

CASTLEPOINT

Written by

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EXT. CASTLE ROCK - NIGHT

Dark clouds churn over the jagged coastline.

Rain lashes sideways, stinging everything it touches.

Castle Rock looms over the sea—ancient, sharp-edged, defiant.

LYN SUTHERLAND (40s) stands at the very edge of the precipice. Her hair plastered to her face. Her hoodie clings to her like a shroud. She's soaked, motionless.

The wind howls like a banshee that's been waiting for her.

Below her, the sea crashes violently against the rocks.

The waves don't break—they detonate, exploding in white foam and black spray.

Lyn lifts her head. Her eyes track the black horizon.

It's not peaceful. It's not romantic. It's final.

EXT. LYN'S HOME - BACKYARD - DAY - FLASHBACK

Sounds of a distant lawn mower, children LAUGHING. Summer.

A wet YOUNG TARA, 5, and YOUNG JAMES, 3, bounce in a trampoline, shriek with delight.

Lyn laughs, her cut-offs and t-shirt wet, circling the trampoline, spraying her kids with water from a garden hose.

Tara squeals as James falls.

James hauls himself up by the protective netting, soaked pull-up sagging.

YOUNG TARA
Me mommy, spray me!

GLEN, 10 years younger, lounges in a lawn chair, watches.

Toes scrunch a perfect blend of rye and fescue.

Lyn smiles. The moment, the day, her life...

Perfect.

EXT. CASTLE ROCK - NIGHT - BACK TO PRESENT

She takes a step forward to the edge.

The cliff's edge crumbles slightly under her boot.

Gravel tumbles down into the void, gone before it can be missed.

She doesn't flinch.

A distant flash of lightning—briefly illuminates her face. Hollow. Weathered. Alive, but not present.

Thunder rolls across the sky, slow and heavy, like a warning that comes too late.

Lyn closes her eyes.

Wind tears at her clothes.

Rain needles into her skin.

But she stands there—on the threshold.

Then...

Her hand—trembles.

INT. LYN'S HOME - TARA'S ROOM - DAY

Lyn knock-enters, the room strewn with name-brand clothes. Obese guinea pigs in a large cage.

A CHYRON reads: LAST WEEK

TARA, (15), pretty, lounges on her bed, occupied with her iPhone. Her T-shirt reads PINK, her shorts too tight.

LYN

Hey.

TARA

Internets down again.

Lyn moves clothes with her feet. Tara ignores her.

She squints at the guinea pig cage.

LYN

How were your exams?

TARA

Okay, I guess. Mum, I got in trouble.

LYN
Of course you did. Why?

TARA
Some kid said stuff about Dad. I
hit him.

Lyn looks at her daughter.

LYN
You hit him?

TARA
Yeah. Right in the nose.

LYN
We don't do that.

TARA
He deserved it.

Lyn softens. Picks her words carefully.

LYN
Maybe. But people deserve to be
good. Even the ones who aren't.

TARA
That doesn't make sense.

LYN
It will when you're older.

She touches her daughter's hand, gently.

LYN (CONT'D)
We don't get to decide who's bad.
We just try not to be one of them.

Lyn picks up a shirt, sighs a useless sigh.

TARA
Why do you come in here if you're
just going to criticize?

LYN
Why should I continue to buy you
nice things if you're not going to
treat them responsibly?

TARA
I don't know, why should you?

LYN

That's it? That's all you got?

Tara's turn to sigh, they've done this before.

TARA

Why did you have children if you
wanted them to act like adults?

LYN

Much better. Where's your father?

She shrugs, returns to her phone, texting. She starts out,
reluctant to leave.

LYN (CONT'D)

Given any thought to what you want
to do with your summer break?

Tara thumbs her phone, doesn't look up.

TARA

Little as possible.

INT. LYN'S HOME - BASEMENT - DAY

Unfinished. Assassins Creed on a TV screen. JAMES, (13),
handsome, thin, sits on a tired couch, sharpens a long stick
with a steak knife.

Lyn ambles over.

LYN

Hey, love. How are you?

JAMES

Hey, mum.

LYN

Ace your finals?

JAMES

You know it.

LYN

You're gonna dull that knife.

JAMES

I'm making a spear.

LYN

I see that. May I ask why?

JAMES
So I can spear something.

Lyn nods at the screen.

LYN
Sink the El whatever yet?

JAMES
Impoluto. Three weeks ago.

LYN
Wanna go for a ride?

JAMES
Nah, not really. Look...

James pulls his mobile, thumbs through photos.

JAMES (CONT'D)
There's this lunch lady at school.
She's super short, kinda plump.
She's got a hunchback and an extra
finger on her right hand.

He hands Lyn the phone: a selfie; James and the Lunch Lady.

LYN
Huh.

Lyn considers her odd son for a beat, returns the phone.

LYN (CONT'D)
Where'd your father go?

JAMES
Out I think. He says he plays cards
on Wednesday.

EXT. EVANS INVESTIGATION - DAY

Strip mall: Title loans. Tanning salon. Subway.

Nissan parked in a Reserved for Evans Investigation spot.

BOB EVANS (V.O.)
Glenda Silverberg...

INT. EVANS INVESTIGATION - DAY

Small. Organized. Framed photos of AUCKLAND POLICE circa

Detectives in suits. Commendations. A capable man.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

She's a partner with McNeil-Roberts
downtown. Know her?

BOB EVANS, 60, shirt-sleeves, ex-Auckland P.D., mans a tidy
desk, waits.

Lyn in the client chair, flips through a Manila file, photos:

Glen and Glenda about town, smiling, close. In various stages
of undress. Lyn shakes no.

BOB

On the board of half a dozen non-
profits. They see each other at
least twice a week. Sometimes more.
Either her place or halfway between
here and the city; an H.I. Express,
Fairfield Inn... the Doubletree in
Alsip's where I tagged them. Girl
makes four-hundred grand, she can
afford better, I'm guessing it's
convenience.

LYN

How long?

BOB

Hard to say.

Lyn closes the file, rocked. The word MAGIC STICK scrawled in
Sharpie across the file's tab.

LYN

Magic Stick. What is that?

BOB

You jumped the gun coming here
today. Normally I transfer
everything from a working file to a
folio binder. Table of contents,
intro, summary. Suitable for
presentation, arbitration.

LYN

What?

BOB

Magic Stick's her pet name for him.
As in... y'know... I got the...

LYN

I got it.

Christ. Lyn wonders at her life, the file.

BOB

You download the footage I sent?

Lyn meets his eyes, she did. Evans sighs.

BOB (CONT'D)

Let's hope your Husband and Ms.
Silverberg don't wind up splattered
all over the internet.

Lyn's phone signals a text. She checks it, incredulous.

LYN

It's the bank. My husband just
emptied our checking and savings.

BOB

You got a gun?

Lyn shakes her head.

BOB (CONT'D)

Good. Seascape Tower. Sixtieth
floor. Apartment 6003.

LYN

What makes you think he's there?

BOB

It's Thursday.

INT. GLENDA SILVERBERG'S APARTMENT - DAY

A knock on the front door. A beat. The lock clicks, the door
opens, Glen eases in, slips the key card in his wallet.

GLEN

Glenda...?

A breeze carries him through the apartment.

He nears a corner, sees Glenda, seated at the table near the
balcony, sliding door open. She stares at him through a
swollen eye, cut lip, frightened.

He rounds the corner, freezes.

A CARTEL ENFORCER sits at the table, points a Glock at him.

INT. LYN'S NISSAN (MOVING) - DAY

Lyn accelerates, mobile to an ear, Glen's voice mail:

GLEN (V.O.)
(over phone; voice mail)
Hey this is Glen, leave me a...

Lyn throws her phone into the passenger seat, grips the wheel in a black fidget.

LYN
You bastard. You thankless bastard.
Fuck you Glen! FUCK YOU!

EXT. SEASCAPE RESIDENTIAL TOWER - DAY

Lyn's Nissan wheels to the curb, a handicapped spot. She boils out of the car, slams the door.

LYN
Twenty-two years...

Lyn stalks past head-turning pedestrians.

LYN (CONT'D)
Never cheated on you. Not once.
Had the chance. And not just a few
times. Worked, came home, got up
did it all over again. Not good
enough for you.

In front of Aqua, shouldering by pedestrians.

LYN (CONT'D)
You want to try and take my money?
You want a divorce? I'll show you
the meaning of ugly. You have no
idea wh...

A body-sized blur falls from the sky. SMACKS the sidewalk, the world turns red, wet.

Blood-misted PEDESTRIANS scream, retreat.

Lyn wipes a veil of gore from her face, stares down at the pulverized remains of... ?

INT. LYN'S NISSAN - DAY

Lyn shuts her door, panting, mind racing. A RING and she scrabbles for his phone, answering.

LYN
(into phone; frantic)
Glen?

ANGEL (V.O.)
(over phone)
Fifty six floors. Fifty six.

INT. KFC - DAY

ANGEL GAVITO ALVERADO (40s) sits alone, enjoys a plate of chicken and biscuits. Mexican. Well dressed, well groomed, everything about him reads respectable.

Using a napkin, he holds his phone to an ear. 5 Enforcers occupy adjacent tables, don't eat.

ANGEL
(into phone)
You think a person blacks out
around thirty or so? Or you think
they're conscious all the way to
the pavement?

INTERCUT LYN /ANGEL

Lyn reels, stifles a sob.

ANGEL (V.O.)
You got my money?

Relief, fear, uncertainty... all compete within Lyn.

LYN
What money?

ANGEL
They money your husband stole from
me. You have forty eight hours Lyn.

LYN
You'll have it tomorrow. Forty-
eight hours, I promise.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Why did Glen have a cashiers check
for \$29,650?

Lyn's mind races, what's the lie? She opens her mouth--

LYN
Investing.

ANGEL (V.O.)
You lied to me. Do that again, I'll
kill you.

LYN
What kind of person isn't willing
to lie to save their families
lives?

ANGEL (V.O.)
Was that before or after you found
out he was fucking the bitch?

LYN
After.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Ouch. We're on the clock. I bet you
didn't confront him. Am I right?

Lyn takes a beat to process.

LYN
You're right.

ANGEL (V.O.)
You're calculating the smart move.
Weighing options. Measure twice cut
once. Or, hear me out, we kill both
birds with one stone. A sudden stop
after a sixty story drop. Double
suicide, no muss no fuss.

Lyn wipes blood, sweat from darting eyes. Through her
windshield, police, ambulance lights, sirens heard.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Hello?

LYN
Yes.

Lyn starts, eyes wild, a death sentence.

Angel grins, wipes greasy hands on a napkin. Lunch over.

Lyn rocks slowly in her seat, resigned to the answer.

The sound of FINGERS SNAPPING.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Hey, Lyn...

LYN

I mean what, not yes, what?! What is it?

ANGEL (V.O.)

You have forty-eight hours to get my money. Cash. No negotiable instruments, no cashiers checks, no wire transfers. Cash. All of it.

ANGEL

Lyn...

Lyn turns, relief pivoting to fear, eyes darting.

ANGEL (V.O.)

One last question, not to influence your decision, ticktock, but does Magic Stick mean what I think it does?

INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - DAY

Lyn stands across from a disinterested DESK SERGEANT.

LYN

I need to speak to someone. My husband is dead and... there's money missing.

DESK SERGEANT

You'll need to fill out a form. Finance crimes are processed in Wellington.

LYN

No, I think--there's more to it. He was... mixed up with someone. Dangerous.

DESK SERGEANT

Then you should contact a lawyer.

Lyn realizes she's getting nowhere.

EXT. BANK - DAY

Lyn exits, holding a manila folder. Rejected again. She fights tears.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Lyn sits across from her sister, SARAH, (40s). Comfortable, upper-middle-class.

SARAH
I'm sorry, Lyn. We're still paying
off the Bach. And honestly, this
all sounds... a little dramatic.

LYN
Glen's dead. Everything's gone.

Sarah puts her hand over Lyn's but doesn't commit.

SARAH
Maybe you should sell the house.

INT. LAW OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Lyn sits, prim and contained. The door opens, GLENDA SILVERBERG (40s), sharp, strides in. She stops cold.

GLENDA
Lyn.

LYN
We need to talk.

INT. GLENDA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

LYN
Glen's dead.

GLENDA
I didn't know...

LYN
Don't. I've seen the videos. The
hotels. You weren't just fucking
him.

GLENDA
It spiraled.

LYN
It always spirals.

Lyn stands to leave.

LYN (CONT'D)
Funny, I passed Stu Thompson on the
way in. Said he'd been in earlier,
asking about fuel permits.

Glenda glances up.

LYN (CONT'D)
Told him I was sure you'd sort it.
Wouldn't want him thinking you'd...
overlooked something.

Glenda frowns.

GLEENDA
Those permits are confidential.

Glenda and Lyn share a look, Glenda shuffles through a
drawer, hands Lyn a thin folder.

GLEENDA (CONT'D)
You didn't get these from me.

LYN
I hope you've got a bag packed.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

White headstones dot the ground like scattered bones.

A small gathering stands around a freshly dug grave. No
flowers. No choir. Just the hush of waves and wind.

Tara stands rigid in black, arms crossed. Her eyes red, but
she refuses to cry.

James stares at the ground, fists in his coat pockets. He
sniffles once, wipes his nose.

Lyn stands behind them. Calm. Too calm. Her face, unreadable.

The PASTOR speaks quietly over a cheap wooden coffin.

PASTOR
Glen Sutherland leaves behind a
wife, Lyn, and two children, Tara
and James. He was a son... a
husband, a father...

His voice fades into the wind.

Tara turns to Lyn, bites back tears.

TARA
Why is no one else here?

LYN
He didn't leave many friends.

TARA
He wasn't a bad person.

Lyn says nothing.

James looks up.

JAMES
Are they going to arrest anyone?

Lyn crouches beside him.

LYN
There's nothing to arrest.

JAMES
But he was pushed, right?

Lyn puts a hand on his shoulder.

LYN
He's gone. That's all we know.

The pastor finishes. No one says "amen" E

The coffin is lowered. Tara turns away. She can't watch.

James steps closer, stares down at the box that holds what's left of his father.

JAMES
Goodbye, Dad.

Lyn watches him. Her eyes glass over, but she blinks it away.

As people drift off, Lyn lingers.

She steps to the grave. Alone now.

She turns and walks back to the kids.

INT. LYN'S NISSAN - DAY

Lyn's Gethsemane. Agony in the Nissan. Short \$5,000.

Witness protection, ruination. Death. Sweat rolls, breath heavy. She keys the car off, cracks the door... hesitates.

ANGEL (V.O.)
The Pacific Ocean.

INT. PAVILION - DAY

Lyn and a sunglasses wearing Angel sit across from each other at a picnic table.

Camry parked, back door open. Enforcer 1 inside, counts cash in an open pink suitcase. Three white Suburban's flank.

ANGEL
The deadliest body of water in the world. But you know all that. You're Lyn Sutherland and Lyn Sutherland's been planning this a long time. How long again?

LYN
Long time.

Angel grins. Both turn to the sound of the Camry door shutting. Enforcer 1 looks at Angel, shakes his head.

ANGEL
Say it ain't so.

LYN
I'm short.

ANGEL
What'd I tell you?

LYN
I have an SUV; a Nissan. X-trail. The Blue Book on it's \$27,000. It's the number one ranked SUV in the country I'll sell it tomorrow...

Angel holds up a hand, stops her.

ANGEL
What do you have left? You. Another car, rainy day money?

LYN
Nothing.

ANGEL
I'll buy the X-trail from you for twenty-five. So, I owe you twenty, take it outta the cash.

Lyn relieved, nods in agreement.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
I'll lease it back to you for say,
a thousand a month?

Lyn wants to argue, the amount steep.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Top ranked SUV in the country.
(Lyn nods agreement)
Good. Now take yourself to
Castlepoint. And find a way to pick
up the gear and get it distributed.

Lyn more appalled than shocked.

LYN
How am I going to do that?

ANGEL
You're the logistics expert, you'll
figure it out.

LYN
Distribute it? I paid you the money
back.

ANGEL
That's not the point is it?

Lyn knows now to keep her mouth shut. She nods, no choice.
Angel turns contemplative.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Lyn, the thing I liked most about
my relationship with your
husband... is that it lacked drama.
See I'm not a micro-manager. I gave
him dirty cash, he gave me clean. I
came to town twice a year, dinner
at Onslow, Glen pays, I leave.
Simple. The rest of my life? Drama.
So even though I'm torn between
intrigue and thinking this
Castlepoint thing is complete and
utter straw-grasping horseshit, I'm
willing to roll the dice. But if
there's drama, excuses... you stop
answering your phone, if I have to
spend too much time there or if I
think you're about to fuck me in
any way, I'll kill you, and both
your children. Not in that order.

Angel rises, extends a hand. He and Lyn shake.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
When I drive by? I better see a
For Sale sign on your lawn.

Angel slips his shades on, turns, walks.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Take good care of my gear, Lyn.
Drive safely.

INT. LYN'S HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

Silence. On a bureau, framed photos of the Sutherlands. Young James, first day of kindergarten.

Young Tara in goggles, at a swim meet.

Circa 2009, the family bundled on a Wellington cable car.

Swim-suited Sutherlands by the shore, Castlepoint Beach 2012, etched in the sand.

On the wall, a larger frame holds a black and white photo--

Lyn in her wedding dress, smushing cake into a tuxedo-ed Glen's face. Both laughing. In love.

INT. LYN'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Lyn on the edge of her bed, stares at nothing. Her lip starts to tremble, the day catching up.

Regains control.

Sound of FOOTFALLS on the steps.

From downstairs, the sound of the kids returning from school; muffled voices, backpacks dumped.

JAMES (O.S.)
Mum! I need my gym clothes washed!

Sound of the kitchen TV turning on

INT. LYN'S HOME - DINNING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner table. A pole-axed Tara puts down a forkful of pasta.

A puzzled James glances at his anxious mother. Lyn with a brave face, stage smile.

TARA
No fucking way am I going.

LYN
Stop with the language. You're going. We're all going.

TARA
Not me. I'll live with Sarah.

JAMES
Castlepoint. That's like, the beach and stuff?

TARA
Mum, what the fuck?

A politically correct gesture to Tara.

LYN
Wives, women, take new jobs and relocate with their families all the time.

TARA
You're a logistics advisor! A self-employed logistic advisor! You decide where the opportunity is!

Lyn SLAPS the table, Tara, the room flinch.

LYN
That's right! And I've decided the opportunity is at Castlepoint!

Her family taken aback; Lyn tamps down her frustration.

LYN (CONT'D)
You're upset. You're leaving your friends, your school... what you're feeling is normal. I understand. But we are a family and we're making this move as a family. Now I would prefer... that you view this as an adventure--

Tara bolts up, tears flowing, charges out.

TARA
Pasta and a shit sandwich...

Lyn and James alone. Silence. Lyn wallows in the aftermath.

JAMES

I think it sounds like fun.

Lyn's throat lumps at the small kindness. James rises, starts to go. Lyn stops him, pulls him in for a hug.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You okay, mum?

Lyn releases him, laughs it off, swats his butt. James exits. Lyn alone at the table, not okay.

EXT. LYN'S HOME - GARAGE - DAY

A FOR SALE sign in the front yard. Feet away...

Lyn stands at the back of the SUV. The SUV's tail gate open, she stares inside.

Crammed. Every available square inch taken with suitcases, clothes, boxes, plastic bins, a cage holding 2 Guinea pigs.

Tara slides next to Lyn, surveys the contents.

Neither look at the other.

TARA

What's really going on, mum?

LYN

I've had a hard couple of days, Tara. So if there's anything in here you can combine into one suitcase, anything you've outgrown, don't wear or don't need...

She can't finish. Tara SIGHS.

EXT. SHELLFISH DEPOT - BACKLOT - DAY

Lyn stands awkwardly with a SHELLFISH GUY in a Hi-Vis vest.

SHELLFISH GUY

You want to... use my trucks? For what exactly?

Lyn tries to smile. Fails. He backs away.

INT. LOCAL HAULAGE OFFICE - DAY

Fluorescent buzz. A secretary barely looks up.

SECRETARY

Do you have an appointment?

Lyn lays out photos. Maps. Numbers.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Hold on.

She steps into a back room and never returns.

Lyn waits. And waits.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT - CASTLE ROCK - DAY

Sea crashes against the rocks. The waves don't break, they detonate, exploding in white foam and black spray.

Wind tears at her clothes. Rain needles into her skin. She stands there, on the threshold.

Her hand trembles.

She opens her eyes again. Something in them has shifted. Not a decision. Not yet. Just... a pause.

A long, still pause.

In front of her, the distant flicker of a fishing boat's headlights weaves up the coastal waters.

Lyn steps back.

One step.

Then another.

She turns, walks away from the edge.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT - JETTY ROAD - DAY

The salty breeze whips through the air, Lyn walks down the wooden pier, her eyes scan the moored boats.

She stops in front of a small, sturdy fishing boat, THE STINGRAY, where JO TROUNSON (30s), secures the day's catch.

She's lean, weathered by the sea, sharp eyes that don't miss much, salty.

JO
Long way from the markets.

LYN
Was hoping I could ask a favor.

JO
What kind of favor?

LYN
A job, actually. Something quick,
easy, pays well.

Jo wipes her hands on a rag, eyes Lyn.

JO
Last time someone said that, I
ended up hauling illegal abalone
for half the take.

LYN
This isn't abalone. Just a few
packages off the coast. Pick them
up, bring them back, no questions
asked.

Jo leans against the railing of her boat, crosses her arms.

JO
If I say no?

LYN
Then I walk away, and you keep
spending your nights chasing a
shrinking haul while the big boys
run the game. Or...

Lyn pulls an envelope, tosses it onto a nearby crate.

JO
Saw you up on the rock the other
day. What were you doing?

LYN
Taking in the view.

JO
The view aye? Careful getting too
close to the edge, wind gusts can
lift a body right off the edge.

Jo studies her, weighs the risks. Lyn tries a smile, shrugs,
turns to go.

JO (CONT'D)
You better not get me killed.

With a smirk, she tucks the envelope into her jacket.

LYN
Wouldn't dream of it.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT BEACH - DAY

The annual horse racing event is in full swing. Crowds gather along the dunes, locals cheering, beers in hand.

A CHYRON reads: FEBRUARY DROP 1.

JOCKEYS on sleek, muscular horses thunder across the wet sand, their hooves kick up mist.

Vendors hawk food, children chase each other near the surf, and a small band plays folk music under a marquee.

At the far edge of the beach, where the crowd thins, Lyn stands near a beat-up Landcruiser, scans the horizon.

OUT IN THE OCEAN

The Stingray, bobs past the whitecaps. Jo mans the helm, sweat on her brow.

The surf is rough, waves slam the hull as she hauls up netting, not full of fish, but watertight bricks of drugs.

The engine SPUTTERS. A harsh metallic COUGH. Then silence.

JO
Oh, come on, you bastard...

She twists the key. Nothing. The boat drifts as waves shove it toward the lighthouse cliff's rocky coastline.

ON THE BEACH

Lyn stiffens as she notices the boat has stopped moving.

LYN
Shit.

OUT IN THE OCEAN

Jo grabs her phone, dials.

JO
We need a distraction. Now.

ON THE BEACH

Lyn throws her phone into the Landcruiser, grabs a MEGAPHONE from the backseat, strides towards the announcer's booth.

LYN
(into megaphone)
Ladies and gentlemen! Who's ready
for the final race?

Crowd turns, CHEERS. Lyn signals a RACE OFFICIAL, feigns urgency.

LYN (CONT'D)
Special prize for the next heat!
Double the winnings. Let's get
those horses ready!

BACK IN THE OCEAN

Jo pumps the primer bulb, trying to restart the engine. A wave CRASHES over the deck, nearly knocks her over.

JO
Come on, come on...

ON THE BEACH

The distraction works. The crowd surges toward the track, eyes locked on the horses lining up.

Then, flashing blue lights. A RIVERSDALE POLICE TRUCK rolls onto the beach.

SERGEANT KENT, (50s), fantastic mustache, sharp-eyed, with flexible morals, steps out, scans the coastline. His DEPUTY follows.

SERGEANT KENT
Bit of a ruckus out there. That
your boat?

LYN
God, no. Belongs to a friend.
They're trying to catch dinner, but
they're useless at it. Probably
tangled their net again.

The deputy squints toward the water.

DEPUTY
Looks like they're drifting.

LYN
You know how it is. City folk
playing fisherman. Thought they
could net something fresh for the
afterparty.

SERGEANT KENT
That so?

IN THE WATER

Jo gives the engine one last desperate pull.
It ROARS to life.

ON THE BEACH

Lyn doesn't flinch as she watches The Stingray lurch back
toward deeper water.

LYN
See? No harm done.

The sergeant exhales through his nose, turns to Lyn,
hesitates, unconvinced but unwilling to press further.

SERGEANT KENT
Let's hope they know what they're
doing.

Kent changes his mind, leans against his truck.

KENT
Haven't seen you around before. New
to the community?

LYN
Just moved down. Needed some fresh
air.

KENT
From where?

LYN
Up north. Auckland way.

KENT

Long way for fresh air.

She chuckles.

LYN

Place was getting crowded. Figured
it was time for a change.

Kent studies her. A flicker of suspicion in his eyes.

KENT

Castlepoint's not much for change.
Folks like to know who's who.

LYN

Guess I'll just have to make a good
impression.

She offers a final smile, Kent nods to his deputy, they climb
back into their truck. The blue lights fade into the crowd.

INT. LYN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lyn at the kitchen table, nurses a half-empty glass of
whiskey. The weight of the past days etched into her face.

Across from her, James and Tara stand, arms crossed,
frustration radiates off them.

TARA

No more bullshit, Mum. We want the
truth.

JAMES

What the hell is going on?

Lyn exhales, rubbing her temples. She looks up at them, her
gaze hard, decisive.

LYN

You want the truth? Fine. Your
father worked for the cartels. He
was distributing methamphetamine
for the cartels around the country.
He skimmed drugs off the top, got
caught, and they killed him for it.

James and Tara exchange shocked glances.

LYN (CONT'D)

Now they think I know more than I do, and they won't stop until they either control me or bury me.

The kids, speechless.

LYN (CONT'D)

I have to finish what he started or they are going to kill us.

TARA

Oh my God.

LYN

Yeah, your dad was no angel, ok.

JAMES

What if the police catch you?

LYN

I don't have a choice.

JAMES

How'd he do it?

LYN

His company picked up shipments along with whatever legitimate load; air conditioners. Dog food...Auto parts...Furniture, carpets...They rigged the gas gauges.

The scheme washes over James, he smiles.

LYN (CONT'D)

They'd read full when they were fifteen liters light.

JAMES

The load would count lighter, you'd take the weight of fifteen liters of petrol. About twenty kilos?

LYN

Give or take.

TARA

How much?

LYN
Thirty-five ounces in a kilo,
that's three hundred and fifty
thousand dollars.

JAMES
Times that by twenty...

TARA
Seven million.

LYN
Over three years.

Lyn turns to Tara, eyes shining. Loss. Regret.

BAM! The sound of Glen's body slams Lyn back into reality.

TARA
You knew? This whole time?

LYN
I found out the same way you just
did, too late to do anything about
it.

JAMES
So what do we do?

LYN
We do what they tell us, or we
don't wake up the next morning. We
survive. Because right now, we're
nothing but loose ends. And I don't
plan on letting anyone cut us off.

A heavy silence hangs between them. Tara swallows hard, looks to James. He nods.

JAMES
Tell us what we need to do.

Lyn studies them, the innocence slipping from their faces. She raises her glass, drains the last of her whiskey, stands.

EXT. MASTERTON CASTLEPOINT ROAD - NIGHT

The Landcruiser speeds along the winding road, headlights cutting through the mist rolling off the hills.

A CHYRON reads: DISTRIBUTION 1.

Lyn grips the wheel, tense. Jo sits in the passenger seat, one hand on the glove box where a loaded pistol rests, the other gripping a bottle of half-empty whiskey.

In the back, the shipment in coolers, covered in blankets.

LYN

We need a better boat.

Ahead, blue lights flash. A police checkpoint is set up across the road. Cones force cars into a single lane.

OFFICERS with flashlights move between vehicles, checking licenses. Some DRIVERS blow into breathalyzers.

LYN (CONT'D)

Shit.

Jo unscrews the whiskey bottle, splashes some on Lyn's jacket. Then she takes a swig herself, winces.

JO

We're coming back from the races.
I'm pissed, you're driving me home.
Nothing in the back but fish.

Lyn exhales, forces her grip on the wheel to loosen.

They roll up. A POLICE CONSTABLE (30s), fit, steps forward, signals them to stop.

Lyn rolls the window down, the scent of whiskey wafts out.

CONSTABLE

Evening. You ladies have anything
to drink tonight?

JO

Ohhh, just a little celebration.
Made a killing at the races.

CONSTABLE

And you?

LYN

Not a drop. I'm the designated
driver. She's my problem now.

Jo laughs loud, leans her head back against the seat.

CONSTABLE

License, please.

Lyn hands it over, feigning patience. The Constable scans it, then shines his flashlight into the backseat.

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)
What's in the coolers?

LYN
Snapper. Couple of gurnard too.
Uncle runs a boat out of
Castlepoint.

The Constable frowns, steps in. Another OFFICER approaches.

Jo, groans, throws open the door, stumbles out.

JO
I need to piss.

CONSTABLE
Ma'am, stay in the vehicle.

JO
Unless you want it right here,
mate.

CONSTABLE
Jesus, fine. Just go behind the
bush there.

Jo stumbles off, Lyn watches the officer. He hesitates, then.

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)
Alright, you're good. Drive safe.

Lyn nods, rolls up the window as Jo lurches back inside.

They past the checkpoint, Jo sits up, sober.

JO
Think I deserve an Oscar for that.

The Landcruiser speeds into the night.

A cartel operative shadows them.

EXT. MASTERTON AERODROME - NIGHT

The runway, a glorified paddock. A small twin-engine prop plane idles on the tarmac, its nose pointed southeast.

Lyn and Jo pull up. They step out, both wearing and
windbreakers, faces tense.

Three MEN in hi-vis vests walk toward them. One of them RONNY (30s), sharp-edged, peels off to greet them.

RONNY
You made good time.

Ronny grins but doesn't laugh. He gestures toward the plane.

RONNY (CONT'D)
Change of plan. You're coming.

LYN
What?

RONNY
The buyers want someone they know.
One of the ladies from the coast.
Human assurance, they called it.

Lyn glances at Jo. Ronny shrugs.

RONNY (CONT'D)
Shouldn't take more than ninety
minutes. We've got a driver waiting
on the other side.

LYN
I've got kids.

RONNY
Then let's not waste time.

He snaps his fingers. The crew unloads the crate.

Jo moves close to Lyn.

LYN
Tell them I'll be back tomorrow.

Jo nods, watches the crate get rolled toward the open plane.

Lyn climbs the steps into the plane. Ronny follows. The cargo hold slams shut.

The propellers spin, slice the sky.

Jo steps back, arms crossed, watching as the plane rolls onto the runway and takes off, vanishes into low clouds.

INT. CHRISTCHURCH AIRPORT - BAGGAGE CLAIM - NIGHT

Lyn moves quickly through the terminal, carry-on slung over her shoulder. She scans for her contact, but something's off.

Instead, TWO UNIFORMED SECURITY OFFICERS stand near the exit, a SNIFER DOG pawing at a suitcase on the conveyor belt.

A third SECURITY OFFICER moves toward the passengers, stopping them for random checks.

SECURITY OFFICER
Ma'am, can you step aside for a moment?

Lyn freezes, forces an exasperated smile.

LYN
You have got to be kidding me.

She drops her bag dramatically and turns toward the nearest KAREN-TYPE PASSENGER in line behind her, a woman with a bulky designer bag.

LYN (CONT'D)
(to Karen)
You saw that flight, right? Ninety minutes of turbulence, and now this?! This is harassment! You can't just stop people randomly!

Karen jumps in, puffing up.

KAREN-TYPE PASSENGER
This is ridiculous! I have an important business meeting!

As the officers try to calm her down, Lyn nudges her carry-on closer to Karen's similar-looking bag.

The security officer turns his head for a split second, Lyn swaps them.

LYN
Unbelievable. Fine, check it. But I need a supervisor.

She storms off toward another officer, dragging the decoy bag, while Karen's actual bag, now containing the shipment remains behind, unnoticed.

BEGIN NEWSPACKAGE SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. AMOURED VEHICLE - AUCKLAND - DAY

NZ ARMED OFFENDERS SQUAD, sit, rifles barrels point up.

All sport bullet-proof vests, tac vests, radios, magazine pouches, helmets, breaching gear, and assault rifles.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

Police and the NZ Drug Foundation are concerned about the latest test results of waste water testing in NZ which are the worst they've ever seen. They say methamphetamine use has doubled as well as well as a rise in cocaine use. Senior reporter Juliet Speedy has more.

HELICOPTERS audible overhead. Vehicles rip to a stop. OFFICERS out, move fast.

JULIET (V.O.)

Waste water testing for drugs in this country gives a good read on the country's drug intake. The latest results don't paint a pretty picture.

They reach the door, A shotgun BLASTS THE HINGES. It falls like a drawbridge.

Part of the six at the front door, toss flash grenades. Blasts rock inside. Through the busted door, weapon.

OFFICER

DOWN!! DOWN, DOWN DOWN!!!

Assault rifle bursts, economical, fires. BULLETS

PUNCH through flesh and bone.

Arterial blood spray bathes the house's interior red. Shots rip through one man into another.

More mechanical, silenced thwacks.

Silence. Voices from a walkie-talkie.

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

CLEAR.

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Reporter JULIET SPEEDY (30s) sits across from SARAH JONES (40s), NGO statistician.

SARAH

Unfortunately, it demonstrates an all-time record high in terms of the amount of methamphetamine and cocaine being consumed in NZ.

JULIET

Significant in that the result shows eighty percent of NZ's population consumed twice as much meth weekly in the last quarter compared to the previous year.

SARAH

That's thirty-two point four kilograms of meth consumed every week. Cocaine use was up a staggering eighty six percent. It's a big jump and just significant full stop. Yeah, very concerning.

JULIET

Doesn't this come off the back of the recent findings of the NZ drug trend survey which mirrors an increase in use of cocaine and methamphetamine?

SARAH

Yes, but also the price had come down thirty percent.

JULIET

Are there are ways to help?

SARAH

Certainly, there are other tools but we need to look at our drug laws which are almost fifty years old.

JULIET

Thank you Sarah. Recent large drug busts like the take down of the Comancheros Auckland chapter has helped but there's a huge amount of work still to go, and with international rings producing more at cheaper rates, there's a big war ahead.

END NEWSPACKAGE SERIES OF SHOTS

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Strings of fairy lights stretch from trees to a large marquee tent outside the small, whitewashed Anglican church.

MUSIC hums from inside, folk covers of Kiwi rock ballads.

Jo backs a refrigerated van into a narrow space behind the church hall. The vehicle rattles with concealed weight.

Lyn, in a puffer jacket and beanie, opens the cargo doors.

A CHYRON reads: DROP 2.

They swing wide to reveal stacked poly bin coolers packed with fish, below them, shrink-wrapped bricks of meth.

JO
Really? A church?

LYN
People feel safe at church. That's
the point.

Jo hands her a clipboard.

INT. MARQUEE - NIGHT

FAMILIES chatter at picnic tables, balancing paper plates.

CHILDREN run between tables with face paint and fairy floss.
A LOCAL BAND strums beneath the fairy lights.

Lyn circulates, fake laughing with the local PASTOR and the local bake sale committee.

She donates a twenty to a raffle, eyes constantly scanning.

EXT. VAN - NIGHT

Jo lifts a cooler, sets it down beside the van. TWO CLEAN-CUT YOUNG MEN dressed like volunteers wait with a dolly.

JO
Straight to the plane.

They nod, load it and vanish into the dark.

A BLACK SUV rolls into the church lot. Windows tinted. It parks at the edge of the grounds.

An ENFORCER in a cheap suit gets out, walks to the shed.

Jo sips a drink. Eyes on the SUV. Lyn moves toward her, nods.

DRUNK LOCAL (O.S.)
Hey! That's my cousin's van!

A WOBBLY YOUNG MAN stumbles toward the back lot, heads straight for the van.

JO
Shit.

She starts after him, but too late, he grabs the side door, tries to pull it open.

JO (CONT'D)
Hey mate!

DRUNK LOCAL
Saw it last week in Greytown. Same
dents, man!

The enforcer approaches, aggressive.

ENFORCER
This isn't your scene.

The drunk shoves him. The enforcer pulls a pistol with a silencer, too fast.

LYN
No, no, no.

PHIFFT.

A single muffled shot. The drunk slumps against the van.

LYN (CONT'D)
Goddamnit.

JO
Go.

The enforcer swaggers to the SUV. It peels away.

INT. SMALL PLANE - CARGO HOLD - NIGHT

The hum of the engine is steady. Lyn sits near the cargo area, knees bouncing.

The PILOT'S voice crackles over the intercom.

PILOT (V.O.)
Smooth sailing from here. Be on the
tarmac in half an hour.

She checks her watch. Lyn exhales. A faint, rhythmic clicking. She frowns, leans toward the duffel bag containing the shipment. The sound gets louder.

She unzips the bag slowly, beneath the bricks of methamphetamine, something blinks red.

A timer. Counting down from 19:57.

LYN
Oh, shit.

She tears open the lining, finds a crude explosive device. A phone taped to a power source. Blinking red light. Wires. She grabs her burner, dials.

LYN (CONT'D)
Pick up, pick up, pick up!

INT. LYN'S HOME - JAMES'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

James answers, groggy.

JAMES
Mum? What's wrong?

LYN (V.O.)
A bomb. There's a bomb.

James bolts upright.

JAMES
Jesus. Okay, what does it look like.

INTERCUT - PLANE / BEDROOM

LYN
An old mobile phone fixed on top with strips of duct tape. A fist-sized block of something dense, putty or wax-looking wired to the phone. The wires are blue, frayed at the ends. A plastic battery pack is taped to the side, a single red light pulsing steady.

James grabs a notebook, sketches furiously.

JAMES

Okay. Cut the blue wire, only the blue. Not the red.

LYN

They're both red. There is no blue.

James hesitates.

JAMES

Then you have to disable the trigger. Pull the SIM card from the burner phone, it's probably set to detonate remotely.

Lyn fumbles with the taped phone, rips the SIM card out. The blinking slows, then stops.

She slumps back, heart pounding.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Still with me?

LYN

Yeah. You just saved our lives.

The plane jolts, drops, Lyn holds on. The pilot checks the dash. Warning lights flicker.

PILOT

Christ.

He radios in.

PILOT (CONT'D)

Tower, this is Zulu-Five-Niner, requesting alternate landing. Weather's closing in over Christchurch, visibility's shot.

RADIO (V.O.)

Copy, Zulu-Five-Niner. Closest strip is Dunedin. Cleared to divert.

Lyn straps herself in again as the plane banks.

LYN

Dunedin?

She pulls out a burner and texts Jo:

Change of plan. Dunedin. Need pick-up. Urgent.

The plane rattles from turbulence. Rain lashes the windows. Lyn grips the seat as lightning flashes outside.

INT. DUNEDIN AIRPORT - NIGHT

Lyn stares out rain needling the runway, breathless, shaken.

No lights. No pickup. No welcome. Th lobby dim, outdated. Lyn turns, sits alone under buzzing fluorescents. Her hair, damp.

Her hands still smudged with black powder from the crude bomb she defused midair. They shake as she tries to text Jo.

No response. She tries again.

No bars.

The phone falls into her lap. She closes her eyes, rubs her face, breathes.

A janitor mops the floor, pretends not to look.

INT. AIRPORT BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lyn washes her hands. Stares at her reflection. Her face is pale. Then she notices, a mark on her coat pocket.

A small sticker. Red. Circular. Not hers.

Her eyes narrow.

She pulls the lining back. Taped inside a tracking beacon.

Her face goes blank.

She rips it free. Drops it into the sink.

Slams her hand down on the tap.

WATER HITS METAL.

INT. JO'S BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

Rain pelts the tin roof. Waves slam against pilings. The scent of seaweed, fuel, and salt hangs thick in the air.

Jo moves through the space restlessly pacing.

Tara watches from a corner, eyes dark with worry.

The door SLAMS open.

Lyn enters, soaked to the bone. Her presence sucks the warmth from the room.

JO
Jesus, what the hell happened? We thought...

LYN
There was a bomb on the plane.

TARA
What?

LYN
Small charge. Wired into the backseat frame. Timer. No warning.

She steps closer to Jo.

LYN (CONT'D)
Who knew the flight plan?

JO
Just you, me... James. Angel's guy. Why?

LYN
Because someone planted a tracking beacon on me too.

Jo blinks. The room goes still.

LYN (CONT'D)
I'm not asking if you planted it. I'm asking why you didn't see it coming.

Jo looks away, jaw clenched.

JO
Maybe because I've been cleaning up your messes. The fucking church corpse, remember?

LYN
I didn't ask for excuses.

JO
This? This game? It's gonna chew us all to bits.

A long silence. The rain gets heavier.

LYN
Then let me be clear.

She steps past Jo, to the wall pulls down a nautical map.
Slaps it flat on the workbench. Marks it with a knife.

LYN (CONT'D)
From now on, every shipment runs
through me. No middlemen. No
unapproved hands. I vet the crews.
I clear the routes. I count every
fucking crate.

JO
And Angel?

LYN
Angel gets what he's owed. But we
set the terms now.

She turns to Tara.

LYN (CONT'D)
You stay here, keep James safe. No
exceptions.

Tara hesitates.

TARA
You think you're still in charge?

Lyn just stares at her.

LYN
I'm the only one left who can be.
I'll see you at home.

INT. UTE - NIGHT

Lyn's hands stay loose on the wheel, her face impassive.

Jo aloof, doesn't notice, she's nursing a beer.

JO
You ever wonder what we'll be like
after this?

LYN
After what?

JO
After all of it. When the drops
stop. When the money's spent.

Lyn doesn't answer right away. Jo takes a swig.

JO (CONT'D)

I used to think it was the sea that scared me. The cold, the weight, the idea of going overboard and no one knowing. But this, this shit we're in now? Feels worse.

LYN

You thinking about bailing?

JO

Sometimes. Not for long. I just... I didn't sign up for kids getting roped in. Dead drunks. Church shoots. It was supposed to be a few quiet runs. Cash, no bodies.

LYN

And now?

Jo looks out over the waves.

JO

Now I just hope we don't drown before we see dry land.

INT. LYN'S HOUSE - CASTLEPOINT - DAY

Tara sits curled up on the couch, scrolls on her phone. The wind howls outside, rattling the old wooden house.

A KNOCK at the door startles her.

She hesitates, sets her phone down. Another KNOCK. Firmer.

TARA

Hello?

No answer. She moves to the door, peers through the peephole.

MIGUEL (30s), Victor's right hand, when he arrives you know death soon follows. He's lean, a face like leather. Calm.

Tara keeps the chain on the door as she cracks it open.

MIGUEL

Sorry to bother you. I'm looking for your folks.

TARA

They're not home.

MIGUEL

That right? Shame. Car's out front,
thought maybe your mum'd be in.

TARA

She's... at work. Won't be back for
a while.

The man studies her. A slow, unsettling smile.

MIGUEL

What about your dad?

TARA

He's not here either.

MIGUEL

Ah. So you're all by yourself then.

Tara grips the door a little tighter, unease creeping in.

TARA

Can I tell them who stopped by?

He steps back from the porch, he turns toward his truck.

MIGUEL

Lock your doors, sweetheart.

Before climbing in, he glances back at her, the smile gone.

He gets into the Escalade and drives off. Tara exhales,
shutting the door, locking it.

She watches as the taillights get further away, then flick
off completely. The Escalade hasn't left.

It's waiting.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT - DAY

In the distance, gulls wheel above the surf. The sky HUMS
with cicadas.

Jo stands beside a wooden table. A long bolt-action hunting
rifle lies in front of her, old, oiled, and well cared for.
She checks the chamber.

James approaches, hands in his hoodie. He glances around.

JAMES

Is this even legal?

She taps the stock. Gestures for him to step closer.

JO
Come here. I want you to know how
to use it. Just in case.

JAMES
Mum would kill me.

JO
Mum's not here. And right now,
you're the man of the house.

He straightens, unsure if he's proud or scared.

JO (CONT'D)
It's not about being a killer. It's
about being ready. This isn't
schoolyard stuff anymore.

She hands him a single bullet. His hand trembles slightly.

JO (CONT'D)
Go on. Chamber it.

JAMES
I've only ever shot clay.

JO
Same principles. Don't point it at
anything you're not willing to
bury.

James slides the bolt open, awkward but careful. Loads the
round. Closes it with a satisfying click.

JO (CONT'D)
Good. Now watch your stance.

She moves his shoulders, adjusts his grip.

JO (CONT'D)
Firm. But relaxed. Rifle's an
extension of your spine.

James looks down the sight. Breath shallow.

JO (CONT'D)
You'll feel the pull to use it when
you're scared. That's not when you
shoot. That's when you think. Then
shoot. Inhale, hold your breath,
then fire.

James blinks. Absorbs it all like a sponge. Fires.
It's wide of the target.

JAMES
I shouldn't be doing this.

JO
You shouldn't be doing a lot of
things. But you are. Because we
don't get to choose the moment.
Only how we show up in it.

James slowly lowers the rifle.

JAMES
We won't tell her, yeah?

JO
Never crossed my mind.

They share a brief look, conspiratorial. Heavy.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT AERODROME - NIGHT

A single bulb flickers above the rusted tin roof.

The waves crash in the distance. Lyn and Angel step out of a
black SUV, cautious.

Inside, Sergeant Kent waits near a battered table.

On the table, A LAPTOP, and a USB drive.

SERGEANT KENT
You weren't easy to track down.

LYN
That's the point, isn't it?

SERGEANT KENT
This is what we've got. Shipment
records, payoffs, offshore
accounts. Your cartel friends are
sloppier than they think.

Angel crosses his arms, unreadable.

ANGEL
The Riversdale police did all that?

SERGEANT KENT
Not just a pretty face.

ANGEL

And you're offering what, exactly?

SERGEANT KENT

I sit on this. Keep it buried. And in exchange, I get a little compensation for keeping things smooth.

LYN

You want to blackmail the cartel.

SERGEANT KENT

You keep your supply line, we keep our jobs, everyone stays happy.

Angel glances at Lyn, waits. Lyn steps forward, places her hands on the table.

LYN

Here's the problem. You're assuming they'll play along. That they'll respect a deal made by a cop who already took their money once.

SERGEANT KENT

You think they'll come after me?

ANGEL

We'll make an example of you. And I think you know that too. That's why you're not taking this to NDIB.

Kent and Angel exchange a look. Lyn leans in.

LYN

I can use this, so we all get what we want. And no one dies unnecessarily.

Angel studies Kent. They hesitate, Kent sighs.

SERGEANT KENT

Fine. But if this blows back.

LYN

It won't.

She picks up the USB, slips it into her pocket.

EXT. WHAKATAKI HOTEL - NIGHT

Bottles of cheap champagne and half-eaten platters clutter the dining table. The tension of weeks has finally lifted.

Lyn, Jo, and Angel are mid-toast, half-drunk, the air filled with a dangerous kind of relief.

LYN

To the cops being as greedy as the rest of us.

They clink glasses. Lyn laughs, a rare full laugh. Looser than we've seen her.

ANGEL

You played them good. Got them chasing ghosts while we stack paper.

JO

Still think it's too early to be celebrating. Deals with cops come with teeth.

LYN

Tonight, I don't care. Tonight, I drink.

She pours more champagne, sloshing some.

JO

Maybe slow down, yeah?

LYN

Don't mother me, Jo. That's my job.

Angel watches them, amused, leaning back in his chair. He lights a cigarette.

ANGEL

Look at you two. Like an old married couple with body counts.

JO

Keep talking, you'll be part of it.

Angel holds up his hands in surrender.

ANGEL

Peace. I'm just saying this right here? This is the top of the mountain.

He nods to Lyn.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
You climbed it. Never seen anyone
do that and keep their soul.

Lyn sips her drink, swaying slightly.

LYN
Soul's overrated. You can't trade
it for fuel or bullets. Or for your
kids safety.

Jo watches her carefully.

ANGEL
Still... I think you've got more
soul than you want people to see.
That's why I like you.

Lyn eyes him, not quite catching the signal yet. Too drunk.
Too tired. She lifts her glass again.

LYN
To survival, then.

Jo's jaw tightens.

Angel leans closer.

ANGEL
To partnerships.

Jo rises.

JO
I'll be back.

They watch Jo head to the bathroom.

Lyn half-slouched in her chair, glass dangles from her hand.
Her eyes flutter drunk, dizzy, between euphoric and empty.

Angel sits beside her, too close.

ANGEL
You really don't know what you are,
do you?

LYN
Hmm?

ANGEL
You scare them. All of them. Even
Jo. Even me.

He brushes a strand of hair from her face.

Lyn recoils, he doesn't stop.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
But that's why I like you. You
don't pretend to be clean.

He leans in.

LYN
Excuse me. I think I need some air.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jo enters the bathroom. She stands in front of the sink,
studies herself in the mirror.

INT. WHAKATAKI HOTEL - NIGHT

The Waitress goes over to their table, picks up Lyn's purse
off the floor, puts it on her chair, sets the check on the
table, looks around for them, walks away.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Lyn has Angel's handkerchief, she's wiping her mouth. Angel
has backed off for this part, but he's right back in there.

Angel leans close to Lyn's head; she pulls her head away.

LYN
Guess I'm starting to feel a little
better.

He tries to put his arms around her. Lyn pulls away.

LYN (CONT'D)
I think I need to go back inside.

INT. WHAKATAKI HOTEL - NIGHT

Jo comes out of the bathroom, another woman goes in, she
scans the room looking for Lyn. She doesn't see her.

She goes over to the table, sees Lyn's stuff there. She picks up the check, looks at it.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Angel has led Lyn off to the far end of the parking lot. He tries to kiss her. Lyn pushes his arms down, turns her head.

LYN
Don't. I don't feel good.

ANGEL
It's okay.

Angel pushes himself on her, she pushes him away harder.

INT. WHAKATAKI HOTEL - NIGHT

Jo pays the Waitress, Waitress shakes her head, indicating she hasn't seen Lyn either.

Jo picks up Lyn's stuff, heads towards the door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Angel pins Lyn against the back of a car, he kisses her neck.

He has her ass in his hands. He humps her. She pushes him away as hard as she can, but he is relentless.

ANGEL
You're beautiful. It's okay. If
won't hurt you. It's okay.

LYN
Stop it! Goddamnit, I mean it! Jo
is gonna wonder where I am. Let go!

ANGEL
Jo is alright.

Jo stands outside the door of the Whakataki, looks around.

Angel pulls at Lyn's clothes. Lyn gets one of her arms free.

SMACK! She hits him hard in the face.

SMACK! He hits her back, grabs her face, squeezes it hard.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Don't you hit me! Don't you fucking
hit me!

There's no trace of friendliness in his face now. He looks mean and dangerous.

He lets go of her face, pins her arms behind her. He holds both of her arms with one hand.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
You just shut up.

With his free hand, he reaches down and starts to pull her pants, tears run down Lyn's face.

LYN
Don't hurt my kids. Angel. Please.

ANGEL
Shut up.

Be spins her, pushes her face down onto the back of the car.

He holds both her arms in one hand, continues pulling her dress up over her hips.

He starts to undo his pants as we hear the CRUNCH of gravel.

JO (O.S.)
Let her go.

ANGEL
Get lost.

The barrel of Jo's gun pressed into the nape of Angel's neck. Jo's thumb pulls back the hammer.

JO
Let her go, you fucking asshole, or
I'm going to splatter your ugly
face all over this nice car.

Angel slowly raises his hands in the air, Lyn darts out, pulling her dress down.

ANGEL
Now, calm down. We were just having
a little fun.

Jo glances at Lyn. Lyn shakes her head no.

JO

Looks like you've got a real fucked-up idea of fun. Now turn around.

Jo backs away, the gun raised, still close to his face. His pants still undone. Lyn inches away as well.

JO (CONT'D)

For future reference, when a woman's crying like that, she's not having any fun.

Jo lowers the gun, stares at him. They turn and walk away.

ANGEL

Bitch. I should have gone ahead and fucked her.

Jo stops in her tracks.

JO

What did you say?

ANGEL

I said suck my...

BANG! A bullet shatters his face.

His body HITS the gravel parking lot. The car behind him, splattered with blood.

Lyn and Jo silent. The SOUND of the hotel in the distance.

Jo lowers the gun.

LYN

Oh my God. Jesus Christ, you shot him.

JO

You watch your mouth, buddy.

LYN

You fucked us. Oh, you've completely fucked us. You know that? Are you out of your goddamn mind? Huh? Are you fucking crazy? Do you know who he works for? His boss, our partner, is expecting him home. And when he doesn't, they'll send another Mexican to take his place.

JO

If there's one thing Mexico is full of, it is Mexicans.

LYN

And what the fuck are we gonna say? Why would we kill someone we'd just gone into partnership with?

JO

I might have overreacted.

LYN

This will cost me my family, you know that? There's gonna be men coming here, they're gonna be looking for answers I can't give.

JO

Right now, you go home, relax, maybe get yourself a frozen custard. I will clean up this mess.

EXT. JETTY ROAD - NIGHT

Lyn's far enough away to relax, she pulls the car over, stops, gets out, shakes out a cigarette.

Lights FLASH.

DETECTIVE GREG WILLIAMS (50s), steps out of his car, hand over his holster, weathered but sharp, higher up the food chain than sergeant Kent, carries the quiet authority of someone who's seen too much.

GREG

Drop the keys on the ground. Hands up. Hands up! On the ground. Don't you move. Where the hell is he?

LYN

Who?

GREG

Angel Gavito Alverado. Where the fuck is he?

LYN

I don't know who that is.

Lyn face down on the ground looks up at Detective Williams. The surf DEAFENING.

GREG

I know who are Mrs. Sutherland. We
can protect your kids. Witness
relocation. New identities.

LYN

What happens to this place?

GREG

We have it under control.

LYN

You don't understand.

Greg studies her, he crouches beside her.

GREG

You're becoming the thing you were
fighting.

LYN

No. I'm becoming what it takes to
win.

INT. JO'S BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

Rain needles the corrugated tin roof. Narrow, claustrophobic.

Lyn stands over a BLOODY TARP. She rips back the cover.

Angel's body lies underneath it, half-covered. His face,
pale. Empty.

A smear of blood across Lyn's cheek.

Jo paces, chain-smokes. James leans against the wall, white-
knuckles a crowbar.

JO

We bury him out back. The
Deliverance Cove track has some
good spots.

LYN

We don't bury him. Not yet.

A distant ENGINE. Headlights sweep across the boathouse's
slats. A BLACK SUV pulls up.

JAMES

Shit. That's him.

Lyn straightens, wipes her face. The boathouse door groans open.

VICTOR GAVIRIA (60s) strides in, flanked by a LARGE ENFORCER and Miguel.

He removes his Panama hat, expensive coat. Bone-dry. Hair slicked back, cold eyes. He eyes Lyn, Jo, clocks the blood on the tarp.

Victor approaches the tarp. Lifts it back with the toe of his shoe. Sees Angel's lifeless face. He doesn't flinch.

LYN

Angel turned. He pulled a gun on Jo. Tried to take the load.

VICTOR

And you just happened to survive?

He circles Lyn. The Enforcers eye Jo and James like meat.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

My nephew, Lyn. Flesh and blood.
And now he's pulp under your tarp.

LYN

He got greedy. He made his move.

Victor's eyes narrow. He doesn't buy it.

VICTOR

Maybe he had reason to.

He nods to one Enforcer, who steps out, returns with a small BLACK DUFFEL.

Drops it on the ground. Kicks it open.

INSIDE: GPS TRACKER. PHONE. STACK OF PHOTOS. Surveillance shots of Lyn, Jo, and the church drop.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Someone's been shopping photos to my enemies.

Lyn's expression freezes. She hasn't seen these before.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Last buyer got a bullet for asking questions.

LYN

That wasn't me.

VICTOR
Then who? Angel? Convenient.

JO
He was playing both sides. Tried to
run with product. We handled it.

Victor steps closer. He's now inches from Lyn.

VICTOR
You better pray that's true.
Because if I find your name
anywhere near those leaks you won't
see me coming next time.

Everyone tenses. Victor's gaze turns knife-sharp.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
You've got two hours to clean this.

He turns to go, stops at the door.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Castlepoint's a small place. You
can't lie here forever.

He exits. The boathouse silent.

Jo looks at Lyn. Lyn wipes blood off her hands, eyes distant.

JO
They don't believe us.

INT. LYN'S HOUSE - CASTLEPOINT - NIGHT

Rain drums on the windows. A stack of blood-stained rags lie
in the sink. A half-eaten dinner grows cold on the table.

Tara storms in, soaked and shaking. Her eyes wild.

TARA
Mum. You said once, we don't get to
decide who's bad. Remember?

Lyn doesn't look up.

TARA (CONT'D)
So now what? We just become them?

She looks up her face dark, hollow.

LYN

There's no clean way through this,
Tara. I've tried. I've begged. I've
bent. And all it got us was blood.

TARA

So what now? We kill to keep the
lights on?

Lyn doesn't answer.

LYN

We don't get to decide who's bad.
But we do decide who walks away.
And I'm done letting it be them.

She picks up the torn photo. Folds it in half. Slides it back
into her coat.

TARA

You lied to me.

Lyn looks up from the table, slow and tired.

LYN

I've lied to everyone. What makes
you special?

TARA

Don't. Don't do that. Don't turn
this into one of your cool little
lines. You told me it was one drop.
One job. That's it.

Lyn says nothing. She picks up a cigarette. Doesn't light it.

TARA (CONT'D)

Now Victor wants your head, and
James, James is talking like he's
some kind of gangster now. He's
thirteen!

LYN

I did what I had to do.

TARA

Bullshit. You're doing this because
you like it. Because for once in
your sad, suffocating life, someone
listens to you. Someone's afraid of
you.

LYN

You think this is fun?

TARA

You're wearing your dead husband's
blood under your nails, Mum. You
haven't cried once.

Lyn finally looks at her, really looks.

LYN

You're right. I haven't. Because
crying doesn't pay the mortgage.
Crying doesn't keep James fed.
Crying sure as hell didn't keep
Angel and his goons from showing up
with a gun at our front door.

Lyn stands. Steady. Measured.

LYN (CONT'D)

You think I wanted this? Your
father left us nothing but a name
and a debt we couldn't pay. You
want to hate someone? Hate him.

TARA

He was weak. You, you're worse.
You're dangerous.

Tara chokes back tears, shakes her head.

TARA (CONT'D)

I won't do it. I'm not going to
launder your blood money, drive
boats full of poison to the shore.

LYN

Then leave. Pack your things. Walk.
Or stay and learn what the world
really costs.

Tara stares at her. Her face breaks, but she holds it in.

She turns. Walks out. SLAM. The front door rattles the walls.

Lyn exhales shaky, shallow.

She lights the cigarette. Takes a drag.

INT. DELIVERANCE COVE TRAIL - DAY

Lyn wrapped in her coat approaches Sergeant Kent already
there, paces on the trail.

She tosses the tracking beacon at his feet, soaked, blinking.

LYN

You want to tell me why I nearly died because of that?

Kent doesn't react right away. He picks it up. Studies it.

KENT

I never meant for it to be used like that. It was supposed to be insurance.

LYN

Insurance for who?

KENT

You. Me. Everyone caught in this circus. You're not the only one they're squeezing.

Lyn steps closer, eyes hard.

LYN

So you gave them my location. Let them put a bomb on my plane?

KENT

I didn't know about the bomb. I swear.

He runs a hand over his face.

KENT (CONT'D)

I thought if they knew where you were, they'd feel safer. Less likely to act out. It was supposed to calm things.

LYN

You sold me out to keep your seat at their table.

KENT

I've got two mortgages, a son in Otago with a heart condition, a badge no one respects anymore. What do you want from me?

LYN

Just the truth. Now I have it.

She turns to leave. Kent grabs her arm.

KENT

You tell them I talked...

LYN
I won't. You're not worth the
bullet they'd spend.

She yanks free, disappears into the night, leaves Kent with the tracker in his hand, staring out at the dark water.

EXT. JETTY ROAD - DAY

Tara walks quickly down the main road, hood up, past a few scattered open shops.

A backpack slung over one shoulder. Her earbuds are in music pulses.

She crosses the street, head down, shoulders tense.

BEHIND HER A BLACK SEDAN sits idling across the road. Tinted windows. No plates.

The car waits... then eases forward slowly.

Tara senses it. She glances over her shoulder. Sees nothing at first. She cuts through a

NARROW ALLEY

Between a bakery and a bait shop. Her pace quickens.

FOOTSTEPS echo behind her slow at first, then deliberate.

Tara turns.

Nothing.

She fumbles her phone. No signal. Dead zone.

She looks up, a shape is there at the alley mouth. Watching.

She bolts into an

ABANDONED YARD

She runs across wet gravel, toward a fence. Breath ragged.

Another shape appears ahead from behind a parked trailer. Then another behind her.

A trap.

Tara tries to scream a gloved hand clamps over her mouth.

Another grabs her legs lifts she kicks, connects, one captor grunts but they're too fast.

She's dragged to the back of a waiting van.

The door SLAMS shut.

The van pulls away.

From the outside, the van merges back into Jetty road, indistinguishable from any delivery vehicle.

Silence returns to the alley.

EXT. NARROW ALLEY - DAY

Lyn walks alone, turns into the alley beside the bait shop, the shortcut Tara always takes.

She stops.

Her eyes narrow. Something feels off.

She takes a step forward. Then another.

ON THE GROUND - A DARK SMUDGE

Something glistens faintly in the light. Lyn kneels. Runs a finger through it.

Blood. Fresh.

Her breath catches.

Just ahead, in the gravel...

A BLACK AIRPOD CASE.

Cracked open. One bud missing.

Lyn picks it up. She knows it instantly.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

Tara laughs in the kitchen, tosses the case on the counter.

TARA

They're not even real Air Pods,
Mum. But they work.

EXT. NARROW ALLEY - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

Back in the alley, Lyn's Her breath turns shallow.

Then she sees it: Tara's necklace a small silver coral pendant Glen gave her lying in the dirt.

Bent. Torn from her neck.

Lyn kneels again. Picks it up, like it might shatter.

She closes her fist around it.

Her face goes blank. Then still. Then hard.

The wind howls down the alley.

Lyn rises slowly. She doesn't cry.

She walks back out with a new purpose.

EXT. MONGREL MOB PAD - CASTLEPOINT - NIGHT

A low-slung house wrapped in shadows. The house looks like it could breathe fire.

Faded Holden Commodores and Harleys crowd the front yard.

A BARKING dog is chained to a post.

Muffled bass-heavy music THUDS inside from blacked out windows.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Lyn's knuckles whiten on the steering wheel, she lets go.

EXT. MONGREL MOB PAD - CASTLEPOINT - NIGHT

Lyn exits her car, slams her door shut, approaches the gate.

She stands outside the gate, motionless, in wears jeans, a hoodie, no makeup. Nothing to draw attention.

Except her eyes, which are dead calm.

She pushes open the gate, strides up the path.

She walks to the door and KNOCKS. Hard.

It opens. A huge PROSPECT (20s) stares her down. Face inked like a maze, eyes suspicious.

PROSPECT
Nah. No chance. You don't want to
be here. You lost, lady?

LYN
No. I'm here to talk to Tama.

The Prospect scoffs.

PROSPECT
Tama doesn't talk to... tourists.

LYN
Tell him it's Lyn Sutherland. And
I've got a problem worth his time.

He hesitates, something in her tone.

LYN (CONT'D)
Please.

He closes the door, disappears inside.

SHOUTING. LAUGHTER. Then silence.

The door swings open again.

INT. MONGREL MOB PAD - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A haze of weed smoke and sweat. MOBSTERS crowd the couches and walls, mid-party. Some clock Lyn with amusement.

OTHERS with caution watching her like a stray dog wandered in. Some leer. Most just wait.

TAMA NGARINO (50s), bald, heavysset, patched to the teeth, sits in a worn leather recliner alone at the far end.

His presence hushes the room. He doesn't rise. Quiet power. Eyes like razors.

He gestures. Lyn steps forward.

TAMA
You're the one from Auckland.

LYN
I was.

TAMA
You got five minutes, Mrs.
Sutherland.

Lyn takes a breath. Steady.

LYN
They used me. Ports. Containers. No
one checks a middle-aged woman
picking up flour and frozen prawns.
Now my name's on papers I never
signed. They've been near my kids.

One of the younger MOBSTERS laughs, a high, mean sound.

MOBSTER
She wants us to play bodyguard.

Lyn turns to him.

LYN
No. I want you to take the power
they think they own. I can give you
what they never will. I didn't
choose this. I didn't want this. I
was clean. A mum.

Pause. Tama watches, unreadable.

LYN (CONT'D)
Now my kids are on the line. The
cartel doesn't care about me, and
they sure as hell won't care about
them. I need out. And I need
someone local who understands
power.

Murmurs among the gang. One laughs.

MOBSTER #1
You want us to what? Help you take
over the cartel?

LYN
Not take over. Cut them out. You
already own half the pipeline. I
can open the other half. Quiet.
Clean. Safer for everyone.

Tama leans forward. Interested now.

TAMA
You offering a seat at their table?

LYN

No. I'm flipping the table.

A long, tense pause. Tama studies her.

TAMA

That's a bold play.

LYN

So is threatening my kids.

Tama finally smiles, a slow, shark-like grin.

TAMA

You've got balls. I like that. But we don't run charity here. What do you really want?

LYN

I want protection. I want my kids safe. And I want to bleed them from the inside, with someone who knows how to make it hurt.

Silence again. Tama nods, looks back to Lyn.

LYN (CONT'D)

They brought a war here without knowing who they were stepping on.

Tama doesn't blink.

TAMA

You think we'll fight it for you?

LYN

No. I think you'll fight it for yourselves. I'm just the crack in the wall. You're the flood that comes after.

Silence. Just the faint buzz of fluorescent lights.

TAMA

You talk like you've already made peace with dying.

LYN

I've made peace with killing.

That hangs there. The dog outside has stopped barking.

Tama leans back, his face unreadable.

TAMA

Tell me everything. No lies.

LYN

You'll get it. And if I disappear,
I've left a letter with names and
proof. Sent to a reporter. I'm not
stupid. And I'm not bluffing.

TAMA

Bring me the names. Routes.
Contacts. You get one chance. You
burn us, I'll bury you.

Lyn meets his gaze, steel behind her tired eyes.

LYN

Deal.

INT. LYN'S HOUSE - CASTLEPOINT - NIGHT

The house dim. The living room is mostly dark, lit only by
the flicker of the television white noise humming like static
in a war zone.

The front door is wide open. Rain whips against the porch.

Lyn throws clothes and gear into a duffel.

James stands by the hallway, pale, holding a flashlight and a
small backpack.

LYN

We go south. Invercargill.
Disappear into the dark. I've got a
stash there.

JAMES

What about Jo?

LYN

She's getting Tara. They'll catch
up. I've gotta get you safe. We
move fast, we move quiet.

A silhouette appears in the doorframe.

Miguel, dripping wet. Calm. A pistol in his hand.

MIGUEL

You were just going to leave?

Lyn freezes. She turns.

LYN
You're not supposed to be here.

MIGUEL
And yet.

He steps inside, tracking mud. The gun never wavers.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Victor wants answers. You've got
thirty seconds to give them.

James tries to edge toward the hallway.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Little man, don't. Sit.

James halts, visibly trembling.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Where's the girl?

LYN
You know where. Your people took
her.

MIGUEL
Not my people. Not anymore. I'm
freelance. Means I get to decide
what happens next.

Lyn eyes the kitchen. Her handbag. Too far.

James's eyes flick to the hallway, nods at Lyn.

Miguel clocks it.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)
Say goodbye to your son.

James bolts.

BANG!

Hits the wall behind James as he dives down the hallway.

LYN
JAMES!

She charges Miguel, he reaches out, grabs her by the throat
slams her into the wall.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

James scrambles into Lyn's room. Opens a drawer. Pulls out an old revolver. His hands shake.

He hears FOOTSTEPS.

He whirls, Miguel storms in.

MIGUEL

Stupid.

James lifts the revolver and pulls the trigger.

CLICK.

Empty.

Miguel smirks. Raises his weapon.

BANG!

Blood splashes the wall.

Miguel drops.

Behind him Jo. Holding a shotgun. Face like a storm.

She steps past the body. Looks at James.

JO

You alright?

James nods. Lyn rushes in past Jo, grabs James, holds holds him tight. Blood stains her shirt.

JO (CONT'D)

You've got maybe five minutes.

LYN

Come with us.

Jo looks back at Miguel's body.

JO

Someone has to slow them down.

Lyn hesitates, then nods. Resigned. She pulls James, grabs the duffel, heads for the back.

JO (CONT'D)

Find Tara. You finish this.

Lyn looks back. Their eyes lock.

LYN

I will.

Lyn and James vanish into the night. Jo turns away. Pumps the shotgun once.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

A long, winding stretch of rural road curves along a cliffside, slick with rain. Wind howls through the trees.

The headlights of an X-TRAIL SUV cut through the mist.

Behind the X-Trail, a black UTE barrels through the darkness, its lights OFF.

INT. X-TRAIL - MOVING - NIGHT

LYN grips the wheel, knuckles white, eyes scan the mirror.

Her face is streaked with blood. James is in the passenger seat, buckled in, he turns, looks back in the rear view window, jaw clenched.

JAMES

They're still behind us.

LYN

I know.

EXT. BEHIND THEM - NIGHT

The black UTE follows in the darkness, its lights OFF.

A GUNSHOT cracks.

INT. X-TRAIL - NIGHT

Rear glass on the X-Trail explodes. Lyn ducks, swerving.

JAMES

They're trying to kill us!

LYN

Welcome to Castlepoint.

She throws the wheel left, the X-Trail veers off the asphalt and onto a narrow gravel side road, tires skidding.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - NIGHT

The X-trail bounces wildly as they speed down the uneven path. Fences, sheep paddocks, ditch weeds fly past in a blur.

INT. X-TRAIL - NIGHT

James looks back, the Ute's headlight flick on, headlights growing.

JAMES
They're gaining!

LYN
Hold on.

She guns it.

AHEAD: A BLIND CURVE. A DIP. A DITCH.

Too late.

The X-Trail hits the ditch edge and LAUNCHES.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - NIGHT

The X-trail flies up off the road. Gravity catches it mid-arc. THEN REAL SPEED RETURNS.

CRASH. CRASH. CRASH.

The X-Trail FLIPS over and over like a rolling steel coffin, shedding sparks and glass as it tumbles into the gully.

INT. X-TRAIL - EDURING FLIP

The roof caves in slightly.

Lyn's head whips forward.

BANG! The DRIVER'S SIDE AIRBAG deploys, smashing into her face, cushioning the impact.

James, belted in, braces, screaming.

Lyn's body jolts, limbs buckling, dazed.

James hangs suspended for a moment, upside down like a puppet caught mid-fall.

EXT. DITCH - NIGHT

The X-trail SLAMS to a stop, upside down. Steam hisses from the crumpled engine.

The wheels spin in the air. A faint trail of smoke curls from the hood.

The black Ute, no where to be seen.

INT. X-TRAIL - NIGHT

Silence. Then.

JAMES

Mum?

LYN

Still here.

Blood trickles from her hairline.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Dim fluorescent lights hum overhead. Lyn lies in a hospital bed, her arm in a sling, bruises mottle her face.

She stares at the ceiling, eyes distant, trying to control her breathing.

The rhythmic beep of the heart monitor fills the silence.

A KNOCK at the door. Before Lyn can answer, Greg steps inside, pulls up a chair beside her bed.

Lyn turns her head, masks irritation with exhaustion.

LYN

If you're here to check my pain
meds, I can assure you they're not
strong enough.

GREG

I'd say you've been through worse.
But that crash could've killed you.

LYN

Guess I should count my blessings.

GREG

Some people aren't so lucky.

Lyn holds his gaze. She knows where this is going.

GREG (CONT'D)
I'm just going to ask a few questions, then I'll let you rest. You were found unconscious at the scene. Do you remember what happened?

LYN
I lost control of the car. Wet roads. Bad luck.

GREG
Bad luck follows you like a shadow, doesn't it?

Lyn doesn't flinch. Just lets out a slow breath, shifts slightly in the bed.

LYN
If you have something to say, just say it.

Greg studies her, then leans in slightly.

GREG
We know about the cartel, Lyn. We know about the shipments, the payoffs, the flights, the boats running in and out of Castlepoint. We've been watching.

Lyn blinks, feigns confusion perfectly.

LYN
Cartel? That sounds serious. But I run a small charter business, Detective. If there's criminal activity, maybe you should look at someone else.

GREG
You're good. I'll give you that. But you weren't always. You were just Glen's wife, right? Keeping house, raising kids. Meanwhile, Glen...was playing both sides.

Lyn's breath catches, for a fraction. Greg sees it.

GREG (CONT'D)
Yeah. He was working for them. Moving product, making drops.
(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)
And at the same time, he was
feeding us information.

Lyn's expression neutral, but her pulse hammers in her ears.

LYN
That's not possible.

GREG
He was in deep. And it got him
killed.

Lyn stares at the window. She forces a bitter laugh.

LYN
This is a hell of a bedtime story,
Detective. But it's not my story.
My husband's dead. And I have
nothing to do with whatever you
think was happening.

GREG
You think they're done with you?
With your family? If Glen was
talking, they'll assume you know
things too. And I guarantee you...
they don't leave loose ends.

Lyn meets his gaze. Cold. Calculating.

LYN
Then I guess I better drive more
carefully next time.

Greg studies her, waiting for a crack. There isn't one.
Finally, he stands, straightens his jacket.

He heads for the door, then pauses.

GREG
When you're ready to stop
pretending, give me a call. Before
they make the next move.

He leaves. Lyn stares at the ceiling again.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The hallway buzzes with fluorescent hum. The clock on the
wall reads 4:17 AM.

Rain still taps at the windows like an echo from another
world.

Lyn lies awake. Eyes open. Dressed in a patient gown. No IVs now, just bandages, bruises, and silence.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

A black utility van idles near the ambulance bay. No markings.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The door opens.

TWO MEN step in. Plain clothes. Hard eyes. One nods. The other carries a coat.

MAN #1
Time to go.

Lyn doesn't move.

LYN
My discharge wasn't signed.

MAN #2
Is now.

They drop her coat on the bed. One gestures to her feet.
She hesitates.

LYN
Do I get to know where?

She stands, winces. Slips on the coat.

The men flank her as she limps from the room to the

HOSPITAL HALLWAY

They walk her past the nurse's station.

No one looks up. No one asks questions.

One of the nurses glances away ashamed, or afraid. They walk out to the

HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

The van doors open. Lyn steps inside. The men follow, close the doors behind them. The van pulls away.

INT. BLACK VAN - MOVING - DAY

Lyn sits in the back, between two enforcers. She stares at her reflection in the window.

She doesn't cry. She doesn't beg. Her knuckles tighten.

EXT. LYN'S HOUSE - CASTLEPOINT - DAY

The van pulls into the front of the house.

Victor waits by the entrance. Smoking. No words.

Just the sound of the sliding door opening.

INT. LYN'S HOUSE - CASTLEPOINT - DAY

Lyn is slumped in a chair. Her hands zip-tied behind her back. Her bare feet are duct-taped to the chair legs.

Her face bruised, blood on her lip. She's conscious, barely.

A folding table beside her holds a set of pliers, a rusted nail file, a jug of tap water with a dirty rag stuffed in it.

Victor stands in front of her, suit clean, hair wet from the rain. Calm. Focused.

VICTOR

You had Miguel in your house.

Lyn doesn't respond.

Victor sits on a stool across from her. Like a man about to start a careful job.

He reaches down, lifts her foot gently like he's inspecting something fragile.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

And now you're very quiet.

LYN

Anything I say is just a reason for you to kill me slower.

Victor smiles. Genuine admiration.

VICTOR

You know what I like about you, Lyn?

(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)
You still think this is about fear.
About punishment. But it's about
discipline. About structure.

He selects a toe, the second on her left foot.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
I need to know where Miguel is.
Because if he's still breathing, it
means there's a hole in my command.
And you... you're supposed to be
part of the structure now.

He lifts the pliers.

LYN
You won't find him.

VICTOR
I'm not looking for him. I'm
looking for what you'll do to keep
him hidden.

He wedges the pliers under her toenail.

Victor pulls.

CRACK.

Lyn SCREAMS teeth bared, eyes wide. Blood runs down her foot.

She shakes but doesn't speak.

Victor drops the toenail into a metal tray. It pings.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Let's try again.

He goes for the next toe.

LYN
You're scared.

Victor pauses.

LYN (CONT'D)
You don't do this unless you're
losing.

He yanks the second nail. Another SCREAM.

VICTOR

Tell me where Miguel is... or I
take all ten. And then I go for the
fingers. Then the face.

LYN

Then you'll have a pile of bones
and still no Miguel.

VICTOR

I'm patient.

Lyn, soaked in sweat, blinks blood out of her eyes.

LYN

Then you'll wait a long fucking
time.

Victor exhales. Calmly sets the pliers down.

VICTOR

Last chance.

The front door bursts open, Jo is shoved inside by a third
man. Her face is bruised, hands bound.

LYN

Jo.

JO

Don't say anything.

Victor smiles, pulls a pistol from his jacket.

VICTOR

See, Lyn...we have a problem.
You're telling different stories to
different people. That makes you...
unreliable.

LYN

I've done everything you asked.

VICTOR

Not everything. You've been clever.
Too clever. And clever people? They
make me nervous.

He gestures, one of his men yanks Jo to her knees beside Lyn.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

This... friend of yours. Loyal,
isn't she?

Lyn's jaw tightens.

LYN
Leave her out of it.

VICTOR
Oh, I will. Right after she's
served her purpose.

He leans forward, eyes locked on Lyn.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
You don't understand, every move
you've made... has led to this.
Every lie you've told me...has a
price. It's about discipline,
remember?

He straightens, aims the pistol at Jo. Lyn lurches forward.

LYN
No!

VICTOR
You pulled the trigger, Lyn... just
didn't bother to hold the gun.

BANG!

A single deafening shot. Jo collapses sideways into Lyn's
lap, blood blooming on her shirt.

Lyn freezes, hands shaking, breath ragged.

Victor watches her, calm as a tide.

LYN
He's already dead. Twelve gauge
buckshot says so.

Victor freezes. Rage simmers behind his eyes.

VICTOR
You're lying.

LYN
Check the floorboards, east of the
chimney. We bled him out right
there.

Victor stares at her for a long moment tries to read if it's
truth or bluff.

He walks out.

VICTOR (O.S.)
You owe one final drop Lyn.

Lyn collapses against the chair, broken but still unbowed.

Blood pools on the floor beneath Lyn's bare feet. She hangs forward, breathing ragged, barely conscious.

A faint metallic CLINK. Somewhere deep in the house.

Footsteps echo down the hallway. Not many. Two men, tops.

LYN'S EYES OPEN. Red and wild.

Two ENFORCERS approach.

ENFORCER #1
Victor said keep her alive. Just
move her to the truck.

ENFORCER #2
You seen her? She's halfway dead
already.

They chuckle.

Lyn blinks back the sweat. Her wrists strain the zip ties have sliced into her skin. She flexes. Again. Again.

POP.

The left tie gives.

She exhales pain blooms everywhere.

The footsteps are closer now.

She sees the metal tray with her own torn nails in it. Beside it the pliers.

She grabs them.

The footsteps arrive.

ENFORCER #1 (O.S.)
Alright, lady. Nap time's over.

They step in.

ENFORCER #2
Wait, where the fuck is the...

Lyn LUNGES from behind a support beam. The pliers drive into ENFORCER #2's eye socket.

He drops screaming.

ENFORCER #1 reaches for his gun.

BANG.

Too slow. Lyn grabs #2's pistol from his hip and fires.

Blood spatters the wall.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT HANGAR - DAY

Lyn limps among ventilators. She passes a tall ventilator and...

She has a gun to her head.

GREG
Hands behind your back.

Greg cuffs Lyn, one-handed.

LYN
You know what you're doing. YOU got
a thing for the countryside? You
brought others here.

Greg shoves Lyn to her knees. Greg crouches.

GREG
I like the light. Space.

He searches Lyn's pockets.

GREG (CONT'D)
Where's the stuff I want.

LYN
Where are the tapes?

Greg pockets the pistol Lyn took from the enforcer.

GREG
Guess we're here for a nice view of
the beach and that's it. I didn't
come here to trade. I came here to
arrest you.

LYN
Citizens arrest?

Greg hits her in the mouth. Lyn stays upright.

LYN (CONT'D)
I'm going to ask you something.
Something I never asked anybody.

GREG
What's that?

LYN
Give me a chance.

GREG
What?

LYN
Why do you think I did all this?
To go straight.

GREG
You did it. I'm not your confessor.
There's no absolution. I'm police.
You talk to a judge. Get up. Come
on.

As Lyn doesn't move, Greg presses the gun to her forehead.

A CRUNCH of gravel. Greg and Lyn both hear it.

ENFORCER 1. (V.O.)
Don't move.

GREG
You know who I am?

ENFORCER 1.
I don't know who you are. Drop your
weapon and move away.

GREG
Your boss got people killed. I got
evidence. Tapes. Other documents.
Let's go to the office.

ENFORCER 1.
Drop your weapon now or I will
fucking shoot you.

GREG
I've got a gun to this bitches head
and if I shoot her, I've got five
boxes of evidence that explain why.
I'm taking her. Now.

Enforcer 1. lowers his gun, and watches them go.

Greg moves Lyn to the door.

LYN

You take what you're dealt, right?

GREG

Yeah. It's the essence of cards.
You play what you're dealt, or
you're a fucking cheat.

LYN

Who dealt me the projects? Who
dealt me no money? Who dealt me
nothing but shit?

GREG

Talk to a priest when you're in
jail.

The door opens and for a frozen moment Greg, holding the gun
on Lyn, stares out of the door.

A LOUD BANG.

Greg is shot through the head. BLOOD sprays the walls, and
Lyn is hit by flying blood and matter.

Greg falls, crumpled, on his face, Lyn, covered with blood,
looks up. ENFORCER 2. lowers his pistol.

ENFORCER 2.

Don't remember me?

Lyn shakes her head.

ENFORCER 2. (CONT'D)

I need someone to look after me.
You gonna look after me?

Lyn nods. ENFORCER 2. uncuffs her.

LYN

You got it.

ENFORCER 2. picks up GREGS'S gun.

The doors open, ENFORCER 1. emerges. He looks down at the
dead Greg.

ENFORCER 2. pulls out Greg's gun shoots ENFORCER 1. in the
head.

He turns to find:

Lyn draws and fires at him.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

Rain spatters puddles, floodlights buzz overhead.

A convoy of SUVs and trucks idle on the gravel.

A CHYRON reads: FINAL DROP - MAY

Under a canvas tent, Victor, and Sergeant Kent gather near a table stacked with crates.

Enforcers linger in the shadows.

Lyn steps out of a beat-up LAND CRUISER. Calm. Wet hair clings to her face.

She enters the

HANGAR

Dim. Isolated. The place only bad decisions happen in. Hangar lights buzz overhead.

Armed DEALERS load crates onto a twin-prop plane.

Rain taps on the tin roof like a metronome counting down.

She carries a USB.

VICTOR

Didn't think you'd show.

LYN

Last drop. Then I disappear.

VICTOR

That so? Funny how you're always holding the cards.

She hands Kent the USB. He plugs it into the laptop.

LYN

Shipment manifests. Crew rosters.
GPS routes. You're all set.

KENT

You sure this is everything?

LYN
Every kilo. Every dollar. Just keep
your promises.

Victor eyes her. Distrustful, smirks, but says nothing.
Jo finishes unloading crates. She nods discreetly to Lyn.

VICTOR
This doesn't smell right.

LYN
You're welcome to walk.

Victor steps forward, inspects the product. Nods.
No weapons drawn. Yet.

VICTOR
We have a problem.

LYN
We always do.

VICTOR
This one breathes. Talks. Wears
your daughter's face.

Lyn stiffens.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
She told the boy from the petrol
station. About the drop. About you.

Lyn's silence confirms it. She already suspected.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
She's young. Angry. Soft in the
mouth. You think that's loyalty but
I've seen it before.

He leans in, quiet and deadly calm.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
You can't run an empire on
feelings. That's what Glen tried.
That's why he fell.

LYN
She's a child.

VICTOR
She's a witness. And if you don't
deal with it...
(MORE)

VICTOR (CONT'D)
someone else will. She can't keep
this secret for the rest of her
life. It's, I really wish she
hadn't told anyone. But let me be
clear. She doesn't need to die
because of what she told the boy.
She has to die because the boy
isn't the last person she'll tell.
We both know that.

Lyn stares at the table. The blood drains from her face.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Regardless. You know how this has
to go. And if it doesn't go that
way... You know how this has to go.

Lyn takes his meaning:

Tara needs to die, and if the Sutherlands won't cooperate,
then the Sutherlands will have to die.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
This has been a very bad week. I'm
giving you a choice. Family or
future. You don't get both.

He stands.

Lyn watches Kent wheel Tara in, bound to a chair.

LYN
Let her go. Now.

VICTOR
You didn't think we'd let you walk
away, did you? You were useful. Now
you're a liability.

LYN
You think you can just kill me and
keep everything running? I'm the
only reason your last shipment
isn't rotting at the bottom of the
ocean.

Victor smirks, Lyn steps closer, pulls out a PHONE.

LYN (CONT'D)
You kill me, this goes straight to
the police. Every account, every
bribe, every drop-off location.
Your whole network burns.

She presses a button, a ticking sound plays over the speaker.

LYN (CONT'D)
Countdown's already started. You've
got two minutes to decide how much
you like breathing.

Victor hesitates. The gunmen exchange uneasy glances.

TARA
Mum.

Lyn flicks her gaze to Tara, then back to Victor.

LYN
You let her go. You let me walk. Or
we all go down together.

VICTOR
Cut her loose.

A gunman hesitates, then slices the ropes. Tara scrambles to
Lyn's side, gripping her tightly.

She takes Tara's hand, stepping back toward the door.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
You better hope I never see you
again.

LYN
Believe me, the feeling's mutual.

Measured, in control Lyn smiles.

She places a black duffel bag on a table. Unzips it.

Inside, neatly stacked cash, final installment of the deal.

LYN (CONT'D)
That's everything. Every cent you
expected. And more.

Victor eyes the money, then Lyn. He doesn't trust this, but
he's come too far to back out now.

SERGEANT KENT
This ties up your loose ends, huh?
And we just... look the other way?

Lyn smiles, but there's no warmth in it.

LYN

No. You look where I tell you to look. You and I both know you're in too deep to walk away. So let's stop pretending this was ever about justice.

The cartel enforcers exchange glances.

Victor remains unreadable.

VICTOR

And us? Where does that leave us?

Lyn turns to him, stepping closer, her voice lowering.

LYN

You were planning to cut me out. I heard everything. The way I see it, that was a mistake. Because I know every deal, every shipment, every dirty cop you've paid off. And the people I work with now? They'll never let you operate here without me.

She nods to the shadows, a handful of LOYAL MONGREL MOB CREW, spread out.

More FIGURES step forward, her children, and Tara, along with a handful of LOYAL CREW.

Not just kids anymore. Operators. They spread out, showing their presence, their power.

Victor's been outmaneuvered. Lyn's people shift, hands rest near weapons but not drawing.

A loaded silence. Victor chuckles, a slow, grudging nod.

VICTOR

Didn't think you had it in you.

LYN

Neither did I. But here we are. This is the last time you get paid. From now on, you take orders from me. And if you don't? Well...

A statement, not a threat.

Victor studies her. He picks up the duffel bag.

VICTOR
Alright. Let's see if you can
handle it.

LYN
Oh, I can handle it. This town?
It's mine.

Lyn stands calm.

Behind Lyn James and Tara. Both armed. Both scared.

The leader, Tama, grips an Uzi with a cracked handle.

VICTOR
You really dragged your kids into
this?

LYN
They're the only ones who haven't
tried to kill me.

A tense chuckle from Tama.

TAMA
This is cute. Real cottage
industry. But we're taking our cut
now.

LYN
No one's taking anything. This is
my territory. My coast.

VICTOR
Then you'd better be ready to die
on it.

LYN
Funny. I was hoping you'd say that.

She snaps her fingers.

CLICK. From the rafters, a red dot lands on Victor's chest.

A dozen LASER SIGHTS blink into view from above, behind
crates, hidden corners. Locals. A few familiar faces.

The room explodes with motion.

GUNS RAISE in unison.

VICTOR'S MEN raise theirs.

TAMA'S CREW panic guns out.

JAMES and TARA aim like they've rehearsed it in the mirror.
Everyone is pointing a gun at someone else.
Sweat drips. Fingers twitch.

VICTOR
You'll start a bloodbath.

LYN
I don't start things, Victor. I end
them.

TAMA
Let's just put the guns down, eh?

JO
You first.

The rain hammers louder.

Someone sneezes.

TARA'S FINGER TWITCHES.

LYN
This is your last breath before it
turns red in here. You walk out
now, you live. You aim, you die.

Victor slowly lowers his weapon.

His men follow.

Tama exhales and drops his gun to the floor.

CLACK.

Lyn doesn't smile. Just lifts her chin.

LYN (CONT'D)
Castlepoint belongs to me now.
Anyone got a problem with that?

No one speaks.

No one dares.

The sound of a shotgun being pumped.

Victor sees, Tara and James. James has the shotgun levelled
at Victor.

Lyn and Tara look from Victor to James then back to each other. They share an understanding, look back at James.

A shotgun BLAST.

Gunfire erupts. James lays cover. Lyn tackles one kidnapper. The other slashes at her.

TARA

Mum!

Lyn grabs Tara and pulls her to cover. The gang retreats under fire.

FROM ABOVE

A BLINDING SPOTLIGHT SWEEPS DOWN

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)

THIS IS A JOINT INTERPOL AND NZ
CUSTOMS OPERATION. GET ON THE
GROUND!

Chaos detonates.

Floodlights. Sirens. Helicopter blades chop the air.

ENFORCERS scatter. Victor reaches for his gun.

RED DOTS light up his chest. He freezes.

Kent tries to run, but tactical agents tackle him.

EXT. RURAL COASTAL ROAD - NIGHT

A lone Land Cruiser speeds down a narrow coastal highway. Rain batters the windshield.

Inside Lyn drives. Calm.

On the seat beside her:

A cracked phone, screen aglow: "SEND ALL: DROP LOCATION,
LEDGER - INTERPOL TIPLINE."

Another burner phone. Powered off.

She CRUSHES the burner under her boot.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

Tara and James wait, packed bags beside them. James watches the door, nervous.

HEADLIGHTS flood the windows.

The door opens.

LYN enters, soaked. Silent. Her eyes meet theirs.

TARA
It's done?

Lyn nods. They sit together. No words. Just breath. Relief.

EXT. CASTLEPOINT - DAY

A new sign hangs over a freshly painted storefront:
SUTHERLAND COASTAL EXPORTS.

Streets bustle. Tourists with coffee. Kids with cones. The town is thrives.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Lyn, sharp in a suit, checks figures on a sleek computer.

Behind her, Tara walks past in business attire, on the phone.

James emerges from a back room, laughs with a local supplier.

This is a clean front—but something darker simmers beneath.

EXT. CASTLE ROCK - DAY

Lyn stands where we first met her. Wind tousling her hair.

She lights a cigarette, gazes out at the sea, closes her eyes, breathes deep.

VOICE (O.S.)
Beautiful, isn't it?

She turns. A MAN, mid-40s, weathered face, stylish jacket. Latino accent. Calm smile. But his eyes... cold.

LYN
You here to enjoy the view, or ruin
my evening?

MAN
Let's call it a courtesy call.
Angel was my brother.

Silence. The wind whistles.

MAN (CONT'D)
You made waves. Big ones. Tides...
always come back around.

He turns and walks away, his silhouette swallowed by the
gathering dark.

Lyn watches, still. Then slowly, she exhales smoke, eyes back
on the horizon.

FADE OUT.