

1 EXT. DORM ROOFTOP - DAY

1

A beautiful, sunlit smile. This smile belongs to MARIE ASTOR (20). She squints into the setting sun, her smile broadening. Over this, a loud CLICK, then the scratchy sound of white noise. The voice that follows is tinny and recorded sounding.

MARIE (V.O.)
I was twenty years old when I lost
my mind.

2 INT. MARIE'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

2

Marie types furiously at her computer, immersed in writing.

MARIE (V.O.)
They don't like to call it that,
though. The shrinks, I mean. They
call it "blossoming." My disorder
blossomed. Like a rose, or a
maiden.

3 INT. NYU CLASSROOM - DAY

3

Marie aloud reads from the piece she was working on. The professor looks around at the entranced class and smiles.

MARIE (V.O.)
I would call it more like "a free
fall into infinite darkness." But
maybe that's why I'm not a doctor.

4 EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - NIGHT

4

Marie and her friend MADISON (21) run wildly through falling snow toward a yellow cab that glows in the twilight.

MARIE (V.O.)
Shrinks are good like that, coming
up with poetic euphemisms to talk
about awful things. But in a way,
this one actually makes sense.

5 INT. LOFT PARTY - NIGHT

5

Marie recklessly makes out with a guy.

MARIE (V.O.)
It blossomed alright. The way mold
does on fruit.

6 INT. THE BOWERY BALLROOM - NIGHT

6

Marie dances (terribly) in a crowd to an indie-pop band.

MARIE (V.O.)
Or a wildfire does in the forest.

7 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

7

Marie holds Madison's hair back as she vomits in a toilet.

MARIE (V.O.)
It bloomed in my mind the way any
disease does in a body.

8 EXT. DORM ROOFTOP - DAY

8

Marie is back at the rooftop party. Her smile breaks into a wild laugh. She leans on Madison, doubled over with laughter.

MARIE (V.O.)
Then it ate me alive.

9 INT. MARIE'S DORM ROOM - DAY

9

An incessant BEEPING.

Marie sits on the floor in a hoodie, knees drawn up to her chin. She lifts her hooded head to reveal a pale, tired face.

The BEEPING comes from an alarm clock beside her: 5:55am. She SMACKS it and there's an almost subliminal FLICKER of images:

The FLASH of a blade, a SPLAT of red hitting Marie's face.

Hands shaking, she pulls a PILL BOTTLE from her hoodie. The morning light gleams off the label:

TYLER DICKERMAN

XANAX: TAKE 1 TABLET DAILY

Marie shakes the last FIVE PILLS into her palm and throws them back, then rolls the empty bottle under her bed where it CLACKS against other empties.

She shuffles to the kitchen, tripping over stacks of notebooks on the floor, and opens a silverware drawer. It's full of SPOONS and SEAFOAM GREEN CRAYONS. She puts FIVE CRAYONS in her hoodie pocket.

The kitchen table is a disaster of papers crowned a thick, worn notebook. Marie reaches for it, then JERKS away, wiping her hand on her pants. She walks out, leaving it behind.

10 INT. NYU BUILDING - DAY

10

Security guards flank a long line of students waiting to go through a METAL DETECTOR. Marie stares straight ahead as she passes POSTERS for CONFLICT RESOLUTION MEETINGS and C HALL SUPPORT GROUPS, and FLYERS for a MENTAL HEALTH STUDY.

11 INT. NYU CLASSROOM - DAY

11

Marie sits near the back of the room, her eyes glazed over. Beside her is Madison, dressed like a sexy librarian in glasses and an unbuttoned button up. Madison openly gawks at the professor, MR. BROWN (42): short, homely, unbearably charismatic. He looks around the class as he talks.

MR. BROWN

We're getting close, boys and girls. Graduation, in its many splendored horror, is mere months away. If fact, some of you-

His gaze momentarily settles on Marie with a wink.

MR. BROWN

-May already be receiving letters of inquiry from magazines and publishing houses. This final semester of Creative Writing can transform your thesis from jello bullshit into steel latticework-but only if you're willing to work for it. So dig deep. Get dirty. It's the last thing you'll write in college. Make it count.

Madison leans over and whispers to Marie.

MADISON

So help me god, I am going to have sex with that man.

MR. BROWN

Okay. Let's take a look at the new chapter of Madison's Gothic werewolf parable "A Death in The Woods."

Madison blushes as she fishes out a slim packet of paper. Marie's hands don't leave her hoodie pocket.

MADISON
(Whispering)
Did you forget to print again?

Marie nods vaguely, her eyes glazing over from the drugs.

MR. BROWN
Madison, why don't we start with
you reading across the page, and
Marie, can you be our monster?

12 EXT. STREET - DAY

12

Marie walks quickly away from campus, her hands shoved in her hoodie pocket. A student handing out MENTAL HEALTH STUDY FLYERS shoves one at her. She dodges him.

INT. NYU CLASSROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Madison reads aloud, following the words with a sharp PENCIL that SCRITCHES along the page. Marie turns to her, eyes weirdly glazed. Suddenly, Madison CHOKES.

EXT. STREET - DAY (PRESENT)

Marie hears the BUZZ of a walkie-talkie and looks over to see two security guards eyeing her aggressively. She speeds up, sweat forming on her forehead.

MADISON (V.O.)
(Whispering)
Marie.

INT. NYU CLASSROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

BLOOD dribbles from Madison's lips. Marie looks down at her hands, gripping the PENCIL, sticky with blood.

EXT. STREET-DAY (PRESENT)

Marie takes her hands out of her hoodie pocket. Clean.

VOICE (O.S.)
Marie!

Marie looks up to see BRIT (22), a tall blonde, good-looking, but definitely not the brains of this operation.

BRIT

Holy shit, Marie, where have you been? Everyone's looking for you.

Marie looks dazed. She murmurs...

MARIE

Because of Madison?

BRIT

What happened to Madison?

MADISON (O.S.)

Nothing.

Marie wheels around to see Madison standing, furious, but uninjured.

MADISON

Marie just fell asleep in class.
While reading my thesis. OUT LOUD.

INT. NYU CLASSROOM-DAY (FLASHBACK)

Marie jolts awake, sweaty and incoherent, to find the whole class staring at her eerily.

EXT. STREET - DAY (PRESENT)

Marie almost laughs, looking deeply relieved. Madison glares.

MARIE

Sorry, Mad, it's not you, I'm just-

MADISON

So hung over? Yeah. I could tell.

BRIT

Hey guess what, you guys?

Marie lights a cigarette.

MADISON

Ew, when did you start smoking again?

Marie shrugs.

BRIT

Yeah, gross, Marie. Guess what, though?

MADISON

You better quit before summer, I heard it makes you snore-

BRIT

Oh. My God, who cares? Guess what-

MADISON

What, Brit? Jesus!

BRIT

Ty Dickerman got expelled.

MARIE

WHA-

Marie starts violently COUGHING and drops her cigarette.

BRIT

Crazy, right? Derek has O Chem with Ty's roommate, Robby, and he said this morning him and everyone he dealt to got expelled in some kind of like, *sting op!* That's why I was looking for you, Marie! Didn't you guys used to make out or something?

Madison rolls her eyes.

MADISON

Ugh. That kid was a fucking train wreck. And now everyone'll wanna talk about it at Conflict Resolution-Hey where are you going?

Marie is jogging away from them. She yells back.

MARIE

I gotta go!

BRIT

You coming to ConRez later?

Marie says nothing, but breaks into a run.

13

INT. MARIE'S DORM ROOM- DAY

13

Marie explodes into her room and frantically searches under her bed, sifting through DOZENS OF BOTTLES: all Xanax, all prescribed to Tyler Dickerman, all empty. She digs through her trash-a stray bottle! She grabs it--

Empty.

MARIE (V.O.)

Good.

Her heart POUNDS in her head. She paces, counting, tripping over BOOKS, slipping on PAPERS, a sheen of sweat forming on her face. She shuts her eyes, a FLICKER:

A BLADE SLASHES, spraying BLOOD. A SCREAM, then a CHOKE. KNIFE again. BLOOD again. KNIFE again. BLOOD-KNIFE-BLOOD-

She rushes out of her room, SLAMMING the door.

14

INT. NYU DORM HALLWAY - DAY

14

Marie KNOCKS on a door five times, then five more, then five-

ROBBY (O.S.)

He's not here, Marie.

MARIE

I know, Robby. Can I just come in?

15

INT. ROBBY AND TYLER'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

15

Marie is slumped on the floor beside a haggard looking ROBBY (22). One side of the room is depressingly bare: stripped bed, tacks in the wall where posters were. Robby sighs.

ROBBY

Now they're going to give me new
fucking roommate...

MARIE

(Distracted)

How can no one else be holding?

ROBBY

You don't get it, do you? Everyone
got expelled. And even if there's a
few that didn't, no one's gonna be
selling on this campus a for long,
long time.

Marie rubs her eyes roughly.

MARIE
Well, how did Ty get his shit?

ROBBY
He was seeing like, twelve different shrinks, dude. One for every prescription. Memorized all the symptoms and everything.

MARIE
And they just gave him drugs? What did he tell them?

16 INT. NYU STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES - DAY

16

MARIE (V.O.)
I'm just really stressed out, you know?

Marie smiles nervously at the man-child sitting across from her. A piece of paper taped to his desk tells us this is JAKE LUDEN, (26, looks 15) He shuffles through an enormous stack of papers, overwhelmed. A POSTER of the ABC's of violent warning signs droops on the wall behind him.

JAKE
Yeah, totally. We've gotten a lot of that in the last few months.
Ever since The C Hall Incident--ah!

He pulls out a sheet of paper triumphantly.

JAKE
Ok. Here we go. Are you currently pregnant?

MARIE
Um, no.

JAKE
Are you currently having unprotected oral, anal, or vaginal-

MARIE
-No.

JAKE
Do you do any illegal drugs?

MARIE
No.

JAKE

About how many times a week?

MARIE

I just told you I don't do drugs.

JAKE

Ha! Tried to trick you. Old psych trick. Well. New to me. But old to the...world. Anyway. Where were we? Oh, have you ever attempted suicide?

MARIE

No. I'm just *stressed*. Maybe you could give me something to...take the edge off?

JAKE

Actually, I'm not technically a "doctor." I'm more of a graduate student. So I can't legally prescribe medication yet. But, have you tried going to ConRez?

She stands up.

MARIE

This was a mistake.

JAKE

Wait!

Jake rapidly digs through his avalanche of papers again.

JAKE

I know someone who can help you.

He finally locates and hands her a business card. She reads:

MARIE

"River Mackey?"

JAKE

Head of Counseling. He's all about that, y'know "taking the edge off."

NEW AGEY CHANTING MUSIC plays. Sage burns in a bowl. Marie skeptically eyeballs a dreamcatcher dangling by a window.

RIVER (V.O.)

See, each of these extensions holds
a crystal that aligns with one of
the body's seven chakras.

She looks back to RIVER MACKEY (55): his braided gray hair and flannel shirt in clear defiance of NYU dress code. He holds a bizarre, spider-legged contraption.

MARIE

Oh. Great.

RIVER

We'll work on brow chakra first. It regulates what you feel as intuition. Then we'll do heart chakra. Guess what it controls.

MARIE

Love?

RIVER

No! Circulation!

He laughs.

RIVER

No, I'm just pulling your leg. It's love. Anyway. Let's get started.

He holds the device up to Marie's face and turns it on. It CLACKS loudly, flashing a blinding purple light.

RIVER

You feel that?!

MARIE

(Squinting)

Yeah!...You're not really a prescription drug kind of guy, huh?

RIVER

Absolutely not! I leave the poison to hacks like that pervert Schneeding!

INT. DR. SCHNEEDING'S OFFICE - DAY

Marie sits in a huge armchair across from DR. PAT SCHNEEDING, DIRECTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY (59); a huge walrus of a man with distracting tufts of hair protruding from his nose and ears.

SCHNEEDING

You remind me of a certain Freudian case study...The Rat Man.

MARIE

I remind you of The Rat Man?

SCHNEEDING

Mmm. He was haunted by grotesque nightmares of people having their anuses eaten by rats. A form of torture, used during The Inquisition, I believe. They would strap a box of starving rats to your anus or testicles and let them eat through your skin.

MARIE

Holy shit.

SCHNEEDING

You may not curse in here. But yes, it was barbaric.

MARIE

What happened to him?

SCHNEEDING

With psychoanalysis, Freud discovered the root of his fixation was a repressed memory of being punished for sexual exploration.

MARIE

So he was cured?

SCHNEEDING

Actually, he was killed in combat in World War I a few months later, so there could be no long term follow up.

MARIE

Of course.

SCHNEEDING

Now in your case, you're projecting a fear of intimacy onto the people around you. You're afraid of the physical reality of intercourse, the penetration or "stabbing"-

He waggles his eyebrows at her meaningfully.

SCHNEEDING

-so you have created a reverse scenario, wherein you have the power to penetrate. It's about both desiring control and fearing it.

Long pause.

MARIE

Oh. So...can you prescribe Xanax for that?

He raises an eyebrow as he reaches for a prescription pad.

SCHNEEDING

I could.

Marie's face lights up as he begins scribbling on the page.

SCHNEEDING

But, due to a recent scandal involving students dealing pharmaceuticals, I'm prescribing psychoanalysis instead, with...

He tears off the page and hands it to her.

SCHNEEDING

...one of our most promising graduate students.

Marie looks down and reads:

JAKE LUDEN

18

INT. NYU STUDENT SERVICES BULDING HALLWAY - DAY

18

Marie storms into the hallway, crumpling up the paper. She turns the corner and SMACKS into a thin woman coming the other way, spilling PAPERS and PENS on the floor.

MARIE

Sorry.

She helps gather the papers, avoiding touching the pens. As she picks up the papers she realizes they're flyers for the mental health study. She reads:

DEPRESSION? ANXIETY? NIGHTMARES?

NYU Mental Health Services now recruiting current students for an experimental treatment. Free for accepted participants. Call for interview.

Marie looks up at the woman. BLOOD seeps from the stab wound Marie just inflicted. Marie looks down at the PEN in her hands and blinks. She's holding the FLYER.

WOMAN

Why don't you hang on to that one?

MARIE

Sorry. I mean. Thanks.

Marie shoves it in her pocket and hurries off, leaving the woman staring after her.

19 INT. MARIE'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

19

Marie stares blankly at the Word document on her laptop. All it says is:

"A Crime Told Twice"

She starts typing: "*The...*"

Her hand shakes. She pounds DELETE. The cursor blinks. She squeezes her eyes shut--

The computer screen types out: MURDERER. Photos pop up, BEEPING as they appear: a dorm room roped with police tape, BLOOD on the walls. A KNIFE in a Ziplock marked EVIDENCE.

Marie's eyes snap open. She lifts her head off her computer. The document is unchanged. Her clock BEEPS: 5:55pm.

Her eyes drift past the screen to an untouched stack of homework assignments. On top, a PINK FORM with the heading CLASS WITHDRAWAL stands out. She picks it up. Beneath it lies a POSTCARD covered in beautiful handwriting.

She replaces the form and picks up the card, reading:

MARIE: HAD A WILD TIME AT CARNEVALE! WISH WE COULD MAKE IT TO GRADUATION, BUT PARIS AWAITS! KEEP THAT GPA UP!

XOXO MOM

PS-THIS PICTURE REMINDED ME OF YOU!

She flips it over. It's a creepy, bird-like Carnevale mask.

BANG!BANG!BANG!

Someone KNOCKS heavily on her door. She tosses the postcard down and opens the door. Madison and Brit stand in the hall.

MADISON

Oh wow Marie, nice outfit.

BRIT

I think you look hot. But like, weird hot. Like, Olsen twin hot.

Marie looks down at her underwear, socks, and hoodie.

MADISON

Sure. Or like one those Worm Guys that live on the subway.

MARIE

They're called Mole People. And they don't live on the subway, they live in the tunnels-

MADISON

Whatever. Anyway, we're going out tonight, remember? Hunter and Dave?

MARIE

Ah, shit, I totally forgot...I don't know, you guys...

Madison looks crestfallen.

MADISON

C'monnnnn. You're the one who said I need to get down with guys my own age. Besides, you never do anything anymore! It'll be good for you.

Marie looks at her friend's worried face and shakes her head.

MARIE

Fiiiiine.

MADISON

YES! And this is a date, okay? So wear something slutty.

Madison shoves a mess of pale crayons off the couch and sits, grabbing the postcard off the table. She shakes her head.

MADISON

Is it me, or is it kind of messed up that your mom and stepdad aren't coming to graduation?

Marie looks up from digging through piles of clothes on the ground and sees her holding the postcard. She shudders.

MARIE

It's pretty much par for the course with them. But it's okay. Just one less thing to worry about.

MADISON

Maybe you're right. I'm still trying to talk my mom out of bringing the cat-Woah.

Marie has stripped her hoodie off to display a fully defined set of ribs and bony hips.

MARIE

What?

MADISON

Marie...You look...

BRIT

Uhhh-mazing!

MADISON

Yeah. You look like a runway model, you bitch. What's the secret?

MARIE

Self-loathing.

MADISON

(Nodding)

So hot right now.

Marie slips into a dress, then pulls her hoodie back on over it. Madison COUGHS loudly.

MARIE

Now what?

MADISON

Uh, nothing. Just, isn't it time to wash that hoodie?

MARIE

No. I don't know. Why?

BRIT

You just have *so* many cute clothes-

MADISON

What she's trying to say is, we're sick of seeing you lurch around with your hands in that kangaroo pocket like a fucking gollum.

Marie takes hers hands out of the pocket and lets them dangle awkwardly at her sides. She smooths one of the sleeves.

MARIE
I'm not a gollum...I just like this hoodie. What do you care...

MADISON
(interrupting)
You need to get boned, Marie. And no one's wants to bone a gollum.

MARIE
Well, maybe the gollum doesn't want to bone, either! Maybe gollum just wants to stay home with her cozy hoodie where it's nice and quiet-

22 INT. CAFE HABANA - NIGHT

22

Marie sits in a DEAFENINGLY LOUD resturant across from HUNTER (22), over-confident, and DAVE (21), who is just *really* trying to pull off an ironic mustache. Brit and Madison nod approving as Hunter shouts.

HUNTER
American novels are so masturbatory now, it just makes you feel like, what ever happened to art for art's sake, you know?

BRIT
Totes.

Marie rolls her eyes and turns to Brit.

MARIE
Where's Dickwad tonight?

BRIT
Derek will be meeting up with us later at Bar None.

MADISON
Gross.

BRIT
(Hissing)
Madison, do *not* disrespect my man.

MADISON
He has a fucking ponytail, Brit-

They're interrupted as PLATE OF MEAT is set down on the table. Everyone except Marie grabs a KNIFE and starts sawing at the RED MEAT. Marie reaches for the pills in her hoodie pocket before remembering...she doesn't have any.

She tosses back the remains of her mojito. Dave notices and decides it's time to make his big move.

DAVE

I really like your style! It's like, Girl with the Dragon Tattoo or something!

MARIE

Thanks. That mustache makes you look like a pederast!

DAVE

What?

Madison leans over.

MADISON

Marie, Hunter interned at the New Yorker!

She looks back to Hunter.

MADISON

Professor Brown is having Marie submit her thesis short there.

BRIT

Yeah, she's like, a genius.

MADISON

Tell them about your crime story!

DAVE

Yeah, tell us!

Marie shakes her head, embarrassed.

MARIE

Oh, no...

Madison gives her a withering look.

MADISON

Haha-YOU'RE BEING WEIRD. TELL THEM.

MARIE

Um. Well, it's two stories, really.

Marie's voice fades, getting lost in WET, GRINDING noise of metal on meat. She senselessly reaches for her pills again.

MARIE
One told from the perspective of
the victim and the other from the,
uh, the...um...criminal...

Marie glances around, glimpsing BLEEDING MEAT, GREASY BLADES.

MARIE
But I can't...write it...anymore...

She trails off, looking back at Dave, whose shirt is unbuttoned at the top, revealing a little triangle of skin--

SUDDENLY, she grabs Madison's KNIFE, lunges forward and STABS Dave in the patch of skin! BLOOD sprays her face. Brit SCREAMS. Dave's body crumples as Marie drops the knife and-

VOICE (O.S.)
Marie!

Blinks. Dave sits before her, unwounded but weirded-out.

MARIE
...what?

MADISON
HE ASKED IF YOU LIKE CHANDLER.

Madison shakes her head.

MADISON
She does. She loves Noir.

MARIE
(standing up)
I-I have to go.

She runs out of the restaurant.

23 EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

23

Marie veers into an alley and VOMITS mojito onto the pavement.

WILL (O.S.)
Woah!

She turns around to see WILL (26), handsome, but shady looking in a ratty Knicks hoodie. She wipes her mouth.

MARIE
My bad.

He checks his shoes for barf.

WILL
No, that's what I get for lurking
in an alley by a college bar-

MARIE
Sh!

She holds her hand up and listens: the sound of LOUD TALKING AND LAUGHTER gets closer.

MADISON (O.S.)
I should go look for her...

Marie shoves Will against the brick wall, leaning back so they're obscured in shadow just as Madison and Brit pass by.

BRIT
Bar None closes in an hour! Derek's
waiting. Just text her to meet us.

They pass. There's a brief silence.

Will tries to step forward, but she pushes him back again as more voices approach.

DAVE (O.S.)
...Fucking weird dude.

HUNTER (O.S.)
Just stick to shots if she shows
up. Only way you'll get laid with
that fucking mustache anyway.

Will looks sideways at Marie and sees her jaw clench as the guys shamble past. She exhales and steps forward. Will pulls a PACK OF CIGARETTES from his pocket and offers her one.

WILL
Like your hoodie.

Marie glares at him, looking for signs of mockery. When she sees none, she takes a cigarette.

MARIE
Thank you.

WILL
Anyone ever told you you're cute
when you puke?

MARIE
Every weekend.

He offers her a light and she glances down at his fingertips- oddly dusted in pale blue paint. She inhales, eyes narrowing.

MARIE
You're being pretty cool about
this.

WILL
I work at a bar. I've seen much,
much worse. Trust me. Girl vomit is
adorable. Especially when it's this
minty.

MARIE
What're you doing out here, anyway?

He shrugs.

WILL
Same thing you're doing.

MARIE
Barfing?

WILL
Escaping boredom.

He takes a drag and she notices a graffiti tag on the wall behind him reading: "HAND." It's pale blue.

WILL
So, should we keep lurking in the
alley or do you want to grab some
coffee or mouthwash or something?

MARIE
Seriously?

WILL
Sure.

Marie considers him, images flickering through her mind:

They kiss, pressed against the alley wall. Suddenly, Will GASPS. A red stain blooms through the Knicks logo. RATS lap at BLOOD dripping onto the pavement.

She shivers and tosses her cigarette on the ground.

MARIE
Eh. I'm not that bored.

She turns away from him.

MARIE
Thanks for the cigarette, though.

WILL
Wait!

HSSSS. He's suddenly spray painting the wall with pale blue.

MARIE
Hey-

WILL
I'm Will. And that-

He finishes with a flourish.

WILL
Is my phone number.

She shakes her head and starts walking away.

MARIE
You're insane.

WILL
Call me!

She laughs and keeps walking.

24

INT. MARIE'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

24

Marie SLAMS her door and collapses in front of her open computer. Photos of her with her friends and family fade in and out. In the pictures she looks happier, healthier.

She flicks the mouse. Word document appears. Her hand shakes, her need to write palpable. The cursor winks mockingly.

She SNAPS the computer closed and grabs the WITHDRAWAL FORM.

25

INT. NYU CLASSROOM- DAY

25

Students file past Mr. Brown, handing him outlines for their thesis papers. Marie lingers, waiting until everyone else is gone, then hands him the withdrawal slip.

He glances at it and looks at her, incredulous.

MR. BROWN
You're kidding.

MARIE
I'm sorry.

MR. BROWN
Don't apologize to me.

Mr. Brown snatches a PEN out of a PEN HOLDER on his desk containing several MARKERS and a PAIR OF SCISSORS

MR. BROWN
I'm not going to sit here and sweet talk you, Marie. You know how talented you are. But none of that will mean anything if you do this. Understand?

He looks at her staring blankly past him, the bags under her eyes, the hoodie.

MR. BROWN
I mean, is there something you want to talk about?

Marie finally pulls her eyes away from the gleaming SCISSORS.

MARIE
No.

He shakes his head and signs it, muttering.

MR. BROWN
Waste.

26 EXT. DORM ROOFTOP - DAY

26

Marie smokes on the deserted roof, now scattered with party debris: empty bottles, chairs, strings of unlit Christmas lights. She peers over the edge and flicks her cigarette off. It's a long, long drop.

MADISON (O.S.)
Thought you might be up here.

She jerks around. Madison walks towards her, letting the roof door close behind her.

MADISON
Cool hanging out with you last night.

MARIE
Sorry.

There's a long beat.

MADISON
I know you were buying from Ty.

Marie's face registers shame and shock, all at once.

MADISON
I'm not a fucking idiot, Marie.
You've changed. I mean, you know
that, right? You weren't always
like this. You used to be fun. And
funny. We used to actually do shit.
And now...I don't know. But
whatever you're on, it's turning
you into a black fucking hole.

MARIE
Jesus Mad, I'm not a *junkie*. I'm
just...Everything that happened-

Madison's face hardens.

MADISON
Oh my god, don't even say it.
You're not gonna blame this on that
chick in C hall again. It was like
six months ago! You didn't even
know her! Give it a rest!

MARIE
You don't understand...

MADISON
I do, actually. You're using that
sick shit as an excuse to slack off
and get wasted. I'm not gonna lie,
Marie, that's pretty fucked up.

MARIE
(Raising her voice)
Well, I guess I'm pretty fucked up
then, aren't I?

Madison rubs her eyebrow, collecting herself.

MADISON
Look...I just, I don't think we
should live together this summer.

Beat.

MARIE
You already found someone else.

MADISON
Well, Brit broke up with Dickwad
again last night, so...

Madison bites her lip, looking like she might cry. Instead, she hands Marie a piece of paper.

MADISON
This was on your door.

She leaves, her heels CLACKING as she heads to the door. Marie watches her go, then looks down and reads the paper:

"Ms. Marie Astor,

This letter is to inform you that as of your withdrawal from class ENG0323, you are ineligible for student housing. Please vacate within 48 hours."

MARIE
Fuck!

She crumples the letter and hurls it off the roof. She sighs.

MARIE
Fuck.

27 INT. MARIE'S DORM ROOM - LATER

27

The room is packed up, with everything but her laptop crammed into a duffle bag. Marie paces the room with her cellphone pressed to her ear. Her voice is high and unnatural.

MARIE
Heyyyy mom. How's Italy?

Pause.

MARIE
Sorry I-No, I'm not upset, I
understand. No, I'm okay, I just...

Marie leans on the window and with her finger marks TALLIES OF FIVE on the foggy glass.

MARIE
Do you ever think, like...there
could be a part of you that you've
kept hidden from yourself your
whole life?
(MORE)

MARIE (CONT'D)
 Like maybe, after all this time,
 you don't really know who you are,
 what your capable of? You ever
 worry about...that?

Silence from the other end. Marie's face flushes red. She wipes the glass clean with her hand.

MARIE
 Aha. Just kidding that's weird. Um,
 anyway. I was actually wondering...

She spits it out quickly.

MARIE
 ...doyouhaveAuntGloria'snumber?

The faint sound of YELLING is audible through the phone.

MARIE
 No-no, it's for a project--Ok. You
 know, never mind. Alright, bye.

Marie opens the laptop and Googles GLORIA NEWBERRY. She scrolls past glamorous HEADSHOTS from the 70's, locates a PHONE NUMBER, and dials before she can change her mind.

28

EXT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

28

A light snow falls on an address written in seafoam crayon: 25 GRAMERCY PLACE. Marie looks up at the gilded number in front of her: 25.

She swallows, then shakily grasps the BRASS GARGOYLE KNOCKER and TAPS five times.

Marie's eyes dart around the crowded street wildly, like a cornered animal, catching and sticking on certain elements:

The SILVER TIP of a woman's UMBRELLA. A BUS AD FOR A SLASHER MOVIE. LAUGHTER as someone exits a BUTCHER SHOP. The TINKTINK of a handyman chipping away at a door hinge with an ICE PICK-

She grabs the knocker again, TAPPING: 1, 2, 3-she stops at the CLACKING of many deadbolts unlocking. The door cracks open, strains of SHOWTUNES drifting out. Suddenly, a darting eye surrounded by dramatic false eyelashes peers through.

MARIE
 Aunt Gloria?

29

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

29

CABARET plays through an ancient speaker system.

Marie sets her duffle bag at the base of a sweeping staircase and stares up at the kind of vaulted ceilings you never see in New York City. The apartment has the faded glory of opulence gone to seed.

MARIE

(Calling out)

Thanks for letting me stay here!

GLORIA (O.S.)

Speak up dear! This isn't a studio!

Marie follows the voice into the kitchen where GLORIA (60's) dumps a box of cookies onto a plate. Her thin frame is draped in a threadbare silk kimono that billows as she spins around-

She wears an alarming mask of make-up: thick powder, false lashes, severely drawn on eyebrows; all framed by an elaborate wig. Yet somehow, the family resemblance is clear.

With one hand she offers the plate of COOKIES. With the other she holds a cigarette.

GLORIA

Cookie? I made them myself.

Marie looks past her at the open COOKIE BOX sitting on the counter. She accepts a cookie from the plate.

MARIE

Thanks. I was just saying how nice it is of you to have me. I know you and my mom don't really...

Gloria waves her hand dismissively.

GLORIA

With you around I can finally get rid of the boy that delivers my groceries. I think he's become obsessed with me. And anyway it can get a little boring around here with just me and Wanda.

MARIE

Oh, is that your...maid?

GLORIA

My god, I haven't even introduced you! Damn my manners! WANDA!

The CLICKING of tiny claws hitting the hardwood. Suddenly, 10 PUGS come rushing around the corner, wagging and WHEEZING furiously, followed gimpily by one, extra wheezy, 11th PUG.

Gloria cackles with delight at the frantic dogs, which circle her, yapping excitedly.

GLORIA
(Commanding)
Wanda-Sit!

All of the dogs simultaneously sit perfectly still, like eleven porcelain statues.

GLORIA
(Explosively)
Good Wanda!

They burst back to life, their tails wagging their bodies. Gloria doles out treats from the pockets of her kimono.

MARIE
Which one is Wanda?

Gloria laughs again.

GLORIA
Let me show you your room.

30 INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - LATER

30

Marie wanders through the second floor, tapping on a GLASS OF WHISKEY and listening to Gloria watch TV in the den below.

She creeps to Gloria's bedroom and tries the handle of the closed door. Locked.

INT. GLORIA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Marie opens a mirrored medicine cabinet: The sheer number of PILLS within takes her breath away. Lexapro, Prozac, Zoloft. Anti-depressants, anti-psychotics, even nitroglycerin, it's all there. Everything except Xanax.

31 INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

31

Marie wanders sleepily into the kitchen where Gloria sits at the table with a cigarette dangling from her mouth. She holds a pug firmly while she clips its toenails. SHOWTUNES blare.

GLORIA

I already fired the grocery boy, so
there's no breakfast. Only
cigarettes.

Gloria pushes a pack of cigarettes and a ZIPPO towards Marie.

GLORIA

And coffee's on the counter.

Marie stands and crosses, reaching towards the COFFEE POT,
then past it, to a KNIFE BLOCK--

She turns, clutching a BREAD KNIFE, and SLASHES Gloria's
face! The dogs SNARL. Gloria's ruined mouth grins horribly.

GLORIA

Good girl, Wanda.

Gloria releases the dog, her face normal. Marie jerks her
hand away from the coffee pot. She sits down and lights a
cigarette, sparking the Zippo in increments of five.

GLORIA

Here's a list. If you pick up the
groceries, I'll let you keep that
lighter.

MARIE

Oh, no, that's okay-

GLORIA

Roger Moore gave me that lighter.
You go get some scotch and Grape
Nuts and I'll give it to you.

MARIE

Honestly-

GLORIA

Just take it. Roger was an asshole.

MARIE

Is there anything else I can do?

Gloria seems to consider this.

GLORIA

You know, Wanda likes you.

MARIE

Oh. I like Wanda, too.

Gloria nods.

GLORIA

Good. Then I'll fire the dog walker, as well. Wanda doesn't seem to care for her, and frankly, neither do I. There's something a little wormy about her.

MARIE

Wormy?

GLORIA

The leash is in the hall.

Marie nods and takes a drag of her smoke. Gloria stares at her expectantly.

MARIE

Oh, okay, so like right now?

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Marie wanders aimlessly through an abandoned, rainy Central Park. The Wandas race around, delighted to be unhooked from their eleven-pronged leash. Marie picks up a STICK to throw.

Suddenly, there's the sound of quiet SINGING. Marie freezes. A CHILD, (8), in a YELLOW RAINSLICKER rounds the bend, walking toward her. He smiles at the sight of all the dogs.

Marie's hand tightens around the wet bark of the stick.

The child kneels down to pet a Wanda.

In a flash of movement, Marie LUNGES forward and THROWS the child off the path, behind a BUSH. The STICK protrudes horribly from the soft skin of his neck.

He dies quietly, CHOKING on blood.

Red slides off the yellow slicker, disappearing in the dirt.

Marie closes her eyes and leans her head back, letting the rain wash the blood from her hands and face.

She opens her eyes. The Wandas stare at her curiously. Her hands are clean, but wet. She looks around. She's off the path. Bushes everywhere.

Frantically, she looks behind the nearest bush. Nothing-except-is that a handprint in the wet ground? She looks closer. Is it? She hears faint SINGING and wheels around.

She's alone.

Marie sways, faint, and abruptly VOMITS. The Wandas gather around, eating it. Marie wipes her mouth and immediately peers behind another bush. Nothing.

Far behind Marie, out of her view, a very faintly singing spot of YELLOW rounds another bend and disappears.

Marie straightens up and slowly turns in a circle.

The park is empty. Bushes stretch out in every direction.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - LATER

It's starting to get dark. Marie's in a completely different part of the park. She feverishly looks behind another bush.

Nothing.

The Wandas whimper, shivering and wet.

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A disheveled, wild-eyed Marie sits on her bed surrounded by every article of clothing she owns. Everything yellow is in the trash. She holds a crumpled piece of paper in her hand:

NIGHTMARES? ANXIETY? DEPRESSION?

She stares at it, TAPPING the corner of the page in fives.

33

INT. BRIGHTON'S OFFICE - DAY

33

Marie sits on a couch across from GWEN BRIGHTON (34), aka the skinny woman from the hall. The office is crowded with stacks of files and seems oddly lived-in, almost half office, half apartment.

BRIGHTON

The goal of the study is to develop a treatment specific to you and compare it with your prior treatment. I see you met with Dr. Schneeding...

MARIE

Yeah. He diagnosed me with wanting to penetrate everything. So. Look out.

Brighton stifles a smile and sets down Marie's file.

BRIGHTON

What do you want to get out of the study?

MARIE

Same as everyone, right? Get better. To be like before.

BRIGHTON

Before the nightmares?

MARIE

Right.

Brighton makes a note. Marie looks annoyed, uncomfortable.

MARIE

What do you want to get out of the study?

Brighton takes off her glasses. She looks at Marie squarely.

BRIGHTON

Good question. I guess you could say the same as you. Same as everyone. I want to get better.

MARIE

Aren't you supposed to say you want to help me?

Brighton shrugs.

BRIGHTON

This isn't a place where we say what were supposed to say. That's everywhere else. This is where you say what you mean. And what I mean is

BRIGHTON

You don't trust me, do you?

Marie is startled. Brighton shrugs.

BRIGHTON

It's okay. You have no reason to. We just met.

MARIE

It's not that. I just...I dunno.

She looks away. Brighton TAPS a RED PEN against Marie's file.

BRIGHTON

Okay. Let me tell you what I think.

Marie watches the pen uncomfortably. Her hands tremble on the arm of her chair.

BRIGHTON

I'm gonna tell you a story, and you tell me what you think, okay?

Marie nods.

BRIGHTON

I think you're suffering profoundly. And I think in the past you've concealed your pain in order to protect yourself from judgement, but that's not working anymore. You're clearly not eating or sleeping, and I bet the people around you have started to comment, which only causes you to withdraw further, making everything even worse. And all because of some nightmares, right?

Marie nods weakly, trying not to look at the SKIN of Brighton's neck. TAP TAP TAP. Marie rasps, throat dry:

MARIE

(inaudibly)

Can you...

BRIGHTON

But they're not really nightmares.
Are they?

The PEN gleams. The TAPPING gets louder.

MARIE

(whispering)

Can you...

BRIGHTON

They don't stop when you wake up.
They don't ever stop.

TAP TAP TAP. It's deafening now. Marie clenches her hands.

BRIGHTON

That's why you came in today. Not nightmares. And certainly not because you're "stressed out."

TAP TAP TAP. Marie closes her eyes, and takes a breath.

MARIE
Can you stop that?

TAP TAP-The tapping stops. Marie opens her eyes. Brighton's PEN is lodged in her gut. Marie stands, sweaty and swaying.

MARIE
I gotta go.

BRIGHTON
Marie-wait-

MARIE
No, no, please, I gotta go. Please-
I can't be here-

BRIGHTON
So let's try again. And this time
be honest. It's my only rule. Why
are you here, Marie?

Marie unclenches her shaky hands, flipping them over and over. Clean. She looks at Brighton, tears in her eyes.

MARIE
I think I might be a sociopath.

She starts to cry.

BRIGHTON
You're not a sociopath.

MARIE
(still crying)
I'm not?

BRIGHTON
No. Not even close. The opposite,
actually. You have Obsessive
Compulsive Disorder.

A beat.

MARIE
(sniffling)
No, that's not right. I haven't
washed this hoodie in like, four
months. I eat stuff after it falls
on the floor.

BRIGHTON

Germophobia and orderliness are just one facet. You're in a purely obsessional subset. "Pure O" for short.

MARIE

Sounds like a gay bar.

BRIGHTON

It means it manifests more mentally, with obsessing, than physically, with compulsions-

MARIE

Can you prescribe me Xanax?

Brighton shakes her head, disappointed.

BRIGHTON

Taking Xanax for OCD is like putting a band-aid on an infection. You're not fixing it, you're just covering it up.

Marie's shoulders slump. Brighton notes her trembling hand.

BRIGHTON

Been hitting the Xanny's pretty hard, huh?

Marie says nothing. Brighton writes on a prescription pad.

BRIGHTON

I'm getting you started on SSRI's. It won't feel as good as the Xanax, but it will actually help.

She tears off the top page of the pad and offers it to Marie. Marie reluctantly takes the prescription.

BRIGHTON

However. I'm only giving you enough medication for five days. You want more, you gotta come back and talk to me. Sound fair?

Marie nods noncommittally. Brighton senses she's losing her.

BRIGHTON

I know it's scary, Marie. But as soon as you do this, it starts getting better. So you have a choice.

(MORE)

BRIGHTON (CONT'D)
 Either you keep trying to outrun
 your own brain, or you can stand up
 right here, right now, and we'll
 make this thing your bitch.

Brighton looks at her with burning eyes and leans forward.

BRIGHTON
 It's up you.

A loud KNOCK interrupts. Brighton glances at the door.

BRIGHTON
 That's my next appointment.

Brighton stands, but Marie GRABS her hand like she drowning.

MARIE
 Wait.

34 EXT. STREET - DAY

34

The sun has begun to set, bathing the street in golden light
 as Marie walks toward campus.

MARIE
 You can fix it, right?

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
 Well. Let me put it this way:

She passes Cafe Habana and sees Will's phone number on the
 alley wall. She looks away.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
 There's no going back to the way
 things were.

She reaches NYU campus and sees a group of students waiting
 for the bus. She spots Madison holding court for a group of
 guys. They laugh at something she says.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
 But that doesn't mean you can't go
 forward.

Marie turns away, heading towards the Student Health Center.

35

INT. DR. BRIGHTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

35

BRIGHTON

At the end of the study, you'll write up a personal account of your experience, and I will present-

MARIE

I can't write.

Brighton looks down at the file in front of her.

BRIGHTON

It says here you're a Creative Writing major.

MARIE

I was. But I can't write anymore.

BRIGHTON

When's the last time you wrote something?

MARIE

For class, or in general?

BRIGHTON

Either.

MARIE

Five months.

Brighton nods and tosses her a BLACK NOTEBOOK.

BRIGHTON

Then that's going to be our way in. You'll start fictional: an alien killing an octopus, Tom murdering Jerry, whatever. But over time they'll become more real. More personal.

MARIE

This because I'm a Writing Major? Because I could switch to like, Econ. Bang. Problem solved.

BRIGHTON

If you were Econ I'd just make you do it in Excel. It's how the treatment works: we make a list of all the things that scare you, and then you do them. Over and over again.

MARIE
So it's like Fear Factor.

BRIGHTON
No, it's not like Fear Factor.

MARIE
It sounds a lot like Fear Factor.

BRIGHTON
Stop stalling and start writing.

Marie takes out a crayon. Brighton stops her.

BRIGHTON
Nope. That's insane. You're not
writing with that.

Marie reluctantly hands over the crayon. Brighton nods and
hands her the RED PEN. Marie regards it with disdain.

MARIE
Really? Don't you have one in like
a...sea foam?

BRIGHTON
No. Now write this down: Exposure
List, Item #1...

Marie presses the pen down hard, watching the ink pool.

BRIGHTON
Marie.

MARIE
Yeah.

BRIGHTON
Write it, don't carve it. That's my
good pen.

The spell is broken. Marie begins to write:

MARIE'S EXPOSURE LIST:

TITLE CARD: ITEM #1. WRITING.

Marie sits at the kitchen table with the red pen staring down
at what looks like the rantings of a serial killer: "As the
knife wept blood onto the kitchen floor, Gloria finally
understood what she had been all along: a monst—"

GLORIA (O.S.)
What are you doing?

Marie snaps up to see Gloria looming in front of her.

MARIE
Oh shit, You scared me.

Gloria glances down at the page and arches a painted eyebrow.

GLORIA
Likewise.

MARIE
No, I'm just...it's for school...

Gloria sits beside her, lighting a cigarette.

GLORIA
Uh-huh. Looks fun. You want help?

MARIE
Um...okay, sure. What's another
word for monster?

GLORIA
Anomaly. Mutant. Fiend.

Marie writes furiously.

MARIE
Woah, slow down.

GLORIA
Gorgon. Demon. Sheila.

MARIE
Sheila? Who's Sheila?

GLORIA
My mother.

MARIE
Oh.

Beat.

GLORIA
Your mom didn't tell you much about
me, did she?

MARIE
Not really.

Gloria nods, stubbing out her cigarette.

GLORIA
Well. Time to feed Wanda.

Marie sits quietly for a moment. She takes out her phone and scrolls down her contacts until she reaches MOM. She pauses, hovering over the button, then clicks the screen off.

INT. BRIGHTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A notebook page filled edge to edge with scrawled red ink. The page turns to reveal another beneath just like it. Brighton finishes while Marie chews her fingernail nervously.

BRIGHTON
I love the compulsive.

MARIE
Who?

BRIGHTON
Your protagonist, the woman that kills her dogs. I loved that you gave her compulsive traits.

Marie looks troubled.

MARIE
Thanks.

BRIGHTON
Actually, you know what? I want to try something. Bear with me for a second and close your eyes.

Marie closes her eyes--

INT. MARIE'S MIND

It's pitch black.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
Now, imagine what your mind might look like if it was a room.

Still blackness.

MARIE (V.O.)
It's just darkness.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
Then turn on the lights.

Suddenly, florescent lights CLICK on, revealing an endless control room, the walls all buttons, computer screens, etc.

MARIE (V.O.)
It looks like...the inside of a rocket ship.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
Good. Now, look around and find your OCD.

Marie notices a FLASHING RED BUTTON. She pushes it. The lights go out and are replaced by BLACK LIGHTS, which illuminate TEEMING BUGS and CREEPING MOLD coating everything.

MARIE (V.O.)
It's everywhere. It's infected everything.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
No. That's what it wants you to think. Your OCD is just a thing. A thing that doesn't belong. Find it.

She presses the red button again and the lights come back up. Suddenly, standing in the middle of the room is a confused, bookish looking woman in 1950's style clothing.

MARIE (V.O.)
I think I found her.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
She's a woman?

MARIE (V.O.)
I think she's a...librarian?

The woman nods.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
What's her name?

Marie notices a name tag on her dress spelling out:

MARIE (V.O.)
Nancy.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)
Perfect. Open your eyes.

INT. BRIGHTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Marie opens her eyes.

BRIGHTON

When you start to panic, try to remember what Nancy really is. She's not a demon, or an infection—she's a stowaway who doesn't want to be caught. Make sense?

MARIE

I think so.

BRIGHTON

Good. Let's talk about homework.

38

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

38

Will's light blue phone number has been covered up with more graffiti and REWRITTEN IN PINK with the words: YOU GONNA CALL ME OR WHAT? CIRCLE "YES" OR "NO"

A shadow falls on the wall as Marie walks past.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)

If you let it, this disorder will subdivide your life into smaller and smaller pieces until there's nothing left.

A moment later and she's back again, walking the other direction. She pauses at the number, then keeps walking.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)

Your job is to break down those walls and make room again.

She paces back and forth a few more times, debating.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)

So I want you to think of the last thing OCD prevented you from doing.

Marie defiantly walks up to the number...

BRIGHTON (V.O.)

And do it.

And dials.

39

EXT. THE EGG ART GALLERY - NIGHT

39

A very hip art gallery. So hip that it has no sign, just a huge, WHITE EGG taking up most of one wall. A long line of steampunks snakes along the sidewalk. Near the front, Will and Marie's hoodies stand out in the sea of odd clothing.

WILL

I'm glad you called. Now I can finally get my number off that wall. You wouldn't believe how many crack heads I've talked to in the last few weeks.

Marie laughs. She looks around at the apparel around them.

MARIE

I've never been to a gallery opening before. I feel...overdressed?

WILL

Yeah, art people are fucking freaks.

The line moves as some weirdoes in ruffled shirts are let in. A guy in lensless glasses taking tickets stares at his phone.

GLASSES GUY

Welcome to The Egg.

He glances up and gives them both a disdainful once over.

GLASSES GUY

You can't wear that in here.

WILL

Wear what?

GLASSES GUY

Hoodies. Not allowed. We have a dress code here. No "gym attire." If you want to come in, you'll have to take those off.

Will looks to Marie, who is blatantly uncomfortable with the idea. He turns back to Glasses Guy.

WILL

C'mon man, you just let in a guy dressed like a Civil War reenactor.

GLASSES GUY

I really don't have time for this.
Either take off your street person
clothes or get out of line.

WILL

Seriously, man, don't be a dick-

Glasses Guy gestures and two gothy bouncers materialize.

WILL

Aw, really? What are they going to
do, spook me to death?

They pull out tazers. Will grabs Marie's hand and starts
backing away.

WILL

Okay, y'know what? Fuck you. And
fuck your lensless glasses, and
fuck your gothy bouncers, and fuck
your dumb fucking egg. We're not
the weird ones. You're the weird
one. Okay? You're the weird one.

40

INT. FRANKIES PUB - LATER

40

MARIE (O.S.)

You didn't have to do that.

WILL

He was the weird one.

A paint marker absently draws A HAND on a vast white surface.

WILL

I thought taking you to an art
gallery would make me look
sophisticated. I think it worked.

Marie laughs. The two of them sit at a bar covered in BUTCHER
PAPER littered with doodles from the night's patrons. Will
shades the fingers of the hand. Marie makes tiny TALLIES.

WILL

Art people are all like that. It's
part of why I left school.

MARIE

"Left?"

WILL

Technically, was "asked to leave."

MARIE

Let me guess. Vandalism?

WILL

Such an ugly word. I like to think
of it more as "surprise art!"

Will abruptly draws an X through the hand.

MARIE

Hey-

Marie's phone RINGS. She looks down at the screen. "MOM."

WILL

Do you need to get that?

Marie silences it.

MARIE

Nope.

WILL

Hey, what are you doing tomorrow?

MARIE

No.

WILL

No, what?

MARIE

No, everything!

Will looks taken aback. Marie sighs.

MARIE

Look, you seem...sort of nice.

WILL

Thank you?

MARIE

So I'm just gonna lay it out for
you. Because for whatever reason,
you seem to think I'm some kind of
rad, manic pixie dream girl. But in
reality, I'm more of a...depressive
goblin nightmare lady.

WILL

You're hardly a lady.

MARIE

I'm serious. I'm fucked up. Not in a cute, fun, hot-in-bed way. In a nasty way. A way you wouldn't like.

WILL

How do you know?

MARIE

Trust me. It's not worth it. Coming into my life would be exhausting. Like boarding an airplane. It takes forever, nothing dangerous is allowed in, and once you finally get on board, you realize the hard part hasn't even started yet. You really want to sign up for that?

WILL

Yes.

MARIE

No you don't. You need a nice sailboat kind of girl. Breezy. Uncomplicated. I have way too many rules and regulations.

WILL

You know, the funny thing about airplanes is: even though it's hard, even though it can be scary...It's still flying.

He leans in close.

WILL

And you can't fly with a sailboat.

41

INT. WILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

41

Will and Marie make out furiously.

Will's apartment is a tiny studio lined with cans of SPRAY PAINT they keep KNOCKING onto the floor. The neighbor beneath POUNDS on his ceiling angrily.

Will peels off her hoodie. She lays back, looking at the art:

A series of MELTING NEON SKULLS with the words WHO'S LAUGHING NOW? scrawled across them in spidery cursive. A disembodied eyeball on block lettering spelling out STOP CRYING.

She looks away. On Will's bedside table are a pile paper stencils and a SHINY EXACTO KNIFE.

SPLAT. A drop of BLOOD falls from Will lips onto her face. His mouth is slack, teeth red. Red words flash through her mind in cursive and block letters: MONSTER. KILLER. FREAK.

INT. MARIE'S MIND

She shuts her eyes, trying to picture Nancy, but the control room of her mind is dominated now by a black doorway, POLICE TAPE strung across it, a BLOODY HANDPRINT on the doorframe...

INT. WILL'S APPARTMENT - NIGHT

She opens her eyes and starts to hyperventilate.

MARIE
I can't do this.

Will can see the tears tremble in her eyes.

WILL
Okay.

MARIE
No, I mean, I *really* can't do this.

She sits up, pulling her hoodie back on and puts her hood up. Will sits up beside her.

MARIE
I'm sorry.

WILL
It's okay. You can make it up to me by telling everyone I have a big penis.

She laughs.

MARIE
You're funny.

WILL
You're beautiful.

MARIE
You're weird.

WILL
You're still beautiful.

He pauses, trying to figure out what he wants to say.

WILL

Okay, so you've got some shit, I
get that. But you also have
some...balls. And I like that...in
a girl?

He looks flustered. She stands up.

MARIE

I should go.

WILL

Wait! What I'm trying to say
is...there's some part of my crazy
gets your crazy. So why don't we
just...see what happens?

Marie considers him: shirt off, covered in tattoos,
surrounded by his weird art. She sighs.

MARIE

Just don't try to "fix" me, Okay?

WILL

I never try to fix anything.

MARIE

Don't ask me what's wrong, or if
I'm okay, or why I do weird things.

WILL

No problem. Stuff's boring anyway.

MARIE

And please, please, don't ask me
what I'm thinking about. Trust me
when I tell you, just this once:
you don't want to know. We have to
keep it simple-Why are you smiling?

WILL

Trust me when I tell you, just this
once-

He grabs her hand and pulls her back onto the bed.

WILL

I can do simple.

42

INT. DR. BRIGHTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

42

The office looks disorganized, papers and empty coffee cups crowd the desk. Brighton rubs her eyes as she passes Marie's phone back to her, a picture of Will on the screen.

BRIGHTON

Not what I had in mind for a homework assignment, but he's cute.

MARIE

Yeah. I...um, I have a weird question.

BRIGHTON

I probably have a weird answer.

MARIE

(Stammering)

I...uh. I can't...bone.

Brighton smiles slightly.

MARIE

And...it's like the more I want to, the worse it gets. Then I freak out, because I feel like I must be one of those SVU killers that's going to like, bone someone and then kill them, or kill someone and then bone them, and the cops will come and they'll be all disgusted, like "My God, there's a pubic hair in the wound!" And-

BRIGHTON

Totally normal.

MARIE

What?

BRIGHTON

Well, OCD normal, not normal-normal. It's the disorder recognizing a soft spot and trying to exploit it.

Marie looks at her blankly.

BRIGHTON

It means you like him.

MARIE

Well. Makes me feel like a perv.

BRIGHTON

I guess we'll just have to write a story about it, then, won't we?

Marie sighs dramatically.

MARIE

I don't know why I tell you anything.

BRIGHTON

Neither do I. And as much as you don't want to hear it, the best thing you can do is tell him-

Marie is vehemently shaking her head. Brighton sighs.

BRIGHTON

I know you think you can do this alone. But, honestly, you need to be around other people. If for no other reason than to remind you what a normal life looks like.

Brighton's eyes droop for the briefest second, her left thumb rubbing the faintest tan line on her bare ring finger.

BRIGHTON

Trust me on this one.

She drops her hand self-consciously, recomposing herself.

BRIGHTON

Anyway. We'll get there. In the mean time, I have a super fun activity for you to do instead.

TITLE CARD: ITEM 2. LISTENING.

43

EXT. EAST RIVER BOARDWALK - DAY

43

Marie grimly walks the Wandas. They bark loudly, but all we can hear is what is the tinny voice speaking through Marie's headphones over white noise:

MARIE (V.O.)

Once upon a time, there was a girl who liked to hurt things.

44

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

44

Marie nods along absentmindedly as PSYCHO KILLER blasts in her headphones. She switches to the next track. It's the THEME MUSIC FROM HALLOWEEN. She switches again. Static, then:

MARIE (V.O.)

She felt her blade slide between his ribs. Easily, like it was coming home. His screaming turned to a choke as foaming lung blood dotted the sheets...

She sighs and folds her hands to keep them from tapping.

45

EXT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

45

Different keys from a massive key ring struggle to unlock all the locks while MACK THE KNIFE plays loudly. The door finally opens. Marie takes out her headphones. A SCREAM cuts the air.

MARIE

Aunt Gloria?!

A long beat.

GLORIA (O.S.)

In the den! Watching cinema!

Marie sighs with relief and winds through the labyrinthine apartment talking loudly.

MARIE

What's the deal with Mack the Knife, anyway? Everyone thinks it's so swanky, but the lyrics are like worse than Cannibal Corpse. Right? I'm not the weird one here-

46

INT. GLORIA'S DEN - NIGHT

46

Marie enters the den where her aunt watches a low-budget horror movie on TV.

GLORIA

It's a murder ballad from a German opera. What's Cannibal Corpse?

MARIE

Never mind.

Gloria pours a glass of gin and holds it out to her.

GLORIA

Sit down. Have a drink. Grab a
Wanda.

Marie drains the glass and reluctantly sits. The EXTRA WHEEZY PUG climbs on her lap and immediately falls asleep. On TV a platinum blonde wanders moronically down basement stairs.

GLORIA

Look at this jack ass. Lighter
their hair, the quicker they die.
Psycho started that one, really.

Gloria lights a cigarette and passes it to Marie, then lights another for herself and takes a deep drag.

GLORIA

I knew Alfred, you know.

MARIE

Hitchcock? You're kidding.

GLORIA

Met him at a party. He wouldn't
leave me alone, the old dog. I was
just his type back then.

She waves a hand at the now screaming blonde on screen.

GLORIA

Like her. Of course, it's all well
and fun to direct an actress to
play fragile, but when the camera
stops rolling, well, Hitch...He
wanted a girl who could act crazy,
not one that actually was.

MARIE

So what happened?

GLORIA

Nothing happened. He moved on to a
different blonde. They all did.
Even my mother.

She takes another drag.

GLORIA

Even yours.

There's a heavy pause, and Marie realizes her aunt is drunk.

GLORIA

But you're not a blonde. You're true blue like me, I can tell. Keep your eye out for those ones, the ones that will stick with you. Might not be as pretty, but those are the good ones.

She sucks down her gin and gestures towards the screen where a long shadow is falling over the blonde's teary face.

GLORIA

Besides, we all know how the blondes end up.

She grins crookedly at Marie, who smiles back uneasily.

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marie scrolls through missed calls on her phone: MOM, MADISON, MADISON, NYU...

She sighs and keeps scrolling: MADISON, MOM, NYU, MADISON...WILL.

INT. WILL'S APPARTMENT- NIGHT

Marie lays in bed beside Will, eyes open and staring. The clock reads 6:06 AM. Suddenly, she's over Will, an EXACTO KNIFE in hand, blank look on her face. He opens his eyes and she brings the blade down, stabbing him with wild ferocity!

--Marie opens her eyes, covered in sweat. She looks over at Will, huddled in a heap with his back to her.

Shivering, she crawls to him, lowering her face until it's right over his. She turns her head, her ear a centimeter from his lips, then finally hears his SOFT BREATH.

She sighs with relief.

WILL

What are you doing?

She starts. Will's eyes are open. He looks deeply weirded-out

MARIE

Nothing. Shhhhh. Go back to sleep.

WILL

You go back to sleep. Weirdo.

She lays back down. She looks at the clock. 6:12 AM. She fidgets, then gently takes his pulse. She nods, relieved.

She looks back over. 6:19 AM. *He's so still.* She gingerly takes his pulse again. Nods. Still alive. Looks back over...

47

EXT. NYU HOSPITAL-DAY

47

Marie and Brighton sit on a bench outside the hospital. Marie anxiously avoids looking at the hospital.

BRIGHTON
How's the boning going?

MARIE
We're not so much "boning" as we are awkwardly making out sometimes while I cry. But. At least I won't get pregnant.

BRIGHTON
At least there's that.

MARIE
So...what are we doing here?

BRIGHTON
Well. We're doing something different today.

MARIE
Yay.

BRIGHTON
Today we talk about your trigger.

Marie starts tapping on the bench, counting to five. Brighton lays a hand over hers to stop it.

BRIGHTON
Tell me the story of how it started.

Her fingers stop tapping. Marie closes her eyes.

INT. MARIE'S MIND

MARIE (V.O.)
Once upon a time, last semester, there were two room mates. Becca and Joanne.

We see two girls decorating a vaguely familiar dorm room.

MARIE (V.O.)
They lived in C Hall.

A dark haired girl sleeps in her narrow bed.

MARIE (V.O.)
Everything about them seemed fine.
But it wasn't. Because one night,
Becca just...

SHINK. A hand pulls a KNIFE from a silverware drawer.

MARIE (V.O.)
Snapped.

--An EXPLOSION of movement as the knife quickly comes down on the sleeping girl, again and again. She SCREAMS. BLOOD sprays into the darkness and the scream turns to a CHOKE. Blackness.

MARIE (V.O.)
She stabbed her six times before
someone got in and stopped her.

A dorm room roped off by POLICE TAPE. Students sit in a hallway, crying.

MARIE (V.O.)
That morning every dorm called an emergency meeting. My RA was crying when she told us, everyone was crying. And I remember suddenly thinking "Good." Just the one word. "Good." And I thought, "The fuck was that?" Then I thought "Oh my god. Is this what happened to Becca? Is this how it starts?" And that was it. It never stopped.

Marie opens her eyes.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

MARIE
I never met Joanne, but I met Becca once. And she was...she seemed normal, you know?

Brighton nods, looking far away, lost in thought.

BRIGHTON
She did, didn't she?

Brighton suddenly stands up.

BRIGHTON
Come with me.

Marie follows Brighton as she walks towards the hospital.

BRIGHTON
Rebecca Engles is gone. She was sent to a private institution out of state. But Joanne is still being treated for PTSD here in the city.
Actually, *Right* here.

Brighton gestures at the hospital. Marie stops.

MARIE
Oh, no. No fucking way-

BRIGHTON
Marie, I shit on at least a dozen university codes just now by telling you this. Do you know why?

Marie is silent.

BRIGHTON
Because I've failed. Me, and my entire department. We failed. And as a result there's a girl in there who has to go through life looking like science experiment. We've got the highest prescription drug abuse rates in the country. The highest suicide rate. And now this. *The system is not working.*

Brighton starts walking again, and Marie matches her.

BRIGHTON
That's why your personal statement is so important. We can show that spending the extra effort on individual treatments is worth it. Because it *works*.

She looks Marie in the eye.

BRIGHTON
I'm all in with you, Marie.

MARIE
Let's just hope it *works*, I guess.

Brighton smiles.

BRIGHTON
No pressure.

They stop in front of the hospital. The doors automatically open. Inside, the chaos of the ER hums like a hornet's nest.

BRIGHTON
That's probably enough for today,
wouldn't you say?

Marie nods. They turn around.

BRIGHTON
You should really meet her, one of
these days. She's tough. Like you.

49

INT. STANDINGS BAR - NIGHT

49

MARIE (V.O.)
I will kill them all, she thought.

Marie takes out her headphones as she walks into the bar. Basketball flickers on ancient TVs. Grime coats everything. Two men argue at the bar while Will fiddles with a KEG TAP, his back to the door.

WILL
That's it, I've heard enough.

The men grow silent. Will doesn't turn around as he struggles to untangle a keg hose.

WILL
I'm giving it to Barry. Pao might have worse facial hair, but the bottom line is he looks more human than Marshawn. So game over, Barry wins. Now both of you shut up or I'll start charging you for your goddamn refills.

Marie laughs and Will wheels around. He breaks into a grin.

WILL
You're here!

BARRY
Hey Will, is this your girlfriend?

WILL

Hey Barry, don't you still owe me
\$50 from fantasy last year?

Barry's smirk falls right off his face.

WILL

Yeah. Go back to Googling pictures
of Marshawn Lynch, big guy.

Barry turns red. Will ignores him and leans towards Marie.

WILL

Guy tipped me 2 bucks last night
after drinking about a keg and a
half. Anyway. You want a beer? Have
a beer. And before you ask for a
Cosmo or something, we only have
beer and very terrible wine, so
just take the beer. Also, we have
no food. Just these peanuts, which
I don't think are safe to eat.

MARIE

Impressive.

WILL

I know. Sometimes I just like to
stand here and...drink it in.

MARIE

Was that a pun?

WILL

Maybe. Anyway, let me give you the
tour.

He waves his arms expansively.

WILL

This is Standings.

He points-

WILL

Over there is the bathroom. We only
have a Men's, which is both
interesting and unique.

MARIE

Mm. That's cool, I can just pee
outside.

Will smiles and gestures up-

WILL
There are the TVs.

Starts pouring a beer-

WILL
And these are the taps.

He slides the beer over to Marie.

MARIE
Thanks.

She takes a sip. He stares at her, grinning.

MARIE
What?

WILL
Nothing. I just realized I really hated this place up until like two minutes ago.

50 INT. STANDINGS BAR - LATER

50

Standings is closed and empty except for Will and Marie, who sit on the bar smoking cigarettes and eating peanuts. Marie looks sadly at shriveled black nut.

WILL
You wanna order pizza or something?

MARIE
I have Amici's saved in my phone.

She slides it to him and hops off the bar.

MARIE
I'm going to the Men's. Get breadsticks. No utensils!

Marie walks into the bathroom and Will picks up her phone. It unlocks to an itunes track entitled: "KILLER by MARIE".

51 INT. STANDINGS BATHROOM - NIGHT

51

Marie looks at herself in the mirror. She hears her own voice faintly, but it must be in her head.

MARIE (V.O.)
I will kill them all. Cut them open
and watch them bleed out...

MARIE
Shut up, Nancy.

Her voice continues to talk, but she ignores it. She puts on lip gloss, takes a deep breath and walks back out.

INT. STANDINGS BAR-NIGHT

Will quickly fumbles her phone, CLATTERING it loudly on the counter. He looks at her guiltily as she walks over.

MARIE
What?

Will says nothing. She picks up the phone suspiciously and looks at the screen. A look of horror crosses her face.

MARIE
Oh. My god.

WILL
(Laughing)
Pretty fucked up, babe.

Her eyes well up with tears. He immediately backpedals.

WILL
Oh, hey now, hey, don't cry! I was
just kidding!

MARIE
Did you call the police?

He laughs again, in spite of himself.

WILL
No. But I didn't order the pizza
yet, either. Don't kill me.

MARIE
Are you scared?

WILL
Of what, your creepy book on tape?
Nah. You should hear my workout
mix. It's just a loop of Hitler
speeches. Untranslated. Sometimes
that's what you need to get really
pumped up, you know?

She buries her face in her hands, sniffing.

WILL

I will say that if this was a ploy
to get rid of me, it was ingenious,
but it's not gonna work.

He takes her hands away from her face and holds them.

WILL

I like you. And there's nothing you
can do, or say, or put on your iPod
that'll change that. I mean, you
can talk to me. I'm not some
college kid. I don't spook easy-

She kisses him, suddenly and violently.

WILL

God, I really gotta stop making you
cry every time you see me.

She kisses him again.

MARIE

It's okay. I cry every time I see
anyone.

53

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

53

Brighton and Marie sit with A WHITE PLASTIC KNIFE on the table between them. Brighton downs coffee like water, looking exhausted. Her hands shake slightly from over-caffination.

TITLE CARD: ITEM #3. TOUCHING

MARIE

What the hell do you expect me to
do with that?

Brighton leans in, wide-eyed, and whispers-

BRIGHTON

Go on a killing spree.

Marie leans in, too.

MARIE

We're gonna need a bigger knife.

Brighton laughs. Marie shakes her head.

MARIE

You're sick, you know that? And seriously, why would you bring a weapon to a public place like this?

BRIGHTON

I got it here. Over by the condiments. Want to get your own?

Marie looks over to a metal cup holding dozens of plastic knives. She shudders, inhaling sharply.

BRIGHTON

Thought so. Now. Pick it up.

MARIE

I hate you. And I hate this. And I won't be held responsible for whatever happens next.

BRIGHTON

Fine. I take full responsibility.

Marie plucks the knife off the table and holds it delicately. Brighton claps. Marie looks proud, in spite of her self.

BRIGHTON

Perfect. Guess what happens next.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Marie sits in packed subway car, the knife sticking out of her hoodie pocket. She twists her headphone cord anxiously.

MARIE (V.O.)

The knife felt light in her wicked hands. She surveyed the subway passengers and thought...

A young guy looks at her and smiles. She looks away.

MARIE (V.O.)

He'll probably be the first to go.

She leans her head back onto the glass and closes her eyes-

INT. MARIE'S MIND

Nancy wears safety goggles, a heavy canvas apron, and leather gloves. She holds the knife gingerly and flips through a huge instruction manual labeled "KNIFE PROTOCOL."

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Marie opens her eyes and smiles.

54

INT. WILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

54

Marie lays on Will's bed in her hoodie and underwear flipping through a sketchbook. Will SMACKS her butt as he walks by.

WILL

You know, I was thinking maybe we could go to your place sometime.

Marie's jaw works from within her hoodie.

MARIE

Nope.

WILL

What, you live in Jersey or something?

MARIE

Just no, okay?

Will gives her a hard look.

WILL

Sorry, too personal? Okay, how 'bout this for a question: why don't you ever go to class?

Marie's face turns red, but she doesn't look up.

WILL

Or are you in school at all? Do you even have a place? Am I dating a homeless person? Why don't you ever answer the phone when your mom calls? Is that even your mom, or is some other guy just saved as "mom"? Cause if it is that's pretty smart, but you should tell me if you're an orphan. In fact, you just tell me literally *anything*, because I have no idea who you are.

MARIE

You got me. I'm a homeless orphan. Now I bet you feel bad.

WILL

Is it that you don't want your friends and family to know you're "slummin' it with the bartender?"

MARIE

Stop it.

WILL

No. Just for a second, I want to talk like normal people, without the rules.

MARIE

Well, I'm not a normal person, and that's not what you signed up for.

WILL

I know it's not what I signed up for! But things change, and what worked yesterday doesn't work today.

MARIE

Why not?

WILL

Because, now I like you and I want to know what the fuck is going on!

She says nothing. Will finally just shakes his head.

WILL

Whatever. I gotta go to work. Lock the door when you leave.

He SLAMS the door. Marie turns back to the book-

RING!

Marie looks at her phone. MOM. Feeling bold, she stands up and answers it.

MARIE

Hey mom.

Beat.

MARIE

I know, sorry, I've been-WHAT?

Marie leans against a wall, eyes wide.

MARIE

I don't understand, why wouldn't you tell me you're coming? Yeah, I'm surprised, I just-What is that like, two weeks?

She slides down the wall onto the floor.

MARIE

No, it's good. I'm really happy.

She buries her head in her hands.

MARIE

It'll be great.

55 INT. NYU STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES - DAY

55

Marie rushes breathlessly to Brighton's door. She's about to open it when she hears MUFFLED SHOUTS within. She pauses.

VOICE (O.S.)

...enrollment to drop twenty percent! At 40K each. You do the math. And you have the nerve to request more money, more staff? You're lucky to still have a job-

BRIGHTON (O.S.)

The presentation will show-

MADISON (O.S.)

Marie?

Marie freezes at the voice. She slowly turns around to see...

MADISON

Hi...

A very awkward beat. Madison looks like she's been crying.

MARIE

Hey...uh...you ok...?

MADISON

Not really. This spacey horse-whisperer shrink just told me my aura's gone bad and I have to stop using microwaves.

MARIE

Oh yeah, I know that guy.

MADISON

Hey, um, do you want to like, grab coffee or something-

VOICE (O.S.)

Someone's losing their head over it, Gwen. And it sure as hell isn't gonna be me.

The door swings open and a glowering DR. SCHNEEDING storms out. Brighton looks hunched, fragile. Her eye catches Marie

BRIGHTON

Marie?

MARIE

I need to talk to you.

BRIGHTON

Not a good time.

MARIE

Please.

Marie looks at her desperately. Brighton sighs

BRIGHTON

Ten minutes.

Marie turns away from Madison.

MADISON

Wait, what are you doing later?

MARIE

-Sorry, Mad, I gotta go...

MADISON

(too loudly)

I fucked Mr. Brown!

Madison goes red.

MADISON

Shit.

She hurries off, her eyes filling with tears. Marie stares a moment at Madison's retreating back, then walks into Brighton's office and shuts the door.

56

INT. BRIGHTON'S OFFICE - DAY

56

Silence. Marie looks terrified. Brighton looks pissed. The tension in the room is huge and heavy.

BRIGHTON

Let's review. You dropped out.

MARIE

Yes.

BRIGHTON

So you're no longer an NYU student.

MARIE

Right.

BRIGHTON

And you've been consistently and systematically lying to me for the entirety of your treatment.

MARIE

Yeah.

BRIGHTON

Anything else you want to confess?

MARIE

No.

BRIGHTON

And now your mom, it turns out, hasn't abandoned you, but is actually coming to see you graduate from the school you recently-secretly-dropped out of. And you want me to...what? Lie to her for you? I mean, what's your plan here? You can't seriously expect me to keep treating you-

Brighton looks down at Marie's thick file, the crux of her study. Her shoulders droop.

BRIGHTON

You realize the position you've put me in?

Brighton looks close to tears.

BRIGHTON

It's over.

MARIE

It's not. It can't be. You were right. It works! We just have to finish it.

Brighton just shakes her head. Marie gets quieter.

MARIE

I can't go back to...the way I was.
Please.

A heavy pause. Brighton shakes her head angrily.

BRIGHTON

Fine. But you're telling your parents. Everything. This is too important to be jeopardized by some dysfunctional family shitstorm.

MARIE

Okay.

BRIGHTON

Say it. Say "I will tell them."

MARIE

I will tell them.

Brighton angrily writes a note on a post-it.

BRIGHTON

I'll put a note in with the Bursar saying you're on temporary mental health leave. Obviously you'll omit this from the personal statement

MARIE

Thank you.

Brighton waves her off, irritated. An unmistakable shift has occurred in the relationship.

BRIGHTON

Don't fuck with me, Marie. I want honesty from now on, or we are done. Understand?

Marie nods.

BRIGHTON

Go call your parents before I do.

57

EXT. STREET - DAY

57

Marie walks up the steps to Gloria's apartment with the phone glued to her ear.

MARIE

Hey mom, it's me, Marie. Your daughter. Um. So. There's something that...we should talk about...

58

EXT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

58

Marie tries to put her keys in the lock and the door swings open. Unlocked. Marie jerks her hand back with a start.

MARIE

Anyway so call me back when you get this love you bye.

She hangs up and steps into the house.

MARIE

Aunt Gloria?

Silence. No showtunes, no barking dogs, nothing. Suddenly, she notices the half dozen locks hang broken on the frame.

MARIE

Gloria!?

She hears the Wandas WHIMPER pitifully from another room. She follows the sound upstairs where Gloria's door is open a crack. *Gloria's door is never open.* Marie pushes on it.

59

INT. GLORIA'S ROOM - DAY

59

The room is dim, with heavy drapes drawn against the setting sun, but Marie can still make out the shapes of the pugs huddled together on a massive king bed.

MARIE

Aunt Gloria?

She trips towards the windows and draws the shades, sending dust clouds billowing in the cruel shock of sunlight.

It's a bad episode of Hoarders. Overflowing ashtrays cover the floor and bed, competing for space with dog bowls.

A thick layer of pug hair coats every surface, threatening to swallow up the hundreds of lipsticks, powders, and eyebrow pencils piled on a long armoire.

Marie weaves towards the crying dog pile on the bed. All the pugs sit anxiously, wagging their tails at Marie.

All except one.

There, in the center of the bed, surrounded by her ten sisters, lies one dead extra wheezy Wanda.

60 EXT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

60

Marie pats down the earth atop the tiny grave in the center of Gloria's front yard. She stands up and brushes the dirt off her hands. A neighbor leans on her stoop, yammering.

NEIGHBOR

...she was still screaming when
they strapped her in. I thought she
was dying until the paramedics told
me it was just her dog--

MARIE

What hospital did they take her to?

NEIGHBOR

NYU.

Marie pales.

MARIE

Are you sure?

NEIGHBOR

That's where they always take her

MARIE

Thanks.

EXT. NYU MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Marie sits on the bench outside the hospital. An ambulance SIREN screams in the distance. Her phone rings: MOM.

She silences it and looks back at the door to the ER. The SIREN gets louder, and suddenly an ambulance SCREECHES to a stop in front of her. PARAMEDICS rapidly unload a BLOODY MAN.

Marie stands up and walks away.

61 EXT. WILL'S APPARTMENT-NIGHT

61

Marie knocks on Will's door five times, then five more, then five more-

It opens.

WILL
Hey, sorry about-

She kisses him hard, pushing both of them into his apartment and SLAMMING the door behind her.

62 INT. WILL'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

62

They make out on the bed. Will pulls back for a second.

WILL
Are you sure this is what you want?

Marie shakes her head.

MARIE
(Whispering)
No.

He pulls away further, but she grabs him.

MARIE
Don't ask me, just do it.

He hesitates, weirded out. She strips off her hoodie to reveal only a black bra. He gets on top of her.

Skulls LAUGH and melt. Eyeballs weep blood. Marie KNIFES Will in his naked, tattooed back. Nancy sits cross-legged and blushing amidst blaring ALARMS and flashing red lights.

63 INT. WILL'S APARTMENT-LATER

63

They lay in bed. It's weird.

WILL
Can I ask you something?

MARIE
I guess so.

WILL
Did you throw out all my Exactos?

Beat.

MARIE
Yeah.

Will nods.

WILL
Are you afraid of me?

MARIE
No.

She clenches her hands into fists, trying not to tap.

MARIE
I'm afraid of myself.

Will stares up at the ceiling for a moment, understanding the implications of this for the first time.

MARIE
There's something wrong in me.

Her voice breaks.

WILL
You know what always makes me feel better?

64 EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

64

Over pitch black there's a metallic RATTLING, then the HISSS of an aerosol can as thread of sky blue spray paint arcs across a wall.

MARIE (V.O.)
How long have you been doing this?

Marie watches as Will fills in an elaborate bubble letter. His movements are fluid and efficient.

WILL
Long time.

MARIE
Have you ever been caught?

WILL
Not here.

She's hypnotized as he outlines the word with hot pink.

MARIE
Why do you write that word, "Hand?"

WILL
Really, with the questions? Thought we weren't doing that.

MARIE

Sorry. Was your family, like,
killed by a pack of wild hands?

WILL

Red.

MARIE

What?

WILL

Toss me the red. And keep an eye
out for people on their cellphones.

She throws him a red can. Will keeps painting as he talks.

WILL

We didn't have art class where I
went to school. So I worked at this
tattoo shop all through high
school. And it was awesome,
actually. I just got high and gave
my friends tattoos all day. Thought
I'd do it forever. But when I got
offered a scholarship to the Art
Institute, suddenly it stopped
seeming so great. And it was like,
shit, maybe I can get the fuck out
of here and make a go at it.

He glances back.

WILL

You keeping an eye out?

Marie nods. He goes back to painting.

WILL

So. Came to the city for school,
and the first day we had 5 minutes
to draw our hands. Then we hung
them on the wall and the whole
class walked through together while
the professor critiqued them. So we
hung 'em up, and there was all
kinds of shit, photoreal, abstract-
and then there was me. "a preteen
who's idea of fine art is Spawn
comics."

His wrist twitches, sending a line of red into an "H".

WILL

Shit.

He grabs the blue and starts fixing the letter.

WILL

The thing is, Spawn had the best illustrators of any comic series ever. But they didn't know that, because they were elitist dicks, and their shit was all just soulless, pandering noise. I didn't wanna do that. I wanted to do something that had heart. Art that took balls. So that's what I did. And I wrote *hand* because...I dunno. Fuck those dicks.

MARIE

But then you got caught.

WILL

Yeah. But by then I wanted to. Otherwise...I'd have to admit it.

MARIE

Admit what?

He does a finishing touch and steps back. The piece is so clean and bright it practically glows in the dark.

WILL

That I was scared.

He turns to her, vulnerable.

WILL

You know?

She looks away uncomfortably.

MARIE

Not really.

His face falls, then hardens. He laughs, loud and false.

WILL

Didn't think so.

Marie snaps.

MARIE

What do you want from me? I'm sick, okay? Is that what you wanna hear? That my brain is a rat nest of unspeakable fucking horror?

(MORE)

MARIE (CONT'D)
 That I kill you a thousand times a day, and no matter how many times my shrink tells me it's not real, I can't shake the feeling that it's just a matter of time-

Suddenly, a light in one of the building's windows comes on. Will covers her mouth with his hand.

WILL
 (Whispering)
 We gotta go. Now.

He grabs his BAG OF CANS and gestures Marie to follow him. She doesn't move. He looks around desperately.

WILL
 What!? C'mon!

MARIE
 I'll find my own way home.

WILL
 Marie-

Another light goes on in the building. He looks at her sadly, then disappears into the shadows.

65

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

65

It's eerily quiet. Marie lies awake, the surviving ten pugs SNORING around her. A shrill RINGING cuts the air. Marie follows the sound to a house phone she never knew existed.

DR. RYAN (O.S.)
 This message is for Marie Astor...
 I'm Dr. Ryan from NYU Psychiatric
 Ward. You were named emergency
 contact by one of our patients, Ms.
 Gloria Newbury. We do need to speak
 with you before we release her, so
 please call us at your earliest
 convenience.

She looks past the phone to a PACK OF CIGARETTES on a window sill. She lights one and leans on the glass, staring at the city, SPARKING the Zippo in fives, over and over again.

67

INT. DR. BRIGHTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

67

Brighton looks serious. Marie looks exhausted.

BRIGHTON
How'd your parents take it?

Marie squirms.

MARIE
Uh. Not great.

BRIGHTON
Do you want to talk about it?

Marie avoids her gaze.

MARIE
Not really.

BRIGHTON
I know it sucks now, but you did
the right thing. I'm proud of you.

She beams at Marie, who looks queasy.

BRIGHTON
Anyway. I wish I could go easy on
you, today, but we have a big one.

TITLE CARD: ITEM #4 FLOODING

Brighton sets something wrapped in cloth on the table with a muffled, metallic CLINK and starts to unwrap it.

MARIE
Nonononononono...

It's a knife. A real one. Shiny, sharp, and medium-sized.

BRIGHTON
You can't write everything, Marie.

MARIE
Yes I can.

Brighton shakes her head.

BRIGHTON
Some things...you just gotta do.

Marie looks at her desperately.

MARIE
Please-Not today. I'm not ready.

BRIGHTON
You're ready.

Marie shoves her hands into her hoodie pocket and shakes her head violently. The walls start to pulse.

BRIGHTON

Marie.

MARIE

What.

BRIGHTON

Pick up the knife.

Hands shaking, Marie slowly picks up the knife as if it weighs a thousand pounds. Sweat shines on her brow.

BRIGHTON

Good. Now, I want you to point that knife at me.

Marie starts to cry a little.

MARIE

No...please. Please don't make me do this. Please don't. Please.

Brighton says nothing, but reaches up and forces Marie's hand to point the knife out.

MARIE

Stop. Stop. I can't do this. I can't I can't I can't. Please.

BRIGHTON

Yes you can. You already are.

Brighton leans forward until the blade is denting her skin. Marie's vision narrows with panic.

BRIGHTON

Breathe, Marie.

Marie's hand suddenly twitches. Brighton inhales sharply. A drop of BLOOD springs from the tip of the knife.

MARIE

Fuck!

The knife CLATTERS to the floor. Marie stands up, swaying.

BRIGHTON

No, Marie, it's okay-

MARIE

-I can't do this shit any more. I
can't do this.

She bolts out the door, wiping her hands on her hoodie.

68

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

68

Marie sniffles as she shoves the thick black notebook, the crimson pen, and the plastic knife into the trash. She crumples up her exposure list and throws it in on top.

MARIE

Fucking quack.

69

EXT. STANDINGS BAR - NIGHT

69

Marie smashes out a cigarette on the ground. She's pulled herself together, but not by much. She walks in and SLAMS the door behind her.

70

INT. STANDINGS BAR - NIGHT

70

Barry, Nick, and a few other regulars watch the Knicks on TV. Marie collapses on a stool. Will looks at her coolly.

MARIE

Yo.

WILL

Looking for free beer?

MARIE

Why, you looking to get laid?

WILL

If I was, I can think of a lot
easier ways than this.

MARIE

Classy.

WILL

You know what, I actually am.

MARIE

Is that why you left me on a roof
in the middle of the night?

WILL

You wanted to stay there!

MARIE
I wanted to talk!

WILL
Oh, great! Good timing! Sorry I
didn't wanna stand around guessing
what you're thinking until we got
arrested.

Marie stares daggers at him. He sighs as he pulls a glass out from under the bar and starts filling it from the tap.

WILL
Look, you want free drinks and
casual sex? Fine.

He smacks the glass on the counter in front of her.

WILL
But don't act like you're looking
for a gentleman, because that's
bullshit. You want someone you can
use to escape your life. And this
is what that looks like.

He nods at the beer. Marie locks eyes with him.

MARIE
You got anything stronger?

They stare at each other for a moment, then Will pulls a bottle and two shot glasses out from under the counter.

WILL
It just so happens...

He fills the shots.

WILL
For emergencies.

MARIE
My whole fucking life is an
emergency.

WILL
I'll drink to that.

They click glasses and drink. She taps the glass down five times. Will notices and for the first time, remarks.

WILL
That was weird.

MARIE

Oh buddy. You have no idea.

WILL

Let me guess. You don't wanna talk about it?

MARIE

Gimme a couple more of these and ask me again.

He smiles and refills their shots. They toss back the shots and slam the glasses on the table.

71 INT. STANDINGS BAR-LATER

71

The bar is empty. Music plays loudly. Marie lies on her back on the bar smoking. Will draws on her arm: the silhouette of a girl with a rat curled up in her head. They're both wasted.

MARIE

Hey.

WILL

What.

MARIE

Let's go paint something.

Will shakes his head.

WILL

Not a good idea to paint wasted.
Plus it's Saturday, the cops are gonna be out...

MARIE

C'mon, please? I need this.

WILL

Why.

MARIE

Because. It's fun. Because I've had a bad week. Because my brain is a goddamned scrolling encyclopedia of ways to kill people, and it wears me out. And when we do this dumb shit together-it's not that it goes away-it gets worse, actually-but maybe I just don't mind it as much.

She looks at him. He puts the lid on his pen, grinning.

WILL

I knew you had some romance
squirreled away in that little old
rat brain.

72

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

72

Will and Marie weave down the street, carrying a BACKPACK of conspicuously RATTLING spray cans. Marie suddenly stops dead.

WILL

What?

Marie points to a building ahead with a giant, pure white egg shape taking up most of one wall.

WILL

Is that-

MARIE

The Egg.

WILL

Aw, our first date.

They stalk up beside it. Will looks around, squinting, drunk.

WILL

Pretty exposed. Would be a very
balls out move. But...

MARIE

But...?

WILL

But fuck 'em if they can't take a
joke.

She laughs. He tosses her a can of green. She looks at him.

WILL

Well? What are you waiting for?

MARIE

What?

He nods to the wall.

MARIE

Oh, I don't think-

WILL

Don't think.

Marie hesitates, then starts to paint. And paint. And paint. Will watches at first, then begins to paint behind her, following as she moves across the wall.

Finally, they both step back and survey their work.

It's a green tally of five, over and over again and a stylized, thin fingered hand, reaching, as if trying to grab the lines while being buried by them. The effect is intense.

WILL

'Sactually pretty tight, huh?

A spotlight swings onto them abruptly.

COP (O.S.)

Freeze-Don't move you little shits!

In a flash, Will bolts, dodges into another alley and is gone. Marie stumbles and is immediately snagged by a cop.

MARIE

Will!

73

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

73

Brighton strides angrily out of the police station with Marie hurrying along behind her.

MARIE

-community service. But they made me pee in a cup and everything!

Brighton ignores her and walks purposefully towards the nearest subway stop.

MARIE

So you wanna get breakfast or something-

Brighton stops suddenly next to the subway staircase and holds out a piece of paper.

BRIGHTON

Here's a prescription for a month of your SSRI's. That should be enough time for you to find another doctor.

MARIE

What?

BRIGHTON

Honestly, it's my fault. And I'm sorry, but this has become completely unprofessional.

MARIE

I thought-

BRIGHTON

You thought, what, that you would just exploit the doctor-patient relationship to avoid getting in trouble with your parents?

MARIE

Look, I just got out of jail-

Brighton holds her hand up, shaking her head.

BRIGHTON

Did you even tell your parents you dropped out?

MARIE

They're in Italy-

BRIGHTON

Did you tell them or not?

Marie is silent.

BRIGHTON

Jesus fucking Christ.

MARIE

No, wait! I'm sorry! I'm sorry I ran out last time, I'm sorry I lied, I'm sorry I fucked up, I'll be better-

BRIGHTON

It's too late.

MARIE

You said you would help me.

Brighton shakes her head.

BRIGHTON

I can't. Not any more.

Brighton turns and heads down the stairs. Marie snaps.

MARIE

Hey, you know what else is pretty unprofessional? Abandoning a patient in the middle of treatment because you suddenly decide your fucking study is more important.

Brighton stops.

MARIE

Because that's what it's all about, isn't it? The study. A happy ending, good PR. Something to make everyone forget that you dropped the ball on a fucking *socio*. And now you don't need me for your little redemption narrative, so you're done, right? Yeah. Real fucking professional.

Brighton strides up the stairs and gets in her face.

BRIGHTON

You wanna take the gloves off? Fine. Yeah, I fucked up, Marie. But at least I have the guts to take responsibility for it. I don't get the luxury of having a disorder to blame all my bullshit on. You have OCD. That's tough. But it doesn't mean you can act like a child and expect to be treated like an adult.

Marie is silent, her face burning.

BRIGHTON

You had a chance to help people in a meaningful way. But you decided your own little drama was more important. You're an indulgent, self-destructive little *kid*. And I'm a psychiatrist, not a fucking babysitter.

She storms down the stairs and disappears into a crowd of commuters, leaving Marie alone on the sidewalk.

Marie's heart BEATS loud as she pushes through the morning commuter crowd. Every person she brushes against doubles over and crumples to the ground. People continue toward her in a steady wall, but behind her lies a carpet of bloody corpses.

MARIE (V.O.)

Good.

Her white plastic knife is covered in blood. She's a walking plague, carnage incarnate. She breaks into a run.

75

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

75

It's dark. The only sound is Marie's chewed fingernails TAPPING out a staccato pattern onto an empty scotch bottle.

ONETWOTHREEFOURFIVE. ONETWOTHREEFOURFIVE. ONETWOTHREEFOURFIVE

She TAPS the BOTTLE too hard. It slides off the table and SHATTERS on the floor. The Wandas BARK spastically.

She picks up a long piece of GLASS and approaches the dogs. They BARK louder...A Wanda yelps.

The dogs sit in a circle whining, a dead Wanda in the middle.

Marie tosses the GLASS in the trash.

MARIE (V.O.)

Good.

MARIE

Shut up!

She looks at her hands. BLOOD. Squeezes her eyes shut and opens them.

BLOOD.

Holy shit. The Wandas BARK. Is one missing? She counts: 1,2,3,4...they run in circles, confusing her...5,6,7,8,9 10?

She looks around: BLOOD on the floor. She looks in the trash. BLOOD on the GLASS. She counts and counts and counts-one is missing, it's dead, she must've hid it somewhere.

She looks behind curtains, in the fireplace, the oven- No Wanda, but everything is covered in BLOOD. She sways, faint. She looks at her hands. MORE BLOOD.

76

INT. GLORIA'S BEDROOM - LATER

76

The light clicks off and on 5 times, then stays on. Marie rushes in and starts to search the cluttered room.

She looks under the BED. Nothing. Opens a drawer--She freezes. Two dozen PILL BOTTLES glow orange from within.

All Xanax.

Dizzy with relief, she grabs one. Her elbow knocks a tall stack of JEWELRY BOXES. She starts re-stacking, then stops, overcome with curiosity. She unlatches a box and opens it.

MARIE
...the fuck...

The inside is lined with velvet and divided into three sections, intended for earrings, necklaces, and bracelets. But instead of jewelry, the box is filled with-

MARIE
Hair?

Black EYELASHES, brown EYEBROW HAIRS, and masses of dirty blond HAIR, balled up and stuffed in the box. Revolted, she drops the box. Unable to stop herself, she opens another box.

Hair.

Another.

Hair.

Another.

This one is empty, save for a single yellowing PHOTO. She takes it out.

It's a picture of Gloria as a teenager in the 70's. Young, beautiful, laughing, she is barely recognizable as the same person now. Instead, the resemblance to Marie is uncanny.

Marie looks up and catches a glimpse of herself in the vanity mirror, surrounded by open boxes of hair, her hands bleeding from being cut by broken glass, clutching a bottle of Xanax.

MARIE (V.O.)
Good.

77

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

77

Marie rummages desperately through a wastebasket.

She finds what she's looking for: a wadded up BALL OF PAPER. She smooths the crumpled exposure list out onto the table. WRITING, LISTENING, TOUCHING, and FLOODING are all crossed out. There is one item left. She circles it with her red pen.

TITLE CARD: ITEM #5. DOING

78

INT. SUR LA TABLE - DAY

78

Rows and rows of knives hang on display like cruel icicles. Marie stands in the midst of them, transfixed.

The smooth SHINK of metal on metal snaps her out of it. The sound seems to be inside her head, but then she sees the source: an employee sharpening a knife. She approaches him looking really weird.

EMPLOYEE

Hi there. Can I help you find something?

SHINK

MARIE

Yes.

He smiles pleasantly. SHINK.

MARIE

I need some uh...

--Blood runs down the side of his face where Marie has slashed him. He continues to smile. SHINK. Marie flinches.

EMPLOYEE

Some...?

MARIE

Some uh...

EMPLOYEE

You okay, miss?

She closes her eyes tightly. SHINK.

MARIE

Some knives.

SHINK.

79

INT. MOISHE'S BUTCHER SHOP - DAY

79

Skinned animals hang on display, waiting to be butchered. A myriad of knives and cleavers cling precariously to a magnetic strip along the wall. Marie gapes at all of it.

MOISHE (O.S.)

Vegetarian?

Marie turns away from the carnage to see Moishe the Butcher standing behind his counter. He taps out "shave and a haircut" with the tip of his knife on a marble cutting board.

MARIE

What?

MOISHE

The way you're eyeballin' the meat,
like it's about to jump down and
grab ya. You a vegetarian?

MARIE

Um, kind of. I'm trying to...get
back into meat, I guess.

MOISHE

Came to the right place. I've
converted more than my share.
Vegans even. The way I see it, its
not something you ease into. Best
to jump in with both feet and get a
sampler-veal, lamb, the works.

He begins grabbing various pieces of meat and wrapping them up with paper and twine.

MOISHE

I'll give you my special vegetarian
discount if you promise not to
overcook it.

MARIE

Thank you.

He winks at her.

MOISHE

Welcome back.

80

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

80

Marie sits at the kitchen table holding a bloody KNIFE, her hands stained red. It seems like a nightmare until she starts offering small pieces of raw meat to the Wandas. The listless pugs just ignore her.

MARIE

That's milk fed veal, you know.

She looks down at the sea of sad puppy eyes.

MARIE
C'mon guys, Gloria's probably-

At the sound of her name, the dogs WHEEZE hysterically. She glances at them and they stare back, bug-eyed, tails wagging.

MARIE
Aw, damn you all.

81 INT. NYU MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

81

The emergency room waiting area. All the sounds and sights of misery blend together: a feverish baby CRIES, a man with a broken nose SNIFFS back blood, a woman with a dog bite MOANS.

THERE IS BLOOD EVERYWHERE. Splattered on shirts, seeping through band aids, dried on hands. Each image jumps out at Marie in rapid succession.

NURSE
Marie Astor?

MARIE
Yes!

Marie springs to her feet and approaches the serious looking NURSE (40's) at a computer.

NURSE
Your aunt's been moved from the crisis unit up to Psych Ward. Floor 3. I'm on my way up there now, if you want to follow me.

82 INT. NYU PSYCH WARD - DAY

82

The nurse leads Marie down a long, beige hallway. It's a strangely forced calm compared to the chaos of the ER. They stop in front of a closed door.

NURSE
Empty your pockets, please.

Marie begins to turn her pockets inside out.

NURSE
You'd be surprised what they can make into a weapon. A good rule of thumb is, don't bring anything you wouldn't be able to board an airplane with.

Marie pats her hoodie pocket and pulls out a WHITE PLASTIC KNIFE. The nurse GASPS and snatches it from her.

MARIE

Wow. I'm sorry. I...I completely forgot that was in there.

The nurse glares, but opens the door to the room.

NURSE

She's on a sedative, so she may not wake up. You have 15 minutes.

Marie steps into the room and immediately comes back out.

MARIE

(Whispering)

I'm sorry, there's been a mix up.
I'm looking for Gloria Newberry.

The nurse peeks in the door.

NURSE

That's Ms. Newberry.

MARIE

No, it isn't.

The nurse looks at her strangely.

NURSE

This isn't her first time here.

83

INT. GLORIA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

83

Marie walks back into the room. It looks like any other hospital room, except that every edge and corner has been rounded, giving the room a surreal dullness.

NURSE (O.S.)

I'll be out here if you need anything.

She hears the door CLICK shut behind her as she sits down by the bed and looks at the stranger asleep in front of her.

Curled into a tiny ball, Gloria can't weigh more than 90 pounds. Without her wig, make up, and eyelashes, Marie sees for the first time her completely bald face, dotted with scabs and scars. She looks about a hundred years old.

Marie covers her mouth to keep from crying out loud. She SNIFFS loudly and Gloria slowly opens her eyes and smiles. She takes Marie's hand in her own.

GLORIA
Can you believe they won't let you
smoke in here?

Marie laughs tearfully. Gloria shakes her head.

GLORIA
And they think I'm the crazy one.

One of the machines hooked up to her DINGS. Gloria doesn't seem to notice, but Marie watches as a cloudy fluid of anti-psychotics drains into Gloria's IV.

GLORIA
How's Wanda?

MARIE
Good. She misses you.

Gloria nods. Her eyes droop as the drugs kick in.

GLORIA
I never should have left.

She closes her eyes.

GLORIA
I had it in me all along. That
fucking curse, it was always coming
for me.

MARIE
What curse?

Gloria reopens her eyes, now glazed, lost in memory.

GLORIA
It's the blood. Bad blood. That's
what makes us what we are...

She touches her ruined face.

GLORIA
Monsters.

Gloria's nail DIGS into her skin at her temple. Marie grabs her hand firmly and presses it onto the bed.

GLORIA

Sheila was a seamstress. And when she got in her moods, she'd click her scissors. You'd hear them in her pocket, snip, snip snip-then-She'd go off. Cut up what she was working on, cut our clothes. Tried to cut all your mom's hair once.

MARIE

What happened?

GLORIA

I got home and she had Eva pinned on the kitchen floor. So I knocked her out with a tea kettle.

Marie gives a choking laugh.

GLORIA

But Eva, she wouldn't even look at me. At first I didn't understand, then I realized-she was scared. Scared of me. So I left.

Saltwater leaks out onto her bald little face.

GLORIA

I left her there.

Gloria wipes a tear away and starts SCRATCHING at her eyebrow. Marie grabs her hand again and pins it down.

GLORIA

But the funny thing is, your mom was okay. She got out, all by herself...And I'm still there.

She closes her eyes again.

GLORIA

I'll always be there.

She drifts off into a drugged sleep, leaving Marie alone.

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT-DAY

Marie furiously types at her laptop, then stops, hits record on her computer, and reads aloud.

EXT. BAD NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Marie wears an orange reflective vest as she paints over a series of SPRAY-PAINTED PENISES scrawled across a boarded up liquor store. Next to her another, equally miserable youth lethargically paints over the words "BUY CRACK."

84 INT. MANHATTAN ANIMAL CONTROL - DAY 84

Hundreds of forlorn dogs CRY and BARK. The noise must be deafening, but all we can hear is-

MARIE (V.O.)
I am a murderous psychopath. I get off on stabbing people.

Marie wears her headphones as she walks amongst the rows of strays. She stops in front of a kennel with a tiny black PUPPY huddled in the corner.

MARIE (V.O.)
I am a killer.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Marie walks toward campus carrying a thick envelope and a burned CD labeled "PERSONAL STATEMENT."

As she rounds a corner, she pauses, then walks back. She's at the ally by Cafe Habana. She stares down it for a long moment, then keeps walking.

On the wall where Will first wrote his number is a spray-painted stencil of two hands forming a heart.

85 INT. NYU PSYCH WARD HALLWAY - NIGHT 85

Marie trundles down the hall to her aunt's room wearing her hoodie again, her hands shoved in the front pocket.

86 INT. NYU PSYCH WARD ROOM - NIGHT 86

She opens the door. Gloria is unwrapping some Nicorette. She wears a kimono and costume jewelry, but no wig or makeup.

MARIE
Hey.

GLORIA
Hey yourself. Did you bring me some more gum?

MARIE

Nope.

Marie unzips her hoodie as her aunt rambles.

GLORIA

You'd think with all the science
these days someone would come up
with a cigarette-Oh!

Marie has shrugged off her hoodie to reveal the tiny black
PUPPY. She hands him to Gloria, who looks like she might cry.

GLORIA

Who's this precious princess?

MARIE

His name's Killer.

Gloria sets him on the bed.

GLORIA

Of course it is. It's about time we
had a man around the house.

Killer immediately pees on the bed and prances to Gloria
proudly. She cackles with delight.

GLORIA

That's right, honey. You give that
lazy nurse something to do.

Killer jumps off the bed and runs laps around the room.
Gloria throws gum wrappers for the dog and laughs maniacally.

MARIE

You excited to come home?

GLORIA

I'm excited to have a smoke and a
nice big glass of scotch.

MARIE

My mom and step-dad get into town
this week.

GLORIA

Want me to see if they'll hold my
room for you?

MARIE

Hilarious.

Just then, the serious looking nurse pops her head in. Killer BARKS crazily at her feet. She gawks in disbelief.

NURSE
Absolutely not.

GLORIA
For Christ's sake, settle down,
Nurse Ratched. It's just a dog.

MARIE
It's my fault, sorry, Nurse Ratched-

NURSE
That's not my name.

Killer gives a final BARK and speeds out the door into the hall. The nurse glares at Marie as she chases the dog.

NURSE
You have 30 seconds to get control
of your animal before I call
security.

GLORIA
Oh, can it, Ratched.

87 INT. NYU PSYCH WARD HALLWAY - NIGHT

87

Marie chases the puppy as he streaks down the hall and veers sharply into a room.

MARIE
Ah, shit!

88 INT. NYU PSYCH WARD ROOM 2 - NIGHT

88

She jogs into the room to find Killer has jumped onto a bed where a girl is leaned over petting him, her long hair obscuring her face.

MARIE
I'm so sorry-

The girl looks over and sweeps her hair back from her face. A red scar runs down her jaw.

INT. MARIE'S MIND

Joanne is STABBED in her bed. The assailant flickers back and forth between being Becca and being Marie.

MARIE (V.O.)

Good.

JOANNE

Hi.

INT. NYU PSYCH WARD ROOM 2 - NIGHT

Joanne smiles at her, Angry scars stand out like neon on her pale arms and periodically appearing to bleed.

Marie sways on her feet, faint, her vision swimming.

JOANNE

Are you okay?

The walls close in. The room darkens. She staggers forward and catches herself on the edge of the bed.

JOANNE

Woah! Here, sit down.

Joanne offers her hand, and Marie sees her palms bear the worst of the scars, deep criss-crossing defensive wounds.

MARIE

No, no, I should go. I'm sorry.

JOANNE

You can sit for a minute until you feel better. I don't mind.

MARIE

No, I really...

She trails off as she catches a glimpse of a dried out bouquet on her bedside table. Beneath it is a folded, deflated "GET WELL!" BALLOON and a dusty stack of CARDS.

MARIE

Maybe I will sit for a second, if you're sure you don't mind.

Joanne's face brightens.

JOANNE

No! Not at all.

Marie sits on the bed and finds herself staring at the scars, which continue to periodically open and bleed. Joanne smiles.

JOANNE

The scars, right? It's okay. I'm
still getting used to them, too.

MARIE

Do they...hurt?

JOANNE

Not as much as they used to.

They sit in silence. Killer licks Joanne's scarred hands
happily.

JOANNE

You want to see something crazy?

MARIE

Sure.

She rolls up her sleeve to display more scars on her
shoulder. Marie looks away from them.

JOANNE

No, look.

Marie forces her self to look back to her. Joanne is pointing
to a scar on her biceps.

JOANNE

It looks like a heart, right?

Marie looks closer. She's right. It's a perfect heart.

MARIE

Huh.

JOANNE

I couldn't even look at them at
first, I just wore long sleeves and
basically cried all day. But after
a while I realized that they aren't
going anywhere, so I should
probably get used to them. That's
when I found it. And this one, too.

She flips her arm over and points to curved scar.

JOANNE

It's a J. For my name. Joanne.

Marie touches a jagged, zig-zag scar on Joanne's ruined palm.

MARIE

M. For Marie.

JOANNE

Nice to meet you.

MARIE

Likewise.

Beat.

JOANNE

So, what are you in for?

Marie pauses.

MARIE

I have obsessive compulsive disorder.

Joanne nods knowingly.

JOANNE

My sister has that.

MARIE

(astonished)

Really?

JOANNE

Yeah. Whenever she drove would have to stop like every half mile to make sure she hadn't hit someone. It literally took her hours to get anywhere. Eventually she just started walking.

MARIE

You're kidding.

JOANNE

Nope. I remember one time she was driving me and my brother to see the new Lethal Weapon movie, and out of nowhere just SLAMMED on the breaks and made us get out and look for a body along the road for like two hours. I remember 'cause we had to see "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" instead. It was the worst.

MARIE

About four months ago my best friend wasn't answering her phone.

(MORE)

MARIE (CONT'D)

And I was so convinced I had somehow murdered her that I got up in the middle of the night, walked across campus, and climbed up the fire escape so I could see in her window.

JOANNE

Was she dead?

MARIE

No. Her phone was on silent because she was hooking up with this dude. I think she saw me, too. But we just never talked about it.

Joanne laughs and her face looks younger, more alive.

JOANNE

Sorry, I shouldn't laugh.

MARIE

Yeah, you should. You really should.

89

EXT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

89

A hand lays a rose on the little mound of dirt.

Gloria steps back, hugs Killer a little too hard and takes a huge drag from her cigarette. Beside her, Marie holds Wanda's leashes. They all stand stoically for a moment of silence.

MARIE

She had a very full life.

GLORIA

I wanted to have her cremated.

MARIE

Well. Too late now.

Beat.

GLORIA

She was a good dog.

MARIE

One of the best.

Gloria stubs out her cigarette with a sigh.

GLORIA
Alright. I need a fucking drink.

90 INT. GLORIA'S APPARTMENT - NIGHT

90

Gloria still holds Killer in her arms as she rummages through the freezer. Tupperware containers full of cubed food keep tumbling out onto the floor and startling the Wandas.

Marie sits at the table fumbling with a Swiss Army, trying to figure out how to put the blade back down.

MARIE
I don't know what to do about my mom.

GLORIA
Where's my scotch? What the hell is all this shit?

MARIE
I've been practicing cutting stuff.

GLORIA
Congratulations. I think you've got it down.

Gloria SLAMS the freezer shut. Marie keeps fidgeting.

GLORIA
We're gonna need more scotch.

MARIE
We're supposed do a graduation dinner on Friday at some nice restaurant. It'll be a shitshow.

GLORIA
Ruining a dinner? Ugh, God. Up to you. You'll owe her one.

MARIE
What do you mean?

GLORIA
Didn't Eva ever tell you what mom did when we ruined dinner?

MARIE
No?

GLORIA

Whenever we fought at the table,
Sheila would make one of us cook
for everyone the next night. She'd
say, "You took this shitty dinner
from me, now you're gonna give me
one back."

Gloria nods as she sets Killer down and lights a cigarette.

GLORIA

We had some terrible goddamn meals.
You ever seen a 14 year-old try to
cook a pork roast? It's how I kept
my figure through high school.
Anyway, maybe you can feed them
some of the crap in my freezer-Oh
for Christ's sake, give me that.

She snaps her fingers. Marie sheepishly sets the knife in her palm. Gloria snaps it shut with one hand.

GLORIA

In the mean time-

She fishes a hundred out of her kimono and gives it to Marie

GLORIA

Be a doll and go to the liquor
store for me. Scotch. Top shelf.

91

INT. FANCY RESTURANT - NIGHT

91

Champagne pours into a flute, bubbles spiralling upwards.

EVA (O.S.)

Do you love it?

Marie looks down at a hideous, bird-like Carnevale mask.
Marie's mom EVA (40's, glamorous) beams expectantly while
Marie's step-dad ANDREW tops off her champagne glass.

MARIE

I love it.

EVA

Put it on!

MARIE

Oh...maybe later.

Andrew laughs at Marie's discomfort as he fills her glass.

ANDREW

She might need a few more of these
first, honey.

He winks at Marie and he moves on to her brother DICKEY (16),
splashing a tiny drop of champagne in his glass. Dickey rolls
his eyes. Marie counts her fingers beneath the table.

EVA

Put it on! It'll be fun!

ANDREW

I want to propose a toast. To Marie-

He lifts his glass. Marie clenches her hands under the table.

MARIE

Wait!

They all look at her.

MARIE

I have to say something.

DICKEY

Are you a lesbian?

EVA

Dickey!

DICKEY

Let her answer, mom!

MARIE

I, uh...Ah, fuck it. I dropped out.

EVA

WHAT?

ANDREW

Fuck.

Her step-dad sits down heavily.

DICKEY

Oh, shit!

ANDREW

You watch your mouth!

DICKEY

You just said-

EVA
YOU DROPPED OUT?

Marie can only nod.

EVA
WHEN?

MARIE
...about three months ago...

EVA
THREE MONTHS AGO?

Marie looks down at her hands.

EVA
Wow. Okay. Wait a second. Just-

She blinks rapidly.

EVA
Okay, so we fly out here to see you graduate, and instead: SURPRISE!- You dropped out? Three fucking months ago? And you tell us *at your graduation dinner*? Wow. Just, wow.

MARIE
I didn't want to...ruin your trip-

EVA
Oh, of course. This is our fault right? Because we can't take a vacation any more without the whole fucking world falling apart.

ANDREW
Honey-

Eva holds her hand up and drains her champagne. She sets her glass down with a THWACK. A silver crack spiders up the side.

EVA
Well. You'll just have to reapply and take summer classes. God knows we haven't sunk enough money into that school yet.

DICKEY
Wait, how come you dropped out?

EVA
Quiet, Dickey.

MARIE

No, I want to talk about it.

EVA

I don't care what you want. It's not the time or the place-

Marie ignores her mom and turns to her brother.

MARIE

I have OCD, Dickey.

ANDREW

What?

Eva's face goes pale, but no one's paying attention

DICKEY

You're like the messiest person I know. I saw you eat an Oreo off the floor. *After* the dog licked it.

MARIE

That's what I said. But it's a weird subset called "Pure O."

Dickey scoffs.

DICKEY

Sounds like porno.

ANDREW

Dickey, I swear to god-

MARIE

There's something else.

EVA

Oh, good, there's more!

MARIE

I've been staying with Aunt Gloria.

Dead silence. Dickey looks around confused.

DICKEY

The crazy one?

Eva stands up.

EVA

I have to go.

MARIE

Mom-

Eva doesn't look back as she beelines out the door. The table sits stunned for a moment.

DICKEY

Way to go, psycho.

ANDREW

Shut up.

Andrew turns and looks at her severely, pointing a finger.

ANDREW

Fix it.

The guys watch as Marie makes her way out the door. Andrew looks at Dickey for a beat, then dumps Marie's champagne into his glass with a sigh.

92

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

92

Eva sits on a stoop, looking bizarre in her glittering formal wear. Marie sits beside her and offers her a cigarette.

EVA

You're smoking now, too?

MARIE

Only on special occasions.

Eva takes a cigarette and lights it. They stare at the street for a minute, neither willing to continue the conversation.

MARIE

I'm sorry.

EVA

Why didn't you tell me?

MARIE

Honestly...I was afraid you were going to react exactly like you did. I thought you'd be mad. And I thought you'd act like by not talking about it, we could make it disappear. But I already tried that and I'm not doing it any more.

EVA

No. Clearly not. Instead you're just dropping out of college to live with your mentally unstable relative.

Eva shakes her head, exhaling smoke.

EVA

How is Gloria, anyway?

MARIE

Pretty good, actually. She wanted me to tell you something.

EVA

I'm sure-

MARIE

-She said she's sorry. She's sorry she left you.

Eva glances at Marie with glittering eyes, realizing that everything she had tried to keep from her daughter had been revealed. After a long moment, she slowly begins to speak.

EVA

I went looking for her. Did she tell you that?

Marie shakes her head.

EVA

Well, I did. After I graduated. I found her too, stayed with her for a week. And she stole. And lied. And fucked anything that stood too close. She was toxic-screaming and scratching like an animal, then begging for forgiveness like a child. Just like mom.

Marie nods.

EVA

By the time I got pregnant with you, she had stopped leaving her house. And, honestly, I felt-felt-

MARIE

...relieved.

Eva looks away. Under the streetlight, she suddenly appears old, and tired, the lines on her face more pronounced.

EVA

I never bought that loony bullshit about the curse. But when I was in labor, I remember praying the whole time. Praying it would skip you. But I knew, as soon as you were born. You looked just like her.

Mascara runs from the corner of her eye. Marie hugs her mom.

EVA

It's my fault.

MARIE

No it's not.

EVA

And when you needed me I went to stupid fucking Italy.

MARIE

Woah. Hey. Italy is not stupid. What about that super great mask you got there?

EVA

You hate it, don't you?

MARIE

You know what, I do. I really do.

Eva laughs and wipes her eyes.

MARIE

It's okay, mom. I'm okay. And you know what's even crazier? Aunt Gloria's kind of okay, too. I mean, you should see her. She's got hair coming in and everything.

Eva nods ever so slightly.

MARIE

No, I mean seriously, you should see her. She's next door at The Flatiron.

EVA

What?

MARIE

Yeah, probably five scotches in by now. Might want to catch her before she switches to gin.

Eva looks panicky but makes no move. Marie hears the familiar TAPPING, but this time it's Eva's shoe on the pavement. Marie presses her foot on top of Eva's.

MARIE

I know you're scared. It's scary.
But the scariest part is avoiding
it. And as soon as you do this,
it's gonna get easier. Trust me.

Eva takes a deep breath, stands up and walks towards the bar.

MARIE

Mom.

Eva turns and looks at her.

MARIE

I'm sorry I ruined dinner. I owe
you one. Actually I owe a lot of
people one.

Eva shakes her head, smiling.

EVA

Well, I hope you're a better cook
than Gloria was.

She pushes open the door and steps inside. Marie sits in silence for a moment. The door reopens and a bouncer walks out. As the door eases shut, we hear Gloria's earsplitting CACKLE ring out. Marie smiles.

94

INT. STANDINGS BAR - DAY

94

Will dries glasses behind the bar, ignoring Barry's ranting. He hears the door SHUT and looks up to see Marie. She gives him a little wave. He nods at her and looks at Barry.

WILL

Hey Barry.

BARRY

What?

WILL

Get the fuck out of here.

BARRY

What?

WILL

You heard me.

BARRY
Can I finish my drink at least?

WILL
No.

Barry gives a huff and shuffles past Marie muttering.

BARRY
Bro's before ho's, man...

Marie walks up to the bar and sits down across from Will.

MARIE
Poor Barry.

WILL
I really should give him a job.
He's here more than I am.

MARIE
Well. At least he's reliable.

Beat. Will looks embarrassed.

WILL
You get community service?

MARIE
Yeah.

WILL
They make you paint that wall with
the dicks?

Marie smiles quizzically.

WILL
They always send you there the
first few times. Part of their
"Scared Straight" bullshit. I'm
pretty sure they paint those dicks
themselves, too, 'cause they're
always there.

MARIE
How many times have you been
arrested?

WILL
A lot. A lot of times.

She nods.

WILL
I'm sorry.

MARIE
I know.

WILL
No, I mean, I'm really sorry. I have problems. I'm working on it. But, I dunno, it's...complicated.

MARIE
I can do complicated.

She smiles. They stare at each other for a moment.

MARIE
Oh, I wanted to give you this.

She slides an envelope across the bar.

MARIE
You should come to this weird thing I'm doing. There's going to be food. And drinks. And...dogs. And my parents.

WILL
Yikes.

MARIE
I know. Just think about it.

She starts to leave.

WILL
Marie-

She turns around.

WILL
I'm not mad you threw out my exactos.

She smiles.

WILL
And I don't care that you don't like to talk about stuff. The rat brain, the scary mixtape, that's cool too. The thing that made me crazy was that I couldn't get you to trust me.

(MORE)

WILL (CONT'D)

So I did what any responsible, well-adjusted guy would do: I got you drunk, coerced you into vandalizing, and let you get arrested.

He shakes his head.

WILL

Anyway. I started thinking...what the fuck am I doing? This whole art with balls thing...man, painting under bridges at night because you're afraid people won't like your shit if they see it properly lit is, uh, not that ballsy. So. I think it's time for me to man up, put on my lensless glasses and ask nicely to paint on the inside of the gallery.

MARIE

Does that mean you're done with graffiti?

WILL

Pretty done, yeah.

Marie gives him a strange smile.

MARIE

How done is pretty done?

95

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

95

Madison sits a stool going through mail. Very nearby Brit and DEREK (23, ponytail) aggressively make out on a couch.

Madison tears open an ENVELOPE with a green thumbprint on the outside. She pulls out a CARD and a PHOTOGRAPH falls out. She picks it up, looks at it momentarily and starts laughing.

INT. NYU PSYCH WARD - DAY

Joanne sits in bed next to a huge bouquet of new BALLOONS, everything from HAPPY VALENTINES DAY to IT'S A BOY. She tears open an unmarked ENVELOPE

96

INT. NYU CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

96

Brighton shakes hands with a group of enthusiastic NYU Mental Health employees. Rivers Mackey holds her in an awkward hug. Schneeding begrudgingly shakes her hand. Jake Luden babbles questions to her. Each holds identical copies of a file:

RIPPING OFF THE BANDAID: PROPOSED CHANGES BASED ON STUDY OF STUDENT "X"

Paper clipped to the front of each file is a burned CD labeled: A PATIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Her colleagues leave, but Brighton lingers, looking somber. As she stuffs the last file into her bag, she pauses at a CARD with a cartoon of a 1950's librarian sporting a name tag reading NANCY. A speech bubble reads:

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO JOIN MARIE, GLORIA, AND THE WANDAS FOR A KILLER FEAST!

Inside the card is the original CD with the words PURE O: A PERSONAL STATEMENT scribbled in Marie's handwriting.

97

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

97

SHOWTUNES play loudly.

Madison and Marie play with Killer until he is run off by a barking pack of disgruntled Wandas.

MADISON

What's your summer thesis called again?

MARIE

How To Commit Murder, And Other Impure Thoughts.

MADISON

God, you're weird. Oh, that reminds me, did you hear Mr. Brown's car was vandalized?

MARIE

Oh no.

MADISON

Yeah. Someone spray painted the word "TURD" in giant green letters across his entire car.

MARIE

Wow. That's pretty fucked up.

Madison smiles.

MADISON

Super fucked up.

Marie grins.

MARIE

I better go check on the meat.

Marie heads back into the kitchen, snatching a WINE GLASS out of Dickey's hand as he shows off a tiny scar to Joanne.

In the dining room. Gloria, wigless with short, soft hair coming in, LAUGHS over a stack of OLD PHOTOS with Eva.

Andrew interrogates Will in a corner over a glass of SCOTCH.

Someone KNOCKS, but it's too noisy for anyone to hear. The unlocked door opens and Brighton steps in. She walks through the room introducing herself and continues into the kitchen.

Marie is cutting bread when she sees Brighton. Brighton smiles and hands her a copy of the study with THE CD paper clipped to the front. We can't hear what's said, we just see them hug tightly, Marie's KNIFE still clutched in her hand.

98

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - LATER

98

Everyone sits at the table talking. In the center is a MASSIVE ROAST, surrounded by a rainbow of CUT VEGETABLES.

Marie stands up from her seat at the head and TAPS her glass with a long, sharp knife.

MARIE

Before we eat, there's something I want to say.

Dickey, rosy-cheeked and obviously buzzed, pipes up.

DICKEY

She's a lesbian!

MARIE

Besides that, Dick.

Andrew glares at Dickey and scoots his wine glass away.

MARIE

Everyone sitting at this table
tonight is here because at one
point...I really thought I might
stab them to death.

People laugh, some more uncomfortably than others.

MARIE

I was afraid of hurting the people
that mean the most to me. So I
left. And I stayed away you. And I
acted badly. And I told myself it
was to protect you, but it wasn't.
It was to make myself feel better.
And it was something that I had
been doing for a long time. Long
before...all of this. And I would
probably still be doing it if it
weren't for you. So thank you guys.

She raises her glass to Madison.

MARIE

For calling me on my shit.

She turns to Gloria.

MARIE

For standing by me.

She toasts her family.

MARIE

For having faith in me when I gave
you no good reason to.

She looks at Brighton and Joanne.

MARIE

And for reminding me not of who I
am, but of who I should be.

She smiles at Will.

MARIE

You are the ones that make this
fight worth fighting.

She lifts her glass towards the whole of the table.

MARIE

And I would not be here without
you.

They CLINK glasses and drink. Marie sits down and surveys the table.

--Everyone is DEAD in their chairs, slumped forward in pools of blood, their knives protruding from their backs.

Nancy stands at the foot of the table in her 1950's Sunday best, glass raised.

NANCY
Cheers.

--Marie blinks. Around the table everyone talks and laughs as they eat. Marie smiles and plunges her knife into the meat.

MARIE (V.O.)
I was 20 years old when I lost my mind. But I don't like to call it that. I like to think of it the way the shrinks do. "Blossoming," they call it. Like a rose or a maiden, like mold on a fruit-like anything that changes.

CUT TO:

99 BLACK.

99

MARIE (V.O.)
Like anything that grows.

There's a moment of dead air, then a loud CLICK.

THE END