

TRANIAC!

Written by

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EXT. NYC STRAIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Outside a typical hetero nightclub complete with a bald, buff BOUNCER (30s) and velvet rope, a long line of dyed-blond sorority sisters and varsity basketball rejects wait against a scuffed brick wall. Excited chatter fills the air.

But near the front of this homogenous stew of business majors and suburban transplants stands a meek, darkly-dressed woman towering above the rest. This is MELANIE (26, trans, white), slender, pale, femme but gorgeously clocky. And she clearly doesn't want to be here.

Accompanying her are a duo of two dyed-blond cis women STELLA (20s, white) and COURTNEY (20s, white), and in contrast to their smaller statures she stands out even more.

MELANIE

Why are we going here? To a straight club?

STELLA

I told you, this place is fun! And we always get free bottle service.

MELANIE

There's nobody like... me... here.

COURTNEY

Relax, Alex--

Melanie winces. Courtney also winces, but for a different reason.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Melanie! I'm sorry, it's just so hard--

MELANIE

Forget it.

STELLA

She's working on it. All of this is so... new. But we wanted to take you out for a "girls" night. Is that so bad?

COURTNEY

And nobody here cares that you're trans.

Melanie turns her head around, observing the clientele. Men and women gawk at her with a mix of curiosity and disgust.

MELANIE

That's what I'm worried about.

She turns back to her "friends" as they make it to the front of the line. The Bouncer takes them in.

BOUNCER

IDs.

The three girls fish their IDs from their bags and hand them over. The Bouncer examines them briefly and gives Melanie a skeptical glance. Handing them back, he opens the rope.

BOUNCER (CONT'D)

Go on in ladies.

Stella and Courtney waltz in. Melanie tries to follow.

The Bouncer closes the rope before she can step through. Stella holds at the entrance.

BOUNCER (CONT'D)

\$20.

MELANIE

What?

BOUNCER

It's ladies' night. Guys pay a cover.

MELANIE

I am a--

But she's interrupted by Stella waving a twenty in the Bouncer's face. He reluctantly snatches it from her hand and opens the rope. Melanie passes through silently, and enters the club with Stella.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

INT. STRAIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Melanie and Stella join Courtney inside the dark club.

Dangerous concentrations of backwards ballcaps bounce up and down in the dark space, dancing to some aggressively obnoxious Drake remix. The DJ warps the voice and some generic bass drops and the crowd erupts in a sea of cheers like this is the greatest thing since sliced bread.

STELLA
Ohemgee, I love this DJ! Come on,
let's dance!

MELANIE
I gotta use the bathroom first!

COURTNEY
We'll be in the VIP section!

The two cis women waltz off together. Melanie goes in the other direction, following the signs for the bathroom.

Against the wall, studying the crowd for wrongdoing, one BUFFER SECURITY GUARD points her out to another BUFFER SECURITY GUARD. They mouth undiscernible words to each other. Eventually, the Buffer Guard nods and enters the crowd.

Melanie approaches the gender-segregated bathrooms. A woman walks in. But as Melanie gets closer, the Buffer Guard blocks the entrance to the women's bathroom. She approaches him.

MELANIE
Excuse me.

BUFFER GUARD
Bathroom's closed.

MELANIE
I just saw someone walk in.

BUFFER GUARD
Out of order.

Another woman sneaks underneath the Buffer Guard's arm. He doesn't even try to stop her. A toilet flushes inside the bathroom.

MELANIE
Seems functional to me.

BUFFER GUARD
It's closed temporarily. If you
need to go, go.

He waves her towards the men's bathroom. She pinches her nose. Fine.

MELANIE
Fuck this.

She stands in line with the men. They pretend not to stare at her. The line moves pretty quickly, and soon she's second in line, bouncing up and down trying to hold it in.

One of the urinals opens up. The man in front of her, a KINDHEARTED IDIOT, turns to her with a smile.

KINDHEARTED IDIOT

After you.

Melanie's face wrinkles up like a ball of tin foil.

EXT. STRAIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Melanie storms out of the club, furious and despairing. She marches down the street, away from the entrance, and dials Stella on her phone. It rings and rings.

INT. STRAIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Stella and Courtney gleefully dance with business bros to the loud THUMP! THUMP! of bassy nightclub music.

Stella's phone vibrates in her purse, sitting neatly on a plush VIP couch. Complimentary bottle of champagne in the foreground.

COURTNEY

Where's Mel?!

STELLA

Probably a line!

EXT. STRAIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

The ringing finally turns to voicemail.

STELLA'S VOICEMAIL

Stella here! Leave a message!

BEEP.

VOICEMAIL BOT

This user's mailbox is full. Please-

-

MELANIE

Fuck.

She hangs up the phone. Marches down the street. As she stomps along the pavement, a CRACK in her shoe! Broken heel.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Fuck!

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

The giant metal beast of a train rattles through the city's underbelly. Clanging and clattering in the dark void of the tunnel, its headlights its only guide through the dark.

It cries out with its bellowing horn. Nothing returns its calls.

INT. TRAINCAR - NIGHT

Inside this lonely monster is Melanie, sitting on a bench by herself, barefoot, holding back tears.

The train car is littered with other passengers from all walks of life. Tired working men, dolled-up girls and guys leaving from--or going to--some party or club. A duo of sleeping women in nursing scrubs, heads leaning on each other.

She writes a long text to Stella.

MELANIE

(text)

I left. People were shitty to me.
Honestly I don't know why we went
there. I get it's fun for you but
there's a reason you never see
trans people in there. Why couldn't
we go to a gay club or something??
All the ones I suggested. What were
you thinking?? What was I
thinking?? If we do this again I'm
choosing the--

She sighs. Deletes the text.

The train stops at a station and the doors slide open. People come and go, among them being a DRUNK FUCKBOY (mid 30s) who stumbles onto the train with the arrogant confidence of a Joe Rogan listener.

He makes his way towards one of the corner seats, saying hello to each woman as he walks past. Obviously not with pure intentions. Staring hungrily.

DRUNK FUCKBOY

Evening ladies. Goodnight
beautiful. Sexy ass body.

Melanie looks at him, disgusted. He comments on every woman in the car under 35. Except for Melanie. He just looks at her with disdain as he walks past.

DRUNK FUCKBOY (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Faggot.

She watches him catcall all of these women with a mixture of disgust and envy. Digging her nails into her thighs.

Finally, the man makes it to the end of the car and he walks through the gangway and into the next car, where he picks up the act once again.

The targeted women glance at each other. The silent checking in. None of them look towards her.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Inside a tiny two-bedroom apartment adorned with plants, warm little lights and an assortment of homemade drawings hung across the wall, Melanie stomps through the living room and collapses on the couch.

She covers her face with one of the throw pillows and belts out a muffled scream.

From one of the bedroom doors emerges ALICE (27, black, trans). She's got a nasty bruise on her arm. Alice's eyes widen at Melanie's wallowing.

MELANIE
Holy shit, Alice, your arm!

Alice rubs it meekly. Avoids eye contact.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Jesus. That piece of shit.

Melanie grabs an ice pack from the freezer. Alice sits down on the couch. Melanie joins her, placing the ice pack on her bruised arm. Alice winces.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Sorry! Sorry.

Melanie re-applies the ice pack more gently.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
What did he do to you?

ALICE
He was having a bad day.

MELANIE
And it was your fault?

ALICE

I guess so.

MELANIE

Even if you fucked his dad, he
can't hit you.

ALICE

He didn't hit me! He just...
grabbed me.

MELANIE

Look at that bruise! You have to
break up with him. There's a reason
he's not welcome here!

ALICE

I can't leave him.

MELANIE

Yes you can.

Strained silence.

ALICE

What happened to you? You seem
fucked up.

Melanie shakes her head.

MELANIE

So these girls from college
suddenly hit me up right? I barely
even knew them back then. But they
suddenly want to go out. I was like
sure. Fuck it. Why not? See what
the cis girls get up to. So I go
and they take me to this straight
club. Ladies' night. And--

ALICE

Uh oh.

MELANIE

Right?! I try to say something and
they just don't care. Bouncer tried
to make me pay and everything.

ALICE

Make you pay. On ladies' night. A
lady such as yourself.

MELANIE

On ladies night.

ALICE

You're more lady than all of them combined. They need to make a club where only dolls get in for free and everyone else has to pay.

MELANIE

And one of them paid for me which is nice but it's the fact that I had to.

ALICE

It's the principle.

Exactly! But the worst part is they "closed" the bathroom right when I needed to use it! I had to use the men's.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Such is life. Faster line at least.

MELANIE

And then I broke a heel on the way home!

Somber silence.

ALICE

Let me finish that drawing of you!

INT. MELANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alice sits in a desk chair scribbling away in a sketchpad. Melanie poses on the full-size bed in her underwear. Fairy lights and plants adorn the space around her.

Alice's drawing is precise, skillful, flattering.

ALICE

Feeling better?

MELANIE

No. Maybe.

Alice smiles. Melanie works herself up.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

I hate cis people. Why are they so stupid?

ALICE

Sometimes I just wanna pack up and run to that commune upstate.

MELANIE

The what?

ALICE

Oh my god, you don't know?! Some old lady inherited her father's farm a few years back and turned into a trans haven. Pretty secluded. Self sufficient. All that.

MELANIE

Wouldn't that be nice. Or just make a tranarchy.

ALICE

Girl what?

MELANIE

Like patriarchy or matriarchy but transgender. Tranarchy!

Alice snickers. Melanie, riling herself up, breaks her pose.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

I mean really! Cis people need to be knocked down a peg! And we'd all be better off. We start... with your boyfriend.

ALICE

Preaching to the choir girl. Now stay still, I'm almost finished.

MELANIE

Ugh. Fine.

Melanie returns to her original position. Alice does some final scribbles and scrapes against the paper, then turns the pad around to show the final result.

It's beautiful. Expertly crafted depiction of Melanie as the divine feminine. The gaze of beauty so rarely afforded trans women manifest. Melanie is struck.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Woah. That's... me?

ALICE

As you are.

MELANIE

It's...

Her lip quivers. Tears well in her eyes. She wipes them away.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

It looks great.

ALICE

Just drawing what I saw.

Alice rips it out of the sketchpad and hangs it up on Melanie's wall next to several others, some of Melanie, some landscapes of New York, and some of Alice herself. One of which being a self-portrait with the same divine beauty.

MELANIE

I wish cis people saw it too.

ALICE

They will. At the gallery show next week.

MELANIE

They won't. They'll see it as an anthropological exercise and then pat themselves on the back for being so inclusive that they'll look at a girl's bulge for a couple hours.

ALICE

Well then I guess we will have to do.

Melanie rolls over onto her back. Stares up at the ceiling.

INT. RETAIL STORE - MEN'S SECTION - NIGHT

A dead-eyed Melanie stands at the register in a cavernous, near-empty all-white department store, folding dress shirts into neat presentable squares. Crappy eighties hits play over the intercom as escaped retirees hobble around browsing the wares.

She checks the time on her phone. 8:30PM. Sighing, she smacks a button on the register. The cash drawer shoots out and she absent-mindedly counts the money, entering each quantity into the machine.

Suddenly, a boorish and boisterous male voice echoes through the dying superstore. And it's getting closer.

The mysterious voice turns a corner, revealing a large, red-faced PIECE OF SHIT (50s, white), greasy, balding, looks wealthier than he is adorned in a fat gold watch and graduation-sized rings.

With him is a small and dainty BARELY LEGAL GIRL (18), an Instagram model-type, in a bodycon dress, being dragged along by this aging meat-wad a little too fast for her to comfortably keep up with.

As he selects his garish shirt-tie combo--this colorblind Saul Goodman--he continues his braggadocious spiel and heads for the register, making sure to sloppily browse every tie display in his path for seemingly no other reason than to mess them up.

PIECE OF SHIT

...And after six hours at the table, losing hand after losing hand, this chump says to me, "My mother has cancer, please just let me have it back?" And you know what I says to him?

BARELY LEGAL GIRL

(giggling)

No.

PIECE OF SHIT

This guy's begging and pleading, practically on his knees "oh please, please, I can't afford it!" And I give him a cigar, fill up his drink, and say "well then you should've gotten a loan!"

He laughs too hard at his own uncreative response. The Barely Legal Girl chimes in with a canned giggle. Melanie grinds her teeth together.

BARELY LEGAL GIRL

Good one!

PIECE OF SHIT

He was a sucker. Old broad passed a year later and he never recovered. What a time the nineties were. Used to be over a hundred grand in some of those games, easy. Not so much anymore. To my wife's dismay.

He feigns shock at revealing his marriage as they finally arrive at the register.

BARELY LEGAL GIRL
Oh, silly! All my clients are
married!

He slams the shirt and tie down on the register, right on top
of the pile of shirts Melanie was folding. Reluctantly,
Melanie stops counting the money.

MELANIE
Register's closed, sir.

PIECE OF SHIT
See what I mean? People got no
respect anymore. Ever hear of
customer service, buddy?

Emphasis on Buddy. Nobody calls women Buddy. Knowing he's
gonna be trouble, Melanie frustratedly re-opens the register.

MELANIE
Find everything okay?

PIECE OF SHIT
As good as I could. It's like a
retirement home in here.

Melanie haphazardly grabs the shirt.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)
Don't wrinkle it! It's for my
mother-in-law's memorial.

MELANIE
All our shirts are made with easy-
to-iron fabric--

PIECE OF SHIT
Ha!

Melanie begins scanning the tags.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)
Thanks buddy.

MELANIE
Miss, actually.

PIECE OF SHIT
What's that, Sir?

MELANIE
It's Miss.

PIECE OF SHIT

No the hell it isn't. You can do what you want but I don't buy into that woke pronouns bullshit. You can't tell me you're a chick when THIS is a chick!

He shows off the Barely Legal Girl like she's the prize on a game show. She giggles, but gives Melanie an apologetic look.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)

Anyway, Sir, what's the damage?

But Melanie's already walked away.

INT. RETAIL STORE - STOCKROOM - NIGHT

Melanie barges into the dank, disorganized stockroom filled to the brim with men's shirts and shoes and underwear. She rubs her face, and plops down on a safety ladder after tossing some loose boxers out of the way.

She's so furious her face scrunches up into a little ball. But only a few moments pass before her manage BRIAN (30s), a pale and flabby man, barges in.

BRIAN

Mel, what the hell's going on?! You can't just leave a customer at the register in the middle of a transaction! We talked about treating customers better.

MELANIE

He's an asshole. Said I'm not a woman.

BRIAN

I'm sure he didn't mean it.

She just looks at him with tired eyes. He pinches his nose.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Bottom line. This is not how we treat our guests. You know the rule of retail. A customer can disrespect you but you can never disrespect a customer. Everyone knows that. He's still here. Now go out there and apologize.

MELANIE

What the fuck Brian?! No way!

BRIAN

I'm not arguing about this. He's threatening to go to corporate and I need this job as much as you do. I'm not taking the fall for this. Apologize. Or get your things.

And with that, Brian exits as quickly as he entered.

Melanie bites into her arm and screams, muffling it with her flesh. Standing up, she notices something on a shelf at her eye-level.

It's a box cutter.

She studies it for a moment. Then exits.

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

Thank you for waiting, they'll be right out. Would you like a complimentary \$100 gift card for your trouble?

INT. RETAIL STORE - MEN'S SECTION - NIGHT

Melanie bitterly strides towards the register, fists clenched. She approaches the Piece of Shit and takes in his smug, cruelly victorious face. She stands before him.

PIECE OF SHIT

Well? Sir?

The Barely Legal Girl has dropped the ditz act and is just staring uncomfortably at the floor, red-faced from embarrassment.

MELANIE

(like she's done this before)

Sir, I am deeply sorry for my behavior. It does not represent the values of Stacy's and no beloved and valued customer--guest--deserves to be treated the horrible way I treated you today. I truly apologize from the bottom of my heart for my unacceptable actions. If you wish, I would be happy to complete the transaction for you now, with a discount.

The Piece of Shit smacks her bro-fully on the arm.

PIECE OF SHIT
It's all squared away, man. Your
boss Dave here--

BRIAN
Brian.

PIECE OF SHIT
Yeah. Great man. He wrapped it up
for me. You could learn a thing or
two about respect. Come on
princess, we can't be late for Joel
Rogan's steakhouse reservations.

He grabs the girl's tiny wrist and drags her along. As she
trips over herself trying to keep up, the Barely Legal Girl
turns back to Melanie and mouths a silent "sorry!" to her.

Melanie watches them leave. Fists still clenched.

BRIAN
This better not happen again. Now
finish up those shirts. And fix
those displays.

Brian storms off.

Melanie rests against the register. Unfolded shirts and
fabric pins sit in front of her. She folds them bitterly,
sadistically stabbing the fabric with the pins that hold the
folds in place.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alice is gone. At work. Still in her work clothes, Melanie
collapses onto her bed. Shakes her head back and forth. She's
sick of it all.

Her phone buzzes. She checks it. It's a notification from
Grindr. Opening it, it's just an advertisement for premium.

But now that the app is open, the notifications from horny
men roll in. An incessant stream. So constant her phone could
double as a vibrator.

She reads some of them. She could use the shallow validation
right now.

- BIG [EGGPLANT EMOJI]: sexy
- [Eye Emoji]4Bttm: sent you an album
- Sissyslut4cd: i luv wearing pantys and being humiliated

- JOHN: come suck my dick good Now in my van
- Str8forTS/CD: i can piss on u

Then in a follow-up message: ?

She opens up JOHN's message. Replies:

MELANIE

(text)

Didn't your mother ever teach you
to ask nicely for things?

JOHN

Sorry.

Pause.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Do you want to come to my van
please?

Melanie chuckles, screenshots and exits the conversation.
Just then, another message rolls through.

- Straight: Hey Beautiful, how's your night going?

Melanie pauses; someone's actually trying to start a
conversation. She opens his profile. It's a normal picture of
him smiling. And he doesn't look like a murderer. Square jaw.
Flowy, shoulder-length hair. Great body. Late twenties. He's
kind of cute.

She replies.

MELANIE

(text)

It's fine. Work sucked. U?

STRAIGHT

(text)

Yeah, same. Dealt with some crazy
people today. Just trying to find a
pretty girl to get drinks with and
decompress. You down?

MELANIE

(text)

What do u do?

STRAIGHT

(text)

Investment [eye roll emoji].

MELANIE

(text)
Points off tbh.

STRAIGHT

(text)
Can't win them all. The money's
good though so you know I'll treat
you well.

MELANIE

(text)
R u weird?

STRAIGHT

(text)
Come find out. My treat.

Melanie bites her lip in thought. She needs a free drink.

MELANIE

(text)
Yea sure :3

STRAIGHT

(text)
1 hr.

Straight sends her a maps link to an upscale bar in Midtown Manhattan. Melanie is impressed.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNELS - NIGHT

Trains rattle to and fro in the darkness. Honking to each other. Trains packed with people coming and going. And in between them all sits Melanie in a simple but refined black bodycon dress and heeled boots. She looks fancy! And hopeful; finally something good's happening to her.

INT. FANCY MANHATTAN BAR - NIGHT

Melanie cautiously enters the high-end establishment. Whoever this guy is, he must be wealthy. A live jazz band performs on stage in the center of the club.

She scans the area, looking for the man. She spots him waving her over. He's got a rounded booth with prime view of the stage. She shyly approaches and he taps the leather seat confidently, gesturing her to sit. She has no choice but to slide in.

MELANIE
Fancy place.

STRAIGHT
A beautiful lady deserves nothing
less.

Melanie blushes a little.

MELANIE
Finally, someone recognizes my
beauty.

STRAIGHT
All too well. Those who don't are
lost.

MELANIE
You got a name?

Just then, the SERVER walks by. Straight waves her over.

STRAIGHT
Two martinis please.

MELANIE
Do you have an espresso martini
actually?

STRAIGHT
They don't. The martinis here are
famous! The regular martinis are
fine, thank you.

SERVER
I can have our bartender make one
for you.

MELANIE
Thank you!

The Server walks off. Straight bites his tongue, taps the
table uncomfortably, and smiles to himself.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
So? Name?

STRAIGHT
Patrick.

MELANIE
Like Bateman?

STRAIGHT

Not quite.

A pause as the drinks arrive.

MELANIE

Thank you. So, Patrick, Mr. Money, what do you invest in to be able to afford a place like this?

STRAIGHT

Well most recently? I invested money into a company that uses AI to create art for children's books. Publishers are eating it up. Huge cost-saving opportunity. And it's... paying off.

MELANIE

Not for those artists.

Straight looks pleased with himself.

STRAIGHT

Such is life in the free market. But, now I get to spend the profit on a beautiful woman such as yourself. Surely, that's not a bad thing. Cheers.

Straight holds up his drink. Melanie looks at her drink, then at the man, then back at her drink. Contemplates. The guy's an asshole, but she's enjoying the flattery.

She lifts up her drink. Clinks it to his. She's in this now. They sip. She coughs.

MELANIE

Wow. Strong.

STRAIGHT

That's why I like this place.

He raises a glass to the bartender, who respectfully nods in return.

MELANIE

You come here a lot?

STRAIGHT

Only when I want to treat someone.

MELANIE

So you bring all your dates here.

STRAIGHT
Only the special ones.

MELANIE
Oh so I'm special.

STRAIGHT
Aren't you?

He stares at her intently.

MELANIE
Depends on what you mean by that.

Melanie takes another big swig. She needs it.

STRAIGHT
Look at you.

He motions to the server.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)
Another for the lady!

The server nods. Melanie kills the rest of her drink.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)
Long day?

MELANIE
When is it not?

STRAIGHT
I can appreciate that. Here. You need it.

He slides his barely-sipped drink towards her.

MELANIE
There's nothing in this is there?

STRAIGHT
You don't think I'm that cunning do you?

He takes a little sip, reassuring her. She shrugs. Drinks it quick.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)
Good thing you're not one of my clients. I'd go broke!

The server brings the next martini. She's feeling it already.

The jazz band erupts into a swing tune. A real dance number. Affluent couples swarm the floor, dancing expertly in the charming old-timey way.

Straight grab's Melanie's hand.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)
Drink that fast because we're
dancing to this song!

He gently pulls her out of the booth. As she slides across the leather, she gulps down the rest of her drink and acquiesces.

Straight guides her to the dance floor, puts his hand around her waist, and unleashes an intricate swing routine. She's swept up in it right away. Just a passenger. As the room spins from the liquor he makes her spin even more. Effortless.

She can't help but smile.

INT. STRAIGHT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Entangled, Melanie and Straight barge into his luxury midtown apartment. It's sleek. Floor to ceiling windows. Gorgeous marble kitchen. The works.

INT. STRAIGHT'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

As they eat each other's faces, Straight leads her into his spacious bedroom, ripping off his suit jacket. The bedroom alone is larger than her entire apartment and Manhattan's skyscrapers twinkle in a near 360-degree view.

She wobbles drunkenly as he gently-but-firmly lays her onto his king size bed. There's a statue of Hermaphroditus on his bedside table. She spots it in between his hungry kisses.

MELANIE
I'm special huh?

STRAIGHT
I know what I like.

He slides a hand between Melanie's legs, grabbing her crotch. She tenses up. Gently, she glides his hand away, placing it on her chest instead.

He squeezes firmly, and she moans, but without skipping a beat his hand slides back down to its original target.

More firmly, but still kindly, she slides his hand away again, this time to her thighs and ass. He squeezes again and she smiles, whimpering.

But all of a sudden he forcefully grabs her wrists and pins them above her head with one hand, using his other to go in for a third time.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)
Playing hard to get.

Melanie lets out a distressed sound.

MELANIE
I don't like being touched there.

He ignores her.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Stop it.

She tries to wriggle free but her hands won't budge. Disoriented and weakened by the alcohol, she's trapped.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I'm serious. Patrick.

STRAIGHT
Why else do you think you're here?

He licks and kisses down from her neck to her abdomen, inching closer to her crotch. She tosses and turns, trying to free herself, but to no avail. He shoves her against the bed. A warning.

As he approaches her crotch, she manages to lift her leg up enough to kick him off her, freeing her momentarily. He loses balance, tumbling to the ground, and she makes a break for it.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)
That wasn't nice.

He lunges for her and pulls her down to the hardwood floor. The statue of Hermaphroditus wobbles on the nightstand.

He's straddling her chest, the full weight of him holding her in place. She's not going anywhere. Tears are streaming down her face.

MELANIE
Please stop. Please.

He clenches his hand tightly around her throat. She turns red. With his other hand he aggressively fondles between her legs a fourth time.

STRAIGHT

What? You thought I was on Grindr to have a nice time with a normal girl? Get real. You're a freak, baby, and so am I!

He squeezes her crotch tightly. Her eyes bulge in pain and she kicks and screams and snarls and cries. But she's helpless. He slams her head against the floor and gets real close to her ear.

The impact causes the statue to wobble again.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)

You really want to deny me of this that badly? Okay.

He gently smacks her cheek with faux affection.

STRAIGHT (CONT'D)

Don't move. I'll be right back.

He releases his grip and disappears into the kitchen. Dizzy from the head trauma and lack of oxygen, she can barely see as she gasps for breath, holding her bruised neck. She tries with all her might to get up, but she's too dazed and weak.

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

You wanna be a normal girl so bad? Let's make you a girl.

Straight returns holding an extra sharp-looking kitchen knife.

MELANIE

No!

He bends down over her and lifts up her dress.

STRAIGHT

I thought this is what you wanted?
I'm doing you a favor! Think of all the money you'll save!

He brings the knife closer to her body. She writhes and shrieks at the top of her lungs, scrambling to get away. He slams her head against the floor again. A CRUNCH! sound as her nose slams into the hardwood.

The impact finally causes the statue to topple to the ground. He doesn't notice, but she does.

He makes a tiny incision on her inner thigh. Blood flows out in tiny, precise droplets. And then he makes another on her other thigh. He twists the tip of the knife around within her flesh, carving a thin line towards her groin.

Her eyes bulge, adrenaline coursing through her system.

With a vengeful cry, she grabs the statue and smashes it against the side of his head. He topples over.

In a flash, she's on top of him, shrieking like a banshee, smashing the statue against his face again and again and again and again.

Straight tries to resist at first, but each bludgeon is so rapid and forceful that all he can do is shake uncontrollably. Blood cakes his face and each impact paints the wall, the bedsheets, the windows, Melanie's face, deep red.

But she doesn't relent. There's a fire in her eyes. She smashes and smashes until she can't anymore. Until well after he's stopped moving altogether. Until the statue breaks into pieces.

She finally ceases. Panting and sobbing and soaked in blood. She looks at the damage.

Where Straight's face once was is now a crater. His skull is fully caved in. Fragments of bone and brain and marble mixed together in a pool of blood like a morbid stew.

Sobbing and shaking, she topples over onto the floor. Exhausted and drunk and dizzy, the last thing she sees before falling asleep is the top half of the Hermaphroditus statue, its all-white eyes staring back at her.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN

Warm sunlight beams through the expansive windows, illuminating the corpse in a beautiful glow. It's dripping and oozing blood. The Hermaphroditus statue, broken and blood-stained, lays beside.

Melanie's eyes flicker open. Groggy, achy and sticky she slowly sits up. She's been laying in a pool of blood all night and it's soaked into her clothes, her hair, coating half her face.

She looks at what she's done, head throbbing in pain.

Then, wobbling, she stands up. Waddles to the master bathroom. Looks back at Straight's corpse one last time.

INT. STRAIGHT'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

Hot, steaming water explodes from the showerhead into the spacious luxury standing shower. Melanie steps in, moaning with relief. Gently, methodically, she washes the blood off her skin, off her face, out of her hair. It disappears down the drain in a little whirlpool.

She steps out of the shower and wipes away the fog in the mirror. Streaks of deep blood-red adorn her hair. As if its been dyed. She takes water from the sink and tries to wash it out, but she can't get it out.

INT. STRAIGHT'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Wrapped in a towel, she looks for spare clothes to wear. Hers are drenched in blood. That's not coming out. She finds an oversized white tee and a baggy pair of slacks. Slipping into her heels, she looks at the body one last time and struts out, carrying her dirty clothes in a ball.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - DAY

Awkwardly strutting through midtown Manhattan, giving a whole new meaning to the walk of shame, she dumps her clothes in a public trash can.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Melanie creakily hobbles into her apartment. Nobody's home. She quietly shuts the door behind her and kicks off her heels.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

Melanie enters. Stares at her reflection in the mirror. At the newly red hair. She turns on the sink, trying desperately to wash it out. Even a little bit. But the color stays in.

She starts to panic. Tries to calm herself.

MELANIE

You had no choice. You had to do it. It was you or him.

She paces back and forth around the bathroom.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

He was going to cut my dick off. Or kill me! It was the only way out. I didn't mean to. I didn't want to! It was life or death. It was self-defense. If I didn't, I would be dead instead. It needed to happen. Who knows how many other women he's hurt. It was the only option. Trans women are safer now that he's gone. He deserved it. He deserved it.

The front door clicks. Melanie snaps out of it.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Alice is walking through the front door, in business attire, holding a cup of coffee and jumps in shock when Melanie exits the bathroom with red hair and men's clothes. Alice has a bruise on her face.

ALICE

Oh, it's just you. I thought you were at work! What are you wearing?

MELANIE

I was out last night... with a guy. What's on your face?! Are you alright?!

Melanie approaches her roommate and touches the bruise on her face. Alice winces. Melanie guides her to the couch.

ALICE

I was thinking about what you said and realized you were right. So I broke up with him. And...

MELANIE

Good for you. Fuck him!

ALICE

He wasn't always like this...

MELANIE

But he is now!

ALICE

Yeah.

MELANIE

Fuck him! Fuck! Him! He deserves to die. Evil piece of shit. Fucking men. Fucking cis men! Worms!

ALICE

When I went into the office today,
I told everyone I fell.

Alice starts to cry and instinctively embraces Melanie. As she holds her friend, Melanie stares into space with fury in her eyes. She grips Alice's shoulder. And the tears start to flow from her eyes too.

Together, they cry. Holding each other. They let it all out. Not just for Alice's abusive boyfriend. But all of it. Every bullshit experience they've both had to put up with.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I'm scared he's gonna come here.

MELANIE

He's not going to. I won't let him.
He won't touch you again.

It's Alice who pulls away first, wiping her eyes.

ALICE

Your hair dye smells like metal.

MELANIE

Oh... uh. It'll fade.

ALICE

It looks nice. Where are your clothes?

MELANIE

I threw them out.

Alice gives a puzzled look.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

We got a little... rough. They're all ripped up. I couldn't wear them home.

Alice cracks a big smile.

ALICE

Oh really now. What'd you do? Tell me.

Melanie shakes her head.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Come on!

Alice pokes Melanie. They laugh as Melanie tries to swat her away.

MELANIE

No! I can't kiss and tell.

ALICE

That never stopped you before girl.
Details! Spill!

MELANIE

Stop! It was embarrassing.

Alice stops her assault. Embarrassing how?

ALICE

Embarrassing how?

MELANIE

You don't wanna know.

ALICE

I do! Even more now!

Melanie bolts for the kitchen, stuffing ice cubes into a ziploc bag.

MELANIE

I'll tell you later. For now let me
tend to your wounds.

ALICE

Yes doctor.

She presses the ice pack to Alice's face. Alice winces; it's tender.

MELANIE

Jeez. This is nasty.

ALICE

Thanks for saying that about
something on my face.

MELANIE

Oh come on. I'm glad you left.

ALICE

It was the last time.

MELANIE
He never deserved you.

ALICE
Why can't we ever find normal guys
to date? You seem to be having fun.

Alice gestures at the strange man's clothes draping Melanie's body. Melanie grimaces as she continues to ice Alice's face.

MELANIE
In a way.

Alice opens her mouth to respond, but is interrupted by a LOUD BANGING on the door, followed by an angry man's wavering voice. The voice of Alice's ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND (35).

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
Alice! Are you there?

ALICE
Oh shit, it's him! Pretend nobody's home.

Alice stands up and tries to tiptoe into her bedroom.

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
I see your shadow! Come on, I just
wanna talk! Are you there, Mel?

Alice shakes her head.

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND (CONT'D)
I know someone's in there! I'm not
leaving until you talk to me!

Melanie sighs. Alice tip-toes the rest of the way into her bedroom and shuts the door.

MELANIE
Sorry! Be right there!

Melanie approaches the door, looking through the peephole. He's angry, looks like he's been up all night.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Oh, hey Bret! What's up?

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
Could you open the door so we can
talk?

MELANIE
I'm... naked! What's up!

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
I don't mind. I just want to talk.
Face to face, like adults.

MELANIE
Is everything alright?!

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
Open up. Please. I'm not leaving
until you open the door.

Melanie attaches the chain lock and opens the door slightly.
Just a portion of her face peeks out.

MELANIE
What's up?

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
Is Alice here? We had a fight last
night and she hasn't been returning
my calls. I thought maybe you would
know.

MELANIE
Oh no! Ummmm... no. She went out of
town!

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
Her car's out front.

MELANIE
She took amtrak!

The Abusive Boyfriend studies her face. Fear and deceit is
written all over it.

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
Where'd she go?

MELANIE
Toronto.

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND
Don't lie to me. Alice! I know
you're in here!

Melanie tries to close the door but he blocks it with his
hand. He's strong. She gasps.

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND (CONT'D)
Open the door!

He pushes with all his might against the weight of her body and the tiny metal chain. These two inches of steel the only thing keeping him at bay.

MELANIE

Alice! Help!

ALICE

Go away Bret!

Alice runs up to the door and tries to hold it shut alongside Melanie. But the Abusive Boyfriend's jammed his arm through the door. The disembodied arm flails around, reaching for something to grab. He finds Alice's arm and grips it tightly. She shrieks and pulls away, leaving just Melanie holding the door.

He pulls his arm out and KICKS! The door aggressively. It vibrates on its hinges and the chain lock starts to give. In this shitty New York apartment, it only takes a couple kicks for the lock to come off.

The door swings open, sending Melanie and Alice flying to the floor. The Abusive Boyfriend, taller and beefier than them, marches through the wide open door.

MELANIE

Get out of our house!

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND

You're both liars, you know that?
You know how that makes me feel,
Alice? It's toxic behavior.
Abusive. And you think you can just
abandon me? Before we even talk
this out?

He steps towards Alice. She goes into damage control mode.

ALICE

I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I wasn't
thinking!

He vice grips her arm. She screams in pain.

ABUSIVE BOYFRIEND

We're going to go talk this out.
Like mature adults! Something you
clearly aren't!

Alice doesn't resist as he drags her towards the door. It's safer not to.

MELANIE

Let her go!

Melanie runs at him and he easily swats her away like a fly. She's back on the floor, near the kitchen, busted lip dripping blood.

ALICE

Melanie! Don't touch her!

At the sight of her friend's injury, she pounds on the man's arm and chest, drags her feet, does anything she can to resist. But this doesn't stop him. He simply slaps her in the face and she instantly stops.

As he drags Alice to the door, Melanie--without thinking--digs the largest kitchen knife from a drawer.

Wielding it with fury, she lunges at Alice's ex-boyfriend.

MELANIE

I said let her go!

And the knife plunges into the back of his neck. He instantly freezes, goes limp, releasing Alice and crumpling to the floor like a solo cup pyramid. Alice shrieks, crawling away from the Abusive Boyfriend as fast as she can.

Blood spurts and pools from his neck. He convulses helplessly as his damaged brain stem cries out for help. The knife sticks out from his flesh, firmly lodged deep in his nervous system.

He's done for. It's only a matter of time. Seconds, maybe a couple minutes. Alice and Melanie watch in silence. Alice clings to Melanie, like a scared child. Melanie holds her, a mix of terror and cathartic fury on her face.

The convulsing turns to twitching. Then the occasional spasm. And then, finally, nothing. Motionless silence. The two women stand there holding each other.

Melanie jostles the corpse with her foot. Alice is shocked she would do something so callous.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Just making sure.

Melanie stares into Alice's eyes. Determined.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Do you want to go to prison?

Alice fearfully shakes her head.

MONTAGE: CLEAN-UP

- 1) Melanie and Alice drag the body into the bathtub.
- 2) They mop up the blood.
- 3) On their knees, they laboriously scrub as much blood out of the wood as they can. Melanie wipes her brow.
- 4) Melanie returns home with saws.
- 5) They chop up the body in the bathtub. Blood runs down the drain.
- 6) They cover the blood-stained floor with a carpet.
- 7) They shove the man's bits and pieces into multiple doubled-up garbage bags.
- 8) Each lugging heavy bags in both hands, the women split up, throwing the bags into separate dumpsters and garbage cans.

END MONTAGE

INT. DINER - DAY

Melanie and Alice sit in a booth of an old-school diner, next to the window. Alice stares out the window. It's a bright and sunny day. She frowns.

A SERVER sets a plate of burgers and fries down on the table. Melanie licks her lips.

MELANIE

Oh, thank god. I'm starving. You want some fries?

Without skipping a beat, Melanie dives in. She chows with gusto. Alice takes a fry off her plate, wipes up a glob of ketchup with it.

An image of a dirty rag wiping blood off the wooden floor of their apartment flashes before her eyes. She drops the fry. Melanie doesn't notice.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Here, take some of my burger.

Using her knife, Melanie cuts her burger in half. Alice watches. An image of her boyfriend's dismemberment flashes across her vision.

ALICE
I'm not hungry.

MELANIE
I dunno how you're not. That guy
was heavy!

Alice looks up at Melanie with concern. And a little
revulsion.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Melanie and Alice lumber into the newly carpeted apartment.
Melanie makes a beeline for her bed, sprawling out on it like
a starfish.

MELANIE
I need a drink.

Alice stares at the now-carpeted floor.

ALICE
Mel... we killed someone.

Melanie sits up.

MELANIE
He deserved it.

ALICE
How could you say that?

MELANIE
He was abusing you, he broke into
our house, he attacked us both.
Self-defense.

ALICE
Self-defense.

MELANIE
He did it to himself.

ALICE
Even if you're right it's still
like... killing someone.

MELANIE
It was him or us! Who knows what he
would have done to you if I let him
take you!

Alice sits down next to Melanie.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I'm just glad you're okay.

ALICE
I'm glad you're okay too. It was close.

MELANIE
Too close.

Exhausted and aching, Melanie gets up and grabs a beer from the fridge. Popping it, she takes a big, tired glug from the can. Sighs and leans against the wall.

Alice studies her. Rubs her temples.

ALICE
Okay. Pass me one.

Melanie tosses her another beer and Alice sips on it, examining the new rug.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I need to get out of here. Let's go somewhere.

MELANIE
Where?

ALICE
Let's go dancing.

MELANIE
And I'm the insensitive one.

ALICE
I can't think about this anymore.
And you shouldn't either.

Melanie chugs her beer.

MELANIE
Not at a straight club.

ALICE
Are you kidding?

INT. UNDERGROUND NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Alice guides Melanie through the crowded club, bathed in red light, both of them holding beers.

A trans DJ blasts electronic music for a crowd of queer dancers flopping around to the music. Many of them are trans, and many of them are on drugs.

They find a clear spot on the dance floor and Alice starts moving, drinking from a cocktail and passing it to Melanie. Slowly at first, but she quickly finds a groove. Melanie struggles to warm up.

ALICE

Come on girl! Let loose!

Melanie shuffles awkwardly at first. Looks around, afraid people are staring. But nobody is. She takes the drink, kills it, and starts moving.

The two women dance to the music. The track builds and builds. And as the beat drops, Alice gives herself to the music. Melanie isn't quite there yet.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Come on!

Alice grabs Melanie's hand, guiding her to jump higher, move harder. Melanie releases herself.

After a few moments, Alice leans into Melanie's ear.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Do you wanna do molly?!

MELANIE

What?!

ALICE

Do you wanna do molly?! I have some!

MELANIE

Is it fun?!

ALICE

Come on!

INT. UNDERGROUND NIGHTCLUB - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alice leads Melanie away from the dance floor and into the bathroom, taking her into a stall and shutting the door. Stalls on either side are filled with dolls making out, doing coke, etc.

In this cramped space, they're almost touching. Alice digs through her purse, fishes out two little round pills.

Alice

Take this.

Melanie takes a pill. Examines it. Alice swallows without reservation and Melanie follows suit.

Alice (CONT'D)

Come on.

She guides Melanie out of the bathroom and back to the dance floor. She immediately dives back into the tsunami of sound, losing herself in her sweaty movements. Melanie tries to match her vibe.

Melanie

How long does it take?!

But Alice doesn't respond.

They dance the night away. And the drug gradually begins to take effect. The room spins, their dancing blurs. Melanie swirls in a world of electric color. All she can focus on is Alice's face. Her ecstatic smile as the molly no doubt takes effect.

As they dance, she can't help but stare back at her friend. She's gorgeous. Ethereal. Dances so effortlessly. She's beautiful. And Alice is staring back.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND NIGHTCLUB - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alice shoves Melanie against the wall of a bathroom stall. They're aggressively eating each others' faces, gripping each others' bodies, like hungry animals. Everything's a blur. Their moans echo and circle around them, cutting through the pulsing music.

CUT TO:

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They're suddenly in Melanie's bed, sandwiched together in the dark. Ferociously ripping each others' clothes off. Light from the streetlamps glistens off their sweaty bodies as they rub against each other.

Alice kisses Melanie's neck, her shoulder, her collarbone. And she bites. Melanie shivers, whimpering. But it's a pleased whimper.

Alice lets out a devious chuckle and bites her more. Gentle nibbles at first, on her neck, her chest, her nipples. And the bites become harder. Teethmarks adorn Melanie's flesh as she writhers with pleasure. And Alice bites like it's her first meal of the day.

She bites Melanie so hard it breaks the flesh. Little droplets of blood pool and slide down her pale skin. And she releases an orgasmic moan.

SMASH CUT

Melanie's on top of Alice now, kissing every inch, descending downward until she's between her legs.

Alice shakes and moans with every flick of the tongue. She grips the sheets and contorts with pleasure. Melanie squeezes her breasts, plays with her nipples. Nibbles on her inner thighs.

Alice breathes, tosses, turns, moans harder. Louder. Faster. Until release.

SMASH CUT

The two women are upright, holding each other, passionately kissing. Alice softly lays Melanie down on the bed. Gently slides a finger into Melanie's mouth. Then another. Melanie wraps her lips around them, sucking on them.

Alice slowly slides them out and, kissing Melanie's thighs, rubs the wet hand against her crotch. Melanie freezes, tenses up, grabs Alice's hand.

MELANIE

I don't like to be touched there.

ALICE

Okay. I'm sorry.

Alice gives Melanie's hands apology kisses, and then slides one of the wet fingers inside her. Melanie gasps, eyes go wide. As Alice fingers her, she grips the sheets for dear life. And as Alice inserts another finger, Melanie lets out a loud moan.

Alice covers her mouth with her free hand, grinning, relishing the pleasure she's providing. Melanie can do nothing but whimper through Alice's soft hand and experience the waves of overwhelming sensation.

Melanie sucks on Alice's fingers. Brushing her lips against her fingertips.

Nibbling the soft flesh between her thumb and index finger while staring back at her friend with big doe eyes. Alice is staring back mischievously.

As the feelings grow more intense, Melanie moves like the ocean tide. Gyrating up and down, in and out, teeth gently locked around Alice's hand. She's about to cum.

As the wave approaches, she screams into Alice's flesh, uncontrollably biting down as she climaxes. A little spurt of blood shoots out from Alice's hand and they both scream loudly. One from pain, the other from intense pleasure.

LATER - DAY

Melanie and Alice lay in bed, Alice snuggling her as morning sunlight beams through the window. Alice's punctured hand rests across Melanie's bare chest, a smear of blood across her breasts.

Alice slowly shifts, likely waking up.

MELANIE

Alice.

Nothing.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Alice!

Alice groans. But her eyes stay closed.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Why did we do this?

ALICE

It's fun.

MELANIE

We're friends.

ALICE

Best.

MELANIE

You don't think it's weird?

ALICE

Why would it be?

MELANIE

I dunno, should we be that close with each other?

ALICE

Why not?

Melanie shifts over and checks her phone. Her eyes bulge.

MELANIE

Fuck, I'm late for work!

She jumps out of bed.

INT. RETAIL STORE - MEN'S SECTION - DAY

Melanie rushes through the nearly-abandoned store, weaving through the elderly obstacles in her path, making her way for the register to clock in.

She winces as she sees Brian at the register, cutting tags off merchandise with scissors. He glares at her.

BRIAN

You're late.

MELANIE

Sorry.

BRIAN

You know what's gonna happen next time. This is your last chance. Get your act together.

Melanie clocks in, grinding her teeth.

MELANIE

Sir, yes, sir.

BRIAN

Drop the attitude. I'll be keeping a closer eye on your clock times.

Just then, Piece of Shit returns! And with him is yet another, different, Barely Legal Girl. As he saunters towards Melanie, girl in tow, Brian scrambles to greet them. Together they walk towards Melanie's register.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Hello! Hello! How are you on this fine day? Find everything okay with your shirt and tie?

PIECE OF SHIT

Actually no. I'm returning.

He holds up a shredded dress shirt. Damaged in some sort of scuffle, surely. Who wouldn't punch this guy?

BRIAN

Oh dear! That's no good.

PIECE OF SHIT

You should see the other guy.

Brian disingenuously belly-laughs. Piece of Shit grins smugly.

BRIAN

I'm deeply sorry that our fabric failed you in such a difficult moment. We completely understand your frustrations and would be happy to assist. Melanie!

He snaps at Melanie, calling her over.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You remember our fine guest here, uh...

PIECE OF SHIT

Stanley. Dave, right?

BRIAN

Close enough! Anyway, you remember our fine guest Stanley. Help him with his return.

MELANIE

We don't accept returns on damage--

BRIAN

Nonsense! Of course we do!

MELANIE

But--

BRIAN

Mel!

Brian gives Melanie a death stare and turns back to Piece of Shit.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I apologize again about our employee's behavior. You know how these people can be. A little out of touch with reality.

PIECE OF SHIT

I understand completely. You have
to be a little loopy to go outside
looking like that.

Melanie hears all of this. She grips the scissors under the counter. Jumps over the counter, marches towards the Piece of Shit and...

SHHK! She drives the scissors directly into his belly. The man exhales in shock as his shirt slowly turns a deep red. She twists the blades and rips upward, cutting open his abdomen like it's a cardboard box. The Barely Legal Girl shrieks and Brian grabs Melanie's arms, trying to pull her away.

She blinks. The Piece of Shit approaches wearing a shit-eating grin, unharmed. She sighs as he plops the torn shirt on the counter. Through gritted teeth Melanie does her job.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)

Put it back on the card.

MELANIE

I can give you half refund in cash,
or a full refund in store credit.

PIECE OF SHIT

This guy's never heard of the
customer's always right?

MELANIE

It's the system. Sir. Nothing we
can do.

BRIAN

Give him a full refund in case.
I'll make a note.

PIECE OF SHIT

Now this is a guy I can trust!

Melanie glares at Brian as she pounds buttons on the register.

BRIAN

Mel. Aren't you forgetting
something?

Melanie pauses. Rolls her eyes.

MELANIE
If you sign up for our rewards card
I can give you 25% more in-store
credit.

BRIAN
Fifty!

PIECE OF SHIT
A hundred.

Brian's eyebrow twitches.

BRIAN
For you? Of course.

Piece of Shit jostles Brian's shoulder.

PIECE OF SHIT
That's my boy!

Melanie grinds her teeth.

MELANIE
Name?

PIECE OF SHIT
Stanley Bartholomew Cifaretto.

MELANIE
Date of birth?

PIECE OF SHIT
Eleven, twenty-three, seventy.

MELANIE
Address?

Melanie looks up. Makes eye contact with the man.

PIECE OF SHIT
115 West 86th. 7F. Central Park
West!

He rubs the girl's waist with his heavily-ringed and bruised
hand.

Melanie types the address into the machine and stares at it
closely.

MELANIE
115 West 86th Street. Apartment 7F.

She'll remember.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Alice is laying in bed, feet up, drawing a picture of her bitten hand when there's a loud BANG! BANG! On the door. She rises as the banging continues.

ALICE
Hold your horses!

She looks through the peephole. A tightly-dressed, female Grizzled DETECTIVE COLLINS (40s, white) in a suit and a standard COP in uniform stand on the other side. Alice gulps.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
NYPD! Open up!

Cautiously, Alice opens up.

ALICE
Hello, officers? How can I help you?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Are you Alex Friedman?

ALICE
No.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
This is his apartment, though. Who are you?

ALICE
I live here, with another woman. No men here. What's this about?

The two cops look at each other.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
The tranny's got a boyfriend. Well your co-habitator, whatever gender you wanna call him, is connected to a very serious crime. Would you know anything about this?

ALICE
No. I don't know this person.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Do you know where he is so we can talk to him?

ALICE
I don't know this person. Officer.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Detective. Two nights ago a man was murdered in his apartment. A man with a bright future. An entrepreneur. We have chat logs between the victim and a trans-identified-male matching the description of someone he was seen with at a bar in midtown that very night. We traced the phone and it led us right back here.

Alice doesn't flinch.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)

You don't seem surprised.

ALICE

I have no idea who or what you're talking about. We're just a couple of regular old biogirls here. Maybe this person moved?

Alice crosses her arms and Detective Collins gets close to her.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Listen, you may be able to convince some blue-haired bleeding heart that you're a real woman but you better drop the act now. We know who you are. Jeremiah Watson. We know who your roommate is. We know he killed this man. And your denial will never change that.

ALICE

Then why haven't you arrested her?

Collins pulls away. She's been caught.

ALICE (CONT'D)

You don't know shit.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

I know this. A real woman would do the right thing. You are a real woman aren't you?

ALICE

More than you'll ever be.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
I'd drop the attitude. Someone like
you doesn't want to get involved in
this.

ALICE
Is that a threat?

Collins raises her hands.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
A simple statement of fact. The
boys at Brooklyn Detention Complex
would have a field day with you/

Collins pulls a card from her pocket and hands it to Alice.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)
If you come to your senses.

Alice doesn't accept.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)
Shame. I'm sure I'll be seeing you
again.

Collins and uniformed Officer waltz off down the hall.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)
Oh, by the way, it's not too late
to choose a different path. You're
a handsome man.

Alice retreats into the apartment and slams the door shut.

Her brave veneer vanishes and she exhales with relief and
horror. She slides down to the floor.

LATER

Melanie sloshes through the door like a bag full of water.
Alice is curled up on the couch, wrapped in piles of
blankets, motionless.

MELANIE
Every day I get sicker of cis
people. How are you?

Alice doesn't respond at first.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Alice?

ALICE
Cops came by today.

Melanie drops her bag on the carpet in shock.

MELANIE
What?

Her mind goes into overdrive.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
We cleaned all the blood, got rid
of the body, what do they have?

ALICE
It wasn't about Bret.

The color drains from Melanie's face.

MELANIE
Did you tell them anything?

ALICE
What do I look like?

MELANIE
Thank god.

But Alice isn't relieved.

ALICE
Did you kill someone? Someone else?

Melanie stills for a moment.

MELANIE
There's something I need to tell
you.

Melanie takes a big gulp of air, sits down on the floor.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
When I came home yesterday, in that
random guy's clothes. I had to toss
my own clothes. Because they were
covered in blood. His blood.

Alice says nothing. Vibrates with shock and disappointment.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
I'm not some serial killer. I had
no choice. He was going to...

Melanie's voice trails off. Alice loosens up and looks at her.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

I didn't want to. But sometimes it's not up to you. And I did what I had to do. It was him or me. And I chose me. I chose us. And I'd do it again. Cis people hurt us all the time. We have the right to protect ourselves. They deserve it. They deserve the fear we feel.

Alice doesn't know what to say. Cognitive dissonance written on her face; not quite able to agree, but not able to disagree either.

ALICE

We're done with this. I'm not hiding another body.

MELANIE

Okay. Even if they deserve it.

ALICE

I'm serious. I know how you're feeling. But if you got hurt... if I got hurt! This isn't some "we have to be better than them" shit. You could die. Or worse.

MELANIE

I said okay.

ALICE

We keep ourselves safe by taking care of each other. Not going after our enemies.

MELANIE

Stonewall was a love-in.

ALICE

Actually! They didn't go after anyone. The bad guys attacked them. They just protected themselves. Protected each other. Like you did for yourself. And for me. But the moment you step over that line, you're just bringing more shit down on the people you want to help.

Melanie tongues her cheek.

MELANIE

Okay.

ALICE

Now come on. I just got scared half to death. Lesson one of choosing love: make me some tea and put me to bed. Apple cinnamon.

MELANIE

Now that I'm happy to do.

Melanie stands and walks to the kitchen. Alice curls up in her blanket on the couch.

Melanie pours water in a teapot, sets it to boil on the stove. Grabs a mug from a cupboard.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Honey?

ALICE

What?

MELANIE

No, do you want honey?

ALICE

Oh. Yes please.

Pulls open the silverware drawer and reaches for a spoon. Next to the silverware is the same kitchen knife used to kill Alice's Abusive Boyfriend.

The teapot whines as the water boils. And she grabs the spoon. The drawer closes on the blade.

She bobs the teabag up and down in the hot water. The water clouds up with a deep red color.

Melanie returns to the living room holding the piping hot cup of tea.

MELANIE

Tea time.

Alice stands, still wrapped in her comforter, and leads Melanie to her bedroom.

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Alice lays down on her bed. Melanie places the tea on her bedside table and pulls the sheets and blankets up to her roommate's chin.

MELANIE

Comfy?

ALICE

Yeah.

Alice lays snug as a bug in her bed. Hot cup of tea steaming beside her.

MELANIE

Okay. Get some sleep. I'm sorry you have to deal with all this.

Melanie kisses Alice on the forehead and walks to the doorway.

ALICE

Can you stay here tonight? I don't wanna be alone.

Melanie looks at Alice from the cusp of the room.

MELANIE

Okay.

Melanie takes off her pants and changes into one of Alice's baggy t-shirts. She climbs into bed beside Alice. Close to her. Shoulders touching. Alice turns to her side and puts her arm around Melanie. Melanie stares up at the ceiling.

ALICE

This okay?

MELANIE

Yeah.

Alice gently kisses Melanie on the cheek. Melanie doesn't react. She kisses again.

In between her kisses, images flash across the screen. The knife plunging into the Abusive Boyfriend's neck. Melanie caving in Straight's head with the statue. Her fantasy murder of Piece of Shit. The statue of Hermaphroditus staring at her.

And all along, Alice's kisses get more intense. Melanie turns over, faces Alice. Kisses her back. They lock lips.

They make out. Holding each other. Their bodies ebb and flow like waves.

A quick, sudden burst of sex and moans. Backs arching, fingers in mouths, sweat glistening. But in between the ecstasy is the disgusting mug of the Piece of Shit. The way he grips women's waists. Stubby, fat, hairy fingers. Cruel eyes. Licking his lips.

SMASH CUT

A naked Melanie lies awake next to Alice, who's zonked out beside her. The man's voice haunts Melanie. His filthy chuckles.

She turns over in bed, facing Alice. The words rattle around in her mind while Alice's peaceful face snores. A little bit of drool. Moonlight shines on Melanie's face through the window. The Piece of Shit's "This is a chick!" rattles in her brain as she looks at the other woman.

She twists around, turning away from Alice. The moonlight is on her back. Memories flash.

MONTAGE - Dwelling

- 1) Piece of Shit says "This is a chick!"
- 2) He slaps Melanie's shoulder.
- 3) Brian scowls at her. Saying "I'm keeping an eye on you."
- 4) The momentary fantasy of slicing his abdomen open with the scissors.

END MONTAGE

Melanie sits up suddenly.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
(whispering to Alice)
I'm sorry.

Quietly, Melanie stands up, slides into some dark, unassuming clothes, puts on a baseball cap and sneaks out the front door.

Alice's eyes flick open.

INT. SUBWAY - NIGHT

The empty train barrels through the tunnel. Melanie, alone in the flickering car, watches the blurs of light speed past the windows.

EXT. PIECE OF SHIT'S BUILDING - NIGHT

It's the middle of the night in this fancy rich neighborhood, and there's not a soul on the street. Except for Melanie. She approaches her target's abode from across the street, holding a plastic takeout bag.

MELANIE

7F. 7F.

She looks both ways to make sure the coast is clear. It is. She briskly crosses the street into the building.

But as she enters, a window on the seventh floor lights up...

INT. PIECE OF SHIT'S BUILDING - NIGHT

She strides into the building's lobby entrance. The DOORMAN (50s) looks up at her from his desk. She holds up the bag.

MELANIE

Delivery.

DOORMAN

Go on in.

The man buzzes the door and Melanie walks through. She enters the staircase.

INT. PIECE OF SHIT'S BUILDING - 7TH FLOOR

Cautiously exiting the stairs, Melanie tip-toes down the hall, observing the apartment numbers. Down the millionaire hallway, growing louder with each step, a couple's muffled argument blares through the door of apartment 7F.

Melanie flinches and puts her ear to the door. A middle aged woman, TROPHY WIFE (40s), belts angrily with a thick Long Island accent.

TROPHY WIFE

What's your excuse now Bart, huh?
This is the fourth maxed card this
month! Again!

PIECE OF SHIT
I warned you not to call me that!

TROPHY WIFE
Bart! Bart! Bart! I don't give a
shit! I warned you to stop running
around spending every dime on those
teeny-bopper broads!

The door to 7F slams open, and Piece of Shit emerges
furiously swinging a garbage bag.

Melanie ducks around the corner as the man nears, heading for
the trash chute. He swings open the trash door and
aggressively tosses the bag down the chute. Melanie peeks her
head out. It's him.

PIECE OF SHIT
(grumbling)
Stupid cunt. Like two thirds of my
income isn't spent on your designer
Gucci Vuitton bullshit.

He angrily stomps back to the apartment. Melanie sneaks
behind him, careful not to make a sound. He marches into the
apartment and the argument continues.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)
Like two thirds of my income isn't
spent on your designer Gucci
Vuitton bullshit!

Just as the door's about to click shut, Melanie ever so
gently catches it with her hand, quietly slipping inside and
letting it softly click behind her.

She's in. The arguing is coming from deep within the bedroom,
lit with a warm yellow glow. She stands in the dark foyer.

TROPHY WIFE
What income?! You haven't brought
home a dollar in a year!

PIECE OF SHIT
I've been having a bad run!

TROPHY WIFE
Then get a real job and you can
afford to buy me something nice!

PIECE OF SHIT
98% of gamblers quit just before
they hit it big! Besides, I didn't
realize I had to pay for your time!

TROPHY WIFE

What, you think I married you for
your sparkling personality?!
There's not a woman in the world
you haven't had to bribe for
attention!

PIECE OF SHIT

And I married you for yours! Yeah,
right. We both know why you're
here!

TROPHY WIFE

Great, so we're both on the same
page. So you understand then, you
lose the condo, you lose me!

Placing the decoy delivery bag on the floor, Melanie gently
opens the coat closet. Quietly digs around for something.

PIECE OF SHIT

I'm not going to!

A furious Piece of Shit emerges from the bedroom, speeding
into the kitchen. But he doesn't notice Melanie, who's
engulfed in darkness.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)

I'll pay the fucking building fees!
But I don't see you chipping in!
What do you got to offer, huh?! You
don't even do the dishes anymore!

He pulls half a leftover ham sandwich out of the fridge.
Oscar Mayer on white bread. He really is struggling. Takes a
bite.

Melanie discovers none other than the tie she unwillingly
sold him. She pulls it out. Grips it tightly. Pockets it and
keeps searching.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)

Maybe I don't buy you things
anymore because you don't do
anything around here!

The Trophy Wife barges out of the bedroom. Wrinkled from too
many suntans, platinum blonde, dressed in pink lace, inflated
bolt-ons. A total bimbo.

And Melanie discovers something else in the foyer closet: a
hefty golf club. She digs it out from the deepest recesses of
the closet. It's covered in dust. She holds it in her hands,
with a satisfied look.

TROPHY WIFE

Fuck you Stanley! You want me to do the dishes?! Fine! I'll do the dishes!

The woman grabs dirty dishes from the sink and hucks them one by one at her husband. He hops around to avoid the porcelain shattering around his feet.

PIECE OF SHIT

What the fuck! What the fuck!
Darlene! That one was a gift! My mother got it for my birthday!

TROPHY WIFE

And you bought me this one on our honeymoon!

She throws a beautiful and vibrant ornamented centerpiece serving plate at him. He smacks it away and it shatters on the hardwood floor.

PIECE OF SHIT

You stupid cunt!

He marches towards her.

PIECE OF SHIT (CONT'D)

Uh oh! We're all out of dishes!
Where am I gonna put my sandwich now? Guess I'll just have to do this!

He picks up the half-eaten ham sandwich and smears it across the Trophy Wife's face. She's aghast.

TROPHY WIFE

That's it! That's it!

The Trophy Wife storms back into the bedroom. Piece of Shit rolls his eyes as the sandwich-adorned woman whips out a ginormous suitcase.

TROPHY WIFE (CONT'D)

I'm leaving! I've had enough of your bullshit!

PIECE OF SHIT

Yeah, same as last week. You're not going anywhere.

TROPHY WIFE

I am! I'm going to Barbara's!

Piece of Shit, alone in the kitchen, leans on the counter, sighing. This is Melanie's chance.

As the Trophy Wife berates her husband, Melanie quietly sneaks up behind him, golf club ready to swing.

TROPHY WIFE (CONT'D)
I'm sick of your humiliation!
You're a small, pathetic man,
Stanley Bartholomew! Pathetic! And
you're gonna die alone!

As the Trophy Wife says those final words, Melanie swings the golf club with full force.

CRACK!

The dense steel club slams against his skull, cracking the bone. He tumbles to the floor. Dazed.

TROPHY WIFE (CONT'D)
You're nothing! Wannabe gambler.
You could never make it with the
pros! You're just an addict! A
broke addict with no friends!

Piece of Shit rolls over, expecting to see his wife. But instead his blurred, concussed eyes see Melanie standing over him, and they nearly bulge out of his head.

PIECE OF SHIT
You!

He dizzily attempts to sit upright, but struggles to balance himself, even on his behind.

TROPHY WIFE
Me?! I'm not your friend! I have
friends! I have people who love me!
Because I'm not some thick-skulled
evil cretin!

Melanie, stone-faced, raises the golf club once again and unflinchingly brings it down on the man's head once more. The impact sends his head slamming into the cabinet. It leaves behind a splotch of blood.

He's down on the floor again, but somehow still conscious. Melanie looks surprised. Thick skull.

TROPHY WIFE (CONT'D)
Oh, great! You're hitting shit
again! Throw your little tantrum
for all I care!

Melanie, stone-faced, pulls the tie from her pocket and wraps it tightly around her fists. Holding it taut, she tightens it around Piece of Shit's neck. He tries to object but all he can muster is a drooling grunt.

She twists and pulls on the tie until it won't tighten any further. His face turns from pink to red. From red to purple. Melanie's knuckles are white and the tie digs into her skin. Blood pours from her lip as her teeth clamp down.

Piece of Shit writhes, trying to get free. Kicking his legs, clawing at his neck, he tries to choke out a call for help.

PIECE OF SHIT

Darlene!

TROPHY WIFE

Whatever you wanna say, you can
come in here and say it to my face!

The man's eyes dart around in a helpless panic as he tries to push the words through his mouth. But his energy wanes.

TROPHY WIFE (CONT'D)

You asshole! You can't even look
your own wife in the eye as she's
leaving you! You really are a
scumbag! I hate you!

As the oxygen fades from his lungs and the light drains from his eyes, all he can see before him are the scraps of the ham sandwich, strewn about the floor.

And he goes limp. Dead. Melanie releases the tie and a final breath escapes his lungs. Melanie quickly stands up. She stuffs the tie in her pocket and quietly sneaks out the door, grabbing the delivery bag on the way.

The moment she leaves, the Trophy Wife barges back out of the bedroom.

TROPHY WIFE (CONT'D)

You want me to leave! Fine! I'll
leave! You have no shame at all,
you know that?! No dignity!

INT. PIECE OF SHIT'S BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

As Melanie strides down the hall, the Trophy Wife's horrified shriek echoes through the door.

Melanie cruelly smiles.

INT. PIECE OF SHIT'S BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Melanie passes the doorman on her way out. She holds up the bag without slowing down.

MELANIE

Wrong address. Goodnight!

The Doorman shakes his head as she exits.

DOORMAN

Moron.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Melanie is startled by Alice's voice as she enters. She's curled up on the couch.

ALICE

Where've you been?

MELANIE

Did I wake you?

ALICE

I've been up.

MELANIE

Hungry. Got some food. Want some?
Chop cheese.

ALICE

Must've been a long line. You left
hours ago.

MELANIE

I went on a walk too. To clear my
mind.

ALICE

Right.

MELANIE

You want some?

ALICE

I'm good.

MELANIE

What's wrong?

ALICE

I think you know.

MELANIE

Not really.

ALICE

Then why did you apologize when you left? Why were you gone for so long? Why are you dressed like that?

MELANIE

Like I said--

ALICE

What did I tell you?! You can't kill more people! No more killing!

MELANIE

I didn't even--

ALICE

Why are you lying?! Are you trying to protect me? Protect me from what, the consequences of your actions? So when that fucking detective comes back I can say I don't know anything and mean it?! I don't want to see that detective at all! You wanna know the best way to protect me?! Stop putting me in the crosshairs! And yourself! And all of us!

MELANIE

I'm doing us a favor.

Alice holds her head in her hands.

ALICE

Don't act like I can't understand how you're feeling. Everything you feel I've felt since I was a kid. You think I never wanted to kill the fucking racist transphobes I came across?! You think I still don't? Or what else is it?! You think I'm a coward?! Is that it?!

MELANIE

No.

ALICE

You wanna know why I don't go after them?! Not because I never get the urge.

(MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)

Not because they don't deserve it.
You know I'll be the first bitch to
say when someone deserves it! It's
because if I did do it, my mom
would get fucked up. My brother
would get fucked up. My friends
would get fucked up. YOU would get
fucked up! It's not about
principle, Melanie, it's survival!
Do you understand what I'm saying?!

Alice is in angry, fearful tears. Melanie slumps on the couch, guiltily.

ALICE (CONT'D)

You have to promise. No more
killing!

MELANIE

No more killing.

Alice sighs. Melanie rests her head on Alice's shoulder.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Are you gonna turn me in?

ALICE

No. Did you even listen to what I
just said?

MELANIE

Do you wanna know what happ--?

ALICE

No, Melanie, I don't.

Melanie stares out the window at the dark street below.

INT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Melanie washes her face in the sink as hot water steams up the bathroom mirror. She looks up at herself, barefaced. A blurry, fogged up face stares back at her. As the torrent of bathtub rain pours behind her, she stares at the foggy image.

She wipes the mirror with her hand and her face, tired and dark, shines through only for a moment before the mirror fogs up again.

She steps in the shower. It's an everything shower.

INT. PIECE OF SHIT'S BUILDING - DAY

Detective Collins stands over the Piece of Shit's dead body. A crew of cops take photos, dig through trash, and place numbers next to any possible piece of evidence.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

(muttering)

Who did this to you?

Her partner, an older man, DETECTIVE THOMAS (50s) walks by carrying a bag of trash. He digs through it next to Collins.

DETECTIVE THOMAS

It's the wife. Neighbors said they fought all the time. Including the night this happened. Open and shut.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

No way Thomas. Where's the murder weapon?

DETECTIVE THOMAS

She threw it out?

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Do you see anything in that trash? Besides, she was the one that called us. How many people confess to their own murder? She strike you as a Zodiac?

DETECTIVE THOMAS

So who did it then?

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Similarities to another murder, just a few days ago a couple miles from here. Blunt force trauma. General... sloppiness. *Large...* masculine... footprints. And I know who did that one.

DETECTIVE THOMAS

If you know who did it why not go get 'em?

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Them?

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Gender neutral. My daughter's been
teaching me how to be more
respectful to people whose genders
we don't know. She's learning it in
school.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
It's a him. A him.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Alright, alright. Who is this guy?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Trans Identified Male. Alex
Friedman. Goes by Melanie. Killed a
man on a date in midtown.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Why not go bust down her door then?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
His. All we got are witness
sightings a couple hours before.
Not enough to lock him up for good.
But I know this is connected. I
feel it in my gut. I can smell the
testosterone from here.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Jeez, Collins, you got something
against this guy?

She stares viciously at Thomas. But another officer, LAPTOP
INVESTIGATOR, interrupts.

LAPTOP INVESTIGATOR
Hey, Collins, check this out!

The Investigator brings a laptop over to Collins and plops it
down on the kitchen island.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
What's this?

LAPTOP INVESTIGATOR
This guy loved to write yelp
reviews. I mean loved. Has to be
every place he's visited in the
last ten years on here. Most of
them are negative. But look at this
one.

The Investigator scrolls to the most recent review. It's for a department store titled STACY'S.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

"Great products as always but I had a run in with a horrible worker. One of those transgenders. Called himself Melanie. I just simply called him Sir, respectful. And he flipped out! It's always these types. Thankfully the manager, guy named Ben, sorted it all out. But watch out for entitled Melanie!"

DETECTIVE THOMAS

You think it's the same one?

DETECTIVE COLLINS

How many trannies named Melanie do you think there are? Of course it's the same guy!

DETECTIVE THOMAS

Well there you have it, let's go get her!

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Him! Dipshit! Him! And not yet. I wanna catch him in the act. Skip the questioning. People that kill twice are likely to do it again, eventually he'll screw up. And we'll have undeniable proof to lock him up for good. You can't prey on women behind bars.

LAPTOP INVESTIGATOR

Sheesh.

Detective Thomas awkwardly rubs his neck.

INT. RETAIL STORE - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Melanie exits a bathroom stall. She's wearing Piece of Shit's tie. As she washes her hands, she notices a little dull red spot on the tie. It's barely noticeable, but she touches it. Shrugs. Finishes washing her hands.

Another CIS WOMAN opens the door to the bathroom. As she enters, she spots Melanie and truly jumps in shock. Like a cartoon character. She yelps a little too.

Melanie turns her head, staring at the cis woman, who looks at her with concern.

MELANIE
You're in the wrong bathroom.

The cis woman scowls. Backs out of the bathroom.

INT. RETAIL STORE - SHOW FLOOR - DAY

Melanie exits the bathroom and makes her way back to the men's section. As she does, across the floor she spots the Cis Woman talking to Brian. The Woman spots her in return and points accusingly. Brian looks, a dirty frown forming on his face.

Brian nods at the Woman reassuringly, and stomps mach speed directly towards Melanie. But she is not phased.

BRIAN
I'm putting my foot down. From now
on you use the basement bathroom.

MELANIE
Why?

BRIAN
Too many guests have complained. It
makes our female guests
uncomfortable. We bit our tongues.
But now you threatened someone?

MELANIE
I didn't threaten anyone.

BRIAN
With the way you've been treating
our customers lately? I don't buy
that for a second. What have cis
people ever done to you?

MELANIE
Is that a serious question? After
all the bullshit I put up with at
this job?

BRIAN
We all put up with bullshit.

MELANIE
Do we.

BRIAN

Bottom line. You use the basement bathroom from now on. Think of it like a privilege. I'd kill for a couple extra minutes break.

MELANIE

No.

BRIAN

This isn't a request Mel.

Melanie takes an aggressive step towards Brian. He steps back.

MELANIE

That's not gonna happen.

BRIAN

Well then I'll have to tell you to clear out your locker.

Melanie takes another step forward. She's mere inches away from him. Taller than him. He's scrawny. Flabby. She breathes fire against his forehead as she backs him against the wall. Her furious eyes look down upon him.

But he meagerly stands his ground.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Mel. You're fired. Get out of here before I call the police.

Melanie backs away, raging. She rips the nametag off her shirt and chucks it at Brian. He yelps and cowers. Windbreaker-clad security guards swarm from all angles. She puts her arms up, signaling her cooperation.

MELANIE

Fuck you Brian.

Melanie storms off, shoving the security guards aside and knocking the head off a mannequin on her way out.

Once she's gone, Brian meekly crouches down and picks up Melanie's nametag.

BRIAN

This isn't even your real name!

EXT. RETAIL STORE - DAY

Melanie explodes from the building.

MELANIE

Fuck!

She looks back at her former place of employment and kicks a random piss bottle against the building. It explodes on impact and old rotten pies splatters against the wall of the store. She furiously flips off the building but it's indifferent to her frustration.

She can't do anything but leave. As she walks away, seething, she takes one last determined look at the building.

EXT. RETAIL STORE - NIGHT

It's late. Everyone else has already left when Brian exits the store and locks the door behind him. Feet aching from a long day on the job, he slowly makes his way down the block, heading for the subway.

But he's not alone. A familiar silhouette lurks in the shadows behind him.

From a safe distance, Melanie follows her former boss through the dark, mostly empty streets. Head down, baseball cap hiding her face from the streetlamps' orange glow.

Brian stops at a red light. Melanie leans against a wall.

The light turns green and Brian continues walking. She follows.

EXT. SUBWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Brian turns a corner and descends into the sickly pale glow of the subway station.

But instead of following, Melanie crosses the street and descends down the other set of stairs.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

When she arrives at the bottom, Brian has already gone through the turnstile and is walking down the platform. Melanie swipes her card and casually follows.

He stops at the middle of the platform and, roughly thirty feet behind, she promptly hides behind a pillar.

She peeks out, staring at her target. He's quietly, noncommittally singing along to "Firework" by Katy Perry.

The train rattles into the station, pulling to a loud and angry stop. The doors slide open, Brian enters. Melanie steps into the adjacent car, staying close to the gangway doors.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - NIGHT

Through the windows, she can see him sitting at the far end of the car, meekly bobbing his head to the music as the lights flicker.

Melanie's ominous figure, draped in shadow, stands through the glass.

A CREEPY OLD MAN (60s) waddles up to Melanie from behind.

 CREEPY OLD MAN
Hello honey pie.

She ignores him.

 CREEPY OLD MAN (CONT'D)
What a beautiful set of hair you
have.

 MELANIE
Fuck off.

 CREEPY OLD MAN
That's no way for a fine lady to
talk.

 MELANIE
Fuck. Off.

 CREEPY OLD MAN
I'm just complimenting your beauty.

With that, Melanie whips around and kicks him square in the nuts. He screeches, collapsing in pain. His head smacks into the pole, producing a taco bell CLANG! as he hits the ground.

The noise alerts Brian's sixth sense, and he turns his head in the direction of the shouting.

 MELANIE
Shit!

She quickly crouches down, hiding behind the traincar wall, as the man continues his yelps and groans.

 CREEPY OLD MAN
You bitches have no idea how
painful this is!

Brian doesn't see anything.

MELANIE
(harsh whisper)
Shut the fuck up or I'll do it
again!

The man, still yelping and groaning, slithers away like a slug.

CREEPY OLD MAN
Who raised you?!

In the other car, Brian returns to his music. Melanie peeks through the window to check on him. She's in the clear.

EXT. MELANIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Detective Collins and Detective Thomas sit in an unmarked car across the street from Melanie's building.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Jeez, this broad ever need to
sleep?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
He'll show up. And when he does, we
follow.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
What do you got against he--this
person anyway?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
He's a murderer.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
You don't got this kind of hate for
normal murderers.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
I don't think any murderers deserve
any respect. Especially not these
buffalo bill freaks. They're sick.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
That's what I mean. I've never seen
you like this! What gives?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Don't push it Thomas.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
I'm just curious.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Be curious about who this fuck is
gonna kill next and lay off.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Jesus Collins. Fine. I'm sorry.

Awkward silence. Collins sighs.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Alright. Fine. You wanna know?

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Well yeah.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Years ago I was married. Good
marriage. To a guy named George. It
was picture perfect. Met in
college. Fell in love. Married for
fifteen years. And then...
fucking... these trannies start
coming out of the woodwork.
Suddenly they're on TV. On the
news. In the magazines.
Unavoidable. And this shit gets
into Bradley's mind. And one day he
sits me down and he tells me "I
wanna be a woman." I think he's
joking. I laugh. He starts to cry.
I just tell him the obvious. You're
a man, you can't be a woman. Right?
Simple, like two plus two. But that
just makes it worse. He pretends it
was just a joke. He starts coming
home late. Being distant. One night
I follow him. He was sneaking out
to act like a woman with his
pervert friends! Can you believe
that?

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Wow.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
So I fucking divorce him. Ugly
divorce. And he runs off upstate
somewhere. Haven't seen him since.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Sorry Collins.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

And the worst part? These freaks do this to lots of women. There's a whole community of us. We're called trans widows.

DETECTIVE THOMAS

But she's still alive.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Would you stop calling him she? It's fucking insulting. Now can we drop it and focus on catching this prick?!

Detective Thomas twiddles his thumbs nervously.

EXT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Melanie watches from a safe distance as Brian enters his old tenement-style apartment building.

After a few moments, a light appears in the third story window.

Melanie approaches the building. Examines the fire escape. The ladder's high up, too high to reach from the sidewalk.

She tries to climb atop a hose connector, but the ladder is still too high for her to reach.

Looking around for an idea, she spots a tall floor lamp left out on the sidewalk. Thank god for stoop trash.

With the lamp, she's easily able to release the ladder from its hook and let it drop down. It slides down with a rusty shriek. She winces at the noise and peers up at the window to see if she's been made. It's all clear.

She climbs up the ladder, rattling with each step. At the top, she pulls the ladder up behind her and latches it back into place.

Climbing the two flights of rusty stairs, she peers through the lit window and into Brian's sparse living room. Just a couch, table and TV. The light's on but there's nobody in sight.

She wiggles the window. Unlocked. She slowly lifts it up and climbs inside the apartment.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She sneaks around the place. On the dining room table is a pile of past-due bills.

In the kitchen, she silently searches drawers for a weapon. She finds a large kitchen knife. Perfect.

She opens one of the bedroom doors. It's pitch black. A man--clearly not Brian--snores loudly. Melanie silently closes the door. Peeks into another bedroom.

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - BRIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Facing away from the door, on his edge of the bed, Brian sits motionless. Lit only by a bedside lamp, he's holding something in his hands. He puts it up to his head. It's a gun.

He inhales. Holds his breath. But doesn't pull the trigger. Drops his arm, exhaling.

BRIAN

Jesus Christ. Can't even do this right.

Melanie sneaks into the room, taking slow and careful steps. As she approaches, she raises the knife above her head, ready to plunge it into his flesh.

But as she draws closer, her shadow moves across Brian's wall. And he notices. Startled, he turns around, just as Melanie is about to bring down the knife.

He dives out of the way, shrieking, narrowly avoiding the knife as it plunges into the bed.

Brian hastily points the gun in her general direction and fires. He misses by a mile and she dives at him, knife raised. He scrambles across the floor, trying to crawl away, flailing his arms randomly to keep the knife away.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Stop!

She piles on top of him and he rolls over, laying on his back. He grabs her wrist, pushing against it with all his might. The knife is poised above his face, but he's just barely managing to keep it at bay.

Finally, he gets a good look at his attacker. His eyes go wide.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Why?

MELANIE

Everything.

BRIAN

Please don't. Help!

Tears are welling in his eyes. Horrified tears, like a child watching a scary movie. Melanie almost hesitates. Almost.

Brian raises the gun, pointing it at her. She dives out of the way just as he fires, and the bullet blasts through the ceiling.

Melanie stands up, but freezes. Her worst nightmare: in the doorway is a burly man, BRIAN'S ROOMMATE (30s). The three of them stand, Brian's gun aimed at Melanie.

BRIAN'S ROOMMATE

This is awkward.

Brian pulls the trigger. The bullet grazes Melanie's arm. She yelps, dropping the knife.

BRIAN

Get him!

The two men dogpile Melanie, grabbing her arms and legs, weighing her down so she can't escape. She struggles with all her might but she can't wriggle free.

Desperate, she deliberately falls backwards, and the men tumble down with her. The impact loosens their grip enough for her to free herself and, in a flash, she's up and running out the door.

As she exits, Brian whips out his phone and dials 911. His roommate sits on the bed, panting.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Hello! Hello! Someone just attacked me and my roommate with a knife! His name is Alexander Friedman! Goes by Melanie! I fired him today! He's getting away!

INT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRS - NIGHT

Melanie, panting and panicked, speeds down the antique building staircase.

In her fervor, she trips on the final flight of stairs and tumbles to the bottom. Groaning, she stumbles onto her feet and limp runs out of the building.

EXT. BRIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

As Melanie races down the street, Brian peers through the window, phone to his ear.

BRIAN
I live at 190 Palmetto! He's
running down the street now!
Towards Myrtle!

Melanie runs as fast as she can. Sirens blare in the far-off distance.

As she runs, she calls Alice.

ALICE
Mel, it's midnight.

MELANIE
Alice. We need to leave. Get the
car now.

ALICE
What? Why? Why are you panting?!

MELANIE
I'll explain later! Just get it!
Now!!

ALICE
Uh, where?

MELANIE
Myrtle-Wyckoff M stop! I'm running
there now!

ALICE
Should I pack a toothbrush?

MELANIE
Just do it!

She hangs up and keeps running.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE - NIGHT

Collins stares intensely at the building while Thomas' eyes wander.

POLICE RADIO

Attention all units, attention all units, possible attempted murder at 190 Palmetto Street. Suspect is tall transgender female, caucasian, considered armed and dangerous. Suspect headed towards Myrtle Avenue. Officer support needed.

DETECTIVE THOMAS

That's gotta be the one.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

That's our guy! Punch it!

Alice, in random baggy clothes, rushes out of the building and makes a beeline for her car.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)

There! Look! That's his roommate!

DETECTIVE THOMAS

She looks upset.

DETECTIVE COLLINS

Probably because his bestie just got caught in the act.

They watch as Alice dives into her car and speeds off.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)

Follow her! Him! Follow him!

Thomas punches the gas and with a loud tire screech they drive off in pursuit of Alice's pursuit of Melanie.

EXT. MYRTLE-WYCKOFF STATION - NIGHT

Melanie races towards the station entrance, underneath the elevated train, rattling by at full speed.

A police cruiser with sirens speeds by in the opposite direction, towards the scene of her crime. She ducks into an open-late deli as the vehicle passes by.

INT. BODEGA - NIGHT

BODEGA MAN

Welcome miss.

She ignores the man, suspiciously peering out the window.

BODEGA MAN (CONT'D)
Are you buying something?

MELANIE
Fuck off.

BODEGA MAN
Fuck off? You buy something or you
fuck off from my store.

Melanie reluctantly approaches the counter.

MELANIE
Cigarettes.

BODEGA MAN
What kind?

MELANIE
I don't give a fuck.

She gives the Bodega man some cash and, receiving the
cigarettes, peers out the window once more. Alice's blue
sedan pulls up to the subway entrance.

Melanie bolts out and jumps into the car.

From afar, Collins and Thomas watch through their unmarked
cruiser.

INT. ALICE'S CAR - NIGHT

Melanie slams the door.

ALICE
Are you okay?!

MELANIE
Drive!

ALICE
What's going on?!

MELANIE
Just go! Out of town! I'll explain!

ALICE
Where?!

MELANIE
Somewhere, just go!

Alice hits the gas and the pair speed off.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE - NIGHT

The two detectives watch this all unfold.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
There they go.

He reaches for the police radio. Collins aggressively grabs his wrist.

DETECTIVE THOMAS (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
They're mine. Follow them.

Thomas begins driving, carefully following Alice's car through the streets.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
We should alert the patrols.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
No. We follow them, quietly, until they stop somewhere. Then we take them down.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
But--

DETECTIVE COLLINS
They're mine! I'm not letting them off easy. So shut your trap and drive!

Thomas sighs in frustration. They drive in silence.

INT. ALICE'S CAR - NIGHT

Alice is speeding up the FDR. Melanie's leaning against the cracked window, smoking a cigarette. Her face is draped in shadow, smoke bellowing from her mouth like a dragon.

ALICE
You gonna tell me what happened?

MELANIE
You know how you said no more killing?

ALICE
What?!

The car swerves. Alice white-knuckles the wheel, regaining control.

ALICE (CONT'D)
What the fuck is wrong with you?!
You did it again?! What, we're
running from the cops?! I'm an
accomplice now! You made me an
accomplice! Nice fucking going!

She's smacking Melanie with one hand as she drives with the other. She hits Melanie's bullet wound.

MELANIE
Ow! Stop! I got shot there!

Alice stops hitting her.

ALICE
Fuck, Mel. You know what they'll
fucking do to me in prison! Think!
This doesn't just affect the people
you hate!

MELANIE
He didn't die. I got more hurt than
he did. Besides, he deserved it.

ALICE
Well I don't! What about me?! Huh?!

Alice pulls off the highway, pulls over on the side of the road.

The police vehicle follows, keeping a safe distance.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE - NIGHT

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Do we nab 'em?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Wait.

INT. ALICE'S CAR - NIGHT

Alice puts her head in her hands.

MELANIE
I'm sorry.

Alice doesn't react.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Are you gonna turn me in?

It takes a second, but Alice shakes her head.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Are you kicking me out?

Another moment of silence. Alice puts the car back into gear and gets back on the highway. The police cruiser stays in pursuit.

MELANIE (CONT'D)
Thank you.

ALICE
(muttering to self)
I'm fucked. I'm just in this now. I guess. Dead anyway. Might as well.

MELANIE
I'm sorry.

ALICE
Okay.

MELANIE
Where are we going?

ALICE
The only place I can think of.

They exit the city limits, and are officially in upstate New York.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE - NIGHT

Collins watches intently as Thomas drives, doing his best to avoid suspicion.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
They left our jurisdiction.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Keep going.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
It's in state trooper hands now.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
We will notify them when they stop.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Collins, it's my daughter's
birthday tomorrow.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
I don't give a shit. This is your
gift to her. Keeping women and
girls everywhere safe from these
buffalo bill freaks.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
That's not very nice.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Boo fucking hoo. We got a murderer
to catch.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
I got a present to wrap. And if you
just had a murderer to catch, you'd
let the troopers do their job. We
got a vehicle description, we got
proof she did it, we get to sleep
before sunrise. Everybody wins. But
this is more than that, isn't it?

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Are you my partner, Thomas?

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Of course. But you're getting too
involved in--

DETECTIVE COLLINS
So be my partner. Or you can get
out and walk home. Capiisce?

Thomas pulls off the highway, reaches for the police radio.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
I'm calling the troopers.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
You will do no such thing!

Thomas puts the radio up to his mouth.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Calling all state troopers, this i--

There's a sudden click of a cocked gun.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Don't say another word.

Thomas turns his head. Collins has her gun pointed straight at him. Locked and loaded.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)
Put the radio down.

Thomas looks at her like she's got two heads. She pushes the gun into his side.

DETECTIVE COLLINS (CONT'D)
Do it!

Thomas acquiesces, puts the radio back on the dashboard.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
This isn't funny Collins.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Get out.

DETECTIVE THOMAS
No! It's the middle of nowhere!

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Get the fuck out! You think I'm too involved in this? You have three seconds to get out or else this bullet's about to be too involved with your guts!

DETECTIVE THOMAS
What's gotten into you?!

DETECTIVE COLLINS
One!

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Collins... take a breath.

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Two!

DETECTIVE THOMAS
My daughter...

DETECTIVE COLLINS
Three!

DETECTIVE THOMAS
Fine! Fine! Just put that thing away!

Thomas reluctantly climbs out of the car. It's almost pitch black on the side of the highway, the only light coming from the car's headlights.

Collins shifts over into the driver's seat, and slams the door shut.

DETECTIVE THOMAS (CONT'D)
Collins, come on, let's take a minute. Calm down. And let's go home.

Without response, Collins floors it and with a major screech, blasts down the highway at 90 miles an hour.

DETECTIVE THOMAS (CONT'D)
Oh, for fuck's sake!

Thomas sighs. Shakes his head. Looks down the endless abyss of highway. And begins walking home.

MONTAGE: THE LONG DRIVE

1) Alice's car speeds through the night. Collins' car is not far behind

2) They pass trucks.

3) Melanie lights a cigarette. Alice gestures for it. Melanie passes it to her. Alice takes a drag and Melanie retrieves it from her mouth.

4) Collins, with the singular viciousness of a Terminator, drives after them, following them from a distance.

5) The moon shines above. Clouds pass by.

6) Cows graze in pastures.

7) And the road hypnotically continues.

END MONTAGE

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

The sky is beginning to go from black to blue when Alice pulls off the highway and onto a dirt road. Following it for what seems like ages, the bumpy gravel jolts Melanie awake.

MELANIE
Where are we?

They come over a hill, revealing a large farmhouse surrounded by endless field. It's an oasis.

The car slowly drives down the hill and towards the house. As they approach, two pea-sized people step out of the house. A man and woman. They are both holding double-barrel shotguns. The woman cocks hers.

The woman is tall, white, rugged, blonde pigtails, hardened with homemade tattoos adorning her arms. She's wearing a hunter's belt with extra shotgun shells loaded. The man is latino, bearded, stocky, bald. They both have hands calloused from hard farm work. They are PATTY (50s) and DIEGO (60s).

Alice pulls to a stop a healthy distance from the two strangers.

PATTY

Get out of the car now!

MELANIE

Where the fuck did you take us?

ALICE

It's the farm I told you about! I thought it would be okay!

Patty points the shotgun at their car.

MELANIE

I'm getting out.

Melanie slowly gets out of the car, hands raised. Alice reluctantly follows.

ALICE

Sorry! We didn't mean to intrude!
We can leave!

When Patty and Marvin see that the two intruders are trans, they disarm themselves. Patty lowers her gun.

PATTY

Why didn't you say we were
related?! Guys, get out here!
They're one of us!

Patty approaches the two women, extending her hand. They both shake it. Meanwhile, three more trans people emerge from the farmhouse. ROSE (black, 40-something trans woman), MARVIN (white, early 30s trans man), and CLOVER (late-20s, asian, nonbinary).

PATTY (CONT'D)
I'm Patty. I'm in charge of this little oasis. This is Diego, my husband. Rose, Marvin, Clover. You two got names?

MELANIE
Melanie.

ALICE
Alice.

PATTY
Pleasure to meet you both. What are you two gals doing here?

Melanie and Alice look sheepishly at each other.

ALICE
We're on the run.

PATTY
From who?

MELANIE
The cops.

The small crowd shakes their head. Diego puts his gun on his shoulder.

DIEGO
They always wanna cause trouble.
What'd you do? Steal a candy bar?

Alice glares at Melanie.

ALICE
Go on.

MELANIE
I may have... Killed a couple people.

ROSE
Like in self-defense?

MELANIE
Something like that.

PATTY
You said you're on the run. So they're still looking for you.

Just then, a trail of dust appears at the top of the hill. Collins has arrived.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE - NIGHT

She stops at the top of the hill and, finally, she speaks into her police radio.

COLLINS

Attention State Troopers, this is Detective Jennifer Collins from NYPD Homicide. Murder suspect Alex Friedman and accomplice I've been following have just stopped at the old Jenkins farm off 87, just past Round Lake. Requesting backup.

POLICE RADIO

Detective Collins, you're way out of your jurisdiction, why's this the first we're hearing of this?

COLLINS

I was pre-occupied. Just send everything you got. Suspect is armed and dangerous.

POLICE RADIO

Sending available units to your location. Standby.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Patty and Diego march forward, past Melanie and Alice.

DIEGO

You were followed.

PATTY

Get inside. Everyone.

Diego escorts Melanie and Alice inside the house as the rest of the group files back into the house.

Patty stands at attention, ready for whoever's coming.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The group files into the dining room and sits around the table. It's old, rustic. Wooden furniture. A locked wooden chest against the wall.

ROSE

You really had to drag your ass here, huh? I came here to get away from all this shit!

DIEGO

Rose, we're all on edge.

CLOVER

I'll say, she's a murderer!

MARVIN

Sometimes you gotta save yourself.

DIEGO

Marvin's right. We all know what happens to trans women in prison. And I'm sure Melanie's not a bad person, right?

They all turn towards Melanie, waiting for her to speak. Alice looks at her.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

The sky is turning a blue-pink. The first taste of sunrise. Collins' car approaches the house. Two State Trooper vehicles follow from behind. Only Patty remains, gun loaded. The vehicle screeches to a stop.

The driver-side door opens. Two black combat boots step out. And Collins emerges. Four State Troopers, all with shotguns, pour out of their vehicles.

Patty's eyes go wide watching Collins exit the car.

PATTY

No.

COLLINS

Morning! Are you in charge here?!

PATTY

How did you find me?!

COLLINS

Followed your new friends here. They're coming back with me. Why don't you go ahead and bring them out for me?

She points to the house and takes a step forward. Patty aims the gun at her. Collins draws her gun in return. It's a standoff.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

Woah there, that's a felony, you know.

PATTY

Get off of my property Jennifer! I told you I never wanted to see you again.

Collins takes her sunglasses off, recognition written into her wrinkled face.

COLLINS

Oh my god. George?

PATTY

I told you ten years ago! That's not my name!

COLLINS

So this is what you've been up to, huh?! Cross-dressing and harboring criminals?! Who else you got in there?! Norman Bates?!

PATTY

I see your heart's as ugly as ever!

COLLINS

You want to talk about ugly?! Look at yourself! You ruined our marriage! You ruined my life! For this fetish! We were going to have children!

PATTY

You gave me no choice! I wanted to make it work! But you just couldn't bear it. The sight of me in a dress broke your poor little heart! You know what that makes you?!

COLLINS

It's not normal!

PATTY

It makes you a coward!

COLLINS

You're the coward! Too scared to face reality!

PATTY

Oh no. I know my reality. You threw everything away because you were too scared to handle it.

COLLINS

Nobody should have to handle something like that!

PATTY

You didn't even try! You're afraid, Jennifer! You were afraid then and you're afraid now! So just walk away!

COLLINS

Not without the freaks you're holding! They're murderers!

PATTY

I don't care what they did! I'm not letting you near ANY trans person. You'll kill them!

COLLINS

That's aiding and abetting George! I'll have to take you in too!

PATTY

That's a risk I'm gonna have to take!

And with that, Patty steps towards Collins.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

Melanie takes a breath. Begins her explanation.

MELANIE

Just. Every day I put up with this bullshit. You know. I hate it. I hate them. So I fought back. It may have gotten out of hand.

ROSE

Out of hand?! The cops are busting down our front door!

DIEGO
We're all in this now. What are we
gonna do about it?

ROSE
Turn her in.

CLOVER
That's my vote too.

ALICE
No way! We can't do that to her.
Besides, that means turning me in
too. And Patty at this point.
Because all three of us are
criminals now. You wanna turn us
all in?

Rose looks away. Bites her tongue. Clover scowls.

MARVIN
New girl's right.

CLOVER
So what, we're just all fugitives
now?!

DIEGO
I fear we are. So what are we to do-
-

BLAM!

The sound of a gunshot. Everyone jumps out of their chair,
looks out the windows.

Patty is keeled over on the grass, clutching her stomach.
State Troopers are surrounding her, guns drawn. Melanie puts
her hand over her mouth. Tears form in Alice's eyes.

Diego turns red with fury.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
No!

He lunges for the wooden chest, urgently unlocks it and yanks
out a hunting rifle. Quickly loading a bullet, he aims it
through the window and fires.

One of the State Troopers is down in a flash. Collins and the
rest of the Troopers look in the direction of the shot and
rush behind their car doors, firing blindly at the house.

Diego loads another bullet and fires. Each shot punctures the police vehicles with a dull thud.

Meanwhile, Rose and Marvin each grab rifles from the chest and mount against other windows. It's a genuine shootout.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

Patty bleeds out on the grass. Writhing, trying to crawl back into the house, but she needs help.

Collins, hiding behind her car door, grabs the police radio.

COLLINS
Shots fired! Officers down! Need
immediate backup!

POLICE RADIO
Copy. Officers en route. ETA 30
minutes.

COLLINS
We need them now!

POLICE RADIO
It's six AM in the middle of
nowhere. They're the closest
officers we've got right now.

COLLINS
Fuck you!

She tosses the police radio aside.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

Melanie, horror etched on her face, watches Patty struggle to move. She looks around and sees Diego, Rose and Marvin firing out the windows. A bullet catches Marvin in the arm. He shrieks and drops his gun.

CLOVER
Marv!

Clover, furiously screaming, rapid-fires out the window. They catch another Trooper, who topples over like an old tree.

Melanie turns around. She sees Alice cowering in the corner, covering her ears. She looks at Melanie like a scared little girl.

Melanie turns back to the window. Horror turns to determination. And she runs for the door.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

Melanie, ducking to avoid the gunfire, runs onto the grass. She makes it to Patty unscathed, who's blood-stained hands shakily extend to her. She lifts Patty up, holds onto her for support, grabs the shotgun, and escorts her back to the house.

Bullets whizz past them in all directions. The farmhouse's wooden façade splinters from each impact.

She makes it to the door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

Melanie rushes inside, slams the door shut. As soon as they're safe, she carefully lays Patty onto the floor.

MELANIE

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

DIEGO

Patty!

He runs over to his wife. Kneels by her side, putting pressure on her stomach. She gags in pain. Melanie backs away, back against the wall. Despite all her murders, this is her first time truly bearing witness to death.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

I got you. I got you girl. You're
gonna be okay.

But Patty's fate is written in her eyes. She knows what's going to happen. She musters her strength to whisper.

PATTY

Diego.

DIEGO

Someone get bandages!

Alice runs to the kitchen, ripping through cabinets, looking for anything she can use.

Melanie is frozen stiff standing over the dying woman. Petrified.

PATTY
Diego.

DIEGO
You're gonna be okay Mi Amor.

PATTY
Get out of here.

DIEGO
No.

PATTY
Save yourselves.

DIEGO
No. Not without you!

PATTY
I'll be okay.

DIEGO
That's right. That's right! You're
gonna be okay and we're gonna take
the truck to Niagara next month.
Like we planned.

Patty coughs, splattering blood onto Diego's face and
Melanie's clothes.

PATTY
Hold my hand.

DIEGO
I need to stop your bleeding.

Patty grabs Diego's bloody hand from her stomach and wraps
her fingers around his. Blood gushes. Melanie bends down and
takes Diego's spot, putting pressure on her wound. But
everyone knows it's futile.

DIEGO (CONT'D)
Where are those bandages?!

PATTY
You have to go. You have to.

DIEGO
I'm not leaving you.

PATTY
Please. You don't... deserve...

She's starting to fade.

DIEGO
Push harder!

Melanie pushes harder against Patty's flesh.

PATTY
Diego... I love you.

Diego's face scrunches with grief.

DIEGO
I love you too Mi Amor. So much.

Patty gently smiles. Relieved.

PATTY
Now... go...

She closes her eyes and, with one final breath, goes limp.
Her hand slips out of Diego's. He sobs.

Melanie's eyes well up with tears. Hand shaking, she covers
her mouth. Breath wavering. What has she done?

DIEGO
No. Patty. No. Te Amo. Please...

Alice finally returns from the kitchen holding gauze.

ALICE
Here!

Seeing the scene, Alice halts. She drops the bandages. They
roll across the wooden floor, unraveling, soaking up Patty's
blood. She stares tearfully at Melanie. Melanie stares back
with broken eyes.

Meanwhile, Rose and Clover continue shooting at the officers.
But they're at an impasse. Neither side is able to hit the
other.

Marvin sits on the floor, clutching his arm. It's painful,
but not lethal.

Alice picks up the gauze, ripping off the still-white portion
with her teeth, and runs for Marvin. She wraps the gauze
around his arm.

Melanie, stunned, is still frozen. She looks at Patty's
shotgun, laying at her feet.

Almost without thinking, she bends down and picks it up.
Checks to see if it's loaded. It is. Diego tearfully watches
her.

MELANIE

Get out of here. Take everyone and go. I'll keep them busy.

Diego looks at her, confused.

DIEGO

You will be killed.

MELANIE

So will you and everyone else if you don't leave now.

Clover catches another in the arm. They yelp, staggering backwards.

ALICE

No!

ROSE

Almost outta bullets Diego!

Sure enough, the box of bullets Rose has been pulling from is down to two left. She grabs one, loads it, fires. Grabs the other. Loads. Fires.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I'm empty!

ALICE

We gotta get out of here!

Clover screams in pain. At the sound of their screams, Diego springs into action. He jumps up, leaving his wife behind.

DIEGO

Okay chicos! We gotta go! We're gonna sneak out the back!

The group begins to move to the back of the house. Melanie stays by the front door. Alice runs over to her. The rest of the group pauses.

ALICE

Come on, we gotta move!

MELANIE

I'm staying. You go.

ALICE

Are you stupid?!

MELANIE

If I come with you this'll never
end until all of us are dead. It's
me they want. Nobody knows you were
with me. Nobody saw you here.
Except her. This is your way out.
It's all your ways out!

ALICE

What about the detective?! She
won't stop!

MELANIE

I'll take care of her.

ALICE

You can't. You'll die!

MELANIE

I have to. This is all my fault. I
have to.

ROSE

Bitch, come on!

Alice tears up.

MELANIE

You'll see me again.

She pulls Alice in. Kisses her. Hard. It lingers. Alice leans
into her. Lights flicker as shots go off all around them.
It's Melanie who pulls away first.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Now go.

Alice tearfully backs away.

DIEGO

We have to go!

Alice rejoins the group, and as they file out the back door,
she gives Melanie one final glance before disappearing
forever.

And now Melanie's all alone. This is it. She bends down,
grabs some shotgun shells from Patty's belt. She steps
towards the door. Readies the shotgun. Takes a deep breath.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - SUNRISE

Collins, noticing the house has stopped shooting back, ceases her fire.

COLLINS

Cease fire!

The two remaining troopers stop shooting. They all stand up, cautiously peering out from the cover of their car doors.

STATE TROOPER

What's going on?

Collins scans the environment. She spots the fleeing group running for a barn off in the distance, silhouetted by orange and pink skies.

COLLINS

There! They're escaping!

As soon as their focus is pulled away from the farmhouse, the front door is kicked off its hinges. A furious, shotgun-toting Melanie emerges.

MELANIE

Leave my friends alone!

She marches towards Collins and the Troopers. Pulls the trigger. One shotgun shell explodes a Trooper's chest, sending him flying backwards with a bloody burst of flesh.

COLLINS

You conniving bitch!

Collins and the sole Trooper both open fire. Their shots sail past Melanie. Melanie, unfazed, pulls the trigger again. The shell blasts through the other Trooper's head. His brains splatter against the car.

It's just Collins left. And she fires her last shot.

It hits Melanie square in the gut. She keels over, grunting and groaning in agony.

Collins pulls the trigger again. But it's empty.

COLLINS (CONT'D)

Fuck.

She crawls to the nearest Trooper's dead body. Grabs his gun. She cautiously approaches Melanie, gun drawn.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
It's over! You're done!

Melanie digs her bloody, shaky fingers into her pocket. Scrambling against the clock. She pulls out another shotgun shell. It slips through her fingers. She grimaces through the pain and she picks it up again.

Collins is mere steps away, gun trained on Melanie's head.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
Stop it!

Melanie doesn't stop. She manages to slide the shell into the barrel. Closes it. But it's too late. Collins is standing over her, gun inches from her face.

COLLINS (CONT'D)
Nice try.

And she pulls the trigger. But nothing comes out. Her eyes bulge in fear. Melanie points the shotgun at her.

MELANIE
Nice try.

BLAM!

Collins' head explodes. Bits of brain and skull fly everywhere, raining down all around Melanie. Collins' headless body topples over.

Melanie lays on her back. Exhales. She's drenched in Collins' guts.

And she watches the rest of the sunrise.

INT. FARM TRUCK - DAY

Diego silently drives a rusty, beat-up blue pickup down an isolated state highway, passing farm after farm.

Alice, teary-eyed, tends to Clover and Marvin's wounds in the back seat with a portable first-aid kit. Applying anti-septic, bandages, the works. The two wounded wince as Alice works, holding hands.

Rose sits in the front seat, eyes darkened by what just unfolded.

ROSE
Where are we gonna go?

DIEGO

I don't know. But at least we're
all together. We'll make it work.
It's what she would've wanted.

ALICE

I'm sorry.

A somber silence takes over the car. Only the sound of the
engine can be heard.

MARVIN

Your friend. She got balls. Sorry.

The stupid joke produces light chuckles from Clover and Rose.

ALICE

Be lucky you're not cis.

Rose turns around in her seat, faces Alice.

ROSE

She saved us.

Alice sniffles.

ALICE

She did.

She looks out the window, at the serene fields passing by.

They drive off into the rising sun.

INT. THOMAS' APARTMENT - DAUGHTER'S BEDROOM - DAY

An exhausted Thomas, disheveled from his long trek home,
quietly sneaks through the door to his daughter's bedroom.
He's holding a neatly wrapped gift. The young girl still
sleeps.

He flicks on the light and--

DETECTIVE THOMAS

Happy Birthday!

His Daughter jolts awake, yelping from shock. Thomas dives
into bed with her, giving her a big hug and a kiss on the
cheek. She's giggling, a big grin on her face, as she hugs
back.

DETECTIVE THOMAS (CONT'D)

I love you babygirl.

THOMAS' WIFE (40s) stands in the doorway, smiling sweetly at the sight.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Collins' headless body lays on the grass, leaking blood from the neck.

Half a dozen State Troopers, pump shotguns drawn, cautiously march in formation through the field of abandoned cars and bloody corpses.

STATE TROOPER
Jesus, it's massacre.

At the end, lies Melanie, motionless. But she's not dead yet. Eyes closed, she struggles to breathe. Hearing the footsteps and chatter of the Troopers, she slowly opens her eyes and lifts her head.

Seeing them approach, she weakly, shakily tries to stand. Slowly, mustering all her energy, she rises.

STATE TROOPER (CONT'D)
Freeze!

Melanie ignores the demand. She manages to get on her feet and, wobbling back and forth, stands upright.

STATE TROOPER (CONT'D)
Don't make another move! You're
under arrest!

Melanie grimaces under the layers of blood caked to her face. Points the shotgun at the oncoming officers.

STATE TROOPER (CONT'D)
Stop or we'll shoot!

The leading Trooper's shotgun barrel, pointed right at her-- at us--approaches. Filling Melanie's shallow, near-death cone of vision.

She cocks her shotgun.

The leading Trooper pulls the trigger--

CUT TO BLACK

THE END