butter.

She throws the door open. Cold cuts through her like a knife.

FRANK (O.S.)
You're going to have to try harder
than that, Honey.

Frank barges through the bedroom.

She runs outside.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Mia runs straight to the car. Fumbles with the keys.
Desperate for one to fit in the door.

Shuddering at the cold.

But no luck. Frank comes lumbering down the steps towards her. Fire in his eyes.

She pounds at the window of the car. No use.

He's closer. A gun at his side. Loading bullets.

He nurses his bleeding side. She chokes back tears.

MIA
Please...

FRANK
Better get inside.

He's on the other side of the car now. She's just out of his reach.

She can barely breathe. Looks down at her bare feet...her thinly covered body.

He reaches for her.

Mia runs.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

She sprints up the driveway. Fleeing as fast as she can.

Frank doesn't have a chance to catch her in his condition.

She tries to keep her pace up. No end in sight.

Then BEEPING behind her. Headlights flash. The Chevy speeds towards Mia. She stops, turn to see--

INT. CAR - DAY

Frank at the wheel. Revving. Petal to the floor. Handgun at the ready.

Speeding along towards the frail figure up the driveway.

Mia runs from the gravel path. Ducks into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Mia tries to run, but can't quite get her footing. She stumbles through trees. Her feet cut and bleeding.

She looks back. Frank's at the woods edge. Staring at her. Gun in hand.

He aims.

Wood SPLINTERS off the bark of a tree next to Mia. She screams. Hides behind a tree.

Frank comes into the woods. Eyes trained for any movement.

Mia runs to a further tree. Hides again.

Frank shoots to show he knows where she is--it's a cat and mouse game...she runs. Hides. But he's faster, trained.

He comes up slowly behind one large tree. Peeks behind it.

--No Mia.

He's lost her for a moment.

Mia hides in a frozen river bed. Just out of sight. Her knees to her chest, shuddering at the cold. Her face white and eyes red-rimmed.

She crawls into a crevasse, shrouded by bush and frozen mud.

Soft FOOTSTEPS overhead. Thick boots. A CLICK of a reloading gun. Mia shakes uncontrollably. She covers her mouth to quiet her raspy BREATHING.

Utter silence. His boots shift on the frozen dirt.

A twig snaps nearby. Frank runs off.

She waits. Listens for him--but nothing.

Mia makes a run for it. Heading into a thicket of trees. Sprinting as fast as she can.

Stumbling through rocks.

Tripping over fallen branches.

BULLETS shred her path again--but she won't stop this time. She wouldn't dare. He won't lose her again.

The woods thins. The gray sky darkening.

Something up ahead catches her eye. A barrier as far as the eye can see--blocking her path. A tall metal fence.

The bullets stop. RELOAD behind her.

Loud WHISTLING coming closer.

Mia stops at the fence. Shaking. Eight feet high. Rusted through.

FRANK (O.S.)

The deer are bad 'round here this time of year. Will come straight through. You need to train them that they can't go wherever they choose.

She turns and sees Frank coming through the trees behind her. A smile that could crack a mirror.

FRANK

Gotta be careful out here. It's not safe. Best go home now.

There's nowhere to go. She grips the fence. Barely has the strength to pull her trembling body up.

Frank comes closer.

She's nearly to the top. Tries to pull herself over--

And Frank's right there. Grabs her ankle. Pulls.

Mia cries out. Yanks her leg back with all her strength.

Frees herself.

Topples over the fence to the other side.

She regains her footing. Mia stares at him through the fence. His gun trained on her chest.

FRANK (cont'd)
Don't think you're going anywhere.

MIA
Don't think I'm going back with you!

He's still smiling. Lowers his gun.

She's confused. Lingers for a second. Spins and runs off. But she doesn't get very far. Only a few steps and Mia--

--Falls hard. Shrieks.

She holds her legs. Pulls up BARBED WIRE buried beneath frozen leaves. The fence is surrounded.

Mia pulls at it--but the wire just digs further into her skin. Tearing at her flesh like paper.

FRANK
Deer can't jump if their legs aren't workin'. Gotta make them know where they can and can't go. They learn.

She stares up at him. Hopeless.

Free but more trapped than ever.

He holsters his gun.

FRANK (cont'd)
Now don't go anywhere.

Frank walks off.

INT. RURAL POLICE STATION - DAY

Captain Morris sits in front of a large oak desk. It's not the side he's accustomed to, and he's been waiting a while.

He checks his watch.

Thumbs through a folder in his lap.

A lone tape sits at the edge of the desk.

SERGEANT GATES comes and sits behind the desk--40s and overweight, more accustomed to a bar fight than a shootout. A fresh donut in his hand.

SERGEANT GATES
You must be Captain Morris. Pleasure to finally meet you.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
You haven't been returning my calls.

SERGEANT GATES
We've been busy.

The Captain looks around. The office is dead.

SERGEANT GATES (cont'd)
(points to his donut)
You want one?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
No. Thank you.

SERGEANT GATES
What can I help you with, Captain?

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I need access to records about the
town. Deeds. Deaths. Missing persons.

SERGEANT GATES
We don't have that here.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I need help with an active
investigation. I need resources.

SERGEANT GATES
For your '*fancy case*'.
(beat)
Called your precinct. Don't know why
you'd be coming all the way out
here...and for that girl. Really? I
read about her.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I'm following a lead. Look.

The Captain spreads printed SCREENSHOTS over the Sergeant's desk. Frozen black & white moments time stamped. A single recognizable man in all of them--Frank.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)
He's been through here at least 3
times in the last 4 months. Got off
the highway at the same place. Went
to the same store. It's not just a
coincidence.

Captain looks to the Sergeant for a hint of acknowledgment.
He gets only pity.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)
 Now I've been around. I've been able
 to cross off a few towns. I've got a
 30 mile stretch here where I think
 Frank Smits might be. And your town's
 smack in the middle.

SERGEANT GATES
 My town's smack in the middle of
 nowhere. And this sounds like a shot
 in the dark, Morris.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
 Captain to you.
 (lets that sink in)
 I came all this way.

SERGEANT GATES
 Sorry. Captain, look. People keep to
 themselves up here. That's why
 they're here instead of that big
 city. It's different than what you're
 used to. It's simple. Quiet. We like
 to keep it that way.
 (beat)

Unless you can show me some real
 evidence that Smits didn't just drive
 through, I can't help you.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

Thick chains fasten around Mia's bloody ankle.

Frank tightens cuffs around her wrists. She kneels on the
 ground.

He waves a gun in her face.

FRANK
 Try 'em on for size why don't you?

Mia tries to stand. Stumbles.

FRANK (cont'd)
 Just remember whose fault this is.

She nods. Keeps her head to the ground.

FRANK (cont'd)
 Say it.

MIA
 (whispers)
 Mine.

FRANK
WHAT?

MIA
It's my fault!

He comes closer to her. Feels the chains at her ankles.
Makes sure they're tight--rubbing at the bone.

FRANK
That's right. I wanted you safe. Got
you away from the city. Gave you
everything you could ever want and
you try to leave? LEAVE ME?

MIA
It won't happen again.

FRANK
You're right. It won't.

He lets his meaty fingers linger...up her leg.

...tracing her spine.

...gracing her lips. Her gaze is hard. Face muddy.

FRANK (cont'd)
Don't look at me like that.

Frank twists her arm. A sharp SNAP in her elbow. She gasps.
Falls into him.

FRANK (cont'd)
You're filthy. Can't go inside the
house like that.

He lets her stumble away from him. She clutches her arm.

Frank grabs a hose. Turns on the spout. He sprays Mia.

Icy water cutting--wet clothes clinging. She braces herself
on the railing of the steps.

She loses her footing. He catches her before she hits the
ground. She stares up at him--blue in the face.

MIA
It's my fault! I'm sorry.

Frank carries her into the house.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mia changes into dry clothes--struggles with it. Her arm is tightly wrapped in a sling. Her ankles chained.

Frank watches from the other room. Entertained by it.

She looks to him.

Goes to close the door.

FRANK
No. Keep it open.

Her hand lingers on the door.

FRANK (cont'd)
Go to bed.

She listens. Gets into the bed. Turns off the light.

Mia stares at him in the other room. A direct sight-line. Nowhere to hide.

FRANK (cont'd)
Sleep tight.

INT. RURAL MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Captain Morris slams the door behind him. Throws his folder and tape on the bed.

He tears up the room--frustrated.

Comes face to face with his large map taped to the wall.

Areas have been crossed off and circled--a significant amount of work...leading to nowhere.

He sits on the edge of the bed. Face in his hands. He pulls out his phone. Plays with something. A familiar recording starts:

MIA (RECORDING)
*"Officer down. Officer down at...I
don't know. Please help--"*

A muffled VIOLENT SCUFFLE. A SHOT. Then CRACKLING. Silence...

Captain Morris plays the recording again. And again.

He rips down the map on the wall.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DAY

Mia wakes up.

Frank is sitting at the foot of her bed.

MIA

How long have you been--nevermind.

FRANK

You slept for a long time. Didn't even have to give you anything.

He stares at her. Emotionless. She coughs. Her face pale.

MIA

I'm not feeling very good.

FRANK

Stay in bed today then.

He fastens her ankle chain to the bedpost. Leaves.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DAY

Frank reads in a chair.

Mia watches him from the bed. Restless. An empty bowl of soup next to her.

MIA

How long do you want me to stay here?

FRANK

Until you get some color in your face.

MIA

Do you want my help with anything?

FRANK

No. Just shut up.

Mia turns away from him. He goes back to reading.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank eats in his chair. Alone. Mia watches him. Hungry.

He rubs at his eyes. Puts down his book.

MIA

Can I...

FRANK
You're hungry?

She nods. He finishes his plate.

FRANK (cont'd)
Sorry. You aren't feeling well. This probably wouldn't be any good for you.

She pinches her cheeks when he's not looking. The redden.

MIA
I'd love to cook for you. Maybe tomorrow I could...

FRANK
Now you wanna talk?

MIA
Sorry--I didn't mean. I'm sorry.

He gets up. Goes to the door. Waits. Looks back.

FRANK
You want me to stay?

She thinks about it. Shakes her head slowly. That's not the answer he wanted. But he accepts it. Leaves.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Frank cooks at the stove.

Mia watches from afar.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAY

Captain Morris walks through a small crumbling town. He's in their poor excuse for a main street--an overused hardware store and dilapidated post-office.

He talks with some PASSERBYS, but no luck.

He goes into the hardware store and asks to hang a WANTED POSTER. We watch through the window. The OWNER shakes his head. The Captain leaves.

He hangs the poster on a cable pole. It's an old picture of Frank. The wind whips at the poster's edges--won't last long.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Frank spurs the fireplace. Flames whip at his hands. Mia's curled on the couch. Sullen. Resigned.

He opens up a new book and starts reading. Stops.

FRANK

You read?

MIA

Yes...please.

He hands her an old torn book from the hearth. She gives him a small smile. Starts reading.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Frank looks at Mia on the couch. Sleeping. Face in her book.

He picks her up. Carries her to the bedroom.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - NIGHT

She stirs and wakes when he places her in bed. He waits there. Expectantly. Not wanting to leave.

FRANK

You want me to go?

MIA

Yes, please...

Frank hides his fists in his pockets. Turns to leave.

MIA (cont'd)

Frank?

FRANK

Yes?

MIA

Tomorrow can I make you dinner?

FRANK

Maybe.

MIA

What's your favorite?

He smiles.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAY

Captain Morris shuffles through the small town.

A BURLY MAN passes him by. Strolls across the street. He catches the Captain's attention.

Morris watches him carefully. Studies him.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

'Scuse me?

The Burly Man gives the Captain an uninterested look. Gets in his truck and drives off.

Morris runs back to his car and jumps in.

INT. CAR - DAY

Captain Morris follows the truck at a distance. Sees it turn off down a side-road. Follows.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

The Burly Man parks and heads inside. Morris drives slowly towards the house. Parks his car behind a barn.

He tiptoes to the house. Gun drawn.

Morris pulls out his phone. Makes a call.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Sergeant...I need you to come to 45
Valley Lane...Now...I found--

The front door of the house swings open. The Burly Man is on the porch. The Captain hangs up his phone. Locks eyes with the man. Gun trained at him.

The Burly Man sees the Captain. Runs inside. Captain Morris shoots at his heels.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)

Franklin Smits!

The Captain gets to the porch. Pauses. Tightens his bulletproof vest. He can hear NOISES inside.

There's a single SHOT through a nearby window. The glass shatters in every direction.

BURLY MAN

GET OFF MY PROPERTY!

CAPTAIN MORRIS
 There's nowhere to run anymore,
 Frank! Just give her up.

Another SHOT cuts through the door. Wood splinters at the Captain's feet.

The Captain shoots at the knob of the door. KICKS it open.
 It falls away. Crashes to the ground.

The Captain rushes in.

There, in the foyer. Is the Burly Man with a shotgun.
 Standing in front of his WIFE and YOUNG DAUGHTER.

The Captain drops his gun. Hands raised. Stumbles back to the porch.

SIRENS speed up the driveway toward them.

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DAY

Frank gets out of the shower. Dresses. Looks at himself in the mirror. Feels at his beard and hair. Pulls out scissors and a razor.

Mia comes to the door. Her chains clang loudly. She waits there. Watches him struggle to cut his own hair.

MIA
 Can I help, Frank?

He looks to her. Undecided--but nods. Almost hands her the scissors.

FRANK
 Wait.

He leaves the bathroom. Comes back with more chains.

Frank ties Mia to the radiator. Tosses the key back in the bedroom, far out of reach.

FRANK (cont'd)
 Don't get any ideas. You understand
 what would happen if you even think
 about--

MIA
 --I wouldn't ever. I wouldn't dare.

She holds up the scissors. Waiting for his permission.

FRANK
Short and neat please.

MIA
I can do that.

She starts cutting his hair. Slow and careful. Mia holds his head still.

He arches at her touch. She runs her fingers through his hair. He can't get enough of it.

She stops.

FRANK
What?

Mia points to the mirror.

MIA
Done. What do you think?

He looks at himself in the mirror. Nods--but he's more focused on her reflection.

Frank holds out a razor to her.

MIA (cont'd)
You want me to...

FRANK
I'm keeping the beard. A new look.
Just keep it neat on the neck.

She takes the razor to his throat--and he gives her that. Exposes his whole neck to the blade.

FRANK (cont'd)
Be careful.

He stares daggers at her. She can't match his eye. Goes to her work--holds her breath.

Mia carefully slices the hair from his neck. The razor grazing his rough skin.

She finishes. Steps back.

Frank looks at himself in the mirror--a new man. Barely recognizable.

He pushes her back.

FRANK (cont'd)
Good job.

Frank undoes her chains from the radiator. Leads her from the room.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Frank dresses. Puts on his boots.

FRANK
On the couch.

Mia sits on the couch.

FRANK (cont'd)
I'm going to be out for awhile. An errand.

MIA
When will you be back?

He glares at her. Loops her chain to the foot of the couch.

FRANK
When I get back.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - DAY

Frank parks the Chevy on the street. Goes into a store.

INT. RURAL POLICE STATION, CELL - DAY

Sergeant Gates waits outside of a single iron cell in the station. He's on the phone. Hangs up and looks to Captain Morris, sitting behind bars.

SERGEANT GATES
You're starting to become a pain in my ass.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I knew those eyes. The way he walked. He looked just like--

SERGEANT GATES
--Save it! I don't want to hear. Clear your head, Captain.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
It won't happen again.

SERGEANT GATES
You're right. Cause you're leaving my town!

CAPTAIN MORRIS
I can't do that. You know I can't.

SERGEANT GATES
Not everything can be solved. Not every person found.

(beat)
You got a family, Captain? Yea? And a good job. You can be helping people instead of chasing ghosts.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
It's not that simple.

SERGEANT GATES
'Cause it's personal?

Sergeant Gates unlocks the cell.

SERGEANT GATES (cont'd)
He's not pressing charges. But you better be on the road tonight. If I hear even a whiff of trouble from you around here again I'll put a bullet in you myself. Got it?

Captain Morris stands. Starts to leave.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Understood.

Sergeant Gates blocks his path. His features soften.

SERGEANT GATES
Look. If I see anything suspicious. Any sign of Smits or the girl I'll look into it. I'll give you a call. You have my word.

They shake hands.

EXT. RURAL POLICE STATION - DAY

Captain Morris comes out of the police station.

Just out of his view, Frank drives the brown Chevy; it disappears around a corner.

Captain Morris sits on a bench. He tears down a WANTED POSTER from a nearby pole. Stares at it like it might hold all the answers.

A BOY skateboards past.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Hey!

The Boy stops and turns.

BOY

Ye?

The Captain holds up a poster.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Have you seen this man?

BOY

What for?

CAPTAIN MORRIS

He's done some bad things.

BOY

Why would he be here?

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Just a hunch.

BOY

You wanna kill him?

The Captain laughs. Takes out his badge.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

I wish. But I'd settle for locking him up...Is there anyone that's missing? Someone you normally see around that isn't here anymore.

BOY

A few. What's in it for me?

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Frank comes in. Mia spins on the couch. Smiles at the sight of him.

He bolts the door behind him. Throws the bags on the table.

FRANK

Got some fresh food for us.

Frank goes to unlock Mia's chains.

FRANK (cont'd)

I want meat and potatoes. Well done. You got it?

MIA
Yes. Yes, I can do that.

FRANK
And the potatoes mashed. No skin.

MIA
Wouldn't dream of it.

FRANK
Good. Well, go.

She pulls food from the bags.

FRANK (cont'd)
Wait! It's not right. This isn't--

She stops. Waits for him.

Frank goes to one of the boxes in the corner. Dusts it off. He pulls out a dress, floral, dated. He flips it, smooths out the wrinkles.

He gives it to Mia.

MIA
It's very pretty.

FRANK
Yes it is.

She waits--wants him to say something first.

FRANK (cont'd)
Put it on.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Mia wears the dress. Cooks at the stove.

Frank watches her while pretending to read.

She sets the table, carefully. Trying to make it perfect.

MIA
Dinner's ready.

Frank comes and sits. She fills his plate.

They wait. Both not eating.

FRANK
You first.

She takes a bite. Smiles. Chews softly.

MIA
It's very good.

She continues eating. He tries a bite of potatoes. Smiles.

FRANK
Very good. Really. You should make
this again.

MIA
I'd be happy to.

FRANK
Thirsty?

Mia looks at the table. Nothing to drink.

MIA
I'm sorry. I forgot. That was stup--

Frank reaches for her hand.

FRANK
It's okay. I got it.

He goes to the sink. Fills two cups of water for them. Comes
back to the table.

Frank cuts at the meat on his plate.

MIA
Stop. Let me get that for you.

Mia gets up. Comes to his side of the table. Cuts his meat
for him. Offers him the bite with his own fork.

FRANK
It's fine. Okay.

MIA
I'll try harder next time. How can I
make it better?

FRANK
Redder. Less salt.

Mia goes back to her seat.

MIA
Do you want to try mine instead? It
might be better.

He's disgusted by that.

FRANK
No. No thanks. But good effort here.
You'll get better.

MIA
I'll try.

FRANK
No. You'll get better.

A pot sizzles loudly behind them. Smoke wisps out of the stove-top.

FRANK (cont'd)
What the--

Mia runs to the stove. It's still on. She tosses the pan into the sink with a loud CLANG.

Frank's pissed, but tries not to show it.

FRANK (cont'd)
Tryin' to burn down the place?

MIA
No. No, I was just--

Frank pounds a meaty fist on the table. She shudders. Wouldn't dare say another word. He collects himself.

FRANK
It's okay.

He looks to her. Neither blink. Frank goes back to eating.

FRANK (cont'd)
Finish eating and clean up. I'm tired.

INT. CABIN - LATER

Mia finishes cleaning up at the sink.

She looks around. No one in sight.

The bedroom door is ajar. The light on inside.

EXT. CABIN, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank sits on the bed expectantly. Waiting. Hair combed and shirt tucked. A thin smile on his face. A withered flower in his hands.

Mia slowly steps to the door. Her glass of water from dinner in her hand. She nervously pushes at her pleated dress.

FRANK

What'd I say? That dress is as lovely as I thought.

MIA

You were right. It's very nice.

FRANK

Nicest you've probably ever had.

(beat)

Awe, come on. Don't just stand there.

He pats the bed lightly. She doesn't move.

FRANK (cont'd)

NOW DON'T BE RUDE!

She gingerly walks over. Puts her water on the bedside table. Takes a seat on the bed. He scoots to be closer.

FRANK (cont'd)

Dinner was lovely as well. You'll be quite the cook when you get more practice. Plenty of time for that.

(beat)

Might even have a green thumb in you too. When the season comes you can start a garden. You'd like that. Wouldn't you?

MIA

Yes, I'd like that very much, Frank.

He tenderly reaches for her. Brushes her skin with his fingertips. She flinches.

He tries again. Kisses her cheek lightly.

Mia's breath hitches in her throat. Hands trembling. She stands up abruptly, stumbles from the bed. Closes her eyes--waiting for the storm.

He holds his palm to her chest. Eyes wide at the deeply intimate experience. She's motionless--fights back tears.

FRANK

I can feel you.

He grabs her hand. Forces it to his own chest.

FRANK (cont'd)

You can feel me too, right? We're the same. And together. Everything will be alright. We're not pretending anymore.

She pulls her hand back.

MIA
I'm tired...I'd like to go to sleep.

He's stunned, shamed.

FRANK
You're right. It's late. We can go to bed.

Frank starts undressing. Untucks the blankets from the bed.

FRANK (cont'd)
Come on, Dear...

She dares to open her eyes. Chokes back a heavy breath.

He stares up at her. Waiting for her to move an inch.

FRANK (cont'd)
It's time for bed.

She shuffles to the bed. Gets in. Pulls the covers tight to her chin.

FRANK (cont'd)
Good, Mia.

Mia turns from him. Waits for him to leave. Begs silently. But he doesn't--and he won't ever again.

He shuts the lights off. Gets in bed. Snuggles close to her.

Tears silently crawl down her cheeks. Her chest heaving.

FRANK (cont'd)
This is nice. I've been waiting for this. I've been patient...
(beat)
I've been kind...

He holds her close for comfort.

Her eyes flash open. She claws at his arms on her. Pushes violently against his heavy body.

MIA
Don't touch me.

FRANK
Honey.

Mia crawls from the bed. Staggeres across the dark room.

MIA
GET AWAY FROM ME! GET AWAY FROM ME!
GET OFF. GET OFF!!!!!!

Mia gets to the window. Claws at the lock. Bangs at the glass. Breaks the pane.

MIA (cont'd)
DON'T. TOUCH. ME.

Frank approaches her slowly. Hands up.

She crumples to the ground. Curls in the corner. Nurses her bloody palm.

She won't look at him. He kneels next to her.

FRANK
I was worried it was too soon. But we
deserve this. Both of us.

He gently brushes the hair from her face. She finally matches his gaze.

Mia roughly pushes him back. He falls to floor--stunned.

MIA
DON'T TOUCH ME!

She rises slowly. Towering over him. Eclipsing the moonlight.

FRANK
But--

She takes a step towards him. He shrinks back.

FRANK (cont'd)
Honey...

MIA
Don't call me that.

Another step. He backs up more...his feet kicking at the floor to make space between them.

Mia grabs Frank's belt from the bed and pulls the leather taut between her fists.

Another step. His eyes wide--and her legs give out beneath her. Knees slam to the hard wooden floor. The belt loosens in her grasp.

She looks to him with surprise--confusion.

His face hardens.

FRANK

It was just to calm you...you're so--
so spirited sometimes.

She touches her own lip. Grazes it lightly. Looks to the cup
at the bedside table.

Frank stands. Towers over her.

MIA

(whispers)

Please...

Frank leans close.

FRANK

What was that? You have something to
say?

MIA

Please. I--

He yanks the belt from her weak hands.

MIA (cont'd)

Stop I...

He comes up behind her. Wraps her throat in the thick aged
leather and yanks her up to stand. His teeth at her ear--

FRANK

You don't tell me what to do.

Mia sobs. Pulls at the belt on her neck, but he yanks it taut.

FRANK (cont'd)

I'm gonna make you happy here. You've
gotta learn first though--learn just
how bad it can be.

He whips her around to face him. His features rough and
twisted by the shadows.

He grabs a fistful of her hair. Brings her closer--almost a
kiss.

FRANK (cont'd)

I'll make you beg for it.

Her eyes go wide. Mouth open and horror struck.

Frank tightens the belt around her throat. Drags her from
the bedroom.

Her voice gone. Her hair bleeding and mangled in his taugth grasp. The belt unyielding at her neck--face white and breathless.

Mia's chained ankles kick desperately at the floor. Her hands claw at the restraint on her neck.

Small desperate screams sneak out.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Frank drags her across the room. Throws open a basement door.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Frank drags her down the dark stairs. Her writhing body--

THUMP

THUMP

THUMPING down the splintered wooden steps.

He tosses her across the cold dirt floor at the bottom.

Mia tries to get up, but can't.

FRANK

Welcome home, Honey.

Frank wraps the belt tightly around his knuckles. Tenses.

Mia coughs violently from the ground--blood coming to her lips.

He turns and stomps up the stairs.

Slams the door behind him.

Mia crawls to the corner. Her back to a stone wall.

Frank fastens thick BOLTS on the other side of the door. She hears them CLICK shut.

Mia crawls to the stairs. Drags herself up. Step by step.

Gets to the thick wooden door.

POUNDS on it. SCRATCHES. Begging for release.

MIA

LET ME OUT!

She bangs at the door. Her hands shaking from the force. Her knuckles bloody.

MIA (cont'd)

PLEASE!

Frank breathes loudly--just from the other side.

MIA (cont'd)

Frank?

She sobs. Curls into herself. Heaving.

Alone.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - LATER

Mia pulls herself up to a small open window near the ceiling. Thick wrought-iron bars block any escape. Moonlight floods in.

She pulls at the bars. Desperate--but her strength gone.

Mia falls back onto the cold hard earth.

INT. TOWN HALL - DAY

Captain Morris digs through old newspapers and town records.

Some EMPLOYEES watch him from across the room.

He studies a LIST of names on a wrinkled piece of paper. Crosses off the first name on the list.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - DAY

Mia's curled in the corner. She hasn't slept. Skin prickled by the cold. She breathes wisps of cold air. Coughs.

Pots and pans clang upstairs. She hurries to the door again. Waits expectantly.

But nothing comes.

She knocks softly. Listens for any response.

A RADIO clicks on upstairs.

MIA

FRANK!

She slams her palm on the door.

MIA (cont'd)

YOU CAN'T KEEP ME DOWN HERE!

The radio turns up.

Mia stomps down the steps. She tears through the basement. Breaking everything in sight.

There are shuffling FOOTSTEPS upstairs. They block a stream of light from under the doorway.

Mia hurries back up the steps. She whispers to the foot of the door.

MIA (cont'd)
Frank, I'm cold. Sick...

No answer.

MIA (cont'd)
Please. I'm so hungry. And thirsty. I
want to come up.
(quieter now)
I want to be with you...

EXT. RURAL HOUSE - DAY

The Captain talks to an ELDERLY COUPLE at the front steps.

They shake their head. He walks off. Back to his car. He crosses off a name from a list.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Frank chops wood outside. Bringing each driving blow on the next block. Splitting them with ease.

He looks to the side of the house. At the small barred window in the basement.

Frank goes to it and kneels. Lets his fingers trace the deep frozen finger-long scratches in the dirt.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Soft flurries blanket the ground outside. Mia cups her shaking hands beyond the barred window.

She brings the melting snow to her dry cracked lips. Drinks eagerly.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - LATER

Mia digs her bloody fingernails into the hard ground. Tries to pull up any dirt. Covers herself in it for warmth.

Moonlight floods into the room, casting it in an eerie glow. Mia' skin is blue in the light--gaunt and skeletal.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Frank eats alone. He angrily pushes away his plate.

Goes to the basement door. Listens for any sound. Palm to the wood, almost expecting a quiver. None.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Captain Morris pulls into the driveway. Stops at the rusted gate. Gets out of the car.

A padlock secures the gate. It's new, unrusted.

He checks the address on the mailbox to his list: "ROGER DILLMAN".

The Captain lifts himself over the gate and starts off down the driveway.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - DAY

Mia's nearly unconscious in the corner of the basement. Her eyes fluttering. Fingers black at the tips.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The Captain crunches along the loose gravel of the driveway. The trees clear and the cabin comes into view.

Nicer than before--better kept.

He goes to the front door. Knocks.

No answer.

He peeks in the windows--but sees no movement.

The Captain walks to the locked shed. Tries to jimmy it open--but no luck.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Frank pulls up to his driveway. The gate is locked. The Captain's car parked in his path.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The Captain walks around the house. His feet sink in the fresh snow.

He spots the small barred window to the basement. Kneels next to it. Trying to get a better look inside.

But it appears empty. Vacant. Inhabitable.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - DAY

Mia slowly wakes. Hears soft breathing from above.

She tries to stand, but her legs can barely move.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The Captain stands and dusts off his pants.

There's a RUSTLING noise behind him. He spins, gun drawn. Ready for a fight.

But it's only a DEER. It dashes back into the woods.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - DAY

Mia tries to make any noise. But her throat is parched. Her lips cracked.

MIA
(barely audible)
Frank? Help me...

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The Captain looks back to the basement window. About to give it another chance.

Mia's only feet away...nearly within earshot.

MIA (O.S.)
(barely audible)
Help me...

--barely a whisper in the wind.

The Captain holsters his gun. Walks away from the house. Back up the driveway.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

The Captain lifts himself over the fence. His car is still at the gate, alone--the Chevy isn't there.

He crosses off the last name from the list. Grits his teeth--holds back tears. His last hope gone.

The Captain gets in his car. Rests his head on the wheel. Dejected--lost. He makes a call.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

(on phone)

Sherry?...Yes...Yes, of course. I'm sorry...I'll be home tomorrow...Love you...

He gives one final look to the driveway, and leaves.

We're left here. Alone. On this empty road as the Captain drives away. Out of sight.

Except that doesn't last very long. A car comes back up the road from where the Captain disappeared. A shiny halo--one last chance...until it's not.

Frank's Chevy pulls into the driveway.

He unlocks the gate. Drives inside. Speeds toward home.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Frank pulls right up to the cabin. Rushes inside.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Nothing's been moved. Nothing disturbed. He fastens all the locks on the door behind him.

Hurries to the basement.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - DAY

Mia's unconscious. Curled in the corner. He scoops her up in his arms.

Runs up the stairs.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Frank lies her on the couch. Covers her in blankets. He cups her face in his hands. Tries to get her to wake.

FRANK

Mia. Mia, you have to wake up.

He shakes her.

FRANK (cont'd)

WAKE UP!

Mia's eyes flutter open. Confused. Delirious.

FRANK (cont'd)

We have to leave. They know where we are.

MIA

(whispers)

What?

FRANK

We're leaving. We'll find a new place.

This resonates with her. Slowly. She achingly sits up. Frank goes to the sink. Gets her water. She sips it.

MIA

They know where we are?

FRANK

Yes.

He hurries off. Starts to pack boxes.

MIA

I don't want to.

FRANK

This isn't a discussion.

MIA

I don't want to go.

(beat)

This is our home.

He kneels next to her. Tears in his eyes.

FRANK

Do you want them to take you away?
Then I'll have nothing. And you'll
have no one.

MIA

Who's coming?

FRANK
 Someone was here--a cop. I saw the
 car outside.

Mia's tears spill over. Covers her face--the realization.

MIA
 The police were here? You saw them?

Frank nods.

MIA (cont'd)
 ...and they left?

Another nod.

MIA (cont'd)
 Then...then...you have nothing to
 worry about, Honey.

She's choking back raspy breaths now.

MIA (cont'd)
 They left. They wouldn't have left if
 they wanted to separate us. They
 wouldn't.

He kisses her hands.

FRANK
 You promise?

She nods. Not able to reply. He rubs his hands through her
 hair affectionately.

MIA
 Can I stay here? Up here with you? I
 can't--
 (coughs)
 Please?

Her eyes flutter closed. She curls into a ball on the couch.

FRANK
 Of course, we'll never be apart
 again.

He covers her in a blanket.

MIA
 I'm sooo cold...

INT. CABIN, BATHROOM - DAY

Frank cradles her in his arms. Dips her into a warm bath.

She smiles lightly. Her eyes flutter open.

FRANK
You're dirty.

He wipes at the dirt over her body. Thinks better of himself. Steps back.

She sits up. Covers herself.

FRANK (cont'd)
I'll only stay if you want me to.

She shudders. Her whole world collapsed.

MIA
You don't have to ask.

He kneels next to her.

INT. CABIN, BEDROOM - DAY

Frank dresses Mia in warm clothes. Her eyes are dead and distant. He leads her from the room.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Frank brings her to the couch. She looks around the room with adoration--like home.

MIA
You've changed it. It's nice.

FRANK
Thank you for noticing.

He's put off by her tone--her ghostly demeanor.

FRANK (cont'd)
Are you okay?

MIA
Just tired. Can you give me something to help me sleep?

FRANK
I don't think...just stay awake for a little longer. I can get you something to eat.

MIA
I'm not hungry.

Frank comes to her. Lifts her face to his.

FRANK
Want some fresh air?

She lets out a little broken smile.

MIA
That sounds nice...

INT. CABIN - LATER

Frank tightens a coat around her shoulders. Helps her put on socks and shoes.

She lets him dress her like a rag doll.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Frank opens the locks on the door and opens it.

Mia's eyes go wide. Lets the cold cut through her. She takes in the fresh air...steps onto the porch.

FRANK
Just a little. Then we'll get you
back inside. Warm you up.

She walks slowly away from him. Away from the house. He follows her. Trying to keep up.

MIA
I'm tired, Frank.

FRANK
Let's go back in. It's getting late.

She stops. He does the same. Mia tears up. Her back to him.

MIA
They aren't going to find me in ten
years...

FRANK
Who?

MIA
I'm not going to get out...

FRANK
Mia?

MIA
It won't be ten years. It'll be
forever...

FRANK

STOP!

She turns to him. Tears crawling down her face.

MIA

And I can't hurt you.

He stiffens--anger boiling over.

She pulls out a razor blade. A single one tucked between her fingers. He tries to grab it from her. But she pulls back.

MIA (cont'd)

But I know your weakness.

She cuts at her wrist. Deep. Cries out. Frank hurries to her side. She falls to the ground. He holds her close. Both crying.

MIA (cont'd)

I get to go home now, right?

FRANK

No. No. No. No. No. This isn't gonna happen.

MIA

Shhhhhh. Let's go to sleep.

FRANK

You're never going to leave. I'm not going to let you. Not again!

MIA

Please...

FRANK

NO!

He smacks her across the face. Her eyes come into focus.

FRANK (cont'd)

You're mine. Nothing more. Do you understand me?

He wraps a scarf tight around her wrist--the bleeding slows.

FRANK (cont'd)

You aren't going anywhere.

Mia's face hardens. She plays with the razor still in her fingertips. Confusion, anger, hatred playing across her face--death isn't an option.

MIA

Well, one of us has to.

She cuts him deep across the face with the razor. It slices into her own hands too, but she isn't about to stop.

He reels back. Stumbles away from her. Eyes on fire. Face spurting blood.

She walks towards him. Careful to keep her distance.

Mia grabs an AXE from a woodblock. Swings it at him.

He falls to the ground. Crawling away from her.

FRANK

I'm gonna...gonna hurt you for this.

She swings at him again. He grabs it. Holds the axe taught--not giving her an inch or a mile.

MIA

No, you aren't.

He kicks her. Brings Mia to her knees. Frank hits her across the face. Blood seeps through her teeth.

Mia crawls away from him. She grips the axe tightly.

FRANK

You aren't going anywhere.

He yanks her ankle. She claws the ground. Loses the axe.

FRANK (cont'd)

I SAID, YOU AREN'T GOING--

He spins Mia. Forces himself on top of her--holds her frail body down.

FRANK (cont'd)

WE'RE HOME.

Mia spits on him, blood dotting his face. She stretches for the weapon--just out of reach.

MIA

No...I'm not.

She laughs. Her fingers clinging for the axe.

FRANK

TAKE IT BACK!

Mia laughs again. His face twists with rage.

FRANK (cont'd)
WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING???

MIA
You said home is where the heart is.

Frank's face drops. Mia's grasp tightens on the axe.

She SWINGS. The blunt edge CRACKS into Frank's neck. He falls back.

Mia scrambles to stand--but Frank grabs for her.

She kicks him. SWINGS again--he catches the wooden handle. Pulls it from her grip, but she won't let him have it.

Mia grips the axe head--lets the sharpened metal cut into her palm.

FRANK
STOP THIS!

MIA
MAKE ME.

She smashes the butt of the axe into his skull. A splintering CRACK. His eyes bulge. Broken vessels and crying blood.

FRANK
Please...

Mia moves to hit him again.

CUT TO: BLACK

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Mia wanders up the driveway. Broken and bloody. Her hands trembling. Knees about to buckle.

She gets to the road. Sees headlights coming toward her.

Feels at her bruised ribs. Wipes her tired eyes.

A breeze hits her. Leaves flutter through the air...skipping across the gravel. Tall looming trees above.

Mia looks back down the driveway--the inviting path...

INT. CAR - DAY

A PIZZA DELIVERY GUY speeds past the driveway.

Mia's back is to him, in the distance. Hobbled back down the driveway. Nothing out of the ordinary.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Mia comes back to the cabin. Limping. On a mission.

She stumbles to Frank. Stares down at him--his skull cracked. Raspy breaths whistling out through bloody lips.

She struggles to drag his body into the cabin.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Mia drags Frank across the floor.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - DAY

She pulls him down the steps. His thick body tumbling toward the dirt floor.

INT. CABIN, BASEMENT - LATER

Mia finishes tying him up. His arms and legs chained.

Over-encumbered. Unnecessarily adorned in rope and metal. She covers his mouth with tape as a final bow.

Mia pulls his switchblade and lighter from his pocket. Heats the metal under a flame. Presses it to his bloody forehead.

Frank's eyes flutter open--muffled cries.

Mia covers his mouth.

She steps back to see her handiwork. A small smile at the corner of her lips.

MIA

You were right. There's nothing for me out there. People can be dangerous. You have to be careful.

He screams. Eyes bulging. Garbled curses. She starts up the steps.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Mia closes the door behind her. Deadbolts it. Her back to the thick wood. She surveys the room. Her room.

She throws the key to the basement into the fireplace.

Mia turns on the radio. Soft classical music plays. Goes to make herself a cup of tea.

The key begins to buckle and deform in the fire.

The radio hums quietly. Faints MUFFLED SCREAMS come from below.

She stretches out on the couch with the tea. Covers herself in a blanket and closes her eyes.

EXT. POLICE STATION, OFFICE - DAY

The Captain sips stale coffee. Drowning in paperwork. Inspector Phillips enters.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

The reporter from the Tribune is here again. Wants to talk to you about Frank.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Again? Tell him what I said last month. He's not getting a story from me.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS

He said he's already spoken with Sharon Williams.

The Captain glares at Phillips. The conversation is over.

INSPECTOR PHILLIPS (cont'd)

I'll tell him, Captain.

Inspector Phillips leaves.

The Captain gets a call. Picks up.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Hello. Yes. I'll be there immediately.

EXT. CAPTAIN MORRIS' HOUSE - DAY

Captain Morris pulls into his driveway. Gets out of the car. Sherry's at the window waiting for him. He goes inside.

INT. CAPTAIN MORRIS' HOUSE - DAY

Sherry greets him at the door. Kisses him affectionately.

SHERRY

We'll aren't I just the luckiest woman in the world. You're home before 6. What's the occasion?

CAPTAIN MORRIS

You said you were making pot-roast.

She smacks his growing belly. Winks and heads to the kitchen.

SHERRY

Not that you need it. Dinner will be on the table in 15.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

I'll just be in the back.

The Captain walks off.

INT. CAPTAIN MORRIS' HOUSE, STUDY - DAY

He unlocks a drawer in his desk. Pulls out paperwork and evidence on Mia's case. Slips a newspaper from his briefcase. Clips out an article. Mia's smiling face looks up at him. The headline: LOCAL GIRL ASSUMED DEAD.

The Captain gets a call.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

(on phone)

Hello...Yes, this is he...Who's this?...What?

He pushes all the files into his briefcase.

INT. CAPTAIN MORRIS' HOUSE - DAY

The Captain runs out the front door.

Sherry hurries out of the kitchen. Watches him go.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

TROOPERS and POLICE wait in a woods. Search dogs BARK in the distance. Caution taped is ribboned around nearby trees.

A police car pulls up. Captain Morris gets out. Walks to up to the crime scene. Shakes hands with Sergeant Gates.

CAPTAIN MORRIS

Sorry it took so long. Drove through the night. Appreciate the call though, Sergeant. After all this time...

SERGEANT GATES
I hope it is worth your while.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Can I see it?

SERGEANT GATES
Got it out of evidence for you.

Gates pulls out a thick plastic bag. A leather wallet.
Inside is Frank Smit's ID.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
And the body?

SERGEANT GATES
Decomposing. But it's already been
sent in for dental. We'll know for
certain soon enough.

(beat)
But it looked like him--what was left
at least. A shallow grave doesn't hide
bones for long in these woods.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Has anyone--have you found anyone
else? A woman's body?

SERGEANT GATES
No sign of your missing girl yet,
Captain. The dogs are out sniffing
though. If there's anyone else buried
out here we'll find them.

Something catches the Captain's attention. A brown Chevy
parked on the other side of the road. It pulls away from the
woods and drives off.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

Captain Morris drives down a desolate woodsy road. A brown
Chevy is parked up the street. Pulled into a driveway. He
passes it.

A woman is at the mailbox. The Captain catches sight of her
in his rearview mirror. Stops his car in the street.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

The Captain gets out of his car.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
'Scuse me, Miss.

Mia turns to him. Tightens her scarf, covering her face from the cold.

She doesn't say anything.

CAPTAIN MORRIS (cont'd)
Roger Dillman live here?

MIA
Not for some time.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Where'd he go?

MIA
Retired I heard.

He squints. Tries to get a better look at her.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
You live alone?

MIA
Yes, Captain.

He takes one single step towards her. She takes one step back. He stops. Their gaze holds.

Mia gives him a small nod.

The Captain's phone rings. Looks at the caller ID.

He has a choice, takes it.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
Have a good day then, stay safe out here.

The Captain walks back to his car. Gets in.

INT. CAR - DAY

He rests his hands on the wheel. Doesn't start the engine.

Mia watches him from the driveway.

The phone rings loudly next to him.

He picks up. Waits. Listens.

CAPTAIN MORRIS
(on phone)
Yes. Driving back now. I'll be there as soon as possible.

He looks back one last time to Mia. Then drives off.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Mia pulls her coat tighter. Watches the car speed off down the road.

She uncovers her face. A small smile.

Mia walks back up the driveway.

FADE TO BLACK