

The Women of Route 40

by

Erin Kathleen

Phantom Four Films

SUPER:

*It's all right for a woman to be, above all, human.*  
-- Anaïs Nin

FADE IN

EXT. ROUTE 40 - NIGHT

A drab suburban highway dotted by pawn shops, tattoo parlors, tarot readers, auto shops, a Masonic lodge, McDonald's.

A place that used to be somewhere.

SUPER:

**NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE**  
**NOVEMBER, 1987**

DIANE ELLIOT (40s) wearing only a light Members Only jacket, walks along, cradling a foil-wrapped PLATE. Face set.

She passes a SIGN:

ROUTE 40

DELAWARE: HOME OF TAX-FREE SHOPPING

She turns, sticks her THUMB out. Cars whizz by.

It's sleetting now, the heavens spitting on her. She breathes on her ungloved fingers.

She walks further. Turns, tries again. Finally:

A DARK VAN slows, pulls onto the shoulder, near the woods.

She runs over, hops in.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

Plate on her lap, she rubs her hands together. Looks over.

DIANE  
Thank you. It's fucking freezing.

A MAN in the shadows, his face unknowable.

MAN  
How much?

Deadened voice. An animal pretending to be human.

DIANE

Oh... I don't... I don't do that no more.  
Just need a ride home. You know where  
Brookmont Farms is?

MAN

Yeah.

(as he pulls out on the  
highway --)

Don't usually pick up normies.

He keeps assessing her. Like he's deciding something.

Diane grows uneasy. Tries to make out his features.

DIANE

You live near here?

MAN

Yeah.

Beat.

DIANE

Been here my whole life. Sometimes I  
think I shoulda gotten out after high  
school, you know? Like maybe I could've  
done something more --

MAN

Be better if you didn't talk.

DIANE

Oh... ok.

(beat, something outside)  
That was the turn.

MAN

Ain't going that way.

Diane's worried now, clutching the plate.

DIANE

Look, if you wanted a quick one... I know  
that's the price sometimes.

Long beat.

MAN

Yeah. All right.

He slows down, pulls over to the shoulder. Black woods sway  
in the wind.

Diane, unsteady, puts the plate down on the floor. Head down, she breathes. Readyng herself. She didn't want this.

Comes up, just as...

The man swings a HAMMER at her...

Diane screams, dodges it, as the hammer comes down on the inside van door...

She covers her head, as lifts his hand again, fumbles for the door handle...

OUTSIDE

She falls, stands, sprints into the woods.

Footsteps behind her. HIM.

DIANE  
(muttering)  
No, no, no....

The woods are too dark. Wet. Branches slash her face. She tries to feel out in front of her. Can't see. Can't get traction on the icy mud.

The footsteps gain on her.

... she slips, falls to the ground and...

... he's on top of her now...

She screams as he brings the HAMMER down on her -- one, two, three times.

Until she's silent.

EXT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT - NIGHT

**SUPER: One hour earlier**

Further up Route 40. The classier end.

Looks like a World War II bomb shelter, by design. Holes in the walls and piles of sand bags all around. To one side, a replica CANNON. To the other, a replica DC-3 PLANE.

A sign out front:

**AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT**

**Fine steaks and spirits in a World War II atmosphere**

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Hectic night. WAIT STAFF flit about. SOUS-CHEFS chop and mince, just barely missing their own fingers.

CLOSE-UP on a WAITER (20s), TRAY hoisted above his head. Sweat coursing down his face. Desperate.

WAITER

Pam?

PAM SPINELLI (40s) turns, stance like a headmaster in an all-boys school. Red hair, red nails. Face like she means it. She always means it.

She dabs the waiter's sweat. Adjusts his tie. Smiles at him.

PAM

Good as new.

Grateful, he backs through the swinging doors of the kitchen.

BUSBOY (O.S.)

Pam?

She turns again. A BUSBOY (20s) holds out a clipboard.

BUSBOY (cont'd)

For the flower delivery.

As she signs --

PAULIE (O.S.)

Maestro.

PAULIE DUBOIS (50s), Head Chef, beefy and hairy, grins out from behind a steaming grill. Mimes smoking a cigarette.

PAM

Five minutes.

She makes her way through the kitchen.

EXT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, BACK LOADING DOCK - CONTINUOUS

Diane dances back and forth at the back door. Breath visible.

PAM (O.S.)

This isn't a charity.

Diane turns. Pam stands there, face serious. Foiled-wrapped plate in hand.

Diane flutters her eyelashes, hands cupped upward.

DIANE  
(terrible British accent)  
Please sir, may I have some more?

Pam laughs, demeanor breaking. *Her goofy friend.*

DIANE/PAM  
(singing terribly)  
*Food, glorious food!*

PAM  
(re: handing over foiled-  
wrapped plate)  
Your favorite tonight, Oliver Twist.

DIANE  
(taking it)  
The meatloaf with the hot sauce? Pam, I  
love you.

PAM  
It's nothing.  
(off Diane's serious face)  
What?

DIANE  
Been a shit year. If it weren't for you,  
I'd be... dunno. Probably still hooking.

PAM  
*Shh.*

Alarmed, Pam looks behind her: in the distance, a busy  
kitchen. No one paying attention.

DIANE  
What do I care if they know?

PAM  
You should care. Keep that locked in. Or  
it might come back to bite you.

DIANE  
C'mon --

PAM  
(beat, noticing)  
Where's your car?

LATER, INSIDE

Pam shuts the door, leans against it. Haunted, faraway look.

She shakes it off. Back to work.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, MAIN DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS  
Candlelight, understated War World II photos on the wall,  
jazz music. Where people go to have a special evening.

Pam circles the room, assessing. People dressed in their  
finest. Cultured, rich people.

Everything perfect except: a CLOTH NAPKIN on the floor. Pam  
discreetly picks it up and stuffs it under arm.

Suddenly, LOUD VOICES at the front of the restaurant.

MARIA (O.S.)  
... I'm sorry, sir, but our dress code  
requires a dinner jacket.

Pam, concerned, moves toward the entryway.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, HOST STAND - CONTINUOUS

The hostess, MARIA (30s), meek and nervous, stands before a  
PAUNCHY COUPLE who look straight out of Atlantic City: faces  
too tan, hair too high, clothes too tight.

MARIA  
You're welcome to borrow one we have --

COUNCILMAN VAN DYKE  
A used jacket? You have any idea who I  
am, honey? I'm Bruce Van Dyke.

MARIA  
(realization, panic)  
Councilman. I am so sorry --

PAM (O.S.)  
Jackets are required.

They turn to see: Pam, unswayed.

PAM (cont'd)  
Pam Spinelli. Manager.

Her hand, out. He doesn't take it.

COUNCILMAN VAN DYKE  
I've eaten in places you wouldn't  
believe. With people who wipe their asses  
with twenty dollar bills --

PAM

-- sir, please keep your voice down --

VAN DYKE

-- I never once wore a jacket. Know why?  
Cause a  **fucking jacket** doesn't give you  
class.

PAM

You're right. A jacket won't help you.

Shock wave through everyone. As he fumbles with his coat --

COUNCILMAN VAN DYKE

I can see right through the fancy clothes  
and fake hair, lady. You're trash, plain  
and simple. Just a trashy Delaware **cunt**.

Maria's eyes bulge. Pam gives nothing. Van Dyke and his lady  
leave in a bluster.

MARIA

Pam, that was --

PAM

Never get down on your knees for people  
like that. Ok?

Maria swallows, nods. Ok.

DOWN THE HALLWAY

Pam catches her reflection in a VINTAGE MIRROR. Stops. Pushes  
away a stray hair, lifts her chin. Trying for dignity.

The strand of hair falls again.

She breathes out. It hit harder than it was supposed to.

INT. MISTER DONUT SHOP - SAME NIGHT

A mom-and-pop franchise donut shop. Retro-style bar stools at  
the counter.

NIKKI SPINELLI (16), a frizzy ponytail growing out of the  
back of her Mister Donut visor, picks through the sad, end-of-  
day donuts. Full name on a bright name tag: NICOLE.

She inspects each donut through her GLASSES: mangled ones in  
a WHITE BAG, decent ones in a BLACK BAG. A careful, studious  
teenager.

A KNOCK on the glass window. Nikki looks up.

A SUBURBAN DAD (30s) implores her. *Please?* He's holding the hand of a LITTLE GIRL (9).

NIKKI  
(loud)  
We're closed.

He makes a sad face. *Pretty please?*

A beat, and Nikki softens. She goes to unlock the door.

EXT. MISTER DONUT SHOP - LATER

Nikki sits in front of the dark, locked store. Waiting.

EXT. ROUTE 40 - LATER

Nikki huffs along the busy highway, a BLACK TRASH BAG at her back. The cars whizz by, some of them too close for comfort.

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE - LATER

Small townhome filled with warmth: wall art, photos of Pam and Nikki throughout the years.

Nikki plunks the bag down. It opens, revealing DONUTS.

She opens the fridge. On a plate of chicken and broccoli, a note: "I'LL KNOW IF YOU EAT THE DONUTS FIRST. xo, Mom"

Nikki smiles, closes the fridge. Notices a LIGHT blinking on the ANSWERING MACHINE. Hits it.

BRYCE (O.S.)  
(on answering machine)  
Oh my god, Nikki. Did you have to walk home like some sort of trash bag Santa?  
My brother got detention again because he's gonna wind up in prison --  
(sound of a SMACK)  
Ow! Fuck! I hate you. Not you, Nikki. I'm so sorry I didn't pick you up. But! I got the details on the party. Call me?

Nikki takes a beat, deciding. Lifts the cradle of the PHONE.

EXT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, BACK LOADING DOCK - LATER

Pam steps out into the cool night air. Paulie sits on a crate, holds out a freshly-lit cigarette.

PAULIE

That was more than five minutes.

She takes the cigarette, drags on it. Hands it back to him.

PAM

Don't ask.

PAULIE

Wasn't gonna.

Smiling. An old, easy friendship. But then Pam shifts, grows nervous. Needs something.

PAM

You talk to the partners yet?

He hesitates, lifts the cigarette with two beefy fingers.

PAULIE

Not yet.

PAM

Paulie...

PAULIE

The new place isn't open for another month or so. What's your rush?

PAM

You said you would.

PAULIE

You wanna get away from me that bad?

PAM

I love you, Paulie, but I need to get off the night shift.

PAULIE

Everybody wants the general manager job at a nice lunch place. Good money, good hours. You know these kids with fancy hospitality degrees are running restaurants straight outta school now?

PAM

You saying they're better than me?

PAULIE

No. I'm saying shit's real competitive. Me recommending you for the job is... it's my neck too, Pam.

Pam sits down on a crate across from him. Squares to him.

PAM

Ten years, Paulie. I've given everything to this job. Ten years of missed homework and goodnight kisses and...

(beat)

Nikki's starting to look at colleges. In two years, she'll be off. Not mine anymore. I look at these parents who go to normal jobs with normal hours who stop by soccer practice after school. And I think... I'm tired of living in the dark. Haven't I worked hard enough to have what they have?

Paulie crushes the cigarette. Looks at her.

PAM (cont'd)

Haven't I?

Her face, vulnerable. Really wanting to know. Before he can answer, LAUGHTER in the distance. They look over to see --

The TRUCK STOP along Route 40. A smiling WOMAN (20s) hoists herself into a huge trailer truck. A sex worker.

Solemn beat.

PAULIE

Imagine needing to do that. Such a shame.

Pam straightens. Sniffs, almost haughty.

PAM

The shame is that they don't have any.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR, GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

**SUPER: One week later**

Candy wrappers, empty soda cans, and balled-up paper strewn across the front and back seats.

MILES STANTON (40s) sleeps, feet up on the dash, out to the world. Drool trailing down his unshaven face.

The SCANNER crackles, alive.

POLICE DISPATCHER

(over scanner)

Detective Stanton, please copy.

He stirs. Blinks awake. Reaches for the receiver, and --

**Turns down the volume.**

Closes his eyes, gets comfy again.

POLICE DISPATCHER (cont'd)  
(lower volume)  
... we have a 10-67. Victim found near  
Route 40. Please copy.

Miles pops up, scrambles for the receiver. It drops.

MILES  
Shit.  
(into receiver)  
Detective Stanton, copy.

EXT. WOODS ALONG ROUTE 40 - LATER

The outskirts of the woods, where the dry grasses of winter have sprung up.

A HIGHWAY PATROLMAN (30s) stands looking down, handkerchief covering his nose and mouth.

FOOTSTEPS crunch behind him. Someone with a LIMP: **MILES**.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN  
Two teenagers called it in. Trying to  
find a make-out spot. Imagine being horny  
as shit and then BAM! Seeing this. I  
mean, where are her... her...? Fuck.

Disgusted, he puts the handkerchief back up to his mouth.

Miles crouches down, pulls out a TAPE RECORDER.

MILES  
(into recorder)  
Wrists and ankles bound. Mouth duct  
taped. Blunt force trauma to the head.  
Ligature marks around the neck.  
(beat)  
Areolas removed.

Miles squints, recorder off. Pulls out a pair of TWEEZERS, reaches for something at her foot. Holds up a BLUE FIBER, puzzled. Seals it in a BAGGIE.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN  
How many dead hookers is this now? Three?  
(snort)  
Somebody doesn't like paying.

Distaste on Miles' face as he stands. Doesn't like this guy.

MILES  
Don't think this one was hooking.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN  
How the hell you know that?

MILES  
Her underwear.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN  
(stare, realization)  
Granny panties. Damn. That's good, Miles.

Another PATROL CAR pulls up as Miles moves around the body.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN (cont'd)  
So I gotta know. Were you in the FBI? I  
heard you were, but then Branson said you  
didn't get in cause of your, ah...  
(re: the limp)  
Your thing there. Your foot.

Smile on Miles' face. The smile of the tolerant.

MILES  
My foot, yeah. When I interviewed with  
the FBI, they asked me if I could get my  
foot back. I said, "Gee, I'm not sure. I  
lost it."

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN  
Shit. Where'd you lose it?

MILES  
Your mom's house.

The patrolman makes a face. They turn as CHIEF SUSAN LANLEY (60s), marches up. The sharpness of a woman in a man's world.

MILES/HIGHWAY PATROLMAN  
Chief.

CHIEF LANLEY  
(to patrolman)  
Fuck outta here.  
(to Miles)  
Well?

The patrolman sulks away.

MILES  
(re: the body)  
This guy definitely has a signature.

CHIEF LANLEY  
You sure it's one guy?

MILES  
You want it to be *more* than one guy?

CHIEF LANLEY  
Fuck.

MILES  
Don't think this one was hooking, though.

CHIEF LANGLEY  
So he's breaking pattern?

MILES  
Dunno. Maybe he thought she was. Or maybe his pattern is just... women.

CHIEF LANGLEY  
**Fuck.** We'll need a task force, a hotline, the whole thing. The cost on this... I mean Jesus Christ, Miles, we have a...

MILES  
Problem.

They stare at each other.

PAM (O.S.)  
Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.

INT. OUR LADY OF FATIMA CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Soaring skylight, Jesus on a cross. Incense in the air. CHURCHGOERS in fine clothes file out.

INT. CHURCH CONFESSORIAL - CONTINUOUS

Pam sits in the semi-dark, staring ahead. Hands fidgety.

PAM  
It's been a week since my last confession. Let's see. I cursed. Smoked. Maybe ten times? But only half. So, five. Five whole cigarettes.

PRIEST (O.S.)  
It was six last time. Growing purer by  
the week.

A chuckle, said in jest. But Pam turns sharply, wounded.

PRIEST (O.S.) (cont'd)  
Anything else?

PAM  
No.

She's somewhere faraway now, her head buzzing.

EXT. SPINELLI CAR, CHURCH PARKING LOT - LATER

Nikki leans up against the car, uses a compact mirror to apply PINK LIP GLOSS.

Pam marches across the parking lot, digging for car keys. Stops when she sees Nikki.

PAM  
No.

NIKKI  
You said not *in* church.

PAM  
Don't be a smart ass. Wipe it off.

With an eye roll, Nikki wipes her lips with her hand. As Pam fumbles with the lock --

PAM (cont'd)  
You have the rest of your life to impress  
boys if that's what you want.

NIKKI  
It's not for boys --

PAM  
I got news for you. Boys think everything  
is for them.

Finally gets the door open. They get in.

INT. SPINELLI CAR - CONTINUOUS

Sullen mood as they drive down Route 40. An argument brewing.

NIKKI

... just a few college kids. But mostly  
kids from my class.

PAM

Where is it?

NIKKI

A house on Chapel Street.

PAM

Whose house?

NIKKI

Some kid's. I dunno. Just a house.

PAM

That's where those frat houses are. It's  
a frat party.

NIKKI

No, I don't think --

PAM

(decided)

No, you can't go.

NIKKI

But why? Bryce will be with me.

PAM

Because --

Pam trails, distracted by something outside. They pass half a dozen COP CARS, lights flickering.

Near the woods, a COVERED BODY. MILES, standing over it.

Nikki's staring, curious. Pam speeds up, determined.

PAM (cont'd)

Because the world's not safe for girls.

Not today, and not tomorrow.

NIKKI

(sullen, sarcastic)

What about the day after that?

They glance at each other, equally exasperated.

EXT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, BACK LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

Snow begins to fall, blanketing the world in purity.

Pam stands at the back door, holding a FOIL-WRAPPED PLATE in her hand, waiting. Steps outside. Growing concerned.

A WAITRESS (20s) peers around the corner.

WAITRESS  
Pam. Someone here for you.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, HOST STAND - MOMENTS LATER

Maria makes nervous eyes at Pam as a man emerges from the shadows: MILES. He flashes his badge.

MILES  
Detective Miles Stanton, state police.

Maria tries to lean in without being too obvious.

PAM  
Pam Spinelli.  
(as they shake)  
The linens need folding, Maria.

Maria sulks away. Pam steps sideways, discreet, blocking the dining room from seeing Miles.

Miles fishes in his coat pocket, distracted. Pulling out papers by the handful -- receipts, notes.

PAM (cont'd)  
How can I --

MILES  
(searching pocket)  
Just a minute. I'm checking businesses  
near the truck stop --  
(found it)  
Ok. You ever see this woman in here?

He holds up a BOOKING PHOTO of Diane Elliot. Pam, shocked, hides it quick.

PAM  
No. What did she do?

MILES  
Your staff see her? Maybe with someone?

PAM  
No.

MILES  
You wanna... maybe ask?

PAM  
Is that a booking photo?

MILES  
Yes.

PAM  
Only certain types are allowed through  
these doors.

He stuffs the photo back in his pocket, amused by her  
snobbery. Pulls out a NOTEPAD, starts writing.

MILES  
I see. So not cops, for example.

PAM  
Maybe if they shave.

He scratches his unshaven jaw with the pen. Intrigued.  
Glances down at her empty ring finger. Back up.

PAM (cont'd)  
(brusque)  
Is there anything else, detective? We're  
very busy this evening.

MILES  
Of course. If you hear anything...  
(handing her his card,  
pointed)  
From any type.

She watches him limp away. Curiosity gets the best of her --

PAM  
Detective. What did she do?

He turns back. Thought she understood.

MILES  
She was murdered.

Pam doesn't move even after he's gone.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Back up against the wall, eyes wild, Pam searches the dark  
for answers. She lets out air. A muffled cry. Can't help it.

PAULIE (O.S.)  
Pam.

She turns, her face smooth, placid. Smiles. *She's just fine.*

PAULIE (cont'd)  
(excited)  
You gotta try this lobster whip. C'mon.

She follows him back out the kitchen. Back to work.

EXT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, PARKING LOT - LATE NIGHT

The stars are bright, clear. Cold.

Pam dusts her car of the light snow. She waves as another CAR drives away. She's alone in the parking lot.

She unlocks her car door, opens it. Pauses before getting in. Glances across the way, to the truck stop.

She closes the car door without getting in.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - MOMENTS LATER

TRUCKERS with large guts pass in and out of a STORE.

A COWBOY TRUCKER (60s) stops before going inside. Handlebar mustache. Cowboy hat. Gentle air. He smiles, interested in --

**Pam.**

She stands underneath an awning, shivering in the cold. Feels his eyes on her. Looks over.

A beat as her face hardens. She shakes her head. *Hard no.*

Cowboy trucker realizes his mistake. Touches his hat, polite. Goes inside.

Across the lot, a SEX WORKER climbs out of a truck. Pam makes a move to go. Steps back, losing her nerve.

TALL SEX WORKER (O.S.)  
Gotta smoke?

Pam turns. Short skirt, kohl eyes, no more than 21, standing behind her. Rummaging in her purse.

TALL SEX WORKER (cont'd)  
Swear to god I had a ciggie in here.  
(gives Pam a once-over)  
A real redhead, huh? Fancy. Men love redheads. Makes 'em feel like they're getting something special.

TALL SEX WORKER (cont'd)  
(beat, found it)  
Ah-ha! Knew it.

The woman produces a cigarette from her purse, triumphant.  
When she looks up, Pam's rifling in her own purse.

PAM  
How many dates do you have tonight?  
Seven, eight? And what does your daddy  
take? Sixty percent? Here.

She frantically pulls a few ones, fives, a twenty. Not a lot.  
Not enough. Extends everything in a messy stack.

The sex worker, confused, doesn't take it.

TALL SEX WORKER  
You a cop?

PAM  
No. I need to know what happened to my  
friend.

The sex worker stares at Pam, cigarette hanging.

EXT. HALFWAY MOTEL PARKING LOT - SAME NIGHT, LATER

A roach motel with stained curtains. Dilapidated and creepy.

KATIE (20s) stumbles out of a room as though shoved. The door  
slams behind her.

Straps falling off her shoulders, skirt barely on. Shoeless.  
She collects herself and turns around. Bangs on the door.

KATIE  
Asshole! Gimme my shoes!

LIGHTS go on in adjacent rooms. CURTAINS lift, drop.

KATIE (cont'd)  
I'll find you, you shithead, and I'll --

MAN (O.S.)  
Boyfriend?

Katie turns. A MAN, standing in the shadows. Dead voice.

KATIE  
This asshole? He wishes.

MAN  
(disappointed)  
So you're... a working girl.

KATIE  
Yeah?  
(shouting, banging door)  
And he owes me money!

MAN  
(beat)  
How much?

KATIE  
Thirty bucks.

MAN  
(beat)  
Come to the front desk. I'll add it to  
his bill and cash you out.

KATIE  
You work here?

She's trying to see him through the dark.

MILES (PRELAP)  
Cause of death is strangulation.

INT. POLICE STATION, BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Miles, now shaved, stands in front of about a DOZEN COPS.  
Behind him, a whiteboard with PHOTOS of the three victims.

MILES  
First injury is blunt force trauma to the  
head. He waits for them to wake up,  
then... all the rest.

COP 1  
Those are all premortem injuries? So he's  
just...?

MILES  
Torturing them.

There's a murmur around the room. Shock.

COP 2  
Fingerprints? Footprints?

MILES

(head shake)

He's careful. Which means he'll do it again. Tomorrow. Tonight. Now. The longer we take, the better chance he has of getting away with it. All eyes are on us.

COP 1

Us?

Something catches Miles' eye in the hallway: Chief Langley, walking a MAN WITH A WALRUS MUSTACHE into a room.

INT. POLICE STATION, CHIEF'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Miles stands in front of Chief Lanley and the man with the mustache, AGENT PENDERGAST (60s). Midwestern vibe. Slow and deliberate. Even the way he stretches out his hand to Miles.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Howdy. Richard Pendergast, FBI.

MILES

Miles.

(shaking his hand)

Susan?

CHIEF LANLEY

We can't do this on our own, Miles. Tracking this sick motherfucker, it takes people who can think like him.

(to Pendergast)

No offense.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Oh gosh. None taken. Public'll want answers. Press'll be up your -- pardon my language -- *keisters*. Not just local, either. 60 Minutes, 20/20. It'll put Delaware on the map.

MILES

We're already on the map.

(to Chief Lanley, with fire)

I can do this.

CHIEF LANLEY

I'm not letting this fucker mess up my pension because I was politely invited to "retire early." You play nice, Miles, could be a promotion in it for you.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Gosh. Last thing I want is you thinking  
you're getting benched here, detective.  
Man with your history, I'm sure you've  
cracked a nut or two.

(looking up the hall)

Ah super. We'll set up in here, fellas.

A DOZEN FBI AGENTS in dark suits march up the hall toward Pendergast, who gestures to an empty room across the way.

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)

(to Miles)

We'd love your help, detective.

Put out, Miles can't answer as he watches them file past.

INT. POLICE STATION, EVIDENCE LOCKER

FBI AGENTS move in and out, pulling down NUMBERED BOXES as Miles watches, all nervous energy.

As an AGENT passes, Miles pulls a BOX from his arms.

MILES

Oops. Forgot to log this one. Good thing  
you guys are here now.

Beat. Not going to fight it, the agent moves on.

Miles sets the box down. Looks around. No one paying attention.

MILES (cont'd)

My mistake.

With a sleight of hand, he stuffs the BAGGIE OF BLUE FIBERS from the box into his pocket. No one the wiser.

He hands the box back to another passing AGENT.

MILES (cont'd)

Guess I'm more competent than I thought.

INT. POLICE LAB - AFTERNOON

CHUCK (30s), white coat, listens to a WALKMAN as he looks at slides under a MICROSCOPE. He sits up, makes a notation, grimaces, plays a little air guitar.

Miles walks up behind him. Pulls up one of the ears of the walkman, yells:

MILES  
Chuck.

Chuck jumps. Pulls off the walkman, heavy metal blasting.

CHUCK  
Fuck me, Miles.

MILES  
Later. Listen --

CHUCK  
You shaved. You look weird as shit.

MILES  
Thank you. Have something for you.

Miles dangles the baggie with the BLUE FIBERS.

MILES (cont'd)  
Need to know what these are.

CHUCK  
(taking the baggie)  
Hm. Maybe from a sweater? Or a dog?

MILES  
Sure. A blue dog.

CHUCK  
It's called a hypothesis.

Chuck pulls his headphones back on, middle fingers extended.  
Miles stops him.

MILES  
No paperwork. Come to me and me only.

CHUCK  
I don't know. Lanley said everything has  
to run through this FBI task force now --

MILES  
Did the FBI go to your birthday party?

Chuck considers Miles.

CHUCK  
You know how much I love secrets, Miles.

Miles pats his shoulder. *Thanks.*

RADIO ANNOUNCER (PRELAP)  
... state police are now working with the  
FBI 'round the clock to catch this guy --

INT. SPINELLI CAR - AFTERNOON

Pam pulls into the restaurant parking lot, NEWS STATION on the radio. Parks. Cuts the engine.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)  
Yes, caller, you're live on 93.7 WSTW.

FEMALE RADIO CALLER (O.S.)  
Yeah, hi. I mean... Is it all women or just... you know, *those* women? 'Cause I travel Route 40 all the time. I mean, how long before decent women get hurt?

Pam turns the radio off. Stares ahead at the cars and trucks going by on Route 40. Innocuous yet terrifying.

She picks up Miles' CARD, sitting in the ashtray. Studies it.

Suddenly: PAULIE bangs on her car window. She jumps.

PAULIE  
(through the glass)  
Next week, maestro!

Pam rolls down the window.

PAM  
Jesus, Paulie. What?

PAULIE  
The partners'll be here. Next Tuesday!  
You want that job? Let's show you off.

It sinks in. She smiles up at him, excited.

He drums the top of the car, pleased with himself. Snow sticks to his fingers.

PAULIE (cont'd)  
Aw, c'mon. You gotta clear your car better than this. You need a man.

She's out of the car now, locking it up.

PAM  
That's why? To clear snow?

PAULIE  
(defensive)  
We do other things.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR, TRUCK STOP PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Miles eats an oatmeal cream pie in the dark, watching the truckers and sex workers. Loneliness on parade.

The TALL SEX WORKER approaches his car.

Miles smiles, nods at her. Encouraging. She hops in.

TALL SEX WORKER  
How you doing, baby?

MILES  
Oh, you know, just trying to avoid the screaming void.

TALL SEX WORKER  
You need a pick-me-up? Twenty to start.

MILES  
(flashing badge)  
How much for answers?

TALL SEX WORKER  
Shit.

MILES  
Relax.

TALL SEX WORKER  
I don't snitch.

MILES  
The dead women won't mind.

Her face darkens.

TALL SEX WORKER  
If I had something to say I'd say it.

MILES  
Anybody acting weird?

Beat. She peels down her jacket to reveal her shoulder, covered in bite-mark bruises.

MILES (cont'd)  
Jesus.

TALL SEX WORKER  
Weird is my thing.

MILES  
They hurt you?

TALL SEX WORKER  
It don't hurt if they pay.

He notices: her hand on the door handle, ready to run.

MILES  
A murderer on the loose and men who do  
that to you and *I'm* the bad guy?

TALL SEX WORKER  
Always more than one bad guy.

He sighs, reaches behind him. Fishes for something. Pulls out  
a box that clinks and rattles.

TALL SEX WORKER (cont'd)  
(taking it)  
What's this?

She pulls something out, holds it up: a PENKNIFE.

MILES  
Carry it. And make sure they all get one.

She steps out with the box. Before she slams the door --

TALL SEX WORKER  
Red-haired cop offered cash.

Miles searches the truck stop, confused.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, OFFICE - NIGHT

A GROUP of waiters and waitresses, mixed ethnicities and  
ages, crowd around the TV. Eyes wide. Hushed fear in the air.

On TV, a REPORTER near Route 40. Behind the reporter, FBI  
AGENTS canvas the same wooded area where Diane was found.

TV REPORTER  
Diane Elliot had hitched before. But she  
couldn't have known her last ride would  
be with the man that the police and FBI  
are now calling the Route 40 Killer...

They all turn as PAM enters. Fear on their faces.

WAITRESS

Our shifts end in the middle of the night, Pam.

PAM

You're safe.

(switching off TV)

And we have a job to do.

They begrudgingly disperse. When they're all gone, Pam eyes her COAT on the rack opposite.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - LATER

Pam once again stands in the cold, waiting.

Finally, across the way, the door opens on a BLACK TRUCK. Out hops a YOUNG SEX WORKER (20s), short skirt like all the rest.

Pam walks across the lot, catches up to her.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Miles POV: Pam and the young sex worker talk.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS

Pam hugs herself in the cold, listening.

YOUNG SEX WORKER

... some nights you just need some place warm. That motel is friendly, so Katie said she was going. I didn't think... I didn't know...

She struggles, starts to cry. Pam touches her arm.

PAM

Thank you.

The sex worker gives a grateful smile, turns away. As Pam watches her go --

FLASH: Diane's angry face, turning away, stepping out into the night.

Pam closes her eyes, pained.

MILES (O.S.)

There she is.

Pam turns. He's leaning up against his car. Holds her gaze.

MILES (cont'd)  
(opening passenger door)  
My turn with my favorite redhead.

Dread on her face.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Pam stares ahead. Miles stares at her.

PAM  
You shaved.

MILES  
You lied.  
(beat)  
I hear some redheaded cop is out here  
paying for info. You getting their  
thoughts on the Berlin Wall or what?

PAM  
She stopped by for food. Maybe once a  
week.

MILES  
Diane Elliot?

PAM  
Yes.

MILES  
Why?

PAM  
Leftovers go to a food kitchen every  
night. So I figured, it's just one plate.

MILES  
So she *was* your friend?

PAM  
(frozen beat)  
Of course not.

MILES  
Why didn't you tell me this when I asked?

PAM  
You see the kind of place I work?

He doesn't want to, but he lets it go.

MILES  
She say anything?

PAM  
(looks away, beat)  
No.

MILES  
You know I could have you arrested? Lying  
to an officer. Impersonating an officer --

PAM  
-- I never said I was a cop --

MILES  
-- interfering in an investigation?

She finally turns to him. Imploring.

PAM  
I can help you.

MILES  
Excuse me?

PAM  
Let me talk to them.

MILES  
No. No fucking way. Why?

PAM  
I was the last person to see her alive...  
and...  
(beat as she grapples)  
I have a daughter. I work right over  
there. I have to do something.

MILES  
You have to do something? I'm doing  
something.

PAM  
They won't talk to you. You're worse for  
business than gonorrhea.

Despite himself, he laugh-snorts.

MILES  
And you?

PAM  
I'm a woman.

MILES  
That simple.

PAM  
Sometimes.

MILES  
Well I work alone, thanks.

PAM  
Just you and the entire FBI apparently?

MILES  
(annoyed)  
I didn't ask for that. And I can't use civilians, ok? It's fucking dangerous. You have any idea what we're not telling the press? He's carving them up. Making sure they feel it, too. Been to war and never seen anything like it.

From her angle, she can see the METAL BAR of his LEFT PROSTHETIC FOOT. Her eyes rest on it.

PAM  
Is that how you lost your--?

MILES  
(sharp)  
No.

He adjusts his pant leg, covers it. Takes a beat.

MILES (cont'd)  
These women aren't exactly reliable, ok?  
They move, O.D., stop hooking. No one reports them missing for weeks, months --

PAM  
So you don't care.

MILES  
(offended)  
I sleep in my car and take shit from people who know less than me. I care.

PAM  
You the one who gave them the knives?  
(off his face)  
Word spreads.

MILES  
If they gotta be out there... they should be safe.

She studies him. Softer consideration.

PAM  
A woman didn't show up today. Katie.

Miles fumbles through trash, pulls out a NOTE PAD, pen.

PAM (cont'd)  
Dark hair. Last seen at the Halfway  
Motel. Word is another one of these women  
was at the motel too. Heard a commotion,  
looked out the window. Saw a blue van  
peeling away from the parking lot. No  
one's seen Katie since.

MILES  
Make? License plate?

Pam shakes her head.

MILES (cont'd)  
Katie have a last name?

Another head shake.

MILES (cont'd)  
We need more.

PAM  
I can get more.

A break in his resistance. Silent negotiation.

MILES  
I could lose my job --

PAM  
So could I.  
(beat)  
I have to get back. I'll find you. Don't  
come into the restaurant.

As she hops out of the car --

MILES  
But I shaved.

She smirks, shuts the door.

He stares ahead. *What the hell just happened?*

INT. MISTER DONUT SHOP - NIGHT

Nikki's on her nightly routine: picking through the end-of-day donuts while watching a TV in the corner.

ON THE TV: a news program. News anchor, suited and formal.

NEWS ANCHOR

... the American Medical Association said today that doctors have an ethical obligation to treat people with AIDS...

Nikki changes the channel to:

A local-access program: "Delaware Roundtable." MEN, sitting at a table. Well-dressed, slick, soulless.

RIGHT-WING PUNDIT

... these murders are punishment from God.

Nikki stops. It has her full attention.

RIGHT-WING PUNDIT (cont'd)

For lust, fornication. For inciting men's baser instincts. What do they think is going to happen? If they lived a righteous life, Satan would not be meeting them on the road...

She powers the TV off, thinking. Turns up the radio instead. Resumes her donut inspection.

The front door CHIMES. In saunters BRYCE (17), gay, floppy hair, over everyone's bullshit. He does a little spin.

NIKKI

(smiling)

Bryce-Bryce-Bo-Bice.

BRYCE

You ready to leave this yeasty nightmare? My brother's already ten minutes late for wrestling practice.

NIKKI

I haven't counted out the till. That's, like, twenty minutes at least. Just go.

BRYCE

You sure, Nikki Tikki Tavi? You hear Delaware has a *murderer*?

NIKKI

Yeah. Of prostitutes.

BRYCE

Don't undersell yourself, honey.

"Touch Me" by Samantha Fox plays over the store. Bryce does a sort of moonwalk out of the store.

BRYCE (cont'd)

(singing)

"I wanna feel your body..."

Nikki's at the door now, shoving him out. Laughing.

NIKKI

No you don't.

When the door's almost closed --

BRYCE

Wait. You ask your mom about the party?

NIKKI

(beat)

I can't go.

BRYCE

Shit, c'mon. There'll be guys there. For both of us.

NIKKI

She wants me to be a spinster like her.

BRYCE

Then blow her off. My old man says a million things and I'm just like, whatever, half the time.

NIKKI

I can't. With my mom, it's like... disappointing God or something.

Bryce makes a sad face as he steps outside. She locks the door, blowing a kiss at him through the glass.

EXT. ROUTE 40 - NIGHT, LATER

Cars pass Nikki, her back stooped under the black donut bag.

INT. POLICE STATION, RECORDS ROOM - LATE NIGHT

In a darkened room, Miles sifts through boxes of OLD FILES. Several boxes open. He's been there a while.

Pulls A FILE out, blows DUST off it. Opens it. Reads.

Closes the file and puts it back. Thinking. Rubs his face. It's late and he needs sleep.

INT. PAM'S CAR, AIR COMMAND PARKING LOT - LATE NIGHT

Pam rubs her hands together, waiting for the car to heat up. She waves goodbye as another CAR drives away. Car clock reads: **2:15 a.m.**

All alone now, she watches the twinkle of cars and trucks on Route 40. Like diamonds.

She looks down: a TIRE IRON on the passenger seat. She picks it up, gives it a little swing. Puts it down again.

After a beat, she pulls out.

Route 40 is eerily empty, except one car coming toward her:

**A BLUE VAN.**

Too dark to see the driver along this unlit stretch of road. Pam gets behind it.

Doesn't blink. Barely breathes. Unsure what she's doing. Eyes to the license plate.

PAM  
XR4TL7. XR4TL7. XR4TL7.

A YELLOW LIGHT, and the van goes through. Now a RED LIGHT. Pam goes through it.

The van speeds up. Pam does too.

In the distance, the lights of the DELAWARE MEMORIAL BRIDGE loom. If she keeps going, she'll be in New Jersey.

The van switches lanes. Pam does too.

The van swerves into the next lane to get away. Slams to a STOP in the middle of the empty highway.

Pam pulls up along side the van. Stops. Looks over.

A WOMAN (50s), glares over at her, window down.

WOMAN  
The fuck are you doing?

The van speeds off. Pam takes a beat to recover.

LATER

A darkened stretch of road. Pam's tired but wired. Blinking, body taut. Hands clenching the wheel.

In a flash they go by: CRUSHED DONUTS spilled out all over Route 40.

She slams the brakes. Steps out.

PAM  
Nikki?  
(shouting)  
Nikki!

No answer from the dark woods. She gets back in, speeds off.

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE, NIKKI'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pam runs up the stairs. Shoves open the bedroom door and lets her eyes adjust to the dark.

The bed is empty, the sheets pulled back.

PAM  
Nikki!  
  
NIKKI (O.S.)  
Mom?

Pam turns. Nikki holds a GLASS OF WATER in the doorway. Pam nearly crushes her in an embrace, the water splashing.

NIKKI (cont'd)  
Mom?

PAM  
The donuts. On the road.

NIKKI  
Oh. I slipped on the ice.

PAM  
Where was Bryce?

NIKKI  
His brother had practice.

PAM

You should've called me.

NIKKI

I'm sorry. I didn't want to bother you at work and it's just a 20-minute walk--

PAM

You take the car from now on.

NIKKI

What? What about you?

PAM

Paulie will drive me.

(beat, fiercer)

You're all I have. You hear me?

NIKKI

Ok. You ok, Mom?

She's not. Pam folds Nikki into an embrace again, protection against the evils of the world.

INT. POLICE STATION, SPARE OFFICE - DAY

Agent Pendergast, several FBI AGENTS, and a FORENSICS EXPERT (40s) stand in front of a table. On it sits a row of PLIERS, marked A, B, C, etc.

Behind them sits Miles. Bored as hell.

FORENSICS EXPERT

(touching each one)

... you have your slip-joint, your water-pumps, your linemans, and your needle-nosed. This guy, he's a big fan of the needle-nosed. But here's where it gets *real* interesting.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Hoo boy.

FORENSICS EXPERT

Most needle-nosed pliers aren't serrated.

FBI AGENT 1

At all?

FORENSICS EXPERT

Not like the big guys. We're talking barracuda to shark here.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Always had a thing for sharks.  
Fascinating creatures.

FORENSICS EXPERT  
Oh yeah? Me too.

They smile. Best friends now. Miles rolls his eyes.

FORENSICS EXPERT (cont'd)  
Anyway, the way the flesh is ripped off  
in this case, it's leaving unique  
markings because --

AGENT PENDERGAST  
-- his are more like sharks.

FORENSICS EXPERT  
*His are more like sharks.*

They nod, simpatico. Miles snickers. Pendergast notices.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Detective Stanton? Thoughts?

All eyes in the room on him.

MILES  
It's a grain of sand in the Sahara. We  
need fingerprints. Blood. Until we have  
that, we have nothing.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
It's about building a case --

MILES  
I know how to build a fucking case.

Agent Pendergast, taken aback. Uncomfortable silence among  
the other agents. Miles knows he was too sharp.

MILES (cont'd)  
Look, it's just --

CHIEF LANLEY (O.S.)  
Gentlemen.

She's stands in the doorway, grim.

EXT. DELAWARE CANAL MARINA - DAY

A HELICOPTER slices the air above the water. Half a dozen COP CARS dot the ground near the bank. Hurried FBI agents rush to and from open-door vans.

At the water's edge, under the dock, Chief Lanley, Miles, and a MEDICAL EXAMINER (50s) hover over a gray CORPSE partially submerged in water.

MEDICAL EXAMINER  
Bloat stage. Been here one, two days?

CHIEF LANLEY  
Miles?

MILES  
Duct taped, ligature marks, areolas removed... blah de fucking blah.  
(beat)  
She's number four.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Fuck.

She looks away, frustrated. Up at the helicopter.

CHIEF LANLEY (cont'd)  
Get that fucking thing outta here.

The medical examiner jumps up, makes a hasty exit.

When no one's looking, Miles picks a BLUE STRAND out from between the victim's LIPS. Quickly stuffs it in a baggie.

Agent Pendergast approaches, glancing at his notepad.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
(holds a laminated  
Blockbuster card)  
Dumped her wallet in the water. Name's Katie Randolph.

Miles looks up sharply. Stands.

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)  
Three arrests for solicitation. Partial fingerprint in blood on her thigh.

CHIEF LANLEY  
And?

AGENT PENDERGAST

No matches. But. He did leave behind tire prints in the mud leading up to the dock. I have my guys checking --

MILES

(blurting)

It's a van. He drives a blue van.

They both turn to him.

MILES (cont'd)

Witness saw a woman named Katie get into a blue van two nights ago.

CHIEF LANLEY

You talked to this witness?

MILES

No. But I got someone who'll talk to her.

CHIEF LANLEY

Who? I didn't approve undercover work.

MILES

Not undercover.

CHIEF LANLEY

A CI?

MILES

No. Just... someone.

CHIEF LANLEY

*Who?*

He shakes his head. Can't tell. Chief Lanley's not pleased.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Detective, like I always tell my daughter, sharing is caring --

MILES

I just did.

FBI AGENT 1 (O.S.)

Sir --

An agent (20s) rushes up, holds up a paper.

FBI AGENT 1 (cont'd)

Tire prints from a Ford E series van. Models from 1979 to 1983.

They look at Miles. He pumps his fist.

CHIEF LANLEY  
We're releasing this.

MILES  
You'll send him into hiding.

CHIEF LANLEY  
More women will die if we say nothing.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
I actually agree with the detective here.

MILES  
"Actually"?

AGENT PENDERGAST  
(ignoring)  
You're also putting a target on every  
poor sap with a blue van.

MILES  
It's the only thing we have right now.

She doesn't like being ganged up on. Looks between them.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Then get more. Three days, then we  
release it.

Behind them, PRESS VANS pull up. JOURNALISTS jump out.

CHIEF LANLEY (cont'd)  
How do they always fucking know...?

Mile starts backing away.

MILES  
Clock's ticking, I guess. Pardon moi.

When he's out of earshot --

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Gosh. He's something.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Chip on his shoulder the size of a foot.

They're swarmed by shouting JOURNALISTS.

EXT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Pam and Paulie jump out of Paulie's TRUCK. As they walk --

PAULIE

... he's charging more. So I says, you  
don't think I don't know how to change  
the timing belt in my own truck?

She spot a familiar CAR across the parking lot. Behind the  
wheel: **MILES**. He nods at her.

Shocked, she shakes her head. A warning.

PAULIE (cont'd)

I mean, I don't, but I could learn --

PAM

Hey Paulie.

At the front door, Pam rifles through her purse for effect.

PAM (cont'd)

Think I dropped something in your truck.

PAULIE

I can get it --

He makes a move. She blocks him.

PAM

It's a tampon.

Paulie recoils, hands her the keys.

ACROSS THE PARKING LOT

She storms up to Miles' window, not happy.

PAM (cont'd)

I told you not to --

MILES

Katie's dead.

Pam stills.

MILES (cont'd)

And your lead was right. He drives a blue  
Ford van.

Pam takes a beat. He unwraps a Twinkie, takes a bite.

MILES (cont'd)

What else you got? Think you can talk to  
the woman who saw Katie that night?

Pam takes a beat to think.

PAM

I'll find you. Don't --

MILES

Come into the restaurant. I know.

He watches her walk away, half admiring. She turns back.

A long glance between them before she goes inside.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT - EVENING

The bewitching hour, halfway between light and dark. Not yet open, the restaurant stands regal in its solitude.

Pam lights a candle at each table.

PAULIE (O.S.)

Pam. Taste test.

AT THE KITCHEN DOORWAY

He dips a wooden spoon into her mouth. Waits as she tastes.

PAULIE (cont'd)

What does it need?

PAM

Duck fat?

PAULIE

(looking around)

Duck fat, duck fat is... in the locker.

He puts the spoon down, wipes his hands on his apron.

PAULIE (cont'd)

Was thinking. Let's start with a tour  
here in the dining room. Little dog and  
pony show. Show the partners some of the  
new changes. Show 'em what you built.

PAM

(genuine, sentimental)

Thank you, Paulie.

PAULIE

Ok. Duck fat.

He leaves. After a beat, she glances at something just out of view in the kitchen. Reaches, lifts it slowly.

A KNIFE in a SHEATH. No one around. She walks away with it.

INT. MISTER DONUT SHOP - NIGHT

Empty inside. Behind the counter, Nikki writes in a NOTEBOOK.

NIKKI

(reading what she wrote)

"As crime in Delaware steadily increases, one wonders what social forces are at play to account for this unsettling reality."

(beat, crossing out)

Disturbing reality.

(tired)

Fucked up reality.

The door chimes. She looks up.

It's the SUBURBAN DAD with his LITTLE GIRL again. Nikki takes off her glasses, perks up.

The little girl runs up to the case, excited and undecided.

SUBURBAN DAD

Hey. Thanks for re-opening the other night. Really nice of you.

NIKKI

No problem.

SUBURBAN DAD

(to daughter)

C'mon, honey. Let's tell the pretty lady what we want.

Nikki blushes at the compliment, pleased.

INT. TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

A SHORT-HAIRED SEX WORKER pays for a bottle of VODKA. Leaves.

From behind a rack of snack foods, Pam steps out. Follows.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS

The sex worker marches across the parking lot.

PAM (O.S.)  
You saw Katie at the motel?

SHORT-HAIRED SEX WORKER  
(turning)  
You FBI? You gotta tell me.

PAM  
No.

SHORT-HAIRED SEX WORKER  
You related to her?

PAM  
No. Just... someone who cares.

SHORT-HAIRED SEX WORKER  
(*yeah right*)  
I got someone waiting.

Pam follows her gaze an older, large-breasted FEMALE TRUCKER, smoking outside her truck.

PAM  
Regulars wait. Everyone knows that.

The woman looks Pam up and down, reconsiders her.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - NIGHT

They sit in a faraway corner of the truck stop parking lot.

PAM  
Said it was six digits. Space in between  
the numbers. Couldn't see the actual  
numbers though.

Miles hunts the dark, dissatisfied.

PAM (cont'd)  
Now what?

MILES  
Now what what?

PAM  
Can't you run six-digit license plates on  
blue Ford vans?

MILES

You know how many blue Ford vans there are in the tri-state area?

(off her head shake)

Six thousand. Now let's say I can narrow it down to... five hundred with six-digits-spaced license plates. Then what? What am I looking for exactly?

Beat as she realizes he's right.

MILES (cont'd)

It's about blood, fingerprints. Something that defines only him. Anyone say anything about blue fibers?

PAM

No. Why?

MILES

Never mind.

PAM

What?

MILES

(relenting)

The victims had blue fibers on them.

(beat, sharp)

Keep your mouth shut about that.

PAM

Well we're not gonna find blue fibers or anything else just sitting in this car.

MILES

You wanna help? This is the work. Sitting in cars. Watching. Waiting. Not sleeping. You want glory, go be a rock star.

PAM

Why are you doing this?

MILES

It's my job.

PAM

Why are you doing *this*?

He looks at her. Loosens after a beat.

MILES

When you're a kid, David always beats Goliath, right?

MILES (cont'd)

But then you grow up and realize... there  
are too many goddamn Goliaths. You're  
gonna be David forever.

(beat)

Why are you?

PAM

(faraway)

I don't know. I don't know what to call  
this feeling.

He's staring at her profile, gets lost for a second.

MILES

Your family know what you're doing?

(feeling it out)

Your boyfriend?

PAM

My daughter doesn't know.

Beat as she lets the rest remain unanswered. Miles nods.

MILES

That's good, you know, to keep some  
things from her.

(collecting himself)

You asked now what. Those women are his  
targets, so we just gotta stay on 'em.

Pam takes a beat. Debating. Then:

PAM

What if they're not his targets anymore?

(off his look)

Diane wasn't hooking.

MILES

That's one theory...

(suspicious)

... that we never released.

PAM

(beat)

Diane was my friend. She was my friend  
and I --

Pam looks away. Miles reaches into the glovebox, pulls out a  
napkin. Hands it to her.

She turns to face him, watery eyes in the moonlight.

PAM (cont'd)

I have to get this guy.

MILES

Ok.

(beat)

Ok. So Diane wasn't hooking anymore. But here's the thing: maybe he didn't know that.

PAM

No. Hooking is transactional. There are terms. Right up front. They would've talked... He would've known right away.

MILES

Ok.

PAM

I think... I think he wants something different. Change it up.

MILES

Different than prostitutes? What about Katie then?

PAM

Maybe he thought she was some other kind of woman at first. That's why he was at that motel and not on Route 40. He was on the hunt for something different. And maybe... maybe she was all he could get that night.

(beat)

He started with the forgotten kind of women. And now...

(beat)

Everyone wants to climb a ladder.

MILES

(beat, considering)

What are you doing tomorrow?

PAM

It's my day off with my daughter.

MILES

After she's in bed?

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, KITCHEN - LATER

Pam slips in through the back door, leans against it. Small smile on her face.

The kitchen is quiet, food sizzling unattended on the grills.

She follows TV SOUNDS to --

EVERYONE huddled around a SMALL TV in the corner. On it, a REPORTER standing in front of a row of POLICE answering phones.

REPORTER ON TV

... the fourth victim has been identified as Katie Randolph, found this morning just south of the canal. Police are asking anyone with information to call the hotline at 1-800--

Paulie turns to see Pam.

PAULIE

Hey. Where you been?

PAM

Sorry. Had an errand.

PAULIE

Another woman. They gotta get this guy.

PAM

They will.

PAULIE

You seen my Wüsthof?  
(holds up his fingers  
spread apart five inches)  
My favorite knife.

PAM

No.

PAULIE

Shit. Did I somehow chuck it?

He walks off in search of his knife. She stares after him.

PAM (PRELAP)

Bless me, father, for I have sinned.

INT. OUR LADY OF FATIMA CATHOLIC CHURCH, CONFESSORIAL - DAY

Pam once again sits in the semi-dark.

PAM

It's been... eight days since my last confession. I cursed. Stole. Lied.

(beat, confused)  
Lusted.

She stops. Staring at something in the dark. Her own history.

PRIEST (O.S.)  
Anything else?

PAM  
The women. The dead women.

PRIEST (O.S.)  
Yes?

PAM  
Where will they spend eternity?

PRIEST (O.S.)  
Depends on the state of their souls when  
they died.

PAM  
They didn't know it'd be their last day.  
Doesn't God make exceptions?

PRIEST (O.S.)  
Focus on your own soul, child. I want you  
to say the Act of Contrition.

She's not satisfied. But lets it stand.

PAM  
(reciting)  
*Oh my God, I'm heartily sorry for having  
offended Thee --*

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE, KITCHEN - EVENING

Pam stands over a steaming pot at the stove. Swirls a spaghetti spoon through it. Looks up at --

Nikki, working away at the kitchen table on her research paper.

PAM  
Hey. Dinner soon.

Nikki sighs, rubs her eyes. Starts putting papers away.

NIKKI  
Mom, do you remember what crime was like  
here in the late 60s?

PAM  
(brief hesitation)  
Not really.

NIKKI

It's really hard to find stuff on it.

Pam sets plates down, wipes hair off of Nikki's forehead.

PAM

You need to take a break every now and again.

NIKKI

Then let me go to the party?

Pam takes in her daughter's hopeful face. The passage of time. She shakes her head, a loving *no*.

PAM

Don't try and grow up too fast. You can never go back.

NIKKI

I just want to regular grow up.

Pam slowly comes back to reality. Collects herself. Stares up at the clock: 6:25 pm.

PAM

I have a work thing tonight. I'll be home late.

Nikki studies Pam, then nods.

CHIEF LANLEY (PRELAP)

You can't pull over every blue van --

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE, BRIEFING ROOM - EVENING

She stands in front of room full of police and FBI agents. To her left, a WHITEBOARD dotted with:

-- PHOTOS of the four victims

-- partial FINGERPRINT and tire print evidence

-- a TIMELINE of the murders in black marker

CHIEF LANLEY

-- but you can get creative. Speeding, broken tail lights, expired registrations. You're to report any detail to Agent Pendergast.

(beat)

Good luck.

As the officers disperse and the room clears, Miles is left standing at the whiteboard. Searching for patterns he hasn't found yet. Circles under his eyes.

Chief Lanley studies him.

CHIEF LANLEY (cont'd)  
You know, when I hired you, the director told me you had the highest score of all the recruits. You came highly recommended, despite...  
(glances at his foot)  
... what had happened.

Miles doesn't turn from the whiteboard.

MILES  
Ancient history.

CHIEF LANLEY  
I want to trust you.

MILES  
So trust me.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Who do you have on the inside?

He turns, lips closed, hands up. *He can't.*

CHIEF LANLEY (cont'd)  
I've been putting up with your bullshit for a long time, but you're getting dangerously close to my limit.

MILES  
You could stick up for me. Believe in me.  
Those are options.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Just promise me, Miles. You're not putting this person in danger.

MILES  
Of course not.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - NIGHT

Miles pulls up to the truck stop, his headlights shining on: Pam, waiting for him in the cold.

MILES (O.S.)  
I would never do that.

She smiles, gets into his car.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Past Route 40 now, further down, the road spotted by bars, car garages, abandoned houses.

PAM  
Where are we going?

MILES  
Testing your theory. Higher-end escorts go to this place.

MOMENTS LATER

He pulls into the parking lot of a ramshackle bar. Neon sign of a finger pointing -- **KUM-ON-IN BAR** -- blinking.

Once parked, he rummages around behind him, through papers and garbage. Pulls out a BLACK WIRE.

MILES (cont'd)  
You ever wear a wire before?

She shakes her head.

MILES (cont'd)  
Ok. You're gonna go in there and make nice with some of the guys. Here.

He starts attaching it to her shirt, their faces close --

MILES (cont'd)  
Just flirting, nothing serious. Make them believe they got a chance. I'll be listening out here. If someone seems fishy, get them talking. They might let something slip. If they want to take you home, get in their car.

PAM  
(alarmed)  
Wait. I don't know--

MILES  
They'll never leave this parking lot. I promise.

PAM

You sure?

MILES

I won't let anything happen to you. And anyway, I sure as hell can't seduce them.

PAM

I dunno. Maybe you could.

He smiles. Their heads, close together. They pull away. She fumbles with the wire, her shirt.

MILES

Just stuff it down in your, uh...

She stuffs it into her bra.

PAM

What if there's trouble?

MILES

Code word. Kalamazoo. I'll come running.

PAM

Kalamazoo.

MILES

The place in Michigan.

PAM

I know where it is. How the hell do I work it in?

MILES

"I'm from Kalamazoo. Where're you from, big guy?" See? Easy.

(off her face)

You're safe. I promise.

Miles reaches around and pulls out a BLACK BOX, the receiver. Twists the knobs. STATIC.

MILES (cont'd)

I'll keep this on. Same kind of batteries they use in the military. Lithium. Last forever. Go ahead. Say something.

Suddenly HEADLIGHTS blind them, another car rolling into the lot, parks across from them. Not a car, a van.

**A blue Ford van.** Before the lights go out, the six-digit-with-a-space license plate blazes in the dark.

Neither of them move.

A SUSPECT (30s) gets out. Thin, stringy hair, beady eyes. Doesn't look their way as he makes his way toward the bar.

PAM  
(whisper)  
Kalamazoo.

MILES  
(beat)  
Ok. New plan.

INT. KUM-ON-IN BAR - LATER

Rowdy bar. Rock music, pool tables. Grungy flirtation between hard-up women and downtrodden men.

Pam sits at the bar, glass of SCOTCH in hand. Facing a pool game.

The SUSPECT leans down over the felt. Glances up, catches Pam's eye. She smiles at him.

He hits, sends the WHITE BALL bouncing off the eight ball, which slides directly into the hole opposite. Game shot.

Pam swivels back around. Side glance at Miles, down at the far end of the bar, nursing a beer. Watching her closely.

A MUSCLEY BARTENDER talks with a guy at the other end.

SUSPECT (O.S.)  
(to the bartender, loud)  
You gonna talk all night or what?

Pam turns. He slides into the seat next to her. Even grosser up close. Stained teeth, greasy hair.

PAM  
(smiling)  
Hard to get his attention.

The bartender, annoyed, finally steps over.

SUSPECT  
(to bartender)  
Pabst.

PAM  
You know how to work a pool table.

SUSPECT

I work lots of things real good.

PAM

Oh, wow. Ok.

SUSPECT

I don't like wasting time. Most precious resource we have.

PAM

Cheers to that. What's your name?

SUSPECT

Later. When you're ready to scream it.

Pam takes a beat to adjust to his level. Nearly purrs:

PAM

Why don't we get outta here, then?

He gets his beer, holds it up.

SUSPECT

Got some drinking to do first. Cheers to pretty women.

Clink. He chugs. Pam looks over at Miles. *Help.*

The suspect slams the beer down. Signals the bartender for another. Belches.

SUSPECT (cont'd)

You play pool?

PAM

A little. Not as well as you.

Another beer comes.

SUSPECT

Challenge you to a game.

PAM

Oh, um --

The suspect is suddenly shoved forward, beer spilling on him, the bar. He turns.

Miles stands behind him, fake shock on his face.

MILES

Did I...? So sorry. Couldn't get that guys' attention way down there. Here, let me buy you another.

SUSPECT

(annoyed)

S'all right.

MILES

I insist.

SUSPECT

I'd rather you not, k? Guy buying another guy a beer is kinda fruity.

MILES

Are you a vet?

SUSPECT

Yeah?

MILES

I could tell. Me too. 1st brigade, 5th infantry. Vietnam. Two tours.

SUSPECT

(glancing down)

That how you lost your foot?

MILES

Oh that. No. Poker game.

SUSPECT

Tough luck.

MILES

I won. The other guy's just a torso.

Pam stifles a laugh, drops it when the suspect turns back to her. He slams cash down on the bar.

SUSPECT

Let's get the fuck outta here.

Pam gathers her things. The suspect walks out ahead of her.

At the door, she turns back, fear in her eyes.

Miles nods at her, reassuring.

EXT. KUM-ON-IN BAR PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The suspect turns back to her as she lags behind.

SUSPECT

That guy was fucking annoying. You coming?

PAM

(all nerves)

Yeah.

AT THE VAN

He hops in on the driver side. She hesitates at the passenger door. Looks backward toward the bar.

No Miles.

The suspect opens the door for her. Long beat before she climbs in.

INT. SUSPECT'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Pam stares straight ahead. The suspect starts the engine. It kicks a little, then comes to life.

SUSPECT

My place ok?

PAM

Huh? Uh. Ok.

SUSPECT

Ain't you gonna wear your seatbelt?

She pulls the seatbelt across her, zombie motion. One more glance out the window.

The van pulls out, crunching on the ice. Pam touches her chest lightly. The wire.

The van is at the entrance now. Waiting to turn back out onto the main road.

PAM

So-- so where're you from? Big guy?

It's decidedly unsexy. Fear has overtaken her mojo.

SUSPECT

What?

Suddenly, a BRIGHT LIGHT in the driver's side window, blinding them. Miles stands there, flashing his badge.

MILES  
Out of the van! Now.

SUSPECT  
What the fuck? No. Ain't getting out 'til you tell me --

The door swings open. Miles grabs the suspect and SLAMS him to the ground. Punches are thrown. Miles straddles him, finally in control.

MILES  
Did you have anything to do with the killings of Diane Elliot, Katie Randolph, Alice Pritchard, or Marie James?

The suspect wriggles, blood in his teeth.

SUSPECT  
The fuck? I don't live here!

Miles hauls him up, marches him to the back of the van. Shines the MINI FLASHLIGHT on:

The license plate. Black and gold, not blue and gold.  
California.

MILES  
Keys, now.

SUSPECT  
Front right pocket.

Miles finds them. Inserts a key into the back. Swings the doors open. A sparkling clean back.

Miles looks up. Pam, standing in the dark, hugging herself.

POLICE DISPATCHER (PRELAP)  
(over scanner)  
Timothy Frazier. Grand larceny, assault and battery, drug possession.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - LATE NIGHT

Pam and Miles sit in the car, staring out at:

The suspect, arms upstretched, cuffed to the antenna.

POLICE DISPATCHER  
(over scanner)  
Released from San Quentin five days ago.

MILES  
(deflates, into receiver)  
Five days ago? Thanks.  
(turning off receiver)  
He's not our guy.

The disappointment sits heavy between them. Miles gets out.

Pam watches as he uncuffs the suspect. Sore and angry, the suspect jumps into his van, screeches away.

Miles stands in the parking lot a beat. Takes a tissue out of his pocket, dabs his bloody nose. Gets back in the car.

MILES (cont'd)  
Really thought it was him.

PAM  
I did too.  
(beat)  
He almost drove away.

MILES  
Wasn't gonna let anything happen to you.  
(beat, off her face)  
Would've had a whole team on him.

PAM  
You and the FBI.

MILES  
Yeah.

PAM  
Even though you work alone.

Beat as regret crosses his face. He wants to convince her.

MILES  
(firm)  
I would have.

She wants to believe him. The clock reads **2:37 am.**

MILES (cont'd)  
You gotta get home, right?

PAM  
I can... I can stay. Just a little while  
longer though.

MILES

Ok. Great.

He's pleased. So is she. He reaches behind his seat, musters up a BLANKET. Gives it to her.

Pam covers herself. Tries to extend it to him, but --

MILES (cont'd)

I'm ok. You get warm.

She stares at his profile as he watches PEOPLE leaving the bar.

PAM

How did you become a detective?

MILES

Long story, but... mostly it involved spending lots of time alone as a kid reading Hardy Boys books.

PAM

Nancy Drew for me.

MILES

See? And here you are.

They chuckle.

MILES (cont'd)

How did you come to run a restaurant?

Her smile fades as she remembers.

PAM

After my marriage ended, I knew I had to do right by my daughter. Even if it meant starting at the bottom.

MILES

No dishonor in that.

PAM

(softly)

Not in that, no.

(beat)

Speaking of, I can't get away tomorrow.

MILES

No?

PAM

Restaurant partners coming in. Looking to... make a good impression. So I can get off the night shift.

MILES

Good for you. Wednesday then?

PAM

Well I was thinking, just for tomorrow... you could... come into the restaurant. Have a real meal.

MILES

(surprised)

Seriously?

PAM

Yeah. They'll be gone by dinner rush, so ... come in around 6 or so. I'll hold a table.

He rummages behind the seat, searching. Holds up a CLIP-ON TIE to his neck. Wiggles his eyebrows.

PAM (cont'd)

(pained)

Fine.

He enjoys teasing her. Pam nestles down in the blanket, smile on her face.

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE, OUTSIDE PAM'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Nikki, in her Catholic school uniform, knocks on her mother's bedroom door. Quiet at first, then louder.

NIKKI

Mom? Gotta go now, ok?

She waits, listening. Shrugs. Pounds down the stairs.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR, KUM-ON-IN BAR PARKING LOT - MORNING

The clock reads **9:20 a.m.**

Pam and Miles, now both under the blanket, sleeping.

Pam rouses slowly. The light, blinding. Blinks, realizes. Throws off the blanket in a panic.

PAM  
Shit. **Miles.**

He stirs, adjusts to where he is.

PAM (cont'd)  
I need to go. Now.

He sits up, starts the engine. She's sick with worry.

INT. OUR LADY OF FATIMA CATHOLIC SCHOOL - MORNING

Pam runs through the empty hallways of the school, frantic.

Something catches her eye in the nearest CLASSROOM WINDOW.  
She slowly walks to it, hoping not to be seen.

THROUGH THE WINDOW: NIKKI, hunched over her desk,  
concentrating on a test with the rest of her CLASSMATES.

*Her good girl.* Relief washes over Pam. Love.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, KITCHEN - LATER

Pam blasts through the back door, disheveled. She grabs a hanging pan, smooths her hair. Checks her teeth.

PAULIE (O.S.)  
The fuck, Pam?

He's standing there in a suit and tie. Arms up in disbelief.

PAM  
Sorry sorry sorry sorry.

PAULIE  
They've been here almost an hour. Those  
the clothes you wore yesterday?

She runs by him, not answering.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, MAIN DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The SIX PARTNERS, all men (40s-50s), follow Pam in a line through the restaurant as she points out its finery.

PAM  
... and in 1986, we commissioned this  
piece from a local artist to best capture  
the Air Command experience.

They all turn to the impressionist PAINTING: fine linens, silverware, fresh spices in understated, refined colors.

MARK, one of the younger partners, smiles at her.

MARK THE PARTNER  
And what is the Air Command experience?

Pam takes a beat. Almost glows with pride as she looks around at the glory of the place she loves.

PAM  
This place is... a dream. The best dream. People come here to forget about out there. They save up for months, work hard just for one special night. Because... we make them feel worthy. This is a kingdom and here, they wear crowns.

They seem touched by her warmth and conviction.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Paulie and Pam whisper to one another.

PAULIE  
... you saved it there in the ninth inning.

PAM  
Did you ask them?

PAULIE  
I'm going to. Waiting for the right opening. Ok?

He squeezes her hand, leaves. She leans up against the wall, eyes closed. Relieved. Exhausted.

INT. POLICE LAB - AFTERNOON

Miles, face bruised, marches straight to --

MILES  
Chuckles.

Miles looks around. FBI AGENTS in conversation at the doorway. They slowly move off. He leans in, almost-whispers --

MILES (cont'd)  
Got my samples analyzed yet?

CHUCK

Yeah, just in. And I --  
(glancing up)

Whoa. What happened? You look like my  
grandma after her first face lift.

MILES

Samples.

CHUCK

Hold on. I was right, by the way.

Chuck shuffles through his papers. Slides drop. A mad  
scientist. Finally holds up a PAPER:

CHUCK (cont'd)

(smug)

Nylon, acrylic, and polyester.

MILES

Why do you think I know what the hell  
you're talking about?

CHUCK

A carpet, Miles. A cheap, flammable  
carpet. The kind they sell everywhere.  
Like I said when you brought this in.

MILES

Shush a minute.

Miles sits down, thinking. Realization.

MILES (cont'd)

A carpet. In the back of his van.

CHUCK

That's why you're the detective.

Miles thinks for a moment more, stands.

MILES

You said it was a dog, by the way.

CHUCK

Science is a safe space for ideas, ok?

Miles pats Chuck's shoulder. Sure. Leaves.

INT. OUR LADY OF FATIMA CATHOLIC SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Nikki stands at her locker, pulling out books, when a COUPLE down the hall catches her eye. A blonde CHEERLEADER and her JOCK boyfriend. She spies with intense interest.

They flirt. The cheerleader's top button, open on her uniform. Laughing at everything he says. Hand lightly touching his.

Nikki's hand seems to float up to her school uniform. She pops open the top button.

BRYCE suddenly sidles up to her.

BRYCE

Hey. I can get the car from my dipshit brother tomorrow. You need me to pick you up from Monsieur Beignet?

NIKKI

No, it's ok. My mom gave me her car.

BRYCE

Your mom gave you her car? Why?

NIKKI

Because she's afraid of perverts.

BRYCE

Joke's on her. We're all perverts.

NIKKI

Not her. It's a miracle she got laid once in her life.

BRYCE

Wait. You've had the car for days without telling me? We have to do something.

EXT. WILMINGTON MARSHES - AFTERNOON

Nikki and Bryce lie atop the hood of the car, reedy grasses reaching nearly up to the windows.

In the distance, the twinkling lights of a factory that looks like a city, aptly named Delaware City.

They pass a JOINT back and forth as Echo and the Bunnymen plays over the stereo, drifting out through the open windows.

NIKKI

What about Michael?

Bryce sits up on his elbow.

BRYCE  
Honey. He listens to Poison and drives an Iroc-Z. No.

NIKKI  
This guy comes into the donut shop. With his daughter.

BRYCE  
(gasp)  
A hot dad?

NIKKI  
I think he likes me?  
(doubtful, ugh)  
I'm gonna die a virgin.

BRYCE  
No, you're gonna meet a hunky pre-med at NYU who loves going down on you.

NIKKI  
(laughing)  
My hero.

BRYCE  
My mom knows I'm not.

NIKKI  
A virgin?

BRYCE  
But she won't outright ask me if I like boys. Like, she's fine I've had sex, just doesn't want to know with who.

NIKKI  
Parents are weird.

BRYCE  
Truest words ever.

NIKKI  
Library's closing soon. I gotta go.  
Finish my paper.

BRYCE  
You're seriously not finished?

NIKKI

There's something new every day. I can't write about crime in Delaware and not, like, include *him*.

BRYCE

I heard he's ripping off body parts. Like their nipples and shit.

Quiet beat. They stare out at Delaware City.

NIKKI

Destroying them piece by piece.

(beat)

You ever wonder?

BRYCE

What?

NIKKI

Why that's sexual for some people.

BRYCE

Cruelty? Fuck. I don't wanna know.

Nikki reaches over for his hand. He takes it.

They stare up at the early shine of the stars.

EXT. OLD NEW CASTLE LIBRARY - EVENING

Nikki hauls her books, running toward the entrance.

The clock tower atop the library reads: 6:30 pm.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, MAIN DINING ROOM - EVENING

A cozy corner nook. Candlelight, privacy.

Miles is waiting there. In a real tie. With slicked hair. Looks good. Stands as --

Pam approaches, slides into the seat. In a good mood. Then she gets a good look at him in the light.

PAM

Oh my god, your face.

MILES

I'm fine. Here.

He slides over a ROSE.

PAM  
What is this?

MILES  
You're off the night shift, right?

PAM  
I don't know. Maybe.

MILES  
Congratulations.

PAM  
What if I'm not?

MILES  
Sympathy then.

She smiles, sniffs it.

PAM  
Thank you.

He looks around.

MILES  
Nice place.

PAM  
Better than chips for dinner.

MILES  
Thanks. Know you got your standards.

PAM  
Think you meet the standard.

He's pleased. They stare a beat too long, look away. Then:

MILES  
Blue fibers are from a carpet.

PAM  
A carpet?  
(beat, thinking)  
From the back of his van?

MILES  
(smiles)  
That's what I think.

Pam sits back, chewing on it.

PAM

The Carpet Mart. I could go over there tomorrow on my break. Check out their blue carpets.

MILES

I was thinking something else.

PAM

Yeah?

He takes a beat, wondering how to say it.

EXT. OLD NEW CASTLE LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Nikki sits in front of a MICROFICHE MACHINE, scrolling through an old NEWSPAPER dated November 20, 1968.

Scrolls past PHOTOS that catch her eye. Scrolls back up again. Leans in.

MILES (O.S.)

I'll wire you up again. But this time, you'll walk Route 40.

(beat)

Like you used to.

Nikki blinks as she reads the headline: **PROSTITUTION BUST ALONG ROUTE 40 NETS RING, POLICE SAY**

There, on the page, several mugs shots, among them: a PHOTO of a YOUNG DIANE ELLIOT. Next to it, a PHOTO of YOUNG PAM.

NIKKI

(horror)

Mom?

Nikki collects her things and runs out of the library.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, MAIN DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The candle light flickers across Pam's frozen face.

PAM

What?

MILES

Undercover work. Only you'll look higher end, you know? So maybe he'll... just like your theory.... Anyway, given your history, I thought... and I'd be listening in...

PAM  
You've known this whole time?

Beat. He knows he's said something wrong.

MILES  
I'm a detective, Pam.

On Pam's face, a silent scream.

MILES (cont'd)  
Look. Your... past. It's not a big deal.

PAM  
It is. It is a big deal.

MILES  
It isn't to me.

Her rage grows. She stands.

MILES (cont'd)  
Where are you going?

PAM  
Get out.

MILES  
What?

PAM  
Get out.

MILES  
What are you doing?

PAM  
My job.

She waits, stares ahead. He stands. Wants to say something. Decides against it. Leaves.

After he's gone, she snuffs the candle out with her fingers.

EXT. LIBRARY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Nikki stands, looking sick. Not getting in the car.

From her pocket, she absentmindedly pulls out a scrap of PAPER, focuses on it. Decides something.

Gets in the car and peels away.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, KITCHEN

Paulie stands in front of an open fridge. Red hair passes behind him.

PAULIE

Maestro.

(lifting bottle of  
champagne)

Taste test?

(beat)

You ok?

She's out of it. Trying not to show it.

PAM

(touches stomach)

Little off tonight. You guys'll be ok if  
I go home?

PAULIE

Yeah, sure. Of course.

He watches after her, puzzled.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Pam stares at herself in a mirror flecked by silver-black patches.

PAM (V.O.)

Where's your car?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

At the back of the restaurant, DIANE stands holding the foil-wrapped PLATE. She hesitates.

DIANE

I don't have it. Just gonna hitch.

Pam's face falls. Disappointed.

PAM

You said you were out. And now here you are again, walking --

DIANE

I am out. Just don't have my car.

PAM

I've known you 20 years, Diane. Sometimes the truth is hard for you.

DIANE

How many times do I gotta show you...?

PAM

How many times have I paid your bail?  
That many times.

DIANE

(beat, frustration)

I got into nursing school.

PAM

(happy)

Diane. That's amazing --

DIANE

So I sold my car.

PAM

If you needed money --

DIANE

I gotta do this on my own, ok?

After a beat, Pam nods.

DIANE (cont'd)

Can I use the toilet? I really gotta go.

Pam hesitates. For too long.

DIANE (cont'd)

Ok. Ok. I see how it is.

PAM

Diane --

But Diane's upset, eyes growing teary.

DIANE

One of these days, I'm gonna put on my best dress and waltz right through the front door of this place. I'm gonna get the best steak you got and the best bottle of wine and I'm gonna spend three hours eating it. And no one's gonna stare at me sideways.

PAM

Diane --

DIANE

If you can do it, why can't I?

Diane turns away, stepping out into the night, when --

PAM  
Diane?

But Diane's gone.

END FLASHBACK

Pam squeezes her eyes shut. Can't look at herself.

Hardens, opens her eyes. Takes off her jacket. Stares at her body in the mirror.

Shoves her arm into her shirt. Lifts her RIGHT BREAST. Lifts her LEFT BREAST. Cleavage now on full display.

Tousles her hair. It goes from groomed to wild in an instant.

She pulls out RED LIPSTICK. Colors her lips. Stares at herself.

Lifts the KNIFE out of her purse, slips it into her inside pocket, careful. Zips up.

INT. TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS

Pam steps out of the bathroom into the harsh glare of fluorescent lights. Shoulders back, she struts past the bright displays.

Eyes follow her.

INT. FRAT HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Nikki comes in through the open screen door. It's dark. Hair band music blares throughout the house. Screechy.

Eyes turn to her. College kids with BEERS in hand. She smiles meekly, unsure what to do.

BRYCE (O.S.)  
Nikki! You came!

He comes running toward, beer sloshing. Hugs her. She relaxes.

BRYCE (cont'd)  
I want you to meet Brad.

He reaches into the dark and pulls forth BRAD (19), a geeky but cute college kid.

BRYCE (cont'd)  
Nikki, Brad. Brad, Nikki. You both love  
sad, British music.

BRAD  
Hey. Need a beer?

Nikki smiles. Freedom at last.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS

SIRENS blare down Route 40.

Pam waits in the cold, eyes watching. But different this time. Not timid. Instead, pacing, hunting.

A few TRUCKERS eye her as they pass through the truck stop doors. She eyes them back.

Women in short skirts climb into truck cabs, saunter across the parking lot, slip money into their jackets.

COWBOY TRUCKER (O.S.)  
Howdy.

Here he is again. Silver mustache. Gentle air, warm smile.

COWBOY TRUCKER (cont'd)  
Wanna apologize for the last time I seen  
you. Shouldn't'a mistaken a lady for a...  
you know. I'm sorry.

(beat)  
Speaking of, someone like you shouldn't  
be out here. Lots of weirdos. I got  
stories.

Her face shifts. From guarded to interested. She sweetens up.

PAM  
You weren't wrong about me.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS

MARK THE PARTNER pumps gas into his Porsche, glancing around absentmindedly. Until something catches his eye.

MARK POV: A WHITE TRUCK parked furthest from the truck stop. In the dark, out of the way of the street lamps.

The Cowboy Trucker gets in. Pam does too.

Mark pauses. Then gets into his car, drives away.

INT. COWBOY TRUCKER'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Soft country music flows from the radio. Cowboy hat off.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
... Texas to New Jersey twice a month.  
Longer than my other routes. Messes with  
my sciatica, you know --

Pam listens, her foot tapping. Nervous energy.

He notices her leg. Chuckles.

COWBOY TRUCKER (cont'd)  
Shit. Been alone so long I'm talking your  
damn ears off. You new? Been here a dozen  
times and --

PAM  
What do you like?

He shifts.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
Well, you know. I'm old fashioned.

PAM  
So everything, then?

COWBOY TRUCKER  
(nervous laugh)  
Sure.  
(beat)  
Gotta ask... do the drapes match the  
carpet? I love me some redheads.

With her face shadowed, he can't see her haunted eyes.

PAM  
Take off your clothes.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
(smiling, *here we go*)  
Ma' am.

He turns away to lift off his shirt, pull off his pants. Just  
in his underwear, he turns back to her.

She points the KNIFE at him. He lifts his hands, shocked.

COWBOY TRUCKER (cont'd)  
Only have a little cash. Just hauling  
manure. I can open the back and show you.

PAM  
What weirdos?

Confusion on his face.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
Weirdos?

PAM  
Do you know him?

COWBOY TRUCKER  
I don't understand.

PAM  
The dead women. Alice, Marie, Katie.  
Diane. It's all over the news.

He finally understands what she's asking.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
No. No.

PAM  
You said weirdos. You a part of it?

COWBOY TRUCKER  
No. I... I don't live here. I don't know  
who he is.

PAM  
Twice a month, you said?

COWBOY TRUCKER  
Yeah?

PAM  
I just saw you here last week.

Her hand is trembling. He slowly lowers his arms.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
I owe the government some money. So I  
took another haul back-to-back. I don't  
know nothing, I swear. Don't hang around  
types like that.

(tears in his eyes)  
I got a wife and kids... you gonna let me  
get home?

PAM  
That's what they wanted too.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
I don't... what do you want from me?  
(beat)  
I can't pay for the sins of other men.

PAM  
Why not? We do.

A beat as they stare at each other. Then:

He LUNGES at her...

... and the knife slashes his ARM in the process, as...

... he pushes her arm back against the door...

... forcing the knife in her hand to drop....

... he grips her arms tightly, digging into her skin to hold her still as...

... he leans down...

... **and scoops up the knife.**

She's panting. So is he. He waves the knife at her, arm bleeding.

COWBOY TRUCKER  
I could fuck you up good for that. Get out!

She scrambles for the door, leaps out.

The truck starts, pulls out. She watches as it blends into traffic on Route 40.

After a beat, she looks up. SCREAMS into the black night sky. Pent-up frustration and rage.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - NIGHT

Lights, people, storefronts on Route 40. He drives by slowly, eyes searching.

Stops at a LIGHT. Looks over to see: a REDHEAD, walking.

He opens the car door, steps out. Through the dark:

MILES  
Pam!

The woman turns. Not her. Another REDHEAD.

BEEP from a car behind him. The light is green now.

EXT. SPINELLI HOUSE - NIGHT

Pam trudges up the driveway. Stops. The car is missing.

PAM

Nikki.

She runs into the house.

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

All the lights off. She flicks them on.

PAM

Nikki!

No answer. She runs up the stairs. Beat. Back down again.

Picks up the phone, punches in 9... 1... and then:

Sees it. An indentation on the NOTEPAD next to the phone.

She grabs a pencil. Rubs it against the paper until it reveals:

**293 South Chapel Street. Party.**

Panic settles into anger.

EXT. FRAT HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT

Pam hops out of a cab. Runs toward the house.

INT. FRAT HOUSE PARTY - CONTINUOUS

Nikki sits in a dark corner with Brad. Though the music is loud, they're having a tender, quiet moment.

He has his arm wrapped around her, nuzzling her face. His hand, partway down her blouse.

Eyes closed, she's enjoying it. Sinking deeper and deeper into it, until...

YANK! Pam has her by the arm. Beer drops.

NIKKI

Mom!

Pam pulls Nikki roughly through a crowd of sweaty, gawking kids. Shoving them aside to pull her daughter out of the house.

INT. SPINELLI CAR - NIGHT

They both breathe fire in the car. Nikki's face to the window.

Pam wants to yell, keeps looking over. Can't collect her thoughts.

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Once inside, Nikki tries to make a beeline for the stairs, but Pam takes her arm.

PAM

Listen to me. You *think* you know. But you don't know.

NIKKI

I do know. Lots of things.

PAM

All of this is for you. No one sacrificed like this for me. You're not gonna give it away to the first idiot frat boy who paws at you --

NIKKI

I wanted to!

Nikki's ferocity quiets Pam. She tries another way.

PAM

Nicole. I used to be a girl who thought she was a woman, too. And I messed up.

NIKKI

I'm not you.

PAM

I'm trying to save you from pain.

NIKKI

You sure it's me you're trying to save?

PAM

(suspicious)

What does that mean?

But Nikki can't bring herself to say it. Not right now.

PAM (cont'd)  
You're grounded for a month. Two months.

NIKKI  
What?

PAM  
School and work and nowhere else. You're not going traipsing around when there's a serial killer on the loose targeting women.

NIKKI  
Just women with no shame. Isn't that what you always say? So who cares?

SMACK! Pam's hand hovers in the air. Nikki holds her red cheek, shocked.

PAM  
(regret)  
Nikki --

But Nikki turns, runs up the stairs. Bedroom door slams.

Pam looks at her hand, horrified.

After a beat, she sits at the kitchen table. Lays her head down on it. Defeated.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

He watches a LIT WINDOW in Pam's house.

The SCANNER crackles, low voices. Miles turns it up.

POLICE DISPATCHER  
(over scanner)  
... blue van moving south on Route 40.  
Following.

Miles sits up, holds his breath. Long beat.

POLICE DISPATCHER (cont'd)  
(over scanner)  
Negative. Negative. Black van.

Miles breathes out. Deflated. Or maybe relief. After a moment, the light in Pam's window goes out.

He starts the car. Drives away.

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE - MORNING

A TV blares in Chief Lanley's office. A SUBURBAN WOMAN (30s) talking to a TV REPORTER (30s).

SUBURBAN WOMAN ON TV  
What's the FBI doing? How many more women?

TV REPORTER  
You feel afraid when you're out?

SUBURBAN WOMAN ON TV  
They say it's just been hookers, but...  
that don't make me feel any better.

CLICK. Chief Lanley shuts the TV off. Looks to:

Agent Pendergast, sitting in the chair opposite her, and Miles, standing up against the wall.

She doesn't have to say a word. Her look withers them.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
My guys are on 24-hour rotations. We have a partial fingerprint, van type... we're getting closer.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Close is when he's handcuffed and sitting in a cell, so don't you fucking dare use that word with me again.

Miles seems far away, not listening.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
With all due respect, Susan, my men and I don't answer to you.

CHIEF LANLEY  
We answer to the same boss and she was just pissed as shit on television. You wanna split hairs when the history of this thing is written?

No, he does not.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
What about the hotline?

CHIEF LANLEY  
That mess. I've got people reporting their lost cockatoos.

CHIEF LANLEY (cont'd)

(beat)

Miles. Hello? What happened to your face?

Miles comes to.

MILES

Bowling accident.

Chief Lanley's not amused. Lets it go.

CHIEF LANLEY

Your informant saying anything?

(off his head shake)

Wonderful. I'm releasing the info about  
the blue Ford van.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Oh geez, not a good idea --

CHIEF LANLEY

Public wants something? Let's give it to  
them. Let him know that the entire  
fucking state of Delaware is hunting him  
like the animal he is.

MILES

Give us one more day.

They turn to him.

MILES (cont'd)

He's following a script in his head. A  
kink he's seen acted out.

AGENT PENDERGAST

So?

MILES

So we take the list of registered blue  
Ford vans and compare it against credit  
card purchases at sex shops. It's a  
needle in a haystack, but --

AGENT PENDERGAST

It's a grain of sand in the Sahara.

A knowing look passes between them.

Chief Lanley takes a beat to think. To Miles:

CHIEF LANLEY

Can you work with Agent Pendergast on  
this?

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Pam sits at the kitchen table nursing a steaming cup of coffee. Hasn't slept at all. It shows on her face.

Nikki comes bounding down the stairs in her uniform. Stops in the kitchen doorway.

They stare at one another.

Pam wants to make it right. Nikki wants to tear it all down.

PAM

Nikki --

But Nikki takes the car keys and leaves.

INT. AIR COMMAND STAFF BATHROOM - LATER

Pam studies purple BRUISES on her bare arms. Puts her business jacket back on carefully. Winces. Breathes out.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT - MINUTES LATER

Pam surveys the dining room, her usual routine. Except tonight, there's no joy in her face.

FIVE BUSINESS MEN laugh raucously over at one table. One of them drops his NAPKIN, doesn't notice.

Pam sees it but doesn't move. Face blank.

Her eyes drift to the TABLE where she and Miles sat. A COUPLE (50s) sits, reading from their menus. Smiling at each other.

Hopelessness on her face, watching them.

A WAITRESS (20s) appears.

WAITRESS

Pam. Paulie's asking for you.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

PAM

(irritated)

What, Paulie--?

But it's not just Paulie. It's MARK THE PARTNER too.

MARK THE PARTNER  
Hello, Pam.

She looks between them. A slow smile.

PAM  
Is this... about the general manager job?

MARK THE PARTNER  
What general manager job?

Confused, Pam looks to Paulie. He won't meet her eyes.

She's suddenly afraid.

MARK THE PARTNER (cont'd)  
No, I'm here because of a curious thing,  
Pam. I was filling up at the truck stop  
the other night and saw you there.

The color drains from her face.

PAM  
I was... running an errand.

MARK THE PARTNER  
An errand that involved you climbing into  
an eighteen wheeler with a trucker when  
you told Paulie you were going home sick?

PAM  
(frozen beat)  
It's not what it looked like.

MARK THE PARTNER  
Then what was it?

PAM  
I... can't say.

PAULIE  
Pam, you'd better say.

It's a warning. He finally looks at her, pained.

MARK THE PARTNER  
Look, you said it yourself. This is a  
kingdom. And we can't let the gatekeeper  
be... one of those types.

They wait for her to say something. But she can't.

After a beat, Mark hands over her purse and coat.

MARK THE PARTNER (cont'd)  
Walk her out, Paulie.

MOMENTS LATER

It's a bustling night, like always. Pam walks in front, Paulie behind. A death march through the restaurant. Passing:

-- THE KITCHEN

Waiters and waitresses smile and say hi, oblivious.

-- THE DINING ROOM

Light glints off the chandelier, sending sparkles everywhere. People laugh, eat steaming plates of food. Glasses clink.

-- THE HOSTESS STATION

Maria fumbles with a stack of menus for a LARGE, LOUD PARTY of 7, sends an eye roll toward Pam. *Can you believe them?*

At the front entrance, Pam steps out. Turns.

Paulie's face, pained. Hers too. He wipes his eyes.

PAULIE  
Maestro --

She shakes her head.

PAM  
You never asked them.

He stares at her a mournful moment. She turns, walks away.

EXT. TRUCK STOP PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Pam stands under a streetlamp. Staring out into the night.

Across the lot, the SEX WORKERS gather, lighting cigarettes for each other. The TALL SEX WORKER spies Pam. Walks over.

They stand in comfortable silence for a beat.

TALL SEX WORKER  
You know when I first met you, I thought  
you was some fancy, uptight rich lady  
from Wilmington? Just goes to show.

PAM  
(empty)  
Just goes to show.

The sex worker extends a cigarette, smile on her face.

Pam hesitates, then takes it. Big drag, bigger blowout. Relief. Or maybe resignation.

Up the road, the steeple at Our Lady of Fatima shines. A beacon in the dark.

INT. OUR LADY OF FATIMA CATHOLIC CHURCH - NIGHT

Candles lit. Empty except one OLD WOMAN in the front pew. Pam makes her way toward the back.

INT. OUR LADY OF FATIMA CATHOLIC CHURCH, CONFESSORIAL - MOMENTS LATER

Pam sits inside, waiting. After a beat, a RUSTLE.

PAM  
Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It's been... I don't know anymore. I cursed. Smoked. Lied. Stole. I really messed up.

She stops, near tears.

PAM (cont'd)  
I come in here a lot. And every time, I want to tell you something.  
(beat)  
Well here it is. I fucked men and I got fucked by men. For money.

She waits, dread on her face. The first time she's said it out loud.

PRIEST  
And you feel... ashamed?

PAM  
I can't tell anymore whether it's the shame or the hiding it.

PRIEST (O.S.)  
The book of John tells us that cleansing comes through the blood of Jesus Christ --

PAM  
"Those without sin cast the first stone."  
Isn't that a verse?

PRIEST (O.S.)  
Yes?

PAM

I felt those stones. But soon as I got out, I threw them anyway. What does God say about that?

PRIEST (O.S.)

Child...

Pam looks over at the screen. Something not right.

OTHER SIDE OF CONFESSORIAL

Pam pulls open his door. The priest peers out with a round, unlined face. No older than his early 20s.

PAM

I could be your mother.

She leaves.

EXT. ROUTE 40

Pam walks on the road, not in the shoulder. Taking up space.

Cars BEEP as they pass her. She barely blinks. A bull breathing out condensed air.

She stops across from the KUM-ON-IN BAR, it's finger-pointing sign twisting in the wind.

INT. KUM-ON-IN BAR - CONTINUOUS

Same dodgy men playing pool. Same roughed-up women missing teeth. Same old.

Pam steps to the bar. The BARTENDER looks over, nods.

PAM

Can you call me a cab?

INT. MISTER DONUT SHOP - NIGHT

Nikki's arranging the donuts in the case. Face, worn. Tired.

The door CHIMES open. It's the SUBURBAN DAD with his LITTLE GIRL again. He smiles when he sees her.

Nikki takes her glasses off, stuffs them underneath the counter. Opens up the top button on her work uniform.

SUBURBAN DAD  
Us again.

NIKKI  
Hi.

The little girl once again takes her place at the counter.

SUBURBAN DAD  
Must be torture working here. Don't know  
how you stay so fit.

NIKKI  
I'll probably never eat donuts again  
after this.

SUBURBAN DAD  
Well. Good girls should indulge in  
something bad every now and again, don't  
forget.

He winks, goes back to watching his daughter.

Something in her sparks. Catches fire. She might burn down in  
front of him. In a breathless moment, she places her hand  
over his.

He jumps back as though bitten.

SUBURBAN DAD (cont'd)  
What are you doing? I- I'm married. And  
you're a kid.

NIKKI  
I'm sorry, I thought --

SUBURBAN DAD  
I was just being nice. You shouldn't do  
that. Not to grown men. You might...  
There's a serial killer out there.  
(to his daughter)  
C'mon, honey.

LITTLE GIRL  
But Daddy --

SUBURBAN DAD  
Now.

They leave.

Mortified, Nikki looks at herself in the reflection of the  
window. *How could she ever think...?*

On the verge of a scream that never comes, she puts her hands on the donuts, squeezes them until they burst, rip, ooze.

After a beat, she settles. Goes to lock the front door.

INT. HILTON LOBBY - NIGHT

Regal lobby, heavy chandelier, romantic lighting.

Pam steps through the revolving doors. Looks around.

INT. HILTON BAR - CONTINUOUS

Pam settles in at the bar in a velvet lounge. Mostly empty, save a few REGULARS.

A BARTENDER (30s) places a napkin down.

PAM  
Gibson?

The bartender nods, steps away.

OLDER GENTLEMAN (O.S.)  
Strong stuff for a little lady.

He's two seats down. Dapper, fit for his age. 65, maybe even 70. Nice clothes, shiny watch, oiled shoes.

PAM  
Been a day.

OLDER GENTLEMAN  
Sorry to hear that. Can I help?

PAM  
Just wanna sit here and enjoy my drink.  
But thank you.

OLDER GENTLEMAN  
You sure?  
(inches over a seat)  
Got a cherry red Ferrari GTS sitting outside, bright as your hair. Might make you happy to go for a spin.

PAM  
Sounds nice, but no, thank you.

OLDER GENTLEMAN  
Listen, my wife died last year. I have a big, empty house up in Greenville --

PAM  
I'm sorry. I just wanna sit here.

OLDER GENTLEMAN  
But --

STEVEN (O.S.)  
C'mon, man. You heard her. Leave her alone.

They turn. He's at the other end of the bar. Handsome in a normal way, 30s or early 40s. Clutching a beer.

OLDER GENTLEMAN  
(embarrassed)  
Excuse me.

He shuffles away without taking his drink. Pam looks over at Steven appreciatively.

The bartender slides her drink in front of her.

STEVEN  
Some men. Geez.

PAM  
Thank you...?

STEVEN  
Steven.

PAM  
Pam.

*Air clink.*

She sips the drink. It *is* strong. And good. Lets it sink in.

INT. JACK AND JILL SEX SHOP - NIGHT

Miles stares at a row of S&M VIDEOS on the shelf. *The Devil's Daughter. Babylon Whores. The Suffering of Miss Jean.*

He turns. A row of DILDOS looks back at him. He sighs.

Agent Pendergast is now beside him.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Agents Miller and Villarosa are taking six in Wilmington, and Agents Finch, Williams, and Jackson are splitting the other...  
(re: looking at notepad)

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)  
Geez, ten. Delaware has...  
(counting)  
... seventeen sex shops?

MILES  
We're bored here.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
(re: videos)  
You know, not everyone who likes this  
stuff is a deviant.

MILES  
I know. Just so happens that the deviants  
like this shit too.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
(faraway look)  
If everyone's into it, with safe words  
and such... the threat of punishment can  
be... stimulating.

Beat. A coy smile on Miles' face.

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)  
Wait, no, I don't --

MILES  
Nah. I like you better now, Spanky McGee.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Detective --

But Miles leaves him there, down another aisle.

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)  
Well shit.

INT. HILTON BAR - NIGHT

Three empty glasses in front of Pam, and she's feeling it.  
Steven, now next to her. Playful, leaning into each other.

PAM  
... ok, lemme start again.

STEVEN  
For the third time.

PAM  
Quiet.  
(beat)  
A flashlight, a knife, and...

PAM (cont'd)  
a photo of my daughter. If I'm stranded  
on an island, I wanna be able to see her.

STEVEN  
That's sweet. But you're gonna die.

She laughs. He has a certain boyish charm.

PAM  
Ok, then what would you bring?

STEVEN  
Definitely a knife, for sure. A  
flashlight. And... copper wire.

PAM  
Copper wire?

STEVEN  
You can do a lot with copper wire.

PAM  
Like what?

STEVEN  
Well it conducts, for one. You get the  
right materials, you can rig a battery.

PAM  
Oh yeah?

STEVEN  
I'm an electrician.

PAM  
Good with your hands?

He smiles, holds them up. She takes them in hers, feeling  
them. No ring. His voice grows husky.

STEVEN  
You good with yours?

PAM  
Yes.

Beat. A turn in the conversation.

STEVEN  
So listen, I don't live far --

PAM  
Yes.

He smiles.

PAM (cont'd)  
I just have to be home by 2:30. For my  
daughter.

STEVEN  
(doubtful, teasing)  
Dunno. I like to take my time.

She smiles. They stand.

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Nikki sits at the kitchen table, staring ahead. A glass of water by her side. She clears her throat.

NIKKI  
(practicing)  
Mom, I know. I know what you did.  
(no, not right)  
I know who you really are.

She watches the door. Arms crossed. Ready.

LATER

Head down on the table, she startles awake. Looks up at the clock. It reads: **2:46 a.m.**

She peers out the window: a fresh coat of snow. No footsteps leading up to the house.

OUTSIDE PAM'S ROOM

She knocks softly.

NIKKI (cont'd)  
Mom?

Opens the door. Pam's bed, empty.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

Nikki twists the phone cord in one hand, waiting. It rings and rings. Nikki almost hangs up, when --

MARIA (V.O.)  
Air Command, Maria speaking.

NIKKI  
Maria? It's Nikki.

MARIA (V.O.)

Nikki? Honey, it's so late. You ok? A huge party just left, otherwise no one woulda been here to answer --

NIKKI

Is my Mom there?

MARIA (V.O.)

(beat)

I'm sorry, but... she was let go earlier tonight.

Nikki grows still, shocked.

MARIA (V.O.)

Is she ok? She's been a little... weird lately. Coming and going a lot, really distracted --

NIKKI

(quickly)

Thank you.

Nikki hangs up the phone. Thinks a second, grabs car keys.

EXT. HILTON - CONTINUOUS

The cold night sky is clear and bursting with stars.

They walk across the parking lot. Pam's happy. Drunk. Feeling desired and desirous.

STEVEN

Here we are.

She stops.

Covered in some old snow, but unmistakable...

... a blue Ford van.

She finds him in the dark as he continues walking. His slightly balding head, broad shoulders. Clear smile.

Normal looking.

Time seems to stop.

She glances down at the license plate: **L29 778.**

STEVEN (cont'd)

You ok?

PAM

A van.

STEVEN

Yeah?

From somewhere within, she fights through the panic. Smiles.

PAM

Why don't we just... right here?

He catches on, looks around.

STEVEN

What if someone hears?

PAM

Isn't that part of the fun?

STEVEN

Let's go somewhere quiet.

Once he's on the other side of the van, she scrambles for something in her PURSE.

Lifts the KNIFE SHEATH out. Panicked beat as she forgets the knife is gone.

Spies something black in her purse: the wire. She clutches it with her fingers.

Slowly makes her way to the front. Gets in.

INT. STEVEN'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

They look at each other.

PAM

I don't usually do this.

STEVEN

Neither do I. You're very special.

(beat)

Buckle up.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Agent Pendergast combs through a BOX OF RECEIPTS as Miles drives.

AGENT PENDERGAST

You know, he coulda used cash.

MILES  
(annoyed)  
I said it was a long shot.  
(beat, here it comes)  
I had everything under control.

Agent Pendergast stops rifling. Studies Miles.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Susan didn't think so.

MILES  
Susan does what's best for Susan --

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Maybe cause she can't trust you to do  
what's best.

Stung, Miles watches the road, jaw set.

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)  
Miles. Sorry. Listen, it's just --

MILES  
Shut up.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Sorry?

MILES  
Shh.

Somewhere in the car, **LOW VOICES**. Miles reaches around, swerves a little.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Jesus, detective --

Miles holds up the WIRE RECEIVER. Turns the volume way up.

STEVEN (O.S.)  
... real quiet. You'll like it.

PAM (O.S.)  
Sounds nice.

MILES  
Pam?

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Who?

STATIC. The red light on the receiver dims.

MILES

Fuck.

He messes with the knob. Hits the side a few times. Voices come in and out. One word at a time.

Miles pulls the car over three lanes to the shoulder. BEEPS follow them.

MILES (cont'd)

(muttering)

C'mon, c'mon, c'mon. Where are you?

AGENT PENDERGAST

The informant?

Miles nods. Fear on his face.

INT. STEVEN'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

She's studying him, taking in as much as possible. He feels her gaze, turns sharply. She smiles.

PAM

You from Delaware?

STEVEN

Yeah. You?

PAM

From Kalamazoo, actually.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

He messes with the receiver. Just static. Hits the side.

MILES

Fuck.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Here.

He takes the receiver from Miles. Fishes in his pocket. Pulls out a PAPER CLIP.

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)

Works for the ol' TV antenna at home.

He straightens out the paper clip, wraps it around the antenna and extends it upward. Holds it up to the window.

Static gives way to voices. Agent Pendergast smiles. See?

STEVEN (O.S.)  
... a long way. How'd you get here from  
Kalamazoo?

Horror on Miles' face.

MILES  
Fuck. Where are you, Pam?

INT. STEVEN'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

He puts the blinker on. Turns left down a winding road.

PAM  
Well, it's a long story, but --

They pass a sign: **LUM'S POND**

PAM (cont'd)  
Lum's Pond. Isn't it closed at night?

STEVEN  
I can pick a lock.  
(smiling)  
We're gonna have so much fun together.

Pam does her best to smile but the fear is palpable.

INT. MILES' UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Miles throws up a PORTABLE SIREN.

PENDERGAST (O.S.)  
(into scanner)  
10-18, we need all available backup to  
Lum's Pond, address 1068 Howell School  
Road --

The siren blares as they pull off into the night.

EXT. LUM'S POND - CONTINUOUS

Pam hops out. Moonlight reflects off the still water. No sound in the dead of winter. Just silence in the trees.

He peeks around from the back.

STEVEN  
You coming?

She walks slowly. Her eyes search the road they came in on.

For Miles. For anybody.

A LIGHT at the back of the van. She moves toward it.

He's pulled open the back doors.

She turns, peers in:

Clean, empty. Except **a blue carpet** covering the bottom.

Her face betrays nothing. Places her hand down. Rubs the carpet.

PAM  
Soft. This'll work.

She stuffs her hand back in her pocket.

STEVEN  
Hop in.

He steps close, almost on top of her. She takes a chance.

PAM  
You should know I used to... do this for  
money. Long time ago. In case it matters.

Something changes. A veil lifts, and his eyes go cold. Angry.

PAM (cont'd)  
I'm sorry, I --

STEVEN  
You got airs about you, you know that?

Deadened voice. An animal pretending to be human.

PAM  
It's not what you wanted.

He turns. Turns back again. Agitated. Thinking. Deciding. *No, it's not what he wanted.*

STEVEN  
Proves my theory. You're all the same. We  
act like there's a line, but... there  
ain't no line, is there?

And it hits Pam as she studies his rage-filled face. How wrong she was.

PAM  
You're right. There's no line.

He's disgusted, angry. He leans into her, menacing.

STEVEN

You're all just black holes. You would drag me into the dark if I let you. But I won't let you.

A beat of heavy breathing. Then:

Pam punches him, clean in the face. He steps back, shocked.

She turns and runs toward the woods.

He's not far behind, quick and lithe and angry.

A hill rises where the woods begin. She pushes, breathless, as she ascends. She can't help but slow, the ground mushy with winter below her feet.

He's nearly on top of her now, reaches for her jacket.

She goes down. He falls on tops of her, grabs her legs.

PAM

No!

She kicks him -- one, two, three times -- in the head until she's free from his grip and he's rolling backward...

Back down to the bottom.

She's in the woods now. Branches hitting her face. She doesn't slow. And doesn't look back.

EXT. LUM'S POND - MINUTES LATER

Steven, mud stains all over, bloodied lip, fumbles with his keys in the dark. Cursing under his breath.

Hears something. Turns. Off in the distance, POLICE CARS and FBI VANS turn onto the curved road. Coming his way. **Fast.**

STEVEN

Fuck.

He hops in his van. With the lights off, he pulls away, heading out of the park in the opposite direction.

MOMENTS LATER

Miles's car slides to a stop nearly at the pond. Jumps out.

MILES  
(into the dark)  
Pam! PAM!

Cops and FBI agents spill out of their vehicles, doors slamming and flashlights criss-crossing through the night.

Agent Pendergast stands with the car door open, looking down.

AGENT PENDERGAST  
Tire prints. Fresh.

CRUNCH. Miles steps on something in the dark. Picks it up: the wire.

MILES  
**FUCK!** What did I do?  
(shouting)  
Pam!

Miles takes off into the dark. FBI agents follow him.

INT. SPINELLI CAR - LATER

Nikki's parked at the truck stop parking lot. Her eyes shut.

NIKKI  
Please please please...

She opens her eyes. A few SEX WORKERS moving in and out of the truck stop.

None of them her mother. Nikki breathes out, relief.

But then: a worse fear settles on her face.

She peels away.

INT. SPINELLI CAR - LATER

Nikki drives slow on Route 40, searching the side of the road. Cars BEEP to get around her.

The trees sway in the wind, making it nearly impossible to see.

She finally pulls over to let other cars pass.

NIKKI  
... I won't... I'll never... I'm sorry.  
Just please. Please please please...

A different kind of *please*. To anyone, anywhere.

She's sobbing.

She lifts her head, wipes her eyes.

But then there *is* someone. Running out of the woods. A bundled shadow. Fighting to get home.

**Pam.**

Nikki jumps out of the car.

NIKKI (cont'd)  
(screaming)  
Mom --

Pam turns, shocked. They run into each others' arms.

PAM  
Nikki, what...? Are you ok? What are you doing out here?

Pam looks behind her, still worried.

NIKKI  
I thought... I thought maybe...  
(tears)  
Mom, I don't care. I don't care. I don't.

She keeps repeating it.

Pam suddenly catches on. Horror on her face. Her worst fear realized.

They embrace. Then fear morphs to something else: relief.

PAM  
I'll explain everything. Just need to make a stop first.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME NIGHT

Miles marches through the hallways, Agent Pendergast and other FBI AGENTS jogging to keep up.

He's disheveled. Mud on his clothes. Barks at an OFFICER (20s) behind the desk --

MILES  
Windover, Snyder, Reilly. Now. Wake them up.

DESK OFFICER

But, sir...

MILES

Now. There's another woman missing.

The desk officer snaps to, starts punching numbers into the telephone.

MILES (cont'd)

And put out an APB... Pam Spinelli.  
Redhead. 43. Five foot --

The desk officer puts the phone down.

MILES (cont'd)

What are you doing?

DESK OFFICER

Pam Spinelli is waiting in your office.

Shocked, Miles runs. An FBI agent makes a move to follow, but Agent Pendergast stops him. They hang back.

INT. POLICE STATION, SPARE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Miles bursts into the room.

MILES

Pam.

She stands up from the chair behind his desk. He makes a move to go to her, stops when he sees her face.

MILES (cont'd)

I'm so sorry. I had the whole team on it.  
I wasn't... I wasn't gonna give up on  
you.

She assesses him: the mud on his clothes, the leaves in his hair.

He's telling the truth. She looks at him anew. Hopeful.

MILES (cont'd)

Did he hurt you?

PAM

No.

(beat)

You have a baggie?

He pulls an EMPTY junk food wrapper out of his pocket.

Pam steps forward, gently dips her left hand in the empty wrapper, pushing off as many BLUE FIBERS as she can. Rolls it up. Hands back the wrapper.

PAM (cont'd)  
Carpet fibers from the back of his Blue Ford van. L29 778.

He searches his coat pockets, pulls out a NOTEBOOK. Scribbles. Looks up at her. Long beat.

MILES  
I never meant to make you feel --

PAM  
Yes you did.

He doesn't fight it. She turns to go. Turns back.

PAM (cont'd)  
Get this fucker.

Leaves. He stares after her.

INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Miles and Pendergast walk as fast as they can down the hallway, huffing it, toward --

CHIEF LANLEY'S OFFICE

MILES  
Chief.

She looks up. Not happy.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Sit down, Miles. Agent Pendergast.

They do. Chief Lanley gives Miles a hard look.

CHIEF LANLEY (cont'd)  
A fucking civilian? Stealing evidence?  
You think I'm dumb?

His face falls.

MILES  
No, ma'am.

CHIEF LANLEY  
She could've been hurt. Or worse. You thought you'd bag this one on your own.

MILES

You called in the FBI over my head --

CHIEF LANLEY

(exploding)

Who the *fuck* cares about your ego when  
women are dying?

He's chastened.

AGENT PENDERGAST

Susan, he's right. It should've been him  
on lead and me and my guys --

CHIEF LANLEY

Shut the *fuck* up, both of you.

She assesses them, disgusted.

CHIEF LANLEY (cont'd)

(to Miles)

I knew you slept in your car. That you  
didn't take calls if you thought they  
were beneath you. Everyone thought I was  
crazy for keeping you around. He's a  
wunderkind, I'd say. Doesn't matter about  
the foot cause his mind is brilliant.

(beat)

I was wrong. Your mind was the problem  
all along.

MILES

Susan --

CHIEF LANLEY

Badge and gun, now. You're suspended  
pending further review.

Shocked beat. He grows riled, stands. No. Holds up the baggie  
with the BLUE FIBERS.

MILES

His name is Steven Pennell. Agent  
Pendergast?

Agent Pendergast pulls RECEIPTS out of his pocket, rifles  
through them.

AGENT PENDERGAST

He's an electrician. Bought seven sets of  
needle-nose pliers at area hardware  
stores with markings that match those on  
the victims. A regular at Jack and Jill  
sex shop in Wilmington.

AGENT PENDERGAST (cont'd)  
Videos he rented include --  
(reading a receipt)  
*Savage Sadists, Helpless Harlots,*  
*Punished Pussies, Sexed to Death* --

CHIEF LANLEY  
(disgusted)  
-- got it --

MILES  
Drives a blue Ford van with a six-digit license plate and a blue carpet in the back. Fibers from the carpet contain microscopic blood samples that match the blood from his victims.

He slaps the baggie down on her desk, finally breathing out.

MILES (cont'd)  
You're right. I'm an insecure fuckhead who needs to get his shit together. I'm sorry for putting you through it. Both of you. But me and Pam and Pendergast, we did this. Let us finish it. After that, you can do whatever you want with me.

Chief Lanley chews her lip. Long beat.

CHIEF LANLEY  
Can she ID him?

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Outside the window, the sun is coming up through a winter haze, casting a gothic glow.

Pam and Nikki sit at the table, steaming cups of coffee in front of them.

Tired, subdued. Long night. Long conversation. After a beat, Nikki reaches out to Pam.

NIKKI  
They'll get him now. I know they will.  
All because of you. It'll be ok, Mom.

PAM  
I know. I have you.

Hand squeeze. The DOORBELL rings.

PAM (cont'd)  
Probably the paper boy collecting?

She stands, digs in her purse. Nikki follows her to the door.

AT THE DOOR

Miles stands on the stoop.

MILES

Hi, Pam.

Behind him, FBI vans. Agent Pendergast and Chief Lanley on either side of one.

EXT. LOWER-MIDDLE CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD PARK - DAY

A neighborhood of ranch houses. Quiet. At the end of the street, a small PARK with monkey bars and swings.

Pam and Miles sit on bench. Feet apart. Awkward silence. In Miles' hand, a WALKIE TALKIE.

Across the street, going from house to house, a GIRL SCOUT (8) with a bag of cookies. They watch her.

Miles turns twice, stops. Then:

MILES

I wanna tell you about my foot.

Her body relaxes. She's listening.

MILES (cont'd)

I'd been working a lot. And fighting with my wife. The FBI, it's not a job, it's a lifestyle. Anyway, I came home one night from some event, drunk, and my wife was standing in the kitchen with this guy. This old friend of hers. I'd met him before, just never spent any real time with him. He had just popped over, she said. To catch up. And then she... brushed a crumb off his cheek. With this easiness. An easiness we'd never had. And I just knew. They were together. Had been together. Maybe for years. And I just... I hadn't been paying attention. I threw a punch. He left. But I couldn't let him go. I jumped on my hog, followed him onto the Beltway. At some point he got off and I just kept going.

(beat)

I was doing over a hundred when I hit a tree. Lost my foot. My job. My wife.

(beat)

MILES (cont'd)  
Sometimes I hate living with the reminder  
of it. That everyone can see it. Then I  
think... fuck it. I'm human.

A moment hangs between them.

His walkie talkie CRACKLES.

AGENT PENDERGAST (O.S.)  
(over walkie talkie)  
Van approaching. Need visual on suspect.

They sit up.

A BLUE VAN rounds a corner...

... comes up the road, slowly...

... crunches through the snow, and...

... rolls into a driveway in front of a one-story HOUSE,  
passenger side to them.

Beat. A door SLAMS on the driver's side.

Miles and Pam wait. A lifetime in only a few seconds. And then:

STEVEN emerges carrying a TOOLKIT. Opens up the back.

A normal-looking man in a normal neighborhood.

Pam squeezes Miles' hand. Head nod. *It's him.*

MILES  
(into walkie talkie)  
Positive ID on suspect.

Miles glances at Pam. Gratefulness on his face. Smiles.

She smiles back.

AGENT PENDERGAST (O.S.)  
(over walkie talkie)  
Go go go.

Miles jumps up, sprinting. Pam watching.

GIRL SCOUT (O.S.)  
Hello.

Pam turns.

GIRL SCOUT (cont'd)  
Do you wanna buy any cookies?

PAM  
(collecting herself)  
Sure, honey.

Pam rifles through her purse. The little girl places her COOKIE BAG on the ground.

There's a COMMOTION behind them. Muffled shouting. They turn.

GIRL SCOUT  
Why are those men at my house?

Horror as Pam realizes: the murderer's daughter. She takes the little girl's right hand. Gentle.

PAM  
Tell me about your badges, sweetheart.

The little girl, confused, points to her sash.

GIRL SCOUT  
Um. This one is for Outdoor Adventurer,  
this one for Painting. And this one...  
(checking)  
... First Aid. This one --

More muffled shouting. The little girl twists. Can't see what's happening behind the blue van.

GIRL SCOUT (cont'd)  
Is my daddy ok?

Pam takes her other hand.

PAM  
Listen.

The little girl turns back, eyes like saucers.

PAM (cont'd)  
No matter what happens, you'll be ok. You have the rest of your life.

The little girl looks up at her, earnest and wide-eyed.

EXT. POLICE STATION - EARLY EVENING

The PRESS is in a frenzy as Chief Lanley steps toward a podium, flanked on either side by Miles and Agent Pendergast. Dozens of FBI agents behind them.

Bulbs flash. Reporters shout "Chief! Chief!"

CHIEF LANLEY

(into mike)

I can confirm that as of this afternoon, we have a male suspect in custody for the murders of the women along Route 40.

FLASH! FLASH! of dozens of cameras. Reporters shouting. Chief Lanley points to one.

REPORTER 1

Chief Lanley, can you confirm that you arrested a Steven Pennell this afternoon? Is he the Route 40 Killer?

More reporters shouting. Chief Lanley, annoyed.

CHIEF LANLEY

As I stated very clearly, I cannot confirm the name of the suspect until further notice.

(beat)

But I want to say one thing to the people of Delaware this evening.

INT. SPINELLI CAR - CONTINUOUS

Pam is parked at the truck stop, radio on. Through the windshield, she can see into the truck stop.

INSIDE THE TRUCK STOP

A TV hangs from a corner. People huddled around it, watching Chief Lanley at the press conference.

Among them, the sex workers. Eyes glued.

BACK TO PAM

CHIEF LANLEY(O.S.)

(on the radio/TV)

I know you've been scared these past few months. Looking over your shoulders. No one should live under a threat of violence. No one should wonder if they'll be the next victim. Too many women live that way, wondering if today is their last. I will continue to fight to make sure justice is served. And tonight I can say to the people of Delaware, to the women of Delaware: sleep easy.

The sex workers look at each other. Smile.

Pam smiles too. A bittersweet, faraway look.

She starts the car.

INT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Paulie stands at the grill, flipping sizzling veggies in a pan. Looks up.

PAULIE

Seymour.

Across the kitchen, a nervous, bookish SEYMOUR (20s), ultra thin and wearing all black, looks up from his clipboard.

SEYMOUR

I ordered too many truffles, Paulie.

PAULIE

S'ok. We'll do something with them.  
Smoke?

SEYMOUR

I can't believe this. The very notion of truffles is that you use *un soupçon* so as to not overwhelm the palette and now...

He drones on. Paulie tunes out, his face far away.

EXT. AIR COMMAND RESTAURANT, BACK LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

Paulie steps out, sits down on his usual crate. Sighs. Pulls a cigarette from out behind his ear.

PAM (O.S.)

Thought you were gonna quit.

She stands there, hesitant, a hopeful smile on her face.

His shock gives way to happiness.

PAULIE

It's not smoking if we share.

PAM

Oh yeah?

PAULIE

Yeah.

She sits opposite him. He lights the cigarette, passes it to her. Old times.

PAULIE (cont'd)  
You doing ok?

PAM  
I am, thank you. You?

PAULIE  
Good. Well. Good enough.  
(beat)  
I'm sorry, Pam. I didn't want to lose  
you, and that's the god's honest truth.  
It was selfish, I know --

PAM  
It's ok. I'm sorry too, Paulie.

PAULIE  
It ain't the same without you.

They smoke in silence a beat.

PAM  
Paulie.

PAULIE  
Hm.

PAM  
Why do love your wife?

PAULIE  
Jesus. What a question.  
(thinks for a beat)  
She has a nice ass.

PAM  
C'mon. That's not why you love her.

PAULIE  
I mean, I can tell you when I feel it.  
It's the small things. Like when I come  
home and she's standing in the hallway.  
She turns around and smiles at me.

PAM  
You love her cause she's nice to you?

PAULIE  
Fuck no, she's not nice to me. It's...  
that look.

PAULIE (cont'd)

That look that says, "I know you. I know all of you." There's nothing quite like that.

Pam smiles at the image.

PAULIE (cont'd)

That's what you come here for? To ask me about love?

PAM

No.

PAULIE

(beat)

You ever gonna tell me what happened?

She takes a drag, hands the cigarette back. Reaches into her pocket, pulls out --

A NEW WÜSTHOF KNIFE. Hands it over to a surprised Paulie.

PAM

My friend... more like a sister. We worked together for a while. Over there.

Her eyes drift to the truck stop. Something different in her eyes this time. No shame, no disgust. Just a wistful sadness.

Paulie follows her line of sight. Shocked. Looks back at her.

PAM (cont'd)

Used to think that if I just worked hard enough, I'd earn the right to outrun my past. Then she was murdered. And I realized... you can't outrun something that will always be part of you.

She continues talking. He listens, astonished.

INT. SPINELLI HOUSE - DAY

Nikki paws through a pile of mail.

**SUPER: Six months later**

She fans out SHINY BROCHURES on the kitchen table: University of Delaware, University of Pennsylvania, NYU.

Grabs a pen and a sticky note. Scribbles something on the sticky. Satisfied, she takes her car keys and leaves.

CLOSE-UP ON STICKY NOTE: **"Mom, Look what arrived! Can't wait to chat. Going to Charcoal Pit with Bryce. Home by 4. Xo"**

INT. ARNER'S DINER - DAY

Bustling old-time diner. A sign at the counter:  
**"ORDER OUR WORLD-FAMOUS, HOMEMADE PIES FOR YOUR EVENT. WE WON'T TELL ON YOU!"**

People in line. Waiting for a table. To buy pie.

Pam is the queen bee at the front: cashing out bills, talking to customers, directing the waitstaff. A smile on her face. In her element once again.

A COUPLE WITH A BABY stand in front of the line, waiting.

PAM  
 Stacy --

A WAITRESS (20s) appears.

PAM (cont'd)  
 Table 35. They need a high chair.

Stacey takes the menus, and the family follows her.

MILES (O.S.)  
 Table for two?

Pam turns. He's next in line. Hopeful face.

MOMENTS LATER

In a back booth, away from the noise. They stare at each other a beat, Miles not sure how to begin.

MILES (cont'd)  
 Nice place. It looks, uh... good.

But his eyes are only on her. She smiles.

PAM  
 Been a while.

MILES  
 Figured you needed some space from terrible men.

PAM  
 (chuckle)  
 Yeah, maybe.

MILES

I needed time to figure some shit out  
too.

(beat)

Good job here?

PAM

Nice people. No night shift.

MILES

You deserve that.

She smiles.

PAM

And you? What are you doing without a  
serial killer to catch? Parking tickets?

MILES

I'm not a detective anymore, actually.

PAM

(shocked)

You quit?

MILES

Words were exchanged.

PAM

But... David, Goliath, the Hardy Boys --

MILES

A new friend offered me a place back with  
the bureau, but... I needed something  
else. So. I'm a private investigator now.  
Different rules, same shit.

PAM

Working by yourself?

MILES

Well. After you've had the best partner  
you're ever gonna have, there's really  
nowhere to go but down.

A knowing smile between them.

PAM

Still sleeping in your car and eating  
junk food, though.

MILES

One change at a time, please.

They laugh. He grows serious.

MILES (cont'd)

Look, I wanted to see you because... I never really thanked you. What you did was... extraordinary. And I've been thinking about you. A lot.

(beat)

You know why Diane was your friend? Why she came to you? She wanted to be like you. And not cause you worked at some fancy place. You just... you make people try harder. Want more for themselves. You make people better, Pam.

PAM

(quiet, moved)

Thank you.

The sound of BREAKING GLASS somewhere.

PAM (cont'd)

I'm sorry... I have to get back.

MILES

I wanna take you to dinner. To a nice place. Maybe you know it?

She slides out of the booth with a smile, stands.

MILES (cont'd)

(beat, hopeful)

Tonight?

PAM

No.

MILES

No?

PAM

Friday night.

MILES

Friday. Yes. Great. What's happening tonight?

PAM

Having dinner with my daughter. Chatting about colleges. She wants to go to NYU.

MILES

Wow. Aiming high.

Pam smiles, thinking about it.

PAM  
Yeah. We do.

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER:

*Dedicated to:*  
*Catherine DiMauro*  
*Shirley Anne Ellis*  
*Margaret Lynn Finner*  
*Michelle Gordon*  
*Kathleen Meyer*  
*and all the women of Route 40*

FADE OUT.