

WALKING INTO MURDER

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ACT ONE

EXT. SUBURBS, HOUSE - NIGHT

Shadows loom across a darkened house. Middle of the night and eerily quiet.

INT. HOUSE, STUDY - NIGHT

A light from a lone study lamp burns. EDWARD LAMBERT (67), grizzled and intense, hunched over a desk, punches a key on a laptop. A printer whirs and spits out paper.

Ed collects the contents and scans them over before stuffing them in a folder.

As he exits the room, several awards and mahogany plaques are seen on the panelled walls: *Police Captain Edward G. Lambert, We Thank You For Your Dedicated Service*. A photo of him with a few fishing buddies - *Happy Retirement!*

BEDROOM

He slips off his watch, places it on a night stand next to a picture of him and his WIFE. A rosary draped on the corner.

Next to the picture is an ornate URN.

He goes to lift the covers off the tight sheets when--

A 9MM is pressed to his temple. He GASPS.

VOICE

(deep, modulated)

Don't. Move.

ED

I won't.

A FIGURE in black tactical gear and ski mask is behind him.

ED (CONT'D)

My wallet's in the drawer.

(silence)

What the hell do you want?

VOICE

I want you to kill yourself.

ED

What?

Ed moves slightly.

VOICE
Don't turn ar--

With quickness reserved for a younger man, Ed grabs the perp's wrist, elbows him sharply in the face!

The perp is knocked back, almost loses balance.

Ed whirls, advances, but stops.

The 9MM is still trained on his face.

ED
If you were going to kill me you
would have done it already.

Ed studies him. Slender frame, but the gear is baggy. Not enough to ascertain gender.

That indefinable shadow voice again.

VOICE
Your daughter doesn't live far from
here, Mr. Lambert. Divorced, no
kids. Lives alone. Shall I pay her
a visit?

Ed wilts.

ADJOINING BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ed stands in front of the mirror, his face a mix of desperation and anger.

From behind, the perp has a different gun pressed to the back of his head. He hands Ed the 9MM.

VOICE (CONT'D)
I'll blow out the back of your head
if you try anything.

Ed takes the 9MM.

ED
This is my gun.

VOICE
The clip is empty. There's one in
the chamber. Make it count.

Ed studies his reflection in the mirror, regards the gun.

ED
Just shoot me.

VOICE
Do it.

ED
(breath quickening)
Why? Why this way?

A long silence.

VOICE
Do it. Or I make another stop after
here.

Ed's mettle is gone. On the verge of tears. This can't be happening.

He raises the gun to his head, just above his right ear. He clenches his teeth.

The perp waits, gun trained at him from a few feet away.

ED
Dear god, forgive me...

Suddenly, Ed raises the gun an inch higher and slightly forward. He closes his eyes.

ED (CONT'D)
NAHHHHH!

Squeezes the trigger.

OVER BLACK:

BLAM!

EXT. SUBURBS - MORNING

MARCY TATUM (32), breezes along the sidewalk of an immaculate neighborhood as a pug and a corgi lead the way. Comfortable walking gear. Fanny pack. This is a woman who prepares for everything.

She comes to a house, opens a gate on a picket fence and leads the pug inside.

MARCY
Bye, Petey. See you tonight.

The dog scurries up the front steps and disappears through a doggie door. Marcy secures the gate and heads off.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Marcy turns a corner and stops when she sees the pulsing lights of two squad cars in Ed's driveway.

Officers milling about, going to and from the open front door of the house.

In a fashionable suit is DETECTIVE DANIEL SHAPIRO (35). He talks with an OFFICER, points to the house. Jotting notes. No doubt he's in charge here.

Marcy accosts them, worried, trembling.

MARCY
What's going on?

DAN
Miss, you're gonna have to step back. This is a crime scene.

MARCY
Is Ed okay?

DAN
You know Ed Lambert?

MARCY
I live next door.

The Corgi starts yapping at the detective's shoes.

DAN
Can you calm your dog down?

MARCY
Poirot, shh!

The dog immediately quiets.

DAN
Did you talk to Mr. Lambert at all last night? Or early this morning?

MARCY
No. I don't usually talk to Ed until I'm done with my work. Is he all right? You're scaring me.

DAN
He shot himself.

MARCY
Oh my god! Is he..?

DAN
He's in ICU right now.

MARCY
He couldn't have...

DAN
What kind of work do you do?

MARCY
I'm a dog walker. I have a lot of clients in the neighborhood.

DAN
(referring to Poirot)
Is this one of your... clients?

MARCY
Actually, it's Mr. Lambert's dog.

DAN
Really?

MARCY
Yeah.

Dan looks down to Poirot, resets.

DAN
Did you enter the house to get the dog?

MARCY
No.
(points)
The doggy door. I got most of them trained. I whistle and they come out.

DAN
And you didn't notice anything unusual last night?

MARCY
Like what?

DAN
A gunshot, for starters.

MARCY

I sleep with my earbuds in.
Relaxing waterfalls and stuff.

DAN

How well do you know Mr. Lambert?

MARCY

We're friendly enough. After I make my rounds, I usually come over for coffee. We talk about a podcast that we both listen to. Unnatural Causes.

DAN

You don't say? I listen to that one too. I'm a few episodes behind. No spoilers.

He wags a finger at her. They share a smile. A moment of connection amidst the chaos.

DAN (CONT'D)

Well, if you think of anything else, give me a call.

He hands her a business card. *Daniel Shapiro, Detective*. She puts it in her fanny pack and gives him one of her own.

MARCY

And if you ever need a dog walked...

DAN

I'm more of a cat person.

MARCY

I don't discriminate.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tidy and well contained. A modest flat screen next to a crammed five-tier book shelf. A college diploma on the wall next to a photo of Marcy in graduation attire with her parents.

Her FATHER in a police uniform.

Marcy opens a closet and pulls out an old doggy bed. She fluffs it and places it in the corner.

Poirot sniffs it, plops himself down and whimpers.

MARCY

I know. You're missing Ed. It's no wonder you were so sluggish today.

She sighs, crosses into the --

KITCHEN

She grabs a tea kettle, fills it with filtrated water, places it on the stove and turns on a burner.

A tea box labelled Tranquil on the counter.

She sits down. Pensive. Folds her hands under her chin and closes her eyes.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE, FRONT PORCH - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Ed and Marcy sit in wicker chairs, two glasses of lemonade on a table between them.

They're both laughing.

ED

I did a double take. It took me a moment to realize he wasn't wearing any clothes. I spent that whole morning scrubbing out the squad car. Hazards of being a rookie, I guess.

Marcy's mood shifts.

MARCY

Yeah. Hazards.

ED

Your father?

She nods silently.

ED (CONT'D)

Any man who joins the force knows there are hazards, Marcy. I'm sure he was a good man, though. The very best.

Marcy raises her glass.

MARCY

Yes, he was. Well, here's to a happy retirement.

ED
Bittersweet without my Janie.

MARCY
Then here's to Janie, too.

Glasses clink.

END FLASHBACK

MARCY'S KITCHEN

The tea kettle whistle breaks Marcy from her day dream. She rises and shuts off the gas.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

She jumps, almost knocks over the kettle.

MARCY
Okay, hold on.

FOYER

Marcy opens the door.

MARCY (CONT'D)
Why you knocking like the po--

It's Detective Shapiro.

DAN
Like the police?

Marcy laughs.

MARCY
Yeah. Sorry. Something like that.
How can I help you, Detective?

DAN
Just one more thing about Mr.
Lambert.

MARCY
Okay.

DAN
He doesn't have much family to
speak of. Wife's passed. Daughter's
estranged--

MARCY
Estranged?

DAN
From what I can gather, you're the only person he really spent any time with since he retired. Did he ever speak to you about suicide?

MARCY
Not once. He didn't seem like the type. Matter of fact, he was planning to spread his wife's ashes by the lake where they honeymooned.

DAN
He told you that?

MARCY
Yeah. That's why this doesn't make sense to me.

Dan presses his lips together, nods.

DAN
Okay.

MARCY
Why? What are you thinking?

DAN
I don't know. Maybe nothing.

There's an awkward pause. Dan looks over to Ed's yard, the commotion beginning to settle.

MARCY
Is there anything else, detective?

DAN
Umm, no, not really. Well, actually, I...

MARCY
Yes?

DAN
I was wondering if you'd like to go for a cup of coffee sometime.

Marcy's stunned. It doesn't get much more uncomfortable for her than this.

MARCY

No.

She abruptly shuts the door on his face.

DAN

I, umm, okay.

He smiles to himself, takes the walk of shame to his car.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Marcy's backed up against the door like she's trying to hold back hurricane force winds.

MARCY

Idiot!

INT. HOSPITAL, CORRIDOR - DAY

Marcy walks alongside DR. HUFFMAN (47), imposing in size and astute, but in scrubs he's calm and empathetic.

He flips through Ed's chart.

DR. HUFFMAN

Are you a relative?

MARCY

I'm his next door neighbor.

DR. HUFFMAN

You're his first visitor.

MARCY

How is he?

DR. HUFFMAN

Well, he's out of surgery. He's stable, but guarded. Unfortunately, he's in a coma.

MARCY

Oh god. Is he gonna survive?

They come upon Ed's --

ROOM

His head bandaged heavily, feeding tube in his mouth and saline tower wire snaking into his arm.

Marcy covers her mouth to stifle a gasp.

DR. HUFFMAN

Despite what you see, it actually looks pretty good. The operation itself was relatively simple, all things considered.

MARCY

How is brain surgery simple?

DR. HUFFMAN

I didn't mean to imply it wasn't without it's challenges. He was under the knife for six hours, but given the angle and entry point of the bullet...

(shakes his head)

Let's just say if he'd fired an inch lower we'd be having a whole different conversation right now.

Marcy runs her hand over the top of her head.

MARCY

I'm sorry, can you explain?

Dr. Huffman points to his head.

DR. HUFFMAN

The point of entry was here, the pre-frontal lobe, where the brain is most dense. That explains why there was no blowout from such close range. The bullet lodged itself there, where we were able to extract it with minimal tissue loss.

MARCY

I see.

DR. HUFFMAN

He may have some fine motor skill disabilities when and if he wakes up, but it should be minor. There's enough portion of that area of brain left to where he can relearn.

MARCY

Well, that's a positive.

DR. HUFFMAN

Yes, it is. Like I said, any lower, he'd have most likely died. And, I hate to admit it, but I do need to see another patient.

MARCY

I understand. You've been very helpful. Thank you.

DR. HUFFMAN

You're welcome. Take as much time as you need.

The doctor leaves the room.

Marcy sides up to Ed and gently grips his hand.

She studies his face, looking for something. An answer, maybe. But there's nothing.

Just the sound of machines beeping and whirring.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Marcy on her route, holding a leash and speed-walking.

A door slams, and a beefy, bearded dude in jogging gear and bright white sneakers joins her. This is RANDY FORSYTHE (41), an ebullient, fast-talking pistol of a man.

RANDY

What's shakin', Tatum--? What the hell is that?!

Marcy slows her pace to reveal that she's holding a gag, invisible dog leash.

MARCY

Good morning to you, too.

RANDY

You know there's no dog on that leash, right? Please tell me you know that.

MARCY

That's Mrs. James' dog.

RANDY

Oh! Say no more. Old lady's as crazy as a loon.

MARCY

I think it's sweet. Her real dog passed a few months ago and, well, she is a paying customer.

RANDY

Whatevers. So, what's the buzz?

MARCY

About what?

RANDY

Yeah, right. Lambert. Your cop buddy. I heard he offed himself.

MARCY

He's in a coma.

RANDY

Really? Is he gonna make it?

MARCY

Doctor said it looks good.

She SIGHS heavily.

RANDY

What was that for?

MARCY

Something's bothering me about this whole thing.

RANDY

Ah. There's the cop's daughter I know so well.

MARCY

Every time we were together he seemed so full of life. Talking about his past glories, the busts he made. He didn't sound like a man who wanted to kill himself. Not even close.

RANDY

Lambert was internal affairs, wasn't he?

MARCY

In his later years, yeah.

RANDY

I don't know why you're letting this get to you. Besides, what can you do anyway?

MARCY

I don't know. Probably nothing.

RANDY

Well, it's a lot of excitement for this part of the neighborhood. Anything else?

MARCY

I got asked out on a date.

Randy perks up.

RANDY

What? You're kidding? Who?

MARCY

(smiles)

One of the detectives at the crime scene asked me out. Dan something. I got his card somewhere.

RANDY

And?

MARCY

And what?

RANDY

When are you going out with him?

MARCY

I'm not. Besides, I don't even think he'd want to anymore after I slammed the door on his face.

RANDY

You slammed...

(he face palms)

Tatum, you gotta stop shutting people out.

MARCY

I know.

RANDY

You spend more time with these dogs than people.

MARCY

Dogs are easier to trust.

RANDY

Can't argue with you there, but you gotta open some of those doors sometimes. Behind one of 'em could be something special.

MARCY

It's what's behind all the others that scares me.

RANDY

Not everyone is like that last creep you dated. There's still good people out there.

MARCY

Like who?

RANDY

Like me, for instance.

She stares at him with a smirk.

RANDY (CONT'D)

All right, bad example. Anyway, I'm out. I gotta burn off that lasagna from last night.

MARCY

Burn, baby, burn.

Randy jogs ahead, turns and back peddles. Points at her.

RANDY

Open that door, Tatum!

Marcy watches him run down the street. She looks down to her invisible dog and --

Stops dead in her tracks. Beat. A thought.

MARCY

Okay.

INT. ED'S HOUSE - DAY

Marcy comes through the door.

She tiptoes through the LIVING ROOM, looking for something to make sense of what's happened.

She moves through the HALL into the --

STUDY

She clocks a pocket-sized BLACK BOOK near the computer desk. Grabs it, flips the pages. Stops.

BLACK BOOK: *4/18 Lunch, Phil Langeman @ 12:30, 4/20 Dr. Hiller appt., 10:45...*

She slips the book into her waistband. Looks down.

A NOTEPAD on the computer desk. The top page hastily ripped off, leaving an inch of paper behind.

LIVING ROOM

A hand pushes the front door open. It's Dan. He draws his gun and steps inside.

DAN

Hello? This is the police.

He cases the house, pistol poised.

STUDY

Marcy runs her finger along the blank top page of the note pad. Indentations of writing.

The pistol appears in the doorway behind her.

Dan jumps into the room.

DAN (CONT'D)

Freeze!

Marcy screams and spins around. Seeing it's her, he lowers his gun and holsters it.

MARCY

Detective. What are you doing here?

DAN

Funny, I was about to ask you that. You know this is still a crime scene, right? I could have you arrested.

She playfully holds her wrists out.

Dan smirks.

DAN (CONT'D)

So, what are you doing? Dusting for prints?

MARCY

No, I was just--

DAN

There's no indication of anything other than a suicide here. No prints other than Ed's. No signs of foul play. Nothing.

MARCY

What about a note?

DAN

Not everyone leaves a note. So, what are you really doing here?

She holds a beat.

MARCY

Well, seeing as I'm watching his dog now, I was looking for dog food.

DAN

In the study?

MARCY

I saw his newspaper in here. We used to do the crosswords together and he...

(picks up the newspaper)

He never finished the last one.

Marcy gets suddenly emotional, that acting class she took in college finally paying off.

DAN

I'm sorry.

MARCY

It's okay. Why are you here?

DAN

I was in the neighborhood on something unrelated. Passed by, saw the door was open.

MARCY

You have a good eye. Well, I guess I'll be on my way then.

She slides past him and into the hallway. He turns.

DAN
What about the dog food?

MARCY
I already checked. Not enough.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE, FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

They step out together. Marcy locks the door.

DAN
You have a key?

MARCY
From walking Ed's dog. He was my very first client.

DAN
He must have really trusted you.

MARCY
About as much as you can trust anyone these days, right? Listen, Detective...

DAN
Dan.

MARCY
Dan. Look, I'm really sorry about the other day. I--

DAN
Don't worry about it. What do you think -- I've never had a door slammed in my face before?

MARCY
Sorry, I didn't mean to insult you. I'm sure you've had many doors slammed in your face. But, actually, I was wondering if the offer still stands.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Trendy little local haunt.

Dan, who looks like he wakes up chic casual, sits with Marcy at a table. Purposefully casual, she sips wine.

DAN
I've been detective three years.
I'm hoping to make sergeant soon.

MARCY
My father was a sergeant.

DAN
I knew you had some blue blood in
you.

MARCY
A little bit.

DAN
You never considered a career in
law enforcement?

MARCY
It's all I wanted to do growing up.
I was actually in the academy
when...

She pauses to control her emotions. Real this time.

MARCY (CONT'D)
My father was killed in the line of
duty.

DAN
I'm sorry. Much respect for his
service.

He raises his glass.

MARCY
Anyway, after that I couldn't bring
myself to continue. Or fire a gun,
for that matter. The first time I
tried I just stood there frozen. My
hand trembling. The instructor
thought I was having a seizure or
something.

DAN
That's understandable.

MARCY
What about you? How'd you get into
law enforcement?

DAN

My father. My grandfather. All cops. Just a matter of time before it was my turn.

MARCY

Well, you're the best dressed cop I ever saw. Not to mention the only one I've ever seen driving a Mercedes.

DAN

(laughs)

Guilty as charged. I guess it's cause I watched my father struggle. Guy worked his ass off without much to show for it. They didn't make a lot back then, so... I aspired for bigger things.

MARCY

I see that.

DAN

You know, I actually worked with Ed Lambert briefly.

MARCY

Really?

DAN

He was internal affairs when I was just coming up. We overlapped by about a year.

MARCY

Was he well liked?

Dan drinks his wine.

DAN

No one in internal affairs is well liked.

MARCY

Understood.

DAN

Can I ask you a question?

MARCY

Sure.

DAN
After the way we left off, why'd
you change your mind?

MARCY
I think I felt bad for slamming the
door on your face.

This prompts laughter.

DAN
Well, I'm glad you did.
Reconsidering, I mean. Not slamming
the door on my face.

Marcy tilts her head, flashes a broad smile.

Dry humor. Grounded. There could be a spark here.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Marcy walking two dogs down the sidewalk. She takes out her
phone, slips her earbuds in.

PODCASTER (V.O.)
Welcome to another edition of
Unnatural Causes.

Haunting, ambient piano plays behind his voice.

INT. BASEMENT STUDIO - NIGHT

A budget friendly lighting rig casts an eerie glow across neo-
noir crime movie posters on the panelled walls. A camera on a
tri-pod flashes intermittently.

At a desk is podcaster GILES MOODY (37). Calm and focused, he
speaks into a 1940s style microphone. A gnarly scar cuts
across his eyebrow onto his unshaven cheek.

MOODY
(slow and monotone)
I'm your host, Giles Moody.
Tonight, we tell the story of a
fifth-generation farmer who stood
up to the corporate agribusiness
and paid for it in the most
gruesome way possible.

He taps a cigarette ash, takes a deep pull.

MOODY (CONT'D)

His throat slashed, he bled out on the cold dirt floor of his barn. Conner Johnson laid there till morning with nothing but the cattle to keep his corpse company. When dawn finally broke, a shriek filled the misty air as...

His voice trails off as --

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Marcy, alone, walking home in the dark. She slows when she reaches Ed's house, stops. Turns.

The darkened house looks almost inviting.

QUICK FLASH: Ed's PLANNER with dates written in it -- her finger on the indentations in the NOTEBOOK.

BACK

Marcy looks to the dark, cloudless sky. It's as if she sees someone we don't.

MARCY

(sotto)

Why would he make plans two weeks out and then kill himself?

No one answers.

She takes a step towards the house. Then another. She freezes. That first inkling of fear settling in her stomach like a cauldron of bats.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

She hangs her jacket in the foyer, proceeds to the --

LIVING ROOM

MARCY

Poirot, I'm home.

The doggy bed is empty.

She looks around, heads towards the kitchen and stops abruptly. Droplets of blood on the floor.

MARCY (CONT'D)

The hell?

Marcy kneels to inspect. There's a trail of blood.

KITCHEN

Marcy enters, turns on the light. More blood.

She follows it. Past the island. Checks the mud room.

Close on her eyes as she turns abruptly. The door that leads to the basement.

She looks down. Covers her mouth and *GASPS!*

MARCY (CONT'D)

Poirot.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. VETERINARIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Poirot lies motionless on a table. Marcy stands over him, watching a VETERINARIAN listen for a heartbeat. He frowns.

VET

I'm sorry. He's gone.

MARCY

I don't understand. What happened?

VET

Has he been in the woods recently?

MARCY

No. We stick to the sidewalks in the neighborhood.

VET

Is there a park you bring him to?

MARCY

Once a week.

VET

It's possible he might have eaten some wild berries?

MARCY

No, not possible. I keep him on a leash.

VET

I've seen cases like this before where a perfectly healthy dog ingested juniper berries. Juniper's widespread in this area, and their berries are toxic to dogs.

MARCY

But I haven't walked him in a few days. He was lethargic.

VET

There's any number of things that could slow digestion. Poisoning is not always instantaneous.

MARCY

Are you saying he was poisoned?

VET

I'm just speculating. It's hard to tell without conducting a post mortem or a toxin screen. We can test for it, but the results take six to eight weeks and, quite honestly, it can get rather pricey.

MARCY

How much?

VET

Well, it depends on what kind of screen you--

MARCY

Comprehensive. Everything.

VET

About eight hundred dollars.

She glances down to Poirot, rubs his fur and SIGHS.

MARCY

How much to put a rush on it?

EXT. GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - DAY

Marcy sits on a bench, lost in thought, staring at an uneaten sandwich. It's been a rough couple days.

She gets up, crumples a bag, tosses it in the trash and heads for the entrance when a woman about Marcy's age storms out of the sliding automatic doors like an angry bull.

This is HARPER (32), the displeasure on her face not just from today. Always seems to be there.

She bumps into Marcy.

HARPER

Get outta my way.

Their eyes meet for a second before Harper stomps off.

MARCY

Excuse you!

HARPER

Don't stand in everyone's way!

Marcy pops a piece of gum in her mouth and watches the woman tear across the parking lot. She turns to go inside and nearly bumps into Dr. Huffman, rushing out.

DR. HUFFMAN
Miss! Miss!

He gives up, slaps his thigh with some papers.

MARCY
What the hell was that all about?

DR. HUFFMAN
She forgot to sign her papers.

MARCY
Who was that?

DR. HUFFMAN
That's Mr. Lambert's daughter.

MARCY
No freakin' way.

Marcy turns to see Harper slamming the door of a red sedan.

INT. MARCY'S CAR - DAY

Marcy weaves through traffic, following the red sedan. She cuts left, a horn blares.

MARCY
Sorry!

Ahead, Harper pulls into the parking lot of a motel. Marcy parks along the curb and watches.

The red sedan stops in front of door #6. Harper hurries out and lets herself into the room. Marcy steps out of her car.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Marcy walks in. Empty front desk. She taps the "ring for service" bell. LEWIS, a dopey-eyed 20 year-old, appears, gulping an energy drink.

LEWIS
Yeah?

MARCY
I need help getting some
information.

LEWIS
Room rates are 79.95 a night.

MARCY
No. I'm curious about the occupant
of room six.

LEWIS
I can't give out, like, any
personal information.

MARCY
Maybe this will help.

She pulls a five dollar bill from her jeans and lays it on
the counter.

LEWIS
Seriously?

She lays down a second five dollar bill. He looks at her
skeptically, shrugs and snatches the cash.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
What do you wanna know?

MARCY
Whatever you can tell me about her?

LEWIS
Well, she's staying in room six.

MARCY
I told you that.

LEWIS
Fine.

He huffs and starts typing at the computer.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Her name is Harper. She checked in
two nights ago.

MARCY
Monday? That's when...

LEWIS
What?

MARCY
Nothing. How long is she staying?

LEWIS

When she checked in, it was just
for one night. But looks like she's
paid for, like, three extra nights.
Guess her plans changed.

Marcy mulls this over.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Marcy knocks on door #6. Harper opens it, still wearing the
same angry face. Looks Marcy up and down.

HARPER

The hell do you want?

MARCY

(laughs nervously)
Hi. My name--

HARPER

Are you following me?

MARCY

Yeah, I guess I am.

HARPER

Why?

MARCY

My name is Marcy Tatum. I'm a
friend of your father.

HARPER

So?

MARCY

So... if I can help with anything.

HARPER

What's it to you?

MARCY

Well, my father was shot too. I
know what you must be feeling.

HARPER

You don't know anything about me.
Or Ed Lambert.

MARCY

I've known him for years. He's my
next-door neighbor.

HARPER
How did you know I'm Ed's daughter?

MARCY
Dr. Huffman told me.

HARPER
I'm guessing Ed never mentioned me?

MARCY
I knew he had a daughter.
Somewhere.

HARPER
That's what I thought.

Harper closes the door, but Marcy blocks it with her foot.

MARCY
He's still your father. He almost
died.

HARPER
Ed Lambert is a piece of shit
alcoholic who beat his wife in
front of his kids.
(Marcy's stunned)
Didn't tell you that, did he?

MARCY
No, he didn't.

HARPER
He didn't tell you about the nights
my mother stayed up all night
waiting for him to get home?
Shielding me from him when he'd fly
into one of his drunken rages?

MARCY
No.

HARPER
Or me in my room with my hands over
my ears trying to drown out the
screams? The open hand slaps to the
face? Or my Mom, lying to our
neighbors about how clumsy she was
when they'd ask how she got that
black eye.

MARCY
I'm... I'm sorry.

HARPER

Or maybe you'd like a dislocated jaw? Yeah, I don't suppose he told you any of that. So why don't you take your foot out my door and walk back to your buddy Ed. You cry for him. He ain't getting none of my tears.

Marcy peers inside the room. A bottle of JACK DANIELS clearly visible.

MARCY

I guess you think drowning out the pain is a viable option?

Harper shoves the door wide open, leans forward. Inches from Marcy's face.

HARPER

(growls)

Who are you to judge me?

MARCY

(undeterred)

Honestly, nobody. But if what you told me about your father is true, then you're just perpetuating the cycle. Following in his footsteps, so to speak.

HARPER

I never took my pain and frustration out on others. But I gotta tell ya -- that could change in a heartbeat.

A standoff as Marcy's glare matches Harper's intensity.

MARCY

Then why are you here? If you hate him so much, why are you here?

A quick moment of vulnerability in Harper's eyes.

HARPER

Why are you here?

A good long while before she answers.

MARCY

Because I don't think your father tried to kill himself at all.

There it is.

HARPER
You're sure of that?

MARCY
Call it instinct.

Harper laughs.

HARPER
Good for you.

Harper closes the door. Once again, Marcy holds it.

MARCY
You never answered my question. Why
are you here.

With all her strength, Harper frees the door from Marcy's grip and slams it in her face.

Something shatters inside the room.

Marcy. Stunned. She lets out a heavy breath. Or six.

MARCY (CONT'D)
Well, now I know how that feels.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marcy's sprawled out on her couch, phone to her ear. Empty dog bed in the corner.

MARCY
(into phone)
No, I didn't feed him juniper. Are
you nuts?

RANDY (V.O.)
So, what now?

MARCY
I'm not sure, but now I definitely
think something's not right.

INT. RANDY'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Local, impressionist art hangs on the walls. Phone to his ear, Randy paces around a sprawling dining table, glass of wine in one hand.

BEGIN INTERCUT: RANDY/MARCY

RANDY

(sighs)

Look, Tatum, be careful, okay? I don't wanna see you get into any trouble.

MARCY

What kind of trouble could I possibly get into?

Randy sips his wine.

RANDY

Do you really want me to list the ways? You almost got beat up today.

MARCY

Almost.

RANDY

Yeah, almost is right. Besides, the more I hear about this Lambert guy, the more I think - why bother? You think this Harper chick was serious?

MARCY

I do. I think she's a serious person. But look, everyone has their shortcomings, okay? I'll give you that. Ed Lambert didn't try to kill himself.

RANDY

Then who did?

MARCY

I don't know yet.

RANDY

So far you have a dead dog and... what?

MARCY

And Harper.

RANDY

You think she has something to do with this?

MARCY
I didn't say that. I'm just...
floatin' names.

RANDY
Did you tell your detective friend
about any of this?

MARCY
(beat)
No, I haven't. And I don't think
I'm going to, either. Not yet.

Marcy abruptly sits up.

MARCY (CONT'D)
Oh damn!

RANDY
Tatum? Tatum, you there?

Randy stops pacing, puts the wine glass down.

MARCY
Look, Randy, I gotta go.

RANDY
Tatum, wait! What is it?

MARCY
No, no. Don't worry. Everything's
fine. I'll talk to you later.

RANDY
Tatum, don't hang up!

END INTERCUT

She clicks off, rises, heads to the closet and slips on a
light jacket.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE, FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Marcy at Ed's front door, hyper-aware of every little twig
snap. Every little cricket chirp.

The key slides in the lock.

She clenches her teeth as the door creeks open.

And goes inside.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. ED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Marcy creeps along the hard wood floors. Turns on a mini-flashlight, illuminating pockets of space as she crosses into the --

She bumps her thigh into the corner of a table.

MARCY

Oww!

STUDY

On the desk is a computer monitor and a newspaper. Her jaw goes slack.

MARCY (CONT'D)

Where the hell is it?

She slides the newspaper. Nothing. Bends down and sees a tangle of unconnected computer wires. There's no tower, just an indentation on the floor where a tower would have been.

Marcy holds on that curious site, rises. Flummoxed. Then she lifts the newspaper. The notebook!

She runs her finger lightly along the top page. Grabs a pencil and -- stops.

She carefully tears the page out as --

RING! Her cell phone.

MARCY (CONT'D)

Dammit!

Checks the screen. Restricted number.

MARCY (CONT'D)

(into phone, quietly)

Hello?

DAN (V.O.)

Hi.

MARCY

Hi. Who is this?

DAN (V.O.)

It's Dan.

She clicks off the flashlight.

MARCY
Oh. Hey. How are you?

DAN (V.O.)
I'm good. Really good. How are you?

MARCY
Umm... good?

EXT. STREET CURB - NIGHT

Dan sits in his car, window open.

DAN
(into phone)
So, guess where I am.

INTERCUT: MARCY/ROBBY

MARCY
Umm... You're in bed watching TV?

Dan exits his car, holding a bouquet of roses.

DAN
Nope. I'm right out front walking
up your steps as we speak.

Marcy grips the phone. Mouths the word "*shit!*"

MARCY
Uh, okay. Why?

DAN
I bought you a gift.

MARCY
A gift?

DAN
Yeah. I had a real nice time the
other night, and you didn't call so
I wanted to reach out and tell you.

MARCY
How thoughtful.

DAN
Where are you?

Marcy checks nervously around the study.

MARCY

Um... I'm just getting out of the shower. Yeah. Honestly, Dan, it's not a really good time. It's --

DAN

Well, I'll just wait out on the steps.

MARCY

Uh, well, I...

Click.

He ends the call and sits in front of Marcy's house.

END INTERCUT

Marcy squeezes the life out of her phone. She folds the paper from the note book and stuffs it in her bra.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE, AROUND BACK - NIGHT

Marcy shuts the back door like she's diffusing a bomb, tip-toes into --

HER BACKYARD

Climbs the back steps to a wooden porch. A floor board creeks loudly.

The back door is locked. Of course it is.

She reaches to the window. It slides up.

MARCY

Oh, thank god.

INT. MARCY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

She squirms in through the window head first and falls to the floor with a THUD.

AROUND FRONT

Dan heard that. He gets up and walks --

AROUND BACK

A cursory glance reveals nothing out of the ordinary. He holds a moment longer before going back, but notices a light suddenly turning on upstairs.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Marcy frantically disrobes. Turns on the sink and runs her hair under the water, splashing everywhere.

Grabs a robe and slips it on.

FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Marcy, breathing quickly, opens the door to reveal Dan about to ring the doorbell.

DAN

Oh. Hi. I thought you were never coming down.

MARCY

Sorry. Just out of the shower.

He looks her over.

DAN

So, I see. These are for you.

He hands her the flowers. She takes them, a sudden softness washing over her.

MARCY

Oh, these are...

DAN

Pretty? Just like you.

She blushes.

MARCY

I was gonna say beautiful.

DAN

That works, too. Can I come in?

MARCY

No!

(off Dan's look)

I mean, now is not a good time really. I was just getting ready for bed. Work in the morning. I have a whole routine.

(MORE)

MARCY (CONT'D)

If it was earlier and, you know,
you had called earlier.

DAN

You're not gonna slam the door in
my face again, are you?

Laughter.

MARCY

No, I'm just going to close it
calmly.

DAN

Okay, good. I'm sorry about the
hour, but I was just thinking of
you. And I was nearby. I can swing
by tomorrow if you'd like.

MARCY

Sure. I'd like that.

DAN

You would?

She holds her flowers like a prom queen, shuffles her feet.

MARCY

I would.

DAN

(smiles)

Good. I'll make sure it's at a
decent hour.

MARCY

That would be fine.

DAN

Okay. Well, good night.

MARCY

Okay. Good night.

He turns to go, but suddenly stops, whirls back.

DAN

How's Ed's dog doing?

MARCY

Oh, he, uh... He passed.

DAN

Oh no. I'm so sorry.

Marcy, suddenly suspicious.

MARCY

Yeah. It was kind of sudden, but he was older.

DAN

That's terrible. I remember him barking like crazy at me that time and I didn't hear him in there.

MARCY

Yeah.

DAN

Okay. Well, I'll see you later then.

MARCY

See ya.

She closes the door. Strangely confused. She bends down to sniff her flowers.

INT. DIMLY LIT ROOM - NIGHT

Hands lay out supplies on a wood table. A black ski mask. Latex gloves. Voice modulator. Pistol.

They get packed into a black case.

INT. CAR (DRIVING) - NIGHT

Darkened road. Intermittent flashes of light from dull street lamps. The DRIVER hits PLAY on his phone.

That eerie, ambient music plays.

MOODY (VO)

Good evening, and welcome to Unnatural Causes.

(pause)

A Pacific Coast CEO with a tech business built from the ground up. Philanthropist. Soup kitchen volunteer. A pretty, young wife. Two grown children in Ivy League schools. Some would say he had it all. Others would say it was all a front.

INT. RANDOM HOUSE - NIGHT

A silenced gunshot. A male victim thuds to the floor. Blood oozes from a head wound.

Shoes step past the body and leave the room.

MOODY (V.O.)
A faceless killer dispensing his
own brand of justice.

EXT. RANDOM HOUSE - NIGHT

The killer, black tactical gear and ski mask, carries a case. He swiftly walks down a cobblestone path, past the gates and out into the night. Gone.

MOODY (V.O.)
Yet to be caught. No clues, no
evidence to be found. It's almost
as if he doesn't exist. But someone
pulled that trigger. On this
edition of Unnatural Causes, we'll
analyze the case facts. Get beneath
the soft pink underbelly of
corporate greed and the motivations
of an invisible killer and find
out...

His voice trails off.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The crashing of waves in the distance. Crickets chirp. Suddenly, red tail lights blur as a car whooshes past.

MOODY (V.O.)
... Who Killed Ray Montague.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Marcy turns on the light, and lays the note paper from Ed's house on the table.

She grabs a pencil, holds the lead horizontal to the paper and gently rubs it over the surface. The impressions of handwritten words are revealed.

Marcy stares at the paper, trying to decipher.

PAPER

Numbers and letters, barely discernable. *D u t c c h b o a k*
... 7 4 1 9 3 3 7 6 2 9 1 1 ...

MARCY

What the--? Dutch boots? Dutch
boat?

Her eyes suddenly light up.

MARCY (CONT'D)

Deutsche Bank!

Marcy searches Deutsche Bank on her phone. Various article headlines: *"Deutsche has troubled history with regulators."* *"Fed slaps Deutsche with \$186 million fine."* *"Deutsche embroiled in money-laundering scheme."*

MARCY (CONT'D)

Son on a... What does that mean?

INT. GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lights burn low in the silence. A NURSE crosses in front of us, down another hall.

ED'S ROOM

A monitor beeps. Ed lies motionless, head still bandaged. Feeding tube in his mouth.

But beneath his eyelids, his eyes dart furiously. His hand twitches. His mouth, drool in the corner, opens slightly.

The heart monitor quickens.

Check that. It's racing.

Ed's mouth opens wide -- heaving -- like he's gonna vomit -- his face contorts -- not vomit -- he's screaming -- screaming with no sound.

His eyes snap open!

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

Marcy and Dr. Huffman walking.

DR. HUFFMAN

One of the nurse's said he woke up
in the middle of the night.

MARCY

Did he say anything?

DR. HUFFMAN

No, not really. The nurse said it
sounded like he was trying to say
"sit up." He had the feeding tube
in. Honestly, even if he didn't
it's not likely he would have been
able to speak at all, given what
he's been through. It takes time.

MARCY

What was he like? His demeanor, I
mean.

They enter --

ED'S ROOM

Ed lies motionless, pinned down with arm and leg restraints.
Marcy turns to the doctor in horror.

MARCY (CONT'D)

Jesus! What did you do to him?

DR. HUFFMAN

The nurse on duty had to restrain
him. Said he was quite hysterical.
Arms flailing. He even hit her in
the face, though I'm sure that was
more of an involuntary reaction.

MARCY

Right.

She goes to his side, looks down at him.

DR. HUFFMAN

He's heavily sedated.

MARCY
(aggravated)
And you're sure you didn't slip him
right back into a coma?

DR. HUFFMAN
It doesn't work that way. We're
monitoring his brain activity.
Right now everything looks pretty
normal.

MARCY
Uh huh.

Dr. Huffman picks up a folder from a table. Opens it.

DR. HUFFMAN
Do you know a Detective Daniel
Shapiro?

This catches her attention.

MARCY
Yeah. I do. Why?

DR. HUFFMAN
He was here about an hour ago.

MARCY
You're kidding? Did he say why?

DR. HUFFMAN
No. I figured he knew him from
being on the force. Actually, I was
glad someone else came to see him.
For a while I thought it was just
you and that...
(clears his throat)
... other woman.

INT. LEGION OF HONOR MUSEUM - DAY

Marcy walks into the rotunda. People mill about, gazing at
fifteenth century paintings and various artifacts.

Randy, in a casual blazer, leaves a small group of people and
goes to greet Marcy.

RANDY
Hey, my girl. What brings you round
these parts? Have a donation?

MARCY

Couple used dog leashes and a water bowl?

RANDY

Well, normally I'd say let me have a look, but I'm afraid that's gonna be a hard pass.

MARCY

Actually, I could use the help of an astute archivist.

RANDY

Can't we all?

MARCY

I need you to do some investigating for me. Hush, hush, under that table type stuff.

RANDY

Juicy. I'm listening.

MARCY

I need you to look into this.

She hands him the notepaper. Randy tries to decipher it.

RANDY

Dutch oven? Is this a model number?

MARCY

Maybe I'm wrong, but I think it's Deutsche Bank. And maybe that's an account number.

RANDY

Is there a name attached to this account?

MARCY

You tell me.

RANDY

Tatum, I'm an archivist, not a private eye.

MARCY

Just run it through for me. See if anything comes out.

RANDY

I'm on it.

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

Marcy drives down her street, clocks a red sedan parked in front of Ed's house. She pulls into her driveway and screeches the car to a stop.

Marcy gets out and walks over to the red sedan. No one inside. She goes to the door of Ed's house, tries the knob. It's locked.

She hears a rustling in the bushes on the side of the house. She skulks across the lawn, peeks around the corner. Harper stands at a window, trying to pry it open.

MARCY

What do you think you're doing?

HARPER

Oh god, not you again.

MARCY

Are you trying to break in?

HARPER

Well, you're perceptive, aren't you?

MARCY

Look, I think we got off on the wrong foot the other day.

HARPER

Yeah? Yours or mine?

MARCY

Can you stop with the snarky remarks?

HARPER

Or what? You'll call the cops?

MARCY

Or I'll have second thoughts about helping you.

HARPER

You'll help me break in?

MARCY

No but I'll get you the key.

INT. ED'S HOUSE - DAY

Marcy unlocks the door. She and Harper go inside.

MARCY

We shouldn't really be in here. May
I ask what you're looking for?

HARPER

A jewelry box. There's a locket my
mother wanted me to have. Ed's been
holding it hostage.

Harper darts into the hallway. Marcy follows her into --

ED'S BEDROOM

Harper scours the dresser and a bookshelf for the jewelry
box. Marcy absorbs the details of the room.

MARCY

Is this why you came to town?

HARPER

I agreed to talk with him in
exchange for the locket. And then
he tried killing himself. So all
bets are off.

Harper opens the closet, rummages around.

MARCY

He didn't try to kill himself.

HARPER

Oh, that's right, I forgot. Nancy
Drew over here.

MARCY

He'd been wanting to reconnect with
you, right? So why would he kill
himself the night before he finally
gets to see you? It makes no sense.

HARPER

His final "screw-you" to me.

MARCY

I found a planner of his. He had
appointments, lunch dates. And you.
Why would he do all this if he was
dead?

Harper disregards the question. She stomps her feet on the floorboards until she finds a loose one. She drops to her knees, pries it up.

HARPER
Good old Ed.

She removes the board, and pulls out a mahogany jewelry box. Places it on the bed and opens it.

Marcy over her shoulder. There's more than just a locket here. It's a veritable treasure trove, including an immense VICTORIAN NECKLACE.

MARCY
Are those real diamonds?

HARPER
These were my great-great-grandmother's. She wore them on her wedding day--

Harper holds up the locket. Got it.

She drops it back into the box, closes it and clamps it under her arm.

MARCY
Wait, you're not taking the whole thing.

HARPER
And who's gonna stop me?

A stare down.

HARPER (CONT'D)
That's what I thought--

Marcy grapples for the box. Harper yanks it away. A tug of war ensues. Harper tries to head butt her, but Marcy snaps back and they both tumble into the --

BATHROOM.

Marcy and Harper, side-by-side on the floor.

Dried blood spatter on the walls and floor. A macabre reminder of what happened here.

Harper's mood suddenly shifts. Beat. Silence.

MARCY
I cleaned it up the best I could.

Harper holds a moment on the gruesome sight. Wasn't expecting to see this.

She jerks the box away from Marcy, rises to her feet.

HARPER

I'm taking what's mine. You wanna get hurt, that's up to you.

Harper heads away, but not before she clocks her mother's urn on the night stand. She goes to it, regards it with reverence. A first true emotional moment from her.

MARCY

That's your mother. Ed wanted to spread her ashes. Honor her dying wish.

HARPER

By the lake where they honeymooned.

MARCY

That's right.

Harper gently touches it, then lowers her hand. She snaps out of it, glares at Marcy. Storms off.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE - LATER

Harper carries the jewelry box to her car. Marcy secures the front door and follows.

MARCY

So, you're a thief, too.

HARPER

I took what's mine.

MARCY

Maybe you should see your father before you go. Hold up your end of the deal.

HARPER

He's in a freakin' coma, Maggie.

MARCY

It's Marcy. And he woke up last night.

Harper stands motionless. She inhales a quick breath, like she's gasping for air. A tear trickles down her cheek.

She opens the car door, throws the jewelry box in. Spins to face Marcy and advances.

Marcy assumes a defensive stance.

MARCY (CONT'D)
Harper, it's okay to be emotional.
This is a chance for him to make
amends. A perfect opportunity for
you to begin the healing process.

HARPER
You just don't get it, do you?

MARCY
What? What is it I don't get?

Harper scoffs.

HARPER
I wanted him to die.

MARCY
You don't mean that.

HARPER
Try me.

She gets in her car and drives off.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Serene and sun-splashed. A shimmering lake nearby.

Marcy and Dan leisurely walk together. An errant ball rolls their way. Dan smiles, scoops it up and tosses it to an awaiting child.

DAN
I come here on my lunch sometimes.
Good place to think.

Marcy's quiet, lost in thought. He turns to her.

DAN (CONT'D)
Okay, now's the part in the
conversation where you respond--

MARCY
You went to visit Ed this morning.

DAN
I did.

MARCY

Can I ask why?

DAN

Mainly out of curiosity.

MARCY

You wanted to see if he had anything to say.

DAN

Maybe. My Lieutenant likes to clear things fast. Work it, close it, file it. Move on.

MARCY

Especially if it's someone who was internal affairs.

DAN

Especially that.

MARCY

He was a cop before that, you know? A detective.

DAN

I'm aware of that.

MARCY

Tell me you don't think something stinks about this.

They come upon a bench and sit.

DAN

You're pressing pretty hard on this. Makes me wonder what you've been up to.

MARCY

Who me? I'm just your every day, average dog walker.

DAN

I don't think there's anything average about you. You have a lot of gumption.

MARCY

My father used to tell me that.

DAN
Sounds like the kind of man I'd
like to have a beer with.

Marcy smiles. That landed.

MARCY
Well, I guess you'll have to settle
for me.

Dan leans in. Closer.

DAN
I can live with that.

They kiss.

EXT. MARCY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dead of night.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

A sliver of moonlight rests upon Marcy's face. She's out like
a light. Earbuds in, we can hear the sound of CRASHING WAVES.

She shifts position, then settles in peacefully.

The reflection against a TV on the dresser reveals a DARK
FIGURE standing over her. Watching. Holding something.

Marcy's eyes snap open.

A length of tape is pressed firmly over her mouth!

She shrieks -- muffled -- tries to sit up -- she's thrown
against the bed with powerful hands!

Tape tearing. The PERP binds her wrists behind her back.

Marcy kicks wildly.

He's on her. Tapes her ankles together, bites it off from a
slit in his ski mask.

Marcy tries to scream. She can't.

The PERP hovers over her. Marcy's eyes dart wildly, expecting
the worst.

She hears a click. Like something turning on. Then scratchy,
electrical deep breaths.

VOICE
(modulated)
Next time, you won't even hear my
voice.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - MORNING

A chunk of duct tape clumped against the corner of the night stand. Another on the floor. And another.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marcy stands in front of the mirror, dressed in casual clothes. She dabs concealer to the skin around her lips where the tape was ripped off.

Her wrists are slightly bruised, sore. She tugs at her long sleeves to cover them.

The DOORBELL rings.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Marcy peeks behind the curtains, out the window. She crosses to the door, opens it for Randy.

RANDY

What's the matter?

MARCY

Get in. Hurry.

She yanks him by the arm, stumbling into the house. She shuts the door and locks it.

RANDY

What's gotten into you?

MARCY

I need to walk my dogs this morning.

RANDY

And?

MARCY

Will you come with me?

RANDY

This is your emergency?

MARCY

I don't want to be alone.

He sees the fear in her eyes. He nods okay.

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

A dog pulls her along her route. She looks over her shoulder, nervous. Not her usual self as Randy strolls beside her.

RANDY

Okay, enough already. What's going on.

MARCY

You're going to say, "I told you so."

RANDY

I'll fight the urge, I promise.

MARCY

Someone broke into my house last night.

RANDY

What?! Are you okay?!

MARCY

I'm fine. They just wanted to scare me.

RANDY

They?

MARCY

It was one person, but whoever it was disguised his voice. Or her voice.

RANDY

Her? You think it was Ed's daughter?

MARCY

No, I don't think so. I've already grappled with her. This person was stronger.

RANDY

Did he hurt you?

MARCY

He taped my hands and feet, and said something like, "next time, you won't even hear my voice." But it was eerie. He used some kind of voice masking. A modulator, I think.

RANDY

Marcy, you have to report this!

MARCY

I'm willing to bet it's the same person who went after Ed

RANDY

You need to call the police.

MARCY

I need to do something else first.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Ed sits up in bed, staring at the wall. The bed straps are gone. He's alert, calm, thinking. Marcy sits in a chair, agonizing over the silence.

ED

I don't know, Marly. It hurts to think.

MARCY

It's Marcy.

He struggles to tear the plastic off his orange juice.

ED

I just remember being here and... I can't even tear the plastic off this damn thing.

Marcy opens it for him.

MARCY

Do you remember anything before being here?

ED

Doc said I had a gun shot wound to the head, but I don't know how I got it.

MARCY

Ed, think. Try.

He stares off, rubs his head. Marcy's phone rings. Caller Id says "Veterinary Clinic."

MARCY (CONT'D)

I gotta take this call. Just relax,
maybe something will come.

Marcy hustles out into the --

HALLWAY

MARCY

(into phone)

Marcy speaking.

VET (PHONE)

Hello, it's Doctor Norris from the
veterinary clinic. The toxicology
report came back on Poirot.

MARCY

And?

VET (PHONE)

His body had elevated levels of
zinc phosphide. It's a chemical
commonly used in rodenticide. When
ingested, it reacts with the acid
in the stomach to produce a toxic
phosphine gas. That's what killed
him.

MARCY

Could he have gotten into a rat
trap or something?

VET (PHONE)

Not likely. Most poisons used in
bait traps are anticoagulants that
require multiple doses in order to
take effect. This was a single
lethal dose.

MARCY

What are you saying?

VET (PHONE)

Well, this might be hard to
believe, but I think Poirot was
murdered.

Marcy hangs up fast, steps back into --

HOSPITAL ROOM

Marcy pockets her phone and sits, white-faced. Ed looks at her, excited.

ED

I remember something!

MARCY

What?

ED

I remember feeding my dog before I went to bed.

MARCY

Poirot.

ED

Right. Have you been checking in on him? I hope he's all right without me.

Marcy reaches over, takes his hand.

MARCY

Ed, there's something I need to tell you.

INT. POLICE STATION, OFFICE - DAY

Dan sits behind his desk, finishing his lunch. Marcy sits in a chair opposite.

DAN

You think the dog was murdered?
Give me a break.

MARCY

It was a lethal dose.

DAN

He probably got into a trap, ate the poison himself.

MARCY

There's no traps on Ed's property.
I checked.

DAN
So you talked to Mr. Lambert?

MARCY
I saw him this morning.

DAN
What does he think?

MARCY
What does *he* think? He barely
remembers who he is!

Someone at a neighboring cubicle peers over. Dan runs a hand
through his hair.

DAN
Look, sometimes with traumatic
events, we push them out of our
mind. You know, subconsciously.

Marcy leans forward, getting serious now.

MARCY
Listen, I don't mean to pry into
your business, but this was not a
suicide.

DAN
How can you be so sure?

MARCY
Because I was attacked last night
too.

DAN
What?! Why didn't you report this?!

MARCY
I was scared. I didn't know what to
do. I...

DAN
Tell me everything.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Dan, wearing gloves, inspects the room. Marcy stands aside,
recounting the events.

MARCY

I managed to sit up. I rubbed the tape on my wrists against the corner of the night stand. Over and over, until it ripped. I unbound my feet. I checked all the doors and windows. And then I pretty much cried until the morning.

Dan carefully removes the clump of duct tape from the night stand and places it in an evidence bag.

DAN

No sign of forced entry?

MARCY

No.

DAN

How do you think the assailant got in?

MARCY

Sometimes I leave the kitchen window unlocked.

DAN

Is it--

MARCY

Yes, everything is locked now.

DAN

I'll double check. If you don't mind.

MARCY

Not at all.

Dan picks up the other clump of tape from the floor, adds it to the evidence bag.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Marcy sits on the couch, waiting. Dan returns from his inspection.

DAN

You were right. No forced entry. Just keep everything locked from now on. Check and double check.

MARCY

I will.

DAN

I'll write up a report, and have the lab do some analysis on the tape. It's not likely we'll get any prints, but it's worth a shot. This guy sounds like a pro if he was using a voice harmonizer.

MARCY

Yeah.

He walks to the door. She follows him. He turns suddenly to look at her.

DAN

Do you have somewhere else you could stay tonight?

MARCY

I'll be okay.

DAN

I can assign a security detail.

MARCY

What? You mean have someone watch the house?

DAN

An officer. In an unmarked car on the street. So you don't have to worry. So I don't have to worry.

He reaches up, touches her cheek. She smiles.

MARCY

That's sweet, but no. Too... stalker-ish. What about Ed?

DAN

What about him?

MARCY

Well, shouldn't somebody be guarding him? I mean, that's how this whole thing got started.

DAN

He's in the hospital. He's safe.

INT. MARCY HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marcy on the couch, seemingly at ease.

Randy enters from the kitchen, a big bowl of something in his hand.

MARCY

What happened to your diet?

RANDY

Who said I was on a diet?

MARCY

You did.

RANDY

Special occasion. Security detail.
Want some?

MARCY

Not hungry. But thanks for staying
with me tonight.

He sits next to her.

RANDY

You're welcome.

MARCY

(off his food)

Smells good. What is it?

RANDY

Randy's famous chili. My own secret
recipe. Plenty more in the kitchen.

She waves him off.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Speaking of secrets -- I looked
into that Deutsche Bank thing of
yours.

MARCY

And?

RANDY

Big nothing burger. I can't access
something like that. If that's an
account number, those things are
air tight. Even if I had a name,
it'd still be hard to track. They
use numbered accounts.

MARCY
No name attached.

RANDY
Exactly. So where does that leave
us?

Marcy rises from the couch, paces the floor.

MARCY
Speculation. Who needs a secret
account?

RANDY
Drug dealers. Embezzlers. People of
low character.

MARCY
Right, right. Thieves. Smugglers.
People with something to hide.
(beat)
You know what? I think I will have
some of that chili.

Randy raises his bowl.

RANDY
I knew you couldn't resist. It's on
the stove.

KITCHEN

Marcy scoops the chili into a bowl, grabs a spoon. Licks her
finger. She stops--

MARCY
(to herself)
Embezzlers, smugglers... Cops on
the take.

LIVING ROOM

Marcy reenters with her food to find Randy peering through
the blinds.

MARCY (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

RANDY
Who is that outside?

She goes over, takes a look and sees a car, a few houses down
and across the street, parked under a street light.

Someone is clearly inside the car, smoking a cigarette.

MARCY

Dan... He offered me a security detail, and I turned him down. He must have done it anyway.

RANDY

Are you sure?

He closes the blinds.

MARCY

It's gotta be. What's the matter? You nervous?

RANDY

Slightly.

MARCY

Seriously? You're supposed to be here to protect me.

Randy looks at his chili, sighs, puts it down.

MARCY (CONT'D)

What?

RANDY

Now, I'm not hungry.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. MARCY'S CAR (DRIVING) - DAY

Marcy's fidgety. Slapping her thigh. She brakes abruptly at a stop light.

Looks out the window. Sighs. Fingers tapping.

A HORN BLARES. Light's green.

She cuts the wheel and makes an illegal U-turn.

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

Marcy at the door of room six. Knocks. No answer. She twists the knob -- open -- and goes in.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

Harper sits on the bed, back turned and clutching herself. Swaying and shivering.

MARCY

Harper!

She races to her, touches her bare arms.

MARCY (CONT'D)

You're ice cold. Are you okay?

HARPER

I'm just not gonna get rid of you,
am I?

MARCY

You've been drinking again, haven't
you?

Harper turns, meets Marcy's gaze.

HARPER

I only get this way when I don't
drink.

MARCY

Come on. Let's get you cleaned up.
I'll buy breakfast, get some coffee
in you. What do you say?

HARPER
That sounds good.

MARCY
I was actually on my way to the hospital when I turned around. I'm glad I did.

HARPER
Yeah. Me too. I think.

MARCY
You know, call me crazy, but... I have an idea.

HARPER
Why do I not like the sound of this?

INT. MARCY'S CAR, HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - LATER

Harper gulps coffee. The shakes are gone. Slowly coming back to life.

MARCY
You sure you wanna do this?

HARPER
I don't know. You sure you wanna watch me doing this? I don't know how I'm gonna react. I'm pretty raw right now.

MARCY
I could go in first. Prime the engine, so to speak.

HARPER
I'd appreciate that.

MARCY
This is a big step you're taking.

Harper almost smiles.

HARPER
That's what they all say.

MARCY
Some never even get this far, Harper.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Ed sits in bed, working on a Jumble in the newspaper. A small bandage has replaced his head wrap. Marcy knocks on the open door and walks in.

MARCY

In the mood for company?

ED

Marcy. Sure. I'm stuck on this puzzle anyway.

MARCY

Having a good day?

ED

I think so. Appetite's back. Maybe you can sneak in a cheeseburger later.

MARCY

I'll see what I can do. I do have something else for you.

ED

Chocolate?

MARCY

Someone else.

Marcy beckons at the open door. Harper steps in. Ed sits up.

ED

Harper...

HARPER

Hi.

ED

If I'd known you were coming I'd have put some clothes on.

HARPER

I've seen worse.

Ed hangs his head. That landed.

ED

How've you been?

HARPER

I'm okay. You know. Getting by. How have you been?

ED
I've been better, I guess. I'm
still not sure what happened, if
that's what you're asking.

HARPER
I wasn't asking. I'm just... glad
you're okay.

ED
Are you?

Harper rolls her eyes.

HARPER
Here we go.

ED
No, no. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have
said that. Believe it or not, I'm
happy to see you.

HARPER
You sure have a funny way of
showing it.

They smile in spite of themselves.

ED
Fair enough.

HARPER
You're not the only one who's made
mistakes.

Ed softens.

ED
That's part of being human, Harper.
So is holding yourself accountable.
I can't help but wonder if I helped
set you on this course.

HARPER
At this point in my life I don't
blame anyone other than myself for
the things I've done.

ED
You didn't have much of a choice,
Harper. My only hope is that you
don't hate me forever.

Harper moves closer to her father, and slowly sits on the edge of the bed. It's the most affection they've shown each other in years.

HARPER
Forever's a long time, Dad.

MARCY
I, um... I'm gonna step outside.

HALLWAY

Marcy leans against the wall as Dr. Huffman approaches.

DR. HUFFMAN
Miss Tatum. Nice to see you again.

MARCY
Marcy. Please.

DR. HUFFMAN
Is that who I think it is in there?

MARCY
The prodigal daughter returns.

DR. HUFFMAN
Amazing. You certainly do have a way with people.

Marcy's embarrassed by the compliment.

MARCY
How's he doing otherwise?

DR. HUFFMAN
Much better. In fact, he's set to be released at the end of the week.

MARCY
You're kidding?

DR. HUFFMAN
Nope. He's passed all the tests we've thrown at him. He's walking. Short term memory's taking some time to come back, but I think it will.

MARCY
He still doesn't remember the shooting.

DR. HUFFMAN
No. He told as much to some cop who
was here this morning.

MARCY
There was a cop here?

DR. HUFFMAN
Yeah. He said it was part of the
investigation. I didn't pry.

MARCY
Was it detective Shapiro?

DR. HUFFMAN
No, it was some kid. Probably right
out of the academy.

MARCY
I see.

Silence.

DR. HUFFMAN
Hey, I have a break in a few
minutes. Can I buy you a cup of
coffee?

Marcy looks like she's heard a bad joke.

MARCY
Umm... No. I mean, I'm kinda seeing
someone right now and...

DR. HUFFMAN
Oh. Say no more. Well, I'll uh,
I'll see you around.

Dr. Huffman heads away. Marcy half raises her hand.

MARCY
I'll see you.

DR. HUFFMAN
(turns back)
Lucky guy.

Marcy watches as he heads down the hall.

INT. MARCY HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Harper sits on the sofa as Marcy grabs her suitcase.

MARCY

I can wash your clothes, if you like.

HARPER

That'd be great. You sure it's not a bother staying with you for a few days?

MARCY

Well, it's either me or that sleazy motel.

HARPER

I can give you money.

MARCY

I don't want your money. I've got plenty of room. I'll have your clothes ready in a couple hours, make some dinner.

HARPER

Sounds good.

MARCY

You make amends with your father?

HARPER

Let's just say it's a work in progress.

MARCY

Understood.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

You can cut the silence with a knife as Harper eats. Marcy just sits there with her fingers interlocked. Watching.

Harper shoots her a look as she shovels food in her mouth.

HARPER

(mouth full)

So, you don't think my father tried to kill himself, huh?

MARCY

I'm so glad you mentioned that. I don't. Not a chance.

HARPER

Then who did?

MARCY

Probably the same guy who attacked me the other night.

Harper's eyes go wide.

HARPER

Someone attacked you? Here?

(Marcy nods)

Gee, I'm so glad I decided to stay with you.

MARCY

I've been doing some investigating. Your father's study has a computer tower missing. There was some writing on a note pad about a Swiss bank account. Other than that, I really don't have much else to go on. But apparently someone thinks I should stop digging.

HARPER

You should be a private eye.

MARCY

(smiles)

Hmm.

HARPER

Tell me about the guy who attacked you.

MARCY

It was nothing, really. He tied me up with duct tape. His voice, though... His voice was disguised with something. Some kind of electronic device.

HARPER

A voice modulator.

MARCY

Exactly. You've seen them before?

HARPER

Yeah. There's a spy store near where I live. My father used to take me there when I was little. That was kind of like his idea of a day trip. If any place has them, that place does.

Marcy leans back in her chair, turns her head.

MARCY
Wanna take a ride?

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

EXT. THE SPY STORE - NIGHT

The end store of a small strip. Everything else closed but this place.

INT. THE SPY STORE - NIGHT

Marcy and Harper slide in, greeted by shelves and glass displays of retractable night sticks, audio recording pens, cell signal blockers. The works.

It's dead quiet.

HARPER

I haven't been in here in years.

MARCY

Hello?

HARPER

It's late. They might be closing.

Marcy wanders over to a set of black ski masks.

From out of an adjoining room steps Giles Moody, an annoyed look on his face.

MOODY

Can I help you?

HARPER

We're just browsing.

Marcy turns, heads to the counter.

MARCY

Actually, we were looking for a voice modulator.

She and Moody lock eyes. His jaw drops slightly, breath quickens. *This can't be.*

HARPER

You know, to disguise your voice.

Moody snaps out of it.

MOODY

I know what it means. A harmonizer.

MARCY

Yeah, that's it. Do you carry them?

He leads them to the end of the counter. Numerous slim black modulators, controls like a remote. Discreet speakers and headphones.

He wipes sweat from his forehead.

MARCY (CONT'D)

Are you okay, sir? You look a little pale.

MOODY

I'm fine.

Marcy and Harper peruse the showcase.

MARCY

(points)

Can I see that one?

MOODY

We close at nine, you know.

HARPER

Got fifteen minutes, buddy.

Moody narrows his eyes, reaches for the modulator and hands it to Marcy.

Marcy fiddles with it, finds the "on" switch and connects it to a small speaker. It crackles. Turns the volume down and speaks into the microphone.

MARCY

Hello? Hello?

HARPER

I think you gotta hit this dial.
It's got different settings.

Moody SIGHS, scratches his neck.

MARCY

(modulated)

Hello? Hello--

(normal)

Oh there it is.

She adjusts the settings.

MARCY (CONT'D)
(modulated)
Next time, you won't even hear my
voice.
(adjusts)
Next time, you won't even hear my
voice.
(deeper)
Next time, you won't even hear my
voice.

Moody's like a deer in the headlights. Sweaty and tense.
Tugging at his shirt.

HARPER
Is that what he said to you?

Marcy nods.

MARCY
(modulated)
Next time, you won't even--

Moody snatches the modulator from Marcy.

MOODY
I gotta close up.

Marcy's taken aback.

HARPER
How do you know we're not gonna buy
that?

MOODY
Are you?

Silence.

MOODY (CONT'D)
That's what I thought.

He puts the modulator back in the case.

MARCY
Well, I guess we'll be on our way.

The girls turn to go, but Marcy stops and turns.

MARCY (CONT'D)
You know, this is gonna sound
cliche, but you sound really
familiar. Like I've heard your
voice somewhere before.

Moody looks up. Eyes piercing.

MOODY
I don't think so.

Marcy spies a business card by the register. She crosses the room and takes one. Reads it. Her eyes light up.

MARCY
Are you Giles Moody, the podcaster?
Unnatural Causes?

MOODY
Who wants to know?

MARCY
Wow. I am such a big fan. I listen
to you every night.

From behind the counter, he turns off the lights and slowly heads in their direction.

MOODY
Closing time.

They back away from him.

Marcy blindly reaches for the door.

Harper hits her shoulder on a display.

They manage to exit as Moody advances on them. He locks the door, glaring at them before disappearing into the darkness.

EXT. THE SPY STORE - CONTINUOUS

Leaves rustle on the outskirts of the parking lot. Marcy and Harper are officially freaked.

MARCY
Well, that was mildly creepy.

HARPER
Gee, you think so?

INT. THE SPY STORE. BACK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Moody glances outside from the doorway --

Marcy and Harper enter their car.

He picks up a phone. Dials. Rings and rings. A MACHINE picks up: *The caller you have reached is not available...*

Growing impatient. An audible BEEP.

MOODY
(into phone)
We need to talk.

He ends the call. Stares straight ahead.

Then smashes the phone on the desk.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Marcy leans against the counter as Randy opens the refrigerator, pulls out milk and pours a glass.

MARCY
So, when do you get back?

RANDY
When are you gonna buy some food?

MARCY
When I get hungry. When do you get back?

RANDY
The conference lasts the weekend, so probably late Sunday night.

MARCY
What about that Moody guy?

RANDY
(shrugs)
Maybe he was just having a bad day.

MARCY
Or saw someone he didn't wanna see.

RANDY
Don't you think you're being a little paranoid here?

MARCY
I don't know. Strange is all. Even Harper thought so.

RANDY
Speaking of which, where is she? I wanna meet her.

MARCY
Still sleeping probably.

RANDY
Really? I didn't see a car out
front.

Marcy perks up. She goes into the --

LIVING ROOM

Opens the front door to see Dan there, just about to knock.

DAN
Oh hey. I was just about to--

Marcy brushes past him to get a view of her driveway.

PORCH

Harper's car is gone.

MARCY
What the?

DAN
Something wrong?

MARCY
Ed's daughter. She was staying with
me but now she's gone.

They go INSIDE.

And walk into the --

KITCHEN

Marcy swings open cabinets as Randy and Dan watch on.

MARCY (CONT'D)
Dan, Randy. Randy, Dan.

They curiously acknowledge each other.

Marcy goes still. Finally she turns, holding an empty wine
bottle in her hand.

RANDY
It's a little early for me.

MARCY
Harper polished this off. Dammit.

She sets the bottle down.

DAN
You're saying she drank your wine
and just left?

MARCY
She was in recovery. Sort of.

DAN
Did she leave a note?

This catches Marcy's attention.

MARCY
Like father, like daughter. Right,
detective?

Marcy's checks her watch. 8:43AM

RANDY
Where you going?

MARCY
I gotta pick up Ed. Have a good
trip, Randy. I'll see you when you
get back.

RANDY
Thanks. Be careful.

MARCY
I will.

DAN
I'll walk you out.

EXT. MARCY'S HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Marcy hits a key fob. Beep beep.

DAN
Marcy, I just stopped by to tell
you we closed the investigation on
Mr. Lambert.

She stares right through him.

MARCY
Why am I not surprised?

She opens the door.

DAN
He admitted it.

MARCY
Admitted what?

DAN
Another officer interviewed him at
the hospital--

MARCY
Admitted what?

DAN
That he attempted suicide. It's
official.

MARCY
Official, my ass. All due respect,
detective. Bullshit.

She gets in the car, pulls out abruptly.

Randy exits the house, sides up to Dan as they watch her peel
out down the street.

DAN
Is she always like this?

Randy claps him on the shoulder.

RANDY
Far be it for me to make a corny
pun at an inopportune moment, but
it looks like you're in the dog
house.

EXT. HOSPITAL FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Ed sits in Marcy's passenger seat as Marcy shakes hands with
Dr. Huffman.

DR. HUFFMAN
A nurse should be at his house any
minute, though I'm sure you'll be
checking in on him.

MARCY
Every chance I get.

DR. HUFFMAN
Glad to hear that. You're a good
friend, Miss Tatum.

She smiles and waves, heads to the driver's side of the car.

DR. HUFFMAN (CONT'D)
Well, you take care. And don't
hesitate to call if you need
anything.

MARCY
I will.

INT. MARCY'S CAR (DRIVING) - DAY

Marcy's like a dam about to burst.

ED
Did you remember my puzzle book?

MARCY
Your what?

ED
My crossword puzzle book. I think I
might have left it in the room.

She slows, stops at a red light.

MARCY
Crossword puzzles, huh?

ED
Yes. It helps with my--

MARCY
Do you know they closed the
investigation on you?
(puts a finger to her
head)
Said you admitted you shot
yourself.

ED
I did say that. How do you know
this?

MARCY
Is it even true?

ED
Look, I just want this to all be
over with. Get back to my life. Do
you have any idea what I've been--

Light turns green, but Marcy stays put.

MARCY

As a matter of fact, I do. Because I've been through hell ever since this happened, and you're sitting here playing dumb with me.

Several horns honk. Traffic backing up behind her. Cars passing on either side.

ED

Marcy, maybe you just better drive.

MARCY

Not until you give me some answers. Did you know your computer tower was stolen? That your own dog was poisoned.

ED

You don't know that.

MARCY

Yes, I do know that!

ED

How?

MARCY

Instinct. You should try it sometime.

ED

Let's be clear, Marcy. Just because you're a cop's daughter doesn't make you a cop.

That stung, but she doesn't care.

MARCY

You were on to something before the shooting. Or someone.

ED

Marcy?

MARCY

Don't tell me I don't know what I'm talking about.

ED

Marcy?

MARCY

What?

ED
Take me home.

MARCY
No! Not before you give me some
answers. I deserve that much, at
least. I--

ED
TAKE ME HOME, NOW!!

Ed slumps forward in pain, touches the wound on his head
where nothing but a small bandage remains.

Marcy, stunned into silence, lets out a heavy SIGH as traffic
continues to pass.

She throws the car in gear.

END OF ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Marcy at the table, drinking a cup of Tranquil tea, trying not to think too hard.

She grabs her phone, dials. Gets Randy's voice mail.

RANDY'S VOICE

Thanks for calling Randy's summer home. Some are home, and some are not. Leave a message for the one who's not.

Sips her tea and waits for the BEEP.

MARCY

Hi, hope your flight was okay. Call me when you're settled in. I, uh... I guess I could use a friend right now. That's all. Bye.

She hangs up. Takes another sip of tea. She can't help but look at the empty wine bottle on the counter.

Her phone rings. Thinks it's Randy, but the ID says "restricted." She stares for a beat.

MARCY (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Yes?

DAN (V.O.)

Hi. I just got off work.

MARCY

And?

DAN (V.O.)

I was wondering if we could talk.

MARCY

We are talking.

A pause, not sure if she's joking or not.

DAN (V.O.)

No, I want to see you. Can I come over?

MARCY
I'll meet you. In an hour. At the
park?

EXT. MARCY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Marcy leaves the house, goes to her car. She glances next door.

Ed sits on his front porch, watching the impending sunset. A NURSE changes the bandage on his head.

Ed notices Marcy. Their eyes connect. A moment of reflection for both of them.

She gets in her car. Ed watches her drive away.

EXT. CITY PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Marcy and Dan sit on a bench. Sunset is approaching, but it's still light out.

DAN
If that's his testimony, we have no
choice but to close the case.

MARCY
What about my case?

DAN
It's still open. Unfortunately, no
prints came back from the lab.

MARCY
Of course not. He was wearing
gloves.

DAN
So our only lead went nowhere.
That's doesn't mean we're closing
your case. I have a personal stake
in this one.

He reaches for her hand. She pulls away.

DAN (CONT'D)
Marcy, come on. You're acting like
Ed's case and yours are connected.

MARCY
Aren't they?

DAN

We didn't find anything. Is it possible that maybe, just maybe, you're connecting dots that really aren't there?

Marcy looks off, battling her thoughts.

MARCY

I don't know. Maybe. It's been an emotional couple weeks.

DAN

For me too. But in a good way.

She looks at him, softens with a smile.

MARCY

Thanks for being here. Everybody else left me.

DAN

It's not easy being alone. You know, if you want I could--

She snaps him a hard look.

MARCY

You're not sleeping over.

DAN

(laughs)

I was gonna say I could assign a security detail again.

MARCY

Didn't you already do that?

DAN

That was just for that one night.

MARCY

So, you did it anyway?

DAN

Under the circumstances, yes.

MARCY

I'm gonna decline. It's been an emotional couple weeks for me. After everything that's happened, I've realized I'm stronger than I thought I was.

Dan smiles at her. Trying real hard here.

DAN
Finally, something we can agree on.

EXT. SUBURBS - NIGHT

Marcy removes the leash from Petey the pug, hangs it on the fence.

MARCY
Bye, Petey. See you in the morning.

Petey scurries into the doggy door, and Marcy walks toward the street corner.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Marcy strolls down her sidewalk, eyes Ed's house as she approaches. The front porch light is on, but all the windows are dark.

As Marcy heads up her driveway, she looks down the street. Under the shadow of a tree, a vehicle is parked along the curb.

She shakes her head, hustles up the steps, unlocks her door and goes inside.

INT. HARPER'S CAR - NIGHT

Harper inside. Outside, the dull neons of a LIQUOR STORE next to her sleazy motel. A light flickers: *No Vacancy*.

She opens a paper bag with a fresh bottle of Jack Daniels inside. Goes to unscrew the cap when...

On the passenger seat sits the locket she took from Ed's house. The open cover reveals the face of her MOTHER.

She stares at it.

HARPER
Don't judge me. I did the best I
could... I'm not turning into him.
I would never do what he did.

The soft eyes of her mother stare right back.

Harper lifts her head, eyes wet with tears.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Don't look at me like that.

She takes a heavy breath.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

A bored CASHIER sits behind the counter, scrolling mindlessly on his phone.

He nearly jumps out of his skin when a bottle of Jack slams hard on the counter.

Looks up. Harper.

HARPER
I want a refund.

CASHIER
No refunds.

He points to a crude, hand written sign: *No Refunds*.

She leans in, narrows her eyes.

HARPER
I'm not asking.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Marcy shuts and locks the door. She kicks off her shoes and checks her phone. Taps the screen and holds it to her ear.

PHONE
You have one voicemail. First voicemail...
(RANDY'S VOICE)
Hey, Tatum. Sorry I missed your call. The flight was fine. And the pilot was even finer. But you know how it goes. Still no mile-high club for me. Anywho, I ran into a couple of old IT college buddies. We're gonna catch up at the hotel bar, so I'll give you a jingle tomorrow when my hangover wears off. Kay? Sleep tight, sweetie.

Marcy sets her phone on a table and plops onto the couch, exhausted.

Out like a light.

INT. BASEMENT STUDIO (DREAM SEQUENCE) - NIGHT

Lights low, eerie shadows. Solid red *On Air* illuminated.

Moody -- black ski mask, sits behind the microphone.

GILES

(heavily modulated)

Marcy Tatum. A rube who got too
close to the truth. Who just
couldn't leave well enough alone.

QUICK SHOTS:

A) Marcy walking her dogs. Plying her trade.

B) Laughing on the porch with Ed.

C) A picture of Marcy and her Father in uniform.

MOODY (V.O.)

Haunted by the memory of a murdered
detective. Perpetually searching
for meaning in her life. Desperate
to find that one clue that eludes
her. That one piece of the puzzle
that will always be missing.

D) Marcy in front of Ed's house with Shapiro, in his
expensive shoes and suit.

END QUICK SHOT SEQUENCE

Marcy in Moody's basement studio, cautiously approaching the
desk where he sits as he talks.

MOODY

So close has she come. A warning
wasn't enough.

(looks right at her)

Next time, you won't even hear my
voice.

Marcy reaches her trembling hand to Moody's head, grabs the
ski mask and -- rips it off!

It's Ed! A hole in his head oozing blood.

Marcy recoils.

He looks up at her, eyes rolling in their sockets.

ED

Take me home now...

His head thumps onto the desk.

(END DREAM SEQUENCE)

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marcy bolts up from the couch, startled awake in a cold sweat. Looks around, gets her bearings. Yep, just a dream.

KITCHEN

She crosses to the sink, fills a glass of water, and gulps it down. She wipes the sweat from her head. Stares. Deep in thought. Turns and looks out the window to Ed's house. A light is on.

She grabs her phone from the counter and checks the time. It's nearly midnight. She has two text messages. From Ed:

"CAN WE TALK? STOP BY WHENEVER."

From Randy, five minutes ago:

"CALL ME ASAP! EMERGENCY!"

MARCY
What the heck?

Marcy dials.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Randy paces in a panic, open laptop on a desk. His phone rings. He immediately answers.

RANDY
Tatum! Are you sitting down?

BEGIN INTERCUT:

MARCY
No. What is it?

RANDY
Well, sit down cause I'm about to drop a bomb.

MARCY
Would you just tell me?

RANDY

(super-fast)

So that old college buddy of mine who studied IT? Turns out he works for the FBI doing - guess what? - bank fraud! I showed him that account information you gave me from Ed and turns out there's some weird encryption in the embezzlement world where numbers substitute for letters and--

MARCY

Okay, Randy, slow down. I can barely understand what you're saying.

RANDY

Long story short, I got a name for that Deutsche Bank account. It's--

Marcy listens. Silence.

MARCY

What? Who?

More silence. She looks at her phone. The call has dropped.

EXT. SUBURBS - SAME

In the shadows, a gloved hand operates a rectangular box with three antennae. A cell jammer. Tucks it into a back pack.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Marcy tries to call Randy back.

MARCY

What do you mean no signal?

She slaps the phone on the counter and looks out the window at Ed's house. The light still on. She takes another drink of water. Thinks.

She heads for the back door.

EXT. STREET - SAME

A car parked along the curb in the shadows. The security detail.

A MAN, retirement age, smokes a cigarette and watches the neighborhood. He reaches out the window to tap the ash off his smoke.

A gloved hand grabs his arm. A PISTOL with a silencer shoved to his head. SPITS a bullet. BLOOD sprays.

He flops against the steering wheel. Seriously dead.

The ski-masked FIGURE turns his attention to Ed's house, crosses the street.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE, FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Marcy pounds on the front door. Nothing. She raises her fist to knock again. The door swings open and she's pulled in.

INT. ED'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's Ed. Marcy shrieks.

MARCY

Jesus Christ! What's going on?

He flicks on a light to reveal he's wearing a shoulder holster.

ED

Shh. I don't think we have much time. There's something I gotta give you and then you have to leave.

MARCY

What?

He grabs her shoulders.

ED

Look, you were right about everything, Marcy. Okay? I didn't shoot myself. I want you to know that.

MARCY

Ed...

ED

I was trying to protect you. That's why I didn't say anything.

Marcy stops. He grabs her by the wrist, leads her into the --

HALL

ED (CONT'D)

Come on! Before I retired I was onto several members of the Bay Creek station. They were all corrupt.

MARCY

Corrupt? How?

ED

They were working in conjunction with gangs. Affiliates of a Mexican cartel. They were bought off. Money changing hands. Swiss bank account type of money. It's all buried on a flash drive, Marcy. That's what I need to give you.

Ed leading to his BEDROOM.

(MARCY'S FLASHBACK)

The day when Ed was shot. COP CARS everywhere.

Walking Poirot -- running to find someone in charge -- passes a CRUISER -- emblazoned on the door --

BAY CREEK POLICE DEPARTMENT

END FLASHBACK

Marcy puts a hand to her mouth.

MARCY

Oh, my God.

Bedroom

Ed in the room, near the night stand with the picture of his wife and her urn. Looks up.

Marcy standing at the door.

ED

What?

MARCY

Ed, who were you investigating?
Give me names.

ED

What does it matter?

Her breath quickens. Eyes widening with fear.

MARCY

Give me a name. Was it--?

WHUMP!

Marcy falls face first onto the floor. Brained from behind.

Ed reaches for his shoulder holster, but stops dead.

In the doorway is a MAN in black tactical gear and a ski mask. A retractable metal baton in one hand. In the other, a gun trained on ED.

VOICE

(modulated)

We meet again.

END ACT EIGHT

ACT NINE

EXT. HARPER'S CAR (DRIVING) - NIGHT

Crawling along a residential street. Darkness all around. In the distance, clocks an arm hanging out an open car window.

Passes slowly to reveal a body, head bloodied, slumped against the steering wheel.

HARPER

Jesus.

She pulls further up to Marcy's house. Pulls out her phone, hits 911. No answer. No ring. Nothing.

No service.

Sits in the car a moment. Torn. She exits the car.

OUTSIDE

Harper darts across the street, looking back at the car with the dead body. She goes to Marcy's darkened house and knocks.

Again. No response.

HARPER (CONT'D)

(insistent whisper)

Marcy!

She runs around back, tries the back door. It opens and she goes in.

INT. MARCY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Treads lightly through the living room. Looking all around.

HARPER

Marcy!

Heads into the KITCHEN.

No one.

By the counter is a window that looks directly at Ed's house.

She stares at it. Knows what she has to do.

Her eyes dart around the kitchen. On the counter is an empty wine bottle.

The one she polished off.

Swipes it.

INT. ED'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ed frozen in place, hand near his gun.

VOICE

I wouldn't reach for that if I were
you. I'll put one right in the back
of her head.

Marcy on the floor. Out cold.

The man advances. Holding his gun on Ed, he pulls Ed's pistol
from its holster.

ED

(hisses)

You son of a bitch. Let her go. You
don't need her.

He shakes his head.

VOICE

Can't do that. If she and that
other whore didn't come into my
shop the other--

ED

I'll rip your head off.

VOICE

Now, that's funny.

ED

If you were any kind of man you'd
look me in the eye when you kill
me.

VOICE

I already am.

ED

Without the mask.

VOICE

With pleasure.

He slowly peels the mask off. A head of sweaty hair. A scar
down his face. Giles Moody.

Stunned look on Ed's face.

MOODY

Let me guess, you're a fan too.

ED

Not anymore.

Moody laughs.

Marcy groans. Begins to rise, but Moody shoves her back to the floor with the tip of the baton.

She coughs.

MARCY

Ed?

ED

Stay right there, Marcy.

Moody grabs a fist full of Marcy's hair and pulls her out of the room.

MOODY

(to Ed)

You. Follow very slowly.

Moody drags Marcy into the --

LIVING ROOM

Shoves her against the wall with Ed. She slowly rises.

MARCY

It's you.

MOODY

I see we all know each other.

He raises his gun, trains it on Ed.

Marcy steps in front of him.

MARCY

Go. Get out of here. You can leave now and disappear. No one will be any the wiser.

MOODY

Isn't that sweet. I'll shoot you first, my darling. Really doesn't matter to me.

Finger on the trigger. He squeezes.

Running footsteps. A SCREAM.

Moody turns just as a wine bottle smashes across the side of his head.

Harper.

BLAM! The gun goes off.

Marcy and Harper on Moody -- wailing and kicking -- trying to subdue him, but losing -- he's incredibly strong -- fights them off.

He elbows Harper in the face. She's knocked back.

Marcy grabs his gun wrist, wrestles for control. Moody struggles. The barrel of the gun inching toward Marcy's face.

Spittle flying from her lips. Trembling. Fight or flight.

MOODY (CONT'D)
Goodnight, Marcy--

She SCREAMS! Gets off a lightning quick punch to his neck. He immediately drops the gun. Throws him off, snatches the gun and levels it at him.

Across the room. Moody's stunned. Looks at his hand.

MARCY
Radial nerve, asshole.

HARPER
Dad!

Marcy glances back. *Shit*. The errant shot hit Ed. He's slumped on the floor in a pool of blood.

Harper races to him. He's blubbering. Eyes darting.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Dad, shh. Don't try to speak. I'll call an ambulance.

She pulls out her phone. No service. Turns to Moody, who wears a shit eating grin.

HARPER (CONT'D)
What did you do? What did you do, you bastard?!

MOODY
Finished my work.

ED
Harper...

He motions for her to come in close, and whispers inaudibly in her ear.

HARPER
All right. All right, Dad...

Her eyes welling up with tears, she strokes his thinning hair. Knows this will be the last time she speaks to him.

HARPER (CONT'D)
I love you, too.

He breathes his last.

Marcy, gun still trained on Moody.

MOODY
Is he dead?

Harper turns, stares at him with a look of death.

HARPER
(growls)
I'm gonna kill you.

The front door swings open, slams against the wall.

Shapiro enters the room, his pistol raised. Quickly accesses the situation.

DAN
Marcy, lower the gun. It's over.

Marcy almost does this, but not quite. She's confused. Doesn't know what to do.

Moody smiles.

MOODY
Christ, I thought you'd never get here--

BLAM!

Everyone jumps.

Shapiro shoots Moody square in the chest. He hits the wall, then drops in a crumpled heap.

Marcy shrieks. She backs up near Harper and Ed.

DAN

Marcy, drop the gun, please. I don't wanna have to hurt you.

MARCY

It was you all along, wasn't it?

DAN

Marcy, you don't know what you're talking about.

MARCY

Everything out of your mouth is a lie. Ed told me all I need to know.

DAN

Marcy, be reasonable here.

MARCY

The expensive clothes. Fancy car. All that on a cop's salary.

Marcy points her gun at Dan.

DAN

Marcy, don't do that.

Shapiro raises his.

HARPER

Marcy...

It's a stand off.

DAN

Drop the gun, Marcy. You won't shoot me anyway. Remember the academy?

BLAM!

Marcy's bullet catches Shapiro in the shoulder. His gun hits the floor. Harper scrambles to pick it up.

Shapiro slumps against the wall. Stunned. He looks to his wound. Not fatal.

MARCY

Yeah. I remember. Sucks I have such a short memory.

DAN
You just shot a cop!

MARCY
No. I shot a criminal.
(to Harper)
There's a land line in the study.
Call the police and tell them what
happened, then get a dish cloth or
something for this guy.

Harper lets out a heavy breath.

HARPER
There's something else I have to
get first.

BEDROOM

Harper heads to the night stand. There's the picture of her
mother and father. Next to that -- the urn.

Harper runs a finger along the inscription. *Loving wife and
Mother 1948-2025*

She opens the lid, reaches inside and feels around.

LIVING ROOM

Harper returns, holding a small, sealable bag. She regards it
a moment, then holds it out so Marcy can see.

A FLASH DRIVE.

Harper places it in Marcy's hand. Her fingers close around
it, then she stuffs it in her pocket.

Looks to Shapiro and smiles.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Harper stands at the end of a pier on a pristine lake,
holding the urn. Marcy beside her, holding a second urn.
Randy lingers a bit behind them.

Harper touches her keepsake necklace. There are two pendants
on the chain now. She sighs. Then she removes the lid of the
urn and sprinkles the ashes into the water.

HARPER
There you go, Mom.

The ashes blend with the water, one with the earth. Harper caps the receptacle and trades urns with Marcy. She removes the lid, but stops herself.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Maybe we could do this one together?

MARCY
Oh... um, yeah.

Marcy turns to hand the empty urn to Randy. He puts his hands up, shakes his head.

RANDY
I get squeamish.

Marcy rolls her eyes, sets the urn on the pier. She grasps Ed's urn with Harper, and together, they sprinkle his ashes into the water.

HARPER
Bye, Dad.

The wind blows, rippling the water. Birds soar overhead. Harper wipes tears from her cheek.

MARCY
You okay?

HARPER
I will be.

MARCY
So, what's next for you?

HARPER
Rehab. I hear they have a good program over in Buxton.

MARCY
Call me when you get out. After everything we've been through, I'd hate for this to be the end.

HARPER
You can count on it.

Randy steps closer.

RANDY

Wait. You two exchanged numbers?
Marcy, didn't--
(leans in, whispers)
Didn't she threaten to beat you up?

HARPER

Watch out, Randy. You're next.

She glares at him. Fakes a sudden movement. He YIPS and flinches. Marcy and Harper laugh.

RANDY

Ha ha. Very funny.

He turns and walks down the pier. Marcy goes to follow, but Harper doesn't move.

HARPER

You go on ahead. I need a few minutes.

Marcy nods, catches up with Randy.

MARCY

Did you see the news about Shapiro?

RANDY

Yes. Pled guilty.
(elbows her)
Thanks to the state's key witness.

MARCY

And Ed's flash drive. Ed was on to him the whole time. He knew Shapiro set up the attack. Knew he'd be back to finish the job. That was Ed's old partner on the street watching the house. Here I thought it was Shapiro, "worried" about me.

RANDY

He gets what he deserves. Are you coping okay, though?

MARCY

It's never easy being betrayed. But I know I can trust my friends.

RANDY

Always.

They've reached land. They stop and turn to face the water.

RANDY (CONT'D)

So, Harper's going to rehab. What's your next move?

MARCY

Keep walking dogs, I guess. This whole thing has certainly raised my profile in the neighborhood. I've had a lot of calls from new clients.

RANDY

You know, it's not too late to try the academy again.

MARCY

I don't think so, Randy.

RANDY

What about opening your own detective agency?

Marcy laughs to herself.

MARCY

That's an interesting idea.

RANDY

You sure made all the difference in this case. I think you'd be a natural.

MARCY

Hmm. Maybe. I'll give it some thought.

Marcy looks at the lake. Harper sits on the end of the pier, an urn on each side of her. Marcy smiles at the scene.

Smiles at the possibilities.

THE END