

Crisis: "Pilot"

By

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TEASER

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Black Friday.

A large mechanical snowman watches as SHOPPERS carry bags of shit they don't need, don't want and, overpay for.

A middle aged, SKEEVY MAN, greasy, long-haired, sucks on a candy cane, pretends to study a new 2018 Subaru Impreza.

From under his dirty baseball cap his sharp eyes shift to a "pay-by-the-day" SANTA ushering a YOUNG GIRL (6) off his lap, hands her a wrapped candy cane as a parting gift.

He looks at his cheap Timex: "9:45".

The scummy dude watches as she stops, head down, wrestling to open the cellophane directly in front of the snowman.

He CRUNCHES his candy cane, swallows, dashes towards her.

SKEEVY MAN  
(nervously)  
Hey, darlin', let me help you.

He snatches the treat from the smiling girl, quickly unwraps the plastic, all while watching the mechanical snowman.

ANGRY MOM (OS)  
Kaitlyn! Get away from him!

A white puffy coated arm roughly appears around the girl's shoulder. The child looks up to see her pissed off MOM (30).

ANGRY MOM  
You know better than that!

Skeevy's flustered.

ANGRY MOM (CONT.)  
Pervert!

Mom hurriedly shuffles her daughter into the throng.

Again, he looks at his watch: "9:46".

He turns, runs as if the devil himself is chasing him across the crowded aisle, slides across the top of the display Subaru. Ducks down, plugs his ears with greasy fingers.

BOOM! Chaos. Screams. Smoke.

The snowman, TOTALLY OBLITERATED, sparks and FIZZLES.

He opens his eyes. A bloody WHITE PUFFY COATED DETACHED ARM rests in front of him.

**END OF TEASER**

**TITLE SEQUENCE**

A montage of Columbine, 9/11, Sandy Hook, the Boston Marathon Bombing, interjected with "EYEWITNESS" interviews.

Opening credits end with flashes of TALKING HEAD NEWS ANCHORS, pulling back to reveal a television in a common American family living room.

MOM, DAD, SON & DAUGHTER--a modernized version of the typical family, each member indistinguishable.

Dad buried in his Kindle, Mom on her i Pad, Son on a portable video game, Daughter on her cell. The television sits spouting WHITE NOISE, the unacknowledged oracle.

ACT ONE

## CRISIS

INT. BAR - DAY

Sad, depressing PATRONS drinking way too early in the morning, watch the breaking news from the corner television.

FEMALE REPORTER

(on television)

Shoppers hoping to take advantage of Black Friday specials at a Chicago mall, instead, found themselves centered in the most recent incident of the ongoing domestic terrorism plague.

INT. SUBURBAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

A YOUNG BOY, still in his pajamas, watches cartoons on an enormous 4K television. The channel immediately changes to CNN. He turns to see his FATHER on the sofa, remote in hand.

YOUNG BOY

Dad!

FEMALE REPORTER (O.S.)

With six confirmed dead and dozens of others injured, this tragedy has not only taken the joy out of the busiest shopping day of the year, it's put the nation on high alert.

INT. CHEAP APARTMENT - DAY

An open laptop in this shit hole streams the news report.

WITNESS #1

We'd just picked up the last thing we came for, you know? And then it's like..Pow!

POUNDING on the floor...the horrible KNOCKING only a "doting" white trash mother with a broom handle can produce.

ANNOYING WOMAN (OS)

Gonna be late again! They don't pay you to be some tardy jagoff!

A shaggy MILLENNIAL wearing a yellow fast food uniform takes a hit off a joint, stares bleary eyed at the monitor.

WITNESS #2

Honestly, I can hardly speak right now. It was damn loud. That could've been me on one of those stretchers over there.

He takes another hit, puts the roach down on a soda can.

ANNOYING WOMAN (OS)

You better get on down here, boy! I ain't drivin' you again!

Eyes still on the monitor, he attaches a name tag: "DUNCAN".

Skeevy appears on screen. In the crowd behind him a male newspaper reporter, BOWIE (30's), scribbles on a notepad.

SKEEVY MAN

I was standing across from that big snowman, waiting for my wife, looking at the new cars. I saw him.

FEMALE REPORTER

Saw who, sir? What did you see?

He looks directly in the camera.

SKEEVY MAN

He was dark, maybe in his twenties. Took somethin' outta one of those handled shopping bags, you know the type. It was like a small gray box. Stuck it right under a snowman.

The scruffy eyewitness TWITCHES HIS NECK, blinks, continues to stare into the souls of the American viewer.

DUNCAN

Fuck me...

FEMALE REPORTER

A young man, possibly Arabic, placed the explosive?

SKEEVY MAN

Yes, ma'am. About ten seconds later all hell broke loose.

ANNOYING WOMAN (OS)  
 Yinz kids are all the same! Go  
 ahead and git fired, but don't  
 think you're gunna be bummin' my  
 smokes and scratch offs!

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Amongst the WAIL of ambulances and the large showing of law enforcement, the female reporter turns back to the camera.

FEMALE REPORTER  
 It appears a reliable source claims  
 there is reason to believe the  
 Jihadians are responsible and  
 taking credit for this blatant  
 attack against our country.

The greasy witness blends into the crowd, works his way to the outskirts. A hand grabs his shoulder.

MALE VOICE (OS)  
 Sir?

Skeevy stops, turns to find himself facing Bowie.

NEWSPAPER JOURNALIST  
 Peter Bowie, Chicago Tribune.

SKEEVY MAN  
 Uh, look, I told everything I know.

BOWIE  
 This will just take a minute,  
 promise. I can't imagine what--

SKEEVY MAN  
 Yeah, I have to go.

BOWIE  
 To find your wife?

SKEEVY MAN  
 Excuse me?

Bowie cocks his head. Something about that last line is odd. It's not the same voice...a different cadence...

BOWIE  
 You mentioned your wife. Was she  
 injured? Is she ok? Where is she?

Skeevy pushes through the crowd leaving Bowie intrigued.

INT. CAR - DAY

Speeding down the interstate in a late model, rusted sedan, Skeevy rips off his FAKE BEARD, pounds the steering wheel.

He tears the ratty baseball cap from his head, flings it and the false straggly wig into the back seat.

What remains is a rather ordinary GORDON SHEPHERD (40), pissed off and angry. He looks in the rear view mirror, speckles of very real blood across his cheek.

GORDON

You promised! You hearing me? Fuck!

He looks around the car, flips open and closed both visors, opens and slams the glove box.

GORDON (CONT.)

I know you hear me God dammit!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

His car whips in and around traffic. Gordon's on a mission.

EXT. SECLUDED AIRFIELD - DAY

FITZ (60), skin like leather with a spring in his step, descends the steps of a small PUDDLE JUMPER PLANE, the only aircraft on this dilapidated runway.

He shields his eyes, looks off in the distance, pulls a cigarette from his pocket, smiles as he lights up.

Gordon's car speeds up a dusty access road. The vehicle screeches to a stop next to the plane.

FITZ

Yer early.

GORDON

Did you talk to her?

Fitz shakes his head. Hands Gordon a grease stained handkerchief from his back pocket, then a cigarette. Gordon accepts both, wipes the blood splatter from his face.

INT. PROPELLER PLANE - IN FLIGHT - DAY

Smoking, Gordon sits in the passenger seat disgusted. In the back, behind him, a pile of shopping bags and wrapped gifts. Fitz flies the plane over the flat lands of Ohio.

Holding a hand to his headset, the pilot adjusts the mic.

FITZ  
 (into the mic)  
 Yep...nope, I would say about as  
 far away from fine as you can get.

GORDON  
 Patch me through!

FITZ  
 Yes ma'am. Over and out.

GORDON  
 Fitz?

FITZ  
 You don't wanna know Gordo. Just  
 keep doin' what yer doin'.

Gordon turns to his right, silently looks out the window.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

AMY SHEPHERD (38), plain yet pretty, a bit "world weary", enters with an overflowing plate of Thanksgiving leftovers. A brainless reality show, "WIN HER HEART", dealing with love, dating and typical bullshit waits for her.

The front door opens revealing Gordon struggling with the shopping bags last seen on the back seat of the airplane.

GORDON  
 Amy, a little help?

She places the plate of stuffing and turkey on a bookshelf.

AMY  
 Christ, what the hell took so long?

Gordon passes off as many bags to his wife as he can.

GORDON  
 Seriously? It's Black Friday.

Amy rifles through some of the bags.



AMY  
Did you get it?

GORDON  
Can you be more specific?

AMY  
Best Buy. The blu ray set?

This throws Gordon, he seriously has no idea.

GORDON  
Uh...I think so..

She pulls out the complete series of "My Little Pony". He wrestles his way out of his coat. Hangs it in the closet.

GORDON (CONT.)  
Where's Penny?

AMY  
Hiding in her room.

GORDON  
I thought she was getting better?

Amy shoves the bags into the bottom of the closet.

AMY  
The Chicago bombing.

GORDON  
Shit. Yeah. Tragic.

She turns, grabs her plate, heads towards the sofa.

AMY  
She thinks we're all going to die  
in some race war or something.

Gordon stands, shamed by these comments.

AMY (CONT.)  
Go tell her it's going to be ok,  
will you? I'm watching my show.

INT. PENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Every light in this princess pink, very girly bedroom is on. Gordon opens the door, peeks in.

PENNY (10), blond, angelic, lays on the fluffy bed, her back turned to the door, apparently asleep. SILENCE.

Gordon flips off the light switch.

PENNY  
(without turning)  
Daddy?

He enters, sits on the bed, strokes her long hair.

PENNY (CONT.)  
Why would he let that happen to all  
those people?

GORDON  
It's fine, baby, it wasn't here.  
Chicago's like hundreds, maybe even  
a thousand miles from here.

Penny turns, faces her father.

PENNY  
But why would he let that happen?

GORDON  
Well...sometimes God--

Frustrated, she leans up on her elbow.

PENNY  
Not him! Santa.

Gordon stares into her eyes, struggles for a response.

GORDON  
Santa's busy, especially at this  
time of year. And he doesn't get  
involved in politics ever.

PENNY  
That's it? He's just too busy?

GORDON  
We all have our job and, well,  
Santa makes sure all the good kids  
get presents. He's not interested  
in grown up stuff. There's no time.

PENNY  
Daddy...that's an easy answer. Like  
it's too short.

GORDON  
Baby, whoever tells the longest  
story is usually not telling the

GORDON  
truth. Honesty isn't that  
complicated. Do you understand?

She nods, moves over making room for her father. He settles down next to his daughter, closes his eyes, exhausted.

PENNY  
Turn the light back on, Daddy.

INT. GORDON & AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sporting bedhead and rubbing his eyes, Gordon enters the bedroom. Amy wide awake continues her show in this new room...see how convenient THEY make entertaining us?

He stands next to the screen, waits for her attention.

She aims the remote, pauses the show.

AMY  
What?

GORDON  
Want anything from downstairs?

AMY  
No.

Amy hits play on the remote. The onscreen drivel continues.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Shivering, Gordon blows cigarette smoke out the open window.

Sullen images of the day FLASH through his mind: the mall, the young girl, the angry mother, the torn off arm...his daughter sleeping safe and sound next to him.

He crushes the cigarette butt into an old coffee can, seals it tight with the plastic lid. Places it safely back in it's hiding space behind the washing machine.

He pulls the chain hanging from the ceiling. DARKNESS.

He pulls it again. ILLUMINATION returns. A spray bottle of fabric freshener on the dryer. He squirts more than enough to mask the stench of smoke. His own form of baptism.

INT. GORDON & AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The television extinguished. The only light appears from a charging cellphone on Amy's nightstand.

Naked, Gordon pulls back the covers, slithers into bed next to his "sleeping" wife. Gently, he moves her hair from her face, kisses her neck. She rolls away from him.

AMY  
(whispering)  
Enough...

GORDON  
Ames?

AMY  
Good night.

He stares at his wife. This is nothing new. In the dimness, his eyes catch a glimmer from across the room. He focuses.

A large cellophane bag full of CANDY CANES. Sweet red and white happiness trapped inside a clear plastic prison simply waiting to be devoured...when their time comes.

EXT. PUHALA ELECTRICAL SUPPLY - DAY

A brick warehouse in the industrial part of Pittsburgh. The CLACKING of a keyboard.

INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - DAY

The CLACKING continues from this cold, uninviting cinder block room. Stacks of cardboard boxes with various UPC numbers line the wall haphazardly.

Gordon scans through spreadsheets on his computer monitor. Very apparent RED negative numbers populate every form.

He rubs his hands over his face, the figures glare at him.

CHUCK PUHALA (68) bursts through the door wearing a leather jacket embroidered with 101st AIRBORNE DIVISION VIETNAM. An aging, grizzled hippie...but not the peace and love kind.

CHUCK  
Let's have it.

Gordon doesn't look up unsurprised by the visitor.

GORDON  
Just a few bumps, Chuck.

CHUCK  
Bullshit. Not what my little girl's  
tellin' me.

GORDON  
It was Thanksgiving. You know how  
Amy exaggerates after her third  
glass of wine.

Chuck pushes his way past boxes, maneuvers his way behind  
the desk. Gordon turns, attempts to block the monitor.

CHUCK  
Get the hell out of the way, boy.

GORDON  
Look, just hold on, ok?

On the screen, unseen by both men, the NUMBERS ON THE  
SPREADSHEET RAPIDLY CHANGE...

CHUCK  
That's your problem, Gordon. Always  
has been. Hold on. I'm tellin' you  
that's when shit goes down, when  
everyone is holding on.

Fucked, Gordon releases the chair to his father-in-law.

Chuck puts on his bifocals. Gordon blinks, twitches his  
neck, turns to the wall waiting for the shit storm.

CHUCK  
Hmm...Rizzo's always late, nothing  
new there...

GORDON  
Chuck, let me explain--

CHUCK  
Hathaway's kicking ass...

GORDON  
What?

Gordon turns, looks over Chuck shoulder.

The salty veteran looks up, stares straight ahead.

CHUCK

Would you kindly move two the fuck  
steps back? Damn' coffee breath on  
my neck's filling me with the urge  
to strangle ya.

Gordon obliges. Chuck proceeds with his review of the books.

CHUCK (CONT.)

Well fuck me running...all total  
I'm up thirty-two grand this year.

The monitor shows a POSITIVE BLACK NUMBER.

Shocked Gordon leans in again, inspects the figures.

Chuck removes his glasses, places his hands on the desk,  
wheels back the chair into Gordon's shins, stands.

CHUCK (CONT.)

Think I'm impressed?

Gordon, flummoxed, attempts to speak.

CHUCK (CONT.)

I ain't. When I was running this  
place I hit fifty grand every  
quarter. Gave Paula, Lord rest her  
soul, and our little girl  
everything they ever wanted.

GORDON

Chuck, I know--

CHUCK

Don't give me that shit about the  
economy, the recession, the damn  
Arabs killing customer confidence.

Chuck stares eye to eye, chest to chest with his son-in-law.

CHUCK (CONT.)

A man doesn't make excuses. He just  
makes it happen.

Unceremoniously he pushes his way past Gordon.

CHUCK (CONT.)

Tell that gran baby her Pap loves  
her. For Christ's sake clean this  
place up. And you stink to high  
heaven of smoke. She finds out  
she's gonna put your nuts in a jar.

Gordon settles into the seat. Chuck stops in the doorway.

CHUCK (CONT.)  
Payroll's down. Keep it that way.  
No bonuses either, but keep the  
fellas pacified.

INT. AMY'S CAR - DAY

Nursing scrubs visible beneath her unzipped coat, Amy drives through congested city traffic, speaks on her blue tooth.

AMY  
No, Nancy, no. I can't.

NANCY (OS)  
Sorry, hun, but with Mercy doing  
home health too we can't pass up  
new patients.

AMY  
I've still got to get over and  
clean out Debbie's wound vac--

Amy takes a sharp right turn, cuts off an SUV, receives a HONK for her trouble. She flips off the driver.

AMY  
Get over it!

NANCY (OS)  
Amy?

AMY  
Sorry, not you.

NANCY (OS)  
Ready for the address?

AMY  
I take this admission that means  
I'm not home to cook dinner. Gordon  
orders pizza. He orders pizza,  
Penny gets fat. In ten years I  
blame my husband for Penny being  
single because her dad promoted  
childhood obesity. I end up  
stabbing him in the eye with a  
fork. There's no way around it.

NANCY (OS)  
 It's just a quick intake. You won't  
 even be there ten minutes.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Gordon enters the beautiful cathedral. The side of the altar decorated with candy canes and a large Christmas Tree.

A PRETTY NUN (40'S) enters from the side vestibule. They make eye contact. He shifts his gaze to the confessional door. She shakes her head "no". He nods his "yes".

INT. CONFESSIONAL - DAY

DARKNESS. Gordon sits impatiently. The SOUND of the adjoining door opening and closing.

The partition slides open.

PRETTY NUN  
 I can get in a lot of trouble.

GORDON  
 I just...need to talk. Please?

PRETTY NUN  
 Confess to Father Kinder, not me.

GORDON  
 I can't. You're the only one that  
 knows any of this.

PRETTY NUN  
 What about dad?

GORDON  
 He knew some.

PRETTY NUN  
 There's more?

No response.

PRETTY NUN (CONT.)  
 Gordon?

GORDON  
 Chicago.



PRETTY NUN  
You were part of that?

He hangs his head.

PRETTY NUN (CONT.)  
You have to stop!

GORDON  
They've threatened Penny and Amy.

PRETTY NUN  
I love you, you know that, but  
there has to be a way out.

GORDON  
There's not, Maggie.

Our Pretty Nun has a name...Maggie.

MAGGIE  
Tell me what I can do?

GORDON  
Nothing. They probably know I'm  
sitting in this confessional right  
now. They know everything. Always.

MAGGIE  
You have to stop this killing--

GORDON  
I'm not killing anyone!

Maggie pulls away from the partition.

GORDON (CONT.)  
I'm sorry.

MAGGIE  
Don't tell me. Tell God.

She stands. The SOUND of the confessional door opening, then  
SLAMMING SHUT.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Penny sits at the far end of the table, alone, watching the  
POPULAR GIRLS gossip and cavort over pizza and applesauce.

From her book bag she retrieves THE BAG OF CANDY CANES seen  
earlier on Amy's dresser. She struggles to open the package.

Pulling too hard, they SCATTER across the table resulting in CHUCKLES from her fellow students.

PENNY

Anyone want a candy cane?

SILENCE.

A burly female CAFETERIA MONITOR makes eye contact with the leader of the girls, DENISE (10). The worker gives a silently understood sympathetic nod.

DENISE

I'll take one.

Sensing the green light of acceptance, Penny gathers her belongings, slides down to the populated end of the table.

She hands Denise a candy cane. Offers the bag to the other students who all ignore her.

DENISE (CONT.)

Thanks.

PENNY

You're welcome. My mom said these are the same candy canes Santa gives away when you tell him what you want for Christmas.

The girls SNICKER.

PENNY (CONT.)

Did you tell him what you want yet?

DENISE

I told my dad that I wanted the iPhone Seven, and he told me to remind my mom.

PENNY

So she can tell Santa?

DENISE

You do realize there is no Santa?

Penny cocks her head to the side, nervously smiles.

DENISE (CONT.)

All that stuff you get on Christmas? Your mom and dad go out and buy that.

PENNY

That's only for kids who weren't good all year. Their parents get them stuff because Santa won't.

SILENCE. Penny looks into the faces of each of the girls. They ERUPT IN LAUGHTER.

DENISE

Believe what you want, but your mom and dad are lying to you. Do you really think some old man goes out and buys all those toys--

PENNY

No. He builds them.

DENISE

Do you know anything about, like business and stores and stuff? You think this guy up in Alaska or wherever is making my i Phone out of wood? Think about it. You're not retarded, it's made up. All of it.

PENNY

That's a long story, and my daddy says who ever tells the longest story isn't telling the truth.

Penny stands, knocks her chair over. Gathers her belongings.

PENNY (CONT.)

Honesty isn't so hard!

INT. SMALL APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

An INFANT CRIES from a secondhand crib. In the corner, a laptop sits open on a weathered desk.

Smiling, SHADIQ (27), a very Americanized Arabic man, handsome in his soft demeanor, rushes in with a baby bottle. He wears only boxer shorts and a Pink Floyd T-shirt.

SHADIQ

Hey Khirti, daddy's coming!

He picks up, cradles the child, offers the bottle.

SHADIQ (CONT.)

There we go...you're a happy boy now...yes you are...

DING. Shadiq crosses to the computer open to a job posting website. A pop-up window shows the logo for Puhala Electrical Supply. An opening for "Service Writer".

He sits with baby Khirti on his lap, scrolls through the opening. A KEY TURNING A LOCK. The door opens, SLAMS.

SHADIQ (CONT.)

You're home early.

SANDY (25), blond, blue eyes, takes off her coat revealing a grease stained yellow fast food uniform. She rips the polo off before the red logo can be identified, races in now only in her bra and jeans.

SANDY

She cut my hours again. But I did get to bring a basket of old fries home so at least we have dinner.

She takes the child from her husband.

SANDY (CONT.)

(re: the laptop screen)

Anything good?

SHADIQ

Electrical Service Writer.

SANDY

How much?

SHADIQ

Too much for a service writer.

Khirti WHINES, the bottle already empty.

SANDY

Just apply, Shadiq. We can't keep going like this.

His eyes devour the screen with self-doubt.

INT. GORDON'S COMPANY TRUCK - DAY

Smoking a cigarette, Gordon pulls into the parking lot of his workplace. STATIC erupts from the radio. He looks at the panel...the radio is turned off...

GORDON

Now you call me?

A take no bullshit FEMALE VOICE manifests from the speakers.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)  
 You miss me. Think that was too  
 much, huh?

GORDON  
 Six dead Chelsea? Yeah, too much.

Ahh...now our mysterious disembodied voice has a name.

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
 I was referring to the extra  
 thirty-two thousand. And it's seven  
 dead as of this morning.

GORDON  
 You swore after Orlando--

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
 Did Fitz give you the message?  
 You're going to want to change your  
 tone here. You agreed to this.

GORDON  
 No, no I didn't agree to watching  
 you kill normal people!

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
 I didn't kill anyone. It's the  
 Jihadians, right?

Gordon lights another cigarette.

GORDON  
 I can't do this anymore.

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
 Don't have much of choice, do you?  
 Listen, onward and upward. You're  
 going to hire a new kid this week.

GORDON  
 I can't--

CHELSEA (O.S.)  
 (re: the cigarette)  
 And put that out. Don't want to  
 piss off the old lady.

He rolls down the window, throws the fresh smoke out.

CHELSEA (O.S.)(CONT.)  
 You've got another assignment soon.  
 An easy one. No planned collateral  
 damage, at least not human.

GORDON

It's getting too hard to come up with excuses. We agreed, twice a year. I can't keep this up.

CHELSEA (O.S.)

Gordon, cut the shit. You're doing more for your country than that gook-bone necklace father-in-law ever did and you know it. When I get the call you get the call.

The radio reverts to SILENCE.

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

EXT. SHADY NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Amy sits in her car as SEEDY CHARACTERS pace the sidewalk staring at her definitely out of place new model hybrid.

She exits with her medical bag, notices a CRACK ADDICT eyeballing her. She turns her back to him, takes her wedding ring off, slips it into her coat pocket.

Amy makes a quick "Sign Of The Cross", marches towards a shabby duplex.

INT. SHABBY APARTMENT DOORWAY - DAY

The door opens.

Standing in front of her, the new patient, PAUL (38), shirtless, ruggedly handsome in a white trash sort of way. A fresh appendectomy scar on his six-pack stomach.

PAUL  
You the nurse?

Amy nods nervously. Paul steps aside, waves her in.

INT. SHABBY LIVING ROOM - DAY

On the television, SENATOR WALKER (60'S) chats with a hardcore Bill O'Reily like "JOURNALIST".

Amy takes Paul's blood pressure.

JOURNALIST  
But aren't they just a bunch of bullies with no direction?

SENATOR WALKER  
Andrew, do you like comic books?

JOURNALIST  
As child, I read them all the time.

Amy scribbles a reading on her chart. Paul's eyes shift from the television to her left hand...no wedding ring, but a pale mark where one should be.

SENATOR WALKER

Imagine if, say, Doctor Doom, Lex Luthor, The Joker and, oh, I don't know, Darth Vader all got together and set their sites on our country.

PAUL

Whadda ya think about all this Jihadian stuff, Nurse Amy?

The television CHATTER continues.

AMY

Huh?

Amy puts her stethoscope on. Warms up the medal with her breath. Places it on Paul's chest causing him to smile.

PAUL

Think we're all in danger?

AMY

Stop talking, please. Just take long, deep breaths.

PAUL

Mind I call ya that?

She takes the stethoscope from her ears.

PAUL (CONT.)

Nurse Amy?

AMY

Sure. That's fine.

PAUL

What about Ms. Amy?

Amy scribbles more notes on her chart.

AMY

Whatever you like. Now, can you tell me what your primary recommended as follow up?

PAUL

Notice I didn't ask if I should call you Mrs. Amy?

She puts her pen down, looks up from her notes.



AMY

You can call me Mrs. Amy.

PAUL

Really? You're not recently divorced or going through a separation or somethin'?

He gestures with his chin towards the missing wedding ring.

AMY

Ok, Mr. Stephens, I have everything I need to officially make you a patient of East Penn Home Health.

She packs up her belongings.

PAUL

So you stoppin' by, what, every other day, is that it?

AMY

If I'm assigned as your nurse.

PAUL

Cool. Uh, what if I need help on those off days. That cut there, it seeps sometimes.

She quickly places gloves on, inspects the incision.

AMY

Yeah...they could have done a better job with this...don't miss a dose of your antibiotics.

PAUL

But how do I reach ya if, it like, splits open while I'm sleepin'?

AMY

Call 911.

PAUL

Rather call you.

INT. PUHALA ELECTRICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Gordon heads to the exit. DOUG (47), burly and blue collar as it gets, cuts him off.

DOUG  
Hey boss. Got a minute?

GORDON  
Honestly, no.

DOUG  
Look, just real quick, is there  
anyway I can get my bonus before  
Christmas? Missy's up my ass about  
the kids and if I don't compete,  
you know, it makes me look bad.

GORDON  
Yeah, Doug, things are tight---

DOUG  
I won't tell the guys you bent the  
rules, hand to Jesus.

Gordon reaches for the door handle. Doug puts his hand on  
the boss's shoulder.

DOUG (CONT.)  
I wouldn't ask if I didn't have to.

Doug removes his hand. His eyes SILENTLY plead with Gordon.

GORDON  
I'll sleep on it, that's the best I  
can say. No promises.

Doug opens the door, holds it open for his boss. Gordon  
gives him a strained smile, exits.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The counter top covered with cooking utensils, a cutting  
board overfilled with chopped vegetables, an open box of  
wheat pasta partially covers the small corner television.

Amy stirs a simmering brown concoction as a cooking show  
QUIETLY offers direction in the background.

Gordon slithers up from behind, wraps his arms around her.

AMY  
Were you smoking?

A subtle blink and twitch of his neck goes unnoticed.

GORDON

Talking in my office with Doug, he must've had at least four cigarettes in ten minutes. Now this smells good. What is it?

AMY

Gravy over noodles. Penny!

GORDON

Think maybe tonight?

He kisses Amy's neck. She moves the skillet off the burner.

AMY

Penny! Let's go!

GORDON

Hey. Ames. It's been awhile.

AMY

Sure. Can you set the table please?

Amy takes the pot of boiling pasta, dumps it in the waiting colander. Gordon SIGHS as he sets the table.

FOOD SHOW HOST (OS)

...when we return I'm going to show you how to get more taste, and less calories from your breaded tilapia!

Penny enters.

GORDON

Hi, baby. How was school.

PENNY

What are we eating?

GORDON

Your mom made beef gravy over noodles. Smells good, right?

TELEVISION NEWS ANCHOR (OS)

Coming up at six. Why retailers are counting on you to purchase big ticket items this holiday---

Gordon pours water for the family. Penny takes her seat. Amy pours the gravy over the noodles at the counter.

TELEVISION NEWS ANCHOR (OS)(CONT.)  
 ---The NFL is prepared to make  
 changes that will increase revenue,  
 but may impact player safety---

AMY  
 Did you wash your hands?

Penny nods as Amy loads noodles and gravy on all three plates. Gordon smiles, eager to dig into the meal.

TELEVISION NEWS ANCHOR (OS)(CONT.)  
 ---and, based on confirmed reports,  
 Secretary of Defense Colin Semler  
 increases the Jihadian threat level  
 to orange. More details after  
 Cooking With Wilma.

Gordon takes a huge bite of the chunky brown gravy...grimaces. Amy pretends not to notice.

GORDON  
 What is this?

AMY  
 Gravy and noodles.

GORDON  
 This isn't beef.

AMY  
 Never said it was. It's tempeh.

He drops his fork.

AMY (CONT.)  
 It's just like beef, but healthier.

Penny pushes the food away, afraid to take a bite.

GORDON  
 Jesus, Amy. Can't you just not try  
 to trick me? Not trick us?

He gestures to include his daughter.

SILENCE...broken by a fast food commercial on the tv.

COMMERCIAL SPOKESPERSON  
 Come on down to Wings 'N 'At for a  
 dozen wings--any flavor you like...

Amy stands. Collects Gordon's plate, Penny's plate then finally her plate. Throws everything into the sink. Father and daughter watch as she SILENTLY walks out of the room.

COMMERCIAL SPOKESPERSON  
 ...curly fries and an extra large  
 drink, all for nine ninety-nine!

INT. GORDON'S COMPANY TRUCK - NIGHT

Gordon places his order at the drive thru of Wings 'N 'At.

GORDON  
 A large Coke and...

He turns to Penny strapped into an unnecessary booster seat.

PENNY  
 Chocolate milk?

Gordon grins and nods.

GORDON  
 And a chocolate milk.

FAST FOOD EMPLOYEE (OS)  
 Twenty-four even. Second window.

He pulls forward, takes his turn in line.

PENNY  
 Are you and mommy Santa?

GORDON  
 What?

PENNY  
 Denise said he's not real, that  
 it's my parents.

GORDON  
 Wait, who's Denise?

PENNY  
 A girl that isn't good all year.

Gordon inches the vehicle up to the next position in line.

GORDON  
 Sounds like it.

PENNY

Well?

GORDON

What do you think?

PENNY

It doesn't matter.

GORDON

Honey, listen, sometimes it's hard  
to stick to what you believe in  
when other people...they just---

The car behind Gordon HONKS. He looks up, notices it's  
his turn to pull forward to the pick up window.

PENNY

You always tell the truth.

Gordon turns his head from his daughter, devastated by her  
comment. Rolls down the window.

FAST FOOD EMPLOYEE (OS)

Twenty-four dollars.

He hands over his debit card. The food passes to the truck.

FAST FOOD EMPLOYEE (OS)(CONT.)

Dude, I know you.

Through the window, holding the chocolate milk is Duncan,  
our pot-smoking burnout from earlier.

GORDON

Sorry?

DUNCAN

Man, I know you from somewhere.

GORDON

I come here for lunch sometimes--

The impatient car behind Gordon HONKS. Gordon reaches for  
the drink. Duncan withdraws it.

DUNCAN

No, man...like, you used to have a  
long beard, right?

GORDON

Got me confused with someone else.

Gordon unconsciously TWITCHES his neck, eyes blink. Duncan shakes his head in refusal now absolutely convinced.

DUNCAN  
No way...it's you...longer hair...

PENNY  
My daddy's never had a beard.

More HONKING.

GORDON  
That's right honey.

DUNCAN  
...you were on the news last week.

GORDON  
Can I have the milk, please?

DUNCAN  
Yeah, man...the bombing.

PENNY  
Daddy?

Gordon reaches through the window, clutches the chocolate milk that Duncan still won't release. HONKING.

GORDON  
Look, I told you...

He reads the burnout's name tag. Incessant HONKING.

GORDON (CONT.)  
...Duncan, you're mistaken.

Duncan lets go of the chocolate milk with a knowing smile. Gordon quickly drives away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy, curled on the couch, watches "WIN HER HEART". She doesn't flinch as the front door opens.

GORDON  
Penny, baby, can you throw these away and go get ready for bed?

He hands her the empty fast food bags.

GORDON (CONT.)  
I'll be up in a minute.

Penny enters the darkened kitchen. Immediately turns on the light before entering.

Gordon approaches the couch. Hovers over Amy.

GORDON (CONT.)  
I'm sorry.

Amy remains focused on the television.

AMY  
Ok.

Penny races out of the kitchen leaving the light on, scrambles to the top of the stairs. Sits, watching this unfolding spousal drama.

GORDON  
I just don't like it when you try to trick me into eating something.

AMY  
Fine.

GORDON  
Amy, I promise, if you're just honest with me about things it's different. When you have your mind set on beef and--

AMY  
I said ok. Honesty. Got it. We can eat whatever you want. It doesn't matter if Penny gets fat.

GORDON  
I'm going to get her down--

AMY  
Get her down? Jesus, she's ten.

GORDON  
Do we have to get into that tonight? I just wanted to...

Amy takes the remote, pauses the show, waiting to hear what is about to come out of her husband's mouth, eager to play her trump card. She looks at him standing behind the sofa.



GORDON (CONT.)  
...you know. Can you please not go  
to sleep until after she does?

AMY  
Sex?

Gordon's eyes sparkle. He nods.

AMY (CONT.)  
Want some honesty? I already took  
care of myself while you were out  
eating junk, and it was good, great  
in fact. Now I'm going to watch my  
show and go to bed.

She hits play on the remote, leaving Gordon dumbfounded.

AMY  
Make sure she brushes her teeth.

**END OF ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

INT. CHICAGO TRIBUNE NEWSROOM - DAY

The bullpen bustles in strict defiance against the online world waiting, listening to the death rattle of print.

Framed front pages from the past line the walls. Headlines of integrity include: "NIXON RESIGNS", "ASSASSIN KILLS KENNEDY" and "GIANT LEAP FOR MANKIND".

Bowie, our handsome and relatively young news reporter from earlier, studies a barrage of images laid across three computer monitors--Columbine, 9/11, Sandy Hook, The Colorado Movie Theater Shooting, Boston and Orlando.

Pinned to his wall, the famous "DEWEY DEFEATS TRUMAN" front page. A reminder to report only proven facts.

His forehead seems cut in two by the crease in his brow. Images of eyewitnesses from these events on his monitors. FRANKLIN (60'S), black, appears at the cubicle entrance.

He drags a screen shot of Gordon as Skeevy into the mix.

FRANKLIN

Peter?

BOWIE

(startled)

Huh? Oh...sorry.

FRANKLIN

The beard piece. Tonight.

BOWIE

Ok, sure.

Franklin enters the cubicle.

FRANKLIN

What's this?

BOWIE

Just follow up about the bombing.

They lock eyes. Franklin nods.

FRANKLIN  
I'll leave you to it then. I'm  
thinking ten...elevenish.

He leaves. Bowie picks up his desk phone. Dials. RINGING.

BOWIE  
Hey. I've got an assignment  
tonight....yes...again.

INT. PATIENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Amy cleans a mastectomy wound on DEBBIE (50's) chest.

AMY  
Healing nicely Debbie, that's good.

DEBBIE  
Still minus a boob.

AMY  
Yes, but you're cancer free.

DEBBIE  
Know what else good I have?

AMY  
What's that?

DEBBIE  
Edgar. He made me cry last night.  
You know what he said? He told me  
it didn't matter if I had two tits,  
three heads and no legs. He'd still  
love me...no matter what.

AMY  
That's beautiful. Sweet.

Amy pretends to look in her medical bag. A tear in her eye.

DEBBIE  
He loves me Amy, even looking like  
this. Do you know what that does  
for my soul?

The RING of a cell phone. Amy retrieves her phone from her  
smock pocket, looks at the display.

AMY  
Gotta take this, give me a second?

Amy answers.

AMY (CONT.)  
East Penn Home Health. This is Amy.

PAUL (O.S.)  
Ms. Amy, I'm gettin' like this  
racing heart beat.

AMY  
Mr. Stephens?

PAUL (O.S.)  
If you mean Paul, then yeah.

AMY  
Did you take your antibiotics?

PAUL (O.S.)  
Yep. 'Bout half hour later I'm all  
sweaty, chest poundin'.

AMY  
Call 911.

PAUL (O.S.)  
Neighbors 'round here don't  
appreciate it when police and  
ambulances show up, can't pay for  
personal service like that anyways.

She looks at her watch, paces.

AMY  
Take a cold shower, as cold as you  
can. Drink ice water, too. I'll be  
there in twenty minutes.

PAUL (O.S.)  
Cold shower?

AMY  
You're allergic to the antibiotic.  
You're running a fever and you  
don't even know it. Just get in the  
shower, and drink as much ice water  
as you can until I get there.

PAUL (O.S.)  
You a bossy little thing, ain'tcha?

AMY  
Mr. Stephens, please---

PAUL (O.S.)

Paul.

AMY

I'm on my way.

EXT. SHADY NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Amy POUNDS incessantly on the seedy apartment door.

No answer.

AMY

Shit!

She takes her cell. Dials. RINGING from inside.

No answer.

She looks at the door knob. Reaches for it. It turns...unlocked.

INT. SHABBY APARTMENT DOORWAY - DAY

Amy pokes her head in.

AMY

Mr. Stephens?

SILENCE. Hesitantly, she enters.

AMY

Hello?

GRUFF MALE (O.S.)

Hello, to you too, baby!

Through the open front door Amy turns to see a CRACKHEAD standing across the street grinning at her.

She slams the door closed. Turns the deadbolt.

PAUL (O.S.)

Told ya to call me Paul.

She jumps out of her skin as Paul, dripping wet, wearing only a towel around his waist cocks his head, smiles.

PAUL

Ok there Ms. Amy?

AMY  
Holy shit! I just peed myself.

Paul's smiles gets wider. She attempts to compose herself.

PAUL  
Pissed yerself?

AMY  
Never mind. Come here, sit down.

Amy places her hand on his bare, wet shoulder. Turns him, guides him into the messy living room.

She removes her hand from his shoulder, nervous, transfixed by the moisture on her fingers.

PAUL  
Feelin' better now.

AMY  
Um...good, great! Ok, uh, sit down.

He plops down on the sofa, his towel comes free, resting across his lap. Amy tries desperately to focus on the job at hand, much to Paul's amusement.

AMY (CONT.)  
Let's take your temperature--

PAUL  
Sounds nice.

Her face reddens. She places the trigger thermometer in his ear. They are dangerously close.

AMY  
Ninety-nine. Do you normally run a degree higher than average?

PAUL  
Only when sittin' naked as a jaybird near a pretty gal.

She turns back to her bag. Pulls out her stethoscope.

AMY  
Mr. Stephens--

PAUL  
You don't start callin' me Paul I'm gonna tell all yer nurse friends you wet yourself when you seen me in justa towel.

Amy places the scope on his chest.

AMY

My bladder's been weak since my daughter was born, you in a towel had nothing to do with it.

PAUL

Little girl, huh?

AMY

Shush. Deep breath.

Like a spider that has trapped a fly, Paul watches intently.

AMY (CONT.)

Are you dizzy? Short of breath?

PAUL

Only when--

AMY

Paul, this is serious!

PAUL

Nice ta hear my Christian name.

Amy fold up the scope, places it back in her bag.

AMY

You need a different antibiotic.

She heads for the door. Paul stands, cinches up his towel.

PAUL

So you're gonna call me then?

AMY

I'm going to call your doctor who will call your pharmacy.

Paul strolls towards the front door.

AMY (CONT.)

Your neighbor scared me. Not you.

He looks out the window.

PAUL

Omar? Shit, he's harmless. Thicker than a donkey's dangler, too.

Amy erupts in LAUGHTER. Yeah...he's so got her.

AMY  
Oh, no!

PAUL (CONT.)  
What?

AMY  
I peed myself again!

They both break out LAUGHING.

INT. WINGS 'N 'AT - DAY

Duncan works the drive through window.

His shift boss, EILEEN (28), too tattooed to work anywhere else, approaches.

DUNCAN  
Straw's in the bag, man.

EILEEN  
You're off Hoss.

DUNCAN  
Whoa, not me. Send Charlie home.  
Come on! I can't lose the hours.

EILEEN  
Sounds like you got a problem,  
then, cause I'm sending somebody  
home and it's you.

She turns to the kitchen.

EILEEN (CONT.)  
Sandy! You're on drive through.

From around the corner Sandy appears...Shadiq's blond wife.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Seated around the table, Gordon, Amy and Penny, all eat thick burgers and ketchup soaked french fries.

PENNY  
--and then Mr. Blackburn told Eric  
if he touched the Elf On The Shelf  
again she would lose all her magic!



AMY

And no magic means no toys, right?

Penny's smile fades. Gordon takes a huge bite of his burger.

GORDON

(chewing)

Just for Eric. Santa doesn't punish everyone because of one bad egg.

AMY

(re: the burger)

Like it?

GORDON

Please tell me this is beef...

Amy rises with her plate, leans over, kisses Gordon on the head. Penny's pleased by this affection.

AMY

Yes. It's beef.

GORDON

No, wait, sit down.

He pulls Amy onto his lap, holding one last bite of burger.

GORDON (CONT.)

I'm cleaning up tonight.

AMY

Really?

PENNY

And I'll help!

AMY

Well, then, maybe we should have burgers every night.

Amy bites the final piece of burger from Gordon's hand.

GORDON

Hey!

She leans in, WHISPERS.

AMY

I am so going to make that up to you later.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Duncan walks through the heavy snowfall, hands buried in his Steelers jacket. He stops, delicately retrieves a joint from his pocket, lights up.

A dark sedan pulls up. Like a child with his hand caught in the cookie jar, Duncan puts the joint behind his back.

The passenger side window rolls down.

MALE VOICE (OS)

Duncan?

Nervously, Duncan leans towards the window.

The lone occupant, a BLACK MALE (40's) with a friendly grin.

BLACK MALE

God damn, boy, you don't remember me? Andre! Mickey's brother.

DUNCAN

Mickey DeCarlo?

Pot smoke escapes Duncan's mouth.

BLACK MALE

DeCarlo? I look white to you? No, man! Mickey Miller. From Homestead!

DUNCAN

Mickey Miller...from high school? I didn't know he had a brother...

BLACK MALE

You looking at him. How you been?

DUNCAN

Uh, ok, I guess.

BLACK MALE

That a Wings 'N 'At shirt under the black and yellow? Damn' son, that's all you doing?

DUNCAN

I got a side business.

BLACK MALE

That side business selling that weed you got behind your back?

Duncan, hesitant, skeptical.

DUNCAN

How do I know you're not a cop?

The driver gestures with a GLOVED HAND requesting the joint. Duncan passes it over. The mystery man takes the longest hit off a joint Duncan has ever seen.

BLACK MALE

You sellin' *this*?

Speechless by this display, Duncan nods.

The driver exhales a car full of smoke.

BLACK MALE (CONT.)

Hell yeah! Get in.

INT. PENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gordon opens the door. The overhead light is on revealing Amy and Penny snuggling sound asleep.

He SIGHS, turns off the light, closes the door leaving mother and child to their slumber.

INT. SMALL APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Shadiq and Sandy make LOUD, passionate love.

A cellphone RINGS.

SANDY

Baby...the phone...

SHADIQ

Screw it.

He continues to thrust even harder.

SANDY

It's late...could...be...important.

Shadiq rolls off his wife, grabs the incessantly RINGING phone. Looks at the display.

SHADIQ

Unknown.

He reaches over, caresses Sandy's breast. She pushes his hand away softly.

SANDY  
Answer it.

He does.

SHADIQ  
Hello?...Speaking.

Sandy leans up, stares at her husband curiously.

SHADIQ (CONT.)  
Yes, yes, absolutely. Nine  
tomorrow...definitely, I have the  
address. Thank you so much!

He disconnects the call. Stares off in the distance.

SANDY  
Baby?

SHADIQ  
Why are they calling at midnight?

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Pittsburgh legend Donnie Iris & The Cruisers hit "Agnes"  
BLASTS from the radio of the parked car.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Duncan nods his head in time to the beat. The driver takes a  
hit off the joint, passes it to his passenger.

DONNIE IRIS (OS)  
*She didn't know he had his gun.*

BLACK MALE  
Man, I love that part! The bitch  
took Louie's gun and she kills that  
mother fucker! You know Agnes was a  
real person, right? Remember The  
Brass Rail in Pleasant Hills.

Looking more like two piss holes in the snow, Duncan's  
confused eyes squint at his new found friend.

DUNCAN  
(smiling)  
Brass Rail?

BLACK MALE

Shit, Duncan, come on! Right there at the cloverleaf, man. All us Homestead brothers could go there and get served as long as we had some hair on our nuts, remember?

Feigning understanding, Duncan nods.

DUNCAN

The Brass Rail.

BLACK MALE

Yeah, Agnes really was a waitress at a bar, just like Donnie says. And there was some dickhead named Louie used to run that place. Thought she was like his main bitch, didn't like her flirting or nothing with the customers.

He snatches the joint from Duncan, takes a drag.

BLACK MALE (CONT.)

Shot that asshole dead one night after last call with a Baby Glock.

DUNCAN

A what?

BLACK MALE

You ain't never held a gun?

Duncan looks at the driver, now ashamed.

DUNCAN

I'm not into violence and stuff.

BLACK MALE

Violence? Guns are about protection. Open the glove box man.

The driver points with his gloved finger to the dashboard. Duncan opens it to reveal a small revolver.

BLACK MALE (CONT.)

Go on. Pick it up. Safety's on.

Duncan reaches in, delicately picks up the gun.

BLACK MALE (CONT.)

Not like a girl, like a man! Put your finger on the trigger, like a video game. It ain't even loaded.

Duncan holds the gun properly, smiles.

DUNCAN  
Bad ass...it's so light, man.

BLACK MALE  
Ain't it though? Here, turn the  
barrel up like this, gonna show you  
how the clip goes in.

The driver adjust the barrel pointed right at Duncan's chin.  
Places his gloved finger over Duncan's on the trigger.

BLACK MALE (CONT.)  
You fuckin' stoners watch too much  
television, boy.

BANG.

Duncan's chin up to his head EXPLODES, a bloody mess of  
brain matter and skull.

The driver exits the car.

INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - DAY

Gordon enters surprised to see a young, fresh faced  
well-dressed Shadiq sitting across from his cluttered desk.

Shadiq stands, extends his hand.

SHADIQ  
Mr. Shepherd?

Confused, Gordon accepts, shakes this stranger's hand  
leaving the office door open.

GORDON  
And you are?

SHADIQ  
Shadiq Masih. I was told I could  
wait in here?

GORDON  
Wait for...

SHADIQ  
You. The interview. Your girl  
called me last night about the  
service writer position.

INT. PUHALA ELECTRICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE HALLWAY - LATER

Studying a clipboard, a lit cigarette dangling from his mouth, Doug passes the open door.

GORDON (O.S.)  
You're overqualified for anything  
here, Mr. Masih.

Doug stops, looks over to the open office door. Who the fuck is this brown skinned kid?

SHADIQ (O.S.)  
That's fine. I'm not. I mean, I am,  
but I really, really need the job.

INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - DAY

GORDON  
I'm afraid the position doesn't pay  
much. Didn't even realize I had an  
opening to be totally honest.

SHADIQ  
Your girl said you needed someone  
right away?

GORDON  
Of course she did...Mr. Masih--

SHADIQ  
Shadiq. Please.

GORDON  
You'd be better off looking for  
something else, anywhere else--

SHADIQ  
All due respect, Mr. Shepherd, the  
job pool and career path for  
someone of my ethnicity isn't  
exactly robust.

Gordon places his hands together, contemplates this fuck story he's found himself in.

INT. PUHALA ELECTRICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Out of sight, Doug stands to the right of the office.

INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - DAY

A SILENT pause, boss looks into the eager applicant's eyes.

SHADIQ

I have a son, he's eight months  
old. My wife, she works. She's  
American. It's not easy--

GORDON

Come back tomorrow. We'll get the  
paperwork filled out.

SHADIQ

Really?

Gordon struggles to nod in the affirmative.

INT. DINER - DAY

Sitting in a window booth, Gordon's greasy plate of steak  
and eggs goes untouched. Mesmerized, he watches an ELDERLY  
COUPLE dining across the room.

The OLD MAN nods as his wife TALKS out of Gordon's earshot.

From the window, Doug crosses the street towards the diner.

The old man suddenly nods off. Gordon watches in amazement  
as the wife SILENTLY places her utensils down, patiently  
waits for her spouse to awaken. He does.

She picks up her fork, the MUFFLED conversation continues.

Gordon smiles sadly. This type of love is what is missing  
from his marriage.

DOUG (OS)

What the hell're you thinking?

Shocked back to reality, Gordon looks up. Doug slides in  
across from his boss.

DOUG (CONT.)

You're able to get me the bonus  
early, then, being we got enough  
work to hire that camel jockey?



GORDON  
I run this business, Doug, not you.

DOUG  
(re: the steak and eggs)  
You going to eat that?

Gordon slowly pushes the plate towards his employee.

GORDON  
I'm still working on the numbers.

Doug cuts the steak with force and vigor, shovels meat and eggs into his mouth.

DOUG  
You should be working on hiring  
American. Crew's talking, boss. It  
ain't all good.

Gordon stands, grabs the check from the table, exits.

**END OF ACT THREE**

ACT FOUR

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CNN plays live footage of a hostage situation taking place in Tacoma, Washington.

CNN REPORTER

We're being told one gunman, currently unidentified, is holding up to twenty patrons hostage in the lounge of this Ramada Inn.

Gordon pulls up the channel select grid, scrolls down.

CNN REPORTER (CONT.)

Ma'am, ma'am, I understand you were exiting the bar as the assailant was entering?

A FEMALE WITNESS, (50), enters the frame wearing a long winter coat and too much makeup.

FEMALE WITNESS

I had just paid my bill--

This VOICE pulls Gordon from his menu surfing. His eyes squint in recognition.

FEMALE WITNESS (CONT.)

--and this kid, I don't know, maybe twenty, rushes right past me. He almost knocked me over! I see he's got like, a rifle or something, so I just kept walking, sister.

GORDON

Connie?

CNN REPORTER

What did he look like? Was he black? White?

FEMALE WITNESS

No, he wasn't white. He was dark, but not black--

CNN REPORTER

Did he look Middle Eastern?

## FEMALE WITNESS

I would say so, it was so fast...he  
had a beard, black...

INT. PENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy lays silently next to her daughter, gauges her breath to ensure she's sound asleep.

Satisfied, she slithers out of bed, tiptoes to the door.

THE RING OF A CELLPHONE. Penny stirs. Amy races back to bed, retrieves her phone from under the covers.

AMY

(whispering)

East Penn Home Health. This is Amy.

PAUL (OS)

Why you whisperin' Ms. Amy?

Amy turns to see Penny still asleep.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

She exits the room.

AMY

(whispering)

I'm not. Why are you calling me?

PAUL (OS)

Picked up my script earlier. Was wonderin' 'bout interactions.

She looks over the railing at Gordon engrossed with the tv.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy enters.

AMY

Can't you just Google it?

PAUL (OS)

Ain't as much fun as hearing you.

She paces nervously through the room.

AMY

You can't call me a hundred times a day. I have other patients--

PAUL (OS)

I know. And a husband, too.

Amy stops dead in her tracks.

PAUL (OS) (CONT.)

Had your ring on today but not yesterday. Why's that?

AMY

What? I don't know, I--

PAUL (OS)

Look, I get it, I do. You got a daughter and you don't want her to go through seein' mommy and daddy gettin' divorced. That's noble.

AMY

That's not any of your--

PAUL (OS)

But you know and I know you want more out of life than gettin' up, going to clean wounds, change bandages and come home ta cook for that guy who likely acts like you ain't there, am I right?

Amy opens the door, looks down the hall. Gordon's head visible on the couch in front of the blaring CNN report.

CNN REPORTER (OS)

I'm being told shots have been fired inside the hotel lounge--

AMY

You have to stop this. I'm your nurse, not your girlfriend or whatever the hell you think I am.

PAUL (OS)

Ok, but just remember, if ya need a friend, someone to really talk to and not havta put up with all this falseness you've convinced yourself is livin'...you know where I'm at.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Troubled, Gordon opens the refrigerator, snatches a beer. Opens it, guzzles nearly half of it.

AMY (OS)  
What are you doing?

He turns. Amy stands with her work cell in her hand. She follows his eyes, nervously places it in her back pocket.

GORDON  
Nothing.

AMY  
Since when do you drink my beer?

He holds out the bottle offering her the rest.

Amy exits. Gordon finishes the remaining beer in one swig.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Amy stands in the shower, hot water runs over her long hair.

IMAGES FLASH: Her first meeting with Paul. His wet, bare chest. Her hand touching his shoulder.

She rubs her breasts. Moves her hands down lower.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gordon stares at his cell resting on the coffee table.

CNN REPORTER  
We have confirmation the gunman is  
Abdul Sahzik, 26 from Portland.

GORDON  
(to his silent phone)  
I know you're listening! What the  
hell is she doing there?

He turns, nervously looks to the staircase.

CNN REPORTER  
--based on social media accounts,  
Sahzik has links to the Jihadians--

GORDON

Call me!

CNN REPORTER

--and has been the subject of federal scrutiny since last July's anthrax attack in Modesto.

GORDON

Shit!

The phone RINGS. Immediately he answers.

GORDON (CONT.)

She's alive. You lied to me!

CHELSEA (OS)

Shut up and listen. It's tonight.

GORDON

No, Chelsea, Connie!

CHELSEA (OS)

Start talking to Hathaway, right now! She's behind you.

Gordon pivots. Amy stands at the bottom of the staircase, hair wet, hands buried in the pockets of her bathrobe.

GORDON

Gene...I can be there tomorrow...

CHELSEA (OS)

Keep going.

GORDON

Ok, if I left right now I can be there by six, five maybe.

Amy shakes her head. Turns, stomps back up the stairs.

CHELSEA (OS)

She bought it. Rest area off eighty, Scotrun. Trucker garb.

GORDON

Gene. Listen to me. This is the last time. Are we clear?

CHELSEA (OS)

Get off the exit before. Blue semi, set up to run automatic. It'd be so much easier if you just fucking learned how to drive a stick.

The phone goes dead.

INT. PUHALA ELECTRICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Darkness. MOANS. GRUNTS.

In a far corner Doug fucks a CHUBBY GIRL (30) doggy style.

The side door opens up ahead. He watches as Gordon enters. Doug violently reaches around, puts his hands over the trashy girl's mouth.

DOUG  
(whispering)  
Shut the fuck up!

INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gordon turns on the light, pulls out a key, opens a large metal storage cabinet. He reaches behind boxes. Pulls out a makeup kit and mirror.

INT. PUHALA ELECTRICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

SILENTLY, on hands and knees Doug approaches, peers from behind boxes and shelving outside the open office door. He watches as Gordon applies facial prosthetics.

INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gordon opens a small box. Wooden blocks, each with a single letter of the alphabet. He retrieves an "F", pushes it down on an ink pad, presses the block on the pinkie of his right hand. Moves onto "E".

INT. PUHALA ELECTRICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The disheveled girl appears behind Doug fastening her bra.

CHUBBY GIRL  
(whispering)  
You're still paying.

DOUG  
(whispering)  
I swear to God I'll knock your  
teeth out and you'll be gumming  
cock for the rest of your life if  
you don't shut the hell up!

He looks up, watches as Gordon applies a shaggy gray beard.

DOUG (CONT.)  
(whispering)  
Jesus Fucking Murphy...

EXT. REST AREA - NIGHT

A trashy HOOKER (30's) exits the building, cell phone pressed to her ear.

A male hand holds a lit cigarette. The word "FEAR" tattooed across the knuckles. His other hand reaches up, scratches a scruffy gray beard. "NONE" printed along these knuckles.

HOOKER  
Baby, I know. Just keep Cartoon  
Network on and try to get some  
sleep. Mommy'll be home soon, 'kay?

She looks up. Smiles at a disguised Gordon leaning against a lamp post. He takes a drag from his smoke.

HOOKER (CONT.)  
Promise baby. Make sure the door's  
locked...I miss you, too!

The hooker shoves the phone into her oversize purse.

HOOKER (CONT.)  
Hey you mind if I get a light?

She digs in her purse, pulls out a pack of Virginia Slims, accidentally drops her cell on the sidewalk in the process.

Gordon CLICKS open a Zippo. She lights her smoke exhales, grins seductively at this chivalrous stranger.

The WAIL of a semi horn. Both look across the way as a masculine hand signals from the window of a tanker truck for our prostitute to hurry up.

HOOKER (CONT.)  
Thanks, honey.

The CLIP CLOP of high heels as she traipses to her client.

Gordon notices the cellphone laying on the cement. He bends over, picks it up.



GORDON

Excuse me.

She stops halfway to her destination, turns, sees Gordon presenting the missing cellphone.

HOOKER

Well ain't you a gentlemen?

She walks back towards Gordon, the semi to her back.

HOOKER (CONT.)

(giggling)

I'd forget my head if it wasn't--

BOOM. The tanker EXPLODES. Gordon, covered in the BLOOD, GUTS, HAIR AND BONE of what just seconds ago was a living, breathing PERSON.

FLAMES shoot high into the night sky. Gordon, still holding the phone, aghast. Sleepy TRUCK DRIVERS exit their rigs to watch the spectacle.

Confused, scared, Gordon runs towards his blue semi.

INT. SEMI-TRUCK - NIGHT

The door opens. Gordon, shaking, still holding the cellphone in his left hand, covered in the remains of the hooker, flings himself into the driver's seat.

He grabs a rag from the dashboard, frantically, futilely, attempts to cleanse himself of the bone, blood and tissue.

MALE VOICE (OS)

Leave it.

The Black Male who killed Duncan sits nonplussed in the back seat, watches the flames of the tanker truck.

BLACK MALE

It'll play great on the news. We'll let 'em know not to blur it out.

Secretively, Gordon slides the hooker's cellphone into his back pocket, the intruder's eyes still watch the flames.

BLACK MALE (CONT.)

What you reaching for man?

GORDON  
 (stuttering)  
 The keys.

He turns to Gordon, looks him dead in the eye.

BLACK MALE  
 What for? You ain't going anywhere.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The counter television tuned to "The Today Show". MATT LOWRY discusses the proper way to decorate a Christmas Tree with some phony plastic FEMALE EXPERT.

MATT LOWRY (OS)  
 So you really can keep your tree a  
 vibrant green using filtered water?

Amy, dressed in her nursing scrubs, snatches a half eaten bowl of Cheerios from Penny.

AMY  
 You got your back pack?

PENNY  
 Daddy said he was taking me today.

AMY  
 Daddy says a lot of things. You're  
 going to be late.

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE picks up with more "real news" on the television. Amy throws her stethoscope into her nursing bag.

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE  
 Let's return to New Jersey where we  
 have an update on that fuel tanker  
 explosion that took place just a  
 few hours ago, and it appears the  
 news is very unsettling. Joey Marks  
 from our local affiliate in Wayne  
 joins us. Joey what's the latest.

Penny stands, gathers her belongings.

AMY (OS)  
 I'm starting the car, let's go!

Penny opens the refrigerator, snatches a Snak Pak Pudding, hides it in her back pack.

INT. POSH HOTEL - DAY

Bowie, our inquisitive Chicago Tribune reporter orally services Franklin. The news report continues.

JOEY MARKS (OS)

It looks as if the Jihadians may again be responsible for this latest attack. I have an eye witness here, Zed Mallick. Can you tell us what you saw?

GORDON (OS)

Yeah, I was on my way to Paramus, pulled over, you know, nature calls and all that--

That VOICE...Bowie stops the blow job, attempts to turn to the television screen. Franklin forces him back down.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

That VOICE...Penny turns, stares at the television...a long haired trucker covered in blood.

GORDON

Anyways, come back out to get in the rig and I sees these two young fellas looking like they wuz up to no good, you know? It's not a long story or anything. Honesty ain't complicated, you understand.

She cocks her head, squints at the image on the screen. A flash of realization crosses her face.

CLICK.

Amy shuts off the television.

AMY

Penny! Let's go!

Penny remains for an instant. Turns to her exiting mother.

PENNY

I'm coming!

FADE OUT

**END OF EPISODE**