FUTURE COPZ

Written by

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The following text fades in, one line at a time, over black:

NEARLY THE FUTURE. . .

ALL COPS ARE WOMEN. . .

DON'T KNOW WHY. . .

DON'T CARE. . .

THEY'RE BETTER AT IT.

MOSTLY.

FLARE TO WHITE

FADE IN FROM WHITE:

EXT. 6TH PRECINCT - DAY

It is a bustling, run-down place. There is a single PROTESTOR near the doors with a PLACARD that reads, "Those who adhere to the mere letter of the law are doomed to repeat it."

INT. 6TH PRECINCT - BULLPEN - DAY

CAPTION: "DAY 1."

JENNY, 30, is a capable officer but a total adolescent. She's filming a sleepy fellow detective, KNIEFL, with her PHONE CAMERA.

GINA (a detective, 35) sits jamming out at her desk while wearing ridiculously huge "Beats"-esque HEADPHONES. She's destroying the lyrics to TV On The Radio's "Family Tree."

(*Please note* - this specific song - usually something considered a mistake - was chosen as an Edgar Wright homage. Every single thing she says here happens later a la "Shaun of the Dead". Could just as easily make up my own prophetic song but this one is perfect due to the 'family' theme that runs deeply throughout this story. Also, the song itself goes totally unheard and these aren't even the lyrics, so there's that.)

INSERT - SMART PHONE VIDEO

We see a semi-somnolent KNIEFL (pronounced 'ken-ife-el'), a 50ish, puddinheaded but genial detective, while GINA is seen singly loudly in the screen's background.

GINA Butter my love. . .

BACK TO BULLPEN

GINA (CONT'D) ... Walk up to your widow... Her date's full of pills, oh...

RABE (early forties, a needy, sadsack sidekick) is giddy, trying on a number of douche tag GOATEES.

MORADO (30ish, beautiful, deeply intense and short-tempered but 'good people') is already wearing a tag and clearly pleased with her own hilarity.

There's a German PHRASEBOOK in Rabe's chest pocket. It's title translates "German For Hairy Bachelors".

JENNY (hype-man style) They said it couldn't be done. . .

Kniefl's head slips down out of sight.

Gina notices the phone and mistakenly assumes Jenny is filming her, mocking her somehow.

JENNY (CONT'D) They said it shouldn't ever, ever be done. . .

Gina makes her famous three middle fingers obscene gesture. She presses her right hand over her left hand and folds them together, then she sticks up the middle and ring finger of her left hand and the middle finger of her right, folding her right pinky and right ring finger on each side of the left middle finger, so it looks like she has three middle fingers. (Try it! Looks pretty cool.)

INSERT - SMART PHONE VIDEO

Kniefl's head, in profile, rises again, blocking out Gina's emphatic gesture. Kniefl seems to be so very, very close to sleep and yet struggling to hold her SHOE close to her nose.

BACK TO THE BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Jenny's giddy, watching this slipper slipping. She even does a happy little 'I gotta pee' sort of dance.

JENNY (hype-man style) OSHA sent many the brochure saying it probably couldn't be done. . .

Kniefl's nodding head gets closer to the shoe. The intense odor snaps her head back but she starts nodding into it again, getting sleepier and sleepeepier. Ever closer until -

Stank. Whip-back reaction. Nodding asleep, yet again.

JENNY (CONT'D) But here today, in this very place, in this exquisitely bestowed Moment, a gal's flat feet will knock her out cold. . .flat. Knock her out...

And Kniefl goes down.

Jenny means to take a picture but she's laughing so hard she accidentally takes a PICTURE of Gina instead.

Jenny looks at the picture she's just taken for a long beat, gobsmacked.

She looks up and neither Gina or the faceless man, BILL (midtwenties, shy-looking but very fit) have moved, though people stream around them.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Huh.

Jenny looks up at the pair and down to the phone several times very quickly. Gina hasn't even blinked.

Rest of the office starts to notice, ladies first.

We see Kniefl's rising, shaking shoe.

Inside the shoe we can clearly see a squished GRAPE that has been there a disquieting while.

Kniefl's hand comes up, peels the grape off and disappears with it.

In the background, we can see Gina mouth "enchanté".

He-

A CHEWING sound drowns out the rest.

KNIEFL (V.O.) I win, Stroheim! You can't make wine one at a time.

Jenny gives her a look and then coolly vomits in a GARBAGE CAN.

INT. - 6TH PRECINCT - GINA'S DESK - DAY

CAPTION reads "Day 3."

The faceless lover, BILL, is now in profile on the other side of GINA's DESK, out of the way, talking intently but comfortably.

He is holding her hand lightly, tracing lines absently with his finger while he talks.

Irony is GINA is being industrious, flying through her work with her one free hand. The PILE in her out box is ridiculous.

CONROY (50s, African-American, highly capable and invariably oververbose and monotone) is impressed and amused by this from behind her very, very tidy desk.

JENNY is trying to look happy, but not very hard.

Bill is leaning in a little and smiling warmly.

BILL We're just different is all, my wicked kitten. You believe cynicism is a valid moral and ethical response to a hollow, duplicitous world, a valueless and yet cruelly calculated, hypocritical existence that seeks only to devour and annihilate, hmmmmm?

GINA

Ah-yup.

BILL And I wouldn't have it any other way. But I disagree. The times are never so bad a good person can't live in them. . . Gumdrop? GINA takes the red GUMDROP without looking at it, licks it and sticks it in the middle of her forehead.

BILL loses it for a second, try as he might to finish his point.

Gina seems to grow taller at the sound of his laugh. The gumdrop stays there through rest of scene.

BILL (CONT'D) And yet somehow I find myself transported by how lovely and free you are. If I had one wish in the world it'd be for you to find moonlight on paper and for us to sing a thousand songs in our gentle, mutual sleep.

GINA sighs happily.

GINA Yeah, I got that. Your tie gave it away.

BILL (in a Scooby voice) Wazitmytie?

Gina pulls her hand away unconsciously.

GINA Nothing. That was. . . Sorry.

For a moment Bill pauses, annoyed. He starts to say something but notices her alarmed posture and relaxes. He makes no effort to remove the tie, though.

He takes her hand back with some authority.

BILL Good to know.

MORADO enters, walking past the lovers, roughly pulling along a PERP (early 20s, jumpy and androgynous).

Morado's face clearly indicates that the Perp has been talking fast for a very, very, very long time. This monologue is delivered crazy fast and in one breath.

(Note - yes this monologue is too long but it meant to be spoken as fast as possible in one breath, less than thirty seconds. It actually used to be longer but an actor friend of mine tried it and this was about as far as he could get. Just try reading it out loud as fast as you can before you judge too harshly. It's not meant to be understood on first viewing.)

PERP

. . . just don't understand how one can expect to be a fisher of men if you don't first master bait. Seems a no-brainer to me. Okay, maybe a liiiitle brainer. But I digress. As I think I may have mentioned before, father was blinded by his appetites and obsession with status among people he loathed while mother could do no wrong and made suuuure that was understood, in the politest way possible, of course. Not a hair out of place. Ever. Onward and upward to the PC Splendid City! Everything, everything, everything either selfserving or a Shangri-La charade. Us kids never stood a chance, not really. Afterthoughts, honestly, capital 'A' afterthoughts. Appearances and expectations. Dominate and blame. Smother and withhold. My childhood consisted of iron law and chit-chat, pretty much. Truth is, I've never been anything but alone. Never belonged anywhere I was. Believe it or not, we were actually deeply, desperately grateful at the time, for what we were told over and over and over was love. Truth is, I've never been anything but alone. When you get squeezed by a dagger's embrace your whole life you either become very gentle or you turn into a monster. Henry Rollins said that, I think. It is up to me to decide, I know, but the stars will ever seem hollow no matter what I do and I will never, never, never lose the lice behind my eyes. How am I supposed to live like that? How am I supposed to. . .

Morado slams the PERP into the CHAIR so hard it gets people's attention. The Perp takes a huge breath both from need and the impact.

She walks away, shaking the stress out of her shoulders.

In the background we can see RABE staring googly-eyed at the Perp, amazed.

Her douche tag drops off. She doesn't notice.

MORADO Damn. That got Off-Broadway in a hurry.

Morado, getting COFFEE, walks past the lovers again and notices the heat this time.

She starts to stop but Gina glares real heat at her so she keeps going.

Around the corner DAY (late 20s, Jenny's girlfriend. If she were any more uptight she'd be inside out.) and BALDWIN (mid 30s African-American who is built like a Mack truck but is the office's overwhelmed paperwork gal) are 'surveilling' the two.

Morado's first reaction is a snort of contempt but she quickly joins along as they together watch Bill hand his PHONE to Gina and start to sexily take off that TIE.

CONROY watches him with great interest from behind a file she is peeking over.

Bill drops the tie in the garbage and unbuttons three buttons. He walks to the hallway, passing the cornered and embarrassed trio. He is surprised by this but keeps going to the end.

He stands there for a moment, still and very cool.

The Perp scooches their chair and peeks out from behind Morado, Baldwin and Day, doubled-over with stretching themselves out for the best look. The four of them form a fan shape to the eye.

The Perp says something to Rabe, who reaches into her desk and pulls out one of those BIG-ASS MAG LIGHTS.

She uses it to a spotlight Bill.

The Perp reaches into their back pocket and sorta backhands (because of the cuffs) a selection of COLORED GELS to her. (Off-Broadway!)

Or maybe the Perp, already bent so far over, gestures to Rabe who pulls a literal rainbow out of the Perp's butt. (Actually a satchel or vest pocket or something. Trust Rabe to find a way to make it weird.) Day turns off the hallway lights.

BILL Wow, uh, okay. Maestra, as you wish. . .

We see Gina's finger push the 'play' button.

It's a bluesy stomp with real swagger and Bill slo-mo works it.

Bill struts down the hall. Nothing too showy. Simple but supremely confident and smoking bedroom eyes as he passes Morado and Day with a hint of a kind smile.

Morado drops her COFFEE CUP without noticing.

Bill reaches the center of the bullpen and stops in threequarter profile to Gina (highlighting his nice butt), turns toward her and extends a hand.

Conroy is watching intently from her doorway.

Morado, in a trance, takes a step forward toward Bill.

Without taking his eyes off Gina, he sweeps his hand to Morado's direction and makes a vague two-finger clitoral stimulation gesture (the men don't catch it) that quickly evolves with an elegant turn into a dismissive wave, a flicking of the wrist.

Day is electric with embarrassment by the public gesture but you can see Morado thinking about it and deciding it's a pretty good idea.

She turns and heads toward the bathroom.

Jenny enters, doing a double-take at the unseen look on Morado's face as she passes her and then an even bigger double-take (a double-double-take?) when she sees Bill and Gina hovering inches apart and the whole office watching.

'My nine Heavens' is a Dante reference. He's calling her a miracle.

BILL (CONT'D) My nine Heavens. Mi amor.

After a three-beat Gina leaps high into the air toward his embrace but just before the sweet impact we

CUT TO:

INT. - STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

KNIEFL and STROHEIM (50ish, fat, stupid and lazy. Basically she's a well-meaning and enthusiastic, but painfully slow, ten year old.) are investigating a lover's suicide pact, or half of one half of one, anyway. Unseen but very gruesome.

We see TECHS walk past carrying bags of what are clearly BODY PARTS.

There's a blood-spattered POSTER of a goofy rabbit character.

Kniefl is a little shaken and somber. She's actually trying, scribbling in her NOTEBOOK. The BLOOD is mostly unseen but they both keep slipping.

The CSU techs around clearly hate them violently but the pair are oblivious.

A TECH appears next to her.

TECH Nothing indicative of a lover's suicide pact on either laptop. . . sir.

KNIEFL You mean besides the twelve texts to her mother telling her all about it?

Tech is a little taken aback by the appearance of acumen. Gives Kniefl a 'who are you and what have you done with my imbecile?' look.

TECH Yes, ma'am.

KNIEFL

Before he left, my pops used to say that you are what you love, not what loves you back. That's why I've always considered myself a cop first and foremost, ya know? Wonder what he'd have to say to her.

Kniefl looks down at a couple of different spots.

STROHEIM approaches from the kitchen area carrying a BRICK OF CHEESE.

STROHEIM I just don't get it. So much to live for. And she wanted to die for some guy I'm guessing was just not that into her? (MORE) STROHEIM (CONT'D) Did you poke the fridge yet? There's three pounds of this fancy cheese in there, smells like dead feet and cabbage with just the vaguest tang of foot powder. (deep whiff) Gold Bond, I believe. Awesome. I just don't get it.

KNIEFL

Sorta says it all, doesn't it?

STROHEIM

What's left, anyway.

She says because she's watching another piece of victim walk past and begins stuffing the cheese into her pants while it's happening.

The techs are flabbergasted.

KNIEFL So where is this dang note? Maybe they mailed it.

STROHEIM Okay, I'll reach out to the Dead Letter Office.

Stroheim exits and Kniefl doesn't react.

The techs are all now completely side-swiped. Stunned. Staring at the sea, I mean the door.

So much so they don't notice when a guy named FANTA with BLOOD SPLATTER all over a WHITE TEE climbs in thru the open WINDOW, removing a JACKET as he enters.

He freezes as he sees the scene and does a comedic rewind back out the window. No one notices at all.

INT. 6TH PRECINCT - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

CAPTION reads 'Day 9'.

JENNY, RABE, MORADO, DAY, BALDWIN and CONROY are gathered in the briefing room and GINA is at the podium.

She has written "Is he just a Bill? An ordinary Bill?" on the WIPEBOARD and taped A LARGE PICTURE of him naked and juggling rubber duckies to the board.

A POST-IT NOTE smiley-face with an exaggerated nose in Day's handwriting covers his junk. It seems pleasantly surprised.

GINA

I can't even begin to describe this feeling but it's totally like my head's full of spinning knives that have been coated in magic electric pixie dust. . . annnd massive orgasms. Mass-ive. My whole body is like boiling thunder.

JENNY

You've been Gina tased. . . and had great sex.

GINA Whozzitwhatnownana?

DAY It's what we call it.

Everyone nods in unison and says together -

ALL

Gina tased.

JENNY When you close your eyes, is he cackling, actually cackling?

GINA

First off, my sweet-ass life just got so much more sweet-ass and I thank you all for that and, B, 'close enough' is the answer to your freaky-dink question.

ALL Gina tased.

DAY

(speeding up as she talks) Do you find yourself fearing your conceits, examining your doubts, doubting your intentions and wondering the whole time if you are only thinking what you are thinking because he wants you to think what you think about thinking?

ALL Gina tased. RABE You've actually tased me. Twice.

ALL (pause and a collective shrug) Gina tased.

GINA And this. . . This is what it's like? How am I not running Broadway right now?

MORADO Don't get cocky. Honestly, we mostly let you get away with it cuz you never. . .well, hardly ever, use it. . . We all sorta talked about it once.

INT. 6TH PRECINCT - DAY - FLASHBACK

The gang is in its very first days, minus Conroy and Jenny. DAY, MORADO, BALDWIN and RABE (who has a hideous perm). They are all huddled together, just glaring at GINA.

Gina is aware of it while she is talking lightly to JENNY (who is oblivious) but she does not care.

It is STROHEIM, walking by and carrying a GREASY BURGER, who speaks.

STROHEIM

Have you guys noticed the stuff she gives us crap about we deserve to have crap given to us about? Mostly.

With that she takes a way-too-big bite and drips HOT CHEESE all over herself.

Thing is, her back is to her so Gina shouldn't notice, but she does.

GINA (O.S.) Get a room, Stroheim.

This freaks the gang a bit.

STROHEIM (with overfull mouth) See? I'm so a glutton. She gets me. She just doesn't care. (MORE) STROHEIM (CONT'D)

And that's awfully comforting, if you think before you drink. At least she's paying attention.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. SQUAD BRIEFING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Morado is finishing her speech.

MORADO

. . . You give us we usually deserve to take crap for. And I've never, not even once, seen you turn it on anyone in genuine soul pain. That counts for a lot in my book.

Murmurs of assent. Here Day tries to hug Gina and it is the most awkward thing ever. They sorta of end up rubbing their foreheads together.

BALDWIN

Dang.

CONROY

Agreed.

RABE It's true. A lot of this stuff we bring on ourselves.

STROHEIM sticks her head in as she and KNIEFL are exiting.

STROHEIM

And me and the skull dog, we're grateful too. I don't spend near as many nights trapped inside shipping containers thanks to your relentless mockery. So thank you. I have some free cheese, if you'd like a nibble. You WILL love it.

GINA

I do love me some free cheese buuuut I'm guessing the odds are middlin' to certain it's been down your pants, so I'm gonna take a pass. Big pass. A whatchamacallit, a Hail Marty.

STROHEIM

Roger that.

Stroheim and Kniefl exit.

Rabe's got nothing but she's aching to pitch in so during a lull she blurts the first thing that comes to mind.

RABE You might be interested to learn my earliest memory is of trying to strangle myself. With some intent, I might add.

GINA So you've said, Rabe.

RABE

Sorry.

CONROY You should call him. Surprise him with a joke or a small, thoughtful sizzle.

GINA

Rabe?

There's a half-second zing of 'maaaybe?' happiness in Rabe's eyes.

CONROY Don't be absurd. You have too much to live for. I'm referring to Bill.

No happiness.

GINA Why? I'm seeing him tonight.

CONROY

Gina, when most people "keep it real" it is just a weak-minded excuse to be a colossal bitch. But not you. You are, in your heart, one of the most decent people I've ever met, which is probably a statement on the nature of our existence but I am not a philosopher or poet and I am aware of said fact.

GINA Still. . . I don't think Cosmo would approve.

CONROY Will he be expecting it?

GINA

No.

Conroy simply arches an eyebrow that tells her this makes it a very hot move.

CONROY

Boo-ya.

Conroy licks her upper lip in the most ridiculously sexy way possible and Gina makes an 'eek' face.

EXT. -ROOFTOP - DAY

CAPTION reads "Day 11."

KNIEFL and STROHEIM on the building roof of their crime scene, searching for the murder weapon. A BLOODY AXE handle is clearly visible behind them.

(A little plot hole-filling backstory - this axe had been stashed in the basement until that morning when it was found by someone hiding their own stuff. They moved it.)

> STROHEIM I think this is the best job in the world. Look at what I found!

Stroheim picks up a DEFLATED SEX-DOLL CENTIPEDE like it was a prize. She can't seem to find the end of it, like pervy Christmas lights.

Kniefl is unusually somber and Stroheim is finally catching on.

STROHEIM (CONT'D) You really think he'd be stupid enough to leave the murder weapon here?

KNIEFL I think we only catch stupid and/or slow criminals.

STROHEIM Well that works out pretty well for us then. And/or strikes again. Stroheim has found the axe. She goes to hold it up over her head, starting to shout "Wolver-" but it slips out of her hand and goes over the side of the roof. INT. - 6TH PRECINCT - CONROY'S OFFICE - END OF SHIFT People are filtering out behind them. CONROY and GINA are in her office, talking casually. Gina is smiling and teary-eyed. CONROY (trying a terrible Southern accent) Why Ms. Gina, I do believe you have the 'vapors' although now that I'm saying it I realize I'm not precisely sure what that means. Woozy? Flushed? The literature is unclear. GINA Probs not the best word choice these days. CONROY Somehow un-PC? GINA (pause) Sure. CONROY Scary, isn't it? GINA I wouldn't say 'scary.' 'Tacky,' may. . . CONROY You know what I mean. GINA (quiet) Yeah. JENNY appears, doing a Kramer slide in the doorway. JENNY You mean the world, sir. CONROY Not now, Berger.

JENNY Or ever, captain. Gina, a bunch of us are headed over to the Deadwood if you want to re-hash for the thousandth time the enigma wrapped in a mystery inside the twisty riddle baloney sandwich that is Bill Bath. News alert! He's just a tech dude who reads a lot. It ain't that complicated.

JENNY exits like a highly dramatic five-year-old.

CONROY

Subtle.

GINA You have no idea.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. 6TH PRECINCT - BULLPEN - EARLIER IN DAY

BILL and GINA in CLOSE-UP. He is talking softly.

BILL They say the brain is the most important sex organ.

KNIEFL and STROHEIM overhear this and can't help but rub each others heads and laugh.

Without breaking eye contact Gina throws a RED STAPLER at the pair but it catches RABE in the back of the head and she goes down hard. DOUCHE TAGS go flying. No one seems to care.

BALDWIN steps over her, reading a REPORT.

BILL (CONT'D) That's why I'm going to shake that thing 'til I break it, baby girl. Then I'm going to lick every inch of you.

GINA (transfixed) Potato bugaloo too.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL JENNY hovering and being a dick.

JENNY

That's assault, mister! You all heard it. He threatened her with assault. Really gross assault. Didn't you, Mr. Handsomepants? Aargh. Rabe, where's your mace?

From the floor, Rabe points weakly to her desk where there is an actual MEDIEVAL WEAPON CALLED A MACE there. It is huge and rusty, probably weighs more than Jenny.

> JENNY (CONT'D) Raaabe! Damn it!

END FLASHBACK.

INT. - 6TH PRECINCT - CONROY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

CONROY and GINA are continuing the conversation.

CONROY Did that really happen?

GINA Eeh. The Rabe thing did. But more to the point, it feels true.

CONROY Well, that explains the gauze yarmulke. Hmm. I know you're scared.

GINA Moi?!? Pfff.

CONROY "One must imagine Sisyphus as happy."

GINA Okay. I'm just going to nod and grin now.

CONROY

My old motto. It's from Camus. Basically it means that to find peace in a material universe incapable of the understanding and love we yearn for from it, one must imagine Sisyphus - the guy eternally pushing the rock up the hill in Hades - as happy. "To die unresolved is to die at peace." GINA

Makes perfect sense.

CONROY

It's what I told myself and told myself before I met my husband. In this line of work. The sacrifices. The relentless emptiness. Paul, he will tell you I chose this career because I have an unconscious drive to please exactly the sort I should disregard, those who care nothing for me. Perhaps I did, when I was young. I say I chose the job because the work chose me. Now I think we are both right, each in our way, and my understanding is deeper because of his perspective. Parallax. Look it up.

GINA

Umm, okay.

CONROY

To the point, I had accepted that love wasn't going to happen for me even though, in a way, it was all I ever thought about. I told myself my struggle would be enough, but I was very wrong.

GINA

You were wrong about something, captain? Pshaw.

CONROY

Yes, very much. The truth is I was starting to. . .when I met him. . . Don't be afraid, my lovely, lovely girl. Be the opposite of afraid. Run. Leap. To-daaay. Fly. Don't let Cosmo decide. Trust that lightning we've all seen and been grateful we did. The monosyllable of the Clock is Loss, Loss, Loss unless you devote your heart to its' opposition. Tennesee Williams.

GINA

Wow. . .But he's so nice. What if I. . . I'd rather die and have Stroheim assigned to my case than hurt him. Truly. Don't even joke about that. Did you see the axe Vine? That poor schnauzer? Who knew eyes got that big before they burst? Not I. Not. I.

Conroy shudders like a lonely ghost at the sound of a distant voice.

GINA

That was animation someone put over the top of it, sir. Old 'Itchy & Scratchy,' looks like.

CONROY

Well, that makes more sense. Still, if that old woman ever comes out of her shock coma she is going to sue the hell out of the City and I don't blame her. Stroheim's rabbi must be the Prophet Aaron herself. But that's not what you are afraid of, exactly. You are afraid you aren't good enough for him. But I've got a secret. You're right.

GINA Whowhatwombat?

CONROY

That's one of the ways you know it's real. Both of you feel equally unworthy of the other. That and when you don't have to work even a little to be amazed and grateful. Frankly, that's well and alltogether "awesome". And being alone together, of course.

Gina just arches a brow and bites her lower lip, funkgrooving her head.

CONROY (CONT'D)

That's not what I meant. That too, but mostly I mean you think and behave exactly as you would if you were alone and so does he and it is the most comfortable, wonderful feeling in the world. No masks. No games. Every day feels like a fifth date. GINA That does sound nice. (sniffles) Can I buy you stupendous amounts of booze, sir?

CONROY Thank you, no. I've got my own mountain of magic waiting for me at home. "Der Zauberberg or bust, mein schatz!" That's my new motto. I much prefer it.

INT. - DIVE BAR - NIGHT

GINA, DAY, MORADO, STROHEIM, RABE, & BALDWIN are standing around a table.

JENNY is off to one side, seeming to stew but is actually half-ass wrapping a gift in PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS. You wouldn't think there's this much SCOTCH TAPE in the world, and yet there it is. An abortive attempt at a LASSO to hang herself with lays to one side.

Gina is at the hyper phase of her buzz and everyone else is leaning backward.

GINA And theeeen what? He sees through all my crap without even dying trying.

MORADO And he still likes you? Marry him.

RABE

If you don't, I will. . . be so mad.

GINA

I think he might even be better at the head-game crap I'm the queen of. The queeeeen. You guys think you know. But. You. Don't. I been ballin' with one hand tied behind my back, brothers and sisters. But him? Wow. And I can't even tell for sure cuz he's so damn kind about it, like it's noooo big deal. Ladee-da. He calls it 'living inbetween'. Makes me so mad at how mad it makes me so mad. What?!? What is wrong with me?!? Feels like I'm going. . Here JENNY enters group and offers her the GIFT, now adorned with a hideous NEON BOW, smiling like the aforementioned fiveyear-old arch dramatist, all straight-armed and nervous.

Her head is down and as soon as Gina takes it she runs away. It is one of those SLIDESHOW FRAMES.

First is her pic of the Great Kniefl Grape Meeting Moment from the open.

Third is of Gina's Leap with the sweet impact included(surveillance .gif possibly? More phone video? Maybe with Jenny's dropping face in it, over and over and over?). The embrace is all the sweeter when the gumdrop passes from Gina's forehead to Bill's as the lovers touch tenderly.

Between these is a black and white photo of a small girl taken from behind. She is standing off by herself, watching the other kids on the Central Park Carousel, her arms akimbo and her head tilted to one side. There's a real sadness about it, the droop in her shoulders, maybe.

When Gina sees this eight-year-old version of herself it is beautiful shock.

DAY Damn. Now I'm even getting a little jealous.

BALDWIN

Me too.

Gina hugs all of them and walks outside to use the phone.

They all gather around the frame when she's gone but we see the back of Rabe's head watching her dial the PHONE.

Morado's PERP from earlier stomps angrily by just as Rabe turns back to the group, barely missing them.

Gina, waiting nervously for Bill to answer, appears out the window but after a second she's blocked again by STROHEIM who enters the foreground 'sophisticatedly' musing over a nice CHIANTI.

STROHEIM I think it's nice to have someone you can't wait to talk to. I should write that down.

Stroheim leans over, spilling the wine and we now see Gina transformed, joyous light in her eyes and her head thrown back in laughter.

INT. - GINA'S APARTMENT - DAY

CAPTION READS "Day 17."

GINA and BILL are making breakfast, working together seamlessly.

She's shaking it a little, wearing only his WHITE DRESS SHIRT and he is in A TIGHT TEE and BOXERS. The tee says "CSU" on the back and "Bath" over the heart.

For no apparent reason she puts her ear to his chest, listening to his heart. He stops.

She dabs his nose with BUTTER but stays there tight against him while he tells his story, smiling with her eyes closed.

He dabs her back. She tries to lick it off.

In the background we see a PILE OF BOOKS he has brought over for her.

On the CUPBOARD behind them is written "Wise ones scream with their ears and learn early on how to move slow in a hurry" in black sharpie. A pitiful attempt to clean it off has been made. We also see "Empathy is not a science". That is untouched. As is "D-TAG in shades of dorkness hides." This last is a reference to the Burns' poem, "A Prayer In The Prospect of Death".(footnote 1 at end of script) Next to it, there's an unkind sketch of RABE with his own d-tag that closely resembles Morty from "Rick & Morty". The sketch by Gina was there before the Burns quote.

> GINA Steady as a rock.

BILL Until you rock it like the sea near a lighthouse, to paraphrase the poet. Sploosh.

To Gina, 'sploosh' is the female equivalent of 'schwing'.

GINA Uhh. . . Never mind. This dream you mentioned, it's about me somehow?

BILL Not exactly. Just a story my favorite uncle, closest thing I ever had to a dad, used to tell me. Guess it sunk in cuz I dream it all the time. You reminded me of the feeling it gives me is all. GINA

Tell me again.

BILL

It's kinda about the Magi and I am one of them in the dream. Always have been, always will be. But the dream is mostly us leaving home and our caravan's journey across the endless sands. There are eight of us to begin with, all shrewd, stainless men sure we are on a proven path to eminence, wealth and many nubile wives. Many, many wives.

GINA

How many?

BILL

Oodles. We're so damn sure we will be received by a great house, given regal positions and revered for our uncannily convenient foresight re: their newborn prince, which we "prove" to any courtly contender through our acumen with charts and reference to required authorities.

GINA

How do you know which house?

BILL

Simple. We ask around for a house with a son born at the right time and then claim the gods sent us there by sign, dream and prophecy. Complicated, it ain't. But the journey transforms us, myself most of all, and destroys many. They die in awful ways that are always different.

GINA You remember all this?

BILL

Well, I don't dream it every night, not by a long shot and never the whole thing at once. I think. Hard to say.

GINA Oh. Continue, please. BILL

The three of us who survive, when the first and strongest sees the manger(which people seem to forget is a kind of feeding trough) inside the stinking stable, he just starts laughing and doesn't stop, consumed with bitterness. The second, the connected one, weeps and tears his whole ensem to shreds in great despair over such a cruel farce as this. The last one, me, the quiet one, simply huddles in the corner, just as heartbroken as the others and watches Mary (who was probably about 14, FYI) watching the newborn. Then there's a thunderclap - that booming thought that pops into your head out of nowhere, without the slightest trace of your usual thought process - you know what I mean?

GINA

Ah-yup.

BILL

To me it's like your entire being is speaking and yet it's coming from somewhere far outside yourself. The thought that booms me in half is, "This is what hope looks like." I am so overcome I go outside to get some fresh air and to consult the sky, my old friend, but all I see now are pretty lights. I climb atop the stable but end up watching the scene below through a patch of missing roof. All night long I'm up there. As the first light of dawn hits my face, another thoughtbomb goes off in my head. "Love is stronger than Death." That's usually when I wake up but I know, just know, that that missing roof Magi smiled unceasingly the rest of his days, as I think I might. I think I may.

GINA

(sniffles) But how is it about me?

BILL It's not, exactly. Been having that dream since I was a kid. The deaths were far more horrible then. . . It's about the Feeling. The first moment I saw you it was the same exact bolt out of the blue. Exactly. "This is what hope looks like" it said in big brass neon.

Gina purrs.

BILL (CONT'D) You like that, hmm?

GINA

Very much.

BILL Well, I've got plenty. Been saving up. Holding on tight, like bark to wood. Like a peach to the pit.

Gina breaks away, pulling SOMETHING FRESH from the oven and sweetly feeds him a bite.

It's still a little too hot but he tries not to let it show.

As he turns away for a moment she looks upward and mouths the words "thank you," makes a quick sign of the cross and points to Heaven like an athlete.

When he turns back he is holding out a JEWELRY BOX to her, inside are antique RUBY AND SILVER EARRINGS. Metaphors for blood and steel.

Gina gasps, but then puts them aside and tackles him to the floor.

The drop is in two parts. At first they look ready to fall but Gina sticks out a hand and uses the fourth wall / camera eye to brace them. The impression is there's an invisible wall there. On her palm we see written, "Lovers find a way."

This holds for a three-beat and then they fall to the floor in a laughing, lustful, offscreen heap.

The last thing we hear is Gina joyously howl like a wolf and both of them laughing.

EXT. 6TH PRECINCT - SIDEWALK - DAY

GINA is lingering outside the precinct.

BILL nonchalantly walks up to her carrying an ICED COFFEE sporting a RIDICULOUS, VAGUELY KEY-SHAPED, STRAW. The logo reads "Splendid City Coffee".

He is on the PHONE and, for the first time, all dressed in his CSU UNIFORM. His jacket says 'supervisor.' He is mid-conversation.

She is making sure every PASSERBY sees her earrings, dancing around a few of the grumpier ones who refuse to play.

He hands her the iced coffee and the absurd straw (which he bought online).

She is tickled. Still showing off too.

BILL No, not really. Sorry. I don't hang out with other writers. They're all either smug, drunk or better than me. . Brecht? No. I don't like Brecht. He flies in the face of all my naked stuff. Hasta.

This amuses Gina. Bill hangs up.

BILL (CONT'D) Sorry, but I can't have lunch. Been slacking off way too hard this last little wonderful while for no unparticular reason. Now I've get to go and sign off on a crime scene of Kniefl and Stroheim's before eight. Always fun. Hopefully, Stroheim didn't leave her gun in the blender again. Who gave these guys badges? Who do they speak for? I truly do not understand. People with capital 'A' authority, huh? Sigh. It just never stops.

Here Gina is talking Kniefl and Stroheim but Bill thinks she's referring to Authority.

GINA Me neither. But if they don't insist you'll love their pants cheese, call it a win.

Bill looks askew at her but amused, then the thought reminds him of something.

BILL Nice. That reminds me what I was trying to say before I got. . . buttered up.

GINA

Hmmmmm?

BILL I guess I meant I like not understanding you. I really, really do. Mostly. I mean, who wants to swim in an ocean where their feet are always touching the sand? Not me. Where's the fun in that?

Gina stops and actually gives this some thought.

GINA Huh. Kinda cool when you put it that way. I'm feeling the sudden urge to buy Tap Out gear. Maybe a bitchin' Camaro. Bitchin' Camaro.

BILL Don't even joke about that.

Bill glances at a text and seems to address the next sentence to it.

BILL (CONT'D) You are perfect however you are. .

His focus returns to Gina.

BILL (CONT'D) I don't judge people but if they dubbed me "The Judge" you would totally win. I don't need to understand it to seriously dig how you think you got me all figured out. Honestly, it does baffles me.

GINA All you need to know is every bite is cutey-pie.

BILL Not too flaky? No mystery to me whatsoever, huh?

GINA Sorry, bub. You're in my world now. BILL

And what color is the sky there?

GINA Whatever color Béyonce says it is. Duh.

BILL Fair enough. You gotta let people be peepholes, that's what I say. . . But you really don't think I could surprise you?

GINA Been a long, long time since anyone's done that in a good way.

BILL Well, I guess that could be good. It does make room for this.

Bill leans over and whispers in her ear (unheard by the audience, a la Bill M and Scarlett) "Were you born this way or did your daddy fuck it into you?"

She is genuinely shocked.

He kisses her hard, full on the mouth while it's agape.

The kiss breaks sweetly and softly and Bill begins to walk backward (reminiscent of his hallway strut), bathed in the golden morning light as he talks.

> BILL (CONT'D) I once walked past a man with a file boldly labelled "Baked Fish Simulator". "You can't make this kind of thing up," I told him. But it is. THAT is a shenanikoan!

With that he is gone, though his laugh lingers a moment longer.

Gina starts laughing and laughing. She starts to, she thinks, punch herself in the face repeatedly but what she is actually doing is kissing her ring finger over and over.

After a minute of this she actually grabs some hipster's hat and does the Mary Tyler Moore freeze-frame thing but not before leading the DUDE on a merry (for her) chase.

The music cue could be a riff on the chords for "your going to make it after all" with a vinyl scratching swerve at the end.

KNIEFL and STROHEIM are all excited in their BOOTH. They are pounding their fists on the table as the smiling WAITRESS brings them SOFT-BOILED EGGS.

As she sets them down Kniefl looks at her WATCH. A CREEPY COOK is watching avidly from his station.

KNIEFL

7:49!

STROHEIM Two minutes for a three minute egg. Amazing!

CREEPY COOK You could say it's a special family recipe.

Stroheim starts playing with the slimy bit of hers like silly string and it becomes clear she is eating semen-covered eggs. Cook must have been saving up or something. I don't know, but there's lots.

Kniefl's seem fine. They are not.

STROHEIM I forget. What's this slimy stuff called again?

CREEPY COOK

Albumine.

He means 'albumen'.

STROHEIM Learn something new every day!

KNIEFL Except who our killer is.

STROHEIM

Try to think positive. It has to be somebody, right? Probably someone she knows. That's what the book says.

Kniefl gives her a look for that. She takes a bite. Stroheim is still poking and playing with the silly string.

KNIEFL

Any word from the Dead Letter Office?

STROHEIM

You know, I could not find them anywhere. And I looked. A lot of angry people work at the post office, you ever notice that? So I just wrote a letter to the Dead Lettererers, telling them what we needed and mailed it. Should be hearing back in a few days, I figure. Cat's cradle!

KNIEFL

Cool.

The Waitress gives the Creepy Cook a "WTF?" look and he is grinning ear to ear. He says quietly -

CREEPY COOK Healthy living . . . And some corn starch.

The Waitress covers her face and starts crying.

CREEPY COOK (CONT'D) What's wrong?

WAITRESS I have a Master's degree.

CREEPY COOK Yeah? You're neck deep in my domain now.

She grabs a half dozen NAPKINS.

Kniefl and Stroheim are oblivious. Kniefl is lasciviously licking her fingers.

KNIEFL

Nice. And that's good news about the Letterere-erer. . . Well, at least they seasoned the eggs how I like. Tangy. Pretty good start to the morning, at least. Dinner and a show. Dinner is the show.

STROHEIM (something unseen out the window catches her eye) Hey, a balloon!

(MORE)

Splatter.

STROHEIM (CONT'D) Isn't life good? Gosh. Endless forms most beautiful and wonderful. Truly. Mostly giraffes, though.

That 'endless forms' bit is actually from the last paragraph of Darwin's "Origin of Species". Kniefl sighs.

The waitress approaches. She never actually expected them to play with it, let alone eat it.

She turns back toward the Creepy Cook and whispers -

WAITRESS You don't have any STDs or anything, do you?

Creepy Cook gives her a "What do you think?" look and she bolts toward the table.

In the background the Creepy Cook raises a fist and shouts -

CREEPY COOK Durden lives!

It's too late. She gets there just in time to see Stroheim slurp hers down in one go and smile at her like she's been a good girl.

> KNIEFL Check, please.

INT.- 6TH PRECINCT - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Some of the shift staff (CONROY, BALDWIN, RABE, DAY and MORADO plus EXTRAS) is in a dreary morning briefing being lead by Captain Conroy.

JENNY appears in the doorway, deeply shaken.

JENNY Umm, that was Kniefl. Bill's dead. Some bastard shot him. So. Yeah. Dead. I should be making sure that's understood now. Dead. Yeah. Okay. No one is sure what to think except Captain Conroy who can tell Jenny is barely standing. She starts to move calmly toward her.

Jenny starts to walk away a few steps but turns back.

JENNY (CONT'D) Oh. They already caught the killer looking for his cheese. I didn't quite. . . We should get over there.

Suddenly, GINA appears behind him, slurping her straw nosily. The drink Bill gave her disappears before our eyes.

Jenny sees her and freezes, wavers.

Conroy moves slowly forward.

Jenny can't help but focus on the funny straw and her brain just short-circuits. After a beat, he turns and walks toward the camera, offscreen into the briefing room.

> GINA What? Did something wacky happen? What's the poop?

Gina follows Jenny offscreen and her last line is delivered in a baby-voice.

The CAMERA stays still and focuses on the empty bullpen.

GINA (O.S.) (CONT'D) I will tickle it out of you. Yes I will. Yes I will. (sluuuurp)

EXT. - 6TH PRECINCT - DAY

The main gang, minus Gina, are all approaching the front door solemnly in FUNERAL ATTIRE. No one is speaking. JENNY, DAY, BALDWIN, MORADO, RABE, CONROY and PAUL (50s, professional and droll where Conroy is merely dry.).

KNIEFL is already there, sitting on the hood of her CAR, eating a SANDWICH.

JENNY Kniefl? What ya doin'?

KNIEFL Eating a sandwich. Why is it when I get to the end one piece of bread is always bigger than the other?

DAY Overbite. KNIEFL Over by what? DAY Never mind. KNIEFL Never? Seems a bit unreasonable, but okay. CONROY Kniefl, what are you doing out here? KNIEFL I'm not going back in there until I have to. CONROY Seems very unreasonable. KNIEFL Thank you, Captain. Wow. I caught on quick to that one, huh? STROHEIM comes barrelling out the door, breathless and terrified. Everyone is slightly concerned. Jenny alone ignores him and heads inside. He suspects Gina is already there. STROHEIM Scul. . . You were right, Kniefl. I was gonna beg, I was. Hands and knees. But the triangles tried to eat me.

Everyone looks to Kniefl.

KNIEFL You'll see. I won't. I'm never slicing my sandwiches side-ways ever again. In fact, why don't Stroheim and I meet you at the hole?

This expression earns a disgusted dismissal.

They begin to head inside.

Rabe lingers, muttering angrily under her breath.

RABE

YourethemeatholeyoumeatholeIdon'tkn owwhyyouthinkmisterdeadinside-

STROHEIM (to RABE) Do you think it would be okay if we made a stop? I could really go for a two-minute threeminute egg.

Just as RABE is about to lose her goddamned mind, we hear Jenny's shrill shriek out an upper window.

RABE bolts.

Stroheim begins to get into passenger side.

KNIEFL I called shotgun.

STROHEIM You've got the guys.

(Yes, Stroheim calls keys 'guys' for some reason.) Kniefl turns and shuffles to the driver's side, muttering to himself.

KNIEFL Heknowssteeringmakesmethinkaboutpad dleboatsIdon'tliketothinkabout -

While he does that, Stroheim takes the KEYS from her pocket and puts them in the ignition. Kniefl gets in the car and starts it without ever noticing.

> KNIEFL (CONT'D) paddleboatsorCincinnatiingeneralwhe rearemykeysohtheretheyaremyluckyday

INT. - 6TH PRECINCT - BULLPEN - SAME

JENNY, DAY, CONROY, PAUL, RABE, BALDWIN and MORADO are all huddled around the elevator.

GINA, unmoving and elegant behind YOKO GLASSES, has clearly been there awhile and gone all geometric. She is wearing a MAN'S BLACK SUIT AND BLACK TIE.

Looking at her desk reminds one of Paul Thomas Anderson's precise framing gone plum loco.
WHITE BOXES are stacked in front and behind her, she is sharply backlit but her head is very low in the frame. The whole thing looks like one big gaping maw to Hell, which is exactly what it is.

The closer you get the stacks of white becomes more pronounced and fang-like. (Hence, Stroheim's babbling.)

A RED STANDPIPE is especially nightmarish. A demon's fetid claw rocketing out of Hell. Or at least Piet Mondrian's idea of one.

> JENNY Well, I guess this is me doing this. Rather get an Uber lift from an Angry Bird.

Jenny approaches the desk. The teeth grow, the maw widens.

Gina does not move. Jenny is rattled.

The rest of the gang takes the moment to slip past.

GINA So what ya got?

JENNY Whu... What now?

GINA

Time to take the training wheels off your mythic cycle, sweetie. People are relying on you. Give me the real.

JENNY

Cycle? What? Are you. . . visiting Aunt Flo?

GINA (pause) That's not. . . No. No, I'm not.

JENNY

Well, that's some good news at least.

GINA Sigh. This is now the perfunctory pat-on-the-back moment. The moment you say something nice but canned and I pretend to hear you so you don't feel so bad. Pass. Well, I mean. . .

GINA

Yes, you mean well. I know that and I appreciate it. I do. But the thought of standing here while watching lips flippy flap about how Bill would want me to be happy and it's better to have loved and lost and blahblahblah. Lines. You're just parroting lines.

Conroy appears.

CONROY

Gina, I would give the world to be able to think of something that didn't sound cheap or stupid -

Gina stands abruptly.

GINA Stop. Just stop. Nothing is going to be okay. Ever.

With that she walks sharply away. She seems to be headed to the elevator but at the last moment veers toward the holding cell.

She stands there silently while Conroy and Jenny exchange a worried look.

Gina rests her head against the cold metal of the cage.

To the two friends it looks like she is taking a moment to breathe. They don't see the suspects, a man named Hatchett and another dubbed Paul (not that Paul), sitting in the corner, nor do they hear Gina speaking.

They silently decide to give her her space. That is a mistake.

INT. - GREASY SPOON DINER - MORNING

We are looking down on an empty table.

TWO PLATES OF SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS arrive. Sides of BACON and TOAST, everything arranged precisely and geometrically.

Two sets of frightened arms reach out and push them away.

KNIEFL AND STROHEIM (O.S.)

No.

The plates are taken and away and instantly TWO BOWLS OF CLAM CHOWDER appear in their place.

KNIEFL (O.S.) That's better. Smells great.

WAITRESS #2 (O.S.) I added my own something something.

STROHEIM (O.S.) Well, my compliments. These clams are something else. So juicy. Ooh, hot! Hot hot!

Clam chowder is sprayed all over the table.

CUT TO:

Kniefl's pained reaction.

KNIEFL Ahh! It's in my eyes. Hot clam juice blindness! Again!

INT. - 6TH PRECINCT - HOLDING CELL

Kniefl's shape gives way to HATCHETT. (Hatchett, mid-20s and total private school whitebread, is trying to look hard and doing a good job of it but is actually in for identity theft.)

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) is hard, which is why he rarely speaks or makes a show. (60ish, he wears HORN-RIMMED GLASSES WITH THICK LENSES, KHAKI PANTS and a DARK, TASTEFUL BOWLING-TYPE SHIRT, both well-pressed. He has an avuncular glow because he enjoys life but he's done a lot of messed-up shit.)

Right now though, he's having more fun than he's had in a long time, messing with Hatchett. All he's doing is staring Hatchett down and sitting a scooch too close.

GINA knows Paul (Not That Paul) so she more or less ignores him. She seems to be trying to squeeze her face through the bars.

GINA Hey, Paul Not That Paul. Hey, guy. What they got you for, allegedly?

HATCHETT Double murder. And that's Mr. Allegedly to you, bitch. He is clearly trying to establish himself with Paul (Not That Paul), who is thoroughly unimpressed.

GINA Well, you definitely got a dollop of vermin in ya. That from your mother's side?

HATCHETT Mention my mother again and I will gut you, outhouse to in box. That being said, good one. I think I'll steal it.

Hatchett smiles widely. Gina most definitely does not.

GINA Really? A big fish, huh? Have I got a big fish? Hmm. Paul Not That Paul? Big fish?

Paul (Not That Paul) rolls his eyes.

GINA (CONT'D) Uh-huh. Lemme guess. Being a big fish is a dream come true for someone like you, mister killer man. Mister snuffer out of hopes and dreams. Mister remover of Tuesdays. I wanna dance with you.

Hatchett says nothing.

GINA (CONT'D) 'Careful what you wish for,' is what I'm sayin'. True dat. Here's something you may not know. Every step up the fish ladder doesn't give you one more problem. It gives you ten, at least. Two steps, all you need to dance. Not twenty. Ten times ten. That's a hundred. Guess what, big time? I'm your one hundredth problem and it's a bitch of a one.

Paul (Not That Paul) is amused. Gina is ratcheting up.

GINA (CONT'D) You know I'm not a cop, right? You can tell?

Hatchett looks to (Paul Not That Paul), who shakes his head.

HATCHETT

So who are you?

GINA

Doesn't matter. What matters is what I am and that's an experimental psychiatrist for Homeland Security, officially. Tell me, have you ever heard of a sensory deprivation tank?

HATCHETT

No.

GINA

What a shock. Essentially it's an enclosed tank of warm salt water. Sounds harmless, right? Well, it's also pitch black inside and one hundred percent insulated for sound. No sensory input whatsoever. The human mind really, really doesn't like that. It needs input. First, the sound of your own heart will seriously freak you out. The hallucinations kick in after about a half hour or so. Two hours in, you are face to face with your worst self. Nowhere to run. Nowhere to hide. No board-certified doctor would let a person stay in one of these tanks for more than a few hours. Me? I'm sanctified by the C-I-A and goin' for the record!

HATCHETT

Which is?

GINA

Seventeen days. You'll be let out ten minutes daily to eat and do your business, of course.

HATCHETT

Jesus Christ.

GINA

Hmm. Possibly. A few do emerge quite saintly, possessed of a powerful urge to roam the Earth like Caine from Kung Fu, but most are torn apart by the experience. (MORE)

GINA (CONT'D)

Tell me, have you ever really stopped to consider the Void? Because I have. I am.

HATCHETT What are you talking about?

GINA

What is awaiting you. Imagine falling alone through a soundless, smothering dark for days and then weeks and months and years and decades and centuries and millennia and eons with all that being spit, s-p-i-t, in the ocean of infinity you have yet to endure. And even after you cross that ocean, only more oceans await. There's a reason people like you are called the Fallen.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) Have you ever heard the story of Achilles and the tortoise, Big Time? It's a paradox. Common sense says I can kick your ass from here to over there with ease, but, if you apply logic, that simple everyday thing becomes an impossible task. Why? Because, to do so your ass must first cross half the distance, then half the distance of the half that's left to go and then half of that again and so on. But you can never divide a number in half and get zero, only ever-smaller numbers. You get closer and closer to over there without ever reaching it. The Void means knowing that Heaven is your zero point. You'll never, ever get there. "Jaca negra, luna grande, / y aceitunas en mi alforja. // Aunque sepa los caminos / yo nunca llegaré a Cordoba." (footnote 2)

GINA

Yo nunca llegaré a Cordoba. Nice.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL)

Thank you.

HATCHETT Pfft. That's totally stupid. Gina is silent a moment. She is letting her mind run with Paul (Not That Paul)'s idea of Heaven and emptiness.

GINA

Of course it is. Because you are, sweetheart. At the very least you've heard of people about to kick it seeing a tunnel with a biiig bright light at the end of it, all golden glowy and radiating unconditional love?

HATCHETT

I'm not stupid.

GINA

Puh-please. Fic-tion. That tunnel is both the path to Heaven as most you mortals surmise but it is also the quintessence of Hell. Add to that the highly polarized filter of true love's light -

Here Gina lets herself slide down into a fetal position but is still holding the bars closely.

Her hair comes loose and shadows find her face.

GINA (CONT'D) - If you look away ever so slightly, one single moment of heinous self-importance, that light will become impossible to see anymore, let alone attain, and you will find yourself plummeting through the aforementioned Void. Heaven is almost Hell. Hell is almost Heaven. So the damned keep covering half the distance to Heaven's light, forever and ever. Blind and alone. Blind and alone. Blind and alone forever. The light's still there but you can't feel it. That's what gets most souls. The knowing.

Gina rises, raises her head into the light. Crazy eyes! When did she take her glasses off?

GINA (CONT'D) That's what'll get you. PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) Incompleteness, randomness, recursion and paradox are woven into the fabric of the universe.

GINA Exactly. See? He gets it. Thanks, Paul, Not That Paul.

Paul, Not That Paul is confused but amused.

Gina actually has no idea what he just said but she likes it. She puts her glasses back on.

Hatchett is shitting bricks.

GINA (CONT'D) And now I've planted the seed well and deep that's allll your going to see inside, Mister Big Time. I give you an afternoon before you're ripping your face off. It will seem a endless age to you. Hang on, I'm going to get an officer to let you out.

Gina steps back and we see her own face is now frighteningly striped red from where she pressed her flesh to the cage. It is deeply disquieting.

She disappears around the corner.

Hatchett gives Paul a 'WTF?' look.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) She's a death dealer, that one. Probably not good she came out and told us she was CIA. Yeah, definitely a concern. You should be more worried.

HATCHETT

Uhhh.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) I have mollys. How many?

HATCHETT

All of them.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL)

Watch.

Paul (Not That Paul) takes the WATCH and puts it on, then he starts to unbuckle his pants.

HATCHETT

Oh god.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL)

Not yet.

INT. 6TH PRECINCT - HOLDING CELL - MOMENTS LATER

Paul (Not That Paul) is just buckling back up.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) I gotta say, brother. You saved me a lot of trouble at Riker's.

Hatchett slams down the PILLS just as Paul (Not That Paul) slaps him on the back. Pills come out and plop right down the FLOOR DRAIN.

Hatchett scrambles after the last one but he's too late.

He stands, his chest beginning to rise and fall rapidly.

Paul (Not That Paul) steps in closer, gets right in his ear.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) (CONT'D) I've been here your whole life, inside your shadow. Silent since before you were born. Waiting for this moment to become certain. . . .Some go down?

HATCHETT

Not sure.

GINA returns with RABE in tow.

PAUL (NOT THAT PAUL) You will be. You willl be. Those weren't mollys. I had a need, you see.

Hatchett goes bug-eyed and stiff as a board. He's very, very twitchy throughout the following exchange.

Paul (Not That Paul) moves off to a corner.

GINA Let that one out.

RABE I can't just let him out. He's going down for -GINA I don't care. Let him out. Handcuff him to your heart's content but I'm taking him with me. RABE What? You can't just -GINA I can and I will, but before that we can take him to the funeral with us. HATCHETT What funeral? GINA He can be my date. RABE Your. . . date? GINA You expect me to go stag? RABE Ummm. . . Rabe runs away screaming "Jaaakke". GINA He'll be back. Gina strums her fingers in silence. Hatchett can't stop blinking. Now it's his turn to try squeezing though the bars. Paul (Not That Paul) is a grinning statue. Rabe returns with JENNY in tow. JENNY Soooo, this sounds like a great idea. GINA What? Are you afraid he'll escape? With how many cops there? Besides, he can never escape me. Not ever.

With that she shoots Hatchett an arched eyebrow.

He unconsciously takes a step back.

JENNY Not really the point but -

GINA

So what is the point? Is the point that we yap back and forth at each other until you do what I want. Cuz that's reality, little buttercup. Reality is the only point. Big T truth time, my precious little daisy. One. Your good time goofball schtick is getting old. Real old. Grow UP. Two. You take far more than you give and seem to find it funny. It's not. It's cruel. You can be very cruel. Stop walking around like you're the only one who matters. Three. Lucia "Lucite" Ledbetter. Open the door.

JENNY

Yes, ma'am.

MORADO appears.

MORADO Damn. That was pretty harsh.

GINA

Suck me sideways, Rambolina.

The two women stare at each other while Jenny begins prepping Hatchett.

Rabe, the poor soul, is standing between the pair and is handling it like a rabbit would a wall of light. She leans to go one direction, decides the better of it, leans the other way and sees the horrible fate in that.

She goes back and forth a couple of times until she finally freezes and wets her pants.

EXT. - CEMETARY - DAY

DAY, JENNY, GINA (the disquieting marks now becoming even more disquieting bruises), RABE (wearing cargo shorts and flip-flops with same jacket and tie), CONROY, PAUL, BALDWIN (with her HUSBAND and KIDS), MORADO, KNIEFL, STROHEIM, various MOURNERS and HATCHETT are by the CASKET. A PRIEST is speaking.

Kniefl and Stroheim are freaked out because Hatchett was actually their collar, one of the very, very few and they think Gina is using him to mess with them and they are probably right, at least a little.

> PRIEST And now I believe the deceased's beloved would like to say a few words.

Gina stands slowly and with great solemnity.

GINA If I were half the person he was I would be twice the person I am today. He called me 'Button' and I liked it. I liked it alot.

Gina sits.

PRIEST Huh. Would anyone else care to remember the departed? No? Okay then, it's not like I'm getting paid by the hour here.

This raises some eyebrows.

The Priest goes stiff with embarrassment.

Hatchett howls like a wolf.

HATCHETT Ticketssss, please!

He thinks the Priest is a train conductor, apparently. I don't know. He's on Proxima Centauri, man.

PRIEST Oh, my. Please forgive me, sweet child. I did not mean to -

Jenny jolts upright.

PRIEST (CONT'D) Oh, sweet buttery Jesus. Thank you.

GINA (to Priest) Smooth. Like a hot knife through a baby's butt.

JENNY I didn't know Bill very much. He wasn't very judgey, was he? I wish I had been nicer to him. Or at all, really. I even tried to get all bad cop on him once. I know. Sorry. He said I could never intimidate him because he had an Irish mother. But who I do know I know is my friend Gina and I know the effect he had, has, on her and let me tell you, he was something special. He was. . . crap. Sorry. I meant me. I'm full of crap. I sent him one text the whole time I knew him and it was the day he died. I asked him if he was born this way or did his daddy hump it into him.

This gets a round of hisses but it has Gina's attention.

BALDWIN

Dude!

Gina touches her nose but uses the back of her hand, so it looks like she is pressing her face to her ring finger. Actually, she is smelling butter.

She speaks very softly, barely a wisp of a breathless whisper.

GINA Parallax. Love and death. Butter and cheese.

Rabe is the only one to hear Gina but doesn't realize that. She throws up a hand like he owns the front row of the front row at church. Church folk will know what I mean. (Showboaters. Deeply sincere showboaters, basically.)

> RABE Butter and Cheese!

Jenny's oblivious to the inappropriateness but Rabe hitches her for half a second. She's running hot right now and all her energy is focused on getting out what she has to say, so much so she's not really aware of anyone else. At least not until the end.

> JENNY I know. I know. I'm sorry. I was just really angry and I can't even remember about what. (MORE)

JENNY (CONT'D)

The truth is I've never been so sad or scared in my life. I see my best friend and I see this nightmare with awful teeth opening up in front of her and I don't know what to do. Please be okay, Gina. Please. I'll do anything.

Jenny sits. Gina immediately stands.

GINA I'm sure it doesn't seem like it from way half way over there, but that helped. Thank you.

She turns to address the rest.

GINA (CONT'D) Okay, that's it. Show's over, folks. Nothing to -

PRIEST

Actually -

GINA I said 'show's over.'

She moves toward Hatchett.

GINA (CONT'D) That means the show is -

Here Gina deftly kicks her leg out and hooks Hatchett's ankle. In the same quick motion she shoves him at the top of the sternum.

Hatchett screams like he's being dragged to Hell and tumbles like a rag doll backward into the OPEN GRAVE.

GINA (CONT'D) - over. Sorry, scumbag. I don't have an actual sensory deprivation tank. This one will have to do.

Gina grabs a SHOVEL and starts throwing dirt in.

Jenny has to forcibly take it from her and it gets genuinely ugly for half a moment. Gina just didn't want to give it up.

Gina storms away, snarling. We hear her tiny voice from far off.

GINA (O.S.) (CONT'D) Onward to Cordoba!

Eerily, Paul actually catches the reference because he knows and loves the poem just as much as Paul (Not That Paul) does. He watches her longest.

Day goes to follow but Jenny stops her.

JENNY I anticipated this. Well, not this this. But something this.

Jenny snaps her fingers twice and a middle-aged woman appears out of nowhere.

Her name is PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL.(She's about 50. People will think she's a lesbian because of her bad hair-cut and overlarge army jacket but she's not a lesbian. She's pragmatic. Men's clothes are cheap and sturdy and she gets in a lot of fights.) Her eyes are watering.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Hey, kid.

JENNY Day, everyone, I'd like you to meet Philippe the Perfect Tail.

DAY Isn't Philippe a man's name?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL

Yes.

RABE

So why -

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Because when you hear someone named Philippe The Perfect Tail is tailing you, you worry and start to look around. Who's the last person you're going to be looking for?

She gives her boobs a good jiggle in Rabe's direction.

RABE Touché, madam. Touché.

Rabe bows and backs away, bowing all the while.

BALDWIN'S HUSBAND I've heard of you. They say you're the best tail on the east coast.

After that display, Baldwin is not amused by the insinuation.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Damn right. In both senses. I ride that pony.

JENNY

You got this?

No.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Yeah.

JENNY Need anything from me?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL

DAY I like her already.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Thanks, puddin'. That's not a term of endearment. I think you're hospital pudding. Expired hospital pudding. Basement expired hospital pudding. Albanian basement expired hospital pudding. Orange Albanian basement expired hospital pudding. Writhing orange Albanian basement expired hospital -

DAY Okay! I get it.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL - pudding.

JENNY

This is why I'm your only Christmas card, P. Please. Keep an eye on her. Keep her safe and we are even steven.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Nah, kid. This one's on me. What exactly happened to her man there?

MORADO

A guy named Fanta shot him in the face and raped him super-dead.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Don't talk to me anymore. If you do, I'll stick it in, break it off and then light it on fire two times. Once on each end. We clear?

MORADO is impressed. She says nothing.

JENNY Well, thanks a bunch, I guess. I don't -

This is when she realizes Philippe the Perfect Tail is gone. It spins her around in surprise.

> JENNY (CONT'D) Oh, what. Okay, yeah. She's gone.

Now Jenny notices Hatchett still in the open grave. She'd honestly forgotten he existed for half a second.

JENNY (CONT'D) How bad are you going to sue us?

HATCHETT (O.S.) Naaah, man. Forget it. I lost my mother last year. Drop the charges and call it a wash? I just wanna go home and crawl into bed.

JENNY For double murder? Are you insane?

CONROY

What homicides are you referring to? Because Mr. Hatchett here was detained by Kniefl and Stroheim for identity theft.

MORADO The wussiest kind of theft.

JENNY

What? Oh, man. Wait, what? You two actually arrested someone? Again? In the same week?

STROHEIM

Duh.

KNIEFL Duh re ducks.

He means 'redux'.

KNIEFL (CONT'D) He was pretending to be my me-maw but I saw what big teeth he had.

STROHEIM That and she died in 1974. Hockey fight.

KNIEFL Yeah, that too.

BALDWIN What was he doing with it? Wait, did you say 'hockey fight'?

KNIEFL Yeah. But I can't get too upset about it. I mean, she did drop her gloves.

STROHEIM Grandma DROPPED her gloves!

CONROY And the identity, gentleman? What was our guest using it for?

KNIEFL Buying goats.

This gets looks all around. Kniefl just shrugs.

KNIEFL (CONT'D)

Unuh-huh.

This group turns to look down the hole.

Hatchett's head pops up.

HATCHETT It's a charity thing. For the third world.

JENNY Because of course it is.

Exhausted, Jenny sits down hard on the DIRT PILE.

This causes it to AVALANCHE back down into the grave, burying Hatchett.

Baldwin and Rabe jump in immediately to save him, Rabe head first.

Everyone else is aghast, except for Jenny.

Jenny is oblivious, her head in his hands. She's crying, finally.

INT. - 6TH PRECINCT - BULLPEN - DAY

A few months have passed but there's no caption. The CLOCK reads 4:13. The second hand sticks a few times before moving on.

JENNY is wearing business attire and working studiously.

The whole place is giving off an everyday office vibe, maybe a little 'Hill Street Blues' in the mix.

CONROY is behind her venetian slats, PAUL'S chin at her shoulder. You can almost see him mouth the words 'pizza gal'.

A TEMP works at Gina's desk.

Maybe give RABE a BLUE KNIT CAP WITH MONOGRAMMED INITIALS and a LIP WALRUS.

DAY and BALDWIN are arguing about something slight, but she actually seems better-suited to this new environment. More confident.

MORADO is watching everyone discreetly for a secret JOURNAL she's starting. She takes a deep breath, opens to page one and starts to write.

KNIEFL is sweeping and generally tidying things up. Stroheim is not here. This is their lives now.

The elevator opens and PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL puts her hand out to hold the door. She is almost unrecognizable.

She snaps her fingers twice and Jenny looks up immediately. Actually, the whole office does, but Jenny especially.

Philippe does not speak loudly.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL She's in trouble.

The whole crew rise and start moving toward her. This is a surprise to Philippe.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) I just meant him.

They all look at Jenny. Jenny looks at them. They continue on together.

The Temp is taking the opportunity to slip out.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D)

Okay then.

They all pile into the elevator. Even Kniefl is bringing up the rear.

MORADO sees this as she is turning herself around and she ain't havin' it. She stiffarms him and pushes him back.

MORADO

No. No. Nooo. Noooooooo. No.

The door closes without him.

KNIEFL Told ya. . I know. . . We deserve worse, Stroheim. And we're almost certainly gonna get it.

What is happening is he's so tight with Stroheim he doesn't actually need him around to have a conversation with him, so that's what he's doing. He's talking to Stroheim.

He shuffles sadly back to her desk in the lonely office.

KNIEFL (CONT'D) Yeah, it's the silence that gets you. Nobody tells you that. Which makes sense, I guess. You can't speak silently. . But you can fart. Huh. That doesn't seem fair. Whew. Nasty. Like a slaughterhouse dumpster.

EXT./INT. BLAND SEDAN - EXPRESSWAY - DAY

All eight characters are piled into a BLAND SEDAN. PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL is driving.

DAY is next to her and for some reason JENNY is next to her with RABE on her lap.

BALDWIN is taking up half the back and it still ain't enough. CONROY is on PAUL'S lap and MORADO is smashed against the window.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Still not sure I see the point of this.

JENNY We're together. That's the point.

DAY I still think I should be the one riding, ahem, I mean sitting on Jenny's lap.

RABE

It's not personal. It's just that space is at a premium and experience has shown that Jenny and I fit together perfectly, like Tetris pieces of eternal friendship.

JENNY

Oh god. I think my intestines just turned inside out. Is there like a director's cut version of a prolapse? I think I just invented it. Yeah. Here comes the commentary.

DAY Rabe, c'mon, not even if I asked nicely? I'd owe you one.

JENNY

From your mouth to her ass. What? Oh, wow. That sounded a lot nicer, and smarter, in my head. That's it. Rabe, we're re-arranging.

Thus begins a debacle of shifting bodies that will be spoken of for decades to come.

When the madness subsides MORADO is somehow sitting alone in the front with Philippe. She gives Philippe a smile that lets her know she's not gonna say one damn word.

Philippe approves.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Everybody comfy?

In unison, they all reply firmly in the negative.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D)

Good.

BALDWIN Wait. Where's Rabe? I think we lost Rabe.

PAUL (O.S.) Never mind him. I'm concerned we may have collapsed a spatial dimension. I feel sideless right now.

CONROY

Paul?

PAUL (O.S.) Aslan? Not now.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Paul, something tells me you're a big fan of Patton Oswalt.

PAUL (O.S.) The Godfather of Getting It Right? Tremendous.

MORADO Look, there's Rabe.

She points out the window.

There is Rabe waving happily from the bed of a PICKUP TRUCK in front of them.

BALDWIN How. In. The. Hell.

We see Rabe mime rolling out of the car, dodging traffic, attempting to leap onto something, being dragged a good while and finally finding her cozy ride.

She finishes with an extravagant double thumbs up.

DAY Huh. Pretty impressive. Kinda wishin' I'd thought of it right now.

JENNY Don't be fooled. She's almost certainly got major internal damage. She needs to get to the hospital. Hos - pit - al, little buddy. Rabe just shrugs and laughs. She spits up just a bit of BLOOD.

DAY

Oh dear. JENNY Yeah. Welcome to my world. I live in constant dread of the day she staples herself to a live animal cuz a cute boy knows her name. DAY That's a thing? JENNY In this particular scenario, it's some sort of team mascot. DAY Eww. That's not like on a list or anything, is it? JENNY No. No. Nothing like that. Rabe could complicate a sandbox is all. 'If you love the team, I'll love the team more' sort of thing. PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL So does anybody want to hear why we're even on this overland adventure? Jeez. BALDWIN

BALDWIN What? I specifically asked you -

JENNY

Shut up.

BALDWIN

Excuse me?

The car shakes.

Jenny is not her usual scaredy-cat self and it is noticed.

JENNY I said shut up. Go on, please, Philippe. PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Should probably give you a full activity report first, so you have a sense of what we're dealing with.

She reaches into her back pocket and pulls out a NOTEBOOK and manages to flip it open deftly with one hand.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) Let's see here. Straight from the funeral she took a taxi to the home of some Wall Street douche under house arrest. Wrapped his Audi in like a hundred layers of big-ass saran wrap and flipped on industrial heat lamps. No witnesses, thankfully, to her presence. No one was home. Pretty sweet twist on a shrinky-dink too, if you ask me.

CONROY Surely, you must be joking.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Oh, we're just getting started. I cleaned up after her best I could, but your girl has got a gift.

This is met with general but vigorous agreement.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) Let's see what else? She rewired some guy named Stroheim's apartment so all the on/off switches were reversed.

The group lets out a collective 'aaah', realizing where Stroheim has been.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) I had to break in, finally. He hadn't slept in three days or so. Just flipping the switch over and over saying "Well, that can't be right" every. single. time. She also peed in the subway. Cuz she wanted to, I guess. Seemed awfully proud. Been giving change to every bum she meets. If she doesn't have any money she stops and talks for ten minutes or so. She's becoming very adept with a knife. Correction, knives. (MORE) PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) Two curved knives. Like a psycho tai-chi thing or something. Woosh. Swoosh. She spray-painted the word 'lamentations' in four-foot high pink letters across the face of a known Sinoloa hang-out. That actually kicked some stuff off. Long story. She slipped a note into the pocket of Vlad the Finger Eater. He freaked like a little girl when he found it. Left the country. Dug this out of his trash.

Philippe holds up a CRUMPLED PIECE OF PAPER.

Jenny's hand shoots out to grab it but can't reach. Wiggles her fingers like that's going to make them longer.

MORADO is amused by the wiggly. Thinks about biting them but doesn't.

She takes the paper from Philippe, who is watching the road.

MORADO It says, "Your name is on their list."

CONROY Fascinating. As a person of her particular career path, her name must be on any number of lists.

PAUL (0.S.) I believe the pocket appearance aspect to be the source of her perturbation.

CONROY Yes, that would be disquieting. I like it.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Spent a few mornings watching kids play in a park. Don't think she blinked the entire time. Been setting trash fires outside banks. The FBI have to be on this by now. Seriously, this one. She has to stop. She has to. This pyro stuff is ratcheting up. That's not good. I can just feel her brain getting squeezed tighter and tighter. Here's one.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) She dressed a mannequin in a hospital gown and set it on fire atop Bill's grave. Felt like an injoke. But, man, I'm telling you. Pyro stuff. Not a good sign. A soonto-kaboom sign is what that is. She crashed a quinceanera, told them she was a fortune teller. Did a lot of good from what I could tell. Made a grumpy pair of raisins hug and clutch at one another. Pretty sweet. Spent an hour squeezing habenero peppers and filling a bottle of eye drops with their juice. Still waiting for the ball to drop on that one. Got a tat over her heart that says, "Kill Your Carrots". Gave some poor schlub bookstore owner what looked to be about ten grand and a trunk full of books. He was more interested in the books. The letter 'A' was stencilled on the trunk, if that means something. She followed you, Jenny. A couple of times.

JENNY

Whhhuuuu?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL She could have reached out and touched you. Oh, that's right. She did, actually. Touch you. But you never, ever shut up. Nice cop instincts. For God's sake, man. She wiped your face in a pizza place and you just kept talking into your phone. Putz.

Philippe whips out a PHONE.

INSERT - SMART PHONE VIDEO

SCREEN shows some video of JENNY yapping away and downing a PIZZA SLICE.

GINA'S hand comes into frame, proffering a NAPKIN.

Jenny raises up her chin like a little kid. Doesn't look up.

There's a pause and you can see the hand thinking, "Are you kidding me?"

But then it cleans off her cheek and withdraws.

Jenny just keeps on yapping and the stain instantly reappears.

The hand does not.

BACK TO SEDAN

EXT./INT. BLAND SEDAN - EXPRESSWAY - MOMENTS LATER

SAME characters. MORADO is laughing.

MORADO

Damn, son.

JENNY How bad is it? Is it bad? Don't tell me.

MORADO Let me put it this way, it looks like you're one sharp blow to the head away from being the next Stroheim.

JENNY Aaaaaah! Damn it.

DAY

MORADO!

MORADO

What? Oh. Hey, Jenny. You're not Stroheim. You're, uh, some other stupid idiot. (to DAY) Better?

It is not. Now it's Day's turn to reach out, trying to strangle MORADO, but she can't reach either.

MORADO is surprised and a little hurt by the intense sincerity of it.

She bites DAY.

DAY Oww! What the Hell?

MORADO I saw murderous intent in those toothpicks. Go on, call me a liar.

DAY says nothing.

MORADO (CONT'D) Man, why is everyone pickin' on me lately?

Everyone gives her a long, slow turn of the head.

DAY Maybe you're the new Stroheim. Ever think of that?

MORADO Not until now. . . You bitch.

BALDWIN Enough! Tell us what's going on.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL You wouldn't believe me if I told you. Also, mass hysteria in the current environs would be less than ideal.

JENNY

Please, P.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL She's about to kill a lot of innocent people. Herself included. Not on purpose, of course. But that's what's going to happen.

The car goes deathly quiet.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) What else? She ate a bunch of worms. Not gummi worms. Worms.

JENNY (shaken) How? How is she. . .

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Fireworks. A loooot of fireworks.

JENNY (even quieter) Because of course.

DAY Why didn't you stop her? Ha! You're afraid of her too.

Philippe gives her a look. She is not afraid.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL You're like mayonnaise with feet. A lot of reasons, to answer your question. . . She shaved a cat. Does she have a cat? No? Had a feeling. Here was an interesting night, she drove out to the 'burbs and spent the whole night going around and picking flowers out of people's gardens. Had a coupla big trash bags full of 'em by the end. Dumped 'em on somebody's door. Halfcovered it with the little hill it made. Dead lover's place, I'm assuming. She bought a huge hat. Seriously, like make those Kentucky Derby bitches say, "Whaaaa?" I thought it was a burga at first. Did I mention the knives? Can't stress those enough. Like a belly dancer and a blender had a crazy baby. She somehow managed to get Vincent Cassel, the famous French actor, on the phone. Do they know one another? No? Huh. She made him cry, but he seemed grateful. She's constantly eating bacon. Not sure where she keeps getting it.

BALDWIN

Dang. Is she even sleeping?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Doubtful. I been getting by on twenty minutes naps. And I'm only up to day three here. There's still the Cornwall Incident to discuss.

PAUL (O.S.) Lord, If I had a dime -

CONROY

Paul.

JENNY A dime can shine like the sea. A rhyme can outlive a river.

PAUL (O.S.) I think hypoxia might be setting in. That sounded like Jenny. JENNY It is me, Paul. But that was Bill, something he said.

CONROY In what context?

JENNY

Huh?

CONROY What inspired him to say that?

JENNY Umm, this extra shiny dime I found.

CONROY Lovely. Recognize it, Paul?

PAUL (O.S.) No. Auden, perhaps. Or Kendrick Lamar.

CONROY Ah, the noted prostituter of lepidoptera. Fascinating.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL When I am a veteran with only one eye, I shall do nothing but look at the sky.

PAUL (O.S.)

Auden.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Auden.

JENNY Nice. He got a mixtape? . . . What?

DAY Are we there yet?

CONROY Where ARE we going?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Winnipeg. . . to save Bill's wife.

EXT. BLAND SEDAN - EXPRESSWAY - DUSK

The BLAND SEDAN accelerates, drives off into the sunset.

INT. 6TH PRECINCT - BULLPEN - NIGHT

KNIEFL is doing other people's PAPERWORK at her desk.

STROHEIM enters, freshly scrubbed.

He sits down across from Kniefl. The mood is muted and somber.

Kniefl does not look up.

STROHEIM

Hey.

KNIEFL

Hey.

STROHEIM So we suck pretty hard, huh?

KNIEFL Yup. We're legendary now. Like Wang Chung.

STROHEIM Everybody. . .

KNIEFL Wang. Dang it. Don't. Just stop.

STROHEIM Well, if they ever build a statue of me, all I ask is that I be crouching.

Kniefl looks up with a flash of anger that is instantly abated.

This particular instance of stupidity was knowing. Stroheim is looking her straight in the eye and she is crying.

KNIEFL

Dude.

STROHEIM I don't know what to do. I never know what to do.

KNIEFL

I know.

STROHEIM

It feels like everyone else got this 'how to live life' handbook except me.

KNIEFL

I lost mine.

STROHEIM What? There really is -

Kniefl is smiling at him.

STROHEIM (CONT'D) Oh. Good one. I deserved it.

KNIEFL

Yup.

They sit in silence.

STROHEIM

Honestly, I would quit. I would. But where am I going to find another job that's going to pay mom's medical bills? She relies on me.

KNIEFL Nowhere. You are well and truly boned. We both are and we both deserve it. . . We could always transfer to 1PP.

Crickets.

STROHEIM Yeeeaaahh, but they make you stay inside all day.

KNIEFL Good point. Fate *is* a silly rabbit.

Kniefl says that this like it's an accepted profundity.

STROHEIM We could open a detective agency.

KNIEFL Spell 'detective'.

STROHEIM I told you. I'm selectively dyslexic. KNIEFL

It's practically your name.

STROHEIM

Well, the 'det' part is. The rest turns into forest real fast. Too many tees. Why does it need three tees? Makes no sense.

KNIEFL

Strike three.

STROHEIM That was only two.

KNIEFL

Was it? The third musta been voice in my head screaming at me to either run far away from you or beat you into bone salsa.

STROHEIM

Oh.

KNIEFL Yeah. I probably won't though. Just needed to get that out there. I really do hate you sometimes.

STROHEIM I know. But it was you who left the window open.

KNIEFL No, it wasn't. It was you.

STROHEIM No, it wasn't. It was you.

KNIEFL No, it wasn't. It was you.

And here we leave our intrepid imbeciles. Say what you will. At least they're not alone.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

GINA is enjoying a FAT CIGAR. There is no light in her eyes at all but the ember is bright orange in the dark. She is sitting on a ROOFTOP watching the city lights of Winnipeg.

She slowly stands and walks nonchalantly along the roof's narrow edge until she reaches the FIRE ESCAPE.

The first step shows the fire escape to be in no way secure. We see FASTENING BOLTS rattle slightly but Gina is amblin' like Paul Newman down a desert highway. No hurry at all. Serious swagger, like she was slo-mo walking in a bling-heavy rap video.

She runs her finger along the rail like it was a Bugati.

Below her we see a dump truck overfull with fireworks.

At one point there is a slip and a jolt but she is eerily calm about it. Coolly braces herself, looks around and listens for a moment, then continues on.

She reaches the ground and goes over to the DUMP TRUCK.

She throws away the cigar and gets in the driver's side.

CAMERA stays on the dying cigar as the dump truck rolls away.

It hits a bump and a bunch of FIREWORKS spill out onto the ground.

We hear the sound of the fire escape crashing to the ground. It is vaguely, achingly akin to Gina's wolf howl.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The crew (CONROY, BALDWIN, PAUL, PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL, DAY and MORADO) is running for their lives while HOCKEY PUCKS wizz past their heads.

They leap a PILE OF GARBAGE and hunker down behind the barricade.

Hockey pucks keep whizzing past.

JENNY appears from down the alley, running for her life.

He takes a puck, wobbles, but keeps moving.

Her leap over the barricade is in majestic SLOW MOTION until her toe catches on something and he slams to the ground at regular speed.

> CONROY Are you injured?

JENNY Fine, sir. Except for my dignity. I swear, for one kick-ass half second there I was Seabiscuit. PAUL

Well, you're half right.

DAY I hate to admit it but I think Rabe would be a great help right now.

MORADO She totally would let us use her body as a shield.

JENNY She probably would. But you forget how he feels about poutine.

BALDWIN Damn. She's right. We'd be labelled terrorists by now.

A particularly wicked puck just misses Day.

DAY Has this always been a thing or is it just us?

MORADO It's like a Canadian drive-by.

BALDWIN They sure do seem to have a lot of pucks handy.

PAUL This is Canada, detective. There are pucks in the soup. Look, one found its' way into my pocket.

Paul holds up a puck that he attempts to throw. It goes about three feet.

DAY This is all your fault, Jenny.

JENNY

Hey! Nobody told me they were stepping on our Jetdom. We're the Jets! You tell me, look me in the eye and tell me what is it about Winnipeg that screams "Jets" to you? Nothing. That's all I was saying. DAY

Since when do you care about sports?

JENNY

I don't. It's the principal of the thing. You don't mess with another woman's team's theoretical veehickle. You just don't do it.

PAUL Oh, dear Lord.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL That wouldn't do it. They're a genial lot. You said something. Something else.

JENNY

I may have accidentally allegedly insulted Margaret Atwood.

CONROY

Are you out of your mind! Margaret Atwood is a national treasure. Her prosody is sublime. Sublime!

JENNY Well, I know that now.

PAUL You fool. You bloody, bloody fool. Don't you realize what you've done?

JENNY In my defense, the joke was just right there. Peggy . . . Atwood. I mean, c'mon.

DAY I'm gonna die with the taste of moose jerky in my mouth.

CONROY How much time do we have?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Honestly, I think it might be too late. I expected things to go off as soon as it got dark.

BALDWIN Maybe she changed her mind.
MORADO She probably got lost.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL That's likely. City's not that big, though. She's gonna figure it out. And when she does. . .

MORADO

Ka-boom.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL

Ka-BOOM.

Jenny flinches at the big 'boom'.

EXT./INT. TRUCK CAB - RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

The DUMP TRUCK is idling. GINA is holding a MAP in front of her face.

Now she pushes it down and looks around. She is on A QUIET STREET in the middle of the night.

She gets out of the truck and moves to the side.

She takes out a PUNK like you would use for fireworks and lights it.

She tries to throw the punk over into the truck but it goes out before it gets there.

She tries to climb up the side but has trouble.

She gets to the top and has trouble balancing without her hands which she needs for the LIGHTER and punk.

She finally gets it to light just as she loses her balance and falls over backwards onto the pavement.

As she's lying there trying to breathe she turns her head and notices the MAILBOX with the name "Bath-McTurguvinelsonivitch" written on it.

GINA Gak...gak...gak

Gina is out cold. A smolder of smoke rises from the truck.

RABE is in FULL DIVING GEAR. A man named ALBERT (pronounced 'Al-bear') is talking loudly in her ear. A man named PABLO stands behind them.

The PILOT is eyeing them dubiously. They are drug smugglers. BALES are clearly visible behind them.

ALBERT Are you really sure about this, man? This is really dangerous. Professionals don't do this.

RABE

My friends need me, Al-bear.

ALBERT

Okay then. When you're ready, go, but you gotta go now. If you can't, just give a thumbs up and Pablo will push you out. Three seconds and rip the cord. Ready.

Rabe nods and attacks the door howling but freezes at the last second.

He gives a thumbs up without turning around and Pablo kicks him out.

The Pilot eyes Albert even harder.

ALBERT (CONT'D) What? She introduced me to my wife.

PILOT Oh. Good woman.

ALBERT

Yeah.

Albert gives this sentiment a hearty thumbs-up and Pablo pushes him out of the plane, without a parachute.

Pilot does a big-time double take.

Pablo takes a second to realize what he's done.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

SAME characters. CONROY has clearly had enough. He is in the act of fashioning a WHITE FLAG.

JENNY You do realize that no one in the history of the world has ever surrendered to Canadians, sir? CONROY A. Clearly you've never tried to hold open a door for one. B. Shut up, Berger. We don't have time -Here he tries to stand and wave the flag. CONROY (CONT'D) -for this. A puck instantly catches her in the face. A voice comes out of the darkness. PUCKER #1 (O.S.) Oh, hey. Gosh. Was that a white flag. MORADO Duh. PUCKER #1 (O.S.) But it looks awful orangey under the lights. Some kinda safety concern, perhaps. They're right. It does. The truth of this annoys the crew. PUCKER #2 (O.S.) Was there something we could do for ya? BALDWIN You mean besides stop trying to kill us? PUCKER #1 (O.S.) Yeah, that's sorta implied, don't ya think? PAUL stands, hands raised. PAUL

Listen, you are clearly proud men of good families. Right now we have a friend who is in dire need of our assistance. We need to find her, the sooner the better. (MORE)

Muttering in the dark.

PUCKER #1 (O.S.)

Anything?

ALL Anything.

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - NIGHT

JENNY is surrounded by half dozen or so PUCKERS. A TATTOO ARTIST is sitting next to him. One of the Puckers is holding up A PICTURE OF MARGARET ATWOOD.

> JENNY The whole back?

They nod in unison.

JENNY (CONT'D) What about a nice ass cheek. That's always classy.

They shake their heads in unison.

JENNY (CONT'D) A tramp stamp? Maybe making the "Home Alone" face?

Jenny mimes the aftershave 'ahhhh' moment. Pause. Muttering amongst them. Still a no.

JENNY (CONT'D) Maybe giving my tight little behind an impressed check-out?

Emphatic glares. Jenny talks into her PHONE.

JENNY (CONT'D) I think I'm going to be here awhile guys. Don't wait for me.

Someone starts to respond but Jenny hangs up. The tattoo artist leans in to start. Jenny holds up a finger to stop him. JENNY (CONT'D) Before I start weeping uncontrollably, I've always been curious, what's your word for Canadian bacon? PUCKER #2

Back bacon.

JENNY Of course it is.

We hear the needle's motor kick in and Jenny screams like a little girl.

EXT./INT. - BLAND SEDAN - NIGHT

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL, CONROY, BALDWIN, PAUL, DAY and MORADO are driving moderately fast through an empty residential neighborhood, scanning the side-streets as best they can as they go past.

> DAY Wait! I think I saw a big truck.

Philippe slams on the brakes and starts to back up.

POLICE LIGHTS pop on.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL

Shit.

She pulls over.

DAY This is bad. This is bad. There's probably warrants out for all of us after that Timmy's fiasco.

CONROY Almost certainly.

PAUL For the record once again, I did not lure that moose. We had a

connection. There's a difference.

DAY No way he's letting us slide. This is bad. This is bad.

Day just sorta shuts down, seems to be praying with clenched fists.

MORADO

We don't have time for this. Should I bolt? I'm gonna bolt.

MORADO goes to open the door but it is slammed shut from the outside.

MORADO (CONT'D) Damn! Yousonofafloornoodleeateryou -

CONROY Keep cool, Morado. Focus on your breathing. In through the nose, out through the mouth. It helps.

A FLASHLIGHT pops in her face. A very disdainful voice.

MOUNTIE (O.S.)

Stay.

The headless MOUNTIE appears in the driver window.

MOUNTIE (CONT'D) Identification, please.

Philippe The Perfect Tail has hers at the ready.

The Mountie is examining hers while the others dig theirs out.

MOUNTIE (CONT'D) Ms. Mistrial?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Mizztrill. Yup. That's me.

MOUNTIE That was some pretty reckless driving back there. Care to explain?

The others try to hand their IDs to the officer but Conroy 'accidentally' spills them over Philippe The Perfect Tail.

She ignores them.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Not really. Short answer? A friend of ours is at any moment going to set off a dump truck full of fireworks on a residential street as a deeply misguided expression of love.

(MORE)

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL (CONT'D) By my math any house within a hundred fifty feet or so is going to up. Poof.

MOUNTIE Oh, is that all?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Pretty much.

MOUNTIE Why didn't you alert the authorities?

CONROY We tried but have neither address, date or time of the attempt nor description of the vehicle.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Captain?

CONROY

Yes?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Any chance I can squeeze ten to twelve seconds of distraction out of you? Tick tock.

Conroy and MORADO smile in weird sync.

Baldwin and Paul are slightly unsettled.

CONROY (to Paul) It is required. The Lash must rise again.

PAUL

Oh dear.

MORADO You want a stinkin' distraction?

She whips out a TELESCOPING BATON and sticks the tip of it in Philippe The Perfect Tail's face. She has used nail polish to paint a little kitty face on the end.

MORADO (CONT'D) I'll give you a distraction. Say hello to my pussy.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL Hello, pussy.

CONROY

You may rely on us, Ms. Perfect Tail.

MORADO

Meow.

Baldwin gets out first, then Conroy exits the car and begins bellowing at the top of her lungs in her usual monotone.

MORADO shadows behind him, hiding the baton and itching for a chance.

Baldwin circles around the Mountie, unnoticed.

MOUNTIE

Okay, hey now -

CONROY

Alright, you cross-eyed, harelipped crotch licker. Here I am. You caught me. Somebody's getting a biiiig promotion. Congratulations, you septic tank smoothie of a soul, you fetid thing, you aborted warthog, you human sphincter, you leprous, pus-encrusted parasite, you win! Me? I'm waving my arms right over -

The Mountie is rattled and steps back toward his car.

MORADO makes a show of her baton and starts straight at him.

The Mountie steps back faster.

Morado raises her baton and grins like the devil.

Philippe The Perfect Tail turns over the engine and punches it.

Baldwin tackles the Mountie from behind. The Mountie's head bounces on the asphalt and knocks him out cold.

BALDWIN Aw, man. Looks like Baldwin did damage. Aw, man.

CONROY See to him now.

BALDWIN Yes, sir. MORADO? MORADO? CONROY I'm going to call an ambulance.

BALDWIN Did you see which way they went?

CONROY

No, sir.

BALDWIN Damn. It's up to them now.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

MORADO is running at top speed, searching frantically for any sign at all. It is truly a heroic effort. Unfortunately, she's running in the wrong direction.

She makes an angry face, digs deeper and somehow finds another gear.

Her speed is increasing as she disappears into the darkness. Her voice booms out of the dark.

> MORADO (O.S.) Gina! Geeeennaa!

EXT./INT. BLAND SEDAN - RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL, PAUL and DAY are tearing through the neighborhood now.

They cut corners so hard they're destroying LAWNS.

Day is freaking out.

Paul is, well, Paul.

PAUL

Aww.

What?

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL

PAUL I know time is of the essence but nothing pleases me quite like a lush, well-maintained lawn. I find they have a sensuous, almost erotic quality. Day and Philippe The Perfect Tail exchange looks mid-swerve.

PAUL (CONT'D) Don't be prudes. I only meant that it is like nature's own silk sheets. I like to roll around and smell the grass and drink wine and laugh and read poetry aloud while -

Philippe The Perfect Tail slams on the brakes.

They're here.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

PAUL and DAY approach GINA, who is sitting on a curb and trying to hide her face.

PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL stays in the car, watching avidly.

GINA

tree? Did that happen?

Hey.

DAY Aren't you surprised to see us?

GINA To be honest, I'm not sure you're real. Things have been touch and go. Then I hit my head pretty good. I think I saw Rabe screaming in a

PAUL No, we left Rabe back in the city. Ish.

GINA Yeah, okay. Good. I figured it had to be in my head. Nobody around for miles out there. So dark. That pitiful wailing, though. It wasn't human. The way it shook the trees. Terrifying. Being crazy isn't nearly as fun as Jim Carrey makes it look. It mostly sucks.

DAY We should get you to a hospital. Seeing stars, are you?

GINA (pause) No. . . I'm fine.

DAY Did you lose consciousness? GINA Yeah. DAY Hospital. GINA I said I was fine. Just really tired is all. Like bone deep sleep forever tired. PAUL Is that what stopped you? GINA You mean this? Here Gina holds up a MOLOTOV COCKTAIL. She's made bunny ears out of the cloth. She makes it do a little bunny hop. She lights her LIGHTER so the flames lick the tippy tip of the fabric. DAY Oh crap! PAUL That's a serious thing you're holding. Paul takes it from her. Day starts to tear up. GINA What can I say? It seemed a good idea at the time. A really, really good idea. But then I remembered I saw that. She points to the mailbox with the name "Bath-McTurguvinelsonivitch". GINA (CONT'D) After that, I got around to finally seeing that. She hitches her thumb over her shoulder, towards the SMALL HOUSE she is sitting in front of. A TEA TABLE play set with DOLLS is in the yard. The dolls are not normal princess

things.

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One is Emily the Strange, another is Ada Lovelace, another may or may not be Charlie Kaufmann (no one will say definitively) and the last is Bill. He made it himself. It is looking directly into the camera.

DAY

Oh.

PAUL

Indeed.

GINA Turns out she kept the name cuz of, well, duh.

DAY So they are divorced?

GINA

Yeah. For a long time. High school sweethearts. I didn't think to search Canadian records. I just saw this throbbing blue-green everywhere and that was that.

PAUL Why not return to her maiden name?

GINA Cuz it's Beaver. We talked for awhile but she has to get up in a few hours.

PAUL

Can I ask what your plan was here?

GINA

Honestly, I'm not sure. There was some sort of statement involved but it escapes me just now. It meant the world a minute ago. And now my world, my life. . .

PAUL Is full of people who hurt when you hurt.

Paul extends his hand and then Day does. They help her to her feet.

Day brushes off her behind.

Gina really is punchy. She embraces Paul tightly.

GINA Whoa. Jenny? PAUL Bleeding for you. GINA Oh, that's nice. I miss Bill. Is it okay to miss him now? Gina starts to fall flat on her face but the pair deftly catch her at the elbows. She's out. Paul gently lifts her into his arms and carries her to the car. As Paul pauses a moment before putting Gina in the backseat, Day kisses her ever so softly on the forehead. INT. 6TH PRECINCT - BULLPEN - DAY The old crew (except for Rabe) is back like nothing happened. JENNY and DAY are amusing each other. MORADO is scribbling furiously. BALDWIN is back to being neck deep in paperwork. There's a picture of Bill and Gina as her DESKTOP WALLPAPER. GINA is just working. CONROY is on the PHONE, looking at it like it just tried to eat her face. KNIEFL and STROHEIM just got the brilliant idea to try on each other's sweaters right there in the bullpen even though they are each wearing the exact same outfit. The elevator opens. RABE steps out boldly. Her face is covered with hundreds of recently healed tiny scratches and there's a more serious and recent line across her forehead (a la Frankenstein's Monster). She overdramatically announces -RABE I have returned! Crickets. Nobody cares. Jenny didn't hear her.

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RABE (CONT'D) I have returned!

Murmurs and a gentle of indistinguishable 'welcome back's and the sort.

Jenny approaches her, genuinely glad to see her.

Day follows, trying to be a team player.

JENNY Buddy, you're back!

Jenny puts RABE in a headlock and gives her a noogie.

RABE They took the last screws out of my skull this morning!

Jenny lets go.

DAY

Should you be here? What did the doctors tell you?

RABE Pshaw! What do doctors know?

JENNY You really should go home, buddy. You up in that tree for awhile. Listen to the doctors.

RABE

I'm fine. I've decided to think of the whole thing as a learning experience. Like, for instance, did you know squirrels will literally hump anything?

DAY Oh, dear Lord.

RABE

Yeah, things got a little tense when two started fighting over me but then they realized they could share my earholes, which was nice. Non-violence, ya know?

Day is instantly nauseous and flees.

RABE (CONT'D) What's her problem?

JENNY Dude. Seriously, I'm going to take you home. Let me -RABE I'm fine, Jenny. I'm fine. Let's get to -GINA (O.S.) Go home, Rabe. RABE Yes, ma'am. Rabe turns around and goes into the elevator. Jenny joins her.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

JENNY and RABE are riding alone.

RABE I think I figured out an in with the Nieder Gang. I have a nickname. A nickname! They call me 'Neidbau'. Kneeed booowww.

'Niedergang' means 'decline'. "Neidbau' means a building constructed for the sole purpose of annoying a neighbor.

JENNY What? Dude, you gotta let that go. Those guys will eat you alive.

RABE Can't do it, Jenny. If this whole adventure has taught me anything it's that to truly, truly be alive you have to walk right into the lion's mane and pull up a chair.

JENNY That's what you got out of all this?

RABE Of course. What did you get?

Jenny stops the elevator.

This both worries Rabe, due to claustrophobia issues, and thrills her because it's Jenny.

JENNY That every moment counts, even the lame ones. That there is no such thing as boredom. Only boring people get bored. That love is stronger than death. That the insult ladder game is really fun with two people but a lot harder than it looks. Writhing orange Albanians, ha. Classic. Day is shockingly good at it. Let's see, what else? That the motion of the ocean is in the air all around us. That 'simple' is not the same thing as 'plain' or 'average'. That without compassion one inevitably becomes and creates what one despises the most. That Margaret Atwood is a steely-eyed missile angel sent straight from Heaven. That if this is all there is, it's more than enough for me. No lions, though.

RABE Message received.

Jenny starts the elevator.

JENNY And it's lion's mouth, not lion's mane.

RABE

What?

JENNY You said you'd walk into the lion's mane, not mouth.

RABE No, I said 'mouth'. Pretty sure.

JENNY No, you didn't.

RABE Yes, I did.

JENNY No. . . you didn't.

The door dings open as we leave our heroes but they exit and the conversation keeps going.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

GINA is sitting alone at the BAR, talking on the PHONE. Most of the rest of the crew is mingling in the background. Rabe is absent.

JENNY and DAY and MORADO are all sorta dancing together.

BALDWIN and PAUL are engaged in a lively conversation about butterflies. Baldwin loves butterflies and Paul has studied them in depth.

CONROY is standing next to Paul, strictly a highly-amused bystander.

GINA I have to go. They're about to play my jam. . No. There's nothing supernatural about it. Quite the opposite. My favorite jam is the next one. Needs be, right? Take it easy.

Gina puts her phone away and looks down at her stomach.

Another PATRON with a big mop of hair gets her attention. She watches them watch the BARTENDER pour them a DRINK.

PATRON

Honestly, I have no idea why it takes me ten minutes to smoke a bowl. I suspect time gypsies. God, I hope it's time gypsies.

The Patron slams the drink and beams. The hair in their face gives the smile a cheshire cat vibe.

PATRON (CONT'D) Don't you just hate it when the heart of Saturday night slips right through your fingers?

Gina turns away and looks down to her stomach again, touching it softly.

GINA Hey there. Hey. I hope one of you has his eyes. I don't think that's too much to ask. . . That and being kissed too much. I hope you're cool with it cuz I ain't apologizin'.

She smiles and rises, thinking about how happy Jenny is going to be.

She walks the length of the bar, taking in the way the light plays off the bottles and the smells and the smiles around her.

She approaches KNIEFL and STROHEIM, who have been sitting off in a corner.

GINA (CONT'D) C'mon, ladies. Let's dance.

Their faces explode with light.

Stroheim jumps out of her seat and tries to hug her but she stiffarms her, pats her on the shoulder instead.

They all head toward the DANCE FLOOR.

The rest of the cast is already there and she is warmly surrounded.

The band PLASTICS REVOLUTION is onstage.

The LEAD SINGER taps the mike.

LEAD SINGER A little birdie just told me my girl Gina is in the house.

Hoots and hollers.

LEAD SINGER (CONT'D) How you doin', baby girl?

GINA

Fine, thank you. You still owe me six dollars.

LEAD SINGER No I don't. I got away with that shirt fair and square. But this song is for you. Always and forever, girl. Always and forever.

The band launches into their song "Light of Day" and the cast shouts along to the 'light of day, oohhh' chorus while dancing with feverish happiness and true joy.

Day really lets loose. She loves this song. She knows all the words.

In the mayhem we see Gina telling Jenny and her freaking out.

BAND Now the world is moving on a little fast Every day on TV there's a new disaster -

Here Stroheim spills something on herself.

BAND (CONT'D) - Oh, I can't change! You know I can't change!? I can't change! You know I can't change! Everybody's searching for a new direction Waiting for the government to stop inflation Oh, we're not safe! We can't be saved!? Leaders of nations on every station! Light of day ... ooh-Chasing the light of day ... ooh-"Have you ever thought of moving out of Earth some time?" I'd never leave, there's too much to leave behind Have you seen what's left to see? Have you been to Asia? Or even Croatia? Now the world is moving on a little fast Every day on TV there's a new disaster -

Here Stroheim almost spills on herself again but PHILIPPE THE PERFECT TAIL, appearing out of nowhere, stops her.

That is until an ecstatic Jenny crashes into them and makes it ten times worse than it would have been.

They don't care once she mimes them why.

BAND (CONT'D) Oh, I can change! Why can't they change? If they can't change, we're gonna make them change!!! Light of day... ooh-Chasing the light of day... ooh-I can change, I can chase the light of day...! ooh-I can change, I can chase the light of day...! oohBILL'S GHOST appears in the foreground, bathed in a Jedi glow. He is unseen by the rest of the cast.

He looks directly into the CAMERA.

BILL'S GHOST For the record, it was day seventeen that did the trick.

He gives us a cocky wink, a grin and a flick of his nose.

He then goes to stand behind Gina.

He puts his hand on her shoulder.

She sighs and her eyes get a little kinder. She starts to cry, smiling.

THE END

P.S. She will name the twins Roger and Marty but will never, ever explain why, not even to Jenny. She herself doesn't even know, not really. To her, they are from the most beautiful of dreams. If you would like to know why, see page thirteen.

FOOTNOTES

- 1. Where human weakness has come short,
- Or frailty stept aside,
- Do Thou, All-Good -for such Thou art-
- In shades of darkness hide.

2. from "Rider's Song" by Federico Lorca

Translation -

Black pony, big moon

And olives in my saddlebag.

Although I know the roads

I'll never reach Cordova.

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