

YOU MAY COME IN

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FADE IN

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - STEPHANIA'S OFFICE - DAY

STEPHANIA, in her thirties, clearly deprived of sleep, sits behind a large mahogany table and browses her smartphone.

A knock on the door. Stephanian sighs.

STEPHANIA  
You may come in.

A tall MAN, in his forties, enters, eyes exude confidence and self-respect. He flashes a police badge at her.

STEPHANIA  
I know who you are.

She invites him to the seat across. The Man takes his phone out and places it on the table. He punches a few keys.

STEPHANIA  
You can't record the session, sorry.

MAN  
Why is that? Don't you tape your clients whenever you feel like it?

STEPHANIA  
You're not my client.

He pockets his phone. Stephanian types something in her phone, then puts it away as well.

MAN  
Tell me what you do, and why.

STEPHANIA  
I provide services to those who lost someone close. I help them get over the loss.

MAN  
You're not a psychologist, right?

STEPHANIA  
No. I gather information on the deceased and converse with his relatives, pretending to be the person they lost. It's mostly online chats.

MAN  
So, in a way you play a ghost.

Stephania nods.

MAN

And you charge money for it?

STEPHANIA

I tax every penny of what I make.

MAN

You're an honest citizen, I forget.

STEPHANIA

You may not like it, but I help people. They get some closure if they didn't have a chance for a final talk with their beloved. Usually, they don't and that's when I come in.

The Man fumes at that, but takes a hold of himself.

MAN

Let's talk Irene Ketchum. After Pedro been shot, you told her on his behalf that he cheated on her.

Stephania reaches for her phone, opens it, checks her communication with Irene.

STEPHANIA

Yes. I wrote "your instincts are true. I've been seeing another woman." ...Sorry, there were reasons to do it to Pedro.

MAN

What reasons could you possibly have?!

STEPHANIA

I did a bit of investigation.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - SHOE SECTION - DAY

Stephania makes her selection, walks toward the counter. She's greeted by a cute female CASHIER. Stephania takes a note of the woman's earrings - bright daisy with pearls. The Cashier checks out the shoes Stephanias's buying.

CASHIER

I have the same in blue.

STEPHANIA

They must look great on you. Match your beautiful earrings, too, huh.

The Cashier touches her earrings, pleased.

CASHIER  
I got them for Valentine's day.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - STEPHANIA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Stephania reaches for a drawer, grabs a small jewelry box. Inside, the same pair of earrings. She flashes them at the Man.

STEPHANIA  
These are Irene's, he bought two on February 14. Irene knew he was cheating but haven't had the heart to admit that to herself. ...Don't you think knowing it will make it easy for her to let Pedro go?

MAN  
Pedro is dead. He was shot at job duty. Have some respect for the deceased police officer.

Stephania nods.

MAN  
I'll have to issue an arrest, sorry.  
You can't go on doing what you do.

STEPHANIA  
Sure, be my guest.

They hear a car enter the driveway and park. Pedro has deer in headlights look on his face.

MAN  
Who is it?

Stephania leans toward the window and knocks at the glass panel. She waves to the person outside.

STEPHANIA  
It's Irene. I wrote to her you're here to see her for the last time. Don't you think I'd recognize you, Pedro?

Pedro stiffens. They hear the steps closing the house.

STEPHANIA  
Sorry, you got shot. Now, don't make it hard for her, she's had enough.

Pedro rises, steps toward to the window, peeks through the shutters, watches Irene knock the front door.

PEDRO

God, I miss her so bad. She's my everything. I wish she didn't know about me and... that girl. I was a fool, having been shot serves me well. ...Maybe you're right. She got to move on. Just tell her I love her. Please.

Stephania steps out to greet Irene.

She and IRENE (40s), walk in shortly. Irene's expression tells she suffered a loss.

Pedro's eyes fixate on her, but she doesn't show any reaction to him. He sees she can't see him and slumps.

IRENE

Is he still here?

Pedro's chin trembles, he tries to fight a sob.

STEPHANIA

He's crying.

IRENE

Shouldn't I be crying? He lied to me.

Pedro squirms, shakes his head. He seems like aged ten years upon hearing Irene.

Stephania's studies him.

STEPHANIA

He says the cashier lady saw the earrings in his hands and asked him where he got it. He knew her from somewhere and couldn't refuse telling her. There was some WhatsApp to and fro because of that, nothing more.

IRENE

I don't believe it. Do you?

STEPHANIA

Spirits never lie. They can't.

Irene's eyes light up. Stephanias sits her down close to Pedro.

Pedro reaches for Stephanias hand and gives it a squeeze. Stephanias nods to him. She turns away from the two to give them a moment.

Pedro studies Irene, reaches for her, soaks her in, drinks her every feature.

IRENE  
I feel like he's touching me.

STEPHANIA  
He's right next to you.

Irene looks at Pedro. She doesn't see him, but she can feel his presence. Her chin trembles. He leans close, lingers at her skin. Smells her hair.

IRENE  
I love you, dear.

Her lips begin to quiver, eyes wet.

STEPHANIA  
He loves you very much, too. He asks you to move on though, okay?

They stay like that for a while, until Stephania touches Irene's shoulder.

STEPHANIA  
You can't stay for long. It's not good for you or his spirit.

Irene nods. She rises. Stephania walks Irene out, shuts the door behind. She returns to the seat behind her desk.

PEDRO  
Thank you so much. May I ask why you did it?

STEPHANIA  
Because I believed you love her.  
Remember, spirits don't lie.

Pedro nods.

STEPHANIA  
You must go now.

She sits down, closes her eyes, takes a moment for herself. When she opens her eyes - Pedro appears gone.

There's a knock on the door. Stephania sighs.

STEPHANIA  
You may come in.

FADE OUT.