

BUYER BEWARE

by

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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 whimpers 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