

**KNIT ONE**  
**Screenplay By**  
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FADE IN:

END CREDITS SCROLLING

INT. SARASOTA HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Lying beneath a pink and white afghan, bedridden and emaciated, HANNIE TOLAND, 62, nods to her husband, NESTOR, 66. He picks up the remote, shuts off the soap opera, "Restless Lives."

Still possessing the physique from his days as a New York City cop, Nestor turns back to his wife, a shell of a woman.

Hannie points to the door. Closes her eyes.

Nestor nods. He pauses. Heads towards the door. Beyond the door, ROBERT TOLAND, 34, and SYBIL NICOLELLA, 37, stare through the narrow glass window.

The door opens. Nestor nods for them to go in. Robert and Sybil enter.

Nestor stands outside the room, looking in the window.

Stylishly dressed, Sybil walks to one side of the bed. She puts a knitting bag on the chair. Robert, an even more impeccable dresser, walks to the other side, his eyes red from crying.

Sybil picks up Hannie's hand.

SYBIL

Mom.

Hannie opens her eyes, manages a smile. Using what little strength she can muster, Hannie points to the nightstand.

SYBIL

The drawer?

Hannie nods. Sybil opens the drawer and picks up her mother's purse. Hannie shakes her head, coughs.

Sybil takes out a pack of cigarettes. Another cough, another shake of Hannie's head. Sybil holds up a small white box. Hannie motions for the box.

Sybil lays the box on Hannie's chest. Sybil opens the box, pulls out a gold chain necklace containing Hannie's wedding band.

Hannie pats her neck. Sybil glances at Robert. He shrugs his shoulders, bewildered. Hannie pats her neck with more force.

ROBERT

I think she wants you to put the necklace on.

Sybil smiles at Hannie.

SYBIL

I'm not really a necklace person, Mom.

Her hands quivering, Hannie pats her neck harder still. Sybil locks eyes with Robert. He gestures agreement.

Sybil reads the inscription in the inside of the band. 'Love forever, Nestor.' She sighs, puts the necklace on.

A faint smile creases Hannie's face. She closes her eyes. Her head rolls to the left. She dies.

Bowing his head, Robert whimpers at his mother's passing. Sybil clutches the wedding band, but shows no emotion.

From the bedside, Sybil exchanges a contemptuous glare with her father, looking in from the outside.

EXT. NEW YORK CEMETERY -- DAY

A PRIEST concludes the liturgy before two dozen MOURNERS gathered around the casket.

Robert, his arm linked with Sybil, wipes away tears. Sybil wraps her other arm around her lanky teenage son, TONY NICOLELLA, JR. 17. She stands stoic. So does Tony.

Nestor and his younger sister, FERN WELLS, 61, bundle up against the cold on the other side of the casket. They hold hands.

The casket lowers into the ground. Mourners sob. Nestor's gaze zeros in on the wedding band necklace around Sybil's neck.

Nestor scoops a shovel full of dirt, heaves it onto the casket, eyes still trained on Sybil. He jabs the shovel back into the dirt, stalks off. Fern follows Nestor.

Tony stares at Nestor.

TONY

(to Sybil, re:Nestor)  
Who's the tall dude with Aunt Fern?

Sybil shoots a furtive glance.

SYBIL

A friend.

ROBERT

Tell the kid the truth, Sis. Why should he be spared the agony.

(to Tony re:the tall  
dude)

That's your grandfather.

Tony shifts his sights from Sybil to Robert and back.

TONY

Grandpa Nestor? You told me he died,  
Mom.

ROBERT

We can only wish.

Sybil chews her lower lip.

SYBIL

He's been all but dead to us for  
years, Tony.

Tony watches Nestor open a car door. Nestor glances towards Tony. Sybil wraps a hand around the wedding band.

EXT. PENN STATION -- NIGHT

The whistle blows. Fern takes Nestor's hands in hers.

NESTOR

I want the wedding band back.

FERN

Hannie gave it to her.

NESTOR

It doesn't mean anything to Sybil.

FERN

Let it go, Nestor.

Fern hugs Nestor. He huffs.

FERN

I'll call Tomas to remind him to  
pick you up.

Nestor brushes her off.

NESTOR

You're a "nudge," Fern.

FERN

I'll be down to see you next week,  
brother.

NESTOR

"Nudge."

FERN

Crank.

She kisses Nestor on the cheek. He picks up his overnight bag. Climbs aboard the train. Fern waves goodbye.

INT. NESTOR'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Dishes and pots overload the sink. Others lie half-cocked in the dishwasher. Fern opens the cabinets. A handful of clean saucers and cups. But a cupboard bare of even the essentials.

Fern pivots towards the unshaven Nestor.

FERN

How hard is it to load the dishwasher?

NESTOR

I ran out of soap, dammit.

Fern stomps to the window.

FERN

Is that a Walgreens across the street?  
Oh, and I think I see Tomas' van  
parked even closer.

NESTOR

You come down here to give me a hard  
time, little lady, you can just march  
yourself back to New York.

EXT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY

Fern and condo handyman, TOMAS GALENCIA, push Nestor into the store.

INT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY

Nestor stands rigid, arms folded in aisle one.

EXT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY

Tomas pushes a full shopping cart out the door. Fern follows. Nestor trails, brandishing a lengthy receipt and ranting.

INT. NESTOR'S KITCHEN -- DAY

Perched on a step stool, Fern fills the cabinets. The dishwasher churns.

Nestor finishes a bowl of ice cream as he watches a basketball game on the countertop TV. He pours himself a glass of scotch on the rocks.

Fern rips the glass from his hand. Dumps the booze in the sink.

INT. NESTOR'S BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Soaked in sweat, Fern scrubs the floor on hands and knees. She glances up, sees Nestor in the doorway, pointing to his crotch. She lifts herself up, grabs bucket and brush. Glares.

INT. STUDIO CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

A dozen haggard "Restless Lives" WRITERS and ASSISTANTS sit around a large table, strewn with scribbled papers, notepads, coffee cups and donuts.

Sybil reads a script at the head of the table, tapping the top with a knitting needle. The room is rapt at her every breath. Sybil's eyes spring wide open.

SYBIL

Gretchen can't survive that kind of  
a plunge. This is SHIT!

Sybil spears a cream-filled chocolate donut with her needle, squirting chocolate over the desk and the closest writers.

She hurls the script across the table, knocking over a cup of latte.

A knock on the door. A SECRETARY walks in.

SECRETARY

Excuse me, Miss N. Your aunt's on  
the phone.

Sybil points the needle-pierced donut at her charges.

SYBIL

I want a new storyline for Hal and  
Gretchen within the hour. Clean up  
that mess. And somebody get me another  
latte. Now.

She storms out the door. An assistant grabs bunches of napkins to sop up the latte. FIRST WRITER wipes chocolate off his face.

FIRST WRITER

That was a pleasant way to start the  
day.

SECOND WRITER

Cut Sybil some slack. She's still  
grieving over her mother.

THIRD WRITER

The gene fairy lost the grieving genes when he stocked her. Doubled up on the bitch genes instead.

Chuckles all around.

FOURTH WRITER

Maybe her monthly account is due.

FIRST WRITER

She's like Gretchen. A monthly account so overdue it's been sent to collection.

INT. SYBIL'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

A fashionable address on the Upper West Side. Sybil pours two cups of coffee at a dining room table designed to match the chrome and glass furnishings throughout the apartment.

Fern and Robert come from the kitchen. Robert carries a bottle of light beer.

They all sit at the table. Fern grabs a coffee cup. Sybil grabs the other one.

SYBIL

He'll have to manage, Fern.

FERN

He can't manage. He lost his driver's license. He refuses to take taxis. Or ask for favors. And I'm getting too old to run down to Florida to tidy up after him.

She pulls out an inhaler. Takes a hit.

FERN

My pulmonary guy says all this traipsing is bad for my asthma.

ROBERT

We'll put him in a home.

SYBIL

No home would take him for more than half an hour.

Fern clutches Sybil's arm.

FERN

He's not going into a home. You hear me?! You might not care that he's your father, but he's my brother and I care.

SYBIL

Then move in with him.

FERN

I can't take the heat in Florida. He has to move back here.

Sybil does a spit-take with her coffee.

SYBIL

Do you know how long we worked to get him to Florida?

FERN

He'll live with me.

ROBERT

He'll still be in the same city.

Robert guzzles some beer. Fern seizes his arm.

FERN

It's a big place, New York. Your paths will never cross.

Sybil and Robert exchange looks.

SYBIL

Is that a promise?

Fern nods.

FERN

Then it's settled. Now which one of you will bring him up here?

SYBIL

He'll bring himself up here. He's a big boy.

FERN

He can't travel by himself. He'll get lost.

ROBERT

Even better.

Fern smacks Robert in the head.

FERN

Next time, it'll be your other end.

The front door opens. Tony enters, tosses his bookbag on the dining room table.

TONY

What's going on?

FERN

We're arranging to bring the grandfather your mother keeps hidden from you back to New York.

SYBIL

I don't keep him hidden, Fern. We don't recognize each other. There's a difference.

Fern puts her arm on Tony's shoulder.

FERN

I recognize him, Tony. And maybe someday you will, too. Now where were we?

TONY

I was off to my room to do homework.

Tony leaves the room.

ROBERT

And we were hiring a baby sitter to accompany Nestor back here.

Robert slurps down more brew. Fern gets in his face.

FERN

One of you will do this favor for me, Bobby. Or I'll tell Sam about your new boyfriend.

Robert does a spit-take.

Fern approaches Sybil.

FERN

(whispers)

And I know about the little secret you think you've kept buried.

INT. NESTOR'S CONDO -- DAY

The phone on speaker, Nestor peers out the living room window at a pair of flamingos going through a mating dance.

NESTOR

I like it here, that's why.

SYBIL (V.O.)

Fern says you can't get around. Your cupboard is empty. You don't do the dishes. And you eat at some greasy spoon diner every day.

NESTOR

Fuck Fern. All she does is quack about me moving back to New York. When I hung up my gold shield for good, I hung up New York for good. Fern should mind her own business.

SYBIL (V.O.)

You are her business, Nestor.

NESTOR

I won't leave and that's final. The hell with her.

SYBIL

She's your sister, f'r chrissakes.

NESTOR

I know who she is. And the hell with the two of you also.

ROBERT (V.O.)

The hell with you then, Nestor.

A phone hangs up.

SYBIL (V.O.)

I've already contacted Mrs. Walters to put your condo up for sale.

Angered, Nestor twirls away from the window.

NESTOR

You had no right to do that.

SYBIL (V.O.)

I did it anyway.

Nestor paces the living room.

NESTOR

Why do you even give a shit, Sybil? We haven't had a civil thing to say to each other in almost 20 years. And that goes for Robert, too. You made damn sure my grandson doesn't even know I exist.

SYBIL (V.O.)

I'm doing this for Fern, not you.

NESTOR

I want that ring back.

SYBIL (V.O.)

No. Mom gave it to me.

NESTOR

It doesn't mean anything to you.

SYBIL (V.O.)

She wanted me to have it, Nestor.  
End of story. Start packing.

INT. SYBIL'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Sybil disconnects the call. She hurls the phone. Throws her knitting to the floor.

Robert comes in from the balcony.

Sybil grabs Robert's bottle of beer. Takes a swig.

SYBIL

You have to fly down and get the bastard. You only work at Pierre's when you feel like it. I have sweeps to worry about.

Robert yanks the bottle back.

ROBERT

I don't care. If I was a billionaire with nothing to do all day, I wouldn't go after that schmuck. And Fern can tell Sam everything. So sorry, Sis. No. End of story.

SYBIL

If he'd fly, I could have his shit shipped up here, and be done with him overnight.

ROBERT

Make him fly, dammit! You can make people do anything. You tell me that all the time.

Sybil moves within inches of Robert's face. He moves his head back.

SYBIL

I can't make you retrieve your father.

INT. PRODUCER'S OFFICE -- DAY

Donny and Sybil study a "Restless Lives" production chart on the wall of an office which screams with Emmy Awards.

DONNY

I'd tell you to go in two weeks, but the schedule's even worse then.

SYBIL

So we're square?

DONNY

If you're not back by Thursday's shooting, Hathway could fire you, especially with Gretchen's injury in the storyline. I mean it, Sybil.

Donny focuses on the chart again.

DONNY

Wednesday's even better. Bittner is such a prick to boot, I shudder to keep him in charge one extra day.

SYBIL

If I can overcome Nestor's neurosis about flying, Wednesday's a cinch.

DONNY

What's his problem?

SYBIL

He's always had this phobia. Something to do with the war. Before this, I heartily approved of his fear. Kept him a thousand miles away.

EXT. LA PLAYA CONDOS -- DAY

A cab pulls up to Nestor's building. A 'For Sale' sign rests on the lawn.

INT. TAXICAB -- DAY

Sybil stops knitting. Pays the driver.

INT. LA PLAYA CONDOS -- DAY

Sybil knocks on Nestor's door. No answer. She knocks harder. No answer. She rummages through her purse. Takes out keys.

INT. FOYER -- DAY

The door opens. Sybil steps in. Drops the travel bag. Stares at Nestor by the balcony window, cradling a scotch.

SYBIL

You couldn't answer the door?

NESTOR

You had a key.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Sybil comes out from the bedroom. Nestor hasn't budged.

SYBIL

I asked you to pack, Nestor.

Nestor turns his head.

NESTOR

To your mother, I was Nestor. To you, I'm Dad, missy.

SYBIL

I haven't been your missy since I was 10. And it got on my nerves then.

NESTOR

I'll call you what I want to call you...missy.

Nestor glares at the necklace. Sybil strokes the wedding band.

SYBIL

Why didn't you pack...Nestor?

NESTOR

What's the rush?

SYBIL

I have to be back in New York, that's the rush.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Sybil brings in a box to join a scattering of other boxes. Nestor plays solitaire.

SYBIL

We can finish packing by tomorrow morning, have the movers come by, and catch an afternoon flight.

Nestor slams the deck of cards on the table, almost knocking over his scotch.

NESTOR

I'm not getting on a plane, missy. You know that. So fly back yourself. I still own the car. I'll drive back.

SYBIL

You don't have a license.

NESTOR

I'll drive slow and won't break any laws.

Sybil walks over, bends down, the wedding band inches from Nestor's face.

SYBIL

We're flying, Nestor. It's not negotiable.

Nestor balls his hands into fists, resists the urge to rip the necklace from Sybil's neck.

NESTOR

I'm not stepping on a plane. So the hell with your non-negotiable dictates, missy.

LATER

Nestor snoozes in the easy chair. Sybil knits, an ear to the cell phone.

SYBIL

What am I supposed to do, Donny, shackle him? Drag him on the plane? I may be just as stubborn, but he's bigger. And stronger.

DONNY (V.O.)

Then take the train. 24 hours and you're back in New York.

SYBIL

I don't care much for trains.

DONNY (V.O.)

I'm not asking you to marry one. Just ride one.

SYBIL

Out of the question.

DONNY (V.O.)

You're as bad as your father.

SYBIL

Please, Donny. I fly everywhere.

DONNY (V.O.)

Excuse me? Your paranoia's the railroad.

SYBIL

It isn't paranoia. I have a real fear.

DONNY (V.O.)

Of what? Afraid a giant locomotive will gobble you up? You have a drink and crab cakes in the club car, go into a berth, fall asleep. Next thing, you're at Penn Station.

SYBIL  
Bad idea. I'll drive.

A sigh from Donny.

DONNY (V.O.)  
I'll plead for a couple more days.  
Absorb Hathway's threats to put us  
both out on the street. But the trade  
off is giving Bittner a say.

SYBIL  
I'm not worried about that toad.  
But I owe you. And Donny? If you  
happen to get Robert in Pierre's,  
stiff him for me.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

Sybil comes in, a box under her arms. Nestor takes a hit on  
his inhaler.

SYBIL  
How often you use that thing?

NESTOR  
Everytime numbnuts like you get on  
my one last nerve.

Sybil drops the box.

SYBIL  
Is the Buick driveable?

NESTOR  
Your mother drove it.

SYBIL  
So it's been sitting for six months.

NESTOR  
More or less.

EXT. LA PLAYA CONDOS -- DAY

A MECHANIC jump-starts the Buick. It kicks in, then stalls.

MECHANIC  
I'll have to tow it in.

SYBIL  
That car has to get us back to New  
York in three days.

The mechanic glares at her over the top of his glasses.

SYBIL

Four days.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Labelled boxes on the floor. A basketball game plays on the television. Nestor watches Sybil knit a scarf. The phone rings.

NESTOR

It's Fern or for you. Either way,  
I'm not answering.

Sybil throws the knitting to the floor. Grabs the phone.

SYBIL

Yeah?

Her eyes light up.

SYBIL

Tomorrow? Great.

EXT. LA PLAYA CONDOS -- DAY

A MOVER closes the door to the moving van. Sybil slams the Buick trunk shut. MRS. WALTERS and Tomas say goodbye to Nestor.

MRS. WALTERS

Call us when you get to New York.

TOMAS

Call me on the road if you got a  
problem with that kid of yours.  
Collect.

A sly smile creeps onto Nestor's face.

MRS. WALTERS

Hush up, Tomas.

TOMAS

I won't. Makin' you leave your home  
here. You shoulda fought it.

The mover hands Sybil the order slip. She signs.

SYBIL

I should be back in New York by  
Friday.

Sybil turns to Mrs. Walters. Hands her the keys.

SYBIL

Thanks for everything, Mrs. Walters.

MRS. WALTERS

I'll keep you posted on the sale. I  
have serious offers on the table.

SYBIL

Let's get a move on, Nestor.

Tomas and Mrs. Walters glare at her.

Sybil gets in the Buick. Tomas hugs Nestor. Mrs. Walters  
gives him a peck on the cheek.

MRS. WALTERS

Phone me.

NESTOR

"Nudge."

MRS. WALTERS

Crank.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- DAY

Mid-afternoon somewhere in Southern Georgia. An accident on  
the interstate has traffic backed up for miles.

INT. BUICK -- DAY

Nestor fiddles with the radio looking for information. All  
he finds are country stations.

NESTOR

Damn cowboy music. Don't they have  
news reports in Georgia?

SYBIL

Not till we get near a city, Nestor.

He abandons the search. Glances at his watch.

NESTOR

It's way past lunchtime and I have  
to take a pill.

Sybil reaches into her knitting bag, takes out a package of  
peanut butter crackers. Tosses it to Nestor.

SYBIL

This will tide you over.

Nestor tosses it back.

NESTOR

I can't eat peanut butter, dammit.

SYBIL

What do you want me to do?

NESTOR

Get off this parking lot and stop  
somewhere for real food.

INT. DINER -- DAY

Nestor finishes a hot turkey sandwich. Sybil washes down the last of a bran muffin with coffee. She returns to her knitting, but stops after a few stitches. She suppresses a choke.

INT. DINER BATHROOM -- DAY

Her face devoid of color, Sybil rests her head against the wall of a stall. She then throws up in the toilet. She holds her stomach. Doubles over.

INT. DINER -- DAY

Still pale, Sybil drags herself back to an empty table. The dishes are still there. So is her knitting. And the check. But no Nestor.

She picks up the check, the knitting, and walks to the CASHIER with her check card.

CASHIER

How y'all doin' today, ma'am.

SYBIL

Just dandy.

She belches.

SYBIL

Excuse me.

CASHIER

Bran muffin?

Sybil's eyes pop wide.

EXT. DINER -- DAY

Sybil unlocks the Buick, opens the car door but no Nestor. She stands up. Surveys the street. Sybil zings the knitting in the car. Slams the door.

INT. DINER -- DAY

Sybil passes the curious cashier.

SYBIL

I think my father's in the bathroom.

CASHIER

He went outside.

Sybil stops.

SYBIL

When?

CASHIER

10, 15 minutes ago.

SYBIL

You sure?

CASHIER

I'm sure. He got up, walked right past me. You weren't at the table. I figured maybe you're tryin' to stiff us.

Sybil leans in.

SYBIL

Do I look like the stiffing type, dear?

The cashier glowers.

CASHIER

He walked out.

The DINER OWNER comes over.

DINER OWNER

We got a problem here, girls?

CASHIER

No problem.

Sybil points to the restrooms.

SYBIL

I'll check out the men's room, just the same.

The owner stands in her way.

DINER OWNER

Whoa, lady. We run a family establishment here.

SYBIL

My father may be in the bathroom. He's an old man. He may need help.

CASHIER

He left the premises, Randy.

The owner glances at the cashier, then back at Sybil.

DINER OWNER

I'll give a looksee for ya. Just in case he slipped back in unseen. What's his name?

SYBIL

Nestor.

The owner walks towards the rest room. Sybil follows. He stops in his tracks. She bumps into him.

DINER OWNER

I think I can handle this assignment on my own.

MOMENTS LATER

The owner returns.

DINER OWNER

Bathroom's empty. I'd take another looksee outside if I was you.

EXT. DINER -- DAY

Sybil checks the car again.

SYBIL

Fuck!

EXT. MAIN STREET -- DAY

Sybil combs every store on a block. But no Nestor.

She crosses the street, stops in the middle of the intersection to scan the area. The DRIVER of a passing pickup blares the horn.

DRIVER

That's a good way to die, bitch.

Sybil gives him the finger, scampers to the sidewalk on the other side.

She searches more stores. At the local barbershop, she peers in and sighs.

INT. BARBERSHOP -- DAY

Nestor and CHARLIE DANIELS, 56, the barber, sit in adjacent chairs in an otherwise empty place. They're playing gin rummy on a small table between them.

Sybil rushes in. She worms her way behind the chairs, sizes up the game.

SYBIL

Why'd you run off without telling  
me, Nestor?

Charlie discards an eight of hearts.

NESTOR

You were in the powder room, missy,  
and I wanted a breath of fresh air  
from the smell of all that stale  
smoke and fried bacon.

Nestor takes a card. He tosses out a seven of clubs.

SYBIL

You could have stayed by the car and  
gotten a lungful of fresh air, Nestor.

She picks up the seven, gives it to a stunned Charlie.

NESTOR

I wanted to stretch my legs. So I  
took a walk, and met Charlie by the  
barber pole.

CHARLIE

I'm Charlie Daniels, the one who  
don't play a mean guitar.

SYBIL

Should I be flattered?

Curling his lips over the rebuff, Charlie throws out a jack  
of diamonds.

NESTOR

I noted the picture of the USS  
Chesapeake in the window. We came in  
here, outta the sun, to talk a while  
about the war. It turned into a game  
of gin.

Nestor picks up a five of spades, throws out a ten of hearts.

NESTOR

Lord knows, I could use the company.

Sybil grabs the ten from the discard, shoves it in a  
bewildered Charlie's hand. Throws out a six of clubs.

SYBIL

Can we go now, Nestor?

Nestor picks a two of hearts.

NESTOR

In the middle of a game?

Sybil rips a queen of diamonds from Nestor's hand, lobs it out. Nestor snorts. She plucks up the queen, completes Charlie's gin. She chucks the last card down.

CHARLIE

Gin?

SYBIL

Come on.

Nestor flings the cards down. Eases out of the chair.

CHARLIE

Just you hold on a moment, young lady.

Sybil fumes. Charlie pries himself from the chair. He opens a drawer, pulls out a shell casing and a photo of an aircraft carrier. He hands both to Nestor.

CHARLIE

She's in Norfolk nowadays, but I hear they're gonna junk her. Sink her out at sea for one of them artificial reefs.

Nestor cuddles the photo.

NESTOR

I'd sure like to see her one last time.

Nestor casts a glance at Sybil. She grimaces.

INT. BUICK -- NIGHT

Nestor sleeps. Sybil yawns behind the wheel. Glances at the clock. It reads 10 p.m. She sips soda to keep awake. Her eyes grow heavy.

The car skirts the shoulder. Rumble strips jolt Sybil. Nestor awakens.

NESTOR

Either you let me take over the wheel, missy, or you call it a day and find us a place to sleep. If I'm gonna die, I don't want it to be on I-95.

INT. BEST WESTERN -- NIGHT

A DESK CLERK looks up from his computer.

DESK CLERK

I'm sorry, ma'am, but we're sold out for tonight.

SYBIL

Where are we?

DESK CLERK

Just outside of Walterboro, ma'am.

SYBIL

Who stops at Walterboro that all 90 rooms are occupied?

DESK CLERK

Our guests aren't visiting us. They're travelers just like you. But they called ahead.

Nestor, sifting through brochures, smiles.

SYBIL

Isn't there some kind of law that you have to reserve a couple of rooms for inebriated folks.

The desk clerk rocks on the balls of his feet, annoyed.

DESK CLERK

It's a courtesy, not a law, and you appear to be tired, not drunk.

SYBIL

How 'bout I down a bottle of Jack Daniels in the lounge. Will that satisfy you?

Nestor eases in front of Sybil.

NESTOR

You have to excuse my daughter. She's not used to traveling the way the common folk do. She's a hot shot in New York who only goes first class.

DESK CLERK

What a pity.

SYBIL

Hey.

Nestor puts his fingers to her lips.

NESTOR

Maybe you can see who might have an opening up the road.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Nestor enters. Sybil follows. Two single beds, a lounge chair, a television, worn carpets, old drapes and faux artwork nailed to the walls.

Foil wrapped mints rest on each pillow atop a small card which reads complements of the management.

SYBIL

You have got to be kidding. This is like the Bates Motel.

Sybil drops her travel bag on the chair. She clutches her knitting bag and purse.

NESTOR

It's better than driving another 100 miles to Florence. The clerk promised a working TV, clean sheets and few bugs.

Nestor picks up a mint, tears off the wrapper, pops the candy in his mouth. He tests the bed.

Sybil tiptoes towards the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Sybil runs the tip of her finger on the sink. Wipes off a thin layer of crud. She picks up the toilet seat. A strip of paper wraps across an untidy bowl. She gags.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- DAY

Sunlight streams in, bathes Sybil's face as she sleeps sitting up in bed, still in street clothes. She opens her eyes. Checks her watch. 10 a.m.

SYBIL

Shit! Nestor, wake up.

Sybil looks at an empty bed. She hurries to the closed bathroom door. Knocks.

SYBIL

Nestor. Open up.

No reply. Sybil knocks again.

SYBIL

Dad?

Sybil opens the door. No Nestor.

SYBIL

Not again.

Sybil tucks her blouse in. She grabs her purse, knitting bag and room key. She searches in vain for the car keys, cringing with everything she touches.

Sybil opens the door. The car is gone.

SYBIL

Oh my God.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE -- DAY

Sybil rings the bell on the desk over and over. The MANAGER comes out from a back room, plops his hand atop hers to stop the ringing.

MOTEL MANAGER

I'm neither deaf nor blind, Miss.

SYBIL

Did you see my father drive off in a ratty old Buick? The metallic blue car outside Room 12 A?

MOTEL MANAGER

I haven't seen the car or your father.

SYBIL

He isn't suppose to drive. He doesn't have a license or his wits about him.

MOTEL MANAGER

Maybe the car was stolen, and your father went to look for it. Did you lock it last night?

SYBIL

Yes. I know better than to trust the backwoods rabble who live in these parts.

The manager glowers.

MOTEL MANAGER

Well, the backwoods rabble can't keep track of the comings and goings of everyone.

Sybil tears out of the office.

EXT. MOTEL OFFICE -- DAY

Sybil scans the horizon in a fruitless effort to spot Nestor. She heads into the coffee shop next door.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- DAY

The sound of screeching brakes, followed by metal hitting metal. A COUPLE walking their dog turn towards the sound.

INT. COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

Sybil winces from the smell of fried food. She hurries into the bathroom.

Seconds later, echo-laden wrenching noises cascade from the rest room, startling customers.

INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY

Nestor sits across from OFFICER CARL MAYWEATHER. Carl takes notes on a legal pad.

CARL

So you have no wallet?

NESTOR

I told you. I left the wallet back at the motel.

SGT. SARA AMES, 36, ambles in. Petite, with a blond pony tail bobbing up and down, Sara extends a hand.

SARA

I'm Sargeant Sara Ames.

Nestor declines the invite. Sara leans against the desk.

SARA

You have no driver's license, and you went through a stop sign, smacking into the rear of another car. You see how that looks from our end.

NESTOR

I'm familiar with the law.

Sara stares at the legal pad.

SARA

Nestor Toland, is it? A former detective?

NESTOR

That's right.

Sara leans in closer.

SARA

But how do we know you're Nestor Toland?

NESTOR

For God's sakes, I just told you.

Sara takes a deep breath to maintain her composure.

SARA

Are you in town alone?

NESTOR

Unfortunately, no. My-good-for-nothing daughter is with me.

SARA

And what's her name, Mr. Toland?

NESTOR

Sybil Nicolella.

SARA

Where is Sybil?

EXT. COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

Sybil breathes in fresh air. Dials 9-1-1 on her cell.

INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY

A DISPATCHER answers the call.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

DISPATCHER

Reevesville police. Can I help you?

SYBIL

My name is Sybil Nicolella. I'm staying at the Sunset Motel and my father stole his car.

DISPATCHER

Excuse me, ma'am. But this line is reserved for emergencies. And stealing your own car hardly qualifies.

SYBIL

My father has no license.

DISPATCHER

DUI?

SYBIL

No. He's 67, and not altogether in his right mind. So the state of Florida took it away when he got too many tickets.

DISPATCHER

I still don't see an emergency here.

SYBIL

It is for anyone else on the road.

DISPATCHER

Call this number. 555-9277. That'd be the main office.

END INTERCUT

SYBIL

Why can't you help me? Hello? Hello?!

Sybil bangs the phone shut. She dials, but gets a busy signal. She tries again. Gets a busy signal again.

The cell phone rings. Sybil answers it.

SYBIL

What?! Why didn't you people tell me that when I called two seconds ago?... Where are you?

Sybil slams the cell phone in her knitting bag, turns to her left, stares towards the center of town three blocks away.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- DAY

A picture perfect downtown in the rural south, populated by mom and pop stores of all types.

EXT. VARIETY STORE -- DAY

Mesmerized, Sybil stares at young CICELY, perched atop a wooden crate, knitting a headband at lightning speed.

DEE, a heavysset older woman, pipe dangling from her lips, grabs a completed headband before it hits the ground. Cicely casts on for another headband.

Dee returns Sybil's stare.

DEE

You gotta problem?

SYBIL

I'm in awe of this young lady.

DEE

You should be. Don't nobody come close to besting this girl. Been the county champ three years now.

SYBIL

I didn't know you held contests for such things.

DEE

'Cause you from up North.

Sybil moves a little closer to observe.

SYBIL

You like her manager or something?

DEE

More like her inspiration. Now go on about your business. This ain't a peep show.

Sybil holds her tongue. She glances at the variety store.

SYBIL

This place sell yarn?

DEE

Third aisle. Near Cicely's work.

Sybil enters the store. Another headband drops into Dee's hands.

INT. VARIETY STORE -- DAY

Still watching Cicely through the window, Sybil drops two needles and a dozen skeins of yarn on the countertop in front of a CLERK.

CLERK

Don't you be thinking you can show her up with all this yarn. She may be young, but she can take on any stitcher in the state. That be \$12.50.

EXT. VARIETY STORE -- DAY

Her eyes focused on Cicely, Sybil leans against a rail, pulls out a pack of yarn, and the new needles.

SYBIL

\$10 says I beat your girl.

Sybil tosses a bill on the ground. Dee exchanges glances with Cicely. The young girl nods. Dee takes out a ten and throws it on top of Sybil's.

Cicely disengages the half completed headband. Dee checks her watch.

DEE

Get it on, girls.

Cicely shoots a quick look towards Sybil, digs in, her hands a blur. Sybil keeps pace.

MONTAGE

The hands of both knitters move with whirlwind speed. Headbands fall. Sweat beads dot the foreheads of both combatants. More headbands fall. A small crowd gathers.

Sybil takes the lead. Her fifth headband drops. A handful of onlookers gasp in disbelief. Nervous, Cicely drops a stitch on her fifth.

CARL (O.S.)  
Sybil Nicolella.

Sybil and Cicely turn to Carl.

SYBIL  
Yeah?

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT -- DAY

A small foyer, decorated by Wal-Mart. Sybil eyes the chipped, cruddy and corroded chairs with loathing as she strolls to the bulletproof glass in front of the dispatcher.

SYBIL  
You have the kind of criminal element here that requires glass like this?

DISPATCHER  
You must be Sybil. Sargeant Ames will be out in a minute, ma'am.

A door opens. Sara comes in.

SARA  
So you're the new knitting champ of Reevesville.

EXT. POLICE BACK LOT -- DAY

Sybil and Sara stroll towards the tow garage.

SARA  
Your father got himself involved in a little fender bender on Main Street. Eyewitnesses say he plowed into Mrs. Priscilla Bean's wagon at a stop sign.

SYBIL  
Was he hurt?

Sara shakes her head, no.

SARA

Everyone got out unscathed. But Nestor had no license or identification of any kind. To tell you the truth, he was so belligerent, I thought he was drunk.

SYBIL

He's like that a lot these days.

SARA

He finally brought your name up, and our dispatcher remembered you just called.

INT. TOW GARAGE -- DAY

Sybil and Sara peer at the Buick. The front bumper is pushed in on the passenger side, the headlight glass broken.

SYBIL

Is the engine damaged?

SARA

Not that we can tell. The vehicle's not the holdup.

SYBIL

Then what? I'll pay the fines for Nestor's indiscretions.

SARA

It's not that simple, Miss Nicolella.

SYBIL

I favor Sybil, if you don't mind.

SARA

If Mrs. Beans files charges, Sybil, we have to set a court date for later this month, and you've got to post bail.

Sybil glares at Sara.

SYBIL

Nestor has to come back here?

SARA

That's the way the justice system works.

SYBIL

You realize Nestor was a cop for more than 25 years.

SARA

He made sure I was aware. We talked about some of his more celebrated cases. I especially liked the Subway Killer.

Sybil chuckles.

SYBIL

What's the body count up to these days?

Sara throws a stern look, like she's been had.

SARA

Eight. Why? He make up this character?

SYBIL

No. There really was a Subway Killer. Hayward something or other. My recollection is he killed five people before Nestor nabbed him.

SARA

No matter what the number, it won't earn any special privileges here.

SYBIL

What if I can convince Priscilla to change her mind?

SARA

Mrs. Beans was never the negotiating type.

SYBIL

No harm trying.

SARA

I'll get you the number. Maybe you want to see your father now.

SYBIL

Why?

Sara does a double take.

INT. JAIL -- DAY

Nestor stops reading the local newspaper when Sybil and Sara approach. Sara opens the cell door.

SARA

I'll let you two alone.

Sara leaves. Sybil keeps her distance from the cell.

NESTOR

The bars don't bite, missy. Neither do I. Pull up a chair.

The cell is furnished with the same worn out plastic chairs as the waiting room, only in worse condition.

SYBIL

I'll stand, thank you.

NESTOR

You got my inhaler? This place doesn't have the healthiest air. Or the most intelligent people. Carl's a buffoon. Can't take yes for an answer.

Sybil hunts through her pocketbook. Pulls out the inhaler. Hands it to Nestor. He takes a puff.

SYBIL

You want to tell me what you were thinking going for a joy ride.

NESTOR

You were dead to the world. I wanted to see the sites.

SYBIL

I don't recall seeing too many sites when we drove into Reevesville.

NESTOR

I read in a brochure at the motel they got one of the oldest cemeteries in the South.

SYBIL

And if you pull another stunt like this, you may get permanent visitation rights, Nestor.

Nestor crumples up the newspaper. He tosses it on the floor and stands over Sybil.

NESTOR

For your information, missy, I'm not guilty. The other driver stopped when she should have gone. The light was green.

SYBIL

There was no light. It was a stop sign. She stopped. You didn't. I'm going to bail you out so we can get back on the road while we still have daylight.

NESTOR

Good luck.

SYBIL

Priscilla Beans? I'll write her a check. She'll go away.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT -- DAY

Sybil readies pen and checkbook.

SARA

We're up to \$430, not counting whatever fine is levied on behalf of Mrs. Beans.

The bottom of Sybil's mouth drops several inches.

SYBIL

You wanna break that down for me, Sarge?

Sara hands her an invoice.

SARA

Running a stop sign, \$140. Reckless driving, another \$140. No license, \$75. And leaving the scene of an accident, \$75.

SYBIL

Nestor left the scene? To where?

SARA

Monroe's Tavern across the street. Coulda nailed him for DUI, probably.

Sybil puts her head in her hands.

SARA

If I really want to be a stickler, he'd get jail time as well.

Sybil grits her teeth. And writes a check.

SYBIL

Now can we go?

SARA

You can. The car can't. Not without a new headlight and Priscilla Beans' blessing. I took the liberty of calling her. Here's the address.

Sara hands it to Sybil.

SARA

But if you wanna have any shot of landing on her good side, stay clear between 1 and 2. Her soap's on, and she gets irritated anyone interrupts.

INT. TAXI -- DAY

A rickety cab pulls up to an old Victorian house. The TAXI DRIVER checks his watch, turns to Sybil and Nestor.

TAXI DRIVER

You ought not go bangin' on Mrs. Beans door right about now.

SYBIL

Leave it to me. And stay put. Both of you.

She gets out. Marches onto the porch.

EXT. MRS. BEANS HOUSE -- DAY

A television blares from the living room. Sybil peeks through the curtains.

Draped in a black knit shawl, MRS. PRISCILLA BEANS, 74, is curled up on the sofa, intense eyes watching the action unfold on "Restless Lives."

On the soap, HAL runs down the steps of Tenafly train station. Gretchen pursues him despite a cast on her leg, crutches under her arm.

Sybil screams.

INT. MRS. BEANS HOUSE -- DAY

Mrs. Beans falls off the sofa. She pulls herself up, stares at an angry Sybil on the other side of the window.

SYBIL

Damn that Bittner.

Mrs. Beans opens the door.

MRS. BEANS

Who the hell are you and why are you on my porch raving like a lunatic about a Bittner? And during "Restless" time to boot?

Sybil weaves around Mrs. Beans into the living room. She points to the television.

SYBIL

Gretchen has a cast on her leg.  
She's on crutches, and she runs down  
steps? That's not possible, and even  
a dolt like Bittner should know that.

Mrs. Beans checks the screen.

MRS. BEANS

That's what I'm thinkin' but...Hey,  
I asked you who you are? And what's  
this thing about a Bittner?

SYBIL

Bittner is my assistant, and he only  
keeps his job because his uncle is a  
network vice president.

MRS. BEANS

What are you jabbering about?

Sybil motions to the television.

SYBIL

Mrs. Beans, I direct....

MRS. BEANS

How did you know my name, young lady?

SYBIL

I'm Sybil Nicolella. Sargeant Ames  
called, said I'd be stopping by.  
About my father, Nestor.

MRS. BEANS

You don't stop by during "Restless"  
no matter who your assistant is.  
Come back at 2.

Mrs. Beans returns to the sofa. Sybil sits down next to her.

SYBIL

Can we talk, please?

Mrs. Beans glares at Sybil.

MRS. BEANS

I'm getting more perturbed by the  
second, you insolent child. And your  
father is guilty as sin.

Sybil takes a deep breath.

SYBIL

I...

MRS. BEANS

Silence.

Sybil's eyes widen.

EXT. MRS. BEANS PORCH -- DAY

Nestor peers through the window to see Gretchen and Hal locked in an awkward embrace on television. The TAXI DRIVER tries to drag him away.

TAXI DRIVER

You heard what your daughter said.

Nestor shoves the driver off the porch. He lands on his butt with a thud.

NESTOR

My daughter is an uppity fool. You think I'm going to listen to an uppity fool?

INT. MRS. BEANS HOUSE -- DAY

Nestor barges in. Sybil and Mrs. Beans jerk their heads towards him.

SYBIL

I thought I told you to keep your ass in the taxi, Nestor.

MRS. BEANS

(to Sybil)

And I told you to shut up.

(to Nestor)

That goes for you, too.

Mrs. Beans increases the volume on the remote. Nestor leans down to Mrs. Beans.

NESTOR

Do you know my daughter is responsible for this television show?

Nestor straightens up. Mrs. Beans glances from Nestor to Sybil.

MRS. BEANS

What's he talking about?

SYBIL

I'm the director of "Restless Lives."  
I could describe this or any other episode. Except where that jerkwad Bittner is involved.

Mrs. Beans leans back, wary.

MRS. BEANS

Prove it and I won't report you for disturbing the peace.

SYBIL

Watch the credits at the end.

MRS. BEANS

Well, then, that's what we'll do. So keep quiet. Everyone.

Nestor notices a copy of Soap Opera Digest on the coffee table.

NESTOR

No need to wait. Look through that magazine. I'll bet you'll find Sybil's name plain as day.

Sybil eyes Nestor up and down, surprised he even knew Soap Opera Digest. Mrs. Beans leafs through the magazine. Her face lights up.

MRS. BEANS

"Restless Lives" director, right here in Reevesville. In my living room, no less. I am humbled.

SYBIL

Oh please. Spare me the sarcasm.

Nestor squeezes in between Sybil and Mrs. Beans.

NESTOR

I'll bet Sybil can get you a ticket to watch them tape the show in New York.

Sybil tries to speak, but words fail her.

NESTOR

Shall I repeat myself?

SYBIL

Ah, no, Dad. I'll get right on it.

NESTOR

And that includes airfare.

(to Mrs. Beans)

You do fly, don't you?

MRS. BEANS

For "Restless Lives," anything.

Sybil wiggles between Nestor and Mrs. Beans. She takes Mrs. Beans hands.

SYBIL

There is one thing, though, Priscilla.

MRS. BEANS

Honey, when I see those tickets in my hand, the little ole fender bender will be yesterday's news.

Nestor smirks. On TV, Hal hurries into a taxi, leaving Gretchen blathering on the sidewalk.

Sybil jumps to her feet.

SYBIL

Damn that Bittner.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- DAY

The Buick passes a Florence exit sign. The turn signal goes on.

EXT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

The Buick stops in the parking lot.

INT. BUICK -- DAY

Sybil shuts the ignition off. The car shimmies and shakes for several seconds before the engine quits. Sybil pauses.

SYBIL

Do I need a leash for you, Nestor?

NESTOR

If it makes you feel any better, we'll accompany each other to the bathroom.

SYBIL

I'm serious. No more surprises.

INT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

Remnants of dinner cover the table. Nestor enjoys a dish of vanilla fudge ice cream. Sybil jots down notes about "Restless Lives." The WAITRESS returns with the credit card and receipt.

WAITRESS

I thank you. Y'all have a nice day.

NESTOR

Same to y'all.

The waitress smiles at Nestor and sashays off.

NESTOR

You want any of this ice cream before  
I finish it off?

Sybil winces.

SYBIL

Just the thought of it makes me gag,  
Nestor. It's nauseating.

Nestor shakes his head, finishes the rest.

NESTOR

I think I'll use the little boys  
room before we hit the road again,  
missy. You coming?

SYBIL

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

EXT. RESTROOM -- DAY

Nestor stops.

NESTOR

Coming in with me?

An OLDER WOMAN passing by scowls at the suggestion.

SYBIL

I'll stand guard out here, Nestor.

NESTOR

If I need tending, I'll holler.

Nestor goes into the men's room. Sybil places a cell call.

SYBIL

Good afternoon, baby brother...In a  
greasy spoon somewhere outside  
Florence, South Carolina, waiting  
for Nestor to do whatever he does in  
the bathroom these days.

Sybil watches a tubby YOUNG MAN come out of the restroom.  
She sneaks a peak inside.

SYBIL

How's Tony?...I don't care what it  
means for your love life...Where you  
going?...You don't impress me as the  
Vermont type, Robert.

Sybil rolls her eyes.

SYBIL

If big Tony backs out, you call Fern  
or you don't go...Where's she off  
to?...He's still only 17, that's  
why.

Flushing from inside the men's room.

Sybil hangs up the phone. Nestor saunters out of the men's  
room. A COUPLE head towards respective bathrooms.

SYBIL

Bobby says hello.

NESTOR

He still queer?

The couple do a double take.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

I-95 just into North Carolina. The Buick zooms by, its engine  
spewing out sporadic sputters.

LATER

Another stretch of highway, the Buick rattles and stammers.  
It starts to rain.

INT. BUICK -- NIGHT

More sputtering, joined by knocking and pinging. Then a series  
of fluttering jolts. The car slows.

A tractor-trailer honks its horn as it passes. Sybil gives  
the driver the finger.

A pop, a flash of smoke. The engine dies. The car weaves and  
slows. More horn honking.

Sybil struggles to ease onto the shoulder. The car belches  
to a stop. Sybil smacks her hand on the steering wheel just  
as a bolt of lightning shatters the dark sky.

SYBIL

Great. We're in the middle of Nowhere  
North Carolina. Just fucking great.

Nestor wakes up.

NESTOR

I won't tolerate that kind of  
language, missy.

Sybil does a slow burn towards Nestor. She plucks the cell  
phone from her bag. Purses her lips. Dials 9-1-1.

SYBIL

My father's car broke down...This is an emergency.

EXT. BUICK -- NIGHT

Headlights of occasional passing cars and trucks interrupt near total blackness, highlighting the pelting rain. An overhead light shines inside the Buick.

INT. BUICK -- NIGHT

Nestor is riveted by the breakneck speed of Sybil's knitting.

SYBIL

Fern says I should have popped a tranquilizer in your orange juice and forced you on a plane.

NESTOR

That's how much she cares about me. That's how much any of you care about me.

SYBIL

To quote a Biblical cliché, you reap what you sow.

NESTOR

Explain yourself, missy.

SYBIL

Take that comment about Robert back at the restaurant. You never accepted him for what he is.

NESTOR

He chose his lifestyle. God didn't anoint him a homosexual.

SYBIL

This isn't about lifestyle to you. You're the great rejector, Nestor. We all have to fit your image of us. You rejected big Tony, too.

Nestor perks up.

NESTOR

That good-for-nothing lout. You shoulda never run off with that scum.

SYBIL

True. Looking back. But I didn't know it at the time. Neither did you.

NESTOR

I knew it. I have a sixth sense about these things. That's what made me such a good detective.

SYBIL

And I suppose your sixth sense told you to wiretap Jason Carr's phone in high school.

NESTOR

I had to know what his intentions were.

Sybil stops knitting.

SYBIL

His intentions were to take me to the senior prom.

Nestor opens the glove compartment. He takes out a flask of Scotch. Has a drink.

SYBIL

Yeh, that's right. Turn to the booze when you're at a loss for words.

Sybil resumes knitting.

NESTOR

It calms my indigestion, missy.

SYBIL

You want to calm your stomach, knit instead.

Nestor scoffs.

NESTOR

Sissy stuff.

SYBIL

It'll keep you out of trouble.

NESTOR

Maybe I like trouble.

Nestor slugs down more Scotch.

NESTOR

Now if you'll excuse me, missy, I'm gonna shut my eyes for a few minutes till the cavalry arrives. Dream of drunken knitting needles doing battle with each other.

Nestor curls up against the door. He peeks at Sybil, knitting away. Sybil peeks back.

NESTOR

You have something else you want to say?

Sybil pauses.

SYBIL

Something about little Tony.

Nestor yawns.

NESTOR

Yeh. Big Tony isn't his father.

Sybil drops a stitch. She gapes at Nestor.

NESTOR

I figured it out before the kid turned five. He doesn't look like either one of you. I told you. A sixth sense.

SYBIL

Thank God Big Tony doesn't have a sixth sense.

NESTOR

He didn't do too well on the other five senses, either. So who's the real father?

Sybil shakes her head.

SYBIL

No one of any importance. Just an opportune man at an inopportune time.

NESTOR

I wouldn't tell little Tony if I were you.

Sybil scoops out a photo of her son from her purse. She rubs her hands over it.

Nestor falls asleep. Sybil stares out the window.

EXT. BUICK -- NIGHT

A state police car comes up behind the car. A tow truck pulls up in front.

INT. BUICK -- NIGHT

A tap on the window startles Sybil out of a sound sleep. She bolts upright. Nestor stays asleep.

A beefy STATE TROOPER shines a flashlight through the side window. An even beefier ROYAL JENKINS, 33, waves from the front of the car.

INT. TOW TRUCK -- NIGHT

The truck toddles along a two-lane blacktop, wipers keeping time to the country song on the radio. Sybil hugs her knitting bag and purse. Nestor stares into the darkness, still half asleep.

ROYAL

Whatcha whippin' up with the chunky wool?

Sybil throws a bewildered look his way.

SYBIL

A sweater.

ROYAL

Looks like you usin' a cable stitch.

SYBIL

Yeh. That's right.

ROYAL

I just learned that one meself.

The comment snaps Nestor to attention.

NESTOR

You knit?

ROYAL

Ever chance I get. Soothes the savage beast, as they say. Hell, with what goes on in my life, my beast needs all the soothin' it can get.

SYBIL

You don't say.

ROYAL

Hell, my life's thornier than the soaps my Mom can't get enough of.

NESTOR

You don't say. Why, my daughter here...

Sybil kicks Nestor with her foot.

ROYAL

Your daughter what?

Nestor grits his teeth.

NESTOR

My daughter here wants me to keep my mouth shut. How much farther anyway?

ROYAL

Not more'n two miles.

SYBIL

So tell me, what kind of thorns does a tow truck driver in North Carolina have?

ROYAL

As I said, we only got about two miles ta go. So's I'll give you the abridged version.

The rain slows. Royal turns the radio off.

ROYAL

My former wife, Dory, she's bleedin' me dry with alimony so's she and her lover, Felix, can live high off the hog without his liftin' a finger.

SYBIL

Don't they have due process down this way?

ROYAL

That's the funny part. The county judge? He's my ex's uncle. And a close uncle at that. Dory accused me of doin' her cousin - the judge's daughter - but I never touched her, not since I married the mean-tempered bitch.

Nestor and Sybil glance at each other.

EXT. GARAGE -- NIGHT

The rain ends as Royal lets the Buick down from the truck. He unlatches the winch.

He walks over to Sybil. Hands her a greasy business card.

ROYAL

You can call me early tomorra afternoon, after I take a look at the vehicle.

SYBIL

Aren't you forgetting something...  
(glances at card)  
Royal?

Royal scratches his head. He shrugs. Sybil looks at her watch.

SYBIL

It's almost midnight. Can't you take us to a motel or bed and breakfast.

Royal creases his face.

ROYAL

We don't have no motels or B & Bs. Mrs. Simmons has a guest house over on Plum Street, but I don't think she'd take kindly to hammerin' on her door this hour.

NESTOR

What Sybil is hinting at is we need a place to stay for the evening.

Royal grins as a great truth settles over him.

ROYAL

I live out behind the garage, and you're more than welcome to share my humble home with me and my spaniel, Buster.

Sybil groans.

INT. ROYAL'S HOME -- DAY

Sybil, Nestor sit side by side, knitting needles in their hands, a skein of wool in their laps. Sybil stitches away. Nestor doesn't lift a finger.

SYBIL

What are you afraid of, Nestor?

NESTOR

Failing.

Sybil shakes her head.

SYBIL

You sound like Bobby. He slips through life so he doesn't have to fail.

NESTOR

Robert isn't afraid of failure. He's afraid of success.

SYBIL

Bullshit. You put fear into him if he didn't measure up. And you never offered a smidgen of praise for his few accomplishments. So he refused to try.

NESTOR

Did I put fear into you?

SYBIL

I wouldn't...

The front door flies opens. DORY and FELIX enter.

SYBIL

let...you.

Sybil's voice trails off as she and Nestor turn their eyes to the couple. Dory wears a low cut dress, exposing much of her ample bosom. Felix has an outfit suited for a monk.

SYBIL

Talk about your odd couple.

Royal comes in with a pot of coffee, cups, sweeteners and bran muffins. Tail-wagging Buster tags along behind. Royal stops short at the site of his ex-wife and her lover.

ROYAL

You can't just come in here unannounced.

DORY

I need to get some of the clothes I left here.

He looks them up and down.

ROYAL

You two goin' to a costume ball this hour in the morning?

DORY

That's Felix's work attire.

FELIX

I become a preacher in my spare time.

Royal deposits the tray of goodies on the coffee table.

ROYAL

You got nothin' but spare time, you lazy ass.

Dory marches up to Royal's face.

DORY

You shut your mouth, Royal. You talkin' to a man of the cloth now. He got himself a congregation and we're movin' outta the county.

FELIX

I'm promotin' the Lord.

ROYAL

That a payin' job, Felix? If it is,  
you make sure the Lord kicks in the  
\$350 Dory owes me.

Nestor smirks. Dory notices Nestor and Sybil for the first time.

DORY

You laughin' at us, Mister. Say, who  
the hell are you two?

(to Royal)

You runnin' a guest house now, Royal?  
'Cause I didn't notice a permit on  
the door.

SYBIL

I assure you, we're very reluctant  
house guests, Dory.

Dory shifts attention to Sybil.

DORY

How do you know my name? You ain't  
from around these parts.

SYBIL

Royal treated me to a capsule summary  
of life with Dory last night. I just  
put two and one together.

Clenching her fists, Dory steps towards Sybil, bends over.

DORY

Maybe I'll put my two fists into  
your one face.

Sybil rises, taking her time. Dory inches away.

Nestor reaches for Sybil's hand, but she brushes him away.  
She grabs a knitting needle.

SYBIL

Bring it on, skank.

Nestor, Felix and Royal pop their eyes open. Dory moves in  
for the kill, her fists in striking position. Sybil refuses  
to back down, parrying with her needle.

Felix steps between them.

FELIX

Step back, both of you.

Felix plucks a mini-bible from the inside pocket of his robe, flips it open as he keeps the two women at arm's length. He places a hand on Sybil's shoulder, drawing a cross glare from Dory.

FELIX

Friend. Whatever war of words keeps you at odds with my Dory can be put to rest by a few pertinent passages from the Holy Book.

SYBIL

How about turn the other cheek?

DORY

Or an eye for an eye.

Dory and Sybil close ranks around Felix. The two toss him to the floor.

Buster barks. He runs into the fray, knocking Royal down.

The dog's tail slaps the tray, sending it flying off the table. Coffee squirts over the combatants, and over a not-too-amused Nestor.

NESTOR

Now I'm pissed.

Dory smacks Sybil in the face, just below the eye. Sybil stabs Dory in the hand, drawing blood. Dory grips one end of the needle. Sybil refuses to leave go of the other end.

ROYAL

I'm calling the sheriff.

Royal runs off.

Nestor, his pants soaked with coffee, gets up. Swipes the needle. His intrusion startles Dory and Sybil, but in seconds, they grab for each other's arms and shoulders.

Dory reaches for the necklace around Sybil's neck.

Sybil kicks her in the groin, and Dory falls into Nestor. She springs back up. Goes after Sybil again.

Nestor squeezes both women by the nape of the neck. They yelp.

NESTOR

If you ladies can't play nice, then don't play at all.

He pushes both of them towards the front door.

EXT. ROYAL'S HOUSE -- DAY

Dory and Sybil stumble out to find two sheriff's cars in front of the house. Dory clutches her stomach; Sybil holds her face.

Nestor walks out behind the two, stands on the front step.

Felix follows, runs around Nestor, drapes an arm around Dory's shoulder. She knocks his arm off, and rushes up to SHERIFF DUSTY.

DORY

I want those two interlopers put behind bars, Dusty. Or I'll have my uncle on your ass.

SHERIFF

Shut up and go, Dory. Your uncle's a Republican. He can't touch me.

FELIX

Then the Lord have mercy on your soul, Sheriff.

Sheriff Dusty shakes his head. Royal steps outside with Buster. The sheriff turns to Royal.

SHERIFF

It'd be in everyone's best interest for these two to retreat from these borders as soon as possible, Royal.

SYBIL

Amen to that.

INT. ROYAL'S HOUSE -- DAY

Royal moseys in from the garage. Grease-stained. Head down. Feet shuffling. Buster hides behind Royal. Grease stained. Head down. Feet shuffling.

Sybil glances up from her knitting, her face still raw from the slap.

ROYAL

The fender bender did more'n bend a fender. The radiator pushed its way into the carb.

Sybil glares through clenched teeth.

SYBIL

Let's have it.

ROYAL

The damage accelerated the break down. But that engine ain't been cleaned in about four years, and I doubt them cylinders woulda gotten you past Virginia anyway.

Groaning, Sybil bows her head.

SYBIL

Give me the bottom line.

ROYAL

I gotta flag down a part from Raleigh, so's I figure three days tops. Run you about \$8-900 total. That ain't gonna make the Sheriff too happy. Or Dory, if she finds out.

SYBIL

I'd just as soon junk the damn car for part money and rent another.

INT. GARAGE OFFICE -- DAY

Sybil on the cell phone, careful not to touch any of the oil encrusted walls and chairs. She can't take her eyes off Royal, his feet propped up on the desk, running through the cable stitch on a sweater.

SYBIL

Don't you deliver or something?

She scrunches her eyes.

SYBIL

Where the hell's Wilson?...And just how am I supposed to get to Wilson without a car?

She glances over at Nestor, also fixated on Royal's prowess with a needle.

SYBIL

The train? Out of the question. I don't do trains...I do busses - if I have to.

INT. BUS STATION -- DAY

Sybil turns from the window, tickets in hand. She checks her watch. Places a call.

INT. DONNY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Donny picks up the phone. He smiles.

## INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

SYBIL

Did you put a muzzle on Bittner's brain yet?

DONNY

I reiterated the 10 commandments you made so abundantly clear to him in your last discussion.

SYBIL

And?

DONNY

And he promised to be good, then complained to Hathway how you insisted the taping of the next episodes would have to wait until you return.

SYBIL

That weasel-brained bastard.

DONNY

Not to change the subject, but where are you calling from?

SYBIL

Pine Level, North Carolina.

DONNY

North Carolina is no where near New York, dearie.

SYBIL

Don't remind me. This is one of the few places on earth without a Starbucks. Or even a Dunkin' Donuts.

DONNY

Then why are you there?

SYBIL

I refused to spend the time or money to fix the Buick after Nestor's lapse in judgement wrecked the car.

DONNY

And?

SYBIL

And I bought two bus tickets to someplace called Wilson where we can pick up a rental.

DONNY

Amtrak can deliver you in less than  
12 hours.

SYBIL

Don't push my buttons again, Donny.  
I'll be in the office by Monday.

DONNY

If you're not, Hathway will scream.  
And you'll hear it no matter what  
shanty town you're passing through.

Donny hangs up the phone.

END INTERCUT

Sybil hangs up the phone.

INT. BUS -- DAY

Sybil knits. Nestor looks at her bruised face.

NESTOR

If it's any consolation, I gave you  
the edge over Dory back there.

SYBIL

I showed you something, huh? I could  
handle a bitch like that in my sleep.

Sybil reaches into her bag, pulls out a pair of needles and  
the yarn Nestor worked on earlier.

SYBIL

Now it's your turn to show me  
something. If that hillbilly excuse  
of a mechanic can master this, you  
can.

Sybil initiates the next few stitches, hands everything to  
Nestor.

SYBIL

Remember. Back and forth. Right.  
Left. Left. Right. And repeat.

Nestor tries it, but drops a stitch. He picks up again with  
the same result.

NESTOR

You call this relaxing?

EXT. WILSON TERMINAL -- DAY

The bus rolls into the terminal.

INT. BUS -- DAY

The squeal of the brakes cracks Nestor's concentration. He hurls the knitting down.

NESTOR

Come on, we're here.

EXT. INTERSTATE -- DAY

A rented Buick flies along.

INT. RENTED BUICK -- NIGHT

Nestor leans his head against the window, morose, the knitting on his lap. Sybil steals glances his way.

SYBIL

It took me a long time to get the hang of it, Nestor.

Nestor turns her way.

NESTOR

Bullshit. You picked it up just by watching your grandmother.

SYBIL

And I dropped hundreds of stitches in the process. I want you to set a goal for yourself. By the time we reach New York, you'll have 10 rows finished.

Nestor curls up against the door, ignoring Sybil. He shuts his eyes.

INT. EMPORIA HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

The door opens. Sybil and Nestor enter a well-appointed, though hardly luxurious room.

NESTOR

Comfy enough for you, missy?

LATER

Sybil knits.

Nestor opens his travel bag, takes out the Scotch, and a deck of cards. He hits the remote to turn on the TV. Swigs the booze.

He flicks to a Seinfeld rerun. George argues sex with Jerry.

NESTOR

You want to stop knitting long enough  
for a game of gin?

Sybil pauses. She nods at the ball of yarn on the coffee  
table.

SYBIL

I thought you were going to give it  
another go.

NESTOR

Mind if I take a brief hiatus for  
something I enjoy.

Nestor shuffles the cards. Sybil puts the knitting down.  
Pulls up a chair.

SYBIL

You saw me with Charlie Daniels back  
in Okieville. I'm not the same timid  
girl you ridiculed everytime I threw  
out the wrong card.

NESTOR

So I noticed.

SYBIL

I don't care to lose, even in a  
friendly game of gin.

Nestor deals the cards.

NESTOR

Good for you. You owe that attitude  
to me.

SYBIL

I don't owe anything to you, Nestor.

Sybil picks up her cards. Nestor picks up his. He chuckles.

NESTOR

You do. You just don't see it, missy.

On TV, George laments living with his parents.

Sybil takes a card, tosses another out with vigor.

SYBIL

Except for the lunatic stunts, I  
rarely saw you, Nestor. You ever do  
anything positive? Take us to a ball  
game? A movie? Anywhere? You didn't  
even make it to our graduations.

Nestor grabs a card, throws it back on the discard pile.

NESTOR

You wanted nothing to do with me,  
either of you.

Sybil scoops up the discard.

SYBIL

That's what teenagers do.

She rearranges her hand. Zings out a discard.

SYBIL

Tony Jr. is just like that. But I  
make an attempt to connect with him  
anyway.

Nestor takes the card, flips another onto the discard pile.

SYBIL

That's what parents do.

Sybil snatches the card.

SYBIL

Gin.

Nestor stares at his hand in disbelief. On TV, George yells  
at his parents.

Sybil tosses the jumble of yarn at Nestor. He grabs it.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- DAY

The rented Buick approaches a sign for Norfolk.

INT. RENTED BUICK -- DAY

The sign breezes by.

NESTOR

You don't have to sidestep on my  
account, missy.

SYBIL

Don't tempt me to be mean, Nestor.  
This might cost me my job, but I'm  
trying my best to be the good daughter  
you insist you never had.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- DAY

The car flies by another sign for the Norfolk Navy Yard.

EXT. MAIN GATE -- DAY

The Buick stops. An ARMED GUARD ambles out of the guard hut.  
Sybil rolls the window down.

ARMED GUARD

May I help you, ma'am?

Nestor leans over.

NESTOR

I sailed on the USS Chesapeake. We were in the neighborhood, so to speak, so I thought I'd revisit the old gal before she gets deposited out at sea.

ARMED GUARD

I'm sorry, sir, but that vessel is off-limits to tours.

NESTOR

That's OK. I'll just browse around on my own.

Nestor steps from the car.

ARMED GUARD

Sir, you'll have to get back in the vehicle.

The jittery guard fingers his rifle.

NESTOR

Look, son, I just want to rekindle a few memories, while I can still rekindle anything.

SYBIL

Nestor, leave it be.

A SECOND GUARD comes out of the hut.

NESTOR

You pick up the phone, and place a call to Colonel Morgan.

SECOND GUARD

Mighty Morgan?

Nestor nods, grins.

SECOND GUARD

He's not here.

NESTOR

Track him down.

SECOND GUARD

I don't think that's appropriate.

NESTOR

Son, you're not paid to think. Mighty Morgan told me so on many an occasion.

SYBIL

Dad. Let's go.

NESTOR

Hush up, missy.

(to guards)

Now one of you fine young gentlemen please let Morgan know Nestor Toland is here to see the Chesapeake.

The two guards circle Nestor.

ARMED GUARD

Mr. Toland, back in the car.

Nestor's eyes widen. He grabs his chest. Shakes.

SECOND GUARD

Sir?!

SYBIL

Nestor. What the hell's happening?

Upset, Sybil climbs out of the car, knitting bag clasped on her shoulder.

Nestor rolls his eyes. He opens and closes his mouth, over and over. He lays down on a nearby bench. Grabs his chest. Cocks his head to one side.

ARMED GUARD

Call the medivac.

The second guard hurries into the hut.

SYBIL

I think we need to elevate his head or something.

The guard scratches his ear, bewildered.

Nestor's tongue lolls to the side. He closes his eyes.

SYBIL

Don't do this to me, Nestor.

A siren in the distance grows louder.

ARMED GUARD

Has this happened before, ma'am?

SYBIL

No. As far as I know, the bastard  
was always strong as an ox.

An ambulance rolls to a stop. Two MEDICS rush out, one with  
a stretcher, the other with a medical bag.

The first medic applies a blood pressure cuff and takes a  
reading. The second places a baby aspirin under Nestor's  
tongue, takes his temperature, places an oxygen mask on his  
nose.

SECOND MEDIC

He's pale, clammy.

FIRST MEDIC

His pressure is a bit low.  
(to Nestor)  
Are you dizzy or nauseous, sir?

Nestor nods weakly.

SYBIL

Is this an anxiety attack? Heart  
attack? Angina?

FIRST MEDIC

We don't know yet, ma'am. We're taking  
him to the base infirmary for further  
observations. We'll talk on the way.

The two medics lift Nestor onto a gurney and into the  
ambulance. Sybil hops on board, clinging to her knitting  
bag. Second medic gets behind the wheel.

INT. AMBULANCE -- DAY

The ambulance drives off. The siren wails.

First medic unbuttons Nestor's shirt. He places EKG leads on  
his chest. Flicks on the machine. Turns his back to scribble  
notes.

Nestor opens his left eye, checks out the medic...and winks  
at a shocked Sybil. Her mouth drops open. Nestor winks again,  
with the right eye.

SYBIL

(mouthing words)  
You fucker.

Nestor shuts his eyes just before the medic pivots. The medic  
sets up a glucose and saline IV, inserts it in Nestor's arm.

Sybil holds back a choke.

FIRST MEDIC

What can you tell me about your  
father's medical history?

Sybil tilts her head towards the medic, her eyes glued to  
Nestor.

SYBIL

Never had a lick of heart disease.

FIRST MEDIC

How about a tendency towards anxiety?

SYBIL

Not Nestor.

FIRST MEDIC

Is there anything else you could  
tell me about your father?

SYBIL

Enough to write a book.

INT. INFIRMARY ROOM -- DAY

Nestor lies in a bed, still hooked up. He opens his eyes.  
Sybil glares back at him.

SYBIL

I want to know how you faked those  
symptoms.

Nestor pulls the oxygen mask down.

SYBIL

A trade secret, missy.

A knock on the door. Nestor puts a finger to his lips.

NESTOR

Silence is golden.

Nestor replaces the mask. Shuts his eyes.

The door opens and DOCTOR SIG JONES enters, flanked by the  
two medics. Jones carries a clipboard with Nestor's chart.

He checks Nestor's pulse. Takes his blood pressure. Reads  
the latest EKG. Notes the results in the chart.

JONES

All indications point to a panic  
attack of some kind. But your father  
has recovered quite nicely.

SYBIL

Not surprising.

JONES

Still, it may be wise to do a stress test. We'd ship him off to DePaul Medical for that.

SYBIL

I don't think that will be necessary, Doctor.

JONES

It's your call. And your father's. But we do need to wait until Mr. Toland awakens before he can make a final decision and sign a release.

SYBIL

I expect that will be any minute now.

JONES

Good. Ring the buzzer if anything changes.

The trio turn and walk out.

Nestor yanks off the mask.

NESTOR

We'll leave after I see what I came here to see.

He sits up straight. Rips the IV needle from his arm. Tears off the EKG leads.

Sybil gags.

Nestor finds a bandage in the desk drawer. Applies it to the IV wound.

SYBIL

How'd you get to be so duplicitous. You're like a 12 year-old.

NESTOR

Scope out the hallway for me.

SYBIL

No.

NESTOR

You want me to be arrested?

SYBIL

They'll send you to a psyche ward, Nestor. Which might not be such a bad idea. I'd catch the next flight to New York.

Nestor motions to the door. Sybil, pauses, then opens it, peers out.

SYBIL

A couple of nurses...

Not waiting for a further report, Nestor slinks out of the hospital room towards the side door.

INT. INFIRMARY HALLWAY -- DAY

Sybil strolls by the nursing station, knitting bag in one hand, the cell phone held to her ear with the other.

SYBIL

Nestor will be fine. When he wakes up, he'll sign a release and we can get back on the road.

EXT. INFIRMARY -- DAY

Still pretending to talk on the phone, Sybil looks to her left and spots Nestor trotting across the street towards a carrier two blocks away.

INT. INFIRMARY ROOM -- DAY

First medic checks the dangling IV cord and EKG leads.

FIRST MEDIC

Oh shit.

EXT. DOCKS -- DAY

Nestor stares at the USS Chesapeake. LT. COLONEL KIRBY VOGLER, 51, marches up in his spiffy dress whites. Nestor turns his way.

NESTOR

I served on that ship 40 years ago.

KIRBY

I commanded her for nine years. Lt. Colonel Kirby Vogler.

The two shake hands.

NESTOR

Supply Officer Nestor Toland. You must know Colonel Morgan?

KIRBY

Mighty Morgan? Oh yeah. A legend. Lives near Washington these days. Still spry as ever.

NESTOR  
My commanding officer back then.

KIRBY  
What do you do now, Mr. Toland?

NESTOR  
Retired from the NYPD after 26 years.  
Was a detective for over 22.

Kirby looks Nestor up and down.

KIRBY  
You have a pass to be here?

NESTOR  
No.

KIRBY  
How did you slip onto the base?

Nestor leans in.

NESTOR  
I faked a panic attack. Got admitted  
to the infirmary. Snuck out. Just to  
see this lady again.

KIRBY  
I'm impressed.

Sybil clears her throat behind them. Nestor and Kirby turn  
in unison.

NESTOR  
My daughter, Sybil, Lt. Colonel. An  
unwilling partner in this caper.

SYBIL  
I didn't fake an attack. I really  
panicked.

The three watch an MP vehicle toddle along a block away.

KIRBY  
Impressed though I am over your  
successful deception, I'm afraid the  
two of you will have to leave the  
base now or risk arrest.

Nestor puts his hands on Kirby's shoulders.

NESTOR  
I'd sure like to step aboard her  
again. It's important for my daughter.  
Heck, it's important to me.

INT. INFIRMARY HALLWAY -- DAY

An incredulous Dr. Jones glares at the two medics and a pair of NURSES.

JONES

How do you lose a patient?

The medics and nurses exchange embarrassed looks.

INT. CARRIER -- DAY

Nestor, Sybil and Kirby walk into the galley. Nestor explores the cabinets, the pots and pans hanging up.

NESTOR

This was where I got chummy with Mighty. I'd whip him up my famous Salisbury Steak. He couldn't get enough of it.

SYBIL

You cooked?

NESTOR

Don't be so surprised, missy. I knew my way around a kitchen in my younger years. Why I got assigned to mess duty.

Kirby's pager goes off. He checks the number, cancels the page.

KIRBY

We really ought to get going, Mr. Toland. They have half the base searching for you.

NESTOR

I have one more stop I need to make.

INT. CARRIER HANGAR -- DAY

Several older fighter jets lay in various states of repair. Nestor reaches up to one, strokes the underbelly.

NESTOR

I trained to fly these things. Thought that'd be my real role in the Navy.

Sybil chortles.

SYBIL

Nestor here won't get within a mile of an airport, let alone pilot a plane.

Nestor strolls around the jet.

NESTOR

July 10, 1966. I had the worst hangover imaginable. Didn't even drink that much the night before.

He climbs up the steps towards the cockpit.

KIRBY

Mr. Toland.

Nestor ignores him.

NESTOR

On top of that, I had some bug. Mighty tells me I look like shit warmed over, but I gotta fly anyway.

He reaches the top. Kirby fidgets, his hand on the beeper.

NESTOR

So I slide into the cockpit, grab the oxygen mask.

Nestor slips into the cockpit. Picks up the mask.

KIRBY

This has gone far enough, Mr. Toland. Don't make me call the military police.

SYBIL

Let him continue. I have to see where this intrigue is going.

NESTOR

Thanks, missy.

Nestor pulls out his inhaler. Takes a hit.

NESTOR

I massage the rubber on the mask, and the smell bombards me, like I released toxic fumes. Next thing, I vomit, on the mask, the seat, myself. Brings tears to my eyes.

He stares at the mask.

NESTOR

Mighty tells me to haul ass out of there. Ritchie Hume would take my place after the swabbies cleaned up the mess.

He strokes the mask.

NESTOR

I sit there, frozen in my own puke.  
I barely make out Mighty screaming  
at me. I hear engines kicking in.  
My senses return. I look on the deck.  
Rich holds his helmet.

Kirby walks up the bottom few steps.

NESTOR

I climb out, helmet in hand, stepping  
in vomit. I slog down the steps. At  
the bottom, I stare at Ritchie. He  
steps back on account of the smell.  
I salute and trudge off.

Nestor puts the mask on. Grabs the controls. Envisions flying  
the plane. Kirby reaches the cockpit platform. Bends over.  
Lifts the mask off Nestor. Tears inch down Nestor's face.

NESTOR

I never saw Ritchie again.

Kirby extends a hand. Helps Nestor out of the cockpit seat.  
Nestor steadies himself on Kirby's arm.

NESTOR

He got shot down over Khe Sahn.  
Panicked in the cockpit. Couldn't  
fire a round, I heard.

Nestor slowly lumbers down the steps. Kirby stays put. Nestor  
turns to Kirby half way down.

NESTOR

He got blown to smithereens.

He focuses on Sybil.

NESTOR

It shoulda been me. But shouldas  
don't mean anything in the military.  
(to Kirby)  
Do they?

Nestor steps to the hangar floor.

NESTOR

I haven't stepped inside an airplane  
since, missy. Until now. And I never  
will again.

He walks towards the exit.

EXT. CARRIER -- DAY

Kirby, Nestor and Sybil stroll down the plank. Dr. Jones, the medics and half dozen MPs wait to greet them. A SARGEANT steps forward.

SARGEANT

Sir. Ma'am. The two of you...

KIRBY

Can it, Sargeant.

SARGEANT

Sir?

KIRBY

These people were my guests.

Nestor smiles, embraces Kirby.

NESTOR

Thanks for the memories.

He stands at attention, salutes. Kirby returns the salute.

EXT. MAIN GATE -- DAY

Nestor, Sybil and the guards stare at an empty space where the rented Buick used to be. Grasping her knitting bag, Sybil turns to the guards.

SYBIL

Did someone have the car towed?

No reply.

SYBIL

Anyone?

SECOND GUARD

I don't know.

NESTOR

Who was minding the fort?

The guards look at each other.

ARMED GUARD

I was here.

SYBIL

And?

ARMED GUARD

Your car was parked illegally.

SYBIL

You couldn't have moved it for us?  
The keys were in the ignition. My  
father was having an attack.

SECOND GUARD

He faked it.

NESTOR

You didn't know it at the time.

The second guard goes into the hut.

ARMED GUARD

I thought somebody did move it.

Second guard comes back.

SECOND GUARD

I called Sargeant Benson. Our people  
didn't tow it. Neither did the police.

ARMED GUARD

Maybe it was stolen. You did leave  
the keys in the car.

EXT. POST EXCHANGE -- DAY

Nestor on a bench, struggles with the garter stitch. Sybil  
hangs up her cell phone. Sighs. She sits next to Nestor.

SYBIL

I reported the car stolen.

NESTOR

So they just give us another one.

SYBIL

My purse was in the car. My money,  
credit cards and driver's license  
were in the purse.

NESTOR

So?

SYBIL

Rental companies tend to frown upon  
giving a car to someone without a  
license, credit card or money.  
Especially someone who left the keys  
in the car like an engraved invitation  
for grand theft auto.

NESTOR

But they have all your information.

SYBIL

I cancelled the cards, too.

Nestor sifts through his wallet. He pulls out a credit card.

NESTOR

I have this.

Sybil takes it.

SYBIL

This won't get us a car, but it will  
get us a bus ride home.

NESTOR

A train ride.

INT. TERMINAL -- DAY

Nestor drags Sybil inside.

SYBIL

You won't get on a plane. So why  
can't I swear off trains?

Nestor pushes Sybil.

NESTOR

Cause you have no good reason.

SYBIL

Sure I do. I just don't know what it  
is.

NESTOR

I'm buying us a couple of tickets.

SYBIL

You can't make me go.

Nestor glares at Sybil.

NESTOR

You have no money. No credit cards.  
And I don't see you begging for bus  
fare on the street corner. Of course,  
you could sell that necklace you  
stole from me. Or trade it for a bus  
ticket.

Sybil throws a cross look at Nestor.

SYBIL

The necklace was never yours.

NESTOR

Thief. You stole it from Hannie.

He pokes Sybil. She pokes back.

SYBIL  
Her dying declaration was I wear it.  
This necklace doesn't leave my neck.

She pulls the knitting bag to her neck protecting the ring from Nestor.

NESTOR  
Then, the train it is.

AT TICKET COUNTER

Nestor hands the agent his credit card.

NESTOR  
Two tickets to New York.

AGENT  
\$186, including the bus to Newport News.

Nestor watches Sybil massaging the necklace as if it were a talisman.

The agent returns and slides the card through the window.

AGENT  
This account has no funds, Mr. Toland.

EXT. TERMINAL -- DAY

Sybil digs through her knitting bag, and comes up with \$6, most of it in change.

SYBIL  
Empty your pockets.

Nestor sifts through his pockets and finds \$14.

SYBIL  
\$20 leaves us a little short.

Nestor's eyes open wide in revelation.

NESTOR  
I got it.

He sits on a nearby bench, takes off his left shoe. He pulls back the inside sole and retrieves two folded \$20s.

SYBIL  
Another trick of the trade?

NESTOR

For emergencies and stakeouts.  
Druggies do it all the time to hide  
their money and stash.

Sybil plucks the bills with a nothing-surprises-me-anymore  
cock of her head.

SYBIL

That should get us to Washington.

She notices the yarn.

SYBIL

Maybe I can sell some knitting. Make  
enough to get us back to New York.

NESTOR

That'll cost you a full day, at the  
very least, missy.

SYBIL

You haven't seen me in action.

NESTOR

Call your good-for-nothing brother.  
Have him wire us funds to a Western  
Union office close to the bus station  
in D.C.

INT. TERMINAL -- DAY

Sybil dials her cell.

SYBIL

Having fun frolicking in the north  
country, Bobby?

She rolls her eyes.

SYBIL

The point is, someone stole our rental  
car after Nestor faked a panic attack  
at the naval base, and...and it's  
too long a story to repeat.

Nestor hands Sybil a latte from Drippy Donuts.

SYBIL

Bottom line, brother dear, you need  
to wire us money to Washington today  
so we can get home tonight...There  
must be a dispatcher somewhere in  
Vermont...You want me to tell Sam  
about your indiscretions? Bobby!

Sybil slams the phone shut. She growls. Sips the latte.

SYBIL  
This shit is nasty.

NESTOR  
Spend three years in the Navy and 26  
as a cop, you get used to nasty.

SYBIL  
Spend seven years on "Restless Lives"  
and you expect the best.

Sybil tosses the cup in the trash.

NESTOR  
What's Bobby's problem?

SYBIL  
Where do you want me to begin?

NESTOR  
Begin with the indiscretions.

SYBIL  
After I call Fern.

Sybil dials. Gets voice mail.

SYBIL  
Fern. Call me soon as you get this.  
It's urgent.

She ends the call. She texts a message to Fern.

SYBIL  
I have one more contact.

She dials.

SYBIL  
Hiya, Rex...Where's Donny?

Sybil furrows her brow?

SYBIL  
The studio? It's Sunday...Hathway?  
You have to be kidding...If you hear  
from him, have him call ASAP.

She closes the phone.

SYBIL  
A Sunday taping. If that's supposed  
to make me nervous about my job, it  
worked.

LATER

Sybil knits. Nestor tries.

NESTOR

Get your mind off our troubles. Tell me about Robert's indiscretions.

SYBIL

He's had this on again, off again relationship for several years. A fellow named Sam. A few months ago, Robert met a young stud at the gym.

NESTOR

And he's cheating on Sam with this buck.

SYBIL

Fern caught the two of them in some smokey bar one night, and she holds it over his head anytime he steps out of line.

NESTOR

Good for Fern. Why doesn't Robert break up with Sam? Is that what you call it with two guys? Breaking up?

SYBIL

The terms are the same, Nestor.

NESTOR

Dad.

Sybil casts a dagger stare his way.

SYBIL

Sam helps support Robert. So he wants it both ways.

NESTOR

That's always been Robert's problem. Wanting it both ways. Unable to commit. That's one situation you don't face, missy.

INT. BUS -- DAY

Sybil knits a scarf. Nestor fingers his yarn. He stares out the window. Watches an Amtrak train go by.

NESTOR

When you were a young kid, you loved trains.

He glances at Sybil.

NESTOR

Begged me to take you down to Penn Station just to watch them roll in and out.

SYBIL

Nice try, Nestor.

NESTOR

I'm serious. And on days when I wasn't working, I'd buy us a couple of tickets to wherever.

Sybil stops knitting.

SYBIL

Just to ride the train?

Nestor nods.

SYBIL

You must have me confused with a daughter in a parallel universe.

She returns to her knitting.

NESTOR

One day, we'd go to Mahwah. Another, to Long Island. Or out to Brooklyn to visit Fern. And every once in a while, we'd be off on an adventure to Boston or Philly.

SYBIL

How old was I?

NESTOR

Five. Maybe six.

SYBIL

Why would you "shlep" a five year-old to Boston?

NESTOR

The rumble of the wheels mesmerized you. So did the world out those big windows.

SYBIL

Then why do I hate trains?

NESTOR

There was a problem once. On the train back from Plainfield. We got off at the station for some ice cream. Chocolate marshmallow. You couldn't get enough chocolate marshmallow.

SYBIL

Are you making this up as you go along?

Nestor shakes his head.

NESTOR

I bought you a cone, and we got back on the train. We're walking up the aisle and I felt these eyes on me. I told you I have a sixth sense?

SYBIL

Yeah, you mentioned it once or twice.

NESTOR

I turned. Butch Rollins had a gun pointed at me.

SYBIL

Butch Rollins, huh?

NESTOR

I arrested Rollins on a drug charge two years before. Got him in a sting operation. He walked on a technicality, but was pissed I turned out to be a cop.

SYBIL

So he vowed revenge?

NESTOR

No. But when he saw me, his emotions got the better of him. I tried to convince him to walk away. He wouldn't go for it.

Nestor takes a hit on his inhaler.

NESTOR

Rollins inched closer. The gun was steady in his hand, so I knew he wasn't hopped up on anything.

Passengers surrounding Nestor on the bus gawk, engrossed.

NESTOR

I pulled you behind me, out of the line of fire. Rollins said I couldn't protect you.

SYBIL

Wasn't there a cop on the train?

Nestor glares at her. She stares out the window.

NESTOR

The few people on the train got out of the car. I retreated a step, and as I did so, I reached to the small of my back for the .38 I kept hidden.

Sybil turns back to Nestor.

NESTOR

Rollins raised his gun, cocked the hammer. In one motion, I pushed you down to the ground, fell on top of you, and fired a bullet into Rollins' chest. He collapsed in a heap.

The passengers give Nestor a standing ovation.

SYBIL

Blood squirted all over. I screamed.

Nestor nods.

NESTOR

Your cone splattered underneath you, and ice cream smashed all over your favorite jacket. You refused to set foot on another train. Or ever eat ice cream. Or trust me.

Nestor and Sybil sit in silence.

NESTOR

Give me those needles again.

INT. CONTROL ROOM -- DAY

Overlooking the set, Donny turns on the mike.

DONNY

We need another take, ladies. Gretchen has to step more gingerly. She's still recovering from a broken leg.

Donny cues the sound man. He signals for action.

INT. RESTLESS LIVES SET -- DAY

Celeste turns towards Gretchen.

GRETCHEN

I did what I had to, Celeste. Tad would have killed me in a heartbeat once I mentioned the judge. It's his cousin, you know.

CELESTE

So you come off as a hero, instead,  
is that it?

GRETCHEN

I'm not looking for glory.

CELESTE

What happens to me now, Gretchen?

Gretchen steps back, tripping over her cast, and collapsing  
to the floor.

INT. CONTROL ROOM -- DAY

Donny turns to HATHWAY, the stuffed shirt head of daytime  
television.

DONNY

It's Sunday. What do you expect?

HATHWAY

I expect to do this till we get it  
right. And I expect Sybil back on  
New York soil by tomorrow, or both  
of you will be looking for jobs.

EXT. BUS STATION -- NIGHT

The cell phone beeps. Sybil has a message. She hits `listen.'

FERN (O.S.)

The nearest Western Union is 30 miles  
away and impossible to reach cause  
of a storm last night. The storm  
knocked out power to the hotel. We're  
leaving for home. The interstate's  
open. If you're still stranded,  
I'll wire money when I get to the  
city. Call me. This is Fern.

Sybil clicks delete.

SYBIL

There's a dose of happy news. Let me  
try Donny again.

She dials. No answer.

NESTOR

Maybe begging isn't such a bad idea.

Sybil spies a yarn shop across the street.

SYBIL

You beg. I have other plans.

INT. YARN SHOP -- NIGHT

Sybil approaches the counter where the OWNER completes a purchase for a YOUNG WOMAN. She takes out several headbands and two scarves.

SYBIL  
I was wondering if I could interest  
you in some of my wares here?

OWNER  
Not really.

YOUNG WOMAN  
May I?

Sybil hands a scarf to the woman.

YOUNG WOMAN  
How long did this take you?

SYBIL  
Two-three hours. I do headbands in  
less than 10 minutes.

The owner motions with her fingers to see a sample. Sybil lays a headband in her hand. The owner twists it one way then the other.

OWNER  
No way. I'm fast, and it takes me  
20 minutes.

SYBIL  
I guess I'm faster.

OWNER  
Prove it.

SYBIL  
I finish one in 10 minutes, you pay  
me \$20 for two headbands. I fail, I  
give you two for free.

Sybil takes out what little yarn she has left, threads it between the needles.

EIGHT MINUTES LATER

The headband flies off the needles onto the counter top. An unamused owner picks it up for inspection, compares it to the others. She sighs. Hands Sybil \$20.

SYBIL  
How about a couple skeins of yarn in  
exchange for a third headband?

YOUNG WOMAN  
How much for the scarf?

EXT. YARN SHOP -- NIGHT

Sybil shows Nestor the yarn and the money she picked up in the shop.

SYBIL  
And I have enough yarn to turn out half dozen headbands to sell.

INT. UNION STATION CONCOURSE -- NIGHT

Sybil sells a headband to an aging HIPPIE. She sells another to a TEENAGE GIRL.

ACROSS THE CONCOURSE

LORRAINE, 19, knits a scarf standing up. Boyfriend, TOMMY, 20, pitches her line of products like a carnival barker.

Decked out with spiked orange hair, identical earrings, and identical trench coats, the young couple shift attention to Sybil as she works customers. They're pissed.

INT. SEATING AREA -- NIGHT

Nestor knits. Sybil joins him with added funds.

Lorraine and Tommy approach, sour expressions on their faces.

TOMMY  
Never seen a grown man take up such a girly hobby, dude.

Nestor and Sybil exchange glances.

NESTOR  
Never seen anyone color their hair like a ripe cantalope, punk. Now beat it before missy here gets angry. She's got a mean knit one and a flashy purl two.

Sybil thrusts a needle in the young man's face. Lorraine pushes the needle away.

LORRAINE  
Mean enough to take me on for queen of the concourse?

SYBIL  
That a challenge?

Lorraine nods.

LORRAINE

I'll even let you call your shot.

SYBIL

What's at stake?

TOMMY

What do you got?

SYBIL

\$60.

Sybil tosses the money on the floor. Tommy fumbles in his pocket. Peels off \$60. Throws the bills on top of Sybil's.

NESTOR

You sure about this, missy? That's ticket money to New York.

SYBIL

I'm sure.  
(to Lorraine)  
Headband.

LORRAINE

We stop when the clock hits half past.

Sybil checks the clock on the wall.

SYBIL

You're on.

LATER

Lorraine finishes her first headband. Sybil is close behind.

TOMMY

Roll it out, Lor.

NESTOR

I need a cup of coffee.

Nestor vanishes.

LATER STILL

Lorraine nears the end of her second headband. A fumbling Sybil drops a stitch halfway through her second.

TOMMY

You got her ass fried.

Sybil glowers at Tommy.

SYBIL

You wanna keep your mitt shut?

STILL LATER

The clock reaches half past as Lorraine tops off her third, a half a headband ahead of Sybil.

Tommy grabs the pile of money.

LORRAINE  
Guess you shoulda backed off my  
challenge.

Tommy bends over.

TOMMY  
Yeah, missy.

Sybil parries with her needle.

SYBIL  
I have no qualms poking you in the  
eye. Now get lost.

Tommy waves the bills.

TOMMY  
I was gonna say we'd see you on the  
train, but I guess not.

He laughs. Sybil moans, her hands buried in her face.

Nestor returns, a cup of coffee in his hand. Sybil glances up. Nestor waves two train tickets in her face.

NESTOR  
I couldn't bear to watch, so I took  
up begging.

INT. TRAIN STATION -- NIGHT

Sybil pauses. Nestor starts down the steps to the tracks.

NESTOR  
Don't be a wuss.

Sybil holds her ground. Nestor plows ahead.

NESTOR  
We don't have time for dawdling,  
missy.

Nestor disappears from view.

SYBIL  
Nestor? DAD?!

INT. PLATFORM -- NIGHT

Nestor hops on the train. Taps the CONDUCTOR on the shoulder.

NESTOR

(huffing)

My daughter's coming. Hold off a few seconds.

Nestor takes a hit with the inhaler.

Sybil trips on the last step, loses her balance, but not the grip on her knitting bag. The whistle blows.

Nestor leans out the train.

NESTOR

You can do it, missy.

SYBIL

I hurt my damn ankle.

The whistle blows again. Perspiring, Sybil picks up speed despite her injured foot.

The conductor reaches out like a relay runner. He locks hands with Sybil as the train inches forward. He boosts her up and into Nestor's arms. But she loses the knitting bag.

SYBIL

Shit.

The conductor jumps to the platform, retrieves the knitting bag and vaults back on the train. He hands Sybil the bag.

SYBIL

Bless you, sir. I've lost everything else on this adventure. I don't want to lose my sanity, and my sanity is wrapped up in this knitting bag.

The conductor smiles and tips his cap. Nestor takes another hit on his inhaler.

SYBIL

Give me some of that.

INT. METROLINER -- NIGHT

Nestor knits. Sybil leans back, her face ashen. She glances around the car.

SYBIL

I think I see Butch Rollins sitting down the other end.

NESTOR

He's dead.

SYBIL

Then it's his ghost. And he's eating  
an ice cream cone. Chocolate  
marshmallow.

Sybil bends over.

SYBIL

I'm going to be sick.

NESTOR

Start knitting, missy. It'll calm  
your stomach.

Sybil gives Nestor a cross look. Her eyes jerk open.

SYBIL

You sold your wedding band.

NESTOR

I put it up as collateral. If I  
didn't, you wouldn't get back to New  
York tonight.

A cell phone rings. Sybil answers. She sits up.

FERN (O.S.)

Where are you two? This is Fern.

SYBIL

On the Metroliner. And I'm getting  
sicker by the mile.

Sybil flips the phone to Nestor. She bends over again.

NESTOR

Thanks for helping us out, "nudge."

FERN (O.S.)

Crank. Maybe if I had ice skates I  
could have reached Western Union. So  
how did you pull all this off?

NESTOR

Cajoling and begging.

Lorraine and Tommy stroll up the aisle.

NESTOR

I see a couple of old friends marching  
towards us. Pick us up at Penn Station  
around 11:30.

Nestor hangs up.

TOMMY

Well, if it ain't knit and purl. On the train, after all.

NESTOR

Don't you have a circus to join?

TOMMY

I think he's makin' fun of us, Lorraine.

LORRAINE

Let it be.  
(to Nestor)  
What's wrong with her?

NESTOR

I think she ate a bad muffin.

TOMMY

I think she's sick cause she ain't as good as she thinks she is.

Sybil belches.

NESTOR

Your honey just got lucky before.

Lorraine shakes a needle in Nestor's face.

LORRAINE

I've hustled knitting for years, bub. Luck doesn't enter the picture.

TOMMY

She'll take missy on any time, any place. She'll take you both on.

SYBIL

Make them go away, Nestor.

LORRAINE

Come on, Tommy.

TOMMY

Wait a minute.

He sits down across the aisle.

TOMMY

I like that necklace of yours. Probably worth a shit-load of money, too. You want to put it up against \$50 in a rematch?

Sybil glances up at Tommy. Belches again.

SYBIL

Are you nuts? The necklace isn't a bargaining chip. Go away. Everybody.

NESTOR

I still say this is a battle you can win.

TOMMY

Yeah. A chance at redemption.

LORRAINE

Forget it. The necklace means a lot to the woman. I don't want to take it away along with her dignity.

Sybil straightens up. Her eyes narrow. Her lips curl upwards.

SYBIL

Dignity? What does a freak like you know about dignity?

She whips out yarn and needle.

SYBIL

Headband in garter stitch again. First with four, wins. And it's \$60.

LORRAINE

Bring it on.

TOMMY

Wait.

Nestor, Sybil and Lorraine glare at Tommy.

TOMMY

Take off the necklace first. Put it on the seat behind us with the money.

MOMENTS LATER

Tommy drops an imaginary checkered flag.

TOMMY

Stitch away, ladies.

Sybil and Lorraine knit at warped speed.

EXT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

The whistle blows as the rail car rolls past a railroad crossing.

INT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

Lorraine nears the end of her first headband. Sybil lags behind.

A jolt on the tracks. Sybil grabs her stomach. She rebounds and picks up speed.

Lorraine binds off the first headband. Tommy grabs it as it slips off the needle. Lorraine casts on her second.

Sybil takes a deep breath, but maintains her pace. She completes her first, binds it off, lets it loose. Nestor picks it up.

Lorraine glides half way through her second headband.

Sybil freezes. She shakes her head, throws the knitting to Nestor, stands and hobbles off.

Nestor, Lorraine and Tommy watch her disappear down the aisle.

Lorraine smiles.

TOMMY

See what I mean.

NESTOR

Sybil didn't quit, she called a time out.

TOMMY

There's no time outs in this contest, dude. It ain't football.

NESTOR

She said she didn't feel good, punk.

TOMMY

Then she loses.

Nestor picks up the needles and yarn.

NESTOR

I'll take her place. You said she'd take on both of us.

Tommy snorts.

LORRAINE

Can it, Tommy. The old man doesn't stand a chance against me. You pick up where she left off.

Lorraine completes the second headband. Nestor drops a stitch before finding his way. But he gains ground much to Lorraine and Tommy's surprise.

INT. TRAIN LAVATORY -- NIGHT

Sybil on her knees, her head over the toilet. She vomits. A pounding on the door outside.

SYBIL

(whines)

Go away.

INT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

Lorraine is on her third headband.

Nestor binds off his second, casts on the third. His fingers pick up speed.

Lorraine watches out of the corner of her eye. The break in concentration lets Nestor take the lead.

He races towards the end of the third headband seconds ahead of Lorraine. He binds off the yarn. The headband falls. He casts on a fourth as Lorraine finishes her third.

TOMMY

You can still catch him, Lorraine.

LORRAINE

Shut the fuck up, Tommy.

INT. TRAIN LAVATORY -- NIGHT

Using the sink as leverage, Sybil rises to her knees.

INT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

A hand reaches for the emergency brake on the wall.

INT. TRAIN LAVATORY -- NIGHT

A screech, and the train grinds to a jolting stop. Sybil is thrown against the wall. She grabs her stomach, falls back to her knees and barfs again.

INT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

Confusion abounds. Screaming passengers, many on the floor. Nestor groans. He pushes yarn and headbands away, climbs to the seat, brushes himself off. He rubs his aching side.

Nestor glances around. Lorraine and Tommy are nowhere to be found. He looks on the seat behind him. No sign of the necklace or the money.

He combs under the seats, on the floor. Still no evidence.

EXT. TRAIN LAVATORY -- NIGHT

The door opens. Sybil wobbles out, her face shades of white and pale green. She has a wet paper towel propped against her head.

INT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

Sybil teeters in, forehead drenched with sweat. She stares at Nestor on his knees.

SYBIL

Where's the inhaler? Where's the  
fucking inhaler, Nestor? I need a  
hit.

Nestor reaches into his pocket. Slaps it in Sybil's hand. She takes a puff. She glances around.

SYBIL

Where's the Tropicana twins?

NESTOR

Gone.

SYBIL

And the necklace?

NESTOR

Gone. The money, too.

SYBIL

I go the bathroom for five minutes  
and you let all hell break loose.  
And you let that punk steal Mom's  
necklace.

NESTOR

I didn't let the punk do anything.  
I didn't put his hand on the emergency  
brake. What I did do is pick up the  
slack for you. I had that bitch beat.

Sybil takes another puff. Her eyes well up. She whimpers. The whimpers turn to sobs. She plunks down in the seat.

SYBIL

You damn well better use that sixth  
sense you keep bragging about to  
find those skinny pricks and get my  
necklace back!

Sybil bursts into tears.

INT. SECOND TRAIN CAR -- NIGHT

Nestor eases up the aisle, searching for any sign of Lorraine and Tommy. He taps a knitting needle against his leg.

NESTOR

Anybody see a couple of young scrubs  
with orange spikey hair? Ugly as sin  
scrubs?

Some heads shake no. Most ignore the question. Nestor moves on.

INT. THIRD TRAIN CAR -- NIGHT

Nestor enters. Same steady pace. Same scanning eyes.

NESTOR

Anybody see a couple of young scrubs  
with orange spikey hair? Ugly as sin  
scrubs?

A YOUNG ADOLESCENT points up ahead. The door opens. Nestor catches a glimpse of Lorraine exiting the car. He breaks into a trot.

EXT. TRAIN CAR -- NIGHT

Nestor enters the platform. Lorraine tries desperately to pry open the door to the next car. Nestor picks her up by the neck. Thrusts the needle in front of her face.

NESTOR

The necklace? Where is it?

LORRAINE

(gagging)  
I don't know.

Nestor squeezes her neck harder. She whimpers.

LORRAINE

Tommy ran off with it.

NESTOR

And the money?

LORRAINE

Tommy.

NESTOR

Which way did he go?

Lorraine nods her head towards the club car. Nestor lets her down. He puts the needle in his back pocket. He drags her through the door.

INT. CLUB CAR -- NIGHT

STAFFERS and PASSENGERS turn to Nestor yanking Lorraine into the car. She resists, tries to grab the needle from Nestor's back pocket, but fails.

NESTOR

I'm Nestor Toland, an Amtrak detective. This woman's boyfriend is wanted in connection with a series of robberies on the Metroliner.

LORRAINE

That's bullshit.  
(to crowd)  
He's lying. He's a sore loser.

Nestor squeezes her arm tight. Muffles her mouth.

NESTOR

We have reason to believe he came this way. Spiky hair. Earrings. Looks kinda like Lorraine here.

LORRAINE

Mmmmmm.

WAITER

You got a badge proves who you are.

NESTOR

In my pants pocket. You wanna reach in there and get it. I let go of this little lady and she's gone.

The WAITER pauses, thinks about it.

WAITER

Maybe some other time.

A LITTLE BOY pulls on Nestor's pant leg. He points towards the rest room. Nestor smiles.

NESTOR

Thanks, kid. You just made my day.

He jerks Lorraine to the bathroom door. He pounds on the door with his elbow. Lorraine squirms.

NESTOR

Open up, Tommy. You have nowhere to run.

No reply. He pounds again. Still no reply. Nestor looks over at the little boy. The kid nods.

Still gripping Lorraine, Nestor kicks in the door. He winces from the pain in his side.

The door flies inwards, knocking Tommy to the ground. Nestor throws Lorraine on top of him.

Nestor whips out the needle, pulls Tommy up by his spiked hair.

Tommy's mouth is closed tight. Nestor bangs Tommy's head against the wall. He puts the needle to the guy's throat with his free hand.

NESTOR

The necklace, punk?

No answer. Lorraine tries to crawl out.

LORRAINE

Somebody help us.

Nestor steps on her, pushing her back to the floor. A crowd has gathered outside the bathroom door.

Nestor eases the tip of the needle into Tommy's neck, just piercing the skin.

NESTOR

Cough up the necklace.

Tommy slowly parts his lips, lowers his head. The necklace and ring spill out of his mouth into Nestor's left hand. Nestor cringes at the saliva on the necklace.

NESTOR

You got the money in there too?

TOMMY

You don't get the money. Your bitch of a daughter lost. You shouldn't even get the necklace.

NESTOR

I took the bitch's place. I won. Where's the money?

Nestor draws blood with the needle. Tommy cries. Lorraine cries.

TOMMY

In my pants pocket.

Nestor glances over his shoulder, sees the little boy, standing in front of his MOTHER.

NESTOR

Kid. You want to do me a favor. Reach into this punk's pants.

Mom clutches her son.

MOTHER

He'll do no such thing.

NESTOR

There's \$60 in there. And you earn yourself a 10 percent finder's fee.

LITTLE BOY

20 percent.

The mother does a double take.

NESTOR

20 percent it is.

The little boy steps on top of Lorraine. She yowls.

He reaches into a squirming Tommy's pants, and pulls out a Pez dispenser, a set of keys and the wad of money. The boy peels off \$12, and hands the rest to Nestor.

Nestor lets Tommy down, but keeps the needle close by. He pockets the money.

A lurch. The train starts moving again. Nestor falls against Tommy, stabbing him in the arm.

He steps off of Lorraine and out of the bathroom to find a cross-armed INSPECTOR.

INSPECTOR

What's going on here? Who broke this door?

LORRAINE

He did.

TOMMY

(in unison)

He did.

NESTOR

The male pulled the emergency brake so he could rip off passengers in the confusion.

TOMMY

You got no proof of that.

The little boy pulls the inspector's pants leg.

## LITTLE BOY

That man with the orange hair had a necklace in his mouth. He spit it into the policeman's hand.

Nestor opens his hand to reveal the necklace.

## INSPECTOR

Policeman?

INT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

Sybil sits curled up, her head resting against the window as the train flies by in the night. Her eyes are red from crying. Her nose runs.

Nestor puts a hand on Sybil's shoulder. She pushes it off.

He thrusts his right fist in front of Sybil's face. He opens his fist to reveal the necklace. Sybil's gaze moves towards the open hand.

A smile radiates across Sybil's face. She straightens up. Plucks the necklace. Hugs it to her bosom, massaging the ring.

Nestor grins.

## SYBIL

Thank you, Mom.

Nestor's grin turns sour. Sybil takes Nestor's hand in hers.

## SYBIL

You, too. Dad.

Sybil wipes her eyes. Puts the necklace on.

EXT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

The Metroliner approaches New York.

INT. METROLINER -- NIGHT

In unison, Sybil and Nestor finish their respective stitches. They put their knitting away. Sybil stares out the window at the skyline.

## SYBIL

I'm going to kiss the dirty ground of Manhattan when I get off this train.

Sybil turns back to Nestor.

## SYBIL

You know I have a spare bedroom.

NESTOR  
You suggesting I stiff Fern for you?

SYBIL  
Might be something to consider.

NESTOR  
Might be, given the shit Fern dishes out on a daily basis.

Nestor puts his hand on Sybil's.

NESTOR  
But you already got a teenager to contend with. The last thing you need right now is a cantankerous old man living under your roof. Especially at your age.

Sybil does a slow burn.

NESTOR  
I mean that in a good way. You've put one bad relationship behind you, and hopefully, have a good one ahead.

SYBIL  
Please. The guys aren't beating down my door.

NESTOR  
When they do, you need your privacy. So thanks for the offer, but I'll stick with Fern. Maybe I'll be the "nudge" this time.

The train screeches to a stop. Sybil removes the necklace. She caresses the ring. Takes it off the necklace. Places it in Nestor's hand.

NESTOR  
What's this about?

SYBIL  
You pawned your ring for me. You deserve it. I think Mom would approve.

Nestor wipes a small tear from his eye.

NESTOR  
I guess I can borrow it for a little while. Until I reclaim my ring.

INT. PENN STATION -- NIGHT

Fern and Robert wait at the top of the steps. Tony paces as passengers ascend the escalator from the tracks.

ROBERT  
I can't believe Sybil took a train.  
It's so...un-Sybil like.

FERN  
Some of us have the capacity for  
change, Bobby.

ROBERT  
I change. Do I change, Tony?

TONY  
Keep me out of this.

Robert sneers at Tony.

ROBERT  
So where the hell are they?

FERN  
You have the patience of a child.

Robert sneers at his aunt.

FERN  
(to Tony)  
You, too, Tony.

TONY  
I haven't spoken to this guy in like  
10 years. I'm entitled to be nervous.

Nestor and Sybil emerge from below, arm in arm. Both wear  
huge grins.

A smiling, but confused Fern kisses her brother and her niece.  
Robert blinks his eyes, confused.

Tony keeps pacing, but zeros in on his grandfather.

SYBIL  
Robert, I want you to meet your  
father.  
(to Nestor)  
Father, meet your son.

An awkward pause is followed by a tentative hand shake.

SYBIL  
And one other introduction.

Sybil limps towards Tony.

TONY  
What's with your foot, Mom?

SYBIL  
Train accident.

Fern, Robert and Tony focus on Sybil.

SYBIL  
It'll heal.

Sybil hugs Tony. She looks at her father.

SYBIL  
Tony's put on some height since the  
two of you last spoke.

Nestor and Tony face each other. Size each other up.

Nestor beckons him to come closer. Tony wavers. Nestor beckons  
with a larger gesture.

Tony wipes the corner of his eyes, takes that first step,  
then the second.

Nestor, Tony embrace. Nestor steps back. Ruffles Tony's hair.

INT. FERN'S CAR

Nestor sits in the front seat with Fern. Robert and Sybil  
share the back with Tony. Robert leans over to Sybil.

ROBERT  
(mouthing words)  
What's with you?

SYBIL  
Did you say something, little brother?

ROBERT  
(still mouthing)  
You know what I mean.

Nestor takes needles in hand and knits away on his scarf.

Fern and Robert both do a double take.

SYBIL  
I convinced Dad he should up take up  
a new hobby. You should try it,  
Robert. It'll do wonders for your  
disposition.

Nestor turns to the back passengers and smiles, never missing  
a stitch. Sybil grins. Dials a number on her cell.

SYBIL  
I was on the Amtrak...That's right...

Sybil giggles.

SYBIL

Trust me, I was in no condition to answer the cell...Just wanted to let you know I'm on 6th Avenue...I thought you'd be thrilled...Wouldn't miss it for the world, darling.

She hangs up the phone. Stares out at the concrete canyons of New York.

INT. RESTLESS LIVES SET -- DAY

Gretchen, her leg still in a cast, knits in the easy chair. The television plays a soap opera in the background, but neither she nor Hal pay it any mind.

DAD (O.S.)

Gretchen.

GRETCHEN

There he goes again, Hal.

Hal puts down the paper.

HAL

Your mother's wish is our command.

DAD (O.S.)

I can't get the damn television to work again.

GRETCHEN

Did you use the buttons on the TV?

DAD (O.S.)

I didn't touch the TV.

GRETCHEN

Then you must have used the green remote instead of the silver one.

DAD (O.S.)

You have so many. Why can't there be one remote control?

Gretchen fumes.

GRETCHEN

It's what technology is all about.

DAD (O.S.)

In my day, we had six channels. No VCRs. No DVDs.

GRETCHEN

That's what you get for outliving your day.

Hal smiles. He goes back to his newspaper.

INT. CONTROL ROOM -- DAY

Sybil motions a cue to the sound man. Mrs. Beans sits next to her, ecstatic she's inside the studio where her blessed show is unfolding. Sybil gives Mrs. Beans a thumbs up.

INT. RESTLESS LIVES SET -- DAY

A camera pulls back to reveal Gretchen and Hal.

DAD (O.S.)

Get back here and give me a hand.  
The damn show will be over before I  
figure this thing out.

GRETCHEN

I still have a fractured leg, Dad.  
I'm supposed to keep my feet up.

DAD (O.S.)

Oh. But you're not too crippled to  
stab your uncle's girlfriend.

Gretchen seethes. She looks skyward.

GRETCHEN

See what groveling did for me, Mother?

She throws her knitting down, limps to her feet.

The credits scroll down the screen. After the cast rolls by, the name of Sybil Nicolella, Director, makes its appearance.

FADE OUT

THE END