

TILL DEATH DO US ONE

Written by

Roberto Martins & Marcos Fizzotti

Copyright © 2019 by Roberto Martins & Marcos Fizzotti

This screenplay may not be used or reproduced for any purpose, including educational purposes without the expressed written permission of the authors.

Citation in white on a black background.

"Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
For each man kills the thing he loves,
Yet each man does not die."

Oscar Wilde.

EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

A cottage is shown from the outside.

INT. ROOM IN THE COTTAGE - NIGHT

Woman (late twenties) in lingerie.

She looks at another person in the room.

WOMAN

Come dear. That's the moment I've
been dreaming of. Come.

The other person shows her a leather case.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You brought a toy, you naughty boy.
I love it.

The other person comes closer, but only part of his back is
shown.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Tonight, I'm totally yours.

They hug and snuggle passionately.

The woman's face is shown as she is penetrated. Her
expression changes to one of horror.

The woman falls down.

The other person moves away from her.

This person sits down on a chair and crosses legs. The
person's elbow rests on a knee, a hand holding his chin. The
person stays like this for a while.

The person carries the woman to the bed and strips her naked.

The person opens the woman's legs.

The person lifts the dead woman's left leg. Her leg wraps
around the person's shoulder.

The woman's foot hides the person's face.

INT. SOPHIA'S STUDIO - DAY

SOPHIA (30) paints.

CAST LIST.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

DETECTIVE FRED (55) enters the precinct and walks to his desk.

Men drinking water follow him with unfriendly eyes.

Detective Fred reaches his desk, but he doesn't have a chance to sit down.

The precinct lieutenant, JACOBS (57), comes out of his office.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

Hey Freddie, can I have a word with you?

Detective Fred follows the lieutenant inside his office.

INT. LIEUTENANT'S OFFICE - DAY

The lieutenant walks around his desk to reach the chair behind it.

On the desk, a plate shines with the name "LIEUTENANT JACOBS" in golden letters.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

Have a seat, Freddie.

Detective Fred remains standing.

DETECTIVE FRED

What is it, Marv?

Lieutenant Jacobs does not sit down as well.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

You know I'm your friend, right?

DETECTIVE FRED

Well, if you're not, you put on a heck of an act all these years.

The lieutenant chuckles.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
I'm not that good an actor.

DETECTIVE FRED
No, you're not, Marv.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
Then, you know that I mean it when I say that I've always respected your work. You're an extraordinary investigator, with the keenest eye I've ever seen, not to mention a hell of a cop! And why not saying...

DETECTIVE FRED
Whoa, whoa, whoa! You didn't drag me all the way here on a Monday morning just to ask me to retire again! This is getting old, Marv.

The lieutenant stares at Fred.

The detective returns the look.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
You're getting old, Freddie.

DETECTIVE FRED
Same as you, old buddy.

The lieutenant smiles and shakes his head.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
Things are getting dangerous. I just think it'd be better if you stepped aside.

DETECTIVE FRED
Why? Am I obsolete just because I walk the line?

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
Those cocky little shits out there don't give a damn to Johnny Cash. It's not from their time.

DETECTIVE FRED
And, as far as I remember, taking drug money from the evidence locker is not from our time!

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
You know too much.

DETECTIVE FRED

Not as far as I'm concerned. I'm not reporting anybody, even if that goes against each and every bone in my body. I was offered a chance to participate, and I refused. That's that.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

They are not so sure.

DETECTIVE FRED

Then, why don't you back me up here, Marv, like in the old days? Why don't you report them, based on my testimony?

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

Because, in the end, all I got is your word against theirs. And that's what makes the situation so volatile. Especially for you.

DETECTIVE FRED

I don't care.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

I think you do. I can see the hangover from here. No offense, but you look like hell.

DETECTIVE FRED

No surprises there. Dealing with death everyday does that to people. It's worse when you have to live with crooks in your own backyard and feel powerless about it.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

Then, why don't you try to get out of this mess with something more to show than a divorce and a daughter who barely speaks to you?

DETECTIVE FRED

'Cause I don't think it's possible. This is called being a cop. Speaking which, if you excuse me, I got work to do.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

You take care now. Stay out of trouble.

DETECTIVE FRED

Don't I always?

Detective Fred leaves the office.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S KITCHEN - DAY

Sophia enters the kitchen.

She is wearing only panties and a T-shirt.

Her husband ALEX (35) has already made her breakfast, and he is dressed as a doctor.

Sophia watches him.

SOPHIA

Thank you. It looks delicious.
Aren't you going to eat?

ALEX

I already ate, have to be at the hospital early.

SOPHIA

Go early, come late.

ALEX

This is the glamour of my profession.

SOPHIA

Don't forget to leave the check for the ink and canvas. I'm a little broke, you know. As soon as I make a sale, I'll pay you back.

Alex reaches for his wallet, opens it, grabs a check, and gives it to Sophia.

ALEX

This is the glamour of your profession.

Alex walks to the door.

SOPHIA

Turn on the radio, please. I want to hear the news.

Alex turns on the radio.

"Someday," Ray Charles' version, is playing on the radio.

Alex holds still, enjoying the song.

He turns up the volume. His face is one of joy.

ALEX

Remember this song, Sophy?

Sophia looks at him with a puzzled expression.

ALEX (CONT'D)

"Someday," the very first song we danced. At your graduation party, remember? Me, so shy and spineless. I came to you and before I knew it, you said yes.

SOPHIA

Yes, I remember. That's the song, alright.

They listen to the music.

Alex takes Sophia to dance.

They spin around.

Alex lets go of Sophia and sings the song.

Sophia builds her nerves and sings with him.

Alex dances out of the kitchen and out of the house, with Sophia giggling at the scene.

INT. DOWNTOWN CAFE - DAY

Detective Fred eats his breakfast while reading the papers.

Close-up of the newspaper. There is news about tax hikes and violence on the streets. The only thing decreasing rapidly is the salary of cops, according to a columnist.

DETECTIVE FRED

Nice...

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Detective Fred enters the precinct and walks to his desk.

On the desk, there is a thick book, opened on a specific page. A few sentences are highlighted.

Fred lifts the book closer to his eyes.

Close-up of the highlighted sentence. It reads, "Punishment for treason is death. And the traitor shall burn in hell. And his body must be repeatedly violated and deprived of its eternal purity."

DETECTIVE FRED

Nice...

He closes the book and sits down on his chair.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Deprived of eternal purity... I'd
like that.

INT. SOPHIA'S STUDIO - DAY

Sophia paints.

The telephone RINGS. She answers it.

She likes what she hears.

SOPHIA
I don't believe it! (...) That's
great! (...) Okay (...) I'll be
there.

EXT. RESTAURANT BALCONY - NIGHT

Sophia walks to a table, where a man waits for her. This is JACQUES (33).

She sits down.

She puts her purse on the table.

JACQUES
Sophia, I called you here because I
got good news and great news.

SOPHIA
Then don't hesitate to tell me.
Good news first.

JACQUES
The good news is right here. I
arranged to have two of your
paintings hanging in the hall of
this restaurant. It's not a
gallery, but people will see it.

SOPHIA
Starting with me!

Sophia stands up, excited to see her paintings.

Jacques waits, smiling in anticipation.

He stares at Sophia's purse.

She comes back really happy and sits back down.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
And the great news?

JACQUES

I have reliable information that
your paintings will be chosen for
the next Venice Art Festival.

Sophia's eyes goggle.

SOPHIA

Venice Art Festival! Oh God! I
can't believe it.

She pinches herself.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Is this a dream?

JACQUES

I also arranged an interview with
Bazaar Magazine. Julia Phelps will
be doing it.

SOPHIA

Julia, yes. We went to college
together.

JACQUES

I'm also about to get you a couple
of gigs in some art galleries in
Europe. They'll give me a final
answer by the end of the month.

SOPHIA

Wonderful. It seems my art is
finally on the road to success.

JACQUES

I've always believed in your
talent, Sophy. Even so, I worked
double for you.

SOPHIA

And I'll forever be in your debt. I
surely appreciate that a guy like
you, who only works with the best,
took some time to help a nobody
like me. You've been great. I don't
even know how to thank you enough.

JACQUES

Well, you don't even try it, do
you?

Sophia gazes at him.

Jacques puts a hand on Sophia's hand.

Sophia pulls her hand back in a sudden move.

SOPHIA
Jacques, let's not get carried away
here, uh?

Jacques looks at her with angry eyes.

JACQUES
Fine.

Jacques pays the bill.

Sophia's cell phone RINGS. She answers it.

SOPHIA
Hum... I'm in the middle of
something here (...) There's some
meat in the freezer. (...) I know,
I'll be right back. Love you.

She finishes the call and puts the cell phone in her pocket.

Sophia grabs her purse and unzips it. She finds the car key,
but keeps delving in the purse.

JACQUES
Something wrong?

SOPHIA
Can't find the keys to my house.

JACQUES
You know what they say about women,
right?

SOPHIA
They just don't forget their heads
because they are attached to their
bodies.

Jacques laughs but Sophia's facial expression is one of
despair.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
Lord! What am I going to do?

INT. ALEX'S AND SOPHIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex comes home with flowers and kisses Sophia in the mouth.

Alex and Jacques look like each other in appearance.

Sophia takes the flowers and puts them in a vase.

Alex notices other flowers in the house, better than the ones
he brought. There is a card with the flowers. He takes the
card and reads it.

Close-up of the card. It reads, "To my dearest and most talented painter. My best wishes, Jacques."

Alex looks at it disdainfully.

SOPHIA

They are so beautiful. You never get tired of surprising me. Be careful, I may even fall in love with you.

Sophia and Alex laugh.

ALEX

Oh, if that's what it takes, then there's going to be roses every day.

Alex points to the flowers sent by Jacques.

ALEX (CONT'D)

And my roses are surely much better than that junk over there.

SOPHIA

Don't worry about those. Now, go, get ready. Julia is coming.

Alex leaves the living room.

Sophia organizes her paintings.

The doorbell RINGS.

Sophia opens the door to reporter JULIA (31) and a photographer. They enter the house.

They shake hands with Sophia, introductions take place (inaudible).

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

I was so glad when I knew you'd be doing this interview. After all, we lost touch after graduation.

JULIA

Oh, many things happened since then. Two weddings, three kids. Tough life, but happy anyway.

Alex comes into the living room.

ALEX

Sophia here only married once. Thank God, with me. Kids, I'm just waiting for her order.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)
In the meantime, I do everything I
can to make her the happiest girl
on Earth.

SOPHIA
This is Alex, my husband. Always
the hopelessly romantic.

ALEX
I'll go get something to drink,
what do you say? Coffee? Juice?
Perhaps a little wine?

JULIA
Juice for me, thanks.

Julia nods at the photographer.

JULIA (CONT'D)
And another one for him.

The photographer nods back.

Alex leaves the room.

Julia lifts two thumbs to Sophia.

JULIA (CONT'D)
You hit the jackpot, girl! What a
catch!

Sophia and Julia laugh.

Alex comes back with the drinks and distributes them
accordingly.

Julia turns to the paintings.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Let's get to business.

Julia walks to the paintings on the wall.

SOPHIA
That's only a taste. The ones I
really want to show you are in the
studio.

Julia scans the paintings.

JULIA
They are charming. I notice that,
although they look abstract, you
didn't give up the figurative art.
There's seem to be sneakers in all
your paintings.

Julia points to one of Sophia's paintings.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Why is that?

SOPHIA
To me, sneakers are the epitome of post-modernity. They express a belief that we can radically transform our bodies, our lives. They are an elegy to life.

Julia turns to a framework also hanging on the wall, surrounding five real knives.

JULIA
You also work with installations?
Or those are just to chop carrots?

ALEX
Nope, those aren't hers. I collect knives that have a history.

Alex points to one of the knives.

ALEX (CONT'D)
This one here, for example, is a Kima, used in Buddhist rituals.

Alex grabs another knife and shows it to Julia.

ALEX (CONT'D)
This beauty here is a Mitmor. It comes from southeast Asia, a privilege of just a few. Over there, they believe it's possible to fight tigers and even evil spirits with this knife. My passion for knives comes from my line of work. I'm a surgeon, you know... But enough about me. The real star of the house is over there.

Alex points a forefinger at Sophia.

Sophia taps her chest with a hand and points a forefinger at Alex as a code that says, "my heart is yours."

Alex puts the knife back into the framework.

SOPHIA
Julia, if you could please step into my studio, I'll show you my other paintings.

Jacques enters the house.

Sophia is startled.

JACQUES

Oh hi! You left the door open, and
I thought it was no harm to pay you
guys a visit. After all, mi casa,
su casa... Right?

Alex twists his lips.

SOPHIA

Meet Jacques, my art dealer.

Everybody nods coldly at Jacques.

Julia, Sophia, Jacques, and the photographer go to Sophia's studio.

Alex does not go with them.

He walks to the flowers sent by Jacques and stares at them. Alex takes the flowers, and gently puts them into the trash can. He looks at the flowers in the trash can as if admiring a painting.

Sophia, Julia, the photographer, and Jacques return to the living room. They find Alex by the flowers, which are on the same place as before. Alex is smirking mildly. Sophia frowns at him.

Julia checks her wristwatch.

JULIA

Oh, dear, the time! It's already
dark outside. We must go.

Julia, the photographer, and Jacques wave their good-byes.

Alex hugs Sophia and they wave goodbye to Julia.

They close the door.

ALEX

People are beginning to show some
appreciating for your work, honey.
I always knew you had it in you.
That calls for a celebration.

Alex grabs a bottle of champagne and pops it open.

He fills two glasses with it.

They sit down and talk (inaudible).

Sophia speaks euphorically (inaudible).

ALEX (CONT'D)

Sophia, I promised two of my
patients. I'll be seeing them
tonight, at the hospital.

Sophia makes sensual gestures. Alex strides to her. Sophia stops him with a hand on his chest.

SOPHIA

Later, Alex. Duty comes first. Wake me up when you're back.

ALEX

I most certainly will.

Alex leaves the house and closes the door.

Sophia staggers to the kitchen but stops to contemplate Alex's knives collection. She looks awfully drowsy.

The Mitmor knife is missing from the framework.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sophia is having sex with somebody, but it's not possible to see who she is having sex with - the images are foggy.

She turns around frenetically in bed.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sophia wakes up aghast. She looks and touches her own body.

She has a puzzled look on her face.

Alex comes into the room, singing a song, wrapped in a towel.

SOPHIA

I'm glad one of us is so happy this morning.

Alex stops singing and stares at her.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

What happened last night?

ALEX

What do you mean?

SOPHIA

Did we have sex?

ALEX

When I came back last night, you were practically passed out. Guess you had too much wine.

SOPHIA

How come I'm naked?

ALEX
I took off your clothes.

Sophia lifts an eyebrow.

ALEX (CONT'D)
That's the way you like to sleep,
isn't it?

SOPHIA
My body is telling me something
happened.

ALEX
Are you clean? I mean your...

SOPHIA
Yes! But I still have this feeling
as if... Do you think somebody else
has been here?

ALEX
What? That is impossible. Only if
this somebody has the keys to the
house. I locked the door when I
left, and the door was still locked
when I came back. My dear Sophy,
easy with the booze next time, eh?

Sophia frowns at him.

EXT. A PATH IN THE WOODS - DAY

Sophia meets LAURA (32), her friend.

SOPHIA
Hey Laura.

LAURA
Hey Soph. Ready when you are.

They run together.

LAURA (CONT'D)
I saw some people coming out of
your place yesterday. Are you
throwing parties and not inviting
me? Who's that handsome fella? Does
your husband know about him?

SOPHIA
Oh, you mean Jacques? He's my art
dealer.

LAURA
Care to introduce me to him one of
these days?

SOPHIA

My pleasure. Especially if you get
him out of my hair.

LAURA

Atta girl! With the men at your
feet!

They laugh.

They run.

Sophia and Laura stop at a road sign.

They are breathless.

SOPHIA

Guess I finally sweat off all that
wine from last night.

LAURA

Are you alright?

Sophia is meditative.

LAURA (CONT'D)

What's going on? Come on, tell me!

SOPHIA

Got a rough night. Actually, weird
is a better word. I dreamt that I
was having sex.

LAURA

What's wrong with that?

SOPHIA

It was just too real. It was like
the things the guy was doing to me
in the dream were really happening.

LAURA

Jeez, that's the kind of dream I
wish I had every night.

SOPHIA

Some parts of my body were aching
when I woke up. You know what I'm
talking about, don't you?

LAURA

Wow! Just give me the recipe,
Sophia. How can I have this dream?
What kind of wine did you take? Are
you sure it was just wine?

Laura laughs aloud.

Sophia only smiles.

INT. SOPHIA'S STUDIO - DAY

Sophia paints. She is very focused.

The telephone RINGS.

Sophia answers it and puts it on speaker.

ALEX (V.O.)

Hi Sophy! I'm just calling to
remind you of our dinner tonight.

SOPHIA

Like I would forget. You didn't
have to do this.

ALEX (V.O.)

What time do I pick you up?

SOPHIA

Picking me up? Why? Do you need to
change or something?

ALEX (V.O.)

No. I can change in here.

SOPHIA

Then, why are you picking me up?
The restaurant is just two blocks
from the hospital. It'd be a lot of
trouble for you to come all the way
here.

ALEX (V.O.)

No trouble at all, my darling.
Eight o'clock sharp, I'll be there.
For you, I'll do anything.

INT. BATHROOM IN THE COUPLE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sophia is painting her toenails.

Alex comes in.

He crouches by Sophia's feet, grabs the brush, and continues
to paint her toenails.

SOPHIA

I'm supposed to be the painter in
the family.

Alex does not answer and keeps painting Sophia's toenails.

He looks at her.

Alex is showed from above Sophia's head. He is looking up at her face.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Two couples are sitting by a table, together with Jacques and Laura.

The maître d' takes Sophia and Alex to that table.

They greet each other (inaudible).

Alex sits down.

Sophia remains standing.

Alex taps his forehead with his hand and stands up. He pulls out the chair for his wife.

Only then, she sits down.

Alex returns to his place.

WIFE 1

Wow, I wish my husband did that for me. What's your secret?

SOPHIA

It came with the package. Married for ten years, and it just gets better.

Wife 1 wraps her arm around her husband.

WIFE 1

Oh, Lord! Mine here just gets worse!

Laughter.

WIFE 1 (CONT'D)

Sophia, you have to write a self-help book. Each and every married woman in town would buy it.

They check the menu and talk to the maître d' (inaudible).

HUSBAND 1

We saw your interview on Bazaar. They were all compliments. I guess congratulations are in order. A toast to Sophia's success.

They all raise glasses.

SOPHIA

Jeez, thanks, folks. I can say it was a fight against myself. I looked at my paintings and questioned myself if I should really go on with that. I thought of quitting several times. Now I realize my persistence is paying off, and I don't regret it.

Sophia turns to Alex.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

My biggest supporter.

Sophia taps her chest with a hand and points a forefinger at Alex.

Sophia talks (inaudible).

She signals to Alex.

Alex pours more wine into Sophia's glass.

HUSBAND 2

Alex, are you ready to live with your wife's success?

ALEX

Never thought about it. I guess I'll have to start now.

Sophia stares at her husband with a puzzled look.

Jacques comes closer to Sophia and says something to her (inaudible).

Sophia rejoices.

SOPHIA

Really!? Oh no, not that painting! I can't believe somebody actually bought it! That's great!

JACQUES

Like I told you. It's just a matter of time now. People are beginning to love your art.

Alex twists his lips.

ALEX

Sorry folks, but I'm afraid I'll have to leave a little earlier tonight. I have to go to the hospital, see some patients. You stay if you want, Sophy.

JACQUES

Are you going with alcohol on your breath?

Alex gives him an angry look.

ALEX

I'm not operating on anybody tonight, nothing to concern your little mind. Besides, it's not your business.

Sophia moves uncomfortably.

SOPHIA

Hey everybody, Jacques here told me I sold one more painting today. So, I'm delighted to announce dinner is on me.

Everybody cheers.

Sophia turns to Laura.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

But I have to go. Laura, if you please...

LAURA

Oh no!

SOPHIA

Pretty please...

LAURA

Fine! It seems dinner is on me for a while, right?

SOPHIA

Great, thanks! I knew I could count on you. I promise I pay you later.

LAURA

Just remember I know where you live.

Sophia stands up and leaves with Alex.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Alex drives the car.

Sophia rests her head on Alex's shoulder.

Alex stops the car by their home, and Sophia gets out.

Sophia searches into her purse nervously.

ALEX
Something wrong?

SOPHIA
The keys to the house! Can't find them!

ALEX
It's okay, honey. You know I'll always open the door for you.

Alex leaves the car.

Sophia hugs Alex.

SOPHIA
Only if you go up with me.

ALEX
I can't, honey. I told you I have to go to the hospital. I'll be back as soon as I can.

Sophia looks tenderly at Alex.

ALEX (CONT'D)
But I have time for a nightcap.
That will be our personal celebration, just the two of us.

Alex and Sophia get into the house.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alex goes to the refrigerator and grabs a bottle of wine.

Alex opens the bottle and pours the liquid into glasses. He has his back on the camera.

He comes to Sophia holding two glasses.

Sophia reaches for the glass in his left hand, but Alex offers her the one in his right hand.

Sophia takes the glass and raises it in a toast.

SOPHIA
To all my dreams coming true.

Alex hesitates but raises his glass.

They drink.

Alex checks his wristwatch.

They kiss, and Alex leaves.

INT. ALEX'S AND SOPHIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sophia is having sex, this time lying on her stomach.

The scene is foggy.

It is not possible to see who she is having sex with.

INT. ALEX'S AND SOPHIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sophia wakes up aghast.

She looks as if something terrible had happened.

Sophia turns to Alex, lying beside her.

He is asleep.

Sophia is meditative.

Alex wakes up.

SOPHIA

Lord Almighty! Just like the other night. Did we have sex?

ALEX

Well, I wanted to when I came back. I even shook you a little, but no deal.

SOPHIA

This is so weird. It's like I'm delirious or something. The images are so real. It didn't feel like a dream. This can't be right.

ALEX

You worry too much, Sophy.

SOPHIA

You don't know how it feels, Alex. Damn right, I'm worried!

INT. SOPHIA'S STUDIO - DAY

Sophia grabs the brush.

Canvas in front of Sophia is shown. The painting is unfinished.

She takes the brush to the canvas but is paralyzes.

She remembers images of the previous night.

Quick flashback with scenes of her having sex.

Alex enters the room.

ALEX
I'm leaving, honey. Do you need anything?

SOPHIA
A little inspiration.

Alex hugs Sophia.

ALEX
You're still thinking of those dreams, aren't you? They'll pass.

SOPHIA
I don't think so. They're stirring me up real bad.

Sophia looks desolated at the unfinished painting.

ALEX
Fine, Sophia! Go to a doctor, a shrink, a freaking quack, a preacher, anyone you think can help you.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

The CORONER (72) examines the victim's body.

Detective Fred comes into the room.

DETECTIVE FRED
You're taking your sweet time with this one, doc.

CORONER
Good morning to you too, detective. It's just that there's something really strange about this body.

DETECTIVE FRED
Isn't it just a simple case of rape followed by murder?

CORONER
There are no bruises or fractures in the body. I found lots of silicon in her breasts and buttocks, though.

DETECTIVE FRED
So young, so vain.

CORONER

No semen and no foreign hair in the body. No human material in her fingernails. Everything clean as a whistle. It's like our guy knows what we do around here.

DETECTIVE FRED

Crime weapon?

CORONER

She was stabbed only once, it was enough. She died fast, didn't even bleed too much. Our murderer knows his business.

DETECTIVE FRED

She was found naked. This generally indicates the victim was raped.

CORONER

That's the intriguing part. She was violated indeed since she did not consent to the sex.

DETECTIVE FRED

How do you know she didn't?

CORONER

Dead people do not consent. I have reasons to believe she was already dead when the murderer had sex with her.

DETECTIVE FRED

Jesus Christ! Now I saw everything.

CORONER

Same here. Thirty years in this business, and it's a first for me, too. My guess is she was murdered, so the killer could fulfill his sexual desires. If I'm right, we got ourselves a case of necrophilia.

Fred stares at the coroner.

The detective leaves the room.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Four men share a table. They are around the same age as Fred.

Detective Fred comes and sits down with them.

DETECTIVE FRED

Sorry I'm late, guys. I was working
on a case.

FRIEND 1

It must be a heck of a case, to
keep you away from a beer.

Fred chuckles.

DETECTIVE FRED

I deal with the scoria, my friend.
I get into a house, I see a kid
killed by his own dad. I get into
another one and find out that an
uncle raped his niece. But what I
saw today caps it all. There's a
guy out there who killed a girl and
banged the corpse. It's called
necrophilia. Can you imagine
something like that?

FRIEND 1

I was like that for a while.

Everyone turns to him, astonished.

FRIEND 1 (CONT'D)

For two years, I slept with this
woman, and she was so cold that she
looked dead in bed. I guess that
makes me a necrophiliac, too.

Laughter.

FRIEND 2

You may think this is bizarre now,
but very soon, it'll be considered
normal. In today's world, most
abnormalities end up justified
somehow. And do you know why is
that? Well, do you? Many people
believe rules are a cultural thing.
We make them, we change them. This
is okay, as long as we don't cross
some boundaries.

FRIEND 3

Like the transsexuals, for
instance. They were once freaks,
now they're normal. Very soon,
having sex with your dog will be
normal.

DETECTIVE FRED

Maybe, but banging a corpse! This
is sick!

FRIEND 2
Define sick.

Fred stares at him, stunned.

FRIEND 4
There are cases in history. King Herod of Babylon was deeply in love with his wife. Well, she cheated on him, and he had her killed. But he was so much in love with her that he kept her embalmed body in the palace, to keep his passion for her alive. More recent documents show that the Moche civilization of ancient Peru used necrophilia as a fertility ritual...

Friend 1 interrupts.

FRIEND 1
Thank you, mister professor. Now, let's stop talking about dead women and focus on the alive ones, like those hotties over there.

Pretty ladies in a nearby table are showed.

Laughter.

EXT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - DAY

Alex and Sophia arrive.

SOPHIA
You didn't have to bring me. It's just a standard procedure.

Alex walks Sophia hand in hand to the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Hospital staff greets Alex.

ALEX
The nurse will take you to the MRI room. I'll just check if there's anything else I need to sign.

INT. MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING ROOM - DAY

Sophia is slowly pulled into the MRI machine.

DISSOLVE TO:

Sophia gets dressed.

SOPHIA
I'm a little anxious here, doc. Are all my marbles where they're supposed to be?

DOCTOR
I'll send your examination report to the neurologist. Just don't freak out, I'm sure you're okay.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Alex walks through the ER.

He passes by a nurse, and he sees a woman in lingerie lying on a bed.

NURSE
Little help here, doctor?

Alex and the nurse lift the woman and transfer her to a stretcher.

Blood from the woman stains Alex's shirt.

NURSE (CONT'D)
She's just died, doctor. Her husband killed her on a jealousy rampage and then killed himself. This can't be love.

ALEX
And yet, it is.

The nurse leaves.

Alex stares at the corpse.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophia comes with an envelope in her hand.

ALEX
What did the doctor say?

SOPHIA
Neurologically, I'm clean. I got nothing in my head. Please, don't take this too literally.

ALEX
That's great, honey.

SOPHIA

Nothing is great. I still don't know what's wrong with me. I'm terrified at the prospect of living that dream again. My life is all upside down.

BEDROOM

The couple goes to sleep. Alex turns off the light.

DISSOLVE TO:

The couple is sleeping.

Sophia opens her eyes.

She shakes Alex.

SOPHIA (WHISPERS)

Alex, I think I heard something.
There's somebody in the house.

ALEX

You're dreaming again, honey.

Alex also hears a noise.

He stands up, opens a drawer, and takes a gun.

STAIRS

Alex walks cautiously down the stairs - aware of his surroundings.

Sophia follows him, tiptoeing.

FRONT ENTRANCE DOOR

Alex turns the doorknob, the door opens.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

POV - ALEX

There is a person on the porch, his back on Alex. Jacques turns - is startled by the gun.

JACQUES

Whoa!

ALEX

What in blazes are you doing here?

Sophia comes and stands beside Alex.

JACQUES

I... I came to return Sophia's keys. The girl in the restaurant found them and gave them to me. I couldn't just leave them hanging somewhere. Then, I took the liberty to come in. After all, I'm part of the family, right? Technically, I'm doing you a favor. I put the keys over there.

Jacques points to a cupboard.

The keys are there.

Alex twists his lips.

ALEX

Thanks for saving the day.

Alex shuts the door on Jacques.

Sophia grins.

SOPHIA (SMIRKING)

Alex, you are one skillful host.

INT. PSYCHOANALYST'S PRACTICE - DAY

Sophia talks to DR. ARTURO ROSSI (45).

SOPHIA

That's it, Doctor Rossi.

DR. ROSSI

Good. But we're just getting started here. Please, tell me more about yourself.

SOPHIA

There's no much to say. I jog. I go to the gym. I paint.

Sophia speaks (inaudible).

Dr. Rossi listens and makes notes.

DR. ROSSI

Ah, now I remember where I saw you, the magazine interview. Your paintings are strong.

SOPHIA

If you don't mind, doctor, I'd like to talk about my problems, not my art.

DR. ROSSI

Oh, your paintings can tell a lot about you, Sophia.

SOPHIA

I'm sorry. It's just that I want to get rid of this... I don't even know how to call it. Dream? Hallucination?

DR. ROSSI

As far as I can see by what you told me, your dreams are erotic. How's your sex life?

Sophia looks at him, stunned.

SOPHIA

It is, how can I say... good. Very good.

DR. ROSSI

Why the hesitation?

SOPHIA

I'm happy. Got a loving husband who satisfies me, but deep inside, it doesn't feel like I satisfy him enough. This is something I'd like to talk to you about.

Dr. Rossi checks his wristwatch.

DR. ROSSI

And you will, only not today. Time's up, my dear. Hold these thoughts until next week.

INT. MURDER VICTIM'S HOUSE - DAY

The victim's mother and sister are sharing a couch.

Detective Fred examines pictures of the victim.

Close-up of the pictures. The victim appears in beach clothes, posing like a top-model.

There are many more pictures of the victim than there are of her sister.

MOTHER

You came here to say you already
got the man who killed my Veronica?

DETECTIVE FRED

We're working on that, ma'am.
That's why I'm here.

Her mother's face is anguished.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

Did Veronica have a boyfriend?

MOTHER

No. I mean, she went out a lot with
several young men. You know young
people.

DETECTIVE FRED

Do you know somebody who could do
her harm? Was she ever threatened
somehow?

Her mother turns to the victim's sister.

SISTER

I can't imagine anything like this.
She made friends wherever she set
foot in.

DETECTIVE FRED

May I see her room?

MOTHER

Yes. This way.

INT. VERONICA'S ROOM - DAY

Detective Fred investigates the room.

DETECTIVE FRED

Can I take her computer?

Her mother nods a "yes."

Detective Fred checks drawers and closets.

Fred is about to leave the room but stops by a wall.

He sees lots of reproductions of work-of-arts, sharing room
with some engravings.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

I can see your daughter was into
art.

MOTHER

She was, hum, how they call it...
an esthete. She loved beauty.
First, her beauty, then the beauty
of art.

Detective Fred gives his card to the mother.

DETECTIVE FRED

My e-mail is there. Please send me
a list of Veronica's closest
friends and their phone numbers.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Detective Fred is at his desk with Veronica's computer in front of him.

DETECTIVE FRED

Tell me something good, you techno
piece of junk.

Detective Fred opens the computer lid and examines it.

He finds some pictures.

Close-up of the computer screen.

One of the photos is a "selfie" taken in an art exhibition.

The picture shows Veronica, Sophia, and Jacques.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

Yo Zombie, come over here a minute.

Police assistant ZOMBIE (22) runs to Fred.

ZOMBIE

Yes, sir.

DETECTIVE FRED

Print these photos here, please.

Zombie grabs the photos and walks to his desk, packed with figurines of little living dead.

Lieutenant Jacobs comes.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS

What do you have on the stabbed
woman?

DETECTIVE FRED

I'm on it right now. So far, zippo.
But my gut tells me this is
nitroglycerine.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
And why is that?

DETECTIVE FRED
There are no signs of forcible entry or fight. The victim surely knew her killer and let him in.

LIEUTENANT JACOBS
This is no different than any other crime of passion.

DETECTIVE FRED
Except that, in this one, the murderer only raped his victim after killing her.

EXT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S PORCH - DAY

Sophia tends to some flowers in the garden.

Cordless phone RINGS. Sophia answers it.

SOPHIA
Hello (...) No, he's not here. I don't know when he's coming home. What do you want with him? (...) This is a very serious accusation. (...) Calm down, will you? Calm down (...) Alright, I meet you. (...) Yes, I know the place. What's your name?

EXT. FOUNTAIN - DAY

Sophia comes to a small square and walks to a fountain.

Sophia sees a woman in her early thirties standing by the fountain, and she comes near her.

The woman turns to Sophia.

EVA
Sophia?

SOPHIA
Eva?

EVA
Let's take a coffee.

EXT. COFFEE TABLE - DAY

Sophia and EVA (31) are having a loud conversation (inaudible).

Camera approaches the two women.

SOPHIA

Rape is a very serious accusation.
Something like that can destroy my
husband's career.

EVA

I've just told you he may have
raped me, and all you can think of
is his career?

SOPHIA

May have! Then, you're not sure.

Eva hesitates.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

I am not defending my husband's
career. All I'm saying is that he's
an honorable man. He would never do
such a thing.

Eva hesitates and looks at Sophia with anguished eyes.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

In your head, how did it happen?

EVA

It happened at the hospital, in his
private office.

SOPHIA

Usually, hospitals are crowded
places. Somebody would have heard
you scream.

EVA

I didn't scream.

Sophia stares, puzzled at Eva.

EVA (CONT'D)

I couldn't scream.

SOPHIA

Why not?

Sophia doesn't take her eyes off Eva.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Did he gag you or something? Did he
threaten you with a weapon of some
sort?

EVA

No.

SOPHIA

Honey, your story doesn't add up.

EVA

I was asleep.

SOPHIA

You mean, on drugs?

EVA

I don't do drugs. I'm just not quite sure of what happened.

SOPHIA

And yet, you accuse my husband of a hideous crime! What were you doing there in the first place?

EVA

I dated Alex when we were both in high school. It was a teenage thing. Has he ever spoken of me?

Sophia nods a "no" with her head.

EVA (CONT'D)

When we broke up, I've never seen him again until last week. I found his name on the web and gave him a call. I was going through a tough divorce and needed somebody to talk to. He told me to meet him at the hospital he works in.

SOPHIA

So, you looked for Alex, not the other way around. Do you have a crush on my husband?

EVA

I was in love with him once. But I didn't expect anything like that.

SOPHIA

Didn't expect what?

EVA

That he violated me. I'm almost sure he raped me.

SOPHIA

You're not making any sense. What exactly did he do to you?

EVA

I'm really not sure, alright! I fell asleep.

(MORE)

EVA (CONT'D)

I woke up with a sensation he had taken advantage of me. It was like a dream, except everything was real. He denied it.

SOPHIA

Eva, you've just said it was nothing more than a sensation. Do you really want to ruin a person's career on a feeling?

EVA

What do you want me to say?

SOPHIA

I think he rejected you, and you made this all up to get back at him.

EVA

I'm not making this up, and that wasn't a dream.

SOPHIA

Eva, I don't know you, but I'll tell you this. Think very carefully before destroying someone's life.

Eva stands up and goes away.

Sophia squeezes her paper cup, and some coffee spills out.

Sophia is meditative.

She remembers her dreams.

A quick flashback to show Sophia's erotic dreams.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alex enters the house and stumbles on Sophia, standing in front of him.

SOPHIA

Alex, we need to talk.

They walk to the dinner table.

ALEX

Is there something wrong?

SOPHIA

Today, one Eva called me. She was freaking out.

Alex hesitates.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
We met for coffee. She said you
sexually assaulted her.

Alex's eyes goggle.

ALEX
What!? If that's the Eva I'm
thinking of, she was my girlfriend.
She was the one to call me because
she needed somebody to talk to.
What did she say?

SOPHIA
She said you took advantage of her
when she was asleep.

ALEX
Well, she did sleep for a while.
She already sounded groggy when she
came in, typical of somebody under
lots of sleeping pills. We talked,
and she relaxed, maybe a little too
much. She fell asleep. I left her
there because I thought she could
use some rest, but that was all.

SOPHIA
Alex, this is a very serious
accusation. It might finish your
career. You have to do something
about it.

Alex comes closer to Sophia and stares at her.

ALEX
Sophy, I don't get it. Why are you
talking to me like that? Do you
really think I'd do such a thing?

Sophia does not answer.

Alex hugs her.

Sophia accepts the hug, and they embrace for a while.

ALEX (CONT'D)
You're the only one who matters.

Sophia is still quiet.

ALEX (CONT'D)
This Eva character was always a bit
crazy.

SOPHIA

That's not the point. She might as well go public on this, you know, papers, and even the Medical Association. I tried to convince her not to do anything stupid.

Sophia and Alex talk on the couch (inaudible).

His arm is wrapped around her shoulder.

INT. DR. ROSSI'S PRACTICE - DAY

DR. ROSSI

Are those dreams still bothering you?

SOPHIA

Not lately.

DR. ROSSI

Tell me about your husband.

SOPHIA

That's easy. Put seven women together in a room, ask every one of them to tell you how the perfect husband should be. In the end, you're going to have Alex's description.

DR. ROSSI

That good, huh? And he is the only man in your life, then.

Sophia thinks.

SOPHIA

There's this guy who keeps hitting on me. He's interesting and even attractive, but I'd never cheat on my husband.

DR. ROSSI

Maybe that explains your dreams.

SOPHIA

How so?

DR. ROSSI

Freud said that in dreams, we live our innermost desires. The person in your dream could be this guy you've just talked about. When dreaming, you fulfill a repressed desire for him.

(MORE)

DR. ROSSI (CONT'D)
But he doesn't have a face because
not even in dreams you can cheat on
your husband.

SOPHIA
What if it's not a dream?

DR. ROSSI
What else could it be?

Sophia frowns.

SOPHIA
I don't know. But there's a problem
here, Doctor Rossi. This week, I
met this woman, and she had the
same dream as I did. She told me
she woke up with the same sensation
that somebody had sex with her.
Everything she described, I had
felt it, too. Very strange.

DR. ROSSI
Not to psychanalysis, it's not.
Repressed sexual desires lead to
very similar dreams. After all, You
both fulfilled your sexual desires
through the dream.

SOPHIA
At least she knows who she dreamt
of. I don't.

DR. ROSSI
And who she dreamt of?

Sophia scoffs.

Dr. Rossi nods his head negatively and raises his chin to Sophia.

SOPHIA
She believes she dreamt of my
husband. Pure delirium.

DR. ROSSI
She's delirious, but you're not.
How's that possible?

SOPHIA
What's that supposed to mean?

DR. ROSSI
Leave the double talk to me.

Sophia giggles nervously.

SOPHIA
Sorry!

They keep talking (inaudible).

INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Alex and Sophia attend a huge, fancy art exhibition.

SOPHIA
So, did you like them?

Alex grins.

ALEX
What?

Sophia giggles.

SOPHIA
My paintings, silly!

ALEX
And my opinion matters? The
important thing is the snobs loved
it. And I'm mighty proud of you!

SOPHIA
Of course, your opinion matters!
What kind of talk is that? I
wouldn't even be here among the
snobs if it weren't for you.

ALEX
And you remember that, missy.

SOPHIA
So... Did you like them?

ALEX
Let's say I'll never tie up my
sneakers the same way, ever again.

Sophia smiles.

SOPHIA
Are you mocking my art?

ALEX
Oh, I would never...

EVA
I would!

Eva staggers to them.

Alex and Sophia turn to her.

The smile totally disappears from Sophia's face.

EVA (CONT'D)
I don't even know how those cock-
suckers could possibly consider a
pile of sneakers art anyway.

SOPHIA
How come they let you in? Who
invited you?

JACQUES
I did.

Jacques walks to Eva and wraps an arm around her shoulder.
He's carrying a glass with champagne.

EVA
And I think I got the best deal.

Jacques grins.

JACQUES
She's my new special one.

SOPHIA
She's also drunk.

EVA
Hi, Alex. Raped somebody lately?

Jacques laughs aloud.

Elegantly dressed people turn to them.

Sophia faces Eva.

SOPHIA
I think you should leave.

JACQUES
She stays!

EVA
Why don't YOU leave? Fraud!

Sophia stares at Eva with fury in her eyes.

ALEX
Hey! This is not helping any, okay!
Eva, why don't you take a little
walk outside to clear the ideas?

JACQUES
You stay out of this, butcher boy!
You may be a big shot in your
hospital, but over here, you're
nothing more than a slob...

Alex pushes Jacques with fury. As a consequence, Jacques drops his glass of champagne, and the entire contents of the glass spill all around, soaking Jacques' Armani.

JACQUES (CONT'D)
Son of a...!

Jacques and Alex are about to get on each other's throats when Sophia jumps in the middle of them.

Eva giggles.

SOPHIA
Stop! Stop that right now! Jesus!
Are you really so determined to
ruin my night and my career like
that? Everything over a common
slut?

EVA
Hey!

At that point, they are pretty much the center of attention.

Two security guards come to them.

SECURITY GUARD 1
Is there a problem here?

JACQUES
No!

SOPHIA
Yes! This woman is drunk. She's
making a scene!

JACQUES
No, she's not!

Both security guards walk to Eva.

SECURITY GUARD 1
You'd better come with us, madam.

EVA
Take your hands off me!

JACQUES
She's with me, okay!

SECURITY GUARD 1
I understand, sir. Please, come
with us, madam.

Eva does not move.

SECURITY GUARD 1 (CONT'D)
You can accompany us nice and easy
to the door, or being dragged
around. Your choice, lady.

It's Sophia's turn to grin.

EVA
All right! I still have some work
to do in the office anyway.

SOPHIA
Good luck with that.

Eva stares at Sophia with evil eyes.

JACQUES
I'll be at your place as soon as
I'm done here, my love.

EVA
I'll be waiting... up.

JACQUES
You know the way I like it.

Eva sends Jacques a kiss, but she turns to Sophia's husband.

EVA
Be seeing you, Alex.

And the security guards escort Eva to the exit.

Jacques turns to Sophia and Alex.

JACQUES
Well, that was intense, eh, guys?

SOPHIA
Your little mistress made us all
look really bad! You know how
important this is to me, Jacques.
If that floozy costs my chances, I
swear I...

JACQUES
That was nothing! Relax! It's me,
remember? I got all those art
aficionados in my pocket. Dinner is
about to start, just let me do the
talk. Besides, you handled yourself
pretty well during this whole...
little crisis.

Jacques rubs a hand over his wet blazer.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

I just have to pull myself together
a little bit. By the way, apologies
accepted, Alex. No hard feelings.

Alex advances to Jacques, but Sophia blocks him with an arm.

SOPHIA

Alex, please!

Alex stops.

ALEX

You understand if I'm not joining
you for supper tonight. I lost my
appetite all of a sudden.

SOPHIA

But, honey... Where are you going
to be?

ALEX

The washroom will be a good place
to start. Right now, I'm very sick
to my stomach.

Alex turns his back on them and walks away.

Sophia watches him go with very anguished eyes.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

It's late at night.

Eva leaves her office.

She walks home.

Eva hears a noise and looks back.

There is nobody behind her.

Eva continues to walk.

Desert street behind Eva is showed.

INT. EVA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Eva comes in and takes off her dress.

She goes to the kitchen and eats something.

Eva goes to her room.

BEDROOM

Eva is wearing a robe.

She is surprised by a person who is standing in the room. It's not possible to see the person's face. It's covered by a hood.

EVA

Oh! There you are! What's with the hood?

Eva walks to the person in a sexy way.

EVA (CONT'D)

Never mind. Tonight, I'm totally yours.

Eva takes off her robe and opens her arms.

EVA (CONT'D)

Come.

The person stabs her in the chest.

Eva falls down.

The person sits down on a chair and stays there for a while.

The person carries Eva to the bed.

The killer stands by the bed, watching the gorgeous dead body of Eva.

INT. ALEX'S AND SOPHIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

It's daybreak.

Sophia wakes up, startled.

She goes downstairs.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Through the window, she sees Alex outside, throwing a garbage bag into the dumpster.

She goes to the kitchen.

Sophia comes back with a glass of water and finds Alex already in the living room.

Alex is surprised by her presence.

ALEX

Oh. You're up early, honey!

SOPHIA
Couldn't sleep very well.
Especially after what happened last
night.

Sophia drinks the water and walks back to the kitchen, but she stops in front of Alex's knives collection.

The Mitmor knife is back in the framework.

Sophia observes the knives collection.

ALEX
Come, honey. I still have some
time. I tuck you in.

They go upstairs arm in arm.

EXT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S PORCH - DAY

Sophia kisses Alex.

Alex gets into the car and drives away.

Sophia is going back home but stops.

She turns around and walks to the dumpster.

Sophia opens the dumpster and grabs a garbage bag.

She carries the bag to the door and opens it.

She finds a blood-stained shirt.

Sophia examines the shirt.

She puts the bag back into the dumpster.

INT. SOPHIA'S STUDIO - DAY

Sophia paints with the TV on.

She listens to the news.

Close-up of the TV.

REPORTER
The body of a young woman was found
in her home. Apparently, her
boyfriend came sometime late at
night, and he found the body lying
down naked on...

A picture of Eva is shown on TV.

Sophia raises her head with a stunned look on her face.

Close-up of the TV.

A reporter interviews Detective Fred.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Detective, what do you have to say about this incident?

DETECTIVE FRED

Not much for now. The lady was stabbed in the chest. There are no signs of forcible entry or fight. Nothing was stolen. That's it so far.

REPORTER

It seems this woman was killed the same way as that other one, Veronica Ewing. Were they killed by the same person? Do we have a serial killer?

DETECTIVE FRED

We're not ruling anything out. I can assure you our investigation is covering each and every possible scenario.

INT. CORONER'S ROOM - DAY

Detective Fred talks to the coroner.

DETECTIVE FRED

Tell me something good.

The coroner smooths his goatee and walks around Eva's corpse.

Fred follows the coroner.

CORONER

Everything's very similar to Veronica's murder. She was bathed, too. This guy is meticulous. And the shape, angle, and size of the cut suggest the same crime weapon, the same knife.

Fred looks at the corpse.

CORONER (CONT'D)

And the cuts in both corpses are the tricky part. They are really strange. I'll have to do some poking around on the subject, and I'll let you know.

DETECTIVE FRED
Was there necrophilia, too?

CORONER
I'm sure there was. And that could work to our advantage.

Detective Fred looks at the coroner with a puzzled face.

CORONER (CONT'D)
In cases like this, the criminal usually leaves a signature. And the knife cuts could be it. I'm sure they can tell us a lot.

DETECTIVE FRED
So, there is a light at the end of the tunnel after all.

CORONER
There's one more thing.

DETECTIVE FRED
And the hits just keep on coming.

CORONER
The substance the killer used to clean the body is not your garden variety detergent. You won't find it in any supermarket.

DETECTIVE FRED
And what is it?

CORONER
I don't know yet, but I sent a sample to the lab. As soon as they get back to me, I'll ring you. We can learn a great deal about this criminal by what he used in the crime scene.

DETECTIVE FRED
You know where to find me.

INT. DR. ROSSI'S ROOM - DAY

Sophia is silent.

Dr. Rossi waits.

Sophia does not speak.

DR. ROSSI
A little quiet today, aren't we?
Something in your mind, Sophia?

SOPHIA

Ah, if I spoke everything in my
mind...

DR. ROSSI

Well, that's why we're here.

SOPHIA

I think I'm involved in a homicide.

DR. ROSSI

Are you saying you killed somebody?

SOPHIA

Not really.

Dr. Rossi writes something.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Remember when I told you about this
woman who had the same dream as I
did?

Dr. Rossi nods a yes.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

That's the one who died.

DR. ROSSI

The one who wanted your husband?

SOPHIA

The very same.

DR. ROSSI

And how do you feel about it?

SOPHIA

It's like she died because I wished
she was dead. I feel guilty but
also relieved. This can't be right.

DR. ROSSI

Maybe not right, but perfectly
understandable, considering that
now, you no longer have a rival.

SOPHIA

I'm starting to like this
psychoanalysis business.

Sophia and Doctor Rossi exchange looks.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Sophia and Alex are sitting by a table, having dinner in the candlelight.

They chat (inaudible).

ALEX

Why do you want to bring this up now? We talk about it tomorrow.

SOPHIA

It's just that I can't stop thinking of those blood covered shirts you disposed of.

ALEX

I'm a doctor, Sophy. Sometimes, I work in the ER, and there's always somebody who got shot or was hit by a car. I have to help the guys to place the victims on a stretcher. And they bleed.

The waiter comes with the wine.

He fills a glass and gives it to Alex.

Alex tries and approves it.

SOPHIA

I don't think this is a good time for a celebration. Eva died just a few days ago.

ALEX

I'm also sorry about Eva. But a lost soul like her is always an easy target for those weirdos out there. Can we change the subject?

Alex fills two glasses with wine.

ALEX (CONT'D)

What are we toasting today?

SOPHIA

Jacques told me I sold two more paintings today. They were in a gallery in Berlin. The owner said to Jacques that folks there like my art. So, let's toast to the new Sophia. No more living in the shadows.

Sophia raises her glass. Alex hesitates but raises his glass, too.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

What's going on, love?

ALEX

This whole new Sophia thing kind of
creeps me out. I prefer the old
Sophia.

Sophia stares at him, astonished.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Zombie runs to Fred's desk.

ZOMBIE

Fred, my man! The last paladin of
justice and honor!

DETECTIVE FRED

That seems to be a problem these
days, especially around here.

ZOMBIE

Not to me! By the way, I have the
list of calls made from Eva's
phone, fresh from the oven.

DETECTIVE FRED

Then, tell me something good.

ZOMBIE

Three days before she died, she
made four calls to a number that
belongs to one Alexander Fleming,
M.D., three to his cell phone, and
one to his landline. And the first
two calls were long, man.

DETECTIVE FRED

Great. It seems I'll be making a
house call to a doctor today.

Fred grabs his hat and leaves.

Zombie returns to his small desk and stares at the computer
screen, which illuminates his face.

ZOMBIE (WHISPERING)

I envy you, Fred.

Close-up of the computer screen. Zombie is looking at a
picture of Sophia.

EXT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S PORCH - DAY

Sophia opens the door.

Detective Fred flashes his badge. He's also carrying a folder
with papers.

SOPHIA
Police!

DETECTIVE FRED
Detective Fred, Homicide. I'm investigating the death of Eva Flanders. May I come in?

Sophia shakes.

SOPHIA
You're the detective on TV.

She signals him to get in.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

SOPHIA
I'm Sophia. How can I help you?

DETECTIVE FRED
Hi, Mrs. Fleming. Actually, I'd like to have a word with Mister, or should I say Doctor Alexander Fleming.

SOPHIA
He's my husband.

DETECTIVE FRED
Is he in?

ALEX
Yes, he is.

Alex comes from behind the entrance door.

ALEX (CONT'D)
I understand you want to talk to me.

DETECTIVE FRED
Good afternoon, Mister Fleming.

ALEX
Call me Alex.

DETECTIVE FRED
I'm Detective Frederick Shepherd, but call me Fred. I'm in charge of the investigations related to the death of Eva Flanders, and I know she called you four times before she died. What did you talk about?

ALEX

Eva and I were sweethearts in our youth. After that, we've never spoken again. Last week, she phoned me. I was surprised she did it after so many years. But basically, she just wanted a shoulder to cry on.

Fred doesn't take his eyes off Sophia.

She holds still, stiff as a board.

The detective turns back to Alex.

DETECTIVE FRED

Do you know if somebody was harassing her?

ALEX

Nobody, as far as I know. She got a broken heart, that's all. I did what I could to help her. We talked for hours, I tried to be a good listener, but I'm not a psychiatrist, you know.

Fred turns to Sophia again.

She moves uncomfortably.

SOPHIA

Is there something wrong, detective?

DETECTIVE FRED

Oh, I'm sorry about that. Sometimes, my memory can be a bit of an issue. I never forget a face. And I've already seen you somewhere.

Fred takes one more look at Sophia and opens his folder.

He grabs a picture.

Fred shows Sophia the picture.

Sophia looks at the picture.

SOPHIA

It's me, alright. That was the first day of my exhibition at Bonino's gallery. Remember, Alex?

ALEX

Of course. How could I ever forget?

DETECTIVE FRED
Do you know this woman?

SOPHIA
Not really. It's just that I got a soft heart, and every time somebody wants a selfie with me, I go ahead and take it.

Alex stares at the picture. His expression is one of astonishment.

DETECTIVE FRED
The thing is this woman, Veronica Ewing, was also murdered, probably by the same guy who killed Eva.

Sophia frowns.

Fred points to the photo.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
This man in the picture, what can you tell me about him?

SOPHIA
This is Jacques, my art dealer.

DETECTIVE FRED
Did he know Veronica?

SOPHIA
I'm not sure. They talked a lot.

Detective Fred looks around the house and finds Sophia's paintings.

Fred turns to Alex's knives collection.

The detective studies the knives. He turns to the paintings again.

DETECTIVE FRED
Beautiful. Did you paint those?

SOPHIA
Yes, thanks.

DETECTIVE FRED
What about those knives over there?

ALEX
Oh, they are mine. I collect rare knives.

DETECTIVE FRED
I see.

The detective paces between the knives and the paintings, then stops in front of the couple.

DETETIVE FRED

Um, I'm sorry, but I have to ask you where you were on September 2, around one-fifteen in the morning, do you remember?

ALEX

Yes. Both Sophia and I were back home.

DETECTIVE FRED

Back from what?

SOPHIA

An art exhibition.

Detective Fred scratches his chin.

DETECTIVE FRED

Where this art exhibition took place?

Sophia flushes.

SOPHIA

In the Gagosian Gallery.

Fred's eyes goggle.

DETECTIVE FRED

The world-famous Gagosian Gallery? Is that the gallery we're talking about here?

SOPHIA

Yes.

DETECTIVE FRED

I'm impressed, Sophia.

SOPHIA

Thanks!

ALEX

I didn't know you were into art, detective. I mean, Fred.

DETECTIVE FRED

Not really. Actually, I'm just doing my homework here. That was the last place Eva was seen alive.

ALEX

How do you know that?

DETECTIVE FRED
I'm a detective, Doctor Fleming.

Fred walks around the couple.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Is there something you're not
telling me?

ALEX
What's that supposed to mean?

SOPHIA
Alex!

Sophia turns to the detective.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
Yes, Eva was there. She was drunk
and making trouble. The securities
had to escort her out.

DETECTIVE FRED
I see. When was that?

SOPHIA
Around ten in the evening.

DETECTIVE FRED
Then, she didn't go straight home.

SOPHIA
She said something about finishing
work in some office.

DETECTIVE FRED
Uh-huh. What about you? When did
you leave the exhibition?

Alex hesitates.

ALEX
I left a little earlier...

Alex clears his throat.

ALEX (CONT'D)
A little after Eva, actually. I
wasn't feeling well, so I went
straight home. By one-fifteen, I
was very much at home already.

DETECTIVE FRED
Any witness?

ALEX

I took a cab. If you can, find the driver... Perhaps, he can tell you he took me straight home.

DETECTIVE FRED

I'll take care of this, no worries. How about you, Sophia?

SOPHIA

I stayed until the end, with Jacques. We left around one, maybe a quarter to one.

DETECTIVE FRED

What time did you arrive at the house? Do you remember?

SOPHIA

A little after two o'clock. There was no traffic at those hours, but the gallery is kind of far from here.

DETECTIVE FRED

I know. And your husband was already here?

SOPHIA

He was sleeping, yes.

ALEX

Do you mind if I ask you who found the body?

DETECTIVE FRED

Not at all. It was Jacques, the man in the picture.

ALEX

Were they having an affair or something?

DETECTIVE FRED

This is not your concern, but yes, they were.

ALEX

Then, perhaps, he's your killer.

The detective fixes eyes on Alex.

SOPHIA

Alex!

DETECTIVE FRED

This is one of the possibilities we're investigating, yes.

ALEX
Is there anything else we can help
you with, detective?

DETECTIVE FRED
Nope. That's all for the moment.
I'd better be on my way.

The detective gives his card to Sophia.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
If you remember anything else,
don't hesitate to call me.

Sophia nods.

SOPHIA
I'll add you to my contact list.

Detective Fred shows himself out.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF A BUILDING - DAY

Jacques leaves his car.

Detective Fred stands in Jacques's way, making him stop.

DETECTIVE FRED
Hello, Jacques! How are we doing
today?

JACQUES
What do you want? I've already told
you everything I know about Eva.

DETECTIVE FRED
Relax! I just need to talk to you
about something else.

JACQUES
What?

Fred takes a picture of Jacques with Veronica and Sophia out
of his shirt pocket and shows it to Jacques.

Fred points to Veronica in the photo.

DETECTIVE FRED
Do you know this woman?

JACQUES
No.

Jacques tries to walk around Fred, but the detective moves,
blocking Jacques' way.

DETECTIVE FRED

Oh, I think you do. This is Veronica, and she was also murdered, pretty much the same way as Eva. Witnesses said you and Veronica talked a lot the night this picture was taken.

JACQUES

Yes, I talked to a lot of people that night. That's what I do for a living.

DETECTIVE FRED

I also did some research on my own. You got a record of domestic violence against women, my friend. One ex-girlfriend even filed a restraining order against you.

Jacques' face turns red, but he scoffs.

JACQUES

You cops like to dig up garbage, don't you?

Fred faces Jacques with a smirk.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

Am I under arrest or something?

DETECTIVE FRED

Heck, no! We're just getting to know each other better.

JACQUES

Then, stay the hell out of my way, officer, or you'll be getting to know my lawyer better!

Jacques gets into the building and shuts the door.

DETECTIVE FRED

Charming fella.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

Sophia says goodbye to Alex by the main door.

She's in her undies.

Alex grins.

ALEX

Aren't you coming out?

SOPHIA

No! The stripper is just for you,
my love.

Alex smiles, gets into the car, and leaves.

Sophia closes the door.

She takes a magazine and sits down on the couch.

Sophia notices she sat down on something by accident. It's a memory stick shaped like Homer Simpson.

She keeps on looking at the memory stick.

Sophia decides to see what's in it.

She walks to the dinner table, where her laptop is, and inserts the memory stick in it.

She looks horrified at the screen.

Close-up of the computer screen. There are photos of Sophia, in which she is naked and sleeping in several positions.

Sophia closes the laptop lid, removes the memory stick, and puts it back where she found it.

Sophia is meditative.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex enters the room and gets undressed.

When he is only in underpants, he puts on a T-shirt.

Sophia is lying on the bed; he can only see her back.

Alex tiptoes and lies down on the bed very slowly. He turns off the lampshade.

Sophia's face is shown. Her eyes are open.

INT. DR. ROSSI'S PRACTICE - DAY

DR. ROSSI

What about your dreams? Have they returned?

SOPHIA

I told you they're not dreams. But no, they haven't returned. I guess psychoanalysis cured me. Thank you, doctor.

DR. ROSSI

Psychoanalysis doesn't cure anybody. It merely makes people see the same reality in a different way.

SOPHIA

I...

Dr. Rossi waits for her to complete the sentence.

Sophia hesitates.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

A couple of days ago, I found something that really stirred me up. There's sex involved. You're gonna love it.

Dr. Rossi smirks.

DR. ROSSI

What is it?

SOPHIA

I found pictures of me in one of Alex's memory sticks. Erotic stuff. More than that. I appear in very nasty positions.

DR. ROSSI

Many couples do that. It's their way to warm up a relationship. What matters is the pact each couple makes.

SOPHIA

But there is no pact. He took those pictures without my knowledge, without my permission.

DR. ROSSI

How do you feel about it?

SOPHIA

Very odd. After all, he took pictures of me naked when I was sleeping. Actually, passed out would be a better word. As a matter of fact, I look dead in those pictures. How can he possibly be aroused by that?

DR. ROSSI

The human mind drives through bumpy roads.

SOPHIA

I know my husband, he's mister right.

DR. ROSSI

Maybe, but the patient here is you, not your husband. However, speaking in general terms, what you've just described resembles necrophilia.

Sophia's eyes goggle.

SOPHIA

Wait a minute there. I was sleeping, not dead.

DR. ROSSI

I said it resembles, I didn't say it was. Now, let's go back to your case.

SOPHIA

Oh no. Now, you got me curious. What makes a person become a necrophiliac?

DR. ROSSI

It's not that simple, Sophia. There can be multiple causes. A branch of psychoanalysis, which I happen to agree with, associates necrophilia to love.

Sophia lifts one eyebrow.

DR. ROSSI (CONT'D)

A necrophiliac is a person who loves so intensely that separation between life and death loses all meaning. That's when love becomes an obsession. It's the transcendence of love into something so elevated that goes beyond even the material condition of death. Deep inside, what the necrophiliac wants is to have total control over his beloved one. Here's when we come back to obsession.

SOPHIA

Love... Obsession... They can't be the same.

DR. ROSSI

The boundaries between these two worlds are thin and always in motion.

(MORE)

DR. ROSSI (CONT'D)
It's not possible to know when
we're out of one and into the
other.

Sophia meditates.

INT. DR. ROSSI'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Sophia leaves the doctor's private room and finds Alex,
sitting on the couch, waiting for her.

She is startled by his presence.

ALEX
Hey! I'm just here to pick you up.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF DR. ROSSI'S PRACTICE - DAY

Sophia and Alex get into the car.

INT. CAR - DAY

Alex drives.

Sophia is quiet. She doesn't take her eyes off Alex.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The telephone RINGS. Sophia answers it.

SOPHIA
Hey Jacques, what's up? (...)
That's great! You are a genius,
aren't you? I could kiss you right
now! (...) Yes, fine for me. I'll
drop by your place tomorrow morning
and we take it from there.

Alex twists his lips.

Sophia hangs up the phone and closes both hands in fists.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
Yes!

ALEX
Aren't you going to tell me the
good news?

SOPHIA
Those galleries in Europe finally
decided to include some of my
paintings in their next year
exhibitions.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

They believe my kind of art can sell a lot in their market. We have to go there, so they can know me and my work better. We'll also take this trip to know other art galleries around Europe.

ALEX

We? But I can't go with you. I got a lot of patients that need me at the hospital.

SOPHIA

I know, hum... When I said we, I was talking about me and Jacques.

Alex twists his lips again.

Sophia's face glows.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

I've never been so excited in my whole life! All my dreams coming true all at once!

Alex's face frowns.

ALEX

How long are you going to stay in Europe?

SOPHIA

I don't know yet. But it'll be at least a month. It's not only up to me.

Alex hugs Sophia.

ALEX

We've never been apart from each other that long.

SOPHIA

Ah, you know, time flies.

Alex separates from Sophia and walks to the other side.

ALEX

You're getting so famous, aren't you? So full of commitments and all. Why do I get this feeling I'm being left behind?

The glow disappears from Sophia's face. She looks at her husband with mild astonishment.

SOPHIA

Alex, please understand. This trip
is very important to me.

Alex sits down on a chair and hangs his head.

He stands up.

ALEX

I know, but it's just too much for
me to digest. We used to have a
peaceful life. I worked, you
painted, and everything was fine.
Now, all of a sudden, my life's
upside down. Galleries,
exhibitions, trips to Europe. Where
do I stand in all this?

SOPHIA

You stand where you always did, in
my heart. You're right, Alex. A lot
is gonna change. And I prayed and
put my best efforts to make it
happen. People finally see my
value. In the world of art, this
doesn't happen very often.
Thousands of gifted artists died
anonymously. I have to thank
heavens for not being one of them.

Sophia kisses Alex.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Cheer up, hon.

ALEX

You make it look so easy. Well,
it's not that simple to me.

SOPHIA

Now, wait a minute. In the most
important time of my life, you're
not sharing my joy?

ALEX

I like our lives the way it is, the
way it was.

SOPHIA

Nothing changed, at least not for
now. You'd better get used to it.
Success always comes with a price.
Maybe we won't be together as we
used to. But if you love me, you
should be happy with this change.

ALEX

It's okay, Sophia. I'm sorry.

Alex hugs Sophia.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You know I root for you. I'll do everything in my power to love the new Sophia.

SOPHIA

Come now, Alex. Let's go upstairs. I want to make you the happiest husband in the world.

They go to the bedroom.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex and Sophia have breakfast.

SOPHIA

Last night was great.

Alex is quiet.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Even though we didn't go beyond the trivial.

Alex does not look at Sophia.

ALEX

Yes, it was good.

SOPHIA

I have to do some stuff to prepare for the trip, you know, go to places, do some shopping.

ALEX

Do you want me to take you?

SOPHIA

No.

Sophia stands up and kisses Alex.

He returns a cold kiss.

Alex sees Sophia leave.

He walks nervously around the house.

Alex sits down on the couch and turns the TV on. He changes channels.

He turns the TV off.

Alex goes to Sophia's studio.

INT. SOPHIA'S STUDIO - DAY

Alex sees Sophia's brushes drying in a vase beside the sink.

He grabs a brush. He looks at it.

Alex holds the brush by the tip. He meditates.

Alex breaks the brush in two with both hands.

He goes back to the living room.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alex sits down on a chair and looks at some picture-frames, where he and Sophia appear happy in several photos.

He stands up and fixes eyes on one particular picture, in which they look even happier.

Close-up of the picture. The couple stands side by side. Sophia practically hangs on Alex.

Alex throws the two pieces of the broken brush on the floor.

He looks at the brush pieces.

He sits down on the chair and compresses the muscles of his knees with his hands.

Alex crosses his legs. His elbow rests on his knee, his hand holds his chin. He stays like this for a while.

He takes the brush pieces and puts them into a trash bag.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF ALEX'S AND SOPHIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex throws the trash bag into the dumpster.

He walks back home.

INT. ALEX'S AND SOPHIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex is sitting on the couch with an air of delight.

Background music gives an idea of great happiness.

The background music is "Someday," Ray Charles' version.

EXT. STARBUCKS - DAY

Detective Fred is sitting by a table with two cups of coffee in front of him.

Sophia comes and walks to his table.

She sits down.

DETECTIVE FRED

Sophia, thanks for coming. I took the liberty of ordering our coffees. I hope you like yours black. And don't worry, I'm buying.

SOPHIA

Thanks. But I don't know what else I can say to you.

DETECTIVE FRED

Then, maybe, I can help you with that. I called you because I want to talk about your friend, Jacques.

Sophia frowns.

SOPHIA

What about him?

DETECTIVE FRED

When I started investigating the murder of Eva, Jacques was my prime suspect at first. That's why I talked to him before and after I came to your house. On both occasions, he wasn't exactly friendly.

Sophia hesitates.

SOPHIA

And I suppose he told you everything that happened on Gagosian Gallery, the last place Eva was seen alive.

DETECTIVE FRED

That's right.

SOPHIA

Why you didn't tell us this when you questioned us in our house?

DETECTIVE FRED

Because I needed to check if your versions matched. And Jacques told me you did have a more colorful argument with Eva down at the exhibition, but you left that out in our conversation. I wonder why.

SOPHIA

Because there was no colorful argument. Like I said, Eva was drunk and disturbing people. As it happened, I was the one to call security. I don't know how Jacques remembers it, he was a little drunk as well, but I can assure you, everything happened the way I said.

DETECTIVE FRED

Uh-huh. What can you tell me about Jacques? How do you two get along?

SOPHIA

There's not much to say. My relationship with him is strictly business, although he seems to love being around our house.

DETECTIVE FRED

He does strike me as a rather aggressive fella.

SOPHIA

Oh, he got a short fuse, alright. But nothing I can't handle.

DETECTIVE FRED

Did you know a former girlfriend pressed charges against him for domestic violence, and she even filed a restraining order against him?

SOPHIA

He's a very private person, never talks about his personal life.

DETECTIVE FRED

Do you believe he's capable of assaulting a woman to the point of killing her?

Sophia scoffs.

SOPHIA

Are you talking about that woman Veronica by any chance? Was she assaulted before killed?

DETECTIVE FRED

She suffered a kind of sexual aggression.

SOPHIA

That's crazy! I can't imagine Jacques doing something like this.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
But, how can we say we really know
somebody these days?

Fred stares at Sophia.

She faces him.

DETECTIVE FRED
That was surely a lovely coffee.
Well, I'd better be on my way.

Sophia holds his hand.

SOPHIA
Hum, detective... Before you go,
can I ask you a question?

DETECTIVE FRED
Sure.

SOPHIA
Is there some kind of substance
that can make a person lose
consciousness and not have a clear
memory of what happened?

DETECTIVE FRED
Yes. Why do you want to know that?

SOPHIA
Just indulge me.

DETECTIVE FRED
You seem to be talking about the
good old Flunitrazepam, the date
rape drug.

Sophia looks at him with a puzzled face.

SOPHIA
Date rape drug?

DETECTIVE FRED
It's made of something called
Rohypnol, a sedative that surely
gets the job done. It's used by
hustlers to rob their gay
counterparts, or by youngsters to
rape girls in parties. Under the
stuff, a person simply passes out
and doesn't quite remember what
happened after waking up. It's
chemistry in service of crime.

Now, it is Sophia who stares at Fred.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Detective Fred follows Jacques.

Jacques goes into a church.

The detective follows him inside.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Jacques enters a room.

Detective Fred follows him.

CHURCH ROOM

A group of people is sitting down, forming a circle.

Jacques is one of them. He notices Detective Fred.

JACQUES
Came to join us, detective?

Detective Fred looks around and sees a sign on the wall. It reads "N.A. Weekly Meeting". N.A. stands for "Narcotics Anonymous".

DETECTIVE FRED
No. I came to talk to you. It's
about the night of August 11.

JACQUES
You don't get it, do you? I am not
talking to the police.

DETECTIVE FRED
I can only cross you out of my
suspect list if you talk to me.

A man stands up.

MAN
Suspect of what, detective?

DETECTIVE FRED
Murder.

The man takes his cell phone and consults something.

MAN
Detective, there are people here
that did much worse things, but
Jacques here is innocent. You can
be sure of that.

DETECTIVE FRED
And you are...?

MAN
Preston.

DETECTIVE FRED
Please, continue, Mister Preston.

PRESTON
This date you mentioned was a Wednesday, when this particular group meets. Well, today is Wednesday and Jacques here never misses a session. I can be your witness if you want. Everybody here can.

Men and women nod in agreement.

DETECTIVE FRED
And I assume you wouldn't lie to a cop just to protect a member of your flock, now would you?

PRESTON
No, sir. I'm a law-abiding citizen, officer.

DETECTIVE FRED
Aren't we all? Well, I'd better be on my way.

Detective Fred is almost at the door, but he turns back and faces the small crowd again.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Just one more thing...

Preston and Jacques turn to him again.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Veronica was indeed murdered on August 11, a Wednesday, as you so correctly put it. However, Eva was killed on September 2, around one-fifteen in the morning, and that was a Thursday.

PRESTON
Then, I really don't understand why you're bringing that up, detective. The night before this other murder was a Wednesday. That also clears Jacques here.

DETECTIVE FRED

Except that I know for a fact that Jacques here missed his small group meeting that night because he was attending an art exhibition at the time.

Both Preston and Jacques look at Fred with surprised expressions.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

Never misses a session, huh?

Preston hangs his head.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

It's always nice to talk to another law-abiding citizen. I'll be in touch. Please, carry on. Sorry I interrupted.

And the detective leaves.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophia arrives.

She is surprised to see that the dinner table is all set, with silverware, best porcelain, and candlelight.

SOPHIA

What are we celebrating?

ALEX

Your departure.

SOPHIA

But it's not until next month.

Sophia looks tenderly at Alex.

ALEX

It's still an eternity to me, Sophy. I can't help this feeling I'm losing you. Every minute away from you is torture.

Sophia changes her look to one of fear.

SOPHIA

This is not you, Alex.

ALEX

Alright, forget it. Anyway, this will be the night of our lives. Tonight, you'll be totally mine, forever.

Sophia turns her back on him and walks to the stairs.

When walking through the hall, she notices the Mitmor knife is not in the framework.

BEDROOM

Sophia searches the drawers. She rummages through the closet.

Sophia finds several bottles of medicine.

One label catches her attention.

Close-up of the label. It reads Rohypnol.

Close-up of Sophia's astonished eyes.

A quick flashback to show Sophia's erotic dreams. Only this time, the man having sex with Sophia has a face - Alex's.

BATHROOM IN THE COUPLE'S ROOM

Sophia takes a shower. Her face is contorted.

BEDROOM

Sophia gets dressed.

She has her back on the camera.

Sophia grabs something from a drawer. It's not possible to see what it is.

Sophia walks out of the bedroom.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Detective Fred is sitting on his desk, frowning at a folder in front of him.

Zombie walks near Fred's desk.

ZOMBIE

Do you still need me, detective?
Can I go?

DETECTIVE FRED

What's the rush, son? It's so much fun in here.

ZOMBIE

I've just thought of justifying my nickname and eat some meat.

Zombie walks nervously to the exit.

DETECTIVE FRED
Hey boy!

Zombie freezes.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
That can wait.

ZOMBIE
Ah, you know, detective, like you
always say, I'd better be on my
way.

DETECTIVE FRED
I mean it!

Fred raises his eyes to give the youngster an angry look.

Zombie does not move a muscle.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
You and I are gonna have a little
chat.

Fred doesn't take his eyes off Zombie.

The young man is paralyzed.

Detective Fred stands up and walks to Zombie.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Follow me, boy.

Zombie looks at him suspiciously.

INTERROGATION ROOM

A folder with several photos is thrown in front of Zombie,
who is sitting on a chair.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Take a look at those, please.

Fred is sitting on the table, by Zombie.

Zombie looks at the photos.

Close-up of the pictures. There are several photos of women
walking the streets, all young and pretty.

Zombie turns to Fred with a puzzled face.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Keep on looking. It gets better.

With an anguished face, Zombie turns to the pictures again and examines them, one by one.

The telephone on Fred's desk RINGS. They can hear it from the interrogation room.

Fred is still staring at Zombie.

Close-up of the pictures. Now, photos of Veronica, Eva, and even Sophia are shown, with the women taking care of their businesses. Surely, they didn't know somebody was taking pictures of them.

ZOMBIE

What... What are those?

DETECTIVE FRED

You tell me. They came from your computer.

ZOMBIE

So what?

DETECTIVE FRED

Are you in the habit of photographing beautiful, young ladies during the course of their daily routines?

The detective leans closer to Zombie.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

Two of which have been murdered?

The telephone on Fred's desk is still RINGING. The sound is really annoying.

ZOMBIE

Aren't you gonna get that?

DETECTIVE FRED

Answer my question!

Zombie hesitates.

The damn telephone RING seems to be all over the place.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

This is no simple matter, my boy.
It can get you in some serious shit.

Zombie bites his lower lips.

ZOMBIE

Fine!

The young man hesitates.

ZOMBIE (CONT'D)
Sometimes, I'm on my lunch break, I
see all those beauties...

Fred stares at him.

The telephone stops RINGING.

ZOMBIE (CONT'D)
I follow them and take pictures of
them, alright!

DETECTIVE FRED
Why?

ZOMBIE
So I can remember them, enjoy them,
I mean... I know they're out of my
league, so... It's all I got.

DETECTIVE FRED
Where were you on the nights of
August 11 and September 2?

ZOMBIE
Ah come on, man! Why, do you really
think I killed those women and
banged their corpses?

The detective still stares at Zombie.

The young man sobs.

ZOMBIE (CONT'D)
I just... I just want to watch
them, okay! I've never touched any
of them, I've never even spoken to
them, I... They don't even know I
exist.

Zombie hangs his head.

ZOMBIE (CONT'D)
Sometimes, it feels like nobody
knows I exist.

The detective soothes his face expression into a sympathetic
one.

DETECTIVE FRED
I know you exist, boy.

ZOMBIE
But you're only one guy.

DETECTIVE FRED
Yes, but my opinion is the only one
that really matters, ain't it?
(MORE)

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
After all, I'm the last paladin of
justice and honor. Am I right or am
I wrong?

Zombie smiles mildly.

The telephone on Fred's desk RINGS again. The detective rolls his eyes around the sockets.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
Oh darn it. You wait here.

Fred leaves the interrogation room.

PRECINCT MAIN ROOM.

Fred strides to his desk and answers the phone.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)
WHAT?

CORONER (V.O.)
Whoa! Hope this is not a bad time.
Did I interrupt you in the middle
of somebody? 'Cause you're surely
not answering your phone lately.

DETECTIVE FRED
Nope, just taking care of some
business. Now, tell me something
good.

CORONER (V.O.)
The lab identified the product used
to clean the body of the victims.
The trade name is Benzodril, not
sold in any Walmart. It's for
hospitals only, more specifically,
operating rooms.

Detective Fred scratches his chin.

CORONER (V.O.)
I also sent you an e-mail with a
sketch I made, based on the cuts in
the victims' bodies. As I
suspected, they were carved by a
very particular knife.

DETECTIVE FRED
Thanks, buddy. Be seeing you.

Fred hangs up the phone.

He sits down and opens the notebook on his desk.

Close-up of the screen. Fred sees the e-mail from the coroner. He opens it.

Detective Fred types something.

A multifunction printer sitting on another desk springs to life and a document prints.

Fred stands up, but Zombie comes to him with the paper, fresh from the printer.

Fred takes the paper and looks at it.

Close-up of the paper. A blade with very protruding ledges is shown.

Fred's eyes goggle.

A quick flashback to show the knives collection in Alex's house. Close-up of the Mitmor knife.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

Damn it!

ZOMBIE

Bad news?

DETECTIVE FRED

Zombie, my boy...

ZOMBIE

Yes, detective?

DETECTIVE FRED

Go grab that meat. And no more pictures of ladies!

Fred throws the paper on a table and runs out of the precinct.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sophia goes downstairs and walks to the dinner table.

She passes by the knives collection.

The space reserved for the Mitmor is still empty.

Alex pulls out the chair for Sophia.

She sits down.

Alex sits down, too.

He serves the wine.

Sophia turns it down with a gesture.

Alex frowns.

Sophia grabs a pitcher of water and fills her glass.

Alex twists his lips.

They stay quiet for some time.

Sophia finishes drinking the water and stands up.

Alex looks puzzled at her.

ALEX

What's wrong, honey?

SOPHIA

Enough games, Alex. I know you drugged me and had sex with me. This is rape.

ALEX

This is crazy, Sophy.

SOPHIA

Did you really need to do that? You went too far!

Alex stares at Sophia as if studying her.

Sophia's cell phone is on a cupboard nearby, and it RINGS.

Alex stands up, takes the cell phone, and checks the caller ID.

ALEX

The detective is not invited to dinner.

Alex turns off the cell phone and puts it in his pocket.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Detective Fred drives with the cell phone to his ear. He drops the cell phone on the passenger's seat.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Fred's car speeds and cuts off other cars that honk.

INT. SOPHIA'S AND ALEX'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Alex and Sophia are standing by the table.

SOPHIA

This is the end, Alex.

ALEX
You don't understand.

SOPHIA
No, you don't understand. Alex, you
need help.

Alex looks at Sophia.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
I thought I knew you. I was so
wrong. Alex, who are you?

ALEX
The same man that's madly in love
with you like I've always been.

SOPHIA (LOUDER)
This is not love. This is an
obsession.

ALEX
I've always admired you, protected
you, encouraged you. This is love,
endless love.

SOPHIA
You raped Eva too, didn't you? I'm
sure you did. You drugged us. You
abused us. You're a criminal!

ALEX
In your case, it was love.

SOPHIA
Love? You never loved me. It's
clear to me now. All your
attention, your affection, all you
wanted was to control me. And I
fell for it. How stupid.

ALEX
Don't say that, Sophy. You can't
deny what we have. It's pure, it's
beautiful, and forever it will be.

SOPHIA
Stop, Alex. I know what you are
now. This is the end.

ALEX
No! No, it's not! This is the
beginning.

SOPHIA
You're scaring me, Alex.

ALEX
Scaring you?

SOPHIA
Look me in the eyes, Alex. What did you do to those women?

ALEX
They satisfied my desires. But with you, it's passion, it's love.

SOPHIA
Alex, you need to tell me. Did you kill those women?

Alex lowers his eyes.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
Yes, you did. You raped and killed them. I won't turn you in, but I don't want to ever see you again. My God! How come I couldn't see the monster you are?

ALEX
You're not thinking straight, my love. My feelings for you are truthful.

Alex opens his arms.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Come. Let's kiss. And everything bad that separates us will end. Give me just one more chance.

Sophia rejects the hug. She doesn't move.

SOPHIA
It's over, Alex. Accept it.

ALEX
No. I'm taking this relationship to the next level. Come...

He takes one step closer to Sophia and hugs her.

Sophia does not react.

Alex brings his lips very close to Sophia's.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Come, my love. Tell me you'll be totally mine, forever.

SOPHIA
Are you going to do to me what you did to the other women?

ALEX

This is different. You are mine,
and I am yours forever.

Alex grabs Sophia's arm and pulls her to him with violence.

Sophia pulls her arm back harshly.

Alex hugs Sophia again, this time roughly. He tries to force her to hug him back.

She pushes him.

He grabs her arm with a stronger grip.

Sophia tries to release her arm, but she can't.

Alex reaches into his jacket pocket with his right hand.

Sophia holds his hand to stop him.

He fights to release his hand.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Don't be a fool, Sophy. It's time
for us to become one forever.

Alex frees his right hand.

Sophia grabs the gun that was hidden in the back pocket of her pants.

She shoots at Alex three times.

Alex falls on the floor.

Sophia drops the gun and weeps.

She sits down on a chair and looks at her husband.

Detective Fred breaks into the house, gun in hand.

The detective leans forward and tries Alex's neck. He is dead.

Fred puts the gun back to holster and walks to Sophia.

DETECTIVE FRED

Are you alright?

Sophia just keeps staring at the body.

DETECTIVE FRED (CONT'D)

You did right, Sophia. You were
next in his list.

SOPHIA

I know. He was going to stab me to death like he did to the others.

DETECTIVE FRED

And where's the knife?

SOPHIA

In his jacket pocket. I shot him before he could draw it.

Detective Fred searches the dead body.

He turns to Sophia.

DETECTIVE FRED

There is no knife on him.

Sophia looks at him, shocked.

Detective Fred walks to the dinner table.

He finds the knife under Alex's placemat.

Fred takes the knife with a napkin and glances at Sophia.

SOPHIA

It was self-defense! He was going to kill me. I swear it was self-defense!

Detective Fred hesitates. He cleans the knife, puts it in Alex's hand, and closes Alex's fingers around its grip.

DETECTIVE FRED

Now, it is.

Sophia stares at the detective with an expression of doubt.

SOPHIA

The knife he used to kill was missing from the collection. I... I was sure it was in his pocket. He reached into his pocket to... to draw it. I tried to hold his hand, but... He reached into his pocket. I could swear he was going for the knife. I... I shot.

DETECTIVE FRED

Sophia, I believe you. I just don't understand why all this theater. Why your husband went to all this trouble?

Sophia's facial expression changes.

SOPHIA
To save me.

DETECTIVE FRED
What?

SOPHIA
He made me believe he was going to
kill me. Except he wasn't. He
staged all this because he wanted
to die. He made me do it. His
obsession would have killed me. He
chose death for love. The only way
to beat the obsession.

The detective stares at her.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
So strange is the passion.

Sophia gets down on her knees by Alex.

She kisses the corpse in the mouth.

Sophia rests Alex's head on her lap.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
Rest in peace, my love. I'll always
remember the best side of our
lives. This love will never end.
Death did us one.

FADE TO BLACK.