

# **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN MURDER & MAYHEM**

**Written by**

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**FADE IN:**

SEE a picturesque French Norman style country house.

HEAR Tony Bennett's "Stranger in Paradise."

The song and mansion are both surreal. Muted, hazy colors. Lilted, trancelike tunes. A window into a bygone era that is almost too sublime. Just out of reach. HEAR a child's VOICE:

IMOGEN (O.S.)

I've never seen anything so tiny.

Tiny? This? What a strange thing to say.

Things get stranger still. WHEN --

The country manse SPLITS IN HALF --

Cracked open like the whole thing is hinged down the middle. Exposing a perfectly lovely cross-section. All sliced in half with impossible precision BECAUSE --

This isn't a house at all. It's a meticulous 1/32nd scale dollhouse. On a table. In the middle of:

**INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM, "FOUR CHIMNEY'S" ESTATE - NIGHT**

A bespoke child's bedroom. In 2003. **IMOGEN SCOTT** (10) kneels before it in an oversized Wipers concert tee. Mediterranean, brilliant, perceptive. She holds a TINY BAR CART.

IMOGEN

It looks just like your mom's. It even has her brand.

ANNA

Oh please, she'll drink anything. That's a direct quote.

**ANNA COLLIER** (10), a true American WASP, reads People Mag's Bob Hope memoriam in her pale blue Charvet pyjamas. Imogen still plays with this little marvel.

IMOGEN

It's an exact replica of a 1930's Jean Michel Frank. But there's no way...

(pressing a piece of the toy)

There sure is.

(a drawer pops open)

A hidden compartment.

ANNA

Wait what?

IMOGEN

Your mom keeps her first engagement ring in there. The one she got from that polo player.

ANNA

How do you know all this stuff?

IMOGEN

Because, Anna - I pay attention.

ANNA

(clearly delighted)

You're so weird.

IMOGEN

You love it.

Anna smiles. She does. She goes back to her magazine. Imogen checks that Anna's not looking, then stealthily pockets the perfect miniscule bar cart. That little thief!

KIRA (PRE-LAP)

Imogen. What do you have there?

**INT. FOYER, "FOUR CHIMNEY'S ESTATE - NIGHT**

**KIRA SCOTT** (30) buttons a second-hand coat around Imogen, who opens her fist to reveal the stolen bar cart.

KIRA

Imogen. We've talked about this.

IMOGEN

She didn't even know what it was.

KIRA

Doesn't make it right.

IMOGEN

It's not fair. They get to own all the beautiful things.

KIRA

The Colliers have more than they could ever want. But that's not always a blessing.

IMOGEN

Is it a blessing to be poor?

Kira sighs. Brushes the hair from her daughter's face.

KIRA

You have more than you think you do.  
You see things. Things that other  
people don't bother to notice.

Kira pops open the secret compartment. Ah. *She sees it too.*

KIRA (CONT'D)

Anyone can have a toy. You have a gift.

A commanding MAN'S VOICE calls out. HEAR footsteps draw near.

Imogen's POV: SEE the wavy, distorted, normally-square-jawed reflection of **LAWRENCE COLLIER** in a convex mirror. Fret not -- we will get a good look at him later.

LAWRENCE COLLIER (O.S.)

Kira, I can't find the Bangkok orders.

KIRA

Left hand filing cabinet, second folder  
in, under Bangkok.

LAWRENCE COLLIER (O.S.)

Ah, yes. I'd be lost without you.

Lawrence walks back to his office and SHUTS the door.

IMOGEN

He should give you a raise.

KIRA

And what should you do?

IMOGEN

Fine. I'll put it back.

KIRA

Good girl.

Kira KISSES Imogen's forehead. She takes the toy and runs back up the stairs. A Breguet Hall Clock CHIMES 9:00.

**EXT. "THE FOUR CHIMNEY'S" ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER**

The Collier's MAJOR DOMO lets Imogen out through a 10-ft-high door. REVEAL: the Collier Family Manse, "The Four Chimney's" looks exactly like Anna's dollhouse.

IMOGEN

Night, Bruno!

MAJOR DOMO  
See you soon, I hope.

Kira waits in her cream-colored Karmann Ghia hardtop at the end of the gravel drive, 50 yards away. Imogen waves, she's coming. Kira starts the car. The engine struggles to turn over with a charming RATTLE until...

THE CAR ERUPTS IN FLAMES.

IMOGEN  
Mommy!

Instinctively, she RUNS toward the burning car, but Bruno pulls her away. Imogen kicks and flails. Heartbroken.

**EXT. HILLTOP CEMETERY - DAY**

Rain rains. It's Seattle. See the Space Needle way out yonder.

Imogen stares at a freshly carved marble stone:

**KIRA SCOTT**  
***Beloved Mother***  
**1971 - 2003**

Imogen doesn't cry. She looks ANGRY, not sad. Angry at the world. Angry at being alone. She TOSSES a single peony onto the turf. Right where her mother's heart would be. THEN --

HEAR a VOICE. A British accent that never quite kicked its Brighton roots. **RUFUS COTEWORTH**. We'll meet him later.

*RUFUS (V.O.)*  
*Pay attention. Details matter.*

**GLASSY WATER REFLECTING AN ADRIATIC SKY**

Pierced by a SWIMMER in a yolk-yellow one-piece.

*RUFUS (V.O.)*  
*If you want to solve a crime, any*  
*crime, you must first learn to see*  
*through the illusion.*

The surface settles, back to glass. Reflecting clouds above. And we realize we are:

EXT. SS VARUNA - POOL DECK - DAY

A rooftop pool. In Present Day. Atop a lavishly refurbished and updated 1950's ocean liner. Our swimmer in the yellow suit glides beneath the water. But we move past her --

*RUFUS (V.O.)  
For the world itself is a funhouse  
built to deceive.*

SUNBATHERS read kindles on striped deck chairs -- BLUE HAIRE D LADIES in tailored linen suits play bridge at a cafe table -- UNIFORMED BARTENDERS serve cocktails in crystal behind an ornate brass bar -- the camera keeps moving as --

-- a WOMAN in a hot pink Oscar de la Renta coverup grabs two crystal coupe glasses from the bar. This is Imogen's childhood friend, **ANNA COLLIER**. Now 28.

She glides toward the pool. Our swimmer in yellow towels off.

ANNA  
Imogen!

Ah. Yellow suited swimmer is 28-year-old **IMOGEN**. Grown, but with those same perceptive eyes. A smile.

*RUFUS (V.O.)  
What is real is precious. And rare.*

Anna hands her one of the coupe glasses. Imogen sips. Tastes. Really thinks. Because, this is a game:

IMOGEN  
French 75, obviously.

ANNA  
And the champagne?

IMOGEN  
Fruitier than Dom... very little bite.  
(another sip)  
Krug Grand Cuvée Blancs de blancs. '98.

ANNA  
You never miss.

Anna offers a little golf clap. They sit.

IMOGEN  
Can't help notice your wife is MIA.  
Again.

ANNA

The sun is no good for migraines. And I don't need judgment from the woman who was carried out of the ballroom by security last night.

IMOGEN

Hey, I'm an orphan with a rich friend. That's a lifetime pass for questionable behavior.

ANNA

That security guard, by the way... I don't think God could've carved a man to be *more* your type.

IMOGEN

God is dead. Jules, on the other hand --

ANNA

Of course his name is Jules.

Imogen SMIRKS. A smirk that could mean many things. Then picks up the menu as a purposeful diversion.

IMOGEN

Do they serve anything without caviar?

ANNA

Why would we want that?

IMOGEN

We wouldn't.

Before Imogen can get her hand up to signal for service --

WAITER (O.S.)

How may I help you, Madame?

-- a UNIFORMED WAITER is there. As if by magic.

ANNA

Ah!

IMOGEN

That takes getting used to. I think we'd like...

WAITER

What you had at the Palm Court Bar last evening?

IMOGEN

Andjustlikethat, I'm used to it.

WAITER

Very good. One of everything then.  
 (Anna is about to say...)  
 And two more French 75s.

He's already got them on a tray. Imogen commiserates:

IMOGEN

You must be exhausted.

WAITER

If you can tell, then I have failed.

He GOES. Anna and Imogen clink glasses.

IMOGEN

To your father, for retiring in style.

ANNA

To paradise.

UGLY AMERICAN (O.S.)

YOU GOTTA BE FUCKING KIDDING ME.

HEAR: *The Aggressive American Male* -- an invasive species identified by poor taste and over-confident volume. This specimen has a bulbous face which can be seen in his private cabana. Tommy Bahama shirt, another tell-tale identifier.

UGLY AMERICAN (CONT'D)

You think it's okay to set a drink next to this? This watch cost fifty grand. Hear me, pal? Fifty thousand American.

He waves THE UGLIEST WATCH YOU EVER SAW at a WAITER.

We can't quite SEE the Waiter in question. Nor can we hear his quiet apology. But we hear Ugly American all right. As he waves his TOO-FAT MONEY CLIP.

UGLY AMERICAN (CONT'D)

Your tip was in here. Was.

ON IMOGEN: Her jaw is set. Anna knows that expression well.

ANNA

Please, Imogen. Leave it alone.

IMOGEN

What fun would that be?



INT. SS VARUNA - UGLY AMERICAN'S CABANA - MOMENTS LATER

Ugly American slurps his cocktail through a straw. Imogen leans in, all smiles. Eyes his wristwatch. *Hideous*.

IMOGEN

It's just the worst. I mean, you pay for impeccable service, that's what you expect.

UGLY AMERICAN

My point exactly.

IMOGEN

And you made your point so *eloquently*.  
(uh-oh -- *danger*)  
How did you put it?

UGLY AMERICAN

I... what are you asking?

IMOGEN

What you said to him.

And the wind goes out of his sails. He backpedals.

UGLY AMERICAN

I said uh... I don't remember.

IMOGEN

I think you said that your watch costs more than he makes in a year.  
(indicating his watch)  
Which by the way, I believe completely. It's not enough that people like you get to own all the beautiful things in the world, you need to own the ugly things too.

He pauses. Stares her up and down.

UGLY AMERICAN

You know what I think?

IMOGEN

Please. Blow my feeble mind.

UGLY AMERICAN

I think you wanna be seen like some kinda bleeding heart limousine liberal kumbaya let's bow down to the working man type. But that's not who you are. You don't belong up here, do you? You didn't pay your way.

(MORE)

## UGLY AMERICAN (CONT'D)

You're an interloper. And if I can tell... sweetheart, so can everyone else.

(and she goes speechless)

Tell me I'm wrong.

## IMOGEN

No, you got me pegged.

She staggers off. BUT. BUT! Her blank expression turns into a delighted smile. SEE --

**A KEYCARD** stealthily hidden in her palm.

## RUFUS (V.O.)

*What is real is hidden. By distraction.  
By our own misperceptions. But it is  
there. Waiting to be uncovered.*

**FLASH TO MOMENTS EARLIER:** Imogen moves toward Ugly American. This time, WE SEE her PLUCK the keycard from his Tommy Bahama shirt pocket. He doesn't feel her skilled lift.

**BACK WITH IMOGEN:** Strutting off. Keycard in hand. A-ha! We understand -- grown-up Imogen is a thief. And a good one.

INT. SS VARUNA - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A light green, silk-on-silk Pakistani rug lines the oak-paneled hall. A pair of LACED ANKLE BOOTS moves silently. Imogen, now in a hunter-green jumpsuit.

## RUFUS (V.O.)

*Even the job itself is misunderstood.  
The detective's duty has never been to  
right the wrongs of our dysfunctional  
society.*

She stops. As a DRUNK WOMAN IN A FLOPPY HAT stumbles by. Imogen turns her face from view. Waits until she's alone. THEN -- She scans the brass plaques on each door. Checks the number against her pilfered keycard: 7134. Swipes.

INT. UGLY AMERICAN'S SUITE, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ugly American's DEEP SNORING echoes from the bedroom as Imogen's fingertips sweep a lacquered desktop. This ship is a work of art. And Ugly American's things clash. His rumpled Tommy Bahama strewn on the linen-covered brass bar cart. A ketchup stain on the Chinese deco-style rug.

*RUFUS (V.O.)  
For a crime, in and of itself, is not  
just or unjust. Fair or unfair.*

Imogen picks up a STAINLESS SPEAR FISHING GUN. Weighs it in her hands. Weird thing, this. She moves off to the bedroom --

**INT. UGLY AMERICAN'S SUITE, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Ugly American's ass crack hangs out of his nautical-motif boxers, undulating with every hideous SNORE. Imogen's eyes sweep the room until she finds his UGLY WATCH.

*RUFUS (V.O.)  
In point of fact, it is when a  
detective goes off hunting for justice  
that he makes his gravest mistake.*

She holds the watch. Fuck is this thing hideous. She waits for Ugly American to unleash his next snore THEN --

SMASHES the timepiece against the table. The face SHATTERS. Forever frozen at 2:17am. Ugly American only snores louder.

Imogen PLUCKS his money clip off the night stand. Peels away a few hundreds. Nothing he'll miss.

**INT. SS VARUNA - HALLWAY - NIGHT/DAY**

Imogen slips quietly down the hall, out of sight...

*RUFUS (V.O.)  
The job of the sleuth is simple: find  
the truth. The truth at all cost.*

We stay on the door as we --

**TIMELAPSE:** Dawn breaks. Elegant BREAKFAST-GOERS move past. Then sunbathers. A FAT KID glued to his phone (we'll meet him later). Ugly American's door never opens. Until...

A housekeeper, HUA, pulls her cart into view, bringing a song with her through her earbuds: "Stranger in Paradise." She knocks twice. No answer.

HUA  
Housekeeping!

**INT. UGLY AMERICAN'S SUITE, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The room is just as Imogen left it. Hua enters. Humming the melody as she does. She pulls the bar cart into the hall to be bussed. Dumps out trash cans and melted ice buckets.

*RUFUS (V.O.)*

*We've made a mess of the truth. We argue it. We call it "alternative." We do not trust in the things we see.*

She ENTERS the bedroom now --

And SCREAMS. A full-body shriek. BECAUSE --

IMPALED to the wall by a sport fishing spear which struck him square in the sternum is Ugly American. Nude, save for his boxers. Blood pools at his feet. Think Damien Hirst-meets-Andres Serrano contemporary shock-art -- an image rich with metaphor. You can't look away, even though it is awful.

*RUFUS (O.S.)*

*But the truth is all. Without it, friend - we are sunk.*

**THIS IS A GOOD TIME FOR A TRANSITION:**

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING**

Imogen stirs, cat-like. A satisfied smile. Remembering last night's daring robbery? No. Because as she walks across plush carpet and pulls back rich velvet drapes, we REVEAL --

A tree-top view of **CORFU, GREECE**. We're in a Renaissance monastery repurposed as a luxe hotel. On *land*. When? Well, we'll be wondering exactly that as we CUT TO:

**EXT. CORFU - HOTEL COURTYARD - DAY**

Anna sits at a cafe table, a breakfast spread before her -- olives, feta, ham, yogurt with figs and almonds. She is casually resplendent in linen shorts and a big sun hat. Money on vacation, *par excellence*. Imogen pulls up a chair.

IMOGEN

And where's Marina this morning?

ANNA

Headache. It's the jet-lag.

(Imogen's not buying *that*)

I ordered ahead.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

There's a local designer around the corner who's opening early for us. The boat departs at 10. Try the feta.

Ah. So, it's the day the SS Varuna sets sail. Which means... Imogen hasn't yet stolen that watch. And Ugly American is still alive. Don't worry, reader, we'll catch up.

**INT. ATELIER - DAY**

A boutique inside a 1,000-year-old wine cave. Minimalist furnishings go so well in here. Anna and Imogen examine the single rack of jewel-toned clothes.

ANNA

Gorgeous. Right? And all the colors come from flowers they pick themselves.

Imogen turns to the DESIGNER, a Greek-chic hipster.

IMOGEN

I saw you written up in Purple but it looks like this whole rack was in the spread.

(gauntlet thrown!)

My friend is looking for something... unique.

Designer looks at Anna. Seems to approve of her outfit. And so, she opens a back DOOR --

DESIGNER

Please, this way.

**INT. THE WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS**

Perfectly industrial. A single purple flower sits beneath a skylight. At a central work table, FOUR OLD LADIES argue in Greek as they cut cloth with shears. On a form nearby, SEE a hot-pink cocktail dress. Anna's eyes light.

DESIGNER

Made for a mistress to a Russian minister but they never come back.

IMOGEN

It's one-of-one?

DESIGNER

Right now it is just an idea. Until you put it on, it is nothing really.

IMOGEN  
And it's pink, too.

Anna smiles. Imogen smiles. Designer does not know how.

ANNA  
Where I would be without you?

IMOGEN  
And what would you be wearing?  
(to Designer)  
She'll take it.

**EXT. CORFU - DAY**

Imogen holds open the door. Anna squeezes through, six bags in each hand. They wind up the cobblestone hillside. Down below, the stunning bright blue Ionian Sea. And on it --

A ship. A masterpiece, really.

IMOGEN  
We're gonna be trapped on that thing  
for 10 days?

ANNA  
I'm so sorry I dragged you into this.

They laugh. And now WE --

FLOAT UP away above the hills. And DOWN to the marina.

Floating past smaller boats in slips to find --

**THE SS VARUNA.** Restored to 1950's perfection with lavish attention. We TRAVEL the length of the deck and then make a tasteful right turn into the opulence of:

**INT. SS VARUNA - CELESTIAL BALLROOM - DAY**

The massive UNIFORMED STAFF is assembled to be lectured by --

**TEDDY GAO** (30s, Chinese). Elegant as any of her guests. She speaks in a bought-and-paid-for Eton accent. She is the Maitre D', and in many ways the very soul of our ship.

TEDDY  
"The world is ugly and the people are sad." Wallace Stevens wrote that. And he died in 1955, the lucky fuck.  
(MORE)

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Imagine if he saw the dumpster fire it is now. But all of that ugliness? Stays on shore.

**EXT. SS VARUNA - HELICOPTER ESTABLISHING SHOTS - DAY (MOS)**

CREW MEMBERS wheel matched luggage down the promenade deck. GUESTS in 2022 Spring/Summer Resort Wear mill about. WAITERS loft champagne on silver trays.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*When we sail these rolling waters, we leave the real world behind. And let me tell you who paid for the privilege.*

**EXT. SS VARUNA - UPPER DECK PROW - DAY (MOS)**

Perfectly weathered **LAWRENCE COLLIER** (60s, white, American). He gazes out on the Adriatic as if thinking, "I'll take it."

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Mr. Lawrence Collier of Seattle. He sails to celebrate his retirement from a storied career as CEO of Collier Mills, the firm which makes the fabric that is cut-and-sewed into every uniform you've ever worn. He is to be addressed as Sir. Never break eye contact. And do not, under any circumstances, let him see you sweat. He and his wife foot the bill for one third of our guests.*

**LISA COLLIER** (50s, white, American) joins her husband at the prow. He reaches for her hand. She swats it away like she's swatting a gnat.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*His wife Lisa is a philanthropist, a christian, and devotee of chilled vodka. Never serve her a drink above 5 degrees centigrade.*

Lisa takes a sip of a sub-par drink and DUMPS it overboard.

**INT. SS VARUNA - HALLWAY/ANNA'S SUITE - DAY (MOS)**

A SLEEK BLACK SUITCASE rolls. Then another. 17 in all.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Their daughter Anna is expected to take over for her father as CEO of Collier Mills. This is no simple case of nepotism. Anna Collier is a shark.*

ANNA oversees suitcase delivery into her suite where... Four-inch heels stand on a chair. PAN UP looong legs to reveal **MARINA** (20s, Mexican-American), her perfect-looking wife. Marina is... unscrewing a lightbulb. Huh. Marina studies the bulb like it contains the secrets of the univese. Double-huh.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Anna and her new wife Marina have requested a room on the south side of the ship to avoid 5g contamination. Marina has certain... peculiarities.*

**INT. SS VARUNA - IMOGEN'S SUITE - DAY**

Imogen pulls the YOLK YELLOW SUIT out of her suitcase. It has a magnetic ANTI-THEFT tag still attached. With practiced ease, she uses her very own magnetic gun to remove it.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Anna's childhood friend Imogen Scott also travels with the family. Ms. Scott, too, has worked for Collier Mills since college, but unlike her prodigious meal ticket, she remains a middling marketing executive of no consequence to us, but for her close relationship with the Collier family.*

**INT. SS VARUNA - PALM COURT GAME ROOM - DAY (MOS)**

CLOSE ON: a JACK OF SPADES being dealt. **TRIP COLLIER** (30s, white, American) throws a handful of chips at the DEALER.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Anna's older brother, Lawrence III, or Trip, is a self-employed "entrepreneur." Trip has launched many enterprises, all of which have failed.*

Dealer reveals her cards. Trip SWEARS and SLAMS his fist to the table. Dealer sweeps the pot. Trip SNIFFS hard.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*What he has succeeded at is... cocaine. As might be expected, the Colliers always travel with their family lawyer.*



INT. SS VARUNA - PRIVATE SUITE BATHROOM - DAY (MOS)

**LLEWELLYN MATHERS** (50s, white, American) SCREAMS into his phone, seated on his toilet. Laptop open on bare thighs. A female HOUSEKEEPER enters. Mathers doesn't close the door. He... enjoys this.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Llewellyn Mathers is to be waited on only by male staff and considered a liability to all female civilians in ports-of-call. To balance those unseen scales, the Colliers also travel with the family priest.*

INT. SS VARUNA -BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

**FATHER TOBY HARKNESS**, (50s, Black, American) neck fat bulging from a priest collar, reads in the bleachers of a stunning old-timey gymnasium.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Father Toby Harkness drags along his son, known to the world as Fat Derek.*

12-year-old **FAT DEREK** shoots a WILD AIRBALL and then mugs to his cellphone on a tripod, LIVESTREAMING for his "fans."

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Fat Derek is a rising Tik Tok star. Surely, in his celestial home, Wallace Stevens weeps for us all.*

INT. SS VARUNA - HILARIOUS TRIPLE-HEIGHT SUITE - DAY

A nerf dart sails past, nailing **ELEANOR CHUN** (20s, Chinese) square in the forehead. She cusses out her YOUNG COUSINS who are engaged in a nerf gun war. They do not pay her any mind.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*The Chun Family are booked into our Monaco Suite. The Chuns operate a global chain of steakhouses which has purchased one-fourth of France's most recent Bordeaux vintage.*

The CHUN FAMILY FATHERS argue and smoke on the balcony. The MOTHERS argue and tip the BELLHOPS.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*You may recognize their personal security detail, Rufus Cotesworth.*

**RUFUS COTESWORTH** (40s, Nigerian-British) stares pensively into space. In fact: it's his headshot on the cover of the Cantonese translation of his book, *On Solving Impossible Crimes*, tossed on a table.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Once heralded as the World's Greatest Detective, Mr. Cotesworth is now nothing but an hourly employee. Even so, when you are in his presence, be vigilant. He sees what others do not bother to notice.*

TRAVEL UP the three-story suite to the top level -- Where the real Rufus Cotesworth is slumped, flask in his sleeping hand. He is nattily attired in a (wrinkled) P Johnson suit and (battered) Cleverley loafers. His face is weather-beaten since his jacket cover photo was snapped.

**INT. SS VARUNA - PALM COURT BATHROOM - DAY**

Someone with smartly manicured french nails uses a black card to meticulously set a few lines of cocaine on the polished marble countertop. Meet **ALEXANDRA HOCHENBERG** (50s, Black/white, American), possessed by unearned confidence.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Rounding out the Collier's guest list is Governor Alexandra Hochenberg of the state of Washington. She is a dear and trusted friend of the family.*

Alexandra blows three lines. Then, makes way for Trip Collier who finishes the rest off. Trip really loves cocaine.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*And finally, Mr. Keith Trubitsky...*

**EXT. OPEN SEA - SPORT FISHING BOAT - DAY**

Ugly American -- our murder victim -- who we now know is **KEITH TRUBITSKY**, STEADIES himself. Aims. FIRES his stainless steel speargun into the water. Two Varuna STAFF look at each other: This dude couldn't hit a fish if it was on his plate.

*TEDDY (V.O.)*

*Mr. Trubitsky is the inventor of a commercial plumbing fixture that made him the wealthiest resident of Indianapolis, Indiana.*

**INT. CELESTIAL BALLROOM - DAY**

A young employee, **WINNIE** (20s, Chinese), sneaks in late.

TEDDY

Our guests look to you to transport  
them from the crude world they inhabit  
to a bygone era of beauty and style. It  
is a spell we cast. Do not be the one  
to break it. Dismissed.

The crew splits. Teddy approaches Winnie. Doesn't bother scolding her for being late. Instead she micro-adjusts Winnie's scarf and strides off. Winnie goes red. *The shame.*

**INT. SS VARUNA - HALLWAY - DAY**

Imogen takes in the posh digs. The low light. The midcentury "prancing zebra" wallpaper. So she doesn't hear the elevator's *DING!* Doors open. And --

Rufus Cotesworth steps out. Ramp to EXTREME SLOW MOTION --

**IMOGEN'S POV:** Rufus moves into the hall. She DUCKS behind a bookcase. Her heart POUNDS. Rufus's loafers pad by. She SNEAKS a look -- did Rufus see her? Hard to say. But then again. Rufus was once paid handsomely to see *everything*.

We RAMP UP to regular speed. Imogen looks at her hands. They're shaking. She commands them to stop. And they do.

**INT. SS VARUNA - ANNA'S SUITE, LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Imogen storms in, still reeling from the encounter.

IMOGEN

You're never going to fucking guess  
who's on this ship --

She stops short because Anna is sitting with Trip.

IMOGEN (CONT'D)

Ah. Trip.

TRIP

Fat-face.

IMOGEN

(re: his nose)  
You got a little something...

Marina enters from the bathroom, arms full of --

LIGHTBULBS. Stay with us.

Marina stacks them on the bed, then unscrews a bulb from a WWII-era campaign desk. As she moves out of earshot again.

ANNA

Don't ask.

Imogen slides into a club chair and pours herself a drink.

IMOGEN

Yeahbutno. Seriously.

TRIP

Listening devices. Viktor Sams is everywhere, you know.

IMOGEN

Oh. She's still on Viktor Sams?

ANNA

(she dry-swallows two pills)  
Dr. Mark says I need to listen more.

Then, from the bedroom: A *RAGGED SHRIEK OF TERROR!*

**INT. SS VARUNA - ANNA'S SUITE, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Imogen and Anna run in, Trip stumbles in behind them. Marina is shaking, backing out of the room. POINTING --

At a tasteful little ABSTRACT PAINTING above the bed.

IMOGEN

Okay. That is odd.

MARINA

It's a message.

TRIP

It's a painting.

IMOGEN

No. Yes. But - it's by Diego Flora Fuentes. Your sister bought up and then dumped a shitload of his work.

TRIP

And that's... that's bad. Right?

Anna has been moving closer to the painting. It IS odd.

ANNA

It's just a coincidence.

MARINA

No! Someone hung it here on purpose.

ANNA

Sweetheart, it's Day 1, we're gonna be on this boat 10 days let's... work on our breathing.

MARINA

This has Viktor Sams's fingerprints all over it.

ANNA

Well now, hold on. What reason would he have to target us?

TRIP

Yes. Please. Marina - tell us how you've crossed the great and powerful Viktor Sams?

ANNA

Do not belittle her.

MARINA

Do *not* talk for me.

IMOGEN

Okay, Trip - off you fuck.

She pushes Trip out into the hall as Marina paces. Clenching and unclenching her fists. Anna mouths: *Thank you* to Imogen.

**INT. SS VARUNA - HALLWAY - DAY**

Imogen and Trip walk together. Imogen is CONCERNED about her friend. Trip... has a different take:

TRIP

It's 2021. You can get a divorce out of a vending machine. Honestly, I don't know what she's doing.

Imogen wonders the same. Just then --

Keith Trubitsky, our Ugly American, exits suite 7134, belly hanging out of a *different* Tommy Bahama shirt.

TRIP (CONT'D)

Catch ya later, Fat-face. Potential investor coming in hot.

(jogging after Keith)

Yo! My man. You get a chance to read my prospectus yet?

A-ha! Trip knows Trubitsky. Could this go to the MOTIVE of Trubitsky's murder? A business deal gone bad? Only time will tell...

**INT. SS VARUNA - RECEPTION DESK - DAY**

Imogen approaches. A 4-foot bouquet of flowers amid a sea of polished wood. A young Japanese RECEPTIONIST finishes a call in Spanish. Picks up a DIFFERENT phone. Offers a chipper response in French. Turns to Imogen and guesses her language:

RECEPTIONIST

*Buona sera, signora.*

IMOGEN

I'm. Sorry - I'm American.

RECEPTIONIST

Americans always apologize.

IMOGEN

Not enough. I was hoping... I wanted to leave a note for a guest. Not sure what room he's in. Rufus Cotesworth?

RECEPTIONIST

Oh. The world-famous detective. He is not a guest.

IMOGEN

But I saw him. Didn't I? Is he working?

RECEPTIONIST

I'm not at liberty to say.

IMOGEN

So, he is. For who? For you? For the ship? Is he on a case?

RECEPTIONIST

He is not under our employ. I cannot disclose anymore about --

IMOGEN

So he's working for someone on the boat but it's not you. Okay. Thank you.

Imogen walks off. Gears turning.

**INT. SS VARUNA - TEDDY'S OFFICE - DAY**

Teddy closes the door. Young employee Winnie rolls her eyes as Teddy slides soundlessly behind her desk.

TEDDY

Winnie, I don't ask more of you. I just need you to be prompt. And in uniform.

WINNIE

But the bare minimum is not how I get where you are, right? *Maitre D'*. If they could see you now back in Kowloon. I'm bored of this speech.

TEDDY

You know what the very best part of my job is?

(Winnie stares - waiting for:)

Sunil lets me fire anyone I want.

WINNIE

Second part first: *Sunil*? How familiar you are. And - you can't fire me. Not if you don't want a lecture from Mom at New Years.

TEDDY

If not that, it'll be something else.

They both smile. Ah. They're SISTERS. And love each other.

Teddy stands. Opens her arms. *Fine*. GEEZ. Winnie gives her a hug. But then, Teddy pulls her back. Wrinkles her nose.

WINNIE

I borrowed your perfume. Sorry.

TEDDY

I worry. There are temptations. You spend enough time around these people, you start to think like them. Act like them. Except you can't, really. Because they have something that protects them everywhere they go.

WINNIE

And what is that?

TEDDY

Money.

INT. SS VARUNA - CELESTIAL BALLROOM - NIGHT

A party is built. Silver is polished. Peony stems are cut. Place settings are laid. A jazz quartet tunes up. Bartenders slice lemons. Teddy oversees. It could be the TO CATCH A THIEF premiere except for Teddy marking items on an ipad.

**NOW WE'RE FULL-SWING:**

Jazz band plays. BLACK TIE-CLAD GUESTS mingle. Booze flows.

Imogen enters. Her sparkling jumpsuit is a showstopper. Dark lips. Hair swept back. She's Audrey Hepburn meets punk rock and everyone notices. SHE SPOTS --

Anna in that hot pink one-off cocktail dress she bought in Corfu. But sadly surrounded by BOARD MEMBERS. Anna sneaks a little wave at her friend.

Imogen glides to the bar. Men watch. Wives swat them. (It happens, people.) She slides into a seat next to a STRANGER.

As she waits for a bartender, she looks UP. On the ceiling, an inlaid-brass constellation map depicts the night sky.

STRANGER

Pretty, isn't it?

IMOGEN

(staring at the art piece)

It's a Giacometti. He only made a few of these. They must've paid a fortune to have it installed here.

STRANGER

It took three cranes.

And now Imogen turns to the Stranger. Who is shockingly, Royal-Shakespeare-Company main stage handsome and charming. Imogen notices. He is **SUNIL RANJA** (30s, Pakistani-British). He extends a hand.

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Sunil. I am the... there must be a better word for it but the mind disappoints.

IMOGEN

You own the boat.

SUNIL

I do. You Americans never parse words.



IMOGEN

We're #1 at adult-onset diabetes, so.  
Good with the bad.

(looking up at the Giacometti)  
It's incredible. And it's... real.

SUNIL

Down to every splinter. She's as real  
as we could make her and still float.  
Our rule was, if you can see it, it  
should have been made prior to 1955.  
The year the Varuna first sailed.

IMOGEN

So... the glassware?

SUNIL

Curated from antique shops across  
Ireland and Wales. You know what was  
tricky? The *towels*.

IMOGEN

That must have cost you a fortune.  
(Sunil: *more than that*)  
Why not just go with reproductions?

SUNIL

I promised a genuine experience.

IMOGEN

Literally no one would know the  
difference.

SUNIL

You did.

IMOGEN

But they --  
(gesturing at the crowd)  
Don't care. You wasted your money,  
friend.

Imogen PICKS UP a glass of champagne and walks off. Sunil  
watches her, entranced.

**ANGLE ON THE DOOR:** Our future murder victim, Trubitsky, tries  
to enter the soirée. An athletic, dangerous(ly-handsome)  
Senegalese-French SECURITY GUARD (30s) blocks him.

SECURITY GUARD

I am so sorry sir but the Celestial  
Ballroom is closed for a private party.

TRUBITSKY

Why so sad, Jean-Claude. Maybe this'll  
change your mood.

Trubitsky palms him a \$100 bill. Security Guard looks at it like it's a losing lottery ticket, then tucks it into Trubitsky's pocket.

SECURITY GUARD

I cannot accept gratuities. And  
certainly not in American paper.

**ANGLE ON ANNA:** Who chats with a Board Member's SPANISH WIFE.

SPANISH WIFE

And where is your lovely bride tonight?

ANNA

Sadly, she is down with a migraine. She  
sends her apologies.

(overflowing)

She had an accident a few months ago. I  
begged her to quit her job. I shouldn't  
have done that, maybe. She's all alone  
now in our house and - I don't know why  
I'm telling you any of this.

(okay now she's emotional)

If she were here, we would be laughing.  
She has the most infectious laugh. I'm  
sorry.

An awkward beat. Broken mercilessly by Imogen's arrival.

SPANISH WIFE

I love your ensemble.

IMOGEN

Thank you. I stole everything I'm  
wearing.

Spanish Wife can't tell if Imogen's kidding. Anna sniffs back a tear. Spanish Wife needs to be rid of these two. So she laughs. And turns back to her husband. Imogen wonders:

IMOGEN (CONT'D)

Tonight the night?

ANNA

Doubtful. I mean, everyone else seems  
to think he'll announce. But dad does  
like to keep people on their toes.

IMOGEN

I swear to God, Anna, if he fucks you over on this --

ANNA

He won't. He's tee'd it up with the board. I'm next in line, it's just matter of when.

**ANGLE ON THE BAR:** Sunil eyes Imogen. Teddy slides up.

TEDDY

Mrs. Chun would be especially grateful if you took time to get to know her granddaughter Eleanor. She's the pretty one.

SUNIL

Yes but sadly, I believe Eleanor prefers the company of the fairer sex.

TEDDY

She's still gotta get her steps in. A stroll around the deck would go a long way with the grandmother. Whose pockets, may I remind you, are deep as the Mariana trench.

Oh. That's interesting. Sunil is NERVOUS ABOUT MONEY.

**ANGLE ON THE CENTER TABLE:** Trip steps up to the mic. *Tap-tap.* His taut skin is glossed by coke-sweat.

TRIP

Hey everyone. Everybody. Thank you. Yeah. Thank you for coming. To honor my old man. Papa bear.

(Lawrence grimaces - nope)

My dad. A man with standards so high, he wouldn't even hire his own son!

(plop - that sinks)

Anyway. Give it up for Lawrence Collier the second!

APPLAUSE. Lawrence Collier takes the mic.

LAWRENCE COLLIER

I have always been a man of few words.

Pregnant pause. Anna leans forward, excited despite herself. This is the moment he should announce her takeover. But --

That's really it. Lawrence hands the mic back to Trip. Some guests are confused. Others laugh. Anna downs her Negroni.

IMOGEN

Here we are - on our toes.

Anna forces a smile. Then, it gets worse. When Legal Counsel Llewellyn Mathers slithers up, glassy eyed. Tries to aim vibes at Imogen.

MATHERS

Imogen Scott... You look just like your mother did at that age. 28. The best age. The best age of all.

IMOGEN

I'm looking forward to my 60's, actually. Are you enjoying them?

ANNA

Llewellyn, aren't you late for work? The Hong Kong office has been open for an hour.

He raises a glass -- right you are. And slithers away.

IMOGEN

See? Life is a comedy. It's a dark comedy. And it isn't funny. And -- mother-fucker.

Because... Imogen HEARS a thick Brighton accent --

*RUFUS (O.S.)*

*Everyone thought the Contessa's jade necklace had been lost forever. They just hadn't looked at the problem from the correct vantage.*

**AT A TABLE NEARBY:** Rufus entertains a gaggle of guests.

*RUFUS (CONT'D)*

*... people go on about my shrewd intelligence, my attention to detail, but there's only one thing separates a detective like me from the rest. I don't stop until I find the truth.*

That strikes a nerve with Imogen.

IMOGEN

The truth? All HE cares, is "did the check clear?"

ANNA

Ignore him. He's working. You're on vacation.

IMOGEN  
You're right.

                  ANNA  
I'm deeply right.

                  RUFUS (FROM HIS TABLE)  
*It's why I never met a case I couldn't  
close. Listen to me. Am I bragging? I  
am bragging.*

                  IMOGEN  
I can't.

And now Imogen STALKS over to Rufus's table.

                  IMOGEN (CONT'D)  
Tell me, how much is the Chun Family  
paying you to taste their food?

                  RUFUS  
I'm sorry, but who are you?

                  IMOGEN  
Who am I?

                  RUFUS  
Yes. Have... we met?

Something in Imogen snaps. This dig is too much. She grabs a lowball glass off a waiter's tray and launches it at Rufus -- it takes a chunk of skin off his eyebrow and shatters on the floor. Blood. Glass. Then, quick as you like -- Imogen is GRABBED by that Security Guard and carried out of the room. Rufus watches her go. Intrigued.

**INT. SS VARUNIA - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Marina, in yoga pants, scoops ice from the icebox into a crystal bucket. She's got earbuds. HEAR:

                  PODCAST HOST (O.S.)  
*So then you get to the photo thing.  
"How is it Viktor Sams can run guns and  
drugs and operate the world's biggest  
black-market server farm and no one has  
a single confirmed photo of the dude?"  
Well lemme ask you this: How many  
powerful men does Viktor Sams have in  
his pocket? And what would they do to  
protect him?*

Great question, bro. Marina turns back to her room just as Ugly American Keith Trubitsky enters the hall. Marina drops her bucket, ice goes skittering across the silk runner.

MARINA

You! You're stalking me.

TRUBITSKY

I'm sorry, I'm...?

MARINA

In Sydney! In New York last year. You're following me. Did you hang that painting in my room?

TRUBITSKY

Sydney? I'm afraid you're mistaken. This is the first time this Hoosier has left the great state of Indiana.

Marina BACKS away from him. Her pupils dilating.

MARINA

You just stay away from me. And you tell them, tell them *I know*. *I know* his people are on this boat. And I'm ready.

We wonder: Is this somehow related to Trubitsky's murder? Remember, details matter. All this will come into play.

**INT. SS VARUNA - DECK - NIGHT**

Imogen's hair whips as the Security Guard sets her down. His name is **JULES**.

IMOGEN

Well, that was humiliating. I'm Imogen.

JULES

Jules.

He takes her hand up to his lips. She can see the artful tattoo peeking below his collar. He really is Imogen's type.

IMOGEN

Tell me, Jules, where's the real party on this dingy?

JULES

I am on duty. Clearly.

IMOGEN

I can wait.

He smiles. She smiles AND WE CUT TO:

**INT. SS VARUNA - CREW MESS HALL - HOURS LATER**

CLOSE ON: Dancing feet. A DJ in the corner drops a remix of "Rock around the Clock." It's weird. And catchy. And the make-shift dance-floor is packed, BODIES pulsing together on and around all the tables. It's the staff, letting loose.

FIND Imogen among them. She's in her jeans, a white tee sticky with sweat and booze. Jules finds her in the crowd, bottle of gin in hand.

JULES

We're out of cups.

Not a problem. Imogen pours a shot right in her mouth. Then, does the same for Jules. And, the bottle passes down the row.

Imogen turns to find Jules staring at her.

IMOGEN

What?

JULES

You are... Layered.

She likes that. She dances closer, he spins her around and pulls her into a kiss. It's rough. She kisses him back twice as rough, then takes him by the collar and stretches up to whisper in his ear:

IMOGEN

Show me where you work.

**INT. SS VARUNA - SECURITY ROOM - DAY**

Imogen and Jules burst in. It's not a thorough tour. He presses her against the desk. On all three walls, MONITORS display a black and white view of the halls and ballrooms and decks. If we were looking closely, we might see:

-- Lisa Collier praying in the ship's CHAPEL with Father Toby Harkness. He squeezes her hand too-familiarly.

-- Trip Collier SLAMMING his cell against the railing in fury before LAUNCHING it into the ocean.

-- Llewellyn Mathers entering his suite with a woman. We can't see her face, but we can see she's too young for him.

-- And perhaps most importantly... Keith Trubitsky talking quietly, passionately with SOMEONE. Whoever it is, is just out of reach of the camera.

But we don't pay attention to any of that because Imogen and Jules are shredding clothes and tearing at each other's skin. She mounts him. He twists on top, pinning her to the ground. It's hot. And dangerous. And a whole lot of fun.

**INT. SS VARUNA - BELOW DECKS HALLWAY - DAWN**

Imogen, heels in hand, shimmies down the corridor. Squeezing past Winnie, coming from above-decks.

Winnie NODS to Imogen. Whereas Imogen suppresses a walk-of-shame smile, Winnie is NERVOUS. She's been crying.

**EXT. SS VARUNA - POOL DECK - DAY**

Sunil and glamorous Eleanor Chun stroll the deck together. But our shot is fixed. They move out of frame.

Then, Imogen passes by in that YOLK YELLOW SUIT. A-ha. So, we are nearly caught up to our opening sequence.

Suddenly, Fat Derek's little fat face fills the frame entirely. And we realize, we're in his live feed.

FAT DEREK

'Sup fam. Itcha boy Fat Derek, you know what time it is. Bout to light this ship up so follow me for the grand tour. As always, upvote if you want more of this action. But you know...  
(peace-sign for his slogan)  
Y'all can't be me.

**ACROSS THE POOL:** Eleanor and Sunil finish up their walk.

ELEANOR CHUN

... my mom made the whole family call her "my friend." We were together three years. So, yeah, I don't really bring people home anymore.

SUNIL

My mother stays out of my dating life. Bit weird for a Pakistani Tiger Mom but, she and dad are engineers. Much too busy to worry about their children.

There's *just* a hint of regret in that.



ELEANOR CHUN

A man with dimples like that should not engage in self-pity.

She KISSES him on each cheek. Very European. And goes. Sunil wanders over to find Teddy at the bar. Her look says: *Well?*

SUNIL

Her parents are building a quidditch pitch in their backyard.

TEDDY

God bless a Potter-head. Their neighbors must be thrilled.

SUNIL

Oh, it's in the courts already.

**ON THE DIVING BOARD:** Imogen, in that yolk yellow suit. Sunil can't take his eyes off of her. Teddy misses nothing.

TEDDY

You're not her type. She doesn't go for rich guys. To wit - she's banging your head of Security.

SUNIL

Jules?

TEDDY

Indeed.

Sunil sips his drink. Imogen dives, piercing the glassy water in her yellow suit. And just like that --

WE ARE CAUGHT UP TO THE TOP OF OUR STORY. CUT TO:

**INT. UGLY AMERICAN'S SUITE, BEDROOM - DAY**

Poor Keith Trubitsky. HARPOONED TO THE WALL.

Sunil and Teddy stare up at him. Sunil is speechless. Teddy:

TEDDY

Bit gruesome. And yet, somehow poetic.  
(off Sunil - how's that?)  
I will take care of it, of course.

**INT. SS VARUNA - IMOGEN'S SUITE - DAY**

Imogen and Jules enjoy a lavish brunch. In robes. Imogen POPS another bottle of champagne.

JULES

Wait. This is too much.

IMOGEN

Oh please, I'm not paying. And the man who is... he's not paying either. Corporate expense. The richer you are, the more free shit they throw at you.

JULES

*Incroyable.* You are fortunate to have such friends.

IMOGEN

Everything has a price.

JULES

What was yours?

IMOGEN

I don't know, watching my mom's car blow up in their driveway.  
(he squints)  
A joke.

JULES

I lost my parents, too.

A HURRIED KNOCK shakes them both. Imogen pulls her robe tight. Answers to see --

A UNIFORMED GUARD (20's, Nigerian). Jules knows this is bad.

JULES (CONT'D)

What is it Nnamdi?

**MOMENTS LATER:** Imogen has her ear pressed to the door. She can hear Jules and Nnamdi conferring in the hall.

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

Are you sure?

NNAMDI (O.S.)

We are, sir.

JULES (O.S.)

Room 7134? That's Mr. Trubitsky.

**FLASH TO:** Imogen SMASHES Trubitsky's watch. He SNORES. His ass crack hangs from his boxers. The watch face reads 2:17.

**FLASH TO:** Imogen sweeps out of Trubitsky's room. She looks up at the corner. REVERSE TO SEE: A security camera.

**BACK WITH IMOGEN:** She reels.

IMOGEN

Fuck.

TEDDY (PRE-LAP)

Last night, Mr. Keith Trubitsky was murdered in his suite.

**INT. SS VARUNA - KITCHENS - MORNING**

The entire staff is assembled. Teddy stands before them, calm as ever. Jules on one side. Rufus on the other. FIND WINNIE among the crowd, frozen. *Can anyone tell I'm not breathing?*

TEDDY

We are fortunate to have a world-renowned detective on board, Mr. Rufus Cotesworth. He has been asked by Interpol to lead the investigation until we have docked in Erba. As such, none of our guests need yet be apprised of the situation.

RUFUS

Right. Go about your business. Shan't notice me. If I do have questions for you --

JULES

He will come to me first.

TEDDY

Actually, Mr. Cotesworth will consult me first.

RUFUS

There you have it.

TEDDY

Step lightly. Do not congregate. But this should not effect the quality of service we provide to our guests.

Quiet GRUMBLES pass through the crew. One can't keep quiet.

DISGRUNTLED CREW MEMBER

But like one of us could be a murderer?

TEDDY

If you have something to confess, Mr. Flora-Fuentes, by all means.

Dead silence. Teddy's lips curl, satisfied. Note, dear readers, that this disgruntled crew member, and his memorable name, is a detail that will come back... but not this week.

**INT. SS VARUNA - BELOW DECKS HALLWAY - DAY**

Imogen hustles through. Empty, given the meeting in the kitchen. She arrives at the Security Room Door. A KEYPAD.

**FLASH TO:** Imogen and Jules stumble up to the door. Laughing. Drunk. He keys in the code. She's watching. **BACK TO:**

Imogen keys the same code. Light flashes green. AND SHE'S IN:

**INT. SS VARUNA - SECURITY ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The monitors show every angle of the ship. The crew meeting in the kitchen. A few guests already up on the deck. And caution tape surrounding Suite 7134. Bingo.

She moves to the console and finds the right feed. REWINDS the footage. We zip BACKWARDS through moments we recognize:

-- Jules and his guards set up a perimeter.

-- Teddy and Sunil exit and enter the room.

-- Hua, the housekeeper, enters the suite.

Then: BLACK. The feed cuts out entirely. Right at 2:18 am. Right when Imogen would have left.

Imogen stops the playback to double check. But it's not a glitch. *The footage is missing.* The black stretches and stretches until... 2:11 -- it's back again.

SOMEONE DELETED THE 7 MINUTES THAT SHOW IMOGEN ENTER AND EXIT THE SUITE.

In short: This is getting weirder and weirder.

**INT. SS VARUNA - IMOGEN'S SUITE - DAY**

Imogen plops on her bed. Stressed. Then, HEAR running water in her bathroom. She sits up.

IMOGEN

Jules?

No answer. She backs toward her door, frightened, when the bathroom door opens -- and Rufus steps out, drying his hands.

RUFUS

You realize they sourced vintage hand towels for every room on this ship? Madness, that.

IMOGEN

Get out of my room.

She grabs the phone to dial security.

RUFUS

I wouldn't do that, Ms. Scott.

IMOGEN

So, you do remember my name.

RUFUS

It came back to me. It's been... a while.

IMOGEN

And yet you're still a lying piece of shit. Don't you have a flock of Chinese kids to babysit?

RUFUS

You're angry. Understandable. But I may just be the only person who can help you out of your particular predicament.

He plucks a DRIVE from his suit pocket. Puts it on a table.

RUFUS (CONT'D)

7 minutes 23 seconds. That's how long you spent in Mr. Trubitsky's suite.

Imogen sits. Fuckity fuck fuck fuck.

IMOGEN

I didn't kill him.

RUFUS

Interpol gets their hands on this footage, they will think differently.

IMOGEN

What do you want?

RUFUS

I want to help you, Ms. Scott.

IMOGEN

Bullshit.

RUFUS

Fine. I want the truth.

IMOGEN

Since when do you care about *that*?

RUFUS

I never gave up on the truth. The truth gave up on me.

IMOGEN

So sad. Know what? I don't need this. You wanna show them the footage, show them. I can handle it.

RUFUS

Mm. But will your friend Anna be so eager to grease the wheels of justice when she finds out you've been skimming from the family firm?

(then)

I wondered what you were *doing* in Trubitsky's suite. I found this.

(producing the stolen cash)

You have a nasty habit. And you're up a creek. Let me help.

Imogen does quick math: (I'm fucked)+(He has proof) = Fine.

**EXT. SS VARUNA - DAY**

Through a tilt-pan lens, we FLOAT above the ship.

It looks like a toy. Bobbing along. But wait. A ship this big doesn't BOB. It slices water, steady.

REVEAL: This ain't our ship. It is in fact a scale model of a 1950's ocean liner. Floating across a reflecting pool in the back garden of:

**EXT. FOUR CHIMNEYS - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

**10 year-old Imogen** watches it, sullen. HEAR footsteps crunch gravel. **YOUNG RUFUS COTESWORTH** approaches. He sits opposite Imogen. Calm as you like. Betraying nothing.

YOUNG IMOGEN

You're him. The man they hired to solve my mom's murder.

YOUNG RUFUS

I am. But you can call me Rufus.

YOUNG IMOGEN

I'm Imogen.

YOUNG RUFUS

I know all about you.

(perfectly tuned kid-talk)

You could very well hold the key to unlocking this mystery. There are things you know - that you don't even realize you know.

YOUNG IMOGEN

I don't want to talk about it.

YOUNG RUFUS

Fine then. We don't have to talk.

Rufus pulls his notepad out. He scribbles a note. Imogen plucks a dandelion. Trying not to be interested in what he's writing. But she is. What she sees --

YOUNG IMOGEN

That's just gibberish.

YOUNG RUFUS

On the contrary. These are my most important thoughts. So important, I hide them in a code that no one can read. Not without the primer.

Young Imogen is hooked.

YOUNG IMOGEN

What's a primer?

YOUNG RUFUS

It's like a lock. A keyword known only to me - and whoever else I trust with my thoughts. If you know the primer, you can decode the message. Like this.

Imogen watches Rufus carefully as he writes.

YOUNG RUFUS (CONT'D)

Say your primer was "cat." Three letters. Every A becomes a D. Every B becomes an E. Every --

YOUNG IMOGEN

Truth.

Rufus stops. Stares. Impossible.

YOUNG IMOGEN (CONT'D)

*Your primer. It's at the front of every one of your messages. Five letters... You shift them differently every time but. It's truth.*

YOUNG RUFUS

*Perhaps I should be working for you.*

*She shrugs. But she's pleased with herself. A delicate bond is forming. Please let's ruin the moment with the SOUND OF:*

**INT. UGLY AMERICAN'S SUITE, BEDROOM - DAY**

Imogen PUKING in a trash can. Don't blame her because:

Keith Trubitsky hangs there. Still impaled. Imogen wipes her mouth. Grabs vodka from the minibar. Gargles. Spits. Then, drains the bottle. AS -- Rufus moves about the room.

IMOGEN

What am I doing here again?

RUFUS

I always work with an assistant, read my book.

(then)

It's a classic locked-room murder. No way in or out.

IMOGEN

Yeah well. I got in.

RUFUS

Aside from the door. The windows are hermetically sealed. The floor is... it's a floor. And regarding the door, we have surveillance that shows that no one came in or out of the place all night, present company excluded.

Rufus, unfazed by the gore, moves to study Keith's face. He pats his cheek, almost lovingly.

RUFUS (CONT'D)

He's been dead 4, maybe 5 hours. Based on the way the blood has pooled in his extremities.

IMOGEN

So it couldn't have been me. I was here at 2:17.



She picks up the hideous watch that she smashed. He winces:  
That's evidence!

                  IMOGEN (CONT'D)  
You smell that?

                  RUFUS  
Two... maybe three bloody mary's. With  
a smoked salmon chaser.

                  IMOGEN  
No, not - disinfectant. Housekeeping  
was in here, cleaning. Before they  
found ole Keith.

There's a glint in Rufus' eye. Was he hoping for this?

                  RUFUS  
Trampling my crime scene no doubt...  
who knows what else she saw? We must  
speak to the housekeeper.

On Imogen: Must they?

**INT. SS VARUNA - TEDDY'S OFFICE - DAY**

Teddy sits. Jules stands behind her. Hua, the grandmotherly housekeeper, talks a mile a minute in Cantonese. She goes on and on, with hand gestures, facial expressions. It's a long story. She wraps up. Teddy turns to Rufus to translate:

                  TEDDY  
She didn't see anything.

                  RUFUS  
Mm.

                  IMOGEN  
She said a lot more than that.

Teddy smiles stiffly. Jules shoots Imogen a look: *What is she doing here?*

                  IMOGEN (CONT'D)  
He always works with an assistant. Read  
his book.

                  TEDDY  
If she remembers anything of  
consequence, I will be sure to inform  
you immediately.

RUFUS

Thank you.

IMOGEN

Are you serious? You're going to just let her push you around like that?

TEDDY

Jules, please see Ms. Scott out.

IMOGEN

There's a *murderer* on this ship.

JULES

We will keep everyone safe.

RUFUS

And a bang-up job you're doing so far.  
(back to the point, pls)  
The housekeeper doesn't know anything.  
Ms. Gao is simply being protective of her aunt. In fact, a not-insignificant amount of the crew are her relations.

IMOGEN

And you speak Cantonese.

RUFUS

I dabble.

TEDDY

Dabble elsewhere.

RUFUS

Very well. But the truth will come out sooner or later. I prefer sooner. As I like a nap.

He stands to go. Imogen follows. As she does, she SHRUGS at Jules as if to say: *So this is strange, isn't it?*

**INT. SS VARUNA - HALLWAY - DAY**

Imogen struggles to keep up with Rufus. She wants to know:

IMOGEN

What was that? Why didn't you press the housekeeper?

RUFUS

She didn't see anything. She doesn't know anything.

IMOGEN

Bullshit. They're hiding something.

Rufus SHRUGS. But in the style of a man who definitely knows they're hiding something and who has an idea of what, too.

RUFUS

Everyone on this ship is hiding something. Doesn't mean it's the thing you're looking for.

IMOGEN

Okaybutwait. You don't think it's a bit weird? You and me, separated for 20 years, all of a sudden we're floating around on some preposterous vacation in the middle of nowhere and some asshole gets himself murdered?

RUFUS

You don't like coincidences.

IMOGEN

Coincidences are just dressed-up clues.

RUFUS

You read my autobiography.

IMOGEN

I skimmed your stupid book.  
(she stops walking)  
You knew something bigger was going on from the jump.  
(realizing, further:)  
That's why you cut out that footage.  
That's why you came to me. That's why you don't want to ask too many questions in front of the staff.

RUFUS

We can rely only on ourselves. We have no idea who could be a part of... whatever this is.

IMOGEN

Okay. So what now?

RUFUS

Now we're at the fun part - we get to figure out who's messing with us.

INT. SS VARUNA - ANNA'S SUITE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anna in a couture suit and hat. Marina enters in gym clothes.

ANNA

Missed you at lunch...

MARINA

I was at the gym.  
(but she isn't sweating)  
I just stretched for a while.

Anna smells a lie, but chooses not to push it. Instead:

ANNA

You also skipped out on dad's party.

MARINA

Your father throws himself more parties  
than most dictators.

ANNA

This is about me. I'm taking over the  
company. *Me*. And you should be there to  
support me. Your wife.

MARINA

You think you're taking control.

ANNA

Basta! Marina. It's too much. The  
fucking podcasts and the hidden clues  
on Twitter and the men in the shadows.  
I've been listening and listening and I  
can tell you -- this isn't real! *Viktor  
Sams* is just a screen name. Or he's a  
teenager in Ireland. Or he's 20 people  
but probably he's nothing because this  
is all nonsense.

MARINA

What about that robbery at the airport  
in Lisbon? 5 cops shot dead. Half a  
billion in euros stolen. Every weapon  
they used was bought on DarkMart. Owned  
and operated by *Viktor Sams*.

ANNA

I don't know. It's a scary world.

She takes Marina's hands in hers.

ANNA (CONT'D)

You went through a trauma. I know it hurt. I know it scared you. I know you've been looking for answers, but babe - you're looking in the wrong place. These people, they're...

She stops. She doesn't want to say crazy.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I miss you. I am trying. But you need to meet me in the middle.

MARINA

I was blind once, too.

How do you argue with that? You don't. So -- Anna *SCREAMS*. A loud, guttural release. Then takes a breath. Fixes her hat.

ANNA

I'm going to the pool. See you at dinner. Or not. I honestly don't care.

**INT. SS VARUNA - RUFUS'S ROOM - DAY**

A small, more modestly decorated space. No window. Imogen paces. Rufus eats a burger. Dips his fries in mayo.

RUFUS

... very good. What next?

IMOGEN

I closed the door. Put the keycard down. No...

***IMOGEN'S MEMORY:*** *The colors are richer here, in her memory palace. She moves in reverse through Trubitsky's suite. Picks his stolen keycard up from a side table. FREEZE. Now she MOVES FORWARD and slips it into her pocket.*

*IMOGEN (V.O.)*

*I put it in my pocket.*

*RUFUS (V.O.)*

*What did you see? In no order.*

**BACK WITH IMOGEN & RUFUS:** Imogen paces. Thinking.

IMOGEN

The room was a wreck... ketchup stains on the carpet. His shirt was on a chair. A blue guayabera. No...

**IMOGEN'S MEMORY:** A blue shirt tossed on a chair *FLICKERS*. Disappears. When it *REAPPEARS* -- it is now *GREEN*. Imogen picks it up and puts it back down. Disgusted.

IMOGEN (V.O.)

It was green. I think. I don't remember. Ugh. Why can't I think?

**BACK WITH IMOGEN & RUFUS:** He indicates -- sit down, please.

RUFUS

It's bog standard. Memory is malleable. Most witnesses distort the truth without even realizing it.  
(as Imogen calms herself)  
Trust nothing and no one, especially yourself.

A *KNOCK*. A *BELLHOP* arrives to bus the bar cart. As he wheels it out, Imogen's eyes go wide. And now we're back in --

**IMOGEN'S MEMORY:** A bar cart *FLICKERS* into existence in the suite. The green shirt *FLICKERS*. Disappears. And *REAPPEARS* -- now tossed haphazardly on the bar cart.

IMOGEN (V.O.)

It wasn't on a chair! There was a bar cart in that room when I went in. But it's not up there now...

**FLASH TO:** Hua the Housekeeper *PUSHING* the cart out of Trubitsky's suite. And *THEN* entering the bedroom. She *SHRIEKS* when she sees Trubitsky's horrific murder.

**BACK WITH IMOGEN & RUFUS:** She is amped. For the first time.

IMOGEN

Holy shit. That's how they got in and out of the room.

RUFUS

Possibly.

IMOGEN

Definitively.

RUFUS

If you're right of course, then the killer knows something about you, too. They were hiding in Trubitsky's suite. So they saw you make a hash of his timepiece and knick 600 quid.

(well, that's creepy)

(MORE)

RUFUS (CONT'D)

If you see this through, it is possible that you will be in danger. That you already are, in fact...

IMOGEN

(ignoring that -  
her mind already races...)  
So. They ride out in the bar cart.  
Where'd they get off? And who saw them?

RUFUS

I can talk to the staff.

IMOGEN

You don't trust the staff. I know what to do.

**INT. SS VARUNA - VARIOUS HALLWAYS - DAY**

A chipper BELLHOP strolls. He spots a linen-covered bar cart. That shouldn't be there... so -- he pushes it away, whistling the melody of Tony Bennett's "Stranger in Paradise."

**PLEASE LET'S LOOK BENEATH THE BAR CART:**

TO FIND Imogen. Hidden by the tablecloth. RIDING along. BUMP. She finds herself very quietly HUMMING along to the tune.

HEAR an elevator door *DING!*

Now she's going down... she can SEE glossy black shoes as other STAFF get on. They argue in Estonian. Someone chews gum. HEAR it *POP!* Then --

Imogen FREEZES -- stops breathing as --

The cloth is LIFTED by our GUM-CHEWER. Who now SMUSHES his gum up under the cart.

Gum-Chewer goes back to his Estonian argument. Not SEEING THAT Imogen is completely exposed. Until he lets the linen cloth drop and she is hidden once again.

*DING!* Elevator ride over. Imogen bounces on industrial flooring. Then... she stops. HEAR glossy black dress shoes clack away. A door swings open -- HEAR a snippet of shouting in Filipino. It swings closed. Silence. So --

Imogen crawls from under the cart to SEE that she's in:

INT. SS VARUNA - CATERING KITCHEN - DAY

A room filled with carts waiting to be bused. Through a stainless steel door's porthole, SEE the massive KITCHEN. Imogen pulls her phone...

**MOMENTS LATER:** Rufus has joined her.

RUFUS

Enjoy the ride, did you?

IMOGEN

The last ride I enjoyed was in a '76 BMW 3.0 I borrowed from Anna's club. Dogleg gearshift. It was Spring...

(to business)

The cart stopped four times. Twice on floor 9 - housekeeping dropped empty plates. But the doors were open into those suites, so the killer could have slipped into a room. Maybe. More likely they got off here. Because --

RUFUS

No cameras.

(then)

A bit addictive, that feeling rushing through you.

He's right. But Imogen doesn't give him the satisfaction. Rufus looks around. If he spots something (and he definitely spots something), he DOESN'T TELL HER...

IMOGEN

We need to go back to the security room. There will be footage of... Wait. You've already been to the security room. You already saw the cart get wheeled out. You already knew everything I've quote-unquote figured out.

RUFUS

I had a hunch.

IMOGEN

What the fuck, man?

RUFUS

It's more fun when you unravel it yourself.

IMOGEN

Right. Totally. I'm out.



RUFUS

Wait. I'm sorry. I tried a - Imogen. You're good at this. You've always been good at this. Even when you were ten years old, I could see, you had a gift.

IMOGEN

Oh yeah? Was that before or after you spent all the Collier's money and then dropped my mom's case?

RUFUS

You think that's what happened.

IMOGEN

The second the money ran out, you quit.

RUFUS

It's more complicated than that.

IMOGEN

I was a kid. You made me believe you were on my side.

RUFUS

I was. I am. And Imogen - you were right. There *really is* a reason we're on this ship together and you and I are the only two people we can trust.

IMOGEN

You think I trust you? You really have lost your touch. If you ever had it.

She goes. He doesn't try to stop her.

**EXT. "THE FOUR CHIMNEYS" - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

*A Defender 90 pulls into the drive. Young Rufus steps out, Young Imogen rushing up to greet him.*

YOUNG IMOGEN

*Any leads?*

YOUNG RUFUS

*Not yet. It takes time and patience to unravel the truth. And I have both of those things in spades.*

YOUNG IMOGEN

*They won't tell me anything. They treat me like a little kid.*

*He takes a knee. Eye to eye now.*

YOUNG RUFUS

*I grew up in Brighton. Mom washed floors. My dad thank god, was locked up mostly. These people hire me to solve their problems, but they treat me like a kid, too. Cuz I'll never be one of them.*

*(she stares at the ground)*

*I will find out what happened to your mom, Imogen. I promise you.*

*ON IMOGEN'S sweet, naive face. She believes him.*

**INT. SS VARUNA - ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Imogen rides up. Jaw clenched. She's worked up. And mad at herself that she allowed Rufus to get her worked up. The car STOPS. Trip gets on. High and drunk but still, he can sense:

TRIP

Rough night?

IMOGEN

Aren't they all?

TRIP

Wanna come back to my room and do karaoke? One rule: no hits.

*(she does not)*

Worth a shot.

The door opens on Imogen's floor. She stomps off.

**INT. SS VARUNA - GALLIPOLI BAR - DAY**

Styled after a post-war renovation of an 1890's British men's club. Bartenders wear pale green waistcoats and wield extra-long stirrers. Anna, deep in debate with Governor Hochenberg.

GOVERNOR HOCHENBERG

... it's capitalism on the way up and socialism on the way down is my point.

ANNA

Collier Mills pays our taxes.

GOVERNOR HOCHENBERG

That sounded like a dig. And those allegations are a hit job.

ANNA

*My point is, the city benefits if the bridge gets built. You want it done efficiently? Let me bid for the job.*

A waiter approaches with a note on a silver tray.

WAITER

Ms. Collier?

Anna takes the note. Reads it. To the Governor:

ANNA

If you'll excuse me a moment.

**INT. SS VARUNA - COAT CLOSET - NIGHT**

Full of the most extravegant furs you've ever seen. PETA would burn it down. Anna enters.

ANNA

Hello? Marina?

Marina steps out, clothed in mink. Lets the shoulder slip.

MARINA

I need some help with my outfit. I couldn't decide between the Balenciaga or that new jumpsuit...

She drops the coat. She's totally nude beneath. Anna bites back a smile. This is Marina's superpower.

MARINA (CONT'D)

So I went with nothing.

Anna pulls her into a kiss. Marina takes Anna's hand and guides it down, South of our frame. Both are hungry for this. The only thing keeping their marriage together.

**INT. SS VARUNA - BELOW DECKS HALLWAYS - NIGHT**

Imogen approaches Jules's cabin. She KNOCKS.

IMOGEN

Jules?

SUNIL (O.S.)

He's working the Galipoli event.

Imogen turns to see SUNIL. Sweaty, sleeves rolled up, a grease smudge on his forehead.

IMOGEN

Ah. Okay. Thanks anyway.

SUNIL

Wanna see something cool?

He holds out a grease-stained hand.

**INT. SS VARUNA - ENGINEERING ROOM - NIGHT**

Sunil's tools are laid out on a gangplank beneath a section of 70-year-old engine guts. All brass with rivets. Beautiful but outdated. He goes back to futzing as he explains:

SUNIL

This is the original engine. Designed by Helmut Gerhardt and hand-built in Derby to his specifications.

IMOGEN

Very... chitty-chitty bang-bang.

SUNIL

Supposed to supply a third of our power but the old girl's been down two days.

IMOGEN

So this is why you're single. You're in love with your boat.

SUNIL

Who said I was single?

Sunil tightens the lugs on an overhead pipe. Then points to a lever and ask Imogen:

SUNIL (CONT'D)

Crank that for me... NOW.

She tries. It's stuck. He approaches. Gets right up behind her. Puts his hands above hers on the lever.

SUNIL (CONT'D)

May I?

IMOGEN

There is nothing less interesting than a man who asks permission unnecessarily.

He smiles. As the two of them TURN the lever. The engine hums back to life. It is a pleasant thrum. Not a cacophony.

**INT. SS VARUNA - KITCHEN AREA/CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

HEAR the harsh hum of industrial lighting. Rufus enters the same room where Imogen exited the bar cart earlier. He PUSHES one of the carts forward to REVEAL --

A square of floor board. Rufus presses and it POPS open.

A secret panel. Just large enough for a man his size to go down. So, he does.

**CORRIDORS:** Rufus walks. Tight down here. He arrives at a door. Tries the handle. Unlocked. Lucky him.

BUT when he opens the door and steps into a --

**SMALL CHAMBER:** Rufus freezes. SEE a Glock-19 pressed into the small of his back. He puts his hands up slow. TURNS.

WE DO NOT SEE whoever got the drop on him. As Rufus sighs:

RUFUS

I wish I could say I was surprised.

**INT. SS VARUNA - ENGINEERING ROOM - NIGHT**

Sunil packs his tools. Imogen admires the spotless space.

IMOGEN

Why do this yourself? Isn't the point of money... honestly I don't even know what the point of money is anymore.

SUNIL

Because I don't trust anyone else. Because if someone else cocked it up, they'd blame themselves, and I'd feel worse. But the real reason is, I love it. I *do* love this ship. I was angry, before. I hated my life. I hated the whole ugly world.

IMOGEN

It's perfectly hateable.

SUNIL

It is. But - I decided to do something about it. To never waste another moment doing something I don't love.

Nice words. But -- they UNLOCK something in Imogen.

IMOGEN  
I... I have to go.

**INT. SS VARUNA - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Imogen hurries to Rufus's room. But when she rounds the corner, she stops short.

SEE security shutting down the hallway. Guests crane necks. To see into a CERTAIN ROOM, where guards have gathered. Jules oversees. Imogen pushes past the crush to get to him.

JULES  
I'm so sorry.

IMOGEN  
What?

JULES  
Your friend, Rufus Cotesworth.

IMOGEN  
He's no friend of mine. Can I get through, please?

JULES  
Imogen, I am trying to tell you - he is dead. Murdered in his stateroom.

IMOGEN  
Fuck you. Let me see him.

But he's not kidding. And yet dear readers, you must wonder: Why is Jules lying about WHERE Rufus was killed? Because WE KNOW he was caught deep below-decks and NOT in his room...

Sound goes woozy. Imogen's eyes go unfocused.

She STUMBLES. Jules CATCHES her. Helps her take a seat on a plush hallway bench. As other guests GAWK.

HEAR snippets of GOSSIP go in and out of phase:

GUESTS  
*Murdered... shot twice in the gut...  
but what do you mean another murder??*

Imogen gets her bearings. Jules kneels next to her.

JULES  
Do you need water?

IMOGEN

I need to see the crime scene.

JULES

That is not possible. My men are sealing the room. Interpol is on their way. I am sorry. He was a great man.

IMOGEN

No, he wasn't. But...

She's about to say "But something is going on here. And we need to get to the bottom of it."

BUT she suddenly looks askance at Jules. Can she trust him?

JULES

But what?

IMOGEN

Nothing. I'm fine.

He helps her to her feet. She walks away. Shooting a look over her shoulder as Jules confers with his team.

**INT. SS VARUNA - TEDDY'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Teddy motions a nervous Winnie in. Winnie shuts the door.

WINNIE

And now Mr. Cotesworth is dead too!  
What's happening?

TEDDY

We're dealing with it. But...  
(then, a sister's intuition)  
Winnie? Why is this so upsetting to you? Did you see something?

WINNIE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry...

TEDDY

I can protect you. But I need you tell me everything you know before Interpol goes to work on you.

Winnie's breathing goes ragged. She tries to control it. She looks up at her big sister, helpless...

**INT. SS VARUNA - IMOGEN'S SUITE - NIGHT**

Imogen digs through her suitcase. Pulls out a well-worn book. It's *On Solving Impossible Crimes*. By Rufus Cotesworth. Her own copy. Clearly, she didn't just "skim his stupid book." She opens to a page. Scanning. And we HEAR:

RUFUS (V.O.)

*Pay attention. Details matter. If you want to solve a crime, any crime, you must first learn to see through the illusion.*

Imogen is PULLED from her reverie by a KNOCK. She hides the book. Opens the door. It's Anna. Who WRAPS her in a hug. Anna knows all this must be dredging up ancient troubles.

ANNA

You can stay in our suite tonight.

IMOGEN

I'll be fine.

ANNA

With a double-murderer running loose?

IMOGEN

I'll bolt the door. I need to be alone. To think. How's Marina with all this?

**FLASH TO ANNA'S SUITE:** *Marina has taken the place apart. Cushions shredded. Carpet pulled up. She wanders the room with an RF scanner. Her eyes -- wild. In the door to the bedroom, Anna watches. And SWALLOWS two pills, one green, one blue.*

**BACK WITH IMOGEN AND ANNA:**

ANNA

She took a pill. Then I did. Then I took another. Then I walked down here. I don't remember that part.

IMOGEN

Something strange is happening.

ANNA

Please, not you too.

IMOGEN

You're right. It's nothing. See you at breakfast.

Anna SQUEEZES Imogen's hand and goes.



**INT. SS VARUNA - IMOGEN'S ROOM - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Imogen splashes cold water on her face. She grabs a vintage hand-towel. A FOLDED NOTE falls out.

**FLASH TO:** Rufus exiting her bathroom with the hand-towel.

She gets some real-good heebie-jeebies. She unfolds it. The note Rufus left for her just before he got himself killed.

**M k n m a o b d m h k l t f l i**

It's gibberish. But then we --

**FLASH TO:** Young Imogen staring at Young Rufus's notepad.

*YOUNG IMOGEN*  
That's just gibberish.

*YOUNG RUFUS*  
On the contrary. These are my most important thoughts. So important, I hide them in a code that no one can read. Not without the primer.

Imogen KNOWS his primer. She grabs a dark red lipstick. And writes on the mirror: **T R U T H.**

She gets to work. Decoding Rufus's message. And --

**WE ENGAGE IN SOME INTRICATE INTERCUTTING:**

Rufus shows Young Imogen the Shift Code.

Grown-up Imogen writes on the glass.

Imogen's mom's car explodes.

Imogen wipes the lipstick off and starts over.

Imogen throws her glass at Rufus.

Young Imogen tosses a single flower on her mom's grave.

*IMOGEN (V.O.)*  
You don't think it's a bit weird? You and me, separated for 20 years, all of a sudden we're floating around in the middle of nowhere and some asshole gets himself murdered?

Imogen steps back from the mirror. Caps the lipstick.

*RUFUS (V.O.)*

*Now we're at the fun part - we get to  
figure out who's messing with us.*

Imogen stares at her decoded message. Could it really be that a master criminal is pulling the strings on this ship? Rufus sure as hell thought so. Because the message he left her just before he died -- a message he thought important enough to hide in code -- is this:

**V-I-K-T-O-R S-A-M-S**

**END PILOT**