

Monster Jams

A feature horror/thriller

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FADE IN:

EXT. STADIUM - NIGHT

A man's head, blindfolded, bobs slightly as he slowly walks. Distraught, apprehensively, unsure in his steps as trudges ahead, he is- LEN KENNEDY, 40, pragmatic and dapper.

As he stumbles and nearly falls, WE SEE he wears an ORANGE JUMPSUIT. The blurred landscape comes into focus, head-high mounds of fresh dirt, and beyond, towering rows and columns of empty seats.

An unseen force jolts Len to the side. Again, he is tugged, and continues to walk. A black gloved hand maintains a vice-grip on his arm.

Len trips, stumbles to his knees, WE SEE Len wears handcuffs, the gloved hand pulls him to his feet.

Len resumes his begrudged walk, the gloved hand attached to a man, he is- ANDRE DAVEY - 40, enterprising knuckle-dragger, in a guard's uniform, he is Len's stone-faced escort.

The two men reach the dirt mound base and begin to climb the steep slope.

Len off-balanced and Andre equally unsteady ascend as the earth gives way with each step.

The men reach a plateau, take several steps, then begin another ascent.

They both breath heavy, Len's short breaths are fear filled, and Andre's are an athletic man exercising.

They reach another plateau and stop. Andre positions behind Len.

ANDRE

I'm gonna get these off you.

Len grunts as Andre fumbles handcuff keys and twists Len's wrist, and removes the cuffs. Andre stands, toys with cuffs, returns them to his holster.

Andrea stands in front of a blind-folded Len, examines him, head to toe, then firmly pats both Len's shoulders and a final friendly squeeze.

ANDRE

Survive two minutes. You get 10 years off. Best deal Ever.

LEN

That's why I signed. Fuckin mystery though.

ANDRE

Got questions?

LEN

Lots. Rules?

ANDREA

Just one. Stay inside the Orange lines. I'll signal the end.

LEN

One more question.

ANDRE

Yeah?

LEN

Am I gonna make it?

ANDRE

I've seen you around the Yard. You got as good as shot as any. Just-

Andrea pauses, looks around cautiously as if someone may be listening.

ANDRE

--try to keep moving laterally.

LEN

Literally?

ANDREA

Laterally. Side to side. Think like a matador. A bullfighter.

LEN
What the fuck?

ANDRE
You'll see. In a moment. Keep your blindfold on until the Announcer says take it off.

LEN
Announcer?

Andre ignores Len's utterance and adds parting words as he turns and hastily walks away.

ANDRE
I got a C-note riding on you.

LEN's POV, darkness, small slices of light enter from the top and bottom of the tightly wrapped blindfold.

Andre's footsteps slide and sink into the soft dirt as he scampers away. Len takes deep breaths.

An omnipresent bullhorn breaks the silence, words in English, with a deep foreign accent, echo in the vast and empty arena.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
Prisoner, ready?

Len, an ant in a bright Orange jumpsuit, a stark contrast to the sea of deep brown colored dirt, stands atop the giant Mayan style multi-platform pyramid.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
(Repeats)
PRISONER, READY?

Len, unsure, raises a single jittery arm.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
Driver, ready?

WHHHHHHHUUUUUUU. A Monster Truck's gas pedal fully depressed causes an ENGINE PULSE, which tears through the air with a deafening roar, rumbling.

Len's feet jump wide, bent knees, arm move in shock, one hand high, the other grasps the blindfold, a splotch of wetness grows on Len's Orange Jumpsuit crotch area.

Len gasps, mouth hinged. The engine roar fades, a pause, the sound of CAT SHRIEKS, then another ENGINE PULSE, sounds even louder. Len's body trembles.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.S.)

Prisoner. Remove your blindfold.

Len tears the blindfold off his head, squints from the bright LED stadium lights above, hastily rubs his eyes.

Len looks around in disbelief, sees he's atop a giant dirt mound, surrounded by rows of bleachers, a backstop, an upper deck, and realizes he is in an empty baseball stadium, elevated, high above the ground.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.S.)

6. 5. 4.

In the Announcer's voice, indiscernible foreign words, a countdown sequence, equally loud.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.S.)

(In Kazakh)

3, 2, 1.

Go!

An ENGINE PULSE, the echoes bounce from every wall. Len twists to locate the source. His eye's bulge, he sees a -

MONSTER TRUCK, supersized black knobby tires, a dozen floodlights, elevated frame, tinted windows with gaudy fluorescent trim and chrome everywhere, skulls and ghoulish designs on the doors and hood.

--Monster Truck as it rocks side to side, vibrating with intensity, rumbles with the engines thrust. The Monster

Truck is parked just beyond a hastily painted broad Orange chalk line and in front of the home plate backstop.

Len's stares long in disbelief and takes a small step backwards. His eyes slowly pan, following the Orange chalk line that surrounds the field.

The Monster Truck's engine rumbles subside, Andre hears a digital ticking noise, glances up and sees a clock high above Home Plate, ticking down, at 1:56, 1:55, 1:54. The truck quiet. Between the ticks, he hears intermittent cat hisses and meows.

Panic sets in. Len looks behind him for--sees Andre traverse the Orange Line and hop over a wall into the seating area, repeatedly casting a callous eye on Len.

WHHHHM, an ENGINE PULSE, Len turns back, the Monster Truck rockets forward, towards HIM, a rooster trail of earth flying skyward in its wake. LEN GETS IT.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
(Indiscernible foreign calls)

Len takes quick strides and leaps down the South slope of the top incline just as the Monster Truck goes skyward over the plateau on the East side, landing where Len just stood, splattering dirt.

The truck's big tires bounce like a toy rubber ball, expand wide on impact, then launching the truck airborne again. The truck sails down the West side slope, while airborne, the engine silence, cats howl loudly.

The Monster Truck landing HARD on the plateau. The Monster Truck veers sharply as the tires imprint the soft dirt, and the driver compensates to straighten as the truck jaggedly bumping to the base, slows, then turns.

Len, aghast, pants. He crouches on the lower plateau, braced against the mound peers alertly around the slope's edge. The digital clock reads 1:35.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
(Indiscernible foreign calls)

An ENGINE PULSE interposes with the WHOOSH of wheel spun air. The Monster Truck perilously close to Len, as it jumps from the South lower slope Across the entire East slope, as the engine roar pulse fades a trailing distinct sound of a trove of cats whining becomes audible.

The Monster Truck lands at the base, brakes hard, turns, ENGINE PULSE, immediate Giant Fishtail of dirt.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
(Indiscernible foreign calls)

Len rushes away as a fast as his legs gain traction, falling, using his hands to continue moving sideways onto the West slope.

Len scans for the Monster Truck. The engine echoes are Everywhere. Len spots a 10' scaffolding metal pole laying on the slope near the top plateau.

Len considers, rushes towards the pole, picks it up. The pole's weight is nominal. Len feign swings the pole, considers, then decides its cumbersome and slow, and drops it.

Len, fatigued, stumbles with each step, uses his hands to stay afoot.

The ENGINE PULSE pitches, Len jolts, echoes from every direction. He scans back and forth, as he approaches the North edge. From the corner of his eye, he sees the Monster Truck circling the base, like a shark, headed towards him.

An ENGINE PULSE, the Monster Truck rockets forward up the North lower slope, taking air over the lower plateau, as Len scurries on all fours, over the East edge.

The Monster Truck attempts to turn across the edge but awkwardly slows as its two uphill wheels rise off the ground.

The Monster Truck compensates by turning down the hill, gravity at work. Len crosses to the South edge, glances at the digital clock, 1:37.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
(Indiscernible foreign calls)

The Monster Truck circles. Len is exhausted. Clumps of dirt cling to his sweat covered face. The ORANGE JUMPSUIT is largely brown.

Len's shoes are a mud-covered mess, the weight drags heavy on his movements.

An ENGINE PULSE as Len doubles back to the East slope as he hopes to outmaneuver the beast.

The Monster Truck slows, the front wheels cut Hard, an ENGINE PULSE, and the Monster Truck turns On A Dime, accelerating up the East slope.

Len dives over the North upper slope edge, and falls. Len rolling uncontrollable, head over feet. WE HEAR the grunts of Len as he impacts the earth, whimpers, tries to slow himself. OOOMPH.

Len slams face down into the ground at the base, out of breath. The digital clock ticks. Len cranes his neck to see, the time is :29, :28, :27. Len has hope.

Len struggles to his feet.

ENGINE PULSE. Cats hiss. Len searches, twists wildly, sees nothing. The echoes are everywhere.

A long roaring sound as the Monster Truck appears and bears down on Len, careens across the base.

Len musters a dive over the lower East edge as the Monster Truck cuts quickly and averts a possible roll-over. The turn sends hundreds of pounds of dirt flying at Len. The heavy dirt blasts Len, knocks him down, and winds him.

Blood runs from his nose. Len makes his way up the slope. An ENGINE PULSE. Len is too tired to look, only concerned with GETTING HIGHER. Len sees the metal pole, and this time, grabs it, scurries to the top of the pyramid.

Len stands, two hands bracing the metal pole, as a hunter would hope to impale a beast. The engine noise is Insane.

Len aggressively searches for the Monster Truck. Len sees nothing. The engine rumble distorts and seemingly fades. A shadow passes over Len. Silence. A cat hisses.

Len cranes his eyes skyward. Awe. The Monster Truck high above Len, blocks the light.

Len turns, raising the pole at the exposed ring shaped glowing orange hot transmission.

CRUNCH. With the impact, the Monster Truck wheels expand wide, the undercarriage crushes Len, scraps his body against the dirt.

The Monster Truck bounds off the top plateau as Len's arm sails high in the air towards US, as a mangled corpse pirouettes from the treads of the rear tire, along with many other pieces of Len.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
(Indiscernible- excited calls)

Near the Orange Line, the Monster Truck slows to a stop. The engine cuts out. Eerie silence.

Footsteps, as Andre approaches the dormant beast. Andre stops briefly at Len's severed arm, kicks it errantly, some dirt goes too.

Another set of footsteps approach, a pair of black men's Channel loafer stop a pace from Andre's feet, some dirt sticks to the toe of the fine leather.

ANDRE
We gonna have a tough time passing
this off as an Escape Gone Bad.

DIGNIFIED VOICE (O.S.)
You just shovel Him up. Get back
inside. I got the paperwork done.
(A beat.)
(Calls out)
A winner?

The OS voice calls to another man, who climbs upon the cab of the Monster Truck, he is the - DRIVER, in a racing outfit, wearing a Logo fused helmet, visor raised.

Driver, steps carefully over an aluminum vented crate.

DRIVER

One sec, boss.

A small camera is mounted to the crate, aimed at a latched panel. The driver releases the latch, bends over the crate, his back conceals the activity.

The Driver's arms are reaching, moving, tossing, Something. The Driver stands, turns, in his hands there is Cat, splattered with blood, intact, with a Yellow collar around its neck.

The Driver shakes the cat slightly, the cat's eye's open, claws latch into the Driver's padded sleeve. The cat hisses.

The Driver tugs the cat, detaches it from his sleeve, then raises the cat high above his head, like a trophy.

DRIVER

We got a winner! Yellow.

DIGNIFIED VOICE (O.S.)

Great. Now, please turn so our friends in Almaty can see.

The Driver pivots and turns for an unseen audience.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)

(Indiscernible rambling)

CUT TO

INT. PRODUCERS ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A small dark office. A table filled with editing laptops and a wall filled with television monitors.

A video frame is being edited, WE ONLY SEE the hands manipulate the mouse and keyboard and hear O.S. whispers of the digital graphics artist in clearly a foreign language.

Clips play of: The Monster Truck landing on Len. A close-up of airborne body parts. A yellow collared cat, lifted high, a crate of cat corpses lining the crate's interior.

A laptop screen with rows and columns of constantly changing numbers, tabulated at the bottom with a dollar sign and lots of commas.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Inside the cab of a Loan-N-Go Home Depot rental van with "Rent this van for \$19" plastered on the side. The cab is dark, the only illumination is from several small flashlights, which beam haphazardly about.

The occupants speak indiscernibly, young adult voices, in hushed, serious tones as they pass sheets of paper to each other, exchanging glances.

Clinking. Metal-on-metal, resembling a magazine loaded into a gun. Serious sounds, menacing, a hammer or mallet striking wood, a leather strap pulled taut.

A girl speaks emphatically, in low whispers, overruling the interposing voices, she is--Mary Ella Newsome - 22, lean and spry, attractive in spite of every effort to look plain.

Mary, and she sits up a little straighter, dominates the others.

MARY

Can we be Quiet!

A hush. The flashlights beams are still, there are three listening heads, attached to people wearing dark clothes.

MARY

Ok. Ok. This is Us.

Mary points to a Google Map printout of the neighborhood, a crudely scribbled "X" on an intersection.

MARY

(Continues)

Here's the Target.

Mary slides her finger an inch, it rests upon a house just near the parked van. Mary scans the group. A voice speaks up, BOB, 25, lethargic tag-along, a flashlight to his face.

BOB
What's his name?

MARY
Finn. His name is Finn. He should
come quietly. I'm not expecting
problems.

Mary shares a photo we can't see as the flashlight glares
the glossy printout, a hand reaches out to grab it, a
flashlight follows to TREVOR, 25, wiry, jokester.

TREVOR
Ugly fuck.

Trevor glances, drops the photo, chuckles and nods as he
looks for support. KIMMY, 25, shy, athletic, ends the humor
with dead pan delivery.

KIMMY
We're not here on a pity call.

Mary lays another sheet atop the photo - it's the elevation
of a house, to the side is a gate. Mary adds--

MARY
Here's the gate. There may be a
lock.

BOB
No lock. I looked yesterday.

Bob smiles, awaits a reciprocal smile. None.

MARY
We ready?

Nods and hushed utterances.

MARY
Let's do it.

CUT TO

EXT./INT. VAN - NIGHT

The van door opens, four dark dressed individuals exit, donned backpacks, flashlights in hand, and begin to irregularly jog, towards a nearby house.

EXT. FENCED YARD - NIGHT

A small run-down house, cluttered front yard with brown grass, dirt patches, unkept, a wooden gate on the side.

The crew reaches the gate. There's a lock. Mary sees it first and confirms with a sigh.

MARY

There's a lock.

TREVOR

Dude, you said no lock!

BOB

There wasn't. I swear.

Mary takes off her backpack, drops it to the ground, and begins search.

MARY

Light.

Bob shines his flashlight over Mary's shoulder, upon the open backpack. Mary quickly removes bolt cutters.

MARY

Got 'em.

Mary stands, positions the bolt cutters on the bar lock, KERCHUNK, the busted lock falls. GRRRR. A dog behind the fence. The crew goes quiet.

BOB

Oh shit.

MARY

Quiet. Be ready. Open the gate.

CUT BACK

INT. VAN - NIGHT - MOVING

The van on a small street speeds away. Bob drives, a cucumber, checks the mirrors, eyes on it. Mary, Trevor and Kimmy in the cab, sit atop crude benches, all look down, serious for a moment. Then wide smiles, as they stare at --

FINN, an apricot and white colored
standard mixed-breed Labrador Beagle.

Finn, as wags his tail, flash breaks to lick knees, then eats rapaciously from a large kibble-filled bowl.

MARY
Whoa. Slow down there fella.

KIMMY
Probably his first meal in, like,
weeks.

TREVOR
We'll get him a bath. Clean you up
boy.

MARY
I'll need to check him for a chip.
Doubtful. But I want to make sure
no one brings him back to That
Place. Those people should be
Horse Whipped.

Bob eager to agree with anything Mary says and calls back.

BOB
Definitely.

KIMMY
When will you get him to the
shelter?

MARY
Tomorrow. Afternoon.

TREVOR
It's great the shelter works with
you like this. I mean, they could
be Asking a lot of Questions. Like
Home Depot will if I don't get
this van back, clean.

BOB

With this rescue-- he'll make 7
this month.

MARY

Yeah, I know. They are great.
(To Finn)
We'll get you a good home boy.

Mary stares at Finn. Finn stops eating, tail wags
continuously, looks long into Mary's eyes, he understands.

MARY

There's something special about
you, Finn. I'll make sure you get
a good home.

TREVOR

We'll get you a Great home.

All break out in good spirited laughter. The cab lights
turn on, and there's No Gun, No Weapons, only a leash, pair
of plyers, a bag of dog treats, some photos, and scribbled
notes, and stock photo of a similar but random dog.

INT. OPULENT OFFICE - DAY

Plush carpet, mahogany furniture, tall ceilings, spacious.

A meeting, suited men seated in chairs around a large
mahogany table. A man speaks, WE SEE only his feet,
specifically, the back of his shoes, as he walks, pauses as
he speaks, we've heard the voice before.

DIGNIFIED VOICE (O.S.)

When I was elected two years ago,
I ran on a promise. We would take
our civic responsibilities
serious. We'd make improvements in
education, health care, roads. I
promised prison reform, resources
for animal control. And most
importantly, a balanced budget. No
new taxes. And what have I done?

The man's feet pivots, WE SEE a Channel gold logo on the front of the shoes, a familiar dirt stain.

DIGNIFIED VOICE (O.S.)

I have delivered.

The Channel gold logo shoes stop, pivots and turns. A man turns to face us, he is --Rafael Mariucci, 45, suave, psychopath in an Armani suit.

Rafael, smiles broadly, hands elevated as a magician delivering magic.

RAFAEL

And that's why I'll be RE-elected
as Mayor.

Rafael pauses for effect, begins a measured walk around the table. All eyes on Rafael.

RAFAEL

(Continues)

My dear ex-wife, God rest her
soul, chided me, saying You can't
pay for these things, and not
raise taxes. But No. I told her.
The Public needs these things. I
will get it done. I said. It's a
matter of Willpower. Being willing
to do, what the others won't do.
My administration is frugal. My
accountants are sticklers for
line-items. If we can cut a
dollar, why Not two.

The men around the table nod in agreement.

RAFAEL

So, when YOU voice these concerns.
When you ASK me to stop what I'm
doing to address these. (A beat.)
Ridiculous allegations. Its
creates unnecessary risk. As, if
my eyes are Here, with You, my
Eyes are not. How we say. On the
ball?

RAFAEL

Gentlemen?

A man fidgets more than the others, scans the faces of his cohorts, sees no alarm or division, then settles his gaze on Rafael. He is— Tim Tyler, 50, cynical, statesman.

Tim speaks for everyone. Rafael takes notice and listens intently. Tim speaks slow and cautiously at first.

TIM

Mayor Mariucci. I. I think we are satisfied. We appreciate your audience.

Uninterrupted, Tim's speech becomes more fluid and comfortable.

TIM

(Continues)

And. Yes. We are grateful for what you have done for Us, and our community.

Rafael looks curiously at Tim, gauging his candor. A humming sound. Rafael's phone, deep inside his pocket, vibrates.

Rafael continues his gaze at Tim while he retrieves his phone, raises chest high to peek at the screen. The CallerID reads "Da 9999's". Rafael scans the room, then motions to his hand-cupped phone.

RAFAEL

Thank you, gentlemen. My constituents need me. I must go. Good day.

Rafael walks out the conference room door, looks long at the phone. Tim watches as he departs.

TIM

I don't trust him. These numbers just don't make sense.

Rafael exits, we follow him to—

INT. LOBBY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

--a lobby area. Chairs for guests. A large glossy poster of an airborne Monster Truck, an SPCA Award, a photo of Rafael with a warden in front of a towering prison. Several issues of Off-Road magazine, and a fictitious magazine titled Prison Warden's Weekly.

STACEY, 25, pretty, always a smile, engaged but oblivious, a secretary seated at a desk.

Rafael strides as he answers the phone, rises it to his ear. Stacey sees him enter, a smile, her head trained on him.

STACEY

Good morning.

As he ignores and indifferent Stacey, We follow him as he pushes open oversized double mahogany doors, moves into his--

INT. PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

--private office, as large as the conference room, a massive ornate desk, oversized leather chair, several model Monster Trucks upon the desk, an autographed racing helmet.

RAFAEL

(Phone)

Calm down. Calm. Listen. Will you listen to me?

(In Kazakh)

Fuck

Rafael sits, sinks in his cushy chair, legs instinctively crossed, high upon the desk as he leans Way back.

RAFAEL

(Continues)

Sanctions this and sanction that.
It is not a problem. No one sanctions foreign political donations to PACS. Just change the senders name.

(Pause)

Who cares? By the time someone notices, you'll be rich and I'll be governor.

Rafael ends the calls, pauses, then sits upright, quickly lift the desk phone handset.

RAFAEL

Get in here.

A nearby door opens and closes, followed by hurried footsteps approach. Rafael eyes the office double door. There's a knock. Then nothing.

RAFAEL

For Christ's sake, get in here.

The door opens, in a brisk and skittish pace, enters - SKYLER, 25, frail and brainy go-getter, dressed in a mid-range gray suit, matching Everything, and as always, stressed, looks as if he's about to cry.

SKYLER

I'm so sorry Mr. Marucci.

RAFAEL

Mayor.

SKYLER

Mr. Mayor Mariucci.

RAFAEL

Just Mayor Mariucci. Or even just "Sir."

SKYLER

Ok. Mayor. Sir. Got it.

RAFAEL

Our friends over *There*.

Rafael's eyes roll and head nods slightly towards the East. Skyler's fully turns as if to see someone, but doesn't. Skyler quickly looks lost and confused.

RAFAEL

Over there. In *Kazakhstan*. Need some guidance on depositing Campaign Funds. I think we'll need to come up with a few new PACs.

SKYLER

You mean shell companies, right?

RAFAEL

Of course, I mean Shell Companies. This time, don't use any in Panama. Too hot.

SKYLER

Yeah, and humid too.

RAFAEL

Fuck sake. Hot. Like *Interpol*. Not the weather. If you weren't a wizard shuffling funds, I'd replace you.

SKYLER

That. And I know all the other things too.

Skyler chuckles to himself and doesn't realize the unintended threat inferred. Rafael glares and Skyler realizes his mouth was too far ahead of his brain.

SKYLER

Sorry Sir. Mayor. I. Just meant. I'm very useful. And. I keep quiet.

RAFAEL

Let's keep it that way.
(A beat.)
Where's that leave us?

Skyler whips out an iPad mini from his coat pocket, scrolls.

SKYLER

Our prisoner count is good, but down is always better. Less prisoners, less overhead. Animal

control, still running Red, those Vet costs of dog spading/fixing expenses. I've moved some PAC funds into the Pet Adoption Fees. But it's not enough.

RAFAEL

What about the Dark Web subscriber fees?

SKYLER

There's some. But. (A beat.) I have a feeling they are not adhering to their commitment for revenue sharing.

RAFAEL

Why?

Skyler taps on a screen, shows bar charts in pink and purple.

SKYLER

These margins don't add up. We should be pulling in another 12-15 percent.

Skyler turns the iPad to face Rafael. Rafael half-looks at the iPad, and contemplates.

RAFAEL

So?

SKYLER

So, we need to get them in line, or we need fewer dogs.

RAFAEL

I need to be careful how we Approach Them. They can be quite nasty. Let's go with fewer dogs.

SKYLER

Ok. I'll make the call.

INT./EXT. CAR - DAY - MOVING

An older model Nissan Sentra, clean, filled with organized boxes of folder, supplies. Mary, is driving on a suburban street with little traffic, few lights.

Both windows are down, the radio playing something cheery. She is dressed vastly different from the raid, now in a summer dress, heels, make-up, hair brushed neat.

A refreshed Finn in the passenger seat. He's had a bath, was brushed.

Mary smiles, as she slows the car for a red light. Mary reaches over to pet, Finn anticipates and leans in.

MARY

Good boy, Finn. Wait, Nat. Your new name. I hope you like Nat since that's on the paperwork!

Mary nods to an envelope filled with folded white papers.

MARY

With your Micro-Chip neutralized, we'll get you a new one, and a new home. With a loving family.

Nat stares lovingly at Mary, as if he understands. The traffic light turns green, the car rolls forward. Nat hangs his head out the window, tongue in the wind, enjoying the fresh air. Mary glances, it brings a smile to her face.

Mary slows the car and make a turn, passing a sign "Animal Shelter." Mary glances, the car's digital clock shows 4:52.

MARY

Cutting it close. Any slower, I'd have to keep you another day. Which wouldn't entirely be a bad thing? Right?

INT. PRISON OFFICE - DAY

A dank and dreary prison office. Wooden table and chairs, relics of the 1960's, a metal floor fan, fluorescent lights cast a weak yellow light, industrial creaks and echoes.

Two men are seated at the corner of the table. A man in an Orange Jumpsuit, engaged, skeptical, not entirely sure, he is— Donald Ash, 50's, chunky but hopeful.

Donald, and he nods as listens to another man who speaks in whispers, that man is Andre.

ANDRE

So?

DONALD

I don't know. What to think. I mean I got 15 years, for me that probably Life. I thought you'd, when you asked me, well, smuggle drugs, shank someone, perhaps a Hard Stop, maybe homo shit. But.

ANDRE

It's a great deal. The best you'll get. But you have to decide—

DONALD

--now. Right now. I get it. And you can't tell me any details. If I don't make it, my kid gets 10g's. But I have a—

ANDRE

--really good chance. Just like you-know-who. Here one day— released on a technicality the next. Out of nowhere.

Donald smiles as he stares in Space, visualizes, getting out, a long distant smile.

Beat.

Whoom. The door flies open. In stomps an overexcited guard, he is— TERRY - 20's a giant goon.

Terry, smiles heartily, coffee cup in hand, speaks to Someone O/S mid-anecdote.

TERRY

--and I took his arm and bent that
fucker--

Andre overtaken by rage, stands.

ANDRE

FUCK!

Terry jumps and freezes, in shock, looks at Andre.

ANDRE

(Continues)

Get the Fuck out of here!

Andre screams at Terry, points at the exit. Terry yields, confused and unaware, backtracks. Terry doesn't look directly at Donald, but WE KNOW he sees him.

ANDRE

(Continues)

Can't you fucking read. The sign.
Stay the Fuck out!

Terry exits, musters a whispered apology, closes the door carefully behind him, casts an underhanded glance at Donald.

Andre stares at the closed door, exhales deeply, remembers where he paused his conversations, now the beads of tirade induced perspiration blanket his face. Andre sits, quickly settles, he's surprisingly calm.

ANDRE

So. What's it gonna be? I can
promise you two things, and
because this place is so
regulated, I can't guarantee
anything. But, you will have a
REAL chance to come out Way ahead,
and a real chance at dying, a
fabulously exciting, yet quick
death. I don't expect you to come
to a decision soon, but I need an
answer now.

TERRY

How long do I have to think about
it?

ANDRE

I'm getting up to leave now. You
have until I reach the door.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

A detached brick building, small largely empty parking lot,
perimeter fenced, a sign "City Animal Rescue."

Mary stops the car, and as she turns the engine off, she
looks at Nat. Nat wags his tail, leans in again. Mary,
obliged, pets him lovingly. Mary grabs a new Red collar
from a supply box and fastens it around his neck.

MARY

Let's go Nat.

Mary walks around the car, opens the passenger door.

MARY

C'mon.

Nat is reluctant, he wants to stay in the car. Mary tugs on
his collar, he resists a little.

MARY

Let's go. It's hard enough for me
already. Please. We'll find you a
great home, with a great family,
kids to play with. I promise.

Nat appears to hear her plea, and jumps down. Mary fastens
a leash, and Mary and Nat walk towards the entrance, into--

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT

A business lobby area, a customer counter, service windows,
chairs, a TV on the wall, a poster board with photos of
pets for adoption.

--the lobby. No customers, the lobby is empty, the only
person present is a girl behind the counter, and she is---
Ava, 20's, unenthused, casual employee.

Ava, the receptionist, playing Texas Hold-em on her computer. The lobby door slams closed, Ava looks up and recognizes a familiar face.

AVA

And there she is, the pet lover
with no pets.

MARY

Well hello yourself! And who is
this?

Ava slides a clipboard with a pen tethered by a string, and forms across the counter.

MARY

This is Finn. Er. Pat. I mean NAT.

MARY- A MOUTHFUL

AVA

Well, let's get him checked in.

MARY

Already got those done. Saved you
some time. I'm sure you want to
get out of here.

AVA

Yeah. You, me, everybody else.

MARY

Sticklers, huh?

AVA

They sure are. The city manager
called like three times to make
sure I'm out of her By 5. Like
he's got nothing better to do.

MARY

The city manager? Does he usually
call?

AVA

I don't know. I'm only here like 15 hours a week. It's bizarre they leave me alone. In charge. Usually there's like, three staff and a manager here.

MARY

Maybe you're management material?

AVA

Ha. I can't even run the copier. I dunno. They've done this before. Probably to save money. I think.

MARY

The city is always trying to save money. Usually at the expense of the Needy.

AVA

Well, let me get these forms filed, and you'll be all set. Just take a minute.

MARY

Sure. No rush. Ahh. NAT is going to make a great addition to some caring family.

AVA

Where did you find him?

MARY

(rehearsed)

I gotta call. Nat was found along the highway in Rainbow, about 20 miles from here. No tags. No nothing. He looks like a Nat. I had him for a week, had to call him something.

Ava believes the story.

MARY

(Continues)

But I looked Everywhere for the owner, put up some posters,

checked with police and fire,
nothing. He seems okay.

AVA

Nat is so lucky. You always seem
to be in the right place.

(Pause)

Just give me a minute. I have a
pen set up for Nat.

Ava arises and walks O/S. The TV audio becomes clearer.
Mary kneels, eyes watering as she starts to a good-bye.
Something on the TV catches her attention.

CUT TO

EXT. PRISON EXTERIOR GATE - DAY

A news reporter, female, 30's, small-time amateur, with a
cut-throat shrill voice, holds a microphone. She stands in
front of an ominous brick building with a "City Prison"
placard.

REPORTER

The warden reported a felon was
shot and killed after a failed
attempt to escape from the city
prison. This is the 3rd attempt in
as many months from this facility.
This man-

Len's booking photo is shown

--was 3 years into a 15-year
sentence, was shot and killed
while fleeing. The warden said
guards gave a warning, but the
felon did not stop, leaving the
guard with no choice but to shoot.
Back to you.

CUT BACK

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT

Mary stares somewhere in the distance as her hands still
pet Nat. Nat looks around nervously, tail motionless. Ava
returns, passing the visitor gate, and kneels next to Mary
and Nat.

AVA

I hate to rush goodbye's, but its
5:02, and I need to split.

Mary looks sad.

AVA

We'll take good care of him. He
gets the last room in the house. I
saved the best for him. Alright
Mar?

MARY

Yeah. I'm okay. I just have a
feeling I'm really gonna miss this
guy.

AVA

Like you always say, who rescued
who.

Mary does say that.

MARY

Thanks. I needed to hear that.

Mary released Pat's collar to Ava. Mary and Ava stand,
looking into each other's eyes.

Ava nods it's okay, Mary sad. Ava turns and walks Nat. Nat
looks back, tugs slightly towards Mary, as he's let through
the gate into the pen area.

Mary watches him go, then sighs. Mary turns and exits the
door, leading outside.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT

Mary walks slow, head drooped, a hand in her pocket as she
reaches her car. The car looks dark and empty and she
notices.

A metal squeaking noise awakens her, she around for the
source.

Mary spots, parked, just outside the gate, a Loan-N-Go Home Depot rental van, exactly the model as she rented the night before.

MARY

(Jokes)

I guess someone else is
dognapping.

Mary gets into her car. As she drives past the truck she notices in the front seat, the familiar glow of a cell phone, silhouetting the faces of two shadowy people.

Mary dismisses the oddity, and drifts back to sadness. Mary looks in the rear-view mirror, seeing the Shelter grow small.

As Mary turns away, the van's tail lights turn on.

INT. KITCHEN - MARYS CRAMPED APARTMENT - NIGHT

Small dank apartment kitchen, cluttered but clean. A toaster oven, counter and stovetop both storage areas.

A tiny table, one chair, a laptop. Fridge covered with Polaroid photos of rescued animals, including Finn's photo, labeled, handwritten in Red Marker "Rescued."

Mary sits, looks frail and emotionally exhausted, slouched in the chair, hand supporting her heavy head, the other hand scrolls the laptop mouse.

Finn's old leash and dog tag sits nearby. Mary checks her email, most subjects are about dogs, cats, a horse needing rescue. Mary glances at Finn's collar.

She deliberates, a tear rolls down her cheek, she quickly Deletes everything.

(a Beat.)

FLUSH. A door opens. A bellowing sigh of relief, out walks Bob, as he fixes his pants.

BOB

I turned the fan on.

Bob sees Mary's sadness as get gets close.

BOB
You can't keep blaming yourself.

Mary looks up with watering eyes.

BOB
It's been years. You were just a kid. Kids forget—

MARY
--he died. He died. And it was all my fault. I just can't let that happen. Ever again.

Bob repels.

BOB
I'm just saying. Think of all the good you do. You'll give Finn a better home. The Best home.

Mary undecided. Bob comes close to comfort.

BOB
I told you. I forgot to feed my hermit crabs. Like for a month. My mom reminded me like every day after school to take care of them, stop watching Tv, exercise.

Bob forget his point.

BOB
But. Wait. Well they died. It was my fault. I was responsible. But now, I'm a different person. I have a job. I'm respectable. People at Home Depot. They know I care. Really care.

Mary starts to believe.

MARY
Do you think he. Suffered?

BOB

No. No. He died peacefully.
Probably from old age or disease.
Not starvation.

MARY

Then why were his paws bitten up?

Bob grasps.

BOB

Rabbits don't do that. It doesn't
matter how hungry they are.

Mary buries her head in her crossed arms, Bob rolls his eyes skyward and asks God for forgiveness. Bob stands, looks at a saddened Mary, knows tonight won't be his lucky night, and decides.

BOB

I gotta roll. Maybe, I'll call you tomorrow. We can go over together and get him?

Mary still silent. Bob steps towards the door.

BOB

You are his savior. Like countless other animals you've rescued. He loves you.

Bob doesn't see as Mary jumps slightly at "loves you."

Bob saunters to the door and quietly leaves a distraught Mary.

Mary wipes her eyes, looks around. She types in the browser, leading her to the website, Next Door, types in search keywords "abused, animals," moves the mouse cursor over Search, but quickly changes her mind. Slams the laptop shut.

She crosses her arms, buries her head upon the table and sobs. Her sobs quiet.

There's no noise in the apartment, WE HEAR tiny clicks of random apartment noise, the silent sounds of emptiness. Mary rises her head looks around, determined.

See a towel on the floor covered with Finn's loose dog hair from last night's bath. Looks at the photo of Finn on the fridge and decides.

MARY

I'm going back first thing.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT

Two men lead several leashed and reluctant dogs out the shelter door. Some dogs resist then are yanked. The last of the dogs enters the van. A shadowy man closes the rear van door. Both men enter the van and depart.

EXT. CURB - STADIUM - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

The van parked curbside at the stadium's entrance. WHHHHHHUUUUUUU. An ENGINE PULSE echoes.

CUT TO

EXT. FIELD - STADIUM - NIGHT

That fat man can run. Donald moves like a linebacker half his age. Arms pump, knees high, torn sneakers kick up dirt as he traverses an edge. Face drenched in sweat, and mud trails. Hands caked with dirt, he quickly down on all fours and climbs with strength.

The clock countdown 39, 38, 37.

Donald doesn't look at the clock, but keeps his own countdown, just a second off.

DONALD

40, 39. C'mon Donny. We got this.

A gasp. His eyes on a swivel. He passes an 8' Chrome Chain and casts a puzzled scowl.

The loudspeaker bellows.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)

(Indiscernible foreign calls)

SUBTITLE: Fat man decline to accept metal hoop link.

An ENGINE PULSE, the Monster Truck skyward, lands unevenly where Donald was a second ago, bounds down the pyramid. A sharp turn.

Donald moves to higher ground.

Andre and Rafael behind the wall. Andre plainly stares while Rafael muses.

RAFAEL

Nice touch. The chain. Who thought of that?

ANDRE

I don't know.

RAFAEL

Perhaps, next time, a chain saw, or better yet, a machete?

Andre glued to the action. Rafael taps his watch.

RAFAEL

Better wrap this up.

Rafael nods to the circling Monster Truck. As if the Driver heard him, ENGINE PULSE, the truck screams up the slope, sending a rooster tail of brown dirt flying.

RAFAEL

This should do it.

Donald sees it coming, stands tall at the apex, unafraid. The Monster Truck bears down. Rafael keenly watches. Andre hasn't blinked. Even the announcer gives pause.

ENGINE PULSE, full speed ahead, the Monster Truck nearly upon Donny.

DONNY BARREL ROLLS to the side. The truck, cuts the wheel too fast, induces a roll.

The truck tumbles the slope. A door flies off, siding, the light bar, the axle bends, as the truck settles at the base, upside-down, two wheels spin, as one falls off.

Rafael stares motionless in disbelief. Andre cheers.

ANDRE

Way to go Donny! Yeah!

Donny, a dirt covered mess, stands at the first plateau, arms raised as a champion. The clock counts down 2, 1, a horn blast. A trashed Monster Truck squeakily rocks still.

Andre jumps and cheers, moves to Rafael and offers a high-five. Rafael looks him down.

RAFAEL

Get away.

Andre softens his enthusiasm, jumps over the fence and quickly walks to Donny. Donny stumbles down the decline to the base, jubilant, gasps, an ear-to-ear grin.

DONNY

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah! 10 years off
baby. 10 muther-fucking years.

Donny gives Andrea big-high five. Andre smiles.

ANDRE

I'm happy for you bro. Too bad
this time I bet on the truck. You
cost me.

Andre takes out the cuffs, gives them a shake. Donny happily complies.

ANDRE

Let's get you back. On the way,
I'll grab you a Big-Mac and a
shake. Remember, not a word.
Understood.

Donny turns and assumes the position.

DONNY

Got it. Man. Fucking awesome.
Shit. I'll be eligible for parole,
like next year.

Men spray the smoldering Monster Truck with a fire extinguisher. DRIVER sits on the dirt, nearby, in disbelief, shakes his head solemnly, twists his back and shirks in pain.

A goon in a mechanics outfit pries open the cage. He leans forward, elbows move, while his unseen hands work grunts as he pulls and pushes Something. A black dog's tail. A white leg. A 40lbs mass falls lifeless to the dirt. An apricot and white colored paw flops lifelessly aside the goon's torso. The goon turns towards Driver and shakes his head sideways.

Driver looks skyward towards Someone and relays the message.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)
 (Indiscernible foreign calls)
 SUBTITLE: No winner. No winner.

INT. PRODUCERS ROOM - NIGHT

Seated men at laptops edit videos which appear on TV screens and whisper in indiscernible foreign hushes.

Rafael paces frantically, phone pressed to his head, sweat beads across his face. He wipes with his sleeve, curiously examines the sweat stain on the jacket's sleeve, shakes his arm to no avail.

He stands still, stares, holds on the TV as it plays clips of the Monster Truck as it rolls over, Donny's moment of triumph, the goon as he shakes his head.

RAFAEL
 This is serious. Calm down? I'm
 the one who is here. You're 6,000
 miles away. What do we do?

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

A dark office, a desk, a single yellowish lamp casts limited light on a seated dark suited man, as he smokes a cigarette. He is NURSULTAN, 50, polished war criminal.

INTERCUT between Rafael and Nursultan.

RAFAEL

We. You and I. Us.

NURSULTAN

I see this as your problem. But I will help. We are, as you say, a Team.

RAFAEL

It's a wreck. My guy has a fractured vertebra.

NURSULTAN

You will take care of the winner?

RAFAEL

I'm not worried about our *contestant*. We have checks-and-balances in case he can't keep his mouth shut. Really, who would believe him?

NURSULTAN

In Kazach, we don't leave loose ends. You soft. How do you say? Domesticated.

RAFAEL

I suppose. But I have to get the Truck Fixed. Or we are Out Of Business. Plus a Driver.

(Muses)

Though I could make him a city employee, call it a work-related injury. Later.

(On point)

Truck first.

NURSULTAN

What do you need?

RAFAEL

50k.

NURSULTAN

Peanuts. You have? Yes.

RAFAEL

No I don't have. The city has it.
Besides, it will take a month to
fix.

NURSULTAN

A month? Here we fix in a week.

RAFAEL

I could, but it will cost more.
Much more. Double.

NURSULTAN

You will find way.

RAFAEL

I know. I can. Do it. You're
right. No other options.

Nursultan ends the call. Rafael looks skyward and muses.

RAFAEL

But I'd have to get the money back
fast. Tool-Time fucking Tim
watches everything. I need another
driver. Fuck, all the strays we'll
have to fix. Another 100k in
prison expenses. Damn. This will
ruin my candidacy.

CUT TO

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Nursultan studies the ceiling, considers and decides. He
snaps his fingers. An aide appears, stands at attention.

NURSULTAN

I will need a flight to America.
Today. Make arrangements.

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

A man inside with a key in hand approaches the glass doors
to unlock them, he is -Marco, 40, gruff badger, and he
moves slower as he eyes Mary outside, impatiently pacing,
eager to enter.

Mary squeezes inside as the door opens.

Mary postures. Marco senses her urgency with a skeptical eye. He avoids eye contact as he waddles in retreat to his chair behind the counter, eyes already glued to a TV playing off-roading videos.

MARCO

As least you waited until the door opened. You know technically we don't-

MARY

--I know. 8:30. It's 8:29. Call it a good deed.

Mary smiles and beams, she's on top of the world. He's skeptical, mostly tuned to the TV, but casts her a curt smile.

MARY

(Blurts, happily)
I'm here to get my dog!

MARCO

Ok. Ok. We'll Pet Adoptions is what we are here for. I. Well, you know your way around. Go have a look and see if any are a good fit. I'll-

Mary brushes past him quick footed, eyes ahead.

MARCO

(Trails)
--be happy to assist.

Not even Marco believes those words. Back to the TV. A giant truck does a full flip, then launches 30 feet into the air.

CUT TO

INT. KENNEL - ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

Rows of kennel cages for dogs and cats of various sizes. Largely occupied with Pit Bulls, other odd strays. Empty

food bowls, feces on the floor - no one has cleaned or fed them in a while.

Mary walks fast into the first row of kennels, scans each one quickly for Nat. She's all smiles.

MARY

No. No. No.

Mary has finished the first row, and quickly moves to the second and final row. She's a bit anxious.

MARY

Where's my boy?

Mary is halfway down the row, Pitbull, empty, Pitbull, empty, one cage left beyond her view.

MARY

And there he is!

Mary is beyond enthused, already crouches, slowly sees the LAST KENNEL IS EMPTY. Mary stares, her smile is gone, and panic quickly set in.

MARY

What?

Mary turns, backtracks, scans all the kennels a second time. Mary looks in the cat's area, still nothing. Mary walks fast, nearly runs, and WE FOLLOW HER as she returns to-

CUT BACK

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

--the front counter. Marco sits, disinterested, turns as hurried footsteps approach. Mary, frantic, leans over the counter.

MARY

Where is he?

MARCO

Who?

MARY

MY DOG. Where is he?

MARCO

I don't know.

Marco remains seated, hunkered down, trying to act calm but notably ridged. Mary's upset, her voice elevated.

MARY

He was here yesterday.

MARCO

Miss. Please calm down. Dogs are here one day, and adopted the next. If you liked him, you should have filled out the forms—

MARY

--I just brought him in yesterday.

MARCO

Good dogs go quick.

MARY

No. No. I just brought him in yesterday. You guys were closing. You Just opened. Where is he?

MARCO

Why would you bring him in if you wanted to keep him?

MARY

That's not the point. Where is He?

MARCO

Alright, alright. What kind of dog was he?

MARY

He's a mixed-breed Labrador Beagle mix.

MARCO

His name?

MARY

Finn. I mean. Nat.

MARCO
Which one is it? Finn or Nate.

MARY
Nat.

MARCO
Finn or Nat?

MARY
Nat.

MARCO
(Flippant)
Was this your dog or one of those
you, Liberated?

MARY
(Starkly)
What difference does it make?

MARCO
(Warns)
You need to settle down miss.

The front desk phone rings. Marco looks at her with disgust, hesitancy, then motions towards the phone.

MARCO
I need to answer that. Get set up.
I'll. Be here.

Marco slides her a Post-It and a pen.

MARCO
(Continues)
Write your name and number, and
the dogs information. I'll look
into it.

Marco doesn't await a reply, and answers the phone, immediately engrossed in the call, clearly relieved.

MARCO

Animal shelter. How can I help you today?
 (Pause)
 Sure. Sure. Just give me a minute to log in.

Marco casts an eye to a beaming Mary, then nods to the blank Post-It.

MARCO
 (To Mary)
 This may take a while. I'll call you.

MARY-STEAMING.

Mary acquiesces and hastily scribbles down her name and number. Marco on the phone, in no rush. Mary recognizes he's going to wait her out. Mary storms out--

CUT BACK

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

--the front door of the shelter. Stands in reflection as the doors begin to close behind her.

MARY
 There's something incredible wrong here.

Mary takes a deep breath. The closing door jars her. Mary realizes Something.

MARY
 That van. That Home Depot van.

Mary turns, storms back into--

CUT BACK

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

--the lobby. Marco stands, off the phone, caught flat-footed at Mary's return.

MARY
 (Barks)

The Van. Last night. Where did you take him?

Marco wide-eyed.

MARCO

What—

MARY

The rental van. Yesterday, when you closed. The van that was outside.

Marco squirms.

MARCO

I. I wasn't here.

Mary incensed. Marco on the defensive.

MARCO

(Dumbly offers)
Maybe he was transferred?

MARY

Do you transfer animals?

MARCO

Uh. No.

MARY

I'm going to get to the bottom of this. Maybe the police should know what's going on here.

MARCO

What? That you steal people's dogs, because You don't think they are good owners.

Mary at a standstill as the quick facts of reality settle in, Marco knows something about Finn's absence, and she is, after all, technically stealing dogs.

MARY

This is not going away.

Mary turns and storms out. Marco cautiously observes her departure. He picks up the phone, dials, intermittently glances between a distant Mary and the keypad. The phone rings.

MARCO

(On the phone)

Uh. Boss. We may have a problem.

INT. OPULENT OFFICE - DAY

Rafael on the phone, stands, mid-speech, in the background, a table filled with seated executives includes a skeptical Tim.

INTERCUT between Marco and Rafael

RAFAEL

(On phone)

That's great news. I need to finish up with a meeting, and I'll give you a call back.

Marco puzzled.

MARCO

(On phone)

I said We have a problem. There's a girl here asking questions about a missing dog.

RAFAEL

(On phone)

Right, right. I'm happy your happy. It's my pleasure. Take care now.

Rafael, hangs up, smoothly pockets his phone, momentarily forgets his paused audience, stares blankly into the distance.

Marco, confused, stares at the phone while it emits a dial tone.

END INTERCUT

TIM

A-hem.

Rafael glances up at the guests who all stare.

RAFAEL

Sorry, I was saying-

TIM

How you plan to pay for these programs. These promises you keep making. I just can't see how-

RAFAEL

--yes, yes. That is why, my friend, I am the mayor. Now, if we are finished, I have matters to attend to.

The guests slowly gather their materials, stand, prepare to depart. Rafael is lost in the moment, stares, contemplates Something.

INT. PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

Rafael and Skyler dressed as-if going to a Polo match though Rafael's attire is gaudier. Rafael paces circles while Skyler is on the phone.

Skyler covers the phone's mouthpiece.

SKYLER

The bank said the money didn't come in.

Rafael pines as he hears the news.

RAFAEL

Yes, we knew it was a possibility our Friends would resort to hard-ball.

SKYLER

It appears, our--

Skyler really enjoys the innocuous term.

SKYLER

(Continues)

--*Friends*, dislike our New financial arrangement.

RAFAEL

(To himself)

I can't cut expenses enough. Tim will know there's something up. I don't need Him snooping around.

Skyler ends the call and tunes into Rafael to hear the rhetorical comment.

SKYLER

The quarterlies are due Friday. You need to—

RAFAEL

I know what I need to do. Get our *Friends* back on the phone. I have an offer they can't refuse.

SKYLER

Don't you mean *Friends*?

Rafael beams and Skyler quickly realizes his emphasis overstepped. Skyler steps to the desk, handling papers, grabs the phone. Rafael on his cell phone, flips through phone Contacts - sees - Warden.

RAFAEL

(Aloud to himself)

I've gotta make a few calls.

Rafael dials a first ring pick-up.

RAFAEL

It's me.

VOICE ON PHONE

(Indiscernible)

RAFAEL

You got one? Good. But I need five.

VOICE ON PHONE
(Indiscernible yet alarmed)

RAFAEL
Five. Get it done, or we're
finished.

Rafael ends the call. Rafael examines the phone, scrolls,
and dials.

RAFAEL
Hello. Marco?

INT. PEETS COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Local coffee shop. Sparsely occupied, small tables and
chairs.

Ava sits, plays on her phone, attention jumps between her
phone screen to Somewhere in Space, wears a certain
despair, a tote bag on the floor by her legs, a few manila
folders inside.

Mary enters, excitedly approaches her, not even fully
seated, and begins to speak, words running together.

MARY
Sorry for spamming you on
Facebook.

AVA
No, it's okay. I'd reply faster,
but I deleted the App. Now I just
keep getting these stupid email
alerts from them asking me What
they did Wrong?

MARY
Did they tell you why you were
fired?

AVA
No. Even worse, he did it by text!
Not even the decency to call or
Skype. Said they needed to "right-
size." Whatever that means. Heck,
I don't even think he knows. Self-

absorbed idiot, pig. They already posted a job vacancy. I think he just wanted me out.

MARY

I'm so sorry Ava. Are you getting a coffee?

AVA

Uh. No. I'm kind of broke. With no next-paycheck. It's okay. I just came to see you.

MARY

Yeah. Getting coffee out gets kind of pricey. I'm saving up to build a website.

AVA

What's it do?

MARY

It will help match People with the Right pets.

AVA

That sounds cool. What's it called?

MARY

I dunno. Maybe e-furry-me, or pet-tinder? I was going to call it animallovers.com. But. It was already taken. You wouldn't believe what the heck was on that site. Some people are more animal, than-

AVA

--animals.

MARY

Real sickos out there. Well listen. You remember the dog I dropped off a couple days ago. I think it was your last day.

AVA

Yeah, I think. So many dogs.

Ava slowly searches her mind. Mary smiles, eager to move the conversation ahead.

MARY

I went back yesterday morning to get him and he was gone.

AVA

Well, good dogs go quick—

MARY

--no. I brought him in, to you, and you closed. I was back the next morning, Marco opened. Finn was gone.

AVA

Who is Finn?

MARY

I mean Nat.

Ava looks at Mary sideways.

AVA

He should still be there. There's nothing after hours.

Ava thinks for a quick second.

AVA

Though. I mean there was a time a few months ago, when I locked up one night, and opened the next morning, and some folders I KNOW I left on the desk, were gone.

MARY

Weird. Just gone? Did you report it?

AVA

Vanished. At least I think they were gone. I told Marco. He called

me Flighty. Which, is maybe a little accurate.

Mary understands that comment, rolls her eyes.

MARY

No. I wouldn't say Flighty. Just, busy. You are Deep in thought about other stuff.

AVA

Yeah. I was worried I may get fired if stuff went missing so I started making copies of what I did so-

MARY

Copies! You have copies of the records?

AVA

Just the stuff I did. Mostly billing. In case he said I was stealing.

MARY

Logs of rescued animals and adoptions?

AVA

Yes, some of those, and invoices for vet billing, animal disposal.

MARY

You mean animal Waste disposal.

AVA

No. Animal disposal. You know. When the animal dies and-

MARY

I'm sure that doesn't happen too often.

AVA

You'd be surprised. Like every day it seems.

MARY

Do you have the records with you?

AVA

No. There scattered about. Some are in my car, some in my backpack, in the closet-

MARY

--I get it. Can I have them?

AVA

Sure, you can have them all. I'm already fired.

INT. MARY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mary seated at her kitchen table, contained to a cramped space as she pushed the other items to the edge to give herself a little room for THE ANIMAL SHELTER RECORDS.

Mary is feverously scanning documents, papers, invoices, Post-It notes.

Mary has two sheets laid in front of her. Mary's finger jumps between the two. One column lists "17" the other shows "13." Mary hastily circles both numbers with a Red Marker, then writes "4 missing."

MARY

Another one.

Mary amassed a stack of papers with Red Markings.

MARY - EUREKA MOMENT

MARY

That makes 47 pets in the past 90 days. Where are they taking You? What are these bastards up to? I should call the police. But they won't do anything until I know more.

Mary flips through a stack of invoices. Mary sees Something, freezes, eyes water in sadness. WE SEE it's an

invoice from Area Crematory. Mary holds the invoice for a few seconds, then lowers it, drops it upon the pile, wipes her eyes and whimpers.

Behind this slip, is another, and another. Mary knows what these are, tears fall freely. Mary looks sideways, hands support her head as she considers.

A shudder, followed by a deep centering breath. Mary looks at the stack of invoices.

Protruding just above the crematory invoice, is an invoice with a Home Depot logo. Mary removes the HOME DEPOT INVOICE from the pile, picks it up and holds it to eye level, sees the billed amount is \$19.95. Mary instinctively recognizes the price, stares at the ceiling, considers, and decides. Mary purposefully stands.

INT. HOME DEPOT - DAY

The Home Depot Returns and Service counter. A few clerks dressed in orange aprons, a short line of annoyed customers, their arms carry various defective items.

The clerks are in semi-circle engaged in an animated and spirited discussion, debating Star Wars, barely tend to the customers. The waiting customer exchange unhappy glances and sighs.

Mary approaches, recognizes Bob from a distance and smiles. Bob hands open, animated, as he agrees with Clerk A, 20's, homely.

BOB

(to Clerk A)
Solo's was the worst ever. Man,
one second the plating and sensor
dish, there. Then Poof! Even the
quad turrets didn't-

CLERK A

Yeah. How do you ruin the sound of
freakin quad turret.

Something catches Bob's eye, he's immediately detached from the Star Wars spar. Bob sees through a waiting customer, who for a second, anticipated Bob to call "next."

Bob sees Mary and smiles warmly. Mary, with prose, cuts to the head of the line, places an elbow on the counter, casts an ignorant glance at the line of grumbling customers.

MARY - MY BUSINESS MATTERS

BOB

Hey.

Mary slides the INVOICE across the counter.

MARY

Here's the invoice. Are you busy?

BOB

Naw. It's slow.

Mary for a moment, eyes the line. A woman, 50's, offers a scowl.

MARY

Just take a second.

(To Bob)

So?

Bob keys the computer, looks at the screen.

BOB

This was paid by the city.

Mary, disheartened.

MARY

Oh. Animal control. I thought it may be some--

BOB

--No. By the mayor's office. They.
(Pause)

Bob scans the screen.

BOB

Rent a van, like every week.

MARY

Every week? What days?

BOB

I'll print the record for you.

They—

(A beat.)

-- have one reserved for today.

Pickup at 4.

Mary's interested piqued. The growing line of customers call aloud their dissatisfaction.

The printer whizzes as a sheet is printed. Bob pulls the paper from the tray and hands it to Mary.

BOB

(Aloud to the line)

Ok, Ok. One second people.

Bob raises his hands up in surrender and offers his well-rehearsed corporate pitch

BOB

(Continues -)

I promise any delay is because we personally attend to each and every guest, ensuring the best service experience.

Mary blows Bob a kiss as she turns and walks away. Bob blushes, ignorant that he's left with a growing field of grumbling customers, watches Mary's departure way too long.

INT. STADIUM - NIGHT

A bulldozer moves a pile of earth, puts the finishing touches on the Mayan pyramid.

Rafael and Skyler stand a few feet apart both wear very new vogue blue-jeans and sport coats. Skyler marvels at the sight and rube of the dozer, Rafael on the phone.

Marco, dressed in filthy dungarees, sweaty and dirt covered, approaches Skyler.

MARCO

Ahem.

Marco holds his hand out, makes a "gimme" motion. Skyler barely takes his eyes off the dozer, reaches inside his coat pocket, removes a BROWN-PAPER-WRAPPED bundle, blindly hands it to Marco.

Marco smiles wide, rips at the paper, fumbles and drops the bundle into the dirt.

Marco leans over to retrieve, his ass-crack wildly exposed, catches Skyler's attention, a glance, a patronizing frown.

Marco stands, gasps for breath, fingers the money inside the paper, then slumbers away. Skyler shakes his head in mild disgust.

SKYLER

(Mumbles)

The things I do to get ahead.

Rafael ends his phone call, looks on point. Skyler anticipates more guidance.

RAFAEL

I need to tend to some things back at the office. You stay here. Keep the plan on track. Yes.

Rafael doesn't await a reply, turns and walks away. Skyler likes the delegation.

As Rafael clears the area, Skyler, enjoys a certain pleasure, slowly begins to triumphantly sing Big Sean's song, "I don't fuck with you" to himself, bobs his head awkwardly, smiles, starts to dance, rough at first, then progressively better. He's a great dancer with a strong voice.

SKYLER

Little stupid ass, I don't give a fuck, I don't give a fuck, Bitch, I don't give a fuck about you or anything that you. I. I. I don't give a fuck, give a fuck.

INT. PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

Rafael in the office, pacing, in control, but somewhat jittery, on the phone, glances at the laptop screen, then paces some more.

RAFAEL

(An apology)

No. No. I wasn't making demands.

(A pause)

Yes. I'm Not fucking you.

NURSULTAN (V.O.S.)

(Angry but indiscernible)

RAFAEL

Here? You're here? No. You don't need. I don't need a. Babysitter.

Tim opens the ajar door, walks in with poise, sheets of paper in his hand. Rafael in awe, stares at the open door.

RAFAEL - WHO ARE YOU NOT TO KNOCK?

Tim, acutely aware Rafael engaged in a private conversation, stops confrontationally close to Rafael, commands Rafael's attention. Rafael holds his gaze on Tim.

RAFAEL

(On the phone)

Wait. Wait. I'm going to have to call you back. No. I'll call you back. I. I have some one here. No. NO.

Rafael ends the call, exchanges a glance between Tim and the door. Rafael suspects Tim will present a speedbump and makes a hallow effort to redirect by barking--

RAFAEL

Do you live in a barn?

Tim is savvy, ignores the comment, and pushes his agenda.

TIM

I don't know what you're doing.
But I'm on to you.

Rafael, a poorly concealed squeamish laugh.

Tim waves the handful of papers at Rafael.

TIM

You can't use campaign
contributions as donations to fund
ongoing operations.

Rafael looks over his shoulder, hoping Skyler would be there to help.

RAFAEL

I'm sure it's nothing. My
assistant will-

TIM

--your assistant is running the
show. Is that what you're telling
me?

Rafael squirms and Tim is authoritative.

TIM

YOU don't know where this money is
coming from. Nor where's it going.
You are breaking the law. A \$100k
to a Falafel shop? This stinks
like fraud. I'm calling an
emergency council meeting. You're
finished.

Rafael's face reddens, looks around the room. Tim grows louder.

TIM

You're done in this town.

Rafael pale, chin high and canted, blinks twice quickly.
Tim's finger pokes Rafael in the chest.

TIM

Done!

Tim pokes him a second time, harder, urges a reaction, but Rafael doesn't acknowledge. Tim withdraws his finger. A little space. Tim awaits Something.

But not this. Rafael pulls a gun from the small of his back, point blank at Tim's head. Shock, nothing else. No time to react. BOOM. A contact shot.

Blood spray and brains sail, and form a neat triangular pattern on the floor, Tim's body collapses oddly, eyes open with a bewildered look, the top half of his skull a hamburger mess, with a leg bent underneath him props his hips up.

RAFAEL

No. My friend. You are done.

Rafael retrieves his phone and dials. Rafael walks a small circle around Tim's corpse, casually, awaits the dialed party to answer.

NURSULTAN (V.O.S.)

Yes.

RAFAEL

Yeah, sorry about that. On second thought. Send your guys. I could use-

Rafael eyes Tim's corpse and the blood splatter.

RAFAEL

(Continues)

--a hand. Have them bring a tarp and a bottle of Oxyclean.

INT. FALAFEL SHOP - DAY

A very ethnic Falafel shop, deli counter, a few small tables and chairs, drab photos, eclectic local fare.

Two large olive-skinned gruff men, AMBART, and YAKAV, 30, dressed as if they were plucked off the streets of Kazakhstan, sit at the smallest table at the window smoking cigarettes, doing nothing else. An ashtray overflowing with butts, two flip phones on the table.

The men sit quietly, somber, the air is heavy as they wait.

A phone vibrates. The larger and filthier of the two, Ambart, glances unsurprised at the vibrating device. He methodically picks it up, and answers, speaking in a foreign tongue.

AMBART
(Indiscernible)

VOICE (V.O.S.)
(Indiscernible, terse
instructions)

AMBART
(Indiscernible)

Ambart ends the calls, returns the phone to the table, in a giant draw, finishes his cigarette. The smaller man, Yakav, 30's, look serenely out the window.

Ambart lights another cigarette, taps his fingernail upon the table and gets Yakav's attention.

AMBART
Do you know this Oxy-Clean?

Yakav's eyes filled with confusion, returns to looking out the window.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

We've been here. Stacey seated at her desk, the lobby empty and quiet.

The door burst open, and with a purpose and a fist full of invoices, Mary storms in, committed, expecting to battle, but comes face to face with, Stacey and her warm and inviting smile.

STACEY
Good afternoon. Maam. What can I
help you with?

Mary slows, her planned onslaught deflates.

MARY
I'm here to see the Mayor.

STACEY

Ok. And your name?

MARY

I don't have to tell you.

STACEY

That's okay. What's this regarding?

MARY

It's none of your business. Where is he?

STACEY

He's meeting with constituents at the moment. You know he's started his re-election campaign.

MARY

Uh. Yeah. When is he due back?

STACEY

Well, not today. His office is closed. Fumigation.

Stacey nods towards the door, Yellow Tape and an Orange Cones warn of Pesticides.

STACEY

But if you want to leave a number, he'll give you a call Today.

MARY

I'm not falling for that. He's hiding.

STACEY

I can assure he calls every single person back. It's his hallmark, 360-feedback. He always says He Works for You.

Stacey punctuates. Mary looks at the Yellow Tape, considers, believes that Stacey believes. Mary wonders.

MARY

Why is only his office closed?

STACEY

I don't know.

Stacey smiles.

STACEY

If you don't want to leave your number, I can put you in his calendar, for, the day after next. 9:00 a.m. is open. Would that work?

Mary deflates from Stacey continued pleasant demeanor.

MARY

Uh. Yes. That will do.

Mary pauses, studies the rest of the office. Mary sees the SPCA award, the Off-Roading and Prison Warden's Weekly magazine, and muses, and shivers.

MARY

Where is he now?

STACEY

His daily calendar is public and available online. I can tell you he just finished a meeting at the Flyer's Ball Park and. His next appointment is coffee and cake at the Rotary Club. Would you like the address?

MARY

No. That's okay. I know where—wait. Flyer's Ball Park? That's shut down, isn't it?

STACEY

I believe so.

Stacey continues to warmly smile.

MARY

Why is he meeting there?

STACEY

I don't know.

Mary considers, turns and walks towards the door.

A step away, the door pushes open, in walks Ambart and Yakav dressed in matching painter's overalls. Ambart with a jug of Oxy-Clean in hand, Yakav drags a carpet clean behind him.

Mary stands to the side, gives right-of-way.

MARY

Excuse me.

AMBART

No issue.

Mary catches the odd reply in a thick foreign accent, pauses, her brow furls. She looks them top to bottom as they pass, sees the Oxy-clean, the carpet cleaner, she pauses and considers.

She slowly steps to exit and gives a fleeting glance as they pull down the Yellow Tape, and enter the Private Office, quickly closing the door behind them. Mary looks at the invoices in her hand and dismisses the strange men.

INT. CAR - DAY - MOVING

Mary drives her car with the window down. A wind gust stirs the invoices into the air. Mary flails to catch them, swerves the car across the lane cuts off a car sending it into a skid. She insincerely offers--

MARY

Sorry.

She clasps the invoices, tears and folds them in the process, slaps them into the seat. She starts to roll up her window, it's halfway up, her phone rings.

A hand on the steering wheel, as she drives 40mph, grabs for her phone and answers, only distant squeaks.

MARY

Hello. Hello?

Eyes off the road, invoices airborne, a squeaking noise on the phone, she manages to press Speakerphone, rolls up the window, the invoices fall.

She can hear the voice on the phone, its Bob.

INT. HOME DEPOT - DAY

Bob behind the service desk in a quiet corner on the phone.

INTERCUT between Mary and Bob

BOB

Mary? You okay?

MARY

Uh. Yeah. Bob. What's up?

BOB

Oh. You just sound. You know. I wanted to make sure you're alright. We didn't get much of a chance to talk. I'm on my break now. Are you still around? Maybe we can-

Mary gives the phone a look, that's sweet.

MARY

--No. No. I'm driving.

BOB

Where to?

MARY

Uh. Nowhere. Just errands.

BOB

Well, I have an hour. Maybe I can help?

MARY

I'm headed to Flyer's park.

BOB

Why?

MARY

No reason. You called. What's up.

BOB

Yeah. I just thought since you were interested in the Mayor's van, you'd like to know.

Bob's voice trails and saddens. Mary notices.

MARY

Yeah?

Bob silent.

MARY

Ok. Ok. I didn't mean to blow you off. We can grab a coffee, or some lunch later. Okay.

A chipper Bob.

BOB

That would be cool.

MARY

Mayor?

BOB

Yeah. So just after you left. They called and added a steam cleaner to the order.

MARY

Steam cleaner?

BOB

You know. Like a carpet cleaner. I think a bottle of Oxy-Clean too. Must be cleaning-house.

Mary considers, her stomach drops, eyes go wide, and Bob's continued chatter fades in her ears.

INT. PRISON OFFICE - NIGHT

Andre and a guard flank a handcuffed Donald. A few other guards sit and fill out forms.

Donald has showered, back into the drab blue overalls. Andre finishes a final bite of a Big Mac, the special sauce dribbles out the corner of his mouth.

Donald jubilates. The cuffs taken off, Donald stretches his arms. He looks tired, but struggles to suppress a grin.

ANDRE

(Loud for effect)

Good meeting with your PO. He's gotta feeling you'll be out of here soon.

No one cares. Donald turns, and is buzzed through a hardline. Before the door closes Andre reminds.

ANDRE

Just a reminder, what was. A. Discussed, stays between you and your court order attorney.

Donald's smile breaks through. As the door starts to close, we follow him into-

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

--a hallway that connects to a prisoner lounge area. Some chairs, an old wall mounted TV behind a steel screen. Some prisoners watch a re-run of Cops. They call bullshit with every scene. BOOM, the door shuts, a few men look over at Donald, most quickly revert to the TV.

One man, RUSTY, 35, nail-hard but dim-witted, spots Donald's smile. Donald doesn't want any attention, specially from Rusty. Rusty suspects as much, stands, pushes his chest out, and shuffles over.

RUSTY

Where the fuck you been old man?

DONALD

I. I had a meeting with my parole officer.

RUSTY

Bullshit.

DONALD

No, really. I may get my sentence
red-

RUSTY

--you were talking with the
fucking cops. You're a fucking
rat.

Donald squirms as Rusty pokes a finger into his chest.
Rusty bluffs, he's and ace, and he smells fear.

RUSTY

Tell me what the fuck you were
doing cuz I know the PO office
closed 4 hours ago.

Donald, nervous, eyes dart side to side.

EXT. STADIUM - DAY

A vast empty parking lot outside the stadium. Desolate.
Cracked pavement with grass and weeds, trash.

Mary's car perfectly parked in a guest spot, she walks
slowly towards the barren exterior stadium wall.

Mary sees the worn glass ticket taker windows, boarded up
poster boxes, a vehicle breezeway with a pad locked
security gate.

Mary sees large sets of fresh dirt vehicle tracks. She
scans the area, considers, and decides. She ducks under the
gate and cautiously enters.

The breezeway is dark and damp. As she follows the dirt
tracks, there's an opening ahead, brighter. She passes
into-

--the arena. Mary is dumbfounded. The weathered pyramid of
dirt, earth moving equipment, and a Monster Truck,
surrounded by welding equipment and tools.

Mary nears the Monster Truck, circles it, plucks off hand sized clumps of red-dirt, a piece of orange fabric. She stops at the rear of the truck at the aluminum crate, and stares in wonder. She sees tufts of fur and some blood.

Mary considers and realizes, face awash with dread, she stares skyward, tears rolls down her cheek.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Lobby area of a small-town police department.

A uniformed officer behind the counter begrudgingly plays customer service representative, she is—SHARON, 50, beat cop desk caged by injury.

Sharon and Mary play a stern game of sliding a form on a clipboard back and forth.

SHARON

You Can file this online. It all goes to the same place.

MARY

I Know you don't read it. This deserves Attention. Now.

SHARON

Maam. We take every complaint serious and will fully inves—

MARY

--Bull shit.

SHARON

I'm going to ask you a final time to use a courteous tone when—

MARY

--I just told you. There is Something going on—

SHARON

-I heard you. And I'm sure its all above board. And, technically, you

are trespassing. You have no right to be there.

MARY

The mayor is killing dogs with a fucking giant off-roading truck!

Sharon looks sideways and shakes her head.

SHARON

Miss. Do you have any evidence?

Mary looks down at her handful of invoices, sadly realizes its circumstantial.

MARY

Uh. No.
(Pleads)
Go. Look. For yourself.

SHARON

Interesting and all. But all of our officers are currently responding to real calls.

Sharon scans a screen and lists.

SHARON

(Continues)
A DUI - ran over a hydrant, a possible missing person, a council member, and several complaints of two olive-skinned gentlemen with gamely body odor - not sure what code that violates?

Mary pauses, genuinely distraught and Sharon notices.

SHARON

I'll stop by at the end of my shift if no one else gets to it.

Mary manages a smile.

MARY

I'm telling you. There's something very wrong going on at Fryers.

Mary eyes track the floor as she exits.

The desk phone rings and Sharon answers.

SHARON

Police dispatch.

Yes?

(Eye roll)

Yes, maam. We've dispatched an officer.

Calling us every 10 minutes isn't going to help. No, we have not gone to the mayor. We haven't done Nothing. Well, we checked the hospital, the morgue, a few of the local bars, the clubhouse-

Sharon looks sideways.

SHARON

(Continues)

It's routine to check the morgue. If he's not there, I consider that Good News. He's probably on a golf-outing, had a few too many. Did you check with his friends?

Sharon hangs up and muses.

SHARON

(To herself)

Two times the Mayor's come up. He Does have some unpaid parking violations.

She decides and calls over her shoulder.

SHARON

Bob. Hey. Cover the bat-phone. I'm gonna go next door, see the honorable Mr. Mariucci about his Stack of unpaid tickets. See if I can shake a few bucks from his holiness.

BOB (O.S.)

Good luck with that!

INT. PRIVATE OFFICE -

Rafael eyes the carpet, drags his shoe across the shadow of a lingering carpet stain. The door opens, in limps Sharon, eyes immediately to the carpet.

SHARON
Too late. You're done.

Rafael jumps in alert.

SHARON
Once you clean carpet wrong, the stain sets. It's permanent.

Rafael exhales in relief. Both hover over the stain.

RAFAEL
Uh. Thank you, sergeant.

SHARON
What'd you use?

RAFAEL
Huh?

SHARON
To clean it?

RAFAEL
I don't know. Whatever the carpet cleaning people use.

SHARON
Well, judging from the orange hue, your guys tried to use bleach to clean up-

Rafael holds his breath.

SHARON
BBQ sauce, or whatever red sauce. Not salsa, right?

Rafael dances around the answer.

RAFAEL

I don't know. There's always
functions. My office. The public.

Sharon moves on. A jittery Rafael retreats to his desk.

RAFAEL

What can my office do for your
today?

SHARON

Thanks for seeing me. We just have
the usual.

Sharon waves a stack of tickets in the air.

SHARON

I'll assume neither you nor the
city will pay us, or the city for
these. So if you can just sign, or
initial.

Sharon lays the tickets across the desk. Rafael quickly
produces a pen and begins to scribble each.

SHARON

Sir. We had a few noise
complaints. Out. Around Flyer
Park. I know the city condemned
the property. Is there anything
going on there?

Rafael skips a beat while signing and she notices.

RAFAEL

Uh. No. Flyer Park. It should be
closed. I'll have my people look
into it. Make some calls.

Sharon looks doubtfully at him as he finishes signing.

SHARON

Also, sir. Councilman Tim's wife
has been calling, I guess he
didn't come home last night.

Rafael death grips the pen, Sharon notices.

RAFAEL

Well, he's been known to have a few too many. Maybe shack up somewhere, with someone.

Sharon commits to push.

SHARON

I didn't know he was a drinker.

RAFAEL

You wouldn't know him like I do. Now, would you?

SHARON

I guess not. Well. Okay. Thank you sir.

Sharon, skeptical, turns, casts a wave and limps off.

As the door closes, Rafael looks to where she just stood, holds a stare, loudly exhales and decides. He picks up his phone, dials, and presses the phone to his ear.

RAFAEL

She just left. There will still be questions. Tough ones. Which reminds me, you gotta get his credit card, book him a one-way to Australia, and drop his car at the airport. No? I'm not packing his fucking bags either. What do you mean You don't run that kind of coverup service?

INT./EXT. CAR - DAY

Mary and Bob inside her car parked near the animal shelter.

Mary checks her watch. It's 5:00 p.m. the shelter's lights go out. She sees Marco, like clockwork, lumber to the front door, keys dangle from his hands, as he locks the door and disappears.

She scans the area and sees nothing. Bob's gaze goes from the Mary, to the radio, then back to Mary, as he feigns interest. Bob gives up on Mary, decides to go to his fallback favorite topic.

BOB

You ever wonder why a Wookie would
WANT to hang with Han?

A van arrives, Mary sees and excitedly elbows Bob who misses it.

BOB (O.S.)

No, really. It's not a symbiotic
relationship like owning a pet.

The van pulls to the shelter's side entrance.

BOB (O.S.)

You feed him, he gives you love.
I'm sure Chewie could find his own
food.

Mary watches as Ambart, and Yakav exit, and Marco pops open the side door, passes Ambart a handful of leashes as Yakav enters. Mary leans forward, glued as the leashes taut, several rambunctious dogs exit. Mary's mouth drops open as Ambart tugs them to the back of the van and herds them inside.

BOB (O.S.)

Solo always found a girl. Did we
ever see Chewie find another
Wookie?

Marco stands at the door, vies to watch both men. His mouth flaps. Ambart get the last dog in the van. Marco's mouth tersely wide, emphatic in his words as he points, Ambart shrugs, annoyed.

BOB (O.S.)

I mean, there's really Someone out
there for everyone.

Yakav, one arm filled with rabbits and the other carries a crate with cats, plows into Marco. Marco spins, WE SEE he mouths "Watch it" and again wags his finger in warning.

BOB (O.S.)
Sometimes you have to cross
galaxies to find love, but other
times, its much closer.

Ambart opens the van door, and Yakav places the cats and rabbits inside. They share a glance, a shrug, a decision is made.

Ambart face soothes as he calls Marco over and Yakav takes a measure step away. Marco, still afire, steps close, looks into the van.

BOB (O.S.)
Wouldn't you agree?

Yakav takes a Suppressed Pistol from inside his jacket, a contact shot to the back of Marco's head. Blood mist sails.

Mary jumps, her hands press her face in shock.

MARY
Ahh.

Marco collapses half in the van. They hurriedly shove the rest of his body inside, and close the door.

BOB
I mean we, you and I have a lot in
common. We like pets. You like
helping sick kids, I sort of too.

Mary speechless, points, glances at a clueless Bob.

MARY
They just shot him!

BOB
Shot who?

MARY
The two guys in the van shot
Marco.

BOB

Shot him? Like did shots with him?
Of like took a picture of--

Bob looks, the van's lights are on as it backs out.

MARY
--they killed him.

BOB
I don't see anything. Just the
van. It's pretty far.

MARY
No, they couldn't have.

BOB
Yeah. It must be the light. You
know the lighting in the
Millennium Falcon was just a
common lightbulb behind a glass
filter to give the soft white
image. Soft-

The van drives past.

MARY
--Quick, we gotta follow them.

INT./EXT. CAR - DAY - MOVING

Mary drives Bob. On a city street. They closely follow the
van.

Mary's erratic driving makes Bob nervous.

BOB
If they shot him, we should really
get the cops.

MARY
I told the police. They are not
going to do anything until WE have
evidence.

BOB
Are we just going to keep
following them? What do we do if

they stop. I mean. They could have a gun. What-

MARY

I know. I know. We'll need some help. Call the team. Tell them to hurry.

BOB

Hurry where?

MARY

To Flyers. That's where they are headed.

EXT. STADIUM - NIGHT

Mary and Bob parked at the far side of the stadium parking lot behind some bushes. The stadium interior fully lit. The van curbside. Ambart and Yakav take the mobile zoo from the van.

Mary notices most of the dogs have red stains around their mouths. She cringes. Bob muses.

BOB

Why are the dogs faces red?

He realizes.

BOB

Oh. God.

Bob gags and doubles over. Mary casts a dismissive glance.

MARY

Bob. He's dead.

Ambart and Yakav and the entourage pass in through the breezeway.

MARY

We can't wait any longer. Let's go.

BOB

No. We can. We can. I don't like this.

MARY

You want to be a hero, or a zero.

BOB

There's too much pressure in society today. There's plenty of room in the middle.

Mary storms out the car on a mission. Bob deliberates, twiddles his thumbs, and reclines his chair.

SIDEWALK

Mary creeps towards the van, rear door still open. She scans and slows as she gets near.

An ENGINE PULSE followed by men's enthusiastic and foreign laughter. Mary jumps. Footsteps and voices approach.

Mary crouches at the rear of the van, no time, she crawls underneath.

Two pairs of feet at her head. Foreign words exchanged. A grunt, then another. The van's struct squeak as weight is removed.

An errant yelp as the men lose grip. Marco's body falls to the pavement, his lifeless eyes stare at Mary.

His throat, arms, and torso, dog torn. Mary covers her mouth to stop a gag and vomit.

Four hands grab the corpse, and lift. The two pairs of feet stumble away, Marco's lifeless hand drags. Mary's eyes glued to disappearing shoes and dragging hand.

Mary cautiously slides out from under the van, eyes glue where the men just left. Mary stands.

A VOICE (O.S.)

Ahem.

Mary gasps in shock, turns, her hand over her mouth. She is face-to-face with tense Rafael.

RAFAEL

I fear. As clever as I am. I
wouldn't be able to explain this
now, would I?

BLACKOUT

FADE IN

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Bob sits in the car, fiddles with radio, haplessly scans
the area.

KNOCK, KNOCK. Shock, he jumps. In the windows are the
smiles and faces of Kimmy and Trevor.

TREVOR

Well we got the cameras. What
exactly is going on? And where's
Mary?

BOB

She's in there.

TREVOR

What? Why?

BOB

She's got some crazy notion the
mayor and these Russian guys are
taking rescue animals and running
them over with giant trucks.

Kimmy's brow furrows.

KIMMY

Here. Monster Truck. Stray
animals. Russians? Here? It's
can't be.

BOB

What?

KIMMY

Oh my God. There's been talk.
 Internet chatter. Dark web crazy
 shit. Some Klingon in Russia
 running a betting site on stray
 dogs and cats in a wash machine on
 a pickup truck that's made a
 contest of running over criminals.
 Like that Schwarzenegger movie
 Running Man.

BOB

I saw Running Man. That's not the
 same.

KIMMY

I mean, the carnage. It's sounds
 bizarre, but you just can't make
 shit like that Up. Those guys who
 run that. They are Dangerous, with
 a capital D.

Bob stares in disbelief, his eyes trace Mary's last steps
 towards the breezeway.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

A single light bulb over a rickety wooden chair.

Mary tied up and gagged, half struggles to loosen her
 binds. Rafael, jittery and unsure, paces, stares at his
 phone, another step and-

RAFAEL

(To himself)
 What to do, what to do. This. This
 isn't going to help me poll any
 better.
 (To Mary)
 I find solutions. I don't
 implement them.

The phone rings, he answers, its Skyler

RAFAEL

Where are you?

BREEZEWAY

Skyler quick walks.

Intercut between RAFAEL and Skyler.

SKYER

I'm here. Where are you?

Skyler looks over his attire, hand wipes off a piece of lint, and smiles.

RAFAEL

I'm in the editing room. The room next store. The janitor's room. Yeah. That one. Come up here. I need you keep an eye on our Special Guest.

SKYLER

I think I saw a police car circling the lot. Does the prisoner van get an escort? They're not due for 30 minutes.

Rafael stares into space as gravity weighs.

ARENA

Yakav hops off a heavy dirt excavator. A 6-foot dig dug. Marco's mangled dirt covered corpse lay twisted nearby. Ambart kicks, the corpse slides a little. He kicks again a little harder, it moves an inch. Ambart in a relentless flurry of kicks and curses, sends the corpse into the hole.

Yakav smiles and points at Ambart's blood-and-dirt covered shoe. Ambart flings an errant kick at Yakav. Yakav laughs and Ambart is pissed.

Ambart pulls out his GUN, and fires a clip at Marco's corpse. Small holes appear across his back. The gunshot echo sends a crate of cats into a frenzy of hisses.

Ambart's phone rings. He looks at the CallerID, it's in Kazakh (*pretty little boy*). He laughs and answers. Yakav watches with interest.

AMBART

Yes.
 Yes.
 Okay.

Ambart ends the call.

AMBART

The boss said he soft. Change of plans. A police officer is in the parking lot. He has a girl upstairs. This is end.

YAKAV

So. Which do you want?

AMBART

I'll handle the police. You handle the other girls.

They share a laugh, a glance at Marco's corpse.

AMBART

We may need deeper hole.

PARKING LOT

Sharon stands outside her parked police car next to Mary's empty vehicle. She scans the area.

BREEZEWAY

Bob, Kimmy and Trevor sneak follow Skyler.

SIDEWALK

Sharon parks next to the van. She muses. She calls on her radio.

SHARON

Charlie 654, I'm at Flyer's Park. There's some activity. I'm going to check it out.

RADIO (V.O.S.)

Roger that 654. You're on the board.

CUT TO

BREEZEWAY

Sharon enters the dark breezeway. A step into darkness. POOF, POOF, a thud as her body falls dead. Ambart steps from the darkness. He drags her.

OFFICE

Skyler stands over a distraught Mary with the gag half out of her mouth.

MARY

Please, let me go. Please. He's going to kill me.

SKYLER

Miss. I can ensure you Mayor Marucci is no killer. If he has you tied up in a janitor's closet, in an abandoned ballpark, trust me, it's for our own good. I mean, Your own good.

(To himself)

I gotta get that right next time.

(A beat)

Skyler waves his arms as he steps back.

SKYLER

Who wears this better? Me or the Mayor?

CLUNK. Kimmy slams a fire-extinguisher on Skyler's head. He drops like a sack. Mary's eyes wide with happiness and relief. Bob and Trevor quietly spill in behind and work to untie her.

BOB

Thank good-ness you're okay. I shouldn't had let you go.

TREVOR

We need to get out of here. ASAP.

Mary is untied. The crew stealthily absconds.

LATER

Rafael's indiscernible voice approaches.

RAFAEL

No you idiot. They are in- (O.S.)

Rafael enters, freezes.

RAFAEL

--here.

Skyler on the floor out cold. The toppled chair empty. Rope and tape discarded on the floor. Yakav on Rafael's shoulder, unsurprised, finds amusement.

YAKAV

Yes. Here they are.

Rafael, a suppressed rage, still no where near as dangerous as a relaxed and cheerful Yakav who smirks and steps close.

CRATE

Face pressed against an aluminum grate. A cat licks a sweat and dirt covered patch of skin, it belongs to-

A VOICE

Oh. Baby. I love it when you-

Rafael awakes. He struggles but can't move. Each attempt causes a cat to hiss, or meow. A rabbit pressed under his chin. He looks left and sees a foot. He recognizes it.

RAFAEL

Skyler, Skyler. Wake the fuck up!

Rafael wiggles and twists. Cats meow. Rafael sees Skyler's groggy eyes swim and close.

RAFAEL

Damn.

Rafael cranes his neck, in hopes to spot an audience. He sees several blindfolded men in orange jumpsuits ascending the pyramid.

RAFAEL

Ok. I get it. You can let me out
now. I owe you.

Industrial noise. The crate jolts, perhaps the truck's door
closes. A loudspeaker high above. A familiar voice.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)

Prisoners, ready.

A mixture of several skeptical voices acknowledges they are
ready. Rafael squirms as panic set in.

RAFAEL

(Loud)

Help. Help. A little help. Come on
now. This isn't funny. I get it.
I'm warned.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)

6, 5, 4,

RAFAEL

No. Please don't do this.

Rafael's hands yank the crate. His eyes go wide. He
frantically pulls.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)

(In Kazakh)

3, 2, 1.
Go!

RAFAEL

No.

An ENGINE PULSE erupts, decibels freely reign. Cats
screech.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.S.)

(Indiscernible foreign calls)

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

A residential street, a sidewalk, mailboxes. A disheveled
woman, 50, in an aged and tattered bathrobe opens the

mailbox. Atop some letters and flyers is a postcard with a colorful photo of a grinning Koala. She flips the card and reads a handwritten note: Hello wife. I, (hastily written) "and Rafael," (even hastier and in different writing) "and policewoman" decide to move to Australia. I not come back. Love husband Tim.

Woman sighs indifferently, drags her feet as she returns inside.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

Ambart and Yakav exit a taxi curbside. A plane roars overhead. Ambart ends a phone call, then laughs, glances at Yakav.

AMBART

Now he tells us okay to clean up.
We make good decision.

They both shake their heads as they enter the terminal.

EXT. STADIUM - DAY

Mary and some police exit a cop car. Other cops exit the breezeway and they meet. The exiting cops shake their heads and wave empty hands.

COP

Nothing. It's empty.

EXT. FALAFEL SHOP - DAY

Falafel shop is dark and closed. A sign in the window
Coming soon "Dunkin Donuts."

EXT. SHELTER - DAY

Mary turns her car off, the window down as she exits. The radio plays. walks from her parked car towards the shelter entrance. A sign in the window Now Hiring. Mary pulls the sign from the window and enters.

RADIO (V.O.S.)

And in the news, a shocking
reduction in the city's long
plagued prison overcrowding. Have

Mayor Mariucci's master plan has gained traction and finally yield fruit? The city council finally agrees. He will likely be a frontrunner, to be the next governor of the amazing state of--

FADE OUT