

THE DEEP MAD DARK

PILOT

"Patasola"

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ON BLACK:

By severing the neural pathways to traumatic memories, we can lock the door on the most dangerous territory there is: the deep, mad, dark of the human mind.

-- Dr. Patrick Ross, *American Journal of Neuroscience*, 2007

TEASE

EXT. VILLAGE IN BELIZE - DAY - 2005

On a road into a picturesque village we see a young woman walking -- from behind. Her name is TASH HOLLANDER, and she is twenty-four years old...

It's a beautiful image: the late sun golden on her bare arms, the foliage lush. Passersby stop to stare, as do people in doorways, and kids playing...

Riveted.

On screen text: "**TASH, 2005**"

A heavysset American, LYDIA PRINCE-RICHARD, 50s, in a bright floral shirt, steps out of a shop as people gather at the door whispering fearfully in Spanish...

Then Lydia sees what they are talking about. Head on, Tash is GROTESQUE. Her face, battered beyond recognition. Even more troubling, the odd grace with which she moves -- as if she's been pushed past pain...

Dropping her bags, Lydia runs to her.

LYDIA

Who did this to you? Can you hear me?!

When Lydia puts out her arms -- Tash collapses into them.

As Lydia eases her to the ground, she glimpses her leg. Caked in blood. Infected. CRUDE METAL PINS have been driven into her shin in a line -- continuing up under her skirt...

Off Lydia, *screaming* for help --

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. FIELD IN MICHIGAN - DAWN - PRESENT DAY

In a field of tall grass, at first light...

An ancient, beat-up, Chevy Impala hurdles into frame -- braking hard. The door opens. A man in his 40s, muscular, gets out. He scans the horizon with an intensity of purpose, then walks to the trunk and opens it, pulling out a MACHETE.

He walks to the middle of the field and starts to cut the long grass with wide, powerful slashes --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - DAWN

POLLY LEWIS, 34, African American, serious without being humorless, drinks coffee at the window of a sprawling loft, watching the man cut the grass seven floors down...

On screen text: "**POLLY, 2015**"

From here we see that the field is Detroit's urban prairie. Blocks of houses, now long-demolished... that nature re-claims with surreal beauty.

JOE STAHL, 36, emerges. His intelligence propelled him to a successful stint on Wall Street; the dreamer in him brought him back to be part of the renewal happening in his home town. But right now, Joe is just groggy...

POLLY
You need to see this.

JOE
(joining her)
Jesus. Is that a machete?

POLLY
That is a machete.

Joe puts his hand under Polly's shirt, grabs her breast. Pushy in the right way. She smiles.

JOE
I heard you come in at four. You need to sleep.

POLLY
I need to get through a ton of paperwork more... before we start with Patient One.

JOE
You're pushing yourself too hard, Pols.

Off Polly, not really listening, watching the man in the field turn a hard ninety degrees and keep cutting --

INT. JOE AND POLLY'S APARTMENT - MID DAY

Alone, Polly works at the table, drinking more coffee. Rising, she goes to the window. A neat SQUARE has now been cleared in the field. The man with the machete, waiting by his car...

ANOTHER CAR approaches... towing a battered RV into the square. Off Polly, watching, intrigued --

INT. LOBBY / DETROIT RECEIVING HOSPITAL - NIGHT - 10:00 PM

A hospital lobby, deserted at this hour; the night pressing in through dark windows. Armed with more coffee, adrenaline kicking in, Polly walks quickly in the front doors --

INT. PRE-OP STATION / DETROIT RECEIVING HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Wearing scrubs, Polly reaches the pre-op station, engrossed in a patient's chart. By the OPERATING ROOM doors waits the circulation nurse, JULIE, 40s, slight, tough.

JULIE

Surgeon's on the floor.

Polly sets the chart by the sink, still reading -- and takes a beloved VINTAGE RING she always wears, off her finger...

Unprompted, Julie unclasps Polly's necklace and puts Polly's ring on it, so Polly can wear it under her scrubs --

INT. OPERATING ROOM / DETROIT RECEIVING HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Julie at her side, Polly enters... chaos: NURSES, a MALE RESIDENT, a SCRUB TECH, and an ANESTHESIOLOGIST, 50s... who all talk loudly around KEVIN, 23, unconscious on the table.

But Polly is hyper-focused. She studies the TRAUMA X-RAYS of Kevin's brain.

Fast, decisive --

POLLY

Nurse, call the time out.

Everyone goes quiet. As Julie reads from a clipboard:

JULIE

I have here written consent for a bilateral craniotomy for evacuation of subdural hematoma, debridement of bullet fragments and use of blood products by the patient Kevin Hill.

POLLY

For those of you who haven't been in my OR, if I haven't called on you-- you're behind the line.

RESIDENT

(grinning)
What, like an imaginary line?

JULIE

A red one.

Amazed, the Resident looks down at the permanent RED LINE on the floor. Scrawled on it -- in permanent marker: **LEWIS**.

Nurses and the miffed Resident move behind it, bringing order to the room... as the SCRUB TECH hands Polly a razor. Polly regards the bloody gash on Kevin's head. The impacted bone.

POLLY

Hi, Kevin.

All eyes on her, Polly starts to carefully shave the hair around the wound --

INT. HALL / RESEARCH BUILDING - NIGHT

Hours later, Polly walks up an empty hall in the research wing of the hospital, reaching a locked door. The sign reads: PATRICK ROSS LAB. She lets herself in...

INT. INNER HALL AND MEETING ROOM / PATRICK ROSS LAB - NIGHT

Moving through a dark suite of offices, Polly reaches a meeting room... flipping on the light. On the table fresh note pads have been placed before three chairs. A DIGITAL CAMERA on a tripod, in the corner.

Polly approaches the window... where thick BARS have recently been installed. Metal filings still on the sill...

MAN'S VOICE-O.S.

If there's a fire we're screwed.

Startled, Polly turns: Dr. ELIOT KERR, 30s, Scottish, in jeans and a sweatshirt, in the doorway.

POLLY

It's almost three, Eliot. What are you doing here?

He has a file in his hand; he's been reading.

ELIOT

Patient One... Henry Cullis... he's serving a life sentence for shooting a man in the face from two feet away during a robbery.

POLLY

I know.

(beat)

Are you going to have a problem being in here with him?

ELIOT

Yes. But that's why you fought for me to be here; to be the opposing voice, right?

Polly nods.

POLLY

True. And a fresh one. Dr. Ross spent seven years battling for the approvals for this study. He has a certain outlook.

ELIOT

And you? What's your outlook?

Polly considers...

POLLY

Ross's work has let us control neural pathways to identify and erase specific memories-- theoretically. We're about to try it practically. My outlook... wonder.

INT. LOBBY / HOSPITAL - NIGHT

In street clothes, Polly heads through the lobby on her way home -- as a TRIAGE NURSE, 50s, catches up:

TRIAGE NURSE

Dr. Lewis?

Polly turns --

INT. E.R. WAITING ROOM / HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The triage nurse leads Polly into the busy waiting room--

TRIAGE NURSE

He wouldn't give me his name. Said he couldn't talk to any other doctor. I told him you were in surgery-- must've been four hours ago.

Alone in a corner... sits a YOUNG MAN who Polly has never seen before. He is nineteen, and wears a bomber jacket that hides his wiry frame.

As the Triage Nurse returns to her desk, Polly approaches...

POLLY

Hi, I'm Dr. Lewis. Do I know you?

The young man, tense, stands and unfolds a piece of paper. And oddly... he reads from it, in a slightly flat tone:

YOUNG MAN

"Are you Dr. Polly Lewis?"

Polly eyes the paper, bemused.

POLLY

That's what I just said.

YOUNG MAN

"It's hard to believe. Seems like just yesterday we were bumming American Spirits by the parkway."

The words resonate for Polly. She is taken aback:

POLLY

Who wrote that?

He keeps reading, his flat tone adding to the strangeness:

YOUNG MAN

"Once there were two girls. They were smart, they were soul mates. One grew up to be a brain surgeon. But the other: what happened to her?"

On Polly. Unnerved. *Emotional...*

POLLY

You tell me.

YOUNG MAN

"Here's a hint."

Picking up a MANILA ENVELOPE on the next chair, he hands it to Polly. Then starts moving quickly for the exit --

POLLY

Wait!

Clutching the envelope, Polly follows closely after him, through the sliding doors --

EXT. E.R. BAY AND PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The young man moves fast, but has to dart through EMTs who stand chatting -- and Polly is fast too -- gaining on him, grabbing his arm --

POLLY

Please.

Up close he can see how utterly spooked she is.

POLLY (CONT'D)
Where is she?

Breathless, the young man's expression morphs. Softening.

YOUNG MAN
I can't.

POLLY
Why not?

YOUNG MAN
She's watching.

Polly looks out at the darkness beyond the E.R. BAY --

As the young man breaks from her grip, running into the

PARKING LOT

Polly runs after him but he has too good a head start...

She stops, watches him disappear across the parking lot...

Scanning the cars in the large, poorly lit, expanse.

No one in sight.

She glances into car windows...

A sea of enclosed spaces someone could be watching from...

Feeling exposed.

POLLY
Tash!?
(hollering)
Tash?!

But her voice just echoes in the silence...

She eyes the envelope in her hand. Two words, typed on it:

The Beginning

Feeling a strange menace in those words and sensing that she's being watched, Polly stares out at the darkness --

END OF TEASE

ACT ONE

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT - LATER

In the otherwise dark apartment as Joe sleeps, Polly sits at the table, studying the contents of the envelope. TWO PHOTOS:

One, of Tash's GROTESQUELY BEATEN FACE.

The other photo shows her leg, into which the CRUDE METAL PINS were driven. The flesh around them horrifically swollen.

Both photos are dated: **MAY 2, 2005**

Sickened by the images, Polly puts them in her purse. Turning off the lamp, she sits in the dark, lost in thought --

INT. HALL / BEN GIBB'S OFFICE / HOSPITAL - MORNING

At the hospital, Polly arrives at the office of DR. BEN GIBB, 45; who does paperwork, listening to Massive Attack. An ex-athlete and trusted confidant with a lack of pretense:

POLLY

Hi, Ben. You have a minute?

BEN

Sure.

He kills the music as Polly shuts the door.

POLLY

Can I talk to you, not as a colleague?

BEN

What, as a patient?

Polly struggles with that. This, hard for her...

POLLY

Something weird happened last night.

Polly takes the ENVELOPE from her bag, and from it, the GORY PHOTOS. Ben eyes them, taken aback:

POLLY (CONT'D)

We were childhood friends. Her name is Tash Hollander. She ran away in 1998, when we were eighteen.

BEN

Where to?

POLLY
That's the thing. No one knows.
Not her family, not the police. She
simply dropped off the face of the
earth. Till a man gave me these
last night.

Ben eyes her. Puzzled.

BEN
How close were you?

POLLY
(smiling, rueful)
Very.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. COMMERCIAL STREET AND ALLEY / DETROIT - DAY - 1997

TASH and POLLY, 17, sun-kissed and beautiful in that
youthfully effortless way, walk through Detroit's north end.
Though the neighborhood is rough they walk confidently:

On screen text: "**POLLY & TASH, 1997**"

POLLY
If I was in a coma--

TASH
Why would you be in a coma?

POLLY
Any number of reasons. Not the point.
If I go into one, you have to promise
me you'll come to my hospital room
every few days to pluck my chin hairs.

TASH
(grinning)
That's disgusting.

POLLY
I mean it, I don't want to be that
poor girl in the coma with the beard.

TASH
The stuff you worry about amazes me,
but okay. I promise.

Tash stops... nudging Polly to look -- at a CAR up an alley --
in which a man and woman have sex.

Tash and Polly move closer... as the man suddenly shoves the
woman off him.

After harsh words muted in the closed car, the woman jumps out -- and the man, speeds off...

TRUDY, 27, leggy in her short skirt, with a leather jacket, beautiful in a damaged way, watches the car disappear...

Tash and Polly cannot take their eyes off her. Which they regret, when Trudy turns -- and walks over to them...

TRUDY

You smoke?

Tash nods. So does Polly. Trudy gives them each a cigarette. *American Spirits*. Then she lights them, and one for herself.

For Tash and Polly, there's something magnetic about Trudy; her unpredictable movements, the harsh sexuality: the sweat above her lip, the stretched neck of her shirt...

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I'm gonna hit one of you.
(blowing smoke rings)
Who should it be?

Polly and Tash, nervous, look at each other. Despite the absurdity of the situation, neither hesitates:

| | | | |
|-----|------|-----|-------|
| | TASH | | POLLY |
| Me. | | Me. | |

Disarmed, Trudy smiles...

TRUDY

Oh, I hope you appreciate that.
That is L-O-V-E.

Polly and Tash eye each other -- oddly *touched*.

POLLY - PRE-LAP

Tash was my first experience of...

INT. BEN GIBB'S OFFICE - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Polly, still lost in the memory, as Ben listens:

BEN

Of?

Coming to. Smiling sadly.

POLLY

Expectation surpassed. I think girls,
at least I did, have this dream of
ideal friendship.

(MORE)

POLLY (CONT'D)

Someone who gets you completely.
When I met Tash, she was that. It
was the first time in my life
something was exactly as I'd wanted
it to be.

BEN

Her leaving must've devastated you.

POLLY

Yes, but not how you'd think. As we
got older, things changed. I was...
getting lost in her. So I ended the
friendship. And she took it hard.
That's when she left.

BEN

And you felt responsible.

POLLY

How could I not?
(beat)
I've never even told Joe about her.

Polly leans forward, trying to articulate her anxiety:

POLLY (CONT'D)

Yesterday this guy showed up behind
our place and cleared the field with
a machete. Then other people came.
I was amused, thought it was one of
those art installations people do in
the empty lots. But after this-- I
wonder why a man with a machete is
building an army behind my house.

Ben appreciates her gallows humor.

BEN

Sometimes a man with a machete is
just a man with a machete.

On Polly, hoping he's right. As Ben picks the ENVELOPE up,
eying the words: **The Beginning**.

BEN (CONT'D)

What do you think this means?

POLLY

Honestly, Ben...
(uneasy)
I have no idea.

INT. BOOK CADILLAC WESTIN HOTEL / HALLWAY - DAY

FIONA BLOOM, 45, her clothes pricey but understated, wheels a suitcase up the tenth floor of Detroit's newly renovated downtown Westin, talking on her cell:

DAVID-ON PHONE

Just tell me where you're staying.

FIONA

Not gonna happen.

DAVID

Give me something. Why are you there?
Why now?

Fiona smiles. She has come, reluctantly, to like this man she's talking to. Letting herself into:

A HOTEL ROOM

Fiona eyes the bed. The bland matching drapes. Feeling a bit despondent.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Come on...

FIONA

Okay. There are four people with access to the study and one of the strictest non-disclosures I've seen. But I've made contact with one of them.

DAVID

What do you mean *contact*?

FIONA

I mean, I'm meeting this person.

DAVID

Holy shit. Which one?

FIONA

It's better you don't know.

DAVID

D'you have any idea the amount of money we're talking if the results are positive and we know first? I have a floor of guys who'll own every stock in that company in an hour, tops.

FIONA
That is why I'm here, David.

DAVID
When this is over can we meet in person? I think I want to fuck you.

Fiona smiles.

FIONA
God, you're all the same.

DAVID
Do we all fall for you?

FIONA
Every one.

DAVID
Why do you think that is?

Fiona kicks off her heels...

FIONA
Because. I'm a disembodied voice on the phone giving you what you love more than anything. You fill in the rest.

DAVID
You don't give yourself enough credit.

Smiling, a bit sadly, Fiona goes to the window. Across the street are two HIGH RISES circa the 1930s. Now expanses of smashed glass.

FIONA
Have you ever seen an abandoned high rise?

DAVID
That's a clue. I could find you.

FIONA
That hardly narrows it down here.
(beat)
It's appropriate, isn't it? The people on the forefront of erasing a person's past... being here.

A beat. David considering.

DAVID
I think you're wrong about why we fall for you.

Intimacy, not her thing--

FIONA
I have to go.

DAVID
Wait--

But Fiona hangs up. Turning off the PHONE APP that has been RECORDING their conversation, she sits on the bed. Depleted; these conversations with her clients, a performance of sorts.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - EVENING

Carrying bags of takeout, Polly enters a building being converted to a boutique hotel. A sleek minimalism emerges from Art Deco origins. CARPENTERS heading out for the day:

POLLY
Night Tom. Night Marlon.

They wave to her as she heads into the office --

INT. JOE'S OFFICE / HOTEL - EVENING

Joe is at his cluttered desk, looking stressed. Polly approaches, kisses his forehead:

POLLY
Did the guy from the city come?

JOE
(nodding)
The lobby bathroom's too far from the bar. Which means new pipes, new plans...
(grim)
Of course, there's a way to make it stop.

POLLY
How much?

JOE
I don't think we should have this conversation.

POLLY
Because you won't entertain it, or you don't want me to know?

Joe stares at her for a beat. Not sure. Noticing the bags--

JOE
Shit. Dinner.

POLLY
 Yeah. They'll be here soon.
 (a loaded smile)
 The *three* of them.

JOE
 I'll be up in a few.

INT. ELEVATOR / POLLY AND JOE'S BUILDING - EVENING

Polly rides an artfully restored bird cage elevator past floors far from completion. Most just expanses of rubble --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Polly gets out of the elevator passing windows with great views of downtown... but puts the bags down and goes to the windows at the *back* -- overlooking the field: where FOUR CARS now surround the RV. And people seem to be building onto it with salvaged lumber. Polly eyes it, uneasy --

POLLY - PRE-LAP
 You ready for the opening?

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Music plays and wine flows as Polly and Joe eat with Polly's sister LUCY, 26, a gorgeous free-spirit, and her boyfriend and business partner NICK, 30... and LEELA, 28, sexy:

NICK
 We will be. When we get the fridge.

JOE
 I know a great restaurant supplier.

NICK
 No, this guy I found has an industrial Frigidaire from the Dearborn plant, re-furbished, for three hundred bucks.

LUCY
 It doesn't exist.

NICK
 It exists, the guy's just MIA. But he'll emerge before we open.

Lucy smiles at Nick. Appreciates his optimism.

LUCY
 And we will, thanks to Leela.

LEELA
 Please.

LUCY
 (to Polly, Joe)
 Seriously. If she wasn't our lawyer,
 we never would've got our permits.

NICK
 Here, here.

Lucy leans over and KISSES Leela. Sensuous, lingering...
 As Polly and Joe share a look.

NICK (CONT'D)
 Nothing turns Lucy on more than a
 person who helps her get her way.

Polly grins. And Leela, pulling away from Lucy, eyes Nick.

LEELA
 So true.

Off Lucy, who can laugh at herself, doing so --

LATER. THE MUSIC LOUDER. MORE WINE.

In the kitchen, Polly and Lucy chat alone:

LUCY
 Thanks for tonight... I know you
 don't get the polyamory thing, so--

POLLY
 You sleep with different people.
 What's to get?

LUCY
 It requires relinquishing control.
That... you don't get.

POLLY
 Oh, is that so?

Lucy tilts her head. Her look says: *come on...*

NICK-O.S.
 What are they building down there?

Polly joins Nick at the window. Lucy too. In the otherwise
 unlit field, the HEADLIGHTS of the CARS shine on the RV.

POLLY
 We don't know. They just showed up.

Joe and Leela join them.

JOE
Our neighborhood drug dealer, Vic,
says they're not locals.

POLLY
Really?

Off the five of them, eying the odd illumination below --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Guests gone, Polly takes off her VINTAGE RING and puts it in a DISH BY THE SINK. Turning off the light she walks into the MAIN ROOM...

Where the GARBAGE BAG of take-out containers is by the kitchen counter. Polly... eying it. As Joe calls from the bedroom:

JOE - O.S.
You coming to bed?

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND HOTEL - NIGHT

Polly exits the back door of the hotel and throws the bag in the DUMPSTER. Pulling a brick from the wall she finds her stash: a pack of *American Spirits* and a lighter.

Lighting one, savoring it... she eyes the RV in the field.

Curious, she walks toward it...

From the cars, she hears music. Something mellow. And voices. But she can't make out the words. Some laughter.

If she gets any closer they'll see her, so she stops.

Tries to make out the words...

Then her peripheral view catches it. Movement. She turns...

A MAN stands about fifteen feet from her in the dark.

Watching *her*.

His proximity to her, jarring.

Polly bolts -- RUNNING through the grass -- toward the hotel -- dropping the cigarette in the alley --

INT. BACK HALL / HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

With the door safely locked behind her, catching her breath, Polly smiles... feeling foolish. Knowing she overreacted.

INT. HOTEL / ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Polly rides up, passing floors under construction...

As she passes the fifth -- through the elevator bars, she glimpses a WOMAN IN A HOODIE moving through the darkness of an unfinished room --

Shocked, Polly stops herself from crying out --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Joe looks up from his book -- as Polly rushes in:

POLLY
There's someone in the building!

JOE
What?

POLLY
On the fifth floor. A woman. I'll call the police--

Joe jumps up, pulling on jeans.

JOE
You're kidding right? In this area, it'll take them an hour to respond.

The THRUM of the elevator -- startles Polly and Joe... and they move quickly into the MAIN ROOM:

Watching the floor numbers above the dark elevator shaft light up as it descends: ... 7... 6... 5.

Where it stops.

INT. BACK STAIRS & FIFTH FLOOR - HOTEL - NIGHT

Joe has a BASEBALL BAT; Polly a flashlight -- as they jog down the back stairwell... to the unlit

FIFTH FLOOR

Polly trains her light onto the rubble-strewn-floor; every piece throwing distorted shadows. They head up the hall -- look in each GUEST ROOM. The places to hide endless...

The corner suite remains. Hearing something, Joe motions for Polly to freeze. Polly hears it too... Movement.

Joe kicks open the door -- and they're in THE CORNER SUITE

A dark bathroom looms across the room. They move toward it--

When a SOUND startles them. At their feet. Polly trains the light on it: a shiny black GARBAGE BAG.

SQUIRMING--

They jump back. Then, recovering, they approach... Joe, opening the bag to see:

THREE RACCOON CUBS. Adorable, cowering.

JOE
Shit, that scared me!

For Polly this is *not* a relief. But something *else* entirely.

POLLY
We need to search all the floors.

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Joe and Polly walk out of the elevator into the loft --

POLLY
You *sure* we looked everywhere?

JOE
Trust me, she's gone.

Polly's gaze lands on the EXIT to the back stairs.

POLLY
What if she came up here while we were downstairs?

Now they both stare around them. Could she be up here? Moving fast -- they check the bedroom -- bathroom -- study...

Empty. Catching their breath, Joe and Polly eye each other.

JOE
Jesus Christ.

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moments later, Polly walks into the bedroom alone. Sits on the foot of the bed. Needs to think. She closes her eyes...

Opening them her expression is *steely*. Our glimpse of a grittiness Polly is capable of when her back is to the wall.

POLLY
Okay, Tash. Here we go.

END OF ACT

ACT TWO

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The sun comes up as Polly, already awake, lies in bed, tense. Beside her, Joe opens his eyes:

JOE
You okay?

POLLY
Are you?

Joe sits up and looks out at the CARS by the RV. No one visible at this hour.

JOE
Do you think it was one of them?

POLLY
I don't know.

Joe, trying to ease her worry:

JOE
Hey, all she did was leave us cute little furry creatures.

On Polly, *not* reassured.

POLLY
We need security cameras.

Rising, Polly grabs her phone, and heads out of the room as Joe watches her, concerned --

INT. JOE AND POLLY'S LOFT / BATHROOM - DAY

In the bathroom, Polly splashes water on her face, then reaches for her vintage ring... Finding the dish EMPTY.

POLLY
(panicking)
Joe!

Joe enters. In a t-shirt, pulling on his jeans.

JOE
What?

POLLY
Did you move my grandmother's ring?

JOE
No.

POLLY
Well, it's gone!

JOE
Don't worry, we'll find it.

Joe looks under the tub. Polly riffles through toiletries...

POLLY
I've worn that ring every day since
I was thirteen--

JOE
And I'm sure it will turn up.

POLLY
(snapping)
Why are you trying to pacify me!?
It's gone.

JOE
Don't take your shit out on me--

POLLY
What is that supposed to mean?

JOE
You don't sleep, Polly. Think that
might affect how you react to things?
I'm just trying to help.

Exasperated, Joe walks out.

As Polly closes her eyes, feeling bad...

POLLY
Joe?

By the time she walks into THE MAIN ROOM

The elevator is closing. He's gone downstairs. Walking
back into the bathroom, Polly grabs her phone and dials,
getting a voice-mail:

POLLY - INTO PHONE
Hi, Ben. Something's happened. Can
you call me?

Hanging up, she eyes the dish where her ring should be.

Troubled.

CHRIS-PRELAP
*Oh Jesus Natalie, oh yes, oh Jesus
you feel good--*

INT. SUGAR'S BAR / OFFICE - LATE MORNING

On a couch, in the office of a bar in a suburb near Detroit... TASH HOLLANDER, now 34, is in the throes of very good, very fun sex with CHRIS SUGARMAN, 38. Who knows her as Natalie.

On screen text: "**TASH, 2015**"

Chris runs his hand down her leg, clenched around his naked ass, and tries to pull down her thigh-high stocking. But Tash grabs his hand and brings it to her face --

TASH

Hurt me.

Chris smiles. Considering. Then playfully slaps her. She hardly feels it. Disappointed.

TASH (CONT'D)

Hurt me.

So he SLAPS her face. *HARD*.

Tash is surprised at the force. But thrilled. Leaning her head back, she comes, losing herself in it...

MINUTES LATER.

Spent, Chris is on the couch watching Tash get dressed: she is beautiful; a soulfulness in her eyes and a warmth that comes from it. He worries that he's falling for her.

CHRIS

That was new.

TASH

For you maybe.

Chris smiles at that.

CHRIS

Why can't I take your stockings off?

TASH

They make me feel sexy. When something does that, I go with it.

Chris digs the answer. As Tash buttons her shirt she approaches a framed photo of a guy singing to a MASSIVE AUDIENCE. A great shot: the lighting, the sweat flying off his face... *Chris*, fifteen years younger.

TASH (CONT'D)

Is that Cobo Arena?

CHRIS
Yeah. We opened for Rage Against
The Machine.

Tash smiles. Likes this about Chris.

TASH
You wanted to talk before Mick comes
in?

CHRIS
Right. Yeah.

Chris grabs a cigarette from a box on his desk. Lights it.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
He's nervous about me paying you
under the table.

TASH
Why does your bartender care how you
pay me?

CHRIS
He owns a share of the bar. Not a
big one, but he worries, you know...

Tash eyes him. Something not adding up.

TASH
What are you not telling me?

Chris shakes his head, troubled. Very conflict averse.

CHRIS
A few years ago this chick Mick was
seeing went a little crazy on him.
He's been paranoid ever since.

Tash nods. Processing that...

CHRIS (CONT'D)
If I put you on the books, I could
give you a raise.

Tash sees it: Chris's closeness to Mick. And his weakness.

TASH
Let me think about it. It's not
that big a deal.

Chris smiles, relieved--

CHRIS
Cool.

INT. SUGAR'S BAR / MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tash walks out of Chris's office, into the nicely designed bar. Pride behind the place. She pours herself a water, unsettled.

Eyes PHOTOS taped to the wall behind the bar:

One of CHRIS and MICK, 30s, arm-in-arm.

Another of MICK with his SISTER and EIGHT-YEAR-OLD NIECE. Beside it -- a card for "MICK, THE BEST UNCLE IN THE WORLD."

Off Tash, considering --

EXT. PARKING LOT / DETROIT MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

In the modern complex that is the Detroit Medical Center; very at odds with the distressed streets around it... a Michigan Department of Corrections van, followed by a State Police Patrol car drive up to the hospital's research wing.

Viewed from a distance: three GUARDS emerge and open the back doors. A PRISONER, cuffed, steps down...

ANGLE ON... Fiona Bloom. Whose view this is. By her rental car, drinking coffee, she discreetly snaps photos of the prisoner and the patrol car's license plate with her phone --

INT. HALL / PATRICK ROSS LAB - DAY

Polly approaches the lab... two of the D.O.C. GUARDS now posted at the door:

POLLY
Morning, gentlemen.

Polly shows her I.D., which one studies. He hands it back:

GUARD
You know the protocol with Cullis?

POLLY
I do.

The Guard steps aside to let her enter the lab --

INT. MEETING ROOM / PATRICK ROSS LAB - DAY

Nodding to another guard by the door, Polly enters the meeting room. Seated at the table is the prisoner: HENRY CULLIS, 41, muscular beneath his orange uniform. Still cuffed.

POLLY
Hi, Henry.

Henry nods.

The others in the room, are:

The lab administrator, CHARLENE, 30, with a pixie cut and a matter-of-fact manner, who adjusts the CAMERA aimed at Henry.

DR. PATRICK ROSS, 48, boyish despite his silver hair; a neuroscientist and star in the field who can verge on arrogant. Making notes, he doesn't look up as Polly sits beside him...

And Eliot Kerr, next to him, who smiles at Polly.

CHARLENE

Okay. We're recording.

Looking up, Patrick smiles at Henry.

PATRICK

Great. In front of you, Henry, is a composite of what you told us about the event in the pre-screening interviews.

(delicate)

I'll warn you... at times this might be difficult.

HENRY

It's been difficult for a long time. That's why I'm here.

Patrick nods.

PATRICK

Dr. Lewis?

POLLY

Okay, so we're all on the same page: in each session for the next four days, you will read us this script. It's important that when you do, you visualize the memories you're describing. Precision is crucial.

HENRY

Yes, ma'am.

POLLY

You comfortable?

HENRY

With four doctors staring at me?

CHARLENE

Three. I'm just an assistant.

Henry smiles at Charlene, appreciating that.

Polly eyes Charlene, noticing the tattoo peeking above the collar of her shirt. Not liking her informality with Henry.

POLLY

Okay. Let's get started.

Bracing himself, Henry eyes the document. Takes a deep breath --

INT. BEN GIBB'S OFFICE - LATE DAY

Polly sits with Ben in his office, venting, emotional:

POLLY

We found raccoon cubs in her yard once. The mother had been killed. We raised them, made them our pets.

BEN

So Tash is invoking your shared history as some kind of message?

POLLY

Yes: I can get in your fucking house.

Ben smiles.

POLLY (CONT'D)

Really, I think they were a diversion so she could steal a ring of mine.

BEN

Is it valuable?

POLLY

Only to me. But I've been thinking about that. This is going to sound really out there...

BEN

That's what I'm here for.

POLLY

Tash and I made up this list of things we'd give up for each other. We called it "Thirteen Things."

BEN

What was on it?

Smiling, Polly shakes her head. A little embarrassed.

POLLY

Everything. It was stupid. I don't remember them all. Your favorite possession. Your sibling... I always felt guilty about that one. Your sanity. It became a shorthand--

BEN

For how far you'd go for each other.

Polly nods.

POLLY

The ring Tash took last night was the "favorite possession" we talked about-- when we made up the list.

BEN

You *know* she took it?

POLLY

(hard)

I *do*. I wasn't honest yesterday, Ben. I didn't end the friendship because I was "getting lost." I ended it because Tash *scared* me.

BEN

How do you mean?

POLLY

You know how people have impulses in anger, but with time they dissipate? It was different for her. She'd hold onto them. Sharpen them. And as we got older it was like she lacked moral limits. And that was when she had all the constraints: school, family, social norms...

BEN

And now, free of those--

POLLY

Who the hell knows?

INT. SUGAR'S BAR - DAY

The bar is empty except for MICK, 38, stocking a fridge with beer, when Tash arrives for her shift. She is wearing ear buds, listening to loud music. She takes them off --

TASH

We need to talk.

MICK

All right.

For Mick, the boyish of boyishly-handsome is fading. He's partied too hard for too long. But he is, in his own way, quietly intuitive.

Joining him behind the bar, Tash opens another fridge and takes out a tub of LEMONS, a KNIFE, and a CUTTING BOARD.

TASH

Why are you bad mouthing me to our employer?

MICK

Don't you think that's a little formal given your relationship?

TASH

Is that your issue?

MICK

Only in that it makes him blind.

Mick faces her. Wiping his hands with a towel.

MICK (CONT'D)

I have a bad feeling about you.

TASH

A bad feeling?

MICK

Let's just say I have an instinct for people with ulterior motives.

Tash eyes Mick. Kind of flabbergasted. But also impressed.

Tash considers, nods...

TASH

I get it. I've got this before.

MICK

Got what before?

TASH

When a person can't put their finger on it, but they just know there's something off about you.

He eyes her strangely.

MICK

Okay...

TASH

So I also know that when someone's
against me like that... there's
nothing I can do about it.

Tash puts her ear buds back in, the music BLASTING.

And cuts lemons.

Mick watches her. Feeling a strange mix of bad and baffled.
He goes back to stocking the bar...

ANGLE ON TASH.

Hyper aware of her peripheral view of Mick. She isn't looking
down at the blade or the lemons -- but we hear the SLICING,
the BLADE hitting the board --

ANGLE ON MICK.

Feeling bad. Rolling his eyes, despite himself --

MICK

Natalie?... Natalie?!

But the music from her earphones is too loud.

So Mick grabs Tash's arm -- and she STARTLES -- LUNGING the
knife at him -- SLICING through his outstretched forearm --

Mick CRIES OUT! As BLOOD splatters Tash --

TASH

Oh my god! I'm sorry!

Mick stares at the DEEP GASH THROUGH his forearm --

TASH (CONT'D)

Hold it up! Hold it up in the air!

In shock, Mick raises his arm. Blood streaming down on him.

TASH (CONT'D)

I have to see if it hit the vein.
Sit so I can look.

Mick slides down the cupboard. Woozy with the SEARING PAIN.

As Tash eyes the DEEP CUT. Unflinching.

TASH (CONT'D)

Good, it didn't.

Tash kneels by him and ties a CLEAN BAR TOWEL around his
arm. It REDDENS immediately.

TASH (CONT'D)
I'll stop the bleeding then call 911--

MICK
Holy shit, that hurts.

TASH
I'm so sorry. I guess I was on edge,
with our conversation.

Mick wants to blame her -- but she seems genuinely sorry and the pressure she's putting on his arm is giving him relief.

TASH (CONT'D)
Accidents happen all the time.
(whispering, almost
tender)
Middlebeck. Regent. Ramsgate Lane.

MICK
What?

Tash levels a cold gaze at Mick:

TASH
Those are the streets your niece
takes when she walks home from school.

Off Mick, incredulous --

END OF ACT

ACT THREE

INT. MEETING ROOM / PATRICK ROSS LAB - MORNING

Polly paces, frustrated, as Eliot, Charlene and Henry wait:

POLLY
 (eying Charlene)
 Did Dr. Ross tell you he'd be late?

Charlene, loyal to Ross, brusque:

CHARLENE
 No. But I'm sure something important
 came up. And that he'll be here any
 minute.

On Polly, miffed by her tone. Wanting to diffuse the moment,
 Eliot grabs his coffee cup, rising--

ELIOT
 More coffee?

Polly shakes her head.

ELIOT (CONT'D)
 Mr. Cullis?

Henry, feeling Eliot's disdain, shakes his head.

CHARLENE
 I'll make some more.

Eliot and Charlene exit.

As... out the WINDOW: Polly spots Ross parking his Range
 Rover. A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, 21, gets out of the passenger
 side and walks angrily away as he gets out, watching her...

Polly smiles to herself knowingly.

HENRY
 Why do we have to say it over and
 over?

Polly turns from the window. Glad for the distraction.
 Considering his question for a moment, she answers:

POLLY
 Because every time we 're-remember'
 something... we change it a little.
 To effectively erase the cluster of
 memories-- we need it to be as defined
 as possible. Unfortunate, I know.

HENRY

More ironic. Remembering, to forget.

Polly smiles. A beat of connection...

When Polly's phone bleeps she checks it. A text from a contact called **ALISON**:

Need to see you. Urgent.

Off Polly's face, falling --

EXT. SUBURBAN SCHOOLYARD - LATE DAY

The yard of a grade school viewed through a car's WINDSHIELD. The focus being... a LITTLE GIRL, alone at a table, watching FOUR GIRLS chatting boisterously nearby. The girl pulls a book out of her back pack and starts to read...

The person watching her, in the car... Tash.

Tash gets out and walks to the fence. Getting a closer look. She can see the lone girl is watching the others, and that she is trying to be discreet about it...

Off Tash, watching her intently --

INT. TASH'S CAR / TRAVELING - LATE DAY

Tash drives through the suburb of Grosse Pointe, eyeing large houses set far back from the road, feeling a little nostalgic.

As... in the back seat, the little girl from the school yard, whose name is MIA, 8, looks out the window, crying softly --

EXT. POLLY'S CAR / PARKING LOT - LATE DAY

In the parking lot of the Detroit Athletic Club, Polly sits in her car, trying to curb her anxiety about what she is about to do --

INT. LOBBY / DETROIT ATHLETIC CLUB - LATE DAY

Polly enters the grand, Beaux-Arts private club that has weathered the decline of the city unscathed. Lush murals, rich mahogany. The concierge, JUSTIN, 30s--

JUSTIN

Dr. Lewis, always a pleasure. The Judge said to send you downstairs.

POLLY

Thanks, Justin.

INT. DETROIT ATHLETIC CLUB / BASEMENT - LATE DAY

Polly enters the hundred-year-old bowling alley. Hand-carved wood elaborate and gleaming. Only the last lane is lit, and there, alone, ALISON, 50s, eyes the pins with immense focus, then hurls a ball, downing all of them -- but one.

ALISON
You threw me off.

Alison turns, smiling; an intelligent beauty aging gracefully, with a great sense of style. Even in bowling shoes.

POLLY
So, do we have something to celebrate?
Has the Governor asked you to run?

ALISON
Not yet. Word is he will any day.
I got some other news though.

POLLY
What?

ALISON
A friend at the DHS called me. Tash
is back in the country.

Uneasy, Polly plays dumb. Though it's killing her to do so.

POLLY
What? Really?

ALISON
Years ago I had him put an alert on
her ID. Five weeks ago she flew
into Miami from Bogota. And then
she flew here.
(grim)
At least I know she's alive.

POLLY
I never doubted that.

ALISON
No word in sixteen years, a mother
can't help but doubt it.

On Polly, torn by not telling Alison the truth.

POLLY
I can only imagine.

ALISON

It's strange. I don't quite know
how I'm supposed to feel right now.

This topic, a minefield. Neither wanting to pursue it;
Alison changes gears --

ALISON (CONT'D)

How are you? How's working with
Patrick Ross again?

POLLY

He's still a narcissist who can't
handle dissent. We already went
head to head. About the third doctor.
Ross wanted a yes man, of course.
But he came to his senses.

ALISON

Be careful. What the two of you
had, inappropriate as it was-- it's
hard for feelings like that not to
linger. And Ross doesn't play fair.

Polly, uncomfortable but appreciative, nods.

POLLY

Trust me, I haven't forgotten.

ALISON

Good. So what the hell do you think
my daughter's been doing back in
Detroit for five weeks?

Polly, uneasy, as Alison appraises her --

POLLY

I have no idea.

EXT. YARD / GROSSE POINTE - LATE DAY

The sun is setting as Tash leads Mia through the leafy grounds
of a large old estate...

TASH

Come. I want to show you something.

Mia, not crying, but still apprehensive, glimpses over her
shoulder -- at a sprawling house. It's windows, boarded.

TASH (CONT'D)

It's beautiful, isn't it?

Mia looks around, dubious, as they walk deeper into the woods.

Reaching a CLEARING Tash stops. A fountain is filled with rain water and debris. Around it are stone benches, moss covered. Despite the neglect it retains a tranquil beauty. Tash sits, pats the bench by her. But Mia shakes her head...

TASH (CONT'D)
Suit yourself.

Tash looks up at the trees framing an opening of dusky sky.

TASH (CONT'D)
When I was your age I'd come out here when I felt sad. Or mad. And it always made me feel better.

MIA
(confused)
Is this your house?

TASH
Told you I would show you.

Tash smiles... as Mia looks around her, amazed...

TASH (CONT'D)
I know things have been hard. I know you don't like the school. Or the girls there.

Mia levels a gaze at Tash.

MIA
Because they're bitches, mom.

TASH
Language... Even if they are.

MIA
I miss the Kingdom.

TASH
Me too. But we can't call it that here.

MIA
I know.

TASH
We need to make this work, Mia. Because when I finish what I'm here to do, our lives are going to be better. I promise.

Mia considers. Reluctant. But she sits on the bench; lets Tash kiss her forehead tenderly --

INT. POLLY'S CAR / TRAVELING / WEST VILLAGE - EVENING

Polly, ill-at-ease from her talk with Alison, is almost home, driving through West Village: an area of grand, turn-of-the-century buildings long in disrepair... now gentrifying. Like most of the city's core, a deserted feel remains. Wide streets, few pedestrians.

Which is why Polly spots... "Machete Man." She slows her car... watches him enter a beloved local dive, THE RAVEN.

INT. THE RAVEN - MOMENTS LATER

Polly enters the bar. Yellowed Motown photos line the walls. It's empty except for the rail-thin bartender, LEONARD, 70s, and "Machete Man", now nursing a pint.

Polly walks over to the stool beside him. A deliberate choice -- given the many empty stools on either side.

LEONARD

Doc.

POLLY

Leonard.

Machete Man -- just stares rigidly ahead.

POLLY (CONT'D)

Macallan, please. Neat.

As Leonard turns to fix her drink, Polly eyes the man's arm. Many mottled scars on it. The proximity between them tense...

Leonard sets Polly's scotch down and disappears into the kitchen. She drinks some, for courage...

POLLY (CONT'D)

Was that you in the field?

When he doesn't answer, she presses...

POLLY (CONT'D)

Were you watching me last night?

At last, he turns... slowly. Up close... his intensity of gaze -- now locked on her. Unnerving.

MACHETE MAN

Should I have been, Doc?

She can't get a read on him. He is aloof or hostile, maybe both. But Polly takes a leap:

POLLY

If you know her... If she has asked
you to do something to me...

(hard)

I will pay you not to.

She has surprised him. His expression... softens.

MACHETE MAN

Tempting, but I think you've mistaken
me for someone. Not someone good.

On Polly. Trying to parse out if he's telling the truth.

MACHETE MAN (CONT'D)

You know what I think? I think you
need sleep. I think it would help
you.

POLLY

Help me do what?

MACHETE MAN

Find yourself.

Polly almost chuckles. Not sure if he's being sarcastic.
But what he says next seems unguarded, even earnest:

MACHETE MAN (CONT'D)

It's okay. I laughed at that idea
too, once. But that cynicism got me
nowhere. You seem a little lost.
Cosmically adrift, even. That often
comes from focusing on who we want
to be rather than who we really are.

POLLY

(placating)

I... will think about that.

He drains his beer, and offers her his hand:

MACHETE MAN

Joda. I believe we're neighbors.

(friendly)

And I'm sorry I scared you last night.

They shake. His grip firm.

POLLY

Polly. No harm done.

Joda puts money on the bar, gives her something resembling a
bow, and walks out -- Polly watching him --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The elevator opens. And Polly enters the loft. Working on something, Joe kneels in the kitchen.

JOE

Hey, Pols.

Joe rises, eying her slightly goofy smile.

JOE (CONT'D)

You're tipsy.

POLLY

No, I'm not. I did have a drink at the Raven with Joda though: our friend with the machete.

JOE

Really!? Did you ask *Joda* if one of his friends broke into the building?

POLLY

No, he just seems like a guy who's spent too much time at Burning Man. Or maybe if I was less cynical I'd say he's enlightened. Or trying to be...

(smiling)

Yeah, I'm tipsy.

Polly approaches Joe, surprised to see that he is finishing a MAKESHIFT PEN. And in it... are the RACCOON CUBS.

POLLY (CONT'D)

There are raccoons in our kitchen.

JOE

Animal Control won't call me back. It felt wrong to keep them down there.

Polly eyes cardboard dividers -- separating the pen...

POLLY

You gave them... rooms?

JOE

In case they want privacy.

Polly smiles. Eying Joe.

POLLY

There's this man. He rescues animals and builds them apartments. I must fuck this man.

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT / BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Joe and Polly have sex. Their chemistry very *alive*. Her legs wound around him, he thrusts into her, vigorous --

POLLY
I've missed you.

JOE
I'm right here.

POLLY
Show me... Hurt me.

He is *with* her. Their eyes locked. This, long a crucial part of their attraction...

He SLAPS her.

Polly gasps, grinning. Joe liking it too...

POLLY (CONT'D)
More.

Joe SLAPS her *harder* --

INT. HOTEL ROOM / BOOK CADILLAC WESTIN - NIGHT

Fiona Bloom's clothes now hang neatly in the closet. Her lap top is on the desk, an article by Patrick Ross beside it... A drink in hand, in stockinged feet, Fiona paces, on the phone:

FIONA-INTO PHONE
I'd like to make a reservation for two, the day after tomorrow, at seven. Same name as the room. Thank you.

As Fiona hangs up, a KNOCK sounds.

Fiona throws her phone on the bed, and goes to the door, checking the peephole:

ANGLE ON her distorted view of... Tash.

Fiona opens the door. Tash is tastefully dressed, business-casual. A lot like Fiona.

TASH
Hi, sorry, I'm next door. D'you have a glass? I called the front desk but they're taking forever.

Cautious by nature, Fiona appraises her. Sees that, like herself, she doesn't have shoes on. It makes her smile.

FIONA

I'm sure I do.

Tash holds the door as Fiona walks into the bathroom. Seeing a glass, she grabs it and comes back... but finds the door closed. Puzzled, Fiona looks into the hall. Tash, not there.

Up the hall, unseen by Fiona... are the shoes Tash left there.

Baffled, Fiona steps back into her room and closes the door. Then she turns, startled. Tash... is by her desk, with her back to her, eying her lap top.

TASH

You and I are a lot alike, Fiona.
Existing... but not.

FIONA

(alarmed)
How do you know my name?

Tash turns to her. Appraising her.

TASH

Well, that's not really your name.

That is when Fiona sees the LATEX GLOVES Tash wears --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Joe sleeps, sated. As Polly puts on a shirt and walks into

THE MAIN ROOM

Getting a water, she eyes the sleeping raccoons curled together in the pen. Adorable... and a disturbing reminder of Tash. Polly goes to the window, troubled. The cars by the RV dark. The solitude up here profound.

Restless, Polly grabs her laptop and opens it on the table.

Her desktop picture: her and Joe on the Golden Gate Bridge.

She navigates to the lab's SECURE WEBSITE.

And types in her password --

INT. TASH'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tash arrives home to her cozy but modest suburban apartment... and walks into her living room. She sits on the couch, greatly affected by what she has just done...

Her cell BLEEPS in her pocket. She checks it.

An APP has sent her a text: PL ACTIVE.

So Tash walks up the hall, past Mia's closed bedroom door covered with cheerful art, unlocking the

SECOND BEDROOM

Empty except for a neatly organized shelf of documents and books, and a table with two LAPTOPS.

Tash opens one of them --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

On the lab's website, Polly navigates to a list of many files labelled by prisoners' names:

Choosing the first: **HENRY CULLIS.**

Opening one of two VIDEO FILES, titled: "**SESSION 1, May 14th.**"

She clicks PLAY.

INSERT, FOOTAGE:

Henry, in the board room, begins reading his "script":

HENRY

We hear my stepfather coming up the hall. I'm not supposed to be in Lainey's room this late so I hide under the bed as he barges in, accusing her of drinking the last of his gin--

Polly FAST-FORWARDS:

HENRY (CONT'D)

--And the bottle smashes. And Lainey, who's scared but doesn't take shit from anybody, laughs and says mom's gonna be pissed. Then... next thing I know, Lainey is making this awful gargling noise. Cause he's cut her throat with the broken bottle-neck...

Polly covers her mouth, horrified --

INT. TASH'S APARTMENT / SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

Now, in Tash's apartment, we see what Tash watches on her laptop...

A MIRROR IMAGE of Polly's screen.

We see Polly's desk-top photo of her and Joe on Golden Gate -- framing the VIDEO playing of Henry:

HENRY (O.S.)
*...Then Lainey stops making any sounds
and I know she's dead. And he knows
too, but he starts stabbing her
stomach...*

As Henry goes silent, tormented, Tash opens her SECOND LAPTOP.

On it... is a feed from the camera on top of Polly's screen.

Showing a CLOSE UP OF POLLY as she watches Henry.

Tash is watching Polly's every unguarded reaction to Henry's pain. *Fascinated*.

Off her eerie, virtual intimacy, with Polly --

END OF ACT

ACT FOUR

EXT. "FROM SCRATCH" RESTAURANT / CORKTOWN - THE NEXT NIGHT

On a street in Corktown, the heart of Detroit's rejuvenation, a new restaurant in what was once an auto body shop --

INT. "FROM SCRATCH" RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Polly and Joe make their way through the loud, stylish crowd at the opening party... toward Lucy, who stands with Nick, clinking a spoon against her bottle of PBR --

LUCY

Thank you everyone for being here...

The crowd goes quiet.

LUCY (CONT'D)

So many of you helped make this place happen. We'd feed you all for free, forever, if we could. But we can't. So enjoy it tonight-- then tell everyone you know to come back!

Laughter, raised glasses -- as Polly speaks up:

POLLY

Can I say something? When you found this place, I thought you were nuts. The mechanic's bay, the holes in the roof... But what impresses me so much about my sister, what *always* has: not only do you see what others can't, you go out and build it.

(raising her glass)

To Lucy. And Nick, of course.

Nick grins. As everyone raises their glasses in a heartfelt toast. Off Lucy, smiling, touched --

INT. "FROM SCRATCH" RESTAURANT / BACK HALL - LATER

Looking for the bathroom, Polly walks into the back hall -- surprised to see the walls are covered with PHOTOS of her family. Her face falls.

Snapshots of their modest childhood: Polly and Lucy with their parents, DIANE and ARTHUR, ill-at-ease before the camera. A run-down bungalow, aging Chevy, shabby rooms...

Hearing someone enter the hall, Polly turns. Surprised to see... Alison. Casual, in jeans.

POLLY
I didn't know you were coming.

But Alison isn't smiling.

ALISON
Lucy invited me.

Alison approaches, perusing the photos of Polly's family.

ALISON (CONT'D)
You know, I don't think I ever saw
your house.

POLLY
Tash and I were always at yours.

Alison, still eying the pictures. Polly, self-conscious...

ALISON
I like to think I've had some
influence on the shape your life has
taken.

Her words loaded, Polly, uneasy:

POLLY
You have. Of course you have.

ALISON
That whole mess with Ross... he
would've killed your career before
it even started had I not intervened.

POLLY
The only reason I got back into
school, I haven't forgotten.

Now Alison turns to Polly. Her gaze, unflinching:

ALISON
So why did you lie to me yesterday?
A decade as a prosecutor, I have
some facility recognizing bullshit.
Tash contacted you, didn't she?

Polly, hating this, feeling terrible. It's a moment before
she speaks, reluctantly --

POLLY
No... Not exactly... A guy came to
the hospital with pictures of her
from 2005. She'd been badly beaten,
more than beaten, brutalized...

ALISON
I need to see them.

Polly nods.

ALISON (CONT'D)
Why didn't you tell me?

POLLY
Things got so toxic between you two.
I didn't want to provoke her.

ALISON
Provoke her?

POLLY
I think she's unstable. She wrote
things for this guy to read to me.
Vague but... threatening.

ALISON
Incredible.
(beat)
The Governor called this morning.
It's official, I'm running for the
State Supreme court.

POLLY
(thrown)
Congratulations...

ALISON
Please. The Republicans will be out
for blood based on my judicial record
alone. And now this? Voters have a
special scorn for mothers who give
up on their children. Tash is my
biggest weakness and she knows it.

POLLY
You think that's why she's back?

ALISON
I think that in the last few months
every policy blogger in the state
predicted I'd be asked to run.

Polly, skeptical...

ALISON (CONT'D)
Your loyalty is to me. Don't forget
that. The second she contacts you--
you tell me.

Shaken up, Polly nods --

INT. TENTH FLOOR HALL / BOOK CADILLAC WESTIN HOTEL - MORNING

We move slowly up the hall toward Fiona Bloom's hotel room. A 'Do Not Disturb' sign on the handle. An untouched copy of *The Detroit Free Press* lying on the floor. We keep going... driving through the re-constituted wood product that makes up the thick door --

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Polly lies awake staring at the ceiling, Joe snoring beside her... as her phone rings on the bedside table...

She is surprised to see the caller is Ben Gibb. Quietly getting up, Polly answers in the MAIN ROOM:

POLLY

Ben? What's up?

BEN-OVER PHONE

Can you come by my office at five?

POLLY

What is it?

BEN-OVER PHONE

I'd rather show you in person.

POLLY

See you then.

Polly hangs up, perplexed --

INT. SUGAR'S BAR - MORNING

The bar is closed, but Chris and Mick, whose arm is now bandaged, sit having a beer as Tash enters. Mick, glaring:

MICK

I told him everything.

TASH

Okay...

CHRIS

Easy, man. I said I wanted to hear Natalie's side of the story.

TASH

My side? He startled me and I cut him. Like I said in my message. Didn't you get it?

CHRIS

I got it.

MICK

It was no accident. And I told him what you said about my niece.

Tash looks confused. Her performance... utterly believable.

TASH

Your niece?

MICK

You followed her home from school-- you crazy bitch!

TASH

Why would I ever do that?

MICK

Because you're up to something and I called you on it.

TASH

He *did* tell me he thought I was up to something. What, he didn't say.

Chris eyes them. Troubled. Both sound reasonable, honest.

MICK

You also said people think there's something *wrong* with you. Or some nutso shit like that.

TASH

What? Why would I say that? Why would I confirm your suspicions?

On Chris. Finding that dubious too...

MICK

I don't know why you do anything.

TASH

I'm sorry about your arm. I did what I could, stopped the bleeding--

Mick chuckles, eyeing Chris.

MICK

You see it, right? She followed my niece home! She threatened her.

TASH

Now I threatened her?

MICK

No, me. *About her.*
 (exasperated, to Chris)
 Do you know *anything* about this chick--
 other than she wants to be paid off
 book?

With Chris considering his words, Tash folds a towel.
 Fighting tears.

TASH

I like this job, and I'm very grateful
 for the chance to get back on my
 feet. But I really don't understand
 what long con I could be playing at
 this neighborhood bar.

Chris eyes Mick. She has, in her way, made a very good point.

TASH (CONT'D)

(to Mick)
 But you... you were here first.

Tash heads out, as Chris and Mick eye each other, tense --

EXT. SUGAR'S BAR / PARKING LOT - DAY

Tash walks out into the parking lot... and stops. Staring
 around at the near-empty parking lot, she is hit by a feeling
 of desolation.

She closes her eyes, willing it to pass...

HENRY CULLIS - PRELAP

...Then he walks out. Closes the
 door like nothing happened...

INT. PATRICK ROSS LAB / BOARD ROOM - LATE DAY

Henry finishes his "script" as Polly, Patrick, and Eliot,
 listen. Charlene, at the camera:

HENRY

...And I stay under the bed till the
 next day when the police come and
 find her body.

Henry puts the paper down, depleted. Charlene stops
 recording.

PATRICK

Thank you, Henry.

POLLY

Are you all right?

Henry nods dismissively; deep in his own troubled thoughts... as Charlene opens the door and the guard enters.

As everyone files out, Patrick and Polly remain packing up...

PATRICK
Want to grab a coffee?

POLLY
I can't.

Rising, Polly heads for the door. Then stops, turns back:

POLLY (CONT'D)
Who is she? This one?

Patrick eyes her strangely.

POLLY (CONT'D)
I saw her yesterday, when you made us wait. Getting out of your car.

Patrick, incredulous--

PATRICK
That was my daughter.

Polly blanches.

POLLY
Really? Sarah? How old is she now?

PATRICK
Twenty-one. She has an internship at the hospital, I drive her in.

POLLY
(cringing)
Shit. Well, I'm embarrassed. But come on, can you blame me?

PATRICK
I suppose not.
(beat)
She hasn't spoken a single word to me in two months. Makes for an awkward drive.

POLLY
Two months? Wow. I'd love to know--

PATRICK
What I did to deserve it?

POLLY

No. How long she sticks with it.
The follow-through's impressive.
Your daughter has integrity. From
her mother clearly.

Patrick smiles.

PATRICK

Is it impolitic to say I miss the
star-struck Polly?

POLLY

(smiling)
You mean the naive idiot?

PATRICK

Yeah, that one. That one was great.

And suddenly... for both Polly and Patrick... a glimmer of
powerful chemistry long dormant. Patrick, enjoying it.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

How's Joe?

Polly, feeling the danger --

POLLY

Wonderful.

INT. BEN GIBB'S OFFICE - LATE DAY

Flustered by her talk with Patrick, Polly arrives at Ben's
office. Taking a moment to collect herself.

When she knocks, Ben opens the door, somber. Ushers her in:

BEN

Have a seat.

She sits on the couch.

POLLY

You're making me nervous, Ben.

He leans on his desk. Disconcerted.

BEN

The "list" you and Tash made-- stuck
in my head. So I googled it.

From his desk, Ben grabs a PAPERBACK BOOK. Hands it to Polly.

Who eyes it strangely. It's title: "**Thirteen Things.**"

BEN (CONT'D)

I got it on Amazon. It was published three years ago.

Polly flips to the author's photo. We recognize her (and her floral shirt)... as the heavysset woman who found Tash, injured, in the tease.

POLLY

Who's Lydia Prince-Richard?

BEN

She self-publishes. Other than that I can't find much about her. Go to page nine.

Polly flips to the page and her face falls. On it, a list:

Thirteen Things

1. **Your favorite possession**
2. **Your pet**
3. **All your money**
4. **Your home**
5. **Your calling**
6. **Your reputation**
7. **Your lover**
8. **Your sibling**
9. **Your parents**
10. **Your body**
11. **Your sanity**
12. **Your life**
13. **Each other**

Polly looks at Gibb. *Reeling* --

POLLY

What the hell? This is our list. Word for word... She must know Tash.

GIBB

It gets weirder.

Gibb shows Polly his laptop.

On it: LYDIA PRINCE-RICHARD'S WEBSITE. Tropical flowers, new-agey text. He scrolls to a section advertising books with titles like: *Finding Your Way*, *The New Life Path*, *Fulfillment Forever* --

Each with a VIDEO INTRO.

Gibb navigates to the one for *Thirteen Things*. Clicks PLAY.

INSERT, VIDEO CLIP:

There is a hokey, low-fi quality, which in other circumstances might be funny... as Lydia, in one of her trademark floral shirts, walks on a beach, smiling at the camera...

LYDIA

Hello there, I'm Lydia Prince-Richard. My book, *Thirteen Things*, was inspired by a young woman very dear to me. A woman who endured terrible trials and tribulations. And how did she survive? Blame. Her strength came from placing blame on a childhood friend who, in betraying her grievously, changed her life forever.

On Polly... incredulous. Her eyes meet Gibb's.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

So while the self-help industry tells us to forgive others and blame ourselves, *Thirteen Things* is a manifesto about the transformational power of blame--

Polly hits PAUSE. Freezing Lydia's smiling face mid-word.

POLLY

Who writes shit like this?

BEN

Would you like to go to the police?

POLLY

With what? A website for a book published years ago?

BEN

Okay, it's not a concrete threat yet--

POLLY

Don't you see? There will never be one.

(rising, emotional)

Please make a record of this. Of when I came to you. Of how you found this. When she does something-- I'll need it.

Off Ben nodding, concerned --

INT. HOSPITAL BATHROOM - LATE DAY

Polly locks the door. Overwhelmed by what Ben just showed her. Hit by --

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CLEARING / GROSSE POINTE - DAY - 1998

The clearing -- in Tash's yard. A spring day. Tash and Polly, 18, lie on benches by the fountain smoking American Spirits. Three RACCOON CUBS are nearby, exploring... Tash, throwing them scraps from a plastic bag.

On screen text: "**TASH & POLLY, 1998**"

TASH

What would you give up for me?

POLLY

What do you mean?

TASH

If someone asked you to choose: me or blank.

(eying Polly's ring)

Like... me or that ring?

Polly eyes the RING we recognize.

POLLY

You. Obviously.

Tash glances at a RACCOON CUB who sniffs at the bag.

TASH

Inanimate objects are easy. What about them? For you, I'd snap their little necks. I'd probably snap my mother's too, if it came down to it.

POLLY

Well, Diane and Arthur have had a good, if somewhat joyless run.

Tash smiles; morbid humor their shared tongue.

TASH

Your sister?

POLLY

Yes, but I'd make sure she didn't see it coming. What about... your body?

TASH
Full-body-amputation, I feel, is asking a lot. But for you, okay. Your sanity? What about that?

POLLY
I've always thought it a burden.

Tash grins.

TASH
I feel a list coming on.

POLLY
You and your damn lists.

Sitting up, her cigarette dangling on her lip, Polly opens her notebook and jots at the top of a blank page:

**Thirteen Things
(I'd give up for you)**

Handing Tash the notebook--

POLLY (CONT'D)
Go to town.

TASH
(eying the title)
That's good. I like that.

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. HOSPITAL BATHROOM - LATE DAY

Polly, unnerved. Splashing water on her face, trying to shake off the memory --

INT. LOBBY / DETROIT RECEIVING HOSPITAL - LATE DAY

Preoccupied, Polly walks through the lobby. And suddenly, coming toward her through hospital staff and visitors is...

...Tash.

TASH
My god... Polly?

Stunned, Polly stops. Tash, smiling warmly.

TASH (CONT'D)
It's so good to see you.

END OF ACT

ACT FIVE

INT. ALCOVE IN LOBBY / HOSPITAL - LATE DAY

In a quiet alcove off the lobby by a coffee counter closed for the day... Polly and Tash sit at a table. An awkward, toxic tension between them, palpable:

POLLY

What... happened to you?

TASH

How do you summarize a *lifetime*?

POLLY

Start with 2005.

TASH

The man they had torture me went above and beyond what they asked of him. He enjoyed it. If I was lucky, I'd pass out after he left.

On Polly, marvelling at Tash's eerie, matter-of-fact tone...

TASH (CONT'D)

And in the pain this thing grew... this knowledge. I could live through anything. Because I'd always open my eyes again. And the pain would hit again. And I knew what life is... Life *is* pain.

POLLY

What does this have to do with me?

TASH

(hard, harsh)

There is one thing you can't play, Polly, and that is dumb.

Polly's hand trembles. Tash, breathing, calming...

TASH (CONT'D)

You have a beautiful life, but such distance between you and the people in it. Lucy, your folks, colleagues.

Hearing Tash name those close to her; for Polly, is chilling.

TASH (CONT'D)

You do it by control. Weird hours. The line on the floor in your OR. The man you chose.

(MORE)

TASH (CONT'D)

You can keep secrets from Joe because
he has his own, right?

On Polly, baffled by how Tash *knows* these things...

POLLY

What *is* this?

TASH

The beginning of something you don't
control. Can I ask you something?

POLLY

What?

Tash leans in, her expression earnest, searching:

TASH

What we did. Why didn't it break
you?

For Polly, all sounds stop. And no one exists but them...

Rising, Tash heads through the lobby. Overwhelmed, Polly
watches her walk away, disappearing through the front doors --

INT. ROAST RESTAURANT / BATHROOM - EVENING

In an upscale restaurant bathroom, Charlene, dressed far
better than in the lab, eyes herself in the mirror. Nervous.

INT. ROAST RESTAURANT / BOOK CADILLAC WESTIN - EVENING

Charlene walks through the busy restaurant on the main floor
of the Westin, to a nice table set for two. She sits, setting
her napkin on her lap, as a HOSTESS approaches--

HOSTESS

I tried Miss Bloom's room again.
She's still not answering.

Off Charlene, perplexed --

INT. HALL / BOOK CADILLAC WESTIN - EVENING

Having gotten her room number, Charlene approaches Fiona
Bloom's door. Two copies of *The Detroit Free Press* now on
the floor. She listens... hearing the TV. Knocks.

CHARLENE

Miss Bloom?

Disconcerted, Charlene walks quickly up the hall --

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - EVENING

It's dark when Polly unlocks the front door of her building. The lobby quiet, the workers gone for the day...

POLLY

Joe?!

Met with silence, Polly heads for the elevator...

INT. ELEVATOR - EVENING

Polly moves up, passing the dark floors that now unnerve her --

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Polly puts food in the raccoons' pen and they run to it...

She eyes the growing structure illuminated by headlights in the field below, glad; it lessens the isolation.

Polly calls Joe. Gets his voice mail, hanging up. *Anxious* --

INT. SUGAR'S BAR - NIGHT

The place is crowded at happy hour, Chris working behind the bar as his wife... Charlene, walks in.

CHRIS

Hey babe. I thought you had a dinner.

Charlene comes behind the bar and kisses him.

CHARLENE

It was canceled. I already told the sitter I'm coming home-- can I get some cash for her?

He grabs bills from the till and hands them to her.

CHRIS

I'm closing. I won't wake you.

Pecking him on the cheek, Charlene leaves...

Watching her, Chris experiences a moment of guilt.

Then, wanting privacy, he walks into the BACK HALL

Where he scrolls through his contacts, to: **NATALIE**.

Dialing, getting her voice mail:

CHRIS (CONT'D)

It's me. Mick's gonna take some time off. Least till his arm heals. So I hope we're good, and that you're coming in for your shift. I'll be working Mick's so...

(smiling, boyish)

Hope to see you later.

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Polly sits at the dining table, waiting for Joe. A glass of scotch before her. As the elevator opens, Joe entering --

POLLY

I've been calling you.

JOE

My phone died. Marlon and I were picking up the security cameras. Just let me wash my hands--

Joe disappears into the BATHROOM.

JOE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You found your ring!

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S BATHROOM / BATHROOM - NIGHT

Joe is drying his hands when Polly enters -- alarmed:

POLLY

What did you just say?

JOE

Your ring. Where'd you find it?

Polly eyes the dish by the sink. Her RING... in it.

POLLY

I didn't.

Polly walks across the bathroom... finding under the ring, a small piece of paper. It is a note, typed:

The rest I won't give back.

Joe sees Polly's fear...

JOE

What is it?

POLLY

Joe, I need to tell you something.

INT. POLLY AND JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - A LITTLE LATER

The PHOTOS of Tash from 2005 are on the table. So is Lydia's book, open to the list... as Joe stares at Polly in disbelief:

JOE
This is insane! You're saying it was her in here the other night!?

POLLY
Yes.

JOE
And then she came *back*?

POLLY
(hard, emotional)
I'm saying she's going to come at me in ways we can't imagine. She knows things. About me... about you. It's like she never fucking left.

JOE
This is insane.

POLLY
Please don't keep saying that.

JOE
What has she been doing all these years? Have you looked online?

POLLY
Online she doesn't exist. I've looked. For years, I've looked.

Joe takes it in; the *history* of this...

JOE
Why have you kept this from me?
(beat)
What is this really about?

We see it. The way she eludes his question with her fear.

POLLY
I don't know. But she will be relentless.

EXT. BEACH IN BELIZE - DAY - 2005

Staring out at azure water on the beautiful beach, Tash, 24, almost fully recovered from her injuries, sits on the sand in a swimsuit, staring out at the water...

On screen text: "**TASH, 2005**"

As GRAHAM FLECK, 20s, shirtless and sinewy, approaches, Tash hides the mottled scars on her leg with a towel.

GRAHAM

Lydia wants to see you.

Though Graham holds out a hand to help her, Tash grabs a cane lying in the sand and pulls herself up --

EXT. THE COMPOUND - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Graham leads Tash through lush, landscaped foliage. We glimpse small, white stucco outbuildings, freshly painted.

TASH

Do you know why she wants to see me?

GRAHAM

No. But time with her is a gift.
Appreciate it.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF BELIZE CITY / BELIZE - DAY - 2005

Lydia Prince-Richard drives a Jeep through the outskirts of Belize city with Tash in the passenger seat:

LYDIA

Do you know what the people in the village where I found you-- believed you were?

TASH

What?

LYDIA

A Patasola; a local legend. A beautiful one-legged-woman who lives in the jungle and eats human souls. They were terrified. Would've let you die because of it. People can say all they want about quantifiable facts, but *belief*... it's the most powerful force in the world.

Tash eyes Lydia, perplexed...

TASH

Where are we?

LYDIA

A crossroads.

TASH

(wry)
Cryptic.

LYDIA

You know how I said I'd find the men
who hurt you?

TASH

Yes, but I figured that was just
something you said to help me recover.

LYDIA

I try not to say things I don't mean.

Lydia pulls up to a CONSTRUCTION SITE. The workers, gone
for the day. Through the fence they can see a security guard
by the hulking, unfinished building, smoking.

Tash recognizes him immediately.

We too, recognize him: Joda.

LYDIA (CONT'D)

Is that one of them?

Tash nods, stunned. Staring at him with revulsion...

TASH

The one. The worst one.

Lydia watches him. Then looks at Tash.

LYDIA

See. A crossroads.

EXT. FIELD BEHIND HOTEL / DETROIT - NIGHT - PRESENT

The other people still work on the structure around the RV...
as Joda eats alone. He sits on the ground, against his car.
He likes the isolation of the field, the lack of city lights,
not a mile from where Tiger Stadium once stood. An abyss in
a city.

Joda looks up at the hotel's only lights, the ones in Polly
and Joe's apartment... watches as they go off, one by one...

His expression, indiscernible.

-- THE END --