

A close-up photograph of a human eye. The iris is a pale, yellowish-green color. The word "OBEY" is printed in a black, monospace-style font across the center of the iris. The letters are spaced out, with small gaps between them. The surrounding skin is a warm, brownish-tan color. The eye is looking slightly to the left of the frame.

O_B_E_Y

CTRL

CTRL

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INT. SUBWAY (MOVING) - NIGHT

Eyes. Paranoid. Darting back and forth.

A hand. Sweaty. Clutching a pole.

Two feet. Nervously tapping to an erratic beat.

All belong to JOEY TANG, late 20s, laptop bag over his shoulder, for better or worse, the smartest person he knows.

The subway car's packed, yet he and a YOUNG MOTHER playing peek-a-boo with her CHILD are the only people not tuned into the Oculus network -- newfangled tech that allows its users internet access via the mind.

Behind Joey sit BUSINESS CASUAL DUDES and STONE-FACED GOTHs, eyes AGLOW, immersed in their own little worlds.

He peers into the glazed over eyes of his fellow Commuters.

Looks for a sliver of human connection, recognition...

Finds none.

Oddly, Joey seems relieved. He calms down a bit, until he's startled by a text. Joey gets out his phone.

Text appears onscreen:

MAESTRO (TEXT)
**"where'd you head off to? it's
celebration time, dude!"**

Joey texts back:

JOEY (TEXT)
Feeling sick. Heading home, bro.

MAESTRO (TEXT)
**home huh? since when do you take
the subway home?**

Joey shudders, hands trembling as he texts back:

JOEY (TEXT)
Lucky guess. You psychic now?

MAESTRO (TEXT)
even better. peek-a-boo.

Joey looks up, shocked to find the Young Mother, eyes wide and terrified, playing a silent game of peek-a-boo with him.

Joey looks behind him, finds the Business Casual Dudes and Stone-faced Goths doing the same.

Unnerved, Joey drops his phone, heads for another car.

Each person Joey passes twitches before addressing him...

WALL STREET BABE
Where you going, JT?

KNICKS SUPER FAN
You're not thinking straight. Come
back to HQ.

OLD MAN
Think of the possibilities, dude!

Joey trips as the train abruptly stops. The Commuters lean forward, heads turning to stare at him. Rising in unison.

Joey scampers out the door.

EXT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT

Joey crawls backwards. The Commuters on the subway stare at him as the doors close and the train takes off again.

Joey rises, flags a YOUNG COP over. The Cop runs to him.

JOEY
Officer, I know this is gonna sound
crazy, but I --

The Cop draws his firearm, unloads!

Joey, no time to run or even scream, hits the floor, dead.

His laptop bag flies off his shoulders, crashing beside him.

The Cop keeps firing until -- CLICK! CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!

He's all out...

The Cop squeezes the trigger a few more times before dropping the gun, wandering to the edge of the platform.

A WOMAN'S VOICE, from far away screams --

WOMAN'S VOICE
NO!

Too late. The Cop smiles, tears streaming, leaps off the platform into the path of an incoming subway train...

On the walls we see several posters advertising the Oculus V5 which promise to connect people 24/7.

BLACKOUT.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Still in black, until a dazzling display of FIREWORKS blaze across the night sky.

Two women drink wine side by side in deck chairs.

TAMARA WILSON, 30s, pain hidden behind a drywall of humor, blind, cool shades, listens to the festivities, drinks her second (or is it her third?) glass of wine.

She stifles a laugh as her sister DANI, late 20s, consummate professional, save when she's drunk, sings a drunken rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner.

TAMARA
Sit down. You're drunk.

DANI
I'm not drunk. You're drunk.

Dani falls out of her chair. Tamara bursts into laughter.

DANI (CONT'D)
Okay, I'm drunk. I'll call an Uber.

TAMARA
What for? Hand me the keys.

Dani winces. Too soon.

DANI
Tam...

TAMARA
What? Fourth of July, Dani. Let's have some fun.

Dani climbs back up into her chair.

DANI
You never told me what the doctor said... Tamara?

Tamara takes a gulp of her wine.

DOCTOR SHAMIE (PRE-LAP)
Tamara?

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Tamara, bandage around her eyes, takes deep breathes. Her (s)mother SUSAN, 50s, always waiting for the glass shoe to drop, squeezes Tamara's hand.

DOCTOR SHAMIE, 40s, reassuring, playful, crosses to her.

TAMARA

Yeah, Doc?

DOCTOR SHAMIE

I'm going to take the bandages off now. Keep your eyes closed. Ready?

Tamara nods. Doctor Shamie unwraps the bandages.

DOCTOR SHAMIE (CONT'D)

Open your eyes. Slowly.

Tamara does so. Doctor Shamie shines a light in her eyes. They're discolored. Partially blind.

DOCTOR SHAMIE (CONT'D)

Tell me when you see the light.

TAMARA

Doctor Shamie... I... I can't...

SUSAN

Hey. I've got you.

Tamara breaks down. Susan hugs her.

DOCTOR SHAMIE

It's still possible your eyesight will return in some capacity --

Everything *BLURS* and goes *SILENT*. For Tamara, life as she knows it is over...

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Tamara finishes off her wine.

TAMARA

She asked if I was free for a consultation. Patient of hers is having open heart surgery and --

DANI

-- Yeah yeah. How many fingers am I holding up, smartass?

Tamara flips Dani off.

TAMARA

How many am I?

DANI

I could leave you up here.

TAMARA

You wouldn't.

LATER

Dani sleeps soundly, wine glass and cigarette butts at her feet. Tamara, shades off, feels her eyes.

INT. WES' APARTMENT / KITCHEN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Tamara's on the phone with a client, admiring one of her beautiful, abstract paintings. WES, 30s, intense, chops carrots, gives her an icy glare.

TAMARA

(into phone)

Glad you like it. Saturday's fine. Come by the gallery. I'll be glad to take more of your money. For the art of course.

Tamara laughs. Wes stabs the carrots, throws them in a pot of boiling soup. He turns to Tamara, knife in hand...

TAMARA (CONT'D)

(into phone)

See you then. Bye.

Tamara puts her phone away, wraps her arms around Wes.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Sorry about that.

WES

Who was that?

TAMARA

Jaden Walsh. He wants to furnish his new apartment with another --

WES

-- The hell he does.

Tamara tries to change the subject.

TAMARA

Smells good. Can't wait to --

WES

-- Give me the phone.

TAMARA

Wes, come on. It's our anniversary.

WES

Bitch, I know what day it is.

Tamara recoils.

WES (CONT'D)

The phone.

TAMARA

Don't be like that. Let's just --

Wes shoves Tamara to the floor, stabs the painting.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Wes, stop!

Wes grabs Tamara by her hair.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Wes!

WES

You want to run around on me?!

Wes cuts off chunks of her hair with the knife.

Tamara claws at Wes's face.

The knife hits the floor. Tamara kicks it under the fridge.

Wes shoves Tamara against the wall, leaves a fist sized hole inches from her head.

Tamara races to the door, hands fumbling as she enters the code to unlock it.

She opens it only for Wes to slam it shut, drag her kicking and screaming to the red hot stove.

WES (CONT'D)

Come here!

He grabs the piping hot pot of soup...

Tamara bites Wes' hand, forcing him to drop the pot. Spilling its steaming contents onto the kitchen floor.

Tamara makes a desperate break for the door again.

Wes pulls her back.

TAMARA'S POV -- NO SOUND AS WES, A MAN POSSESSED, BEATS HER HALF TO DEATH.

BLACKOUT.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Tamara quietly sobs.

THE NEXT MORNING

The sound of footsteps snaps a sleeping Tamara awake.

TAMARA

Officer, I can explain.

Susan brushes hair out of Tamara's face.

SUSAN

You're not that lucky.

TAMARA

I noticed. You're not gonna yell are you? My head might explode.

SUSAN

Tough.

Susan shakes Dani awake.

DANI

Mom... Hey.

INT. TAMARA AND DANI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Tamara, trailed by Susan, feels her way around the apartment.

TAMARA

So now I'm an alcoholic? What about Dani? She goes through a pack of smokes every three days!

SUSAN

Don't bring your sister into this. It runs in the family you know.

TAMARA

Yeah, like being a punching bag.

Susan stops. Tamara winces, knows she's gone too far. She reaches out, takes her mother's hand.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Mom, I didn't mean that. You did the best you could for Dani and me.

Susan shakes her head. Still racked with guilt.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Sit. I'll make you coffee.

SUSAN

Let's just grab some on the way.

TAMARA

It'll be fine.

Tamara grabs a box of salt, gives it a shake.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Okay, let's go.

INT. CANE STORE - DAY

Tamara tries different walking canes. Susan hovers nearby, never taking her eye off her daughter.

TAMARA

Mom, check me out.

Tamara poses, walks like a pimp. Susan can't help but chuckle. Tamara sings/raps "Gangsta's Paradise" while the BEMUSED OWNER looks on. Tamara gives the cane a twirl.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

(to Bemused Owner)

Can you dig it, sucka?

BEMUSED OWNER

Cash only. No returns. Dig that?

SUSAN
We dig it.

EXT. VICTORIOUS - DAY

A brownstone recently renovated into a shelter and empowerment center for battered women.

Susan and Tamara, parked outside.

INT. SUSAN'S HOOPTIE - DAY

Susan takes off her seatbelt. Tamara looks mortified.

TAMARA
What are you doing?

SUSAN
It's your first day. You don't want to be late.

TAMARA
Mom, this isn't middle school.

SUSAN
I know, but you should get going.

TAMARA
I'm going.

Tamara unbuckles her seatbelt, opens her door at half the speed of frozen molasses.

SUSAN
Tamara.

TAMARA
I'm going!

SUSAN
Nervous?

TAMARA
I'm about to bare my soul to a group of strangers. So...

SUSAN
Just be honest. They're there to help you, honey.

Tamara exits the car, uses her cane to guide her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Want me to --

TAMARA

-- I'm okay. See you later.

Tamara holds onto a guard rail, heads into the building.

She bumps into RANYA SHAKARI, 30s, force of nature, in a wheelchair, call her disabled at your own peril.

RANYA

I'm walking here.

TAMARA

I have the right of way.

RANYA

How would you know?

TAMARA

Got jokes, Wheels? Race you.

RANYA

Okay. As soon as the traffic lights turn green it's on.

Tamara breaks into a grin. She's finally found someone who shares her morbid humor. Who doesn't feel sorry for her.

TAMARA

I'm Tamara.

RANYA

They call me Ranya.

TAMARA

And you let them?

The fast made friends head inside.

INT. VICTORIOUS / COMMON ROOM - DAY

Tamara and Ranya, ROARING, in a circle along with ABUSED WOMEN from every walk of life. KELLY, 50s, mousy counselor with the explosive energy of a motivational speaker, claps.

Tamara and Ranya shrug, clap as well.

KELLY
That's what I like to hear!
Everybody have a seat!

The Women sit.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Victorious is all about you taking
back your power back and redefining
who you are! From this day forward
you are no longer victims, but
victors!

TAMARA
Or Victorias.

Ranya and a few of the Women snicker. Kelly scans the crowd.

KELLY
Who said that?

A hush falls on the room. *Oh. Tamara's in trouble.*

TAMARA
I did.

KELLY
Are you new here? What's your name?

TAMARA
I am. Tamara Wilson.

KELLY
Welcome, Tamara!

Kelly claps. Ranya and the other Women join in. Tamara takes a bow, curtsies. Ranya snickers, likes Tamara sheer audacity.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Tell us about yourself.

Tamara gulps. Oh crap.

LATER

Tamara's standing, in the midst of her story.

TAMARA

And I know he could've taken my life... Sometimes I wish he did, but... I just miss painting so much. And... everything else.

Tamara sits. Can't go on.

KELLY

Thank you so much for sharing, Tamara! Come on, ladies!

Kelly claps. Ranya and the other Women join in.

RANYA

I'd give you a standing ovation, but... That speech sucked.

TAMARA

I take offense at that last one.

KELLY'S OFFICE

A she shed of positivity. Inspirational posters cover the wall. Kelly's at her desk, more soft spoken without the presence of a crowd. Tamara sits in a chair across from her.

KELLY

Have you spoken to Wes?

TAMARA

Not since... I was at the trial, but... Let's just say I'm working on some A material for his execution. Maybe book the JabbaWockeeZ.

KELLY

You do that a lot.

TAMARA

Live in perpetual darkness?

KELLY

Deflect with humor.

TAMARA

Think I missed my calling? This place is all about second chances. I mean, comedians don't have to see the audience laughing, do they?

KELLY

You talked about forgiving your
parents. What about Wes?

Tamara scoffs. *What?*

TAMARA

You know, I was all set to turn the
other cheek until he tried to beat
my fucking face in.

KELLY

Joke all you want, but we both know
there's anger and bitterness
boiling under the surface.

TAMARA

You got me! Whew. I feel better.
You feel better?

KELLY

Tamara, until you forgive Wes you
might as well be a prisoner too.

TAMARA

In case you haven't noticed, Kelly,
I already am!

Tamara rises, moves to the door. She gropes for the doorknob.

KELLY

Let me --

TAMARA

-- I got it!

Tamara finds the doorknob, exits with her head held high.

HALLWAY

Tamara strides towards the exit. Ranya rolls beside her.

RANYA

How'd it go?

TAMARA

No one's called security yet, so...
Good. Hey, Ranya --

They reach the door.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

I could use a drink. You game?

RANYA
Does a bear shit in the woods?

TAMARA
(shrugs)
Don't know. I've always been too
scared to look.

INT. BAR - DAY

Tamara and Ranya, in a booth, drinking like fish. BUSY
BARTENDERS mix drinks for a near full house.

TAMARA
Dropped out right before sophomore
year. Started painting full time,
and the rest is a longer story.
What do you do, beside drink?

RANYA
Private contractor.

Tamara gasps in mock shock.

RANYA (CONT'D)
Dirty bitch. I'm a programmer.

TAMARA
Work for anyone I've heard of?

RANYA
That's classified.

TAMARA
Okay. Damn. My mom would freaking
kill me if she knew I was here.

RANYA
How old are you again?

TAMARA
At least I'm tall enough to get
through to ride roller coasters.

RANYA
That's a low blow. My specialty.

TAMARA
Hear that, guys? Meal on wheels.
What's not to like?

RANYA

Don't sell yourself short. Come on, guys. Any guy. It's not like she'd know the difference.

Tamara and Ranya burst into laughter. MARK, 30s, cute bartender, clears their table.

MARK

That's it. I'm cutting you off.

Tamara and Ranya sigh, scolded like drunken school girls.

LATER

Well past last call. Most of the crowd's gone. Tamara and Ranya are sobering up, mid conversation.

TAMARA

-- to sleep in, you know? Grab a shot of coffee and dash out the door. I don't even remember the last time I saw the sun rise or set. Who has time for that? Now... I'd give anything to get that back. Sorry. Didn't mean for this to turn into a pity party for two.

RANYA

We're in a bar. It was bound to happen. That or a brawl.

TAMARA

I'm game if you are.

Tamara teases breaking her beer bottle on the table.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

So how'd you...

RANYA

A classic case of "If He Couldn't Have Me, Nobody Could." So my ex backed over me in my own fucking car. I know. Horrible driver.

TAMARA

Damn.

RANYA

That's not all. He blew his brains out right after. Jokes on him.

(MORE)

RANYA (CONT'D)

I survived, then when I recovered,
rolled all over his grave.

TAMARA

Petty bitch.

Ranya grins. Dani enters, lit cigarette in hand, makes a
beeline for Tamara.

DANI

Tam!

TAMARA

Ruh-roh!

DANI

Are you okay?

TAMARA

(sarcastic as all get out)
No. This is a hostage situation.
Save me, Dani. Ah. Ah I say, ah.

DANI

Are you drunk?

TAMARA

Jealous?

DANI

Maybe.

TAMARA

Dani, Ranya. Ranya, what's her
name.

RANYA

Pleased to meet your acquaintance,
What's Her Name.

DANI

Enchanté.

TAMARA

She wicked cultured!

DANI

Let's go.

Tamara rises. Dani helps keep her steady.

TAMARA

You gonna be okay, Ranya?

RANYA

Yeah. I'm heading home too. After some street racing.

DANI

Do you two ever stop?

RANYA & TAMARA

Nah.

Dani escorts Tamara out the door. KYLE BURNS, 30s, thinks he's cooler than he really is, hot geek, leers at Ranya.

Kyle sits across from Ranya to her consternation.

RANYA

Kyle? What are you doing here?

KYLE

We need to talk.

RANYA

Doubt it. I got to go.

Kyle clutches Ranya's wrists, gets in her face.

KYLE

Let's go some place quiet.

Mark crosses to them.

MARK

Problem here?

KYLE

No. No problem.

MARK

Good. Beat it.

Kyle flashes a look chock full of murderous intent at Mark.

He reaches into his jacket and... slaps some cash down on the table. Kyle gives Ranya a smug look before departing.

MARK (CONT'D)

What's his problem?

RANYA

Probably hasn't touched grass in awhile. Or anything else.

Mark chuckles.

RANYA (CONT'D)
Gonna give me those digits or what?

Mark smiles, takes a pen from behind his ear, writes his number on Ranya's palm.

MARK
Make sure you jot that in your phone before the urge hits.

RANYA
That's not even the hand I use.
(re: name on her palm)
Mark.

Mark grins. Ranya stares at his butt as he walks away.

INT. AREA UNKNOWN - NIGHT

A computer screen. Displaying lines and lines of code. Until... an image of Mark appears.

INT. BAR / BATHROOM - NIGHT

Someone WATCHES Mark stack chairs. The Mystery Person walks past Mark into a bathroom.

Mark crosses to a table with a MAN NODDING in and out.

MARK
Closing time. Need a ride?

NODDING MAN
I'll walk.

Nodding Man sways out the door. Mark heads into --

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

And finds the usual suspects... SHIFTY GUY washes his hands in the sink. BROOKLYN NETS HAT uses a urinal. COLLEGE HOODIE staggers into a stall.

MARK
Closing time, fellas.

All three of the men turn to Mark.

Lights FLASH in their eyes.

Oh crap.

INT. AREA UNKNOWN - NIGHT

"Che gelida manina" from Giacomo Puccini's La Bohème (as performed by Beniamino Gigli) plays as Kyle watches the three patrons beat the hell out of Mark.

Kyle conducts with an invisible wand, eats a handful of red Skittles. Washes them down with a can of red soda.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Dani helps an inebriated Tamara out of the car. Tamara's singing a drunken rendition of "What a Wonderful World".

TAMARA

(singing)

*I DON'T SEE SKIES OF BLUE / OR
CLOUDS OF WHITE / I DON'T SEE A
FREAKING THING / DON'T KNOW WHETHER
IT'S DAY OR NIGHT / AND I THINK TO
MYSELF / WHAT A HORRIBLE WORLD!*

DANI

Tam, shut up. You want to wake up --

Susan stands in the doorway.

DANI (CONT'D)

-- Mom?

TAMARA

Shh!

INT. TAMARA AND DANI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tamara pretends to sleep on the couch. She overhears Dani and Susan arguing about her.

SUSAN

You said you would look after her!

DANI

Mom, what the hell do you think I've been doing?!

SUSAN

Don't you curse and shout at me!

DANI

I wasn't --

SUSAN

-- Look, Dani, if you don't want to be here say the word.

DANI

I want -- I love you. Both. But I have a job, friends, my own life.

Dani lights a cigarette, takes a drag.

SUSAN

Since when do you smoke so much?

DANI

I smoke when I'm stressed.

SUSAN

Who smokes at this time of night?

DANI

People under stress!

Dani drops the cigarette in the sink.

DANI (CONT'D)

Happy? I'm going to bed.

SUSAN

Dani...

Dani exits the room. Susan kisses Tamara on the forehead, exits the apartment. Tamara cries into her pillow.

A POLICE SIREN BLARES in the distance.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Nodding Man's in hysterics as he talks to two young officers, PEREZ, inquisitive, and his partner, MURRAY, gung-ho, the same Cop who shot Joey.

PEREZ

Wait, so they were attacking the bartender out of nowhere, then one of them turned on the other two?

NODDING MAN

I've never seen anything like it. They were gonna kill that boy. I know it. But... Then it became a full on melee. Every man for himself. You go to do something!

MURRAY

Relax, old man. We got this.

PEREZ

Should we call for backup?

MURRAY

Three guys. All unarmed. Let's --

A GUN SHOT rings out. Another SHOT SHATTERS the bar's windows, revealing Shifty Guy, waving a handgun around, standing over College Hoodie's dead body.

Shifty Guy trains the gun on Brooklyn Nets Fan, who's choking out Mark, using him as a human shield.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Shit! Get out of here, Gramps!

Nodding Man gets the heck out of there.

Murray takes cover behind their hi-tech police cruiser, draws his firearm. Perez grabs hi-tech bulletproof vests out of the trunk, tosses one to Murray. They quickly put them on.

A gas guzzling older model SQUAD CAR pulls up and out steps ELLA FROST, 40s, stone cold veteran cop who's seen it all.

ELLA

How many inside?

MURRAY

Uh, three. One armed.

ELLA

Perez, call it in.

PEREZ

You're going in?

ELLA

We are. Murray, cover me.

MURRAY

S-S-Shouldn't we wait --

ELLA

For who, the National Guard?

PEREZ

Frost, Captain wants everyone in a vest. Got yours?

ELLA
Never leave home without it.

Ella heads for the bar. Murray reluctantly follows.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Shifty Guy waves the gun around, mouth twitching.

SHIFTY GUY
Let him go, asshole!

BROOKLYN NETS FAN
Drop the gun or I snap his fucking
neck. I'll do it!

Ella and Murray dash in, firearms in hand.

ELLA
NYPD! Drop your weapon!

MURRAY
D-Do it now!

BROOKLYN NETS FAN
(to Shifty Guy)
See what you've done now? Now
everybody has to die.

Shifty Guy spins around. Murray freezes.

BLAM!

Ella fires, connects.

Shifty Guy slumps to the ground.

Brooklyn Nets Fan tries to choke the life out of Mark.

Ella decks him, slaps on handcuffs.

She shoots Murray a look. He hangs his head.

Perez enters, checks Shifty Guy's pulse. He shakes his head
no.

Ella hands Brooklyn Nets Fan off to Perez.

ELLA
Get him out of here.

MURRAY
Frost, I...

ELLA
 (ice cold)
 Wait outside.

Murray wants to say more. Thinks better of it, exits. Ella kneels beside Mark.

EXT. THE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Ella's in her car, meditating, ready to go home for the night when -- Murray raps on her window. Ella lets it down.

MURRAY
 What happened back there --

ELLA
 -- Could've gotten someone killed.

Murray absorbs that. Ella's words cutting him to the quick.

MURRAY
 This could... What are you gonna tell the Captain?

ELLA
 The truth.

MURRAY
 Which is?

ELLA
 You froze.

MURRAY
 Just for a second! You know I'm --

ELLA
 -- You could've gotten someone killed, Murray. That's it.

Ella drives away, doesn't look back.

INT. ELLA'S HOUSE / MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Ella's showering off the crazy. Decompressing from the job.

NATALIE'S ROOM

NATALIE, 12, bright, geek glasses, in bed, texting. Ella strokes her hair.

ELLA
You hear what I said?

NATALIE
Yeah. Something something
something, Natalie.

ELLA
I realize this isn't on Instabook
or Facegram, but --

Natalie laughs.

ELLA (CONT'D)
What?

NATALIE
Nothing.

ELLA
Natalie. Phone down, lights off,
head on pillow.

Natalie puts her phone in a drawer, lies back. Ella moves to
Natalie, makes a fist.

NATALIE
Really?

Natalie rolls her eyes, daps. Ella makes it "explode"
complete with sound effects, heads for the door.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Mom?

Ella hangs back.

NATALIE (CONT'D)
I want implants.

ELLA
What?

NATALIE
Like Hannah and Dad.

ELLA
Oh.

NATALIE
Can I get the Oculus V5 for my
birthday? Please?!

ELLA

Nat... You're practically glued to your smart phone as it is.

NATALIE

Everyone has them.

ELLA

Not everyone. Did you ask your dad?

NATALIE

He said to ask you.

ELLA

Smart man.

Ella mulls Natalie's request. Natalie waits on pins and needles. *Puppy dog eyes* **ACTIVATE!**

ELLA (CONT'D)

Your dad and I will think about it.

NATALIE

Thank you!

Mother and daughter hug.

ELLA

Good night.

NATALIE

Night, Mom.

Ella grins at her daughter, exits.

ELLA & LEO'S BEDROOM

LEO, 40s, gentle giant, dries his face post shave. Ella, night gown, wraps her arms around his waist, kisses his shoulder. They slow dance. Kiss.

LEO

Smooth as a criminal.

ELLA

Don't make me get the cuffs.

They fall into bed. Things heat up, but... Ella's mind is elsewhere. Leo stops.

LEO

What's wrong?

ELLA
Nat wants implants. Like her dad.

LEO
That's my girl.

ELLA
Mine too.

LEO
What are you afraid of?

ELLA
I don't know. Her growing up too fast I guess. Seems like yesterday she was getting her ears pierced.

LEO
In a couple of years getting the implants won't be any different.

ELLA
Exactly. Just look at what gets pierced today.

LEO
She'll be fine, but... If you don't think she's ready... She won't get them. End of discussion.

ELLA
She's gonna hate us.

LEO
You. I'm pitching you right under the bus. *Natalie, you know how scary your mother can be.*

ELLA
My hero.

Leo's eyes LIGHT UP, FLUTTER. Ella poses seductively while Leo kisses her, SNAPS photos.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE / WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ella throws a magazine onto a table of others, eyes Doctor Shamie's closed door. Leo sits beside her, reading.

LEO
 She'll be fine. I on the other hand
 could use your help.

Leo hands her a a kids' magazine.

LEO (CONT'D)
 Found everything except the fox.

Leo grins. Ella shakes her head, studies the picture.

ELLA
 There. Upside down in the clouds.

LEO
 Sneaky little bastard.

Natalie exits the office all smiles with Doctor Shamie. Ella tosses the magazine on the table. She and Leo stand.

ELLA
 Nat?

NATALIE
 Smile.

Natalie's eyes FLASH as she takes a photo of Ella and Leo.

DOCTOR SHAMIE
 Give yourself time to adjust. You
 have any problems, let me know.

NATALIE
 I will. Thank you.

LEO
 (to Ella)
 See? Just like an ear piercing.

Leo hugs Natalie. Ella heads after them, still wary of the tech. Ella holds the door for Tamara and Susan -- who ad lib their gratitude -- as she exits.

EXAMINING ROOM

Susan studies the same magazine as Leo as Doctor Shamie examines Tamara's eyes with a light.

SUSAN
 (to self)
 Where is that damn fox?

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Excuse me?

SUSAN

Oh nothing.

TAMARA

Surgery's still an option, right?

Doctor Shamie puts away the light.

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Your corneas are too damaged for a conventional transplant, however, there is another method.

TAMARA

I'm all ears.

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Are you familiar with the Oculus network? Certain nanites, synced to its network, could act as a second set of eyes. Better in most cases.

TAMARA

Hear that, Mom?!

SUSAN

Not so fast. There could be side effects. Right, Doctor Shamie?

DOCTOR SHAMIE

There have been a number of successful cases across the country, as well a few cases of retinal hemorrhaging, but --

SUSAN

Nope.

TAMARA

Mom, just --

SUSAN

Nope.

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Ms. Wilson, if --

SUSAN

Nope. Thank you for your time. We'll see ourselves out.

Susan takes Tamara's arm. Tamara yanks free.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Girl, what's wrong with you?

TAMARA
What's wrong with you? I'm not a kid anymore. Or an invalid.

SUSAN
No, you're not. I'll be outside.

Susan exits.

DOCTOR SHAMIE
Tell you what, take some time --

TAMARA
Nope. Don't need any. I want the surgery. When can we start?

INT. SUSAN'S HOOPTIE (MOVING) - DAY

Tamara and Susan drive in silence. Tamara drums on the dashboard. Expects Susan to say knock it off. Anything.

Nothing. Tamara can't stand it anymore.

TAMARA
Tired? I could drive. It'll be just like I Spy. Well, You Spy. I dodge.

Susan pulls over.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Mom, I was just --

SUSAN
-- Kidding. I know. You always are. Like this is some big joke.

TAMARA
Too bad sackcloth's not my color.

SUSAN
You don't think I hear you crying yourself to sleep at night?

Tamara doesn't know what to say.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Do you know how close Dani is
 to losing her job? How hard
 she's working to keep a roof
 over your head while you blow
 off therapy and go out
 drinking without a care in
 the world? Do you --

TAMARA
 What do you want from me?! An
 apology? Fine. Sorry I'm such
 a burden to you. Sorry I
 ignored all the red flags.
 Even after I swore I'd never
 let anyone...

Susan's phone rings.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 It's Doctor Shamie.
 (into phone)
 Doctor Shamie? She's right here.

Susan gives the phone to Tamara.

TAMARA
 (into phone)
 What up, Doc? You're sure? That's
 great! I will. Thank you!

SUSAN
 Is everything --

TAMARA
 I qualify for the implants.

SUSAN
 Oh, baby.

Tamara tears up, hugs Susan.

INT. TAMARA'S ART STUDIO - DAY

Tamara, standing before several paintings. Ranging from
 abstract to incredibly detailed portraits. Dani crosses to
 her, gives her a big hug.

DANI
 This is going to work. Just have
 faith, alright?

Tamara nods.

DANI (CONT'D)
 Then afterwards you can redo my
 portrait.

TAMARA
 What's wrong with it?

DANI
My head's gigantic.

TAMARA
Exactly.

Dani's EYES flash. She's getting a text.

DANI
Doctor Shamie just sent a text.

TAMARA
I'm not here!

DANI
(laughing)
Shut up. She wants you in her office as soon as possible. I know Mom's a little freaked, but whatever you decide, I'm with you.

Off Tamara, weighing the biggest decision of her life...

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE / OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Tamara lies on a hi-tech operating table, nervous.
Doctor Shamie pushes a tray of operating tools over.
She sets a tiny MICROCHIP aside, picks up a syringe.

DOCTOR SHAMIE
This is all routine. Technology will do most of the work.

Tamara nods, takes deep breaths.

DOCTOR SHAMIE (CONT'D)
I'll need to put you under. You'll feel a little pinch.

Doctor Shamie hums the Jaws theme, injects Tamara.

DOCTOR SHAMIE (CONT'D)
Thought it was safe to go the doctor's office again, huh?

Tamara grins, passes out.

IN THE WAITING ROOM

Susan paces past a No Smoking sign. Dani chews a wad of nicotine gum in place of her ciggies.

DANI
 (mouthful of gum)
 She'll be okay, Mom. She's a survivor.

SUSAN
 What?

DANI
 I said...

Dani sighs. Susan starts pacing again.

IN THE OPERATING ROOM

Doctor Shamie shines a light in Tamara's eyes. Tamara winces.

DOCTOR SHAMIE
 Follow the light.

Tamara follows the light, goofy grin on her face.

TAMARA
 Pretty!

IN DOCTOR SHAMIE'S OFFICE

Tamara's wearing protective shades, gazing around the room. Still a little loopy from the drugs. Susan's watching her like a hawk. Doctor Shamie's at her desk.

DOCTOR SHAMIE
 Tamara, I know you're excited, but you should get some sleep. Give your eyes time to adjust. Now there might be some side effects, but they should fade over time.

SUSAN
 Side effects? Like what?

DOCTOR SHAMIE
 Nausea, headaches.

TAMARA
 (singing)
DIARRHEA!

SUSAN

Tamara.

Tamara "zips" her lips.

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Fortunately diarrhea isn't one of them. There have been a few cases of visual and auditory hallucinations post surgery, but you seem to be responding well.

(smiles)

Congratulations, Tamara. From now on, you'll see the world in HD, twenty-twenty vision. Plus a little something extra.

TAMARA

(dancing)

Porn!

Susan facepalms.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Tamara, taking in the starry night sky. A sight she thought she'd never see again. Dani stubs out a cigarette, rubs her arms to keep herself warm.

DANI

Freezing tonight. I'm going to head in. Tam? What's wrong?

TAMARA

Nothing.

Right now, in this moment -- everything's perfect.

INT. DANI'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Dani's behind the wheel, singing along to a song on the radio with Tamara. Tamara's all smiles, pointing out every billboard and sign like a kid learning to read.

LATER

Dani drives towards a café.

TAMARA

Stop here!

WHEE!

A SWEATY EMPLOYEE straining to push a cart full of lumber shoots her a disapproving look.

Tamara gives him a sheepish smile, moves into the --

PAINT AISLE

Tamara picks up a can of paint and a BAR CODE SCANNER APPEARS before her eyes.

TAMARA
That's new.

AT THE CHECKOUT LINE

A CASHIER, 20s, green, rings Tamara up. A CALCULATOR APPEARS before Tamara's eyes calculating the total in seconds.

CASHIER
That'll be --

TAMARA
One hundred twenty-three dollars
and seventy-six cents.

CASHIER
Yeah...

Tamara smiles. She's a freaking math wiz.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Tamara's at Dani's car.

Yet ANOTHER SCREEN APPEARS before her eyes:

UNLOCK VEHICLE? YES/NO

Tamara's a little freaked out now.

TAMARA
Yes?

Dani's car unlocks.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Oh damn.

EXT. / INT. DANI'S CAR - DAY

Tamara's stopped at a traffic light.

She SEES the temperature, a weather forecast, the time and date and a search bar.

Tamara blinks them away, then a SPEEDOMETER showing how fast she and the cars around her are going APPEARS.

It's too much too fast. Overwhelming.

TAMARA
Close! Close all.

The light's green. Tamara doesn't notice. Cue CAR HORNS.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Just a freaking minute!

The apps CLOSE, leaving behind the Oculus V5 logo in the corner. The logo FADES AWAY.

Tamara sighs, relived.

Then she spots flashing police lights in the rearview mirror.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Shit!

LATER

Tamara facepalms.

TAMARA
Dani's gonna kill me.

A COP appears at the window, hands Tamara her license back. It's Ella. She studies Tamara. *Has she seen Tamara before?*

ELLA
Given the circumstances, I'll let you off with a warning.

TAMARA
Thank you so much.

ELLA
Drive safe now.

TAMARA
I will.

Ella watches Tamara drive away, heads back to her squad car.

EXT. CITY STREETS / INT. ELLA'S SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Ella's patrolling the area. She spots a U-Haul parked on the side of the street. She sighs, exits.

Approaches the U-Haul but stops when she sees Murray, in a daze, stumbling into the subway across the street.

ELLA
Okay, Cowboy? Murray?

EXT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT

Ella arrives just in time to see Murray fire one last shot into Joey, then drop the gun, wander to the platform's edge.

A subway train's coming and Murray's about to jump right in front of it. Ella races to save him. Too late.

ELLA
NO!

Murray leaps into the path of the TRAIN.

LATER

Ella, shaken, going through the motions, watches MEDICAL EXAMINERS bag what's left of Murray.

CAPTAIN CROWE, 50s, no-nonsense, cares more than he lets on, crosses to her.

CROWE
Got here soon as I could. The hell's goin' on in this city?

ELLA
Wish I knew...

CROWE
He say anything, before...

ELLA
No. He didn't even hear me. Must've been on something.

CROWE
Didn't seem like the type. You're too close to this. You should --

ELLA
Go home? Sleep? Not happening.

CROWE
You can't blame yourself for this.

ELLA
I don't.

Ella puts her game face back on, moves to Joey.

CROWE
What's his story?

ELLA
Don't know, but Murray emptied his clip in him. Seem like much of a threat to you?

Crowe shakes his head no.

ELLA (CONT'D)
We'll know more when the toxicology report comes back.

CROWE
One black eye at a time.

INT. THE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Perez rubs his eyes, leads a DRUNKEN MAN to processing.

DRUNKEN MAN
It was a joke!

PEREZ
You're lucky I'm not pressing charges. Sit down.

Perez shoves the Drunken Man into a chair. Captain Crowe exits his office, annoyed.

CROWE
Hell happened to you?

PEREZ
Guy was using a laser pointer to disrupt a play.

CROWE
Hear it stings like hell. Only drawback of the chip, really.

PEREZ
Tell me about it.

CROWE
Listen, I know how close you and
Murray were. My door's always open
if you ever want to talk about it.

PEREZ
Appreciate that, Sir.

Ella crosses to her desk in the background.

CROWE
Damn lasers. Walk it off. Frost'll
take care of the paperwork.
(turning to Ella)
Right, Frosty?

Ella flips him off. Crowe laughs it off, goes back to his
office. Ella sighs, starts her manual paperwork.

LATER

Ella's squinting at a computer monitor, typing -- utilizing
the hunt and peck method -- at one of the few computers in
the precinct. DETECTIVE ARCHIE ALAN, late 20s, green, tech
wiz, walks over to her. Ella types, hits the desk,
frustrated. Alan jumps. Ella notices him for the first time.

ELLA
I swear these damn things have a
mind of their own.

ALAN
Could I try?

Ella moves out of the way. Alan hits a few keys and ta-da!

ELLA
Thanks, Alan. I, uh, heard you went
to the academy with Murray.

ALAN
I don't think I would've made
detective without him. I just...
He'd made all these plans, you
know? So why...

Alan's eyes GLOW for the briefest of moments.

ALAN (CONT'D)
Sorry. Surveillance footage's in.
I'll e-mail it to you.

Alan inclines his head. There's another quick GLOW in his eyes, then Ella's computer BEEPS. She opens the e-mail.

ELLA
Okay. What have we got...

They study the FOOTAGE.

INSERT OF ELLA'S COMPUTER.

The subway train arrives. Joey falls onto the platform, crawling backwards from the Mind Controlled Masses.

ELLA (CONT'D)
Pause it.

Alan does so, sees what Ella does. All of the Commuters are laser focused on Joey.

ALAN
What are they doing?

ELLA
Just staring at him.

ALAN
That would creep me out.

ELLA
Hit it.

Alan hits play and the video resumes. The train departs. Joey rises to greet Murray, only to be shot dead. Alan turns away.

ELLA (CONT'D)
Pause it.

Alan pauses the video. Ella leans in, squints.

ELLA (CONT'D)
Murray. Look at his eyes.

Alan looks, doesn't see what Ella does.

ALAN
I don't --

ELLA
They were rolled back in his head.

ALAN
He was high?

ELLA
I don't know, but how could he see anything, much less how to shoot a firearm like that?

ALAN
What does that mean?

ELLA
Hell if I know.

EXT. THE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Ella strides to her squad car. Alan struggles to keep up.

ELLA
You drink?

ALAN
Like a booze hound! I mean, not like a -- I partake in the bubbly, but only on Strawberry Daiquiri Saturdays. And my birthday. I'm a Margarita fiend on my --

ELLA
Coffee.

ALAN
Oh. Yeah.

ELLA
You had a sweet setup in SoCal. Surprised you made the switch.

ALAN
It was sweet, but wasn't a good use of my talents. Ten years ago I'd be stuck behind a computer screen, but with real time DNA and facial recognition software upgrades, the sky's the limit.

ELLA
Is it? Crime rate's been skyrocketing since we got the new tech.

(MORE)

ELLA (CONT'D)

Instead of criminals being scared straight of the idea of constant surveillance, they're making first person shooters to see how many likes they can get.

ALAN

We didn't let a couple of bad apples keep us in the Stone Age.

ELLA

We did something worse. We gave pyromaniacs the gift of fire. Even made it pocket size.

They walk past the hi-tech, self driving patrol cars to Ella's. Alan looks it over. Less than impressed.

ELLA (CONT'D)

Get in.

ALAN

No offense, but your car...

ELLA

Yeah?

ALAN

It's not exactly regulation. I mean, it's --

ELLA

-- Old?

ALAN

No, I...

ELLA

Perks of seniority. She may not look like much, but she always gets me from point A to point B without any crap in-between.

Ella gets behind the wheel. Alan crosses himself, climbs in. They speed off. Seconds later, TWO COPS hop into a self-driving car. It starts, then gets stuck doing loops.

INT. KYLE'S HQ - NIGHT

Kyle, in the dark save for the glow of a computer monitor, watches a live feed of Tamara (through her eyes) brushing her teeth. He eats a handful of red Skittles, strokes the screen.

INT. TAMARA'S ART STUDIO - NIGHT

Tamara, looking right past us. Painting Ranya's portrait.

RANYA
My nose itches. Can I --

TAMARA
No.

RANYA
Damn!

TAMARA
Got it!

Ranya itches her nose, wheels her chair over to Tamara. Checks out her portrait. Spectacular.

RANYA
Whoa.

TAMARA
Drink it in.

RANYA
That's unbelievable.

TAMARA
You're too kind.

RANYA
You know I'm not paying for this,
right?

TAMARA
You're crazy. Nah, it's yours.

RANYA
Ah!

Ranya hugs her.

TAMARA
You going soft on me?

RANYA
Couldn't if I wanted to. DNA test
confirmed I'm one-hundred percent
that bitch.

Tamara laughs. Ranya's phone RINGS.

RANYA (CONT'D)
Ugh. Everybody's so damn thirsty.

TAMARA
Quench their thirst.

Ranya makes a face, answers the phone.

RANYA
(sexy voice)
Meal on Wheels. Hope you're hungry.

KYLE (V.O.)
Fucking starving.

Ranya's face falls.

KYLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Feeling naughty?

RANYA
Wrong number.

KYLE (V.O.)
Don't do it, Ranya. You won't like
what happens if --

Ranya ends the call, shaken.

TAMARA
Everything okay?

RANYA
Yeah. Just some creep.

Ranya puts her phone on silent, gives Tamara a reassuring smile.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Tamara and Ranya relax in deck chairs, drink wine despite the dark rain clouds overhead.

RANYA
So you're done with therapy?

TAMARA
I don't know. Maybe.

Ranya looks crushed.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

But that doesn't mean we can't
still hang, my sista.

RANYA

And talk and talk and talk about
how great your life is?

TAMARA

What happened to not letting our
pasts define us?

RANYA

It's easier when you don't have a
ball and chain dragging behind you.

Tamara nods, finishes off her wine.

RANYA (CONT'D)

Sorry. Bitch DNA, remember? I'm
happy for you. Sista.

TAMARA

Thanks. You know, I was headed down
a dark road before I met you.

RANYA

(sings)

*WE CAN BUILD THIS WORLD TOGETHER!
LOVE AND LAUGH FOREVER! NOTHING'S
GONNA STOP US NOW!*

TAMARA

I'm serious. My mom and Dani were
trying, but... Seeing how you deal
with everything like a boss
inspired me. I'm glad we met.
Regardless of the circumstances. I
just wanted you to know that.

RANYA

Back at you.

They clink glasses, finish off the wine. Seconds later, the
clouds burst and shower them with rain. The women scream,
retreat back into the building.

INT. TAMARA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Heavy rain falls as Tamara sleeps like a hungover baby. Her
lava lamp alarm clock bathes the room in alien light.

We watch her sleep (like the world's creepiest roommate) a beat, THEN --

Her LEFT EYE TWITCHES.

It pops open, revealing COMPUTER CODE followed by the words TEST_DRIVE_00001.

Her eye surveys the surroundings like a security camera.

Her left arm flexes, rises in the air as if possessed.

Tamara's eye snaps shut, arm falls to her side as she awakens. She rubs her eye, looks around the room. Unaware of what just transpired. Goes back to sleep.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - DAY

Tamara's eyes open in shock.

She's lying on the ground in the freezing rain.

Tamara hugs herself, runs back inside.

INT. APARTMENT / ELEVATOR - DAY

Tamara, shivering, still in disbelief, waits for the elevator to reach her floor.

The elevator stops at floor number four.

The doors open, revealing a LITTLE GIRL at the end of the hall. She's no older than ten, swinging a battered Barbie doll back and forth on a string. *Yikes*.

Tamara reaches out lightning quick to hit the button to close the door, stops herself.

Just a little girl... *Right?*

TAMARA
Hey. Are you lost?

The Little Girl faces Tamara, looks like she's about to cry.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Is this your floor?

Little Girl nods.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Let's get you back home, okay?

Tamara steps out of the elevator towards the Little Girl.
 The Little Girl drops the Barbie doll, sways towards Tamara.
 Her expression changing from melancholic to pure bliss...
 Tamara takes a step back. The Little Girl a step forward.

LITTLE GIRL
 Where ya going, Tamara?

Tamara's eyes widen in fright.

How does the Little Girl know her name?

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)
 We're not done playing yet.

The Little Girl rushes towards Tamara! Arms outstretched. Her movements clumsy, mechanical.

TAMARA
 Whoa! Hey!

The Little Girl keeps running. Uncontrollably giggling one second, sobbing the next.

TAMARA

runs back into the elevator, repeatedly slapping the button to shut the door. *Come on! Come on! Come on!*

The Little Girl's close enough to --

GIANNA'S MOTHER (O.S.)
 Gianna!

The Little Girl/Gianna freezes.

She blinks, confused.

GIANNA'S MOTHER, 30s, overworked, hugs her.

GIANNA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Don't ever run off like that again!

She gives Tamara, still freaked out, a dirty look, grabs her daughter's hand. Marches back towards their apartment.

Gianna turns back to Tamara, gives her a creepy smile as her mother drags her back in, slams the door.

Tamara leans back against the wall, mouths "What the fuck?" as the elevator doors finally close.

APARTMENT HALLWAY

The elevator doors barely open before Tamara gets out. She can't get out of there and back to her apartment fast enough.

AT TAMARA AND DANI'S DOOR

Tamara enters the security code.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE
Invalid code. Try again.

Tamara tries the code again.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE (CONT'D)
Invalid code. Try again.

TAMARA
Come on!

Someone touches her shoulder. Tamara jumps.

Dani, bags of groceries in arm, sizes up her sister.

DANI
You look terrible.

TAMARA
Thanks.

Tamara hugs her.

DANI
Just bought this coat, but
whatever. Tam, what's wrong?

INT. TAMARA AND DANI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Tamara, wearing dry clothes now, sipping coffee. Still processing the bizarre events of the day. Dani offers her a plate of bacon pancakes.

DANI
Tam?

TAMARA
Yeah? Oh, thanks.

Tamara takes the plate, doesn't eat.

DANI
Going to tell me what happened last
night or not?

TAMARA
Why, Danielle, you know full well
sophisticated women of our stature
do not kiss and tell.

Dani gives Tamara a small smile, digs into her breakfast.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Yeah, I... I don't remember.

DANI
Oh god.

TAMARA
It's not like that, I just...
Things are a bit hazy. I'm fine.
Don't tell Mom.

DANI
I'm telling Mom.

TAMARA
Don't tell Mom! She'll blow things
out of proportion, have a freaking
stroke. I'm going back to therapy.

DANI
Promise?

Tamara puts a hand over her heart, raises the other.

TAMARA
Scout's honor.

DANI
Weren't you kicked out of the Girl
Scouts for stealing cookies?

TAMARA
It was worth it.

EXT. VICTORIOUS / INT. DANI'S CAR - DAY

Tamara exits, leans in the window. Dani smokes a cigarette.

TAMARA
You should give it some thought.
Smoking's bad for you, mmmkay?

DANI

Fine. We'll quit together. Happy?

Tamara quickly grabs Dani's pack of smokes, jumps backwards out of her reach.

TAMARA

Walking on sunshine.

DANI

You're walking home!

Dani speeds off.

TAMARA

Love you too!

INT. VICTORIOUS / COMMON ROOM - DAY

BIRD'S EYE VIEW of Tamara in group therapy. Kelly at the center. The circular arrangement of the chairs resemble an eye.

Tamara looks to Ranya's empty seat.

NICOLE, 20s, looks twice that age from hard living, stands, about to bare her soul to the group.

NICOLE

Hi. I'm Nicole.

EVERYONE

Hi, Nicole!

NICOLE NICKI

Everyone calls me Nicki.

EVERYONE

Hi, Nicki!

NICKI

I met Todd back in junior high. He was the quarterback, I was the class clown.

Tamara's left hand drums on Ranya's empty chair.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Somehow we just clicked. Nobody could figure out why.

Tamara makes the jerk off motion with her hand. Nicki stops, hurt. All eyes move to Tamara, unaware of what she's doing.

TAMARA

What?

KELLY'S OFFICE

Tamara's left knee bounces. She notices it and it suddenly stops. WTF?

The door opens and Kelly, consoling Nicki, ushers her in, shuts the door behind them. Tamara rises to meet them.

TAMARA

Nicki, I'm so sorry. I don't know what --

Tamara backhands Nicki. Nicki cries, runs out the door.

KELLY

What's wrong with you? Get out!

TAMARA

Please, I just --

Tamara flips Kelly off. Kelly forces Tamara out the door.

EXT. VICTORIOUS - DAY

Tamara exits in a panic.

TAMARA

Call Ranya.

Ranya's phone number flashes in Tamara's eyes.

She see Kelly's on the phone, staring at her.

Tamara shoots her a smile, crosses the street.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Tamara, right hand holding down her spastic left hand, still trying to get in touch with Ranya. A HOMELESS MAN approaches, changes directions when he sees Tamara.

RANYA'S VOICE MAIL

Babble at the beep.

BEEP!

TAMARA

Hey. It's Tamara. Missed you today.
Look, I don't mean to freak you
out, but... Something's happening
to me. Think I'm losing it. Might
be the implants. Please, just...
Call me back as soon as you can.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE / EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Doctor Shamie shines a light in Tamara's eyes.

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Raise your right hand.

Tamara does so.

DOCTOR SHAMIE (CONT'D)

Now your left.

Tamara looks at her left arm. It won't move.

TAMARA

What's wrong?

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Your mind is still adjusting to the
microchip. For now just give
yourself a few days and if this...
phantom limb phenomenon continues,
we'll explore other options.

TAMARA

Like what?

DOCTOR SHAMIE

Don't worry about that now.

TAMARA

Like what?

DOCTOR SHAMIE

You may have to have surgery to
remove the microchip.

Off Tamara, devastated.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Tamara, hands in her pockets, drifting back and forth towards
the door. Wanting a drink more than she'd like to admit.

She takes a breath, walks away. HEARS a SCREAM nearby.

TAMARA
Ranya?

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The back of the bar, blocked by a wooden fence.

Tamara finds Ranya's overturned wheelchair next to a garbage bag full of beer bottles.

Behind the dumpster, Ranya and Mark slam into each other.

Ranya's holding onto Mark, spilling her beer on his back.

MARK
Fuck!

RANYA
That the best you got?!

TAMARA
Hey! Leave her alone!

Mark eases Ranya to the ground, hops into his jeans.

MARK
Look, she wanted it.

TAMARA
She's drunk, asshole!

Tamara checks on Ranya.

RANYA
I'm fine.

TAMARA
No, you're not.

Mark glares at Tamara before heading back into the bar. He suddenly groans, leans onto the wall for support.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Get a room.

Mark blinks, looks at Tamara and Ranya, confused.

MARK
What are we doing back here?

TAMARA

Don't tell me you don't remember.

RANYA

Story of my life.

Tamara sets the wheelchair upright, wheels it over. Helps Ranya get back in. Mark rubs his eyes, freaked out.

MARK

Sorry, I... Last thing I remember was... Your text. I mean, I thought it was you, but... This is...

Mark sits against the wall, shakes his head. Out of it.

TAMARA

Let's go.

Tamara and Ranya make their way out of the alley.

INT. RANYA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tiny studio apartment. Devoid of major technology save for a flatscreen. Ranya's sipping coffee. Tamara massages her head.

RANYA

I got your message. I was gonna call you back, but... Something came up. You okay?

TAMARA

Not really. I think whatever it was has passed. What the hell, Ranya?

RANYA

They the moths, I'm the flame. Don't hate the playa, hate game.

TAMARA

What if something had happened?

RANYA

I had it under control.

TAMARA

Really? 'Cause the guy was blitzed out of his mind.

RANYA

Side effects may include...

Tamara sighs.

RANYA (CONT'D)

Ran into my ex. Pissed me off so bad I couldn't think straight. Then I found Mark. And... You know, boom went the dynamite.

Tamara winces.

RANYA (CONT'D)

You should sit down.

TAMARA

I have to go. There's probably an APB out for me.

Tamara crosses to the door.

RANYA

Thanks for looking out for me.

TAMARA

Sisters from another mister, right?

RANYA

Damn straight.

Tamara exits. Ranya's phone BEEPS. She checks the message:

MAESTRO (TEXT)

hey bae. was it good for u too? :P

Ranya texts back:

RANYA (TEXT)

Fuck you.

MAESTRO (TEXT)

i like to watch, but hate to share.

Ranya's wheels to the door, makes sure it's locked before texting back:

RANYA (TEXT)

Ooh. Cryptic. What that's mean?

MAESTRO (TEXT)

more broken toys. >0 }:-]

She finds Tamara's number, but her phone suddenly DIES before she can dial it.

RANYA

Shit!

The POWER GOES OUT. Ranya pounds on the door.

RANYA (CONT'D)
 Tam! Tamara, can you hear me?!

Ranya slings her phone against the wall in frustration.

INT. THE PRECINCT / BULLPEN - NIGHT

A cell phone, swinging in a Ziploc bag.

If it looks at all familiar it's because it's Joey's.

Ella's at her desk, studying the surveillance video, burning the soon to be midnight oil.

She stares at a picture of herself with Leo and a YOUNG Natalie at Walt Disney World.

Ella looks up, finds a Child holding the Ziploc and his Young Mother. The same pair seen earlier on the subway.

YOUNG MOTHER
 My son found this on the subway and
 wanted to return it.
 (to Child)
 Go on.

The Child waddles over, offering the Ziploc to Ella.

ELLA
 Thank you. I'll make sure the owner
 gets it back. Just a sec.

Ella opens her drawer, takes out a fake badge.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 Here.

The Child takes the badge, high fives Ella.

YOUNG MOTHER
 Thank you.

ELLA
 Bye.

Young Mother and Child walk off hand in hand, wave as they exit. Ella smiles, waves back.

She turns to the phone. That was found on the subway... The lightbulb goes off and Ella picks up the phone, dials. Taps her fingers on her desk as she waits.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Alan? Sorry I woke you. Look, I owe
 you a coffee. Get down here. Yes,
 I'd prefer if you wore pants.

LATER

Alan, at his desk, yawning. Eyes glued to a computer screen. Ella peers over his shoulder, anxious for a break in the case. Alan fidgets, looks back at her.

ALAN
 Do you, um, have to hover?

Ella pulls up a chair.

ELLA
 What are we looking at?

ALAN
 Walls and walls of encryption. Not
 just the garden variety either.
 Whatever this guy had on here he
 didn't want prying eyes to see.
 Huzzah! The Dark Archer strikes
 again! Please don't tell anyone I
 just said that.

ELLA
 Secret's safe with me.

ALAN
 These are the last texts he sent
 anyone. Spooky.

ELLA
 Okay, so this Maestro knew where he
 was. What about before that?

ALAN
 Um, let me se... Nothing. Must've
 wiped it clean.

ELLA
 So who's Maestro?

Alan scrolls through photos.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 Hold it.

Ella studies a selfie of Joey with Kyle and Ranya.

ELLA (CONT'D)
I want names.

ALAN
I'll need java. Lots of it.

ELLA
Deal.

INT. APARTMENT / ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Tamara's sending Dani a text via the Oculus network.

TAMARA (TEXT)
Don't freak. In the elevator now.

DANI (TEXT)
**You freaking better be! Lied to Mom
to cover your a\$\$!**

TAMARA (TEXT)
Should I write a check? ;)

DANI (TEXT)
Auto-correct. (>_<)

Tamara smirks. The elevator opens and ROY, 50s, fit, wears his sleaze on his sleeve, looks up from his phone, grins at Tamara as he enters.

TAMARA
Hi, Mr. Roy.

ROY
Mister? I look that old to you?

Tamara chuckles, doesn't know what to say.

ROY (CONT'D)
Age is nothing but a number.

TAMARA
That depends on a jury of your
peers.

Roy utters the world's fakest laugh, sidles up to her. Looks her up and down. Tamara hits the elevator button, not liking Roy's vibe.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
How's your wife?

ROY
 (whispers)
 Sound asleep.

TAMARA
 Tell her I said hello.

ROY
 Aren't you full of surprises?
 Didn't think you were the type.

The elevator reaches Tamara's floor.

TAMARA
 What type is that?

Roy only shoots her a coy smile.

ROY
 Nighty night.

TAMARA
 Good night. Mister Roy.

Tamara gets out of there. Roy holds the door, watches her go.

ROY
 Mmm mmm mmm mmm mmm!

INT. TAMARA AND DANI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tamara turns on the lights.

TAMARA
 Dani? I'm home.

DANI'S ROOM

Tamara peers in on a slumbering Dani, tiptoes back out.

TAMARA'S ROOM

Tamara, fast asleep.

Her left TWITCHES, then --

Nothing. She's simply sleeping.

We drift to the door.

DANI, eyes rolled back in her head, sticks her head in.

BLACKOUT.

THE NEXT MORNING

Sunlight streams through the window. Tamara winces, massages her hand. Feels something wet in the bed. BLOOD. Lots of it.

Tamara raises her right hand and to her horror discovers four finger nails plucked out.

TAMARA

Dani!

DANI'S ROOM

Tamara, hand wrapped, storms into Dani's room.

TAMARA

Dani, there's something...

Dani, in bed, arms behind her head, cigarette butts sticking out of her eyes. Dead.

Got a light? written in blood on the wall above her.

Tamara backs to the wall, shaking in terror.

THE KITCHEN

Tamara stumbles in.

TAMARA

C-C-Call 911.

A text from Maestro POPS UP, obscuring the call screen.

MAESTRO (TEXT)

check your videos. ASAP!

TAMARA

What? Close.

A video list automatically pops up.

Video #1 starts.

Tamara, in her bra and panties, sings "Light My Candle" while a mesmerized, shirtless Roy ogles her in the background.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Close!

Tamara looks sick to her stomach.

The video list POPS BACK OPEN again.

Tamara CYCLES through the videos.

Tamara's hesitant to open another. But she has to know.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

Open.

Video #2 -- POV of Tamara stumbling around her apartment.

Video #3 -- POV of Tamara on the roof, dancing in the rain.

Video #4 -- POV of Tamara yanking out her fingernails with pliers while Dani jabs lit cigarettes into her eyes. "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" plays in the background.

The videos CLOSE and a text message POPS UP in its place.

MAESTRO (TEXT)

**head over to Infinite Wisdom. no
cops. i'm in your head watching
every move you make. but just in
case you're still feeling froggy...**

A video PLAYS.

Video #5 -- Tamara's standing over a sleeping Susan, gripping an X-acto knife.

TAMARA

Call Mom!

Tamara hears a phone RINGING. An agonizing beat, then --

SUSAN (V.O.)

Tamara?

TAMARA

Mom, are you okay?

SUSAN (V.O.)

I'm fine. What about you? You girls
still getting along?

Tamara looks to Dani's room. It takes everything she's got not to burst into tears.

TAMARA

Like two peas in a pod.

SUSAN (V.O.)
You're looking after yourself,
aren't you?

TAMARA
Yeah. I'm... I just wanted to say I
love you, Mom.

SUSAN (V.O.)
I love you too, baby.

TAMARA
Talk to you later.

SUSAN (V.O.)
Alright. Bye.

TAMARA
Bye.

LATER

Tamara, dressed, ready to exit. She HEARS high pitched
RINGING, holds her head.

RANYA (O.S.)
Tamara, open the door!

Tamara unlocks the door. Ranya enters, smart pad in hand.

TAMARA
Now's not a good --

RANYA
-- We don't have much time.

TAMARA	RANYA
Ranya, listen to --	-- I know what's been happening to you.

TAMARA
What?

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Tamara, massaging her head. Ranya, gauging her reaction.

TAMARA
Mind control? That's insane.

RANYA
How else do you explain it?

TAMARA

Why me?

RANYA

Your microchip's one of a kind. Kyle's control over the others is easier, but it lasts a few hours at the most. He wants to break your chip's encryption, reverse engineer it for the others. Once he does...

TAMARA

He'll be able to control them as long as he wants.

RANYA

So far he can only control you when you're asleep. I've blocked him, but I don't know for how --

TAMARA

-- You knew? This whole time?

RANYA

You think I'd do that to you?

TAMARA

I watched my sister die and I didn't even remember it! What the hell am I supposed to think?

RANYA

I never meant for any of this to -- This was supposed to help people.

TAMARA

So what now?

RANYA

As long as you're connected to the Oculus network there'll always be that chance that someone out there will break the encryption.

A horrible realization hits Tamara like a ton of bricks.

TAMARA

I have to remove the microchip.

Tamara touches her eyes. And just like that her life's being ripped away from her. Again...

The elevator doors open, revealing a MULTITUDE of mind controlled OCCUPANTS, including Gianna and Her Mother.

The Mind Controlled Occupants swarm, grab Tamara and Ranya!

EXT. STORAGE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Ella and Alan approach a U-Haul.

ELLA

Sure this is the one?

ALAN

Positive. There's surveillance of Burns stopping by this storage unit every other day and disappearing into the back of the U-Haul.

ELLA

Hope you're right. A guy sneaking into a truck he owns to yank it doesn't count as probable cause.

ALAN

Kyle Burns was the last person to speak to Tang before Tang was shot. Then Burns, a programming prodigy who worked consistently since junior high just drops off the face of the earth? I, mean, that can't just be a coincidence, right? It's got to mean something.

Ella mulls it over. Rookie has a point... They walk around Kyle's moving truck, Ella covering the front, Alan the back.

ELLA

Police! NYPD! Open the door!

Ella peers inside. Clean. She tries the door. No go.

Alan shines his flashlight on the U-Haul's rear door.

ALAN

Frost?

Ella steps up beside him, shines her light on a message written in sharpie on the door in computer code.

ELLA

Great. Another guy who thinks he's the Riddler. Computer code, right?

ALAN

That's right. Base64.

ELLA
 Don't look so shocked. Base64, huh?
 So what's it say?

ALAN
 Welcome.

Ella grabs the handle.

ALAN (CONT'D)
 Wait. I'll do an X-ray scan, make
 sure he's not --

ELLA
 Don't bother.

ALAN
 But --

Ella pulls the handle, pushing up the door. Shines her light
 on a big, blocky desktop computer.

INT. U-HAUL - LATER

A super secret hacker hideout. On a budget.

Computer screens emit the only source of light.

Ella and Alan walk past rows of the outdated desktop
 computers. All have an animation of a dancing, grinning
 Cheshire cat with a bag slung over its shoulder.

ELLA
 Cute.

ALAN
 What do you think?

ELLA
 I think we've been had and I owe
 you a coffee. Let's --

The rear door SLAMS DOWN, LOCKS!

ALAN
 Hey!

Ella and Alan appear on the monitors.

KYLE'S VOICE
 Hi-didilly-ho, neighboreenos.

ELLA
Open the door.

KYLE'S VOICE
Can't. Only opens from the outside.

ALAN
You're interfering with an official
police investig--

KYLE
-- You should've thought about that
before you busted in without so
much as a warrant. Ignorance of the
law is no excuse.

ELLA
I'm gonna count to three.

KYLE'S VOICE
I see your three and raise you a
ten. Nice meeting you!

The computers flatline, all showing blue screens. They suddenly reboot and the Cheshire cat animation returns.

This time it opens the bag, takes out a bomb with a long, burning fuse. Snickers as a countdown clock appears.

10...

9...

ELLA
Bomb!

Ella kicks the door. Alan rams his shoulder against it.

Nothing doing.

6...

5...

Ella fires, kicks a hole in the door. Reaches through...

EXT. STORAGE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Ella and Alan run for their lives.

An EXPLOSION knocks them off their feet.

Fire reaches the fuel tank and the U-Haul ERUPTS into flames.

Ella and Alan lie on the ground, motionless. *Dead?*

INT. INFINITE WISDOM / BOARDROOM - NIGHT

Kyle watches the aftermath of the explosion on a gaming laptop, celebrates with a wine glass full of cherry soda.

MIND CONTROLLED CEOS wrestle, others have an awkward dance off on in the background.

Kyle shuts the laptop, takes a bow.

EXT. STORAGE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Fire truck SIRENS echo in the distance. Ella coughs, sits up.

ELLA

Alan?

She crawls to him, checks his pulse. Shakes him awake.

ALAN

Are we dead?

ELLA

Still alive and kicking.

INT. THE PRECINCT / CAPTAIN CROWE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ella, pissed, Alan, nervous, as Captain Crowe enters, throws a file down on his desk.

CROWE

Murray's tox and labs came back clean. At least of any narcotics. Mind telling me why the hell you broke into a warehouse without a warrant? Or why you didn't run it by me first?!

ALAN

Captain, we had probable cause to --

CROWE

-- Bullshit! You're supposed to know better than this, Frost.

ELLA

What part of he tried to blow us up don't you understand?

CROWE

And where's the evidence?

ELLA

Still burning!

CROWE

Ella, so far your record's been impeccable. But you are this close to blowing it all to hell.

ELLA

Something's not adding up.

CROWE

That's life! Murray snapped and shot that kid. I'm sorry if that eats at you, but that's the way it is. That's all.

ALAN

Sir, we still have reason to --

CROWE

-- I said that's all. Get your asses comfy 'cause you're both on desk duty until further notice.

Alan exits, knows better than to protest. Ella hangs back. Crowe sighs, looks up. *What now?*

ELLA

The kid just started.

CROWE

And? This isn't The X-Files. You want to start a kook conspiracy convention, be my guest. Just don't do it on my time. Hop to it.

Ella storms out.

THE BULLPEN

Alan, at his desk, still licking his wounds. SCANS police reports via his eyes. Ella crosses to him, grabs her coat.

ALAN

I'm sorry. I thought --

ELLA

-- You've got good instincts. Never be sorry for that.

ALAN
 Captain said --

ELLA
 -- I heard what he said. My gut's
 telling me something.

ALAN
 You're...
 (whispers)
 ...going after Burns aren't you?

ELLA
 Plausible deniability. Tell the
 Captain I went for a coffee break.

Ella winks, exits.

EXT. INFINITE WISDOM - NIGHT

A four-storey building with mirrored windows. Could easily be mistaken for a giant Rubik's Cube. The main branch of the technological heavyweights behind the Oculus.

You may have heard of it.

We see Kyle strutting on the reception floor inside as a PIZZA VAN arrives.

Ella sneaks in behind the DELIVERY DRIVER.

INT. INFINITE WISDOM / RECEPTION AREA - NIGHT

Kyle spots Ella, right on his heels, heads the other way.

ELLA
 Kyle Burns?

Kyle keeps walking.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 NYPD! Stop!

Kyle bolts up stairs. Ella's right behind him. They enter --

A DARK CORRIDOR

Annoying, holographic ADS ACTIVATE as Kyle races past.

He overturns a trash can, races towards a glass elevator at the end of the hall.

Ella kicks the trash can out of the way, doesn't break stride. She's coming in hot.

Kyle swipes his ID card down a keycard plate, gaining entry into the glass elevator.

The doors shut seconds before Ella can get to them.

Kyle waves.

KYLE

Employees only. Don't make me call security. Ella. After all, this is borderline harassment.

ELLA

You're under arrest for the imprisonment and attempted murder of two police officers. I also have reason to believe that you're involved with the murders of Joey Tang and Chris Murray.

KYLE

That's a leap and you're all alone out on that limb.

ELLA

Open the door!

KYLE

Where have I heard that one before?

Ella draws her firearm, takes aim at the glass doors.

ELLA

I won't ask again.

Kyle taps his forehead, presses it to the glass.

KYLE

Fire at will.

ELLA

Do not f with me.

KYLE

So you're the bad one? Where's your partner, still in the burn ward?

Kyle backs to the wall, hands on his head.

Ella fires! But it's no use. The glass is bulletproof.

A security alarm BLARES.

Kyle waves as the elevator DESCENDS.

Ella ducks into a restroom.

Moments later two colossal SECURITY GUARDS lumber past.

EXT. INFINITE WISDOM / INT. ELLA'S SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Ella punches the steering wheel. Her cell phone BEEPS.

MAESTRO (TEXT)
curiosity is not without its
consequences. what happens now is
on you. daddy or daughter? who's
super mommy gonna save?

Ella peels out of the parking lot.

INT. ELLA'S SQUAD CAR - NIGHT (MOVING)

Siren SOUNDING OFF. Ella on the phone, racing home.

ELLA
 Pick up, guys. Please.

LEO (V.O.)
 Hello?

ELLA
 (into phone)
 Thank God. Leo, I need you to --

LEO (V.O.)
 Is what I'd be saying if this
 wasn't a recording. Get back to you
 pronto. That's a promise.

BEEP.

ELLA
 (into phone)
 Leo, I need you to pick up Natalie
 and go to Ned's. Yes, I know it's a
 wi-fi dead zone. I'll explain
 later. Love you.

Ella, fearing the worst, hits the accelerator.

INT. ELLA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ella and Leo embrace.

ELLA
Where's Natalie? Nat?

LEO
Easy. She's at Hannah's. Just talked to her.

ELLA
Oh god, Leo.

LEO
You're shaking. What's wrong?

ELLA
Nothing I can explain.

LEO
Sit.

Ella, still on edge, has a seat.

LEO (CONT'D)
It's this case, isn't it?

ELLA
Just hold me. Please.

Leo holds Ella tight. She pulls him into a steamy kiss.

LATER

Music (Marvin Gaye, Luther Vandross, or a little Aretha to set the mood off right) plays.

Ella lights the last scented candle, arranged in the shape of a heart, smiles at Leo.

Leo, in his underwear, wearing a beard made of whipped cream.

He sets the can of whipped cream on a table, gets his groove on. Moves to Ella. She sits atop the oven, pulls him close.

Leo moves down Ella. Just for the briefest of moments we HEAR a light, familiar RINGING.

SMOKE rises from underneath Ella...

OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN WINDOW

Ella's squad car races up the driveway.

The smoke detector's SOUNDING OFF.

A reflection in the microwave reveals lighter fluid in place of whipped cream and Leo's face ablaze as he happily gives head to a red hot oven burner.

EXT. ELLA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SMOKE BILLOWS from under the front door.

Ella puts her jacket over to her face, kicks the door in.

THE KITCHEN

Leo's covered in flames, jaws locked on the over burner.

He turns to Ella, tears in his eyes before falling backwards, going into shock.

ELLA
Leo! Leo, hold on.

Ella beats the flames, but it's no use.

Leo's gone.

EXT. ELLA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ella's slice of paradise, engulfed in flames. Badass bravado shot, Ella leans onto her car, desperately tries Natalie's number. BRRING... BRRING... BRRING... BRRING...

Finally, mercifully, Natalie answers.

ELLA
(into phone)
Natalie, where are --

NATALIE (V.O.)
Don't know where you kid is? You're not a very good detective. Ella.

ELLA
(into phone)
Who is this?

NATALIE (V.O.)
Call me Maestro.

Ella shakes her head. *It's not possible.*

ELLA
(into phone)
If you hurt her I swear --

NATALIE (V.O.)
-- Yadda yadda yadda. Shut up. A little birdie told me you nabbed something from Joey Tang after he bit the dust. I want it.

ELLA
(into phone)
I don't know what--

NATALIE (V.O.)
-- Don't lie to me, bitch! It's in the evidence locker. Trouble is only you know the combination. And the rest of your buddies in blue aren't in much condition to help.

ELLA
(into phone)
I want to talk to Natalie.

"Natalie" sighs. When she speaks again it's as her old self.

NATALIE (V.O.)
Oh god! Everyone's dead, Mom! What's happening? Why can't I remember how I got here?!

ELLA
(into phone)
Nat, listen to me. I'm coming to get you, okay? Stay there and --

NATALIE (V.O.)
-- That's enough of that Lifetime shit. Better get here before I get bored. And lose the phone.

"Natalie" ends the call.

ELLA
(into phone)
Natalie!

Ella smashes the phone on the ground. She pops the trunk of her squad car, stares at something inside.

INT. THE PRECINCT / BULLPEN - NIGHT

The bloody aftermath of a shoot-out amongst the officers. The lifeless, bullet-ridden bodies of VETERAN DETECTIVES -- some still clutching their firearms -- and UNIFORMED OFFICERS, ammo scattered around them, litter the floor.

Alan, smug smile, terrified eyes, feet propped on his desk. Waves as Ella enters, takes in the chaotic scene.

ALAN

You had to be there.

Ella's hand moves to her firearm.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Gonna shoot your partner?

Ella hesitates.

ELLA

You're not my partner.

ALAN

I'm whoever I want to be.

ELLA

This is some sick RPG to you?

ALAN

This is the future.

ELLA

Where's Natalie?

ALAN

Sooner you get the evidence, the sooner you'll find out.

EVIDENCE ROOM

Alan twitches, watches Ella enter the code on a hi-tech locker. Ella eyes Alan's warped reflection in the window as he unholsters his firearm...

ELLA

Whatever you're planning, it won't work, Burns. Someone will stop you.

ALAN
Open the locker.

ELLA
Not until I see Natalie.

Alan glares at Ella, knocks on the door with his foot.

Natalie peers in the window, waves. Like most under mind control her eyes are wide in fear yet she flashes a big grin.

NATALIE
(cheery)
Better do what he says or he's
totally gonna --
(chant)
B-L-O-W! B-L-O-W my brains out!
B-L-O-W! B-L-O-W my brains out!

Natalie does a cartwheel. Ella takes a deep breath, enters the last digit, opens the locker.

ELLA
Well?

He pushes her aside, grabs a Ziploc containing an SD card.

ELLA (CONT'D)
Was it worth it?

ALAN
More than you know.

Alan smashes the SD card, grinds it under his boot.

ALAN (CONT'D)
You girls have fun.

Alan winks, drop to the floor unconscious.

Ella checks Alan's pulse, cuffs him. She reaches for his firearm when a BULLET FLIES past her head.

NATALIE -- armed with a pump action shotgun -- takes aim at her mother through the window!

Ella takes cover as Natalie opens fire.

NATALIE
(singing)
*WHO'S THE LEADER OF THE CLUB THAT'S
MADE FOR YOU AND ME?
M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E!*

Ella leaps behind a desk as bullets SHATTER the window above her. She crawls to the door, locks it, ducks back down.

ELLA

Natalie! You have to fight this!

Natalie twirls the shotgun like it's the world's deadliest baton, marches to the evidence room door.

NATALIE

(singing)

HEY THERE, HI THERE, HO THERE!

YOU'RE AS WELCOME AS CAN BE!

M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E!

Natalie blasts the lock, throws the shotgun behind her back, spins around and catches it.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM / BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER

Ella throws herself up and over the shattered window just as Natalie enters, takes aim once more.

NATALIE

(singing)

MICKEY MOUSE! DONALD DUCK! MICKEY
MOUSE! DONALD DUCK!

FOREVER WE WILL HOLD YOUR BANNER
HIGH HIGH HIGH HIGH!

Natalie dances with the shotgun as if it were a cane, readjusts her aim at a running Ella.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

(singing)

COME ALONG AND SING THE SONG AND
JOIN OUR JAMBOREE!

M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E!

BLAM!

Bullets SHATTER Ella's picture frame. She crawls behind her desk to Perez's, hand shaking as she opens his desk drawer...

Natalie raises the shotgun over her head like a soldier wading through water, stalks Ella.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

(singing)

NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE, TO
ALL OUR COMPANY!

M-I-C, SEE YOU REAL SOON!

(MORE)

NATALIE (CONT'D)
K-E-Y, WHY? BECAUSE WE LIKE YOU!
M - O - U - S - E!

Perez, bleeding from a gunshot wound, rises.

PEREZ
 Hey!

Natalie whips the shotgun around towards him.

Ella blinds her with the confiscated LASER POINTER!

BLAM!

Natalie screams, shooting wide, BLASTS a hole in the ceiling.

Ella disarms Natalie, cuffs her hands behind her back.

NATALIE
 Mom, what's going on? What's
 happening? How did I --

ELLA
 -- I'll explain later.

Ella hugs Natalie. Perez staggers over.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 I'll call an ambulance.

PEREZ
 A-Already did.
 (re: his bulletproof vest)
 Never leave home without it.

Ella pockets the laser pointer, spots Captain Crowe among the dead. She shuts his eyes. Alan rubs his eyes, confused.

ALAN
 Heck of a first week. Am I being --
 (taking in the carnage)
 -- hazed?

ELLA
 Explain later. What was on Joey
 Tang's SD card?

ALAN
 Uh, just some random numbers. I was
 going to give them a closer look
 before the Captain shut us down.

ELLA
 Too bad you didn't make a copy.

ALAN

Actually... I took the liberty of scanning them. They're all up here.

Alan taps the side of his head.

ELLA

Could they have been coordinates?

ALAN

Yeah. I guess so. But to what?

ELLA

Let's find out.

LATER

Disabled laptop parts, scattered on the desk. Ella pulls the motherboard out, revealing another SD card taped to the back.

ALAN

(reading the SD card)

JTV... What do you think's on it?

ELLA

A virus. Courtesy of Joey Tang.
(pocketing the SD card)
Come on.

ALAN

Where are we going?

ELLA

To the nearest wi-fi dead zone.

ALAN

At least take off the cuffs.

ELLA

Later.

ALAN

(sighs)

Heck of a first week.

INT. INFINITE WISDOM / RECEPTION AREA - NIGHT

MIND CONTROLLED EMPLOYERS screw on every available surface.

OTHERS experience their worst fears, clawing at creepy crawlies under their skin.

A SECRETARY with a plant pot on her head spins around in dizzying circles, yodels.

One of the SECURITY GUARDS seen earlier zaps himself with his taser gun in the background.

INTERNS stand in a circle with revolvers guns pressed to the back of the head of the person next to them.

BLAM!

A few drop dead. They keep going, not missing a beat.

ARMED GUARDS lead Tamara and Ranya past the madness.

Kyle leans over a railing, surveying the chaos from a ledge, smug as ever. Red soda in hand.

KYLE

About time.

TAMARA

You wouldn't believe the traffic.

KYLE

Come on up, bae.

Ranya flips Kyle off. Kyle clutches his heart as if shot by a gunslinger, staggers out of sight.

ELEVATOR HALLWAY

Tamara and the Armed Guards wait while Ranya enters a code. The elevator opens. The other Security Guard's inside, yanking it in the corner.

SECURITY GUARD

I don't care what you promised the Queen. Take every last fucking inch, Paddington!

RANYA

We'll... use the other one.

IN THE BOARDROOM

Kyle watches CEOs nose in nose in a coke snorting race.

KYLE

Come on, Hunter!

Both Men pass out.

KYLE (CONT'D)
Lightweights.

The Armed Guards escort Tamara and Ranya in.

RANYA
Too late to place a bet?

KYLE
Hey, bae. You brought company!

RANYA
Didn't have much of a choice.

KYLE
Tamara, it's a pleasure to finally
meet you face to face.

Kyle extends a hand.

TAMARA
Touch me and I'll fucking kill you.

KYLE
I believe it. Me-ow! Ready to
change the world?

TAMARA
You might as well kill me right
now, 'cause I'll never be your
slave or anyone else's.

Kyle whispers in Tamara's ear:

KYLE
You already are.

Tamara connects with a left hook. Kyle rubs his sore jaw.

KYLE (CONT'D)
(to the Armed Guards)
Ouch! Take her to her room. Ranya,
you know what to do.

The Armed Guards grab Tamara, carry her out of the room.

TAMARA
Get the fuck off me!

Tamara breaks free. Ranya gets between her and the Guards.

RANYA
I didn't sign up for this!

KYLE

Think of the possibilities!

TAMARA

The poss-- You really think she'd help you, you psycho?!

KYLE

Ranya didn't tell you? Who do you think made all of this possible?

Tamara looks to Ranya, who can't meet her gaze.

KYLE (CONT'D)

She knew exactly what we were doing. Got off on it.

Tamara looks at Ranya, horrified. Snippets of past conversations flit through her mind --

TAMARA (V.O.)

What do you do, besides drink?

RANYA (V.O.)

Private contractor.

TAMARA AND RANYA -- AT THE BAR

RANYA (CONT'D)

I'm a programmer.

TAMARA

Work for anyone I've heard of?

RANYA

That's classified.

TAMARA AND RANYA -- IN THE ALLEY

MARK

What are we doing back here?

TAMARA

Don't tell me you don't remember.

THEN --

MARK

Sorry, I... Last thing I remember was... Your text. I mean, I thought it was you, but... This is...

TAMARA AND RANYA -- AT RANYA'S APARTMENT

RANYA
I had it under control.

THEN --

RANYA (CONT'D)
Ran into my ex. Pissed me off so bad I couldn't think straight. Then I found Mark.

TAMARA AND RANYA -- AT TAMARA'S APARTMENT

RANYA (CONT'D)
I know what's been happening to you.

BACK IN THE BOARDROOM

Tamara looks at Ranya in a whole new light.

RANYA
Tam --

TAMARA
Don't touch me!

KYLE
Trouble in paradise?

RANYA
Shut up, Kyle.

KYLE
We're so close to getting everything we've ever wanted, bae.

Kyle grabs Ranya's hand, nibbles on her fingers. She looks at the mad man, equal parts repulsed and enthralled.

KYLE (CONT'D)
Everything's all on the other side of that encryption.

RANYA
The program's still in Beta. If it's not calibrated right...

Kyle kisses Ranya's neck.

KYLE
You'll figure it out.

RANYA
 Tamara, I'm --

TAMARA
 -- Save it.

A SECURITY ALARM BLARES. Kyle checks the monitor, SEES Ella, hi-tech bulletproof vest on, racing towards the elevators.

KYLE
 What's the point of security if...
 Ugh! Why won't she die?!
 (sighs)
 Want something done right...

RANYA
 Outsource it?

KYLE
 Get her ready. Super Cop's not
 ruining everything we worked for.

Kyle grabs a gun from one of the Armed Guards, holds it sideways like the gangsta he is, moves out.

ELEVATOR HALLWAY

In a reversal of earlier events, Ella's the one racing to get away from a gun-toting Kyle. She reaches the glass elevators, enters a super long pass code.

ELLA
 Alan, I hope you're right...

KYLE
 Welcome back!

Kyle, still holding his gun gangsta style, fires lazily. He's taking his time, enjoying the game.

KYLE (CONT'D)
 Like what I've done with the place?

Ella returns fire. Kyle takes cover behind a cleaning cart.

KYLE (CONT'D)
 See what happens when you don't
 mind your own damn business?!

ELLA
 I'm taking you in! Dead or alive.

KYLE
Die, bitch!

Kyle, serious now, fires, hits Ella in the leg.
She winces, returns fire, enters the last digit.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE
Pass code detected!

Ella and Kyle exchange fire.
Ella, out of ammo, lunges into the elevator just in time.
The doors shut in Kyle's face.
Ella waves as the elevator DESCENDS.

Kyle runs to the other elevator, finds the Security Guard,
a.k.a. Yank It Doodle Dandy, still tugging away. *Oh boy...*

YANK IT DOODLE DANDY
Yeah! Oh fuck yeah! Better than
porridge, ain't it?!

Kyle shoots him in the head, skids in...

KYLE
Ew!

THE CONTROL ROOM

LED lights dance in the dark. Various monitors show Tamara's
blood pressure/heart rate/brain activity.

Ranya's at a keyboard in the center of the room, watching a
feed of Tamara.

INTERCUT WITH:

DARK ROOM

A faint light illuminates Tamara as she pounds on the door.

RANYA (V.O.)
Don't fight this, Tam. It'll hurt
worse if you do.

TAMARA
Let me out of here!

RANYA

You think I want to hurt you?
You're my best friend, Tam. I wish
it had been anyone else, but... You
got the golden ticket.

TAMARA

Lucky me.

Ranya hits a few keys and --

Another light reveals a box in the center of the dark room.

TAMARA (CONT'D)

What's in it, Paltrow's head?

RANYA

Only one way to find out.

TAMARA

I didn't get you anything.

RANYA

You're the gift that keeps on
giving. Open it.

Tamara sighs, approaches the box with caution.

She opens it, finds a baseball bat inside with the words
"Swing Away" written on it.

TAMARA

What am I supposed to do with this?

RANYA

You'll think of something.

A third spotlight reveals a man facing the wall in the
corner. He turns to face Tamara. It's Wes.

On the monitor, Tamara's heart rate spikes.

Tamara drops the bat, backs to the door.

TAMARA

Let me out.

RANYA

Pick up the bat.

TAMARA

Let me out!

RANYA
Hurt him before he hurts you!
Again. Tamara! Pick it up!

Tamara picks up the bat. Wes marches towards Tamara

TAMARA
Stay back!

Wes keeps coming.

TAMARA (CONT'D)
Don't make me do this, Wes!

Wes kicks the box out of the way, closes in on Tamara.

Back in the control room, a monitor reveals Tamara's brain,
lit like wildfire.

RANYA
Swing!

Tamara swings, clocks Wes in the head!

He staggers, keeps coming.

RANYA (CONT'D)
Harder!

Tamara swings harder, dropping Wes to a knee.

Ranya leans back in her chair, tears in her eyes, a
bittersweet smile on her face.

RANYA (CONT'D)
Hit him!

BACK IN THE DARK ROOM

Tamara beats the hell out of Wes.

Only it's not Wes, but a GUY who looks nothing like him...

That's right. Ranya's broken the encryption.

RANYA (V.O.)
Stop!

Tamara stops the savage beating.

RANYA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Drop the bat.

Tamara drops the bat. The door opens behind Tamara.

Ranya wheels in, takes Tamara's hand.

Tears stream down Tamara's eyes.

Ranya fights back tears of her own.

RANYA (CONT'D)
Let's go see Kyle.

THE BASEMENT

Supercomputers stand like ominous monoliths throughout the room. It's dark and silent save for the supercomputer's eerie green lights and never-ending hum.

Ella limps in, fighting through the pain. Scans the supercomputers for an SD card reader.

The door BINGS. Ella takes cover. Seconds later, Kyle enters, spots a trail of blood.

KYLE
Ella, come to papa!

Kyle belts out some of Mozart's Don Giovanni, strides past a row of supercomputers.

KYLE (CONT'D)
(sing-song)
I know you're in here.

Kyle fires. Just his reflection. He reloads.

KYLE (CONT'D)
Got ninety-nine problems, but lack
of ammo ain't one.

Kyle darts behind a supercomputer. Nope. No one.

KYLE (CONT'D)
You should be thanking me. Because
of my genius your baby girl's gonna
live in a much better world.

ELLA (O.S.)
Funny. I assumed Joey and Ranya did
all the heavy lifting.

Kyle grits his teeth, annoyed at that remark. Ella's gun flies over his head, hits the floor.

Kyle fires towards the sound. Ella sneaks up behind him.

KYLE

Just because you're a queen doesn't mean you're not a pawn.

ELLA

Pawn, Queen, King... Still on the same board.

KYLE

The game's over. I've already won.

ELLA

Not yet. I'm still standing.

Kyle spins around, fires! Hits Ella point-blank in the chest!

Ella wraps her jacket over Kyle's gun hand, pops him in the face, breaking his nose.

Kyle swings Ella around, firing through the jacket.

He slams her against a supercomputer, shattering glass.

Kyle, tipped over the edge, chokes her.

Ella's fading away, fingers clutching for the gun.

KYLE

You stupid -- You thought what I did to your hubby was bad? Just wait til you see what happens to your little Nata--

BLAM!

A nervous laugh escapes Kyle's throat. He looks at the blood pooling through his shirt, falls backwards.

Ella tries to stand, falls back down.

She crawls towards the supercomputer.

Tamara, lifeless eyes, gun in hand, blocks her path.

Ranya's typing commands into a smart pad behind Tamara.

ELLA

Tamara, you have to finish this.

RANYA

She can't hear you. Even if she could it wouldn't matter. Tamara, get the SD card.

ELLA

Tamara --

Tamara puts her gun to Ella's head, takes the SD card out of her pocket. Moves to Ranya.

KYLE

B-Bae, we did it!

Ranya wheels over to Kyle, cups his chin.

RANYA

I'm thinking this was all me.

Ranya squeezes Kyle's broken nose. He yelps.

KYLE

Crippled bitch! You'll come crawling back like you always do.

Kyle spits up blood.

RANYA

Don't think so. Tam?

Tamara shoots just past Kyle, who cowers.

ELLA

Tamara, you've got to fight this!

RANYA

Shut up.

ELLA

A world with no original thought. No creatives. No free will. That's what it'll be. That's the world little boys and girls will grow up in and will ever know.

RANYA

I said shut the fuck up!

Ranya rams into Ella, who winces, keeps talking.

ELLA

She can call herself whatever she wants. Truth is she's just another control freak. Another abuser.

RANYA
 Don't call me that! DON'T YOU EVER
 FUCKING CALL ME THAT!
 (to Tamara)
 Shoot her. SHOOT HER!

Ranya types in a series of commands. Tamara's eyes BLEED.
 We PUSH INTO HER EYES.

INT. TAMARA'S CHILDHOOD HOME / LIVING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

YOUNG TAMARA, in front of the couch, coloring while SUSAN tends to BABY DANI. Tamara adds a heart to her homemade Father's Day card, beams with pride.

She grabs the card, races into --

THE KITCHEN

Where XAVIER WILSON, ruffled clothes, his pride the only thing he thinks he has left, drinks malt liquor, fumes over the bills.

YOUNG TAMARA
 Daddy!

Tamara rushes up to Xavier, accidentally knocks over his liquor. He's on her in seconds, shaking her like a rag doll, screaming in her face.

XAVIER
 Tamara, what did I say about
 running in the house? Huh?!

Tamara cries.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
 Shut up! Shut up that crying!

Susan rushes in to defend her.

SUSAN
 Don't you lay a hand on that baby!
 She didn't mean it!

XAVIER
 Get out of my face! She's gonna
 learn to do what I say!

Xavier pulls her to the broken glass, presses her hand in it.

Tamara cries out in pain. Susan shoves Xavier off Tamara, then shields her as Xavier slings bills and fists.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
She coming out of that school too!

Xavier rips up the Father's Day card.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Shit like that don't pay the bills!

Xavier grabs his car keys, stumbles out the door.

Slams it shut, leaving Tamara and Susan in tears.

BLACKOUT.

INT. WOMEN'S SHELTER - NIGHT

Much like Victorious, we see WOMEN and CHILDREN from all walks of life here. Susan rocks Baby Dani to sleep. Young Tamara sits on a mattress.

YOUNG TAMARA
Mama, when's Daddy coming back?

SUSAN
He's not, baby. Your daddy's sick, but I'm not gonna let him take it out on you. Nobody has the right to hurt you. Understand?

Tamara nods, on the edge of tears. Susan reaches into a bag, gives her a coloring book. Tamara lights up a little.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I love you, baby.

YOUNG TAMARA
I love you too.

BLACKOUT.

INT. THE BASEMENT - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Tamara's hand shakes. She drops the gun. Snatches Ranya's smart pad, hurls it at the wall where it shatters.

Tamara hooks the SD card up to the reader. Ranya grabs Tamara's arm, pleading with her.

RANYA

Tam, please! We can change the world. No one can hurt--

Tamara elbows Ranya in the face. She falls backwards in her wheelchair next to Kyle, who's still coughing up blood.

TAMARA

It's over.

Tamara's finger hovers over the touch screen.

RANYA

No! You'll be blind again! Stuck in darkness for the rest of your life. Is that what you want?

Armed Guards flood into the room.

TAMARA

It's the last thing I want.

Tamara uploads the virus. Her eyes FLASH for the briefest of moments before she faints. The Armed Guards hit the floor.

IN THE RECEPTION AREA

A fainting wave passes through throngs of Mind Controlled Employers. They collapse in a heap.

BACK IN THE BASEMENT

Tamara awakens, VISION BLURRING.

Ranya belts out a primal scream, grabs the gun.

Alan and dozens of OTHER COPS burst in, firearms drawn.

ALAN

Drop your weapon!

Defeated, Ranya drops the gun, surrenders.

The Officers sweep the room. Alan cuffs Ranya, who's rocking back and forth. Ella cuffs Kyle, mouth full of blood.

ELLA

Kyle Burns, you're under arrest.

KYLE

I need medical attention! I know my rights! I want to talk to a law--

Ella shoves Kyle's face into the floor.

ELLA

You have the right to shut the fuck up. I suggest you take it.

ALAN

Your vest's almost in shreds...

ELLA

Never leave home without it.

Tamara gropes around the supercomputers. Ella takes her hand.

Forever linked now, through terror, resilience, and tragedy, the women embrace. And for the first time since this nightmare began, Ella Frost allows herself to cry.

INT. PRISON / VISITING ROOM - DAY

Wes, prison jumpsuit, one eye black, the other swollen shut, clutches the phone.

Tamara sits on the other side of the glass, shades on.

WES

How you been, girl?

TAMARA

Better than you.

Wes eyes the GUARD behind him, flashes Tamara a toothy grin.

WES

Still got jokes, huh? Listen, my lawyer's got--

TAMARA

No, you listen. You took something from me that I'll never get back. For a long time I hated you for it. Maybe part of me always will, but as long as I hold on to that... I'll be just as much a prisoner as you. So, Wes, I forgive you.

Tamara hangs up the phone, leaving Wes stunned.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Tamara walks out of the gate, into the sun, free as a bird.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Wes slams Kyle, also in a jumpsuit, against a fence.

WES
Fuck you say?

KYLE
J-J-Just my nickname. Maestro. And
Wes! W-We could be like Bird and
Magic, Stockton and Malone. We
could run this place!

WES
So you want to be my master?!

Huge, hard BROTHERS surround Wes. Kyle looks to the WHITE INMATES, who turn their back on him.

KYLE
Oh shit.

Wes and the Brothers beat Kyle down.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY / RANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Tamara's portrait of Ranya's in the corner.

Ranya, eyes a thousand miles away, methodically writes nonsensical computer code in a notebook.

We see several unopened letters addressed to Tamara in a waste basket beside her.

A slot in the door opens revealing, at long last, a letter from Tamara. Ranya, slowly coming back around, tears the letter open, reads.

We don't see what Tamara's letter says, but it's enough to bring Ranya to tears.

EXT. ELLA'S HOUSE - DAY

Ella, on a crutch, carries a box to her car. Natalie takes the box from her, puts it in the trunk.

NATALIE
Mom, you're supposed to be resting.

ELLA
I took a day off didn't I?

Tamara and Susan drive up in a brand new car, exit with a covered painting. Ella crosses to them.

TAMARA
Caught you just in time.

Ella and Tamara hug.

SUSAN
You're really going?

ELLA
Uh-huh. Some place nice and quiet.

TAMARA
With no wi-fi?

SUSAN AND NATALIE
Too soon.

TAMARA
That settlement from Infinite
Wisdom will be enough for you to
start a new life anywhere.

ELLA
I'd settle for my old one.
(re: painting)
Is that for me?

TAMARA
Yeah. Could be my last one.
Collector's item.

Tamara grins. Hands over the painting. Ella laughs, uncovers it. It's an exact replica of the photo of Ella, Natalie, and Leo at Walt Disney World.

ELLA
It's beautiful, but how?

NATALIE
She had some help.

Ella holds out her fist. Natalie rolls her eyes, bumps it.

Alan and Perez, in a sling, arrive in a gas guzzling, older model squad car, exit.

ELLA
Not exactly regulation.

ALAN
Sometimes oldschool is better.

PEREZ
Can we help you pack?

ELLA
Sure. Break anything you buy it.

NATALIE
She's not kidding.

Natalie leads Perez and Alan inside.

SUSAN
I'll supervise.

Susan heads after the others.

TAMARA
So you're transferring?

ELLA
Retiring. The department's in good hands. Plus I should leave before I change my mind. We never did get that drink. Beer?

TAMARA
No thanks. I'm driving.
(off Ella's look)
Kidding.

ELLA
Do you ever stop?

TAMARA
Nah.

Ella and Tamara head inside.

EXT. VICTORIOUS - DAY

Susan pulls up in her new ride, looks to Tamara.

SUSAN
Nervous?

TAMARA
Let's just say --
(rapping)
*MY PALMS ARE SWEATY / KNEES WEAK /
ARMS ARE HEAVY / THERE'S VOMIT ON
MY --*

SUSAN
 (rapping)
 -- SWEATER ALREADY / MY SPAGHETTI /
 YOU'RE NERVOUS, BUT ON THE SURFACE
 YOU LOOK CALM AND READY?

Tamara's mouth hits the floor.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 What? I know Eminem. I'm cool.

TAMARA
 I know.

Tamara hugs Susan.

INT. VICTORIOUS / COMMON ROOM - DAY

Tamara's standing before another group of abused WOMEN.

TAMARA
 I know it feels hopeless. Like you
 can't make it on your own.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - DAY

Tamara's in a deck chair watching the sunrise. She looks to the empty chair next to her, cries.

TAMARA (V.O.)
 But you will reach the light at the
 end of the tunnel. Break through to
 the sunshine on the other side.

INT. ELLA'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

Ella hangs the painting of herself, Leo, and Natalie on the wall, hugs Natalie.

TAMARA
 You'll see your children grow up,
 happy and healthy because you found
 the courage and strength to walk
 away. You chose to reclaim your
 life. Take back your power.

INT. VICTORIOUS / COMMON ROOM - DAY

The WOMEN light up, inspired by Tamara's words.

TAMARA
And together, you will survive
this. I'm living proof.

Tamara takes off her shades, revealing partially blind eyes.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - DAY

Tamara, shades off, watching the sunset.

TAMARA (V.O.)
Because in the end, this life is
yours to live and only you get to
decide who's in control.

Off Tamara's eyes, accompanied by a hopeful smile --

IRIS OUT:

THE END