



Gloria Swanson, 1918

**ACTRESS**

by  
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#### NOTE TO THE READER

All the locations and settings presented in this screenplay are existing places. In many cases, discovering these places over the course of a 2160 mile research trip from the beaches of Tijuana, Mexico to a small pier at the top of Vancouver Island, Canada, were instrumental in creating the story.

JFR

ACTRESS

EXT. SAND - A BEACH - DAY

SILENT - WATER rushes in on the sand... then retreats. NOW THE SOUND, but only of the WAVES. The BARE FEET of a WOMAN appear (THE ACTRESS). Her toes are carefully manicured.

NOW MUSIC, VOICES, NOISES creep in - Spanish and English mixed, but we plainly hear in English:

DIRECTOR

Over, OVER...

Her FEET move.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

(with a UK accent)

No, back, back... STOP, too far...

THE FEET ADJUST, back and forth in obedience.

We now see the DIRECTOR, unhappy, standing by a CAMERA. A FILM CREW for a commercial is splayed across the beach, a collection of young serious people and LOTS OF EQUIPMENT. A JAPANESE CLIENT stares at a MONITOR, shaded in a "video village" - he's frowning.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Hand on your hip... Bend OVER.

THE ACTRESS'S HIPS - as she follows instructions. She wears a cute SUNDRESS.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

No! Bend over, OVER MORE...

A GIANT SUN HAT has been hiding the Actress's face. Frustrated, she takes a breath, pauses... Then she REVEALS her face. It's a face that has been seen everywhere, by everyone. She's turned the internal light on. The face is not so young anymore, but it's still riveting. Her eyes are glimmering like lasers. All despite the fact that she is bent over, ass out and contorted.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

GOOD, that's hot - Better, Good.

But he's not THAT pleased. He squints and stares at her like she is a thing that is just not right.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Cut. Let's take a break.

EXT. BORDER FENCE - PLAYAS DE TIJUANA, MEXICO - DAY

WIDE, revealing the beach in TIJUANA MEXICO (Playas de Tijuana). Some LOCALS are grouped in clumps, watching the scene. Nearby is the overwhelming BORDER FENCE, vulgar & rusty. Massive steel beams jut out of the sand.

The Actress is under a MEXICAN BLANKET, sitting next to the fence. She's trying to hide/regroup/disappear.

CLOSE ON HER as she peers out from under the blanket, like a kid looking out of a tent. She looks through the bars of the border fence to the U.S. side. Where the Mexican side has people and activity, the U.S. side is a desolate wilderness. The only thing there is a U.S. BORDER PATROL PICKUP, with a BORDER AGENT standing in the open door, staring at the fence and shore. The Actress watches him. He watches her. She waves. He doesn't wave back. A 2ND AD approaches her.

ACTRESS

Yes?

2ND AD

Do you need anything?

ACTRESS

No, just a moment out of the sun.

She extends one leg towards the fence, her toes stick through the bars to the American side. She looks at the Border Agent.

HER POV - The Agent watches her without expression.

THE 2ND AD - looking at the locals watching.

2ND AD

Do you want me to get security to move these people back?

ACTRESS

Oh, no. Everything is fine.

2ND AD

We are back in five.

The Actress keeps her eye on the Border Agent. She wiggles her toes on the U.S. side.

2ND AD (CONT'D)

You sure you're OK? I was told to ask.

ACTRESS

WHY are we shooting here again?

2ND AD

Someone at the Agency wanted a trip to Mexico. They are editing in Cabo. They sold the spot as "Gritty Glamour."

ACTRESS

They said this thing is not going to be seen in the States...

2ND AD

No way. For Japan only. You are big there, right?

The Actress shrugs. A WALKIE CRACKLES with a voice.

VOICE (ON RADIO)

She needs to change, take her to wardrobe.

2ND AD

(on radio)

Ok.

ACTRESS

Wait a minute, I thought I was wearing this the rest of the day.

2ND AD

(on radio)

She wants to know why we're changing her.

VOICE (ON RADIO)

Nigel wants the bikini next.

ACTRESS

Nope.

An awkward pause as the 2nd AD tries to figure out what to do. The PAUSE CONTINUES as the 2nd AD weighs the options. Finally,

2ND AD

(on radio)

She says she doesn't want to wear that.

VOICE (ON RADIO)

Fucking motherfucker...

2ND AD

(on radio)

She's right HERE.

SILENCE. The 2nd AD looks at the actress sheepishly. The Actress smiles, blandly.

EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

COMING TO THE SET - A STYLIST is bringing the "hero" prop, a Japanese RICE COOKER. She holds it reverently in a towel. Crowds part as she hurries through the sand.

The Director is talking to the Actress, who is now wearing a DIFFERENT SUNDRESS.

DIRECTOR

Here's the idea - think of it like this: It's your BABY, darling. Don't you see? Sprung from your womb... STOLEN from you, now reunited.

She takes the cooker from the Stylist and takes a breath. The Director retreats to a monitor by the camera.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Roll... Action.

THE ACTRESS tries to emotionally relate to the cooker.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Feel these BEATS: Beat ONE, LOSS... Beat TWO, DISCOVERY... Beat THREE, ELATION...

She tries... REALLY tries. TEARS magically appear.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

CUT. Barbara! Check that eyeliner.

A MAKEUP ARTIST rushes in and starts at the Actress's face. Whatever confidence the Actress had, is deflating. A HAIR DRESSER and COSTUMER follow, descending on her like insects on a carcass.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

DARLING - Eyes HERE. I'm going to tell you EXACTLY how to do it. It's so fucking surreal, it's TRUTH. The UNREALITY is the very thing that makes it REAL. It's not a "cook pot", dear, it's a real live sucking and crying and pissing BABY.

The Actress hates him.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
Just fucking pretend it's a baby,  
Right? Brilliant.

The Costumer is now occupied with adjusting the Actress's  
BREASTS in her sundress.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
(exasperated)  
Clear... PLEASE!  
(and derisive, under his breath)  
Fucking hell... ROLL IT.

Everyone clears.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
Action.

The Actress tries to give what she's been asked to give. She  
looks at the Rice Cooker. She's trying to make it into a baby.  
She looks up. She SEES THE CREW encircling her, with detached  
faces -- one GUY is EATING something - another is TEXTING. She  
looks down desperately again at the cooker, trying to find her  
reality.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
Go ON!

She's FAILING HORRIBLY. All she can feel is everyone's eyes on  
her. Finally, she can't do it anymore. She looks desperately  
at the Director. Everything is unraveling. The CLIENT starts  
yabbering in JAPANESE. He's not happy. She gestures, a mixture  
of exasperation, shame and anger.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
Cut. Let's reset and go again. Can  
someone wipe the smutz off the hero?

He means the cooker. He approaches her, talks softly.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)  
This isn't a fucking sitcom my love.  
No laugh track. Just fucking do it  
so we can get out of this shit-hole.

EXT. PRODUCTION BASE CAMP - SEVERAL HOURS LATER - DAY

The shoot is over. The Actress is by a GIANT SUV, in her  
street clothes & wrapped in a blanket. She is disconsolate.



2ND AD

That was great! How do you just CRY like that? It was like you actually cared.

ACTRESS

Oh god. No one can ever see this.

2ND AD

I love these jobs, they pay you in cash, no tax withholding.

The Actress pulls the blanket tighter and gets in the SUV.

INT. A SUV DRIVING - TIJUANA - LATE AFTERNOON

Jammed Tijuana traffic downtown. A sea of pedestrians drenched in bus fumes. The Actress is in the back seat taking off her makeup, using a small COMPACT MIRROR. The Stylist is next to her - the 2nd AD is in the front seat next to a MEXICAN DRIVER.

2ND AD

(to the Driver)

How long to get across the border?

"How much *tiempo*?"

DRIVER

(in Spanish)

*This time of day? Maybe three hours.*

2ND AD

Geez -- two hours.

The Actress shoves her stuff in her well-worn Hermés Birkin Bag. The others chatter on.

FROM THE WINDOW - Life passes by - People walking, on bikes, street vendors. A couple kiss.

DRIVER

(in Spanish)

*For walking, maybe 45 minutes in the line.*

The Actress is the only one that understands that.

STYLIST

(to Actress)

So, what are you doing next?

ACTRESS  
(hates this question)  
Oh... nothing for sure.

STYLIST  
You know my sister and I would  
always watch your show when we were  
kids. She had a haircut like yours.  
I mean, back then.

ACTRESS  
Oh, thanks.

STYLIST  
I used to want to be famous.

ACTRESS  
Well...

STYLIST  
I mean there must be a million  
shows that want you to be on them.

ACTRESS  
You would be surprised.

2ND AD  
I figured you would have your  
choice of parts.

STYLIST  
Do you ever see...

ACTRESS  
(knows what the question  
will be)  
...No, he got married again.

STYLIST  
Yeah... I read that.

ACTRESS  
(to the AD)  
Hey. You know, the driver said we  
can walk across in 45 minutes. You  
can let me out by the border. My  
car is just on the other side in a  
parking lot.

2ND AD  
Right! Do you see ANY American  
people walking around? No. You've  
heard about the kidnappings and all  
that stuff.

STYLIST

Walk? Out THERE?

The Actress sits there glumly. She looks at herself again in her compact. Whatever she sees dismays her.

2ND AD

The Insurance Company would FREAK  
OUT if we let you out around here.

STYLIST

You drove YOURSELF?

ACTRESS

I just took a cab to the hotel,  
it's easy.

2ND AD

In TIJUANA?

STYLIST

Jeez -- this production is so  
frickin' cheap it makes the star  
WALK across the border to a Third-  
World country?

ACTRESS

I wanted to do it, it's not really  
that dangerous.

She gives up. The Stylist isn't listening anyway. The Actress sinks inside herself. There is a gathering wildness behind her eyes.

EXT. A STREET CORNER IN CENTRAL TIJUANA - DAY

The SUV is stopped at a traffic light. The Actress is staring at the door handle. She glances at the others. Their mouths are moving but we really don't hear them.

HER POV - Now in SLOW MOTION - She leans over and OPENS THE DOOR and STEPS OUT of the SUV. The SOUND OF THE STREET washes over her. We see the shocked faces of the people inside as she looks back. She walks into the crowd. The windows roll down and the people in the car start YELLING for her to come back.

THE SUV - The 2nd AD YELLS at the Stylist.

COORDINATOR

Yasmine, go get her!

STYLIST  
I'm not fucking going out there!

EXT. CENTRAL TIJUANA STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

The Actress is walking, quickly. She has ejected from the safety of the SUV spaceship into an alien world where no one dares follow. She can hear the 2nd AD YELLING in the distance... but the SOUND RECEDES the faster she walks. She's away from them now. Now, there's MUSIC in her head. They'll never follow her. She's FREE. She puts on her SUNGLASSES. Her PHONE RINGS. She pushes "reject". It keeps RINGING. She turns it to SILENT. No one on the street seems to be paying much attention to her.

SERIES OF SHOTS - STREETS OF TIJUANA - The Actress has slowed her pace and is just walking and watching people. She is trying to blend in, become invisible. She finds an out-of-the-way place to sit and watch. She takes some PHOTOGRAPHS with her phone of local women, without them noticing. She studies the photos. Soon she notices people observing HER. Her CLOTHES and expensive SUNGLASSES are giving her away. She looks at her REFLECTION in a shop window, evaluating.

INT. STORE, TIJUANA - LATE AFTERNOON

She enters a CLOTHING STORE. The MEXICAN RADIO MUSIC is loud. She browses through clothing racks. Her phone keeps BUZZING. She keeps referring to the PHOTOS of the women on her phone. She buys a SWEATER similar to one worn by a woman in a photo - buys a SKIRT similar to another photo. She buys SUNGLASSES and SANDALS, the kind the women on the street are wearing. She puts it all on in a dressing room. She buys a plastic SHOPPING BAG and stuffs the Birkin bag and all her LA things into it. She finds a small mirror on the wall and looks at herself.

CLOSE, THE MIRROR - She takes out some eyeliner and eye shadow and works on her face. The Actress has disappeared and an ANONYMOUS WOMAN has taken her place. For the first time, she seems content.

EXT. SERIES OF SHOTS - STREETS OF TIJUANA - DUSK

She walks around, watching people, hidden in her new persona. No one pays attention to her. On occasion, she mimics the movement or posture of one of her subjects, as if to imprint the information in her brain. She's rehearsing. On one corner, a LOCAL WOMAN speaks to her.

LOCAL WOMAN  
 (in Spanish)  
*Do you know where this address is?*

She shows the Actress a piece of PAPER.

ACTRESS  
 (in Spanish)  
*No. Sorry.*

LOCAL WOMAN  
 (in Spanish)  
*Sorry to bother you.*

The woman leaves. The Actress is elated. Mistaken for a local! She beams.

EXT. RED LIGHT DISTRICT - TIJUANA - EARLY EVENING

The Actress quite accidentally walks into a different part of town. She stops abruptly, and looks.

HER VIEW - It's a dozen or so women who are standing in a line next to cheap hotels and nightclubs. They are clearly PROSTITUTES, wearing cheap mini-skirts and garish tights. There is no glamour here. The women eye the MEN walking by, some murmuring at them as they pass.

The Actress, both fascinated and terrified, straightens her shoulders and struts down the sidewalk. She tries to share looks with the street girls, but most avoid eye-contact. Some give her a hostile look. But the men eye her.

ACTRESS POV - Catching all the women's details, the high heels, Catholic school-girl skirts, the makeup, the tattoos, the blank looks. A WOMAN IN SPANDEX glares and MUTTERS something threatening at her as she passes.

She rounds a corner and leans against a wall to pull herself together. Something about her experiment has unnerved her. She is surprised when an AMERICAN MAN stops and asks her,

AMERICAN MAN  
*¿Cuanto cuesta?*

ACTRESS  
*Que?*

AMERICAN MAN  
 How much? You speak English?

A glimmer of fear and excitement flashes in her eyes. He sees it.

AMERICAN MAN (CONT'D)

How much?

ACTRESS

*No hablo Inglés.*

AMERICAN MAN

Well - You're kinda old to be doing this, aren't ya Chica?

Now THAT pissed her off. He shrugs and leaves. But she stops. What IS she worth in this market anyway? She impulsively shouts after him...

ACTRESS

(in a thick Mexican accent)

Five hundred!

AMERICAN MAN

(turning)

Pesos?

ACTRESS

Dollars!

That makes him LAUGH out loud... but he's not interested enough to negotiate. She's devastated.

EXT. NEAR THE BORDER - DUSK

The Actress gets out of a Taxi and walks towards the border. There is a GIANT MEXICAN FLAG in the background.

EXT. INTERNATIONAL BORDER - TIJUANA - NIGHT

In the GLOOM - Hundreds of people are crossing the border. The Actress is crossing through customs with the others, she now has her Birkin bag out, PASSPORT in hand.

EXT. SAN YSIDRO PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Actress walks towards her CAR, an expensive but older European Sports Sedan with a stick shift. She beeps open her CAR, but before she gets in, she sheds her "Mexican" top, revealing her own blouse underneath. When she starts the car, LOUD MUSIC starts with the engine. She quickly turns the MUSIC OFF. Her normal life rushes back over her. She pulls her hair back and wipes off the "Mexican" makeup. She turns on her phone again, glances at the messages. She pauses for a moment, an unpleasant thought seems to cross her mind, then she DRIVES AWAY.

INT. CAR - DRIVING ON INTERSTATE 5 - NIGHT

The Actress drives, expressionless. Her PHONE RINGS. She looks at it, turns it off for good and tosses it in her purse.

EXT. SERIES OF SHOTS - DRIVING - NIGHT

The ACTRESS driving. MUSIC, a feisty Mariachi version of the Patsy Klein song "Stop The World (And Let Me Off)" accompanies.

- Through San Diego
- By the Del Mar Racetrack
- Signs north to LA
- The Toro "Y" - Anaheim - City of Industry - Downtown LA

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Her NAV SYSTEM is talking to her, trying to take her home.

GPS  
"EXIT HIGHWAY 101 NORTH IN POINT  
TWO-FIVE MILES"

She drives on, ignoring. Passing Downtown LA.

GPS (CONT'D)  
"EXIT HIGHWAY 2, GLENDALE FREEWAY  
IN POINT FIVE MILES TO THE RIGHT."

She turns the navigation system off and keeps driving.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE MOJAVE DESERT - THE CAR - DAWN

The sunlight is vivid, relentless. The landscape is barren. The Actress's CAR is parked by the side of the highway, next to some RAILROAD TRACKS.

INSIDE THE CAR - The Actress is asleep under her coat. The SOUND OF A TRAIN wakes her. She peeks out, sees a TRAIN moving. She checks the time on her PHONE, and pulls the coat back over her head.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - WIND FARM - AN HOUR LATER - DAY

The Actress pulls her car to the side of the road. It's a desolate place - a raw, eternal landscape, devoid of human activity. She gets out and starts wandering, walking towards giant WIND TURBINES. She looks blank without her makeup. The turbines make a soft "SWOOP, SWOOP" SOUND. She takes a PHOTO with her phone. She wanders through some Joshua Trees, then just stops and stands. She is completely alone. Time doesn't exist. She looks at the desert floor, which is scattered with rusted OLD CANS, shot through with holes. She kicks at a BRIGHTLY COLORED ROCK and picks it up. She sits down in the dirt, cross-legged, and looks at the rock. The "swoop, swoop" sound is all we hear.

HER CAR - THE TRUNK - she opens it and TOSSES THE ROCK IN.

INT. CAFE - MOJAVE - MORNING

CLOSE - TABLE TOP: A PLATE of scrambled egg whites and cottage cheese is set down in front of the SUNGLASS-WEARING Actress by a WAITRESS. She watches as the Waitress leaves and comes back with the COFFEE POT. In a series of POV CLOSE-UPS we are made aware of how ACUTE the Actress's observations are. She notices every DETAIL & NUANCE - a CALLUS on the Waitress' finger, the DENT in her finger where a wedding ring was, a STAIN on her sleeve, her EYE MAKEUP style from 15 years ago. The Waitress refills another customer's cup, then comes back to the Actress's table.

WAITRESS

Refill?

The Actress nods. As she refills, the Waitress watches the Actress's face. She's seen that face before, but she doesn't know where exactly.

ACTRESS

(warmly)

How are those shoes?

ANGLE - the SHOES. Thick black ones waitresses wear.

WAITRESS

Oh... uh. These don't hurt my feet so much as the old ones.

ACTRESS

They look sturdy.

Now we see the Waitress has placed her in her mind - something about TV.



WAITRESS  
You an off-roader?

ACTRESS  
What do you mean?

WAITRESS  
They doing a show up there? There's a  
big off-road rally this weekend at  
the Jawbone. Is it a TV thing?

ACTRESS  
(she retreats from her  
earlier warmth)  
Oh, no...

WAITRESS  
Thought they were doin' a show up  
there, since you was here.

She stares at the Actress for a moment, as if she were inspecting a two-headed calf, then turns and walks away. We see the Waitress approach ANOTHER WAITRESS and say something to her. They both look at the Actress.

EXT. CAFE PARKING LOT - MORNING

The Actress walks into the parking lot. There are several TRUCKS with TRAILERS packed with OFF-ROAD VEHICLES. FAMILIES mingle, most wearing garish motocross-type suits. As the Actress approaches her car, an OFFROAD MOM recognizes her. The Actress stares aggressively back at her until she looks away. Something CLICKS in the Actress's head. Her posture changes. She walks up to the woman, who seems slightly panicked as she approaches.

ACTRESS  
(affecting an accent)  
Say. Do you drive these?

OFFROAD MOM  
Oh, yeah. It's real fun.

The Actress stares at her, as if formulating a plan.

ACTRESS  
So, how hard IS it to drive one of  
these things?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. JAWBONE CANYON - OFFROAD TRAIL - DAY

THE LOUD ROAR of a MOTOR - The Actress joyfully SCREAMING - She is DRIVING STRAIGHT UP a massive hill at FULL SPEED.

The Actress is driving a souped-up two seater ATV (like an off-road golf cart, with a roll-over cage) up the hill. She's in full off-road costume, including a helmet and goggles. The Offroad Mom is beside her, SQUEALING with delight. The cart is sputtering and shaking, and they just barely make it to the top. The Actress jumps out, elated, shouting into the valley below.

ACTRESS  
YES! YEEESS!

She hugs the Mom - their helmets smack together.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
My heart is beating so HARD!

The Actress starts to laugh. She can't stop. She feels IN-CHARGE for a change. The Mom starts laughing too.

EXT. OFF-ROADER BASE CAMP - JAWBONE CANYON - DAY

Actress, Offroad Mom and her OFFROAD HUSBAND are all sitting on ICE CHESTS, eating SANDWICHES and CHIPS. There are giant BOTTLES OF SODA. In the background an assortment of KIDS are buzzing around on DIRT-BIKES.

OFFROAD MOM  
God, that old suit of mine just  
swallows you up. You are so tiny. I  
still can't believe someone I watched  
on TV for all those years is sitting  
with me eating MY sandwich!

The Husband is staring at the Actress. He is sweaty with a bad case of helmet-hair. The Actress, her hair in a ponytail, has now completely morphed into a different character. Like a chameleon mimicking the color of a wall - she sits, moves and talks in a way identical to the Mom. It's eerie. She takes a massive bite from her sandwich.

ACTRESS  
My god Karen, I can't believe how  
GOOD this peanut butter sandwich  
is. SO good. Holy you-know-what.

The husband & wife just watch her, amazed.

OFFROAD MOM  
What are you doing here, anyway?

ACTRESS  
(food in mouth)  
...Research.

OFFROAD HUSBAND  
Karen loves that show you was on. I like it okay too.

OFFROAD MOM  
I loved that one episode where you were like, "Who I sleep with is NONE of your business" and your husband is like "yeah... WHAT?"

OFFROAD HUSBAND  
"Yeah... WHAT?"

They laugh. Pretty damn funny.

OFFROAD MOM  
I used to say that when Tom bitched about somthin'. Then I'd just LAUGH.

OFFROAD HUSBAND  
...yeah.

OFFROAD MOM	OFFROAD HUSBAND (CONT'D)
And that sexy husband you had on that show... Wow.	Here we go...

ACTRESS  
He's nice. He's married and has kids. I know his wife.

OFFROAD HUSBAND  
So he is NOT available... KAREN.

OFFROAD MOM  
I know that... God! I'm trying to get some gossip here.

ACTRESS  
Karen... I am not what you think I am. You know what I REALLY am?

The husband and wife glance at each other.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
I'm a cow.

OFFROAD HUSBAND  
Oh, NO...

OFFROAD MOM  
NO! You might not be as tiny  
as you was on TV but you are  
still itty-bitty!

ACTRESS  
I don't mean SIZE, I mean I AM A  
COW. My job is to keep producing  
milk. There are people sitting in an  
office wondering "How can I get  
another gallon or two out of her  
next week?" Maybe a commercial, or a  
horror movie where I'm a mom of some  
hot kid, or a TV movie where I play  
the ol' chestnut, the slutty mother  
with a heart of gold who made some  
wrong decisions -- in a part that  
they can keep down to a couple days  
shooting so they don't have to pay  
too much, and after all -- they need  
SOMEONE in the show that can act.

The couple doesn't know what to say. Is this actress going to  
freak out with Karen's peanut butter and jelly sandwich in  
her hand?

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Do you know what I just finished?  
Some commercial you will never see  
for Japan where I was selling a  
electronic pot that cooks rice.

OFFROAD HUSBAND  
You probably was real good at that.

ACTRESS  
I had to CRY Kurt! CRY. Over a Rice  
Pot.

The Actress closes her eyes and pulls herself together.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Do you know what they do to cows  
Kurt, when the old bovines stop  
producing milk? When no more stuff  
comes out that anyone wants?

OFFROAD HUSBAND  
No.

ACTRESS

That's all the old bovine knows how to do Kurt, she's not good for anything else, she's too old to make hamburgers out of -- all she can do is stand there and let them PUMP 'er.

OFFROAD MOM

What DO they do with her?

ACTRESS

I don't know either, but it is probably not good.

She takes another BITE OF THE SANDWICH, and resets. In a perfect imitation of the wife's rural accent, she says.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Kurt, you ever turn that buggy of yours over? I felt like I was gonna flip over on that hill. Oh man.

The wife doesn't notice her imitation.

OFFROAD MOM

Oh, HELL yes.

OFFROAD HUSBAND

Oh, well... Now VERY RARELY. If you know what you are doing, you can almost scale a vertical wall.

ACTRESS

Think you can teach me?

EXT. STEEP HILL - JAWBONE CANYON - DAY

There's a scarred-up hillside obstacle course that is a proving ground for men and their internal combustion engines. The Actress is driving the ATV, the Husband sitting next to her, coaching her progress. She sends the machine up the hill, but the wheels start spinning and she stalls out at a precarious angle. She's in danger of completely flipping the thing over and rolling back down the hill. She emits a litany of shrieks and obscenities with each lurch.

ACTRESS

Kurt! Now what! Shiiit!

The Husband keeps barking instructions, but things get more precarious. The barking and shrieking and cursing continues until it's obvious that they are doomed.

Like a turtle turning over in slow motion, the cart TWISTS and FLIPS OVER on its roll-cage. It tumbles down the hill like a child's toy, coming to rest UPSIDE DOWN. Several people rush over to help. The Husband can be heard LAUGHING. The Actress is suspended upside down, like a discarded marionette, and she is slowly loosened and removed from her cage by the men who crowd in to help. She glares silently at the upside-down machine. The Husband crawls out after her.

#### OFFROAD HUSBAND

That was NOT the way to do it.

That's okay - you're a beginner.

Everyone pitches in to turn the ATV upright. Some of the men are SNICKERING.

#### A MOMENT LATER - ON THE HILL

The Actress is blasting up the hill again in the ATV. She is almost through the course - then everything goes to hell. She TUMBLES back down, rolling over and over again. Now it's the Husband that is doing all the swearing.

#### SERIES OF SHOTS - THE HILL

As the CART TUMBLES down the hill again and again and AGAIN and AGAIN. The Actress doesn't even bother crawling out anymore, but just holds on as the guys turn the cart upright. Finally, the husband has had enough. He glares at her.

CUT TO:

#### EXT. OFF-ROADER BASE CAMP - JAWBONE CANYON - DAY

The Actress is leaning against her car watching the family DRIVE AWAY with their trailer full of machines. Back in her LA street clothes, we can't quite read her expression. Is she regretful? Satisfied? Angry? She picks up a STONE from the ground. It seems like she is going to throw it, but she reconsiders.

THE CAR TRUNK - as she opens it and TOSSES THE STONE IN next to the one from the wind farm.

#### INT. CAR - HIGHWAY 58 - TEHACHAPI - AFTERNOON

The Actress is driving. She looks completely different from the woman she became in Mojave. She's now a blank slate. Her PHONE BEEPS. She picks it up and looks at it - tosses it back in her bag. She tries not to think about it. After a moment, she gives in and puts in her AIRPODS.

MARK'S VOICE  
...Stu's desk.

ACTRESS  
It's me.

MARK'S VOICE  
Where the hell ARE you?

ACTRESS  
On the road.

MARK'S VOICE  
Are you okay?

ACTRESS  
(she's not interested in saying)  
Does he still want to talk to me?

INT. TALENT AGENCY - BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Mark is her not-so-young-anymore Agent's Assistant.

MARK  
He's at a meeting.  
(she's silent)  
He tried you three times yesterday.  
We thought the Cartel got you.

ACTRESS' VOICE  
No.

MARK  
There was an office pool betting on  
if you would turn up alive and in  
what condition. I put twenty bucks  
on "yes, alive, but without a  
thumb." Do you have both thumbs?

ACTRESS' VOICE  
Yes.

MARK  
Fuck -- lost again.

ACTRESS' VOICE  
Is there anything?

This prompts an awkward PAUSE.

MARK  
He put you up for a Hallmark movie.  
It's in town. In Valencia.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

ACTRESS

As the wise-cracking but lonely divorcee? The sexy Angel that saves Christmas?

MARK'S VOICE

...the Mother.

A more awkward PAUSE... Darker.

MARK'S VOICE (CONT'D)

A YOUNG-ISH mother... of a little kid.

ACTRESS

How many days?

MARK'S VOICE

Three.

(selling it hard)

She has some good lines. She's sexy. In a kind of charming, slutty way. It would be fun. You would SO expand the part. They would be crazy fucking lucky to have you.

ACTRESS

Who's directing?

MARK'S VOICE

You don't know her.

ACTRESS

Try me.

MARK'S VOICE

She directed that Doritos commercial. With the funny dog.

That's all she needs to know.

MARK'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Look, it's better than selling crock pots in Mexico.

ACTRESS

(sadly indignant)

That was for JAPAN! No one would see it here. AND it was a top-of-the-line rice cooker. Expensive.



MARK'S VOICE  
(back to the topic)  
Look - It's not a bad part. I read  
it. The writing is not awful.

ACTRESS  
You read the whole thing?

MARK'S VOICE  
NO... Come on. Just your lines.

She thinks.

ACTRESS  
There's no reason for him to call  
me, really. I'm on the road.

MARK'S VOICE  
Well, where? Where are you going?

ACTRESS  
You can't just sit still Mark,  
that's what I finally realized. You  
have to move, keep moving. So I'm  
moving. Currently at about 82 miles  
per hour.

MARK'S VOICE  
Alone?

ACTRESS  
Yes. I'm working on a character.

MARK'S VOICE  
For what? You don't have anything  
booked.

ACTRESS  
Mark -- I'm an ACTOR...

She wants to explain it's the only thing she CAN do. But  
what's the point?

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Gotta go.

MARK'S VOICE  
Check in tomorrow... they might  
want you to read. Be AVAILABLE. You  
know sometime you don't answer the  
phone. You have a reputation.

ACTRESS  
I have to READ for the slutty mom?

MARK  
It is what it is.

INT. TALENT AGENCY - BEVERLY HILLS - DAY

Mark listens to whatever she says, then hangs up. THAT didn't go well. SOMEONE walks by, notices.

SOMEONE IN THE AGENCY  
Was that HER?

MARK  
Yeah.

EXT. HIGHWAY 99 - ENTERING BAKERSFIELD - THE CAR - DAY

The Actress in her car, driving. MUSIC: An alt/country/girl-rock version of ZZ Top's "I'm Bad, I'm Nationwide."

- General views of mostly dirt landscape & agricultural artifacts.

- BAKERSFIELD signage.

- EXIT SIGN - "Paradise Road."

EXT. GAS STATION - PARADISE ROAD - DAY

The Actress is putting gas in her car. As she does, she watches the people around her. A PICKUP TRUCK pulls in. A WOMAN is yelling at HER CHILDREN. A MAN is buying beer. She imitates the way ANOTHER WOMAN is standing at the pump, toes pointed in. Then something catches her attention.

HER POV: It's a FUNERAL HOME and CEMETERY down the street. A green oasis in a sea of brown dirt.

EXT. BAKERSFIELD CEMETERY - DAY

The Actress drives in. She makes her way slowly into the cemetery. She sees something and pulls over.

HER POV: She sees two VERY LARGE WOMEN sitting silently in LAWN CHAIRS under a BEACH UMBRELLA. They stare absently at a NEW GRAVE. One of them produces a phone, scans the screen. She texts something, then takes a photo.

The Actress watches from her open window. Her breathing slows. She just sits. This is her WORK, and she loves it.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE CEMETERY - DAY

The Actress is out of the car, just wandering, looking at the graves, reading the names and dates. She comes to a HEADSTONE with a small pile of ROCKS on it. Her eyes linger on it, then she looks at the ground. She finds a SMALL STONE and carefully places it on top of the stack. She looks at the gravestone. She feels nothing, reconsiders and takes the stone back.

EXT. CHILDREN'S SECTION - CEMETERY - DAY

The Actress continues to walk among the graves, looking.

HER POV: A YOUNG MOTHER is sitting on a bench, near a fresh & SMALL GRAVE with lots of plastic flowers, fake balloons and butterflies. The Actress watches the mother, who has a numb, sightless expression on her face. A SMALL BOY is playing around the graves, RUNNING as fast as he can, then FALLING DOWN - LAUGHING, then picking himself up and RUNNING again. The woman finally catches the Actress looking at her. Their eyes LOCK for a micro-second, forcing the Actress to turn and walk away. Watching real life is fine, until they watch back.

HER CAR - She opens the trunk and tosses the stone from the grave in.

EXT. PARADISE ROAD - DRIVING - CARWASH - A SHORT TIME LATER

The Actress is DRIVING back towards the freeway. She sees a long line of CARS snaking into a CAR WASH. The business is new, with shiny green grass, like a mini-Disneyland for cars. She impulsively pulls in behind the other cars. As she waits, she sees a sign: IN CAR PHOTO SERVICE! She sees a PICTURE of a woman in a minivan, smiling, with a tropical beach behind her. She checks herself out in the mirror, and pulls out her lipstick.

INT. CARWASH - DAY

Her car glides through the carwash. Washing - Rinsing - Drying. She glides up to a PHOTO-TAKING SECTION, a CAMERA with a GREEN SCREEN behind the car. She rolls down her window, smiles for the camera as the FLASH pops.

EXT. CARWASH DRYING AREA - DAY

CLOSE on her CARWASH PHOTO - The Actress's dazzling smile in her car, behind is PARIS AND THE EIFFEL TOWER.

WIDER - She stands there, her car dripping wet. Everyone else is busy drying their cars and vacuuming the carpets. A MAN WITH A PICKUP keeps stealing looks at her. He obviously thinks she looks familiar.

ACTRESS  
(to the man)  
They really make you dry your own car?

A FEW MOMENTS LATER - The Actress is drying her bumper with a towel. Nearby, the Man is on his knees, wiping down her wheels.

A FEW MORE MOMENTS LATER - The Man finishes vacuuming her carpet.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
(charming)  
Thank you - SO much...

MAN WITH PICKUP TRUCK  
Sure. You're welcome.

ACTRESS  
Well... I gotta go.

MAN WITH PICKUP TRUCK  
Uhh, You are the one on TV, right?

She can't do IT again this time... be THAT person. She makes a DECISION.

ACTRESS  
(in a new, flat accent)  
I get that sometimes. Someone on TV looks like me. Can you imagine that? I work over at the Funeral Home... Maybe you saw me there.  
(BEAT) I'm Candice.

The man stares at her, blinks, confused. Her eyes defy him to challenge her.

MAN WITH PICKUP TRUCK  
You look just like that woman on that show.

ACTRESS  
What's your name?

The fact that this goddess might be interested enough in him to ask his name, stuns him.

MAN WITH PICKUP TRUCK  
Uh, Danny.

ACTRESS

(overwhelming him)

Well, Danny. I work at the, you know, funeral home down the street. I so appreciate your help because this has been a bad, bad week Danny. It's tough when little children pass on... Danny, I really can't. There have been so MANY Danny. It's hard on me.

The Man doesn't know what to say. On top of that, she keeps saying his name, like it matters or something.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Danny... have you been over there? Where I work?

MAN WITH PICKUP TRUCK

No Ma'am.

EXT. CEMETERY - CHILDREN'S SECTION - DAY

The Actress and the Man with the Pickup Truck stand in front of the child's grave where the mother sat before. The Actress is concentrating, working up a major EMOTIONAL MOMENT. She collapses in TEARS. She grabs the startled Man and buries her head into his shoulder, SOBBING. The Man's face shows a mixture of terror, confusion and then... satisfaction. She clutches onto him like a stricken, lost child.

THE MAN'S FACE - he's supremely happy.

EXT. HIGHWAY 99 NORTH OF BAKERSFIELD - DAY

The Actress is driving north, MUSIC BLASTING. She is elated, full of life. She takes a deep breath. She looks in the mirror, touches her RUNNY MASCARA with pride.

ACTRESS

That was GOOD.

She takes out her PHONE and clicks through some PHOTOS. There is a selfie of the man with her at the grave. But she's looking at herself - her eyes streaked with tears.

EXT. BIG BOX STORE OFF HIGHWAY 99 - NIGHT

Her CAR pulls into the parking acreage of a Big Box Store.

INT. BIG BOX STORE OFF HIGHWAY 99 - NIGHT

Series of shots as she grabs:

- A pillow and white blanket
- A package of generic cotton panties
- A spiral notebook, markers, pencils
- Food, including a Pringles tube
- Several cheap pairs of sunglasses
- A thermos
- A small camera and tripod
- A mini photo printer and packages of photo paper

INT. A TRUCK STOP RESTAURANT ON HIGHWAY 99 - NIGHT

She is sitting at a booth, with a half-eaten salad. The ROCKS she collected are on the table. The PHOTO PRINTER she bought is on the seat by her, the power cord is plugged in a nearby outlet. PHOTOS are being pushed out of the PRINTER; images from Tijuana, the off-road family in Mojave, her in tears with the man in the cemetery in Bakersfield. There are several selfies of her as a Mexican woman. She is scribbling in her NOTEBOOK. We see her writing - things like: "She wants to be INVISIBLE", "She wants to feel ALIVE", "She wants to DISRUPT". A WAITRESS (II) comes up to refresh her drink.

ACTRESS  
(referring to her mess)  
Sorry...

WAITRESS II  
Oh, the manager's off tonight...  
Don't worry 'bout it.

The waitress looks at the photos.

WAITRESS II (CONT'D)  
Are you scrapbook'n?

ACTRESS  
Kinda.

WAITRESS II  
You look so... familiar to me  
somehow.

## ACTRESS

I get that.

The Waitress leaves and The Actress stares at the list she has made. Then she takes the PRINGLES CAN, opens it and dumps the contents into her SALAD BOWL. She then tears up the paper into strips, each one with their own "assignment" such as: "She wants to be DESIRED". She puts the strips in the Pringles can, puts the cap on, satisfied.

EXT. AN ORCHARD IN THE CENTRAL CA VALLEY - THE NEXT MORNING

It's a COMMERCIAL ORCHARD, with neat rows of ALMOND TREES. Her car is parked off the road. We HEAR a LOUD ENGINE. A TRACTOR comes by, it pauses as the DRIVER looks into her car.

INSIDE THE CAR - Asleep, BLANKET over her head, she opens one eye to see the tractor driver staring at her. He shows no emotion behind his sunglasses.

The tractor DRIVES OFF. She climbs out of the car & stretches. Two nights sleeping in her car has not been good to her. Her hair has taken on a psychotic life of its own. She looks at herself in the window of the car. She takes a picture of herself with her phone, the orchard behind her. She studies it. She looks down the rows of trees. Life seems to be bursting out everywhere. Birds are singing, and near her, an irrigation ditch is gurgling with water.

In the distance, she sees that the tractor has stopped, and the driver is working with some BIG WHITE BOXES that are loaded on a small trailer. INSECTS are flying around him. He is now wearing a large wide-brimmed hat with netting - a BEEKEEPERS HAT.

INT. A MOTEL - CENTRAL VALLEY - DAY

She is sitting on the bed, just out of the shower, eating from a COTTAGE CHEESE CONTAINER. She is watching an OLD MOVIE playing on the TV. The character in the movie (Bette Davis?) is placidly suffering in some private way. Our Actress mimics her. She holds her hand the way the Actress in the movie does, tilting her head, eyes wide. She takes another bite of cottage cheese. She grabs the Pringles can, opens it. She pulls out a piece of paper from the tube and unfolds it. It reads, "She wants to be INVISIBLE".

INT. THRIFT STORE - CENTRAL VALLEY - DAY

An old TV is behind the counter, watched by a SALESGIRL. The Actress is buying the most bland clothing she can find.

She picks out a floppy HAT, and a pair of un-cool, grandmother-type, wraparound "VISOR" SUNGLASSES. Something catches her ear - a TV promo:

TV PROMO  
 "Next on Dangerous Wives"

THE PROMO features scenes from a former primetime melodrama. We see the Actress, circa 20 years ago, tarted-up in lingerie and delivering the line,

YOUNGER ACTRESS ON TV  
 "Who I sleep with is NONE of your business!"

The Actress shrinks. She puts on the sunglasses.

THE COUNTER - as she pays.

THRIFT STORE GIRL  
 Is this all?

ACTRESS ON TV  
 Yes... oh, and these sunglasses.

THRIFT STORE GIRL  
 Two dollars?

ACTRESS  
 Yes.

THRIFT STORE GIRL  
 Do I know you?

ACTRESS  
 (Adjusting the glasses  
 that swallow her face)  
 I don't think so...

THRIFT STORE GIRL  
 You looked SO familiar. Like I know you.

She puts on the hat, shoving as much of her hair under it as she can. She is now hidden. But she shares a bit of her TV-star smile as she takes the change.

ACTRESS  
 Thanks.



EXT. ORCHARD - DAY

ANGLE - VERY CLOSE on the inspection of a HONEY BEE HIVE. Bees BUZZING ferociously. A hand takes out a FRAME using a metal HIVE TOOL & inspects the new BROOD COMB. CLOSER SHOT reveals the QUEEN BEE with a white PAINT MARK on her body. The Queen is surrounded by dozens of worker bees, frantically moving around in mysterious ways. The BEEKEEPER touches the Queen with his bare hands. He's a man of some dignity and quiet presence. He methodically puts the frame back into the hive box. He is suddenly aware of the Actress, HOVERING THERE, watching him in her bland, beige outfit. She gives a slight, odd wave to the Beekeeper.

BEEKEEPER  
Can I help you?

INT. BEEKEEPER'S HOUSE - DAY

The BEEKEEPER'S WIFE looks out of the kitchen window at the SOUND of the Beekeeper arriving. The Actress gets out of the truck, and even in her thrift store don't-notice-me clothes, she makes a significant impression on the wife. They enter, the Beekeeper has a slightly sheepish look.

BEEKEEPER  
Donna... we gotta guest for lunch.

ACTRESS  
(approaching the wife)  
Hi, I'm Genevieve...

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE  
Nice to meet you.

ACTRESS  
I want to learn about beekeeping,  
your husband offered to help... I  
hope I'm not intruding.

The wife looks at the husband.

INT. KITCHEN TABLE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The Actress is in mid-chatter,

ACTRESS  
(rapid-fire)  
...And my thesis is on urban social  
patterns, stratified by demographic  
and income-based sub-groups...  
(MORE)

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
 I'm a statistical nerd as you  
 probably guessed...

The wife is setting out Tupperware CONTAINERS of leftovers on a table with a plastic tablecloth. There are giant bottles of SOFT DRINKS and a bowl of MAC & CHEESE. She sets out a big JAR OF HONEY and a loaf of WHITE BREAD.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
 ...but my writing just wasn't going  
 anywhere and I was so - BAM -  
 against a brick wall... Oh, Donna  
 so much FOOD! Mac and cheese AND  
 that traditional, down-home white  
 bread. You don't see that very  
 often any more, but it is so...  
 SOFT... isn't it?

The Actress is observing the spread -- thinking "what can she possibly eat?"

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
 ...Anyway my advisor said one  
 word... "Bees". I thought, "Bees?"  
 Then I thought, "of COURSE! BEES!"

During her ramble, the Beekeeper gets up and rummages through a bookshelf, he sets a battered BOOK by the Actress.

BEEKEEPER  
 It's an old book about beekeeping.

She picks it up and flips through it. It is the MYSTERIES OF BEEKEEPING EXPLAINED (1853). The wife eyes the Actress carefully as she looks through the book.

ACTRESS  
 (reading)  
 "Every prosperous swarm, or family  
 of bees, must contain one queen,  
 several thousand workers, and part  
 of the year, a few hundred drones."  
 No King?

BEEKEEPER  
 The Drones are the boys. All the  
 rest are girls.

ACTRESS  
 So the Drones are like a male  
 harem? Donna, these bees know what  
 they are DOING.

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE  
I think one husband may be  
plenty...

ACTRESS  
(with a generous laugh)  
But Donna - you'd be the "QUEEN" -  
they would be the "DRONES". I mean,  
just the NAME ALONE sets it up - I  
don't think the Queen has to pick  
up their dirty socks.

The wife LAUGHS, the ice has broken.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Donna... this mac & cheese looks  
AWESOME.

She takes a tiny, actress-y bite.

EXT. ORCHARD - APIARY - DAY

SERIES OF DOCUMENTARY-STYLE SHOTS of the society and life of  
the bees - this is accompanied by the Actress's words,  
following.

- The orchard and air filled with bees.
- Guard bees at the entrance to the hive, bees in and out.
- Bees working blooms, gathering pollen.
- Worker bees tending future bees and filling honeycomb.
- The Beekeeper helping the Actress, now in her own all-white  
anonymous BEE SUIT. It completely obliterates any trace of  
her body or personality, creating an anonymous, sexless  
humanoid blob. She cautiously takes out frames, and quietly  
observes the bees. Through all the above, we hear her read  
from the book:

ACTRESS (VO)  
"The Queen is the mother of the entire  
family, her duty appears to be only to  
deposit eggs in their cells. All labor  
devolves on the worker bees. They range  
the fields for honey and pollen,  
secrete wax, construct combs, prepare  
food, nurse the young, bring water for  
use of the community, cool the hive  
with the buzz of their wings, stand  
guard, and keep out intruders and  
robbers.

(MORE)

ACTRESS (VO) (CONT'D)

The Drones are large and rather clumsy. They seem to have the least value of any in the hive. Perhaps not more than one in a thousand is ever called upon to perform the duty for which they were designed...

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE ORCHARD - DAY

The Actress is sitting reading, near the apiary (bee hives).

ACTRESS

"...As honey becomes scarce, the drones are destroyed."

(closes the book)

Wow... harsh. Inseminate, and die.

She smiles in a way that seems unnerving.

EXT. ORCHARD - APIARY - DAY

The Actress has set up her SMALL CAMERA on her TRIPOD, ready to take pictures of herself with a HIVE. Bees fill the air. Moving very slowly, she tries different poses, re-setting the camera's automatic timer. As it becomes apparent that she's not getting stung, she decides to shed the suit, revealing herself in a BRA and SHORTS underneath. She still wears the HAT AND VEIL, but the large amount of bare skin makes her seem totally exposed. She stands perfectly still as the bees buzz around her. She consciously slows her breathing, TRYING TO DISAPPEAR.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Beekeeper's Wife is taking some TRASH out of the house. She walks over to the ACTRESS' CAR and looks around.

VIEW FROM INSIDE THE CAR - as she looks inside. She tries the door and it OPENS. She snoops around like a detective, looking for clues. She POPS the TRUNK LATCH.

THE TRUNK - as the Wife inspects the clutter. There are the clothes bought in Mexico, the CHEAP SUNGLASSES, the small STONES and the BIRKIN BAG. She digs through the contents. She finds EXPENSIVE MAKEUP and the Actress's DESIGNER SUNGLASSES and other odds and ends. The PRINGLES TUBE is there also. She inspects the bag, which is unlike anything she has ever seen. Does she know it's a \$12,000 handbag? We can't tell.

EXT. ORCHARD - APIARY - CONTINUOUS

The Actress sets her CAMERA TIMER. As it BEEPS she JUMPS, the camera FLASHING at the apex of her jump.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The Actress looks at a PHOTO PRINT, it's of herself, hanging sideways in the air, arms out, legs folded up, looking into the entrance to the hive, as if she is flying home. The Beekeeper's Wife enters carrying TWO BUCKETS OF HONEYCOMB. The Actress hides the photo.

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE  
Let's bottle some honey.

The Beekeeper's Wife MASHES the HONEYCOMB with a TOOL and gravity-filters the honey into another BUCKET.

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE (CONT'D)  
We have an extractor machine, but  
it's busted. This is the old way.

The Wife hands her the tool and a BUCKET OF HONEYCOMB. The Actress starts mashing it up.

ACTRESS  
(sad)  
They worked so HARD to make this stuff.

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE  
We leave them plenty, and feed them  
in the winter when they need it.

The Actress seems lost in the bucket, but keeps smashing up the comb, almost with regret. The Wife notices.

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE (CONT'D)  
They are overachievers. It's their  
nature. It makes them happy.

ACTRESS  
Do you think?

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE  
They only live five or six weeks, and  
work themselves to death, but well,  
they must like to leave something  
behind. Most likely, they don't FEEL  
anything. They are just bugs.

The Actress has no reply. She stares into the honey.

BEEKEEPER'S WIFE (CONT'D)

(pointedly)

What are you doing here anyway? You don't seem like the "dissertation" type. I haven't seen you taking notes or anything.

The Actress can only shrug. Is there a tear building in her eye? Is it real?

ACTRESS

...I'm figuring things out.

The wife doesn't exactly believe her. She goes back to bottling honey from another bucket.

EXT. APIARY - THE NEXT DAY

The sun is baking the Orchard. The Beekeeper and Actress are inspecting a large number of HIVES, engulfed in their beekeeper suits. As far as he is concerned, she doesn't exist. He wanders over to his TRUCK BED and starts to work on a BROKEN HIVE FRAME. After a moment, he senses something behind him. It's the Actress - motionless, staring at him in silence, still covered up head to toe in the white of the beekeeper suit.

ACTRESS

(menacing)

I've got an idea.

She raises a frame, thick and pulsing with bees.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Let's swap Queens. Spice things up.

BEEKEEPER

You should put that frame back in the hive. They don't like that.

ACTRESS

Don't like what?

BEEKEEPER

(flatly)

The Queen doesn't like to be away from the Colony and the Colony doesn't like to lose their Queen.

She was sure she'd get more drama out of this.

ACTRESS

Come on... Let's swap 'em!

BEEKEEPER

Genevieve... why are you acting like this? It's not play-time. This is my business.

She doesn't have an answer for that.

BEEKEEPER (CONT'D)

The workers would just kill any alien Queen introduced to the hive. They can grow a new one themselves.

The Actress wilts.

ACTRESS

Grow a new one?

BEEKEEPER

The Queen isn't really in charge. The Colony is.

ACTRESS

I thought the Queen could kill all of her husbands whenever she wants.

BEEKEEPER

The Colony decides to kill the Drones, and only if it is needed for the hive to survive.

He goes back to the truck. She can't quite digest the fact that she could be so easily dismissed. And by a man. She takes the frame, still teeming with bees, back to the hive.

THE HIVE - She holds the frame and watches the Queen, dancing across the comb, attended by her court. She tosses off a glove, like a gauntlet to the ground, and with her naked fingers, plucks up the Queen and looks at it. Even through the beekeeper veil, we can feel her acid malice.

She TOSSES THE INSECT to the ground.

CLOSE - we see the squirming insect, and her BOOT posed over it, ready to CRUSH it.

HER EYES - As she watches it TWITCHING in the dirt.

THE INSECT - A wing is damaged. The BUZZ of the Colony is now overpowering.

Her boot HOVERS - aching to crush it.

It doesn't.

THE HIVE - The missing frame is replaced.

THE QUEEN - Bare fingers pick her up, drop her onto the top of the hive. She crawls around, getting her bearings. The cover is replaced.

EXT. ESTABLISHING - FARMLAND - EARLY THE NEXT MORNING

The birds have just started singing.

EXT. MOTEL - DAWN

The Actress is packing her stuff in the car. She's dressed for the city, not the orchard. She opens the PRINGLE CAN and pulls out a slip of paper. It reads: "She wants to be DESIRED". She gets behind the wheel and starts the engine.

EXT. THE FARM - EARLY MORNING

Everything is quiet, light is streaming in from behind the trees. The Beekeeper looks at his watch. He looks at the sun, and then down the road. Nothing.

THE FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The Wife walks out of the house and looks out towards her husband. She sees him check his watch again. She watches him stand there, bees thick in the air, backlit by the morning sun. Waiting. A kind of victory is in her eyes.

EXT. HIGHWAY 132 EASTBOUND TOWARDS OAKLAND - MORNING

The Actress is driving towards her next character. Her makeup is sharp-edged, and her mood, focused. Her phone is playing an old B&W TV show. She driving and watching at the same time. On the screen is a scene from THE AVENGERS, the stylish 60's British Spy TV show featuring a leather-clad Emma Peel.

EXT. ALBANY BULB LANDFILL - EAST BAY - DAY

A desolate old landfill on the San Francisco Bay. The Actress is talking on the phone, she's got a coffee.

MARK'S VOICE

They are waiting to see you before  
they make an offer. You could  
totally steal this part from her.



She's silent, looking off towards the Bay Bridge and San Francisco beyond.

MARK'S VOICE (CONT'D)  
...Where ARE you?

ACTRESS  
San Francisco. Actually, Berkeley.  
Going to San Francisco. I found  
some water.

MARK'S VOICE  
But you are coming home TONIGHT,  
right?

ACTRESS  
Or by morning... Is it hot there?

INT. AGENCY - MARK'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

MARK  
How the hell would I know? I never  
leave. It is air-conditioned.

ACTRESS' VOICE  
It's nice here. Hey, do you  
remember Mrs. Emma Peel? The  
Avengers?

MARK  
The super-heroes?

ACTRESS' VOICE  
No, the swinging-sixties miniskirt one.

MARK  
You are not going to drive all night  
and look like hell, right? Please fly,  
I'll arrange for your car.

EXT. ALBANY BULB LANDFILL - CONTINUOUS

ACTRESS  
I thought the character was a  
slutty old mom. The worse I look  
the more appropriate I would be!

MARK'S VOICE  
Look -- you know I can put up with  
you... but your timing is NOT good.  
(MORE)

MARK'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Stu got an earful from the ad agency about your little Mexican episode, walking off the set. They had cops looking for you, did you know that?

ACTRESS

I have NEVER walked off a set, it was way after we wrapped. It was just... I needed to make my own fucking decision for once in my life... My car was...

MARK'S VOICE

...OKAY - Stu got yelled at and you know he LOVES that - then I got yelled at...

She notices a ROCK, picks it up, looks at it.

ACTRESS

(pocketing the rock)  
...now it's my turn.

MARK

Look, just be there at two, tits up. At Raleigh. Two o'clock. You have to park on the street, there's no parking. I know that might seem insulting, but it's a tiny lot, and there are 3 shows there right now.

ACTRESS

I know - I did 2 seasons there years ago, in my bushy-eyebrow days.

She's barely listening now, she's picking up ROCKS and throwing them in the bay.

MARK

Seriously. You HAVE to be there. I can't drive up there and get you this time. "Good Girl" behavior.

ACTRESS

Gotta go.

She hangs up and proceeds to pry a very LARGE ROCK out of the ground. It takes both hands to toss it overhead in the water: "Ker-Splash!"

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
(in her Emma Peel accent)  
Brilliant!

EXT. BAY BRIDGE - DAY

The Actress's CAR crosses the bridge into the city.

INT. HIGH-END BOUTIQUE - SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

She's SHOPPING, but this time she's NOT trying to blend in. Quite the opposite. She is trying on sexy Emma Peel-type LEATHER.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF BOUTIQUE - SF - DAY

She steps out of the shop, resplendent in a tight-fitting ONE-PIECE LEATHER OUTFIT. She notices a small gaggle of geeky TECH BOYS (mid-20's) waiting at the corner for the light to change. Two of the boys, RAMESH and GARY, stare at her, as if their eyes are seeing the sun for the first time. The Actress returns their look, which immediately causes them to divert their gaze. The hawk has found her prey. The LIGHT CHANGES and the boys cross.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREETS - MARKET STREET & SOUTH - DAY

The Actress follows them, staring at Ramesh and Gary all the while. The guys are aware she is stalking them, and seem to be terrified. The boys make their way south of Market Street, and into a refurbished TECH-ISH BUILDING. The Actress follows them in.

INT. TECH BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

A sizable group of YOUNGISH GEEKY-TYPES are gathered and waiting. A SIGN says, "SPEED DATING - EMPLOYERS AND DEVELOPERS." The tech guys part like the Red Sea as the Actress walks through them. No one seems to recognize her as a TV celebrity, it's just HER they react to, with her sexy-chemistry dial set to 11. She sees Ramesh and Gary, who have just collected their NAME BADGES. She heads for them. They both look as if they are about to cry. She addresses them in a breathy, posh British accent.

ACTRESS  
Act like you don't know me.

Gary starts to breathe rapidly.

GARY  
I DON'T know you.

ACTRESS  
That's right... (reads his badge) GARY.

RAMESH  
(suspiciously)  
Are you an employer?

She stalls, scans the sign, figuring it out.

ACTRESS  
Well, do I look like an EMPLOYER?  
I'm TALENT.

RAMESH  
(suspicious)  
This is for OSI - Open Source  
Initiative Developers...

GARY  
...you have to have a ticket.

ACTRESS  
Don't you boys have enough to worry  
about? You're unemployed, right?  
Let's FOCUS here: You are guys. I'm  
assuming you want women. Women want  
guys with jobs... that's a free  
dating tip from someone that knows.  
So you can stop getting pissy about  
me stealing your jobs. Anything  
they hire ME for, is not something,  
well... YOU can do.

THE REGISTRATION TABLE - The Actress approaches, watched by  
every eye in the room. She throws her hotness spell over the  
POOR GUY manning a table full of printed registration badges.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Hello, what's YOUR name? I'm Pauline.

A MOMENT LATER - The Actress rejoins the boys with a name-tag  
on a lanyard around her neck. It reads "PAULINE POUNDWORTHY"  
and "APSL-GNU-APACHE". This shuts them up... although Ramesh  
grits his teeth. He knows she doesn't belong here.

INT. TECH BUILDING - MAIN HALL - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS documentary-style: an "Employer-Developer Speed Date" where tech companies and potential employees quiz one another. The Actress is in frenzy-audition mode, a welcome change after the quiet of bee-country. We see:

- The mechanisms of the "Speed Dating" process. Every few minutes a BUZZER SOUNDS, job-seekers SWITCH TABLES.
- The look on the face of the employers when the Actress turns on the charm and the English accent. She ends up collecting a giant stack of BUSINESS CARDS.
- How she handles the bizarre range of tech company interview questions, such as: "You are shrunk to the height of three centimeters and thrown in a blender that will start in five seconds. What do you do?" and "On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?"
- Going on the offensive, when challenged about her programing credentials, she attacks the interviewee. We hear her parrot developer-speak from one interview into her conversation in the next.

EXT. A BAR NEAR MARKET STREET - EVENING

The Actress is drinking with Ramesh and Gary and a few other guys and a girl who participated in the "Speed Date". She is the object of everyone's attention, especially since she has just paid for a round of drinks. She displays the stack of business cards she collected.

ACTRESS

(still in the UK accent)

I have secured twelve call backs!

GARY

I got a good nibble from a start-up  
in Fremont.

Her phone buzzes. A TEXT READS: "Mark: PLEASE be on your way back to LA! SERIOUS!" She turns off the phone.

ACTRESS

(standing, toasting)

To rocking Speed Dating! Each of  
you were brilliant!

They all drink.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

And can someone now tell me -- what the HELL does a "Developer" DO anyway?

RAMESH

I KNEW it! No way she knew Apache.  
Pay up!

He collects a bet from the guy next to him.

ACTRESS

So I'm supposed to go back to LA tonight. Who is going to be responsible for my irresponsibility this evening?

At least seven people RAISE THEIR HANDS in the group, and a FEW OTHERS at the bar as well.

INT. THE BAR - AN HOUR LATER - NIGHT

The Actress, Ramesh, Gary and several other guys and the girl are dancing to a dubstep remix of ABBA's "Fernando".

MUSIC

"...There was something in the air that night, the stars were bright, Fernando..."

She dances with a little bouquet of FLOWERS someone has bought her. She's shifted the flirt-machine in high gear, dancing with both Gary and Ramesh, twirling them in circles on the floor, frying their little techie boy-brains into a crispy crust.

EXT. STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO - HER CAR - NIGHT

MUSIC CONTINUES - SERIES OF SHOTS as The Actress drives around the city, Gary in the front seat, Ramesh in the back.

EXT. EMBARCADERO - NIGHT

GARY

I thought you were going to Los Angeles tonight.

ACTRESS

(a little drunk)  
Yeah.... It's not a worry.

She stops at a stoplight.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Gary. Drive. Now.

GARY  
What?

RAMESH  
He can't drive a stick.

She UNBUCKLES her seat belt - starts to switch seats.

ACTRESS  
Get over here. The light is going  
to change.

GARY  
I can't!

She CRAWLS into the passenger seat with him.

ACTRESS  
Gary -- I'm doing this for YOU!  
Don't you recall the fateful night  
we crossed the Rio Grande?

Gary SLIDES into the drivers seat. The light changes, cars  
are HONKING.

RAMESH  
Go, it's green. Come on!

ACTRESS  
That pedal on the left, push that  
in, here, put it in first...

She takes his hand and guides the stick into first gear.

RAMESH  
Go! Go!

ACTRESS  
Now let out the clutch, gas...

The car lurches and DIES. More HONKING.

GARY  
I CAN'T.

ACTRESS  
Restart it, clutch in...

More HONKING. She has had enough, she gets out of the car and gives the drivers behind a evil look, then raises her arms and SCREECHES at them with an UNHOLY DEMONIC RAGE, her FINGERS OUT, CLAWS PROTRUDING.

RAMESH  
(watching her)  
Holy SHIT! She's possessed!

She gets back in so calmly, you would think she was now a high school driving teacher.

ACTRESS  
Okay. Clutch in, first gear, a  
little gas, clutch smoothly out...  
Gas... more gas.

And the car lurches forward again, but doesn't die.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Yes! More, good. Clutch in...  
CLUTCH IN. Second gear. NOW!

She grabs his hand and roughly jams it into second.

RAMESH  
Whooo!

ACTRESS  
Fernando! Bravo! Clutch OUT. Give  
it the gas. You're DRIVING!

And he is... He even shifts into 3rd gear.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Now, you can drive me back to LA.

RAMESH  
That's NOT going to happen.

She has had enough of "Mr. Negative". The Actress grabs the CIGARETTE LIGHTER from the dash and starts to crawl in the back seat with Ramesh. She waves it at him.

ACTRESS  
That's the LAST of the bitching  
I'll hear from you tonight, Lovie.

She points the cigarette lighter menacingly at him as she crawls in the back. Ramesh starts SQUEALING and SLAPPING at her.



GARY

What are you doing!? You're  
supposed to have your seat belt on!  
I could get a ticket!

ACTRESS

(now on top of Ramesh)  
Take it like a man!

GARY

How do I DOWNSHIFT?

She is WRESTLING with Ramesh - he's SCREAMING and she's  
trying to "brand" him with the cigarette lighter. He HOWLS.

ACTRESS

It's not even HOT!

Ramesh stops struggling, gasping for breath. She has his  
hands tight in her grasp, like he's tied up. She looks in his  
eyes, her face only inches from his.

GARY

(can't see what they are doing)  
What happened... GUYS?

She's smoldering now - moves closer - he's still gasping,  
wide-eyed.

GARY (CONT'D)

Guys... Uh.. What's HAPPENING?

She seems like she is about to kiss Ramesh, but she just  
LICKS THE TIP OF HIS NOSE lightly with her tongue. Something  
catches her eye outside the window.

ACTRESS

Look! The Golden Gate Bridge!

And there IT IS, out of the window, glistening in the fog.

EXT. CAVALO POINT - GOLDEN GATE - NIGHT

The Actress stands alone on a dock with the Golden Gate  
Bridge behind. She is wearing her WHITE BLANKET wrapped  
around her like a shawl. She holds the flowers she had in the  
club. Gary stands on the dock, watching her.

ACTRESS

(her normal voice, but dreamy)  
All those people driving back and forth across the bridge, all that friction - building up ELECTRICITY, bigger and bigger and bigger... this delicious cosmic electric charge. Don't you feel it Gary? It fills us up and leaks out of our ears and eyes and fingertips. It GLOWS. It makes us ALIVE.

Gary is just looking at her. To him she is terrifying.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Gary - come feel the electricity baby... it's crackling.

He inches towards her. She soaks up the moment, his fear and attraction, the cool moist air, the magical glow from the bridge, her intense performance. The FOGHORN in the distance adds the final touch.

GARY

Uh, what happened to the English accent?

ACTRESS

Oh god... it hurts my jaw to do that too long.

Gary has no response. A BEAT. She looks at her phone.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

FUCK! It's four thirty in the morning! I'm supposed to be in LA at two pm. How long does it take to drive to LA?

GARY

Uh, five - six hours.

She is trying to do the math in her head.

ACTRESS

Don't you want to take me Fernando?

GARY

(obediently)  
... Uh, you mean DRIVE??

She shakes her head. Forget it. It's like pushing a fucking boulder up a hill.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE OBSERVATION PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Actress and Gary return to the car. Ramesh is asleep in the back. Gary gets in the passenger side. She picks up a SMALL STONE she sees before she gets in.

INSIDE - She takes a breath.

GARY  
Can You drive?

ACTRESS  
Fernando, I don't want to go back.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MUIR WOODS NATIONAL MONUMENT - PARKING LOT - DAWN

Light is dimly filtering through the towering, silent trees. Her car is alone in the parking lot. Gary is asleep in the front seat, Ramesh still in the back. The driver's seat is reclined, but the Actress is not there.

EXT. ENTRANCE GATE MUIR WOODS NATIONAL MONUMENT - DAWN

She is sitting on a bench, WATCHING VIDEO on her PHONE with earbuds. She mouths the words.

THE PHONE - She is watching VERTIGO. Kim Novak & Jimmy Stewart are in the very same Muir Woods, sixty-something years earlier. Novak is in a dream-state, in a white coat.

EXT. MUIR WOODS - PARKING LOT - A BIT LATER

Now we see her rushing back to the car, wrapped in the WHITE BLANKET. She opens the passenger door and shakes Gary.

ACTRESS  
Fernando - Get UP! I need you.

EXT. MUIR WOODS - TREE CROSS-SECTION EXHIBIT- MORNING

The Actress, now wrapped in her white blanket, hustles Gary over to the exhibit, the same one featured in the movie. It is the CROSS-SECTION of a GIANT TREE, with DATE MARKERS. Rings of the tree are marked by historic events, the last one says, "TREE CUT DOWN, 1930." She positions him, and takes her place. She takes a breath. Settles. She points to the tree cross-section.

ACTRESS

(spooky - mesmerizing)  
Somewhere in here I was born... and  
there I died. It was only a moment  
for you - you took no notice.

She wanders off... in a dramatic daze. But after a few steps  
she slows and looks back at him.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Say my name...

GARY

Huh?

ACTRESS

Say my NAME... you need to try to  
stop me.

GARY

Pauline... STOP.

Exasperated, she walks back.

ACTRESS

That was the British woman. Call me  
"Madelyn."

She goes back to her spot by the cross-section. Moves him  
back in place. Closes her eyes.

GARY

Madelyn? Is that your real name?

ACTRESS

(whispering)  
Shhh. (BEAT) Say "ACTION."

GARY

Ok. "Action."

ACTRESS

(pointing again)  
Somewhere in here I was born... and  
there I died. It was only a moment  
for you - you took no notice.

She walks off, again in a daze.

GARY

MADELYN, STOP!

ACTRESS

No Gary... Just say "Madelyn."  
Don't shout it, it should be gentle  
and concerned, like a woman you  
love is sleepwalking and you are  
afraid to stop her AND afraid to  
let her go. Can you do that Gary?

GARY

I don't get it. Is this a play or  
something?

ACTRESS

(grabbing his ear, hard)  
You are helping me Gary, you are  
really doing something sweet for me.  
Do you have any idea how thankful I  
am going to be?

She moves close to him, fingertips grazing his cheek.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Thank you Gary... in advance.

GARY

Okay. Cool.

She gets in position, closes her eyes, nods at him.

GARY (CONT'D)

...Action.

ACTRESS

(pointing again)  
Somewhere in here I was born... and  
there I died. It was only a moment  
for you - you took no notice.

She walks away.

GARY

Madelyn...

She takes a few more steps, TREMBLES. She looks up suddenly,  
as if she sees something, something terrifying that no one  
else can see. Terror crosses her face. She GASPS and runs to  
a tree, covers her face, pressing it against the tree. She  
WAILS. Gary runs to her.

GARY (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

ACTRESS  
(under her breath)  
Grab me, turn me around. HARD.

He turns her.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
(frantic, confused)  
Please don't ask me, Please don't  
ask me.

GARY  
Are you okay?

ACTRESS  
Please don't ask me, Please don't  
ask me.

GARY  
Ask you what?

ACTRESS  
(whispering)  
Say, "What, what is it?"

GARY  
What, what is it?

ACTRESS  
Please don't ask me, Please don't  
ask me.

GARY  
What, what is it?

ACTRESS  
(terribly frantic)  
Please don't ask me, Please don't  
ask me.

GARY  
(freaked out)  
WHAT, what IS it?

ACTRESS  
(going insane)  
Please don't ask me, Please don't  
ask me. PLEASE don't ask me.  
PLEASE.

She SOBS deeply - Then is quiet. She breaks character. A huge  
smile crosses her face.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
That was SO GOOD! Wasn't it?

GARY  
You scared the CRAP out of me.

She kisses him on the cheek. She is floating.

ACTRESS  
Really?

GARY  
I thought you went completely  
fucking psycho.

EXT. MUIR WOODS - SEQUOIA GROVE - MORNING

Now Ramesh has joined them, although he is barely awake. She points for him to look up at the trees.

GARY  
What do I do?

ACTRESS  
You say "action."

She moves close behind Ramesh.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
When I finish a line, you just say "Why."

RAMESH  
Why?

ACTRESS  
Shhh. Not yet. Look up. Darkness.  
Mystery. You want to help this woman,  
but you can't. You want to understand  
this woman, but you can't. You want to  
make love to this woman, but you can't.

RAMESH  
Why?

She SMACKS HIM across the head.

ACTRESS  
Because you CAN'T.

But the sexy look she gives him is meant to torture him, and it does. She turns him back around towards the tree. She takes his head in her hands, points it to the sky. The character possesses her. She gestures to Gary.

GARY

Action.

ACTRESS

(in that far-away voice)

I don't like them.

She nudges Ramesh.

RAMESH

Why.

ACTRESS

Because of what it makes me think about. All the people who have been born and died while the trees go on living.

For some reason, it's not right.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

(her normal voice)

That wasn't right.

RAMESH

Why?

ACTRESS

Not now. Gary, again.

GARY

...Action.

ACTRESS

I don't like them.

RAMESH

Why?

ACTRESS

(more distant)

Because of what it makes me think about. All the people who have been born and died while the trees go on living.

She stops, closes her eyes, thinks. A new angle.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

(unstable, detached)

I don't LIKE them.

RAMESH

Why?



ACTRESS

(locked in)

Because of what it makes me think about. All the people who have been born and died while the trees go on living.

RAMESH

(turns, holds her)

Don't worry nice lady, don't be afraid of the trees, I'll take care of you.

She GRABS his neck and SQUEEZES.

ACTRESS

Because of all the people who have been born and DIED and the trees watched them be STRANGLED for crappy ad-libbing.

She holds it a little too LONG and with too CONTORTED an expression. Ramesh starts to struggle. Finally,

GARY

Uh, Madeline?

She relaxes her grip, KISSES him on the lips and lets go. He DROPS to the ground - gasping.

ACTRESS

Okay. Let's do it again.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MILL VALLEY - DAY

The Actress's car pulls over, and Ramesh and Gary get out, confused. She rolls down the window to talk.

GARY

I thought you were going back to LA?

ACTRESS

I can't now. I need to go north.  
'Til the road ends.

GARY

Isn't that, like the North Pole?

RAMESH

There are no roads at the North Pole.

GARY  
I was overstating, everyone knows  
there are no roads at the North Pole.

ACTRESS  
I'm leaving.

RAMESH  
Where ARE we?

ACTRESS  
I'm sure a bus goes to the city.  
(BEAT) It's a life lesson. Sorry.

The guys look around - what the hell?

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Never get in a car with a strange  
woman. That's the lesson.

She rolls up the window and DRIVES AWAY. Then STOPS, backs up  
and rolls down the window.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
That was fun. Uh, Thanks.

And she takes off.

EXT. RIVERSIDE UNDER GIANT BRIDGE (I-80) - DAY

It's HOURS later and miles away. The Actress is out of her  
car, restless. She is under a MASSIVE BRIDGE soaring over a  
river. She looks up to the Interstate TRAFFIC passing way  
overhead. The River is seen in the background. She has ear-  
buds on, and reluctantly makes a CALL.

INT. AGENCY - MARK'S DESK - DAY

Mark's cell RINGS. He sees who it is. He answers.

MARK  
Yeah.

EXT. UNDER BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

ACTRESS  
I won't be there.

MARK'S VOICE

I figured.  
(looks at his call sheet)  
9... 11... 13 unanswered calls.

ACTRESS

I'm sorry. Really.

MARK'S VOICE

Thirteen is an unlucky number.

ACTRESS

Tell them I got a job up here. I  
DO, kinda, I was great, you should  
have seen me.

MARK'S VOICE

Where is "here?"

ACTRESS

Well, now I am somewhere by  
Sacramento. By a river.

MARK'S VOICE

What is this "job?"

ACTRESS

It's not a job, it's just WORK.  
Acting work. All these characters,  
it's surprising. I don't suck at  
it.

MARK'S VOICE

It's not a "web series" is it?

ACTRESS

No, nothing like that. I can't  
explain it exactly.

MARK'S VOICE

Well I DO have to explain it  
"exactly." Exactly why you won't be  
coming to the four producers and  
casting director that are expecting  
you at Raleigh in... (looks at  
watch) EIGHT minutes.

ACTRESS

Mark - THREE DAYS in Valencia.  
Another meaningless part. My resume  
can survive the absence of a random  
slutty mom credit.

## MARK'S VOICE

Yeah, I'm not sure you are aware of how thin the ice is that you are skating on here. You know WME dropped 8% of their actor clients last week? Lot's of bloody stumps marching up and down Wilshire Blvd. And some of those stumps are already marching into this office trying to take your spot.

INT. AGENCY - MARK'S DESK - DAY

## ACTRESS' VOICE

But wait till I tell you what has happened...

## MARK

...Another call, gotta go.

And he HANGS UP. But there isn't another call.

EXT. UNDER BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

She reacts. But doesn't know how to, exactly. The NOISE above draws her attention.

HER POV - Looking up, MASSIVE TRUCKS on the bridge, RUMBLING high above her head. The SUDDEN SOUND of them hitting the gaps in the bridge echoes off the massive steel beams. THU-THUMP, THU-THUMP. She watches and listens.

EXT. DRIVING - INTERSTATE 5 - NIGHT

DARK as she drives north, deep into the mountains. There is a sign for MOUNT SHASTA NATIONAL FOREST. The hint of dark trees blur by the window.

EXT. CITY PARK - DUNSMUIR, CALIFORNIA - EARLY MORNING

Morning in a small city park in a sleepy mountain town. There's an old BASEBALL DIAMOND with wooden bleachers. Her CAR is parked nearby, she's ASLEEP once more in the front seat, under her white blanket. A hard THUMP SOUND wakes her up. It repeats every few seconds - THUMP - THUMP - THUMP.

THE BASEBALL DIAMOND - A BOY about nine years old is throwing a BASEBALL against the wooden backstop, fielding it, and throwing it again -- it THUMPS against the backstop.

The Actress has emerged from the car, wrapped in the BLANKET with a THERMOS that she pours into the PLASTIC TOP. She leans on the fence watching the boy. She sips. Her grimace tells us the coffee is cold.

ACTRESS

(to the boy)

A place around here to get coffee?

He throws - THUMP - and catches once more before answering.

BOY

You're not from here.

ACTRESS

Yeah.

BOY

Are you homeless? Lot's of homeless people live in cars.

ACTRESS

No, I'm not homeless. Is there a place around here to get coffee?

BOY

I don't know - I don't drink coffee.

She tosses out the cold coffee and walks back towards her car. A BASEBALL bounces across the gravel over towards her car. The Boy yells:

BOY (CONT'D)

Little help?

She looks back at him. Really? He "accidentally" threw the ball at her? She picks up the ball and throws it onto the field. She throws well. He notices.

BOY (CONT'D)

Do you know how to pitch?

ACTRESS

Not really.

BOY

Well, can you at least try?

She gives him a look.

BOY (CONT'D)  
If you pitch to me for practice,  
I'll show you where to get really  
good coffee. It's really hard to  
find.

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The Actress is on the infield, wearing the boy's glove. The Boy stands at the plate with a bat. She starts to pitch, underhand.

BOY  
Wait - STOP! I'm not a GIRL.

ACTRESS  
Well, I am.

BOY  
You're a LADY. Just throw it  
normal.

ACTRESS  
Okay...

She throws it, hard. The ball HITS him square in the ribs.

BOY  
Owww! Shit!

ACTRESS  
Oh. Sorry. I told you.

He picks up the ball and throws it back.

BOY  
(composing himself)  
Didn't hurt.

ACTRESS  
And watch your language, remember,  
I'm a LADY.

She throws it. He swings and misses completely. She holds her comment. He retrieves it and throws it back to her.

BOY  
My Dad was SUPPOSED to be here to  
practice with me.

She tosses it, slower, and he HITS it. It rolls out in the outfield. He runs the bases like his life depends on it.

ACTRESS  
Get the ball while you're out  
there.

But he doesn't.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
So I'M supposed to get it?

She jogs out and retrieves it - walks back to the infield.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
That's the LAST hit you're getting  
off me.

SERIES OF SHOTS - Throw after throw, they are faster, the Boy misses several, jumps out of the way of some others - finally he gets a solid HIT. She watches it roll way out in the outfield.

EXT. GAS STATION - DUNSMUIR - DAY

They sit on a concrete barrier. She's got COFFEE, he has SKITTLES. She has the BIRKIN BAG on her shoulder.

ACTRESS  
So this is the big, hard-to-find  
coffee shop. A gas station. And  
this is the "good" coffee?

BOY  
I don't drink the stuff, I just  
know where it is.

He pockets the Skittles and stands, starts THROWING PEBBLES at a PROPANE TANK. They bounce off with sharp CLANGS.

ACTRESS  
Can't that explode?

BOY  
That would be awesome.

He throws another pebble, harder.

BOY (CONT'D)  
I saw you sleeping in the car after  
my mom dropped me off. Your mouth  
was open like a frog's. Why do you  
sleep in your car?

ACTRESS

It happens by accident. I get tired driving, but think I just need a nap and will drive more later, sometimes later is when the sun is up. My plan is to have no plan.

BOY

That isn't a plan.

ACTRESS

Yes it is. One that makes me brilliant and unconventional. And a plan I am executing perfectly.

Now he grabs a whole handful of gravel, and THROWS IT shotgun-style at the tank. It goes PING-PING-PING-PING.

BOY

Where are your kids?

ACTRESS

Nonexistent.

BOY

Can't get pregnant?

ACTRESS

Where's your Dad anyway?

BOY

Waited too long? It's nothing to be ashamed of. It happens.

She gives him a sharp look -- the message is clear.

BOY (CONT'D)

If my dad doesn't show up after a while, I'm supposed to walk over to the house.

She digs through her bag and produces the Pringles tube. She opens it and points it at the Boy. He looks in the tube.

BOY (CONT'D)

Where are the chips?

ACTRESS

Pull a piece of paper out.

He does, suspiciously. She takes the paper out of his hand before he can unfold it. It says: "She wants to DISRUPT". She tosses it in her bag.



ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
 Let's go, I'll drive you to your  
 father's.

EXT. BOY'S FATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

She lets him out in front of a modest HOUSE. He goes to the door and rings the bell. He waits. Nothing. He goes to a flowerpot with a dead plant in it and gets a KEY from under it. He unlocks the door, looks back at her for a moment, waves slightly and goes in - closes the door.

INT. DUNSMUIR BOOKSTORE - DAY

It's got used books, New Age nick-knacks and other goods. A BOOKSTORE GUY nods at her.

ACTRESS  
 Do you have any screenplays or plays?

BOOKSTORE GUY  
 Maybe.

He leads her over to a corner. He squints at the titles.

BOOKSTORE GUY (CONT'D)  
 This is all we have.

He hands her a battered paperback version of MACBETH.

MISC. DUNSMUIR & VICINITY - SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY

A SERIES OF SHOTS follows the Actress as she prepares her character study of LADY MACBETH. Despite the morbid nature of the text, she reads with a lightness and elated recklessness.

- IN A RAILWAY YARD - she wanders across the tracks mumbling the lines, walking tip-toe on the rails.

- STANDING ON ROCKS IN A STREAM rehearsing, gesturing.

- AT THE BALL PARK - Laying on her back in the outfield, repeating parts of lines over and over.

- A STREET WITH MT. SHASTA LOOMING BEYOND. She is pacing back and forth, lost in character.

Under all of the ABOVE we hear her:

## ACTRESS

Double, double toil and trouble;  
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.  
 Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
 Witches' mummy, maw and gulf  
 Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,  
 Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,  
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
 Silver'd in the moon's eclipse,  
 Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,  
 Finger of birth-strangled babe,  
 Ditch-deliver'd by a drab. Make the  
 gruel thick and slab: Add thereto a  
 tiger's chaudron, For the  
 ingredients of our cauldron.  
 Double, double toil and trouble;  
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

The last line she mutters as she sits in her CAR, taking a PHOTOGRAPH of an ORDINARY WOMAN walking down the street.

## INT. DUNSMUIR MOTEL - NIGHT

The PHOTO of the Ordinary Woman is taped to the wall next to other RESEARCH PICTURES OF WOMEN. Some of them have been marked with cryptic NOTES with colored markers - noting posture, jewelry, makeup, hairstyles, etc.

HER BED - covered with her purchases; clothes, a baseball glove and ball, food, makeup. She grabs a RED MARKER.

She draws an arrow on the last photo, pointing to how the woman has put her hair up. She takes the photo off the wall.

THE BATHROOM MIRROR - she tapes the picture there and takes some BOBBY PINS and works to put her hair up like the woman. She recites,

## ACTRESS

What, will these hands ne'er be  
 clean? No more o' that, my lord, no  
 more o' that: you mar all with this  
 starting.

(considers, unhappy, repeats)

What, will these hands ne'er be  
 clean? No more o' that, my lord, no  
 more o' that: you mar all with this  
 starting.

EXT. DUNSMUIR BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

The Actress is at the field, throwing a ball against the backboard and fielding it, like the Boy did. She mumbles,

ACTRESS

(throws - THUMP)

What need we fear who knows it,  
when none can call our power to  
account? Yet who would have thought  
the old man to have had so much  
blood in him.

(revising emphasis -  
throws - THUMP)

Yet who would have thought the old  
man to have had so much BLOOD in  
him.

(throws again - THUMP)

Yet who would have thought the old  
man to have had so MUCH blood in  
him.

A LITTLE LEAGUE COACH walks over to her.

LITTLE LEAGUE COACH

Uh, we have the field at 3:30.

The Actress looks around. LITTLE LEAGUERS have begun to gather outside the fence. They wear team T-shirts. Some PARENTS are there, staring at the Actress. Behind, another CAR ARRIVES, and THE BOY she met earlier is ejected with his baseball gear and his team T-shirt. The MOTHER is briefly seen, but she seems in a hurry and DRIVES AWAY. The Boy is a bit startled to see the Actress with his coach. She walks to the fence and he meets her there.

BOY

What are you doing here?

ACTRESS

Working.

BOY

Did coach yell at ya?

ACTRESS

No.

In a way it seems the Boy understands the Actress, or at least has the idea there is mischief to be had together.

BOY  
(to the coach)  
Hey Coach, can my Aunt help you  
today? She can pitch. Really.

The Coach brightens up.

LITTLE LEAGUE COACH  
Sure. I'm Robby.

ACTRESS  
I'm Aunt Agnes.

He HUGS her, awkwardly.

LITTLE LEAGUE COACH  
How cool you are, wanting to help.  
You throw BP, I'll do grounder  
drills with the infield. I'll get  
the balls...  
(shouting)  
Okay - Outfielders get BP, everyone  
else over here for drills...

BOY  
(whispers to her)  
"BP" is Batting Practice.

EXT. DUNSMUIR BASEBALL FIELD - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

She is pitching to a BATTER. The Boy is catching.

ACTRESS  
(mumbling to herself)  
'tis the eye of childhood...

She throws. He HITS it. She picks up another ball, winds up.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
...That fears a painted devil.

The ball sails at the batter's head, he HITS the dirt.

BOY  
Alright, just throw it down the  
middle. It's BP. He's SUPPOSED to  
hit it.

ACTRESS  
Can't one of you pitch?

BOY

They don't LET us - It's coach-pitch league.

BATTER

God - Don't you KNOW that?

The Boy throws the ball back to her.

THE COACH - is doing grounder drills, but watching the Actress. She PITCHES. The Kid hits a HARD GROUNDER straight back at her, she SPASMS in reaction, and instinctively CATCHES IT in her glove, eyes squeezed shut.

BOY

NICE ONE Auntie Agnes!

The Coach nods... Impressed.

ACTRESS

(bad-ass)

NEXT!

The Batter sheepishly hands the bat to the next kid. She waits, cold as Lady Macbeth, but there's a happy gleam in her eye.

EXT. DUNSMUIR BASEBALL FIELD - A SHORT TIME LATER

Practice is over, the kids are milling about. The Coach is talking with the Actress.

LITTLE LEAGUE COACH

So, how long are you going to be staying?

ACTRESS

I'm leaving. Soon.

LITTLE LEAGUE COACH

(joking)

Are you here like the others, who want to communicate with the aliens that live under Mt. Shasta and twirl in the vortex and find the lost city of J. C. Brown and all that?

ACTRESS

Is that what people come here for?

LITTLE LEAGUE COACH

Well, those that don't come for fishing.

EXT. GAS STATION - DUNSMUIR - DAY

The Actress and the Boy are back at the station, sitting on the same barrier. She's got a BOTTLE of water, he has Sour Patch CANDY.

ACTRESS

What do you know about this "Aliens inside Mt. Shasta" thing?

BOY

My Dad says it's big business, all these people come from the cities and buy crystals and stuff. He knew a guy who bought quartz crystals at twenty dollars a pound and sold them for thirty bucks each, for LITTLE ones! They think giant aliens live under the mountain in a big tube or something.

ACTRESS

What do you think?

He's gone back to throwing more rocks at the propane tank.

BOY

Just bullshit.

He throws one. PING.

ACTRESS

I want to tell you, I think I'm leaving tonight.

BOY

Where you going?

ACTRESS

I don't know really, I just drive north till I see something interesting. Then I stop driving, but before long I start driving again.

BOY

What are you looking for?

ACTRESS

If I told you it would sound weird.

BOY

Okay.

He throws another rock. PING. It doesn't occur to him that adults might feel that something is so missing that they have to go look for it.

ACTRESS

...Does that sound dumb?

BOY

I usually say things whether they sound dumb or not. I don't give a damn.

ACTRESS

Good plan.

She picks up some rocks and THROWS THEM at the tank like the boy. They go, "Ping-Ping-Ping."

BOY

You should consider just doing stuff, don't think about it all the time.

He THROWS some more rocks. She pockets the one stone left in her hand.

EXT. BOY'S FATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Her car pulls up in front of the house.

ACTRESS

It was nice hanging out with you.

BOY

Yeah. Thanks for helping me with baseball. And the Sour Patches. And the Skittles.

ACTRESS

Did my pitching improve?

BOY

A little.

He gets out of the car. This time he goes straight to the flowerpot for the spare key. He looks back at her.

BOY (CONT'D)

Bye, Aunt Agnes.

She waves.

EXT. SACRED VOYAGE SPIRITUAL CENTER - DAY

A New Age Center in the shadow of Mt. Shasta. A sign says "Transformational Seminar Tonight". She sits in the car and pulls out some of the research photographs she made. She applies eyeliner to match one woman's eyes. She studies some other photos. She does some VOCAL WARM-UP EXERCISES as she gets out, goes to the trunk and opens it. She places her bag inside and takes out various GYPSY-LIKE GARMENTS, scarves and a feathery wrap of some sort. She shuts the trunk and dissolves into her Lady Macbeth.

INT. SACRED VOYAGE SPIRITUAL CENTER - DAY

A SPEAKER is at a podium in front of an attentive GROUP. The Actress walks, almost glides up, through the audience, to the speaker, she interrupts and says:

ACTRESS

J. C. Brown sent me.

The Speaker wilts away. The room QUIETS as all eyes are on her. The Actress stares at them, then starts, reciting in a way that almost makes sense:

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Come, you spirits, that tend on  
mortal thoughts, unsex me here, and  
fill me from the crown to the toe  
top-full of direst cruelty! Make  
thick my blood; Stop up the access  
and passage to remorse, that no  
compunctious visitings of nature  
shake my fell purpose, nor keep  
peace between the effect and it!

(dramatically seizing her  
boobs in both hands)

Come to my woman's breasts, and  
take my milk for gall, you  
murdering ministers, wherever in  
your sightless substances you wait  
on nature's mischief! Come, thick  
night, and pall thee in the dunkest  
smoke of hell, that my keen knife  
see not the wound it makes, nor  
heaven peep through the blanket of  
the dark, to cry 'Hold, hold!'

There are excited MURMURS from the crowd. A few people have started CHANTING.



A MAN IN THE AUDIENCE  
(shouts)  
When will the Truth be revealed?

ACTRESS  
Oh, never shall sun THAT morrow  
see!

THE SPEAKER  
Who are you... who do you channel?  
Are you Phyllos? Are you Lemurian?

The Actress walks to the Speaker, reaches out and takes HER FACE in her HAND, like Hamlet holding Yorick's skull. She is frozen.

ACTRESS  
Your face, my thane, is as a book  
where men may read strange matters.

And with that she WALKS OUT.

EXT. SACRED VOYAGE SPIRITUAL CENTER - DAY

The Actress is DRIVING AWAY. She looks in the rearview mirror.

THE MIRROR - The CROWD is outside the center, DANCING and CHANTING.

ACTRESS  
And they say The Theatre is dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OREGON COASTAL DUNES - DAY

The Actress is walking on the ridge of a sand dune, she is on the phone with Mark back in LA. She is wearing the white blanket again on her shoulders, stalking the ridge like a lost Spirit.

MARK'S VOICE  
Explain to me again what you are  
doing up there...

ACTRESS  
I'm WORKING. Killing it.

INT. MARK'S CAR - LOS ANGELES - CONTINUOUS

Mark is in his car, talking to her.

MARK

Why don't you come back? You need to patch things up with Stu. It's bad. He told me to stop submitting you for things. That's BAD.

EXT. OREGON DUNES - CONTINUOUS

ACTRESS

I CAN'T.

MARK'S VOICE

And I am worried about you. You're not going to end up in the tabloids are you? Found behind a dumpster eating out of an old box of cereal?

ACTRESS

I do like cereal.

INT. MARK'S CAR - LOS ANGELES - CONTINUOUS

ACTRESS

It's beautiful here. You should get out of LA, Mark. There's a WORLD out here.

MARK'S VOICE

Yeah?

EXT. OREGON DUNES - CONTINUOUS

She looks at the dark, ominous WAVES crashing on the shore.

ACTRESS

I drove all day up this wild coast...

EXT. OREGON COAST MONTAGE - DAY

A SERIES OF FLASHBACKS in SLOW-MOTION generally matching what she is describing. The shots include:

- HER DRIVING in the rain through THICK FORESTS. The WIPERS are the only sound we hear.

## ACTRESS' VOICE

Mostly just hour after hour gliding through billions of trees and then, you pop out into an open space and there is an untamed, terrifying chunk of coast...

- WILD STEEP COASTLINE, massive ROCKS jutting into the sea.
- ROADSIDE ATTRACTION - A giant PAUL BUNYON and BABE THE OX.

## ACTRESS' VOICE (CONT'D)

...or maybe a touristy place where there is something giant to look at and everyone piles out of cars to pee.

- Another ROADSIDE ATTRACTION, one with cartoonish GIANT DINOSAURS.

## ACTRESS' VOICE (CONT'D)

And you would think, that we puny humans would be so overwhelmed with this world that engulfs us...

- Her wandering through people at the Dinosaur place, VARIOUS PEOPLE watching her.

## ACTRESS

But, it's nothing like that. It doesn't affect anyone. People act like they are back at the local mall - rushing off to the toilet and crowding into gift shops. Sometimes they think they recognize me, and just stare.

## EXT. THE DUNES - DAY

She stands there with the PHONE to her ear. Verbalizing this exhausts her... she waits for a response.

## ACTRESS

Mark?

She looks at her phone. No signal. Probably just as well.

There, at the bottom of the dune is a SERIOUS MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE, decked out with hiking poles, matching visors, matching fanny-packs and water bottles. They stare at her. She's a sight after all, white blanket flapping in the breeze, standing on the stark bare dune, her hair a wild mane. Her eyes glowing with pure self-contempt.

Impulsively she re-enters her Lady Macbeth character, descends to them, muttering:

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
 (to the couple)  
 Life's but a walking shadow, a poor  
 player that struts and frets her  
 hour upon the stage...

She slithers closer and closer, the Wife slides behind her Husband for protection.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
 ...And then is heard no more. It is  
 a tale told by an IDIOT,

She's close now, face to face with the Husband who shields himself with a glazed, emotionless expression. She whispers the final words into his ear, her pain-soaked eyes peering into the wife's frightened gaze.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
 Full of sound and fury...  
 Signifying... (whispers)  
 ...NOTHING.

The terrified Wife pulls the Husband away from this she-demon. The couple walks quickly down the trail, almost running. The Actress follows.

EXT. VARIOUS PLACES ALONG THE DUNES TRAIL - DAY

She follows the couple like a mad spirit, stopping when they stop, following when they move. It's a game to her, but the Wife is terrified. The landscape this plays out in is epic - frightfully lonely dunes amid a dark stormy seascape.

THE PARKING LOT - The couple return to their CAR, and rush to get inside. They lock the doors and LEAVE quickly. The Actress on the top of a dune above them, watching them. When they have gone, she takes out her PHONE, pushes a few buttons, RECORDS her words:

ACTRESS  
 A poor player that struts and frets  
 her hour upon the stage, and then  
 is heard no more. It is a tale told  
 by an idiot, full of sound and  
 fury... Signifying nothing.

She pushes "stop" then "play".

## RECORDING

*"A poor player that struts and  
frets her hour upon the stage, and  
then is..."*

She STOPS the recording. She closes her eyes. All we HEAR is the waves, crashing.

EXT. PORTLAND, OREGON - LATE NIGHT

The Actress drives into the city, across the St. Johns Bridge. It's late... things are still and quiet.

EXT. DOWNTOWN PORTLAND STREET - NIGHT

She drives. Her HEADLIGHTS briefly illuminates SOMEONE IN A HOODIE hunched over an ELECTRIC BOX, applying a large GRAPHIC POSTER with WHEATPASTE.

She drives on, considers. Then she pulls over to the curb, and digs through her bag. She produces the PRINGLES TUBE, and pulls out a slip of PAPER. In the dim glow of the streetlight it reads: "She wants to NURTURE." She turns the car around.

EXT. STREET CORNER - PORTLAND - NIGHT

The Actress's car pulls up to the corner where the electric box is. The GRAPHIC is half-stuck to the box. A BUCKET with PASTE and a BRUSH and SQUEEGEE are laying on the pavement. She parks and gets out to look. She picks up the brush and starts to paste up the rest of the graphic. It is a large B&W IMAGE of a young woman's SNARLING FACE with the words: "The Girl You Can't Have."

BEHIND HER - Appears a pair of small LEGS in skinny jeans.

GIRL

That's MINE you know.

The Actress looks up, it's a GIRL wearing the hoodie. She is young. There is a lot of eyeliner. Her face is the one on the graphic. The Actress glances at both faces.

ACTRESS

Nice picture.

GIRL

That's more than enough paste. You have to squeegee it now.

She takes the squeegee from her, and does it herself.  
Something catches the Girl's eye.

THE STREET - A POLICE CRUISER rolls by.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Fuck.

The Girl grabs her gear and rushes to the Actress's car.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Com'on - Help me out.

Both get in. She drives away. The Girl huddles down on the floor. The POLICE CRUISER now PASSES them, heading back.

ACTRESS

They're gone.

OUT OF THE WINDOW - The Actress sees another wheat-paste GRAPHIC, identical to the last one. This one is on a wall.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

You're famous.

GIRL

Pretty much.

ACTRESS

How does that feel?

GIRL

Normal. For me.

She crawls back up into the seat.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Yeah, I've got like eight thousand followers online and I was in a music video three times. And now I am everywhere as "The Girl You Can't Have" and no one knows who I am and everyone is saying "who is she?"

ACTRESS

"The Girl You Can't Have."

GIRL

Yeah.

The Girl studies the Actress for a moment.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Isn't it past your bedtime?

ACTRESS

Shouldn't I be asking you that?

GIRL

I do whatever I want to. A psychic had a vision that I am going to die really young, and I have to do a lot of great things before then. I'm going to move to LA, this man I met is going to send me down there and get me an apartment, 'cause he knows how talented I am and says he has never met anyone with my special quality and he wants to help me. He's kinda old but he's okay. He knows a producer of some reality shows. He's good friends with him. But I don't really want to do TV, I am a better actress for movies. My list of people who I want to star with includes, Robert De Niro, Christian Bale, Brie Larson and Bradley Cooper. I have this script I am writing where Robert De Niro plays my grandfather and I am a Special Agent in the Middle East and he comes to avenge me after I am captured on a Special Ops assignment gone bad, and he comes out of retirement for the CIA. He thinks I'm dead but I'm not dead, I have survived by seducing the guard and escaping and living underground disguised as an assassin for hire for the terrorists. They hire me to kill my OWN Grandfather, which is how we get together and then kick ass. In one scene - I am on a zip line, flying down from the tower of a mosque with two AK-47s, one in each hand... blau-blau-blau-blau! I'm shooting everyone... And I have the address of this Hollywood script agent and am going to send it to him and I am probably going to finish it in a week or two.

Through this barrage, the Actress restrains herself from commenting, although it would have been impossible to get a word in anyway.

ACTRESS

So. An actress.

GIRL

Yeah.

EXT. A CRAPPY PART OF PORTLAND - APARTMENT BLDG. - NIGHT

The Actress's car pulls up in front of a low-rent apartment building. The Girl gathers her stuff and starts to get out.

GIRL

Hey, why don't you come up? My roommates are probably having some kind of party, it would be so awesome for them to meet you.

ACTRESS

Why...

Does the Girl recognize her? If so, she's not letting on.

GIRL

Because you saved me from the cops, I'd likely be in jail or being interrogated right now if not for you. You are pretty awesome and cool too.

ACTRESS

I'm trying to get to Tacoma tonight.

GIRL

No way. There is nothing in Tacoma, Come on! If you are going to Tacoma, you'll need coffee. I make really good coffee.

ACTRESS

Thanks, really...

GIRL

Please, please, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE!!

The Actress looks at her, she's fairly adorable in the streetlight.

ACTRESS

(caving in)

Okay, just for a quick coffee.



## INT. GIRL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Girl enters an unkept studio apartment with her wheat-paste paraphernalia, and the Actress behind her with her Birkin bag and a look of regret. There is MUSIC. The room is mostly lit by strings of CHRISTMAS LIGHTS. MATTRESSES are laying around the small space. TWO KIDS are playing Xbox on an ENORMOUS SCREEN, TWO OTHERS are sitting around texting & drinking. The Girl is obviously the Alpha, they all look at her, expectantly.

GIRL

Hey everyone, this is my new friend, she saved me from the cops, who busted me - and I TOLD YOU they were after me - and she stopped and talked to them and told them she was my MOM and totally kicked their asses and they let me go and apologized to me. Ha! Is she EPIC or what?

The kids look at her with some sort of dull amazement. Some of them muster the energy to make a small gesture of greeting towards the Actress.

ACTRESS

Hi everyone. Didn't say I was her Mom. Didn't talk to any cops. No one was arrested. Not staying long.

The Girl glances at the Actress, mischievously triumphant. She obviously LOVES lying.

GIRL

Coffee!

## INT. THE KITCHEN - GIRL'S APARTMENT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

She pulls a chipped COFFEE CUP out of a dirty microwave and sticks her finger in the water.

GIRL

I think it is hot enough.

She stirs in INSTANT COFFEE. She hands it to the Actress.

ACTRESS

...Thanks.

INT. GIRL'S APARTMENT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The Girl is SINGING KARAOKE, and DANCING, the center of attention. As she moves, she casts a shadow on the Actress's face, whose expression is pleasantly bemused. Layered underneath is something dark and unreadable.

This is interrupted by a LOUD BANGING on the door. The Girl drops the MIC, anger in her eyes. She storms to the door and FLINGS it open. There stands a tallish, dangerous-looking BOYFRIEND in a sleeveless T-shirt with an oversized TONGUE STUD. A scruffy SIDEKICK is with him.

BOYFRIEND

Why don't you answer my texts, BITCH?

GIRL

Fuck you Todd! I got arrested by the police tonight, no thanks to you.

BOYFRIEND

That's probably BULLSHIT.

GIRL

Todd! Get outa here, I am so OVER this.

She tries to close the door, but he roughly PUSHES HER, and barges in.

BOYFRIEND

(looking at everyone)

I see you are still hanging out with all these RETARDS. Who the fuck is SHE?

Meaning the Actress. She slowly STANDS, like she is being inflated to superhero size.

GIRL

That's my FUCKING MOM - you LOSER!

BOYFRIEND

Oh, So THAT'S the bitch...

Instantly, he regrets that. In a moment, the Actress is UPON HIM.

ACTRESS

Todd... it's time to leave. You and your friend are LEAVING and you are never RETURNING here, you are never CONTACTING my daughter again...

The SHEER POWER of her RAGE is pushing him back, out of the door and into the hallway. The Girl and all the kids follow.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

...and if you do, Todd, I will hunt you down, and I have a pair of pliers Todd, a pair of pliers I keep in my bag, and I will take that motherfucking tongue stud of yours in my pliers and SQUEEZE it and rip it out of your pasty tongue and shove it so far up your ass that you'll cough it up for breakfast - THEN Todd, THEN, I'll turn you over to my alcoholic Policeman ex-husband and his cop buddies who will have a really good time beating the unholy SHIT out of you Todd. Remember Todd, I'll KNOW.

By this time Todd & Co. have left the building. The kids stare.

GIRL

(whispered)

...SO EPIC...

ROOMMATE

...FU-U-UH-CK...

The Actress turns to her, with a real maternal annoyance.

ACTRESS

What are you DOING with a douche-bag like that anyway?

The Girl shrugs.

ROOMMATE

Are you REALLY her Mom?

GIRL

Shut UP Justin!

INT. GIRL'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

A soft morning light is sifting into the room. The entire party of kids are splayed out across the mattresses, ASLEEP. The Actress is asleep too, hugging her Birkin bag in both arms. The Girl is asleep next to her, curled-up alongside her like a puppy.

THEN, we hear: CLICK-CLICK-CLICK.

The Roommate is taking PHOTOS of the sleeping Actress. She WAKES UP and sees him. She narrows her eyes.

ACTRESS  
(sweetly)  
Can I see?

The Roommate hands her his PHONE. She clicks through the photos, pushes ERASE for each. She TOSSES THE PHONE ACROSS THE ROOM and gets up. This wakes the Girl up.

GIRL  
What is happening?

ACTRESS  
I've got to get going.

GIRL  
Are you leaving?

ACTRESS  
Yes, I really should not have stayed. I'm late.

The Girl seems to panic.

GIRL  
Oh, please stay. Really.

The Actress packs her things up.

EXT. STREET BY APARTMENT - DAY

The Actress BEEPS her car open & gets in. In her REAR VIEW MIRROR she sees the Girl, RUNNING TOWARDS HER, carrying a BAG. She runs up to the car.

GIRL  
I wanna go with you.

ACTRESS  
No.

GIRL  
Please let me go with you.

ACTRESS  
No. No, and No.

The Girl steps it up.

GIRL

Todd is going to come back when he hears you are gone. And he's going to do something bad. He's really mean.

(reading her face for clues on how to proceed)

He'll know you are gone, one of those guys will text him or post something. He BROKE my arm before. He really DID, it was in a CAST. Ask Justin. I'll call the doctor, you can talk to him.

ACTRESS

I think you can handle him. I think you can handle anyone.

GIRL

I'm little, I won't take up much room. I just want a ride to Tacoma, my Dad lives there. PLEASE.

ACTRESS

I'm not going to Tacoma anymore, I'm going further north.

GIRL

But I bet you go BY Tacoma. He could come pick me up at an exit or something.

The Actress PAUSES, seeing her chance, the Girl closes the deal.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Todd is going to hurt me, I swear to GOD, I SWEAR TO GOD.

(she starts to CRY)

I don't WANT to see him anymore. He can't get me if I'm with my Dad. That's the only place I feel safe.

And the Girl makes the most pitiful, lovely face possible. The Actress knows she's being played, but she can't help it. She unlocks the passenger door and the Girl scampers around and crawls in. The car takes off.

ACTRESS

Do not say a FUCKING word.

EXT. COFFEE PLACE - PORTLAND - DAY

The Actress returns to the car, she has TWO COFFEES and a BAG. She hands them to the Girl, then gets in.

GIRL

Thank you. You didn't have to do that.

ACTRESS

No problem. There are scones.

She pulls out the PRINGLES TUBE and opens it. She points it at the Girl.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Take a paper out, just one.

GIRL

Why?

ACTRESS

Just do it.

The Girl reaches in and pulls out a slip of paper. The Actress SNATCHES it out of her hand before she can read it. The Actress glances at it and re-folds it. We don't see it. She tucks it in her bra, starts the car and DRIVES.

INT. THE CAR - DRIVING - A SHORT TIME LATER

The girl is eating.

GIRL

Ummmmmm. Cinnamon raisin.

ACTRESS

So what do you do? For money I mean.  
Does your dad give you money?

GIRL

I'm independent. I get signatures for a company, petitions. I go to the MAX trains and get lots of them, I get twenty five cents a signature, but I have to validate them which is a pain. I got 323 in one day once, but Justin helped. I use this smile...

She SMILES, brightly and well-practiced.

GIRL (CONT'D)

It's a good smile, right?

ACTRESS

Sure.

GIRL

It's a GREAT smile!

ACTRESS

Your Dad knows you are coming?

GIRL

Yeah, I texted him. He's excited.  
He'll meet us at the Ferry,  
whenever we get there.

ACTRESS

Okay.

GIRL

Where are you driving to anyway?

ACTRESS

Someplace you would hate.

GIRL

Where did you start?

ACTRESS

Mexico.

GIRL

No WAY... really?

ACTRESS

Well, Tijuana.

GIRL

Where is that?

ACTRESS

Just south of San Diego.

GIRL

Where is that?

ACTRESS

Below LA, at the bottom of  
California.

GIRL

I thought it was in Texas or  
something. So you live in LA?

ACTRESS

Yeah.

GIRL

(can't stand it anymore)  
What is it like on the Red Carpet,  
I mean, how cool is it?

ACTRESS

What are you talking about?

GIRL

I KNOW who you ARE. My Mom watched  
that show all the time when I was a  
little girl. She said you were her  
second favorite of all of them.

ACTRESS

Ahh, "second favorite." That's what  
I was always going for.

GIRL

I wasn't sure when I first saw you,  
but in your car I figured it out.  
You say some words exactly the way  
you say them on TV. And you turn  
your head that way. You know, the  
way you do.

ACTRESS

Oh.

GIRL

Do you throw up your food to stay  
skinny?

ACTRESS

No.

GIRL

God, I would...

ACTRESS

It's not as cool as you think.

GIRL

Come on - you get to be on the RED  
CARPET, they all take your picture. I  
bet you have been in US MAGAZINE  
like, a million times... right? You  
have so many IMDB credits. You are  
famous.

The Actress is really hating this.



GIRL (CONT'D)

After you fell asleep I looked you up. I never sleep anyway. It said you started when you were my age. Like EXACTLY my age.

ACTRESS

I was lucky.

GIRL

Are you going to be in a new movie? Or TV show?

ACTRESS

I'm taking a break.

GIRL

(on to what's really important)  
I am going to be SO FAMOUS. I'm moving to LA and I bet I am going to be on TV right away, like you, or maybe straight into my first movie. (something occurs to her)  
Why did I eat both of those scones, am I CRAZY? I can't eat anything more today. Or maybe tomorrow. Maybe some carrot sticks.

The ACTRESS sets her teeth and accelerates.

OUTSIDE: A sign: TACOMA 138 MILES

EXT. I-5 - SOUTHERN WASHINGTON - DAY

The car drives into deeply forested country.

EXT. REST STOP - I-5 - DAY

They are sitting on a cement rest stop table. The Actress LIGHTS a CIGARETTE.

GIRL

Do you smoke?

The Actress takes a long DRAG.

ACTRESS

No.

She tosses the cigarette aside. She exhales the smoke with emphasis.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
It makes ugly lines around your  
mouth.

The Girl is meekly standing there, but deep in her eyes we  
see triumph and excitement. The Actress sees it.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Look. This is a tiny ABERRATION.  
This is not a week, or even days,  
this is a few HOURS. We don't have  
any "special friendship" or  
"connection" or bullshit like that.

The Girl smiles.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
DON'T try to fucking charm me.

GIRL  
Can I have one?

ACTRESS  
No.

She takes out another CIGARETTE, lights it, takes a drag, and  
tosses it.

EXT. CAR, I-5 COMING INTO TACOMA - DAY

The Actress is still driving. The Girl is ASLEEP. The Actress  
glances at her. Her phone RINGS, she LOOKS to see who it is,  
and answers,

ACTRESS  
Hi, Mark.

INT. TALENT AGENCY - BEVERLY HILLS - CONTINUOUS

MARK'S VOICE  
What are you doin'?

ACTRESS  
Driving. Heading for Tacoma.

MARK  
How about I come crash your little  
pity-party? It's a long weekend  
coming up -- I can fly up to  
Seattle or Vancouver... you're  
going that way right?

ACTRESS' VOICE

Yeah.

MARK

I can do crazy actor shit with you,  
like pretending to be an oyster.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

ACTRESS

Great.

MARK'S VOICE

Don't sound so excited.

ACTRESS

No -- I AM... I just can't talk  
right now.

MARK'S VOICE

Well, let's set it up. We'll be  
like FEAR & LOATHING. But I'll do  
all the drinking and pill-popping  
and you do all the driving.

EXT. THE FERRY LANDING - TACOMA - LATE AFTERNOON

The SUN is getting low. She parks. She nudges the Girl.

ACTRESS

We are here. Tacoma. The ferry. I  
didn't want to wake you up before.

GIRL

(waking)

Oh, okay. Uhhh.

ACTRESS

Text your Dad. We can get coffee or  
something till he comes.

The Girl shuffles around, looks at her phone, punches at it.  
She is stalling so she can think.

GIRL

I guess I can get out here. I can  
wait for him.

ACTRESS

It's no problem, I can wait. I  
don't want you waiting by yourself.

The Girl keeps staring at her phone. She's obviously trying to sort something out.

GIRL

No, I can get out here. Can I call you when I get to LA? Really? I know I'm a pain, but can I?

ACTRESS

Maybe.

The Girl scribbles her number on a paper she gets from her bag. She gives it to the Actress. She gathers her bag & phone, and opens the door, moving slowly, trying to think.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

What is going on?

GIRL

You are going to be mad at me.

ACTRESS

What.

GIRL

My dad doesn't live in Tacoma.

ACTRESS

REALLY. Where does he live?

GIRL

...Oklahoma, I think. I don't really know.

ACTRESS

You just LIED to me?

GIRL

(PAUSES, then)

...You lie too!

The Actress glares at her.

ACTRESS

WHO do you know in Tacoma?

GIRL

No one.

ACTRESS

Get in.

She gets in. The Actress grabs the phone from her. Goes to "photos" and starts scrolling through.

THE PHONE - Finding PHOTOS of herself, she ERASES them.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
(handing the phone back)  
Take ONE MORE picture of me...

She doesn't have to finish the sentence.

GIRL  
Where are we going?

ACTRESS  
I have no idea.

INT. GAS STATION STORE - DAY

The Actress is picking a WATER BOTTLE out of the refrigerated case. She glances at the counter.

THE COUNTER - The Girl is chatting up the CONVENIENCE GUY working there. She has a hand on her hip provocatively.

CLOSER - The Guy has a goofy smile on his face.

GIRL  
She's kinda cool. "Future-  
superstar." She ACTUALLY calls me  
that. And that I have more talent  
than she did at my age.

The Guy's eyes shift to something behind the girl.

ACTRESS'S VOICE  
Excuse me...

The Actress is standing BEHIND HER.

ACTRESS  
(to him)  
Are you HITTING on her?

CONVENIENCE GUY  
Uh, no.

ACTRESS  
You know, she is FIFTEEN years old.

GIRL  
I'm not!

ACTRESS  
JUST turned fifteen.

CONVENIENCE GUY  
I didn't do any...

ACTRESS  
We don't put up with this shit  
anymore. The Patriarchy is OVER.  
And hitting on underage girls won't  
fix your flaccid noodle-dick.

CONVENIENCE GUY  
Wait...

ACTRESS  
...You disgusting PIG.

GIRL  
He didn't...

ACTRESS  
TWO bags of GUMMI BEARS? The  
"Obesity Packs?"

Referring to the two "sharable" bags of Gummi Bears on the  
counter by her.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
You're waiting for me to pay right?  
I'm not paying for that corn syrup  
shit.

She picks up a package and reads it.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
23 grams of carbs per serving? 6  
servings per bag. Thats like, 140  
grams of carbs per bag, and I know  
you plan to eat BOTH of these  
motherfuckers. Are you fucking  
INSANE?

GIRL  
I don't want them anymore...

ACTRESS  
...Have you SEEN your ass lately?  
Seriously, have you SEEN it? It's  
growing like a goddamn radioactive  
mushroom. In a few months, you'll  
be able to balance a big bottle of  
Coke on it as you waddle down the  
street.

The Girl's eyes lock with the Actress's.

EXT. TACOMA TRAIN STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

The Actress's car pulls in front.

INSIDE - From her purse, she hands the Girl a \$100 bill.

ACTRESS

This will pay for the ticket, and  
the taxi home, and more fucking  
junk food.

She reaches over and opens the Girl's door, pushing it open dramatically.

GIRL

I saw this scene in a movie...

ACTRESS

Get out.

GIRL

That's what the guy said to her  
too.

The Actress just stares at her, shark-eyed. Eventually the girl gets out with her bag. She closes the door and the Actress takes off.

THE GIRL - Looking after her.

THE CAR MIRROR - The Actress's eyes, looking back at her.

EXT. PUGET SOUND - SEATTLE - FERRY - DUSK

The Ferry is leaving Seattle behind. The Actress is at the rail, watching. The wind whips her hair.

She pulls out the folded up PAPER she tucked into her bra previously. She unfolds it. It reads: SHE WANTS TO BE HATED. She tosses the paper overboard.

THE WATER - As the PAPER hits the water and is swept behind.

The Actress turns to look at the SETTING SUN.

EXT. VICTORIA B. C. FERRY LANDING - NIGHT

The Ferry is unloading. The Actress's car unloads with the rest. We see a CANADIAN FLAG.

EXT. VICTORIA AIRPORT - CURBSIDE - DAY

Her CAR is parked at the curb. We see she has fallen asleep, her head against the glass, mouth open. There's a KNOCK on the glass. It's MARK with a BAG.

MARK

Oh my GOD...

She wakes up startled. Rolls down the window.

MARK (CONT'D)

What has HAPPENED to you?

ACTRESS

I got to the hotel late last night, then I couldn't sleep.

MARK

Thank God there are no Paparazzi in Victoria, Canada. You'd be viral right NOW.

ACTRESS

Good to see you too.

MARK

You looked like a frog you know. A drooling, sleeping frog.

ACTRESS

I've heard.

He kisses her on the cheek.

MARK

You're alive...

She SMILES.

INT. CAR - INTER-CANADA HIGHWAY - DAY

They are driving North.

MARK

I mean, there is really NOTHING up here. Nothing. Trees. More trees. Look, a tree! Just like the previous three million trees we have seen so far. Trees... More trees, more trees over there...



ACTRESS

My God, is this what it is going to be like?

MARK

(looking at his phone)  
I have no service, no bars. LOOK, no service. Wait, ONE BAR.

ACTRESS

You have been in Canada for 20 minutes.

INT. TIM HORTONS - GOLDSTREAM, CANADA - DAY

They are at a TABLE with COFFEES, talking.

MARK

So, you just drive north, and that's the entire plan? Drive north - Sleep like frog?

ACTRESS

'Till I run out of road.

MARK

Or get eaten by a bear.

ACTRESS

It's like a traveling theater company, except there is only one actor, me... and no audience.

MARK

And no pay.

She muses for a moment. What she is about to say means a lot to her.

ACTRESS

I'm really GOOD at this.

Mark SIGHS.

MARK

You know, I've come all the way up here to SAVE YOU. From yourself.

ACTRESS

I didn't ask you to.

MARK

Yes, you did, by calling me and being a crazy, desperate nut-job on the phone.

ACTRESS

I'll pay you back for your flight.

MARK

You are good at plenty of things you know... And don't worry, the agency paid for the flight.

ACTRESS

I thought I was fired.

MARK

You might be. But you have been with the agency since you were seventeen years old.

ACTRESS

Yeah.

MARK

That's a very long ten years.

She LAUGHS.

MARK (CONT'D)

Look, there's got to be some kind of fancy resort or lodge up here. Let's check in, hit the spa, devour a massive amount of salmon and wine and breathe the fresh air then fly back to LA in a day or two. I can have your car shipped back. You can patch it up with Stu. There's stuff happening down there. The Streamers are greenlighting everything that moves.

Her eyes darken at the idea.

ACTRESS

I thought I was only good for 3-day TV gigs playing slutty moms.

MARK

Look - What do you expect to happen when you run out of road in the middle of nowhere? Unicorns and chipmunks dancing?

## ACTRESS

I remember looking at my calendar when I was in Mexico and I realized I could not remember ONE SINGLE THING I did in April and most of May, except go to the gym and not eat. Not one thing. Except just wonder every day if I was going to work again, and if I did, would it matter. And how much would I hate it. Yet I can remember EVERY SECOND of what I did and felt and created since I stepped out of that car in Tijuana. I can remember EVERY face and what THEY said and what I did... and it may have all been LIES but it was REAL to me.

EXT. MID-VANCOUVER ISLAND - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

They DRIVE, Highway 19 North.

A SIGN: "LABYRINTH - Find Your Centre."

She turns.

EXT. OCEAN RESORT LABYRINTH - DAY

The Actress and Mark walk the LABYRINTH, a twisty, complicated path laid out in driftwood & stones that leads to a space in the middle. She is expressionless, wearing her expensive SUNGLASSES. It's quiet, but we HEAR the sea nearby.

THE CENTER OF THE LABYRINTH

They sit in the middle of the center, facing each other.

## MARK

I look beautiful in your sunglasses.  
...And long and skinny. I love seeing  
me as YOU see me.

The Actress reaches her hands towards him. Like a blind person, she feels his face, delicately at first, then more aggressively, she smushes his face between her fingers.

## ACTRESS

You feel handsome, yet charmless.

## MARK

The ideal combination.

ACTRESS

So why aren't you married?

MARK

Maybe I am, how would you know? I am just one of the little people no one cares about.

ACTRESS

Because I know. That last woman broke you.

MARK

In several nice symmetrical pieces, so, there's that. I look at the positive.

ACTRESS

(sighs)

In the center of the Labyrinth, you must reveal all.

MARK

So why aren't you married again? You are not even dating.

ACTRESS

Rrrrr.

MARK

In the center of the Labyrinth, you must reveal all.

ACTRESS

Not worth it.

MARK

Come on...

ACTRESS

It's not me they want to date.

MARK

What about Jason?

ACTRESS

No.

MARK

Edward?

ACTRESS

No more actors.

MARK

Tom?

ACTRESS

...OR Producers.

MARK

What do your girlfriends think?

ACTRESS

What are those again?

MARK

You never really had any, did you?

ACTRESS

Some things I'm not good at, like being a real person.

MARK

Friends keep you from going crazy. I still have friends from middle school. They treat me the same, despite my current lofty position; answering the phone and yelling at the dry cleaner who lost Stu's jacket.

ACTRESS

Did he ever get it back?

MARK

No. I had to find another one just like it.

ACTRESS

These things are important. Maybe he plans to be buried in it.

She lays back in the circle.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

Just bury me here. In Stu's coat. And a nice bra.

HER POV - Looking up at the trees and sky. There are CLOUDS.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)

That cloud kind of looks like my old cat. I guess it wasn't really mine, someone was moving to New York and couldn't take it. Or didn't want to take it. And thought the cat was something I should have.

MARK

I didn't know you had a pet. Ever.

ACTRESS

Yes, it's not really like me. By the time I liked her I had to put her to sleep. I guess she was old -she stopped eating and then I would get on the floor and feed her baby food with a spoon. And she stopped taking that, then I had to squirt water down her mouth with a syringe, and later after that the baby food, and then she stopped taking that. But she would walk and walk and walk. She would walk until she got to a wall or a corner and just put her head against the wall for a while and then start walking again, and walking and walking. It was like she was trying to walk away from having to die. It was heartbreaking. I thought I could save her. I would sleep on the floor with her on my stomach so she could sleep, because she couldn't sleep, but she always started walking. And at the end she would take a few steps, and fall and a get up and a few more steps and fall. All night. And if I picked her up and walked her around and let her look out the window or walk with her around in the garden she seemed at peace. Even at the vets as she was being put to sleep, she was moving her legs - like if she just kept moving death would't get her.

Mark doesn't know what to say.

MARK

What was her name.

ACTRESS

Just "Cat." She was a good cat. I don't want another one, I can't do that again.

EXT. SMALL ROAD - NIGHT

It's pitch dark. They are a small spec in a black wilderness. The Actress is shifting in her seat, trying to focus.

MARK  
I can drive...

INT. CAR - CANADIAN HIGHWAY 19 - NIGHT

Mark is driving and the Actress lounges. Then...

A LOUD SQUEAL, and HORRIBLE CRUNCH as a PICKUP TRUCK SLAMS INTO THE SIDE of the Actress's car. She SCREAMS. AIR BAGS EXPLODE. Then, the SLIDING STOPS, it's DARK. We hear the distant SOUND of a CAR RADIO from the other vehicle.

EXT. CRASH SCENE - 30 MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

An AMBULANCE is pulling away. Mark, who seems unhurt, is standing next to her car. It has the passenger side smashed in. A TOW TRUCK arrives. A POLICE OFFICER is still doing PAPERWORK with Mark.

POLICE OFFICER  
Is your wife going to be okay?

MARK  
I think so. (hesitates) But she's not my wife.

INT. COMOX B. C. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Mark is in the HALLWAY with the DOCTOR.

DOCTOR  
Her scaphoid bone is broken in the left wrist, it's fairly minor. I put her in a plaster cast and she'll stay in that for several weeks. I've looked at the MRI, and there seems to be a mild concussion, but I'll get the blood work back tomorrow and can be sure.

The Doctor LEAVES and Mark goes into the HOSPITAL ROOM quietly. He moves towards a CURTAIN, slowly pulls it aside.

THERE - The Actress LAYS VERY STILL, her EYES OPEN, unblinking. She looks HORRIBLE. Mark PANICS.

MARK  
Sweetheart?

NOTHING, she doesn't move, doesn't BLINK, doesn't BREATHE... Mark turns and BOLTS out of the room.

MARK (CONT'D)  
NURSE! COME QUICK.

INT. NURSES STATION - NIGHT

Mark runs up to a busy NURSE.

MARK  
There is something wrong! She's not  
breathing. PLEASE!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

As the Nurse and Mark RUSH in the room. Mark YANKS the  
curtain aside.

SHE'S FINE - clicking through TV channels with the REMOTE.

ACTRESS  
(muttering to herself)  
How many talent shows can be on TV  
at the same time anyway...

NURSE  
There... she's fine.

Mark stares at her, his eyes narrowing.

MARK  
Sorry... I was... mistaken.

The nurse LEAVES Mark turns back to the Actress - who now  
looks GHASTLY, her EYES DEAD, head flopped over, TONGUE OUT.

MARK (CONT'D)  
You bitch.

She comes to life, a gleam in her eyes:

ACTRESS  
"Your face, mythane, is as a book."

She smiles.

MARK  
Up yours, Juliet.

ACTRESS  
That was Lady Macbeth.

MARK  
Fuck her too.



She blows him a kiss. Her Red Carpet smile appears.

EXT. COMOX HOSPITAL PARKING - THE NEXT DAY

Mark PARKS a RENTAL CAR, carries a PLASTIC BAG with him to the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Another NURSE(2) is leaving the Actress as Mark ENTERS.

NURSE 2  
(to Mark, giggling)  
You should HEAR the voices she  
does...  
(to the Actress)  
You should have been an Actress,  
you know!

The Actress beams at Mark, who shrugs.

MARK  
What a preposterous idea...

He hands her the bag.

ACTRESS  
My ROCKS!

She takes the bag eagerly. She takes a rock from her bedside table, and adds it to the group.

MARK  
Where did you get that?

ACTRESS  
The EMT guy gave it to me, from the  
road where we got hit. I asked him  
for one.

She lines up the rocks in chronological order on her bedside table. She uses the hand with the plaster cast.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
(with each hand movement)  
Ouch, ouch, ouch, ouch, ouch.

MARK  
I don't know what you are so cheery  
about, I talked to the Insurance  
Company, they are gonna total your  
car.

She is inspecting the rocks.

MARK (CONT'D)

That guy was drunk you know, just ran the stop sign. What are the chances when there are three cars every hundred square miles up here... that two actually run into each other?

ACTRESS

It wasn't your fault.

MARK

I know... but.

ACTRESS

I'm FINE. And I don't need a car, I'm going to stay in this hospital for a few months maybe. It's Canada -- It's free! And all the TV I can watch.

The DOCTOR wanders in the room, with Nurse 2. The Actress sees him before he sees her, and lays back on the pillow, weakly.

DOCTOR

(looking at her chart)

So how are you feeling today?

ACTRESS

(exhausted)

Headaches. And my vision is not so great - sometimes things get fluttery... it will get better, right? That will take some time.

DOCTOR

Let's see.

He EXAMINES her eyes. She flutters them for him.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Looks pretty good. Pretty eyes.

MARK

Did her blood work get done?

DOCTOR

Yes. And it looks fine. Those headaches won't last long.

ACTRESS

I really think it is going to take  
a long time for my brain to heal.  
Like months.

MARK

She's ready to go, right Doctor?

ACTRESS

Doctor, my wrist. How soon till I can  
play the cello? It's my fingering  
hand.

DOCTOR

Oh... I'd wait six weeks.

ACTRESS

That's great news! Because I could  
never play the cello before.

MARK

Oh god...

ACTRESS

Ha!

DOCTOR

Oh my, I stepped into that  
one!

The Nurse GIGGLES.

MARK

That is the oldest, lamest joke.

The Doctor LAUGHS, so does Mark.

MARK (CONT'D)

Pathetic.

DOCTOR

I HAVE heard that a time or two...  
but you did it good. You should go  
into acting.

ACTRESS

Really?

EXT. COMOX VALLEY AIRPORT - DAY

The RENTAL CAR pulls up to the curb and Mark and the Actress  
get out. Mark gets his bag. She hugs him.

MARK

Can you drive with that cast?

ACTRESS

Yeah, it's automatic. I hate automatic.

MARK

How far are you going?

ACTRESS

The end is less than five hours away.

MARK

Then what?

ACTRESS

Ride that damned Unicorn, what else? Ride it 'til it's freak'n horn falls off.

MARK

Oh, yeah! Enjoy.

ACTRESS

God, you're stupid.

She smiles sweetly - and kisses him.

EXT. SEQUENCE OF SHOTS - HIWAY 19 - DAY

The Actress is driving the long, long TWO LANE ROAD, passing RIVERS, MOUNTAINS, LOGGING TRUCKS and not much else. It is gloomy in a pristine, inhuman way. She STOPS a lot, seemingly for no reason. She picks up ROCKS, throws them in the water. Watches EAGLES flying and fishing, PHOTOGRAPHS giant piles of STACKED-UP LOGS. It's a world with no humans.

EXT. SEQUENCE OF SHOTS - PORT HARDY - DAY

She drives into THE TOWN, and approaches the BAY. She gets out and looks around. A wooden SIGN carved out of a log reads: WELCOME TO PORT HARDY. There is a CARVED BEAR and a GIANT FISH.

EXT. LAST ROAD TO SCOTIA BAY - DAY

The Actress drives down a tiny road past some houses that becomes a gravel road that winds through trees and eventually to SCOTIA BAY, it's a SMALL GORGEOUS BAY with a few BUILDINGS and a small DOCK. Here, THE ROAD DEFINITELY, FINALLY ENDS.

She gets out and smells the air. She takes her BAG and wanders, looking. She picks up a ROCK and puts it in her bag.

There doesn't seem to be anyone around. She walks towards the dock.

EXT. DOCK - SCOTIA BAY - DAY

She walks out to the end of the dock and sits. She takes out her CAMERA and takes some photos. She sits again. Then there is a SOUND in the water below the edge.

THE WATER - A HARBOR SEAL looks at her.

ACTRESS  
Hello, Mr. Unicorn.

She takes his photo. The Seal slides back under the water.

She takes off her jacket. She opens her bag, pulls out all the rocks and lines them up at the very edge, starting with the rock she got at the wind farm in Mojave. She lays flat on the dock. She gazes at them. She hears another WATER SOUND, it's the Seal, peeking at her again.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
I'm still here.

TIME PASSES - The LIGHT eases into a golden hue. She closes her eyes, listens to the SOUNDS. The water lapping, a distant bird, the wind. She turns over to look down in the water, and there is the Seal looking at her again. She recites to him.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
(darkly)  
"Yet who would have thought the old man  
to have had so much BLOOD in him."

The Seal has no reaction.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
Forget it.

She FLICKS one of the STONES IN THE WATER, the first Mojave one. The Seal thinks it is food for an instant, 'til he sees it isn't.

ACTRESS (CONT'D)  
It's just a rock.

She digs into her bag, and pulls out the Pringles Tube. She opens it and pulls out a paper. It reads, "She wants to be Happy." Without much ceremony, she FLICKS EACH ROCK into the water, one by one. The Seal SWIMS AWAY.

She stands up, puts on her jacket, gathers her bag, and WALKS back towards her car. The paper, she puts in her pocket.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNDERWATER - LOOKING UP AT THE EDGE OF THE PIER.

IN SLOW-MOTION - FLASHBACK - We see each of the ROCKS, falling off the pier, one by one... HITTING THE SURFACE and FLOATING DOWN through the water, resting in the silt at the bottom of the bay.

THE END