

## TEASER

INT. TUNNEL - DAY - DREAM

A seemingly-endless tunnel. No cars. Just DIANNE MALICK (26) - a modern-day 'Snow White.' Raven hair, pale skin. She possesses a quiet beauty, but also keen, watchful eyes. Always on the lookout.

She charges towards the end of the tunnel - to freedom. But as Dianne nears the overwhelmingly-bright light at the end, she comes to a halt. Something's wrong.

Sure enough, the light becomes consumed by dark. Dianne is anchored to the pavement as the world around her is plunged into shadow. As her eyes adjust, Dianne spots a SILHOUETTED FIGURE at the mouth of the exit.

The figure moves towards Dianne, FOOTSTEPS ECHOING. The figure is slow at first, but then their pace quickens until the figure - a MENACING BLONDE WOMAN (26) - lunges at Dianne.

END DREAM.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - SUNRISE

Dianne's eyes pop open. She sits up on the hardwood floor of her empty apartment. It's a classy one-bedroom that anyone under thirty would be proud to rent. Hardwood floors, marble counter-tops - the whole shebang.

As she re-familiarizes herself with her surroundings, Dianne spots a single moving box next to her. On its side, a few contents have spilled out.

Dianne stares the box down, fighting to remember how it got that way.

EXT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - SUNRISE

Dawn. The horizon splits the city of Los Angeles in half, and the sun has just begun to make its ascent. All is quiet. Calm. Dianne breaks this stillness, struggling to heave the heavy moving box across the parking lot to her car.

In the morning light, remnants of bruises and scars are now more visible on Dianne's face & arms, and create a fragile tableau. However, despite these battle wounds, Dianne is anything but delicate. Determined, calculative and head-strong, Dianne's survival-instinct is her greatest asset.

Dianne pops the hatchback and stuffs the box inside. She takes a step back and stumbles, out of breath. Dianne barely catches herself on the car as she is overtaken by a VISION.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT - VISION

A small, congested room. Dianne is seated in a chair, facing the door. Someone on the other side turns the knob. Luckily, the door is locked... for now.

END VISION.

EXT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - SUNRISE

As Dianne recovers, she catches a glimpse of a large billboard. It features a 'Have You Seen This Man' bulletin with the face of Daniel Fielding, a dangerous criminal sporting a "come and get me" smirk.

Dianne makes a 180 and stares up at the building. Frozen to the spot, her gaze fixed, Dianne nervously plays with her keys. But suddenly, she grips them tightly - decision made.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Dianne slowly moves through the apartment. One last look. As she surveys, certain areas trigger memories, and their related SOUNDS play out in her head.

1. The floor: The BURSTING of a glass coffee table as Dianne's body flies through it.

2. A wall: A LOUD THUMP as her body is thrown into it.

3. The bedroom: Dianne's CRIES OF PAIN.

Dianne works up the courage to move into

THE BEDROOM.

Dianne GASPS. The handsome remains of ROY THOMPSON (35) lay on the floor, face-up. Somehow, the pool of blood surrounding him doesn't take away from the burly hunk-of-man that is "Roy." Dianne blinks hard and when she reopens her eyes the floor is clear.

Nothing but a figment.

Dianne kneels and touches the floor where Roy's body lay moments before. A few tears roll down her cheeks.

DIANNE  
Goodbye, Roy.

Dianne stands. Suddenly, a reflection in the window ahead sends Dianne spinning. With a clear view of the living room, Dianne spots a MALE FIGURE in plain sight near the front door.

Dianne lurches backwards, suddenly magnetized to the wall behind her. It's hard to discern the intruder's identity, but as he makes his way towards Dianne, it's clear he's wearing a jack identical to Roy's.

Dianne shakes uncontrollably, praying her mind is once again playing tricks. But when the figure removes his sunglasses, it becomes all too apparent -

The intruder is definitely *not* a figment.

It's DANIEL FIELDING - an equally sociopathic & eccentric criminal mastermind. His dark, psychotic eyes pierce Dianne's, boring into her soul.

DIANNE  
You?

DANIEL FIELDING  
Who else would I be, sweet pea?  
Now, let's have some fun.

Dianne remains motionless, horror etched in every groove of her face and ingrained in every fibre of her being.

SMASH TO BLACK:

END TEASER

SUPER OVER BLACK: STATIK TIME

ACT ONE

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SUNRISE

Daniel closes the distance, and the moment lasts an eternity for Dianne. She analyzes every moment - the SOUNDS of Daniel's shoes on the hardwood, the forceful way with which Daniel carries himself and - above all - Daniel's eyes.

In them is an endless cold. And endless darkness.

At the last moment, Dianne snaps out of it and scurries into a corner. But Daniel's intent was only to draw the blinds.

DIANNE  
You're Daniel Fielding.

DANIEL  
In the flesh.

He peers through the blinds.

DANIEL  
And, might I add, looking a  
hell-of-a-lot better than  
"billboard me." I really wish the  
sketch artist would've drawn me  
with a *nice* smile. What do you  
think?

He flashes Dianne a winning smile, but it only makes her  
cringe.

DANIEL  
Okay, no teeth then...

DIANNE  
This is not happening.

DANIEL  
Sure it is. Look at you, shaking  
like a wet dog.

He catches himself.

DANIEL  
Sorry - that was sexist. I  
apologize. I'm a little nervous  
myself. Maybe if we sat down, put  
on some coffee...

Daniel feigns an epiphany.

DANIEL  
Oh, but that's right - we can't.  
Because everything you own is  
either in that shitty hatchback or  
at the dump.

DIANNE  
You've been watching me?

He motions towards the billboard.

DANIEL  
24/7 it seems. How often did you  
stare back at me? Frightened, sure,

DANIEL  
but never truly afraid. Because  
things like this never happen to  
good girls like you, do they?

DIANNE  
You're psychotic.

Daniel smirks.

DANIEL  
Now that we can agree on.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUING

Just a table. Blinding flashbulbs followed by picture after picture of dead hookers. Three to be exact: a Caucasian red-head, a Caucasian blonde and an African-American brunette.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUING

DANIEL  
"The face of evil." That's what  
every news outlet in the country  
had to say about this handsome mug.

DIANNE  
Some other title you'd prefer? What  
should we call a man who abducts,  
rapes and murders women?

DANIEL  
They were hardly 'women.'

DIANNE  
How dare you. Just because they  
were prostitutes, doesn't mean -

DANIEL  
- That's exactly what it means. And  
you know why? Because the rest of  
the world says so. The rest of the  
world says that Kathryn Tate,  
Melanie Winters and Natasha Okoye  
are vermin.

DIANNE  
So you were just doing your civic  
duty? Cleansing society of its  
filth? How patriotic.

The more self-righteous Dianne gets, the more fun Daniel has.

DANIEL

Spoken like a true writer. I know what you're trying to get at, Dianne. But those girls weren't chosen for who they were, but rather what they were.

Daniel closes the gap again but Dianne has nowhere to go.

DANIEL

I like my captives like I like my coffee. Weak. Okay, maybe not the best metaphor, but think about it. Mediocre java is something you tolerate. You drink it down fast and then when you're done, you toss it out.

Dianne spits in Daniel's face but he wipes it away like its nothing.

DIANNE

You're disgusting. You violate women for what - your "get rich quick" scheme?

DANIEL

Hey, someone's gotta drive me.

DIANNE

Momma never taught you how?

The smallest of brow furrows from Daniel. He leans in, his face inches from Dianne.

DANIEL

I can drive, little girl. But when you're in the bank-robbing business, a minute, a second - an instant - changes everything.

Daniel backs away.

DIANNE

So that's why you're here? I'm next - victim number five? The coerced Louise to your Thelma as I drive you across country - your accessory as you raid the coffers of our national banks?

Daniel stops in his tracks. Pivots back towards Dianne.

DANIEL  
Big words make you feel better,  
don't they? Makes you feel smarter  
than me.

DIANNE  
I am smarter.

DANIEL  
Nevertheless, I figured you might  
make this assumption. But I'm not  
here to abduct you, Dianne.

DIANNE  
Then why?

DANIEL  
Can we just take a quick detour to  
discuss that mighty-fine legal  
terminology you've got going on?  
"Coerced?" "Accessory?"

DIANNE  
Let's just say I've become  
well-acquainted with the law.

DANIEL  
Let's just say I know *exactly* what  
you're talking about.

Something about Daniel's "exactly" sends shivers down  
Dianne's spine.

DANIEL  
C'mon Dianne, think. These digs?  
That'd be an awful coincidence if I  
showed up here wearing Roy  
Thompson's jacket, wouldn't it? And  
in the very same room he bit the  
bullet - or baseball bat, rather.

Dianne can feel the metaphorical walls closing in.

DIANNE  
What do you want from me?

DANIEL  
Details, my lady. But since the  
Senator-elect is... permanently  
indisposed, you're my new go-to  
girl. So, tell me everything!

Dianne doesn't match Daniel's enthusiasm, remaining  
tight-lipped. A playful Daniel smiles.

DANIEL  
 Okay, you big tease. I'll show you  
 mine and *then* you show me yours.  
 C'mon...

He starts to move towards the living room, but when Dianne doesn't oblige.

DANIEL  
 C'monnnnn!

He grabs Dianne by the hair and she CRIES OUT in pain as he drags her into the

LIVING ROOM

And tosses her to the floor. When Dianne recovers, she finds herself facing the front door.

DANIEL  
 Now, my cheat sheet may be a little  
 off, so feel free to jump in. The  
 night of May third, you two crash  
 here.

Dianne REMEMBERS.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Dressed up with quality furniture (somewhere between Ikea and Pier 1), the apartment is far more impressive. The front door swings open. Dianne and ROY THOMPSON (35) stumble inside, hot & heavy.

DANIEL (V.O.)  
 Drunk out of your minds.

Roy is a broad-shouldered, devilishly-handsome brute. A Senator-in-the-making, Roy already possesses all the necessary characteristics - confidence, cockiness and a superiority complex, all with a dash of misogyny.

The lovebirds GIGGLE as they struggle to multi-task kissing and coat-removal. When they finally get their jackets off, Dianne pulls Roy towards the bedroom.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUING - FLASHBACK

DANIEL (V.O.)  
 Two hired hands outside.

The warm glow of Dianne's bedroom light can be seen from street level, where a limo sits parked. Not far from the limo, Roy's TWO BODYGUARDS light up.



INT. DIANNE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUING - FLASHBACK

DANIEL (V.O.)  
You take Mr. Thompson to the  
bedroom. Get him thinking he's  
about to get some.

Dianne sits Roy down on the side of the bed.

DIANNE  
You just wait right here, mister.

Roy grabs Dianne around the waist and pulls her in, kissing her midsection as he slides his hands under her dress. Dianne throws her head back in ecstasy at Roy's touch, but manages to pry herself away.

DIANNE  
I'll be right back, stud.

Dianne disappears into the bathroom.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S LIVING ROOM - SUNRISE

Dianne slides up against a wall, keeping her eyes fixed on Daniel.

DANIEL FIELDING  
But then things go horribly awry.

Dianne REMEMBERS.

INT. DIANNE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A fragmented altercation:

1. Dianne goes soaring backwards through the air and SMASHES into a glass coffee table, shattering it. Roy is quickly on her again, chucking her across the room. Dianne hits the wall with a heavy THUD.

MOMENTS LATER

2. Roy has Dianne pinned against the wall as he chokes her. GASPING for breath, Dianne manages to grab a nearby vase and SMASHES it over Roy's head.

Dianne frees herself from Roy's grip and flees.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

3. On her stomach beside the bed, Dianne desperately searches for something. But Roy grabs her feet and pulls her away from the bed.

But Dianne doesn't come back empty-handed. As Roy flips Dianne over, he sees the baseball bat too late. A loud CRACK as the bat connects with his face.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUING - FLASHBACK

The bodyguards' peace and quiet is shattered by Dianne's WAILING. They snap into action, dropping their cigarettes and bolting for the entry.

INT. DIANNE'S BEDROOM - MOMENT'S LATER - FLASHBACK

The guards stampede inside and stop dead in their tracks at the sight of Roy's body.

What they see next is Dianne - huddled in a corner, shaking. Her eyes are fixed on Roy, but she looks up at the bodyguards upon their arrival.

Dianne HOWLS.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S LIVING ROOM - SUNRISE

The last of the HOWLING rings in Dianne's ears as she musters the courage to look Daniel in the eye.

DANIEL

So instead of a satisfied boy toy,  
we have a very deceased one. Help  
me get from point A to point B.

DIANNE

He was drunk. He attacked me. And I  
decided he wasn't worth dying for -

DANIEL

- Dianne please, save me the  
long-winded, gut-wrenching speech.  
Sure, I know all about how he liked  
to bat his girls around like balls  
of yarn, but I also know that  
you're the first to strike back.

DIANNE

I'm also the first to almost die!

But Daniel just ignores her, continuing.

DANIEL

Now, if we look at Roy's dating history - which is a little abysmal, if you ask me - I think you'll find that he has a pattern. Mr. Thompson likes to date what I call the lollipop type. Not much going on but sure sweet to suck on. So, did he make a grave miscalculation in courting you, or is there really something else going on here? Which brings me back to my one and only question: why did you really kill him?

DIANNE

What's it to you? You his brother?

DANIEL

I'm just a curious cat, that's all. The question you should be asking is 'what's it to me?' And the answer? Everything. Like I said, you're not my next conquest, Dianne, you're just a pit stop. You see, I love a good-old fashioned mystery. So I know that with every great page-turner, you've got to have three things. There's the crime, the murderer - or murderess - and the motive.

DIANNE

I've told you why, and that's the truth. For God's sake, the whole world must know by now.

DANIEL

The world knows exactly one thing. What you've told them. But me? I don't buy it. You know what I think? I don't believe for one second that you gave a shit about Roy for or anyone else on this planet, for that matter. I think you wanted something from him, and I think you got it.

More indignant silence from Dianne.

DANIEL

We got all day. In fact, we have days, don't we? You've had the inspection, and those new tenants - with their freshly-signed papers - aren't in town till the end of the month.

Dianne starts to realize just how screwed she is.

DIANNE

And if I scream like Donna Reed?

Daniel pulls out a gun and screws on a silencer.

DANIEL

Then I expect we'll be having us some visitors.

Dianne not-so-subtly looks around the apartment - her new prison.

DANIEL

This is hell, love. There ain't no exit here, and not even Sartre, himself, could write you out of this one.

Daniel leans in.

DANIEL

You've lived quite the life, haven't you? Well, it ends today, and we're not leaving until I get the truth - straight from the black widow's mouth.

CUT TO: BLACK

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DIANNE

What happens if I say nothing?

DANIEL

Well, you're not off to a great start.

DIANNE

I could sit here. Right here. And then what? You start making things 'painful' for me?

DANIEL

Oh, Dianne. There's really something you need to understand about me. I'm not your 'made-for-TV' criminal. But I think you'll find I have my ways.

DIANNE

What might those be?

Daniel answers with a grin.

DANIEL

I have to admit - you're impressing me. Leaps and bounds ahead of the other girls. How quickly they cracked. Even the tough one. Eating out of the palm of my hand.

DIANNE

Why am I different?

DANIEL

It's your line of questioning. With the others, it was all -

Daniel puts on his best 'damsel-in-distress' act.

DANIEL

- "Oh, Mr. Fielding, what are you going to do with me!? Please don't hurt me. Are you going to kill me?"

He drops the act and rolls his eyes.

DANIEL

Yes, of course I'm going to kill you. Like asking about it's going to change my mind.

DIANNE

I thought you loved asking ridiculous questions.

Daniel smirks again.

DANIEL  
See? Willful. Different.

DIANNE  
You don't go through what I have  
and stay a damsel.

DANIEL  
Good old public scrutiny. I like  
that we have something in common.  
I've felt the red-hot stare of the  
public eye. Maybe not twelve sets  
at one time, but you get what I  
mean.

DIANNE  
And he segways into the trial. I  
guess it was only a matter of time.

DANIEL  
That is the one thing I hope I  
never have to suffer through. On  
display like that. Caged...

DIANNE  
It wasn't just the jury watching.  
It was all of them. Twelve sets of  
eyes? Try hundreds.

Dianne REMEMBERS.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

A highlight-reel style trial with an eager AUDIENCE hanging  
on every moment. A JURY (ten men and two women) pays close  
attention while a JUDGE oversees the proceedings.

1. Dianne's DEFENSE ATTORNEY delivers his opening statement.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
It'd be easy write Ms. Malick off  
as bloodthirsty killer, but in  
doing so, you are doing an innocent  
woman a terrible injustice. Forget  
everything you've been told. Forget  
anything you think you know about  
Dianne Malick. Because in truth,  
you don't know her at all.

2. The PROSECUTOR (Roy's lawyer) - attacks.

PROSECUTOR

The defense will attempt to paint Mr. Roy Thompson as a dangerous, malevolent villain when - in truth - he was the kind soul you all knew him to be. Charitable, compassionate...

3. The Prosecutor questions the on-site FORENSICS INVESTIGATOR.

FORENSICS INVESTIGATOR

This belt, worn by the accused the night of murder, was used as a final self-defense tactic, after direct contact with the aluminum bat did not cease Mr. Thompson's assault.

PROSECUTOR

And why is the belt fashioned out of rope?

FORENSICS INVESTIGATOR

I was told it's designer. Vintage. It was bought for Dianne Malick by Roy Thompson himself.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Which we have a receipt for.

The Prosecutor seethes, attack derailed.

4. OFFICER KEN LENNOX (45) testifies.

LENNOX

My name is Ken Lennox. I am an officer at the LAPD. I took Dianne Malick's statement, the night of the murder.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

We've read the report, officer, but can describe Dianne's appearance to us, her state?

LENNOX

I've been doing this a long time, and I have to say - I have never seen a woman - a victim - so beat down. In my opinion, Dianne was a blameless victim who was lucky enough to survive what has become a growing epidemic in this city.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
Domestic violence, you mean?

LENNOX  
Correct.

5. ERIKA REYNOLDS, 30, testifies.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
State your name and your  
relationship to Dianne.

ERIKA  
I'm Erika Reynolds. I'm her  
neighbor... and Roy Thompson's ex  
fiancée.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
Ex fiancée? What exactly ended the  
relationship?

Erika rolls up her sleeve. A scar, though healed, remains  
permanently etched in her arm.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
Let it be known that Roy Thompson  
has a history of abuse. The jury  
will please note Ms. Reynold's  
medical records and two separate  
police reports, submitted as  
evidence.

6. More testimony from the forensics investigator.

FORENSICS INVESTIGATOR  
Blood on the carpet, glass  
fragments in Dianne's clothing. In  
my professional opinion, Thompson  
wished her grave harm.

7. The DA continues his argument.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
Dianne had absolutely no motive to  
initiate the attack.

LATER.

PROSECUTOR  
No one's arguing Mr. Thompson  
assaulted Ms. Malick. But there is  
evidence that suggests he would not  
have thrown the first punch.



DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Such as?

The Prosecutor pulls out a ring box and pops it open. A stunning diamond ring glistens.

PROSECUTOR

Mr. Thompson was planning on proposing to Ms. Malick.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Objection. Where's the proof?

PROSECUTOR

I found out right around the time Mr. Thompson began inquiring about a prenup.

The Prosecutor holds up a document. WHISPERS from the audience. A new motive for Dianne? Even the defense is stunned.

PROSECUTOR

Now, why would the deceased attack the woman he planned to marry?

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

That is both circumstantial and highly convenient!

PROSECUTOR

Oh - and we also have the bill for the ring. Dianne was not the victim here, but instead a conniving, money-hungry villainess!

8. An endless COLLAGE OF VOICES throughout the trial mix together in an overwhelming cacophony, including:

PROSECUTOR

Ms. Malick is a cold, vindictive criminal who carefully plotted this murder and executed it with precision!

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dianne's face has become hardened by bad memories.

DIANNE  
He eviscerated me.

DANIEL  
Maybe that's because you actually  
were guilty of all those things, of  
those rhetorical daggers.

DIANNE  
You're just like him. Nothing but  
speculation and clever words.

DANIEL  
Someone's getting pissy.

DIANNE  
And for the record, I call bullshit  
on your public scrutiny claim.

DANIEL  
That so?

DIANNE  
You may be watched - analyzed - but  
only from behind a TV screen. All  
the while, you're tucked away in  
the shadows. Never actually seen.  
Is that because you're good at  
staying hidden, or because you  
couldn't survive their looks?

DANIEL  
Who's that?

DIANNE  
Every goddamn American.

DANIEL  
And how exactly did you survive the  
stares?

DIANNE  
Because I was innocent.

DANIEL  
Or a good actress.

The mention of 'actress' makes Dianne nervous.

DANIEL

You must've put on quite a show. I heard you gave killer testimony. I've been dying to know - what on Earth could you have said to convince those twelve fools you didn't deserve an upgrade from basic bitch to prison bitch?

Dianne REMEMBERS.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

A nervous Dianne approaches the stand and takes a seat.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DIANNE

I guess you'll never know.

DANIEL

Fair enough. I know when to pick my battles. So let's get back on track. Roy's death. Your actual motive. Now.

Dianne shakes her head. Daniel stands.

DANIEL

Tell me.

DIANNE

No.

Daniel approaches her.

DANIEL

Say it!

DIANNE

NO!

Daniel snaps. He grabs Dianne and slams her up against the wall, his face inches from hers.

DANIEL

Why, why, why, why, WHY!?!?

DIANNE

BECAUSE HE BEAT ME AND I HAD ENOUGH!

The outburst from Dianne drains her, and she struggles to breath. Daniel backs off, giving Dianne space. When she finally collects herself -

DIANNE

I have a question. What kind of sexually-frustrated mama's boy takes out his issues on a defenseless woman?

Another "mother" reference. Daniel whips back in her direction, momentarily overwhelmed by MEMORY.

INT. SLUM HOME - DAY - FLASHBACK

THREE YEAR-OLD DANIEL is scooped off the ground by his MOTHER. She kisses him gently on the forehead.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A glimmer of rage in Daniel's eyes that he barely manages to mask behind a trademark grin.

DANIEL

You're trying to make me angry, aren't you? I can understand how someone in your position may need to vent. I'm sure you couldn't afford to be quite so vocal on the stand, after all. Ten of twelve jurors with a dangler? The women of Los Angeles must've collectively gotten together and said "Let the men handle this one. Surely even they can't fuck it up." Except they did. Because you - my guilty gal - are standing right here instead of rotting away.

DIANNE

And you don't deserve to rot for your crimes?

DANIEL

You got caught.

DIANNE

So I, alone, deserve to be tormented?

DANIEL

That's how it works. You know, Issac Newton was bang on. That first law of his... Have you ever heard a more perfect description of humanity? We're nothing but objects in motion. And once we get moving, we're unstoppable.

DIANNE

Until someone derails you.

DANIEL

'Derails' - that's an interesting choice of words. To throw off course.

Daniel peeks out the window at Dianne's car.

DANIEL

Where exactly were you headed anyway?

DIANNE

'Away' was about as far as I got.

DANIEL

Sly fox. I think you had an idea. Maybe not where you'd end up, but perhaps a few pit stops. Maybe... Salt Lake City?

Dianne's eyes go wide and Daniel revels in her shock and dismay.

DANIEL

How long has it been since you paid a visit to your dearly-departed folks?

DIANNE

How do you know about Salt Lake?

DANIEL

You really thought the past was buried away, didn't you? I guess you had every right. If the prosecution couldn't find it, who else would dig it up?

DIANNE

Stop.

It's all too much, and the panic stirs another VISION in Dianne's mind.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT - VISION

The intruder on the other side of the door becomes agitated, and starts tugging on the knob, causing the door to wobble in it's frame. And then - KNOCKING. All Dianne can do is watch from her chair.

END VISION.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DANIEL

Now, I'm going to ask you again.  
Think very carefully before you  
answer.

A single tear escapes Dianne's eye.

DANIEL

You think your train's off its  
tracks? Well I've got news for you  
- bridge is out ahead, and we're  
going full-speed.

CUT TO: BLACK

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. MALICK HOME (SALT LAKE CITY) - DAY - FLASHBACK

SUPER: Six Years Ago

Complete quiet. A carefree Dianne (20) enters.

DIANNE

Mom! Dad! I've got good news -

She stops dead in her tracks, her face twisted with horror at the sight before her. DIANNE'S PARENTS lie in a pool of their own blood.

Dianne slumps to the floor.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

In the same slumped position, Dianne stares up at Daniel, more dejected than ever.

DANIEL

Roy Thompson wasn't your first  
kill, was he?

Nothing from Dianne.

DANIEL

How long has it been since you  
thought about them - how you  
spilled their blood all over the  
carpet?

Dianne looks up at Daniel, completely vulnerable.

DANIEL

You think on that while I  
reconsider the best way to punish  
you. I was just going to kill you,  
but now my little mind is imagining  
what would happen if the world  
knew. "Dianne Malick: An Exposé of  
Deception." Sounds like a  
best-seller to me.

Dianne has practically checked out.

DANIEL

I bet death sounds pretty desirable  
right about now.

Dianne finally manages to speak. It takes all of her  
strength to keep her voice steady.

DIANNE

If you want any of this to continue  
- if you want me to even look at  
you - you will never bring up my  
family again.

DANIEL

What would you prefer to talk  
about? New York - where you found  
fruitful employment with the Times?  
Or how about that unexpected  
transfer to LA, right out of the  
blue?

Dianne looks away.

DANIEL

What's it like working for the mass media? I'm sure a liar like you felt right at home. I bet Jim Gershwin - Mr. Editor in Chief - might have a comment for me. Maybe I'll just go ask him.

Terror in Dianne's eyes as Daniel moves for the door.

DIANNE

No, wait!

DANIEL

I just want to keep the dialogue going, Dianne. But right now you're about as exciting as a glory hole in a brick wall. So, if you want me to hang around - speak.

DIANNE

Fine.

DANIEL

Good girl.

Dianne REMEMBERS.

INT. LA TIMES - JIM'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

JIM GERSHWIN (late 50s) works behind his desk. Dopily-cheery, but with a sharp mind, Jim is the perfect combination of personable and professional.

Dianne enters as incognito as possible, sporting sunglasses and leftover bruises and scars. Jim freezes at the sight of her.

JIM

Dianne? What on Earth are you doing here?

DIANNE

Just stopping by.

Jim stands and moves from behind the desk to join Dianne. He pauses, tentative, but when his soft side wins over, he hugs Dianne.

JIM

I was so very sorry to hear about the troubles that have befallen you. You have my deepest sympathies.



DIANNE

That's very kind, thank you.

JIM

Didn't you get the message? Damned HR. I told them to make sure they contacted you - *not to leave a message -*

DIANNE

- About the time off. I got it, Jim. But here I am.

JIM

Stubborn as always, I see. What about your "healing process" - is that what they call it?

DIANNE

Don't worry - they've got me in some top-notch therapy.

But Jim sees right through the facade.

JIM

What about the parts of you I can't see?

Dianne dodges the question with a weak smile. Jim moves back behind his desk and busies himself with work.

JIM

Well, I stand by my mandate. You are on vacation, missy - whether by choice or by force.

DIANNE

I'm not here to work, Jim.

Jim freezes again. Thinks he's onto something.

JIM

Don't say it.

DIANNE

I'm leaving. The Times, the city. Everything. I need a fresh start.

JIM

Where will you go?

DIANNE  
I'll find out when I get there.

Jim reestablishes eye contact.

JIM  
What if I told you we need you -  
that I need you.

DIANNE  
I'd say that's awfully kind but  
probably not the case.

JIM  
Dianne, do you remember what I said  
to you the first day we met?

Dianne tears up.

DIANNE  
Of course I do.

JIM  
Everyone deserves a second chance.  
Sometimes even a third.

Dianne considers it for just a moment, and then moves  
towards Jim. She takes his hands in hers.

DIANNE  
You have been so good to me. More  
than you'll ever know and more than  
I ever deserved.

She turns on her heel.

JIM  
Wait.

He slides a folder across his desk and Dianne eyes it over  
her shoulder.

JIM  
One last story. For old time's  
sake? I have a feeling this one may  
be right up your alley.

Dianne opens the folder and fails to hide her surprise.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dianne catches herself smiling.

DIANNE

He wouldn't even give a battered woman a break.

DANIEL

Slave driver?

DIANNE

No. He's one of those rare people who actually gives a shit. He cared enough about me to push me towards something I wanted.

DANIEL

Which was?

DIANNE

An actual story worth telling. I wrote public interest pieces. Fluff - that was my thing. But he knew that was never what I wanted, so he let me go out on a high note. He made the news but refused to let mine define me. Which is a hell-of-a-lot more than some people.

DANIEL

Boo hoo. Our troubles - always someone else's fault, aren't they?

DIANNE

Is that what you told the girls before you pulled the trigger?

DANIEL

Is that what you told Roy before you hit a home run? Or your parents, before you turned their living room into a filet-o-family?

DIANNE

You think that just because you've managed to piece together my entire life it means you know me? You may know what I've done, where I've been - but you'll never understand what it's done to me.

DANIEL

Fortunately for you - I don't give a shit about any of that. There is exactly one thing that concerns me.

Daniel checks his watch.

DANIEL

Speaking of - looks like it's that time again. Why'd you kill Roy? For serious this time, not for play-play.

DIANNE

Christ, I feel like a goddamn rabbi. Ask me three times and get a 'yes' - is that how you think this works?

DANIEL

If that's what it'll take. Or we could play 'two truths one lie,' 'twenty questions'... It's really up to you.

DIANNE

Why is it so hard for you to accept the truth?

DANIEL

It really bothers you that someone's finally calling you out on your shit, isn't it? As I alluded to before, girls like you don't fight, Dianne, they run. All you know how to do is take off. Salt Lake, NYC, LA - all within six years? And now to God-knows-where. So that's why I'm having a hard time buying your bullshit. But don't blame yourself. We're born the way we are, simple as that. And just as I was made to thief and kill my way to infamy, you were made to lie and get away with it. Well, almost.

DIANNE

You're delusional. All morning it's been "yeah I'm a bad guy too" but then there you are, subtly spinning everything in your favor. And I thought I was the writer. What are

DIANNE  
you trying to convince yourself of?  
That what you're doing is  
justified, or that there's someone  
else in this world who's as  
horrible a human being as you?

Now Daniel's the quiet one.

DIANNE  
How lonely it must get.

Daniel pounces, slamming his fist into the wall inches from  
Dianne's head.

DANIEL  
You don't know a thing about me.

DIANNE  
Don't I?

The intense staring contest continues, but Dianne is the  
first to break.

DIANNE  
I am not lying to you. Or maybe I  
am.

DANIEL  
I will find out, one way or  
another.

DIANNE  
No. And you know why? Because I'm a  
woman. A stubborn, tired woman. And  
I can outlast you.

Daniel regains his composure and moves away. He's back to  
cheery murderer mode, as if nothing ever happened.

DANIEL  
I'd like to see you try.

DIANNE  
What's this little confession worth  
to you? And in what scenario do I  
get to walk out of here alive?

DANIEL  
Sadly, that scenario doesn't exist.  
However, in exchange for the truth,  
I will spare your lovable  
employer's life.

Dianne doesn't bite.

DANIEL

Still not enough? How about I  
sweeten the deal. I also won't  
mercilessly slaughter Kristin  
Harold right before your eyes.

Dianne freezes, stark white all over. She's overtaken once  
again by the VISION.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT - VISION

The intruder lays off but only for a moment. But then -  
BANG. They POUND on the door - single strikes that repeat,  
one after the other.

END VISION.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DANIEL

That got your attention didn't it?  
I told you I had my ways.

CUT TO: BLACK

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dianne trembles. Daniel revels.

DANIEL

Yeah, I know about Ms. Harold too.  
Think about how nice that'd be - to  
have your best friend at your  
funeral. She's an English teacher,  
yeah? I bet she'd give one hell of  
a speech. Tears all around. But  
that can't happen if you two are  
sharing plots.

DIANNE

Kristin is not involved in any of  
this.

DANIEL

Agreed! Let's keep it that way.

Daniel analyzes Dianne.

DANIEL

Look at you - all shook up.

Dianne stands on wobbly legs.

DIANNE

I need a moment.

Daniel approaches Dianne and Houdinis her cell out of her pocket in one quick motion. Then, Daniel makes an "all yours" motion to the bathroom.

Dianne moves inside the

BATHROOM

And closes the door behind her. She instantly collapses, muffling her sobs as best she can. Dianne REMEMBERS.

INT. KRISTIN'S PORCH - DAY - FLASHBACK

KRISTIN HAROLD (30) opens the front door to find Dianne in the same outfit she wore to the Times. Dianne removes the sunglasses, and just the sight of her fallen friend makes Kristin's heart sink.

KRISTIN

Dianne...

Kristin lunges forward and wraps her arms around Dianne. A warm, unguarded smile from Dianne that Kristin doesn't see.

DIANNE

You should see the other guy.

Kristin refuses to let go.

KRISTIN

What the hell did he do to you?

When it comes to being the "best friend," Kristin checks off every box. Caring, compassionate and wildly intelligent, Kristin is even more engaging than she is empathetic.

Kristin finally pulls away to get a better look at her wounded comrade.

DIANNE

I'm still here. All in one - sore - piece.

KRISTIN

You are, aren't you? Come inside.

INT. KRISTIN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

A modest, modern starter-home. Pictures of Kristin and her parents, her father in a wheelchair. Uncomfortable silence, occasionally broken by the SIPPING of coffee. Dianne stares off into space.

KRISTIN

Have you been back into work?

Dianne snaps out of it and looks over at Kristin.

DIANNE

Just a quick visit. How are the kids?

KRISTIN

Excitable. Way too much energy. I swore I'd never have children. Now I have twenty five of them.

DIANNE

But you love teaching.

Kristin grins.

KRISTIN

Yeah, I do. And what about your classes? Plans on going back anytime soon?

DIANNE

Maybe. To be honest, I don't know if I'm meant to crack the acting thing in this life.

KRISTIN

Why not?

DIANNE

"Dianne Malick shows potential, but lacks commitment to the craft." I guess having to eat means I don't 'want it' enough. I'll never be the starving artist type. Not for me.

KRISTIN

This could be the perfect time for you to go back. Channel that inner darkness and all that crap...



DIANNE  
You sound like my court-ordered  
therapist.

KRISTIN  
Court-ordered? I didn't know.

DIANNE  
It's fine. Well, not really. I'm  
convinced she's making Coles Notes  
for Roy's attorney. But the trial's  
behind me. So I guess they really  
can't do shit.

KRISTIN  
The trial... I can't even imagine.  
I tried to be there, in the room  
with you, but it was impossible.

DIANNE  
I know.

KRISTIN  
I've never seen the media cover a  
local story like this.

DIANNE  
Well, Roy was a big deal.

KRISTIN  
What did you say to them - the  
jury? It seems to be the one thing  
the papers could agree on. Your  
testimony made all the difference.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

On the stand, Dianne surveys the entire room and then opens  
her mouth to speak.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. KRISTIN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

KRISTIN  
And that was incredibly rude of me.

A single tear rolls down Dianne's cheek.

DIANNE  
It's not that. I... I can feel  
myself slipping.

KRISTIN  
Slipping?

DIANNE  
Some days are good. But others...

Dianne makes eye contact.

DIANNE  
Sometimes I feel like I'm going  
mad. I get headaches I've never had  
before. I'm not sleeping. And when  
I do, the nightmares...

Dianne REMEMBERS.

INT. TUNNEL - DAY - DREAM

Dianne watches as the light at the end of the tunnel goes  
dark.

END DREAM.

INT. KRISTIN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Kristin's suddenly very interested. Invested. And more  
curious than ever.

KRISTIN  
This all started because of what  
Roy did?

DIANNE  
Like a screw came loose or  
something.

Kristin takes a moment to digest.

KRISTIN  
You have come so far. *Literally*.  
How many thousands of miles?  
Combine that with all of the shit  
that's happened to you. Dianne,  
you're not some push-over. You're a  
fighter. And if you made it through  
that, you can make it through this.  
Don't give up on yourself.

DIANNE  
I'm not sure that's possible.

KRISTIN  
Then I won't. Not ever.

More tears from Dianne.

DIANNE  
You have been one of the only  
people in this shitty town who's  
been good to me. You deserve to  
know...

Keen-eyed Kristin watches Dianne trail off.

KRISTIN  
Dianne?

Kristin takes her hand.

KRISTIN  
What? You can tell me anything. You  
know that. Anything.

Dianne hesitates a moment longer and then forces a smile.

DIANNE  
I'm going to take a vacation.  
Hawaii, maybe. I need to get away  
for a while.

Expecting a juicier confession, Kristin manages to bury her  
surprise.

KRISTIN  
Of course. Why wouldn't you? You  
deserve it.

An awkward silence passes.

KRISTIN  
We need to get out. I'm taking you  
to lunch.

Kristin stands and extends her hand. Dianne 33takes it.

INT. CAFE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Kristen and Dianne enjoy a leisurely lunch. Kristin catches  
a news headline on a television. A NEWSCASTER reports:

NEWSCASTER  
But first: 'Phenomenow' - a Los  
Angeles-based technology center  
that intends to revolutionize

## NEWSCASTER

virtual reality software. The newly-founded techno-firm delivered a press release this morning outlining plans for their first major product-launch. Founder and spokeswoman Amara Banaporte went into detail about a state-of-the-art, virtual reality system that will not only be fun for the whole family, but incredibly affordable.

Meanwhile, a keen-eyed Dianne people-watches. Analyzes. First, she sees a SEXY FEMALE and a SUAVE MALE in the middle of a conversation.

## SEXY FEMALE

She really needs me right now, you know? My mom and dad are gone, and she hates living in a home. She depends on me.

## SUAVE MALE

I think it's amazing you'd give up so much of your time for her. I bet she really appreciates it.

The female smiles, blushing. Just then, her phone rings.

## SEXY FEMALE

That's her.

## SUAVE MALE

Go ahead. Take your time.

The woman takes the call in privacy, and the man rolls his eyes, checking out other women in the cafe.

Next, Dianne spots TWO MEN IN SUITS in mid-conversation -

## SUIT #1

Well, this is great. You seem like a fantastic guy, John, and you're definitely qualified. The headmaster just wants to make sure you're aware of our policies against smoking on campus, alcohol etcetera. I assume that won't be a problem?

SUIT #2  
No, not at all.

Only Dianne can see him nervously tapping his back pocket.  
The two men shake hands.

SUIT #1  
Perfect. We'll get back to you by  
the end of the week.

SUIT #2  
Great, thank you so much.

The two men leave. Outside, the second man stays behind and  
pretends to make a call, but once the first man is gone, he  
desperately pulls out a cigarette and lights it.

Dianne redirects her attention to an ANGRY WOMAN  
interrogating her BOYFRIEND. The boyfriend hangs his head in  
shame.

ANGRY WOMAN  
You've got to be fucking kidding  
me!?

Now everyone's tuning in.

BOYFRIEND  
I'm not.

ANGRY WOMAN  
How long?

BOYFRIEND  
Almost two months.

ANGRY WOMAN  
How can someone just do that?! How  
could you do that!? I know you.

BOYFRIEND  
Well, obviously not as well as you  
thought.

She slaps him.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

Daniel throws the door open, jolting Dianne back to reality.

DANIEL  
Moment's over.

Dianne moves past Daniel into the  
LIVING ROOM

And sits at the window sill. She looks out, severe  
depression seeping in.

DANIEL  
I always wondered how someone would  
go about making a best friend.

DIANNE  
A criminal *and* a loner? Shocking.

DANIEL  
Friendship's the ultimate battle,  
isn't it? How much can you take  
before they call bullshit and  
demand you give back?

DIANNE  
Not with her. Never with her.

DANIEL  
Then I guess you're one of the  
lucky ones. How'd you two meet?

DIANNE  
Something you don't know about me?

DANIEL  
I'm not God, Dianne... yet.

DIANNE  
It was chance. She was just another  
assignment. You know what they say  
- the moment you stop looking...

DANIEL  
Not sure I agree with you there,  
but I appreciate the tired  
sentiment. So, how'd this work? You  
don't seem like the "plays nice  
with other girls" type. Am I wrong?

DIANNE

No.

DANIEL

Then what made Kristin so special?

DIANNE

She just understood. Still in her twenties and she already had it all figured out.

Dianne looks Daniel in the eye.

DIANNE

Not many us can make such a claim.

DANIEL

Right. We the rebellious are the only flawed beings.

DIANNE

I never said that. If fate ever existed... Kristin was fate. And for everything she gave me, I walked away as much a coward as the day we met.

DANIEL

How's that?

DIANNE

I lied to her. I didn't have the courage to tell the one person I trusted what I was doing.

Daniel grins at the epiphany, reveling.

DANIEL

She didn't know you were leaving.

DIANNE

Like you said - give and take.

Daniel moves towards Dianne.

DANIEL

You know, I didn't feel it the first time - that you gave a damn about old Jimmy Gershwin. But this time...

Daniel "chokes up" as he puts on his best Sally Fields impersonation.

DANIEL

This time I feel it. And I can't deny the fact that you like her. You really like her!

Nothing but a mortified look from Dianne.

DANIEL

Not a Sally Fields fan, eh? Me neither. Not enough mystery there.

DIANNE

Mystery... What a high opinion you must have of yourself. The brooding, misunderstood murderer with a cause.

Dianne shakes her head.

DIANNE

Why me? Out of all the people on the goddamn planet...

DANIEL

You want to know why I'm really here - why I'm tormenting you? It's not because you're a bad person. We all are. It's because you made one crucial mistake. You had your pretty face splashed all over the headlines for the entire country to see.

DIANNE

So my suffering continues at the hands of a dead man?

DANIEL

This isn't about a man's honour. Roy Thompson is how I found you, how I knew there was a 'Dianne Malick' who needed to be taught a lesson. I'm here because I despise you. Even more than you do me. You hide from what you've done. You get to kill as you please and continue living your precious little life. You get to walk in the sun while I skulk in the shadows. Your words. So there it is. You don't get to lie and eat your cake and all that crap. I won't allow it.



DIANNE

Walk in the sun - why do you think I'm running? I don't want to be seen, you stupid man, all I want is to disappear.

DANIEL

That can be arranged.

He slowly advances.

DIANNE

If there is any shred of good in you, you won't hurt Kristin.

DANIEL

But you see - now I have to. Now that I know Kristin Harold is a pressure point, I have to press.

He grabs Dianne and presses down. Daniel rants, his pace quickening and temper rising. All mind-games and theatrics are gone. Daniel's hit his breaking point.

DANIEL

Because, honey, something's gotta give. You're not giving me what I want, and like I said at the top of the hour, I'm not leaving until I get the truth. You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to drive us over to Ms. Harold's, tie you up and make you watch as I mutilate her right in front of you. I'm going to ask you that simple question again and again, tearing off one body part after another for every wrong answer. And I'll keep doing so until you tell me what I want to know or your best friend is a pile of flesh. Is that what you want? *IS THIS WHAT I HAVE TO DO TO GET ANSWERS!* What a sap Roy Thompson was, trusting his life with a cunt like you, leeching off those who have everything because you have nothing. Was it easy? Did you feel remorse? Glee? Well let me tell you, the sick pleasure you got from murdering Roy will be nothing compared to the euphoria I'll feel when I rip your fucking head off! Why'd you do it, Dianne? *WHYYYYYYY!?*

DIANNE  
*I DON'T REMEMBER!!!*

In the process of Daniel's rant, Dianne has a complete mental breakdown. She FLASHES back and forth between -

INT. ROOM - NIGHT - VISION

The door practically flies off its hinges as the intruder attacks it, giving it everything they've got. Finally, at the peak of Daniel's rant, the door explodes, and the menacing blond woman comes storming inside.

END VISION.

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dianne passes out, slumping in Daniel's arms. Daniel freezes, completely stunned.

DANIEL  
What the fuck...

Dianne comes to and straightens herself. It takes only one look in her eyes to realize: The woman staring back is not Dianne. An evil grin curls the corner of her mouth.

DIANNE  
You want to know why I killed him?  
Well let me tell you.

Pure fear radiates from Daniel's entire being.

CUT TO: BLACK

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. DIANNE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DANIEL  
This isn't real.

Nothing in Dianne's dangerous gaze falters.

DIANNE  
Let go of me. Or do you want to end  
up like Roy?

Daniel instantly submits, as if under a trance. For every intimidating step Dianne takes towards Daniel, he takes one shaky step back.

DANIEL  
This is a lie.

DIANNE  
Is it now?

DANIEL  
You're an aspiring actress. I know  
this - I know everything about you!  
It's all just an act. All of it!

Dianne feeds off of Daniel's frantic state.

DIANNE  
Then it must be a convincing one.  
  
They reach a wall.

DIANNE  
You might want to sit for this.  
  
Nothing.

DIANNE  
SIT!  
  
Dianne shoves Daniel into the wall. Hard. He slumps to the  
ground where Dianne kneels to join him.

DIANNE  
Still want answers?

DANIEL  
Yes.

DIANNE  
You can do better than that. Ask me  
again. Like you mean it.

DANIEL  
Why did you kill an innocent man?

DIANNE  
Because I was tired of him. Men get  
all the glory while women pick at  
the scraps like ravenous wolves. We  
work twice as hard and what do we  
get? The fat trimmed off the  
turkey, the loose change between  
the cushions, the endless, endless  
no's - the 'you're not good  
enoughs'! So yes, I killed him in  
cold blood - I admit it! Because

DIANNE  
there comes a point when a girl  
finally realizes something. She can  
learn to swallow a lifetime of  
being the runner up, or she learn  
to handle a strong backhand to the  
face. Just not both.

DANIEL  
Who are you?

Dianne grins.

DIANNE  
How weak am I now, Mr. Fielding?

DANIEL  
What the fuck are you?

DIANNE  
You'll never know.

Dianne stands and backs away.

DIANNE  
Until we meet again.

Dianne's eyes roll back in her head and she collapses,  
unconscious.

CUT TO: BLACK

LATER.

Dianne awakens, groggy and disoriented.

DIANNE  
What happened?

She finds Daniel sitting against the same wall, his cocky,  
devilish facade back in full swing.

DANIEL  
Oh, you don't remember? What a  
shame. You're quite the complicated  
cat, Dianne, and it's a bit of a  
turn-on. You confessed.

DIANNE  
No...

DANIEL

Oh yes.

DIANNE

It was a lie. All of it.

DANIEL

Oh yeah?

He approaches Dianne and looks her in the eye.

DANIEL

So you weren't jealous of his success? Eternally-frustrated by the lack of yours - of "picking at the scraps?"

Tears from Dianne. Her one bartering chip is gone.

DANIEL

I have looked many a man in the eye, just as close as you and I are now. These men had cunning. Professional liars, they were. So much so, that they could sell you the tallest tale in the land and have you begging for a price. But you know what I did when they lied to me?

DIANNE

Bang?

DANIEL

That's right. And that's how I know. Once and for all. Whomever the hell that gal was a moment ago - she was telling the truth.

DIANNE

So what now? The 'quick and painless death' option?

Daniel pulls out the gun and points it at Dianne.

DANIEL

You've earned it.

Dianne trembles, awaiting her fate. Daniel pulls the trigger. CLICK. It's empty. Daniel LAUGHS.

DANIEL

That was quite the little game,  
wasn't it? Thanks for playing,  
Dianne, you've been a good sport.  
But that was just the warm-up  
round.

DIANNE

What?

DANIEL

Fuck Roy Thompson. Sonofabitch  
probably deserved it. Truth is, you  
were always going to be my next  
girl. My driver. I just needed to  
know who I was dealing with.

Daniel grins as he watches Dianne process this news.

DAN

Isn't this fun?!

Daniel advances and, once again, time slows down as Dianne suffers through every single instant, every minuscule movement. But Daniel's firm grip on her arms jolts her back to reality.

Dianne fights her life. She hits and kicks, but Daniel easily overpowers her. Dianne resorts to SHOUTING.

DIANNE

Erika!

But Daniel shoves Dianne's back into the wall, silencing her. Dianne's out cold.

CUT TO: BLACK.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

Dianne comes to and finds herself in the passenger seat. Daniel climbs in beside her.

DANIEL

Don't worry, baby. I'm going to  
make you famous.

He starts up the car.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

DEFENSE ATTORNEY  
I'd like to call my next witness,  
your honor. Dianne Malick.

Dianne takes the stand.

INT. CAFE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Right where we left Dianne and Kristin. The angry woman  
slaps her cheating boyfriend.

COURT ROOM

Dianne finally addresses the court.

DIANNE  
You think it's possible to know a  
person - who they really are?

CAFE

A confused Kristin looks over at Dianne, reacting to the  
same question.

KRISTIN  
What?

DIANNE  
Not a chance. How often are we our  
true selves? My auditions, for  
example. The second I walk through  
that door, I'm someone else. Even  
before it's started.

COURT ROOM

DIANNE  
It's all just an act. But it's no  
different from the rest of our  
entire lives. Look around.

CAFE

DIANNE  
There's boyfriends lying to  
girlfriends, employees to their  
bosses. Everyone's a natural.  
There's a point in life where we  
discover that we want things. And  
it's in that moment that we become  
actors.

COURT ROOM

DIANNE

And I was fooled. Fooled by a man I  
thought loved me and would never  
hurt me. I guess the joke's on  
me...

Dianne's falters for just a moment, but she finds the  
courage to engage the gallery again. Her gaze is cold.

DIANNE

Everyone's an actor.

END FLASHBACKS.

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

Dianne takes DEEP BREATHS as Daniel drives. The finale of  
Dianne's testimony plays in her mind.

DIANNE (V.O.)

But the good ones... now they're  
the ones to watch out for. They're  
the ones that really fool you. And  
you will never see them coming.

One final BREATH.

CUT TO: BLACK

END