

THE SIXTH STAGE OF GRIEF

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Wrought iron and brick fencing guards an expanse of lawn and moss-hung trees. A long pebble driveway leads to -

The imposing three stories of a gabled Victorian mansion.

A FIGURE moves in the shadows, circling to the rear and ...

The French Doors of a softly lit kitchen.

GLASS SHATTERS.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT

Dark and quiet. The FIGURE stalks behind a flashlight sweep. Right, left, down. Right, left, down.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens to a Queen-size bed of fussy organza. Vintage Chippendale furniture screams money.

The flashlight beam lands on a dressing table and several jewelry boxes. A gloved hand scoops necklaces, bracelets, rings into a pillow case ripped from the bed.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - CLOSET - NIGHT

The walk-in space is full of neatly hung garments on three rails forming a horseshoe of convenience.

Behind the clothes, ROSEMARY (MOM) CASSIDY, (72), huddles barely breathing, eyes wide with terror.

Trembling hands clutch a nightstick at the ready.

MONICA (V.O.)

Is this your worst nightmare?

The young woman's voice is soft with a sarcastic edge.

COLIN (V.O.)

In the closet with a night stick?

Are you serious?

INT. ADVERTISING CO. - MONICA'S OFFICE - DAY

The private office is clean and airy. Trophies and plaques share a bookshelf with professional volumes.

COLIN (50s), thick but not fat, with an Alec Baldwin panache, frowns at an outsized monitor and the frozen robbery image.

ON MONITOR - Mom huddled behind the night stick.

He casts a look over the top to the desk.

MONICA CASSIDY (32) at her computer. Hair pulled into a neat pony tail, dressed for success. She shrugs.

MONICA
Baseball bat?

COLIN
That works. I worry about you at times, Mo.

She corrects her computer screen with a stylus.

On Colin's monitor a baseball bat replaces the nightstick.

Lying next to the keyboard, Monica's cell phone erupts with the JAWS theme music. She ignores it.

MONICA
Wish I was making it up. This was last week, minus the actual break-in. Moving on?

Colin flicks an eye at the phone. Monica shakes her head, taps the phone off. Colin sighs, indicates the mock-up.

MONICA (CONT'D)
But with All Eyes Security in place your home is now a fortress.

MONITOR - A new scene. The figure trips an alarm before the door glass can break. LIGHTS blaze on. COPS arrest the would-be thief. A security camera records his face.

MONICA (CONT'D)
And Mom can rest easy knowing that she's protected twenty-four seven.

MONITOR - Mom in a rocker knitting and happily watching television. The scene freezes.

Monica looks to Colin.

COLIN

Lose the rocker. The tag is weak.
We can use the rest. How is your
Mom doing with the new meds?

Monica saves her program work.

MONICA

What's that old saying? You can
lead a horse to water but you can't
make him drink. The conspiracy
queen has to be reminded every day
that nobody's out to poison her.

COLIN

Be gentle. You spend your whole
life eating anything you want and
suddenly you can't even look at
sugar. Not easy. I know. Good work.

He heads for the door. Monica rises to follow.

MONICA

So I'm a lock to win Advertiser of
the Year?

Colin stops, door open, smiles at her.

COLIN

You're in the running. That's all I
can say.

The JAWS theme sounds again. Colin's smirk softens.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Give the diva my love.

He exits. Monica closes the door, a tense irritation
dissolving her professional poise. She crosses back to the
phone, punching the speaker button.

MONICA

What?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A large modern layout designed for efficiency.

Rosemary Cassidy, the model, holds a corded phone receiver to
her ear as she putters.

MOM CASSIDY

Is that how you answer the phone?

MONICA

When I know it's you. What's the emergency this time?

MOM CASSIDY

I just caught the most disturbing story on the radio about delivery people sampling your food or even licking it.

She shivers, nauseated. But there's steel under her practiced daintiness as she shovels sugar into a coffee cup.

MOM CASSIDY (CONT'D)

It makes me want to throw everything out.

MONICA

In the first place, all the food in the house is stuff I brought in and we both inspected the packages. No forced entry. No licking. Secondly, I wish I had thought of the idea.

MOM CASSIDY

Such a rude girl you are.

She opens the refrigerator, looks on a plate of cinnamon Danish dripping with icing.

MONICA

Mom, nobody's messing with your food or your meds. Eat some breakfast. A real breakfast, not sugar buns.

Mom's hand stops above the plate.

MOM CASSIDY

Young lady, I've lived with the sugars all my life. I know my limits.

MONICA

Sure you do. That's why you nearly went into an insulin coma last week. Take your pills and no more cheese Danish for breakfast.

Mom rolls eyes, closes the refrigerator, gets her coffee.

MOM CASSIDY
You're as bad as that quack! Dennis
won't let anything happen to me.

MONICA
Dennis is a security monitor. He's
not going to manage your diet.

MOM CASSIDY
You sound testy.

MONICA
I'm working on a promotion. I can't
do that if I'm constantly fending
off your delusions. Keep pushing.
One of these days I'll snap.

MOM CASSIDY
Now now. Remember what Ben
Franklin always said. When you
reach the end of your rope, tie a
knot in it and hang on.

MONICA
Right. Are we done? I have work to
do.

MOM CASSIDY
I can't depend on you for anything.
One day you'll come home to find me
dead on the floor.

She hangs up with a huff of annoyance.

INT. ADVERTISING CO. - MONICA'S OFFICE - DAY

Monica glares at her phone and the hissing dead signal.

MONICA
Promises, promises.

Monica cuts the call, turns back to the computer screen.

A KNOCK at the door. PAUL THORNTON (33) pleasingly rugged,
peeks past the panel. Monica waves him in.

PAUL
Colin's practically whistling. The
new promo worked?

MONICA

Piece of cake. Speaking of which.
Do you know what Katie Scarlett did
yesterday? She baked a cake.

Paul crosses behind her and massages her shoulders. Monica
gives in to the comfort.

PAUL

Yum. What kind?

MONICA

The kind a diabetic shouldn't eat.

PAUL

So I'll help.

MONICA

Is that your way of inviting
yourself to dinner?

She swivels around to face him. Paul retreats to sit on the
window shelf.

PAUL

What are you afraid of? I have to
meet your mother sometime.

Monica winces, turns away from his gaze.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Come on. What's the worst she can
do?

MONICA

You've seen my ads. No joke. That's
her. The poster girl for paranoia.

PAUL

She has to have some company other
than you.

MONICA

Just Dennis, our second shift
monitor. He's got this voice and
manner.

For a flicker of a moment she's dreamy, shakes it off.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Gentle yet authoritative. Like Dad.

PAUL

Hmmm. Okay, Plan B. I have a boat that's begging to be used. What do you say to a long weekend, celebrate your upcoming Advertiser of the Year victory?

Excitement fractures her reserve. Time for herself is something she aspires to. Paul leans in.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Blue sky, blue water, just you and me with Mai Tais and some gulls.

A chance to be on her own. Monica seems on the verge of yielding. Instead she tamps her interest down, turns back to the computer.

MONICA

One step at a time. Seven good?

Paul sighs his disappointment, gets to his feet.

PAUL

Sure. Red or white?

MONICA

Oh, you'll need one of each at the very least.

PAUL

Done. Do I need a secret password?

MONICA

God, that will be her next trick. I'll walk you in.

Paul swings her around for a quick kiss, heads out. Monica watches him out. Once the door closes him out, she allows herself a smile of anticipation.

EXT. ALL EYES SECURITY - NIGHT

An older high rise, nothing special. Ground floor office of gleaming mirrored windows. Simple company logo over the door.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - DAY

A warren of sound-proofed partitioned cubicles. Front windows blanketed with heavy drapes.

RINGING PHONES, SOFT MEASURED VOICES and low key BUSTLE.

AGENTS fitted with headphones man video stations. Multiple monitors line the 3 walls of each cubicle, some dark, others scanning homes or store interiors.

Along the back wall another line of monitors focuses on each agent, providing 3 SUPERVISORS with oversight.

DENNIS' CUBICLE

SAM has the chair at the monitors. Mid 30s, pleasant face, non-athletic frame going to pudge, he logs notes with one eye on a clock headed to the top of the hour.

Soft footsteps behind him and DENNIS WILEY (50s) enters the cubicle. Lean and ramrod straight. A mottled scar distorts his left cheek.

Sam finishes his note, logs off the system and moves out for Dennis to assume the chair, never looking directly at Dennis.

SAM

Kelsey's Bar is gearing up for an overflow playoff crowd. Their alley cameras are acting wonky. Miss Anne's been trying to sneak out.

DENNIS

While the cat's away the mice will play.

SAM

She's not a zoo animal. She can walk around her own yard.

DENNIS

She's borderline dementia and disturbing the neighbors. It's called being proactive.

SAM

In my family it's called being a Yenta.

Dennis doesn't seem to be listening as he sets up with practiced ease. He skims the call log, runs a systems check.

Sam eyes the clock as he shoulders his personal bag. He counts to himself; three, two, one.

The clock hits the hour and on cue the phone rings. Dennis hits the call button with a bare glance at the caller ID.

DENNIS

This is Dennis. Is there an emergency, Mrs. Cassidy?

MOM CASSIDY (O.C.)

Oh Dennis, it's dreadful. Horrible. That Sam is useless. I think I'm having a heart attack.

Dennis casts an eye over his shoulder at Sam. Sam rolls his eyes, holds up 2 fingers with an exasperated look. Dennis nods, turns back to the monitor and Sam exits.

Dennis brings up the Cassidy house monitors.

On MONITOR - Mom perfectly healthy on the kitchen land line.

DENNIS

Shall I call an ambulance?

MOM CASSIDY

Call an ambulance. Call the National Guard. While you're at it call a caterer. That girl is bringing a date home for supper.

DENNIS

Without warning I suppose.

MOM CASSIDY

Just now. That's four hours. What am I supposed to do in four hours?

DENNIS

It sounds like a perfect time to use that Instapot Miss Monica bought for your birthday.

MOM CASSIDY

A glorified pressure cooker. That's not cooking.

DENNIS

That depends on whether you intend to encourage this suitor or discourage him.

MOM CASSIDY

(laughs)
Oh, you're so wicked.

INT. ADVERTISING CO - MAIN FLOOR - DAY

Closing time. Cubicle denizens still busy on phones and computers, voices creating a buzz of noise.

Monica exits her office, bag over her shoulder. Spots -

JEFF ANDERSON (58) rail thin and weary, leaning on the wall of a cubicle. She offers a smile as she comes abreast.

MONICA

Jeff. Sorry about Mom's defection to All Eyes. Nothing personal.

Anderson moves to block the cubicle's occupant from her direct view. Monica doesn't try to look past.

ANDERSON

Some people are easy prey for fear tactics.

Monica ignores the slight.

MONICA

We both know three thousand people dying in a flood is a statistic. Little Timmy pulled out of his mother's arms never to be seen again is a tragedy. Which of those scenarios sells more flood insurance?

ANDERSON

Just because the Dark Side has cookies, doesn't mean we should all join them. Be careful what you wish for, Monica.

Anderson turns away, ending the conversation. Unruffled, Monica continues to the elevator, falling in step with Paul.

INT. MONICA'S CAR - DAY

Monica pulls her car up to the gate, swipes a key card. The gates swing in, revealing ...

The long drive and grand Victorian set back on five acres of manicured lawns and towering oaks and willows.

Paul gawks as she cruises to a stop.

PAUL

I've only read about these grey old ladies. Never thought I'd see one. What's with the storm shutters?

MONICA

Mom insisted the gardeners were spying on her. So these went up. I still haven't found the keys. Still game?

He reaches for the bag of wines at his feet.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - VESTIBULE - DAY

The 4 x 6 entry hall boasts stainless steel walls. A narrow side table the only decoration. The inside door has no knob, only a key pad. A security camera high in the corner.

PAUL

All Eyes really goes for the overkill, don't they?

MONICA

Jeff Anderson's fifteen second response time wasn't fast enough for Katie Scarlett.

Monica KEYS in a code. No response. Paul takes a bag from her so she can try again. Nothing.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Our first house burglars crashed in like the front door was paper.
(shudders)
We got lucky. Nobody was physically hurt. Mom never recovered. This monster gives her places to hide.

A blue light blinks under the camera eye.

DENNIS (V.O.)

You have entered an incorrect code. Miss Cassidy?

MONICA

Yes, just me and a guest. Dennis, Paul Thornton. Paul, Dennis. Mother changed the entry code again?

DENNIS (V.O.)

You should have received an e-mail with the new codes.

MONICA

My hands are full. Could you open
the door please.

The door unlocks. Paul waits until he's under the camera line of sight before showing his discomfort.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Paul moves out from behind Monica, gawks at the Hollywood-grand entrance of chandeliers, marble floor and filigreed staircase. The only thing missing is liveried staff.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Oak paneling off-sets vintage furniture. The inner corner holds a massive desk with a comprehensive three monitor computer set-up.

Bookcases are filled with first editions, small marble busts and odd figurines.

Paul wanders, uneasy under the strong lights and shuttered windows. Digs an asthma inhaler from a pocket for a jolt.

The camera follows him. He stares into it for a moment, gets jittery, finds a spot to stand under it. Monica breezes in.

She repositions an orchid closer to a sliver of daylight.

MONICA

We have eight bedrooms. Dad added
the garage loft as an office. We
kids spent hours playing Clue from
here.

PAUL

The board game.

MONICA

No, for real.

PAUL

Get out, secret passages?

Monica sparkles with mischief. She crosses to the bookcase, springs a hidden latch. The panel pops open.

MONICA

The house is riddled with them.
There's even a bomb shelter.

PAUL

No way.

MONICA

Swear to God.

Monica reaches inside to a switch. Rope lights come on. She steps into the passage, looks back for him.

MONICA (CONT'D)

It's perfectly safe.

Smiling a false bravado, Paul steps up, balks at the darkness of the passage. Monica palms a flashlight.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Come on, it's fine.

Paul puts his hand in hers, allows her to tug him inside. The bookcase closes them in.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER PASSAGEWAY - DAY

A raw staircase lets out onto raw beams of an unfinished gabled attic. The rope lights end at the top step.

Monica tops the steps, waits for Paul to join her. He gawks at the beams under her flashlight.

Keeping hold of his hand, Monica leads the way down a center aisle, edging around a circle of police tape marking an unfinished repair of the flooring.

Paul snorts in dust, gags.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Cement outer walls and floor. Metal storage cabinets flank laundry machines facing a simple staircase.

The long room is empty but for an 8 by 10 concrete and metal bomb shelter snugged just past the laundry area. Storage boxes are piled against the bunker wall.

Almost directly opposite the bunker door, there's a door in the interior wall. A security camera rides overhead.

The door opens. Paul rushes out, gasping for breath. Monica comes out, flicks on lights as he composes himself.

PAUL

Now I know how you got to be so tough. That is not for the faint hearted. And you played in there.

MONICA

Yep, and in here. One vintage Cuban Missile crisis bomb shelter.

Paul gawks at the plain walls, shivers.

PAUL

This is beyond paranoid.

MONICA

It came with the house. Used to run the length of the basement. Dad cut it back to just this cubby.

Monica crosses to the door, KEYS in a 4 digit code.

She pulls the door open, stands in the frame. Blue lights activate. Paul doesn't enter past the door.

BUNKER

Cabinets line the back wall. There's a bare few inches clearance from a floor level vent grate. The floor scraped where furniture used to be.

PAUL

The air is stale.

MONICA

Yeah, TJ had a bad habit of stuffing clothes into any air vent he could pry open and those boxes outside should be moved. Mom uses it as storage for her records and to ride out thunder storms.

PAUL

What if she locks herself in?

Monica taps the tumbler lock on the door.

MONICA

Key pad entry and a fail-safe. Four fails at the code and the tumblers reset. And there's this.

She pulls a cane out of an umbrella stand, sets it in a notch in the floor to hold the door off the latch.

PAUL

You should just take the lock out.

MONICA

I did. She had it put back in. As long as she doesn't get it in her head to mess with the tumblers the fail safe will work.

JAWS theme sounds. Monica shuts the alarm, eyes him.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Last chance.

Paul smiles at her. Monica puts the cane back and they exit out the door. He shudders when it bangs shut.

The camera follows them up the regular stairs.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

A formally set table with waiting covered platters. Mom sits with an imperious reserve as Monica and Paul enter.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Paul bolts for the door, scrubbing his tie.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Mom packs away the food in double layers of Saran wrap. Monica adds bowls to the table.

MONICA (O.S.)

Jesus Christ, was that necessary?

MOM CASSIDY

I'm your mother. I had every right to ask his intentions. You'll get a reputation catting around.

Monica barely suppresses a groan of frustration.

MONICA

Oh my God, join the twenty-first century already. I have to drop Paul off.

MOM CASSIDY

In my day it was the man who did the dropping off.

MONICA

Your day hasn't existed for over a hundred years, Katie Scarlett.

MOM CASSIDY

You know I hate that name. It's disrespectful.

MONICA

That's why I do it. Take your pills and call it a night.

Monica turns for the door. Mom coughs for attention, taps her cheek when Monica looks back.

Rolling eyes, Monica returns to peck a kiss then heads out.

MOM CASSIDY

I'll see you tomorrow?

MONICA (O.S.)

Dammit. (louder) Sure.

Mom smirks her victory, continues to package food. Storing the dishes in the fridge, she considers the chocolate cake.

EXT. ADVERTISING CO - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The sun settles into the west, throwing long shadows over Monica's car as it enters.

INT. MONICA'S CAR - NIGHT

Monica cruises to a stop alongside a sleek Camaro. Paul reaches to squeeze her hand.

PAUL

Could I have done anything different?

MONICA

No. She would have found another way to run you off if the gravy wasn't handy.

PAUL

She's a piece of work all right.

Monica focuses on their hands, comes to a decision.

MONICA

Is your boat ready to sail?

Paul breaks into a smile, steals a kiss.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

ON MONITOR - Camera angles flit around a large property.

Dennis' eagle eyes separate shrubbery from movement in the shadowed yard on the screen.

ON MONITOR - A tracking shot doubles back, fixes on a scurrying naked old man.

DENNIS (V.O.)

I have your father now. Looks like he's going fishing again. Shall I lock him in the boat house for your convenience?

A tiny voice responds over his head set.

ON MONITOR - The old man slips into a cottage. An inside camera takes over the scene. The door locks behind him. Startled, he pulls at the door frantically.

DENNIS

I turned on the music for him. How could I forget his fondness for Chopin? There's no need to thank me. I have a camera trained until you enter the door code.

The phone call is ended with a flick of a finger. Dennis zeroes in the inside camera. He taps his microphone on.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Mister Watkins. We talked about this. About what would happen if you broke restrictions again.

MONITOR - The old man looks for the camera, defiance failing under a rising dread.

Dennis touches buttons.

MONITOR - The boat house fills with ear-splitting heavy metal. Mr. Watkins covers his ears, crumples into a heap.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

The punishment befits the crime. It is for your own good, after all.

Dennis reacts to movement in the mirror over his monitor.

ALISON (30s), a starched, prickly woman heads his way.

Dennis changes Watkins' music to Chopin, lowers the volume before she steps into his cubicle.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Alison.

ALISON

How's Crazy Cassidy tonight?

DENNIS

Some people can't deal with day to day anxieties, and ...

Aware of the time he makes a move to switch camera feeds, holds off.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Her evening call for attention is about due. Did you have something for me?

ALISON

A head's up. I'm moving Miss Anne to another monitor. Her family says you're making her cry.

DENNIS

We're cruel because we care. I'm doing the best I can for her.

ALISON

You're borderline interfering. Try sugarcoating the discipline. We don't need lawsuits over a choice of words.

DENNIS

Yes ma'am.

Alison nods, exits. Dennis goes back to the monitors, brings up the Cassidy house. He runs the cameras until he finds Mom

ON MONITOR - Caching jewelry in a small wall safe.

EXT. CABIN CRUISER - NIGHT

On the rear deck, Monica wobbles for balance on a slow rolling tide. She drops to a seat, yanks her heels off.

Paul cuts the engine, drops anchor. Miami's lights are low stars on the horizon. Monica stands to take in the quiet.

PAUL
No schedules, no calls, and too far
to swim.

He closes to wrap arms around her. Monica turns in the
embrace, meets him eye to eye and her smile freezes.

PAUL (CONT'D)
What?

MONICA
Since when are you taller than me?

PAUL
Always have been. You're not in
heels, babe.

She looks for her shoes. Four inch stilettos.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Are you afraid of the water? You're
wound up tighter than a
Stradivarius.

MONICA
No. No, of course not. It's ...

She's startled when he shifts away from her.

PAUL
You don't like this. You agreed to
come to shut me up.

MONICA
Paul! No, I want to be with you.

PAUL
I hear the words. I'm not feeling
them.

He drops inside the cabin. Monica holds onto the rail, unsure
of herself. She sneaks a look at her phone - no service.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mom bustles about, making coffee with plenty of sugar. She
pulls a ring of keys from her pocket.

SCRATCHING NOISES OS freeze her in a snap of terror.

The keys are slapped on the counter, forgotten. Mom peeks an
eye out the kitchen door.

FOYER

A SHADOW flits across the windows beside the vestibule.

KITCHEN

Mom falls back against the wall, a moment away from fainting.

MOM CASSIDY

Oh Dennis. Where are the alarms.

She slaps at the alarm call button with practiced grace. The camera light turns blue.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Mrs. Cassidy, is there an emergency?

MOM CASSIDY

Somebody's trying to break in.

DENNIS (V.O.)

I'm not showing any intrusions on the motion sensors.

Mom's panic oxidizes into a blistering rage, ready to take on any would-be thief herself.

MOM CASSIDY

Don't you patronize me. Get the police here. Light up the yard. Fry those bastards.

DENNIS (V.O.)

I'm running all exterior cameras now, Mrs. Cassidy. Stay calm.

Mom hyperventilates, working herself into a dither.

MOM CASSIDY

My heart is pounding.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Mrs. Cassidy, there is no one on the grounds. I can show you on the computer.

LIVING ROOM

Mom parks at the desk, taps into a program with one finger.

ON MONITOR - An outside camera looks down across the front door. A moon beam making tree branches into shadowy fingers. The scratching comes from a shrub rubbing against the wall.

Mom scowls at the screen, hardly mollified.

MOM CASSIDY

Well. Don't I look foolish. This wouldn't have happened if Monica had taken that tree down when I asked.

DENNIS (V.O.)

A daughter should be sensitive to her mother's needs.

MOM CASSIDY

She's never here when I need her.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Now, now, we can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Perhaps you should turn in for the night.

MOM CASSIDY

I'm so aggravated I couldn't sleep.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Of course you can. I have just the thing to settle your nerves.

A moment of silence then a 1950s blues instrumental filters in through the sound system.

MOM CASSIDY

What would I do without you?

Mom nods, afflicted with a sudden yawn. Out of sight of the camera she opens a deep lower desk drawer to turn off a reel to reel tape recorder, locks the drawer.

HALL

Passing the kitchen door Mom pauses. She forgot to do something. What? With a shrug of dismissal she simply turns out the light, keeps going.

KITCHEN

The keys lay next to the coffee going cold.

INT. CABIN CRUISER - NIGHT

Paul fixes himself a drink. Monica sits on the top step. He glances at her over the glass.

PAUL

How did your mother get on before
you became an indentured servant?

Monica looks away to compose herself, except she can't.
Emotion threatens to overwhelm her.

MONICA

She's always been the helpless
flower. I thought that was the way
every mother was. Part of the
reason I studied psych.

She forces herself to stay firm.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I decided in high school that I
would never be that dependent. On
anyone. Ever.

He waves for her to sit on his lap, holds her close.

PAUL

Love isn't never having to say
you're sorry. Love is setting
limits and respecting them. On both
sides.

Her head tilts back to take in his face. He caresses a cheek.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I'm here for you but I refuse to
buy into her head games. Give me
these two days. Okay?

Monica nods. Paul brings her into a passionate kiss.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - DENNIS' CUBICLE - NIGHT

The clock over Dennis' head shows 11:00. A spritely feminine
voice cuts through the room.

JENNIFER (O.S.)

Hi Bobby. Feeling better tonight?

Dennis glances at the mirror as JENNIFER (20s) glides into
the cubicle. Dressed smartly, she deposits a canvas carry bag
on the side table, beams at him.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Hi, Mr. Wiley. How are we doing
tonight?

She picks up a clipboard with the call sheet.

Dennis disconnects his headphone, moves his gear efficiently out of the way, keeping his left side away from her.

Jennifer takes the chair and plugs in without missing a beat. She runs the screens, sets up her codes.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Oh. You recalibrated Mister Watkins' motion sensors.

DENNIS

He's been wandering.

JENNIFER

Oh dear. I'll make sure to check on him. How was Mrs. Cassidy tonight?

DENNIS

Upset with her daughter.

JENNIFER

So the usual. Okay. Have a good night.

Dennis eyes her doubtfully. She's focused on the monitors.

EXT. COUNTRY ESTATE - NIGHT

Lavish grounds, magnificent house (although not as imposing as Mom's Victorian), isolated on an acre of land.

An older model sedan pulls around the house itself to a cosy guest cottage several hundred feet behind, parks.

Dennis gets out, lets himself into the guest house.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

Slightly roomier than a studio apartment, the open floor design melds living room into kitchen and sleeping area.

Dennis lays out his keys, wallet, papers in a precise formation on a credenza just inside the door. He opens an inside door to the real bedroom.

BEDROOM

A comprehensive computer set takes a good portion of the room, looking eerily like the set up he left at work. Monitor split screens reveal static shots of his clients' houses.

He runs an eye over the various scenes, backs out.

EXT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

On a small stone patio, Dennis adjusts a military grade pair of binoculars, raises them.

The focal point brings in a formal enclosed patio, then the industrial steel door leading into Mom's kitchen.

Behind him, a monitor beeps. He stores the binoculars.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis takes his seat at the computer where he can also see a mounted corkboard filled with magazine decor pictures and a scale architectural blueprint of the layout of Mom's house.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A news program plays on the TV. Keys unmoved. Mom washes last night's coffee cup, eyes unfocused.

REPORTER (V.O.)

The DEA reports a seizure of counterfeit drugs.

Mom rivets on the television.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Everything from baby aspirin to diabetes meds, making this a highly sophisticated

Alarmed, Mom digs for her key ring. Not in her pocket. She spots it on the counter, crosses to open the padlocked corner cabinet and an array of prescription bottles.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Warnings have been issued for patients to check for the following lot numbers ...

Uncertainty makes her touch each bottle. She backs away.

MOM CASSIDY
 These are not my pills. Someone's
 been in here. Dennis. Dennis, help.

She hits the alarm button next to the land-line phone, looks
 for a hiding place. The camera light turns blue.

SAM (V.O.)
 This is Sam. Are you injured, Mrs.
 Cassidy?

MOM CASSIDY
 Somebody changed my pills. They're
 trying to kill me.

SAM (O.S.)
 Ma'am?

MOM CASSIDY
 I put the Diovan in front of the
 Glipizide. Now it's behind.
 Someone's been in here.

SAM (V.O.)
 Mrs. Cassidy, I need you to be
 calm. No one has gotten past
 perimeter security.

MOM CASSIDY
 Don't you patronize me. Where's
 Dennis? Dennis makes me feel safe.

SAM (V.O.)
 Dennis is off duty, ma'am. Stay
 calm. I'm running the overnight
 tapes to review activity.

Mom darts to the pantry, hides behind the door.

SAM (V.O.)
 Mrs. Cassidy. That cabinet has been
 locked tight. You are alone in the
 house.

MOM CASSIDY
 You can't know that so fast. You
 didn't look hard enough.

SAM (V.O.)
 I wouldn't lie to you, ma'am. The
 pills are fine.

Mom starts out of hiding, stops. Resets her dignity to cross
 back to the cabinet.

MOM CASSIDY

Thank you. I'm fine now. You can go back to doing what you were doing.

SAM (V.O.)

Going to passive mode.

Camera light blinks red. Mom locks the pill cabinet, attends to her coffee maker.

REPORTER (V.O.)

In related news, outbreaks of E-coli and salmonella in ...

Mom pauses over dumping sugar into her coffee, stares at the television, panic a heartbeat from exploding into terror.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - PATIO - DAY

Mom dumps full bags of trash into hard plastic bins. She scurries back inside.

EXT. CABIN CRUISER - DAY

Paul instructs Monica in deep sea fishing, both more invested in proximity than in actual fishing.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mom staggers in, eyes barely focused. She opens the refrigerator. Empty shelves.

She goes to the sink for a glass of water.

Crosses to the pill cabinet. Fumbling fingers get the lock undone, scatter the bottles.

She spills a day's worth into her palm.

Blinks. The tablets erupt into piles of tiny creatures.

Blinks again. Shakes her head. Slaps her palm on the counter, punishing the capsules.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis runs Miss Ann's interior cameras. He finds ...

ON MONITOR - The Nurse banging a fist against a locked door.

Putting that on an inset screen, he continues his sweep of the rooms until he spots Miss Ann in the kitchen.

ON MONITOR - Miss Ann plops newspapers on the table. She sets a stool on the table then a frying pan on the stool. Proceeds to rip the papers up and throw them in the frying pan.

DENNIS

That would be clever if it weren't so dangerous.

ON MONITOR - Miss Ann struggles to light a match to the pile.

Dennis works his board, setting off electronic alerts.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Priority breach at Ann Woodward residence. Fire rescue respond.

The PHONE RINGS. A glance at the caller ID and he returns attention to the monitor, keys his microphone.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

This is Dennis. Are you hurt, Mrs. Cassidy?

MOM CASSIDY (V.O.)

Oh Dennis, someone's in the house.

DENNIS

Checking cameras. Hold on.

On a side monitor, Dennis brings up an automated scan report.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Mrs. Cassidy, everything is clear.

MOM CASSIDY

No. I'm telling you someone's here tampering with my medications. And they took all my food.

DENNIS

Mrs. Cassidy, I find nothing wrong with your security. You can take your pills. I have to go now.

MOM CASSIDY

Don't you brush me off.

ON MONITOR - The little fire spurts up, setting off the sprinkler. Miss Ann goes to the outside door. When it unlocks, she hurries out.

Dennis switches to Miss Ann's exterior cameras, still sending auto alarms.

DENNIS

Mrs. Cassidy, without an alarm going off I can't stay on the line.

MOM CASSIDY

I'm giving the alarm. My bottles have been tampered with. I can't see straight. I've been poisoned.

ON MONITOR - Miss Ann makes her way to the outside fence. A waiting figure helps her with the gate locks.

Eyes on the screen, Dennis flicks switches, touches buttons. A careless finger brushes a button that switches the recording channels.

DENNIS

Mrs. Cassidy, if you're having a problem with your meds, call your doctor or throw them out. You're keeping me from a true emergency.

Drops his focus momentarily to cut the line, looks up.

ON MONITOR - Too late. Miss Ann's gate stands empty.

Dennis slams a fist to the desk.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mom bangs the phone down. Pill bottles dance over the counter. Totally befuddled, all she can do is stare at them.

MOM CASSIDY

Why are these here?

DENNIS (V.O.)

Throw them out.

MOM CASSIDY

Throw them out. Yes, throw them out.

She scoops the pills into a bowl, dumps them down the garbage disposal.

A CRASH OF GARBAGE CANS outside wrings a scream.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mom huddles in a pile of bedding behind the hanging clothes, cradles a riot stick in her arms.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - DENNIS' CUBICLE - NIGHT

Alison has the chair as she checks the recordings. Dennis, rigid with upset, blocks the door from curious eyes.

ON SCREEN - Miss Anne is escorted back into her house by the Nurse and a Police Officer.

ALISON

Another false alarm at the Cassidy house? You're sure?

DENNIS

Her daughter had been out of touch today. The alarms are in perfect working order. The only infraction a raccoon sniffing around the trash.

Alison resets the machines, gets up.

ALISON

You did your best, Dennis. At least Miss Ann is back home and no real damage was done.

Nodding once, he steps aside to let her pass. Alison shoos away the gawkers.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

The door unlocks. Dennis enters, stands with his back to the door for a long moment, haggard and exhausted.

BEDROOM

Settling at the computer, he types in a code. Mom's house blazes up on the screen. Dennis hovers a hand over the keyboard, conflicted. Anger wins out.

He puts the machine on idle, goes about his business.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

Humming mindlessly, Mom wedges the cane in the door, carries a flat reel tape box to the cabinets, opens a drawer.

She stares at the row of reel to reel tape boxes, confused.

She rushes out, returns with a laundry basket, scoops the reel boxes into the basket, exits.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DAD'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Heavy wood furniture, bookcases crammed full of authoritative books, pristine desk. Empty laundry basket.

Mom exits, eyes half-closed and one hand to the wall as weakness threatens to topple her.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - DENNIS' CUBICLE - DAY

Sam runs his screens, checks a log book, frowns at the list. He brings up a camera in Mom's living room.

ON MONITOR - Quiet. Lights off. Nobody in view. Mess but no blood.

He sighs, switches to a business camera.

ON MONITOR - A couple making out behind a tall display.

SAM

That I didn't need to see.

He changes screens, shaking his head.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BEDROOM CLOSET - DAY

Mom lies motionless in her nest of blankets and pillows. The stick has dropped out of her embrace.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Monica drops her suitcase, Paul a step behind her.

MONICA

Mom?

Paul peeks into the living room, nose wrinkling.

PAUL

She doesn't have pets, does she?

MONICA

I bought her a fish once. Bad move.
I really have to get those security
shutters down and get some air in
here. Mother!

She taps the security intercom.

SAM (V.O.)

This is Sam. Are you injured?

MONICA

It's Monica, Sam. Do you have
mother on any of your screens.
She's not answering.

SAM (V.O.)

One moment.

MONICA

It's her payback for me taking off.

PAUL

My fault. I'll apologize.

SAM (V.O.)

Miss Monica, I don't have a visual.
Shall I alert the police?

MONICA

We don't need any false alarms. Let
me look first. Mother!

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Monica scowls at the perfectly made bed.

MONICA

Mom! Come on, quit playing.

She looks in the closet, reels, holding her nose. Taking a
deep breath, Monica turns on a light and shoves the clothes
to one side.

MONICA'S POV - Mom's a huddle of death.

Monica falls back to the bed, too shocked to scream.

Paul comes in to look. He backtracks, dials 911 with
trembling fingers.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sharing a love seat, Paul consoles Monica. Dispassionate OFFICER WARREN (40s) advances, deep in his notes.

OFFICER WARREN
Miss Cassidy. Your mother was
diabetic?

MONICA
Type 2.

OFFICER WARREN
The coroner will have to confirm
but it looks like she stopped
taking her pills, went into an
insulin coma.

MONICA
That's not possible.

OFFICER WARREN
We found pill bottles and most of
her food in the trash. Give us a
few days, then call for the report.

Monica barely feels Paul behind her. Her grief turns cold when the EMTs come through wheeling a body bag on a gurney.

Paul nudges her.

PAUL
Get your bag. You'll stay with me
for the time being.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

Alison meets with Dennis, Sam and Jennifer at the supervisor station, one eye on the monitors.

JENNIFER
It's just so awful. I feel like I
missed something, but there were no
alarms.

ALISON
It happens. Tech is running systems
analysis. All tapes will be
reviewed. For now go on as normal.
Dennis.

Sam and Jennifer depart at Alison's nod. She faces Dennis.

ALISON (CONT'D)

As the last person to speak to her focus is going to be on you. Do not go beyond what's in the script.

DENNIS

I ...
 (off her warning look)
 I'll do my best.

Alison scowls her lack of confidence, waves him off and turns fully to the monitors.

INT. ADVERTISING CO - MAIN FLOOR - DAY

Conversations stall when Monica marches through. Not as sharply dressed, eyes rimmed with fatigue. She disappears into her office. Business picks back up.

MONICA'S OFFICE

Monica sweeps condolence cards into a pile on a side cabinet. Colin bursts in.

COLIN

Monica, my angel, you didn't take your full bereavement. Just as well. Tell me how Franklin can sell insurance against an Arctic freeze in the lower forty-eight.

MONICA

Franklin's selling snow insurance in Florida?

COLIN

Think Wisconsin. Huge piles of ice shoving into people's yards. People can't drive in the rain here, think what snow would do to traffic.

She's not in the mood, forces concentration.

MONICA

Global warming - the new normal. Are you ready for snow when it happens? Call Franklin Insurance for peace of mind when Mother Nature decides to take a vacation in Miami.

Colin studies her, peevish, heads to the door.

COLIN

Not so blunt. We'll need at least
six scenarios by lunch.

He's out in a rush. Monica scowls at the door. Turning away,
a photo of Mom catches her eye. She lays it face down, stares
at the computer, as blank as the screen.

INT. ADVERTISING CO - MONICA'S OFFICE - LATER

Monica ignores the remains of a salad, doodles on a legal
pad. Cross outs and stick figures mark a lack of inspiration.
She's propped up on will power, on the verge of exhaustion.

A tentative KNOCK. The door opens. Sam's apprehensive grimace
of a smile begs forgiveness of the intrusion.

SAM

Miss Cassidy?

MONICA

I'm sorry. Cheryl was supposed to
cancel all my meetings.

SAM

I wouldn't be on your calendar. Sam
Goldfarb. All Eyes Security. Your
mother was one of my people.

Monica rises to meet him, searches his face.

MONICA

Sam? Day shift. Come in.

SAM

I can't stay. Lunch hour. I wanted
to offer my condolences.

MONICA

You're so kind.

She shows Sam to a seat, returns to her chair.

SAM

I tried to be supportive, but she
was a handful, only wanted Dennis.
Loved his voice. Everyone loves his
voice. Me, she said I sounded like
sand paper. But Dennis. She'd be on
the phone as soon as he got in. I
can't imagine what could have
happened.

MONICA

The coroner said it was an insulin crash. She probably heard a report about bad meds and trashed hers.

SAM

Oh. Really? I'm Dear, I'm surprised Dennis couldn't talk her out of that kind of funk.

Monica nods absently, suddenly comes alert, turns on him.

MONICA

What?

SAM

He was always so good with her. I did make a note in my report.

He clams up, fearful of having said too much. Checks his watch, gets up. Monica rises.

SAM (CONT'D)

Oh. Look at the time.

MONICA

Hold on. Did something happen?

Sam stops, caught in some decision. Monica crosses the room to hold the door shut, peers at him. He waffles.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Please.

SAM

She called earlier, in full panic raving that someone had tainted her pills. She didn't want to hear that nothing was wrong. I made a note, but there were multiple emergencies that night. If she called while Dennis was busy, he might have been short with her.

Something clicks for Monica and her despair ices into anger.

MONICA

Dennis killed my mother?

He flinches away from her eyes, uncomfortable.

SAM

No, no. God no. That's not what I ... He doted on her.

MONICA

No. She trusted him and he let her down.

SAM

Please don't take it that way. Your mother cried wolf every day. If he had to make a snap judgement it wasn't malicious. I'm sorry. I have to go. Forget I said anything.

He squeezes out the door. Monica stares at the panel, a blazing fury rising.

INT. ADVERTISING CO - MONICA'S OFFICE - DAY

Monica paces, waiting for a Skype call to connect. Alison appears on the screen.

ALISON

Miss Cassidy?

Monica takes her seat, glares into the screen.

MONICA

I want his records. Dennis Wiley.

ALISON

Why don't you take a breath and start from the beginning.

MONICA

I'll get a court order if I have to. You show me he didn't cause my mother's death.

Alison assumes her most professional cool.

ALISON

We see this every day. Children put their aging parents under care. Then when something happens All Eyes did something wrong. There's a psychological term for it.

MONICA

Transfer of guilt.

ALISON

So you know all about it.

MONICA

College psych major. That's why my ads hit home. But that's not what's happening here.

ALISON

Are you sure? You're still in shock. Angry. Maybe a little defensive. You were out of town.

MONICA

I didn't tell my mother to stop taking her meds.

ALISON

Neither did Dennis.

They glare at each other.

MONICA

Are you going to investigate?

ALISON

Miss Cassidy, we've done our due diligence. All Eyes is not responsible.

MONICA

Somebody is. I want your equipment pulled from the house.

Alison refers to a calendar.

ALISON

I can have a team out at the end of the month.

MONICA

Tomorrow.

ALISON

Monday the thirtieth. That's the best I can do. We are legally obligated to honor the contract for a month after the death of a client.

MONICA

That clause must be in the real fine print.

She cuts the call.

INT. ADVERTISING CO - MONICA'S OFFICE - DAY

Monica stares at her blank computer. Colin bulls in.

COLIN

Have you lost your mind?

He slaps papers on her desk. Monica scans the top page.

MONICA

She's upset? That bitch brushed me off like some hysterical schoolgirl.

COLIN

These are clients. We don't make clients angry. We keep them happy.

MONICA

Well she didn't keep me happy. One of her people pushed my mother over the edge.

COLIN

How? Was he in the house?

MONICA

No.

COLIN

Was he responding to a summons?

MONICA

He responded to every whimper and shadow. Sucked up like he was after an inheritance.

COLIN

Your mother was delusional.

Monica pushes to her feet.

MONICA

That's a world of difference from being suicidal.

COLIN

Are you?

A physical slap couldn't shock more.

COLIN (CONT'D)

If you don't make nice to these people you're out on your tight little ass.

Monica sits down hard. Colin marches to the door.

COLIN (CONT'D)

We can't afford to lose clients, Cassidy. Keep this up and you can kiss that promotion good bye.

Steaming mad, so close to breaking down. She flinches, bats at the machine. Tears threaten. Instead she lets anger rise.

MONICA

Everybody wants me to take time off. Fine. I'm taking off.

She packs her personal items quickly.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - DAY

Monica enters, sticking a cane in its hole. She carries a funerary urn to the shelf.

MONICA

Here's the deal, Mom. You sit here until I find what I'm looking for, then you go to a niche next to Daddy.

She almost gives in to emotion, shakes it off, about-faces.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A half-finished drink sits on a pile of folders. Monica works at the computer, plowing through phone recordings.

MONICA

For someone who believed her phone was bugged you certainly couldn't stay off it.

She opens a random file.

MOM CASSIDY (V.O.)

I don't know what I'm going to do with that girl. Catting around with that co-worker.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Miss Monica has shown a tendency to be contrary to your wishes. A dutiful daughter would respect her mother's concerns.

Monica's gaze jerks up to the security monitor. She hurls the glass at the camera. Glass shatters. The camera blinks blue.

DENNIS (V.O.)

This is Dennis. Are you hurt?

MONICA

I'm devastated.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Miss Monica. I am sorry for your loss. Your mother was special to me.

MONICA

Apparently. You spent quite a lot of time on the phone with her.

DENNIS (V.O.)

I spent whatever time was needed to reassure her that she was safe in that big house.

MONICA

Did you? Or did you feed her delusions and play white knight to her damsel in distress dodge?

DENNIS (V.O.)

Are you implying that I did more than keep a client calm?

Monica pushes to her feet, stalks towards the camera.

MONICA

You indulged her, made her worse.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Hardly. You're the one who jetted off on a vacation without notice.

MONICA

If I had given her notice she would have come down with consumption just as I was leaving.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Exaggeration doesn't become you.

MONICA

Then what happened to the in-home nurses I hired? You convinced her they were spying on her and she cancelled the service.

DENNIS (V.O.)

I only pointed out issues to watch out for. Mrs. Cassidy made her own decisions.

MONICA

Oh please. She couldn't turn the radio on without consulting you, o great and powerful Oz.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Miss Cassidy, I remind you we are not obliged to tolerate ridicule. This call will end unless you get yourself under control.

MONICA

I'm a big girl and you're not my father. Go to passive mode.

She returns to the computer, plops down, shaking.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Intervention terminated.

The camera eye blinks to red. Monica swipes at her eyes.

MONICA

Hell no, I'm not going to cry in front of you.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - DENNIS' CUBICLE - DAY

Dennis runs his normal checks. Something's nagging at him. One eye on the screens, he pulls up archived audio files.

MOM CASSIDY (V.O.)

Oh Dennis, someone's in the house.

Stop. Next.

MOM CASSIDY (V.O.)

Then she brings a man home at the last minute.

Stop. Next.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The house is quiet, with few lights on. A small television flickers company, sound lowered.

Monica goes through computer files. Empty wine bottles lined up. A fresh one half-full.

A huge yawn, she rubs her eyes. Brings up the next record.

MOM CASSIDY (V.O.)

I'm giving the alarm. My bottles have been tampered with. I can't see straight. I've been poisoned.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Mrs. Cassidy, if you're having a problem with your meds call your doctor or throw them out. You're keeping me from a true emergency.

Instantly focused, Monica grins, stops the machine.

MONICA

Bingo.

Digging for a flash drive, she keys into odd sounds.

A CLOCK TICKS. The AIR CONDITIONER HUMS. WOOD CREAKS.

TAPPING NOISES upstairs.

Monica brings up a schematic of the house on the computer. All alarm systems show ready.

FLOORBOARDS CREAK OVERHEAD. A SOFT SIGH OF A BREEZE.

A CRASH OF GLASS upstairs.

She pushes to her feet.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - HALL - TRAVELLING - NIGHT

In bare feet Monica stalks along, armed with a riot stick. A cautious hand tries each door to verify its locked.

Closing in on the far end of the house and the TAPPING noises. One last door.

Monica hesitates, gingerly tries the knob. Unlocked.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BED ROOM - NIGHT

The door inches open. Monica's eye peers in, wary, then blinks relief. The door pushes wide. Lights flick on.

Despite the storm shutter, the window shade sways under a puffing breeze, tapping against the pane.

A broken bud vase is shattered at the base of a side table.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - DENNIS' CUBICLE - NIGHT

Dennis runs his screen checks, still sampling audio files.

MOM CASSIDY (V.O.)
I'm giving the alarm. My bottles
have been tampered with. I can't
see straight. I've been poisoned.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Mrs. Cassidy, if you're having a
problem with your meds, call your
doctor or throw them out. You're
keeping me from a true emergency.

He slaps off the audio. How was that missed?

He goes into the programming files. A nested file!

Nervous fingers tap the desk.

ON MONITOR - Mom's living room. No sign of Monica.

Dennis' fingers fly and he brings up a remote access.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mom's computer comes on line.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BED ROOM - NIGHT

Monica sweeps up the broken glass. Checks the latch on the storm shutter, shuts and locks the window, exits the room.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The computer screen flashes as files are moved and saved.

Monica enters.

The last file uploads, the screen returns to home page.

Monica drops into the chair, stares at the screen. She yawns, checks the wine bottle, shuts the machines down.

MONICA

Oh enough for one night.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - DENNIS' CUBICLE - NIGHT

Dennis works through files to delete any trace of the damning call, nerves tightening every muscle.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

Dennis sips coffee at the French doors, looking across to Mom's house. Fatigue rides him.

He sits on the bed to pull off shoes and socks, flops flat out. After a moment, his eyes close and he's asleep.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Refreshed but still fatigued, Monica waits for the computer to come up. The phone rings. She initiates Skype on a side monitor.

MONICA

You told me to take bereavement.
I'm taking it.

COLIN (V.O.)

End it. Wright and Collins want changes to their promotion. I need you in here.

MONICA

It's Barry's promotion.

COLIN (V.O.)

Well they trashed it.

MONICA

They also trashed my original plan, which is why we gave it to Barry. They talk the same language. I can't deal with them now, Colin.

The main computer screen lights. Monica logs in.

COLIN (V.O.)
You sound rational, not grieving. I
want you in here pulling this
campaign out of the fire.

MONICA
Hate to tell you, but you're not
that intimidating over the phone.
Barry can handle them.

COLIN (V.O.)
Monica.

MONICA
Colin.

Silence that gets her attention. She glares at the screen.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Okay, tell you what. Send me the
specs and I'll work on it from
here. You don't want me in the
office just now. I could bite
somebody's head off.

COLIN (V.O.)
Fine. Fine. But I want your
absolute best work and be quick
about it.

He logs off. Monica focuses on the main screen.

MONICA
Like I care about your shit.
Jackass.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Monica works the computer, Colin's material on the main
screen. A second monitor runs audio files.

MOM CASSIDY (V.O.)
Oh Dennis, there's someone in the
house.

MONICA
Wait a second. Where's the rest of
it?

She backtracks several messages, frustration building. The
phone rings. A glance at the ID, and she switches the
computer to Skype.

ON MONITOR - Paul beams a wary hello.

PAUL (V.O.)
Hey. Thought I'd check up on you.

MONICA
I'm glad you called. I need help
with Mom's computer.

PAUL (V.O.)
Of course you do.

She keys into his voice, softens a bit.

MONICA
Make-up sex only works when we're
both in the same room. Forgive me?

PAUL
I'll think about it. What's up?

MONICA
I was going through some files
yesterday. Now I can't find them.

PAUL (V.O.)
Did you check the recycle bin?
Maybe you accidentally hit delete?

MONICA
I'm not that illiterate. And it's
like a conversation was edited. Can
that be done?

PAUL (V.O.)
Piece of cake.

MONICA
While the computer is off?

PAUL (V.O.)
That makes it interesting. Link me
up on Team Viewer.

He works his keyboard. Monica drops the Skype screen to an
upper corner of her main screen, brings up the Internet site.

MONICA
Ready for codes?

PAUL
Go.

MONICA

Four eight ...

PAUL

Hold on. This can't be right. What the hell? Mo, transfer the Skype to your laptop.

She sets up the portable next to the monitor.

ON LAPTOP - Paul frowns as he works at his machine.

MONICA

Got you.

PAUL

Your Mom had a network of computers?

MONICA

Please, she barely used the one. Oh wait. I totally forgot about Dad's business computer.

PAUL

Nothing else? Nothing remote, like a cloud site?

MONICA

Hell no, Mom wouldn't trust the cloud. I'm surprised she got on the Internet at all. What's going on?

PAUL

Somebody already has access to your computer. Use an external drive to copy your files.

A lightning glance at the wall camera, then Monica goes through the steps as quickly as possible.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Put them in a safe place. Disconnect the power and don't use the Internet. Change your passwords on everything.

MONICA

How illegal is this?

PAUL

That depends on whether your Mom knew what she was doing when she gave him access.

MONICA
What about my laptop?

Paul looks up at his screen.

PAUL
He shouldn't be able to, but I
can't know for sure without running
a diagnostic. Better safe than
sorry. Better yet, get out of the
house.

MONICA
Okay. I love you.

Monica cancels the remote viewer. She brings up the password
page, thinks a moment then changes the password.

She digs in her briefcase, brings out an external hard drive
in, plugs it in and sets it to copy.

Opens desk drawers. Opens the bottom drawer, peers at the
empty tape deck, lights up with victory.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha. Mom's CIA
reels.

She pushes up, darts out of the room.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - DAY

Monica yanks the drawer open. CD discs skitter into a sloppy
pile. She picks up disc after disc of music albums, elation
crashing. Addresses the funerary urn.

MONICA
What did you do?

Just then lights flicker. There's a strange hum then all
electronics go out.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Now what?

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Monica checks the fridge - not running. No stove clock.

She retrieves her phone, peers out the back door window. The
house across the way seems dark.

RECORDING (V.O.)

System overload. We are working to restore power to the affected areas as soon as possible. Thank you for your patience.

MONICA

Son. Of. A. Bitch. Where did you hide those shutter keys, mother?

She breaks the call, grabs a flashlight from the pantry.

MONTAGE:

HALL - At the main electrical panel Monica throws switches and dim green emergency lighting comes on.

SEWING ROOM - Piles of material stack the tables as Monica opens drawers, digs through supplies.

DINING ROOM - Monica empties a credenza of silverware and good plates into display room settings.

BEDROOM - Stripped down to a tank top and shorts, Monica turns out dressers, checks closets. She wipes a rag across her face.

SMALL BEDROOM - Windows opened bare cracks don't off-set the building heat. Monica drinks some water, splashes a shot on her rag to wipe over her face and hair.

The empty take-out carton tops a small trash bucket. Bureau drawers hang empty, linens piled on the bed.

STORE ROOM - Chests and plastic storage bins are lined up, tops off to reveal contents. A frustrated Monica leaves everything as is, heads out.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DAD'S OFFICE - DAY

Monica opens the door, hesitates, battling a rise of grief.

MONICA

Oh Dad. I don't know whether I wish you were here or I'm glad that you're not.

She scans the entire room, turns to the nearest bookcase, moves books and small artworks gingerly.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

5:00 pm. Overheated, Dennis shuffles in, ignores the machines, enters the bathroom.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DAD'S OFFICE - LATER

The room's been put back in order. On the floor, a sweaty Monica sags against the couch, gulps at her bottle of water.

MONICA

Come on, Monica, if you were a paranoid diabetic in a fog, where would you hide your reels?

She leans back, hand flopping to the cushion. A CRUNCH OF PLASTICS sounds underneath.

Monica yanks the cushion off, then a square of corrugated cardboard to reveal a box of tape reels in CD style clam shells. She pulls a few out, checks the dates.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Pay dirt!

Taking only the last reel, she resets the box into the cache. Lights flicker, come on. The AC whooshes into life.

Monica replaces the cushions.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Oh sure, now that I'm leaving.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Fresh from a shower, Monica settles at the desk, unhooks the hard drive, plugs in a flash drive.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

Dennis runs a hand through his hair, ready for work, checks the computer idly.

A flashing icon on the bottom of the screen winks at him. He brings up the details. Access to Mom's computer denied.

Dropping into his chair, he checks the connections.

He's locked out. He brings up the house monitors.

ON MONITOR - In the living room, Monica packs up a briefcase. The case blocks the hard drive and reel going in, but he ...

Gets a clear look when several flash drives go into the bag.

Without conscious thought, his hands move to the keyboard. Door locks activated.

Agitated, baffled he runs the cameras to bring up the various rooms - all showing signs of Monica's search.

Did he miss something? The computer link has been broken. Worry eats at him.

A glance at his time. Dennis picks up the phone.

DENNIS

This is Dennis. I'm calling in sick for my shift. Thanks.

He brings up a new program, watches the monitor as he keys in a set of commands.

ON MONITOR - The afternoon sun puts Monica in darkness at the front door. She pulls at the knob, surprised when it doesn't open, fiddles with the lock.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - DAY

Sam and Jennifer switch out, focused on main screen action.

SIDE MONITOR - Monica at the front door. The screen frizzles, resets. Monica's not there.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

Dennis confirms the command, returns his main screen to the Cassidy foyer. Monica is gone for real.

He runs cameras until he finds movement.

ON MONITOR - In the kitchen, the back door resists Monica's pull. She keys in a code. Nothing. Pulls out her phone, tries an override code. Still no response. Hits a new number.

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - DAY

Jennifer works her screens. Phone rings. She logs on.

JENNIFER

This is Jennifer. Is there a problem, Mrs. Wilcox?

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

Dennis' phone buzzes. He logs on, assumes his formal pose.

DENNIS

This is Dennis. Is there an emergency?

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Monica schools her impatience.

MONICA

Unlock the doors.

DENNIS (V.O.)

Miss Monica. You are about to commit a security breach. I can't allow you to leave with material that doesn't belong to you.

MONICA

What are you talking about?

DENNIS

Leave the briefcase.

She looks around at the camera.

MONICA

Seriously?

DENNIS

We have protocols. All materials belonging to the owner, in this case your mother, must remain in the house.

MONICA

You knock this shit off right now and open the doors.

DENNIS

I can't do that.

MONICA

Get me your supervisor.

DENNIS

Miss Monica, I am fully authorized to hold you until you

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

Dennis flinches when the phone cuts off abruptly.

ON MONITOR - Monica flips a bird, leaves her travel bag, keeps the briefcase and moves out of camera range.

Dennis screens her through halls.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Monica keys her phone, listens to it ring.

INT. PAUL'S CAR - DAY

Paul navigates light traffic. His phone, in his briefcase on the back seat, rings.

PAUL
Sorry. Busy. Leave a message.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

Dennis touches keys.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Monica's phone goes dead mid-ring.

She looks it over, surprised. No bars. She stops at an electrical junction box, flips switches to test reaction.

The security camera light goes from red to blue.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Miss Cassidy, you are not qualified to make changes to that panel.

MONICA
Define qualified.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

Dennis runs his screens. Several monitors go blank.

DENNIS
We anticipated that action.

A touch of fingers and the screens reactivate.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Monica flips all the breakers off. Darkness envelops her for a few seconds, then the lights come back on.

DENNIS (V.O.)
For your own safety systems have
been restored.

She takes off up the hall.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Miss Monica.

MONICA
Since when does protocol allow you
access to Mom's computer? You had
no right to be in there.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Mrs. Cassidy initiated the network.

MONICA
I don't think so. You overstepped
your authority.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Monica taps her phone - still no bars. Pissed, she pauses, carefully tries the door knob. Locked.

MONICA
Damn it, Dennis.

DENNIS (V.O.)
There's no need to get angry with
me. I am performing this service to
the best of my ability.

MONICA
Keeping me in like a prisoner?

DENNIS (V.O.)
Maintaining order. You're the one
who took off and left your mother
alone.

She finds the camera, faces it.

MONICA
I'm not the one who told her to
stop taking her meds.

DENNIS (V.O.)
I never said that.

MONICA
Mom recorded all her calls. I heard
it.

DENNIS
Hardly satisfactory evidence in a
court.

MONICA
So let me out and we'll let a judge
decide.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

Dennis battles indecision. He reaches for the keyboard, can't
bring himself to release the system.

ON MONITOR - Monica rattles the garage door, backs away.

MONICA (V.O.)
Fine. Have it your way.

ON MONITOR - She's gone.

Dennis runs the screens.

ON MONITOR - KITCHEN

Monica opens the pantry secret passage door.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Miss Monica, that is a dangerous
action.

The pantry door closes her off his monitors.

Dennis runs screens, taps nervous fingers. He brings up a
secondary control screen, initiates a tracking program.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS PASSAGE - DAY

Monica digs out her phone. Still no bars. She powers down.

MONICA
Bastard.

Breaking out her flashlight, she heads up the passage.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - DAY

The GPS Tracking screen goes blank. Dennis snarls frustration. Gets an idea. He accesses the electric lines.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS PASSAGE - DAY

The rope lights go out. Monica checks the cord to the lights. Nothing wrong there.

PANTRY

The secret panel opens. Monica looks out.

The room is silent. The stove clock out.

She follows her flashlight back into the passage.

SMALL BEDROOM

Monica exits the passage, opens the window. The storm shutter rattles in its bracket, doesn't fall under her push.

BATHROOM

The window is too small to climb through.

ATTIC

Monica leans out the dormer window. It's a 40 foot free fall almost straight down. No ledges or frills to hold onto.

Settling back inside, she pulls the quilt out, tries to tear it apart. The material disintegrates into unusable pieces.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS PASSAGE - DAY

Back at the pantry access, Monica loads fresh batteries into her flashlight, pockets a bottled water.

MONICA

No need to panic. Jennifer comes on
in a few hours. Worse comes to
worse there's Sam in the morning.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Monica makes her way past the damaged floor to the dormer window, lugging her briefcase in one hand, flashlight and supplies in the other.

She settles the briefcase into a tub, opens the window wide for whatever breeze and sinks down against the wall.

Eyes closed, she rolls her neck, sips from her water.

Her shoes come off. Feet stretch out. She fingers the torn quilt, regret surfacing.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - BED ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis hasn't moved from his seat. His time - 8:46

ON MONITOR - The house is quiet. Motion sensors inactive. Phone inactive.

DENNIS

Waiting for the shift change, are you? We can work with that.

He reaches for his phone.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Soft footsteps, barely heard. The lock clicks.

Dennis lets himself in. Eases the door shut.

His eyes widen. His breath catches. It's more beautiful in person than he ever dreamed. He's in awe.

And suddenly uncomfortable. On the verge of retreat, his eyes are drawn to the living room door, followed by his feet.

LIVING ROOM

Dennis can't help grinning, nearly tears up. Fingers run over a table top.

He starts to rearrange the chairs, catches himself. Uses a sleeve to rub off fingerprints.

Goes to the computer desk. Pulls latex gloves from a pocket. Tries to log in. Access denied. Looks for notes. Looks in the drawers. Empty.

Empty.

Bottom drawer and the reel to reel recorder. No tape. No tapes anywhere.

A clock strikes the hour, startling him. No time to waste.

He gets up.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - SEWING ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis steps carefully around the piles of goods as he crosses to a small photo on the wall. He tugs it sideways to reveal a wall safe, zips through the combination.

Nothing of value to him.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis checks hollow statuary and books, coming up with keys and mounting frustration. His phone chimes an alarm and he checks his time. He doesn't dare stay any longer.

A monitor activates. His phone keys up with a buzzer.

Dennis freezes in a panic, but his phone doesn't show a house camera. It's one outside.

ON MONITOR - Paul at the front gate.

Dennis hesitates. Answer or don't answer? If he doesn't will Paul keep ringing? What if Monica hears it?

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Monica dozes, monitor buzz too soft too disturb her rest.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

Paul presses the buzzer again. The monitor light flicks from red to blue.

DENNIS (V.O.)
Access denied at this time.

PAUL
Hey. Hey wait. Dennis? It's Paul
Thornton. I'm checking on Monica.
Why isn't she answering?

DENNIS (V.O.)
There was a power outage. We do not
have an estimated time for systems
recovery.

PAUL
Okay. But what about Mo? Can you
see her? Is she okay?

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis hesitates.

PAUL (V.O.)
Her phone is going direct to voice
mail. I should come in and look
around.

DENNIS
That won't be ...

PAUL (V.O.)
Come on. You don't have cameras
everywhere. She could be hurt in
the bathroom. If you can't take
action I'll just call the police.

Irritated now, Dennis' gaze lands on the baseball bat in the
umbrella stand. Maybe he can use Paul for leverage.

DENNIS
No need to trouble the police.
You'll have to push the gate open
once it unlocks.

He presses the button.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

Paul hops back into his car from opening the gate, drives
straight to the house.

Behind him the gate swings shut.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis follows Paul on the monitors getting out of the car.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - VESTIBULE - NIGHT

Paul steps in, nervous in the dark. He cringes when the front
door shuts behind him. He uses the light app on his phone to
find the key pad. Punches numbers.

PAUL

Dennis?

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis pauses his finger over the program, holds off.

PAUL (O.S.)

Are you there? Is anybody there?
I'm locked out. What's going on?

Dennis changes the screen as Paul bangs on the door.

DENNIS

You'll be fine until I need you.

He runs room cameras on his laptop, ending with the basement.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Dennis eases down the steps behind his phone light. He rests the laptop on the washing machine, cruises down the wall to the passage door, listens to the panel before opening it for a look.

Closes that, checks the space behind the bunker, then goes to the bunker door. He hesitates with a bare tremor of fear.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

The door opens. Dennis keeps his back to the panel to throw the light around the space, clearly not comfortable here.

He picks out the canes, then the holes in the floor, inserts a cane to block the door.

Only when he's certain he won't get locked in does he cross to the cabinets. Plays his light over the shelves, stopping on the urn. A moment of sadness is mastered and he goes drawer to drawer. Nothing but music CDs.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - DAD'S OFFICE - NIGHT

At the desk, Dennis rummages through drawers, pulling them out and checking underneath and behind for hidden pockets.

His laptop sits open on the sofa, security cameras looping the rooms.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - PANTRY - NIGHT

Dennis moves a shelf on the wall opposite the passage door to reveal a small space. But its empty. He unlocks the passage, shines his light around the first five feet or so. Backs out.

KITCHEN

Dennis checks his laptop on the table. Mom's last hiding place is upstairs. He runs the cameras for movement.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Monica jolts out of her doze, stretches stiff limbs.

Sweating, smothered by humidity, she pulls herself up to the window to breathe the night air. Not much help. Takes a swig of water, checks for her watch. Not there.

Looks for the Moon. Did it travel any? How far? Can she judge her time by that? She makes a face at her folly.

Turning, she digs in the memento bin, pulls out a child's jewelry box. Brings out trinkets to eye in the moonlight.

A delicate ribbon rose sparks a bittersweet smile.

MONICA

I was six before I realized your
name wasn't Katie Scarlett, because
that's what Daddy called you.

That box gets put away. A shoebox comes out, middle school award ribbons, report cards.

Family photos where Mom is decked out in ruffled finery and teen Monica almost always has a sour face.

Monica pouts the same irritation as her younger self, drops the photo and that box gets put back.

MONICA (CONT'D)

He let you get away with all your
shit. Be nice to mama. She's not as
strong as you, MoMo.

She looks out the window, weary to her bones.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I'm counting on you to be here for
her, baby. Promise me.

Anger shudders through her. She unearths a larger, later family photo in the bin, glares at it.

PHOTO - All three children (Monica plus older brother and sister) have the same pout of forbearance. Dad looks sickly.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I kept my promise, Dad. Can I go on with my own life now?

She smashes the frame against a beam, drops it.

Her legs give out and she sits under the window, on the verge of complete breakdown. Fishes the photo out of the shards.

PHOTO - This time it seems Mom has the most pained frown, one of abject fear, huddling within the family group.

Tears threaten. One finger runs over the photo faces.

The photo goes back in the box. She digs the tape reel out of her briefcase, considers it.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Just one crappy weekend to myself.
That's all I wanted.

Huffing her tears under control, she pockets the reel, finds her shoes and flashlight.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BATH ROOM - NIGHT

Monica washes her hands, splashes water on her face.

A FLOORBOARD CREAKS in the hall.

She freezes, douses her light. Eases the door open to listen.

FOOTSTEPS.

She dares to peek one eye out.

MONICA'S POV - Up the hall, a tall figure separates itself from the dark.

FLASHBACK -

8-year-old Monica cowers in the bathtub as a masked thief towers over her.

BACK TO SCENE -

Hyperventilating, Monica manages to close the door without a sound. She looks around the room under brief hits of her flashlight. No escape here.

She shuts the light, takes a breath, eases the door open.

Listens.

The footsteps are further away.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT

Monica slides out along the wall, eyes on the figure well ahead of her.

One step at a time, she backs to the next room door. Waits.

Listens.

No sound inside.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - SMALL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Monica slips inside, pushes the door shut, throws the lock. Finally daring to use her light, she darts to the passage door, lets herself in.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Monica hauls ass up the stairs, past the dormer nook. She pulls up at the police tape, gasping.

MONICA

Oh God, oh God. Monica, stop.
Think. How did he get in here?

Calming, she darts to the window.

Under the moon she can just see a car bumper near the door.

She turns away from the window.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LOWER HALL - NIGHT

A door eases open. Monica slithers out, listening. She crosses to the breaker box control panel, uses a flicker of light to access the call button.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT

Dennis startles at the call ring, nearly drops the phone.

Checks the caller ID, Monica.

Filters the connection through the house monitors.

DENNIS
Miss Monica?

MONICA
There's someone in the house.

Dennis turns a circle. He's alone.

DENNIS
That's not ...

MONICA
Don't contradict me. I saw him. You want to lock me in. Fine. How do you justify letting burglars in?

DENNIS
Where are you?

MONICA
I'm ...

Something makes her hesitate.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Safe.

DENNIS
Very well. Stay calm while I check the cameras.

Monica frets, looking up and down the hall, keeping half an eye on the camera light flashing red.

Dennis runs the monitors on his phone.

She flashes her light on the control panel.

MONICA
System is armed. Nothing's fried. And this is ...

Shaking fingers trace wiring to a second unit.

MONICA (CONT'D)
What is this? Oh yeah. Jeff
Anderson's unit. Jeff? Is this
still active?

She keys the call button.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Anderson Security.

MONICA
This is Monica Cassidy. I'm locked
in my house. And there's someone
else in here.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Cassidy. One moment.

Monica dances her impatience.

At his end of the house, Dennis' systematic camera search
gets closer to the monitor above the control panel.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Miss Cassidy, service has been
superceded by All Eyes.

MONICA
All Eyes locked me in here. Get me
your super. Better yet, get me
through to Jeff.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
One moment.

The camera light flickers. Monica just catches it, darts to
stand under it as the light turns blue. She winces at the
open control panel door.

A few seconds then the light turns red. Monica holds
position.

DENNIS
Miss Monica, I'm not picking up any
intruder. Where did you see him?

MONICA
The upstairs hall.

Dennis turns a slow circle, eyes the doors. He crosses to the
nearest one to test the knob.

ANDERSON (V.O.)
Monica.

Monica darts back to the control panel.

MONICA

Jeff, help. I need the police.
There's someone in the house.

ANDERSON (V.O.)

For a second there you sounded just
like your Mom. Do you know how he
got in?

MONICA

I wish I did because then I'd get
out. All Eyes has taken over the
house.

ANDERSON (V.O.)

That's ... Never mind that now. I'm
sending the alert. Find someplace
safe.

MONICA

I owe you. Thanks.

She shuts the circuit, closes the panel.

Heads for the passage, hesitates at the door. How did this
unknown get in?

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

Alison's behind Jennifer working on an issue when a call
comes through.

JENNIFER

This is Jennifer. What's your
emergency?

ANDERSON (V.O.)

Jeff Anderson, Anderson Security. I
just got a call from Monica Cassidy
with a security issue. Will you
check your systems and have police
go to the house?

Alison squeezes Jennifer's shoulder, gives a nod.

JENNIFER

We'll take care of it, sir.

The call disconnects.

ALISON
Have there been any alarms from the house?

Jennifer checks her boards.

JENNIFER
Not on my shift.

ALISON
Anderson's the competition. We don't do their work. Log the call and leave it.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Monica tries the back door, locked tight. She looks around, pulls a knife from a block on the counter.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Monica heads to the front door. She keys the inside lock, surprised and delighted when that opens.

Pulls the door wide and stops, stunned to find Paul wilting on the side table.

MONICA
Paul!

He straightens, startled, glares at her. Monica uses the knife as a wedge to keep the door from locking.

MONICA (CONT'D)
How did you get in here?

PAUL
I walked in.

She passes him to check the front door lock.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I tried that. What happened to the AC?

MONICA
The electric went out.

PAUL
Yeah, rolling blackouts. The power came back hours ago.

Monica turns to him, fury mounting.

MONICA
That bastard.

PAUL
Who?

MONICA
Dennis. He locked me in. He's trying to get me to give up my evidence.

PAUL
So? Give it up and take him to court. That's how a sane person responds to threats.

She goes back to the inside door, peeks into the foyer.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Are you listening to me?

MONICA
You listen to me. There's someone besides us in the house.

PAUL
You sound like your mother.

She glares at him.

MONICA
Not funny. What are you doing here?

PAUL
I came to check on you when you weren't at my place. Why didn't you leave when I told you to?

MONICA
I had to find Mom's reel and I did. Took me all day. I don't want to argue. The cops are on the way. We need to hide someplace safe. Come with me.

She reaches for his hand, tugs him out. The knife gets nudged aside and the door closes and locks.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Monica goes straight to the passage door, pulls Paul inside.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT

Dennis gets to the grand staircase, takes it down, heads for the rear hall.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Monica leads Paul along the beams to the window nook.

PAUL
Not much camouflage here.

MONICA
And no cameras.

She throws down the quilt, settles down, motions for Paul to sit with her.

PAUL
How are you not sweating your ass off? It's stifling in here.

MONICA
Mind over matter.

They snuggle side by side.

PAUL
So let me get this straight. When I told you to leave this morning, you opted to stay.

MONICA
He doctored the computer record. I had to find the tape. Without that its he said, she said. Then he locked me in.

PAUL
You definitely sound like your mother, except in your case its vengeance. For what? She's gone.

MONICA
You don't understand.

PAUL
Don't I? Mom's dead and somebody has to be responsible. You have a bigger problem. With or without that tape what happens come morning?

MONICA

What?

PAUL

You're the smartest woman I know.
Forget your vendetta for a minute.
Calm down and think. You called his
bluff. What's his ultimate move?

MONICA

He ... He ...
(understanding dawns)
Oh. Wait. Damn. He can't let us go.

PAUL

You're sure there's no way past the
alarms?

MONICA

Mom worried about people getting
in, not herself getting out.

PAUL

What if we start a fire?

MONICA

Dennis would let the house burn
down with us inside.

PAUL

Windows?

MONICA

Shuttered tight. God knows where
she hid those keys.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dennis runs a diagnostic on his laptop. The redundant system
highlights.

DENNIS

Anderson Security! Why is that
still working?

Fingers tap deliberation. He heads for the kitchen.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

Outside the gate, Dennis works on the keypad box.

A patrol car glides up. Officer Warren gets out, flashlight up, opposing hand on his pistol butt.

OFFICER WARREN

Hey. Hands where I can see them.
What are you doing there?

DENNIS

Dennis Wiley, All Eyes Security.

He offers his ID badge. Warren flashes a light on it, scans Dennis' face, returns the card.

OFFICER WARREN

We got a call about an intruder.

DENNIS

I'm sorry about that. The system
had a short. We couldn't get to it
before the alert went out. Do you
need to access the house?

The cop looks past Dennis to the freaking big sprawling house. Everything seems quiet.

OFFICER WARREN

Looks like you have everything
under control. Get that fixed.
Another false alarm and we'll have
to charge the company.

DENNIS

That's why I'm here.

The cop returns to his car. Dennis holds his pose until the car is out of sight, considers the house. He should leave well enough alone.

Then his gaze lifts to the top level and his breath catches.

DENNIS' POV -

Monica leans head and shoulders out the open window, scans the grounds. Ducks back inside.

BACK TO SCENE -

Dennis seethes with rage. Of course she'd hide the tape up there. Dare he go back inside? Can he afford not to?

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Moving with care, Monica returns to the junction box, calls Anderson again.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. ANDERSON SECURITY - NIGHT

Jeff Anderson picks up the incoming call.

ANDERSON
Anderson Security.

MONICA
Where are my cops?

ANDERSON
Monica? I passed on your issue.

MONICA
Dammit, All Eyes is keeping me
inside. It's too complicated to
explain. I need those cops here.

Anderson takes the computer controls from his agent, zips through screens.

ANDERSON
Are you safe to hold on? I'm
calling All Eyes now.

MONICA
Go for it.

ADD ALL EYES TO INTERCUT

INT. ALL EYES SECURITY - MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

A ruffled Alison stands behind Jennifer as she runs through the monitors.

JENNIFER
I've been checking. The house is
quiet.

MONICA
I'm at the main breaker box. How
can you not see me? I see the
active light clearly.

Fuming, Jennifer runs the sequence again. Each room shows empty. The breaker box hall is clear.

Sam comes in, bleary-eyed. He gets right behind Jennifer as she runs the screens. Something catches his eye.

SAM

Living room. Time lapse shots.

Jennifer brings up a series of shots of the room.

JENNIFER

There's nothing different.

SAM

There should be. That light should be off this time of night.

He nudges the chair. Jennifer gets up to let him in.

Quick fingers pull up a diagnostic program. The screens frizz, reset.

SAM (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch. Monica, Jeff, hold on.

He mutes the phone, turns to Alison.

SAM (CONT'D)

Our authority has been overridden and sent to a remote location.

ALISON

Then what are we looking at?

SAM

A feedback loop. We haven't had a live feed all day.

Alison thumbs her phone.

ALISON

Shit. Do what you can to regain control.

Sam turns back, keys his headphone.

SAM

Jeff, the police are on their way.

ANDERSON

Can you override his control?

SAM
I'm trying.

MONICA
Jeff, how come you can get through
and I can't?

ANDERSON
They're working on it. Find a place
to hide until the police get there.

ALISON
(on phone)
Walter, send the police out to the
Cassidy house. Unknown emergency.
Override all security stops.

She pockets her phone.

ALISON (CONT'D)
Jennifer, take back control. Sam,
with me.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Sweltering in the close heat, Paul groans, stirs. His hand
searches for Monica. Coming up empty, he wakes fully.

PAUL
Dammit, girl.

He gets his feet under himself, feels his way to the stairs.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Monica closes the panel and breaks the lock.

UPPER HALL

Dennis finds his way, guided by a light from his phone.

FOYER

Monica eases through, catches a brief flash of light
upstairs. She stops, then darts to the living room, pulls
Mom's riot stick from the stand.

She backs into cover just inside the living room.

FOYER

Dennis comes down the stairs, hesitates over his phone as he brings up the house plan.

Monica peeks out. Dennis' back is to her.

She slips one foot out, then the other, baton held up like a Samurai sword at the ready.

Guided by the glimpses of the phone light, she sneaks up behind Dennis.

Closer.

Within striking distance.

Dennis reacts to breathing, turns.

Monica swings, scores a glancing hit off Dennis' shoulder. He reaches for her, knocking the baton from her grip.

Monica turns and runs into the living room.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Monica runs to the secret panel, darts in, pulls the door shut.

Seconds later, Dennis barrels in to the panel, pops it open.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Breathing hard, Monica makes her way through, using brief flashes of her light.

She almost barrels into the police tape, catches herself up short. Listens.

Footsteps come up the stairs.

She looks around, focuses on the police tape around the bad floor. Rips it down, retreats down the attic.

Dennis eases up the stair behind his phone's light. He listens hard. Catches the blips of light up ahead. Follows.

His foot breaks through the weak spot and he slams down face first, leg caught to the knee in the broken boards.

Up ahead, Monica stops, smirks then makes her way downstairs.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - UPPER HALL - NIGHT

Dennis limps out of the small bedroom.

A door opens ahead of him. Paul leans heavily on the jamb, eyes half-shut.

Pain forgotten, Dennis picks up a plaster knickknack, gets up close behind.

Paul's head comes up, tired eyes blink Dennis into focus.

Dennis bashes Paul in the head. Paul hits the wall hard. Dennis grabs hold, marches his prisoner along.

DENNIS
Introductions later.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Dennis puts Paul into the vestibule, shuts the door.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The passage door opens. Monica pops out, slams it shut. There's nothing to block it.

She passes the bunker door to check around the laundry machines. Nothing to use as a weapon.

Looks around.

Her gaze lands on the bunker.

An idea sparks. She opens the door, grabs a cane.

Backing out she hesitates over a second cane in the basket. A trap maybe? A decoy at the very least.

She wedges the second cane into the hole, starts to back out.

She focuses on the lock, stops and digs fingers into the tumblers, spinning the wheels in different directions.

Satisfied, Monica eases the door shut, slips behind the wall, wedging between the closet and the washing machine.

She holds her cane ready to bash.

The passage door creaks open. Dennis eases out, eyes everywhere, picks out the open bunker door.

Tucking his phone into a pocket, he steps up to listen. He takes hold of the door edge, opens the door wide.

Monica slides around the closet, closes on Dennis.

Leveling the cane, she jabs his back.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

Dennis stumbles, not losing his grip on the door as he twists to catch hold of Monica's weapon.

Monica hangs on, wrestles for possession.

Losing his balance, Dennis grabs Monica's hand, pulls her in.

They fall in a tangle of arms and legs.

The door stops, reverses direction.

Dennis pushes Monica off, his annoyance distracted by the moving door.

It's closing!

He scrambles on hands and knees.

Monica rolls out of his reach, clinging to her cane.

The door locks just as Dennis puts hands on it.

EXT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

Alison and Sam approach. Sam knocks, ignoring her look. She brings out keys, searches, fits one to the door lock.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

The pair stop just inside, listen, look. Sam shakes his head at the lackluster furnishings.

SAM

It must kill him watching over all
these huge houses while he's living
in this closet.

Alison glares at him.

SAM (CONT'D)

But it's a nice closet.

ALISON
You're one of a kind, Sam. Dennis?

She leads the way, cautiously.

BED ROOM

Alison opens the door, gasps at the monitor set up. Sam edges up behind her.

SAM
Oh snap. Somebody's putting in
unauthorized overtime.

He nudges her to one side to cross to the desk, taps the keyboard. The screen changes.

Sam drops into the chair, tries another command.

ALISON
Can you disconnect his control?

SAM
I don't see why not. We're at
ground zero.

He works for a space. Screens flash from camera to camera. Sam shakes his head.

SAM (CONT'D)
System is active, but not
responding. He could be using a
remote.

ALISON
Oh my God, he's in the house?

Sam runs the cameras again.

SAM
No sign of anybody except in the
vestibule.

He brings up the screen. Alison studies Paul on the screen.

ALISON
He looks a bit worse for wear, but
not in danger.

SAM
We should call in the cops.

ALISON
No. I need you to stall.

SAM

But.

ALISON

I can't make this decision without input from corporate.

SAM

Yeah, fine, we can't afford the publicity, but we have people in possible danger in there.

She frets, not ready to make a solid decision.

ALISON

We don't have signs of violence.

SAM

We also don't have cameras in every room.

ALISON

Give me ten minutes to get an answer.

Sam sits back, hands off the keyboard. She heads into the other room, keying her phone.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

Dennis pushes, pushes at the door. He pulls the tumbler housing off, inspects the wheels under his phone light.

Monica pulls herself back to sit against the wall as blue emergency lighting comes on.

MONICA

Good luck finding the right combination.

DENNIS

There's a safety reset. You said so.

She startles.

MONICA

Dennis? You're Dennis Wiley?

He glances at her, just enough profile to give her a glimpse of the vivid scar tissue across his cheek.

MONICA (CONT'D)

How dare you!

Rage exploding, she pushes to her feet, pounds his back with the cane.

MONICA (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch.

Dennis cringes, manages to get to his feet and move away. But Monica follows until he whips out a hand and yanks the cane from her.

A gasp of surprise then Monica's overcome with fear. She shrieks, stumbles into a cowering ball in the corner.

Rattled, Dennis holds his ground, assesses her posture quickly. His professionalism takes over.

DENNIS

I'm not going to hurt you. Please calm yourself.

Monica shakes her head, hugs herself tighter, very much like a young child. Dennis lays the cane on the shelf.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Miss Monica, I'm going to work on the door. When you come to your senses you should help me.

She still doesn't respond. With an aggrieved sigh Dennis moves to the door, sets himself on one knee. A glance at her then he focuses on the lock.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - VESTIBULE - NIGHT

Paul sits on the side table, head hanging. He looks at the inner door key pad, tries a combination, tries another.

The camera light turns blue.

SAM (V.O.)

This is Sam. Can you hear me?

Paul startles, looks up.

PAUL

Yes! Yes. Help. That lunatic's locked us in here.

SAM (V.O.)
I don't have complete control yet.
The police should be there shortly.

PAUL
I'm sweltering. The air ...

SAM (V.O.)
There's no danger of suffocation,
not where you are. We're working on
restoring power.

PAUL
Well work faster. I want out of
here.

SAM (V.O.)
Stay calm. I have to field another
call. I'll be back as soon as I
can.

The light turns red. Paul groans, settles on the table.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

Monica regains control of herself, forcing that irrational
fear into hiding. She looks at Dennis busy at the lock, spots
the cane on the shelf.

With stealth and eyes on Dennis, she drags herself to the
cabinet.

Dennis remains focused.

Monica reaches blindly for the cane. Her move to bring it
down knocks against the urn. Dennis snaps a look at her.

They glare at each other.

DENNIS
Can we resolve this now?

MONICA
I'm okay with the cops finding you
in my house.

DENNIS
I am well within my rights to
investigate a client in distress.

MONICA
Not by coming inside. How did you
get in here?

He can't help but look at his phone.

Monica fixes on it. Fury reignites.

MONICA (CONT'D)

You hacked a remote! Is that how you talked to Mom all hours? You just couldn't turn it off, could you?

DENNIS

Your mother was special to me.

Beyond reason, Monica pushes to her feet. Dennis rises, wobbles on stiff knees.

Monica knocks the phone from his hand, dives to get it first.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Monica. Don't do anything rash.

Monica backs up, thumbs the screen.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Please. Be careful. Without that phone neither of us will get out of the house.

MONICA

Is that a fact?

She raises the phone over her head, watches emotion play across his face. Opens her fingers.

Dennis yelps, lunges, hands reaching. Too far away.

The phone shatters on the floor.

Monica retreats as Dennis picks it up. He taps the screen. It lights for a moment, fizzles and dies.

Pent up emotions release and he advances on her.

DENNIS

Are you insane! How are we going to get out of here?

MONICA

We? WE are not walking out of here.

Dennis reins in his emotions, eyes her.

DENNIS

An impasse will get us nowhere.
Help me.

MONICA

Like you helped Mom? Sure.

Regaining her confidence, she plops down, gets comfortable.

DENNIS

What are you doing? We could be in
here for hours.

MONICA

So?

DENNIS

So, the air.

MONICA

Yeah. It will get bad after a
while. CO2 buildup, then
suffocation, coma and death. I've
heard you don't even realize you're
dying. You just drift off.

DENNIS

We have air for hours before any
ill effects. There has to be a
vent.

He feels along the front wall, finding the screen beside the
cabinets.

MONICA

That would work except for the pile
of boxes stacked against the wall
outside.

He glares at her, trying to read past her smug smile.

DENNIS

Nice try. I don't believe you.
You're not the suicidal type.

MONICA

I wasn't, but if it means taking
you with me. I'm all for it.

She makes herself comfortable in the corner. Dennis gapes.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

Cop cars block access, lights flashing. A Fire Engine and EMT van add to the confusion.

The gate defies Officer Warren's attempts to override or short circuit the lock. Fire fighters are examining the gate itself for Jaws of Life vantage points.

An All Eyes Security van pulls up. A TECH flashes his ID, brings a tool bag to the control panel.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

Dennis paces slowly, deep in thought. Monica watches him like prey.

DENNIS

I loved your mother as if she were my own. I would never hurt her.

MONICA

Yes, you did. You denied her.

DENNIS

Look who's talking. Someone had to be here for her. Where were you? Off gallivanting.

MONICA

I'm entitled to my own life.

DENNIS

At the expense of your mother's.

MONICA

You've only dealt with her for three years. This was my whole life. Don't you dare talk to me like I was negligent.

She wags the phone at him.

MONICA (CONT'D)

You're the one going down. As I see it you could strangle me for more air. But that leaves marks. They'd get you for murder.

DENNIS

You're not funny.

MONICA

Or. Wait, you could suffocate me.
No. You'd have to knock me out
first. Also leaves marks.

DENNIS

This is ridiculous. It should never
have happened.

MONICA

You started it by locking me in.

DENNIS

You threatened my livelihood. I had
every right to defend myself.

MONICA

You killed my mother!

DENNIS

I did no such thing.

MONICA

You ignored her call for help.

Bristling, Monica takes a step. Dennis retreats under her
advance, keeping out of easy reach, circling the space.

DENNIS

I did my job. You have no idea what
went on that night.

MONICA

Mom had an emergency ...

DENNIS

No, she didn't. All her emergencies
were in her head.

He stops moving.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

That night I had a genuine issue on
my hands.

MONICA

So you brushed her off.

DENNIS

I advised her to seek medical help.
I didn't have her on camera. There
were no alarms to confirm she was
truly was in danger.

MONICA

You cut her off, scolded her.

DENNIS

I couldn't turn away from a real fire to deal with phantoms. Where were you? She was frantic because she couldn't reach you.

Monica's eyes shift to the urn, confidence ebbing.

MONICA

She made me mad chasing Paul off.

DENNIS

So you retaliated by deserting her. How mature of you.

Dennis presses his advantage as Monica shakes with emotion.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Everything I've done was for your protection. You were acting erratic tearing up the house, trying to slip goods out.

Monica wheels around fast, cane lashing whisker close.

MONICA

It's none of your business what I bring in or out. It's my house! What are you doing in here?

Her fury rattles him for a moment.

DENNIS

I ... I was afraid you would injure yourself in those passages.

MONICA

Nice try. Liar! You could have unlocked the door. No, you came looking for the copies of that phone call.

Reading her rising fury, Dennis calms himself, adopts his professional mode, raises empty placating hands.

DENNIS

Miss Monica. Please. Forgive me.

That stops her.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

This is hardly the time or place. You're still in mourning. Such a horrific loss and no one to lean on. I would be a monster to capitalize on your sorrow.

Confusion settles on Monica, makes her hesitate. She doesn't let go of the cane, simply backs away. Dennis watches her. Who's the tiger now?

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

Jeff Anderson pulls up, gets through the police line to the gate box. He scowls the Tech away, uses his own tools to release the gate in short order.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Flashing lights from the emergency vehicles light up the house. Anderson and Officer Warren work at the front door to break the lock.

Paul bolts out, falls into Warren's arms.

LATER

Paul sits in the ambulance bay, under treatment for dehydration and shock.

The surrounding police don't appear to buy his story.

PAUL

You're right. I made up the whole thing because she wouldn't talk to me. Go find her yourselves.

OFFICER WARREN

We have a history of false alarms from this address.

PAUL

That was her mother. Just go look. Don't forget the basement bomb shelter.

The cops look at each other in disbelief. Warren sighs, nods.

OFFICER WARREN

Yeah, that's a thing. Brody, you stay with him. The rest of you, follow me.

He leads the way in.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

Breathing hard, Dennis collects himself, paces on his side of the bunker.

DENNIS

This is not how you grieve a loss.
You shoulder the blame and make
amends.

Monica looks to the urn, defiance cracking.

MONICA

Dammit, Mom. One lousy weekend to
myself. You couldn't take care of
yourself for two damn days?

DENNIS

You see. Derelict in filial duty.
Aren't you ashamed.

MONICA

You make me so angry. I don't want
to be angry with you. But you're
crazy, lady.

DENNIS

Monica, you will never forgive
yourself this guilt until you
surrender the copies. Open the
door.

Monica kneels at the cabinet in front of the urn, so tired.

MONICA

Oh Mom. I'm sorry I wasn't here for
you. You've been so brave in the
face of all your dreads.

Tears form. She strokes the side. Turns it so she can read the inscription.

Rosemary Cassidy, 1946 - 2019, Beloved wife and mother.
Quotation - When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot
in it and hang on.

Monica blinks. Rubs a thumb over the words. Her drowsiness
fades. Oh, this isn't over yet. She keeps her back to Dennis,
slumps down in feigned exhaustion.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The cops ease down the stairs, spread out to check the area, converge on the bomb shelter door.

Officer Warren tries the handle. Nothing. He pounds a fist on the door.

DENNIS (O.S.)

Yes! We're locked in here. Help.

Two Firemen examine the bunker door, flummoxed by the construction.

FIREMAN

I've never seen anything like this.

INT. MOM'S HOUSE - BOMB SHELTER - NIGHT

Dennis waits anxiously.

Monica, on the floor against the cabinets, exhausted, holding off sleep.

Noise at the door as the rescuers work to unseal the hinges.

OFFICER WARREN (O.S.)

Just a few more minutes. Keep away from the door.

Dennis crosses to Monica.

DENNIS

Monica, they're coming in. Can you stand? You should walk out.

Monica accepts his hand, uses the wall to leverage herself to her feet, the picture of fatigue.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Now, remember, this was all a misunderstanding.

She nods. Dennis lets her get a few steps ahead, ready to catch a fall.

The last hinge drops with a clang. The door screeches as its pulled open the wrong way.

OFFICER WARREN

Anybody alert in here?

MONICA

I ... I'm here. Tired. It's been a long night.

OFFICER WARREN

Anybody with you?

The opening continues to widen.

MONICA

Yes. We're both ... tired.

OFFICER WARREN

Are you under duress? Let me hear from anyone else with you.

DENNIS

Dennis Wiley. This was a gross misunderstanding. Please hurry.

MONICA

Yes, hurry. This man abused his authority to lock me in, then had the audacity to enter the house.

Shocked, Dennis grabs Monica, spins her around. She eyes him with clear conviction.

DENNIS

You admitted you were at fault. Why punish me as well?

MONICA

Mrs. Cassidy, if you're having a problem with your meds, call your doctor and throw them out. I have to go. That tape is in Paul's pocket.

Dennis gasps. His grip tightens on her arms. He shakes her.

Officer Warren slides in through the tight opening. In one fluid move he draws his pistol, yanks Monica back out of Dennis' hold.

She gets a momentary glimpse of the rising gun.

MONICA (CONT'D)

No!

The single shot throws Dennis back into the cabinets, shatters Mom's urn. Monica slaps hands over her ears at the deafening report.

EXT. MOM'S HOUSE

Paul waits anxiously at an ambulance, pacing out nerves. Jeff Anderson perks up as Monica is led out of the house by a COP.

They both cross to her as she's led to the ambulance.

PAUL

Monica!

ANDERSON

Are you all right? What happened?
Was that a gun shot?

A shrouded stretcher is brought out. Monica clings to Paul, tears finally finding release.

MONICA

What? I don't. It happened so fast.

PAUL

Monica? You're not hurt.

MONICA

No. We, we talked things out. He
lost.

She shies away as the stretcher skirts past her into the ambulance, tears welling.

MONICA (CONT'D)

We both lost.

FADE OUT.

THE END