

Not so Ordinary

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INT. LIAM'S LIVING ROOM

LIAM sits at the edge of his seat... elbows resting on his knees... face in his blood-covered hands.

He shakes his head. Droplets of sweat hangs from his drenched fringe.

LIAM

No... no, no.

The room is sparsely decorated.

Drug paraphernalia litters the coffee table...

A cigarette still smolders in an overfull ashtray, next to a fallen beer bottle and his friend.

Light from the adjacent kitchen is the only light source.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAWN

BEN CARTER(39) sips on his coffee. He looks intensely at Roger(38).

BEN CARTER

So, there's no way?

Roger shakes his head... sips on his coffee... takes his time--

ROGER

We can adopt.

BEN CARTER

Damn, bro.

DISPATCHER V.O

10-16 at 352 South Eighty-Second Street.

Roger reaches for his mic, responds.

ROGER

This is Unit Six. We are en route.
ETA two minutes.

EXT. STREET - DAWN

The police cruiser speeds up-- lights flashing.

INT. LIAM'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN

The cigarette in the ashtray burns itself out.

Liam stares at his blood-stained hands-- shakes his head... tries to remove the blood from his hands.

The blue and red lights outside, colors the filthy white walls in spooky shadows of red and blue.

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

ROGER
This is the police. Open the door!

He looks up. Confused.

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

Jumps up, looks around...

OUTSIDE ON THE PORCH

Roger and Ben waits, their eyes meet.

Ben nods slowly, his glock primed against his chest.

Roger bangs against the door again.

INT. LIAM'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN

The white door bursts open. Roger and Ben barge in, glocks drawn.

Liam freezes bewildered.

ROGER
Put your hands behind your head.

His limbs come to life. He raises his hands - his fingers entangle behind his head.

ROGER (cont'd)
Get down!

Liam kneels down, hands behind his head. Roger moves in... vigilant.

Liam lays face down on the filthy floor.

Ben holsters his glock, kneels down next to Liam, slams cuffs on. He looks at the blood on Liam's hands.

He looks at Roger, motions to the kitchen.

Roger steps into-

THE KITCHEN

A round wooden table fills most of the kitchen.

The table cloth hangs half off the table.

A fallen beer bottle, keeps the tablecloth from falling to the ground.

A broken bottle, scattered on the floor.

Roger steps deeper into the kitchen.

A pool of blood comes to view.

Roger steps around the table.

A woman is sprawled out on the floor, a knife clenched in her hand. Blood seeps from a wound on her head.

Roger tries to find a pulse... slides his hand across her eyes, close them respectfully.

He gets up, talks into the mic on his shoulder.

ROGER

This is Unit 6. We have one deceased female.

An unfamiliar sound draws Roger's attention. He pauses... listens... hears a faint cry.

Roger follows the cries down--

THE PASSAGE, past the first door. He enters the second door.

INT. DIRTY BEDROOM - DAWN

Roger flicks the light switch. Life comes to a bare bulb hanging from the roof. Shocked, Roger stares into the room.

ROGER

Oh my God!

Instinctively, his hand reaches for the mic.

He reaches the grimy mattress in the corner of the dirty room, kneels down next to a baby.

ROGER (cont'd)
This is Unit 6. We request urgent
medical assistance. We have a
severely injured infant.

Faint cries escape her lips. Blood gash from the slit in her
throat.

He picks a towel off the floor... presses it on the wound...
reaches for the mic.

ROGER (cont'd)
Unit 6. I need that ambulance, now!

DISPATCHER V.O
Unit 6, an ambulance has been
dispatched. ETA three minutes.

Roger turns to the infant.

ROGER
(soft and fatherly)
Hang on, little one. Help is on the
way. You just have to hang in there.

EXT. LIAM'S YARD - DAWN

Ben leads Liam to the police cruiser... opens the back
door... helps him in.

The ambulance arrives. Two medics jumps out.

BEN CARTER
(points to the house)
In there, second room to the left.

INT. INSIDE HOUSE - DAWN

Two medics runs into the room, kneel on either side of
Roger.

He hands the dirty towel compress over, rise to his feet.

EXT. LIAM'S YARD - DAWN TURNING TO NIGHT

Ben and Roger chat indistinctly. Different departments
arrive. The coroner. Forensics.

The two medics exit the house.

Roger rush over to the medics... reaches them, before they step off the derelict porch.

ROGER
How is she?

MEDIC1
We need to get her to the hospital,
immediately... She has lost a lot of
blood.

Pensive, Roger looks at Ben for a moment.

ROGER
I'm coming with.

Roger runs to Ben, exchange a few words.

Ben nods, squeezes Roger's shoulder.

Roger sits in the ambulance.

Medic 2 hands the baby to Roger, gets in, close the doors.

The ambulance starts moving.

EXT. OUTSIDE COURT - DAY

SUPER: 8 MONTHS LATER

Roger and WANDA(28) exit the court building on a determined walk. Big smiles.

Wanda looks at Roger, holding the eight month old VALERIE in his arms. She pauses, kisses Valerie, prominent scar in her neck, on the cheek.

WANDA
Our little Valerie.

Roger smiles, hugs the baby in his arms and leans over... kiss Wanda.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY - 9 YEARS LATER

Wanda straightens after Roger's kiss. She smiles and looks down at VALERIE (9), a white pitbull puppy in her arms.

WANDA
Did you think of a name yet, Val?

Valerie holds the puppy at an arms length and looks into the blue eyes.

VALERIE

ICE.

ROGER

That's a good one.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

SUPER: 6 Months Later

ICE, weaves from side to side in front of Wanda. She strains against her harness.

Wanda follows her with a smile, a spring in her step. She crosses the road.

Patrons look up as they pass the tables in front of the coffee shop.

EMMA, a stately sixty-something woman, with a battle ax demeanor, shakes her head in dismay.

EMMA

(Under her breath)

I wish they would ban these beasts.

Her husband JOHN looks at her across his glasses, balancing on the tip of his nose. Dumbfounded.

JOHN

What has that poor animal done to you to deserve that? Look how friendly she seems.

EMMA

(Snorts)

Until she turns. They all do... Eventually.

John shakes his head and turns his attention back to his paper.

JOHN

(snorts)

Old hag.

He sips on his coffee, savors the flavor.

A young couple comes to a stop. SARAH, kneels down, calls Ice.

Ice runs to Sarah, licks her face. Sarah cups Ice's face between her hands.

SARAH
Oh, aren't you a sweetheart?

Ice breaks free, showers Sarah with more kisses.

Emma shakes her head, disapproving, takes a bite from her cake.

John smiles, turns back to his newspaper.

Sarah laughs, pushes Ice away, rises. She runs her fingers through her hair.

SARAH (cont'd)
She is adorable, what is her name.

WANDA
Ice.

SARAH
(bends over, rubs
Ice's ears)
It suits her.

She turns to Wanda.

SARAH (cont'd)
She is beautiful.

WANDA
(nods in agreement)
Thanks, she is.

Sarah finds ALEX's hand. She smiles at Alex, who's dark eyes haven't left her.

SARAH
I guess we should go.

ALEX
(smiles)
If you don't want to be late for your appointment.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

The school bell RINGS. Moments later the doors burst open, pupils piles out.

Ice's tail starts to wag... Barks excited.

VALERIE pauses on the steps.

She pushes her glasses up... searches. A big smile creeps onto her face. She leaps off the steps and runs to the gate.

Valerie kneels down, hugs the wriggly pitbull. Her laughter cuts through the noisy rush of school kids.

She gets up hugs Wanda.

VALERIE

Hey Mom.

Wanda places a kiss on Valerie's head.

MOM

How was your day, Honey-bun?

Valerie's face becomes serious, almost sad. She bites down on her lip.

INSERT FLASHBACK

Valerie closes her locker. She looks into the face of AMY, the bully and her two sidekicks, Chloe and Sam.

AMY

My mom says your dad didn't want you.

Valerie looks at her in shock.

AMY (cont'd)

She said he tried to kill you and that is why you have a scar.

CHLOE

Scar-face.

Amy and Chloe shares a high five.

A crowd forms around Valerie and Amy. They chime in.

CROWD

Scar-face, Scar-face.

END FLASHBACK

VALERIE

It was okay.

MOM

Did something happen?

Wanda kneels down and holds Valerie at arm's length by the shoulders.

Eyes glued to the ground, Valerie shakes her head.

Ice comes into her view... her tail wags vigorously.

Valerie's face brightens up, a smile creeps across the somber mouth.

VALERIE
I just missed Ice. Come, let's go
home.

Valerie takes the leash from Wanda's hand, they walk home, unaware of the black Chrysler Escalade following them.

INT. VALERIE'S ROOM - DAY

Valerie sits back. She looks at Ice, dressed in a pink chiffon tutu.

The blue make-up above her eyes in sharp contrast with her white skin.

VALERIE
I am sure you will find that to your
satisfaction, Ma'am.

She puts the foot- red painted toe nails- on the table.

She reaches for a summer hat, places it on Ice's head.

VALERIE (cont'd)
There.
(Stands back)
Ready for your tea-party, Miss.
McMullins?

Ice barks.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Valerie enters the kitchen, school bag already on her back.

ROGER
You ready for school, Sweetie?

VALERIE
I guess.

Val takes her lunch off the kitchen counter, kisses Wanda and Roger, calls Ice.

VALERIE (cont'd)
Come girl, we'll be late.

They exit-

THE FRONT DOOR

down the-

WALKWAY to the

BUS STOP on-

THE SIDEWALK.

Valerie gets on the bus, it drives off.

Ice runs back towards the house.

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Wanda opens the kitchen door.

Steps into THE BACKYARD --

WANDA
Ice, come on.

Ice comes running around the corner, jumps up against Wanda's legs.

Wanda prepares the harness, looks down at Ice.

WANDA (cont'd)
Sit.

Ice sits down... jumps up before Wanda can fit the harness properly.

WANDA (cont'd)
Ice, sit down.

Ice sits with immense effort, while Wanda fits her harness.

EXT. ROAD TO SCHOOL - DAY

LEON re-adjusts his seat.

A red bandanna, hangs low over his eyes. His dark eyes follow Wanda and Ice.

The big pitbull in the backseat wags his tail.

LEON
Calm down, yo. You gonna get us
busted.

Wanda and Ice passes the black Chrysler Escalade.

Leon slides down in his seat, notes the time.

Wanda glances at Killer.

Ice and Killer lock eyes.

They walk past the car.

Wanda and Ice disappears around the corner.

Leon leans forward, starts the vehicle. He pulls away, slowly and disappear around the corner.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - RAINY DAY

Old wooden shed, surrounded by trees... make shift dog box next to every tree.

A thin, drenched pitbull chained to every doghouse.

Parked in front of the shed, a black Chrysler Escalade. Next to it a black Cadillac.

INT. WOODEN SHED

Leon paces. Agitated.

LEON
Where the fuck is he? It's the third
fucking day this week.

JOHNSON
I don't know yo, he said he'll be
here.

LEON
Is he bringing the fucking food? We
need to feed the dogs.

Leon starts pacing again.

JOHNSON
He said he is.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - LATE NIGHT

The energy is electric. Everyone talks at the same time.
Laughing. Money. Excitement.

In the middle of the crowd, a ring is squared off.

RINGMASTER
Ladies and gentleman, have we got a
fight for you?

The crowd CHEERS.

In the left corner Leon leans forward, holds a black
pitbull.

TERMINATOR barks, saliva spatters in all directions.

The crowd ROARS wildly.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
On our left tonight, we have the
undefeated, Terminator.

In the right corner, DWAYNE bends over a fawn pitbull.

TRENT seems much calmer than Terminator.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
In the left hand corner, we have new-
comer Trent.

The crowd ROARS.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Will the Terminator disappoint?
(Waits for the cheers)
Or will Trent surprise with his brute
strength?

SERIES OF FLASH SHOT
Bookies takes bets-
Money change hands-
Smoke... laughter... excitement-

The ringmaster steps out of the ring.

RINGMASTER
Ladies and gentleman shall we get
this started?

CROWD
YEAH!

The ringmaster looks at the two competitors and their dogs.

RINGMASTER
Are you ready?

Leon is bent over his dog... hands on either side of Terminator's face.

Terminator barks excited.

The ringmaster looks to the competitor in the opposite corner.

Determined, Dwayne bent over his dog, nods. He speaks to his dog.

Trent strains against his arms.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Release!

The two dogs charge. They lunge at each other, mouths open, murder in their eyes.

A woman in a red satin, evening dress, turns away... shields the horror with her hand.

Her partner cheers excitedly.

Teeth, blood, eyes...

Money change hands, bets are placed. The crowd goes wild.

Leon paces nervously, shouts words of encouragement to Terminator.

The newcomer gets a hold of The Terminator's cheek, he yelps.

Leon turns his back to the fight, discouraged.

Terminator, on his back, kicks with his hind legs. He manages to break free from Trent's grip.

The crowd cheers.

Leon turns back... sees The Terminator up... cheers.

On the opposite end of the ring Dwayne looks confident.

Roger moves around the crowd. A hidden camera takes pictures of the event, people and participants.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Wanda washes her hands and dries them on her apron. Valerie watches her every move. Ice sitting close by her feet. The expression on her face is somber.

VALERIE

Mom?

Wanda turns to Valerie.

WANDA

Yes, Honey.

Valerie straightens up... uncomfortable.

Wanda notices and sits down opposite Valerie at the kitchen table. She takes Valerie's hand.

WANDA (cont'd)

What's it baby?

Valerie looks Wanda in the eyes. Her hand finds the scar in her neck.

VALERIE

How did I get this?

Wanda looks overwhelmed.

WANDA

You always had it. Why?

VALERIE

But how did I get it?

Wanda looks around uncomfortable. She takes a deep breath.

Two hands cover Valerie's eyes.

ROGER

Guess who?

A smile creeps onto Valerie's face.

VALERIE

The tooth-fairy?

Roger laughs.

ROGER
Not. Guess again.

Valerie giggles.

VALERIE
Is it the Easter bunny?

Wanda, grateful for the break, smiles at their silly game.

ROGER
Guess again.

Valerie smiles.

VALERIE
That only leaves... Santa.

Roger laughs. He lets his hands slip from Valerie's eyes, places a kiss on her cheek, pulls out a chair at the table next to her.

ROGER
You ready for school?

Valerie nods, a somberness creeps across her face.

VALERIE
I guess.

Valerie slides off the chair and collects her schoolbag. She wraps her arms around Roger.

VALERIE (cont'd)
Bye Dad, I love you.

The big man wraps his arms around his daughter.

ROGER
I love you too, Peanut.

Valerie turns to Wanda.

VALERIE
You didn't answer my question.

HONK! HONK! The school bus honks outside.

WANDA
We'll talk later, Honey. You'll be late.

Wanda pulls Valerie into a hug.

WANDA (cont'd)
You must have a good day.

HONK!

VALERIE
Bye, Mom.

She scoops her lunch of the table.

VALERIE (cont'd)
Come on Ice.

She hands Ice her lunchbox. They hurry out the door to the bus.

ROGER
What was that about?

Wanda turns to him. Concerned.

WANDA
She asked me about the scar.

Roger, reaching for a cup, stops in mid-air. He looks at Wanda.

ROGER
What did you tell her?

Wanda looks out the door. Valerie takes her lunch from Ice, kneels down, gives her a hug.

WANDA
Nothing.

INT./EXT. LEON'S VEHICLE - MORNING

Leon sees the girl and pitbull run towards the bus. He exits his vehicle. Leans against the fender.

INSIDE-- Killer moans excited.

Valerie gets on the bus. Ice sits on the sidewalk.

Leon calls at Ice. She looks at him, then back at the house.

LEON
Come on girl.

He kneels down, extends his hand.

LEON (cont'd)
Come on. You know you want to.

Ice gives a couple of steps towards him.

WANDA O.S
Ice! Come on, girl.

Ice stops, looks back at the house... looks at Killer in the window of the car... turns and runs to the house.

Leon looks at his watch. 8:32am. He gets into the vehicle and drives off slowly, looking at the house.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING - RESUME

Roger looks at Wanda, intently.

ROGER
We have to tell her Wanda.

Wanda shakes her head.

WANDA
NO! Can you imagine what it will do to her?

Roger smashes his hand on the counter top.

ROGER
Dammit, Wanda! Rather let her hear the truth from us, then half-truths from strangers... or the kids at school.

Wanda looks at Roger, big-eyed. She starts to cry.

Roger folds his arms around her.

ROGER (cont'd)
I'm sorry, for losing my temper,
(Holds her at an
arm's length)
but we need to tell her. She deserves to know.

WANDA
I know, but it's her whole life. Everything she knows. We just can't do it to her.

Roger takes Wanda's face between his hands.

ROGER

Hey, we have raised a beautiful and strong girl. She'll be alright,
(Takes a seat)
and if she isn't... we will handle it.

Wanda allows Roger to pull her into a hug. She lays her head on his chest. She nods, in agreement, tears slowly making their way down her face.

WANDA

Maybe you're right. I noticed she is not as happy to go to school, lately. It worries me.

Roger places a kiss on top of Wanda's head. Love for her radiates from him.

ROGER

I am working a late shift today. We can tell her after school.

Wanda nods. She loosens Roger's grip and looks into his eyes.

WANDA

Do you have any idea how much I love you?

ROGER

Well, you'll just have to proof it Mrs. McMullins.

He kisses Wanda in the neck... giggles as he steers her to the bedroom.

Wanda happily obliges.

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

Leon looks at his watch again.

LEON

Anytime now.

He straightens from leaning against the fender of his Escalade. He opens the door, grabs a hold of Killer's leash. Eagerly, Killer jumps out of the vehicle.

Leon looks at his watch again. Then up and down the tree-lined street.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The door closes. Wanda checks to see if it is locked.

WANDA
You ready, girl?

Ice barks excitedly.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Leon looks at his watch... grins.

LEON
Right on time.

He rubs Killer's head.

LEON (cont'd)
You ready, boy?

Killer barks.

LEON (cont'd)
Let's go see what she's made off.

Leon takes a hold of the lead, heads around the corner, purposely bumps into Wanda and Ice.

LEON (cont'd)
Oh, I'm so sorry.

Wanda recovers from the initial shock. She tucks on Ice's lead to bring her closer.

WANDA
It's alright. No harm done.

Wanda looks at Killer.

Leon pulls Killer back.

LEON
Hey yo, give the ladies some space
man. What's wrong with you, yo?

He looks down at Killer. He shivers with excitement.

Leon tucks on the lead.

LEON (cont'd)
Come on yo, sit down.

Killer sits obediently.

LEON (cont'd)
Sorry about that. He gets a little
excited.

Wanda looks at the big brown dog.

WANDA
He's beautiful.

Leon motions to Ice.

LEON
Thanks... but so is yours. How old is
she? She looks young.

Wanda looks at Ice, who reaches to Killer. Wanda tucks the
lead.

WANDA
Ice. Leave him alone.
(turns to Leon)
She is 7 months.

Leon kneels down and extends a hand to Ice. She smells,
hesitantly, turns her attention to Killer.

LEON
She fixed?

WANDA
Not yet. She is booked to go next
week .

Wanda looks at the time. Leon notices and straighten up. He
looks at Killer.

LEON
Come boy, let's not keep the ladies
any longer. They seem to be in a
hurry.

Killer reacts immediately.

Wanda looks apologetic.

WANDA
Sorry, I didn't mean to be rude. I
need to fetch my daughter from
school.

Leon nods in understanding.

LEON

All good, we should be on our way too. It was nice meeting you and...
Ice.

Wanda smiles.

WANDA

You really have a beautiful dog.

Leon smiles.

LEON

Yeah, he's alright. He's a good boy.

Wanda walks off... glances over her shoulder at Leon.

Leon kneels down and talks to Killer.

LEON (cont'd)

Well, yo, looks like we found you a pretty new bitch, if we quick about it.

He gets up, walks back the way he came. His hand slides across the slats of the wooden fence.

He stops, backs up a step, has a quick look around, feels the loose slat again.

A smile plays on the corner of his mouth.

LEON (cont'd)

Well would ya know. Ice must have slipped out.

He laughs, lets Killer into the back seat. He drives off.

INT. WOODEN SHED - DAY

Leon puts a puppy back in the litter box and picks up another.

He lifts the lips to look at the teeth and smiles when the pup growls. He turns the puppy to see the sex. It's a boy.

LEON

Hands off this one. He's mine.

He ties a ribbon around the neck of the pup and puts it back in the litter box.

Johnson nods, shifts the ever-present match from one side of his mouth to the other.

JOHNSON

It's a good litter... should get good money for them.

LEON

I found a new bitch. We need to prepare, will bring her home soon.

Johnson looks at Leon with renewed attention.

JOHNSON

She a fighter?

Leon shakes his head.

LEON

A pet... awesome specimen... pure white, blue eyes... Gorgeous man.

JOHNSON

When?

Leon paces agitated.

LEON

I don't know man... soon as I can lay my hands on her.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Valerie kneels down... Ice kisses her vigorously.

Valerie's happy laughter audible above the school yard bustle.

Valerie gets up, hugs Wanda. They start the walk home, Wanda's arm across Valerie's shoulder.

Valerie chats indistinctly with Wanda.

Ice walks in front of them, smells at everything.

INT. VALERIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wanda quietly peeks into the half-open door.

On the bed, Valerie sleeps peacefully, her arms stretched across the pitbull, sleeping on the covers.

Wanda smiles silently, she tucks on the duvet, places a soft kiss on Valerie's cheek, rubs Ice's head.

WANDA
Good night girls, sweet dreams.

She switches the light off.

The moonlight falls over the girl and her dog.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Valerie takes her lunch tin from Ice. She hugs the pitbull and gets on the bus. The bus rides off.

Valerie waves and blows kisses at Ice, on the sidewalk.

The bus drives past the black Dodge Escalade parked on the side of the road. Inside the vehicle Leon looks at his watch. 8:33 am.

LEON
Right on time.

He looks at Killer.

LEON (cont'd)
You ready to do this yo?

Killer barks excitedly.

LEON (cont'd)
Let's do this.

He opens the door and lets the dog out. They walk up the street.

At the loose slat, Leon kneels down... pretends to fasten a shoelace, glances around.

When sure no one is watching, he slip the blade of a flip-knife in, loosens the slat completely.

Satisfied, he walks back to the Escalade and gets in.

LEON (cont'd)
Looks like we will have company tonight.

The big dog barks excitedly.

Leon rubs Killer's ears.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Wanda slips her bag across her shoulder. She looks down at Ice.

WANDA
No girl, you have to stay, I won't be
long, I promise.

The door closes. Wanda walks down the footpath leading to the street.

Inside the house, Ice gets up, she turns around, runs to the kitchen, through the doggy door and into the back garden.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Leon straightens up in his seat. Attention on Wanda, leaving the house.

LEON
Oh yeah... There we go.

Wanda walks past the black vehicle without noticing Leon in the driver seat.

He watches her walk past... sinks back in his seat...
adjusts the rear-view mirror... watches her in the mirror
until she disappears from view.

He sits up, looks through the back window.

When he can no longer see Wanda, he takes the leash, from the passenger seat, turns to Killer.

LEON (cont'd)
You wait here yo, I'm gonna get you
that bitch.

Leon gets out the vehicle. He walks to the loose slat and slips it to the side.

Ice notices and runs to the opening, curious. Leon puts his hand through.

Ice smells his hand, recognizes the smell. She wags her tail.

LEON (cont'd)
That's a good girl. Come now.

He slips the leash around her neck and helps her through the gap.

LEON (cont'd)
That's a good girl.

He leads Ice to the vehicle... opens the passenger door, allows her to jump in. He closes the door behind her. They disappear down the tree-lined street.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

The front door closes.

WANDA
Ice, I'm back.

Wanda waits for the sound of dog steps on the floor.

WANDA (cont'd)
Ice?

Nothing.

WANDA (cont'd)
Ice! Come on baby, where are you?
Ice?

Wanda starts to panic, she searches the house, calls Ice--
Nothing.

Frantic she opens the kitchen door.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Wanda barges into the backyard.

WANDA (cont'd)
Ice? Come on girl.

Wanda pauses shocked... inspects the loose slat shifted to the side...

WANDA (cont'd)
(Frantic)
No, no, no, no, no. Ice? ICE!

Wanda runs into the house.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - DAY

Leon ensures the chain and collar is properly secured. He gets up, turns to Johnson.

JOHNSON
She's a fucking beaut.

Leon looks pleased.

LEON
Told ya man, she's a babe.

He looks back at the pitbull fighting against the heavy chain.

JOHNSON
I wonder if she will perform.

LEON
She better, if she doesn't perform,
she'll be fucking bait.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Wanda dials a number on her phone... urges Roger to answer.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Papers are strewn about the desk, files are piled up on one side. A phone rings.

Roger pads down the papers, tries to locate the phone, hidden underneath the mountain of paperwork.

ROGER
Hey Honey.

INTERCUT WITH WANDA AND ROGER

WANDA
(Frantic)
Roger, you have come home, she's
gone, I can't find her anywhere.

Roger gets up, worried immediately.

ROGER
Val?

Wanda shakes her head.

WANDA
Oh my God, Val. How am I going to
tell her?

Roger sits down again.

ROGER
Wanda you not making sense.

Wanda takes a deep breath, trying to calm herself down.

WANDA
Ice, I can't find her. I went out and
when I came back, she was gone.

Still worried, Roger relaxes a little.

ROGER
Did you look outside?

WANDA
Of course I looked outside. I looked
everywhere... there is a loose slat
in the fence... I searched around the
neighborhood. I can't find her.

She begins to cry.

WANDA (cont'd)
What will I tell Valerie? She will be
devastated.

ROGER
Don't worry, we'll find her. Make
posters. Contact the Humane Society
and the pound.

WANDA
I'll get on it right away.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Wanda envelopes the crying Valerie in her arms.

WANDA
Don't worry, honey... we will find
her. Dad is out looking for her.

Teary eyes look up to Wanda, a sob shakes through her body.

VALERIE
What if we don't... What if we never
find her?

Wanda kneels down, she takes a gentle hold on Valerie's
arms. She takes a deep breath to calm herself.

WANDA

Honey, I know you are upset, but right now we need to focus on the positive and that is the hope the we will find her.

Wanda gets up.

WANDA (cont'd)

Come, we need to be strong. We need to put these posters up.

Valerie nods slips her hand into Wanda's.

VALERIE

Do you think we'll find her?

Wanda nods quietly.

INT. VALERIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A poster with a picture of Ice lies on the bedside table... Valerie's thick frames glasses on top of it.

Valerie lies on her side, clenching a pillow. She cries silently.

INT. WOOD SHED - NIGHT

Leon circles a third ad in the newspaper. It reads: Cute Jack Russel puppies, free to good home. Loves kids. Contact Pete followed by a contact number.

He looks up at Johnson, also reading through the swap columns.

LEON

You finding any?

JOHNSON

Yeah... lots of kittens... a dachshund...

LEON

Good. We need bait. I want Ice on the jenny this week.

JOHNSON

Yeah, be interesting to see what that bitch gonna do. I'll make the calls. We can pick up in the mornin'.

Leon nods in agreement.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Wanda places the phone back in its base. She turns to face Roger and Valerie. She shakes her head.

WANDA

Nothing.

Valerie starts to cry.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Valerie barges from the school doors. She pauses for a moment, searches for Wanda. Her happy demeanor changes.

Wanda kneels down in front of Valerie, tries to hug her.

Valerie swats her arms away.

Doleful, they walk home. Valerie wipes tears from her cheek.

INT. VALERIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The curtains dance in the slight breeze-- the moon paints the room a pale shade of blue.

Valerie kneels in front of her bed. Hands folded in prayer.

VALERIE

Dear God, I am sorry if I have been bad. Please don't punish Ice... she has done nothing wrong... she loves me... and I love her. Please God, let her come home. I will be good... I promise. Amen

Frozen in the door, Wanda's eyes well up. She takes a deep breath-- walks into the room, sits down next to Valerie.

WANDA

(Fighting back
tears)

Val, honey, please don't think that you did anything wrong. Ice isn't missing because of anything you did or didn't do.

VALERIE

Why did she go away then?

WANDA
I don't know, Honey.

Valerie looks up at Wanda.

VALERIE
Do you think we will find her?

Wanda looks at the moon, closes her eyes for a moment.

WANDA
I... I don't know. We just have to
keep the faith.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - NIGHT

The wind howls through the trees on the property. Every tree has a makeshift shelter and dog chained to it.

Some of the dogs barks at the wind, some howls.

Ice lays curled up in front of her shelter... she shivers... looks at the moon... tucks her head in... shivers...her eyes close... shivers.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Wanda turns to Roger, hands him a cup of coffee.

He glances at her.

ROGER
We cannot lose hope.

WANDA
It's been 5 days.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - DAY

Leon stares at Ice, a far off look in his eyes. He looks up as Johnson joins him.

JOHNSON
How do you want to do this?

LEON
Undertaker.

Johnson looks up, shocked.

JOHNSON
Undertaker...? Are you sure?

Leon nods slowly, deliberate.

LEON
I have feeling about her. She reminds
me of Athena.

JOHNSON
The bitch that took out the Don's
dame?

Johnson takes another look at Ice. He nods in affirmation.

JOHNSON (cont'd)
You might be right, yo, there is
resemblance. Those eyes... I'll never
forget those fucking eyes... They use
to creep the fuck out of me.

Johnson walks away.

MOMENTS LATER-

he returns with a conditioned, huge black and white pitbull
on a leash. Undertaker strains on his leash.

Johnson looks at Leon, his dark eyes, brooding.

JOHNSON
You sure you want to do this?

Leon nods.

LEON
Yeah, let's see what this princess is
made off.

Leon steps back a little.

LEON (cont'd)
Let's do it man... Set him loose.

Undertaker charges.

Ice cowers and strains on her chain. The chain pulls tight,
Ice falls face in the ground.

Undertaker rushes closer, teeth exposed, slobber flies
everywhere.

Ice yelps, turns her butt towards Undertaker, protecting herself.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Amy walks behind Valerie.

AMY
Hey Scar-face!

Valerie ignores Amy, walks on, tries to avoid Amy and her sidekicks.

AMY (cont'd)
(Taunting)
I'm talking to you.

Valerie walks faster.

AMY (cont'd)
If I was as ugly as you, I'd just
kill myself. Save my dad the trouble.

Chloe and Sam giggles, share a hi-five, feeding of each other's vindictiveness.

Valerie pauses for a moment, clenches her jaw, continues walking.

AMY (cont'd)
(Grabs Valerie's
shoulder)
Even your dog ran away, 'cause she
couldn't stand the sight of you.

Valerie turns on her heels, grabs Amy's shoulders and head-butts her.

The momentum still in her favor, she pushes Amy, who falls on her back. A crowd quickly gathers... starts chanting.

CROWD
Fight! Fight! Fight!

Valerie doesn't let the opportunity slip, jumps on Amy, pins her to the ground.

Amy grabs a hold of Valerie's ponytail and pulls. Valerie with her head tilted starts to scratch.

CROWD (cont'd)
Fight! Fight!

Mr. Simpson, a forty-something, partly bald, history teacher, separates the girls.

MR. SIMPSON
Come on, girls. Break it up!

He grabs a hold of both girls, tries to keep them apart.

They reach across his expanding waistline to get back at each other.

MR. SIMPSON (cont'd)
I said, break it up.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Wanda stares at the phone, she picks it up-- her hand shaking.

WANDA
Hello?
(Beat)
It is her.
(Beat)

Her hand raises to her mouth in shock.

WANDA (cont'd)
Oh, my word... Thank you, I'll be there shortly.

Wanda replaces the phone, grabs her bag, slips the body strap across her shoulder and rushes out the door.

INT. WAITING ROOM, PRINCIPAL OFFICE - DAY

Amy sits forward and glares at Valerie, on the opposite side of the pot-plant. She sits back when Wanda enters.

Wanda looks around and sees Valerie. She rushes to her.

WANDA
Baby, what happened?

Valerie pulls away from Wanda.

VALERIE
Nothing.

A door opens behind Wanda.

The PRINCIPAL (41) appears behind Wanda.

PRINCIPAL
Mrs. McMullins?

Wanda turns to face the principal. She steps forward,
extends a hand.

WANDA.
Yes.

PRINCIPAL
(Shakes Wanda's hand)
I am principal Matthews.

He motions to his office.

PRINCIPAL (cont'd)
Let's talk in here.

Wanda looks back at Valerie.

WANDA
I'll be right back, Baby. Will you be
okay?

Valerie looks at Wanda and nods, then turns her eyes to the
ground.

Amy mimics Wanda with a nasty face.

AMY
I'll be right back, Baby.

INT. PRINCIPAL OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Matthews looks at Wanda, he nods understanding.

PRINCIPAL
I understand that she is going
through a difficult time, but we
cannot condone such behavior.

WANDA
Agreed, but did you speak to her? Did
you ask her happened?

Mr. Matthews adjusts the papers on his desk.

PRINCIPAL
Amy said that Valerie attacked her...
Witnesses confirmed it to be true.

Wanda looks at the man in front of her.

WANDA
And what did Valerie say?

Mr. Matthews fiddles with his papers, uncomfortably.

WANDA (cont'd)
So?

PRINCIPAL
Nothing... She hasn't said a word.

Wanda gets up. Waits for Mr. Matthews to walk around his desk.

WANDA
I will talk to her... get behind this.

PRINCIPAL
I'd appreciate that Mrs. McMullins.

Wanda opens the door. Valerie straightens up in her chair.

WANDA
Come on, Baby. Let's go.

She holds a hand out to Valerie. They leave the office together.

Amy glares at them, mimics vindictive.

AMY
Come on, Baby.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - DAY

Gobsmacked, Johnson and Leon stares at Ice.

JOHNSON
I can't fucking believe it.

He looks down at Undertaker, panting next to him, his black-and-white coat, bloodstained.

LEON
I told ya, I have a feeling about her.

They turn around, lead Undertaker away.

INT. MCMULLINS LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Wanda sits opposite Valerie.

Valerie wipes her tears with the back of her hand. Her glasses clamped in her hand, on her lap.

WANDA
Tell me what happened.

Valerie fights the tears that well up in her eyes, looks at her feet. She shakes her head.

VALERIE
Nothing

Wanda sighs.

WANDA
Sweetie, I am not angry with you. I'm trying to understand what happened...

Valerie starts crying again. Lashes out.

VALERIE
She started it... I tried to walk away... I did. Dad always tells me to walk away... but she wouldn't stop, she just carried on and on.

WANDA
About?

She stares Wanda in the eye. Deviant. Angry.

VALERIE
About how ugly I am, and why Ice ran away.

Wanda looks shocked.

WANDA
What else did she say?

Valerie nods.

VALERIE
She said I should kill myself and save Dad the trouble of having to try again.

Sobs tear through her body.

Wanda tries to hug her.

Valerie resists, she looks at Wanda.

VALERIE (cont'd)
(Sobbing)
Is it true Mom? Did Dad try to kill
me?

Wanda shakes her head slowly, breathes deeply.

WANDA
It's not like that?

VALERIE
(Shocked)
What do you mean it's not like that?

WANDA
Maybe it is time need to talk.

VALERIE
You mean it's true? He wanted to kill
me?

Wanda sighs... gently turns Valerie's face towards her.

WANDA
I will tell you everything... but I
will do it on one condition only.

Valerie sits forward, eyes on Wanda.

WANDA (cont'd)
You have to listen to the end...
Deal?

Valerie nods eagerly.

WANDA (cont'd)
Your Dad and I, wanted a baby for the
longest time.
(gently plays with
Valerie's hair.)

WANDA (cont'd)
When I didn't fall pregnant... we
went to see a doctor... doctors...I
... I couldn't have children... we
were devastated.

Wanda shifts her position to face Valerie.

WANDA (cont'd)
One night, Dad was called out to a
scene... he phoned me from the
hospital...

Valerie plays with a strand of her hair.

The front door opens, Roger steps inside.

Valerie jumps up, runs to Roger, hugs him.

ROGER
Hey Pumpkin, how was your day?

Her eyes avoid his.

VALERIE
(Embarrassed)
I got into a fight.

Roger's meets Wanda's eyes. She confirms with a silent nod.

WANDA
Why don't you go sit. I'll pour
something to drink?

Valerie takes his hand and leads him to the living room.

VALERIE
Did you find out anything about Ice,
Daddy?

Roger shakes his head.

ROGER
I'm sorry, Val.

He looks into her eyes.

ROGER (cont'd)
What was the fight about?

VALERIE
Amy... She said some things... I got
angry.

She stares into Roger's eyes.

VALERIE (cont'd)
I did try to walk away... I did.. She
just wouldn't stop...
(eyes wells up)
I couldn't stop.

Wanda enters the living room, tray with steaming cups in her hands.

WANDA
I was just telling Valerie, about
that night...

She takes his hand.

WANDA (cont'd)
After the trouble at school today, I
realized that you were right.

Wanda takes a sip from her cup.

Roger nods.

Valerie looks at Roger.

VALERIE
What happened at the call out?

Roger cleans his throat... takes a deep breath... release it
slowly... mentally preparing himself for the conversation.

ROGER
Dispatch said it was domestic
disturbance... it was so much worse.

Valerie looks at Roger with interest.

VALERIE
What happened, Daddy?

ROGER
We were the first on the scene. We
knocked on the door, no one opened.
We forced the door open...

INSERT BACK FLASH

- Ben and Roger enters Liam's house.
- Liam cuffed.
- Deceased woman, knife in hand on kitchen floor.
- Roger sees Valerie, bleeding.
- Roger holds Valerie in ambulance.

END FLASH BACK

ROGER (cont'd)
When we got to the hospital, I phoned
Mom... She rushed over immediately.

Wanda looks at Val, who is listening with intent.

WANDA
We loved you from the moment we laid
eyes on you.

Roger nods in agreement.

WANDA (cont'd)
You came to brighten up our lives,
and you still do... everyday.

Valerie looks at her parents.

VALERIE
So, Amy was right. My dad did want to
kill me?

Roger sits up. He pulls Valerie closer to him. She fight him
off.

ROGER
Honey, no. We don't know what
happened.

VALERIE
Why didn't you tell me?

ROGER
We should have...

Valerie nods though the tears. A sob tears through her body.

Roger tries to pull her into hug. She fights him off.

ROGER (cont'd)
Hey, look at me.

Valerie looks up, into Roger's eyes.

ROGER (cont'd)
We may not be your biological
parents... but you are our daughter,
and we love you.

Valerie falls against Roger's chest.

VALERIE
I love you too, Daddy.

Wanda wipes the tears from her eyes... hugs Valerie and Roger.

INT. WOODEN SHED - NIGHT

Leon looks at the puppies in the whelping box. At six weeks old, they are ready to sell.

LEON
They are ready... The guys can pick them up from tomorrow.

Johnson nods.

JOHNSON
I'll let them know.

He looks at Leon.

JOHNSON (cont'd)
When you gonna start on the Ice-queen?

LEON
We still have some kittens, right?

Johnson nods in agreement.

JOHNSON
Yeah, there's a few left.

LEON
We'll put her on the Jenny tomorrow. She's thinned out nicely... lost all that spoiled pet fat.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - NIGHT

Ice sits in front of her make shift shelter. She shivers... glances at the other dogs... lifts her head, HOWLS.

INT. VALERIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Valerie stares out of her window. Clouds partly covers the moon.

VALERIE
Ice, please come home. I miss you.

She blows a kiss into the night, then crawls into bed, snugs up to a big stuffed toy-dog.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - MORNING

The dogs strains against their chains. They bark simultaneously, as Johnson and Leon walk past... Ice on the lead.

She too pulls on the lead, runs from side to side.

Johnson strokes the little kitten, almost lovingly, as he watches Leon strap Ice into the cat-mill.

Leon straightens up and takes the kitten from Johnson's hands. He brings it to Ice's face.

The little kitten spits and lashes out with its claws. This gets the desired reaction from the frustrated Ice.

She snaps and reaches for the kitten, straining on the cat-mill/jenny.

Leon ties the kitten up, just out of Ice's reach, while Johnson keeps Ice stationary.

Leon straightens up... pleased.

LEON

Let's see.

Johnson releases Ice.

JOHNSON

Go get 'em girl. Go.

Ice runs to get to the kitten, responsible for the blood trickles on her muzzle.

The kitten moves with the jenny. Ice runs faster, frustrated at the meowing kitten that stays out of reach.

Leon smiles satisfied. Johnson nods slowly, his braids sways with the movement.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Wanda looks at Roger, concerned.

WANDA

Please tell me she'll be okay.

Roger folds his arms across her shoulders.

ROGER
She is a tough little girl. She'll be
fine. She just needs time to work
through the emotions.

He breaks the hug and looks at his watch.

ROGER (cont'd)
I have to go. I'll be late... Going
to the ring.

WANDA
(Hugs Roger)
Be careful.

Roger nods and steps out off the door, leaving a pondering
Wanda behind.

EXT. WOODED PROPERTY - DAY

Ice shakes the lifeless remains of the kitten playfully. She
carries it proudly, as Leon leads her back to her shelter
and chains her up.

Leon pats Ice.

LEON
You did good, girl.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

SERIES OF FLASH SHOTS

Teeth. Eyes. Slobber. CHEERS.

A dog YELPS, falls to the floor. The opponent is upon it
immediately. Clamps down on the victim's throat.

In the corner of the pit, an owner celebrates. He calls his
dog. The dog breaks, runs to his owner.

In the pit, the opponent tries to get up... fails... lies
down, gasping for breath.

Money change hands, some celebrate the win... others mourn
their loss.

Roger is horrified.

The injured dog is lifted out of the ring... another two
competitors lines up.

Roger's eyes follow, the dog that is being removed from the pit. He follows them at a distance, careful not to be noticed.

A new set of dogs begins their fight.

The crowd CHEERS, the sound deafening. Muffled by the cheers, Roger hears the faint sound of a gunshot.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Valerie looks at Wanda and Roger. Determined.

VALERIE
I want to see him.

Wanda instinctively reaches out.

WANDA
Honey!

Valerie steps out of the way.

VALERIE
I need to see my father.

Roger nods. His hand falls comforting on Wanda's shoulder. He kneels down in front of Valerie.

ROGER
Pumpkin, are you sure this is what
you want?

Valerie nods.

ROGER (cont'd)
I will see what I can do?

Valerie throws her arms around and buries her face in Roger's neck.

VALERIE
Thank you, Daddy.

EXT. WOODEN SHED - MORNING

BUYER 1 picks up the puppy by the skin on its neck. The puppy screams.

He puts the puppy back with the others, picks up another. The pup wriggles, but keeps quiet.

He takes a hold of the pup in both hands and looks at the teeth. The puppy growls.

BUYER 1
Yeah man, that how I like them... Not
a whining bitch like that one.

He looks at Leon.

BUYER 1 (cont'd)
You said they're Killer's offspring?

Leon nods.

BUYER 1 (cont'd)
(Fishes a roll of
cash from his pocket)
I'll take this one.

Leon takes the money. Counts \$2500, smiles.

LEON
Glad we could do business.

Buyer 1 rubs the head of the pup.

BUYER 1
Yeah man... hope he'll be a chip of
the old block.

LEON
He won't disappoint, if you train him
right... Keep him isolated... it
drives them crazy.

Buyer 1 shakes Leon's hand.

BUYER 1
Thanks man. I'll do that.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Amy steps up behind Valerie.

AMY
Hey Scar-face!

Valerie stops, clench her jaws, turns around, a cold,
determined look in her eye.

VALERIE
(Constrained)
My name is Valerie.

Amy looks at Chloe and Sam, taunting.

Amy, Sam and Chloe look at each other *Oooooeee*

AMY

She speaks.

Pupils start to congregate around them.

Valerie pushes her glasses up, turns around and walk off.

Amy grabs her backpack, yanks her back.

AMY (cont'd)

Did I say you can leave, Scar-face?

Valerie finds her footing, looks at Amy. Cold, emotionless.

INT. WOOD SHED - DAY

Leon pushes Ice towards the attacking Jack Russel.

LEON

Go get him, Girl!

She YELPS when the Jack Russel sinks his teeth into her cheeks.

Anger wells up in Ice. She retaliates... fights back. The Jack Russel screams.

Frustration keeps her going. The Jack Russel yelps, goes limp.

Leon and Johnson's eyes meet, knowingly...they smile at each other. Leon moves in, grabs Ice by the collar.

LEON (cont'd)

Come, girl. You did good.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

A victorious smile on the corner of her mouth, she pushes her glasses up, walks through the accumulated mass around them.

She glances over her shoulder to where Chloe and Sam are helping Amy back to her feet.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

The big knife makes quick work of dicing the tomatoes.

Wanda puts them in a salad bowl, starts chopping some lettuce.

Roger sits at the counter, an uncomfortable look on his face. He cleans his throat before he speaks.

ROGER
I been thinking, I'll take Val to see
her father on Thursday.

The knife stops cutting, it is laid down on the cutting board, hands trembling.

Wanda takes a moment.

WANDA
Do you think it is the right thing to
do?

Roger nods.

WANDA
What if we lose her?

ROGER
We have to Wanda. It's her choice.
We'll lose her if we don't.

Wanda supports herself on the counter, her head hangs.

WANDA
I'm scared.

Roger walks around the counter and puts his arms around Wanda.

ROGER
It will be fine... I'll be there for
her... with her.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Valerie and Roger pause in front of the huge building.

Valerie slips her hand into Roger's, looks at him.

Roger squeezes her hand and smiles down at her.

ROGER
Are you sure you want to do this?

Valerie nods.

INT. PRISON - DAY

Liam is seated behind a glass screen. He speaks over the phone in the corner.

LIAM
...and you sure she wants to see me?

Roger nods.

Liam chokes up.

ROGER
She's asked to... she's had a
difficult few weeks.
(Leans forward,
threatening)
Be nice.

Liam nods in understanding.

Roger looks back at the guard behind him. He accompanies Valerie to Roger.

Hesitant Valerie picks up the phone.

LIAM
(Emotional)
Baby?

Valerie looks back at Roger.

He encourages her silently.

VALERIE
My name is Valerie.

Liam drinks in every detail of Valerie.

LIAM
That is such a beautiful name. Do you
know what it means?

Valerie shakes her head *No*

LIAM (cont'd)
It means brave and strong.

Overwhelmed Val nods. She looks back at Roger.

He motions for her to carry on.

VALERIE
(Trembling)
Why did you do it?

Liam is taken aback.

LIAM
Baby?

Valerie pulls her sweater away, exposing the scar on her pale neck.

Liam breaks down, cries... takes some time to compose himself.

LIAM (cont'd)
Baby, I... We...

He shakes his head.

LIAM (cont'd)
I cannot remember what happened that night. I know we were high... I dragged her from your room...we fought.

Liam shakes his head.

Valerie looks at him. Uncertain.

LIAM (cont'd)
Next, the police busts the door in...
Arrested me...

Liam looks up, he looks into Valerie's eyes.

LIAM (cont'd)
I... I thought you were dead.

VALERIE
They call me Scar-face at school.

Tears well up in Liam's eyes... he looks to the ceiling... compose himself.

Roger comforts Valerie with a hand on her shoulder.

VALERIE (cont'd)
They say I am so ugly...

Valerie swallows at the lump in her throat.

VALERIE (cont'd)
that you tried to kill me...

Liam shakes his head profusely.

Roger looks down at his daughter in disbelief. He steps in behind her, a hand on each shoulder comforts and protects her.

LIAM
No Baby, don't listen to them. They
don't know what happened, they
weren't there. You are beautiful.

GUARD 1 steps forward, respectful not to interrupt, but still in need of doing his duty.

GUARD 1
Time.

Roger whisper in Valerie's ear. She nods.

VALERIE
Did you ever love me? Or hug me? Or
held me?

GUARD 2 steps up behind Liam.

GUARD 2
Time's up.

Liam nods, tears line his eyes.

LIAM
I did...

Guard takes Liam by the arm. He drags Liam to his feet. Liam clings on the phone.

LIAM (cont'd)
Please come visit me again, Baby.

Motionless, Valerie stares at him, a tear slowly leaves her eye and runs down her face.

VALERIE
My name is Valerie.

INT. WOODEN SHED - DAY

Leon and Johnson sit at the table. In front of them, a cold beer.

An ashtray is slowly getting filled between them.

The monotonous hum of the treadmill cuts through the room.

A heavy panting together with the rhythmic fall of toenails on canvas accompanies the hum.

LEON
She needs a roll. Ask one of the guys
to bring a match dog.

Johnson looks back to Ice running on the treadmill.

JOHNSON
You think she's ready?

Leon nods.

LEON
Only a small bump. Let's see how she
handles herself.

JOHNSON
Cool, I'll ask T.J. He has a
youngster he wants to start.

Leon gets up, he turns the treadmill off... untie Ice

LEON
You did good, Snowy.

Ice wags her tail.

INT. VALERIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Valerie is tucked into bed. Wanda sits next to her on the edge of the bed.

WANDA
Good night, Honey. Don't let the bed
bugs bite.

She leans forward, reaches for the light.

VALERIE
Mom?

Wanda stops and turns her attention to Valerie.

WANDA
Yes, Honey?

VALERIE
Am I... bad?

WANDA

NO, Honey! Why would you to ask such a thing?

Wanda strokes Valerie's hair. Valerie strains against the gentle hand and sits upright.

VALERIE

When Dad took me to see my dad... I looked at him... my father... I felt nothing. I... I didn't love him.

WANDA

Honey, you don't even know him, you didn't even know he existed. You don't have to feel anything.

Valerie looks uncomfortable.

VALERIE

What if I don't like him? Will I be a bad then?

An endearing look crosses Wanda's face.

WANDA

That won't change a thing.

Their eyes meet.

VALERIE

Even though he is my father.

Wanda looks to the window, takes a moment, looks back at Valerie's anticipating eyes.

WANDA

Do you remember the day we fetched Ice?

Valerie nods.

WANDA (cont'd)

It's like that... Ice had a mommy before she came to us. You cared for her, fed her, raised her.

Valerie nods eagerly.

VALERIE

And I loved her.

WANDA

(Nods)

And you loved her... Those first few days, she whined for her mommy, can you remember?

Valerie agrees.

VALERIE

Yeah, and I would hold her until she fell asleep.

Wanda laughs.

WANDA

Eventually, Ice accepted you as her mommy... and that was pretty special right?

Valerie's face lit up and she smiles.

VALERIE

It was.

WANDA

Do you think Ice is bad because she don't remember her mother?

Valerie shakes her head *No*

VALERIE

Ice is a good dog.

WANDA

... and you are a good girl...
Nothing can change that.

Valerie yawns. She snuggles back into bed.

VALERIE

Mom... I'm glad you guys found me.

Wanda leans forward, hugs Valerie.

WANDA

I am too.

VALERIE

Do you think Ice misses me?

WANDA

I know she does.

VALERIE
I miss her.

WANDA
So do I, Honey.

She tucks the blankets in around Valerie.

WANDA (cont'd)
Now it's bed time. Good night, Honey.
Sleep tight.

Valerie smiles.

VALERIE
Night Mom. I love you.

Wanda gets up, bends over and kisses Valerie on the forehead.

WANDA
I love you too, Sweetheart.

EXT. WOODEN SHED - DAY

T.J, well-built, ex-quarterback, gets out of his Dodge Impala.

He lets out a brown and white pitbull from the back seat, scopes his surroundings, heads in the direction of the wood shed.

Leon and Johnson await him at the door, they greet with a hug followed by a fist-bump.

LEON
This the one?

T.J moves his sunglasses to the top of his head. He looks down at his dog panting excitedly, nods.

T.J
Yeah, been training him for a while now. He's fucking game.

JOHNSON
Well, let's roll.

The three men disappears into the shed.

INT. WOODEN SHED - DAY

Johnson unties Ice. He makes his way to Leon and T.J at the pit.

LEON
Johnson will be referee. You cool
with that?

T.J
Do we break?

Leon and Johnson look at each other and then at T.J

LEON
Yeah, it's just a roll to see how she
handles herself.

T.J nods.

T.J
Let's roll then.

Leon moves to the one corner of the pit... takes the collar off Ice... bents over her... holds her by the sides of the neck... looks at Johnson... primed.

In the opposite corner, T.J assumes the same position.

JOHNSON
Are you ready?
(Looks at Leon)
Are you ready?
(Looks at T.J)
GO.

The two men sets their dogs free.

They rush towards each other. Teeth, eyes, blood, yelping, slobber.

RIPPER catches the skin on Ice's neck, she yelps and turns ripping her skin.

**She retaliates
- gets a hold of Ripper's cheek
- twists her head
- flips Ripper to his back and goes for the throat.**

JOHNSON (cont'd)
BREAK!

Leon and T.J steps into the pit. Leon pulls Ice off Ripper, slips her collar on.

T.J comforts his dog, helping him to his feet, checks for injuries.

T.J
That's a sly fucking bitch you got there. She's gonna bring in the bucks.

Leon smiles, nods in agreement.

LEON
Let's hope so, man.

T.J puts his hand in his pocket, fishes a roll of notes out. He hands them to Leon.

T.J
As agreed, Winner takes 5k.

Leon takes the cash, slips it into his pocket.

LEON
You want a beer?

T.J looks at his watch.

T.J
Yeah, why not?

The 3 men disappears deeper into the shed, leaves behind a puddle of blood from the wound on Ice's neck.

INT. POUND - DAY

Wanda waits on the POUND RECEPTIONIST to finish her search on the computer.

POUND RECEPTIONIST
Nope
(shakes her head)
Nothing. No white pitbulls that came in.

WANDA
Can we just have a look, please?

The receptionist's eyes fall on Valerie, barely able to see over the dark wood counter.

POUND RECEPTIONIST
Sure. Do you want a guide?

Wanda shakes her head and smiles.

WANDA
No, its fine, we'll find our way.

Two tiny crossbreeds jump excitedly up and down. One barks excessively.

Valerie's heart melt, she kneels down, sticks her hands through the bars, rubs the two dogs, eagerly licking her hands.

They move slowly from cage to cage, giving attention to all the occupants, mix breeds, pure-bred, big breeds, small breeds.

When they get to the last cage, Valerie turns to Wanda.

VALERIE
(Disappointed)
She's not here.

Wanda folds her into a hug.

WANDA
I'm sorry, sweetie.

Wanda looks into the sad face.

WANDA (cont'd)
(Hesitant)
How about...

Valerie looks at Wanda expectantly.

WANDA (cont'd)
How about we adopt that puppy that
you liked so much.

Valerie looks to the ground and shakes her head.

VALERIE
No, it won't be right. Ice will come
home. I know she will.

Wanda hugs Valerie.

WANDA
I hope so, Honey... I do.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The CHEERS of the crowds are deafening. Money changes hands.

Undertaker and GLADIATOR, a bulky American Staffordshire, fight in the pit. Their owners pace their corners, shouting words of encouragement to the fighting dogs.

**Undertaker bites down on Gladiator's front leg -- shakes his head furiously! **

CRACK!

A startled SILENCE grips the crowd.

RINGMASTER
Unbelievable! Undertaker just broke
Gladiator's leg.

Gladiator yelps... bites into the skin on Undertaker's ribs.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Whoa! Would ya look at that? He's not
done yet. He's fightin' back.

**Undertaker lets go of the leg --
Bites into the back of Gladiator's neck --
Gladiator turns -- exposing his throat --
Undertaker quickly sinks his teeth into Gladiator's neck --
Shakes his head violently.**

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Undertaker is not havin' any of it.

**Gladiator goes limp --
Undertaker loosens his grip on Gladiator's throat --
Gladiator fails to get up.**

Leon gets into the pit, secures his dog.

Gladiator's owner picks up his dog, as it gasps its last breaths.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Undertaker claims another victim.

The crowd CHEERS. Money change hands.

Roger moves around. Keeps an eye on the exits.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Ladies and gentlemen, are you in for
a treat tonight? We have a newcomer.

The crowd ROARS.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
In the left corner we have Luther...
Luther has won his last two fights in
under one minute!

The crowd CHEERS.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
In the right corner, we have new
comer, Snowy. Will she measure up?

CHEERS

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Are you ready?

He looks at Leon, bent over Ice in the right corner. Leon
nods.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Are you ready?

He looks at DOG OWNER bent over his dog in the left corner.
The man nods.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
LET'S RUMBLE!

The two men set their dogs off.

**Ice and LUTHER charge--
She folds her front legs and slides under Luther--
She latches onto Luther's throat.**

The crowd CHEERS wildly.

**Ice locks her jaws --
Luther struggles violently--
She battles to her feet--
Forces Luther down on his back.**

The crowd cheers. Money change hands. Owners shout, swear!

**Ice adjusts her grip --
Shakes Luther like a rag-doll --
He stops struggling.**

RINGMASTER (cont'd)
Ladies and gentlemen, the winner.
Ice, with an amazing technique.

Leon celebrates.

The crowd ROARS.

Ice releases her grip on Luther, pants heavily, her white face red with blood. Leon enters the pit, secures her.

Luther's carried out back.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Luther's owner drops him on the ground, kicks the dog --

DOG OWNER
Stupid fucking dog!

Kicks Luther again --

DOG OWNER (cont'd)
Lost me a shit load of money tonight.

He stomps on the ribs of the dying dog, over and over again.

DOG OWNER (cont'd)
Son of a fucking bitch!

He slams his foot down on the dog's head -- keeps it there, until the gasping breaths stop.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - LATER

SERIES OF FLASH SHOTS

Fangs. Eyes. Blood. Crowd cheering. Money changing hands.

ICE YELPS!

TANK a huge mastiff holds her left front foot in his massive jaws.

The crowd goes wild. Leon cusses, turns away in agitation.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Figures, dressed in black, pile out of two black vans. They wear bullet proof vests and carry assault weapons. Police, written in big letters on their backs.

INTERCUT - WAREHOUSE INTERIOR / EXTERIOR

Ice break free from the Tank's grip -- she fights ferociously, her left foot dangling uselessly.

The **Tank** attacks.

The crowd cheers, money changes hands.

OUTSIDE

The police, in formation, swiftly move in to surround the dilapidated building.

INSIDE

**Ice lunges forward --
She slides beneath the Tank --
He catches the side of her neck in his huge mouth and bites down... trying for the kill.**

LEON

Fuck!

OUTSIDE

The black-clad police, backs against the wall, wait on their command.

ROGER tests the door... it swings open... he peeks in... signals to the rest of the team.

INSIDE

The crowd watches, Ice go limp -- Tank relaxes his grip.

RINGMASTER

Tank has done it again!

The crowd ROARS. The dogs are cleared from the pit.

Leon hands off Ice to his Johnson.

LEON

You know what to do.

Johnson nods.

LEON
Make it quick, Killer is up after
this.

Johnson walks off toward a door, leading outside.

OUTSIDE

Johnson drops Ice on the ground. She YELPS in pain. He
lifts his foot over her--

INSIDE

The Police surround the crowd and the pit... they block all
the exits.

POLICE (V.O.)
(bull horn)
Police! Remain where you are!

OUTSIDE

Johnson freezes -- foot in the air! Looks around terrified.
Sees nothing -- runs away.

INSIDE

Chaos erupts!

POLICE (V.O.)
(bull horn)
Hands on your heads!

MONTAGE - YOU'RE ALL UNDER ARRESTS

-- Police apprehended and cuff spectators and dog owners,
and lead them away.

-- The building runs empty.

-- A big white van pulls into the building. Humane Society
written on the side. Workers gets out... open the van...
take out crates.

-- The dogs on the property are stuffed into crates and
loaded into the van.

OUTSIDE

Ice opens her eyes... stares blankly into the darkness.
Sounds from inside building reach her.

Hurt and frightened, she lifts her head... struggles to
stand... her left foot dangles, helpless in the air.

She looks around, then limps away towards the city. A
determined look in her eyes.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Roger sips on his freshly made cup of coffee.

ROGER
45 dogs.

Wanda breaks 2 eggs into a pan.

WANDA
I don't understand how people can do
this.

Roger nods in agreement.

ROGER
Money. A lot of money was
confiscated.

Wanda dishes up the eggs.

WANDA
Still. Those dogs are living...
breathing beings. How were they?

ROGER
Ugh... most of them will have to be
euthanized. The match dogs are too
aggressive to re-home... most of the
breeding dogs is in such a bad
condition... it will be kinder to
send them over the rainbow bridge.

Roger shakes his head slowly, as if he trying to get rid of
the images in his head.

ROGER (cont'd)
Then there is the losers. A pile of
them. Disposed of like yesterday's
trash... Made me sick.

Wanda puts her arms around Roger, gives him a comforting hug. She rests her chin on his shoulder.

WANDA
You did good. Thanks to your
determination a lot of dogs were
saved.

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

Colorful pictures decorate the walls. Posters that spell out the alphabet with pictures accompanying it.

MISS. SMITH writes "Oral" on the big green board. Her hair, hangs all the way down her back.

She turns around to face the 30 odd 9-year-old pupils.

MISS. SMITH
Who knows what an Oral assignment is?

A few hands go up. She looks over the eager hands, competing to get her attention. Her eyes falls on Amy, who smiles confidently.

MISS. SMITH
Amy?

AMY
It's like an essay, but it is spoken,
not written.

Miss. Smith smiles.

MISS. SMITH
Very good, Amy.

Amy looks confidently around her.

MISS. SMITH (cont'd)
You will have an oral assignment. It
is due in three weeks.

She looks over the faces of her pupils.

MISS. SMITH (cont'd)
Your topic is "My parents and why I
love them".

Amy whispers something to Chloe and Sam. They giggle together. Miss. Smith walks over to Amy.

MISS. SMITH (cont'd)
Anything you'd like to share with the
class?

Amy looks guilty, shakes her head.

MISS. SMITH (cont'd)
You had something to say. I want you
to share it with class.

AMY
(Mumbles)
I said Valerie won't be able to do
the assignment... She doesn't have
real parents.

Some pupils laughs, others are shocked.

The room begins to spin. Laughter... spinning... pointing
fingers... spinning... laughing... spinning... fingers...
laughing.

MISS. SMITH
AMY! What a horrible thing to say.
Apologize immediately.

Valerie storms out of the class, runs blindly down

THE PASSAGE.

The bell rings.

Miss. Smith runs after Valerie. Hordes of pupils pile out of
their classrooms. She is brought to a standstill.

She reaches the doors. Opens them and looks around...
doesn't see Valerie.

She returns to her class.

The class is in disarray.

Children squeals, throws paper planes, balls of paper. A boy
is runs from desk to desk.

Miss. Smith opens the door and steps into the class, pupils
scatter to get to their desks. A paper plane lands at her
feet.

MISS. SMITH (cont'd)
Amy, get yourself over to the
principal's office. I will meet you
there.

Amy gets up, eyes glued to the floor.

AMY
Yes, Miss. Smith.

Miss. Smith turns her attention back to the rest of the pupils.

MISS. SMITH
(Sternly)
I am extremely disappointed.
(Looks slowly from
one pupil to
another.)
I am going to the office... When I
return, I expect everything to be
back in order...
(Steps out of the
door, looks back)
and not a word, from any one. Do you
understand?

The pupils nod, big-eyed.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Valerie flees the school grounds... turns left, runs down
the street-- blinded by tears.

Ice staggers and falls. Her breath shallow... labored. She
tries to lift her head... Gives up.

Valerie pauses... sprints forward.

VALERIE
Ice? ICE!

Valerie reaches Ice.

VALERIE (cont'd)
Where have you been?

The only movement is the feint tap, tap, tap of the tail...
the slight turn of her eyes.

Valerie cries... she looks around.

VALERIE (cont'd)
HELP! HELP!
(Gets up, looks
around)
Help me.

No one in sight. She turns back to Ice.

VALERIE (cont'd)
Nobody can hear me. I will have to
carry you.

Valerie wraps her arms around Ice and strains to pick the heavy pitbull up. She fails.

VALERIE (cont'd)
(Breaks down)
I can't do it... You are too heavy.

She sits down next to Ice... notices the breathing.

She gets up... determined, she tries again. Ice whines.

VALERIE (cont'd)
I'm sorry, Baby... I'll try to be
more careful.

With inhumane strength, Valerie starts down--

THE STREET-- turns right into the

THE FOOTPATH-- up

THE STAIRS-- down

THE PASSAGE-- into

THE OFFICE. She staggers to the RECEPTIONIST.

VALERIE (cont'd)
Can you please
(grunts)
call my mom.

The receptionist jumps into action.

RECEPTIONIST
Name?

VALERIE
McMullins, my mom is Wanda.

Valerie's legs buckles under the weight. She tries her best to keep Ice up.

The Receptionist motions to a quiet spot and whispers, phone clamped in her neck, hand over the mouthpiece.

RECEPTIONIST

(Whispers)

Why don't you lay the dog down in the corner over there?

Valerie lays Ice down carefully, sits cross-legged next to her, softly caressing the blood-stained skin.

VALERIE

What happened to you?

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

She is here, in the office. She... she has a dog with her...I didn't know what to do... Thank you.

Valerie looks up when the receptionist hands her a little bowl of water.

RECEPTIONIST

Your Mom will be here shortly.

Valerie looks up at and takes the water from the receptionist. She smiles.

VALERIE

(Quietly)

Thank you.

The receptionist returns to her station, leaving Valerie lone with Ice.

Valerie offers Ice the water. Ice doesn't react.

She dips her fingers in the water... lifts Ice's lips... drips some droplets into Ice's mouth.

VALERIE (cont'd)

Mom is on her way. She should be here any minute now.

Wanda rushes into the office. Stops and sees Valerie in the corner... rushes over... falls down on her knees.

The door to the principal's office opens.

Amy exits. She glances at Valerie sitting in the corner on the floor... walking past her, slowly... she pauses.

WANDA

Where did you find her?

Amy progresses to the door, looks back to Valerie. Jealous.

Wanda is rushed suddenly.

WANDA (cont'd)
Come, we need to get her to the vet.

She gently puts her arms under Ice and lifts her, gently.
They head out of the office. At the receptionist's station,
she stops briefly.

WANDA (cont'd)
Thank you so much.

The receptionist smiles and nods.

INT. VET'S ROOM - DAY

Valerie opens the door. Wanda rushes into the room with Ice
in her arms, legs dangling.

A friendly ASSISTANT, behind the light wood station, looks
up, notices the emergency.

Briskly, she steps out from behind the counter.

ASSISTANT
Right this way.

She motions to a room on the left.

INT. SURGERY - DAY

Wanda places Ice on the stainless-steel table, gently
stroking her head. Valerie stands close by, watching.

DR. STAPLES, mid-forties, dark hair, gray around the temples
walks in, drying his hands on a hand towel.

DR. STAPLES
Good morning. How can I...

His eyes fall on Ice, lying on the table.

DR. STAPLES (cont'd)
Oh my God.

He carefully look Ice over .

DR. STAPLES (cont'd)
Fighting?

Wanda looks up sharply.

WANDA
I don't know. She'd been missing for
a while.

She looks at Dr. Staples. Her eyes, begging for some good news.

He continues to look over Ice, he touches the ribs carefully.

Ice yelps.

He listens to her breathing and heart, cleans the wounds and puts her on a drip.

He turns his attention to Wanda.

DR. STAPLES
Her lungs sound clear though there
are some fractured ribs. I need to do
a CT Scan to look for internal
bleeding. She has lost a lot of
blood.

For the first time since they entered the surgery, Valerie speaks.

VALERIE
Is she... dying?

Ice starts twitching. It quickly progress into a seizure.

Dr. Staples jumps into action. Calls for an assistant.
ROBERT(28) barges in, rushes to Dr. Staples' aid.

Wanda watches in horror. Her hands on Valerie's shoulders.

Dr. Staples grabs medicine from the cupboards, syringes from the counter.

Robert holds Ice down. Dr. Staples administer the injection. The seizure stops, Ice goes limp.

Valerie cries... reaches out to Ice. Wanda holds her back.

Dr. Staples straightens up. Turns to Wanda and Valerie.

DR. STAPLES
She is stable for now, but as you can
see in critical condition.
(turns to Valerie)
Can you stay with her, while I speak
with your mom quick?

Valerie nods... turns to Ice.

INT. DR. STAPLES OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Staples' dark eyes stares into Wanda's.

WANDA
So, there's no hope?

Dr. Staples shakes his head.

DR. STAPLES
No, no, that is not what I said. I
just want you to be prepared. It's
not an easy journey ahead.

He plays with his pen, turning it over and over again,
between his fingers.

DR. STAPLES (cont'd)
You saw what happened in there. She
has serious infection... broken
ribs... multiple puncture wounds.

He flips the pen around again. Uncomfortable.

DR. STAPLES (cont'd)
Then there is the psychological
aspect you need to consider. You
don't know how this has altered her
mentally.

He looks at the pen, now sliding it from one hand to the
next.

DR. STAPLES (cont'd)
It may be more human to euthanize.

WANDA
No... No, we can't. My daughter...
You have to save her.

They get up and walk to the door.

INT. SURGERY - DAY

Valerie talks quietly to Ice. She looks up when Wanda and
Dr. Staples enter.

DR. STAPLES
I'll keep you up to date.

Wanda smiles.

Wanda puts her hand on Valerie's shoulder.

WANDA
Come on Honey, time to go.

Valerie hugs and kisses Ice, gently.

VALERIE
We have to go now... You have to stay
here until you feel better... We will
come to visit tomorrow.

Valerie looks up to Dr. Staples.

VALERIE (cont'd)
You will take good care of her, won't
you?

Dr. Staples smiles.

DR. STAPLES
Of course, I will.

Valerie spontaneously hugs Dr. Staples.

VALERIE
Thank you, Doc.

INT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Valerie flies up when she hears the front door. She runs up to Roger and throws her arms around his waist.

VALERIE (cont'd)
(Excited)
Daddy, Daddy, we found her.

The happy smile on Roger's face change to disbelieve.

ROGER
(Confused)
Wait! What? Where?

He picks Valerie up and carries her into the living room.
Wanda closes her laptop and puts it aside.

VALERIE
(Excited)
She came to my school.

Roger slowly lowers her to the floor.

VALERIE (cont'd)
We took her to the vet,
(MORE)

VALERIE (cont'd)
(A somber expression
crosses her face.)
but we had to leave her there.

Roger hugs Wanda, who is patiently waiting for Valerie, to finish her rant.

ROGER
Is this true?

Wanda nods, a sad smile on her face. Roger's eyes meet hers. He notices the concern.

ROGER (cont'd)
What's wrong?

Wanda turns to Valerie.

WANDA
I bet Dad is dying for a cup of
coffee. Why don't you make him one?

Valerie happily obliges, skips to the kitchen.

Wanda turns to Roger.

WANDA (cont'd)
Ice is not doing well. She is badly
injured. The vet wanted to euthanize
her.

She looks back to the kitchen.

WANDA (cont'd)
Dr. Staples said if she gets an
infection she may not make it.

Valerie enters the living room, carrying an I love Dad cup.

ROGER
Just what I need. Thanks Peanut.

INT. VET'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Ice's ribs move up and down, breathing deep. Her foot twitches.

The NIGHT TECHNICIAN, a slender built thirty-five-year-old, sips on a cup of coffee... browses the internet on a computer.

Ice's closed eyes twitch, the breathing becomes irregular.

The night technician looks up from the computer. The clock against the wall reads 3:07. He stands up, stretches.

The movement of the ribs becomes erratic.

The night technician disappears to the kitchen. A moment later, he returns eating a sandwich.

Ice's whole body twitches in distress. The breaths are short and irregular, shallow.

The night technician looks on his watch. He looks to the animal room... takes the last bite of his sandwich.

The twitching stops, the body goes limp. The breathing now, fast and shallow.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Valerie tosses and turns. The curtain floats in the breeze. She tosses again, nightmare ridden.

INSERT DREAM

Black, darkness. Valerie follows Ice walking in front of her. Ice runs to the edge of the light, surrounding them.

VALERIE

Ice, wait. I can't keep up.

Ice her looks at her, turns and runs back to Valerie.

Valerie kneels down and hugs Ice. She straightens up, they begin to walk again.

Ice runs ahead, pauses at the brink of darkness.

VALERIE (cont'd)

Ice, you scaring me.

Ice looks back at Valerie, then steps forward and disappears into the darkness.

VALERIE (cont'd)

ICE!

(Beat)

ICE!

Valerie starts running to where Ice disappeared.

VALERIE (cont'd)

ICE! Come back.

Valerie hears Ice bark in the distance. The darkness closes in.

VALERIE (cont'd)
ICE?

The darkness swallows Valerie.

END DREAM

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Valerie screams. Wanda bursts into the room, she rushes over to Valerie, envelopes her in her arms.

WANDA
What's wrong?

Valerie nods, pressing her head against Wanda's bosom. Comforting, Wanda rocks her slowly back and forth.

VALERIE
I had a bad dream.

A lost sob tears through Valerie.

WANDA
Shh, it's alright. I'm here now...
Want to tell me about it?

Valerie shakes her head. Wanda strokes the silky, blonde hair, softly humming a lullaby

Valerie turns her eyes to Wanda.

VALERIE
(Softly)
Ice is gone.

Wanda looks at Valerie confused.

WANDA
You found her, honey. We took her to the vet.

Frantically, Valerie shakes her head.

VALERIE
It's not what I meant. I know she's at the vet.
(beat)
She came to say good bye. She is...
(MORE)

VALERIE (cont'd)
(Takes a moment to
fight back tears)
she didn't make it.

Wanda pulls Valerie into a tight hug, blindly staring at the clock's big red numbers flashing 3:15

The night technician walks to the hospital room, he checks on a cat in a crate. He lifts the cat out of the crate, cuddles it.

NIGHT TECHNICIAN
How are you doing? Ready to go home tomorrow?

The black cat purrs. The technician places the cat back in the crate and make sure it's secure.

He reaches Ice. Stares at her blankly for a moment.

A sadness creeps across his face. He reaches out with his hand, place it on Ice's side, notices the shallow breathing.

NIGHT TECHNICIAN (cont'd)
Oh no, no, no, no. You are burning up.

He gets into high gear, hurried suddenly.

He rushes to the medicine cabinet, ravages through it, lifts a bottle out, finds a syringe in a box on the counter and a needle in another box.

He draws the fluid into the syringe, flicks his finger against the syringe to release the air, rushes over to Ice.

He inserts the syringe into the drip and empties the contents. He adjusts the speed of the drip.

NIGHT TECHNICIAN (cont'd)
Come on girl, you have to hang in there.

He kindly strokes Ice's face.

NIGHT TECHNICIAN (cont'd)
I know you have been through a lot,
but I need you to fight through this.

The breathing slows down, becomes regular. The night technician listens to Ice's heart, looks at his watch.

MONTAGE

- Vet checks in on Ice.
- Technician changes drip, clean wounds
- Cleaner wash floor with mop
- Valerie and Roger visits
- Vet administer injection
- Technician cleans Ice's dressings
- Cleaner wipes down cages, wash floor
- Wanda and Valerie brings a new blanket and toy
- Technician cleans bedding, writes on chart
- Ice sits up, wags tail at cleaner
- Vet rubs Ice's head, checks her over

END MONTAGE

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Wanda stares out of the window, lost in thought. The kettle starts to whistle softly, then louder Wanda does not notice.

The phone rings. It brings Wanda back to reality.

WANDA
Wanda, hello?
(nods)
Really?

She continues making her tea, the phone pinched between her neck and shoulder.

WANDA (cont'd)
Thanks, I'll be there in about an
hour.

Wanda looks at the phone and smiles, before she places it back on the hook. She looks at her watch... sips on her tea.

EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

The bell sounds. The big doors swing open, learners pile from the doors, happy the day has come to an end.

valerie pauses on the steps. she pushes her glasses up, searches. Her eyes find Wanda, waving at her. She smiles, makes her way to Wanda.

At the gate, she stops. Tears fill her eyes. She runs past Wanda.

Ice sits on the passenger seat, front foot in a cast, tail wagging.

Valerie frozen for a moment, stares at Ice, perplexed.

VALERIE

Hey Puppy.

Ice wiggles from the tip of her tail to the tip of her nose.

Valerie steps forward, hugs Ice. Laughs and cries. Happy.

Ice licks Valerie's face, wiggling with her whole being.

EXT. PARK - DAY

- Couples laze around on picnic blankets, a young lady leans against the trunk of a tree, lost in her book. A group of young people laugh.

- Valerie skips happily next to Ice. Wanda follows two steps behind.

- A distance away, a young man, plays ball with his Jack Russel. He tosses the ball, the Jack Russel in short pursuit.

The ball falls inches short of Ice, who lunges at the Jack Russel.

WANDA

Ice! NO!

The Jack Russel grabs his ball and runs off. Wanda waves and apology at the young man.

Ice strains on her leash, tries to get to the little dog.

Valerie places a calming hand on Ice.

VALERIE

It's enough now.

Ice looks at Valerie, she calms down and licks Valerie's face, her tail wagging a million miles a minute.

VALERIE (cont'd)
There we go, that's my girl.

Valerie takes Ice's head between her hands.

VALERIE (cont'd)
(Scolding)
That was very naughty, Ice.

Excited Ice breaks free, licks her face. Valerie's laughter cuts through the bustle in the park.

WANDA
Come you two, we should go.

They walk off again, Valerie skipping next to Ice, chatting away, indistinctly.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Ice runs up and down, next to the white, slat fence, aggressively barking.

She jumps up against the fence, tries to get to the little dog, on the other side.

Roger comes out, brings Ice inside.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The white minivan comes to a stop. The bright blue letters reads Julie's dog training.

Julie exits the van with a variety of leashes, a muzzle and some papers. She heads for the house... rings the bell.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

The doorbell cuts through the house. Ice rushes towards the door, barks like crazy.

Wanda slips her collar and leash on and pulls her away from the door.

Roger looks at Wanda before he opens the door.

Julie extends a hand.

JULIE
Hello, I am Julie. You called about your dog.

She looks past Roger at Ice, straining on her lead.

Roger step aside to let Julie in.

ROGER
We glad you came. As you can see, we
need help.

INSERT MONTAGE

- Valerie, Wanda and Julie walk down a quiet suburban street. Ten feet away, a cat runs across the street.

Ice strains in her harness in desperate pursuit of the cat. Julie corrects Ice's behavior.

- A sunny day at the park, Julie teaches Valerie some basic obedience commands to practice with Ice.

Roger watches on, a concerned look on his face.

- The doorbell rings, Julie steps in to stop Ice from barking and storming to the door.

She shows Wanda how to claim her space to stop Ice bad behavior.

- The dog park is quiet, Wanda, Ice and Julie walk is working with Ice on lead.

A small Jack Russel comes running to Ice.

Wanda reprimands Ice before she can react and praises her for not reacting.

Julie congratulates Wanda, satisfied.

- Valerie and Wanda practice the basic commands that Julie has taught them.

Eager to please her loving family Ice excels in these exercises.

- Roger walks with Wanda and Valerie, Ice on lead, next to Valerie.

They pass a woman walking two Yorkshire terriers, the run up to Ice.

Ice shows signs of play.

Wanda smiles at Roger while Valerie praises Ice.

- Julie brings a young Maltese over. She introduces them, allows them free play.

The two dogs run and play, without any incident.

- Ice sits down, a black graduation hat on her head, Valerie proudly standing next to her.

Julie hands her a diploma from Julie's dog school.

Roger and Wanda take pictures.

END MONTAGE

INT. SCHOOL HALL - NIGHT

The stage is filled with trees, a little girl in a turkey outfit and more pupils dressed up as pilgrims.

Every character on stage is trying their best to keep still.

MISS. SMITH
Ladies and gentlemen, I present to
you, Valerie McMullins with her oral
assignment.

The applause is deafening.

Valerie walks onto stage, Ice, next to her. They walk to the middle of the stage, before they stop and turn to the audience.

Valerie search through the spectators. She pushes her glasses up higher, swallows nervously.

Roger and Wanda's eyes meet for a second, proud. Wanda waves at Valerie.

Valerie catches sight of Wanda.

Roger mouths *I love you, Peanut*.

Valerie smiles, then looks at the people with a little more confidence.

VALERIE
Ladies and gentlemen, until recently
I was just an ordinary girl, with an
ordinary Mom, and ordinary Dad and an
ordinary dog.

Valerie looks down at Ice sitting quietly next to her.

VALERIE (cont'd)
We live in an ordinary house, I went
to an ordinary school, where I was
bullied, by...

Valerie nervously swallows, she looks sideways, her eyes
meet with Amy's, before she continues.

VALERIE (cont'd)
an ordinary...

Valerie's gaze falls on two empty seats, about four rows
from the front. A yellow A4 paper reads "Reserved Amy
Wilson".

VALERIE (cont'd)

a girl. That was, until Ice, here,
was stolen and I got into a fight.

Valerie briefly looks down at the flash cards, in her hands.
She looks up, her eyes play across the audience.

VALERIE (cont'd)
My ordinary life was crumbling under
my feet, as I learned that my birth-
father was a murderer, and the woman
who gave birth to me, wanted to kill
me.

The audience gasps. Wanda dabs at her eyes with a tissue.

VALERIE (cont'd)
My Mom and Dad refused to give up on
me...

Her eyes play across the audience.

VALERIE (cont'd)
they refused to let me lose hope of
finding my dog.

The faintest smile crosses her face.

VALERIE (cont'd)
When I was difficult, they were kind.
When I scared...

Valerie's meet those of Roger.

VALERIE (cont'd)
they were there to comfort me.

She smiles as she meets Wanda's gaze.

VALERIE (cont'd)
I put Mom through the ultimate test
when I asked to see my father. She
wanted to be the protective mom,

Wanda sobs, she nods her head in agreement, a laugh escapes
her lips. Roger takes a hold of her hand.

VALERIE (cont'd)
but Dad understood. He arranged for
me to see the man who fathered me...
and murdered my mother.

Valerie slips a flash card to the back of the pile. She
looks to her notes briefly, adjusts her glasses.

VALERIE (cont'd)
It was there as I put my hand in my
dad's for reassurance that I knew my
dad wasn't ordinary, he was special.

She looks across the audience, most women now are dabbing
their eyes. Her eyes fall on Wanda.

VALERIE (cont'd)
I realized that my mom, wasn't
ordinary either. An ordinary woman
couldn't love someone else's child,
as much as mine does me.

Valerie kneels down and puts her arm around Ice. Ice kisses
her cheek. Valerie laughs.

VALERIE (cont'd)
I realized my ordinary dog, was not
so ordinary. She survived a dog-
fighting ring, and almost died,
trying to get back to me.

Valerie walks of the stage, while speaking. She makes her
way to Wanda and Roger.

VALERIE (cont'd)
That's when I realized I must be
pretty special too, because these
very special people chose me. They
chose me to be their daughter, they
chose to give me an extraordinary
home.

Valerie reaches Wanda and Roger and pulls them up.

VALERIE (cont'd)
These two people, ladies and
gentlemen, are my parents and that is
why I love them.

Wanda cries openly, proud of her daughter. The audience rise
and applaud Valerie. Ice barks to join in the CHEERS.

The End