

LIPSTICK AND DYNAMITE

by

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OVER BLACK:

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE (FILTERED)
Heed my words: Do not
underestimate her.

FADE IN:

EXT. BURGER WORLD - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Billboard sign: BURGER WORLD. The sign sits at the entrance of a standard, dine-in/take-out burger joint by the side of a highway.

A sprinkling of cars in the parking lot.

A light pole shines. Mosquitos and moths in a bright frenzy.

The BUZZ of insects gives way to an approaching car. A Jaguar swooshes into view like a silver cat.

Into the lot flashes the Jag. Parks next to a dark vehicle.

YOUNG WOMAN (O.S.)
Dark Mercedes? She's here.

Out of the Jag steps CHERRY SMITH (mid 20's). Girl-next-door looks. No makeup. Shoulder-length blonde hair in a frazzle.

Cherry lowers the iPhone from her ear.

She's slender and statuesque. A white blouse hugs her sweet shoulders and breasts. Blue jeans loves her curvaceous hips.

Cherry glides through the parking lot with grace and purpose. Like a model on the runway.

INT. BURGER WORLD - NIGHT

Enter Cherry. Her eyes sweep the interiors.

Business is snoozing. One teen girl at the counter, a mom and daughter at a table. An old lady sleeps at a corner table.

A booth near the door, catches Cherry's attention.

BOOTH TABLE

two coffees, with lids, sit together in the middle of the table. Balanced on the two cups is a business card.

Cherry steps to the table. Glances at the

BUSINESS CARD

PHYLLIS SHEPARD, CEO, SHEPARD COSMETICS. Website, email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, phone number, company logo.

BACK TO CHERRY

who sits, facing the interior of the eatery. She doesn't notice the person outside, walking toward the restaurant.

This person is PHYLLIS SHEPARD (late 40's). Athletic frame, runner's calves, attractive in a harsh, corporate way.

Her jet-black hair is pulled back in a tidy bun. Wears an Armani jacket, blouse and slacks.

She enters, stealthily, like an apparition.

PHYLLIS

I took a nice moonlight walk,
since I had time to kill.

Cherry is startled, as she turns to Phyllis.

A wan smile on the older woman's face.

Phyllis sits at the table across from Cherry.

CHERRY

The early bird doesn't always
get the worm.

PHYLLIS

I prefer early to bed, early
to rise, makes a woman
healthy, wealthy and wise.

Cherry nods and extends a hand in greeting.

CHERRY

Cherry Smith.

Phyllis ignores the gesture. She pushes one cup of coffee toward Cherry's hand.

PHYLLIS

Well, thanks for joining me on
such short notice.

She pops the lid from her cup. Steam rises from the coffee.

PHYLLIS

You drink coffee, don't you?

CHERRY

I don't.

PHYLLIS

Well, I need you wide awake.

Cherry glances at the gold Rolex Datejust on Phyllis's wrist.

Phyllis notices. She adds a sugar to her coffee. Stirs.

The two woman size up each other.

CHERRY

I get where you're coming from. Really. But my relationship with your mother is between me and her.

Phyllis shakes her head.

PHYLLIS

I run the company. Frontwards and back. If Mother hires somebody, for any reason, I'm involved.

CHERRY

She put me in charge of her personal affairs.

PHYLLIS

Sweet. But it should be obvious you're just a lapdog for hire. And next month at this time, you'll be history.

(beat)

Mother tends to hire pretty, naive creatures as assistants. To aggravate me, of course.

Cherry takes her coffee and flips off the lid. Coffee steams.

CHERRY

Dorothy and I take care of each other's needs just fine - so what do you want?

PHYLLIS

I want your relationship with Mother aborted.

Cherry is unfazed. She pulls a brush from her purse. Brushes her hair with hard strokes as she converses.

CHERRY
A fatal request.

From a large purse, Phyllis removes a folded manila envelope. Places the envelope in the center of the table.

PHYLLIS
Then think of it as your
winning lotto ticket.

She sets her purse down, open-end facing Cherry. Revealing

A SMALL-CALIBRE HANDGUN

BACK TO PHYLLIS

who run her tongue over the coffee stirrer.

PHYLLIS
Thirty-five grand. Tax free.
Yours on two conditions. You
heard condition one.

Cherry studies the envelope. Appears uninterested. She pulls a compact from her purse. Followed by eyeliner.

PHYLLIS
Enough money to buy yourself a
fancy, dancy Toyota.

Eyeliner traces along Cherry's eyelids. Quick and precise.

Cherry blinks. Shifts her gaze to Phyllis.

CHERRY
And condition two?

PHYLLIS
I want the keys to the Jaguar.

Phyllis nods to the Jag in the parking lot.

Cherry smiles. Slides her untouched coffee back to Phyllis.

CHERRY
What if I said that Dorothy
and I have discussed something
long-term? A permanent place
in the company hierarchy.

Phyllis stares at Cherry.

PHYLLIS

Bullshit. You have no cred, no resume. When she's done with you, you'll be as broke as the day came into the world.

CHERRY

Then what's your worry?

A pause as Phyllis mulls over the question.

Cherry slips the eyeliner into her purse. Pulls out a stick of red-choolate lipstick.

PHYLLIS

I'll admit... there's a quirky chance she might empower you. Just to spite me. Mother can be dangerously unpredictable.

CHERRY

And I can be a real comfort to a woman in her twilight years.

Phyllis leans in. Her voice lowers to just above a whisper.

PHYLLIS

You have no idea what you're getting into.

CHERRY

Dorothy shared a lot about you, Phyllis. Your tendencies toward violence, manipulation, cocaine cowboys. DUIs here, a nervous breakdown there. Seems obvious to me you're driving company profits down.

PHYLLIS

Stupid cunt. I had Mother removed from power. I had the board retire her and her antiquated ways. Not that it's any of your fucking business.

CHERRY

When she's gone, why would she leave her empire to you? Her Daughter Frankenstein, as she eloquently put it?

PHYLLIS

Because we're blood. The same
blood. Bet she didn't tell you
I'm a chip off the old block?

Cherry runs lipstick over both lips. Purses her lips. Flashes
an evil smile at her counterpart.

CHERRY

There's one big difference.
She handpicked me, Phyllis.
What can I say? Dorothy
considers me the granddaughter
she could never have – with
you being a Dyke and all.

Phyllis's eyes widen: MURDER THIS BITCH.

CHERRY

Before your blood pressure sky
rockets, I'm here to make you
a generous counter-offer.

Cherry removes a letter-sized envelope from her purse. Blots
her dark red lips on the envelope.

Then slides it toward Phyllis.

A restaurant worker cleans a nearby table. Listen coyly to
the back-and-forth. Gets embarrassed when Cherry nods at her.

Phyllis takes the envelope. Slices it open with a dagger-
sharp pinky nail. Pulls out a folded sheet of paper.

Cherry applies blush to her cheeks. A warm glow to her face.

Phyllis scans the letter. Finishes and glares at Cherry.

PHYLLIS

You totally manipulated her.
Didn't you, you opportunistic
little cunt?

CHERRY

Hardly. Your mom might need a
cane to get around, but her
mind is as sharp as a razor.

Phyllis tosses the letter and envelope back at Cherry.

PHYLLIS

Then let there be blood.

Cherry shrugs her shoulders. Takes back the letter. Holds on to the money envelope and eases out of the booth.

CHERRY

Dorothy did mention your
obsession with that gorgeous
XJS outside – which I drive
daily. And love to death.

She stands and looks down at Phyllis. This is not the same Cherry who walked into the joint.

Transformed now by makeup. *Phalaropes*.

Cherry tosses the money envelope at Phyllis. It knocks over a cup. Phyllis rears back as coffee splatters her blouse.

Phyllis looks up slowly. A smoldering fire in her eyes.

Cherry waves to the restaurant worker. Gestures at Phyllis.

CHERRY

MILF needs a sponge bath.

She blows Phyllis a last kiss and leaves.

Phyllis watches with reptilian stillness. Her hand shakes as she reaches into her purse for the

GUN

Her long fingers caress the cold, smooth gun metal. Phyllis slides her hand over the thick handle, but keeps the gun at bay. Not the right moment.

BACK TO SCENE

The restaurant worker walks over and cleans Phyllis's table.

Phyllis's gaze is fixed on the parking lot.

EXT. BURGER WORLD - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Jag growls to life and screeches out of the parking lot.

INT. JAGUAR - NIGHT

As she flies through blackness, Cherry pushes a call button on her cell phone. Puts it on Speaker to hear the phone ring.

And the call is answered.

WOMAN'S VOICE/DOROTHY (FILTERED)

Is it done?

CHERRY

Yes it is. I left her stewing
in a savage rage.

DOROTHY (FILTERED)

Wonderful. You made the
counter-offer? And, and did
she demand the Jaguar?

CHERRY

I did and she did. You should
have seen her face.

DOROTHY (FILTERED)

How marvelously delightful. I
wish I could have been there.

EXT. OPEN ROAD, COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Two vehicles surge through darkness. One behind the other.

INT. JAGUAR - NIGHT

Cherry glances in her rear-view mirror. Headlights glare from
the car behind her.

CHERRY

Here she comes now. Right on
cue.

DOROTHY (FILTERED)

Brilliant. Remember, lead her
to the back of the house. We
need eye-witnesses.

CHERRY

Gotcha.

Just then the Jaguar's engine sputters.

Car instrument panel flashes red.

CHERRY

Whoa. What the fu—

The Jag's engine stalls.

Cherry turns the key frantically. The engine won't turn over.

She shifts into neutral. Car still won't start.

CHERRY
It's the engine -

DOROTHY (FILTERED)
I told you to be wary of her.
Where are you?

CHERRY
I don't know. Fuck. Maybe five
minutes from the restaurant.

The Jaguar slows to a stop at the side of the road. The other car stops behind the Jag.

DOROTHY (FILTERED)
Call 911. Now. I'm on my way.

In the rear-view mirror Cherry squints at the other car's blazing headlights.

Cherry disconnects from Dorothy. And calls 911.

911 OPERATOR (FILTERED)
What's your emergency?

Cherry hears the door slam from the other car. Her eyes swing from the rear-view mirror, to the side mirror.

CHERRY
Being stalked by psycho woman.
Phyllis Shepard. She's driving
a black car. A Mercedes.

DRIVER SIDE-VIEW MIRROR

Just bright car lights. Cherry squints.

CHERRY
And she's armed with a gun.

911 OPERATOR (FILTERED)
Where is your location?

CHERRY
Portuguese Road. East of
Burger World. Hurry.

Cherry dips into her purse. Removes a handgun of her own. Grips it with both hands.

She closes her eyes and sucks in a breath.

CHERRY
Bring it, bitch.

Something is thrown on the car roof. Cherry's eyes fly open. She frowns, looks up. Hears rolling and tracks the movement.

From the car roof, something rolls down the front windshield, onto the hood.

A STICK OF DYNAMITE – its fuse sparkles and hisses.

Panic sets in. Cherry flings open the car door. Stumbles out.

EXT. OPEN ROAD – NIGHT

Black desert all around.

Cherry sprints away from the Jag and the dynamite, toward the bright headlights of the car behind her.

She lifts her gun and fires several shots at the other car.

Then a BANG from somewhere in the night.

A bullet rips through Cherry's upper torso.

The force of the bullet knocks the gun from Cherry's hand.

She collapses to her knees like cut timber. Her hands cover her chest, blood spreading across her white blouse.

Cherry stares in silent anguish at her assailant.

A gloved hand grips a small-calibre handgun. Pulls back the hammer. Trains the gun at Cherry's head.

BANG. A bullet zips through her skull. Blood shoots.

Cherry's upper body falls forward and smacks the asphalt. Around Cherry's body – her blood pools.

And next to the pool of blood, silhouetted against car lights, stands her Killer.

A WOMAN

slight of build, with a smoking handgun tucked into one fist.

In the other fist, a CANE.

FADE OUT.

THE END.