

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF VACAVILLE. CALIFORNIA - DAY

ZOOM IN ON: dry, yellow fields full of cows - businesses that have seen better days - old people walking slowly into a health center - a general tone of a town you would leave rather than visit.

ZOOM IN ON: A RUN DOWN DEPARTMENT STORE

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - MAKE-UP COUNTER - SAME

Cassie (20's blonde, pretty) is in a store uniform working at the make-up counter.

Two YOUNG GIRLS are stealing make-up and stuffing it in their pockets.

CASSIE
Put that back or I'll call security.

YOUNG TEENAGE GIRL
(mocking her)
Wow! I'm scared.

CLOSE UP: a security guard JERRY is asleep at his station. The girls keep stealing make-up and putting it in their purses. Cassie picks up her walkie talkie.

CASSIE
(over the loudspeaker)
Security to aisle five. Security to aisle five. JERRY! WAKE UP! You've got some shoplifters to catch.

Jerry jumps up and the girls throw the make-up on the ground and run out the door.

LIA (20's) a beautiful, dark haired, long-legged beauty has been watching Cassie. She's very amused. She's very sophisticatedly dressed and looks out of place in the shabby department store.

Lia approaches Cassie. Cassie starts to smile in recognition.

LIA
(Alabama accent)
Excuse me, where can I find that cream that shrinks the bags under your eyes? Cause, girl you need some!

CASSIE
(laughs)
You know, you remind me of a good friend of mine. She used to be nice girl.

LIA
Oh please, I just saw how ruthless you've become. We used to steal stuff all the time.

They both laugh.

CASSIE
What are you doing here?

LIA
Came for my daddy's birthday. Least I
could do for him in his predicament.

CASSIE
Oh no, is he sick?

LIA
Not all over, not yet.

CASSIE
Shit. How bad is it?

LIA
He's got cancer of the ball sack.

CASSIE
Is he...?

LIA
He'll live, but he's gonna miss having
one of his balls.

CASSIE
Sorry to hear that. How long you here
for?

LIA
Just the night. 'Bout all I can take of
my daddy. I really came back to try and
persuade you to come to Los Angeles with
me. I told you I'd be back for you!

Cassie shakes her head no, but smiles.

LIA (CONT'D)
I can try, can't I?

CASSIE
I'm just about to finish, you've timed
this perfectly. Can you stick around for
a few minutes?

LIA
You need a ride home?

CASSIE
You have a car?

LIA
I have my boyfriend's Mercedes.

CASSIE
Shut up! A boyfriend?! A Mercedes?!

LIA
You're missing out my designer clothes.

CASSIE
You look so great - expensive!

Lia does a twirl and shows her the Prada label on her handbag.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Are they fake?

LIA
No! They ain't.

CASSIE
You won the lottery?

LIA
Hurry up and count your till. I'm gonna need your full attention.

CASSIE
(opens the till)
I have to take this to the office to count it. Wait for me - and don't steal anything.

Lia puts the lipstick she was looking at in her purse.

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Cassie and Lia are walking to Lia's car in the parking lot. Lia takes the key fob of her Mercedes and points it at her car, it flashes. Cassie is impressed.

CASSIE
That's your car?

LIA
Lovely ain't it?

CASSIE
Makes a change from the bus.

They get in.

INT/EXT. MERCEDES BENZ - CONTINUOUS

CASSIE
Wow! This is beautiful, Lia! Is he rich?

LIA
Yeah.

CASSIE
Congratulations.
(beat)
Is he old?

LIA
Fifteen years older than me but that don't make him a silver daddy.

CASSIE
Has he got grey hair?

LIA
No he ain't. It's black. What do you want to know the color of his hair for?

CASSIE
Silver daddy - usually means grey.

LIA
No, the candy kind.

CASSIE
Sugar daddy?!

LIA
Yep. One of those.

CASSIE
Is he married?

LIA
Not any more. We live together.

CASSIE
Lovely. What's his name?

LIA
Narek.

CASSIE
Oh - he's not American?

LIA
He's Armenian. Like the Kardashians.

CASSIE
Is he an Instagram star?

LIA
No. He hates having his photo taken and social media. It makes him crazy.

Lia looks serious for a beat.

CASSIE
(concerned)
Is he nice?

LIA
Yeah, real sweet - emotional sometimes - hot headed but I've learned how to handle him.

(smiles confidently)
I've told him all about you and your situation here. He said you can stay with us as long as you want and can even work for him.

CASSIE

Lia, I...

LIA

Cass, hear me out. We have the sweetest little guest house you can stay in right next to our pool. There's nothing we can't give you. My life's perfect, I just need a real friend.

CASSIE

Lia - you've got loads of friends.

LIA

Not real ones. Just the girls I take dance classes with and they're always rushing off somewhere. I really wish you'd come. You could at least give it a try.

CASSIE

I want to come but I've almost saved up enough to go to Beauty School and I can't leave my mom until she's stable.

LIA

I heard she was doing great.

CASSIE

She is, but it's still early days.

LIA

What happens if she's never stable? You could be stuck here forever.

CASSIE

She's getting better. Well, as long as she doesn't see my Dad and that woman...

LIA

Pam?!

CASSIE

Yep. I can't even say her name.

LIA

Shitty thing to do to your best friend though, take her husband..

CASSIE

She hates all women now. Thinks they're out to take something from her.

LIA

But Cass, what about you, your life? You can't put yours on hold to look after her.

CASSIE

I'm not. Mom's been getting some counseling and going to AA meetings.

(MORE)

CASSIE (CONT'D)

She's really improved. Once she's a year sober, I'm going to move out and go to beauty school, maybe even in Los Angeles.

LIA

(raises an eyebrow)

Cass, how many times have you said that! Come on - I hope she gets better, but do you honestly think she will?

CASSIE

She hasn't tried to kill herself in a few months.

LIA

It's a cry for attention. She doesn't mean it.

CASSIE

I know but one day if I'm not around...

LIA

Oh honey - if she really wants to she'd find a way, but she doesn't. She does it to control you. Sorry to be so harsh but this has been going on for so long.

CASSIE

I know. I know. Let's change the subject. I'm so happy to see you.

(they hug)

Have you been back to Alabama? You know you sound more Southern than you used to.

LIA

(sounding even more Southern)

Narek finds it charming. He loved Daisy Duke as a kid. Obsessed with the Dukes of Hazard. Of course, I'm no Jessica Simpson but I'm more than happy to oblige!

They laugh.

ZOOM IN ON:

EXT. A HOUSE ON BROWN STREET. VACAVILLE

Run down with a dirt front yard. Old beat up car in the driveway.

INT. CASSIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

There's a picture of Cassie in the lounge.

CLOSE UP OF: PHOTOGRAPH OF CASSIE'S MOTHER in her beauty queen days, young and pretty.

Then we see her mother as she currently is: old, fat, badly dyed hair, smudged eye make up, mean and drunk. She pulls out a pill bottle from her purse and opens it - throws it down - empty. Pulls out a vodka bottle from under the sofa cushion.

EXT. CASSIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cassie and Lia sit in the car outside Cassie's house. They're smoking a joint. Cassie throws the joint butt out of the car window and looks at her house.

CASSIE

All looks quiet on the western front.
I better go in. I'd invite you in to say
hi, but you never know what kind of mood
she's in.

LIA

Send her my love.

CASSIE

I won't, it may start her on the 'you can
never trust your best friend' pity-logue.

Lia nods knowingly.

Cassie gets out of the car and walks towards the house. Her face changes as she gets nearer the front door. Bracing herself. Not knowing what to expect.

INT. CASSIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

Cassie walks in to the sitting room and sees her mother lying on the floor next to an empty bottle of vodka and an empty bottle of pills.

CASSIE

Oh no, not again. Mom - wake up, Mom.

She tries to shake her mother awake. Picks up the phone and calls 911.

CASSIE (INTO THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Ambulance please. 5202 Brown Street.

Cassie's mom stirs and waves her hand.

CASSIE'S MOM

I'm not...stop, I'm all right.

CASSIE (INTO THE PHONE)

Hang on - she's just woke up. Mom, have
you taken pills? Mom?!

Cassie's mom shakes her head no.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Are you sure? Why's the empty bottle?

CASSIE'S MOM

Only one left.

CASSIE (INTO THE PHONE)

I think she's fine. Sorry. It was a false
alarm. Cancel the paramedics. Yes, I'm
sure. Sorry, thanks.

She hangs up and looks at her mom.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
What happened? You were doing so well.

CASSIE'S MOTHER
I saw Pam in the supermarket buying your father's favorite fish.

CASSIE
That's it? That all it took for you to throw seven months sober time out the window? You saw her buying fish!

CASSIE'S MOTHER
(laughs a little)
I know. I know. Cassie, I don't know what to do with all of my feelings. I wanted to hurt her. Ram my shopping cart into her skinny body and...

Cassie's mom pulls a bottle of vodka out from under the cushion and drinks some.

CASSIE
Why didn't you call your sponsor?

CASSIE'S MOTHER
I did. She told me not to drink but I can't seem to help myself. I've only had a few. I haven't eaten anything and it's knocked me clean out.

CASSIE
Oh mom. How about I make you some eggs on toast?

Cassie leaves the room.

Under the coffee table is Cassie's cell phone. It flashes as a text comes through. Her mom picks it up and reads the text from Lia on the screen: 'LEAVING FOR LA AT 4:00 TOMORROW. COME WITH ME?!'.

Cassie's mom stands up and exits into the hall.

CASSIE'S MOTHER
(yelling at Cassie in the kitchen)
Forget it. I'm not hungry. I'm going to bed.

Her mother pulls a half bottle of vodka out of a coat pocket in the hall and takes it upstairs with her.

The house phone rings. Cassie answers it.

CASSIE
Hello?

INT. CRISIS HOT LINE OFFICE - NIGHT

DAVE (attractive, hippy-ish but has the air of a trust funder 20's) is on the phone in a small office.

DAVE
Hello, is Annie there? It's Dave from the
Crisis Hotline.

INT. CASSIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CASSIE
Dave? Hey, it's Cassie. Why are you
calling for my Mom?

DAVE (V.O.)
She called earlier. We're doing a follow
up.

CASSIE
Oh. That's strange. Well, she's fine.
Crisis is over. She's got drunk and has
gone to bed to sleep it off.

DAVE (V.O.)
How are you?

CASSIE
(there's history between them)
Ok. Maybe her AA sponsor said to call
you?

DAVE (V.O.)
Haven't seen you in a long time Cass. You
doing ok?

CASSIE
Fine. Nothing's changed. What are you
doing at the Crisis Hotline.

DAVE (V.O.)
Training to be a therapist. I'm getting
some of my practice hours here.

CASSIE
Please don't tell anyone anything about
my Mom.

DAVE (V.O.)
Of course not. Look, you have my number,
if you need to talk or anything just let
me know. I'm here for you.

CASSIE
Thanks. I have to go. Good night.

Cassie hangs up the house phone and looks at the text on her
cell from Lia that her mother just read.

She writes a reply: 'Sorry, not this time. Mom fell off the wagon again'.

INT. CASSIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - CASSIE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Cassie is asleep in bed. Her mother flings open the bedroom door, she's drunk and steaming with rage. The street lights glowing through the drapes illuminate her mother's face.

She stumbles on a shoe and falls. Cassie opens her eyes and closes them again, she doesn't see her mother on the floor. Next thing she sees is the shoe in her mother's hand coming towards her face as it strikes her.

Cassie is trapped in the bed. Her face is bleeding. She's trying to shield herself from the blows.

CASSIE
Stop mom! Stop!

Her mom keep raining blows on her.

CASSIE'S MOTHER
You can fucking go to LA with Lia...

CASSIE
OW! What? I'm not going...

CASSIE'S MOTHER
Liar! I saw it on your phone.

She pulls Cassie out of her bed by her hair, hitting her head against the wall. Cassie is stunned, then recovers to give her mom a hard push away from her.

Cassie gets out of the room. Her mom is too drunk to chase after her. Mom slumps on to the bed and passes out.

Cassie stumbles down the stairs, blood is pouring from her head. She grabs a towel and presses it against her head and it quickly fills up with blood.

CASSIE
Mom! Mom! Can you help me? I'm really hurt.

Silence.

She picks up the house phone. Her hand is shaking so badly she can't press the numbers. She just hits 'redial'. Dave answers.

DAVE (O.S.)
Crisis Hotline.

CASSIE
Dave. It's Cassie. Help. I'm hurt.

Silence.

DAVE (O.S.)
You OK? Cassie, are you there?

Fade to black.

INT. HOSPITAL - ER. DAY.

Next morning. Cassie is sitting in the waiting room. She's pretty battered and bruised. She has a stitch over her eyebrow and her right arm is bandaged.

Dave enters and goes up to the reception desk.

DAVE
Hi. I've come to pick up Cassie Bevan.

ER RECEPTIONIST
(looking at a form in front of
her)
Cassie Bevan.
(hands it to him)
Sign here.

Cassie sees Dave and walks over to him.

CASSIE
(winces in pain)
Thanks for coming. They wouldn't let me
go without someone picking me up.
Apparently, Uber doesn't count.

DAVE
How are you feeling?

CASSIE
Like I've been in a fight with a very
large, angry bear.
(beat)
How's she doing?

DAVE
The paramedics called the police. They
have to. If you press charges she'll have
to choose jail or rehab.

CASSIE
I can't do that.

They walk out of the hospital and towards the parking lot.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS.

DAVE
Did anyone suggest Al-Anon meetings to
you?

CASSIE
A few, but they don't really tell you how
to stop them drinking.

DAVE

They're supposed to teach you how to take care of yourself. Sometimes you have to let people go for them to recover. Practice tough love. Not be there to pick up the pieces for them.

CASSIE

Yeah, I know.

DAVE

It's not safe to be around your mother. She doesn't have control of herself in a blackout.

They get to his car. Dave has an electric BMW. Cassie raises her eyebrows when she sees it.

CASSIE

Suits you.

DAVE

Thanks. I brought the things you asked for.

He opens the trunk of the car to show her backpack.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Where am I taking you?

CASSIE

I'm going to stay with Lia. She bought me a plane ticket. Could you drop me at the airport?

DAVE

I'm not sure if that's a good idea...

CASSIE

If I don't leave now, I never will. I'm starting to really hate myself - everything.

DAVE

Cassie, you have a concussion, you're not supposed to be left alone...

CASSIE

I won't be alone, there are other people on the flight and then I'll be at Lia's place in LA.

DAVE

I'm not sure...

CASSIE

I don't expect you to take me. Thanks for signing me out. I can get an Uber from here.

She gets out her phone to order an Uber.

DAVE
I'll take you.

Cassie puts her phone away, they get into Dave's car.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Do you need some money?

CASSIE
You offering me your trust fund?

DAVE
Very funny. Do you need some money Cass?

CASSIE
I have enough to get me to Lia's in LA.

DAVE
I'm trying to help you out as a friend!

CASSIE
I don't need your help. I always felt like 'poor little Cassie' around you. We're not at Kindergarten anymore, so there's no need to give me your lunch.

DAVE
That was my mother, she insisted I bring a meal for you. She knew your mother didn't feed you...

CASSIE
Stop! Jesus, I...I feel so fucking uncomfortable being your charity case. You'd think working at the Crisis Center would ease your privileged guilt.

Beat.

DAVE
Yes, I want to help people - I'm not ashamed of that.

Dave looks across at her. He has always had a thing for Cassie. Cassie realizes how harsh she sounded.

CASSIE
You'll be a great therapist. I'm just...

DAVE
Scared?

CASSIE
I'm still worked up from last night. Sorry.

Cassie looks at the window at the planes flying into the airport. She can't wait to get out of Vacaville.

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT OF EAST LOS ANGELES FROM THE AIR.

ZOOM IN ON: A SIGN SAYING 'LITTLE ARMENIA' - VERY EARLY MORNING.

ZOOM IN - on large ostentatious house with a wall around it and a long driveway behind ornate gates.

EXT. LIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cassie gets out of a taxi in the driveway. She's in the same clothes she went to the hospital in.

The front door opens and Lia comes out to meet her. She's upset to see Cassie looking so beaten up.

LIA
Fuck Cass. What did she hit you with?

CASSIE
A shoe.

LIA
What?!

CASSIE
A shoe. I'm lucky they were flats, not pumps, or I'd be dead now.

LIA
Finally something to be said for ugly flat shoes. I'm so relieved you're here. Follow me to your new home.

Lia walks around the side of the house towards the guest house - a converted garage.

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

Lia opens the door. There's a pile of cardboard boxes inside.

LIA
You didn't give us time to get it ready for you. Don't worry about those, they're getting picked up later.

CASSIE
What's in them?

LIA
I don't ask questions. Narek doesn't like it.

CASSIE
What does he do?

LIA
That's a question. I'm not entirely sure, but my guess is he lends money to people who can't get credit.

(MORE)

LIA (CONT'D)

Sometimes he brings me home presents that have had a previous owner. I think that's the sort of stuff that's in these boxes. He sends them home to Armenia.

Cassie looks worried.

LIA (CONT'D)

He's not a criminal, if that's what you're thinking. He's not completely law abiding but he isn't like the Mafia.

(beat)

I can't wait for you to meet him. He's going to love you!

CASSIE

I'll probably be staying for just a couple of weeks.

LIA

Isn't this little guest house adorable? And it's all yours. You can stay as long as you like.

Lia looks at Cassie's bruised arms and face.

LIA (CONT'D)

I've seen you with a few bruises but never this bad. Does she know what's she done to you?

CASSIE

She doesn't remember doing it. She was in a blackout drunk. I try to help her but ...

Cassie starts to cry. Lia puts her arms gently round her.

LIA

You're not helping her by being a punching bag for her bad temper. Don't you even think about going back there. She can't hurt you here Cass, you're safe. You don't ever have to go back to her or Vacaville. You have no idea how much better life is away from that place.

Cassie smiles a little.

CASSIE

Oh! I can imagine!

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - MORNING

Cassie is asleep in bed. NAREK (Early 40's with a criminal edge) comes in with a breakfast tray. Cassie wakes with a start.

NAREK

What you all jumpy about? I'm not going to harm you with a breakfast tray in my hands now am I?

CASSIE

Are you Narek?

NAREK

Yep. God! Look at you, poor thing. Your mother did that to you? Crazy. That looks like it really hurts.

Cassie looks away. Embarrassed and tearful. Narek puts down the tray.

NAREK (CONT'D)

(kindly)

Listen, don't worry about a thing now. Lia's told me everything. You're welcome to stay as long as you want.

Cassie looks tearful.

NAREK.

Come on, stop hiding under that blanket and sit up. Have some coffee at least.

CASSIE

Where's Lia?

NAREK

Gone shopping. She said you needed some 'basic female things'.

CASSIE

Basic female things?! It's going to be interesting to see what she comes back with.

They laugh.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Thanks for letting me come here.

NAREK

You can stay as long as you like. Lia needs a girlfriend around. Do you have any money?

CASSIE

I can give you something towards the rent.

Narek laughs.

NAREK

I don't want your money. Maybe when you're better you can do some work for me.

CASSIE
I don't even know what you do.

NAREK
All kinds of things. You're very pretty under those bruises. You could be very useful to us.

CASSIE
You sound like you're going to pimp me out. Don't think you'll get much for me looking like this!

NAREK
(laughs)
Good God no. Lia told me about your sense of humor. I need a smart girl to do some, you know, public relations work for me. You could deal with our more sophisticated clients.

CASSIE
(suspiciously)
Just what exactly would it involve?

NAREK
Don't think about it now. Get better, then we'll talk.

Narek pulls out a roll of cash.

NAREK (CONT'D)
I don't want you going back to that crazy lady. Here, go get yourself new stuff. Get your hair done. Treat yourself. If you need any more let me know.

CASSIE
I... I can't take your money.

NAREK
Think of it as an advance.

CASSIE
Advance on what?

NAREK
Your salary.

CASSIE
My salary?

NAREK
(charming)
Take it. I don't like it when people say no to me. Saying 'yes' makes me happy!

He puts the money down next to her. Pulls the bedclothes up around her and gently tucks her in.

NAREK (CONT'D)

Now Princess, get some rest. I'm leaving for a few weeks, to go to Armenia. I hope you're still here when I get back. Please, my home is your home!

He kisses her in a fatherly manner on the forehead and leaves the room.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LIA'S BEDROOM - A FEW WEEKS LATER

Cassie is doing Lia's make-up in Lia's bedroom in the main house. Cassie's bruises are almost gone.

CASSIE

What do you think?

LIA

I look radishing.

CASSIE

(laughs)

Radish is a vegetable. You saying I made you look like a vegetable?

LIA

A very edible one. You're really good at doing make-up.

CASSIE

I still want to go to beauty school. I was thinking of looking into some in LA. I could get a job and...

LIA

You'll make much more money working for Narek. He asked me if you were ready?

CASSIE

To do what?

LIA

I'm going to show you.

MONTAGE

EXT/INT. MERCEDES CAR. LOS ANGELES

Cassie and Lia back out of the driveway in her Mercedes, music blaring. Cassie is driving.

Cassie and Lia drive down to Santa Monica on the freeway.

Cassie and Lia park outside a Massage Parlor.

EXT/INT. MASSAGE PARLOR. LOS ANGELES

They knock on the back door and a tough looking, fat woman with a lot of make-up and red dyed hair comes to the door. She greets Lia like a long lost friend.

Inside the parlor, the woman counts out small bills of money, puts them in a bag and gives it to Lia.

EXT/INT. MERCEDES CAR. LOS ANGELES

Lia and Cassie are in the car - the roof goes up. Lia counts out five hundred dollars.

LIA
That's our pay. Ten percent. See, there's nothing to it.

EXT/INT. SHOPPING MALL. LOS ANGELES

Lia and Cassie go into clothes shops and try on/buy clothes.

Armed with shopping bags they go to the car.

EXT/INT. MERCEDES CAR. LOS ANGELES

Inside the car they change into new, tight, sexy designer T-shirts.

INT. EXPENSIVE LOOKING RESTAURANT. LOS ANGELES

They sit in an up market restaurant eating dinner. Lia's ordered pink champagne to drink. Cassie looks around the restaurant and is very impressed. She's never had anything like this before.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT. LOS ANGELES

Lia and Cassie leave the restaurant and see a limo full of priests pulling out of a church next door. They both count to three then flash their bras at them - killing themselves laughing.

INT/EXT. LIA'S MERCEDES - FREEWAY - NIGHT

Cassie drives home with Lia asleep in the back of the car.

Cassie sees the police in the rearview mirror, she thinks they are going to pull her over and they start sounding the siren. A bad omen. She realizes it's for another car and crosses herself.

LIA
(waking up)
What's that about?

CASSIE
What?

LIA
The Catholic cross thing.

CASSIE
I thought the police were going to stop us.

LIA
That shit stops it?
(crosses herself as a joke)

CASSIE
It worked. Want to drive?

LIA
No, I'm tired and I don't have my
driving glasses.

CASSIE
Since when did you wear glasses?

LIA
For ages. I have a stigmata in my
right eye.

CASSIE
A STIGMATA! We should alert the
Vatican, there is a miracle amongst
us!

LIA
Astigmatism! Ha ha.

Pause.

CASSIE
Lia? This money we collect for Narek?

LIA
Yeah?

CASSIE
So what happens if they can't pay him
back?

LIA
He gets creative.

CASSIE
Creative?

LIA
(uncomfortable)
Look, he helps poor people in his
community start businesses. The Armenians
have had a very rough time. He takes a
huge risk and sometimes he loses. He's
not a bad guy Cass - you'll see.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Cassie is doing Lia's make-up and hair. She carefully puts on false eyelashes on Lia and then applies white shiny eyeshadow and finishes with brown eyeliner.

LIA
You're good. I look amazing. I don't
think you need to go to beauty school.

CASSIE

There's a lot of stuff I don't know.

LIA

So why haven't you gone yet?

CASSIE

Money. There's tons of equipment you have to buy, on top of tuition fees. I've almost saved it all up a couple of times and then something happens with mom. She doesn't pay the rent or I have to pay towards her rehab...

LIA

That's not right. That breaks my heart. That woman needs to grow up and take care of herself. Maybe if she doesn't have you to fall back on she'll take more responsibility for herself.

CASSIE

You're right, I know you're right but what can I do?

(looks in the mirror at Lia)

I'm finished.

LIA

Wow! I can't wait for Narek to see me. He loves it when I dress up for him.

Lia takes some clear silicon pads out of the drawer in front of her and shoves them into her bra.

LIA (CONT'D)

Think these make my boobs big enough?

CASSIE

Big enough for what?

LIA

(laughing)

To be noticed!

CASSIE

They'll be spotted a mile away.

LIA

Or these, they're mainly for night wear...

Stuffs these huge silicon pads in her bra which make her look ridiculous.

LIA (CONT'D)

Yeah! Perfect!

Lia offers the ones she's just taken out to Cassie. Cassie shakes her head no.

LIA (CONT'D)
Is that what you're wearing?

Cassie looks nice but modest and with only a little make-up.

LIA (CONT'D)
Follow me to the treasure trove.

Lia takes Cassie into a walk-in closet in the bedroom and shows her a fake door. The door opens into a small hidden store room. Inside are paintings, antiques and suitcases. Lia starts opening up the suitcases. They're full of bundles of dollar bills. Then she opens one which has dresses inside.

LIA (CONT'D)
Look through those.

Cassie starts pulling out the dresses.

CASSIE
Wow! Dolce & Gabbana. Armani. Alexander
McQueen! These real or fakes?

LIA
Does it matter?

Cassie checks the size of a dress and takes off her dress and tries it on.

CASSIE
It's a little too tight.

LIA
No - you look perfect! You need more make-up, your hair up, elegant and sexy! We're going somewhere very classy. Want some money?

Lia offers Cassie a chunk of dollar bills. Cassie thinks she's joking and laughs but Lia puts the money straight into her purse. Cassie goes to take the money out again.

LIA (CONT'D)
Narek never counts it.

CASSIE
I can't, Lia.

She takes the roll of money back out and throws it back in the suitcase.

INT. NOBU RESTAURANT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT.

Cassie, Lia and Narek are sitting at a table. KARIN (40's, very attractive) walks in. He's powerful, commanding, sophisticated, oozing charm and charisma - but has an aura of something dangerous and criminal about him. The whole restaurant notices him.

NAREK
Here he is.

Narek gets up and goes to meet Karin.

NAREK (CONT'D)
Karin, what took you so long?

KARIN
(whispers)
The wife. Yak, yak, yak. I couldn't
get out the door. Who's that with Lia?

NAREK
That's our new girl, Cassie. I think
you'll like her.

KARIN
I already do!

ZOOM IN ON: Cassie looking at the menu.

LIA
Have you made your mind up yet?

CASSIE
It's all so expensive.

LIA
I'm having yellowtail sashimi and then
Kobe beef.

CASSIE
That's the most expensive on the menu.

LIA
Cassie, have whatever you want. We can
afford it. Why don't I just order you the
same as me?

CASSIE
I've never eaten yellow tails or Kobe
beef before - I don't know if I'll like
it.

LIA
If you don't, we'll order you something
else. Cass, we're rich. Relax. Enjoy
yourself. God knows you deserve it.

Narek and Karin walk over to the table.

NAREK
Cassie, this is Karin.

KARIN
Nice to meet you. Welcome to the
family.

CASSIE
Thank you.

Cassie can't take her eyes off him. He smiles and sits down opposite her and picks up the menu. The waiter rushes over with Karin's favorite drink and makes a fuss over him.

INT. NOBU RESTAURANT. LADIES' REST ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lia and Cassie are sitting in the lavish rest room re-applying their make-up in the mirror.

LIA
See, aren't you glad you came? Don't you love this place?

CASSIE
Beats Chuck E. Cheese.

They both have their glasses of champagne with them. Lia pulls out a vial of cocaine and snorts some. She offers some to Cassie who shakes her head no. Then Lia tips it into Cassie's drink when she's not looking.

LIA
Karin is really hot isn't he?

CASSIE
Not what I expected.

LIA
I knew you'd like him. He asked me to speak to you. He wants you do something for him.

CASSIE
What?

LIA
They need to have a little talk with someone...

CASSIE
(slowly)
That owes them money?

LIA
Yeah! They don't want to embarrass him by approaching him in public. All you have to do is take him to a quiet place...

CASSIE
Quiet place? Are they going to kill him?

LIA
(laughs)
No, he's no use to them dead. They just want to put some mental pressure on him.

CASSIE
(thinks)
It's too weird. I'm not doing it, Lia.

LIA

Cass, there's nothing to it. I'd do it except the guy knows me. No harm will come to you, I promise!

CASSIE

But what about the guy, are they going to hurt him?

LIA

(laughs)

Heavens no! They're not the Mafia.

CASSIE

Lia I really don't...

LIA

Cassie, I wouldn't ask you to do something I wouldn't do myself.

Cassie's not convinced. Lia changes her tone.

LIA (CONT'D)

Narek says he's already paid you for it. That you owe him. You could just give the money back to him!

Cassie looks scared.

CASSIE

Oh, I paid off my credit card bill with it. I was just paying such high interest rates. I'm going to start looking for a job then I can pay him back.

LIA

(laughs)

Cassie. You don't need to. Just do this favor for Narek and it's paid off! Look, it's not a big deal, honestly! Please Cass, for me, there's really nothing to it.

CASSIE

What do I have to do?

LIA

Karin will tell you. Don't look so worried. I would never put my Cass in any danger. Trust me. It's easy as making peach pie.

CASSIE

Yeah? I'm a terrible cook!

LIA

It'll be fun. A little adventure.

Cassie is reluctant, but gives in and nods that she'll do it. Lia puts more cocaine in Cassie's drink when she's not looking.

INT. SAME RESTAURANT - BACK AT THE DINNER TABLE - NIGHT.

Lia, Cassie, Karin and Narek have finished their meal and the waiter is clearing the table.

KARIN

Cassie, have you always lived in Vacaville?

CASSIE

Born and bred.

LIA

Did you know Vacaville means 'cow town'?

NAREK

(thinking he's funny)
Does that mean you are cows?!

CASSIE

(dryly)
Moo moo.

Narek thinks this is hilarious.

LIA

I come from the same place as Daisy Duke - Alabama.

CASSIE

Yes, but you lived in Vacaville long enough to be an honorary cow!

Lia kicks her under the table.

LIA

Narek likes Daisy Duke.

Narek smiles at her and Karin leans over to whisper something to Narek.

Lia gives Cassie a little wink. Cassie rolls her eyes.

KARIN

So Cassie, Narek tells me you're going to help us out. Thank you. I had a girl lined up for tonight but she had a family emergency. It's nothing to worry about. I'm going to take you to this private club. You drive don't you?

CASSIE

Yeah but I...

There's a moment when it looks like Cassie is going to say no.

NAREK

(whispers in Cassie's ear)
Do what Karin asks you.

KARIN

(to Cassie)

Don't look so worried. You talk and laugh with him. Then ask him if he wants to go to your place. Tell him you live in Glendale Hills. Take him in your car. Drive down the road that I tell you. You'll see me in my car, I'll flash my lights, you pull over and swap cars with me. Easy. Nothing more to it. Leave your car door open.

CASSIE

What will I say to him?

KARIN

Cassie, I'm going to tell you exactly what to say when you see him..

Karin takes Cassie's arm, they walk out of the restaurant looking like a couple.

INT. PRIVATE CLUB IN GLENDALE - SAME NIGHT.

The club is 'cheap rich'. Men in expensive suits with over made-up glamor girls up hanging off their arms.

Cassie is hiding behind a menu. She sneaks a look at a photograph of a guy on her phone. She looks around the room and sees the guy in a booth, on his own, talking on his cell phone.

Cassie walks over to his booth. He immediately starts checking her out.

REUBEN is middle aged, overweight with badly dyed hair combed over his bald spot. Wearing a loud suit and open necked shirt exposing a mat of hair and a large gold cross. Cassie walks over with a bottle of champagne in a bucket and a glass.

Reuben finishes his phone call.

CASSIE

(shyly)

Excuse me. My date stood me up. I ordered this and I wondered if you'd like it? I'm going home and it seems a shame to waste it.

He looks her up and down.

REUBEN

Do I have to pay for it?

CASSIE

No. It's paid for.

REUBEN

Why don't you share it with me. Come on, sit down.

CASSIE
Well if you're sure I'm not intruding?

REUBEN
Are you kidding? A beautiful lady with
free champagne. Please - sit down.

CASSIE
I'm Lucy.

REUBEN
Nice to meet you Lucy. I'm Reuben.

Cassie puts the champagne on the table and sits down next to
Reuben who can't believe his luck.

INT/EXT. CAR - KARIN AND NAREK - SAME NIGHT.

Narek and Karin are driving.

NAREK
Stop worrying. Cassie won't let us
down.

KARIN
I hope you're right. I've been trying
to nail this fucking worm, Reuben for
weeks. He's got more senses than a
cat. He knows when I'm coming after
him.

NAREK
Well this time we'll get him. I hate
getting heavy but what should we do if
he doesn't - agree?

KARIN
Torch the fucker's car. Tell him, his
house is next but we don't want to get
the police's attention...

NAREK
Don't worry, he's not legal here. He's
not going to want them poking around in
his fake identity.

Narek gestures to the trees at the edge of the road.

NAREK (CONT'D)
Karin, you gonna need to pull off
here, this is where I told her to meet
us.

KARIN
By the way, where did you find Cassie?

NAREK
She and Lia grew up together.

KARIN
What about her parents?

NAREK

Don't worry, no one gives a fuck about her. She's perfect.

Karin nods in agreement.

INT. PRIVATE CLUB IN GLENDALE - SAME

Reuben has his arm round Cassie, and is kissing her neck and mauling her.

CASSIE

Want to go to my place?

REUBEN

Sure.

INT/EXT. CAR HEADING TOWARDS THE GLENDALE HILLS - CONTINUOUS

Cassie is driving. Reuben can't believe his luck! He keeps trying to get his hand in her crotch.

She sees Karin's car tucked under some trees. At the side of the road flashing his lights and she starts to slow down.

REUBEN

What are we slowing down for?

CASSIE

I don't think I can wait!

REUBEN

What? We're gonna to do it in the car?

CASSIE

Yeah! Why not? See if that seat goes all the way back.

REUBEN

Well, you'll have to get on top. I have a back problem.

Cassie stops the car. Reuben reclines the seat and undoes his pants.

CASSIE

Sorry. I've just got to take a quick pee.

REUBEN

What? Where you going?

CASSIE

Be right back. Take your pants off.

Cassie gets out of the car and out of Reuben's sight line.

Karin steps out from the trees and gets into the car next to Reuben, slams the door and drives off.

Narek opens his car door for Cassie. She gets into Narek's car and he spins it around to drive off in the opposite direction. She turns to look back. Narek grabs her face roughly with his hand.

NAREK
Nothing for you to see.

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Knock at the door. Cassie is sleeping but she eventually hears it.

CASSIE
Who is it?

KARIN (O.S.)
It's Karin.

Cassie opens the door and Karin comes in with a bottle of champagne.

CASSIE
It's four in the morning. What happened to your...?

The cuff of his shirt has blood on it.

KARIN
Yeah, I cut his dick off, he had it out and raring to go when I jumped in the car. You'd got him very excited.

Karin laughs when he sees her stricken face.

KARIN (CONT'D)
Sorry, it's a joke. Come on, give us a smile.

Cassie's not sure whether to believe him or not.

Karin walks over to the kitchenette and opens the closets to find some glasses. He opens the champagne. Pours the drinks. His hand is shaking and his knuckles are grazed and recently bruised.

KARIN (CONT'D)
Let's toast to your first job well done. Congratulations.

They toast, but Cassie doesn't drink hers.

KARIN (CONT'D)
Don't look so worried. So tell me - how was he?

CASSIE
(scared, but tries to make the situation lighter)
Like a very horny gorilla!

Karin laughs.

KARIN
You're not drinking?

CASSIE
Sorry Karin, I need to sleep.

KARIN
Look at you, like a little girl. Come on, let's go to bed.

Karin starts to undress, much to Cassie's surprise.

CASSIE
Karin, what are you doing?

KARIN
What's it look like?

CASSIE
Karin, you're bleeding?

There's a slash mark under his arm pit. He's wasn't aware of it either.

KARIN
Shit.

Karin walks over to the mirror and looks at it.

KARIN (CONT'D)
(sees her frightened face)
I got caught in some barbed wire, when I had to jump over a fence to catch the fucker.

CASSIE
Is he...?

KARIN
Why you so worried about him for? What about me?

Cassie's survival instinct kicks in and she becomes cautious.

CASSIE
Let me get something to bathe it with. Have you had a tetanus shot recently? Barbed wire can be very...

KARIN
(likes the attention)
Don't worry about that. Why don't you have a drink with me and I'll show you I'm not such a bad guy...

Goes to kiss her.

CASSIE
Karin, don't you have a wife?

He stops trying to kiss her.

KARIN
Yeah! So?

CASSIE
You're a very attractive man, Karin.
But I don't mess around with married
men.

KARIN
You what?

CASSIE
I don't have affairs with married men.

KARIN
Oh! I don't want to have an affair, I
just want to...

CASSIE
Fuck me?

KARIN
Is that what you think I want from
you? I want more than that. Look...
(stumbles on his words)
I'll go, if that's what you really
want?

Cassie nods, yes.

CASSIE
(cautiously)
I think it would be best...

He kisses her very gently on the cheek and leaves. Cassie
closes the door and leans against it.

She listens to him walking to his car. Start up the engine
and drive off. She sighs with relief.

She takes out her cell phone and phones the Crisis Hotline.

LADY (O.S.)
Crisis Hotline.

CASSIE
Hi, is Dave there please?

LADY (O.S.)
Can I take your phone number?

CASSIE
Is Dave there?

LADY (O.S.)
I need your phone number. Have you
taken anything? Or bleeding?

Cassie laughs.

CASSIE
I'm not about to kill myself.
I just want to speak to Dave.

LADY (O.S.)
You can talk to me.

CASSIE
Lady, nothing in your phone manner makes
me want to talk to you. Bye.

Cassie hangs up. There's a knock on her door and Lia walks
in wearing her night robe.

LIA
You all right, Cass?

CASSIE
Yeah! I think so. Am I the only person
around here who likes to sleep at
night?!

LIA
Sleep in the day, the night's more
interesting! I wanted to check on you.
How was your first job? Wasn't it like
the best fun?! I love the thrill and
danger...

CASSIE
(serious)
Did that guy Reuben get hurt?

LIA
(annoyed that Cassie didn't enjoy
it)
It's none of your business, Cass. I
thought you'd enjoy it. Bit of excitement
in your dull life.

CASSIE
You mean a pleasant change from the usual
suicidal entertainment provided by own my
mother?! Did they kill him?

LIA
No. I don't think so. They don't usually.
Dead men can't pay debts. Who cares? The
guy's a pig!

CASSIE
But what did he do? What did he owe them?
Lia come on tell me...I'm serious. I
won't do another...

LIA

If you have to know, he sold Karin some very expensive stolen earrings. He gave them to his mom. Who tried to insure them and they were registered as stolen. The police kept them and questioned Karin.

CASSIE

She has no idea what her son does for...

LIA

Obviously fucking not! Karin wanted his money back.

CASSIE

But that doesn't sound fair.

LIA

He was assured they were the guy's family heirlooms.

CASSIE

So they killed him for a pair of earrings?

LIA

NO! They don't kill people. They took his car and...

CASSIE

And what? Come on, if I'm involved in this I need to know what I was used for?

Lia looks really annoyed.

LIA

Stop! Enough! None of your damn business, Cassie! You've kind of ruined my surprise for you with all your annoying questioning but...

Lia pulls out a roll of cash from her bath robe.

LIA (CONT'D)

From Narek. A bonus. Look, just do as they ask and keep your mouth shut and there's plenty more where this came from.

She puts it down in front of Cassie.

CASSIE

(looks at the money)
That's insane!

LIA

No. It's just different. If you don't want it, I'll take it.

Cassie looks at the money and then at Lia. Lia goes to pick it back up again.

CASSIE

Leave it.

LIA

No 'thank you? You're an amazing friend!'

CASSIE

Thank you - amazing friend!

Lia points at her cheek for Cassie to give her a kiss on it. Cassie pecks her cheek and Lia gives her a hug. Cassie strains a smile and hugs Lia back.

As soon as Lia has gone, she quickly puts together the few things she does have and leaves.

CLOSE UP: Cassie ordering an Uber to Burbank airport on her cell phone.

EXT/INT. CASSIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - LATE MORNING

Cassie walks up to the front door of her mom's house in Vacaville. She rings the doorbell several times. On the door is an eviction notice. She pulls it off and goes inside the house.

It's a mess. She looks around for her mother.

CASSIE

Mom! Mom - are you home? Hello?

She heads upstairs to her bedroom.

INT. CASSIE'S MOM'S HOUSE - CASSIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cassie opens the door to her closet - there are none of her clothes inside. It's empty. She opens up her chest of drawers. The same. She pulls out a box from under her bed with 'Beauty School Supplies' written on it. It's empty. She's confused. Upset.

The bedroom door is pushed open suddenly. She's not expecting to see her mother standing there - drunk.

CASSIE'S MOM

What are you doing here?! Get out!

CASSIE

Where are my things? What have you done with my things?

Cassie reaches up to a high shelf in her bedroom. On it is a shoe box, she takes it down. Her passport is in there.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Where's the cash that was in here? You left my passport, how nice!

CASSIE'S MOM

I didn't see it in there.

CASSIE

Just grabbed the cash and headed straight down to the Bevmo. Where are my things?

CASSIE'S MOM

What I couldn't sell, I threw in the trash.

CASSIE

What? How could you! Why?

CASSIE'S MOM

I needed to pay the bills. I was behind with the rent.

CASSIE

Dad gives you the money for the rent. You've spent it all on alcohol. Why should I pay it?

CASSIE'S MOM

(like a defensive child)
It's not my fault that alcohol is so expensive.

Cassie shakes her head in disbelief.

Cassie looks around at her bedroom, at all the empty drawers and the torn empty box for beauty school. Tears come to her eyes as she stoops down to pick up a broken comb from her kit. She stands up again and her face becomes strong. Her mother is blocking the doorway.

CASSIE

I need to get past.

CASSIE'S MOM

(angry)
You're just like your father. You're going to leave me just like he did.

CASSIE

What do you honestly expect? You've sucked the life from both of us.

Her mom suddenly slaps Cassie across the face. Cassie is shocked and then pushes her mother really hard away from the doorway - runs out and down the stairs.

CASSIE'S MOM

Cassie, Cassie come back. If you don't come back here I'll...

Cassie stops on the stairs.

CASSIE

You'll what, mom? Beat me, sell my things, strangle my ambitions, make every time I walk into the house a living nightmare? What could you do that's so terrible that you haven't already done?

CASSIE'S MOM
I'll kill myself.

CASSIE
(angry)
Go ahead. I don't care. I can't - I'm worn out. Go back to rehab or die, that's your choice. I can't help you any more. I never could.

CASSIE'S MOM
Your dad's done this to you. He's made you hate me.

CASSIE
You've made me hate you, all on your own.

CASSIE'S MOM
Are you staying with Lia? You gonna be a whore just like her?! Don't think I don't know what that girl's up to in LA.

Cassie's thrown for a moment then regains her composure.

CASSIE
You've wasted your life - you're not getting mine too.

Cassie walks out the front door and closes it firmly behind her.

EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE - VACAVILLE - LATE AFTERNOON

Cassie is standing on the doorstep of an expensive house, ringing the bell. She's upset and anxious.

Dave answers the door.

CASSIE
Hey. Thanks. Sorry about this, I couldn't get a flight to LA tonight.

DAVE
Welcome. Come in.

Cassie walks in, looking around the hallway.

CASSIE
I don't think I've been here since your fifteenth birthday party.

DAVE
Sixteenth.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - LATER

They've finished eating their dinner and they're drinking wine. They're both a little drunk.

DAVE

They definitely sound like criminals to me.

CASSIE

Well I don't think they're like 'criminal-criminals'! They're money lenders. Who's going to give you a loan if you have zero credit history? Or you're new in the country? They fulfill a need.

DAVE

So what do they do if you don't pay up?

CASSIE

Lia says 'a dead man can't pay his debts'. So I don't think they kill people. But something...not nice happened to that guy. There was a lot of blood.

(beat)

But going back into my mom's house...that felt worse than anything out...

Cassie's eyes well up with tears and she turns away.

DAVE

You're welcome to stay here as long as you like.

CASSIE

Thanks.

They look at each other in the eyes. He fills up her wine glass.

DAVE

So, I have to ask you this. Do you remember the night of my birthday - you know - us - in the tree house?

Cassie blushes and smiles.

CASSIE

Of course. I had the biggest crush on you and your trust fund!

DAVE

Just my money hey?

CASSIE

Well, your parents were still alive then. That didn't come out right. Sorry. I've always liked you, but figured that you could do better than 'little orphan Annie' me.

DAVE

A very pretty, attractive and smart 'little orphan Annie'. Neither of us are responsible for who are parents - were.

CASSIE

(beat)
Is it weird still living here?

DAVE

I've redecorated it since they died.

CASSIE

It looks different. More modern.
(beat)
You know I can't drive past that lake
without thinking of their car...

A dark cloud sweeps across Dave's face. Cassie reaches out and touches his hand. He takes it in his and holds it for a second.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Do you still have the tree house?

DAVE

Yes, and that memory.

CASSIE

(blushes)
I don't really remember...

Dave leans in to kiss her. She lets him.

DAVE

Is this ringing any bells?

CASSIE

A few, but I think they're more the bells
of warning than...

DAVE

I've always liked you Cass. A lot.

He kisses her again. She kisses him back.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Cassie wakes up next to Dave. She smiles at Dave's sleepy face. He wakes up and looks at her. Cassie goes to get out of bed.

CASSIE

I should...

DAVE

Cassie - stay. I'd really like you stay.

CASSIE

I'm just going to the bathroom. I'll be
right back.

DAVE

(laughs)
It's taken so long for us - you know for
this to happen. I don't want it to end.

Cassie tenderly kisses him. He pulls her gently back into bed.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN/HALLWAY - LATER THAT MORNING

The front door opens and a wealthy looking young woman, LYNSEY enters wheeling a suitcase.

LYNSEY
(yells)
David! David!?

Just then Cassie emerges from the kitchen in Dave's bathrobe. Lynsey stares at her.

LYNSEY (CONT'D)
Who are you?

Dave comes out of the bedroom, looks downstairs and sees Lynsey.

LYNSEY (CONT'D)
What's going on? Who is this?

DAVE
She's...hmm...this is Cassie.

Lynsey walks out and slams the front door.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cassie is gathering up her clothes, Dave comes in.

CASSIE
I take it she wasn't the cleaning lady!

DAVE
She's supposed to be at Harvard.
I...she...

CASSIE
(shocked)
Wow! I really had you wrong.

DAVE
Cassie - I...

CASSIE
What?

DAVE
I've had a crush on you since the fifth grade. I couldn't not...

CASSIE
Have me when you got the opportunity?
Great, I'm happy you got to fulfill your fantasy at last.

DAVE

Cassie I really care for you. It's not like...

CASSIE

Somewhere in my deluded brain I thought I could rely on you. That you were a decent guy. I'm a terrible judge of character. I've got to get out of here.

Cassie goes into the bathroom and locks the door. We hear the shower running.

DAVE

(through the door)

I can explain. Our relationship is over but I wanted to leave it until she'd taken her exams to tell her.

No reply. The shower stops running.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Look, I can give you some money for a hotel.

CASSIE (O.S.)

(through the door)

I don't want your money!

DAVE

(through the door)

There's a woman's shelter...

CASSIE

(through the door)

Fuck off!

EXT. LIA'S HOUSE - LATE MORNING

An Uber pulls up in front of Lia's house in LA. Cassie gets out.

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - LATE MORNING

Cassie walks back in. Lia is sitting on her bed looking as if she's been crying. She starts crying again when she sees Cassie walk in.

CASSIE

Hey.

LIA

(sobbing)

I thought you'd gone.

CASSIE

I had. Went back home - big mistake.

Cassie sits on the bed.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Why are you crying?

LIA
I need you here with me Cass. I get so
lonely.

Lia keeps sobbing and Cassie hugs her.

LIA (CONT'D)
So you're going to stay?

Cassie doesn't answer but Lia sobs like a manipulative child.

CASSIE
(hesitates)
Well, maybe for a little bit.

LIA
Yay! I promise I'll make it fun for you.
You'll see. You'll never want to leave.
Let's get dressed up and go somewhere
tonight!

INT. RESTAURANT - EAST LA - DAY

Cassie and Lia are sitting at a table in the corner.

LIA
I heard you said no to Karin...

CASSIE
(surprised)
Really?

LIA
(laughing)
Don't think any woman's done that to
him before. Don't you think he's hot?

CASSIE
Yeah! But I barely know him and it's
hard to find a man sexy with blood all
over his shirt.

LIA
You said 'NO' to sex with Karin! Well,
you really missed out. Don't ever tell
Narek, but Karin and I used to - you
know. He's insanely good. He was like
this skilled, wild animal who threw me
on the bed and...

They are approached by SHARON. She's a shy valley girl.

SHARON
Lia, I hope you don't mind me
interrupting but I wondered if I could
just have a little talk with you?

LIA

You look all shaky. Why don't you sit down?

Sharon sits down.

SHARON

Yeah, no, well, see it's like this: I need some help. It's Tony. We've split up and he's got a new girlfriend and to be honest with you - she can have him, I'm glad to be rid of him.

Sharon's eyes fill with tears.

LIA

What's wrong Shar? Come on, you can tell me.

SHARON

Well, see... I'm pregnant Lia, and I don't want to have an abortion at a free clinic.

LIA

I've heard they're...

SHARON

I've had one before, by the time they do it it's like giving birth to the thing. I just want it gone now before I start getting sentimental about it.

LIA

I don't know where else...

SHARON

I found this private place in Burbank. They keep you in overnight - but I don't have enough, I need an extra thousand dollars. I don't have that kind of money or the time to save.

Lia nods - she gets it.

SHARON (CONT'D)

They could take me tomorrow but...

LIA

You want me to ask Narek for the money?

SHARON

I don't want him to know who I am or what for. Tony can go all 'holy Catholic' when it suits him. I'd rather he didn't get involved. They know each other, so Narek can't know.

LIA
I can't ask him to lend you money and not
say who or why.

Cassie touches Lia's arm and whispers something in her ear.
Lia nods.

CASSIE
Do you have a job?

SHARON
I'm a dog groomer. I don't get paid until
the end of the month - it's three weeks
until I get paid.

CASSIE
I can lend you the money.

SHARON
(face lights up)
Thank you.
(eyes filled with tears)
I could give you it all when I'm paid, or
if you have a dog I could give you a
grooming plan - the top to tail spa
treatment.

Cassie laughs.

CASSIE
No pets. Lia do you need a grooming plan?

LIA
Ha ha.

CASSIE
Can you pay me back in four weeks and
there's \$100 interest on top? Is that
doable?

SHARON
Yeah! That would be great. I could do
that.

CASSIE
Meet me in the restroom. I'll get you to
sign something.

Lia watches Cassie and Sharon go to the restroom together.
She doesn't like it.

EXT/INT. LIA'S MERCEDES - LATER

Lia and Cassie are driving in Lia's car.

LIA
Don't let Narek find out.

CASSIE

It's my money. The money he gave me. Why shouldn't we help the poor like Narek does? Especially other women. That's a good thing isn't it?

LIA

Of course it is. Narek can just get weird about lending money to women. They don't always pay him back and he says it gets 'messy'.

CASSIE

But all those women we collected money off?

LIA

They all have businesses they run for Narek. It's not the same.

CASSIE

Come on Lia, it could happen to us. I want to help her out. Besides we'd make a bit of extra money. Just like Narek does.

LIA

(beat)
Ok. It's your money.

INT. REUBEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Reuben is lying in bed. He can barely move from all his injuries. He's been badly hurt by Narek and Karin.

His wife ELAINE (40's) enters. She's hard as nails and dresses in loud, fake designer labels.

ELAINE

Reuben, I need a car. Who did this to you? Tell me - I'll get my brothers to...

REUBEN

(can hardly speak)
Elaine, shut up, just fucking get out...

ELAINE

What?

REUBEN

Go. You're making me crazy. Don't make trouble. Leave.

He closes his eyes.

ELAINE

Reuben! Reuben! Wake up!

(beat)
I know you're pretending, Reuben. If that's the way you want to play it, fine.

She storms out.

INT. RESTAURANT - EAST LA - DAY.

Lia and Cassie are having lunch when Sharon comes in with Elaine.

LIA
Hey Shar.

SHARON
This is my cousin, Elaine. I'm not sure if you've met? Lia and Cassie.

ELAINE
Nice to meet you ladies.

Cassie and Lia both nod hello to her.

LIA
Could I see you alone for minute Shar?

ELAINE
Oh, I need the ladies room. Don't mind me.

Lia points to the restroom. Elaine goes off. Sharon gets an envelope out of her bag and slips it to Cassie.

SHARON
Here you go Cassie. It's all there.

CASSIE
How you feeling, everything go all right?

SHARON
Yeah, well, I was upset but I feel better now. Relieved. Thanks.
(looks uncomfortable)
Listen, I hope you don't mind me asking, but Elaine needs a car. She needs it to run her kids around.

LIA
Karin and Narek don't do cars anymore.

SHARON
Oh no, I mean she needs a loan for a car.

LIA
Why doesn't her husband talk to Karin and Narek?

Elaine comes back. She heard what Lia has said.

ELAINE
I'm divorcing the miserable fucker.
I'd rather keep it amongst us women.

CASSIE
Can't you get a lease?

ELAINE

You can't keep a car nice with kids. I do too many miles for a lease. I've got some insurance money coming for the car, not sure if it will be enough. I have some money from my cake making but I need another ten.

LIA

Thousand? Ten thousand?

ELAINE

(nods yes)
Cash. It would really help me out Lia. It's a nightmare trying to get the kids anywhere without one.

LIA

OK.

Cassie glares at her.

CASSIE

LIA! Lia, we need to have a little talk.

Cassie pulls Lia into the ladies rest room.

INT. RESTAURANT - LADIES REST ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CASSIE

Where are we going to get ten thousand dollars from?

LIA

Narek's stash closet. He never counts it. We'll just borrow it, charge her interest, then put it back. We'll keep the profit.

CASSIE

Do you know her?

LIA

Elaine's Sharon cousin. Sharon I love, she used to dance at Cheetahs with me. Only girl that was nice to me when I moved here. I trust her.

CASSIE

What happens if she doesn't pay us back?

LIA

I know she won't be a problem!

CASSIE

What will Narek do to you if he finds out?

LIA

We'll make sure he doesn't. Look, Sharon's worked out. Why not Elaine?! Come on. Think about it. Once the word gets out, the women will come to us for their loans. We'll be business women.

(thinks - then)

How much interest shall we charge?

CASSIE

Let's start with fifty. She'll probably knock us down...

Lia agrees.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Lia and Cassie go back to the table with Sharon and Elaine.

LIA

I'll give you what you ask for. We want fifty per cent interest back.

ELAINE

That's too greedy.

CASSIE

It's an unsecured loan. What do you expect? It's not much considering we don't do a credit check.

Lia gives Cassie a 'what the fuck' look.

LIA

If you don't like our terms, then go elsewhere!

CASSIE

Well, she could borrow less?

ELAINE

Come on Lia, I can't get a decent car for less than ten thousand.

LIA

Listen Elaine, you're not going to buy a kosher car anyway. Something from out of state with new license plates. I know the game.

ELAINE

I've got that lump sum coming from my insurance. They said it should only be a few weeks and you can have it all back in one go. Thirty five per cent. It's a short term loan.

CASSIE

Forty per cent.

ELAINE
That's too much.

CASSIE
Wait for your insurance money then.

ELAINE
But there's a car I want...

LIA
You're really starting to get on my last nerve.

ELAINE
When can I have it?

LIA
Friday.

ELAINE
But I've seen the car I want. I might lose it if I don't get it soon.

CASSIE
We'll give you thousand now. Put it down as a deposit. But you have to agree to our terms - forty percent.

ELAINE
Yeah! Thanks Cassie. Deal.

Cassie looks at her calendar on her phone.

CASSIE
So, I'm giving you until this date to give us the money back. Make a note of it. We don't hear from you, we'll hunt you down.

Lia gives Elaine the money. Elaine isn't sure if Cassie is joking.

ELAINE
Well, I won't be going very far.
(half laughs)
Okay, done deal.

LIA
Thanks girls, and if you have any other friends that need a loan do send them our way but keep it on the down low!

CASSIE
Yeah, secret - only women we can trust.

Elaine and Sharon leave.

LIA
We make a good team.

CASSIE

Yeah. Let's get a glass of Prosecco to celebrate our new business venture.

LIA

Honey - champagne. And let's make it a bottle.

MONTAGE

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A young woman holding a baby is borrowing money from Lia and Cassie.

EXT. CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND - ECHO PARK. DAY

Lia and Cassie are sitting on a bench handing money over to an African American woman and Sharon coming and giving them another installment of her debt.

INT. HAIRDRESSERS - DAY

A couple of Chinese ladies come in and hand them a paper bag of money.

EXT/INT LIA'S MERCEDES - LOS ANGELES. NIGHT

Lia and Cassie slow down, the window rolls down as an sophisticated older woman pulls up next to them in her car and hands them money.

EXT. RODEO DRIVE - LOS ANGELES. DAY

Lia and Cassie shopping on Rodeo Drive laden with bags of stuff they've bought from various designer shops.

INT. CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON - DAY

THE BOSS (late 50's), Armenian-American. Has a sense of authority and danger about him. He's sitting in his cell, marking the days off on a calendar.

A prison warden comes to the door of his cell.

WARDEN

You've got visitors?

THE BOSS

Who?

WARDEN

Narek and Karin.

THE BOSS

About fucking time.

Rises from his bunk to walk out with the warden.

INT. PRISON VISITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Karin, Narek and The Boss are all sitting at a table with a prison guard walking around.

THE BOSS

When I get out I'm not sticking around.
I'm going to be incognito. I want to pick
up my belongings from your house Narek,
then I'm sailing away. I want everything
of 'mine' ready.

He looks at them as if he's speaking in code. They nod.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - NAREK'S STASH ROOM/LIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Lia and Cassie are in the money closet in Lia's house.
They're counting out some money.

CASSIE

Are you keeping track of what we've taken
from here?

LIA

Hmm. I have a rough idea of what we've
borrowed. A guess - I don't know - about
ten, fifteen...?

CASSIE

It's less than that. I've given you eight
thousand to put back.

LIA

(looks uncomfortable)
Yeah - I took some housekeeping out of
that so I'm not sure of the total. It
does look a lot less.

Looking at the box of cash.

CASSIE

Elaine hasn't paid us back a dime. It's
been almost a month. Fuck. We should get
that back before they notice. What should
we do?

LIA

'Get creative', as Narek says.

CASSIE

We should go and talk to her.

Then they hear a car pull up in the driveway. They panic -
Lia runs to look who it is.

LIA

Fucking hell Cassie, hurry up it's
Narek - he's back! Get out of there
now!

Cassie gets the money and rushes out of the room leaving the light on.

They run into Lia's bedroom and Cassie picks up a pair of flat irons and pretends to be styling Lia's hair.

Narek comes up the stairs, looks at them and goes straight to the stash room - comes back out again a few seconds later. The girls are chatting and laughing and he looks at them. They stop.

LIA (CONT'D)
Hi babes. Cassie's doing my hair straight. What do you think?

NAREK
(looks the hair tong plug)
You may want to plug those in.

LIA
Oh lord! I'm dumb as a box of rocks. That's why it ain't working so good, Cassie.

They both feign laughter. Narek ignores them.

NAREK
(serious)
Lia, I have a friend, an important friend coming to dinner tomorrow night. Cook for him. He likes roast lamb and raspberry Pavlova.

LIA
Can't we go to Carasol?

NAREK
Has to be here. Cassie will you help her?

CASSIE
Of course.

Gestures towards the stash room.

NAREK
Has Karin been in that room?

LIA
Not today.

NAREK
Other days?

LIA
Yeah, but I couldn't tell you which ones.

He looks worried and leaves.

CASSIE
(whispers)
We better go and see Elaine.

LIA
How are we going to make her pay? We could get a gun.

CASSIE
No. No.

LIA
Maybe just a baseball bat. You could hold her and I could...

CASSIE
I'll think of something - be 'creative'.

Lia smiles.

EXT. ELAINE'S HOUSE - BURBANK - DAY

Cassie stands outside Elaine's front door and looks at her watch - it's 2:30pm.

The door opens and out comes Elaine. Cassie stands in her way.

CASSIE
I want my money, Elaine. Fourteen thousand, five hundred. Now please!

ELAINE
Look Cassie, I don't have your money today and I've got to go and get my kids from school.

CASSIE
I've been told that you got your insurance money, Elaine. The same person who was with you the day you cashed the check. Now stop playing dumb.

ELAINE
I don't have it.

CASSIE
How are your kids, Elaine?

ELAINE
What the fuck do you care? I've got to go and get them from school, they'll be waiting.

Elaine goes to push past her and go to the front door. Cassie puts her arm across the hall and stops her.

CASSIE
Your kids aren't outside school.

ELAINE
What do you mean?

Cassie speed dials Lia on her cellphone.

CASSIE
 (into phone)
 It's me. Put one of the kids on.

We hear a muffled little girl's voice at the other end of the phone.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)
 Hi mommy.

Elaine is horrified.

CASSIE
 Get me the money, Elaine!

ELAINE
 Don't hurt them.

CASSIE
 Oh no! We were just going to take them on a long trip and leave them somewhere. Topanga Canyon Park is nice at sunset. Lots of wild, hungry animals prowling around in the dark.

ELAINE
 You wouldn't...

CASSIE
 Best not take the risk then, hey? It's not me, it's Lia. You really don't want to get on her cruel side.

ELAINE
 But...

CASSIE
 I'm not joking Elaine. Get the money now. Before Lia does something stupid with your kids. She's not good with children!

ELAINE
 She wouldn't dare!

CASSIE
 She's driving to Topanga to play hide and seek with them now.

Elaine's hands are shaking. She starts to cry. She gets the money from a shoe box under the sink in the kitchen and hands it to Cassie.

ELAINE
 Now call Lia and bring my kids back here, now.

CASSIE
 The sooner you count out the money, the quicker it will happen. Count it out in front of me. I don't trust you.
 (MORE)

CASSIE (CONT'D)

You do want your kids back in one piece?

(firmly)

Count the fucking money, Elaine!

Elaine tips the money onto the floor and starts to count it.

ELAINE

One hundred, two, three, four...

INT/EXT. CAR - 3RD STREET. BURBANK - CONTINUOUS

Lia is sitting in a car with Elaine's LITTLE GIRL AND BOY. Lia is telling them a story, they're eating ice cream, perfectly happy.

Lia gets a text, after reading it, she gets the kids out of the car.

EXT. ELAINE'S HOUSE - BURBANK - CONTINUOUS

Lia takes the kids to the door of Elaine's house and rings the doorbell. Out comes Cassie looking pleased with herself. Elaine runs out and grabs her kids.

LIA

I take it by the smirk on your face you got it.

CASSIE

Yeah, I felt like a real bitch though. Can't believe what I'm turning into.

LIA

Can't believe she told Shar that we couldn't make her pay. I hate the fucking trashy old hag. I would have smacked her one with a baseball bat.

CASSIE

That's not very creative or ladylike. We don't have to resort to violence.

LIA

I can't believe what a cold blooded mastermind you are!

CASSIE

It's from all those years of dealing with my drunken mother.

Lia takes the bag of money from Lia.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

I'm relieved we've got this back. I think Narek is getting suspicious.

LIA
He's not. I have to stop at the Farmer's Market and get a leg of lamb for dinner tonight.

CASSIE
I'm exhausted after all that. Do you mind if I don't come with you?

LIA
Suit yourself.

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - LATER

Lia's standing in Cassie's guest house with a pile of designer shopping bags. Cassie's lying on the bed.

LIA
Wait til you see this!

She shows her the latest Prada bag.

LIA (CONT'D)
Limited edition! Prada, of course! Only one in the store! I just love this dusky pink color, so I bought a dress to go with it. It's very tight and I won't be able to eat if I wear it but...

CASSIE
Is this out of Elaine's money?

LIA
Hum. Yeah. Some of it.

CASSIE
Some of it! Jesus, Lia I'd say it was all of it.

LIA
I don't count it when I spend. I don't have to.

CASSIE
We have to put that money back.

LIA
Oh! I'll just tell Narek I went shopping.

CASSIE
Yes but the point is we just borrowed it and...

LIA
Was I supposed to ask you if it was okay to spend my boyfriend's money? It was out of the profit - well maybe I borrowed a little from Narek but I'll tell him.

CASSIE
How much is left?

LIA
 (annoyed)
 Enough. Damn it Cassie! You've taken all
 the fun out of showing you my new things.

Cassie's shocked by the remark and changes her tune. Lia
 throws a bunch of cash on the bed.

LIA (CONT'D)
 There. Happy. You go put it back.

Lia picks up her bags and heads for the door.

CASSIE
 Lia - don't be angry with me. We're
 business partners and we should question
 each other.

LIA
 Well, this ain't a business meeting.

CASSIE
 Lia, come on, I'm sorry. Show me what you
 bought. I want to see that Prada bag

Lia stops and looks at Cassie.

LIA
 Do you mean that?

CASSIE
 Hell yeah! Limited edition, and the only
 one in the shop.

Lia proudly pulls the handbag out of the bag.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
 Wow! That is a beauty! When you get tired
 of it please give it to me.

LIA
 I will never get tired of this...

CASSIE
 Bequeath it to me then.

LIA
 What?

CASSIE
 When you die, leave it to me.

LIA
 (laughs)
 Fine. It's yours then.

CASSIE
 Better keep it in good condition.

Lia proudly admires the bag again. Cassie looks at all the
 bags of Lia's shopping and looks worried.

EXT. SIDE GATE OF CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONAL PRISON - DUSK

SOUND OF prison gates clanking.

Karin is sitting in his black Range Rover.

Out of the prison gate comes what looks like a middle aged lady in a floral dress with shoulder length black hair and large sunglasses. She walks towards the car with large, unlady like strides and as she gets closer, we realize it's The Boss. He gets into the Range Rover.

INT. RANGE ROVER - DUSK

Karin and Narek drive with The Boss in the back seat.

KARIN

Like the new look.

THE BOSS

News reporters are around the front.
Don't want my face out there interfering
with my permanent vacation plans.

NAREK

What?

THE BOSS

Mexico. By boat. Hopefully before word
gets around that I'm out.

KARIN

(camp voice)

Your secret is safe with me, honey pie!

Karin blows him a kiss. They all laugh.

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - EARLY EVENING.

Cassie is styling Lia's hair for her. She picks up a hair piece the same color as Lia's hair and adds it to Lia's hair. Cassie stands back and Lia admires herself in the mirror.

LIA

Wow! I love it! You're so good. It makes
my hair look so long.

Cassie puts lipstick on herself and looks in the mirror next to Lia. She looks more elegant than Lia who's in a skin tight dress.

LIA (CONT'D)

We both look so amazing!

There's a little knock on the guest house door, Karin and Narek come in. Lia's does a little twirl to show off her new dress and hair.

LIA (CONT'D)

Hi baby. What do you think?

NAREK
Wow! Beautiful.

KARIN
You both look very nice.

NAREK
Lia, don't let the dinner burn.

LIA
Charming. Don't worry it's all fine.

Karin clears his throat and looks very business like.

KARIN
So girls, it's like this - the man
who's coming for dinner, The Boss,
he's very important to us.

LIA
Why?

CASSIE
I think the clue's in the name.

LIA
The Boss? Narek calls me that sometimes.

NAREK
(laughing)
He really is The Boss.

KARIN
He's our backer, so to speak. He set us
up in business. We owe him, big time.

NAREK
Everything we have - it's because of him.
He's the head of our business family.
He's going to need some help adjusting,
and we want to be right there for him.

CASSIE
Adjusting from what?

LIA
Prison.

CASSIE
Prison?!

KARIN
Yup, He's been in there a few years
and we need to do whatever it takes to
make him happy.

CASSIE
What?

NAREK

Well, it's like this girls. The Boss has been away for six years and he's been denied the comfort of a woman.

LIA

He might prefer men by now.

KARIN

Very funny. We want him to have a good time tonight and we thought that you two could put on a little show for him.

CASSIE

I take it you don't mean show tunes?

NAREK

That's right.

KARIN

Something that involves less clothing.

LIA

You want us to put on a strip show for him?

CASSIE

I'm not having sex with him. If this is where this is going?

KARIN

Not necessarily with him, with each other. Come on, it's not like you two aren't friends.

Cassie and Lia look at each other with disbelief.

CASSIE

Well, we're not quite that good friends!

NAREK

Just pretend you are.

CASSIE

How do you pretend to have sex?

NAREK

You know - like wrestlers pretend to wrestle.

LIA

Narek, I'm your girlfriend.

NAREK

Lia, you were a stripper when I met you!

LIA
I was an exotic dancer, Narek. Not a stripper.

NAREK
What's this difference - you take your clothes off and waggle your ass.

LIA
There is a difference. I'm a trained dancer.

NAREK
(patronising Lia)
Yeah! Yeah! Whatever!

LIA
I'm not doing it.

CASSIE
It sounds too weird.

KARIN
(applying pressure)
Look girls, I didn't want it to come to this, but you owe us...

CASSIE
For what?

KARIN
Oh, I think you know.
(he looks from one to the other)
Been quite busy with our money.

Suddenly anger flashes across Karin's face. Lia goes to say something and then stops when Cassie catches her eye.

NAREK
Do you have something to tell us Lia?

LIA
I thought you wouldn't mind if it was all put back. You didn't seem to be using it.

NAREK
You what? Thought I wouldn't mind if you took over twenty fucking thousand dollars?!

Narek looks like he's about to explode.

KARIN
(clears his throat in a calm voice)
The money you took belonged to The Boss, which is why we never used it. If you said you borrowed it then you can just give it back to us. End of problem.

Cassie and Lia nervously look at each other.

NAREK

Do you have it? Do you? Answer me Lia!
Where is it? How much is left?

LIA

Cassie?

Cassie looks at Lia.

CASSIE

I don't know. Lia?

NAREK

You fucking what?

LIA

I went shopping for tonight, bought a few
clothes, and Cassie's got the rest.

CASSIE

I can go and get it.

Lia won't look at her. Karin takes charge.

KARIN

Narek wanted to fire you both but I said,
'no they're good girls and I'm sure
they'll help us out when we need it'.

Cassie and Lia look scared.

LIA

(scared, nods in agreement)
Sorry, Narek. I'm really sorry. I
didn't know about The Boss. If I'd
known it was someone else's I wouldn't
have...

Cassie keeps very quiet.

NAREK

Cassie's leading you astray. You're not
that clever.

Lia nods in agreement with Narek. Cassie can't believe what a
traitor she is.

KARIN

You're turning out to be quite a dark
horse, Cassie. Think yourself quite
the little business woman according to
Elaine.

CASSIE

Who?

NAREK

Elaine. You know whose wife she is, don't
you?

CASSIE
Elaine? I don't...

NAREK
Don't pull that crap with me. You know her and you also know the husband that owed us money because you helped to connect us...

CASSIE
Reuben?

NAREK
Yeah! Not so fucking smart now, are you? We have to go to extreme but necessary lengths to get money back off him and then you lend it back to his wife!

Lia and Cassie are shocked.

CASSIE
But...but - I - we got it back.

NAREK
Then spent it.

Lia stands next to Narek and nods in agreement looking at Cassie as she's completely to blame.

CASSIE
I wouldn't have touched it unless Lia said it was...

LIA
It was Cassie's idea. She started it.

Cassie is stunned but tries to defend herself.

CASSIE
I used my money to start with and Lia - you knew Elaine was Reuben's wife. You didn't say anything.

LIA
I thought she was more likely to pay it back.

Cassie looks scared. Narek gets in her face.

NAREK
You'll do whatever I tell you to do. If The Boss wants to fuck you. You bend over and take it, if he...

Karin steps in.

KARIN
Now, now Narek. This has to be done in the right spirit. I deal with Cassie. Let Lia get back to cooking the dinner. He's looking forward to that lamb...

Lia quickly goes to the kitchen. Narek gives Cassie a threatening look and goes upstairs.

Cassie looks terrified. Karin stands close to Cassie and puts his arm reassuringly around her. They speak quietly to each other.

KARIN (CONT'D)

You OK?

CASSIE

You can't honestly expect me to just fuck that man?

KARIN

(whispering)

Listen, play this right and Lia will probably do all the nasty stuff. She loves it!

CASSIE

Why don't you just take him to see a hooker?

KARIN

He doesn't want anyone to know he's here.

CASSIE

Oh! Can't you bring one here? I'm sure they do home visits.

KARIN

We need to be discreet.

CASSIE

You can't find a discreet hooker that does home visits?

KARIN

(laughs)

Not on short notice.

(beat)

Look, you're smart. You're different. I don't like lending to women because it gets ugly collecting from them when they don't pay, but if you want to, then great, but if they don't - then you owe me!

CASSIE

I had the money to pay you back, it's just that Lia...

KARIN

Don't think I don't see Lia dipping into that money. I do. Keep it away from her. Be very careful around Narek, don't get cute with him. He needs a lot of... managing. Come and talk to me if there's any problem.

CASSIE

Good to know - sorry I haven't...

KARIN

(puts his hands reassuringly on
her shoulders)

Enough said. Now, I need you and Lia to do everything you can to keep The Boss happy. We've got to break it to him that we're short because you girls went on a shopping trip. So please - help me get him in a good mood.

Cassie nods her head in agreement but then looks scared.

EXT. LIA'S HOUSE - LATER

Karin and Narek are talking intensely.

NAREK

(angry whisper)

I can't get that kind of cash at short notice.

KARIN

And you haven't taken anything?

NAREK

(shouting)

You don't trust me now?! How do I know you haven't been helping yourself?? Lia said she's seen you in there.

There's a beat when they both look at each other.

KARIN

(he's not taking this from Narek)
That money was fine until Cassie came here. She's going to pay us back. Look, I'll see if I can persuade him it's better to send the rest later. Now, let's get the girls to put him in a good mood first. Come on, lighten up - have a bump.

Pulls out a vial of cocaine.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Cassie and Lia are in the kitchen. Cassie is pouring them each a large vodka. She hands Lia a glass.

CASSIE

You can take all those stuff back to Prada tomorrow.

LIA

They're not serious. Narek's just stressed.

CASSIE

Take them back! You're not throwing me under the bus and not taking some responsibility.

LIA

(sulking)

It was your idea to lend money not mine. I just told the truth. Just do what Narek wants and he'll be fine. I know him. He makes a big deal out of something to get his own way. All he wants, is you to be nice to The Boss.

Cassie drinks the shot of vodka and then pours another one.

CASSIE

I can't - it's too weird.

LIA

Cassie, don't look so worried, we'll just put on a little show and then give him a hand job. The poor fucker's been in prison, it's not going to take much to make him launch his rocket.

Cassie smiles. Lia pours another shot of vodka. They knock them back.

LIA (CONT'D)

Want me to show you a few moves?

Lia swivels around grinding her ass and pokes out her breasts. Cassie copies her and they laugh.

CASSIE

It's going to be hard not to laugh.

LIA

Just so you know, I don't have those kind of feelings towards you.

CASSIE

Yeah. Likewise.

They both look worried.

LIA

I need more drugs to do this.

Cassie looks scared.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - LATE NIGHT.

Music and candles provide the atmosphere. Narek, Karin, Lia, Cassie and The Boss converge on a huge leather sofa. A large glass coffee table is nearby, on which sits a pile of cocaine and champagne on ice.

Lia and Cassie are drugged up and giggly.

Karin shoots them a 'take this seriously' look.

NAREK
Want another line, Boss?

Narek offers The Boss a mirror with cocaine on it.

THE BOSS
You know what I'd really like to try
is that Ecstasy they were all raving
about in prison.

NAREK
I've got some upstairs. I've never
tried it though.

KARIN
Me and the wife tried it one night.

NAREK
And?

KARIN
I still couldn't fuck her!

They all laugh.

NAREK
I'll go get some E's.

Narek leaves the room and comes back shortly with a bag of pills. He dims the lights even further and lights more candles.

CASSIE
What? We having a seance now?

NAREK
Just setting the mood.

Narek turns up the music and puts a porno film on the large TV. He hands everyone an Ecstasy pill. They all take one.

Karin signals to Narek and they both leave the room. Karin gestures to the girls to start.

KARIN
The girls wanted to do a little welcome
home show for you.

THE BOSS
Lamb, Pavlova, now a show!

He claps his hands, sits right back on the couch and undoes his trouser belt and fly.

Calvin Harris blares through the speakers and Lia starts to do some of her stripper moves. She pulls Cassie up to dance with her.

THE BOSS (CONT'D)
No clothes. Off with the clothes.

Lia starts to take off her clothes and Cassie's. They undress each other.

THE BOSS (CONT'D)
(to Lia)
Let me see your ass!

CASSIE
This music's too upbeat. I need something slower?

THE BOSS
Come on girls, I don't care what music you play. Kiss each other. Grab her ass.

Lia and Cassie start doing this sexy little dance together. Every now and again they giggle.

The Boss gets in between them and Lia takes over - she's all over him. Cassie slowly moves away from them.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Narek and Karin are watching through a crack in the door.

NAREK
No, no, Cassie's the one who's supposed to be doing him. I'm going to fucking kill her in a minute if she doesn't stop.
(whispers)
LIA! LIA!

KARIN
What are you doing? Don't spoil it.

NAREK
I can't let her...

KARIN
You wanna try and stop him?! He hasn't had a woman in nine years.

NAREK
(hisses through the door)
Cassie! Cassie!

He gestures to her to get involved. She doesn't move. Narek goes to enter the room but Karin grabs him.

KARIN
(whispering)
Get out, get out, you cannot fuck this up. Go. Leave. I'll get her out of there. Go Narek, get out of here. You can't fuck it up for us.

Karin pushes Narek out of the front door.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Karin's POV - Lia is having a great time having sex with The Boss.

Karin goes back to the door and gestures to Cassie to come out.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cassie leaves the room and sees Narek pulling out of the driveway in his car through the window.

Karin gently takes Cassie by the hand and takes her upstairs to Lia and Narek's bedroom.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LIA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Karin and Cassie are in the bedroom.

KARIN

Feel that E working yet?

Cassie looks completely stoned. She nods, yes. Karin goes over to her and kisses her full on the mouth. They move to the bed.

KARIN (CONT'D)

I've been looking forward to doing this to you.

He gets on top of her. Cassie wraps herself around him. They have sex.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LIA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Cassie wakes up on Lia's bed. Lia is asleep next to her. She gets up and tip toes down through the house. The Boss has passed out on the sofa, she puts a blanket over him and goes out the back door to her guest house. There's no sign of Karin and Narek.

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Cassie is asleep on her bed. Lia comes banging and running through the door to the guest house. She's dressed and has a couple of bags and a backpack with her.

LIA

(shakes Cassie)
Wake up. Get up. Get up.

CASSIE

What?

LIA

(throwing clothes at her)
Come on we have to go. NOW!

She throws some clothes at Cassie.

CASSIE

What? Oh - my head hurts. OK. What's going on?

LIA

(panicking)

Karin just called me. He says to get out. Narek's going crazy over me fucking The Boss, he's saying he's going kill me. He's on his way home. Quick Cassie - run - run!

Lia grabs Cassie's purse and her phone and drags her out of the door.

EXT. LIA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

They run out into the yard. Lia throws her bags onto the back seat and jumps into her car - her hands are shaking too much to turn the ignition key.

CASSIE

Let me drive.

Lia jumps out of the car and Cassie comes around to get in the driving seat.

Lia runs around the car just as Narek drives into the driveway.

She slips, and he jumps out of the car and grabs Lia by her hair and drags her along the ground. Lia screams as her hair piece comes off in his hand and she jumps up. He grabs her again and presses her up against the wall.

LIA

Please don't Narek. Please. I love you. I did it for you...

He punches her in stomach and then he presses his thumbs into her eyes.

NAREK

Shut up you whore. I saw you enjoying it - you...

Cassie presses hard on the car horn. Narek spins around. He throws Lia hard to the ground and goes after Cassie.

NAREK (CONT'D)

Your fault! This is your fault! Come here Cassie, you fucking...

Just as he reaches her she sprays perfume into his eyes through the open car window.

NAREK (CONT'D)

Aaargggh!

He thrashes around with fists flying like a mad man.

Cassie gets out of the car, gets behind Narek and kicks him hard in his lower back - his legs buckle and he falls down.

CASSIE

Get in the car! Lia - get in the car!

Cassie pushes Lia into the back of the car and jumps in the driving seat.

She reverses out of the driveway. Just as she is about to pull out, Narek smashes the back window with a huge plant pot. The girls scream as Cassie pulls the car around and drives down the road.

Narek's eyes are red and his face bleeding from falling over. He's looking in his pocket for his car keys - can't find them.

Cassie looks in the rearview mirror - sees Lia's bloody face.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

You okay?

LIA

No. I'm bleeding from my...

Cassie looks at the back seat and there is blood everywhere.

CASSIE

I'm taking you to the ER. Do you know where the nearest one is?

LIA

No...

Lia passes out. Cassie pulls over and calls 911.

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE - SAME MORNING.

Lia is unconscious with an oxygen mask on.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC

Miss, do you know what happened?

CASSIE

I don't, I didn't see.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC

I'm not the police. I'm just trying to find out what her injuries might be. She's losing a lot of blood.

CASSIE

She had a fight - with her boyfriend.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC

She maybe bleeding heavily internally. Is she pregnant?

CASSIE

Not that I know of. Why?

She sees the pool of blood on the stretcher beneath Lia's thighs.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC
Has she taken any drugs? I need to know how to treat her right now. DO YOU WANT YOUR FRIEND TO DIE?

Cassie starts to cry.

CASSIE
Yes, cocaine and Ecstasy - champagne.

MALE PARAMEDIC
When? How long ago do you think?

CASSIE
Last night - about ten o'clock!

Male Paramedic feels her pulse.

MALE PARAMEDIC
How much?

FEMALE PARAMEDIC
We can't treat her if we don't know what's in her system.

CASSIE
A lot. Two ecstasy pills - maybe half a gram of coke. Loads of champagne. But she's used to it. Will she be okay?

MALE PARAMEDIC
It's hard to know yet. They'll need to examine her.

Cassie looks at Lia and tears pour out of her eyes.

FADE OUT with the sound of the ambulance siren as they drive off.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - DAY

Cassie is walking around her new apartment. It's small, old and dark.

The landlady, MEI (Asian American) comes in. She's in her 60's and hard looking.

CASSIE
It kind of smells!

MEI
Open up the window. Two months rent. Due now.

Mei holds out her hand. Cassie opens a drawer and gives her the cash.

MEI (CONT'D)
 (looking around the apartment)
 Don't you have any stuff to move in?

CASSIE
 I don't have much.

MEI
 (suspicious)
 Don't bring any trouble here.

CASSIE
 I won't. I just left my boyfriend.

MEI
 I don't want him here.

CASSIE
 (looking upset)
 He's got someone else. That's why I left him.

MEI
 (flicker of compassion)
 OK. You're very young, you'll be fine.
 Many more boyfriends, then you'll give up like me.
 (she laughs)
 I need help downstairs if you want a job.

CASSIE
 Yes, I do. Great. Thank you.

Mei leaves. Cassie throws the bags in the hall closet. Cassie walks around the apartment. Opening cupboards and pulling out drawers.

She unpacks. A towel, soap, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrush in the tiny bathroom with a tiny, miserable looking shower. She turns it on and water spurts lamely out. She feels the water. She groans and turns it off again.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Cassie walks into the ward to see Lia, she's carrying flowers. Lia is lying in bed.

She winces as she sees how badly bruised Lia's face is. There is a plaster strip across her nose and one above her eyebrow. Both eyes are badly bruised.

CASSIE
 (shows Lia the flowers)
 Hey sweetie. I couldn't remember whether it was flowers or cats you were allergic to.

LIA
 Doesn't matter, I can hardly breathe let alone sneeze. Like my new nose?

CASSIE
Yeah, really, it's a definite improvement. Get your lips done too?

LIA
You're so full of shit.

CASSIE
Jesus, Lia what do you want me to say? You look like death. How's..?

LIA
I didn't know I was even pregnant. I'm always missing my periods.

CASSIE
You say that so calmly.

LIA
I don't have the energy to add the emotion.

Lia breaks down. Cassie reaches out and holds Lia's hand.

CASSIE
Lia, I'll look after you, you're my best friend. I don't know what I would have done without you. We'll get you through this!

LIA
Have you spoken to him?

CASSIE
No. To Karin. He said not to contact or go near Narek, he still wants to kill us.

LIA
He doesn't mean it.

CASSIE
Lia, listen to yourself. He nearly killed you. You almost bled to death.

LIA
Narek doesn't mean it, he's got bad impulse control. My dad's the same. They just don't have a filter. You learn to deal with it.

CASSIE
Well your mom didn't. She just went out for a packet of cigarettes and never came back!

LIA
I made that up. That's what she told me to tell my daddy. She had a whole getaway planned.

(MORE)

LIA (CONT'D)

Hid a little cash each week from the housekeeping and left in the clothes she was wearing with her passport in her purse.

CASSIE

She must have been very scared...

LIA

My daddy would find her whenever she left and he threatened to kill her if she did it again.

CASSIE

Shit Lia. You were so young. How could she leave you with him and not tell you where she was?

LIA

She's in Canada. I was supposed to join her. She sent a plane ticket to our teacher, Miss Simpkins.

(Cassie nods - knows who she means)

I was so embarrassed, she knew all about the beatings and said she'd take me to the airport but I couldn't give my daddy a clue that I was going. I just had to get my passport and go. I ripped that plane ticket up right in front of her.

CASSIE

Why didn't you go?

LIA

My mom was always so strict and uptight. I preferred my daddy - he let me do what I wanted and he's fun when he's not angry. Besides, your home life was just as shitty, I thought it was normal. Although I don't think my daddy became as bad as your mom. No offense.

CASSIE

I think Narek is worse than your dad. Your dad loves you. Narek's sort of...

LIA

No Cassie, you don't understand him. I know...I know Narek loves me.

CASSIE

This is not love, Lia.

LIA

It's how Narek shows it.

Lia lies back and thinks.

LIA (CONT'D)

He hasn't even called me to see how I am.

CASSIE

Karin said he's gone to Armenia.

LIA

Oh! He still went.

(looks hurt. Then sits up)

I need my stuff. If Narek is away, go and get my clothes. I have my keys. In there...

Lia points to her bag.

LIA (CONT'D)

(thinks)

I need more clothes, underwear, my good hair irons and my Prada trainers. Anything designer label, bring it!

INT. LIA'S GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT.

SOUND OF A CELL PHONE RINGING as Cassie comes through the door holding a couple of cardboard boxes.

Cassie puts down the boxes and puts the few belongings she has into one of the boxes. She also takes the money she had hidden under the corner of the carpet.

EXT. LIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cassie leaves the guest house, locks the door and puts her stuff into the trunk of Lia's car.

Cassie walks to the main house, rings the doorbell. She waits - nobody comes.

She puts the key in the lock and goes in.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE UP of Cassie NOT LOCKING the door behind her.

The house is a mess - hasn't been cleaned up since the night The Boss was there.

CASSIE

Hello? Hello?!

No reply. Cassie walks upstairs to Lia's room. She takes a suitcase out of the closet and starts going through the drawers full of Lia's stuff and pouring them in there.

She walks into the bathroom and sees the big jacuzzi bath. She looks at it and wants to take a bath. She puts the plug in and runs the faucets.

As the bath is running, she finishes packing Lia's stuff. Then she goes into the stash room and looks around. She notices all the money is gone.

EXT/INT. LIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Boss arrives at Lia and Narek's house in a taxi. He has a hat, wig and sunglasses on. He lets himself into the house.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

He goes into the lounge where the 'party' happened. He sees the bag of cocaine on the table. He snorts line after line until it's all gone. He sees a bottle of whisky on a small table and pulls the top off and sits down to swig it straight from the bottle. He's very high!

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - LIA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cassie puts the suitcases by the bedroom door and gets into the bath.

Her phone rings. Dave's name comes up on the screen. She puts him on speaker phone.

CASSIE

Well hello. Didn't think you'd be calling me.

DAVE (O.S.)

Just thought I give you a call and tell you your mom's back in rehab...And I was wondering how you're doing?

CASSIE

Well, I'm just peachy! You?

DAVE (O.S.)

Are you being sarcastic?

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS/STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

The Boss hears talking upstairs. He pulls off his disguise and takes out his gun and slowly walks upstairs.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

CASSIE

Well, things have gotten really crazy here, Dave. I'm back there right now getting Lia and my belongings.

DAVE (O.S.)

Define 'crazy'.

CASSIE

Lia got really badly beaten up by Narek. He's gone away or I wouldn't be at his house.

DAVE (O.S.)

You sound like you're in the bath.

CASSIE

I am. There's a shitty shower at my new place and there's no one here so I...

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE UP of the gun in The Boss's hand as he quietly enters Lia's bedroom.

INT. OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE UP OF - The unlocked door of Lia's bathroom leading off her bedroom.

The Boss looks at the suitcases and he's puzzled. He immediately sees that Cassie is in the bath and he stops to watch her through the crack in the door.

DAVE (O.S.)

I'm surprised you went back. I could have helped you.

CASSIE

I was short on options.

Cassie sees The Boss in the mirror - leaps up in the bath.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Get out of here! Get out!

Cassie goes to slam the bathroom door in The Boss's face. He kicks it open.

CLOSE UP of The Boss's face shows that he's drugged up and turned on by her being naked. The Boss grabs Cassie by her hair.

CLOSE UP of the phone lying on the bathroom floor.

DAVE (O.S.)

Cassie, Cassie are you okay?

CASSIE

(screaming)

Get off me! Get off me!

Cassie puts up a really good fight against The Boss. He smashes her around and she keeps throwing things and landing some really good punches on him. He's such a psychopath he appears to be enjoying it.

INT. DAVE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dave is on his landline talking to the police. On his iPhone he can see the location of where Cassie is.

DAVE

Her name is Cassie Bevan. Young girl - early twenties. Blonde. Slim. She's being attacked as we speak.

(MORE)

DAVE (CONT'D)

The address is 652721 Fountain Ave 90027
I think she's in their guest house ...

INT. EAST LOS ANGELES POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

One police officer taking the call leans over to another (one male and one female).

POLICE OFFICER ONE

That's Narek Vartan's house. Boy, would I
love to book his ass.

POLICE OFFICER TWO

Let's go. Phone for back-up.

They exit.

INT. LIA'S BATHROOM/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cassie is losing the fight against The Boss. She breaks away from him but he leaps across the room and pins her down. As he's trying to pin her down and take his clothes off to rape her, she sees his gun in his trouser belt. To undo his trousers he has to take it out and put it on the floor.

Cassie grabs his gun. She fires the gun at him. It hits him in the leg. He rolls around in agony.

SOUND OF POLICE SIRENS pulling up in the driveway.

EXT. LIA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The two cops go to the guest house. They knock on the door. When there's no reply they look through the windows.

Another two cars pull up outside.

POLICE OFFICER ONE

Her name is Cassie.

POLICE OFFICER TWO

(shouting through)
Cassie. Cassie!

She knocks hard on the door. POLICE OFFICER ONE walks around the back of the house, tries the back door - it's locked. He goes to the front of the house.

POLICE OFFICER ONE

No signs of life.

POLICE OFFICER TWO

What should we do?

POLICE OFFICER ONE

We can't barge in without a warrant.

They hear a window slam around the back of the house.

EXT. BACK OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They run around to see the window open and a thin trail of blood leading down the garden to the back gate.

They hear Cassie scream:

CASSIE (O.S.)
Help! Help!

POLICE OFFICER ONE
Cassie! Cassie! It's the Los Angeles
Police Department. Where are you?

CASSIE (O.S.)
Upstairs!

They kick the front door open and go in.

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The police come in with their guns cocked ready to shoot. Cassie is lying on the floor naked.

CASSIE
He's gone. Out that window.

A trail of blood goes to an open bathroom window, which The Boss has escaped through.

POLICE OFFICER ONE
(into walkie-talkie)
Go around to the yard. Suspect escaped
out the back window. He's injured.

There is blood everywhere (not Cassie's). The police officers look around and sees all the wreckage.

POLICE OFFICER TWO
(into walkie-talkie)
I need an ambulance.

POLICE OFFICER ONE
Are you Cassie?

CASSIE
(weakly)
Please could you get me something to put
around me.

She points to a towel. He hands it to her. Cassie covers herself with it and painfully sits up.

POLICE OFFICER ONE
We're going to need a statement from you.
Did Narek Vartan do this to you?

CASSIE
No. I don't know his name.

POLICE OFFICER ONE
Really?

CASSIE
He's called The Boss.

POLICE OFFICER TWO
That name kinda sounds familiar.

The police officers look at each other.

POLICE OFFICER ONE
(whispers)
I don't think she means Bruce
Springsteen.

POLICE OFFICER TWO
Is this man your pimp? Is that why you
won't tell us who he is?

POLICE OFFICER ONE
Do you have any ID?

CASSIE
On me? Where would I put it?

INT. LIA'S HOUSE - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Cassie is dressed. The paramedics are checking her head wound and shining a light in her eyes to see if she's concussed. There's blood trickling down Cassie's face from a head injury. Her eyes well up with tears but she's determined to hold herself together.

CASSIE
I'm really not that hurt.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC
We don't get any medals for bravery young
lady.

CASSIE
I'm fine, I don't need to go to hospital.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC
Let's get you checked over first. Did he
rape you?

CASSIE
No. He tried but no.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC
Maybe we should check you in case you
lost consciousness.

CASSIE
I didn't.

The paramedics look at her. They're not sure what to believe. Cassie stands up to go and then passes out.

EXT. STREET IN HOLLYWOOD - CONTINUOUS

The Boss is in a laundromat in a mini-mall. He opens a dryer and steals a garment which he ties around his bleeding leg. He walks up to the Latino lady working there.

THE BOSS
Do you have a cab number?

LATINO LAUNDRY LADY
No. I use Uber.

THE BOSS
Uber?

LATINO LAUNDRY LADY
You do it on your phone.

THE BOSS
I don't have one. I need a cab.

LATINO LAUNDRY LADY
No cab company. Sorry. Are you hurt?

She looks at the blood coming from his leg. He reaches inside his pocket and pulls out a hundred dollar bill.

THE BOSS
Can you help me?

LATINO LAUNDRY LADY
I...

THE BOSS
(shows her more money)
Help me.

LATINO LAUNDRY LADY
Who are...?

THE BOSS
No questions.

He gives her another hundred dollars.

LATINO LAUNDRY LADY
Let me call my husband.

THE BOSS
No.

LATINO LAUNDRY LADY
He can drive! Me no.

She turns the sign to closed. The boss is in too pain much to argue.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Cassie is sitting in a chair next to Lia's bed. They're both lying there with black eyes and facial injuries. Lia is the worse off of the two.

LIA
What the fuck happened Cass? I thought Narek wasn't there.

They're both shaken up but trying to joke with each other like the old friends they are.

CASSIE
It wasn't Narek. It was The Boss. He attacked me and...
(whispers)
I shot The Boss.

LIA
You did what?

CASSIE
I shot The Boss.

LIA
Jesus Cassie, did you kill him?

CASSIE
No, he escaped. I shot him in the leg, but he might be lying injured or dead somewhere. The police couldn't find him.

LIA
I'm confused. Why is he still around? I thought he was going to Mexico. I don't understand why's he's still here?

CASSIE
It's not our problem.

LIA
Maybe I should call Narek?

CASSIE
No. We're both here injured because of those men. We're staying away from them and starting a new life.

LIA
Well you can, but I'm not sure I want to...

CASSIE
Lia! Look at me. You do not contact him - do you understand?

Lia nods yes but Cassie knows she doesn't mean it.

Dave comes in with the suitcase and bags from Lia's house. Lia looks surprised when he stops at Cassie's bed.

DAVE

Cassie.

CASSIE

What are you doing here?

Dave puts down the suitcase and bag from Lia's house.

DAVE

Oh! Hi Lia. Wow! Both of you look - hurt!
(to Cassie)

You gave my name as your emergency contact. They called me to come and get your belongings.

CASSIE

Aren't you just the knight in shining armor?

DAVE

Oh. Did I do the wrong thing? I can go if...

CASSIE

No. Sorry. You've got no idea how relieved I felt when I heard that police siren come up the driveway. How did you know where to send them?

DAVE

GPS on my smart phone.

CASSIE

Clever.

DAVE

We use it at Crisis Hotline and I still had access.

Lia is pretending to read her magazine but is listening to them intently.

CASSIE

So, this is good for you isn't it? Saving a life, that's what you like to do.

DAVE

Really, Cassie. Sarcasm?

CASSIE

(lowering her voice so only he can hear)

You want me to feel sorry for myself? Please don't. I can't for one tiny second.

DAVE
 (lowering his voice)
 Why Cassie?

CASSIE
 I'll disappear into a fucking black hole
 and never get back.

DAVE
 Cassie, what are you going to do when
 you leave this hospital? Maybe I...

CASSIE
 This the offer of the women's shelter
 again?

DAVE
 (lowering his voice)
 You can stay with me until...

CASSIE
 I have a new place and a job. Thank you.

DAVE
 (whispers)
 One where you don't get hurt and have to
 do 'favors'.

CASSIE
 Yes. It's a bar job with a low rent
 apartment. I'm fine. Seriously.

DAVE
 (sweetly)
 You don't look fine. I want to help you.
 I seriously care about you. You've had
 such a hard start in life and...

Lia pulls a disgusted face from behind her magazine.

CASSIE
 Dave, I know you mean well and thanks
 for your help, but really I am fine.

Lia's very interested - leans further over.

DAVE
 (low voice)
 Look Cass, if you need anything, please
 call me - any time.

Lia practically drops her magazine when she hears this.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 I care about you, Cassie.

CASSIE
 Thanks Dave, thank you for everything,
 honestly.

DAVE
Stay in touch. Call me...

CASSIE
I wouldn't want to upset your girlfriend.

DAVE
That's over.

Dave leaves.

LIA
Dorky Dave sure has gotten handsome in his old age. Did you have something going on with him?

CASSIE
Hmm. For a very brief moment.

LIA
I remember giving him a blow job at his sixteenth birthday party. You know the one we got all dressed up for and gate crashed!

CASSIE
Are you sure? I got it together with him in his tree house that night.

LIA
Me too.

Cassie thinks.

CASSIE
But I was with him all night.

LIA
Didn't take him long. Don't think anyone had given him good head before. I can't remember if we fucked later? Yup, I think we did. Narek said I'm the best he's...

CASSIE
Lia, why are you lying? There's no way that happened that night!

LIA
I'm sure I did! He'll fuck whatever is available to him. Men are all the same. Just because he does charity work doesn't make him any different.

CASSIE
(shocked and hurt)
He's been a good friend...

LIA
And you fucked him to say thank you. So you don't owe him anything.

(MORE)

LIA (CONT'D)

He's gonna marry some nice rich girl not a white trash...

CASSIE

(upset)
Thanks a fucking lot Lia!

LIA

Sorry to burst your little love bubble for Dave.

CASSIE

You're being so nasty. I'm going...

Cassie gets up to go.

LIA

Cass don't go. It's all the drugs...

CASSIE

You sound exactly like my mother when she's drunk and I can't be around her or you like this!

Cassie looks confused.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

Cassie is leaving the hospital on her own. She's outside waiting for an Uber when a car stops in front of her. It's Karin. He rolls down his window.

KARIN

Cassie, get in please. I'm not going to hurt you. We just need to talk.

Cassie looks around.

CASSIE

How did you know I was here?

KARIN

Lia left me a message to give to Narek. Get in.

CASSIE

I don't want to get in.

KARIN

Get in.

CASSIE

No.

KARIN

Fine, I'll follow you.

CASSIE

(thinks for a few seconds)
Why? What have I done?

KARIN
Get in! Then we can talk.

CASSIE
My Uber's here.

Cassie's Uber arrives.

KARIN
I'll follow you.

CASSIE
Why?

KARIN
It hurts that you don't trust me.

CASSIE
Can you blame me?

She walks to the Uber. Her hand is shaking as she opens the door.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
(to the driver)
Change of location. Take me to the
Americana, Glendale.

The Uber driver looks at her. She gets in.

UBER DRIVER
You have to change it on your phone.

CASSIE
OK. Fine.

She taps into her phone. She looks out the window behind her
Karin is following her.

EXT. AMERICANA OUTDOOR MALL. GLENDALE - DAY

Cassie is standing by the water fountains. Karin walks over
to her.

KARIN
Look at you, what the fuck's the matter
with that guy?!

He goes to touch Cassie's cheek and she flinches.

CASSIE
Sorry, it hurts too much.

KARIN
I'll fucking kill him. The woman
beating bastard. I'm going to teach
him a lesson when I get my hands on
him.

CASSIE

Well, he certainly deserves it for what he did to Lia. Narek didn't do this to me.

KARIN

Who did?

CASSIE

The Boss.

KARIN

Fucking hell. The Boss, where is he? Where is Narek? Where the fuck is everyone? I go away for a few days and all hell breaks lose. What did you do to him?

CASSIE

What did I do to him? That psychopath, how about what he did to me?! He tried to rape me Karin. I shot him.

Karin laughs in disbelief.

KARIN

The Boss tried to rape you? You shot him? You and Lia, what a disaster. Un-fucking-believable. I pay you girls to make The Boss happy. Lia does such a good job, Narek loses it with her, and then you shoot him.

(beat)

You're both fired.

CASSIE

(amused)

We've already resigned.

Karin paces around.

KARIN

(shouting in disbelief)

I'm scared to ask if he's dead.

CASSIE

I think he's fine. It wasn't a good shot, I shot him in the leg.

KARIN

You and me, Cassie. I had plans for us. What did you have to do this for? I care about you.

CASSIE

(turns away from him)

You've got a wife and...

KARIN

My wife is just the mother of my children. I wanted you...

CASSIE

Oh, I...no, I...

This touches Cassie - her eyes well up with tears and Karin puts his arms around her, she pushes him away. Karin becomes angry again.

KARIN

Why did you have to shoot him? The Boss of all fucking people. My name is going to be a joke around here. It would have been better if you killed him.

(beat)

I'll put out some feelers and try and find him. Your phone's not working.

CASSIE

I've had it cut off. The police may have tapped me.

KARIN

Good girl. Get a burner and call me.

CASSIE

I don't want to be involved in this - with you guys any more. I've kept your name and Narek's out of everything. The police keep pressing me. They want something to get you with. I haven't given them anything.

KARIN

You owe me. You took something that doesn't belong to you.

Cassie looks scared.

CASSIE

When I went back - it was all gone. I thought you or your Boss had taken it.

Karin thinks.

KARIN

(seems relieved)

It was his. Hopefully he's in Mexico by now. I can't believe what a mess this is! I want you to stay in touch with me.

CASSIE

No. The police want you. If you come anywhere near me or Lia you're in trouble. If anything happens to me or Lia they'll pull you in.

He looks around.

KARIN

Are they following you now?

CASSIE

I'm supposed to call them when I get out of the hospital. I haven't yet but I will.

KARIN

(not sure whether to believe her)
I'll be in touch.

He goes to kiss her on the lips. She pulls away and then changes her mind and kisses him. He walks off. She stands there.

CASSIE

(to herself)
What the fuck are you doing?

She walks into the Americana and gets in an elevator. She presses a floor and then once inside changes it. She gets out, walks through the parking garage. She looks around to see if she was followed and walks down the stairs.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - DAY.

Cassie Lia are sitting on the bed in their apartment.

Cassie counts the money in her purse. Lia pours hers out onto the table too.

CASSIE

We have to be careful with money - no designer anything for a while.

LIA

Don't depress me any more than I already am, Cass.

(beat)

Can we get new drapes? Those look like they were stolen from a funeral home.

CASSIE

You won't notice them after a while.

LIA

I will always notice them and I just can't get used to how small this place is. I've lived in bigger trailers.

CASSIE

It's temporary. Just keep telling yourself that.

LIA

I miss my lovely home. I don't want to go back to being poor. I've had enough of eating Hamburger Helper and Goodwill store clothes to last me a lifetime. I need money and nice things.

CASSIE

Give me time to work it out. I've still got a few loans out and a good front working downstairs.

LIA

You don't understand. I cannot be without money. It makes me ill. I can't go back to dancing because I'm a fucking mess and my vagina is half hanging out.

Cassie starts to laugh and Lia starts to cry. Cassie gives her a hug. Lia pushes her away.

LIA (CONT'D)

I miss Narek. I wonder if he misses me too?

CASSIE

Well, don't wonder. Come on, I'll give you something to take your mind off things. Come and help me count this money.

Lia and Cassie sit there counting the cash.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

We've got almost a thousand here.

LIA

I need to do some laundry. Does this dump have a washing machine?

CASSIE

It's in the basement.

Cassie opens up the suitcase and the black plastic bags of stuff she got at Lia's house. There's a small backpack that she doesn't recognise.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

I don't remember packing this!

Puts it in front of Lia.

LIA

That's not mine. How could you think that nasty old thing belongs to me?

CASSIE

Oh! It's not mine either.

They stop - then Cassie unzips it. Inside there's some men's underwear. Not that nice. A Mexican Passport, another plastic bag which is stuffed with wedges of hundreds of American dollar bills - and stuffed inside socks, rolls of Mexican pesos. There's also an address and a phone number for somewhere in Playa Del Carmen, Mexico.

LIA

Wow! Oh my God! Whose is it?

Cassie opens the passport. She shows the passport photo to Cassie. It's The Boss.

CASSIE
'Pedro Sandoval.'

LIA
That's not his real name. He's Armenian.

CASSIE
He's Mexican now.

Lia pours out all the money.

LIA
Shit! We're rich! We can move out of this dump! Yay!

CASSIE
No, we're not. We have to give this back.

LIA
What? No fucking way!

CASSIE
(putting all the cash back in the bag)
We can't keep it. Sooner or later they'll know and they'll come looking for us.

LIA
OK, I'll take it back. I'll give it to Narek and he won't...

CASSIE
Won't what? Won't kill you?!

LIA
But...

CASSIE
No Lia. Go and do your laundry. Please, let's talk about this later.

Lia flounces out of the room.

Cassie takes out the socks full of pesos and starts to count them, she sees they're different notes.

Then she hears someone coming up the stairs. She quickly tries to shove the notes back into the backpack with the American dollars but they don't fit. She shoves the pesos in to a plastic carrier bag.

There's a knock at the door.

MEI (O.S.)
Cassie - you in there?

CASSIE
Just getting in the shower.

MEI (O.S.)

OK. I need you to come earlier. 5 o'clock. Is okay?

CASSIE

(yells through the door)
Yes. Thank you. See you then.

Cassie looks around the room for somewhere to hide the bags. She finds a loft door above a closet, gets a chair and climbs up to it.

The plastic carrier bag of pesos goes in first, followed by the backpack. She seals up the loft and climbs back down again.

INT. SPORTS BAR - NIGHT.

It's a quiet night in Mei's sports bar. There are a bunch of guys playing pool and an old baseball match on the TV screens. Lia is sitting at the bar looking dressed up to the nines and drunk.

Mei walks over to Cassie who's working behind the bar.

MEI

I'm going out. You'll be okay on your own, won't you?

CASSIE

I think so.

Mei looks at Lia. She doesn't like her much.

LIA

Hey Mei. You going somewhere nice?

MEI

Mahjong.

LIA

That your boyfriend?

MEI

It's a game.

Mei exits and Lia pulls a face.

LIA

Can I have another vodka and soda?
Make it a double!

CASSIE

I think you've had enough, Lia. I can't keep giving you free drinks.

LIA

Do we have any cocaine? I have a headache?

CASSIE
I have Aspirin or Tylenol.

LIA
Cocaine please.

Cassie sees someone come through the door and her face falls.

CASSIE
Shit!

Lia turns to see Elaine walking in with Sharon.

LIA
She's got some nerve coming in here.

CASSIE
Play it cool Lia. Get back on your stool and BEHAVE.

LIA
She's been seen hanging around my Narek.

CASSIE
How do you know?

LIA
I do have other friends!

CASSIE
Well done Lia. You're the reason they found us.

LIA
Narek knows we're here. He thinks the police are watching us. Look - that guy over there, he looks like an undercover cop.

Points to a guy sitting in the corner.

CASSIE
Well, he's doing a great job of being our resident drunk. He can barely walk straight to the men's room...

LIA
(re. Elaine)
She's coming over here, I can't believe her nerve.

CASSIE
Go upstairs and take an Aspirin. I'll deal with her. GO. NOW. LIA. Please.

LIA
Give me another vodka and soda.

CASSIE
No. Walk away. I'll deal with this.

Lia gets up and walks away.

ELAINE
You don't have to leave on account of
me, Lia.

CASSIE
Lia's not feeling well. Hi Sharon.

Sharon smiles at Cassie.

ELAINE
Well, it's you I've come to speak to.

CASSIE
Do you want something to drink,
Sharon?

SHARON
Want something Elaine?

ELAINE
Do you have Prosecco?

SHARON
Me too, please.

Cassie pours two glasses of Prosecco.

SHARON (CONT'D)
How are you, Cassie?

CASSIE
Good. I take it this isn't your usual
hang out. So, why are you here?

Sharon's embarrassed and looks at Elaine.

ELAINE
You look fine, considering...

CASSIE
Considering what? Listen Elaine, if
you've come to gloat, have your drink
and gloat away. But I'm warning you -
any moronic little bitchy remarks to
Lia and she's liable to send you into
next summer.

Cassie walks down to the other end of the bar.

Lia comes back to her seat and is staring at Sharon's suede
jacket with a look of disbelief.

Cassie sees this but can't get down there fast enough.

LIA
I've got a suede jacket just the same
as that. In fact, that is my fucking
jacket. That crazy cow is wearing my
fucking jacket!

Lia lunges towards Sharon.

LIA (CONT'D)
Give me back my jacket!

Lia starts to pull the jacket off Sharon.

CASSIE
Lia, behave. Sharon, did Narek give you that jacket?

SHARON
Yeah! I didn't know it was yours, Lia.

LIA
Well, whose the fuck did you think it was? I want it back, now!

ELAINE
It looks good on her.

Cassie gets in between Lia and Elaine.

CASSIE
What do you want Elaine? To make trouble - to see how bad things are for us? Well, viewing time at the zoo's over now, so fuck off.

SHARON
Just tell them what they've sent us here for.

CASSIE
'What they've sent you here for?'

SHARON
Just tell them Elaine, I don't want any trouble.

ELAINE
Narek said you have something of theirs.

CASSIE
I don't know what you're going on about.

ELAINE
He says this is a polite warning - that he'd hate to have to take this further.

CASSIE
We haven't got it. Honestly - would we be living and working here if we had it?!

They all look at each other.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Well, would we?

Lia looks really pissed.

SHARON
You can have your jacket back Lia.

LIA
I don't want it back after you've put
your nasty cheap scent all over it.

Lia picks up a drink and pours it on Sharon.

LIA (CONT'D)
There now, no one can wear it.

CASSIE
All right. That's enough, Lia.

ELAINE
That's right Lia, calm down. Stop acting
like a dumb bitch.

Lia throws another drink all over Elaine.

All other customers in the bar are looking over the drunk
in the corner gets up.

CASSIE
(whispers to Elaine)
Stop it. That guys an undercover cop.

That stops them in their tracks. Lia nods.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Leave. Get out! Leave! Tell Karin and
Narek the cops are always watching us. He
needs to be careful.

Lia laughs as they walk away. They both watch the drunk guy
stagger towards the restroom and laugh.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cassie and Lia are in their tiny kitchen.

LIA
But I want that money. I need to go to
the hairdresser and I need get my
Botox done.

CASSIE
How much will it cost?

LIA
Well, by time I tip about two thousand.

CASSIE
What! No Lia. Your expensive tastes have
got us in this mess. We have to give it
back!

LIA

Oh don't blame me for not enjoying being poor! Why didn't you just give it to them then?

CASSIE

I don't trust Elaine to give them all of it and I want them to leave us alone for good.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

They're getting ready for bed.

LIA

Do you think Narek will stop being angry with me when we give the money back?

CASSIE

You worry me when you talk like that, Lia. Would you want to go back to Narek?

LIA

He was so jealous and hurt that night. I can feel he's really sorry.

CASSIE

Really? Well, we haven't seen any signs that his is.

LIA

Well, how could he show it? You told them the cops are watching us. He can't come anywhere near me, even if he wanted to.

CASSIE

Lia, he's capable of killing you or me. Is that what you want?

LIA

I understand Narek. It's his upbringing. He was around a lot of violence. He saw things a child should never see.

CASSIE

Please Lia, just give this more time.

LIA

I hate my life! I miss my lovely things! I miss - luxury...

CASSIE

Well so do I but I'd rather stay in one piece and not become a criminal. You could get some kind of work...

LIA

I phoned my old stripping buddy and she said it's all internet these days and I'm useless with computer things.

CASSIE

I'm sorry. Lia, things will get better. We'll get some money together and we'll move somewhere nice.

LIA

As long as it's not Vacaville. I'm never going back there!

CASSIE

I don't want to go back there either Lia, please give this some time.

LIA

Narek must be missing me. We've been together three years.

CASSIE

Stop this Lia, why don't you get that Narek is crazy? Look what he did to you! Next time you may not be so lucky.

Lia looks defiant.

LIA

I hate this life. I hate being poor! I'm starting to hate YOU!

CASSIE

Oh Lia, please, calm down. We'll make a plan in morning.

Lia turns away from her.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT.

CLOSE UP ON - TIME ON THE CLOCK IS 11:30

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT.

CLOSE UP ON - TIME ON THE CLOCK IS 4:15

Cassie is asleep.

Lia lies awake in the dark. She gets up, takes her clothes and tip toes into the bathroom. Moments later she comes out dressed and very quietly takes a chair by the closet and takes out the backpack of money from the loft, climbs down. Picks up her bag she had hidden near the front door and leaves.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Cassie wakes up - she sees Lia has gone. She looks around the apartment and sees a chair under the loft door, it's left open. She climbs up, reaches her hand inside. The backpack is gone but the plastic bag of Mexican money is still in there.

INT/EXT. CAR. LITTLE ARMENIA - NIGHT

Lia is in the back of an Uber, on the phone.

LIA
Hi Narek, it's me.

NAREK (O.S.)
Lia, how are you baby? You better?

LIA
Almost. Just a few little bruises.

NAREK (O.S.)
I'm so sorry babe, I didn't mean to hurt you, I was just so jealous.

LIA
I miss you...

NAREK (O.S.)
It's so good to hear your voice babe. I just want to put my arms around you. Hold my Lia. I miss you so much. When are you coming home?

LIA
I'm on my way. I have your money with me.

NAREK (O.S.)
I can't wait to see you.

INT/EXT. CASSIE'S VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE CAR - EARLY MORNING

The streets are quiet. Cassie is getting into her car outside her apartment.

Just as she's getting into her car, a HOMELESS MAN appears right behind her, making her jump. She quickly gets into her car and shuts the door.

He bangs on the roof. Cassie jumps again. She starts up the car engine and the homeless guy stands in front of her car.

CASSIE
Get out the way!

He keeps standing there. She goes into her purse and pulls out a five dollar bill. She shows it to him, winds down the window and throws it out. He goes to pick it up.

HOMELESS MAN
(points at her)
Die. Die. Die.

Cassie tries to recover her composure, takes a deep breath and drives off.

EXT. LIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cassie is sitting outside Lia's house, thinking what to do.

She sends Lia a text.

She quietly gets out of the car and softly walks up the steps to the house. She can't see any lights on.

She sends the same text to Lia again.

Seconds later she jumps when Lia appears behind her. Lia's wearing a silk bathrobe and holding her phone.

LIA
(whispers)
You can't be here.

CASSIE
(whispers)
What are you doing?

LIA
(whispers)
If Narek sees you he's going to go crazy.
He'll hurt you. Leave.

CASSIE
(whispers)
I'm not going without you.

LIA
(whispers)
Go. I'm not coming with you.

A light goes on inside the house upstairs.

LIA (CONT'D)
Fuck. Narek's awake. Is your car here?

CASSIE
Yes.

LIA
(whispers)
Let's go. Now.

Cassie and Lia quietly and quickly go to her car.

EXT/INT. CASSIE'S CAR - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Cassie goes to her car and gets in the driver's seat. Lia sits in the back and ducks down.

LIA
Drive. Fucking drive. He's coming after us.

Cassie looks up the driveway to see Narek coming out in his bathrobe.

NAREK
(yells)
Lia! Lia!

When he hears Cassie's car drive off he runs down the driveway - he watches as Cassie drives up the road.

Cassie's nervous, scared - her driving is terrible, she keeps swerving and almost hitting stationary cars. Fortunately it's late at night and the roads aren't busy.

LIA (O.S.)
Jesus, Cassie - I'm getting car sick.
Take it easy.

She drives for about a mile.

LIA (CONT'D)
Is he following still?

CASSIE
I don't think so - maybe I lost him.

Cassie looks at the dashboard. The car starts slowing down.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Shit! I'm almost out of gas. Is Griffith Park ahead?

Lia pops up from behind the seat and looks out the window.

LIA
Yep. We're on Western Ave, keep going round that bend.

Cassie goes around the bend and sees the entrance to the park. She pulls into the road and half a mile into it the car runs out of gas.

CASSIE
Christ! Well, I can't see him behind me but we should go into the trees just in case.

Cassie gets out of the car with Lia following her.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Hurry up Lia.

LIA
I'm not hiding in the trees all night. There's snakes and lions in this park!

CASSIE
We'll get an Uber when we think the coast is clear. Let's get far away from the car.

Cassie walks into the trees and Lia stops at a picnic bench. Lia orders an Uber on her phone.

LIA
I'm not going any further. Stop Cassie, I want to talk to you.

CASSIE
We can talk later.

LIA
No now. Sorry, Cassie I only came to talk to you. I'm not coming with you.

CASSIE
This doesn't make sense.

LIA
Not to you, but to me it does. You know what Narek said? 'We were happy until Cassie came along'. He's right, we were.

CASSIE
He tried to blind you - you had a miscarriage, he...

LIA
It was supposed to be you that did the sexy stuff with The Boss that night but I could see you were freaked out and I felt overprotective so...

CASSIE
Really? 'Cuz it looked to me like you were having a great time!

LIA
I was so trashed so I don't really remember all the...

CASSIE
Oh right! Do you remember the next morning? When...

LIA
He ain't never been that bad before. He was angry because of all the money you took and then you wouldn't fuck The Boss and if you had then...

CASSIE
Oh! So it's all my fault? Wow! He's really done a number on you.

LIA
Fuck you Cassie. I watched you for years stay at home with that crazy, drunk mom beating on you. You kept saying 'she'll get better', and you'd still be there if it wasn't for me.

CASSIE
I left because she got too violent.

LIA
And you somehow brought it to my house!

CASSIE
What?!

LIA
Look, I don't want this. I hate that crappy apartment and especially those drapes - which never got changed! They're still hanging there looking like death's going to come knocking. I'm not going back there - ever!

CASSIE
(trying to lighten things up)
Because of the drapes!?

LIA
Everything was good until you came. Now it's a big mess.

CASSIE
So you're blaming me for everything?! How convenient.

LIA
No Cassie, no problems. Narek's right about that.

CASSIE
I don't understand what you're saying.

LIA
I can't be your friend anymore Cassie. He hates you. He's going to hurt you if you come near me or him, he's real angry with you. He doesn't want me to have anything to do with you.

(her phone pings - she looks it)
My Uber is here.

CASSIE
Don't go back to him Lia, please.

LIA
If I were you I'd leave LA and stay away. I can't be responsible for what happens to you.

CASSIE
So that's it? Friendship over?

LIA
Look, I went out of my way to come and tell you goodbye so Narek wouldn't hurt you for coming near our house.

(MORE)

LIA (CONT'D)

Stay away, Cass. Don't try and contact me. We're done!

Cassie looks really hurt but Lia's face is cold.

An Uber driver flashes the lights of his car and Lia gets into the car. She doesn't look back. The car drives off.

Cassie watches her go. She sits down on the curb and looks broken. She walks over and looks at her broken down car. She starts walking out of the park.

EXT. GARAGE - SAME NIGHT

Cassie buys a gas can from the garage attendant and walks to the pump to fill it up. Her eyes look like she's been crying.

On the gas pump is a television screen that shows the news.

TV REPORTER FOX NEWS

Welcome back. Here is the rest of this morning's news. Notorious Armenian Mafia Leader Grigor Bedrossian, known as, 'The Boss' was captured after violating the terms of his parole.

There are mugshots of The Boss on screen.

TV REPORTER FOX NEWS (CONT'D)

He took laundromat worker Rosa Munoz hostage and forced her to take him to her house. Unfortunately the laundry worker's husband was a police officer, who Mr. Bedrossian attacked on returning home. He's now back behind bars...

Cassie laughs out loud.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - MORNING.

Cassie climbs on the chair and reaches into the loft, takes out the plastic bag of Mexican money. She smiles to herself.

She walks to the drawer and takes out her passport, puts it in her purse with the money. She doesn't take anything else. Leaves her door/car keys on the table. She walks out the front door of her apartment and leaves it open.

INT. CASSIE'S NEW APARTMENT - DAY

Mei is standing in the apartment with the police.

MEI

She just disappeared. Take nothing. Car outside. Her friend too. I think they're in big trouble.

The police look at each other.

POLICE OFFICER ONE

You wanna file a missing person report?

Mei shrugs her shoulders.

TITLE ON SCREEN: **'ONE YEAR LATER'**.

EXT. OVERVIEW OF TULUM IN MEXICO.

ZOOM IN ON A NAIL SALON - late afternoon.

Cassie is sitting at reception counting the money for the day. She has dark, red hair and looks different from her former self. She wears a name badge saying 'Anna'. She waves goodbye to the people working there. Closes up the salon and leaves. She walks down the road to an open air restaurant by the sea.

EXT. OPEN AIR RESTAURANT TULUM SEA FRONT - CONTINUOUS

Cassie sits down and waves to someone across the restaurant. It's Dave. He looks at her for a moment and smiles. He comes over and they awkwardly hug and then sit down.

CASSIE

Dave. When did you get here?

DAVE

Yesterday. Wow! You look different. I'm so glad you called me. I was beginning to give up hope that I'd hear from you.

CASSIE

Sorry I didn't call you earlier. Every time I went to dial your number, I was scared but I kept dreaming about my mother and...

DAVE

I'm so sorry Cass.

CASSIE

Honestly, I felt relieved. She was so unhappy for so long.

DAVE

Heart attack in her sleep.

CASSIE

After all those times she tried to kill herself and she has 'a millionaires death'. Isn't that what they call it?

DAVE

Yup - don't know why but they do.

Dave puts a brown paper bag with something box-shaped inside on the table. Cassie's face drops.

CASSIE

Oh God! Don't tell me that's her ashes?!

DAVE

No. It's not - it's from Lia.

CASSIE

Lia's ashes?

DAVE

No! It's a present from Lia. She went to your mother's funeral. I think she was hoping you'd be there.

CASSIE

Lia was back in Vacaville?

DAVE

Not for long. She came back pretty broken up. Her boyfriend wasn't allowed back in the country. Some immigration problem - they banned him. She was going to go to Armenia but he went back to his wife.

CASSIE

Narek had a wife! Poor Lia - I don't think she knew that.

DAVE

She asked me if I'd heard from you, if I knew where you were? She told me to tell you that she's going to go to Canada - and that you'd know why. And to give you this if I saw you again.

He pushes over the brown paper bag. Cassie looks in and pulls out the dusky pink Prada Handbag Lia said she'd give her if she dies.

Cassie laughs. Then her eyes well up with tears and she doesn't speak for a few seconds.

CASSIE

She's gone to see her mom. Good for her.

Cassie searches through the bag.

Cassie looks inside - there's a small envelope, inside is a little note. *'Cass, if you have this purse, then you've seen Dave. I lied about him and me. He's a good guy. Be happy'.*

CASSIE (CONT'D)

(tears well up in her eyes)
Thank you for coming here to give me this.

DAVE

What does the note say?

CASSIE

It's private. Girl talk.

She gives him a smile. The waiter comes over with the menus.

WAITER

The fish of the day is Tilapia. I'll be back to take your order.

Cassie nods thanks. The waiter leaves.

DAVE

She said that she'd send me her new address.

CASSIE

She's not going back to Vacaville?

DAVE

She said she hated that 'cow town'. That the only good memories she had there were of you.

CASSIE

She made it more bearable for me too.

DAVE

It made me question why I was there too? Driving past the river that killed my parents everyday. Becoming a therapist to try and heal my own wounds. I've never left Vacaville for more than a few weeks. It's like something in me feels I have to stay there because my family has been there for centuries. I'm the only one of my family left - who cares?!

CASSIE

You sound like you're leaving too!

DAVE

I've rented a house in Tulum for the summer. I hope you don't mind me being here. I can stay away if you don't want me around?

CASSIE

(smiles)
Oh, I'd like to have you around.

Dave smiles at her and she smiles back.

The End