

Ocean, City, Monster, Building

Written by

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1

INT. BUS - DAY - JULY 1979

1

FADE IN:

Sally Lambert (17) sitting on the back of the bus in a corner by herself facing the window. Tears are streaming down her face, she begins to gasp for air as she cries more intensely.

Jimmy Carter's Crisis of Confidence speech plays in the background from someone's transistor radio.

"Good evening. This is a special night for me. Exactly three years ago, on July 15, 1976, I accepted the nomination of my party to run for president of the United States.

I promised you a president who is not isolated from the people, who feels your pain, and who shares your dreams and who draws his strength and his wisdom from you.

During the past three years I've spoken to you on many occasions about national concerns, the energy crisis..."

Reverse shot of a man sitting across from Sally on the other side of the bus holding and listening to a transistor radio on speaker, he stares at the crying Sally.

The bus comes to a stop at a station.

Sally get off the bus.

2

EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY - SEPTEMBER 1984 2

Sally Lambert (22) in a slightly different hair cut, wearing slightly different clothes and a backpack on her back standing in front of the door. She take a deep breath, knocks on the door.

The door opens.

Sally's mother Denise Lambert (45) with tears in her eyes standing on the other side, she reaches out and gives Sally a big hug.

3

INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

3

Sally sits by the short end of the dining table, Denise is behind the counter working on a pot of coffee.

DENISE

Did you have an easy trip up dear?

SALLY
Never mind that, what happened?

DENISE
I don't know, I don't know. I just
got the phone call this morning,
they told me they found him in his
car outside the cemetery.

Denise walks out with a cup of coffee for Sally. Denise puts
it down in front of her.

The doorbell rings.

SALLY
I will get it.

Sally gets up, she walks over to the door.

DENISE
No don't get it, there's nobody
there.

4 EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY 4

Sally opens the door, nobody is there.

DENISE
The doorbell is broken, it's been
doing that for weeks.

Sally closes the door.

5 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 5

Sally sits back down.

Denise picks up the mug from the table and hands it to her.

SALLY
Why haven't you replaced it yet?

DENISE
I don't know, it still works.

SALLY
It doesn't!

DENISE
When you press it, it still works.

SALLY
But it's going off on its own.

DENISE
I don't know what to tell you, I
have too much on my mind to worry
about some doorbell. If you are so
useful why don't you go and fix it?

Sally takes a deep breath.

SALLY
I will fix it, I will fix all of
it.

The telephone rings.

Sally gets up and gestures to Denise that she's got it.

6 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

Sally picks up the phone.

SALLY
Hello.

POLLSTER
Hi, good morning, is this the
Lambert household? I'm looking for
Jason and Denise Lambert.

SALLY
Speaking.

POLLSTER
Is this Denise?

SALLY
Huh no, this is their daughter
Sally.

POLLSTER
Oh hi Sally. Are your parents home?

Sally is visibly annoyed about that.

SALLY
What is this about?

Denise tips her head out from the kitchen.

DENISE
Are they looking for me?

Sally holds up one finger.

POLLSTER

This is Jen from Gallup, I just have a few questions about the upcoming presidential election for your parents. Do they have a moment?

SALLY

I'm sorry this is really not a good time.

POLLSTER

I promise this would only take a few minutes. Your response would be vitally important...

DENISE

Who is it?

Sally waves her off.

SALLY

I'm really sorry. It's really not the time for it. I'm gonna have to hang up now.

POLLSTER

Okay no problem, is there a better time we can call back to talk to your parents about who they're voting for...

Sally hangs up the phone.

She walks back to the table just about to sit down.

SALLY

It's a pollster.

The doorbell rings again.

Sally gets up before she can sit down.

SALLY

I will fix the doorbell right now.

Sally walks over to the door, this time faster.

DENISE

No just leave it alone.

Sally opens the door to check on the doorbell button, as the door opens we see two people standing in front of the door. Town Sheriff Johnathan White (50) and State Police Detective Aida Pierre (45). It's clear they had pressed the doorbell this time.

SALLY

Oh... Yes?

JOHNATHAN

Is it Sally?

Johnathan recognizes Sally, Sally doesn't recognize him.

SALLY

Ahhh...

JOHNATHAN

It's Johnathan. I worked with Mayor Lambert years ago, I knew you since you were this little.

Johnathan gestures on Sally how tall she was.

Sally still doesn't remember and is clearly made uncomfortable by the gesture.

SALLY

Of course.

Denise walks in from behind Sally.

JOHNATHAN

And this is Det. Aida Pierre she's with the State Police.

Aida waves.

JOHNATHAN

Denise.

DENISE

Johnathan. I called the station this morning looking for you, they put me on with a Canadian lady.

JOHNATHAN

Right, that's Christine you spoke to. She's from Canada.

AIDA

May we come in?

SALLY
Yes of course, please come in.

7 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

7

Johnathan and Aida sit down on the long end of the table.
Sally sits back down where she was.

Denise is standing by the table.

DENISE
Can I get you guys any
refreshments?

AIDA
No, I'm okay.

JOHNATHAN
I'll have a cup of joe if you have
a pot back there.

DENISE
I certainly do.

Denise walks back to the kitchen, pours two cups of coffee.
One for Johnathan, one for herself.

SALLY
So what happened?

JOHNATHAN
Well the truth is we don't really
know what happened now, that's why
the State Police is...

Denise hands Johnathan the mug then sits down across from
Sally.

JOHNATHAN
Thank you. That's why the Det.
Pierre is here, because the case
does involve a minor. Now we don't
really know exactly how they knew
each other, the nature of their
relationship, or how they ended up
in the car toget...

Sally looks terrified and in shock.

SALLY
A minor?

AIDA

Yeah, you didn't know that?

Aida looks at Sally.

JOHNATHAN

You didn't tell your daughter?

Johnathan looks at Denise.

DENISE

I haven't gotten around to it yet.

Denise looks at Sally.

SALLY

What do you mean a minor?

Sally stares at Aida.

AIDA

Well, Jason Lambert was found dead
on the backseat of his car early
this morning near the Henley Family
Cemetery, with a 15 year old girl
also on the backseat, also dead.

Sally looks physically sick.

AIDA

Are you okay?

SALLY

Yeah, I'm just... I'm just a
little...

Sally vomits.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

8 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - SALLY'S OLD BEDROOM - DAY

8

Sally wakes up from her bed.

She sits up, a headache rushes to her head.

She hears some mumbling downstairs.

She leaves the room to check on it.

9

INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

9

Sally walks downstairs.

She sees Johnathan and Aida standing by the front door, looking like they are trying to leave.

Denise is next to them, looking like she's trying to keep them there longer.

DENISE

But when would I get to see him?

JOHNATHAN

He's with the coroner now, with no difficulties they should be done by Friday. They will release him to you after.

DENISE

Johnathan, he's got nothing to do with it, you know him, he was probably just trying to help her.

JOHNATHAN

I know. I know. We just have to look at all the possibilities, okay?

SALLY

Mom?

Denise turns.

DENISE

Sally, you're up?

Aida looks at Johnathan.

AIDA

We should go.

Johnathan checks his watch.

JOHNATHAN

Yeah, we really should.

Johnathan turns to Denise.

JOHNATHAN

Alright, that's it for us. I'll report back when we have more information, okay?

Johnathan turns to Sally.

JOHNATHAN
See you later Sally, feel better.

Sally gives a polite wave.

10 EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

10

Johnathan and Aida exit the house.

JOHNATHAN
Gee, what a family huh?

Aida looks at him with no replies.

AIDA
Let's get to the girl's parents
house.

JOHNATHAN
It's that way.

Johnathan speaks as he points to his right.

Aida walks towards her car parked on the side of the street.

Johnathan turns walks down the street.

AIDA
Hey the car is over here. Where are
you going?

Johnathan walks further down the street, he turns his head.

JOHNATHAN
It's just a few blocks away.

AIDA
Get in the car, we will drive
there.

JOHNATHAN
What are you afraid of, let's walk.

Aida slams the car door close.

11 EXT. STREET - RESIDENTIAL NERIBERGHOOOD - DAY

11

Aida catches up to Johnathan.

AIDA
 Seriously, you wanna walk there?

JOHNATHAN
 Yeah, what's wrong? You guys don't walk in the big city?

AIDA
 I live in Albany, hardly the big city.

JOHNATHAN
 Albany? Where are you from?

Johnathan asks seemingly condescendingly.

JOHNATHAN
 You a southern girl?

AIDA
 Eh, no.

JOHNATHAN
 Nope?

Aida hesitantly answers.

AIDA
 No. I was born in Haiti.

JOHNATHAN
 Haiti? Africa?

AIDA
 It's in the Caribbean.

JOHNATHAN
 Okay.

The conversation comes to an end.

A few seconds of awkward silence.

JOHNATHAN
 When did you come over?

AIDA
 '63.

JOHNATHAN
 And how old were you?

AIDA
 Ahhh, 24.

JOHNATHAN
And you always lived in Albany?

AIDA
New York City.

JOHNATHAN
Oh, which borough?

Aida getting slightly annoyed.

AIDA
I moved a lot. Kind of all over the place.

JOHNATHAN
Now how does a woman like you from the Kingdom of HAITEE become a detective here in the United States?

AIDA
Same as anyone I guess, going through the police academy.

JOHNATHAN
So you are telling me a Haitian woman can just come to this country and join the police academy?

Aida takes a beat.

AIDA
I'm an American citizen.

Johnathan makes a strange face.

JOHNATHAN
You a refugee?

AIDA
No.

JOHNATHAN
You married?

AIDA
You know we really don't have to talk.

JOHNATHAN
I know. Oh I know.

AIDA

How far is this house anyway?

Jonathan stops, he points down the street.

JOHNATHAN

Go down this block, turn west at the light and take it all the way down, it's the second house on the right.

AIDA

I'll see you when you get there.

Aida starts running.

Aida is running down the street, breathing heavily.

AIDA

Un fucking believable.

Aida says to herself under breath.

CUT TO:

12

EXT. MILLERS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

12

Johnathan is standing by the front door, smoking a cigarette, Aida runs up panting heavily.

AIDA

You gave me the wrong address?

JOHNATHAN

You looked like you wanted the exercise Ms. Cadet.

Aida ate whatever she was going to say.

AIDA

Let's just go inside.

JOHNATHAN

Hold on, so the family doesn't know what happened to the girl yet. What do you wanna do?

AIDA

What do you mean what do I wanna do? Why hasn't anyone told them yet?

Johnathan shrugs his shoulders.

Aida looks to be in disbelief, she turns and walks up to the door.

13

INT. MILLERS' HOUSE - ENTRANCE - DAY

13

A knock on the door. Jake Miller (40) opens the door.

Aida is standing on the other side with Johnathan a few steps behind her.

JAKE

Hello?

AIDA

Hi, are you Mr. Miller?

JAKE

Yes.

AIDA

I'm Det. Aida Pierre with the State Police, you probably already know Sheriff White, he's with Rome PD, may we come in?

Amy Miller (35) hearing this rushes out from the back.

AMY

Where's my Megan? Where is she?

AIDA

Mrs. Miller, may we come in first?

AMY

No! Tell me where's my daughter first!

JAKE

Amy please.

AMY

Where is she? I haven't heard from her since yesterday morning.

Jake opens the door wider to let Aida and Johnathan through, camera leaves as they walk in.

JAKE

Come in please.

Jake closes the door, shutting the camera outside.

AMY
I called the police last night and
haven't heard shit from you
people...

14 EXT. MILLERS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

14

Camera moves away from the door slowly.

A passerby walks past the camera.

A car drives by,

Some time passes.

The door opens.

Amy is in handcuffs behind her back as Johnathan pushes her
out of the door. Jake and Aida follow.

JAKE
Where are you taking her?

JOHNATHAN
The station, we have the right to
keep her there for 72 hours without
charges, so that's what we will do,
while we think about what to charge
her with.

AMY
Fuck you!

Johnathan points at Amy.

JOHNATHAN
Maybe that.

AIDA
Do we have to?

JOHNATHAN
Yes we do!

AIDA
Come on, Sheriff.

JOHNATHAN
Come on yourself, the bitch spat on
me.

Johnathan turns toward Jake.

JOHNATHAN

You can pick her up at the station
on Friday.

Johnathan takes Amy by the shoulder and walks away.

JOHNATHAN

Let's go.

Jake turns to Aida for help.

JAKE

Detective?

AIDA

Come by the station this afternoon,
I will see what I can do. If you
could bring some of Megan's
handwriting with you. It'd really
help the investigation. Any
journals or letters you can find.

Jake nods.

Aida leaves.

15

EXT. STREET - RESIDENTIAL NERIBERGHOOH - DAY

15

Aida catches up to Johnathan and Amy.

AMY

You're hurting me!

JOHNATHAN

Not enough apparently, you can
still talk back.

AIDA

I got her, I got her.

Aida takes out her car key hands it over to Johnathan.

AIDA

I got her, you drive please.

Johnathan hands over Amy, takes the key.

AMY

Where are we going?

JOHNATHAN

I just told you, we're going to
station.

AMY

What are we walking to the station?
You guys are so morally bankrupted
you can't even afford gas money?

AIDA

We're walking to my car, it's
parked just a few blocks down.

AMY

Why didn't you just drive here and
park here?

Aida rolls her eyes, takes a deep breath.

AIDA

That's what I told him as well.

JOHNATHAN

I didn't want you to drive here and
park here because I didn't want
your nice car to gets stolen. A few
blocks makes all the difference
around here.

AIDA

Thank you.

Aida says ambiguously.

Amy turns her head as far back as she can towards Aida.

AMY

Where's my Megan, let me see her, I
need to see her.

Aida nods.

AIDA

Okay, okay, let's get to the
station first.

16

EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

16

Aida, Johnathan and Amy walk down the street from afar.

As they get closer all three of them notice the Lamberts'
house door opens, Sally runs out looking emotional, she's
going the other way, she doesn't notice the three of them.

Aida, Johnathan and Amy walk over to her car. Aida takes the handcuffs from behind Amy to in front of her, to make her more comfortable then places Amy in the backseat and shuts the door.

She has a quick word with Johnathan then runs after Sally in the same direction. Johnathan gets in the driver's seat and drives away.

17

INT. DINER - DAY

17

Sally and Aida walk in.

They sit down at a table by the window.

They each have a cup of coffee in front of them.

Aida takes out a tape recorder.

She presses the red button.

AIDA

Thank you so much for taking the time.

SALLY

It's fine. I needed to get out of the house anyway.

AIDA

I understand it must be very difficult.

SALLY

For many reasons yes.

AIDA

I have a few questions about your father regarding the investigation, I had a chance to speak to your mother while you were upstairs, I can imagine it's still emotional to talk about it.

SALLY

It's fine, I can handle it, I wanna help, I won't throw up again, I promise.

AIDA

Okay. Your mother told me you go to NYU?

Sally nods.

AIDA
What major?

SALLY
Psychology for undergrad and
Clinical Neuropsychiatry for
graduate.

AIDA
Really? You know I got my undergrad
in criminal psychology, best
decision I've ever made.

Sally nods.

AIDA
Do you live in the city?

SALLY
I do, lower Manhattan. Do you?

AIDA
Not now, but I spent my 20s in
Harlem, my aunt still lives there.

SALLY
Where do you live now?

AIDA
Albany, it's where the State Police
headquarters is.

Sally nods.

Aida takes a deep breath.

AIDA
So... is it fair for me to assume
you were adopted?

Sally nods.

Aida nods back.

AIDA
Could you tell me a little bit
about your childhood? What was your
first memory about your father?

SALLY
I guess the first day I stayed with
them.

AIDA

So you weren't an infant when your parents adopted you?

SALLY

No, I was 12.

AIDA

Are there any other kids in the house?

SALLY

No, I was the only one. You know the older kids they rarely get adopted. My parents said they never really wanted to have children. So they decided to adopt a teenager.

AIDA

And where were you before that?

SALLY

I'm an orphan. Just been going from orphanage to foster home and back to orphanage, until they took me in permanently.

AIDA

I'm sorry to hear that.

SALLY

Why?

AIDA

It must be tough.

SALLY

It's the only way I know. I feel like we're all orphans really, all of us humans. We get left here on this earth with nothing explained to us, we don't know where we came from. Where we going. What's the point of all of this. We crave connections so badly we create religions just to feel closer to our creator. We tell stories about how we were once linked together and how they promised to come back for us in the end. We fight wars and kill each other, do ungodly things to one another just to prove our loyalty and devotion to them.

(MORE)

SALLY (CONT'D)

All we really wanted... is just to talk, but they never show up, they never respond, but we can't lose faith, right?

Aida looks confused and caught off guard.

AIDA

Right... so your father Jason, when was the last time you spoke to him?

SALLY

Two weeks ago on the phone.

AIDA

And what did you guys talk about?

SALLY

I talked about my graduation thesis and he talked about his plans for Christmas. He said he wants to take the family on a vacation. We never go on vacations so I was looking forward to it.

AIDA

Anything unusual about the tone of his voice?

Sally shakes her head.

AIDA

What about growing up? Have you ever noticed anything strange about him?

SALLY

No.

AIDA

How he behaves around you?

SALLY

No. Never. Listen, I know what you're asking. And no, my father has never done anything like that. Which is why this doesn't make any sense.

AIDA

How was your relationship with him? Were you guys close?

SALLY

As close as one can be in our situation I guess.

AIDA

So that's close? Not close?

SALLY

Close enough.

AIDA

And what about your mother? How would you describe their relationship?

SALLY

What can I say? They found a way to deal with each other. Sometimes that's all you really need in a relationship. They've been married for longer than I've been alive, I don't feel qualified to make a judgment on it.

AIDA

Does the name Megan Miller mean anything to you?

Sally sits up.

SALLY

No. Is that the girl?

Aida pauses for a second then nods.

AIDA

Do you have any idea how your father might know her?

Sally sits back.

SALLY

He served in Vietnam, and he was the mayor briefly in the 70s. The local high school would invite him as guest speaker to talk to the students. He would often give a speech about the sacrifice his generation had to make in order for the younger generation to live in freedom. The principal was his assistant when he was mayor.

Camera moves away from the table, it goes out of the door.

18 INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - AFTERNOON

18

Door opens.

Aida walks in.

Christine (30) is working a shift at the front desk, she greets Aida.

CHRISTINE

Detective Pierre. Sheriff White asked you to meet him in the interview room when you get in.

Christine grabs the keys.

CHRISTINE

Oh and here's your keys.

AIDA

Thank you. You must be Christine.

CHRISTINE

I am, detective Pierre.

AIDA

Just call me Aida. It's nice to meet you.

CHRISTINE

Nice to meet you too, Aida.

AIDA

Do you know when the autopsy results gonna come out?

CHRISTINE

They sent the bodies to the lab this morning. It should be done by tomorrow.

AIDA

Could you do me a favor and let me know as soon as the results are here?

CHRISTINE

Yes, I will.

AIDA

Great. Where's the Sheriff you said?

CHRISTINE

In the interview room with the suspect.

AIDA

She's not a suspect. How long have they been in there?

CHRISTINE

About an hour or two.

AIDA

Where's this room?

CHRISTINE

Just down the hall.

AIDA

Thank you.

19

INT. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

19

Aida walks down the hall, she reaches out to open the interview room door, as she touches the handle, the door opens from the inside.

Johnathan walks out.

JOHNATHAN

What are you doing standing here?

AIDA

I was just about to go in.

JOHNATHAN

She just had another episode, let her calm down a bit.

AIDA

Why do we need to do this? She just lost her daughter.

Johnathan looks around for a second.

JOHNATHAN

You wouldn't know this and I don't blame you. But it's a small town here and we all know this. The woman works in the world's oldest profession.

Aida looks confused.

AIDA
She's a toolmaker?

JOHNATHAN
No! She's a prostitute from
Atlantic City, and the husband was
a magician.

AIDA
What does that have to do with
anything?

JOHNATHAN
Do you really think a prostitute
and a magician can be good parents?
Do you really think they can raise
well rounded offspring? She's the
break through of the case.

AIDA
Just let me talk to her for a
minute.

Johnathan about to open the door.

Aida stops him.

AIDA
Alone.

Johnathan stops and gestures Aida to go in.

Aida just about to go in.

JOHNATHAN
Before you go in, let me just ask
you, what VPN do you use?

AIDA
What?

JOHNATHAN
V. P. N. What VPN do you use?

AIDA
What's a VPN?

JOHNATHAN
Virtual Private Networks.

AIDA
What's that?

JOHNATHAN

It's how you can keep your internet data private and secure. When you log on to the internet, the server assigns you an IP address, this address is what hackers use to identify you and steal your personal information. With Fast Track VPN you can select from their over 180 servers around the globe, making it impossible for hackers to do you harm. Not only that, you can also stream copyrighted contents restricted in your regions. For example Netflix just lost the North America streaming license for The Office to the newly created NBC universal streaming service, but they still hold the show's streaming rights in Japan. So instead of paying for an additional streaming service, you can simply log on to Fast Track VPN, select from one of the servers in Japan, and Voilà you're good to go. For a limited time only Fast Track VPN is offering new customers 30% off for their first three months of subscription. Go to FastTrackVPN.com enter promote code: OCEAN30 for 30% off your first three months of subscription.

Aida looks even more confused.

AIDA

Wh... wh... you guys have an office in Japan?

JOHNATHAN

Never mind, ready to go in?

Johnathan tries to open the door.

AIDA

I said alone.

Johnathan gestures again.

Aida opens the door and goes in.

JOHNATHAN

Your funeral.

20

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM - AFTERNOON

20

Aida walks in.

Amy is sitting by the short end of the table, she looks up.
Her hands cuffed in front of her.

They make eye contact.

AIDA

How are you holding up?

Amy looks at Aida with no response.

AIDA

These cuffs are not necessary, let
me take them off.

Aida removes the handcuffs from Amy.

Aida sits down on the chair next to Amy, as she sits down,
she pulls the chair closer to Amy.

Aida takes out her tape recorder, presses the red button.

AIDA

So, I know it must be difficult but
do you mind if I ask you a few
questions about Megan? It's really
important for me to hear your side
of the story. It'd really help us
to solve the...

AMY

I'm hungry.

Aida is caught off guard.

AIDA

What?

AMY

I'm hungry.

AIDA

You've only been here for two
hours.

AMY

And I'm already hungry, I haven't
eaten anything since yesterday, I
can't think straight when I'm
hungry.

Aida takes a deep breath.

AIDA
What would you like to have?

AMY
Mac and Cheese.

Aida nods as she gets up from the chair. She takes one step towards the door.

AMY
Lobster Mac and Cheese.

Aida looks back with a frown on her face.

AIDA
I can't get you lobster.

AMY
Okay, then I want to have my
daughter back. Alive.

Aida takes a deeper breath.

Aida shakes her head.

Aida leaves the room.

21 INT. POLICE STATION - BREAK ROOM - AFTERNOON

21

Aida removes the paper cover on a TV dinner plate.

She puts it in a stainless steel microwave oven.

She inputs 2 minutes and starts the microwave.

The microwave lights up.

The TV dinner spins inside the microwave

Aida stands in front of it waiting.

Camera pushes in onto the TV dinner inside the microwave.

The microwave dings.

Aida opens the microwave door.

She removes the TV dinner from the microwave.

22 INT. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON 22

She opens the interview room door.

23 INT. POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM - AFTERNOON 23

The plastic cover is removed.

A hand with a plastic spoon scoops up the food.

It was Amy's hand, she takes a bite.

Amy chews.

AMY

So this is the good cop bad cop
routine huh?

AIDA

No. I have no routine here. You
asked for food and this is what I
can do. I'm not from this place,
I'm not part of any routine you
might have seen around here. I
don't care what happened before
between you and them. I just wanna
find out what happened to your
daughter. Now would you please help
me?

Amy looks up, she nods slightly.

AIDA

Okay. When was last time you saw
Megan?

AMY

Yesterday morning when I sent her
off to school.

AIDA

What time was that?

AMY

Seven.

AIDA

And when you say you sent her, do
you drive her to school.

AMY

No, she doesn't want me to. She
walks to school by herself.

AIDA

So you don't really know where she went since she left the house at 7 am on Monday?

AMY

She's at school, my Megan is a good student, a good daughter, she wouldn't do that.

AIDA

Right. Of course not. Do you happen to know anyone she got along with at school?

AMY

There was a boy she had a crush on. What was his name? Brian... B... Br... Bruce... something, something, B something. I can't remember.

Amy scratches her nose and rubs her eyes.

AIDA

How old is this boy?

AMY

I don't know, a year older than her, the same age.

AIDA

What about teachers? Any teachers Megan especially got along with?

AMY

She got along with all the teachers, she's a good student, a straight As student.

AIDA

Anyone particular comes to mind? Any... any male teacher?

AMY

What are you asking? Is a teacher involved in this?

Aida pauses and debates internally whether or not she should disclose any information.

AIDA

There was another body that was found at the scene. It was an adult male in his 50s.

AMY

What? How?

AIDA

So far we are suspecting suicide.

AMY

No. My Megan wouldn't do that. Who's the guy?

AIDA

I'm sorry I can't disclose that information right now, it's an active investigation.

Amy raises her voice.

AMY

Who is it?

The interview room door opens, Christine tips her head in.

CHRISTINE

Detective.

Aida turns her head.

AIDA

Yes?

CHRISTINE

There's someone at the front looking for you.

Aida gets up.

AIDA

I'll be right back.

Camera follows Aida to leave the room, Amy can be seen in the background pulling her hairs out.

Aida closes the interview room door as she walks out, camera follows her out.

Sounds of footsteps coming from behind in the hallway, camera turns pointing to the opposite direction down the hallway then begins to track the boots walking down the hall.

The boots enters into the interview room, sounds of handcuffs moving around, camera only follows the boots, the boots left the room, door slammed closed.

25 INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - AFTERNOON

25

Aida walks out, Jake gets up from his seat.

JAKE
Detective.

Aida nods at Jake.

AIDA
Hey.

Jake hands over a journal with lots of paper stuffed inside.

JAKE
Here are all of Megan's handwriting
I can find.

Aida takes it.

AIDA
Thank you.

JAKE
How is Amy?

AIDA
She's doing better. She's been
really helpful with the
investigation. I just have a few
more questions for her. When we're
done, she can go home with you.

JAKE
Thank you. Is there anything else I
can do to help?

AIDA
Yeah actually, it would be really
helpful if I can schedule another
time to stop by and speak to the
both of you together. By myself of
course.

JAKE

Anytime. Anything I can do to help.

AIDA

How about tomorrow afternoon? I will be at Megan's school in the morning, I can stop by after.

JAKE

That works.

Aida about to leave, but she decides to extend the conversation by one more sentence.

AIDA

I heard you're a magician.

JAKE

I used to be. I cut people's lawns for a living now.

AIDA

I see.

JAKE

There's no use for magic in cutting people's lawns.

AIDA

Well, if you are not gonna need it, I could use some of that magic to find out exactly what happened.

JAKE

Truth is there's no magic out there in the day to day trenches of adult existence, there never was any. We all just keep our heads down hoping we can be good enough to make it out of this one alive. We don't ever get to decide where the bomb is gonna be dropped. They just fall from the sky, and we're just glad that it didn't land on us this time. But we signed up for this, we enlisted, we're grownups. Megan is still a child, she doesn't deserve what happened to her. Whatever happened, she doesn't deserve it.

Aida looks down, she pauses for a second.

She looks up.

AIDA
Have a seat please, she'll be right
out.

JAKE
Thank you.

Jake sits back down.

26 INT. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

26

Aida walks back to the interview room, she opens the
interview room door then immediately screams.

AIDA
What the fuck!

Aida angrily paces down the hallway, leaving the door half
open.

Camera goes past the door when it's following Aida. Amy is
seen handcuffed with her arms behind her back on the chair,
the food is still in front of her on the table.

Camera catches up to Aida.

Aida opens a door further down the hallway.

27 INT. POLICE STATION - JOHNATHAN'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

27

Aida walks in visibly upset.

AIDA
What the fuck do you think you're
doing?

Johnathan looks nonchalant.

JOHNATHAN
Relax, it's the good cop bad cop
routine.

Aida points one finger at Johnathan.

AIDA
I'm not part of your fucking
routine! And stay the fuck out of
my investigation!

Johnathan raises both hands in the air, in a surrender pose.

Aida walks out of the room, camera follows her.

28 INT. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON 28

The camera tracks behind Aida as she walks down the hallway.

29 INT. POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM - AFTERNOON 29

Aida walks in.

Aida opens the cuffs immediately.

AIDA

I have no more questions for now.
You can go, your husband is outside
waiting for you.

Amy looks strangely at peace, no facial expressions.

AMY

Do you have any kids detective?

Aida frowns as she heard the question.

AIDA

No.

AMY

Nope?

AIDA

No.

Aida finishes un-cuffing Amy.

She walks to the front of Amy, standing in front of her.

Amy loosens up her arms.

AMY

You know detective, there's this
type of fungus that only grows on
the back of cicadas. A cicada can
contract it by being in contact
with an infected cicada. An
infected one will have most of its
lower body fall off and most of its
organs turn into white powders,
spores for the fungus. And the
cicada will no longer behave like
an insect but a fungi.

(MORE)

AMY (CONT'D)

It will, regardless of sex imitate both the male and female mating calls and try to mate with both sexes in order to infect more cicadas, even though it no longer has genitals.

Aida looks puzzled.

AIDA

And?

AMY

And that's what it's like to have children detective. I just thought you should know that.

Amy gets up and leaves the room.

Aida is standing in the same spot, her eyes follow Amy out of the room. She then looks down at a corner of the room, lost in her thoughts.

30 INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - AFTERNOON

30

Amy walks out, Jake gets up to greet her. She grabs him by the shoulder with one hand, he reaches out with one hand to her back. Without exchanging one word they walk out of the police station together.

Johnathan walks out from the back, he stops in front of Christine's desk.

JOHNATHAN

Who was the judge that helped us with the search warrant last time?

CHRISTINE

Judge Henry Marks.

JOHNATHAN

Yeah, you have his contact in your rolodex?

31 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

31

The door opens, Aida walks in by herself looking exhausted. She takes off her jacket, puts it on the back of a chair. She takes out the tape recorder from the jacket pocket.

She goes into the bathroom, standing in front of the mirror.

She opens the tap and splashes some cold water on her face.

She looks at herself in the mirror as the water continues to run.

She hits the play button on the tape recorder.

She runs her hands up and pulls her hair back, showing her forehead all while staring at her own reflection in the mirror.

She reaches to the back of her head and begins to take off the wig she's wearing from behind.

She tilts her head forward as she takes off the wig, the wig covers her face completely.

She takes off the wig and reveals a fishnet headband, she puts down the wig on the counter.

She takes off the headband and reveals a head of curly afro hair underneath.

She picks up the wig with one hand and runs her other hand under the tap to get some water and wet the wig.

She takes a comb on the counter and begins to brush the wig to straighten the hair.

She looks into the mirror at her reflection as she does the brushing.

She looks back down at the wig, she puts down the comb, turns the wig front side up and starts to style the wig with her hands.

The camera exits.

The camera sways to a clock on the side table by the bed. The clock face under the lamp reads 10:17.

CUT TO:

The same shot now in darkness, we can't make out what the clock reads.

Aida's hand comes into frame, she turns on the lamp, then gets up walking over to the chair. The clock face reads 3:47.

Aida comes back to the bed holding the journal Jake gave her, she starts reading it. In the background we hear Megan's voice.

MEGAN (V.O.)

July 18, 1984. Today was hot, like extremely hot, like the ice cream will melt on your hand even if you try to eat it really fast kind of hot, like it makes you wonder how people existed before whenever they invented air conditioner used to live without it in this kind of weather kind of hot. I saw it on TV that a crazy guy shot up a McDonald's in San Diego and killed 20 people including children and two babies. I was sad, but also feel exhausted about the sadness. I learned a poem today called "This Be The Verse" by Philip Larkin, I like it a lot. "Man hands on misery to man. It deepens like a coastal shelf. Get out as early as you can. And don't have any kids yourself."

Aida flips to another page.

MEGAN (V.O.)

July 24th, 1984. Today is a good day. Today I feel really good, but I also know that this feeling won't last forever, it probably won't even last for a day, and knowing that is enough to make me feel really bad. This world that we live in, it breaks everybody, but unfortunately different people heal in different ways.

Aida flips to another page.

MEGAN (V.O.)

August 11th, 1984. Today Brandon and I broke up. I'm strangely at peace about it. Maybe because I've known for weeks that this is going to happen. Isn't it odd you can spend all this time with someone only to find out that they're a stranger. My favorite part of our relationship is when I can make him happy. Unfortunately it happened less and less often, until it stopped happening all together.

Aida closes the journal, lays back down.

Camera pans up.

CUT TO:

32 INT. THE PRICIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

32

The same angle from the shot before

Camera pans down.

Principal Stephen Thompson (50) is sitting behind his desk.
Aida is sitting across the desk in a chair.

STEPHEN

We were all so so sorry to hear that. Megan was a fantastic student and an amazing young person. A brilliant young woman who was taken from us far too early.

AIDA

I agree. I'm sure by this point you've already heard rumors about the situation surrounding her death.

STEPHEN

Ahmm, nope. I've not heard anything of, of substan...

AIDA

Come on Principal, it's a small town.

Stephen looks away for a second.

STEPHEN

I'm telling you the truth when I say I've not heard anything of substance. But I did hear that Mayor Lambert was somehow, somehow, somehow he was also there. Yes, I worked for him in the mayor's office. We were not personal friends but I thought he was an honest Mayor and a good boss. Which is more than one could ask for from someone in his position.

AIDA

And recently you invited him to come and speak to the students.

STEPHEN

I did. He fought for our country and was awarded the Purple Heart and the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Ford. His bravery, his character. I thought the students could learn a lot by listening to him, and that they did.

AIDA

Do we have a student here named Brandon?

STEPHEN

I think we have more than one Brandon here at this school.

AIDA

Someone that got along with Megan, someone that took the same classes with her maybe?

STEPHEN

Let me check.

Stephen picks up the phone on his desk and dials an extension.

STEPHEN

Ms. Wilson. Do you know anyone by the name of Brandon, someone that particularly got along with Megan Miller?

Stephen nods as he hears the response.

STEPHEN

Okay. Can you send him over to my office please?

Stephen nods.

STEPHEN

Great! Thank you.

Stephen hangs up the phone.

STEPHEN

The boy's name is Brandon Gabriel. Apparently they were an item, even the teachers know about it. He's coming over now.

AIDA

Thank you.

Aida takes a beat.

AIDA

Just out of curiosity, what was the Purple Heart and Medal of Honor for?

STEPHEN

You know Sheriff Johnathan White right?

AIDA

Of Course.

STEPHEN

He was in the same infantry with Mayor Lambert. During the Tet Offensive they were trapped together under enemy fire. Johnathan had injured his legs and was unable to walk, so Mayor Lambert strapped him to his back, crawled 20 miles over the jungle wetland back to the base camp and saved his life.

AIDA

Wow. That explains the Medal of Honor. And the Purple Heart?

STEPHEN

Well he was also injured by a Vietcong grenade in the process, but he completed his mission anyway. He was permanently injured by the shrapnel. When he finally got back home, he went through several reconstructive surgeries in order to walk normally.

AIDA

And you learned all of this from the speech he gave to the students?

STEPHEN

Exactly. He didn't really talk a lot about it while he was in office. It's not the most popular thing with public opinion in those days.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You know Jason Lambert could've been much more than a small town Mayor if he just wanted to be.

AIDA

What do you mean?

STEPHEN

Well in '78 during the midterm, he announced his run for the vacant congressional seat for our district. He was leading the primary polls all the way through the summer, but for whatever reason he decided to quit the race before a single vote was cast. And the person who ended up winning the race, he still has the job.

A knock on the door.

Brandon (16) walks through the door.

STEPHEN

Brandon, right?

BRANDON

Yeah, you looking for me?

STEPHEN

Well, not me exactly. It's the Detective here.

Brandon looks over and notices Aida.

AIDA

Hi Brandon, I'm Detective Pierre with the state...

Before Aida could finish her sentence, Brandon takes off running.

AIDA

Hey!

Aida runs after him.

Brandon running away from Aida.

Aida chasing after him.

AIDA

Stop!

34 EXT. STREET - DAY

34

Amy and Jake walking down the residential streets together.

JAKE

Stop Amy! Where are we going?

AMY

We are going to find out what happened to Megan.

JAKE

Here? We're going to find out here?

Amy starts opening mailboxes on the street, looking through the letters for clues, before putting them back and going to the next mailbox.

JAKE

Talk to me Amy. What's going on?

Amy goes through another mailbox. This one is in front of the Lamberts's house. She looks over the letters.

AMY

There. It's this one.

Amy points at the Lamberts' house.

JAKE

This house?

AMY

This is where I saw that female detective chasing after that Asian girl.

JAKE

I remember this house. I remember that girl.

35 EXT. STREET - DAY

35

Brandon continues to run, he turns his head and sees Aida chasing after him, getting closer.

AIDA

Stop Brandon! Stop!

Brandon makes a turn from the street and goes down a little dirt hill.

BRANDON

I didn't do anything! Stop chasing me!

AIDA

Then stop running!

Aida runs after him.

Aida slips but gets up quickly.

Brandon runs into a wooded area.

Aida chases after him.

36 EXT. STREET - DAY 36

Amy and Jake open the side gate to the Lamberts' house and go into the backyard.

37 EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY 37

They look around in the backyard, no one is there.

They open the window from the outside and enter the kitchen.

38 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 38

As Amy and Jake enter the house quietly. Amy notices Denise laying on the couch taking a nap.

Amy points at the sleeping Denise.

Jake waves at Amy and mouthing the words.

JAKE

Let's get out of here.

Amy whispers to Jake.

AMY

No. You stay here. Keep an eye on her. I'll go up and look.

JAKE

Look for what?

Amy goes upstairs before Jake can finish.

Denise turns in her sleep on the couch.

The doorbell rings.

Jake ducks down behind the kitchen counter.

Denise is still deep in her sleep. She doesn't hear the doorbell.

Jake is surprised that it only ringed once.

He takes a peak from behind the counter.

39

EXT. WOODS - DAY

39

Brandon runs into a wooded area.

He hides behind a tree. Aida catches up, looks around for him.

Brandon takes a peak from behind the tree.

As Aida walks past the tree Brandon is hiding behind, he takes off running again.

Aida chases after him getting closer and closer.

Brandon dodges a tree in his way but get catch with the branches of the tree next to it.

Aida arrives right on time to push him inti the tree and handcuffs him behind his back.

Aida panting heavily.

AIDA

God damn it Brandon!

BRANDON

I didn't do anything, I swear I didn't do anything. I wasn't even in town. I was on a finishing trip with my family for two weeks. I just got back this morning.

Aida's wig is messed up from all the running she just did.

She got frustrated, she takes it off as she throws it on ground.

AIDA

Then why did you run?

BRANDON

I just got scared. I came back home
and suddenly everyone told me Megan
is dead. I'm afraid okay?

AIDA

Well, too bad. You are under arrest
for evading a police officer.

Aida walks away with Brandon with a fishnet on her head.

The wig is left on the ground behind them.

40

INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - DAY

40

Aida walks in with Brandon together. Sally is sitting by the
door.

Aida is in her natural hair.

As Aida walks in Sally gets up. She is holding a huge pile of
papers.

SALLY

Detective?

Sally doesn't immediately recognize Aida with the changed
hairstyle.

AIDA

Oh Sally.

SALLY

I heard from my mother you were
looking for my father's handwriting
so I found some for you. Hopefully
this could help.

AIDA

Thank you. I will take it.

Aida takes the thick pile of papers and puts it in her
jacket's inside pocket on the left. It barely fits.

SALLY

Also. I think I actually remember
knowing someone with the last name
Miller.

AIDA

Yes?

SALLY

He was the gardener who used to cut our lawns. I remember him because whenever I used to see him he would do this magic trick with me with two pebbles. Well, he would turn one pebble into two, but he probably already had two to begin with, I just couldn't see it.

AIDA

Did you also know his daughter?

SALLY

No, I didn't even know he had kids. This was a long time ago. Like 10 years ago.

AIDA

Okay, thank you for this. Please go home for now, I will contact you for anything new.

Sally nods.

Sally leaves.

Aida takes Brandon to the front desk.

Christine gets up.

AIDA

Christine, could you help me to book Brandon here?

CHRISTINE

Of course.

Christine takes Brandon by the shoulder.

AIDA

And please check on his alibi. He said he's been away with his family for two weeks and just got back this morning.

CHRISTINE

You got it.

Christine takes Brandon down the hallway. She turns her head back to say to Aida.

CHRISTINE

The autopsy is here detective. It's
in the folder on the desk.

As Christine leaves, Aida takes the folder and opens it.

She takes half a minute to read through the papers.

Christine comes back out.

CHRISTINE

Can I ask you something detective?

AIDA

Sure.

CHRISTINE

What's the handwriting samples for?
As far as I know, there wasn't any
note left at the scene.

AIDA

It's a small trick my criminal
psychology professor taught me. A
person's handwriting can reveal a
lot about them, especially if it's
in a personal journal.

CHRISTINE

I see, that's so interesting. Can I
ask you something else?

AIDA

Enhmm.

CHRISTINE

What NFT marketplace do you use for
trading?

AIDA

What?

CHRISTINE

NFT marketplace. You know Non-
Fungible Token.

AIDA

I don't know what that is.

CHRISTINE

A non-fungible token is a unit of
data stored on a digital ledger,
called the blockchain.

(MORE)

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

It certifies a digital asset to be unique and therefore not interchangeable. NFTs can be used to represent items such as photos, videos, audios, and other types of digital files. Crypto Now marketplace is the world's largest and most user friendly NFT marketplace. With a daily trading volume of over 20 million dollars and a team of dedicated expert customer service professionals available to you 24/7. You can rest assured that your NFT transactions are safe and secure. The best part is, it's completely free for buyers to use. Not only that for a limited time Crypto Now marketplace is awarding every new customer who makes a purchase with a piece of unique and valuable NFT art collectible when you register and make a purchase within 24 hours. Go to CryptoNowMarket.com and enter promo code: OceanNewCustomer for more details. Terms and conditions applied.

AIDA

Okay, I have no idea what you are talking about, and I don't have time for any of this. Just make sure you verify the boy's alibi before I get back.

CHRISTINE

You got it detective.

Aida stuffs the autopsy papers down in the same jacket chest pocket on the left.

Aida leaves.

Christine goes back to the desk.

41 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

41

Amy comes downstairs. Jake is standing close to the wall, trying to hide himself as much as he can.

Amy whispers.

AMY
I got it. Let's go.

JAKE
What did you get?

AMY
Let's go.

Amy tries to open back up the window where they came in.

But the window makes a huge noise as she tries to open it.

Jake stops her.

They both look at Denise, who moves a little bit but still in deep sleep.

Jake shakes his head, he points at the window near the front door.

42 EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

42

Sally is coming home.

She takes out the key to open the door.

As she opens the door, she sees Jake first and Amy second trying to sneak out through the window from the house.

She sees them, they make eye contact, they all freeze for a second, Sally stops for a second before going back walking through the door as if she didn't see anything.

SALLY
I'm back.

Sally closes the door behind her.

Amy and Jake exit through the window, closes it before leaving the house.

Amy and Jake get out of there fast.

43 EXT. STREET - DAY

43

Amy and Jake pacing down the street back to their car.

AMY
You think she saw us?

JAKE
How could she have not?

AMY
Well you said you knew her. Was she blind or something? Did they adopt a blind girl?

JAKE
I don't think so. She doesn't look like she had trouble seeing.

AMY
Maybe not completely blind but just couldn't see things too clearly.

JAKE
I think she saw us.

AMY
Well what are we gonna do?

JAKE
What did you find up there?

Amy looks too upset to speak.

AMY
Let's go home first. When's the female detective gonna be there?

Jake looks at his watch.

JAKE
Like right now.

CUT TO:

44 INT. MILLERS' HOUSE - ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

44

The doorbell rings.

It rings again.

It rings for a third time.

Jake opens the door.

Aida is standing by the door.

JAKE
Please come in detective.

45

INT. MILLER'S' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

45

Jake and Amy sitting on one side of the table, Aida is on the other side, her tape recorder is on the table.

AIDA

Would you describe Megan as a happy child?

Amy seems in distress.

Jake doesn't seem to be.

JAKE

I would. I mean she was always a thinker, and sometimes she seems to have the weight of the world on her shoulder. But most of the time she's just like any other teenage girl. She likes that god awful music from those clowns in those oversized suits. And she won't stop cutting holes in her nice new jeans.

AIDA

What does a typical school day look like for her?

JAKE

She would wake up around six, leave for school around seven and be back home around three in the afternoon. And she would...

Amy jumps in.

AMY

Except on Fridays, she would have an off campus drama class and wouldn't be home till around 7 or 8.

Jake is surprised by this.

JAKE

Really?

AMY

Yeah.

AIDA

Where's this drama class?

AMY

I don't know. I never asked.

Aida looks at Jake.

AIDA

And you didn't know about this?

JAKE

I work late shifts on Fridays and normally won't be home till midnight.

AIDA

I was unaware there are lawn mowing late shifts.

JAKE

I also work as a security guard at the factory. I work the second shift.

AMY

You mean you worked as a security guard at the factory.

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE

Not now Amy.

Aida looks at Amy.

AIDA

What do you mean?

AMY

Well he was fired from the job three months ago, but he never bothered to tell anyone about it.

JAKE

I said not now.

AMY

So instead of coming home, he just wanders around town from bar to bar.

JAKE

Not now!

AMY

Why not?

JAKE
Because it's not the time or the
place!

Heavy knocks on the door.

All three of them look over at the door.

Jake gets up walks over to the door.

JAKE
Coming.

Amy turns to Aida.

AMY
And why are you here anyway? Why
aren't you at the other guy's
house?

46 INT. MILLERS' HOUSE - ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

46

Heavy knocks continue.

Jake walks over to open the door.

Amy in the background speaking to Aida.

AMY
Is it because of who he is? That's
right I know who he is. I know more
than that.

Johnathan and two other police officers push through the
door.

Johnathan holding and displaying a search warrant.

JOHNATHAN
Jake Miller.

Johnathan points at Amy.

JOHNATHAN
And you Amy Miller. We are here to
execute a search warrant against
your property. Please don't
interfere with our search and stay
where I can see you.

AMY
What?

Aida walks over to Johnathan as the two officers walk inside while putting rubber gloves on their hands.

AIDA
What are you doing?

JOHNATHAN
This has nothing to do with you detective. We are here to execute the search warrant issued by Judge Marks.

AMY
Are you kidding me? What legitimate reasons do you have to search my house.

JOHNATHAN
We don't need to explain that to you.

Amy gets up and walks over to Johnathan.

JOHNATHAN
Stay where you are and keep your hands where I can see them.

Johnathan puts one hand on his holster and gestures to Amy to sit down.

One of the officers walks out from inside.

POLICE
Johnathan, you might wanna come take a look at this.

The officer with rubber gloves is holding a half a dozen polaroid photos.

We don't see the photos.

He hands the photos to Johnathan, Aida next to them also seeing it.

JOHNATHAN
Oh God! Arrest them now!

Aida looks to be in shock after she sees the photos.

AMY
That is not mine. I took them from this guy's house.

Amy reaches in her pocket, pulling out an envelope.

As she does that officer twists her arms behind her back, she drops the envelope on the ground.

The other officer arrests Jake.

JAKE
What's happening?

JOHNATHAN
Take them out to the car.

Johnathan orders the two officers as he puts the photos in a brown paper evidence bag.

All three of them walk out the door.

AMY
Fuck you! You piece of shit!

JAKE
Somebody tell me what's happening?

Aida coming back from the shock stage, walks over to pick up the envelope dropped on the ground.

Aida takes a look at the envelope, before stuffing it in her already crammed jacket pocket.

Aida walks out the door, closing it behind her.

47 INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - EVENING

47

Amy and Jake are both in handcuffs behind their back, the two officers walk them in.

Aida and Johnathan walk in behind them.

AIDA
Can we talk about this?

JOHNATHAN
What is there to talk about? We caught them red handed.

Aida sees Christine at the front desk doing some paperwork with Brandon, who is not in handcuffs.

Aida walks over.

Johnathan and the other two officers walk Amy and Jake to the back.

AIDA

What's going on here?

CHRISTINE

Oh detective. I checked his alibi, he was indeed away with his family in Connecticut until this morning. I verified with lodging and his family. Johnathan told me we should release him.

BRANDON

I told you I was away.

AIDA

Why did you run from me then?

BRANDON

I told you I was scared. Wouldn't you?

AIDA

Well tell me this, what does Megan do on Fridays after school.

BRANDON

She says she goes to a drama class off campus on Fridays. To be honest I don't know what she really does. She wouldn't tell anyone anything about it.

Brandon turns to Christine.

BRANDON

Can I go now?

CHRISTINE

Yeah, I will walk you out.

Christine hands over the paperwork to Brandon and walks out with him.

Aida stands by the front desk by herself.

Sounds of a commotion coming from down the hallway.

Amy emerges with only one arm handcuffed, she is holding Johnathan hostage and has taken the gun from Johnathan's holster, she is pointing it at the two officers.

AMY

Back off! Back off!

POLICE
Drop the gun! Drop it!

As Amy reaches the front, she turns her body sideways and points the gun at both Aida and the two officers from two directions back and forth.

POLICE
Drop the fucking gun!

POLICE
Let him go!

The two officers follow Amy out to the front.

Amy points the gun at Johnathan's head.

Johnathan closes his eyes and raises his hands up.

Aida puts her right hand on her holster but she doesn't draw her gun.

Aida gestures to the two officers to calm down.

AIDA
Stop Amy! Don't do this. Drop the gun.

Amy keeps pointing the gun at Johnathan, she keeps backing up against the front door, she turns her head to look at Aida.

AMY
You are no better you know. I expect them to be the way they are. But you. You actually think you care don't you? And you are allowing all of this to happen.

AIDA
Amy. What happened in the past has already happened. But look at the future. Don't do anything stupid.

AMY
What is future but a past you can't seem to remember. And what do you do when you can see the future so clearly that it feels like it's already passed.

Amy removes the gun from Johnathan's head, points it towards Aida.

Amy pulls the trigger once and shoots Aida in the chest.

Aida falls down.

Amy is shot 5 times from the back.

Christine coming back through the front door is the one who pulled the trigger.

Amy falls down.

Johnathan slumps to the floor.

People rush over to check on Aida.

Aida on the floor reaches with her right hand into her left chest pocket pulling out the pile of papers.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

48 INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - EVENING

48

Aida walks through the door with her left arm in a cast.

Christine gets up from her desk to greet her.

CHRISTINE

Detective, are you feeling better?

AIDA

Yes, I am. Thank you for asking and thank you for saving my life.

CHRISTINE

Don't mention it detective, I was just doing my job.

AIDA

Aida.

CHRISTINE

Okay Aida.

AIDA

Thank you Christine. Where's the sheriff?

CHRISTINE

He's in his office.

AIDA

Great!

49

INT. POLICE STATION - JOHNATHAN'S OFFICE - EVENING

49

A knock on the door.

JOHNATHAN

Come in.

Aida walks through the door.

JOHNATHAN

You are out of the hospital already? It's only been a day.

AIDA

I'm feeling better.

JOHNATHAN

Did they fix you up good over here detective?

Aida nods.

JOHNATHAN

Well great! Listen, I'm not gonna say we are not happy this case is finally over. It's definitely taken a toll on this small town we call home. But despite our differences at times I have a lot of respect for you. And it's been a pleasure working with you.

Johnathan gets up from his chair, offering up a handshake.

AIDA

This case is not over. There're still so many unanswered questions. The kid Brandon mentioned that every Friday Megan would take a drama class off campus and her parents confirmed that she does go home much later on Fridays. But I looked into the school's records, there is no off campus drama class. What was she doing every Friday between 3pm to 8pm?

Johnathan takes back his hand.

JOHNATHAN

You know detective, it's a skill to know when something is over before it's truly over.

AIDA

It might be over for you, but it's not over for me. I will continue my investigation with or without your help. Actually I prefer without it.

A knock on the door, Christine is by the door.

CHRISTINE

Aida.

Aida turns.

AIDA

Yes.

CHRISTINE

There's a phone call for you at the front.

Aida leaves the room.

50

INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - EVENING

50

Aida walks in.

The phone speaker is on the desk.

Aida picks up the phone.

AIDA

Hello, Det. Pierre.

LIEUTENANT

Hi Aida, this is Gordon. How are you doing?

AIDA

I'm doing well Lieutenant. Thank you for checking in.

LIEUTENANT

Are you kidding me? My detective gets hurt on the job, this is the least I can do. I wanna let you know I've already talked to the Deputy Chief, as soon as you're back, we're gonna give you a performance review and trust me you'll like the result.

AIDA

Thank you Lieutenant but the case...

LIEUTENANT

Someone is gonna need a new
insignia if you know what I mean.
So when are you gonna be back?

AIDA

Lieutenant the investigation is not
over yet.

LIEUTENANT

What do you mean it's not over yet?

AIDA

There are just so many unanswered
questions regrading the exact
nature of the death and...

LIEUTENANT

Hold on. Tell me. Did one of the
suspects try to kill you?

AIDA

She did.

LIEUTENANT

And did the search warrant uncover
incriminating evidence against
them?

AIDA

It did.

LIEUTENANT

And what did the autopsy say?

AIDA

Both people in the vehicle died
from carbon monoxide poisoning. No
apparent signs of foul play.

LIEUTENANT

Then wrap up the case detective! Do
you know I've gotten a call from
the congressman this morning? I
don't need this shit on my desk,
you understand?

AIDA

I'm so sorry to put you in this
position Lieutenant. But something
just doesn't add up here.

LIEUTENANT

Let me make this easy for you
detective. Come back to
headquarters now for your promotion
or stay there forever. It's your
choice.

The lieutenant hangs up.

Dial tone coming through the phone.

Aida hangs up slowly.

Johnathan walks in from behind. He walks up to Aida.

JOHNATHAN

You know what my mother used to say
"Don't fight a battle if you don't
gain anything by winning."

Aida frowns.

AIDA

That was Erwin Rommel.

Johnathan throws his hands in the air.

JOHNATHAN

The point still stands.

Johnathan walks away.

Aida stands there for a second before walking away.

51 EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - EVENING

51

Aida walks up to the door.

Aida about to knock on the door, the door opens. It's Sally
opening the door with a backpack on her back.

They see each other.

AIDA

I was just about to knock.

SALLY

Oh and I was just about to leave.
Yes?

AIDA

I brought these letters back. The case is closed and I thought I should return them.

Aida hands over the letters to Sally.

Sally takes a look at the letters.

SALLY

There's a hole on them.

AIDA

I won't bore you with the details, but it saved my life.

Sally raises the letters with the bullet hole to her face and looks through the hole.

SALLY

I don't think it's possible whatever happened to this could be boring.

Aida shrugs.

SALLY

Thank you, thank you for bringing it back.

AIDA

No problem.

Sally takes one step in to put down the letters, she turns around as she doesn't want to shut the door on Aida.

SALLY

Would you like to come in?

AIDA

No, no I should go.

Aida turns around about to leave.

SALLY

Just wait for me for one second, would you?

Aida nods.

Sally left the door ajar, she comes back 15 seconds later, she gets out and closes the door behind her.

SALLY
Are you going back to Albany?

AIDA
I am.

SALLY
The Albany detective.

AIDA
That's me, if all detectives are
named after the city they live in.

SALLY
Aren't they?

Sally takes a seat on the left side of the bench.

AIDA
I don't know, I don't think there's
a rule for it.

SALLY
Okay but let's say if I go back to
New York tonight and run into a
detective on the street. What would
I call the detective?

AIDA
Officer I hope.

Aida takes a seat across the porch on the right side of the
bench.

Sally lightly chuckles at the answer.

SALLY
Yes madame.

Sally jokingly salutes Aida.

AIDA
Can I ask you something, it's
unrelated to the case? Well, sort
of unrelated.

Sally intrigued.

SALLY
Sure.

AIDA

Do you remember the interview we did on Tuesday at the diner down the street?

SALLY

Yeah.

AIDA

What happened before you ran out of the door crying? You seemed so upset.

SALLY

I was upset. I just couldn't believe it. And if I'm being honest my mother was no help.

AIDA

What did you guys say to each other after we left.

52 INT. LAMBERT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASH BACK - DAY 52

Denise closes the door.

SALLY (V.O.)

I asked her why didn't she tell me how they found him. She said she didn't know how to say it to me, it was all so sudden, and I guess I understand.

Sally walks over to Denise.

SALLY

You told me I was the only one.

Denise lowers her head before looking up.

DENISE

You were. He's not who you think he is.

SALLY

Then what happened with this girl?

DENISE

I don't know. I've never heard of this girl. I don't know anything about this.

SALLY

I'm having a hard time believing you.

Denise walks pass Sally to the table.

DENISE

You don't have to believe me. I'm telling you the truth. You know me, I wouldn't allow something like this to happen. You were different, you were so mature. He liked you, we both liked you. It's different.

Sally starts crying, she covers her face with her hands, looking more and more upset.

SALLY (V.O.)

She was in shock, we were all in shock. How could something like this happen?

DENISE

Dear?

Sally storms out of the house.

53

EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

53

Sally and Aida sitting where they were.

SALLY

You know I had a younger sister.

AIDA

I thought you said you were the only child in the house?

SALLY

I was. In this house.

AIDA

Where's your younger sister?

SALLY

We weren't born in this country. I may as well be born in an orphanage, I can't remember anything before that. My earliest memory was roaming the streets, being hungry and searching for food in trashcans for my sister and I.

(MORE)

SALLY (CONT'D)

Then a local church took us in, I remember they asked me how old was I, and I had no idea. So a lady working there pried open my mouth, looked at my teeth and said: seven. My sister was one. They told me that younger kids have a better chance of getting adopted but having an older sister severely complicates it. So, I let her go.

AIDA

Where did this happen?

SALLY

Does it matter?

AIDA

It's illegal!

SALLY

It's illegal here. Maybe.

Aida looks away.

SALLY

I stayed at the place for another year after my sister was adopted. Around that time they started working with this orphanage here in the states. The people took pity on me and recommended me to be transfer to America. So I spent the next four years in an American orphanage instead.

Aida looks at Sally.

AIDA

Where's your sister now?

Sally shrugs.

Aida looks away.

AIDA

I wasn't born here either. This country is like a big party. And some of us were not invited, we crashed the party.

SALLY

I don't even like parties, do you?

AIDA

That's not the point and you know it.

They both smile.

SALLY

Is that what you see when you look at this country? A big party?

AIDA

What do you see?

Sally looks into the distance.

SALLY

Do you know who Ivan Pavlov is? Pavlovian?

AIDA

Yeah, he's the ring a bell and feed the dog guy right?

SALLY

Yeah, that's him. Except he did a little more than just ring a bell and feed the dog.

AIDA

What else did he do?

SALLY

Well, Ivan Pavlov pretty much tortured dogs for his research. He would cut holes in the dog's neck and abdomen, inserting tubes into the dog's esophagus, stomach, pancreas, and gallbladder in order to measure exactly how much digestive fluid the dog produced before, during and after consuming food. He designed this wooden device that keeps the dog standing upright while constraining the neck, spine and legs so they wouldn't move around so much during the day and accidentally detach the tubes. Every device can hold up to 5 dogs, and he hired 1 lab assistant to be in charge of every 5 devices. At its peak his lab had over 20 assistants dedicated solely to this job.

(MORE)

SALLY (CONT'D)

They were collecting so much dog digestive fluid they started to bottle and sell it as heartburn medication. And it works by the way, of course it would, nothing better than some strong dog stomach acid to help you with your indigestions. Oh and he didn't really use a bell, that's a mistranslation from a Russian word. No he actually shocked the dogs with electricity while feeding them. At first the dog would be very upset about the shock, and the tubes connected to their body would be empty, but after a while of shocking and feeding the dogs at the same time, he started to notice that excitement replaced anxiety as a response to the electric shock and the dogs would produce as much digestive fluid as they did before they ate, regardless of actually being fed or not. Of course being a scientific study he had to have a control group, so he had another half dozen dogs that would have the tubes just like the other dogs and get the shock at the same time but they wouldn't get the food with it. That group of dogs would react exactly the same way towards the shock throughout the experiment. Fearful and full of anxiety. And that's what America is to me. It's brilliant and revolutionary, it's cruel and malevolent. But at the end of the day, all will be forgotten and people will tell sugarcoated stories about it.

Aida thinks for a second.

AIDA

Are we the dogs or the lab assistants?

Sally laughs.

SALLY

So why did you come here?

Sally says half sarcastically.

SALLY

A better future for your kids?

AIDA

No, definitely not.

SALLY

Do you have any kids?

Aida pauses for a second.

AIDA

I used to.

Sally is surprised about the answer.

SALLY

Oh.

Aida looks up, deep breath.

AIDA

My dad was the English professor at the State University of Haiti. My husband was one of his students, that's how I met him. We were married when we turned 20 and I was a mother a year later. We named her Madeline. After Madeline was born we moved out of the city and settled in this small village by the water. Unfortunately, my dad was also the personal English interpreter for the president at the time, Papa Doc they call him. He was always notoriously paranoid about people's loyalty to him. But it got worst after his heart attack. When he came back from the hospital someone from his close circle convinced him that the reason why he had a heart attack was not because he had a coronary artery disease for the past 10 years but because his second in command Clement was trying to kill him using voodoo with the help of my father and the Americans. My mother was branded as a witch, an angry mob dragged her from her house onto the streets, stripped her naked and hung her to death on a flag pole. Her naked body stayed there for a week.

(MORE)

AIDA (CONT'D)

The firing squad executed my father along with 400 other people convicted of treason against the state. I was on a trip visiting my aunt in Harlem when it happened. As soon as I heard about it I wanted to go back, but my aunt wouldn't let me, she burnt my passport behind my back, and so, I didn't.

SALLY

What happened to Madeline?

AIDA

We didn't hear anything for a while, and that was the worst part you know, you still have this glimmer of hope. A month later a family friend from the nearby village wrote to me and told me that, my village saw some heavy casualties during the unrest and both my husband and my daughter died in the ensuing riot. He said a wall fell on them as they were being evacuated. But I know, I know it's not that simple. I know they were being targeted. It's not going to be an easy death like that. They were probably tortured. I will never find out what actually happened, I just hope whatever happened they were together when it did.

Aida stops talking, she seems relatively calm.

Sally looks shocked.

SALLY

I'm, I'm sorry.

AIDA

I am too.

Aida pauses.

AIDA

You know I've never told anyone about this for like 20 years.

SALLY

Why have you decided to tell me?

AIDA

I don't know. I guess sometimes
it's easier to tell the real truth
to a stranger. Especially when they
are just as lost.

Aida gets up, she turns to Sally as she does.

AIDA

I gotta go. You should go back to
the city tomorrow morning. At this
hour, I wouldn't wanna be near Port
Authority.

Aida walks away.

Sally gets up.

SALLY

Detective.

Aida turns.

Sally seems to have something to say but doesn't say it.

A smile comes on the face of Aida, she nods as if she
understood what Sally wants to say.

Aida waves.

Sally waves back.

Aida leaves.

Sally goes back in the house.

The house sits in the night with only porch lights
illuminating it.

54

INT. AIDA'S CAR - NIGHT

54

Aida in the driver's seat, driving her car down the street.

The camera from a low angle profile shoots up.

Aida starts to cry, first subtlety then more and more
intensely, tears are coming down. She wipes the tears away
and focuses on driving.

FADE TO:

55 EXT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY 55

The house standing in bright autumn sunshine, looking lovely.

56 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 56

Sally coming down from upstairs.

The TV is on in the background downstairs, the volume is low.

Denise is in the kitchen busy preparing a meal, including a live lobster.

The live lobster with its claws rubber banded together in a pot of water in the sink underneath the running tap, barely moving.

DENISE
You're up Sally?

Sally nods.

DENISE
The coffee is on the table. Let's
have lunch before you go back. I'm
cooking.

SALLY
We're having lobster?

DENISE
Yeah with butter sauce and mashed
potato, Mac and cheese, garlic
asparagus and bisque.

Why? SALLY

Why not? DENISE

Sally still confused about the occasion.

She pours herself a cup of coffee and sits down by the table.

The telephone rings.

Sally gets up.

I got it. SALLY

Sally picks up the phone.

SALLY
Hello Lamberts' house.

POLLSTER
Hi, this is Jen from Gallup. We just have a few questions about the upcoming presidential election for you and your family. Do you have a moment?

Sally takes a deep breath.

SALLY
Yeah, I do. Go ahead.

POLLSTER
Prefect! May I ask you what is your name and how old are you?

SALLY
My name is Sally Lambert and I'm 22 years old.

POLLSTER
Great! Thank you Sally. What's your education level? High school, some college, college graduate or grad school?

SALLY
I'm currently in grad school.

POLLSTER
Fantastic! Congratulations by the way! And who do you think you will vote for this November?

SALLY
Probably Mondale.

POLLSTER
Got it, got it. What do you think his chances of winning are?

SALLY
I don't know, 40%? A little more than 40%.

POLLSTER
Okay. Okay. And what's the most important quality he possesses that makes you wanna vote for him?

SALLY

That. He's not the other guy.

POLLSTER

Okay. Fair enough. So I just have a few more questions about your family. Are you the head of household?

SALLY

No, that would be my father and he passed away recently.

POLLSTER

Oh I'm so sorry to hear that. My condolences. Would that be Jason Lambert as my documents suggests here?

SALLY

Yes, that's my father.

POLLSTER

And what about your mother? Denise? Is that her?

SALLY

Yes. She's still with us.

POLLSTER

Oh great! And according to my records here you also have a younger sister?

Sally is caught off guard.

SALLY

Hmm, no.

POLLSTER

No? Really?

SALLY

No, I don't have a younger sister.

POLLSTER

Oh my mistake, cause I see here a few weeks ago my colleague dialed this number on a Friday afternoon and spoke to a young girl named Megan, is she not your younger sister?

Sally is in deep shock.

She drops the phone.

POLLSTER
Hello? Hello Sally?

Sally runs over to the kitchen where Denise is cooking.

Sally pushes Denise away from the stovetop with both her hands.

Denise drops the utensils.

Denise almost falls over.

DENISE
Sally!

SALLY
You knew. You knew everything.

Both Sally and Denise stare at each other in silence.

Right at this moment Ronald Reagan's Morning in America ad comes on the TV

"It's morning again in America. Today more men and women will go to work than ever before in our country's history.

With interest rates at about half of the record highs of 1980. Nearly 2000 families today will buy new homes, more than at anytime in the past 4 years.

This afternoon 6500 young men and women will be married. And with inflation less than half of what it was just 4 years ago, they can look forward with confidence to the future.

It's morning again in America..."

As it plays on TV Sally and Denise stay in silence.

The lobster is boiling in the pot on the stovetop.

Before the ad finishes Denise walks past Sally off screen to turn off the TV.

DENISE
I think maybe the lunch is a bad idea. Maybe you should go back now.

Sally walks over to face Denise.

SALLY
You know why he decided to kill himself?

(MORE)

SALLY (CONT'D)

Because when I last spoke to him I told him the theme of my graduation thesis is going to be about him and what he's done to me. He was so afraid, so frightened. He was begging me with every word in the English dictionary not to. I've never realized what a scared little pussy he was.

DENISE

Get out.

Sally grabs her backpack and runs out the door.

The door shuts behind her.

CUT TO:

57 INT. LAMBERTS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - JULY 1979 57

The same shot of the door.

The door bell rings.

Denise (40) opens the door.

Sally (17) in the exact same clothes and haircut as the very first scene of the movie standing by the door.

She looks like she had just cried.

Denise gives her a big hug.

DENISE

Hi dear! How are you? How's school?

Sally looks a little awkward and distant.

SALLY

It's good. Thank you again for taking care of the tuition.

DENISE

Oh silly girl, stop it. Go say hi to your father, he really misses you.

Sally walks over to the kitchen.

Jason Lambert (43) standing in the kitchen cooking, facing away from the camera.

He turns his head and smiles as he sees Sally walking over.

As the two of them get closer, Jason reaches out with his right hand, grabbing Sally by the lower wrist.

It is at this moment, Sally turns her head, looking directly into the camera breaking the fourth wall.

As Sally stares into the camera, the camera pulls back, slowly exiting the house, pointing at the same direction.

Sally maintains eye contact with the camera.

The camera gets out of the door, Denise shuts the door.

The camera keep going down the street, pulling backwards traveling down the street faster and faster.

SALLY (V.O.)

You know William Faulkner once wrote "The past is never dead, it's not even past." I'd like to ask him how did he know it was alive in the first place.

The camera continues to travel backward down the street.

The Yankee Doodle Boy 1904 by Billy Murray starts playing.

Credits roll over the backdrop of the moving street view.

FADE TO BLACK.