

THE EXECUTIVE

Written by

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INT. PRECINCT - DAY

LAUREN KELLY (34) attractive, sassy, ambitious in cuffs. Is marched down the corridor by DETECTIVE RICHARD JAMES (40's) and a UNIFORMED OFFICER TATE, (30's)

DETECTIVE JAMES V.O  
Lauren Kelly. You're under the arrest for the murder of...

LAUREN V.O  
What? No Is this a joke? I didn't do anything!

DETECTIVE JAMES V.O  
You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law.

They reach booking. A CLERK (30's) inks Lauren's fingers and presses them to a card. Camera flash, her mugshot.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Lauren powers up the trail, earbuds in, sweat glistening.

She checks her watch and pushes harder.

At the top she takes in the skyline.

Her phone buzzes with work notifications.

She exhales and jogs on.

EXT. EDGE MARKETING UPSCALE HIGH-RISE - DAY

Lauren, in a sleek pencil skirt, polished blouse and stilettos rushes from her car with briefcase and coffee in hand. A SECURITY OFFICER BRYAN MALE (40s) greets her in the lobby.

OFFICER BRYAN  
Good morning, Ms. Kelly.

INT. EDGE MARKETING - LOBBY - DAY

LAUREN  
Morning. Hold the elevator please.

OFFICER BRYAN  
You're going to get a ticket Ms.  
Kelly.

Lauren tosses her car keys to him without breaking a stride and walks to the elevator.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Lauren struts into the conference room late.

All eyes turn as the meeting is already in motion.

She sits down next to MASON (30) Caucasian, clean shaven, lean, eager new team leader who is taking notes.

TIMOTHY (45) clean-shaven, slightly over weight, Director of Marketing, commands the table.

A handful of EMPLOYEES are in attendance.

TIMOTHY  
Nice of you to join us, Lauren.  
Make this the last time your late.

Lauren calm, unbothered, sets down her cup and opens her laptop.

LAUREN  
Won't happen again.

TIMOTHY  
It better not. Your team projections look fair but not good enough. Lauren, you're top notch. I need more advertisers on board before the Silent Auction. Hit the numbers and maybe your team sees a bonus.

LAUREN  
A few of my team members have meetings to close with clients this afternoon.

TIMOTHY  
Good. Make this a priority. Cause if you don't, cuts will start. And the fat is trimmed first.

Mason leans over to Lauren.

MASON

Can't wait to take his job.

LAUREN

I wish.

TIMOTHY

When I'm six feet under. Now back  
to work.

Lauren and Mason rise from their seats and walk towards the door.

MASON

After you.

LAUREN

Thank you.

MASON

Hey, you wanna grab lunch later?

LAUREN

No thanks. I'm just gonna grab  
something from the vending machine.  
Maybe next time.

MASON

Sure, thing.

Lauren walks out the door. Mason lingers in the doorway  
watching her go. Timothy walks up behind him.

TIMOTHY

Be careful, she's out of your  
league and not part of your job  
description.

MASON

No Sir she isn't, but I can sure as  
Hell dream.

Timothy and Mason exit.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Lauren is standing in front of the vending machine. Mason  
enters.

MASON

The trail mix if you're counting  
calories, cookies for a sweet  
tooth.

LAUREN  
Neither. I need salty.

Lauren presses for chips.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
So how's your team holding up.

MASON  
Well, you know. We're making some progress but we all can't have first draft picks on our team like yours.

LAUREN  
My team is very busy. But they're hungry and always deliver. That's why we win.

MASON  
Clearly I need to steal a page out of your playbook.

LAUREN  
I learned from the best. Timothy has been in this industry for over a decade. After starting at Edge, he was promoted to Director within 2 years.

MASON  
Impressive.

LAUREN  
Very.

MASON  
How long did it take you to become Manager?

LAUREN  
Not long. Timothy told me to be disciplined and work harder than anyone in the position I wanted. And if you fuck up, clean that shit up and don't do it again. I give my team the same advice he's given me.

Mason walks over to the window and stares out.

MASON

My father used to have a saying right after he disciplined me." I'm doing this so you can learn from this" I never understood how beating me with a leather belt would help me learn. I guess my father had his method and Timothy has his.

LAUREN

Were your parents strict?

MASON

Strict? No, but they were firm. What about your parents? I can't imagine someone as beautiful and intelligent as you being spanked. I mean disciplined.

LAUREN

Hmm, my grandmother raised me. She was from the south, and she had all the southern tendencies. She cooked just as well as she disciplined.

MASON

Really? Is she still around?

LAUREN

No. She passed a few years back. I miss her like crazy. I have no idea where I'd be without her. She's the reason I won't give up. Can't let any of her guidance go in vain.

Mason stares back out the window and starts rubbing a scar on his forearm. Lauren walks over to Mason and places her hand on his shoulder.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Look don't beat yourself up. I'm sure we both turned out okay. Otherwise I wouldn't be the top producing manager and you wouldn't be in 2nd place trying to steal my spot. Things will get better.

MASON

Yeah, once we get Timothy off our backs.

LAUREN

I have an idea. Let's collaborate this week and maybe we can help each other and our teams. You know shrink the fat before it gets cut.

MASON

Sure, that may work. I appreciate the help.

LAUREN

No problem. I see great potential in you. Let's talk later to set a plan in motion.

MASON

Indeed.

Lauren pulls her phone out and checks her messages and sees three missed calls from TRACY (30's) Lauren's assistant and best-friend. Lauren sends Tracy a text.

ON THE PHONE SCREEN

LAUREN (TEXT)

Hey sorry gotta cancel our lunch plans. I have some work to catch up on. Raincheck?

Lauren exits the break room.

MONTAGE

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Lauren is directing a meeting. Mason is observing.

EXT. FOOD TRUCK - DAY

Lauren and Mason are laughing while ordering lunch

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Mason is typing on his laptop. Lauren is standing over his shoulder giving feedback.

END MONTAGE

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

EDGE MARKETING'S annual silent auction is in full swing.

EMPLOYEES and GUESTS mingle, glasses of wine in hand. Laughter and hushed conversation weave beneath the soft strains of classical music.

The doors open. Lauren steps inside, stunning in a long, black dress that turns heads.

Across the floor, Mason, sharp in a black tux, stands with a CO-WORKER. His eyes lock on Lauren instantly. He excuses himself, and walks over to greet her.

MASON

Wow, you look absolutely stunning.

LAUREN

Thank you. You clean up pretty good yourself.

MASON

This old thing.

LAUREN

Oh you have a tux on standby huh.

MASON

I actually wore this to my senior prom.

LAUREN

No!

MASON

Just kidding.

They laughs loudly. Timothy notices Lauren and calls out to her.

TIMOTHY

Lauren, I have someone I want you to meet.

Lauren excuses herself and walks over to him.

LAUREN

Excuse me.

Mason nods and takes a sip of his wine.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF RESTROOM - NIGHT

Lauren steps out of the restroom and nearly collides with Mason coming in.

The faint trace of Lauren's perfume lingers in the air. Mason inhales, running a hand through his hair.

Lauren's gaze drifts to his lips. She bites her own, holding the look a second too long.

Her imagination blurring into something dangerous.

DAYDREAM

Lauren grabs Mason by his collar and tie and pulls him into the women's restroom.

They collide with a heated kiss.

Mason lifts her onto the counter, his grip tight, possessive.

Her dress rides up as his hands slide dangerously close.

END OF DAYDREAM

Lauren snaps out of it.

LAUREN

So sorry. I didn't see you

MASON

No apology necessary.

LAUREN

I'm going to head back in.

MASON

See you out there.

She walks away and he walks into the restroom.

Mason immediately walks into a stall and zips down his pants. He pleasures himself.

A CO-WORKER (MALE 20's ANY RACE) walks into the restroom and overhears grunting.

CO-WORKER

I know he is not taking a...

The Co-worker places his hand over his nose, turns and abruptly exits.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

The evening continues. GUESTS and EMPLOYEES continue to drink and mingle.

Mason sips his wine while staring at Lauren across the room.

Lauren is chatting with a CO-WORKER and catches Mason staring.

Mason lifts up his glass gesturing a toast.

Lauren smiles and does the same.

INT. EDGE MARKETING CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A handful of EMPLOYEES and Timothy rise from their seats and exits the conference room. Mason and Lauren remain seated.

TIMOTHY

Great job on the auction last night. Take the rest of the day off you earned it.

LAUREN

Thank you Sir. I have a few things I need to wrap up before I call it quits tonight.

TIMOTHY

Mason?

MASON

Sure thing Boss. As soon as I finish these tasks I'll be on my way as well.

Timothy nods and exits.

INT. EDGE MARKETING CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

A few hours go by. Lauren staring at her laptop gets a crook in her neck. She struggles to massage her neck while typing with the other hand.

LAUREN

Ugh.

Mason looks up from his computer. He walks over and slides behind her. She looks over her shoulder at Mason.

MASON  
Please, allow me.

His hands resting on her shoulders. His fingers press into her neck, slow and deliberate.

His touch drifts lower, mid-back, low back. Mason leans in, lips brushing her neck.

Lauren shivers, caught between reaction and restraint.

He spins her chair around. Their eyes lock then a sudden kiss.

She unbuttons her blouse.

Mason pulls her up, lifting her onto the table.

He lifts up her skirt and lays her back.

Papers scatter. A heavy paperweight clatters to the floor.

The sharp sound jolts her.

Lauren pushes him back. She hurriedly buttons her blouse  
adjusts her clothes.

LAUREN  
I'm sorry, we can't. Mixing  
business and pleasure will send the  
wrong message.

MASON  
What message? Two co-workers  
enjoying each other's company?

LAUREN  
It's not gonna work. I'm sorry.

Lauren exits.

INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lauren is sitting in her bed cuddled in a blanket and  
drinking a glass of wine. A movie is playing on her laptop.  
She reaches over to place her glass of wine on the nightstand  
and notices a company engraved paper weight.

LAUREN V.O  
Another dry season ahead.

Lauren fumbles with her folders and grabs her phone. She scrolls through her contacts and sees Mason's name. She puts her finger on the call button then hesitates.

ON THE PHONE SCREEN

Mason 818-676-9012

She sets her phone on the nightstand, pulls a small rose shaped vibrator from the drawer, and drains the last of her wine. The lights go out. A low, insistent buzz fills the dark.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Lauren dashes up the trail. She bends over to catch her breath then straightens. Mason is standing directly in front of her.

LAUREN

Jesus! Mason, what the Hell? You scared me. What are you doing out here?

MASON

What does it look like? Getting a quick run in before work.

LAUREN

Obviously. But what are you doing on this side of town, don't you live uptown?

MASON

Yeah I do, but this trail is on my way to work.

LAUREN

Oh yeah, right.

She walks away then turns back to Mason.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Look about last...

MASON

Don't worry about it. We had a moment. We're good. No hard feelings.

He gives a subtle nudge to her shoulder.

LAUREN

Okay, because you know you're a great guy. I'm just trying to get this promotion and I can't have any distractions. Understand?

MASON

Crystal clear. I'm going to finish my run and I'll see you at the office.

Mason continues down the trail.

INT. EDGE MARKETING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Timothy is meeting with Lauren for her quarterly review.

TIMOTHY

Lauren I am very impressed. You took my advice last meeting and your team knocked it out the park. You're a rockstar.

LAUREN

Thank you. I appreciate it. We've been putting in long hours.

TIMOTHY

As you know I'm being promoted to VP of Marketing and I'm looking for a successor. I believe you're the person I'm looking for.

LAUREN

Thank you Sir. I know there were a few mishaps in the past, but I'm so happy you allowed me to make it up. I won't let you down.

TIMOTHY

Don't let me down and don't let yourself down. I would hate to regret my recommendation.

LAUREN

I won't Sir.

TIMOTHY

Good! Any questions?

LAUREN

No Sir.

TIMOTHY  
Great! Back to making me money.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Lauren scrolls through her phone a text from Tracy flashes:  
ON THE PHONE SCREEN

TRACY (TEXT)  
Not you blowing me off again

She barely notices where she's walking, until she collides hard into Mason.

Her purse and folder spill across the floor. Papers scatter and a small bottle of pills rolls out, stops near Mason's shoe.

Mason glances down, then back up at her eyes narrowing.

Lauren freezes, caught between grabbing the pills or the papers first.

MASON  
We can't keep meeting like this.

LAUREN  
Yeah, yeah, just clumsy today.

She crouches quickly, snatching up her purse and the pills.

Mason bends down too, gathering the papers, but his gaze lingers.

MASON  
Everything alright?

LAUREN  
Of course. Why wouldn't it be?

MASON  
I just saw the bottle of..

LAUREN  
Pills? My migraines.

MASON  
Sure. Migraines.

A faint smile creeps across his face.

MASON (CONT'D)

Tell you what, how about dinner  
later? Strictly business. Go over  
notes before tomorrow's meeting

Lauren stands up and reaches for her papers. Mason continues to hold on to the papers out of her reach.

LAUREN

Um, let's just connect at the  
meeting. No need to go over notes.

MASON

You sure about that?

LAUREN

Yes, I'm confident our  
presentations regarding our team's  
progress will speak for itself.

Lauren stares at Mason with a shocked look. She reaches for the papers. He doesn't release his grip.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Let go!

Mason releases his grip.

MASON

No problem. See you tomorrow.

He walks away. She slides her papers into her folder and hurries down the hall.

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lauren and Tracy are clearing the dining room table.

Tracy takes the dishes to the kitchen.

Lauren crosses to living room and sits on the couch.

LAUREN

Damn, girl that was delicious. I  
forgot you know how throw down like  
that.

TRACY O.S.

Well, you know how I do. I try.

Tracy walks into the living room with two champagne flutes and a bottle of wine and joins Lauren on the couch. Lauren stares at the flutes.

## FLASHBACK

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lauren sits on the edge of the bed, champagne flute in hand.

Behind her, an UNKNOWN MAN lingers, face blurred in shadow, robe draped loosely, another glass in his grip.

Red rose petals are scattered across the bedspread.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

TRACY

Sorry, these are all I have.

LAUREN

Please. As long as you have wine,  
I'm good.

They drink and start reminiscing.

TRACY

Oh my God remember that time we  
went on that blind double date and  
your eyes were almost swollen shut  
from that allergic reaction

LAUREN/TRACY

And we ended our date in the  
emergency room.

They laugh hysterically.

LAUREN

That was the absolute worse. Who  
knew I was allergic to nickel. That  
shit was in all of my make up.

TRACY

But those guys were so sweet  
waiting in the ER with us.

LAUREN

They definitely were.

TRACY

Those are the type of guys you  
marry. Not like that nigga Alex.

LAUREN

Girl, you live and you learn. What ever happened to those guys? After that fiasco, I thought I would at least got a text or call from my date asking me how I was doing. But no, not a word. What about you?

TRACY

My date hit me with a few "good morning beautiful" texts. But after a few texts, that shit got real old. It went nowhere fast.

LAUREN

Hmm. Oh well. Their loss.

TRACY

Yep. So how's dating life? Or should I ask is the drought season over?

LAUREN

Girl no. Ain't nobody watering my garden. I'm celibate.

TRACY

Now I told you a little sprinkle ever so often will keep the weeds away.

LAUREN

I almost fucked this guy at work. I wanted it so bad. I could almost taste him in my mouth. But I ended it before we went too far.

TRACY

Mmmh, are you serious?

LAUREN

Yea girl, I'm not about to risk it all over dick. Plus he started acting weird after I ended it so I know I made the right decision.

They laugh.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

End up dickmatized and the next  
thing you know he's my boss or even  
better I become a stay at home  
wife, barefoot and pregnant while  
he furthers his career. Did that  
done that!

Lauren takes a sip of wine.

TRACY

You stupid, but you right. You do  
not need a repeat of...

LAUREN

Don't even say his name. I'm still  
rebuilding my life after that  
divorce.

TRACY

And you're killing it.

LAUREN

What about you? Didn't you say you  
met someone on one of those dating  
apps?

TRACY

I did. We went out for drinks a  
couple of times but he's too busy.  
I want somebody whose wants to  
spend some real time with me. I'm  
over the meet me at happy hour  
every week type of guy.

LAUREN

Girl you told me you wanted no  
strings attached and was trying to  
have fun.

TRACY

I want to have quality fun. I want  
to be wined and dined and go on  
trips and be bent over a balcony  
while feeling the ocean breeze.  
Shit.

LAUREN

Ooooh Girl. Ok that type of fun. I  
hear you. That's one thing I do  
miss about being married. Date  
nights and bae trips.

(MORE)

LAUREN (CONT'D)

But Alex was more interested in  
role playing with his assistant.

TRACY

Girl. You know how these men are  
when they on a career high.  
Especially when they got the house,  
the car and trophy wife. They think  
they unstoppable.

LAUREN

Well I wasn't a trophy wife. I had  
my own dreams and career path. I  
just wanted partnership. Hell we  
could have built an empire together  
with the skills we had between us.  
Was that too much to ask?

Lauren finishes her wine.

TRACY

I understand girl. I'll Be right  
back.

Tracy gathers the empty flutes and slips out.

Moments later, she reappears now in silk pajamas, a matching  
pair draped over her arm.

She crosses the room, and extends the extra set toward  
Lauren.

TRACY (CONT'D)

Here you go. I figure you want to  
sleep over since we've indulged in  
so much wine.

LAUREN

Aww thanks. On any other night I  
would. But I have a early meeting  
and I want to get my jog in  
beforehand.

Lauren grabs her purse.

TRACY

It's still early.

LAUREN

I know. But I still need to prepare  
for my meeting. I'm going to call  
it a night. I'll probably knock out  
before I finish reading my notes.

TRACY

Well, I'm glad we did this. It was long over due. Let's do this again.

LAUREN

Yea me too. Thank you for dinner.

TRACY

You're welcome. Don't take forever next time. You know I'm the best date you had in a long time.

Lauren laughs.

LAUREN

I won't. I promise.

They hug. Tracy turns her head to kiss Lauren. Lauren pulls back.

TRACY

My bad. Too much wine

LAUREN

It's okay. Goodnight

Lauren exits.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Lauren enters the conference room.

A handful of EMPLOYEES, Mason and Timothy are seated.

Mason is adjusting his laptop where his power point presentation is playing.

She looks at her watch and walks over to Mason.

LAUREN

Excuse us everyone.

She pulls Mason into the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

LAUREN

Mason, what are you doing? We're scheduled to start at 10 am, it's 9:30.

MASON

I sent an e-mail to everyone  
yesterday evening. I moved the  
meeting up an hour. I CCD you.

LAUREN

You did what?

MASON

You don't remember our conversation  
about moving the meeting due to  
your conflict.

LAUREN

What are you talking about? I  
never...

MASON

Shh, calm down.

Timothy sticks his head out of doorway.

TIMOTHY

Guys, is there a problem?

MASON

No Sir, Mr. Davis. Just a mix up.  
Lauren must have forgot she told me  
to take the lead and she would join  
after her conflict was resolved.

TIMOTHY

Lauren?

Lauren stares intensely at Mason.

LAUREN V.O.

I should fucking rip your face off  
right now.

LAUREN

Yes, I totally forgot, change of  
plans Sir.

TIMOTHY

Well Mason, get on with it.  
Everyone is waiting, and I don't  
have all day.

Timothy and Mason walk back into the conference room. Lauren  
not following. Timothy stops.

TIMOTHY (CONT'D)

Are you joining?

Lauren stands there for a moment, then follows Timothy back into the conference room.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

EMPLOYEES rise from their seats and exit. Timothy approaches Mason and Lauren. Mason is gathering his materials.

TIMOTHY

Well done Mason, nice presentation.  
Lauren, next time let me know ahead of time any change in presenters.

Timothy exits the conference room. Mason grabs his laptop and heads toward the door. Lauren stops him before he exits.

LAUREN

One second.

Mason stops.

MASON

What's up?

LAUREN

What do you mean what's up? You moved the meeting and threw me under the bus.

MASON

You don't remember our conversation the other day? You told me I can take the lead on our next presentation.

LAUREN

The key word is next. Not a presentation that's already scheduled. And I certainly didn't give you permission to move the start time.

MASON

My bad. I saw your calendar and noticed you had a conflict at the same time. I didn't want you to be late and upset Timothy.

LAUREN

First of all, why are you looking at my calendar and second my appointment was cancelled.

MASON

I moved the time so that you could still be apart of the presentation after your conflict. I sent you an e-mail.

LAUREN

You had no right and I did not get your e-mail.

MASON

I don't know, check your spam folder. I was just helping.

ON THE PHONE SCREEN

Lauren scrolls through her phone to check her spam. She sees an e-mail with the subject "Notice of meeting time change" She notices the e-mail is from Mason's personal e-mail address and not his business e-mail address.

LAUREN

Look going forward, I will plan, change and execute all presentations when we are collaborating.

MASON

Ah, you didn't check your e-mail. Are you blaming me for your mishap?

Lauren grabs her folder and purse.

LAUREN

Just forget it. It's my call. I have things to do. I have an presentation with Timothy and the Execs tomorrow morning.

MASON

That's right. I'll be there bright and early.

LAUREN

I think its best you sit this one out. This is a presentation for top managers and directors only.

She walks to the door. He follows. Lauren stops and turns toward Mason.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I'm being promoted.

She walks out the door. He grabs her arm.

MASON

You told me I can sit in on the presentation.

Lauren shocked looks down at her arm. He lets her arm go.

MASON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, but that's very unprofessional to invite me then dis-invite me.

Lauren steps back.

LAUREN

You can attend but I will be running it. You can take notes. My decision is final.

Lauren exits. Mason not moving, clutches his fist and punches the door.

MASON V.O.

Selfish Bitch.

INT. RESTROOM - DAY

Lauren is sitting on the toilet seat and takes a deep breath.

LAUREN

Wow, unbelievable.

Enter 2 EMPLOYEES (20s). They walk to the mirror and touch up their make up, while laughing.

EMPLOYEE 1

What the hell did we just witness?

EMPLOYEE 2

I do not know but Lauren was all over the place. The late entrance, the change of time and that scene with Mason.

EMPLOYEE 1

What the Hell was that about?

EMPLOYEE 2

Not a clue, but the whole thing was a train wreck. She was all over the place.

EMPLOYEE 1  
Fucking embarrassing.

EMPLOYEE 2  
She better get her shit together.

EMPLOYEE 1  
Seriously.

Both women exit. Lauren walks out of the stall. She washes her hands and splash water on her face. She pats her face with a paper towel and stares in the mirror. She takes a pill out of purse, cuffs her hand for water and swallows the pills. She dries her hands, adjusts her clothes and exits.

INT. RECEPTIONIST DESK - DAY

Lauren walks up to the receptionist desk. RECEPTIONIST CHERYL(30s) is seated at the desk.

LAUREN  
Hi Cheryl. I'm going to relax in the sauna for a bit. Can you please hold my calls?

CHERYL  
Yes Ms. Kelly, anything else?

LAUREN  
No thank you.

Lauren exits.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Lauren walks to the back of elevator. 3 EMPLOYEES are in the elevator. The elevator starts to close and Mason sticks his hand in and the elevator opens wide. Mason walks to the back and stands next to Her. Lauren stares forward unbothered. Next floor, elevator opens and the EMPLOYEES exit. A few floors go by. Silence between them. They reach the ground floor and Lauren exits. Elevator closes. Mason yells out to Lauren before the door closes completely.

MASON  
Enjoy the rest of your day Lauren.

INT. GYM - SAUNA - NIGHT

Lauren lounges on the bench in workout gear, adjusting her towel before leaning back.

A WOMAN in her 20s, wrapped in a towel, steps down from the top bench and slips out.

Lauren settles in, fixes her earbuds. Faint MUSIC hums as her eyes close.

A hand-gloved in black-turns the thermostat higher.

Another hand wedges a chair under the door handle.

Footsteps retreat. A shadow slides out of view.

Inside, the heat climbs. Lauren stirs, sweat pouring. She sits up, wiping her face.

LAUREN

Sheesh! It got hotter.

She rises, grabs the door handle. Yank it's stuck.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

The door's stuck. Somebody, hello?

She slams her shoulder into the door. It won't budge.

The handle sears her palm. She jerks back with a yell.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Oh my God, please! Somebody help me!

She pounds, kicks, frantic.

Suddenly, the chair scrapes outside. The door wrenches open.

JEFF (36), tall, muscular, sharp goatee, in a security uniform, fills the doorway.

Lauren stumbles out, collapsing at his feet.

JEFF

Oh damn.

LAUREN

Oh my God, I couldn't get out. What happened, why was the door stuck?

JEFF

There was a chair lodged on the door handle.

Lauren hyperventilating tries to get up.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Let me help you.

He helps her into the chair.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Try to calm down, let me get you  
some water.

He runs down the hall to the vending machine, and comes back with a bottle water. He unscrews the top and hands her the bottle.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Here you go.

LAUREN  
Thank you.

She drinks half the bottle.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
I just don't understand, why would  
he do this to me?

JEFF  
You know who did this?

LAUREN  
I have an idea, but I need proof.

JEFF  
There's a camera in hallway outside  
sauna. I can check to see the last  
person in the hall around the time  
this happened. You'll also need to  
fill out an incident report.

LAUREN  
I'm tired. I'm going home. Tomorrow  
morning, I'll do it.

She finishes her water .

JEFF  
You should at-least report this to  
the police tonight. This is  
serious.

Lauren picks up her phone.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
There's rarely any reception in  
this area.

LAUREN

I'll call them when I get home. I just want to go. Thank you for all your help Mr.

JEFF

Manning. Jeff Manning. But call me Jeff.

LAUREN

Jeff, you literally saved my life.

JEFF

Just doing my job. I'm glad I was here to help. Just remember to stop by in the morning and fill out that incident report.

LAUREN

I will.

INT. EDGE MARKETING - SECURITY DESK - DAY

Lauren approaches the security desk and places her coffee on the desk.

Impatient, She taps her fingers on the desk.

Officer Bryan is finishing up a call.

OFFICER BRYAN

Good morning, Ms. Kelly, can I help you.

LAUREN

Morning, yes I need to speak with the guy who was helping me last night. He told me fill out an incident report.

OFFICER BRYAN

Okay, what's his name?

LAUREN

Um, Manuel? No Jeff. I just need to see the footage!

OFFICER BRYAN

Wait just a minute.

He picks up the phone and starts dialing. Jeff answers.

JEFF V.O  
Jeff Manning.

OFFICER BRYAN  
Hello Mr. Manning, Bryan Speaking.  
Ms. Kelly is here to see you.

JEFF V.O  
(Inaudible)

OFFICER BRYAN  
Okay, no problem.

He hangs up the phone.

OFFICER BRYAN (CONT'D)  
You're gonna walk down the end of  
this hall, on the left side is the  
security office. Jeff is waiting  
for you.

LAUREN  
Thank you.

She grabs her coffee and walks away.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE

Lauren knocks on the door.

JEFF  
Come in.

She walks in.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
Please have a seat.

LAUREN  
Thank you.

JEFF  
How are you feeling this morning?

LAUREN  
Drained, tired, I was up all night,  
couldn't sleep.

JEFF  
I can understand that. That was a  
rough ordeal last night.

LAUREN

I just want to know if he did this  
to me.

JEFF

Well, let me get straight to the  
point.

Jeff reviews the footage.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, there's some footage  
missing from when you were in the  
sauna.

LAUREN

What?

Jeff swivels the monitor toward her. Grainy footage plays.

INSERT VIDEO

Lauren enters the sauna.

Ten minutes pass. A WOMAN exits.

Moments later, Jeff appears moving the chair.

BACK TO SCENE

JEFF

See? There you are going in. Ten minutes later—she walks out.  
Then me, pulling the chair. That's it.

LAUREN

How is that possible?

JEFF

System runs continuous. Every  
floor, every hour. Twenty-four-  
seven. Footage stays one week  
before auto delete. Only way  
something disappears is if it's  
erased manually.

A heavy silence.

LAUREN

So... is that what happened?

Jeff meets her eyes, steady.

JEFF

No. Only me and Officer Bryan were here. We rotate. One patrols, the other watches the feeds.

Lauren studies him.

LAUREN

But could he?

JEFF

No. I've worked with Bryan for years. He wouldn't tamper with surveillance.

LAUREN

Right, not saying that. Maybe he stepped away just for a minute?

JEFF

Bryan knows better. He never leaves this room unattended. And I locked this door myself before my rounds.

Lauren exhales, frustrated.

LAUREN

It just doesn't make sense.

Jeff leans back, voice calm.

JEFF

I'll dig into it. Talk to everyone on the team. We'll find out.

He opens his drawer and pulls out a form. He hands the form and a pen to Lauren.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I started the report. I need you to complete it. Please.

LAUREN

Okay.

She fills out the form.

JEFF

Maybe someone was just playing a prank on you.

LAUREN

If so it was a sick one. Not funny at all.

JEFF

I'm going to be monitoring this system a lot closer to see if I notice anything out of the ordinary. I'll get to the bottom of this deleted footage. I'm really sorry this happened to you.

She looks at her watch and hands him the form and pen.

LAUREN

I have to get to a meeting. Thank you again for your help.

JEFF

Sorry I couldn't give you the information you were looking for.

LAUREN

Me too.

Lauren exits

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Timothy is commanding the meeting. Lauren, Mason and a handful of EMPLOYEES (30s) are in attendance.

TIMOTHY

I'm impressed with these projections. Keep up the good work everyone. Anything else to add?

Lauren is distracted.

TIMOTHY (CONT'D)

Lauren?

INT. SAUNA - DAY - FLASHBACK

LAUREN

Oh my God, please! Somebody help me!

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

TIMOTHY

Lauren!

LAUREN

Yes, Sir, what? I'm sorry can you  
please repeat?

TIMOTHY

Do you have anything else to add?

LAUREN

Add? No, Sir that will be all.

MASON

Well, there is one last thing Sir.

TIMOTHY

And that would be?

MASON

The typo on page 26. The figures  
are inverted.

Timothy and Lauren flip through the pages of the report. The EMPLOYEES start whispering and also flip through their pages.

MASON (CONT'D)

It should say \$48,000 not \$84,000.

TIMOTHY

Well, that certainly changes  
things. How did you miss this  
Mason?

MASON

I...

LAUREN

I apologize Sir, my mistake. I  
reviewed the final report last  
night, but I guess I missed it.

TIMOTHY

Good catch Mason. Lauren I'm  
surprised. You normally would catch  
an error before placing a report on  
my desk.

LAUREN

Once again I apologize, I'm just a  
little tired.

MASON

Long night?

LAUREN

Sir, it won't happen again.

TIMOTHY

Make sure. You can't miss any errors. If there's nothing else, I have another meeting to attend.

The EMPLOYEES exits. Lauren still seated stares at the report.

TIMOTHY (CONT'D)

Lauren, no more mistakes.

Lauren nods. Timothy exits. Mason stares at Lauren. She looks up.

LAUREN

What the fuck Mason? I told you to take notes only! This is the last time you overstep your boundaries.

MASON

You look tired. Get some rest Lauren.

Mason exits. Lauren gathers her things.

She checks her phone and sees a missed call from Tracy. She exhales and exit.

INT. LAUREN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lauren is typing in her laptop. Tracy knocks on the door.

LAUREN

Come in.

She enters carrying a long white box with a red ribbon on top. Lauren inattentive continues typing.

TRACY

Girl I called you. Are you alright? I can't believe that happened to you.

LAUREN

Sorry I missed your call. I was filling out an incident report earlier.

She looks up at Tracy

LAUREN (CONT'D)

You and your red lipstick. What's that?

TRACY  
You have a special delivery.  
Hopefully this will cheer you up.

Lauren takes the box.

LAUREN  
How sweet. Who delivered these?

TRACY  
I'm not sure, they were delivered  
by messenger.

Lauren looks for the card.

LAUREN  
Hmm, no card.

TRACY  
Awe someone has a secret admirer.

LAUREN  
I guess so. I definitely need a  
nice surprise after last night.

Lauren opens the box and screams.

She pushes the box away which is full of dead roses and worms.

Tracy puts her hand over her mouth and slams the cover back on the box.

TRACY  
What kind of sick bastard would  
send something like this?

LAUREN  
Get rid of these!

Tracy snatches the box and strides out the door without a word.

Lauren sits at her desk, chest rising and falling, hyperventilating.

A moment later, Tracy steps back in.

Lauren's hands tremble as she yanks open a desk drawer, pulls out a small bottle of pills. She shakes two into her palm and downs them with a gulp of coffee.

TRACY  
Are you...?

LAUREN

I'm fine, thank you. You know I've been having a rough week.

TRACY

You have any idea who could have sent you those?

LAUREN

I do, but?

TRACY

What is it?

LAUREN

Just thinking about the sauna and everything else this week.

TRACY

You think it's connected?

LAUREN

I'm really not sure but I'm going to find out. This is driving me crazy.

Lauren picks up the receiver of her desk phone.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I'm calling security.

TRACY

You don't think its Alex do you?

LAUREN

Alex? No, he's not stupid.

TRACY

I'm just saying, your ex was an Ass, you never know.

LAUREN

Yes he was an Ass, but not crazy. It wasn't him. Who delivered the box?

TRACY

You know what?

Tracy walks to the door.

TRACY (CONT'D)

Let me call the messenger service,  
maybe they'll tell me who requested  
the delivery.

Tracy exits. Lauren starts dialing on the phone. After a few minutes, Tracy walks back in. Lauren hangs up the phone.

LAUREN

You find out anything?

TRACY

No, the office clerk told me someone ordered the delivery service online and dropped the box off to their office last night. It was left in their drop box.

LAUREN

Drop box?

TRACY

Sounds like the flowers were purchased somewhere else.

LAUREN

Well, can't they tell you who requested the delivery.

TRACY

The clerk told me they can't disclose that information due to privacy laws.

LAUREN

So you're telling me someone could've sent anthrax to me and they can't say who ordered it?

TRACY

Apparently. Packages dropped off goes through their system which checks for hazardous material.

LAUREN

Well they missed this one.

TRACY

Sick but not harmful.

LAUREN

This is insane! It's time to get the police involved, I'm not going to keep going through this.

TRACY

You already called security right?

LAUREN

I spoke with Jeff in security. He's calling the police. They're on their way so I can file an official report.

TRACY

Good.

Lauren takes a deep breath and exhales.

TRACY (CONT'D)

You sure you're okay?

Lauren nods. Tracy walks over and puts her hand on her shoulder.

TRACY (CONT'D)

You should take the rest of the day off.

LAUREN

I can't take any days off. My formal interview for my promotion is Friday. I also have reports to finish. I'm not letting anything get in the way.

TRACY

You sure?

LAUREN

I'll be fine. Now go home! Your shift is over.

TRACY

Yeah but I can stay late if you need me.

LAUREN

No, it's okay. Go home.

They hug.

TRACY

If you need anything, call me.

LAUREN

Thanks I will.

Tracy smiles, nods then exits.

INT. LAUREN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lauren exhausted is typing on her laptop.

LAUREN  
God, I just need to finish this  
report.

An unknown caller rings her phone. She reluctantly answers.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
Hello. Hello.

Silence. She ends the call. The phone rings again. She answers firmly.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
Who is this?

YOUNG GIRLS V.O  
Karen?

LAUREN  
You have the wrong number.

She ends the call.

INT. SECURITY DESK - NIGHT

Lauren walks to the security desk.

OFFICER BRYAN  
Ma'am., Are you leaving for the  
evening?

She signs out in the log book.

LAUREN  
Yes, I am.

OFFICER BRYAN  
Would you like for someone to  
escort you to your car?

She walks away.

LAUREN  
No thank you, have a good evening.

Officer Bryan nods. Lauren exits.

EXT. EDGE MARKETING PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Lauren enters the garage. Footsteps BARELY AUDIBLE.

She stops and looks around.

She walks to her car in a hurried pace.

Footsteps very AUDIBLE. She starts jogging and drops her keys which has mace attached to the key ring.

She picks up her keys with her finger on the mace trigger.

She stands up as Jeff taps her on the shoulder.

She turns and points her mace at him.

LAUREN

You scared me!

JEFF

Whoa, I'm sorry, didn't mean to scare you. I just wanted to make sure you got to your car safely but I see you got it covered.

He gently grasp and lowers her hand.

She unlocks her car door.

He opens the door and she gets in the drivers seat.

LAUREN

Yeah, gotta protect myself. Thank you for the escort, but you didn't have to do that.

JEFF

Yes, Ma'am I did.

LAUREN

Please call me Lauren. I didn't want to bother. You've been helpful enough.

JEFF

It's no bother. I'm glad to help.

LAUREN

Thank you. I really appreciate it.

Awkward silence.

JEFF

Listen, if you don't mind, I just want to make sure you get home safely. Can I give you my number, and ask that you text me when you make it your destination. You don't have to call just a text is cool.

LAUREN

I'll call you. I'd like that.

He hands her his business card.

JEFF

And by the way a detective is supposed to stop by the security office tomorrow morning.

LAUREN

Ugh, finally.

JEFF

Stop by my office when you get in. Let's get an official police report filed.

LAUREN

What a relief. Thank you again. Have a good evening.

JEFF

My pleasure. You as well.

He closes her door. She reverses and exits the garage. He waves then watches until her car disappears. He turns around and is brutally struck in the head with a metal rod. He collapses. He's unconscious.

EXT. LAUREN'S CAR - NIGHT

Lauren pulls up to her house.

Before exiting her car, She pulls out the business card and dials Jeff's phone.

Voicemail activates, she leave a message.

LAUREN

Hi Jeff, it's Lauren. I made it home safely. Thank you again for your help. Good night.

She ends the call.

INT. EDGE MARKETING - SECURITY DESK - DAY

LAUREN  
Good morning Bryan.

OFFICER BRYAN  
Good morning Ms. Kelly, how you  
feeling?

LAUREN  
I'm feeling refreshed.

OFFICER BRYAN  
Glad to hear that.

LAUREN  
Is it okay if I stop by Jeff's  
office? He's expecting me.

OFFICER BRYAN  
He isn't in yet.

LAUREN  
Oh.

OFFICER BRYAN  
He's scheduled to be in this  
morning, but hasn't signed in yet.

LAUREN  
Well, when he comes in, can you  
please let him know I'm here?

OFFICER BRYAN  
Sure thing Ms. Kelly.

LAUREN  
Thanks, have a good day.

OFFICER BRYAN  
You too.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Lauren pours a cup of coffee and takes a sip.

She checks her phone and confirms no messages or missed calls  
from Jeff.

Impatient she sends a text to him.

ON THE SCREEN

LAUREN (TEXT)  
Good morning Jeff. Just wanted to  
let you know I'm here at Edge.  
Please let me know when the  
detective arrives so I can stop by  
your office. See you soon.

She slips her phone back into her purse and crosses to the window. Outside, a police car idles in front of Edge, its lights flashing faintly in the drizzle.

Mason enters, pours himself a cup of coffee, and catches her staring out the window.

MASON  
Morning.

She turns and quickly walks to the door.

MASON (CONT'D)  
Leaving so soon?

LAUREN  
I have something to take care of.

Lauren exits. He smirks and continues drinking his coffee.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Lauren anxiously presses the elevator button.

LAUREN  
Come on!

The door opens and Tracy walks out. Lauren attempts to walk in but is stopped by Tracy.

TRACY  
Hey, I was on my way to see you.

The elevator door shuts.

LAUREN  
Can't right now. The detective is  
here. I have to go fill out a  
police report.

TRACY  
About Jeff?

LAUREN

Jeff? No about the sauna and  
flowers. Why did you say Jeff?

TRACY

That's what I came to tell you.

LAUREN

Tell me what?

TRACY

The detective is speaking to  
everyone about Jeff.

LAUREN

Why?

TRACY

Lauren, I'm sorry.

LAUREN

Just spit it out.

TRACY

Jeff was attacked in the parking  
garage last night.

LAUREN

What?

TRACY

Someone in security found him. He's  
currently in ICU.

LAUREN

What the hell is going on, whose  
doing this shit?

TRACY

I don't know but at this point you  
can't rule out Alex.

LAUREN

Why would Alex have something to do  
with this? Why would he attack  
Jeff?

TRACY

Come on Lauren, you know your  
divorce was nasty. He's the reason  
you're in this position now.

LAUREN

Excuse me. I'm doing very well now.

TRACY

Just saying. Instead of working for Edge, you could have owned this and several others if it wasn't for Alex spending all your money investing in his bitches.

LAUREN

Yes he was cheating bastard and I gave him my last dime to help him start his company. And he blows it chasing skirts and investing in get rich quick scams. Getting half of everything in the divorce was satisfying but it still wasn't enough to start my own shit.

TRACY

Yes, he was dead wrong. But I still think he would have a reason to get back at you.

LAUREN

He's still rebuilding his reputation. He'd be an idiot to risk it all to get back at me. But now you have me thinking. I know my divorce was bitter, but I truly loved Alex. I thought he was my happily ever after.

TRACY

Well, life would be simpler if forever was with the love of your life.

LAUREN

Obviously he wasn't. Growing up without a father, I've made some mistakes choosing men. My grandmother gave direction but only a loving father can show his a daughter how a good man should treat her. I never had that. So instead of allowing a man to choose me, I was always chasing and looking for love in all the wrong places. I should have chose me first.

She sniffs and catches a tear forming in her eye with her pinky. Tracy grabs a napkin from her purse and hands it to her.

TRACY

Girl don't get all teary eyed. We all made bad choices in men. Some worse than others but that's life. We learn from our mistakes, move the fuck on and boss up. That's what you're tryna do now. You got this. Let's talk to the detective and see if he has any leads. If not you may want to mention your history with Alex.

LAUREN

Okay, but after we talk to him, I'm going to check on Jeff.

Lauren presses the elevator button. The door opens and they walk in. Door closes.

INT. SECURITY DESK - DAY

Lauren and Tracy approach the security desk. DETECTIVE JAMES (Male, 40's) and UNIFORMED OFFICER TATE are speaking with the security officer Bryan.

OFFICER TATE

Good morning ladies.

TRACY/LAUREN

Good morning.

They shake hands.

DETECTIVE JAMES

I'm Detective James.

LAUREN

Lauren Kelly.

TRACY

I'm Tracy.

DETECTIVE JAMES

Miss Kelly, Do you mind? I need a few minutes of your time to ask you a few questions. Is there somewhere we can speak privately.

LAUREN

Sure. My office is open but there's a lot of employees on my floor. I don't want to alarm them.

OFFICER BRYAN  
You can use the security office.

LAUREN  
Okay.

OFFICER BRYAN  
Right this way. I'll unlock the door for you.

Detective James, Lauren, Officer Bryan and Officer Tate walk away.

TRACY  
Lauren, don't forget what we talked about.

LAUREN  
I won't.

Tracy takes out her phone and sends a text.

INT. SECURITY DESK - DAY

DETECTIVE JAMES  
Sorry we weren't able to get a clear ID on Jeff's assailant but we are canvassing for witnesses. Once we complete our investigation, I'm hopeful well find out what happened and whose responsible.

LAUREN  
I understand. If I can think of anything else, I'll let you know.

DETECTIVE JAMES  
Good. Jeff's family will give me an update on his condition. I can't give you any specific details but I do know he's not out of the woods.

Timothy approaches the security desk.

TIMOTHY  
Lauren, what is going on here? I heard there were detectives and police officers down here. What happened?

Detective James hands Lauren his business card.

DETECTIVE JAMES  
Have a good day Ms. Kelly.

He and Officer Tate exit.

LAUREN  
It's Jeff in security.

TIMOTHY  
I heard about Jeff, I'm referring  
to things I heard about you.

LAUREN  
I'm fine, it's being handled.

TIMOTHY  
Are you sure? Because rumor is,  
things are serious and now a  
security officer is in the  
hospital. That doesn't sound fine.

LAUREN  
Detective James and his team are  
taking care of things. I'm sure  
they will find out whose  
responsible and they will be  
prosecuted for assault and  
harassment.

TIMOTHY  
Those are serious charges. Maybe  
you should take a few days off  
until this matter is resolved.

LAUREN  
Timothy, I'm fine and work is a  
distraction.

TIMOTHY  
I insist. I already have Mason  
covering your meetings for the rest  
of the week.

LAUREN  
What? Sir, you can't do this!

TIMOTHY  
I can and I did. I spoke with HR  
and they are aware of the incident  
and my recommendation that you take  
a few days off.

LAUREN  
Sir, this isn't right, and Mason...

TIMOTHY

Mason what?

LAUREN

Never mind. I'm fine!

TIMOTHY

You're not. Go home. You're excused  
for the rest of the week. I'll see  
you Monday morning.

LAUREN

What about my interview?

TIMOTHY

I'll reschedule it. Go home!

Tracy walks up. She's holding Lauren's briefcase and purse.  
She gently grabs Lauren's arm.

TRACY

Officer Bryan is pulling your car  
to the front. I'll drive you home  
and Uber back to the office to  
finish up. I'll make sure  
everything is taken care of while  
you're out.

Lauren grabs her things and they walk towards the exit. Tracy  
turns to Timothy.

TRACY (CONT'D)

I'll make sure she gets home  
safely.

Timothy nods and exits.

EXT. EDGE MARKETING - DAY

Tracy starts the car. Lauren in the passenger seat looks up  
at the window of Edge and see's Mason standing in the window  
looking down at her. The car pulls off.

INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are out and faint glow stems from a candle on the  
table. Soft music is AUDIBLE. Lauren is seated drinking a  
glass of wine. Vulnerable she throws the glass across the  
room and sobs uncontrollably.

INT. LAUREN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Lauren is awakened by her phone alarm. She hits snooze and checks her messages. She sees a text from Tracy.

ON THE SCREEN

Morning love, Jeff has been cleared for visitors. You should go check on him. If you want me to tag along, let me know.

She puts her phone down and gets out of the bed.

INT. HOSPITAL - JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

LAUREN stands at the foot of the bed. Jeff lies motionless, tube in his throat, head wrapped in a heavy bandage. The ventilator breathes for him.

LAUREN  
I'm so sorry.

A NURSE (30s) steps in, checks the monitor, smooths Jeff's blanket with practiced, gentle hands. She offers Lauren a small, reassuring smile and exits, closing the door with a muffled CLICK.

Lauren moves a chair closer. She sits. Her fingers find Jeff's hand, limp. Her thumb trembles against his knuckles.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
Jeff... I keep thinking, if I'd been there, if I hadn't... This isn't what you signed up for. You were only doing your job.

She swallows. Anger layers over the grief now, sharpening her words.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
I don't know if he did this to get back at me, but mark my words as soon as I have proof, he's going to pay. For both of us.

She squeezes his hand once, hard, then lets go. The ventilator inhales. Lauren stares at the bandage, at the machines, and for a long beat, the room holds its breath with her.

## INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY

Through the narrow window of Jeff's room door, Tracy peers in. Inside, Lauren sits beside Jeff's bed, lost in thought.

Lauren senses something, a presence.

She glances toward the door but Tracy's gone.

Lauren stands, uneasy. She crosses to the door and opens it.

## INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The corridor stretches in both directions. Empty except for an ORDERLY (30's) and a NURSE (30's) chatting as they pass. No Tracy.

Lauren lingers, scanning the hallway. Then quietly shuts the door and returns to her chair.

From the room next door, the door creaks open.

Tracy steps out, glancing back toward Lauren's room before walking briskly down the hall and disappearing around the corner.

## INT. LAUREN'S CAR - NEXT DAY - DAY

While driving, her phone rings. The caller ID says Richard James. Lauren answers. Her blue tooth car speaker connects.

LAUREN

Hello.

DETECTIVE JAMES V.O

Afternoon Ms. Kelly This is  
Detective James.

LAUREN

Afternoon, How can I help you.

DETECTIVE JAMES V.O

I was hoping you can come to the  
station. I have some additional  
questions for you.

LAUREN

Did you find out something? You  
have a suspect?

DETECTIVE JAMES V.O

Yes Ma'am. I have new information, but it would be best if we discuss in person at the station. Can you come down now?

LAUREN

Okay, sure. What station are you located.

DETECTIVE JAMES V.O

Precinct 3 downtown.

LAUREN

Great. See you soon.

Lauren ends the call.

INT. PRECINCT - FRONT DESK - DAY

Lauren enters the station. A CLERK (30s) is on the phone at the front desk. Lauren approaches the desk. She hangs up the phone.

CLERK

May I help you?

LAUREN

Yes. My name is Lauren Kelly. I'm here to speak to Detective James. He's expecting me.

CLERK

Have a seat and someone will be with you in a minute.

Lauren sits on the bench.

The clerk picks up the phone and speaks to someone in a hushed tone while staring at Lauren.

The conversation is BARELY AUDIBLE.

Lauren strains to hear but is unable to comprehend what the Clerk is saying. The clerk hangs up.

Moments later Detective James enters with Officer Kate. Lauren stands up to greet Detective James.

DETECTIVE JAMES

Lauren Kelly.

LAUREN

Hello Detective James. Why so formal?

Detective James pulls his handcuffs out of his jacket pocket. He grabs Lauren's wrist and turns her around.

DETECTIVE JAMES

You're under the arrest for the murder of Jeffrey Manning.

LAUREN

What? No Is this a joke? I didn't do anything! What are you talking about? He can't be dead I just saw him.

DETECTIVE JAMES

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law.

Detective James and Officer Tate march Lauren down the corridor for booking.

LAUREN

Someone is setting me up. You gotta believe me. I didn't do this, it wasn't me, I swear!

DETECTIVE JAMES

Save it. You have a right to an attorney. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you.

INT. PRECINCT - HOLDING CELL - DAY

Officer Tate knocks on Lauren's cell with her baton. Lauren scrunched on the bench between TWO INMATES(20's) awakens.

OFFICER TATE

Get up Kelly.

Lauren sits up and fixes her hair with her fingers.

LAUREN

Huh, yes officer?

OFFICER TATE

Time for your arraignment.

The cell door opens and she walks out. One WOMAN jumps up from the bench and grabs the cell door as it closes.

INMATE  
When the Fuck do I get outta here?

OFFICER TATE  
Sit your ass down. Relax!

Officer Tate walks Lauren down the corridor.

INT. PRECINCT - FRONT DESK - DAY

Lauren at the front desk signs her release papers. She grabs her belongings in a zip lock bag.

LAUREN V.O  
Thank God. Tracy got my voice mail.

EXT. PRECINCT - DAY

Lauren walks out of the precinct. She is shocked to see ALEX (35) Tall, Muscular, Attractive, dressed to a tee, leaning on a sports car.

LAUREN  
Alex, what the hell are you doing here?

She approaches him.

EXT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

ALEX  
Who you think got you out? Oh you thought your wack ass friend was gonna bail you out?

LAUREN  
Yeah I did. Tracy always comes through.

ALEX  
Right cause she had an hundred grand sitting around?

LAUREN  
Look I don't have that kind of money to pay you back!

ALEX

Don't even trip. I know you won't skip bail. You're not capable of murder.

LAUREN

Thanks, I guess. But how did you know I was arrested? And who told you the details? Who called you?

ALEX

One, Tracy called. And two, I talked to your public defender. Fire him! He's not good.

He opens the passenger door for Lauren.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Get in. Let's talk about this somewhere else.

Lauren sits in the passenger seat. He closes the door and pulls off. He pulls into a nearby parking lot.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

LAUREN

That makes no sense. Why would she call you when she's the one pointing the finger at you.

ALEX

Say what now?

LAUREN

I've been through a lot these past weeks. It's obvious whoever has been messing with me is now trying to frame me for murder. Ugh God, poor Jeff.

ALEX

Look, I don't know what else you got going on but I had nothing to do with it. Lauren look at me.

He gently turns her face towards him.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I know we had our differences. And as mad as I was after our divorce, messing with you like this ain't my style.

She stares into his eyes for a moment then turns away.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
I ain't tripping on you no more.  
And honestly I want you to be good.  
I wouldn't celebrate if you had to  
do prison time.

LAUREN  
I believe you.

ALEX  
As you should.

LAUREN  
I just need to figure out who did  
this.

INT. EDGE MARKETING - SECURITY DESK - DAY

As Lauren walks past the security desk she notices a new SECURITY OFFICER TERRY(30s) at the desk. Lauren nods and continues walking.

OFFICER TERRY  
Excuse me, Ma'am.

LAUREN  
Yes?

OFFICER TERRY  
You have to sign in.

Lauren walks back to the desk.

LAUREN  
I work here. I never have to sign  
in.

OFFICER TERRY  
I haven't seen you before. I'm just  
doing my job.

Lauren annoyed, signs her name in the log.

LAUREN  
I understand. Tightening up  
security with everything going on.

OFFICER TERRY  
Not sure what's been going on. I  
just started here. Their rules.

She huffs and walks away.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

Lauren approaches her office.

Clusters of EMPLOYEES hover nearby, whispering. Their eyes dart toward her, then quickly away.

She frowns, steps closer.

Her door. The nameplate is gone.

INT. LAUREN'S OFFICE - DAY

She pushes the door open. The desk is bare. Stripped clean.

She yanks open drawers. Empty. Every one.

Lauren lowers herself into the chair, rattled. She lifts the phone receiver.

A harsh, endless BUSY TONE hums in her ear.

She hangs up slowly.

At the doorway, Timothy is watching.

LAUREN

Sir. Where's all my stuff?

TIMOTHY

Yes, about that. I thought Hr  
called you.

LAUREN

Oh they're in my new office, I got  
the promotion! Wait I thought you  
wanted to interview me first?

TIMOTHY

No Lauren. That's not it.

LAUREN

Excuse me?

Officer Terry is standing at the door. Lauren notices him  
then looks back at Timothy.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

What's going on?

TIMOTHY

I'm sorry Lauren. We're going to have to let you go.

LAUREN

Wait, you're firing me?

TIMOTHY

Your personal belongings were mailed to you Friday. HR was supposed to call you this morning.

LAUREN

I can't believe you're doing this.

OFFICER TERRY

Ma'am. I'm going to have to escort you out.

TIMOTHY

Consider it an indefinite layoff.

LAUREN

This is not right. You're going to regret this after I clear my name.

OFFICER TERRY

Ma'am. You have to go.

TIMOTHY

For your sake I hope you do.

Officer Terry escorts Lauren to the elevator.

EMPLOYEES are whispering as they walk by.

Mason passes Lauren and Officer Terry.

Lauren not making any eye contact with him notice he's a carrying a box of items.

She turns around to see where he's going.

The elevator door opens and Officer Terry walks in.

He places his arm in the doorway preventing the elevator from closing.

OFFICER TERRY

Ma'am.

Lauren walks backwards into the elevator not taking her eyes off Mason.

Mason approaches Timothy's old office.

He turns to Lauren with a grin and walks into the office.

The elevator door closes.

INT. MASON'S HOUSE BEDROOM - DAY

Mason is in bed with a sheet barely covering him.

His back is visible. He's aggressively having sex with a WOMAN (20's) digging her nails into his back.

He finishes, jumps out of bed and walks into the bathroom.

He opens up the medicine cabinet and pulls out a small zip lock bag and razor.

He yells out the bathroom to the woman.

MASON

Got an early meeting this morning.

Mason pours cocaine out of bag onto the counter.

He takes a razor, lines it and sniffs.

He pulls a crumpled photograph out of the trash can.

He uncrumples the photograph, it's Lauren.

Mason turns on the shower and gets in.

He holds the photograph and masturbate.

He grunts loudly. Heavy metal is AUDIBLE in the bedroom.

He gets out of the shower.

Naked, dripping , he stares at his reflection in the mirror.

EXT. EDGE MARKETING - PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Mason pulls into the parking garage. Classical music is AUDIBLE. He puts his car in park and turns off the music. Mason sit in silence. Moments later he yells loudly. He adjust his tie and exits his car carrying his briefcase.

INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren seated in the couch, dials Tracy and leaves a voice message.

LAUREN

Tracy, please call me back. This is the 4th message I left you. Why aren't you returning my calls or responding to my texts. Call me A S A P. I need you to help me get to the bottom of this so I don't spend my life in jail. Please call me back.

She ends the call. Alex walks into the room carrying two glasses of wine. He hands a glass to Lauren.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Why the hell isn't she calling me back?

ALEX

Maybe she's busy at work. I'm sure she's working for someone else now.

Lauren takes a sip of wine.

LAUREN

Thanks, but I need something a bit stronger.

She finishes the rest of the wine with one gulp and places the glass on the table.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I can't believe that fuck face stole my job!

ALEX

What you need to do is stop worrying about him and call my attorney. Mason is clearly behind this.

LAUREN

I'm not calling your attorney. This is the same guy who tried to get me to pay you spousal support. And why are you helping me?

ALEX

Look I'm not going back and forth with you.

(MORE)

ALEX (CONT'D)

Either call my lawyer or hire someone else. But your public defender won't keep you out of prison. You don't have many options or a lot of time.

LAUREN

Oh I got options. I could represent myself.

ALEX

Just because you took a few law classes in college don't make you Johnny Cochran. You need professional help.

LAUREN

Right. Let you tell it, I need the kind of help that keeps me locked in a padded room.

ALEX

Well.

LAUREN

Shut up.

Lauren throws a pillow at Alex, He catches it.

ALEX

I don't want to see you behind bars. You may act a little crazy but you're not a killer.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Lauren opens up the medicine cabinet and grabs a bottle of Prozac. She swallows a pill. Alex walks in behind her.

ALEX

You still taking your pills?

LAUREN

Yeah. I was down to one pill every so often. I wasn't having attacks like I used to. But these past few weeks set me back a bit.

ALEX

Maybe one day you can eliminate taking them altogether.

LAUREN

Once I prove that Mason is behind turning my life upside down, I'll be fine. Otherwise I'm going to need more than pills to cope with prison.

She places the bottle back on the shelf and closes the cabinet.

EXT. LAUREN'S CAR - DAY

Lauren pulls up to Tracy's house and parks in front.

EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

She approaches the door and rings the doorbell. No answer.

She notices a pile of mail protruding from the mailbox.

She peeks in the window and see's no one.

She turns and walks away.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Lauren is discussing her case with her attorney BRETT (40s) on the patio.

BRETT

So the problem is, the prosecution's key witness is going to testify that you were the last person in the room with Mr. Manning.

LAUREN

You mean the nurse? Cause she's the only person who saw me with him.

BRETT

We don't know she's the only person. And there may be surveillance video.

LAUREN

Okay that's great. The video will prove it wasn't me.

BRETT

Apparently, in the video there's a woman who matches your description allegedly entering into his room and turning off the ventilator.

LAUREN

What? Clearly I'm being framed. When can I see the video?

BRETT

Unfortunately we won't be able to see the video until Discovery. When all evidence is presented to both sides.

LAUREN

This is ridiculous! This is my life we're talking about. I have no job, I might go to prison.

She starts sobbing. Brett pulls out a handkerchief from his vest and hands it to her.

BRETT

The evidence is weak. The video is also grainy. You can't even identify you as the person turning the machine off.

LAUREN

What about my case against Mason? I know it was him who did all those things to me.

BRETT

Right now we have no evidence linking him to your claims. But the police will keep looking for a suspect.

LAUREN

Not the same police who just arrested me.

BRETT

Look I understand your concerns. My job right now is to get this case dismissed and charges dropped against you.

LAUREN

Okay.

INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lauren enters carrying a pile of folders.

She drops the folders onto the table and see's a sticky note on her laptop from Alex.

ALEX V.O.  
Be back later going to check on my  
house.

She picks up her phone and checks her messages.

No missed calls. No new texts.

She opens her laptop and runs an online criminal search for Mason's name.

One sealed case appears, along with a newspaper article from two years ago.

The headline catches her eye "County Official's Daughter Dead from Suicide.

ON THE SCREEN

County Official Mason Davis Sr. and his wife, Catherine, of Suffolk County are mourning the loss of their beloved daughter, Cameron.

According to investigators, Cameron was found unresponsive in the family's guest house.

A note was discovered at the scene, and her death has been ruled a suicide.

She is survived by her parents and her twin brother, Mason Woodley Jr.. Cameron was 28 years old.

LAUREN  
He had a twin? Why does that name sound familiar?

She adds "Cameron Davis" to the search, but finds no additional information. The hours slip by as she continues her research, growing increasingly absorbed. Eventually, exhaustion takes over, and she falls asleep on the couch.

INT. LAUREN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lauren is startled by the sudden sound of her phone ringing. Glancing at the screen, she see's the caller ID: Tracy. She instantly answers.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Where the hell have you been? I've  
been calling you.

TRACY V.O  
Well, hello to you Lauren.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Well?

TRACY V.O  
(Clearing throat) I've been sick.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
I'm sorry. How are you feeling?

TRACY V.O  
I'm okay now. Must have been a bug  
or something. But anyway what's  
going on? I see you called a few  
times.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Yeah, I was worried about you and  
stressing about trying to find a  
lead on my case. I can't go to jail  
Tracy...

TRACY V.O  
What did your attorney say?

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Not much. But he believes I'm being  
framed.

TRACY V.O  
Really.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Well, of course! You know I didn't  
kill Jeff.

TRACY V.O  
No that's not what I meant. I'm  
just surprised they hasn't come up  
with another suspect.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
He's working on it. But I did come  
across some new information. I'm  
looking deeper into it. Once I know  
more, I'll catch you up.

TRACY V.O  
Interesting. I can't wait to hear  
about it.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Besides the state only has  
circumstantial evidence. I just  
can't wait to prove that Mason's  
behind all of this so that he can  
rot in prison.

TRACY V.O  
Yeah me too. Well I have to get  
ready for work.

LAUREN INTO PHONE  
Oh okay. Whose the new client?

TRACY V.O  
Huh?

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Your job. Who are you assisting  
silly?

TRACY V.O  
Oh, I'm no longer assisting.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
That's great! Spill the tea. Where  
are you working now?

TRACY V.O  
Um, I'm still at Edge.

LAUREN  
Oh?

TRACY V.O  
I was going to tell you Lauren.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
Tell me what? What is it?

TRACY V.O  
I work for Mason. I'm his  
secretary.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
What the fuck! Why would you work  
for the man who set me up!

TRACY V.O  
Lauren, I'm sorry it's not like  
that. Mason offered me a job when  
he started his new position. After  
you were fired, I had no job. I  
needed to work!

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)  
That's bullshit and you know it.  
You could've worked for anyone  
else! You are fuckin foul!

TRACY V.O  
There's no proof Mason is behind

Before she could finish her statement, Lauren hangs up,  
throws her phone and screams into her pillow.

EXT. EDGE MARKETING - NIGHT

Lauren wearing a disguise parks on a side street around the  
corner from Edge Marketing.

As she approaches the entrance of Edge she receives a text  
from Alex and reads it.

ON THE SCREEN

ALEX (TEXT)

I don't agree with you going up  
there, but I understand.

She puts her phone away and enters.

INT. SECURITY DESK - NIGHT

She walks to the security desk not making eye contact with  
Security Officer Terry. She signs into the log book as "Tracy  
Roberts". She walks away.

OFFICER TERRY  
I thought you were gone for the  
evening?

She stops without turning around.

LAUREN  
I forgot something.

OFFICER TERRY  
Oh okay. Have a good evening.

She quickly walks away.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lauren exits the elevator and creeps down the dark, quiet hallway. The EMPLOYEES have left for the day.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

She walks and sits at a computer. She logs in as "Tracy Roberts"

LAUREN  
Yes. Password is still the same.

She begins researching on the company's internal network.

She digs through old team photos from previous years, clicking through one after another.

She pauses on a group photo taken two years ago, her first marketing team.

Using the mouse, she slowly scrolls over the faces in the image.

Her cursor hovers over a young Caucasian woman.

Curious, she scans the list of names at the bottom of the photo, reading from left to right.

Then she see's it: "CAMERON DAVIS (20s)." Her mouth drops open in shock.

INT. EDGE MARKETING CONFERENCE ROOM - FLASHBACK 2 YEARS PRIOR

MONTAGE

Lauren is standing over Cameron as she's typing on the computer.

Timothy is talking to Lauren holding a folder with Cameron's name labeled on the folder.

Lauren is speaking to Cameron in the conference room.

Cameron is standing in the elevator holding a small box. A SECURITY OFFICER (30s) is standing next to her.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - BACK TO PRESENT

LAUREN

She was my first assistant. I fired her.

Lauren logs out of the computer, grabs her purse and exits.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

She walks down the hallway toward her old office. As she gets closer, she hears a faint moan echo from inside.

INT. LAUREN'S OLD OFFICE - NIGHT

The office door is slightly ajar.

She steps quietly and peeks through the crack.

The lights are off, but the glow from a nearby streetlamp filters through the blinds, casting faint shadows across the room.

A woman sits on the desk, her legs wrapped around a man's waist.

His back is to the door, shielding the woman's face.

He grips the edge of the desk and tilts his head slightly.

Lauren's eyes widen, it's Mason.

The woman leans in, nuzzling his neck.

As her face comes into view, Lauren freezes. It's Tracy.

TRACY

You are so sexy.

MASON

Oh yea. Cause my plan worked huh.

TRACY

Yes. I never doubted you.

Mason kisses down her neck.

TRACY (CONT'D)  
I am curious about one thing?

MASON  
Yea, what's that?

TRACY  
How did you delete the sauna  
footage?

MASON  
I told you I was the man. Bryan  
owed me favor. So I cashed in.

TRACY  
Pure genius.

They continue kissing.

Lauren gasps, covers her mouth, and stumbles back.

Without a word, she spins around and hurries down the hallway  
toward the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Lauren jabs the close button. Footsteps pound down the hall,  
closer, faster, just as the doors snap shut.

The elevator descends.

INT. LOBBY - EVENING

The doors slide open. Lauren slips out, quick and sharp, eyes  
locked ahead.

She sweeps past the security desk without looking.

INT. SECURITY DESK - NIGHT

OFFICER TERRY  
Ma'am. You forgot to sign out.

Lauren doesn't stop. She pushes through the doors and exits  
the building.

EXT. LAUREN'S CAR - NIGHT

Lauren screeches to a stop outside Tracy's house.

EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

She bolts up the steps, glancing over her shoulder.

Her hand dives into the potted plant. Dirt scatters.

Fingers close around a key. She yanks it free, jams it into the lock, and slips inside.

The door clicks shut behind her.

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lauren slips into the room, heading straight for the nightstand.

A laptop waits. Fingers fly across the keyboard.

Wrong password. She tries again. Wrong. Frustration builds.

She exhales sharply, pushes back, and pulls open the nightstand drawers.

Top drawer, empty. Second, clutter. Bottom, got it. A burner phone.

She powers it on. The lock screen glares back at her. Another password.

Her jaw tightens. She tries, fails. Tries again. Nothing.

Lauren leans back, ready to quit, then her eyes land on a framed photograph on the nightstand.

It's Tracy. Younger, smiling with a dog pressed tight to her chest.

Lauren stares at it. It clicks. She types the dog's name. The phone unlocks.

LAUREN  
It worked!

INT. TRACY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lauren sits on the edge of the bed, phone in hand. Text threads flash across the screen between Tracy and Mason.

ON SCREEN

TRACY (TEXT)  
The flowers were delivered.

MASON (TEXT)  
Good.

TRACY (TEXT)  
Getting close.

Lauren scrolls. Her brows frown.

ON SCREEN

TRACY (TEXT)  
She's visiting Jeff this afternoon.

MASON (TEXT)  
Follow her. Get it done.

Lauren gasps. The phone trembles in her hand. She jumps to her feet, clutching the phone tight, and bolts from the room.

INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

The fluorescent lights buzz overhead. A half empty cup of coffee sits beside a clutter of case files and photos. Detective James hunches over his keyboard, typing hard.

The clack of keys fills the silence. He grabs the phone, dials. Rings once. Someone picks up.

DETECTIVE JAMES (INTO PHONE)  
What's the status of the second  
camera in the garage?

He pauses, listening

DETECTIVE JAMES (INTO THE PHONE)  
Grainy? That's not good enough.  
Send it to forensics. I want that  
footage cleaned up and on my desk  
before sunrise. No one goes home  
until it's done

He slams the receiver down, jaw tight. The phone rattles.

DETECTIVE JAMES (CONT'D)  
Gotta do everything myself these  
days.

EXT. LAUREN'S CAR - NIGHT

Lauren gets in her car and pulls off. She dials Alex on her phone, it goes straight voice mail. She leaves a message.

LAUREN (INTO THE PHONE)

Alex, you're not gonna believe this. I found everything. Mason had a twin sister. Cameron she was my first assistant briefly before I hired Tracy... and Mason, they're in it together. I'm one hundred percent sure they're behind all of it. I'm meeting Brett first thing tomorrow. Call me back.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Lauren ends the call, eyes fixed on the road. She rolls up to a red light. In the rearview mirror, a car screeches to a halt, stopping just inches from her bumper.

LAUREN  
Jerk.

The light turns green. She pulls forward. The car behind her pulls forward still on her bumper. Lauren frowns, and steps on the gas. The car matches her speed, still tailgating.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
What the hell?

She flicks on her blinker, turns right at the intersection.

The car turns right too.

Her grip tightens on the wheel.

She floors it, then swerves left into a narrow alley.

Headlights vanish in the rearview as the car continues straight past.

She exhales, shaking. She pulls out of the alley, she scans left and Right. It's clear.

Her phone rings. Caller ID: TRACY.

Lauren stares at it. She Let's it ring and Ignores it.

She drives on, finally pulling into her driveway.

EXT. LAUREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lauren walks onto her porch. She notices her motion light doesn't activate. She opens the door and walks in.

INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's dark. She clicks the light switch but the light does not come on. She presses the flashlight app on her phone.

LAUREN V.O.  
Did a fuse blow?

Lauren steps into the kitchen and flicks the switch. Nothing.

She slides open the breaker box, flips a few switches. The kitchen light sputters on. She crosses to the living room, flips the lamp, drops her purse on the couch.

A floorboard CREAKS behind her. Lauren freezes, turns and Tracy explodes toward her, shoving her to the floor.

Tracy lands on top of her, hands wrapping her hands round Lauren's throat. Fingers dig in. Lauren claws, gasping.

She slams a thumb into Tracy's eye. Tracy loosens her grip. Lauren rolls, scrambles. Tracy snatches her ankle. Lauren lashes out, her boot connecting with Tracy's head. Tracy tumbles back.

Lauren scrambles to her feet. Tracy is up too, charging. Lauren bolts. Tracy yanks her by the hair. Lauren drives an elbow into Tracy's ribs. Tracy doubles over, clutching her stomach.

Lauren glances at the couch. Her purse sits there, half-open.

LAUREN (V.O.)  
My mace.

She takes a step toward the couch, but Tracy's eyes lock on her. Lauren pivots and sprints for the bedroom, slamming the door and throwing the deadbolt.

Tracy rams the door, hands pounding. She reaches, but the bolt holds.

LAUREN  
What is wrong with you? You psycho!  
You're not gonna get away with  
this!

Tracy presses her forehead to the door, voice low and dangerous.

TRACY

We'll see about that. Say one word  
and everything you love dies.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The music is loud. A small CROWD is dancing. Lauren and Tracy are sitting at the bar. Lauren is drunk and Tracy is tipsy. There's a small group of GUYS (20's) sitting at the end of the bar. Lauren puts salt on Tracy's wrist. She licks Tracy's wrist then drinks a shot of tequila.

LAUREN

I'm up to four numbers. One more  
and I win.

Tracy squirts lime on Lauren's shoulder. Tracy sucks the lime off Lauren's shoulder then drinks a shot of tequila.

TRACY

Nope we're tied. I got the  
bartender's number.

LAUREN

Fucking cheater.

TRACY

All is fair in love and war.

Lauren stares at the cluster of GUYS standing near the jukebox. The BARTENDER (20's) walks over.

BARTENDER

Anything else ladies? Last call.

Tracy notices Lauren staring at the cluster of GUYS.

TRACY

One more round.

The bartender nods and walks away. Tracy pulls her stool close to Lauren and leans in towards her face.

TRACY (CONT'D)

This will be for the ultimate win.

LAUREN

I'm listening.

TRACY

If you walk over there and invite  
one of them back to our place, you  
win.

Lauren's eyes widen.

LAUREN

Bitch they're like 10 years old.

TRACY

It'll be fun and they're at the  
bar, so at the least they're twenty-  
one.

The bartender slides two shots across the counter.

Lauren downs hers in one go.

LAUREN

You're on!

She pivots toward the cluster of GUYS laughing near the jukebox.

Lauren leans in close to one MITCH (20s) and whispers something in his ear.

His eyes widen. His friends exchange knowing looks.

Lauren straightens, gives a teasing smile, and walks back - Mitch's hand now caught in hers.

Tracy watches, half amused... half calculating.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Let's go!

Tracy tosses back her last shot.

She sets the empty glass on the counter beside a crisp twenty-dollar bill.

A faint smear of red lipstick is gleaming on the rim.

TRACY

Now let the real game begin.

INT. TRACY'S HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is dim, shadows flickering from a candle burning low. Clothes lie scattered across the floor. The aftermath of something impulsive, reckless.

She looks over to the side of the bed and see's Tracy sleeping with ease.

Lauren sits up, pulling the sheets around her. Mitch slips out of bed, disappearing into the bathroom.

Lauren's gaze follows him. Wary, thoughtful.

She reaches down, picks up his jeans from the floor, and pulls out his wallet.

She flips it open looks at his ID card.

LAUREN (V.O.)  
Mitch Hayes. Age twenty-one.

She exhales a long, uneasy breath. But then another card catches her eye.

A second ID.

She pulls it out. A driver's license. The words "UNDER 21" glow faintly under the lamp light.

Lauren freezes. The realization hits. Her pulse quickens.

She presses a pillow to her face.

LAUREN V.O  
Statutory rape.

INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE - NIGHT - BACK TO PRESENT

Lauren jolts upright at the sound of Tracy's footsteps retreating down the hall. The front door opens then closes.

She rushes out of the bedroom, flings the front door open just in time to see Tracy's car speeding off into the night.

Lauren slams the door shut, flips the lock, then slides the security chain across.

She turns back to the living room, chaos everywhere, overturned cushions, broken glass, the aftermath of their fight.

Lauren digs her phone out of her purse. Three missed calls from Alex. Her thumb hovers over the screen, then hesitates.

She opens a browser instead, types "locksmith near me."

Her breathing quickens. Images flash in her mind, Tracy's hands at her throat, Mason and Tracy together, all the lies, all the danger.

Sweat beads on her forehead. Her chest heaves. She's spiraling.

Her POV: The room warps, sound distorts. Whispers echo from nowhere.

Lauren clutches her head, drops onto the couch. Darkness crashes in.

TIME CUT - TWO HOURS LATER

A loud, urgent knock rattles the front door.

Lauren jerks awake, disoriented. Her hand dives into her purse, pulls out the mace.

She rises slowly, heart hammering, inching toward the door.

The knocking grows louder.

Lauren freezes at the door, heart still pounding.

LAUREN  
Who is it?

LOCKSMITH (O.S.)  
The locksmith, ma'am.

Lauren hesitates.

LAUREN (V.O.)  
I don't remember calling a  
locksmith.

She unlocks the door but keeps the security chain latched. The door opens a crack.

Through the gap, she sees a man in uniform, toolbox in hand. The glint of a metal name tag catches her eye - Gregory Johnson.

LOCKSMITH  
Evening, ma'am.

Lauren's gaze lingers on his eyes. She slides her mace into her pocket.

Then, with a cautious breath, she unlatches the chain and opens the door.

LAUREN  
It's this one here.

She gestures toward the front door lock.

LOCKSMITH  
Any others?

LAUREN  
No. Just this one.

The locksmith nods but doesn't move right away.

A beat. The air thickens.

He finally steps inside.

He kneels at the door, toolbox open beside him.

He works silently. The click of metal against metal echoing in the stillness.

Lauren lingers near the doorway for a moment, watching, then drifts back to the living room.

She sits on the couch, eyes fixed on him the whole time. Every sound a turn of a screw, a faint creak makes her flinch.

A final click.

The locksmith straightens, closes the door, locks it then unlocks and opens it again, testing it.

LOCKSMITH  
Finished.

He walks over and hands her small pair of keys.

Lauren pulls her wallet from her purse.

LAUREN  
Thank you. How much do I owe you?

LOCKSMITH  
Nothing. It's been paid for in full.

Lauren appears surprised.

LAUREN  
Who took care of it?

ALEX  
Relax Lauren, he's good.

Alex stands in the doorway, framed by the porch light. Relief floods her face.

She rushes over and throws her arms around him.

LAUREN  
Boy am I happy to see you.

Alex hugs her back tight.

ALEX  
You good?

The locksmith moves towards the door toolbox in hand.

LAUREN  
Thank you.

LOCKSMITH  
No problem anytime.

Alex pulls back from Lauren, his relief fading as he studies her.

Her hair's disheveled. Red marks trace her neck. The room around them is chaos.

ALEX  
Yo... what the hell happened?

Lauren shakes her head.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
What happened?

His eyes locked on hers. He wipes a tear from her cheek, thumb brushing the bruise at her throat.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Lauren...

She turns away, can't meet his eyes.

He lifts her chin, slow, careful, forcing her to face him.

For a beat, neither speaks. The silence hums with something heavy, unspoken.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Look at me.

Lauren locks eyes with Alex. Alex leans in and kisses Lauren's lips. Lauren kisses him back. She hesitates and snaps out of it.

LAUREN  
No, we should stop.

ALEX  
You want me to?

LAUREN  
We can't go backwards.

Alex nods slowly, stepping back.

ALEX  
At least tell me what happened.

LAUREN  
Tracy happened. But I'll handle it.

A heavy silence stretches between them.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
I'm just tired. I'll tell you everything in the morning. I need sleep.

ALEX  
Okay. I'll call you tomorrow.

He turns toward the door.

LAUREN  
Alex... if it's not too much. Could you stay the night? I'll feel better.

ALEX  
You don't have to ask. Couch is fine?

LAUREN  
Perfect.

He nods, brushes a kiss across her forehead. Lauren disappears down the hall.

INT. LAUREN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Soft daylight filters through half-closed blinds. Alex lies awake on the couch, staring at the ceiling.

His phone buzzes in his pants on the floor. He grabs it.  
Missed call: Mason.

Alex dials back.

MASON (V.O.)  
What took you so long?

ALEX (INTO PHONE)  
I told you not to call me. It'll  
get done.

He ends the call.

A voice behind him:

LAUREN  
What'll get done?

Alex spins. Lauren stands in the hallway, wrapped in a blanket, eyes sharp, tired.

ALEX  
Nothing important. Just work.

He slips on his pants, crosses to her, and plants a quick kiss on her forehead.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Didn't mean to wake you.

He snatches his keys off the table and heads toward the door.

LAUREN  
Leaving so soon?

Alex pauses at the door, keys in hand, doesn't turn around right away.

ALEX  
Yeah. Things to take care of. But I'll be back. Then you can tell me everything. What you found on Mason and Tracy, what really happened here.

Lauren forces a faint smile.

LAUREN  
Nothing. Just a misunderstanding.

Alex finally turns to face her, searching her eyes.

ALEX

You sure about that?

LAUREN

Yeah. I'm just gonna get a little more sleep. Got a meeting with Brett in a few hours. We'll talk after.

ALEX

Alright. Bet.

He nods once and walks out.

Lauren watches through the window as he heads to his car.

The door clicks shut.

She locks it, then slides the security chain into place.

INT. MASON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mason sits shirtless on the couch, eyes fixed on his phone, his face unreadable.

From down the hall, a bedroom door creaks open.

Tracy appears, barefoot, wearing only an oversized T-shirt. Her hair's a mess, her expression a dangerous mix of playfulness and defiance.

She pads toward Mason, kneels between his legs, and trails soft kisses up his chest.

Mason doesn't look up.

MASON

Not now.

She ignores him, her kisses move lower, hungrier. Fingers toy with the button of his pants.

MASON (CONT'D)

I said, not now.

Tracy pauses... then smirks. From behind her back, she reveals a small Zip-loc bag of cocaine, holding it up like a peace offering or a weapon.

She lays the bag gently on his thigh, her lips brushing against his skin.

Mason's jaw tightens. He snatches the bag and shoves her away.

Tracy hits the floor hard, her breath catching.

He doesn't look at her. Instead, he empties the bag onto the coffee table, movements sharp, mechanical. He grabs a razor blade from an ashtray and slices the powder into three perfect lines.

He leans forward and inhales. A long, shaky breath follows.

Finally, Mason glances down at Tracy, motioning her closer with a flick of his fingers.

His voice drops to a low, dangerous murmur

MASON (CONT'D)  
Come here.

She hesitates for a moment then crawls over to Mason.

Mason leans back into the couch, his breathing uneven. Tracy moves closer, her actions teasing, deliberate both intimate and manipulative as she pleases him orally.

Mason lets out a tense laugh.

MASON (CONT'D)  
Easy, babe.

Tracy doesn't stop. Her movements become sharper, something's off. Mason's expression shifts from pleasure to discomfort... then pain.

MASON (CONT'D)  
(gritting his teeth)  
Tracy.

His voice falters. He tries to stand, but his legs give out. He stumbles, then drops to his knees, choking on air.

Tracy stays crouched, watching him shake, her face unreadable.

MASON (CONT'D)  
What.. what did you?

He crashes to the floor, his body convulsing violently. Foam gathers at the corner of his mouth.

Tracy rises slowly, her bare feet stepping around his spasming body. She stares down, emotionless as if she's waited a long time for this.

TRACY

By the way... Lauren had nothing to do with Cameron's death

INT. EDGE MARKETING - WORKSPACE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Tracy see's Cameron walking away from her cubicle.

Tracy glances over her shoulder the room is empty.

She moves quickly. Cameron's purse sits on a chair. Tracy unzips it. She pulls out a bottle of prescription pills, studies the label, Cameron's name.

She empties the pills into her own purse, replaces them with another bottle from inside, Xanax, the label worn and smudged.

Tracy screws the cap back on, sets the bottle neatly inside Cameron's bag like nothing ever happened.

Tracy hurries back to her cubicle.

INT. MASON'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - BACK TO PRESENT

Mason lies twitching on the floor.

TRACY

Your sister was in the way. Guess you finally ran out of control Mason.

She stands, glancing around the room.

She wipes the table clean with a napkin, erasing the razor blade and cocaine residue into a tissue.

She folds it neatly, tucks it into her purse.

Then she moves to Mason's phone, unlocks it with his thumb. A few quick taps then types a short message.

ON THE SCREEN TEXT DRAFT

"Can't live with what I did. Tell Lauren I'm sorry."

She sends it.

Tracy steps back, surveying the room one last time.

She slips on her sunglasses and walks out the door.

INT. MASON'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Alex climbs the front steps. He presses the doorbell.

Waits, Nothing.

He rings again. No answer.

Alex knocks, harder this time.

ALEX

Yo, Mason? You here, man?

He tests the doorknob, it turns. The door creaks open.

Alex hesitates in the doorway.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Mason?

He steps inside. He closes the door behind him, calling out louder now.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Come on, man. I don't have much time for..

INT. MASON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alex stops mid sentence.

Mason lies sprawled on the floor motionless. A faint white residue streaks from his nose and mouth.

ALEX

Oh, shit.

Alex rushes over, drops to his knees. He shakes Mason's shoulder.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Mason! Hey come on, wake up!

No response.

Alex fumbles for his phone, dials 911.

ALEX (INTO THE PHONE) (CONT'D)

Yeah, I need an ambulance! My friend, he's not breathing. Hurry!

He presses a hand to Mason's chest, trying to find a pulse.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Hold on, man... just hold on.

EXT. STREET - DAY

An ambulance races down the road, siren screaming.

INT. HOSPITAL - MASON'S ROOM - DAY

Mason lies weak in bed, pale, hooked to IVs. His eyes flutter open, groggy, unfocused.

Alex stands at his bedside, arms crossed.

ALEX  
Man... what the hell happened?

Mason swallows hard, voice hoarse.

MASON  
Can't believe that bitch gave me  
that bad shit. She got me, man.

Alex leans in closer.

ALEX  
Who? Tracy?

Mason nods, staring off.

MASON  
I never wanted it to go this far, I  
swear. I thought Lauren was behind  
my sister's death. I just wanted to  
scare her... maybe get her fired.  
That's all.

He turns his head slowly toward Alex.

MASON (CONT'D)  
Tracy... she took it somewhere else.  
She did the rest.

The monitor beeps louder, Mason's breathing quickens.

ALEX  
What did she do, Mason?

Mason's lips part, but before he can answer, his body tenses. The monitor spikes. Nurses rush in as Alex steps back, stunned.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Mason!

Alarms fill the room.

INT. HOSPITAL JEFF'S ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

The lights are dim. Machines hum softly.

Jeff lies motionless in bed, his chest rising and falling with the help of the ventilator.

The door opens.

Tracy steps inside, dressed almost identically to Lauren. Same jacket, same hairstyle under a wig.

She stands by the bed, staring down at Jeff.

The machine's rhythmic hiss fills the silence.

Tracy glances at the monitor, then reaches toward the cords.

Her hand hovers there, trembling slightly.

She freezes, her reflection flickering in the monitor's glass.

She flicks the switch. Then, without a word, she turns and walks out of the room.

Moments later, ALARMS BLARE

A NURSE (30s) rushes past, followed by a DOCTOR (30s). They burst into Jeff's room.

The monitor flashes red. Chaos erupts as the nurse calls for help.

Tracy keeps walking down the hallway, her pace steady, blending into the noise behind her.

INT. HOSPITAL MASON'S ROOM - BACK TO PRESENT

The steady beep of the heart monitor fills the quiet room.

A nurse adjusts Mason's IV, checks the monitor, and gives Alex a small, polite nod.

NURSE  
He needs rest. Don't stay too long.

The nurse exits the room closing the door behind her.

Alex pulls up a chair beside Mason's bed.

ALEX

Look, man.. I know Lauren. She didn't have some hidden agenda when she fired your sister. That's not who she is. I told you before Cameron had some bad work habits when she was with me at Max Advertising. It wasn't personal

MASON

Yeah, I know that now. Everything Tracy told me, all lies. I'll make sure the cops hear the truth. My part too.

Alex studies him for a moment, then offers his hand.

ALEX

Do that. And lay off the drugs, yeah?

Mason manages a faint smile and shakes his hand.

MASON

Yeah. No more ghosts.

Alex pats his shoulder, then heads for the door. Before he leaves, he glances back, Mason already sinking into the pillow, eyes closing.

ALEX

Get some rest, man.

He steps out, the door shutting with a soft click.

INT. PRECINCT - FRONT DESK - DAY

Alex opens the door for Lauren, and they step inside.

They walk toward the front desk, where a CLERK (30s) looks up from a computer.

Lauren crosses her arms, eyes still on Alex.

LAUREN

You still haven't told me why you were at Mason's place in the first place.

ALEX

Because I was trying to clear your name. I saw what people were saying online. The stuff going around about you and Edge. So I started digging.

LAUREN

And you thought breaking into his house was the smart move

ALEX

It worked didn't it?

Lauren exhales, half annoyed, half impressed. She reaches into her purse and sets a burner phone on the counter.

CLERK

May I help you?

LAUREN

Yes. I have some evidence I need to turn in. My attorney should be here any minute.

The clerk nods and slides a form across the counter.

CLERK

You can start by filling this out.

Lauren takes the pen and fills out the form.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Bright sunlight cuts across the courthouse steps. The tension that once hung over everything seems to lift.

Lauren, Alex, and Brett step out through the heavy doors. Reporters linger nearby, but none approach.

Brett turns to Lauren, extending his hand.

BRETT

You're all set. Everything's been cleared.

LAUREN

Thank you, sir.

BRETT

My pleasure.

He gives Alex a nod, then heads down the steps.

Lauren watches him go, then turns to Alex and playfully shoves his shoulder.

LAUREN  
Couldn't have done this without you.

Alex smirks, eyebrows raised.

ALEX  
Guess you're kinda smart after all.

LAUREN  
Come here, big head.

She grabs his face with both hands and kisses him.

Alex wraps his arms around her, pulling her in close, then presses a kiss to her forehead.

For a brief moment, all feels calm.

Then a black sedan slows as it passes the courthouse. Tinted windows. No plates.

Lauren's smile fades slightly, her eyes following it until it disappears into traffic.

Alex notices.

ALEX  
Something wrong?

Lauren shakes her head, forcing a smile.

LAUREN  
Nope! Just ready to move on.

They walk down the steps together.

INT. EDGE MARKETING - LAUREN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lauren sits at her new desk, sunlight spilling across polished wood. In her hands, she turns a nameplate over slowly.

It reads: LAUREN KELLY, MARKETING DIRECTOR.

She studies it a faint, disbelieving smile tugging at her lips.

A knock at the door.

LAUREN  
It's open.

Timothy steps in, half-smiling, hesitant.

TIMOTHY  
Welcome back, Lauren.

LAUREN  
Thank you, sir.

He lingers in the doorway.

TIMOTHY  
May I?

LAUREN  
Sure. Come in.

He walks inside, stopping just short of her desk.

TIMOTHY  
Look, I just wanted to say... I'm  
sorry for everything that happened.  
It wasn't personal.

Lauren nods, her tone even.

LAUREN  
I know. It was business.

A quiet moment. Timothy nods again, relieved and slips out, closing the door gently behind him.

Lauren rises from her chair and walks to the door.

She slides the nameplate into its holder, "CLICK"

For the first time, her name looks permanent again.

She takes a slow breath, closes the door, and stands there for a moment. She exhales, closes her eyes for a moment, then presses her palms together in quiet gratitude.

LAUREN (CONT'D)  
Thank God...It's finally over.

She looks out the window, peaceful, but with the faintest flicker of thought behind her eyes.

## EXT. EDGE MARKETING - DAY

Mason, wrists cuffed, is led toward a squad car. A UNIFORMED OFFICER (30's) guides his head down as he's pushed into the back seat.

Mason sinks into the seat, defeated.

Through the reflection in the window, he looks up and freezes.

High above, in her office window, Lauren stands watching. A coffee cup in her hand

## EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE - DAY

A police cruiser idles at the curb, red and blue lights spinning silently. Detective James stands at the gate, reading a search warrant. Officer Tate waits nearby.

DETECTIVE JAMES

This is it.

He nods. They step onto the porch. Detective James bangs on the door, hard.

DETECTIVE JAMES (CONT'D)

Tracy Roberts! Police! Open up!

Officer Tate moves forward, rams the door. It bursts open with a CRACK.

## NT. TRACY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They sweep through. The place is half-empty, cabinet drawers pulled out, furniture gone, dust outlines where pictures once hung.

## INT. TRACY'S BEDROOM

Detective James steps inside. Closet doors hang open, nothing but stray hangers. He tugs at a drawer empty.

OFFICER TATE (O.S.)

Looks like she left in a hurry.

DETECTIVE JAMES

Tear it apart. See what's left.

INT. TRACY'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

OFFICER TATE  
Detective, you need to see this.

James enters. The medicine cabinet hangs open.

Inside taped to the mirror is a collage of photographs.

Lauren and Tracy, smiling together.

Several of Lauren alone, red hearts drawn around her head.

A photo of Lauren and Alex with Alex's eyes are blacked out.

Handwritten messages: "I love you." "Mine forever." "No one can have you."

The two men stare in silence.

OFFICER TATE (CONT'D)  
Jesus...

DETECTIVE JAMES  
Looks like we just met the real  
Tracy Roberts.

James closes the cabinet slowly. The mirror catches his reflection and Lauren's face in one of the photos.

EXT. TRACY'S HOUSE - DAY

Detective James and Officer Tate exit the front door.

Detective James holds a clear evidence bag. Inside it, a photograph from the bathroom collage: Lauren's face circled in red, the words "Mine forever" scrawled across it.

He looks down at it.

OFFICER TATE  
Think she's long gone?

DETECTIVE JAMES  
Not for long.

He hands the bag to Tate, then looks out toward the quiet neighborhood.

DETECTIVE JAMES (CONT'D)  
No one disappears forever.

They walk toward the police car.

The cruiser door closes.

Lights flash once, briefly then fade as they drive off down the street.

INT. DINER - TIJUANA - DAY

A small roadside diner hums with faint chatter and clinking dishes.

A WAITRESS (20s) slides over, refilling a half-empty coffee cup at a corner booth.

The waitress walks away.

A phone on the table buzzes, a FaceLook notification flashes across the screen:

"Experienced Assistant Wanted" Edge Marketing

A woman's hand, manicured, picks up the phone. She taps the notification.

She lifts the coffee cup, takes a slow sip.

When she sets it down, a perfect smudge of red lipstick marks the rim.

The camera pans to the table beside the phone lies a passport. The name reads: "Rebecca Lane."

The woman's face remains hidden. Just the faint reflection of sunglasses in the window, a blurred smile.

She scrolls to the Edge Marketing page, her finger hovers over APPLY.

**FADE OUT**