

HIGHER GROUND

PILOT

Written by

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Secret Hideout

"I'm so darn glad he let me try it again  
Cause my last time on earth I lived a whole world of sin  
I'm so glad that I know more than I knew then  
Gonna keep on tryin'  
Till I reach my highest ground"

-- *Stevie Wonder*

TEASER

**INT. GRAND JURY ROOM. LOWER MANHATTAN**

LT. NAOMI BARR, MULTICULTURAL, is in the witness chair, and it is taking every ounce of her formidable strength to stay there. In her 15 years on the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force, this may be the hardest thing she's ever had to do.

NAOMI

I believe these Officers are guilty  
of the murder of Shanice Neveah  
Brown.

The vitriol in the air is so thick, it's hard to breathe. The OFFICERS sit shoulder to shoulder, their eyes giving nothing. Naomi's eyes are very round and full. They give everything.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I believe that this murder was a  
Hate Crime.

PROSECUTOR O/S

Thank you, Lieutenant. You're  
excused.

**EXT. COURTHOUSE STEPS. NEXT.**

Naomi pushes her way into the gray morning. A SMALL CROWD is huddled at the bottom of the steps: The OFFICERS, their WIVES, and ATTORNEYS. They stop all conversation at the sight of her.

PARKED ON THE STREET...

Captain MICHAEL SANCHEZ, HISPANIC, emerges from his WAITING CAR. He is Naomi's Rabbi, and serves as the liaison between the Mayor's Office and the Hate Crimes Task Force. Even from a distance, he can feel the heavy vibe as Naomi WALKS THE GAUNTLET OF COPS down the Courthouse steps.

**INT/EXT. CAR.**

Sanchez has a large FOUNTAIN SODA waiting for Naomi. They sit in a bubble of silence for a beat, then... *an OFFICER'S WIFE appears like a GHOST at Naomi's window, her face twisted with rage.* Naomi holds her gaze until Sanchez hits the SIREN once, and the WIFE is hustled away by her HUSBAND.

Naomi takes a minute to pull the pieces of her heart off Sanchez' floor mats.

SANCHEZ

You want to take a day?

Naomi shakes her head: No. She starts to take off her shoes.

NAOMI

Nate must have heard by now... which means he's on the stoop, scrubbing the grill from the barbecue, because that's Nate's yoga. I really need to see his face... And you said dress like a *Lady*, which means, apparently, wear shoes that cripple you, so you can't outrun the angry mob waiting to shank you at the bottom of the courthouse steps.

Beat.

SANCHEZ

Okay.

NAOMI

I need my sneakers, and I need --

Sanchez has a second Fountain soda ready. Naomi is grateful.

SANCHEZ

Barrelle's office called me.

NAOMI

The Barrel herself?

SANCHEZ

With a message: The Governor --

NAOMI

-- Who actually runs the State of New York? The Governor or her?

SANCHEZ

When she talks, it's him talking. ...*The Governor*, having recently released a study about the improvement of Police and Community relations during his term, is saddened to hear of your testimony.

NAOMI

Is he saddened that Shanice Brown is dead?

SANCHEZ

That part was ...*unclear*. But starting now, I report to The Barrel about whatever cases you guys are working on. As well as reporting to the Mayor.

NAOMI

*Are you kidding me?*

SANCHEZ

I told you this was going to be rough. I'm not going to lie. Albany and Gracie Mansion would have been a lot happier if you had said something else.

NAOMI

Well, *shit*. I'd be a lot happier if Dwayne Johnson made me pancakes and bacon every morning. But those Officers took the same oath as me, in the same uniform, and *shot a 15 year old black girl in the neck, while she was holding a pack of cigarettes and a cell phone.*

Naomi calms herself. Sanchez' eyes flicker to an UGLY SCAR at Naomi's elbow. A souvenir from long ago.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Would you have been happier if I said something else?

SANCHEZ

No. Does your fiancée know about the Rock and the pancakes?

NAOMI

You can just shush about that.

**EXT. BROWNSTONE. LOWER MANHATTAN.**

They've arrived at a BROWNSTONE by Hamilton Fish Park. Home. The stoop. NATHANIEL FERRO, the Manhattan South District Attorney, is indeed cleaning the grill with an aggression reserved for busting out of Shawshank.

Naomi runs, barefoot, from the car. They are about to embrace, when MRS. LEE, 70's, ASIAN, SLAMS out of the DOWNSTAIRS APARTMENT. Mrs. Lee smokes. A lot. She was a smoking *toddler*. Mrs. Lee doesn't ask questions, she barks smoke signals.

MRS. LEE

Nathaniel. The boiler is acting up again. Please come fix it. Would you mind. I used to ask your father.

Nate LOVES Mrs. Lee. LOVES her. But he is distracted...

NATE

I'll be down tonight. Miz Lee.

MRS. LEE

Bring the girl. I'll make pork.

SLAM. 'The Girl' will forever be Naomi.

**INT. BROWNSTONE. NEXT.**

Much of the furniture remains from Nate's multi-generational COP FAMILY. There are commendations, pictures of MEN IN BLUE and their stalwart WIVES. Naomi's contribution is a garden of empty FOUNTAIN SODA CUPS. Naomi waits as Nate scrubs his hands with the same aggression he was using on the grill. It's only a matter of time before he morphs into Sonny-on-the-Causeway.

NATE

YOU COULDN'T HAVE GIVEN ME A HEADS UP?

Hi, Sonny.

NAOMI

You're the Manhattan South D.A. You know I couldn't.

NATE

NOW YOU'RE IN AN EPIC SHITSTORM. THAT DOESN'T WORK FOR ME.

His phone is buzzing like crazy. He answers.

NATE (CONT'D)

(into the phone)

IF YOU CALL ME AGAIN I'LL SUBPOENA YOUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.

NAOMI  
Who was that?

NATE  
I DON'T KNOW.

He sits, takes a breath. His hands are a mess from the Yoga. Naomi tends with a little tube of lotion.

NATE (CONT'D)  
Where are your shoes? From how quiet you were, while you were working on it, I figured we'd end up... here.

Nate pulls her to him and holds her tight.

NATE (CONT'D)  
Stay still a minute...

This is the only place where she does. His phone buzzes.

NATE (CONT'D)  
The world is blowing up a little, Nomes.

Naomi's nose starts to run and she swipes at it with her sleeve. Nate gently pushes her hand away and swipes at it with his sleeve.

NAOMI  
Are you going to be okay?

NATE  
I'm a Grown Ass Man...

They share a grin.

NAOMI  
Then how come when you get a cold, your mother has to come over?

NATE  
She's like a bat. She gets, like, a ping and just finds an open window and flies in with the Vick's.

Okay, *we're still us*. Naomi takes a deep breath. Back to it.

NAOMI  
The Barrel called Sanchez. The Governor's office has developed an interest in my whole Unit.

NATE  
Not surprising.

NAOMI  
How bad is it going to be? For you?

NATE  
Let me worry about my stuff. You, be yourself. Do your job. Keep doing the stuff I fell in love with you for. ...You look exhausted.

NAOMI  
Thank you.

NATE  
You just testified against *your family. Your Cop family.* Your heart must be in a million pieces. And your head must be all over the place... How many fingers am I holding up?

He holds up both hands...

NAOMI  
Jazz hands.

NATE  
Not a number. Maybe, stay home today. If it were up to me I'd wrap you in Kevlar and hide you in a closet till this thing is over.

NAOMI  
If I hide, I'll be a ghost. Nobody makes me a ghost.

**INT. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE. LOWER MANHATTAN.**

The HATE CRIMES TASK FORCE is on the third floor, and the WALLS OF THE SQUAD ROOM look like this:

- '*Shapewear is a Hate Crime*' and '*Days without White Nonsense:Zero*' scrawled on the white board .

- A scowling Jesus Christ captioned "*I'm not fixing this.*"

- An ancient ACT UP sticker, with a heart drawn around it.

- '*Lipschitz is Magic*' written everywhere in Sharpie.



- A Bracket, ala March Madness: "*The Sweet SpringSTEEN*". The Unit is wagering on which character from which Springsteen song would survive a nuclear winter. (As of today, Sonny and Candy from Darkness on the Edge of Town, have defeated Spanish Johnny and Madam Marie from The Wild, the Innocent and the E Street Shuffle.)

News of Naomi's testimony has arrived ahead of her, and ripped through the D.O.J. There is indeed tension within her TEAM, and it is manifesting some odd behavior:

DETECTIVE SARAH JANE LIPSCHITZ. 30's, JEWISH, is obsessively re-encrypting her old school corkboard with an indecipherable system of color coded sticky notes.

DETECTIVE MATTHEW WEBB, 40's, WHITE, is standing at the CENTER TABLE, examining a bunch of sad BANANAS abandoned in the fruit bowl. It appears there has been a horrible act of vandalism. He turns, furiously, to...

DETECTIVE DANIEL MARKUS, 40's, BLACK. Upside down, because he's mid-set of HANDSTAND PUSHUPS, executed without a peep...

WEBB

What kind of ...monster *opens* all the bananas in the Unit and leaves them to die? Who does that?

MARKUS

What kind of monster eats all the Swiss Almonds out of another man's pint of Vanilla Swiss Almond Ben and Jerry's? Leaving tiny, guilty craters?

Lipschitz whispers her mantra...

LIPSCHITZ

*Menstoptalking. Menstoptalking.*

Naomi enters the Squad room. She has another FOUNTAIN SODA.

NAOMI

Oh. Well. Congratulations on representing the third floor in the 26th Obsessive Compulsive Olympiad, but can we get to work giving voice to the voiceless? And there's a guy in the kitchen. Nice detecting, Detectives.

All heads turn. DETECTIVE DAVID TUCKER, 50's, Human, though there rumors of a cousin who is an actual *bear*, is in the Squad's KITCHEN, eating compulsively; his default response to being anywhere.

TUCKER  
Tucker. From Bomb Squad.

NAOMI  
You're a week early.

TUCKER  
Snafu. Paperwork.

NAOMI  
Do you have an explosive device on  
you now?

Tucker, mouth full, shakes his head, no.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Good. Stop eating all the Luna  
Bars. Can we reset, please?  
Lipschitz, what do we have?

Naomi slurps at a Big Gulp as Lipschitz reads from an iPad...

LIPSCHITZ  
Swastikas on a synagogue. Swastikas  
on a hardware store. Swastikas on a  
Toys R Us. I can't, with these  
idiots. Broken windows at a gay bar  
in Chelsea...

TUCKER  
I don't get it.

LIPSCHITZ  
People fear gay people so they  
break stuff.

TUCKER  
I get that...

NAOMI  
(to Tucker)  
I know you got the Hate Crimes  
Literature: Your neighbor says  
"hello" and punches you in the  
face. That's assault, he gets  
arrested. Your neighbor says '*I  
hate your Queerpants face, and  
therefore I'm punching it...*'

MARKUS  
(to Tucker)  
That actually happened.

NAOMI

... this Unit designates it a Hate  
Crime. Felony bumps up a class.  
Sentence gets harsher.

TUCKER

I get that, too. But this broken  
window stuff is just vandalism.  
Patrol can handle this easy.

MARKUS

You watch Road Runner?

*What-the-fuck-kind-of-question-is-that-who-doesn't-watch-Road  
Runner-this-is-America-for-fuck's-sake.*

TUCKER

Yeah.

MARKUS

The sticks of dynamite with  
the really long fuse.

WEBB

Life of Wiley...

MARKUS

We have to stay ahead of the fuse.  
If we explode, maybe Newark  
explodes. Then Philly, then  
Chicago...

TUCKER

So you wanted a Bomb guy  
metaphorically?

MARKUS

Boss wanted a Bomb guy because the  
idiots have IEDs now. But the  
metaphor is apt. Welcome to the  
family.

Family. Markus takes a beat...

MARKUS (CONT'D)

I have to say something--

WEBB

--Here we go...

--Boss, today you spoke truth  
to power.

-- The whole investigation  
has been way too fast. This  
thing was faster than my  
divorce. What about that  
other witness who...?

MARKUS (CONT'D)

Swift justice for black women  
should not be a NOVELTY, Webb.

LIPSCHITZ

Whether there's *consensus* regarding what went down today, Boss just went through some serious trauma testifying against Fellow Police Officers...

WEBB

Trauma? What about the guys who got...?

MARKUS

What about Shanice Brown?

NAOMI

CAN WE GET BACK TO WORK?

Okay.

LIPSCHITZ

A 19 year old girl, Mexican, here legally, drowned in the bathtub of her dorm, at State College of New York, in Isolah. Body found by Roommate, early this morning . Isolah Cops think it's a suicide.

WEBB

(pointedly)

How the Local Cops feel carries weight with me...

MARKUS

Me too, Webb. Don't make *this* about *that*.

NAOMI

Mm. Isolah was really white until a few years ago. There's been a huge Latino influx. Day laborers mostly. And there was that thing...

LIPSCHITZ

Yeah. Yeah. It was on the Campus. Last year. School announced grants for the immigrant kids. And someone broke in to the Scholarship Office and left crates of lettuce. And melons. That's probably why the S.C.N.Y is covering it's ass by calling us.

Naomi's phone rings. The Ring Tone is the opening base line of **"EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE"**.

WEBB

...And it's forever the 80s, here  
on the third floor.

WE SEE her making the decision *not to answer*.

NAOMI

Who is she? The girl.

LIPSCHITZ

Monica Alvaro. Monica grew up in  
Mexico, and was on track for her  
Green Card. Her employee sponsor  
was the Isolah Elementary--

NAOMI

-- She wanted to be a teacher?

LIPSCHITZ

-- Yeah, she did. So, M.E.'s  
initial finding is she died Friday  
night with nothing in her system  
but a little bit of Prozac --

Putting it together...

NAOMI

--And was in the tub until she was  
found by the Roomie this morning,  
who was, what, away for the  
weekend?

Lipschitz nods.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Can we go back a sec? Isolah  
Elementary is...

Naomi's interruptions force Lipschitz to scramble for info,  
which she *hates*.

LIPSCHITZ

--Catholic. A lot of chapel. Which  
Monica never missed. She didn't  
miss a day of anything in the two  
years she'd been at S.C.N.Y.

NAOMI

--So she was devout. Responsible.  
Where's the Mother?

LIPSCHITZ

Boss, since when do you interrupt my flow? You only interrupt Webb's flow.

Naomi holds her hands up in apology.

LIPSCHITZ (CONT'D)

Um... Mom lives in the States. Michigan. School informed her. Then Mom kinda disappears into the ether...

NAOMI

What's the note say?

LIPSCHITZ

No note --

NAOMI

-- No note? A teenage, devout Catholic, killed herself without asking for forgiveness? Who doesn't ask for forgiveness?

The Team is exchanging confused glances. Webb pipes up...

WEBB

Boss... we have three other cases that we know are Hate Crimes --

NAOMI

-- Yeah. So get our precinct guys to handle the graffiti and the broken windows --

WEBB

-- And you're kinda all over a thing that the Local Cops, and some of your Team, think is a suicide...?

Naomi is in deep thought...

WEBB (CONT'D)

Maybe wait for the complete Medical Examiner's report?

NAOMI

M.E. will take forever. Green Card. Scholarship. Organized. A teacher. *Devout* Catholic. No note. We deal in *emotional evidence*. This doesn't feel right.

(MORE)

NAOMI (CONT'D)

(beat)

I don't think she killed herself.

WEBB

But...

NAOMI

*I don't think she killed herself.*  
*That's my call.* We're going.

**EXT. D.O.J. PARKING.**

The Team heading to their unmarked vehicles. Naomi is walking *fast*.

NAOMI

Lipschitz, go right to the  
Administration and listen to them  
tell you everything's great.  
Tucker, ride with me. Isolah's,  
like, 25 minutes over the Bridge.

ALL OF A SUDDEN the entire Team with the exception of Markus,  
*reach for their weapons...*

The OFFICER'S WIFE, *the same woman from the car window*, is  
WAITING in front of Naomi's car. Naomi motions to the Team.  
Hang back... She walks to the woman.

*The Woman throws her coffee in Naomi's face.* The effect is  
concussive. Naomi is stunned.

WOMAN

You're nothing.

Naomi wipes at her face with her hand. Gets eye to eye with  
the Woman.

NAOMI

I'm a Police officer. And I have a  
job to do.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

**INT/EXT. NAOMI'S CAR. ON ROUTE TO S.C.N.Y CAMPUS.**

Naomi, still seething, is DRIVING LIKE A MANIAC. SWERVING AND PASSING every car ahead of them. She is schooling Tucker...

NAOMI

All people carry some bias. Most people don't even know they're carrying it. It's implicit. Our job relies on finding *emotional evidence*. There's a lot of nuance, Tucker. It's not so black-and-white-no-pun-intended as Bomb Squad.

Naomi, not a nuanced driver, almost clips a PICK UP.

TUCKER

It's black and white to me. You reduce a person to one thing? And you do violence to them because of that one thing? Then you're doing violence to everyone who does that thing. That's not American. That's ISIS. That's the Taliban. I fought those guys. What do you think I'm doing here? Every asshole who does a Hate Crime is kicking a Vet in the stomach.

She considers what Tucker has said. She nods. He's right.

NAOMI

... People tend to reveal their own bias without knowing it. So you have to leave your own emotional stuff at the door. You have to stay chill.

A CAR HONKS and cuts dangerously in front of them.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

(yelling)

G'HEAD HONEY. SEE YOU AT THE PILE UP AND THE ...JAWS OF LIFE.

Beat.

TUCKER

Oh, I'm chill as balls.



**EXT. DISMALLY DEPRESSED GAS STATION. MINUTES LATER.**

Naomi getting back in the car, ripping the tag off a PROMOTIONAL T-shirt, with her teeth.

NAOMI

I needed a dry shirt. They don't have a bathroom. Cover Your eyes.

HER PHONE RINGS. The opening base line of "**EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE**". *She doesn't pick up. She puts her phone on buzz.*

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Stop peeking.

TUCKER

(genuine)  
I wasn't...

Her phone buzzes again and without checking the screen I.D., Naomi answers, sharply...

NAOMI (CONT'D)

*I can't right now...*

NATE O/S

HELLO?

NAOMI

Oh! I'm sorry. I thought it was someone else.

**INT. D.A.'S OFFICE.**

Nate is trying to keep his voice level as he strides through the CUBICLES towards his PRIVATE OFFICE.

NATE

YOU WERE ASSAULTED AT THE D.O.J.  
AND YOU DIDN'T TELL ME? SANCHEZ HAD  
TO TELL ME?

**EXT. GAS STATION. INTERCUT.**

NAOMI

Okay, you're fully Sonny on the Causeway. Fully. I'm fine. I'm on route to the Medical Examiner...

NATE

There's some social media stuff about you. On a Precinct page. 122. Staten Island. They scrubbed it fast, just... watch your back, okay?

But Naomi's not listening...

NATE (CONT'D)

Naomi...

Naomi is fully focussed on what's directly in front of her.

NATE (CONT'D)

...You just got a hit didn't you?

A HIT. A Hunch, a feeling, a spooky thing. Tucker (now peeking) has noted a relaxed change in Naomi's body. Nate knows there is no reaching her now.

NATE (O/S) (CONT'D)

Alright. Be careful. Go solve this thing and come home.

NAOMI

Okay.

She hangs up. Finishes changing. To Tucker...

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You can look now. Not at me, look around you.

TUCKER

It's a gas station.

NAOMI

*See what you're looking at...*

A WHITE MANAGER removing an ENGLISH LANGUAGE OSHA sign and replacing it with A BILINGUAL one. **TWO** careworn WHITE WOMEN, just glaring at the TEEN HISPANIC GIRL doing a lackadaisical job wiping down their windshield. **TWO** FAMILIES, one White, one Hispanic, filling up, while carefully avoiding the others eyes. This is the context. This is Isolah, New York. Naomi saw it a flash. She looks at Tucker.

TUCKER

This town looks afraid.

NAOMI

Yup.

**INT. NATE'S PRIVATE OFFICE.**

ANDREW PEI, 40, Nate's college roommate and *consigliere* meets him at the door...

ANDREW  
Heads up, brother.

TWO WOMEN are in Nate's office. One of them is PAULA BARRELLE, The Barrel, herself. Like Nate, she is a street fighter. Nate is not pleased at the trespass. He motions for Andrew to come in.

NATE  
Paula.

BARRELLE  
Nate.

Beat. Knives out.

BARRELLE (CONT'D)  
She didn't just testify it was a crime. She testified it was a Hate Crime.

NATE  
That's her call.

BARRELLE  
The Governor put a lot of resources into you taking his seat when he's elected to the Senate next year. He wants you, because of your thing with Cops.

NATE  
I respect Cops. That's my thing.

BARRELLE  
Right. Your fiancée may have screwed that thing to the wall. You need to maintain your street value, Nate. To us.

Beat.

NATE  
You need to make an appointment next time you wanna talk to me, Paula. Let me show you the door.

He opens the door for her.

NATE (CONT'D)  
Have a good day.

She leaves. Andrew looks after her for a beat.

ANDREW

You know she started out as twins,  
but ate her sibling in utero. You  
know that, right?

**INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE.**

MONICA. A small girl with fresh drugstore highlights in her hair.

TUCKER

(sotto, pissed off)  
She's tiny. Maybe five feet.

Monica is lying on a slab, waiting for the M.E. to give her the time of day, as are Naomi and Tucker.

M.E

Lieutenant Barr? That's you, huh.

News travels fast, apparently. She gives him a level gaze.

NAOMI

Yeah.

He turns his back to her, his attention on TWO MALE DEAD GUYS, one BROWN, one WHITE...

M.E.

Well, I just got handed these two geniuses who killed each other over a parking spot. I'll get to your case after I extract this guy's teeth from that guy's forehead. Kay?

Naomi's eye is suddenly caught by Monica's NECKLACE, a little silver DOLPHIN on a chain. She reaches out to touch it, then yanks her hand back.

NAOMI

(to the M.E.)  
There's some urgency here. I don't think it happened like the Cops here think it happened.

The M.E. keeps working on the two geniuses.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I know you've given her an preliminary look, but, can you just take a moment please? Maybe something will jump out at you.

He looks.

M.E.

Not a mark on her. She died of happiness. I'll be in touch.

Beat.

NAOMI

You are on my Christmas list.

As they EXIT...

TUCKER

(sotto)

...For Christmas you...

NAOMI

...Send a card saying Santa's coming to beat you with a fucking hammer. But nuanced.

**INT. MONICA'S DORM ROOM.**

The ROOM is in a **SMALL BUILDING THAT ONLY HOUSES EIGHT STUDENTS**. Two suites on the ground floor, and two more, including Monica's, on the second floor. No other students are present.

Naomi and Tucker ARRIVE as Webb and Markus are processing the room. TWO WHITE LOCAL COPS are STARING DAGGERS at the Team. Naomi evaluates their emotional state, ducks away and calls Lipschitz...

LIPSCHITZ

(in lieu of hello)

According to the Administration this campus is harmonious as fuck.

NAOMI

Lipschitz, these Cops hate my guts. Don't set up at the...

LIPSCHITZ O/S

...Precinct? Hell no. I'm set up in the Campus Security room.

NAOMI

I want...

LIPSCHITZ

...All the security footage from that weekend. Cueing it up now.

Beat.

NAOMI  
 What is Nate going to want  
 for dinner tonight?

LIPSCHITZ  
 Something with sauce...

Click. She and Tucker enter the CRIME SCENE. Monica's side of the room is SPARE AND TIDY. Her Roommate's is not. Roommate BRITTNEY is the proud owner of a lot of superfluous *stuff*. From her TROPICAL VACATION PICTURES WE SEE: Brittney is blonde, has a buff BOYFRIEND (SPF 50), and likes to sip alcohol out of coconuts with a swirly straw.

NAOMI  
 (to the Locals)  
 Barr. Hate Crimes.

They simply look at her.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
 Any luck with Monica's phone? And  
 where's her mother?

LOCAL COP #1  
 Looking for the phone. Mother lives  
 in Riga, Michigan. Checked airlines  
 and such. Can't locate her.

NAOMI  
 A mother is usually on route.

LOCAL COP #1  
 Unless she's a lousy mother, which  
 could be why this girl *killed*  
*herself*.

This is not his call. He knows it. It's a challenge to Naomi's authority. The Team stops it's work...

NAOMI  
 (to the Team)  
 Keep working, ya'll. It's me they  
 want to talk to.

LOCAL COP #1  
 I have a cousin in the 122 --

NAOMI  
 -- Holidays must be fun. You guys  
 do Staten Island Kwanzaa?

LOCAL COP #1  
 -- You're up here trying to make  
this into something, so you can  
 feel better about shooting three  
 cops in the back.

Naomi refuses to let him see how much this hurts.

NAOMI

We were informed you'd be  
delivering the Roommate, Officer.  
Since she's not here, maybe you  
should go look for her.

LOCAL COP #1

Big Campus. We're looking.

As they leave, the YOUNGER LOCAL, 20's, under his breath...

YOUNG COP #2

Looking at you, too. Bitch.

The Team immediately goes Sonny-on-the-Causeway but Naomi holds up a hand.

NAOMI

Thank you for your input, *Scooter*.  
I get called 'Bitch' fourteen times  
before you've even had your first  
*juice box*. And it's Lieutenant  
Bitch.

Furious, the Locals leave. Every member of the Team raises his hand immediately. A burning question...

NAOMI (CONT'D)

(immediately, to the Team)

...No. Nobody gets to call me that.

Bummer.

WEBB

Boss, these guys are --

NAOMI

-- *They're not seeing what they're  
looking at*. Put Lipschitz on  
finding the phone and the mom.  
...Monica chose this tiny dorm...

MARKUS

Bathroom is crazy clean. There are  
marks from scrubbing. Smells like  
bleach. Which is weird. Cops  
wouldn't clean a crime scene.

Naomi can't figure this out...

NAOMI

She scoured the bathroom *before*  
drowning herself in the tub?

MARKUS

Or someone else scoured it after.  
And this is hers...

Monica had created an organizer in a notebook. Every school and work responsibility is accounted for. It sits on her night stand with a picture of her MOM.

MARKUS (CONT'D)

This girl didn't miss a day of  
work, or school, or worship in *two*  
*years*. I was thinking she could  
have messed up the dosage with her  
Prozac, but...

Naomi flips through.

NAOMI

School and work. Opportunities.  
That's her life. She cared too much  
to 'mess up' anything.

WEBB

...Here it is ...

Wrapped in a tissue inside Monica's shoe: a lot of little pills. Loose, NO BOTTLE.

NAOMI

It's bootleg. Can you guys run over  
to Campus Health and confirm if  
from the school?

As Markus and Webb pull on jackets, Tucker notices Markus **IS NOT CARRYING A GUN**. *WTF?* He turns to query Naomi. Naomi is now lying on Monica's bed, swirling Monica's DOLPHIN WATER GLOBE and looking out the window. WTF? part deux.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

(sotto)

What's the last thing you wanted to  
see before you went to sleep?

*THE BACK DOOR OF THE MAINTENANCE BUILDING?* Not a pretty view. Especially with a MAINTENANCE GUY scrubbing GRAFFITI: "*Keep cleaning, Amigos!*" Nice. There is a SECURITY CAMERA outside the building, as well. **Naomi flips the pillow to the opposite corner.**



NAOMI (CONT'D)

If you had just slept this way, you would have seen all these pretty trees. So why did you want to look at the Maintenance Building?

**INT. MAINTENANCE BUILDING. BREAK ROOM. NEXT**

Naomi and Tucker are interviewing the All HISPANIC MAINTENANCE STAFF. The mood is both somber and tense.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You were in the same church group?  
A lot of you?

MAINTENANCE WOMAN

Yeah. And we look out for each other.

NAOMI

So, if Monica needed something, she'd reach out to you.

(beat)

Something like medication.

(beat)

I'm not looking to bust anyone...

MAINTENANCE WOMAN

...I got her the pills, okay? After the stuff last year, with the melons, and then some graffiti started showing up, we started walking together at night. Checking in regular. Who wouldn't be depressed? Monica didn't want her mom to know she was scared sometimes. She was a sweet girl from a tiny town in Mexico --

MAINTENANCE MAN

--There, she was a person. Here, she's a wetback. And they never let her forget it.

NAOMI

Any 'they' in particular?

MAINTENANCE WOMAN

Look. You can get grocery money doing stuff these rich kids don't want to do themselves. Monica did their laundry, and her own work scholarship stuff.

(MORE)

MAINTENANCE WOMAN (CONT'D)

But they treated her like a dog,  
not an industrious, enterprising  
person. But no way Monica would  
have committed suicide. She was her  
Mom's pride. *She was going to be a  
teacher.*

NAOMI

Monica had recently highlighted her  
hair. Was there romance in the  
picture?

Some tense looks all around.

YOUNG MAINTENANCE WOMAN

Monica is... was seeing this guy,  
Keith. Hesh. He works here.  
That's his picture on the wall up  
there.

All the Maintenance workers have I.D. pictures on the wall.  
Keith is WHITE, and in his 20's.

YOUNG MAINTENANCE WOMAN (CONT'D)

He's not supposed to date a  
student. He could get fired.

NAOMI

I don't care about that. Where is  
Keith now?

Tense looks amongst the Maintenance Crew. Then...

YOUNG MAINTENANCE WOMAN

He hasn't been around since Friday.  
All I know, his dad lives across  
town.

**EXT. CAMPUS HEALTH. INTERCUT.**

Markus and Naomi are on the phone.

MARKUS

Apparently, the kids on this campus  
got happy prescriptions if they had  
to read a sad book. But Monica  
never came here. Ever. But the  
Locals have the Roomie. The one who  
found Monica's body.

NAOMI

Okay. Monica had a boyfriend.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Keith H-e-s-h-e-r. Gone AWOL. Go detect, Detectives. FIND HIM. His dad has a house on Blake Street. Ask the Locals to help out. Please tell them that Lieutenant Beeeyotch appreciates their cooperation.

**EXT. KEITH HESHER'S HOUSE.**

A tidy, sad, house with a sagging porch. Markus and Webb bang on the door. A cough, and a gravelly voice...

VOICE O/S

What?

WEBB

Police.

VOICE O/S

Read the welcome mat.

The Detectives look down: The WELCOME MAT says: **"Come Back With A Warrant"**. Markus raises an eyebrow.

MARKUS

You think he'll talk to the Black Guy Cop or the Gay Guy Cop?

WEBB

I'll hide my magic wand for the conversation.

(through the door)

Mr. Heshher, We'd like to...

The door opens. KEITH'S DAD is White, careworn, in a bathrobe and drying a dish.

KEITH'S DAD

Get off my porch.

SLAM. Webb turns to Markus. Beat.

WEBB

...Was it showing?

MARKUS

(through the door)

We need to speak with you about your son...

**EXT. CAMPUS. INTERCUT.**

The same Local Cops are waiting with BRITTNEY. One Local gestures for a convo with Tucker. Naomi seems to have become invisible.

NAOMI  
(sotto, to herself)  
Christmas list.

LOCAL COP #1  
(to Tucker)  
The blonde over there saw the victim on Friday, went away for the weekend, and then found the body this morning.

TUCKER  
She's our bookend. Thanks.

Naomi has already begun interviewing Brittney...

BRITTNEY  
We don't hang out that much. She's kind of, just... we're just in different spaces.

NAOMI  
Sure. Monica called you...

BRITTNEY  
...Monica called me Friday. I was upstairs in Ezra's room. Ezra's my boyfriend.

Brittney waves vaguely to a WINDOW in the BUILDING behind them.

NAOMI  
I saw his picture in your room. Did Monica call from her cell? You remember the time?

BRITTNEY  
From her cell, around six.

NAOMI  
Had you seen her earlier that day?

BRITTNEY  
No. She does her thing. I do mine. I was mostly here.

NAOMI

Okay. I need to know exactly what you guys said on the phone.

BRITTNEY

Exactly?

NAOMI

It might help you remember if you think: where you were in the room when she called, or where Ezra was...

BRITTNEY

Ezra was in the shower... I was on the phone with his mom... Oh, yeah! Monica called and said 'I lost my key.' I said 'who's this?' And she said 'Monica.' That's *exactly*.

NAOMI

Did she sound upset?

BRITTNEY

More tired. All the other girls in our house were away at some Woman March. So, I guess I was the only one. Then, like right away she said: 'Can you meet at the Rabbits'. Then she hung up.

Off Naomi's look.

BRITTNEY (CONT'D)

There's a rabbit pen so when students are stressed out they can pet them.

Fix it, Jesus.

NAOMI

Would you mind walking down to the Rabbits with me now? The same way you walked on Friday.

BRITTNEY

Exactly the same?

NAOMI

If you can.

**EXT. HESHER HOUSE. INTERCUT.**

Dad is still inside the house, but speaking to the Detectives through the PORCH WINDOW. He seems genuinely shocked...

KEITH'S DAD

My son couldn't have had anything to do with that girl's death. With anyone's death. How did she...?

WEBB

We're working on that. So you know Monica?

KEITH'S DAD

Met her. Once.

Markus peers over the Dad's shoulder. He can see through the tidy house into a MESSY BEDROOM. There is an old WU TANG POSTER on the wall.

WEBB

Keith didn't bring her around, much?

KEITH'S DAD

(sharply)

You don't get it. I've been looking for a job for a year. The circles I run in, in this town, nobody's happy all these people are moving here. I can't have my son bringing one of them over for Christmas, now can I? They spent most of their time at the School.

WEBB

And how long has Keith been employed at the College?

KEITH'S DAD

Long enough so if he had one of those financial packages they're throwing around, he'd have graduated by now. I can't help you. I don't know where he is. I haven't seen him in a long time.

Webb offers his card.

WEBB

If your son makes contact...

Keith's Dad slams the window.

MARKUS

Messy bedroom for an absent kid.  
You think Dad's a Wu Tang fan?

WEBB

Oh, for sure. He parties with The  
RZA.

**EXT. CAMPUS. INTERCUT.**

Naomi is noting *everything Brittney could have seen on the route to the Rabbits*. She discreetly points out CERTAIN SECURITY CAMERAS to Tucker, who makes note of the locations and TEXTS THE INFO TO THE TEAM. They arrive at a SMALL WIRE RABBIT PEN. A STUDENT is on the ground, covered in BUNNIES. Naomi files this under: "If This is the Future, We're All Doomed."

NAOMI

Put me where she stood.

Brittney, slightly uncomfortable, places Naomi where Monica was standing. Naomi can see what Monica saw: RABBITS, TABLES AND BENCHES, AND CAMPUS PHONE partially hidden by trees. All pretty. All busy.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Did it look all busy like it does  
now?

BRITTNEY

Nuh uh. Because it was raining.  
Nobody's ever here when it's  
raining, everybody goes under the  
kiosks. The rabbits go in their  
...um, house.

NAOMI

Why didn't she just come up to  
Ezra's dorm?

BRITTNEY

...She said she couldn't.

'Couldn't'. Off Naomi's look...

BRITTNEY (CONT'D)

I don't know. Those people are all  
really Catholic and Ezra's dorm can  
be pretty raunchy. But she'd been  
there. She did laundry over there,  
sometimes.

Naomi realizes they are standing in the sight line of...

NAOMI

It looks like you can see Ezra's window from your window.

BRITTNEY

Yeah. It's right across. Those guys would just hang a towel out the window if they wanted her.

TUCKER

A towel?

Brittney jumps. Tucker scared her a little.

BRITTNEY

I gave Monica my key and went back to Ezra. We left for his parents house in Albany right after. We were with them all weekend. We came back and I found her in the tub. This morning.

NAOMI

How did you get back in, if you gave Monica your key?

BRITTNEY

I'm an R.A. We get staff keys as extra. Can I go?

NAOMI

For now. We'll be in touch.

Brittney moves off quickly. Naomi whirls on Tucker.

TUCKER

Those guys made her jump like a dog?

NAOMI

*Start a Christmas List.* You don't lose your focus when there's a bomb, do you?

TUCKER

Can't. It's a bomb.

NAOMI

Okay. How did responsible Monica lose her key? Where's her key? And what else, Tucker? What didn't Rabbit Girl say? Her roommate's dead.



Tucker thinks...

TUCKER

She didn't say one goddam nice thing about her.

**Phone Buzz.** It's Lipschitz. Naomi signals Tucker to listen.

NAOMI

You have me and Tucker.

**INT. SECURITY ROOM. INTERCUT.**

Lipschitz is grabbing her gear...

LIPSCHITZ

**I got Mom.** Timeline: The School informs Mom this morning. Then Mom places one call only to a burner phone. Untraceable.

TUCKER

Mom didn't call all the relatives and such?

LIPSCHITZ

**Manstoptalking I'm in the flow.** Okay. Then, nothing AT ALL from Mom's phone until now. Mom's in Jersey. She just called a number she's never called before. And that number is attached to a debit, which came up at a gas station and then a rest stop. They're moving in this direction.

Tucker is lost...

LIPSCHITZ (CONT'D)

Bomb Guy's confused, right? LISTEN, BOMB GUY: All marginalized communities form *networks* for survival. Immigrants especially. This tells me she's been getting rides here, from Michigan, car by car. It's dangerous, but probably the only way she could afford it. There was no way to trace her. But now I tapped into the network.

TUCKER

You're like... Gandalf.

LIPSCHITZ

God...

NAOMI

There's a security camera outside  
maintenance...

LIPSCHITZ

Yeah. Got it. All tapes are cued up  
and waiting. The boys are here  
watching already,

(louder)

HAVING STRUCK OUT WITH KEITH.

Distantly...

MARKUS O/S

Yo mama struck out with Keith.

NAOMI

I secretly love it when you  
find your thing faster than  
they find their thing.

Duh.

LIPSCHITZ

**INT. SECURITY ROOM.**

Webb and Markus are scanning various SCREENS as Naomi and  
Tucker ENTER.

MARKUS

You have to stop enabling her. She  
is the most competitive person on  
the planet. She was trash talking  
me at my own *barbecue*.

NAOMI

Well, who made the potato  
salad?  
-- Nothing.

What?

MARKUS

WEBB

Keith hasn't bought any kind of  
ticket for anywhere, and his car  
was spotted in town. The Locals are  
sitting on it.

**ON THE TAPE:**

MARKUS

Rabbits.

MARKUS/TUCKER  
In my neighborhood we woulda  
eaten them.

NAOMI  
Surprise! Brothers from  
another mother.

MARKUS (CONT'D)  
Okay, This is a little before 6  
p.m. on Friday.

It's POURING RAIN. Monica is waiting for Brittney, in shorts  
and a tee shirt. She is making no effort to take cover.

TUCKER  
The rain must have been freezing.  
What kind of girl waits ten minutes  
in the freezing rain?...

WEBB  
...Maybe a girl who's depressed.  
(pointedly, to Naomi)  
Maybe a girl with suicidal  
ideation.

NAOMI  
Maybe a girl who doesn't melt in  
the rain, like a little snowflake.

MARKUS  
Wait a minute. Look there. You can  
see it really fast. Monica's  
barefoot.

Markus, Webb and Naomi share a glance. Naomi can't deny this  
is odd. She turns this over in her mind.

TUCKER  
Boss, who's this guy getting his  
ass beat by our suspect? Outside  
maintenance? Friday a.m?

On another screen, Keith and another WHITE GUY are in heated  
discussion by the Maintenance building. Keith just knocked  
the other guy on his ass.

NAOMI  
That's Keith with the fisticuffs...  
And that's SPF Guy! Ezra Down,  
Brittney's boyfriend. They knew  
each other.

WEBB  
I know people. These guys wanted to  
kill each other

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. S.C.N.Y. GYM. NEXT.**

A game of hoops. Upon seeing Naomi and Tucker, EZRA grabs the ball, and his phone, and starts FILMING. WTF?

EZRA

You're the Cops, right? Brittney texted. I'm filming in case you trample on my civil rights. Anyway. Is this about that girl?

NAOMI

Monica.

EZRA

I wasn't here when... you know.

NAOMI

Did you see her at all that day?

EZRA

Nope.

Off Naomi's look, re: the filming.

EZRA (CONT'D)

It's just a goof.

NAOMI

So, does Keith Heshel kick your ass every Friday morning?

A SPASM OF RAGE crosses Ezra's face, then, poof!, it's gone.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

What were you two arguing about?

EZRA

He was freaked. That girl thought she might be pregnant. Brittney figured it out. Chick stuff.

**Well. This is news.**

EZRA (CONT'D)

...Anyway, I didn't like how he was treating her.

Ezra focusses his camera tight on Naomi. It's as if he craves a reaction from her. Her brown face fills his frame.

EZRA (CONT'D)

I was like, if you're going to make a brand new multi-cultural citizen? You should do the right thing and make it's mother a citizen as well. Spare her the difficulties of... waiting on line. Or whatever they have to do.

NAOMI

They have to do a lot. And Monica managed school and a work scholarship.

EZRA

They give those out like candy. She had time to do my laundry.

TUCKER

Enterprising young woman.

Tucker holds up his hands for the ball. In receiving the pass, he slams Ezra to the ground.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Whoops.

Again, Ezra's face FLASHES WITH RAGE. The humiliation he just endured was heightened by Naomi witnessing it. Ezra scrambles up and tries to cover. Looks at her face on his phone.

EZRA

I like this movie. I'm going to keep this one. Can I go?

Naomi whips out her phone.

NAOMI

I'm going to sic Sanchez on that M.E. get him to move his ass. Find out if Monica was actually pregnant. And what was that, by the way?

TUCKER

My mom did laundry. It's straight up work. And you call a person by their name. Especially if they've passed on. Especially a chick.

NAOMI

Towel boy doesn't like it when chicks see him on the ground.

TUCKER

Towel boy's an Asshole. And Assholes are never Assholes once.

NAOMI

That's some deep knowledge.

TUCKER

I bet he applied for a scholarship. And I bet he's got priors. Rich kid priors.

Naomi is impressed.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

I know from douche. You wanna go lean on Brittney, find out why she didn't tell us Monica was pregnant?

NAOMI

Well... Ezra's texting her everything that just happened as we speak. Let her worry about why we're not coming back. She's not smart enough not to panic.

TUCKER

I have two boys. Why do teenagers lie about dumb stuff?

Naomi checks her buzzing phone.

NAOMI

Markus...

**INT. SECURITY ROOM. IMMEDIATE.**

ON THE TAPE: Markus has made a discovery.

MARKUS

We have Keith Heshner entering Monica's dorm Sunday Night. With a key. And running out ten minutes later like he's on fire. There's no action in or out, until Brittney comes home 6 am Monday morning.

**EXT. GYM. INTERCUT**

As Naomi and Tucker are leaving...

MARKUS (CONT'D)  
Keith discovered the body before  
Brittney. And didn't report it.

NAOMI  
... Monica may have been pregnant.  
**That's a motive for murder.**

**INT. SECURITY ROOM. INTERCUT.**

**MARKUS**  
Yeah. An old and sad one.

Markus gets a hit on his phone.

MARKUS (CONT'D)  
The Locals have Keith. The 7/11.

The Detectives grab their gear.

TUCKER  
Can I come? I want a muffin.

NAOMI  
(into phone)  
Get Tucker a muffin. We'll meet you  
there. I'd like to try to keep this  
chill.

**INT. 7/11. NEXT.**

Three LOCALS, GUNS DRAWN, are in the 7/11 when the TEAM  
ENTERS, guns also drawn. Keith has locked himself in the  
BATHROOM. The Locals are banging on the door, yelling.

LOCAL COP#4  
We just want to talk to you...

NAOMI  
How long has he been in there?

LOCAL COP#5  
Five minutes. He won't answer.

Naomi nods at Webb, who makes his way to the door.

WEBB  
Keith Heshher?

Nothing. Webb puts his hand gently on the door. He stands in  
absolute stillness for a beat. He turns to the Locals.

WEBB (CONT'D)

He's not in there.

LOCAL COP#5

We saw him go in.

WEBB

He got out. I have 20 years in Hostage negotiations. My finest moments have been through doors, and I'm telling you, this is an empty room.

LOCAL COP

Well, you must be part --

VOICES O/S

He's going! He's on the roof!

MARKUS

Oh, man --

The team sprints out, Markus and Webb in the lead. Naomi and Tucker hustling after...

TUCKER

(sotto, to Naomi)

This would go better if Markus had a gun.

**EXT. STREET.**

A PAIR OF AIR JORDANS LANDING ON THE SIDEWALK. KEITH HESHER has jumped from the roof of the 7/11. He's TERRIFIED. He looks back over his shoulder and starts to run.

Webb and Naomi have jumped in the car, while Tucker and Markus pursue on foot.

Webb hits the siren as The Team chases Keith towards a crowded LATIN MARKET PLACE. Keith is sprinting wildly, and Markus and Tucker are right behind him, chasing Keith between VENDORS, as Webb pulls the car THE WRONG WAY DOWN A ONE WAY STREET. After some intense moves from Markus, Webb OPENS THE DRIVER'S SIDES DOOR in a timely fashion, knocking Keith off his feet, and INTO THE PATH OF ANOTHER MOVING CAR.

**This was not chill.** Off Naomi's face...

END ACT TWO



ACT THREE**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. ISOLAH HOSPITAL.**

The Entire Team is staring at Keith as he wakes. He hazily focusses on Webb.

KEITH  
Why'd you hit me?

WEBB  
I didn't hit you, I nudged you.

NAOMI  
Lt. Barr. Hate Crimes.

KEITH  
Should I get a lawyer?

NAOMI  
Do you need one? Why'd you run on Sunday night, Keith?

Tears begin streaming down Keith's face.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Was it the baby? You didn't want the baby?

KEITH  
You think I killed her? I didn't kill her! I loved her! I ran because I thought everyone would blame me that she killed herself.

**WHAT? The effect is concussive. For a beat Naomi can only hear her blood rushing in her ears. The Team becomes very still. Naomi pulls it together, manages to keep her voice even.**

NAOMI  
Why do you think she killed herself?

KEITH  
I don't know! It doesn't make any sense! Monica was happy she might be pregnant! I asked her to marry me! I didn't care what anybody would say. I loved that girl. She wants to bring my kid into the world? I'm a lucky guy! I got her a ring.

He holds up chain around his neck. A small, sweet ENGAGEMENT RING. Naomi's hand instinctively goes to HER OWN ENGAGEMENT RING.

KEITH (CONT'D)

I tried to see her all weekend, to give it to her. But she wouldn't *answer the door*. And then I got worried, and I let myself in Sunday. I used my Maintenance key...

Naomi feels every emotional truth, and Keith's grief is filling the room... But grief doesn't mean innocence.

WEBB

Do staff keys log on to the school system?

Keith nods. With a glance at Naomi, Webb leaves the room to verify.

NAOMI

You and Ezra Down were fighting. Why?

KEITH

I knew she was supposed to do laundry for him that day, I didn't want her to, because, you know... she might be pregnant, right? I said she should relax. He starts bitching about *those people breeding*. And then going off how *they're the* reason he didn't get some grant, or something he *deserved*. Asshat. I don't know. But he kept saying 'those people' and 'that girl'. You call my girl by her name. So I hit him.

NAOMI

Did she go? To Ezra's?

KEITH

I don't know. I don't know.

NAOMI

Did he first learn about Monica's pregnancy from you?

KEITH

Hell no. He can kiss my ass. Brittney must have told him.

(MORE)

KEITH (CONT'D)

My head hurts. I feel really bad. I don't want to talk to you anymore. I want a lawyer.

Webb pulls Naomi into the hall.

**INT. THE HALL. NEXT.**

Naomi's brain is spinning. So many loose ends.

NAOMI

I bet the Key thing checks out, doesn't it? He's... credible.

WEBB

Boss...

NAOMI

Ezra went out of his way to point us at Keith.

WEBB

Boss, we got the ME report. Monica wasn't pregnant.

NAOMI

*What?* Did Monica *know* she wasn't pregnant?

WEBB

Yeah. According to the M.E. She would have known. Looks like she had her period... Boss...

NAOMI

So ...pregnancy is not a motive for anything anymore...

WEBB

Monica committed suicide.

**Naomi freezes.**

WEBB (CONT'D)

A hundred percent. There isn't a mark on her, she was not held under water by force. No petechial stuff. Nothing under her nails. Nothing in her system besides a regular dose of Prozac. She drowned herself.

Naomi isn't listening. She's flailing. Trying to add up things that don't add up.

NAOMI

Wait a second. I don't understand how...

WEBB

*Boss. Stop. It's a suicide.* There's no crime here.

Beat. Naomi's face is falling like a house of cards. Confusion, guilt, remorse. Her throat has gone dry. She goes to the soda machine.. The sound of the machine is oddly appropriate in this moment. Clunk, clunk, clunk, like pieces falling apart. Naomi opens a soda and downs half of it. Takes a breath.

NAOMI

She was 19. She was supposed to grow up and be who she wanted.

WEBB

I know. But it's not our case anymore.

Naomi looks over her shoulder -- A HISPANIC WOMAN, 40's, exhausted, is with LIPSCHITZ at the end of the hall. Naomi exhales big...

NAOMI

We have to take care of this woman.

As Lipschitz escorts MONICA's MOTHER down the hall, Naomi sees she is twisting a ROSARY.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Get Markus.

**INT. THE ROOM.**

Webb, quietly, to Markus

WEBB

It's the Mom.

Markus nods. Carefully opens his BACKPACK.

**INT. THE HALL**

Naomi greets the distraught Woman

NAOMI

Sra. Alvaro? I'm Lt. Naomi Barr. North East Regional Hate Crimes Unit.

At the words "Hate Crimes", Sra. collapses into a chair.

**INT. THE ROOM.**

To Tucker's great surprise, Markus reverently removes a BLACK JACKET AND SHIRT from his backpack He changes expediently.

**INT. THE HALL.**

Sra. Alvaro is crying. Her grief is impenetrable. Then, a PAIR OF DARK HANDS envelop The Sra.'s paler ones. Sra. looks up into the calm face of OFFICER and REVEREND DANIEL MARKUS, now wearing the dark garments and CLERICAL COLLAR of his other calling. Sra. Alvaro falls on him, and he holds her, letting her tears soak his jacket, until she's able to whisper:

SRA. ALVARO

It was very hard to travel here.

The Team steps back to allow Markus room to do his work.

**INT. ISOLAH HOSPITAL CHAPEL. AFTER.**

Sra. Alvaro is kneeling in the pew. Naomi enters as respectfully as she can. Markus meets her at the door...

MARKUS

She's in a bad way.

NAOMI

I know. I have to ask her some questions though. I have to close it out.

Beat.

MARKUS

When I'm wearing this uniform I don't work for you.

NAOMI

That was always the deal. I'm asking.

Markus nods, holds the door open. The Team will observe, but keep a respectful distance.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Sra. Alvaro. May I speak with you?

The Sra. is exhausted with grief. Markus is watchful.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
I'm so, so sorry for your loss.

Naomi takes a deep breath.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
I know how your daughter died, but  
I don't know *why*. I'm asking your  
permission to find that out.

With a glance at Markus, The Sra. nods again.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Did you notice anything different  
about her, recently? Anything  
troubling her?

The Sra.'s English is imperfect...

SRA. ALVARO  
She just told me everything was  
good. Everything was good.

A glance at Markus. It doesn't sound like Monica told her mom  
she was pregnant.

NAOMI  
She said everything was the same.  
Okay. Did you speak regularly?

SRA. ALVARO  
Si, every Friday.

NAOMI  
She sounds like a good daughter.  
She never wanted you to worry.

SRA. ALVARO  
I sent her here to school. I didn't  
think I had anything to worry  
about.

The Sra. Dissolves into tears. Naomi, helpless, takes her  
leave.

**INT. LOCAL BAR. LATER**

No college kids. Just some MEAN DRINKERS and the Team, minus  
Markus, getting hammered. Naomi rolls up her sleeve and rubs  
at her scar. She is on the phone with her fiancée, and it is  
not going well...

NATE

Naomi, you're allowed to be off your game today.

NAOMI

No. I'm not. I put three Cops on the line today because *I believed in myself*. I put my Team on the line because *I believed in myself*. Now I don't know what to do. Monica committed suicide. I don't know why. I'm supposed to walk away?

NATE

Naomi, there are people who just can't go on when it's too much...

NAOMI

*What? When what's too much? The town was rough, but she had a goal, she was going to help people. There was nothing holding her back. She had a legit path to citizenship! She had a boyfriend who's practically the salt of the earth. Her mom literally travelled the country to get to her... *Why did she give up?**

NATE

*Because she's not as tough as you. Let the girl be. Have some respect.*

NAOMI

*What did you just say to me?*

NATE

*She's not as tough as you. No one is.* You went through the worst possible thing, and somehow you didn't give up. Your sister did, and that broke your heart...

NAOMI

*Nate, shut up. I swear to God...*

NATE

...But you picked up a gun and put yourself in the middle of the fight.

NAOMI

What am I supposed to do? In the middle of the fight is the only place it's safe!

NATE

Well, dammit, Naomi. *Not everyone can be there with you. Live with that. Respect that.*

She hangs up. *On him. **Shit.*** She sips her beer. She scratches at her scar. Tucker eyes it.

NAOMI

Long story.

Naomi's phone buzzes. **Every Breath You Take.**

WEBB

Can you answer it? Please? Its been driving *me* crazy.

She looks at her engagement ring. She's getting a HIT...

NAOMI

Nate says I have to keep a place in my heart for the people that give up.

Again, Naomi's phone buzzes. **Every Breath You Take...** THE HIT LANDS, because there's no running away, now.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Something happened to Monica. Something horrific happened to that girl, and it pushed her over. Barefoot in the cold rain isn't depression. It's the immediate aftermath of trauma.

Her Team weighs this emotional evidence silently for a beat. Then...

LIPSCHITZ

Who would she go to with that?

**INT. ISOLAH MORGUE. NEXT**

With Markus escorting, The Sra. IS ABOUT TO VIEW HER DAUGHTER'S BODY. Naomi stops her before she goes in. She holds out two fingers to Markus. Markus glares, then whispers to the Sra.



MARKUS

It will be easier to talk to her  
before you go in.

Naomi tries to be as gentle as a feather.

NAOMI

I'm sorry. Sra., you spoke every  
Friday, you spoke the night she  
died?

The Sra. nods. Her focus is constantly drawn to the drab DOOR  
of the M.E.'s office, and what's waiting for her on the other  
side.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Did she call from her cell phone?

SRA. ALVARO

No. It was late. Around nine. Her  
name didn't come. It was the...  
room phone. House phone.

NAOMI

Okay. That's important, thank you.

The Sra. starts to cry. Markus gives Naomi a heavy look.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You were her safest place. Please.  
It's very important that I know the  
last thing Monica said to you.

A quick glance at the DOOR and then the Sra. goes ashen...

SRA. ALVARO

She said she had... bled. She lost  
the baby...

What? What? What? Markus steadies the Sra. Naomi reels...

NAOMI

Sra. Forgive me, the Medical  
Examiner said she wasn't pregnant  
when she passed.

SRA. ALVARO

*She lost the baby.* She was pregnant  
when we spoke last...last...

The Sra. Makes a gesture with her hand, indicating...

SRA. ALVARO (CONT'D)

Ten days ago.

NAOMI  
 (so, so careful)  
 I see. Sra. I asked you if anything  
 was different in her life...

SRA. ALVARO  
*Not your business...*

Naomi is like a tuning fork. As gently as a soap bubble...

NAOMI  
*You're saying she miscarried? The  
 night she died?*

SRA. ALVARO  
*It's not your business! It's God's  
 business!*

NAOMI  
 I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Can you just  
 please tell me what she said to  
 you. After that.

SRA. ALVARO  
 She said 'Mami, I'm sorry we're so  
 far away from each other. Forgive  
me.' I said I loved her. She said  
 she loved me. Now you get away from  
 me.

Markus hustles Naomi out the door.

**INT. HALL. MORGUE.**

Off the faces of the Team, we see they have just heard the  
 news. Tucker, Webb and Lipschitz have just heard the Monica  
 miscarried.. Naomi is rubbing at her elbow, the one with the  
 scar, as she speaks. She is on fire...

NAOMI  
 She miscarried. So the M.E. got a  
 negative pregnancy test. So he  
 didn't bother to check her cervix.  
 So, so... Timeline. We see Monica  
 at the Rabbits. She's traumatized,  
 but walking. She gets a key. She  
 goes presumably, to her room. She's  
 alone. She miscarries an early  
 pregnancy. Alone. She doesn't do  
 Campus Health. She cleans herself  
 up. She cleans up the bathroom. You  
 smelled the bleach, right, Markus?

Markus nods. Lipschitz closes her eyes.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

She calls her mother. Says 'Forgive me'. That was her note. That was her note.

WEBB

**So the trauma, whatever it was, that caused the miscarriage happened before the Rabbits?**

NAOMI

**Yeah. So where was she before she met Brittney?** Both Brittney and Ezra say they didn't see her at all. But Keith says she was supposed to do Ezra's laundry..

TUCKER

Maybe she didn't show up.

NAOMI

Monica always takes care of her responsibilities. She showed up.

Naomi is going a hundred miles an hour...

NAOMI (CONT'D)

What the hell? Brittney said Monica called from her cell. But Monica had to identify herself. Ezra, Sir Galahad, says he fought Keith because he was defending Monica's honor...

TUCKER

...An asshole is never an asshole once.

NAOMI

Monica committed suicide.  
So why is everybody lying to us?

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**INT. LOCAL PRECINCT. INTERROGATION OBSERVATION AREA.**

WE SEE Brittney in one interrogation room. Ezra in another.

LIPSCHITZ

Ezra's juvvie file just came in.  
You'll have to read it while you're  
in there. It's nothing he can be  
convicted for, but he's not going  
to be bragging about it.

*Boss...*

BARRELLE has just entered the room. A long beat...

NAOMI

How can I help you Ms. Barrelle?

BARRELE

You can tell me why you're  
interrogating two college kids  
about a suicide.

NAOMI

The Governor's office doesn't  
usually involve itself in my Unit.

BARRELLE

Get used to it. You're potentially  
the star witness in the Shanice  
Brown case --

NAOMI

-- I'm here for Monica Alvaro. One  
has nothing to do with the other.

BARRELLE

**What are you, ten years old?** If the  
Brown case goes to trial, so will  
every professional decision you've  
ever made. You're up here looking  
at a *suicide as a Hate Crime*? Is  
this is a pattern for you, making  
something out of nothing? *We need  
to know that.* Maybe that's what you  
were doing, looking at the Officers  
in the Brown case. Or maybe you  
have some personal thing with these  
particular Cops? These White cops?  
You have something in your own  
history that left you with bias,  
maybe?

(MORE)

BARRELLE (CONT'D)

You'll be answering questions like that, under oath, for a very long time. You think we were all going to hold hands and sing *Kum by yah?*... I need a coffee. Is there a decent espresso place around here? Can you send one of your people?

Naomi, SHOCKED, shakes her head: No.

BARRELLE (CONT'D)

(re: the espresso)

Figures. Small towns. Maybe you're a Saint, Lieutenant. Then we take care of you. If you're the sinner, we throw you to the wolves. *My job is to have the goods on you, in either scenario, so I can protect the Governor.* He wants an update about what you're doing down here. I told him I'd give you 15 minutes.

Damn.

NAOMI

I need to confer with my Team. You mind giving us the room? Seeing as you're not actually Law Enforcement or anything.

The Barrel raises an eyebrow. Whispers to Naomi...

BARRELLE

Don't. Be. The. Sinner.

She exits. The Team sits with this for a beat.

LIPSCHITZ

She's like the Alien Mother Queen.

NAOMI

I can't tell her I'm fishing. I do, it's all done. You guys want out? It's my sword to fall on.

Beat. The Team exchanges glances.

LIPSCHITZ

Well, I certainly can't work for anyone else.

WEBB

We trust you. Mostly.

MARKUS  
With my life.

They all wait on the silent Tucker. Lipschitz elbows him.

TUCKER  
Trust. Absolutely.

He goes to the door for Barrelle. Barrelle hits the switch on the SPEAKER.

Naomi takes a deep breath, then, into Brittney's room.

**INT. BRITTNEY'S INTERROGATION ROOM.**

Brittney is nervous. Naomi pulls up a chair.

NAOMI  
You're not under arrest. You can  
have a lawyer though.

BRITTNEY  
I'm not under arrest... so...

**INT. OBSERVATION AREA.**

TUCKER  
That girl is goat level stupid.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM.**

NAOMI  
I work Hate Crimes. It's a sentence  
enhancement. A class E felony gets  
bumped up to a class D Felony.  
Which is five years.

Brittney is having a hard time.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
I'm talking about 5 years, and you  
haven't even asked me what this is  
about?

Naomi abruptly switches tracks. She snaps her fingers in  
Brittney's face.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Keep up. I'm trying to help you.

Naomi flickers her eyes towards the mirror. Brittney's seen  
enough T.V. to know someone's behind it.

BRITTNEY

What?

Panic starts to creep onto her face. Naomi leans close to Brittney and whispers...

NAOMI

They want me to listen to Ezra. Not you. I'll try to come back.

Naomi has to pass through the Observation room to get to...

**INT. EZRA'S INTERROGATION ROOM.**

As Naomi enters...

EZRA

Am I being arrested? Can I film it?

Naomi shakes her head: No. Naomi opens Ezra's JUVENILE FILE and reads.

EZRA (CONT'D)

What's that?

NAOMI

Your Juvenile File. I'd like to hear about Lisa Padilla. She worked for your family? You were 15 when Lisa made a complaint against you. A little kid, really.

Ezra doesn't like "little kid"

NAOMI (CONT'D)

There was an incident. Apparently you urinated on the floor while she was on her hands and knees, cleaning.

EZRA

It was a goof. She flipped out. Anyway, my mom had her shipped back to wherever... This stuff is sealed.

NAOMI

I know. Don't be scared.

EZRA

I'm not scared.

NAOMI

Good. Children's Services was monitoring... Your dad got fired.

(MORE)

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Was that because of you? The details got out? It's an ugly incident, Ezra.

EZRA

My dad didn't get fired. He got outsourced. And why should I care if details got out? She was just ... *whatever*.

NAOMI

Did you see Monica at all on Friday?

EZRA

She *killed herself*. What the hell...? No. I didn't.

NAOMI

That's not my understanding.

EZRA

Fuck you and your understanding. Can I film you in here? You're sweating.

She is. She's starting to sweat.

**INT. OBSERVATION AREA.**

Naomi strips off her jacket and uses it to wipe the sweat off her face. The Team is looking grim.

MARKUS

He's not budging.

LIPSCHITZ

Why hasn't he asked for a lawyer?

BARRELLE

Because he hasn't committed a crime. You're done, Lieutenant.

NAOMI

Monica Alvaro deserves justice.

Barrelle takes out her phone.

BARRELLE

She's not getting it from you. Let this go. You're done.



NAOMI

No.

A beat. Wordlessly, The Barrel brings full, lethal weight to the moment.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You're bluffing. Nobody knows if the Shanice Brown case *will go to trial yet*. Until indictments come down, I have the biggest stick in the room. Because it's me everyone's looking at, you said it yourself.

The Team is holding it's breath.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I call my Rep. I say, I might have been confused when I testified for the Grand Jury. Or I do have personal vendettas. Or maybe, I was making pancakes with Dwayne The Rock Johnson the night in question, and it was him, me, and Mrs. Butterworth. Then the Governor asks you why the hell *you didn't know about it. Why you didn't have the goods.*

Barrelle has STEAM COMING OUT OF HER HEAD.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Fire or fall back, honey. Because I need five minutes more.

The Team looks at The Barrel. She glares at Naomi, then at her watch.

BARRELLE

Starting now.

**INT. BRITTNEY'S INTERROGATION ROOM.**

As Naomi enters...

NAOMI

(entirely serious)  
I think it's about time for you get really, really scared.

BRITTNEY

But I didn't lie about anything.

NAOMI HITS THE CEILING IN FULL-ON BLACK PEOPLE FREAK OUT.

NAOMI

*Goddamit! I am not one of your  
little rabbit friends! I'm done  
playing with you!*

Brittney panics out of her mind and bursts into tears.

BRITTNEY

(blurting)

Monica killed herself because she  
was pregnant. That's the only thing  
I lied about.

NAOMI

WRONG! YOU LIED ABOUT YOUR KEY! How  
did you get back into your dorm  
Monday morning? Don't you cry!  
Don't you dare cry now!

This Black Woman is losing her shit.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

...Each Staff key is registered  
digitally. You did not use your  
R.A. key! *HOW THE FU---*

BRITTNEY

I... I used Monica's key!  
Ezra gave it to me. He told me to  
not to tell...

NAOMI

**HOW DID HE GET IT? DID HE SEE  
MONICA FRIDAY? DID HE SEE MONICA  
FRIDAY?**

BRITTNEY

It wasn't my idea. I just helped  
clean up!

**ONE DOWN.** Brittney collapses crying. She is invisible to  
Naomi now.

**INT. OBSERVATION AREA.**

The Team, the Local, and The Barrel are barely registering  
for her. In transition to Ezra, Naomi calms herself, utterly.  
As she enters his room...

TUCKER

He's got no reason to talk.

MARKUS  
She'll give him one.

**INT. EZRA'S INTERROGATION ROOM**

NAOMI  
You can film me now, Ezra.

EZRA  
Cool.

He picks up his phone. She stops him. Keeps his phone. Just toying with it.

NAOMI  
You can't. Just a goof. So. You applied for some grants at SCNY. But you didn't even qualify. Monica qualified.

EZRA  
Wetback quota. Monica washed my jock for money.

NAOMI  
Yeah, and your Mom got you out of the jam with Lisa Padilla, and Brittney said some crap about keys. She's done lying for you anymore, by the way. You can't do a damn thing with out a fluffer, can you?

EZRA  
You don't know anything about anything.

NAOMI  
I know you like me. When you were filming me, you said you were going to 'keep this one.

A HIT. A MOST PALPABLE HIT. Naomi's face brightens and darkens as she looks at Ezra.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
There are others.

Ezra **freezes.**

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
You film them. You filmed Lisa Padilla. You filmed Monica.

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM: The observers are breathless.

EZRA

I...

NAOMI

I think, deep down, you want to show me. What you did.

Off Ezra's face.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Or I can get a warrant for this phone faster than you can pray to God lightning strikes this building right now.

Beat. Ezra, trying to bluster...

EZRA

Go ahead. It was just a goof.

NAOMI

Then why'd you lie?

EZRA

You can't look side eyed at a Mexican without the Campus Thought Police freaking out. IT WAS A GOOF. It's not like anybody really got hurt.

Ezra's Night at The Movies... we see only in IMPRESSIONISTIC FLASHES: *There is loud music playing. Monica is asking Ezra for her laundry money. He is laughing: 'What are you going to do about it?' Ezra's focus goes tighter on Monica's face, her frustration: 'I'm going to tell your girlfriend.'* Monica heads for the door, but Ezra locks it. She's so tiny and he is over 6 feet. She tries to leave and Ezra blocking her, but not touching her. He's laughing and filming. Monica, genuinely and righteously afraid, tries to call for help, yanking at her pockets, KEY flying, trying for her PHONE, but Ezra swats it away and it skids under he washing machine. Now he's angry. He drags her to the sink, and dunks her head until she is gasping. He turns the camera on himself "Wetbacks like the water." And dunks her again. And again. Filming the whole time. Wetbacks like the water. Wetbacks like the water. Monica is choking. She vomits water all over the floor. Ezra jumps back, laughing.

Naomi has seen enough.

NAOMI

This video is 28 minutes in total.  
Was this right after Keith knocked  
you down?

EZRA

That faggot didn't knock me  
anywhere. It was a goof. She ran  
out. See? Her shoes fell off when I  
let her go.

NAOMI

When you let her go.

Ezra shrugs.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

What made you think she wouldn't  
tell?

EZRA

I told her if she opened her mouth,  
I'd post it everywhere. Those  
people never want anyone to see who  
they really are.

Naomi kicks the chair out from under Ezra, grabs him under  
the arm, twists one his hand behind his back, and goes for  
her cuffs.

EZRA (CONT'D)

WHAT?... WAIT! I DIDN'T DO  
ANYTHING...

NAOMI

You did everything. You did  
everything.

And she cuffs him.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Ezra Down you're under arrest for  
the kidnapping, unlawful  
imprisonment, and assault of Monica  
Alvaro. I'm designating these as  
Hate Crimes. This is the next 15  
years of your life.

EZRA

WHAT? WAIT...

NAOMI

She miscarried. After movie night.  
Then she killed herself.

Ezra's is in animal panic. He starts to cry as Naomi gives him a by the book frisk...

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Say their names...

Naomi gets right in his ear.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
Say their names. Monica Alvaro.  
Lisa Padillo. Say them.

EZRA  
Monica Alvaro... Lisa Padillo...  
Monica Alvaro. Lisa Padillo...

Naomi has done her job.

**INT. OBSERVATION AREA.**

The Local eyes Naomi. They exchange nods. Barrelle stands between Naomi and the door...

BARRELLE  
You were lucky. And that kid's  
lawyers will have something to say.

NAOMI  
So will I.

NAOMI SLOWLY AND DELIBERATELY **SHOULDER BUMPS** Barrelle OUT OF HER WAY. Battle lines drawn.

**BACK IN N.Y.C. THAT NIGHT.**

**MONTAGE:** A sweet glimpse of each Team member in their home...

Lipschitz: HUSBAND AND TEENAGE DAUGHTER in the background, swirling wine in a glass.

Webb: paying gruesome Legal bills. A picture of his HUSBAND and BABY as a screen saver.

Markus: alone, on his thousandth sit up.

Tucker: cooking with his TWO SONS, JAKE, 20 and SAM, 12, and his German Shepard, STAN, recently kidnapped from the Bomb Squad.

EACH TEAM MEMBER TAKES A QUIET, SIMPLE BEAT TO SAY THE NAMES:  
*Monica Alvaro. Lisa Padilla. Monica Alvaro. Lisa Padilla.*

**INT. N.Y.C. POLITICAL GALA. SAME NIGHT.**

A surprising facet of Naomi's life. A GLITTERING AFFAIR at a lovely hotel for The Gordon Parks Foundation. New York's POWER BROKERS are all there. Nate looks gorgeous in a tux. He radiates power and confidence. Naomi, decked out in white, is surreptitiously tugging at her dress. Nate looks at her.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Heels I want to sit down in and  
Spanx I have to stand up in. Your  
gender sucks.

They make their way to a numbered TABLE, where we meet NAOMI'S FAMILY. The BARRS are accomplished members of New York Intelligentsia:

Father GENE, White, Editor of Look & Listen, a Political Journal.

Mother EVELYN, Black, an expert in African American History.

Beautiful sister DEBORAH, in a wheelchair since her teens, is an elementary school teacher. Naomi can see the DOLPHIN TATTOO on Deb's shoulder. The one that MATCHES HER OWN. The whole table is gasping with laughter as Nate and Naomi approach.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

What'd we miss?

GENE

Your mother got the lyrics wrong  
again.

EVEY

Why is this so funny? I hear what I  
hear.

Deb is dabbing at her eyes.

DEB

Because... Just sing it. Please.

NATE

Please, please. You have to.

Nate can ask anything. Evey sings quietly...

EVEY

"Thoreau is like Ralph  
Emerson/Ralph Emerson is what I  
read."

Beat.

THE ENTIRE TABLE  
 "Good Love is like Bad Medicine/Bad  
 Medicine is what I need..."

IS SHE KIDDING??? WHOOPS AND HOLLERS.

<p>DEB          Mom. Listen. BAD MEDICINE,          mom</p>	<p>EVEY          Well I can't... I heard it on          the radio.</p>
---	--

<p>NAOMI          In 1988?</p>	<p>EVEY          I like Emerson. It stuck with          me. Nathaniel come sit with          me. My daughters are horrid.</p>
------------------------------------	---

Naomi kisses her mother's cheek. Deb gives her sister a loaded glance. They sit.

DEB  
 (sotto)  
 I tried you so many times today...

NAOMI  
 I know, Every Breath I Took.

**So Deb is Every Breath You Take.** Deb leans close...

DEB  
 I found something on line.

NAOMI  
 I figured something like that...

DEB  
 So why won't you look? You're pushing me away, I feel it. You want these ...*people* to get away with it? Why didn't you take my calls today?

NAOMI  
*Because your calls break my heart,  
 D. They make me scared you're still  
 in the past. And that's when I  
 almost lost you forever.*

Naomi can see the FAINT MATCHING SCARS on each of Deb's wrists. UNDER THE TABLE Naomi takes her sister's hand.

DEB  
 Maybe they remind you you're not that far out of the rabbit hole yourself.



NAOMI  
 ...Yeah. That too.

Naomi looks weary as hell, and Deb's need is strong .

DEB  
*Is this us, or am I alone in this?*

For better or worse, Naomi is determined to open her own heart.

NAOMI  
 No. Never. It's us. We'll find them.

**TIME CUT.**

Warm chit chat all around, an AIDE leans to Nate's ear. Nate has a great game face, but he turns to Naomi and whispers...

NATE  
*They're bringing the indictments.  
 It's coming down tomorrow.*

Naomi's breath comes short. Nate takes her hand.

NATE (CONT'D)  
*Keep cool. If I know, some other people in this room know.*

Nate and Naomi scan the crowd. Indeed, a few HEAVY HITTERS are looking in their direction. Some have AIDES whispering in their ears. Naomi takes a deep breath, tries to steady herself. Nate takes her hand...

NATE (CONT'D)  
*Hey. Remember you're one of the good guys.*  
 (beat)  
 You want to get out of here?

NAOMI  
 No one makes me a ghost. I told you that.

TWO HEAVY HITTERS, one in a BESPOKE SUIT, another in FULL DRESS POLICE UNIFORM, are glaring at Naomi and Nate. Nate just conspicuously enough, shoots his cuffs and rolls up his sleeves. Naomi's is touched by the protective gesture. She measures the HEAVY HITTERS, meets their gaze, raises her glass, and downs the shot.

END EPISODE