

MINUS

by
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FADE IN:

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

So early in fact that the sun isn't up. But the late moonlight is enough to illuminate the three days worth of MAIL stacked beneath the slot on the front door.

FOOTSTEPS echo in the hall outside. A KEY feels its way into the lock. The door OPENS, pushing the hill of paper up against the wall.

TRISTEN (mid 20's), ENTERS, glances at the mail and shuts the door behind her.

She moves through the apartment, specter-like, concealed by both the pale light and the half darkness.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Her ANSWERING MACHINE blinks on and off. FORTY messages. Next to the phone is her PURSE and the rest of her KEYS. She picks up the key ring and slides her apartment key back ON.

Tristen traces her fingers over the 'sixty' on the digital display. She moves into

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where she strips down in the dark and falls into BED pulling the covers over her head like a plush cotton cocoon.

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Tristen awakens. Strong sunlight beams in. It doesn't comfort her any. Thick strands of her neck length blonde hair cascade over her smoky eyes and full lips like prison bars.

INT. BATHROOM - SHOWER - LATER

Tristen washes herself vacantly as she stares forward at the bathroom tiles. On one tile a family of water drops slide downward...one starts to fall behind.

Tristen watches them for a moment, wipes them all away.

EXT. CITY STREET/ ELECTRONICS STORE - MORNING

Tristen walks down a busy side walk. She watches her reflection in the store windows that she passes. She comes to an ELECTRONICS STORE. A dozen TELEVISIONS sit on display on the other side of the glass.

ALL TELEVISIONS

are set on a NEWS channel. WAR FOOTAGE. Massive destruction happening in some far away country. Fire, debris, soldiers and crying children. PANDEMONIUM.

BACK TO SCENE

Tristen STARES at the display. Sullen.

VOICE(OS)

Tristen?

Tristen turns to see MEESHA (40's). Her car is pulled up to the curb. It sits there, engine running.

Tristen walks up to the passenger side. They eye each other. Meesha UNLOCKS the door. Tristen gets in. They drive off.

INT. MEESHA'S CAR

Tristen gazes out of the window. Meesha concentrates on the road. Finally, sensing that somebody should say something...

MEESHA

Where's your car?

TRISTEN

I felt like walking.

EXT. TENSOR ELEMENTARY - PARKING LOT

Meesha parks in the space marked 'reserved for principal'. She shuts the car OFF and the two of them watch a class of small children run wild in a PLAYGROUND in the distance.

Nobody moves.

MEESHA

Three days, Tristen.

TRISTEN

Meesha...I know.

MEESHA

You know? Good. That means I can scratch incoherent right off the list. What's next, let's see...do you care?

TRISTEN

Is that a serious question?

MEESHA

Its only as serious as you take it. Just like your job.

TRISTEN

I didn't call and I could never apologize enough so I'm not going to waste your time. I was gone for three days, Meesha. I didn't call and I'm ready to accept whatever...

MEESHA

This isn't about your job. You know what happens when you don't show? Fifteen minutes and boom, I have sub in there. I have been doing this a long time, Tristen, I know who to call. I dont even blink anymore. But this isn't about me or you...this is about them.

She motions toward the kids on the playground navigating a large steel JUNGLE GYM.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

Come with me.

The two of them traverse the walk way toward the school entrance. As Meesha leads the way a TEAR rolls down her cheek. She turns to Tristen.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

I forgot to ask if you were okay.

They HUG, squeezing each other tightly. Tristen STARES over Meesha's shoulder at the children on the playground.

TRISTEN

I'll be fine.

INT. TENSOR ELEMENTARY - HALLWAY

Meesha and Tristen come to a classroom door. The two of them look through the window portal.

IN THE CLASSROOM

FIRST GRADERS mill about. At their desks they paint, draw and cut out shapes.

BACK TO SCENE

MEESHA

Three days. You know what you missed?

TRISTEN

The recitals.
(beat)
How did Bo do?

MEESHA

He didn't. You weren't here, he lost his nerve...along with his bladder...on stage.

TRISTEN

Oh god...

MEESHA

In his hysterics back stage he wasn't screaming for his mother or his father. He needed you.

IN THE CLASSROOM

BO sits in a desk all the way to the rear. He STARES at a blank piece of paper.

BACK TO SCENE

MEESHA

At this age the easiest way to break a child is inaction. You're the last person he wants to see by now. And that's exactly why your going to go talk to him, before its too late and he never trusts anyone...ever.

Tristen ENTERS

INT. FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM

She NODS to the SUB and makes her way back to Bo's desk. Bo looks at her and then back to his blank paper.

TRISTEN
 (softly)
 Hey, Bo.
 (beat)
 Why aren't you drawing, honey?

Nothing.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)
 Bo...I'm so sorry that I missed
 your recital.

At the mention of the word 'recital' Bo tenses.

BO
 (staring at paper)
 You said to look for you if I got
 scared.

She brings her wrist up to catch a tear that hasn't yet
 surfaced.

BO(CONT'D)
 I couldn't find you. I forgot the
 words, and...I got scared...I peed.

He pulls his blank paper off of the desk and holds it to his
 face so she cant see him. He CRIES silently. Only whimpers
 escape.

His tears catch on the paper and slide down it like a funnel,
 puddling on the desk top.

BO (CONT'D)
 You said you'd be there no matter
 what.

TRISTEN
 I know Bo, I'm sorry.

He lets the wet paper down. His expression is a stab directly
 to her heart.

BO
 Where were you?

TRISTEN
 I want to tell you so bad but I
 just cant.

BO
 Please. I want to go where you
 were.

TRISTEN
I cant, baby...

BO
(crying)
Please, I'll be good...I promise...

TRISTEN
Bo...I cant...

BO
...I promise...

She HUGS him.

POV TRISTEN - Over his small shoulder she can see the wall covered by drawings by the first grade. She zero's in on one in particular. An old assignment. On it a small STICK FIGURE holds the hand of a taller BLONDE HEADED STICK FIGURE. Bo's signature, still in development, is printed down in the corner.

TRISTEN
I want you to know that I was
thinking of you the whole time.
Okay. I'm gonna be back real soon
and I'm gonna make it up to you.
(kisses him on forehead)
You be good.

She gets up to leave.

BO
Ms. Tristen...?

He holds out to her the blank PAPER, totally soaked with his TEARS. The two letters of his name handwritten down in the corner.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

She REENTERS the hallway with Bo's paper to her face, crying behind it. She leans against the lockers beside the door. Crushed.

MEESHA
We've got the sub so I want you to
take the rest of the week off. You
need more, you call me. A lot of
people want to have a word with you
I'm sure.

Meesha KISSES Tristen on her temple and moves off down the hallway.

TRISTEN

You never asked me where I was.

MEESHA

It doesn't matter. You weren't here.

EXT. APARTMENT DOORWAY - AFTERNOON

How long has she been standing here in front of this apartment door, unmoving, Bo's tears rolled up and clutched in one hand? The other hand works its way up to a KNOCKING position but just as suddenly falls back to her side.

The door swings OPEN. TRISHA, Tristen's OLDER SISTER, stands there, nine and a half months PREGNANT. She smiles, kind of.

TRISHA

You know, I'm the only one who's not going to severely bust your chops, Princess cant take the strain.

(indicates baby)

Tristen leans down and KISSES her sisters protruding stomach. They ENTER

INT. TRISHA'S APARTMENT

TRISHA

Want some coffee?

TRISTEN

Sure.

This apartment is full of sunlight. No shadows, no suspect crevices. Its obvious that Trisha is still in the process of moving in, BOXES hide a floor somewhere underneath them, but even so the place maintains a sense of shiny naked purity.

Tristen follows Trisha through

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In the corner a MASSIVE polished wood antique DISPLAY CASE lies FACE DOWN on the floor.

TRISTEN
What happened?

TRISHA
Oh, the movers happened.

TRISTEN
They knocked it down?

TRISHA
No, they set it down. The nitwits.

Trisha continues on alone into

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

TRISHA
Apparently tables and chairs are self explanatory but glass door display cases require twenty four hour technical support. Matthew tried to lift it this morning but no dice. He said not to worry. He said he's gonna bring home three or four of those construction workers that whistle at him everyday on his way to work. So I was like, 'Great, I'll make sandwiches!'

Trisha grabs a coffee mug from the cupboard. She pours hot coffee into it and moves back into

LIVING ROOM

TRISHA (CONT'D)
He asks if he can tape it. I had to explain to him that I meant ham and cheese-

Trisha STOPS, looks perplexed.

TRISTEN

walks away from the display case, which is now UPRIGHT in the corner, dusting her hands.

TRISTEN
You should tell Matthew to find his center gravity.
(takes coffee)
I need sugar, baby.

Trisha follows Tristen back into

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

where Tristen puts sugar in her coffee.

TRISHA

No, no, no. Matthew found my center gravity about nine and a half months ago, and since then we've pretty much postponed all issues having to do with center gravity finding. At least until the staples dissolve.

Tristen SPITS a mouthful of coffee into the sink, LAUGHING.

TRISTEN

Your disgusting, already. Wow, I'm trying to consume over here.

Tristen sets her coffee down. The two of them HUG tightly.

TRISHA

I was so worried about you.

TRISTEN

I just needed sometime, Trish.

TRISHA

Wow. When I taught you to lie I obviously forgot to go over the finer points of deception.

POV TRISTEN - Over Trisha's shoulder Tristen can see a hint of LIGHT PINK through a cracked door.

TRISTEN

You finished the room?

TRISHA

Yeah.

TRISTEN

We were supposed to do it together.

TRISHA

I waited three days.

TRISTEN

I'm...

TRISHA

I know. Go take a look.

Tristen moves slowly toward

EXT. NURSERY

She stops at the door, looks back at her sister.

TRISHA
 What are you? Allergic to pastels?
 Go in.

INT. NURSERY

It is indeed a wonderland of PASTELS. Light pink having reigning dominion over all. Trinkets and toys that the baby wont be able to use for years are strategically placed around the room. Its Easter in heaven.

Tristen cant stop SMILING. Her warmth is brimming. By the window is a magnificent white CRADLE. At its head is a word in silver lettering. It says: PRINCESS.

TRISTEN
 It's beautiful.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The living-room is a little less cluttered. Tristen and Trisha are filling the massive display case with antique PORCELAIN DOLLS.

TRISHA
 What?

TRISTEN
 I didn't say anything?

TRISHA
 Your side of the glass is fogging up. Your contemplating.
 (beat)
 Unless, oh god, maybe it's the dolls.

TRISTEN
 Shut up.
 (beat)
 I was wondering what kind of mother I'd be.

TRISHA
 As a woman, caring for young is genetically encoded in your DNA.
 (MORE)

TRISHA (CONT'D)

However, you still have to be there.

TRISTEN

Whatever happened to not busting my chops.

TRISHA

That was the original plan. Then you lied to me. However...

TRISTEN

I didn't lie to you.

TRISHA

However...shut up, brat!

(beat)

Can I finish? Jeez...where was I? Oh, yeah. However, I refuse to harass you until you walk out of here, that's the last thing I want. What I am gonna do is let you unpack my house until we get to the heat lamp. Then I'm gonna tie you down and go Serpico on your ass. Or...you can just give it up easy, like a lady of the night.

TRISTEN

'Like a lady of the night'?

Trisha SHRUGS.

Tristen walks over to a random box and from it she pulls a large HEAT LAMP. She plugs it in and sits down in its GLARE, sarcastic.

Trisha comes close.

TRISHA

Is it a drug?

TRISTEN

No, Trish.

TRISHA

Is it drugs, plural?

TRISTEN

No, Trish.

TRISHA

Are you hooking?

TRISTEN

What?!

TRISHA

Is it any kind of money trouble?

TRISTEN

No. Trish.

TRISHA

Okay, one last question. And this is serious, sweetheart, so no matter how embarrassed or strange you feel about it you need to tell me. We can get you help.

Trisha takes a deep breath.

TRISHA (CONT'D)

Was it...aliens?

TRISTEN

I just. Needed. Some time.

TRISHA

Time with aliens?

Tristen SMACKS Trisha in the face with a couch PILLOW.

TRISHA (CONT'D)

You cant hit me! I'm pregnant!

TRISTEN

Your over due, I'm gonna help you with that.

In the middle of there mock pillow fight the front door OPENS. Its MATTHEW, Trisha's HUSBAND.

MATTHEW

Wow. Its Hudina versus the pregnant puppet master.

Tristen and Trisha stare at each other blankly.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Get it? She's pregnant puppet master cause the dolls, and you're the female version of Houdini, because, well...you do your thing.

TRISHA

(to Tristen)

He so wants to be like me.

(MORE)

TRISHA (CONT'D)
(to Matthew)
Hi, honey!

He KISSES them both 'hello'. Trisha heads to the Kitchen.

MATTHEW
What's with the heat lamp?

TRISTEN
Oh.

Tristen gets up to disconnect the heat lamp. Matthew joins Trisha.

INT. KITCHEN

They WHISPER to each other.

MATTHEW
Is she okay?

TRISHA
She seems fine, but three days?
Something has to be wrong. Right?

MATTHEW
Not necessarily. I read this GQ
article once. It was all about how
to disappear without a trace. Maybe
she was practicing.

TRISHA
And what the hell, may I ask, were
you reading that for? Huh?

MATTHEW
(busted)
So, Do your parents know she's
here?

TRISHA
Hell no. I just want her to be
comfy with us, were the good guys.
Maybe she'll, you know, confide. So
you be charming. Not annoying
charming, but, cool brother in-law
charming. Gimmie a kiss.
(they kiss)
Send her in here would you?

Matthew peeks into the living room.

POV MATTHEW - Tristen holds her hand deathly close to the now lava hot heat lamp.

BACK TO SCENE

Matthew ENTERS

INT. LIVING-ROOM

MATTHEW

Hey, Tristen. Your sister beckons.

TRISTEN

(surprised)

Oh. Thanks Matt.

Once she's gone he curiously licks the tip of his index finger and touches the glowing bulb of the lamp. He SCREAMS.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Everyone is pretty much finished eating. Matthew and Tristen sip RED WINE while the baby confines Trisha to spring water. The girls are in giggle havoc coming off the tail end of one of Matthew's comedic misfires.

Tristen tries not to choke.

MATTHEW

I actually used to be much funnier than her. But the combined efforts of her and the baby act as a sort of a...wit vampire. Your doing it right now aren't you?

TRISTEN

(laughs)

...wit vampire...

TRISHA

(stone faced)

That's right, Gump, we're doing it right now.

TRISTEN

(laughs)

Stop, it hurts.

MATTHEW

Its like a tingling sensation...

TRISHA

Oh, Matthew. God, Jesus and wit
vampires aside, I love you but its
detrimental to our sanity that you
retire immediately. My babies
crying and the silverware is
curling up in the drawer. Shut up,
already.

MATTHEW

Okay, I'm done.

Tristen is recovering. Matthew and Trisha WINK at each other,
happy to have made her smile.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Hey, who put up the display case?

TRISHA

She did.

MATTHEW

Really? By yourself? Because I went
to pick it up this morning and I
think...I think it was the third
vertebrae from the bottom that
said...

Matthew SCREAMS the word 'No' at the top of his lungs.
Tristen goes back to griping her stomach which is strained
from laughing. Trisha throws something at Matthew.

TRISHA

C'mon, Matthew. Your gonna scare my
funny baby to death. Jesus, you
been flushing' your Ritalin down
the toilet?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Tristen and Matthew sit on the sofa, the flicker of the
television dousing them sporadically like a strobe light as
Matthew flips through the channels. Trisha sits in a
recliner, falling asleep.

Matthew STOPS flipping on a NEWS channel. More WAR FOOTAGE.

MATTHEW

You been watching this?

TRISTEN
Its...inescapable.

MATTHEW
Yes, but the question is: What are we looking at? Trying to get the vaguest sense of what's going on is like doing a jigsaw puzzle blindfolded with your fingers cut off.

(beat)
Maybe I started paying attention too late. Or...maybe its just what it looks like. Senseless wall to wall carnage.

They watch together silently.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
You know what's funny?

TRISHA(OS)
(sleepily)
Not you.

MATTHEW
(to Trisha)
Yeah, thanks for that honey.
(to Tristen)
Anyway...a year ago I wouldn't be caught dead watching the news. I just didn't care and wouldn't pretend to care. Its there, I'm here. Doesn't matter.

TRISTEN
Why do you care now?

He points at Trisha and the child in Trisha.

MATTHEW
My baby, my princess. The carnage doesn't seem so far away anymore. Doesn't seem like we have so much time...

(beat)
Time is of the essence...

TRISTEN
Your gonna be a good daddy.
(checks the time)
I have to go.

Tristen KISSES Trisha on the cheek and once again KISSES her stomach too. Tristen picks up Bo's tears.

Matthew walks Tristen to the front door.

MATTHEW

Tristen, if you need anything, and I don't want to sound corny, but...we're here for you.

She HUGS him.

POV TRISTEN - Over his shoulder war still wages on screen a few feet from where Princess awaits birth.

TRISTEN

I'm here for you, too. You just don't know it. Get that lady to a bed.

MATTHEW

Good night.

TRISTEN

Matthew? You make sure you call me the second my niece tries to pop out. No excuses.

MATTHEW

You make sure you pick up the phone. Good night.

He SHUTS the door.

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tristen ENTERS her dark apartment. She OPENS up a CLOSET DOOR and stares at something out of view. She SHUTS the door and moves into the

KITCHEN

Where she tries to stick Bo's tears to the refrigerator using a small magnet but it wont stick. It keeps sliding down to the floor. She throws the magnet in the TRASH.

Her phone RINGS. Hesitantly, she ANSWERS it.

TRISTEN

Hello?

WEEPING on the other end.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

Hello?

VOICE(V.O.)

I needed you, Tristen.

It's the voice of KENNY, her little brother.

TRISTEN

Kenny? Kenny, what's wrong?

KENNY(V.O.)

(screams)

What the hell do you think is wrong, Tristen?!

TRISTEN

Kenny, calm down...

KENNY(V.O.)

I told you something, Tristen. Something I never told anyone else. The only people who knew where the ones who guessed. The ones who beat me within an inch of my life the other night. I couldn't go home. Not like this. I cant explain to mom and dad why I look like I got ran over by a train.

TRISTEN

Kenny, where are you?

KENNY(V.O.)

I knocked on your door for hours. I called and left a dozen messages. But you know because you were there weren't you. You were holed up in there hiding from...from me...

TRISTEN

I wasn't here Kenny.

KENNY(V.O.)

Where were you then, huh, Tristen?

TRISTEN

I cant tell you...maybe I was with Marcus...

KENNY(V.O.)

Bullshit, Tristen, he's been looking for you too. I need you to lie to me better than that.

(MORE)

KENNY(V.O.) (CONT'D)

Like the other day when I told you
and you said you didn't care and
that you loved me and that it was
just me and you. You know, before
you disappeared on me. I need a
comforting lie like that, before...

TRISTEN

Before what, Kenny...?

KENNY(V.O.)

I gotta gun, Tristen...

TRISTEN

Kenny...where are you?

KENNY(V.O.)

I'm at the library. Because...
(crying)
...I'm trash...

TRISTEN

No your not. You're my brother and
I love you. I'm coming over there.
Swear to me you wont do anything
until I get there.

KENNY(V.O.)

Just like you swore that you would
always be here for me?

TRISTEN

Kenny,...be better than me...

KENNY(V.O.)

(beat)
I'll wait, Tristen...hurry...

He HANGS UP. Tristen DROPS the phone and runs out of her
apartment, still gripping Bo's tears.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Tristen flies through traffic in her modest little car.

EXT. CITY LIBRARY - NIGHT

Tristen's car SCREECHES to a halt. She gets out, leaving it
in its awkward position.

She runs up to the front ENTRANCE but the library is long
closed. Large CHAINS bind the door handles.

She puts her hands on them as if contemplating something.
Instead she walks around to

THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING

where she finds an OPEN WINDOW. She crawls into

INT. CITY LIBRARY

Tristen's feet float down gently to the carpeted floor. A few lights are still on inside. She traipses cautiously through the valleys of literature, Bo's tears still clutched in her hand.

TRISTEN

Kenny?

A SCRAMBLING up ahead. She presses forward and then splits off, turning a corner.

There stands KENNY (17). He's been beaten severely, his face is SWOLLEN. Tears still flood from his eyes.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(going to him)

Kenny, your face...

Kenny jerks a HAND GUN up to his temple.

KENNY

Stay back!

TRISTEN

(stopping)

Its me Kenny. Its Tristen.

KENNY

I know...and...I was thinking about it. The problem is...I'm still me. No matter who does what, or what you say...what you promise...I'll still be me.

Tristen searches for comforting words.

KENNY (CONT'D)

I cant live like this!!

Tristen tries not to cry, to be strong for her brother.

TRISTEN

Kenny, I need you to give me that gun. Please...? Don't do this to me.

KENNY

You!? Don't do it to you?!

Kenny pulls the pin back.

TRISTEN

Give me the fucking gun, Kenny!

(beat)

Please don't do this...

KENNY

You want the gun, Tristen? I'll give you the gun, Tristen. First tell me you love me.

TRISTEN

I love you. You know I love you.

KENNY

Tell me you'll always be there for me.

TRISTEN

Always, Kenny, always...

Kenny begins to cry harder but he holds the gun out to her. She GRABS it from him and holds him tightly. They hold EACH OTHER.

POV TRISTEN - Over his shoulder she sees a pro reading poster: a young blonde girl holding up the AMERICAN FLAG.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Lets go home.

KENNY

(sobbing)

I just need a second.

TRISTEN

Okay, baby.

(beat)

Kenny...I wont leave you again.

They let go of each other. She turns around, shuddering as she puts the hammer back in place. Kenny has his back to her.

KENNY
(whispers)
I don't believe you.

Kenny pulls another HAND GUN from the back of his pants and puts it to his temple.

TRISTEN
What...?

The CLAP is blunt and merciless.

EXT. CITY LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

The library CARETAKER, in his pajamas UNLOCKS and pulls off the chain. The doors OPEN and a dozen POLICE OFFICERS rush into

INT. CITY LIBRARY

The police move through the library splitting into packs, their GUNS at the ready.

A group of them enter into an isle where

TRISTEN

sits cradling her brother, her EYES super blood shot red. Bo's tear lies by her side, dotted heavily with Kenny's blood.

The books in their immediate vicinity are SINGED BLACK. Some still flicker with small multicolored FLAME.

An officer holsters his gun and reaches down to check Kenny's pulse.

TRISTEN
Don't touch him!

EXT. CITY LIBRARY - LATER

Tristen sits at the back of an AMBULANCE, spaced out, a blanket around her. A medic shines a pen light into each one of her pupils. Bo's tears and Kenny's blood clutched in her hand.

A SEDAN pulls to a stop at the police line. Tristen's Parents, MELISSA AND FRANK, EXIT the car running toward her.

Tristen jumps out of the ambulance letting the blanket fall to the ground.

TRISTEN

Mom...!

They adhere to each other.

MELISSA

Tristen, what happened?

TRISTEN

Kenny...he...

POV TRISTEN - Over her mothers shoulder she sees the coroner loading up her brothers body.

MELISSA

My god, Frank...he's...dead.

Frank, obviously distraught, quickly changes the subject. He hugs the two of them.

FRANK

(to Tristen)

Are you hurt?

TRISTEN

Kenny's dead.

FRANK

Your coming home with us.

Frank and Melissa help Tristen toward the Sedan.

TRISTEN

Wait, my car...

FRANK

I'll drive it.

TRISTEN

No. I'll do it.

FRANK

You shouldn't...

TRISTEN

I know. But I can and I will. I'll follow you. Go ahead, I'll be fine.

EXT. CITY STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

The two cars move calmly through the empty night.

INT. SEDAN

Melissa happens to look up into the rearview mirror.

POV MELISSA - Tristen's car has come to a dead STOP in the middle of the street.

MELISSA

Frank...

INT. TRISTEN'S CAR

Tristen BEATS the steering wheel down with both hands in a certified RAGE. She SCREAMS as the steering wheel begins to bend and break under the pressure of her crushing blows.

EXT. CITY STREET - TRISTEN'S CAR

The door flies OPEN. Tristen RUNS out and into

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

In the alley Tristen drops to her knees in a puddle of mud.

TRISTEN

(crying)

I...I didn't look.

She lets her self down slowly into the mud puddle.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(crying)

I didn't see the gun. I didn't try...I didn't know to try...I'm sorry...

She lets her face fall into the mud.

FRANK

Tristen!

He picks his daughter up off the floor of the dirty alleyway and carries her back toward the street.

EXT. PARENTS HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

Frank has obviously done well for himself. Their home is a palace of bright red brick. A LIGHT comes on in an upstairs bedroom.

INT. PARENTS HOUSE - GUEST ROOM

Frank stands in the doorway as Melissa gently nudges Tristen into the room.

MELISSA

You take a shower and get some sleep. Just leave your clothes by the door.

Frank comes in and HUGS his daughter.

FRANK

We'll talk in the morning.

They EXIT, shutting the door behind them.

Tristen doesn't move. Still lost in pain.

INT. GUEST ROOM - SHOWER - MOMENTS LATER

Tristen doesn't even wash herself. She just lets the harsh jets of water spray her as she stares forward at a group of five WATER DROPLETS as they slide down the white marble shower encasement.

One of them stops, another one totally EVAPORATES. The others continue on.

She WIPES them away.

INT. GUEST ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tristen gets into the large, lonely bed. She lays her head down.

POV TRISTEN - a photo on the night stand: Tristen and Kenny, happy. Tristen starts to cry and pulls the covers over her head.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GUEST ROOM - THE NEXT AFTERNOON

Tristen AWAKES. Her CLOTHES are folded, crisp and clean at the bottom of the bed.

EXT. GUEST ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tristen EXITS the guest room and moves DOWNSTAIRS to

INT. LIVING-ROOM

where Frank is just getting off the phone. He looks exhausted, bags under his old overworked eyes. On the TV, WAR FOOTAGE, he turns it off. Tristen sits down on the sofa across from him. Neither can smile, but he tries, unsuccessfully.

TRISTEN

What time is it?

FRANK

Two in the afternoon. I'm glad you slept so long. I was actually hoping you would sleep a little longer. The good thing about sleep, it passes the buck to your subconscious. Lets it work out the previous days woe's. That way you can wake up a little lighter.

TRISTEN

Did you get any?

FRANK

What?

TRISTEN

Any sleep. Did you get any sleep?

FRANK

Oh, no. Too many details to work out. Things to get in order.

Tristen looks around the room. She hears the footsteps of questions she doesn't want to answer coming steadily closer.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I had to have a tow truck pick up your car. It wasn't drivable...the steering wheel was...destroyed. What happened?

TRISTEN
I don't know, I hit it...and...it
broke. It was an old car.

FRANK
It was a ninety eight.
(beat)
Anyway, you can use the Audi until
I get yours fixed.

He slides a KEY across the coffee table.

TRISTEN
(picks it up)
Thank you.

Now she owes him.

FRANK
Did you see the whole thing?

She NODS. He scribbles something on a NOTEPAD.

FRANK (CONT'D)
What were the two of you doing at
the library after hours?

TRISTEN
Kenny called me. He was crying...he
said he might hurt himself. So I
went over there.

FRANK
You didn't call the police then?
Why not?

TRISTEN
No time.

FRANK
Its three numbers Tristen.

TRISTEN
Its three seconds. I could have
been three seconds too late.

FRANK
Were you?

TRISTEN
(Whispers)
No...I got Kenny to give me the
gun...but he had another one.
And...and, um...

Melissa ENTERS sitting down next to Tristen.

MELISSA
Shhh, you don't have to say it.

FRANK
They said his face was...beaten.
Did you hit him?

TRISTEN
No...of course not...what kind of
question is that?

FRANK
The kind of question the police
would ask.

TRISTEN
You not the police.

FRANK
Well you can either talk to them or
talk to me. Who hit him, Tristen?

She still looks at him in awe of the audacious last inquiry.

TRISTEN
Some...people.

FRANK
Which people?

TRISTEN
I don't know, he didn't tell me.

FRANK
Where have you been for three days
Tristen?

TRISTEN
What does that have to do with any
of this?

FRANK
It could have everything to do with
this.

TRISTEN
I just asked you 'What'?

FRANK
If you've gotten into something, if
you've mixed with the wrong people,
maybe...

TRISTEN
Maybe what?

FRANK
Maybe...

TRISTEN
Maybe what?!

FRANK
Maybe they shot my son!!

Frank breaks down CRYING.

TRISTEN
Your son shot himself.

FRANK
No...that's not acceptable.

TRISTEN
'Not acceptable'?

FRANK
He wouldn't do that! He had everything!

TRISTEN
Except someone to talk to...

FRANK
He didn't need anyone to talk to. I know this has something to do with you. You met somebody...and you got hooked on something, and you got him hooked on something and someone came looking for you and they couldn't find you and...

Tristen can only shake her head in disbelief.

TRISTEN
What are you talking about? I don't know what your talking about.

FRANK
You completely disappear for three days. You don't contact your parents, your sister, your job, or even your boy friend who is also worried sick. Then...last night. Then..I find this in your car...

He pulls Bo's tears and Kenny's blood from a stack of papers.

TRISTEN
(stands up)
Give me that.

FRANK
What is this?

TRISTEN
Give me that.

FRANK
Look at this. This is blood, you
need help Tristen.

TRISTEN
I said give it to me!!

She SNATCHES the paper from him and walks toward the front door.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)
(facing him)
Whoever it was beat Kenny up
because he was gay. Kenny shot
himself because he didn't know how
to deal with it. Kenny shot himself
because he didn't have anyone to
talk to. Kenny shot himself because
I wasn't there when he needed me
and you were never there as much as
you would like to suppose the
contrary. Kenny is your son's name
and you haven't said it once since
I've been down here.

She EXITS.

Frank collapses onto the sofa, burying his head in the pillow. Melissa follows after Tristen.

EXT. PARENTS HOUSE - FRONT PORCH

MELISSA
Tristen...

Tristen STOPS, hugs her mother.

POV TRISTEN - over her mothers shoulder Tristen can see her dad in agony on the sofa before the FRONT DOOR comes to a rest, CLOSING.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

He stayed down there on that sofa all night so I wouldn't hear him cry. You know your father. He's been up the whole time getting things in order, trying to distract himself at the same time trying to make sense of the whole thing. He's so worn out by now that he's just grasping at anything.

(beat)

You go home. I'll take care of him.

They let go of each other.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

He got things sped up. Kenny's funeral is Tomorrow at four. So we can heal faster.

TRISTEN

You mean so we can forget faster.

Tristen gets in the AUDI and speeds away.

EXT. TRISHA'S APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR - LATER

The front door OPENS. Trisha stands there, face wet with tears, a tissue to her eye.

Tristen KISSES her sisters belly and then Trisha herself.

EXT. TRISHA'S APARTMENT - BALCONY - LATER

Trisha is no longer crying. Either her sisters presence comforts her or she just ran empty. With worn red eyes the two of them look out over the city. Tristen GRIPS the surrounding iron trellis separating them from the open air with BOTH HANDS.

TRISHA

He must have felt like the last person on earth.

TRISTEN

But he was, wasn't he? I keep trying to convince myself that he wasn't, that I was here, that you were here, that there were people he could have talked to. But I wasn't here so I'm wrong on count one.

(MORE)

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(beat)

He would never have bothered you
with...not with the baby coming.
He counted on me...my little
brother trusted me. I let him down.
I let someone down everyday and I
can deal with that because it has
to be done and it has to be dealt
with but I miss my little brother
and...and...

(crying, looking at hands
griping iron)

...my hands wont stop shaking!

Tristen breaks down falling to her knees. She holds Trisha's mid-section, she holds Princess. Trisha cries too as she caresses Tristen's blonde hair.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(whispering)

What's the point...?

TRISHA

Of what sweetie?

TRISTEN

(whispering)

Of salvaging some other place when
everything you love and everything
you care about is here...and its
falling apart at the same time?

Tristen lets go, lays herself down one the cement balcony. Her hands shake violently, she curls up like a fetus.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

I just need a second...that's what
Kenny said before he did it. That's
not enough time.

Trisha kneels down next to her.

TRISHA

Princess is kicking. She wants you
to calm down.

Tristen reaches back without turning around, rests her hand on Trisha's stomach.

TRISTEN

Tell her that's not an option for
Auntie, and that she can kick all
she wants too...And I'll never let
anything happen to her.

TRISHA

You can tell her yourself. You can tell her soon.

(beat)

Tristen, honey, I think you need a certain kind of comforting right now. When did you talk to Marcus last.

Tristen SHUTS her eyes tightly at the mention of his name. A few tears squeeze out from her lashes.

TRISTEN

(sadly)

Oh, my Marcus...we had a big date planned the night I...left. Its been five days. He's so perfect and so fragile. Probably in a million pieces by now.

TRISHA

What are you saying?

TRISTEN

He's the type of guy you only get one chance with.

TRISHA

Marcus is practically my brother and law. He loves you more than anything. And, of course he's probably considering the fact that your dead by now. That's your fault, your gonna have to take those lumps honey. And you will because he's worth it. Once he sees how badly you need him...you wont have anything to worry about. He wont let you.

TRISTEN

Any harsh words from him and I'll crack.

TRISHA

(beat)

Bring him some flowers then.

EXT. SIDE STREET/BUSINESS BUILDING - EARLY EVENING

There is still good light outside as the Audi pulls up and parks on a side street about sixty feet from the clean BRICK WALL of a business building that faces out toward the main street.

Tristen EXITS the Audi. She's in a SEXY BLACK DRESS. She looks irresistible. She pulls a bouquet of FLOWERS out of the car and shuts the door.

She smells the flowers, smiles.

Tristen begins to walk and just as fast as she began she slows to a STOP.

Her lips begin to TREMBLE.

She stares at the brick wall ahead.

The TEARS she's come so accustomed to in the past few days don't waste any time cutting a trail down her face.

Tristen DROPS the flowers. They crash on the blacktop.

She stares at the brick wall ahead.

The tears still pump, even though she is silent, they drip down her neck.

She starts to walk again, choking as she does.

EXT. MAIN STREET/BUSINESS BUILDING(FRONT) - CONTINUOUS

POV TRISTEN - Inside, toward the middle of the building, a very attractive yet sullen looking man who could only be MARCUS is trapped between the wall and another WOMAN.

Her arms around his waist, she KISSES him deeply, obscenely. He doesn't kiss back. He just lets it happen, his arms dangle at his side.

BACK TO SCENE

Tristen's hands begin to SHAKE again.

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN LATER

The front door is AJAR. We can't see Tristen but we can HEAR her sobbing angrily.

In the Kitchen SILVERWARE is thrown about as if a hurricane hit, a trail of KNIVES lead to Tristen's room. There is something wrong with the knives though. The metal of their blades have been bunched up at their ends, leaving them resembling jellowy HATCHETS.

INT. TRISTEN'S ROOM

Tristen lies on the floor in her beautiful black dress. Make up ruined by tears. She tries to slit her wrist with the last knife she has but the metal just PUSHES OVER. She SCREAMS and THROWS the blade into the wall.

EXT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marcus is about to knock when he notices the door OPEN. He ENTERS

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Its dark. He moves toward her room, tripping over mutated silverware.

MARCUS

Tristen...?

INT. TRISTEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tristen is curled up in her bed having long since cried herself to sleep. She SHIVERS. He SITS on the bed next to her, pulls a cover over her, and gently pushes her hair out of her face.

She WAKES.

She jumps up CLINGING to him. He holds her as she KISSES his neck, crying.

TRISTEN

Marcus...thank god you're here...I had this... nightmare...I went to see you, to...beg you to forgive me for everything I've ever done or haven't done or might do.

(MORE)

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

Whatever it took to get you here...in my bed...because if I didn't have you...to hold me....I was running out of reasons to protect this place...but you could make everything better, you always do...but then, there was a girl and she was kissing you...and I was alone...and...the knives wouldn't work...I love you...kiss me please...

MARCUS

Shhhh, I'm right here.

(holds her close)

I had a nightmare too, baby. In mine, the woman I love disappeared from my life, from everyone's life, for four long days. I couldn't sleep a second, I left messages until her machine couldn't take it anymore, I went by her job, I interrogated her family, I badgered the police, until, thank god for my sanity the thought occurred; what if she doesn't want to be found...

TRISTEN

(shaking her head)

No...

MARCUS

What if she got her fill? What if she's just like the rest?

TRISTEN

No, baby...

He TRIES to pull away from her, she wont let him.

MARCUS

Tristen, let go of me.

TRISTEN

No. Never. I love you...you love me...

MARCUS

Tristen, let go of me.

TRISTEN

Only if you wont leave. We can talk if you want but don't leave.

MARCUS

What do we have to talk about,
Tristen? The night you disappeared
I had so much to say, baby, so much
but now I'm totally...I hope he
takes good care of you.

He breaks away from her and moves into

INT. FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tristen is frozen, her mouth agape.

TRISTEN

You think...?

She ENTERS the front room. She grabs his arm spinning him
around.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

You think I was with another man?

MARCUS

I've been through this a dozen
times, remember? A day here a day
there, and then comes the night
where it hurts so much to leave him
that you stay and you stay and you
stay. Don't even care about keeping
up the facade anymore. You stay
because your happy where you are.
You have everything you could ever
need. I've been through this
before, remember?

TRISTEN

That's the way I feel about you...I
need you!

She tries to touch his arm, he pushes her hand away.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

That's the way I feel about you...
(crying)
...I put this dress on for you. You
love this dress baby. You said I
look like a princess...

He let's her closer

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

...like a diamond princess...

SHE wraps HIS arms around HER waist, and cups his face.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

There is no other man, baby. No man could compare.

(whispers)

Do you know how much I love you?
Let me tell you how much I love you.

(kisses his lips)

I put this dress on for you...and I went to your job and I saw you and that girl and she was kissing you and you were kissing her and I don't even care. I don't care how much you kissed or where she kissed you or for how long...because I love you and its...it's my fault. Do you know how much I love you...I want to have your baby. Our baby. A little diamond princess, or a prince. Whatever you want. Right here, right now. Tonight.

As she kisses him she lets her dress fall to the floor.

HE WALKS AWAY. She WILTS down to the ground, defeated.

Marcus reaches the front door, STOPS and comes back.

Her eye's are wide with hope. He slams something on the counter top above her and EXITS the apartment.

She reaches up and grabs the item, pulling it down.

It's a JEWELRY BOX. She WIPES her tears. OPENS it.

Three months worth of paychecks light her face up a sparkling blue.

She pulls her dress on and RUNS out of the apartment.

EXT. CITY STREET/APARTMENT BUILDING

She spins around looking for his car. She spots him. At a red light at the INTERSECTION. She runs up to the driver side window.

TRISTEN

Don't go, Marcus. Yes, yes a thousand times, please don't go. Look baby I'm already wearing it...don't go.

MARCUS

Walking out of that room is the hardest thing I've ever had to do...I'm gonna make sure I never have to do it again.

The light turns GREEN.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Get back.

TRISTEN

Marcus...please...

Cars HONK like mad. Marcus looks straight ahead.

She steps back, somehow hopeful.

Marcus ACCELERATES. She FOLLOWS his car halfway into the intersection but its pointless. He's gone. She stares up at the RED LIGHT. The symbolism doesn't escape her.

She melts to the ground, all the way down, as if trying to seep through a crack in the blacktop.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(whispering)

When is someone gonna save me...

Marcus HOISTS her off of the cement.

INT. TRISTEN'S ROOM

He sets her down on the bed softly. She looks into his eyes.

TRISTEN

I can't make promises anymore,
things are to erratic. Just know
that I'll die without you. I don't
know how...but I will.

INT. TRISTEN'S ROOM - LATER(FOUR AM)

Marcus is dead asleep. Tristen rests with her face buried in his chest.

From outside the room, a muted RINGING. Tristen AWAKES,
slides out of his arms and moves into

INT. KITCHEN

Its NOT the phone in the Kitchen.

Tristen moves to the CLOSET by the front door. She OPENS it. The ring is LOUDER. She kneels down into the closet, out of sight. There is a 'click'.

TRISTEN(OS)
(hesitant)
Hello?

INT. TRISTEN'S ROOM - MORNING

Marcus wakes up to piercing sunlight, alone. But next to him is a folded PAPER, on it a HEART drawn in LIPSTICK. He RELAX'S.

INT. TRISHA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Matthew gets out of bed tiredly, eyes half closed he stumbles to the

INT. BATHROOM

He flicks ON the LIGHT, rubbing his face as he yawns. BLOOD trails along his face where his hand just left. He looks down. His entire side is covered in red. He feels himself, panicky, but he's not cut.

MATTHEW
Trisha...

He runs back into the

BEDROOM

TRISHA
(moaning)
Matt...

He pulls the covers back, blood everywhere, obviously emanating from Trisha.

MATTHEW
Trisha, baby, come on we have to go
to the hospital.
(helping her up)
Come on.

TRISHA

Matt, what's wrong with my baby...?

She sees the blood and begins to scream

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL

Its hectic as they race Trisha on a stretcher through the halls of the hospital. Matthew can barley keep up. The doctor and nurses seem to be in some sort of heated exchange over Trisha's vitals. But we cant hear the details. All we can hear is the HEARTBEATS of any individual that comes into our line of vision.

Trisha's is FAINT.

Matthew's RACES.

Princess has them both beat by what must be a million beats per second.

Someone STIFF ARMS Matthew, leaving him behind. Soon he's as small an ant.

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Tristen ENTERS. She hits a button on her answering machine and moves away, adding her apartment key to her key chain.

MATTHEW (VO)

...Tristen, its Matthew, I'm at the hospital...something is wrong with Trisha...

Tristen is GONE. The front door hangs OPEN.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAYS

Tristen is running like a mad woman and ends up in

INT. INFANT WARD

where Matthew leans up against the glass, a dozen BABIES on display behind it.

TRISTEN

Matthew?

She is about to hug him but notices his face. He's been crying and looks dead, blood still on his face.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)
 Why is here blood on your face?
 Where's Trisha?

He speaks detached. No emotion.

MATTHEW
 See my Princess?

TRISTEN
 Which one is she?

MATTHEW
 Second row, second baby down.

PRINCESS only a few hours old sleeps comfortably.

TRISTEN
 She's beautiful, Matthew.
 Where's Trisha?

MATTHEW
 She...she um...

He begins to walk away.

TRISTEN
 Matthew...?

MATTHEW
 I don't know if you talked to them
 but your parents are in Rome. Your
 dad couldn't take it, I guess they
 figured there was nothing left to
 do but take a vacation.

TRISTEN
 What are you talking about? Where
 the hell is my sister?!

MATTHEW
 She's dead, Tristen.
 (faintly)
 I don't know what happened...she's
 dead...

He turns and walks away. Condensed by loss to an aimless man.

Tristen drops to her knees. As the CRY of a baby, possibly motherless, grows to a SEARING DECIBEL she grits her teeth, shaking, past the point of tears.

INT. LIBRARY - BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE

Tristen wakes up in the isle of books where Kenny killed himself. She looks back at the poster of the girl holding the flag. Its covered in BLOOD. Kenny's blood.

KENNY(O.S.)
(screams)
Tristen!!

It came from outside. Tristen runs to the front doors and tries to push them open but the doors are CHAINED from the outside.

EXT. LIBRARY - DOORS

The SOUND of bending metal only lasts a second. The chains BURST, the doors EXPLODE OPEN. Tristen EXITS.

The sky is purple, peach and orange. The library sits on a small island of grass high in the sky supported by only a skinny stick of rock and dirt.

At the end of the island Kenny is on all fours and being kicked violently by FOUR HOODED INDIVIDUALS.

KENNY
Tristen!

Tristen TACKLES the hood who is about to strike next. They fall to the ground. Tristen grabs the hoods throat and cocks back to punch. The hoods falls OFF and Tristen is staring at HERSELF.

TRISTEN TWO smiles deviously.

Tristen gets up and backs away from the group.

The rest of them take their hoods OFF. They ALL look like Tristen.

TRISTEN
No...

KENNY
Tristen...help me...

Tristen looks down, she is dressed just like the rest of the hoods. She runs up and kicks Kenny hard in the-

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - END DREAM SEQUENCE

Tristen wakes up soaking wet in her bed, breathing out of control. After a moment she calms down. The only sound left is the ringing of THE phone.

INT. CLOSET

The closet door OPENS and a nondescript black PHONE sits on a small stool. She answers the phone, hesitant.

TRISTEN

Hello?

VOICE(V.O.)

Don't worry, this isn't an assignment...

Tristen exhales.

VOICE (VO)(CONT'D)

You have a meeting. Tomorrow. Ten a.m. The Coffee Castle. Do you know where that is?

TRISTEN

Yes.

VOICE(V.O.)

Okay then. Sorry to disturb your rest.

The voice HANGS UP.

INT. COFFEE CASTLE - MORNING

Tristen sits at a table for two, alone, sipping a cup of coffee. She looks around curiously. Its obvious that she didn't sleep much.

The place is packed. She checks her watch.

NICOLAS LAURENT maneuvers from the front of a long line carrying a tray containing three cups. He sits down across from Tristen without even looking at her.

Nicolas is about Tristen's age, attractive and dressed in a slick black suit. She stares at him oddly.

NICOLAS

Check it out, Tristen, they've got French Roast, Honey French Roast and yep, that's right, French Vanilla Honey Roast and don't bother asking them the difference because they couldn't tell you anything you couldn't deduce yourself. So...what's it gonna be?

TRISTEN

Black.

Nicolas looks up and notices her cup of coffee.

NICOLAS

I guess now is a good time to show you my impression...of my first impression.

He pretends to hang himself. Head cocked to the side, eyes closed, tongue hanging out.

TRISTEN

Who are you?

His eye's OPEN. He sits up.

NICOLAS

I'm sorry.

(beat)

Nicolas Laurent.

(shaking her hand)

However, all my extremely close friends call me needle dick. Just in case Nicolas doesn't have enough dynamism for you.

Tristen stares at him.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Look, Tristen, I know your not in the mood for either this meeting or my antics, which I'm not gonna lie, I am totally conscious of, but, they make my job a little easier.

TRISTEN

And what is that...your job?

NICOLAS

I'm so glad you asked that. This way I dont have sacrifice eight million brain cells figuring out a way to work it into the shtick.

He takes a sip of his coffee and immediately spits it out in a spray, onto the floor.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

God that's hot!! I'm sorry. Let me just clean this up. That's a negative on the French Roast by the way.

Tristen tries not to smile.

One of the teenage girls that work the Coffee Castle comes over with a mop.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

(to Coffee Girl)

I'm sorry sweetheart, I didn't know it was gonna be that hot.

COFFEE GIRL

(mopping, annoyed)

It is coffee.

NICOLAS

Yeah, I asked for the French Roast, not the Hawaiian molten lava, that was the lady over there with the barbecue pit for a mouth, might want to talk to your people about that. Thanks.

COFFEE GIRL

Whatever.

Coffee Girl finishes and leaves.

NICOLAS

Its really not my fault. They wrap these little brown things around the cup so you cant feel the heat and there's a top so you cant see, it could be kool-aid for all I know.

Tristen smiles at the observation. The smile segues directly into TEARS.

TRISTEN

(crying)

How could I...sit here and
smile...right now.

NICOLAS

(looking down)

The smile was natural. Over due and
well deserved even. The crying you
forced on yourself. Senselessly
self inflicted.

He reaches out to put a hand on her shoulder but decides
against it and pulls back.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

Look, there is no way I could even
begin to feel your pain. Your load
is bigger than I can even fathom. I
know that, but, if you could, help
me with an experiment of sort's.
Check it out,

(pulls out folded paper)

I have notes for this part. The
construct of the device always
escapes me.

(reading)

The Coffee Castle is...a bubble. In
this bubble we are not affected by
things that happened yesterday or
an hour ago. We have access to them
but they don't affect us. We are in
our own time...thing. Can you do
that for me, just for a little
while?

Tristen pulls her hair out of her face.

TRISTEN

Do you have any idea...what that
would take?

(beat)

Nick?

NICOLAS

(looking around)

Yes.

Nicolas takes her coffee and gets up. He pushes his way to
the front of the line. What is he doing?

Nicolas comes back and puts her coffee down in front of her.
It is now adorned with a mound of WHIP CREAM and CHOCOLATE
SPRINKLES.

He sits down, raising an eyebrow.

TRISTEN
(smiling)
Who are you?

NICOLAS
Needle dick, remember?

She rolls her eye's.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
No seriously, lets see if I can explain this in English with out naming any names. I do it pretty well in Dutch, but, who cares right? So, what is my job? Okay, when the immediate entity you perform for was created...

He moves one cup of coffee forward representing the 'entity'.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
...and the current program put into action. It didn't take long to see the effects that such an extreme double life could have on the subjects.

He moves another cup of coffee forward representing the 'subject'.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
Apparently there was a less sensitive entity before my time that foolishly pushed their subjects to breaking point without ever once attempting to cater to their needs. Emotional, psychological, etcetera...I mean not having anyone to talk to is one thing, but, having plenty of people to talk to and not being able, being forbidden...that's like losing the remote...forever.

TRISTEN
Its actually worse than that, but, carry on.

NICOLAS
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to furnish such a weak metaphor to illustrate your very real peril.

TRISTEN
Ignorance is bliss.

NICOLAS
Yeah, that's what I tell my tax preparer.
(beat)
Do you know you have the most charming half smile...

TRISTEN
What's wrong with my full smile?

NICOLAS
Only that I haven't really seen it...

She stares into his eyes for a moment and then guilty looks down at her coffee.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
(snapping out of it)
Alright, so...um, with a blood curdling scream from the...American Military a group of hush hush P.H.D.s were brought in to assess the subjects and fill in those trouble spots in the mental social outlet area. The only problem was...you know how when you get hurt at work they make you see the company doctor. And your spine has to literally slip out of your ass on crystal clear surveillance video to get some employer funded you time?

TRISTEN
I see.

NICOLAS
Same situation. The neglect went on and on until one day...and every one in the world saw it on the news in instant replay and slow motion but the cover up was so good and so quick that no one knew what they were looking at.

Coffee Girl is walking by.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
 (to Coffee Girl)
 Hey, sunshine, could I get a cup of
 ice.

COFFEE GIRL
 No.

NICOLAS
 She didn't even have to walk this
 way she just wanted to be near me.
 The lead director of the entity you
 work for, died not long ago and his
 replacement saw the holes in the
 program and was smart enough to see
 the conflict of interest going on.
 So with another blood curdling
 scream from the A.M., an outside
 unit, a sort of supreme clientele
 Blue Cross was brought in. Totally
 non profit, totally screened,
 totally uncorrupted. In other
 words...

He moves the last cup of coffee in-between the other two.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
 Me.
 (beat)
 I'm totally at your disposal. You
 can use me or not use me.

A brief silence is broken up as Coffee Girl SLAMS a cup of
 ice on the table in front of Nicolas and keeps walking.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
 Thanks, honey!
 (to Tristen)
 Can she handle a crush or what?

Nicolas plops ice cubes into his coffees.

TRISTEN
 So you're a shrink.

NICOLAS
 Classically trained. But I'm really
 just here to listen.

TRISTEN
 But you're so young.

NICOLAS

I was thinking the same thing about you.

TRISTEN

How did they know...or, what made them think that I needed this.

NICOLAS

Tristen, do you really think that there is a second in the day when they are not watching you?

TRISTEN

(beat)
All the time?

NICOLAS

Not all the time. *All* the time. There were two particular reasons they sent me. Two...red flags, so to speak.

(beat)

Did you know that your tears contain small traces of radioactive dust? Not heavy enough to be harmful to those around you but to opposing entities its very distinctive, like blood in shark infested waters.

(beat)

Anything you want to get off your chest?

TRISTEN

They didn't tell you...my little brother shot himself in front of me?

Nicolas REACTS.

NICOLAS

When did this happen?

TRISTEN

A few days ago.

NICOLAS

I had no idea. I am so sorr-

TRISTEN

My sister died...in child birth. Sometime yesterday.

(MORE)

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

I couldn't even tell you exactly when because I wasn't there. My sister was dying...and I was in some shitty, third world...wasting my time on...

NICOLAS

It definitely wasn't worth the trade but don't ever write off what you leave to do as a waste of time. I'm not gonna sit here and tell you to shake it off, baby, but lets take one last painfully close look at this. Your sister died in child birth. There is nothing even you could have done to help her. You gotta draw the line.

TRISTEN

I could have been there to hold her hand!

A spider web CRACK instantly forms in the window next to them. Nicolas pretends not to notice it.

NICOLAS

Wherever she's at she loves you and by now knows why you weren't there and understands completely. Depending on what you believe in.

TRISTEN

You didn't even know her.

NICOLAS

That doesn't change the fact that you were making the world a better place for your niece. Put a price on that.

TRISTEN

What about, Kenny? I was right there. My baby brothers life was at stake and I couldn't focus. God dammit, I missed his funeral.

NICOLAS

Your not a computer, Tristen. Your not a clairvoyant, a probability processing monster or a god. You're a person. An emotional human in what I can only imagine was an immensely intense emotional situation.

She cry's. He lifts her chin gently and uses a napkin to soak up her radioactive tears. We see for the first time strange SPARKLES in them as she stares up at Nicolas.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

So what was the catch?

TRISTEN

He had two guns.

NICOLAS

Jesus, Tristen. You have to come to grips with the fact that he decided he didn't want to live anymore. No matter what you wanted. Can you look at me and say you didn't give a valiant effort.

TRISTEN

I tried, Nic, I swear I did.

The sparkles flood.

NICOLAS

Come here.

They stand and she squeezes him until he's running out of air but he's strong for her.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

That's all you can do. By the way the guilt that doesn't eject in the form of tears will probably manifest its self in the most wicked nightmares your mind can conjure up. And another thing...

(Holds her face to face)

Family should always be A-number one but try to remember...they're not the only ones in the world who need you.

TRISTEN

I know...but they're the only ones in the world I need.

NICOLAS

Can't argue with that.

TRISTEN

Thank you, Nicolas.

NICOLAS

Hey, all you have to do is pick up the bat phone and ask for me. I'll be there. Although next time we should probably meet somewhere else...

Coffee Girl walks by.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

(so she can hear)

Certain individuals cant hide their jealousy.

COFFEE GIRL

Blow.

As Nicolas LAUGHS he glances out of the window next to their table. A concerned look covers his face.

NICOLAS

That's funny.

TRISTEN

What?

NICOLAS

I wasn't even talking about him.

Tristen looks toward the window. On the other side stands

MARCUS

Nicolas takes his hands off Tristen.

Marcus SHAKES his head and walks off down the sidewalk.

Tristen and Nicolas EXIT the coffee castle running after Marcus.

EXT. SIDEWALK

Nicolas is slightly ahead of Tristen.

NICOLAS

Marcus! Hey, Marcus! Where you going buddy?

Marcus turns around contemplating a swing on Nicolas.

From an AERIAL VIEW we see a group of BLACK SUITED MEN scattered out like the points of a clock moving in to swarm on Marcus if he so much as touches Nicolas.

Nicolas puts a hand UP and the Black Suits FREEZE.

Nobody seems to be aware of them except for Nicolas and Tristen after she notices the selective halt in movement.

MARCUS

Get away from me. Both of you.

NICOLAS

What? Its me. Cousin Nic.

MARCUS

I don't have a Cousin Nic.

NICOLAS

(smiling)(to Tristen)

You were right about this guy. He's a sexy riot.

(to Marcus)

Not your Cousin Nic. Tristen's Cousin Nic.

He throws an arm around her neck like an old chum.

MARCUS

She never mentioned...I mean she never...

NICOLAS

Yeah they don't like to talk about me. No matter where I'm at I get this twitch, automatically know who it is and soon after pop up to ask for money. But...I came...when I heard about Kenny.

MARCUS

I'm...sorry. Kenny was a good kid.

NICOLAS

He was. We'll all miss him.

(beat)

Say! I heard that you are a fan of...the Opera. Have you seen the Vericor yet?

Nicolas pulls two OPERA TICKETS out of his breast coat pocket and hands them to Marcus who looks them over.

MARCUS

Wow, the Vericor. I thought it was sold out.

NICOLAS

Its been sold out for a month. And its tonight so time to dust off the prom gear.

MARCUS

Tristen, The Vericor. Wow...look, I'm sorry about the thing...almost hitting you...

NICOLAS

Hey, its cool. I'd think there was something wrong with you if you didn't think of it.

(Shaking his hand)

It was nice to finally meet you Marcus.

MARCUS

Same. We should--

NICOLAS

I'll...be in town for a little while.

(to Tristen)

So don't make yourself too scarce blondi.

They HUG, awkward.

TRISTEN

(whispering in his ear)

Thank you so much.

NICOLAS

When your out there your saving my life too.

They separate. Tristen walks off arm in arm with Marcus.

Nicolas dwells, watches her leave. He looks hurt.

She looks back at him and mouths the words 'thank you' once more. He just nods playfully and disappears into the crowded side walk. The black suits follow.

Plus Coffee Girl, RIPPING off her Coffee Castle smock.

EXT. LARGENTO OPERA HOUSE - RED CARPET - NIGHT

Tristen and Marcus arrive in a limo and traverse the RED CARPET. They LAUGH amused when mistaken for famous people by the hungry paparazzi.

INT. LARGENTO - OPERA HOUSE - BOX SEATS

Tristen and Marcus are escorted to the premium vantage point where they sit and wait for the show to begin. She sticks to him like a magnet.

MARCUS
You look incredible.

TRISTEN
That's the three hundredth time
you've told me.

MARCUS
Oh, really?

TRISTEN
Yeah. Tell me again.

MARCUS
You look incredible.

TRISTEN
Thank you.

They kiss.

MARCUS
(beat)
What does your cousin really do?

TRISTEN
His mother doesn't even know.

MARCUS
How could his mother not know?

TRISTEN
Does your mother know everything
about you?

MARCUS
Yes, she does.

TRISTEN
So...she knows what I'm going to do
to you tonight?

MARCUS
No, I'll tell her afterward so I
can edit.

TRISTEN

That's what I thought.

(beat)

Why are you so concerned about Nic anyway?

MARCUS

I'm not. Its just that this is a huge production. A-list crowd. Us in the box. This show sold out a month ago. I figure he must be somebody with pull.

TRISTEN

Like...

MARCUS

Like...mafia or something.

Tristen LAUGHS.

TRISTEN

Thanks a lot you sexy riot. You messed up my eyeliner. I have to go fix it. Baby don't worry about Nic, he's not mafia...he's just a petty drug dealer.

MARCUS

That's soooo refreshing.

Tristen EXITS.

INT. LADIES RESTROOM

Tristen ENTERS and goes straight to the mirror to check her make up.

One of the many faucets DRIP incessantly.

The door OPENS. ENTER HAVANA PETRIKOVA, a stunningly beautiful Cuban woman about Tristen's age.

EVEN Tristen does a double take at Havana in her revealing designer dress.

TRISTEN

Hi.

Havana begins touching up her make up. The faucet DRIPS on.

HAVANA

You must have taken inventory of the splendid buffet of potential out there just like I did.

TRISTEN

I'm sorry?

HAVANA

The boy's.

TRISTEN

Oh. That potential. No, I brought my own.

The faucet DRIPS.

HAVANA

Tsk, tsk. Sand to the beach, remember.

TRISTEN

Hey, I like my sand.

(beat)

And my sand likes me.

HAVANA

(laughing)

I'm sure he does. You look like a model.

TRISTEN

Thank you. I love your dress.

HAVANA

When god warned men about coveting his neighbors wife...she was in this dress.

The faucet DRIPS.

TRISTEN

I recognize you from somewhere. You're an actress, aren't you?

HAVANA

(laughing)

I'm no more of an actress than you are, sweetie.

The faucet DRIPS.

HAVANA (CONT'D)

Oh, enough with this thing.

Havana grabs the neck of the faucet and TWIST the metal around, pinching off the tunnel and ceasing the drip.

She walks back to her purse. Tristen is stunned.

TRISTEN

What did you say your name was?

As Havana speaks she pulls a small mirror out of her purse. Then a small VIAL and from it sprinkles a mound of BLUE POWDER onto the mirror. She cuts the mound into two lines with a razor blade.

HAVANA

A funny story about names before I answer your question. I'm having my first session with the Russian psychotherapist, analyst, whatever and he say's 'If you could change you name to any one letter of the alphabet which one would it be?'. So I say, 'P'. And he says, ' What does the P stand for?'. And I say, 'Power...pestilence, pussy, predator, provocateur, Paris in the fall, premium prowess, platinum pin cushion, phallus...princess.

She SNORTS a line of powder using a rolled up piece of RUSSIAN CURRENCY.

HAVANA (CONT'D)

You should try some of this, kills the nightmare's in the womb. Anyway, by the time I got to 'Pentecostal penetration' the poor old man is jumping up and down and screaming 'You can only have one! You can only have one!' So I reach across the table and punch him clear through his throat. I toss the table aside and I keep hitting him and hitting him. Security rushes in but they're too smart to do anything but to wait to help clean the poor bastard up. So I'm screaming at him; 'I can have anything I want! I can have anything I want! His face starts to get mushy. I...

(slower)

I,I,I...I

(beat)

I!...thanks doc.

TRISTEN

What did you say your name was?

She snorts the last line.

HAVANA

Havana...Petrikova. The one and only.

TRISTEN

Castro let you off the leash long enough to take in a show?

HAVANA

Please, darling, the only molecule of Cuba still attached to me is my first name. I just didn't want to give it up. I love the way the cabana boys down in Cabo say it. 'Welcome back, Havana. We missed you Havana'. I don't mind adopting the Petrikova so much. Its sharp. Orgasmic. Fitting. Plus they paid me a shit load to do it. What did you think the Russians were down there kicking up all that dust for? Prolonged free agency paid off. Like saving your virginity for a plastic surgeon. God your beautiful. Do you know what the Russians call you.

TRISTEN

They should call me Death.

Havana licks her lips.

HAVANA

They call you the American Crybaby Destroyer. Watching your off hour footage is like watching a low grade soap opera. All whining and tears. But watching you in action is like...big bang theory in reverse. You pillage your enemies souls and leave the grim reaper standing around holding his organ.

Havana LAUGHS heartily.

HAVANA (CONT'D)

I want to lick your face.

Havana rushes toward Tristen. Tristen pushes Havana back up against the wall, the wall TILES are crushed to powder.

Tristen GRITS her teeth. She wants to snap Havana like a twig. We haven't seen this girl before.

Havana grins with lust in her eyes.

HAVANA (CONT'D)

I don't have authorization to engage you here, Crybaby, but if you test me I will bring this whole building down.

EXT. LADIES RESTROOM

An OLDER WOMAN is about to enter the restroom when she hears monstrous booms and twisting metal harshness coming from the other side of the door.

She heads back to her seat.

INT. LADIES RESTROOM

EXTREME CLOSE

Tristen leans down to Havana's ear.

TRISTEN

I catch you in my country without my permission ever again I'll have you crawling back to Russia with a urinal wrapped around your face.

As Tristen EXITS the restroom we PULL BACK to see Havana laying on the floor with the entire COUNTER TOP, sinks included wrapped around her mid-section, arms pinned at her side.

HAVANA

You...BITCH!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MARCUS' TOWNHOUSE - HALLWAY - LATER

Under the operatic sounds of the Vericor, seduction plays out:

The lights are low. He slides soft dress fabric off her shoulder. She loosens his tie.

She tries to kiss him. He playfully withholds.

She forces him back into the wall, taking what she wants. He MARVELS for a moment before reclaiming his manhood.

He spins her around, stripping her gently but firmly. Her eyes close. Her heart skips a beat from his touch.

She LEVITATES a little. He doesn't notice.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bed is host to a heated ballet. They tumble together.

Tristen BLINKS and within that blink Marcus has been replaced by Nicolas Laurent. Tristen REACTS, pulls him closer.

INT. MARCUS' TOWNHOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tristen and Marcus are asleep in his bed. Naked bodies covered in a single sheet.

A soft baby blue LIGHT begins to pulse throughout the room.

On. Off. On. Off.

Tristen WAKES.

She rises, wraps herself in the sheet and moves to the window where she looks out into the night.

OUTSIDE

A MAN stands next to a black car. He holds a powerful flash light which he clicks on and off. He sees her and STOPS.

Tristen NODS. The Man gets into the driver seat.

IN THE BEDROOM

Tristen gently lays the sheet over Marcus. She kisses him on the cheek.

EXT. MARCUS' TOWNHOUSE

Tristen SHUTS the door quietly and locks it behind her. Key under the mat.

She ENTERS the black car which immediately creeps back out of the driveway and moves into the dark morning traffic.

INT. BLACK CAR/STREET - NIGHT

TRISTEN
I don't have my case.

DRIVER
(without looking back)
They know you're not coming from home. They should have a spare unit.
(beat)
The brief is on the seat next to you.

Tristen picks up the BLACK ENVELOPE.

TRISTEN
Were's Tracy?

DRIVER
They gave him a few days off. His wife had a baby.
(beat)
A little girl.

She looks out the window, contemplating.

MAN
By the way Miss, I just want to take this chance to thank you. So...thank you.

TRISTEN
For what?

DRIVER
I'm not allowed to say.
(beat)
Everything.

Tristen still stares outside. Neon reflections glazing her face.

TRISTEN
Your welcome.

She OPENS the envelope and begins to READ.

EXT/INT. AIRPORT/GIANT HANGAR

The black car drives through an air field to a humongous hangar, ARMED GUARDS at its flanks. The doors OPEN just enough for the black car to squeeze through.

INSIDE

is a giant PLANE. The kind that gets up into the stratosphere. The rear of the plane is OPEN. A group of highly decorated MILITARY TYPES stand at its mouth. One of them a high ranking GENERAL. Another is WALTER FLAIL, the Secretary of Defense' right hand man.

The black car STOPS.

Tristen gets out and approaches them.

TRISTEN
(shaking hands)
General.

GENERAL
Tristen. Thank you for coming so fast. This is Walter Flail. The Secretary of Defense sent him and his assistant around to take notes on budgetary distribution if you know what I mean. They'll be observing the outing via satellite with the rest of us.

TRISTEN
(shaking hands)
Mr. Flail.

FLAIL
Nice to meet you. I've heard so much about you. I just want to say good hunting and you give her one in the eye from Walter Flail.

Tristen REACTS. Give who one in the eye?

Some one comes up and hands the General a large RED ENVELOPE.

GENERAL
Thank you, private.
(to Flail)
We still have a few minutes. How would you like a look inside our plane?

FLAIL
Sounds great.

Flail and his people head off, its just Tristen and the General now.

TRISTEN

'Give her one in the eye', General?

GENERAL

That's what I wanted to talk to you about. Just turned into a double shift. After you tend to Andrei there's an issue a few miles away that needs immediate attention. Tristen...we wouldn't ask you if it wasn't totally necessary. We have be in the air in eight minutes. Take a few to look that over.

He follows after Flail.

Tristen doesn't like the look of this red file.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I got one of those once. The meter maid at our office was so sweet. She saved all my tickets for the year and for Christmas just gave me one big one.

Its Nicolas. They hug.

NICOLAS

Nice to see you. How are you feeling?

TRISTEN

Better since we talked. Thank you for the opera. Marcus loved it.

NICOLAS

Good. That was a close one though wasn't it?

TRISTEN

It was. For a second it actually felt like we got caught...doing something wrong.

She looks down nervously. He laughs.

NICOLAS

Well, he was definitely going to hit me like we did.

TRISTEN

That's actually what I wanted to talk to you about, and, this is kind of embarrassing...

(MORE)

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(beat)

If I felt...because you're the only one I can talk to...if I felt...or maybe if I thought of you...at intimate times...when I really shouldn't...

NICOLAS

Its not that heavy sweetheart, look, trust and respect form the core of any and all intimate relationships. Anything we posses with sentiments that powerful are all gonna be stored close to each other. You got your wires crossed at a questionable moment so you're doing extra math. Plus I paid a small fortune for the cologne. Your only human.

She holds the envelope to her chest like a school girl.

TRISTEN

Nicolas, do you know who Havana Petrikova is?

Nicholas FLINCHES for the first time since we've met him.

NICOLAS

The ex-free agent. Unfortunately I do. I read her evaluation.

TRISTEN

And...

NICOLAS

And that's confidential.

TRISTEN

Nic!

NICOLAS

What?! I cant. That would be the worst possible thing I could do. My badge would automatically detach from my jacket and fall to the ground so everyone in this hangar could trample on my face. What kind of example would that be setting for all the little psychoanalyst out there? The children are the future Tristen.

TRISTEN

You could just say that you are arming me...emotionally.

NICOLAS

Wait. You guys are going to...tonight?

TRISTEN

I've got a feeling. A bad one.

NICOLAS

Well...I cant give it to you for free...

(looks around)

Buy me a soda.

INT. HANGAR - BREAK AREA

The break area is recessed away from the Military chaos. A single exposed light bulb illuminates the area. They are alone.

Tristen puts coins in the machine, looks back at him.

NICOLAS

Anything diet.

TRISTEN

You're a joke Laurent.

NICOLAS

Wow, you sound like the woman who gave me my driving test when I was sixteen.

She hits a button. A can plops down to the opening. She crouches to retrieve it but doesn't. She sits there. Thinking. Her face is a maze of needs.

She closes her EYES.

The solo bulb over Nicolas' head begins to DIM.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)

(looking at bulb)

Budget cuts...

The light goes OUT.

There is the sound of light SHUFFLING in the complete darkness.

The bulb RELIGHTS, the shadows melt away.

NICOLAS

Stands ALONE. Slowly, his fingers rise. He feels his lips, searching for soft traces of the Angel that just touched them.

BLACKOUT

ON TRISTEN - SLOW MOTION

Tristen traverses the hangar and boards the Jumbo Plane. As she does many eyes are stuck to her. What is going through her head? What atrocities will she commit? And even more important; how does she cope when its all over?

NICOLAS (VO)

Havana Petrikova, as she now calls herself, is nothing more than a stunningly manicured monster. Her intelligence although finely tuned is easily eclipsed by her appetite for sex and destruction. Add to that her deeply entrenched 'material girl' complex and you have a mass murderer in the name of high fashion under political cover. Doom in a bottle. Anyone can get a dose if the price is right.

Someone hands her an odd looking SUITCASE. She moves into

INT. BATHROOM - JUMBO PLANE

and splashes water on her face.

NICOLAS (VO)

A recent bidding war for her services, which until recently belonged exclusively to Cuba, ended in highly publicized gunfire between them and the Russians. She literally went to the highest bidder. The Cubans were holding her two year old daughter hostage as a signing bonus but she counted the child as a loss and went else where for the bigger paycheck.

Tristen OPENS the red envelope and begins to READ.

NICOLAS(VO) (CONT'D)
She's explosive and implosive at
the same time. Clinically insane,
Egomaniac. Sure, we've heard it all
before. But this woman is to be
avoided at all cost. You don't want
her attention. That's the kind of
evil that follows you home.

EXT. JUMBO PLANE - SKY OVER CUBA

The jumbo plane sails above the clouds. The moonlight paints
the sky as a sea of puffy carpet.

INT. JUMBO PLANE

Tristen EXITS the bathroom wearing her 'uniform'.

Head to toe in some skin tight, white, alien fiber. An
AMERICAN FLAG emblazoned over her left breast.

NINA, Air Force, REACTS.

NINA
So much for being covert this trip,
huh?

TRISTEN
I, uh, I'm going to a dinner party.

NINA
Let me guess, sweetie; you weren't
invited?

TRISTEN
That's right.

NINA
(sighing)
You watch you ass out there.

TRISTEN
Wont be hard in these pants.

They smile at each other.

NINA
You ready?

TRISTEN
No...yes...

Nina connects a HARNESS that is attached to her own vest to the wall of the plane. She picks up a small box and brings it to Tristen.

Tristen OPENS the box.

INSIDE THE BOX

A shiny hi-tech looking ear piece with a small microphone on the end.

NINA
They said this one wont burn up.
We'll see, huh?

Tristen puts the piece in her ear.

TRISTEN
(into ear peice)
Testing. Testing.

VOICE (V.O.)
We read you just fine. Copy that.

TRISTEN
Copy.

NINA
Where's your mask, hon?

TRISTEN
Don't need one this time...no one's
getting out alive.

NINA
You just do what you have to do and
hurry back to us, ya hear?

TRISTEN
I hear ya.

A PHONE nearby RINGS. Nina answers it.

NINA
(on phone)
Okay. Got it.

She comes back to Tristen.

NINA (CONT'D)
That was the General. He wants to
put on a show for the foreskins
downstairs. He wants you to start
with a Z6.

TRISTEN

Nina...you ever feel like...?

NINA

Like what, hon?

TRISTEN

Nothing. Like getting it over with.
Lets go.

Nina looks at a DIGITAL COMPASS on her wrist. Tristen has one too.

Tristen backs up to the rear of the plane. Nina hits a button and a huge cargo door begins to OPEN. The belly of the plane fills with air. Out side the purple sky races by.

They stand on the edge of the cargo bay, Nina directly in front of Tristen, staring at her compass.

Nina takes a single step BACK.

NINA

Three...

Tristen's EYES EXPLODE INTO BLUE FLAME.

Nina takes another step back.

NINA (CONT'D)

Two...

Tristen's entire body IGNITES IN BLUE FLAME.

NINA (CONT'D)

One...

Tristen gracefully falls back out of the cargo bay. In a 'cross' position she cuts through the night sky like an indigo torch. Burning holes through clouds as she drops, a falling angel.

She falls past the MOON. Beautiful.

ON THE GROUND

EXT. CUBAN TERRORIST MILITARY ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

The CT's(Cuban Terrorists) mill about unsuspecting.

SCREAMS of torture come from a nearby DITCH. Its contents concealed. The camp lights begin to FLICKER. Suddenly its pitch black. Everyone panics in Cuban Spanish.

TRISTEN

The ground is now rushing up toward her. She holds, eyes CLOSED.

BOOM!

Blue fire Tristen hits the dirt floor dead center of the camp. Her body DETONATES on contact incinerating everything one hundred yards in every direction.

The only sound is that of sizzling bodies and melting metal. The ground is bare and singed BLACK. Tristen's touch down has created a large deep crater.

We creep to the cliff of the crater to peek down at her but she FLIES up landing at its edge.

Spot fires light the area. Glimmering on her.

She scans the camp. Its dead quiet. Then a MUTED SCREAMING from the Ditch.

She takes a step toward it but spins around staring at a burnt edge of jungle. A ROCKET flies out at her. She catches it and throws it directly into the air.

An ARMY TANK tramples out of the jungle, coming straight for her. She rushes it, RIPPING off its cannon.

More TANKS. One on the left and one on the right. They both FIRE. Using the cannon like a baseball bat she smacks the rocket's back to their respective owners. The tanks EXPLODE.

About a hundred CT's run out of the jungle behind her, SCREAMING and firing machine guns. The BULLETS go dead when they hit her.

She pulls OPEN the hatch on the tank of the cannon she ripped off. The Rocket she threw in the air falls into the tank. She SLAMS the hatch closed and rides the Tank as it rocks from the internal explosion.

Tristen BACK FLIPS off the tank and lands right in the middle of the charging CT's. They try to climb her like a mountain. Killing each other as they fire at her from point blank range.

She beats and breaks them one by one. She tosses the bodies into the crater from her fall.

More CT's run out of the DITCH, firing. Soon their bodies lie crumpled and collapsed with the rest of them.

From a concrete reinforced shed Tristen drags two oversized canisters of GASOLINE. She tosses them in the air over the crater.

Her eyes go RED with heat. A TEAR slips out under the flame and slides down her cheek.

The canisters EXPLODE rain LIQUID FIRE over the human pile. Everybody is INCINERATED.

EXT. DITCH

Tristen stares down into the ditch. At the bottom is a DOOR.

Tristen ENTERS.

INT. SUB HALL

Its one long hall way, concrete walls, an OPEN door at the end. Fading MOANS escape.

INT. TORTURE ROOM

Tristen ENTERS slowly. ANDREI, a middle aged Russian diplomat, is strapped to a metal autopsy table. He seems to have been through every variation of torture. He MOANS.

One of His hands has been sawed off. The wound cauterized.

A monitor BLEEPs showing his vital signs. They are almost nonexistent.

Weakly Andrei reaches up for her. She shuts her eyes blocking him out.

She OPENS them. Its KENNY on the table reaching for her now.

KENNY

Tristen...

TRISTEN

Kenny...?

She reaches for him. Fingers touching...

The generals VOICE comes through her ear piece.

GENERAL(O.S.)

(through ear peice)

Tristen, what are you doing?

She snaps out of it. Its Andrei again. She turns to the wall trying not to look at him.

TRISTEN
(to General)
Nothing, General.

GENERAL(OS)
We didn't arrive in time. There's nothing we could do. Continue on to you secondary target.

TRISTEN
But, General, he's still alive...

KENNY
Tristen...

She turns around. Kenny is reaching out to her. He's flipping back and forth from Kenny to Andrei. Both of them attempting to beg for help.

TRISTEN
Kenny...

GENERAL(OS)
Tristen, continue on to your secondary target, that is an order.

Tristen GRITS her teeth. She turns to walk out of the door.

As she does

FLASH BACK TO DREAM SEQUENCE

Tristen delivers a swift kick to Kenny's ribs.

END FLASH BACK

Tristen runs deeper into the torture room. She finds a blanket and wraps Andrei in it. She picks him up and carries him to the surface.

GENERAL(OS) (CONT'D)
(Screaming)
What are you doing!!

TRISTEN
I didn't come all the way over here to watch this man die.

GENERAL(OS)
Your damn right you didn't. You came to make sure he was dead.
(MORE)

GENERAL(OS) (CONT'D)
 Now put the subject down and
 continue on to your secondary
 target.

EXT. DITCH - CONTINUOUS

TRISTEN
 If you wanted this man dead you
 shouldn't have sent me.

GENERAL(OS)
 You see that mass grave a few feet
 away from you, Tristen? You did
 that. You are death. On call twenty
 four hours a day. As needed.

TRISTEN
 Not for long. Continuing on toward
 final target.

She takes the ear piece out of her ear and CRUSHES it.

She looks down into Kenny/Andrei's teary eyes.

KENNY
 Thank you.

She SMILES and takes off into the air.

INT. MILITARY AIR PORT/ CONTROL ROOM

The General SLAMS his ear piece down.

GENERAL
Shit!!

FLAIL
 This is incredibly disappointing. I
 mean, does she do this all the
 time. General, tell me this is a
 menstrual issue or something.

GENERAL
 Mr. Flail, maybe it would be a good
 idea if you stepped out for a
 moment while I confer with my team.

FLAIL
 No. Hell no. I want--the Secretary
 of Defense wants to know what is
 going on right now.

GENERAL
Get the hell out of here!!

FLAIL
 Okay, now your in trouble.
 (to his team)
 Lets go..
 (to General)
 I hope you have a hell of a plan
 'b', because in about fifteen
 minutes I'm going to have the
 Secretary on the phone and he's
 going to want to know why you
 didn't see this coming.

GENERAL
 That wasn't my job. It was his.

He points an Nicolas who has been listening quietly.

FLAIL
 What happened, Laurent?

NICOLAS
 The file said it was a rescue
 mission. If you wanted a failure
 maybe you should have sent Chuck E.
 Cheese.

The General REACTS.

FLAIL
 Maybe. You better get it under
 control. I dont care how you do it.
 Neutralize or vaporize.

Flail and his team EXIT.

EXT. NIGHT SKY - SOMEWHERE OVER CUBA

Tristen carries Andrei through downy clouds profiled by
 ambient moonlight.

They begin to DESCEND. She touches down in the jungle outside

EXT. CUBAN TERRORIST ENCAMPMENT TWO

Tristen sets Andrei down lightly on a mattress of huge jungle
 leaves.

TRISTEN

Andrei? Can you hear me? I have to go for a moment. I'll be right back though and I'll get you some help. Just be quiet. Don't strain.

She gets up to leave. Andrei GRABS her arm.

Its Kenny's FACE.

KENNY

Hurry, Tristen.

TRISTEN

I will, Kenny.

EDGE OF THE JUNGLE OUTSIDE ENCAMPMENT TWO

Tristen SPREADS vines and shrubs and peers into the center of the encampment.

LOLA, THE GERMAN SUPER SUBJECT is trying desperately to keep a BUS full of SCREAMING WOMEN AND CHILDREN from sinking into a custom made pool of wet CONCRETE.

Lola is struggling. She looks no older then SIXTEEN.

Tristen flashes over to the bus which is half way submerged. Concrete SPLASHES at the windows.

Lola has ripped a small grip of metal on the roof.

Tristen flies around looking for somewhere to get a handle.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

Lola, right?

LOLA

(speaks in German)

Yes.

(beat)

Its too heavy. I cant hold it.

TRISTEN

Its not heavy, its just awkward. Grab one of the windows at the back.

She does. Tristen does the same on the other side, grabbing the threshold of a window at the front so they are diagonal from each other.

All of the windows BUST, concrete floods in.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

Lift!

The bus begins to pull out of the concrete. Easily on Tristen's side but Lola is not as strong.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

You got it!?

LOLA

Yes!

They set the bus down on the ground next to the pool.

Tristen pulls the bus doors OPEN, concrete SPILLS out onto the ground. She ENTERS

INT. CONCRETE BUS

The hostages are shaking, scared to death, their lower halves matted with wet grey mud.

TRISTEN

(in German)

If everyone could please remain seated. We will have you to safety in a moment.

She EXITS the bus.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

Lola?

She spots Lola standing on the roof of the bus. Lola stares out in the distance. Tristen joins her. They speak in German.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

They're covered in concrete. We have to get them to the beach to wash it off.

LOLA

What is that?

Tristen looks out to the horizon of the jungle.

TRISTEN

I don't see anything.

The horizon IGNITES. Napalm style. Like Apocalypse Now. The flames race toward where she set Andrei down.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)
Get them to the beach now!

LOLA
I'm not strong enough!

TRISTEN
Then I hope your smart enough.

Tristen LEAVES.

LOLA
Damn!

INT. JUNGLE

Tristen flies through the jungle at top speed. Ahead of her the jungle is being eaten alive by fire. The flames are a few feet away from Andrei.

Tristen SLIDES over him like he's home plate, covering him, closing her EYES as everything around them sizzles.

EXT. ENCAMPMENT TWO

Lola has only dragged the bus a few dozen feet.

She STOPS and ENTERS the bus. She sits in the drivers seat. She POINTS at the ignition. It begins to SPARKS, the engine STARTS.

LOLA
(in German)
Everybody hold on.

Lola rips through the jungle in the opposite direction of the fire. Its obvious that the bus doesn't have a lot of life left. It threatens to die as they bounce thoughts the vines and trees trampling a path. Soon they EXIT the jungle onto a beautiful

EXT. BEACH

The bus grinds to a halt. Sand kicks up as smoke explodes from the engine.

INT. CONCRETE BUS

LOLA
Everybody into the water.

INT. JUNGLE

Tristen OPENS her eyes. Andrei is now a BLACK CHARRED SKELETAL CORPSE.

Tristen REACTS.

EXT. BEACH

The hostages wade in the water. Lola helps a woman scrape wet concrete off of their children.

TRISTEN

touches down in the water next to her, solemn looking she helps with the hostages.

POV TRISTEN - someone is still seated on the bus.

INT. CONCRETE BUS

Tristen ENTERS and advances slowly on the sitting figure.

TRISTEN

Miss?

The woman's face is covered with a blanket.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

Miss, we have to get the concrete off you...

Tristen pulls the lower half of the blanket back. A PLASTIC BABY falls to the floor of the bus.

Tristen REACTS.

She removes the rest of the blanket; it's HER SISTERS DEAD BODY.

She backs away horrified.

A deep LAUGH from behind her.

VOICE(OS)

It's no bathroom sink...but it wraps you up quite effectively, doesn't it?

Havana Pertrikova stands at the front of the bus. She wears mother Russia's version of the skin tight super hero costume.

Tristen's hands tighten into FISTS harder than steel.

HAVANA

Come on Barbie, you have to respect
the research and effort that goes
into a prank like that.

Tristen is at Havana's throat in the blink of an eye.

TRISTEN

You're dead.

HAVANA

I've heard that every other week
since I was four.

The two of them cock back their fists...

EXT. BEACH

Lola looks up from the water to see the bus rocking back and forth, jumping up and down. Lights spark as if there were fireworks inside.

She runs in its direction.

IN THE BUS

The two trade blows ripping the interior of the bus apart. Tristen knocks Havana to the front.

Havana takes a deep breath and VOMITS FIRE in her direction. Tristen walks right through the fire and head butts her. POW! A double footed kick to Tristen's chest, she hits the center isle of the bus sliding back.

Havana's on top of her SWINGING, The bus ROCKS. Tristen stops Trisha's body from falling over. Havana nails her one time good in the face, Tristen feels it.

Lola rips Havana through the grip hole in the roof of the bus.

EXT. BUS - ROOF

Appalled, Havana SMACKS her and DIVE BOMBS her on the hood of the bus. She holds her down as the engine EXPLODES beneath her. Lola screams in agony. The small aftershock detonations finish. Havana kicks her onto the sand.

POV HAVANA - Tristen is still trying to rise from the center isle.

Havana picks up the entire bus and HURLS it out over the ocean. She stares at the bus as it flies away. She DUSTS her hands off and turns to Lola.

In the distance we hear an approaching HELICOPTER.

HAVANA
 (to Lola)
 You hear that? That's a present for
 you. Lets get you ready?

She puts Lola in a choke hold and starts STRANGLING her.

INT. CONCRETE BUS

The bus is still speeding through the air and shows no signs of slowing up. Because of its momentum in its vertical position Tristen is pinned to the floor of the center isle.

Her eyes are half OPEN.

Trisha's body slips out of its seat and falls down the bus out through the windshield.

TRISTEN
 NO!

Tristen dives down after her.

ON THE BEACH

Havana is squeezing the life from Lola.

OVER THE OCEAN

Tristen catches Trisha inches before she hits the water, Tristen is halfway in.

ON THE BEACH

The helicopter is just over Havana. Its carrying something.

HAVANA
 (to earpiece)
 Drop it.

A giant METAL SPHERE with lights and buttons hits the sand.

IN THE OCEAN

Tristen tries to rise out of the water holding her sister but something jerks at her leg.

Tristen REACTS.

A circling of SPLASHES surround her. She rises again and is out of the water when a huge GREAT WHITE SHARK ejects from the water and grabs her pulling her under.

UNDER THE WATER

There are dozens of sharks. Their movements suggests how ravenous their mood.

THE SHARK dives deeper with Tristen in its mouth. She tries with one hand to hold her sister and pry the sharks jaws with the other one.

The other sharks begin to attack. She beats them in their noses. Sometimes having to let go of Trisha momentarily to do them two at a time. They've all got the message. She begins to beat on the huge shark that has her with two hands. It relents. She grabs her sisters body and bullets toward the

SURFACE

She ERUPTS from the water, sharks nipping at her coat tails.

ON THE BEACH

Havana punches a code into a TOUCH PAD on the outside of the sphere. An entrance slides OPEN at its top.

Havana picks up the dazed Lola and flies her to the top of the sphere.

HAVANA (CONT'D)

You really should have stayed in school.

EXT. ALTERNATE BEACH

Tristen sets Trisha's body down on the soft sand. She KISSES her forehead and takes off.

ON THE BEACH

Havana swings the sphere around launching it into the water where it immediately begins to sink.

HAVANA

(to earpiece)

Base this is the sultry Havana Pertrikova. I'm going to need another ball for the American Junior Miss.

Havana turns around. The grill of the Concrete Bus crashes into her pushing her deep under the beach.

Tristen, floating in the air over the beach, sees the bubbles rising from the water. She DIVES

UNDERWATER

The ball is sinking rapidly. Tristen swims up to it. She peeks through a small window.

The interior is lit. Lola lies on the floor UNCONSCIOUS. Tristen BANGS on the outside of the ball trying to yell at Lola.

Lola is waking up. She remembers where she is and REACTS. She runs to the window hitting it. Nothing. Inaudibly she begs for Tristen to save her.

Tristen notices the touch pad. A digital COUNTDOWN is now falling from ten. A WHIRRING SOUND is building. Lola is deathly scared. She stands at the center of the ball.

FIVE.

HUNDREDS OF ELECTRICAL TENDRILS shoot out from the wall of the ball and penetrate Lola, SHOCKING her.

Tristen RIPS out the touch pad but its too late.

Lola, REACHING for the window.

Havana GRABS Tristen from behind and pulls her back through the water.

THREE

TWO

ONE

The ball IMPLODES and then EXPLODES massively.

AT THE SURFACE

A MUSHROOM CLOUD of green FIRE rises from the water lighting up the night. Moments later, after a total silence, DEAD FISH began to surface from hundreds of yards in every direction. Even a dead WHALE floats lifelessly to the top.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BEACH

Tristen has washed up on shore. She rolls over, dazed.

Havana swings the sharp end of a large corroded ANCHOR down at her like an ax. Tristen evades. The two circle each other.

HAVANA

You wont run will you?

Tristen just GLARES from between her fists.

HAVANA (CONT'D)

How American. The odds are stacked against you but you will still risk death to be a success story.

TRISTEN

I'm going to rip your arms off for ever having touched my sister.

Tristen jabs, Havana blocks it, Tristen delivers a blow square in her stomach. Havana doubles over. What little air she needs is knocked out of her.

She recovers.

HAVANA

Is that more attitude Americana? Detached passion? What a joke. While you risk your life defending the illusion of homeland security I waltzed right into to your shitty country and stole your sisters corpse. Does that seem a little odd to you? Do you understand what I'm trying to say?

Tristen's fists slides right through Havana's defense and connects square with her lips. The blow carries Havana off the beach, through the

JUNGLE

to the edge of the concrete pool. Tristen lands right next to her. SLAPPING her in the face repeatedly. Tristen takes her up over the concrete pool and throws her forcefully down into it.

She disappears into the grey mud. After a moment the surface is still calm.

Tristen concentrates, her eyes BURN. She BAKES the entire pool. It is solidified all the way through. She waits.

There is no disturbance. She disappears into the dark SKY.

INT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Tristen lies on the floor in front of her bedroom door. She's still in her tattered and torn uniform.

There is a KNOCK at the front door. She rises and advances on the door with a balled fist.

She PAUSES looking THROUGH it.

She OPENS the door.

Nicolas NODS to her. He walks in slowly, a FILE in hand, he takes a seat on the couch.

Tristen settles opposite him.

Its dead quiet.

POV TRISTEN - A deformed butter knife abandoned in a corner.

Nicolas takes off his SHOES and lays back on the couch, staring straight up.

NICOLAS

Ask me how I feel.

TRISTEN

Why?

NICOLAS

Because no one else ever does.

(beat)

Because I think its important that you understand how I feel...right now. I think that its important that you understand how it feels when a normal person is totally defenseless. Physically and emotionally. How it feels when a normal person cant effect change in a situation that's so...

He shuts his eyes.

TRISTEN

How much acting did you put into trying to make me feel normal only to tear it down today of all days?

NICOLAS

I've never 'acted' a day in my life which is more than I can say for you.

TRISTEN
You dont know anything about me.

He gives her a look. He knows everything about her.

NICOLAS
Ask me how I feel?

TRISTEN
No.

NICOLAS
Ask me.

TRISTEN
I dont care how you feel!

A CRACK forms in the window. Nicolas pretends not to notice.

NICOLAS
When a normal person feels they dont have the power needed to side step the impending doom of themselves or someone they care about, someone they love, they feel...they feel like they are waiting to die. Just like you are waiting to die.

Tristen begins to cry. Nicolas stands. He FLIPS the coffee table from between them. The glass SHATTERS across the room. He falls to his knees in front of her.

NICOLAS (CONT'D)
(softly)
Why did you come back?
(stroking her hair)
They're going to kill you. It was so selfish of you to come back. Why would you do that? I dont...I cant understand. You had to know what would happen. You had to know what they would do. Just tell me why.

Tristen walks across the room, OPENS her bedroom door and returns to her seat.

POV NICOLAS - TRISHA'S SHROUDED CORPSE rests on Tristen's bed surrounded by dozens of candles.

TRISTEN
I had to bring my sister home.

Weary, Nicolas collapses back on the couch, covering his eyes.

NICOLAS

This is a Rouge Contingency Plan.
 (indicates file)
 And keeping with said plan before
 you are destroyed you are replaced.

TRISTEN

By who?

NICOLAS

Who else? This is America. We come
 out winners or we dont come out at
 all.

TRISTEN

Who?

NICOLAS

The General got a team to break her
 out of the concrete before the
 Russians showed up. Nice hefty
 signing bonus. Didn't take long.

TRISTEN

No, dont say that.

NICOLAS

I just did her evaluation.
 (beat)
 At the Coffee Castle.

TRISTEN

Oh my god.

NICOLAS

Tristen, listen to me, just go,
 please. Go to the roof. Go straight
 up, they'll never catch you,
 please. You cant fight them all.

TRISTEN

I dont want them all.

NICOLAS

God dammit! What the hell is wrong
with you? Cant you see that...I
 dont want to see this...

She doesn't feel his pain. This isn't the Coffee Castle.
 There is no even exchange.

Nicolas gives up. He tries not to look back as he EXITS Tristen's apartment. He fails.

Tristen pulls a full length white leather TRENCH COAT from the closet and puts it on over her tattered uniform. She moves into the

KITCHEN

where she takes Bo's tears down from the surface of the refrigerator. She holds it to her face as she leans against the wall and slides down to the floor.

She's concentrating. Her fists tighten. The paper falls to the floor. She gets up and EXITS the apartment.

EXT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY

She walks across the hallway to the stairs. She stands at the top looking down at the rows of Government SWAT TROOPERS that have been waiting for her with itchy trigger fingers.

But she looks into their eyes as she passes. She sees Fathers, Brothers and Sons. All of them scared. All of them just want to be home.

They line the walls of the stairway side by side, odd looking guns pointed reluctantly at her face.

She walks down four flights.

EXT. TRISTEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Tristen steps outside. The intersection is clean of civilians. A hundred more troopers face her, guns aimed. Behind them TWO BATTLE TANKS, also aimed. In front of her is a CHROME BALL like the one Lola died in. HELICOPTERS fly overhead.

She stares at the ball in disbelief of their audacity. She starts to walk casually down the side walk, away from them.

The hatch on one of the tanks pops OPEN. The General stands up.

GENERAL

No. Tristen.

She turns around.

GENERAL (CONT'D)

We're not doing this your way. You might be able to sweet-talk the bleeding hearts but not the United States government. We're taking you to an exit psyche evaluation after which you will be dishonorably discharged. Get in the ball, Tristen. It's not what you think. It's a transport vehicle. Specifically designed for your own safety.

She walks up to the ball, so many infrared beams on her she's completely crimson.

GENERAL (CONT'D)

I know that look of yours. You just remember, you lift a finger against us there will be nowhere to run. Or fly. You need us right now. The Germans are for some strange reason holding you responsible for the death of their subject. On top of that the Cubans and the Russians are looking to kidnap you before threatening you onto their pay roll. We can protect you and your family, Tristen. This doesn't have to be a nasty break up.

Tristen stares at the ground. Her mind forced that way by the amounting odds.

TRISTEN

General...?

GENERAL

Yes, Tristen.

TRISTEN

Tell me where Havana is...and I promise I'll let you live.

The General LAUGHS.

GENERAL

You'll have to excuse me if the words of virtual child dont fill me with concentrated fear. But I'll tell you exactly where Havana is. We let her pick her own cover...she wanted yours.

Tristen REACTS.

She snatches an odd looking ROCKET LAUNCHER from a soldier standing an inch too close. She fires it directly into the blacktop underneath her. A large electromagnetic ripple turns the street into a liquid wave.

Everyone is knocked off their feet. By the time they are back on point Tristen is

ACROSS THE INTERSECTION

She snatches parked cars off the side of the street and LAUNCHES them at the General and troops like they were tennis balls.

After about fifteen cars the tanks are BURIED, the troops SCATTERED.

EXT. CITY STREETS - MORNING

Tristen walks through public, pulling her coat closed. She keeps her eye on CHOPPERS that circle over head.

EXT. TENSOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PARKING LOT

Tristen STOPS at what used to be her PARKING SPOT. Parked there is an apple red AUSTIN MARTIN. The license plate reads: GODDESS.

Tristen LEERS at it.

INT. TENSOR ELEMENTARY - HALLWAY

Meesha EXITS the first grade classroom and sees

MEESHA

Tristen!

They hug.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

The superintendent called me and said you weren't coming back. Sent a replacement and everything. I didn't think I'd ever see you again.

TRISTEN

You wont. I just came to say good bye. And thank you.

MEESHA

(beat)

You have to do what you have to do.
You realize that now, right.

Tristen NODS.

TRISTEN

Did I fail them?

MEESHA

No sweetie. You fail them if you
tell them to always be true and
then you turn around and deny
yourself when all your being is
true.

Tristen tries to look away so she doesn't cry but Meesha
brings her face back.

MEESHA (CONT'D)

You fail them if you tell them to
stand up for what's right..and then
you lay down. Are you laying down?

TRISTEN

Never.

MEESHA

Well, alright. Go say 'hi' to your
children. Not 'goodbye'.

TRISTEN

Okay. Is my...replacement here?

MEESHA

She's mingling with the little
people right now. She's a little
spicy for my taste but her
credentials are outstanding.
They'll be okay. Go ahead, go in.

Tristen HUGS Meesha once more and ENTERS

INT. FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM

Tristen and Havana's eyes connect instantly. The children run
to Tristen.

ALL CHILDREN

Hi Ms. Tristen. We missed you!

TRISTEN

I missed you guys too. How are you?

ALL CHILDREN

We're learning with our new teacher, Ms. P!

TRISTEN

Wow. That sounds exciting. I didn't mean to Interrupt you. I just came to tell you that I love you all.

ALL CHILDREN

We love you too.

Tristen, one eye on Havana, moves back to Bo's desk. He's drawing again.

TRISTEN

Hey, guy.

BO

Hey, Ms. Tristen. Are you back?

TRISTEN

Almost, but not quite.

BO

Do you have to go?

TRISTEN

Yeah.

BO

Do you have time for a picture?

TRISTEN

Always!

Bo SMILES at her. She melts.

He pulls his colors out and moves in long broad strokes. She hangs close to him.

Havana GLARES from the teachers desk at the front of the room where she has her high heel propped up on the desk, even though she's wearing a skirt. She Bites into a blood red APPLE.

BO

(drawing)

Are you gonna miss me where you go?

TRISTEN
I'm positive.

BO
How can you be positive when your
not there yet.

TRISTEN
(tickling him)
Are you doubting my psychic
ability?

BO
(laughing)
No.

TRISTEN
I know because I miss you even
though you're sitting right here.
So it will get worse before it get
better.

BO
Are you still gonna need me where
you go?

TRISTEN
Yes. As a matter of fact. I need
you to do something for me right
now. Something only you can do.

BO
Why me?

TRISTEN
Because you're the strongest, the
smartest and the most powerful. Can
you do this thing for me?

BO
(whispering)
Yes. What is it. Tell me in my ear.

TRISTEN
(smiling)
Okay.

She whispers in his ear. The whisper is lost amongst the
sound of playing children.

BO
I'm not supposed to do that. Its
wrong.

TRISTEN

Some times you have to do the wrong thing for the right reason.

(jokingly)

I threw like twenty cars today and I don't even know who they belong to.

They both LAUGH. He looks at her like he's in love.

BO

Okay.

He hands her the drawing. It's a RAINBOW.

TRISTEN

This is a lovely rainbow.

BO

Its not a rainbow, it's you.

He gets out of his desk and runs to the classroom door, he struggles for a moment to OPEN it but he gets out.

Tristen squeezes into his desk. She uses Bo's crayons, adding TREES and a vibrant SUN to the picture.

She and Havana stare at each other from across the room.

INT. HALLWAY/CLASSROOM - INTERCUT

Bo slides a chair up against the wall.

CLASSROOM

Tristen and Havana; gunslingers in waiting.

HALLWAY

Bo reaches up and pulls

CLASSROOM

The FIRE ALARM rings out sharply. SPRINKLERS activate drenching everything. The kids panic. Havana and Tristen begin herding them toward the door. They are side by side for a moment. The tension is concrete.

Havana heads back to the desk.

Tristen pulls the SHADE down over the port hole and JAMS the door. She returns to Bo's desk, takes her trench coat OFF and sits.

Havana is in front of the chalkboard, NAKED. She's puts on her uniform and takes off her jewelry then sits at the edge of Tristen's old desk. She rings the hard water out of her hair before she puts it up.

They sit there quietly in the artificial rain. Both with the eyes of caged animals. The sprinklers STOP.

HAVANA

I hate kids, you know. We pretend to be teaching them to take care of themselves but we're really just bribing them into letting us take care of them better. Totally murdering their primal urge. We've evolved it right out of them. Well, you have, you've helped anyway, I haven't. If I had a baby, I'd drop her off on a deserted island at ten months old. Come back in two years maybe, if she's still alive, drop her off a gallon of clean water, leave her for another two. Survival of the fittest.

TRISTEN

You did have a daughter.
(beat)
You sold her out.

HAVANA

(beat)
I couldn't find an island.
(looking away)
She never stopped crying.
(beat)
Do you know how much powder I'm going to have to snort to get that sound out of my head?

She pulls a vial out of her purse. It explodes in her hand. The blue powder igniting and then vaporizing.

She looks at Tristen who STANDS now, eyes ABLAZE.

HAVANA (CONT'D)

Okay, Tristen, execution time.

The desks in between them part like the red sea, flying up against the wall. Havana bullets through, TACKLES Tristen.

They wrestle on the wet floor. Their thunderous blows leave streaks of colored fire in their wake.

Havana spins around, choking Tristen.

HAVANA (CONT'D)
 What's wrong, hon? Need some air?
 Lets step outside.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/PLAYGROUND

Tristen's body blasts through the wall and carries through the playground. She catches on jungle gyms which are ripped out of the sandbox by her momentum. She's freed in the chaos but tumbles into a CHAIN LENGTH FENCE which she becomes wrapped in.

An CHOPPER hovers in the air over her.

Havana grabs the feet of the chopper and forces it UPSIDE DOWN. The rotating BLADES like the bottom of a lawn mower bearing down on Tristen.

She BREAKS out of the fencing, and STOPS the blades inches from her face.

SCHOOL PARKING LOT

The teachers are caught between counting kids and watching the spectacle in the school yard. Toddlers mill around without supervision. Bo also watching the scene, recognizes Tristen under the gun.

BO
 Ms. Tristen? Ms. Tristen!

He RUNS around the fence and onto the grass yard.

TRISTEN

Lets one hand free and gauges the rotation of the blades.

ON TOP

Havana's face is twisted in evil desire.

Tristen GRABS one of the blades and jerks it down into the grass. She rolls out as the copter begins an anchored tailspin, flips over and crushes Havana.

BO (CONT'D)
 (running)
 Ms. Tristen!

TRISTEN
Bo! Go Back!

There is a 'whooshing' SOUND behind Tristen. She turns. Havana stands there with that twisted smile. The chopper is gone.

Tristen looks back. The CHOPPER sails through the air, dead weight halfway to Bo.

She RUNS and slides over him like she did Andrei in the jungle. She closes her eyes and knocks the copter away with one swing.

The chopper continues into the parking lot CRUSHING Havana's goddess mobile.

Tristen OPENS her eyes. Bo's wide eyes stare back.

BO

Ms. Tristen your strong.

TRISTEN

Thanks guy.

POV TRISTEN - In the distance a BLACK CHOPPER holds its position. The large deadly SPHERE dangles below it.

Havana locks Tristen's arms from behind and hoists her high into

THE SKY

Somewhere past the clouds Tristen breaks away.

HAVANA

Here comes your severance package.

TOMAHAWK MISSILES explode into Tristen's back. She SCREAMS in pain.

Missiles from both sides. One detonates on her forearm, the other catches her in the ribs. She doubles over in mid air.

Havana locks her up from behind.

SHOOM! SHOOM!

Two STEALTH BOMBERS whiz by on both sides. They make sharp U TURNS. Stealth Bomber One lets two missiles go. Tristen struggles but Havana holds her tight. The rockets explode in her mid section.

Havana, ecstatic, howls like a banshee.

Bomber Two screeches forward. Two missiles FIRE.

Tristen ducks. Both bombs blow up in Havana's face. When the smoke clears she barely has a nose bleed but she's pissed.

Tristen is GONE.

HAVANA (CONT'D)
Where are you, bitch!?

Two hands appear from a soft cottony cloud behind Havana and pull her in

THE CLOUD

Tristen now has Havana locked up from behind.

TRISTEN
(in her ear)
Your turn to play catch, goddess.

Tristen holds her there listening to the SOUND as the bombers pass by repeatedly, looking for them.

Bomber One is passing the cloud. Tristen steps out swinging Havana by the ankles like a baseball bat. The bomber and all its missiles EXPLODE as she collides with it.

Havana can barely stay air borne. She tips and crests like a beautifully singed zeppelin running out of gas.

POV TRISTEN - Hundreds of feet below them the sphere, chrome death, waits for one of them. Better hurry.

She zaps down to where the chopper hovers, centering herself underneath the mass of metal and forcing it straight up, sphere and all.

The two PILOTS jump out, their parachutes OPEN seconds later.

HAVANA

Still dazed. Her body drops in altitude a few feet at a time.

We move over her looking straight down as

THE CHOPPER BLADES close in.

The two COLLIDE.

The metal cant chop her so she just screams as she is wrapped up in the blades, stalling them. The machinery gives out and EXPLODES.

Tristen pushes through the ball of fire snatching up the unconscious Havana. She flies higher, to the edge of the Earth's atmosphere, dragging the sphere by its large strap.

EXT. EDGE OF SPACE

Tristen lets Havana go. She floats, buoyant.

Tristen PUNCHES the keypad on the sphere. The display POPS and SIZZLES, crushed.

The entry hatch slides OPEN.

Tristen GRABS Havana, directs her body into the sphere.

TRISTEN

Contemplating. She grips the edge of the hatch. Breathes deep, running figures in her head. She looks back at the planet.

She gets INSIDE.

INT. SPHERE

Tristen estimates the position of the control pad. She PUNCHES the wall of the sphere.

The hatch CLOSES. The interior LIGHTS UP.

Tristen grabs Havana, holds her by the shoulders. She closes her eyes. Breathes. Scared.

Silence.

The WHIRRING begins.

The projectiles FIRE. Tristen SPINS Havana around so fast that every single electrode buries itself in Havana's body.

Havana jerks AWAKE, SCREAMING. She passes out again.

Tristen weaves through the live wires. She pushes up against the wall of the sphere.

EXT. SPHERE

The large orb tips back down towards Earth's atmosphere. Tristen hangs on to Havana who is strung like a marionette.

TRISTEN

You want to see who's stronger?
Because that's what determines
who's right and who's wrong, isn't
it?

(beat)

I hope we both die from this.

They start their fall back to Earth. Through burning reentry,
through self contained storm clouds and lightening strikes.
Past birds and planes. A fiery speeding bullet.

Suddenly the ground is close. Death is close.

Havana's eyes OPEN ever so slightly.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

(in her ear)

Can you hear her? Can you hear your
baby crying?

From Havana, a TEAR.

EXT. ROME - STREET/SHOPPING DISTRICT - DAY

The impact digs a crater in the street twenty feet deep. Blue
fire and blacktop particles are pushed straight up into the
air. A mushroom cloud of dust and stark white smoke plumes in
what looks like a shopping district close to the water.

The initial panic of the explosion calms. Amazingly, injuries
are minimal. Pedestrians venture to the edge.

Tristen rolls off the burnt skeletal remains of Havana.

POV TRISTEN - the world is a smoky blur. She cant focus. She
finds a wall of dirt with protruding pipes and begins to
CLIMB.

Tristen crawls out of the crater and stumbles past the crowd
gathered at its rim. She moves down the sidewalk, bumping
onto people, knocking them to the ground.

She walks, sometimes accidentally floating a few inches off
the ground. She's searching for something.

EXT. STREET CAFÉ

Tristen spots her MOTHER in a group of startled citizens. She
reaches out...

TRISTEN

Mom.

MELISSA

Tristen? Tristen?! Oh my god. What happened to you? Baby what happened?

TRISTEN

Shhh. Mom, listen to me. I have to tell you something.

Tristen begins to cough violently. When she pulls her hand away its covered with BLOOD.

MELISSA

We have to get you to a hospital.

TRISTEN

(trying not to laugh)

A hospital? Do you think they can do surgery on my entire existence? Cut out my regret like a cancer? Give me back my missing time like a donated organ.

MELISSA

(crying)

Sweetie, what's wrong?

TRISTEN

Too many minus', mom. Every move I make results in a subtraction somewhere for someone. Someone is always losing something on my account. Tears, blood, pride, love...life. I thought I could live with it, you know, sacrificing for the greater good. Then my positives started disappearing. The few positives I had. Kenny, Trisha...I pushed you away.

MELISSA

No you didn't.

TRISTEN

I did inside. I covered it well. I cover so well, I've been covering for so long. Mom, I need you to do something for me.

(coughing)

Tell Marcus I love him.

MELISSA

You can tell him yourself, honey.

TRISTEN

No...I dishonored him because I thought it would get me through the night. And it did, and I'm afraid of what that might mean. Never, I'll never look him in the eye again. When you go back...kiss my niece for me. Tell her no matter what they say...it was all for her.

She hugs her mother.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)

Where's my father?

MELISSA

He's...sitting by the water. I was getting his coffee.

Tristen starts to stumble toward the water. Melissa STOPS her.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Tristen, wait.

(beat)

Your father came here when her was in the service. Said it was the most beautiful place he'd ever seen. That spot right over there.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

He said he wanted to die here.

Tristen REACTS.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Brain tumor. He was supposed to have a few more weeks, but, when he heard about Trisha he said he could feel it coming. What ever you say to him...make sure it ends with 'I love you'.

TRISTEN

(nodding)

Get his coffee, mom. I love you.

Its a face off with PAIN as Tristen walks off toward the boardwalk and the solitary bench facing the water. Every step excruciating enough to kill a normal person instantly.

Frank sits there staring out at the sea. She sits next to him.

FRANK
(faintly)
Tristen?

TRISTEN
Yeah, daddy. It's me.

He SMILES and looks back toward the water. Her HAND sneaks into his, gripping it tightly.

She stares at it with him for a moment. Her head is ringing, she BLEEDS from her ears, stifles a cough and time becomes a factor again.

TRISTEN (CONT'D)
(turning to him)
Daddy, I...

Frank has DIED staring out at the sea beyond Rome, just like he wanted to.

She looks at him for what seems like a long time and then shuts her eyes and lays her head in his lap. She wraps HIS arm around HERSELF as if he were comforting her on his own.

She sleeps too.

The pain turns into a faint tingle.

The tingle turns into nothing.

FADE TO BLACK