

# **BUYER BEWARE**

by

Cole Depner

FADE IN:

EXT. DOWNTOWN AUSTIN - COLORADO RIVER - DAY

A KAYAKER paddles through the calm waters of the Colorado River. Above, cars motor across First Street Bridge into downtown Austin, Texas.

EXT. DOWNTOWN AUSTIN - OFFICE TOWER - CONTINUOUS

The summer sun glimmers off the glass of an office tower, its reflection rippling over the water.

SEAN (V.O.)

Wade, we've been over this. You gotta meet me halfway.

INT. OFFICE TOWER - SEAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

SEAN ADLER, late twenties, clean-cut, paces behind his desk, on the phone --

SEAN

What about a free rent period? ...  
Three months. A year?! No way.

Through the glass partition, Sean catches a glimpse of SOMEONE walking by.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Look, I gotta go. I'll call you back.

Sean hangs up and hurries to the door, pushing it open --

SEAN (CONT'D)

Hey, Jen!

JEN FOSTER, early forties, effortlessly charming, the kind of person you would love to bring to your ex's wedding, turns around.

JEN

You're here early. Couldn't wait to get out of the house?

A sly smile spreads across Jen's face.

SEAN

Uh... Yeah, sure. Listen, um... I  
can't find my driver's license. Did  
you --

JEN

You mean this driver's license?

Jen casually holds up his driver's license.

JEN (CONT'D)

Waitress found it under the table.

She hands it to him.

JEN (CONT'D)

Good thing my Uber was late.

Sean stares at it for a moment, then notices the document in  
Jen's hand.

SEAN

What's that?

JEN

(glances down)

This? Oh, just an invoice.

SEAN

From who?

JEN

The structural engineer -- S.S.E.  
Consulting.

Jen hands Sean the invoice.

SEAN

They mailed it?

JEN

Weird, I know. God forbid someone  
gets their hands on the design  
calcs.

Sean studies the invoice, his frown deepening.

JEN (CONT'D)

Something wrong?

He looks up.

SEAN  
What? Oh, no.  
(hands invoice back)  
Here.

A beat.

JEN  
Did you get a haircut?

SEAN  
(fixes hair)  
Uh... Yeah.

JEN  
It looks good.

SEAN  
Thanks.

Jen leaves. Sean lingers at the door, watching her go.

INT. OFFICE TOWER - FOOD COURT - SERVICE COUNTER - DAY

A SERVER dumps a heaping spoonful of beef into a to-go container.

GRANT  
(to Sean)  
You should've moved downtown.

GRANT, Sean's colleague, mid-twenties, boisterous, pays for his lunch.

SEAN  
We couldn't. Emma needed to be closer to the hospital. At least until she finishes her residency.

GRANT  
And how long's that?

SEAN  
Three years.

GRANT  
Fuck me. That sucks.

SEAN  
Yeah, the hours are brutal.

GRANT  
I meant for you.

SEAN

It's not that bad. I just forgot to  
feed the dog.

GRANT

The dog?

SEAN

We got a dog.

GRANT

When?

SEAN

Last week. She's the bane of my  
existence.

GRANT

It's a girl?

SEAN

Yeah, a rescue.

GRANT

What's her name?

Sean hesitates.

SEAN

Snowflake.

Grant bursts out laughing.

SEAN (CONT'D)

I didn't name her.

GRANT

I sure as hell hope not.

INT. OFFICE TOWER - CONCOURSE - MOMENTS LATER

Sean and Grant head back to the office with their food.

GRANT

You know what she's doing, don't  
you?

SEAN

It's just a dog, man.

GRANT

That's what she wants you to think.

SEAN

What was I supposed to say, "No"?

GRANT

I would have.

SEAN

And that's why you're single.

GRANT

No, it's not. I just haven't found my soulmate.

SEAN

There's no such thing.

GRANT

Love is supposed to be effortless.

SEAN

That is the dumbest thing I've ever heard.

GRANT

Says the guy with a dog.

A beat.

GRANT (CONT'D)

Have you talked about it?

SEAN

About what?

GRANT

Kids.

SEAN

Oh... No.

GRANT

No?

SEAN

No, we haven't talked about it.

GRANT

What about marriage?

SEAN

It's not really on my list of priorities.

GRANT  
Does she know that?

SEAN  
She hasn't asked.

GRANT  
But you live together.

SEAN  
Yeah, so?

GRANT  
I don't know. It just seems kind of weird. I mean, don't you want to know if it's going anywhere?

Sean stops, aggravated.

SEAN  
Look, I don't want to get married just to say I'm married. Emma and I are happy. Marriage isn't going to change that. All right? So just drop it.

GRANT  
Okay. Moving on.

Sean takes a breath. They keep walking.

GRANT (CONT'D)  
Marriage is the death of sex, anyway.

Sean looks at Grant sharply.

SEAN  
What? Who told you that?

GRANT  
I don't remember.

Just then, they pass a jewelry store. Grant stops --

GRANT (CONT'D)  
Oh, look...

He wanders over to the display window.

GRANT (CONT'D)  
... Engagement rings. What a coincidence.

SEAN  
Oh my god.

Sean stalks off. Grant calls after him --

GRANT  
And they're on sale!

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Sheets of paper slide out of a printer. Sean stands beside it, waiting. His gaze drifts across the room.

Jen arranges her office. Her outfit -- tailored and confident -- grabs Sean's attention. His eyes linger on her figure.

The WHIR of the printer stops, snapping Sean out of it. With a slight, self-conscious shake of the head, he grabs the papers.

INT. OFFICE - NICOLE'S CUBICLE - MOMENTS LATER

Sean walks over to NICOLE, the stack of papers in his hands.

SEAN  
Hey, what company did Jen say she worked for?

NICOLE  
Um... some insurance brokerage.  
Northridge, I think.

Sean looks at Jen, curious. She puts a potted plant on her desk.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STATION - DAY

A train leaves the station.

AERIAL SHOT - TRAIN - MOMENTS LATER

The train shuttles along.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Crammed with passengers. Sean stands in the aisle, watching the Austin skyline fade into the distance.

## EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

The train ROLLS to a stop. The doors OPEN. Sean gets out.

## EXT. TRAIN STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

Sean gets in a plain-looking sedan and drives off.

## SERIES OF SHOTS - SEAN DRIVES HOME

Sean cruises through the suburbs. The further he drives, the newer the houses get.

He sits at a traffic light. Through the driver's window, a large billboard displaying a rendering of a shopping center -- "Hillside Plaza" -- stands at the front of an empty lot.

He passes a middle school.

He turns down a freshly paved road with houses under construction.

## EXT./INT. CAR - DUSK

The sun dips below the horizon.

Up ahead, a stone sign reading "Townhomes at Silver Springs" comes into view. Sean slows down, turning into a gated community.

## EXT./INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Sean drives by a row of identical townhomes, eyes on the road, glazed over.

## EXT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - MOMENTS LATER

One of the garage doors opens. Sean's car pulls into the garage.

## INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - CONTINUOUS

SNOWFLAKE, a small, spasmodic dog with fluffy white fur, lies on the couch, licking her paw. The place is sparse and undecorated -- a house but not quite a home.

Suddenly, Snowflake sits up, hearing the garage door OPEN. She races to the door, barking wildly.

EMMA, late twenties, strong-minded, passionate, comes down the stairs in her scrubs.

EMMA  
Snowflake, shh. It's Daddy.

Snowflake keeps barking. The door opens. Sean slips inside, blocking Snowflake with his leg.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Hey, babe.

SEAN  
Hey.

EMMA  
(re: driver's license)  
Find it?

Snowflake jumps up on Sean's leg.

SEAN  
Yeah. It, uh... it was on my desk.

EMMA  
Snowflake! Shh.

Snowflake stops barking.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Good girl.

Sean looks at Emma, noticing her scrubs.

SEAN  
I thought you had the night off.

EMMA  
Someone's sick. They asked me to cover.

SEAN  
They couldn't ask someone else?

EMMA  
It was the ER.  
(lightheartedly)  
Lives are at stake.

SEAN  
That's not funny.

EMMA  
It's one night, Sean.  
(picks up Snowflake;  
gives her to Sean)  
And besides, Snowflake can keep you  
company.

Sean awkwardly holds Snowflake.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Did you call your mom back?

SEAN  
... No.

EMMA  
(disappointed)  
Sean.

SEAN  
What?

EMMA  
You said you would.

SEAN  
We've been down this road before.  
She hasn't changed.

EMMA  
You don't know that.

SEAN  
Yeah, well, maybe I don't want to  
find out.

Emma sighs, then walks over.

EMMA  
Look, babe, you don't have to  
forgive her. But she's your mom,  
and one day you won't be able to  
call her back... And you're going  
to wish you had.

Sean's expression softens, a flicker of regret in his eyes.  
He leans in and kisses Emma.

SEAN  
Love you.

EMMA  
Love you too.  
(to Snowflake)  
And I love you.

She kisses Snowflake on the head, then grabs her keys and heads out the door.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Bye.

Sean looks at Snowflake. She stares at him, panting.

WADE (PRE-LAP)  
So it's the first day of the  
season.

EXT. RESTAURANT - PATIO - DAY

Sean and Jen eat lunch with WADE, late forties, hard-headed, thick Texan accent. He chews on a fat piece of steak --

WADE  
I didn't sleep a wink. Wake up at 'round three, three-thirty so I can be in my stand before sunrise -- better to be an hour early than a minute late. Follow this beaten trail to a little clearing deep in the brush -- a perfect spot for an ambush. Hang my stand on this big, tall pine along the tree line. Few hours later, this giant whitetail buck wanders out of the woods -- a twelve-point beauty. I wait for a clear shot, draw my bow, and just as I'm about to let 'er fly, I hear this godawful moaning sound. Like something straight out of Jurassic Park.

JEN  
What was it?

WADE  
I look down, and on my mother's grave, I see a forest ranger getting his corn ground.

JEN  
Oh my god.

WADE

That gal looked like she was riding  
a buckin' bronco.

JEN

Did you say anything?

WADE

Hell no. Didn't want to blow my  
cover.

JEN

Did you get the buck?

WADE

You're damn right. I got dinner and  
a show.

Wade busts a gut, beside himself.

WADE (CONT'D)

Sucker's hangin' in my office.

Sean and Jen exchange looks.

SEAN

All right, Wade, let's cut to the  
chase --

WADE

Good one.

SEAN

What? ... Oh. Yeah, sure.

(beat)

Look, are you going to sign the  
lease or not?

WADE

I told you -- the rent's too high.

SEAN

We've already agreed to cover the  
operating expenses.

WADE

You want seven percent of gross  
sales at a four-hundred-thousand-  
dollar breakpoint? That's highway  
robbery. You've seen our income  
statements -- at seven percent,  
we're talking an extra fifty-five  
grand a year... minimum.

SEAN

Wade, we both know you're not going to find a better location than this. By the time you move in, seven percent will be a bargain.

WADE

Our online sales have nearly doubled. Way things are going, I might not even need another store.

Sean holds Wade's stare.

SEAN

What if we reduce the lease period to eight years, with an option to renew?

WADE

That's a start.

SEAN

And we'll lower the percentage rent to five percent for gross sales over a million?

WADE

Two million.

SEAN

You're not Walmart, Wade.

WADE

Not yet.

Jen interjects --

JEN

I think we can agree that this partnership could be *very* profitable. We just need to find a little common ground.

Sean takes a sip of water.

JEN (CONT'D)

Do you have kids, Wade?

WADE

Yeah, a son. You?

JEN

No. Unfortunately, not.

A beat.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Has he followed in your footsteps,  
joined the family business?

WADE  
(disappointed)  
No... wanted to be his own boss.

JEN  
Good for him.

WADE  
Tell that to my wife. She's worried  
sick.

JEN  
Oh, no. How come?

WADE  
He just can't catch a break. Nobody  
wants to give him a shot.  
Construction industry's a goddamn  
boy's club.

JEN  
He's a contractor?

WADE  
Yeah.

JEN  
Hmm.

Sean looks at Jen, wary. Then --

JEN (CONT'D)  
What if we hired him?

WADE  
You could do that? SEAN  
Jen, what are you doing?!

JEN  
(to Sean)  
I'm negotiating.

Wade leans forward, intrigued.

WADE  
How?

JEN

This is a multi-million-dollar project with significant financial implications. It could sustain a company's bottom line for the next five years.

WADE

What's your point?

JEN

Competitive bidding is a cutthroat environment. Contractors will do practically anything to gain an edge. For instance, if they thought hiring your son could tip the scales in their favor...

Wade's eyes light up.

WADE

They'd do it.

JEN

In a heartbeat. As far as they're concerned, it's just another day at the office.

Wade sits back, considering.

WADE

What's the catch?

JEN

No catch. Just agree to our terms and conditions.

(beat)

It can be our little secret and just the break he needs.

Jen gives Wade a wink. He smiles, convinced.

WADE

Where do I sign?

JEN

I thought you'd never ask.

They laugh.

Sean sits there, staring at Jen, as the HUM of the restaurant fades into the background.

INT. OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Sean hustles down the hallway to the boardroom, where a meeting is already in progress.

INT. BOARDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grant smirks, spotting Sean.

FRANK (O.S.)

The soil tests came back negative,  
so that's one less thing to worry  
about --

Sean opens the door. Everyone looks at him. FRANK, the company president, mid-fifties, announces his arrival --

FRANK (CONT'D)

Sean, nice of you to join us.

SEAN

Sorry I'm late. Traffic.

Sean sheepishly takes a seat next to Grant.

FRANK

(unimpressed)

Uh-huh.

(then, gesturing to Jen)

Sean, this is Jennifer.

JEN

Jen.

FRANK

Right. Jen.

Jen gives Sean a warm smile.

SEAN

Hi.

FRANK

Jen just moved here from San Francisco. She's going to give you a hand with leasing, so I'll need you to bring her up to speed.

SEAN

Sure.

Frank stares at Sean, waiting.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Now?

FRANK  
Unless you've got somewhere else to be.

SEAN  
Uh, no. No.  
(clears throat)  
Okay, well, um, long story short, we've got three months to secure financing. Problem is, the bank won't approve the construction loan without a takeout, and the insurance company won't commit unless seventy-five percent of the space is pre-leased.

JEN  
The seller won't negotiate?

SEAN  
They have multiple offers.

JEN  
What about a standby commitment?

SEAN  
We can't afford it.

JEN  
Do we have a leasing plan?

Grant jumps in --

GRANT  
Yeah.  
(opens a folder)  
Assuming the layout doesn't change, there's approximately three hundred thousand square feet of leasable space. And based on our merchandising strategy, a quarter of that is designated for the anchor tenant.

JEN  
Who's the anchor tenant?

GRANT  
Uh... TBD.

FRANK

Several regional supermarkets are interested.

JEN

Any big-box stores?

Nicole chimes in --

NICOLE

They'd steal business from the local retailers.

SEAN

Won't matter if we don't get the loan.

A long, uncomfortable silence.

FRANK

We'll cross that bridge when we get there.

JEN

(to Grant)

Do we have any tenants?

GRANT

No. Not yet.

JEN

None?

Grant shakes his head.

JEN (CONT'D)

(skeptical)

So let me get this straight -- we have no anchor tenant and three months to lease two hundred and twenty-five thousand square feet?

FRANK

The property is at the corner of a major intersection. It practically sells itself.

JEN

What's the lease rate?

SEAN

Fifteen to twenty dollars per square foot.

JEN  
And the type?

SEAN  
Depends on the tenant.

JEN  
But if we had it our way.

SEAN  
Triple net.

Jen nods.

JEN  
That it?

SEAN  
Yeah, pretty much.

Jen stares at Sean for a moment. Then --

JEN  
Piece of cake.

Sean glances at Frank, unsure if she's serious. Frank laughs. The rest of the room joins in.

FRANK  
I like her already.

Jen flashes a charming smile.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Sean and Jen stand outside the restaurant with Wade.

WADE  
Thanks for lunch.

JEN  
Any time.

A beat.

WADE  
How's your aim?

JEN  
Lethal. Why?

WADE

You should stop by the store.  
There's a bow with your name on it.

JEN

That a challenge?

WADE

Don't say I didn't warn you.

JEN

Tempting. I'll check my schedule.

WADE

You better.

Jen and Wade shake hands, laughing. Wade turns to Sean --

WADE (CONT'D)

Sean.

SEAN

Wade.

Wade walks off. As soon as he's out of earshot --

SEAN (CONT'D)

What the hell was that?! If anyone finds out about this --

JEN

They won't. I mean, not unless you tell them. And you're not going to tell them, are you, Sean?

A beat.

SEAN

Jen, this is illegal.

JEN

So is jaywalking.

SEAN

This is not jaywalking.

JEN

Might as well be.

(beat)

Look, sometimes you gotta get your hands a little dirty. It comes with the territory. We need him. Do you want the loan or not?

Sean exhales, relenting.

SEAN  
Did you know he had a kid?

Jen's mouth curves into a devious grin.

JEN  
Don't worry, Sean. We're in this  
together.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Sean blindly follows Emma through the home décor section.

EMMA  
Ooh, these are cute.

Emma stops at a set of cream-colored throw pillows, running her fingers over the fabric, then moves on.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Or what about these?

Emma looks at Sean. He rubs the fabric of a pillow, his brow furrowed, lost in thought.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Sean?

SEAN  
What? Uh... I like the green ones.  
They match the curtains.

Emma stares at him for a moment, then smiles.

EMMA  
Okay. Oh, and we need to get a  
doggy cam.

SEAN  
A doggy cam?

EMMA  
To keep an eye on Snowflake. You  
don't want her to burn down the  
house while we're gone, do you?

SEAN  
No.

Emma steps closer.

EMMA

I didn't think so.

She gives him a kiss. His lips barely move.

EMMA (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

SEAN

Nothing.

EMMA

You sure?

Sean manages a smile.

SEAN

Yeah, I'm fine.

(deflecting)

Do they sell doggy cams here?

Emma pauses, studying him. Then, deciding not to push, she perks up.

EMMA

I don't know. Let's find out.

She heads off. Sean exhales, his smile fading as he follows.

INT. OFFICE - BOARDROOM - DAY

Sean stares at the wall clock, conflicted. The minute hand TICKS --

FRANK

I've got some good news: the rezoning application's been approved. Grant, can you send the bank a copy? They need it to close.

GRANT

Sure.

(then)

Wait, does that mean we got the loan?

FRANK

Not quite. We still gotta find somebody to build the thing, but that's the least of our problems.

GRANT

So...?

FRANK

Yes, you get to keep your job...  
for now.

Nicole butts in --

NICOLE

(to Sean)

You got Wade to sign?!

Sean nods.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

How?

JEN

Bribery.

Sean pipes up --

SEAN

She's joking. He, uh --

Jen puts her hand on Sean's thigh, near his crotch.

JEN

He just needed a little convincing.  
Sean was very persuasive.

Jen squeezes -- subtle, but deliberate. Sean squirms, faking a smile.

GRANT

You sure it wasn't the hundred-  
dollar steak?

JEN

Does it matter?

GRANT

I didn't pay for it.

FRANK

No, I did. Whatever it was, it  
worked. Plain and simple.

Jen takes her hand off Sean's thigh.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Nicole, can you let the architect  
know?

JEN

Actually, I already did. They have  
to revise the drawings.

FRANK

What for?

JEN

Wade wants more space for an  
archery range. It was non-  
negotiable.

FRANK

Lovely.

Jen shoots Sean a cunning smile.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Well, in the meantime, we can  
launch the marketing campaign.

(beat)

Any questions?

GRANT

You weren't serious about the job  
thing, were you?

FRANK

Ask me again next month.

The table begins to clear. Sean looks back at the clock --  
the minute hand TICKS.

EXT. DOWNTOWN AUSTIN - COLORADO RIVER - DAY

The sun dips below First Street Bridge, casting the riverbank  
in a warm glow. The autumn leaves shimmer in shades of red,  
orange, and gold.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Sean rides the train home.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PARKING LOT - DAY

Sean gets in his car and drives off.

EXT./INT. CAR - DAY

Sean sits at the same traffic light, waiting for it to turn green. He looks out the driver's window at the Hillside Plaza billboard. Behind it, the lot is now fully under construction.

His jaw tightens. He looks back at the traffic light, clasping the steering wheel. It turns green. He steps on it, SPEEDING OFF.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - DAY

An empty living room.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Sean sits in his car, haunted by guilt.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - MOMENTS LATER

The door OPENS, cutting through the silence.

Sean stands in the doorway, expecting to hear barking. He closes the door and takes a few tentative steps toward the living room.

Just then, Snowflake's head peeks around the corner of the couch. Sean stops.

They stare at each other, neither moving. Sean exhales, his eyes full of remorse.

He kneels and puts out his hand.

Snowflake lingers by the couch, hesitant, then slowly approaches. She gently licks Sean's hand.

A faint, bittersweet smile crosses his face.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - DAY

Sean watches TV with Snowflake. She leaps off the couch and scampers to the door.

Emma steps inside, exhausted from a long shift. Snowflake jumps up on her.

EMMA

Hi, baby.

Emma drops her bag and spitefully turns on the sink. Water flows out of the tap.

Sean sighs, turns off the TV, and goes over.

SEAN  
I'm sorry.

Emma turns off the sink and dries her hands, ignoring him.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
I was angry and I said things I  
didn't mean...

She avoids his gaze.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
I don't want you to feel like you  
have to choose between me and your  
career.

A long pause.

EMMA  
I'm sorry too.  
(re: Snowflake)  
I should have asked.

SEAN  
It's not her. I just miss you.

Sean reaches out, gently touching Emma's arm.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
I miss us.

She looks at him.

EMMA  
I wasn't playing games, Sean. I  
meant what I said. I do want to get  
married. And I do want to have  
kids. But I don't just want them  
with anybody. I want them with you.

Her words linger in the air for a moment, a weight lifting.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
I want to be the couple that's  
still together fifty years from  
now. I want us to be the exception.  
(takes Sean's hand)  
I love you.

Sean smiles.

SEAN  
I love you.

Emma kisses Sean, hugging him tightly. He holds her, his eyes clouded with regret.

MARRIAGE OFFICIANT (PRE-LAP)  
With this ring.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. RANCH - DAY

A BRIDE and GROOM stand hand in hand under a stone arch overlooking the Texas Hill Country. The bride wipes away a tear, repeating after the MARRIAGE OFFICIANT --

BRIDE  
With this ring.

The groom smiles at the bride, captivated by her beauty.

MARRIAGE OFFICIANT  
I thee wed...

Sean and Emma sit in the audience. Sean watches, trying to picture himself in the groom's shoes.

EXT. RANCH - PAVILION - NIGHT

An open-air pavilion. Music BLASTS from the speakers.

INT. RANCH - PAVILION - DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Guests, including Emma, dance with the bride and groom.

INT. RANCH - PAVILION - BAR - CONTINUOUS

Sean approaches the bar --

SEAN  
Hey, can I get a beer?

The BARTENDER pours Sean a beer.

BARTENDER  
Nine bucks.

SEAN  
Seriously?

INT. RANCH - PAVILION - DANCE FLOOR - LATER

The bride tosses her bouquet.

Emma yanks it away from a BRIDESMAID, letting out a cheer.

The guests holler at Sean, putting him in the hot seat. He laughs it off.

INT. RANCH - PAVILION - LATER

Emma and Sean chat with the bride and groom.

BRIDE  
So, Sean, when are you gonna put a  
ring on it? She's not getting any  
younger.

EMMA  
(embarrassed)  
Jules!

Sean plays along.

SEAN  
As soon as I can afford it.

They all laugh, but behind Sean's smile, there's a trace of unease.

INT. RANCH - PAVILION - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

The dance floor is empty, except for Emma and a BOY swaying to a gentle ballad.

Sean watches from across the room, his expression softening as Emma helps the boy twirl her.

The boy looks at Emma, a shy grin spreading across his face.

SEAN (O.S.)  
(to boy)  
Mind if I cut in?

Emma and the boy stop dancing. The boy gives Sean a dirty look --

BOY  
Whatever.

The boy stomps off.

EMMA  
Oh, *Chase*.

Emma and Sean share a laugh. He pulls her close.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Took you long enough.

SEAN  
Better late than never.

EMMA  
Story of my life.

Emma rests her head on Sean's chest. He stiffens slightly --  
*What does that mean?*

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sean loosens his tie, taking a seat on the edge of the bed.  
Emma steps out of the bathroom --

EMMA  
Did you have fun?

SEAN  
Mm-hmm.

EMMA  
Really? That's good. I couldn't  
tell.

Emma takes out her earrings and places them on the  
nightstand.

SEAN  
Well, I mean, they could have told  
us it was a cash bar...

EMMA  
Yeah, that was surprising.

SEAN  
Just a little heads-up would have  
been nice.

Emma flops onto the bed, still glowing from the wedding.

EMMA

I can't believe Jules is married.

SEAN

I give it a year.

EMMA

Sean!

SEAN

What? They haven't even lived together.

EMMA

So?

SEAN

She's known the guy for like three months.

EMMA

(chuckles)

Love doesn't have to follow a timeline, Sean. It's not something you plan.

SEAN

I know. I just think a lot of people want the wedding, not the marriage, you know? Choosing to spend the rest of your life with someone should mean something. It's supposed to be forever.

EMMA

Does that scare you?

SEAN

What, forever?

Emma nods.

SEAN (CONT'D)

No. Not if it's with the right person... for the right reasons.

EMMA

So... you would get married.

Sean pauses, realizing where this is going.

SEAN

Um... Yeah. Yeah, I would. If it was something we both wanted.

EMMA  
You mean us?

A vulnerable beat.

SEAN  
Yeah. Us. Who else?

Sean smiles, warming Emma's heart.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What about you? Do you want to get  
married -- I mean, eventually?

Emma nervously tucks a strand of hair behind her ear.

EMMA  
Um, yeah. I think so. Not now, but  
yeah, one day, eventually, I'd like  
to get married. Start a family.

SEAN  
A family? You want kids?

EMMA  
Yeah. Don't you?

Sean shifts.

SEAN  
Uh, yeah. Yeah, I do. It's just,  
you know, we've never really talked  
about kids before.

EMMA  
No, I guess not. I've thought about  
it.

SEAN  
You have?

EMMA  
(smiling)  
Of course.

Sean nods. Things suddenly just got a lot more serious.

SEAN  
How many kids do you want?

EMMA  
Two.

SEAN

Two. Okay. I think I can agree to  
that.

EMMA

Two girls.

SEAN

Wait, what?!

EMMA

(playfully)

Is that a problem?

SEAN

No. No, not necessarily.

EMMA

You sure? Being a girl dad's not  
easy. It's a big responsibility.

SEAN

If Kobe can do it, I can do it.

Emma laughs. She gazes into Sean's eyes, smiling ear-to-ear.

EMMA

I love you.

She kisses him deeply, their bodies pressing together. Sean takes off his jacket, tossing it carelessly onto the floor as they lie down. Just then --

BARKING from the other room.

EMMA (CONT'D)

(half-laughing)

Nooo.

SEAN

Ignore her.

EMMA

But --

SEAN

She's fine.

They pick up where they left off, kissing hungrily. The barking turns to WHIMPERS.

EMMA

(urgent, pulling back)

Sean, stop. Stop.

Sean groans, rolling off Emma. She hurries out.

Sean lies there, staring at the ceiling, frustrated. The whimper STOP.

END FLASHBACK  
SEQUENCE.

INT. MAILBOX - DUSK

A mailbox opens. A hand reaches inside and pulls out the mail.

EXT. STREET - CLUSTER BOX - CONTINUOUS

Sean closes the mailbox and heads home with Snowflake.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Sean lets Snowflake off her lease and opens a letter. His eyes slowly narrow...

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sean strides into the office, phone to his ear, the letter in his hand --

SEAN

I got a letter in the mail saying I qualify for your personal portfolio services, but I don't have an account with you.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

Sorry about that, sir. May I have your name and address, please?

SEAN

Sean Adler. Forty-four Windsor Avenue, Leander, Texas.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

And your date of birth?

SEAN

October twenty-sixth, nineteen-ninety-five.

Sean waits.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

Looks like you have a business account with us. As a business owner, one of our advisors will help you choose a portfolio tailored to your investment goals. With the personal attention of an advisor, you can focus on what really matters to you.

SEAN

No, I'm not a business owner. I don't have an account with you. Never have.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

Are you sure, sir? Because the information you provided matches one of our registered accounts.

SEAN

Which one?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

S.S.E. Consulting Inc.

SEAN

Well, it's a mistake, all right? I don't own a business. I...

Sean stops mid-sentence, connecting the dots.

SEAN (CONT'D)

How much?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

Pardon me?

SEAN

In the account. How much money's in it?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

Oh. Uh... nine-hundred and sixty-three thousand, two hundred and forty-four dollars.

Sean's eyes widen. He blinks, turning pale.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #1 (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

Hello? ... Sir? Sir, are you still there?

INT. OFFICE TOWER - FLOOR LOBBY - DAY

An elevator floor indicator steadily increases: "4, 5, 6..." It stops at "9", PINGING. The elevator doors open.

Sean storms out, ripping open the office door.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sean charges down the hall, jaw clenched. Grant spots him --

GRANT  
Yo, what's --

Sean blows past him.

GRANT (CONT'D)  
Okay. Good talk.

INT. JEN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sean barges into Jen's office.

JEN  
Hi.

He slams the letter from the bank onto her desk.

JEN (CONT'D)  
(picks up letter)  
What's this?

SEAN  
Don't fuck with me. I know what you did.

Jen stares at Sean for a moment, then calmly reads the letter.

JEN  
(sighs)  
You see, this is why I don't trust anyone. I told them a thousand times I wasn't interested.  
(shakes head; tosses letter)  
I swear, these online banks never learn. They reek of desperation. Seriously, you would not believe how easy it is to open an account. All you need is an email address and a government-issued photo ID.

## QUICK FLASHBACK - IDENTITY THEFT

Jen scans Sean's driver's license.

BACK TO SCENE

Sean glares at Jen.

JEN

Look, don't take it personally. You were just begging to be taken advantage of. I mean, it's written all over your face.

Jen's mouth curves into a wicked grin, her eyes full of malice.

SEAN

Save the confession for your lawyer. You're going to need one. If they're any good, you'll be out in a couple of years.

Sean heads for the door.

JEN

I wouldn't do that if I were you. Not unless you plan on joining me.

Sean stops. Just then, Frank walks by --

FRANK

Morning.

JEN

(cheerfully)

Good morning.

Sean nods, closes the door, and turns around. Jen's smile vanishes.

JEN (CONT'D)

I don't need a lawyer to know collusion is a crime.

SEAN

That's fucking bullshit. I had nothing to do with this.

JEN

Good luck explaining that to a judge. And last I checked, you're the one holding the bag, not me.

(MORE)

JEN (CONT'D)  
It's your fingerprints on the cash,  
not mine.

Sean's expression weakens.

JEN (CONT'D)  
You heard what I said -- we're in  
this together, whether you like it  
or not.

SEAN  
What do you want?

JEN  
Nothing. Just keep your mouth shut.

SEAN  
And if I don't?

Jen smiles, glad he asked.

JEN  
You can kiss your future goodbye.

SEAN  
What the hell's that supposed to  
mean?

JEN  
See for yourself.

Jen taps her phone. Sean's phone PINGS.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Open it.

Sean hesitates, then opens the text message. A video plays.  
He and Jen. Together.

JEN (CONT'D)  
I'd hate to have to ruin another  
relationship.

Sean looks at her, horrified.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Guess it's true what they say...  
like father, like son.

INT. BAR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Jen and Sean sit at a small table in the corner of a noisy  
bar. Jen holds Sean's driver's license, laughing.

SEAN  
Don't laugh.

JEN  
Handsome.

SEAN  
It's the lighting.

JEN  
The haircut definitely doesn't  
help, or should I say lack thereof.

In the photo, a younger Sean sports a mop of curly hair.

SEAN  
That was the style.

JEN  
You look like you just rolled out  
of bed.

Sean reaches for Jen's purse.

SEAN  
Let's see yours.

Jen snatches it.

JEN  
Not a chance.

SEAN  
Come on. What do you have to hide?

Just then, a WAITRESS walks by with a tray of drinks.

JEN  
Excuse me.

The waitress stops.

JEN (CONT'D)  
(points to cocktail)  
Can I get another one of these?

WAITRESS  
Sure.  
(to Sean)  
How about you? Another beer?

SEAN  
Uh... yeah. Why not.

The waitress walks off.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
So you're from San Francisco?

JEN  
I guess so. I don't like to stay in  
one place for too long.

SEAN  
How come?

JEN  
I get bored.

SEAN  
Then why'd you move here?

JEN  
No state income tax.

SEAN  
(scoffs)  
Yeah, you and everyone else.

JEN  
Can you blame us?

SEAN  
I try not to.

JEN  
Oh yeah, I forgot. Texans hate  
Californians.

SEAN  
Hate's a strong word.

JEN  
So is love.

A coy beat.

SEAN  
So, uh, what'd you do... you know,  
before you joined the invasion?

JEN  
Sold home insurance.

SEAN  
Huh. Well, that explains a lot.

JEN  
I beg your pardon.

SEAN  
What? It's a compliment.

Jen gives Sean the side-eye.

JEN  
Some of us weren't born brilliant,  
Sean.

SEAN  
I didn't say that.

JEN  
You didn't have to. Your parents  
must be so proud.

Sean's smile fades. He looks away, his mood shifting.

SEAN  
You'd think.  
(beat)  
My dad, he, uh... he couldn't keep  
it in his pants. My mom filed for  
divorce as soon as she found out.  
Got full custody.

JEN  
So he wasn't in the picture?

SEAN  
No. She didn't give him a chance.  
Never saw him again.

JEN  
And your mom?

SEAN  
She calls -- just enough to say she  
tried.

Sean takes a bitter sip of his beer.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What about you? Your parents in the  
picture?

JEN  
(chuckles)  
No... not exactly.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

JEN (CONT'D)

My father was a self-righteous prick. Thought he owned us. We were his property. Then one day, he just took off, never came back. After that, my mother went through a revolving door of boyfriends. And I went from being a daughter to a burden.

Jen stares at her glass, reliving her childhood trauma.

JEN (CONT'D)

She'd lock herself in her room for days, probably fantasizing about the life she could've had if I hadn't been born. I knew she loved me, but her love was unreliable, so I've never relied on it.

Sean sits there, unsure what to say.

-- RING. Sean glances at his phone. The caller ID reads: "Emma".

Jen stares at him mysteriously. He lets the call go to VOICEMAIL.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - OFFICE - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT DAY

On-hold music PLAYS. Sean paces, phone to his ear. The music STOPS.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)  
Thank you for calling Unified  
Financial. My name is Sarah. How  
can I help you?

SEAN

Hi. I'm trying to log in to my  
account, but I forgot my password.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)  
Did you click "forgot password"?

SEAN

I did, but I can't remember my  
login ID. Sorry, it's been a while.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emma plays tug-of-war with Snowflake. Across the room, Sean peeks through the office door.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean quietly closes the door.

SEAN

Forty-four Windsor Avenue, Leander,  
Texas. October twenty-sixth,  
nineteen-ninety-five.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)

Thank you, Sean. I just need you to  
answer a few questions to verify  
your identity.

Sean pauses.

SEAN

Okay.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)

Where were you born?

SEAN

Uh... San Francisco.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)

I'm sorry, sir. That's incorrect.

SEAN

It is?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)

Yes, sir.

Sean exhales, discouraged.

SEAN

What's the next question?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)

What's your mother's maiden name?

Sean runs a frustrated hand through his hair. Then --

SEAN

Oh! You know what? My business  
partner must have answered the  
questions. She opened the account.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #2 (V.O.)  
Do you know the account number...?

INT. OFFICE - GRANT'S CUBICLE - DAY

Grant crunches numbers, headphones on.

INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean sits at his desk, watching Grant like a hawk, his finger tapping.

Just then, Grant takes a long sip, emptying his coffee cup.

Sean's finger stops tapping.

Grant stands, stretches, and heads off, taking his coffee cup.

Sean springs to his feet, peering down the hallway.

Grant disappears around the corner.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean makes a beeline for Grant's cubicle.

INT. OFFICE - GRANT'S CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS

Sean slides into the chair and opens the payment system. He types "S.S.E. Consulting" into the search bar and hits enter.

A list of invoices pops up.

Sean glances over his shoulder, then clicks on the first invoice. It looks legit -- professional format, billing address, detailed line items -- the work of someone who knows a thing or two about forging invoices.

His eyes scan the page. Near the bottom, under "Payment Instructions", he finds what he's looking for -- the "Account Number: 5273949".

He opens Grant's email, quickly drafts a message to his personal address, and attaches several invoices.

CLICK. He hits send.

A breath -- barely --

BZZT. The screen shuts off.

Sean flinches. Jen stands over him, holding a power cord.

INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Jen locks the door.

JEN

You know, for a smart guy, you make  
a lot of stupid decisions.

Sean tenses.

JEN (CONT'D)

You've got a good thing going,  
Sean. Corner office. Two-car  
garage. Pretty girlfriend -- a  
woman who loves you. Why ruin it?

SEAN

I could ask you the same question.  
You wouldn't do this for no reason.  
You're not that crazy. Something  
had to push you over the edge. So  
what was it?

Jen studies him, letting the question linger for a moment.  
Her gaze shifts inward, distant.

JEN

You're right. I wasn't always like  
this. I used to play by the rules.  
Then I told them I was expecting --  
and suddenly I wasn't qualified.  
The position was "evolving." They  
needed someone with a "unique skill  
set." Or in other words -- a dick.

Jen pauses, almost daring Sean to say something.

JEN (CONT'D)

But hey, it wasn't the end of the  
world. I still had my husband and a  
baby on the way -- a boy. What more  
could a girl want?

(beat)

Do you know what a hysterectomy is,  
Sean?

He doesn't answer.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Didn't think so. Why would you?  
Let's just say there were  
complications -- a lot of blood. By  
the time they cut me open, it was  
too late. He was gone. And so was  
my uterus. It was the only way they  
could save me.

A heavy silence.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Six months later, my husband walked  
out the door. Said he wanted a  
family. One I couldn't give him  
anymore.

(beat)  
Does that answer your question?

Sean stands there, frozen. Jen leans in, lowering her voice  
to a chilling whisper --

JEN (CONT'D)  
You pull another stunt like that,  
you so much as breathe wrong, and  
so help me God, your girlfriend  
finds out exactly who she's been  
sleeping next to.

Without looking back, Jen unlocks the door and walks out.

Sean slowly pulls out his phone. A flicker of relief crosses  
his face.

The email's there -- sitting in his inbox.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. SEAN'S OFFICE/HALLWAY - DAY

Sean slips his phone into his pocket, grabs a folder off his  
desk, and heads out the door.

JEN (O.S.)  
Going somewhere?

Sean turns around. Jen stands behind him.

SEAN  
Uh, yeah. Meeting.

JEN

With who?

SEAN

A tenant... Hopefully.

JEN

Can I come?

Sean hesitates.

SEAN

Uh... Sure. I mean --

JEN

Relax. You won't even know I'm  
there. I promise.

Jen brushes past him. Sean watches her, reluctant -- then follows.

INT. OLIVA - HEAD OFFICE - KITCHEN - DAY

Sean walks past a boardroom window overlooking a spotless prep kitchen.

INT. BOARDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sean stands beside a large monitor displaying a site plan of Hillside Plaza, a remote in his hand.

Jen sits at the table, quietly observing. Across from her is THEO, the Owner of Oliva, a regional fast-casual Mediterranean restaurant chain.

SEAN

... Based on projected foot traffic, demographic overlap, and daily activity patterns, we're estimating an average of...

Sean clicks the remote. Nothing happens. He clicks again. Nothing. He gives Theo an embarrassed smile, tapping the remote.

THEO

You gotta point it at the sensor.  
It's finicky.

SEAN

Right. Sorry.

Sean points, then clicks. The slide changes. Oliva's logo -- an olive branch in the shape of a bowl -- appears on top of a future storefront. Arrows show the direction of traffic, with a daily projections table to the right.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
As I was saying, we're expecting an average of twenty-one hundred potential customers on weekdays.

Sean clicks. "1,800" appears below "Weekday Average".

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Uh... Sorry. I thought -- I could have sworn...

Jen looks at Theo. He checks his watch, quickly losing interest.

JEN  
That's my fault.

Jen stands, joining Sean.

JEN (CONT'D)  
I sent Sean revised projections this morning but forgot to update the deck. Rookie mistake.

She gives Theo an unapologetic smile.

THEO  
Long night?  
JEN  
Only when the numbers don't behave.

Theo cracks a smile.

JEN (CONT'D)  
The original number didn't account for spillover from the rec centre down the block. People who are tired, hungry, but don't want to feel like they've sabotaged their workout in one bite.

Theo raises an eyebrow.

JEN (CONT'D)  
You're not just leasing space.  
You're buying momentum. You've already built trust in this community.

(MORE)

JEN (CONT'D)  
What you need is visibility.  
(to Sean)  
Tell him about the curb extension.

Sean blinks.

SEAN.  
The curb extension...? Right.

He locks in.

SEAN  
The city approved a curb extension  
last quarter -- widens the  
sidewalk, improves sightlines,  
slows traffic. And Oliva would be  
front and center... where it should  
be.

Theo nods, impressed.

THEO  
Send me the lease. I want to take a  
closer look.

Sean exhales. Theo stands, shaking their hands.

THEO (CONT'D)  
(to Jen)  
Let's see if the numbers behave as  
well as you do.

JEN  
I can't make any promises.

Theo laughs.

INT. BOARDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sean turns off the monitor and heads for the door with Jen.

SEAN  
Thanks... You know, for jumping in.

JEN  
Any time.

She steps through the door, then glances back --

JEN (CONT'D)  
Besides... watching you panic was  
kind of adorable.

She gives Sean a cheeky grin, then carries on. Sean stands there, a faint smile tugging at his lips.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - NIGHT

Sean stares at a torn throw pillow.

SEAN

Emma?

EMMA (O.S.)

Up here.

INT. BEDROOM/BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Snowflake lies on the bed beside an open duffel bag. Sean enters. Snowflake barks.

Sean sees the duffel bag, then looks into the bathroom. Emma puts her toothbrush into a toiletry bag.

SEAN

What are you doing?

EMMA

I'm on call tonight, remember?

SEAN

Oh, yeah.

Emma swiftly packs the toiletry bag.

SEAN (CONT'D)

What time do you get off?

EMMA

Seven.

Emma steps into the closet.

SEAN

Did you want to get something to eat?

EMMA (O.S.)

Uh... can we do it another night?  
I'm just gonna want to go to bed.

SEAN

(disappointed)

Yeah, okay.

Emma reappears, changed into her scrubs. She zips up the duffel bag.

EMMA

Don't forget to feed Snowflake. And can you take her for a walk? I didn't have time.

Sean forces a smile.

SEAN

Sure.

EMMA

Thanks.

Emma heads for the door.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Oh.

(turns around)

Uh... she chewed on one of the throw pillows.

SEAN

I saw.

EMMA

It's my fault. I fell asleep on the couch.

(beat)

I'll stop by the pet store on my way home. Get her a chew toy.

Sean stares at Emma for a moment.

SEAN

Okay.

Emma rushes over and kisses Snowflake on the forehead.

EMMA

Bye, baby. Have fun with Daddy.

She pecks Sean on the lips and hurries out the door.

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

Love you.

Sean's smile fades.

SEAN  
Love you too.

END OF FLASHBACK  
SEQUENCE.

EXT. STRIP MALL - DAY

A faded, sun-beaten strip mall. Wedged between a vape shop and a nail salon is a small office. The blinds are drawn, and the paint on the door is peeling.

A sign on the glass reads: "Ed Rourke, Attorney at Law - Criminal & Civil Defense".

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A box fan RATTLES in the window.

Sean sits across from ED ROURKE, fifties, a no-nonsense defense attorney who's been around the block. He flips through a stack of printed invoices and bank statements, glasses low on his nose.

SEAN  
So... what do you think?

ED  
I think you just handed me a front-row seat to a federal indictment.  
And the only thing keeping you out of a jumpsuit is whoever's pulling the strings.

SEAN  
Her name's Jen Foster. We work together.

ED  
Can you prove it?

SEAN  
You tell me.

Ed shifts his attention to a wire log -- page after page of outbound transfers.

ED  
Your name's on every transfer. Each to a different personal account -- classic layering technique.

SEAN

So she's laundering it?

ED

Looks that way. You've got enough here to raise eyebrows, but not enough to clear your name.

SEAN

Then what do I do?

ED

You cut a deal. Immunity, if you cooperate. But they'll want more than documents. They'll want a witness. Someone who will go on the record.

SEAN

(to self)

Wade.

ED

Who's Wade?

SEAN

The witness. None of this would have happened if he hadn't signed the lease.

ED

You get him to talk -- confirm she orchestrated the whole thing -- it changes the conversation.

SEAN

And if he won't?

ED

Then start practicing your plea.

Sean looks off -- it's worse than he thought.

EXT. LOAN RANGER - DAY

A big sign with the words "LOAN RANGER" and a cartoon cowboy holding a Colt Peacemaker hangs above automatic sliding doors. They open.

A satisfied CUSTOMER walks out carrying a bag with the same cowboy on it.

INT. LOAN RANGER - CONTINUOUS

A hunter's paradise. Dozens of Texas game animals -- white-tailed deer, desert bighorn sheep -- are mounted on the walls. Artificial landscaping surrounds display stands stocked full of hunting gear and apparel.

Wade trudges across the floor toward MATT, a young employee stocking shelves with ammo.

WADE

What is it, Matt?

MATT

Some guy's looking for you.

WADE

Who?

MATT

Didn't say. He's by the crossbows.

WADE

Thanks.

Wade heads over.

INT. LOAN RANGER - MOMENTS LATER

Sean stands by a wall of crossbows. Wade warily approaches.

WADE

Can I help you?

Sean turns around. Wade straightens.

WADE (CONT'D)

Sean.

SEAN

Wade.

INT. LOAN RANGER - WADE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Wade hurries Sean into his office, closing the door.

WADE

... Look, my bank started asking questions -- wanted to know what these "unusual" transactions were for. Said they seemed inconsistent with my financial profile.

SEAN

What?

WADE

Just tell Jen the money's on its way. It's just going to take a few days.

Sean freezes.

SEAN

What the fuck did you just say?

WADE

I said it's on its way.

SEAN

No, the part about Jen. What'd she tell you? That this was my idea?

Wade holds Sean's stare, his silence confirming.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Look, Wade, Jen's not who you think she is.

WADE

Yeah, no shit. She's a fucking psychopath.

SEAN

That's why I'm here. She played us both. Used me the same way she's using you. That's what she does, and she'll destroy anything in her path.

(beat)

Jen's the one they'll want. If we come clean, there's a chance we could walk away in one piece.

WADE

There is no walking away, Sean. Not for me. You think anyone's gonna do business with a guy who laundered money through his own company? Hell no. To them, I'll just be another con man who got caught. And I've worked too damn hard to end up as the punchline in some press release.

SEAN

Wade, we're not talking about a bad quarter. We're talking about prison. Your reputation won't matter behind bars.

WADE

My reputation's all I have.

SEAN

Well, then maybe you should have thought of that sooner.

(beat)

Look, we can't change what happened, but we can still decide how it ends.

Wade considers, realizing Sean might be right.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You've seen what Jen's capable of. Stay quiet, it won't just be your reputation on the line.

EXT. BUTLER METRO PARK - DAY

A warm, sunny day. Not a cloud in the sky.

Children climb the jungle gym. People jog and bike along the trails.

Snowflake chases after a tennis ball. Sean glances at Emma, smiling.

Snowflake suddenly stops and poos.

EMMA

Oh, no. Again? You just went.

Sean laughs.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Sean, can you...?

SEAN

Yeah.

Sean heads to the pet waste station and grabs a waste bag.

JEN (O.S.)

Sean!

Sean turns. Jen stands nearby, a cunning grin on her face.

SEAN  
What are you doing here?

JEN  
Enjoying the sunshine... like  
everyone else.

Sean glances at Emma and Snowflake.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Is that...?

SEAN  
Go fuck yourself.

Jen snickers.

JEN  
Relax, Sean. You've been a good  
boy. I'm not gonna say anything.  
(looks at Emma)  
Besides, look at how happy she is.  
That would just be cruel.

Sean looks. Emma gives Snowflake a treat. She really does  
look happy.

JEN (CONT'D)  
If only she knew...

Just then, Emma looks over. Jen waves, smiling brightly. Emma  
puts Snowflake on her leash.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Here she comes.

Sean glares at Jen.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Smile, Sean. It's not that hard...  
believe me.

He puts on a smile. Emma and Snowflake join them.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Hi, I'm Jen. I work with Sean.

EMMA  
Oh, hi. I'm Emma.

JEN  
I know. Sean's told me a lot about  
you.

EMMA

Has he?

JEN

Sounds like he's a lucky guy.

EMMA

Oh, well, we both are.

Emma gives Sean a loving smile.

JEN

And who's this?

EMMA

This is Snowflake.

JEN

Hi, sweetheart.

Jen pets Snowflake.

JEN (CONT'D)

She's adorable.

(to Emma)

I love dogs.

SEAN

Well, we gotta --

JEN

Yeah, me too. Mitch is probably  
wondering where I am.

Sean stares at Jen, thrown.

SEAN

Who's Mitch?

JEN

My husband.

SEAN

Your husband?

EMMA

Sean!

SEAN

Sorry, I just, um... you said -- I  
thought you were divorced.

JEN

I was... Until recently.

EMMA

Oh, congratulations.

JEN

Thank you. Hopefully this one  
lasts. I don't know how much more  
my heart can take.

EMMA

Awe. I'm sure it will.

Emma unclips Snowflake's leash.

JEN

You know, if you ever need a sitter  
-- I mean it -- just let me know.

Sean interjects --

SEAN

That's okay, we've got it covered.

JEN

(to Emma, ignoring Sean)  
Here -- let me give you my number.  
Just in case.

Emma glances at Sean, then shrugs.

EMMA

Okay, sure.

She hands Jen her phone. Jen enters her info, then texts  
herself. Sean watches -- powerless.

JEN

There.

(hands phone back)

Now you've got someone on the  
inside.

Jen winks. Emma laughs. Sean doesn't.

JEN (CONT'D)

(playful, but pointed)

See you at work, Sean.

SEAN

Yeah... See ya.

JEN

(gestures to poop)

And watch your step.

Emma chuckles.

EMMA

Thanks.

Jen wanders off.

EMMA (CONT'D)

She seems nice.

SEAN

Mm-hmm.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

The office is dark, except for a dim light in the boardroom.

INT. BOARDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sean stands at the front, rehearsing his pitch. Jen sits on the edge of the table, listening.

SEAN

... Based on projected foot traffic, demographic overlap, and daily activity patterns, we're estimating an average of twenty-one hundred potential customers on weekdays.

Sean clicks. This time "2,100" appears below "Weekday Average".

SEAN (CONT'D)

Assuming a repeat customer ratio of eighteen percent, that translates to roughly ten thousand impressions per week, with peak engagement between --

JEN

Stop. Stop.

Jen cuts him off.

SEAN

What?

JEN

You sound like an infomercial.  
You're not selling a toaster --  
this isn't a product demo.

SEAN

Wow. Subtle.

JEN

Do you want my help or not?

Sean exhales. Jen slowly stands.

JEN (CONT'D)

People don't buy logic. They buy  
feelings.

She steps toward him.

JEN (CONT'D)

Your job isn't to convince them.  
It's to make them feel something...  
Something they can't ignore.

She steps closer, lowering her voice. Sean stiffens.

JEN (CONT'D)

And once they feel something, they  
stop listening... and start  
wanting.

They're close now. Close enough to feel it. Sean's breath  
catches -- just slightly.

EXT. TOWNHOMES AT SILVER SPRINGS - NIGHT

Sean walks Snowflake home, letting her lead the way, deep in  
thought.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - MOMENTS LATER

Sean lets Snowflake off her leash. She scurries to the stairs  
as Emma comes down in a black mini dress.

EMMA

(to Snowflake)

Hi, baby. Hi.

Sean notices Emma's outfit.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Hey.

SEAN  
Where are you going?

EMMA  
Sixth Street.

Emma kneels, petting Snowflake. Sean watches, his anger growing.

SEAN  
With who?

EMMA  
Jules. We haven't seen each other since the wedding.

SEAN  
You're not tired?

EMMA  
No, not really.

Emma heads for the door.

SEAN  
You think that's a good idea?

She shoots him a look --

EMMA  
Seriously, Sean?

SEAN  
What?

EMMA  
It's one drink.

SEAN  
It's never one drink. Not with Jules.

EMMA  
You barely know Jules.

SEAN  
It's not Jules I'm worried about.

Emma pauses.

EMMA  
What is that supposed to mean?

SEAN

You know exactly what it means.

EMMA

No, Sean, I don't. I don't know what it means.

SEAN

Oh, come on. Look at what you're wearing.

EMMA

What's wrong with what I'm wearing?

SEAN

Nothing --

EMMA

What's wrong with what I'm wearing, Sean? Tell me.

SEAN

Nothing. Forget it. Go.

EMMA

No, say it. Say it, Sean. What's wrong with what I'm wearing?

SEAN

Nothing... if you're a hooker.

Emma freezes, mouth open. She lets out a sharp, incredulous scoff. A deafening silence fills the room. Then --

EMMA

Fuck you, Sean. Go to hell.

She opens the door, slamming it in his face.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sean lies on his side, wide awake. Just then --

BARK. BARK. BARK.

Sean stays still, staring into the darkness.

END OF FLASHBACK  
SEQUENCE.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Sean and his MOM sit at a table by the window. The GRINDING of coffee beans and low HISS of steaming milk cuts through the tension.

SEAN'S MOM

You cut your hair. It looks good.

Sean stares into his coffee.

SEAN'S MOM (CONT'D)

You seeing anyone?

SEAN

Yeah.

A long beat.

SEAN'S MOM

What's her name?

A flicker of something -- guilt, regret -- crosses Sean's face.

SEAN'S MOM (CONT'D)

I'm just asking, Sean.

SEAN

Since when have you cared?

SEAN'S MOM

I've always cared.

SEAN

Could've fooled me.

Sean's mom shifts, defensive now.

SEAN'S MOM

Look, I know this isn't what you want to hear, but everything I did, I did to protect you.

SEAN

Protect me from what, exactly?

SEAN'S MOM

He wasn't a good man, Sean.

SEAN

Doesn't mean he would've been a bad father.

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)  
And because of you, I didn't have  
one. You took that from me.

SEAN'S MOM  
He was never going to be the kind  
of father you needed.

SEAN  
Maybe not. But that wasn't your  
choice to make. It was mine.

Sean's mom pauses, stung.

SEAN'S MOM  
I did the best I could.

SEAN  
Yeah, well, your best wasn't good  
enough.

Sean stands. For a moment, he looks at her -- not angry, just  
done.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Never was. Never will be.

He walks out, leaving her alone at the table.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Sean trudges down the hall, coffee in hand, bags under his  
eyes.

GRANT  
Yo. You look like shit.

Sean keeps walking. Just then --

FRANK (O.S.)  
Sean.

Sean turns. Frank stands outside his office, face unreadable.

INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sean steps inside. Jen sits across from Frank, calm and  
composed.

FRANK  
Close the door.

Sean closes it.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
(gestures to empty chair)  
Sit down.

He sits, wary.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Does the name S.S.E. Consulting  
mean anything to you?

Sean glances at Jen. She stares at her hands, folded in her lap.

SEAN  
Uh... No.

FRANK  
No?

SEAN  
No. Why? Should it?

Frank studies him. Sean looks at Jen again. She gives him nothing.

FRANK  
Jen was finalizing the construction budget -- reviewing consultant fees for the changes Wade requested. She found invoices from two different structural engineers. One was S.S.E. Consulting.

Sean's heart starts to race.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
She spoke to the architect. They've never heard of S.S.E. Consulting.  
So I did some digging.

Frank slaps a folder onto the desk.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Multiple invoices -- over nine hundred grand in payments to S.S.E. Consulting.

Sean shifts in his seat.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
I called the bank. Turns out the account's registered to a Mr. Sean Adler.

(leans forward)  
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)  
So, Sean, I'm going to ask you  
again. Does the name S.S.E.  
Consulting mean anything to you?

SEAN  
Frank, I...

Jen's hand subtly moves. Under the edge of the table, she tilts her phone toward Sean. Her finger hovers over send.

A screenshot: Sean and Jen, lips locked.

The recipient: Emma.

Sean's breath catches. He stares at Jen. She doesn't flinch.

QUICK FLASHBACK - JEN EMPTYING ACCOUNT

Jen sits in front of a laptop, logged into the S.S.E. Consulting account, a glass of red wine beside her.

The balance reads: "\$963,244.17".

She CLICKS "Transfer Funds".

One transfer. Then another. Then another.

With each CLICK, the balance gradually drops.

BACK TO SCENE

Sean blinks, shaken.

FRANK (O.S.)  
Sean?

Sean looks at Frank.

SEAN  
I didn't open that account.

FRANK  
Then who did?

SEAN  
I don't know.

FRANK  
A company with your name, your address, and your date of birth on the paperwork, and you're telling me that's a coincidence?

Sean clenches his jaw. Frank exhales.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
You're suspended. Effective  
immediately.

SEAN  
What?!

JEN  
Frank, is that really necessary?

SEAN  
Please, Frank. You gotta believe  
me. I didn't do this.

FRANK  
I'm sorry, Sean. But until I get  
some answers, you're off the clock.  
(beat)  
You're lucky I didn't call the  
police.

Sean looks at Jen. She deletes the text message -- the  
faintest smirk on her lips.

INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sean shoves a few things into his bag.

JEN (O.S.)  
Tough break.

Sean turns. Jen stands in the doorway, voice like ice.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Word of advice: never trust a  
coward... They'll just stab you in  
the back.

Jen walks off, in total control.

INT. LOAN RANGER - WADE'S OFFICE - DAY

Wade stands at his desk, on the phone --

WADE  
They're new suppliers -- local  
vendors. They don't have standard  
payment terms...

Wade exhales.

WADE (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I'll hold.

Just then, the door flies open.

SEAN  
You son of a bitch.

Wade turns, startled. Sean slams the door shut.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
You told her?

Wade hangs up.

WADE  
Sean, listen --

SEAN  
We had a deal, asshole.

WADE  
I know.

SEAN  
Then what the hell happened?

WADE  
I told her to fuck off. Said I  
wouldn't do her dirty work anymore.

SEAN  
She knew I was here. She knew  
everything.

WADE  
I didn't have a choice. She --

SEAN  
Jen got me suspended. Now Frank's  
on the phone with the bank. I'm one  
call away from getting arrested --  
and you're next.

(beat)  
Wade, we have to turn ourselves  
in... before it's too late.

WADE  
(shakes head)  
I can't.

SEAN  
Wade, please. Your kid had nothing  
to do with this. He's innocent.

Wade walks over to the window, tempted. Then --

WADE  
I'm sorry. I can't.

SEAN  
Why not?! If we don't, she wins.

Sean stands there, desperation in his eyes. Then, recalling --

JEN (V.O.)  
*Relax. He's not going to say anything. He's got too much to lose.*

Sean's eyes sharpen.

SEAN  
What aren't you telling me? What does she have of you?

Wade lets out a heavy sigh.

WADE  
She's threatening to report me... for sexual assault.

The words send a shiver down Sean's spine.

QUICK FLASHBACK - SEAN AND JEN HAVING SEX

Jen tugs on Sean's hair. He opens his eyes, catching his reflection in the glass -- they fill with shame.

He lowers his head and starts thrusting harder, getting it over with.

BACK TO SCENE

Sean looks at Wade --

SEAN  
What did you do?

WADE  
Nothing.

SEAN  
Oh, come on, Wade. I saw the way you were flirting with her.

WADE

I was just being friendly. You should try it sometime.

A beat.

SEAN

Did anyone see you?

WADE

No. We were closed.

SEAN

You don't have cameras?

WADE

Not in here.

SEAN

What was she doing in here?

WADE

(gestures to buck)

She wanted to see the buck.

Sean turns around, seeing the giant buck Wade bragged about.

SEAN

Jesus Christ.

WADE

Look, I know how it sounds, but I swear, I didn't touch her.

SEAN

Then why won't you say something?

WADE

Wake up, Sean. It's not about what happened -- it's about what people *think* happened. Once something like that's out there, it follows you for the rest of your life. And my son shouldn't have to pay the price... I'm sorry. But you're on your own.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - DAY

Sean sits on the couch, staring into space. Snowflake lies beside him, head on his leg.

The garage door UNLOCKS.

Snowflake leaps off the couch and scurries to the door. Sean doesn't move.

The door opens. Emma steps inside.

EMMA  
Hi, baby! Hi! Did you miss me?

She pets Snowflake, laughing softly, then heads toward the living room --

SEAN  
Hey.

Emma gasps.

EMMA  
Jesus, Sean. You scared me.

She catches her breath.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
What are you doing home?

Sean looks at her, hollow-eyed.

SEAN  
I got suspended.

EMMA  
What?

SEAN  
I got suspended.

Emma slowly walks toward him, confused.

EMMA  
Why? What happened?

SEAN  
Someone's been stealing from the company.  
(beat)  
And they think it's me.

Emma stops in her tracks.

EMMA  
Wait, what?

SEAN  
They found invoices from a consulting firm that doesn't exist.  
(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)  
We've been paying them for  
months... No one knew.

EMMA  
But why would they think it's you?

SEAN  
Because that's what it looks like.

EMMA  
What do you mean, "that's what it  
looks like"?

SEAN  
It looks like I opened the account.

EMMA  
What account?

SEAN  
The bank account. But I didn't --  
someone else did.

EMMA  
Oh my god.

Emma sits down, processing.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
How?

Sean looks away.

SEAN  
I don't know.

Emma stares at him, a trace of suspicion in her eyes. Sean  
notices.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Emma, I swear, it wasn't me. I  
never stole a cent. I swear to god.  
You believe me, don't you?

She holds his gaze. Then --

EMMA  
I believe you.

SEAN  
You do?

EMMA

None of this makes any sense. But I trust you. So if you say it wasn't you...

(sincerely)

Then it wasn't you.

He exhales, relieved. She caresses his cheek.

EMMA (CONT'D)

We'll get through this. Together.

Sean nods, barely.

INT. VETERINARIAN CLINIC - TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

A VETERINARIAN administers a shot into Snowflake's leg.

Emma strokes her head. Sean stands behind them, keeping his distance.

EMMA

Good girl.

Snowflake wags her tail.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. SEAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Sean sits at his desk, working late. His phone RINGS --

SEAN

Hey, babe... She needs what? How much?!

(beat)

For some shots?! Are they necessary?

Sean rubs his forehead, annoyed.

SEAN (CONT'D)

All right... I don't know. Soon...

No, I ate already.

(beat)

Love you too.

Sean hangs up.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Fuck me.

JEN (O.S.)  
Trouble in paradise?

Sean looks over, startled. Jen stands in the doorway.

SEAN  
Hey. Uh... No, it's our dog. Five  
hundred bucks for some shots.

JEN  
Ouch.  
(beat)  
What's her name?

SEAN  
Snowflake.

JEN  
No. Your girlfriend.

SEAN  
Oh. Emma.

Jen smiles -- then chuckles.

JEN  
Snowflake?

SEAN  
I didn't name her.

Jen laughs.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What are you still doing here?

JEN  
Same as you.

She sits down.

JEN (CONT'D)  
I saw Wade yesterday. Showed me the  
archery range. It's pretty  
impressive.

Sean's expression hardens.

JEN (CONT'D)  
Relax. He's not going to say  
anything. He's got too much to  
lose.

SEAN

You don't know that. I don't want to go to prison.

JEN

Sean, if corruption were a crime in this industry, they'd have to bulldoze half the city.

(beat)

The ink's dry. As long as the checks clear, the bank won't care how the lease got signed. Trust me.

Sean looks off, still unsure. Jen heads for the door, then pauses, turning back.

JEN (CONT'D)

Do you want to get a drink?

Sean looks at her, surprised.

SEAN

Uh... I probably shouldn't. I --

JEN

Yeah. Yeah, you're probably right.

An awkward beat.

SEAN

I mean, I would. It's just, you know, I told Emma I'd be home soon.

JEN

Some other time... You wouldn't want her to worry.

Jen smirks, disappearing down the hall. Sean sits there, a knot tightening in his stomach. Then --

SEAN

Hey, Jen!

EXT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - NIGHT

Sean's car pulls into the garage.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The soft flicker of the late-night news casts a light on Emma and Snowflake's sleeping faces. Snowflake's eyes suddenly shoot open.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - GARAGE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

The door slowly UNLOCKS, CREAKING open.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Snowflake starts barking. Emma jolts awake, turning on the bedside lamp.

EMMA

Sean?!

INT. GARAGE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Sean exhales, stepping inside.

SEAN

(to self)

Fucking dog.

He closes the door --

SEAN (CONT'D)

It's me!

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Emma sits in bed, gently stroking a restless Snowflake as Sean enters.

EMMA

It's almost two-thirty. Where were you?

SEAN

Work.

Sean stops, noticing Snowflake's kennel beside Emma.

SEAN (CONT'D)

What's that doing in here?

EMMA

It's easier this way.

Sean bites his tongue.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I kept calling.

SEAN  
Sorry... My phone died.

Sean scoops up Snowflake and puts her in the kennel.

EMMA  
I was worried.

He gets undressed and crawls into bed.

SEAN  
I'm fine. Go back to sleep.

Sean reaches over and turns off the bedside lamp. Emma lays her head on his chest, closing her eyes as he stares into the darkness.

END OF FLASHBACK  
SEQUENCE.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Emma puts Snowflake on her leash.

EMMA  
We're going for a walk. Be back  
soon.

SEAN (O.S.)  
Okay.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The front door CLOSES.

Sean dials a phone number, glancing at his computer screen -- the name "Northridge Insurance Brokers" typed in the search bar.

He PRESSES call. The phone begins to RING.

EXT. NORTHRIDGE INSURANCE BROKERS - CONTINUOUS

A streetcar trundles by a decrepit brick building.

INT. NORTHRIDGE INSURANCE BROKERS - CONTINUOUS

A grizzled OLD MAN shuffles out from the back of a cramped, dimly lit office full of dusty file boxes, and answers the phone.

INTERCUT - NORTHRIDGE INSURANCE BROKERS/OFFICE

OLD MAN

Yeah.

SEAN

Hi. Is this Northridge Insurance  
Brokers?

OLD MAN

Yeah.

SEAN

Hi. I'm calling on behalf of a  
private recruitment firm in the  
northwest. We're evaluating  
potential candidates with home  
insurance experience --

OLD MAN

Not interested.

SEAN

Actually, I was hoping to ask you a  
few questions about Jen Foster.

OLD MAN

Who?

SEAN

Jennifer Foster. She used to work  
for you.

OLD MAN

Wrong number.

The old man starts to hang up.

SEAN

Wait!

He pauses, staying on the line.

SEAN (CONT'D)

According to her resume --

OLD MAN

Look, kid, I work alone. Always  
have. Goodbye.

CLICK.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean lowers the phone, staring at the computer screen.

SEAN  
(to self)  
Who the fuck is this bitch?

EXT. DOG PARK - DAY

Snowflake pounces on a tennis ball and trots back...

... straight to Jen, sitting on a bench with Emma.

JEN  
You are so cute, aren't you? Yes,  
you are. Yes, you are.

She rubs Snowflake's ears, smiling.

JEN (CONT'D)  
(to Emma)  
I always wanted a dog. Ever since I  
was a kid.

EMMA  
You never got one?

JEN  
No.

EMMA  
Why not?

JEN  
It wasn't my house. And my mom  
didn't want anything that might  
scare off whichever guy she was  
trying to keep around.  
(beat)  
She already had enough baggage.

Emma gives her a heartfelt smile. Then, casually --

JEN (CONT'D)  
Where's Sean, by the way?

EMMA  
You don't know?

Jen plays dumb.

JEN

Know what?

EMMA

He got suspended.

JEN

Suspended? For what?

EMMA

Embezzlement. At least that's what it sounded like.

JEN

Oh my god. Emma, I had no idea.

EMMA

He said he didn't do it, but...

JEN

But what?

Emma hesitates, ashamed that part of her even wonders. Then --

EMMA

Never mind.

Jen pets Snowflake, choosing her next words carefully.

JEN

Do you believe him?

Emma looks at her.

EMMA

What?

JEN

I mean, you know him better than anyone.

EMMA

Of course. He wouldn't lie to me.

Jen smiles.

JEN

No, he wouldn't, would he?

Emma stares at Jen, doubt creeping in.

INT. OFFICE TOWER - CONCOURSE - JEWELRY STORE - DAY -  
FLASHBACK

Sean stands over a display case full of diamond rings. They sparkle under the light. A JEWELER approaches him --

JEWELER  
Can I help you?

SEAN  
No, I'm just looking.

JEWELER  
Okay. If something catches your eye, let me know.

SEAN  
Thanks.

The jeweler walks away.

JEN (O.S.)  
Sean?

Sean turns. Jen stands at the entrance, holding a to-go container.

SEAN  
Oh, hey, Jen.

Jen walks inside, spotting the rings. Her lips curl into a mischievous grin.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What?

JEN  
Nothing.

SEAN  
I'm just looking.

JEN  
Do you know what she wants?

Sean looks at her, caught off guard.

SEAN  
No. Should I?

JEN  
Of course. She's been dreaming about this ring since she was a little girl.

(MORE)

JEN (CONT'D)

Every detail -- the cut, color, carat, clarity. You know, the four Cs? You can't just choose it for her. I mean, she's the one who has to wear it.

(beat)

Do you even know her ring size?

SEAN

No.

JEN

Oh, honey.

SEAN

What? How would I know that? I thought it was supposed to be a surprise.

JEN

The proposal should be a surprise, not the ring.

Sean steps away from the display case, overwhelmed.

JEN (CONT'D)

Has she dropped any hints?

SEAN

Like what?

JEN

I don't know. Does she have a Pinterest board that she always leaves open when you're around? Or shown you a photo of some celebrity's engagement ring -- you know, like one of the Kardashians?

SEAN

No. I don't think so.

JEN

Have you asked for her father's blessing?

SEAN

That's still a thing?

JEN

Depends. Are they close?

SEAN

Kinda.

JEN

Then I would. You don't want to be  
*that guy.*

(beat)

How much do you make?

SEAN

A year?

JEN

Yeah.

SEAN

Why?

JEN

The ring should cost about three  
months' salary.

SEAN

Three months?!

JEN

Don't look at me. I don't make the  
rules.

SEAN

Well, that's a stupid rule.

JEN

A diamond's forever, Sean. Everyone  
knows that...

Sean looks at the rings, suddenly not so sure.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - NIGHT - BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Suspenseful music PLAYS. Snowflake lies on the couch, nestled  
between Sean and Emma.

A terrified scream PIERCES through the TV. The movie credits  
ROLL.

Sean TURNS OFF the TV --

SEAN

Oh my god. That was terrible.

He grabs the empty popcorn bowl and takes it to the kitchen.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Honestly, I've seen haunted houses  
with better production value.

Emma stares at the black screen, arms crossed.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
I mean, the Blair Witch Project had  
its moment -- twenty-five years  
ago. At least try to be original.

Sean plops back down on the couch, sighing.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
That's the last time I ask Grant  
for movie recommendations.

Emma doesn't even glance at him.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What's wrong?

EMMA  
I called Jen.

Sean freezes.

SEAN  
You what?

EMMA  
I didn't take Snowflake for a  
walk... I took her to the park.

Sean swallows, his heart pounding.

SEAN  
What'd she say?

EMMA  
Nothing.  
(looks at Sean)  
She didn't have to.

Sean panics, unraveling --

SEAN  
Emma, I'm sorry. It didn't mean  
anything. I was drunk. She...

His voice trails off. Emma watches him -- her chest  
tightening.

EMMA  
... What are you talking about?

The color drains from Sean's face.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
What did you do?

SEAN  
Emma --

EMMA  
What did you do, Sean?

Sean's eyes fill with shame.

SEAN  
I'm sorry.

Emma doesn't move. Doesn't blink.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Are you going to say something?

EMMA  
What do you want me to say?

SEAN  
I don't know. Anything.

A long silence.

EMMA  
When?

SEAN  
After our fight.

Emma turns away, fighting back tears.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
It was one time. And it was a  
mistake.

She faces him, disgust in her voice --

EMMA  
Oh, grow up, Sean. You were scared.  
You've always been scared.

SEAN  
I'm sorry. I'm sorry I didn't tell  
you sooner. I --

Emma shakes her head. Sean reaches for her.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Emma, I love you.

She swats his hand away, getting up. Snowflake barks.

EMMA

Don't. Don't you dare. You don't love me. If you did, you wouldn't have done it.

Emma picks up Snowflake. Sean stands.

SEAN

She knew what she was doing. She wanted this to happen.

EMMA

Was it worth it? Throwing us away for one night?

(beat)

Was I that easy to forget?

SEAN

No. If you just let me explain, I --

EMMA

What's there to explain? You're jealous of a dog.

Emma lets out a bitter, condescending laugh.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You know, I almost feel sorry for you. Clearly, you've got some serious mommy issues.

SEAN

Emma, please. I don't want to lose you.

EMMA

Too late.

The words stab Sean in the heart -- cold and unforgiving. Emma's eyes fill with tears of betrayal.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Get out!

Emma puts Snowflake down and shoves Sean toward the door.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I said get out! Leave!

Sean opens the door, then pauses, looking back.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
GO!

Sean steps outside. The door SLAMS shut. Emma stands there for a moment -- then collapses, sobbing.

INT. SEAN'S MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sean's mom rinses a plate.

A SOFT KNOCK.

She pauses, unsure if she heard something.

A LOUDER KNOCK.

She puts the plate in the dishwasher and heads to the door.

INT./EXT. - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Sean's mom opens the door. Sean stands there, his shoulders slumped, eyes sunken.

INT. SEAN'S MOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sean and his mom sit at the kitchen table. Sean stares at the centerpiece, broken.

SEAN  
I'm just like him.

SEAN'S MOM  
Hey. No. No, don't say that.

SEAN  
It's true. I ruined everything.  
She's never going to forgive me.

She grabs his hand.

SEAN'S MOM  
Sean. Look at me.

He does.

SEAN'S MOM (CONT'D)  
Your father loved you, and I loved him, even after everything he did. I wanted him to feel the pain that I felt -- to hurt him the way that he hurt me.

(MORE)

SEAN'S MOM (CONT'D)  
I convinced myself that I was  
protecting you. But the truth is, I  
was just protecting myself.

She squeezes his hand, tearing up.

SEAN'S MOM (CONT'D)  
I love you, Sean. I will always  
love you. And I am so, so sorry. I  
hope, someday, you can forgive me.

Sean holds her gaze. The faintest smile appears on his face.

INT. SEAN'S MOM'S HOUSE - SEAN'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sean sits on his old twin bed, staring at his phone, pain in his eyes.

The doggy cam app is open -- a live feed of his living room.

Emma holds Snowflake, curled up on the couch, tears streaming down her face.

Sean looks away, unable to watch anymore.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - DAY

Emma plays with Snowflake. Sean enters.

EMMA  
Hey, babe.

Sean notices the new toy.

SEAN  
What's that?

EMMA  
What?

SEAN  
(points to toy)  
That.

EMMA  
(gleefully)  
It's Grogu.

Emma squeezes the toy -- SQUEAK.

SEAN  
She doesn't have enough already?

Emma looks at the pile of dog toys in the corner. Sean grabs a glass and turns on the sink. No water comes out.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What's wrong with the sink?

EMMA  
I don't know, it won't turn on.

SEAN  
Did you call a plumber?

Snowflake trots over, dropping a ball at Sean's feet.

EMMA  
No, I thought you could fix it.

SEAN  
(turns sharply)  
Why would I know how to fix it?

Sean steps on the ball, slips, and hits his head on the kitchen island.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Agh! Fuck!

EMMA  
Sean!

Emma rushes over. Snowflake starts barking.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Are you okay?

Sean gets up, pulling away.

SEAN  
Don't touch me!

EMMA  
Let me see.

SEAN  
No! This is your fault.

EMMA  
My fault?

SEAN  
You and that stupid dog.

EMMA

She just wanted to play.

SEAN

Well, I don't. Fuck.

Sean holds his head, grimacing. Snowflake keeps barking.

EMMA

(sternly)

Snowflake, enough.

The barking stops. Emma looks at Sean --

EMMA (CONT'D)

What is wrong with you?

SEAN

I'm tired of this shit.

EMMA

Tired of what?

SEAN

This fucking fantasy of yours. I don't want to get married. I don't want kids. I don't care about the color of the curtains and if the pillows match. And a fucking dog isn't going to change my mind.

EMMA

That's not what I was doing.

SEAN

Bullshit.

EMMA

Well, what about me, Sean? What about what I want?

SEAN

What you want?! You were the one who wanted a dog, not me. You don't take care of her, I do. I'm the one who feeds her. I'm the one who walks her. I do everything. You don't do shit.

EMMA

I don't have a choice, Sean. I have to work.

SEAN

Exactly. You're never here. And when you are, you don't have time for me.

(points at Snowflake)

But you have time for her. You have time for your friends.

EMMA

Forgive me for having a life. The world doesn't revolve around you.

SEAN

Are you fucking serious?! Do you think I wanted to move? I was perfectly happy the way things were.

EMMA

I didn't want to move either, but I had to -- for my career. You knew that.

SEAN

Yeah, well, you didn't even ask. And I didn't sign up to be a third wheel.

Emma stares at Sean, stunned. Then --

EMMA

Wow. Okay. If that's really how you feel, then maybe you should just leave.

SEAN

You read my mind.

And with that, Sean storms out.

INT. JEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jen punches numbers into a spreadsheet.

SEAN (O.S.)

Do you ever go home?

Jen glances at her door, almost as if she were expecting him. Sean stands there, a small lump on the side of his head.

JEN

Depends who's asking.

Sean gives her a tired smile.

SEAN  
Want to get a drink?

JEN  
Sure.

Jen pulls out a bottle and two glasses, smiling.

INT. JEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jen pours Sean another drink, laughing.

SEAN  
It's not funny.

JEN  
Oh, poor baby.

SEAN  
Yeah, easy for you to say.

Jen gives him an alluring smile. He takes a drink, looking away.

JEN  
What are you afraid of?

SEAN  
I'm not afraid. I just don't like being manipulated.

JEN  
Do you love her?

SEAN  
I thought I did.

JEN  
Does she love you?

SEAN  
She says she does, but she says a lot of things.

(beat)  
I don't know why it has to be so complicated.

JEN  
Doesn't have to be.

Jen takes a slow, seductive sip of her drink. Sean watches, inhaling.

She pulls an ice cube out of her mouth, holding his gaze.

Jen leans in, pressing the ice cube against the lump on Sean's head. He exhales, closing his eyes.

A bead of water trickles down his cheek. Jen licks it, daring him to make the next move.

Just then, Sean kisses her -- deep and primal. He lifts her onto the desk, knocking over the computer. Jen moans, breath hitching.

They claw at each other's clothes. Sean unbuckles his pants and begins thrusting...

END OF FLASHBACK  
SEQUENCE.

INT. OFFICE TOWER - FLOOR LOBBY - DAY

PING. An elevator opens. Jen steps out, a smug grin on her face. Suddenly, she freezes, her smile vanishing.

Frank stands by the reception desk with a MAN in a black suit holding a briefcase.

INT. OFFICE - RECEPTION - MOMENTS LATER

Jen enters.

JEN  
Good morning.

FRANK  
Jen, this is Michael Harris. He's a forensic accountant.

Jen shakes his hand, keeping her composure.

JEN  
Nice to meet you.

INT. JEN'S OFFICE - DAY

On-hold music PLAYS. Jen sits at her desk, anxiously clicking a pen. The on-hold music STOPS.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #3 (V.O.)

Thank you for holding, ma'am. It appears the account has been closed due to suspicious activity.

JEN

What?! Why?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #3 (V.O.)

Several large transactions were flagged by our system.

JEN

Why wasn't I notified?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #3 (V.O.)

We reserve the right to close accounts at our discretion.

JEN

Are you kidding me?! Who the hell do you think you are?

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #3 (V.O.)

We're a digital bank providing simple and convenient banking opportunities for a variety of businesses and individuals.

Jen rolls his eyes.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT AGENT #3 (V.O.)

(CONT'D)

If you believe this is a mistake, we recommend filing a formal dispute or seeking legal advice. You should receive a check in the mail for the remaining account balance within ten business days.

Jen slams down the phone, grabs her purse, and rushes out the door.

INT. OFFICE - GRANT'S CUBICLE - MOMENTS LATER

Jen marches toward Grant.

GRANT

Hey, Jen.

She storms past.

GRANT (CONT'D)  
(to self)  
What's her problem?

INT. SEAN'S MOM'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Sean rubs his eyes, staring at the computer screen. Then --

JEN (V.O.)  
... *Mitch is probably wondering where I am.*

SEAN (V.O.)  
*Who's Mitch?*

JEN (V.O.)  
*My husband.*

Sean sits up, a light bulb going off. He feverishly types "Mitch Foster" into the search bar and hits enter.

The first result is a realtor in Austin. Sean CLICKS on the website.

An obnoxious photo of Mitch Foster holding a for-sale sign is plastered across the homepage.

Sean CLICKS on the "FEATURED LISTINGS".

The first property is a two-bedroom, two-bath luxury condo in downtown Austin.

Sean CLICKS through photos of the condo: the foyer, living room, kitchen, master bedroom --

Sean stops at a photo of the guest bedroom and zooms in on the reflection in the mirror.

There, clear as day, is Jen.

SEAN  
Gotcha.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - DAY

Jen bursts through the door, heading straight for the master bedroom.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jen pulls a suitcase out from under the bed and disappears into the closet with her purse.

Hangers SLIDE along a rack. A digital combination is ENTERED, UNLOCKING a safe.

Jen reappears, grabs her suitcase, and wheels it out of the room.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - FOYER - DAY

A MALE'S VOICE grows louder.

MITCH (O.S.)  
... She got half my money and the condo.

The front door unlocks. MITCH FOSTER, smooth-talking, forties, steps inside with Sean.

MITCH (CONT'D)  
Now she wants to sell the thing.  
(beat)  
Moral of the story: sign a prenup.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mitch and Sean enter the living room.

MITCH  
... Marble countertops, stainless steel appliances, wine cellar, heated bathroom floors. Everything you could possibly want.

SEAN  
Then why's it for sale?

MITCH  
Suddenly, she's homesick. This is the same woman who refused to invite her own mother to our wedding.

SEAN  
How long were you married?

MITCH  
Ten months. Worst decision of my life.

Sean gazes out the window, high above the Colorado River.

SEAN

What's the asking price?

MITCH

Two million.

(beat)

Did I mention it comes with a dedicated concierge and private access to the rooftop pool and fitness center? Oh, and there's a dog park on the eighth floor. You like dogs?

Sean turns around.

SEAN

... Love 'em.

Mitch's phone RINGS. He looks at the caller ID.

MITCH

Sorry, I gotta take this. Have a look around.

(answers phone)

Hey, Lisa. What'd they say?

Sean wanders off.

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

That wasn't part of the deal.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sean turns down a hallway, picking up the pace. He spots a glass-paneled door at the end -- the office.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean slips inside and begins searching the room -- opening drawers and cabinets -- looking for anything that could prove Jen's guilt, but it's empty.

SEAN

Fuck.

He stands there for a moment, frustrated, then dashes out the door, back the way he came.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sean makes a beeline for the master bedroom as Mitch argues with Lisa --

MITCH  
(into phone)  
If they want the fridge, they're  
going to have to pay for it.

Mitch flashes Sean a smile.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sean searches the bedroom, throwing open drawers. Dresser -- nothing. Nightstand -- nothing.

Then, out of the corner of his eye, he sees something in the closet -- a glint of metal poking through a rack of clothes.

He goes inside.

INT. JEN'S CONDO - MASTER BEDROOM - CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Sean slides the clothes to the side, exposing a safe. The door hangs slightly ajar.

QUICK FLASHBACK - JEN EMPTYING SAFE

Jen yanks the safe door open and stuffs the contents -- a passport, cash -- into her purse. She slams the door shut, but it bounces back open as she rushes out.

BACK TO SCENE

Sean stares into the empty safe.

MITCH (O.S.)  
So, what do you think?

Sean spins around.

SEAN  
It's not quite what I'm looking  
for.

EXT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DEPARTURES - DAY

An SUV pulls up to the drop-off zone, the trunk popping open.

EXT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Jen steps out.

INT. LOAN RANGER - DAY

Wade carries a box of rangefinder scopes through the store, stopping at the cashier counter --

WADE  
(to cashier)  
You seen Matt?

CASHIER  
No, but some guy's waiting for you  
in your office.

Wade pauses.

WADE  
What guy?

CASHIER  
Didn't ask. He said you were  
friends.

Wade puts down the box, jaw tightening.

INT. LOAN RANGER - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Wade storms down the hallway, slowing as he nears his office. The door's cracked open.

He eases it wider, revealing a man seated with his back to him.

Sean turns around.

WADE  
Sean.

SEAN  
Wade.

INT. LOAN RANGER - WADE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean stands --

SEAN  
I just want to talk.

WADE

We got nothing to talk about.

SEAN

Wade, please. Think about what you're doing.

WADE

Oh, I have -- more than you know.

SEAN

Then don't let her drag his name through the mud. Because she will -- with a smile.

Wade points a stern finger out the door.

WADE

Get out of my office. Now.

SEAN

Wade --

WADE

Now!

Sean holds Wade's stare, then finally moves.

SEAN

You're not protecting him, Wade.  
You're throwing him to the wolves.  
And when he takes the fall, then what?

Wade exhales, head dropping. Then, just as Sean reaches the door --

WADE

Wait.

Sean stops.

WADE (CONT'D)

Close the door.

INT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SECURITY  
CHECKPOINT - DAY

Jen breezes through security and heads to her gate.

EXT. LOAN RANGER - DAY

Sean peers out of Wade's office window. A car pulls into the parking stall in front of him.

INT. LOAN RANGER - WADE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean lowers the blinds.

WADE

After she left, I started getting these anonymous emails -- lists of accounts to funnel the money through.

Wade opens one -- more than a dozen names, addresses, account numbers, routing numbers are listed.

Sean leans in.

SEAN

Who the hell are these guys?

WADE

No idea.

SEAN

They're from all over the country.

(beat)

Washington, New York, Florida, Oregon...

WADE

This ain't her first rodeo.

Beside each account is a random dollar amount: "\$5,453.89, \$7,126.04, \$2,201.87, etc."

SEAN

What'd you tell the bank?

WADE

They were new suppliers.

SEAN

(points to name)

Wait. What about this guy -- Ricardo Garcia?

WADE

What about him?

SEAN  
Look at the address.

Wade squints: "5912 Brunswick Avenue, San Antonio, Texas".

WADE  
San Antonio.

They lock eyes.

INT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - GATE - DAY

A GATE ATTENDANT stands at the gate desk, on the phone.

Behind her, the gate display reads: "Grand Cayman | Departs: 2:20 pm | Status: On Time".

Nearby, Jen flips through a magazine.

The gate attendant hangs up the phone and makes an announcement --

GATE ATTENDANT  
Attention all passengers on Flight  
Three-One-Nine with service to  
Grand Cayman.

Jen looks up.

GATE ATTENDANT (CONT'D)  
We regret to inform you that your  
flight has been delayed due to a  
technical issue beyond our control.  
Your new estimated departure time  
is five forty p.m. We apologize for  
the inconvenience.

The flight status on the gate display updates: "Status: Delayed".

Jen shuts the magazine and marches to the desk.

JEN  
What's going on?

GATE ATTENDANT  
We're experiencing a technical  
issue.

JEN  
Yeah, you said that.  
(beat)  
Look, I need to leave now.

GATE ATTENDANT

This is the only direct flight  
today.

JEN

Then what are my options?

The gate attendant types, barely looking up.

GATE ATTENDANT

There's a connection through Miami.  
Departs in three hours.

JEN

That's not good enough.

GATE ATTENDANT

Then I suggest you take a seat.

Jen glares at the gate attendant, then slings her purse over  
her shoulder and storms off, heels clicking.

INT. WADE'S TRUCK - DAY

Sean stares out the passenger window, watching the world go  
by, as Wade drives down the highway.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Wade's truck ZOOMS OFF, passing under a sign structure. The  
sign above the left lane reads: "SOUTH INTERSTATE 35 -- San  
Antonio".

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A rundown neighborhood of single-family homes littered with  
junk -- broken furniture, tipped garbage bins, rusted cars  
parked on overgrown lawns.

Wade's truck slows, pulling over in front of 5192 Brunswick  
Avenue.

INT. WADE'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Wade kills the engine, then looks at Sean.

WADE

After you.

Sean gets out.

EXT. 5192 BRUNSWICK AVENUE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Sean and Wade reach the front door. They exchange an uneasy glance.

Sean takes a breath, raises his fist, and knocks.

No answer.

He knocks again, harder.

The door opens. A PRETEEN GIRL stands there, straight-faced.

SEAN

Uh... Hi. Is your dad home?

PRETEEN GIRL

No.

SEAN

Do you know where he is?

PRETEEN GIRL

(plainly)

My dad's dead.

Sean stares at her.

SEAN

What...? Are you sure?

She gives him a strange look.

WADE

Sean --

SEAN

No. No, he can't be dead. He's alive. He has to be.

(beat, to girl)

Do you live here?

PRETEEN GIRL

Yeah.

SEAN

Since when?

Wade steps in --

WADE

Okay. Thanks, sweetheart. Sorry to bother you.

He grabs Sean by the arm.

WADE (CONT'D)  
He's a ghost, Sean. She stole his identity.

Sean doesn't move.

WADE (CONT'D)  
Come on. Let's go. This is a dead end.

Sean exhales, long and heavy.

SEAN  
(to girl)  
Sorry.

Wade and Sean start to leave. Then --

PRETEEN GIRL  
Who are you looking for?

They stop, turning back.

SEAN  
Ricardo Garcia.

The girl stares at Sean for a moment, then suddenly yells inside --

PRETEEN GIRL  
Ricky!

INT. 5192 BRUNSWICK AVENUE - BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Ricky, late teens, sits at his computer, headset on, gaming.

PRETEEN GIRL (O.S.)  
Ricky!

Ricky mutes his mic and shouts upstairs --

RICKY  
I'm gaming!

PRETEEN GIRL (O.S.)  
Ricky!

RICKY  
I said I'm gaming. If you're hungry, eat something.

Ricky clicks furiously, killing his opponent. He jumps up, pumped --

RICKY (CONT'D)  
(grabs crotch)  
Suck it, asshole! I just made you  
my bitch. Go make me a sandwich.

Just then, MIA, Ricky's younger sister, spins him around --

MIA  
Ricky.

Ricky yanks off his headset.

RICKY  
What?

MIA  
These guys wanna talk to you.

RICKY  
What guys?

Mia steps to the side. Sean and Wade stare at Ricky, just as confused as he is.

SEAN  
Un-fucking-believable.

RICKY  
Who are you?

Sean pulls out his phone and shows Ricky the photo of Jen from the condo listing.

SEAN  
Look familiar?

Ricky looks at the photo.

RICKY  
No.  
(beat)  
Mia, what the hell? Are you trying  
to get us killed?

WADE  
Listen, kid, we're not going to  
hurt you. Just tell us the truth.

RICKY  
I am. I've never seen her in my  
life.

Sean exhales, agitated.

SEAN

Ricky, you don't have to lie to us.  
We're after her, not you.

RICKY

Dude, I don't know what you're  
talking about. Now get the fuck  
out.

SEAN

Oh, yeah? Then what's this?

Sean snatches a piece of paper from Wade's hand and shoves it  
in Ricky's face.

WADE

Sean!

MIA

Hey! Get away from him!

RICKY

Mia, run! Run!

Mia scurries upstairs. Sean pins Ricky to the chair.

SEAN

(to Wade)

Stop her!

WADE

Are you out of your mind?!

SEAN

She's gonna call the cops.

Wade hesitates.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Go!

Wade chases after Mia. Sean turns back to Ricky, desperate  
for answers.

RICKY

Look, man. I'm sorry. I didn't mean  
it. Stay as long as you want.

SEAN

Shut up.

Sean holds up the piece of paper -- a wire transfer receipt.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Recognize that name?

Sean points to "Ricardo Garcia". Ricky stares at it, scared shitless.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Still don't know what I'm talking  
about?

RICKY  
No.

SEAN  
STOP LYING!

RICKY  
I swear! I've never wired anything.  
My girlfriend asked me to open the  
account. I didn't think it was a  
big deal.

Sean pauses.

SEAN  
Your girlfriend?

RICKY  
Yeah. Look.

Ricky minimizes the game, revealing his desktop wallpaper. A photo of a gorgeous woman, way out of his league, blows a kiss into the camera.

Sean stares at her.

SEAN  
Jesus Christ.

He lets go of Ricky.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Let me guess: you met online.

RICKY  
Yeah, so?

Sean shakes his head.

SEAN  
Move.

Ricky stands. Sean pulls up the bank's homepage from the wire transfer receipt.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What's your password?

RICKY  
Uh... capital I, capital L...

Sean types.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
... u-v, capital N, a-o-m-i,  
exclamation point, exclamation  
point.

Sean finishes typing, then gives Ricky a pitiful look. Ricky smiles sheepishly.

Sean logs in and clicks on "Account History". A pattern quickly emerges -- wire transfers to an account in the Cayman Islands under the name...

SEAN  
(to self)  
Monique Richards.

Sean opens a new tab and searches the name.

RICKY  
Holy shitballs.

INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN

A mugshot of Monique Richards - longer hair, different colour, but clearly Jen.

"WANTED: MONIQUE RICHARDS

Conspiracy to commit 8 counts of embezzlement and money laundering.

Last seen May 25, 2022, Orange County, California."

BACK TO SCENE

Sean stares at the mugshot.

JEN (V.O.)  
*Sometimes you gotta get your hands  
a little dirty... I don't like to  
stay in one place for too long...  
I'd hate to have to ruin another  
relationship.*

He takes off.

RICKY  
Where are you going?

INT. 5192 BRUNSWICK AVENUE - MAIN FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER  
Sean sprints upstairs.

SEAN  
Wade! Wade!

Wade runs over.

WADE  
What? What is it?

SEAN  
We gotta go. Now.

WADE  
Why, what happened? What'd he say?

SEAN  
No time. Come on.

They head for the door -- Sean suddenly stops.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Wait. Where's the girl?

WADE  
Locked herself in the bathroom.

SEAN  
All right, then let's go.

They rush out.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Wade's truck tears down the street.

FBI THREAT INTAKE EXAMINER (V.O.)  
Thank you for calling the FBI. May  
I please have your name?

INT. WADE'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Sean answers --

SEAN  
(into phone)  
Sean Adler.

Wade glances at Sean.

WADE  
Where am I going?

SEAN  
Just drive.

Wade guns it.

INT. OFFICE - FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

Grant stands over Frank, staring at his computer.

FRANK  
It won't open.

GRANT  
Did you try restarting it?

FRANK  
Yeah.

GRANT  
(reaches for mouse)  
Let me see.

FRANK  
(pulls mouse away)  
No! Just tell me how to fix it.

-- Sean busts in with Wade and two POLICE OFFICERS.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Sean?

SEAN  
Where's Jen?

FRANK  
What?

SEAN  
Where's Jen?

Frank stands, confused.

FRANK  
Why? What's going on?

SEAN  
(to Grant)  
Where is she?!

GRANT

I don't know. She left... hours ago.

INT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - TERMINAL - BAR - DAY

Jen sits at the bar watching TV. The PA system CRACKLES --

GATE ATTENDANT (V.O.)

This is a final boarding call for all passengers on Flight Three-One-Nine with service to Grand Cayman. Please proceed to Gate Twenty-Four. Doors will be closing in five minutes. Thank you.

Jen throws back the rest of her drink, leaves a twenty-dollar bill on the bar top, and heads to the gate.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean, Wade, Grant, and Nicole hover around Grant's cubicle, watching the police question Frank inside his office.

Suddenly, Frank raises his voice, loud enough for them to hear --

FRANK

How should I know?!

Grant exhales.

GRANT

Someone's getting fired.

Sean walks off. Nicole shoots Grant a look.

INT. OFFICE - SEAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sean weakly closes the door and dials.

INT. HOSPITAL - CHANGING ROOM

Emma puts on her scrub cap, dressed for surgery. Her phone BUZZES on the locker shelf.

INT. HOSPITAL - CHANGING ROOM - LOCKER

Emma glances at the caller ID. Her eyes cloud with heartache. She shuts the locker.

INT. OFFICE - SEAN'S OFFICE

Sean lets out a shaky breath.

EMMA (V.O.)  
Hey, it's Emma! Leave a message.

His phone BEEPS.

(Note: This voicemail alternates between on-camera and voiceover.)

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY

Emma steps out of the changing room, swallowing the lump in her throat.

SEAN (V.O.)  
Hey... It's me. I know I'm the last person you want to talk to right now, but I needed to hear your voice.

INT. OFFICE - SEAN'S OFFICE

Sean sits down.

SEAN  
I'm sorry, Emma... I lied. I cheated. I betrayed your trust. But it doesn't have to end this way... I don't want it to end this way.

INT. HOSPITAL - SCRUB ROOM

Emma scrubs her hands, as if trying to wash away the pain.

INT. OFFICE - SEAN'S OFFICE

Tears well in Sean's eyes.

SEAN

We can still be the exception. We  
can still be the couple that's  
together fifty years from now. The  
last ones on the dance floor.

INT. HOSPITAL - SCRUB ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emma dries her hands and enters the operating room,  
disappearing behind the doors.

SEAN (V.O.)

Emma, you mean everything to me,  
and if you give me a second chance,  
I'll spend the rest of my life  
trying to prove it. I promise.

INT. OFFICE - SEAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sean hangs up and buries his face in his hands.

INT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - TERMINAL -  
CONTINUOUS

Jen heads to her gate, nearly home free. Suddenly, she  
freezes.

Across the terminal, three AIRPORT POLICE OFFICERS urgently  
speak with the gate attendant.

The gate attendant points, spotting Jen.

Busted.

Jen bolts, abandoning her carry-on.

AIRPORT POLICE OFFICER #1

Hey!

The officers give chase.

Jen sprints down the concourse. Travelers shriek and scatter.

AIRPORT POLICE OFFICERS

Stop!/ Stop, police!

An unsuspecting TRAVELER steps out of the bathroom. Jen bumps  
into him --

JEN

Move!

INT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - BAGGAGE CLAIM -  
MOMENTS LATER

Travelers grab their luggage. A SCREAM cuts through the air.

Jen hurtles down the escalator, shoving people aside --

JEN  
Out of the way!

She dashes past the baggage carousels, through the exit.

EXT. AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - ARRIVALS -  
MOMENTS LATER

The exit doors open. Jen races across the street --

WHAM! A taxi slams into her.

She flips over the hood and crashes to the ground.

Dazed, she staggers to her feet --

CRUNCH. Officer #1 tackles Jen from behind.

The other officers surround her, guns drawn.

AIRPORT POLICE OFFICERS  
Stay down! Stay down!/ Don't move!

Officer #1 handcuffs Jen. She thrashes, resisting.

AIRPORT POLICE OFFICER #1  
Jennifer Foster. You're under  
arrest.

A wild grin spreads across Jen's face.

AIRPORT POLICE OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)  
It's Jennifer, right? Or should I  
say Monique?

Jen bursts out laughing, loving every second of it.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Sean sits at the end of a dark, narrow hallway.

A door OPENS. An FBI SPECIAL AGENT steps out. Sean stands.

FBI SPECIAL AGENT  
We got her -- one-way ticket to the  
Caymans. Just like you thought.

Sean exhales, relieved.

SEAN  
What happens now?

The agent keeps walking.

FBI SPECIAL AGENT  
That's up to the judge. She's  
stolen a lot of money from a lot of  
people.

SEAN  
Yeah, but we'll get it back, right?

The agent pauses.

FBI SPECIAL AGENT  
Look, based on what you've told us,  
that money's long gone. She thought  
of everything... down to the last  
wire transfer.

(beat)  
Your company's on the hook for  
almost seven figures. The bank will  
freeze the loan -- maybe even seize  
the property -- until this shit  
gets sorted, which could take  
years.

(beat)  
My advice: move on.

Sean stares.

SEAN  
What? No. That can't be it. She,  
she --

FBI SPECIAL AGENT  
Go home, son. You've done enough  
for one day.

He pats Sean on the shoulder, then walks off.

Sean stands there, numb. He slowly turns, heading for the  
exit.

The double doors swing open with a loud THUD.

Sean freezes mid-step.

A POLICE OFFICER escorts a handcuffed Jen inside.

She stops, locking eyes with Sean. Her mouth twists into a tiny, cruel grin.

JEN  
Smile, Sean. You won.

The police officer tugs her forward --

POLICE OFFICER  
Come on, let's go.

JEN  
Tell Emma I say hi.

Sean watches Jen disappear down the hall -- her fate sealed.

She turns the corner. Her jaw tightens. A breath catches in her throat -- not defiance, not power, but grief.

EXT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - NIGHT

The garage door opens. Sean's car pulls inside.

INT. SEAN AND EMMA'S TOWNHOME - MOMENTS LATER

The sound of the garage door CLOSING echoes through the house.

Sean wishfully opens the door --

SEAN  
Emma?

A flicker of shock crosses Sean's face. He turns on the light.

The house is empty, except for the throw pillows -- piled on the living room floor.

Sean stands there, completely still -- alone in the silence.

FADE OUT:

THE END