

HIT ME, *baby*

written by

Kurt McLeod

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INT. POSH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Dim lighting. Soft music. Sexy ambience.
STYLISH COUPLES engaged in intimate dinner conversations...

Then we come to...

MARTIN MENARD. 29. Hair by Supercuts. Wrinkled dress shirt tucked into pleated khakis. A fish out of water in this uber trendy scene, but trying his best to project confidence to his offscreen dinner date:

MARTIN

I don't know about you, but I find this whole generation to be so transactional. It's all swipes and likes and one night stands. There's no mystery anymore, no romance. That's why I was so drawn to your profile. You seem like you're searching for something more. A real, human connection...

Now we reveal Martin is talking to an EMPTY CHAIR. And as he flashes an innocent, doe-eyed smile, we CUT TO-

MARTIN'S DATING PROFILE

PHOTO [harsh lighting, unflattering angle, same smile]

OCCUPATION: Software programmer, self-employed

LIKES: Romantic comedies, good wine, picnics in the park, spa days, quality time with family and friends

DISLIKES: Toxic masculinity, conspicuous consumption, heights, enclosed spaces, public swimming pools

LOOKING FOR: That perfect someone to spend the rest of my life with...

BACK TO MARTIN as he attempts to flag down a passing **WAITER**:

MARTIN

Excuse me, but I asked for a water
like a half hour ago-
(Waiter ignores him)
When you get a chance. No rush.

Martin looks around self-consciously, when suddenly-

A striking **WOMAN** plunks down across from him. This is **LEX**. 29. Chic overcoat. Effortless cool. Jaw-dropping beauty. Looks like she was designed in a lab to break hearts.

Martin stares in awe like it's the first time he's ever laid eyes on her in-person (because it is). But Lex is busy on her phone, agitated, mind elsewhere as she talks:

LEX

Sorry I'm late. Work was a
disaster, and the traffic was-

When she finally looks up, she balks at the sight of Martin.

LEX

Wait, who the fuck are you?

Martin is still too awestruck to speak.
And as Lex stares impatiently, we CUT TO-

LEX'S DATING PROFILE

PHOTO [sexy silhouette, sunglasses, bangs hiding pouty face]
OCCUPATION: work
LIKES: no
DISLIKES: yes
LOOKING FOR: no strings

BACK TO LEX snapping her fingers in Martin's stunned face.

LEX

Yo. Guy. You okay?

Martin snaps out of his coma and remembers how to speak:

MARTIN

Yes, no, sorry, I just... Wow.
You're even more beautiful than
your profile.

LEX

Really? Because you look nothing
like yours.

MARTIN

Oh. Sorry. I've been meaning to get
professional headshots, but I was
hoping to drop a few pounds first-

Lex pulls up the dating app PROFILE PHOTO of a rugged,
shirtless FIREMAN posing like it's a Chippendales calendar.

LEX

I'm supposed to believe this is
you? (checks name) "Sean"?

MARTIN

Oh, no, that's not my profile.

LEX

It's not?

MARTIN

I mean, I wish it was. That's like the most handsome man I've ever seen. But no, I'm Martin. Martin Menard? After we matched, I got a private message from you with this location and time. I thought I was getting catfished for sure, but...

Lex checks her phone again. Fiddles with the app. Frowns.

LEX

Huh. Musta got my wires crossed. I just get so many DM's on this thing, and I usually only check it when I'm drunk...

Martin is crestfallen, but tries to stay upbeat.

MARTIN

No, of course. Someone like you, it must be impossible to keep track. I don't get a lotta matches, and the ones I do get turn out to be con artists or multi-level marketers. This one lady was like 30 years older than her photo and tried to recruit me to Scientology. She was really nice, though, we're still friends. I'm actually supposed to see her nephew's one act play this weekend.

Lex scoffs, amused by Martin's sincerity.

MARTIN

Sorry, I ramble when I'm nervous. It's okay if you wanna leave. I get it, really, I won't be offended...

Martin lowers his head in shame. But Lex studies him with mild curiosity.

LEX

Has this approach ever worked?

MARTIN

Approach?

LEX

The whole self-effacing honesty thing. I mean, sure, it plays kinda cute, in a weak, pathetic sorta way.

(MORE)

LEX (CONT'D)

But you'll never get laid if you
give up all your leverage right off
the bat.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, I don't...

LEX

Try being more aloof. Cavalier.
Tell me I have shit in my teeth or
my head is too big for my body.

MARTIN

You want me to insult you?

LEX

Nothing too aggressive. Just enough
to signal you don't care what I
think.

MARTIN

But... I do.

Lex sighs. Martin hesitates, innocently confused.

LEX

I'm sorry, have you ever been laid
before?

MARTIN

Like, in my life? Yes. Multiple
times.

LEX

More than once? Look at you go.

Lex leans back, measuring Martin with rising interest.

LEX

You any good?

MARTIN

Any good at... Oh. Uh, I guess so.
I mean, I don't know how I'd
compare to your other... Effort-
wise, I'm like right up there. But
in terms of actual performance, I'd
say probably more like... average?
Maybe slightly below average, if
I'm being totally-
(off Lex)
No, let's stick with average. Final
answer.

Martin struggles to find something normal to do with his hands. Lex stares, then chuckles. Something about this guy...

LEX

What are you drinking, Mr. Average?

Lex slips off her coat, making herself comfortable. Her low-cut outfit nearly knocks Martin off his chair.

MARTIN

Oh, you're staying? Okay, yeah, great. I'm actually still waiting on water. It's a bit of a challenge to get service here, but lemme see if I can flag down a-

The Waiter who ignored Martin earlier swoops in and drops off a drink for Lex and trades cheek kisses before whisking away.

Lex notices Martin staring at her in awe like she just performed a magic trick.

LEX

What?

MARTIN

Who are you?

Lex smirks. Plays with her straw. Leans in. Lowers her voice.

LEX

Here's what you need to know about me: I just had a day at work I'd like to forget. I'm exhausted. I'm horny as hell. And the fact you don't look like Dean or Juan or whoever you're supposed to be-

MARTIN

Sean?

LEX

Whatever. For some reason it's not a total dealbreaker.

MARTIN

Are you serious?

LEX

Yeah, I don't fully understand it, either. But we're here, right?

Lex chugs her drink in one gulp. Mischievous grin.

LEX
One drink won't kill us.

Close on Martin, wide-eyed and spellbound, as our soundtrack drops an upbeat POP SONG to propel us-

EXT. POSH RESTAURANT - MONTAGE - NIGHT

Peering in at Lex and Martin, we then move along the windows, with each frame displaying a new SCENE from Lex and Martin's evolving relationship, like a living museum exhibit:

HOTEL ROOM. Lex shoves the awestruck Martin onto the bed like a rag doll and mounts him dominantly, undoing his belt.

BREAKFAST AT A DINER. Martin telling a story that makes Lex choke on her eggs laughing. Under the table, she slides her foot into his crotch and he startles, spilling his coffee.

EVENING STROLL. Martin stops to buy Lex flowers at a market stall, but she pulls him to a sex store display to point out leather dominatrix outfits and a swinging harness.

DINNER AT LEX'S PENTHOUSE. Martin in an apron serving an elaborate meal. Lex swipes the food away and throws him onto the table, kissing aggressively, tearing off his clothes.

EXOTIC CAR SHOW. Lex swoons over the engineering features of a custom Lamborghini Countach, then pulls the apprehensive Martin into the backseat when no one is looking.

WINE ROOM TASTING. Martin tries to teach Lex about the intricacies of flavor profiles, but she is more interested in chugging her wine and kissing his neck.

HORSEBACK RIDING. Lex rides gracefully, amused by Martin who struggles to keep up while hanging off the side of his horse.

BUBBLE BATH. Lex nursing Martin's war wounds, wrapping her legs around him and pulling him under the suds...

And last but not least, in the final window frame:

PICNIC IN THE PARK. Martin pulls a blindfold off Lex to present a surprise Valentine's Day picnic. Champagne on ice. Roses laid everywhere. The whole nine yards. Lex hesitates, seemingly touched by the gesture, when suddenly-

CRACK! A single gunshot SHATTERS the window pane, killing our upbeat soundtrack and bringing our montage to an unceremonious end. And as we continue further along the sidewalk, we hear the faint pulse of CLUB MUSIC, arriving at-

EXT. EXCLUSIVE NIGHTCLUB - CONTINUOUS

A long line of BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE waiting to get in the club...

"ONE YEAR LATER"

SHELLY, a frizzy-haired firecracker in a short skirt argues with the BOUNCER while her GIRLFRIENDS wait impatiently.

SHELLY

C'mon man, don't be a dick, I know we're on the list.

BOUNCER

Everyone out here's on the list.

SHELLY

So you want me to take you in the alley and blow you, is that it?

BOUNCER

Nah, I'm good.

SHELLY

Wait, so now you're passing up a free hummer? Who the hell do you think you are?

A PRIVATE CAR pulls up. A suited CHAUFFEUR opens the door...

LEX steps out. Dressed to the nines. Turning every head.

LEX

Sorry I'm late, ladies.

SHELLY

Forget it, it's hopeless. This place is busted, anyway-

BOUNCER

Lex! Where you been, girl?

Lex trades cheek kisses with the Bouncer.

LEX

Hey, baby. You got a table big enough for me and my crew?

BOUNCER

For you? Always.

The velvet rope snaps opens.

Shelly balks as Lex leads the way inside...

INT. EXCLUSIVE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

The DANCE FLOOR pulsates to a hypnotic beat.

A SERVER carries a top shelf bottle to the table where Lex and Shelly are shout-talking over the loud music:

SHELLY

Must be a special occasion. I can't even remember the last time you came out on a school night.

LEX

I know, I suck, I'm the worst. Work's just been so crazy lately.

SHELLY

For you, maybe. I couldn't get a single contract last quarter. Fran said it's the economy.

LEX

(backpedalling)

I mean, yeah, it's cyclical. Ebbs and flows. Interest rates...

SHELLY

Don't patronize me. At least your excuse doesn't have a dick. I was starting to worry my wingwoman got shot down in enemy territory again.

LEX

How are you still busting my balls about that? I told you it wasn't serious, he was just a fuck buddy.

SHELLY

Right, just some random, no-name bootycall who disappeared my best friend off the face of the earth for like three months.

LEX

C'mon, it wasn't that bad.

SHELLY

No? I got so desperate I had to start going out with Karen.

One of the friends, KAREN, turns from her conversation:

KAREN

What's that?

SHELLY

Shut up, Karen, everyone hates you.

KAREN

(laughing abrasively)

Oh my God, you're hysterical. Isn't she hysterical?

Lex grins agreeably. Karen returns to her conversation.

SHELLY

Just promise me you'll never let a dick come between us again. No matter how beautiful or ergonomically-shaped.

Lex raises her shot glass with a smile. Cheers to that.

Shelly downs her drink, then glances over Lex's shoulder at the BAR where she lays eyes on-

CHRISTIAN. Devastatingly handsome. Hair. Clothes. The whole package. And while every woman with a pulse is angling coyly for his attention, he can't take his eyes off... **LEX.**

SHELLY

Okay, so keeping that promise in mind, I feel morally obligated as your friend to inform you that Christian is here, and he's eye-fucking the back of your head so hard I may start ovulating by association.

Lex sneaks a glance at Christian but shrugs off his interest.

LEX

Whatever, he's not that hot.

SHELLY

Oh, fuck you, he's not. How dare you? I'd destroy my whole life to hit that.

LEX

Can't we just forget about boys tonight? It's been a long week. I really just wanna dance.

SHELLY

Alright, fine.

Lex nods, satisfied, pours more shots.

SHELLY

Unless Christian talks to me, in
which case I'm obviously gonna sit
on his face.

Lex laughs. Cheers. Bottoms up. As the music thumps...

LATER

Lex dances alone. Eyes closed. Lost in the beat. Seductive.

A handsome **PLAYBOY** (v-neck, sculpted beard) gazes down at Lex from the VIP BALCONY. Hypnotized by her beauty...

Lex catches eyes with Playboy for a flirtatious beat, stirring his interest. But the Playboy's **TROPHY WIFE** swoops in and possessively drapes herself around him.

Playboy placates his wife with attention, but still sneaks another look at Lex from the corner of his eye as she exits the dance floor. And he's not the only one watching...

CHRISTIAN continues to monitor Lex from the bar, tracking her movement, until a **GORGEOUS WOMAN** steps into his sightline-

GORGEOUS WOMAN

Y'know I've been waiting for you to
buy me a drink all night?

CHRISTIAN

(distracted)

Sorry?

GORGEOUS WOMAN

But if you want we could just skip
the bullshit and go back to your
place.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, can you move, please?

Christian brushes the shocked woman aside, searching for...

INT. EXCLUSIVE NIGHTCLUB - WOMEN'S RESTROOM

Lex freshens her lipstick in the mirror.

The **TROPHY WIFE** sidles up, pretending to check her makeup as she gives Lex a suspicious side eye.

TROPHY WIFE

I love your dress.

Lex smiles dismissively. No interest in making friends. But Trophy Wife leans closer, lowering her voice:

TROPHY WIFE
It's you, isn't it?

LEX
Excuse me?

TROPHY WIFE
Fran's girl?

Lex stares daggers, conscious of other women within earshot.

LEX
I think you have me mistaken.

Trophy Wife takes the hint and waits for the other women to clear out before continuing...

TROPHY WIFE
I need to call it off, okay? Are we clear? Do not proceed.

LEX
That's not how it works. I shouldn't even be talking to you.

TROPHY WIFE
I was upset, alright? But we had the most incredible talk this morning. He promised he's done fooling around. And I believe him, I really do.

LEX
That's touching. But I just fill orders, I don't deal with admin.

TROPHY WIFE
Okay, well, I'm the fucking client. So if I say it's off, it's off. Got it, sweetie?

Trophy Wife flashes a threatening glare. Full on 'Karen' mode. Lex sighs, conceding:

LEX
Alright, c'mon, let's make a call, see what we can do.

Lex gestures to a luxurious TOILET STALL with a wall-to-ceiling door. Trophy Wife follows, exhaling with relief:

TROPHY WIFE

Thank you. And I really am sorry to
do this last minute, I just-

Lex shoves Trophy Wife into the stall, slams the door shut,
and SNAPS off the brass handle, locking her inside.

TROPHY WIFE

Hey! The fuck are you doing?!

LEX

Sorry, sweetie. All orders are
final.

INT. EXCLUSIVE NIGHTCLUB

The VIP rope snaps open. MEN IN SUITS step aside for-

LEX makes a beeline directly to PLAYBOY, who greets her with
a smile as though he's been expecting her. She slides next to
him on the sofa. Whispers coyly in his ear...

He checks to make sure his wife's not around. All clear.
Drops a PINK PILL on his tongue. Leans in for a slow, sensual
KISS with Lex, transferring the pill into her mouth as-

The club lights STROBE to the beat at a seizure-inducing
tempo, warping our perception of movement...

Lex runs her long acrylic FINGERNAILS through his hair...
Then, with a quick FLICK of her PINKY FINGERNAIL-
SCRATCHES Playboy across the neck! Drawing blood!

Playboy pulls away, startled, but also kinda turned on.

Lex smirks, SPITS out the pill, pops off her stilettos, and
walks briskly away in bare feet.

The detached fingernail DISSOLVES into the floor like acid...

Playboy suddenly blanches, clutches his throat, and-
Collapses! Convulsing! Mouth frothing!

MEN try to block Lex's escape, but she's ready for them-
SHING! RAZOR TIPS sling from the heels of her stilettos!
She slashes and stabs her way through the gauntlet of men!

When she reaches the staircase, she finds her exit blocked by
a fresh MOB OF MEN charging up the stairs!

She unclips the VELVET ROPE, twirling it like a rope javelin-
Whips the metal clasp! Slapping guns out of hands!
Bludgeoning faces, knees, and crotches!

But men are storming in faster than she can take them out. Overwhelmed by numbers, she retreats to the BALCONY RAILING as a BULL OF A MAN charges at her!

She sashays like a matador, lassos the rope around his neck, cinches it tight, disarms his pistol while he gasps, and- Leaps OFF THE BALCONY! Rappelling from the rope-

The Bull's neck SNAPS against the railing, anchoring Lex's fall as she lands gracefully on the crowded DANCE FLOOR.

Without missing a beat, she raises the pistol and FIRES TWO ROUNDS at the ceiling!

The entire club SHRIEKS! Stampede to the exit! Pandemonium! The strobe lighting cuts out and the HOUSE LIGHTS come up.

Lex pushes against the flow of traffic, making her way to-

INT. EXCLUSIVE NIGHTCLUB - SERVICE CORRIDOR

Lex is headed for the exit when SHELLY chases after her-

SHELLY

Hey, wait up, you sneaky bitch! Why didn't you tell me you're working?

Rather than respond, Lex shoves Shelly aside and takes out the MAN who is charging at Shelly from behind!

Shelly hesitates, more embarrassed than grateful.

SHELLY

I had him.

LEX

I know.

Lex keeps moving. Shelly hesitates for a beat, then follows.

SHELLY

I told you not to patronize me!

EXT. EXCLUSIVE NIGHTCLUB - ALLEY - NIGHT

Just as Lex and Shelly step outside-

A sleek SPORTS CAR blocks their path, engine revving.

CHRISTIAN rolls down the window, oozing charm:

CHRISTIAN
Need a lift, ladies?

SHELLY
Christian? Oh my god, that's so
sweet of you to offer-

Lex holds Shelly back-

LEX
Isn't it past your curfew?

CHRISTIAN
You're not the only one on the
clock tonight. Fran thought she
might need some insurance on this
one.

LEX
Yeah, right. Probably just wanted
you to see how the real pros do it.

CHRISTIAN
Little does she know I'd be happy
to watch you for free.

Lex rolls her eyes, seemingly immune to Christian's charm.

HONK! Lex's CHAUFFEURLED CAR has arrived.

LEX
C'mon, Shell, let's go.

SHELLY
That's alright, I'm out of your
way, I'll just grab a ride with
Christian.

CHRISTIAN
Sorry, have we met?

Shelly giggles playfully, then realizes he's not teasing.

SHELLY
Are you serious? It's Shelly. We've
met like ten times.

To Shelly's dismay, Christian continues to draw a blank.
Lex shakes her head and drags Shelly away.

SHELLY
I say next to you at the Christmas
Party! Your knee brushed my thigh!

Lex forces Shelly into the car, then pauses to look back at Christian, who sticks his head out to call after her:

CHRISTIAN
Hey. When can I see you again?

LEX
When someone puts a hit on you.

Lex flashes a subtle, flirtatious grin before disappearing into the car.

The look pierces Christian like an arrow to the heart.
He slumps back in his seat. Exhales. Smitten.
As the sound of POLICE SIRENS draw near...

EXT. FASHION DISTRICT - DAY

VALENTINE'S DAY DISPLAYS in every storefront.
High-end clothing stores. Chocolatiers. Florists. Jewellers.
Love is in the air...

INT. FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE - SHOWROOM - DAY

Expensive, heart-themed JEWELRY glitters in a display case.
The showroom is understated and chic. By appointment only.

The ROTATING DOOR spins...

LEX hands her designer bag to the suited SECURITY GUARDS.
Strolls through a hi-tech METAL DETECTOR. Business as usual.

A dapper, middle-aged man, **GENTRY**, is waiting to greet her.

LEX
She in?

GENTRY
Just finishing up her lunch. But
while you're waiting, I have some
gorgeous new pieces just in from-

Lex struts past Gentry, heads behind the counter, into the back. Gentry takes the snub in stride, used to it.

GENTRY
Or I can just go knob myself off,
if you prefer...

INT. FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE - OFFICE - DAY

FRAN (50's) sits behind an opulent desk. Silver hair. Wise eyes. Her wrists jingle with dozens of gaudy, blinged-out bracelets as she takes a big bite from a pre-packaged salad.

Lex barges in with a chip on her shoulder:

LEX

When have I ever not closed for
you? Name one time.

Fran chews calmly. Blank expression.

LEX

You think I'm slipping? That I
can't handle the workload?

Fran keeps chewing. Lex takes a seat.

LEX

Because I got options, too, y'know.
You keep planting tails on me like
I'm on double secret probation, I
might have to reassess the
exclusivity of this relationship.

Fran finally swallows. Wipes her mouth.

FRAN

Done?

LEX

Pretty much, yeah.

Fran nods. Clicks onto a desktop computer which displays a profile of the recently deceased **PLAYBOY**. "Transaction verified"..."Payment approved: \$240,000"...

FRAN

Never hurts to have a plan B.
Warren Buffet says you can't put
all your eggs in one basket. Gotta
diversify your portfolio and shit.

Fran presents a MOBILE DEVICE resembling a POS machine.
Lex waves her BARE WRIST over the device like a tap card.
BEEEEP. "ASSET ID #4843"..."CREDIT \$80,000.00"...

FRAN

Of course after that mess you left
at the club, the Regulators are
slapping a 30% fine on our payout.

LEX

How is that my fault? The brief
said minimal security, not a
private fuckin' army.

Fran shrugs, scribbles notes in a private ledger notebook.

FRAN

You're preaching to the choir.
Bunch of prissy, ivory tower
bureaucrats with no skin in the
game, no appreciation for the risk
we carry. Meanwhile the market is
evolving, getting more efficient,
which means higher volume, tighter
spreads, and worst of all: greater
oversight.

Lex eyes Fran's notebook with suspicion.

LEX

Is that why you still keep paper
records like a 1950's librarian?

FRAN

What, this? Nah, it's just for
accounting purposes. Accrual versus
deferral, accelerated
depreciation... It's all a bit
technical. Point is I can't afford
to have back office breathing down
my neck. Everything has to be
strictly by the book from now on.

Fran slides the notebook into a file cabinet full of them.

A massive VAULT opens. Fran's MEN pile stacks of cash into a
brand new DESIGNER BAG which travels into the hands of-

LEX digs into the bag, counting the stacks of cash by eye.

FRAN

And don't take this the wrong way,
but lately you've been a little...
sloppy is not the right word.
Distracted, maybe?

LEX

By what?

FRAN

You tell me. I know Christian's
been asking around about you.
(MORE)

FRAN (CONT'D)
 Thought maybe there was something
 going on there...

LEX
 (scoffs at the notion)
 I don't shit where I eat, thanks.
 And if I did, it wouldn't be on
 him.

FRAN
 Smart girl. I always say if you
 wanna go the distance in this game,
 there's no room for attachments.

LEX
 Who said anything about distance?
 This is a sprint for me, not a
 marathon. As soon I hit my number,
 that's it, I'm good.

Fran grins knowingly, leans back, heels up on the desk.

FRAN
 I remember when I had a number. All
 I wanted was a house on the hill, a
 20-foot boat, and enough interest
 to make my nut. But you know what
 happens when you get there? You
 find out there's always a bigger
 boat. Always a better house. And no
 matter what anyone tells you, more
 is always more.

LEX
 (stops counting)
 Wow. That's deep. And it explains
 why your commissions are so high.

FRAN
 Real wisdom don't come cheap.

LEX
 (back to counting)
 Also explains how you spend more on
 gigolos than I make in a year.

FRAN
 I prefer to call them 'man-whores',
 it's more degrading. And I don't
 pay 'em to come, I pay 'em to leave
 afterward.

Lex finishes counting, frowns.

LEX

Well you must be paying them too much, because you're short here.

FRAN

The carve-out is for the pendant necklace you're picking up from Gentry on your way out.

LEX

Oh, am I?

Fran shoots a knowing grin. Lex hesitates, interest piqued.

LEX

How many carats?

FRAN

Four. Brilliant cut. Just your taste. And I happen to know the owner, so I got you a killer deal.

Lex considers. Nods. Zips the bag shut. Rises.

LEX

We should have these little girl talks more often.

FRAN

Door's always open. Unless it's closed.

INT. LEX'S CHAUFFEURRED CAR - DUSK

Lex tosses her new bag in the back seat. Slumps. Tired sigh.

CHAUFFEUR

What's the word, boss? We staying in tonight?

Lex opens the DATING APP on her phone. An endless queue of PROFILES, each rippling stud more handsome than the next...

But then a PHOTO pops up on the screen. One of those automated photo album reminders: "**1 YEAR AGO**". A selfie of LEX AND MARTIN at the PICNIC IN THE PARK. Martin smiling. Lex pouting playfully. And from this angle we can see a message written in ROSES on the grass: "L+M" inside a heart.

The photo catches Lex off guard. She stares. Affected... Then shakes it off, swipes the photo away, back to-

The DATING APP lineup. Swiping left, left, left, pausing on **CHAD** (not that his name matters), a chiseled Ken doll in a paramedic uniform...

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Lex kicks the door open and pulls SOMEONE inside, fumbling in the dark, kissing passionately, almost violently-

LEX
Fuck the buttons, just rip it!

The sound of Lex's blouse tearing. More kissing. Moaning.

LEX
There you go. Oh, Martin...

MALE VOICE
Chad.

LEX
What?

Lex KICKS the light switch on to reveal-
CHAD. From the dating app. And he's even hotter in person.

MALE VOICE
I mean, it doesn't matter, but my
name's Chad.

LEX
That's what I said.

CHAD
Okay. Yeah, cool, whatever-

Chad tries to restart the passion, but Lex breaks away and heads to the bar cart to pour drinks.

LEX
I need a drink. You want a drink?

CHAD
Nah, I'm strict paleo. Been in
ketosis for like two years. You
ever listen to podcasts?

Lex throws back the first drink in one gulp.

LEX
This actually goes a lot better if
you don't talk. Bedroom's down the
hall.

Beat.

CHAD
Right on.

Chad happily shows himself down the hall.
Lex sighs, gulps down Chad's drink, about to follow him when-

CHICKA-POW! An alert on her phone, this time to a playful GUNSHOT SOUND EFFECT. Lex hesitates. Torn. Can't resist...

Her FACE ID unlocks an ENCRYPTED APP. "New Offer Posted":

OPEN CONTRACT

PHOTO: [blurry, long-distance surveillance of a MYSTERY MAN]

TARGET: Mr. M.

OFFER: \$2,000,000

LOCATION: Beacon Hotel, Suite 1801

ORDER: First to close. Valid on delivery.

EXPIRES: February 15, 09:00

The price leaps off the screen: **\$2,000,000**. Lex's eyes bulge.

GOOGLE MAPS draws a short line from her apartment to the BEACON HOTEL. Right around the corner. Three-minute walk.

Lex bites her lip, wheels turning, as-
Chad calls out from the bedroom:

CHAD (O.S.)
You coming or what?

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down to expiry of the contract in hours, minutes, and seconds... **11:59:53... 52... 51...**

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - BEDROOM / CLOSET - NIGHT

DESIGNER BAGS line the shelves of a spacious WALK-IN CLOSET. Unofficial trophies from past jobs.

Lex pushes a rack of outfits aside. Wall panel SLIDES OPEN. Treasure trove of JEWELRY, CASH. Arsenal of stealth WEAPONRY. She tosses her new diamond necklace on the heap.

Decorating the wall is a VISION BOARD collage: hot pink LAMBORGHINI COUNTACH, luxury SAILBOAT, Arabian HORSES, property listing for a FRENCH CHATEAU. Pricey goals...

Lex urgently packs a bag of 'work gear'. Her phone rings. Caller ID: "Shelly". Lex answers on her air pods, continuing to pack as she talks:

LEX

Yeah, I saw it.

SHELLY (PHONE)

I don't understand. Did it go out to everyone?

LEX

It's a no-limit public offering. You never see these anymore because brokers like Fran bid up all the best deals for private placement...

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Doors part. **MR. M** glides through the posh crowd. Sharp suit. Flanked by burly **BODYGUARDS**. We don't see his face, but we see the impressed gazes he draws from staff and guests...

LEX (V.O.)

Whoever put this order in has the money and know-how to bypass the intermediaries and go direct to retail. So it's wild west rules. Fair game to anyone with an active account...

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - BEDROOM / CLOSET - NIGHT

Lex strips down, changes into a sultry cocktail dress.

SHELLY (PHONE)

Huh. Crazy. You gonna try for it?

LEX

I dunno, these bake-offs are so dicey. You get all the trigger-happy amateurs trying to make a name. Plus Fran won't let us freelance, so even if you manage to close you gotta cough up half.

SHELLY (PHONE)

Still a lotta money, though. Maybe I should give it a shot?

LEX

Honestly, Shell, I really don't think it's worth your time-

CHAD (O.S.)

You sure you want me to stay?

Chad sits patiently on the edge of the bed, oblivious to what Lex is doing in the closet.

SHELLY (PHONE)
 Wait, are you with a guy right now?
 (Lex hesitates)
 You little slut. Is he hot? He
 sounds hot.

LEX
 Can't talk now, call ya later.

Lex hangs up. And we reveal-

INT. SHELLY'S RENT-CONTROLLED APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Shelly lounging on her couch. Pyjamas. Pore strip. Pint of ice cream in her lap. Vibrator on the side table. 90's romcom on TV (e.g. You've Got Mail). Still on the phone:

SHELLY
 Yeah, me too. I got a lot going on
 tonight, so...

Shelly realizes Lex already hung up. Hesitates.

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - BEDROOM / CLOSET - NIGHT

Lex slips on a chic overcoat. Zips up her bag. Fully loaded.

CHAD
 We could always do this another
 time?

LEX
 It's fine, I won't be long. Just
 strip down and make sure you're
 hard when I get back.

A silk BLINDFOLD flies from the closet into Chad's lap.

CHAD
 Sweet.

Lex does a final check in the mirror. Go time.

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - NIGHT

A PANHANDLER plays a romantic song on a steel string guitar.

A SWEET OLD COUPLE stops at a Valentine's Day themed florist stand. The husband buys a bouquet of flowers for his wife...

LEX darts BETWEEN them, sending the roses flying and splitting their hands apart-

She doesn't stop to apologize or even look back, just keeps trucking, rounding the corner, where she COLLIDES with-

CHRISTIAN!

Lex drops her bag and Christian drops his GUITAR CASE.

CHRISTIAN

Lex? No way, I was just thinking about you.

LEX

Try thinking about where you're walking, why don't you?

Christian picks up her bag, pauses to note the heavy weight.

CHRISTIAN

What you got here?

Lex snatches her bag back. Eyes Christian's guitar case.

LEX

Just a little last minute shopping.
What about you? Boy band finally score a gig?

CHRISTIAN

More of an 'open mic' type deal.
But hey, I'll take what I can get, right? Never know when that big break is coming.

LEX

Or if it ever will...

Christian smirks. Lex smirks back. Hard to tell if the tension is competitive or sexual or both...

CHRISTIAN

Hey, maybe after I'm done we could grab a drink or something?

LEX

You mean after I'm done? Sorry, I have plans.

CHRISTIAN
On Valentine's Day? Lucky guy.

LEX
Luck's got nothing to do with it.

Eyes narrow for a pregnant beat. Then...

They both BOLT in opposite directions!
Lex down the sidewalk, Christian across the street!

The race is on!

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

The CONCIERGE looks up to see LEX fast approaching.

CONCIERGE
Hey, Lex. What's good tonight?

Quick cheek kisses. No time for small talk. She slides across a bulging ENVELOPE. He checks inside. Eyebrows jump. Whoa.

EXT. LOW-RISE FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

Christian races up the fire escape. Stops for a quick breather. Panting. Keeps pushing. Every second counts.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lex steps off the elevator, flips open a makeup mirror, pretends to do a touch up as she peaks around the corner at-

TWO BODYGUARDS posted outside ROOM #1801.

She tussles her hair, pulls down her neckline to emphasize cleavage, then rounds the corner.

The Bodyguards tense when they see her coming, but she talks fast and walks faster, quickly closing the gap.

LEX
1801, right? Concierge called ahead. Thought your boy might like some company.

BODYGUARD
Okay, just hold up a minute-

But her foot is already in the guy's ear - WHOMP!
Her other foot catches the second guy in the face - CRACK!

Both men hit the carpet unconscious.

She pats them down. Pistols. Keycard. Bingo.
But when she goes to use the key, she finds the door AJAR...

INT. HOTEL ROOM 1801 - NIGHT

Lex creeps inside. Stealthy. Cautious...

ROMANTIC MUSIC plays softly. Moody light glows from hundreds of candles covering every surface. And a TRAIL OF WHITE ROSE PETALS leads Lex to...

MR. M's hand pulls a bottle of Cristal champagne from an ice bucket. He faces the windows with his back to us. And in the reflection of the glass we can see...

Lex sneaking up on him from behind, ready to strike... when-

MR. M
I've been waiting for you, Lex...

Lex freezes, surprised. And Mr. M spins to reveal himself as-

MARTIN. But not the same Martin we remember. Fresh new hairstyle. Whitened teeth. Tan. Stylish suit tailored to the contours of his sculpted physique. He looks... fuckin' great.

The only thing that hasn't changed is the sweetly innocent smile he wears as he POPS the champagne bottle.

MARTIN
Happy Valentine's Day!

Lex stares in disbelief.

LEX
Martin?

MARTIN
Oh, man, I can't tell you what a relief this is. Sorry for all the theatrics, I just didn't know how else to find you. Your number went dead. You disappeared off social. And with you're, y'know... line of work... I was worried sick that something happened to you.

LEX
I don't understand...

MARTIN

It's not like I can't take
rejection. I just figured...
because things were going so great
between us... I mean, if you wanted
to break up with me you woulda just
said so, right?

LEX

"Break up" with you? Why would I
break up with you? We weren't even
dating!

Martin balks.

MARTIN

Okay, but... I mean, I fully
respect your truth. And I don't
wanna get caught up on semantics-

LEX

Martin! Why the fuck are you here?!

MARTIN

It's not as complicated as you'd
think. Once you learn your way
around the dark web, it's actually
pretty disturbing how easy it is to
have someone killed.

LEX

Are you telling me you set this up?

MARTIN

I know it seems crazy. And I
completely understand if you never
wanna see me again. Heck, I'll even
file the restraining order myself.
But I had to know you were safe. I
hope you can understand that...

Lex struggles to process, at a loss for words.

MARTIN

Of course, now that you're here...
If you don't have dinner plans...

Lex looks like she is about to explode when-

The BODYGUARDS stumble in from the hall, one holding his
BROKEN NOSE, the other cupping his BLEEDING EAR.

Lex spins to attack, but they throw their hands up in fear-

BROKEN NOSE
 Whoa, easy, don't hurt us! We're unarmed!

Lex holds back, confused.

BROKEN NOSE
 Sorry, Martin. We tried to talk to her but she just fuckin' jumped us!

BLEEDING EAR
 (shouting like he's deaf)
 My shit won't stop ringing! I think she broke my brain!

MARTIN
 It's okay, guys, you did great. I think we're good for tonight, but please be sure to save your medical receipts so I can reimburse you for any out-of-pocket-

LEX
 Shut up! Everyone!

Everyone shuts up. Lex flairs her nostrils at Martin.

LEX
 Do you have any idea what you've done?

MARTIN
 Okay, lemme just say this was not a risk I took lightly. You know how I feel about violence. But you're so talented, I knew you'd get to me first. And now that you're here, I'll just go ahead and cancel the order.

Martin logs onto his phone to demonstrate. Lex stares.

LEX
 Forgive me, I didn't realize you had it all planned out.

MARTIN
 (tinkering on his phone)
 You know me, I'm a planner.
 You look amazing, by the way. I hope you don't mind me saying so.

Martin presses buttons. Hesitates. Keeps fiddling. Frowns.

LEX

Something wrong?

MARTIN

No, it's fine... Just doesn't seem
to wanna... Hm...

Martin furrows his brow, frustrated. Anxiety mounting. Until finally he stops pushing buttons. Swallows. Then nervously raises his eyes to meet a knowing glare from Lex.

MARTIN

Please tell me I can cancel this.

LEX

Maybe you should check the fine
print on your return policy. Which
doesn't exist, because this isn't
Amazon fucking Prime!

Martin absorbs. Color drains. Room spins. Cue panic attack.

MARTIN

Oh God... Oh no...

LEX

Oh yes. So while your little weenus
shrivels up to hide inside your
pelvic cavity, every trained killer
within a hundred miles is on their
way here. Right now. For you.

GPS TARGETING MAP: Zoom out to show dozens of BLINKING DOTS,
each with ASSET ID#'s, all slowly converging on...

MARTIN

I think I need to sit down...

Lex can help with that-

She KICKS Martin's leg out, dropping him to his knees-
Draws a PISTOL to his forehead! Execution style!

The Bodyguards take this as their cue to make a hasty exit.

BROKEN NOSE

We should give you guys some
privacy-

LEX

Nobody fucking moves!

Nobody moves. Lex digs the gun barrel into Martin's forehead.

LEX

Gimme one reason I don't blow your
head off right now.
(beat)
One reason!

MARTIN

Because I love you!

The words spill out of Martin's mouth like a gag reflex.
Lex nearly chokes on the revelation, shocked speechless.

LEX

You what?

Martin beams with conviction, doubling down:

MARTIN

I know you don't believe in it, but
it's true. I loved you from the
moment I met you. And I don't give
a damn what you do for a living. I
know it's not who you are inside,
that deep down you don't wanna hurt
anyone-

CRACK! Lex pistol whips Martin in the side of the head!

LEX

I don't know what meds you're on,
or which of them you stopped
taking, and I don't give a shit. If
I don't cash this ticket, someone
else will.

MARTIN

I understand, I do. And no one
deserves it more than you. So if
you can search your heart and
honestly say you feel nothing for
me, then you should go ahead and
pull the trigger-

LEX

(racks the pistol)
Perfect, let's do it.

MARTIN

Oh, okay. Are you sure? You can
take as much time as you-

LEX

I'm good. Just hold still, okay?

Martin gulps. This is happening.
But not before the peanut gallery chimes in:

BROKEN NOSE
Are you sure you want witnesses?
We don't need to be here. We're not
even real bodyguards.

MARTIN
Wait, what?

BROKEN NOSE
Yeah, our resumes are bullshit. We
work security at a parking lot.

BLEEDING EAR
(still shouting)
Yeah, man, I never even held a
fuckin' gun before!

MARTIN
I don't know what to say, guys. I'm
not angry. I guess I'm just
disappointed-

Lex fires a ROUND in the ceiling to refocus attention.

MARTIN
Sorry, you're right, doesn't
matter.

LEX
Stop talking.

Martin stops talking. Lex re-aims. Steels herself. But Martin
gazes up at her with those innocent, puppy dog eyes...

LEX
And don't look at me like that.

MARTIN
Like what?

LEX
Just close your eyes!

MARTIN
Okay, sorry!

LEX
And stop fucking apologizing!

MARTIN
Alright, I'm... sorry! Dammit!

Martin squeezes his eyes shut. Lex sighs, regroups.

MARTIN
Can I say one more thing?

LEX
What?!

MARTIN
I'm wearing a bullet proof vest, so
you should shoot me in the face.

LEX
That's what I'm doing.

MARTIN
Okay, just making sure. Go ahead.

Martin takes a deep breath, bracing for the end...
Lex's finger hovers over the trigger, slowly pressing down...
Then... RELEASES. Lowers the gun. CURSES under her breath.

BROKEN NOSE
(whispers to partner)
Why'd she stop?

BLEEDING EAR
(shouts back)
Maybe she has feelings for him?!

LEX
No, I don't! I'm just thinking!

Martin cautiously peeks one eye open.

MARTIN
About what?

LEX
It's an expiring contract. I fill
the order now, my broker rakes half
the pot. But if you're alive when
the term runs out, escrow
automatically releases all funds
back to source...

MARTIN
Okay. So...

LEX
So if I get you to the finish line,
I want the full payout. Every cent.

MARTIN

You would do that for me?

LEX

For the money, yeah.

MARTIN

Are you sure it's not too much trouble? The last thing I wanna do is put you in any kind of danger-

At that moment, a glint of RED LIGHT catches Lex's eye... A LASER BEAD beaming through the window at Martin's head...

Lex reacts with cat-like quickness, SHOVES Martin behind the couch as-

A SNIPER ROUND pierces the window! Skimming Martin's hair before it grazes Lex on the shoulder cap! She clutches her wounded shoulder, more annoyed than hurt.

MARTIN

Lex! You're hit!

He leaps up to help her, but she TACKLES him back down just as another SNIPER ROUND zips overhead!

LEX

Stay down, you idiot!

The Bodyguards hit the deck, scared shitless.

BROKEN NOSE

Who the fuck is shooting at us?!

EXT. ROOFTOP ACROSS THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

CHRISTIAN peering through a SNIPER RIFLE. Calm. Patient.

SNIPER SCOPE: Clear line of sight through the WINDOW of ROOM 1801. Tracing the edge of the couch where Martin is hiding...

INT. HOTEL ROOM 1801 - CONTINUOUS

Broken Nose crawls to the door, reaches for the doorknob...

ZIP! A SNIPER ROUND rips through his hand! He WAILS in agony and clutches his hand as it spurts blood!

MARTIN

Are you okay?!

BROKEN NOSE
 Does this look okay to you?! We're
 all gonna fuckin' die!

MARTIN
 Just stay calm, no one's gonna die!

LEX
 No, they probably will.

Lex tosses a cushion in the air as a decoy and, as it gets SNIPED to smithereens, she rolls into a military crawl and worms her way along the wall toward the windows.

MARTIN
 Be careful!

LEX
 Shut up and stay down!

Lex reaches the corner. Back to the wall. Steady inhale... And on the exhale, she DIVES across the room, yanking the heavy CURTAINS SHUT behind her to black out the windows!

EXT. ROOFTOP ACROSS THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Christian looks up from his sniper scope, annoyed. No shot.

INT. HOTEL ROOM 1801 - CONTINUOUS

MARTIN
 Is it over?

LEX
 Not even close. Everyone just stay
 where you are.

BROKEN NOSE
 To hell with you, bitch!

Broken Nose pops up and makes another run for the door-

LEX
 No! Stay away from the-

BOOM! A SHOTGUN ROUND punches out the deadbolt and BLASTS Broken Nose directly in the chest, killing him instantly!

LEX
 (sighs)
 Door.

A duo of HEAVYSET THUGS with pump-action SHOTGUNS charge in!

Bleeding Ear flees for the bedroom but gets mowed down by a round of buckshot in the back!

Martin freezes in the crosshairs, deer-in-headlights...

But Lex runs and SPEARS both Thugs to the floor-
The stray shotgun rounds sail through the curtains-
SHATTERING THE WINDOWS COMPLETELY! Exposing the room to-

GUSTS OF WIND blowing from outside. The curtains flutter and sway, creating fleeting lines of sight for-

CHRISTIAN'S SNIPER RIFLE.

But as the LASER BEAD finds Martin again-
A Thug recovers his shotgun and takes aim at LEX!

Christian abandons his open shot at Martin to SNIPE the Thug, saving Lex's hide! She frowns, more annoyed than grateful.

The remaining Thug wraps Lex in a chokehold!
But Martin smashes the CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE over the Thug's head and leaps on his back, riding him like a rodeo cowboy!

The LASER BEAD dances, vying for a clear shot at Martin...

The Thug finally HURLS Martin into the window, tearing the curtains down completely to leave a WIDE OPEN VIEW!

But as soon as the LASER BEAD lands on Martin's throat-

Lex DROP KICKS the Thug in front of Martin just in time to block the SNIPER ROUND with his beefy chest! The Thug drops.

Christian squeezes the trigger again but his rifle clicks empty. Shit! And while he scrambles to RELOAD...

Lex grabs Martin and hauls him into the hallway...

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lex holds Martin by the collar, pounding the elevator button.

MARTIN

You think there's more of them?

LEX

Yes.

MARTIN

Like how many?

LEX
Like everyone.

On cue, the STAIRWELL DOOR swings open: MORE HITMEN!
Lex abandons Martin to fight them off as-

The elevator opens: ANOTHER HITMAN! This one is surprised to find Martin on a silver platter, so he hesitates for a split second while Martin TACKLES him!

Meanwhile, LEX sends her guys tumbling down the stairs like bowling pins and turns back in time to see-

Martin twists his guy into a technically-sound ARM BAR. This unlikely demonstration of skill seems to surprise Martin himself as much as it does Lex.

MARTIN
I got him!
(beat)
What do I do now?!

Lex KICKS the guy unconscious in Martin's arms, then shoves Martin onto the elevator and punches the button.

As they wait for the doors to close, Martin catches his breath, adrenaline pumping.

MARTIN
I shoulda told you I've been
training. I'm still learning the
basics, but sensei says my fast-
twitch reflexes are naturally-

WHAP! Lex catches him with an open-palm SLAP across the face! He shrinks, nursing his cheek as the elevator doors CLOSE.

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down from 11:13:38... 37... 36...

INT. HOTEL ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Going down in silence, except for the elevator MUZAK which plays an instrumental cover of an iconic LOVE BALLAD ("My Heart Will Go On" by Celine Dion).

LEX
Gimme your jacket.

MARTIN
Of course, you must be chilly.

He tries to drape the jacket around her shoulders, but she snatches it away and does it herself.

LEX

I'm shot.

MARTIN

Oh, right. Sorry, I think I'm just
in shock. Are you okay?

Lex stares forward in silence, giving Martin a moment to absorb the weight of recent events. As the MUZAK swells...

MARTIN

I don't know what I was thinking...
And now people are dead... And it's
all my fault... You must think I'm
a horrible person... I am a
horrible person...

Martin's voice cracks, overwhelmed by emotion.
Lex shoots him a judgmental side eye.

LEX

Are you crying?

Yes, he is. As the MUZAK crescendos to its moving climax.

MARTIN

I'm sorry. It's just a lot to
process...

Lex keeps staring forward. Shakes her head. Fucking hell.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Elevator opens. Lex pokes her head out, scopes the scene:

A GROUP OF MENACING HITMEN stride through the main entrance.
And a SECOND GROUP approaches from the adjacent hallway.

Lex ducks back into the elevator. Going up...

INT. LA RONDE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ding. Elevator opens on the TOP FLOOR. The entrance to the hotel's three-star Michelin restaurant, "La Ronde".

Lex steers Martin toward the pretentious MAITRE'D.

MAITRE'D

Madame Lex! I didn't realize you
were joining us this evening.

Cheek kisses. Lex clocks the elevator bank.

LEX

Can you put us by the south window?

MAITRE'D

Not to worry. Monsieur has made all the arrangements.

Lex stares at Martin, who gives a sheepish half-smile.

INT. LA RONDE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Table for two. The curved dining room ROTATES slowly on a circular platform. Panoramic view of the twinkling cityscape.

A handwritten CARD is waiting for Lex on her place setting.

MARTIN

You don't have to open that now-

But Lex is already tearing open the envelope. Inside she finds an enigmatic RED PASSCARD with no print on it.

MARTIN

There's this new spa downtown, The Red Door. It's open 24/7. Great facials, apparently...

Lex turns her attention to the card. A HANDWRITTEN NOTE. She reads, then winces, confused.

LEX

What the hell is this?

MARTIN

Sometimes I find poetry is the only way to express how I feel. I know it's not any good, but it comes from the heart...

Lex crumples the note. Buries her face in her hands.

LEX

Martin, for fuck's sake. It was just sex. Yeah, sure, it was good. But that's all it was.

MARTIN

How can you say that? What we shared was so much more than some casual romp in the- Wait, you thought it was good?

LEX

For you, I assume. I've been with so many guys since, I honestly can't remember.

MARTIN

No, yeah, of course. But in terms of numbers, what are we talking, like five? Ten, tops?

(off Lex)

Not more than twenty? Oh, Jesus-

LEX

We hooked up. I got bored. That's it. It didn't mean anything.

Martin studies Lex's poker face for a long beat.

MARTIN

I don't believe you.

Lex drops her face back in her hands. Sheer exasperation.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, I don't. I was there, too. And I know you felt something.

LEX

Pity, Martin. You were like a sad little bird, with broken wings, lying in the middle of the road. And I felt sorry for you. Because you're pathetic.

If she's trying to hurt his feelings, mission accomplished. But when she sees how deeply wounded he is, she softens...

LEX

And yeah, you're a good listener, I'll give you that. I was in a weird place at the time. Had been for a while, actually... And it was nice to have someone to... y'know, talk to or whatever... But just because I let some personal shit slip out in a moment of weakness, doesn't mean there was anything more to- What are you looking at?

Martin is indeed staring nervously over Lex's shoulder.

MARTIN

Based on how this is going, I'd rather not say...

She follows his gaze out the window...

The tallest SKYSCRAPER is lit up with an electric display:
"L+M 4EVR" encircled by a HEART. Floating past the table...

LEX

There's something seriously wrong
with you.

Martin can't disagree. Meanwhile...

AT THE MAITRE'D TABLE

A group of stylishly menacing HITMEN approach with stone-cold glares. The Maitre'D gulps.

MAITRE'D
Reservations?

BACK TO LEX AND MARTIN

The WAITER presents the first course to Lex.

WAITER
To begin, la boeuf tar-tar.

MARTIN
It's your fav-

LEX
I know it is, goddammit.

Lex shovels a spoonful into her mouth, chomps resentfully.

MARTIN
How is it?

Lex breathes deeply through her nose. Hesitates.

LEX
It's fucking incredible.

But her trip to flavor country is cut short when she sees-

The HITMEN seat themselves at a nearby table.

LEX
Ah, great, look who's here.

The Hitmen trade familiar nods with Lex. Mutual respect.

MARTIN

You know them?

LEX

Just some Russian outfit guys.
Don't worry, they won't try
anything in a crowded public place
like this.

MARTIN

Really?

LEX

I'm messing with you, dummy.
They're Russian. They'll scalp you
at a kid's birthday and stick
around for cake and ice cream.

The Hitmen flash carnivorous smiles. Martin recoils.
Lex can't help but chuckle as she savors another bite.

MARTIN

Okay, but don't you have like a
plan or something?

LEX

Yeah, I plan to enjoy this first-
rate culinary experience. And I
encourage you do the same, because
it's gonna be your last.

The Waiter returns to present a bottle of wine.

WAITER

Chateau Haut-Brion, 2006.

LEX

Mm, sounds expensive.

Lex grabs the bottle and pours it herself. Takes a sip.

LEX

Fuck my ass, that's good.

MARTIN

It's supposed to pair nicely with
the beef...

ANOTHER GROUP OF HITMEN position themselves at a nearby
table, this batch even scarier than the first.

LEX

Oh look, more company! How fun!

Lex raises her glass to the new arrivals, but they scowl back, not nearly as cordial as the first batch.

MARTIN
Russians?

LEX
You really wanna know?

MARTIN
No, I guess not.

Lex laughs heartily as she refills her glass, loud enough to draw looks from civilian diners. And the more she loosens up, the more Martin shrinks into his shell.

LEX
I gotta hand it to you, this is
turning out to be a pretty
entertaining evening.

MARTIN
I'm glad you're enjoying yourself.

LEX
How'd you come up with the
financing for all this, anyway?
Don't you live with your parents?

MARTIN
I told you that's by choice.

LEX
Right, I forgot, it's a lifestyle
thing.

MARTIN
And if you must know, I sold a
software patent. Not a huge deal,
but the royalties turned out to be
pretty substantial.

LEX
No shit? I always wanted a sugar
daddy. Shoulda kept stringing you
along until you rang the bell.

MARTIN
This was before we met, actually.

LEX
(balks)
Are you telling me you were already
rich?

MARTIN

I wouldn't go that far.
Comfortable, I guess, sure.

LEX

Dude, you need to lead with that.

MARTIN

But what if someone only wanted me
for my money?

LEX

Yeah, that's the point. Money is
all we care about. That and looks.
(refilling her glass)
Speaking of: is it just me or have
you been hitting the gym?

MARTIN

Yes, actually, thanks for noticing.
What happened was, after you dumped
me-

LEX

Which I didn't, cause we weren't
dating.

MARTIN

Right. Anyway, I took a long hard
look in the mirror and decided to
dedicate myself to becoming the
kind of man you would find more
attractive. I approached it like
any engineering problem. Identified
my most glaring weaknesses. Did the
research. Invested in a team of
experts. Personal trainer, stylist,
life coach. I've always been self-
conscious about my masculinity,
even before I met you, which is why
I leaned into all the self-defense
and weapons training and so forth.

LEX

And you did all that just for me?

MARTIN

Turns out personal growth is pretty
addictive once you get the ball
rolling.

(wistful pause)

But I shoulda known I'd never be
enough for someone like you. No
matter what version...

Martin takes a sullen sip of wine. Braves a glance at the surrounding HITMEN who are restlessly leering at him.

LEX

I wouldn't be too hard on yourself.
The problem wasn't just you, per
se.

MARTIN

It wasn't?

Martin perks up, hopeful. Puppy dog eyes wide as saucers.

LEX

It was that, right there.

MARTIN

My face? I can change it if you
want, I'm not attached to it.

LEX

No, the way you look at me. Like
you think I'm...

MARTIN

What?

LEX

Forget it, it doesn't matter. The
fact is you're just not my type.

MARTIN

What type is that?

Lex hesitates. And before she can come up with an answer-

CHRISTIAN

Mind if I cut in?

CHRISTIAN pulls up a chair. Steals a bite from Lex's plate.

LEX

Um, excuse you?

CHRISTIAN

Wanted to give you a chance to
thank me for saving your ass back
there.

LEX

I was doing fine, thanks.

CHRISTIAN

Oh yeah, you're doing great. Looks like you really got the situation under control.

Christian helps himself to a sip of Martin's wine.

CHRISTIAN

Not bad. Little fruit-forward for my taste.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, can I help you?

CHRISTIAN

I was gonna ask Lex the same thing. The fat price tag on Bambi here has all the top talent teaming up. Thought you might be open to joining forces for a change.

LEX

With who, you? What makes you think you could even keep up?

CHRISTIAN

Hey, I may be green, but I got moves you've never seen.

Lex rolls her eyes, but smirks a little. The palpable chemistry between these two makes Martin uncomfortable.

MARTIN

Uh, I don't know who you think you are, but we don't need your help. Right, Lex?

Lex checks her watch, mulling Christian's offer...

The surrounding HITMEN gently RACK guns under the tables. Eyeing Martin. Eyeing each other. The fuze is lit...

CHRISTIAN

It's like Fran always says: "half of something's better than all of nothing".

LEX

For most people that's true...

Lex takes a swig directly from the wine bottle, then ducks below the table to rummage in her BAG...

LEX

They're so afraid to end up on
their own, they get desperate,
settle for the first offer that
comes along...

INT. HOTEL UTILITY ROOM

The Concierge (who Lex paid off earlier) waits at a
BREAKER BOX. Checks his watch. Hand on the MASTER SWITCH...

INT. LA RONDE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

LEX

The thing about me is, I like my
independence. And furthermore...

Lex rises up wearing a pair of sleek NIGHT-VISION GOGGLES.
Mischievous grin.

LEX

I don't settle.

Christian balks, alarmed. Martin balks, confused.

MARTIN

Wait, what's happening?

BZZZT! THE POWER SHUTS OFF! LIGHTS OUT! Plunging us into-

DARKNESS

Guests gasp! The only light comes from the distant twinkle of
the cityscape outside. And before our eyes can adjust-

A torrent of GUNFIRE erupts! MUZZLE FLASHES provide sporadic
glimpses of GUNS BLAZING! TABLES FLIPPING! GUESTS SCREAMING!

EXT. HOTEL POOL DECK - NIGHT

A SEXY COUPLE sips champagne in the HOT TUB. Hands creep
below the water. He whispers something naughty. She giggles.

HOT TUB GIRL

Stop. You're so bad...

HOT TUB GUY

C'mon, no one's around...

The sound of GUNFIRE rings out above, startling them!
SHARDS OF WINDOW GLASS shower the pool in the background!

As the sound of Martin's desperate SCREAM descends on us...

MARTIN drops from the sky, wrapped tight in the arms of LEX! They hit the deep end of the pool with a thunderous SPLASH!

A moment later, a falling HITMAN slams onto the deck just shy of the pool's edge. SPLAT! So much for that guy.

Lex surfaces, gasping, but Martin is nowhere in sight.

LEX
Martin? Martin! Sunuva...

She dives back underwater. And after a tense beat... Resurfaces with Martin! Rolls him up onto the pool deck.

Martin is unconscious, waterlogged, not breathing. But as Lex climbs out of the pool to help him-

Another HITMAN drops from the sky, SPLASHES into the pool, quickly pops above the water with his GUN drawn!

Lex leaps back in the pool, spearing the Hitman before he gets a shot off!

We stay tight on Martin in the FOREGROUND, as-

Lex wrestles the Hitman in the pool. Limbs splash and flail. Grunting, choking on water. Lex finally clamps her legs around his neck and thrusts his head underwater...

Martin remains motionless in the foreground, lips turning blue, urgency building with each breathless moment...

Lex holds the Hitman underwater until he stops squirming... She gives a final, emphatic twist of her legs. CRUNCH!

Then she jumps out of the pool, returning to Martin's aid. Pumps his chest. Mouth-to-mouth. Chest. Mouth. Chest. Mouth. Martin finally COUGHS up a lung full of pool water.

LEX
There he is. You alright? You good?

Martin gazes up at Lex's ethereal visage, which hovers over him like a guardian angel.

MARTIN
You saved me. I can't believe you-

Lex COLDCOCKS Martin unconscious!
Slings him over her shoulder.
Plods across the pool deck.

As she passes the hot tub, the SEXY COUPLE gawks in terror.

LEX
The fuck are you looking at?

EXT. HOTEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

WHITE HORSES harnessed to a CARRIAGE. Ornate and majestic, like a fairytale. But the horses WHINNY and STIR as-

FIRETRUCKS and POLICE CARS swarm, sirens blaring! A crowd of worried HOTEL GUESTS gather outside in pyjamas.

Lex rushes outside with Martin slung over her shoulder.

A chipper young VALET spots them and runs over-

VALET
Mr. M! I've been trying to get ahold you.

Martin grumbles, half-conscious.

VALET
Is he alright?

LEX
He's fine, just drank too much.

VALET
Oh, okay. Well, do you still want the carriage? It's all ready to go but the cops are saying we need to clear the street.

The Valet gestures to the horse-drawn carriage. Lex stares blankly for a beat.

LEX
Tell me he has a car.

VALET
Yeah, I could bring it around, but the parkade's all blocked off so it could be a while...

Lex considers her options. Sighs.

INT. HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE (MOVING) - NIGHT

Lex and Martin crammed shoulder-to-shoulder on the bench. Horse hooves CLIP-CLOP. Bumpy ride.

MARTIN

I know how much you love horses.
Thought it would be romantic...

Lex points to the opposite bench.

LEX

Sit over there, please.

Martin obeys, moves across. They clip-clop along in silence.

EXT. HOTEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

CHRISTIAN stumbles out of the hotel, haggard and disheveled like he just escaped a war zone. Scans the scene...

But the CARRIAGE is already rolling inconspicuously through the police barricade. Home free. For now...

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down from 10:21:48... 47... 46...

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Lex yanks Martin inside. Programs the SECURITY SYSTEM. Then beelines to the BAR CART to pour herself a much needed drink.

MARTIN

I can't tell you how much I appreciate this.

LEX

Let's not make this a thing, okay?
It's a business transaction. As soon as the transfer hits my account, you're on your own.

MARTIN

I understand, I do. But I just...
Thank you. For everything.

Lex meets Martin's sincere gaze. Almost a moment. But then... A deep, masculine VOICE calls out from the bedroom:

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
That you, sexy?

Martin balks. Lex hesitates, then it dawns on her...

INT. LEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lex arrives in the open doorway, staring at-

CHAD, star-fished on the bed, blindfolded, buck naked except for a mountain of WHIPPED CREAM molded around the vague outline of his impossibly large erection. With sprinkles.

CHAD

Hope you don't mind I helped myself to the Cool Whip. I call it a 'hot fuck sundae'.

Martin arrives in the doorway next and gapes in horror like he just caught his wife with the gardener.

MARTIN

And who may I ask is this?

Chad pulls down his blindfold. Lex draws a blank.

LEX

I'm sorry, I forgot your name.

CHAD

It's Chad. 'Sup, bro. Didn't know this was a group thing. I'm cool with it, but we should go over ground rules.

As Martin struggles to process Chad's existence...

The security system beeps an ALERT. Lex goes to investigate.

The SECURITY PANEL shows a surveillance video feed of a HOODED INTRUDER lingering outside the hallway door...

LEX

Under the bed. Both of you.

Martin hesitates. Chad claps his hands in anticipation.

CHAD

It's on, baby!

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

The sound of a keypad code: BEEP-BEEP-BOOP-BOOP-BEEP. The front door gently CLICKS open. The doorknob rotates...

The HOODED INTRUDER creeps inside, cloaked in shadow. Then... Freezes. Checked by a GUN BARREL to the back of the head.

Lex emerges from the shadows on the other end of the pistol.

LEX

How'd you get the code?

The Intruder remains silent...

UNDER LEX'S BED

Martin and Chad (still naked) flat on their stomachs, hiding.

CHAD

You guys take this role play shit
pretty seriously, huh?

Martin SHUSHES Chad, tries to listen.

CHAD

Hey man, no judgment, I'm into it.

BACK TO LEX AND THE INTRUDER

LEX

Turn around. Slow.

The Intruder doesn't budge. Lex angles to get a look...
CHICKA-POW! The gunshot PHONE ALERT startles them both.

Lex carefully holds her aim on the Intruder while she checks the phone with her free hand...

OPEN CONTRACT

PHOTO: [Surveillance photo of LEX]

TARGET: Alexis "Lex" Cutler

OFFER: \$500,000

LOCATION: GPS Targeting Active

ORDER: First to close. No expiration.

Lex balks at the sight of her own death sentence. And while she's distracted-

The Intruder spins and smacks the gun loose! Lex counters, SLAMS them into the wall, switching the lights on to reveal:

LEX

Shelly?

SHELLY uses the surprise to tackle Lex to the ground!
They grapple for control. Grunting. Rolling.
Lex comes out on top, mounts Shelly. Pins her arms down.

LEX

The hell are you doing?! I thought
we were friends?!

SHELLY

Is that what you call hoarding all
the work and screwing every guy I
ever liked?

LEX

What? Like who?

SHELLY

Uh, the Brazilian DJ?

LEX

(hesitates)

You knew about that?

SHELLY

You fucked him in the pool at my
birthday party!

Shelly swings her leg around for leverage, twists Lex into a pretzel, flips on top, pins Lex down, then crosses Lex's arms over her throat to CHOKE HER OUT. Tables turned.

SHELLY

You think you're so hot you can
just take whatever you want. Well
I'm done being 'the friend'. I'm
making a name for myself, and I'm
starting with you.

Shelly's vice grip tightens. Lex turns blue, fading... when-

MARTIN comes charging! Launches into Shelly!

They tumble, but Shelly easily mounts Martin and dummies him with a FLURRY OF PUNCHES. Grabs him by the scalp.

SHELLY

This must be Mr. M. Kinda cute,
isn't he? Did you screw him, too?!

Lex is still sprawled out, wheezing, too weak to help.
Shelly wraps her hand around Martin's throat and CHOKES.

SHELLY

I've never done two at the same
time before. Feels so naughty.

While Shelly tightens her grip on the squirming Martin...
Lex musters the strength to crawl in the direction of...

The loose PISTOL, only a short distance away.

Shelly clocks Lex's objective and tries to reach for the gun while holding Martin down... But before either of them can get to it, a MYSTERY HAND reaches down and picks up the gun-

CHAD. Naked. Confused. And still rocking a raging whipped cream hard-on.

CHAD

Okay, maybe we should take a minute
to review everyone's comfort
levels? 'Cause this is getting a
little hardcore, even for me.

Shelly jumps off Martin and charges at Chad!

MARTIN

Run, Chad!

Chad stumbles backward and turns to run, but Shelly chases
him down and dropkicks him in the back-

The pistol flies from Chad's grip, sliding down the hallway,
INTO THE BEDROOM...

Martin staggers to his feet, races after the gun, but-

Shelly leaps over Chad's naked ass, dives into the bedroom,
grabs the pistol, flips on her back and draws a bead on-

Martin, frozen in the doorway. Just as-

Lex grabs her phone and activates the SECURITY APP-

A built-in steel SECURITY DOOR slides shut, sealing off the
bedroom a split second before-

Shelly FIRES! But the ROUNDS lodge in the steel door,
puncturing divots just inches from Martin's gaping face!

A beat of stunned silence as everyone takes stock.
Martin. Lex. Chad.

CHAD

Dude. This orgy is fucked.

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Lex rifles through kitchen drawers, searching for something,
as Shelly BANGS on the security door.

SHELLY (O.S.)

Let me outta here and fight me like
a man, you pussy!

LEX

Suck my dick!

Lex finds what she's looking for. A roll of TINFOIL she
spools tightly around her forearm.

MARTIN
What's that for?

Lex shoots Martin a grave look as she tears the strip of duct tape with her teeth.

GPS TARGETING MAP: The blinking DOT with Lex's ASSET ID# morphs into a fuzzy blotch with a broader radius. But a CLUSTER OF NEW DOTS are already closing in on the location...

Lex whips open the FREEZER, pulls out a MINI-COOLER with a label written in sharpie: "GOLDEN PARACHUTE". Checks inside.

MARTIN
If they know where we are, maybe we should call the police? I get why you'd be averse to law enforcement, but at least we'd be safe, right?

Lex stops to shoot Martin another grave look.

INT. LEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

A pair of corrupt POLICEMEN hold the lobby doors open for-
A TEAM OF HITMEN who sweep through the lobby unchallenged.

The FRONT DESK CLERK is already hogtied and gagged on the floor (compliments of Shelly).

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Lex seals the cooler shut and slings it over her shoulder.

MARTIN
Even so, I feel like the safest thing to do is shelter in place until we come up with a plan that we both feel comfortable with-

Lex grabs Martin by the collar and pulls him within an inch of her face, nose-to-nose, dead serious.

LEX
I acknowledge your feelings as valid. I really do. But I feel that if you want to keep your head attached to your body, you will do exactly what the fuck I say.

Martin gulps, nods.

CHAD

Uh, guys?

CHAD (still naked) sheepishly lingers.

CHAD

So I think I'm gonna peace out, if that's alright...

Martin does a wide-eyed double take at Chad's nether region.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, how can you possibly still be hard right now?

Chad glances down, impressed by himself.

CHAD

Must be all the adrenaline.

MARTIN

That's not how adrenaline works!

CHAD

(still looking down)

Huh. Weird.

MARTIN

Can you just put some clothes on?!

CHAD

That's what I'm trying to say. My clothes are in the bedroom...

On cue, Shelly SHOOTS another DIVOT in the metal door, then CURSES in frustration when the bullet RICOCHETS back at her.

INT. LEX'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

The inbound HITMEN fall into formation outside the door to Lex's penthouse, locked and loaded...

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

A breach charge BLOWS the door open!

The Hitmen storm inside, but to their surprise (and ours)...

The apartment is EMPTY.

Except for Shelly, who calls through the security door:

SHELLY (O.S.)
Hello? Anyone there?

INT. GARBAGE ROOM

LEX drops from the GARBAGE CHUTE and lands softly in an open DUMPSTER. Climbs out. Disgusted by the filth.

MARTIN drops next. Then CHAD drops on top of him - OOMPH!

MARTIN (O.S.)
Get off me!

CHAD (O.S.)
Dude, careful, that's my dick.

MARTIN (O.S.)
I can't help it, it's everywhere!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

VROOM! A custom LAMBORGHINI COUNTACH pulls to the curb. Hot pink. Identical to the photo on Lex's vision board.

The VALET from the hotel jumps out, tosses keys to Martin.

LEX
You bought my dream car?

Martin offers the keys to Lex, who stares at the car in awe.

MARTIN
Is that okay?

CHAD
Fuck yeah.

Reveal Chad, still naked, but now holding a discarded milk carton over his privates like a gentleman.

CHAD
Dibs shotty?

Martin and Lex both stare at Chad.

CUT TO-

TIRES SPIN! The Lamborghini speeds away!

Chad is left in the dust, hugging himself for warmth. A passing group of DRUNK PARTY GIRLS whistle and hoot at him.

CHAD
 'Sup, ladies? Where we goin'
 tonight?

INT. FRAN'S YACHT - NIGHT

FRAN sits at a white cloth dining table, staring out the window at the lights of the city HARBOR. Her phone vibrates. She answers matter-of-factly:

FRAN
 Everyone pays commission. No
 exceptions.

INT/EXT. LAMBORGHINI (MOVING) - NIGHT

Lex talks to Fran over the speakerphone as she drives:

LEX
 I was gonna cut you in. I swear.

Martin listens intently in the passenger seat.

INTERCUT LEX/FRAN

FRAN
 I'm sure it's just a silly
 misunderstanding. Which is why if
 you bring yourself and your
 companion in immediately, without
 incident, I'll be willing to sit
 down and sort this out like adults.

LEX
 The "incident" part might be a
 little tricky since you painted a
 giant fuckin' target on my back.

FRAN
 It's a derivative contract,
 contingent on execution of the
 underlying.

LEX
 I know what it is.

FRAN
 Then you know all you have to do is
 close the deal with mystery man and
 you're off the hook.

Lex considers Fran's ultimatum. Then considers Martin...

FRAN

Look, I don't know who he is or what he's offering you, but I know it's nothing compared to what you stand to lose.

LEX

(hesitates)

What if I can get you the whole two million? Free and clear.

FRAN

I don't think you understand the gravity of what's happening here. The integrity of a market cannot survive without full faith and confidence between buyers and sellers. You blatantly interfered with that trust, so now you got the Regulators involved.

Lex's grave reaction tell us everything we need to know.

LEX

You can cover it up. Fudge the paperwork.

FRAN

Are you even listening to me? You're on my books. If I don't clean up your mess, it's my ass.

LEX

I'm not asking you as my broker. I'm asking you. I need help.

FRAN

And this is me giving it. Take the deal, Lex. Whoever he is, he's not worth it.

Lex glances at Martin, who is hanging on her response...

LEX

No. Sorry. Not feeling it tonight.

Fran sighs. Patience depleted.

FRAN

Fucking young people. You think you're so invincible...

INT. LEX'S PENTHOUSE - BEDROOM / CLOSET - NIGHT

Fran's MEN raid the stash in Lex's closet.
The jewelry. The cash. The designer bags. Even her clothes...

FRAN (V.O.)
But how long do you think you can
make it on your own? Without any
resources?

The VISION BOARD is ripped off the wall...

FRAN (V.O.)
Without a single ally?

SHELLY watches the raid but doesn't participate. A hint of
regret behind her eyes? Guilt, maybe?

BACK TO LEX/FRAN

FRAN
Smart money says you won't even
last the night.

Lex clenches the wheel as her world closes in around her...

LEX
So that's it? After all the work I
put in? Everything I've done for
you?

FRAN
(sympathetic sigh)
Oh, honey... If it's loyalty you
want, you're in the wrong fuckin'
business.

Martin watches Lex closely, hanging on her response.

LEX
Alright. Fair enough.

FRAN
So we have a deal?

LEX
No. But you're gonna find out how
good business is when there's no
one left to send.

Lex smashes the hang up button with prejudice!

INT. FRAN'S YACHT - NIGHT

Fran lowers the phone. Solemn. Deep in thought.

Seated across the table is a muscle-bound BOY TOY in a suit vest, no shirt underneath, like an extra from Magic Mike.

BOY TOY
Everything okay?

FRAN
Do I pay you to talk?

BOY TOY
You do not.

INT/EXT. LAMBORGHINI (MOVING) - NIGHT

Lex drives like a maniac, pushing the car to its limits and eyeing the rearview mirror like she's expecting company.

MARTIN
There's no one behind us. Maybe we
should slow down a little-

Lex accelerates, fishtails around a corner, sucking Martin back into his seat.

CHICKA-POW! The familiar, ominous sound of Lex's PHONE ALERT. This time it's a "**CONTRACT UPDATED**". The price on Lex's head just went from \$500,000 to **\$1,000,000**.

LEX
Motherfuck!

Lex whips the phone out Martin's open window, then punches the dash in frustration until her fist is raw.

MARTIN
I understand if you don't wanna
talk about it right now. I just
want you to know I'm here for you.
If there's anything I can do,
anything at all-

LEX
How much money you got?

MARTIN
(hesitates)
Like in terms of liquid cash?

LEX

No, cigarettes cartons. What's wrong with you?

MARTIN

Okay, so the thing is, I'm not exactly what you would call 'solvent' at the moment. Like from a credit perspective, I'm actually pretty severely overextended...

LEX

What are you talking about? You said you were rich?

MARTIN

Comfortable, sure. I mean, I was. But I had to put the two million down right upfront. And when you add in the car, and all the other expenses... I probably shoulda been a tad more conservative. I just wanted everything to be perfect. And don't take this the wrong way, but you have incredibly expensive taste-

Lex cuts Martin off by pounding the HORN with her fist and HOLDING IT DOWN while her lips mouth the most scathing TIRADE OF PROFANITY ever strung together in the English language...

When she finally finishes her rant and RELEASES THE HORN, Martin sits in silence, head down, shell-shocked.

MARTIN

Okay. Well, I appreciate your honesty. But if that's how you really feel, maybe you should just kill me. Sounds like you'd be doing me a favor.

Lex sighs, depleted by her cathartic release.

LEX

I'm not gonna kill you, Martin. You're not even worth it...

Martin absorbs the sting of her words for a painful beat.

MARTIN

At least I know what I want.

LEX

What's that supposed to mean?

MARTIN

I dunno, why don't you ask 'tripod'
Chad or one of your other lubed-up
F-boys? I'm sure they're just
bursting with profound insights
into the human condition-

Lex stomps on the brakes and swerves to a STOP at the curb!
Reaches across and pushes Martin's door open.

LEX

Get out.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, I didn't mean it.
Honestly, Chad seems like a good
guy. If anything, I'm just
threatened by his enormous-

LEX

You're not safe with me! Don't you
get it?

Martin hesitates. Not the reason he expected.
Lex anxiously eyes the rearview mirror, expecting company.

LEX

They can't track you on your own.
You just gotta stay outta sight
until morning. Now go on.

Martin considers the offer. Then steels himself. Determined.

MARTIN

No.

LEX

What?

MARTIN

You heard me. I'm staying with you.

LEX

Martin, I don't have time for this.
If you don't get outta this car
right fuckin' now-

MARTIN

No, you listen to me!
(Lex balks, taken aback)
I got you into this mess. I can't
abandon you now. I lo-

LEX

You drop the 'L word' right now, I
swear to fucking God.

Beat.

MARTIN

Then let's just say I care about
you deeply. I'm not going anywhere.

Lex would continue arguing with Martin, but when she looks in
the REARVIEW, she sees-

Two supped-up MUSCLE CARS, engines roaring, headed this way!

Lex sighs. Shifts gears into drive.

LEX

I hate you.

MARTIN

Not really, though.

LEX

Yes, really.

She floors the gas pedal!

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down from 8:54:12... 11... 10...

EXT. THE RED DOOR SPA - NIGHT

The MUSCLE CARS zoom past. And we push in on...

An inconspicuous brick facade. Too exclusive for a sign.
Just an industrial COPPER DOOR with a rusty red patina...

INT. SPA RECEPTION

Warm, marble-clad lobby. Soft, soothing music.

The attractive RECEPTIONIST looks down her nose at-

LEX AND MARTIN. Haggard and smelling faintly of garbage.

SPA RECEPTIONIST

I'm afraid this is a members-only
establishment. But I believe
there's a charming little shelter
on 84th street-

Lex slides the RED CARD (Martin's gift) across the counter.

SPA RECEPTIONIST
 Forgive me, I didn't realize.
 (scans the card)
 Welcome back, Mr. Menard. I see you
 and your guest are scheduled for
 our full-body couples experience?

INT. SPA HEALING POOLS

A tranquil cavern with four round SOAKING POOLS, each lit with a distinct ethereal glow to highlight their essence:

HOT (red). COLD (blue). SALT (purple). MUD (charcoal).

Martin and Lex enter from opposite sides wearing towel robes. Awkward pause as they size each other up.

Lex casually drops her robe first. Black lingerie. Tattoos inked tastefully along her statuesque physique.

Martin takes a deep breath. Moment of truth. Drops his robe. Despite the dorky white briefs, he's impressively ripped, eight pack and all. And shyly proud of himself, until-

LEX
 What are you doing?

Martin hesitates, suddenly self-conscious.

MARTIN
 You took yours off. I just thought-

LEX
 Put your clothes back on, you goof.
 No one wants to see your little
 baby bulge.

Martin blushes as he scrambles to put his robe back on.

LEX
 Looks like that personal trainer
 paid off, though, huh?

MARTIN
 It's mostly diet. Combination of
 intermittent fasting and-

LEX
 Yeah, no one cares.

Lex PLUNGES into the COLD POOL with a SPLASH!

CUT TO-

Lex SHIVERS intensely, chest deep in the freezing water. Martin holds two fingers to her neck, timing her pulse.

MARTIN

62.

LEX

Give it another minute. I wanna get below 50.

Martin diligently unpacks the contents of the MINI COOLER labelled "Golden Parachute" onto a towel: SYRINGES, VIALS, SURGICAL TOOLS, GAUZE... a mobile operating kit...

LEX

Sure you can handle this? You're not gonna faint on me, are you?

Martin confidently loads a syringe with a vial of liquid.

MARTIN

Not to brag, but I have a homecare nursing license with a specialty in hemodialysis.

Lex scoffs. Then realizes Martin is serious.

LEX

You're an odd little man, y'know that?

MARTIN

Thank you.

Beat.

LEX

Seriously, though. I appreciate this.

MARTIN

I know.

They lock eyes for a tender moment. Then she catches his eyes wandering to the FADED SCAR below her collar bone...

LEX

Hey, eyes up here, pervert. Don't y'know it's rude to stare at a girl's scar?

MARTIN

Sorry, it's just... You told me it was flat iron.

LEX

And you believed that?

MARTIN

No. I guess not.

Lex traces her fingers over the scar, delicately, as though it's still raw to the touch...

LEX

A parting gift from my first and last real 'relationship'. Lil' baby 22 cal. Woulda got me right in the heart if he had better aim...

Martin listens, sympathetic.

LEX

Coulda had it covered up, but I kinda like it there. Good reminder.

MARTIN

Or maybe it's a good excuse?

(off Lex)

You say he missed your heart, but I'm not so sure...

The insight gives Lex pause. Seems to affect her...

LEX

Martin?

MARTIN

Yes?

LEX

If this doesn't work... I need you to know something...

Lex struggles to open up, to speak what's in her heart...

MARTIN

It's alright. You can tell me.

Martin leans closer... Intimate... Then...

SPLASH! Lex flings an armful of freezing water in his face! He recoils, drenched and shivering.

MARTIN

What the hell?!

Lex grins as she takes her own pulse.

LEX

Spare me the analysis, Dr. Drew.
Every relationship is
transactional. Money, sex, even so-
called 'love'. It's all just
currency trading hands. Points on a
scoreboard.

MARTIN

Well, I think that's a pretty sad
way to look at things.

LEX

Sad or not, it's the way it is.

MARTIN

Not for me.

LEX

Yeah? And how's that working out
for you?

Martin hesitates to answer. Lex lifts her forearm out of the water and RIPS off the tinfoil! And we CUT TO-

GPS TARGETING MAP: The faint, distorted BLIP of Lex's general location radius shrinks to a pinpoint DOT. And we CUT TO-

FRAN'S PHONE PINGS on the bedside table. Fran shoves the Boy Toy off her to snatch the phone. And we CUT TO-

INT. SPA RECEPTION

Two eerily similar MEN barrel through the door, stalk toward reception. We'll call them **STEPH** and **KLAY**. Angular, brooding, and definitely not here for the seaweed body wrap.

RECEPTIONIST

Welcome to the Red Door. May I have
your account number?

Steph ignores her and leaps over the turnstile-

RECEPTIONIST

Hey, you can't just-

Klay crashes the Receptionist from behind, presses an INJECTION GUN to her neck, and-

INT. SPA HEALING POOLS

Lex's INJECTION GUN hisses as she fires the numbing agent into her forearm. Cinches the robe belt tightly around her elbow as a tourniquet. Smacks the flesh numb.

LEX

Alright, let's do this. Scalpel.

Martin dutifully presents a SCALPEL, but hesitates when he sees Lex's hand TREMBLING violently from the cold.

LEX

C'mon, we're on the clock!

Lex grabs the scalpel from Martin, who reluctantly concedes. The faded INCISION SCAR (from when she received the implant) serves as her surgical map.

MARTIN

Just be careful around the artery.

LEX

I got it, nurse. Just make sure you're ready to get rid of this thing before it blows.

MARTIN

Okay. Wait, what?

Lex goes ahead and CUTS the incision while Martin panics.

MARTIN

You mean like explode?

LEX

Probably just a bullshit old wives' tale to keep us from doing this.

Lex grunts in pain as she digs her fingers under the skin. Blood trickles into the water. Not for the faint of heart.

MARTIN

Okay, but it still seems like something you wanna confirm before you-

LEX

Will you shut up and lemme focus?!

Lex tries to control her breathing as she feels around for...

LEX

Okay, I think I got it. Scissors.

Martin anxiously passes Lex a pair of SURGICAL SCISSORS.

LEX
Help me hold it open.

He helps. She goes in with the scissors, straining to steady her trembling hand. Pauses. Steels herself.

LEX
Get ready. On one... two...

SNIP. Her expression goes blank.

MARTIN
Did you get it?

Lex gives an uncharacteristically vulnerable look. Wide eyed.

MARTIN
Talk to me. What do you need?

Her pupils balloon. Skin turns ghostly pale. Barely audible:

LEX
Help.

A deluge of blood suddenly gushes from Lex's arm! Artery cut. She FAINTS instantly, collapsing face down INTO THE WATER!

UNDERWATER. The scissors fall from her hand, sinking...

Martin reaches down and pulls Lex out of the water-

MARTIN
It's okay, I got you! Where are the scissors?! Lex!

Lex moans weakly. Blood spreads across the marble floor...

Martin dunks his head UNDERWATER. Visibility clouded by plumes of blood. His hand combs the floor blindly, coming within inches of the scissors. But he runs out of breath and-

Pops up for air!

INT. SPA MEN'S LOUNGE

STEPH navigates stealthily, brandishing a TACTICAL KNIFE...

A few GUYS IN ROBES watch golf highlights on TV so intently they don't notice Steph creep past in the archway...

INT. SPA WOMEN'S LOUNGE

KLAY brandishes a matching KNIFE, creeping past...

A group of WOMEN IN ROBES drinking white wine.
They stare directly at Klay, mouths agape. SHRIEK!

INT. SPA MEN'S LOUNGE

Steph hears the SHRIEKS coming from the women's lounge.
So much for the element of surprise. He breaks into a sprint!

INT. SPA HEALING POOLS

Steph BURSTS through the swinging door and discovers-
LEX, alone, unconscious, lying in a pool of her own blood.

Steph balks for a beat as-

MARTIN blindsides him, knocking the knife loose!
They tumble to the floor, wrestling.

Lex stirs and slips back into the water, face down again!

MARTIN
Lex!

Steph clamps Martin in a headlock and reaches for the nearby knife, but Martin kicks the knife into the HOT POOL!

Steph cinches the headlock, forcing Martin to watch helplessly as Lex drowns right in front of him...

Martin huffs with determination. Summons every ounce of will from every fiber of his being, and...

HIYAH! Executes a perfect JUDO THROW, flipping Steph onto his back with enough force to CRACK the marble tile!

Before Martin can fully register his accomplishment-

KLAY busts through the women's door! Lines up Martin in his sights and, without hesitation, THROWS THE KNIFE!

At that exact moment, Steph does an impressive KIP UP just in time to catch the flying knife in the BACK OF HIS SKULL!

Steph stares blankly at Martin. Blinks. Twitches. Then drops.

Klay gapes in shock at the fact he just killed his partner.
Then glares daggers at Martin, who backpedals defensively:

MARTIN

Hey, that was all you!

Klay charges! But he doesn't account for the POOL OF BLOOD spreading across the slick marble. He slips and CRACKS his head on the floor! Lies still. Unconscious or worse.

Martin can't believe he's the last man standing. Then he remembers: Lex!

He pulls Lex out of the water. Dunks his head under for a beat. Then pops up with the SCISSORS in hand!

Digs into her open incision, no time for caution...

SNIP. Got it. Pulls out a tiny, blinking NANO-CHIP. Stares at it for a beat. Then rushes to-

The MUD POOL. Plunges the chip into the thick sludge, thrusting it to the bottom, as deep as he can, just as-

CLAY stumbles to his feet, heavily concussed, and breaks into a wobbly run at Martin.

Martin easily sidesteps, slams Klay headfirst INTO THE MUD! Then dives across the slick floor and throws himself over LEX, screening her with his body as-

The chip EXPLODES! Spraying the room with chunks of mud and Klay. No pun intended.

Martin pops up, amazed he's still alive. Back to business-

DUNKS Lex's arm in the SALT POOL. Painful groan.

STITCHES her incision closed with the surgical stapler.

WRAPS her arm in gauze and bandage.

DRAWS a vial of ADRENALINE into the SYRINGE.

STABS her in the thigh and INJECTS!

GASP! Her eyes bulge awake! As we CUT TO-

EXT. SPA PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Martin runs from the scene with Lex cradled in his arms. Both in robes. Skin and hair plastered with clumps of dried mud and blood and God knows what else.

MARTIN

Just hang in there! You're gonna be okay!

Lex murmurs weakly into Martin's chest:

LEX

No hospitals... It's not safe...

MARTIN

Don't worry, I know a place we can-

When Martin aims the fob to remote start his car-

KABOOM! The Lamborghini EXPLODES in a ball of fire!

Martin shelters Lex from the light shower of flaming debris. They both stare at the blazing wreckage for a wistful beat.

LEX

My car...

MARTIN

I shoulda gone with the installment plan...

The moment of mourning is cut short by the sound of SIRENS. Martin reacts and scurries off down a dark SIDE STREET... As we tilt up to a view of...

THE BRIDGE...

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down from 7:22:27... 26... 25...

EXT. WATERFRONT BOARDWALK - NIGHT

Martin climbs awkwardly over a chain-link fence. Loses his robe on the barbed wire. Trespasses onto a recreational DOCK with assorted water toys.

EXT. PADDLE BOAT (MOVING) - NIGHT

Paddles smack against the moonlit water.

MARTIN kicks furiously in nothing but his underwear. LEX leans on his shoulder, nestled in her robe like a cocoon.

MARTIN

It's not much further. You just need to stay awake for me, okay?

But Lex is fading fast, her eyelids sagging.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, am I boring you? Don't even act like this isn't the most exciting date of your life.

(Lex grumbles in protest)

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)
 Not a date? What do you call dinner
 at the hottest reso in town?
 Carriage ride... Spa... And who
 could forget that steamy make-out
 sesh by the pool? I know it got my
 heart rate going.

Martin realizes Lex has slipped unconscious.

MARTIN
 Hey, eyes open! Lex!

He paddles like her life depends on it, which it does...
 And as the paddles slosh in the water, we FADE TO...

BLACK

For a long, pregnant beat... Then...

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Lex slowly OPENS HER EYES...
 An I.V. MACHINE beeps nearby. Blood and fluid bags DRIP.
 La-Z-Boy recliner. Oversized flannel shirt.

The TV plays a classic ROMANTIC MOVIE (e.g. "The Notebook").
 The melodramatic score rises as two STAR-CROSSED LOVERS lock
 eyes in the pouring rain and collide in a passionate kiss!

BERNARD (O.S.)
 What a crock of shit.

GENE (O.S.)
 Oh, zip it, you old prune. You're
 the only person on earth who
 doesn't like this movie.

The voices belong to **GENE** (60's) and **BERNARD** (70's), a couple
 of willowy, white-haired men in matching pyjamas. They sit on
 the couch knitting opposing ends of a patchwork QUILT.

BERNARD
 It's just so unrealistic. If a stud
 like that bats his eyes at me, I'm
 hauling him off to bed before the
 opening credits. Flick wouldn't
 last two minutes.

GENE
 Thank goodness some of us can
 control our impulses.

BERNARD

Didn't hear you complaining about
my impulses last night...

Gene gasps playfully and swats away Bernard's wandering hand, then straightens up when he realizes LEX is awake.

GENE

Oh my, look who's up! How are you
feeling, dear?

Lex sits up, surprised by how spry she feels.

LEX

Good... Really good...

BERNARD

That Martin's a miracle worker, isn't he? Lemme tell ya, I may look like a young Richard Gere now, but before he moved in to take over my dialysis treatments, I was on death's door.

LEX

Martin...

Lex searches around for Martin, alarmed by his absence.

GENE

Oh, don't worry, dear, he's fine. He wanted to wait up with you, but he just looked so exhausted, I made him lie down in the bedroom. Bernard and I don't mind, we're night owls, anyway.

BERNARD

Not much choice when this one wakes up to piss every five minutes. Man has the urinary constitution of a wet fart.

GENE

Can you at least try to act like we've had company before?

LEX

Sorry, you guys are...

GENE

Forgive me, we've heard so much
about you it feels like you're part
of the family. I'm Gene, Martin's
father. And this is Bernard-

BERNARD

His more handsome and charming
father.

GENE

And more delusional, clearly.

Lex smirks, amused by these two.

INT. COTTAGE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Martin sleeps face down on a quilted bedspread, dead to the world, until the sound of MUFFLED LAUGHTER stirs him awake...

INT. COTTAGE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The nook wall is cluttered with PHOTOS OF MARTIN at all ages. Table crowded with half eaten peach cobbler and coffee mugs.

Lex cackles with delight as the Dads show her a PHOTO OF TEENAGE MARTIN in an elaborate set of orthodontic headgear.

LEX

Oh. My. God. Okay, I'm gonna need a copy of this one for my records.

BERNARD

Poor bastard had to wear the headgear all through high school. No wonder he couldn't get laid to save his life.

GENE

Nonsense. He's just very selective.

Gene winks at Lex. She smirks, touched, then notices another photo of Martin with a RADIANT YOUNG WOMAN on his arm.

LEX

Who's the rocket in the red dress?

BERNARD

Ah, the old fiance.

LEX

Fiance? Shut up.

GENE

Together almost seven years.

Lex takes the photo off the wall to examine it more closely.

LEX

She's a total dime piece...

BERNARD

Good lookin' gal, for sure, but not
too much below deck if you know
what I mean.

LEX

Makes sense. The hottest ones are
usually the dumbest.

BERNARD

Oh, no, she was brilliant. Rhodes
Scholar in, what, physics was it?

GENE

Theoretical physics.

BERNARD

You're a nerd. Point is Martin is
all about character, and when I got
sick she turned out to be more
sizzle than steak. So he had to
break it off.

LEX

Wait, you're telling me he broke up
with her? Okay, now I'm confused.

GENE

I'm not surprised he doesn't talk
about it. He tried his best to let
her down gently, but she did not
take it very well.

BERNARD

Nothing compared to the tracks you
left on him, though.

GENE

Bernard, don't.

BERNARD

What? It's no secret he was a wreck
after she threw him to the curb.

(MORE)

BERNARD (CONT'D)

But I gotta hand it to you, young lady, you lit a fire under his ass like I've never seen. And he's a better man for it.

Lex hesitates, taking the comment to heart... Then...

AHEM. Martin coughs in the doorway to announce his arrival.

LEX

Hey there, sleepyhead. I was just learning about your early origins as a robotically-enhanced virgin.

The Dads laugh as Lex presents the HEADGEAR PHOTO.

BERNARD

I like this one, Martin. She's got an edge to her. Not like those prissy princesses you usually date.

MARTIN

Oh, no, we're not... She's not my-

LEX

We're not big on traditional labels. What we have is too special to fit in a box. Right, babe?

Martin hesitates. Lex gives him a subtle wink.

GENE

Well, whatever you call it, we're just glad to see you two back together.

LEX

Just try and keep us apart.

Lex slaps Martin on the ass, startling him.

INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gene and Bernard tucked into bed.

Martin finishes setting up the dialysis machine and kisses Bernard sweetly on the forehead.

MARTIN

All set. You know the drill. Ring the buzzer if you need anything.

Bernard grabs Martin by the wrist and pulls him close.

BERNARD

You watch yourself with that girl,
you hear me?

GENE

Ignore him, Martin. We absolutely
adore her.

BERNARD

Yeah, that's the problem. He's
punching too far above his weight.
If he doesn't keep his guard up
she's gonna eat him alive.

GENE

You've been punching above your
weight for 40 years and you're
doing just fine.

BERNARD

You really wanna go there?

GENE

I thought I just did.

Martin slips away with a smirk, leaving the Dads to bicker...

BERNARD

Just wait until I get that Grindr
account set up. We'll see who's got
the higher market value.

GENE

Oh, please. I'd like to meet the
poor bastard desperate enough to
push your saggy ass around in a
wheelchair.

BERNARD

There's a fetish for that, y'know.

GENE

Stop. There is not.

BERNARD

You'd be surprised. There's a
fetish for damn near everything
now...

INT. COTTAGE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Martin finds Lex rinsing dishes in the sink.

MARTIN

You should really rest that arm.

LEX

You gonna help or just stand there
and nag?

Martin concedes and slides into to the dish drying position.

MARTIN

You didn't have to do that. Tell
them we're together...

LEX

You saved my ass. Least I can do is
make you look good.

MARTIN

Well, you definitely made a couple
new fans. They're gonna be
devastated when you fake dump me
again.

Lex smirks, pleased to hear it.

LEX

They're a cute pair.

MARTIN

Spend most of their time at each
other's throats. But they wouldn't
last two minutes apart.

LEX

Hard act to follow these days.

MARTIN

Not if you find the right person.

As Lex transfers a plate to Martin, their fingers connect.
They lock eyes for a beat. But Lex gently pulls away.

LEX

Get real, Martin. It's fun to play
house, but this would obviously
never work.

MARTIN

Why is that obvious?

LEX

Do we really have to review what I
do for a living?

MARTIN

But you don't even like it. It makes you miserable, you said so yourself.

LEX

So what? No one "likes" their job. That's why it's a job.

MARTIN

Well, have you ever considered doing something else?

LEX

Like what? Are you and me gonna open a bed and breakfast in Vermont and sell kombucha at the farmers market?

MARTIN

I know you're being sarcastic, but that honestly sounds incredible.

Lex sighs, frustrated. Martin gives a sincere gaze.

LEX

I told you not to look at me like that.

MARTIN

Like what?

LEX

(hesitates)

Let's just drop it, okay? It's been a long night, we're both tired-

MARTIN

Wanna know what I think?

LEX

I really don't.

MARTIN

I think you're full of shit.

LEX

(balks, defensive)

Excuse me?

MARTIN

You wear this whole 'bad bitch' persona like a suit of armor.

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Because if you can convince everyone you don't care, don't need anyone, then maybe you won't get hurt again. But I see right through it, and that scares you.

LEX

You see what you wanna see! Some idealized fantasy in your head I couldn't live up to even if I wanted. The problem is I'm not that person, and I'm never gonna be.

MARTIN

Oh yeah? Then who are you?

Lex balks, flustered by the question. Then, without warning, she snatches a plate from the sink and flings it at the wall, SMASHING it to pieces! Martin stares for a beat.

MARTIN

Why did you do that?!

Lex hesitates for a beat, then steps toward Martin and surprises him with a soft, tender KISS on the lips.

She pulls away slowly, gauging his reaction.

LEX

I'm not sure.

Beat.

MARTIN

Cool.

INT. COTTAGE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lex splashes water on her face. Stares in the mirror. The FADED SCAR on her chest peeks above her shirt collar.

She pauses to trace the scar with her finger...

Then something catches her eye in the mirror... A faint dirt HAND MARK on the door of the LAUNDRY CLOSET... She realizes the window above the toilet is OPEN a crack...

Lex approaches the laundry closet with caution. The washer-dryer RUMBLES ominously behind the pocket door... Then, in one swift motion, she WHIPS the door open, and-

CHRISTIAN jumps out! But Lex is ready to absorb his attack-

SLAMS his head onto the sink edge, smashing the porcelain!

INT. COTTAGE WINE CELLAR - NIGHT

A hanging filament lightbulb CLICKS ON.

Lex aims the bulb at CHRISTIAN, who is tied to a chair, interrogation-style. Grabs him by the hair.

LEX

How many?

CHRISTIAN

I told you, it's just me-

Lex PISTOL WHIPS Christian to refresh his memory.

CHRISTIAN

There's no one else! I swear!

BERNARD

Bullshit, he's lying.

Reveal MARTIN and the DADS hovering in a semi-circle.

GENE

Honey, please, let her handle this.

MARTIN

No, dad's right, he's definitely lying.

CHRISTIAN

Piss off, Bambi! If it wasn't for her you'd be a shit stain with a chalk outline by now-

Lex grips Christian by the balls and squeezes!

Christian BELLOWs in blinding pain. Martin puffs his chest.

MARTIN

You were saying?

CHRISTIAN

Okay! Alright! There's two out front, one in the back.

BERNARD

See, Gene? What'd I tell you?

GENE

Of course, make it about you, like a textbook narcissist.

Lex continues with Christian:

LEX
How'd you find us?

CHRISTIAN
Next of kin. Bambi left his credit
card on file at the hotel-

Lex tightens her death grip on Christian's junk.
He whimpers, on the verge of passing out.

LEX
Sorry, what's his name?

MARTIN
Yeah, what's my name, bitch?

CHRISTIAN
Martin! His name's Martin.

MARTIN
I can't hear you!

LEX
Alright, dial it down a notch.

MARTIN
Sorry.

Martin takes five. Lex continues with Christian:

LEX
I gotta admit, I really didn't
think you could hang. But now that
I see what you're working with, I
may have to start taking you more
seriously...

MARTIN
Okay, I think we have what we need.
You can let go of his penis now.

LEX
I'm still waiting for an apology.

CHRISTIAN
I'm sorry, okay?! You know how Fran
gets. I didn't have a fuckin'
choice!

Lex nods, satisfied, releases her grip. Then surprises
Christian with a firm KISS on the lips. Pats him on the
cheek. Whispers playfully in his ear:

LEX
I forgive you.

Lex turns to find Martin staring in shock.

MARTIN
What the hell was that? You won't even hold hands with me, but this haircut tries to kill you and you-

Lex silences Martin with an equally firm KISS. Then takes his hand and slides the pistol into his palm.

LEX
Did you learn how to use one of these?

Martin nods. Lex straightens his collar.

LEX
Don't go anywhere, okay? I won't be long.

On her way out, Lex grabs a bottle of wine off the rack.

LEX
Is this a good one?

GENE
What's that, the Monte Pierre '16?
Not exactly a banner year, but-

Lex SMASHES the end of the bottle to make a jagged SHANK.

LEX
I'll replace it.

And with that, Lex disappears up the stairs.

BERNARD
I told you he can't handle that.

Beat.

GENE
You might be right.

EXT. COTTAGE BACKYARD - NIGHT

A CAMOUFLAGED ASSASSIN crouches in the BUSHES. Earpiece:

CAMMO ASSASSIN
 All clear back here. Holding
 position, over.
 (no response)
 You guys copy?

INT. COTTAGE WINE CELLAR - NIGHT

Muffled GUNSHOTS and SHOUTING sounds from outside.
 Gene clings to Bernard's arm, but Martin reassures them:

MARTIN
 It's okay. She knows what she's
 doing.

Christian glares at Martin. Shakes his head in disgust.

CHRISTIAN
 Feeling pretty tough right now,
 aren't you?

Martin does his best to ignore Christian.

CHRISTIAN
 And why shouldn't you? All you
 gotta do is run out the clock and
 you're golden. Not Lex, though.
 There's no turning back for her...

GENE
 What's he talking about, son?

CHRISTIAN
 Thanks to Bambi here, our girl Lex
 is a marked woman. Open contract.
 No expiration. And the price is
 just gonna keep going up until even
 she can't outrun the market.

Christian has Martin's full attention now.

CHRISTIAN
 The real mystery is why she'd throw
 it all away on lightweight like
 you? Personally, I don't get it.
 But I know if you cared about her
 even half as much as I do you,
 wouldn't sit by while she takes the
 fall-

WHOMP! Martin silences Christian with a fierce PISTOL WHIP!

GENE BERNARD
Martin! Attaboy, son!

Christian casually spits blood, unfazed but mildly impressed.

CHRISTIAN
Okay. I'm starting to see why she likes you.

MARTIN
Just shut up and tell me what I
have to do.

Christian cracks a cheshire grin. Got him.

EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

LEX hogties the trio of unconscious ASSASSINS, when-
A STATION WAGON pulls out of the garage, Martin at the wheel.

LEX

Martin shoots her a sorrowful look before he BURNS RUBBER!

Lex jogs after the car, throwing her hands up:

LEX
Where are you going?!

But the car speeds off into the trees...

Close on Tex. Grave concern.

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down from 3:43:26... 25... 24...

INT. FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE - OFFICE - DAY

Fran fills out paperwork at her desk. Pauses to yawn. Eyes glazed from a sleepless night.

Phone rings. She picks up immediately, without greeting:

FRAN

INT. 24 HOUR DINER - DAWN

Lex sits at a window booth, on the phone to Fran:

LEX
I need proof he's alive.

INTERCUT LEX/FRAN

FRAN
I'm afraid you'll have to take my word for it at the moment...

MARTIN sits across the desk. Mouth taped. Flanked by MEN.

FRAN
Seems like a sweet kid. Offered to trade himself straight up for your immunity. But I can do him one better.

Beat.

LEX
I'm listening.

FRAN
You get your ass down here before lover boy turns into a pumpkin, I'll let you close him out yourself. By the book. Restore full faith and confidence to the marketplace, get the Regulators off our backs, and you and I put this nonsense behind us, get back to business as usual.

LEX
Just like that?

FRAN
So you had a crisis of conscience? Shit, I used to have 'em all the time when I started out. But you're still my best asset. And I can't tell you how hard it is to find good talent in this economy.

(beat)
I'll take the silence as a 'yes'.

LEX
I need to think about it.

FRAN
Take as much time you need. Not like there's a ticking clock.

Fran hangs up and returns to her paperwork. Humdrum. Then, to her men:

FRAN
She'll be here. Just make sure you bring her to the back first. I don't want a mess in my showroom.

The men drape a clear plastic tarp over the carpet.

Martin SCREAMS in protest through his muzzle, but he quickly gets silenced by a brutal punch to the face!

INT. 24 HOUR DINER - DAWN

Lex studies her coffee. Anxious. Waiting...
The door chime JINGLES. And Lex brightens when she sees...

SHELLY slides into the booth. Poker-faced.

LEX
I didn't think you'd show.

SHELLY
I was gonna get here early and rig your seat with explosives. Got a whole trunk full.

LEX
That woulda been pretty baller.

SHELLY
Yeah, I know.

Beat.

LEX
Why didn't you?

SHELLY
Well, when you consider the property damage... All the casualties... I guess it just didn't seem worth it...

Lex nods. They nurse their coffees for a pregnant beat.

SHELLY
It's not easy being friends with you, y'know?

LEX

Probably why I don't have many.
(off Shelly)
Okay, fine, I don't have any.

Lex lowers her head sadly. Shelly hesitates, sympathetic.

SHELLY

Yeah, well, real friends are hard
to come by when you're as hot as we
are. Bitches be jealous.

Lex looks up. Glimmer of hope.

SHELLY

So you like this guy or what?

LEX

Martin? Oh, hell no. He's the exact
opposite of what I like. He's so
needy. And naive. And sensitive...
Thoughtful... Sweet...

Lex sighs. Shelly cracks a knowing smirk.

SHELLY

So what are you thinking?

Close on Lex. Subtle, mischievous grin...

As our soundtrack drops the beat... tempo building...

EXT. FASHION DISTRICT - MORNING

Quiet morning streets, buzzing with potential.

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down from 1:13:19... 18... 17

INT. FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE SHOWROOM - MORNING

An ARMY OF SUITS waiting for Lex to arrive. Armed and ready.

GENTRY is at the forefront. Checks his watch. On edge.

INT. FRAN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Martin with his mouth taped, watching the clock tick away.
Fran checks her watch. Disappointed shrug.

FRAN

Well, shit. Guess I read this one wrong. So much for puppy love.

Martin squirms in protest as the men carry him to the center of the plastic tarp. But the security system pings an ALERT.

FRAN

Hold up.

Fran checks the monitors. Pleased at first. Then concerned...
As our SOUNDTRACK ramps up with an intensifying BEAT...

INT. FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE SHOWROOM - MORNING

The REVOLVING DOOR rotates...
The METAL DETECTOR goes haywire...
The ARMY OF SUITS part like the red sea...
GENTRY steps forward, shaking in his loafers...

GENTRY

You were expected to come alone...

LEX

Guess you better go get your manager.

Lex holds CHRISTIAN in front of her like a human shield. VEST OF C4 strapped to his chest. Her thumb on the DETONATOR.

LEX

I'll wait.

EXT. FASHION DISTRICT - MORNING

SHELLY in a black overcoat, looking fashionable, pretending to peruse the window display of a high-end clothing store.

In the reflection, she watches FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE across the street. Speaks into a concealed earpiece:

SHELLY

Alright, I put the call in. You got seven minutes.

INT. FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE - MORNING

Fran pushes through the crowd, seething. Faces off with Lex.

FRAN

What do you think you're doing?

LEX

Not that I ever really listened to you, but for the record: Warren Buffet doesn't believe in diversification. He believes in concentrated bets with a healthy margin of safety. Which means when you put all your eggs in one basket, you take care of the fuckin' basket.

Fran fumes, turns her scolding glare to Christian.

CHRISTIAN

Sorry about this, mom.

FRAN

I told you not to call me that at work.

CHRISTIAN

Sorry, Fran.

FRAN

This is why I'm against nepotism. This kinda shit, right here.

Lex waits patiently as Fran mulls her options...

FRAN

Alright, fuck it, let's get this over with.

Men shove MARTIN forward, and the moment they rip the tape off his mouth, he blurts out a desperate warning:

MARTIN

Look out, Lex! It's a trap!

Beat. Lex sighs.

LEX

Just get over here.

MARTIN

Okay, sorry.

Martin scurries to join Lex. Double takes at the sight of Christian in the bomb vest.

MARTIN
Nice outfit, guy.

Lex shoves Christian across the room in exchange.
Christian sheepishly takes his place next to Fran, who
refuses to look at him directly.

FRAN
We done here?

LEX
Not quite.

Lex slaps a large designer BAG into Martin's chest.
Inside the bag, Martin discovers a HAMMER.

LEX
You know what I like.

CUT TO-

Martin SHATTERS display cases with the hammer.
Shovels jewelry into the bag. Plundering the entire showroom.

All Fran can do is watch and smoulder at Lex's smugness.

FRAN
I'll give you one last piece of
advice, no charge. Live it up.
Spend as much as you can as fast as
you can. Because the two of you
will not have long together.

LEX
I appreciate the tip. But I'm done
taking orders from you.

Martin joins Lex with his goodie bag bursting at the seams.

LEX
Okay, looks like we're all set.
(flaunts the detonator)
This thing has a good ten mile
range on it, so you're gonna wanna
sit tight for a beat.

FRAN
Ten miles, ten thousand, doesn't
matter. There's no rat hole in the
world you can hide that I won't-

CHICKA-POW! The familiarly foreboding PHONE ALERT, not just
Lex's phone, but every phone in the room.

LEX

You should check that. It's for you.

Fran hesitates. Checks her phone.

OPEN CONTRACT (UPDATED)

PHOTO: [Surveillance photo of FRAN]

TARGET: ~~Alexis Cutler~~ Francine Dupont

OFFER: \$1,000,000

LOCATION: GPS Targeting Active

ORDER: First to close. No expiration.

Fran gapes in disbelief. The men trade confused looks like they're no longer sure who they should be aiming at...

LEX

Forgot to mention I called in a favor with back office, had them check the fees you report against the ones you actually charge. It's all a bit technical, but the Regulators are real sticklers for transparency, and it turns out your accounting practices are a little... sloppy is not the term. More like... fucked.

FRAN

You little cunt.

LEX

Right? Lucky for you I am big on loyalty. Which is why I hooked you up with a generous retirement plan. For your own protection, of course.

On cue, POLICE CARS swarm the storefront, SIRENS blaring!

Fran's eyes bulge. Lex flashes a final shit-eating grin.

LEX

Pleasure doing business with you.

Dual SWAT VANS crash through the storefront glass! SMOKE GRENADES hiss WHITE GAS! SWAT TEAMS storm the castle!

Fran retreats to the back with Christian as GUNFIRE erupts!

Lex pulls Martin to the floor, surrendering.

SWAT

Down! Down! Down!

LEX

Alright, we're down! Take it easy!

Lex presses her face to floor, nose-to-nose with Martin. She reassures him with a confident wink, as her thumb hovers over the DETONATOR TRIGGER...

Meanwhile, CHRISTIAN rips the C4 VEST off his chest, hurls it into Fran's VAULT, and heaves the door SHUT just as-

Lex presses the detonator-

KABOOM! The explosion BLASTS the vault door off its hinges! A SHOCKWAVE ripples through the store, consuming everyone in a cloud of SMOKE AND DEBRIS!

Martin coughs through the settling dust.

MARTIN

Lex...?

By the time Martin looks around and realizes Lex is gone...

The CROSSFIRE resumes! Bullets whizzing overhead!

A SWAT hauls Martin behind a display counter for cover, throws a bulletproof vest on him, muzzles him with a gas mask, and ushers him outside...

EXT. FRAN'S JEWELRY STORE / FASHION DISTRICT - DAY

The SWAT forces Martin outside, through the wave of SWAT REINFORCEMENTS rushing into the store to join the shootout.

They reach the back of a PADDY WAGON, but Martin resists-

MARTIN

Hold on, my girlfriend's still in there!

FEMALE SWAT

Let's get one thing straight...

The FEMALE SWAT turns and KNOCKS the other team members unconscious. Then turns to address Martin:

FEMALE SWAT

I am not your girlfriend, and under no circumstances are you allowed to tell people that.

Martin realizes it's LEX behind the SWAT mask! He beams with relief as she shoves him inside the paddy wagon-

INT. PADDY WAGON - DAY

Lex pulls off her SWAT mask. Shakes her hair out. Zips open the bag full of jewelry to revel at the score. Martin gazes at her with awe, smitten.

MARTIN

Okay, I get the 'L word' is currently off limits, but I want you to know I've never felt closer to you than I do at this moment.

Lex rolls her eyes. Can't help but smirk.

SHELLY (also in SWAT gear) leans out from the driver seat:

SHELLY

You sure we can't just pop him? Be a helluva bonus.

LEX

Martin, you remember my friend, Shelly?

Martin double takes, still reeling from his last encounter with Shelly, but smiles politely.

MARTIN

Yes, of course. Nice to see you again, Shelly.

Shelly grins. Starts the engine.

INT. FRAN'S OFFICE

A SWAT BATTERING RAM thuds against the thick steel door. Rhythmic. Inevitable.

Fran flicks a switch that turns her FILE CABINET into an incinerator, a blazing inferno to torch the paper evidence.

Then she peels the lid off a pre-made salad. But before she digs in, she stops to consider:

Christian sits across the desk, slumped in his chair.

FRAN

I told you you weren't cut out for this game. You're a tough kid, but you gotta be a killer. Stone-cold.

CHRISTIAN

No, you were right, I'm soft as fuck. Congratulations.

FRAN

C'mon, I didn't mean that.

Christian looks away, pouting like an emo teenager.

FRAN

I know you think she's 'the one' or whatever, but you're still young. Good lookin' kid like you, they'll be lining up around the block.

CHRISTIAN

Not like her. She's different.

Beat.

FRAN

Yeah. I suppose she is...

Fran sighs. Checks her watch.

FRAN

Y'know, if I'm being honest, I'm kinda relieved you're not cut out for this. Because the thing about being a killer? It can get awfully lonely sometimes.

Fran reaches below her desk and presses a hidden button-
The wall panel slides away to reveal a SECRET CORRIDOR.

Christian perks up.

FRAN

What are you waiting for? Go get her.

Christian rises. Determined.

MOMENTS LATER

The office door is finally flattened by the battering ram!

FRAN sits alone, casually chomping on her salad.
She motions for the SWAT to wait while she finishes chewing.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKADE - DAY

The PADDY WAGON abandoned.

Lex and Shelly rush to change outfits behind a BURNER CAR.

SHELLY

Flight's on schedule. Security
knows you're coming so you
shouldn't have any issues with
customs.

Lex hands the bag full of jewelry over to Shelly.

LEX

Make sure you stay off the main
exchanges. And don't move it all at
once.

(off Shelly)

What am I saying? You're a pro, you
got this.

Shelly smiles. Big hug. Both of them squeezing tight.

SHELLY

It's gonna be boring around here
without the competition.

LEX

Aw, Shell. You were never any
competition.

SHELLY

(laughing)
You're such a bitch.

Their misty-eyed laughter is interrupted by-

MARTIN

Hey, guys?

Reveal Martin stuffed in the open trunk of the car.

MARTIN

Sorry to interrupt, but do you
think I could sit up front, maybe?
I promise to keep my head down. I
just get kinda triggered by small
spaces-

Lex slams the trunk closed on Martin, who's muffled voice
continues from inside:

MARTIN (O.S.)
No worries. I'll make it work.

Shelly chuckles.

SHELLY
I like him.

LEX
He's alright.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

CHRISTIAN on a crotch-rocket MOTORBIKE. Careens out of an alley and speeds the wrong direction down a one way street.

Full throttle!

TIMER CHYRON: Counting down from 00:37:51... 50... 49...

EXT. AIRPORT HIGHWAY - DAY

A concentrated patch of dark storm CLOUDS rolling in...

Lex's BURNER CAR speeds down the highway toward the PRIVATE AIRPORT TOWER on the horizon...

INT/EXT. BURNER CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Lex drives, flipping through RADIO STATIONS. Pausing on:

TALK RADIO
-we're on now with Sasha from
Columbus, Ohio, who says she loves
her boyfriend, but just isn't sure
she's the type of person who
belongs in a committed
relationship-

Lex switches channels to a POP MUSIC STATION.

Martin's muffled voice hollers from the trunk:

MARTIN (O.S.)
Any chance you could slow down a
bit? The shock absorption back here
is not very-

The car BOUNCES through a pothole and Martin's head THUMPS loudly against the trunk roof. He CURSES in pain.

Lex smirks. But there's a heaviness in her eyes...
Something is weighing on her...

INT. BURNER CAR TRUNK

Martin crammed awkwardly in the fetal position, using his phone as a nightlight.

The car rolls to bumpy STOP.

MARTIN
Are we at the airport already?

He hears the driver door OPEN and SHUT...
FOOTSTEPS circle around to the trunk...

MARTIN
Lex? Everything okay?

EXT. AIRPORT HIGHWAY UNDERPASS - DAY

The car is parked behind the underpass, out of sight.
Lex stands next to the locked trunk. Lump in her throat.

LEX
I left the A/C running. A tow truck
will be here to let you out once
it's safe.

MARTIN
What are you talking about? I'm
coming with you.

Reveal Lex's CHAUFFEURED CAR parked nearby, waiting.

LEX
Did you really think we were gonna
ride off into the sunset together?
People like me don't get endings
like that.

MARTIN
Okay, hold on, can we just talk
about this?

LEX
You can keep your money. All of it.

MARTIN
I don't care about the money! I
care about you!

LEX

I care about you, too. That's why I cut you off. I didn't wanna hurt you. You deserve to be with a good person.

MARTIN

You are a good person!

LEX

No, I'm not. A good person wouldn't do this.

MARTIN

Lex, wait! Don't go!

But she's already gone. Martin PUNCHES the roof in protest!

EXT. AIRPORT HIGHWAY - DAY

Christian's MOTORBIKE weaves through traffic at breakneck speed, passing cars like they're standing still.

TIMER CHYRON: 00:19:44... 43... 42

INT. PRIVATE AIRPORT LOUNGE - DAY

Lex sits alone. Somber. Sunglasses concealing her sad eyes. An ATTENDANT passes by with a tray of champagne.

ATTENDANT

Champagne before we board?

LEX

No, thank you.

Lex's voice betrays the well of emotion behind her shades.

A strikingly handsome BUSINESSMAN takes notice and approaches Lex with a sensitive smile.

BUSINESSMAN

I'm sorry, I don't mean to pry, but are you alright?

LEX

I'm fine, thanks.

He interprets this as an offer to sit next to her-

HANDSOME BUSINESSMAN
 Paris, right? I believe we're
 sharing a plane-

LEX
 Fuck off.

Alrighty then. He pulls a quick 180 and retreats.

INT. BURNER CAR TRUNK - DAY

Martin keeps POUNDING on the roof, but it's futile...
 He finally gives up. Defeated. Wallowing in silence.
 As the sound of the RADIO fills the void...

RADIO DJ
*..with an 84% chance of rain on
 this dreary Saturday morning,
 here's a pick-me-up for all you
 hopeless romantics out there. It's
 Peter Frampton with "In Your Eyes"
 on K-ROCK FM...*

As the melody washes over Martin...
 It sparks something inside of him. Inspiration. A surge of
 newfound resolve. And then... an idea!

He swings his phone flashlight around, searching for...
 A NYLON STRAP pokes out of a crease in the inner wall. Bingo.
 He squirms to switch positions. Grabs the strap. And PULLS-

INT/EXT. BURNER CAR - DAY

The BACKSEAT slings forward!
 Martin squeezes through narrow space like it's a birth canal.

Plops in the driver seat. Engine still running.
 Cranks the RADIO volume up. Grips the wheel. Game face.
 Takes off down the highway! As the THUNDER ROLLS...

The Frampton song is our soundtrack now. A cathartic power
 ballad to carry us all the way to the finish line...

TIMER CHYRON: 00:11:14... 13... 12...

INT. PRIVATE AIRPORT LOUNGE - DAY

RAIN showers the tarmac outside.

AIRPORT ANNOUNCEMENT
*Our direct charter to Paris is now
 ready to board. Please make your
 way to the gate...*

Lex remains seated. Eyes down. Reading something...
 In her hands: a crumpled, handwritten NOTE...

MARTIN'S POEM. She kept it after all.

As Lex reads, a single TEAR rolls down from her sunglasses.
 She brushes the tear away. Steels herself. Rises.

INT/EXT. BURNER CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Windshield wipers slosh against the POURING RAIN.

Martin accelerates past the AIRPORT PARKING STAND-
 SMASHES the boom gate clean off!

EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT ENTRANCE - DAY

Martin's car jumps the curb, screeches to a stop.
 He leaps out, sprints through the main entrance doors.
 SECURITY GUARDS chase!

EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT SERVICE ROAD - DAY

Christian's motorbike rips down the gravel road adjacent to
 the AIRFIELD. He suddenly swerves through the DITCH-

Draws a machine pistol and BLASTS the lock off the chainlink.
 Pops a wheelie, BASHES through the gate, onto the TARMAC!

EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY

The staircase descends from the PRIVATE JET.

A porter holds an umbrella for Lex as she walks to the plane.

INT. PRIVATE AIRPORT LOUNGE - DAY

Martin dodges SECURITY GUARDS like a runningback on an end
 zone drive.

Once he makes it through the GATE, he uses a chair to jam the
 door shut behind him. The Guards pound on the glass!

TIMER CHYRON: 00:00:23... 22... 21...

From here on out, the TIMER remains on screen, counting us down to the deadline, second by second...

EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY

Lex takes her first step up the staircase of the plane when-

MARTIN (O.S.)

Lex!

She stops. Looks back. Double takes. It can't be...

MARTIN. In the pouring rain. Chest heaving. Heart on his sleeve. One look to say everything. As our song PEAKS...

Lex locks eyes with Martin. Overwhelmed by emotion. But the heartfelt moment is interrupted when she sees...

CHRISTIAN'S MOTORBIKE! Closing in on Martin from behind!

00:00:09.. 8... 7...

Lex turns gravely serious, leaves the cover of the umbrella, INTO THE RAIN, sprinting to Martin!

Martin is oblivious to the impending threat of Christian. All he sees is Lex running toward him in the rain. His romantic fantasy playing out in real time...

3... 2... 1...

Christian SKIDS to a sharp stop, draws a bead on Martin-

Lex slides to a stop ten feet from Martin-
Pulls a PISTOL from her bag-

It all happens too fast for Martin to process, so his face is still beaming with anticipation when-

POW! Lex SHOOTS Martin square in the chest!
The force of the ROUND sends him toppling onto his back!

Needle scratch. Our soundtrack CUTS OUT. Instant buzz kill.

Christian lowers his gun, shocked, confused...

Lex stands over Martin's body and...
POW! POW! POW! Peppers his torso with ROUNDS!
She pauses to flash Christian a winning look, then-
POW! Plugs Martin with a final ROUND for good measure.

The heavy rain fades to a soft drizzle.

Christian stares in awe at Lex as she strolls over.

CHRISTIAN
I knew you were cold. But damn...

Lex cracks a flirtatious grin. Christian melts instantly.

An AMBULANCE SIREN whines in the distance.
Incoming SECURITY GUARDS close in around them.

LEX
You gonna offer me a ride or what?

Christian offers his helmet. Lex declines the helmet but hops on the back of the bike and wraps her arms around his chest.

TIRES SPIN. Away they go...

Lex keeps an eye on the SIDEVIEW MIRROR, where the reflection of Martin's body shrinks to a speck in the distance...

CLOSE ON MARTIN

Eyes shut. Dead still. As the SIRENS grow closer...

A thin band of SUNLIGHT peaks through the clouds, washing over his lifeless face... when suddenly-

Martin GASPS! He's alive!
Confused, saddened, in excruciating pain, but alive.
He gingerly rips open his shirt to reveal...
A BULLETPROOF VEST. Filled with flattened rounds, evenly spaced across his torso.

The SECURITY GUARDS come running to Martin's side.

MARTIN
It's okay. I think I'm alright...

A heavy boot KICKS Martin in the face! The Guards pile on, take turns beating the living piss out of him.

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT - DAY

Christian and Lex sit on the motorbike looking out over an epic view of the city. The bridge. The harbor. Breathtaking.

Lex on her phone:

LEX
Alright, I'll meet you there...
Thanks, babe... See you soon...

She hangs up. Hops off the bike.

CHRISTIAN

Sure you don't wanna grab a drink
or something?

(off Lex)

Or we could just skip the bullshit
and head back to my place?

Lex chuckles, shakes her head.

CHRISTIAN

What?

LEX

I tried to kill you like an hour
ago. That's not a turn off for you?

CHRISTIAN

That's why this makes so much
sense. We're the same, you and me.
We fit together.

Lex chuckles, shakes her head.

LEX

You might be right. But I need try
something different.

She gives him a platonic peck on the cheek. A look. Then
walks away like it's the last time.

CHRISTIAN

You sure you wanna turn your back
on me? I could still take you out.

LEX

But you love to watch me leave.

Lex flashes a final flirtatious grin over her shoulder.

Christian smirks, melancholy. Left to take in the view alone.

INT. AMBULANCE (MOVING) - DAY

Martin on a gurney, beaten and disoriented. Oxygen mask.

PARAMEDIC

Deep breath for me. That's it. How
you feeling, champ?

MARTIN

There's a bright light... It's so
warm...

PARAMEDIC

That's just the morphine kicking
in. You got your ass whooped pretty
good, but you'll be alright.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

The back doors swing open. Gurney rolls out.

Martin lifts his head, squinting in the bright sunlight.
Then gapes when he sees...

MARTIN

Oh, God, no... Not him...

CHAD in his paramedic uniform, looking studly as ever.

CHAD

'Sup, bro. You look like ass.

Chad passes a fat ENVELOPE to the other Paramedic.
Fist bump. And the ambulance departs.

Chad takes over, rolling Martin into the park...

MARTIN

Please, just let me go. I'm not
comfortable with you as my primary
caregiver.

CHAD

Relax, my guy. Uncle Chad's hooking
you up...

Chad lifts up the back of the gurney so Martin can see...

A HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE (the same one from last night).
White horses. Dream-like. Doesn't seem real.

Chad smirks at Martin's reaction.

INT. HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE - DAY

Martin gingerly climbs inside with help of Chad. Takes a
seat. And freezes when he sees:

LEX sits opposite. Sundress. Ponytail. Warm smirk.
Martin hesitates, speechless.

CHAD

He's got a few cracked ribs but the rest is superficial. Keep him rolling on these, he'll be fine.

Chad tosses Lex a bottle of painkillers. She nods, grateful.

CHAD

And hey, I don't know what your plans are tonight but-

LEX

That'll be all, Chad. Thank you.

Chad shrugs. Worth a shot. Off he goes. Farewell, sweet Chad.

Martin and Lex sit in silence for a long, awkward beat. Martin pouts, refusing to speak first.

LEX

I'm sorry I shot you.

MARTIN

Five times.

LEX

I had to make it look authentic.

Martin continues pouting. But then he sees something that piques his interest... A PICNIC BASKET.

LEX

Seemed like a nice day for a picnic. Nothing fancy. A baguette. Little baked brie.

MARTIN

My favorite.

LEX

You're not the only one who remembers stuff.

Beat.

MARTIN

Look, I don't know what this is, but I don't want your pity.

LEX

Can you just let me talk for a minute? There's something I need to...

To Martin's surprise, Lex unfolds the handwritten POEM.
Clears her throat. Reads aloud:

LEX

"If we are bold, love strikes away
the chains of fear from our souls.
And suddenly we see, love costs all
we are, and will ever be. Yet it is
only love... which sets us free".

MARTIN

Okay, if you brought me down here
just to make fun of me-

LEX

It's a good line.

Martin realizes Lex is being sincere. Hesitates.

MARTIN

It's not mine.

LEX

No?

MARTIN

Plagiarized it from Maya Angelou.
I could never write something like
that. I suck at poetry.

LEX

Well, whatever. I still like it.

Martin warms a little, but remains cautiously guarded.

LEX

Can I be honest with you?

(off Martin)

It wasn't a mistake, that first
night. When I saw your profile, I
wanted to meet you.

Martin is pleasantly surprised, but also confused...

MARTIN

Why?

LEX

I guess I was tired of the same
shit. The games. I was looking for
something different. I dunno,
something...

MARTIN

More.

Lex nods. Exactly.

LEX

And I may not be a good person,
but... you make me wanna try.

Lex locks eyes with Martin, who is stunned speechless.

LEX

So if you were willing to give me
another shot...

MARTIN

I thought we weren't dating before?

Lex smirks. Touche.

LEX

I think we should take it slow.
Really get to know each other.

Martin tries his best to play it cool, but it's getting harder to contain his bubbling excitement.

MARTIN

Seems reasonable.

(beat)

You have to be nicer to me, though.

Lex struggles with the concession. It's a big ask.

LEX

We can work on that.

Martin can't hold back any longer, he flashes a beaming smile. Lex lights up, smiling back as Martin jumps across to squeeze in beside her.

MARTIN

Can we hold hands?

LEX

Fine.

He squeezes her hand tightly. Giddy. Both of them grin ear-to-ear like smitten teenagers.

LEX

You're such a dork.

MARTIN
You like it, though.

She does. She slaps the wall, whistles.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

The CARRIAGE rolls away. White horses trotting proudly into the park. Sun shining. Flowers bursting with color. Romantic. Majestic. Perfect.

As we take in the scenery, we hear VOICE OVER of Lex and Martin's conversation inside the carriage:

MARTIN
Can I change my relationship status online?

LEX
Absolutely not.

MARTIN
I don't have to tag you. I just think people should know I'm off the market.

LEX
Don't make me regret this.

MARTIN
Okay, sorry.

We rise away from the carriage, above the trees...

MARTIN
Can I tell my dads?

Beat.

LEX
Yes.

MARTIN
Good, because I just texted them. They're knitting us a quilt.

LEX
They're adorable.

MARTIN
Yeah, they're the best.

Wide on the SKYLINE. Rainbow arching over the park.

MARTIN

Hey, Lex?

LEX

What?

MARTIN

Is it okay if I use the "L" word
now?

Long pause. Deep breath.

LEX

Okay.

The tallest SKYSCRAPER in the city still flashing an electric
message: "**L+M 4EVR**" encircled by a HEART.

Blast the soundtrack. And we're out.

THE END