

SCRIPT TITLE

Written by

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Based on, If Any

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FADE IN:

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A long walnut table set with surgical precision.

Crystal. Gold flatware. Low candlelight. No harsh shadows.

Eight WOMEN sit mid-conversation, controlled laughter, calibrated reactions. The kind of women who never talk over each other.

At the head of the table: THE HOSTESS (early 40s). Effortless. Commanding without volume.

Mid-table: ROWAN (late 30s). New. Observing.

A WAITER refills glasses silently. No one thanks him. He disappears.

A beat of quiet.

HOSTESS

We don't usually do this so quickly.

A few of the women glance at Rowan. Not hostile. Measuring.

WOMAN #1

She hasn't even had dessert yet.

Soft laughter.

Rowan smiles, just a fraction too late.

ROWAN

I can pace myself.

HOSTESS

Can you?

A charged pause.

Rowan meets her gaze. Doesn't look away.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)

Good.

The Hostess lifts her wine glass.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)

To new faces.

The others follow.

ALL
To new faces.

Glasses clink.

Rowan drinks. Watches who watches her.

Under the table, a heel brushes her ankle.

She stiffens, then realizes it isn't an accident.

Across from her, SLOANE (mid 30s) doesn't break eye contact as she slowly withdraws her foot.

SLOANE
Relax. We're not predators.

WOMAN #2
Speak for yourself.

More laughter.

HOSTESS
We believe in comfort here.

Rowan folds her napkin carefully.

ROWAN
And what does comfort require?

The Hostess studies her. Approving.

HOSTESS
Discretion.

A subtle shift in the air.

WOMAN #3 reaches into her clutch and places her phone face down on the table.

One by one, the others do the same.

No one asks Rowan to follow.

She does.

The Waiter returns with dessert plates. Perfect portions. Identical.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)
You'll find we're generous.

SLOANE
But we expect reciprocity.

Rowan's eyes flick between them.

ROWAN
Reciprocity how?

HOSTESS
(smiles)
We protect each other.

WOMAN #1
We don't compete.

WOMAN #2
We don't repeat.

That one lands heavier.

A small cream envelope appears in the Hostess's hand. Thick paper. Embossed seal.

She places it on the table.

Doesn't push it yet.

HOSTESS
It's optional.

WOMAN #3
It's never optional.

The Hostess shoots her a look. Playful, but corrective.

HOSTESS
You don't have to open it tonight.

She slides the envelope across the table.

It stops directly in front of Rowan.

The women go quiet.

No one eats dessert.

Rowan rests her fingertips on the envelope.

It's heavier than it looks.

ROWAN
What am I agreeing to?

ACT ONE

INT. ROWAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door unlocks.

Rowan steps inside.

A modest apartment. Moving boxes against one wall. No art.
Bare surfaces.

She closes the door.

The latch clicks.

She stands there.

Still in her coat.

Still holding the envelope.

A beat.

She turns the deadbolt.

Checks it.

Checks it again.

Only then does she move.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Rowan sets the envelope on the counter.

Careful. Centered.

She slips off her heels. Rubs her ankle.

Faint red indentation.

Her phone BUZZES.

She freezes.

Looks at the screen.

UNKNOWN NUMBER

Home safe?

Another BUZZ.

UNKNOWN NUMBER (CONT'D)
You left early.

Rowan types.

ROWAN (TEXT)
It was late.

She deletes it.

Types again.

ROWAN (TEXT) (CONT'D)
Yes. Thank you for inviting me.

Sends.

Three dots appear.

UNKNOWN NUMBER
We don't do thank you's.

Rowan looks at the envelope.

UNKNOWN NUMBER (CONT'D)
Open it when you're alone.

Rowan glances around the empty apartment.

Like she's being watched, then back at the envelope.

She doesn't touch it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lights off.

City glow through the window.

Rowan sits on the couch.

Phone in hand.

She opens her camera roll.

Photos from dinner.

The women. The table.

One photo, Rowan in a hallway.

Blurry.

Timestamp: 1:47 A.M.

Rowan frowns.

She checks her ride share app.

TRIP COMPLETED 11:32 P.M.

She stares at the discrepancy.

Her phone BUZZES again.

UNKNOWN NUMBER
You were perfect.

Rowan locks the phone.

Silence.

She looks at the envelope on the coffee table.

Then at the front door.

She stands.

Checks the lock again.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Rowan lies in bed.

The envelope sits on the nightstand.

Her phone lights up.

INSTAGRAM NOTIFICATION

SLOANE started following you.

Rowan stares at the screen.

Then at the envelope.

She reaches for it.

Stops.

Turns off the light.

We HOLD in the dark.

INT. ROWAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sunlight cuts across the wall. Rowan's eyes open. She doesn't move.

The envelope sits on the nightstand.

Unopened.

Her phone lights up.

7:12 A.M.

A notification preview: SLOANE: Brunch. 11. You're coming.

No question mark.

Rowan sits up. Looks at the envelope.

Doesn't touch it.

INT. KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Coffee brews.

Rowan stands at the counter, staring at the envelope.

She flips it over. Breaks the seal slightly, Stops.

Footsteps above her. Neighbor moving around.

Ordinary sounds.

She sets the envelope back down.

Her phone buzzes again.

SLOANE:

Wear something comfortable.

Another text.

SLOANE: (CONT'D)

We hike before we drink.

Rowan types.

ROWAN:

I didn't say I was coming.

Three dots appear immediately.

SLOANE:
You don't have to say it.

Beat.

SLOANE: (CONT'D)
We'll pick you up at 10:30.

Rowan looks at her reflection in the microwave door.
Studies herself.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Steam from the shower.

Rowan wipes a clear patch on the mirror.

Looks at her ankle. The red mark is still there.

Her phone rests on the sink. She checks the hallway photo again.

Zooms in.

In the background, A hand on her lower back.

Not visible enough to identify.

Rowan scrolls.

There's a video.

Two seconds long.

Muted.

She presses play.

It's dark. Movement. Laughter.

A whisper we can't make out.

She stops it.

Deletes it.

Hesitates.

Goes to "Recently Deleted."

Deletes it again.

She meets her own eyes in the mirror.

EXT. ROWAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE MORNING

A sleek black SUV idles at the curb.

Rowan steps out of the building and spots it immediately. It doesn't belong on this street.

The passenger window rolls down.

Sloane. Sunglasses. Composed. Like she's been there a while.

SLOANE
You look rested.

Rowan approaches the car but doesn't smile.

ROWAN
I left before midnight.

Sloane tilts her head slightly, considering her.

SLOANE
Did you.

Not a question.

Rowan studies her face, looking for a crack. Finds none.

ROWAN
Yes.

Sloane removes her sunglasses, folds them carefully, and sets them on the dashboard.

SLOANE
That's interesting.

A beat.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
You were still there when I left.

That lands heavier in daylight.

ROWAN
What time was that?

SLOANE
Late enough.

A quiet moment between them.

The engine hums.

A delivery truck passes, rattling the air for a second before fading.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
You coming?

It's casual. But it isn't optional.

Rowan glances up and down the street. A neighbor walks a dog. A normal Saturday.

She looks back at Sloane.

ROWAN
Where are we going?

SLOANE
Out.

A small smile.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
You'll like it.

Rowan hesitates just long enough to register the choice.

Then she walks around the front of the SUV.

As she reaches for the passenger door

SLOANE (CONT'D)
Oh.

Rowan pauses.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
Phone.

Rowan looks down at it in her hand.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
We try to be present.

The implication hangs there.

Rowan studies her.

Then powers the phone off.

She opens the passenger door and gets in.

The door shuts.

The SUV pulls away from the curb.

We stay on the now empty sidewalk for a beat longer than necessary.

Then

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK SUV - CONTINUOUS

The door closes with a solid, insulated thud.

Rowan adjusts in the seat, aware of the expensive quiet. The kind of car that makes the outside world feel far away.

Sloane pulls into traffic smoothly, one hand on the wheel.

For a moment, they drive in silence.

ROWAN

You said I was still there.

SLOANE

You were.

ROWAN

Doing what?

Sloane glances at her briefly, then back to the road.

SLOANE

Talking. Laughing. You seemed comfortable.

ROWAN

With who?

SLOANE

Does it matter?

Rowan watches her carefully.

ROWAN

It does to me.

Sloane's expression softens, just slightly.

SLOANE

You were asking questions.

ROWAN

About what?

SLOANE
About how it works.

Rowan turns toward the window. The neighborhood is changing.
Fewer storefronts. More trees.

ROWAN
And how does it work?

Sloane smiles faintly.

SLOANE
You tell me.

Rowan doesn't answer.

A beat passes.

Sloane reaches into the center console and removes a small
velvet pouch. She places it between them.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
House preference.

Rowan looks at it but doesn't touch it.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
We don't like interruptions.

ROWAN
From who?

SLOANE
From outside.

Rowan slowly takes the pouch and opens it.

Inside, three phones. Powered off. Identical.

ROWAN
Why do you need backups?

SLOANE
In case someone forgets which world
they're in.

That lands.

Rowan closes the pouch but keeps it in her lap.

ROWAN
And which world is this?

Sloane signals and turns off the main road.

The city noise fades.

SLOANE
The quieter one.

The SUV moves down a long, tree-lined drive.

Ahead, tall iron gates begin to open.

Rowan didn't see Sloane press anything.

She watches the gates widen.

ROWAN
You do this every weekend?

SLOANE
Only when someone new comes.

The SUV passes through. The gates close behind them.

We hold on Rowan as she registers that. No easy way back.

EXT. ESTATE DRIVE - DAY

The SUV moves slowly along a winding gravel road bordered by dense trees. Sunlight breaks through in shifting patterns across the windshield.

The property reveals itself gradually.

A modern glass-and-stone house sits ahead, low and expansive, designed to disappear into the landscape rather than dominate it. Floor-to-ceiling windows reflect sky and trees, giving little away about what's happening inside.

Several cars are already parked near the entrance. All expensive. All understated.

Sloane pulls to a stop.

The engine idles for a moment before she shuts it off.

Neither woman moves immediately.

ROWAN
This someone's house?

SLOANE
Sometimes.

Rowan looks toward the structure again, trying to place ownership.

ROWAN
And the rest of the time?

Sloane opens her door.

SLOANE
It belongs to whoever needs it.

She steps out.

Rowan stays seated a beat longer, watching her through the windshield as Sloane greets a WOMAN approaching from the patio. Familiar ease. A brief kiss on the cheek.

Rowan takes this in.

Then opens her door.

EXT. ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

Gravel crunches under Rowan's shoes as she joins them.

The air is quiet here. No traffic. No neighbors. Just wind moving through trees somewhere beyond the property line.

Sloane turns back to her.

SLOANE
You made it.

ROWAN
You picked me up.

A faint smile from Sloane.

The approaching woman extends a hand.

MARCELLA (40s). Warm, composed, observant.

MARCELLA
Rowan, right?

ROWAN
Yeah.

Marcella holds her hand a moment longer than necessary.

MARCELLA
We weren't sure you'd come back.

Rowan registers that wording.

ROWAN

Back?

Marcella releases her hand.

MARCELLA

After last night.

A beat.

Before Rowan can respond, laughter carries from inside the house.

Movement behind the glass walls, figures crossing rooms, sunlight flashing off wine glasses.

Sloane gestures toward the entrance.

SLOANE

Come on. You're late.

ROWAN

For what?

Sloane starts toward the house.

SLOANE

Brunch.

Rowan follows.

As they approach, Rowan notices a small wooden table beside the front door.

Several phones rest there. Powered off. Waiting. She slows slightly.

Marcella notices.

MARCELLA

Habit helps.

Rowan looks down at her own bag. Then toward the open doorway.

Inside, conversations pause just long enough to acknowledge her arrival.

She steps forward.

INT. ESTATE - DINING AREA - DAY

Sunlight floods an open-plan kitchen and dining space. Glass walls overlook trees rolling down the hillside.

A long table is already set.

Nine place settings.

Eight women sit or move easily around the room, refilling coffee, pouring champagne, passing plates without asking permission.

Conversation overlaps comfortably.

It stops, almost imperceptibly, as Rowan enters.

Then resumes.

Sloane guides her forward with a light hand at her back.

Too familiar for someone she met yesterday.

SLOANE

Everyone remembers Rowan.

A few smiles. A few assessing looks.

Rowan notices an empty chair midway down the table.

Place set. Coffee poured. Untouched.

No one acknowledges it.

Marcella gestures toward the seat beside her.

MARCELLA

Here.

Rowan sits.

Across from her, ELENA (late 30s) watches openly, amused.

ELENA

You look different in daylight.

ROWAN

Better or worse?

ELENA

More cautious.

Light laughter.

Coffee is poured in front of Rowan before she asks.

A hand briefly rests on Sloane's shoulder as another woman passes behind her. Fingers linger. Intimate. Casual.

No one reacts.

ROWAN
So this is the hike?

SLOANE
After we eat.

ELENA
If everyone behaves.

Another ripple of laughter.

Rowan glances again at the empty chair.

ROWAN
Are we waiting for someone?

A beat.

Utensils continue moving. Plates pass.

Marcella answers without looking up.

MARCELLA
Habit.

Rowan waits for more. Nothing comes.

Champagne appears beside Rowan's coffee.

She didn't see who poured it.

ELENA
You were very funny last night.

Rowan looks up.

ROWAN
Was I?

ELENA
You told Hannah exactly what you thought about loyalty.

Rowan searches faces.

ROWAN
I don't remember that.

A subtle shift travels around the table.

Not alarm. Interest. Sloane takes a sip of coffee.

SLOANE

You had strong opinions.

ROWAN

About what?

Marcella finally looks at her.

MARCELLA

About why people stay even when
they shouldn't.

That lands harder than expected.

ROWAN

I don't think I said that.

Elena smiles gently.

ELENA

You did.

A beat.

ELENA (CONT'D)

You said leaving is usually just
fear dressed up as morality.

Silence settles briefly around Rowan.

She genuinely doesn't recognize the words.

Across the table, someone slides their foot slowly along
another woman's ankle beneath the tablecloth.

A quiet inhale. No one comments. Rowan notices. Looks back
up. Everyone continues eating as if nothing happened.

Marcella raises her glass.

MARCELLA

To honesty.

The others lift theirs. All eyes drift, subtly, toward Rowan.

She lifts hers too. Unsure whether she's being welcomed.

Or confirmed. They drink. Rowan glances once more at the
empty chair.

Still untouched. Still waiting.

INT. ESTATE - KITCHEN - DAY

Brunch breaks apart naturally. Chairs scrape. Conversations splinter into smaller pairs drifting toward the patio.

Rowan gathers her coffee mug, unsure where she's supposed to go next.

Marcella appears beside her.

MARCELLA
Can you help me for a second?

It sounds casual enough to refuse. Rowan follows anyway.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The space is spotless. Minimal. Everything already clean.

Marcella moves to the counter, rearranging plates that don't need rearranging.

ROWAN
What do you need?

Marcella smiles faintly.

MARCELLA
Nothing.

A beat.

MARCELLA (CONT'D)
We just like to talk to people
individually the first time.

Rowan sets her mug down slowly.

ROWAN
About what?

Marcella leans against the counter, studying her openly now.

MARCELLA
Comfort level. Boundaries.
Expectations.

ROWAN
You make it sound like onboarding.

MARCELLA
(smiles)
It sort of is.

Outside, laughter carries through the open glass doors.

ROWAN
And if someone's uncomfortable?

Marcella considers that.

MARCELLA
Then they usually figure that out
quickly.

Rowan holds her gaze.

ROWAN
And leave?

Marcella doesn't answer immediately.

MARCELLA
Sometimes.

That word hangs.

Before Rowan can push further

The SOUND of a car approaching outside.

Gravel crunching.

Marcella's attention shifts instantly toward the driveway.

Not surprise. Recognition.

EXT. ESTATE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Through the kitchen windows, a silver sedan pulls up fast.

Too fast for the tone of the day.

The engine cuts.

A WOMAN steps out.

Early 40s. Sunglasses. Controlled anger barely contained.

Conversation on the patio falters.

Sloane straightens.

ELENA

(low)

She wasn't supposed to come.

Rowan watches, confused.

ROWAN

Who is that?

Marcella exhales quietly.

MARCELLA

Complicated.

INT. ENTRY HALL - MOMENTS LATER

The front door opens without knocking.

The arriving woman steps inside.

HANNAH.

She scans the room until her eyes land on Rowan.

Recognition. Immediate.

HANNAH

So she's the one.

The room goes still.

ROWAN

Have we met?

Hannah laughs once. Humorless.

HANNAH

Apparently.

Sloane moves between them, calm but firm.

SLOANE

This isn't the time.

HANNAH

No, actually, this is exactly the time.

Her gaze never leaves Rowan.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
You don't remember talking to me
last night?

Rowan shakes her head.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
That tracks.

A tense beat.

Marcella steps forward.

MARCELLA
Hannah.

A warning. Hannah softens instantly, performance returning.

HANNAH
Relax. I just wanted to see the
replacement.

That word lands hard. Rowan absorbs it.

Replacement.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Rowan steps away from the tension, unsettled.

She wanders down a quieter corridor.

Framed photographs line the wall.

Retreat weekends. Group dinners. Hiking trips.

The same women. Different seasons. Rowan slows.

One photo catches her attention.

The group gathered around this same table.

Nine women.

One unfamiliar face among them.

Standing exactly where Rowan sat today.

Rowan leans closer.

The woman's arm rests comfortably around Sloane.

Intimate. Established. Happy.

Rowan glances back toward the noise of the house.

Then back to the photo.

The woman has been carefully scratched out.

Not removed.

Scratched.

Footsteps approach behind her.

Rowan turns Sloane stands there.

Watching her reaction.

SLOANE
You're not lost.

ROWAN
Who was she?

Sloane looks at the damaged photograph.

A long beat.

SLOANE Someone who decided she didn't belong here anymore.

ROWAN (CONT'D)
And the chair?

Sloane meets her eyes.

SLOANE
It feels strange when it's gone.

Beat.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
You'll see.

This subtly pulls Rowan deeper instead of shutting her out.

SLOANE (CONT'D)
Come outside.

Rowan hesitates before following.

INT. ESTATE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sloane turns and heads back toward the sound of conversation drifting in from outside.

Rowan lingers a moment longer.

Her eyes return to the damaged photograph.

Nine women reduced to eight.

She studies the scratched surface where the missing woman once stood, as if trying to reconstruct her face from what remains.

Voices and laughter swell again from the patio.

Rowan finally follows.

EXT. ESTATE PATIO - DAY

The group has migrated outdoors. Sunglasses, wine glasses, bare feet on warm stone.

Someone has started music low enough to ignore.

Hannah stands apart near the railing overlooking the trees, smoking despite the otherwise pristine atmosphere.

Rowan notices immediately.

Hannah notices her noticing. They hold eye contact.

Hannah gestures slightly with the cigarette.

HANNAH

You going to pretend you don't
remember me?

Rowan approaches cautiously.

ROWAN

I'm not pretending.

Hannah studies her face, searching for performance.

HANNAH

That almost makes it worse.

Rowan folds her arms.

ROWAN

Then help me out.

Hannah laughs under her breath.

HANNAH

You were very brave last night.

ROWAN
Everyone keeps saying that.

HANNAH
You told me this place felt
dangerous.

Rowan absorbs that.

ROWAN
That doesn't sound like something
I'd say.

HANNAH
You said danger makes people
honest.

A beat.

ROWAN
Did I mean it?

Hannah flicks ash over the railing.

HANNAH
You meant it enough that they heard
you.

Rowan glances back toward the others laughing together.

ROWAN
Why are you here?

Hannah finally looks at her directly.

HANNAH
To see how long you last.

Before Rowan can respond

Marcella calls from across the patio.

MARCELLA
Shoes if you need them. We're
heading out.

Movement begins. Water bottles grabbed. Sunglasses adjusted.

The group reorganizes with quiet efficiency.

Hannah drops the cigarette and crushes it beneath her heel.

HANNAH
(low, to Rowan)
Just pay attention to who walks
beside you.

She turns away.

Leaving Rowan unsettled.

EXT. ESTATE TRAILHEAD - MOMENTS LATER

A private trail begins just beyond the property line.

The women gather loosely before starting down the path.

Pairs form instinctively.

Sloane falls into step beside Rowan.

SLOANE
You survived brunch.

ROWAN
Barely.

Sloane smiles.

SLOANE
That's usually a good sign.

They begin walking.

Behind them, Hannah watches.

Ahead, the trail curves sharply into dense trees, swallowing
visibility within a few yards.

Rowan glances back once toward the house.

It already feels farther away than it should.

Then she turns forward and follows the group into the trees.

EXT. FOREST TRAIL - DAY

The trail narrows as the women move deeper into the trees.
Conversation stretches into smaller pockets, voices fading in
and out with distance.

Gravel gives way to packed earth.

Rowan walks beside Sloane for a while, matching her pace, until Sloane slows to adjust her shoe.

ROWAN
You okay?

SLOANE
Go ahead. I'll catch up.

Rowan nods and continues forward.

Within a few steps, the group reshuffles around her.

Marcella and Elena walk just ahead, their voices low enough to suggest privacy but not secrecy.

Rowan isn't trying to listen.

Then she hears her name. She slows instinctively.

ELENA
She really doesn't remember?

MARCELLA
Apparently not.

A pause as they step over exposed roots.

ELENA
That helps.

MARCELLA
For now.

Rowan keeps walking, careful not to break rhythm.

ELENA
Last time took months.

Marcella glances back briefly, checking distance.

MARCELLA
She pushed too fast.

ELENA
She asked questions.

MARCELLA
Exactly.

A beat.

ELENA
Do you think Rowan will?

Marcella considers.

MARCELLA
Everyone does eventually.

They continue ahead, conversation shifting before Rowan can hear more.

Rowan stops walking.

Processes.

Then resumes, pretending nothing changed.

Further down the trail, sunlight opens into a small clearing overlooking the valley below.

Several women gather near the edge, catching their breath.

Rowan steps closer to the view.

Sloane appears beside her again, almost silently.

SLOANE
Worth it.

ROWAN
Yeah.

They stand shoulder to shoulder.

Close.

Too close to be accidental.

Wind moves through the trees, lifting Rowan's hair across her face.

Sloane reaches out automatically, brushing it away.

Her fingers linger near Rowan's temple.

Neither woman moves.

ROWAN (CONT'D)
You do that with everyone?

SLOANE
Only when they let me.

Rowan doesn't step back.

Below them, laughter rises from the others.

The moment exists just outside group awareness.

Sloane's hand drifts down, briefly resting at the small of Rowan's back, steadying as someone passes behind them on the narrow path.

The contact stays a fraction longer than necessary.

Rowan notices.

Doesn't pull away.

Their eye contact holds.

Then

HANNAH (O.S.)
Careful.

They separate.

Hannah steps into the clearing carrying a water bottle, expression unreadable.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Loose ground near the edge.

She looks directly at Rowan.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
People slip.

A beat.

The group begins moving again down the trail.

Sloane gestures forward.

SLOANE
Come on.

Rowan follows.

But now she walks differently.

Aware.

Watching.

EXT. FOREST TRAIL - DAY

The trail descends sharply, forcing the group into single file.

Branches brush shoulders as they move deeper into shade.

Conversation fades into scattered fragments ahead and behind Rowan.

At some point, without noticing exactly when, Rowan finds herself walking alone.

She slows.

Looks ahead.

No one.

Turns.

The trail behind her curves out of sight.

Only wind through trees.

ROWAN

Hello?

Nothing.

She listens.

Faint laughter somewhere distant, impossible to place.

Rowan moves forward faster, scanning for movement between trees.

Her footing slips slightly on loose dirt.

She steadies herself against a trunk.

Her sleeve rides up.

She freezes.

A thin gold bracelet circles her wrist.

Delicate. Expensive.

Not hers.

Rowan turns her wrist, confused.

There's a small clasp she doesn't recognize.

She pulls at it.

It doesn't come loose easily.

ROWAN (CONT'D)

What the

Her phone vibrates inside her bag.

She startles. Pulls it out. No signal.

But a notification banner remains frozen on screen.

PHOTO SAVED – 2:03 A.M.

Rowan opens her gallery. A new image. Taken from behind.

Rowan standing near the estate hallway last night.

Someone's hand resting low on her back.

Intimate. Possessive. She zooms in. A reflection in the glass beside them.

The photographer. Before she can make it out

VOICES approach. Rowan locks the screen quickly.

Sloane emerges from the trees with Elena and another woman, NADIA (30s).

SLOANE

There you are.

ROWAN

I thought I lost you.

ELENA

Trail splits back there.

NADIA steps closer, noticing Rowan's wrist.

NADIA

Oh.

She smiles knowingly.

NADIA (CONT'D)

So you kept it.

Rowan instinctively covers the bracelet.

ROWAN

I didn't know I had it.

Nadia laughs softly.

NADIA
They usually don't.

That lands wrong.

ROWAN
Who gave this to me?

A small pause.

Elena and Sloane exchange a glance.

NADIA
(flirtatious)
You really don't remember?

Nadia reaches forward, adjusting the bracelet gently against Rowan's skin. Her fingers linger. Too familiar.

ROWAN
Should I?

Nadia meets her eyes.

NADIA
You were very convincing last
night.

The proximity draws attention as the rest of the group reconnects around them.

Marcella watches from farther up the trail.

Hannah watches even more closely.

Nadia's hand slides briefly along Rowan's forearm before she steps past her.

NADIA (CONT'D)
Come on. You'll miss the view.

Rowan stands still for a beat, unsettled.

Then follows.

Her hand unconsciously rests over the bracelet.

EXT. FOREST TRAIL - LATER

The group walks again, looser now. Conversation rises and falls around Rowan, but she remains slightly outside it, distracted.

Her thumb moves unconsciously over the bracelet clasp.

Ahead, the trees thin. Sunlight breaks through. The estate comes back into view.

Rowan slows.

ROWAN
(confused)
We're... back?

Sloane glances over.

SLOANE
Loop trail.

ROWAN
You didn't say that.

SLOANE
You didn't ask.

The house sits exactly where they started, calm and distant, as if they never left.

Rowan looks behind her. No alternate path visible. Just trees.

EXT. ESTATE GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

The women drift toward the patio again, grabbing water, removing jackets.

Rowan hangs back.

Hannah approaches from the side, falling into step beside her without announcement.

HANNAH
You're starting to notice things.

ROWAN
Like what?

Hannah nods toward the bracelet.

HANNAH
That, for example.

Rowan instinctively lowers her arm.

ROWAN
Do you know who gave it to me?

Hannah studies her carefully.

HANNAH
You asked for it.

Rowan laughs once, disbelieving.

ROWAN
I wouldn't do that.

HANNAH
You said you wanted proof you'd
been here.

That stops Rowan cold.

ROWAN
Proof of what?

Hannah leans closer, voice low.

HANNAH
That you weren't pretending
anymore.

A beat.

ROWAN
Pretending what?

Hannah straightens.

HANNAH
You should ask them.

She nods subtly toward the others.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
See who answers first.

Hannah walks away.

Leaving Rowan alone again. Rowan turns toward the house.

Movement catches her eye.

Across the lawn, partially obscured by trees, Elena lowers
her phone.

Too quickly.

Rowan realizes she was being photographed.

Their eyes meet across the distance.

Elena smiles. Not apologetic. Just acknowledging.

Rowan steps toward her. Elena pockets the phone before Rowan reaches her.

ROWAN
Were you taking pictures?

ELENA
Of the light.

ROWAN
Of me?

Elena shrugs lightly.

ELENA
You photograph well.

ROWAN
I didn't say you could.

Elena's expression softens, almost sympathetic.

ELENA
You didn't say no last night
either.

That lands harder than intended.

ROWAN
I don't remember last night.

Elena studies her, genuinely curious now.

ELENA
That must feel terrifying.

A beat.

ELENA (CONT'D)
Or freeing.

She walks past Rowan toward the house.

Rowan remains standing in the open yard.

Watching everyone move comfortably through a world she doesn't understand.

Her phone vibrates.

UNKNOWN NUMBER:
Still comfortable?

Rowan looks up sharply.

No one nearby appears to be texting. She scans the group.

Every woman looks occupied. Relaxed. Normal.

Rowan slowly turns toward the house again.

For the first time. She looks unsure whether she's allowed to leave.

INT. ESTATE - MAIN ROOM - AFTERNOON

The group filters back inside. Shoes kicked off. Music slightly louder now. Wine replaces water without announcement.

Movement feels looser than before the hike.

Rowan slips in last.

No one stops her. No one guides her. Which somehow feels worse. She scans the room.

Kitchen occupied. Patio doors open. Conversation everywhere.

Unwatched space down the hallway.

Rowan moves toward it.

INT. ESTATE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Quieter here. The same corridor from earlier.

Photographs watching from the walls. Rowan continues past them this time. A partially closed door ahead.

She hesitates. Then pushes it open.

INT. PRIVATE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Soft afternoon light fills the room.

Guest bedroom. Immaculate.

Bed remade. Curtains half drawn.

Rowan steps inside slowly.

Something about the space registers before she understands why.

Her eyes land on a chair near the window.

Her jacket. Folded neatly across the back.

Rowan freezes.

She crosses the room. Touches it. Definitely hers.

She checks the closet. Empty.

Nightstand. A wine glass sits beside the bed.

Lipstick on the rim. Not Rowan's shade.

Her breathing changes. She turns. Stops.

On the dresser sits her phone charger.

Uncoiled. Plugged in. Used.

ROWAN

...no.

Footsteps behind her. Rowan spins.

Elena leans casually in the doorway.

ELENA

You found it faster than most.

ROWAN

I never came in here.

Elena watches her carefully.

ELENA

You stayed awhile.

ROWAN

No.

ELENA

You asked for privacy.

Rowan shakes her head.

ROWAN

That's not possible.

Elena steps into the room.

ELENA

You didn't want an audience.

That word lands wrong.

ROWAN
An audience for what?

Elena studies her, realization dawning.

ELENA
You really don't remember.

Rowan's silence answers. Elena exhales. Almost impressed.

ELENA (CONT'D)
That changes things.

INT. ESTATE - DINING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Conversation hums again as Rowan re-enters with Elena behind her. Heads turn subtly. Energy shifts.

Marcella notices immediately.

MARCELLA
Everything okay?

Rowan looks around the table.

At all of them.

ROWAN
Was I upstairs last night?

The room stills. Not dramatic. Controlled.

Sloane sets her glass down.

SLOANE
Rowan

ROWAN
I just want a yes or no.

A long beat.

Nadia smiles faintly.

NADIA
You were very popular.

Light laughter from one end of the table.

Rowan doesn't laugh.

ROWAN

With who?

No one answers immediately.

Marcella finally speaks.

MARCELLA

You chose who you spent time with.

ROWAN

I don't remember choosing anything.

That lands heavier.

Hannah watches closely from across the room.

ELENA

You were very clear.

ROWAN

About what?

Silence again.

Then

SLOANE

About wanting to see what happens
when you stop pretending you're
different from us.

Every eye lands on Rowan.

The implication hangs there. Rowan absorbs it.

Uncertain whether she's being accused or welcomed.

INT. ESTATE - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

The silence following Rowan's question lingers just long
enough to feel deliberate.

Rowan looks from face to face. No one appears defensive. No
one apologizes.

That unsettles her more.

ROWAN

I think I should go.

She grabs her bag from the chair.

Movement pauses around the room. Not alarm. Adjustment.

Marcella rises smoothly.

MARCELLA
Of course.

Too easy.

ROWAN
I have things tomorrow.

SLOANE
It's Saturday.

ROWAN
I still need to leave.

Marcella steps closer, calm and reassuring.

MARCELLA
No one's stopping you.

A beat.

MARCELLA (CONT'D)
You just seem upset.

ROWAN
I woke up with things I don't
remember doing.

Nadia pours wine into a fresh glass.

Slides it gently toward Rowan.

NADIA
That happens sometimes.

ROWAN
Not like this.

Elena gestures lightly toward the glass.

ELENA
Sit for a minute.

ROWAN
I don't want another drink.

ELENA
Then don't drink it.

A pause.

ROWAN
I should call a car.

Marcella nods.

MARCELLA
Signal's unreliable out here.

That lands.

Rowan pulls out her phone anyway. No service.

She turns slightly, searching for reception.

Nothing.

Behind her, conversation resumes, softer now, careful not to exclude her entirely.

Sloane approaches slowly.

SLOANE
You're not in danger.

ROWAN
You can't actually promise that.

SLOANE
I can promise no one here wants to hurt you.

Rowan studies her.

Searching for sincerity. Finding it. Which somehow makes things worse.

INT. ESTATE - LIVING AREA - LATER

Golden evening light replaces afternoon brightness.

Music plays louder now.

Candles appear without Rowan noticing when they were lit.

Wine circulates again. Jackets gone. Shoes abandoned.

The mood resets itself.

Marcella hands Rowan sparkling water this time.

MARCELLA
No pressure.

Rowan accepts it reluctantly.

She remains standing while others lounge comfortably across sofas and chairs.

Physical closeness increases naturally, knees touching, hands resting casually on shoulders, shared blankets pulled from somewhere unseen.

No one performs intimacy. They live inside it. Sloane sits beside Rowan.

Not touching. Close enough to.

SLOANE

First weekends are overwhelming.

ROWAN

How many people say that?

SLOANE

Everyone who stays.

Rowan looks at her.

ROWAN

And the ones who don't?

Sloane considers.

SLOANE

They usually leave earlier.

A beat.

ROWAN

Like Hannah?

Sloane smiles faintly.

SLOANE

Hannah never really leaves.

Across the room, Hannah raises her glass slightly toward Rowan. Watching. Always watching.

EXT. ESTATE - SUNSET

Through the glass walls, the women appear framed together as daylight fades.

Rowan stands near the window.

Inside the group. Not yet part of it.

Her phone vibrates again.

UNKNOWN NUMBER

You can go whenever you want.

Another message appears.

UNKNOWN NUMBER (CONT'D)

You just haven't yet.

Rowan slowly looks around the room. Every woman relaxed. Comfortable. Certain she will stay.

Rowan doesn't move toward the door.

INT. ESTATE - LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Night settles fully outside the glass walls.

Conversation softens into smaller clusters. Music low. Intimate.

Rowan stands near the edge of the room, half participating, half observing.

Her phone rests in her hand.

Unlocked.

She scrolls again through last night's photos.

Stops.

A video file.

Longer than the others.

Timestamp: 2:11 A.M.

Rowan hesitates. Then presses play.

ON SCREEN

The same hallway from earlier. Unsteady framing.

Rowan's voice, unmistakable. Relaxed. Laughing.

ROWAN (VIDEO)

No... I want to remember this part.

Someone off-camera laughs.

ROWAN (VIDEO) (CONT'D)
I'm serious. I don't want excuses
tomorrow.

The camera shifts. Rowan steps into frame. Clear-eyed.
Present. She reaches toward someone unseen.

ROWAN (VIDEO) (CONT'D)
If I stay, it's because I chose to.

The video ends.

Back in the room. Rowan lowers the phone slowly.

Air leaves her lungs. No coercion. No confusion. She was
willing.

Across the room, Sloane watches quietly. Not triumphant.

Waiting. Rowan meets her eyes. A long beat passes.

Then Rowan locks her phone. Sets it down.

She doesn't ask questions anymore.

Rowan moves deeper into the room.

No one calls attention to it.

Marcella shifts slightly, making space beside her on the
sofa.

Rowan sits. Nadia hands her a glass automatically. Rowan
takes it. Drinks.

The group conversation absorbs her seamlessly. Laughter
returns around her. Ease. Belonging. For the first time Rowan
relaxes. She stays.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

The table has been reset. Candles lit. Nearly identical to
Friday night. The same seats. The same quiet anticipation.
Rowan notices the empty chair again.

Marcella gestures subtly.

MARCELLA
Sit wherever you like.

Rowan chooses.

The Hostess places a hand lightly over it.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)

You don't get invited twice.

Rowan holds her gaze. A small smile forms.

Not nervous. Certain.

CUT TO BLACK.