

SINGULAR JOE

SCREENPLAY BY

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INT. BAR - NIGHT TIME - SUMMER

It's a non-descript common neighborhood bar. A few patrons are nursing their drinks. There's a big screen T.V. tuned to a sports channel. Two guys are playing pool in the back room. Music is coming from an old style jukebox. One patron stands out. He's dressed in white t-shirt, black jeans and black converse sneakers. His hair is neither short nor long and dark brown. He's wearing very dark, wraparound type glasses that hug his face very tightly. At his feet is a black, royal poodle who appears to be sleeping. This patron's name is Joe. Bartender's name is Jake. Jake continues tending his bar and serving the odd customer while talking to Joe.

JAKE

Hey Joe want a refill?

JOE

No, I think I've had enough for one night. Got the time Jake?

JAKE

Yeah, it's around 2:30. I'll be closing pretty soon, it's kinda a slow night.

JOE

Don't you get tired sometimes of this bar business?

JAKE

A man's gotta work and I'm my own boss so that's a definite plus.

JOE

You're probably right.

JAKE

I know I am, I've been tending bar since I was legal, I don't know anything else. What about you Joe still like doing those talking books?

JOE

For now - I'm pretty specialized, there's not much of a demand.

JAKE

Oh yeah, what's your specialty I always meant to ask you.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

You're probably gonna laugh but  
it's French literature, mostly 19th  
and 20th century.

JAKE

I'm laughing on the inside buddy  
but seriously what are you some  
kind of Franco nut or something?

JOE

Well I'm part French. I was born in  
New Orleans. I'm a Cajun baby.

JAKE

That's all right. We're all from  
somewhere else originally. Speaking  
of elsewhere I hadn't seen you  
around for quite some time, found a  
new bar?

JOE

I moved to West 67th.

JAKE

Wow that's a pretty posh  
neighborhood, did you win the  
lottery or something.

JOE

Something like that but I gotta get  
going, it's a bit of a walk.

JAKE

Okay but I wanna hear about that  
lottery win next time. Maybe you  
got a secret or something.

JOE

Sure next time, I'll tell you about  
it.

Joe looks down at his dog, finishes his drink and gets up to leave.

JOE

What do you say Zola, time to go  
home?

Zola perks up his ears and starts getting up.

JOE  
I guess that's a yes, see you  
around Jake.

Jake, looking up from wiping his bar.

JAKE  
Adios, Amigo.

EXT. - OUTSIDE BAR - NIGHT TIME

JOE  
Well it's you and me old buddy,  
although, I know, you're not that  
old.

The dog looks up as Joe is speaking to him.

Joe and Zola start walking when Joe hears screams coming from the alley next to the bar. Although the screams are muffled Joe can hear that it's a woman's voice. He stops and listens. There is definitely a scuffle going on, Joe hesitates, you can tell he's unsure what to do. For whatever reason he's holding back.

JOE  
Shit, shit, shit.

Joe starts running in the direction of the fight with Zola running ahead and barking although still on his leash.

EXT. - ALLEY - NIGHT TIME

There's a young woman staring at a body lying on the ground. She's got a bit of blood on her. She's looking pretty dazed. Joe is looking in her direction but we don't know what he's actually seeing because he still has his dark glasses on.

JOE  
What happened? I heard a shot, are  
you all right?

YOUNG WOMAN  
Oh shit, oh shit, I shot him.

JOE  
It's all right. Tell me exactly  
what happened?

YOUNG WOMAN

That bastard was trying to rape me.  
It was self-defense.

JOE

I thought I heard his gun drop.

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh yeah, how do you know that if  
you can't see nothing.

JOE

I can hear fine. I heard the gun  
drop to the ground. The important  
thing is that you're all right. I'm  
gonna have to call the cops.  
Somebody else probably did that  
already. Is he dead?

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't know and to tell you the  
truth I don't give a damn.

JOE

I know you're upset but can you  
check his pulse.

The young woman bends over the guy on the ground and  
attempts to check his pulse. Her hand is shaking.

YOUNG WOMAN

Yeah I think he's dead.. Look I  
don't know what mojo or voodoo you  
used Mr. but you saved my life. He  
was going to rape me, he was going  
to rob me and then he was going to  
kill me.

(this last said with a certain  
finality)

JOE

Are you sure he's dead, check him  
again.

YOUNG WOMAN

I'm telling you I can't feel a  
thing.

Joe takes out his phone ready to dial 911.

JOE

I have to call it in. We're dealing  
with a homicide now.

(CONTINUED)

YOUNG WOMAN  
Go ahead. I'm so fucked up.

The young woman crouches on the pavement with her head against the wall, eyes semi-closed. Joe approaches her and crouches down beside her.

JOE  
Listen I'm really glad you're all right. We have to get our stories straight when the cops come.

YOUNG WOMAN  
(in a plaintive voice) You won't say anything about the dropped gun?

JOE  
I promise, I won't. That guy was hurting you but I need to hear what you're going to say.

YOUNG WOMAN  
I'm gonna tell them the truth. You got here on the scene with your dog. The dog's barking pissed him off, he turned around, I was able to wrestle the piece from him and I shot him end of story.

JOE  
There's only one problem with that scenario. If the guy was turned around how come you didn't shoot him in the back?

The young woman realizes that she has to come up with something better.

YOUNG WOMAN  
Shit you're right, I'm truly, truly fucked.

JOE  
Or we can say he only turned his head around, told the dog to fuck off and because he was distracted you were able to grab the gun from him and shoot him.

YOUNG WOMAN  
God I hope that works, thanks... what's your name?

JOE

Joe.

YOUNG WOMAN

Listen Joe you probably have your reasons for helping me but whatever they are, I'm totally grateful. You saved me back there.

JOE

Don't worry about it... what's your name?

YOUNG WOMAN

Andrea.

Joe and Andrea can hear sirens in the distance.

JOE

Let's wait for the cops Andrea.  
Remember your story.

Joe helps Andrea up and they both look in the direction where the sound is coming from.

EXT. - ALLEY - NIGHT TIME

Sirens can be heard in the distance. Pretty soon an NYPD car and a city ambulance pull up. Both vehicles keep their emergency lights blinking. Officials get out and approach the scene.

EXT. - NEAR THE ALLEY - NIGHT TIME

A standard issue police car pulls up near the black and white. A young woman in her early 30's steps out. She's dressed for the job but still feminine in a dark green lightweight pantsuit with enough give to hug her muscular and lithe body. She's of average height with auburn hair and widely spaced dark eyes crackling with intelligence. Her hair is long but she keeps it loosely piled on top of her head with a clip. It's a little messy. She's not conventionally pretty but there is something arresting about her. She exudes confidence in an effortless sort of way. Her name is Lauren Delacroix and she's a homicide detective. She approaches one of the first cops on the scene. She's met him before. His name is Lou.

LAUREN

Hey Lou long time no see.

(CONTINUED)

LOU

Detective Delacroix (pronounced  
delacroy) you flying solo tonight?

LAUREN

I'm afraid so. Partner has the flu.  
Even cops get sick once in a while.

LOU

Aint' that the truth. What,  
department too cheap to give you  
someone else?

LAUREN

You know, police departments and  
budgets...

Lauren makes a face to indicate how tightfisted departments can be.

LAUREN (cont.) So what do we have Lou?

LOU

(checks his notes)

Intended victim's name is Andrea Loach.

LAUREN

What was she doing in the alley?

LOU

Said she took a shortcut.

LAUREN

O.K. What else?

LOU

According to the vic. the perp came out of nowhere and attacked her, pinned her against the wall, had her by the neck and was brandishing a gun.

LAUREN

So both his hands were busy while he was trying to rape her, a little odd don't you think?

LOU

I thought so too but that's what she says. Maybe he never intended to rape her. He just wanted to rough her up a bit and rob her.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Did she have any money on her?

LOU

Not much but this particular  
lowlife doesn't care he'd probably  
rob his own mother for a few bucks.

LAUREN

Who's the dead guy? Any known  
priors?

LOU

Oh yeah, quite the rap sheet. In  
and out of juvie, did some time for  
armed robbery, nothing for rape  
though. Perp's name is Travis Dyck  
and by the way he's not dead.

LAUREN

So what happened, a miracle?... by  
the way love the name.

LOU

I know it fits him like a glove  
too. So anyways the victim checked  
his pulse and couldn't find one.  
She checked him twice and both  
times the same so she assumed he  
was dead. Said she was too messed  
up.

LAUREN

That makes sense considering what  
she had been through. What else  
have you got?

Lauren and Lou continue to talk as they walk towards the crime scene.

LOU

The bullet just missed his heart.  
Lucky bastard. His good luck is our  
bad luck if you know what I mean?

LAUREN

I think I do Lou, I think I do. Who  
called it in?

LOU

911, anonymous, somebody must have  
heard the dog barking and the shot  
oh and the witness.

LAUREN

Good there's a witness but first  
how's Ms. Loach doing? Has she been  
seen by someone?

LOU

Yeah by one of the paramedics.  
She's O.K., a little shook up but  
otherwise mostly unharmed. She has  
lacerations on her neck where the  
guy had her pinned.

LAUREN

O.K. So what about the witness?

LOU

Name is Joe Toussaint (pronounced  
tousaynt) but I don't think you're  
going to get too much out of him.

LAUREN

Oh no, why's that?

LOU

Guy's blind, he saw shit.

LAUREN

Great, a blind witness, well he  
must have heard something.. Okay  
we'll have to get them to the  
station to get their statements.

Lauren and Lou stop talking as they reach the other  
officials, Andrea and Joe.

INT. - MANHATTAN PRECINCT - NIGHT TIME

Detective Delacroix is putting the finishing touches on  
Andrea Loach's statement. Joe is sitting in the main area  
with Zola at his feet. There is a lot of commotion with  
phones ringing and other detectives talking on the phone or  
to each other. Detective Delacroix is in a sealed off  
interview room.

DETECTIVE DELACROIX

I think I've got all the  
information I need.

ANDREA

What's gonna happen to me. It was  
self-defense, right?

(CONTINUED)

DETECTIVE DELACROIX

There will be an investigation. I'm gonna have to interrogate Dyck as soon as he comes out of surgery. I also have to interrogate the witness but don't worry about that for now. You need to take care of yourself. You've been through quite an ordeal. We'll be in touch.

ANDREA

It's just I'm scared. He tried to rape me. He was gonna kill me. I had to shoot him.

DETECTIVE DELACROIX

I know I understand but just let me do my job. Like I said I'll be in touch.

The detective gets up from behind her desk to get closer to Andrea who's still sitting.

DETECTIVE DELACROIX (con't...)  
Are you sure you're all right? You don't need to see a doctor?

ANDREA

No I think I'll be O.K. I'm so tired, I just wanna go home and sleep.

LAUREN

I'll get a squad car to take you home. Here's my card, phone me any time.

Andrea pockets the card. Lauren opens the door and motions to someone to take Andrea home.

ANDREA

Thank you detective.

Andrea leaves. Lauren notices the witness still sitting patiently on the chair. She approaches him and he startles a little, he may have been sleeping. Zola is at his feet. Lauren extends her hand but realizes how silly that looks so instead she calls his name.

LAUREN

Mr. Toussaint (pronounced Tousaynt) sorry about the wait. It always takes longer than you think. Let's go to my office. (she guides him by

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN (cont'd)  
the elbow) - have a seat (she  
guides him to a chair) I'm  
detective Delacroix. (pronounced  
Delacroy)

Joe sits down.

LAUREN  
So Mr. Toussaint (pronounced  
Toussaynt...)

JOE  
It's pronounced Toussain. I really  
dislike it when people mangle my  
name. It's a pet peeve of mine,  
sorry detective

LAUREN  
Quite all right. So it's Mr.  
Toussain, how's that, better?

JOE  
Much better, thank you. By the way  
your name is also French, Delacroix  
not Delacroy. Did you know that  
there was a very famous French  
painter who also had that name...  
Eugene Delacroix.

LAUREN  
(jokingly) Well I'm sure we're not  
related.

JOE  
Probably not but I don't know why  
you don't insist on proper  
pronunciation of your name. It  
sounds so much better, don't you  
think?

LAUREN  
Frankly I never gave it a thought.

JOE  
You should give it a thought, you  
should start right now.

LAUREN  
We're getting off track here Mr.  
Toussaint (places special emphasis  
on last name). Let's make this  
quick, it's been a long night for  
both of us. I can't ask you what

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN (cont'd)  
you saw but anything you might  
remember could be helpful.

JOE  
Aren't you just a little bit  
curious about Eugene Delacroix.

LAUREN  
Well my sister's the art major so  
I'm sure she can fill me in.

JOE  
Or... I could fill you in.

Lauren is getting flustered. She feels like she's losing control of this interrogation. She takes a good look at Joe. She realizes how handsome he is but she's a bit unsettled by the dark glasses he's wearing. She shuffles some papers on her desk trying to compose herself and regain the upper hand.

LAUREN  
Mr. Toussaint I'm really not in the mood to discuss art maybe some other time. Right now I'm really tired and would appreciate a little cooperation.

JOE  
Sorry, I was tired before but I feel fine now.

LAUREN  
(starting to get upset)  
Good for you now back to my question.

JOE  
Which was exactly?  
LAUREN  
(exasperated now) What did you see....(catches herself) I mean hear?

JOE  
I was outside the bar. It was around 2:30. I heard a scuffle going on in the alley, then a scream, sounds of fighting, Zola started to bark, I went to check it out.

LAUREN

What did you think you we're going to do exactly?

JOE

I'm not sure I know what you mean.

LAUREN

Well you couldn't see what you were going to get into. The guy had a gun.

JOE

Are you suggesting I should have done nothing?

LAUREN

No of course not. Go on.

JOE

Zola kept barking. The guy said something like "shut the fuck up" - he said that a few times.

LAUREN

What did you do?

JOE

What could I do? I was hoping that Zola would scare him enough to interrupt what he was doing. I screamed at him to stop.

LAUREN

Did he?

JOE

I couldn't tell what was happening but then I heard a shot. At first I didn't know who had been shot till I heard the woman speaking.

LAUREN

What did she say?

JOE

She said she shot him. She said thank you, that guy was gonna rape me.

LAUREN

And then?

JOE

I asked her to check his pulse, she did and she said he was dead. I asked her to check again.

LAUREN

Why you didn't believe her?

JOE

I knew she was upset and I wanted to make sure.

LAUREN

Well you know that the guy's not dead. The bullet just missed his heart.

JOE

Sorry to hear that. That's it detective I've told you all I know.

LAUREN

Fine. If you can think of anything else, you'll know where to find me.

Out of habit Lauren hands him her card. Joe doesn't say a thing. Joe pockets the card given to him by Lauren. He gets up to leave. Lauren gets up as well and opens the door, Zola is leading. Lauren takes another good look at Joe. There's something not quite right about him but she can't put her finger on it. Joe puts out his hand, Lauren takes it, he holds on to it a little longer than necessary. She pulls her hand away. Suddenly feeling hot like there's less air in the room.

LAUREN

Do you want a ride? I can get someone to take you home?

JOE

No I'll be fine, I'll either walk or take a cab.

LAUREN

O.K. Then, I may be in touch.

JOE

Don't forget about your name. It's important.

LAUREN

Sure, I'll think about it.

JOE  
Good bye detective Delacroix.

LAUREN  
Good bye Mr. Toussaint (she makes another special effort to pronounce it correctly)

As Joe is leaving Lauren watches him with a pensive look on her face.

EXT - ON SIDEWALK - IN FRONT OF PRECINCT

Joe takes off his glasses and rubs his eyes. It's too dark for us to see. He puts the glasses back on and starts walking down the street with Zola leading.

JOE  
I've changed my mind Zola, let's grab a cab.

Zola seems to agree because he stops walking.

JOE  
I know you're tired too. Let's walk to a busier intersection.

Joe and Zola reach a busier street. Joe hails a cab.

JOE  
Dog all right? (as he opens the door of the cab)

CABBIE  
Hell yes, I've had worse fares and he looks harmless enough. Get in.

JOE  
Thanks.

Cab drives off with Joe and Zola inside.

INT. - APARTMENT OF LAUREN AND ISABELLE DELACROIX - MORNING

Lauren is sitting at the kitchen table, reading the paper and having a coffee. She's not dressed for work yet because this is the weekend and she will be going in a little later. A door opens and her sister Isabelle walks out of her bedroom. They are sisters and roommates. Isabelle is blond, with short hair, she too has an athletic build although she's a bit shorter than her sister. Her eyes are hazel,

(CONTINUED)

flecked with green, she still has some paint on her hands, Lauren notices this as Isabelle sits down with her cup of coffee.

LAUREN

What too tired to wash your hands  
last night?

ISABELLE

It's that damn new paint, I have to  
put tons of shit on it to get it  
off and it stinks.

LAUREN

That's the price you pay for being  
an "artiste".

ISABELLE

An undiscovered "artiste".

LAUREN

Yes but I have faith in you.

ISABELLE

And I....have faith in you. How's  
work?

LAUREN

You know the usual, mayhem,  
madness, murder or attempted murder  
but we nailed a live one yesterday.

ISABELLE

Not a homicide, I thought you only  
did those?

Isabelle gets up to refill her coffee.

ISABELLE

More coffee Lauren?

LAUREN

No I'm fine thanks. So yeah no  
homicide because there was a mix up  
when the 911 went out and I was  
already on the scene so I took it.  
The guy had been shot but the slug  
just missed his heart.

ISABELLE

Lucky for you then, an easy one to  
solve.

LAUREN

God I sure hope so. but hey I  
wanted to ask the art major  
something.

ISABELLE

Goodie, I like it when I'm an  
authority.

LAUREN

Don't let it go to your head. So  
it's about our name. Do you know  
that there's a famous French  
painter who has the same name?

ISABELLE

... of course I knew about Eugene  
Delacroix. (She pronounces it  
correctly)

LAUREN

Why didn't I know ?

ISABELLE

Because you didn't care to know,  
you were busy with other stuff. Art  
was never really your thing. But  
what's so important about our name  
now?

LAUREN

Doesn't it bug you that everybody  
always mispronounces it, Delacroy  
instead of Delacroix?

ISABELLE

No offense Lauren but in my milieu  
people do say Delacroix, they get  
the French thing but I can see that  
it might be a problem in a precinct  
setting. Nobody would give a shit  
about that. In fact they'd probably  
think you were a snob if you  
pronounced it correctly.

LAUREN

I don't know I'm gonna try it out.  
I like the way it sounds in French.

ISABELLE

Try all you want, but don't say I  
didn't warn you. Don't they just  
call you Lauren?

LAUREN

It depends, Captain always calls me by my last name.

ISABELLE

You know one thing that really bugs me?

LAUREN

No what?

ISABELLE

How first names are always abbreviated, like Meredith, Mer, Catherine, Cathy, Robert, Rob, hey feel free to stop me at any time I could go on for a while.

LAUREN

STOP! You're right I never really noticed but it's true.

ISABELLE

It's like they're always trying to make you smaller. I hate it when people call me Issy.

LAUREN

I've never called you that.

ISABELLE

Better not or I'd punch you in the mouth.

Isabelle makes a half-hearted attempt to punch Lauren.

LAUREN (playfully)  
Cut it out.

ISABELLE

Fine...so what's really behind the name query?

LAUREN

Nothing, just what I said.

ISABELLE

You're never gonna be good at undercover work, you're such a bad liar, come on spit it out.

LAUREN

O.K. Fine, there was this guy, a witness...

ISABELLE

Keep going... more details please  
like name, shoe size, bearded,  
hairy you know the usual.

LAUREN

Stop it, you're being silly (but  
she actually loves it) His name is  
Joe Toussaint and he's the one who  
told me about my name.

ISABELLE

I see he has a French last name.  
Does he have a sexy moustache  
(takes a pen and draws a moustache  
on her face) a la Tom Selleck..  
(She mugs with the moustache)

LAUREN (laughing) No, no moustache  
but he is very handsome at least  
the part of his face I could see.

ISABELLE

Now I'm really intrigued, more  
please.

LAUREN

He's blind. He has these really  
dark glasses and a seeing eye dog,  
one of those big Royal black  
poodles.

ISABELLE

Wow that came out of nowhere.

LAUREN

Which part, the blind part or the  
poodle?

ISABELLE

Well both actually although I  
didn't think you could have a  
poodle as a guide dog.

LAUREN

You can. I googled it.

ISABELLE

You googled it why didn't you just  
ask him?

LAUREN

I was conducting an investigation,  
remember and I didn't want to  
appear...

ISABELLE

Stupid, I get it. So did he grab  
your wrist a la Jamie Foxx in Ray?

Isabelle gets up and grabs Lauren's wrist who brushes her off and heads for the sink.

LAUREN

Enough with the pop references  
already and no he didn't although  
he did hold on to my hand for  
longer than necessary.

ISABELLE (mock swooning)  
And it felt so electric.

LAUREN(throwing a rag at her) I'm  
never telling you anything, go wash  
that paint off your hands.

ISABELLE

O.K. Boss so are you going to see  
him again?

LAUREN

I might, in the course of the  
investigation.

ISABELLE

Make it happen, you haven't been  
this interested in a guy, in  
what....years.

LAUREN

Who says I'm interested plus he's  
still involved in an ongoing  
investigation.

ISABELLE

You said it was gonna be an easy  
one to solve.

LAUREN

I know... the weird part about Joe  
Toussaint was I felt like he was  
checking me out.

Isabelle gets up to wash her hands at the sink.

(CONTINUED)

ISABELLE

That is weird but stranger things  
have happened.

Lauren looks at the time and heads for the bathroom to get ready.

LAUREN

(out of frame and calling out)  
Can you get me a book on  
Delacroix. I would still like to  
see his paintings?

ISABELLE

No problem. I'll bring one this  
week.

LAUREN

(out of frame)  
Thanks.

EXT. - MORNING - IN FRONT OF JOE'S APARTMENT

Joe is walking with Zola and talking on his cell phone with some urgency.

JOE

I really need to see you Alec. My  
eyes are killing me and my  
headaches are getting worse. Pause

JOE

Fine, I'll drop by right now.

Joe puts away his cell phone and continues walking.

INT. - EXAM ROOM - OPTOMETRIST'S OFFICE - DR. ALEC MONROE -  
MORNING

When the scene opens Alec is busy looking at Joe's eyes with a specialized machine that involves extreme close-ups. One eye is covered by the machine and the other one is closed. You can't see what the doctor is seeing. He finishes one eye and does the other. He hands Joe his glasses and it's done very quickly so that we can't really see Joe's eyes. Joe is still on the exam chair but in the process of getting up and starting to ask questions. Alec is moving towards his desk and looking at Joe's file, adding new notes and obviously comparing with past results.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

Can you see anything different?

ALEC

(moving to his desk) At first glance no but I'll have to do a more thorough study. The results do seem the same Joe.

JOE

It feels different.

ALEC

(consulting his notes) Then I'm not sure why.

JOE

(very despondent). I'm never gonna get rid of this... condition am I?

ALEC

( gets up from behind his desk and moves closer to sit with Joe) I don't know what to say Joe. We both know how "different" your condition is. (he's a little fatalistic when he says that, like he's tried everything and nothing's worked). All the procedures I've tried have failed, you know that. Maybe new glasses...

JOE

I'm not blaming you Alec, you've been a great friend, I just don't know where to go from here.

Joe gets up and starts pacing the room.

JOE

I don't think new glasses are going to help either and I think I might have a bigger problem.

ALEC

What kind of a problem?

JOE

There was an attempted rape last night. I used my "ability" to stop it.

(CONTINUED)

ALEC

(looking straight at Joe) That's a good thing, right?

JOE

Yeah except he dropped his gun and she picked it up and shot him. The guy's not dead, he's gonna say something.

ALEC

What's he gonna say, he's some lowlife scum who thinks he saw something, he might not even remember exactly.

JOE

That's the thing I'm not really sure how much they do remember after...

ALEC

Come on Joe, Sometimes it turns out well as in this case. You saved someone.

JOE

Yeah but what about those other times?

ALEC

You didn't know what was going on. You couldn't help those other times plus nobody died.

JOE

I know you're right and it did feel good when I knew I was helping but...

ALEC

But...

JOE

Why did she have to shoot him, he was gonna walk away. I had to lie when I gave my statement.

ALEC

Yeah but she didn't know what was gonna happen, she probably panicked.

JOE

You're right and I'm not blaming her that's for sure, it's just there's a detective, detective Delacroix, she seems pretty hard nosed, I felt like she was suspicious of me.

ALEC

Suspicious how, that you were lying?

JOE

I'm not sure, it's just a feeling I have like she's gonna get interested.

ALEC

(curious now) Like interested in you personally?

JOE

Maybe, I don't know what I'm saying.

ALEC

Did you say or do anything special?

JOE

(smiling a bit now) I played the French angle.

ALEC

(laughing) Joe, Joe, you've been out of the game for a while, the French angle doesn't work like it used to. I don't think you have to worry.

JOE

Still I should have kept my mouth shut. I don't know why I have this feeling like dread.

Joe sits down again and hugs his knees, obviously worried.

ALEC

(puts his hand on Joe's shoulder)  
Look we'll work it out. Stay cool, maybe nothing will come of this.

(CONTINUED)

JOE  
You're probably right.

Joe gets up to leave and Alec accompanies him to the door.  
They hug.

ALEC  
Stay in touch buddy.

JOE  
All right, I'll see you later.

Joe exits the exam room.

INT. - PRECINCT - MORNING - MAIN SQUAD ROOM

Various detectives are working the phones. Lauren is at her desk. She hears her name being shouted and looks up to see Captain Bart Trammel holding an 8 by 10 index card. He approaches her desk obviously very pissed off.

CAPTAIN TRAMMEL  
Delacroy what the fuck is this, is  
this some kind of a joke?

Lauren looks up, seemingly unruffled by this outburst.

LAUREN  
I'll pretend you didn't call me  
Delacroy just now. What you're  
holding is the phonetic  
pronunciation of my name and how I  
wish to be called from now on.

Having said that Lauren goes back to reading some files oblivious to the captain who doesn't really know where to go from here but he's still pissed.

CAPTAIN  
What crap is that? You've never  
minded before.

Lauren looking up as if sizing him up.

LAUREN  
Well I mind now. You either start  
calling me Delacroix or Lauren it's  
up to you.

CAPTAIN  
Next thing you know everybody here  
is gonna wanna be called by some  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN (cont'd)  
ethnicity or whatever. Stan  
Stanislas, George, Jorge and so on  
you see where I'm going with this.

LAUREN  
Look, I can't control what other  
people do or want. I'm asking  
nicely.

The Captain is softening up a bit, he doesn't want to appear narrow minded although it's still bugging him.

CAPTAIN  
Fine, I'll give it a try Delacroix  
(still mangled a bit but not bad).  
Where are you on the Dyck/Loach  
case?

LAUREN  
I still have to get a statement  
from Dyck, hoping for a confession  
really. It appears to be a clear  
case of self-defense although the  
witness at the scene could only  
corroborate that an attack was  
taking place. He didn't actually  
see what happened when the shot was  
fired since he's blind.

CAPTAIN  
That's a bitch.

LAUREN  
I'm gonna phone the hospital.  
Hopefully Mr. Dyck will be out of  
surgery and ready to talk.

CAPTAIN  
You wanna take Hernandez with you?  
He's no longer contagious.

They both laugh since George Hernandez was out with the flu.

LAUREN  
No I think I can handle Mr. Dyck on  
my own.

CAPTAIN  
Fine, report back when you've found  
out more... Delacroix.

LAUREN  
(smiling) Will do.

Captain goes back in direction of his office.

INT. - PRECINCT - MORNING

Lauren is at her desk. She grabs the phone and phones the hospital. We only hear one side of the conversation but it appears that she has the go ahead to get a statement from Dyck. She picks up her jacket and leaves.

INT. - HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - MORNING

Lauren is at the door to Dyck's room. She is talking to Doctor Hamilton who operated on him.

DOCTOR HAMILTON  
He should be fine to talk to you, a little groggy but otherwise fine. The guy was lucky. The bullet just missed his heart.

LAUREN  
So I've heard. Maybe he did something good in a past lifetime.

DOCTOR HAMILTON  
One can only hope. Good luck in there.

LAUREN  
Thanks.

INT. - DYCK'S ROOM - MORNING

Lauren opens the door to Dyck's room as he opens one bleary eye. She advances towards his bed.

LAUREN  
Travis Dyck?

DYCK  
If the name fits....

LAUREN  
I have to say you wear it quite well considering the circumstances.

DYCK  
And you are...

Lauren pulls out her shield. Dyck groans.

LAUREN

I'm detective Lauren Delacroix. I'm investigating the attempted rape of Ms. Andrea Loach

Dyck interrupts.

DYCK  
That fucking bitch tried to kill me.

Lauren continues as though there had been no interruption

LAUREN  
whereupon you were distracted by a dog barking and a witness which is when Ms. Loach was able to grab the gun away from you and shoot you.  
Does that sound about right?

DYCK  
(in a whiny voice) I just wanted to scare her a little, things got out of hand. I thought she was hip to it.

Lauren takes out a folder and looks at his jacket.

LAUREN  
Well she wasn't hip to it, you moron.

DYCK  
Hey you can't call me a moron.

LAUREN  
(ignoring his protest). Let's see, numerous b.& e., purse snatching, a little drug selling on the side, you're right it doesn't fit your m.o. So what happened the other stuff got boring and you wanted to kick it up a notch, try it out?

DYCK  
(in a scared voice) I don't know. I never meant to hurt her.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

As you were chocking her and  
brandishing a gun, excuse me if I  
find that a little hard to believe.  
You're gonna go down for this Dyck.

Dyck closes his eyes real tired. Lauren hovers over him.

LAUREN

Yep, no doubt about it they're  
gonna lock away the key for this  
one. Attempted rape that's serious  
shit.

DYCK

What about the bitch who shot me,  
what does she get?

LAUREN

That's not your problem right now.  
Right now the only one you should  
be worrying about is you.

DYCK

If it's a confession you want I'll  
sign the damn thing. Where's the  
fucking paper?

LAUREN

Right here Dyckie. That should earn  
you a few brownie points.

Lauren gives him the paper and the pen to sign it with. She helps Dyck to sit up so he can sign. After having signed he lays back down exhausted.

DYCK

What's gonna happen to me?

LAUREN

(in an ironic tone of voice) I'm  
sure you know the drill well. Don't  
worry we'll be in touch in the  
meantime... get some rest, you'll  
need it.

Lauren gets up to leave and has her back to the bed when Dyck calls out to her. She still has her back turned while he's talking.

DYCK

Hey, what about that guy?

Lauren still has her back turned.

LAUREN

You mean the witness, that guy,  
what about him?

DYCK

That 's one weird dude. I've seen  
some pretty weird shit but  
this.....

Lauren turns around and walks back to the bed, she's frankly intrigued and suspicious.

LAUREN

Weird how, there's nothing weird  
about him unless you call blindness  
weird.

DYCK

(warming up to his tale) That's just it. The guy took off his glasses I swear, his eyes were glowing. he was looking right through me, right into my brain then he spoke to me, I heard him in my head. Man that was the weirdest shit.

LAUREN

Assuming what you say is true and I really don't believe you, what did he say exactly?

DYCK

That's just it. I've been wracking my brain and I can't remember like there's a hole or something where I lost time, I remember the eyes and then Bang ....adios

LAUREN

If I were you I wouldn't go around saying stuff like that. Frankly you're not making a whole lot of sense.

DYCK

I swear it's the truth. I couldn't make this stuff up. I'm just not smart enough.

LAUREN

No argument there although I think I've heard enough bullshit for one day.

Lauren heads back towards the door as she's walking down the hall she can still hear Dyck saying.

DYCK  
(off screen)  
It happened, I swear, I didn't make  
it up.

Lauren stops in the middle of the hallway, like she's thinking about what Dyck has said and is starting to wonder.

EXT. - OUTSIDE HOSPITAL - MORNING

Lauren takes out her phone, grabs her little notebook, checks something as though she's about to dial a number, thinks about it, then changes her mind and walks to her car.

EXT. - OUTSIDE BROWNSTONE - MORNING

Lauren is looking up at the brownstone and checking the address against the one she obviously has written in her notebook, as though delaying a bit and hesitating. She turns around to leave but then changes her mind again and walks up the steps, ringing the bell.

INT. - JOE'S APARTMENT

We see Joe closing what appears to be a secret room behind a bookshelf and quickly putting on his glasses as he hears the door bell. He walks towards the door. He's dressed all in black, with a black t-shirt and black jeans, he's not wearing any shoes.

JOE  
Who's there?

LAUREN  
It's Detective Delacroix.

Joe opens the door but doesn't invite her in.

JOE  
I didn't think detectives made  
unannounced house calls.

LAUREN  
Usually we prefer phoning but I  
thought this might be easier than  
having you come down.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

Please come in, although I don't know what else I can add to what I've already told you.

Joe looks around for his shoes by the door and puts them on.

LAUREN

Thanks.

Lauren steps into a very well appointed apartment. Joe motions her forward to the living room area. It's a comfortable and pleasant room. Zola ambles in to take a sniff of Lauren. Lauren pats him on the head.

JOE

I think he likes you. Please sit down detective.

Lauren sits down in one of the arm chairs. An uncomfortable silence follows. It's clear she doesn't know what she's really doing here. Joe stares or we assume it's a stare since we can't see his eyes. After a few seconds....

JOE

I'm sorry, Would you like something to drink? I can make some ice tea.

LAUREN

I would like that thank you.

Joe gets up to go to the kitchen and he can be heard rummaging in there. Lauren takes the opportunity to poke around, picking up objects, scanning through the library, a lot of Braille books, picking up a photo of a younger Joe with his parents. Joe is still heard rummaging.

LAUREN

(calling out)Can I help you with anything?

JOE

No I'm fine, thanks.

Joe exits the kitchen carrying a tray with two tall glasses of ice tea. They both take a glass and sit down again.

LAUREN

I noticed that picture of you and your parents. You weren't always....

JOE  
Blind, no it happened 2 years ago.

LAUREN  
Do your parents live in New York?

JOE  
They used to, this was their  
apartment. They're both dead.

LAUREN  
I'm sorry.

JOE  
Nothing to be sorry about unless  
you were with the drunk driver who  
caused the accident.

LAUREN  
Is that when you lost your sight?

JOE  
Yes but I don't really want to talk  
about it. As much as I would like  
to indulge your curiosity detective  
I still don't understand why you're  
here. I thought it was an open and  
shut case.

LAUREN  
Well nothing is ever quite open and  
shut.

Lauren attempts to change the subject in an effort to postpone having to ask Joe what's really on her mind.

LAUREN  
By the way I took up your  
suggestion about my name?

JOE  
How's that working for you?

LAUREN  
I'm encountering a little  
resistance but I think I'll win  
out. I also looked up some of  
Delacroix' paintings. My sister  
brought a book of his work home. I  
remember that for occupation you  
wrote that you do talking books,  
that's interesting.

Joe is clearly a little baffled at the turn of this conversation and doesn't really know what the detective is up to.

JOE

In what way, is it interesting?

LAUREN

Interesting that's all, I've never met anyone who did that.

JOE

Do you think it's strange because I'm blind. The blind do have the right to be gainfully employed you know.

LAUREN

I didn't mean it like that.

JOE

It's hard to know how you meant it. Yes I do talking books probably no authors you would have ever heard of.

Lauren is a little taken aback at this and frankly she's also pissed off at Joe's dismissive tone.

LAUREN

Do you always have such a high opinion of New York's finest?

JOE

(realizing he's being rude) I'm sorry that was totally rude. It's just French literature is a pretty rarefied milieu. Let's just say employment opportunities aren't abundant in that field.

LAUREN

You're doing all right. You dog's name Zola, is that a famous writer?

JOE

Yes, one of my favorites you should read him sometimes.

LAUREN

I spend most of my time reading cases, pleasure reading would be quite the luxury.

JOE

Now that we've had this little  
chat, again how can I help you?

Lauren deciding to take the plunge. She stands up and heads for the window. Her back is turned to Joe finding it easier to say what she's about to say without looking at him.

LAUREN

I went to take a statement from Mr.  
Dyck, in the hospital, this  
morning.

JOE

Did he confess?

LAUREN

Actually yes.

JOE

So?

LAUREN

He told quite a tale.

JOE

What kind of a tale?

LAUREN

The kind that's hard to believe.

JOE

I'm sorry but you're not making any  
sense.

Lauren turns around to look at Joe who's now absently petting Zola.

LAUREN

He said something about you taking  
off your glasses. Your eyes were  
really bright, like you were  
looking right through him and  
(taking a breath) you spoke to him  
in his head.

JOE

(starts to laugh) I spoke to him in  
his head, wow, I'm surprised you  
came all the way here to tell me  
that.

LAUREN

(sitting down again) I know how  
silly it must seem now but he  
sounded quite convinced.

Lauren is obviously feeling quite foolish, at this stage, for even having brought it up. She gets up again ready to leave and make a quick exit. Joe hearing her stand up, stands up as well and heads towards the door in a not so subtle gesture that it's time for her to leave. Joe opens the door.

JOE

Again I'm surprised that you would  
put stock in the ramblings of a  
would be rapist who's probably  
trying to find some kind of angle.

LAUREN

(at the door) I know, I'm sorry, I  
won't trouble you again. Good bye  
Mr. Toussaint.

JOE

Good bye Detective Delacroix.

Lauren exits. Joe shuts the door and rests his head against it. He appears both relieved and worried.

INT. - PRECINCT - AFTERNOON

Lauren is at her desk making notes. She gets up and heads for the Captain's office. His door is ajar.

LAUREN

Can I come in?

CAPTAIN

What is it? Not another damn cue  
card I hope.

LAUREN

No, not this time. It's about the  
Dyck/Loach case. I went to see him  
at the hospital this morning.

CAPTAIN

And did he confess?

LAUREN

He folded like a flower, actually  
it was almost spooky how quickly he  
agreed to sign the confession.

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN

The guy's guilty, he knows it, we know it, end of story.

LAUREN

I don't know, something with this case still doesn't seem right.

CAPTAIN

Like what exactly?

LAUREN

Like the witness, I went to seem him this morning.

CAPTAIN

What the hell for?

LAUREN

Dyck said something which bothered me.

CAPTAIN

Spell it out Delacroix I don't have all day.

LAUREN

I don't want to say anything till I've done a little more digging.

CAPTAIN

Look, you're barking up the wrong tree. We don't get too many of these open and shut cases. If I were you I'd be thankful it was that easy and leave it at that.

LAUREN

Yeah but that witness....

CAPTAIN

Are you developing some kind of a fixation on this guy, better not, because I'm taking you off the case.

LAUREN

Why?

CAPTAIN

You're a homicide detective, and I have a bad feeling that the shit's gonna hit the fan soon. I want you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN (cont'd)  
primed and ready. Bottom line, this one's no homicide. I'm giving it to Mackie. Hand him over the file. In the meantime I'm sure you have some paper work that needs doing.

CAPTAIN  
(calling out) Mackie get your ass in here pronto.

LAUREN  
For the record I disagree with your decision.

CAPTAIN  
Yeah, yeah duly noted.

Lauren turns to look at Mackie who's now appeared at the door.

MACKIE  
Yes Captain.

CAPTAIN  
Get the file from Delacroix on the Dyck/Loach case and throw the book at the guy. She'll fill you in.

Lauren isn't happy with this turn of event but she and Mackie leave to go back to her desk. She hands him the file.

MACKIE  
It's pretty slim.

LAUREN  
It's all in there. Let me know if you see something that I missed.

MACKIE  
Will do.

Mackie leaves with the folder and Lauren sits down at her desk. She starts going through some paper work.

INT - COFFEE SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

Joe is getting a coffee at the counter when his cell phone rings. He moves away from the counter to answer it. We only hear one side of the conversation.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

Hey Alec.

(pause)

JOE

You know that problem I was talking about, I think it might have happened.

(pause)

JOE

I don't want to talk over the phone.

(pause)

JOE

Okay I'll meet you outside La Petite Fleur at 8:00. I'll take a cab.

(pause)

JOE

See you there.

Joe puts away his phone and exits the coffee shop.

INT. - RESTAURANT - EVENING

Joe and Alec are sitting at a corner table. They have finished their meal and are now enjoying a cognac. Now that the meal is over it's time to talk.

ALEC

Okay so let's go over what happened one more time. She came to your apartment. She talked about this Dyck guy having seen something.

JOE

That really freaked me out.

ALEC

Look I'm not saying it's not cause for concern but how was she when she left?

JOE

I think she felt a little silly.

ALEC

Silly is good, so why are you still worried?

(CONTINUED)

JOE

Like I said I have this feeling  
she's gonna dig deeper maybe just  
out of sheer curiosity. She's a  
detective after all.

ALEC

If that's the case I have two  
suggestions for you and you might  
not like either of them.

JOE

Let's hear them anyways.

ALEC

One you do your thing and she  
forgets about you.

JOE

No can't do that. It's too  
deliberate and it feels unethical.

ALEC

Please don't bring ethics into  
this, you're walking around  
pretending to be something you're  
not.

JOE

That's a low blow you know it  
wasn't always the case.

ALEC

I know...okay forget option 1,  
option 2, you ask her out. You're  
Joe average and you've got nothing  
to hide. It's called a preemptive  
strategy.

JOE

Is that the same as keep your  
friends close and your enemies  
closer.

ALEC

Something like that.

JOE

What if I ask her out and she says  
no, then what?

ALEC

I have the feeling she's gonna say yes, curiosity and all that. Hey it might even be fun. You haven't been out on a date in... forever and don't tell me about Nina, she doesn't count.

JOE

Nina might not agree with that statement.

ALEC

I don't give a shit about what Nina might think. So you're gonna do it?

JOE

I don't want to lead her on.

ALEC

Who said anything about leading her on. Just go out with her long enough to prove to her that you're a completely normal guy. What have you got to lose, better you pursuing her than her pursuing you.

JOE

Fine I'll think about it.

They finish their cognac.

ALEC

Let's get out of here. Garcon, l'addition S.V.P.

INT. - LAUREN AND ISABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lauren and Isabelle are hanging out in the living room. Lauren is looking at paintings by Delacroix. Isabelle is working at a computer. She looks up and starts talking to Lauren.

ISABELLE

Hey, you haven't said much all evening. Are you really interested in Delacroix or still thinking about our mysterious Joe?

LAUREN

His paintings are beautiful and regarding Joe since I got taken off  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN (cont'd)  
the case there's no longer much of  
a reason to go back and see him.

ISABELLE  
So what you're just gonna give up  
even after what that creep at the  
hospital said?

LAUREN  
Even if there was a tiny bit of  
truth in what Dyck said, I told  
you, I'm off the case. What do you  
want me to do...follow him around?

ISABELLE  
That's not a bad idea you know...

LAUREN  
You must be joking...

Isabelle makes a face indicating she's not joking.

ISABELLE  
Come on Lauren, it's a hell of a  
mystery, you're a detective, you  
detect, that's what you do.

LAUREN  
Yeah on legitimate cases not bogus  
ones. Privacy laws don't phase you  
much it seems.

Lauren gets up and closes the book. She's a little  
distressed with Isabelle's cavalier attitude.

ISABELLE  
Please don't go all legalistic on  
me. Admit it you're just as curious  
as I am.

LAUREN  
I'm not sure what I am. I'm  
tired. I'm going to bed.

ISABELLE  
Fine but we're not finished with  
this conversation.

LAUREN  
Good night little sister.

ISABELLE  
Good night.

Lauren exits the living room and Isabelle continues to work at the computer.

EXT. - IN FRONT OF JOE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Lauren is sitting in her car, she's far enough that she's inconspicuous but close enough to be able to see when Joe will come out. She's talking on the phone to her partner George.

LAUREN  
O.K. tell the captain I'll be back  
as soon as I can, I had a family  
emergency.

PAUSE

LAUREN  
I'll tell you about it later.

PAUSE

LAUREN  
What...my voice sounds funny, it  
must be the reception...oh,oh  
you're breaking up.

Lauren waits a beat and then puts away her phone.

LAUREN  
(To herself))  
What are you doing exactly, you're  
such an idiot...Isabelle I hate  
you.Oh, oh there he goes...

Lauren gets out of the car and starts following Joe.

INT. - APARTMENT OF LAUREN AND ISABELLE - NIGHT

Isabelle and Lauren are in the kitchen. Isabelle is making some tea while Lauren is sitting at the table a pensive look on her face.

ISABELLE  
So you followed him for what, a  
couple of hours?

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

That's all I could manage away from the job and I had to lie to George about some family emergency. To tell you the truth I felt really dumb, like some stalking paparazzi.

ISABELLE

Never mind that...what did you find out?

INT.-EXT. - FEATURING A MONTAGE OF JOE - DAY

An old fashioned screen is pulled down and on it are projected images of Joe doing various things in his apt. and outside while Lauren is following him. We see Joe get up, shave, get dressed etc... all with his glasses on because Lauren has never seen him without them. Outside Joe goes to a coffee shop, gets a take out coffee and enters a bookstore. He has a shoulder bag. This montage is all speeded up like an old Charlie Chaplin silent movie and it's in black and white.

INT. - APARTMENT OF LAUREN AND ISABELLE - NIGHT

ISABELLE

That's it! Let me get this, the first part is imagined and the second part is...uhh nothing?

LAUREN

It doesn't matter. I'm never doing it again. It made me feel really dirty.

ISABELLE

Well the bookstore part is a least interesting.

LAUREN

I have one word for you regarding that...

ISABELLE

God I hope it's not plastics.

LAUREN (SMILING)

Film class getting to you much and no it's not plastics Mrs. Robinson, it's Braille. He was probably picking up some books and dropping off some tapes.

(CONTINUED)

ISABELLE

You mean you didn't even go in to check. He's blind for Christ sakes or we think he is.

LAUREN

I don't know I was worried he was going to sense that I was there. Look I don't want to talk about it anymore. It's done, it's over, I'm closing the book on Mr. Joe Toussaint.

Lauren leaves the room while Isabelle looks on.

INT. - PRECINCT - EARLY AFTERNOON

Lauren is working at her computer. Once in a while she looks up making sure nobody is paying attention to her. Her screen indicates that she's looking up information on Joe and she's now zeroing in on the name of his ophthalmologist, Dr. Alec Monroe. She takes out her notebook and writes down his address. She grabs her jacket and calls out to George who is talking to the Captain.

LAUREN

Hey listen something's come up, I have to go, I'll be back in a couple of hours.

GEORGE

Lauren wait a sec. where are you going? Want me to come?

LAUREN

No, it's fine, don't worry.

Lauren heads out quickly before she's asked anymore questions.

CAPTAIN

Is it me or does she have a bug up her ass lately?

GEORGE

Uh-huh

INT. - OFFICE OF DR. ALEC MONROE - EARLY AFTERNOON

Lauren is talking to the receptionist. There are patients also waiting to see the doctor.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sorry detective but he's with a patient right now, you're going to have to wait.

LAUREN

Can you just please let him know that there's a detective Delacroix here to see him regarding one of his patient.

RECEPTIONIST

Fine but you're still going to have to wait.

The receptionist picks up the phone. Lauren remains standing in front of her desk.

RECEPTIONIST

Dr. Monroe, there's a detective Delacroix here to see you.

(PAUSE)

Fine. Sorry Doctor.

She puts down the phone and gets up from behind her desk.

RECEPTIONIST

Please follow me detective.

The receptionist guides Lauren to his private office.

RECEPTIONIST

You can wait for him in here. He should only be a few minutes.

Receptionist closes the door behind Lauren and Lauren takes a look around the room.

INT. - DR. MONROE'S OFFICE - EARLY AFTERNOON

The door opens and Dr. Monroe walks in. He extends a hand to Lauren. They shake hands.

ALEC

Detective Delacroix is it, how can I help you?

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

It's about one of your patient, Joe Toussaint.

ALEC

I'm sure you're aware of doctor/patient confidentiality issues. I can't discuss my patient or their treatment.

LAUREN

Please I just need a few answers.

ALEC

Is there a problem with Mr. Toussaint, is he a suspect in a criminal investigation?

LAUREN

No nothing like that, well perhaps, he may be part of a cover up. I need to know if there is anything unusual about his blindness?

ALEC

You mean like is he faking it?

LAUREN

I'm not sure that's why I came to you.

ALEC

I'm sorry detective but you're going to have to leave. I find this line of questioning about my patient highly offensive.

Alec takes Lauren by the elbow and leads her towards the door.

LAUREN

I'll leave you my card in case you change your mind.

Lauren takes out her card but Alec refuses to take it.

ALEC

That won't be necessary. I have patients waiting. Good bye detective Delacroix.

Alec closes the door to his office on Lauren who is left standing there. She turns around and leaves.

INT. - DR. MONROE'S OFFICE - EARLY AFTERNOON

Alec is on the phone. We can hear the phone ringing.

ALEC

Come on Joe, pick up, pick up,  
where the hell are you?

The phone's been picked up.

JOE

Hey Alec...

ALEC

Guess who waltzed into my office  
wanting to know if there was  
something weird about your  
blindness?

Joe knows that Alec is talking about the detective.

JOE

I told you she might not give up  
easily.

ALEC

Well you were right. You need to  
step it up. When are you gonna ask  
her out?

JOE

I'm not sure that's such a good  
idea.

ALEC

Remember it's either that or the  
other scenario. You need to be Mr.  
Joe Cool, Joe Normal. Look Joe  
it's not just about you. I'm  
sticking my neck out for you.

JOE

O.K. I'll do it but I have a  
feeling it might not work.

ALEC

Make it work Joe, for you and for  
me. Where are you going to right  
now?

JOE

I'm meeting Nina.

(CONTINUED)

ALEC

Nina, what the hell for?

JOE

It's our day, I'm gonna tell her  
it's the last time.

ALEC

It's your day...good choice of a  
euphemism there Joe.

JOE

(a little angry)

Would you like it better if I said  
it was our day to fuck?

ALEC

Probably not. Sorry Joe. Do what  
you have to with Nina and take care  
of our common problem. I trust you  
Joe.

JOE

I'll keep you posted.

Joe hangs up the phone.

INT. - HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Joe is asleep. He's not wearing his glasses. The sheets are rumpled. The door to the bathroom is ajar, there's noise coming from there and the sound of a toilet flushing can be heard. Joe wakes up at the sound, he opens his eyes briefly, his eyes are a beautiful golden color but Joe quickly puts his hands to his face looking for his glasses.

JOE

(calling out)

Nina, Nina

Nina comes out of the bathroom, she's wearing a white man's shirt, obviously Joe's and nothing else. She's standing in the doorway to the bathroom.

JOE

You took off my glasses, can you  
hand them to me please?

Joe sits up and starts fishing around for his pants on the floor. Nina grabs Joe's glasses off the nightstand and hands them to him. He puts them on.

(CONTINUED)

NINA

Here they are baby, you looked so comfortable sleeping, I didn't want to wake you up. You're not mad are you?

JOE

No, I'm not mad, don't worry about it. Money's on the desk.

Joe gets up from the bed, having put his pants on.

NINA

You don't have to pay Joe, I've told you that before. I would do it for free you know that.

JOE

It's cleaner this way.

NINA

No messy entanglements, I get it.

Nina heads back to the bathroom, she's a little pissed off with Joe.

JOE (calling out)

Nina, can I have my shirt back I have to go.

Nina comes out of the bathroom, holding Joe's shirt so you can't really see her. Joe grabs it from her and puts it on. Nina's also dressing.

NINA

Why do you have to go so soon, it's because of the glasses isn't it?

Joe goes up to Nina and takes her in his arms. She rests her head on his shoulder.

JOE

It's not because of the glasses, it's nothing you've done Nina. You're perfect honestly.

Nina looks up at Joe.

NINA

I wish you could see me Joe. I'm beautiful you know.

JOE

I don't have to see you to know  
you're beautiful. I can feel you,  
I can taste you but right now I  
have to go.

Nina starts kissing Joe all over his face and is moving down  
over his body. Joe stops her.

JOE

Nina please stop it, I really have  
to go.

NINA

Will I see you again, same time as  
usual?

JOE

I might not be able to see you for  
a while, I have some business I  
need to take care of. I'll phone  
you O.K.?

NINA

Promise?

JOE

I'll try Nina, I really will but I  
can't promise you anything right  
now. Good bye Nina.

Joe kisses Nina and exits the hotel room while Nina looks on  
forlornly.

INT. - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - PRECINCT - DAY

Captain Trammel is listening to someone on the other end of  
the line, someone who sounds pissed off. The Captain puts  
the phone down looking like he's eaten some crow and not  
liking it. He gets up from behind his desk and calls out.

CAPTAIN

Delacroix in my office, now.

Lauren casts a questioning glance at George at the next desk  
and he gives her a sheepish look back. She heads for the  
Captain's office. He's still standing at the door. When  
she walks in, he goes to sit behind his desk.

CAPTAIN

Don't sit down. You won't be long.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Uh-huh.

CAPTAIN

I just had to listen to an irate Police Commissioner. Apparently you took it upon yourself to visit a well connected and respected ophthalmologist to get information on one of his patients.

His voice gets progressively louder as he makes the above statement. Lauren is still standing and not saying anything.

CAPTAIN

What the fuck were you thinking. Harassing a prominent doctor about a patient who happens to be a witness, a blind witness, for Christ's sake...

LAUREN

I wouldn't call it harassment...

Captain can't believe what he's hearing.

CAPTAIN

Listen I don't give a shit what you call it. It stops and it stops right now.

LAUREN

I had reason to believe that there was something off about the scene of the intended rape and that the witness may have been withholding valuable information. I had to check it out.

CAPTAIN

No you didn't and no you don't. That case is no longer your case. Is that where you ran off to the other day when you had a bug up your ass?

Lauren doesn't say anything. She knows she's been caught. The captain is softening up a bit.

CAPTAIN

Look Lauren you're one of my best detectives I would hate for your

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN (cont'd)  
career to be derailed because of  
poor judgment on your part. Am I  
making myself clear?

LAUREN  
Crystal.

CAPTAIN  
Good, now go work on the cases that  
you do have.

Lauren exits the captain's office while he's turned back his  
attention to his computer.

INT. - PRECINCT - SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Lauren is back at her desk. George comes over.

LAUREN  
He called me Lauren.

GEORGE  
Oh, Oh, that's never a good sign.

LAUREN  
I know.

GEORGE  
Anything I can do?

LAUREN  
Thanks George but I'm a big girl I  
can handle a difference of opinion  
with the boss man.

GEORGE  
I know you can but I'm here if you  
need me.

George walks away and Lauren boots up her computer.

INT. - PRECINCT - MAIN SQUAD ROOM - EVENING

Lauren is still at her desk. The place has emptied up  
considerably. She's eating some take out when her phone  
rings.

LAUREN  
Delacroix...

(CONTINUED)

JOE  
Detective Delacroix it's Joe  
Toussaint.

Lauren is quite surprised that Joe is phoning her.

LAUREN  
Yes Mr. Toussaint, what can I do  
for you?

JOE  
Joe please...are you still working  
our case?

LAUREN  
(curious)  
Actually no, I was taken off but  
why did you want to know?

JOE  
I wanted to make sure there would  
be no conflict of interest if I  
wanted to ask you out.

Now Lauren is totally surprised.

LAUREN  
Excuse me...you're asking me out on  
a date?

JOE  
If that's what they're still called  
then yes, I'm asking.

LAUREN  
Wow, that totally came out of left  
field.

JOE  
Is that a yes?

LAUREN  
I don't know what to say.

JOE  
Just say oui that's French for yes.

LAUREN  
I know what oui means.

JOE  
Good then. How do you feel about  
Cajun?

LAUREN  
I'm not sure.

JOE  
There's a great restaurant called  
Gator Lune which serves excellent  
Cajun food. A friend of mine owns  
it.

LAUREN  
I'm pretty busy with cases right  
now.

Joe ignores what she's just said and presses on.

JOE  
How about tomorrow night?

LAUREN  
It would have to be late.

JOE  
Late's great, late's better.  
Detective...

LAUREN  
Lauren please...

JOE  
O.K. Lauren can I ask you a favor,  
can I ask you to pick me up?

LAUREN  
Okay then, how does 8:30 sound?

JOE  
8:30's perfect. I'll see you  
tomorrow Lauren.

LAUREN  
Bye.

Lauren's a little shell shocked. She can't believe she just accepted to go out with Joe.

LAUREN  
(self-talk)  
I can't believe you just said yes.

Switch to Joe who's looking quite happy with himself and talking to Zola.

JOE

Well Zola that went better than I thought it would.

INT. RESTAURANT GATOR MOON - NIGHT

Joe and Lauren are sitting at a table. They've obviously just arrived because the table is empty of food. It's a funky, restaurant of medium size, decorated in an unpretentious style befitting the Cajun menu. Almost all of the tables are occupied. There's a stage set up for live music. They both have been given a menu although Joe is not looking at his. Lauren is puzzled by hers, she doesn't know Cajun cuisine.

LAUREN

I have no idea what to order?

JOE

I usually let my friend Pascal chose for me, he's the part-time chef and owner. He should be by any minute now. Would you like to try a cocktail a la Louisiane, it's a typical drink?

LAUREN

Why not.

Joe calls to their waiter.

JOE

Garcon.

WAITER/GARCON

Deux cocktails a la Louisiane.

GARCON

Very well monsieur.

Waiter leaves with the order. A robust looking man approaches the table. He's quite big with an imposing belly and a drooping moustache. He's the owner and friend of Joe. His name is Pascal.

PASCAL

Joe cher, where have you been and who is the lovely mademoiselle?

JOE

Lauren Delacroix I would like you to meet Pascal Doucette. Lauren is a detective with the NYPD.

(CONTINUED)

Lauren presents her hand to shake Pascal's but he kisses it instead.

PASCAL  
Enchante Ms. Delacroix Joe is a  
lucky man.

LAUREN  
Pleased to meet you.

JOE  
I was telling Lauren that you  
probably have great dishes to  
recommend for tonight.

PASCAL  
Let me take care of  
everything. You won't be  
disappointed.

JOE  
Merci Pascal.

PASCAL  
For my friend Joe and his lovely  
lady, it will be my pleasure. I'll  
come by after you've eaten. Bon  
appetit.

Pascal heads for the kitchen.

LAUREN  
He seems very nice. Is he a  
childhood friend?

JOE  
No we met here. There is a small  
but very vibrant Cajun community in  
New York.

The waiter arrives with their drinks.

JOE  
(lifting his glass for a  
toast)chin, chin, that's French for  
cheers.

LAUREN  
(taking a sip)  
It's delicious.

INT. - RESTAURANT - EVENING

The meal has ended and Joe and Lauren are finishing the rest of a wine bottle.

LAUREN

This was so good Joe, the best meal I've had in a long time.

JOE

Some say that New Orleans has the best cuisine in all of the U.S.

LAUREN

Why did you move to New York, you seem to love it there very much?

JOE

It's a strange tale. About fifteen years ago my parents won a big state lottery.

LAUREN

I've never met anybody who won a lottery.

JOE

Yes and the strange thing is that they won with numbers that I picked. When you win big like that you draw a lot of attention to yourself, not always the best kind.

LAUREN

They wanted to disappear?

JOE

In a way, it's much easier to go unnoticed in a city this size, plus my parents always wanted to experience New York, go to Broadway shows, cinema, plays and now they could do it so we moved. They were both teachers, they loved culture.

LAUREN

You must miss them very much.

JOE

I'm happy they got to do what they always wanted to do.

Pascal reappears at their table. He notices the somber mood.

(CONTINUED)

PASCAL

Why the sad faces chers, the food  
was not good?

JOE

The food was wonderful Pascal, as  
usual.

LAUREN

You've made me a fan for life.

PASCAL

Excellent. It's music to my ears  
and speaking of music did you know  
Lauren that Joe plays a mean  
accordion?

JOE

(looking embarrassed)

Pascal did you have to bring that  
up?

PASCAL

You wanna hear him play don't you  
Lauren?

LAUREN

I would love to hear him play.

PASCAL

Come on Joe. We're just setting up  
now. Get ready for some real  
Zydeco Lauren.

LAUREN

I can't wait.

Pascal drags a still reluctant Joe to the stage. Pascal  
hands him the accordion while he settles on the  
fiddle. Another musician takes care of the percussion  
instruments. They start to play and the scene ends.

INT.- LAUREN'S CAR - IN FRONT OF JOE'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

They are still seating in the car, it's the end of their  
evening together.

LAUREN

Thank you for a wonderful evening  
Joe.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

You're welcome and does it mean we  
can do it again?

LAUREN

I would like that very much. You're  
a man of many talents Joe  
Toussaint.

JOE

I try to keep most of them hidden.

LAUREN

Well you shouldn't. By the way what  
does "cher" mean, Pascal was using  
that a lot.

JOE

It's a common Cajun expression. It  
means dear, everybody's always a  
"cher" regardless.

LAUREN

In other words I shouldn't let it  
go to my head...got it.

Joe grabs the handle of the door and opens it. He gets out  
and bends down to say a final good night to Lauren.

JOE

Good night Lauren.

LAUREN

Good night.

Joe closes the door and stands outside looking a little  
lost. Lauren comes out of the car.

LAUREN

Do you need help Joe?

JOE

I'm afraid I don't have my trusty  
Zola to point me in the right  
direction.

LAUREN

(grabs Joe's arm)

Here.

They go up the stairs together. It's a little awkward. They  
are facing each other and standing very close together. Joe  
takes out his keys.

LAUREN  
Here, let me help you with that.

Lauren opens the door and Joe steps in.

JOE  
Are you still there?

LAUREN  
I'm still here.

JOE  
Can I hold you?

Lauren moves in closer and Joe puts his arms around her.

JOE  
Mmmm. your hair smells wonderful.  
Can I touch your face?

Joe doesn't wait for an answer and brings his hands up touching Lauren's face. He caresses her lips softly.

JOE  
You have very kissable lips Ms.  
Delacroix.

Joe leans in and blows on her lips. Lauren moves in and they kiss, a long, sensual kiss. They finally break away.

JOE  
Would you like to come in?

LAUREN  
I think it's best if I don't but  
thanks again for a lovely evening.

Lauren moves down the stairs.

JOE  
Can I call you again...soon?

LAUREN  
Yes Joe you can, good night.

JOE  
Good night Lauren.

Lauren heads for her car as the door slowly closes on Joe.

INT. - LAUREN'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

LAUREN

(to herself)

Wow, wow.

INT. - APARTMENT OF LAUREN AND ISABELLE - MORNING

It's early morning. The two sisters are having breakfast.

ISABELLE

Okay, spill the beans. How was the date with mysterious Joe?

LAUREN

Stop calling him that. I've decided there's nothing mysterious about him.

ISABELLE

Fine but I want details.

LAUREN

We ate, we drank, we talked. He played the accordion.

ISABELLE

Wow, I'm impressed and totally jealous so what about the sex?

LAUREN

(making a face at her sister)  
No sex yet but we kissed.

ISABELLE

and...

LAUREN

It was pretty spectacular but don't ask me for a scale you know I hate those.

ISABELLE

I won't. So everything was fine, no surprises.

LAUREN

Plenty of surprises but none that would qualify as mysterious.

(CONTINUED)

ISABELLE

Great, I'm happy for you Lauren.  
Did he say anything about your  
impromptu visit to his eye doctor?

LAUREN

Now that you mention it, no he  
didn't. That's a bit odd, oh well  
I'm sure there's a very plausible  
reason.

Lauren gets up but she's thinking about what Isabelle said.  
She grabs her stuff and heads for the door.

LAUREN

Talk to you later. Bye.

ISABELLE

Bye...have a good day no make that  
a great day.

Lauren exits the apartment.

INT. - PRECINCT - DAY

Lauren and George are going over some case files in the main  
squad room. Phones are ringing. The door to the Captain's  
office suddenly bursts open.

CAPTAIN

(calling out)

Delacroix, Hernandez in here now.

INT. - PRECINCT - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lauren and George get up and enter the captain's  
office. He's already seated behind his desk.

CAPTAIN

Close the door and take a seat.

GEORGE

What's up Captain?

CAPTAIN

What's up is that the shit's  
finally hit the fan like I knew it  
would. I was just on the phone with  
the Police Commissioner. There's  
been a double murder on Fifth  
Avenue, a brother and a sister,  
both in their twenties.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Oh, oh this could get messy.

CAPTAIN

Damn right it could get messy. I told the Commissioner I was gonna put my two best detectives on this case, tag it as a high priority. From now on that's all you're gonna be doing.

LAUREN

What about our other cases?

CAPTAIN

I'm reassigning those. Like I said this is gonna have to be solved and solved fast. The press is gonna be all over this one like a pack of hyenas.

LAUREN

(under her breath)

That's what happens when the rich get murdered.

CAPTAIN

Speak up Delacroix, I can't hear you.

LAUREN

Captain I will do everything in my power to find out who did this but I have to tell you when the rich get murdered it's always a top priority. It seems the rich always get a pretty big slice of the justice pie.

CAPTAIN

All right, you've said your piece now let me say mine.

George and Lauren exchange a knowing look, they have a feeling they know what's coming.

CAPTAIN

Let me tell you about rich people. Rich people are different than you and I. They expect results not today, not tomorrow, but YESTERDAY. How do they get those results...because they're

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN (cont'd)  
connected, that's how and when  
people are connected, guess who  
gets an earful when things don't go  
as fast as they should?

Lauren and George don't answer since it's a rhetorical question.

CAPTAIN  
I think you know the answer to that  
question so that's it, get out of  
here and solve this case fast. Get  
the details from dispatch.

Lauren and George exit the captain's office.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE CAR - DAY

Lauren is driving. George is going over some of the information. They're a bit tense, they know this is going to be a big case. Lauren attempts to diffuse the tension if only momentarily.

LAUREN  
So is it true?

GEORGE  
What is?

LAUREN  
You wanna be called Jorge.

GEORGE  
Who told you that?

LAUREN  
A little bird.

GEORGE  
Well that little bird is full of  
shit. When it comes to Spanish I'm  
just as clueless as the next  
gringo.

LAUREN  
Born and raised in New York right?

GEORGE  
Three generations. It's the whole  
melting pot thing, you know...first  
you melt and then you disappear.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

It's kinda sad.

GEORGE

Maybe but that's just the way it is. I gotta admit though that thing you did with the cue card, that was priceless.

LAUREN

Captain didn't think so.

GEORGE

Whatever, I never laughed so hard in my life. I see he's coming around though...

LAUREN

He's trying I'll give him that. So this case...

GEORGE

Yeah, it's one of those make or break cases.

LAUREN

Well, let's hope we break it before it breaks us.

GEORGE

Amen to that.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE 5TH. AVENUE BUILDING - DAY

Lauren and George arrive at the scene of the murders. There are already a lot of vehicles there, including the M.E's van, the ident. people as well as media vehicles. Lauren takes a look at the media vans. She's talking to George as they start walking in the direction of the building.

LAUREN

(pointing to the media cars)

Shit, how did they get here so fast?

GEORGE

They can smell rich blood a mile away.

LAUREN

You got that right. Let's make it discreet and try not to get noticed otherwise no comment.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE  
Got it.

Cameras and mikes are being shoved in their faces as they enter the building and take the elevator up to the penthouse floor.

INT. PENTHOUSE - DAY

LOU  
Detective Delacroix.

LAUREN  
Lou we're gonna have to stop meeting this way. You know my partner George Hernandez

LOU  
We've met before.

They acknowledge each other.

LAUREN  
So you took the call?

LOU  
First on the scene, although it wasn't quite as crowded when I arrived.

They look around and there is a lot of police activity in the huge apartment.

LAUREN  
Give us what you got.

LOU  
Victims' names are Olivia Andrews and Nicolas Andrews. Shot in the back of the head with a small caliber pistol, execution style, very little blood. The body of the girl was moved from his bed to hers.

GEORGE  
So they were sharing the same bed?

LOU  
It appears that way.

LAUREN

Let's not jump to conclusions. Wait for forensics, see if there's any semen. Okay? Who called it in?

LOU

The housekeeper. She had a couple of days off and usually returns around 11:00 on her first day back.

Lou checks his notes.

LOU

Her name is Gabriela Perez, she's from the Philippines, has been with the family for 7 years, she speaks English.

GEORGE

Who else do you have?

LOU

There's the uncle, James Andrews, he lives in the other penthouse. The mother is on her way, name's Elizabeth Andrews, she was in the Catskills, they have a vacation home there. Dad's deceased going on 5 years.

LAUREN

Good work Lou. That's really helpful. Can you take us to the bodies. Will start with the M.E.

LOU

Right this way.

Lauren and George follow Lou to the bedroom where the boy's body was found.

INT. - LAUREN AND ISABELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's quite late. Isabelle tiptoes into the apartment all the lights are off.

LAUREN

(off screen)

You don't have to tiptoe, I'm still awake.

INT.- LAUREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isabelle enters Lauren's bedroom and sits on the bed. Lauren sits up and turns on a small night light.

ISABELLE

You must be dead tired, poor baby.

LAUREN

I'm so tired and I still can't sleep. I keep going over this case, round and around. We've been at it for a week and still no break.

ISABELLE

Have you seen the latest headlines...they're already calling it The Penthouse Murders.

LAUREN

Yeah I know, I've tried to avoid the papers and the T.V.

ISABELLE

It's wall to wall coverage. You're in the big league now.

LAUREN

Yes and I'm not sure I like it.

ISABELLE

Have you heard from beautiful Joe?

Lauren gives her sister a warning look.

ISABELLE

What...you told me not to call him mysterious. I just think Joe's too short, it needs something in front of it.

LAUREN

You know what I'm too tired to argue with you and yes he did phone me a couple of times but I've been too busy to see him. He's meeting me for lunch tomorrow, if I can get away.

ISABELLE

Good. Try and get some sleep. You'll need your beauty rest for tomorrow. Good night Lauren.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN  
Good night, I'll see you when I see  
you.

Isabelle turns off the light and exits the bedroom.

INT. - PRECINCT - MAIN SQUAD ROOM - DAY

George and Lauren are going over the Penthouse murder case file.

LAUREN  
The Captain wants to see us.

GEORGE  
We don't have much to show him.

LAUREN  
I know but let's put a brave face  
on it. Damn it it's only been a  
week.

GEORGE  
Yeah but I don't want to hear the  
rich speech again. I've heard it  
enough as is.

LAUREN  
Me too.

They get up and walk towards the Captain's office.

INT. - PRECINCT - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The captain looks up as they enter his office.

CAPTAIN  
Ha my two best detectives, I hope  
you have some good news for me.

LAUREN  
Not exactly.

CAPTAIN  
I don't like the sound of that,  
give it to me straight.

GEORGE  
There's no sign of forced entry.  
Trace hasn't found anything that we  
can work with. The weapon might be  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE (cont'd)  
a gun which belonged to the father  
but the mother thinks he may have  
gotten rid of it a few years back.

LAUREN  
She can't remember but it's not  
where she thought it might have  
been, so it's still a possibility  
that it may have been the weapon  
used.

CAPTAIN  
Which means diddly since we don't  
have it either way. Okay, what  
else, what about the alibis?

LAUREN  
So far they all check out. Mom was  
in the Catskills, housekeeper was  
at her sister's in the Bronx, uncle  
was having his java at his regular  
coffee joint. The victims were both  
attending college and we're well  
liked, no boyfriend or girlfriend  
which is a little odd. In fact  
they seemed more like a couple than  
a brother and sister add to that  
that they were sleeping in the same  
bed when they were murdered and  
that the semen found at the scene  
is a positive match for the  
brother.

CAPTAIN  
Holy shit, this case gets messier  
by the minute. What did the mom  
have to say about that?

GEORGE  
Nothing really, she's still in a  
state of shock so this new  
bombshell didn't help. They kept  
the fact that they were sleeping  
together well hidden. It's a huge  
apartment and Mom takes sleeping  
pills so...

LAUREN  
Besides the housekeeper and mom the  
uncle is the only other one who had  
a key to the apartment.

CAPTAIN

Could they have lost their keys?

LAUREN

No, the keys of the victims were still on their key chains. Nothing was stolen, it's really hard pinning down the motives.

CAPTAIN

So what we have here is a fucking air sandwich, no meat at all...

LAUREN

Basically, I know it sucks but it's only been a week. The incest angle, is the thing we're going to focus on. We're also gonna double check the uncle's alibi. Something's bugging me about it but I haven't quite figured out why.

CAPTAIN

You do that and come up with something fast because I'm already getting an earful about the lack of progress.

LAUREN

We're on it.

Lauren and George exit the Captain's office.

INT. - PRECINCT - MAIN SQUAD ROOM - DAY

GEORGE

It wasn't as bad as I thought.

LAUREN

Don't kid yourself, it's the calm before the storm. We better make some progress and fast.

GEORGE

Do you want me to go and interview the people at that coffee shop again, double check the times?

LAUREN

Good idea. I'll keep playing around with the time lines.

(CONTINUED)

George leaves and Lauren's phone rings. She checks and sees it's Joe.

JOE  
Is this a bad time?

LAUREN  
Right now any time is a bad time.

JOE  
Oh, oh does this mean our lunch date is off?

LAUREN  
No I do want to see you but can we just grab something quick and go sit somewhere?

JOE  
Not a problem. I can grab with the best of them.

LAUREN  
You're funny. Meet me downstairs in 30 minutes?

JOE  
See you then.

They both hang up and Lauren goes back to work checking the time on her watch.

EXT. - PARK BENCH - DAY

Lauren and Joe are sitting on a bench finishing the rest of what appears to be hot dogs.

LAUREN  
You know I'm still curious about...  
oh, oh wait a minute.

Lauren looks at Joe who's got a little mustard on the side of his mouth, she wipes it off with a napkin.

LAUREN  
There, much better.

JOE  
Thanks, you were saying...

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

I was wondering why you hadn't yet asked about my visit to Dr. Monroe?

Joe says nothing instead he fishes around for Lauren's hand and starts playing with her fingers.

LAUREN

Joe, I've asked you a question.

JOE

I guess I didn't want to embarrass you.

Lauren takes back her hand.

LAUREN

So what, you did it out of some chivalrous notion.

JOE

Well you do seem to have this crazy idea that there's something weird about me.

LAUREN

Is that why you've asked me out so you can convince me that you're totally normal?

Joe grabs her shoulders and forces Lauren to look at him.

JOE

Don't ever think that Lauren, I asked you out because I wanted to get to know you. I like you very much. Here let me prove it to you.

Joe tries to kiss her but Lauren still wants to talk.

Lauren is feeling a bit mollified. She looks up at Joe who is now talking into her ear.

JOE

In fact I wanted to know if I could see you tonight?

LAUREN

I don't think I can. This case has to be my priority.

JOE  
(making his voice seductive)  
I can wait up. We can just relax at  
my place.

LAUREN  
(hesitating still)  
I don't know. It would have to be  
really late.

JOE  
See unlike you Lauren any time is  
the right time for me. Plus how are  
you gonna solve the mystery of Joe  
if you never get to see me?

LAUREN  
(playfully)  
Are you saying there is a mystery?

JOE  
You never know Lauren, you never  
know.

Joe hugs her and kisses her ear lightly. Lauren smiles.

INT. - PRECINCT - DAY

Lauren walks into the squad room, she's still smiling  
thinking about Joe. George is back already.

LAUREN  
Back so soon...that was fast.

GEORGE  
Yeah I know I'm a regular speedy  
Gonzales. What's the grin for, do  
you know something I don't?

LAUREN  
It's nothing so what about the  
coffee shop interviews.

GEORGE  
I think I might have something.

LAUREN  
Great, let's hear it.

EXT. - STREET - DAY

Joe is walking with Zola and talking on the phone.

ALEC

Is that really what you said, solve  
the mystery of Joe?

JOE

Sometimes I just want to tell her  
and get it over with. I've  
forgotten what it's like to  
actually be seen for who I am.

ALEC

I know it's not easy and it might  
be tempting but she's a  
detective, don't forget you gave a  
false statement and I'm covering  
for you, everything will have  
to come out.

JOE

It's just that I'm just so damn  
tired. I really like Lauren. It  
would be so easy to fall in love  
with her.

ALEC

Does she still suspect something?

JOE

I don't think she's given up  
entirely, It's inevitable.

ALEC

What is?

JOE

When you start caring for someone  
you want to know all of them  
especially the part that's  
mysterious.

ALEC

Yeah, I think you're right. Maybe  
it wasn't such a good idea after  
all.

JOE

In any case I'm seeing her again  
tonight.

(CONTINUED)

ALEC  
Be careful.

They say good bye and hang up.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lauren and Joe are on the couch. They've been making out for quite some time, their clothes are in disarray. Lauren pushes Joe away playfully.

LAUREN  
Joe is it true what they say, you know how your other senses are heightened when one goes?

Joe walks his hand slowly up her bare leg and thigh.

JOE  
Like the sense of touch here? Let me see I need to study some more before I can give you a definitive answer.

Joe continues exploring higher up Lauren's leg who now draws him to her.

LAUREN  
I think study time is over.

Lauren draws Joe to him. They kiss passionately and Lauren brings her hands up to Joe's glasses attempting to take them off. Joe pushes her hands away and gets up as though burned.

JOE  
Don't do that.

Lauren gets up to face Joe.

LAUREN  
Why Joe? What's wrong, I want to see your face. What could be so bad that I can't see your eyes? Please Joe.

Joe has moved towards the door. He's obviously upset.

JOE  
It's getting late. You better leave now.

LAUREN

No. I don't want to leave and I  
don't understand.

JOE

Lauren, please just go.

Joe has opened the door. Lauren hesitates but she finally picks up her stuff and heads towards the door.

LAUREN

Fine, I'm leaving but this isn't  
over not by a long shot.

Joe doesn't answer. Lauren leaves and he closes the door. Lauren is seen on the other side with tears in her eyes.

INT. - DR. MONROE'S OFFICE - EARLY AFTERNOON

Joe and Alec are talking in Alec's office.

ALEC

Okay, I can take care of Zola while  
you're gone. How long will you be?

JOE

I'm not sure. Lauren's getting too  
close. I don't know what else to  
do.

ALEC

Well at least you can be yourself  
in Paris.

JOE

Phone me if you hear anything. You  
know where to reach me. Take care  
of Zola.

Joe pets Zola and tells him good bye. Alec and Joe hug.

ALEC

Maybe it's for the best. Take care  
buddy.

JOE

See you Alec.

Joe leaves the office. He has a suitcase with him. He hails a taxi outside Alec's office and directs him to the airport.

INT. - MANHATTAN PRECINCT - DAY

Lauren and George are at their desks. They are going over the Penthouse murder files. Lauren appears distracted. Her eyes are red.

GEORGE

Are you all right? You don't seem with it today.

LAUREN

It's this damn case, I'm not getting enough sleep. We don't seem to be making much progress. It's frustrating.

GEORGE

What about the uncle as a viable suspect? His alibi is not as air tight as we thought it was?

LAUREN

Still it's pretty slim, I don't know if we can go to the Captain with what we have?

The Captain is now at their desks and has overheard part of what they were saying.

CAPTAIN

Tell the captain what?

GEORGE

The alibi of the uncle doesn't check out.

CAPTAIN

Let's move to my office. With a case this sensitive we have to be careful.

They all move to the Captain's office. The Captain closes the door.

CAPTAIN

So what's this about the uncle?

LAUREN

James Andrews, he owns the other penthouse. The thing is he always goes to the same coffee shop and...

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE

...it's a really busy place at that time of the morning so the people who work there think they saw him at a certain time but they're not 100% sure...

CAPTAIN

...because he goes there all the time so they're just assuming he was there at the time he said.

Right?

LAUREN

Like we said it's pretty slim but it's something. It does provide him with a window of opportunity. He could have killed them and come back to have his coffee with nobody the wiser.

CAPTAIN

What about the doorman?

LAUREN

There's a garage and you can exit through there without being seen.

CAPTAIN

Okay, what about motive?

LAUREN

That's the sticking point and we know it's huge. We're still working on that.

CAPTAIN

Trace gave you nothing to work with no hair no fibers, I mean one body was moved for Christ's sake.

LAUREN

The thing is the uncle is completely hairless, he has a condition called alopecia universalis in which you experience total loss of body hair so no, no hair, no tell tale fibers either.

GEORGE

His prints are all over the apartment except in the two bedrooms which makes sense why would he go in there?

the Captain is still thinking about the no hair statement.

CAPTAIN  
No hair, damn!

LAUREN  
I know. Do you think we could bring him in and rattle his cage a little bit, see what gives?

CAPTAIN  
We have to be very careful with this one, remember...

GEORGE  
We know rich people...

CAPTAIN  
I guess it's worth a try. Ask him to come for clarification purposes.

LAUREN  
We got nothing to lose. The worst that can happen is he'll lawyer up right away.

CAPTAIN  
Fine, bring him in.

LAUREN  
I'll go call him.

George and Lauren leave the Captain's office. Lauren checks the file and starts dialing.

INT. - PRECINCT - MAIN SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Lauren has just phoned the uncle and he's agreed to come him.

LAUREN  
Okay, that's all set. George I'm gonna go grab a bite to eat do you want something?

GEORGE  
No, I'm fine thanks.

Lauren grabs her jacket and leaves. She wanted the excuse to go outside so she could phone Joe. The phone rings but nobody's picking up and the answering machine can be heard.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Joe, I really want to talk about what happened the other night. I don't know where you are. Please phone me on my cell, don't phone the office. Bye.

Lauren puts away her cell and goes back to the precinct.

INT. PRECINCT - MAIN SQUAD ROOM - DAY

GEORGE

That was quick.

LAUREN

I wasn't hungry after all.

INT. PRECINCT - MAIN SQUAD ROOM - DAY

The uncle James Andrews is seen leaving the interrogation room. He has a smile on his face. He waves bye to George. Lauren exits the interrogation room after him.

GEORGE

Bastard, he was positively glowing.

LAUREN

He didn't even break a sweat as cool as a cucumber and he didn't even lawyer up.

GEORGE

He's Mister I'll cooperate with the authorities, I got nothing to hide.

LAUREN

We're screwed George. Fuck we have to go back to the drawing board.

GEORGE

I still like him for it.

LAUREN

Me too but liking him for it isn't gonna get us anywhere. Let's go back and interview the friends of the victims. Maybe we missed something the first few times.

GEORGE

We need a break on this case. The press is having a field day.

LAUREN

Let's just go.

They grab their stuff and leave.

INT. - DR. MONROE'S OFFICE - A FEW DAYS LATER

Lauren is standing in front of the same receptionist who's still giving her a hard time. They are keeping their voices down since there are patients waiting to be seen in the room.

RECEPTIONIST

Look detective, he's really busy as you can see so unless this is an emergency and or official police business I don't think I can disturb him.

LAUREN

It's not official police business but I know he'll want to see me. Please can you just tell him Lauren Delacroix would like to see him. It will only take a minute of his time.

RECEPTIONIST

(clearly exasperated)

I can try but don't be surprised if you can't see him today.

The receptionist dials the main exam room. She talks briefly to Dr. Monroe and it appears to be the same scenario as before. She gets up and reluctantly ushers Lauren into a side room.

RECEPTIONIST

You can wait in here.

She leaves. Lauren sits down in one of the chairs and takes a look around the office. She keeps checking her watch, she's obviously impatient. After ten minutes or so she gets up and heads for the door and just at that moment the door opens and Dr. Monroe walks in.

(CONTINUED)

ALEC

Detective, you again. I thought I made my position clear the last time we spoke.

LAUREN

Look I'm not here as a detective. I know that you and Joe are friends. I'm worried about him and I didn't know where else to turn.

ALEC

Why the sudden worry?

LAUREN

You probably know that Joe and I have been seeing each other...

Alec doesn't say anything. Lauren presses on.

LAUREN

The other night we had a fight and I've been trying to reach him ever since with no success. Do you know where he is?

ALEC

Detective Delacroix...

LAUREN

Lauren please...

ALEC

All right Lauren, what is it about Joe that you're so curious about?

LAUREN

I think you know. Joe's not blind, I'm almost sure of it. As his friend you must know this.

ALEC

I may be Joe's friend but he's still my patient and the confidentiality rule still applies, nothing's changed. I don't know what you expected coming in here making those accusations.

LAUREN

I don't care about that. I just want to know where he is and that

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN (cont'd)  
he's all right. Please can't you  
just tell me where he is?

ALEC  
He left for Paris a few days ago  
that's all I know.

Lauren gets up, clearly upset.

LAUREN  
Paris...why?

ALEC  
He has friends there. It's not his  
first time in Paris.

LAUREN  
Do you know where I can reach him,  
at least?

ALEC  
I'm sorry detective, I mean  
Lauren. He usually phones me and  
right now that's all I can tell  
you. I have patients waiting.

Alec moves Lauren towards the door.

LAUREN  
Can you please tell Joe that I  
would like to hear from him.

ALEC  
If and when he phones me, I'll  
relay that message now if you'll  
excuse me...

LAUREN  
Good bye Dr. Monroe.

ALEC  
Good bye.

Alec watches her as she leaves and then enters an exam room.

INT. - APARTMENT OF LAUREN AND ISABELLE - NIGHT -

It's very late. Lauren is sitting in the dark when Isabelle comes back home from a party. She turns on a few lights and notices Lauren sitting in the dark. She rushes towards her concerned.

(CONTINUED)

ISABELLE  
Lauren what's wrong?

LAUREN  
Besides everything? My case is  
going nowhere and Joe's left for  
Paris.

ISABELLE  
Why? What happened?

LAUREN  
We had a big fight and I don't  
think Joe's blind.

ISABELLE  
Why didn't you tell me this before?  
You mean he's been pretending all  
this time, who would do that?

LAUREN  
The bigger question is why and the  
worst part is that instead of  
thinking about my case I'm  
preoccupied with Joe and that's  
really pissing me off.

ISABELLE  
How did you find out about Joe?

LAUREN  
I went to see his doctor...I know,  
I know I shouldn't have but Joe let  
slip that they were friends so I  
thought he might know something  
about where Joe was.

ISABELLE  
You'll figure this out Lauren  
you're a great detective remember.

LAUREN  
I'm not as optimistic as you are,  
anyways thanks for the pep talk.  
I'm going to bed.

Lauren gets up from the couch. Isabelle has a quizzical look  
on her face and Lauren notices.

LAUREN  
What?

(CONTINUED)

ISABELLE

I just want to know one thing is it  
okay to switch back to mysterious  
Joe from beautiful Joe?

LAUREN

It's not funny Isabelle.

Lauren did smile a little at Isabelle's question.

ISABELLE

Come on I saw that smile.

LAUREN

You know I can never be mad at you.

ISABELLE

What can I say it's a gift.

Lauren leaves the room as Isabelle looks on.

EXT. ON PARIS SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Joe is walking on a busy Paris street. He's checking something in a little notebook obviously looking for an address. He stops in front of a bar restaurant called Chez Clementine, takes one look and enters.

INT. - CHEZ CLEMENTINE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The interior is art nouveau style with long, red leather booths. A motley group is seated at one of these long booths, they've finished eating and are busy drinking and talking. English can be heard. One man notices Joe and stands up, beckoning to Joe. His name is Lance.

LANCE

Over here Joe.

Joe approaches the table but doesn't sit down.

LANCE

Everybody this is Joe. We're not  
too formal with introductions Joe.

JOE

That's quite all right. Hello  
everybody.

Some say hello back, others just acknowledge Joe through a nod of the head.

(CONTINUED)

LANCE

If you folks will excuse us, I haven't seen Joe in a while so we'll go sit somewhere a bit more private.

Good natured joking can be heard while Lance guides Joe away from the group towards a more private table. They both order drinks.

LANCE

I didn't know how much socializing you were up for plus I was starting to get pissed at the bitching and moaning.

JOE

Let me guess, they love France but just don't like the French in it?

LANCE

That's about right. Some days I don't know how I put up with it.

JOE

You could always hang out with another crowd, just a suggestion.

LANCE

What and miss out on all that complaining...not a chance.

JOE

That's because you probably complain as much as they do.

Lance laughs.

LANCE

Goddamn right I do. So how are you Joe, how are the eyes, can you see okay?

JOE

Yeah, I can see fine, sometimes a little too much.

LANCE

I know what you mean. The world's a fucking mess but you can't go around pretending to be blind, can you?

JOE

No you can't. How's the book coming along?

LANCE

It's finished. It's finished, done, cooked. My Nights at Clementine, it's got bestseller written all over that sucker.

JOE

That great is it...so what, no bites?

LANCE

Not even a tiny nibble. Think I should change my title?

JOE

I don't know...I always liked it. I thought there was a market for this genre of writing, you know expat's tale of living the good or not so good life in Paris.

LANCE

Maybe a few years ago. I'm just too slow a writer, I missed the curve on that one.

JOE

Don't give up just yet.

LANCE

Ah hell, maybe I should just move back to New York?

JOE

What and miss out on all the complaining...plus if you're gonna be broke might as well...

LANCE

...be broke in Paris, let's drink to that.

They clink their glasses.

LANCE

What about you, still doing those talking books?

JOE

I've done a few but the market's not huge. It's a good thing I don't depend on that or I'd be flat broke.

LANCE

Lucky bastard, that lottery thing sure came in handy. Got any numbers you wanna share with an old pal?

JOE

Sorry Lance, not a one. Alec sends his regards.

LANCE

He's still a big shot eye doctor?

JOE

He does all right. He's been a great help to me after and since the accident.

LANCE

Yeah, Alec's a good guy. How about the love life?

JOE

It's complicated.

LANCE

Isn't it always. Mine just walked out the door a couple of weeks ago.

JOE

Man, that's bad. How you doing?

LANCE

Not bad...considering, as they say here c'est la vie. Moving on buddy, moving on. Any plans for tonight?

JOE

I was counting on you.

LANCE

Okay, let's blow this joint. I know a place where we can go not far from here.

JOE  
Let's do it. I'll get the bill.

They both get up. Joe pays the tab. They say their goodbyes to Lance's friends and leave the restaurant.

INT. - HOTEL ROOM IN PARIS - DAY

Joe is seating in his hotel room reading a paper. The television is turned on and there's a movie playing it's Jules et Jim. The phone rings. Joe gets up to answer it.

JOE  
Oui, allo.

ALEC  
Joe, it's me. Detective Delacroix came to see me. She wanted to know where you were.

JOE  
Did you tell her?

ALEC  
A momentary lapse of reason but yes I did, she seemed pretty upset so I caved.

JOE  
I was thinking about coming back and telling Lauren the truth about my condition.

ALEC  
Whatever you decide is fine by me. We'll work it out together. I think you need to do this.

JOE  
I'll be back in a couple of days, I'll email you the details, can you pick me up?

ALEC  
I'll be there don't worry and by the way Zola misses you.

JOE  
See you soon then. Bye Alec.

ALEC  
A bientot.

Joe hangs up and goes to his laptop computer.

INT. - CAR - (MOVING) - DAY

This time George is driving. Lauren is sitting in the passenger seat going over any new information they may have gleaned from recent interviews on The Penthouse Murders.

LAUREN  
I hate to tell you this but we're not much further ahead then when we started.

GEORGE  
Other than the uncle and the discrepancy with the time frame we've got sweet fuck all that's new. So where do we go from here?

LAUREN  
The goddamn motive is what's hanging us up, I still feel that it has to do with the incest angle.

GEORGE  
How?

LAUREN  
Okay, I'm just thinking out loud here but what if the uncle had a thing for his niece, what if she had been stringing him along and he suddenly discovers that she's doing the nasty with her brother no less...that may have pushed him over the edge. Unrequited love combined with jealousy, come on it's the oldest thing in the book.

GEORGE  
I like it but even if it's true we don't have a shred of evidence and the guy's unflappable...supposedly torture's still illegal in this country...or so they say.

LAUREN  
That's not funny George.

The phone rings. It's Lauren's, Lauren notices it's Joe and she doesn't want to answer not while driving in the car with George.

GEORGE

Aren't you gonna answer that?

LAUREN

Nah...I'll just pick up the message later. Let's go back to the office and figure out what our next move is going to be.

GEORGE

You got it partner.

INT. - PRECINCT - WASHROOM - DAY

Lauren is in the washroom. She brought her phone and is accessing Joe's message.

JOE

(voice mail)

Lauren sorry I left in such a rush. I really want to see you. I know you're really busy but can you drop by the house later. I'll wait for you. Please, it's important.

Lauren puts away her phone and goes back into the squad room.

LAUREN

Listen George something's come up. I need to go, I'll be in tomorrow early.

GEORGE

Fine, I'll just keep plugging away here, see if I can come up with anything else.

LAUREN

Thanks, see you tomorrow, hopefully we won't have to debrief till then.

George makes a face and Lauren grabs her stuff and leaves.

INT. - JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe is in the bedroom of his apartment when the doorbell rings. He grabs his glasses and puts them on. He knows it's Lauren. He opens the door. She looks at him and waits to come in.

JOE

Lauren, I'm so glad you came. I thought you would be by later.

LAUREN

(not looking very happy)  
I left work early.

Joe moves away from the door to let her in. Zola comes to say hello and give Lauren a nudge. It softens her up a bit, she pets him. It's awkward and a bit reminiscent of the first time they were together in the apartment.

JOE

Look I know you have a lot of questions.

LAUREN

Did you take Zola with you to Paris?

JOE

No I left him here with a friend.

LAUREN

Don't you need him in Paris?

JOE

I have friends there and he doesn't know the streets well so he wouldn't have been very helpful.

LAUREN

I see. I'm gonna go get a glass of water in the kitchen, I'm really thirsty.

JOE

(tense and anxious)

Help yourself.

Lauren moves away from the living room and heads towards the kitchen.

INT. - JOE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Lauren is looking around. She finds a glass and pours herself some water from the tap. She pokes around some more, opens a drawer, hesitates and grabs a big kitchen knife.

JOE  
(offscreen)  
Finding what you need?

LAUREN  
(a determined look on her face)  
Got it.

Lauren heads back for the living room. She's hiding the knife behind her back. Joe has his back to her.

LAUREN  
(calling out)  
Joe.

Joe turns around and Lauren brings out the knife in a motion as though she is going to stab Joe, instinctively Joe puts up his arms. Lauren drops the knife.

LAUREN  
Well that's it then by the way I was never going to hurt you. Why couldn't you trust me?

JOE  
(sits down, both upset and relieved)  
How long have you suspected?

LAUREN  
(sits down opposite Joe)  
Maybe from the start, call it a detective's intuition, I always had this feeling that you were seeing me. Of course Mr. Dyck put a bug in my ear. What is it Joe, what could be so bad that you have to walk around pretending to be blind?

JOE  
I wasn't always pretending. I was blind for almost a year after my accident, that's how I got Zola, then my sight came back and with it... an ability.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

What do you mean? What kind of an ability?

Joe gets up, he's visibly upset and can't face Lauren, he obviously doesn't know how to say this.

JOE

See that's the hard part, it's not even about trust it's so crazy, I don't even know how to tell you this, some days I can't believe it myself.

Lauren gets up and hugs Joe from behind.

LAUREN

Just tell me what it is, please Joe.

JOE

(taking a breath)

Okay...I have the ability to influence people's actions but it's not about lying. If I think something related to them, they just do it. For instance I could turn around right now, take off my glasses, have you look at me and tell you to forget about me and walk out of this apartment as though you had never known about me and you would do it. I was tempted to do that a few times but selfishly I didn't want to lose you.

Lauren is stunned. She can't believe what she's hearing. She moves away from Joe and starts walking back and forth in the apartment.

LAUREN

I don't get it. This isn't a science fiction movie and you're not some kind of super hero. There must be a rational explanation.

JOE

There isn't. Alec tried a number of procedures and nothing worked. I didn't want this ability. The only way I could protect myself and others from it was to pretend I was

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOE (cont'd)  
blind. Lauren you have to  
understand, it was too much  
responsibility.

LAUREN  
So Alec knows about this, of course  
it makes sense now.

JOE  
We grew up together. He's like my  
brother. He's the only one who knew  
and now there's you.

LAUREN  
What about your statement, the  
first time, all false?

JOE  
Only parts of it. I got the guy to  
turn around and told him to drop  
the gun and leave which he was  
about to do when she got in front  
of him, picked up the gun and shot  
him.

LAUREN  
So she did it deliberately?

JOE  
Yes but don't forget what he had  
been doing to her, I was protecting  
her but mostly I was protecting  
myself.

LAUREN  
What are you so afraid of? Can't  
you control this ability?

JOE  
Even if I could learn to control  
it, come on Lauren, there's a reason  
why super heroes have aliases, they  
don't want to be found out and  
exploited. An ability like mine who  
knows what could happen. I would be  
prodded, tested and used. There are  
so many ways to force people to do  
something they don't want to do.  
You of all people should know that.  
I can never reveal it, I won't  
reveal it.

Joe sits down on the couch and Lauren comes and sits down in front of him. She puts her head on his knees. Joe hugs her.

LAUREN

I'm sorry Joe, it's just so hard to understand, I'm really having trouble with this, it doesn't seem possible, is it like hypnosis?

JOE

No because the person is awake, I don't even have to say anything, I can just think it.

LAUREN

And the glasses are what...like a barrier of some kind?

JOE

Something like that and you wanna know what's even more bizarre?

Lauren gets up to sit beside Joe.

LAUREN

I don't know if I can handle more bizarre...

JOE

This...ability, curse really, it's language specific. Since I only think in English it only works with people who speak English as well.

LAUREN

So in France...

JOE

I'm perfectly fine, no game of pretending.

LAUREN

Wow this is beyond weird. How do you explain it?

JOE

It's a left brain thing, I guess, that's where language primarily originates beyond that I have no idea. I'm just as confused as you are but I have to live with this condition.

LAUREN

What would happen if you took off your glasses now and I don't want you to make yourself disappear, please don't do that. You could think happy thoughts couldn't you?

JOE

I've never actually experimented with it. I never wanted to, it freaked me out too much.

LAUREN

Take off your glasses Joe, I really want to see you, I don't believe you would do anything that could hurt me.

Lauren takes off Joe's glasses. He has beautiful eyes. Lauren looks at him.

LAUREN

It's fine Joe, it's fine, I won't betray your trust. I would never do that to you.

JOE

What about the false statement I gave?

LAUREN

What false statement? Let me worry about that later.

Lauren moves in closer and they kiss.

JOE

I was almost ready to tell you, you know but I was afraid I was gonna lose you.

LAUREN

You haven't lost me yet.

They kiss again, then Joe takes her hand and guides her towards the bedroom.

INT. - PRECINCT - MAIN SQUAD ROOM - DAY

Captain Trammel is heading towards the desks of George and Lauren. He has a big scowl on his face. He's holding the front page of a newspaper with a huge heading on it referencing The Penthouse murders. He plunks it down on Lauren's desk.

CAPTAIN

Have you seen the latest?

LAUREN

I try to avoid those.

CAPTAIN

I wish I could have that luxury but unfortunately I don't. Once again we're being branded as incompetent and I'm being hounded on all sides. First the family, then the Commissioner and let's not forget the press.

GEORGE

Look Captain it's only been a few weeks.

CAPTAIN

A few weeks too many and what... not a single break in the case. I'm getting really tired of this shit.

LAUREN

Look, we're all under a lot of pressure here just let us work the case, we're gonna find the connecting link, it's just gonna take a little longer than we thought. I feel like we're making progress even though I know it doesn't seem like it.

CAPTAIN

Feeling doesn't get you anywhere in police work, don't you know that by now. Results, I need results, we need to break this case wide open and fast.

The captain leaves muttering under his breath.

(CONTINUED)

CAPTAIN  
My two god damn best detectives....

He slams the door to his office.

GEORGE  
Well that didn't go too badly.

LAUREN  
I'm glad you think so.

The phone rings, it's Lauren's cell phone. She sees it's Joe.

LAUREN  
(to George)  
Sorry, I have to take this.

Lauren moves away from her desk. She's whispering.

LAUREN  
(to Joe on the other end)  
Good you got my message. I can't  
talk for long.

PAUSE

LAUREN  
Can you meet me soon at the place  
where we had lunch the other day?

PAUSE

LAUREN  
Great, I'll see you in 30 minutes.

LAUREN  
(to George)  
Something's come up, I'll be back  
soon.

GEORGE  
You've been awfully mysterious  
lately, anything I should know.

LAUREN  
Nothing major...oh oh Captain's  
coming, I'm out of here.

CAPTAIN  
Hey, where the hell is she going?

GEORGE  
(shrugging his shoulders)  
Lunch?

CAPTAIN  
(yelling to Lauren as she's  
heading out the door)  
Delacroix I want you back in here  
pronto you've got a case to  
solve...who's got time to eat, I'm  
not eating, George here isn't  
eating...

Captain keeps mumbling as he heads back to his office.

EXT. - PARK BENCH - DAY

Lauren and Joe are sitting in the same spot where they were some time ago. They are having what appears to be a heated conversation.

LAUREN  
Joe, I wouldn't ask this if I  
didn't feel so hopelessly  
stuck. We're running out of  
options with this case.

JOE  
Look Lauren, I want to help I do  
but you just found out about me and  
already you're trying to use it to  
your advantage. Sorry if it just  
doesn't feel right.

LAUREN  
That's not fair. You know that this  
is different. I just feel it in my  
gut. The uncle is guilty but I'll  
never be able to prove it with  
nothing to tie him at the scene.

JOE  
How can you be so sure then? What  
if he isn't guilty? I'm just not  
sure I can do this, I need to think  
about it.

LAUREN  
I understand, I do but like I said  
we don't have much time, the  
pressure to solve this case is  
pretty intense.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

Lauren, don't you feel it would be unethical to use me in that way? I'm surprised frankly, and a little shocked, that you would even contemplate it.

LAUREN

Please don't give me that you didn't hesitate to use your...ability and to cover up for it when it suited your purpose.

JOE

That was different, I was trying to save a life.

LAUREN

(angry now)

And I'm trying to get justice for two innocent victims, doesn't that count for something? You have this awesome gift and you just choose to hide in plain sight this could be your chance to do something good, why can't you see that?

Lauren gets up and starts walking away. Joe follows her.

JOE

Lauren wait, please.

Lauren stops to wait for Joe.

JOE

Look this isn't something simple that you're asking me to do. What if he isn't guilty? What if something bad happens?

LAUREN

Like what? I've thought about this Joe. You can suggest to him that he come see detective Delacroix and outline the truth about what happened on the day of the murders. If he's innocent he'll repeat his previous statement, if he's guilty that will be a whole other story. You're not asking him to lie or fabricate.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

Can I at least think about it?

LAUREN

Fine but don't think too long. I know it seems weird me asking you this, I'm a detective I should be able to solve this but I can't, it doesn't make me feel good if that's what you want to hear.

Joe takes Lauren in his arms.

JOE

Hey, come on, I'll phone you I promise.

INT. - JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe has just arrived back at his apartment. He goes to his secret room and boots up his computer. He doesn't have his glasses on. He starts looking for information on The Penthouse Murders. The screen fills up with the latest headline. THE PENTHOUSE MURDERS STILL UNSOLVED. Joe starts to read. After a while he gets up and grabs his phone. He dials a number.

JOE

Lauren, it's me. O.K. I'll do it.  
Come by later to give me the details of where and when.

Joe hangs up. It's obvious he's uncomfortable but he's made his decision and is going to go through with it.

INT. - RESTAURANT SUITE 767 - NIGHT

Joe is sitting at a table, he's just finished his meal, he's been watching the uncle who goes there on a regular basis. He's waiting for an opportunity to catch him alone. The opportunity comes when the uncle who is dining alone goes to the restroom. Joe follows him.

INT. - RESTAURANT - REST ROOM - NIGHT

The uncle is at the urinal, Joe is beside him. Joe trips and his glasses fall off. The uncle bends down to pick them up and offer them to Joe who is now looking at him. No words are spoken but something passes between them.

INT. - PRECINCT - NIGHT

The uncle has arrived at the precinct, he is talking to the desk sergeant.

UNCLE

My name is James Andrews. It's urgent that I speak to detective Delacroix. I have information regarding The Penthouse Murders.

DESK SERGEANT

I'll call her. You wait right here.

The desk sergeant phones Lauren. Lauren arrives quickly.

LAUREN

Yes Mr. Andrews you said you had new information?

JAMES ANDREWS

Detective Delacroix, I would like to outline the truth of what happened on the day my niece and nephew were murdered.

LAUREN

Let's got somewhere more private.  
Please follow me.

They leave together and Lauren takes him to an interrogation room.

INT. - PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren is sitting opposite the uncle. She's ready to take his statement.

LAUREN

I've read you your rights. You're here of your own free will and you don't want a lawyer present.

JAMES ANDREWS

Yes, can we get on with this.

LAUREN

Go ahead.

JAMES ANDREWS

I want to confess to the murders of Nicolas and Olivia Andrews, my  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JAMES ANDREWS (cont'd)  
nephew and niece. On the day of the  
murders this is what happened...

INT. - PRECINCT - NIGHT

James Andrews has just confessed to the murders and is being led away in handcuffs. The Captain, Lauren and George are debriefing what just happened.

CAPTAIN

Well I'll be a son of a gun. So what he just waltzed in here and confessed to killing them both. I've never seen anything like it. What happened? We couldn't get anything out of him the last time we tried to sweat him.

GEORGE

Maybe he was feeling remorseful. Honestly I can't figure it out myself. Lauren what's your take on this happy turn of event?

LAUREN

(she's a little uncomfortable)  
Oh I don't know...let's just be happy he confessed, that's all that matters, justice for the victims and the family.

CAPTAIN

Still, it's puzzling as hell. So he had been in love with the niece and she had been stringing him along, why... that's still not clear, and he lost it when he saw that they were sleeping together.

GEORGE

That's about it. Jealousy it'll make you do crazy things. You know in some countries they call those crimes of passion and sometimes they don't convict.

CAPTAIN

Well thank God it's not gonna happen in this country. He's gonna go away for a very long time. Can I say I'm glad it's over? What do you say we go out and celebrate?

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Count me out. I'm not in a very  
celebratory mood.

CAPTAIN

I don't get it Delacroix. This is a  
great day for our department and a  
feather in both your caps.

LAUREN

Yeah well I'm just not feeling it.

CAPTAIN

What about you Hernandez are you  
feeling it?

GEORGE

Yeah I'm feeling it. Go ahead I'll  
see you at our usual place.

CAPTAIN

Fine and Delacroix...if you change  
your mind...

LAUREN

...I'll know where to find you. Got  
it.

The Captain leaves and George and Lauren are now alone.

GEORGE

Something's bugging you, what is  
it? I'm your partner remember?

LAUREN

Do you think we missed anything?  
Could we have done a better job  
investigating?

GEORGE

I don't get you Lauren, the case is  
solved, why are you still worried  
about it. Plus your scenario with  
the uncle was bang on. You should  
be happy about that at least.

LAUREN

Yep, it was bang on but if he  
hadn't confessed we would still be  
running around like chickens with  
our heads cut off.

GEORGE

Give yourself a break. It's over,  
he confessed although I admit it's  
weird I hadn't pegged him as the  
remorseful type...on the other hand  
people will surprise you.

LAUREN

I can't help but feel that I missed  
something, that I could have done a  
better job. I'm really starting to  
have doubts about myself.

GEORGE

Look nothing's perfect. We all make  
mistakes but in this case you  
didn't make any. Come on let's go  
for a drink. It'll cheer you up.

LAUREN

(smiling)

Only if you're paying.

GEORGE

Deal now let's go.

George and Lauren leave the precinct.

INT. - JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe's watching T.V. in his special room. There's a press conference going on about The Penthouse Murders. There's a clip of James Andrews being led away and asked why he confessed just now.

JAMES ANDREWS

(obviously distraught and  
confused, screaming)

I don't know...I don't know.

JOE

Poor bastard, he doesn't know what  
hit him. I hope you're happy  
Lauren.

Joe shuts off the T.V. and the phone rings. It's Lauren.

JOE

Well, you got what you wanted.  
Congratulations.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Then why do I feel so shitty about it? The guy's guilty, I was right all along, I should be celebrating.

JOE

Yet you're not. That's what happens Lauren when you mess with things like that. Why do you think I hide behind my glasses, it's not because I like it. I tried to warn you. This...ability, it's unnatural.

LAUREN

I think I understand now, I don't think I did at first. It was too easy...to use you. I feel like a goddamn cheater.

JOE

(hesitating)

You're still a good detective Lauren even if you don't feel like you are right now. Listen...I'm leaving. I'm going back to Paris. I'm tired of feeling like a stranger in a strange land. I don't even know who I am anymore. I want to live in the light again and if it means living in another country then so be it.

LAUREN

Okay but what happens when you become fluent in French, will you have to keep going from country to country...always running away...

JOE

I can't think about that now. I guess I can never become fluent, stupidly I'll have to try very hard not to learn and especially not to think in that language. It's the thinking that messes things up not the talking. Look Lauren what other option is there?

LAUREN

You could stay here with me?

JOE

And do what?...Nothing would be different. You have your job, your life. I have Alec and Zola.

LAUREN

What about us?

JOE

Us can't exist here. I'm sorry Lauren. I really wanted it to work. I wish I could have been more open with you from the very beginning and I'm not saying I won't ever use my ability again. I know it can be used in a positive way but I'm not ready for that just yet. Forget about me. I have to go. Good bye Lauren.

LAUREN

Joe wait...

Lauren realizes Joe's already hung up. She puts her phone away, tears in her eyes, and starts walking.

EXT. - OUTSIDE AIRPORT - DAY

Alec has just dropped off Joe and Zola. They are saying their good byes.

ALEC

Keep in touch. I'm planning a trip to the South of France maybe I can pick you up in Paris.

JOE

Deal and thanks for everything Alec. It's been great having you here.

ALEC

Don't mention it. You'd do the same for me.

JOE

In a heartbeat. See you Alec.

They hug and Joe disappears with Zola inside the airport while Alec looks on.

INT. - PRECINCT - CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The Captain is holding a piece of paper. He's at his desk and Lauren is standing in front of him. Her detective's shield and gun are also on his desk.

CAPTAIN

I don't understand. Why do you want to resign? I'm not sure I can accept this.

LAUREN

It's done. I don't think I like policing as much as I used to. I want to explore other options.

CAPTAIN

Why don't you just take a leave then?

LAUREN

No, I've made up my mind. It's been great working with you. Good bye Captain Trammel.

The Captain stands up and they shake hands.

CAPTAIN

Good bye Detective Delacroix...Lauren, don't be a stranger. If you change your mind...

The captain doesn't complete his sentence but Lauren acknowledges that she understands.

LAUREN

I know and thanks.

INT. - PRECINCT - DAY

Lauren heads for George's desk. They shake hands and then George hugs her.

GEORGE

Good bye partner. See you around.

LAUREN

Not if I see you first.

Lauren takes her box of stuff and heads for the exit. She takes one last, lingering look and then turns her back and leaves.

INT. - APARTMENT OF LAUREN AND ISABELLE - DAY

Isabelle is walking around Lauren who's picking things up. Lauren goes to her bedroom. She has a suitcase on her bed.

ISABELLE  
Lauren stop a minute.

Lauren stops and looks at Isabelle.

ISABELLE  
We haven't really talked since you quit your job. You never told me what happened with Joe. You found out his secret didn't you? Why can't you tell me?

LAUREN  
I can't. Just accept it. I made Joe a promise. Anyways my quitting it's not just about Joe. It's about me wanting to do something different. Policing is all I've ever done. I've never even been anywhere. This is just the kick in the pants I needed.

ISABELLE  
I thought you loved policing, it's just you have to admit it was a pretty sudden decision. It surprised the shit out of me to tell you the truth.

LAUREN  
I thought I loved it too but I have to tell you this last case left a sour taste in my mouth.

ISABELLE  
Why you solved it, you should be proud.

LAUREN  
I'm not so just leave it at that.

ISABELLE  
Okay fine but you've sent Joe a postcard and he still hasn't written back and you're already almost packing. How did you even know where he was?

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN

Alec told me and I know he's going  
to write back.

ISABELLE

I hope you're right. I don't want  
to see you get hurt.

LAUREN

Don't worry about me. I just feel  
shitty leaving you alone.

ISABELLE

I can find a roommate, although no  
one could replace you, that's gonna  
be the hard part.

Lauren goes to Isabelle and hugs her.

LAUREN

I love you little sister.

ISABELLE

I love you too. Beautiful Joe  
better come through or I'll be  
pretty pissed with him.

LAUREN

You never give up, it's back to  
beautiful then is it?

ISABELLE

Well he's no longer mysterious to  
you.

LAUREN

He'll always be mysterious to me  
but I'm willing to live with it if  
he's willing to try. Can you go  
check the mail, it must have come  
already.

ISABELLE

Okay and keep your fingers crossed.

LAUREN

(with great determination)  
I don't have to. I know he'll  
write. I just know it.

Isabelle leaves the room. Lauren continues to sort her  
clothes.

EXT - SIDEWALK IN PARIS - DAY

Joe is reading a postcard from Lauren. The camera angles on the postcard which reads.

Dear Joe, I know you said there couldn't be an us here but I'm willing to try for an us elsewhere. Will wait for your answer. Lauren.

EXT. - POST OFFICE - PARIS - DAY

Joe is just finishing writing a postcard. Camera angles on the postcard, all it shows is Lauren's address and the message: Tell me when, Joe. Joe heads for the counter.

JOE

Poste express s'il-vous-plait,  
c'est tres important.

CLERK

Pas de probleme, un jour ca vous  
va?

JOE

Un jour, c'est parfait. Merci.

Joe pays, mails the card and walks out a big smile on his face. It's sunny now he takes out his sunglasses, puts them on and starts walking away.

While the end credits roll Lauren is seen getting on a plane. Cut to Joe waiting at the airport in Paris to greet her. Zola is with him. He sees Lauren walking towards him. She stops and looks at him, really looks, he's not wearing his glasses.

JOE

Welcome to Paris, detective  
Delacroix.

LAUREN

(playfully) Lauren please and what  
shall I call you Mr. Toussaint?

JOE

Let's see how about Joe, will that  
do?

LAUREN

Joe will do just fine.

He grabs her hand and they walk away.

The end.