

FORSAKEN

Written by

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FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN

The voice of a crazed MAN fills the silence.

MAN (V.O.)
In her presence, I am transported
to a realm of pure pleasure.

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

A dark loft. The only light comes from a wall of T.V. screens. On the screens, a looping video of SASHA ROBERTS, (29), stunning, playful, seductive.

The MAN, AMON JEFFRIES (30), in the throws of a manic episode, stands naked on a tarp in the center of the room, a phone clutched in his hand.

He paces. He stops. He screams at the phone.

AMON
My object of worship. My muse. My
reason for being... I am forsaken.

Amon sways. He looks at the phone.

AMON
...Help me. Guide me. Restore me.

Amon reaches out, the steel blade of a knife flashes in his hand. He tries to touch HER image up on the screen, but Sasha can't be reached. His arm drops. The knife cuts into his leg. He speaks quietly as he slashes at his leg.

AMON
Now, I am nothing. I am nothing. I
am nothing.

Blood drops pool on the tarp. The image of Sasha freezes on the screen. Amon looks at the phone.

AMON
Release me from every evil deed.

Amon slashes his wrist. He falls to his knees. He pleads with the person on the other end of the phone.

AMON
Father forgive me. Save me. Bring
me into your heavenly kingdom.

2.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

People bustle up and down the street, in and out of bars and restaurants on a warm summer night.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Sasha sits on a bar stool, her hair swept up in a messy bun. It's her weekend look. She watches the news.

T.V. NEWS(V.O.)
Thank you for joining us. For all
of us at ACTION NEWS 9, I'm Boomer
Johnson, goodnight.

The bartender, JOE (25) hipster, turns the T.V. off. Sasha sips her drink. She toys with the rim of the Champagne glass.

SASHA
Thanks, I never miss a show.

Sasha gestures to the T.V..

SASHA
This is delicious.

Joe switches the T.V. off. He holds a menu up. He smiles.

JOE
It pairs nicely with our new menu.

Sasha shakes her head.

SASHA
You know the rule. No food on the
first date.

Joe drops the menu, dejected.

BECK REEVES (30), handsome, just edgy enough to be a little dangerous, walks over to the bar. He sidles up next to Sasha.

BECK
That looks good. What did you get?

Sasha focuses on her drink. She's used to being hit on and a pro at rejecting unwanted advances. She takes a moment to plot her strategy. She turns her head slowly to look at him and changes her mind. He's HOT. Her expression softens.

SASHA
The French 75.

3.

She slides the glass toward him.

SASHA

Try it.

Beck puts his foot on the bar stool.

SASHA

Nice boots.

BECK

Thank you. You in the habit of sharing drinks with strange men?

Sasha is coy, playful.

SASHA

What's the worst that can happen?

Beck studies her. He smirks.

BECK

What's in it?

SASHA

What fun would it be if I told you?

BECK

You know what they tell us sweet young thangs?

Sasha shakes her head.

BECK

Never drink anything you didn't pour or see poured.

SASHA

Well cowboy, when the rest of your sorority sisters get here, you can watch Joe make you a fresh one.

BECK

I'm just being careful. I don't want to find myself tied up in your closet.

Sasha leans in, she speaks above a whisper.

SASHA

How do you know? It could be fun.

BECK

You're bad.

4.

Sasha gives him a look, daring him.

SASHA

Being bad makes me just as happy as being good, and it's more fun.

Beck picks up the glass. He smells the drink and takes a sip.

BECK

That's good. Girly, but good.

Beck sets the glass down. He slides it back toward Sasha. He raises his hand to get Joe's attention.

BECK

Whiskey neat.
(to Sasha)
That's a man's drink.

SASHA

Oh, so you're too tough to be seen holding a tiny Champagne glass?

BECK

Exactly. I'm new in town. I wouldn't want the other guys think'n I'm soft.

Beck gestures to a group at the end of the bar.

Sasha follows his gaze to a group of HIPSTERS: beanies, oversized glasses and flannel shirts.

SASHA

That's definitely the group you want to impress.

BECK

They're influential.

SASHA

I know! My friend Layla dated this guy she thought was a hipster because of the coolness factor--

BECK

Let me guess, they're married now. He's turned in his plaid shirt, skinny jeans, and beanie for a button down and dockers?

SASHA

No. He's homeless and she's a lesbian.

5.

Sasha nods.

BECK
I didn't expect that.

SASHA
Nobody expects the Spanish
Inquisition.

BECK
Monty Python, nice.

SASHA
Don't be so surprised. What do you
say, you up for a little pillow
torture?

Sasha winks.

SASHA
Pick a safe word.

Beck's jaw drops. He edges slightly away.

Sasha reaches out.

SASHA
I'm teasing. Don't run away. What
brings you here?

BECK
A friend. He's in intensive care.
He may not pull through.

SASHA
I'm so sorry. It's hard when a
loved one falls ill. You just feel
helpless.

BECK
Why do you think it's a loved one?

SASHA
People don't generally travel to
someones bedside unless they really
care about them.

BECK
You're right. We're close. Almost
like brothers. I didn't mean to
bring things down. What brings you
here?

Sasha perks up in her seat.

6.

SASHA

A date.

BECK

Wait! You're on a date? Right now?

SASHA

Not yet. He's late.

BECK

It's a sign.

SASHA

Of what happens when a city gets too big, too fast and infrastructure hasn't kept up?

BECK

We were meant to meet.

Sasha pulls out her phone.

SASHA

I wouldn't get ahead of myself.

Sasha shows Beck a photo of ALAN (30).

BECK

The competition. Let me see.

(reaching for the phone)

He's handsome.

(scrolling)

He likes long walks on the beach, is passionate about travel and...

(scrolling)

...Oh, this is precious. Look, he loves the elderly.

Beck holds up a picture of Alan with an OLD WOMAN.

Sasha takes the phone back.

SASHA

He's a nurse in geriatrics.

BECK

That's good. For a second there, I thought you were too young for him.

Joe sets Beck's drink down. Beck pulls the drink to him.

7.

BECK

I bet he runs in here in scrubs
with an excuse about a patient so
you'll forgive him.

Beck takes a sip of his drink.

Sasha shakes her head.

BECK

I don't think he's mister right.

SASHA

I'm not looking for mister right.

BECK

You can't fool me. I watched "Sex
and The City." You're a Charlotte.
You want children and nice bedding.

Beck sips his drink. Sasha is enraged.

SASHA

Eww! I am not! If anything, I'm a
Samantha.

BECK

I stand corrected.

Alan, in scrubs, comes up behind Sasha.

ALAN

Sasha.

Sasha turns. A slight tone of surprise in her voice.

SASHA

Hey... you. I'm glad you made it.

Sasha hops off the bar stool. She hugs Alan.

ALAN

Sorry I'm late. Misses Ryan took a
turn for the worst.

Alan drops his head.

ALAN

After all these years you'd think
I'd get used to it, but they're all
just so special to me.

Beck gives Sasha an "I told ya so" look.

8.

Alan notices Beck. Sasha follows Alan's gaze.

SASHA

It's okay. I understand. I had...

Sasha looks from one man to the other.

It's clear, Beck is the superior specimen.

Beck pushes off the bar. He extends his hand.

BECK

Beck. Beck Reeves.

SASHA

Beck to keep me company.

ALAN

Nice to meet you.

(to Sasha, gesturing)

Should we?

Sasha walks away with Alan. She looks back at Beck.

He holds his drink up.

Sasha disappears around the corner with Alan.

Beck turns back to the bar. He sips his drink.

Within minutes, Sasha is back at the bar.

SASHA

I forgot my drink.

She picks up the glass, downs the contents.

BECK

Is that all?

Sasha grabs Beck's hand and pulls him out of the bar.

INT. MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO - DAY

Sasha spars with LAYLA JAMISON (30), black, tough, street smart with the savvy refinement that comes from being well educated. Sasha holds her hands up. Layla advances she lands a ONE - TWO PUNCH. Sasha's head whips to the side.

From the corner, the INSTRUCTOR (50), buff, in a tight green t-shirt, cargo pants and combat boots, yells.

INSTRUCTOR

Stop!

The room goes silent. The Instructor marches over. He's intense. Drill Sargent is his only volume.

INSTRUCTOR

Roberts, KEEP YOUR HANDS UP!

The Instructor marches back to the corner.

Sasha and Layla reset. Layla lets rip a quick one-two jab. Her leg hits Sasha in the side. Sasha hits the mat.

LAYLA

Are you okay?

Sasha, dazed, looks up at Layla.

Layla smiles. She extends her hand. She pulls Sasha up.

The Instructor screams from the corner.

INSTRUCTOR

Sloppy! No focus! Move to weapons!

Layla walks over to the side of the ring.

LAYLA

What's your pleasure?

Layla holds up a knife and a gun.

SASHA

Let's go with gun.

Layla adjusts a rubber gun in her hand. She strides toward Sasha.

LAYLA

What are the four principals?

SASHA

Redirect. Control. Counterattack.
Disarm.

Layla cracks her neck. She gets into character.

LAYLA

Keys BITCH!

SASHA

Redirect.
(reaching over the top)

Control.
(pulling the gun away)
Counterattack.
(simulating a punch)
Disarm.

Sasha strips the gun away.

LAYLA
Nice!

Sasha spins the fake gun on her finger. She bounces around the ring with pride.

LAYLA
Kelly and I are going to the range tomorrow. You wanna come with, test out that new Sig?

SASHA
Sounds good.

A BUZZER signals time. Layla walks to the edge of the ring.

LAYLA
So, Alan?

SASHA
Didn't happen.

Layla drops the fake gun in the weapons bucket.

LAYLA
What? Really?

SASHA
I met someone more interesting.

Sasha walks to the edge of the ring and climbs out.

LAYLA
When?

SASHA
While I was waiting for Alan.

Layla shakes her head. She follows Sasha out of the ring.

LAYLA
I worry about you. You're going to be thirty.

Sasha and Layla line up in front of a long line of HEAVY BAGS.

11.

LAYLA

Wouldn't it be nice to get off the
cock carousel... settle down?

Sasha shoots Layla a sideways glance.

SASHA

Really?

A FLASHING CLOCK on the wall counts down, THREE, TWO, ONE,
GO.

Sasha and Layla jab and punch their way down the line.

LAYLA

People don't understand why you're
not married.

SASHA

Who are these "people?" Why is my
marital status their business?

LAYLA

An attractive, unmarried woman is a
threat.

Sasha takes a wild swing.

LAYLA

Haven't you noticed as soon as you
talk to a married man his wife
appears, needing him urgently?

Layla hugs the heavy bag and looks over a Sasha.

LAYLA

She hasn't needed him since he put
a ring on it, but she sees you
talk'n to her man and she can't get
by his side fast enough.

Sasha throws her head back and rolls her eyes.

LAYLA

All they see when they look at you
is the cover of COSMO, wake him up
with a...

Layla makes a "blow job" gesture.

LAYLA

Nobody, IRL, doing that.

SASHA

IRL?

The Instructor screams.

INSTRUCTOR

Reset!

Sasha and Layla walk to the end of the heavy bags.

SASHA

So... You want me to stop having fun to appease insecure women?

LAYLA

No, I want you to evolve. Stop running around with your panties in your purse. Form a meaningful relationship.

The clock on the wall counts down. THREE, TWO, ONE, GO. Sasha and Layla punch their way down the line.

LAYLA

Someday your hit it and quit it...

Sasha stops, winded, and puts her hands on her hips.

SASHA

That's three. I don't know who is teaching you these phrases, but I beg you, stop. The words sound so wrong coming out of your mouth.

LAYLA

...lifestyle is going to get you in trouble.

SASHA

Why? I'm honest about what I want.

Sasha stands up and punches down the line.

LAYLA

Which makes men want you even more.

SASHA

That's on them.

LAYLA

Rejection is dangerous.

SASHA

I can take care of myself.

13.

LAYLA

Why put yourself in that situation
when you don't have to?

The Instructor shouts.

INSTRUCTOR

Last round!

Sasha and Layla reset.

LAYLA

Listen, Sis, real talk, last year,
50,000 women were killed by
intimate partners.

SASHA

You keep that stat handy?

LAYLA

The keynote speaker, from the gala
you ditched last night, used it in
her talk. Hook-ups can be
dangerous.

The clock on the wall counts down. THREE, TWO, ONE, GO.

Sasha and Layla punch down the line.

SASHA

A million people die in car
accidents every year. Should I stop
driving?

LAYLA

Your raggedy-ass car... yes.

SASHA

First, that car is a classic, don't
hate. Second, if I lived in fear of
what could kill me, I'd never leave
the house. I'd never experience
anything amazing, like meeting
Beck.

LAYLA

Who is Beck?

SASHA

The guy I met while I was waiting
for Alan.

Layla stops, she shakes her head.

14.

Sasha looks back at her.

SASHA

He was fun, edgy and exciting. We had incredible chemistry.

Layla starts punching.

LAYLA

What happened?

SASHA

You know what happened. One minute I was flirting with a stranger, the next minute--

LAYLA

Call mister chemistry. Go out on a date, get to know him.

SASHA

I can't.

LAYLA

You didn't get his number?

SASHA

No. That's not how it works. I didn't even know his name until Alan showed up.

Sasha stops at the end of the line. She rests her hands on her knees, takes a moment to catch her breath and undoes her wraps.

SASHA

I'm never going to see him again, but the feeling--

Sasha shimmies.

SASHA

Being all tingly, connecting with someone, will stay with me forever.

Sasha looks at Layla with defiance.

SASHA

I'm not giving that up because some wife can't manage her husband, or some boy may get his feelings hurt.

Layla finishes her last set of punches. She undoes her wraps. She's not the least bit tired.

15.

Sasha slumps down.

SASHA
How are you not tired?

LAYLA
I'm in way better shape than you.

Sasha stands up.

SASHA
Let's go.

LAYLA
Great. I've been dying to hit up that little lingerie shop. Kelly has been out of town with Aiden visiting her parents for a week. When she gets home tonight, I'm going to surprise her with something special, maybe edible.

Sasha fastens her wraps together and walks to the lockers.

SASHA
Eww. TMI.

LAYLA
You get to be flirty and tingly. I got to keep my woman come'n home.

Layla fastens her wraps and tosses them over her shoulder.

LAYLA
It's hard with a six-year-old and our schedules. A good relationship takes effort.

SASHA
Another reason you don't see me having them. My job is enough work.

Sasha sits on a bench and picks up her gym bag.

LAYLA
Speaking of which, I started talks on your new contract. You're going to get that network job.

Layla nods.

LAYLA
The first black woman to sit in the anchor chair in network history.

Mattel wants to add you to the
Barbie Inspiring Women series.

Layla picks up her gym bag. She slings it across her body.

LAYLA

Did you ever think, coming up the
way we did, someday you'd be a doll
millions of children look up to?

Sasha shakes her head.

LAYLA

Me either, so stop doing stupid
shit that jeopardizes your chance
at stardom.

Sasha zips up the gym bag. She shakes her head and smiles.

LAYLA

Don't, I need to know, you
understand what's at risk.

SASHA

I understand.

LAYLA

Alright then. Let's go.

Sasha and Layla walk away.

SASHA

I am nervous. Ratings are low.

LAYLA

Don't be. Be awesome and fix it.
I'm doing my part you do yours.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - DAY

Sasha closes the door to her house, a beautiful Victorian.
She dashes down the walk way and rummages through her bag for
her keys.

Danny (60), a homeless man, pushes his cart and shuffles up
to the gate. He scratches his head.

DANNY

Hey, what you got for me?

Sasha looks up at him. She smiles.

SASHA

Hey Danny. I'm running late today.

DANNY

I hear that. Important people got places to go. Just one question.

Sasha drops her keys. She bends down to pick them up. She notices Danny is shoeless. Blood trickles from one foot.

DANNY

Why are skeletons so calm?

She grabs the keys, stands up and smiles. This is their routine. A dad joke, a laugh. A connection to another person for someone most people avoid and try to ignore.

SASHA

Why?

DANNY

'Cus noth'n gets under their skin.

SASHA

That's a good one. Wait here a minute.

Sasha sets her bag down. She runs back in the house.

Danny tends to his cart. He moves things around.

Sasha runs back out. She hands him an apple, a bottle of water and a mini first aid kit.

SASHA

Take care of that cut.

Danny takes the apple and water and puts them in his cart. He opens the first aid kit and looks through it.

EXT. ACTION NEWS 9 - DAY

Sasha speeds into the parking. She parks her vintage car, "Althea." She gets out of the car, adjusts her BAG, and checks her reflection, one last look, the perfect TV news anchor. She looks up at the ACTION NEWS 9 building.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - DAY

Sasha walks, with confidence, her head held high, down a hallway lined with framed ACTION NEWS 9 TEAM ONE-SHEETS.

She stops in front of a set of double doors with a larger than life picture of her next to the ACTION NEWS AT 9 logo on them. She smiles and pushes through the doors into--

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha weaves through a crowded bullpen. She makes idle chit chat with random STAFF MEMBERS on her way to a conference table. STEVE PLITNICK (60), grandpa, stands next to a whiteboard, impatient, he checks his watch. He taps the glass as Sasha approaches.

STEVE

Thank you for joining us. I get nervous when I'm about to start the news meeting and all my anchors aren't present.

Sasha smiles, drops her bag and holds up her hand, *mia culpa*. She sits at the back and takes a notebook out of her bag.

Steve walks to the front of the room.

STEVE

Settle people. Before we get to the rundown, this is Beck Reeves, our new freelance photographer.

Sasha looks up from her notebook.

Beck leans forward. He catches Sasha's eye. He smiles.

STEVE

Great, now that we're done with the pleasantries. What do we have?

PEOPLE shout story ideas. Steve writes the ones he likes down on the whiteboard next to time slots.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Sasha sits in a makeup chair. She reviews show notes. In the mirror she sees Steve weave his way through the MAKE-UP ARTISTS and HAIRDRESSERS. He stops at her chair.

STEVE

They want to see you upstairs.

Sasha sits up taller in her chair.

STEVE

You've worked hard, but it's not enough, the numbers are down.

Steve looks around.

STEVE

It's between you and Stacey.

Sasha plasters a smile on her face. She looks at STACEY SIMS (25), one rung up from bikini wether girl, but smart.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - ELEVATOR BANK - CONTINUOUS

Sasha paces with nervous energy, her phone to her ear.

SASHA

Layla, are you ready for this?

INTERCUT: INT. ACTION NEWS 9/INT. LAYLA'S OFFICE

Layla sits in a well-appointed office. The walls are adorned with pictures and framed degrees. Her prize possession, a framed family photo, sits on her desk.

LAYLA

You know I am, tell me.

SASHA

They want to see me upstairs.

LAYLA

What are you waiting for?

SASHA

I need a pep talk. I've worked so hard for this... Now--

LAYLA

Take a breath.

Sasha closes her eyes and inhales.

LAYLA

Remember who you are, a fighter from a nowhere coal mining town. You've earned your place. Now get up there and take what's yours.

Sasha stops pacing. She exhales.

SASHA
Thank you for being such a great
friend and agent.

LAYLA
You're welcome.

Sasha pushes the elevator button with zeal.

SASHA
Meet me after the show for a drink?

LAYLA
You know I will.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 SET - CONTINUOUS

Sasha sits behind the anchor desk, a big smile on her face.

SASHA
Thank you for joining us. For all
of us at Action News 9, I'm Sasha
Roberts, good night.

The CAMERA MAN pulls the camera back. Sasha shuffles papers
at the desk, she looks busy until she hears--

FLOOR DIRECTOR
We're clear. Good show everyone.

A TEAM of PEOPLE charge the news desk. One removes Sasha's
earpiece, another unclips her microphone, her assistant
STEPHANIE (22), nerdy-hot, approaches with an iPad.

STEPHANIE
You have time to run through your
schedule for tomorrow?

Sasha smiles and nods. She gets up from the desk.

SASHA
(to the crew)
Thank you, everyone.

Sasha waves, steps off the stage, unbuttons her jacket.

STEPHANIE
You're doing your "Empowerment and
Integrity" talk at United Way at
twelve-fifteen.

Stephanie hands Sasha the script. They walk.

STEPHANIE

Then, the children's hospital
cancer wing with that running back.

SASHA

Cute?

STEPHANIE

Married.

SASHA

Moving on.

STEPHANIE

Followed by the Press Club
reception. Last thing, tonight,
before you leave, they need you in
editing.

SASHA

Of course, let me change.

Sasha peels off toward her office. She reviews the script.
Stephanie calls after her.

STEPHANIE

I left some research on your desk.

SASHA

Thank you. Efficient as always.

STEPHANIE

Don't forget me.

Sasha stops, turns and gives Stephanie her full attention.

SASHA

You know I won't.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - SASHA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sasha's office is a mix of TCHOTCHKES, NEWSPAPERS and
MAGAZINES. The walls are adorned with FRAMED STORIES,
MAGAZINE COVERS and PHOTOS of her in the field.

She closes the door and rests her back against it. She pushes
her shoes off and kicks them toward a corner pile.

Sasha walks to a rack of clothes near her desk. She hangs up
her jacket, pulls her blouse out of her skirt, unbuttons it
and slips it off.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

SASHA

Just a minute.

The door opens. Beck sticks his head in.

BECK

Excuse me.

Sasha, in a camisole, turns toward the door. She drops her hands to her sides. Beck's eyes linger. Sasha is cool, undisturbed by his presence. She steps forward, confident.

SASHA

Did you need something?

Beck opens the door enough to stand in the frame.

BECK

No. It's just--

Sasha holds up her hand and steps forward.

SASHA

Let's pretend it never happened.

Beck steps inside and closes the door. He leans against it, a sardonic smile on his face.

BECK

Which part? When you snatched me out of the bar before I could finish my drink or when you took advantage of me?

Sasha reaches for a blouse.

SASHA

Mr. Reeves--

Sasha buttons her blouse. She grabs a pair of jeans from the rack and puts them over her shoulder.

Beck pushes off the door and walks toward Sasha.

BECK

Mr. Reeves? Did you take advantage of my father too?

Sasha shakes her head.

SASHA

I did NOT take advantage of you.

BECK

I was new in town. I told you I wanted to make a good impression...

Beck stops in front of Sasha. He runs his finger the length of her arm. He leans down and speaks above a whisper.

BECK

The next thing I know, you've got me pressed against a wall in an alley. That's not something easily forgotten.

Beck moves in to kiss Sasha. She pushes away and walk to the side of her desk.

SASHA

Okay, listen, we're not those people anymore. Let's be professional. If you'll excuse me I need to get to the editing bay.

Sasha walks to the door, opens it and ushers Beck out.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Sasha puts the key in the ignition and pulls out her phone.

SASHA

(on the phone)

Can you still meet me? You won't believe what happened.

Sasha turns the key in the ignition. The car sputters.

SASHA

(on the phone)

No, I understand, if he's sick.

(tries the car again)

Layla, it's okay, I can tell you about everything later.

(pumps the gas pedal)

Come on Althea!

Sasha hits the wheel softly with her hand and sighs.

SASHA

Althea won't start.

(listening)

She is reliable...

(taking the key out)

It's fine.

24.

Sasha opens the car door.

SASHA
(on the phone)
I'll talk to you later.
(listening)
Love you. Mean it. Bye.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sasha walks down the street on her phone.

Beck steps out of the shadows. He walks up behind her.

Sasha gasps. Her shoulders tense. She drops her hands down, ready to fight. She looks back at Beck. She relaxes.

BECK
Sorry. I didn't mean to scare you.

SASHA
You didn't.

Sasha walks across the street. Beck follows behind her.

She stands on the corner. She checks her phone.

BECK
You waiting for someone?

SASHA
My car won't start and... my Lyft
just cancelled.

BECK
I'm good with cars.

SASHA
I've got a guy. Althea's vintage.

BECK
The 190 SL?

Sasha nods.

BECK
I noticed her when I came out.
She's a beauty.

SASHA
A beauty with special needs.

BECK
Aren't you all?

Sasha gives Beck a sly grin, to acknowledge the comment.

BECK
Since your ride cancelled, have a
drink with me.

Sasha shakes her head.

BECK
Come on, I'll be professional.

Sasha laughs, she looks at Beck, she considers his offer.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The bar isn't crowded. It's a casual late night crowd. Sasha and Beck sit at a snug table. There is an ease between them, a natural comfort. He's in the middle of a story.

BECK
It's midnight, the warning siren is
blaring. The sky is lighting up
with IED's. Explosions... BOOM!
BOOM! BOOM! Shake the compound.

Beck gestures with his hands.

BECK
I charge out and there she is,
standing outside, wearing a helmet,
a pink silk robe and combat boots.

Beck leans back laughing.

BECK
She looks over and I couldn't help
myself; I had to take her picture.

SASHA
You're kidding.

BECK
In that moment, amid the chaos, she
was calm, commanding, in control.

A beat.

BECK

The most beautiful thing I'd seen.
It was like she was saying, "We may
be in savage conditions, but we are
not savages."

SASHA

Wow.

BECK

I knew her before she was a PIO.
Back in the day when I was a
scrawny recruit, shake'n so hard I
wasn't sure I could keep my feet
under me.

SASHA

Was she a drill instructor?

BECK

Protocol officer. Nothing could
shake her. She was a legend. She
used to run the fence line, dare'n
the enemy to do something.

SASHA

Used to?

BECK

She was killed. Her convoy hit an
IED outside of Fallujah.

Beck swirls his drink, playing with the glass.

BECK

You know the risks, but you just
never get used to the reality.

He takes a long drink. He sets his glass down.

BECK

The award for most depressing
drink'n buddy goes to--

SASHA

No. It's nice how you remember what
was amazing about her.

BECK

War changes you. You forge this
bond-- Once a battle buddy always a
battle buddy.

SASHA

How long did you serve?

BECK

Eight-years. I didn't have much of a family, a half-brother, we enlisted in the Marines together. The corps gave me a sense of purpose and introduced me to my true love.

SASHA

Oh my God. She died. Beck, I--

BECK

What? No. Photography.

Sasha reaches over she hits his leg playfully.

SASHA

I thought you were talking about the PIO.

BECK

No! Don't get me wrong, I had a helluva crush on her, but--

SASHA

Photography? Really?

BECK

Once you find your passion, it's like a love affair. The service let me put my camera to good use. I even did a few small gallery shows.

SASHA

If you're interested, I can connect you with my agent. She can take a look, and who knows.

BECK

Thanks, I may take you up on that. Shows can be hard for me. Some of my stuff is personal.

SASHA

I get that. People can be so harsh.

BECK

You speaking from experience?

SASHA

"A vapid vanity project," that's how one of my book reviews started.

BECK

Ouch. Do you still write?

SASHA

Yes, but I've gotten smart. I don't use my own name. It makes the criticism and rejection easier.

BECK

How's that work'n out for you?

SASHA

Fantastic. A drawer full of rejection letters and I'm doing great. As for the named author... she's a sad basket case who eats ice cream and cries at TV commercials.

Sasha raises her glass.

SASHA

Now who's the most depressing drinking buddy?

Sasha and Beck clink glasses. Sasha swallows the rest of her drink. The WAITER (25), comes to clear away the glasses.

WAITER

Last call.

Sasha looks over to Beck, hopeful.

SASHA

One more round?

Beck nods. The Waiter walks away.

BECK

Who knows about your nom de plume?

SASHA

How did you know she was French? Kidding, my agent, but she's cool with it. The pen name makes it easier for her to give me bad news.

BECK

Isn't it hard to keep to yourself?

SASHA

You know what they say, "Discretion is the greater part of valor."

Beck gives her a sarcastic, sideways, concerned glance.

BECK

It's, the better part of valor.

SASHA

What?

BECK

The quote, it's discretion is the better part of valor.

Sasha leans closer to Beck, intense, seductive.

SASHA

Are you discreet?

BECK

I can be.

Sasha looks at Beck. He slides his hand under the table and glides it up her thigh. An intense moment between them.

The Waiter sets the drinks down. The spell is broken.

BECK

Now, let me ask you, why is someone as smart, accomplished and attractive as you meeting men on dating apps and picking up strangers in bars?

SASHA

By choice. I'm the girl you take to Mexico, not home to meet mom.

BECK

So, it's all about you.

SASHA

Let me be direct. I've been thinking about all the things I'd like to do with you. You have a choice, we can leave it here or we can--

BECK

Get the check.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha and Beck are locked in an embrace.

Sasha fumbles at the gate.

They're interrupted by Danny.

DANNY
Hey man, spare change?

Beck pulls back from Sasha. He looks at Danny.

BECK
Where the hell did he come from?

Sasha gestures to the park, across the street. She takes Beck's hand and leads him through the gate.

SASHA
(to Danny)
Come by tomorrow, I have some things for you.

Danny does a little dance. He shows off his shoes. Sasha smiles. She closes and latches the gate. Beck stands close.

Danny scratches his head.

DANNY
Hey, hey, what's more romantic than roses on a piano?

Sasha shakes her head, playing along.

SASHA
What?

DANNY
Tulips on an organ.

Sasha drops her head, embarrassed.

SASHA
Good night Danny.

DANNY
Good night. I'll be here all week.

Danny shuffles off. He pushes his cart down the street.

Beck is confused but plays along.

BECK

I don't know what that was, but I'd love to show you my organ.

SASHA

Let's take this inside before he circles the block.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha and Beck are pressed against each other on the stairs. Sasha pulls Beck's shirt over his head. She tugs at his belt buckle.

Beck fiddles with the buttons on her blouse. He loses patience and rips it open.

The stair pushes into Sasha's back. She reaches down, takes Beck by the hand and pulls him up the stairs.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha unbuttons Beck's jeans, she guides them to the ground. He steps out of them and pushes her on the bed.

Sometime later.

Beck reaches out. He attempts to pull Sasha close. She holds her hand out, Heisman, she distances herself and runs her hand along his tattoo.

SASHA

I've seen this before. What kind of design is this?

BECK

Rune. I got it for extra protection before I headed to the Middle East.

SASHA

I didn't take you for the superstitious type.

BECK

Going into a war zone, you take all the protection you can get.

SASHA

So, are you a religious zealot?

BECK

I spent some time in the seminary,
studying to be a priest.

SASHA

What?

BECK

It started in boot. The only time
you get away from drill is church.
I used to sit in the pews and
listen to the sermons.

Beck shifts, he rests his head on his hand.

BECK

I saw how the word of GOD could
lift spirits. I spent so much time
in church the guys started calling
me Father.

SASHA

What changed your mind?

BECK

Women.

SASHA

On behalf of all of us, thank you.

Beck glides his hands along the sheet and up Sasha's arm.
Sasha moves away. She throws the sheet back.

SASHA

I'm going to the kitchen. Would you
like some water?

Sasha steps out of bed and grabs her robe.

BECK

I'm fine. That's one hell of a
bruise. Did I do that?

Sasha closes her robe and walks to the bedroom door.

SASHA

Casualty of a different sport. This
was fun... I'll see you at work.

Beck, shocked, sits up.

BECK

Are you kicking me out?

SASHA

I have got to get some sleep.

BECK

Won't you be lonely in this big comfy bed? I can stay on my side.

SASHA

You are so thoughtful. I'll be fine. I prefer to sleep alone. Take your time. I'll see you downstairs.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sasha comes in the backdoor, on her phone, as Beck enters. His jeans are unbuttoned. His shirt wrapped around his neck.

BECK

Looking for my replacement so soon?

SASHA

Texting my housekeeper. The back gate is broken. Every time the wind blows it slams against the frame.

Beck reaches for her. He pulls at the belt on her robe.

BECK

You want me to take a look?

Beck slips his hand inside her robe.

SASHA

I think you've done enough--

Beck kisses her hard. He lifts her up on the counter. Pushing his jeans down, he positions himself comfortably between her legs. He's savage. He thrusts hard and fast; he finishes. He walks out of the kitchen.

BECK

Sweet dreams.

EXT. ACTION NEWS 9 - DAY

Sasha walks and talks with HANS (60), heavy set, he speaks with a German accent.

SASHA

I don't know Hans; Althea is having more trouble these days.

HANS
Car, she is built for performance.
We find problem; we fix problem.

SASHA
Thanks. I love her.

As they round the corner to--

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Sasha sees Althea. She's in shock.

SASHA
What the--

Hans approaches with her.

HANS
Be careful. The glass.

The driver's side car window is smashed. The seat slashed.

SASHA
Who could have done this?

Hans takes a rag out of his pocket, wipes his hands.

HANS
We fix window. Order special glass.

Hans steps forward, he opens the driver's side door. He drops to his knees and slides his hand down the ignition column and feels around, a piece of wire falls on the floor board. He nods, picks it up and stands up.

HANS
Car won't start, wiring is cut.

Hans hands the piece of wire to Sasha.

HANS
I call for tow truck.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - SASHA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sasha reads over some copy, at her desk.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

Stephanie walks into the office. She leaves the door open.

SASHA
Any luck with those security tapes?

STEPHANIE
The guard said everything was fine
when he locked up. Was anything
stolen?

Sasha shakes her head.

STEPHANIE
Stupid people do stupid things.
What did the police say?

SASHA
Nothing, they took my information.

Sasha shakes her head.

SASHA
Since I started working on the
police corruption story, they
aren't too anxious to help me.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Beck lurks in a corner of the bar. He watches.

Sasha stands at the bar with Joe. Layla, comes up behind her.
The two women hug.

Joe sets a napkin down in front of Layla.

JOE
What can I get you?

Layla looks at Sasha's glass.

LAYLA
What's she having?

JOE
The Kim Crawford.

LAYLA
Sounds good.

JOE
Coming right up.

Joe walks away.

Layla hangs her coat on the back of the bar stool.

LAYLA
So, tell me.

Layla sits down. She sets her cell phone on the bar.

SASHA
So, remember that guy from the
other night?

Layla shifts in her seat.

LAYLA
Which one.

SASHA
Beck.

LAYLA
Oh, the one you banged in an alley
and left on the street, that one?

SASHA
It's gotten complicated.

LAYLA
How? I thought you were never
seeing him again.

SASHA
I wasn't, but--

LAYLA
But what?

SASHA
He works at the station. He's also
a photographer. He could be a new
client for you.

Joe sets Layla's drink down.

Layla looks at Sasha, picks up the glass, and takes a big
drink.

LAYLA
So you explained to him, the other
night was a one off and you're
keeping it professional.

Sasha looks away. She picks up her glass and takes a drink.

LAYLA
Girl, I can't with you. You are up
for a major promotion.

This guy knows who you are, where you work. You have any idea what this could mean to your career if it gets out?

SASHA

It's fine. He gets it. He's mature. Nobody is going to find out.

Layla shakes her head in strong disapproval.

LAYLA

How's the piece coming?

SASHA

I looked at a final edit today. It's good, but--I just don't know if it's good enough to beat out sex workers and human trafficking.

Sasha sips her wine.

SASHA

I don't know how Stacey does it. She got a sixteen-year-old girl to sit down for an interview and give up the entire operation.

Layla's phone vibrates. She picks it up.

LAYLA

It's Kelly. I've got to take this. Aiden still isn't feeling good.

Layla gets up and walks away.

Joe refills Sasha's glass.

Beck steps up to the bar. He waves to Joe.

BECK

She cheats.

Sasha looks at him confused.

BECK

Stacey. I overheard you.

Beck sits down.

SASHA

How do you know?

Joe sets Beck's drink down.

BECK

I saw the edit of the sex trafficking piece. In the cut, we see her crying. Ask yourself how we were able to see her tears when she only had one camera?

Beck picks up his drink and takes a sip.

BECK

Some stations find it highly unethical for a reporter to manufacture tears and edit a piece that way -- a fireable offense.

Sasha shakes her head, dumbfounded she never noticed the trick.

Beck sets his glass down.

Layla comes up behind Beck.

LAYLA

Excuse me. This seat is taken.

Beck looks back at her, annoyed by her presence.

SASHA

This is great timing. Layla, this is Beck, the photographer I mentioned.

Layla looks Beck up and down. She nods her approval to Sasha and extends her hand to Beck.

LAYLA

I understand you may be interested in representation?

Beck stands up and shakes Layla's hand.

BECK

Yeah, maybe.

LAYLA

Well, when you're sure--

BECK

I'll call you.

Layla takes her coat off the back of the chair.

LAYLA

Sasha I've got to go. Aiden is running a fever.

SASHA

Oh, let me close out. I'll go with you. I want to finish our talk.

LAYLA

Great, I'll meet you outside.

Layla walks to the door.

Sasha signals for Joe. He comes over with the check.

Beck looks at Sasha.

BECK

Let me make you dinner.

Sasha signs the check and pushes it back toward Joe.

SASHA

It isn't necessary.

She stands up from the bar stool.

BECK

Come on, I insist. I'll show you some of my work.

Beck reaches out. He glides his hand down Sasha's arm.

BECK

You can let me know if I should call Layla or stick to my day job.

SASHA

Sure, fine. Text me the details.

Sasha pushes past Beck. He grabs her arm.

BECK

I don't have your number.

Sasha hesitates. She looks at his hand. He takes it away.

SASHA

Ah, sure, it's 303-742-6550.

EXT. BECK'S LOFT - NIGHT

Sasha walks through an active neighborhood. She looks at the building; it has a familiar feel, but she can't quite place it. She checks her phone, and confirms the address. She presses the buzzer. The speaker system crackles.

SASHA
Hey, it's me.

BECK (O.S.)
Come up.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sasha steps out of the elevator. She walks down the corridor to a large metal door. It's ajar. She slips her hand in the crack and slides it open.

SASHA
Hello.

BECK (O.S.)
Come in.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - NIGHT

Sasha steps inside the loft. She slides the door closed. She walks along and looks at the photos leaning against the wall.

SASHA
This is amazing.

Sasha stops in front of a image of a man wearing a ghutrah.

SASHA
His eyes are haunting.

Beck comes from around a corner to stand next to Sasha.

BECK
Thank you. I took that while
traveling with a group of Bedouin's
in North Africa.

Beck picks the picture up.

BECK
Some of them are superstitious
about photographs capturing their
souls. So, I used a pin head
camera.

41.

SASHA
Isn't that stealing?

Beck sets the picture down. He's dismissive.

BECK
You can't steal someone's soul with
a picture. Pictures capture a
moment. They reveal the truth.

Beck stares at the image for a moment. Then he steps away.

BECK
I've got to get back in there. I
hope you like Italian.

Sasha follows Beck. She stops in the doorway.

BECK
Why are you standing over there?
Come on in. Try this sauce.

Sasha steps into--

INT. BECK'S LOFT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She hesitates and leans against the counter.

SASHA
I don't know, the last time I was
in a kitchen with you--

Beck drops the spoon in the sauce and holds up his hands.

BECK
No funny business, I promise. You
any good in the kitchen?

Sasha looks at him sideways.

BECK
In the traditional sense.

Sasha comes closer to Beck. She brushes against him.

SASHA
You have a spare apron?

Beck gestures to a hook.

BECK
You can get started on the salad.

SASHA

I think I'm going to need to test
the sauce first.

Sasha ties her apron and walks over to Beck.

BECK

Here you go.

Beck holds out the spoon.

BECK

Make a tight ball with your fist.

Beck drops a little sauce in Sasha's fist bowl.

SASHA

Delicious. What do I taste? Bacon?

Beck pulls the spoon away. He sets it on the trivet.

BECK

Nice pallet. It's guanciale.

SASHA

So fancy bacon?

Beck laughs.

BECK

The salad stuff is in the fridge.
Would you mind grabbing the wine?

Sasha walks to the refrigerator. She opens the door and takes
the wine out.

SASHA

Riesling, bold choice.

BECK

It's a great option if you want to
enjoy savory or spicy food. I think
you're going to like it.

Sasha looks at the bottle, it's already open.

BECK

What? I started without you. Let me
get you a glass.

Sasha takes out the things to make the salad. MUSIC rises
through the loft. Beck comes back in with a glass. He pours
wine in the glass and hands it to Sasha.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Beck and Sasha look at each other across the table.

SASHA

This was good. My compliments.

Beck pours more wine in Sasha's glass.

BECK

Thank you.

SASHA

You trying to get me drunk?

BECK

Afraid you'll find yourself tied up
in my closet?

SASHA

Touché.

Sasha raises her glass. Beck smiles, proud of himself.

BECK

Wouldn't it be nice to come home to
a dinner like this every night?

Sasha leans back in her chair. She shakes her head.

SASHA

I'd get bored.

BECK

You really don't want a family--

SASHA

I have a family. I'm godmother to
an amazing six-year-old who I
adore. Which is more than enough.

BECK

I thought, I do what I want, when I
want, was a ploy.

SASHA

Nope, it's real.

BECK

In that case, doesn't it get old?

Sasha shakes her head.

BECK

You really don't like us.

SASHA

Oh no, I love you. I crave you. I just want you on my terms.

BECK

What about us? Do you every worry about the affect you're having?

SASHA

I'm not the one. I thought you understood.

Sasha raises her eyebrows and cocks her head.

SASHA

Oh, you thought you could charm me into changing my wanton ways.

Sasha shakes her head.

SASHA

Don't ask for more than I can give. You'll be disappointed.

Beck folds his napkin and sets it next to his plate.

BECK

I think you are capable of more.

SASHA

It's not about capability. It's about desire. This, it's not that deep. You don't even know me.

Sasha pulls her napkin from her lap and tosses it down.

SASHA

You're amazing in bed, a fantastic cook and, by the looks of your work, a talented artist. Any woman would be lucky to come home to you.

BECK

Just not you.

Sasha shakes her head. She pushes back from the table. She stands up and takes slow, seductive, steps to stand behind Beck. She brings her lips to his ear.

SASHA

Now, I know what I want. Do you?

INT. BECK'S LOFT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sasha and Beck are in bed. Sasha is asleep. Beck slips out of bed and gets his camera.

Beck gently pulls the sheet back. CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. He looks at the images on the digital display.

Beck sets the camera down and picks up Sasha's phone. He clicks around on the phone. He sets it back down.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - BEDROOM - DAY

Sunlight streams into the room. Sasha slips out of bed. She gathers her things.

Beck sits up in bed. He calls to her.

BECK
Hey what's the rush?

Sasha stops.

SASHA
I've got a busy day.

Beck throws the sheet back and stands up.

BECK
Let's spend the day together, you
can show me the town.

Sasha drops her shoulders.

SASHA
I don't know how to be any clearer.
We're not spending the day
together. We're not a couple. We
are two people who had sex.

BECK
Had?

SASHA
It's clear I was wrong. You can't
handle this.

Sasha walks to the door.

SASHA
Bye Beck.

EXT. MARTIAL ARTS GYM - MORNING

Sasha looks at her phone when Layla walks up.

LAYLA
You ready? What's with the look?

Sasha holds the phone up. She shows Layla a string of texts. Layla takes the phone. She reads the texts aloud.

LAYLA
"You can't treat people this way!"
(scroll)
"I won't be ignored!"

Three dots blink on the screen.

LAYLA
In coming.

Sasha reaches for the phone.

LAYLA
What was it you were saying, 'they get it,' 'I'm engaging with more mature, sophisticated men?'

Sasha glares at Layla.

LAYLA
Don't glare at me. I warned you

DING. DING.

Sasha looks down at the phone.

INSERT IMAGE ON PHONE:

Sasha asleep, her hair a veil over her face.

DING. DING.

Sasha looks at the phone again.

Layla reads aloud over her shoulder.

LAYLA
Woe to those who devise wickedness
and work evil in their beds. Wrath
will be upon them.

Layla looks at Sasha, confused.

LAYLA
What is this?

SASHA
Creepy. Let's just go.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - DAY

Sasha opens the gate and walks to her front door. A Bible sits open on the doormat. A section is highlighted: Be afraid of the sword, for wrath brings the punishment of the sword, that you may know judgement.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - DAY

A SECURITY TEAM installs cameras and sensors all around Sasha's house.

A MAN tests a SECURITY KEYPAD.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sasha stands in the entry hall with a TECHNICIAN.

TECHNICIAN
This panel controls the house.

The Technician pushed a button.

TECHNICIAN
Red light, the system is armed.
Green, it's disarmed. Right now
there is a breach in sector five.

The Technician points.

SASHA
Oh, the back gate. I'm getting that fixed.

TECHNICIAN
I'll disable it until you have it fixed. Otherwise it'll keep throw'n the alarm. Too many false alarms and the city will bill you.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Sasha sits across the dining room table. She throws her head back with laughter. She passes a CHINESE FOOD CONTAINER to Layla. She's in mid-story.

LAYLA

...I still can't believe you left
what's his name?

SASHA

Scuba guy?

LAYLA

On the swim up bar and walked out
naked to get a drink.

Sasha stifles a laugh.

LAYLA

What did that waiter say?

SASHA

Madam, the bar is closed.

LAYLA

You're a savage.

SASHA

What a fun trip. Back when we were
young and wild and free. I miss
those days.

LAYLA

We have responsibilities now.

SASHA

I can't believe you settled down.

LAYLA

Real talk Sis. Married life is
good. You should get a husband and
stop all this nonsense.

Layla picks up her glass.

LAYLA

Think about what it could do for
your career. The network loves the
happy family image.

DING. DING.

Sasha looks over at the phone.

SASHA
Saved by the bell.

LAYLA
Get it, I'll clear these away.

Layla picks a few containers up. She looks into a cluttered family room.

LAYLA
We also need to talk about the hoarding. Who still has VHS tapes?

DING. DING.

Sasha snatches the phone from the table.

SASHA
Some of my best work is on those tapes.

Layla smirks and walks into the kitchen.

Sasha looks at her phone.

Inset Text Message on Screen:

WITHHELD NUMBER (TEXT)
Nice dinner. Love the new security system. I'm glad you feel safe.

Inset Picture: Sasha and Layla in the dining room.

Sasha jumps up. She looks back at the picture; it is as if the camera is in the room. She walks to a standard-looking USB wall charger. She snatches it.

DING. DING.

WITHHELD NUMBER (TEXT)
You can buy an hour with a whore, but a wanton woman will eat you alive. Watch and see.

Sasha clicks on a link. A video plays.

SASHA (ON VIDEO)
Oh-my-GOD! Don't stop.

Layla walks back in the room. Sasha hits stop.

LAYLA
What's wrong with you?

Sasha looks at Layla, in shock.

SASHA
He has cameras in my house.

LAYLA
Camera's in your house? Who?

SASHA
Beck!

LAYLA
Okay, weird. Show me.

Sasha shows Layla the picture on her phone.

LAYLA
I'll get a team to sweep the house.

SASHA
Thank you.

LAYLA
Is there anything else?

SASHA
My very own sex tape.

LAYLA
What?

Sasha holds the phone out to Layla.

SASHA
I am as surprised as you are.

Layla pushes the phone away.

LAYLA
I don't want to see it.

Sasha exhales. She pulls the phone back.

SASHA
I can't believe this is happening.

LAYLA
It's awful, and, a breach of the
decency clause in your contract.

SASHA
What! I'm the victim. Those photos
were taken without my knowledge and
the video--

LAYLA

America wants its news anchors to be a respected, relatable authorities, not--

SASHA

My privacy has been violated, and you're saying I could lose everything?

LAYLA

I'm saying it's problematic. Let me talk to Paulie. You talk to Steve.

SASHA

He sent me a text about a meeting tomorrow. Layla, I don't want to bring this to the station. Steve has been like a father to me. I don't want him thinking of me--

LAYLA

Get ahead of it. I'll start damage control.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha walks Layla to the gate. Sasha enters the code. The gate clicks, she turns the handle, the gate locks.

Sasha enters the code again, the gate clicks, she turns the handle, the gate locks.

Exasperated, she enters the code again, the gate clicks.

A BRIGHT LIGHT comes on. They look back. The light gets brighter.

Sasha jostles with the gate.

LAYLA

What watt bulb is in that thing?

SASHA

I have no idea! The security company installed it.

Sasha pulls out her phone. She opens the app. The light explodes. Shards of glass rain down on the porch.

SASHA

I'll call the company. This is crazy. Come on, let's go back inside.

Sasha walks to the keypad. She punches in a number. The keypad flashes red.

Sasha punches in the number again. The keypad flashes red.

SASHA

I know my number. I don't understand.

Sasha punches in the number again. The keypad flashes red. An alarm sounds, red flashing lights go off.

Police sirens can be heard in the distance.

Layla is agitated, anxious, annoyed. She looks around.

LAYLA

Turn it off.

SASHA

I'm trying.

Three squad cars, lights flashing, pull in front of the house.

POLICE OFFICERS get out of their cars, GUNS drawn. POLICE OFFICER ONE (30), white, fit and intense advances.

POLICE OFFICER 1

HANDS UP!

Sasha and Layla turn to face the Officers.

Sasha steps forward.

SASHA

Officer there has been--

OFFICER ONE

Freeze.

Sasha steps forward.

OFFICER ONE

NOT ANOTHER STEP.

Layla reaches out. She puts a hand on her shoulder.

LAYLA

Girl no. They will shoot us.

Sasha stops. She puts her hands up.

Officer One punches a code into the gate keypad. The gate opens. He enters the yard and charges up the stairs.

SASHA

This is my house. I just had this system installed. It's malfunctioning.

OFFICER ONE

I'm going to need to see some identification.

SASHA

My license is in my purse. May I?

Sasha reaches into her purse. She takes out her wallet and shows Officer One her license.

Officer One studies the license.

OFFICER ONE

Call the alarm company. Get your system fixed.

Officer One hands the license back. He stares hard at Layla.

OFFICER ONE

You all have a good night now.

DING. DING. Sasha looks at her phone. She slides open a TWITTER post.

INSERT TWITTER IMAGE:

Sasha and Layla standing on her porch with their hands up. Above the picture @SashaRoberts, breaking and entering much? #SmoothCriminal.

Sasha scrolls up. The Twitter feed streams with comments. She shakes her head and drops the phone by her side.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sasha lies asleep. The sound of multiple car alarms wakes her up. She looks out the window. She see's the lights on cars going on and off down the block.

SASHA
What time is it?

The AUTOMATED VOICE responds.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
It's two a.m.

SASHA
Set an alarm for 7 a.m.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
Okay, I've set that alarm.

She lies back down. Just as she starts to drift off, TWEET, TWEET, TWEET.

Sasha sits up in bed. She throws the blankets back. Gets out of bed and follows the sound of the TWEET, TWEET, TWEET.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She looks up at the smoke alarm. Sasha grabs a BROOM and swings at the SMOKE ALARM. She knocks it to the ground.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - ENTRY HALL - CONTINUOUS

DING DONG.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
There's activity at your front door.

Sasha walks over to the display panel. The screen is clear. She hits the button and turns to walk up the stairs.

DING DONG.

AUTOMATED VOICE (V.O.)
There's activity at your front door.

Sasha stops. She walks back to the display panel. The screen is clear. She hits the button and walks back to the stairs.

INT./EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The SECURITY LIGHTS outside flicker. Sasha stops on the stairs and looks out the window of the front door. The lights go off. She shakes her head and continues up the stairs.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

As Sasha reaches the landing, the lights come on. They blind her. She loses her footing and falls on the stairs. The lights go off. The house is dark. Sasha crawls up the stairs.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - DAY

Sasha steps out of the elevator. Her eyes hidden by dark glasses. She walks down the hallway and stops in front of the double doors. She watches two MEN scrape her image from the glass doors.

SASHA

Excuse me.

The Men step aside. Sasha pushes through the doors into--

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha walks through the newsroom. It's sparse, a few PEOPLE. She weaves her way through the desks to a door with STEVE DAVIS, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, etched in the glass. She knocks.

STEVE (O.S.)

Come in.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sasha walks into the office with her head down.

SASHA

I got your text. Are we shooting new promos for the doors?

Steve sits at a table next to WENDY WILLIAMS (45), black, stern, no nonsense. A file folder is open in front of her.

Sasha notices Wendy. She takes off her sunglasses, adjusts her posture and strides confidently into the room.

SASHA

Hi, I'm Sasha Roberts.

WENDY

Wendy Williams.

SASHA

Like the talk show host?

WENDY

I get that all the time.

SASHA

Are you new to the station?

WENDY

I'm from corporate--

STEVE

HR. An issue has come up. Sit down.

Sasha pulls out a chair and sits down.

WENDY

Ms. Roberts--

Sasha sits up in the chair, warm and friendly.

SASHA

Call me Sasha.

WENDY

Do you know Beck Reeves?

Sasha nods.

WENDY

How do you know him?

SASHA

He's a photographer at the station.

WENDY

What is your relationship with Mr. Reeves?

SASHA

Relationship? I'm confused.

WENDY

Mister Reeves has filed a sexual harassment complaint against you. He alleges you made promises of career advancement in return for sexual favors.

SASHA

You can't be serious.

Sasha looks around.

SASHA

Am I being punk'd?

WENDY

This is no joke. Did you tell
Mister Reeves you would introduce
him to your agent?

SASHA

Wait, what? Yes, but--

WENDY

Did you introduce him to your
agent?

SASHA

I was being polite.

WENDY

Did you tell Mister Reeves, and I
quote, "I would like to tie you up
and lock you in my closet?"

SASHA

That's not right. I was--

WENDY

Did you undress in front of Mister
Reeves in your office?

SASHA

I was changing, he came in.

WENDY

These are serious allegations.

SASHA

This is wrong. He's threatening me.

Sasha pulls her cell phone out and pushes it toward Wendy.

Wendy pulls the phone forward and scrolls through the
messages. She looks at her notes. She sets the phone down.

WENDY

What am I looking at?

SASHA

The text messages he sent me.

Wendy pushes the phone back to Sasha.

WENDY

The senders name isn't listed. That
number doesn't match what I have in
my records for Mister Reeves.

Sasha snatches the phone back. She's angry.

SASHA

It's HIM! He's threatening me.

WENDY

Isn't it true you maintain sexual relationships with many men? Any--

SASHA

Excuse me! How dare you? My personal life is not the business of this station.

WENDY

I beg to differ based on the decency clause in your contract.

Sasha changes her tone. She's measured, controlled.

SASHA

There is nothing indecent about my conduct. These accusations are baseless. His conduct is indecent.

WENDY

So, you do have more than a professional relationship.

SASHA

We had sex.

WENDY

You had sex with a subordinate.

Sasha stands up from the table.

SASHA

This is crazy. I've got work to do.

WENDY

Did any of these sexual encounters occur in the workplace or at company-sponsored functions?

Sasha shakes her head. Steve stands up.

STEVE

Sasha, take a leave of absence. We'll get to the bottom of this.

SASHA

Steve, no. I didn't do anything wrong. I'll be in my office.

WENDY

It's not a request. Mister Reeves
doesn't feel safe with you here.

Wendy slides a piece of paper to Sasha. She picks it up.

SASHA

You know how to make all this stop.
Give me what I want. Tie me to the
bed and--

Sasha drops the paper back on the table.

WENDY

That's your number, isn't it?

SASHA

I didn't write or send--

Wendy points to the paper.

WENDY

What about these other messages?

Sasha shakes her head. Steves comes around the table.

STEVE

Sasha, you understand, we have to
investigate, protect the station.

SASHA

Steve, you can't be serious? It's
sweeps, my story, the promotion.

Steve shakes his head.

WENDY

Until we complete our investigation
you need to leave the station.

Wendy stands up. A SECURITY GUARD steps into the office.

WENDY

He'll escort you to collect your
things and show you out.

The SECURITY GUARD reaches for Sasha's arm.

SASHA

Don't. You. Dare.

Sasha pushes past the Guard and marches out the door.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sasha walks down the street she talks on the phone.

SASHA
You will not believe this.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

EXT. STREET DAY/ INT. LAYLA'S OFFICE DAY

Layla sits behind her desk. She taps her pen feverishly.

LAYLA
Does it have anything to do with
why the network called me?

SASHA
He filed a sexual harassment claim
against me.

Layla sets her pen down on a stack of papers.

LAYLA
We need to prove the text messages,
the photos, everything came from
him.

Layla reaches across the desk and picks up a camera.

LAYLA
We finished the sweep of your
house, four tiny cameras.

SASHA
I think he hacked my security
system.

LAYLA
Bring your phone to my office.

SASHA
Okay, I'm waiting for my ride.

Sasha looks down at her phone screen.

SASHA
Ride cancelled. Account Suspended.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - DAY

Beck sits at a workbench, his computer is open, he clicks on
Sasha's Lyft account. A list of activity appears on screen.

INSERT LYFT ACCOUNT HISTORY:

ACCOUNT HISTORY
Ride Cancelled, 2:45 p.m.
(scroll)
Ride Missed, 3:13 a.m.
(scroll)
Ride Missed, 6:00 p.m.
(scroll)
Ride Cancelled, 2:18 a.m.
(scroll)
Account suspended.

Beck smiles. He opens another tab. A map comes on screen with a moving red dot. The dot stops. Beck picks up a phone.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sasha looks down at the screen in disbelief.

SASHA
(into phone)
Could this day get any worse?

LAYLA (V.O.)
It's okay. I'll pick you up.

SASHA
Thank you. I'll be at Coffee Bar.

INT. COFFEE BAR - DAY

The shop buzzes with PEOPLE. Sasha walks up to the counter.

SASHA
May I have a large, almond milk
cinnamon latte?

The BARISTA (20) punches in the order.

BARISTA
Name for the order?

SASHA
Sasha.

BARISTA
Sasha Roberts?

SASHA
Yes.

BARISTA

Here you go and thank you!

The Barista cups his hands around his mouth.

BARISTA

Everyone, this is Sasha Roberts.
You have her to thank for the
drinks and snacks.

The PEOPLE begin to clap and cheer.

The Barista slides the coffee and a receipt to Sasha.

BARISTA

Your boyfriend called it in.

SASHA

My boyfriend?

BARISTA

Beck.

Sasha takes the coffee and looks down at the receipt.

Insert Image: Long receipt with a total of one thousand
twenty dollars and nineteen cents.

Sasha crushes the receipt and stuffs it in her pocket. She
walks to a table takes out her phone and opens a BANK APP,
she scrolls through the charges and slides the FREEZE MY
ACCOUNT BUTTON into place.

RING. RING.

SASHA

Hello, Sasha Roberts.

The other end of the phone is silent. She hangs up.

RING. RING.

Sasha answers, a little high pitched, annoyed.

SASHA

Hello, Sasha Roberts.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION:

INT. COFFEE SHOP/INT. BECK'S LOFT

Beck walks through the loft. He stops at the workbench and
clicks through photos of Sasha.

BECK

Why'd you hang up? Enjoying the coffee? You look tired. Sorry you couldn't get a ride.

Sasha loses control. She shouts into the phone.

SASHA

You son of a--

People turn to look at her. Sasha drops her head.

SASHA

Stop!

BECK

Apologize.

Sasha lowers her tone and walks to the door.

SASHA

I have nothing to apologize for.

BECK

This is the way of the adulteress. You eat, wipe your mouth and say, "I have done no wrong." People have been hurt because of you.

Sasha pushes through the doors of the coffee shop.

SASHA

When I'm done, you're going to be sorry.

BECK

Is that a threat?

SASHA

It's a promise.

INT. LAYLA'S OFFICE - DAY

Sasha sits across from Layla. She moves things around on Layla's desk as she talks on the phone.

LAYLA

Okay, thanks Paulie.

Layla hangs up the phone. She slides the picture back into place, moves the stapler and jar of pens back into place.

LAYLA

Paulie's investigator is on it.
Leave the phone with me.

Sasha hands the phone to Layla.

SASHA

What about my promotion, New York?

LAYLA

You are the victim of a crime. It's
in everyone's best interest to let
the investigation play out.

SASHA

So, I've still got a shot?

LAYLA

The suspension stands, but they
have to prove you're in breach. The
network doesn't want a lawsuit.

SASHA

I'm trying not to let him get to
me, but I'm not sleeping, which is
making me irritable. He's
everywhere.

LAYLA

If the cameras are any indication,
there's a good chance he installed
some kind of tracking software on
your phone. He is everywhere.

Layla holds up the phone.

LAYLA

He can't follow you anymore.

SASHA

No, but that means he's had access
to other things, which explains how
he got the video.

LAYLA

The video is real?

SASHA

Yes, but it's not what you think.

LAYLA

I'm thinking a lot of things.

SASHA

It was months ago. I went out with
this artist.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

While the action unfolds Sasha and Layla speak in the
present.

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Sasha stands in front of an installment piece of video
screens. Amon walks over. She smiles and extends her hand.
Amon takes it. She points to the piece. Amon smiles.

SASHA

I met Amon at a show. He was fun.
We went out a few times.

INT. AMON'S LOFT - NIGHT

Amon pulls out a handheld camcorder, he follows Sasha around
the loft. She's playful. She makes faces, jumps on the bed.

LAYLA (V.O.)

You agreed to--

SASHA (V.O.)

No! Video was his medium.

Sasha lies in bed, she pulls the covers up.

SASHA (V.O.)

I didn't know he recorded us.

INT. AMON'S LOFT - DAY

Sasha stands with her hand on the door. Amon pleads with her.

LAYLA (V.O.)

Where is this guy now?

Amon reaches for her. He grabs her arm. She pushes him away.

SASHA (V.O.)

Things may not have ended well.

Amon paces. He screams. He throws the phone at the wall.

SASHA (V.O.)

He became obsessive. I ignored him.

END FLASHBACK.

LAYLA

And?

Layla gestures for an answer.

Sasha hesitates.

SASHA

Ah, I got a call from a state hospital. He, uh, slit his wrists.

Layla closes her eyes as if taking a moment for prayer.

LAYLA

Why would they call you?

SASHA

Exactly.

LAYLA

Is he? Never mind, I don't want to know.

Sasha stands up.

LAYLA

Remember that talk we had about your lifestyle?

SASHA

Now is not the time. I need a strategy, not a lecture. While I'd like to keep all of this private, we need to go worst case. Focus on an approach that positions me in a positive, sympathetic light.

DING. DING.

Layla looks at the screen.

LAYLA

It's the garage.

Sasha reaches over, she picks up the phone.

SASHA

Hello.
(listening)
Great. Thank you.

Sasha ends the call and drops the phone back on the desk.

SASHA

Althea will be ready on Friday.

LAYLA

Since you have so much time on your hands why don't you pick up your godson from camp?

SASHA

You know what, I will.

LAYLA

Great, you're on the list. Home by six and not too much sugar.

EXT. BECK'S LOFT - DAY

GREER BOWEN (50), in athletic clothes, stretches outside Beck's building. His face is obfuscated. He's an expert at not being seen. He watches Beck leave. Greer pulls his phone out.

GREER

(into phone)

He's on the move.

Greer watches Beck turn the corner. He sprints across the street and gains access to Beck's building.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - DAY

Greer looks around. He sees a collage. All the images are of Sasha. Greer takes pictures.

BEGIN MONTAGE

Greer opens Beck's laptop he inserts a FLASH DRIVE.

Greer takes photos of the burner phones and numbers.

Greer opens the medicine cabinet. He takes pictures of pill bottles "Latuda," "Celexa."

Greer walks over to the bedside table he opens the drawer, a box of condoms, a single picture.

Greer pulls the flash drive out of the computer. He inserts another FLASH DRIVE. A loading bar fills the screen.

Greer shuts the computer lid.

END MONTAGE.

INT. INVESTIGATORS OFFICE - NIGHT

Greer sits facing the computer screen. The screen flickers with information. A map pops up. Greer picks up the phone.

GREER

He cloned her phone. He also hacked the security company. I checked out the pills. Pretty heavy doses.

Greer holds up the bottles.

GREER

He's being treated for bipolar disorder and depression. Nothing really in the drawers. A box of condoms and a picture of your guy with another guy.

Greer pulls up the photo on the computer screen.

INSERT PHOTO:

Amon and Beck, in fatigues in front of a tent in the desert.

GREER

I'll send it over.

Greer clicks buttons. He attaches the image to an email.

GREER

I loaded spyware. We can track his every click.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - DAY

Beck picks up a burner phone and punches in a number. An AUTO-VOICE comes on the line.

AUTO-VOICE (V.O.)

The number you have dialed has been disconnected. Goodbye.

The phone hangs up. Beck tries the number again.

AUTO-VOICE (V.O.)

The number you have dialed has been disconnected. Goodbye.

Beck is furious. He throws the phone across the room.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - DAY

The SECURITY TEAM removes the cameras and control panel from Sasha's house.

EXT. GYM - DAY

PARENTS pick up their CHILDREN.

SASHA parks. She goes to the entrance. The signs above reads: UNIVERSITY DAY CAMP.

INT. GYM - DAY

Sasha walks through a sea of CHILDREN. In the corner, she sees AIDEN (6) with a CAMERA CREW.

Stacey looks up and gives Sasha a stiff smile.

STACEY

This is a surprise.

SASHA

I'm glad to see you. I've always been impressed with your work. You're a good reporter.

Stacey softens.

STACEY

Thank you, that means a lot coming from you.

SASHA

The only thing stopping you from being great is parlor tricks.

Stacey looks confused.

SASHA

I saw the outtakes of your sex trafficking interview. You faked your tears and acted your reaction.

STACEY

Are you going to tell Steve? Get me fired?

SASHA

It's an incredible breach of ethics and makes me question your integrity, but I get it, this is a competitive business. You have to decide who you want to be.

Beck walks up behind Sasha.

STACEY

You remember Beck.

Sasha swings around to face Beck. She clinches her jaw and clutches her fist.

Aiden runs up to Sasha, excited. She relaxes.

AIDEN

I'm going to be on TV.

SASHA

That's great buddy. Get your stuff.

Aiden nods and runs off. Sasha smiles at Stacey.

SASHA

I hope you'll think about what I said. Can you give us a minute?

STACEY

Sure. Thank you.

Stacey reaches out. She touches Sasha's arm and walks away.

Sasha smiles at Beck. She speaks through her teeth.

SASHA

What are you playing at?

BECK

I won't be ignored. You need to apologize. Atone for your sins.

SASHA

My sins? We had sex.

A ball hits Sasha's leg. She looks around. She remembers where she is.

SASHA

What happened to that cool, edgy guy I met in the bar?

Sasha shakes her head. She walks away.

BECK
Don't walk away from me. I'll ruin
you.

SASHA
I'd like to see you try.

Aiden runs up to Sasha with his backpack over his shoulder.

AIDEN
Can we get ice cream?

SASHA
Of course.

Sasha and Aiden turn to leave.

BECK
Bye Aiden, see you around.

Aiden stops and looks back with a smile and a wave.

Beck follows, he watches Sasha help Aiden in the car. He
takes out his phone.

INT./EXT. CAR - DAY

Sasha and Aiden drive down the street with the top down.
Aiden holds his hands up, he giggles and plays with the wind.
A siren goes off. Lights flash. Aiden looks at Sasha.

AIDEN
Were you speeding?

SASHA
No. I wasn't speeding.

The OFFICER approaches the car. His pad out.

OFFICER
Do you know why I stopped you?

AIDEN
She was speeding.

OFFICER
No son.

SASHA
Then why did you stop me?

OFFICER

We got a child endangerment call.
Someone his size needs to be in a
car seat.

SASHA

It's a few blocks, we're heading
home.

AIDEN

And getting ice cream.

Sasha shoots Aiden a look.

OFFICER

License and registration.

Sasha reaches over to the glove box and pulls out her
registration. She hands it to the officer.

She reaches behind her seat for her purse. She takes out her
wallet and hands the officer her license.

OFFICER

Just a minute.

The Officer walks back to his squad car.

After a few minutes.

OFFICER

Sasha Roberts step out of the car.

SASHA

What? Why?

OFFICER

There is a bench warrant for your
arrest.

Sasha steps out of the car. The Officer places her in
handcuffs and walks her to his squad car.

EXT. JAIL - NIGHT

PAULINE "PAULIE" DANIELS (45), hard hitting attorney, ready
for a fight walks down the jail stairs with Sasha. Paulie
stops at the bottom of the stairs. She takes a photo out of
her brief case.

PAULIE

Do you know these men?

Sasha takes the picture. She's surprised.

SASHA

That's Beck and that's Amon. Why are Beck and Amon in a picture together?

Paulie takes the photo back.

PAULIE

Beck is Amon's half brother.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha carries Aiden's backpack and a cardboard box up the walkway. She adjust the phone to her ear.

SASHA

(into phone)

Layla, it was a few blocks.

(listening)

I have the car seat--

(listening)

The bigger issue, I was arrested, put in jail.

(listening)

I appreciate Paulie bailing me out.

(listening)

We need to work faster. He can't get away with this.

(listening)

Fine. I have to go.

Danny stops his cart. He shuffles up to the gate. He scratches his head.

DANNY

What you got for me?

Sasha turns around.

SASHA

Come on Danny. I'll get you a plate.

Danny scratches his head.

DANNY

What to hear a joke about construction?

SASHA

Sure.

DANNY
I'm still working on it.

Danny pushes his cart through the gate.

Sasha adjusts the box on her hip. She heads up the stairs.

Danny shuffles behind her.

The box slips. She drops her keys and notices a large package wrapped in brown paper.

SASHA
Danny can you bring that in?

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha sets the keys and the cardboard box down. She picks up a pile of mail from the floor.

Danny follows her.

They walk into the--

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha looks through the mail. She drops it on a side table.

SASHA
Set that anywhere. I'll get your plate.

Sasha goes to the kitchen.

Danny sets the package down. He calls after her.

DANNY
Can I open it?

SASHA (O.S.)
Sure.

Sometime later.

Sasha walks into the living room with a plate of food.

Danny stands in front of the image. He scratches his head.

DANNY
Looks like you need some seashells to cover up those boo-bees.

Sasha walks over.

SASHA
What are you talking about?

Sasha gasps at her image, a larger than life nude beneath the
HEADLINE: GET UP WITH SASHA ROBERTS

Danny takes the plate of food out of Sasha's hand.

Sasha picks up a card. She reads aloud.

SASHA
Nobody expects the Spanish
Inquisition! Our chief weapon is
surprise, surprise and fear, fear
and surprise. Are you afraid?

Sasha crumples the card.

DING. DING.

Sasha pulls her phone out our her pocket. She swipes open an
alert.

Danny eats his food. He looks over at the phone.

SASHA
It's a count down clock. In forty-
eight hours see exclusive photos of
Sasha Roberts's new campaign.

Sasha stares at an image on the social media feed similar to
the one in her living room. Her body is digitized. The only
thing clear is her face.

INT. BECK'S LOFT - NIGHT

Beck sits at his workbench. He edits photos. Music plays in
the background. His phone rings.

BECK
Hello?
(Listening)
Ready to apologize?
(Listening)
Now you want to talk--
(Listening)
Downstairs-- sure, you can come up.

Beck looks around. He notices his picture wall.

BECK
I'll buzz you in.

Beck walks across the room. He pushes the BUZZER and hangs up the phone. In a frenzy he rips down photos and stuffs them under the bed. At the workbench, he slides burner phones into a drawer. He shuts his laptop. There's a knock on the door.

BECK

Just a minute.

Beck takes a last look around. He walks to the door. He opens it to a contrite Sasha.

Sasha leans against the doorframe. Sasha walks into the loft. She casually brushes against Beck. He follows her. She's sheepish and coy.

SASHA

I see it now.

BECK

Can I get you a drink?

Sasha wags her finger.

SASHA

No. The last time I was here,
someone spiked the punch.

Sasha walks to the center of the room.

SASHA

I should have remembered what your
sorority sisters told you.

Beck grins.

SASHA

You didn't have to go to all this
trouble. You could've talked to me.

BECK

About?

SASHA

Your battle buddy Amon. Or should I
say, your half brother?

BECK

Way to remember his name. Is
keeping the names straight hard for
you?

SASHA

I never name the puppy. You, for example, are "Cowboy." Or better yet, WITHHELD NUMBER.

BECK

Burners are a beautiful thing.

SASHA

Now I understand why you've been doing all these terrible things to me. Naughty boy.

BECK

What have I done?

SASHA

You filed a false claim against me.

BECK

I had to get your attention, to make you stop ignoring me.

SASHA

And showing up at my godson's camp, calling the police on me, having me arrested?

BECK

Little Aiden wasn't safe and you should pay your parking tickets. You're not above the law.

SASHA

Who were you protecting when you hacked into my security system and sent me all those threatening text messages?

BECK

I sent those so you'd understand how serious I am, what I'll do--

SASHA

You took photos of me without my permission, stole a private video--

BECK

I didn't steal the video.

SASHA

It doesn't matter.

BECK

It does. It speaks to the larger issue.

SASHA

Which is?

BECK

Your predatory behavior. Those pictures, that video, none of it would exist if you didn't treat men like a commodity. You brought this on yourself with your destructive nature.

SASHA

I want you to stop.

BECK

Once you get what you deserve.

SASHA

What's that?

BECK

To have your life destroyed, like you destroyed Amon's.

Beck storms toward her.

BECK

An outreach counselor from his support group found him.

Beck steps toward Sasha. He pulls her close.

BECK

The last thing he did was call you.

Sasha pushes him away. She takes several steps back.

SASHA

I don't know what he told you--

BECK

Amon made the mistake of loving you.

SASHA

He didn't love me.

BECK

He wanted to be part of your life.

SASHA

But he wasn't.

BECK

I lied about you to show people how evil and heartless you are. When I release the photos and the video, no one will every look at you the same way again. You'll be lucky to get a job delivering the farm report on public access.

SASHA

Maybe, but I have what I need to prove you're behind all this.

Sasha takes her phone out.

Beck lunges at Sasha. He grabs her by the wrist. He tries to wrestle the phone from her.

Sasha responds in dramatic fashion. She plays it up for the recording.

SASHA

Beck, stop you are hurting me. I'm scared. Please, let me go. Stop.

Satisfied with her performance, Sasha throws an elbow into Beck's head. He stumbles. Sasha slips her phone back in her pocket. She advances. She pummels him with her fists. He stumbles backward.

Beck looks up. Sasha punches him in the face. He falls to the ground. Sasha steps over him and walks to the door.

SASHA

I warned you. I asked you to stop.

With a burst of adrenalin, Beck gets to his feet. He charges.

Sasha thrusts the heel of her hand up and into his nose. He falls back. Blood runs from his nose.

SASHA

Sweet dreams Beck.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha comes through into the house. She flexes her sore wrist. She can hear recognizable voices in the family room.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha rushes around the corner.

SASHA
Where did you get that?

LAYLA
This is quite the video.

The video plays in the background. We see Amon, naked, crazed, he paces his loft, the images of Sasha on the screen.

SASHA
Turn it off.

Layla hits stop. The video freezes on the image of Sasha.

LAYLA
When you said sex tape, I was imagining, but this. What have you done? Why didn't you help him?

SASHA
There was nothing I could do.

LAYLA
You could have talked to him. You could have called someone to help him. You could have--

SASHA
Layla, come on, don't. We've been friends too long. You know me.

LAYLA
I know you're selfish and self centered, but this--

SASHA
Is not my fault.

LAYLA
Keep tell'n yourself that.

Layla sets the remote down.

LAYLA
I'll leave you with this. I hope you watch it and think about who you are and the consequences of your actions.

81.

Layla snatches Aiden's backpack from the chair and walks out of the room.

Sasha calls after her.

SASHA

Don't go.

Sasha hears the sound of the door slamming.

Sasha looks at the screen. She picks up the remote, she rewinds the video, she sits down and watches it.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Sasha and Layla sit next to Paulie.

Steve and Wendy sit across from them.

Paulie pulls a folder out of her bag. She sets it in front of herself and folds her hands on top.

PAULIE

Thank you for seeing us. For the record, I am Miss Roberts's attorney, Pauline Daniels. In this capacity, I hired an investigator to look into Mister Reeves and his claims.

Paulie slides a folder over to Wendy.

Wendy opens the folder. She reads through the information. She passes a page to Steve. She looks up at Paulie.

WENDY

This is--

Paulie waves her off.

PAULIE

As you can see, Mister Reeves is stalking my client. He is mentally unstable. He blames my client for an incident involving his half-brother.

Steve looks up, shocked.

PAULIE

To be clear, my client was not involved or responsible for the incident.

Sasha looks at Layla. Layla drops her head.

Wendy looks through the additional contents of the folder.

PAULIE

We have a recording of Mister Reeves admitting he lied about the sexual harassment claim and that he took illicit photos of my client without her permission with the intent to harm her reputation.

Wendy closes the folder and looks up at Sasha.

WENDY

Let me--

PAULIE

Save it. I have contacted the police about Mister Reeves. I suggest for the safety of the other employees you alert your security staff and make them aware he is a dangerous and volatile man. He did this to my client yesterday.

Sasha shows Wendy and Steve her bruised wrist.

PAULIE

Thankfully, Miss Roberts knows how to defend herself. My client was further victimized by this station. As such, we are filing suit.

Paulie looks to Sasha and Layla.

PAULIE

I think we're done here.

SASHA

No. I want Stacey to interview me.

PAULIE

I don't--

SASHA

He keeps threatening to expose me. I want to beat him to it, reclaim my narrative.

STEVE

Let's do it. We can tape today.

SASHA
No. Live at five.

INT. ACTION NEWS 9 - SET - NIGHT

Sasha sits across from Stacey on a comfortable talk show set. She's refreshed; she looks sympathetic. The lights come up.

FLOOR DIRECTOR
We're live in three, two--

The Floor Director points to Stacey.

STACEY
Good evening, I'm Stacey Sims. We lead off with a special report about the alarming rise in revenge porn and the toll it takes on its victims, ninety percent of which are women. Tonight, a familiar face shares her story.

The Camera Man pulls out, a two shot.

STACEY
Sasha, what happened?

The Camera Man pushes in close on Sasha.

SASHA
Stacey, perhaps the most degrading and humiliating experience is the unauthorized publication of intimate photos and videos.

Stacey reaches across. She takes Sasha's hand.

SASHA
A man took photos and a video of me without my knowledge. He is threatening to release them.

The Camera Man pulls out wide.

SASHA
The professional and personal ramifications of these threats have taken a severe toll.

Sasha reaches over. She picks up a photograph, she holds it up to the side.

The Camera Man pushes in on the photo of Beck.

SASHA

This man, Beck Reeves, is terrorizing me. He has been reported to the police. I am here tonight because we, as women, have a voice. We do not have to be victims.

The Camera Man pushes in on Sasha. She sets the photo down.

SASHA

I refuse to be silent. I am using my voice, my platform, to bring attention to this, because I am not alone. If you are being stalked--

BWEEP bip bip BWEEP. BWEEP bip bip BWEEP. A fire alarm goes off. Lights flash on the set.

The Camera Man pushes in on Stacey.

STACEY

This is an important conversation.
(touching her earpiece)
I am being told there is a fire,
and we must evacuate the building.

EXT. ACTION NEWS 9 - NIGHT

Sasha, Layla, and Paulie, rush out of the station. Thick smoke fills the air.

Wee woo. Wee woo. Wee woo. Fire engines blare in the distance.

SMOKE rises from the parking lot.

SASHA

It's my car! It's Althea.

Sasha, steps toward the parking lot. Layla grabs her arm.

The car is engulfed in flames. The paint blisters and peels off the metal.

Beck stands across the street from the news station. In a BASEBALL CAP, he blends in with a small CROWD. His SUNGLASSES disguise the swelling and bruising around his nose and eyes. He pulls out his camera and zooms in on Sasha. CLICK.

DING. DING.

Sasha takes her phone out and looks at the screen.

WITHHELD NUMBER (TEXT)
You destroyed something I loved...

Sasha looks at the crowd across the street. She sees a MAN with a camera. She charges the Man. She snatches his arm. It's not Beck.

Layla guides Sasha back across the street.

LAYLA
I'm sorry I walked out.

Sasha exhales.

SASHA
I watched the video. It was a lot. I understand why you're upset, but you've got to know I'd never be so callous.

LAYLA
I do. We're going to get him.

They watch with Paulie as the fire truck extinguishes the car.

The crowd disburse.

The NEWS TEAM heads back inside the building.

A tow truck pulls Althea out of the parking lot.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Beck watches Sasha enter the house from the park through binoculars. He pulls out a tissue. He wipes his nose.

Danny pushes his cart down the street.

Beck walks out of the park. He follows Danny.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The sun streams through the bedroom windows.

CRASH! Then SLAM!

Sasha bolts up in bed. She pulls the bedside table drawer open. She takes out her Sig.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - PANTRY - CONTINUOUS

Sasha holds the gun down as she approaches the pantry. She flings the door open and points the gun.

SASHA

STOP!

The intruder, GERTRUDE (65), bent over a dustpan, freezes. She puts her hands up. Sasha lowers the gun.

SASHA

Gertrude!

GERTRUDE

Miss Roberts, you scared the
daylights out of me.

Sasha clicks the safety and slips the gun into her robe pocket. Gertrude stands up, a jar of sauce at her feet.

SASHA

What are you doing here?

GERTRUDE

Stocking the pantry like I do every
week. Everything okay dear?

SASHA

Yes, sorry, you startled me.

GERTRUDE

I'll finish up down here. The
handyman is coming to fix the back
gate. Can I get you anything?

SASHA

No, thank you. I'm going to take a
bath.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha relaxes in a sunken tub, spa music plays in the background, a towel rests on her eyes.

DING DONG. DING DONG. The doorbell rings. The towel falls from her eyes. She calls out.

SASHA

Gertrude, can you get that?

DING DONG. DING DONG. Sasha pushes out of the tub.

INT/EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - DAY

Sasha opens the door. A COURIER (25) hands her a padded envelope.

Sasha signs the register and takes the envelope.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sasha pulls an MP3 PLAYER out of the envelope. A sticky note attached to it reads, "PLAY ME."

Sasha puts the headphones in. A low-tuned guitar fills her ears. A deep, aggressive voice rises over the drums.

MP3 PLAYER

*I am the man. I will kill you when
I can. Try to run. If you can...*

Sasha rips the headphones from her ears and throws the MP3 player on the couch. Music screams through the headphones.

Sasha walks over to the couch. She picks the player up and turns it off.

BANG! BANG! Sasha jumps. A noise comes from the kitchen.

SASHA

Gertrude?

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

BANG! BANG!

The screen door slams rhythmically with each gust of wind.

BANG! BANG!

Sasha walks over to the screen. She pulls the door closed. She looks out, Gertrude stands with the HANDYMAN.

Sasha turns around. She notices a beautiful bouquet, a bottle of wine, a charcuterie tray and a note: Bless those who persecute you for they will deliver you into salvation. See you soon!

She crushes the note and snatches the bottle of wine from the counter. She throws it in the sink.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha hurries to the bedside table. She picks up her phone and punches in a number.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
9-1-1 what's your emergency?

SASHA
There is an intruder in my house.

Sasha opens a dresser drawer. She pulls clothes out.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
What's your location?

SASHA
Four Five Four Seventeenth Avenue.

She cradles the phone to her ear as she pulls on a blouse.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Are you in a safe place?

SASHA
Yes.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Are there any weapons in the house?

She picks up her robe, and pulls the Sig out of the pocket.

SASHA
Yes. A registered handgun.

She opens the bedside table drawer, and puts the Sig inside.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
I will let the officers know. Do you know the intruder?

SASHA
Beck Reeves. I reported him. He's stalking me. I have a restraining order against him.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Does he have a weapon?

SASHA
I don't know. Can you send officers to the house?

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
They are on their way.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha sits on a comfortable couch. Officer One, the same cop from earlier, sits across from her, his notebook resting on the coffee table between them. OFFICER TWO (30), stands nearby. He looks around.

SASHA
He's stalking me. This is just the latest.

Sasha hands Officer One the MP3 player. Officer One pulls out a plastic bag and drops the MP3 player inside.

OFFICER ONE
You said there was something else?

Sasha stands up.

SASHA
He left me flowers in the kitchen.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sasha leads the Officers to the flowers in the kitchen. Gertrude stands near the sink.

SASHA
I came down after my bath. These were on the counter. With this.

Sasha hands Officer One the crumpled note. Gertrude, a bit nervous, steps forward.

GERTRUDE
I took those from a delivery man. I didn't realize--

OFFICER ONE
(to Gertrude)
You brought the flowers in?

Gertrude nods.

OFFICER ONE
(to Sasha)
I understand you're upset, but it doesn't seem you have an intruder.

Officer One looks down at the note.

OFFICER ONE
You sure it's the same guy?

SASHA
Yes. Who else?

OFFICER ONE
A local celebrity like yourself.

Officer One hands the note to Officer Two.

Sasha watches Officer Two put the note in a plastic bag.

OFFICER ONE
We can look around, but, if
nothing's missing and he's not on
the premises, there's not much we
can do.

SASHA
He's obsessed with me. There's no
telling what he'll do.

OFFICER ONE
Didn't you do that series on police
corruption?

SASHA
What does--

OFFICER ONE
Well ma'am, we're a by the book
department. We don't arrest people
for what they might do.

Officer One looks to Officer Two.

OFFICER ONE
If we did that, well, someone might
accuse us of not doing our jobs
properly.

Officer Two nods.

OFFICER ONE
If he violates the restraining
order, we can take action.

SASHA
Is this a joke to you? He's
terrorizing me.

Officer One notices the wineglass on the counter. He sees the bottle in the sink.

OFFICER ONE
How much have you had to drink?

SASHA
What!?

OFFICER ONE
By your own admission, a courier brought the MP3 player. Your housekeeper brought the flowers in.

Gertrude walks over to Sasha. She takes her hand.

GERTRUDE
I'd be happy to stay with you. I wouldn't want you to be alone, as upset as you are.

SASHA
It's okay. I'll be fine.

The Officers and Gertrude follow Sasha into--

INT. ENTRY HALL - CONTINUOUS

Sasha holds the front door open.

SASHA
Thank you for coming out.

OFFICER ONE
Under the circumstances, stay vigilant.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sasha rinses dishes in the sink. She looks out the window. She notices the gate is open.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sasha comes outside. A low mist hangs above the ground. She walks to the gate. She reaches for the latch and pushes the gate. It won't close. She tries again. She opens the gate and looks down.

SASHA
Danny, Danny, are you okay?

Sasha squats down. She shakes Danny. She rolls him over, she sees his eyes wide open. Blood pools around his body.

SASHA
Hold on Danny.

Sasha stands up. She pushes the gate open and runs to the backdoor.

A HISS OF A VOICE, in the dark, SINGS OUT HER NAME...

VOICE (O.S.)
SASHA...

Sasha turns her head. She scans the darkness for the voice. She charges up the back stairs.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sasha slams the door. The lights flicker. The electricity goes out. The house is bathed in darkness. She moves with determination through the kitchen. She charges into the--

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

WHAM! A fist comes out of the darkness, and knocks Sasha out. A DARK FIGURE rolls her over. HANDS slip beneath her arms.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha is tied to a chair. She blinks her eyes to focus on-- cowboy boots. She stretches her jaw, she feels a twinge of pain.

SASHA
Hey Cowboy. I've been expecting
you.

Beck leans forward. He stares deep into Sasha eyes.

BECK
I have to teach you a lesson.

SASHA
You killed Danny.

BECK
Nobody is going to miss that
worthless bum.

Sasha drops her head. Beck taps his head with a knife.

BECK

Well nobody, but you.

Beck grabs her jaw. He pulls her face inches away from his.

Sasha is calm and composed.

SASHA

The police know you're here.

Sasha squirms in the chair. She tests the restraints.

SASHA

It's not too late. Stop this. We can get you some help.

BECK

Now you want to help.

Beck backhands Sasha. Her neck whips to the side.

BECK

I gave you a chance.

Sasha stretches her neck.

SASHA

I'm some girl he met in a bar.

BECK

Your rejection--

Sasha wiggles her hands. The restraints loosen.

SASHA

I didn't reject him. Things ran their course. You're upset about your brother. You're trying to make sense of it. Blaming me is not the answer.

BECK

I watched the video--

SASHA

Did you? All this time I was afraid of what could be on that video, only to find I had nothing to fear.

Beck looks at her. He's confused.

SASHA

He never called me. Amon called you. He begged you to help him.

Beck drops the knife to his side and looks at her.

SASHA

The real question, where were you when he needed you? You want someone to blame, Father? Look in the mirror. Why didn't you help him?

Beck stands up anguish on his face. He paces.

BECK

Since we were kids. I had to protect him.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

While the action unfolds Beck speaks in the present.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A young Beck (6), sits on the couch. He watches television. A MAN, we don't see except for his hands, ushers a young Amon (6), skinny, nervous, and frightened into the room.

MAN

Beck, this is your brother Amon. His mom died. Now, it's your job to take care of him. Keep him safe.

BECK (V.O.)

My mother hated my father for his infidelity. She couldn't take it out on him so she took it out on Amon.

Amon cowers in a corner. He grips his knees and ducks his head. A WOMAN, we don't see, approaches him, her heels loud on the linoleum. She holds a wooden hanger.

WOMAN

There you are you little bastard.

Just as the Woman raises her hand to wail on Amon. Beck runs in the room he steps in front of the Woman and protects Amon.

BECK (V.O.)

Probably one of the worsts beatings I ever took. From that moment, Amon was my shadow, I kept him safe.

Amon and Beck stand in MILITARY FATIGUES in front of a tent in the Middle East.

BECK (V.O.)

He was stronger than I thought. He went off his medication to join the Marines with me, but without it he was too sensitive, he showed too much empathy for our enemies.

Amon and Beck in military fatigues. Amon hands Beck a piece of paper.

AMON

I'm being discharged.

Beck takes the paper. He reads it over.

BECK

What happened wasn't your fault. We can fight this, find another job for you.

Amon takes the paper back.

AMON

No, brother, it's okay. I'm going home. I'm going to work on my art, get my head right.

Beck reaches out. He hugs Amon.

END FLASHBACK.

Beck stops. He looks at Sasha.

BECK

He was doing well until you. What happened to him, it's your fault.

Beck raises the knife. He charges Sasha.

BAM. She kicks him between the legs. He falls forward.

SMACK. She head butts him.

Beck stumbles back. Sasha stands up. She falls back hard. The chair breaks on the ground. She gets to her feet and frees her hands.

She runs to the door. Beck reaches out. He grabs her ankle. She trips and falls.

She looks back. She pumps her leg. BAM. BAM. She kicks Beck in his broken nose. He releases his grip. She runs out of the room.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha charges into the bedroom. She closes and locks the door. Beck isn't far behind. She can hear him on the stairs.

INT. BEDROOM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Beck pounds against the door. Blood streams from his nose. His eyes water. He rams the door with his shoulder. The wood splinters.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sasha goes to her cell phone. She punches in a number.

911 (V.O.)
9-1-1 what's your emergency?

SASHA
This is Sasha Roberts.

Sasha looks at the door. The wood splinters with every blow.

SASHA
There is an intruder in my house. I need help.

Sasha sets the phone on the nightstand.

9-1-1 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Ma'am, are you there?

She pulls open the drawer. She takes out her Sig Sauer P320.

SASHA
He's got a knife.

9-1-1 OPERATOR (V.O.)
Ma'am, help is on the way.

SASHA
Hurry! I'm scared.
(loading the gun)
The door is breaking!
(taking the safety off)
He's getting in.

Beck breaks through the door.

SASHA
No! Don't hurt me. Stop. I will shoot.

Beck enraged advances, he raises the knife and charges.

Sasha squeezes off two rounds.

BAM. BAM.

The bullets hit Beck in the chest. He falls to the ground.

Sasha lowers the gun. She picks up the phone.

SASHA
I have just shot an intruder.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - DAY

POLICE OFFICERS swarm the house.

Sasha sits in the living room with two OFFICERS.

EXT. SASHA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

In the backyard. Danny's body is zipped up in a BODY BAG and wheeled away.

INT. SASHA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Beck's body is zipped up in a BODY BAG and loaded on a stretcher.

SUPERIMPOSE: 6 Months Later

EXT. HARLEM NY STREET - NIGHT

A light dust of snow covers the ground. Sasha walks alone. She stops at a bar. She looks in the window.

INT. BAR - HARLEM NY - NIGHT

Sasha sits at the bar. She enjoys a drink and watches the news.

TV NEWS (V.O.)
...Watch TVN Action News in the
Morning with Sasha Roberts.

A MAN (35), handsome and distinguished, approaches.

MAN
That looks delicious.

Sasha looks up at the Man. She smiles. She slides the drink toward him.

SASHA

Try it.

The Man hesitates. He looks at her glass. He looks at Sasha. He picks the glass up.

MAN

What's the worst that can happen?

Sasha winks.

The Man sips the drink.

Sasha stands up. She grabs her coat.

SASHA

Early morning.

EXT. HARLEM - NIGHT

Sasha walks down the street alone. Light snow falls.

INT. DAY ROOM - STATE HOSPITAL - DAY

Strange HUMMING SOUNDS, CLANKING PIPES and HISSING RADIATORS fill the silence. A television plays in the distance.

A MAN sits at a ROUND TABLE in a TATTERED WHITE BATHROBE. He tears PIECES of PAPER. His wrists are wrapped with bandages.

In the distance. A NURSE walks by. The Nurse turns up the television.

TELEVISION (V.O.)

Good morning, I'm Sasha Roberts.

It's Monday...

At the sound of HER voice, the MAN, AMON, turns to face the television screen. He stares at Sasha and smiles.

FADE TO BLACK.