

PRESENCE (unlic)

written
by
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PRODUCTION PENDING DRAFT

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PRESENCE PILOT

OVER BLACK WE HEAR THE SOUND OF DEEP, RAPID BREATHING. It should be indicative of hard, physical exertion.

OVER THIS IS A SLUG THAT READS:

Afghanistan / Then

FADE IN:

1 EXT. AFGHANISTAN/ROAD - DAY (D1) 1

We open TIGHT on LT. COL. PRESENCE FOSTER. We are on her eyes, and can read the intensity in her nature. Presence is RUNNING, and RUNNING HARD. As she continues to run, THE CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal that Presence is in COMBAT GEAR. She's running down a back road in Afghanistan, WEAPON IN HAND. As she runs, as THE CAMERA CONTINUES TO WIDEN, we see more and more of the "story" and the reason for her intensity. Along the road are WRECKED and SMOLDERING Humvees, DOWNED SOLDIERS. Other soldiers returning fire on TALIBAN FIGHTERS who pop up from cover... Through all this - fire fights, RPGs - Presence NEVER STOPS MOVING forward - BALLS OUT - and we DO NOT CUT AWAY from her moving forward.

Presence finally arrives to a small group of Soldiers who are using a Humvee for cover. At this point the ENEMY FIRE is intense. Delivering orders:

PRESENCE

Check right. I need suppression fire on three. All you got.

SOLDIER

Yes, ma'am.

PRESENCE

One, two...

On a silent three count, the soldiers swing from cover and cut loose with a vicious fusillade of fire. Presence darts from cover, runs about fifteen yards to an ugly scene: A wounded comrade - EDGAR - his burned out Humvee obviously hit by an IED. DEAD SOLDIERS scattered around him. Grabbing Edgar by his vest - BLOOD PUMPING FROM OPEN WOUNDS - Presence pulls Edgar to the safety of the cadre of men who are giving her covering fire, BULLETS STRIKING ALL AROUND HER. Once there, Presence frantically tries to tend his wounds, but moment by moment it becomes painfully clear to Presence there's JUST TOO MUCH DAMAGE. There's not much she can do. Blood CONTINUES to flow, as the LIFE SLIPS from Edgar. It is

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

Presence exits her vehicle, and makes her way through the JOYFUL MASS toward SAUL'S DELI. Just as she's about to enter, HER PHONE BUZZES. She takes her phone from her pocket,... The CALLER ID on the screen reads: **DUCHESS AVEDON**. Presence swears slightly under her breath, hits IGNORE, and then proceeds to enter the deli.

3 INT. SAUL'S - CONTINUOUS (D2) 3

Not a corner shop by any means, Saul's is a SIZABLE CONCERN and a FINE ESTABLISHMENT. As with the exterior, the interior is filled with PATRONS who celebrate the holiday.

Presence makes her way through the crowd to a PRIVATE DINNING ROOM.

4 INT. SAUL'S/PRIVATE ROOM - CONTINUOUS (D2) 4

Wood and leather dominate. It's got an "old boy's" feel to the joint. The room is populated by several HASIDIC MEN. A few of them have some real size to them. If they weren't believers, YOU MIGHT THINK THEY WERE WORKING FOR THE MOB. At first blush, it would seem Presence is out-numbered and out-muscled. If that should matter to her, she displays no anxiety. She closes the door to the room as she enters - which both serves to afford her some privacy, but also gets everyone's attention. As she settles Presence casually rests a foot on a chair.

PRESENCE

Hey, I'm looking for Saul.

The men don't necessarily respond directly, but it's clear Presence isn't going to give up much info other than to Saul himself.

SAUL

Help you?

PRESENCE

Saul? So, look, thing is, sometimes life; it doesn't go how you planned. It happens. Things change. People change. They're in love. They're out. They get divorced... They move on. You moved on. But your ex-wife--

SAUL

Hester sent you?

One of the Hasidic men stiffens, starts to move toward Presence. Before he can close the gap, Presence straightens

(CONTINUED)

a leg, sending the chair shooting across the space and directly into the guy tripping him up, and dropping him down to the floor. She was ready for him the minute she arrived.

Returning her attention to Saul:

PRESENCE

By religious law, Hester can't move on until you give her a, a...

SAUL

A "get."

PRESENCE

A "get." Yeah.

As Presence pulls a DOCUMENT from her back pocket:

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

And until you sign *this* for Hester, even though you're divorced, she's got no legal rights in marriage. If she's with another guy, it's adultery...

SAUL

Hester shouldn't be with another man.

PRESENCE

If you're having regrets over the divorce, work it out. Don't punish her.

SAUL

Why do you care?

PRESENCE

She wants to live her life. So, do right; let her live.

Saul exchanges some stink-eye with Presence, but it's very clear he's a wounded man. He takes the document from Presence, signs it.

As she takes the document back, pockets it and starts to head from the joint:

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

You're a good man, Saul. I know 'em when I see 'em.

5 INT. TEMPLE - LATER (D2)

5

As we come into the scene, Presence is in the Temple with a RABBI. The Rabbi is literally getting down to business counting out CASH MONEY:

RABBI

Twenty, forty, sixty, eighty, one-hundred... Ten..that's twenty...

PRESENCE

Whoa. Wait.

RABBI

Two-twenty-five.

PRESENCE

Deal was I'd get the "get," I get two-fifty.

RABBI

Something for the Lord.

Presence gives a "really?" stare.

RABBI (CONT'D)

Something for the Lord.

Clearly the deal isn't going to be modified. Presence mutters with a touch of melancholy:

PRESENCE

Sure. Something for the Lord.

She collects the money and exits under the Rabbi's smile.

6 EXT. MUSCLE CAR LOT - DAY (D2)

6

We are on a street in Van Nuys that is LINED with AUTO SHOPS - sales, service, consignment. The block is like a Mecca for the worship of vehicles.

Presence talks with MANNY ACEVEDO - Edgar - the guy who died in Presence's arms; his brother. Manny's kind of a thin dude. Has a sorta "Jesus" look to him, if Jesus was sporting tats all over his body. One can tell Manny used to be a troubled kid - likely RAN WITH GANGS - but for the minute he's putting all his energy into being a better person.

Manny and Presence have an easy manner as well as a familiarity.

(CONTINUED)

MANNY

Two-hundred-fifty bucks just to get some woman a divorce?

PRESENCE

I didn't get her a divorce. I got her her freedom. Big difference.

MANNY

Is that legal?

PRESENCE

Legal-ish.

MANNY

C'mon, girl. You getting out of the Army just so you can get back to thuggin' and thievin'?

PRESENCE

Manny, I'm not going back to that. I owe Edgar better. I'm not just living for me anymore.

That's a sharp statement. Before Manny can give a response, a car is pulled around the lot. It's a classic MERCURY MARAUDER. The whip is black on black (on black). RIGO - lot's owner, and a rather heavy set guy - heaves himself from the car. He's got PAPERWORK ready for Presence.

Just looking at the car, Presence lights up like a kid on the first day of Kwanza.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

That's what I'm talking about. That is a whip.

RIGO

Four-point-six litre V8... Three-hundred-two-ponies...

MANNY

Those trims don't look like they're within DOT standards.

RIGO

Don't talk a customer out of a deal, bro.

PRESENCE

They're fine.

PRESENCE

Black-on-black-on. They can't even see you coming.

MANNY

See? That's a "thuggin' and thievin'" mentality. You need to be more practical with your purchases.

PRESENCE

Can you just stop making sense?

RIGO

Bro, I'm trying to make a sale.

Presence grabs a pen, signs the paperwork. Does a little "tada" with her hands. As she starts to get in the car:

PRESENCE

Seriously, you're like an Amish Librarian.

MANNY

An admirable lifestyle, and an honorable profession, so if that's meant to be a slam...

PRESENCE

With, or without you, starting now, I'm living life.

Presence fires up the car and starts to drive off the lot. The moment she rolls out into the street, ANOTHER CAR traveling perpendicular to the drive HITS THE FRONT END of the Marauder, then drives off without even stopping to check on anyone's well being.

Manny runs to the car to check on Presence, he yells at Rigo:

MANNY

Rigo, go get him!

Rigo goes huffing up the street after the hit-and-run driver. As Manny pulls Presence from the car:

PRESENCE

What the hell... He couldn't see me?

A nice, higher end club/lounge in Hollywood with a view of the city. At the moment the STAFF is in the middle of setting up for an event. Servers are prepping food, drinks... People are dressing the space...

Overseeing it all is TRE DAVIS, Presence's half-brother. Tre is the kind of modern gay-guy who is tight, right and always

good for a fight. Dresses well, has a head for business, and would have no problem KNOCKING SOMEBODY THE FUCK OUT if the person got a little too lippy. A guy like Tre, a guy who's got his shit together, isn't real forgiving of mistakes. Particularly when it comes to Presence.

PRESENCE

Tre, hey.

Presence's greeting is met by Tre with a negative shake of his head.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

C'mon, don't be like that.

TRE

What do you need this time, Presence?

PRESENCE

I had a little car trouble...

TRE

When did you get a car?

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

I'm kinda tight on money for repairs.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

I really could use a gig.

TRE

Every time you come around to see me--

PRESENCE

"Every time?"

TRE

You show up asking me for a solid, or a hook up...

PRESENCE

I come around looking for some helping out from my brother.

TRE

You're not my sister. You're my *half* sister. And six months ago I didn't know about you. I could show up to work without you coming around acting like I owe you something.

PRESENCE

You don't need a bouncer? Some security for a couple of nights?

TRE

I don't run these clubs, *sister*. I just book the events. You want to work security, then you need to get licensed.

PRESENCE

It's hard for me to get a license. I'm an ex-con. Got a rap sheet.

TRE

Should have thought about your future back when you were screwing up your past. But your side of the family--

PRESENCE

You know we had the same dad, right?

TRE

Look, you been out of the army for four months. You've been broke for three and a half 'em. Hell, you'd be homeless right now except you're baby sitting some abandoned house.

PRESENCE

"Distressed property."

TRE

You need to get real about your situation.

PRESENCE

I'm getting tired of people telling me that.

TRE

If enough people are telling you to get real, maybe you need to listen.

That piece of science lands a bit with Presence.

We see Presence's wounded Marauder arrive to her home. The joint is at the tail end of Malibu looking out over the beach. The joint would be a really nice piece of

8

CONTINUED:

8

property...except that it is clearly UNFINISHED. Like a spec house where the financiers had run short of funds. The structure is livable, but not something that's ready for sale. Beyond that, being able to see the raw infrastructure of the place in some ways enhances the overall design language making the joint feel as much like a HIP, ARCHITECTURALLY-DRIVEN space as a distressed property. Somebody with wits could do a lot of the joint. Presence, in fact, has.

9

INT. PRESENCE'S JOINT - LATER (N1)

9

The interior of the space, much like the exterior, is unfinished, but Presence has done all she can to make it both livable and her own. ORANGE EXTENSION CORDS, run through and among the space along with WORK LIGHTS...

Presence arrives to a BEDROOM. On a sound system she plays Nina Simone's version of "*Here Comes the Sun*" as she changes and gets relaxed.

She cracks open a bottle of El Mayor Reserva Añejo Tequila. She uses a glass, but at the rate she drinks, she might as well take it straight from the bottle.

10

INT. PRESENCE'S JOINT/LIVING AREA - MORNING (D3)

10

Presence is eating some version of something out of a microwave. There's a knock on the door. Presence opens it revealing JAS, a near-Eastern woman in her late-twenties. Jas is quite beautiful, and all business. And clearly formidable. She's got a certain ease with Presence that plainly says that she's got no issues getting into things with Presence should it come to it. Jas and Presence seem to have history, and perhaps not real good history.

Getting a whiff of Presence's breath:

JAS

God, Presence. You smell like a dog that ate its own vomit.

PRESENCE

Wrong party, Jas. Keep moving.

JAS

We need to talk.

PRESENCE

If you're still working for the Duchess, tell her whatever it is, I said "no."

(CONTINUED)

JAS

It's Chad. He's missing.

That kinda lands with Presence. She steps away from the door. Jas floats inside the space.

JAS (CONT'D)

Three weeks since we've heard from him.

PRESENCE

Not my problem.

JAS

(pointed)

But he used to be. He used to be your fiancé.

PRESENCE

Never got over finishing second.

JAS

Never got over watching you break his heart. If the Duchess is asking for your help, she's desperate. And from what I saw of your wrecked car outside, and all this...nothing you got going on in here, you could use a paycheck. Do everybody a favor. You're not doing this for the Duchess. You're doing this for Chad.

Presence considers her decision. The hardness she displayed when Jas arrived fades just a bit. She swears a bit under her breath. Then, relenting:

PRESENCE

Let's go see the Duchess.

END OF ACT

ACT TWO

11 EXT. DUCHESS'S MANSION - DAY (D3) 11

We've got an amazing view of the Blair Hills section of Culver City; sizable homes that look over the 60 acres that has become a beautiful state park. It's like a nature reserve in the middle of a city.

Presence is escorted by Jas out to The DUCHESS. The Duchess is an older woman - mid-fifties - who carries her physical stature very well. She's accumulated a great deal of wealth and power. She has no problem reminding people of that.

Jas floats nearby. If there's a chance that Presence might want to start trouble, Jas remains close enough to end it.

DUCHESS

I wasn't sure you'd come.

PRESENCE

Jas says you're desperate, and I was curious what desperation looks like on you.

DUCHESS

Chad's missing.

PRESENCE

Guys with trust funds and cold mothers tend to do that.

DUCHESS

Generally he'd run off with you. And generally I could count on him to come to his senses, and return home. He hasn't this time.

PRESENCE

Check the strip clubs, the ultra lounges...the hotel suites of any supermodel in town...

DUCHESS

We've tried that.

PRESENCE

Then call the police.

DUCHESS

Chad's an adult. If he wants to run off there's not much they can do.

(CONTINUED)

PRESENCE

We both know your son. He loves fun, hates maturity, and can't stand being sober. Whatever the problem is, me bringing him home's not going to solve it.

DUCHESS

I'm asking for your help. That doesn't mean anything to you?

PRESENCE

It meant something; you always treating me like I was a thug just trying to steal her son.

DUCHESS

You are a thug. You can pretend you're a war hero, but the only reason you were in the army is because it was that, or jail.

Starting to head off:

PRESENCE

You're on you're own.

DUCHESS

Back when I wanted you to stay away from Chad you wouldn't. Now that I need you to find him, you won't?

PRESENCE

I learned my lesson. There are people you can hire to find him.

DUCHESS

He'll run from other people. You know Chad better than I know him myself. You'll be discreet, and you won't give up. That makes you the right man for the job.

The Duchess opens a ledger, and writes a check.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

I'll pay you a flat rate, and cover your expenses if you bring him back.

PRESENCE

I never wanted your money, Duchess.

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

DUCHESS

And I never wanted you as a
daughter-in-law. And yet here I am
sending you after my son...

Stepping to Presence, getting right in her grill and making a
challenge of the next moment:

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

And here you are taking my check.

The Duchess holds out the check to Presence. She hesitates a
moment, then takes the check and starts to head out.

12 INT. DUCHESS'S MANSION/FOYER - LATER (D3)

12

Presence is met on her way out by Jas. Jas has got a little
shit eatin' smile.

JAS

You're taking the job?

PRESENCE

Chad's usual suspects; rich
friends, beautiful women...?

JAS

I've shaken those trees. Nothing.

PRESENCE

What's his new addiction?

JAS

He's been clean lately.

PRESENCE

Chad always had an addiction. If
it wasn't liquor, it was gambling.
If it wasn't drugs, it was women.
There's something new in his life.
Something he's obsessed with.
That's where we've gotta start.

Jas thinks for a minute. Something comes to her.

13 INT. DUCHESS'S MANSION/GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER (D3)

13

Jas opens the garage revealing a collection of CARS. Some
vintage, some new and high end... Among them is a very hot
CUSTOM MOTORCYCLE.

(CONTINUED)

JAS

Chad's new distraction. Custom,
and he spent quite a bit on it.

Presence starts TAKING PICTURES of the cycle with her PHONE.

PRESENCE

Who did the work?

JAS

Don't know his name. Some
roughneck. He hasn't come around
in awhile.

PRESENCE

Why would he if he already knew
Chad was gone?

Presence heads from the space with the urgency of a woman on
a mission.

INT. THE CANDY STORE - DAY (D3)

We're in Manny's business: The Candy Store. A VERY FUNKY
consignment space, lounge, emporium... It's the crossroads
of commerce. The YOUNG and HIP looking to mingle with the
MONIED UP. Rick's Place if Rick's had been in downtown LA
rather than Casablanca.

Manny is looking through photos Presence took of the bike.

MANNY

You almost married a Duchess's kid?

PRESENCE

Duchess. Tech millionairess, has a
huge international shipping
business...

MANNY

You walked away from all that?
This dude Chad must've been a real
ass-hat.

PRESENCE

(hedging)

He...sometimes had his good points.

Looking through the cellphone photos:

13

CONTINUED: (2)

13

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

Custom ride; that's like a finger
print. I know some Gs who could ID
a ride like this.

As she collects her belongings to start heading out:

MANNY

I'm coming with.

PRESENCE

You're not coming with.

MANNY

You're gonna run around doing some
"legal-ish" nonsense, I'm keeping
an eye on you.

PRESENCE

God. Like an OCD Amish Librarian.

MANNY

I don't know what you've got
against reading.

Manny and Presence are up and out.

14

EXT. "THE STRIP" - DAY (D3)

14

A section of South Central LA where Biker Boyz - Urban Youth
who are into trick motorcycle riding - practice their skills.
They ride up and down the block doing tricks, showing off
their rides for the SIZABLE CROWD OF MOSTLY ROUGHNECKS that
has shown up to take in the display of skill and bravado. As
one would imagine, these are a rough bunch. Young people who
might otherwise POTENTIALLY BE IN GANGS, but who now put all
their energy into riding.

Presence and Manny arrive in her wounded Marauder. Both exit
the car. Getting the lay of the land, Presence rolls up on
BRICE, a guy whose muscle and potential for bad-assness are
big and obvious. Presence and Brice greet like two people
who have good history.

PRESENCE

Brice...

BRICE

Presence, what up, Yo? Heard you
was back on the streets.

PRESENCE

You remember Manny.

(CONTINUED)

Eyeing Manny, speaking with a chill:

BRICE

Yeah.

(to back Presence)

So, what's good?

PRESENCE

I got a friend I'm looking for.
He's gone underground, and the only
thing new to the scene is this
ride.

Showing the images on her phone:

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

Do anything for you?

BRICE

Sorry. I ain't a snitch.

PRESENCE

Doesn't go past me, you know that.

BRICE

Not talking about you. Talking
about Manny. Flipped on you,
flipped on his own brother. He's
the reason Edgar got killed.

MANNY

Forget this fool.

Manny starts to head off. Presence pulls him back.

PRESENCE

Hey...

(to Brice)

If Manny's here with me, he's cool.

Brice takes a moment to consider Presence's veracity.

BRICE

Lemme see the bike.

Presence holds the phone up again.

BRICE (CONT'D)

Garret Huff. He thinks he's a
playa, but he's harmless. Drops on
and off the map all the time.

PRESENCE

He on the map now?

Taking out his phone, Brice shows a photo of Huff posing with some BIKER GIRLS.

BRICE

Around here somewhere probably
trying to score some tail. Follow
the honey.

PRESENCE

Very classy. I owe you.
(to Manny)
Head back to the car.

MANNY

I'm not letting you roll alone.

PRESENCE

Keep the motor running. I come
back, I might be coming back hot.

As Manny heads off, Presence starts to work her way through the crowd, head on swivel, looking for Huff. As Brice instructed, she "follows the honey:" a flow of attractive ladies the guys all work to impress. At in the center of it all, among a gaggle of dudes showing off their wares, is Huff with a bike very similar to Chad's.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

Slick. That is seriously slick. I
got a friend with a ride just like
it.

GARRET

If he's got it, I made it. What's
your friend's name?

PRESENCE

Chad. Know him?

GARRET

Chad? Lemme tell you something
about Chad...

With suddenness, Chad SWINGS HIS HELMET at Presence. Presence is ready and blocks the swing. Garret, however, has got some quick to him and THROWS A KICK that catches her hard in the midsection. Garret jumps on his bike fires it up, and tries to fight through the mass which isn't easy.

Presence is up on her feet and comes running back to her Marauder and jumps behind the wheel.

PRESENCE

That's him. Buckle up.

Presence jams the car into gear, hits the gas, tears after Garret... Just as she crosses an intersection, the Marauder is yet again FRONT-ENDED. This time, by a POLICE CRUISER which obviously didn't see her coming. From the car steps officer MIKE MCKAY who orders Presence:

MCKAY

Out of the car!

PRESENCE

What the hell? You couldn't see me?

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

15 INT. POLICE STATION/HOLDING - AFTERNOON (D3) 15

Presence is alone, chilling in a holding cell. Deep in thought, she seems kinda like a version of Steve McQueen in The Great Escape.

A HOLDING OFFICER comes around and opens the door.

HOLDING OFFICER
You got bail. Let's go.

16 INT. POLICE STATION/PRE-RELEASE - MOMENTS LATER (D3) 16

Presence is walked to pre-release. Manny is already there signing for his belongings. He is visibly pissed, and starts in on Presence as she signs for her stuff.

MANNY
Told you.

PRESENCE
Quiet.

MANNY
Four months out of the army, and you're right back in prison.

PRESENCE
It's a holding cell, not prison.

MANNY
It's got bars, and you couldn't get out.

PRESENCE
For a guy who grew up around the life, sometimes you can come off a little precious.

MANNY
I wouldn't be coming off any way at all if you were living straight.

PRESENCE
What is your problem?

Manny doesn't respond, which begs more inquisition from Presence.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)
Hey, what's your problem?

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED:

16

MANNY

You heard what he said: I'm a
snitch who got his own brother
killed.

PRESENCE

Well...you are a snitch.
(beat)

But you're the reason I got out of
gangs, and I'm still alive.

Presence collects her belongings and the two head off.

17

INT. POLICE STATION/LOBBY - CONTINUOUS (D3)

17

Presence and Manny make their way out of the joint. As they
travel, Presence spots officer McKay. It's the first time we
really get a good look at the guy. Late-twenties. He's got
the body of a guy who knows where the gym is located. Nice
eyes, but with tough scars here and there to let you know
he's not afraid to get hectic if he's required.

PRESENCE

Oh, man...

MANNY

Presence, leave it. We just got
sprung.

Presence isn't leaving anything. She makes her way directly
to McKay, gets right up in his grill.

PRESENCE

Hey, jackass... You hit my ride.

MCKAY

Excuse me?

PRESENCE

You hit my ride, then you arrest
me?

MCKAY

You blew through a stop sign.

PRESENCE

I had right of way.

MCKAY

Your car's a rolling violation.

PRESENCE

My ride is tight.

(CONTINUED)

MCKAY

So maybe the problem's not the
ride, it's the woman behind the
wheel. Where'd you learn to drive?

PRESENCE

Afghanistan. But I was only
dodging Taliban and IEDs, not
hardasses in squad cars.

That Presence used to be in uniform kinda lands for McKay.
Presence can read the look on McKay's face and anticipates
what's coming.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

What, now you feel bad 'cause you
should've been nicer to a vet?

MCKAY

You know, you're not the only one
who learned to drive in
Afghanistan. Just drive careful,
okay?

Presence, not expecting to have anything in common with
McKay, gives a bit of a lingering look, then an appreciative
nod before heading on.

Waiting for Presence and Manny is Tre, who is none too happy
about having to bail the two out.

TRE

I seriously have to jump from work
just to bail you out of jail?

MANNY

Don't start with her. She's
already pissed.

TRE

Then she shouldn't be tussling with
the cops.

PRESENCE

Wasn't my fault.

TRE

I just paid your bail, paid to get
your car out of impound...

PRESENCE

I don't need your help. I got a job.

MANNY

She's doing a rundown on her ex-fiancé.

Tre gives a "WTF" look. Presence now gives a similar "WTF" look to Manny.

TRE

You got some stuff you want to talk about?

PRESENCE

I'm cool.

TRE

Four months, and I'm just now hearing about some dude you almost married? Why didn't you tell me about him?

PRESENCE

How am I going to talk to you? Every time I come around, you act like I'm trying to climb in your pocket.

Getting fairly genuine about their circumstance:

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

Being a sister; this is new to me, and so far I liked it better when I was an only child.

That kinda lands with Tre.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

I'm cool. Lemme have my car keys.

Tre looks to Manny for confirmation. We get the sense Manny doesn't buy that. Presence says again:

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

I'm cool. My keys, please

TRE

Whatever you're into, you need to be done with it. *Promise.*

18 CONTINUED: (2)

18

Presence looks from Tre to Manny. Both wait for her to promise.

PRESENCE

Promise.

19 INT. GARRET'S JOINT/STAIRWELL - DAY (D4)

19

Garret's making his way up the stairs. He finds waiting for him at the top a clearly annoyed Presence. Garret spots her, and immediately bolts back the way he came. Presence jumps the rail, and beats Garret to the next landing. Garret turns, and now tries to make his way BACK UP the stairs. Presence grabs him by the leg, yanks him back slamming into the stairs. That pretty much takes the spring out of Garret's step. As he clutches his head, he whines to Presence:

GARRET

Damn! Why you keep chasing me?

PRESENCE

'Cause you keep running. I know your name, I know who you hang with... I found your ex-girlfriend - who is better than you deserve - and she was real happy to flip on you... Where's Chad?

Garret doesn't say anything. Presence starts to make a threatening move toward Garret.

GARRET

Whoa, whoa, whoa...

PRESENCE

Look, you can either help me, or you can get your ass kicked some more. Those are the only options you get.

GARRET

What is the matter with you? It's no big thing with Chad. He just wanted to disappear some. Get his head right. He knows I been on the DL before, and wanted me to do the same for him.

PRESENCE

So you set him up where?

(CONTINUED)

GARRET

Got him some fake IDs, got him to Catalina. I don't know what name he's using, I don't know where he's staying.

Easing up on Garret:

PRESENCE

I do.

(beat)

You're a good man, Garret. I know 'em when I see 'em.

Presence is out.

EXT. CATALINA ISLAND - DAY (D5)

Catalina is just off the coast of California and a world away. It is a sun soaked, chill playground full of the RICH and the PRETTY. There's a lot of flesh showing, and the majority of it is tight and tanned.

EXT. PLAYA MAR HOTEL/POOL - DAY (D5)

It's the VERY BEST hotel the island has to offer. The theme of sun and skin continues.

Presence enters the pool area, looking appropriate for the venue. She lands at a pool-side bar where she's approached by a bartender, WINN.

WINN

What can I get you?

PRESENCE

Do you know Ralph Ellison?

WINN

Mr. Ellison? He's got a cabana. He's around here somewhere.

Presence waits a bit, does some people watching... For a moment she kinda drifts mentally, digs on the environment... Then, through the crowd, Presence sees CHAD. Even at a distance, Chad is charming, charismatic...but there is something about him as well that's just a bit busted. For what good qualities he has, there something about him that would make one think he can't help but end up on the wrong side of trouble.

A whole lot of emotion starts to well up in Presence. Her gaze lingers on him for a long moment. At first there's some

nostalgia to her thoughts...but thinking back on the past only brings up bad memories. She gets up off the bar stool, starts for Chad like a woman on a mission. Then, she stops... With equal determination she heads back to the bar and says:

PRESENCE

Lemme get a shot of El Mayor
Reserva Añejo.

Winn pours. Presence downs the shot. Braced, she now turns back for Chad and starts making the cross.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

Chad!

Chad turns, sees Presence moving for him. He shows no surprise. Rather, it's as though he figured sooner, or later she was going to catch up to him. Easy in manner:

CHAD

I know that look. I know what's
coming. I'm not gonna fight you.

Presence lands with Chad, grabs him by the shirt and cocks an arm like she's about to beat him senseless.

CHAD (CONT'D)

Just do your thing, and dump me
somewhere comfortable when you're
done.

Chad's passiveness kinda shakes Presence. She eases up on him. Rather than throw a punch, Presence delivers a deep, deep kiss. We she eventually breaks off:

CHAD (CONT'D)

It's good to see you, Presence.

We are interior of what must be one of the more luxurious suites in the joint. In the bedroom is a sizable bed. In the bed are Presence and Chad who are finishing some monumental "reacquaintment" sex.

As Chad huffs a few deep breaths:

CHAD

Jesus, Presence, you been working
out?

PRESENCE

It's called upper body strength.
You'd know about it if you dated
girls who weighed more than 82
pounds.

CHAD

How'd you find me?

PRESENCE

You don't slum. I knew you'd be at
the best hotel on the island. You
always used one of your favorite
authors as an alias, and since
there wasn't a Chester Himes
registered...

CHAD

I didn't think I'd ever see you
again.

PRESENCE

That was sorta the plan.

Presence gives a bit of a smile with that.

CHAD

You got a great smile.

PRESENCE

Same as it ever was.

CHAD

You forget after three years.

PRESENCE

Learn to appreciate when you have
the chance.

(beat)

God, Chad. There were 10,000 miles
of good times waiting for us.

Real quick pop of Presence and Chad in and among beautiful
people. The attraction and passion between the two fairly
radiates in the near dark.

PRESENCE (V.O.)

You and me...you know we could've
had so much fun.

24 INT. PLAYA MAR HOTEL/SUITE - CONTINUOUS (D5) 24

Presence and Chad continue.

CHAD

We did have fun.

PRESENCE

We could've had the kind of fun that didn't include me waking up to an empty bed, going days without hearing from you... Settling your gambling debts... And the mystery phone calls from women you swear you didn't know.

CHAD

I didn't know them. Not really.

25 INT. CHAD'S CONDO - MORNING (D0) 25

Another real quick pop. We see Presence and Chad in the middle of a fierce argument.

PRESENCE (V.O.)

I could put up with a lot, but I wasn't going to put up with somebody who couldn't commit.

26 INT. PLAYA MAR HOTEL/SUITE - CONTINUOUS (D5) 26

Completing her thought:

PRESENCE

I grew up in a broken home. I wasn't going to marry into one.

Presence gets up and moves over to a DINING TABLE littered with ROOM SERVICE TRAYS. Clearly they've been at this for awhile.

Chad weakly drags himself from the bed and joins Presence in a cup of TEA.

CHAD

How long you been out of the army?

PRESENCE

I just got discharged four months ago. I needed a change. ...My father died.

(CONTINUED)

CHAD
(genuine)
I'm sorry.

PRESENCE
Lost a buddy, too. Edgar

CHAD
He was the one...

PRESENCE
We enlisted together. His
brother's worried now that I'm out
of uniform, I'm going to get back
into the life.

CHAD
Are you?

PRESENCE
Me and Edgar; we were a couple of
young thugs acting stupid...

CHAD
Pulling a "smash and grab" at a
jewelry store.

PRESENCE
Yeah, that was genius. After Manny
turned us in to the police, it was
jail, or the military. Picking
green over orange...? Best thing
that ever happened to me. I'm not
trying to backslide. I'm trying to
make things right with Manny,
trying to connect with my
brother...

CHAD
Wait. I didn't know you had a
brother.

PRESENCE
I didn't know I had a brother.
But...broken homes. Dad drops
dead, we show up to mourn, and
there's brood #2 weeping over his
casket.

CHAD
Good times.

PRESENCE

Tre's a hood rat, too, but he made it out on his own, so he treats me like an 8-ball chick that's always looking for a handout.

CHAD

I thought me and the Duchess were messed up.

PRESENCE

You got nothing on my family.
(beat)
So, look, I gotta get you home.

CHAD

I'm not going.

PRESENCE

Don't make me haul your ass--

CHAD

You sit there talking about how you're trying to figure yourself out, but you're going to haul me home for doing the same? The Duchess paying you?

Pulling a check book from a nearby end table:

CHAD (CONT'D)

I'll double it.

PRESENCE

I got a job, I'm doing my job.

CHAD

I'm offering you a new job, which is to quit your old job. And your old job is basically over 'cause you found me.

(getting real)

Presence...I can't go back. I got stuff I'm trying to deal with.

PRESENCE

Stuff like what?

CHAD

I'm off liquor, I'm trying to dry out--

(CONTINUED)

PRESENCE

Stuff like what? I can help.

CHAD

I'm asking you, just for awhile,
let me be. Go back to the Duchess.
Tell her...tell her whatever. Just
forget about me. Then one day,
when I get myself together, I'm
gonna be the one who comes looking
for you.

For a moment it seems Presence might actually be enthralled
by the vision. If so, she quickly gets over it.

PRESENCE

I don't believe you. And I don't
like getting lied to. And know
what else...? I don't care
anymore.

CHAD

Presence, I'm always gonna--

Presence ain't trying to hear all that.

PRESENCE

Make the check out to cash. You're
just business now. That's it.

Chad writes the check. Presence takes it, then heads back to
the bedroom to get dressed.

Presence has returned to the Duchess. Jas stands over her
shoulder giving Presence much stink eye. Holding up her end
of the agreement with Chad:

PRESENCE

I couldn't find him.

The Duchess steps close to Presence as if using her eyes as
lie detectors. Presence says again as she takes out the
Duchess's check:

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

I couldn't find him, so...you can
have this back.

27

CONTINUED:

27

DUCHESS

I'm surprised. I always thought
you to be the kind who would do
anything for money.

Presence rips up the check, heads back the way she came. We
read in her a lot of hurt and emotion.

28

INT. PRESENCE'S JOINT - DAY (D6)

28

We see Presence using a phone app to deposit the check from
Chad. She's kinda melancholy about it.

29

INT. GYM - DAY (D7)

29

Presence is in the gym working out her frustrations in the
ring against ANOTHER FIGHTER. The pair are just sparring,
but Presence lays in just a bit to the other fighter. We can
see the speed and accuracy with which she can place her
shots. No two ways; Presence is fierce.

As Presence engages, a couple of LAPD detectives approach.
LUDLOW, male and STONE, Female. Both formidable. Both
hardasses. They are backed by a couple of uniformed
officers. One of whom is McKay.

LUDLOW

Presence Foster?

PRESENCE

Yeah.

LUDLOW

You know Chad Avedon?

PRESENCE

What'd he do?

LUDLOW

He got himself killed. We need to
go talk about that.

For Presence, that's the sock that shocks.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

30 INT. POLICE STATION/INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY (D7) 30

Cleaned up some, Presence is sitting at a table as she's grilled by Ludlow and Stone. BARELY ABLE TO PROCESS CHAD'S LOSS, Presence is in no mood to deal with Ludlow's "hard guy" routine as he displays PICTURES of Chad's body.

LUDLOW

Dead. Fished out of Catalina Bay.
Two days after you told the Duchess
you couldn't find him.

PRESENCE

How long was he in the water?

STONE

You tell us.

PRESENCE

Do you have his cell phone? You do
a trace on any calls? I hope to
God you're looking at surveillance
footage.

LUDLOW

You start owning up to things now,
it's gonna make it easier later.
We pulled your jacket. Armed
robbery. Assault...

STONE

You're out of the army, back in the
hood, hard up for money... You go
see your ex... Only, prick that he
is, he doesn't want to pay your way
anymore. You beat his ass? I'd
beat his ass.

PRESENCE

You two are stupid. We're done.

STONE

You don't set the rules.

PRESENCE

But I pay my taxes, so you work for
me. And, by the way, you shouldn't
be wearing a gun to an
interrogation.

(CONTINUED)

Ludlow gives a nod to Stone. Stone throws an elbow to Presence that hits her square in the head.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

God...damn... You think that's cool just 'cause she's a girl?

STONE

A "girl?"

Stone doesn't like that qualification. She starts to take another swing at Presence. Presence intercepts, twists Stone, slams her hard onto the table... Ludlow starts to go for his weapon. At the same time, Presence goes for Stone's gun. She DOES NOT PULL IT, but she clearly beats Ludlow to the punch.

Before Ludlow can respond. McKay opens the door and steps in. Ludlow, pissed:

LUDLOW

Knock, ass-cap!

In a very dry fashion, McKay knocks twice on the door. Nearly enraged:

LUDLOW (CONT'D)

What!

MCKAY

Medical Examiners report came back. The vic's blood alcohol level was three times the limit. Was drunk when he hit the water. Accidental drowning.

PRESENCE

So, I guess we are done.

Presence moves for the door. McKay escorts her out.

Presence converses with McKay as he walks her from the joint.

PRESENCE

Your boss has got a real attitude problem.

MCKAY

He's not my boss. And, you could try "thank you."

PRESENCE

And this accidental drowning...?
When I saw Chad he wasn't touching
liquor.

MCKAY

The ME's report said it was *likely*,
but *questionable*. I wasn't going
to say anything in front of Ludlow.

PRESENCE

As long as you're in the mood for
doing favors Officer...McKay; they
have Chad's cell phone? They trace
any calls?

MCKAY

Remember when I told you to stay
out of trouble?

PRESENCE

"Trouble?" What, you saw my
jacket, too? I'm not a thug.
(beat)
Anymore.

MCKAY

I saw your "other" jacket. The one
from the DOD. Bronze Star...?

PRESENCE

When I'm bad, I'm bad. When I'm
good, I'm sugar wrapped in
peppermint honey.

MCKAY

What the hell is "peppermint
honey?"

PRESENCE

Can I go?

MCKAY

You can go.

Presence starts to head off. Presence, she takes a beat,
then turns back:

PRESENCE

McKay... Thank you.

32

INT. W HOTEL/DRAIS NIGHTCLUB - DAY (D7)

32

The space is mostly empty. A BAND is rehearsing. The LEAD SINGER working her way through a version of India.Arie's *Ready for Love*. Presence and Tre hang near the back having a couple of drinks, Presence downing her El Mayor Reserva Añejo. They interact, perhaps for the first time like a sister and a brother.

PRESENCE

This is exactly why I got out of uniform. I hated being in a job, if you're a day late, or a dollar short, you end up standing over somebody else's grave. Losing Chad...hurts. But losing him knowing I could have done something for him...

TRE

You tried.

PRESENCE

Clearly I messed it up.

TRE

You can't save people who don't want to be saved.

(beat)

Did you love him?

PRESENCE

I don't know.

TRE

That's bull. You know if you love somebody.

PRESENCE

Sometimes you think you know what love is. You think you know what commitment is, then you find out dad's not hanging with his boys, he's just out running around with some whore.

TRE

My mom's not a whore.

PRESENCE

Wasn't talking about your mother in particular. Whatever whores in general our dad was banging.

(CONTINUED)

TRE

That is a whole lot of bitterness,
and blame in service of dodging one
question. Did you love Chad?

PRESENCE

I'm not as sentimental as you
think.

TRE

And you're not as hard as you
think. The only thing that's tough
are the choices you need to start
making.

PRESENCE

You ever think the standards you
set for other people are
unrealistic?

TRE

Or, maybe I just think there's
nothing you can't do.

Presence gives an appreciative smile.

TRE (CONT'D)

See. Not so bad having a brother.

PRESENCE

Your mom's still a whore.

Presence lays in bed, exhausted more than just resting. Her
phone RINGS, and she languidly fumbles it on. On the other
end of the line is a BRANCH MANAGER

PRESENCE

...Hello...

BRANCH MANAGER (O.C.)

Presence Foster? I'm calling from
Prime National Bank. I'm sorry to
inform you that the check you
recently deposited can't clear.

PRESENCE

It can't...?

BRANCH MANAGER (O.C.)

The account it's written from has
been placed in probate. The assets
(MORE)

33 CONTINUED: 33

BRANCH MANAGER (O.C.) (CONT'D)
are frozen. We're going to have to
charge a thirty-five dollar fee for
the returned check.

PRESENCE
Of course you are. You couldn't
have just sent me an email?

BRANCH MANAGER (O.C.)
I wanted to let you know about the
letter.

PRESENCE
What letter?

34 INT. BANK BRANCH - DAY (D8) 34

We see Presence arrive to the bank. She's greeted by the
BRANCH MANAGER who hands her an envelope. As she does, WE
CONTINUE TO HEAR THE TAIL END OF THE PHONE CONVERSATION.

BRANCH MANAGER (V.O.)
There was a letter addressed to the
individual who cashed the check.
We're holding it here for you.
We'll give it to you directly any
time you want to pick it up.

Presence opens the envelope. Inside the envelope is a single
BUSINESS CARD. The card reads: CHUCK PANAMA - BROKER. The
address is in Inglewood.

35 EXT. MINI-MART - DAY (D8) 35

Inglewood, CA. You can tell by the low-flying planes that
make their approach to LAX. We see Presence's Marauder
arrive to what looks like a low-end insurance brokerage.

Presence checks the address against the card, then heads for
the door. She rings a BUZZER, and after a moment is BUZZED
IN.

36 INT. BROKERAGE - CONTINUOUS (D8) 36

Presence enters to find a place that's right out of 1979.
Shag rug, mimeo machines, filing cabinets...

There's a MAN sitting behind a desk, and OLDER BLACK MAN who
looks like he's been working the joint for 60 plus years.
CHUCK PANAMA. The man has a certain ease about him. But
it's the kind of ease that could lead one to a false sense of
security right before Chuck slipped out a gun and handed you
a bullet.. Though Charles comes across as pleasant enough,

(CONTINUED)

the PITBULL that sits across the room from him doesn't look to be. Presence, however, is nonplussed.

PANAMA

May I help you?

PRESENCE

I'm looking for Chuck Panama.

PANAMA

Who's asking?

PRESENCE

Presence.

PANAMA

That doesn't tell me anything.

Presence takes out Panama's business card, hands it to Panama.

PRESENCE

What's this tell you? I got it from a dead man. Chad Avedon.

PANAMA

Have a seat, Presence.

As she does:

PRESENCE

So...what kind of a broker are you?

Panama doesn't answer.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

I'm not a cop.

PANAMA

You're not a client, either.

PRESENCE

I'm just looking for a few answers. Chad was...we were close.

PANAMA

I feel your pain, but that's not my problem.

PRESENCE

Well...there's an issue of an outstanding check. Can you relate
(MORE)

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

to that? So, we can chat, or I can get to collecting.

Panama takes measure of Presence.

PANAMA

I believe you will.

(beat)

I broker services. There are people who need services, and there are people who can supply them.

PRESENCE

What kind of services?

PANAMA

Generally speaking; the kind of things your can't even find people on the internet to handle.

PRESENCE

Illegal stuff.

PANAMA

There is a whole level of commerce that exists below the visible. I don't ask. I don't judge. I just facilitate.

PRESENCE

Did Chad need services?

PANAMA

He was offering. Interesting thing: people who come *from* money are generally very lousy *about* money. Chad owed heavily.

PRESENCE

Owed who?

PANAMA

I don't know who, and "who" was not my concern. He needed to make money, and I put him together with someone who needed some helping out.

PRESENCE

What kind of "help" did Chad give?

36

CONTINUED: (3)

36

PANAMA

I'm a businessman. I'll tell you about your friend, but there's no business in me offering up more than that.

PRESENCE

You brokered a deal. Chad ended up dead, so I'm guessing whatever the deal was, it didn't go down and you're missing your vig. Somebody owes me, somebody owes you. I'm in the mood to make that somebody pay.

PANAMA

This is a tough business, Presence.

PRESENCE

I'm a tough customer.

Panama considers things. He crosses to an OLD-SCHOOL FILING CABINET, pulls a file and hands it to Presence.

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

Any chance you got this on a thumb drive?

Panama gives a rather dry look. Presence takes the file and exits, taking just enough time to pet the dog on her way.

37

I/E. THE MARAUDER - LATER (D8)

37

On a side-street, as traffic passes in the near distance, Presence sits in the car looking through the file she's been given. There are PICTURES and CLIPPINGS of a man named NICK TASHJIAN. From what we can gather from the clippings, we get the idea that he's an entrepreneur, club owner of a joint called LUNA VICE, had money troubles in the past, but has always managed to come out on top.

As Presence looks over the material, WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A PHONE RINGING. AS IT PICKS UP, WE CUT TO:

38

I/E. THE MARAUDER - MOMENTS LATER (D8)

38

We jump to "real time." Presence is on her cell phone. OVER THE LINE WE HEAR:

RECEPTIONIST (O.C.)

Nick Tashjian's office.

(CONTINUED)

PRESENCE

Lemme speak to Nick, please. I'm calling about Chad Avedon.

RECEPTIONIST (O.C.)

Mr. Tashjian's not available. I can take a message.

PRESENCE

It's not a message. Tell him I'm calling about Chad Avedon.

RECEPTIONIST (O.C.)

(beat)

Hold please.

There's a long beat as WE HEAR HOLD MUSIC OVER THE LINE - PLAYER'S "BABY, COME BACK." After a moment someone comes back on the line. As the two speak, their meaning is thinly veiled. They both know the game they're playing.

TASHJIAN (O.C.)

This is Nick Tashjian.

PRESENCE

Nick? Hey. I'm calling about Chad Avedon.

TASHJIAN (O.C.)

I don't think I can help you.

PRESENCE

No?

TASHJIAN

What was the name again?

PRESENCE

Chad Avedon.

TASHJIAN (O.C.)

Your name.

PRESENCE

Presence.

TASHJIAN (O.C.)

Well, I can see if this gentleman is in my employ, if that's what you're asking. Do you have a number where I can get back to you.

PRESENCE

Three-one-oh, three-eight-five, six-
seven-two-eight.

TASHJIAN (O.C.)

I'll be in touch, Presence.

PRESENCE

Appreciate it, Nick.

Presence hangs up the phone. She fires up the Marauder and drives.

THE FOLLOWING PLAYS OUT IN A SINGLE PIECE. Presence arrives home. She heads upstairs. She turns on her sound system. "*When am I Going to Make a Living*" from Sade plays. Presence goes to a closet, pulls out some clothes, lays them out on the floor leaving a trail toward the bedroom.

She goes to a LOCK BOX she has hidden away, opens it. Inside are GUNS, and some ORDNANCE. She takes out a FLASH BANG. She heads into the closet just outside of the bedroom and CLOSES THE DOOR.

THE CAMERA PANS OVER to a WINDOW which looks outside the property. After a long moment WE SEE A CAR PULL UP to the house. It sits for a moment, then the lights dim. We see FOUR MEN get out of the car and head for the house. THE CAMERA AGAIN ORIENTS FOR THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE, and toward the stairs. We see the four men, WEARING SKI MASKS AND TOTING GUNS moving up the stairs and for the bedroom HEADING PAST THE CLOSET AS THEY GO. WE HOLD ON THE CLOSET. We see Presence then open the closet door, ease from the space and roll the grenade into the bedroom, then turn her back to the space. The flash bang DETONATES. We see Presence move into the bedroom, the men now STUNNED. She kicks ass in counterpoint to the easy sounds of SADE, one dude in particular she pounds rather BADLY IN THE HEAD. The men, barely able to keep their bearings, struggle from the space.

Presence moves to the WINDOW, and watches as they fall into their car and then speed away. She heads back into the bedroom, lays on the bed as Sade continues to ask "when am I gonna make a living?"

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

40 INT. LOUNGE - DAY (D9)

40

The space is largely empty, some crew cleans as Presence sits with Tre. He's reading through the file she got from Panama. Tre says to his sister, rather incredulously:

TRE

Nick Tashjian's trying to kill you?

PRESENCE

I don't think he was trying to kill me. I think he was trying to keep me from asking questions about a guy he did kill.

TRE

That's...that's nuts.

PRESENCE

Chad writes me a check that he knows, if he's not alive, the bank won't cash. And when they don't, the check comes back to me with an envelope and a card. That takes me to Chuck Panama, who hooked Chad up with Tashjian. I call Tashjian to see if he's cool, or he's rattled. Next thing, I got some thugs come around to see me.

TRE

Why? This Panama guy trades services. No disrespect to your ex, but it's not like he had a lot going on.

PRESENCE

The Duchess does. She's got a whole shipping company. Tashjian; he's been broke as much as he's had dough. You know how the club scene works. People build empires moving weight, and being dirty. Chad's desperate, agrees to do some smuggling...

TRE

But...?

(CONTINUED)

PRESENCE

But Chad's not a complete jerk, and decides to kill the deal.

TRE

Only, Chad's the one who ends up getting killed.

PRESENCE

That's what I'm going to ask Nick.

TRE

You read this, right? It's like the history of how he built himself. Major playa, big trouble, but with enough friends nothing ever sticks.

Pointing a photo of Tashjian's Luna Vice Club:

PRESENCE

Can you get me in?

TRE

I'm not putting my sister in the middle of all that. If this dude's trouble...

PRESENCE

Then I'm in the right place. Can you get me in?

TRE

Presence, one time; let go.

PRESENCE

You told me there's nothing I can't do.

TRE

I meant, like, start a bakery. Open a Pizza Hut franchise...

Tre very much gets that she doesn't let go. Relenting:

TRE (CONT'D)

...Yeah, I know a guy.

It's a hot spot with the associated types: YOUNG and GOOD LOOKING, OLDER and MONIED UP. There's a string of HIGH END CARS placed out front. Presence pulls up in the Marauder.

She spots a sizable dude, DANNY, who's working security outside the place.

PRESENCE

Danny?

DANNY

What's up? You Tre's little sister? Must be from the good-looking side of the family. Whatcha need?

PRESENCE

I need to get in, and I need to keep my ride close. And pointed toward the drive.

Calling to another BOUNCER.

DANNY

Leon, back her in.
(to Presence:)
Let's go.

Danny walks Presence INTO THE CLUB. As they travel:

DANNY (CONT'D)

You sure you want to do this? Once you're in there, I can't help you.

PRESENCE

What am I looking at?

DANNY

Tashjian always hangs at the back of the house. He's got five thugs watching him. Strapped, but they don't usually pull out. Not in his joint. Bad for business. Tashjian's ride's out front. The Vanquish.

The pair arrive to the MAIN SPACE of the club. The joint is jumping. The club is jamming. A DJ's spinning. Danny, looking out over the space toward a VIP area:

DANNY (CONT'D)

That's him. I don't know how you're gonna get through his guys.

PRESENCE

I'm not. Thanks.

41 CONTINUED: (2)

41

Presence works her way across the space to the VIP area. She makes her way directly to a bouncer, WELLS. Presence moves to him, whispers something in his ear. Wells gives a curious look, Presence remains constant.

Wells crosses into the VIP area and over to TASHJIAN. This is the first time we get a real, good physical look at the man. Well manicured, handsome, but in some ways it's like putting lipstick on a rock. The dude is hard. His nature is to be hard. One can only hope he doesn't turn his nature against you.

At a distance, over the noise, we can't hear what Wells says to Tashjian. We can, however, see Tashjian sit up and look across the club to Presence. Off his look, WE MAKE A HARD CUT TO:

42 INT. LUNA VICE/KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER (N3)

42

Presence is marched into the kitchen by Tashjian and FOUR THUGS. The kitchen's "closed." Music piped in from the club plays in the space. Tashjian reaches to a control and turns the music down. Arriving to the space, Presence sees another guy - a real badass looking dude - CARTER, whose face is BADLY BRUISED. Likely the guy Presence put the beatdown on back at her place. Easy as Sunday morning:

PRESENCE

Have we met?

That gets a sneer from Carter. Tashjian wastes no time getting right into things.

TASHJIAN

You are a stupid little girl, you know that? Stupid. You really don't get it.

PRESENCE

That's why you sent guys to kill me.

TASHJIAN

Sent people to explain things to you.

PRESENCE

I'm listening.

TASHJIAN

Smart people mind their own. When they don't, bad things happen.

(CONTINUED)

PRESENCE

Bad things like they end up in
Catalina Bay?

TASHJIAN

The Duchess has ten cargo ships
making port every day. Me and Chad
could've had a real good thing. Me
and "drunk, desperate Chad"
could've. But then he starts to
sober up. Has second thoughts
about the deal. Wanted to run off
and figure things out. Nothing
worse than a drunk who starts to
think straight.

PRESENCE

So you put him in the bay.

TASHJIAN

Actually, I just tried to get him
to start drinking again. He went
in the bay himself. Some people,
they really want to make things
more difficult than they need to
be.

PRESENCE

Yeah. You going to start me
"drinking," too?

TASHJIAN

Doesn't have to be like that.
You've clearly got capacities.
We've got a set up between here and
Vietnam. We're starting to move
over a hundred kilos of--

PRESENCE

Nick, just so we're clear; I don't
give a shit.

Just as Presence has had enough of Tashjian, Tashjian's had
enough of her. To Carter:

TASHJIAN

Mess this bitch up.

Tashjian leaves, TURNING UP THE MUSIC ON A SPEAKER as he does
as if wanting to cover the sound of bloody murder that's
about to come.

42

CONTINUED: (2)

42

The men close in on Presence. FIVE on one. Unfortunately, for the men, they are vastly outnumbered. Presence excels at close/quarter fighting. She uses all of the environment around her to her advantage: From SUPPORT BEAMS, to APPLIANCES, to the UTENSILS that are located in various spots. Anything near her is at the very least usable for defensive means, and anything not fixed is eligible to be used offensively. THE SHOT IS STITCHED so that it seems as though Presence fairly "dances" through the space to the music taking out the thugs in a single, fluid take. In short order, Presence has torn her way through four of the men. Carter, seeing which way things are going, busts from the kitchen.

43

INT. LUNA VICE - MOMENTS LATER (N3)

43

We see Carter fighting his way through the club crowd... We see Presence closing in behind him.

44

EXT. LUNA VICE - MOMENTS LATER (N3)

44

Carter comes running out of the joint. Tashjian is near his Vanquish.

CARTER

She's coming!

Tashjian doesn't need to be told twice. He jumps in his car, peels off leaving Carter behind.

Presence comes out of the joint. Carter tries to cut her off, but she clocks him.

Presence jumps in her waiting car and is quickly hauling ass after Tashjian.

And then it's on: the BIG ASS CAR CHASE we've been building toward all episode. Presence is not cut off this time, but rather puts on display a master class in precision driving.

The Vanquish has off-the-line speed, but Tashjian isn't the driver that Presence is. She slaloms effortlessly through the traffic which separates herself from Tashjian.

Closing on him, Presence starts to get aggressive, using the Marauder to tear at the Vanquish. Tashjian knows he's not going to win that fight. Jamming his brake, he turns sharply orienting the Vanquish the WRONG WAY up onto a freeway off ramp.

Presence overshoots, has to brake hard and bring her car to a stop. Swinging the front end around, Presence jams the accelerator sending the Marauder surging forward like a

(CONTINUED)

bullet from a gun. She races up the ramp after Tashjian. What she sees before her forces her to utter:

PRESENCE

...Shit...

The road ahead is littered with SPUN OUT VEHICLES, the drivers clearly having lost control. Presence has got to navigate an automotive minefield just to close the gap.

Up ahead, Tashjian looks in his REARVIEW MIRROR. He can see Presence gaining. He jerks his wheel, heads down an off-ramp, races for some city streets... Looking behind him, he sees... Nothing. Nothing at all. No sign of Presence. Despite the fact he was trying to lose her, now that she is suddenly gone fills Tashjian with dread. Slowing for a bit, muttering to himself:

TASHJIAN

...Where the hell is she...?

Then, out of the darkness, the Marauder comes roaring "unseen" directly for Tashjian. Presence T-bones it into the PASSENGER SIDE of the Vanquish. Once both cars slide to a halt, Presence steps from her car, comes around to the driver side of Tashjian's car, hauls him out and dumps him on the pavement. Presence stands over Tashjian, triumphant, AS WE HEAR THE SOUND OF SIRENS APPROACHING.

We hold on Presence for a long moment, then CUT TO:

We come in tight on Presence who's riding in the back of the car. She looks worn, she looks tired... She's a woman who is spent. The car comes to a halt. We "feel" an officer exit the car and come around to the back. Presence, emotionally empty asks:

PRESENCE

Am I in trouble?

The back door of the car opens revealing that it's McKay who's driving. Rather than arriving to a police station, McKay is delivering Presence home.

MCKAY

I don't know if you're going to get off Scott free, but... I know the shields are pouring through Tashjian's phone records, texts... The stuff he's saying about Chad makes him look real guilty. Worry

(MORE)

45

CONTINUED:

45

MCKAY (CONT'D)
about that later. Get inside, get
some rest...

Presence gives a nod. She starts for her place. Exhausted, she's a little woozy. As she tips a bit, MCKAY IS THERE TO CATCH HER. If electricity could be transmitted by image, the viewer would feel the SPARK that travels between Presence and McKay as they touch. Presence looks to McKay, and with a bit of a tired, but intoxicating smile:

PRESENCE
You're one of the good ones. I
know 'em, when I see 'em.

The two linger for a moment, then Presence heads on inside her joint.

46

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY (D10)

46

We're just beyond a rather handsome HEADSTONE set for Chad Avedon.

Presence, Manny and Tre are present, all dressed in various black-centric looks. Presence has with her a very expensive looking JAPANESE TEA SET which she places at the headstone.

MANNY
Isn't it supposed to be "one for
the brothers..."

PRESENCE
He was cleaning up. Figure I'll
help him on his way.

Presence gets quiet for a moment. Tre, getting a little uncomfortable:

TRE
Do you want to be alone?

PRESENCE
Kind of like being with family.

MANNY
You gonna be good?

PRESENCE
I just need to get my head correct.
Figure out what I'm doing with
myself.

(CONTINUED)

The group starts heading toward the Marauder, damaged, but like a warhorse, it's still running. As they arrive to the car:

TRE

You know, I got people, time to time, could use some helping out on the DL from somebody who's actually good to their word.

MANNY

Why you encouraging her?

TRE

I am encouraging her. Looking out for people; girl's got a way.

PRESENCE

Manny, don't even sweat it. I'm not getting up to anything illegal.

As the group gets into the car, thoughts take hold with Presence... She asks, clear with her intent:

PRESENCE (CONT'D)

But, if it's legal-ish; who are your friends and what are they paying?

As we hang on Presence, we FADE TO:

BLACK

END OF SHOW

*