

MAID

"Ponies"

Episode 102

Written by Molly Smith Metzler

Directed by John Wells

MAID

"Ponies"

Inspired By

Maid: Low Wages, Hard Work, and a Mother's Will to Survive

By Stephanie Land

MAID

"PONIES"

CAST

ALEXANDRA "ALEX" RUSSELL

NEW

SEAN BOYD

NATE DARA

MADDY BOYD

JOHN MARSHAL

PAULA LANGLEY

DENISE TURNER

DANIELLE BECKER

RECURRING

DOREEN BOYD

TANIA BARROW

SILVER (Court Clerk)

MRS. KIM (non-speaking)

*COMMISSIONER VIVIAN JENNINGS

YOLANDA VARGAS

MCCLINTOCK (Bailiff)

JODY BYFIELD

JACKIE RUDASILL (Realtor)

REGINA CAMPBELL

KENT (Realtor Associate)

CAL (Guard) (non-speaking)

MAID
"Episode 102"

A1 **INT. UNCERTAIN LOCATION - FOUR YEARS AGO - DAY** A1

CLOSE ON Alex's face. We don't know where we are yet, but she's speaking directly to us. She seems nervous.

ALEX

I died when I was eleven. My mom
and I were living in Alaska at the
time, one of her many failed
attempts at re-invention.

PULL BACK to reveal that Alex is reading to us from a notebook. She sits on the lip of a small wooden stage, the type that's in the corner of an old bar. This is a low-rent Open Mic type of thing, and she's speaking into a mic.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I fell through the ice. I heard it
crack. Watched as the water started
to pool around my ladybug boots. I
remember thinking rather calmly,
I'm about to disappear.

An unseen person COUGHS, bored. We REVERSE to REVEAL...

lpt1 **INT. CALLIOPE'S NEPTUNE CAFE - PORT HAMPSTEAD - FOUR YEARS AGO - FLASHBACK - DAY** lpt1

Calliope's Neptune Cafe, a funky bar. Lots of mermaid-themed artwork; lots of ancient houseplants.

Outside, a large deck looks out over the beautiful bay.

This is four years ago, pre-Maddy. Alex's face is well-rested and rosy. A bit naïve. She's wearing a Calliope's Neptune Cafe tee-shirt.

She SCANS the BORED AUDIENCE now, which is not much of an audience. There's a DOZEN PEOPLE there, all checked-out. An ELDERLY MAN is clearly asleep. A WAITER clears a table, his back to us. A BASKETBALL GAME is on the TV in the BG, and most of the PATRONS are watching that.

ALEX

There are a lot of theories about
who rescued me. Not that *I* know. I
blocked it all out.

(CONTINUED)

1pt1 CONTINUED:

1pt1

Alex scans the BORED AUDIENCE again, but this time her eyes land on a YOUNG MAN alone at the bar, nursing a whiskey, a well-worn paperback in hand.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Some say it was the dog next door, who barked. Some say my mom finally came home, remembered she had a daughter. Some say it was me; that I punched through the ice, clawed my way out.

He glances up at her now, his eyes meeting hers for a moment, over the top of the book. It's the first time Alex and SEAN have ever laid eyes on each other.

ALEX (CONT'D)

But I'm not sure. Maybe I never made it out of there at all. Maybe I've been a ghost all these years.

A beat. She has more to read, but being that no one is listening, she adds, jokingly:

ALEX (CONT'D)

...And that would make sense, because none of you seem to hear me at all right now. Do you?

No one REACTS at all. But Sean smirks, with a small CHUCKLE.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(to the audience)
Anyway. That's it, just something I'm working on.
(then)
Thank you.

TANIA (Alex's friend, who we met in 101) approaches, holding a tray of empty glasses. She wears a Neptune tee-shirt, too.

TANIA

Look at you! Reading sad words up there! [SNAPS]
(back to business)
Thirteen wants another pitcher of Bud, six wants dessert.

ALEX

Thanks for covering.

She follows Tania to the bar. Both of them work at Neptune.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Hey--who's that guy?

Alex points to Sean, who is paying his tab.

TANIA
Sean. You don't know Sean? He
bartends at The Swan.

ALEX
(intrigued)
What's he reading? Can you go look?

TANIA
Are you serious?

Alex makes prayer hands: *please?* Amused, Tania disappears
down the bar. She pretends to go check the ice bin. Returns.

TANIA (CONT'D)
Love is a dog something.

ALEX
Love is a Dog from Hell?
(impressed)
He's reading Bukowski?

Smitten, Alex watches Sean put his jacket on, grab his book,
and make his way to the door. He looks directly at her as he
passes, and smiles. It's uncanny, his confidence.

1pt2 A MALE VOICE (PRE-LAP) 1pt2
Alex?

2pt1 **INT. FERRY STATION-VERY EARLY MORNING-PRESENT DAY (D/3)** 2pt1

Alex looks up, tries to focus her groggy eyes. Slowly, she
makes out the face of NATE (30s, handsome, tech vest).

NATE
It's me. Nate.

ALEX
(no clue)
Nate...

NATE
From Neptune. Nate from brunch?

2pt2 **Flashback: WHIP PAN back through that memory we just** 2pt2
saw, of the Open Mic in Neptune.

(CONTINUED)

Only this time, when Alex SCANS the BORED AUDIENCE, the camera PAUSES on that waiter who was clearing a dirty table, in a Neptune tee-shirt. It's Nate. And he's actually listening attentively to Alex. It's clear he's got a huge crush on her.

ALEX

Right. Nate. Of course... I'm running into you. Hi.

NATE

I was just catching the ferry, going into work early, and I was like *whoa* that girl looks like Alex and... it is. How are you?

ALEX

I'm good. I'm so good.

This is a goddamn horror show. To be busted like this.

NATE

This must be Maddy.

ALEX

Yep.

NATE

I recognized her from Facebook.
(then)
Why are you camped out on the floor? Are you stranded?

ALEX

No, we're just early for the ferry. Letting her take a little catnap while we wait. What time it is, anyway? My phone's dead.

NATE

6:05. Why do you have a vacuum?

ALEX

I'm just really into vacuums right now, Nate. Like to keep one close.

Nate laughs warmly. She's weird. And wild and funny and lovely and smart. She's his one that got away.

NATE

Well the ferry's here.
(reaching for her vacuum)
Let me give you a hand with your--!

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

No thanks. We're waiting for a different ferry. Thank you though.

NATE

(there's only one)
...what other ferry?

ALEX

I'm gonna let her sleep, is what I mean. But wow, so great to see you.

Maddy stirs.

MADDY

Mommy.

ALEX

(kissing her nose)
Oh sorry, bunny boo. Shhhhhh.

Maddy whispers something to Alex, that she can't make out.

ALEX (CONT'D)

What?

MADDY

I wanna go home.

ALEX

(quietly)
Shhh. Just a few more minutes, bug.

A beat. Standing above them, Nate takes in the scene for a moment, noticing some details he missed initially. Their clothes are dirty, they look rough. These two slept here.

NATE

I don't have to go to work this early. Can I give you a ride somewhere? Buy us breakfast?

Maddy sits up, exuberant.

MADDY

BRE'FAST! YES YES YES BRE'FAST!

ALEX

No breakfast.
(to Nate)
No thank you, we're not hungry.

MADDY

I'm hungry! Me me me!

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

No, Maddy. He has to catch his
ferry.

NATE

I'll catch the next one. Come on.
I've got a phone charger in the
car, we'll hit Starbucks...
(quietly)
Let me help you out, Alex.

OFF Alex's face, humiliated, but giving a small nod.

3pt1 **INT. NATE'S SUBARU - (MOVING) - MORNING (D/3)**

3pt1

Nate drives. Alex's in the front seat, scarfing down a
breakfast sandwich. Her phone's dead in her lap, charging.

Port Hampstead flashes by outside. Brick Victorians towering
over lapping waves. A normal morning for everyone else.

In the backseat, Maddy's in an expensive Scandinavian car
seat, her face covered in powdered sugar.

NATE

Maddy, you want to watch *Frozen*?
I've got it on a continuous loop
back there, for my son.

MADDY

NO FROZEN!

ALEX

She's afraid of the snow creature.

NATE

Ah. Brady loves that part. 'Cause
he's a psychopath.

ALEX

(laughs)
How old is he?

NATE

Just turned two.

ALEX

He your only one?

NATE

Yes. And his mom and I just got
divorced, so that's a hard yes.

(CONTINUED)

3pt1 CONTINUED:

3pt1

ALEX

Oh. I'm sorry.

NATE

Don't be. It was amicable.

(a beat, then re: rearview)

God, she really looks like Sean.

ALEX

(unhappy to hear that)

You think?

NATE

(whiff of scorned lover:)

It's a good thing, isn't it? To
look like the great Sean Boyd?

3pt2

Flashback: Sean sits on a bench outside Neptune, late at night. His breath visible in the cold air. He listens to John Prine on an MP3 player, a hand-rolled cigarette behind his ear. He watches Alex approach. He's been waiting for her.

3pt2

SEAN***Hey, Alaska.******He holds up a flask and smiles, sexy. Interested?***

NATE

So you still writing?

ALEX

Yep. All the time.

3pt3

Imagined: Alex's hand holds a pen to a blank piece of paper, but writes absolutely nothing.

3pt3

NATE

Oh, good. You're so talented.

ALEX

What about you?

(a joke)

You still working at Neptune?

NATE

No. I'm a structural engineer now.
Remember, I was in grad school at U-
Dub?

3pt4

Flashback: CLOSE ON Nate's smitten face, talking to Alex animatedly, taking up most of the frame. But she's craning her neck to look past him, not listening. Looking at Sean.

3pt4

(CONTINUED)

ALEX
Right.

NATE
I joined a small firm in Seattle.
(modest)
Well, not that small. We just
opened a second office in LA.

3pt5 ***Imagined: Alex hitting herself in the head with the microphone, back at Open Mic. Stupid stupid stupid.*** 3pt5

NATE (CONT'D)
Uh--which way am I going here?

Alex's phone LIGHTS UP, back to life. She has multiple missed calls from "Miss V's Value Maids" and a "360" number.

ALEX
Sorry, right. The Laundromat.
(distracted by her phone)
What's 360 area code, do you know?

3pt6 NATE 3pt6
Merritt, I think?

4 **EXT. STOREFRONT LAUNDROMAT - PORT HAMPSTEAD - MORNING (D/3) 4**

Nate pulls up in front of the Laundromat and parks. Alex pulls Maddy out of the carseat. Grabs her stuff.

ALEX
Say bye to Mommy's old friend,
Maddy.

MADDY
Bye old.

ALEX
Thank you, so much.

NATE
Here--keep it. I've got more.

Nate holds the phone charger out for her. She takes it.

NATE (CONT'D)
And call me. If you need anything,
or want to do a playdate sometime.
I have Brady every other weekend.

She nods weakly and closes the door. Nate watches Alex schlep off with the vacuum and Maddy into--

5 **INT. LAUNDROMAT - MORNING (D/3)**

5

With Maddy on her hip, Alex drags the vacuum across the laundromat. MRS. KIM glares at her, folding.

ALEX

Morning. Long time no see.

She puts headphones on MADDY and hands her her tablet before she KNOCKS on the Value Maids door.

YOLANDA (O.S.)

If this is another summons, you can shove it up your ass!

ALEX

No, it's Alex.

YOLANDA

Who?

She pushes open the door and we FOLLOW her into the office--

6 **INT. MISS V'S VALUE MAIDS - YOLANDA'S OFFICE - MORNING(D/3)** 6

--where we find Yolanda, making instant oatmeal.

YOLANDA

Oh. You. The Dyson Thief! Don't bring that kid in here.

Alex comes in anyway--

ALEX

I can explain.

YOLANDA

I can explain, too.
(acting this out:)
Value Maids--ignore.
Value Maids--ignore.
Who am I? *Your phone.*

ALEX

I was in a car accident.

YOLANDA

(laughs)
Sure you were.

ALEX

I was. My car got totaled on Route 20. I have a picture...

(CONTINUED)

Alex holds out her phone, displays a pic of the wreck.

YOLANDA

Jesus Christ. That's *your* car?

(Alex nods)

Well I stand corrected. But I still can't pay you if that's what you're here for.

A beat.

ALEX

I had an emergency.

YOLANDA

The client doesn't give a shit. All she knows is you didn't come back.

(policy)

I don't get paid, you don't get paid.

ALEX

But I was on my way over there.

YOLANDA

(shrugs)

Don't know what to tell ya.

ALEX

But I did the clean, Yolanda. I busted my ass for three hours, never even stopping to pee. And I bought cleaning supplies! And spent money on gas! And blew two hours of my time driving back and forth to Vegina's stupid house!

YOLANDA

Sucks for me, too. I'm out the money and a very valuable client. Life shits on your balls sometimes.

Alex's cell rings. That "360" number again. She ignores.

ALEX

Do you have anything else you can give me? Another shift?

YOLANDA

(a blow off)

I'll keep ya in mind.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

This is John Marshal, ma'am. I represent Sean Boyd.

MADDY

WEEEEEEEEEE!

JOHN

Do you have an attorney at this time or can we speak directly?

ALEX

What? Who is this?

JOHN

I'm Mr. Boyd's attorney, ma'am, and I'm calling to notify you that--

MADDY

WEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

ALEX

(can't hear over Maddy)
WHAT?

JOHN

Mr. Boyd has filed an emergency petition with the Family Court of Ludlow County to have his child, Maddy Boyd, returned to his custodial care immediately.

John tosses a wrapper/Starbucks into a trash can. Walks on. Mrs. Kim is about to go postal on Maddy at the laundromat.

ALEX

You're joking. This is a joke.

JOHN

The petition was filed this morning and the Court has called a preliminary hearing at 10 am tomorrow. Do you know where Family Court is located?

ALEX

I'm sorry. You need to back up. Sean wants custody of Maddy?

JOHN

If you fail to show, we will file a further petition to forgo all your parental rights to Maddy.

(then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Do you understand everything you've
been notified of on this call?

A beat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Ms. Russell?

ALEX

He didn't even finish high school.
How the fuck does he have a lawyer?

CUT TO:

9 INT. SOCIAL SERVICES - JODY'S CUBICLE - DAY (D/3)

9

JODY

Anyone can get a lawyer. All you
need is fifteen hundred bucks.

Jody's at her desk in her generic cubicle, digging through
her stuff, looking for her glasses.

ALEX

But Sean doesn't have \$1500 bucks.

JODY

Someone does. His family? That's
not your problem. Your problem is
you don't have a roof over her head
and that's not gonna look good in
court. Where's your car now?

ALEX

I dunno. Towed.

Alex has found Jody's glasses; hands them to her.

ALEX (CONT'D)

He can't actually get custody of
Maddy, can he?

JODY

Doubt it. But we gotta get you off
the streets immediately.
(eyes on her screen now)
No beds in Shawgit, not that you'd
be able to get there without a car.
Did Yolanda advance you a pay stub?

Alex shakes her head, no.

(CONTINUED)

JODY (CONT'D)

So we still can't qualify you for
transitional housing...

(reading off her screen)

There's beds open at the Domestic
Violence shelter...

(searching)

But you said you're not DV...

ALEX

I mean, I'd hate to take a bed from
someone who's been abused for real,
but if they have an extra, I'll
take it.

Jody smells a story. She's been at this a long time.

JODY

"Abused for real"? What does that
mean?

ALEX

Beaten up. Hurt.

JODY

What's "fake" abuse? Insults?
Threats? Intimidation? Control?

ALEX

(tiring of this)

I dunno.

JODY

Does Sean do any of those to you?

ALEX

(shrugs)

He's a man.

Jody eyes Alex, then pulls a brochure out, hands it over.

JODY

Here. You have to call the DV
hotline yourself. They usually send
a cab for you, to the nearest
police station.

ALEX

I call them up and say what?

JODY

Help.

10pt1 **INT. PORT HAMPSTEAD CAB - (MOVING) - DAY (D/3)** 10pt1

Alex's in the backseat of a cab. Her caddy of cleaning supplies and bag at her feet. Maddy naps in a Costco carseat.

Up front, a DRIVER (male, 60s) stares straight ahead. Outside, enormous pine trees dwarf the tiny cab.

On the radio, something ridiculous like "Mambo No. 5" comes on. Alex can't help but smirk. This whole thing is surreal. She looks out the window, watching the pine trees.

10pt2 **Flashback: Alex still looking out the window, but now she's in the passenger seat of Sean's car, on a similarly woody road. All of Alex's stuff is in the backseat.** 10pt2

SEAN

(warmly)

My friends are giving me so much shit about this.

ALEX

Why? Cuz we've only been on four dates?

SEAN

(laughs)

Not even.

ALEX

It's a business decision. I'm leaving for college in 49 days, you're leaving for your cross country bike trip, we can both save money.

SEAN

(in love with her)

Yeah, it's a business decision.

ALEX

(same)

Purely business.

Alex takes his hand. OFF a couple in a car, moving in--

11 **EXT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - PRESENT - DAY (D/3)** 11

The cab pulls up to an inconspicuous, fenced-in apartment building. Aside from the formidable intercom/buzzer at the gate, there's no other indication this is a shelter.

The driver puts the cab in park, waits. Eyes straight ahead.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Is this... are we here?

He nods. Does not look back at her. She eyes his fare (\$15).

ALEX (CONT'D)

Am I supposed to pay you, or?

DENISE (50s, with the demeanor of a perfect kindergarten teacher, but who looks like she's maybe been to prison) appears out of thin air, by the driver's window. KNOCKS.

He rolls his window down and she hands him a \$20 without a word. (They know each other. Have done this many times.)

Denise now arrives at Alex's door, which she opens. She leans all the way in, a surprising invasion of Alex's space.

DENISE

You're Alex. This is Maddy.

She *really* looks at both of them. Her eyes full of an empathy that is almost strange to Alex. Like they're back from war.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I'm Denise. We spoke on the phone.
You're here. You can breathe.

A beat. Alex senses that Denise is waiting for her to do something. Oh... is she waiting for her to breathe??

Alex inhales, then exhales, awkwardly. (She doesn't feel like she's back from a war, so this is just odd.)

DENISE (CONT'D)

Good, babygirl. We do a lot of
breathing here! Yes, we do!

Denise ushers them both out of the car.

DENISE (CONT'D)

You carry Maddy, I'll get your bag.

Like she's in a dream, Alex follows her, while carrying Maddy.

Denise does some business at the intercom with her fob and the door BUZZES. We follow her up the sidewalk and into--

12

INT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - FRONT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS (D/3)

12

A small, no-nonsense front office. A white board hangs on the wall, which lists the name of maybe eight women, along with their phone numbers, birthdates, their children's names, and other information Alex doesn't understand. But she sees:

Alex Russell (F, 12/20/95) - Maddy Boyd (F, 2/23/2016) -

She's on the board already? She starts to feel panicked.

DENISE

This is Cal. He's always here.

Denise is referring to a GUARD (30s). He nods from behind a desk without looking up, out of politeness.

DENISE (CONT'D)

On his desk is the sign-out book.
Where you sign in and out.

ALEX

Every time I go anywhere?

DENISE

For your safety. Yes please.
(then)
And no sign out at all after
curfew. Eight o'clock.

Jesus Christ. Is this a prison? Denise points to a table with an ancient computer and a plastic bin full of CELLPHONES.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Your phone goes here. Just check
the "location" is off first.

ALEX

I can't use my phone?

DENISE

You can use it *all you want*,
babygirl. It'll be right here for
you. Just gotta leave the premises
to use it. Walk a block or two.
Protecting the confidentiality of
our location is our top priority.

Alex turns "location" off, abandons her phone in the bin.

DENISE (CONT'D)

We did most of your intake on the
phone...

(touching her arm)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DENISE (CONT'D)

So why don't we let you and Maddy
get settled into your space, and
we'll do the rest later. Sound
good?

ALEX

Great. Thanks.

Alex follows Denise out a SIDE DOOR, and outside, into--

13 **EXT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - COURTYARD - DAY (D/3)** 13

A small courtyard in the center of the complex. There's a
small, plastic playground and two empty picnic tables.

All around the courtyard are simple apartment units.

DENISE

This is the courtyard. Will be nice
for Maddy, when she's awake.

As they walk, Alex catches a glimpse of a woman with a
laundry basket on her hip, coming out of the LAUNDRY ROOM.

This is DANIELLE. She's about the same age as Alex. Pretty,
in Juicy sweatpants and Ugg Boots, with elaborate eye-makeup
and long eyelashes. (Not in a crazy way; in a glamorous way.)

Danielle pauses and averts her eyes as Alex passes. (Must be
the protocol here.) Alex clocks that Danielle's neck is badly
bruised. Black and blue.

Alex starts to panic. This isn't her vibe, at all.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Here we are. Number one.

They've arrived at an apartment door. We TRACK with Denise--

14 **INT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - APARTMENT ONE - DAY (D/3)** 14

Into a humble, well-worn living space. It has a couch, a
coffee table, a kitchenette with a table and two chairs, a
bathroom with a tub, a crib, a queen-sized bed, some bedding.

There's also one soft area rug and one piece of art: a TJ
Maxx painting of a woman frolicking on a beach.

Alex surveys in the apartment, looking around. It's not super
clean, but it's way more than she hoped for.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

This is all for me and Maddy?

Denise smiles and nods. At the sound of her name, Maddy stirs.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Hi, bug! Look at our new place!

MADDY

(grumpy)

No, Mommy...

ALEX

(laughs)

What are you saying no mommy to?

MADDY

I wanna go home.

ALEX

Well... this is home for a bit.

And: guess who came with us?

(reaching into the bag)

Schmariel's here!

MADDY

NO SCHMARIEL HERE.

Maddy smacks Schmariel away. Whoa. That's it, Maddy's hit a wall. She starts having a TOTAL TODDLER TANTRUM BREAKDOWN.

MADDY (CONT'D)

I. WANNA. GO. HOME.--NO MOMMY!

She hides from Alex, gets down on the floor, FURIOUS.

ALEX

(to Denise)

Sorry. She's beyond exhausted.

Maddy WAILS.

DENISE

I'll have them bring dinner here,
so you can settle in.

Maddy's having the BIGGEST BREAKDOWN ever. Crocodile tears.

DENISE (CONT'D)

And a change of clothes for her.
What's she, a size 3?

Maddy WAILS.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Thank you. Sorry.

Denise exits the apartment and closes the door behind her.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Maddy. Honey. Come on...

(then)

We gotta give this a try. This is a nice place. It's clean.

MADDY

(could break an eardrum)

!!!!NO MOMMY!!!!

A KNOCK at the door. Irritated by both the tantrum and the disruption, Alex opens it, ready to be annoyed!

But it's Danielle. She's holding a garbage bag.

DANIELLE

Hi. I live over in two. Here. Try this.

She hands Alex the bag, as Maddy continues to WAIL.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

The woman in apartment three left them behind when she moved out. Maybe your daughter will like 'em.

She hands Alex the bag, and Alex glances in. Relieved:

ALEX

Oh my God, *thank you*.

DANIELLE

Don't mention it.

Danielle heads out. Alex closes the door and returns to--

15pt1 **INT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - APARTMENT ONE - CONTINUOUS (D/3)** 15pt1

--The apartment floor, where she sits down next to Maddy.

ALEX

I've got something for you. A big surprise for you, in this bag.

MADDY

(still upset)

No, Mommy...

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

No? You don't want to see it?

Alex opens the bag and lets Maddy take a peek in.
Immediately, her face explodes with excitement.

MADDY

PONIES!!!

CLOSE ON: The bag is full of little ponies. Hundreds of them. Like, 100+ of them. Alex dumps the whole bag out, surrounding Maddy with RAINBOW, GLITTERY, NEON-COLORED PONIES. They're lightly used, but this is the greatest gift ever.

Maddy can't believe it. She jumps up and giddily starts sorting through them, putting them into piles, exuberant.

This day has officially turned around.

A QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS:

15pt2 - Alex, Maddy, Schmariel, and 100+ little ponies take a bath together. Alex suds up Maddy's hair. Maddy suds up 100+ little ponies' hair.

15pt3 - Alex and Maddy, now dressed, lie on the plush area rug, arranging the 100+ Ponies into a cheerleading pyramid.

15pt4 - Alex and Maddy eat a simple dinner at the table. 100+ little ponies watch them eat.

15pt5 - Alex kisses Maddy goodnight and tucks her in. Then she tucks in 100+ little ponies. A smile on Maddy's face. Alex watches Maddy drift to sleep...

16 **EXT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - COURTYARD - END OF DAY (D/3)** 16

Alex approaches a door that has a "2" on it. She KNOCKS.
After a moment, Danielle comes to the door.

ALEX

(whispers)

Hi. Sorry. I just wanted to--

DANIELLE

(whispers)

Hang on, I'll come out.

Danielle steps away from the door, leaving it ajar. Alex is able to see in. It's so decorated and homey! Danielle's got posters up, and throw pillows, and lavender-hued curtains. Tons of toys for a boy. Flowers on the table.

(CONTINUED)

She returns to the door and comes out, zipping up a hoodie.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Did the ponies work? Sounded like.

ALEX

Yes. You're a lifesaver. I cannot thank you enough. They're amazing.

DANIELLE

But also fucking creepy, right? I showed my son and he was like: naw.

ALEX

So creepy! Why does anyone have that many little ponies?

DANIELLE

I got a lotta questions about the woman who lived in three. Smelled like she was cooking terds up there. I'm Danielle by the way.

ALEX

I'm Alex.
(then)
...we use real names here, right?

DANIELLE

That's entirely up to you. Some girl's calling herself "Yasmina Jade Skye" over there, and we all know that's a bunch of bullshit. But my real name is Danielle.

ALEX

Mine's really Alex. How old's your son?

DANIELLE

Seven. First grade. Yours?

ALEX

She's almost three.
(then)
I don't mean to be weird, but...
your eyelashes are so beautiful.

DANIELLE

Oh I know, right? Shelter chic.

She bats them; Alex laughs.

16

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

I'm trying to be my own best advertisement--I do lashes, it's my side-hustle. But I'm determined to get more serious about it, so I can turn it into a main-hustle. You know, be a boss babe. Denise is gonna help me get signed up for a business class at the Y.

ALEX

Good for you.

DANIELLE

Yeah. "Lashes by Danielle." Or "Luscious Lashes by Danielle."
(then)
You guys need anything?

ALEX

No, we're all set.
(then)
Unless. You don't have anything I can wear to court tomorrow, do you?

DANIELLE

Girl.

OFF Danielle's smile, very eager to help...

17 **EXT. FAMILY COURT OF LUDLOW COUNTY - THE NEXT MORNING(D/4) 17**

Alex climbs out of the same cab as yesterday, looking like she's been styled by Danielle. Which is to say: a J-Lo top, skinny jeans, hoops, a blow out, and long new eyelashes. Alex looks beautiful. But not quite court appropriate.

Maddy pops out after her, holding Schmarie and one pony. The two of them look up the steps, at their destination.

We GO WIDE on the court building. It's Victorian, brick, imposing. Alex takes Maddy's hand. They start up the stairs.

18 **INT. FAMILY COURT OF LUDLOW COUNTY - GALLERY/LOBBY - DAY 18 (D/4)**

The first thing Alex sees is SEAN. He's wearing a suit and tie, freshly shaved, hair wet from the shower.

Behind him, he has a POSSE of supporters, including CLINT & DOREEN (Sean's severe-looking, mid-Western parents), ETHAN and SOME BUDDIES, his landlord, and his lawyer, John Marshal.

(CONTINUED)

They ALL turn away as Alex approaches. Give her their back. But Sean approaches them, dropping to a knee to greet:

SEAN
Maddy Moo!

MADDY
Daddy!

Quite a show he's putting on. Like *he's* the one back from the war.

SEAN
I'm so glad to see you, baby.

He stands up now. They stare at each other for a beat.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(quiet)
You brought her to court?

ALEX
Why are you wearing a suit?

SEAN
Why are you wearing a cheetah?
(then)
Kids aren't allowed in court. It's against the rules.

ALEX
Why's your whole family here? Why's fucking Ethan here?

SEAN
To support me. This has been hell for me.

ALEX
Hell *for you*?

SEAN
Come on. We all just want what's best for Maddy.

ALEX
Oh, we all want that, do we?
(re: Maddy)
We don't have money for food, Sean.
But you have a lawyer.

John steps over, glancing at his expensive watch.

18

JOHN
Sorry... we should head in.

SEAN
Thanks, John.

ALEX
Yeah, thanks John! *Thanks a lot!*

Doreen arrives next to Sean. She doesn't like Alex.

DOREEN
(tenderly, to Sean)
I'll watch Maddy for you out here.
(bitchy)
Since Alex *brought* her...

ALEX
Thanks, Doreen. Lovely to see you.

DOREEN
(to Maddy)
Come to meemaw, Sugar.

Maddy hesitates. Alex bends down and reassures her:

ALEX
Mommy will be right back. Okay?

Maddy nods, and takes Doreen's hand. Alex turns and heads out.

19 **INT. FAMILY COURT OF LUDLOW COUNTY - COURTROOM - DAY (D/4)** 19

Alex enters the courtroom, which is BUSY. People wait for their hearings. Hers is one of many this morning.

The room is strangely beautiful. Vaulted ceilings. A wall of arched windows, looking out onto the grey day.

The court clerk, SILVER, (50s, male) reads from a paper.

SILVER
Case 549GRT.

The court commissioner, JENNINGS, (female, 50s, all business) sits up front, behind a podium. Sean and John are at a table facing her. Sean's supportive POSSE behind him.

SILVER (CONT'D)
Boyd vs. Russell. 549GRT.

(CONTINUED)

Alex moves to the front of the courtroom, and takes a seat at the other table, on the other side of the room.

No one sits with her. Behind her, just empty rows.

John WHISPERS something in Sean's ear and he has the audacity to GIGGLE. Like they're old bros, best buds.

MCCLINTOCK (PRE-LAP)
MA'AM? Please rise.

MCCLINTOCK, the bailiff, is looking at her. Oh, everyone else is standing. She stands. Jennings begins...

JENNINGS
Regarding emergency petition 5937-G filed by Sean Boyd, this is a motion for an ex parte order to return Maddy Boyd, age 2, to the care of her father Sean Boyd, effective immediately?

John stands.

JOHN
Yes, Your Honor.

JENNINGS
Has an amendment to the Family Plan been filed, and paperwork served?

JOHN
It has been filed, your honor. And with your permission, since we have been unable to reach Ms. Russell, we will serve her at this time.

JENNINGS
Granted.

Alex has no idea what's going on. John approaches her table, places a large manila envelope in her hands.

JOHN
So served.

JENNINGS
On what grounds should an ex parte of Maddy Boyd be considered?

Alex's lost. What's an ex parte? What is happening?

JOHN
(with authority)
Your Honor, Ms. Russell has failed to legal legal legal and she's legally legal legal. We ask the court to legal legal legal.

JENNINGS
I see. And that's legal legal?

JOHN
(pointing at Alex)
Very legal legal legal.

Alex looks around. Does anyone else understand this?

JENNINGS
Ms. Russell?

ALEX
Excuse me, judge. I don't really--

JENNINGS
Commissioner.

ALEX
What?

JENNINGS
I'm not a judge, I'm court commissioner. And I asked you what your plan is.

ALEX
My plan?

JENNINGS
To provide for Maddy.
(then)
You removed her from her home in the middle of the night, have withheld and concealed her whereabouts from Mr. Boyd for more than 72 hours, and have neither a home nor income. What's your plan?

ALEX
I'm... figuring that out.

JENNINGS
Do you have a roof over her head?

ALEX
Yes. We're at McMullen House.

(CONTINUED)

Imagined: everyone in the room--Silver, Jennings, Sean, posse, everyone, stops and stares.

JENNINGS

That's a DV Shelter. For victims of domestic violence.

ALEX

I was referred there by social services, when I told them why I left. How unsafe we were.

Sean looks like he's about to flip the fuck out. He growl-whispers to John, trying to stay calm.

JOHN

Your Honor! This is out of left field. My client has never laid a hand on this woman. Or his child.

Sean's furious, staring daggers into Alex.

JENNINGS

Ms. Russell, did you file a police report on the night you left?

ALEX

No.

JENNINGS

Do you have any third-party witnesses, who can confirm this allegation?

ALEX

No.

JENNINGS

Have you ever filed a police report, at any time, documenting the domestic violence of Mr. Boyd?

ALEX

No.

This next part happens FAST, as Alex gets smothered by legal:

JOHN

Your Honor, may I throw some more legal at you?

JENNINGS

Yes. Legal me.

JOHN

*This isn't legal legal legal in the
State of Washington.*

(re: copy of ticket)

*And she failed to legal legal,
which is legally legal per legal.*

JENNINGS

Ms. Russell, is this true? You were
in a car accident with Mr. Boyd's
child in the backseat unattended?

ALEX

(weakly)

....I was looking for a mermaid.

JOHN

Legal legal legal, legal legal.

JENNINGS

(grave)

Legal legal.

JOHN

*Big time legal legal. We move to
legal.*

Jennings NODS--she sits forward, an announcement to make:

JENNINGS

Mr. Boyd, the court grants your
emergency petition for an ex parte
order to return Maddy Boyd to your
custody. We will reconvene in seven
days. Adjourned.

It's over. At Sean's table, they start packing up their
stuff. John pats Sean on the back, we did it.

Alex is confused.

ALEX

I don't understand what's
happening. What's happening?

She approaches Jennings, who is gathering up stuff for the
next case. Over this one.

ALEX (CONT'D)

What did you just decide?

(CONTINUED)

JENNINGS

You have seven days until the temporary custody hearing, Ms. Russell. Use that time to obtain employment and create a cogent plan to provide for Maddy.

ALEX

And Sean gets Maddy until then?

JENNINGS

You can see her with a third party neutral supervisor present.

ALEX

No. You don't understand...

JENNINGS

Ms. Russell? We're adjourned.

SILVER

(moving on)
Case 339GRF.

Alex turns to see that Sean and his posse are already gone. No trace of them.

Panicked, she bolts out of the courtroom, eager to get to Maddy. She runs as fast as she can...

EXT. FAMILY COURT OF LUDLOW COUNTY - DAY (D/4)

...down the steps of the courthouse, to where Sean is already weaving through the parking lot with his posse. He's holding Maddy's hand, leading her to his car. Away.

ALEX

Wait! Maddy! MADDY!

MADDY

Look Mommy, monkey!

Maddy holds a monkey-shaped stuffie. Alex bear-hugs Maddy.

ALEX

Did Daddy tell you where you're going right now?

MADDY

Home.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Yes, but just for a week. Then
we'll go back to the Pony House,
okay? And I'm gonna come do bedtime
with you every night!

(to Sean)

I'm allowed to. The judge said.

MADDY

You come, Mommy.

(to Sean)

Mommy comes.

SEAN

She can't, pal.

ALEX

No, I can't, bunny boo. But I'll
see you tonight, okay? I love you
the most most most most most most.

Doreen holds a hand out for Maddy, which Maddy takes. Alex
watches as she climbs into her carseat in the back of Sean's
car. Sean's parents climb in after her. A car of Boyds.

SEAN (O.S.)

Alex.

Alex can't look him in the eye.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Why don't you get in the car, too?

But now she looks at him. His face is hurt, open.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Just come home with us. Stop being
crazy.

Alex's eyes go back to the Boyd Car. She can see Maddy
looking for her. Asking the Boyds where Mommy is.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Okay. Not gonna beg.

Sean stomps past her and climbs into his car. Then, he pulls
away. Maddy waves back at Alex, upset. Bye, Mommy!

OFF Alex, feeling like she might die.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

That's good! They don't always do that, either. Court gave me no visitation at all the first time I left Kyle. Calling me "unfit."

(then)

Those suits can say whatever they want. You're a great mom.

ALEX

I never should have left.

DANIELLE

Yes, you should've.

ALEX

He's a great dad, Maddy adores him, and they're home snuggling right now, and I'm alone in a shelter I don't belong in... what *the fuck am I doing here? I must be crazy.*

22pt2 ***Imagined: Alex's Mom, Paula, CACKLING with delight while she Jackson Pollock-style splatter-paints her car.*** 22pt2

DANIELLE

You're here cuz he abused you.

ALEX

He didn't though! He just punched a wall! And the judge said it, I don't have any proof, didn't file--

DANIELLE

Fuck the judge. Punching a wall *next to you* is emotional abuse. Before they bite, they bark. Before they hit you, they hit *near you*. Next time it was gonna be your face and you know it.

ALEX

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

DANIELLE

Stop that. Look at me.

(re: her neck)

This motherfucker tried to strangle me. You think it started like that? You think on our first date, he was all, "pass the salt, someday I'm gonna strangle you"? No. It grows. Like mold.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX
(weakly)
It doesn't matter. I lost Maddy.

Alex wallows in defeat. Danielle gets up; tries a new tactic.

DANIELLE
Okay. We're getting up. You gotta
get off this carpet. Now.

ALEX
Go away.

DANIELLE
I know this carpet. I've been on
this carpet before. I've lost weeks
of my life to this carpet. You
gotta get off this carpet, Alex,
and YOU GOTTA FIGHT.

Danielle takes her hands, tries to pull her up.

ALEX
Stop!

DANIELLE
Get up.

ALEX
No!

DANIELLE
Get up!

ALEX
NO!

DANIELLE
I can't slap you, bitch--we're in a
DV shelter! But you gotta get up.
Seven days is not that long. You
need to get yourself a DV advocate.
Gotta write an account for the
court. Get your ducks rowed UP.

ALEX
...no one will listen to me.

DANIELLE
Look at you, all "no one will
listen." Whine whine whine. Get
angry! You need to dig inside there
and pull that out, mama.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

What he did to you is fucked up.
You gotta start getting MAD AS SHIT
ABOUT IT.

Danielle gets the notebook and a pen that come with this
apartment, on the shelf under the coffee table.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Come on. I'll help ya. Tell me one
thing you're pissed about.

A beat. Alex doesn't answer.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Anything. I don't care what it is,
long as you get fucking mad.

ALEX

Okay.
(thinking, then)
Regina.

DANIELLE

Great. Who's Regina?

ALEX

This woman who stiffed me. I
cleaned her house on Fisher Island,
she refused to pay.

DANIELLE

You did the work and she didn't pay
you?

ALEX

Nope.

DANIELLE

She probably lives in a gorgeous
house too. In her lulu lemon pants,
with her fucking KitchenAid
standing mixer.

Alex NODS, Regina does have that.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

That must make you really angry.

ALEX

...it does.

DANIELLE

Good. Get your coat.

(CONTINUED)

Danielle's up, on the move, tosses Alex her keys.

ALEX

What?

DANIELLE

Let's go. We're pulling up. *That bitch is gonna pay you.*

Danielle stomps out. Alex sits up, surprised.

Alex isn't sure how to respond to this, but this has been a horrible day and... Fuck it. She follows her out.

Perhaps Cardi B's "BODACK YELLOW" takes us OUT to--

23 **EXT. FISHER ISLAND - CURVY ROAD - DAY (D/4)** 23

We watch Danielle's Toyota SPEED down a curvy street, and--

24 **EXT. REGINA'S HOUSE/INT. DANIELLE'S TOYOTA - (MOVING) 24**
FISHER ISLAND - DAY (D/4)

SCREECH to a halt in front of Regina's magnificent house. But weirdly: there are a DOZEN CARS in the driveway.

DANIELLE

Jesus. Are all these cars hers?

Alex spots a real estate sign out front. "Open House."

ALEX

(pointing)

No, look--it's an open house.

DANIELLE

(more excited now)

Ha! Let's fucking go.

ALEX

No! We can't go to an open house.

DANIELLE

Why not? It's an open house. The house is open.

ALEX

Regina's probably not even here.

DANIELLE

But her stuff is! How much did she fleece you for anyway?

(CONTINUED)

24

ALEX

\$37.50.

A beat.

DANIELLE

We're doing this for \$37.50? I could've Venmo'ed you that.

ALEX

I know. I told you, this is stupid.

DANIELLE

No, fuck that. It's the principle. You earned that pathetic \$37.50 and we're getting you \$37.50 worth of something. It's only right.

ALEX

C'mon, I'm serious. I don't steal.

DANIELLE

Who said anything about stealing?

But Danielle's dumping out the contents of her large purse, making room. Then she exits the car and heads to the door.

Shit. Reluctantly, Alex gets out and follows...

25

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - DAY (D/4)

25

JACKIE (40s, a polished realtor with a tag that says "Jackie") opens the door and surveys Danielle and Alex. They don't quite look the part. CLASSICAL MUSIC plays.

JACKIE

Are you here for the open house?

DANIELLE

I'm gonna stop you right there, "Jackie." The question is... are you here to make a sale?

A beat. Jackie has no idea how to receive that...

ALEX

My wife and I are friends of Regina's, from spin class. She said we had to come check this out. Something about a designer nursery?

(CONTINUED)

JACKIE
Gorgeous. Eco-friendly, heated
floors. Come in!
(grabbing her Sharpie)
May I have your names?

ALEX
Taylor. Swiftman.

DANIELLE
Yasmina Jade Skye.

JACKIE
(likes that name)
Oh, lovely.

She writes their names on their name-tag stickers, and puts them on their respective shirts.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Welcome. Make yourselves at home.
My associate's in there to answer
any questions and show you around.

ALEX
Regina's not home, is she?

JACKIE
She stepped out, but I'll be sure
to tell her you say hi, Taylor.

Another COUPLE walks into the foyer and Jackie moves off, to greet them. Danielle and Alex step into the main room--

26 **INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - OPEN LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS (D/4)** 26

In this context, with well-heeled COUPLES walking around, Regina's house looks even nicer. There's a cheese board and a fruit tray and some decanted wine.

DANIELLE
Damn. What do these people do?

ALEX
Not sure.

DANIELLE
This house is really clean. You're good.

ALEX
Thank you. Can we go now?

(CONTINUED)

Danielle points out the associate (KENT, 30s), fanning out brochures and attending to the cheese.

DANIELLE

You distract him. I'm gonna look around.

ALEX

Wait, don't--

Danielle's already disappeared down the hallway that leads to Regina's office. Alex makes her way over to the spread table, starts putting cheese on crackers. Tries to blend in.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(to Kent)

What a beautiful property.

KENT

Yes. So much light.

A beat. He does not think she's a serious buyer.

ALEX

These walls... look solid...?

Alex glances down the hallway. Where is Danielle?

KENT

They're earthquake retro-fitted, finished with plaster.

ALEX

Excellent. And the roof... goes over the whole house, or?

Alex's dying on the vine here. Where's Danielle?

KENT

It doesn't cover the backyard, if that's what you mean.

ALEX

No of course not. Not the backyard.

Danielle's returns, clutching her bag, rushing.

DANIELLE

Love this place! Let's go think it over, honey. Thank you!

Danielle rushes out. Alex follows her, brings her cheese--

27pt1 INT. DANIELLE'S TOYOTA - (MOVING) - MOMENTS LATER (D/4) 27pt1

Danielle SPEEDS away, while Alex buckles in.

DANIELLE

Okay, so, don't be mad. But I found something in her office I just had to take for you.

ALEX

Oh, God. What?

Danielle pulls out a business card from her pocket.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Her business card?

DANIELLE

No, that's not it. That's just how we have her number, so we can text her. The item's in my bag!

ALEX

What?

DANIELLE

Take a look...

Alex opens Danielle's purse, and pulls out... A TEACUP CHIHUAHUA. The dog she was holding when we met her in 101.

ALEX

You stole her dog?!

DANIELLE

No, she came to me! She was just chilling in there, in her little kennel, and I was like: hey buddy and she was like hi, new friend.

ALEX

You can't steal the woman's dog!

DANIELLE

We're not stealing her! We're gonna show her the sights, give her some treats, then text that bitch to bring us \$37.50 or we cut a paw.

ALEX

Turn around! We have to go back. We'll throw him over the gate.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

(to the dog)

Him? Oh no, are you a boy? Dammit,
look at your lil dog junk.

ALEX

You don't understand. I've already
been in court once today. I'm not
getting caught with a stolen dog.

(pointing)

Pull over up here, we'll call and
say we found the dog on the street.

DANIELLE

(re: dog)

But he likes me... we're vibing.

27pt2

ALEX

27pt2

Pull over! Now!

Danielle laughs and puts her blinker on, pulling over...

28

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - PARKING LOT - A BIT LATER (D/4) 28

Danielle comes out of the convenience store with two huge
Slurpees and a beef jerky for the dog. She hands them over
as she approaches. Alex has just hung up her phone.

ALEX

Regina's on her way. Here in five.

Danielle doesn't laugh--she looks down. In fact, she looks
like something's wrong. Something's not right.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You okay?

(thinks she's mad at her)

I'm sorry I ruined your dog fun. I
just can't get arrested right now--

DANIELLE

No, it's not that.

Danielle pulls a phone out of her hoodie. It's on silent, but
it's BUZZING. We see: a man's face is lit up on the screen.
He looks like a nice guy. The screen says: "Kyle calling..."

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

It's the second call. First one was
when I was in line.

Danielle is trembling, looks like she might CRY.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Can you... can you hold it? I don't even want it in my hand.

ALEX

Hold the phone?

DANIELLE

Yes. Can you press ignore for me?

ALEX

(pressing ignore)

Ignore! Yes. Done. It's ignored.

DANIELLE

Thanks...

(unglued)

Just his face.

ALEX

No, sure.

A beat.

DANIELLE

This is what he does. "I love you, I want to see my boy."

ALEX

(reaching for it)

Let's just turn it off--

DANIELLE

He'll just keep calling. And the fucked up thing is, I want him to want to see Max. He's his son.

Her PHONE buzzes again. His face on her screen.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

Be right back.

Danielle steps away, answering the call in a hushed tone. Alex watches her. How vulnerable she is. Nervous.

A Mercedes Sedan PEELS INTO the parking lot and stops in front of Alex and the dog. The door flings open and Regina leaps from the car, still in her pedicure flip-flops.

REGINA

MR. DARCY!? OH THANK GOD!

Regina grabs the dog and showers him with kisses.

(CONTINUED)

REGINA (CONT'D)
(kiss, kiss, kiss)
*My sweet baby! It's okay, Mommy's
here! Yes, Mommy's here!*

More kisses. The display of affection is a bit much.

REGINA (CONT'D)
I don't know how he got out of his
kennel! *How did you get out of your
kennel?* Those realtors must've done
it. *They are gonna hear from me.*
(kiss, kiss)
Where did you find him?

ALEX
Um the street. He walked by with no
person, and I was like, that's not
right...

REGINA
How did he get all the way over
here?

ALEX
Dogs can run far.

REGINA
*But your legs are so short, Mr.
Darcy. So cute and tiny!*

ALEX
Anyway. Glad I was able to help.

REGINA
Yes! Thank you so much! Truly.

And with that, Regina turns and heads towards her car.

Today, with the day Alex has had, and with Danielle's
coaching inside her, Alex is just not okay with this.

ALEX
You don't recognize me. Do you.

REGINA
I'm sorry?

Regina stops and turns back. Looks at Alex.

ALEX
I'm your maid.
(a beat)
I cleaned your house yesterday.

(CONTINUED)

REGINA

Right. You passed out in the nursery.

ALEX

You stiffed me.

A beat.

REGINA

Oh my God... is this...? What is this? *Did you steal my dog?*

ALEX

No, my slightly insane friend borrowed your dog in a potential hostage situation. But I'm returning him to you. I'm the hero.

Regina wheels around and heads back to her car--

REGINA

Oh. My. Fucking. God! Stay there! I'm calling the police!

ALEX

Good! Call the police! I'll tell them what a thief you are. I did that clean. You owe me \$37.50.

Regina's already stomping back to her car with Mr. Darcy.

REGINA

Unbelievable! I don't negotiate with criminals!

ALEX

You're paying me what you owe me.

REGINA

I'M NOT PAYING YOU A DIME! YOU DIDN'T EVEN COME BACK TO FINISH!

Regina is climbing into her car--putting Mr. Darcy in his doggy car seat--

ALEX

I did come back. I was on my way to your house when I got into a terrible car accident on Route 20. And my car was totaled.

Now Regina's heading to her car door, opening it, but Alex's blocking her--

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (CONT'D)

And since my toddler and I were living in the car, we became homeless. And because your cheap ass stiffed me, I wasn't able to feed her or house her or get her off the fucking ferry station floor, so the court actually took her away from me this morning.

(breaking)

So if I'm acting a little bit crazy today... that's why. You lost your dog for two minutes, and I'm really sorry. But I lost my daughter. So you can go fuck yourself. Go fuck yourself! GO FUCK YOURSELF.

A beat. Regina's face is opaque. But then she gets in her car, starts it, and drives off without looking back.

OFF Alex. Yep, figures...

29pt1 **EXT. SEAN'S TRAILER/INT. DANIELLE'S TOYOTA - (MOVING) - 29pt1
EARLY EVENING (E/4)**

Danielle pulls up in front of Sean's trailer, to drop Alex off for her time with Maddy. In the light of day (and through Danielle's fresh eyes) this place looks pretty rough.

Alex eyes the trash in the lawn. An overturned armchair, which is covered in mold. Her eyes linger on this chair.

DANIELLE

This is where you were living? No wonder you're sweating \$37.50.

29pt2 **Flashback: Sean bikes past us, up the driveway, into 29pt2
the front yard of trailer, as it appeared four years ago.
It's still a trailer, but it looks like love lives there. No
trash in the yard. TOM WAITS on the stereo. Sun's out. Some
herbs grow in coffee cans. A cooler of beer on ice.**

**Alex's in a hammock between two pine trees, reading a book. A
stack of books are on the grass under her.**

When she sees Sean, she jumps up and stops a stopwatch.

ALEX

**Five hours, nine minutes, thirty
seconds.**

SEAN

Wow. Sweet.

(CONTINUED)

Sean dumps his bike and gets off, super sweaty. He sprays his head with his water bottle. Takes off his shirt.

ALEX
(joking)
Yeah baby. Take it off.

SEAN
Too bad I can't feel my nuts. I'd give you a proper show, Alaska.

*Alex laughs and tosses him a cold beer. These two are *into* each other. He catches it, cracks it, takes a deep chug.*

ALEX
How many hours do you need to be able to bike in a day?

SEAN
Not hours, miles. Forty. With three month's worth of gear on my bike.
(re: her books)
You supposed to blow through the whole syllabus before class starts?

ALEX
Why else would they put the it online? It's like nerd catnip.

SEAN
(laughs, then)
Anything good?

ALEX
Holy shit. "A River Runs Through It." Makes you want to move to Montana immediately.

SEAN
Good thing you are then.

They stare at each other a beat. This has been a hot, glorious summer that neither of them quite want to be over.

ALEX
I'm not gone yet...

She takes her shirt off and tosses it at him. An invite, which he accepts immediately. OFF them going at it--

The sound of Danielle's phone RINGING brings us back to her car. On the screen, we see "Kyle calling" again.

DANIELLE

This man. How many times does he think I'm gonna listen to his sad-ass pity-party?

(pressing "ignore")

STOP CALLING ME, SLICK.

ALEX

Danielle.

DANIELLE

Yeah?

ALEX

This trailer wasn't always this bad. I just...

(vulnerable)

I don't want you to think this is what I chose. For my daughter.

A beat. Danielle considers this.

DANIELLE

I think your daughter is lucky, that's what I think. She's got you.

(then)

And hey, I know that bitch didn't cough it up today, but you should feel good about yourself. You started fighting back, standing up for yourself. Yelling GO FUCK YOURSELF in random parking lots.

ALEX

Thanks for getting me off the carpet.

Alex and Danielle DAP fists.

DANIELLE

You sure you're okay going in there? It's soon.

ALEX

I promised Maddy I'd do bath-time. It's our thing.

DANIELLE

You want me to come back?

ALEX

No thanks. I'll walk or do the cab.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

Okay, boo. Don't miss curfew.

Danielle blows her a kiss and pulls the car door closed...

30 **EXT. SEAN'S TRAILER - FRONT DOOR - EARLY EVENING (E/4)** 30

Alex approaches the trailer door and KNOCKS. After a moment, Doreen comes to the door. A lit cigarette in hand.

ALEX

Hi, Doreen. I'm here to do bath-time with Maddy.

DOREEN

Oh. We already did it.

A beat.

ALEX

You did bath-time? It's 5:45.

DOREEN

Yeah. She got dirty on the playground, so we did it early.

Bath-time is she & Maddy's thing. No one's done it but her.

ALEX

...Can I come tuck her in?

DOREEN

She's already down. Sean did it before he left for work.

Behind her, a GAME SHOW is back on the TV, and Doreen's distracted. Looking over her shoulder at the TV.

ALEX

Maddy's asleep? At 5:45?

DOREEN

She had a lil cough so we gave her some Robitussin to help her sleep.

ALEX

What? She can't have cough syrup--

DOREEN

(drag of cigarette)
She's almost three. I gave it to all my kids at this age.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DOREEN (CONT'D)
(eager to get back to game)
You have a good night now.

Doreen closes the door. We STAY with Alex as she swallows this pill, considers punching through the door.

Instead, she turns and walks away. We FOLLOW her to--

30A **EXT. RURAL ROAD NEAR SEAN'S TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER** 30A

Alex walks in the direction of town along the side of the road. Trees towering over her. Alone with her thoughts.

31 **EXT. PORT HAMPSTEAD - MAIN STREET - NIGHT (N/4)** 31

The Main Street of Port Hampstead. Alex walks home, down the sidewalk, zipping her jacket up in the night air.

It's a bustling, lively, social night for everyone else in this town. PEOPLE HER AGE are heading in to HAPPY HOURS. A COOL BAND is playing inside one of the bars...

Left and right, she sees happy, well-dressed PROFESSIONALS. Many of them are COUPLES. We STAY with her as she crosses the street, and makes her way up a quiet backstreet to--

32 **EXT. THE SINGING SWAN - PORT HAMPSTEAD - NIGHT (N/4)** 32

Alex arrives at a restaurant door that says: The Singing Swan. It's tiny but packed. She looks in through the storefront windows. PEOPLE eat and drink merrily. She cranes her neck to see past them, to the CROWDED bar that's three-deep...

Her eyes find Sean behind the bar. He's talking animatedly to TWO GIRLS while banging out drinks with a skill that's truly impressive. Cool as a cucumber. The favorite bartender.

The girls eye-fuck him, cracking UP at his story, charmed.

Alex takes him in, from her hidden angle. There's something so familiar about him. It would be easy to go back to him.

The door to The Swan opens, and a BOOZY COUPLE (20s) comes out, LAUGHING. Alex moves away and walks into the night.

Alone, in the middle of the street, she keeps walking...

37 **EXT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - APARTMENT TWO - CONTINUOUS (D/5)** 37

Alex KNOCKS on Danielle's door, eager to celebrate this win.

ALEX

Danielle! It's Alex.

(then)

She PAID! Regina paid! Get out here
and celebrate with me.

A beat. Alex KNOCKS again. No answer.

She tries the doorknob and is surprised to find it unlocked.
The door swings opens wide, and Alex steps inside to find--

38 **INT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - APARTMENT TWO - CONTINUOUS (D/5)** 38

Danielle's apartment has been stripped bare. It's empty.

All her lavender decor and Max's toys are gone. All that
remains is the standard-issue stuff that comes in every
apartment. The place has been reset for the next family.

ALEX

....Danielle?

Alex walks through the place, disbelieving. Checks the
bathroom. Also empty.

OFF Alex, we cut to--

39 **EXT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS (D/5)** 39

ALEX

Excuse me! Denise!

Alex runs up to Denise in the courtyard, where she is doing
an intake tour with ANOTHER WOMAN and her FOUR KIDS.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Where's Danielle?

Denise gives Alex a look that says: not now.

DENISE

Let's meet in my office to speak--

ALEX

What happened to her? *Did you kick
her out?*

(CONTINUED)

DENISE

...No.

ALEX

Her stuff's gone! She's gone!

DENISE

(to the other woman)

I apologize, babygirl. Can you wait here for one moment, please?

Denise takes Alex by the elbow, and pulls her aside.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Danielle checked out. She left.

ALEX

What do you mean she left?

DENISE

(business tone:)

She left shelter. Early this morning. That's all I can say.

ALEX

To go where?

Denise shrugs, but they both know the answer is likely: Kyle.

ALEX (CONT'D)

But... he strangled her.

DENISE

This happens. They go back more often than not.

(quietly)

Takes most women seven tries before they actually leave. This was Danielle's third time here.

ALEX

It was?

DENISE

Took me five tries.

Denise takes a slow inhale and exhale. We see on her face: this job is harrowing. Watching the cycle.

She gives Alex's elbow a pat, then returns to the new family, who Denise is ushering into Danielle's empty apartment...

40 **INT. MCMULLEN HOUSE - APARTMENT ONE - A BIT LATER (D/5)** 40

Alex comes into her apartment and sits down at the kitchenette, shattered by this development with Danielle.

She's not sure what to do with herself now. It's eerie, how quiet this space is without Maddy, and now Danielle too. It seems shabbier. More depressing. Very lonely.

She looks down at the table, at that notebook which is still out from yesterday. She looks at what's written on it:

“ 1.) **REGINA**”

What is that? Oh right, the start of a list. Danielle started it for Alex, of things that made her mad. She takes this in. After a beat, we cut to--

41pt1 **INT. UNCERTAIN LOCATION - NIGHT (N/5)** 41pt1

CLOSE ON Alex. Like in the opening scene, we aren't sure where we are yet. Or why she's talking directly to us.

ALEX

The armchair in the lawn in front of our trailer belongs to me.

41pt2 **Flash: that chair she was looking at when Danielle dropped her off.** 41pt2

ALEX (CONT'D)

You can't tell under all the mold, but it's a pink velvet. When I moved into Sean's trailer, it came with me.

(then)

And when I told him I was pregnant, he sat me down in that chair, and brought me a cup of mint tea, and told me he'd hold my hand every step of the way. All tenderness.

(beat)

But when I told him I was not going to have an abortion, he took that chair, and all the rest of my things, and dumped them outside in the rain. He screamed at me, told me I was a fucking whore who had trapped him, that I was ruining his bike trip and his life, that he would never forgive me.

41pt3 **Flash: Sean's face, purple with rage.** 41pt3

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (CONT'D)

And he hasn't. And I've been afraid
of him since.

Alex looks up at her audience. We REVERSE to REVEAL: she's
speaking to the 100+ little pony army.

ALEX (CONT'D)

That's it. Just something I'm
working on.

(then)

Thank you.

OFF the army of little ponies...

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW