

A Dire Situation

By

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U.S. Pending

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**FADE IN:**

**INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY**

SUSAN ADAMS, 30, hysterically crying, exits the open doorway of apartment 6B and encounters --

SIX SWAT TEAM OFFICERS

These guys are heavily equipped and led by Sergeant WALTERS, mid 30s. He is first securing Susan to safety behind his burly squad.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Shut that stupid bitch up. She's  
giving me a damn migraine.

Walters cautiously peers around the door frame and into the apartment.

Inside the dining room, with her back to a wall, stands IRENE, 30s. She is the female voice.

Irene holds a silver revolver -- directly at the temple of 7 year old MAX. The young human shield stands between her and the doorway. Tears run down the face of the terrified tot.

WALTERS  
The boy's scared. Let him go and  
I'll help you.

Irene kneels behind Max, drapes her arm tightly around him to prevent escape. She spins the cylinder on the revolver then points the muzzle back at the side of Max's temple.

IRENE  
I don't want your help.

The Sergeant steps into the doorway threshold.

IRENE  
(crazed)  
Get back! I'll kill him, I swear  
it! Don't think I will? I'll do it!

Walters leaves the threshold and returns into the hallway. Exhales deeply. Regroups. Peers into the apartment.

WALTERS  
I need you to take your finger off  
that trigger. You don't want to  
hurt a little kid.

IRENE (O.S.)  
 Don't tell me shit, you... pig.  
 Dirty pigs... All of you!

Walters to one of his men barricaded in the hallway...

WALTERS  
 Where's my fuck'n negotiator?

A SWAT OFFICER lowers a cell phone from his ear, speaks directly to Walters...

SWAT OFFICER  
 Negotiator is at least twenty minutes out.

WALTERS  
 Twenty minutes? Where da fuck does he live -- Australia?

SWAT OFFICER  
 Sniper Bravo is in position.  
 Apartment is leased to a Mitch and Susan Adams. Kids name is Max.

SUSAN  
 Max!

Susan's hysteria begins to accelerate. Walters to Susan.

WALTERS  
 You're Susan?

She nods.

WALTERS  
 Who is that lady? What's she want?

SUSAN  
 I don't know.

WALTERS  
 You've never seen her before?

SUSAN  
 No.

WALTERS  
 Think hard.

SUSAN  
 I don't know. My sister, Christine -- can you call her? Please call.

SWAT OFFICER

Detective Christine Lugo called in route. She heard the radio notification and recognized the address.

WALTERS

Chris is your sister?

SUSAN

Yes. Oh my God, my Max. Why is she doing this to him?

IRENE (O.S.)

Pig, you still there? I won't be ignored.

Walters leans and peers into the doorway, directly at Irene.

WALTERS

His name is Max.

IRENE

I don't care what his name is. You think she cared what my name was -- or he cared anything about me, or what this would do to me? Selfish. All of you -- selfish.

WALTERS

Who? I don't understand. Who's selfish?

IN THE HALLWAY

Walters turns to Susan...

WALTERS

Is she talking about you?

IRENE (O.S.)

You pissed yourself? He pissed his pants. Just great.

Max is standing with wet pants.

WALTERS

Send him out and we'll get him some new digs.

IRENE (O.S.)

Ya, nice try

Detective CHRISTINE LUGO, 30s, approaches Susan. She is holding body armor. She hugs Susan.

CHRISTINE  
Susan, you okay? Is Max okay?

SUSAN  
I don't know. I don't know.

Christine slips on her Kevlar vest. Tops it off with a shield necklace.

WALTERS  
Any ID on the perp yet?

Christine leans into the doorway, quickly looks.

CHRISTINE  
Her name is Irene Peters.

WALTERS  
You know her?

She nods. Takes out her cell phone and dials.

Walters to his Swat Officer...

WALTERS  
Run data on her. See if she's off her meds or some shit like that.

Swat Officer kneels, begins typing on a TOUGHBOOK just as Christine ends her brief phone call.

CHRISTINE  
I want this. Let me handle this.

WALTERS  
I don't know, you're close to...

CHRISTINE  
Come on. I'll end this. I'm doing this, Sarge.

Walters ponders for a few moments...

WALTERS  
It's yours -- until Negotiations gets here. Figure out a way to get those blinds open for our snipers.

Christine pulls out her weapon, makes it safe, hands it to Walters -- steps into the middle of the doorway..

WALTERS

Geez, don't...

INSIDE THE APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

CHRISTINE

Irene. I'm unarmed. I only wanna talk.

Christine raises both hands in surrender. Turns her right hip towards Irene displaying her empty holster.

Irene takes one look at her, grins from ear to ear -- then looks at her with disdain.

CHRISTINE

Hey Max, sweetheart.

IRENE

Took you a while. Making me wait a long time.

CHRISTINE

Traffic was a bitch, next time don't take hostages during rush hour.

IRENE

I heard you were a riot.

CHRISTINE

Max, It's gonna be okay. I know Irene doesn't want to hurt you. Right Irene?

Christine steps further into the room. Irene watches her like a hawk.

IRENE

That's far enough.

Christine surveys the room looking for intel. The shades to the windows are drawn. Minimal lighting. Christine scans the open bedroom door for additional threats -- appears as though they are the only occupants in the apartment.

CHRISTINE

Are you injured? Can I get you anything?

IRENE

You must be fucking kidding me. Like you care?

CHRISTINE

You're right, I don't care about a crazy bitch holding a gun to my nephews head -- matter of fact, you can burn in a fiery hell.

IN THE HALLWAY

Walters cringes at Christine's response.

INSIDE THE APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

IRENE

Handled these situations before?

CHRISTINE

Unfortunately.

IRENE

How do they usually end?

Irene offers no response.

IN THE HALLWAY

Alan Peters, 30s, dark thick beard, handsomely Mediterranean -- rushes to Walters.

WALTERS

You Irene's husband?

ALAN

Yes. Let me talk to her, fix this before...

WALTERS

Just answer me this... Is she capable of hurting a kid?

ALAN

No. Never. She loves kids.

WALTERS

She's got a fucked up way of showing it.

INSIDE THE APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

The gun still aimed at Max's temple.

IRENE

You haven't asked me what my problem is yet.

CHRISTINE

I think I have a pretty good idea.

IRENE

Damn right you should.

CHRISTINE

Nobody's been hurt. Put that down and I'll make sure you get the help you need. We can all move on from this.

IRENE

Move on? How can I do that?

(beat)

Still, it's pretty funny how all it takes is a gun to a kids head and everyone wants to help me.

CHRISTINE

How this plays out is up to you. Like I said, nobody's been hurt. You gotta work with me to make the right call here. Please, I beg you for his sake. Do what's right.

(beat)

What the hell do you want?

Irene maintains a cold and unflinching glare at the detective. After a few moments she lowers the gun to her side.

Relaxing her grip on Max, she reaches into her jacket pocket and removes a folded manilla envelope -- offers it to Christine.

IRENE

You already gave me exactly what I want.

Christine slowly moves closer and cautiously accepts the offer.

The detective removes full page photo paper -- cycles through the pictures.

Her face appears aghast. She exhales, looks at Irene who --

Raises her revolver and points it directly at Christine's face -- pulls the trigger...

BULLS EYE

A single shot into Christine's left eye. Her central nervous system shuts down, body goes limp -- falls to the floor.

Irene then puts the muzzle into her own mouth and pulls the trigger. Blood and six shades of grey matter splatter the wall behind her.

She too falls to the ground behind a petrified Max.

The team enters and secures the room.

Susan embraces a confused Max.

Walters checks on his fallen comrade. She is lifeless.

He retrieves the photos from the envelope --

Scans them -- multiple shots of Christine with a bearded man -- Alan Peters -- adulterous, explicit, and compromising in every way.

**FADE OUT**

**THE END**