

THE GOOD (BAD) SHEPARD

S1:E4

Written by

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S1:E4 "CONSTRUCTING FACADES"

FADE IN:

INT. MARILYN'S OFFICE - DAY

Marilyn works at her desk; her phone rings. After several rings, Marilyn yells to her Aide.

MARILYN  
Can you answer the phone!

No response. The phone continues to ring.

MARILYN (CONT'D)  
Jesus Christ.

She answers the phone.

MARILYN (CONT'D)  
Marilyn Jenkins.

RICHARDS (V.O.)  
Ms. Jenkins. I'm glad I caught  
you. Grayson Rich--

MARILYN  
(Angrily)  
--I will not be blackmailed!

She slams down the receiver.

INT. RICHARDS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Richards sits at his desk, a cigar smolders in an ashtray.

RICHARDS  
What are you talking-- Hello?  
Marilyn?

Richards dials the phone. Marilyn's Aide answers.

MARILYN'S AIDE (V.O.)  
Good morning. Ms. Jenkins office.

RICHARDS  
May I speak to her? I'm Grayson  
Richards.

MARILYN'S AIDE  
I've been instructed not to put you  
through. Don't call here again.

Richards hangs up, takes a puff of the cigar and jots in a notepad.

INT. JET (TRAVELING) - DAY

Marilyn reclines in first class wearing eye covers.

INT. SAN DIEGO BISTRO - DAY

Marilyn sits at the bar in the same Bistro where Tracy revealed Cuttbate's death. She munches on snacks and nurses a fruity drink. She checks her watch just as Tracy strolls in and takes up a stool next to Marilyn.

TRACY

Marilyn. So good to see you. How was your trip?

MARILYN

Twenty-two hours. You tell me.

(beat)

Did you have to pick this place - of all places - to meet with me?

TRACY

Sorry you're triggered.

MARILYN

This Richards thing has made me a ball of nerves.

The Bartender arrives.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

He's threatening to blackmail me over Cuttbate's killing.

Tracy grabs Marilyn's forearm sharply and stares daggers at her.

BARTENDER

Um, I'll come back.

TRACY

Chardonnay, please.

The Bartender nods and departs.

TRACY (CONT'D)

What the fuck, Marilyn! Why not just wear a T-shirt that says "Ask me how I got away with murder"?

MARILYN

I'm sorry, but I'm scared.

Tracy releases Marilyn's forearm.

TRACY

I've arranged for stepped up security for the KL facility, and a bodyguard for you.

MARILYN

Is that necessary?

TRACY

(patronizing)

Um... Yes?

(beat)

I sold Matt on the idea that the R&D and other stuff could be vulnerable to competitive poaching. He agreed to add personal protection for you.

MARILYN

I appreciate that, but it won't stop Richards, or his partner. He's still gonna try to pin the kill--

The Bartender arrives with Tracy's wine.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

--Is that a Napa Valley Chard, Tracy?

The Bartender departs.

TRACY

I'm going to talk to my FBI contact to assess options. It's possible Richards figured out Cuttbate's real name with help from a coroner. I bet he bribed someone inside the morgue for information. That would compromise him big time.

(beat)

If he knows the FBI is poking around, maybe he'll back down.

MARILYN

I hope you're right.

TRACY

Richards has to be bluffing. What could he possibly know that would qualify as solid evidence? We left no traces, no witnesses, the hooker angle has stood up.

(beat)

My father has the gun.

MARILYN

Maybe you're right.

TRACY

The FBI might contact you for a statement.

MARILYN

Shit, I hope not.

TRACY

Marilyn, you were the victim of the harassment. Of course they'll want to talk to you. Just stick to the script. It's about corporate theft, pure and simple. Nothing about blackmail.

(beat)

Let's get something to eat. You can run your presentation by me.

MARILYN

I don't have the charts with me.

TRACY

You need charts, Marilyn? That doesn't give me confidence.

MARILYN

Can you give the head games a rest, Tracy? I just wanna drink my cocktail and forget this whole debacle for half an hour.

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

A scene of the quarterly meeting. Matt on the stage, his face projected on two big TV screens on either side of the stage. Big screen behind him with the NanoNano logo.

EXT. SAN DIEGO MARINA - DAY

A MARINA WORKER accompanies Aiman to a gate. He unlocks it and points Aiman in the direction of a row of large yachts docked.

Aiman strolls along the gangway toward the Brobdignagian Yacht where Tracy sits at a large, round table on the aft deck. He's dressed a little too much like Thurston Howell III in his brand new, never before worn boat shoes and a sweater draped a bit too rakishly over his shoulders. Aiman calls out to announce his presence to Tracy.

AIMAN

Permission to come aboard.

TRACY

Permission granted, Admiral Hakim.

Aiman proceeds across the gangplank onto the yacht. Shortly thereafter, Hannah, carrying a briefcase, appears on the gangplank unseen by Aiman and Tracy. When Hannah spots the couple in an embrace, she quickly retreats from the scene.

INT. YACHT - DAY

Tracy kisses and hugs Aiman.

AIMAN

Tracy, so nice to see you again.

TRACY

Likewise. Come, have breakfast with me.

Tracy leads Aiman by the hand to the table covered with food and drink. Aiman does a 360 degree look around.

AIMAN

Wow, this is an amazing vessel.  
What does Brobdignagian mean?

TRACY

Something large, gigantic. Matt thought it would be ironic to name his yacht after something large when his whole business is about making tiny things.

Aiman chuckles.

TRACY (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, we can't take her out this week. The entire crew except housekeeping is on leave. Matt's booked up all week with the big quarterly meeting I told you about.

AIMAN

How's that going?

TRACY

It's a slog, but with occasional moments of juicy cringe when some middle manager shits the bed during his presentation.

AIMAN

Oh, dear.

Aiman takes a bite of a croissant.

AIMAN (CONT'D)

So, what can I do for you, Tracy?

TRACY

We have to expand the scope. How much do you know about the FBI? How they conduct investigations, and such?

AIMAN

Not much. Whatever I think I know comes from watching movies, but I have a former agent on the payroll.

TRACY

How ideal. I need something done this week, before the quarterly ends. Sorry for the short notice.

AIMAN

Don't be sorry. I love a challenge.

TRACY

I'm afraid it's going to be complicated, but time is of the essence.

AIMAN

Tell me what's going on, Tracy.

FADE OUT.

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

The quarterly meeting comes to a close. Dozens of suited and casually dressed execs and aides mill about. Marilyn chats with Hannah.

HANNAH

I'm sorry you need a bodyguard, Marilyn. Frightening, but at least you'll rest easier.

MARILYN

The past couple weeks have been disconcerting, to say the least.

HANNAH

Tracy made me the liaison to the security firm. Let me know if you need anything from them.

MARILYN

I will.

Tracy and Matt approach.

MATT

Marilyn, congratulations on an excellent presentation. I'm glad we saved you for last.

TRACY

Yes, Marilyn. Well done.  
(beat)  
When are you going back to Malaysia?

MARILYN

Monday. I'm spending the weekend in La Jolla at La Valencia Hotel.

TRACY

Wear something that goes with pink.

MATT

I'll get you a dinner reservation at the Addison. It's at the Grand Del Mar. Do you play golf?

MARILYN

Um, no.

MATT

You should take it up. I know the pro there. He can set you up with a lesson.

MARILYN

Maybe next time, Matt.

TRACY

Well, have a swell time, Marilyn.  
See you next quarter.

(beat)

Hannah, do you have a minute?

Tracy and Hannah peel off from Matt and Marilyn.

MATT

We'll get to the bottom of the harassment, Marilyn. My gut says it's some Chinese entity trying to steal our IP. They respect no boundaries.

MARILYN

Makes sense, I suppose.

MATT

I'm sure you're not in any real danger. They just come on strong as an intimidation tactic. I'm glad you held your ground and reached out to Tracy right away.

(beat)

Regardless, you'll receive protection for as long as necessary.

MARILYN

Thanks, Matt. I appreciate it.

MATT

Have a nice weekend.

MARILYN

You too. Any plans?

MATT

Sailing the yacht to Cabo. I need a break.

MARILYN

Sounds wonderful. You and Tracy deserve a little get-away.

MATT

Tracy can't make it.

MARILYN

Oh. Well I'm sure you'll have fun anyway.

MATT

I always do. Have a safe trip back to KL, Marilyn.

EXT. LA VALENCIA HOTEL/POOL - DAY

Wearing a one-piece swimsuit, pale skin shimmering with oil, Marilyn lounges by the Pool, sipping a cocktail. Two FBI agents, ERSKINE and COLBY dressed in dark G-Man suits approach her. Their shadows cross her face and body capturing her attention. She sits up.

ERSKINE

Marilyn Jenkins?

MARILYN

Yes?

Erskine produces a badge and quickly flips it shut.

ERSKINE

My name is Inspector Erskine, and this is my partner Special Agent Colby.

COLBY

Ma'am.

ERSKINE

Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions for us? Not here, of course. At our office downtown.

MARILYN

About what?

COLBY

Downtown, Ma'am.

ERSKINE

You're not in trouble, Ms. Jenkins. We're looking into someone you may be familiar with. Perhaps your cooperation can help us in our investigation. Wha'dya say?

Colby hands Marilyn a card.

COLBY  
Here's the address. Say 4PM?

MARILYN  
OK. I was kinda expecting this.

ERSKINE  
Great. We'll see you then.

The Agents depart. Marilyn stares off at the Pacific Ocean. A WAITER arrives, interrupting her pensive moment.

WAITER  
Another Dirty Shirley, ma'am.

MARILYN  
Huh? Uh, yes please.

The Waiter takes her empty glass.

EXT. SAN DIEGO STOREFRONT - DAY

Marilyn walks the sidewalk looking at the address numbers on the buildings. When she gets to a grim-looking Storefront with no markings, she stops. She continues farther down the sidewalk, then returns to the Storefront. She checks the card Colby gave her, then reluctantly walks in.

INT. SAN DIEGO STOREFRONT - DAY

The Storefront is bleak and threadbare. A calendar and some mug shots hang on the putty colored walls. Fluorescent ceiling lights flicker and buzz.

Colby and Erskine rise from their respective desks.

ERSKINE  
You're in the right place, Ms. Jenkins. Thanks for coming in. I'm sure you were expecting something more professional looking, but our unit has to keep a low profile.

MARILYN  
I was a bit confused.

ERSKINE  
Can I get you something to drink?

MARILYN  
No, I'm fine.

ERSKINE  
This place is a dump, but we brew excellent coffee.

MARILYN  
OK. That sounds good.

ERSKINE  
Great. Have a seat. This won't take long.  
(to Colby)  
Get Ms. Jenkins a coffee.

MARILYN  
Cream and sugar if you have it.

Marilyn sits in a spare wooden chair at Erskine's desk across from him. Colby brings a cup of coffee and sits on the edge of the desk.

ERSKINE  
A man named Grayson Richards has been brought to our attention. You know of him, is that right?

MARILYN  
That's correct, but I never met him.

ERSKINE  
As I understand from your boss, Tracy Shepard, someone has been harassing you at your workplace.

MARILYN  
And at a restaurant.  
(beat)  
She's not technically my boss.

ERSKINE  
Ms. Shepard once employed Richards who is a private investigator. Now she thinks Richards is behind the harassment campaign.

MARILYN  
That's right.

COLBY  
Why would he want to do that?

MARILYN

I presume he's trying to intimidate me into revealing company secrets. Mr. Blankenshein suspects the Chinese are behind it.

(beat)

He's the CEO.

ERSKINE

Pardon me for being skeptical, but that doesn't comport with the behavior of a PI.

MARILYN

Well, I don't know--

ERSKINE

--Our investigation is very preliminary, and there are many gaps, but we have reason to believe Richards is after something completely different.

MARILYN

Like what?

COLBY

Why did Ms. Shepard hire a PI in the first place?

MARILYN

I don't know. Why did she?

COLBY

We don't know yet, but it's curious that she would make an inquiry to the FBI about the guy she once employed. Does he know something that could compromise Ms. Shepard?

Marilyn fumbles with her coffee cup.

MARILYN

Like I said, I never met him. I don't know anything about him.

(beat)

Uh, why don't you ask Tracy?

COLBY

We have other leads to pursue before that.

Erskine stares at Colby disapprovingly. Marilyn notices.

ERSKINE

Suffice it to say we'll take whatever matters are appropriate in the proper order to get to the bottom of this harassment.

(beat)

In the meantime, we'd appreciate it if you didn't talk to anyone about our meeting today.

MARILYN

Is Tracy in trouble?

COLBY

Why would you ask that?

MARILYN

Well, you said Tracy might be compromised.

ERSKINE

No one is in trouble... so far. Like I said: preliminary, gaps.

(beat)

Thanks for coming in. We'll be in touch if we need to talk to you again.

Everyone stands and Marilyn shakes hands with the two agents.

COLBY

Enjoy the rest of your vacation.

Marilyn departs the Storefront. Once on the sidewalk she nervously lights a cigarette.

EXT. SAN DIEGO MARINA - DAY

Matt drives his McLaren into the Marina lot where he turns the vehicle over to a VALET. He proceeds to the locked gate leading to the gangway, followed by a STAFF MEMBER carrying a couple pieces of luggage and a burly BODYGUARD.

INT. YACHT - DAY

The Yacht's CAPTAIN shakes hands with Matt. A STAFFER brings Matt a cocktail.

EXT. SAN DIEGO AIRPORT- DAY

Tracy's limo arrives at the General Aviation Terminal from where corporate jet passengers depart. She proceeds inside the terminal.

INT. JET - DAY

Tracy takes a seat near the front of the Jet. An ATTENDANT brings Tracy a cocktail. A couple EXECs and ASSISTANTS are already on board, sitting near the rear.

INT. DAD'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Dad opens the door and Tracy enters carrying a small bag. She drops the bag and gives her father a warm hug.

DAD

Tracy Rae, it's so good to see you.

TRACY

Me too, Dad.

DAD

It's been far too long, dear. Come on in, sit down, relax. Can I get you some lemonade?

TRACY

I'll get it. I desperately wanna wash my hands.

DAD

Bring out some cheese and crackers, too.

Dad proceeds to the Living Room.

INT. DAD'S BROWNSTONE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tracy plates cheese and crackers and pours lemonade, spilling some on the countertop. She reaches into the drawer and retrieves a towel. Suddenly she paws around the drawer searching for something. Coming up empty, puts the plates and glasses on a tray and heads for the Living Room.

INT. DAD'S BROWNSTONE/LIVING ROOM

Dad sits on the couch watching TV. Tracy takes up a spot next to him.

TRACY  
Whatcha watching, Dad.

DAD  
The Sweet Smell of Success. Burt  
Lancaster, Tony Curtis.

TRACY  
Haven't seen it.

DAD  
"The cat's in the bag and the bag's  
in the river"

TRACY  
Sounds cruel. What's it supposed  
to mean?

DAD  
Problems solved, I guess.

TRACY  
I wish it was as simple as that.  
(beat)  
How's your vision, Dad?

DAD  
Never better. I can't thank your  
husband enough for making the  
investments. You too, dear.  
(beat)  
I was hoping he'd come out here  
with you, but I'm sure he's busy  
running things.

TRACY  
Actually, he's taking a two week  
soiree to Mexico in the yacht.

DAD  
Why didn't you go with him?

TRACY  
It's five days round trip through  
choppy open seas. And Matt invited  
his Stanford buddies and their  
obsequious cling-on's. The  
conversations are stultifying.

DAD  
Oh.

TRACY

We'll take a vacation alone one of these days. Bora Bora, maybe. Seychelles.

(beat)

What have you been up to, Dad?

DAD

Not much. I go to the university library now that I can read books again. Watch TV. Once a month some of the Physics Society guys get together. I try to make it when I feel well enough.

TRACY

Wha'dya say we go out for some dinner? I'm starving.

DAD

There's nothing fancy around here.

TRACY

I'm tired of fancy. I just want something simple, tasty and unpretentious. Pastrami Reuben would be lovely.

DAD

There's a deli about five blocks from here.

TRACY

Perfect. I'll call for my driver.

DAD

We can walk it, Tracy. It's five blocks.

TRACY

Yes. Yes, we can.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Tracy walks arm-in-arm with Dad. His shuffling slows the pace.

TRACY

Um, Dad, I seem to remember you keeping a gun in your kitchen drawer. What'd you do with it?

DAD  
That old relic? I sold it.

Tracy stops in her tracks.

TRACY  
What? Why?

DAD  
What am I gonna do with a gun?  
Shoot my foot in self-defense?

TRACY  
How'd you sell it? Don't you need  
special permits, or licenses, or  
something to sell a handgun in New  
York?

DAD  
I don't know. I met a guy in the  
library and we got talking about  
things. His father was in the same  
Army division as me. He offered to  
buy my pistol. I guess he's a  
collector.

TRACY  
So out of the blue he buys your  
gun?

DAD  
He's building a memorial to his  
father. He has his old uniform and  
medals. And a helmet. He needed  
an authentic pistol.  
(beat)  
He paid me good money. What was I  
gonna do with it?

TRACY  
Gee, I don't--

DAD  
--It wasn't my combat arm. It was  
given to me at a discharge  
ceremony. I don't think it was  
ever fired.

TRACY  
Um, really?

Tracy and Dad resume walking.

DAD

Why do you care about that antique?  
I would've thought you'd want me to  
be rid of it.

TRACY

Who bought it, Dad?

DAD

I don't recall. Why are you  
asking?

TRACY

Do you have a bill of sale?

DAD

What's the problem, Tracy?

TRACY

What if the guy who bought it uses  
it to kill someone? Or resells it  
to some drug dealer? Do you want  
their crimes traced back to you?

Dad freezes.

DAD

Oh dear, I never thought of that.

TRACY

(forcefully)

Do you have a bill of sale, Dad?

DAD

No, he paid me in cash.

TRACY

Shit.

Dad looks at Tracy with concern.

TRACY (CONT'D)

Forget it, let's get dinner.

INT. YACHT - DAY

The Brobdignagian anchors off of Cabo San Lucas on a hot,  
sunny afternoon. About a dozen people, mostly thirty-  
something men but also a few younger GROUPIES mill about the  
yacht dressed in swim suits and enjoying colorful cocktails.  
A buffet of food lays out on a table in the aft deck. Matt  
chats with three BUDDIES.

MATT

We had a little trouble in Malaysia. Someone's been harassing the GM of the division. Smells like an attempt at IP piracy to me. Or maybe a plot to disrupt R&D.

BUDDY #1

Do you suspect anyone?

BUDDY #2

Gotta be the Chinks, or one of their satellites. Viet Nam maybe.

MATT

Tracy contracted with some security firm I've never heard of with an office in KL to investigate. They also provide personal protection. Costs a fortune.

BUDDY #3

What choice do you have? Do you want to get a package with a severed toe in it?

MATT

That's what Tracy said.

BUDDY #1

Did you consider one of your competitors? PicoTech, maybe?

MATT

Well, there is an ocean of bad blood between us, but I can't believe Fogle would be so stupid.

BUDDY #2

That old fuck is still running things there?

MATT

His son. Nepo-CEO. Since he took the reins in Q1, we've taken 13 points of share from them. When I think about it now, mini-Fogle doesn't have the imagination to pull off such a scheme.

BUDDY #3

I run into him at Torrey Pines now and then. Three handicap, but dumb as paint.

Hannah arrives with some papers. She wears business casual in a sharp contrast to the frolicking guests.

HANNAH  
 Sorry to interrupt, Mr.  
 Blankenshein. I need your  
 signature on these. I can notarize--  
 -

BUDDY #1  
 --Have a drink with us, darling.

HANNAH  
 Oh, no, I--

MATT  
 --That's a good idea. You've done  
 enough work, Hannah. You deserve a  
 break.

Buddy #1 pours out a shot of Clase Azul and hands it to Hannah. She's about to take a sip, but Buddy #1 interrupts.

BUDDY #1  
 Hold on, Hannah.

Buddy #1 pours out shots for the others.

BUDDY #1 (CONT'D)  
 Salud!

Everyone shoots the tequila in unison.

BUDDY #1 (CONT'D)  
 Now change into your bikini,  
 Hannah. We're taking a swim.

HANNAH  
 Uh, I didn't bring one. I didn't  
 think I'd--

Buddy #2 points across the yacht to three women in bikinis drinking, laughing and occasionally looking toward the men.

BUDDY #2  
 See the hottie in the blue and pick  
 polka dot? I'm sure she has a  
 spare. And from what I can see, I  
 bet it'll fit you just fine.

Hannah shuffles a bit uncomfortably.

MATT  
 It's OK, Hannah. Margaux is cool.

HANNAH  
Well, OK, Mr. Blankenshein.

Matt hands the papers back to Hannah.

MATT  
Take these back to my cabin. I'll  
look at them tonight.

Hannah departs.

BUDDY #3  
She's cute, Blankenshein. Where'd  
you find her?

MATT  
She used to work for Tracy.

BUDDY #3  
Oh shit. Well, all I can say is  
mind your P's and Q's.

MATT  
Aye aye, sir.

Matt departs.

BUDDY #1  
P's and Q's? You sound like Ward  
Cleaver.

Buddy #2 snickers.

BUDDY #2  
Ward Cleaver. Always a little hard  
on the Beaver, according to June,  
anyway.

.

The men laugh and set up another round of shots.

INT. YACHT/MAIN CABIN - DAY

Matt walks in just as Hannah is about to step out.

MATT  
You should call me Matt. It's less  
formal, which is how I prefer  
things - professionally and  
otherwise.

HANNAH  
Are you sure?

MATT

I'm always sure. We've known each other for a while now, Hannah. It's fine.

HANNAH

OK, Matt.

MATT

Great.

Matt exits the cabin.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Marilyn exits an elevator and walks into the underground Parking Garage of her apartment building. As she waits, the Stranger approaches from out of the shadows, startling Marilyn.

STRANGER

Good Morning, Marilyn.

MARILYN

What are you doing here?

STRANGER

We have to continue our conversation. It's time to move forward. Let's go for a ride.

MARILYN

Get the fuck away from me!

The Stranger reveals a gun tucked in his waistband.

STRANGER

Take me to that snazzy blue BMW, license plate V 8891. Where is it parked?

MARILYN

Please leave me alone. I beg you.

STRANGER

Get moving. I'll drive.

He takes Marilyn by the arm. Just then the blue BMW arrives down a curved ramp and into view.

INT. BMW (TRAVELING) - DAY

The Driver of the BMW, Marilyn's BODYGUARD spots the confrontation and immediately speeds toward the pair.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

The Stranger's attention is drawn to the advancing vehicle. The license plate matches the Stranger's citation: V 8891.

STRANGER

What the fuck?

Marilyn escapes from the startled Stranger just as the Bodyguard bounds out of the vehicle straight for the assailant. Before the Stranger can prepare, the Bodyguard tackles him to the pavement, dislodging the gun. Marilyn picks it up and points it toward the wrestling duo. The Bodyguard subdues the Stranger and zip ties his wrists behind his back. Straddling the prone Stranger, the Bodyguard brusquely addresses Marilyn.

BODYGUARD

Stop pointing the gun, Ms. Jenkins!

Marilyn quickly complies. The Bodyguard hoists the Stranger to his feet. He addresses Marilyn acidly.

STRANGER

Why didn't you tell me you have a bodyguard, Marilyn?

BODYGUARD

Shut your mouth.

The Bodyguard frog-marches the Stranger toward the elevator.

MARILYN

What are you going to do with him?

BODYGUARD

A little question time, then a trip to IPD.

INT. MARILYN'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Marilyn's Apartment is spare, as it would be for someone on an international assignment. Some kitschy ornaments adorn the walls. The Stranger sits zip-tied to a straight-back ladder-back chair in the living room. The Bodyguard is in rolled-up shirt sleeves.

Marilyn signals to the Bodyguard, who steps off to the side to speak with her away from the bound Stranger.

MARILYN

Do you think it's a good idea for him to be here?

BODYGUARD

We must take this opportunity to find out whatever we can about the extortion plot before I take him to the police. Once he's in their custody, whatever they get out of him will be unavailable to us.

MARILYN

I see.

The Bodyguard returns to the Stranger, followed by Marilyn. He reaches into the Stranger's pocket and pulls out a cell phone.

BODYGUARD

What's the unlock code?

STRANGER

Square root of Pi.

BODYGUARD

What's the code?

The Stranger remains defiantly silent, until the Bodyguard holds the phone in front of his face and yanks his head into position by his hair. The phone unlocks.

BODYGUARD (CONT'D)

I proffer the notion you recorded your conversation with her at the restaurant. Am I right?

The Stranger remains silent. The Bodyguard fingers the cell phone, then begins scrolling.

BODYGUARD (CONT'D)

Ms. Jenkins, what was the date of your conversation with this man?

MARILYN

April 14th.

The Bodyguard scrolls some more. He taps the screen. The recorded conversation plays.

STRANGER  
 (Recorded voice)  
 That's a delicious looking  
 cocktail.

MARILYN  
 (Recorded voice)  
 I-- I'm sorry. What are you doing?

STRANGER  
 (Recorded voice)  
 Sit down, please. I want to talk  
 to you.

MARILYN  
 That's it! That's him talking to  
 me at the restaurant.

The Bodyguard pauses the replay.

STRANGER  
 You have no right to--

MARILYN  
 --Fuck you.  
 (To the Bodyguard)  
 Jump ahead.

The Bodyguard slides his finger on the screen.

STRANGER  
 (Recorded voice)  
 Things will go much smoother for  
 you if you stop lying, and face the  
 fact that I know what I'm talking  
 about. The owner of that  
 festooned, albeit tiny cock went by  
 many names--

MARILYN  
 --Stop! Jump ahead a bit.

The Bodyguard stops the recording and slides his finger on  
 the screen again.

MARILYN (CONT'D)  
 (Recorded voice)  
 What is it you want?

STRANGER  
 (Recorded voice)  
 Quid pro quo, Marilyn. Pay for my  
 silence, stay out of legal  
 jeopardy.

(MORE)

STRANGER (CONT'D)

Keep your hifalutin job, and your stellar reputation. I checked your compensation in the annual report. Substantial, congratulations. More than I make. I'll arrive at a sum you can pay, so don't cry too hard.

MARILYN

Shut it off.

(beat)

There's the proof.

(to the Stranger)

Do you know what the penalty is for aggravated extortion in this country? I looked it up. Twenty years in prison, huge fines.

(beat)

Whipping.

STRANGER

Look, I was just hired to scare you. I never saw any evidence that you--

MARILYN

--Shut up!

The Stranger nods toward the table where his gun rests.

STRANGER

That's not even a real gun.

MARILYN

Who hired you? Grayson Richards?

The Stranger hangs his head.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

It had to be Richards.

BODYGUARD

Give us his contact number.

Silence. The Bodyguard scrolls the phone.

BODYGUARD (CONT'D)

Suit yourself. I see you have a lot of contacts, but I don't see a Richards. What's his nickname?

The Stranger stares defiantly forward, clenching his jaw.

BODYGUARD (CONT'D)  
I'm going to call every one of  
these contacts starting with the  
A's until I get Richards.

STRANGER  
Knock yourself out.

The Bodyguard produces a hand-held Taser.

BODYGUARD  
Oh, I will. Every time I get a  
wrong number, I'm going to light  
you up.

MARILYN  
Tell him the nickname, goddammit!

BODYGUARD  
Go in the kitchen, Ms. Jenkins.

Flustered, Marilyn retreats to the Kitchen.

INT. MARILYN'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - DAY

Marilyn sits apprehensively at the kitchen table, fiddling  
with an orange.

BODYGUARD (O.C.)  
Hello, I'm looking for Grayson  
Richards.  
(beat)  
I'm sorry.

The BUZZ of a Taser. The Stranger screams.

STRANGER (O.C.)  
Aaauuuuggghhhh!!!

A short pause.

BODYGUARD (O.C.)  
Hello, I'm looking for Grayson  
Richards.  
(beat)  
I'm sorry.

INT. MARILYN'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Bodyguard presses the Taser against the sofa, emitting  
another BUZZ. Again the Stranger screams dramatically.

STRANGER  
Aaauuuuggghhhh!!!  
(beat)  
Okay, okay. Stop it!

INT. MARILYN'S APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - DAY (LATER)

The Bodyguard lifts up the sweaty Stranger. Marilyn stands off to the side with her arms folded.

BODYGUARD  
I left Richards's private number on the table. Perhaps it can help you and your company resolve the harassment campaign.

Marilyn picks up a piece of paper and reads it.

MARILYN  
I wasn't prepared for that.

The Bodyguard hustles the buckling Stranger toward the door, and addresses Marilyn over his shoulder.

BODYGUARD  
I'll let your company know what the police decide to do, Ms. Jenkins. Work from home until I return. Probably a couple hours. Keep the door locked. Don't go out.

EXT. NANONANO MALAYSIA - DAY

Marilyn's BMW, driven by her Bodyguard, arrives at the entrance of her office building. He opens the door for Marilyn and escorts her to the front door.

INT. MARILYN'S OFFICE - DAY

Marilyn stands by the window staring out at the city. Her Aide announces over the intercom.

MARILYN'S AIDE  
Ms. Jenkins, Mr. Blankenshein on the line for you.

Marilyn takes a seat at her desk.

MARILYN  
Matt, what can I do for you?

INTERCUT WITH THE YACHT.

It's night and the sky is full of stars. Matt sips a cocktail on the yacht's forward deck, accompanied by some of his Buddies, the Groupies, and Hannah who, dressed in a sexy outfit appears to be one of them.

MATT

You should be asking what I can do for you, Marilyn. I just heard from Hannah that you were attacked. Are you alright?

MARILYN

I'm OK, just a little shaken. I'll be fine.

MATT

What happened?

MARILYN

A man accosted me in the parking garage.

MATT

That's what Hannah said. Incredible.

MARILYN

He threatened me if I didn't turn over project plans and other stuff.

MATT

Jesus. What was he going to do?

MARILYN

I don't know. He didn't get that far. My bodyguard subdued him. Took him to the police station. I'm not sure what they'll do.

MATT

Well, we're not going to let the police go easy on him, that's for sure.

(beat)

Listen, I want you to come back to the home office. Best to get away until things settle down over there..

MARILYN

Do you think that's really necessary?

MATT  
Yes, I do, Marilyn.

MARILYN  
OK. You're the boss. I'll start  
making plans.

INT. MARILYN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marilyn is busy packing luggage. Her phone RINGS; she  
answers.

MARILYN  
Hello, Tracy.

TRACY (V.O.)  
Are you OK?

MARILYN  
Yeah.

TRACY  
Hannah heard from her contact at  
the security firm that some guy  
attacked you or threatened you or  
something?

MARILYN  
It was that cretin at the  
restaurant. He's definitely  
involved with Richards. The  
bodyguard you hired took him down.  
Very impressive.

TRACY  
Glad he was there to protect you.  
(beat)  
I'll give myself a little credit  
for engaging that firm. Expensive,  
even after negotiating the hell out  
of them.  
(beat)  
Anyway, they have influence with  
the local police. We won't be  
hearing from Mr. Cretin anytime  
soon. Did he demand anything  
besides intellectual property?

MARILYN  
C'mon, Tracy, you know exactly what  
he-- Wait, can anybody hear me?

TRACY

No. I'm all alone.

MARILYN

He demanded blackmail money to keep Richards quiet about me supposedly, y'know, doing, y'know, to Cuttbate. We both know I didn't do it, but if Richards insinuates to authorities that I did, I'll get implicated in the sordid mess. I can't have that, Tracy.

TRACY

Neither can I, obviously.

(beat)

Putting Richards's stooge in the custody of the KL police is good for us. Richards will be forced to reconsider his whole slimy scheme.

MARILYN

I hope you're right.

INT. NYC RESTAURANT - DAY

Tracy and Aiman sit at a table in a fancy Restaurant in New York City. Aiman eats his lunch while Tracy continues to speak to Marilyn. Distracted by his phone, Aiman is too consumed to eavesdrop. Still, Tracy scooches away from him.

TRACY

It was smart to tell Matt the harassment was over company secrets. Keeps the focus away from other things.

(beat)

Anyway, I guess I'll see you in a couple days when I get back to San Diego. Have a good flight.

MARILYN

Thanks. Bye bye.

Tracy hangs up, and returns to her meal.

AIMAN

Everything OK, Tracy?

TRACY

All going according to plan.

AIMAN  
Glad to hear.

Aiman holds up a fork spearing what looks like beef.

AIMAN (CONT'D)  
You'd never know this is vegan.

INT. MATT'S OFFICE - DAY

Matt sits at his desk holding court with Tracy, a couple EXECs including Jack the CFO, GREG the Sales VP, and Hannah.

MATT  
Marilyn will be here in a minute.

JACK  
How's she doing?

MATT  
Tough broad. Put up with a lot of  
shit recently, but I think we've  
tamped down the harassment.  
(beat)  
Right, Tracy?

Tracy nods.

TRACY  
You look tanned, Hannah.

HANNAH  
Uh, well, I took a few days off.  
Drove out to Palm Springs.

TRACY  
Didn't it rain?

Marilyn walks into the Office carrying an attaché case and looking a trifle haggard. Everyone stands except Tracy.

MATT  
There's my road warrior. So great  
to see you again, Marilyn.

Matt hugs Marilyn, and the rest shake her hand.

TRACY  
Yes, glad you're here, Marilyn.

JACK

I know we have a lotta stockholder meeting stuff to go over, but would you--

MATT

--Jesus, Jack, give her some time to settle in. And maybe she doesn't wanna talk about it, y'know.

MARILYN

The whole thing happened so fast. My bodyguard took two seconds to disarm the piece of sh-- garbage.

GREG

He was armed? Oh my god!

MATT

You didn't tell me that.

MARILYN

And after tasing him a few times, zip tied his hands and marched him away.

MATT

Wow. Did you hire John Wick, Tracy?

Everyone chuckles, except Marilyn and Tracy.

MATT (CONT'D)

Jack, let's start with the inventory turns. That's been on my mind.

JACK

Sure.

Jack preps his materials. Hannah approaches Marilyn and hands her an official-looking envelope.

HANNAH

A courier delivered this for you.

Jack takes the floor.

JACK

Top takeaway: total sales are running ahead of projections. Keep this pace, we beat by 6 percent. Congrats to Greg.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

(beat)

Optical division is poised to flip positive in two to three quarters.

TRACY

How do we improve that?

JACK

More outreach to ophthalmologists.

GREG

I can do that. Just need an eight to 10 headcount boost in four US cities. They gotta have some STEM creds, though.

MATT

I'll give you four for two. What else, Jack?

JACK

Free cash flow is a click below where it should be.

Jack looks at Marilyn who is not paying attention.

JACK (CONT'D)

As you mentioned Matt, inventory turns are below where they should be. In the cosmetics division.

Hiding her moves, Marilyn slits open the envelope and peers at the contents. Jack drones on unintelligibly.

MARILYN'S POV: A REQUEST BY THE FBI FOR A MEETING.

She quickly returns the letter to the envelope.

MATT

Why might that be, Marilyn?

MARILYN

(startled)

Huh? I, uh--

MATT

--Say it again, Jack.

JACK

Um, it appears we're overstocked on materials in the cosmetics division.

The attendees stare at Marilyn, awaiting her answer. Marilyn composes herself.

MARILYN

Well, Jack, it's really quite simple. In order for me to recover two point oh, I had to replace a key production compound. TiO<sub>2</sub>.

(beat)

That's titanium dioxide, in case you didn't know. Given the tight time-to-market deadline, I didn't have the luxury of calculating to the nearest gram how much we would need.

Tracy looks at Matt and shakes her head in disbelief at Marilyn's impudence.

MATT

I see.

MARILYN

We'll work it off. Besides I negotiated an excellent deal from the supplier. Matt signed off.

Tracy sits up, irritated. Matt smirks.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

Since I made the purchase, the spot price has gone up 9 percent.

JACK

Thanks for that, Marilyn.

Jack proceeds to the next topic on his agenda.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. SAN DIEGO STOREFRONT - DAY

As before, Marilyn wanders about the sidewalk looking at the addresses on the buildings, finally settling on the Storefront where she met Erskine and Colby before.

INT. SAN DIEGO STOREFRONT - DAY

Marilyn sits by the desk, drinking a coffee.

ERSKINE

Thanks for coming in again Ms. Jenkins. I hope you're not jet-lagged?

MARILYN

I'm used to it.

ERSKINE

Well, we wouldn't ask if we didn't have some new things to discuss with you.

COLBY

Since we last spoke, the FBI now believes Tracy Shepard was scammed in an elaborate con game, and subsequently hired Grayson Richards to find out who was behind it and recover stolen funds.

Marilyn chokes on her coffee.

MARILYN

Really?

COLBY

Apparently, Ms. Shepard fired Richards. Presumably he didn't perform. In any event, Richards kept working on the case. I guess he became obsessed with it.

(beat)

Somehow he discovered the con man was killed. Shot to death.

MARILYN

Really?

COLBY

Yes, really.

MARILYN

Who was it?

ERSKINE

What we think is that Richards now suspects Ms. Shepard had something to do with the con man's death. Perhaps even killing him herself.

MARILYN

That's impossible! She would never do something like that.

ERSKINE

What's the real reason Richards was harassing you? Don't tell me he's interested in company secrets.

MARILYN

I, um, uh, I have no idea. Matt thinks--

COLBY

--Could it be that you know something about the con man's death?

MARILYN

What? No.

ERSKINE

Listen, Ms. Jenkins. Marilyn. We're following up on Richards's hypothesis. Tracy could have discovered her con man's identity and then confronted him. She certainly had motive to do so.

MARILYN

So you're saying Tracy was able to find the con man in her spare time when a professional private investigator couldn't?

ERSKINE

Did Tracy confide anything with you about being scammed?

MARILYN

No. Nothing.

COLBY

It's against the law to lie to the FBI, Ms. Jenkins. It doesn't matter whether or not you're under oath. 18 U.S. Code 1001.

Marilyn shifts in her chair. A long pause ensues. The agents exchange glances.

ERSKINE

Try this on for size, Ms. Jenkins. Tracy told you about the scam and a subsequent encounter with her tormentor. We're not saying you had anything to do with his death, but you knew about it, right?

MARILYN

I don't want to--

COLBY

--You're not in any trouble... not yet.

ERSKINE

Richards wouldn't harass you unless he thought he could get something from you - like flipping on Tracy.

(beat)

I think that's his plan. Pressure you to implicate Tracy. If you refuse, he'll threaten to implicate you. Either way he has a path to extortion.

COLBY

You're both wealthy women.

Marilyn sneers.

MARILYN

Both? Hah!

ERSKINE

Forget that. Richards plans to fuck over one or both of you.

MARILYN

You could be wrong, y'know.

ERSKINE

That's really why we brought you in today, Ms. Jenkins. Help us confirm whether Richards has any actionable evidence of Tracy's involvement.

MARILYN

What?

ERSKINE

Look, Grayson Richards ain't on a pro bono crusade to find some shit con man's killer and bring her to justice. He's not after CNN's Hero of the Year Award. His ultimate goal is to blackmail the flush Ms. Shepard.

COLBY

If Richards has solid evidence implicating Ms. Shepard, we'll hold her responsible.

ERSKINE

After due diligence, you understand.

COLBY

If he's bluffing, but threatens Tracy with blackmail anyway, we'll prosecute his ass to the fullest.

(beat)

Of course, both could be true at the same time.

MARILYN

I don't know what to say.

ERSKINE

C'mon, help us. Meet up with Richards. Feel him out.

MARILYN

What if I say no?

COLBY

We're gonna find out who killed the con man. And anyone else involved. If you don't cooperate, Marilyn, that'll weigh heavily on where we look. And what we'll do when we're done investigating.

ERSKINE

Look, it's for the best, Ms. Jenkins. We'll set you up with a wire. It's a no-brainer. Just lunch. Where are you staying?

MARILYN

La Valencia in La Jolla. But I'm going back to Malaysia in a few days.

ERSKINE

That's good to know. We'll have to act fast, then.

COLBY

We'll coach you on what to ask and how to answer. Like he said: a no-brainer.

ERSKINE

Wha'dya say, Ms. Jenkins?

Marilyn silently sips her coffee apprehensively.

MARILYN

I have his private phone number if that helps.

FADE OUT.

EXT. GRAND DEL MAR - DAY

Tracy and Aiman walk off the 18th hole dressed in casual golf attire. Caddies and other attendants take over the equipment. The couple proceed inside to the Bar.

INT. GRAND DEL MAR/BAR - DAY

Tracy and Aiman sit at a table for two along the wall away from the others in the bar. Each has a glass of white wine.

AIMAN

This is a swell club, Tracy.  
Stylish and not too masculine.

TRACY

Y'know they only recently let women in here.

(beat)

Matt joined after he kept having trouble getting tee times at Torrey Pines.

AIMAN

I guess that's one way to solve the problem.

TRACY

A solution in six figures. He doesn't even like golf that much. He mostly uses this place for offsite meetings so he can write off the dues.

(beat)

Anyway, I didn't want to discuss it while we were golfing with that fat couple from Ohio, but I have to question the fees you're charging. A half mil?

AIMAN

I hope you're not going to go into full-on negotiation mode on me, Tracy.

(beat)

Setting up a fake FBI operation on the fly is not the kind of thing you could have gotten from any other firm. Actors, props, a storefront in downtown San Diego? On top of the harasser and the body guard? It takes serious money to stage all those interactions with quality, discrete personnel.

TRACY

I appreciate that, Aiman.

AIMAN

Like I said on the plane that day we met, "no service request is out of bounds." That was buzzword-compliance for "we'll do anything for the right amount of money." Didn't you catch that?

TRACY

I know, I know. I'm not complaining, but it's gonna be difficult to hide this big bill--

AIMAN

--Hide?

TRACY

Disguise. Whatever.

AIMAN

Why is that necessary?

TRACY

Seriously? This type of expense is at least ten light-years from NanoNano's core business. I need you to do something about it.

(beat)

Yes, I am going into full-on negotiation mode with you. Knock off 20 percent and divide the billings over the next 8 quarters.

AIMAN

Two years? Jesus, Tracy, that's a big ask.

TRACY  
I'm not asking.

AIMAN  
I see.

TRACY  
Look, I love your work. The things  
your firm is capable of. And I'm  
kinda fond of you, too. I have no  
doubt I will call upon your unique  
services again in the future.  
(beat)  
Consider this a teaser fee in  
anticipation of big business down  
the road. Make it work.

Aiman sips his wine, as does Tracy.

AIMAN  
The Medea of Mediation.

TRACY  
(sharply)  
What did you say?

AIMAN  
(shocked)  
Um, The Medea--

TRACY  
--Don't ever say that again. I  
mean it.

AIMAN  
I'm sorry, Tracy. I read it in a  
magazine profile of you.

TRACY  
Do you even know who Medea was?

AIMAN  
No.

TRACY  
I didn't think so. Maybe you  
should've studied Euripides instead  
of arbitrage back at M I T.

AIMAN  
I'm sorry.

Tracy and Aiman simultaneously take a sip of wine, neither  
looking at the other. After a moment, FOGLE'S SON calls out.

FOGLE'S SON (O.S.)  
Tracy Shepard?

Tracy and Aiman look toward the approaching late-20s man, trim, tanned and dressed in golf attire. He sidles next to the table.

FOGLE'S SON (CONT'D)  
I bet you don't remember me. Jerry Fogle. Sumner's son. I was at that mediation meeting you ran between PicoTech and NanoNano.

TRACY  
I'm sorry, but I don't remember.

FOGLE'S SON  
My old man instructed me not to say anything.

TRACY  
Ah. How are you?

FOGLE'S SON  
Excellent. I'm running PicoTech now. My father retired last year.

TRACY  
Congratulations.  
(beat)  
This is Aiman Hakim.

Aiman and Fogle's Son shake hands.

AIMAN  
Nice to meet you.

FOGLE'S SON  
So, Tracy, are you doing any consulting work for NanoNano?

TRACY  
I'm on the board and manage special projects. That includes trying to keep Matt out of trouble.  
(beat)  
You know Matt, don't you?

FOGLE'S SON  
Of course. Not well, but seeing as he's my chief competitor I make it a point to stay up to date on his comings and goings.  
(beat)

(MORE)

FOGLE'S SON (CONT'D)  
 Is he still the second most  
 eligible bachelor in San Diego  
 behind me?

TRACY  
 He's my husband.

FOGLE'S SON  
 No kidding. For some reason I  
 thought he was with-- I guess I'm  
 back level.

Tracy furrows her brow. Aiman takes stock of Tracy's  
 reaction.

FOGLE'S SON (CONT'D)  
 Anyway, nice to see you, Tracy.  
 Hit 'em straight.

Fogle's Son turns and walks away, his foot in his mouth.

EXT. RON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Surrounded by a few Police Officers, Ron makes a phone call.

RON  
 Richards, it's Slomsky. Where the  
 hell are you? I never got a call  
 from your computer expert.

OFFICER  
 You gotta go, man. If you don't  
 leave the premises, I gotta arrest  
 you for violating this O.P.

RON  
 You hear that, you motherfucker.  
 I'm getting kicked out of my  
 apartment. Call me back!

INT. LA VALENCIA HOTEL - DAY

Marilyn places a call from the hotel lobby.

ERSKINE (V.O.)  
 Special Agent Erskine.

MARILYN  
 I called him. He'll meet. I told  
 him 2 o'clock day after tomorrow at  
 the hotel... like you said.

ERSKINE (V.O.)  
Outstanding. What did he say?

MARILYN  
Not much. I could tell he was rattled. Not that I called, but that I called his private number.  
(beat)  
Then I guess he put two and two together. His goon must have told Richards my bodyguard tortured it out of him.

INTERCUT WITH THE STOREFRONT.

ERSKINE  
What?

Erskine cups his hand over the phone and whispers to Colby.

ERSKINE (CONT'D)  
Hook, line and sinker.

MARILYN  
Oh shit. Forget what I just said.

ERSKINE  
I don't even know what you're talking about. And at this point I don't wanna know.  
(beat)  
Did you establish the meeting parameters as we discussed?

MARILYN  
He's all set to hear my proposal.

ERSKINE  
Keep it simple, Ms. Jenkins. Let him talk all he wants, but steer him toward his extortion scheme.

MARILYN  
I know the plan. But he may just be trying to solve a case. That's a possibility.

ERSKINE  
A remote one based on our investigation to date, but don't push it if he doesn't wander into extortion territory.

MARILYN

I won't, believe me. I have no interest in provoking him.

ERSKINE

You'll do fine. And if things start going sideways, we'll do an extraction.

MARILYN

Extraction?

ERSKINE

We'll come to your rescue.

(beat)

I'll come by your hotel room with Colby at noon and get you prepped.

MARILYN

I can't wait.

INT. MATT'S HOUSE - DAY

Matt and Tracy sit on the patio overlooking Coronado Island and the Pacific Ocean. Matt scrolls his phone while Tracy sips a cocktail and picks at some canapes. Several seconds go by as Tracy watches with disdain as Matt chuckles intermittently at the screen. Finally, Tracy sits up and removes her sunglasses.

TRACY

I ran into Jerry Fogle the other day at the club. I hadn't seen him since I did that negotiation between you and PicoTech.

MATT

Oh yeah?

TRACY

I didn't even remember him which he seemed to take no offense to.

MATT

He's running the company now. Took over from his scorbatic old man at the beginning of the year. Maybe one of the best favors he could have done for us.

TRACY

When's the last time you saw him?

MATT

When I got back from Cabo. At the marina. He was on Sumner's sailboat.

TRACY

Is that a fact.

MATT

Yes. It's a fact Sumner owns a sailboat. What's going on, Trace?

TRACY

Nothing. Will you fix me another cocktail, darling?

Tracy puts her sunglasses back on. Matt grabs the empty glass and walks off.

INT. LA VALENCIA HOTEL/MARILYN'S ROOM - DAY

Erskine, Colby and Marilyn sit around a coffee table. She wears a black suit, yellow blouse and a garish Versace-branded scarf.

COLBY

Our best advice: be yourself. You're not in any trouble, so act confident, but not cocky.

ERSKINE

It's important you don't ensnare Richards. Let him hang himself. You can progress the conversation, but do not initiate talk about bribery and extortion.

MARILYN

I'm nervous. What if he get suspicious? Or violent?

COLBY

We'll be monitoring your conversation from 20 feet away. If anything starts going sideways--

MARILYN

--I know. You'll do an extraction.  
(beat)  
Reminds me of the dentist.

ERSKINE

Quick sanity check. Are you wearing the outfit you told him you'd be wearing.

MARILYN

Yes. I picked this outlandish scarf so there'd be no doubts.

ERSKINE

Great. Now let's get you wired up, Ms. Jenkins.

Marilyn stands and removes her jacket. Erskine heads to the bathroom.

COLBY

No need for that.

Colby removes a brooch and a watch from a box and shows them to Marilyn.

COLBY (CONT'D)

Let me pin this on your jacket. It contains a tiny wireless listening device.

Marilyn leans forward and Colby pins on the brooch.

MARILYN

Why do you say "wired up" when there are no wires?

COLBY

I guess for the same reason we say dial 911. Put on this watch. It's a backup bug. Both these devices are voice activated. Nothing for you to do but talk and listen.

Marilyn straps on the watch.

ERSKINE (O.S.)

Say something, Ms. Jenkins.

Marilyn speaks at a volume louder than normal.

MARILYN

Testicles, testicles, one two three.

ERSKINE (O.S.)

You don't need to speak so loudly. These mics are very sensitive.

COLBY

Say something in your normal voice.

MARILYN

What the hell am I doing?

ERSKINE (O.S.)

Perfect.

INT. RICHARDS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

At his desk illuminated by a desk lamp in an otherwise dark office, Richards pores over files and photos from his FOIA request. He examine a schematic drawing showing the outlines two human shapes facing each other standing five feet apart, one of which points a gun at arm's length at the other. A dotted line connects the end of the gun through the throat of the second figure and into a wall behind. The shooter shape is taller than the victim shape. Figures on the drawing indicate the shooter is estimated to be 3 to 6 inches taller than the victim. Other linear measurements document the scene.

INT. TRACY'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Tracy escorts Richards to the door. They shake hands. As Richards steps out, Tracy pipes up. They face each other, Tracy standing taller than Richards by four inches in her heels. He notices the height difference.

TRACY

One more thing I forgot to mention.  
Fletcher Cuttbate has a, um... he  
has a snake tattooed on his penis.

Richards raises an eyebrow slightly, takes out a pad of paper and writes a note on it.

END FLASHBACK.

Richards puts the sketch aside and examines a copy of a grisly photograph of Cuttbate's mangled scrotum. The photo is marked "Property of Hamilton County Coroner" along with the warning "Reproduction Prohibited".

INT. TRACY'S APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Richards and Tracy converse.

RICHARDS

From what you've already told me, Ms. Shepard, I am convinced that Fischer and Fletcher Cuttbate - no doubt aliases - are one and the same person.

Tracy shrugs, her legs crossed, a stiletto heel dangling from her toe.

C.U. Of the shoe and its pointy heel.

Richards notices.

END FLASHBACK.

Richards reaches into his drawer and pulls out a bottle of booze. He pours out a stiff one, gulps it down and quickly pours another. He reaches into the drawer again, this time pulling out Dad's pistol. He places it on the desk and does a "spin the bottle" with it. When the pistol stops spinning, it points at Richards's heart.

EXT. LA VALENCIA HOTEL/POOL - DAY

Marilyn sits at an isolated table drinking a glass of water with a slice of cucumber. FAKE RICHARDS approaches from inside the Hotel. He bears a passing resemblance to Richards in stature and age. Upon seeing Fake Richards, Marilyn takes a long swig of water and wipes her lips.

FAKE RICHARDS

You must be Marilyn. That's one unique scarf.

(beat)

May I join you?

MARILYN

Of course. Isn't that why you're here, Mr. Richards.

(beat)

You are Grayson Richards, aren't you?

Fake Richards takes a seat.

FAKE RICHARDS

Indeed I am. I have to say, you completely caught me off guard calling me on my secure number. But when I thought about it, I should have known it was inevitable.

(MORE)

FAKE RICHARDS (CONT'D)

(beat)

Anyway, I'm glad you did.

(beat)

You want a drink? Dirty Shirley,  
maybe?

Marilyn cocks her head in and expression of surprise at the suggestion.

MARILYN

Uh, no thank you.

FAKE RICHARDS

Do you mind if I have one?

MARILYN

A Dirty Shirley?

FAKE RICHARDS

A real drink.

Richards flags down a WAITER who promptly arrives as no one else is by the pool.

FAKE RICHARDS (CONT'D)

I'll have a single malt scotch,  
neat.

The Waiter departs.

FAKE RICHARDS (CONT'D)

So why do you want to meet? Are  
you ready to tell me your secrets.

MARILYN

I want you to stop harassing me. I  
have no secrets to tell you.

FAKE RICHARDS

Harassing you, Marilyn?

MARILYN

You're behind that asshole in KL--

FAKE RICHARDS

--KL?

MARILYN

Kuala-- Goddammit, you know very  
well what I'm talking about.

FAKE RICHARDS

Look, any pressure that may have been applied was solely intended to encourage you to help me solve my cold case.

MARILYN

I don't know any--

FAKE RICHARDS

--Stop and listen.

The Waiter arrives with Richards's cocktail, then leaves.

FAKE RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Here's my pitch. Tracy Shepard hired me to find the guy who scammed her. I never found him, and I felt bad about that. Even after she dismissed me, I kept working on the case.

MARILYN

Why?

FAKE RICHARDS

I hate to fail. I thought, "Maybe I could recover some money for her". And the whole ugly affair intrigued me, to be honest.

(beat)

Moreover, I thought solving this bizarre case would be a feather in my cap, and new clients would come calling.

MARILYN

And now you think you found him.

FAKE RICHARDS

I know I did. The tattoo on the cock slams the file cabinet shut.

(beat)

Sadly, the guy's dead. Shot through the throat. Body mutilated. But you know that, right?

MARILYN

Why do you persist on saying that? I don't know what you're talking about.

FAKE RICHARDS

Please, stop already. Fletcher Cuttbate? Calvin Blough? The guy who nearly scammed you too? You absolutely know what I'm talking about.

A lengthy silence.

FAKE RICHARDS (CONT'D)

I think Tracy shot him, possibly by accident, but I can't prove it. Yet. But if I could place her at Cuttbate's house the night of the killing, that would really advance the case.

MARILYN

I imagine it would.

FAKE RICHARDS

You knew where Cuttbate lived, and gave Tracy directions. Am I right?

MARILYN

What's your real motivation in all this? You're going to blackmail Tracy. Am I right?

FAKE RICHARDS

I don't--

MARILYN

--You're not trying to attract new business with your super-sleuth prowess. You just want to take her money.

FAKE RICHARDS

You were at Cuttbate's house the night he was killed. Tracy knows it because as we speak she's preparing to turn you in for the killing.

MARILYN

What?!

The Waiter returns.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

Bring me whatever he's having.

FAKE RICHARDS

Make it two.

The Waiter leaves.

FAKE RICHARDS (CONT'D)

I know a guy who has a contact in the FBI. I asked him what they knew about the case... an unidentified source named you as the perpetrator.

Marilyn bolts up, agitated.

MARILYN

Oh sure.

(beat)

I shot Cuttbate dead. Then I gouged his fucking face and stomped on his pathetic cock. He absolutely had it coming after what he did.

FAKE RICHARDS

Marilyn--

MARILYN

(sarcastic)

--He almost, repeat "almost" scammed me so I tracked him down to his shithole house in Jersey and killed him. No remorse. The ultimate retribution for a wet fart of a scam. Totally normal, right? Happens every day.

(beat)

Do you realize that makes no fucking sense?!

Marilyn sits down, crying.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

Has my whole fucking world turned upside down, for god fucking sake?

INT. LA VALENCIA HOTEL/MARILYN'S ROOM - DAY

Erskine and Colby listen into the conversation wearing headphones.

COLBY

I can't wait to hear the first question she asks when we get back together.

EXT. LA VALENCIA HOTEL/POOL - DAY

Marilyn has a drink.

FAKE RICHARDS

Don't you see - Tracy has to be the anonymous tipster.

MARILYN

(sniffling)

I can't believe it.

Fake Richards hands Marilyn a cloth napkin.

FAKE RICHARDS

You can't believe the Medea of Mediation would throw you under the proverbial bus?

MARILYN

I can't-- It doesn't-- Are you absolutely sure?

FAKE RICHARDS

I'm truly sorry I harassed you, Marilyn, but I wanted you to see the foolishness of protecting Tracy.

(beat)

I'm not gonna blackmail her. That's not what I do. I only want to solve the case - before the FBI does. Selfish reasons. Pride, maybe. A boost to my business, whether you believe it or not.

(beat)

Will you help me?

The Waiter returns with the two scotches, and leaves. Marilyn wipes her eyes.

MARILYN

I can't be your source.

FAKE RICHARDS

I'll pin it on stuff Ron Slomsky told me.

(MORE)

FAKE RICHARDS (CONT'D)

If anyone cares to ask him about it, he'll deny it of course, but he's in no position to argue his bona fides.

Marilyn finishes her scotch, sucking in air through her clenched teeth at the end.

MARILYN

Tracy shot Cuttbate. She said it was an accident - and I believe her. She only went there to get him to confess on video tape. He attacked her and the gun went off.

FAKE RICHARDS

Where were you?

MARILYN

I had left.

FAKE RICHARDS

Then what happened?

MARILYN

I guess she panicked and drove away.

FAKE RICHARDS

Not before she stomped on his cock with her high heels.

Marilyn looks at Fake Richards inquisitively.

MARILYN

How did you --

FAKE RICHARDS

--I had already suspected that, and you just confirmed it.

Marilyn sucks some remnants of her scotch.

MARILYN

Yeah, that was crazy. I couldn't believe it when she told me. Hell, I couldn't believe she told me about it at all.

FAKE RICHARDS

Why not notify the police?

MARILYN

Seriously? Commit a career-ending move over the death of a total fucking scumbag? No thanks.

(beat)

I have to give Tracy credit. She got a dire situation under control fast. Dialing 9 1 1 using Cuttbate's cell phone. Concocting the prostitute alibi.

(beat)

She's cool under pressure. Thinks ahead like a grandmaster. Plays the long game. Capitalizes on weakness.

FAKE RICHARDS

Impressive woman.

MARILYN

Shit. If only you had taken the fucking hint and moved on when she fired you. We'd all be doing fine right now.

FAKE RICHARDS

You've been helpful, Marilyn. I appreciate it. You've confirmed my long-held suspicions. But I can't close the deal without some kind of evidence. Anything you can tell me?

She takes another sip, and sits back resigned as the orange sun sets.

MARILYN

I think her father still has the gun.

FADE OUT.

THE END