

IN BETWEEN

by

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This is a work of fiction. All characters and events portrayed in this work are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.

FADE IN:

EXT. CABRAM ROAD - DAY

A SHOT FRAMING the guard rail along a sharp curve. A light rain falls and the road is wet. The guard rail is battered, and in one spot is missing altogether. Leading up to the break in the rail are tire tracks that go through the gap and disappear over the side of a steep incline. In the background, a thin black line of smoke rises. SOUND FX: traffic whizzing past behind the camera. A car pulls onto the shoulder next to the break and a man gets out. He hurries over to the edge and looks down the slope.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM, - DAY

C.U. on DANIEL's wrist as he inserts a cheap cufflink into the frayed cuff of a white shirt.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. of KAT's bare wrist as she buckles up a studded leather band.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

A shot of DANIEL, his back to the camera, his torso reflected in a mirror atop an old-fashioned dresser. His head is out of view, above the edge of the mirror. He is carefully knotting his tie in a slow, mechanical way.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. on KAT's hands as she expertly ties a series of knots in a white, silk rope.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. on DANIEL's waist as he buckles an old leather belt.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. on KAT's waist as she straps on an elaborate leather harness.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. on an old, sagging bed on which lies a well-leafed Bible. DANIEL reaches into the shot and picks up the Bible. C.U. on DANIEL's hands holding the Bible uncertainly, as if he is testing its weight.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. of a bed with a wrought iron frame, its garishly colored sheets ruffled. In the middle of the bed are several bottles of lotion and assorted sex toys. KAT reaches into the shot and picks up a red dildo, hesitates, then drops it in favour of a bigger, black dildo.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANIEL'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

C.U. on DANIEL's shoes as he sits in a chair. His shoes are old, but have been shined diligently. PAN UP to his lap, where the bible sits, DANIEL drumming his fingers on the cover. PAN UP to reveal his face. He is a tall man in his mid-forties, with short, thinning hair. He stares off at a distant point. In his black clothes, he is reminiscent of a 30's hellfire and brimstone preacher. It is that grey, transitional time between fall and winter. The day is overcast, a storm threatening.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

KAT is in the foreground of the shot, on the phone, her back to the camera, a lit cigarette dangling between her fingers. We can see she lives in a run down apartment on the main floor of an old house. Past her, through a doorway, we can see into her bedroom where a NAKED MAN is blindfolded, gagged and handcuffed to the bed.

KAT

(into phone)

I forgot.

(pause)

All right, all right. I'll be there.

(pause, angry)

I said I'd be there!

KAT slams the phone down.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S FRONT HALLWAY - DAY

KAT, back to the camera, takes a long pink coat with a faux fur collar from a hook and heads out the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S FRONT DOOR - DAY

C.U. on bottom of front door. The door swings open, revealing KAT's vinyl, spike-heeled boot. PAN UP the knee-high boots to the overcoat, stopping on a hand holding the stub of a cigarette. KAT flicks the cigarette away. PAN UP to her face. She is in her late twenties, has a nose stud, wears bright red lipstick and heavy black eye makeup. Above the collar of her overcoat peeks a studded leather dog collar. The camera follows her as she steps into the street and waves down a cab. Her house is run down, and sits in the midst of similar houses in an older, downtown neighbourhood. The trees are bare and dark clouds scud across the sky.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. of the NAKED MAN, blindfolded and handcuffed to her bed. He makes an inquisitive noise.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - DAY

KAT sits in the back of the cab. Reaching into the pocket of her overcoat she pulls out a pack of cigarettes and lights one. The CABBIE turns and taps a "No Smoking" sign.

CABBIE

No smoking.

KAT flicks the cigarette out the window. The CABBIE glances back, then stares at KAT's lap. KAT looks down to see a prominent bulge in the front of her overcoat. She reaches in and pulls out a large black dildo, then tosses it out the window. The CABBIE stares at her.

KAT

Fuck off.

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

DANIEL sits on the porch of his house, looking distracted. Thunder sounds in the distance. A cab drives by and something flies out the window, catching DANIEL's attention. DANIEL rises and walks out to the street, holding the Bible. Crouching next to the curb, he picks up a large, black dildo. Drops of rain begin pattering down on him. A car pulls up, it's front grill stopping inches from DANIEL's face. ANGLE ON JASON, DANIEL's brother, who emerges from the driver's side. He is in his early forties and is carrying a few extra pounds. He dresses like a 50's hockey coach, complete with a fedora.

JASON

Danny?

DANIEL rises, slipping the dildo behind the Bible.

JASON (CONT'D)

What's that?

DANIEL looks down. DANIEL's P.O.V., looking at the Bible, with the dildo behind.

DANIEL

It was mother's.

ANGLE ON JASON -- frowning.

JASON
Let's get rolling.

CUT TO:

INT. JASON'S CAR - DAY

DANIEL sits in the back seat, holding the Bible on his lap, covering the dildo. JASON drives and his wife, RUTH, sits in the passenger seat. She is a plump woman with a pinched face wearing far too much makeup. She swivels to look at DANIEL.

RUTH
Daniel, I'm so sorry.

DANIEL nods curtly, but does not answer.

RUTH (CONT'D)
What will you do now?

DANIEL shrugs.

JASON
He'll get himself back into the game!
Right, Danny?

RUTH
(looking at the Bible)
What's that?

DANIEL
It was mother's.

RUTH
Maybe it's a blessing.

DANIEL
A blessing?

RUTH
She was getting on, you know. All but
blind. What kind of life could that be?

JASON

(sadly)
She gave a hundred and ten percent to
life. Couldn't ask for more.

RUTH
(to JASON)
And what about Daniel? What kind of
life is it for him to be taking care of
her all the time? It's time he got out
of that old house.

(turns to DANIEL)
Isn't it?

DANIEL shrugs.

JASON
Ruth--

RUTH
(to DANIEL)
You wouldn't want to live with us, would
you Daniel? A boring old couple.

JASON
You agreed not to talk about this today.

RUTH
(to JASON)
Is it my fault she left us the house?

JASON
Jesus, Ruth--

RUTH
(sharply, to JASON)
He's got his own place. It's just
sitting empty.
(gently, to DANIEL)
It's time for you to move back there.
After all, it's been more than eight
months since the accident.

JASON

He'll move back when he's ready. Right, Danny?

RUTH

(to DANIEL)

What you want is a place where you can be comfortable, have some privacy. Maybe bring a lady friend or two.

DANIEL's P.O.V. of RUTH, who winks. DANIEL looks down at the Bible, with the dildo poking out from beneath.

CUT TO:

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

JASON's car pulls into the lot as a cab pulls out.

CUT TO:

INT. PETULA CLARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

C.U. on KAT's spike-heels resting against a kneeler in a pew. The song "Downtown" is playing softly in the background. PAN UP vinyl boots to KAT sitting with her arms crossed in the back row of a crowded chapel. Two large caskets and a small one are at the front, surrounded by a sea of flowers. Muffled sobs are audible. ANDREW, a tall, dignified, man in his sixties comforts the mourners at the front. KAT is agitated. She pulls out a pack of cigarettes and fumbles for her lighter. ANDREW spots KAT and makes his way to her. Before she can light the cigarette, he pulls it from her mouth and crushes it in his hand.

ANDREW

(whispers)

Kat. You made it after all.

KAT

(making no effort to whisper)

I guess I did. Happy Andy?

ANDREW

(miffed)

Andrew. My name is Andrew. And I'm not doing this for me. It's for them. It's out of respect for them.

ANDREW nods at the coffins.

KAT

They're dead. They don't care.

ANDREW

They're your family. You're their only blood relative.

KAT

I was adopted.

ANDREW

No you weren't.

KAT

I might as well have been.

ANDREW

For God's sake, have a little respect. Didn't you shame them enough when they were alive?

KAT

They treated me like shit.

ANDREW

I've known your family for years. I was like an uncle to you. I never once saw them mistreat you.

KAT

You only played bridge with them at the church. You didn't know them.

ANDREW

You're upset. An accident like this is bound to upset anyone.

KAT

(looking at coffins)

Would they have come to my funeral?
(looking at ANDREW)
Would you, Uncle Andy?

ANDREW
You think I'm a hypocrite, Kat?

KAT
Yes.

ANDREW
And what does that make you, pretending
not to feel anything at all?

C.U. of KAT's face, who has no answer.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRANCE, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

A young, pimply STAFF MEMBER of the funeral home stands near the door. On his forehead is birthmark that resembles a devil's face. Beside him a sign holds the directory to that afternoon's funerals. SOMBRE MUSIC fills the air. DANIEL, JASON and RUTH enter. The STAFF MEMBER nods solemnly at them.

JASON
(to STAFF MEMBER)
Ray.

The STAFF MEMBER points to the directory, where the name RAY has been posted next to the words FRANK SINATRA MEMORIAL CHAPEL. Below that is the PETULA CLARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL. Several other names and chapels are on the board. Jason nods and moves down the hall. DANIEL, glancing down at the dildo hidden beneath the Bible, hesitates. JASON notices his hesitation.

JASON
Danny?

DANIEL
I, uh, need to...

STAFF MEMBER
The washroom is to your right, sir.

DANIEL

Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. DOOR TO WASHROOM, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

DANIEL walks down a short hallway to the washroom door. On the door is a blue sign indicating it's a shared male/female washroom. DANIEL tries the door, but it's locked. A tap runs briefly, then a middle-aged woman emerges, dabbing her nose with a kleenex and sniffing. DANIEL enters the washroom.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHROOM, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

There is a single toilet and a sink. DANIEL enters and locks the door. Rain drums on the window pain. DANIEL places the Bible on the toilet tank, then sits on the seat, absent-mindedly examining the dildo. After a moment, he places the dildo in an inner pocket in his suit jacket and rises. Going over to the sink he turns on the tap and splashes water in his face.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK SINATRA MEMORIAL CHAPEL, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

DANIEL stands at a small distance from the casket with JASON. The song "New York, New York" plays quietly in the background. In front of the casket is a kneeler. A PRIEST stands in the aisle halfway to the casket, nodding encouragingly at DANIEL. There are only a few mourners in this chapel, mostly old ladies, and RUTH who sits at the back applying makeup.

JASON

(pushing DANIEL gently)

Go on, get in there.

DANIEL makes his way over to the priest.

PRIEST

She was a good woman, Daniel.

DANIEL

Yes.

PRIEST
Came to mass every Sunday.

DANIEL
Yes.

PRIEST
Even when she was sick.

DANIEL
Yes.

PRIEST
And you were a good son for bringing
her.

DANIEL
I suppose.

PRIEST
A good son.

DANIEL
(looking at PRIEST)
I was obedient. Is that the same as
good?

The PRIEST eyes DANIEL warily.

CUT TO:

INT. PETULA CLARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

ANDREW is slumped in a seat next to KAT, snoring gently. At the front a middle-aged woman delivers a droning eulogy, spiked with references to this "model" family.

KAT's P.O.V. SFX: She looks around at the various people, some of whom glance back disapprovingly at her. All the faces look distorted and grotesque to her.

ANGLE ON KAT rising. KAT exits.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRANCE, FUNERAL PARLOUR - DAY

As KAT heads for the front door, she pulls out a cigarette. The STAFF MEMBER eyes her and taps a "No Smoking" sign. KAT glances outside. It's pouring rain. She notices the washroom and turns towards it. The STAFF MEMBER makes a disapproving noise and takes a step towards her. KAT turns on her heel, opening her coat wide to reveal her outfit. Astonished, the STAFF MEMBER stops in his tracks.

KAT

Call me a cab, will you?

KAT spins around and walks into the washroom.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHROOM, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

KAT paces, smoking furiously. Rain patters against the window and the small room is choked with smoke. KAT flicks her butt in the garbage can. She pulls out her pack, but it's empty, and she tosses it into the corner.

KAT

Shit!

Angry, she sits on the counter, her arms crossed. Then she notices the Bible. She narrows her eyes. A KNOCK ON THE DOOR disturbs her reverie.

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)

Your cab is here.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRANCE, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

KAT emerges from the washroom and heads for the front door. She pauses in front of the STAFF MEMBER.

KAT

She's not dead.

STAFF MEMBER

What?

KAT

(tapping the directory)

Petula Clark.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK SINATRA MEMORIAL CHAPEL, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

DANIEL and the PRIEST stand next to each other in front of the coffin, their backs to the camera. A moment of silence passes.

PRIEST

A good woman.

A beat passes.

DANIEL

How do you know?

PRIEST

(taken aback)

She came to mass every Sunday.

DANIEL

What was her name?

PRIEST

(glancing at the name placard
on the chapel door)

Ray.

DANIEL

Her first name.

PRIEST

You don't have to know someone's name to know they're a good person.

DANIEL

Just that they go to mass?

(looking at PRIEST)
I came to mass every Sunday with her.
Am I a good person?

The PRIEST frowns. DANIEL bends over the coffin.

PRIEST
It's only natural at a time like this to
question your faith. When my mother
passed--
(notices dildo poking out of
DANIEL's jacket)
What's that?

DANIEL
(absent-mindedly)
It was hers.

DANIEL realizes he is missing the Bible. He straightens.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

DANIEL exits, the PRIEST staring after him.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENTRANCE, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

DANIEL hurries past the STAFF MEMBER towards the washroom. Smoke curls out from under the door. Just as DANIEL is about to open the door to the washroom, a SMOKE DETECTOR goes off. The STAFF MEMBER steps up next to DANIEL, holding a fire extinguisher.

STAFF MEMBER
She's gone.

DANIEL stares at him for a beat, then pulls open the door. Smoke pours out.

CUT TO:

INT. WASHROOM, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

DANIEL wades through thick smoke to discover the bible is gone. Behind him, the STAFF MEMBER battles a fire that has spread from the garbage can.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRANCE, FUNERAL HOME - DAY

DANIEL and the STAFF MEMBER both lean against the wall as people crowd to get out the front door. Both look dishevelled and have soot stains on their faces and clothes. The STAFF MEMBER smokes a cigarette. The hallway is filled with smoke. The sound of a FIRE TRUCK SIREN approaching.

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

Please stay calm. File out in an orderly fashion.

STAFF MEMBER

(to DANIEL)

What will you do now?

DANIEL

Don't know.

STAFF MEMBER

It would be a mistake to live with your brother and his wife.

Several FIREMEN enter, dragging a hose.

DANIEL

I suppose.

STAFF MEMBER

Trust me. I've been down that road. First they tell you to turn down the tunes, then it's no friends over after eleven on weeknights.

DANIEL doesn't respond. The STAFF MEMBER takes a long drag on his cigarette. Then he takes a business card for the funeral home from a table beside them and scribbles his number down on it. He stuffs it the breast pocket of DANIEL's jacket.

STAFF MEMBER

Call me. We'll talk.

DANIEL
(pointing to PETULA CLARK MEMORIAL
CHAPEL on directory)
She's not dead.

STAFF MEMBER
So I heard.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

KAT is back in her bedroom, the NAKED MAN still handcuffed to her bed. Her coat is off and she holds a whip.

KAT
Miss me?

The NAKED MAN whimpers. C.U. on KAT as she cracks the whip with more than the required enthusiasm. The NAKED MAN moans. With each lash, KAT winces as if she is the one being whipped. Although her expression is hard, almost a grimace, a single tear tracks down her cheek.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S KITCHEN - DAY

DANIEL, still in his rain-soaked suit, sits in the empty kitchen, staring off into space. It is an old kitchen, circa 1930's.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

KAT drops the whip on the floor. The CAMERA TRACKS WITH HER as she walks into the front hall, opening a closet full of sexual paraphernalia. She selects some electrified nipple clamps. As she closes the door she notices her overcoat on a hook next to the closet. C.U. of the Bible sticking out from the pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

DANIEL peels off his wet jacket. As he does so, the dildo falls out of his pocket. DANIEL crouches to retrieve it. C.U. of his dresser. DANIEL's hand enters the shot and places the dildo upright, next to the mirror. His hand withdraws, then a moment later re-enters holding the damp business card from the funeral home, which he sticks between the frame of the mirror and the glass. The phone number on it is smeared and almost illegible.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

KAT sits in an easy chair, smoking, taking a break. The television is on and a televangelist pleads for donations. In the background the NAKED MAN is still handcuffed to the bed. On the table next to KAT's chair is the Bible. C.U. on Bible. KAT's hands enter the shot as she picks it up. ANGLE on KAT leafing through the Bible. She snaps it shut. C.U. on waste paper basket next to the table as the Bible drops into it.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S MOTHER'S BEDROOM - DAY

The closet is empty, and the drawers of a dresser are open. An older woman's clothes have been neatly sorted and stacked on the bed. C.U. on a crucifix attached to the wall above the bed, a picture of Jesus and Mary on either side. DANIEL's P.O.V. as he stares at the clothes. DANIEL looks at himself in the mirror above the dresser. C.U. on DANIEL in the mirror. A PULL FOCUS so that instead of DANIEL's reflection, we see a small gold rosary draped across the top of the mirror. DANIEL's hand enters the shot and lifts the rosary. He stares at it.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

KAT holds an oversize key ring with dozens of keys on it. One by one she unlocks the handcuffs of NAKED MAN. He gets up, rubbing his wrists, and exits the shot. KAT leaves the other end of the cuffs locked to the bed posts. C.U. of the NAKED MAN's hand placing bills on the corner of her nightstand. KAT ignores him. She stares at the handcuffs amidst the rumpled sheets.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S - DAY

DANIEL stares at the rosary. He closes his fist around it, then slowly goes to his knees and folds his hands as if he's about to pray. DANIEL'S P.O.V.: from this angle he sees a dusty box under his mother's bed. Forgetting about his prayer, he retrieves the box, brushes the dust off it and lifts the lid. C.U. on contents of box. Inside are newspaper clippings, photographs, and other assorted memorabilia.

EXT. CABRAM ROAD - DAY

It's late afternoon. WIDE SHOT of the road, which is a busy, four lane artery just outside the city. We are at a spot where the road curves abruptly south. On the outside of the curve is a steep incline that ends in a forest. A SHOT FRAMING the guard rail along the curve. The rail is battered, and in one spot is missing altogether. Two sand drums and a sawhorse with flashing yellow lamps fill the gap. A cab drives into the shot and pulls onto the shoulder opposite the makeshift barricade. KAT exits the cab and lights up a cigarette. She walks over to the rail and looks down the incline. The car that went through the rail tore a path down the side of the incline. At the bottom, where the track ends, the brush and trees are burned. Scattered nearby is assorted debris -- a wheel, a mirror, broken glass -- from a car wreck. At the edge of the burn is a singed white teddy bear.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Later in the evening. KAT lies in bed, smoking. Her hair is wet. She wears a pink bathrobe and has scrubbed her face of

makeup. She stares at the ceiling. KAT stubs out her cigarette in an ashtray on her stomach. Her pack is empty, so she opens the drawer of a night table and rummages around. She pauses, her hand encountering something. She pulls out a framed picture. C.U. on picture. It's a family portrait, including a dour, younger KAT, her FATHER, and her surprisingly young MOTHER, too young to have been KAT's biological mother. Her step-mother holds a baby. Next to her MOTHER stands a BOY, about five. C.U. on baby. KAT places the portrait back in the drawer. She extracts a pack of cigarettes, pulls one out. C.U. on lighter as the flame unfurls from its tip.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

DANIEL is at the kitchen table, sorting through the shoe box, picking up several things at a time and leafing through them. Most are the meaningless detritus of his mother's life. He looks at a family picture, in which his smiling mother and father stand behind their two young sons. The sons wear the vestments of altar boys. DANIEL drops the picture and picks up another handful. He flips through the pile, then pauses when he comes to a photograph. C.U. of photo: a wedding picture of DANIEL and an attractive YOUNG WOMAN. ANGLE ON DANIEL who puts the photo to the table. Next is a folded clipping. DANIEL unfolds it and his expression tightens. C.U. of clipping. The headline reads, "Cabram Curve Claims Third Victim of Year". The article includes a picture of the same YOUNG WOMAN. DANIEL drops everything he had in his hand except for the clipping and a photograph directly beneath. He puts the photograph on top. The picture was taken from the passenger side of a car. In it the YOUNG WOMAN is driving. Her head is turned to the camera and she smiles. Flames lick up the photograph, until they consume the picture. ANGLE ON DANIEL holding the burning photograph and clipping over the sink.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. TABLE, STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

DANIEL and the STAFF MEMBER sit at a table near the catwalk, several empty shot glasses scattered on their table. Both are tipsy.

STAFF MEMBER

I never figured you for the sort who'd
want to go to a place like this.

(looking at the stripper)

Is she ever fucking hot.

(to DANIEL)

Got anymore fives?

DANIEL reaches into his pants pocket and pulls out his wallet. When he opens it, it's empty. He drops the wallet on the table and reaches in his other pocket and pulls out a crumpled wad of bills. The STAFF MEMBER sorts through the pile anxiously until he strikes upon one. He puts it in his teeth and leans over the catwalk. DANIEL watches intently as the stripper allows the STAFF MEMBER to nuzzle the bill into her g-string.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR, STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

KAT sits with ANITA, a stripper, at the bar. KAT wear a tight leather skirt and leather jacket. Both are drinking coffee. In the background we can see the STAFF MEMBER with his face nestled in the crotch of the stripper.

KAT

Do you believe in God?

ANITA

Sure. I guess.

KAT

Do you believe in the devil?

ANITA

The devil?

KAT

He called me the devil. In front of
their kids.

ANITA

What do you expect from born again zealots?

KAT

How could my dad have said that?

ANITA

People are shit, Kat.

KAT

Then he called me the devil's whore. How the hell can I be both?

ANITA

My dad once told his friends I gave great blow jobs.

KAT

It's too late to take anything back. To change any of our words.

ANITA

Try not to dwell on it.

KAT

I mean, I always thought something would happen. Something would change....

ANITA

People don't change.

KAT

(looking at ANITA)

Do you really believe that?

ANITA

It's been five years. And I still love a man who can never love me back.

KAT

But people have to be able to change. Otherwise, what's the point?

ANITA

Sometimes I think the point is that
we're waiting for God to change.

CUT TO:

INT. TABLE, STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

DANIEL and the STAFF MEMBER stare at the table. There is now a larger accumulation of glasses. Both are drunk and slur their words slightly.

STAFF MEMBER
So. Why live with your mother?

DANIEL
What?

STAFF MEMBER
Your mother. Why live with your mother?

DANIEL
It just sort of happened.

STAFF MEMBER
You a fag?

DANIEL looks at him blearily.

STAFF MEMBER (CONT'D)
Not that I have anything against fags.

DANIEL
I was married.

STAFF MEMBER
(leaning forward intently)
The bitch left you?

DANIEL
(looking away)
She died.

STAFF MEMBER
Sorry, man. How long ago?

DANIEL
Eleven months.

STAFF MEMBER
Jesus, rough year.

DANIEL
I moved in with my mother after that. I
don't remember why.
(looks at STAFF MEMBER)
Shouldn't I remember why?

STAFF MEMBER
How'd she die?

DANIEL
(abstractly)
I've been in a fog.

STAFF MEMBER
Your wife, man. How'd she die?

DANIEL
Car crash.

STAFF MEMBER
Sorry, man. It's a bad corner.

DANIEL
I didn't say anything about a corner.

STAFF MEMBER
(raising his glass)
If ever anyone needed a drink, it's you.

The STAFF MEMBER drinks, while DANIEL stares at him. Then he
stares at his glass.

DANIEL
I've got nothing left.

The STAFF MEMBER grabs a handful of crumpled bills.

STAFF MEMBER
No, man. You got lots.

(shaking money in DANIEL's face)
Look.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR, STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

ANITA now stands next to KAT, who's smoking.

KAT

Why do they come to me? Isn't there
enough pain in the world already? Why
do they want me to give them more?

ANITA

Don't think about it. Go out. Get
drunk.

KAT

(nodding at DANIEL's table)
Like those assholes?

ANITA

Yeah, like those assholes. Hey, you're
alive. Enjoy it.

In the background, the STAFF MEMBER rises and staggers over to
the bar as KAT and ANITA talk.

KAT

My life is shit.

ANITA

Give it a few more weeks.

KAT

At least they believed in something.

ANITA

In a cruel, unforgiving God.

KAT

They had their faith.

ANITA

Not faith. They only had belief.

KAT looks at her, perplexed.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Belief is blind obedience. But faith presupposes doubt. Faith and doubt go together, like God and the Devil.

The STAFF MEMBER fetches up against the bar next to KAT, his fist crammed full of bills.

STAFF MEMBER

Did I hear my name?

ANITA

Get lost.

The STAFF MEMBER waves the bills.

STAFF MEMBER

(to KAT)

You available?

KAT

What?

STAFF MEMBER

My friend is in need of your services.

KAT looks at ANITA who shrugs.

STAFF MEMBER (CONT'D)

His mother just died.

KAT softens fractionally, glancing at DANIEL who's lost in his own thoughts.

STAFF MEMBER (CONT'D)

He needs to be reminded he's alive.

KAT

I'm not in that business.

STAFF MEMBER

Really?

KAT

Really.

STAFF MEMBER

(frowning, and leaning over
her to get a good look)

You sure?

KAT stubs out her cigarette, pushes the STAFF MEMBER away and rises. She exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENTRANCE, STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

SHOT FRAMING the club entrance. The sign above the door reads "Nunn's Strip-o-rama". KAT exits the club. She reaches into her shoulder bag, pulls out a pack of cigarettes and lights one. Two hookers, arm-in-arm, amble by, behind her. She watches them until they exit. A dark car with tinted windows pulls up and the window on her side goes down.

MAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

Are you available?

KAT flicks her cigarette in the window.

CUT TO:

INT. TABLE, STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

A topless WAITRESS drops four more shot glasses on the already crowded table. The STAFF MEMBER stuffs several bills down her waist band and almost falls out of his chair doing so. The WAITRESS exits. DANIEL is also very drunk now. He sways where he sits, and his dialogue in this scene is slurred.

DANIEL

There is no God.

STAFF MEMBER

That's the spirit.

DANIEL

Or if there is, he's a cruel, hateful
God.

STAFF MEMBER
We all have our off days.

DANIEL
And the thing is, we'll never know.

STAFF MEMBER
Know what?

DANIEL
If there is a God.

STAFF MEMBER
Sure there's a God.

DANIEL
How do you know?

STAFF MEMBER
Just take a look around us.

DANIEL
You see God here, in a strip bar?

STAFF MEMBER
I was talking about the evil in the
world. Then tell me the devil isn't
real!

DANIEL
What does that have to do with God?

STAFF MEMBER
You can't have one without the other.
They go together, like...
(searches for words)
...love and marriage.

DANIEL

What?

STAFF MEMBER

If you want proof of God, look for his
opposite. Man, the devil's everywhere.
Hell, he's even in me.

(smiles demonically)

Q.E.D.

DANIEL

Huhn?

CUT TO:

EXT. QUIET STREET - NIGHT

A telephone pole is FRAMED in the shot. KAT enters the shot,
walking slowly, smoking. She stops and leans against the pole,
smoking contemplatively.

CUT TO:

INT. TABLE, STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

DANIEL's head is on the table. The STAFF MEMBER leans over
DANIEL, shaking him gently. Behind them a large bouncer stands,
his well-muscled arms crossed.

STAFF MEMBER

Buddy. Wake up, Buddy.

(glancing back at BOUNCER)

We got to go.

The bouncer grabs DANIEL's hair and pulls up his head. DANIEL's
P.O.V.: the STAFF MEMBER's grotesquely distorted face fills his
field of vision. The devil-shaped birthmark on his forehead
glows red. He no longer looks like a pimply-faced kid; now he
looks demonic. Sound FX: distorted voice repeating "Time to die,
Buddy".

DANIEL

(rasping)

N...no!

The CAMERA follows DANIEL's P.O.V. as he and the STAFF MEMBER
are roughly ejected from the club. DANIEL falls to his hands and

knees on the sidewalk outside. A cab pulls up inches away from his face.

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)
Come on, buddy. You wanna die, don't you?

DANIEL
Die?

Hands pull DANIEL up, rifle his pockets for money. DANIEL's keys fall out of his pocket in SLOW MOTION, and the STAFF MEMBER bends down to pick them up.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - NIGHT

DANIEL's P.O.V.: he sits in the back seat next to the STAFF MEMBER, who looks even more demonic. Distorted lights blur by outside the cab.

DANIEL
(panicky)
Why are you doing this?

STAFF MEMBER
Does the Prince of Darkness need a reason?

DANIEL leans towards the cabbie.

DANIEL
He's the devil!

The cab driver turns around and his face is the same as the STAFF MEMBER.

STAFF MEMBER
I know.

Daniel turns to see that the seat next to him is empty.

CUT TO:

INT. CAB - NIGHT

We are now out of DANIEL's P.O.V., but things are still strangely distorted. The SHOT FRAMES the entire back seat of the cab, DANIEL sitting by himself, looking panicky. The cab speeds up. Papers blow around inside the cab. We hear SQUEALING TIRES as the cab rounds a corner and DANIEL is thrown across the back seat.

DANIEL

Stop!

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)

Don't you want to die?

DANIEL

No!

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)

But you prayed for it.

DANIEL

Not like this!

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)

Dead is dead.

The cab turns another corner and this time DANIEL is thrown across to the other side, as if he weighs almost nothing. He extends his arms trying to brace himself, but in vain. The cab turns again and this time DANIEL is thrown halfway up the door. His body moves in that strange, weightless way, as if gravity itself has been turned upside down. Papers swirl madly around and assorted debris falls up from the floor to the ceiling of the cab. The cab swings in the other direction and DANIEL is pulled almost horizontal.

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)

Where would you like to crash? Any favourite spots?

DANIEL

(whispering)

Jesus, save me!

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)
I thought you didn't believe in God.

DANIEL
I don't want to die!

STAFF MEMBER (O.C.)
You were pretty much dead already. This
is just a formality.

CUT TO:

EXT. QUIET STREET - NIGHT

The same telephone pole is FRAMED in the shot, but KAT is no longer there. A beat passes. A cab, moving at high speed, crashes into it.

CUT TO:

INT. NURSING STATION, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

KAT stands in front of a nursing station, holding a lit cigarette. A frazzled looking NURSE sits behind, holding a phone in one hand. She looks disapprovingly at KAT.

NURSE
Visiting hours are from 12 to 7.
(points to clock on wall)
It's 10:30.

KAT
Can't I just look in --

NURSE
(curtly)
Tomorrow. 12 to 7.

The nurse lifts the phone to her ear.

NURSE
(to phone)
I'm sorry, I can't give that information
out over the phone.

KAT

I work afternoon shifts.

NURSE
(to phone)
You'll have to speak to the Doctor.
(to KAT)
You work weekends too?

KAT
It's Monday.

The NURSE points to the visiting hour rules on the wall.

KAT (CONT'D)
There's no one around. Who will know?

NURSE
(into phone)
She was admitted early this evening.
(to KAT)
No.
(points to "NO SMOKING" sign)
And put out that cigarette.

KAT
What about immediate family?

NURSE
(into phone)
No, I'm sorry. The doctor's are the
only ones allowed to discuss a patient's
prognosis.

The NURSE pulls the phone away from her ear and glares at KAT.

What don't you understand about 'no'?

The NURSE snatches the cigarette from between KAT's fingers and stubs it out on the side of a metal trash can. KAT notices a pop can on the desk on the top of which are the ashes from a cigarette.

KAT
Can you at least give me a room number?

NURSE

(to PHONE)
Please hold.
(to KAT)
No.

KAT
There's a rule against giving me her
room number?

NURSE
Come back tomorrow.

KAT
There's no reason to not to give the
room number now.

NURSE
I'm on the phone.

KAT
I want the name of your supervisor.

The nurse glares at her.

NURSE
If I give you the room number, will you
go?

KAT
Yes.

The NURSE picks a clipboard up from the desk.

NURSE
Room 314.

KAT turns and walks towards the elevator. A car is waiting with the door open. The NURSE watches KAT step into the car and press a button. ANGLE ON the NURSE returning her attention to the phone. SOUND FX: ELEVATOR DOOR CLOSING. The nurse glances up to see the doors closed. SHOT FRAMING the nursing station. KAT, crouched down so her head is below the edge of the nursing station, creeps past, unseen by the NURSE.

NURSE
(to phone)

I'm aware she's your wife, sir.
I already told you I can't give out that
information over the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. WARD ROOM, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

There are several beds, some with curtains drawn around them. The lights are out and the only illumination comes from the open door in the hallway. The occupants of the beds are cloaked in shadow and difficult to make out. KAT appears in the doorway and checks the room number. She enters and walks down the aisle, scanning the occupants of the beds. She stops at the last bed on the right, and places her hands on the rail at the foot of the bed. ANGLE ON MELISSA, a young girl of seven, in bed, an IV drip in her arm, her forehead and the right side of her face covered in fresh scabs and her right arm in a cast. KAT watches her for a moment. MELISSA stirs and opens her eyes. She stares at KAT.

MELISSA

Are you my guardian angel?

CUT TO:

EXT. QUIET STREET - NIGHT

The cab is wrapped around the telephone pole. An ambulance, its lights flashing and back doors open, is at the edge of the shot. DANIEL sits on the curb, looking dazed, while a PARAMEDIC daubs a gash on his head.

PARAMEDIC

You're lucky to be alive.

DANIEL stares at him. The PARAMEDIC helps DANIEL to his feet and leads him to the ambulance. DANIEL sits. The paramedic starts to close the door.

DANIEL

Wait.

PARAMEDIC

What's the matter?

DANIEL

What about my the driver?

PARAMEDIC

(shrugging)

Driver? There was no one else in the cab.

CUT TO:

INT. NURSING STATION, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A frantic YOUNG MAN stands in front of the nursing station. The frazzled NURSE sits behind the desk.

YOUNG MAN

Why won't you tell me? I'm here, aren't I? You said you couldn't give that information out over the phone, so here I am.

NURSE

(annoyed)

I'm sorry. You'll have to speak to the doctor.

YOUNG MAN

Where's the doctor?

NURSE

He'll be in tomorrow at 10.

YOUNG MAN

Give me his phone number.

NURSE

I'm afraid I'm not allowed to give out that information. Come back tomorrow--

KAT enters. The NURSE notices her and frowns.

YOUNG MAN

Please. I was out of town. Christ, I didn't even know she'd been in an accident until an hour ago!

NURSE

(to KAT, angrily)

What are you doing here? You're not allowed on the wards at this time!

KAT

(to YOUNG MAN)

What's her name?

YOUNG MAN

Dianne Quinn.

KAT reaches over and snatches the clipboard from behind the NURSE's desk. The NURSE makes a grab for it but is too late.

NURSE

Give me that!

KAT

Room 328.

The YOUNG MAN hurries down the corridor. KAT flips the clipboard back on the desk.

NURSE

I'll be calling security now.

While the NURSE picks up the phone and dials, KAT lights up another cigarette. The two regard each other across the desk. SOUND FX: the tiny ring of the phone. The NURSE is visibly agitated and her hand shakes.

NURSE (CONT'D)

How dare you! How dare you judge me!
I'd like to see you do this job. Do you think it's easy? Do you?

KAT doesn't answer. The NURSE's anger crumples.

NURSE (CONT'D)

I have a husband, a daughter. My mother was on this ward. I know what it's like

to see someone you love fall sick and die.

The NURSE looks away, embarrassed and near tears. The phone continues to ring. KAT offers a cigarette to the NURSE. Slowly the NURSE drops the phone to its cradle as a MALE VOICE on the other end says "Hello?" With a shaking hand, the NURSE takes one. KAT lights it for her.

CUT TO:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

DANIEL sits on a gurney, his shirt off. There are bruises on his chest. An INTERN is examining the cut on his forehead.

INTERN

You're a very lucky man.

DANIEL

So I heard.

INTERN

A couple of broken ribs and a few minor abrasions.

(looking at DANIELS's forehead)

Should stitch this up, though. I'll be right back.

The INTERN exits. A moment passes. SOUND FX: a loud, insistent phone ring. The ring repeats itself several times, and DANIEL looks around, but he is alone. DANIEL eases himself off the gurney and follows the ring around the corner to a security cubicle. DANIEL looks again, but still can't see anyone. He picks up the phone.

DANIEL

Hello?

SOUND FX: a click then a dial tone. DANIEL replaces the phone.

DETECTIVE LIU (O.C.)

You the guy from the cab?

DANIEL turns to see DETECTIVE LIU, an expressionless, middle-aged police officer in a rumpled suit. He is short and heavyset.

DANIEL

Yes.

DETECTIVE LIU

I'm Detective Liu. I have some questions I'd like to ask you.

DANIEL

I wasn't driving.

DETECTIVE LIU

I didn't say you were.

(wearily)

Look, my shift ends in a few minutes. Couldn't we make this as painless as possible?

DANIEL nods. DETECTIVE LIU pulls out a pad.

DETECTIVE LIU

Good. Name?

DANIEL

Daniel Ray.

DETECTIVE LIU

Do you have any ID?

DANIEL reaches in his pocket, but can't find his wallet.

DETECTIVE LIU (CONT'D)

No ID, huhn?

DANIEL

I must have left it in the bar.

DETECTIVE LIU

Right.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

DANIEL sits on the gurney again, his back to the hallway. The INTERN stitches his forehead. DETECTIVE LIU stands in front of DANIEL and scribbles in his notepad.

DETECTIVE LIU

Right.

DANIEL

You don't believe me, do you?

DETECTIVE LIU

I've heard stranger stories.

DANIEL

Did you believe them?

DETECTIVE LIU

No. But I always check them out.

DANIEL

Am I under arrest?

DETECTIVE LIU

What for?

DANIEL

Reckless driving. Driving under the influence.

DETECTIVE LIU

You were unconscious and in the back seat when the ambulance got there. Crashes don't throw you backwards. Ergo, you couldn't have been driving.

DANIEL

Then you do believe me.

DETECTIVE LIU

I believe someone else was driving. As for the rest....

DETECTIVE LIU shuts his notebook. The INTERN cuts the end of the surgical thread.

INTERN

All done.

DANIEL

(to DETECTIVE)

What happens next?

Behind DANIEL, in the hallway, KAT enters. By the expression on DETECTIVE LIU's face we see he recognizes her. KAT, at first lost in thought, glances up and sees DETECTIVE LIU. She also shows signs of recognition. She looks away and continues quickly down the hall. DANIEL turns to see what DETECTIVE LIU is staring at, but by the time he does, KAT has exited.

DETECTIVE LIU

(to DANIEL, distracted)

Excuse me.

DANIEL

(calling after DETECTIVE LIU)

Am I free to go home?

DETECTIVE LIU exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

DETECTIVE LIU and KAT face each other in the street. It is cold, and DETECTIVE LIU's breath unfurls in a fog while KAT smokes a cigarette. DETECTIVE LIU pulls the cigarette out of her mouth and throws it to the ground.

DETECTIVE LIU

Filthy habit.

KAT

Am I under arrest or can I go?

DETECTIVE LIU

I love you.

KAT

I know.

DETECTIVE LIU

There's someone else.

KAT
(laughing)
Hundreds.

DETECTIVE LIU
That's not what I meant.

KAT
Things are complicated right now.

DETECTIVE LIU
My offer holds.

KAT
I need time to think.

DETECTIVE LIU
(threatening)
I won't let you go.

KAT pulls out another cigarette and lights it.

DETECTIVE LIU (CONT'D)
I mean it.

KAT kisses him lightly on the lips. She walks away. DETECTIVE LIU stares after KAT.

DETECTIVE LIU
(to himself)
I won't let you go.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

SHOT of parked car. It's an older model green Ford Escort.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE LIU'S CAR - NIGHT

C.U. of DETECTIVE LIU in his parked car, staring out the windshield. PAN DOWN to his hands in his lap. Around his right wrist is a handcuff. In his right hand he holds the other open

handcuff. He snaps it around his left wrist. ANGLE ON
DETECTIVE LIU's face. Tears streak his cheeks.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. WARD ROOM, HOSPITAL - DAY

MELISSA patiently watches the doorway. KAT enters the room wearing tight leather pants and a see through blouse. In her right hand she holds a stuffed teddy bear. An older woman in a bed near the door looks at KAT disapprovingly. A SHOT FRAMING MELISSA's bed. KAT walks into the shot, and stands at the foot of the bed, her back to the camera.

MELISSA
I knew you'd come back.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S KITCHEN - DAY

DANIEL roots through a top kitchen cupboard. It is late afternoon and the kitchen is gloomy. DANIEL extracts a dusty bottle of scotch his mother had squirreled away some years ago. Sitting at the table, he opens the bottle and pours himself a shot. DANIEL stares off into space, abstracted. He raises the glass and takes a sip. SOUND FX: the DOORBELL RINGS.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S FRONT HALL - LATE AFTERNOON, DAY

DANIEL walks into the shot and opens the front door. DETECTIVE LIU stands in the doorway. He wears an overcoat.

DETECTIVE LIU
May I come in?

DANIEL
(reluctant, but worried how it
would be interpreted if he

refused)
Certainly.

DANIEL steps back and DETECTIVE LIU enters.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The living room looks like it was furnished by an old lady -- which it was. DETECTIVE LIU scans the room, noting everything. DANIEL motions DETECTIVE LIU to sit in a large wingback chair. As DETECTIVE LIU settles in the chair DANIEL sits on the brocaded couch opposite. On its back is a antimacassar. CROSS-CUT between the two as they converse.

DANIEL
Did you find him?

DETECTIVE LIU
Not yet. The bouncer confirmed your story. But he couldn't remember what your pal looked like.

DANIEL
He wasn't my pal. I met him at my mother's funeral. Surely the funeral home must have his address.

DETECTIVE LIU
No one of that description works at the at the funeral home.

DANIEL
(nonplussed)
But, I saw him there, talked to him--

DETECTIVE LIU
You told me you had between ten and fifteen shots of whiskey.

DANIEL
That was the day after the funeral.

DETECTIVE LIU
Do you drink often?

DANIEL
No. Almost never.

DETECTIVE LIU
Have you been drinking today?

DANIEL looks away guiltily. A beat passes.

DETECTIVE LIU (CONT'D)
Interesting décor.

DANIEL
It's my mother's house. Was my mother's house.

DETECTIVE LIU
Were you living with your mother before she died?

DANIEL
Yes.

DETECTIVE LIU
How long have you been living here?

DANIEL
Eight months. Aren't you going to write any of these things down?

DETECTIVE LIU
Why did you move in with your mother?

DANIEL
What does this have to do with your investigation?

DETECTIVE LIU
Maybe nothing.
(a beat passes)
Sometimes what you think you're investigating isn't what you're really investigating.
(reaches in his overcoat)

We found this in the cab.
(pulls out the black dildo)
Yours?

DANIEL
It...it was my...I mean...I thought I
left it...
(a beat)
Yes.

DETECTIVE LIU
I see.

DETECTIVE LIU places it upright on the coffee table and ponders it. DANIEL glances from the dildo to DETECTIVE LIU and back. A moment of silence passes.

DETECTIVE LIU
Do you frequent prostitutes?

DANIEL
No. I never--

DETECTIVE LIU
Do you know a dominatrix named Kat?

DANIEL
No. What does this have to do with the
accident?

DETECTIVE LIU
Just a question.

DANIEL
I don't understand why you're asking me
these things. What about the cab? Have
you checked its registration? It has to
belong to someone.

DETECTIVE LIU
It was stolen earlier that evening.

DANIEL
You don't think I--

DETECTIVE LIU

I don't think anything. About you. Or about your invisible pal.

DANIEL

He wasn't my pal. I already told you, I met him the day of my mother's funeral.

He wrote his number--

(remembering the card)

I have his phone number. Upstairs.

Give me a second and I'll get it.

DANIEL hurries from the room.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWAY, DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

DANIEL takes the stairs, two at a time.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

DANIEL enters the bedroom and, much to his relief, sees the card stuck between the mirror and mirror frame. He walks briskly over to the dresser and pulls the card out. C.U. of card in his hand. The phone number is smeared and wormy, so much so that its individual digits could represent almost any number.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

C.U. of business card which has only a street number and an ink drawing of a whip. PULL BACK TO REVEAL ANITA holds the card, and that she and KAT sit in a booth, coffees in front of them, a pack of cigarettes in front of ANITA. There is a box containing several hundred more cards, fresh from the printer, on the table. The box is open.

ANITA

I like the new card. Very tasteful.

KAT
Waste of money.

ANITA
A waste?

KAT
I'm getting out of the business.

ANITA
Really?

KAT
I've had enough.

ANITA
Maybe you should give it a few days.
Think about it.

KAT
I have been thinking about it.

ANITA
I know you're unhappy. That's only
natural, given everything that's
happened.

KAT
I feel hollowed out. Empty. Like
nothing seems worthwhile. Like
everything is pointless.

ANITA
That road leads to despair.

KAT
Now you're going to tell me that's a
sin.

ANITA
No.

KAT
Good. I hate it when you get all
religious on me.

ANITA
(laughing)
Old habits are hard to break. What will
you do?

KAT
I don't know. Get a job, I suppose.

KAT checks her watch.

KAT (CONT'D)
I've got to go.

ANITA
Appointment?

KAT
New client.

ANITA
I thought you were quitting.

KAT
Soon.

ANITA
(holding up card)
Mind if I keep this one? As a memento?

KAT nods. ANITA takes the card and pushes it into her pack of
cigarettes so the end sticks out.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

C.U. of business card which has the STAFF MEMBER's illegible
phone number. PULL BACK TO REVEAL DETECTIVE LIU holding the
card. He hands it back to DANIEL, who is flustered. CROSS-CUT
between the two as they converse.

DANIEL
Aren't you going to take it?

DETECTIVE LIU

Why would I want it?

DANIEL
As evidence.

DETECTIVE LIU
Of what?

DANIEL has no answer.

DETECTIVE LIU (CONT'D)
You never answered my question.

DANIEL
(confused)
Question?

DETECTIVE LIU
Why did you move in with your mother
eight months ago?

DANIEL
(quietly)
My wife died.

DETECTIVE LIU
How did she die?

DANIEL
Car accident, if its any of your
business.

DETECTIVE LIU raises his eyebrows slightly, and scribbles in his
pad. An awkward silence falls.

DANIEL
(trying to fill silence)
On Cabram Road.

DETECTIVE LIU
Where it swings south, just outside the
city?

DANIEL
(taken aback)
How did you know?

DETECTIVE LIU
Bad corner. Lots of accidents happen
there. Where did you live before?

DANIEL
In a house. My own house.

DETECTIVE LIU
Do you still have the house?

DANIEL
Yes. Our things are... stored there.

DETECTIVE LIU
When was the last time you were there?

DANIEL
A few days... after the....
(beat)
Eight months.

DETECTIVE LIU
Could I see the house?

DANIEL
(shrugging)
If you like. But I really don't--
(gets it)
You think he's hiding there.

DETECTIVE LIU doesn't answer.

DANIEL
He's not. I've got the only two keys.

DANIEL pulls a key ring out of his pocket. It has half a dozen
keys on it. DANIEL finds the key he's looking for, but then
can't find its twin.

DANIEL
(perplexed)
I could have sworn I put it on here.
(looking at DETECTIVE LIU)
He must have taken it.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

FLASHBACK to DANIEL's P.O.V. in which his keys fall out of his pocket in SLOW MOTION and the STAFF MEMBER picks them up.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

DANIEL

He took it! I remember, he took it!

DETECTIVE LIU says nothing.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You don't believe me.

DETECTIVE LIU

I don't have the luxury of belief.

DANIEL looks worried.

DETECTIVE LIU (CONT'D)

Don't let it upset you.

DANIEL

That's easy for you to say. You're not being accused of anything.

DETECTIVE LIU

Neither are you. Not yet, anyway.

DANIEL

What if I can't prove my innocence?

DETECTIVE LIU

(shrugging)

Some things just can't be proved.

(a beat)

Like the existence of God. I think He exists. I can't prove it. But I have faith.

(standing)

Shall we go?

C.U. of DANIEL's face still in his chair. He looks distressed.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

KAT is dressed in her dominatrix outfit. Face down and handcuffed to her bed is a THIN MAN dressed in bondage gear, including a leather head mask and ball gag. KAT whips him without enthusiasm. The MAN tries to speak through the gag, but his words are muffled. KAT drops her whip and undoes the gag, which the THIN MAN spits out with disgust.

KAT

Had enough?

The THIN MAN speaks in a low, rough voice.

THIN MAN

Enough? I paid you to whip me! Now whip me like you mean it, bitch!

ANGLE ON KAT who cracks the whip a bit harder.

THIN MAN (O.C.)

Harder!

KAT cracks the whip even harder.

THIN MAN (O.C.)

Come on you stupid cunt!

C.U. on KAT who's getting pissed. She pulls the whip back for another blow.

THIN MAN

You're a pussy! Just like your Dad!

KAT lowers her arm.

KAT

Don't talk about my father.

THIN MAN

Your father sucked my fat dick!

KAT

The session is over.

C.U. on the THIN MAN who turns his head to look at KAT.

THIN MAN

(quietly)

I've met him, you know. In fact, we were chatting yesterday.

ANGLE ON Kat.

KAT

I doubt that.

THIN MAN

Don't believe me? He has dark, wavy hair, wears glasses, and has a large mole on his neck.

KAT

(disturbed)

You couldn't have.

KAT, much to her relief, notices a picture of her father on her dresser. It's in black and white and shows her father as the THIN MAN has described him. However, her father is a much younger man, and is arm in arm with her biological mother.

THIN MAN

Because he's dead?

KAT is nonplussed again.

KAT

How did you know he was dead?

The THIN MAN doesn't answer.

KAT (CONT'D)

The picture is old. You guessed I'd have a more recent picture if he was alive. But you're wrong.

THIN MAN

He died last week. With his wife and
your step brother.

KAT

(taking a step back)

Who are you?

THIN MAN

He had such high hopes for you. He
hated what you've become.

KAT

(angry)

Shut up!

THIN MAN

Personally, I have no problem with your
profession. But your dad....

KAT

If you don't shut up, I'm going to gag
you!

THIN MAN

I doubt that.

KAT picks up the ball gag, and the ball falls out and rolls under
the bed. She looks at it in disbelief.

THIN MAN

He was bitter. And who could blame him?
A failing business. A miserable
marriage. A loss of faith. And then
there was you....

KAT drops the gag.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)

I guess that's why he killed himself.

KAT

He died in a car crash.

THIN MAN

He killed them all. Drove off the road on purpose.

KAT

It was an accident! It had been raining--

THIN MAN

Despair is the greatest sin.

KAT

Shut up!

THIN MAN

And you blame yourself. If only you'd been a better daughter....

KAT loses it and whips him in anger. The THIN MAN grunts.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)

Did you know suicidal tendencies run in families?

(a beat)

How are you feeling these days?

KAT whips him again. The THIN MAN groans with pleasure.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)

Maybe just before you do it, you should kill your step sister. You know, murder-suicide. Nice for closure....

C.U. of KAT's face, red with anger, as she whips him again. O.C. he moans. KAT, in a frenzy, whips him harder and harder. The THIN MAN's moans stop. KAT continues to whip him several more times. Abruptly, KAT stops. SHOT FRAMING the THIN MAN on the bed. He is limp and blood wells from long cuts on his back. KAT is shocked at what she's done. She drops her whip, which curls to the floor amidst thin lines of blood on her carpet. KAT steps over to the bed and turns his head, but his eyes are closed and he is wheezing raggedly. Blood trickles from the corner of his mouth.

KAT

Shit!

The THIN MAN opens his eyes and smiles weakly.

THIN MAN

(whispers)

Life is pain.

The THIN MAN's eyes roll back and he goes limp. His wheezing stops. KAT feels for a pulse in his neck, but can't find one. She grabs a compact from her dresser and puts the mirror in front of his mouth to see his breath, but there is none. She's horrified.

KAT

You can't be dead. I didn't do anything to kill you!

KAT leans over and tries to give him mouth to mouth but can't because of the way he's restrained. She unbuckles his mask and tries again, but without success. When she pulls away, we can see his face for the first time. It's the STAFF MEMBER. Blood seeps out from the edges of his birthmark. KAT opens the drawer next to the bed and rifles through it desperately. She pulls out the large ring that holds the keys to the handcuffs. She flips through the keys but the ones for the handcuffs are gone. She throws the keys in the corner.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S FRONT HALLWAY - DAY

KAT enters and snatches the phone from its cradle. She dials 911. SOUND FX: a ring, then a tiny voice answering.

KAT

I need an ambulance! And a hacksaw.

(beat)

Yes, a hacksaw.

(beat)

I don't know. A heart attack, maybe.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The CAMERA TRACKS with KAT as she paces in her living room, smoking furiously. She paces towards the bedroom and looks in; we can see the legs of the THIN MAN handcuffed to the bed posts. She paces towards the front of the house and pauses to lift the curtains to look out the window. SOUND FX: METAL SLIDING ON METAL from the bedroom. KAT turns, the curtain still drawn in her hand. An ambulance, its light flashing, pulls up outside. Oblivious, KAT lets the curtain drop and walks towards the bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Kat enters the bedroom. SHOT FRAMING the bed. The THIN MAN is gone. The four handcuffs lie on the bed, still locked. KAT looks around the room, but there is nowhere for a man to hide. KAT stares at the unopened handcuffs. SOUND FX: URGENT KNOCK at the door.

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT HALL, DANIEL'S OLD HOUSE - DAY

The lights are out and blinds drawn. The house is gloomy. Barely visible, a door is FRAMED in the shot. SOUND FX: a key being put in the lock and the lock cylinder clicking. The door swings open revealing DANIEL in the hallway. Behind him is DETECTIVE LIU. DANIEL steps into the hallway and reaches for a light switch. SOUND FX: LIGHT SWITCH CLICK.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S OLD HOUSE - DAY

A SHOT of an empty house. Not even a crumb has been left. ANGLE ON DANIEL and DETECTIVE LIU. DETECTIVE LIU passes DANIEL and begins poking around the rest of the house. C.U. on DANIEL who is stunned.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

DANIEL stands near a large window in the living room staring at the floor. DETECTIVE LIU enters.

DETECTIVE LIU
There's nothing here.

DANIEL
(staring at floor)
I don't even have a picture of her.

DETECTIVE LIU
What was stolen?

DANIEL
(ignoring question)
I carried a picture in my wallet for years. But it was too much, seeing it every time I picked up my dry cleaning or bought a newspaper. A week after she died, I took it out and left it here.

DETECTIVE LIU
I asked what was stolen.

DANIEL blinks and looks up at DETECTIVE LIU who is taking out his pad.

DANIEL
My life.

DETECTIVE LIU
I need specifics. Can you make me a list?

DANIEL
It might take a couple of days...

DETECTIVE LIU
What kind of valuables were there?

DANIEL
Valuables?

DETECTIVE LIU

Things easy to move and sell. A coin collection. Jewellery.

DANIEL

No. Nothing like that. Unless....

DETECTIVE LIU

Unless?

DANIEL

My wife collected art. She'd been doing it for years. We had several pieces that had appreciated significantly.

DETECTIVE LIU

How significantly?

DANIEL

In total? Maybe five hundred thousand.

DETECTIVE LIU

Were they insured?

DANIEL

I think so.

DETECTIVE LIU

You think so?

DANIEL

Yes. Of course they were insured.

DETECTIVE LIU

And you didn't have a security system?

DANIEL

No. The neighbourhood is safe. We never thought--

DETECTIVE LIU

Five hundred thousand. That's a nice bit of change.

DANIEL

What are you saying?

DETECTIVE LIU

That five hundred thousand is a nice bit of change.

DANIEL

You think I stole the paintings. That I'm going to sell them and collect the insurance too.

DETECTIVE LIU

That would be an even nicer bit of change, wouldn't it?

DETECTIVE LIU walks to the front door and opens it.

DETECTIVE LIU (CONT'D)

Let's go.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENTRANCE, STRIP CLUB - DAY

FRAMING SHOT of street and sidewalk in front of the strip club. Two workers are on ladders, changing the sign above the door. It now reads "Heavenly Bodies". A light snow falls. DETECTIVE LIU's car pulls up. It's a older model green Escort. DANIEL exits the car. The car pulls away leaving DANIEL alone. He looks at the sky, then turns and walks into the club.

CUT TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB - DAY

DANIEL enters the gloomy club. Handel's Messiah plays loudly. The club appears empty, except for ANITA who is dancing on the catwalk. She is slowly peeling off a Nun's outfit. Her dancing is unlike the lifeless bump and grind usually seen in strip clubs. She moves sensually, rhapsodically, even though she has no audience. Something animates ANITA. The CAMERA TRACKS with DANIEL as he takes a few more steps into the club and spots a BARTENDER who is washing glasses. DANIEL walks over to her.

DANIEL

Excuse me, but--

The BARTENDER pauses in her washing and hands DANIEL his wallet.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
How did you know?

The BARTENDER resumes washing.

BARTENDER
The picture on your driver's license.

DANIEL
Oh, right.

BARTENDER
Going to count the cash?

DANIEL
No point. Fuzzy night. I couldn't
guess how much should be left.

BARTENDER
Thirty dollars.

DANIEL
(nodding at ANITA)
Does she always dance when no one is
watching?

BARTENDER
Someone is always watching.

DANIEL
God?

BARTENDER
Sort of.

The BARTENDER points. DANIEL takes a step to the side to see what she's pointing at. SHOT of a lone man, previously hidden behind a pillar, sitting at a table near the catwalk. ANITA is dancing for him. It's as if these two are in their own world.

BARTENDER
He's been waiting for you.

DANIEL frowns. The BARTENDER returns to her washing, ignoring DANIEL. DANIEL makes his way over to the table. When he gets near, the man at the table looks up at him. It is the PRIEST who performed the service at the funeral.

PRIEST
(nodding at ANITA, enraptured)
Beautiful, isn't she?

The PRIEST turns his attention back to ANITA. He gestures at a chair. DANIEL sits.

PRIEST (CONT'D)
I remember when she first came to my parish, young, bright, filled with boundless optimism. Fresh from the convent, wearing her carefully ironed habit, believing she could change the world. She fairly glowed with the conviction of her calling. I watched her then, marvelled at her, at her generosity of spirit, her thousand small acts of selflessness. At the unutterable beauty and perfection of her soul. And, God forgive me, I imagined her. Like this. Naked.

(glances at DANIEL)
Is that so wrong?

DANIEL
I... I guess not.

PRIEST
(focussed on ANITA)
Christ, she's magnificent. How can you not love her?

DANIEL
You're a priest.

PRIEST
I've kept my vows of celibacy. But I love her. And desire her. Body and soul. Do you think less of me for that?

DANIEL thinks for a moment.

DANIEL

No.

PRIEST

An untested faith is an empty one.

DANIEL

So you torture yourself by coming here?

PRIEST

When I see her here, I can think of no better proof for the existence of God.

The MUSIC reaches a crescendo, then stops. ANITA exits.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

(still distracted, looking
after ANITA)

Do you believe in God?

DANIEL

I never gave it a lot of thought,
until....

PRIEST

Until what?

DANIEL

Until I met the devil.

The PRIEST stares at DANIEL.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Does that sound as strange to you as it
does to me?

PRIEST

No. In my line of work belief in God
and the devil are part of the job
description. How do you know he was the
devil?

DANIEL

Things happened... impossible things. I was drunk, but I know I didn't imagine all of it.

PRIEST
What did he look like?

DANIEL
A kid. A pimply-faced kid.

PRIEST
(smiling)
Sounds like Satan, alright.

DANIEL
He brought me here.

The PRIEST leans closer, an intense expression on his face.

PRIEST
Here?

DANIEL
Yes.

PRIEST
Are you certain it was the devil? Is it possible that he could he have been an angel? An angel has its own powers....

DANIEL
No. At least I don't think so.

The PRIEST sits back in his seat, and stares off into space, lost in thought.

DANIEL
The bartender said you were you waiting for me.

PRIEST
(looks at DANIEL)
Yes.

DANIEL
Why?

PRIEST

I'm not quite sure myself.

(turns to DANIEL)

A friend -- not a friend exactly --
asked me to give you this.

The PRIEST puts a business card on the table and pushes it towards DANIEL. C.U. of card. It is the same card KAT was showing ANITA in an earlier scene. SHOT FRAMING table.

DANIEL

I don't understand.

PRIEST

(looking away, remembering)

She left one night, no warning. Just a few lines scribbled on the back of pizza bill. Funny, isn't it? I can't count the number of times I've stood by the beds of dying parishioners, good people, their lives cut short for no apparent reason. In the confessional I've heard about lies and betrayals, about anger, resentment and abuse, even about murder. Yet these things never shook my faith, not once. But when I saw that letter, for the first time in my life I knew despair.

DANIEL

Whose card is this?

PRIEST

(ignoring DANIEL's question)

She disappeared. No forwarding address, no way of finding her. Everything seemed pointless. Nothing made sense. I lost faith. I lost my will to live.

(locks eyes with DANIEL)

I was going to kill myself.

(reaches over to tap the card)

Then I met him. The man who gave me that card. He brought me here.

DANIEL and the PRIEST regard each other in silence.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

He saved me from committing an unpardonable sin. He saved me from despair.

DANIEL

Who is he?

PRIEST

I don't really know.

DANIEL

So a man you don't really know gives you a card to give to me? And you do it without question.

PRIEST

Yes.

(beat)

I know it sounds foolish, but I like to think of him as an angel.

DANIEL

This friend of yours, what does he look like?

PRIEST

A kid. A pimply-faced kid. Only he's not a friend. I've only seen him twice. Once when he brought me here four years ago. And this morning, when he left me that card.

DANIEL

With a birthmark here?

DANIEL touches his forehead. DANIEL and the PRIEST regard each other for a moment.

DANIEL

What does it mean?

PRIEST
(shrugging)
A sign, perhaps? I like to think so,
since I'm in the business.

DANIEL stares at the card, as if trying to decide whether to take it or not. He looks at the PRIEST.

DANIEL
Who are we fighting? Demons or angels?

PRIEST
(shrugging)
Sometimes it's hard to tell.

DANIEL rises. He picks up the card and examines it closely.

DANIEL
Damned if I do and damned if I don't.

The PRIEST smiles. DANIEL smiles back. He places the card in his overcoat pocket and exits. ANITA enters and sits at the table. She wears street clothes. The PRIEST continues to stare at DANIEL as he exits the bar. ANITA takes out a pack of cigarettes, pulls one out, then puts the pack on the table. She lights her cigarette.

ANITA
What was that all about?

PRIEST
(looking at ANITA)
An exchange of favours.
(beat)
I think.

The PRIEST notices the end of KAT's business card sticking out of the ANITA's pack of cigarettes. He pulls it out all the way.

PRIEST
Where did you get this?

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S BACKYARD - DAY

SHOT FRAMING KAT standing in the backyard. A light snow falls. She pulls out a lighter and flicks it. She lowers the lighter. C.U. of a pile of her business cards in a an empty charcoal barbecue. KAT's hand enters the shot and she lights them.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE LIU'S CAR - DAY

There are empty food wrappers and coffee cups on the dash and seat of the car. It is clear the car has been there for some time. Shot through the front window of DETECTIVE LIU's car. Snow falls, and we see KAT, who wears her overcoat, pick up a garbage can and haul it out to the street. On the way the lid falls off.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK, IN FRONT OF KAT'S HOUSE - DAY

KAT drops the garbage can by the curb. She returns to pick up the lid and walks back to the can. C.U. on the can which contains assorted garbage, bondage gear, and the Bible. KAT's hand enters the shot placing the lid on the can. ANGLE ON KAT who turns and stares at DETECTIVE LIU's car, her face expressionless. KAT's P.O.V.: she sees DETECTIVE LIU's car, its windows fogged, a shadowy figure sitting in the front seat. KAT turns and walks down the street. Behind her, the car pulls out and follows her.

Several shots of KAT walking. She glances behind her at the car, which matches her pace. KAT hurries around a corner then cuts through an alley.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

KAT emerges on another street. It's a busier street lined with commercial properties and pedestrians brushing past her. KAT walks briskly down that street and stops at the corner to look back. KAT's P.O.V.: the car noses out of the alley, then stops. It backs up out of sight. C.U. on KAT. She turns and immediately bumps into DETECTIVE LIU, who clutches her arm. In

his other hand he holds a steaming cup of coffee. She is shocked, and glances back at the alley.

DETECTIVE LIU
I need to talk to you.

KAT
Your car....

DETECTIVE LIU
What about my car?

KAT
(looking at his
hand on her arm)
It...
(glances back at alley)
Nothing.

DETECTIVE LIU
You saw it outside your house.

KAT
Yes.

DETECTIVE LIU
I left it on your street.

KAT
(pulling away from him)
I've got to go.

DETECTIVE LIU keeps his hold on her.

DETECTIVE LIU
You're frightened.

KAT
No, I'm not.

DETECTIVE LIU
It's him.

KAT
I don't know what you're talking about.

CUT TO:

EXT. DETECTIVE LIU'S CAR - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU's car is back on the street where it was before.
DETECTIVE LIU walks into the shot and climbs into the car.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE LIU'S CAR - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU places the cup of coffee on the dash. Snow flakes drift down onto the windshield. DETECTIVE LIU pulls the lid off the cup and steam curls out. As he opens a creamer, a black car pulls into the spot in front of him. A man in an overcoat gets out of the car and turns up the walk to KAT's apartment. DETECTIVE LIU forgets about the coffee and wipes a circle on the windshield. DETECTIVE LIU's P.O.V.: we see DANIEL approaching KAT's porch. DETECTIVE LIU drops the creamer on the floor. Reaching into his overcoat, he pulls out a handgun and balances it on his thigh.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

DANIEL stands on the porch, looking at the card. He pockets the card, then knocks on the door. A moment passes, then the door opens a bit to reveal the left half of MELISSA. She hides the right half of her face and her broken arm behind the door.

MELISSA

She's gone.

DANIEL

Perhaps I'll come back later.

MELISSA

I can't let you in the house because
you're a stranger.

DANIEL

No, you shouldn't. Your mother's right
to teach you that.

MELISSA

My mother's dead. I'm staying with my sister.

DANIEL

I'm sorry.

MELISSA

What are you sorry about?

DANIEL

Your mother being dead.

MELISSA

My mother died in a car crash.

DANIEL stares at her.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

I was lucky.

MELISSA opens the door a bit wider to reveal her injuries.

DANIEL

My wife died in a car crash.

MELISSA

Do you think they'll let me stay. With my sister, I mean?

DANIEL

Who?

MELISSA

(looking around DANIEL)
Is the man still there?

DANIEL

What man?

MELISSA

The man in the green car. I used to be able to see him out the window, but I think he saw me watching him. The next time I looked he'd moved his car.

DANIEL looks around and sees several cars parked along the street, but can't see anyone in any of them.

DANIEL

Maybe you should lock the door right now. And don't open it for any more strangers.

MELISSA

Okay.

MELISSA starts to close the door, then opens it a bit

MELISSA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry too. I mean about your wife.

MELISSA closes the door softly. SOUND FX: the deadbolt clicking. DANIEL pulls the card out of his pocket and stares at it for a moment. Then he sticks it between the door and the door jamb.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE LIU'S CAR - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU lies on the seat of his car, out of sight. He peeks above the dash, then sits up and rubs the window again, watching DANIEL as he leaves the property and walks away.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

DANIEL pauses outside a coffee shop. The sign reads "Old Nick's Coffee Shop". On the sign a cartoon devil dunks a doughnut in a coffee. DANIEL opens the door and steps inside.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

DANIEL sits in the same coffee shop KAT and ANITA were in before. His coat is off and he stares at his mother's rosary which he holds in his hand. An almost empty coffee sits in front of him. A WAITRESS enters the shot, but we can only see her uniform and a hand holding a pot of coffee. DANIEL, looks up. ANGLE ON

waitress, who is KAT. She wears a tee-shirt that has the same cartoon devil. KAT and DANIEL regard each other with a familiarity that is unsettling.

KAT
(looking away)
Refill?

DANIEL
(studying his cup)
No thanks.
(glancing at KAT)
Have we met?

KAT
No. I don't think so.

KAT meets his gaze.

KAT (CONT'D)
Will there be anything else?

A beat passes.

DANIEL
No. Just the bill.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

SHOT FRAMING front door. Two men in overcoats, one short and heavyset and the other thin and wearing a hat, enter the shot. Their backs are to the camera and we cannot see their faces. The thinner man takes the card DANIEL left in the doorframe and pockets it. Then he presses the bell. In a moment the door opens a crack and MELISSA stares out. The thinner man crouches. C.U. on MAN's face, revealing he is the STAFF MEMBER. He pulls off his hat, revealing the mark on his forehead. Behind him stands DETECTIVE LIU. The STAFF MEMBER smiles.

STAFF MEMBER
Hello, Melissa.

C.U. on Melissa's face. She stares expressionlessly at him.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

DANIEL sits at the table, still looking at the rosary. His cup is now empty. KAT enters the shot as she did before and refills his cup. Surprised, DANIEL looks up. KAT sits down in the booth opposite DANIEL, a cup and saucer in her other hand. She puts the cup and saucer on the table and pours herself a coffee. In the background the CHEF behind the lunch counter flips burgers and shoots looks at KAT.

KAT
I needed a break.

A moment of silence passes.

KAT (CONT'D)
Say something.

DANIEL
I'm not sure what to say.

KAT
Why are you here?

DANIEL
I... I don't know exactly. But I have the feeling that I'm supposed to be here.

KAT
In this coffee shop?

DANIEL
With you.

KAT frowns at him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
It's not a pick up line.

KAT
I know.

DANIEL
You know?

KAT
I feel the same way.
(beat)
I don't believe in this weird shit.

DANIEL
Neither do I.

KAT
So what are we supposed to do?

DANIEL
Maybe we can figure it out - if there's
anything to figure out.

KAT
This was a mistake.

KAT starts to rise.

DANIEL
I think it's about what we need.

KAT looks at him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
What do you need?

C.U. on KAT's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

FLASHBACK to KAT's conversation with DETECTIVE LIU, picking it up
where they left off. He holds her arm.

DETECTIVE LIU
You're frightened.

KAT
No, I'm not.

DETECTIVE LIU
It's him.

KAT
(puzzled)
I don't know what you're talking about.

DETECTIVE LIU
He can't do anything for you. You need me.

KAT
I don't need anything from you.

DETECTIVE LIU
They'll never let you keep her.

KAT
We'll see.

DETECTIVE LIU
I know what you did at the hospital.

C.U. on KAT's face.

CUT TO:

INT. WARD ROOM, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

FLASHBACK to MELISSA's room in hospital. MELISSA stands beside KAT, wearing pyjamas, a winter coat and boots. Under her arm she clutches the teddy bear KAT brought her. KAT stuffs some of MELISSA's clothes into a knapsack, then clips it shut. KAT takes MELISSA's hand and leads her towards the door. We hear the dialogue below as this action takes place.

KAT (V.O.)
She's my sister. I'm her only living relative.

DETECTIVE LIU (V.O.)

Step-sister. And she's under the guardianship of Children's Aid. You kidnapped her.

CUT TO:

INT. NURSING STATION, HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Still in the FLASHBACK, KAT and MELISSA walk along the hospital corridor to the elevators. The NURSE holds open the elevator door, while keeping watch to make sure they aren't spotted.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU and KAT stare at each other.

DETECTIVE LIU

You're single. You've got a record.
You're a whore.

KAT slaps him, but DETECTIVE LIU is unaffected. He doesn't spill a drop of his coffee.

DETECTIVE LIU (CONT'D)

If she's lucky they'll put her in a foster home. But at her age it's more likely she'll end up somewhere in the system. You know that. That's why you took her.

KAT

Leave me alone.

DETECTIVE LIU

You'll go to jail for kidnapping. But I can make it right. Fix it for you.

(beat)

If you were married to a good man, a pillar of the community....

KAT

(snorting)

You? A good man?

DETECTIVE LIU
(shrugging)
As good as anyone else.

KAT
No.

DETECTIVE LIU
You don't have to love me. Not at
first....

KAT
No.

DETECTIVE LIU
Why?

KAT
It doesn't feel right.

DETECTIVE LIU
You're in a corner. You've got no
choice. I'm giving you an out.

KAT
Something will happen.

DETECTIVE LIU
Don't count on Daniel.

KAT
(puzzled)
Who?

DETECTIVE LIU
You know who I mean. He's got his own
problems. Chances are he'll be locked
up before you.

KAT stares at DETECTIVE LIU with a puzzled expression.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

KAT
I don't know your name.

DANIEL
Daniel Ray.

A beat passes while KAT stares at DANIEL.

KAT
Katrina.

SOUND FX: dishes clattering loudly. KAT watches DANIEL, who twists the rosary around his fingers. She lights a cigarette.

KAT
(nodding at rosary)
You religious?

DANIEL
I used to think I was.

KAT
Would you consider yourself a good man,
Daniel Ray?

DANIEL
No. Not any more.

KAT
I used to think I was evil. My dad told
me that so often I started to believe
it.

DANIEL
You're not evil. No one is wholly good
or evil.

KAT
(smiling)
I thought of it as my contribution, you
know. God's job is to forgive us,
right? So I was making him feel useful
by giving him lots to forgive.

DANIEL

You shouldn't joke about things like that.

KAT
I'm evil, remember?

DANIEL
Good and evil are abstractions. Like heaven and hell. We have to scratch out a life somewhere in between.

A moment passes in which KAT takes a long drag on her cigarette and scrutinises DANIEL as if she is taking his measure.

KAT
Before you asked me what I need. I need a good man to marry me, Daniel Ray.

KAT stubs out her cigarette.

KAT (CONT'D)
That answer your question?

DANIEL doesn't say anything. KAT stubs out her cigarette and rises.

DANIEL
Where are you going?

KAT
To find a good man.

DANIEL
What about your job?

KAT
There's plenty of jobs like this.

KAT exits the booth. She goes to the back of the coffee shop and retrieves her coat. The CHEF glares at her as she walks past him. DANIEL stands beside his booth as KAT passes.

DANIEL
That's it?

KAT doesn't break stride.

KAT

Yes.

KAT exits the shop. DANIEL stares after her. He looks confused and crestfallen. He turns to the table, picks up the rosary, and pockets it. Reaching in his pocket, he pulls out some crumpled bills and places them on the table. He exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

DANIEL stands just outside the entrance to the coffee shop. Snow flakes drift down around him. He turns up his collar against the cold.

KAT (O.C.)

I live just around the corner. You can walk me home, Daniel Ray.

DANIEL turns to his left where KAT stands.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK, NEAR KAT'S HOUSE - DAY

KAT and DANIEL walk down KAT's street. The sky is darkening and thick flakes of snow drift down. They pass DETECTIVE LIU's car. KAT turns into the walk leading up to her house. DANIEL stops at the end of the walk and stares at the house. Halfway up the walk, KAT turns.

KAT

What's the matter?

DANIEL

You live here?

KAT

Yes.

KAT

Come on, Daniel Ray. I don't bite. Not unless you pay for it.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

DANIEL stands beside KAT while she fumbles in her purse for her keys. The card DANIEL left is gone. DANIEL notices the door is open a crack. He pushes it, and it swings open slowly. KAT freezes, her hand in her purse, staring at the open door. She drops her purse and runs into the house.

KAT

Melissa!

DANIEL follows.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

KAT tears through the apartment calling MELISSA's name. DANIEL stands in the living room, not sure what to do. KAT, a devastated expression on her face, walks back into the living room and paces. She's frantic.

KAT

I told her to stay in the house.

DANIEL

She was here half an hour ago.

KAT stop pacing; she looks at DANIEL through narrowed eyes.

KAT

How do you know?

DANIEL

I talked to her.

KAT looks at DANIEL as if he is a monster.

KAT

(quietly)

What have you done with her?

DANIEL is flabbergasted.

DANIEL
I didn't do anything.

KAT
What do you want?

DANIEL
Nothing.

KAT picks up the phone.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

KAT
I'm calling the police.

KAT dials.

DETECTIVE LIU (O.C.)
No need.

KAT freezes. ANGLE ON DETECTIVE LIU who stands in the open doorway, snow powdering his shoulders and hair.

DETECTIVE LIU
(to DANIEL)
Step away from her.

DANIEL
What?

KAT puts the phone down.

DETECTIVE LIU
I asked you to step away from her.

DANIEL
(to KAT)
I didn't do anything.

DETECTIVE LIU
(to KAT)
I've been following him.

KAT looks dubious.

KAT
When you're not following me?

DANIEL looks from one to the other.

DANIEL
You know each other?

KAT
Detective Liu and I go back a ways.

DETECTIVE LIU
(to KAT)
He's under investigation.

KAT
For what?

DETECTIVE LIU
Accessory to a felony. Insurance fraud.
Now, kidnapping.

DANIEL
He knows I didn't do anything.

DETECTIVE LIU
(to DANIEL)
I won't warn you again.

DANIEL
This isn't right.
(looks at KAT)
Melissa said something about a man in a
green car watching her. I didn't think
anything about it at the time, but I
parked in front of green car. One just
like the Detective's car.

DETECTIVE LIU
(insistent, to KAT)
He's dangerous.

DANIEL

(to KAT)
If he was watching the house, then he'd
know I didn't take Melissa.

KAT
(to DETECTIVE LIU)
What do you know?

DETECTIVE LIU narrows his eyes, but doesn't answer. KAT walks
over to him.

KAT (CONT'D)
What do you know?

KAT looks at him fiercely. DETECTIVE LIU's expression tightens,
but he still says nothing. KAT picks up the phone.

KAT
I'm calling your precinct. Asking for
your Lieutenant.

DETECTIVE LIU
(quietly)
She's with Children's Aid.

KAT puts down the phone.

KAT
They took her?

DETECTIVE LIU
Yes.

KAT
You saw them take her?

DETECTIVE LIU
Yes.

(slowly)
After I left you, I came back here.
(points at Daniel)
He arrived a few minutes later. He
talked to Melissa at the door. He left.
Then a man from Children's Aid came.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S STREET - DAY

FLASHBACK. The STAFF MEMBER walks past DETECTIVE LIU's car and up KAT's walk. DETECTIVE LIU gets out of his car and follows the STAFF MEMBER onto the porch.

KAT (V.O.)

How do you know he was from Children's Aid?

DETECTIVE LIU (V.O.)

He gave me his card.

The STAFF MEMBER hands DETECTIVE LIU a business card. C.U. of card. On it is printed Children's Aid Society. ANGLE ON front door as MELISSA opens it.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

KAT

Give me the card.

DETECTIVE LIU reaches in his overcoat pocket, pulls out a card and holds it out to KAT. KAT takes it. C.U. of card. It's the card from the funeral home that DANIEL tried to give DETECTIVE LIU earlier.

KAT

(holding card out towards
DETECTIVE LIU)

What's this?

DETECTIVE LIU looks confused. He checks his pockets, but can't find the right card. DANIEL steps over to KAT and looks at the card.

DANIEL

(to DETECTIVE LIU)

What did he look like?

DETECTIVE LIU

Who?

DANIEL
The man from Children's Aid.

DETECTIVE LIU
Young. Thin. Bad complexion. Had a
birthmark here.

DETECTIVE LIU touches the right side of his forehead.

KAT
Jesus.

KAT and DANIEL lock gazes. A moment of shared recognition passes
between them.

KAT (CONT'D)
You know him.

DANIEL nods.

DANIEL
(to DETECTIVE LIU)
He's the guy I told you about. Who
stole the cab. Who tried to kill me.

DETECTIVE LIU
It makes no sense. You're just trying
to confuse things.

KAT grabs DETECTIVE LIU's arm and pulls him towards her bedroom
door.

KAT
Melissa's clothes are still here.
(points to a child's suitcase
open on the floor of bedroom)
Her suitcase is still here. If he was
from Children's Aid, wouldn't he have
taken those things?

DETECTIVE LIU says nothing.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

FLASHBACK. DETECTIVE LIU's P.O.V.: The STAFF MEMBER takes MELISSA's hand and guides her out of the house. MELISSA looks back over her shoulder at her teddy bear lying on the floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU walks out onto the porch. Big flakes of snow drift down, the sky darkening. DETECTIVE LIU watches as the STAFF MEMBER puts MELISSA into the front seat of a car then walks over to the driver's side. As the car pulls out, MELISSA stares forlornly out the window at DETECTIVE LIU.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU

We'll get the number for Children's Aid
from the book.

KAT notices something else on the bed, which is out of the shot.

KAT

Did he go in the bedroom?

DETECTIVE LIU

Yes. To get her overcoat.

KAT

(pointing)

That wasn't there when I left the house.

DETECTIVE LIU takes a step into the bedroom, keeping an eye on DANIEL.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

The four sets of handcuffs are still locked to the bedposts. On the opposite side of the bed is DANIEL's Bible, open, the black dildo resting in the spine. KAT stands beside DETECTIVE LIU.

KAT

Would a worker from Children's Aid do that?

DETECTIVE LIU
(to DANIEL)

Stand over here, so I can keep an eye on you.

DANIEL moves just outside the door to the bedroom. DETECTIVE LIU places a hand on the bed and leans over to grab the Bible. C.U. on KAT, then on an open handcuff near DETECTIVE LIU's wrist. As DETECTIVE LIU closes his hand on the Bible, KAT picks up the cuff and snaps it around his wrist. She steps back, out of his reach. DETECTIVE LIU forgets about the Bible and lifts his handcuffed arm, sliding the cuffs up the bedpost, to examine them. He looks at KAT.

DETECTIVE LIU
Open it.

KAT
The keys are gone.

DETECTIVE LIU reaches inside his overcoat and pulls out his gun. He aims it at DANIEL.

DETECTIVE LIU
Open it.

KAT
(laughing nervously)
Or what? You'll shoot him?

KAT steps in front of DANIEL.

DETECTIVE LIU
(impassive)
Uncuff me.

KAT
No.

DETECTIVE LIU
We'll go down to the precinct. Sort all of this out.

DANIEL
Some things you can't sort out.

KAT
(to DETECTIVE LIU)
We've got to go.
(to Daniel)
Do you have a car?

DANIEL
Outside.

KAT
Start it.

DANIEL hesitates.

KAT
Go!

DANIEL exits. DETECTIVE LIU lets his arm drop to his side, the gun pointing at the floor. He slumps to the bed, sitting on its edge. C.U. of DETECTIVE LIU's face, his expression wracked by a series of conflicting emotions. He looks up at KAT.

DETECTIVE LIU
You lied to me. You said you didn't
know him.

KAT
I don't.

DETECTIVE LIU
But you believe him.

KAT
Yes.

DETECTIVE LIU
(looking up at KAT)
I love you.

KAT
I know.

DETECTIVE LIU

Doesn't that mean anything to you?

KAT

Yes. But it's not enough.

KAT EXITS.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

Outside snows swirls gently around DANIEL's car. DANIEL has his seatbelt on, the car started, and rubs a circle in the fog on the windshield. He notices a leaflet under the windshield wiper. Rolling down the window, he grabs it. C.U. on slip. On it is printed "If you were to die today, would you be 100% certain you'd go to heaven?" ANGLE ON DANIEL. The passenger door opens and KAT climbs in. She clutches the teddy bear to her chest and stares out the windshield. DANIEL crumples the paper and tosses it out his window.

KAT

What do we do?

DANIEL

I don't know.

Both stare out the windshield.

DANIEL

(to KAT)

Your parents died in a car crash.

KAT looks at DANIEL as if he's said something completely incongruous.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Melissa told me.

KAT nods.

DANIEL

Where?

KAT

Cabram road.

DANIEL

Eleven months ago my wife died in an accident on Cabram road. Where it curves south, just outside the city.

DANIEL and KAT look at each other. DANIEL pulls out.

CUT TO:

INT. KAT'S BEDROOM - DAY

SHOT FRAMING DETECTIVE LIU sitting on the bed, head hung, still clutching his gun. He lifts the gun and examines it. C.U. of the gun as he turns it this way and that. He aims it, although we can't see at what, and pulls the trigger.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAT'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU opens the door. From one wrist dangles the remains of a handcuff he's shot. DETECTIVE LIU scans the street. At the far end, DANIEL's car turns right at a stop sign. DETECTIVE LIU hustles towards his car.

CUT TO:

EXT. DETECTIVE LIU'S CAR - DAY

DETECTIVE LIU reaches his car, then sees a boot has been placed on his front wheel. Under his window wiper a leaflet flutters.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

The snow outside has increased, making the road treacherous. DANIEL drives as quickly as he can, almost causing several accidents. Cars honk at him. He turns onto a major artery that is almost deserted. Visibility is diminishing quickly. C.U. of street sign: "Cabram Rd". ANGLE ON KAT who has one hand on dash, the other clutching the teddy bear.

KAT

That handcuff. When I left for work it was locked.

DANIEL
Melissa could have opened it.

KAT
No. The key was gone. Stolen.

DANIEL says nothing.

KAT (CONT'D)
Why is this happening?

DANIEL
I don't know.

KAT
Before you said it was about what we needed.

DANIEL glances over.

KAT (CONT'D)
What do you need, Daniel Ray?

DANIEL focuses his attention on the road.

DANIEL
Something to care about.

CUT TO:

EXT. CABRAM ROAD - DAY

WIDE SHOT of the road, which swings south abruptly. It's the same spot KAT visited earlier. Snow streams down. There are no cars on the road. Part of the guard rail along the curve is still missing. Two sand drums and a sawhorse with flashing yellow lamps fill the gap. In the distance a car's headlights appear through the veil of snow.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

SHOT FRAMING DANIEL AND KAT in the front seat. KAT leans forward, rubbing the inside of the windshield and peering out. DANIEL concentrates on keeping the car on the road.

KAT

I think this is it coming up.

DANIEL

I can't see a thing --

Through the windshield we can see a small figure that looks like MELISSA lurch in front of the car. DANIEL stomps on the breaks and the car fishtails, sliding towards the makeshift barrier. The car strikes the barrier, sending the drums and sawhorse flying; its momentum carries it through the gap. For a moment everything is still as they are airborne. Then the car hits and rolls, the outside world tumbling out of control, snow sluicing off the windows like water, the noise deafening as the car scrapes down the side of the hill, bouncing off rocks and trees. The car hits something and comes to an abrupt stop, right side up, but pitched on a steep angle. Snow and debris completely cover the windows on the passenger side. The car is dead silent.

C.U. on DANIEL as he lifts his head from the steering wheel. He has reopened the cut on his forehead. He blinks, looks around for KAT. She lies against the passenger door and window. DANIEL works himself out of his seatbelt and slides along the seat to KAT. He lifts her face. C.U. on KAT's face. She breathes but her eyes are closed. DANIEL smooths her hair back from her forehead. KAT opens her eyes.

KAT

(dazed)

Are we dead?

DANIEL

No. I hurt too much to be dead.

KAT tries to prop herself up, but grunts with a sudden pain. She cradles her wrist.

KAT
I think my wrist is broken.
(remembering, urgent)
Melissa. I saw her. Just before....

DANIEL
We didn't hit her. I'm pretty sure we
didn't hit her.

KAT
Jesus! We've got to find her!

DANIEL reaches up to the door on the driver's side. He pulls the handle and pushes on the door, which opens with a reluctant groan.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

A blizzard howls outside. We see the car wedged in a ditch at the bottom of an incline. The driver's side door opens, then swings wide. A moment later KAT emerges and wiggles out of the car, her legs dangling over the edge of the car body. DANIEL helps her slide to the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

DANIEL spots the teddy bear in the backseat and reaches for it, stuffing it in the front of his jacket. DANIEL pulls himself out of the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANIEL'S CAR - DAY

DANIEL lowers himself to the ground next to KAT. A thick veil of snow obscures the top of the incline. DANIEL helps KAT ascend the foot of the slope.

CUT TO:

EXT. CABRAM ROAD - DAY

SHOT FRAMING the break in the guard rail with tire tracks disappearing over the edge. DANIEL climbs into view, pausing near the top to give KAT a hand up. KAT stops near the top. KAT's P.O.V.: the STAFF MEMBER stands at the side of the road, holding MELISSA's hand. If he has a car, it's nowhere in sight. ANGLE ON DANIEL who turns towards the STAFF MEMBER. KAT struggles the last few feet to the shoulder of the road.

KAT

Melissa!

MELISSA doesn't move. DANIEL takes out the teddy bear and hands it to KAT. KAT extends it to MELISSA.

KAT (CONT'D)

Please, Melissa.

MELISSA looks up at the STAFF MEMBER, who nods. MELISSA releases his hand and walks over to KAT, taking the teddy bear and clutching it to her chest. KAT curls her good arm protectively around MELISSA. Snow swirls around the STAFF MEMBER, obscuring him. He wavers in and out of sight. From here on in the dialogue is shouted above the howl of the wind.

DANIEL

(to STAFF MEMBER)

She isn't frightened of you.

STAFF MEMBER

She has no reason to be.

DANIEL

Who are you? Why are you doing this?

STAFF MEMBER

It's a question of making allowances.
Working with what you are given.

DANIEL

(glances at KAT and MELISSA)

You mean them, don't you? How can I
marry someone I don't even know? I
don't love her.

STAFF MEMBER

Perhaps someday you will.
(beat)
Or maybe you'll never see them again.
Nothing is certain.

DANIEL
Are you an angel or a devil?

STAFF MEMBER
(smiling)
That would be telling, wouldn't it?

The STAFF MEMBER seems to recede, even though he stands still. Then he disappears behind a thick curl of snow and doesn't reappear. For a moment the three stare after the STAFF MEMBER. The wind abates somewhat, although the snow continues to stream down.

MELISSA
Is he gone?

KAT
Yes.

KAT looks at DANIEL as if she is posing a silent question.

DANIEL
I don't love you.

KAT
(smiling)
I know.

DANIEL
There are complications.
(looks at missing guard rail)
Your family. My wife.
(looks at KAT)
Detective Liu.

KAT
An empty road in the middle of a
blizzard.
(lifts her arm)
A broken wrist.

DANIEL

Yes.

KAT

Nothing is certain. But you have to
start somewhere.

(beat)

Don't you?

C.U. of DANIEL and looking at her. C.U. of KAT meeting his gaze.

WIDE SHOT of road, the three barely discernible figures of DANIEL, KAT and MELISSA seen from a distance. Behind them the snow has washed out the landscape. It is a featureless wall of white. The snow thickens until it obliterates the three figures and the whole screen goes white.

CUT TO BLACK SCREEN.

ROLL CREDITS.

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