

Panthera Leo
Written by
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Based on Real Events

Alicia Purdum 2016

FADE IN

EXT. WOODS - DAY

A girl sits behind a tree. This is SASHA (14). She is panting, looking scared.

She scans the vicinity, seeing nothing.

SKYLAR (19) aims a gun at her from across a clearing. (His POV)

He pulls the trigger.

Sasha grimaces, and looks down at the yellow stain on her shirt.

Skylar comes bounding out of the trees, laughing. The gun hanging relaxed at his side.

SASHA
I don't like this game.

SKYLAR
Why not? It's fun.

He holds out his hand and helps her up.

SASHA
I'm always the bait. Why can't I be the hunter?

SKYLAR
You can be the hunter when you beat me. Besides, you scared of guns.

SASHA
Not paint ones.

Another boy comes up to them. This is MARCUS (18).

MARCUS
Ya suck at this.

Sasha rolls her eyes.

SASHA
Race you home.

SKYLAR
Okay.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The three kids run through a field. Sasha in the front.

TITLE CARD : Panthera Leo

INT. SHOP - DAY

SASHA (14) kneels on the floor, stacking cans on the shelves.

She looks at her watch and stands.

Sasha walks over to the counter, where CASHIER (55) stands. He is reading a magazine, and doesn't bother to look up.

SASHA
I'm finished.

The cashier nods, turns a page.

SASHA
It's Friday.

The cashier looks up, annoyed.

CASHIER
And?

SASHA
And you aint paid me yet.

CASHIER
Ah, yes.

He stands and takes 5 twenties out of the cash drawer. He places it on the counter and she looks at it.

SASHA
I worked 20 hours this week.

CASHIER
Do you want money or not?

SASHA
That ain't even minimum wage.

CASHIER
Welcome to the real world,
sweetheart.

Sasha takes the money and leaves the store.

EXT. STOREFRONT - DAY

Sasha walks out and sees SKYLAR (19) leaning against the shop.

He holds up 2 ice creams. She takes one and they begin walking, eating the ice cream on the way.

SKYLAR
How was work?

SASHA
Fine.

SKYLAR
Djou get paid?

SASHA
Yep.

Sasha holds up the 100 dollars.

SKYLAR
Asshole. I don't know why you don't quit.

SASHA
We need cash.

SKYLAR
But still.

A car pulls up next to them, and an officer gets out. He is in plain clothes but has a police badge clipped to his belt. He is white. This is MUELLER (40).

MUELLER
Where y'all comin from?

SKYLAR
Work.

MUELLER
Can you guys please stand over here?

Sasha and Skylar walk over to the front of the car.

MUELLER
Hands on the car.

Skylar drops his ice cream and puts both hands on the car.

Sasha puts one hand on the car, still holding the ice cream. She looks at him and shrugs.

The officer takes it out of her hand.

SASHA

Hey!

He throws the ice cream on the ground.

MUELLER

I said hands on the car.

Sasha puts her other hand onto the car.

The officer frisks Skylar.

Skylar takes a step back when he finishes.

SASHA

Find what you were looking for?

MUELLER

You best shut up kid.

He begins to frisk Sasha roughly.

SASHA

You could at least buy me dinner first.

The officer pushes her roughly onto the hood of the car, his hand on the back of her neck.

MUELLER

I said shut up!

SKYLAR

Hey man, come on.

Skylar puts his hand onto the officer's shoulder.

MUELLER

You want to get arrested for assaulting an officer? I've got plenty of room in my back seat.

Skylar puts his hands up in surrender, and takes a step back.

The officer leans in close to Sasha.

MUELLER

Remember your place, little girl.

He presses her neck down and then backs up.

She stands, rubbing her neck.

The officer gets back into his car and drives away.

Sasha walks quickly away. Skylar hurries to catch up to her.

SKYLAR

Sasha.

SASHA

Thanks for the help.

SKYLAR

I'm sorry! Would you prefer I got arrested?

SASHA

Of course not.

They walk up the porch to their home and go inside.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The house is small, slightly messy. A dog runs up to greet them.

SASHA

I just want you to stick up for me.

Skylar takes out a pot and begins preparing cans of soup.

Sasha pours food into the dog bowl.

SKYLAR

You know I do. But not to cops.

SASHA

Why?

SKYLAR

We got frisked just for walking down the street. What do you think fighting will do?

She takes a chess game off of the shelf and tucks it under her arm.

SASHA
I'm going out.

SKYLAR
It's dark.

SASHA
I won't go far.

She opens the door to reveal DAD (48) standing outside. She stops short, surprised.

SASHA
Dad?

SKYLAR
What?

Dad looks sheepish.

DAD
Uh, hey.

SASHA
What do you want?

DAD
You were leaving. I'll come back.

SASHA
No. What?

DAD
I want to see you. Lets go out.

SASHA
I aint want to see you.

DAD
That's your brother talking. What he been telling you bout me?

SASHA
This is on you.

DAD
What did I do?

SASHA
Please just go.

DAD
You gonna ignore your own father?

SASHA
You left. Don't you pin this on me.

Skylar comes up behind her, stands glaring.

DAD
Sasha, come on. We got the same
blood.

SASHA
Didn't mean nothing to you.

Dad looks at Skylar.

DAD
Come talk outside.

SASHA
I don't wanna talk to you!

DAD
Sasha.

Skylar steps between them.

SKYLAR
She asked you to leave.

DAD
You stay outta this boy. This is a
conversation between me and my kid.

SKYLAR
It's a conversation between you and
my sister. And if she say she don't
wanna talk then she isn't going to.

DAD
You can't keep me from her.

Dad tries to push his way in and Skylar shoves him into the
street.

EXT. STREET

DAD
You think you're tough?

Skylar gets into Dad's face.

SKYLAR
Tough enough to kick your ass.

SASHA
Sky.

SKYLAR
Don't come here again.

Skylar walks back towards the house.

DAD
You're not going to keep me from
seeing my kid.

Skylar shuts the door.

INT. FRONT DOOR

Skylar locks the door.

SASHA
I'm sorry.

SKYLAR
You didn't ask him to come here.

He looks at the chess game in her hands.

SKYLAR
I don't want you going out tonight.

SASHA
I was just going to Marcus'.

SKYLAR
No.

SASHA
But it's just around the corner.

Skylar debates.

SASHA
Please?

SKYLAR
15 minutes. If you ain't back I'll
come looking.

SASHA
Okay. 15 minutes.

She walks out the door.

SKYLAR
I'm serious!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sasha walks down the street.

Sasha walks up to MARCUS (17) who is sitting on the first step. He is smoking a joint.

She sits across from him and opens up the chess game.

SASHA
Hey.

MARCUS
Hey.

They begin setting up the game.

MARCUS
Leave your moms alone?

SASHA
Nah, Skylar's there.

MARCUS
Ah. Who's turn is it?

SASHA
Yours.

They begin playing chess, using SEA CADET MATE strategy.

MARCUS
Okay, truth. What is stronger, love
or anger?

SASHA
I don't know.

MARCUS
You gotta answer.

SASHA
I know. I know. Gimme a sec.

She thinks.

SASHA
I guess anger. Because it keeps you
from thinking or doing anything.
You're blinded by it.

MARCUS
Love can do that too.

SASHA
You asked my opinion.

MARCUS
Fine.

They play for a moment in silence.

SASHA
My dad came by.

MARCUS
Why?

SASHA
Some bullshit about wanting to see
me or something.

MARCUS
You okay?

SASHA
I'm fine. Ha, I got your queen!

MARCUS
Shit.

Marcus studies the board again before moving his bishop.

SASHA
How you been?

MARCUS
Fine.

SASHA
Just fine.

MARCUS
Yes!

He snaps, and Sasha looks taken aback.

SASHA
What's wrong?

MARCUS
Checkmate.

SASHA

Damn.

Sasha begins packing up the game. Marcus looks conflicted.

MARCUS

I gotta tell you something.

Sasha checks her watch.

SASHA

Shit, I gotta go.

MARCUS

Sasha.

Sasha picks up the game and leaves. She calls over her shoulder.

SASHA

It's my turn!

Marcus grinds the blunt into the dirt angrily.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sasha walks along the street. She hums a tune, a smile playing over her lips.

Suddenly a man runs up and punches her square in the face.

She bends over, her hands over her face.

SASHA

Ow! What the fuck!

MAN 2

Pockets.

She looks up, blood streaming from her nose.

SASHA

I ain't got nothing.

The man looks around, nervous, eager to leave. He nods at the chess game.

MAN 2

Gimme that.

SASHA

It's a game.

MAN 2

Nigga I need to ask again?

Sasha hands over the game, and the guy tucks it under his arm.

MAN 2

Tell your brother I said hi.

He walks away quickly.

She wipes the blood from her face.

SASHA

Fuck.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sasha walks into the kitchen and unleashes the dog.

Skylar turns around and goes over to her.

SKYLAR

Dammit Sasha.

She grins sheepishly.

He brings her over to the sink and wets a washcloth.

She hops up onto the counter.

He begins cleaning her face.

SASHA

I'm fine.

SKYLAR

Your dad do this?

SASHA

No. I got mugged again.

SKYLAR

He take your cash?

SASHA

Nah, just my game.

Sasha gets down from the counter and takes a box of pills from the cabinet.

SKYLAR

You mad?

SASHA

Yeah! It was a good game!

Skylar takes 3 bowls from the cabinet and begins setting the table.

SKYLAR

This is why I didn't want you to go out.

Sasha pours out pills into a plastic cup. She fills a glass with water.

She walks to

INT. BEDROOM 1 - NIGHT

The bedroom is sparsely decorated. MOM (45) sits on the bed, facing the television. Her hair is disheveled, and she stares enraptured with the television, which is playing Popeye.

Sasha hands her the meds.

SASHA

Ma.

Mom looks up, noticing Sasha for the first time.

MOM

It's not 7 yet.

Sasha looks at the clock, which reads 6:58.

SASHA

2 minutes.

MOM

I take my medication at 7 o'clock.

SASHA

Can't you take it early?

MOM

No! If I take my medication early I have to move my whole schedule. Then I'll have to have dinner early, shower early, put on my pajamas early.

SASHA
Okay okay.

Sasha sits on the edge of the bed.

SASHA
How was your day?

MOM
Good.

Sasha watches the cartoon with her for a moment.

SASHA
I got mugged again.

Mom laughs at the television.

SASHA
Did you hear me?

MOM
You got mugged again.

Sasha sighs. She looks at the clock, which now reads 7:00.

SASHA
It's 7.

Sasha hands her the medication and water.

She begins to take them one at a time.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Skylar spoons soup into 3 bowls that are sitting on the kitchen table. A KNOCK sounds at the door.

Skylar walks to the front door, suspicious.

Sasha comes up behind him, standing in the doorway.

Skylar opens the door angrily.

SKYLAR
I told you to go away.

He sees it's a man wearing a hat low on his head and a bandana across his face. A cross necklace sits on his chest. There is a car idling in the street.

The man lifts his arm, revealing a semi automatic weapon.

He opens fire and then runs to the car.

Skylar coughs up blood, and then slides down the wall, leaving a streak of blood behind.

Sasha stands behind him, trembling, covered in a spray of blood. A bullet graze goes across her right cheek.

She drops to her knees.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sasha sits on the couch, staring blankly, rigid, almost uncomfortable. Her eyes shine, but there are no tears. A bandage covers the right side of her face, which is clear of blood. Her clothes are still covered in it.

Her mother lays next to her, her head resting in Sasha's lap. Tears stream down her face.

A knock at the door.

Sasha goes to answer the door. Skylar's body is gone, but the blood remains.

She opens the door to reveal Mueller. He chuckles sarcastically.

MUELLER
We meet again.

SASHA
4 hours.

MUELLER
What?

SASHA
We've been waiting 4 hours!

MUELLER
Can I come in?

Sasha steps aside, shutting the door behind him.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The 3 bowls of soup sit untouched on the table.

Sasha is sitting across from Mueller.

She looks down at her hands and notices the blood covering them.

She furiously tries to scrub it off on her jeans.

Sasha glances at Mom, who is still sitting on the couch, unblinking. She has a glass of water in her hands.

A stack of papers sit in front of Mueller, a briefcase on the ground next to him.

MUELLER

Can I please talk to your mother?

Sasha shakes her head no.

MUELLER

How come?

SASHA

She aint real keen on talking to strangers.

MUELLER

Okay. Well, It just feels like there is something missing.

Sasha raises her eyebrows, confused.

MUELLER

From what you've told me there's no reason your brother should have been killed.

MUELLER (CONT'D)

Could it have been a rival gang?

Sasha shakes her head no.

MUELLER

Are you sure?

Sasha nods her head yes.

MUELLER

I'm not attempting to insinuate anything. It's just that cases like these tend to be gang related.

Sasha glares at him.

SASHA

He weren't in a gang.

MUELLER

Did he have any altercations?

SASHA

No.

MUELLER

No one who was angry with him?

Sasha looks at him.

Mueller waits to see if she says anything else.

Mom drops the glass she was holding. CRASH.

Mueller looks over in shock, but Sasha seems unperturbed.

Mom picks up a shard of glass, her fingers trembling.
Suddenly Sasha is there, holding her wrist.

SASHA

Give it to me.

Mom slowly relents, dropping the piece of glass into Sasha's hands.

Mueller sits at the table, unsure of what to do.

SASHA

Please leave.

Sasha stands and coaxes Mom to the bedroom.

She returns and begins picking up the broken glass.

MUELLER

I understand that this has been
tough for you

Sasha scoffs.

MUELLER (CONT'D)

so I'm going to leave. I have all
of the information that I need.

Sasha stands and walks behind him to

INT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

SASHA

Will you find 'em?

MUELLER

I'd like to say yes.

Sasha raises her eyebrow.

MUELLER

But there's a good chance that we won't.

SASHA

Why?

MUELLER

Do you know how many people have been shot this month?

Sasha shakes her head no.

MUELLER

213. 213 people. We can't keep up.

SASHA

You ain't even gonna try?

MUELLER

Of course we'll try. But don't get your hopes up.

Sasha starts to reply, and then slams the door. She walks back to

INT. BEDROOM 2 - NIGHT

She shuts the door behind her, and leans against it.

The bedroom is relatively neat. But it is sparse, undecorated.

She takes a flat penny from her pocket and fingers it.

She throws herself down on the bed and curls into a ball, facing the wall.

INT. BEDROOM 2 - NIGHT (CONT'D)

Sasha lays on the bed, asleep. Suddenly a SMOKE DETECTOR goes off.

Sasha leaps out of bed and runs to

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mom stands at the stove, a pan of burning food in front of her. Smoke fills the room. There is a mess everywhere, and Mom has flour streaked across her face.

Sasha runs and takes the pan from her mom, dumping it into the sink.

SASHA
What are you doing?

MOM
I wanted to make breakfast.

Sasha runs water over the food. She opens the window and begins fanning the air.

SASHA
It's

She looks at the clock on the stove.

SASHA
4 in the morning. Go back to bed!

The smoke alarm stops.

MOM
I just wanted to.

SASHA
What? Burn the goddamn house down?

MOM
I didn't mean to.

She looks hurt. Sasha sees the look on her face and relents.

SASHA
You scared me.

Sasha wets a rag and cleans her mom's face.

MOM
I'm going to bed.

SASHA
Okay.

Mom leaves. Sasha surveys the kitchen and turns off the tap.

She begins wiping up the flour. She looks at the doorway and notices the blood.

INT. FRONT DOOR -NIGHT

Sasha kneels in front of the door, a bucket of soapy water in front of her. She is scrubbing the blood off of the walls.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sasha walks around the living room, tidying frantically. A woman (PCA) shadows her with a notepad, listening intently. She looks nervous, and scribbles notes as Sasha speaks.

SASHA

She takes her meds at 7. Not 6:59,
not 7:01. 7.

The woman nods.

PCA

7.

SASHA

Her show starts at 6:30. Do not let
her miss it.

PCA

What happens if I'm late?

SASHA

Don't be.

Sasha begins picking up clothes.

SASHA

Okay. Um, she takes a bath at 9
o'clock. She can't shower because
water gets in her eyes. You can't
leave her unattended in the
bathroom, period.

PCA

What if-

SASHA

Period.

Sasha looks at PCA, a bundle of clothing in her arms.

SASHA

You need to cook meals for her. She
only eats soup, so have fun with
that. Dinner is at 7:30 every
night. You also need to do laundry.
Don't let her see you wash
anything.

PCA

Why?

SASHA
Just trust me. Don't.

Sasha hands her the bundle of clothes.

SASHA
Here.

She reaches into her pocket and unfolds a piece of paper.

SASHA
I made a schedule so you don't forget. She has it memorized though, so don't try to change anything.

PCA
Okay. Thank you. Have you been doing all of this yourself?

Sasha stops cold, fades away a bit.

SASHA
Uh, not always.

She shakes her head, shaking back to her senses.

SASHA
I've gotta go.

She walks to the door, picking up a box on the way.

She turns around.

SASHA
You'll do fine.

PCA smiles, relieved.

PCA
Thanks.

Sasha leaves and shuts the door behind her.

PCA looks around worriedly.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sasha walks down the road, a large box in her hands.

She enters a PAWN SHOP.

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

Sasha stands at the counter, the box between her and the checker. Random items litter the counter.

SASHA
Nothing?

CHECKER
I'm sorry.

The checker starts to leave.

SASHA
My brother's dead.

CHECKER
What?

SASHA
That's why I need money. For the funeral.

CHECKER
I'm sorry, but I can't help you.

Sasha begins to pack up the box, dejected. She turns to leave.

CHECKER
You can take something from that table if you want.

He gestures to a table, also covered in junk.

Sasha walks past it, but then goes back.

She picks up a police scanner and puts it into her box.

She walks out of the store.

EXT. PAWN SHOP

Sasha steps outside and sees Marcus sitting across the street.

She walks over to him and sits down.

SASHA
Got any money?

He laughs.

MARCUS
No, why?

SASHA
My brother's funeral.

MARCUS
Funeral?

SASHA
Yep.

He looks uncomfortable.

MARCUS
Are you...

SASHA
I'm fine.

She stares absentmindedly for a minute. She perks up.

SASHA
Do you know anything?

MARCUS
I wasn't there.

SASHA
You were just around the corner!
Did you see anything suspicious?
Or, there was a car.

MARCUS
I didn't see a car.

SASHA
You must've. It went right by your
house.

Marcus jumps up.

MARCUS
I didn't see it, okay! Stop
interrogating me!

Sasha looks taken aback.

SASHA
I'm sorry.

MARCUS

Jesus! I'm sorry I don't know everything that fucking happens in the world.

SASHA

Marcus.

MARCUS

Look. I'm sorry your brother is dead. But I can't help you.

He walks away.

SASHA

Marcus!

She sighs, confused.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sasha sits on the sofa, looking through photos of Skylar.

There is a knock at the door.

She stands and answers it to reveal GRANDPA (65).

SASHA

Grandpa?

He pulls her into a hug, which she receives stiffly.

GRANDPA

I'm so sorry that this happened.

Sasha pulls back.

SASHA

Do you want to come in?

He walks into the house and she closes the door behind him.

SASHA

I'd offer tea or something, but we aint got any.

He sits at the table, and she sits next to him.

GRANDPA

It's fine. I can't stay long.

SASHA

Ok.

He skirts around the subject, awkwardly conversing.

GRANDPA

How's your mom doing?

SASHA

She's good.

GRANDPA

Oh good. How's she taking this?

SASHA

I'm not really sure.

GRANDPA

Ah.

They look at each other awkwardly.

SASHA

So...

GRANDPA

You are going to come to live with me.

SASHA

What?

GRANDPA

Your brother and I talked it over. That if anything were to happen to him I'd take care of you.

SASHA

What about Mom?

GRANDPA

There are plenty of great residential centers-

SASHA

No way. You're not sticking her in some loony bin.

GRANDPA

That's not what it is.

SASHA
I take care of her fine.

GRANDPA
You're just a child.

SASHA
I been doing it for years. This
won't change anything.

GRANDPA
You are too young to live alone.

SASHA
I'm not alone.

GRANDPA
She is unfit to be a guardian
Sasha. You know that.

SASHA
I don't want to go to Maine! That's
hundreds of miles away.

GRANDPA
This isn't a negotiation.

SASHA
You can't make me leave.

GRANDPA
Unfortunately I can.

SASHA
How?

He stands.

GRANDPA
Please don't make this more
difficult than it needs to be.

She glares at him.

GRANDPA
Why don't you go get your things?

SASHA
Now?

GRANDPA
Yes.

SASHA
I can't leave now!

GRANDPA
Why?

SASHA
I've, I've got my friends. My dad
lives here.

GRANDPA
You hate your dad.

SASHA
Skylar just died!

GRANDPA
More reason to distance yourself.
Take some stress off your
shoulders.

SASHA
But we don't even know who killed
him.

GRANDPA
Does it matter?

She looks shocked.

GRANDPA
Look. I'll give you one week to
'get ready.'

SASHA
A week.

GRANDPA
I'll be back.

He walks out, leaving her sitting there stunned.

INT. BEDROOM 2 - NIGHT

Sasha lays on the bed next to her mom, who appears to be
sleeping.

SASHA
Grandpa came by today.

MOM
I know.

Sasha sits up, shocked.

SASHA
You knew?

MOM
Yes.

SASHA
Do you know why he came?

MOM
Yes.

SASHA
So you want me to leave?

MOM
Of course not. I want what's best
for you.

SASHA
You're best for me.

MOM
I'm not.

She begins to cry, silently.

Sasha lays down, forehead to forehead.

MOM
I'm sorry.

SASHA
I love you.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sasha sets the table for dinner, laying out 2 plates and
silverware.

She straightens the silverware so that it lines up
perfectly.

CRASH

The window shatters, glass flying!

Sasha drops to the floor in fright.

She waits a moment and peeks around the corner, looking at
the broken window.

A brick sits on the ground.

She goes over cautiously and picks it up.

She turns it over and there is a note attached. It reads
SNITCHES GET STITCHES.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sasha duct tapes a tarp over the broken window.

The phone rings.

SASHA

Hello?

V.O

Find Aunt Frieda.

SASHA

Who is this?

The line goes dead.

SASHA

Hello? What the hell.

She goes back to taping the window.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sasha sits on the floor in front of the coffee table. Papers litter the table, as do various writing utensils. Marcus sits next to her.

Sasha is making a flyer which reads SKYLAR WHITE, BORN OCT. 18, 1996, KILLED JUNE 6, 2016. IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 773-867-9563. REWARD. SUSPECT HAS CROSS NECKLACE.

Marcus is searching through a box of photos.

He picks up a photo of a young Skylar.

He holds it up to Sasha, questioningly.

SASHA

Needs to be recent.

Marcus continues digging through the photos.

MARCUS

You take these?

SASHA
Nah. My ma did. A past obsession.

MARCUS
Ah, cool.

Sasha finishes the poster, puts down the pen.

SASHA
How many of these do you think
we'll need?

MARCUS
Like a hundred? Two?

SASHA
Okay.

Beat.

Do you know who Aunt Frieda is?

Marcus drops the box, startled.

MARCUS
Why?

SASHA
She might know who killed Skylar.

MARCUS
Why do you think that?

Sasha pulls out the note.

SASHA
Do you know where she is?

Marcus shakes his head.

Sasha looks at him skeptically.

MARCUS
I swear! I don't.

SASHA
Fine.

Marcus digs through the photos for a few seconds.

He looks up again.

MARCUS
Please don't try to find him Sasha.

SASHA
Him?

MARCUS
He won't take kindly to questions.

SASHA
I thought you didn't know him.

MARCUS
I know people like him.

Sasha rolls her eyes.

MARCUS
I'm serious!

SASHA
Okay, okay.

Sasha looks into the box of photos.
She pulls one out, the same one Mueller had.
She holds it up for Marcus to see.

MARCUS
Good.

Sasha nods in agreement.
She glues the photo onto the poster.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sasha hangs a flyer on a street pole.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Sasha sits at a table, alone. She fiddles with the penny, agitated. A cup of tea sits in front of her.

Dad walks over to the table and sits down. He looks almost homeless, his lips cracked and a beanie covering his balding head.

She looks almost repulsed by him.

DAD

Coffee.

Sasha gets up and goes to get a cup of coffee.

Dad looks around the cafe, scoping out the place.

Sasha returns with the coffee and places it in front of him.

She watches as he pours an ungodly amount of sugar into it and stirs.

SASHA

Sugar rots your teeth.

He smiles, showing teeth that are already past the point of no return.

Sasha grimaces and sips her tea.

DAD

So you need money.

Sasha nods.

DAD

How much?

SASHA

Seven.

DAD

Hundred?

Sasha grimaces.

DAD

Thousand!

Dad laughs.

DAD

You expect me to give you seven grand?

SASHA

You got it.

DAD

Don't matter if I got it. I haven't seen you in over a year and you suddenly show up asking for money.

SASHA
I wouldn't ask if I had any
other options.

DAD
What you need that much cash
for anyhow?

SASHA
Skylar's funeral.

DAD
That nigga finally got
himself killed, huh?

SASHA
He didn't 'get himself killed.'

DAD
And why should I give you money
for some kid I ain't even know?

SASHA
He's my brother.

DAD
That don't make me responsible
for him.

SASHA
I know you got it.

DAD
I got it cause I worked for it!
Bet that nigga never did a day of
work in his life.

She looks down and notices a baggie of crack on the floor.

SASHA
Dropped something.

DAD
What?

She nods at the bag, and he leans down to pick it up.

He tucks it into his pocket, chuckles.

DAD
Shit.

She leans back, takes a deep breath.

SASHA
Where were you last night?

DAD
Nowhere.

SASHA
Dad.

DAD
Nowhere.

SASHA
Just tell me!

DAD
Why?

Pause.

I didn't kill him Sasha.

SASHA
You lying?

DAD
I ever lied to you?

SASHA
Yes.

Sasha contemplates her tea, she looks up abruptly.

SASHA
You know who Aunt Frieda is?

DAD
Yeah. He the dentist.

SASHA
Dentist?

DAD
He'll get you that Grade A teeth if
you know what I mean.

Sasha looks confused.

DAD
Why? You gettin into that rock?

SASHA
No.

DAD
Hey, I don't judge.

SASHA
I ain't like you.

He leans forward threateningly.

DAD
What's that supposed to mean?

Sasha collects herself, runs her fingers through her hair.

SASHA
Where he live?

DAD
I don't know.

SASHA
Thought you knew him?

DAD
Not personally.

SASHA
Then how is that helpful?

DAD
Why you so eager to find him
anyways?

SASHA
I'm not.

DAD
Well good. He's bad news.

SASHA
I gotta go.

She stands to leave.

DAD
Hey. You can have the money.

SASHA
Really?

DAD
Sure. On one condition.

Sasha looks suspicious.

DAD
I want you to come visit me.

SASHA
No.

DAD
No? I thought you needed this.

Sasha deliberates.

Dad holds a roll of bills out to her.

DAD
Consider this a down payment.

She reaches to take it and he pulls it back.

DAD
Is that a yes?

Sasha nods, brusque.

She turns to leave and he grabs her arm.

DAD
I expect to see you.

She wrenches her arm from his grip and storms out of the cafe.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sasha walks around the corner.

Someone smashes into her, sending her sprawling to the ground.

He helps her up.

She looks up and sees that it is Mueller.

MUELLER
Shit.

SASHA
Mueller.

MUELLER
I have someplace to be.

He steps away from her.

SASHA
You been ignoring my calls.

MUELLER
We are very busy. Try calling at a
different time.

SASHA
Anyone snitched yet?

MUELLER
It's only been two days.

SASHA
So?

MUELLER
I'll tell you something when I know
it.

Sasha glowers.

MUELLER
It's very difficult to find
witnesses.

SASHA
Especially when you ain't looking.

MUELLER
Excuse me?

SASHA
Not one person been down my street.

MUELLER
I really have to go.

He begins to leave and Sasha jogs to keep up with him.

SASHA
You can't just blow me off.

MUELLER
You need to be patient and let us
do our job.

SASHA
Fine. I'll do it myself.

MUELLER
You know you can't do that.

SASHA
Why?

MUELLER
You're a kid.

SASHA
I ain't a kid.

MUELLER
You are, and you are going to wind
up getting yourself hurt.

SASHA
I know these streets better'n
anyone.

MUELLER
I. Don't. Care.

Mueller begins to walk away again, and she grabs his sleeve.
He jerks his arm from her grip.

SASHA
Please.

Mueller softens a bit, around the edges.

He takes the cigarette from her mouth and grinds it into the
dirt.

MUELLER
You're too young to smoke.

He leaves, leaving a crushed Sasha standing alone.

She notices a pair of handcuffs on the sidewalk and picks
them up.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Sasha stands in front of the bathroom mirror. She is wearing
a suit.

Sasha wraps a tie around her neck and ties it deftly.

She walks to

INT. BEDROOM 1 - DAY

Mom sits on the edge of the bed. Sasha comes up behind her and begins brushing her hair.

Mom is looking at photographs of Skylar and crying.

Suddenly Mom begins tearing up the photos and smacks herself in the head.

SASHA
Stop. Please, ma.

Sasha holds her mom's arms down until she calms.

SASHA
Can I ask a question?

Mom doesn't make eye contact, doesn't reply.

SASHA
Look at me. Ma, look at me.

Sasha takes her head in her hands. Mom avoids eye contact.

SASHA
I need you to tell me something.

MOM
A duel between three people is
actually called a truel.

SASHA
What? No. Did you see who killed
Skylar?

MOM
No.

SASHA
Are you sure? You're 100 percent
sure you don't know anything.

Mom cranes her neck to try and see the television around Sasha.

SASHA
Mom!

MOM
It's time for my show.

Sasha lays back on the bed, giving up, her hand thrown over her eyes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sasha sits on the couch, holding the police scanner. She scrolls through the channels, listening closely.

Suddenly a burst of noise.

RADIO

10-37

It goes back to static. Sasha attempts to go back to the station.

RADIO

(Street name) Vehicle spotted. Blue with white stripe.

Flashback to the car in the street, when Skylar is killed.

RADIO

Suspicious activity reported.
Officer please respond.

The front door closes, the radio left on the couch.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sasha stands across the street, looking at the car.

She looks to make sure no one is around, and then walks up to it.

She tries all of the doors, which are locked.

Looking around again, she picks up a rock and smashes the driver side window.

Sasha reaches in and unlocks the door, opening it.

She climbs in and searches around the floorboards, opens the glove compartment, and finds nothing but garbage.

She looks under the seats and finds a flyer for a Narcotics Anonymous meeting.

She sits up, intrigued.

WOMAN

Hey!

Sasha looks up, and sees the woman coming towards her.

She stands and runs away.

EXT. TRAIN TRACK - DAY

Sasha walks along the train tracks, the flyer tucked into her back pocket. She is balancing on the rail.

FLASHBACK

Sasha is in the same place, with Skylar on the opposite rail.

Skylar stops and bends down to pick something up.

SASHA

What?

Skylar holds up the penny, showing her. It is dark and weathered.

SASHA

Is it a penny?

SKYLAR

I think so. Hard to tell.

He tries to rub some of the dirt off. Sasha comes closer to look.

SASHA

Can we try?

SKYLAR

Try what?

Coins sit on the train rail. A train comes barreling through, whistle blaring.

After the train passes Skylar and Sasha come out from the trees.

They run to the rails, and Sasha holds up one of the flattened coins.

SASHA

It worked!

SKYLAR

Give that one to me.

Sasha hands it over.

SASHA

Why?

SKYLAR
I get the shiny ones.

He tosses her the weathered coin, which she deftly catches.

SKYLAR
You can have this.

SASHA
Not fair.

They both laugh. She turns the penny in her hands.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. OFFICE - DAY

Sasha sits outside a building, watching. There is a NA sign on the door.

She turns the penny in her hands.

People begin to come out and she walks over to them.

She begins searching for people with necklaces. None of them are crosses.

She sees a group of people smoking joints a bit further away.

She goes over to them.

SASHA
Hey.

They stare at her, threatening.

SASHA
Where'd you get those?

MAN 3
You serious?

Sasha looks confused.

MAN 3
You a narc.

SASHA
I ain't a narc.

He laughs.

MAN 3
Nigga please.

They go back to their conversation, ignoring her.

SASHA
I'm looking for Aunt Frieda.

This gets their attention.

MAN 3
Who?

SASHA
Aunt Frieda. Right?

MAN 3
Why?

SASHA
I need to talk to him.

The man scrutinizes her.

MAN 3
Here.

He holds out the blunt.

Sasha looks confused.

MAN 3
You aint a cop. Should be no
problem.

SASHA
I aint a narc.

He waves the joint towards her.

She takes it and takes a long drag before handing it back.

He laughs.

MAN 3
Why you need to talk to Aunt Frieda
anyways?

SASHA
You gonna tell me or not?

MAN 3

You wanna find Aunt Frieda you
gonna have to go talk to Duane.

Mueller comes out of the building, talking with another
person.

Sasha looks up and sees him, but he doesn't see her.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sasha stands in front of her poster, which is pasted to a
street pole. It is covered in graffiti.

She angrily rips the poster down, and crumples it up.

Marcus walks up the street towards her.

MARCUS

(angrily)

Hey!

Sasha turns to him. He reaches her.

MARCUS

You been bothering people?

She ignores him.

MARCUS

I asked you a fucking question!

She tries to walk past him.

He spins her around, presses her against the street pole.

SASHA

Get off me.

MARCUS

I told you to stay out of it!

SASHA

Let me go.

MARCUS

Sasha. Sasha. Listen to me!

He pulls her close, her wrist held between them.

SASHA

What!

MARCUS
I'm not always going to be around
to save you.

She laughs, affronted.

SASHA
This is saving me?

MARCUS
People are talking. People you
should be scared of.

SASHA
I ain't scared.

He lets go of her wrists and grabs her by the shoulders.

MARCUS
You're not listening! These people
will not hesitate to kill you.

SASHA
I can handle myself.

Marcus groans, exasperated.

MARCUS
You're a fucking kid!

SASHA
I am not a kid!

Marcus shoves her to the ground.

MARCUS
Get up.

She stands, and he slaps her across the face.

She drops to a knee, blood trickling from her mouth.

He yells at her.

MARCUS
Come on!

She lunges at him.

He sidesteps her and pushes her to the ground again. Her
face smacks into the street pole.

MARCUS
Handle yourself!

She stands and turns to him.

He is holding a gun, pointed in her direction.

MARCUS
You're dead.

He lowers the gun, tucks it back into his waistband.

MARCUS
Go home.

She glares at him, wipes the blood from her lip.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Sasha sits on a log in a clearing. She is in the middle of the woods, nothing around. Something wrapped in a handkerchief sits next to her.

The day is cloudy and chilly.

Marcus walks up to her.

MARCUS
It's freezing.

Sasha unwraps the package, revealing a small handgun.

MARCUS
Where'd you get that?

SASHA
Teach me.

MARCUS
Sasha.

SASHA
I need to learn to protect myself.

MARCUS
Where did you get that?

SASHA
Will you help me or not?

Marcus looks apprehensive.

EXT. WOODS - DAY (CONT'D)

Sasha stands with the gun held in front of her. Marcus stands behind her, helping her line up the shot.

MARCUS
So you just line up the sights,
concentrate, and fire.

SASHA
At what?

He looks around.

MARCUS
There.

He points across the clearing.

A rabbit sits, chewing on grass.

Sasha looks dubious.

MARCUS
Shoot it.

Sasha lines up the shot, face screwed up in concentration.

She wavers, afraid to shoot, debating it. Her hands shake.

With a sigh she lowers the gun.

She shakes her head no.

MARCUS
What?

SASHA
I can't.

He sighs, exasperated.

INT. BEDROOM 2 - NIGHT

She begins to search the room, pulling books off of the shelf, digging through drawers, dumping out containers.

She tears the posters from the wall, becoming more and more frenzied.

She rips the blankets off of the bed, flips the mattress up.

She notices a hole inside the mattress and feels inside.

She pulls out a baggie with crack and a pipe inside it.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sasha walks up the path to a house, radiating fury.

She debates for a moment before knocking.

After a moment the door swings open, revealing a small child. Sasha is surprised.

SASHA

Uh, hi there.

The kid walks back into the house, leaving the door open.

Sasha follows, hesitantly, shutting the door behind her.

INT. HOUSE

The house is a mess, a haze in the air. People stand in the hall, smoking. Loud music plays somewhere else in the house.

The people standing around watch her as she walks past.

A scantily clad woman comes up to Sasha, too close for comfort.

WOMAN 1

You lost sugar?

SASHA

I'm looking for Duane?

The woman points down the hallway.

Sasha walks down the hallway to a living room. It is sparsely furnished, with people lounging around in various states of consciousness.

Scantily clad and heavily made up women sit on one side, while a group of men sits around a table.

Sasha walks over to the table, pushing her way through multiple people.

Duane sits at the table, playing cards with some other men. A pipe sits on the table, as well as an ashtray with joints and cigarettes.

SASHA

You Duane?

DUANE
Who's asking?

His words slur, almost unintelligible.

SASHA
Can we talk in private?

Sasha looks nervous, noticing the men watching her.

DUANE
You can talk here.

The guys move over, and Sasha comes closer.

She puts the bag of drugs onto the table.

DUANE
Where'd you get that?

SASHA
This yours?

DUANE
No.

SASHA
Don't you fucking lie to me. I know
this is yours.

He picks up the bag and looks at it.

DUANE
This is a lot. I don't sell this
much.

SASHA
Then where'd it come from?

He lights a pipe, taking a long drag. He offers it to Sasha.
She shakes her head.

DUANE
What? Not good enough for you?

SASHA
I don't smoke.

He looks around the room, laughs, gesturing grandly.

DUANE
Oh-ho. Hear that guys? She don't
smoke!

SASHA

Hey!

He focuses back on her.

DAD

So you want me to buy this.

SASHA

No! I want to know why my brother
had it!

Marcus walks into the room then. He locks eyes with Sasha,
startled.

He walks over to Duane and whispers into his ear. Sasha
looks gobsmacked.

SASHA

Marcus?

DUANE

You two know each other? Well, come
on. Sit!

Marcus sits, uncomfortable.

DUANE

What's your name?

SASHA

Sasha.

DUANE

Sasha, lets play a game.

SASHA

No.

He takes out a gun and sets it between them on the table. He
removes 5 of the 6 bullets.

DUANE

I'm going to take out 5 bullets.
But I'll leave one in.

Sasha looks worriedly at Marcus.

MARCUS

Duane.

DUANE

Shut up!

Sasha jumps, startled at the sudden yell.

DUANE

You go first.

SASHA

I wanna know where I can find Aunt Frieda.

DUANE

That aint none of your business.

SASHA

Fine.

She stands to leave, and Duane levels the gun at her.

DUANE

Sit down!

She sits reluctantly, she avoids looking at Marcus.

DUANE

I played your game. Now you play mine.

MARCUS

Sasha-

Duane stands and grabs Marcus by the shirt. He hurls him to the floor.

DUANE

Speak when spoken to!

Marcus looks frightened, almost pitiful. He stays on the floor.

Duane sits back down and levels the gun again.

DUANE

Go.

Sasha shakes her head.

DUANE

I'm going to count to ten. 1, 2, 3.

SASHA
No.

DUANE
4. 5.

SASHA
I won't.

DUANE
6. 7.

SASHA
I said no!

DUANE
8. 9.

MARCUS
Just do it Sasha!

DUANE
10! 10! 10!

She picks up the gun, holds it to her temple.

She pulls the trigger.

CLICK.

She gasps in relief.

She puts the gun back onto the table, breathing heavily.

Duane leans back in his chair.

DUANE
Get out.

SASHA
What?

He stands up, grabs her by the hair.

DUANE
Get out!

He drags her to the door, flings her out onto the porch.

EXT. HOUSE

Sasha sprawls across the porch. She picks herself up.

DUANE

If you come here again I'll kill
you!

He slams the door. She pounds on it.

SASHA

Hey! Hey!

She stops suddenly, runs into the grass and vomits.

A pair of heels comes into her field of view.

Sasha looks up to reveal the woman from the hallway.

The woman hands Sasha a piece of paper.

WOMAN 1

You looking for the dentist, you'll
find him here.

SASHA

Huh?

WOMAN 1

You better scram kid.

Sasha takes it and the woman walks back to the house.

Sasha opens the folded paper and sees an address written on
it.

INT. BEDROOM 2 - NIGHT

Sasha sits on the bed, phone held to her ear. The note from
the brick sits next to her.

SASHA

Can I speak to Detective Mueller
please. Oh. Well do you know when
he'll be back? Do you know where he
is? Okay. Uh-huh, thanks.

INT. DINER- NIGHT

Sasha walks into a dinky diner.

She looks around, and spots Mueller sitting alone at a table. There are multiple beer bottles on the table, but the meal is only half eaten.

She sits down at the table.

MUELLER

Ah fuck.

Sasha puts the note onto the table.

SASHA

Someone threw a brick through my window. This was on it.

MUELLER

I'm having dinner. Can this wait?

SASHA

The person who killed my brother sent this.

He continues to eat, attempting to ignore her.

SASHA

Mueller!

Mueller gives up, sighs, looks at the note.

MUELLER

What am I supposed to do with this?

SASHA

I don't know! Can't you get fingerprints or something?

MUELLER

The only fingerprints are going to be yours. And now mine.

She thinks.

SASHA

The car! You found the car!

MUELLER

The car you broke into.

SASHA

But-

MUELLER

I'm not finished eating.

He goes to take a bite and Sasha pushes the plate off of the table.

SASHA

Finished?

He groans and focuses his attention.

SASHA

This Frieda person knows who killed my brother. Can't you find him?

MUELLER

It doesn't work like that.

SASHA

Why?

MUELLER

Because I can't find someone with just their fucking first name!

Sasha looks at the bottles on the table.

SASHA

Where's your wife?

MUELLER

Go home Sasha.

SASHA

She leave?

Pause. Mueller begins to fume.

SASHA

Did you leave?

MUELLER

I didn't leave anyone.

Sasha smiles, realizing she has the upper hand.

SASHA

Get a little too into the hard rock?

MUELLER

What?

SASHA

Jelly beans. Elektric cool aid.
Crunch and munch?

Mueller slams his fist down onto the table, startling Sasha.

MUELLER

Shut up!

She smiles, triumphant.

SASHA

So that is it.

The waitress comes over. He waves her off.

MUELLER

Fuck off!

She hurries away.

Mueller grabs Sasha by the collar, pulls her close. Trying to keep others from overhearing.

MUELLER

How do you know about that?

Sasha takes the NA flyer out of her pocket and puts it onto the table.

He lets go and she settles back, smoothing her shirt.

SASHA

Do you know who Frieda is?

MUELLER

I told you to stay out of this.

SASHA

You're really not gonna help me?

MUELLER

Did you expect anything different?

Sasha stands and walks away, leaving him alone.

He picks up the beer bottle, realizes it's empty.

He notices the waitress standing a few steps away looking frightened.

MUELLER

What?!

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mom sits in the bathtub, and Sasha sits on the edge.

Sasha rubs shampoo into her Mom's hair.

SASHA

Head back.

She fills a cup with water and rinses her Mom's hair.

Mom shakes her head, splashing Sasha.

Sasha looks shocked.

Mom looks frightened for a moment.

Sasha smiles and splashes her Mom.

Mom laughs, and after a moment Sasha laughs too.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sasha walks along the street.

A man comes out of a doorway and begins following her.

She notices him, beginning to walk faster.

He speeds up as well.

She turns onto a side street and begins to run.

Suddenly 3 men step in front of her.

She stops, and the other man comes up behind her.

They step around her, blocking every exit.

SASHA

What do you want?

MAN 1

Heard you been quite a pain in the
ass for my Aunt Frieda.

He takes a step forward, and she takes one back.

MAN 1

You know, if there's one thing he really hates, it's little niggers trying to interfere with his business.

SASHA

Business?

The men close in around her.

MAN 1

You know exactly what I mean.

SASHA

Okay.

Sasha begins to take off her jacket, and the men laugh.

MAN 1

Eager beaver huh?

She throws the jacket into his face and runs, bursting through the men.

She runs partway down the alley before one of the men grabs her by the back of her shirt.

She goes down hard, flat on her back.

He wraps his arm around her neck, and she struggles, choking.

The other men walk up.

She bites the chokers arm, and he lets go.

She gasps for air before Man 1 hits her across the face.

The man covers her mouth with his hand.

One man holds her left arm out, flat against the ground.

Man 1 pulls out a knife and she struggles harder.

MAN 1

Consider this a warning.

He leans over her hand, and she thrashes, screams.

INT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Sasha walks into the house, her left hand wrapped in a blood stained sweatshirt.

She goes into

INT. BATHROOM

She opens the cabinet and pulls out a roll of gauze.

She slowly unwraps the sweatshirt and drops it to the ground.

She wraps her hand with gauze, minus the missing pinky finger.

INT. BEDROOM 1 - NIGHT

Sasha sits on the bed. Her mom lays on the bed with her head in her lap. Sasha is reading a book.

SASHA

Why? said the caterpillar. Here was another puzzling question; and, as Alice could not think of any good reason, and the caterpillar seemed to be in a very unpleasant state of mind, she turned away. Come back! the caterpillar called after her. I've something important to say! This sounded promising, certainly. Alice turned and came back again. Keep your temper, said the caterpillar. Is that all? said Alice, swallowing down her anger as well as she could. No, said the caterpillar. Alice thought she might as well wait, as she had nothing else to do.

Sasha looks at her Mom, who appears to be asleep.

MOM

That's not the end.

SASHA

I know.

Sasha seems lost in her thoughts.

SASHA
Am I obsessing?

MOM
Obsessing about what?

SASHA
Finding out who killed Skylar.

Mom looks sad, she bites her lip, closes her eyes.

MOM
Please finish the story.

Sasha finds her place in the book again.

SASHA
Alice thought she might as well
wait, as she had nothing else to
do, and perhaps after all it might
tell her something worth hearing.
For some minutes it puffed away
without speaking.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Marcus and Sasha sit on a park bench. Sasha has her head
in her hands.

MARCUS
What happened to your hand?

Sasha ignores him.

MUELLER
Sasha?

SASHA
Why were you there Marcus?

MARCUS
Why were you?

SASHA
You know.

Marcus nods.

SASHA
You're better than this.

MARCUS

Maybe. But you know what? It's really nice not having to worry about some nigga rolling up on me every day. Knowing someone's got my back.

SASHA

I got your back.

MARCUS

It aint the same.

Sasha turns the penny in her hands.

MARCUS

Why are you so obsessed with this?

SASHA

I'm not obsessed.

Marcus looks at her.

SASHA

It's just not fair! It's the same thing, repeated. Violence, silence. Violence, silence. And no one is doing anything!

MARCUS

I'm sorry. Time heals all wounds.

SASHA

Time doesn't heal. It just distracts.

Sasha holds back tears.

SASHA

I don't know if I can do this anymore.

MARCUS

What do you need?

She tries to hold in her words, but fails.

SASHA

I need to know why! Please just tell me why!

She bursts into tears, and leans sobbing into Marcus's chest.

He looks startled, and then holds her.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sasha slowly opens the bedroom door.

INT. BEDROOM 1

Mom is asleep on the bed.

Sasha covers Mom with a blanket. Mom stirs but doesn't wake.

Sasha turns and knocks a clock off of the nightstand.

She bends down to pick it up when she sees something under the bed.

She pulls out a box and opens it, revealing pills. Dozens upon dozens of them.

Sasha slowly stands.

Mom is sitting up, watching her.

MOM

Sasha.

SASHA

You promised you wouldn't do this again.

MOM

I.

SASHA

You promised!

Sasha flings the box at the ground, pills flying. Mom flinches.

SASHA

I can't do this by myself! I need you to help me!

MOM

I'm trying.

SASHA

I'm trying! You're not doing anything!

Mom sits on the end of the bed. Sasha begins to clear up clothes again.

MOM
I do my best.

Sasha looks at the mess in the room.

SASHA
This is your best?

MOM
You can't talk to me this way. I'm
your mother.

SASHA
Yeah, some mother you are. I cook,
I clean, I do everything. Now that
Skylar is gone,

Mom looks hurt. She holds her hands over her ears.

MOM
Shut up. Shut up. Shut up!

SASHA
No. Listen to me! Ever since Skylar
died I'm all alone. I need you to
do this with me! I can't live like
this anymore!

Mom throws a book at Sasha.

MOM
No!

SASHA
Fine, you want to throw things?
Here.

Sasha sweeps everything off of the dresser.

SASHA
Let's throw things!

Sasha begins trashing the room, tearing books off of the
shelves and clothes from the drawers.

After a moment Mom joins in, knocking everything off of the
night stand, throwing pillows. She is laughing.

Sasha topples the bookshelf, smashes the mirror on the
floor.

Standing in front of her mother, she screams. Loud, angry.

She sinks to the floor, her head in her hands.

Mom turns back to a serious look, breathing heavily, realizing that Sasha wasn't playing.

SASHA
Please just take your pills.

Sasha stands and leaves the room.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sasha stands at the counter, steadying herself. She looks at herself in the mirror.

Flash to her face covered in blood.

She gasps, tries to calm down.

She turns on the tap and splashes water on her face.

She looks in the mirror again, and traces the bullet scar with her finger.

She picks up a towel and dries her face.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sasha sits on the front steps, absentmindedly twirling the penny.

Dad walks up to her.

DAD
Sasha.

SASHA
I'm really not in the mood to talk.

DAD
Can I sit?

Sasha shrugs, and Dad sits next to her.

DAD
I heard that you're moving in with your grandparents.

She shrugs again.

DAD
Is that what you want?

SASHA
Does it matter?

DAD
Look. I'm sorry I wasn't a better father to you. I was young and all I cared about were drugs. I was stupid. I'm 3 weeks clean now! I know it's too late for me to make up for it and I know you hate me. I just needed to tell you.

He stands to leave.

SASHA
I don't hate you.

He looks surprised.

SASHA
I hate the things that you do. But I don't hate you.

DAD
Can you forgive me?

SASHA
I'm not there yet. But I'll work on it.

DAD
I can live with that.

He leaves and Sasha goes back into the house.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Sasha stands outside of the bedroom door.

SASHA
Ma?

No answer.

SASHA
Ma, I'm sorry. I didn't mean what I said. I shouldn't have said it.

Still no answer.

SASHA
Ma?

She opens the door.

Mom lays across the bed.

Sasha goes over to her. Mom's lips and fingertips are blue.

SASHA

Mom! What's wrong? Mom!

Sasha shakes her, getting no response.

She jumps up and pulls her phone out of her pocket.

She glances at the carpet and notices the pill box. It's empty, and there aren't any pills around.

SASHA

Shit.

She dials the phone, holds it up to her ear.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sasha sits on the couch. Blue and red lights flash outside the window. The lights fade away, leaving Sasha in the dark.

She turns the penny in her hands.

FLASHBACK

Sasha and Skylar sit in a waiting room. Sasha nervously picks at her hands.

Skylar puts his hand over hers.

SKYLAR

It's going to be fine.

SASHA

What if she dies?

Skylar chuckles.

SKYLAR

She's not going to die.

SASHA

How do you know?

SKYLAR

They just pump your stomach and you're fine. If she was going to die she'd be dead already.

SASHA

That aint very reassuring.

He smiles.

SKYLAR

Come on. I thought you were
brave? Brave like a lion.

SASHA

I'm not brave. I'm scared.

SKYLAR

You can be brave and scared at the
same time. Being brave is just not
letting your fear stop you.

Sasha mulls over this for a minute.

SASHA

You should sew that on a pillow.

He huffs in mock offense and pushes her with his shoulder.

He wraps his arm around her shoulder and she leans against
him.

She picks at her hand again.

END FLASHBACK

Sasha looks at the scar on her hand.

Suddenly there is a knock at the door.

She looks up, startled.

She reaches under the couch and pulls out the pistol.

She cautiously goes to

INT. FRONT DOOR

and throws the door open, gun held out in front of her. A
teenager stands on the porch. The same boy who mugged her.

He throws up his hands.

BOY

Whoa, whoa, whoa!

SASHA
What do you want?

BOY
I'm a friend of Skylar's!

SASHA
You are?

BOY
Yes, yes!

Sasha lowers the gun.

The boy puts his hands down, relieved.

BOY
He here?

SASHA
He's dead.

BOY
Oh. Um, he mention me?

SASHA
What?

The boy looks around, anxious.

BOY
I left some stuff here, your
brother was, uh, keeping it for me.

SASHA
Stuff.

BOY
Y'know.

He taps the side of his nose.
Stuff.

Sasha looks at him, confused.

BOY
Look, I left a whole load of brick
here, okay?

Her eyes widen in realization.

SASHA
That was yours.

BOY
Yes. So do you have it?

SASHA
I gotta go.

She goes onto the porch, shuts the door.

She tucks the gun into the back of her pants.

She runs past him.

He yells after her

BOY
What about my stuff?

Sasha turns to yell

SASHA
I ain't got it!

He stands on the porch, looking confused.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha stands in front of the house. All of the windows are dark.

She looks at the address on the paper, and then back at the house.

She knocks on the door but no one answers.

Sasha walks carefully around the house, looking for something.

SASHA
Brave like a lion. Brave like a
lion.

She comes to a window and looks inside.

She picks up a rock and smashes the window.

She ducks down, waiting for something to happen.

When nothing does she climbs inside the house.

INT. HOUSE

She walks carefully over the broken glass and goes into the hallway.

She walks slowly into the kitchen, checking left and right.

She walks up to the table, which is covered in dishes and bottles.

Suddenly, her face is slammed down onto the table! The sound of glass breaking splits the silence.

She goes down hard, holding her face.

She gets onto her hands and knees and pulls a shard of glass from her face, which is dripping blood.

A boot connects with her ribs.

She looks up and sees a shadowy figure through the blood clouding her vision.

He kicks her in the face and she goes down, unconscious.

EXT. ISLAND - DAY

Marcus walks along a path in the woods. He has a bag over one shoulder. Sasha is thrown over the other shoulder, still unconscious.

The sun rises in the background.

Marcus walks across a bridge to a small island.

He sets Sasha down against a tree.

Marcus walks to the edge of the island and opens the bag.

He pulls out a coil of rope and a stack of bricks.

He begins to uncoil the rope.

CLICK

He freezes, stands up slowly and turns.

Sasha is standing behind him, gun pointed at him. Half her face is swollen, and it is covered in cuts and blood.

MARCUS

Sasha.

SASHA
It's my turn.

He looks confused. She is holding back tears.

SASHA
Truth. It's my turn.

MARCUS
Okay...

SASHA
Did you do it?

MARCUS
Sasha-

SASHA
You have to tell the truth. Did you
kill him?

Marcus begins to cry.

MARCUS
I didn't want to do it Sasha.

SASHA
But you did.

MARCUS
I was just following orders.

SASHA
Didn't you think of me?

MARCUS
He would have killed me Sasha.

SASHA
I could kill you.

He drops to his knees.

MARCUS
Sasha please. He told me to! I
couldn't say no. Please.

SASHA
Skylar didn't do anything!

MARCUS
He robbed me. He stole the drugs,
the ones you brought to Duane.

SASHA
That wasn't him, you idiot!

MARCUS
Wh, what?

SASHA
How couldn't you tell? You know
him!

MARCUS
It was dark. I, I couldn't tell. He
went right to your house. I just
thought. Please don't kill me.

He begins sobbing.

Sasha watches him, tears rolling down her face.

SASHA
You are a coward.

She walks towards him. He cowers on the ground.

SASHA
Get up.

He stands up, his hands held up.

MARCUS
Please don't. I'm sorry. I'm so,
so, sorry.

She walks the rest of the way up to him, gun raised.

MARCUS
Aunt Frieda-

His head whips back, blood flying. He drops to the ground.

Sasha stands shocked. A hand closes over her shoulder and
she spins around to reveal Duane.

She's confused.

SASHA
You're Aunt Frieda.

DUANE
You know, I really hate that name.
But it stuck.

SASHA
I don't understand.

He takes a step closer, leaving them nose to nose.

DUANE
I did warn you.

WHINE

All we hear is a high pitched drone, which slowly fades.

Sasha steps back surprised.

She looks down and sees the blood spreading across her abdomen.

DUANE
I don't take kindly to thieves.

He glances at Marcus' body.

DUANE
Or cowards.

Sasha falls to the ground.

Sasha POV he fades in and out.

He squats down next to her.

SASHA
My brother wasn't a thief.

DUANE
So I heard. An honest mistake,
really.

She laughs, which turns into coughing.

SASHA
Some mistake.

DUANE
It's what I get for trusting a kid
with my dirty work. You, however. I
would have loved having you work
for me.

SASHA
That won't happen.

DUANE

Not now.

He starts to stand, and Sasha clips a handcuff to his ankle, the other end already connected to her wrist.

DUANE

What are you doing?

SASHA

Shh. Listen.

He listens. In the distance we hear police sirens.

Sasha smiles, her teeth coated with blood. It trickles out the side of her mouth.

He tries to pull his foot out of the cuff.

DUANE

Give me the key!

She shakes her head.

He digs through her pockets, comes up with nothing.

DUANE

Where is it?

She laughs, gurgling slightly.

She holds up the key with her bandaged and bloody hand.

DUANE

Give it to me.

She throws it into the river.

He tries to pull the chain off her wrist.

DUANE

You think this'll stop me?

SASHA

It's just business.

He yells and stomps on her arm, the bone making a loud SNAP.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. FOUNTAIN - DAY

Sasha sits in a wheelchair in front of a staircase. There is a fountain at the top. She is wearing hospital scrubs, and there are bandages across her face. She also has quite a large bruise on her face. Her right arm is in a cast.

Grandpa walks up next to her, placing a hand on her shoulder.

GRANDPA
That was very stupid.

SASHA
I know.

GRANDPA
I've talked to your mother, and she will come live with us in Maine.

SASHA
Really?

GRANDPA
I think it's good for you two to be together.

SASHA
Thank you.

Sasha smiles and looks towards the fountain.

GRANDPA
Need some help?

She nods. He picks her up slowly, and she winces in pain.

He carries her up the steps to the fountain and sets her on the side.

She pulls the penny out of her pocket, turns it in her hands.

Flashes of her, Mom, and Skylar together. Happy, all laughing.

She smiles sadly and throws the penny into the fountain, where it sinks slowly to the bottom.

FADE OUT