

'THREE BLIND MICE'

"See How They Run..."

Final Draft

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NOTE:

The story takes place in France.

*When characters speak in French and the audience doesn't need to understand what is being said, the dialogue will be written in the French language.

**When characters speak in French and the audience does need to understand what is being said, the dialogue will be written in the English language -- accompanied by parenthetical that reads "(in French)".
In these instances, the dialogue would be supported with English subtitles on film.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - NIGHT

Dusk. A low, stirring wind sends autumn leaves rolling gently over the dusty ground.

A children's playground sits under the darkening sky. The roundabout turns slightly in the breeze, metal groaning.

A young GIRL (11) sits on one of the swings. She sways gently, the chains creaking with her movement.

The wind howls like a wolf, picking up speed. The roundabout turns faster. A distant CRY carries on the wind.

The girl on the swing stops swaying. Did she hear something? She remains still, eyes combing the empty playground. Another cry. Louder this time. It sounds like that of a small boy.

The girl gets to her feet, panic rising on her face.

GIRL
(calling)
Hello?

No reply but the wind. After a moment...

GIRL (CONT'D)
Hello?!...

Still nothing. She turns around to see A TALL TREE in the centre of the playground. Large and imposing. It claws at the dusky sky, looming over everything, casting twisted, ominous shadows over her face.

A vertical ladder is attached to the trunk. A TREE HOUSE structure sits in the high, gnarled branches. There's a metal slide from the tree house to the playground below.

The girl approaches it apprehensively, darkness closing in over her. She crosses her arms, bracing herself against the cold and increasingly strong wind. She shudders, holding herself tighter.

She hears the crying again. Louder now. A pained, agonized wail. Her eyes search frantically in the darkness, her breath quickening as she advances towards the tree.

She suddenly freezes, stopping cold in her tracks, seeing...

a small PAIR OF FEET poking out from behind the tree trunk. They're at an awkward, broken angle like a rag doll.

She inches forward, reaching the trunk, running her trembling hand over the rippling bark as she circles it... and her eyes widen in unspeakable horror...

...as her blood-curdling SCREAM pierces the night.

INT. AEROPLANE - DAY

A pair of eyes SNAP open.

They belong to ISOBEL JENNINGS (21); a pretty waif of a girl with dark hair to match her intense eyes, which dart frantically as she establishes reality from the nightmare from which she has just escaped.

She scans the cabin, full to bursting with PASSENGERS with not enough leg room.

A book with dog-eared pages sits open on the lap of her skinny jeans: 'FRENCH FOR BEGINNERS". She closes it.

INT. AIRPORT - ARRIVALS - DAY

Isobel emerges from the terminal, carrying an over the shoulder bag and wheeling a large suitcase behind her.

She spots a TAXI DRIVER holding a sign with 'JENNINGS' written on it. She smiles, approaching.

INT/EXT. TAXI - DAY

The taxi weaves its way through busy Parisian streets. Isobel takes in the sights through the window, eyes full of wonder.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The taxi navigates an isolated road lined with trees a deep, rich green; the surrounding woodland all the eye can see.

INT. TAXI - DAY

Isobel watches them roll by, shadows scaling her face, cast by the taller trees obscuring the brilliant afternoon sun.

The inside of the taxi seems to grow darker as the vehicle continues on, travelling deeper into the woodland.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The taxi passes a bus stop; nothing more than a tall metal pole with sign attached. It then turns left on to a

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

The taxi moves up the long, winding strip of tarmac with dense hedges and bushes on either side, which eventually open out to reveal

A LARGE TWO STOREY COUNTRY HOUSE up ahead. A decked wrap-around porch surrounds three sides, with an overhead pergola strangled with thick ivy that climbs the house walls. On the fourth side sits a garage, behind which the glass roof of a sun room runs the length of the property.

The house sits alone, surrounded only by its own expanse of immaculate sprawling lawns edged with colourful flower beds, manicured hedges and a wooden fence. Beyond that, only woodland. Not another house in sight.

The taxi comes to a stop at the top of the driveway. Isobel steps out, staring up at the house in awe. The taxi driver gets to work removing her luggage from the boot.

Isobel sees MADELEINE LEVASSEUR (late 30s) approaching from the house. A thick mane of long, dark curls surrounds her exquisite, statuesque face. She's elegant but stylish. A woman who takes care of herself. Speaks with a French accent.

MADELEINE

You're here! Welcome!

She initiates a warm embrace. Isobel reciprocates awkwardly.

ISOBEL

Hi. Nice to see you again.

They break their hug. Madeleine beams happily.

MADELEINE

Let's get you inside.

She approaches the taxi driver, producing her purse, as Isobel takes another impressed look at the house.

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

The front door opens and Madeleine enters, followed by Isobel lugging her heavy suitcase over the threshold onto the varnished hardwood floor of a spacious foyer featuring antique tables and cabinets. A spindle staircase climbs from the foyer to the first floor.

MADELEINE

I'm so sorry, I would have come to collect you myself but I was getting my son from school.

ISOBEL

Don't worry about it, honestly.

MADELEINE

Why don't you leave your things here for now? I've just put the kettle on. This way.

Isobel nods her agreement. Madeleine steps through a doorway on the left, into the

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A spacious, lavishly furnished room. Plush carpets. A log fire. A large flat screen TV in one corner. Madeleine walks briskly, Isobel trailing her, surveying.

MADELEINE

Living room...

Up ahead, open double doors lead to a dining room featuring a grand dining table and chairs, polished to perfection. Madeleine gestures towards it as she approaches...

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

Dining room through here...

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

They enter. It's modern. Well-adorned. Gleaming with pride. A door leads to a utility room housing a washer and dryer.

MADELEINE

Kitchen, utility room...

Madeleine moves swiftly through a glass door off the kitchen.

INT. SUN ROOM - DAY

A long room running alongside one bricked wall of the house. The other three walls and the pitched roof are made of glass. A veritable jungle of plants, small trees, shrubs and flowers, including a colourful rose garden, basks in the glorious sunlight that pours in from all around.

Madeleine stops in the middle of the path that cuts through the middle of the dense foliage, admiring.

MADELEINE

This was an orangery once upon a time. Now it's my little haven.

Isobel soaks up the impressive array of plant life. A high pitched WHISTLE squeals from the kitchen. Kettle's boiled.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

Isobel and Madeleine sit on lawn furniture in a sunny spot, away from the shade of the house. They drink their tea.

MADELEINE

I hope your journey was tolerable?
When I flew over for your interview
the delays were outrageous.

ISOBEL

It was fine, thanks. No problems.

Squinting against the sun, using her hand as visor, Isobel sees movement in an upstairs window, glimpsing a YOUNG BOY before he moves out of view.

MADELEINE

It was worth it to see London again
anyway. I hadn't been back since my
year abroad. Best time of my life.
Do you plan to go to University?

Isobel doesn't answer, still distracted by the boy in the window. Noticing the silence, she quickly rushes to fill it.

ISOBEL

Oh. Erm, I'm not sure. Haven't
really got any plan just yet...

Madeleine smiles warmly, sipping her tea.

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Madeleine and Isobel enter. Isobel heads for her luggage as Madeleine gestures to a closed door off the foyer.

MADELEINE

My husband's study. Off limits. You
know what men are like.

She chuckles. Isobel smiles, picking up her suitcase.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Isobel heaves her suitcase over the last step onto the hallway. Madeleine, ahead of her, glides down the hallway, quickly pointing at open doorways. Isobel follows.

MADELEINE

Bathroom, I'll show you how the
shower works. My room, this here
will be your room... and finally...

Isobel parks her luggage by the open doorway, catching her breath as she peeks inside curiously. Madeleine carries on to a final room at the hallway's end, entering...

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - DAY

A tidy, ordered room home to traditional toys; a train set, toy soldiers, a wooden rocking horse in the corner. It looks more like a designer display window in a department store than a child's bedroom. Isobel enters, joining Madeleine.

MADELEINE

This is my son, Bruno.

Sitting on the hardwood floor, BRUNO (5) plays with a toy fire engine; the only distinctly modern toy in sight. He's a slight boy with curls of chestnut hair, deep brown eyes and an angelic face belied by his stoic expression.

He looks up from his fire engine at Isobel. She smiles.

ISOBEL

Salut. Je m'appelle Isobel. Ça va?

MADELEINE

Très bien!

ISOBEL

I wouldn't get too excited, that's about all I know.

Madeleine giggles.

MADELEINE

Pas de problème. You start your French classes at the language college soon, it's all arranged.

Madeleine turns back to Bruno, realising he has yet to reply.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

(in French)

Be polite! Say hello to Isobel.

He doesn't. Pushes his fire engine instead. Madeleine smiles, somewhat embarrassed. Isobel smiles politely in return.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

A modest, bright room. Duck-egg blue. White wash wooden furniture. Isobel unpacks the open suitcase on her bed. Madeleine appears in the open doorway.

MADELEINE

Everything okay in here?

ISOBEL

Great. Thank you.

MADELEINE

I'll let you get settled in. We can discuss your duties over dinner.

Isobel smiles warmly, starting to relax into all of this. As Madeleine leaves, Isobel gets back to unpacking.

She unearths a thick wad of papers. The top page features the words 'RESEARCH INTO STEM CELL THERAPY FOR SCI'. Isobel places it in the drawer of her bedside cabinet.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - DAY - LATER

Isobel now sits at the dresser in front of a mirror, partially framed with a collage of worn photographs. Various snapshots featuring various faces, some including Isobel. She secures another to the frame with blu-tac.

It's of Isobel, an older woman, and a teenage boy. It gives her forlorn pause. She stares at it with deepening thought...

INT. ISOBEL'S HOUSE - ANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A messy, teenage boy's room. ANDY JENNINGS (16), the boy in the photo, sits at his desk on his laptop. There's a KNOCK at the door. He doesn't respond. Keeps playing his game.

After a moment, the door opens. Isobel enters tentatively.

ISOBEL

I'm off, so...

He doesn't look up. Keeps playing. He mutters, disgruntled.

ANDY

Yeah. Whatever. Have a good time.

Isobel lingers in the doorway for a moment, sheepish. Wounded. She exits, leaving the door ajar. Andy glances up, sadness in his eyes.

EXT. ISOBEL'S HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Isobel steps out the front door, hauling her luggage. Behind her, LINDA JENNINGS (mid-40s), the woman from the photo appears, bleary-eyed, pale. Her hair an unruly mess.

LINDA

Weren't you even gonna say goodbye?

ISOBEL

I didn't want to wake you.

LINDA
Thought you'd just make a run for
it, did you? Dunno why I'm
surprised...

Isobel fights to contain her anger, keeping a calm resolve.

ISOBEL
Sleep it off, mum...

She starts up the driveway with her suitcase, making for a
taxi parked on the road side. Linda spits a reply with venom.

LINDA
Go then. Selfish little cow.

Isobel doesn't turn back, keeping her stinging eyes from
Linda, who watches her go, lips trembling. She looks both
ways, making sure there was no audience, before shutting the
door with a SLAM.

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel JUMPS back to the present, finding her reflection in
the mirror. She stares back at it. Troubled.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Isobel enters to find Madeleine preparing dinner.

MADELEINE
Won't be long now. My husband
should be home any minute. You know
doctors and time keeping...

Madeleine rolls her eyes. Isobel laughs.

ISOBEL
Can I help with anything?

MADELEINE
No you mustn't. You start work on
Monday. Tonight you're our guest.

ISOBEL
Please, I like to feel useful.
You'd be doing me a favour.

Madeleine laughs, conceding. She goes into the open utility
room, still in view. She opens a cupboard.

MADELEINE
If you insist. You can go down to
the cellar and pick out a bottle of
wine for dinner.

She retrieves a torch from the cupboard and moves back into the kitchen, handing it to Isobel.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

The light doesn't work properly.
I've been meaning to get a new
starter cartridge. So be careful!

Isobel takes the torch.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

The door CREAKS open revealing a narrow wooden staircase descending into pitch black. Isobel hovers in the doorway. She flicks the light switch. A florescent STRIP LIGHT whirrs in to life below. It flickers intermittently.

Isobel clicks the torch on and treads carefully down the stairs, the torch beam guiding the way to the bottom.

The light sparks for a millisecond at a time, between ten second stretches of darkness, leaving the torch to illuminate the room. It reveals racks of wine bottles lining the stone walls. Piles of cardboard storage boxes clutter the room.

Isobel's feet scuff on the dusty concrete floor as she moves down the wine rack, her finger stroking the labels. She stops, looking around. The flickering light continues eerily as her eyes comb the shadowy cellar. She looks unsettled...

She grabs a bottle. Any bottle. Moves for the stairs, dashes up them to the inviting light up ahead... reaches the top...

A MAN APPEARS IN THE DOORWAY. Isobel SCREAMS as she collides with him, dropping the bottle. It SMASHES on the floor.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Isobel, Madeleine, Bruno and LUDOVIC LEVASSEUR (late 40s), the man who scared Isobel, sit around the table eating dinner. He's a tall, distinguished man with silvering hair. His face is wrinkled, weathering from years of stress.

Ludovic pours from a new bottle of wine. Isobel averts her eyes, head down as she eats. Mortified. Ludovic smiles, offering the bottle. Isobel smiles weakly, shaking her head.

LUDOVIC

(in French)

Ne vous inquiétez pas, Isobel. Ce
n'était pas important.

Isobel's blank expression brings Madeleine to her aid.

MADELEINE

He said not to worry. The bottle wasn't special.

LUDOVIC

Si cela avait été mon Romanée Conti j'aurais dû vous tuer.

Ludovic chuckles. Madeleine smiles, but it's somewhat strained. She looks uncomfortable. Isobel's eyes shift from him to her, settling on Madeleine, waiting for a translation. Madeleine clears her throat.

MADELEINE

He said had it been his bottle of Romanée Conti he'd have had to kill you.

Madeleine laughs. Forced. A little nervous. Isobel smiles it off, gets back to eating. Ludovic smiles warmly back.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel moisturises at her dresser mirror, dressed for bed. There is a knock at the door.

ISOBEL

Come in?

The door opens to reveal Madeleine, wearing a dressing gown.

MADELEINE

I came to say goodnight.

ISOBEL

Okay. Night, Madeleine.

They exchange friendly smiles. Isobel gets back to moisturising. Madeleine lingers in the doorway, watching her, still smiling, as if grateful. Relieved even. Sensing her remaining presence, Isobel stops moisturising. Looks at her.

MADELEINE

I'm so pleased you're here, Isobel.

More than a pleasantry. There's weight and meaning to her words... Isobel smiles, a little baffled, watching her go.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel sleeps soundly in her bed, breathing softly. She looks relaxed. Peaceful.

INT. MADELEINE & LUDOVIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ludovic sleeps soundly in their bed. Madeleine lies with her back to him, wide awake. Her eyes burn holes in the darkness.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel awakens, stretching in her crisp bed sheets as golden rays of sun spill in through the unshuttered window. She looks around, remembering where she is. A smile forms.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - DRIVEWAY/FRONT GARDEN - DAY

Isobel bounds down the driveway, bag over her shoulder. She spots a RED FLAT-BED TRUCK parked on the driveway. The flat-bed contains gardening tools and a lawn-mower.

She turns to the front garden where ROMAIN LEVEQUE (mid-20s), topless, Calvins waistband visible above his low slung jeans, digs up a dead shrub with a spade. He's chiselled and muscular. His perspiring body glistens. Isobel stares, agape.

He stops to wipe his brow, looking up to see Isobel on the driveway. Catching her lustful gaze. He smiles cockily, and gives her a wave. Isobel turns crimson, mortified. She looks away, hurrying down the driveway.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Isobel stands at the bus stop on the deserted road. The bus pulls up, the doors whooshing open. She climbs aboard.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Isobel rides the bus down a country road, admiring the view.

Isobel steps off the bus in front of a small metro station.

Isobel rides the metro, absorbed in a pocket map detailing all the different lines and stations.

Isobel explores central Paris, taking in the architecture, street art, snapping photos with a digital camera.

Isobel vacuums the living room.

Isobel and Bruno arrive outside a primary school. Isobel waves him off as he walks through the gates.

Isobel works away in the kitchen. The saucepan on the hob begins overflowing. She rushes over to it in a panic.

Isobel, looking lost, approaches a cluster of buildings off a busy road. A sign reads 'LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL'.

Isobel sits at the back of a classroom filled with students taking notes. She looks confused and intimidated.

Bruno sits in front of the TV, engrossed. Isobel and Madeleine nurse cups of tea on the sofa in deep conversation.

Isobel sifts through a selection of postcards on a metal stand outside a small tourist shop. She picks one out.

Isobel sits outside a cafe, sipping coffee. Smiling.

Isobel walks down the street, passing a lamp-post. A poster has been affixed, showcasing the smiling face of a young woman in her twenties. The writing in French below on the poster means 'HAVE YOU SEEN THIS GIRL?'...

END OF MONTAGE:

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Isobel walks up the driveway, taking her time, serene...

ROMAIN'S TRUCK CAREENS AROUND THE CORNER towards her. Isobel leaps left as the truck veers right, avoiding a collision.

Isobel fights to catch her breath on the roadside as the truck comes to a stop. Romain hops out and jogs over to her. He speaks with a French accent.

ROMAIN

Are you okay?

ISOBEL

You speak English?

Romain nods to confirm.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

So you'd understand me if I said
watch where you're going you
fucking moron?

Romain breaks into a smile. He can't help it. Isobel huffs past him, heading up the driveway. He follows, catching up and blocking her path.

ROMAIN

Wait, wait. I'm sorry. Seriously,
are you alright?

He's sincere now. Isobel softens. Takes a calming breath.

ISOBEL

Fine. Just a bit shaken up.

ROMAIN

I have that effect on people. I'll
wear a shirt at work in future...

He grins, his sincerity evaporating in an instant. Isobel is mortally embarrassed. She huffs past him up the driveway.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

Oh come back, it was just a joke.
Hey you were the one looking at me!

She keeps walking. Hard angry steps. He calls after her.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

I'm Romain by the way!

She picks up the pace. Romain watches her go, eyes fiery with intrigue. He laughs to himself, heading back to his truck.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel lies in bed, eyes closed, lost in sleep.

The faint sound of a child CRYING swirls and echoes in the night. The crying of the small boy from her dream. Isobel twitches as the crying builds, louder, until...

Her eyes open. She escapes her nightmare once more. She rolls over, adjusting her pillow. She breathes deeply... calming...

But the crying continues. Not in her dream, this time. It's coming from within the house... Bruno. She sits up in bed, listening, deliberating...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Isobel's door opens halfway. She peers through the gap into the shrouded hallway. The crying continues from Bruno's room, muffled by the closed door. Isobel prepares to step out...

But Madeleine and Ludovic's bedroom swings open. Isobel sinks back as Ludovic emerges in the darkness. He catches sight of her just as she closes the door. His gaze lingers there a moment... before he enters Bruno's room.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Isobel prepares breakfast. Madeleine enters, chirpy.

MADELEINE

Good morning! Did you sleep well?

Isobel hesitates a moment... then smiles.

ISOBEL

Like a log.

Madeleine smiles and nods, a little confused by the expression. She's at the table, opening the morning paper.

MADELEINE

Could you check on Bruno for me? He should be having breakfast now.

Isobel, already busy making scrambled eggs, looks at Madeleine with bewilderment. She's too engrossed in the paper to notice. Isobel sighs heavily, taking the eggs off the hob and wiping her hands on a tea cloth. She makes a swift exit.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM ROOM - DAY

Isobel enters to find Bruno kneeling in the middle of the floor, playing with his fire engine. Isobel isn't impressed.

ISOBEL

Bruno...

He ignores her, enjoying his play time.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

(firmly)

Bruno. Manger.

He stops this time, turning to look at her. She gestures a knife and fork motion with her hands. She beckons him towards the door. He turns back to his fire engine. Isobel sighs.

She walks over to him and picks him up off the floor by his arm. He YELPS in pain, startling her. She instinctively lets go as if his little arm was red hot.

Bruno nurses his arm, shying away from Isobel.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Oh god! I'm sorry! I didn't mean to... are you okay? I'm so sorry.

Bruno looks up at her, confused by her ramblings, tears forming. She kneels beside him, her movements measured and considered, trying not to spook him.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Let me have a look...

Gently, she takes his arm in one hand and uses her other to inch his sleeve to his elbow. His forearm is home to several pink and brown bruises, varying in age. Isobel is shocked.

MADELEINE (O.S.)

(calling)

Isobel? Everything okay?

She remains fixed on his arm, her face awash with concern...

INT. LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Around thirty STUDENTS sit at individual desks, open text books and note-pads in front of them. Isobel sits at a desk towards the rear of the room, doodling with a biro.

The teacher, MONSIEUR SALLÉ (50s), smartly dressed with salt and pepper hair, enters and stands before the class.

MONSIEUR SALLÉ
 Bonjour la classe. J'espère que
 vous avez passé un bon weekend.

He picks up his register, scanning the list of names.

MONSIEUR SALLÉ (CONT'D)
 Mademoiselle... Jennings.

Isobel snaps out of it, meeting the teacher's expectant gaze.

MONSIEUR SALLÉ (CONT'D)
 Votre weekend. C'est bien passé?

Isobel shrugs, wincing apologetically.

ISOBEL
 Erm... something about the weekend?

MONSIEUR SALLÉ
 (pointing at her)
 Vous. Votre weekend.

ISOBEL
 My weekend?

MONSIEUR SALLÉ
 Oui. C'est bien passé? Bien?

ISOBEL
 Good? Did I have a good weekend?

MONSIEUR SALLÉ
 Oui! Alors!

Students SNIGGER at the teacher's patronising admiration of Isobel's meagre achievement. Isobel squirms. An attractive BLONDE GIRL shoots her a sympathetic smile.

EXT. LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - DAY

Students stream from the main entrance. Isobel hangs back at the top of the steps, struggling to light a cigarette, her piece-of-shit lighter failing her in her moment of need.

The blonde girl from class approaches. This is SHANNON (early 20s). Feisty. Carefree. Irritatingly beautiful. She wears oversized designer sunglasses. She breezes up to Isobel, producing a silver Zippo from her bag.

SHANNON
(phoney French accent)
Mademoiselle Jennings?

Isobel smiles gratefully as Shannon lights her cigarette. She inhales with deep appreciation, then proffers the pack to Shannon. She holds up a hand in protest, speaking in her regular American accent.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
Gross. No thanks. You notice how everyone smokes here? Weird...

ISOBEL
So you just carry that around for fun? Weird...

Shannon giggles, pushing her sunglasses up onto her head to reveal piercing blue eyes.

SHANNON
Emergencies. Nothing better in a crisis for sealing a wound.

ISOBEL
Like a flesh wound?

SHANNON
Fabric. Fraying is fashion cancer.

Isobel scoffs, gesturing with her cigarette.

ISOBEL
I'll just worry about the regular kind. I'm Isobel.

SHANNON
Shannon. C'mon. Lets walk.

She urges Isobel away from the steps.

EXT. CAMPUS GROUNDS - DAY

Isobel and Shannon walk slowly along the network of pathways that weave between the buildings, carrying take-away coffee.

SHANNON
It's an internship. Lacroix. The pay seriously blows.
(re: her bag)
But the free swag helps.

ISOBEL
They just let you have stuff?

 SHANNON
No. So you're like, British.

 ISOBEL
 (sarcastically)
No, Jamaican.

 SHANNON
Really? Why're you so uptight then?

Isobel laughs. Touché.

 SHANNON (CONT'D)
So what're you doing in Paris?

 ISOBEL
I'm an au pair for a family here.

 SHANNON
Like a nanny?

 ISOBEL
Sort of. I mostly run errands, do
household chores... there isn't
much child care involved.

 SHANNON
Yeah kids are a drag.
 (checks her watch)
Look, I gotta run. It was nice
meeting you, see you in class!

 ISOBEL
Yeah, see you.

Shannon dashes off, leaving Isobel to suck the remaining life
out of her stubby cigarette before dropping it to the floor.

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Isobel, Madeleine and Bruno sit at the dining table, eating
their evening meal. No-one is talking.

Madeleine watches as Isobel pushes her food around her plate
with her fork. It looks barely touched.

 MADELEINE
I'd ask if there's something wrong
with the food, but you cooked it.

She gives a soft laugh. Isobel barely smiles.

 MADELEINE (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

Isobel carefully places her fork down on her plate.

ISOBEL

I noticed some bruises on Bruno's arm. Any idea where he got them?

Madeleine's smile fades, her expression turning cold.

MADELEINE

Are you implying...

ISOBEL

I'm not implying anything.

Madeleine watches Bruno use his fingers to eat, blissfully unaware of the tension in the room. She straightens up and clears her throat, trying but failing not to sound defensive.

MADELEINE

He probably got them from playing too rough with the other children.

ISOBEL

Maybe Ludovic should have a look?

MADELEINE

What do you mean by that?

Isobel continues to hold steady, keeping eye contact.

ISOBEL

He's a doctor isn't he?

Madeleine questions Isobel with her eyes, not falling for the innocent act. A painful moment of silence follows, until...

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

What time did you say he was back?

Madeleine drops her fork on her plate with a deafening CLANG that makes Bruno jump out of his skin. Her hands go to her temples as she fights the urge to snap. She calms herself.

MADELEINE

You're being rude.

ISOBEL

It was just a question.

MADELEINE

(bitterly)
With no implications. Of course...

Madeleine drinks deeply from a glass of wine. Bruno watches her, sensing something is wrong. She looks at Isobel, ready.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

If you think I'm the kind of mother who would knowingly let harm come to her child, then you really don't know me at all. You'd be wise to keep your ill-conceived conclusions to yourself.

ISOBEL

I'm sorry...

Madeleine watches Isobel, who looks like she feels utterly wretched. She takes a deep breath, calming herself, eyes full of regret. She's overreacted.

MADELEINE

No, I'm sorry. You were right to raise your concern. Forgive me.

Isobel smiles, appreciative.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I should remember I have good instincts. I knew you were right for the job the second I met you.

Isobel's smile is soon replaced with a troubled expression. Madeleine sips her wine.

ISOBEL

I'm not so sure...

Madeleine stops drinking, intrigued.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

When I was a child, my younger brother had an accident. We were at the park and he fell from a tree house. I was watching him... I was *meant* to be watching him...

Isobel's voice has become small and distant. She's lost in the memory. Madeleine just stares at her, stunned.

MADELEINE

Oh Isobel... I'm so sorry...

ISOBEL

He's a T-10. "Fracture of the lower thoracic vertebrae". Whatever that means... paralysed from the waist down.

QUICK FLASHBACK:

Andy sits at his desk as Isobel says goodbye. She leaves, dejected, leaving the door ajar. He watches her go, saddened. He uses his WHEELCHAIR to cross the room and shut the door.

END OF FLASHBACK:

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Thanks to me. It's my fault.

MADELEINE

Accidents aren't anybody's fault.

ISOBEL

My mother wouldn't agree with you on that one. And she's right...

Isobel straightens up, refusing to let the memories in.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Like you said, you'd never knowingly let harm come to him. So I thought it was only fair that I tell you. I don't think I'm the kind of person you want around your child.

A long silence follows, until...

MADELEINE

You're wrong.

Isobel looks up, her confused, teary eyes meeting Madeleine's.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

The courage that must have taken to tell me... no. You're wrong. You're exactly the kind of person I want around my child.

Madeleine smiles warmly. Isobel smiles back, tears falling, utterly overwhelmed. Thankful.

EXT. PRIMARY SCHOOL - DAY

Outside the main gates PARENTS wave off their CHILDREN, who run through them towards the main school building.

Isobel crouches in front of Bruno, her face level with his.

ISOBEL

Okay, so you're all ready? Got everything you need?

Bruno stares blankly at her.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

You can't understand a word I'm saying can you?

The same blank expression remains fixed on his little face.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)
Right. Probably for the best.

She stands up, looking down at him awkwardly. He turns and heads through the gates, leaving Isobel at a loss. Feeling compelled to communicate something more...

ISOBEL (CONT'D)
Have a good day!

He turns and looks at her, face full of confusion, before continuing across the playground.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Stop talking, Isobel...

Isobel turns around to see a FIGURE in the distance watching her from across the road. It looks like... Ludovic?...

The bright afternoon sunlight obscures her view. She shields her eyes, squinting for a better look...

BANG! Something bumps into Isobel's leg, almost knocking her down. A little boy TOMAS, running playfully from his MOTHER.

MOTHER
Tomas! Viens ici!
(to Isobel)
Pardon, mademoiselle. Il faut que
je le surveille tout le temps!

Tomas' mother pats Isobel's shoulder apologetically. Isobel smiles and nods, not understanding a word. Tomas' mother grabs his hand, ushering him towards the school gates.

Isobel looks back across the street. The figure has vanished.

INT. LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Monsieur Sallé conducts the lesson. Isobel attempts to make notes, but her mind is clearly somewhere else.

Shannon catches her attention. She rolls her eyes in response to Monsieur Sallé's endless droning. Isobel manages a smile.

EXT. LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - DAY

STUDENTS spill down the steps. Isobel is among the crowd. Shannon weaves her way through, reaching Isobel.

SHANNON
You busy tonight? I thought we
could go out. You look like you
could use a drink. Or twelve.

ISOBEL

That's encouraging... thanks, but I'm not really in the mood.

SHANNON

That's a great story. You can tell me the rest of it tonight.

She smiles broadly. Isobel sighs. Defeat is inevitable.

ISOBEL

Where and what time?...

Shannon pats Isobel on the shoulder, smirking her victory.

ACROSS THE GREEN

A red headed YOUNG WOMAN in her 20s stands watching them from a distance as they walk away, oblivious.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon, sunglasses on and window open, manoeuvres the vehicle effortlessly along the winding country road with Isobel beside her. Bruno sits in the back, playing quietly with a pair of toy soldiers.

SHANNON

They really live out in the sticks, huh. Creepy...

ISOBEL

Nice views though... and much safer than the city.

SHANNON

But no one would hear you scream out here. Or find your body for weeks...

Isobel indicates Bruno, urging her to shut up.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Can he understand what I'm saying?

ISOBEL

Can you?

Shannon swats her playfully. They glance in the rearview mirror to see Bruno playing with his toys. Shannon shares her adoring expression with Isobel, her heart melting.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Shannon's car pulls up the driveway. The back door flings open and Bruno hops out, trudges towards the house.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Isobel takes off her seatbelt. Shannon sees something through the windscreen. She lowers her sunglasses for a better look.

SHANNON

'That what you meant by nice views?

Isobel follows her gaze to see Romain trimming the garden hedges, biceps flexing as he works. She scoffs.

ISOBEL

Yeah, they have him on a post card at the petrol station...

SHANNON

Wow. Sarcasm. Such a turn on..

ISOBEL

I don't care what he thinks...

SHANNON

Sure you don't.

Isobel's insistent glare holds firm.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Hey, if you're not interested...?

Shannon flashes a devilish grin as she unbuckles her seat belt and hops out of the car.

Isobel opens her mouth to protest but says nothing. She watches in awe as Shannon strides towards Romain with astonishing ease, pushing her sunglasses up onto her head.

Isobel continues to watch as Shannon introduces herself, her words distant and inaudible. She offers her hand. Romain wipes his on his jeans and shakes it. Shannon continues to talk, hand on hip. Romain says something in return. Shannon responds with the hair-toss and giggle combo. The spell is cast.

Isobel's eyes give way to a hint of envy.

Shannon looks in Isobel's direction. Romain follows. They're both looking at her now. She shifts uncomfortably. They go back to talking for a moment.

Romain produces his mobile from his pocket and hands it to Shannon. She presses several buttons and hands it back.

ISOBEL

Unbelievable...

Isobel climbs out of the car as Shannon waves her farewell, Romain watching her strut away with fierce confidence.

EXT. CAR/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Shannon arrives at the car, getting in. Isobel just stares at her through the open window.

SHANNON

There. Easy.

ISOBEL

You said it...

Shannon smirks. Doesn't take the bait.

SHANNON

Nine thirty. Wear something cute!

And with that she peels out of the driveway. Isobel watches her car disappear, her heart in her shoes. She sighs irritably and heads towards the house.

Passing Romain, he waves, sporting his trademark cocky smile.

ROMAIN

Salut!

Isobel throws up her hand in reply; a half-hearted wave. Says nothing. Keeps walking.

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel is sprawled on her bed, laptop open. Her snapshots of picturesque Paris fade in and out from one to the next on the screen, forming a slide-show. Isobel writes on a postcard.

In the top left corner it says 'To Andy'. She's midway through a paragraph. Her pen stops. She looks at her words, questioning, unsure. With a sigh, she scribbles them out.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Music POUNDS as strobe lighting intermittently illuminates the dance floor packed with gyrating bodies.

Among them, Isobel and Shannon move to the beat. Shannon's in her element, all hips and hair. She looks great and knows it.

Isobel throws her head back, eyes closed, letting the humidity and the heady mix of music and lights wash over her for a moment. She opens her eyes to find Shannon checking her phone. Shannon makes a 'drink' gesture with her free hand.

AT THE BAR - LATER

Shannon flashes her pearly smile, getting a BARTENDER's attention instantly. She holds up two fingers.

SHANNON
Deux Jägerbombs. S'il vous plaît.

He nods and slides off to fetch their drinks.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
All the French I'll ever need.

ISOBEL
Jägermeister's German.

Shannon waves her hand in disregard, checking her phone.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)
Expecting someone?

SHANNON
Maybe...

The bartender brings their drinks. Shannon hands him money.

ISOBEL
Can I just have a water? De l'eau?

The bartender nods his understanding and goes off again.

SHANNON
Come on Iz, live dangerously.

ISOBEL
Not tonight.

Shannon smiles excitedly, looking past her now...

SHANNON
No probs, more for us. Hi Roman!

Isobel turns to see Romain standing behind her. She stares at him awkwardly, failing to mask her surprise.

ROMAIN
It's Romain.

SHANNON
Whatever. Here.

She hands him the spare Jägerbomb. He throws Isobel a smile as he takes it. Isobel pulls Shannon aside.

ISOBEL
Are you two on a date?

SHANNON
What do you care?

ISOBEL
I don't...

ISOBEL

I was rubbish at French at school.
Still am, as you may have noticed.
You bilingual lot make me feel
about this big.

She measures an inch with her thumb and forefinger.

ROMAIN

My dad is from England. I grew up
with it. It's no big deal.

ISOBEL

For you, maybe. Personally I think
it would be pretty useful if I
could communicate with the people I
work for...

Romain smiles.

ROMAIN

You're fine. Madeleine likes any
excuse to speak English. She
studied it at University. I think
it's half the reason she hired me
too. To re-live the glory days.

Isobel laughs, relaxed around him now. She pushes hair behind
her ear. Romain watches, endeared, taken with her.

ISOBEL

And what's the other half?

Romain shrugs his broad shoulders.

ROMAIN

I don't know, to have something
nice to look at?

He grins. Isobel rolls her eyes.

ISOBEL

(mocking)

You "have that effect on people".

His grin softens to a sweet smile. Isobel smiles back, eyes
twinkling. Neither speaks, the air wired with electricity...

Isobel's mobile RINGS, destroying the moment. She grabs it
from her pocket. 'MADELEINE CALLING'. Isobel answers, a
little put out. She smiles at Romain in apology.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Hello?

Her smile fades, her face darkening as she listens...

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Madeleine hunches over on the sofa, on the edge of her seat, eyes red from crying, wringing her hands as she rocks gently back and forth, mind racing.

The front door SLAMS from the foyer. Madeleine reacts, looking up as Isobel hurries into the living room. Isobel stops awkwardly in the room's centre.

ISOBEL

Madeleine... what happened?

Madeleine shuts her eyes tightly, not answering. Isobel takes a tentative seat beside her on the sofa.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Please, tell me...

She puts a reassuring hand on Madeleine's arm. She flinches in pain. Isobel recoils, startled. Madeleine looks at her. Isobel's eyes burn into hers, urging her...

Madeleine slowly pulls up the sleeve of her cardigan, revealing a deep red blistering BURN branded on her forearm, the shape of the bow of an iron.

Isobel covers her mouth, appalled. Unbelieving.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

You need to go to hospital...

Madeleine is stricken with fear at the prospect.

MADELEINE

No. No I can't...

Isobel's sorrowful face shifts, tightening, anger rising.

ISOBEL

Where is he?...

MADELEINE

He stormed out. We need to sort things out before he gets back. I need your help, Isobel.

ISOBEL

Madeleine you need to get yourself and Bruno away from this house tonight. And you need to call the police. Is there a friend, family member you could---

MADELEINE

(sharply)
You don't understand.
(MORE)

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I can't do that. You don't know what he'd do! What he's capable of!...

Isobel looks scared. Chilled to the bone.

ISOBEL

How long has this been going on?

Madeleine looks away, ashamed. She can't look at her.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

(softly)

Madeleine... you can't just sit back and let this happen. Think about Bruno...

Madeleine stands in protest, raising her voice now.

MADELEINE

I *am* thinking of Bruno! He'll take him from me, Isobel. Or worse. *That* is what I can't let happen.

Her hands goes to her temples as she paces the room, frantic.

Isobel's eyes fall on the coffee table, seeing a thick paper document. It's *her* document. 'RESEARCH INTO STEM CELL THERAPY FOR SCI'. She turns to Madeleine with interrogating eyes.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I was changing the drawer liners. I wasn't snooping.

ISOBEL

Why do you have that?...

Madeleine talking at a hundred miles an hour, rambling, words falling on top of each other.

MADELEINE

I can't leave him, Isobel. I can't run. He'd find me, if I even got away. And I'd have nothing. I've no job, no skills, no money of my own... I can't divorce him, not without proof. Not if I don't want to end up broke and homeless. I signed a prenuptial. I need reasonable grounds.

(yelling)

Reasonable fucking grounds!

Isobel is alarmed, taken aback. Madeleine covers her mouth, crying now. Still pacing the room.

ISOBEL

Madeleine, why did you take that
from my room?...

Madeleine keeps spewing words at full speed.

MADELEINE

It's wonderful isn't it? What
medicine can do these days. My
husband attended a conference about
it in Ohio last year. The Mayo
Clinic. Where they're conducting
the research. He told me about it.

Isobel's growing concerned by her rambling. And impatient.
Madeleine looks at her, sensing her unease. She sits back
down, clutching at Isobel's hands.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I need your help. Please. I need
you to help me protect my son until
we can find a way out of this. Show
everyone what a monster he is.

(she scoffs)

I'd have "reasonable grounds"
then... and money. More than
enough. For both of us...

ISOBEL

What are you?...

Isobel trails off, lost, totally overwhelmed and bewildered.

MADELEINE

It's a miracle. Using stem cells to
repair spinal cord injuries...

ISOBEL

(catching on)
Madeleine...

MADELEINE

Making people walk again...

ISOBEL

It's experimental.

MADELEINE

But showing promising results. For
people who can front two hundred
and fifty thousand dollars.

Isobel gets to her feet, crossing the room.

ISOBEL

That's enough. This is insane. I
can't stay here. Neither of us can
stay here!

MADELEINE

But only one us has the choice...

This hits Isobel. She tries to maintain her strong resolve, but she looks at Madeleine, frazzled, spent, a quivering mess on the sofa. A trapped, victimized woman on the brink of losing her mind. There's a tender sympathy in her eyes.

ISOBEL

Look, I wish I could help--

MADELEINE

You can! You can help! Me, Bruno, your brother... yourself...

Isobel shakes her head, defiant. Resistant.

ISOBEL

We put it behind us a long time ago. We tried to get funding, sponsorship, anything we could. From every charity, trust and organization going. And every single one turned us down. We accepted it. End of.

MADELEINE

Then why do you still have that?

She glances at the document on the coffee table. Isobel's defiant expression falters for a second. She quickly re-armours herself with it and moves for the door, swiping up the document on her way.

ISOBEL

I'm not talking about this anymore. I'm sorry. I really am. But this is impossible. I'm going to bed, and tomorrow...

She doesn't finish. She can't. Not with Madeleine's desperate, pleading, tear stained face staring back at her. She turns back to the door--

LUDOVIC STANDS IN FRONT OF HER. She jumps back, startled. Madeleine is instantly on her feet, smiling, covering.

MADELEINE

(in French)

You're back. Isobel was just going to bed.

Ludovic nods, turning to Isobel, a little stern.

LUDOVIC

Bonne nuit, Isobel.

Isobel manages to muster a smile through her trepidation.

ISOBEL

Bonne nuit.

He makes way for her, and she quickly slips out of the room as Ludovic goes inside. He closes the door behind him.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Isobel starts up the stairs, looking back at the closed living room door, hearing MUFFLED VOICES from the other side.

She hovers a moment, guiltily, before dashing to the top.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel rips clothes from their hangers and throws them into her suitcase on the floor, flustered. She stops herself, taking a calming breath.

She takes a seat at her dresser, staring back at her anxious, weary reflection. Her eyes drift to the photograph of herself, Linda and Andy. And there they remain...

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel lies asleep in bed, twitching, her slumber being disturbed... invaded...

DREAM SEQUENCE:

Images FLASH by in rapid succession. The tall, gnarled tree. A pair of children's feet on the ground, sticking out awkwardly from behind the tree. The young girl's horrified face as she discovers him. She SCREAMS like a banshee.

Isobel walks away from her house, luggage in hand. Linda shuts the door with a SLAM.

END OF DREAM SEQUENCE.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel's eyes snap open as she awakens, her chest heaving.

She rolls over, seeing her open suitcase by the wardrobe. She stares at it long and hard.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Isobel prepares breakfast. She glances over her shoulder to the table, where Ludovic reads the morning paper.

Madeleine enters, sluggish and pale, her eyes bloodshot but wide. It looks like she hasn't slept all night. She goes to the fridge, glancing at Isobel but saying nothing.

ISOBEL

Bruno wants to go to the park today. I said I'd take him, if that's okay?

Madeleine turns to her, her face awash with surprise. After a moment, Isobel looks up from the breakfast to meet Madeleine's confused, questioning gaze.

Isobel smiles gently. Nods. Madeleine's face weakens, lips trembling as she fights tears of overwhelming silent relief. Her gratitude immeasurable.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Isobel walks hand in hand with Bruno down the driveway. Up ahead, Romain is hauling his lawn mower onto the flat bed of his truck, where a GOLDEN LABRADOR PUPPY scurries excitedly, tail wagging as he investigates under a ground-sheet.

He greets them with a wave, clearly expecting Isobel to stop and chat. She slows awkwardly.

ISOBEL

Nice dog...

Romain picks him up. He wriggles in his strong arms as he holds him within Bruno's reach. Bruno's eyes light up. He strokes the puppy, smiling.

ROMAIN

His name is Max. You want him?

Isobel is thrown by the random question. Romain chuckles.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

A guy I know got caught by his landlord with a whole bunch of them. He was just giving them away. I didn't like to think what might happen to any he had left.

ISOBEL

You know some lovely people...

ROMAIN

Anyway I can't keep him. Not allowed pets in my building either.

ISOBEL

I can't see the lady of the house agreeing to it somehow.

ROMAIN

How is she by the way? You left in
a bit of a hurry when she called
last night...

Isobel looks sheepish. She shifts uncomfortably, but covers.

ISOBEL

Yeah, sorry about that. She's fine.
Everything's fine. Anyway we'd
better get a move on.

ROMAIN

Where are you going?

ISOBEL

The park.

ROMAIN

Ten minutes, I'll drive you.

ISOBEL

No that's okay. Thanks though.

She hurries Bruno down the driveway. Bruno looks behind him, taken with Max. Romain makes a sad face, making Max wave his paw goodbye like a puppet. He watches Isobel go, smiling.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

A grassy, brightly coloured play area backing onto some woods. Happy CHILDREN play on climbing frames, swings and slides, under the watchful eyes of their GUARDIANS.

Isobel snaps photographs of Bruno as he rides down a slide. He climbs off at the bottom, sombre, and walks over to a ROUNDABOUT occupied by a few other children.

Isobel comes over as Bruno climbs on and a BOY puts it in motion, pushing from the sidelines. It spins, faster and faster, much to the delight of the children on board. All except Bruno, indifferent. Isobel readies her camera.

ISOBEL

Smile for the camera, Bruno!

He looks at her. She grins, drawing a smile in the air with her fingers. He doesn't oblige. Isobel snaps away, regardless. A LITTLE GIRL waves at her, beckoning as the roundabout slows to a squeaky halt.

LITTLE GIRL

Get on! Get on!

Isobel looks apprehensive but the girl doesn't relent. Reluctant, she climbs on beside Bruno as ANOTHER BOY hops off to push. The roundabout spins, picking up speed.

Isobel clutches Bruno with one arm, gripping the bar with her free hand. She LAUGHS, jovial, surprised by her own enjoyment. She looks at Bruno but he doesn't share in the joy. She looks up as neighboring woods whirl by, seeing...

LUDOVIC STANDING BY THE WOODS, watching them from the distance of the park's edge. But only for a second as...

the roundabout turns her away from him, the park and playing children now in her moving line of sight-- keeps turning-- the woods sliding into view again. Ludovic has vanished.

The roundabout slows to a stop. Isobel climbs off, staggering slightly, dizzy and disorientated. She scans the woods anxiously, turning for a panoramic view. No sign of him. Did she imagine it?

She lifts Bruno off the roundabout and puts him down, preparing to go. Her mobile BEEPS. She removes it from her pocket. 'MESSAGE. UNKNOWN NUMBER'. She opens the text. It says: 'SURPRISE'. Isobel's face fills with dread...

A HAND LANDS ON HER SHOULDER. Isobel SHRIEKS, spinning--

Romain stands before her, surprised, and a little amused. He has Max with him, who pants excitedly, fighting his lead.

ROMAIN

Whoa! Sorry. Did I scare you?

Isobel sighs her relief as Bruno lights up at the sight of Max, dropping to his knees to stroke him.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY - LATER

Bruno runs after Max, full of the joys of Spring, as the playful puppy bounds in off-the-lead freedom.

Isobel and Romain sit on swings, watching Bruno and Max play as they sway gently back and forth.

ROMAIN

Shannon gave me your number...

Isobel shakes her head with a smirk. Of course she did.

ISOBEL

It's fine. Just a bit jumpy today.

Romain looks intrigued but she doesn't care to explain, preoccupied, watching with unease as a boy climbs to the summit of a tall climbing frame. Romain watches Bruno and Max playing nearby, smiling.

ROMAIN

You'll have trouble breaking those two up later.

Isobel follows his gaze. She smiles too, the change in Bruno a nice sight to behold.

 ISOBEL
Yeah, the perks of the job...

 ROMAIN
Why did you take it?

 ISOBEL
So I could afford to travel. It was either this or waitressing, and the cafe managers don't tend to throw in accommodation and hot meals.

 ROMAIN
 (mock surprise)
You mean it wasn't for the glamour?
Or the money?

Isobel laughs weakly, failing to hide her discomfort.

 ISOBEL
No...

 ROMAIN
Sorry. Bad topic. Especially when you don't have any.

He laughs at his own joke, but it's clearly a sore point for him. He looks out at Bruno and Max, thoughtful. Serious. Isobel watches him, sympathetic. He can feel her eyes on him.

 ISOBEL
Maybe you're better off. You seem like a down to earth guy.

 ROMAIN
 (smiling)
Because I dig around in it all day?

Isobel laughs, but maintains her serious air.

 ISOBEL
I just mean, money compromises people...

Romain nods, thinking about it. He kicks woodchips as he sways on the swing. Isobel watches Bruno and Max, lost in thought for a moment. She sighs, getting to her feet.

 ISOBEL (CONT'D)
I should get him home.

Romain stands, following suit.

 ROMAIN
Will you accept a lift this time?

Isobel blushes, embarrassed. Romain smiles. She nods.

ISOBEL

Thanks.

She starts heading towards Bruno. Romain follows, reaching for her hand.

ROMAIN

Well just in case you run off again...

He pulls her back gently and kisses her on the mouth, gentle but direct. Isobel's initial surprise evaporates quickly. She sinks into the kiss, returning it, powerless to resist.

After a moment their lips part. Their faces remain close. Romain smiles broadly.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

I've been wanting to do that since you called me a fucking moron.

Isobel bursts out laughing, turning away from him, embarrassed once more. She looks at the spot where Bruno and Max were a moment before. They're gone.

Isobel's eyes comb the park and surrounding trees, her smile fading fast. Only now does Romain notice.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

She ignores him, begins walking, eyes searching, frantic.

ISOBEL

(calling)
Bruno? Bruno? Où es-tu?

Several parents of other children react to her cries, looking, concerned. No sign of him. No reply. Nothing. Romain joins the search, keeping his cool.

ROMAIN

He can't have gone far.

ISOBEL

(sharply)
Shut up and look for him!

Romain is taken aback, but does as he's told, moving off through the park as Isobel heads in the opposite direction, jogging, panic building by the second. She picks up to a run.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Bruno?!

She runs alongside the woods, glimpsing inside as she races by. She stops, hands in her hair, flushed and breathless. She whirls around, searching the earth to its ends.

Max emerges from the woods, bounding eagerly towards her. Bruno follows a moment later, giving chase. Isobel nearly collapses with relief. Max explores Isobel's feet as Bruno approaches. Isobel clutches her chest, recovering.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Bruno! You don't run off like that!
You scared me half to death!

Bruno looks up at her, admonished. He doesn't understand the words but her tone speaks volumes. He points to the woods.

BRUNO

(in French)
Max ran in there...

Isobel eases off, seeing his apologetic face. Max scurries over to Bruno, jumping up at him. Bruno strokes him, comforted, shying away from Isobel. She sighs heavily, relieved and guilty.

BY THE SWINGS

Romain is still searching the park. He sees Isobel, Bruno and Max approaching. He throws his head back in relief as they reach him. Isobel doesn't look happy.

ROMAIN

You found them.

ISOBEL

(pointed)
What did I call you again?

She glares at him, striding past him with Bruno and Max in tow. Romain watches in shock, hurt.

INT. ROMAIN'S TRUCK - DAY

Romain drives down a country road. Isobel sits beside him. Neither one speaks, the tension palpable. Isobel glances in the rearview mirror at Bruno.

He sits in the back, cuddling Max. He looks calm. Comforted. Isobel continues to watch, considering.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Isobel and Madeleine watch from the open doorway as Bruno sits on his bedroom floor playing with Max.

Madeleine looks disapprovingly at Isobel. She returns a guilty smile.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel enters followed by Madeleine, who shuts the door.

MADELEINE

It wasn't your place to make a decision like that. I dread to think what Ludovic will say. He can't stand dogs...

ISOBEL

I'm so sorry, Madeleine. I just... I haven't seen him smile like that since I got here. And he seemed so calm. Like he felt safe. I couldn't bring myself to say no...

Madeleine's stern expression falters slightly, something getting to her. Guilt maybe. She regains composure.

MADELEINE

Of course he likes the puppy. He's five years old. That doesn't give you the right to--

ISOBEL

I know. It was a mistake. I'm sorry. I'll call Romain tomorrow.

MADELEINE

Perhaps he's the one you couldn't say no to...

She softens, smiling. Isobel goes crimson, uncomfortable and unsure of how to respond. Madeleine gestures to her open laptop on the bed, letting her off the hook.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

What are those?

Isobel glances at her laptop. Her digital camera is plugged into it via a USB lead. Beautiful nature shots fade in and out on screen in a slide-show.

ISOBEL

Some photos I took at the park.

Madeleine smiles with admiration. The nature shots come to an end, followed by shots of Bruno playing in the park.

MADELEINE

They're very good. I hope he wasn't any trouble?...

MADELEINE

Lawns and hedges, perhaps. But my flowers need a woman's touch.

She smiles. Isobel smiles politely in return, distracted.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

Speaking of our fine gardener, why don't you go outside and say hello rather than spying from the window?

Busted. Isobel looks embarrassed.

ISOBEL

It's... complicated. I'm not really speaking to him.

Madeleine is looking past her, through the window.

MADELEINE

Well someone is...

Isobel turns to the window to see that Shannon's car has pulled up beside Romain's truck. He leans on the frame of her car, chatting to her through her open window. She throws her head back, laughing charmingly. Isobel is clearly jealous.

INT. FOYER - DAY

The doorbell RINGS. Isobel emerges from the living room and opens the front door. Shannon stands on the doorstep.

SHANNON

Hey.

ISOBEL

Hi. What're you doing here?

Shannon tries to hide her disappointment at Isobel's luke-warm greeting. Her relaxed smile remains in tact.

SHANNON

I thought we could go shopping.

ISOBEL

I can't. Looking after Bruno.

SHANNON

It's the weekend... aren't his parents home?

ISOBEL

Yeah, they're around. Busy though. I said I'd keep an eye on him...

She shrugs an apology. It doesn't seem quite genuine.

SHANNON
Okay... another time?

ISOBEL
(stand-off-ish)
Yeah, okay. Whatever. I'll see you
on Monday.

She musters a weak smile before closing the door.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Shannon lingers on the doorstep. She looks baffled. After a moment, she slinks back towards her car, dejected.

INT. SUN ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Isobel enters, followed by Max. Bruno brings up the rear, chasing after the puppy. Madeleine prunes a small magnolia tree.

ISOBEL
I'm making drinks, do you want
anything?

Madeleine stops, gently wiping her brow with her hand.

MADELEINE
Iced water would be good. Where's
your friend?

ISOBEL
Gone. She had somewhere to be.

Madeleine nods, considering. She begins pruning again.

MADELEINE
That's probably for the best.

Isobel gives her a questioning look. She doesn't follow. Madeleine sighs, uncomfortable.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
With everything that's going on
here... I don't want you not to
have friends but we don't want to
drag anybody else into this
frightful mess. Trust me...

She looks worried. Isobel nods in agreement, but looks miserable as she considers the prospect...

A shrill CRY snaps her out of it. Madeleine rushes down to the end of the sun room where

MAX DIGS UP HER ROSE GARDEN, throwing up dirt and petals. Madeleine reaches him, CLAPPING her hands loudly.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

Max stop it! Max!

He keeps at it, oblivious. She grabs him by the collar and drags him away, ushering him away. He races up the sun room, passing Bruno who stands by the work-bench looking sheepish.

Madeleine strides towards Isobel, grabbing Bruno's hand on the way and bringing him in tow. She drops him off with Isobel, stern.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

Take them somewhere else to play.

She marches back to her magnolia tree. Isobel, admonished, leads Bruno out of the sun room, Max scurrying ahead.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bruno carries a plastic box as he moves around the room, grabbing various toys and dropping them in the box, filling it quickly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Bruno sits on the floor, the now empty plastic box on it's side. He's surrounded by toys from his bedroom. Stuffed animals, toy soldiers, his trusty fire engine. Isobel enters and crouches next to him.

ISOBEL

What're we playing?

He doesn't look up from what he's doing. Isobel looks around, bored. Her fingers play absentmindedly with her black scarf. Bruno reaches out and grabs it. He tugs at it eagerly, smiling. Isobel looks confused.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

What? You want this?

He keeps tugging it, urging her to remove it from her neck. Confused, she obliges and hands it to him. He proceeds to pull it over his eyes and secures it behind his head.

BRUNO

(in French)

Hide! Hide!

He gets to his feet and puts his hands out in front of him, feeling the air with them. Isobel finally gets it. She moves out of reach, slipping behind the sofa.

Bruno walks carefully, one gentle foot in front of the other, arms outstretched. Isobel smiles. He's adorable.

She coughs deliberately. Bruno turns towards the sound. He's facing her now. Slowly he manoeuvres towards her, his little arms reaching out. His fingertips find her leg.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
(in French)
Got you!

He whips off the blindfold triumphantly, a proud grin on his face. He hands it to Isobel. It's her turn.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Isobel, now wearing the blindfold, moves cautiously through the room, her hands feeling out for Bruno. No joy.

Bruno peers into the room, stifling a laugh. He clutches a bundle of several toys in his arms.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Isobel manoeuvres carefully around the dining table, feeling her way along it with her hands as she goes.

ISOBEL
Am I getting warmer? Bruno?

No answer. Her searching hands knock over a TOY SOLDIER standing on the table top. It CLATTERS loudly on the wood, making Isobel jump. She sighs. Keeps going.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Isobel shuffles out into the foyer, waving her arms out in front of her, finding nothing but thin air.

Isobel's foot kicks Bruno's toy FIRE ENGINE which sits in the middle of the foyer. The SIREN WAILS to life, the blue light flashing as it rolls into the wall. Isobel stumbles, surprised, almost falling. She huffs, irritated.

ISOBEL
(muttering)
Come on, this isn't funny now...

She slowly reaches for her blindfold... until Bruno GIGGLES from somewhere on her left. She leaves it on, following the sound through an open doorway...

INT. ROOM - DAY

ON ISOBEL'S FACE

As she moves slowly into room, feeling out in front of her. No sound from Bruno now. She moves forward another step... and another...

THUMP. Her leg connects with something hard in front of her. She sucks air through her teeth, grabbing her pained leg.

ISOBEL

Ah! Fff...

She stops herself short, sighing. She's had enough now.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Okay, you win.

She whips the blindfold off...

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

That's enou...

Isobel trails off as she sees the offending obstacle. A large mahogany desk. Another TOY SOLDIER stands on top of it.

She takes in her plush surroundings. A gold-framed family portrait above the fireplace. A green banker style lamp on the desk. A drinks cabinet against the back maroon wall.

Her eyes flash with realisation. She's in Ludovic's office. She whirls around for the door--

LUDOVIC STANDS BEFORE HER, filling the doorway. Isobel GASPS, startled. His menacing eyes burn into hers.

LUDOVIC

(in French)

What're you doing in here?

Isobel can't muster a reply, confused by the language and scared by his forboding presence. He takes a step forward.

LUDOVIC (CONT'D)

(in French)

What're you doing in my office, Isobel?

ISOBEL

I... I'm sorry. I was looking for--

She hears something to her left. Bruno emerges sheepishly from under a corner table.

BRUNO

(in French)

We were playing a game...

Ludovic strides over to Bruno and lifts him to his feet.

LUDOVIC
(in French)
You're not allowed to play in here.

He guides him swiftly to the door, his little legs struggling to keep up. He hands him over to Isobel who hurries him through the doorway.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Isobel and Bruno step out into the foyer. Isobel looks back, catching a glimpse of Ludovic's stern expression before the door SLAMS shut between them.

Isobel's gaze remains on the closed door for a moment, shaken. She looks down at Bruno. He looks up at her, tail between his legs.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Isobel, Madeleine, Ludovic and Bruno eat at the dinner table, joined by SYLVIE and CHRISTOPHE, a pleasant looking couple in their 40s. Cutlery clinks and scrapes on plates as they talk.

CHRISTOPHE
(in French)
This is delicious, Isobel.

Isobel looks to Madeleine, confused.

MADELEINE
He's complimenting your cooking.

ISOBEL
Oh. Merci beaucoup.

SYLVIE
(in French, smiling)
The dog seems to like it too...

Sylvie's words alert Ludovic to Bruno, who is handing scraps of meat to Max who sits expectantly by his chair leg.

LUDOVIC
(sharp, in French)
No, Bruno. You don't feed that dog
at the dinner table.

Bruno looks downhearted. Sylvie catches his gaze. She rolls her eyes over-dramtically in response to Ludovic. Bruno covers his mouth, holding his laugh in his mouth. Sylvie smiles at him warmly. Carries on eating.

MADELEINE

(in French)

Especially not after what he did to
my roses.

She laughs softly, but Ludovic narrows his eyes at Max.
Christophe turns to Isobel.

CHRISTOPHE

(in French)

So how're you finding it here?

Ludovic looks at Isobel with scrutiny as she obliviously
awaits a translation from Madeleine.

MADELEINE

He asked how you're finding it
here.

Isobel turns to Christophe, nodding unsure of what to say.

ISOBEL

Erm, bien. Très bien.

SYLVIE

(in French)

You're not going to take off
without a moment's notice like the
last one then?

She and Christophe laugh. Ludovic doesn't. Madeleine forces a
smile. Isobel awaits a translation as Madeleine pours herself
a generous glass of wine...

But she doesn't give one. Her eyes flicker to Ludovic as she
drinks deeply from her glass, watching as he stabs his fork
hard into his meat.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Isobel dusts the polished cabinets and tables in the foyer.
She passes the door to Ludovic's office. It's closed. A thin
strip of light emanates from the foot of the door.

Isobel dusts a display cabinet near the office door. A loud
SMASH sounds from within the office, prompting Isobel to turn
to the door in surprise.

It's followed by a muffled, agonized GROAN, full of anger. It
sounds like Ludovic. Isobel remains fixed to the spot,
staring at the door, confused and panicked. What the hell is
he doing in there?...

Slowly, she creeps towards the door, placing one careful foot
in front of the other. She reaches the door and presses her
ear against it, biting her lip as she concentrates, straining
to hear something...

Nothing. Only silence now. Isobel turns her head, trying with the other ear, listening carefully...

A floorboard CREAKS loudly under her feet, like a bullet through the silence. FOOTSTEPS approach within the office.

Isobel's eyes bulge. She leaps from the door just before it BURSTS open. Ludovic storms out, riled, striding to the stairs, passing Isobel as she pretends to dust a table top.

Isobel watches discreetly, still fake-dusting, as he marches up the stairs and disappears from view. A few moments later, she hears the bathroom door SLAM. Isobel's eyes remain on the stairs, unnerved...

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel enters in her dressing gown, fresh from the shower, her hair wet and stringy. She carries a bathroom towel.

She sits at her dresser, examining her own reflection for a moment, before proceeding to towel-dry her hair. Head down, she leans over, throwing her hair forward over her head. She rubs the dangling strands of hair with the towel.

In the mirror, a SHADOWY FIGURE PASSES BEHIND HER, quickly passing her open door as it moves down the hallway.

Isobel's head snaps up to look in the mirror, sensing the movement. She spins around. There's no one there.

ISOBEL
Madeleine?...

No reply. After a moment's pause, Isobel gets to her feet.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Isobel's head sticks out of her door. No sign of anyone.

Her eyes fall upon Bruno's door. It's ajar. She slips into the hallway and pads towards it with bare feet.

She reaches Bruno's door. Gently, she pushes it open further.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door's hinges SQUEAK as a strip of light from the hallway slides through the darkness within, illuminating Bruno's pillow and his sleeping face. He slumbers soundly, his breathing soft and slow. He looks angelic.

Max sleeps on the bed beside him, chin flat on the duvet. He raises his head as the light strikes him.

Peering through the partially open door, Isobel smiles. She opens the door further for a better view, allowing more light to spill into the room, revealing...

LUDOVIC SITTING ON THE END OF THE BED, staring at her with cold eyes. Isobel GASPS, recoiling in surprise.

He gets to his feet. Isobel remains frozen in the doorway.

LUDOVIC
(in French)
What are you doing?

Isobel stares at him with fearful confusion.

ISOBEL
I... I'm sorry, I don't know what you're... I heard something and I was just checking Bruno was...

She trails off wearily, frustrated at the pointlessness of their exchange. Ludovic walks slowly towards her, his questioning eyes not breaking contact with hers.

LUDOVIC
(in French)
Why did you come to his room? He's sleeping.

He looms over her, threatening, formidable. Isobel stares up at him, saying nothing. A low GROWL from behind Ludovic makes him turn around. Max is watching him from the bed.

Ludovic looks at Max with distaste, then back to Isobel.

LUDOVIC (CONT'D)
(in French)
Go to bed.

He gestures towards the door. Isobel nods and backs out.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Isobel hurries to her bedroom door. On reaching it, she stops, glancing back at Bruno's room, worried, unsure of what to do...

After a moment, she reluctantly goes into her room.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel lies asleep in bed. She shuffles amongst the covers, turning over, getting comfortable. Once settled, silence falls upon the room. Until...

A low THUMP sounds from behind the bedroom door. After a moment, the THUMP is heard again. Louder this time. Isobel's eyes flicker open. She looks over to the door.

The door slowly OPENS with a CREAK... Isobel's eyes go wide with fear, watching the opening door slow to a halt...

Then nothing. Isobel sits up, eyes fixed on the door, her breathing accelerating as she strains to see in the darkness. She leans forward, edging closer for a clearer view...

MAX JUMPS ON TO THE BED.

Isobel jumps out of her skin, clutching her chest, as if stopping her pounding heart from bursting from it.

ISOBEL

Oh my God...

Max looks up at her with his big eyes, tail wagging excitedly, oblivious to Isobel's annoyance. She rolls her eyes, making room for him to snuggle down beside her.

Isobel closes her eyes, stroking Max as she drifts off.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel is asleep, in the same position she was in before. Max is no longer there.

Isobel stirs awake, stretching. Her eyes open slowly, clocking the empty spot where Max once was. She sits up with great effort. She hangs her head in her hands, half asleep.

Suddenly her head snaps back up as she sits bolt upright, eyes fully awake now. A light-bulb moment.

INT. BRUNO'S ROOM - DAY

Isobel eases the door open and sticks her head inside. Bruno is still sleeping.

Carefully and quietly, she moves over to the shelf on which a selection of Bruno's toys sit on display.

Isobel scans the row of toys. THE TEDDY BEAR IS MISSING.

She scans the whole bedroom, her eyes darting from wall to wall. No sign of it. She sees the box that Bruno brought his toys downstairs in by the door. Empty. Her shoulders sink.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - BACK PORCH - DAY

Isobel sticks her head out of the kitchen door.

ISOBEL
 (calling)
 Max! Breakfast!

She WHISTLES. Waits. The dog doesn't emerge. Isobel sighs irritably, slipping back inside.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Isobel goes to the counter, getting back to preparing breakfast in a huff. Pots and pans clang as she goes. Madeleine watches from the table, concerned.

 MADELEINE
 And you've no idea where the camera
 could have gone?

 ISOBEL
 Not a clue. All I know is that he
 was in there, doing God knows what,
 and we missed it.

She glances at her watch and rushes to the hob where French toast sizzles in a frying pan.

 ISOBEL (CONT'D)
 And I'm going to be late, just to
 top off the perfect morning...

With a heavy hand she turns the French toast with a spatula, splashing hot oil onto her hand.

 ISOBEL (CONT'D)
 Shit!

Her hand retracts on instinct. She puts it to her mouth, soothing her injury with her tongue.

 MADELEINE
 Are you okay?

Not answering, Isobel storms to the sink, turning the cold tap on full blast. She puts her hand under the gushing water.

 ISOBEL
 The way he looked at me...

She shudders, remembering. Madeleine scoffs bitterly.

 MADELEINE
 Welcome to my world.

Isobel smiles sympathetically.

 MADELEINE (CONT'D)
 We need proof. I don't know how
 much longer I can live like this...

ISOBEL
I know. I'm sorry...

MADELEINE
Don't be. It's not your fault. But
we need to think of something else.

Isobel nods in agreement, checking her watch again. She sighs heavily, stressed. She marches back out of the back door.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK PORCH - DAY

Isobel steps out onto the decking, scanning the back garden.

ISOBEL
(calling)
Max! Get in here! I don't have time
for this today!

No luck. She moves down the porch, continuing to survey the garden as she goes. She WHISTLES again.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)
(calling)
Max?!
(sotto)
Where are you?...

She reaches the turning on the porch, rounding it to find...
MAX'S DEAD BODY on the deck, skewered with a GARDENING FORK.
Morning birds take flight as Isobel SCREAMS in horror.

EXT. LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - COFFEE STAND - DAY

Isobel and Shannon step away from the coffee stand, each holding a cup.

SHANNON
Jesus, that's totally sick... what
did you say to the kid?

ISOBEL
Told him he ran away...

SHANNON
Poor thing... seriously, who would
do something like that?

Isobel looks shifty. Shannon stops walking.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
What? What is it?

ISOBEL
We *know* who did it.

 SHANNON
Who?

Isobel looks conflicted. She looks around, as if to check no one else is listening.

 ISOBEL
I need to tell you something
first...

Shannon's eyes flash with intrigue.

INT. HOUSE - SUN ROOM - DAY

Through the window, Romain mows the back lawn in the distance, as Madeleine plunges a garden spade into one of the soil beds. She digs up the earth with vigour, venting her anger and frustration through the motion.

She stops, catching her breath, wiping her glistening brow with her hand. Her troubled eyes look down upon...

A BLACK BIN LINER, containing a small Max-sized lump.

EXT. LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - CAMPUS GROUNDS - DAY

Isobel and Shannon walk slowly along a secluded pathway. Shannon looks stunned at what she's just heard.

 SHANNON
Wow...

 ISOBEL
Yeah...

 SHANNON
For what it's worth, I think you're
really brave. Stupid, but brave.

Isobel can't fight a little smile.

 ISOBEL
Sorry for unloading on you. I
really needed to talk to someone.

 SHANNON
Hey, it's cool. At least this
explains why you've been so tightly
wound recently. You know. More so
than usual.

Shannon smiles playfully. Isobel rolls her eyes.

ISOBEL

Cheers...

SHANNON

Look, if you need anything, you let me know. Okay? I don't wanna read about you in the morning paper just because you were too proud to ask for help. Got it?

Isobel nods.

ISOBEL

Got it. Thanks, Shannon.

SHANNON

I know, I know, I'm amazing. I'll let you buy me lunch if you want.

Isobel laughs, in better spirits now. Until...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Isobel?

Isobel turns around to find BETH GRANGER (24), a stern red headed woman. The same one who was watching her before...

ISOBEL

Yes?...

BETH

My name is Beth Granger. I need to talk to you.

Isobel and Shannon exchange a look of uncertainty.

INT. LANGUAGE STUDIES INTERNATIONAL - CAFETERIA - DAY

A worn and creased MISSING GIRL POSTER, the smiling face of the girl filling the page.

It sits on the table before Isobel. She examines the poster for a moment with confused eyes, then looks up at Beth who sits opposite, her expression solemn.

ISOBEL

I'm sorry... am I supposed to know who this is?

BETH

It concerns me that you don't.

Isobel looks a little surprised. Her questioning eyes urge Beth to elaborate.

BETH (CONT'D)
That is my sister. Sophie.
(pause)
Was my sister...

ISOBEL
How long has she been missing?

BETH
Too long...

ISOBEL
Do the police have any idea where
she might be? Has anyone seen her?

Beth scoffs bitterly.

BETH
Please. Let's not be polite about
this. We're looking for a body now,
not a family reunion.

Isobel shifts uncomfortably, taken aback by her abrupt words.
She's unsure of what to say.

ISOBEL
I'm sorry...

BETH
Yeah. Me too. But I'll be even more
sorry when it happens again.

ISOBEL
Excuse me?

BETH
The family you work for. Sophie was
their au pair. Until she
disappeared.

Isobel looks stunned.

ISOBEL
Are you saying...

BETH
...that the two aren't unrelated?
That's *exactly* what I'm saying.

Beth is deadly serious. Isobel tenses, deeply unsettled. She
thinks a moment, remaining calm.

ISOBEL
Are you sure? How do you know she
didn't just leave? Maybe she--

BETH

--because I know my sister. She would never do anything like that. Not without telling me. We tell each other everything. And trust me, she had a lot to say. Not that the police will listen. No evidence. That Ludovic sounds like one crafty little bastard...

Isobel's fearful expression speaks volumes, confirming.

BETH (CONT'D)

I guess she was right...

ISOBEL

But that doesn't mean he...

She trails off, not believing the words coming out of her own mouth. Beth looks sympathetic, softening.

BETH

Look, I didn't mean to scare you. But maybe that's what you need. He's dangerous, Isobel. A sick, twisted tyrant who abuses his wife and kid. It's no wonder she had an affair...

Another bombshell. Isobel looks thunderstruck.

ISOBEL

What? Madeleine?...

BETH

That's what Sophie said...

Isobel takes this in as Beth looks down at the poster. At Sophie's smiling, happy face. She wears a gold chain necklace in the photo, with a heart-shaped charm attached.

BETH (CONT'D)

I gave her that necklace as a going away present. I didn't even want her to go. I didn't tell her that. Maybe if I'd done something when she first...

Her voice trails off, eyes glistening. She fights back her tears, putting the walls back up.

ISOBEL

You couldn't have known.

BETH

Maybe. But I know now. Lucky for you. I just hope you'll listen...

Isobel looks down at Sophie's photo, her mind racing.

EXT. HOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Isobel sits in a wooden chair on the decked porch that overlooks the back garden. She smokes a cigarette, blowing smoke into the cool evening air. Her face looks serious. Troubled.

Madeleine emerges from the back door, holding two steaming cups of tea. She sets them down on the wooden table.

MADELEINE

I thought you might like a cup of tea. It's getting cold out here.

Isobel doesn't respond, staring straight ahead. She takes a drag. Madeleine watches her, uncomfortable.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

Are you alright? You hardly said a word at dinner.

Isobel blows smoke, before turning to Madeleine.

ISOBEL

I met Sophie's sister today...

Madeleine's smile fades. Isobel's eyes burn into hers. Madeleine looks away, unable to face her accusatory stare. She slowly takes a seat at the table, covering her mouth with her hands, her eyes still averted, shamed.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Apparently Sophie's a bit hard to find these days. Since working for you. 'Anything to say about that?

Madeleine finally meets her harsh gaze, her eyes now glistening with tears.

MADELEINE

Ludovic. I think... I think he did something to her.

Isobel's lips tighten, holding it in. It's what she suspected, but the confirmation is still tough to hear. She closes her eyes, regaining composure, calming herself.

ISOBEL

Do you think he killed her?

Madeleine's eyes evade Isobel's, whose hard expression doesn't falter.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

(louder)
Do you?

Madeleine begins to cry silent tears, nodding. She desperately wipes tears from her face, but they're quickly replaced by new ones. Isobel's steely eyes soften, sympathy finding it's way in.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

Because she knew about your affair?

Madeleine closes her eyes, mortified. More tears.

MADELEINE

No. My husband doesn't know a thing about it. He can never know.

(pause)

She was... becoming a problem.

ISOBEL

Like me...

Madeleine frowns sympathetically. Isobel shakes her head.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

No. I'm sorry Madeleine. I can't do this. It's too dangerous.

Madeleine's sorrow is quickly replaced with blind panic.

MADELEINE

Wait...

ISOBEL

You lied to me.

MADELEINE

No I didn't...

ISOBEL

Failing to mention the part about your husband being a murderer is a pretty big omission in my book.

MADELEINE

You're right... I'm so sorry, Isobel. I know it was wrong. But I also know you would never have agreed to stay if I'd told you. And I need your help. I'm desperate. You know what he's capable of now. I'm terrified of him... of what he might do... every single day is like a living nightmare.

By now her words are all but a whisper as she fights uncontrollable tears. Isobel looks deeply sorry for her.

ISOBEL

And the affair...

MADELEINE
(getting her back up)
Can you blame me?!

ISOBEL
No...

Madeleine looks guilty for snapping. Isobel presses on.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)
I just meant... why didn't you tell
me about that either? I thought we
were friends.

Madeleine musters a tentative smile.

MADELEINE
I warned you about those.

She laughs softly through her tears at her own joke. Isobel shifts uncomfortably, not amused. Madeleine straightens up, resuming a serious tone.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
I haven't told *anyone*. Not a soul.
It breeches the conditions of our
pre-nup. If Ludovic ever found out,
that would be it. He'd be able to
leave me with nothing. He could use
it as leverage, get sole custody.
And he would. In a heartbeat.

Madeleine's face is fraught with fear. Isobel sighs deeply.

ISOBEL
From now on, you have to promise
you'll be totally honest with me.

Madeleine looks up at her, eyes full of hope.

MADELEINE
Does that mean you're still going
to help me?

ISOBEL
Looks like it doesn't it.

Madeleine is overcome with relief. She throws her arms around Isobel, squeezing her tight.

MADELEINE
(softly)
I promise.

She holds on tight, not letting go.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel lies in bed, wide awake. She stares at the ceiling, deep in anxious thought.

There's a chair rammed up against the door, wedged at an angle under the handle to keep it jammed shut.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Madeleine stands at the window, pulling the curtains back, peering nervously outside. Isobel waits by the doorway.

The retreating sound of a reversing car is heard from outside.

MADELEINE

Okay. He's gone.

She strides to the door, passing Isobel on her way out.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

Follow me.

She disappears into the foyer. Intrigued, Isobel does as instructed.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Madeleine goes to Ludovic's office door. She opens it and steps inside. Isobel hangs back on the threshold, hesitant.

ISOBEL

What are we doing?

MADELEINE

Getting proof.

She moves deeper into the room. Isobel reluctantly follows.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Madeleine moves around the desk and begins searching the drawers. Isobel hangs back, folding her arms protectively as she scans the room, not comfortable being in here again.

MADELEINE

There has to be something in here... help me look.

Isobel shakes off her apprehension and joins her.

ISOBEL

What are we looking for exactly?

MADELEINE

I dread to think. But trust me, I know my husband. He's just the type to keep a trophy for himself...

Isobel gently opens a drawer, her apprehension back in folds.

She digs through the contents, her hands finding two strange lengths of elasticated wire attached to either side of a flat block of rubber. There is French writing on the block that she doesn't understand. She puts it back, baffled.

They both continue to search the drawers, turning up nothing. Madeleine tries the top one. It won't open. Locked. Isobel watches as she reaches into the hollow leg space, feeling the underside of the desk top. Her hand retreats, now holding a small key attached to a piece of blu-tac.

Madeleine unlocks the top drawer, opening it to reveal a sleek, black HANDGUN.

Isobel's eyes widen, but Madeleine continues searching, uninterested. She notices Isobel gaping at it.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

It's licenced. "Protection"...

She does air-quotes with her fingers, scoffing at the term.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

He's had it for years. Besides, he wouldn't be stupid enough to use a gun. It's not very discreet. Not his style...

There's both bitterness and fear in her voice. Isobel watches with sympathetic eyes as Madeleine continues to search.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Isobel and Madeleine enter, deflated. Their faces say it all. Madeleine slumps onto the sofa in defeat.

ISOBEL

Can you think of anywhere else?

MADELEINE

I don't know...

Her eyes suddenly brighten.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

The apartment. We have an apartment in the city...

(hope fading again)

But I can't go there. Someone might see me.

(MORE)

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

If they mentioned it to my
husband... I have no reason to be
there. He'd know I was up to
something...

She wrings her hands, anguished, lost in her mental struggle.

Isobel exhales deeply, closing her eyes, as if preparing to
take a high dive...

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A central city apartment block on a busy street. The tall
building is detailed with elegant mouldings. Shannon's car
moves slowly down the road towards the building.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Isobel glances at her phone, Google Maps open on the screen.

SHANNON

Y'know, when I said "if you need
anything"... I was kinda thinking
like a spa day or something...

Isobel ignores her, concentrating. She looks up from her
phone to the apartment building up ahead.

ISOBEL

This is it.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Shannon's car continues down the street and pulls into an
empty parking space a safe distance from the building.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon adjusts the rear view mirror to give her a view of
the apartment building entrance as Isobel gathers her bag.

ISOBEL

Okay. Keep an eye out and call me
if you see anything.

SHANNON

That's it? Don't I at least get
coffee and doughnuts?

Isobel frowns with disapproval, not in the mood for jokes.
She goes to open the car door.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Wait.

She removes her sunglasses from her head and hands them to Isobel. She pops them on and examines her reflection in the rear view mirror.

ISOBEL

Great. Now I'm invisible...

SHANNON

Well it's good to know your trademark sunny disposition doesn't crumble under pressure.

Isobel pops the door open and starts climbing out.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Be careful...

Isobel smiles, grateful. Shannon smiles back. Worried.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Isobel climbs the steps to the front entrance. She produces a small piece of paper from her bag on which an access code, floor and apartment number are scribbled.

She takes a deep breath, composing herself, and punches the four digit code into a keypad on a panel beside the door. She glances over her shoulder, and slips inside.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Isobel moves swiftly through a small, empty lobby to a lift. She pushes the button and waits.

The front entrance door opens to her right. She jumps, startled, turning to see TWO DELIVERY MEN in the doorway. One holds a clipboard. They talk loudly in French.

Isobel sighs, relieved. PING! The lift slides open. Isobel steps forward, colliding with an OLD WOMAN in a Chanel suit.

ISOBEL

Oh, pardon madame...

OLD WOMAN

(smiling)

De rien.

Isobel smiles back weakly, head down as she makes way for the old woman. Route clear, she hurries inside.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon sits behind the wheel. She glances into the rear view mirror for a look at the apartment building. Nothing. She sighs, tapping her fingers impatiently on the steering wheel.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - 4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

The lift doors open. Isobel peers out into the hallway at the numerous doors to the apartments, each one branded with gold numbering. She spots a door with the number '11' on it and dashes to it, keys already in hand.

Her trembling fingers fumble with the lock as she struggles to get the door open.

The adjacent door to apartment 12 opens, LAUGHTER spilling into the hallway. Isobel hurries to make quick work of the lock, getting the door open and slipping inside just before a YOUNG COUPLE step out of apartment 12.

INT. LEVASSEUR APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

In her frantic hurry to close the door, Isobel drops her bag. The contents spill out, sliding across the polished floor.

She sighs irritably, quickly gathering her things and shoving them back inside the bag. She gets to her feet and moves swiftly down the hallway into the

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Affluent. Spacious. Tastefully and expensively decorated. Lots of beige and cream. No place for a child.

Isobel has no time to take in her plush surroundings. She gets straight to work, moving to an oak chest of drawers. She rifles through the top one, finding nothing of interest. She opens the one below. Keeps going.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon remains in the car, staring idly out of her window at passers by. She looks back at the rear view mirror.

In the reflection, a suited, silver haired MAN moves down the street, nearing the apartment building. Shannon straightens up, leaning forward for a closer look.

The man's face is obscured by PEOPLE walking in the opposite direction. Shannon's eyes remain fixed as she fumbles for her mobile phone, waiting anxiously for a proper view of him...

A gap in the crowd reveals his face. It's not Ludovic. The man walks past the building. Shannon sighs, relieved.

BANG BANG BANG! Shannon SCREAMS, jumping out of her skin to find a surly looking TRAFFIC WARDEN knocking on her window.

TRAFFIC WARDEN

(in French)

Do you have a permit to park here?

Shannon just stares at him, clutching her heaving chest.

INT. LEVASSEUR APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Isobel, now searching a cupboard on the other side of the room, fingers through old magazines and opened mail.

She sighs, frustrated, shoving them back inside and shutting the cupboard. She gets to her feet and moves for the door.

Her phone RINGS. She jumps with a start. Checks the screen.

'MUM CALLING'. Isobel looks stunned. She stares at the screen at the moment, drawing a blank, unsure of what to do...

She hits reject. She shakes it off, quickly exiting the room.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel enters Madeleine and Ludovic's bedroom, spotting matching cabinets on each side of the large bed.

She goes for the left one first, opening the drawer of it to find nothing but a book and an eye mask. Madeleine's side.

She moves swiftly around the bed to the other cabinet and pulls the drawer handle. Locked.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Shannon is now standing next to her car, talking with the traffic warden.

TRAFFIC WARDEN

(in French)

You can't park here without a permit. These spaces are reserved for the residents. Do you live in one of these buildings?

SHANNON

Permit? Let me see...

She reaches inside to the glove compartment, bending over.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

She arches her back as she pretends to search.

SHANNON

I'm sure it's in here somewhere...

The traffic warden is distracted by her pert behind straining to be contained by a tiny pair of denim shorts. Shannon looks over her shoulder, flashing him her winning smile. He smiles back, neutralised by her allure.

Shannon gets back to 'searching', rolling her eyes.

In the rear view mirror, LUDOVIC APPROACHES the apartment building. Shannon remains oblivious.

INT. LEVASSEUR APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel attempts to pry the lock on the bedside cabinet with a nail file. It's no use. She throws it into her bag, dejected.

She's about to get to her feet, but hesitates. She feels around the underside of the cabinet drawer. Her hand emerges, now holding a small key stuck to a piece of blue tac.

She unlocks the drawer and rifles through the contents, pulling out a collection of clippings from newspaper articles. The headlines and text are in French, but each is accompanied by a photograph of a young woman. Sophie Granger.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon is back in the driver's seat, talking to the traffic warden through the open window. She shrugs apologetically.

The traffic warden smiles, holding up his hands as if to say it's not a problem.

TRAFFIC WARDEN

(in French)

Make sure you have it next time.

Have a good day, miss.

Shannon nods, still smiling until the coast is clear. Her face caves with relief. She closes up the glove compartment and checks herself in the rear view mirror.

INT. LEVASSEUR APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel's eyes scan the clippings, picking out words she understands, panic rising as she moves from one to the next.

She digs through the drawer again. Her fingers find a gold chain and slowly fish it out of the clutter.

On the chain is a heart-shaped charm. Sophie's necklace. The same one from her photo on the missing person's poster. Only now it is stained with tiny specks of dried, rusted blood...

The RATTLING of keys in the front door startles her. Pure dread storms her face. She gathers the evidence, wrapping the necklace in newspaper before stuffing the lot into her bag.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The door opens and Ludovic steps inside, putting his keys and mobile phone on a side table.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel shuts the drawer and locks it with the key, Ludovic's approaching footsteps making her hurry. She reaches under the cabinet drawer to stick the key back in place.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ludovic moves down the hallway, approaching the bedroom...

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ludovic enters. Isobel has vanished. None the wiser, Ludovic walks to the bed, passing the wooden slatted doors of the built-in wardrobe.

INT. WARDROBE - DAY

Isobel hides. Thin, horizontal shafts of light streak her terrified face. She watches Ludovic through the narrow slats as he kicks off his shoes and removes his suit jacket...

She glances at the hanging clothes she's hiding amongst... her eyes bulge in dawning horror. She rummages in her bag, producing her mobile phone...

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ludovic gets to his feet, unbuttoning his shirt with one hand and picking up his jacket with the other...

INT. WARDROBE - DAY

Isobel finds Ludovic's number in her phone, silently frantic as he begins to cross the room towards the wardrobe...

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ludovic gets closer to the wardrobe... closer... reaches for the door handle... a phone RINGS outside the room, stopping him. He tosses his jacket onto the bed and walks out.

INT. WARDROBE - DAY

Isobel breathes deeply with sheer relief.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ludovic scoops up his ringing mobile from the side table, reading the screen. 'BLOCKED'. He answers, incredulous.

LUDOVIC

Allô?

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel creeps out of the wardrobe, edging towards the door...

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ludovic waits impatiently for the caller to speak.

LUDOVIC

Allô?...

He looks at the screen. They've hung up. He sighs, irritated.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Isobel nears the door, preparing to make a break for it...

CLUNK! The hastily blu-tacked key falls off the underside of the bedside cabinet, clattering loudly onto the cabinet shelf below and bouncing onto the carpet.

Isobel reacts to the sound...

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

...as does Ludovic, his head snapping back to the direction of the bedroom. He moves down the hallway.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ludovic walks in. Again, Isobel has vanished.

Ludovic's eyes search for the source of the noise. He spots the key on the carpet. He approaches it slowly with intrigue, moving deeper into the room...

...as Isobel watches from behind the bedroom door with bated breath. If he turns around, he'll see her plain as day.

Ludovic crouches in front of the bedside cabinet, picking up the key. Seizing her opportunity, Isobel steps out from behind the door and slips silently out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Isobel creeps to the door and turns the handle. Pulls gently. It doesn't budge. She tries again. No luck. Panic rising...

She grabs the handle with both hands and cautiously pulls harder this time... the sticking door still not budging... she pulls harder still...

The door finally POPS open with an audible THUD. She winces.

LUDOVIC (O.S.)
(in French)
Who's there?...

Isobel launches out of the door, fuelled by terror.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - 4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Isobel sprints down the hallway to the door for the stairs. She hurls it open, bulldozing through it.

INT. STAIRS - DAY

She stops dead - below, the two delivery men she saw earlier are heaving a sofa up the stairs, blocking her way down.

ISOBEL
Shit...

She races back through the door.

INT. 4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

She presses frantically for the lift. She sees the apartment door to opening just as the lift PINGS open. She dives in, out of view as Ludovic barrels out of his apartment.

INT. LIFT - DAY

She pushes a button and sinks against the back wall with bated breath, wide eyes on the door, willing it to close...

INT. 4TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Ludovic charges for the lift, reaching it just a second too late - the doors close, concealing her within. In frustration he SLAMS his fist on the metal doors.

INT. LIFT - DAY

Isobel jumps as the doors CLANG from the impact. She breathes a sigh of relief.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Isobel bursts in, hurling her bag onto the back seat and collapsing into the front passenger seat, sucking in oxygen.

SHANNON

Jesus! Are you okay?!

Isobel's face says it all. Shannon wastes no time. She fires up the engine.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

Shannon's car pulls over into a free space on the road-side.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon stops the car. Isobel is calmer now, breathing slowly, composed.

SHANNON

I'm sorry... I didn't see him... so have you got something?

Isobel just looks at her, dazed, confused.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Don't tell me it was all for nothing...

Isobel nods, on the same page now.

ISOBEL

No. I have what I need.

Isobel reaches over into the backseat for her bag as Shannon talks, finding a man's vest underneath it. Romain's vest.

SHANNON

Good. Please say you're done playing Nancy Drew now.

Isobel returns to her seat, facing Shannon, vest in hand.

ISOBEL

Why do you have this?

Shannon looks at the vest, confused.

SHANNON

What?... I don't...

Isobel just stares at her, her eyes full of hurt. Shannon knows what she's thinking.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Iz I swear to God, I have no idea how that got in here.

ISOBEL

I guess in your case it's pretty hard to keep track.

Shannon is shocked, wounded. She takes a second, composing...

SHANNON

Okay, I'm gonna let that one slide because this looks bad and you're upset. But I am telling you, I don't know what that is doing in my car. I mean do you seriously think I'd be stupid enough to leave the evidence right under your nose?!

ISOBEL

No, I'm the stupid one. You said you were doing it for me, and I believed you.

And with that Isobel climbs out of the car.

SHANNON

Izzie where're you going? Izzie!

Isobel slams the door behind her, leaving a bewildered Shannon to watch hopelessly as she hurries down the street, her rapid footsteps picking up to a full run.

EXT. METRO STATION - DAY

Isobel, still running, reaches the metro station entrance. She slows to a stop, leaning against a stone pillar.

Her eyes glisten with the threat of oncoming tears. She takes a deep breath and blinks them away, refusing to cry. She pulls out her mobile. "2 MISSED CALLS. SHANNON". She presses a button to clear them and makes a call. She holds the phone to her ear and waits as it rings, taking another breath, regaining composure. Madeleine answers.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 (from phone)
 Oh thank goodness you called, I've
 been worried sick.

ISOBEL
 Took longer than expected. But I
 found something I think we can use.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 (from phone, sheer relief)
 Oh Isobel... thank you so much. You
 don't know what this means to me.

Isobel smiles weakly, but her mind is elsewhere. A brief
 silence follows.

MADELEINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (from phone)
 And you're alright?

Isobel sniffs back tears.

ISOBEL
 Yeah. Yeah I'm alright.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 Are you sure? You sound a little...

ISOBEL
 Honestly I'm fine. Everything's
 fine. Look I've got to go, I'm
 getting on the metro so I won't
 have any signal. See you later.

The sound of Madeleine's protest is quickly silenced as
 Isobel ends the call. She dashes into the metro station.

EXT. PRIMARY SCHOOL - DAY

Isobel waits outside the gates to the school as CHILDREN
 hurry eagerly from the building, greeted by their GUARDIANS.

She leans against the fence, arms folded protectively across
 her slight frame. She stares glumly into space.

Bruno approaches from the gates, dwarfed by his rucksack.
 Isobel forces her misery away, crouching to greet him.

ISOBEL
 (in French)
 Hello Bruno! Did you have a good
 day at school?

Bruno is unresponsive, still mourning Max.

SHANNON

Hello? Anyone home?

(pause)

Izzie if you're there just open the door. We need to talk about this.

She waits a moment longer. Still no answer. She sighs irritably and abandons the front door.

EXT. BACK GARDEN - DAY

Shannon emerges onto the back garden, walking around the back of the house. She surveys the lawn, seeing no one.

Her eyes scan the house, from the porch decking up to the first floor windows and balcony. Not a person in sight.

She continues on, approaching the double doors to the sun room that backs onto the garden.

She steps up to the door and peers in through the glass. Her eyes go wide, horrified by what they have witnessed...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Shannon's car tears down the road, kicking up dust.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon clutches the wheel with one hand, knuckles white. She glances in the rear view mirror at the road. Empty.

She dials a number on her mobile with the other and clamps it to her ear. The ringing tone rolls over and over.

SHANNON

Come on...

She waits impatiently for an answer.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Isobel's phone RINGS on the table. 'SHANNON CALLING'. She grabs it frustrated, switching her phone off.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon yanks the phone from her ear in frustration.

WHAM! Shannon lurches forward as her car is rammed from behind, the phone flying from her hand in the process. Her frantic eyes search the rear view mirror.

Behind her, Ludovic's Mercedes gives chase, tailing her, inches from her bumper.

His car surges forward and hits the back of Shannon's with a violent CRUNCH of metal. Shannon SCREAMS, the wheel spinning free of her grip as her car swerves left. She pulls it back, regaining control.

SHANNON
(screaming)
Leave me alone!

WHAM! Ludovic's car rams into hers a third time. Shannon loses control again, the car veering off the road.

She throws her arms up to shield her face as the car hurtles towards an old wooden barricade.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Shannon's car crashes through the barricade into an overgrown clearing, tearing through foliage, no signs of slowing down.

It barrels into a mass of thick bushes.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Through the windscreen, the bushes part and flatten as the out of control vehicle ploughs forward, suddenly breaking through the wall of foliage to--

AN ONCOMING CLIFF EDGE. Shannon SCREAMS, eyes bulging as she hurtles towards the precipice. Her foot SLAMS on the brake.

EXT. CLIFF EDGE - DAY

The wheels spit dirt and gravel as the car slows in a desperate attempt to stop. It screeches to a halt mere inches from the cliff's edge.

INT. SHANNON'S CAR - DAY

Shannon's seatbelt takes the impact, snapping her back into her seat with a painful jolt.

Her chest heaves as she hyperventilates, her ragged breaths becoming sobs as she stares out at the open space before her. She peers over her shoulder through the rear windscreen. No sign of Ludovic's car.

With trembling fingers she un-clips her seatbelt and fumbles for the left door handle, popping it open.

It swings out over open air. Shannon's eyes bulge as they take in the fifty foot drop to the rocks and thorny thickets below - seeing now that the left side of the car is perched dangerously close to an alcove in the cliff's structure. There's no way in hell she's climbing out that side.

Shannon clammers over the gear box to the right hand seat, reaching for the other door.

The rumbling roar of an approaching car makes her look up through the rear windscreen.

LUDOVIC'S CAR HURTLES towards hers and CRASHES into the rear, lurching her front wheels over the cliff edge with an almighty jolt.

EXT. CLIFF EDGE - DAY

Shannon SCREAMS IN UNFORGETTABLE HORROR as she CRASHES through the windscreen in an explosion of glass.

She rolls across the bonnet and sails over the edge, still screaming as she plunges out of sight into the abyss.

A sickening THUD echoes from below. Silence follows, all but for the distant chirp of forest birds.

Ludovic's car retreats from the cliff edge.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The trees rustle and sway in the late afternoon breeze as a blood-red sun descends behind the rim of a valley.

The birdsong fades and shadows creep in as dusk draws near.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Isobel stares distantly out of the window, the orange hue of the low, setting sun reflecting on the glass pane.

She glances across the table at Bruno, an empty glass and chocolate-stained plate in front of him. He sluggishly rolls a toy car back and forth across the table top, his other little arm supporting his head. He looks tired. Overindulged.

Isobel heaves her weary body to its feet.

ISOBEL

I guess we'd better get you home.

Bruno stands as Isobel switches her mobile phone back on.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Isobel scrolls through the contacts on her phone as she walks with Bruno. She finds Madeleine and is about to call when...

The phone RINGS. 'ROMAIN CALLING'. Isobel hesitates, watching his name flash before her eyes as the phone continues to ring. Her mouth tightens as she musters courage. She answers.

ISOBEL

I don't have anything to say to you
right now so why don't you just--

She stops talking, her footsteps slowing, her defences evaporating as the colour drains from her face.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Isobel bursts through a set of doors, clutching Bruno's hand as she hurries down a bright strip-lighted corridor.

She pulls Bruno aside to make room for a passing NURSE pushing a PATIENT in a wheelchair.

She spots Romain sitting in a chair against the wall further down the corridor, his head in his hands. Once the wheelchair has gone by, she makes a bee-line for him. He glances up as she approaches. He looks grim.

ROMAIN

Hi...

Isobel sits in the empty chair next to him. Bruno hovers, taking in his surroundings with a mixture of interest and apprehension.

ISOBEL

Have they spoken to you since you
called?

ROMAIN

She's still in surgery. They said
to wait here. When they have any
news they'll...

He trails off, looking past Isobel. She turns to follow his gaze, seeing a young, female DOCTOR approach. She'd be pretty if her expression weren't so sombre.

Isobel and Romain get to their feet, Romain stepping in front to take charge. Isobel waits behind him, taking Bruno's hand as the doctor stops in front of Romain. She acknowledges Isobel with a sympathetic smile before she begins talking.

The doctor speaks in French, slowly. Calm. Romain nods in response to the words to indicate his understanding. Isobel doesn't understand a word. She doesn't need to...

Romain hangs his head as the doctor places a reassuring hand on his arm. Isobel watches on, her face stricken with grief, tears forming in her darkening eyes.

Bruno looks up at her, his little face sad and confused. Isobel squeezes his hand.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Isobel sits on a wall. She pops a cigarette between her trembling lips, digging in her bag for her lighter. Romain perches on the wall beside her. Bruno walks the length of the walk, glibly running his car along the brick work.

ROMAIN

I was on my way to the house and the police had blocked off the road. I heard something about another vehicle. I think they're treating it as suspicious...

ISOBEL

Good. They should be.

ROMAIN

Why? Do you know something?

She leaves it at that. Romain waits for her to elaborate, but it's clear she isn't going to.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

I spoke to her. Just before...

Isobel stops digging in her bag. Looks at him.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

She called. Said you two had a fight. Something about finding my vest in her car.

ISOBEL

Pales into insignificance now. Looks like you're off the hook.

ROMAIN

Nothing ever happened between us, Izzie. I don't know how it got in there. Someone...

He trails off, as if deciding what he was about to say is ridiculous. But Isobel picks up the thread.

ISOBEL

Someone must have put it there...

ROMAIN

I know. That doesn't make sense.

ISOBEL
 ... to make me not trust her...
 isolate myself...

ROMAIN
 What the hell are you talking
 about?...

She keeps searching for her lighter in a fluster, growing more frustrated as she fails to find it. She SCREAMS and hurls the bag to the ground. Bruno jumps, alarmed. Isobel buries her head in hands.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)
 Here...

He produces his lighter. Isobel goes to accept, but hesitates. She takes the cigarette out of her mouth and drops it to the floor.

ISOBEL
 I need to get Bruno home.

ROMAIN
 Okay. I'll drive you.

ISOBEL
 No. Don't do that. Don't do
 anything for me.

ROMAIN
 What?

ISOBEL
 You need to stay as far away from
 me as possible.

ROMAIN
 Look, you're upset. Let me take you
 home, get some rest, and--

ISOBEL
 I mean it. It's not safe for you to
 be around me. This is my fault...

ROMAIN
 Don't be stupid. How is any of this
 your fault?

She gets to her feet, about to walk away when she stops, turning back to Romain. She kisses him - deep, passionate. Giving into him for just a moment. And then she pulls away.

ISOBEL
 Come on, Bruno.

Bruno trudges over to her. She takes his hand and the two of them walk away, leaving Romain to watch them go.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

The sparsely populated bus bumps its way along the dark country road. Isobel and Bruno sit in silence.

Isobel's head rests against the cool window pane, eyes closed, her limp body rocking gently back and forth with the bus' movement. She looks completely worn out. Spent.

She pulls her phone from her pocket. She has a 'VOICEMAIL'. She puts the phone to her ear.

LINDA (O.S.)
 (from phone)
 Isobel? It's Mum... I was really hoping you'd pick up... maybe it's better that you didn't. I need to get this out...

Isobel sits up, listening. She hears her rustle of paper. A deep SIGH. A long pause follows...

LINDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I'm back in AA. I know, fifth time's the charm... it's early days. But I had to make a list of all the people I've harmed and try to make amends. If they'll let me...

Isobel looks bitterly cynical. She's heard this before. Another long pause. More rustling of paper. Quiet again...

LINDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 It wasn't your fault. It was mine. For asking too much of you. For making you grow up too fast. For making you take care of my child when you were still one yourself because I wasn't fit to do my job.

Isobel looks utterly thrown, the words cutting through to her very core. She *hasn't* heard this before. Linda's voice breaks as she presses on, battling her tears.

LINDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 He doesn't want it, Isobel. He's never wanted it, not really. He doesn't want to be treated like a guinea pig for something he doesn't even think will work.
 (pause)
 It was what *I* wanted for him. For me. I erase my mistake...

Linda loses the battle, breaking down in tears. Isobel cries silent tears of her own. Crying for everything she knows. She looks completely overwhelmed, exhausted with emotion.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Isobel and Bruno trudge wearily towards the house. Ludovic's Porsche is parked in the driveway.

LINDA (V.O.)

He doesn't blame you. He never has.

Isobel moves around to the front of the car. It's all in tact. Not a scratch. Not the car used against Shannon.

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Isobel opens the front door, stepping aside to let Bruno through. She wearily drops her bag onto a table beside the door as Bruno disappears into the living room.

LINDA (V.O.)

He says he's accepted it and we need to do the same.

Isobel follows him, not noticing the suitcase resting against the wall by the door. She heads for the stairs, passing the closed door to Ludovic's office as she goes.

Light seeps out from under the door.

INT. ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens to darkness. Isobel's fingers search the wall for the light switch. After a moment they find it.

LINDA (V.O.)

He misses you, Isobel. We both do.

The light illuminates Isobel's now bare room. It looks unoccupied. The photographs are gone from the mirror. All of her belongings have vanished. Not a trace of her remains.

INT. - FOYER - NIGHT

Isobel hurries down the stairs to the foyer. The door to Ludovic's office is now open, but there's no one inside.

ISOBEL

Madeleine? Are you here?

She moves across the foyer to the living room doorway.

LINDA (V.O.)

We just want you to come home...

Isobel stops dead in her tracks.

Ludovic stands before her in the middle of the room, arms folded over his chest. Behind him, Madeleine shrinks like a violet on the sofa, her arm around Bruno.

Isobel slowly steps into the room...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She approaches. Ludovic steps forward, between his family and Isobel, signalling for her to stop where she is. She does so.

ISOBEL

What's going on?...

Ludovic produces the medical DOCUMENT ON STEM CELLS from the coffee table behind him, handing it to Isobel.

MADELEINE

He found it. I had to tell him about Andy. I explained, I told him it wasn't your fault--

LUDOVIC

(in French)

You think I'm going to leave my child in your hands after what you did?

Isobel looks at the document, her fingers trembling. She looks up at Ludovic, eyes glistening, but fiery with rage.

ISOBEL

That's private. You had no right going through my things...

MADELEINE

(in French)

She says you had no right to go through her things.

Ludovic's lips form a thin, malicious smile.

LUDOVIC

(in French)

Ca c'est plutôt hypocrite, surtout de ta part.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls his hand out to reveal...

Isobel's LIGHTER. She tenses, her blood turning cold, as he flicks the lighter open and closes it again, examining it with smug satisfaction. Madeleine speaks in a small voice...

MADELEINE

He said that's rather hypocritical coming from you...

Isobel stares at the lighter for a moment, unable to look Ludovic in the face. She turns away from him and strides defiantly out of the room.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

She marches over to the table on which her bag sits.

She pulls it open... and freezes. The newspaper clippings are gone. She digs frantically through the bag, but her hands turn up nothing. The necklace is gone too. She turns back to Ludovic, angry, but cowering... losing ground...

LUDOVIC
(in French)
I've packed your things. I want you
out of this house. Now.

Isobel looks to Madeleine, shying away behind Ludovic, lost... unable to muster a translation, or anything else. But Ludovic knows all the English he needs.

LUDOVIC (CONT'D)
GET OUT!

Isobel jumps back in terror as he bellows at her. She scrabbles to grab her suitcase and bag and stumbles out of the front door, glancing back at a crushed Madeleine before the door SLAMS shut between them.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Isobel sits on her suitcase at the bus stop, downtrodden. A solitary figure in the night.

Her eyes glisten in the darkness. She looks utterly broken. Her phone RINGS. She digs for it in her bag, pulling it out. 'MADELEINE CALLING'. She closes her eyes, taking a moment to prepare... and accepts the call. But she doesn't speak.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
(from phone)
... Isobel?... What are we going to
do?

ISOBEL
It's over, Madeleine. Done. I'm
going home.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
So you're just going to leave?...

ISOBEL
It's out of my hands.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 What if we think of something?
 Maybe we can--

ISOBEL
 Where's the Mercedes, Madeleine?

Isobel waits for the answer. After a moment Madeleine speaks, her voice tiny, defeated.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 He took it in. He said it needed a service...

ISOBEL
 Convenient. And a few repairs too while they're at it... we don't have anything. The stuff I found on Sophie is gone too. I don't know what else you expect me to do.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 What about the money?...

This gives Isobel pause. She takes a moment, readying herself to break the news.

ISOBEL
 I... I don't need it anymore. They want me to come home.

Isobel waits. Silence. Is she still there? Eventually...

MADELEINE
 I see. Well you have no reason to help us then...

Isobel opens her mouth to protest, but something in the distance stops her.

From the bus stop, she can see Madeleine at the window. Illuminated by the light inside. Staring. Trapped.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
 Thank you for trying. Have a safe journey home.

And with an abrupt CLICK she is gone. Isobel can still see her in the window. Isobel looks at her helplessly, her face fraught with guilt. Madeleine steps away from the window... and then it seemingly vanishes. Devoured by darkness.

Isobel struggles to contain her tears as TWO HEADLIGHTS approach, beaming in the night. She gets to her feet with her suitcase. The vehicle comes into view...

Romain's truck. Isobel closes her eyes with exhausted relief.

INT. ROMAIN'S FLAT - NIGHT

A tiny studio flat falling apart at the seams. Damp on the ceiling. Wallpaper curling from the walls. Clutter everywhere. And yet in the orange glow of the bedside lamp it's comforting and warm.

Isobel and Romain sit on the bed. No room for a sofa. Isobel looks ragged with fatigue. Romain looks stunned.

ROMAIN

Wow...

ISOBEL

That's what Shannon said...

Her eyes hit the floor. It's painful to talk about her.

ROMAIN

Have you told anyone else?

Isobel shakes her head.

ISOBEL

I've been so scared...

He puts a comforting arm around her. She rests her head against his cheek. He strokes her hair. Kisses her head. She responds, kissing his cheek... his mouth.. they keep kissing, more intensely.. more passionately...

Isobel suddenly breaks away, getting to her feet. Romain looks hurt, confused. Isobel paces the room, running her fingers through her hair.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...

Romain stares, dumbfounded. He throws up his hands in defeat.

ROMAIN

You're right. You're scared. I just don't know what of...

Isobel looks offended, staring back, waiting for an explanation. He looks up at her from the bed.

ROMAIN (CONT'D)

You keep shutting me out! And I know it's not because you don't feel it, because I feel it too. But you keep pulling away from me. Have I done something or is this just what you do?

Isobel is stuck for a reply, struggling to find words.

ISOBEL
It's... complicated.

 ROMAIN
Exactly...

 ISOBEL
What?

 ROMAIN
You like things simple. You do what
feels easy instead of what feels
right. Even if it means being
fucking miserable.

Isobel looks furious, ready to explode. She opens her mouth to protest, but she's not quick enough. He gets to his feet.

 ROMAIN (CONT'D)
And this is the part where you tell
me I'm wrong, that I don't know
what I'm talking about, and then
walk out that door proving
everything I just said to be--

She kisses him firmly, shutting him up. He's stunned. So is she. For a moment they just look at each other. She puts her hands to his face, kissing him softly this time. He kisses her back, their hands roaming each other's body, neither letting go.

INT. ROMAIN'S FLAT - NIGHT - LATER

Romain sleeps soundly in bed. Isobel lies beside him, wide awake. Her eyes glinting with resolve.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Madeleine sits in one of the wooden chairs, a blanket draped over her legs. She cups a mug of tea in her hands as she stares into the night with intense eyes.

Her mobile phone RINGS from the table, startling her. 'ISOBEL CALLING'. She stares at the phone, surprised. Hopeful.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Isobel empties a plastic shopping bag onto a table. Several boxes containing hidden nanny-cams tumble out before Madeleine, who sits at the table in bewilderment.

 MADELEINE
I don't understand...

ISOBEL

You said we needed proof. He's going to give it to us.

Madeleine doesn't look convinced. She looks around at other CUSTOMERS, chatting, sipping coffee. No one's listening.

MADELEINE

We've tried this before...

ISOBEL

On *his* terms. Waiting for him to put a foot wrong and hoping we'll just happen to have what we need to catch him out when he does.

Madeleine's cynicism starts to fade, her face registering her growing intrigue, wondering where she's going with this...

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

But we're not going to wait anymore. It's over. And you're going to tell him that.

Madeleine looks utterly terrified at the prospect. In a small, weak voice, she finally speaks...

MADELEINE

He'll kill me...

Isobel picks up one of the nanny-cams from the table, turning it over in her hands.

ISOBEL

He'll try to.

Isobel stares across the table at Madeleine, eyes on fire with a fierce determination; the likes of which we've not seen in her before.

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - MADELEINE & LUDOVIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Madeleine sits at her dresser. Her reflection stares back at her, intense and serious. Ludovic appears in the mirror, standing in the bedroom doorway. He wears a smart suit.

LUDOVIC

(in French)
I'm going now.

Madeleine turns to him, quickly adopting a happy, smiley disposition. Her nerves are obvious in spite of this.

MADELEINE

(in French)
Okay darling. Have a good time.

She keeps smiling, as convincingly as possible.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Madeleine stands at the open doorway, waving, as headlights retreat down the driveway. Once they are out of sight...

She turns the other way, leaning out over the front porch to peer along the shrouded front of the house.

MADELEINE
(harsh whisper)
Isobel?

After a moment, Isobel emerges from around the side of the house. She holds the plastic shopping bag.

INT. HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

A clock on the wall indicates that the time is 9.49pm.

Isobel eyes the clock as she positions a hidden camera designed to look like a piece of decorative rock. It blends in amongst the display ornaments on top of the cabinet.

Madeleine enters from the living room, tense with worry.

MADELEINE
Is that the last one?

ISOBEL
Yeah. What time will he get back?

MADELEINE
Around midnight...

Madeleine folds her arms protectively.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
I'll still give you the money, you know. If this works... I know you said you don't need it. But I'll still give it to you.

ISOBEL
I don't care about--

MADELEINE
I want you to have it. You deserve to gain something from all of this.

Isobel gives her a reassuring smile, as if to say she already has. Madeleine smiles in return for a moment... but her face becomes serious again.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

Madeleine strides purposefully over to the desk, retrieving the key and unlocking the drawer.

She pulls out the GUN. She thrusts it towards Isobel, who recoils slightly, unnerved.

MADELEINE

Here. Take this.

Isobel's hesitant hand gently takes the gun from Madeleine. She turns it over gently in her hands, uneasy.

ISOBEL

Madeleine...

MADELEINE

This isn't a game. If he tries to... you might have to be the one to stop him. So either you're prepared to do so, or we end this right now because I can't do it without your help.

Isobel hesitates a moment, her reluctance obvious, but she nods her agreement. Madeleine softens, managing a grateful smile in spite of the tense atmosphere.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I'll show you how to use it. Why don't you go and check on Bruno? I need a hot shower...

Isobel takes her leave. Madeleine gives an exhausted sigh.

INT. BRUNO'S ROOM - NIGHT

Isobel hovers in Bruno's doorway, watching forlornly as he sleeps, unaware of what's to come. She moves over to his bed and settles beside him, putting a protective arm around him.

The two of them lie there in the still darkness, Isobel's shrouded face intense. Ready...

INT. BRUNO'S ROOM - LATER

Isobel is now asleep beside Bruno. Her eyes snap open as a loud BANG from downstairs wakes her with a jolt.

She checks the clock. 10.37pm. She relaxes and climbs off the bed, careful not to wake Bruno. She slips out of the room.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel dashes into Bruno's room, drops onto the bed, and grabs him by the shoulders, trying to rouse him.

 ISOBEL
 (harsh whisper)
 Bruno wake up. Wake up...

He stirs mildly as she wrenches him from the depths of sleep. She shakes him again, firmer this time, desperate.

 ISOBEL (CONT'D)
 (harsh whisper)
 Come on Bruno wake up!

Bruno's eyes open, his face scrunched up in bleary confusion.

 BRUNO
 (loudly, in French)
 What's wrong?

Isobel shhhes him.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Ludovic stops cold, hearing Bruno's voice. He suddenly jumps into a run to the top.

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isobel spins to the door, reacting to the rapid THUMP of Ludovic's approaching footsteps...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ludovic reaches the top of the stairs and vaults down the hallway to Bruno's bedroom door...

INT. BRUNO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

He barrels through the door into the room to find...

BRUNO'S EMPTY BED. The sheets still a ruffled mess. Ludovic stalks into the room, eyes searching, resting on the wooden slatted doors of a built-in wardrobe...

He moves silently towards it, reaching for the door handle... THROWS the doors open. Nothing but Bruno's hanging clothes. He reaches inside, whipping the hangers along the metal rail with a screech to check behind them. Empty.

UNDER THE BED

Isobel and Bruno huddle close, lying on the floor, terrified, watching Ludovic's feet as they move away from the wardrobe.

Neither moves a muscle as they listen to his heavy footsteps. They come to a stop. They wait. Still. Agonizing silence...

ISOBEL SCREAMS AS SHE'S SUDDENLY WRENCHED BY HER FEET, sliding violently across the floor away from Bruno.

IN THE ROOM

She emerges from under the bed, kicking, screaming as Ludovic drags her by her ankles. She gets a leg free- KICKS him in the chest. He stumbles back, falling against the chest of drawers. His head connects with the wooden unit. He drops to the floor, grabbing at his pained head, momentarily stunned.

Isobel seizes the moment, beckoning Bruno in a frenzy.

ISOBEL
Bruno! Allons-y!

Bruno scrambles out from under the bed and gets to his feet. Isobel grabs his hand and drags him out of the door.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

They hurry towards the staircase. Bruno glances fearfully over his shoulder, seeing Ludovic emerge from the bedroom, unsteady on his feet. They reach the stairs. Isobel ushers Bruno down them ahead of her, pointing to the bottom.

ISOBEL
Go! Vite!

He dashes down the stairs as quickly as his little legs will allow. Isobel hangs back, reaching into her jeans waistband.

Ludovic charges like a bull down the hallway, lumbering towards her...

Her trembling hands fumble, retrieving the GUN, Ludovic oblivious to it in the darkness. Just as she prepares to aim--

Ludovic BARRELS into her, shoving her hard against the wall. She cries out in pain but holds steady, fighting against his powerful arms, wriggling and writhing with all she's got.

LUDOVIC
(in French)
Stop, Isobel! Just stop this now!

With a burst of strength, Isobel yanks an arm free, her elbow connecting hard with his jaw in the process. He recoils, still holding on to her, taking her with him as he falls backwards over the edge of the stairs.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Isobel and Ludovic tumble down the staircase in a jumble of limbs, their twisted bodies falling end over end until...

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

...they hit the hardwood floor with sickening a THUD. Both just lie there, not moving. Deathly still.

Isobel lies face down like a rag doll. She stirs, lifting her head, getting her bearings, wincing and groaning as she slowly heaves her body off the floor.

On all fours, her eyes search the floor for the gun. No sign of it. Her eyes dart around frantically, turning up nothing. She turns to see Ludovic lying at the foot of the stairs, limp, unmoving. Her eyes travel up the staircase, finding...

THE GUN, resting on a step two thirds of the way up. She closes her eyes, heart sinking, courage draining. She clambers to her feet, sucking it up, fighting back defeat.

Ever so slowly, she steps over Ludovic's body, never taking her petrified eyes off him as her foot finds the first step.

The other foot arches slowly over Ludovic, clearing his body to the step. Tension drains her body in immeasurable relief.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

She creeps up the stairs and retrieves the gun. She readies it in both hands and turns to aim it down the stairs.

LUDOVIC HAS GONE. Isobel stares in horror at the empty floor.

She creeps down the stairs, pointing the gun as she scans the foyer below from her vantage point. Not a trace of Ludovic.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Isobel reaches the foyer, looking every which way. She moves slowly, eyes darting, breath quickening, pointing the gun at shadows and empty doorways, her mind in over-drive. She sees the phone on a table. Goes for it.

She grabs the receiver, her fingers reaching for the buttons when it dawns on her... no dial tone. Thwarted, she hangs up.

LUDOVIC (O.S.)
(softly, distant)
Bruno?...

Isobel WHIRLS around in the direction of the voice. It came from the kitchen... she moves stealthily on to the hallway...

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

...creeping towards the open kitchen door at the end of it, aiming the gun, mustering courage with every step...

LUDOVIC (O.S.)
 (softly, in French)
 Bruno? Bruno, where are you? Please
 come out...

Isobel hovers outside the door, gritting her teeth as she readies the gun, her finger tensing on the trigger...

A DOOR OPENS TO HER RIGHT-- she SCREAMS, LEAPING out of her of skin, spinning to face the door, pointing the gun at--

BRUNO, standing in the now open doorway to the cellar, startled by Isobel, his fearful eyes fixed on the gun aimed at his face. Face aghast, Isobel quickly lowers the gun, but--
 --he retreats into the darkness, racing down the staircase.

ISOBEL
 No! Bruno wait!

She follows in hot pursuit, disappearing through the door.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

Isobel hurries down the staircase, Bruno several steps ahead. He vanishes into the darkness below. Isobel stumbles, almost falling. She regains her footing, running to the bottom.

ISOBEL
 Bruno?

She fumbles around in the darkness, feeling with her hands. She trips over a cardboard box, falling to her knees.

A HAND GRABS HER WRIST. She SHRIEKS, startled.

MADELEINE
 (weakly)
 Isobel...

Her eyes adjusting to the darkness, Isobel can make out Madeleine lying on the floor.

ISOBEL
 (whisper)
 Madeleine?! What did he do?...

She can barely muster a reply, or even move. Her head remains on the dusty concrete.

MADELEINE
 Stop him...

Isobel hears movement behind her-- turns to see Bruno-- revealed by the split second FLASH of the overhead strip light, before the room is plunged into darkness again.

She dashes over to him, hunched by a wall. She crouches at his level, his scared face just about visible at close range.

ISOBEL

It's okay, Bruno. It's okay. I didn't mean to scare you.

The light FLASHES again, illuminating them and the room for a millisecond. It finally registers for Isobel... eyes widening... Ludovic has turned on the light.

Footsteps THUD down the wooden steps... Isobel grabs Bruno, carrying him as she manoeuvres to the back of the room. She puts Bruno down and the two of them huddle in a corner between the end of a wine rack and a pile of old boxes.

The light FLICKERS, revealing Ludovic at the back of the cellar for split-second, before he's engulfed in darkness.

Isobel and Bruno cower in the corner, hugging the wall, petrified, trembling in the darkness.

The light FLICKERS again. Ludovic is closer now, his eyes firing around the room in his millisecond of light.

Darkness again. Isobel and Bruno statues in fear...

The light FLICKERS again. He's closer still... darkness.

Deathly silence... darkness still... Isobel catatonic. Not daring to breathe... terror coursing through her...

The light FLICKERS-- LUDOVIC IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF THEM! Isobel SCREAMS FROM HER VERY SOUL-- A GUN SHOT fires, ringing off cavernous stone walls with the dying echo of Isobel's scream. Pitch black darkness.

A heavy THUD as he hits the ground. Unseen. Utter blackness.

Isobel's PANTING breath the only sound, slowing, fading...

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Bruno emerges from the hallway, shaken and teary. He's followed by Isobel who supports Madeleine as she staggers into the foyer, a purple welt on her cheek bone, her nose a bloodied mess.

Isobel eases Madeleine down to the floor. She slumps against the wall, bleary, out of it.

While Isobel hugs a traumatised Bruno beside her, Madeleine stares straight at Ludovic's study. The door open. The room empty. Forever.

A serene smile forms on her battered face.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - DAY

The house sits peacefully beneath a grey, wintry sky.

TITLE CARD: 6 MONTHS LATER

INT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - ISOBEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

AN OPEN NEWSPAPER. The article features a photo of Isobel.

ISOBEL (O.S.)
 (reading aloud)
 ...the twenty one year old had
 been... required... to remain on...
in France during the police
 investigation and... after trial?

The room is bare. Isobel sits on the bed, newspaper in her hands. Madeleine sits beside her, peering down the pages.

MADELEINE
 Subsequent trial.

ISOBEL
 but was... granted permission to
 leave the country during the...

MADELEINE
 Hearing.

ISOBEL
 ...during the hearing on Thursday,
 where she was found not guilty of
 murder by... reason of self-
 defence.

Madeleine beams, giving her a soft round of applause.

MADELEINE
 Excellent! I'm very impressed.
 Although I take some credit for
 enrolling you in the first place.

She smiles smugly in jest. Isobel laughs, picking up her 'FRENCH FOR BEGINNERS' book from the bed before crossing the room to her packed suitcase sitting by the door.

ISOBEL
 Well what *else* was I going to do
 with myself?
 (MORE)

ISOBEL (CONT'D)

(waving the book)

This helped. As did having a load of police officials droning on at me for days on end. You pick it up.

She laughs at her own remark, stuffing the book in the front of her suitcase. But Madeleine looks guilty.

MADELEINE

It's not been fair on you, being stuck here for so long. Thank you, again. For everything.

Madeleine is a little overcome with emotion. She gets to her feet, straightening herself up, clearing her throat.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I'll make us some tea. When is Romain collecting you?

ISOBEL

In about an hour.

MADELEINE

Saying his good-byes at the airport. How romantic.

Isobel smiles, blushing. Madeleine departs. Isobel goes to the window, peering out at the beautiful garden, thoughtful.

BRUNO (O.S.)

Izzie!

She turns to find Bruno at the door, holding her black scarf out with eager intent. Isobel rolls her eyes. Bruno grins.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Isobel, blindfolded, staggers through the foyer, her hands out in front, feeling for reference... finding the door frame of Ludovic's study... she shuffles inside...

INT. STUDY - DAY

Isobel walks in, waving her arms, heading for the desk...

THUMP-- she cries out in pain, whipping the blindfold off in frustration. It hangs loosely around her neck. She looks around the study. Déjà vu... she tenses, remembering... eyes scanning the unoccupied study, everything still in place....

She looks under the corner table. Bruno's old hiding place. Empty this time... except for, in the very corner... the teddy bear. With the blue bow. Containing the hidden camera.

INT. STUDY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Isobel slots the memory card into Ludovic's now booted up laptop, opening up a folder full of video files. She double clicks one, prompting it to open in a media player programme.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Bruno is dragged by Ludovic from his hiding place as Isobel watches sheepishly by the door - the camera having captured the moment from its vantage point where Bruno dropped it.

The cursor moves to another file. Double clicks.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Ludovic goes to his desk and retrieves the same wire contraption Isobel previously discovered.

BACK TO ISOBEL

She watches with keen intensity, eyes fixed on the screen...

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Ludovic carries the mysterious item to the middle of the room, placing the centre of the wire under his feet. He proceeds to pull the ends upwards, stretching the wire as he raises his arms in unison. It's just a fitness resistance band - he's using it to do exercise.

After a moment, the wire springs loose from under his shoe, WHIPPING him in the face before it SOARS across the room into his glass whisky decanter, which SMASHES to the floor.

Ludovic clutches his face, GROANING in pain.

BACK TO ISOBEL

A nervous laugh escapes her lips as she watches the screen, equally bemused and relieved by the innocent explanation for the commotion she heard through the door that evening.

The video clip ends, prompting the next one to begin.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Ludovic sits at his desk as Madeleine paces nervously back and forth. They converse in French, Madeleine pleading.

MADELEINE

But the bruises on Bruno's arm...

LUDOVIC

He wouldn't say where he got them.

MADELEINE

Because Isobel probably threatened him not to!

LUDOVIC

We can't go making wild accusations when we don't have any proof. You said the same thing about Sophie...

MADELEINE

Then *get* proof. Watch her. Follow her. When she's alone with him. Please, Ludovic. I'm telling you there's something not right about her... I'm sure of it this time. That girl is hurting our son...

BACK TO ISOBEL

She stares at the screen, gob-smacked. Utterly bewildered... she can interpret enough of what they're saying, but she can't believe what she's hearing...

Isobel hovers the cursor over another file. CLICK-CLICK.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Madeleine sits on the desk, pert, leaning back seductively. Romain steps into frame, approaching her with apprehension.

ROMAIN

What's wrong with the bedroom?

MADELEINE

The next time my husband tells you he isn't happy with the way you trimmed the hedges, wouldn't you feel better knowing you'd had me right here on his hand-carved Bocote desk?

She smooths her hand over the expensive wood. Romain laughs nervously, still unsure.

ROMAIN

I just... don't you think we should be a bit more careful after what just happened?

MADELEINE

Shannon? That stupid little bitch won't be telling anyone what she saw. She'll be lucky if she can even say her own name.

Madeleine cackles at her own sick joke. Romain uncomfortable.

ROMAIN

I should get to the hospital.

Madeleine stops laughing, calming herself.

MADELEINE

You're right. I'll call you when I'm ready for Isobel to come home. And when you come back tonight, you better make sure she doesn't leave.

ROMAIN

I will.

MADELEINE

I mean it, Romain. You do whatever it takes. Fuck her if you have to. Just get her to stay.

ROMAIN

I will. Trust me...

Madeleine smiles.

MADELEINE

I do. Who could say no to you?

Romain smiles back, moving in for a deep, passionate kiss.

BACK TO ISOBEL

Isobel in horror at the screen, aghast, her world spinning, ripping at the seams... and yet falling into place at the same time... morbid curiosity getting the better off her one more time... CLICK CLICK.

ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

Madeleine stands behind the desk, Isobel on the other side.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I'll show you how to use it. Why don't you go and check on Bruno? I need a hot shower...

Isobel takes her leave. Madeleine gives an exhausted sigh. She waits a moment... then grabs the phone. Dials. Waits...

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

(into phone, in French)
Ludovic! She's here! In the house!
She came back! She's going to take
Bruno! You've got to hurry!

(pause)
No! Don't call the police! She'll
hurt him if we do... oh God, you
have to stop her...

BACK TO ISOBEL

She's lost, sucker-punched, barely able to stand, her unbelieving eyes registering her gamut of emotions.

INT. FOYER - DAY

Isobel hurries out of the room, stopping dead as she sees MADELEINE STANDING AT THE FRONT DOOR, blocking it. She smiles coolly, stepping forward slowly, calm and casual.

Isobel stares at her, eyes deep with betrayal.

MADELEINE

I was right about you. Isobel. I knew as soon as I met you that you'd be perfect for the job. Lots of initiative, helpful, loyal, a desire to go the extra mile... willing to believe everything I want you to... rather like my dear husband. And generous too, again, just like him...

She looks up, gesturing widely with her arms.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I mean, look! He left me all of this! And without the condition of having to share it with someone I'm repulsed by.

Madeleine's beams with genuine happiness. Isobel recoils, sickened, eyes searching for escape.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

I knew you were someone I could trust.

(playing dumb)

God only knows why Ludovic didn't feel the same way...

ISOBEL

We were both just trying to protect Bruno. You tricked us... and I...

She trails off. She can't finish the words. Madeleine is more than happy to help.

MADELEINE

And you shot him.

With a wicked smile, she mimes pulling a trigger. BANG!

RAPID FLASHBACKS:

Madeleine burns herself with the iron.

Romain puts his vest in Shannon's car while she talks to Isobel on the doorstep, oblivious.

Madeleine plants Sophie's necklace in the bedside cabinet.

Madeleine hands the stem cell document to Ludovic.

Madeleine glances up the stairs, then removes Sophie's necklace and the newspaper clippings from Isobel's bag.

Madeleine stands up close to the mirrored door of the bathroom cabinet, gripping the handle, staring hard at her reflection... readying herself... before she YANKS THE DOOR OPEN, SMACKING HERSELF IN THE FACE!

END OF FLASHBACKS:

Isobel staggers backwards, losing her footing, weakening, the deceit cutting hard and deep.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)

It's such a pity you don't know
when to stop. Just like the last
one. Such a pity...

Isobel turns and runs, fleeing down the hallway.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Isobel stumbles to the back door, wrenching the handle. The door is locked. She launches at the door to the sun room.

INT. SUN ROOM - DAY

Isobel barrels through the door and locks it shut behind her.

She runs the length of the room to the back door, her escape route. Yanks the handle. Locked. No key. She rattles the handle uselessly, panic rising. Madeleine was prepared...

Her eyes search the room for a solution. She's surrounded by a dense maze of plants and foliage on either side. She quickly ducks amongst the plants out of sight.

AMONGST THE PLANTS

Isobel weaves and crawls her way through the greenery. She pushes a thick, bushy plant aside--

BRUNO APPEARS FROM BEHIND IT. Isobel SHRIEKS in surprise.

BRUNO

(in French)

You found me!

ISOBEL
 (harsh whisper)
 Shhh! Be quiet. Tais-toi.

BRUNO
 Pourquoi?...

ISOBEL
 S'il te plaît, Bruno...

Bruno looks confused. Glass SMASHES. Isobel GASPS.

IN THE ROOM

Madeleine's hand reaches through a square of wooden frame in the door, now almost devoid of glass. Careful not to catch her wrist on the jagged shards that remain in the frame, her hand slowly turns the lock. The door CREAKS open...

AMONGST THE PLANTS

Isobel remains frozen, clutching a scared Bruno in her arms, as slow, methodical FOOTSTEPS enter the room.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 Do you like my garden, Isobel? I've been told I have a gift. But it's simple. You just plant the seeds, stand back, and watch them grow...

Bruno gives Isobel a questioning look. She shakes her head, putting a finger to her lips. He remains silent.

IN THE ROOM

Madeleine calmly walks the length of the room, passing a work bench littered with gardening tools. She picks up a large set of GARDEN SHEARS... keeps walking, the shears at her side.

AMONGST THE PLANTS

Isobel stays perfectly still, barely daring to breathe. She glimpses the long, steely blades through the leaves and petals as they pass by...

IN THE ROOM

Madeleine stops in the middle of the room, scanning the surrounding foliage with cold, calculating eyes. They land on the large bushy plant amongst the greenery, behind which Isobel and Bruno are hiding. She moves towards it slowly...

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
 I can't let you hide in here all day. I have things to do...

With sudden speed she LUNGES at the bushy plant, pushing it aside to find... nothing. She surveys the room, frustrated.

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
 ...people to see...

She continues walking through the room.

AMONGST THE PLANTS

Isobel creeps slowly through the foliage in the opposite direction, careful not to rustle the plants as she goes, with Bruno behind her. She beckons for him to follow.

MADELEINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 ...a new life to build... well, I'm
 sure I don't need to tell you. I
 mean you helped me do it.

Isobel meets a wall of leaves and branches too thick to manoeuvre around. She stops, trapped in the rose garden.

She turns herself around, the palm of her hand shifting loose soil from a recently trowelled hole, by the same patch of prize roses Max had been digging up. It exposes something shiny and metallic glinting under a ray of overhead sunlight penetrating the leafy canopy...

It's SOPHIE'S NECKLACE. Isobel picks it up, eyes following the length of the chain, down to the charm dangling from it... down to a small earthy crater from where it came...

There's something else. A speck of greyish-brown emerging from the dirt. Isobel slowly claws away at the dirt, digging deeper with her hand until...

A SKELETAL EYE SOCKET stares back at her. Further down, the corner of a JAW, SEVERAL TEETH showing, seemingly grinning; a smile fixed in death. All covered in the thinning, final remains of decayed tissue. A partially unearthed human skull.

Isobel clamps a hand over her mouth, suppressing the horrified scream that threatens to escape. She shuts her eyes, holding her breath, fighting every impulse in her body.

IN THE ROOM

Madeleine circles back, walking the other way, slowly parting the plants with the shears' blades as she goes...

MADELEINE (CONT'D)
 I couldn't have done it without
 you...

She moves further down the room...

AMONGST THE PLANTS

Isobel holds steady, turning to Bruno, shielding him from it, her face full of assertion now. She means business. She grabs the scarf from around her neck.

ISOBEL
 (soft whisper)
 Your turn, Bruno.

She makes quick work of slipping the scarf over his eyes, nimbly securing it with a knot behind his head.

MADELEINE (O.S.)
 Let me show you how grateful I am.

Isobel puts her mouth to Bruno's ear.

ISOBEL
 (in French)
 Count to twenty. Very slowly...

She takes his hands in hers and places them over his own ears. He holds them there, tightly, as he begins to count.

BRUNO
 Un...

Too loud. Isobel gently shushes him. He corrects himself, now mouthing the numbers almost silently.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
 Un...

Satisfied, Isobel creeps away through the plants, getting some distance. A branch POPS in her wake. She freezes.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
 Deux...

Isobel arches her neck as she tries to peer through the gaps in the plants in search of Madeleine. No sign of her...

BRUNO (CONT'D)
 Trois...

In a FLASH OF SILVER the garden shears' blades SHOOT through the foliage at Isobel, missing her head by a hair! She SCREAMS, scurrying away at full pelt. The blades STAB through the foliage again in pursuit.

She reaches a bush, seeing an opening in the thorny stalks. She goes for it - but Madeleine's feet block her path.

Isobel recoils, screaming again as the scissoring blades SNAP at her face, just missing, decapitating rose heads.

IN THE ROOM

Isobel scrambles out of the foliage at the far end of the room, coming up against the locked back door. Madeleine blocks the other way. She backs up against the door, hands behind her back. Cornered.

AMONGST THE PLANTS

Bruno continues to count.

BRUNO (CONT'D)
Neuf... dix...

IN THE ROOM

Madeleine moves slowly towards Isobel, wielding the shears. Her lips purse into a thin smile.

MADELEINE
Nowhere to run...

She moves closer, the sharp blades inches from Isobel's face.

Isobel's fist tightens behind her back. Her penetrating eyes darken with grim determination...

ISOBEL
I wasn't going to.

And with that, her arm strikes like lightning, WHIPPING SOPHIE'S NECKLACE hard across Madeleine's face. She screams, clutching her face dropping the garden shears.

Isobel kicks them away and shoves past Madeleine, racing back towards Bruno's hiding place.

ISOBEL (CONT'D)
Bruno?!

AMONGST THE PLANTS

Bruno keeps counting, blindfolded, ears covered. Oblivious.

BRUNO
dix-sept... dix-huit...

IN THE ROOM

Madeleine catches up, grabbing Isobel violently by her hair. She screams, clawing at Madeleine's hands as they grapple. She breaks free, falling hard against the work-bench. Madeleine pins her down with one hand, reaching for a GARDEN FORK with the other...

AMONGST THE PLANTS

BRUNO (CONT'D)
Vingt!
(in French)
Ready or not, here I come!

IN THE ROOM

Madeleine wields the fork, ready to strike...

With all the strength she can muster, Isobel forces Madeleine off her, charging her, tackling her through the jungle of plants on the other side of the room, and with an almighty shove sends her BARRELLING AT THE GLASS WALL WITH A SCREAM!

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - SUN ROOM/BACK GARDEN - DAY

Madeleine CRASHES THROUGH THE WALL IN A SHOWER OF GLASS, landing hard on the back lawn.

Silence follows for a moment, the world seemingly frozen.

Isobel climbs carefully through the opening in the sun room wall, her shoes crunching the broken glass on the ground.

She approaches Madeleine, sprawled face down on the grass, her face, neck and hands lacerated and bloodied. Still.

She stands over the body, wiping sweat from her brow, her chest heaving. The sound of CRACKING glass behind her makes her spin around in surprise, finding...

Bruno, stepping out into the garden. He stops at the sight of his mother. He just stares. Stoic. Blank. Emotionless. Isobel looks at him with apprehensive concern...

ISOBEL

Bruno?...

As if waking from a trance, he turns away from Madeleine to look at Isobel, his deep brown eyes staring into hers. A moment's hesitation... and then he comes to her, wrapping his tiny arms around her waist, hugging her tightly.

Isobel returns the embrace with a bittersweet smile.

EXT. LEVASSEUR HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

MADELEINE'S EYES flutter, slowly opening as she stirs, waking from unconsciousness. They search her bleary surroundings, trying to make sense of them, taking in the scene.

POLICE and SCENE OF CRIME OFFICERS go about their procedural business; radioing control, examining the sun room, cordoning off the area, conversing with one another.

She realises the scene is moving past her. She's being wheeled away on a stretcher by TWO PARAMEDICS.

EXT. HOUSE - FRONT GARDEN/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Madeleine's stretcher is wheeled around to the front of the house. She passes a police officer as he talks to Christophe.

Nearby, Sylvie holds Bruno protectively in her arms. Madeleine tries to sit up, feeling resistance at her right arm. She's HANDCUFFED to the stretcher's guard rail.

She is taken to the back of an ambulance outside the front of the house. She sees a second one parked nearby.

Isobel sits inside the open back doors, wrapped in a thermal blanket, as a PARAMEDIC dresses a cut on her forehead.

They lock eyes, Isobel's face glowering with bitter triumph. Madeleine responds with a twisted smile, both disdainful and admiring. As if to say... 'Bravo'.

The paramedics slide her into the back of the ambulance, before hopping in themselves. One of them pulls the doors shut with a firm SLAM.

INT. ROMAIN'S TRUCK - DAY

Romain drives up the driveway. Through the windscreen, he sees POLICE CARS parked up ahead. His face drops, filled with dread. He brings the car to a stop.

A loud KNOCK at the window startles him. A strapping POLICE OFFICER with a stern and serious face stares back at him.

POLICE OFFICER
Romain Lévêque?

Romain's mobile phone BEEPS. He picks it up from the dashboard. A text message from Isobel: 'SURPRISE'...

EXT. HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Isobel stands at the top of the driveway, sombre. But a self-satisfied smirk finds its way through the hurt. She pockets the phone, looking up to see...

Beth, finishing a conversation with one of the police officers, before walking over, eyes red from crying.

BETH
Thanks for calling...

Isobel responds with a tentative 'don't worry about it' smile. Beth smiles weakly back.

ISOBEL
I have something for you.

Isobel digs into her pocket, checking the coast is clear before slipping the contents of her palm into Beth's. It's SOPHIE'S NECKLACE.

Beth looks at the necklace, and then at Isobel, stunned. She wells up, overwhelmed by the gesture. Isobel smiles, putting a finger to her lips as a police officer passes by.

Beth hugs Isobel in a rush of mixed emotion, sobbing quietly, breaking down in her moment of closure.

BETH

Thank you.

Isobel hugs her back, fighting back her own tears, overwhelmed herself by Beth's genuine appreciation and warmth. She looks over Beth's shoulder to see...

Christophe and Sylvie in the distance, still talking with the authorities. Sylvie still holds Bruno. His arms are draped around her neck, his head resting on her shoulder.

He sees Isobel. She smiles. He smiles back. Both locked in a warm embrace. Both calm. Both safe.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Isobel sits at a small table, draining her coffee cup thirstily with one hand as the other scribbles with a pen.

She's writing on the back of a postcard, finishing up her message with her name and several kisses. The written message is in French. The top reads 'Dear Bruno'.

She gets to her feet, slipping the postcard into her shoulder bag, revealing the photograph of the LONDON EYE on the front before it disappears inside.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Isobel, pulling a suitcase on wheels, steps out of the coffee shop, now revealed to be inside a large airport.

She approaches the glass doors that make up the exit/entrance, a number of TAXIS outside, parked in the rank.

The automatic doors part as she approaches. She walks through them, passing under a large sign overhead greeting entrants:

'WELCOME TO HEATHROW AIRPORT'.

FADE OUT.