

DEAD TO ME

"It's Not You, It's Me"

Written by

Liz Feldman and Kelly Hutchinson

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - JEN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

BIRDS EYE CLOSE UP on JEN's face, in bed, staring at the ceiling. She turns as we--

WIDEN OUT to reveal BEN's sweet sleeping face, just inches from hers. His hands rest gently across her stomach. Jen can't help but melt for a moment at the face of this lovely, kind man, until we...

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - THE NIGHT STEVE DIED - FLASHBACK

Steve's cold, wet, dead face.

MATCH TO:

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - JEN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Ben's sleepy, angel face as he opens his eyes. He smiles. Jen stiffens. He's obviously smitten. She's covering her discomfort.

BEN
Mornin'.

JEN
Hey.

BEN
(grins)
I can't believe I'm here.

JEN
Me neither.

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - ADMITTANCE - SAME

A prison door SLAMS SHUT behind a startled Judy, as a FEMALE GUARD escorts her into an admittance area.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - JEN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Ben rubs Jen's arm sweetly.

BEN
How'd you sleep?

CONTINUED:

JEN
(she didn't)
Good.

BEN
Good.

JEN
Good.

BEN
Good.

He goes to kiss her and she goes along with it, for a moment.
Then she pulls away.

JEN
I have to shower.

Jen slips out of bed, self conscious, dragging both the sheet
and duvet with her, leaving Ben fully uncovered. He grabs a
pillow to cover himself before rolling towards his clothes.

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - ADMITTANCE - SAME

Judy hands over her purse as the FEMALE GUARD wands her down.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - MORNING

Jen turns the shower on, then picks up a towel. She wants to
scream but she can't.

JEN
(to herself)
You're a fucking psychopath.
Fucking full-on, Taxi Driver
fucking psycho. What the fuck is
wrong with you? Fuck you!

BEN (O.S.)
You okay in there?

JEN
(quickly and too loud)
Yep!
(then again, to herself)
You're fucking De Niro-- you're
just fucking De Niro in every movie
he's fucking ever been in.

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - VISITING ROOM - SAME

Judy opens the door to the visiting room, where a STRIKING WOMAN (60) in a tan jumpsuit waits. Seeing her takes Judy's breath for a second. Then she moves slowly to the table and sits.

JUDY

Hi Mom.

ELINOR

Hey.

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - VISITING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Judy is sitting with the woman we now know is her mother: ELINOR HALE (60), an irreverent, manipulative charmer who has probably Dirty John-ed a fella in her day. There's a palpable distance between them. The vibe is awkward, heavy.

ELINOR

Lemme look at you. Judy Ann, you haven't changed at all.

Beat.

JUDY

You look good. You're still so beautiful.

ELINOR

Oh, come on. I know I look like a bag of day-old shit.

JUDY

Nooo. You're really pulling off that jumpsuit. It's very on-trend.

ELINOR

Working with what I got. I'm-- what's that book-- *Leanin' In*.

JUDY

I don't think that's what that book's about, but--

ELINOR

Yeah. Haven't read it.

CONTINUED:

JUDY

Me neither.

Beat. Then.

ELINOR

Why're you here?

JUDY

I've lost some people... recently,
and-- I didn't want any more time
to go by before I saw you again--
you're my mother. I've missed you.

ELINOR

I miss you, too. It's been 15
years. Part of me thought I'd never
see you again. I just figured you
didn't want anything to do with me.

JUDY

Mom-- I sent you all those letters.
I kept trying. I just thought you
didn't want to see me.

ELINOR

I wrote you back.

JUDY

You did?

ELINOR

(covering)
Of course.

JUDY

I-- I never got them. And you never
called, so I--

Elinor waves her off like she doesn't believe her--

ELINOR

It's okay. You don't have to-- You
did the right thing, staying away.
And I never worried about you. The
world has always loved taking care
of you. With that face.

A beat, as Judy doesn't know how to take this in.

JUDY

How long do you think you'll be
here? This time?

CONTINUED: (2)

ELINOR

(tongue in cheek)

I don't know. Could be five, could be ten. I haven't decided.

(then, sincere)

But it's alright. Really, I'm good. I'm sober. This... this is actually the most peace I've felt in a long time.

JUDY

Really?

ELINOR

Yeah. You know how exhausting it is to hide and lie all the time?

Judy knows all too well, but she doesn't say anything.

ELINOR (CONT'D)

I got here, and it was like I could finally exhale.

JUDY

(deep breath)

Right.

ELINOR

It's not the worst thing... paying the price.

A beat, as this resonates with Judy.

JUDY

Yeah. I can see how that would be a relief.

INT. JEN'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT MORNING

Jen emerges from the shower, dressed. Ben, now dressed, sits on the edge of the bed waiting for her. He smiles. She doesn't.

BEN

I'm still here.

JEN

You are.

BEN

You're freaking out.

CONTINUED:

JEN

No I'm not.

Ben steps forward and gently takes her hands in his. She stiffens.

BEN

Feels like you are a little. And I get it. You're with a new person, it's weird, it's scary--

He has no idea.

BEN (CONT'D)

--And I think all we can really do is dance it out.

JEN

What?

BEN

I think we should dance it out.

Ben sweetly takes her into a slow dance. She relents. He starts singing a little made up song into her ear as he gently moves her around the room, doing a little two step. Jen can't help but give in for a moment, even as she's dying inside.

BEN (CONT'D)

You're wiggling out/ And that's alright/ It's normal to spin out when someone new spends the night/ Especially when he's a nerdy chiropractor/ But maybe it would help to know one little factor/ He thinks you're incredible/ And...

Ben breaks singing and looks at her adoringly.

BEN (CONT'D)

Coming up short with a rhyme for incredible.

Jen pulls away.

JEN

I can't do this.

BEN

Indelible! There it is.

CONTINUED: (2)

JEN

No. Stop. I'm sorry. Ben, this has all been a huge mistake.

BEN

(surprised)

What? Why?

JEN

It doesn't matter why.

BEN

It matters to me. Because I don't think it's been a mistake. I feel like I've waited my whole life to meet someone like you. Someone who challenges me and shows up, who's this amazing combination of kind and strong... and beautiful. Like really beautiful, inside and out.

All of this plunges Jen deeper into a self-loathing guilt spiral.

JEN

No. Ben. No. That is-- you have no clue who I really am. You deserve to be with the person you just described, but I assure you, it is not me.

BEN

Jen-- this is crazy. What are you talking about? Help me understand. Is this because it's too soon after your husband--

JEN

No-- it's not.

BEN

Can we at least talk about it--

JEN

(fighting tears)

No, we can't. Please just go, please don't make this harder.

Ben, hurt, retreats towards the door. He turns before he goes.

CONTINUED: (3)

BEN

You know, I don't know what's going on with you, but I really hope that someday you can see yourself the way I see you. 'Cause it's pretty special.

He exits as Jen starts to sob.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Ben, bummed, rushes down the stairs when he bumps into CHARLIE.

CHARLIE

Hey Ben.

BEN

Oh, hey Charlie. I was just leaving.

Charlie senses the weird vibe.

CHARLIE

Is everything okay?

BEN

Yeah. All good. I was just um-- having a meeting with your mom. A morning meeting.

CHARLIE

Uh-huh.

BEN

But it's over.

(then)

Hey, uh-- you take good care of yourself, okay?

CHARLIE

Okay...

BEN

And-- take good care of your mom, too.

CHARLIE

Sure.

He exits. Charlie watches him go, unsure of what's going on.

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - VISITING ROOM - LATER

Judy and Elinor, still talking. The vibe is decidedly lighter as the two women become more comfortable with each other.

ELINOR

You're living in Laguna? Fancy, fancy! Who's the fella?

JUDY

No, no fella. I live with my friend Jen and her two boys, Charlie and Henry.

ELINOR

Oh. You don't have your own family?

JUDY

No. But I have them.

ELINOR

Well, motherhood's overrated anyway.

Beat. Judy fidgets, trying not to feel hurt by that comment. A LARGE SECURITY GUARD (FRANK) addresses Elinor.

FRANK

Two minutes.

ELINOR

Aw, Franky can I have a lil more? Catching up with my daughter. Isn't she beautiful?

FRANK

I see the resemblance.
(then, sotto)
You can have five. Just this once.

ELINOR

Thanks. Don't think I didn't notice that haircut.

Frank smiles at her, as Elinor turns back to Judy.

JUDY

I don't know how you do it. Still making friends everywhere you go.

ELINOR

You need 'em in this place.

CONTINUED:

JUDY

How did you end up back here?

ELINOR

Can't get into it-- they listen--
but it's the system. Once you go in
they make it almost impossible for
you not to come back.

JUDY

(tearing up)

Right. I'm sorry, Mom.

ELINOR

Look. You were just a kid. They
shouldn't have let you testify.

JUDY

I think about it all the time. I
just... I had to tell the truth.

ELINOR

Yeah. You didn't know better.

A beat as this twisted logic lands on Judy.

ELINOR (CONT'D)

It's in the past right? Let's live
for the future.

JUDY

Yeah. Okay. I'd love to see you
more.

ELINOR

Oh baby, I'd like that.

(then)

Rumor has it I have a parole
hearing coming up -- maybe I'll get
out sooner than later.

JUDY

Really?

ELINOR

Especially if I had a lawyer this
time who didn't get his degree at
Costco. But good attorneys don't
come cheap.

Judy catches her mother's drift.

CONTINUED: (2)

JUDY

God, I would love to help you, mom,
but I don't have any money--

ELINOR

No, I wasn't-- it's okay. If you
can't show up for me like that, you
can't.

A thump as Judy is hit with a wallop of guilt.

JUDY

Yeah.
(then)
Well, I mean... I can try.

ELINOR

That would mean a lot.

INT. JEN'S KITCHEN - LATER THAT MORNING

Charlie and HENRY are sitting at the island eating cereal as
Jen enters. She tears through a big pile of mail.

CHARLIE

So, I saw Ben coming down the
stairs earlier...

HENRY

Ben was here?

JEN

Oh, he was just here for a second
for... real estate stuff.

CHARLIE

(laughs)
In your bedroom?

JEN

(admonishing)
Yes.

CHARLIE

He seemed upset when he left.

JEN

He did?

CHARLIE

Yeah--

CONTINUED:

Jen opens another piece of mail that gets her attention.

JEN

Shut up.

CHARLIE

I didn't say anything.

JEN

No, sorry, not you. I just got a letter from the city council. They denied my stop sign petition.

CHARLIE

Seriously?

HENRY

Why?

JEN

I don't know. It doesn't say why. It's just an impersonal rejection from some faceless assholes.

CHARLIE

So that's it? We did all that work for nothing?

Jen looks at Charlie, buoyed by his frustration.

JEN

No. That's not it.

She goes to grab her bag.

HENRY

Where are you going?

JEN

To make them tell me to my face.

CHARLIE

Can I come with you?

JEN

Uh, no, you may not. You are gonna finish your breakfast, and then when you're done eating, you're gonna take your bowl to the dishwasher for once in your life.

CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLIE

I'm on your side, why are you mad
at me?

JEN

I'm not. I'm just covering my
bases.

Jen slams the door, she's already gone. Charlie stirs his
cereal around, worried.

INT. CITY COUNCIL - OPEN FORUM - LATER

CLOSE ON a large monitor telling us that we are in a very
dry, procedural city council meeting. The current topic up
for debate: "MEDIANS: SHOULD WE OR SHOULDN'T WE?"

A PANEL OF BOARD MEMBERS, made up of primarily older white
men, listen as MARCY, a DULL, MONOTONE WOMAN, stands at a
microphone. An audience of twenty or so looks on.

MARCY

I mean, I've done the research, and
the numbers are very compelling.
I'm just very passionate about
this. So I think, in terms of
medians... we shouldn't.

Several of the board members nod in agreement, as Marcy
crosses out to REVEAL Jen. She approaches the microphone.

JEN

Hi. Jen Harding. Real estate agent
and mother. And... I just want to
say... No.

A white-haired board member, BERNARD, looks up, confused.

BERNARD

To medians?

JEN

No. To you.

BERNARD

I beg your pardon?

JEN

I submitted a proposal for a stop
sign, which was just "rejected" by
the council, and I'm here to reject
your rejection.

CONTINUED:

A few titters and surprised looks from the crowd. This is the closest thing to excitement this city council has ever seen.

BERNARD

Well, I'm sorry but this is the Median Hearing.

JEN

Well, now we're talking about stop signs.

BERNARD

That request was unfortunately denied because stop signs slow down traffic.

JEN

Yeah, that's the point.

A board member coughs, uncomfortably.

BERNARD

After review, the board felt it could actually do more harm than good.

JEN

Who is a stop sign going to harm? Some asshole who bought a Lambo to compensate for his micro-dick?

BERNARD

Miss, there's no need for that kind of--

JEN

No. No. Don't "miss" me. That's so annoying. I'm a full grown fucking woman.

A tiny snicker from the audience.

JEN (CONT'D)

And I have a teenage son who's about to get his driver's license. I'm just trying to protect him, and make the neighborhood a little bit safer for him and for all of you.

Another board member, who looks vaguely familiar (ANDREW PETERS from last season Ep. 108), pipes in.

CONTINUED: (2)

ANDREW

You know, Mrs. Harding, I find it interesting that you're so concerned with keeping your neighbors safe.

JEN

Sorry-- do I know you?

ANDREW

Yeah, we met. The name's Andrew-- Andrew Peters.

Jen looks at him. Oh fuck.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. ANDREW PETER'S GARAGE - FLASHBACK

Inside Andrew Peters' RED MUSTANG, he tries to make a move on Jen. She struggles and he pursues... until she punches him in the face.

BACK TO:

INT. CITY COUNCIL - OPEN FORUM - RESUME SCENE

As they were.

ANDREW

You might remember me from when you offered me a free estimate of my house... and then assaulted me.

A hubbub in the crowd. Jen is momentarily thrown.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Almost broke my nose.

JEN

I should've hit you harder.

ANDREW

Excuse me?

The crowd titters.

CONTINUED:

JEN

Well, you may remember that the reason I tried to break your nose is 'cause you were trying to force yourself on me after I repeatedly said no. And I said no to you, not just because you're fucking gross, but because I had just lost my husband, and the last thing I needed was to be molested by some smug, horny prick.

ANDREW

That's not what happened--

JEN

--Could've used a stop sign that day, huh?

(then, getting emotional)

And maybe if there'd been a stop sign on the road where my husband was killed, he'd still be alive and my boys would still have their father. And our whole world wouldn't have fallen apart.

BERNARD

Mrs. Harding, though I'm sorry to hear about your husband's death, we don't know that a stop sign could have saved him.

JEN

No, we don't. But it's one stop sign. And if there's a chance it could save someone else from feeling like I do every day, trust me, it'll be worth it. Because I wouldn't wish this on anyone.

(to Andrew)

Even you.

The crowd slowly erupts in applause. Jen turns to see A FEW WOMEN IN THE CROWD looking back at her, with admiration. Jen can't help but feel... almost good.

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - DUSK

Judy walks to PEREZ's desk and hands her a wrapped gift. Perez is caught off guard.

CONTINUED:

JUDY

Hi. This is for you.

PEREZ

Ms. Hale--

JUDY

I feel like you can call me Judy by
now.

PEREZ

I don't.

JUDY

Oh. Well-- I brought you something.

Judy hands Perez the gift. Perez opens it. It's a small
framed sketch that Judy has drawn of FLO, Michelle's mom.

JUDY (CONT'D)

It's Flo. I heard she's feeling
better--

(then, quick)

Not from Michelle-- she won't return
my texts, which is really hurtful--

PEREZ

Seriously?

Judy relents.

PEREZ (CONT'D)

(re: gift)

Thank you for this.

Perez returns to her work. Judy persists.

JUDY

You're welcome.

(then)

I was also hoping you could do me a
favor.

PEREZ

You think you're in a position to
ask me for favors?

JUDY

Probably not, but it's about my
paintings. I'm looking for them.
It's a whole collection of little
girls with holes in their hearts--

CONTINUED: (2)

PEREZ
(weirded out)
Uh huh.

JUDY
I know they sound weird, but they're worth something. And the last time I saw them was at Steve's gallery--

PEREZ
Stop talking. I have something to show you.
(calls)
Prager.

Perez looks incredulously at an unseen person. NICK crosses over from a nearby desk, startling Judy.

NICK
Hello Judy.

JUDY
(caught off guard)
Heyyy Nick. Nice to see you back in uniform.

NICK
Is it?

Nick turns his phone to her, revealing SEVERAL PHOTOS OF CHARLIE DRIVING STEVE'S MERCEDES.

PEREZ
Can you do me a favor, and explain to me what's going on in these photos?

JUDY
(panic)
That's not what it looks like.

NICK
That's not Charlie Harding with Steve Wood's car?

JUDY
Charlie has nothing to do with anything about Steve.

Perez and Nick exchange a look.

CONTINUED: (3)

NICK

Then help us understand why there's also CCTV footage of Charlie driving Steve's car the night it was burned.

JUDY

I-- um--

PEREZ

Look, our boss is itching for us to get an arrest in this case--

NICK

And he thinks we should be looking at you--

JUDY

He does?

PEREZ

He does.

(re: photo)

But it's a little hard not to look at this. It's our only actual lead.

JUDY

But it's just a few pictures--

NICK

They don't tell a very good story.

PEREZ

We know Charlie's angry about his father's death.

NICK

And we know he's had access to a gun.

PEREZ

The question is, was he angry enough to use it? Which obviously, we'll have to ask him--

JUDY

He didn't-- that's not what happened.

NICK

Then what did?

Judy sits in stunned silence.

CONTINUED: (4)

PEREZ

Look. Charlie's the one who needs a favor, now. So if you have a better story, you need to tell us. Quickly.

Off Judy looking like she could break into a thousand pieces...

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DUSK

Jen lays out a lovely home cooked dinner on the dining room table. She calls out.

JEN

Char? Hen? Your mama made dinner. Kind of a once-in-a-lifetime thing happening here!

No one answers. She moves toward the stairs.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - HENRY'S ROOM - DUSK

Jen enters to find a dejected Henry sitting on his bed.

JEN

Hey, Boop. Dinner's ready.

HENRY

I'm not hungry.

Henry can barely look at her.

JEN

No? What's going on? You okay?

HENRY

I got into a fight with Shandy. I don't want to be her friend anymore.

JEN

Why? You can't just talk it out? Shandy seems very... reasonable.

HENRY

She killed my bird.

JEN

She did?

CONTINUED:

HENRY

I know you told her to lie about
it.

JEN

(gut punch)

Oh.

Henry looks at his mother, hurt.

HENRY

Why would you do that?

JEN

I-- I don't know, honey. I'm sorry.
I knew how sad you were about the
bird, and I didn't want you to feel
any worse.

HENRY

But I do feel worse. You're my mom.
And you fucking lied to me!

Jen, taken aback and feeling horrible, leans in close.

JEN

I know. I made a mistake, honey.
Moms make mistakes sometimes. I'm
so sorry. Can I make it up to you?
Should we go to the arcade?

HENRY

No.

(then)

But maybe when Judy gets home, she
could come up to my room.

JEN

Okay.

Henry pulls out the BROKEN TOY BIRD from under his blanket,
to comfort himself, as Jen's eyes go wide in horror.

JEN (CONT'D)

You... have your bird there?

HENRY

Yeah. But somehow his tail broke.

JEN

(covering)

Huh, guess it did.

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

JEN (CONT'D)

(kisses his head)

I love you.

Henry doesn't respond. Jen, trying not to freak out, reluctantly gets up and walks out the door to:

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Charlie, full of steam, stops Jen in her tracks.

CHARLIE

Mom-- we need to fucking talk.

JEN

Oh god, what now?

Charlie steps in front of Jen, forcing her to face him.

CHARLIE

I'm not Henry, okay? You don't have to hide shit from me. And you don't have to lie--

JEN

What are you talking about?

CHARLIE

Everything. Ben. Steve. I know you're the one who burned his car. You had a fucking gas can in your hand!

JEN

Charlie, you don't know what you're talking about, okay? And it's not your business--

CHARLIE

It is. It is my business. You're my mother. Aren't we supposed to look out for each other?

JEN

We are. And that is why I'm telling you to drop it. Okay? Trust me.

CHARLIE

(pleading)

Okay, then tell me what the fuck is going on.

CONTINUED:

JEN

I can't.

CHARLIE

Why not?

JEN

Because...

CHARLIE

Why?

JEN

(breaking)

Because I'm scared.

(covering)

Steve Wood was involved with some really dangerous people, okay? So you, please, don't say another word about this ever again. Do you understand me?

CHARLIE

Yeah--

JEN

Not another word, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Okay.

Jen looks down and sees Charlie holding THE SACHEL from Steve's glove compartment.

JEN

What-- what is that?

CHARLIE

Nothing.

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - NIGHT

Perez and Nick at her desk.

NICK

You don't really think the kid did it.

PEREZ

I'm just going off the evidence. It's all we have.

CONTINUED:

NICK

(re: his folder)

You ever take a look at what I gave you?

PEREZ

I did. But we need more. A couple of photos of a guy walking into an art gallery doesn't prove much.

NICK

Neither does a couple of photos of a kid in a car.

They look up to see CHIEF HOWARD HASTINGS marching toward Perez's desk.

HOWARD

(to Nick)

Prager, my man. Those phones aren't going to answer themselves.

Nick gives Perez a look as he crosses away to answer the phone on his desk. Hastings leans in to Perez.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

(sotto)

What'd Judy Hale have to say for herself?

PEREZ

She's not talking yet.

HOWARD

Did you dangle the kid?

PEREZ

(feeling gross)

I... did.

HOWARD

Good girl.

PEREZ

I'm not your girl.

HOWARD

Sorry. Thought that'd be a compliment for a woman your age.

Hastings exits, as Perez watches him go.

PEREZ

(under her breath)

Bitch.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER

Jen sits at the dining room table. Alone. Food still untouched. She is deep into a bottle of wine. Judy enters, devastated. Jen looks up at her, in a similar state.

JUDY

Hey. I need to see you in the garage, please. Now.

JEN

Really? Just-- fuck. Okay.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Jen and Judy rush in.

JEN

What's going on?

Judy sobs. Jen comforts her.

JEN (CONT'D)

Hey, hey, Judy, just tell me what's going on.

JUDY

(panicked)

The police have pictures of Charlie driving Steve's car. The ones Parker took.

JEN

Oh god.

JUDY

And they have him on CCTV driving it the night it was burned. They think he did it, Jen.

JEN

(tearing up)

No no no. No.

(then)

What am I gonna do?

JUDY

Nothing.

(then)

Because I'm gonna take the blame. For all of it.

CONTINUED:

JEN

What are you-- no you're not.

JUDY

(strong)

I'm not asking. I'm telling you.

JEN

Oh, fuck no--

JUDY

You are going to let me do this. I
need to do this--

JEN

Oh, my God, no.

JUDY

Yes. Listen to me.

(beat)

The night that Steve died... I was
gonna kill myself.

JEN

What?

JUDY

But then you called me, and you
saved me.

JEN

Judy...

JUDY

And maybe you saved me for a
reason. So that I could do this,
for you, right now.

JUDY (CONT'D)

You have a family. You have a life.
Please let me do this for you, Jen.
I'm responsible for all of this. If
it wasn't for me, none of this
would have happened.

JEN

You're not responsible for Steve's
death. I am.

JUDY

Yes, I am.

CONTINUED: (2)

JEN

No, you're not.

JUDY

He came here looking for me, and then he attacked you.

JEN

No--

JUDY

Yes, it was self-defense, Jen.

JEN

No, it wasn't--

JUDY

Yes, it was--

JEN

No, it wasn't, Judy.

JUDY

What are you talking about?

JEN

He was walking away! He didn't attack me, okay? I attacked him.

JUDY

You said he tried to strangle you.

JEN

No, I-- I lied.

JUDY

You what?

JEN

I lied. I'm sorry.

JUDY

No, I don't understand why you-- why would you do that? Why-- why would you kill him?

Off Jen, we...

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - THE NIGHT STEVE DIED - FLASHBACK

Steve turns to leave, then turns back, his face full of vitriol. He looks at Jen and spews.

STEVE

He was looking for a way out honey.
Ted... he jumped in front of our
car.

JEN

No--

STEVE

Oh, yeah, he wanted to get hit!

JEN

Fuck you--

STEVE

You know what? I don't fucking
blame him, because if I was married
to you, I'd want to put a fucking
gun to my head. I'd want to kill
myself too, you miserable cunt!

BACK TO:

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - GARAGE - RESUME SCENE

Jen, barely able to look at a distraught Judy.

JEN

(shaky, weeping)
He said some really bad things,
okay? And I got angry. And I lost
it.

JUDY

What did he say to you?

JEN

I can't... it doesn't fucking
matter.

JUDY

Yes, it does. What did he say to
you?

JEN

No, it doesn't--

CONTINUED:

JUDY

It obviously matters, because you fucking killed him. What the fuck did he say to you?

JEN

He said Ted jumped in front of your car. He said that he wanted to die because of me.

JUDY

You know that isn't true, right?

JEN

It's true--

JUDY

No, it's not-- none of that is true. That's just what Steve did. He wanted to hurt you. That's how he was.

A beat as this lands on Jen.

JEN

But he's right. I'm a piece of shit, Judy. I'm a fucking piece of shit. Ted fucking hated me. My kids fucking hate me. I fucking hate me. Everybody fucking hates me.

JUDY

I don't hate you. I could never hate you.

JEN

Oh, God, that's because you love anyone who just gives you a morsel of fucking attention, even if it's abusive. It's like you get off on it or something. It's why you loved Steve and why you love your shitty, fucking asshole mother! You'll just stick around for anybody.

A beat, as this hits Judy in her deepest place. Judy takes off out the door. Jen follows her out...

EXT. JEN'S HOUSE/STREET - CONTINUOUS

Jen catches up with Judy.

CONTINUED:

JEN

I'm sorry, Judy. I didn't mean that. Please don't go.

Judy tries to walk away. Jen pulls her back.

JEN (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry.

Judy can't even look at her.

JEN (CONT'D)

It's okay to be angry. You should be. You should be fucking irate! I deserve it! You should punch me in the fucking face!

JUDY

No.

JEN

Hit me!

JUDY

No!

JEN

Punch me in the fucking face!

Jen grabs Judy's hand. Judy yanks it back.

JUDY

I'm not like you.

Judy hurries into Abe's car. She starts it, and guns the engine. Jen suddenly gets in front of the car in desperation.

JEN

Hit me!

Jen bangs the hood of the car.

JUDY

Get out of the way!

JEN

Just hit me!

JUDY

Move!

JEN

Please!

INT. JUDY'S CAR - SAME

Suddenly, Judy lets out A GUTTURAL SCREAM. She WAILS. But not at Jen. At herself. She starts to hit herself, hard, like we've seen her do in her private moments alone in the bathroom. Jen watches through the windshield, horrified.

Jen crosses and gets into the passenger seat as Judy begins to weep. Jen envelops her in her arms, stopping Judy's self-flagellating tirade. Jen holds her tight until Judy relents and gives in to the hug, sobbing in Jen's arms.

JEN
(gently)
It's okay, it's okay...

JUDY
(through tears)
It's not okay.

PRE-LAP: "It's Just a Matter of Time" by Brook Benton.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - JEN'S BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER

A worn out Judy sleeps, curled up in Jen's bed. Jen pulls up the covers over her, brushing the hair out of her face. It's sweet, maternal. But there's a look in Jen's eyes that belies the tender moment.

As the song continues, we see:

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

-Jen, at the kitchen island, puts a letter into an envelope and writes "Charlie" on it.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - HENRY'S ROOM - SAME

-Jen kisses Henry, sleeping in bed, and takes the broken bird out of his little hand.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - LATER

-Jen enters and opens the safe-- revealing THE GUN. She puts the broken bird inside, then removes something else from the safe, unseen, with steely resolve.

INT. JEN'S HOUSE - JEN'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Judy wakes up, turns to Jen's side. But she's not there. Instead, on Jen's side of the bed, Judy finds Jen's IN CASE OF EMERGENCY Binder (from 202) along with three envelopes. Written on them: Charlie, Henry and Judy. As Judy takes this in, a stark realization dawns on her...

JUDY
(calling out)
Jen?!

EXT. MICHELLE/PEREZ'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - SAME

Perez, in her PJs, opens the door to see Jen, distraught.

PEREZ
Mrs. Harding? What are you doing
here?

Jen swallows hard and meets her gaze--

JEN
There's something I have to
confess.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE