

BEACHWOOD

Written by

Briggs Watkins and Wes Watkins



BEACHWOOD DR

the eponymous blue sign, framed against an even bluer sky.

BOOM DOWN

to the large STOP SIGN just underneath it, a bright red warning, our last warning before we...

MOVE AWAY

from the sign and ROVE into Beachwood Canyon, crossing the street of the Village, a BMW 3 Series HONKS at us. *Whatever.*

JUMP CUT TO

a quiet residential, red-tiled roofs, lawns green as cash...

TONAL MUSIC

builds as we creep up the mountain in a series of JUMP CUTS:

THE ROAD

slims and winds, threatening to lose us in the labyrinth...

THE HOMES

grow more reclusive, hidden behind walls of Indian Laurel...

THE CARS

gain a zero on their price tags, four-seater family vans give way to two-seater Jags, legacy plates...no leases...

THE RESIDENTS

clock us as we smear by them, apprehension in the air...

AND WE FINALLY

hone in on a SINGLE-STORY BUNGALOW, a bohemian wet dream of original 20s design, immaculately maintained.

STILL IN OUR POV

we HOP the electric fence and slip around to the backyard, where we crawl toward a DOGGIE DOOR, on all fours...

INT. BUNGALOW - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...and find DYLAN LEVER (24) emerging from the other side.

She rises to her feet, knees scuffed, hair big and unbrushed, a clipboard with zero signatures dangling in her hand. She takes a look around, eyes wide with pest-like curiosity...

She saunters toward a farmhouse kitchen sink. Sets her clipboard down. Turns on the stainless steel faucet.

A silky stream of water GUSHES out. Dylan positions her head underneath the faucet and begins to drink, water splattering all over her baggy Greenpeace polo.

She catches her warped reflection in the stainless steel. Doesn't look away. Her moth-wing eyes seem unevenly huge.

CUT TO:

INT. BUNGALOW - LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

A cozy living room, bathed in a waterfall of natural light.

Dylan wanders in, sizing up the tastefully arranged furniture, the original hardwood floor. It's clearly up to her liking.

She rounds a glass coffee table, fingers grazing over a pretentiously chosen Taschen: *A Window to Nowhere*.

She pricks open the first couple of pages. Completely blank. Flips through the entire book. Nothing but white pages.

*Art.*

CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - LATER

Dylan tours a spacious master bedroom. Impeccably furnished.

She crawls onto the beautiful queen-sized bed and begins to play out a scenario where she's being taken from behind.

INT. CLOSET - LATER

Dylan separates a rack of designer clothes. Unspools a D&G leopard-print scarf from a wooden hangar. Considers.

INT. BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Dylan adjusts her new wardrobe in the bathroom mirror.

Satisfied, she pretends to hold a glass of wine as she workshops an ostentatious self-introduction:

DYLAN

Hi, I'm Dylan.  
(no)  
Hi, Dylan!  
(no)  
Hi, Dylan.  
(yes)  
Hi, Dylan. Welcome to my home.

She smiles, "clinks" her wine glass with her own reflection.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Dylan plops onto the plush grey sofa, making herself at home in a home that isn't hers...

As she settles in, she reaches for the smart remote on the coffee table. Clicks on the TV. Selects a flashback episode of *The Hills* to watch; a 2000s-era "reality" show populated with gorgeous, Barbie-doll blondes living their best lives in a dreamily perfect Los Angeles.

A melodramatic scene between SPENCER PRATT (25) and HEIDI MONTAG (20), colloquially known as "Speidi", plays on screen:

HEIDI (O.S.)	SPENCER (O.S.)
Is it true?	It's not true, babe.

ON DYLAN, rapt in a vicarious hangout until--

The front door UNLOCKS, spooking Dylan on the sofa. We hear the jangling of keys outside, the clinking of dog leashes...

Dylan moves fast. Shuts off the TV, flattens her divot on the sofa and DARTS for the kitchen--

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

--where she narrowly misses the DOG-WALKER (26) entering through the foyer with two jittery chihuahuas in tow.

Dylan throws herself into the kitchen pantry. As she shuts the louvered doors behind her--

CUT TO:

INT. PANTRY CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Light bands across Dylan's face, eyes, a voyeur's glow.

DYLAN'S POV: A slatted view of the kitchen, empty for now.

We hear the chihuahuas clatter toward us, YAPPING on their way over. They can smell us, a *scent that doesn't belong...*

Dylan goes crocodile-still, turning panic into patience.

The chihuahuas start to CLAW at the base of the door, yap-yapping, a soundscape of anxiety, relentless...

In the b.g., we see the DOG-WALKER approach the farmhouse kitchen sink, back firmly to us.

There's a cheaply printed logo on her prison orange t-shirt: 'Walk-a-Friend' (like Wag! or Rover).

The Dog-Walker turns on the stainless steel faucet. A silky stream of water GUSHES out.

Then, the Dog-Walker angles her head underneath the faucet and begins to drink, just like Dylan only moments earlier.

ON DYLAN, a recognition there. Something primal linking them.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The Dog-Walker brings her head up from the sink, quenched. Towels off her wet chin with the tail of her t-shirt.

As she does, she spots something foreign on the counter...

**Dylan's clipboard.**

The Dog-Walker freezes. Suddenly alert. She turns to the direction of the incessant yapping--*the pantry closet.*

INT. PANTRY CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Dylan and the Dog-Walker caught in an unknowing eye-line.

A shadow passes over Dylan's face, plunging us in **black** until

INT. KITCHEN/PANTRY CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

--THE CLOSET DOORS RIP OPEN, revealing the DOG-WALKER.

Dylan and the Dog-Walker lock eyes for a charged moment.

The YAPPING has reached an unbearable pitch...

Finally, *mercifully*--

The Dog-Walker addresses Dylan in a low, territorial tone:

DOG-WALKER  
What are you doing?

Dylan doesn't answer, a creep in headlights.

DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
(re: D&G scarf)  
What are you *wearing*?

Dylan, panicked, starts to remove the cashmere scarf but--

DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
No, keep it.

*What?*

DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
(off Dylan's look)  
They won't miss it.

She notes the Greenpeace logo on Dylan's rumpled polo.

DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
Greenpeace? You'll never get  
anywhere with them. These people  
don't trust *anyone*, so you'll have  
to be more creative. Do something  
with dogs, they like dogs. More  
than people.

Dylan nods, digesting, a creature of the same genus.

DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
Now get the fuck out of my house.

Dylan SCRAMBLES out of the closet like a shooed pest. Exits  
the same way she came in--right through the DOGGIE DOOR.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - BELDEN DRIVE - EVENING

Dylan coming down Belden, frazzled. The sun is setting.

AARON (O.S.)  
Yo, Dylan!

Dylan flinches, turns to see AARON meeting her around the bend. Aaron wears the same Greenpeace polo as Dylan but he carries his clipboard with a different, more earnest energy.

AARON (CONT'D)  
 Get any sign ups yet?  
 (re: D&G scarf)  
 Whoa, what are you wearing?

DYLAN  
 I quit.

AARON  
 Quit? What do you mean you quit?

Dylan ignores him, continues on down the winding drive...

AARON (CONT'D)  
 Wait, where ya going? Dylan!

CUT TO:

EXT. YUCCA STREET - NIGHT

The grunge of Hollywood, barren at this hour save for the one homeless man screaming/dancing through yet another nightly episode. A helicopter THRUMS overhead, disturbing no one.

Dylan side-steps a tent on the sidewalk and jay-walks the red light on Wilcox, approaching

THE LIDO

a gentrified, Old Hollywood-style apartment complex.

Dylan rounds the curve and is suddenly hit with a light RAIN.

She stops, dumbstruck, then glances up at the night sky and discovers the Lido's overused AC units are dribbling water.

CUT TO:

INT. LIDO APARTMENTS - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A white hallway. SOUNDS of sex, music, domestic violence...

Dylan swipes an Amazon package off a neighbor's tacky door mat: *Yay! You're Here!*

CUT TO:

INT. ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a silver-framed photo of a bright-eyed BLONDE in a white mini dress, a UC Davis sash loose around her shoulders.

QUICK CUTS of other framed photos of that same bright-eyed blonde in varying exotic locales; study abroad in Spain, self-discovery in Thailand, spring break with the girls in Tulum.

FIND Dylan cross-legged on a girlish bed. Laptop open. The apartment that surrounds her is whimsically feminine, full of little tchotchkies taken from trips from around the world.

This is most assuredly not Dylan's apartment.

ON LAPTOP SCREEN: An application page for *Walk-a-Friend*, the pet-sitting service advertised on the Dog-Walker's t-shirt.

Dylan uploads her resume. Hits "next". We're taken to a long form application page. Since nothing auto-filled from her PDF, she'll have to fill out the same information again.

A laborious moment as she re-types her made-up work history.

Once finished, Dylan hits "submit." And almost immediately--

An email titled Schedule For Interview pops up in her inbox.

Dylan checks it. Agrees to the earliest possible date.

CUT TO BLACK.

A moment in the dark. Then, from the **blackness**--

NATE (30s) materializes in a low res ZOOM CALL. He crosses his buff arms as he waits for the other participant to join.

After a beat, Dylan finally joins in. She's replaced her apartment background with a poorly pixelated JPEG of an ostentatious living room. Her outline jars against it.

NATE  
(Australian accent)  
Hey. Dylan?

DYLAN  
That's me.

NATE  
(stab at a joke)  
Nice place you're calling in from.

DYLAN  
Thanks.

A beat.

NATE  
You based in L.A?

DYLAN  
Hollywood, but recently I've been  
looking into houses in Beachwood.

NATE  
Nice area. *Beachwood*, I mean.

DYLAN  
Yeah, I've wanted to live there  
ever since I saw it on *The Hills*.

NATE  
(nodding off)  
Nice, very nice...

A flash of white on his face as he pulls up her resume on  
another tab.

NATE (CONT'D)  
So it looks like you've got some  
pet care experience. "Posh Pet  
Care"...which location were you at?

Dylan's eyebrows jump with surprise. *There's more than one?*

DYLAN  
Uh, the original?

NATE  
Oh, nice. So you know Brian?

DYLAN  
Yeah. He was...the coolest.

NATE  
Isn't he? Miss Bri. Knew him from  
when he was still over at the  
Melrose location. Small town.  
(cursory glance)  
ASPCA...some volunteer work at the  
shelter...really impressed with  
your resume here, Dylan. It's like  
you're tailored made for us.

DYLAN  
Thanks.

Nate's face darkens a hue as he clicks out of her resume.

NATE

So, why do you want to be a Friend with us?

DYLAN

I guess I just can't get enough of... (strained) dogs.

NATE

Well, that's always a plus! (haha) I guess I should get a little bit more into who we are: we're relatively new to the Greater Los Angeles area, but we've grown pretty exponentially since COVID. Turns out, people still need to have their dogs walked. Who knew?

CUT TO:

INT. ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Dylan pretending to be interested as she pulls up Walk-a-Friend's main website, the page with their mission statement.

NATE (O.S.)

So, question for you, Dylan. Why Walk-a-Friend? As opposed to our other competitors?

Dylan reads/glances off their website, almost verbatim:

DYLAN

I believe what separates Walk-a-Friend from other app-based pet-sitting services is that you "provide owners and their adorable pets with the same unconditional love a *real* friend would bring, albeit for a more reasonable and affordable price."

Nate nods, proud in a masturbatory way.

NATE

Well, I'll tell you what, Dylan...  
(beat)  
That's exactly what we're about.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - VILLAGE MESSAGE BOARD - DAY

Dylan, now wearing a prison orange Walk-a-Friend t-shirt, loiters around the community message board, eyes glued to her cracked Android screen - waiting for a bite...

Suddenly, her phone DINGS with a new walk request:

***BRAWN, a German shepherd in Mid-City, needs a walk!***

Dylan sees "Mid-City" and promptly hits "Ignore Request."

ASC SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)  
Hey. Got somewhere to be?

Dylan looks up from her phone and sees an ASC SECURITY GUARD (private outfit) trying to accost her from his cruiser.

Dylan pinches the nipples of her shirt and flexes the 'Walk-a-Friend' logo like a badge. The ASC guy reads it, drives off.

When Dylan returns to her phone (more tense than before), she realizes that she's missed a new walk request:

***GRACIE, a poodle in Beachwood Canyon, needs a walk!***

Dylan comes alive. Hits "Accept Walk". A message appears:

***Already Booked!***

DYLAN  
 Shit!

A couple passerby regard her strangely. Dylan tenses a "hi". It doesn't help. As soon as they pass, her smile slides off.

We get another DING--

***OSCAR, a Yorkshire terrier in Beachwood Canyon, needs a walk!***

In a millisecond, Dylan hits "Accept Request."

***Booked!***

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - HOLLYRIDGE DRIVE - DAY

Dylan standing alone in the street, visibly disappointed.

REVERSE ON

the HOUSE, well, *house* is being generous. It's more like a wall--a flat, white, ugly structure consumed in shrubbery.

We see OSCAR pawing for us in the window, red rocket ready.

Dylan pulls up the Walk-a-Friend app and, with little regard for Oscar's vigorous enthusiasm, hits "Cancel Walk."

Another walk request almost immediately replaces it--

**JARVIS, a French bulldog in Beachwood Canyon, needs a walk!**

Dylan is already in motion as she hits "Accept Request."

**Booked!**

CUT TO:

EXT. MID-CENTURY HOUSE - DAY

The next house fares much better; a shady MID-CENTURY tucked in the corner of a quiet cul-de-sac. Beautifully landscaped, as if under a Buddhist's eye. The Chi flows like honey here.

Impressed, Dylan strolls up to the elegant front door. Unlocks the four-digit passcode on the lockbox (*provided by the owner over the Walk-a-Friend app*) and steps inside...

INT. MID-CENTURY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...and makes a truly horrifying discovery:

The house is a certifiable **bachelor pad**, with its black-and-wood paneling, mom-picked furniture, and life-sized Marvel statues (Rocket Raccoon gargoyle the entryway).

Dylan motions to turn back the way she came but...

JARVIS stops her in her tracks. He looks up at her from the carpet, bug-eyed, cute. She must've missed him on the way in.

A lengthy beat as Jarvis and Dylan just eyeball each other.

Suddenly, A MALE VOICE CRACKLES FROM BEHIND HER--

OWNER (O.S.)  
Leash and harness are by the door.

Dylan JUMPS, spins to see the OWNER observing her omnipotently through a RING CAMERA on the wall.

DYLAN  
Oh, okay, um...

Flustered, she heads for the front door. Grabs the leash and an *Avengers*-themed harness off a magnetic hook rack and returns to Jarvis on the carpet.

As she struggles to fasten on his harness--

OWNER (O.S.)  
New hire, huh?  
(tsks)  
*Just my luck...*

Dylan pretends she didn't hear that. Once everything's fastened, she rises, the leash like a lasso in her hand.

DYLAN  
Okay, c'mon...  
(already forgot his name)  
Dog.

Jarvis doesn't move. The mutt is stone.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
*C'mon...*

She gives a few tugs on his leash, but Jarvis puts the "bull" in bull-headed. A mini TUG-OF-WAR breaks out between them.

The Owner intervenes, patience lost--

OWNER (O.S.)  
Just drag him.

*What?*

OWNER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
He's not gonna care. Just drag him.

Dylan glances at the camera, then back to Jarvis, unsure...

After some trepidation, she grabs Jarvis' two little hind legs and begins to slowly DRAG him across the hardwood floor. Jarvis looks like he's having the time of his life.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOLLYWOOD PARK - DAY

A bustling dog park, nestled underneath the Hollywood sign.

**LAKE HOLLYWOOD PARK**  
*We Make L.A. a Better Place!*

FIND Dylan on a bench with Jarvis, taking in the safari of L.A. dog culture; the cliques...the breeds...the Gucci...the Balenciaga...the toned asses and the sunny vibes...suddenly--

A MINIATURE PINSCHER barks at her, bringing her back. The Pinscher wears a CoyoteVest; a spiky, punk-rock harness fitted with a mohawk of defensive nylon bristles.

NOAH (O.S.)  
Hey, Quentin, no.

The Pinscher scurries back to his owner and we see him--

NOAH, early 40s, soft-featured, hipster beard speckled grey. He wears a New Beverly Cinema t-shirt as if it were vintage.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Sorry about that. He likes to think he's king of the park sometimes.  
(self-effacing chuckle)  
Noah. Cute Frenchie. How long you been with Walk-a-Friend?

Noah plants himself in a way that lets her know that he's going to be here for awhile. Dylan affects politeness:

DYLAN  
Just started today.

NOAH  
Okay, right on. Y'know, I've seen a couple of you orange-shirters around, doing the lord's work. And by lord I mean *capitalism*, right?.

Noah chuckles. Dylan doesn't get it. Smiles anyway.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
God, this country is just so *rigged* against you guys it's crazy. I feel for you, I really do. Something's gotta give, y'know? Maybe one day--

Dylan's eyes leave the conversation and

Suddenly, a great COMMOTION breaks out among the spray-tanned tribes, owners pulling leashes, collars, a crowd gathering at the gate, iPhones whipping out at a star sighting--

A GORGEOUS, PUREBRED CHOW CHOW

arrives to a throng of admirers going gaga, snapping selfies, the Chow receiving them like a pro, the consummate celebrity.

We see JESSICA (30s), his handler, close behind; face mask on, decked in designer, all-black, chic, better than us...

NOAH (CONT'D)

(re: Jarvis)

I'd keep him close. That Chow's known to be a real fucking asshole.

DYLAN

Who is she? Is she famous?

NOAH

Who? Jess? No...

He gives her a neighborly wave, gets a cursory wave back.

NOAH (CONT'D)

...but she certainly likes to *think* she is. Walking him everywhere would make anyone feel like they're the fifth Beatle.

SLOW MOTION:

Jessica pulling out a bottle of Evian from an LV bag...pouring a little bit into her cupped hand and...

...bringing it down to the Chow Chow's snout. He laps it up Tootsie-pop slow, forcing her hand to linger...

NOAH (CONT'D)

Everyday, on the dot, they come here and get mobbed like a fucking boy band. It's crazy.

ON Dylan, doing the math for us: **nice dog = nice house.**

DYLAN

They live here? In Beachwood?

NOAH

Nah. She's based somewhere on the west side. *He*, however...

ON the Chow, red hair flowing, a lion.

NOAH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He's Beachwood royalty.

Dylan falls into a bizarre state of focus. Noah, put off--

NOAH (CONT'D)

You, uh...you okay?

Across the lawn, we see the crowd grow too unwieldy for the Chow. Jessica quickly whisks him away like a VIP...

DYLAN  
--I have to go.

Dylan stands up, activated, tugs on Jarvis's leash - let's go - but the mutt's impounded to the bench.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
Don't make me *drag* you again.

NOAH  
(quietly horrified)  
What?

DYLAN  
No, it's fine, he's just--

She leans over and SCOOPS him up off the bench, carrying him in her arms like a big fat fur baby. Then, over her shoulder:

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
Nice meeting you.

Quentin BARKS at them as they leave. Noah cinches his leash.

NOAH  
Yeah, nice meeting you too!  
(under breath)  
...fucking *creep*.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - DURAND DRIVE - DAY

Jessica and the Chow bouncing up the steep gradient, passing FRAME in a speedy blur.

We linger on the empty road, keeping it in FOCUS.

After a long moment, we finally catch DYLAN inching up the drive, still taxiing Jarvis in her arms...

CLOSE ON Dylan, cresting the hairpin on Durand until suddenly Her ears POP, and with it--a sonic rush of mountain clarity (and for us too, as the film's entire sound design adopts a new, stratospheric quality, insanely rich in aural texture).

Dylan staggers over to the cliffside, a stunning vista view of the whole canyon.

She breathes, spongeing in the crisp mountain air. Everything seems more beautiful than it was; the colors are more vibrant...the city, pleasantly muted...

But a trio of CAUTION SIGNS mar the vista: **DON'T FALL.**

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - FURTHER UP DURAND - DAY

The road slims, winds.

Dylan continues to brave up the steep gradient, determined, keeping Jessica and the Chow firmly in her sights...

Up ahead, we see a peculiar STONE WALL, the beginnings of an ancient, Hollywoodland property. Practically medieval.

We spy a tiny GARGOYLE perched in a putlog hole. *Mocking us.*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - HILLTOP - DAY

Dylan, an oily disaster, lugging Jarvis up the crest of the hill, following Jessica and the Chow up towards...

WOLF'S LAIR

a magnificent, Norman-style castle framed just underneath the Hollywood sign. With its gable windows and miniature turrets, to its witchy roof and medieval walls, it all feels fantastical, mythic, ripped from the pages of a storybook...

DREAMY SYNTH PLAYS over Dylan's fairytale discovery.

And we know, just based on that enamored look in her eye; she's found it. The perfect home.

Her eyes seem to sparkle, her jaw hangs. It's love, or the closest we'll ever come to it with Dylan Lever.

We see Jessica escort the Chow past an imposing GATEHOUSE.

The GATE slowly crawls down frame, shutting us out in **BLACK.**

CUT TO:

EXT. YUCCA STREET - NIGHT

Dylan making the sobering trek back to her grimy apartment.

As she approaches the front entrance, a BLACK TEEN nearly CLIPS her on a Bird. She GASPS, startled. Collects herself.

She punches in her door code. Suddenly, a dribble of RAIN touches her hand. It feels dirtier than before. Like spit.

CUT TO:

INT. ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT - NIGHT

Spencer and Heidi on another episode of *The Hills*, bleached smiles and tanned skin - an ad for LA as we slowly PULL BACK

To Dylan on her bed, rummaging through mail (not addressed to her), fishing for anything even *remotely* of value; gift cards, birthday money, stimulus checks...

Suddenly, a sharp KNOCK at the door.

Dylan quickly mutes the TV and FREEZES, waiting for the mysterious presence behind the door to pass. When it does--

She returns to the slush pile of stolen mail. Finds a TWENTY in a b-day card and holds it up to the light:

Off Jackson's Indian-hating scowl we--

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOLLYWOOD PARK - DAY

--Another scowl, a WOMAN's, exfoliated and unwelcoming.

MONTAGE of a cliquey cast of Beachwood dog-owners, flitting their eyes at us intermittently through sips of gossip and

FIND Dylan posted on the same bench as before. She's got a whole new look now, all black chic, vaguely designer, just like Jessica. An H&M imitation of Beachwood bougie.

Noah approaches, a hall monitor skip in his step.

NOAH  
Hey. No Frenchie today?

Dylan regards him with a strange new detachment, unnerving:

DYLAN  
Sorry, have we met before?

NOAH

(uh...what?)

Yeah, yesterday. Noah. You were  
with Walk-a-Friend, right?

DYLAN

No, sorry.

She walls up. Noah scoffs, thinks it's a joke at first...

NOAH

OK, well, thought I'd come over and  
tell you that this is a *dog* park,  
and you need a dog to be here.

DYLAN

I don't see any signs.

NOAH

It's literally on the gate as soon  
as you come in.

DYLAN

I don't pay much attention to  
gates.

Quentin BARKS at her. Noah pulls him back.

NOAH

Hey, Quentin, no.

The dog circles around his legs, worked up to a frenzy.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(returning)

Look. Didn't want to be a dick  
about it but you're starting to  
make some of the owners here  
uncomfortable.

DYLAN

I'm waiting for a friend.

NOAH

Who's your friend?

DYLAN

I don't like to give out that kind  
of information.

Noah feels the eyes of the park on him.

NOAH

You mind waiting for your friend  
outside? The owners would  
appreciate it.

DYLAN

Why?

NOAH

(diplomatic)

They think you're...*staring*.

DYLAN

Would you rather I stare at you?

(beat)

Noah?

A great COMMOTION stirs behind him, the daily star sighting.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

(short)

I have to go. My friend's here.

She stands up abruptly and exits, leaving Noah in a chill.

TRACK with Dylan as she crosses the bright green lawn, every dog seemingly BARKING in her direction, an atavistic alarm.

Eventually, we reach the throng of Chow Chow fans, snapping photos, girlish shrieks of delight against ominous BARKING.

Dylan tries to make eyes with JESSICA through the crowd but the woman's got her Chanel shades on, no way to tell what she's looking at but it is most assuredly not Dylan.

We almost lose her amongst the shuffling of shoulders until

Dylan begins to ELBOW her way through the crowd, aggressive, clearing a path towards

Jessica and the Chow, the center of the universe. We see a FAN try to mingle her poodle with the Chow but the Chow SNAPS, flashing fangs. Jessica cinches his leash - fast.

JESSICA

Hey, too close.

FAN

(rueful)

Sorry...

As the Fan leads her poodle away, Dylan makes her opening--

DYLAN

Wow. Beautiful dog.

JESSICA

Thanks.

Awkward beat.

DYLAN

What kind is it?

JESSICA

Chow. Purebred. You can tell  
because his tongue is black.

DYLAN

(faux-amazement)

Oh wow...

Another awkward beat. The crowd gets antsy behind her. Dylan  
reads a bedazzled phrase off Jessica's face mask: **Pucci Pets.**

DYLAN (CONT'D)

"Pucci Pets." Is that like, a dog-  
walking company?

JESSICA

Yup. Mine.

DYLAN

Oh, neat. I walk dogs too.

JESSICA

Cool. So are you going to take a  
picture or what?

DYLAN

Actually, I was hoping I could talk  
to you.

JESSICA

(flighty)

I'm on a schedule.

DYLAN

Okay, well, I was wondering if you  
needed an assistant. Or something.

Jessica regards Dylan, as if for the first time. Realizes  
that she's dressed almost *exactly* like her. Can't decide  
whether to be freaked or flattered.

JESSICA  
 I'm not hiring at the moment.  
 (re: Dylan's wardrobe)  
*Is that--?*

DYLAN  
 I read somewhere that you should  
 always dress for the position you  
 want, not the position you have.

JESSICA  
 (freaked)  
*Right...*

DYLAN  
 Let me buy you a coffee. Pick your  
 brain?

JESSICA  
*Sorry, I think we should--*

Jessica gives a polite tug on the Chow's leash but he assumes a defecating position, trapping her there with Dylan.

A long, unbearable moment as the Chow tries to squeeze a pencil-thin sized shit out of his inflamed asshole.

DOG-OWNERS begin to snap photos of him, enraptured:

DOG-OWNER	DOG-OWNER
Aw, look at his little poops!	I love his little butt!

The Chow basks in the limelight.

Dylan can't help but comment:

DYLAN  
 What's wrong with him?

JESSICA  
 (annoyed)  
 His anal glands. They need to be  
 expressed but his owners haven't  
 scheduled an appointment yet.

The Chow scuffs the grass with his two hind legs, finished.

Jessica kneels, removes a baby-powdered scented doggie bag from her backpack and forceps the pencil-thin sized shit off the grass. Does a cool little inside out move and ties off the top. All in a fraction of a second.

Then, failing to hide the relief in her voice:

JESSICA (CONT'D)  
Okay, baby. Let's go!

She hits the leash with a little too much enthusiasm and they jog away, fleeing from Dylan and the encroaching crowd...

DYLAN  
Hey, wait--

Dylan hurries after them, meeting Jessica in a light jog.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
I think there's a lot I can offer,  
don't you think--?

JESSICA  
(curt)  
--This isn't really the time.

DYLAN  
(out of breath)  
I understand. You're a very busy,  
successful female entrepreneur, but  
I think as two women living in a  
post-MeToo world we have a greater  
obligation to help one another--

JESSICA  
--Okay, look.

Her tone brings all three of them to a halt.

JESSICA (CONT'D)  
Want my advice? Learn the  
difference between being  
*persistent*, and being annoying. I'm  
sure you can read that somewhere.

Jessica deposits the doggie bag (pointedly) into a PET WASTE ELIMINATION STATION and flees the park with the Chow.

Dylan stews in place, eyes clouding with an inner violence...

After a brooding beat, she bounds over to the pet waste elimination station and TEARS out a GREEN DOGGIE BAG.

And right off that frightful TEAR we--

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - DURAND DRIVE - DAY

A quiet drive. Eerily still.

Jessica and the Chow work up the steep gradient, rounding a trio of familiar caution signs: **DON'T FALL.**

Jessica clocks the serene mountain vista until SUDDENLY--

A GREEN DOGGIE BAG COMES OVER HER HEAD, SUFFOCATING HER.

Jessica flails around, trying to fend off DYLAN, a jackal out of hiding, primally motivated, hands balling the doggie bag around her neck into an asphyxiating knot.

CLOSE ON Jessica's wrist, still tethered to the Chow's leash. The Chow tugs on her to keep going, *completely oblivious...*

Dylan brings Jessica to the asphalt the way a great cat would. Her Chanel shades CRUNCH against the pavement.

Eventually, all the life leaks out of Jessica.

Dylan stops. Unsheathes the green plastic bag. Jessica's lifeless head slumps out. We see her Chanel shades are cracked in one frame, exposing a vacant blue eye. Lightless.

Dylan picks the shades off Jessica. Tries them on. Discovers the cracked frame for herself. TOSSES them over the CLIFF.

Then, she moves on to Jessica's face mask. Unhooks it off her ears. Tries it on. Can still smell her last, dying breaths.

As Dylan throws Jessica's LV bag over her shoulder, we start to see the vague makings of a brand new identity, one in Jessica's image. It is as frightening as it is fascinating.

Dylan gets to work on the leash still tied around Jessica's wrist. We FOLLOW it up to the Chow - staring at Dylan the way dogs do when they see something new and unfathomable.

Soon, we hear a CAR humming up the road from behind them...

The Chow hears it first, prances toward the noise...

Dylan realizes a car is coming only when Jessica's wrist suddenly WHIPS to the other side, yanked by the Chow. Her dead fingers seem to point to the danger: *look out!*

Dylan glances up at the Chow, squints, listens, hears what sounds like a HYBRID crawling up Durand. PANICS. *Rushes to untie the leash from Jessica's wrist...*

Once untied, Dylan then proceeds to DRAG Jessica's body toward the CLIFFSIDE, right under the **DO NOT FALL** signs.

As soon as the Hyundai Ioniq appears from around the bend--

--Dylan KICKS Jessica's body off the cliff...

*...and we watch it tumble all the way down the mountain, rag-dolling into an impossibly dense thicket below.*

Dylan stands, victorious until--

TOURIST (O.S.)  
Excuse me.

Dylan turns, sees a carful of ASIAN TOURISTS gawking at her from a rented-out Hyundai Ioniq. They look lost.

TOURIST (CONT'D)  
 Is this the way to the sign?

A bewildered beat. Then--

Dylan just points up the drive - it's all she can manage at the moment. Murder takes a lot of exertion.

TOURIST (CONT'D)  
 Oh, okay, thank you!

Suddenly, a SHRIEK from the backseat. Her eyes jump to the cliff, *thinks it's something to do with Jessica but really--*

It's the CHOW, sauntering up to the car, majestic, putting on a good show. The Asians LOSE IT. Phones flying out, in sync.

Dylan seizes the opportunity to re-grab his leash, slipping into the role she will play for the remainder of our story.

TOURIST (CONT'D)  
 So cute!! What kind is it?

Dylan wrangles in the Chow, group-photo tight--

DYLAN  
 Chow. Purebred. You can tell  
 because his tongue is black.

A chorus of "awws" then--

CUT TO:

EXT. WOLF'S LAIR CASTLE - DAY

The GATE slowly crawls up and we reveal

DYLAN, remote in hand. She stuffs it back into Jessica's bag and nudges the Chow through the imposing GATEHOUSE...

...where we arrive onto the MAIN CASTLE GROUNDS. And it's here we take in the absolute grandeur of Wolf's Lair; the manicured Italianate gardens, the free-flowing fountains, the Olympian view of Lake Hollywood, Griffith, and beyond...

Dylan nearly trips over the leash as she takes it all in.

She follows the sweeping driveway up towards

A MEDIEVAL DOOR

Elegant, beautiful, something out of Tolkien and Dylan hits

THE DOORBELL

Sending a melodic CHIME throughout the massive interior. She hits the doorbell again, wanting to hear it a second time.

The Chow grumbles in the interim. Not used to waiting.

Suddenly, the door CRACKS open, revealing--

SHIRA (50s), blonde, glamorous in an understated way.

She fixes a hard look at Dylan, not sure what to make of her.

SHIRA

...you're not Jessica.

DYLAN

I'm Dylan, Dylan Lever. Jess hired me to be your new dog-walker.

SHIRA

I don't understand. I just saw her today. Did something happen?

DYLAN

Well...

(story still shaky)

Jess...has decided to focus more on client development on the Westside.

SHIRA

(offended)

So she's too good for us now?

DYLAN

I assure you, ma'am, she has passed along everything she knows to--

SHIRA

--I can take him.

She snatches the leash from Dylan and ushers the Chow inside.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
 I'll have a talk with Jessica  
 tomorrow because I'm not sure how I  
 feel about this new arrangement...

The door starts to close and Dylan feels compelled to stop it

DYLAN  
 Do you need me to--?

SHIRA  
 No, that's all.

It's nearly shut when Dylan improvises:

DYLAN  
 (blurting out)  
 I saw him poop today.

Shira pauses. *What the hell did she just say?*

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
 I saw him poop today. It looked  
 painful. When was the last time you  
 had his anal glands expressed?

Shira suddenly feels like she's being put on trial for crimes against children, *her* children.

SHIRA  
 (flustered)  
 Too long, I, haven't scheduled an--

DYLAN  
 --An appointment, yes, I know. Jess  
 already filled me in. Y'know, I...  
 (here it goes)  
 I am qualified to do...it.

SHIRA  
 Do...what?

DYLAN  
 Express anal glands.

SHIRA  
 You know how to express anal  
 glands?

Dylan nods, not quite connecting the meaning of that but--

DYLAN  
Yes. It's why Jess hired me.

We see Shira slowly warm up to the idea. *Maybe...*

SHIRA  
I should probably schedule an appointment with the vet...

Shira motions to leave in a way that allows Dylan enough time to counter with a better offer--

DYLAN  
--Why wait, ma'am, when we can have it done today?  
(sweetening the deal)  
At no charge, of course.

Shira considers. Likes that Dylan's wearing her face mask, makes her feel safe. And it's a class designation, too, of a new breed of servant in L.A. - the cool and accommodating essential worker, eager to serve the undeserving.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
Think of it as a welcoming gift.

Shira perks up at "gift". Likes gifts.

SHIRA  
Oh?

DYLAN  
(an attempt to sound less manipulative, "caring")  
More importantly--think of it as a gift for your dog. The best gift.  
The gift of no more pain.

It's too much, but Shira responds to extremes. She's moved.

SHIRA  
It truly is...the best gift.

Dylan sees that Shira is faltering, decides to pounce:

DYLAN  
So, what do you say, *miss*--?

SHIRA  
--Shira. Just Shira.  
(beat)  
I'll have to check with my husband first.  
(MORE)

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
 (then)  
 Oh, what am I saying? No I don't.

Shira gives Dylan something of a wry smile.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
 You're very persuasive, Ms. Dylan.

DYLAN  
 (with tact)  
 I prefer persistent.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - VARIOUS - DAY

Shira leading Dylan through a delightful flow of zen-like space, gothic in design but absolutely exquisite in taste.

Dylan drinks in the details; the hand painted coffered ceilings, the stained glass windows, the winding staircases. It's more impressive than she could have ever have imagined.

TRACK with Dylan and Shira as they move from one palatial room to the next, scored to the echoey din of MANUAL LABOR.

And we see them, buzzing in and out of frame--

MASKED WORKERS, re-touching minor scuffs on walls, steaming carpets with high-powered cleaners, wrapping sheets of plastic around chewed-up furniture. A whole apparatus designed to cater to one dog's very bad behavior.

The Chow strolls past them, haughty, and we see some of the workers side-eye him. Veterans.

Suddenly, a WORKER cuts in front of Shira with a doggie bag--

SHIRA  
 Um, excuse me (scoffs rudely) where  
 do you think you're going?

This worker must be new because she doesn't look completely terrified of Shira.

WORKER  
 I was just about to toss it in--

SHIRA  
 --In the garbage? Inside?

WORKER  
(confused)  
...yes?

SHIRA  
Well, I don't want it *inside*, I  
want it outside.

WORKER  
Like...the outside trash?

SHIRA  
(as if scolding a four-  
year old)  
No, not in *our* trash. In the  
*neighbor's* trash. I don't want to  
smell it anywhere near the house.  
Why is that so fucking complicated?

The Worker, trembling, bows her head, geisha-like, then  
exits. Shira turns back to Dylan, almost conspiratorial:

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
We're letting in too many of them.

ON Dylan, seeing her future darkening...

CUT TO:

HOME OFFICE

an intimidating space. Dark wood. Mostly glass. Erudite. And  
on a high shelf - two Daytime Emmys. For what? Who knows.

JACOB (60s), faces away from us in an ergonomic desk chair.

Shira enters, tries for her husband's attention--

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
Hun, there's someone I'd like you  
to meet. This is, erm--?

She looks to Dylan. *Sorry, what was it again?* Dylan croaks:

DYLAN  
Dylan.

SHIRA  
--Dylan, right, Jessica's  
assistant.

Jacob hears "assistant" and decides not to turn around.

DYLAN  
(the brave mouse)  
I wouldn't say I'm her *assistant*, I  
guess I'm more like  
her...replacement.

The air tightens.

Jacob slowly tears himself away from his desktop and spins to face us. A handsome older face. He wears expensive, black-rimmed glasses and his hair is the color of cremated corpses.

The clamor of MANUAL LABOR floats in.

JACOB  
(to Shira)  
Honey, can you shut the door?

Shira goes to shut the glass-paned doors behind them.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
(once they close)  
Thank you.  
(then)  
So - a replacement. Shira, I  
assume, has already filled you in  
on our expectations. They're quite  
high, as you can imagine. She loves  
Chow Chow very much.

SHIRA  
Don't act like it's just *me*.

She turns to Dylan, half-joking, or not joking at all:

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
Jacob likes to play unconcerned  
parent but he's a proud father.

JACOB  
(chuckles modestly)  
It's true. Chow Chow's practically  
a son. You know how it is with  
dogs. They become our children.

He glances to a FAMILY PORTRAIT of them on the wall.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
How long have you been with  
Jessica, Dylan?

DYLAN  
I've been shadowing her for quite  
some time, actually.

Shira interjects, selling Jacob on what Dylan sold her on--

SHIRA  
Dylan can express anal glands.

JACOB  
(with great interest)  
Is that right?

DYLAN  
Yes sir.

JACOB  
"Sir". You hear that, Shira?  
Manners. Sounds like music, doesn't  
it? I tell you, this newer  
generation has just lost it--

Shira rescues him before he goes off on a tangent:

SHIRA  
--She said she could even do it  
today. *For free*.

JACOB  
Do what?

Shira jogs his memory with the heat of her gaze.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Oh, right, of course. Is that true  
Dylan? If so, that'd be fantastic.

DYLAN  
I'm afraid I don't have any of my  
things with me *currently*...

She starts to feel their interest in her wane. Switches tact:

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
I'll...see what I can do.

Shira and Jacob share a mutual look of excitement. Dylan, on the other hand, has realized her bluff has been called and appropriately PANICS--right under their high noses.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
(mind racing)  
Is there a...bathroom I can--?

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - GUEST BATHROOM - DAY

ECU on a Youtube search bar: How to Express Dog Anal Glands.

Dylan paces back and forth in front of a large bathroom mirror as she scrolls through the middling search results...

She clicks on the first video, gag clickbait with 13M views.

The video starts and immediately it **buffers**.

Dylan hits the refresh button. Somehow it makes it even worse. After some troubleshooting, the video plays and we see

ON PHONE SCREEN: A hot vet carefully massaging a dog's anus.

ON Dylan, pushing the limits of her processing power until--

A hard RAP at the door startles her.

SHIRA (O.S.)  
How are we doing in there?

She means '*hurry the fuck up!*' and Dylan knows it.

DYLAN  
Be right out!

Dylan returns to the video, fast-forwarding through the filler, skipping the ads, *cramming, cramming, cramming...*

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - DAY

The bathroom door opens.

Dylan remerges and plods down the hall, not quite moving as fast as she could. She's stalling.

We notice that the house has fallen into a strange new silence, an anticipatory silence. Heavy and disquieting.

Dylan sweats as she enters...

## LIVING ROOM

and finds EVERYONE in a cultish circle around the Chow. The masked workers glare at her (obviously forced to spectate).

Jacob and Shira occupy their own individual chairs/couches, ready to see Dylan perform miracles on their dog's asshole.

SHIRA  
 (standing)  
 There she is!

JACOB  
 We were starting to think you  
 fell in!

They laugh, and the workers half-heartedly laugh with them.

Dylan approaches the cult-circle, hoping that they won't see  
 the fresh dew of sweat on her forehead.

DYLAN  
 (re: all the workers)  
 This really isn't necessary...

JACOB  
 For your concentration, it mostly  
 certainly *is*, Dylan. I could barely  
 hear myself think over all  
 their...racket.

He says it meanly in front of them. They don't protest.

SHIRA  
 Do you have everything?

DYLAN  
 Yes, I think so...

She rummages through Jessica's bag and fishes for some LATEX  
 GLOVES. Luckily, she finds a whole box buried underneath a  
 nest of some of Chow Chow's other things (Erewhon treats,  
 monogrammed paw wipes, squeaky toys, etc).

Dylan draws out two hand condoms and SNAPS them on tight.

At the SOUND, the Chow perks up his ears. *Ruh-Roh*. Dylan  
 positions herself behind him, ready. Shira, fretting:

SHIRA  
 It's not painful, is it?

Dylan thinks. *Was it painful in the video?* Doesn't remember.

DYLAN  
 No ma'am.

SHIRA  
 How many of these have you done?

DYLAN  
 Um...

SHIRA  
 And Jessica trusted you?

JACOB

*Honey--*

He grabs his wife's hand, as if to shush her.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Let's leave it to the experts,  
shall we?

He gives Dylan a weird wink and then--

A hush descends. All eyes on Dylan. And she feels them, a palpable weight in the room. The pressure of expectation.

With courage, she slowly lifts the Chow's bushy tail. Regards his swollen anus. The angry red eye of Jupiter.

Then, drawing from her bathroom crash course, she begins to gently milk his anal glands in smooth, patient circles. We hear the Chow emit a noise close to a SNEEZE.

Jacob and Shira look on, rapt. The workers, mildly piqued.

As Dylan feels her way around the eye of Jupiter, we start to see what looks like the inside of a Snickers bar spooling out of the Chow's anus. It's rancid and it's worse than murder.

SHIRA  
Oh my goodness--

JACOB (CONT'D)

Dylan's grateful to be wearing her face mask as she excavates the rest of the Snickers build up from the Chow Chow's bum.

Suddenly, a comet of PUS splatters onto her. She WINCES.

The Chow YAWNS then stretches out his hind legs, pleased.

Jacob and Shira lead a slow golf clap, pressuring the others to follow suit. They do. And suddenly, we feel like we're on the green. Dylan smiles through her face mask, *relieved*.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOLF'S LAIR - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Shira seeing Dylan out. They linger by the door.

## SHIRA

DYLAN  
Yes. Remind me when that is again?

SHIRA  
 (pause)  
 Jessica didn't tell you?

DYLAN  
 Must've slipped her mind.

Dylan covers that with an 'oopsie' shrug.

SHIRA  
 9 a.m.

DYLAN  
 Right.

SHIRA  
 I'll call her later today to  
 sort everything out--

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
 (quick)  
 --She might be busy.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
 Not for me, she won't.

Dylan senses the conviction behind that. Gets nervous.

DYLAN  
 Why don't you let me fill her in on  
 everything? It'll be a lot more  
 efficient that way, I promise.

Shira hums.

SHIRA  
 Well, I don't see any harm in that.  
 (then, noticing how  
 she's hovering--)  
 Anything else I can help you with?

It's a comment that kind of shocks Dylan back into her place.

DYLAN  
 Can we discuss payment?

Ugh.

SHIRA  
 You're an assistant, right? What's  
 the starting rate for that? \$11?

DYLAN  
 Actually, I was wondering if we  
 could forgo a traditional hourly  
 rate for something...less  
 traditional.

SHIRA  
Such as?

DYLAN  
(hopeful)  
Room and board?

Shira scoffs. Aw.

SHIRA  
I don't think that's appropriate.

DYLAN  
I mean, logically it makes  
sense, doesn't it? I'd be around  
whenever he needs me, and you won't  
even notice I'm here. I'm good at  
being invisible.

SHIRA  
I appreciate the offer, Dylan, I  
really do, but monetary payment  
works just fine for us. Thanks.

The kind of 'thanks' that ends conversations. She motions to  
close the door but--

DYLAN  
Wait, ma'am, we forgot to exchange  
contact information.

Dylan draws out her cracked Android. Shira notes it with  
subtle disgust. A look that almost crosses over to *pity*.

SHIRA  
Can't you just get it from Jessica?

DYLAN  
Like I said, she's busy.

SHIRA  
She really sent you in blind,  
didn't she?  
(with a resigned sigh)  
I'll give you Jacob's number.

Dylan setting up the contact info.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
323...

EXT. WOLF'S LAIR - GATEHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Dylan on the other end of the gatehouse. The remote's in her hand, but...she hesitates. *Doesn't want to leave paradise.*

After one last glance, she hits the remote and we abruptly--

CUT TO:

EXT. YUCCA STREET - NIGHT

The cacophony of law and disorder; police sirens, schizoid screams, helicopters whirring overhead. A city on the edge.

Dylan crosses the barren street, more aware of the noise than she's ever been...

CUT TO:

INT. LIDO APARTMENTS - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dylan approaches her apartment door, irritated by the familiar din of music, sex, and domestic violence...

She pulls out her keys, feels for the right one and when she does--she slides it into the lock and jostles open the door--

INT. ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

--and finds a CONCERNED RESIDENT MANAGER (30s) and a BRIGHT-EYED BLONDE (20s, the one from the photos) already inside.

They both snap to Dylan, spooked:

BRIGHT-EYED BLONDE  
Who the fuck are you?

Dylan at the door, frozen. Then, she SCRAMBLES out of there--

INT. LIDO APARTMENTS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

WHIP PAN to Dylan FLYING down the hall, racing for the exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. YUCCA STREET - NIGHT

POLICE SIRENS welcoming Dylan back onto the streets.

She stays on the move, eyes popping out of her head, shuffling across the empty street like a bag in the breeze.

She follows Yucca all the way down to the dirty intersection on Cahuenga. Stops. Looks up to see her house on the hill - shining like a star on the elusive black mountain.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - DURAND DRIVE - NIGHT

HEADLIGHTS fracturing through a bush. We catch Dylan's dark outline crouched behind it.

The headlights bleed into taillights...

And as soon as the ASC CRUISER disappears around the bend--

She slinks out of the bush and continues her trek up Durand.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOLF'S LAIR - NIGHT

The fairytale estate, lit up like a midnight mirage.

Dylan wanders around it, on the edge, *always on the edge...*

She finds an inconspicuous spot near the property and settles in, rubbing her arms for warmth against the late night chill.

NOTICE her eyes, a pin-prick of light in their recesses - the reflection of Wolf's Lair or the glint of an insane resolve.

REVERSE ON the castle, focusing in on a single lit window, high up in the tower. There, we spy the silhouette of a YOUNG WOMAN, flittering in and out of frame in a giddy blur...

It takes a moment for us to realize that it is DYLAN in the window, twirling happily, trying on dresses, a fantasy.

BACK ON Dylan, imagining herself there, hoping, deluding and--

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - CLOSET - MORNING

**A black space.** Then--

A SWITCH is flipped, revealing a wall of silver/gold lamé leashes - glistening like jewels under the dim closet light.

Shira steps inside, Dylan behind her. It's morning.

SHIRA  
...leashes are in here...

Dylan scans the closet, wide-eyed. Shira shuts the door.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - KITCHEN - MORNING

Shira grabbing two bottles of Evian from the fridge. She sets them down on the polished counter.

SHIRA  
...always pack two just in case it gets too hot for him.

Dylan nods, stuffs the bottles in her LV bag. As she does--

Shira notes a small **leaf** in Dylan's hair. She plucks it out without asking (or Dylan noticing).

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - FOYER - MORNING

Dylan struggles to fasten on the Chow's harness, a confusion of straps and holes that don't quite fit around the beast.

As Shira enters, Dylan straightens a little.

SHIRA  
That looks loose.

DYLAN  
Hmm?

She regards the harness; the straps sway like rapper chains.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
(covering)  
I always like to give them some extra breathing room. Harnesses can suffocate if you're not careful.

SHIRA  
But Jessica always puts it on so tight...

DYLAN

That was the old way of doing things. Fortunately, the science has caught up with us.

Shira seems comforted to have Dylan in the room, an expert.

SHIRA

He does look happier for it...

The Chow looks exactly the same.

Dylan feels the tone in the room lighten. Pauses mid-strap.

DYLAN

I haven't had the opportunity to express just how grateful I am to be employed by you...Shira.

SHIRA

(surprised)

Oh.

DYLAN

For most of my adult life, I've felt like I've worked for machines. Robots who don't believe in the value of a good employer/employee dynamic. That is, until I met you. And your husband. I am comfortable enough to admit that this job is starting to feel less and less like work and more like...a real *family*.

She seals that with a big, thankful grin. Shira automates:

SHIRA

Well, we appreciate all the hard work you've done for us, Dana.

DYLAN

Dylan.

SHIRA (CONT'D)

Right.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - DURAND DRIVE - MORNING

The Chow pulls on his leash, dragging Dylan down the mountain with him. It's hard to tell who's walking who.

Eventually, they pass a PARANOID NEIGHBOR (70s) illegally spray-painting a stretch of grey curb red.

She waves to him. *Howdy neighbor.* The man doesn't wave back.

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - LEDGEWOOD DRIVE - MORNING

As Dylan and the Chow descend, the road gradually widens, opening us up into the lower part of the canyon. It's still nice, the houses are still nice, the cars too, but the air is definitely different down here - sucked by more lungs.

Dylan reins in the Chow's leash until suddenly--

We see the DOG-WALKER cutting out of an intersection on Belden, the two little chihuahuas in tow.

Dylan recognizes them immediately and tries to maneuver the Chow back up the way they came but the mutt BARKS at them.

DYLAN

No--shh!

The Dog-Walker glances up at them, alert, then pulls her chihuahuas off to the side, sixth-sensing a confrontation.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

(to the Chow, quietly)

*This way, this way!*

The Chow LUNGES out at them, barking like mad, testing the strength of his harness until--

It SLIPS and he GUNS it for the delicious little chihuahuas.

The rest unfolds in horrifying SLOW MOTION, almost painterly:

--Dylan sprinting after him, as if wading through concrete.

--The Chow pouncing on the rat-dogs like an apex predator.

--Chihuahua blood misting through the air.

--Blood splattering across the Dog-Walker's orange t-shirt.

--The Chow shaking the rat-dog in its mouth like a chew toy.

--The Dog-Walker scooping up the other frightened chihuahua.

--Dylan wrapped up in a mean tussle with the Chow.

--The Dog-Walker recognizing Suzi behind her face mask.

--Dylan yanking the Chow away from the carnage.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - TRAILHEAD - MORNING

Dylan scrubbing chihuahua blood off the Chow's coat with one of his monogrammed paw wipes. She douses it with a bottle of Evian and scrubs deeply, strenuously. Hard work.

The Chow just pants under the shade. A big, bloody smile on his face, like a good boy.

Dylan glares at him, could eat him.

DYLAN

Why are you smiling? Stop smiling.

He can't. Her voice jumps to a paranoid octave:

DYLAN (CONT'D)

She's going to be looking for me now, you understand? If she finds me, she's going to make me pay.

The Chow just looks off, disinterested.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

(slighted)

*You don't care, do you? You think we're all just here to clean up after your shit, is that it?*

She grabs him by his furry neck, forcing eye contact.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

You're not gonna ruin this for me. I've come too far. Farther than you could ever know.

She continues scrubbing him more vigorously than before.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - DAY

Dylan tosses the bloodied paw wipes into a neighbor's bin.

She looks up and sees a DISGRUNTLED NEIGHBOR spying on her through a window. Phone cradled in his ear. Calling someone.

EXT. WOLF'S LAIR - GATEHOUSE - DAY

Dylan throws a wary look over her shoulder as she enters the gatehouse. ZOOM OUT as she disappears into the darkness...

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - FOYER - DAY

The Chow waddling in, black tongue hanging out, home.

Shira immediately goes to him, her baby, her king.

SHIRA  
There he is! There he *is...*

She gets on her knees and kisses him, tongues meeting. She speaks to him in a cutesy, incomprehensible baby language:

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
Wookatwusowurstyuh? Sowurstyman.

Dylan follows in behind, greeted not so enthusiastically. She hovers, *waiting for their make-out session to end...*

Shira scratches his coat and that's when Dylan notices--

A small, red spot she missed, right behind his left leg.

Dylan instinctively moves toward it but Shira--

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
How was he?

DYLAN  
(sweating, distracted)  
He was...good.

SHARON  
*Really?*

Dylan fixated on the missed RED SPOT, watching Shira's fingers graze over it unknowingly...

DYLAN  
Yup. He was a good boy.

SHIRA  
(gasps in mock-shock)  
Youwereuhgoodboy?

Shira rustles the Chow's fur, smothering him. He turns his head away - embarrassed by her doting affection.

DYLAN  
Do you want me to take him, ma'am?

SHIRA  
Oh.

Dylan's heart stops. Knows what's happened before we do--

Shira thumbs the **red spot** behind the Chow's left leg.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
What happened here, baby? Did you  
hurt yourself?

She looks up at Dylan, eyes hardening with a mother's concern-

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
What happened here?

DYLAN  
(gulpng)  
Um...

SHIRA  
(accusatory)  
Did you notice this at all?

DYLAN  
Yes, he, um, *walked* into...

Shira hanging on that. Impatient.

SHIRA  
Walked into what?

DYLAN  
...sidewalk paint.

Dead air. Then--

Shira lets out a resigned sigh, the tension escaping.

SHIRA  
*The neighbors.* They're always re-  
touching the curbs up here. Adding  
new ones, too...

Although Shira's tone has shifted to a lower gear, she's not  
about to let Dylan off that easy--

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
Well don't just stand there and  
look at it, do something.

DYLAN  
(obsequious)  
Yes ma'am.

Dylan kneels down and reaches in her LV bag for a monogrammed  
paw wipe, but she's all out. She summons the courage to ask:

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
Would you...?

Shira's face is one of intolerance.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
...would you happen to have any  
more wipes?

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - KITCHEN - DAY

ECU: A damp washcloth rubbing out the Chow's red spot.

Dylan on the cloth, puritan hard, ashamed in a way as

SHIRA AND JACOB

converse in a corner, heated whispers, clandestine shit-talking as they sneak glances back at

Dylan, reading their lips, gauging sympathies. Not knowing where she stands right now and freaking about it, internally.

Jacob crosses over to her, the intermediary--

JACOB  
Heard he was a good boy today.

DYLAN  
Yes, he was!

Too much. Overcompensating.

JACOB  
(a fond smile to him)  
Good, good. Although I did hear he  
got into some nasty business with  
some sidewalk paint...?

DYLAN  
Unfortunately, yes, but! He's all  
better now! See?

She lifts up the Chow's freshly cleaned leg. Jacob smirks.

JACOB  
I know you mean well, Dylan. But  
next time, when you see a painted  
sidewalk, don't be a retard and  
lead my dog right into it, deal?

Dylan nods appreciatively.

DYLAN  
Yes sir. I mean (awkward) deal!

JACOB  
Good. So--  
(washing the slate)  
Shira and I are about to head out  
for a lunch meeting. We should be  
back in about an hour or so--

ON Dylan, unable to hide the relief in her eyes.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
--In the meantime, we'd like you to  
read to him.

DYLAN  
...read?

JACOB  
Yes.  
(noting her confusion)  
You...can read, can't you?

DYLAN  
Yes sir.

JACOB  
He's on *A House Divided* now, the  
third of the trilogy. You know it?  
(obviously not)  
Well, it's a gripping read if you  
ever find the time.

DYLAN  
I'll add it to my list.

Jacob smiles, a sucker for forced enthusiasm.

JACOB  
What do you say, son? You ready for  
Dylan to read you the next tragic  
chapter of the Wang Lung family?

The Chow cranes his head up at him, *unenthused*.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Shira, is there anything you want  
to say to Dylan before we leave?

Shira in the corner, arms crossed, petty:

SHIRA

I think...everything that needs to  
be said has been said already.

Dylan makes tentative eyes with Shira. Jacob bobs his head,  
satisfied with the peace.

JACOB

Alright then. Well, good luck.

(reminding)

Oh, and when you're reading to him,  
do you mind keeping your mask on?

(with a grin)

Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - FOYER - DAY

Dylan waves Jacob and Shira off as they pull out of the driveway in their coke-white Mercedes (S Class).

As soon as they're out of view, the mask comes down and Dylan **glares** at the Chow, revenge in her eyes. He SCAMPERS away.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CHOW'S BEDROOM - DAY

The *real* master bedroom. King-sized bed. A giant, Banksy-style portrait of the Chow on the wall. Commissioned.

The Chow races up onto his bed and circles around his fluffy duvet, anxious of

DYLAN by the door, dumbstruck by the sheer square footage of this place. A mini puppy Versailles.

DYLAN

(a touch of resentment)

You really have it all, don't you?

The Chow whines in the direction of the nightstand where

*A House Divided* is already laid out for him, bookmarked.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

Oh, how could I ever forget, your majesty?

She marches over to the nightstand, picks up the book (a First Edition) and FRISBEEs it over to him. A mean throw.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
"You can read, right?"

He sniffs the book as she SLAMS the door shut behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CHOW'S BEDROOM - DAY

Dylan leans back against the door, sighs, decompressing. A babysitter's reprieve. It takes a second for her to realize that she's made it, that she's here, that this home is *hers* now, and hers alone - *if only for a little while...*

Slowly, a Kevin McCallister smile breaks across her face...

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - KITCHEN - DAY

Dylan chugging bottle after bottle of Evian water. Ravenous.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR- VARIOUS - DAY

We cycle through a MONTAGE, recalling our OPENING:

- 1) Dylan in Jacob's office, picking up the two Emmys off his shelf and weighing them in her hands, heavier than expected.
- 2) Dylan rifling through mail.
- 3) Dylan wandering around the outside terrace, taking in the supreme view of Beachwood Canyon.
- 4) Dylan skimming her hands over the black-bottomed pool.
- 5) Dylan running her hands over obscure designer pieces in Shira's infinite walk-in closet, all Italian-sounding.
- 6) Dylan popping open a jewelry box, slipping on treasure.
- 7) Dylan trying on Shira's satin robe, examining herself in front of the huge bathroom mirror, frowning at the sight of some maskne burgeoning around her cheeks, nose...

SUDDENLY, THE DOORBELL CHIMES, ripping her back to reality.

Dylan whips her head toward us, alarmed, *paranoia returning...*

INT. WINDING STAIRCASE - DAY

Dylan THUNDERS down the staircase, face mask on, Shira's bathrobe off, *just in case...*

The doorbell CHIMES over and over, insistent.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER - DAY

Dylan peeks out the foyer window and SEES--

THE DOG-WALKER, hovering around the outside door, not happy.

Dylan loses the color in her face. She shuts her eyes, thinking, strategizing, her mind working through the dread.

The doorbell continues to CHIME incessantly. Dylan's face sets, *knows deep-down that there's no getting out of this...*

With a fortifying breath, she cracks open the door and--

DYLAN

You shouldn't be here.

THE DOG-WALKER

(not missing the irony)

Seriously?

DYLAN

It wasn't my fault, the harness, it slipped--

THE DOG-WALKER

--I have a \$10,000 vet bill now.  
How am I supposed to pay for that?  
I don't have insurance. Do you have insurance?

DYLAN

No.

THE DOG-WALKER

Well I'm not leaving without some restitution.

DYLAN

What does 'restitution' mean?

THE DOG-WALKER

It means you fucking owe me for everything.

DYLAN  
I'm sorry, I, I can't help you--

She starts to close the door but the Dog-Walker wedges her foot in--

THE DOG-WALKER  
Are they home? I'll scream.

DYLAN  
No, don't--

She SCREAMS violently. Dylan flinches.

THE DOG-WALKER  
I'll do it again.

DYLAN  
Don't. I'll call the police.

THE DOG-WALKER  
You want them here?  
(beat)  
After what you did?

She could mean many things, and Dylan knows it. She wilts.

DYLAN  
I don't have any money.

THE DOG-WALKER  
But *they* do.

She nudges to the invisible presence of Jacob and Shira's wealth behind her. Dylan mulls it over, reluctantly.

DYLAN  
They'll know.

THE DOG-WALKER  
No they won't. *Remember?*

The Dog-Walker shows herself inside. We LINGER on Dylan, eyes filtering through a million different ideas, varying from the smart to the desperate to the dangerous. She closes the door.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dylan ushers the Dog-Walker from one palatial room to the next, reminiscent of Shira only scenes ago...

The Dog-Walker takes it all in. She's got that same glimmer in her eye, that look of pure adoration...

Dylan sees it, makes her nervous:

DYLAN  
(a warning)  
They'll be back soon.

The Dog-Walker's not paying attention; she's too gobsmacked by the hand painted ceilings, the stained glass windows...

Dylan tries cutting through to her again--

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
Did you follow me here?

THE DOG-WALKER  
(still looking around)  
Didn't need to. Everyone knows this house. Everyone knows that dog.

DYLAN  
How'd you even get in?

THE DOG-WALKER  
How did you get in?

A loaded beat. They reach the winding staircase.

DYLAN  
(evasive)  
This way.

CUT TO:

INT. SHIRA'S WALK-IN CLOSET

The light comes on, illuminating an endless row of designer clothes, shoes, accessories. Cat burglar heaven.

The Dog-Walker gives herself a moment. She, too, has never been in a closet quite as nice and luxurious as this.

THE DOG-WALKER  
(a hint of bitterness)  
How can two people have so much?

She brushes her hand over a row of designer jackets, chic brands with unpronounceable names.

THE DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
I've never even heard of these.

DYLAN  
 C'mon, we don't have a lot of  
 time--

THE DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
 --Oh!

The Dog-Walker rolls out an LV suitcase hidden behind a curtain of French/Italian couture.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
 (annoyed)  
*Really?*

THE DOG-WALKER  
 What? They won't miss it.

She lays the suitcase out on its back and pops it open. An avalanche of Jacob's history books SPILL OUT.

THE DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
 They turned Louis Vuitton into  
 storage?

Even Dylan seems taken aback.

DYLAN  
 Take what you need and let's go.

THE DOG-WALKER  
 Hold on...

She rifles through rack after rack, targeting only the recognizable stuff; the Gucci, the Louis, the Prada, names you'd associate with Rodeo, not the Palisades Village.

As she does, Dylan briefly leaves the room and enters

THE BATHROOM

and catches her reflection in the massive mirror. She looks awful, fraying at the edges. Coming undone.

Her eyes float towards

A NAIL FILE

on Shira's side of the counter, a weapon, *tempting her...*

THE DOG-WALKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 (from closet)  
 Hey. Come look at this.

The sound of her voice edges Dylan closer to violence.

She pokes her head back into the closet and sees the Dog-Walker wearing a familiar D&G leopard-print scarf.

THE DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
Wonder if they all get the same  
discount?

DYLAN  
These people don't need discounts.

THE DOG-WALKER  
Oh, you'd be surprised.

She fluffs the scarf around her shoulder, impersonating:

THE DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
Who am I supposed to be?

DYLAN  
You're going to walk away with  
nothing if you don't hurry.

THE DOG-WALKER  
Oh, I'm not walking away from *any*  
of this.

*Was that a threat?* Dylan registered it as such.

DYLAN  
Not the flashier stuff, okay?

THE DOG-WALKER  
You act like I've never done this  
before.

Dylan realizes that the Dog-Walker has added nothing to the  
LV suitcase.

DYLAN  
You haven't found *anything*?

THE DOG-WALKER  
I'm looking!

DYLAN  
Well look fucking harder!

Suddenly, Dylan hears what sounds like a CAR outside, well-fed tires rumbling over well-paved driveway.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
Did you hear that?

She DARTS out of the closet and listens for the sound again.

DYLAN (CONT'D)  
(anxiety peaking)  
I think they're here.

THE DOG-WALKER (O.S.)  
Then help me with all this shit!

Dylan rushes back to the closet, slides onto her knees and helps the Dog-Walker heave all of Jacob's stupid history books out of the suitcase. And despite the mania of it all--

THE DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
So you're not going to tell me?

DYLAN  
(breathless)  
Tell you what?

THE DOG-WALKER  
How you did it.

Dylan stacks the books behind a curtain of evening dresses.

DYLAN  
(still evasive)  
Why do you care?

THE DOG-WALKER  
I just wanna know.  
(re: her face mask)  
"Pucci Pets", huh? That's cute. And they trust you now, just like that?

Dylan remains poker-faced.

DYLAN  
(without looking up)  
Yup.

The Dog-Walker grins. A look of begrudging admiration.

THE DOG-WALKER  
Come a long way since Greenpeace,  
haven't we?

DYLAN  
You don't want to leave, do you?

THE DOG-WALKER  
No, sorry, we're going...

She stands up to grab something off a rack behind Dylan.

DYLAN  
(realizing that there's  
still nothing packed)  
Have you seriously not found any--

SUDDENLY, A LEOPARD PRINT SCARF SLIPS AROUND DYLAN'S NECK.

The Dog-Walker YANKS her to the floor, suffocating her.

Dylan writhes - scratches - claws for escape but the Dog-Walker's got her in the loser position. Dylan's face blues.

WE ARE LOOKING DOWN at them as they tussle for dominance, one gaining the edge over the other, *the victor obvious...*

Eventually, all the life leaks out of Dylan.

The Dog-Walker unsheathes the scarf. Dylan's head flops dead to the side.

After a moment of stillness, the Dog-Walker quickly gets to work. Unhooks Dylan's face mask. Tries it on for herself. Can still smell her last, dying breaths...

Then, she ROLLS her corpse into the LV suitcase, angling it in like human origami. Once she's in, the Dog-Walker zips it up tight, Dylan's body BULGING out awkwardly in the middle.

Suddenly, we hear the shuffle of feet downstairs.

Shira and Jacob.

The Dog-Walker listens, gauging their distance, then--

She wheels the SUITCASE behind the curtain of dresses.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER - DAY

Shira and Jacob removing their sunglasses as they walk in.

SHIRA  
(sing-song lilt)  
Where IS he? Where IS he...?

FOOTSTEPS drum down the staircase, revealing--

THE DOG-WALKER  
Hello.

Shira and Jacob straighten at the sight of a new face.

The Dog-Walker graces up to them, face mask on, orange 'Walk-a-Friend' t-shirt replaced with something more elevated from Shira's closet. It's a whole new look, crafted in Dylan's image, Jessica's image. A copy of a copy of someone we knew.

Shira fails to recognize one of her own pieces on her.

SHIRA  
Um...hello?

THE DOG-WALKER  
I'm Anna. I'll be taking over as  
your new dog-walker.

SHIRA  
(concerned)  
Is everything alright?

ANNA  
Yes, I'll just be covering for...

Anna realizes that she doesn't actually **know** Dylan's name. She waits for either Jacob or Shira to fill her in, but even they have forgotten. It's really Jacob who saves the day--

JACOB  
--Da. I think.

ANNA  
Right. I'm afraid she quit today.

SHIRA  
Quit?

ANNA  
Reevaluated her work/life balance.

SHIRA  
(incredulous)  
On the job?

ANNA  
It's happening more and more these  
days, unfortunately.

SHIRA  
This is the second time this week  
I've needed a replacement. What the  
hell kind of business is Jess  
running over there?!

Anna's a quick learner, quicker than Dylan--

ANNA

(the sweet servant)

I apologize for the inconvenience  
ma'am, but we always provide a  
replacement should one of our  
employees suffer an existential  
crisis at the workplace.

Jacob and Shira nod understandingly, appreciative of her tone  
- and her face mask. *It makes them feel safe...*

SHIRA

So, did she..fill you in at all  
before she left? You know what  
you're doing?

ANNA

Yes, ma'am. We all do. I can  
provide my résumé if needed--

JACOB

(too much work)

Oh, no, that's quite alright, Anna.  
We'll take Jess's word for it.

SHIRA

Is he still in his room?

Anna blinks.

ANNA

Hmm? Oh, yes.

JACOB

(eager)

What'd he think of the new chapter?

Now it's Anna's turn to look puzzled.

ANNA

He, um, seemed...responsive.

Shira and Jacob share a smile, proud parents.

SHIRA

I'll go check on him.

(beat, to Jacob)

Can you--?

JACOB

(intuiting)

Yes, of course.

Shira exits, leaving Jacob alone with Anna.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
(once Shira's out of  
earshot--)

I don't know if she mentioned, but  
my wife got into a little bit of a  
row with Dana this morning.

ANNA  
(shaking her head)  
Oh, no.

JACOB  
Probably played a role in her early  
departure if you ask me. My wife is  
not an easy woman to please, as you  
can imagine.

(with a beleaguered sigh)  
Just when I started getting used to  
having her around, too. She did a  
lot for us, in the brief time she  
was here. She'll be missed...

(then, with no tears--)  
So, how much do I owe you?

ANNA  
Just the traditional rate.

JACOB  
What is it now? \$11?

ANNA  
12...actually.

JACOB  
(aghast)  
Christ.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - DURAND DRIVE - MAGIC HOUR

A pink twilight. The sun now a memory behind the hills.

Anna traipses down the steep drive, passing the familiar  
hairpin on Durand, the trio of caution signs, the view...

She sinks lower and lower into frame, and eventually, we lose  
sight of her completely. LINGER on the empty road, sunset  
shadows streaking across the drive, tranquility until--

A COYOTE crosses the street. It stops, glances up in our  
direction and we see, very clearly, a WOMAN'S FOOT in its  
mouth - still attached to a Balenciaga trainer. Jessica's.

The coyote skitters over to the other side of the street, disappearing into the darkness of the canyon...

CUT TO:

EST. HOLLYWOOD AND VINE - NIGHT

WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE of the intersection as the walk signs go white and the masked up denizens of the Boulevard collide.

TILT UP to the dreary apartment building overlooking this sad stream of unfiltered humanity--

CUT TO:

INT. THE LOFTS AT HOLLYWOOD AND VINE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A black-carpeted hallway, dimly lit. We hear the sleepy hum of centralized air - a step up from the ratty Lido.

ANNA steps in front of her apartment door and lays a KEY CARD on the reader.

Blurred in the b.g., we notice--

Another GIRL (25), wearing a prison orange 'Walk-a-Friend' t-shirt, doing the exact same thing only a couple doors down.

The Girl and Anna briefly touch eyes, a hint of aggression there. After a tense beat, the Girl enters her apartment, leaving Anna suspended in a vague state of alarm.

INT. THE LOFTS AT HOLLYWOOD AND VINE - NIGHT

A high-luxury loft in the midst of a dramatic renovation.

FIND Anna moving through the construction space as if it were her own (it's not, the framed portrait of an Indian girl with her family on the wall proves it - if we even spot it).

Anna drops her things on the messy counter, pulls out her phone: **22 missed calls, 10 voicemails.**

She brings the phone up to her ear and plays a voicemail:

OWNER (O.S.)  
(from phone, livid)  
--I'm gonna bury you alive in my  
fucking rose garden, you  
understand?  
(MORE)

OWNER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
*I find you anywhere near my fucking house again, my dogs, my family, I will fucking k--*

Anna ends the voicemail and quickly disassembles her phone, dumping all the parts into a nearby recycling bin.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The 'W' from the W Hotel bathes the room in a seedy red. We hear "Unwritten" from *The Hills* playing somewhere O.S.

Anna goes to a nightstand. Pulls out a drawer.

ANGLE ON the drawer, littered with dozens of burners.

Anna retrieves a dead iPhone X and shuts the drawer.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

A fogged mirror, obscuring a post-shower reflection.

Anna brushes her teeth, wet hair done up in a towel. She's scrolling through something on her resurrected iPhone X.

ON PHONE SCREEN: the *Pucci Pets* main website, the 'About' section. We see a professional-looking photo of JESSICA posing with two handsome retrievers.

Anna devours everything; the mission statement, the inspiring backstory, the slow-loading photo galleries, everything.

**CUT TO BLACK.**

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - CLOSET - MORNING

**A black space.** Then, a closet door OPENS, revealing Shira and Anna. They step inside, morning light behind them.

SHIRA  
 ...leashes are in here...

Anna scans the closet, wide-eyed. Shira shuts the door.

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - KITCHEN - MORNING

Shira handing bottles of Evian to Anna. She stuffs them into her LV backpack (or Dylan's backpack, or Jessica's backpack).

SHIRA

...I usually pack two, just in case  
it gets too hot for him.

ANNA

Why not make it three?  
(flash of a smile)  
Just in case.

Shira smirks. *Can tell she's going to like this one...*

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - FOYER - MORNING

Anna fastening on the Chow's harness like a pro, tightening the straps around his legs, chest.

Shira enters, observant:

SHIRA

I thought tight was *bad*?

ANNA

(looking up)  
Who told you that?

SHIRA

Dana.

Anna nods, quietly frustrated that she has to be the one to course-correct.

ANNA

No ma'am. If the harness is too loose, there's a good chance he might slip out and run away.

SHIRA

(beat)

...but why would he do that?

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOLLYWOOD PARK - DAY

Another bustling day at the dog park. A WHIPPET and a BULLDOG tussle over something in the grass.

Near the entrance, Anna arrives with the Chow, leash tight, face mask on, a pretty good impression of Jessica, or Dylan?

The fans are here and they bum-rush toward the Chow, snapping photos, selfies, *fifth Beatle is right...*

Anna looks overwhelmed by the sheer *number* of them. She makes her way over to the middle of the park, dodging the frenzy.

FANS  
(various)  
Wait, can we take a picture?/What kind is he?/What's his name?/Wait!

They give CHASE, phones out, closing in on her like a pack of paparazzi. We see a few toy dogs try to mingle with the Chow but he SNARLS at them. Anna YANKS him back, knows more than anyone what this monster is capable of.

ANNA  
(under breath)  
Not too close!

FAN  
What?  
FAN  
What'd she say?

DOG-WALKER (O.S.)  
Excuse me!

A DOG-WALKER (24), wearing a bright orange 'Walk-a-Friend' t-shirt, elbows her way through the crowd, aggressive.

DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
That's a beautiful dog.

Anna recognizing something of herself in this girl.

ANNA  
(clipped)  
Thanks.

DOG-WALKER  
If you don't mind me asking, are you currently hiring?

ANNA  
No?

DOG-WALKER  
Not even for an assistant?

The mob SWELLS, threatening to pull her under...

ANNA  
No, I'm sorry---  
DOG-WALKER (CONT'D)  
--What about coffee then?  
(freakish smile)  
Pick your brain?

Suddenly, a SCREAM rings out, turning every head in the park toward the direction of the sound.

A HYSTERICAL WOMAN watches as the Whippet and the Bulldog engage in a playful tug-of-war over JESSICA'S SEVERED FOOT (still in the Balenciaga trainer, although heavily gnawed).

CLOSE ON the foot, dog teeth tearing into designer.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE HOLLYWOOD PARK - DAY

Security evacuating everyone out of the park. Pet-owners and park-goers hike back to their individual cars on the hill.

We FIND Anna moving with the exodus, the Chow ahead of her, pulling her. She's sweating, and quite profusely.

Suddenly, the DOG-WALKER catches up to her.

DOG-WALKER  
Looks like someone could use a  
break!

Anna stays on the move, eyes forward, guard up...

ANNA  
I know what you're doing.

DOG-WALKER  
Continuing the conversation?

They weave past a MICRO-INFLUENCER live-streaming the chaos.

ANNA  
You're looking for a way in.

The Dog-Walker loses her step, realizing:

DOG-WALKER  
*You're not one of them, are you?*

NOAH (O.S.)  
--Hey. Everything okay over here?

WHIP PAN to NOAH watching them from his Tesla Model X. We can hear QUENTIN barking from the passenger seat, riled up.

The Dog-Walker, spooked, falls back into the crowd.

Anna turns to Noah, grateful:

ANNA  
Thanks.

NOAH

No prob. Been seeing creeps like  
that around here a lot lately.  
(beat, sincere--)  
You sure you're okay?

ANNA

Just a little overwhelmed.

NOAH

Aren't we all.

PASSERBY (O.S.)

A FUCKING FOOT!

PASSERBY (O.S.)

*Yo, shut the fuck up...*

NOAH

Beachwood's never seen anything  
quite like this...

ANNA

A severed foot? We're in L.A.

NOAH

Not here we aren't.

He looks off, troubled. Then, he returns to Anna. Regards her elevated appearance, her *Pucci Pets* face mask...

NOAH (CONT'D)

Jess around?

ANNA

She's busy. I'm just covering for  
her today.

NOAH

Huh. Didn't know Jess even had  
help.

ANNA

Everyone needs a little bit these  
days.

Her cheeks raise with an exhausted smile. Noah's warmed by it, the great generosity of the mask-people.

NOAH

Yeah, these past few years...  
(contemplative beat)  
Well, hey, listen: I'm having a  
little neighborly get-together at  
my place tonight.  
(MORE)

NOAH (CONT'D)

Just to talk about today, maybe get some answers. I was going to invite Jess, but, seeing as she isn't here...you should come.

Anna weighs it, a ticket to assimilation.

ANNA

Really?

NOAH

Yeah, gotta stick together during times like these, right?

ANNA

I like that. Cool motto.

NOAH

Thanks. I'll add you to the Facebook group. You got a first and last?

ANNA

*Anna, but, I actually don't have a Facebook...do you have WhatsApp?*

Quentin claws over to the driver's side just to BARK at Anna.

NOAH

Hey, Quentin, no! Fucking psycho...  
(back to her)

Yeah, that's okay. Guess you could just lift my address from Jess. I'm a client of hers. *Noah*.

ANNA

Any chance I can get it from you now, *Noah*?

(hopeful)  
Old fashioned way?

Noah smirks.

NOAH

Ah, you mean the ole' face-to-face?  
Surprised you even remember those days. Before the Zuck ruined everything...  
(sure)  
5564 Ledgewood, the one with the Tesla out front.

ANNA  
 (there are Teslas  
 everywhere)  
 Great!

NOAH  
 Stay safe out there, Anna.

He drives off. Anna watches him go.

Over the drone of a KTLA helicopter...

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - FOYER - DAY

The Chow waddling in, tongue out, Anna right behind him.

Shira goes to greet them, the Chow first, always first.

SHIRA  
 There he *is*! Thank you, Anita.

ANNA  
 (lightly correcting)  
 It's *Anna*--

Shira gets on her knees, rakes her hands through his thick red fur, her cutesy-voice reaching a new, irritating octave:

SHIRA  
 (gibberish)  
 Bigmistermanhuhwhoseabigman!

Anna hovers off to the side, *gauging what she knows*--

ANNA  
 It was crazy down there...

SHIRA  
 Hm?

The look on Shira's face, confused, like a child's. It really *is* heaven up here, insulated among the clouds...

ANNA  
 (retracting)  
 ...the tourists.

SHIRA  
 Oh. Yes. Every year.

She continues to pet her son. Disinterested and disconnected.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD SECRET STAIRCASE - EVENING

A helicopter WHIRS overhead, bringing us down to--

Anna, zipping up a trendy jacket over Shira's designer top. It looks new, as in *nice*, as in *not hers*.

As Anna two-times it back up the stairs we slowly...

...BOOM DOWN to a barely conscious TOURIST splayed out on the steps, bleeding from the head like a Mayan sacrifice.

CUT TO:

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - EVENING

ECU of Anna's FINGER pressing a Ring doorbell camera.

She bends slightly out of frame, avoiding the glowing blue eye. Noah's Tesla is parked out in the driveway behind her.

As Anna waits, she spruces up her hair, straightens out her jacket, checking for any dried blood/dirt. Suddenly--

--THE DOOR OPENS, revealing Noah, similarly spiffied up.

NOAH

Hey! Didn't even recognize you  
there.

ANNA

(downplaying)

I just threw this on...

NOAH

I mean without your mask.

Anna, covering her disappointment--

ANNA

Right! Guess it wasn't really face-to-face then...

NOAH

(keeping it light)

Guess not, guess not. You, um...

A lingering at the door. We hear voices inside. Lively.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
You bring one, by any chance? I  
only ask 'cause I have a friend in  
there - she's *immunocompromised*--

ANNA  
--Oh, sure, of course.

NOAH  
Sorry, I just--

ANNA  
--No, no, no. Totally fine.

Anna awkwardly digs through her LV bag and retrieves her *Pucci Pets* face mask, kinda stung. The second she puts it on--

NOAH

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Noah leads Anna into one of those ultra-modern living spaces, oppressively white with only a reluctant splash of color.

Seated around the den are some of Noah's closest friends; STACEY (40s), an industry type, her husband, JOSH (40s), and TOMMY (39), a face we vaguely recognize from commercials.

Noah doesn't make a big show of introducing Anna.

NOAH  
Hey guys. This is Anna.

STACY JOSH  
Hey. Hey.

Tommy only acknowledges her with the flit of his eyes. Anna recognizes him immediately, but tries not to leer too much.

ANNA  
Sounds like you guys are having  
quite the party...

STACEY  
(polite to the point of  
teasing)  
Well...

JOSH

...Nooo, we're just here because  
*someone* promised us free food.

STACEY

And theories.

JOSH

Theories?

STACEY

For what happened today....!

JOSH

Right...

TOMMY

(serious)

I have a theory.

The group braces themselves. Anna is kept on a pin.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I think Cosby did it.

Groans/laughter.

JOSH

Fuck off...

TOMMY

Hold on, listen. He just got out,  
right? Maybe he got bored of--

NOAH

(to Anna)

We don't need to hear this.

(gesturing)

Let me show you outside.

As he leads her out, Anna finds herself glancing back at the group, wanting to stay, wanting to hear the next thing to come out of a famous person's mouth, *the novelty of it...*

CUT TO:

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DUSK

The late evening sky, purpling to dusk.

We see QUENTIN and three other ratty-looking DOGS try to chase/hump/kill each other across a sprawling green lawn.

Noah hovers near a huge grill, slow-cooking steaks. Anna peers out at the great backyard, in awe of its expanse...

NOAH

I've been watching them for a bit before you got here. That's Quentin, the terrier's Moxie, and the two little Shih Tzus are Fuzz and Tigger.

ANNA

(not paying attention)  
Cute.

NOAH

Yeah, Jess usually just hangs with them out here...

He waits for Anna to get it. When she does, her face falls.

ANNA

Oh, you mean you want me to--?

NOAH

Just while we're inside. They get kinda crazy when they're all together like this.

(with a smirk)

*The kids*, I mean. So just try to keep them separated if you can. Think you can do that, ref?

Anna nods. "Ref." This is all starting to feel like a prank, a mean one at that...

NOAH (CONT'D)

Something wrong? I'll pay you your normal rate, whatever that is--

ANNA

No, I guess I just thought...

He stares at her dumbly, genuinely, "what else were you expecting?" Anna, working through the pang of rejection:

ANNA (CONT'D)

...you wanted me here?

NOAH

What? *Of course*. We're here for you. We'll just be...inside.

A hurtful beat.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
 (awkward)  
 Should really get back to it.

He pops open the grill's massive hood and forks the steaks.

ON Anna, watching metal glide into hot flesh...

LATER

Anna roaming the backyard like an outcast, breaking up dog fights in-between longing looks into the house...

FROM OUTSIDE

We see Noah and his friends enjoying a nice steak dinner, laughing, smiling, eating...the hearth of a community.

As Anna stares at them, burning with want...

We hear the low, distant rumble of a police helicopter banking overhead.

Noah and his friends suddenly rise from their seats and move to the sliding glass doors, curious of the sound...

Anna remains unfazed as the copter's roar BUILDS over them.

A SHOT of Noah & friends looking at Anna, inside vs outside.

The dogs RUSH to the sight of their owners, anxious of all the noise. Noah opens the sliding glass door to let them in.

As the dogs stampede back into the house, Noah calls out to Anna, a little anxious of the noise himself:

NOAH (CONT'D)  
 Hey, why don't you come on in? Set up their lick mats.

He arcs his head up at the night sky, trying to place the copter but it's circled off to another part of the canyon.

Over its foreboding RUMBLE we...

CUT TO:

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

INSERT: A knife spreading CBD peanut butter over a lick mat.

NOAH (O.S.)  
 Alright, so who do we think did it?

FIND Anna, exiled to the kitchen with the other animals. The dogs yip at her heels - hungry, anxious, annoying...

Noah, Josh, Stacey and Tommy have moved the party (and the wine) to the LIVING ROOM - bellies full, glasses not so.

JOSH  
A coyote, most likely.

NOAH  
Sure.

STACEY  
But that's not as fun, is it?

NOAH  
You think this is fun?

STACEY  
I mean...a little. Feels like the  
90s again. Serial killers--

TOMMY  
--Cosby was on...

EVERYONE  
Enough!

Topsy laughter.

NOAH  
Cosby was 80s though.

JOSH  
Last episode was '92, during the  
riots.

NOAH  
No shit. I didn't know that.

JOSH  
You weren't there?

NOAH  
For the riots? What do you think?

STACEY  
I don't think I've ever even *seen* a  
riot up close.

TOMMY  
(stirring the pot)  
You weren't there for BLM?

STACEY

Okay, that's--

NOAH

Most of them were peaceful.

JOSH

There were looters...

STACEY

(admonishing)

Josh!

JOSH

They torched the Grove, Stacey!

STACEY

It was a fucking *kiosk*!

NOAH

Can we please get back on topic--

STACEY

--Yes, serial killers.

NOAH

No.

STACEY

What if it is? What if we finally  
have a serial killer in Beachwood?

Anna wipes the peanut butter off the knife with her fingers.

JOSH

It's not a serial killer.

STACEY

(slurring)

Why, why are you so confident?

JOSH

Because it's not the 90s anymore?

TOMMY

(dramatic)

Ohhh, don't say that. Pleaseeee  
don't say that...

Tommy pretends to slowly wither and die in his chair. As he does, he peeks at Anna bending over in the kitchen.

STACEY

Don't.

TOMMY

*What?*

STACEY

You're still in time out.

TOMMY

(pouty)

Don't remind me.

NOAH

What's going on?

STACEY

Tommy's raping again.

NOAH

JOSH

Wow.

Seriously?

TOMMY

Stacey, you can't just throw the r-word around like that.

(beat)

The correct term is "fondle."

NOAH

(disgusted)

Tommy!

TOMMY

*Grope! Sorry...*

Noah throws a pitying look to Anna in the kitchen but it's not *that* pitying.

JOSH (O.S.)

Anyone check the latest on LookOut?

NOAH

I'm not on it anymore.

JOSH

(disbelief)

What?

NOAH

Disproportionally targets minorities.

STACEY

I heard about that. On NPR.

NOAH

Plus, it's just shitheads in  
Hollywood doing shithead stuff.  
Doesn't apply to us.

JOSH

True. I mean It's not like anything  
ever happens up here.

NOAH

Well, *until today...*

STACEY

What, some unhoused person wanders  
off a cliff--

TOMMY

Stacey, if you want to fuck Jemele  
Hill then just say that.

STACEY

*Homeless*, for the uncouth among us.

TOMMY

(tipping his drink to her)  
Thank you.

NOAH

How do we know they were homeless?

STACEY

*It's always* the homeless.

TOMMY

Remember when they were nice?

STACEY

Yes! They've gotten so much worse  
oh my god.

JOSH

And the encampments are just *nuts*  
now. Go anywhere - tent city.

NOAH

Someone said it was a trainer.

STACEY

Like a personal--?

NOAH

No, like the shoe.

STACEY

*So?*

NOAH

So, when's the last time you saw an  
unhoused person in Balenciaga?

The helicopter WHIRS overhead, rattling the wine.

STACEY

(concerned)

Active pursuit?

JOSH

Might be the news.

STACEY

Can't say I know the difference.

ANNA (O.S.)

I do.

They all turn to Anna entering from the kitchen.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Police like to circle around, news  
usually hovers in one spot.

STACEY

Hmph. Well! *The more you know!*

NOAH

(to Anna, pointed)

You finish with the mats?

ANNA

Yup.

She lingers, forcing them to accept her presence.

NOAH

(that's all)

Thanks, Anna.

ANNA

You want to know what I think?

Nervous glances among the group. *Sure...?*

ANNA (CONT'D)

I think it was one of them.

JOSH

Who?

ANNA  
The ones in the orange shirts.

Noah grimaces.

TOMMY  
What's she talking about?

ANNA  
Walk-a-Friend hires just about anyone these days. No background checks, no serious vetting--

STACEY  
--I read about that. In the Post.

ANNA  
Hypothetically, it could be anyone down there...using our park.

They bristle slightly at her use of "our".

TOMMY  
Sorry, Walk-a-What now?

NOAH  
Walk-a-Friend, it's like Wag.

TOMMY  
The fuck is Wag?

JOSH  
(to Anna)  
What do you think we should do?

NOAH  
Josh--

JOSH  
What? I want to hear from someone on the ground.

Noah takes a strong sip of wine, ceding the floor to Anna.

ANNA  
Ban them.

NOAH  
(scoffs)  
We can't ban people...  
(beat)  
Can we?

STACEY

We can actively *discourage* them.

JOSH

Might fall under those pesky  
discrimination laws though...

TOMMY

(mock-chagrin)

Damn those pesky laws.

STACEY

If we can convince Google to drop  
tourists on the wrong side of  
Griffith then we can do anything.

NOAH

Yeah, because the fake wall on the  
trailhead *really* deterred them...

STACEY

What'd you expect? We're dealing  
with people who don't even believe  
in the *concept* of walls. Or  
*privacy*, for that matter.

JOSH

--Hold on, why do we think it's the  
orange shirt people again?

Anna looks to Noah for backup.

ANNA

Did you tell them?

STACEY

(impatient)

Noah?

NOAH

I caught one of them creeping on  
her today. Seems to be part of  
their brand if you ask me...

He takes another strong sip of red.

JOSH

Okay, but none of this proves that  
they're capable of *killing* anyone.

STACEY

We don't know that! They let out a  
shit ton of prisoners for COVID--

JOSH

What does that have to do with anything?

STACEY

It's scary. I can't even wear my rings on my walks anymore.

TOMMY

And Jesus wept.

STACEY

I'm Jewish.

TOMMY

I'm cancelled, nice to meet you.

Stacey rolls her eyes. Noah's phone TRILLS in his pocket. He takes it out, reads the (323) number and answers:

NOAH

Yello? (pause) This is he.

He excuses himself from the group. Anna watches him disappear around a corner...

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Overhead lights set to gallery low. Black-and-white movie stills passing as chic photography adorn the walls.

NOAH

Yes, I'm a client of hers. Uh-huh.  
I haven't, actually, no. Is there--  
(pause, the bad news)  
Oh, I'm sorry, I haven't seen her--

As soon as he turns - ANNA is right there, waiting.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Can you, can you hold on for a second? I actually have someone with me right now who might--

He mutes the call.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(freaked whispering)

Something seriously  Fucked  is going on.

(MORE)

NOAH (CONT'D)

I'm on the phone with some relative of Jess's and apparently she's been missing for like, 2 days? They've been combing her entire client list for tips. You said she was busy today, right?

Anna stares at him, face shadowed under the low light.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Here, can you talk to them? Just explain to them why--

She SNATCHES the phone from him and abruptly hits "End Call."

Noah blinks, bewildered.

NOAH (CONT'D)

What happened?

Silence, save for the muffled laughter in the living room.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Why'd you hang up?

Silence.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Anna, why'd you--

She draws out a meat fork and PLUNGES it right into his neck.

HARD CUT TO:

QUENTIN

Barking his lungs out in the kitchen. The other rat-dogs join in, rallied by a danger that currently eludes--

THE GROUP

Still lounging in the den, wine glasses dry. Stacey turns to the source of the racket--

STACEY

MOXIE!

(annoyed)

What's gotten into them?

On top of the BARKING, we hear the low, distant RUMBLE of the police helicopter banking overhead, *building over the house*.

TOMMY

Anyone hear that?

JOSH  
(drunk)  
Hear what?

We PUSH past Stacey...settling in on Tommy, paranoid.

TOMMY  
It sounded like a--

STACEY (O.S.)  
(shocked)  
--Anna?

Anna returns from the hallway wearing only underwear. She power-walks over to them, with purpose.

STACEY (CONT'D)  
What's going on? Is everything--?

In a flash, Anna THRUSTS the meat fork into Stacy's trachea.

CUT TO:

EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

From outside (and *only* outside) we watch Anna as she stabs Stacey, Josh, and Tommy to death in real time, an involving murder that takes us through nearly every level of the house. The helicopter's RUMBLE drowns out most of their blood-curdling screams. By the end, Anna remains the weary victor.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - LATER

Anna throws open the patio door and the dogs spill out after her, eager to pee - their blood-stamped paws leaving tiny little maroon trails all over the deck...

She hangs outside, letting the cool breeze ripple over her grisly body. She closes her eyes. Peaceful, considering.

Beyond the lawn, echoing from the wilderness, we hear COYOTES yipping in the dark, a dozen of them, maybe more. Waiting.

INT. NOAH'S HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Anna leaves the patio door open as she re-enters the house. In the b.g., we notice that the lawn is now empty.

LIVING ROOM

Anna drags Noah's corpse into the middle of the room where we discover Stacey, Josh, and Tommy's bodies have been arranged in a neat row, side-by-side like meats on the grill.

KITCHEN

Anna opens the fridge, welcoming the burst of cold air. Then, she grabs every slab of meat off the shelves; some leftovers, most still in their packaging.

As she shuts the door--

HARD CUT TO:

NOAH'S LIFELESS FACE

Horribly grey and distended. Eyes fixed to nothing. Suddenly--  
A RAW STEAK plops onto his face.

Anna slaps meat all over his body, dressing him up. Each successive slap feels harder than the last, a clear resentment being worked out here...

QUICK CUTS of MEAT being slapped over the dead Gen-Xers.

Suddenly, the doorbell CHIMES - freezing Anna in place.

She slowly turns her head toward the direction of the door.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. NOAH'S HOUSE - FOYER

Anna, drenched in blood from the neck down, trying to peek at the visitor through the frosted glass. All we see is ORANGE.

Anna pulls away, panicking, strategizing until--

The doorbell CHIMES again, coupled with a puppy's WHINE.

VISITOR (O.S.)  
(behind door)  
Hello? I have your dog here...

We see something shift in the visitor's arms, something brown and animated, WHINING. Anna decides to wait it out...

VISITOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Hello?

Anna glances back at the bodies in the living room, thinking.

Finally, she makes a decision--

She hustles back to the bodies, bare feet squeaking across the bloody hardwood floor and kneels next to Noah's body.

She pinches out his iPhone 12 from his denim pocket and opens up the Ring app, activating the microphone feature.

RING CAMERA POV: An Orange Shirter rocking Moxie in her arms.

ANNA  
(into Ring app)  
Hello?

The Orange Shirter spooks at the sound of Anna's voice.

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING:

ORANGE SHIRTER  
Oh, hello. Is this--?

ANNA  
I'm sorry, that's not my dog.

ORANGE SHIRTER  
Really? Because her tag says--

ANNA  
I know her tag doesn't say 5564  
Ledgewood Drive.

ORANGE SHIRTER  
(caught)  
Then maybe you could help me--

ANNA  
Go bother someone else.

The Orange Shirter just stares at her through the Ring camera, unmoving, breathing heavily. Her eyes refract like a predator's under the night vision lens.

ORANGE SHIRTER  
You sound like me...

Anna doesn't respond.

ORANGE SHIRTER (CONT'D)  
(to Moxie, babying)  
Okay. Let's go.

Behind her, we see another ORANGE SHIRTER attempt the same scam at a different house, this time with Tigger.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

POV of Anna shoving her bloodied clothes into the wash.

After she shuts the door (the kind where you can peek inside), we see her struggle with the bougie interface.

DOLLY across all the unique settings, wash cycles, choices...

She presses a couple random buttons until she gets the DING, followed immediately by the sound of RUSHING water.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. NOAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A waterfall soundscape, playing on a humongous TV.

PAN to Anna lying in bed, eye-mask on, drifting to sleep.

Over the soothing waterfall, we hear COYOTES downstairs, yipping and hollering and tearing into their new offerings.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. NOAH'S BATHROOM - MORNING

FADE BACK IN on a hazy bathroom mirror. No one in it.

Then, Anna whips back up from washing her face in the sink.

She stares at her reflection for a long, unbroken moment.

ANNA

(reciting)

Yes. They called me right away.

Nobody knows what's going on, I  
haven't heard from her at all.

(affecting)

I hope she's OK.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Anna, dressed for work, rounds the living room where we see, in merciful soft focus, a stain of gore leading to the backyard. Some coyote scat too. There's nothing left.

ANNA (PRE-LAP)  
Yes. They called me right away.  
Nobody knows what's going on, I  
haven't heard from her at all.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anna, Shira and Jacob seated around the living room, their arrangement suggesting a casual interrogation.

ANNA  
(affecting)  
I hope she's OK.

SHIRA  
When was the last time you spoke  
with her?

ANNA  
The day before yesterday.

JACOB  
Have you tried calling her?

Anna nods.

SHIRA  
(to Jacob)  
Should we involve the authorities?

JACOB  
Us?

ANNA  
(jumping in, too quick)  
I wouldn't.

Jacob and Shira turn to her, struck by her response.

SHIRA  
Why do you say that?

ANNA  
It's a little...early.

SHIRA  
It's been 48 hours. Quite a long  
time to be missing.

ANNA  
She could be unavailable.

SHIRA  
 (sitting with that)  
 Unavailable.

A long, scrutinizing moment. Anna readjusts her face mask.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
 Whatever happened to that other  
 girl? Diane--

JACOB  
 --Daniella.

SHIRA  
 Right. Didn't she say Jess was busy  
 on the west side now?

JACOB  
 News to me.

SHIRA  
*I told you that.*  
 (idiot..)  
 This doesn't makes any sense.

ANNA  
 99% of missing persons are found  
 within the first 48 hours.

SHIRA  
 (okay..?)  
 Really.

ANNA  
 I wouldn't worry yourself too much.

SHIRA  
 Aren't you?

Anna, caught--

ANNA  
 What?

SHIRA  
 Worried?

ANNA  
 Of course.

We see Jacob and Shira share a look - ambiguous in meaning. Then, as if passing a judgement:

SHIRA

Well...there's not much we can do.

JACOB

(ambivalent)

She'll turn up. Somewhere.

SHIRA

Thank you, Aniston. For everything.  
Jacob will see you at the door.

She stands up and leaves with no eye contact.

ANNA

(a real concern now)

*Anna, but, you don't need me to--?*

JACOB

Take the day.

He smiles at her, emptily. A knot forms in Anna's stomach.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - FOYER - DAY

Jacob showing Anna the door.

ANNA

Same time tomorrow?

JACOB

(curt)

Same time.

ANNA

Is everything going to be okay?

JACOB

Everything's fine. Thanks again.

A hurried tone in his voice as he shuts the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOLF'S LAIR - GATEHOUSE - DAY

Anna pauses to look back at the splendor of Wolf's Lair before exiting through the darkened gatehouse...

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - FLAGMOOR PLACE - DAY

Clouds rolling in.

Anna keeps to the shoulder of the road, stomping down the hill, heavy with thought. Every step louder than the last.

Suddenly, we hear a CAR (off screen) screeching up the drive, engine revving, emergency vehicle fast...

Anna stops, as if hit by something. A deep, premonitory dread. Soon, we hear the rumble of ANOTHER CAR behind her...

Panicked, she swivels her head to SEE--

An ASC CRUISER screaming down Flagmoor, same pitch as the one racing up the drive, the urgency obvious...

Anna forgets how to move as--

The TWO ASC CRUISERS pinch her on the edge of the cliff.

GOD'S EYE VIEW of this, a rousing shot of justice.

The ASC SECURITY GUARDS eject out of their cruisers like real cops and call out to her, scary yet rational--

ASC SECURITY GUARD  
Are you Aniston?

Anna quakes.

ANNA  
No?

ASC SECURITY GUARD  
Well, you match the description.  
(then)  
We're responding to a complaint  
issued by one of our residents.  
You'll need to come with us.

ANNA  
What's going on?

ASC SECURITY GUARD  
We'll talk on the way down.

ANNA  
(defiant)  
No.

ASC SECURITY GUARD  
Ma'am, you don't want to make this  
harder than it needs to be.

ANNA  
But I haven't done anything wrong.

ASC SECURITY GUARD  
That's not up for you to decide.

ANNA  
Who filed the complaint?

The guards share a look, a conversation behind sunglasses.

ASC SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)  
(hardball)  
We're not going to ask you again.

As soon as the guard motions to open the backseat door--

Anna turns on a heel and FLEES the scene, vaulting over the guardrail and skidding down the hill...

ASC SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)  
Hey, HEY!!

EXT. BEACHWOOD CANYON - HILL/BACKYARDS - CONTINUOUS

Dust plumes as Anna speed-runs down the precarious slope.

She reaches the bottom and finds herself on

BELDEN DR

sprinting across the empty street, the roar of the cruisers in the air, coordinating, hunting her, getting close as

ANNA

scales a small wall into a neighbor's backyard, not exactly stealthy but she needs to move and fast because

## THE CRUISERS

are only a hair behind her now, screeching up on Belden, car doors opening, boots hitting smooth pavement but Anna's already onto the next

## BACKYARD

and trampling through it, a well-watered Eden; a rose garden here, some metal sculptures there, hippy landscaping...

WE HEAR

the cruisers pulling up outside the house, closing in...

ANNA

rips off her face mask and BREATHES, stealing a lungful of air. Then, she throws herself over the next wall and--

EXT. DISGRUNTLED NEIGHBOR'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

--collapses onto a patch of bright green lawn, dyed perhaps.

Anna, breathless, ambles toward the next wall until her feet SNAG on something resembling trip wire and SUDDENLY--

CAMOUFLAGED TANNOY SPEAKERS EXPLODE WITH PENDERECKI'S 'THRENODY FOR THE VICTIMS OF HIROSHIMA' (A COYOTE DETERRENT).

Anna covers her ears, frightened. She DARTS over to the wall but struggles to find her footing, Penderecki BLARES.

WE RACK FOCUS OVER TO the DISGRUNTLED NEIGHBOR, observing Anna from his window, pleasantly surprised by his catch.

Eventually, Anna heaves herself over the wall and we--

RETURN

to the frenetic animal POV of our opening, this time we're scrambling out of the neighborhood...

hurdling over fences, walls, gates...

darting down alleyways, secret staircases...

fast-forwarding out of the labyrinth...scored to Penderecki.

JUMP CUT TO

the street of the Village, familiar signposts whizzing by, right back to square one it feels like and that's when--

A BMW 3 SERIES

knocks us off our ass and we ROLL over to the side of the road, dead - *probably*. CAMERA lingers on nothing in particular as we gradually lose consciousness and...

**FADE TO BLACK.**

**An eternity in darkness.** Then, with absolutely no warning--

HARD CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

SHIRA waking with a start. She stirs, turns over to Jacob, still sleeping. He wears a sleep apnea mask.

Over the quiet hum of the machine, she rises out of bed, drawing a night robe over her chest and enters...

THE BATHROOM

using the toilet as she ponders her nightmare.

*Was it really all a dream?*

She stands, the toilet automatically flushing behind her.

INT. WALK-IN CLOSET - EARLY MORNING

Shira slips into something casual for the day.

As she changes out of her nightwear--

She pauses, catches a whiff of something. A strange smell.

She roams around the closet, trying to place it. Can't. Decides to sidebar it for now. *Maybe a job for the workers...*

CUT TO:

INT. THE CHOW'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

The door cracks open and Shira peeks inside, hallway light spilling onto the big pile of fur on the bed, the Chow.

Shira watches him sleep, a prick of a mother's concern in her eyes. After a beat, she gently closes the door.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER - MORNING

The masked workers stream in, single file.

Shira greets them one by one with the thinnest of smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - VARIOUS - DAY

CLOSE ON a high-powered vacuum WHINING over carpet.

We see Shira making the rounds in every room, nit-picking over missed spots, lazy efforts...

Suddenly, she trips over a loose extension cord. She wobbles a bit, catching her fall - but it's enough to stir the giant.

She turns to the closest victim, a MASKED WORKER--

SHIRA  
Excuse me!

The Masked Worker doesn't hear her over the vacuum.

Shira, offended, bounds over and YANKS the cord out of its socket. The room goes frighteningly still.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
Do you see this? Do you see what could have happened here?

The Masked Worker just shakes his head, confused.

SHIRA (CONT'D)  
I could've broken my neck, I could've died, right then and there on that miserable floor and you wouldn't have even heard me.

MASKED WORKER  
I'm sorry--

SHIRA  
--Don't. Don't talk. Just...do what you were born to do and tape the goddamn thing to the floor.

MASKED WORKER  
But--

SHIRA  
Monkey! Tape! Floor!

The Masked Worker drops to his knees like a circus animal and begins to tape down the loose extension cord.

Another MASKED WORKER approaches Shira from behind, timid:

MASKED WORKER (O.S.)  
Excuse me, ma'am?

Shira turns to her, volcanically active--

SHIRA

What?

MASKED WORKER

One of our ladies found the source  
of that smell in your closet?

SHIRA

Oh! Very good.

Shira brushes past her, navigating a path around a viper pit  
of extension cords that still snake throughout the room.

Over the return of the vacuum's WHINE we--

CUT TO:

INT. WALK-IN CLOSET - DAY

Shira enters and immediately finds the bulging LV suitcase  
splayed out across the floor.

TILT UP from the suitcase to reveal--

ANNA, wearing a cleaner's uniform. Her hair's different, but  
her eyes haven't changed. She slowly removes her face mask,  
unveiling a row of grisly scars across her cheek (road rash).

ANNA

You should get your husband.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Shira, shaken, glides past the workers - affecting normalcy.

INT. JACOBS' OFFICE - DAY

Shira barges in, interrupting Jacob in the middle of a Zoom  
call. He pauses mid-sentence, shocked--

JACOB

*Um--?*

SHIRA

Come with me.

JACOB  
(scoffs)

Now?

SHIRA  
Yes, now.

JACOB  
Whatever it is, it can wait.

He turns back to the Zoom call, apologetic:

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Sorry everyone. Tom, I'd like to--

SHIRA  
RIGHT FUCKING NOW, JACOB!!

Off her explosion we--

CUT TO:

INT. WALK-IN CLOSET - DAY

Shira bringing Jacob into the closet of horrors. Jacob sees Anna and turns white, whiter than he already is...

JACOB  
(confused/stern/scared)  
What are you doing here?

Anna bends down to unzip the LV suitcase. We STAY on Jacob and Shira as Dylan's rotting corpse is revealed.

Shira YELPS. Jacob's hand comes over his mouth, trembling with abject terror.

ANNA  
Why do you look so sad?  
(re: the suitcase)  
It's not like you ever *missed* this.

She kicks it with the outside of her foot (we still haven't seen Dylan's rotting corpse, which only peeks below frame).

JACOB  
Is that--?  
ANNA (CONT'D)  
Yes.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
And you...?

Anna's cold gaze confirms everything for him.

SHIRA  
 (disoriented)  
 I'm, I'm going to call someone...

Shira motions to flee but Anna stops her with a single--

ANNA  
Don't.

A terrified beat.

JACOB  
 (a warning)  
 There's a lot of people downstairs.

ANNA  
 And you want them to know that your  
 wife is a murderer?

Shira blanches. Jacob cannot even begin to process the idea.

JACOB  
 What, what are you talking about?

Anna draws out the D&G scarf from her work apron.

ANNA  
 The murder weapon.

SHIRA  
 (exploding)  
 That's not mine! I've never even  
 seen that in my entire life!

Anna rolls her eyes. Unbelievable.

ANNA  
 (with the memorized  
 quality of a testimony)  
 Dana came to you shortly after your  
 dog attacked my dogs, the ones I  
 used to walk for--

JACOB  
 --Your dogs? I don't  
 understand...my son isn't violent.

ANNA  
 Then you don't know your son.

She pulls out her iPhone X and shows them (presumably) a  
 photo of the maimed Chihuahuas. Jacob and Shira go ill.

SHIRA JACOB  
Ohmigod... Is that the Abelman's?

ANNA  
They're still looking for the  
culprit. Are any of you familiar  
with California's euthanasia law?

They both shake their heads "no," afraid of the answer....

ANNA (CONT'D)  
Well, California law stipulates  
that your dog could be put down if--

SHIRA  
NO!

Shira falls to her knees, not needing to hear the rest.

ANNA

Shira wails silently into her palm. Jacob remains tall, for her, for the both of them, but even he is faltering...

JACOB  
Why, why are you doing this to us?  
(desperate)  
Is it the money? I'll write you a  
check, forget the minimum. How much  
do you want? I'll get my checkbook--

ANNA  
(in control)  
Don't.

JACOB  
That's what this is about, isn't it? We're not dumb. We know we're secure, more than most. Please...

He gets on his knees and crawls over to her. Shira follows.

JACOB (CONT'D) SHIRA  
Please, don't bring my son We'll give you whatever you  
into this... want.

Anna towers over them, bemused by the sight of Jacob and Shira completely debasing themselves for someone like her.

ANNA

Okay. I'll let you go. I'll spare  
your son, I'll get rid of *Dana*, and  
I'll leave all your lives forever.

(but...)

On the condition that you both  
answer my next question correctly,  
and carefully.

Shira and Jacob exhale, absolution.

SHIRA

Yes, of course!

JACOB

Thank you, okay. What is it?

Beat.

ANNA

What's my name?

We see the panic return in Shira and Jacob's eyes.

SHIRA

Oh, um--!

JACOB

Yes, it was, uh, uh--

They look at each other, desperate, Charades with stakes.

Anna waits and waits as they sound out every conceivable name  
that starts with "An" (*Andrea, Angela, Annica, Annette...*).

Then, with total confidence, Shira proclaims:

SHIRA (CONT'D)

ANASTASIA!

(then--)

*Wait, no...*

JACOB

It was something exotic, right?  
Anise? Antonella? Anya?

SHIRA

Aniston!

JACOB (CONT'D)

Aniston!

Final answer. They both look to Anna, clinched with suspense.

She just stares at them. A long, tortuous moment until--

ANNA

Anna. It's Anna.

Oh.

WIDE of all three of them trapped here, forever, surrounded by a grotesque amount of wealth and an even more grotesque body, decomposing in the middle of the room...

**CUT TO BLACK.**

Then, 'Unwritten' from *The Hills* stork-drops us into...

EST. BEACHWOOD CANYON - VARIOUS

Glossy aerials of the canyon, fast-cutting and hard-selling an image of L.A. dreamed up by reality TV, sunny propaganda.

CUT TO:

EST. WOLF'S LAIR - MORNING

Touching down on Wolf's Lair as a glittery **CHYRON** appears:

Anna's House

Hollywood, CA

CUT TO:

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Sheer curtains. Daylight trickling in. Birdsong signaling the start of a new, glorious day.

A young woman stirs in bed. Then, she rises. Reveal ANNA, her scars long faded. She welcomes the new day with a smile.

Glittery **CHYRON**: Anna.

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

Bundled in Shira's night robe, Anna uses the toilet. She stands as the toilet flushes on its own.

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - CHOW CHOW'S ROOM - MORNING

A dark room suddenly sliced with light. We see the Chow still nestled in bed with what looks like two other bodies.

Anna watches them, then leaves the door open a crack.

INT. WOLF'S LAIR - KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON three eggs in a pan, morphing into a human scream.

Anna brings the pan over to three dog bowls on the floor. She scrapes a gooey egg into each one.

Once finished, she reaches for a dinner bell on the counter and gives it a cute little ring.

After a beat, we hear the Chow lumber down the stairs and mope into the kitchen. He sniffs the fresh egg in his bowl and doesn't waste any time - digs right in.

Glittery **CHYRON**: Chow Chow, Anna's dog.

Anna glances at the two other bowls. Something's wrong. Impatient, she rings the bell more pointedly this time.

Nothing happens. Then, after a long moment, we hear what sounds like hands and feet drumming down the stairs.

The sound builds and builds until we reveal--

Shira and Jacob arriving on all fours, completely nude.

Glittery **CHYRON**: Shira and Jacob, Anna's slaves.

They crawl over to their individual food bowls, heads hung low, humbled to the new master of the house. They don't acknowledge Anna as they vacuum up their runny eggs.

Anna smiles disturbingly as she watches them eat.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. POOL - BEACHWOOD CANYON - EVENING

A sunburnt BOOMER flinching awake on a white pool float.

He darts his eyes everywhere, nervous of everything. As the post-nightmare adrenaline rush begins to fade...

The Man eases back into his float. Sighs a phlegmy sigh. Everything's still here; the pool, the house, the view.

He fins one hand in the water and drifts endlessly. Content.

CREDITS over this.