

BLOOD RELATIVE

Written by

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*SNAP!*

The imposing jaws of a 12 foot, 1,500 pound AMERICAN ALLIGATOR slam shut around a fish, otherwise known as lunch.

ALLIGATOR WRANGLER (O.S.)  
What you're lookin' at is a living fossil. We got more Gators than souls out here in the Glades.

The Alligator opens his mouth wide for another serving. Rows of sharp teeth glisten in the sun, mouth slits like a wicked smile. We're --

EXT. GATOR PARK - DAY

A low rent Gator Theme Park deep in the Florida Everglades. Framed by a sky so blue it hurts, the ALLIGATOR WRANGLER spouts knowledge sporting a bandana, Oakley shades and a Croc tooth necklace.

ALLIGATOR WRANGLER (O.S.)  
This big boy's got'a bite strength of 2,125 PSI. That's enough to bite through steel. So I'd suggest you keep hands, valuables and anyone you like inside the boat.

*Oohs, Ahhs, and nervous titters* -- PULL BACK to find we're ON AN AIR BOAT floating on the water's surface. It's packed with TOURISTS, baseballs hats and outstretched iPhones.

The Wrangler smiles down at a 10 year old on vacation with her parents. She's staring at the Wrangler's necklace.

ALLIGATOR WRANGLER (CONT'D)  
(with a smile)  
It's available for purchase in the Gator Park Gift Shop.

CUT TO:

THE PARK ENTRANCE where AN OLD MAN (70's) greets folks as they enter. Gator Park windbreaker, shock of white hair, paunch. His gray MUSTACHE topped by bottle GLASSES, he steadies himself on A CANE.

OLD MAN  
Welcome to Gator Park!

He waves at a TWEEN.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)  
 Hey there, Sport! Don't miss out on  
 the air boat tour.

The Tween avoids eye contact with the Old Man whose attention moves to the kid's MOM (40's).

OLD MAN (CONT'D)  
 Right this way, young lady. Tickets  
 at the kiosk.

INT. GATOR PARK - BREAKROOM - DAY

Inside a drab breakroom, the Old Man hangs his windbreaker on a hook below the name, DAN RESSLER. In pushes the Alligator Wrangler from the tour.

ALLIGATOR WRANGLER  
 Douchebag just gave me a \$1 tip.  
 His kid's phone cost \$700 easy and  
 he's smiling like I just won the  
 Lotto. You believe that?  
 (clocks out)  
 Missed you at the BBQ, Dan.

DAN RESSLER  
 At my age, I'd have one light beer  
 and do a nose-dive into the grill.

ALLIGATOR WRANGLER  
 Something tells me you were the  
 life of the party back in your day.

DAN  
 Let's keep it between us.

Smiling Dan heads out, leaning on his cane for support.

INT. CRAB SHACK - DAY

Paper plates, cold beer and all you can eat crack-it-yourself crab in a shack right over the water. Dan finishes his lunch at a picnic table with a view. The WAITRESS (late 40's, sun-bleached, cut offs and tats) refills his coffee.

WAITRESS  
 Save room for pie, Mr. Ressler?

DAN  
 Not today. Watching my figure. Any  
 baby news?

She shows him a pic on her iPhone - her holding a newborn.

WAITRESS

They named him Collin Christopher.  
Seven pounds, eight ounces.

DAN

You're too young to be a grandma.

WAITRESS

Helps when you get started at 16.

The waitress winks, man's a charmer.

EXT. CRAB SHACK - SUNSET

Sun sets over the Glades as Dan pushes out, leaning on his cane. A LINE COOK preps crabs at the curb. *Spanish in Italics.*

LINE COOK

*See you tomorrow, Mr. Ressler!*

DAN

*Have a good one, Miguel.*

EXT. COTTAGE - SUNSET

Dan comes to a picket fence in need of a coat of paint, unlatches it and walks slowly down a palm tree lined dirt path to the front door of a bright yellow cottage. He goes to put his key in the lock... and FREEZES.

REVERSE ANGLE TO REVEAL -- a SHEET OF CHILDREN'S STICKERS stuck between the screen door and the jam. Each one the same. A cartoon character named GEEDIS (think McDonald's Grimace but with hard, beady eyes).

Dan shoots a look of panic over his shoulder -- then up the street. No one... Something about the GEEDIS image has frightened him to the core. Dan fumbles with his keys, unlocks his door and pushes inside --

INT. DAN'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Breathing fast, Dan throws the deadbolt. Then locks a second. And a third. *Odd.* Why so many locks? He leans against the door.

A beat...his breathing calms, eyes focus.

Dan DROPS HIS CANE, STANDS UP STRAIGHT and STRIDES ACROSS THE ROOM like a man half his age. Because he is.

THE OLD MAN ROUTINE IS AN ACT

Dan's all fluid movement. He peels off the mustache, tugs at the white wig revealing a shaved, bald pate. A man so easily dismissed as a grandpa is actually quite striking. Dan pulls the shades, blocking the light, moves into --

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

With clear intent, Dan goes straight to the closet. Pulls down his hanging shirts, drops them to the floor. He feels around the drywall, taps until it sounds hollow, then --

PUNCHES A HOLE IN THE WALL

He rips the drywall away, revealing a SAFE. He dials the code, swings it open to a 9 MM SEMI-AUTOMATIC AND A CLIP. With ease he slides the clip into the gun, chambers a bullet.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sink, toilet, and shower/tub with a plastic curtain. Dan studies himself in the mirror. Clearly terrified, but of what? Dan peels one of the GEEDIS STICKERS from the sheet he found stuck in the front door...

He places the GEEDIS STICKER over his reflection in the mirror...

Then he puts the barrel of the gun under his chin...

CUT TO BLACK

The sound of a SINGLE GUNSHOT and we --

**END TEASER**

ACT ONE

EXT. DAN'S COTTAGE - MORNING

Crime scene tape. An unmarked SEDAN pulls up, out steps DETECTIVE JOHN KELLY (late 40's, kind eyes, Dad gut). Dressed in khakis and a blue polo, his sidearm in a shoulder holster.

A NEIGHBOR IN A MUUMUU blocks John's path with her mini dog. The dog squats, does its business, triumphantly scratches grass around his shit pile. John watches as the Neighbor takes her leave without picking up the mess.

Another Detective joins the party. This is BRICK DOUGHTY, John's partner (30s, African American, wise ass).

BRICK  
Making friends?

Brick lifts the police tape, John ducks under.

JOHN  
Why am I at a suicide on a Sunday?  
Erin turns six, today. I got a  
magician coming at noon.

John takes in Brick's wardrobe -- Everglades Bicycle Club cycling shorts.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Forget your pants?

BRICK  
I was out on a ride, AlA out to  
Lake Worth and back.  
(back to business)  
Florida State drivers license says  
the deceased's name was Daniel  
Ressler.

JOHN  
They locate a relative?

BRICK  
A sister. She thought we were  
pranking her. Seems her brother  
died in a car accident in 1972.

John stops walking. This just got interesting.

INT. DAN'S COTTAGE - BATHROOM - DAY

TIGHT ON THE DEAD BODY, now a JOHN DOE. John crosses himself, then straddles the body -- he now stands where the dead man stood when he shot himself. John looks in the mirror.

JOHN  
He was looking at himself.

RACK FOCUS TO THE GEEDIS STICKER, still stuck to the mirror.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
What the hell's that?

BRICK  
The father of two asks a single man? Figured it was some kiddie cartoon character.

JOHN  
Prints?

BRICK  
Ran 'em. Nada. We're up a creek without a paddle.

A loaded beat before --

BRICK (CONT'D)  
You know who we should --

JOHN  
No. Not Lou. Not gonna happen. Your shorts are cutting off the circulation to your brain.

BRICK  
But Lou's an expert, right? A 'DNA wizard'. *Your words.*

JOHN  
Lou's a genetic genealogist. Not a cop. We'll draw blood, run it through CODIS see if we get a hit.

BRICK  
\$20 bucks says he's not in the system. For starters, he's a middle class, white man. We're gonna hit a wall. Now Lou -

JOHN

-- will cut years off'a our lives.  
I don't involve Lou in my work.  
Never. Period.

BRICK

You can't fight progress, John.  
Three words - Golden State Killer.  
It's how we're catching the bad  
guys now and Lou wrote the book on  
it -- literally.

JOHN

Work is my safe place. I don't want  
Lou pissing all over it by pissing  
everyone off.

BRICK

But --

JOHN

Lou doesn't play well with others.  
Or animals. Or plants.

BRICK

So let me get this right. You're  
trying to fight crime, you've got a  
direct line to Superman, but you're  
not picking up the phone because  
you're butthurt over some personal  
beef?

JOHN

It's not personal, it's self  
preservation. Besides the timing's  
off. Lou just got fired.

BRICK

How the hell do you get sacked from  
your own company?

JOHN

You're Lou. Anyway, I've left  
messages, even went by. I don't  
think Lou's left the house in  
weeks.

BRICK

You're currently straddling a  
faceless man with zero leads. Come  
on, how bad can Lou be?

HARD CUT TIGHT ON LOUISE "LOU" KELLY. Not at all what we were  
expecting. For starters, Lou's a woman.



Mid-40's, currently extremely uncomfortable and wearing a pointy kids' birthday party hat. PULL BACK TO FIND she's --

EXT. JOHN KELLY'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Party in full swing. KIDS chase each other with bang snaps. A MAGICIAN makes a dove appear from a scarf. A 5 year-old BOY sits in a chair beside Lou, dripping ice-cream cone in hand.

LOU  
Are you fully vaccinated?

The Boy just stares as Lou opens a pocket in the VEST she wears. It sports 42 individual pockets. Out of one she pulls out a packet of Wet Wipes, cleans her hands vigorously.

JOHN (O.S.)  
Hey, Lou! You made it.

Lou looks up as JOHN and BRICK walking towards her.

BRICK  
Nice outerwear.

LOU  
It's a Q.U.E.S.T VEST. Saw it on Shark Tank, had to have it. 42 pockets, different sizes for various needs.

Lou opens a shoulder pocket, removes a tiny piece of paper.

BRICK  
Receipt?

LOU  
A list of what's in the other pockets.

BRICK  
You should get your brother one.

JOHN  
Please don't.

*Lou is John's sister.* As Lou puts the diagram back into its pocket John studies her with brotherly concern.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Thanks for coming out today. Wasn't sure you'd make it what with the whole work situation...

LOU  
Erin's family.

JOHN  
Yeah but... you haven't returned my calls. How you doin', Lou? Getting out much?

LOU  
Why do you ask?

JOHN  
You're wearing pajamas.

Lou looks down and we realize John's right. Brick seizes the awkward moment --

BRICK  
John has something to ask you.

Brick holds his smile as he turns to John, *just do it.*

JOHN  
We...uh, caught a tough case. Suicide.

LOU  
Since when do we talk work?

JOHN  
You know what? Never mind. This --

BRICK  
What John means is, we need your brain. We've got nothing. Guy was living under an alias... For going on twenty years.

Lou whistles through her teeth like a truck driver.

JOHN  
It's not easy to erase yourself. Lengths he went to... This can't be a good guy. Thing is his fingerprints, blood... no hits.

LOU  
So?

JOHN  
Well, if he's never been arrested --

LOU

What does it matter if he's not in the police database? If you have his DNA profile, I can find him.

BRICK

(smiling/to John)

See? Lou speaks the new language. She's gonna be our Superman...  
*woman.*

DELIGHTED SQUEALS -- PAN TO FIND six-year-old ERIN tearing open her presents. She holds up a Hatchimal. Her mom, REBECCA (40, kind but wears the pants), collects the gift wrapping.

REBECCA

What do you say?

ERIN

Thanks, Brick!

Rebecca hands Erin the next present. It's in a grocery bag.

REBECCA

This one's from Aunt Lou.

Erin tears it open, finds an odd device. A circle at the end of a barrel with black lines etched in it. Erin's baffled.

LOU

It's a Benham disk. When it spins, our eyes see color when there's technically none there.

Erin turns it over in her hands, deeply confused.

ERIN

I'm bored.  
(off her mom's look)  
Uh... thanks Aunt Lou!

Erin tears into the next gift, the party resumes.

FIND Erin's older sister ASHLEY (16 going on 35). Ashley's perched on a picnic table beside her best friend CAMERON (16) mid-selfie. Cameron holds her iPhone up high --

CAMERON

Ash, tilt your head. You're getting nose shadow.

ASHLEY

I would'a killed for a Benham disk at her age.

Cameron doesn't look up from her phone but Lou heard what Ashley said. She studies Ashley, intrigued.

CAMERON

(scrolling on her cell)

I can't even... It's like Simon has a whole secret life! How did you find his finsta?

ASHLEY

Oh, I've been messing around with Instagram's API.

CAMERON

What huh?

ASHLEY

Told you comp sci wasn't a total waste of time.

Lou takes note. Then hands John her party hat.

LOU

I need to be with my computer now.

But the MAGICIAN steps in her path, fans out a deck of cards for Lou to pick one. She does, hands it to John face down.

LOU (CONT'D)

Queen of Hearts.

With that she turns and goes. John flips the card over. Queen of Hearts. Lou shouts over her shoulder --

LOU (CONT'D)

They're all the Queen of Hearts!

John hands the card back to a deflated Magician.

EXT. LOU'S HOUSE - CORAL GABLES - NIGHT

Where the 1% keep their winter homes. A yacht rests in every dock. FIND A MANSION right on the water as a RESTAURANT DELIVERY CAR pulls up the drive. CUT INSIDE THE HOUSE --

INT. LOU'S HOUSE - NIGHT

TRACK PAST a photo of Lou with the Dalai Lama... another of Lou receiving a National Medal of Science from President Obama. CONTINUE TO TRACK through a house devoid of furniture. Moving boxes are stacked, unopened. PUSH INTO --

THE LIVING ROOM where Lou sits at a folding card table on her laptop and still in the same pajamas. Multiple genealogical websites are open on the screen -- *GEDMatch*, *FamilyTreeDNA*.

*Note: Lou has 5 distinct BURN MARKS lining her inner arm. Long healed, they look like cigarette burns because they are.*

A TV propped up on a moving box plays *Jeopardy!* where a Contestant gives an answer. Lou shouts without looking up -

LOU  
Wrong again!

The doorbell RINGS and Lou crosses to the entryway. A two-story space where a chandelier hangs, still swaddled in bubble wrap. Lou opens the door to RESTAURANT DELIVERY DRIVER HOOMAN (40, Persian, dapper and clearly smitten with Lou).

HOOMAN  
Good evening, Ms. Kelly.

He hands Lou the food she ordered, then sheepishly pulls out a HARDCOVER BOOK -- "*BLOOD RELATIVE, the new science of Genetic Genealogy*". It's Lou's book.

HOOMAN (CONT'D)  
I purchased a copy of your book.  
Fascinating, truly. I was hoping  
you might sign it for me?

Lou takes a ballpoint pen from behind her ear, scribbles her name on the dust jacket and hands it back.

HOOMAN (CONT'D)  
The people who solved the Golden  
State Killer clearly read it.

Oblivious to his flirting, Lou hands him \$200. In cash.

LOU  
Working.

Hooman peeks over her shoulder. Works up his courage...

HOOMAN  
I see you still haven't unpacked?  
I could come by on my day off --

No hesitation, Lou swings the massive door closed mid sentence, punches in the alarm code --

HOOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
See you tomorrow night!

-- at the card table Lou unpacks her meal like a jeweler arranging precious gems. Foie gras; beet salad; chicken aspic. Without looking up she shouts at the TV --

LOU

What is 'The Milagro Beanfield War', nitwit.

She spears a chunk of aspic, resumes work on her algorithm...

EXT. FORT LAUDERDALE POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAYS LATER

The myriad windows of The Fort Lauderdale Police Headquarters shimmer like scales of a gigantic fish in the Florida heat.

INT. FORT LAUDERDALE DETECTIVE BUREAU - DAY

A handful of detectives and Uni's stand in a half circle as Lou draws TWO LADDERS on a blackboard.

LOU

Think of this ladder as your John Doe's DNA profile. Some sections repeat. We call these STRs for 'Short Tandem Repeats'....

Lou circles a section, looks up to blank stares.

LOU (CONT'D)

Should I use fewer syllables?

JOHN

Watch the tone, Lou.

LOU

Ok. Forget the ladders. To find your victim's name I'm looking for relatives who may have uploaded their DNA to any one of the genealogy websites available.

BRICK

But aren't there 100's of them?

LOU

Over 12,000. I like a challenge.

Lou goes back to scribbling on the blackboard.

LOU (CONT'D)

Lets say I find Bob who shares 2% of the vic's DNA, and Mary who shares 3%. And Bob and Mary don't share that much DNA with each other, say 2%... They're distant cousins. What I do is work my way up the family tree to a common ancestor, a great grandfather.

She draws a circle around where the two connect.

LOU (CONT'D)

Then through the magic of genealogy I find the branch that belongs to your victim. And if all goes well, a name. DNA takes us upstream. Genealogy takes us back down.

She dusts chalk off her hands, proud of herself.

LT. DIXON (O.S.)

Poetic.

REVERSE ANGLE to find LT. HANNAH DIXON (50s, African American, world weary). She doesn't crack a smile.

JOHN

Lieutenant, this is my sister, Louise.

LT. DIXON

Ah yes, the "DNA Wizard".

LOU

Merlin was a wizard. I'm a genius.

LT. DIXON

Ok... Pleasure to finally meet you.

Lt. Dixon reaches out to shake. Lou just looks at her hand.

LT. DIXON (CONT'D)

I understand you invented some kind of facial recognition software for the CIA?

John grimaces - he knows what's coming.

LOU

Incorrect. What I invented was recognition technology that the CIA completely misappropriated so I sold my shares in the company. I now have a very big house.

LT. DIXON

I see. And what brings you in?

LOU

Your limitations. I'm using genetic genealogy to find the John Doe's birth name for you.

BRICK

Detective Kelly's idea.

John shakes his head. Seriously?

LT. DIXON

You're running us head first into a 4th Amendment nightmare. People who put their DNA data up on those websites didn't agree to have their information used to hunt down fugitives. No one wants us climbing all over their family tree.

LOU

Don't be ridiculous. This is the first new science available to you people since detectives started using DNA in 1987.

LT. DIXON

You're a civilian. I can't condone involving you in casework.

Lou can't let go. Worse, she doesn't know that she should.

LOU

Back in the day they questioned fingerprints, too.

JOHN

*Lou...*

LOU

And desegregation.

The room goes so quiet you could hear a pin drop.



LT. DIXON  
I can't tell if she's joking.  
Please tell me she's joking.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FORT LAUDERDALE POLICE HEADQUARTERS - PARKING LOT - DAY

Standing between parked cars, John rips Lou a new one. His frustration tips into rage --

JOHN  
What the hell's wrong with you?!

LOU  
Me? *She's* wrong.

JOHN  
She's my boss!

Lou matches him, her heart rate racing with her words --

LOU  
I fail to see your point!

JOHN  
Of course you do! *This* is exactly  
why you got fired!

LOU  
(defensive)  
I quit!

JOHN  
Your own company? Yeah right.

LOU  
There'll be others.

JOHN  
That's not what you said when you  
locked yourself in the bathroom for  
a week! Nah, you practically gave  
birth to that code, then you pissed  
off the wrong people and they took  
it away from you.  
(blurts)  
Why can't you just be *normal*?!

That one word sends Lou over the edge. Her emotions hit tilt. In the throes of a full blown PANIC ATTACK she struggles to catch her breath. John realizes he's pushed too far, snaps into caretaker mode. Clearly been here before.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Lou? I didn't...Lou, listen to me.  
 Come on, head between your knees.

For Lou the world is SPINNING but she does as she's told,  
 bends at the waist. John puts his hand on her back.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 That's it. Deep breath in.

CO-WORKERS walk past, stare. John tries to act casual, like  
 his sister isn't completely freaking out in the middle of the  
 parking lot. Lou's breath stabilizes, she stands. Lucid but  
 still stinging and not ready to let go of what John said...

LOU  
 'Normal'? So what, you're Dad now?

Her words hit John like a *smack* --

JOHN  
 Hey. That's not... I protected you.

LOU  
 (matter of fact)  
 Sometimes.

History hangs there between them. More on that later. For  
 now, Lou pushes ahead --

LOU (CONT'D)  
 I'm not entirely to blame for your  
 Lieutenant's short-sightedness.  
 She's clearly distracted by the  
 cancer.

JOHN  
 How did you -- ?

Lou rattles it off like a grocery list. She misses nothing.

LOU  
 Radiation recall under her left  
 ear, bags under her eyes, fatigue.  
 It's clouding her judgement.

With that Lou turns and does what she does best, walks away.

JOHN  
 You still coming to dinner tonight?

LOU  
 Wouldn't miss it.

No matter how big the war, there is always reconciliation.  
John watches Lou go, forever his little sister...

INT. JOHN KELLY'S HOUSE - ASHLEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ashley lays on her bed, hair fanned, taking a selfie. Checks it. Deletes it. Is about to go again when there's A TAPPING at her window. Ashley *freezes*, creeped out... The wind?

Another TAP

Shit. Should she call for help? Get her dad? Instead she picks up her lacrosse stick... play the tension as she creeps towards the window... reaches out slowly... and TUGS BACK the curtain, stick RAISED HIGH, ready to swing only to find --

LOU STARING BACK AT HER. She's climbed the trellis two stories up, hangs mid-air. Ashley pulls open the window --

ASHLEY

Aunt Lou, what the -- ?

Lou unspools through the window with surprising grace. Pats her vest, making sure all is accounted for, then blurts --

LOU

Where do you fall on cyber  
stalking?

Ashley's stunned silent.

LOU (CONT'D)

At your sister's party you told  
your friend with the short  
attention span you'd made a custom  
search engine for social media  
sites.

ASHLEY

(lies)  
No I didn't.

LOU

I believe the exact phrase was  
'messing around with Instagram's  
API'?...I need you to do the same  
thing for me.

(looks around)

This used to be my room. I liked it  
better then.

(back to business)

Your father asked for my help  
ID'ing a John Doe.

ASHLEY

Wow. Hell must've frozen over.

LOU

Climate change. Anyway -- I ran the Doe's DNA through a friend's lab. He owed me a favor. Five if I'm counting. I uploaded the results to GEDMatch and now I'm looking at 5,000 possible relatives.

ASHLEY

Ooooookkkkkk...?

LOU

I need someone to help put together a large family tree and find a missing branch online.

ASHLEY

Me? Aren't you like, the country's leading expert on all things genetic? I mean, you wrote the book on --

LOU

I don't do menial tasks. Are you proficient in Facebook?

ASHLEY

Nobody uses Facebook anymore. It's Insta. Snapchat. Tik Tok.  
(realizes)  
You were just here for dinner. Why didn't you ask me then if I --

LOU

Because your father would say no.

Ashley can't meet Lou's eyes.

ASHLEY

Maybe I shouldn't then.

LOU

You'll meet a million men who will tell you that you can't do the things you're good at. If you start listening to them, you'll never have any fun.

ASHLEY

I've got the PSAT to prep for,  
Coach wants me practicing weekends  
and Cameron's riding my ass to go  
try Matcha Madness in Ocean Beach.

LOU

Can you honestly tell me that any  
of that is more fun than helping me  
find the name of a John Doe who  
effectively erased himself when he  
blew off his own face?

Clear from Ashley that the tug to help is strong.

ASHLEY

Sick.

LOU

Oh, you have a cold?

ASHLEY

No, it... Never mind. What you're  
asking, it'll take forever.

LOU

Millennials. Always in a hurry.

Ashley considers...

ASHLEY

I've got a bandwidth problem. Dad  
put a data-cap on my account.

LOU

I can fix that.

(hands her a flash-drive)

That's everyone who may be related  
to the John Doe in order of highest  
match. 5,000 names, give or take.

Lou turns back to the window.

ASHLEY

Is it true you tested Grandpa's DNA  
when you were 15 to see if you were  
adopted?

This stops Lou. A tender spot.

LOU

I was 11. And I had my reasons for  
wanting clarification.

(raw for Lou)

(MORE)

LOU (CONT'D)

Turns out I'm a Kelly. Just like you.

Logic's "*Homicide*" kicks in, carries us through A SERIES OF QUICK TIME CUTS AS DAYS PASS --

3 AM -- ASHLEY'S ON HER BED, laptop open, earbuds in. A TEXT *chimes* from her bestie Cameron "*U awake?*". Ashley considers ...then flips the cell over, keeps scanning social media against the list of partial DNA matches --

NEXT MORNING -- Rushing to get ready for school, ASHLEY pulls a shirt over her head, cell pressed to her ear --

ASHLEY (INTO PHONE)

Gloria Dechant? Hi, my name's Ashley and I, uh... I got your name off a genealogy site. I fully realize this is gonna sound totally random but... has anyone in your family ever gone missing?...

(line goes dead)

Hello?

LACROSSE FIELD -- ASHLEY catches a pass, scores. She's subbed out. On the bench, she checks her phone. There's A MESSAGE.

PHONE VOICEMAIL

Ashley, this is Peter Skowronski. I got your message. No missing relatives here but good luck on your search. Sounds exciting.

THE BEACH -- A Dude in board shorts rubs SPF on CAMERON's shoulders. One towel over his BUDDY flirts with ASHLEY as her cell *dings*. He grabs it, she smacks him, takes it back.

TIGHT ON ASHLEY'S CELL -- a Facebook notification: "*Felix Woodward has accepted your friend request.*"

Ashley takes off running across the hot sand. Her friends trade looks.

LOU (PRE-LAP)

Jackpot! Felix Woodward turned out to be a first cousin.

CUT TIGHT ON the name FELIX WOODWARD written in Sharpie on an index card. Start a SLOW PULL BACK --

LOU (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

You got us to the right part of the tree and I smelled fruit.

The index card is one of at least 100 INDEX CARDS spread out across Lou's unfurnished LIVING ROOM FLOOR. Continue to PULL BACK TO FIND LOU and ASHLEY standing over the cards.

ASHLEY

Have you slept in the past week?

LOU

Overrated. I did a deep dive into Felix's 362 Facebook friends, sifted out potential relatives, cross referenced them with public records, added some secret sauce...

ASHLEY

What's that?

LOU

Glad you asked, Grasshopper. 14 years of graduate studies, intimate knowledge of DNA processing techniques, a mastery of all published genealogy literature, not to mention a powerful synthetic intelligence in the top .01 percentile.

Lou writes a name on a blank index card, places it smack in the center of the family tree that stretches across her empty living room floor. GO TIGHT ON THE CARD with the name we've been searching for...

LOU (CONT'D)

Gary Northrup. The John Doe's name was Gary Northrup.

ASHLEY

Don't tell Dad I helped.

JOHN (PRE-LAP)

Stop right there or I swear to god I'll shoot you!

CUT TO JOHN, eyes and jaw set. He's...

INT. FORT LAUDERDALE POLICE HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - NEXT DAY

Making a decisive bee line down the hall, John lowers his voice but it's no less fierce when he barks --

JOHN

If Dixon so much as smells you.

REVEAL LOU is coming at him in the opposite direction.

LOU  
I'll walk the brain trust through  
my process. They'll be lost if --

John takes Lou by the arm, escorts her back towards the elevator. As he hits the down button --

JOHN  
Squad's had enough show and I got a hit.  
tell to last a lifetime thank  
you very --

JOHN  
-- much... Wait. You got a name?

The elevator doors slide open, he tugs her inside.

LOU  
Why do you sound surprised? Now if  
you'll kindly loosen your grip.

He does and Lou provides the missing piece of the puzzle they've been searching for...

LOU (CONT'D)  
Your John Doe's birth name was Gary  
Northrup.

JOHN  
(stunned)  
Northrup.

LOU  
But wait. There's more. On March  
12th, 1998, Northrup, his wife, two  
kids, and the nanny vanished into  
thin air.

The elevator doors slide closed with a *WHOOSH* --

SMASH CUT TO THE ELEVATOR DOORS IN THE LOBBY as they slide open with a *WHOOSH* and Lou pushes out mid-thought --

LOU (CONT'D)  
Made headlines for weeks. Entire  
family disappears without a trace.  
Except the dog. Dog was still  
there, perfectly fine. Every  
article made reference to the dog.  
The world's canine obsession  
continues to baffle --



Lou stops when she realizes John hasn't moved. Folks push into the elevator, hit their floors. The doors start to close, startling John who steps out, tail between his legs...

JOHN

I'm, uh... Lou, I'm sorry.

LOU

For threatening to shoot me?

JOHN

No, that was justified but... you were right. I didn't want to bring this case to you... any case to you.

LOU

I understand. It's challenging to possess diminutive intelligence. Especially for men.

Before John can smack back --

LOU (CONT'D)

Does that conclude our sibling bonding moment for today?

Off his reluctant nod.

LOU (CONT'D)

Good. Because here it gets interesting... They arrested, tried and convicted the Northrup's neighbor for the murders. A Diego Alvarez.

JOHN

That's it? I could'a Googled that in 30 seconds.

LOU

Google merely provides the forest. I find the trees.

(drops the bomb)

It was Dad's case.

OFF LOU. This is personal.

**END ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

OPEN TIGHT on the name JOSEPH KELLY.

START A SLOW PULL BACK to read he was a "*loving husband and devoted father*"...

PULL BACK FURTHER to see that he died 4 years ago at the ripe old age of 76. This is his GRAVESTONE.

And standing on the grass looking down at the words etched in stone is LOU. His daughter.

An ELDERLY WOMAN stands 6 gravestones away. She smiles and nods at Lou. A kindred spirit.

Lou's eyes fall back on the gravestone, GO TIGHT on the epitaph... "*loving husband and devoted father*". Without a flicker of emotion, LOU SPITS ON THE GRASS at her feet. The Elderly Woman startles, stunned. Lou states, matter of fact --

LOU (CONT'D)  
(re the gravestone)  
False advertising.

Lou turns, walks away.

LOU (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)  
Dad was wrong.

SMASH CUT TO --

INT. YARDBIRD DINER - SOUTH BEACH - DAY

Space is a wash of the pink and blue color scheme favored by the Art Deco District. A beefy short-order cook mans the griddle. FIND LOU AND JOHN in a booth.

LOU  
He sent an innocent man to jail for a crime he didn't commit. Facts don't lie.

JOHN  
They're not facts, not yet. You're jumping to conclusions.

LOU  
Why do you always defend him?

Before John can argue a WAITRESS arrives, hands John --

WAITRESS

Pancakes for you... And for you 7  
minute eggs, english muffin, bacon.

LOU

I ordered my bacon *crisp*.

Lou holds up a strip, it droops dramatically. The Waitress takes the bacon back passing DETECTIVE PATRICK MAINES (late 60's) making his way to the booth. He and John shake warmly.

JOHN

Pat. Thanks for coming.

DETECTIVE MAINES

You kiddin'? It was good to hear from you, John. Been too long. How's things at the squad?

JOHN

Good. You know Lieutenant Dixon?

DETECTIVE MAINES

After my time. Probably a good thing. Bad enough I gotta take orders from a woman at home.

LOU

Dinosaur.

Judgement drips in her voice. Maines turns a critical eye on Lou. Reluctantly acknowledges her.

DETECTIVE MAINES

Lou. I see you haven't changed.

JOHN

(makes nice)

Hope I didn't interrupt a golf game, but seeing as this was a case you collared with Dad...

DETECTIVE MAINES

Anything for Joe's kid. Best partner I could'a asked for. Great man.

LOU

(loaded)

So they say.

John shoots Lou a look that could kill a small animal.

JOHN

Like I said on the phone, we found Northrup living under an alias.

DETECTIVE MAINES

After all this time... Guy goes and dies twice.

JOHN

Can you fill in some blanks?

John's smile is winning. Maines lays a CASE FILE on the table between them. Lou opens it to PICTURES OF THE NORTHRUPS -- Gary, his wife, son (5), daughter Jenny (8), and their Nanny (early 20's, Mexican). Snap shots of a family living their lives unaware of their fate...

DETECTIVE MAINES

Northrups were solid middle class living in a blue collar neighborhood. Wanted their kids to be 'multi-cultured', you know? Way me and your dad saw it, they were in over their heads. March of '98, the entire family plus the nanny up and disappears.

Maines *snaps* his fingers to show how fast.

DETECTIVE MAINES (CONT'D)

Food in the fridge. Beds unmade... Family car was missing but we got no hits off'a the credit cards, no one touched the bank accounts. Nada. This family was dead.

Waitress returns with a smile and Lou's bacon.

WAITRESS

Here ya go, Sweetie. Bacon crisp.

Lou pokes at the bacon, not pleased.

LOU

Websters defines crisp as *brittle*. As in 'a pleasing snap'. Try again.

Lou hands it back, the Waitress huffs off and Maines stares. Lou stares back. It's borderline uncomfortable.

LOU (CONT'D)

You display marked facial asymmetry. Any chance you're the product of inbreeding?

DETECTIVE MAINES

What the hell?

John hangs his head. Lou attempts to read his reaction like one reads a page in a book. Clinically.

LOU

This is where I make a polite excuse to extricate myself.

And she does, slides out of the booth and walks away.

JOHN

You and Dad spoke to Northrup's colleagues at Florida State?

DETECTIVE MAINES

By all accounts he was a stand up guy. Clean record.

JOHN

What led you to Diego Alvarez?

DETECTIVE MAINES

We got lucky... found his semen on the sheets in the Northrup master bedroom. Guy got off on it.

JOHN

Any priors?

DETECTIVE MAINES

Petty theft, public intoxication.

JOHN

That's all you had on him?

DETECTIVE MAINES

We had his seed on the sheets.  
(Conspiratorial)  
Plus he was an *illegal*.

John does his best to keep the judgement out of his voice --

JOHN

Right.

LOU (O.S.)

If Diego Alvarez killed Gary Northrup twenty years ago, then why is the body still warm?

FIND LOU at the griddle, frying her own bacon. The beefy short-order Cook stands beside her. Off his shrug CUT TO --

EXT. MARIE ALVAREZ'S HOME - HIALEAH - DAY

Neighborhood's 97% Hispanic, Cuban mostly. John walks across a cement swatch where a lawn should be. Joins Lou who's stopped at a NEON SIGN in the window touting PSYCHIC READINGS (first one's free). Lou shakes her head, disgusted.

LOU  
Charlatans.

JOHN  
Everyone's looking for answers,  
Lou.

INT. MARIE ALVAREZ'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tarot cards spread out on a table. A scarf draped over a floor lamp. Incense burns. MARIE ALVAREZ (28, Cuban) sits on the sofa, stunned. Usually warm with an infectious smile, right now she's a raw nerve as she struggles to process...

MARIE  
All this time... I doubted. I  
couldn't help it. I mean my best  
friend disappears... her whole  
family? Then they arrest my dad...  
They didn't even let him put his  
shoes on before they...

The tears she's held back for years, now come spilling out.  
PAN TO FIND LOU standing at a distance watching, perplexed.

LOU  
Am I wrong or did she not just get  
good news?

Standing beside Lou, JOHN warns --

JOHN  
Not now, Lou.

LOU  
Finding Northrup proves they got it  
wrong and your father's innocent.  
Why aren't you happy?

MARIE  
I *am* happy.

LOU  
But you're crying.

MARIE  
Is she for real?

JOHN

I've been asking myself that for  
more than forty years.

Lou picks up a Tarot card (The Hermit) with disdain.

LOU

How long you been running this  
scam?

MARIE

Me? No. This... it's my mom's  
house. We live with her. You try  
paying rent, going to night school  
and raising a kid on your own.

As if on cue, from out of the kitchen at a gallop Marie's son  
SAMUEL (8). He *snaps* to get Marie's attention.

*Note: Samuel is deaf.* His conversations will be SIGNED, but  
Marie will speak out loud, as many hearing people do.

SAMUEL (SIGNING)

Abuela's asking about the rice.

MARIE (SIGNING)

No she's not. You're spying on me.

Marie wipes her eyes, doesn't want her son to see her upset.  
But the kid misses nothing. Samuel gives Lou the once over.  
Lou gives him the same. Then throws them all for a loop when  
she competently SIGNS.

LOU (SIGNING)

Smart kid.

Sam smiles, ducks back into the kitchen. John turns to Lou.

JOHN

You sign?

LOU

I'm full of surprises.

Can't argue with that. John turns back to Marie.

JOHN

Thanks for your time, Ms Alvarez.  
I'll be in touch.

Conversation over, John turns to go but Lou lingers.  
Apparently with Lou the conversation is never over.

LOU

I'm sorry about your emotions.

Lou turns to catch up with her brother. HOLD ON MARIE watching this odd bird slip out through the door...

EXT. FSU COASTAL AND MARINE BIO LAB - DAY

The Gulf of Mexico stretches out to the horizon. On shore are the unobtrusive buildings housing Florida State University's Marine and Coastal Studies program.

Out in the water PROFESSOR IRA BALDWIN (late 40's, distinguished grey at the temples) collects meiofauna samples along side two Grad Students. All in wader boots.

FIND LOU and JOHN standing on shore, shielding their eyes from the sun.

JOHN

One hell of an office.

LOU

An estimated 50 - 80% of all life on Earth is found under the ocean's surface. Too bad most people use it as a toilet.

JOHN

Get comfy. No idea when Professor Baldwin will be out.

Of course, Lou does exactly the opposite. SHE WALKS DIRECTLY INTO THE GULF OF MEXICO. Shoes and all.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Lou! You can't seriously --

LOU

Why wait for your ship to come in when you can swim out to it?

Lou's up to her knees in water when John relents, follows her. Fully clothed they make their way out to a huffy --

PROFESSOR BALDWIN

What are you -- ? You're disturbing the marine sediment!

JOHN

(badges him)

Detective Kelly, Fort Lauderdale P.D. And this is...



PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 Dr. Louise Kelly. I attended your  
 lecture for NGS in Salt Lake last  
 year. Pleasure to meet you.

LOU  
 I'm sure it is.

JOHN  
 We came to speak to you about Gary  
 Northrup.

Beat.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 Gary...? I haven't heard his name  
 in years. Why --

JOHN  
 We found his body. The family is  
 still missing.

Baldwin takes that in, stunned. Tells his Grad Students --

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 We'll call it for today. Get the  
 samples back to the lab.

The Students head towards dry land. Baldwin lets out a sigh.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN (CONT'D)  
 It just never ends, does it?

Up to her waist in water, Lou reaches into a vest pocket,  
 pulls out Binaca. Sprays two pumps and offers it to Baldwin.

LOU  
 Breath freshener?

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 Uh, no... thank you.  
 (then)  
 So you're revisiting the case? Now  
 that you've found Gary?

JOHN  
 (yes)  
 You shared office space. Must've  
 seen things other people didn't.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 The man had an inimitable mind,  
 published more than most, his  
 curiosity was vibrant.

LOU  
Do you get paid by the syllable?

JOHN  
I'm sensing a 'but'...?

Questions aren't going to stop until he gives them something.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
I mean, we all have weaknesses.

JOHN  
Humor me.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
He liked the ladies.

JOHN  
Students?

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
Professors. A visiting mother...  
When his wife called, I'd cover. I  
was an Assistant Professor, I  
looked up to Gary.

LOU  
And you took his tenure position  
when he disappeared.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
Are you saying I benefited?

LOU  
I didn't say it, you did.

John attempts once again to deescalate the Lou situation.

JOHN  
We're here to get a better picture  
of the guy, not point fingers.

LOU  
That's not what you said in the  
car.

Lou's inner voice is very loud. John closes his eyes, shakes.

JOHN  
With this new development we're  
going to want you to come in,  
answer some questions.

The insinuation is clear. He's a suspect.

BALDWIN

Of course... But while you're here,  
Gary left some things in storage.  
Would you like to see them?

INT. FSU COASTAL AND MARINE BIO LAB - BALDWIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dry and dressed, Professor Baldwin walks John and Lou into his office, all bookshelves and sea life in beakers.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN

Just be a minute.

Baldwin steps into a side room, leaving John and Lou alone. The siblings talk rapid fire in hushed tones --

JOHN

Never come at a suspect directly.

LOU

Why waste time dancing around --

JOHN

We spook him, we lose him.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN (O.S.)

Think I could get a hand in here?

INT. STORAGE CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Cramped. Floor to ceiling shelves coated in dust dating back years. Beakers and flasks, abandoned. Lou and John find Baldwin pointing up at a high shelf.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN

It's that box there. I'd get it myself but I tweaked my L5 in an Iyengar class last week.

John grabs a step ladder, climbs up and pulls down the BOX.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN (CONT'D)

Sorry about the mess. Maintenance never makes it back here.

Lou lifts the top of the box, her fingers covered in a *thin layer of gray dust*. She rubs the dust off on her pants, then pulls out papers and a leather-bound JOURNAL.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN (CONT'D)  
 Gary's appointment book. Every time  
 a lady friend visited, he listed it  
 as "peer review."

LOU  
 Charming.

JOHN  
 Thanks for this, Professor Baldwin.

John goes to shake, sees the *grey dust* on his hands and  
 thinks better of it.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 Of course. Anything to help.

EXT. DADE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION - DAY

Brick buildings stand behind tall fences, barbed wire and  
 palm trees. John's car pulls up to the gate.

LOU (PRE-LAP)  
 "Patience and fortitude conquer all  
 things."

CUT TIGHT on the face of a baffled PRISON GUARD. He's --

INT. DADE PRISON PROCESSING - DAY

The Guard watches Lou attempt to empty all of her vest  
 pockets into a plastic bin before walking through the metal  
 detector. A long line of visitors waits behind her.

LOU  
 Emerson?... Ok, that should do it.

She marches through the detector, it *BEEPS* and everyone in  
 line groans. Already through security, JOHN shouts --

JOHN  
 Lou, come on! Leave the vest!

LOU  
 Would you leave your child?

Lou goes from pocket to pocket, placing more items in the  
 plastic bin -- a small camera, compass, jade Buddha. The  
 Guard reaches into the growing pile, holds up a sealed VIAL.

LOU (CONT'D)  
 (matter of fact)  
 Tissue sample.

GUARD  
 Ma'am, you can't bring hazardous  
 medical waste into --

LOU  
 That's the earlobe of a Tasmanian  
 tiger. Extinct. It's not medical  
 waste, it's history.

JOHN (O.S.)  
 It's okay, Miguel. She's with me.

FIND JOHN waiting just through the metal detector. The Guard  
 studies Lou... A tense beat of decision... He finally nods.  
 Lou grabs the plastic bin, waltzes through security.

LOU  
 He just broke 12 safety protocols.

JOHN  
 Try again.

Lou searches for the right words... Can't find them so John  
 does it for her, like a parent does a child.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
 Thank you?

Not a word, Lou waltzes past him. John shakes and follows.

CUT TIGHT on the hardened face of DIEGO ALVAREZ (late 40's,  
 menace in his build, but his eyes are world weary). He's --

INT. VISITATION ROOM - DAY

Wearing a standard issue orange jumper, phone pressed to his  
 ear, Diego stares through plexiglass at Lou who stares back.

LOU  
 Has anyone ever told you that you  
 have a pronounced supraorbital  
 ridge? It's a genetic holdover from  
 when Neanderthals interbred with  
 homo sapiens.

John takes the phone from her.

JOHN  
 Did you know Northrup was alive?

DIEGO

You kidding me? If I'd known the bastard was out there living it up while I was stuck here in this rat infested hole of a --

JOHN

Got it.

(treads carefully)

Can you... help me understand the evidence they used to convict you?

Diego lowers his eyes. After a long beat...

DIEGO

I... slept with Susan Northrup.

JOHN

Why didn't you testify to that?

DIEGO

Come on man, the jury? They were all white and look at me. Lawyer said it would give them motive... He didn't want to put me in the house. Said I didn't stand a chance if they knew.

The injustice hangs there...

DIEGO (CONT'D)

I think about what I did every day. Part of me... Maybe I deserved this.

EXT. DADE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION - DAY

Lou and John walk out into the blinding Florida sunlight.

LOU

Can I say something?

JOHN

I really wish you wouldn't.

John turns to face his sister.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I already know where this is going. Yeah, Dad got it wrong. It's brutal and... and disappointing. But it happened. I'm not making excuses or taking sides.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

We're going to make this right. No need to go and get emotional about it.

LOU

The stoics believe facts are facts and it's purely the curse of our consciousness that applies complicated emotions. You can't be emotional about a fact.

(then)

That's not what I was going to say.

JOHN

Ok. My bad. What is it then?

LOU

Call 911.

Lou's body slumps inelegantly to the ground, UNCONSCIOUS.

JOHN

Lou?! Oh my god!

John pulls out his cell, dials. As he waits for someone to answer, his breathing becomes labored. He clutches his chest.

911 RESPONDER (OVER PHONE)

911. What's your emergency?

John barely manages to get out --

JOHN (INTO PHONE)

Me...

He leans against a car, CRUMPLES to the pavement.

ANGLE FROM ABOVE, Lou and John on the ground, UNCONSCIOUS

**END ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

OVER BLACK, VOICES bark, rapid fire --

EMT (PRE-LAP)  
She's hypertensive. BP 146 over 90.

NURSE (PRE-LAP)  
We need to cut off her vest!

COME UP TIGHT ON LOU, lying on a gurney --

LOU  
Don't even think about it!

Pale, weak, but not fucking around about her vest, Lou's --

INT. ST JUDE'S HOSPITAL - ER - DAY

Two EMT's and a NURSE race Lou on a gurney down the hall.  
John's on a gurney beside her, barely conscious. A baby faced  
DOCTOR falls in beside them, gets debriefed --

NURSE  
Sudden onset of symptoms. Fever,  
vomiting, nausea.

JOHN  
Could'a been the bacon?

LOU  
It wasn't the bacon.

Lou sits up, annoyed. The EMT halts suddenly mid hallway.

LOU (CONT'D)  
Do I have to do everything myself?  
Pay attention. Are you seeing this?

Lou raises one of her hands. It's SHAKING.

DOCTOR  
Tremors can be attributed to any --

LOU  
And my brother's eyelids?

ANGLE ON JOHN - his eyelids are drooping.

DOCTOR  
You can't be... Botulism?



LOU  
Your parents should be proud.

DOCTOR  
There are less than two hundred reported cases of botulism in the U.S. every year. The chances --

LOU  
-- are astronomical. But only if we assume the exposure was accidental.

OFF LOU three steps ahead, as usual, CUT TO --

INT. HOSPITAL LAB - LATER

A LAB TECH peers through protective glass into a sterile module. Inside is NORTHRUP'S LEATHER JOURNAL. REVEAL LOU standing behind him (in a hospital gown). The Tech swabs some of the gray DUST. As he rubs it onto a slide we hear --

TICKET AGENT (PRE-LAP)  
All rows for Flight 217 to Quito.

CUT TIGHT ON A line of passengers waiting to board, we're --

INT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

PAN DOWN THE LINE TO FIND PROFESSOR BALDWIN, a Marlins cap pulled low over his eyes which are currently staring THROUGH THE WINDOW -- down on the tarmac FOUR POLICE CRUISERS race to a stop, surrounding the airplane --

Baldwin backs out of line casually, begins to walk away just as a DOZEN TSA AGENTS in tactical gear run toward his gate -- Baldwin raises his hands and an AGENT pats him down. Stops short. There's something in Baldwin's pocket... The Agent pulls it out slowly REVEALING a passport and --

A GEEDIS STICKER

The same one Northrup stuck to the bathroom mirror before blowing his brains out. WTF? As Baldwin is led away, CUT TO --

INT. FORT LAUDERDALE POLICE HQ - OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Lt. Dixon stands with her arms crossed looking through a one-way mirror into Interrogation where Professor Baldwin sits.

LT. DIXON  
Know how I found out I had cancer?

FIND BRICK standing beside her.

LT. DIXON (CONT'D)

Went to get tested for Parkinson's. Pinky finger wouldn't stop twitching and my grandmother had it so... Turns out there was a tumor the size of a ping pong ball under my arm, squeezing the nerve.

BRICK

I'm sorry.

LT. DIXON

We're so busy looking straight ahead, we miss the trouble sneaking up on the sides. And now here comes Professor Baldwin...a suspect in a murder we thought we closed 20 years ago. This looks bad for the department. Fix it.

Dixon moves to the window, CUT TO --

INT. FORT LAUDERDALE POLICE HQ - INTERROGATION - DAY

Professor Baldwin looks up as Brick enters.

BRICK

I hear you've declined having a lawyer present. If I were you --

PROFESSOR BALDWIN

20 years ago I helped Gary Northrup disappear. I knew a guy who knew a guy who did that sort of thing.

Stunned, Brick looks to the window where Dixon is watching.

BRICK

Northrup and his family?

PROFESSOR BALDWIN

Gary only wanted two fake IDs. One for him... one for Elena Corredor.

BRICK

The nanny?

*Bam.* Another layer of the mystery peels back.

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 Gary said he was in love with her.  
 I have no idea what happened to his  
 wife... the kids.

BRICK  
 So, what? You want a deal?  
 Immunity? That's not gonna --

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 I want what Gary got. Anonymity.

BRICK  
 My partner's in the hospital. Why --

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 I wasn't trying to kill anybody.

BRICK  
 Just slow 'em down a bit?

PROFESSOR BALDWIN  
 You put me in jail -- I'm dead.  
 They have people inside. Get me to  
 a safe house and I'll give you the  
 name of the man who can make anyone  
 disappear.

Start a SLOW PUSH IN AND THROUGH THE GLASS WINDOW to find  
 LT. DIXON watching on the other side, weighing her options...

CUT TIGHT ON LOU'S FACE FILLING THE FRAME, staring intently.

JOHN (O.C.)  
 Whoa!

FIND JOHN just waking up in a hospital bed, he's --

INT. ST JUDE'S HOSPITAL - PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

Hooked up to a myriad of tubes, John looks up at his sister.

JOHN  
 What the hell, Lou? You scared the  
 crap out'a me!

LOU  
 They said I can go home now.

JOHN  
 And I'm stuck here overnight? How  
 do you do it?

LOU  
Supplements. I sent you the link.

JOHN  
Nah. It's how you're built. Like  
you're Teflon or something.

LOU  
I had to be.

Her words hang in the air between them...

LOU (CONT'D)  
Dad got it wrong.

JOHN  
Here we go. You finally get what  
you want, I'm a captive audience.

LOU  
He wasn't perfect.

JOHN  
Never said he was.

LOU  
No but it's apparent in your  
actions. You're a Detective like he  
was, you live in his house, raise  
your kids around the same table as  
he did.

JOHN  
So Dad was strict,  
uncompromising... but he was also  
there at that table every night for  
dinner, asking us about our day.

LOU  
People see what they want to see.

An impasse. One they've hit so many times before.

LOU (CONT'D)  
I'm going now.

And she does. Strapped to machines that *beep* and *ping*, all  
John can do is watch her go.

"*Super Freak*" by Rick James kicks in, CUT TIGHT ON LOU  
wearing protective goggles, staring intently. She's --

INT. LOU'S GARAGE - NIGHT

REVERSE ANGLE TO FIND A RUBIK'S CUBE suspended by a string. Lou flips a switch -- a green LASER springs to life. The beam splits, bounces off two mirrors coming together to make one beam that hits the Rubik's cube, making it GLOW.

Startled by a BUZZ, Lou powers down the laser, tugs off the goggles and opens the garage door to find MARIE ALVAREZ --

MARIE

I...uh, went by the police precinct to see your brother. They said he's still in the hospital? These... they're from my mother's garden.

Marie holds out a bouquet. Lou doesn't move to take it.

LOU

In Victorian England bouquets were a way to communicate without writing a letter. That specific arrangement resembles a thank you for the transfer of livestock.

(then)

How'd you know where I live?

MARIE

(quotes Lou from before)

I'm full of surprises.

Marie looks around Lou's personal space. On the walls are HOLOGRAPHIC PHOTOS of game pieces: chess, dice, cards.

LOU

Holograms. It takes laser precision and focus. While you're working... you can't think of anything else.

(blunt)

Why are you here?

Marie rummages through her purse, pulls out a small FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH. GO TIGHT ON the photo -- it's Marie as a child, playing with another girl beside A LAKE, both laughing.

MARIE

That's Jenny... Jenny Northrup. I wanted you to see --

LOU

You're using Pathos to appeal to my emotions.

MARIE

I don't think you understand what you've done to my life, bringing this all up again.

LOU

You're getting your father back.

Marie holds out the FRAMED PICTURE --

MARIE

I need answers. Some kind of, I don't know -- closure. What happened to my best friend?

LOU

There are limits to evidence and we've reached them.

MARIE

So what -- that's it?

LOU

We would need more -- say, Elena Corredor's DNA. So unless you've kept a tissue sample from your friend's nanny for twenty years...

MARIE

(re the picture frame)

All I have from Elena is this. She gave it to me on my 8th birthday.

Without hesitation, Lou takes the frame from Marie's hands and hits a button, CLOSING THE GARAGE DOOR.

MARIE (CONT'D)

What are you...? Wait! Hello?

Marie's left standing alone in the drive as a restaurant delivery car pulls up. HOOMAN gets out, stands beside Marie.

HOOMAN

She's not big on chit chat.

The two stand side by side, locked out of the fortress they both long to gain access to -- Lou's world.

**END ACT THREE**

ACT FOUR

INT. JOHN KELLY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAYS LATER

John's wife Rebecca stirs a pot of chili on the stove. Over her shoulder comes a hand, finger extended, lowering slowly towards what smells so damn good...

REBECCA

No fingers!

She turns to find a sheepishly smiling John. Down a couple of pounds, he's using a cane til he regains his full strength.

JOHN

Thought you'd be happy I got my  
appetite back.

Rebecca hands John a spoon like she would a kid.

REBECCA

Lou's here.

JOHN

What? Where?

REBECCA

Down in the basement... Babe, it's  
date night. You've gotta set  
boundaries, say no to her every  
once in awhile.

JOHN

She didn't tell me she was coming.

REBECCA

If she had you would've canceled  
date night...  
(before he can protest)  
I get it. I do. You're still trying  
to make things right.

JOHN

I wouldn't put it --

REBECCA

And it's why I love you. You like  
the scales to be balanced. But  
you're not gonna do it wrapping Lou  
up in bubble wrap to protect her  
feelings. She's a grown woman, not  
a child.

OFF JOHN, knowing she's right...

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - LATE DAY

Where things with no other home go to collect dust. Camping gear is stacked next to skis that are crammed beside a foam surf board. And tucked way back in a corner -- 2 DOG CRATES. Metal, rusted by age. Lou studies them.

JOHN (O.S.)  
What'cha doing down here?

John climbs down the stairs. Lou doesn't take her eyes off the dog crates. When she speaks, her voice is far away...

LOU  
This is the only place in the house that's completely quiet. I spent a lot of time down here...  
(matter of fact)  
I pulled Touch DNA off the picture in a frame Marie Alvarez gave me.

John tries to keep the frustration out of his voice, fails.

JOHN  
You spoke to Ms Alvarez? Lou, this is an active investigation, you can't --

LOU  
The glass in the frame preserved the Northrup nanny's DNA.

JOHN  
Touch DNA? So that's like, what -- fingerprints?

LOU  
How quaint. No. Touch or Trace DNA only requires very small samples, for example from skin cells. Analysis needs only 7 or 8 cells. And the fact that the subject --

JOHN  
The subject? You mean Elena Corredor.

LOU  
I mean the 7 or 8 skin cells.



JOHN

That's not... Lou, these are people's lives we're talking about, not specimens in a lab.

LOU

Shame... May I continue?

(off John's nod)

I got a hit for a niece and nephew. Birth records got me to their parents, currently residing in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Meaning one of them is the subject's brother or sister. Find them, we find Elena.

JOHN

No. We don't.

LOU

Oh. Do you need a visual aid? You always were better when you could see it mapped out. I can draw a --

His wife's words echo in John's ears, he blurts --

JOHN

Lou, stop! This... I let it go too far. I knew I shouldn't have dragged you... Look, full disclosure? I asked for your help as a way to get you out'a the house. Maybe change your pj's. Cheer you up after you got fired --

LOU

I quit.

JOHN

Whatever. But you're not a Detective, Lou. You helped me find Northrup's name and - hell, I'll be the first one to admit we couldn't have done it without you. I'm impressed and grateful as hell but... why are you still in this?

(dares her to look away)

What's in it for you?

Lou doesn't answer -- because she can't? Or chooses not to. She deflects with --

LOU

The flight to San Juan is approximately 2 hours and --

JOHN  
I thought you were afraid to fly.

LOU  
Well I can't drive to Puerto Rico  
now can I?

JOHN  
We're not going to Puerto Rico,  
Lou. This ends here.

A standoff. There's a firmness in John's voice, he's made his decision and Lou knows better than to challenge it. She starts back up the stairs to the kitchen. Stops...

LOU  
You ever ask yourself why we had  
dog crates but never had a dog?

And with that she goes. HOLD ON JOHN as he studies the two empty DOG CRATES. Questions about the past, their childhood, start creeping into his head...

CUT TIGHT ON CELL PHONE - on it, a website for Le Petite Restaurant, they proudly deliver *7 days a week*. Under the claim is the smiling face of HOOMAN, their driver.

PULL BACK to find Lou, she's --

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATE DAY

Standing in the driveway, about to place an order and get a ride home from Hooman when a car pulls up to the curb in front of her, stops and the window rolls down to REVEAL --

JOHN  
Get in the car, Lou.

John caved. He can't say no to his little sister. Lou climbs in. As if she expected it --

LOU  
I booked you a window seat.

INT. ASHLEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ashley's on her cell, fingers fly across her lap-top keys.

ASHLEY (INTO PHONE)  
The niece was on Twitter but it's a  
dead account. No Insta.

INTERCUT WITH LOU AND JOHN driving a rental car through SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO. Through the windows we see the dichotomy of the city -- festively colored buildings beside rubble from the earthquakes. John drives. Lou holds her cell to her ear.

LOU (INTO PHONE)  
Are you chewing gum? I can't hear you over the incessant snapping.

ASHLEY (OVER PHONE)  
The niece has a Snapchat, but all I can tell from that is she's in San Juan. How was the flight?

LOU (INTO PHONE)  
I'd rather not speak of it. Did you find anything?

JOHN  
Who you talking to?

Ashley hears John's voice, catches her breath --

ASHLEY (OVER PHONE)  
Don't tell Dad it's me!

LOU  
(lies)  
A friend. She's helping me wade through the social media swamp.

JOHN  
You have friends?

John's honestly delighted. Lou pushes ahead --

LOU (INTO PHONE)  
So, what -- you've narrowed it down to a city of roughly 350,000 people?

ASHLEY (OVER PHONE)  
Slow your roll, Boomer... I got you a location. The nephew wrote a Yelp review of the family's fruit stand. Kinda false PR if you ask me but --

LOU (INTO PHONE)  
Address?  
(off John's look)  
Please.

EXT. SAN JUAN MARKET - NIGHT

The night market teems with life, color and, well... livestock. Lou and John drink it in.

LOU (CONT'D)  
We're looking for a fruit stand...

JOHN  
*Fruteria Corredor.*

LOU  
What you said. How hard can that be?

They turn a corner REVEALING ROW AFTER ROW OF FRUIT STANDS. A dizzying maze.

JOHN  
Crap.

A MAN walking past with his friends takes a hit off his CIGARETTE, flicks it to the ground but it bounces, striking Lou and *glancing her leg.*

HOLD ON LOU. It's as if every one of her muscles contracts. Color drains from her face. Staring at the cigarette smoldering in the dirt, Lou goes from 1 to 100 in a blink. John sees it, jumps into action --

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Lou...? You ok?

Clearly she's not. Lou's having a full blow PANIC ATTACK. Her breathing comes in quick spurts, eyes dart. From Lou's POV the walls are closing in. John takes Lou gently by the arms.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Lou? Look at me. You gotta breathe.  
I'm right here, breathe with me.

Lou mimics John's breathing pattern, rides the attack out... her heart rate slows. She locks eyes with her brother, John waits expectantly for a thank you... Instead he gets --

LOU  
What was the name of the fruit stand again?

John follow's Lou's gaze down the line to A FRUIT STAND bearing the name *Fruteria Corredor* where 19 year old ALEJANDRO sells his wares.

JOHN  
Hey that's (it) --

But Lou is already walking towards the fruit stand.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Lou, wait! You can't just --

Lou ignores him, walks right up to Alejandro, bluntly states -

LOU

Good evening. We're investigating a suicide and the DNA trail led us here. The victim's name was Gary Northrup.

Alejandro's face drains of color. He stares at Lou, stunned.

ALEJANDRO

I'm sorry... Who are you?

John cuts in, holds up his badge.

JOHN

Detective John Kelly. I'm looking for Elena Corredor. Any chance you know her?

ALEJANDRO

She's my mother.

*BAM!* Lou puts the pieces together, out loud --

LOU

Elena must have been pregnant. *That's* why Northrup wanted to get away, start over.

JOHN

You're using your outside voice, Lou.

John levels his gaze on Alejandro, his voice direct.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry to show up out'a the blue like this and I can explain. Is Ms Corredor here? It's important we speak to her.

ALEJANDRO

*My mother is dead.*

OFF LOU and JOHN, they just ran smack into a dead end --

**END ACT FOUR**

**ACT FIVE**

INT. CORREDOR HOME - SAN JUAN - NIGHT

A home filled with warmth, life. Alejandro sits with John. Lou paces.

JOHN

So Gary Northrup is your father?

ALEJANDRO

(yes)

I never met him. Mom moved home when she was still pregnant so my Aunt Paula could help out.

PAULA (O.C.)

How do I know he didn't send you?

REVEAL AUNT PAULA (40, Elena's sister) standing at a distance, arms crossed at her chest.

LOU

Northrup? He's dead.

Paula crosses herself. John treads carefully...

JOHN

What happened to Elena?

Paula shoots a protective glance at Alejandro.

PAULA

(in Spanish)

*Alejandro, the tea is ready.*

He does as he's told, reluctantly leaves them to talk.

PAULA (CONT'D)

Breast cancer...eleven years ago. But she was sick long before that. In her heart... That man, he wouldn't let her go.

JOHN

Elena came home because she was running from Northrup?

PAULA

He'd call in the middle of the night, screaming how he'd take the baby if she didn't come back...

LOU

If it makes you feel any better he died pathetic and alone.

John goes to cover Lou's bluntness, but Paula surprises her.

PAULA

It does.

Alejandro comes back with tea, the family dog happily running laps around his feet. Lou pulls her feet up --

LOU

Any chance it's hypoallergenic?

JOHN

Did Elena ever tell you what happened to the Northrups?

PAULA

We never spoke of the past. My sister, she came home to start fresh. Even in her sleep...

LOU

Could you be slightly less vague?

PAULA

*Hablando en tu sueno.* She talked in her sleep since we were kids... One night I found her holding the baby, she was sound asleep but she was saying "Okee, Okee." Over and over. She wanted everything to be ok.

LOU JOLTS, KNOCKS into the tray, SPILLING tea.

LOU

Of course!

PAULA

Are you alright?

JOHN

Lou! What're you -- ?

\*

As the pieces fall into place, Lou shoots a look at John --

LOU

I believe you would say this calls for a private conversation.

John jumps to his feet, leads Lou into the hallway.

JOHN

What the hell's --

LOU

Elena wasn't saying OK. OK is a place. Okeechobee Lake.

(with horrifying clarity)

The family didn't disappear - they were three miles from home all this time. John, they're in the lake.

CUT TIGHT ON A MAN'S HEAD bobbing on the surface of the water. He's in full diving gear. PULL BACK to find he's one of 6 divers in a SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM, they're --

EXT. OKEECHOBEE LAKE - NEXT DAY

A crane lifts THE NORTHRUP STATION WAGON from the lake. It comes to rest on the shore where a Recovery Team gets busy. One steps back, holds up THREE FINGERS... THREE BODIES. FIND LT. DIXON WITH JOHN, he digests the sickening reality.

JOHN

Northrup killed them... his own kids. How does a man...?

LT. DIXON

Detachment. Narcissism. Does it matter? Personally I don't want to waste another minute on the wicked.

Wreckage crew/investigators begin to process the car.

LT. DIXON (CONT'D)

You're on dispatch. Four weeks.

JOHN

Desk Duty?! All due respect, Lieutenant. I fixed a 20 year old mistake.

LT. DIXON

Be happy, you get to keep your job because your sister was right. What happens when she's wrong?

Lt. Dixon walks down to the car and John looks over to FIND LOU, detached from it all, as usual. His greatest asset and constant albatross. But Lou's not looking at the Northrup's car beached on the shore... FOLLOW LOU'S GAZE TO LAND ON --

MARIE ALVAREZ. Tears flow as she watches the tactical team work on the station wagon she rode to dance class in with her best friend. OFF LOU witnessing what true loss looks like...



EXT. JOHN KELLY'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Lou climbs out of a car (*at the wheel is a smiling Hooman*). She walks up the drive to where John's on his hands and knees in the dirt, gardening. Lou stands over him, bluntly states -

LOU  
To prove Dad wrong.  
(off John's silence)  
You asked what's in this for me.

John stands, brushes dirt off his hands. Studies his sister.

JOHN  
Prove Dad wrong about this case?  
Well, congratulations. You did.

LOU  
No... wrong about *me*.

And with that, per usual, Lou turns to go.

JOHN  
Hey! We're not done.

LOU  
Yes we are. You asked me a question, I came and answered it.

JOHN  
Why do you always... I'm trying to thank you, Lou. For your help.

LOU  
Again with the theatrics. I merely -

JOHN  
Alienated my boss, insulted the detective on the case who also happens to be a close family friend, got us *poisoned*, not to mention I'm gonna be making up for missing date night for the rest of my natural life.

LOU  
You're welcome?

John takes a minute to find the right way to say it.

JOHN  
No one, and I mean no one can do what you do.  
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

This case...it would'a stayed wrong  
if you'd listened to the people who  
have been telling you your whole  
life to stay in your lane, color  
inside the lines... Including me.

John's words carry us to -- DADE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION  
where 8 year old SAMUEL squints up into the sun.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It takes a strong person to listen  
to their gut, even when their gut  
is inappropriate and sometimes  
just, well... rude.

Sam reaches out to shake a Man's hand. It pulls him into a  
bear hug. It's his grandfather Diego. A free man at last.

JOHN (V.O.)

You did it *your way*, Lou... You  
changed people's lives. And there's  
a better than average chance I'm  
gonna ask you to do it again.

PULL BACK TO FIND MARIE watching her dad holding his grandson  
in his arms. Marie got answers, closure, and her dad back.

CUT BACK TO JOHN AND LOU in their childhood front yard.

JOHN

You did good.

John smiles. And for the first time, Lou smiles back. He  
takes a breath, then takes a leap --

JOHN (CONT'D)

What don't I know, Lou... about  
Dad? When we were --

LOU

Not today.

A nod, an understanding. It won't be the last time John asks.

LOU (CONT'D)

What's for dinner?

As they head inside, START A SLOW PAN to John's mail slot to  
REVEAL, unseen and stuck to the stucco --

A GEEDIS STICKER

**END PILOT**