

THE GIRLFRIEND

By Nadine.

FADE IN:

FLORIDA SKYLINE - DAY

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A big house with dark wood interior throughout.

The furniture is dark brown, the walls in each room have different colors - light brown and cream color walls.

An early 50 something year old white lady (Sherry) is baking a cake in the kitchen, she is slim, short blonde hair, medium height.

A 50 something year old white man (Mike) enters the kitchen, he has dark hair, slim build, tall, wearing a suit and tie, he kisses Sherry on the cheek.

MIKE

I'm sorry I have to work today, honey.

Sherry smiles.

SHERRY

It's okay.

MIKE

See you tonight.

Mike leaves the house.

A cell phone on the kitchen table rings.

Sherry answers the phone.

SHERRY (Talking on cell phone)

Hi, Gary.

(Beat)

SHERRY (Talking on cell phone)

(Chuckles) Yeah, well your momma is making your second favorite pie.

(Beat)

SHERRY (Talking on cell phone)

Okay, hun. See you soon.

(Beat)

SHERRY (Talking on cell phone)

Bye.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

There is a knock at the door.
Sherry walks to the door and opens the door to an early 20 something year old man (Gary) he is medium height, skinny build, shoulder length long straight hair, he has a big smile on his face.

GARY

Hi, Mom.

SHERRY

Hi, sweetheart.

Gary walks in the house.
Sherry shuts the door.
They hug.

GARY

Something smells good.

SHERRY

I've been cooking for most of the day.

SHERRY

Where are your bags?

GARY

Me and Chantelle decided to stay at a hotel.

SHERRY

Oh...why? There's plenty of room here.

GARY

I don't know, I think Chantelle is a bit nervous.
You're gonna meet her tomorrow.

SHERRY

Okay, great.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Gary is leaving the house.

SHERRY

So, I shall expect you and Chantelle tomorrow morning.

GARY

Yes.
Bye, Mom.

Gary kisses Sherry on the cheek.

SHERRY

Bye, sweetheart.

Gary leaves.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Sherry and Mike are in the kitchen making breakfast.

MIKE

What time are Gary and his girlfriend arriving?

Sherry looks at the kitchen wall clock.

SHERRY

Should be within five minutes.

The doorbell rings.

SHERRY

Ah...should be them now.

Sherry walks out of the kitchen, to the front door.
We stay with Mike in the kitchen, he smiles while waiting.
There is inaudible talking from the front door/hallway.
Gary, Chantelle and Sherry walk into the kitchen.
Chantelle is in her early 20s, attractive, short dark hair,
medium height, white, slim build, wearing an oversize button
down shirt, skinny jeans, sneakers. She has a nice big smile on
her face.

CHANTELLE (To Mike)

Hi. I'm Chantelle.

Chantelle walks towards Mike, with her hand open to shake his hand.

Mike smiles at Chantelle.

MIKE (To Chantelle)

Hi, Chantelle.

He walks towards Chantelle and shakes her hand.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Everyone is about to eat dinner in the dining room.

MIKE (To Gary)

Gary, you wanna say the prayer?

GARY (To Mike)

No, dad. That's okay. You can do it.

MIKE

Father, thank you for this lovely meal that we're about to eat this beautiful evening.

And thank you for Chantelle, a new member of the family.

EVERYONE

Amen.

SHERRY

Everybody, enjoy the food.

Everyone starts to put food on their plates.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Everyone is eating dinner.

GARY

So that's how me and Chantelle met.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Well, you got two blessings from film studies.

Chantelle smiles at Sherry.

CHANTELLE (To Sherry)

Thank you.

SHERRY (To Chantelle)

So, have your parents met Gary?

CHANTELLE (To Sherry)

Well, uh...

GARY (To Sherry)

Not yet, Mom.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Gary and Chantelle are about to leave the house.

SHERRY

See you guys, tomorrow.

They all say bye to each other.

Gary and Chantelle have left.

Sherry and Mike walk into the kitchen and start cleaning up the plates.

MIKE

Nice lady.

SHERRY

Yeah...but...

MIKE

Uh oh...but what?

Sherry sighs.

SHERRY

I don't know, there's just...I mean, they cut off the conversation about her parents when I brought them up...

MIKE

Well, there could be many reasons...maybe they'll tell us at a later time.

SHERRY

Yeah...you're probably right.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Gary is watching TV. Chantelle is changing her clothes in the bathroom.

GARY (Shouts to Chantelle)

So you're okay about tomorrow then, Chan? (pronounced "Shan")

CHANTELLE (O.S.) (Shouts back)

Yeah.

(Beat)

Chantelle enters the room wearing her pajamas. She joins Gary on the bed.

GARY

You still look sexy, even in pajamas.

Chantelle kisses Gary on the cheek.

(Beat)

CHANTELLE

Your parents are nice. You know I like them, but your mom, she...I don't think she likes me.

GARY

What? Don't be stupid, Chan (Pronounced "Shan").

CHANTELLE

No, I'm serious. I got the feeling that she is not keen on me.

GARY

Baby, she loves you, okay?!
I know my mom.

CHANTELLE

She loves me, Gary? She doesn't know me.

GARY

I know. Wrong choice of words. I mean I know you and Mom are gonna get along great.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHURCH BUILDING - DAY

Mike, Sherry, Gary, Chantelle are walking out of church.

GARY (To Sherry)

We're gonna meet up with Chantelle's friend. We arranged this a week ago.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Okay, honey. We'll see you later.

They all say bye to each other.

Gary and Chantelle walk to his car. Sherry and Mike walk to Sherry's car.

INT. CAR - DAY

Gary is driving, with Chantelle in the passenger front seat.

CHANTELLE

I respect the whole church thing, but it's not for me.
I don't think I'll be going again.

GARY

Okay, that's cool.

(Beat)

CHANTELLE

So, how do your parents feel about us?
I mean...they must guess that we're getting our groove on.

Gary chuckles.

GARY

They don't judge. And it's my life. I'm a grown man.

Chantelle smiles.

CHANTELLE

A very sexy man.

They both chuckle.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Mike and Sherry hang their coats on the coat rack.
They walk into the living room.

MIKE

I'm gonna start working on the back yard.

SHERRY

Okay.

Sherry sighs, she shakes her head while looking towards the floor.

MIKE

What's wrong, honey?

(Beat)

SHERRY

It's Chantelle.

MIKE

What about her?

SHERRY

I don't think she's right for Gary.

MIKE

Oh, hun. Come on, don't do...

SHERRY

No, it's a strong intuition that I have.

MIKE

Honey...you didn't like his last girlfriend.

SHERRY

I know, but...

MIKE

Look, I know it's difficult.
You want someone to be good enough for your baby boy.
But let's give Chantelle a chance.

(Beat)

Sherry nods her head.

SHERRY

Okay.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A house twice the size of Sherry and Mike's house.
This house is decorated white all over, minimalist style
furniture and overall minimal with only the basic furniture and
things.
A lot of people are in the main room, talking and eating small
snacks with glasses of wine and champagne, 70s music is playing
in the background at this party.
Sherry, Mike, Gary, and Chanelle are in the main room.
Chantelle and Gary are in a corner by themselves, both have a
glass of champagne in their hands.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

It's 2023, what's up with this 70s music?!

Gary chuckles.

GARY (To Chantelle)

Baby, the owners of this house are my parents' age.
What'd you expect?!

A tall white lady (Colleen) approaches Gary and Chantelle.

COLLEEN (To Gary and Chantelle)

Hey, guys.

GARY (To Colleen)

Hi, Colleen.
This is a nice party.

COLLEEN (To Gary)

Thank you, Gary.

GARY (To Colleen)

This is my girlfriend, Chantelle.

Chantelle and Colleen shake hands.

CHANTELLE (To Colleen)

Hi. Nice to meet you.

COLLEEN (To Chantelle)

It's very nice to meet you.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

More and more people are arriving at Colleen's house warming party. Sherry is drinking wine in the kitchen, Mike is drinking a can of soda, the kitchen is full of people.

SHERRY (To Mike)

I want to leave soon.
Need to find Colleen.

Sherry and Mike grab their coats, Colleen walks towards them.

COLLEEN (To Sherry and Mike)

Leaving so soon?

SHERRY (To Colleen)

It's a beautiful house, Colleen.

MIKE (To Colleen)

Yes. Very.

COLLEEN (To Sherry and Mike)

Thank you.
Call you guys in a couple of days?

SHERRY (To Colleen)

Yes. Speak to you soon.

Sherry and Colleen kiss each other on the cheek.
Mike and Colleen kiss each other on the cheek.

COLLEEN (To Mike and Sherry)

Bye guys.

Mike and Sherry both say bye to Colleen at the same time.
Mike and Sherry leave the house.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Colleen, Gary, and Chantelle are in the kitchen, along with
other people.

COLLEEN (To Chantelle)

You tried to take my crystal glasses. I saw you!

CHANTELLE (To Colleen)

Bullshit.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

Let's get out of here. I don't need to take this.

GARY (To Colleen)

You're accusing my girlfriend.
She's not a thief.

COLLEEN (To Gary and Chantelle)
Both of you just get out. Just leave!

GARY (To Colleen)
Our pleasure.

Gary and Chantelle leave the house.

CROSSFADE:

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Sherry is in the living room. She is talking on her cell phone.

SHERRY (Talking on Cell Phone)
Okay, thanks for telling me, Colleen.

(Beat)

SHERRY (Talking on Cell Phone)
Okay.
Bye, Colleen.

Sherry puts the phone on the table.

SHERRY (To Herself)
Gary...why are you with her?!

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Chantelle and Gary are sitting on the bed.

CHANTELLE

Let's just get outta here, Gary.
These people are not cool!

GARY

Come on, C.
Just because of Colleen?!
Look, you don't have to see her again.

CHANTELLE

It isn't just that incident.
I'm not feelin' this place.
Your parents are nice, but we should just see them another time.

GARY

You wanna run away.

CHANTELLE

Running away is sometimes not a bad thing.

GARY

Babe, just give it a chance.

Chantelle sighs.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Gary and Chantelle are at Sherry and Mike's house.
Sherry and Gary are in the kitchen.

GARY

Look, Mom. I know Chantelle. Colleen has an issue with her, maybe it's jealousy of a younger woman or somethin', I don't know, but it's kinda rude to talk about someone when they're in the next room. I'm not doing this right now.

Gary starts to walk out of the kitchen.
Sherry grabs his arm.

SHERRY

Don't walk away from me and watch your tone..

GARY

Mom...

SHERRY

You've only known Chantelle for 6 months.

All of a sudden, we hear yelling in the living room.
Gary and Sherry immediately stop their arguing and walk fast into the living room where Mike and Chantelle are.

SHERRY (To Mike and Chantelle)

What is going on?

GARY (To Mike and Chantelle)

We heard yelling.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

Your dad's a fucking pervert, that's what's happening!

SHERRY (To Chantelle)

What?...What on earth...

Gary is speechless for a moment.

CHANTELLE (To Sherry)

Yeah, that's right! Your husband just hit on me...saying sexual things to me..grabbed my ass.

MIKE

That is a lie!

MIKE (To Chantelle)

I did not touch you!
What the hell are you trying to pull?!

GARY (To Mike)

What the hell, dad!

MIKE (To Gary)

You don't actually believe what she said??

Chantelle storms out of the house.
Gary runs out of the house after Chantelle.

MIKE

She's lying.

SHERRY

What the hell happened? Why is she accusing you?

MIKE

We were talking about her hobbies...all of a sudden she started yelling at me...saying all kinds of weird stuff...accusing me...we were literally sitting on two different sofas...this woman...she's ill or something.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

CHANTELLE

You have to believe me, Gary.
If you're calling me a liar right now, then we can end this.

GARY

No, no, baby. I do believe you...it's just...are you sure that...maybe you misunderstood something that he said...I mean, my dad is not a sexual predator.

CHANTELLE

Gary, I'm not lying!

(Beat)

GARY

My dad is a son of a bitch.

I should go back in there and knock him out...he...

Gary's eyes well up, he shakes his head, he puts his hand on his forehead while lowering his head.

CHANTELLE

Gary...Gary...it's okay...let's just get out of here.

Gary starts the car. They drive away.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Sherry and Mike are in the living room.

MIKE

We need to get Gary away from her, Sherry.

SHERRY

There's not much we can do. He's an adult.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

I'm leaving tomorrow. I ain't staying here.
Are you coming with me?

DISSOLVE TO

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Sherry is in the kitchen cooking breakfast.
Mike walks into the kitchen. He picks up his cell phone on the table.

MIKE

I've got a message.

He puts the phone to his ear.

ANSWER MACHINE MESSAGE (GARY V.O.)

Dad, we are done!
Don't you ever contact me again!

Mike puts the phone on the table, his lips are trembling, his eyes well up with tears, he sits down at the table.
Sherry turns around and looks at her husband.

SHERRY

Honey, what's wrong?

(Beat)

Mike hands his cell phone to Sherry.

MIKE

Gary left me a voice mail.

Sherry listens to the voice mail.
Her eyes filled with sadness.
She puts the phone down on the table.
She sits down at the table with her husband.

(Beat)

SHERRY

She's got into his head, Mike.

(Beat)

SHERRY

We'll get our son back. He will eventually see that she's manipulative and a liar. People like her, always slip up and reveal their true selves.

INT. CAR - DAY

Gary is driving.
Chantelle is in the front passenger seat.
The silence brings tension into the atmosphere.

GARY

Chan (pronounced "Shan"), we need to go to the police.

CHANTELLE

No.
I just want to forget it.
It will just be his word against mine anyway.

GARY

But we still need to try.
He can't get away with this.

CHANTELLE

Gary, let's just get out of here.

GARY

Okay.

CROSSFADE:

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Sherry and Mike are eating breakfast.

SHERRY

I'm glad you fixed up the yard. Nice to eat breakfast out here sometimes.

Mike smiles.

(Beat)

MIKE

So I tried to contact Gary this morning...no luck.

SHERRY

Honey, it's been two months...let him contact us...he'll see the light eventually.

There is a knock at the door.

MIKE

I got it, honey.

Mike goes to answer the door.

Mike walks into the backyard...GARY appears behind him.

Sherry gasps.

SHERRY

Oh my God.

Sherry walks up to Gary and hugs him. She keeps him in her embrace for a moment.

GARY (To Sherry)

Hi, Mom.

Sherry starts to cry.

MIKE (To Gary)

We missed you, son.

GARY

I missed you guys too.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Sherry, Mike and Gary are sitting at the table. Breakfast stuff still on the table with new fresh Ice Tea.

GARY

Me and Chantelle have been going back and forth with what happened. I told her my dad is not a predator. I've asked her more than once that she could have mistaken something you said.

MIKE (To Gary)

Gary, I'm your father...I did not and would ever not be inappropriate to a woman, no matter who she is...you know me, son!

GARY (To Mike)

Dad, I've defended you over and over, but Chantelle is 100% certain...look...I love Chantelle..and I love you guys, and the only way I can think of in my mind is that you guys got your wires crossed. I'm still with Chantelle. I told her I still want to see you guys. She told me that I find it difficult to accept that my dad is bad...she's got you all wrong, dad, but I still wanna be with her.

MIKE (To Gary)

Son, she's bad news.

GARY (To Mike)

Dad...don't make me regret coming here.

MIKE (To Gary)

Make you??? Really????!!!

SHERRY

You guys have never argued like this before.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Look at what Chantelle is doing to our family, Gary. Can't you see it?!

GARY (To Sherry)

I'm outta here, Mom.

Gary leaves.

Sherry attempts to follow him.

MIKE (To Sherry)

Honey, let him go.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Loft apartment, brick walls, open plan.
Chantelle is in the living room area talking on the phone.

CHANTELLE (Talking on Cell Phone)

Okay. Bye, Mom.

She puts the phone down on the coffee table.
A key turns in the door, Gary walks in.

GARY

Hey, babe.

CHANTELLE

Hey.

CHANTELLE

Was just talking to my Mom on the phone. Gonna go and see her in
a few days.

(Beat)

GARY

Well, just got back from seeing my parents...and...

Gary sighs.

GARY

I don't know what to do with this situation with you and them.

Chantelle walks over to Gary.

She puts her arms around his shoulders, he puts her arms around her waist. She looks into his eyes with affection.

CHANTELLE

It's okay. We talked about this.

(Beat)

CHANTELLE (CONT'D)

I think your dad's a jerk. And you love him. It's two different opinions. We can live with that. Do you think other couples don't have to compromise?!

Gary nods his head.

They kiss.

CROSSFADE:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Mike is walking with Sam, he is early 60s, taller than mike.

MIKE

I'm glad we had this business dinner.

SAM

Me too.

MIKE

This idea for the business is a good risk. I know it's gonna be worth the money.

SAM

Agreed.

SAM

My car is just round the corner.

MIKE

Mine is a bit further down the street.

SAM

Okay, well listen, I'll call you in a few days.

MIKE

Okay. Goodnight, Sam.

SAM

Say hi to Sherry for me.

MIKE

I will.

Sam turns left into a residential street.
We stay with Mike as he walks further down the straight road.
The stores and the takeout stores stopped just before the road
that Sam went to.
There is a chill in the night air. Mike approaches his car. He
puts his hand in his coat pocket to get his keys.
All of a sudden, a GUN is touching the back of Mike's head. He
freezes for a moment. There is a menacing male voice.

ATTACKER (O.S.)

Give me your wallet.

MIKE

Okay.

Mike swallows in fear, his eyes are wide, he's breathing with
his mouth open, the chill of his breath in the dark air.

ATTACKER (O.S.)

Remove your hand from your pocket slowly.

Mike does what the attacker tells him.

ATTACKER (O.S.)

Turn around.

Mike turns around and is now facing the attacker with the silencer gun pointed at Mike's chest.

(Beat)

The attacker squeezes the TRIGGER. The gun goes off. Mike screws up his eyes and face and yells in pain. He falls to the ground, bleeding from the chest. The attacker runs off. Mike is lying by his car, bleeding out.

A person/Good Samaritan, runs up to Mike.

GOOD SAMARITAN

Oh my God.

GOOD SAMARITAN (To Mike)

Sir, are you okay??

Mike is falling unconscious.

Another person runs to Mike to help him.

GOOD SAMARITAN (To Mike)

Hold on, Sir. I'm gonna call the ambulance.

Good Samaritan takes a cell phone out of his pocket, he dials a number and puts the phone to his ear.

GOOD SAMARITAN (Talking on the Cell
Phone)
I need an ambulance at Frederick Street. A man's unconscious.

As Good Samaritan is talking to the 911 operator, more people
run to help Mike.

CROSSFADE:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Two police officers are talking to Sherry. The conversation is
inaudible. Sherry slowly sits down on the chair in the living
room, she starts to weep. One of the police officers puts her
hand on Sherry's shoulder.

CROSSFADE:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gary is crying, Chantelle hugs him.

CHANTELLE
I'm sorry about your dad. I'm so sorry.

CROSSFADE:

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Sherry and Colleen are drinking tea in the kitchen.

SHERRY

I'm thinking about getting out of this house for a few days.
I don't know, I just can't be here.

COLLEEN

Gary should be here with you right now.

SHERRY

We're not as close as we were.

COLLEEN

Chantelle.

SHERRY

Even though it would be easy to say it's because of her...me and Gary haven't been close for a long time.

(Beat)

SHERRY (CONT'D)

As soon as he left home...our relationship hasn't been the same.
We used to talk about everything.

Sherry's eyes are filled with sadness.

CROSSFADE:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

People dressed in black are leaving the funeral service.
A Detective is walking with Gary and Sherry.

DETECTIVE

We're going to get to the bottom of your husband and father's
murder.

SHERRY

Thank you Detective.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Sherry and Gary enter the house.

GARY

Let me make you some coffee, Mom.

SHERRY

Thanks, hun.

They walk into the kitchen.
Gary starts to make the tea.

SHERRY

Listen, I want to talk to you, Son, about our relationship.

Gary turns around to face his Mom, his hands resting at his side on the kitchen counter, the kettle boiling in the background.

GARY

What is it, Mom?

SHERRY

I feel we're not as close as we used to be...ever since you moved out.

GARY

That's ridiculous, Mom.

SHERRY

Just let me finish.

(Beat)

SHERRY (CONT'D)

We should spend more time together...go out on outings.

GARY

Okay...but you know I love you, Mom.

SHERRY

I know, and I love you too.

They hug.

CROSSFADE:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Sherry is drinking wine at Collen's house with Colleen and Colleen's husband (Roy)

ROY (To Sherry)

So, how has Gary been coping?

SHERRY (To Roy)

He's coping...I think he's trying to be strong for me, he seems to be bottling his emotions.

(Beat)

SHERRY (CONT'D)

I may sound out of line here, but I think...I...I think Chantelle may have had something to do with Mike's murder.

ROY (To Sherry)

Woah, that's quite an accusation, Sherry.

SHERRY (To Roy)

I know, but...

COLLEEN (To Sherry)

Do you have any proof?

SHERRY (To Colleen)

No, but we all know Chantelle disliked Mike.

CROSSFADE:

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

Chantelle and Gary are sitting in the living room area.

CHANTELLE

How can your mom accuse me like this?!

(Beat)

CHANTELLE (CONT'D)

Because her husband was inappropriate with me, she blames me.

GARY

Obviously you didn't do this.
She's just hurting right now.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Sherry and Gary are in the kitchen.

GARY

Mom, you are wrong about Chantelle.

SHERRY

Gary, she's dangerous. I have the mother's intuition. She's bad news.

Gary shakes his head.

GARY

Just because you don't like her...doesn't make her a killer!

SHERRY

She's breaking up our relationship, can't you see that?!

GARY

That's ridiculous, Mom. Look, I've gotta go.

Gary walks out of the house.

CROSSFADE:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective 1 and Detective 2 are walking down the hall.

DETECTIVE 1 (To Detective 2)

The case is closed on Mike Davis's death. A mugging gone wrong.

CROSSFADE:

1ST FLASHBACK

Sherry and Colleen are talking.

SHERRY (To Colleen)

Me and Gary haven't been close for a long time.

There is sadness in Sherry's eyes.

END FLASHBACK.

2ND FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE / KITCHEN - DAY

Gary and Sherry are talking.

SHERRY (To Gary)

I feel we're not as close as we used to be...ever since you moved out.

GARY (To Sherry)

That's ridiculous, Mom.

END 2ND FLASHBACK

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Sherry is talking to a guy in a hoodie and jogging bottoms, the guy is African-American, medium height. The conversation is inaudible. Sherry hands him a bunch of cash.

CROSSFADE:

FLASHBACK

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The hooded man is walking towards MIKE as Mike at his car.

CROSSFADE:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Mike is lying on the ground, BLEEDING OUT.
We see the attackers face, he is the SAME GUY who was talking to SHERRY.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Sherry is in the living room, talking on her cell phone.

SHERRY (Talking on Cell Phone)

So, what do you say, Gary?

How about moving back home for a while.

I don't want to live here on my own...not right now after what happened to your father.

(Beat)

SHERRY (Talking on Cell Phone)

Why not, Gary?!

Sherry's lips tighten, she balls up her fist.

SHERRY (Talking on Cell Phone)

It's that bitch you're dating!

She's turning you against me, she...Hello?...HELLO?!

Sherry looks at her cell phone, she presses a button and puts the phone on the table.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Gary is in the living area, Chantelle walks in from the kitchen with two cups of coffee, she puts the mugs on the table.

GARY

Thank you.

CHANTELLE

Couldn't help but hear the tense conversation you had with your mom.

GARY

She's losing it.

(Beat)

GARY

She...

Gary pauses.

CHANTELLE

It's about me isn't it?!

(Beat)

CHANTELLE (CONT'D)

What bad thing has your mom said about me now?!
Come on, you can tell me. I'm not a child. I know she dislikes me, so whatever she says about me it's not gonna be good.

Gary sighs.

GARY

Mom wants me to move back home for a while. She's accusing you of ruining mine and her relationship.

(Beat)

CHANTELLE

I don't know what to say! You know that it isn't true.

GARY

I know, I know.

Gary hugs Chantelle. The tears from her eyes stain on Gary's sweater as her head rests on his chest.
Gary looks at Chantelle.

GARY

I'm sorry you're getting hurt by all this, sweetheart.

CROSSFADE:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gary and Chantelle are watching a stand up comedy show on TV. They both laugh as Gary has his arm around Chantelle, she is leaning into him, both are clearly comfortable with each other. The door knocks. The smiles disappear from their faces. Chantelle looks at the clock on the wall.

CHANTELLE

It's 9' o clock. Are you expecting anyone?

GARY

No, no one.

Gary walks to the door. He opens it. It's Sherry.

GARY

Mom! Hi! Come in.

SHERRY

Thank you, hun.

Sherry walks into the open-plan apartment and stands by the living room area.

CHANTELLE

Sherry, Hi. How are you?

SHERRY

Chantelle.

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, please sit down.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Thank you.

Sherry sits down on a different couch to Chantelle. Both couches are facing each other like a semi-circle.

GARY (To Sherry)

Can I get you a coffee or something, Mom?

SHERRY (To Gary)

No, thank you, hun.

Gary sits down next to Chantelle.

GARY (To Sherry)

So what brings you here at this time, Mom?....I mean...you always call first.

SHERRY (To Gary)

I know, I'm sorry for not calling you, I...

Sherry bursts into tears.

Gary walks over to Sherry and hugs her.

Chantelle gets a box of tissues from the kitchen and gives them to Sherry.

SHERRY (To Chantelle)

Thank you.

Sherry calms down. She uses the tissues.
Gary sits back down next to Chantelle.

GARY (To Sherry)

What's wrong, mom?

SHERRY (To Gary)

I was watching TV and I started to feel so lonely at the house...I've been feeling extremely lonely since your dad died.

GARY (To Sherry)

I know, Mom, but we talked about this.

SHERRY (To Gary)

I know.

GARY (To Sherry)

Couldn't you stay with Colleen for a while? Or one of your other friends? I mean...

Sherry interrupts.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Well, that's nice! (Sarcasm) You would rather I stay with anyone but you.

GARY (To Sherry)

You know I don't mean it like that.

(Beat)

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, you and Chantelle do not get along...

Sherry interrupts again.

SHERRY

I shouldn't have come here.

Sherry stands up.

Gary stands up.

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, don't be stupid, look...

Chantelle interrupts.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

Gary, let's just let your mom stay here tonight...I'll go to a hotel.

SHERRY (To Chantelle)

Here you go again, playing the victim.

CHANTELLE (To Sherry)

Excuse me?!

SHERRY (To Gary)

Can't you see this is what she does?!

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, what are you talking about?!

SHERRY (To Gary)

I guess you still believe that your father was inappropriate with her.

CHANTELLE (To Sherry)

He was inappropriate towards me! I did not not lie!

FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike and Chantelle are in the living room, talking.

CHANTELLE (To Mike)

I like hiking and...

Chantelle stops talking. She remembers a bad memory from her childhood... a three second flashback of a man...the same build and race as Mike is walking into her bedroom.

Chantelle frowns, her lips tighten, she stares at Mike.

CHANTELLE (To Mike)

YOU FUCKING PERVERT! YOU WILL NEVER TOUCH ME! YOU WISH!

Mike's eyes are wide, he can't believe what he is hearing.

MIKE (To Chantelle)

Chantelle, what are you talking about?!
What are you doing?!

Gary and Sherry run into the living room.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

GARY (To Chantelle)

So you did lie about my dad?!

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

I'm sorry, babe. I have issues...and I know I need to get help about that...but I did not have anything to do with your dad's death.

(Beat)

SHERRY (To Chantelle)

And what about Colleen's crystal glasses?...

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. HOUSE / KITCHEN - NIGHT

Colleen's house warming party.

The kitchen has quite a few people.

Chantelle is looking at the crystal glasses on the kitchen side...she can't take her eyes off of them. She picks up a glass and ATTEMPTS to put a glass in her BAG.

Colleen walks in the kitchen and sees Chantelle's thievery attempt.

COLLEEN (To Chantelle)

What the hell do you think you're doing?!

END FLASHBACK

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

GARY (To Chantelle)

Shan, why?...

(Beat)

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

It's a weakness of mine...I lived on the streets when I was younger to get away from my mom and stepdad...

(Beat)

CHANTELLE (To Gary) (CONT'D)

And stealing was a way of life...

(Beat)

CHANTELLE (To Gary) (CONT'D)

It's a habit that I've found difficult to break...before Colleen's, the last time I stole was a year before that...something stupid...like an album.

GARY (To Chantelle)

Why didn't you tell me about all of this?!
You told me that you and your mom and dad are simply not close because you didn't get along with each other.
You never told me about your stepdad and the abuse. And the stealing...

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

Gary, you need to stop acting like you're mr. perfect.

GARY (To Chantelle)

You know everything about me! I did not lie to you, I did not keep anything from you, I hit my ex-girlfriend once...I had a problem with anger and I got help.

(Beat)

GARY (To Chantelle)

Why didn't you tell me about your past? I would never judge you, it wasn't your fault.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

I was too ashamed to bring it up. My mom never protected me, she was a junkie, I never tried to find her. After I left, that was it! I'm not interested in finding her, I don't even know if she's still alive.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Gary, come home with me now.
She's no good for you.

Gary sighs.

GARY (To Sherry)

No, mom. I'm not going anywhere. I love Chantelle.

Sherry lets out a short bitter laugh.

SHERRY (To Gary)

She just admitted to lying to you TWICE! She...

Gary interrupts.

GARY (To Sherry)

I still love her, Mom.

(Beat)

Gary looks at Chantelle.

GARY (To Sherry)

She's a good person who suffered and made mistakes...mistakes that are not unforgivable.

Chantelle smiles at Gary with a closed-mouth smile. He smiles back at her the same way.

Gary looks at Sherry.

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, you always say that God is always willing to forgive anything and that his sheep should too.

(Beat)

SHERRY (To Gary)

Then I guess you will forgive me for what I'm about to tell you.

(Beat)

GARY (To Sherry)

What are you talking about?

(Beat)

SHERRY

I had him killed.

(Beat)

SHERRY (To Gary)

I had your father killed.

Gary stares at his mom, wide-eyed, tears welling up in his eyes.

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, why did you?....How could...why?

SHERRY (To Gary)

I was losing you.

(Beat)

SHERRY (To Gary) (CONT'D)

Our relationship was fading away.

GARY (To Sherry)

That's ridiculous!

You and I have always been close.

SHERRY (To Gary)

I disagree.

SHERRY (To Gary) (CONT'D)

Me and your father's marriage lost its spark. We may as well have been roommates. I fell out of love for him, and I believe he didn't love me. We were more like friends rather than husband and wife.

(Beat)

GARY (To Sherry)

So why didn't you talk to dad about it?
You guys could have got counseling.

SHERRY (To Gary)

There's no point talking about what we could have done.

(Beat)

SHERRY (To Gary)

I made up my mind. I made my choice.
I'm pretty sure your father was having an affair, and I didn't
even care!

(Beat)

SHERRY (To Gary)

So I thought why not do this and get my son back and have the
police blame Chantelle.

Chantelle shakes her head, she stares hard at Sherry.

GARY (To Sherry)

Your plan didn't work, Mom.
We spoke to the police, they ruled both Chantelle and I out as
suspects. They've closed the case as a robbery gone wrong.

SHERRY (To Gary)

I know. They spoke to me too.

(Beat)

GARY (To Sherry)

You had my father killed for nothing.

(Beat)

GARY (To Sherry)

A good man was murdered, and you've made our relationship worse, not better.

Tears fall down Sherry's face.

GARY (To Sherry)

And I'm not breaking up with Chantelle. I love her, and I want to marry her.

Chantelle stands up and stands next to Gary. Her hand rubbing his shoulder as support. We see that they will stick together no matter what.

GARY (To Sherry) (CONT'D)

Mom, you need to turn yourself in to the police.

SHERRY (To Gary)

I can't do that.

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, you need help.

SHERRY (To Gary)

I'm not a threat to society. I just lost my mind for a moment.

GARY (To Sherry)

FOR A MOMENT?!...MOM, YOU PLANNED MY DAD'S MURDER! YOU'VE BEEN MANIPULATIVE AND YOU'VE BEEN SCHEMING. IT WAS NOT SOME CRIME OF PASSION! YOU PLANNED AND PAID SOME THUG TO KILL MY DAD!

(Beat)

SHERRY (To Gary)

I'm not going to turn myself in. I'll go on the run if I have to.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

Look, your mom made a horrible choice. But she's still your Mom.

Gary turns to face Chantelle.

GARY (To Chantelle)

What are you saying?

Chantelle goes back to the couch and sits down.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

How about we keep this between ourselves. Your mom is clearly sorry for what she did.

(Beat)

Gary sighs.

He looks at Sherry.

GARY (To Sherry)

Okay, mom, here's the deal. We won't go to the police, but I don't want to ever see you again!

Sherry starts to weep.

GARY (To Sherry)

You had my father killed to make our relationship closer, but you've only managed to do the opposite.

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

Gary, you're in pain right now. Don't disown your Mom.

Gary turns to face Chantelle.

GARY (To Chantelle)

Why are you sticking up for her?! She was planning to frame you for my dad's death!

CHANTELLE (To Gary)

But she is sorry, and I just think...look, my Mom never cared about me...If I had a mom like yours...all I'm saying is that your Mom did this to keep you in her life.

(Beat)

CHANTELLE (To Gary) (CONT'D)

Don't make any extreme decisions right now.

(Beat)

Gary turns back and faces Sherry.

GARY (To Sherry)

We won't go to the police...I don't want to see you for a while...I need some time.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Okay.

GARY (To Sherry)

I will contact you, I don't know when.

(Beat)

GARY (To Sherry)

Mom, I want you to leave now.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Okay.

Sherry is weeping, she struggles to get her words out.

SHERRY (To Gary)

Son, just know that I love you.

GARY (To Sherry)

I love you too, Mom.

Still tearful, Sherry leaves.

Gary sits down next to Chantelle. They hold hands. They sit in silence...

10 seconds pass before words are spoken.

CHANTELLE

Are you still gonna have a relationship with your mom?

(Beat)

GARY

I don't know...

(Beat)

GARY (CONT'D)

How could I ever trust her again?! She had my dad ki...

Gary stops his sentence, he pauses...his teary eyes fill with anger and sadness.

GARY (CONT'D)

She killed my dad.

Chantelle and Gary hug.

FADE TO BLACK

