

ACCELERANT

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OVER BLACK:

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

I want you to close your eyes-- Go on, close them... Now, I want you to imagine something very specific for me: picture a single, solitary pin-prick of light within a void of utter nothingness. Thick, black emptiness. But this pin-prick of light, it's becoming larger, brighter, stronger. It's calling you, drawing you near...

A single PINPRICK of light begins growing larger until...

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE -- DAY

SHAFTS OF SUNLIGHT cut through window blinds, illuminating the face of **SAMANTHA** JENSEN-- three decades young and, with the way light frames her face, it's as if she's halfway hidden in shadow, a cave dweller tempting the sun, Plato's allegory come to life for the briefest of moments as...

SAMANTHA

This image, this was the sight seen by a lookout aboard a battleship astray at sea... The lookout, he called to his Captain: "Light bearing starboard." And his Captain replied: "Is it steady or moving astern?" The lookout returned his gaze to the sea, answering: "It is steady, Captain." Which, of course, meant they were on a collision course with another ship...

REVERSE ANGLE to reveal: a common WHITE COLLAR WORKER, we'll call him EDWARD -- 50s, a little overweight and a little confused-- poor posture perhaps from the Atlas-like weight on his shoulders.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

And so the Captain called to his Signalman, "Signal that ship: We are on a collision course. Advise you change course 20 degrees." But back came a signal: "Advisable for you to change course 20 degrees."

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

(then)

The Captain huffed and retorted:
 "Send: I am a Captain, change course
 20 degrees." "And I'm a seaman second
 class," came the reply. "You had
 better change course."

REVERSE ANGLE on A DIFFERENT WORKER occupying the same seat
 Edward was-- he nods, kinda understands where she's going...

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

By this time, the Captain was
 furious. He barked, "Send: I am a
 battleship. Change your course 20
 degrees."

A THIRD WORKER, sitting in the proverbial hot seat now,
 gulps-- dreading the conclusion of her story.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

The Captain awaited a reply, his crew
 surrounding him. Moments passed,
 their collective breath held, but
 back it came: "You may be a
 battleship... but I am a lighthouse."
 (after a moment)
 ... and so the Captain, well-- he
 changed his course.

BACK TO EDWARD: nodding, awkward silence, eyes shifting.

EDWARD

...I- I'm not sure I understand.

SAMANTHA

It's an allegory, Edward. In our
 lives, we will all be met with that
 pinprick of light-- that immovable
 object. We will all find ourselves
 there, and when we do... we must be
 prepared to change course-- to right
 the ship, so to speak...

Ed's eyes betraying some kernel of doubt, a long-held fear.

EDWARD

...so that's it, huh?

She lifts an empty STORAGE FILE BOX to the table.

EDWARD (cont'd)

...how do you even sleep at night?

SAMANTHA
 (not skipping a beat)
 Two Ambiens and a glass of wine
 usually does the trick.

Off Samantha, blinking matter-of-factly:

MATCH-CUT TO:

LATER

And Sam gathers her belongings, night encroaching through windows as she moves into a...

HALLWAY

to find the entire floor empty-- a wasteland of her creation as she passes the turmoil she's caused: A FIST HOLE in dry wall, an entire box of BELONGINGS strewn like vomit, PAPERS & RESUMES shredded, littering the floor like volcanic ash.

But Sam just bee-lines for an elevator, never batting an eye.

INT. AIRPLANE - FLYING -- NIGHT

Sam watches New York City slowly fade away from her window seat, dazed by a week of layoffs, studying her own REFLECTION as she holds a half-finished SUDOKU sheet...

STEWARDESS (O.S.)
 I see you.

Sam blinks-- *did she really just hear that?*

STEWARDESS (O.S.) (cont'd)
 I see you...

She turns to find a YOUNG STEWARDESS leaning over a sleeping PASSENGER (40s) as she repeats...

STEWARDESS
 Ice for you? You asked for ice, yes?

SAMANTHA
 Yes-- Oh, I'm sorry. Thank you.

She takes the glass of ice, pouring two fingers of SCOTCH from tiny travel bottles, then topping it off with Sprite before...

PASSENGER

Long day, huh?

SAMANTHA

Long week-- month-- make that *life*.

PASSENGER

I hear you. Mergers and acquisitions. Real world Wolf of Wall Street type a' shit. Either drives you off a roof or into a pile of coke.

SAMANTHA

Wow, talk about difficult choices.

PASSENGER

Not that difficult...
(sharing a laugh)
Yourself? Whudduyou do?

She sips her scotch, lets it burn, savoring the immediate dopamine rush, melting a bit into her seat as...

SAMANTHA

Corporate Downsizing. Real world Wolf of the Board Room type a' shit.

PASSENGER

"Ya' fired"...

Sam taps her nose, points in his direction-- "you got it."

PASSENGER (cont'd)

Gotta be hard, right? Breaking up someone's life like that-- I can't even imagine.

Sam pauses, a nerve exposed.

SAMANTHA

"Either drives you off a roof or into a pile of coke."

They "cheers," Sam tossing back the remainder of her drink.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

A job like any other. Somebody's gotta be axed and somebody's gotta do the axing. Pays well, I get to travel, and I get to be that person that ushers someone into a new stage of their life. Change is always hard, but it doesn't have to be a bad thing...

(then)

Sometimes, you have to put a part of your life behind you...

INT. BALTIMORE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- DAY

Samantha traversing the terrain of terminals as TRAVELERS pass by like snakes of flesh-- blurred lines that merge together like turbulent rivers rushing past.

SAMANTHA (POST-LAP)

...just never look back, keep moving forward-- like blinders-- always keep your blinders on.

EXT. LONG TERM AIRPORT PARKING -- DAY

Sam tugging her rolling BAGGAGE as we MATCH-CUT TO...

CLOSE ON: A BOX

shaking ever so slightly, someone WHISTLING as we...

PULL BACK a bit to reveal it's being carried on a DOLLY...

FURTHER BACK as we notice we're moving down a walkway and...

PANNING DOWN as the box is laid upon a front stoop and...

RACK-FOCUS to show a MESSENGER walking away and turning the corner out of sight as we study the ADDRESS on the box-top:
Samantha Jensen, 2844 Pinwheel Dr...

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- DAY

Messenger climbs inside, his face obscured by a low-slung cap, only his torso in sight as he slides a LAPTOP onto his knees and types a command as...

EXT. BALTIMORE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- DAY

Sam speed-walks through a vast parking lot as she speaks on her CELL:

SAMANTHA

Look: HR wanted 12 mid-level employees laid off-- that's what we did. Not 11, not 13... 12. I just got *home* and I'm not even entertaining the thought of work til tomorrow-- adios...

-CLICK- as she pockets her phone, finds her Mercedes GLC 300 and heaves her luggage in the rear-- sliding a crooked LOAD FLOOR COVER back in place as her cell rings-- "JACE"

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

...hey, babe-- just landed-- hoping to come straight home. I could use, oh, twelve hours of sleep-- is that right?

(smirks)

I could use twelve hours of *that* too.

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Sam enters, hooks her cell to a USB charger-- presses SPEAKER as she lets down her hair, kicks off her heels, tosses her blazer on the passenger seat...

SAMANTHA

Tell CeeCee I'll read her a story tonight...

JACE (V.O.)

Be careful what you wish for-- she's hooked on Alice in Wonderland right now...

SAMANTHA

What happened to the... the Big Red Dog-- what's his name?

JACE (V.O.)

Clifford...

SAMANTHA

That's the one.

JACE (V.O.)

We went through some old boxes in the attic, she picked it out-- said Alice reminds her of mommy...

SAMANTHA

Oh god, I hope not--

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

Mommyyyyyy!

SAMANTHA

CeeCee, hey baby, I just landed and I'm on my way home...

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

Daddy says you work too much.

She breathes deep, rolls her neck, releasing & relaxing in comfortable isolation -- insulated from the world behind DARK TINTED windows...

SAMANTHA

Daddy's right...

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

You're coming home? We're making mashed potty-toes!

SAMANTHA

That doesn't sound very appetizing.

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

Toe nails and all...

SAMANTHA

Mmmmm.

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

You'll read me a story?

SAMANTHA

Alice in Wonderland, right?

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

She goes down the rabbit hole and she dies...

SAMANTHA

Honey, she doesn't die. She just--

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

Splat. Dead.

Sam pauses-- tad disturbed at her daughter's sense of humor.

SAMANTHA

I'll read it while we cuddle, deal?

CEE-CEE (V.O.)

Deal. Back to mashing toes. *Bye!*

SAMANTHA

Love you, my Ceehorse...

-*CLICK*- as CeeCee hangs up, abruptly leaving Sam in silence.

Finally, she reaches below the steering wheel-- hand emerges with a BREATHALYZER connected to her steering column-- an ignition interlock system.

It's light blinks a steady, BLOOD RED.

She SIGHS deeply, the remembrance of some long-held burden, and then blows: *all clear* -- light turning a SOOTHING BLUE.

Her ignition *starts* just as her doors auto-lock and, for a moment... she's concerned-- *did they always do that?*

She shakes her head as if shaking off rust, rubs her red-rimmed eyes as her cell rings again: "*Unknown Caller*"

She answers.

SAM

Jace?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Mrs. Jensen...

SAM

Who is this?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Your guardian angel-- or am I the devil on your shoulder? A little of both perhaps...

He pauses, FAINT LAUGHTER audible as Sam checks her phone display again: "*Unknown Caller*"

SAM

Sorry, I think you have the wrong number--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

I have the exact number I want...
Samantha Jensen: Born 7/11/1983, last
known address 2844 Pinwheel Drive,
place of employment: Pinnacle Inc,
Corporate Downsizing Department...

(then)

Tell me, Sam: do you enjoy your job?

Sam tenses, breath quickening, hand trembling until she hangs up, tosses her phone on the passenger seat.

But again, it rings: "*Unknown Caller*"

She presses decline, closes her eyes, finding her center, suppressing bundled nerves until...

VROOM-VROOOOM-VRRRRROOOOM! as her engine ROARS like she's challenging another driver to a race at a stoplight.

Except for one thing: she's not touching the pedals.

Abruptly, her ON-STAR SERVICE chimes-- that familiar VOICE tapping *directly* into her SPEAKER SYSTEM:

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Still attempting to fix your problems through avoidance, I see. If you just ignore it for long enough, it will fix itself... isn't that right?

(then)

Do not ignore me again. Say yes if you understand...

Sam can't even breathe.

VROOM-VROOOOOOOOM! as her engine growls.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Say yes if you understand, Samantha.

Sam pulls at her door HANDLE-- *locked.*

SAM

Listen, if you're some disgruntled employee my company fired, you have the wrong person--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Do I? Perhaps I made a mistake-- a
grave error...

Sam flicks her window LEVERS-- *won't budge*.

SAM
I deliver bad news but I don't make
it-- don't shoot the messenger...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Shoot the sheriff, not the deputy--
is that it?

SAM
Right, exactly...

Sam presses her sunroof CONTROLS-- *no response*. LAUGHTER
again, Sam confused as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Listen closely, Samantha: I have
assumed control of your vehicle's
operation. I control whether you
exit. I control whether you
accelerate. I control whether you
survive...

Sam attempts to wave down a passing STRANGER-- *no dice*.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Now, then... tell me: Do you *enjoy*
your job?

No response, so... *VROOM-VROOOOOOOOOOOOM!*

UNKNOWN CALLER
Do you?!

SAM
I- I don't know... I...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
You what...

SAM
(defiant)
...yes, I do.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Good, it's important to enjoy what
 you do. We only have so much time--
 life is short, as they say...
 (then)
 Let's take a ride, shall we?

Her Mercedes *reverses* violently, Sam unaware of what's
 behind her-- could be another car-- could be a person-- a
 fucking stroller pushed by a granny for all she knows but...

SUV *stops* on a dime and *peels* out, barreling for the exit as
 the sun dips below the horizon-- Sam reaching for her seat
 belt like her life depends on it...

Because it does.

EXT. BALTIMORE HIGHWAY -- SUNSET

Sam's Mercedes *weaves* through traffic-- speeding at a clip
 of 80 MPH as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 ...how much do you make, Samantha?

INT. MERCEDES (MOVING) -- SUNSET

Sam white-knuckle grips her steering wheel, slick leather
slipping through her fingers like hour-glass sand, powerless
 as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 This is a nice vehicle, you've just
 returned from a week-long trip to New
 York, your home is in an aged
 community where little boys and girls
 can roam free, their parents
 unworried about who may run them over
 or run off with them...
 (then)
 You live a nice life, Sam. You have
 your job to thank for that-- your
employer. So, how much do you make?

SAM
 I-- I don't know-- slow down!

VROOOOOOOOM! as the Mercedes ACCELERATES to 95, 100 MPH as
 Sam SLAMS the brake pedal helplessly...

SAM (cont'd)
One-hundred fifty!

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
...that's it?

SAM
Two with commissions & bonuses--
please slow down, you're gonna get
someone *killed!*

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
How ironic...

She pauses for the briefest of moments, lost in thought--
something long-held and buried threatening to resurface but,
just like that: her blinders are back in place.

SAM
Where are we-- Where are we going?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I ask the questions. And please,
don't pretend like you don't know...
(then)

When you're in town, you drive this
drive every morning and back every
evening. Sometimes twice so that you
can let little Brownie out to bake
his own brownies in your immaculately
manicured lawn while you stare
absently at the life you know you
don't deserve as you sneak a glass of
wine at noon...

Off Samantha, terrified -- as if her own conscience has
grown a voice -- suppressing her sobs as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
I know you, Sam. Better than you know
yourself, perhaps. But today, that is
going to change...

Sam finds her cell, conspicuously dialing a number-- ON
SCREEN: 911

SAMANTHA
This is insane-- stop this. What do
you want-- you want money? You lost
your job and you're hurting for cash,
so you're *taking me hostage*, that it?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Very perceptive of you. A veritable
 Sigmund Freud, ladies and gentlemen--

Her cell reads: "*connected*"

SAMANTHA
 Want me to float you until you find
 something else? I'll even help you
 find a new position-- an upgrade-- a
promotion...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 From desk jockey to CEO--

SAMANTHA
 Something like that...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 You would do that?

SAMANTHA
 I can help you, if you just let me.

A moment as it seems he's really considering the offer --
 911 still connected -- silence until, finally, he LAUGHS
 heartily...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Come, now, Samantha... Is that what
 you think this is? A cry for help?
 Some sad attempt at exploiting you--
 at blackmailing you?

SAMANTHA
 Why else would you *hack into my*
vehicle and drive me *north on I-75*
 then? *Why won't you let me out?*

No response...

Sam glances to her cell: still "connected"...

She ups the volume a bit, HEARING: An operator? Someone
 speaking-- singing? Volume higher until...

ELEVATOR MUSIC, something tauntingly upbeat until someone
 speaks again:

CAR MANUFACTURER (V.O.)
 "Please stay on the line for our next
 available representative.

(MORE)

CAR MANUFACTURER (V.O.) (cont'd)
*We apologize for the wait, and for
 the car trouble..."*

Back to that elevator music until *-CLICK-* line goes dead.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 They really care for their customers,
 don't they? Have to respect their
 dedication...

Sam begins breathing harder, quicker-- hyperventilating...

SAMANTHA
 What-- Why are you-- Just tell me
 what you want, okay? Whatever it is,
 we can work something out...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 I want you to reach into your glove
 compartment...

She looks to the glove-box, pausing...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Go on, now...

She does, finding a fifth of CHEAP RUSSIAN VODKA.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Bottoms up.

SAM
 I don't-- I'm sober. I don't drink.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Only the occasional *bottle* of wine
 with friends? A rare blip on the
 radar? Another addition to the long
 list of Samantha Jensen's terrible
 choices that accrue no consequences.

SAM
 Who are you-- How do you know me?

A pause until he responds, almost apathetic:

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Drink up, Samantha. You'll need the
 liquid courage.

EXT. SAM'S SUV -- DAY

Mercedes takes a sharp turn off a highway-- heading for a business district in the distance as...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Sam eyes the buildings & tenements with recognition...

SAMANTHA

This is insane-- Tell me why you're doing this...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

You've fired hundreds of people from their jobs-- dozens upon dozens of wives and husbands and sons and daughters-- affecting their lives in unknown and irrevocable ways... like ripples that turn into tidal waves...

(then)

Now, you're going to fire yourself.

EXT. PINNACLE INC. BUILDING -- DAY

We pull into the PARKING LOT of an office building, cold and common exterior-- *PINNACLE INC* emblazoned above an entrance.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

It would have been someone else, if it weren't me. I didn't fire them, I just... delivered the news.

In the distance, *notice* a dirty white MESSENGER VAN as we...

CUT TO:

A STEAMING STYROFOAM CUP OF COFFEE

in a cup holder as a pair of hands fondle a STRING OF ROSARY BEADS-- fingernails encrusted with dirt & grime.

NOTICE the distinctive ANCHOR CHARM attached.

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- DAY

Messenger holds a HANDKERCHIEF over his mouth & nose, his eyes squinting as he uses a HAMMER to *smash* a single ROSARY BEAD to dust upon his middle console.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

You wouldn't punish a reporter for relaying that a hurricane is coming, would you? No, you blame the *storm* for the damage, not the weatherman...

A dirty rag *scrapes* the debris into the coffee.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

People blame the weatherman everyday.

Dirty fingers replace the CAP to the coffee cup.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

They blame others for their problems to alleviate the burden of their responsibility...

HANDKERCHIEF lowers to reveal his face but...

A SHAFT OF LIGHT slices through the driver window-- glass refracting and distorting like we're staring into the SUN itself as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Never forget: people need someone to blame. They need a scapegoat-- a whipping boy-- a fall guy...

He places the string of beads around his neck and places the the CUP in a DRINK CARRIER amongst three others and *exits*...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Sam breathing deeply, overwhelmed as...

SAMANTHA

Please, just let me outta here.

AHEAD: Messenger throws on a SUIT JACKET, wrenches a MESSENGER BAG on his shoulder-- appears decidedly more *professional*...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Your wish is my command: I'm going to
 unlock your door and you're going to
 walk directly to your boss' office...
 where you're going to quit your job--

SAM
 I-- I can't, I won't...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Need some extra motivation, perhaps?

He moves into the building-- DRINK CARRIER at his side as...

INSERT: Messenger's dirty fingers on his iPhone-- texting a
 video to "*Mrs. Jensen*"

Sam's CELL chirps: a new text message... a VIDEO RECORDING
 of a nice home in a nice neighborhood.

SAM
 That's my-- How did you-- That's my
 house...

She's frozen as VIDEO ZOOMS IN and now we can see that **LARGE
 BOX** on the front stoop upon a WELCOME MAT that reads *The
 Jensens...*

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Special delivery for Samantha Jensen:
an explosive rigged to blow upon
opening. If you don't do as I say--
 if you don't follow my exact
 instructions, I will ring your
 doorbell. I wonder who will answer,
 who will open that package...?
 (then)
 Perhaps your husband, Jason. Or maybe
 your daughter, CeeCee...

Sam cries silently, helplessly... hopelessly as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Now, then: it drinks the vodka as its
 told... or else a tragedy unfolds.

She eyes the vodka, takes a deep breath, cracks the top and
 guzzles a shot-- gritting her teeth as the cheap alcohol
 burns her esophagus.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Good girl. Now, I want you to reach
 under your seat...

Sam does, shakily-- finding a WATCH BOX-- pulling it open to
 reveal a little SMILEY FACE PIN with doll-like EYES.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 You're going to wear that for me.
 Place it on your chest-- Hurry up,
 now, we're short on time...

She breathes in, calming herself, sweat trickling down her
 brow-- accidentally POKING her skin with the pin-- drawing
 BLOOD before she affixes it her shirt...

OFF that eerie SMILING FACE WITH DEAD EYES...

SLOW FADE TO:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

Messenger moving through a lobby-- his face momentarily
eclipsed by the AFTER-IMAGE of the smiley face pin until...

WE FOLLOW Messenger as he turns down a hallway-- past
 cubicles and CO-WORKERS-- carefully carrying that DRINK
 CARRIER until he turns another corner and...

He enters a MEN'S RESTROOM, leaving us outside.

We HEAR the *click-clacks* of men's dress shoes approaching
 until an ASSISTANT nears the restroom-- also carrying four
 coffees in a DRINK CARRIER until...

Messenger strikes through the restroom door-- pulling
 assistant inside like a sand spider on prey as we HEAR a
 short scuffle and...

Messenger emerges with his coffees, a small STAIN on his
 pants (blood or coffee?) and a new NAME-TAG that reads *JEFF*.

INT. MAIN OFFICES -- CONTINUOUS

He moves into an open-concept floor with a vast array of
 CUBICLES and the incessant drum of WORKERS on headsets,
 keyboards *clacking*, copiers & shredders & fax machines
whirring as...

Messenger drops the coffees on a desk and walks away, moving down a far hallway and out of sight before...

SAMANTHA

rounds a corner, nerves barely hidden-- breathing hard-- disheveled and desperate-- attempting to calm her nerves with a breathing exercise until...

INT. LARGE OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Sam *enters*, knocking lightly before she takes a seat...

VOICE (O.S.)

Sam? Thought you were taking the day off to be with your family...

REVERSE ANGLE to reveal: **DEAN** -- he's mid-50s, steel fox.

SAMANTHA

I-- I was, I'm... here now.

DEAN

You okay? You look... *tired*.

KNOCK-KNOCK as a SECRETARY (20s) enters with those coffees.

SECRETARY

Sorry, Dean? Your coffee's here. I guess Jeffery just... left them? He's so *weird*.

DEAN

That he is. Thank you, Mona...

(to Sam)

Would you like some coffee-- some tea-- some water?

SAMANTHA

I'm fine, thank you.

Secretary leaves them, closes the door behind her.

Off Dean eyeing Sam, her disheveled state, noticing that PIN, her BLUETOOTH earpiece...

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Messenger watching the PIN VIDEO FEED on a laptop, Dean's face in the shot, sipping that COFFEE...

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>DEAN (ON SCREEN) You sure? Listen, corporate called about New York-- they wanted 13 layoffs, they had to fire the last guy themselves--</p> | <p>UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) Do it, Samantha. Do it or you risk your family. Do it for them-- to protect them-- to prevent any further harm to yourselves or others--</p> |
|--|---|

SAMANTHA (O.S.)
--I quit.

INT. LARGE OFFICE -- SIMULTANEOUS

Dean taken aback-- literally leaning back in his chair.

DEAN
Sam, it's not that big a deal--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Bravo, Samantha. *Bravo...*

SAMANTHA
I'm sorry, Dean. Thank you for the opportunity. Truly. It's been a pleasure working with you but...

Sam discretely takes a NOTEPAD & PEN from Dean's desk, leaning her chest away from the view, writing as she continues speaking:

SAMANTHA (cont'd)
I just-- I need to move on. I need to do something more... *rewarding*.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Well put...

DEAN
Rewarding? I've taken good care of you, haven't I? Is it a raise you want-- you got it-- name it...

Sam slides a NOTE onto his desk, Dean eyes it, jaw dropping as if her price is egregious...

DEAN (cont'd)
Excuse me, Sam-- I'll just be moment.

Dean rises, moving for the door -- Sam tense as he walks behind her and just as he reaches for his door handle...

He collapses to the ground-- writhing-- *convulsing*...

Sam moves to his side, in shock at the sight of FOAM rising from his throat...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

(laughing)

Look at his face-- If only I could hear his thoughts-- "Is this a heart attack? Am I dying?" No and yes...

SAMANTHA

Jesus, Jesus-- Dean, you're okay, you're gonna be okay, I'll get help...

She moves for the door too but...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Sam, stop-- I want you to think very carefully before you walk out that door...

(she pauses)

Your life and the lives of your family are at stake, here. You do not walk out that door until I tell you to. You do not get help. You do not do a goddamn thing but watch him die.

Sam's hand trembles on the door knob, falls to her side.

She turns, slowly, to find Dean taking his last painfully raspy breaths-- his eyes losing life like a TV going dark-- his tightly knotted fists loosening ever so slowly.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Now, then. You're going to wipe your eyes and you're going to find a smile...

Sam checking her reflection in a hanging MIRROR-- mascara running, eyes red and bloodshot-- contorting her face into an unconvincing smile as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

...and you're going to walk outside but before you do, do me a favor, would you: take your note with you.

Sam steps around Dean's dead body, scraping her note off his desk that reads:

H O S T A G E

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Valiant effort, my dear. But no
cigar...

She begrudgingly pockets the note and exits.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Sam closes Dean's door behind her, turning to nearly collide with his Secretary...

SECRETARY
Sam! I thought you took the day off
to be with--

SAMANTHA
Just had to pop in to explain the
confusion about New York.

Sam blots her eyes with fingertips, valiantly attempting to conceal her shock.

SECRETARY
Right, the *notorious* 13th Guy.

SAMANTHA
That's the one. Listen, Dean said
he's not feeling well-- I wouldn't
disturb him...

SECRETARY
He has a meeting in an hour--

SAMANTHA
I'd give him some space till then.

Secretary relents, moving back to her desk.

SECRETARY
Okie doke. Tell the family I said
hello...

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Sam breezing through the doors, hurriedly approaching her Mercedes which is still running (it will always be running), picking up speed before she halts like a skidding wheel...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Hurry, now, Samantha. You don't want little miss Sunshine in there getting any bright ideas-- "rapping at his chamber door"...

(no response)

Think about it, Sam: you will be the last person to have seen him alive-- only you-- no one else. Do you think you should stick around to see what kind of sense they can make of this?

Sam opens her driver-door, pausing there like Alice before the rabbit hole until...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Perhaps we should ring your doorbell.

SAMANTHA

No, stop! I'm getting back in...

(nods to herself)

I'm getting back in.

She makes her choice-- *enters* her SUV once more.

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Familiar CLICK of her doors locking and Sam is again trapped inside a speeding casket.

She *rips* the PIN off her chest-- flinging it against her passenger window-- SLAMS her fists into her steering wheel, against her own window, into the REARVIEW MIRROR.

Sam CRIES, letting her guard down.

SAMANTHA

(through sobs)

... why... why? *WHY!*

A MOTORIZED WHIR is heard-- Sam noticing: the REARVIEW MIRROR angling itself back where it was-- a little DARK EYE in the corner of the glass-- A TINY CAMERA.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Now you know what it feels like to
 lose something-- to lose someone...

Her SUV *whisks* her out of the parking lot and back towards
 the city-scape looming in the distance-- sun falling behind
 the downtown skyline like an EYE peeking through a keyhole.

EXT. BALTIMORE HIGHWAY -- SUNSET

Sam's Mercedes travels at a clip of 80 MPH, threading gaps
 between other vehicles as...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- SUNSET

Sam struggles to catch her breath, twisting the AC full-
 blast, sweat trickling down her brow, her heart *beating* in
 her ears-- a slight *BUZZZZZZ* as she notices:

A FLY

suicide-bombing her windshield over and over again,
 desperately clawing at inches of glass that separate it from
 the free-world-- just like Samantha...

SAMANTHA
 All this because you lost your job?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 It's a mad, mad world...

SAMANTHA
 Why him-- why not me-- why not kill
me instead?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 You *did* tell me to shoot the sheriff.

SAMANTHA
 No more games--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 All of those puzzles you do-- Sudoku,
 Scrabble, Solitaire... and you're
 asking for the answer-- for a clue--
 for a *cheat*?

EXT. DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE -- SUNSET

SHAFTS OF SUNLIGHT cut through skyscrapers like god-knives, clouds above bleeding like sheep from slaughter, packed lanes of traffic below like steer before the same.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Put those skills to good use, Sam--
figure me out...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- SUNSET

Sam watches lanes of traffic pass around her, SNAKES OF RED on the right, RIVERS OF WHITE on her left as she racks her brain, mind spinning as it searches her short-term memory.

SAMANTHA

I read people everyday. Most aren't good at hiding who they are. They keep things close to the chest, but even that can be a give-away...

CLOSE-ON: THAT FLY

now buzzing helplessly against the SUNROOF, freedom so close yet impossibly far away...

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

...how did you know where I live?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

A Q&A-- lovely. Tell you what: you take a drink, I answer a question. In that order...

Sam eyes the quarter-empty Vodka bottle, takes a swig, almost welcoming the instant rush of relief.

SAMANTHA

How'd you know?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Google is a powerful tool...

SAMANTHA

Seriously? When you graduate college, you learn very quickly to set your online accounts to private... Try again.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Fiery-- I like it. But I am serious.
 Your *former* employer has an easily-
 accessible employee database. Next
 question...

Sam tosses back a shot, coughing as it burns.

SAMANTHA
 What was your job-- the one you lost.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 I.T. Come on, now, Sam-- you can do
 better. Where's my hard-hitting
 expose-- gimme your best Katie
 Couric...

She guzzles the liquor, eyes glossing as she studies the
 passing LANDSCAPE-- derelict buildings covered in GRAFFITI,
 dozens of HOMELESS pitching tents beneath BILLBOARDS touting
 brand-name products they'll never own...

SAMANTHA
 What was your company called?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 I worked for many companies. I was
 freelance-- a consultant.

SUV rolls beneath an OVERPASS-- suddenly feeling darker
 inside this crypt, light fading as we approach DOWNTOWN.

SAMANTHA
 A consultant...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 A wasted question. Drink up...

SAMANTHA
 I wouldn't fire a consultant.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 We all do things we would never have
 thought we would do.

Sam blinks her eyes as if waking from a fog, mind clearing.

SAMANTHA
 I wouldn't-- My company doesn't fire
 consultants... we fire *direct*
 employees.

A MOMENT-- Caller silent-- calm before the storm until...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
A surprise at every turn with you...

As her SUV literally makes a turn.

SAMANTHA
This isn't about a job. You weren't
fired-- not by me at least...

Passing FORECLOSURES, now...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Impressive, Samantha. No wonder you
make the salary you do-- or *made*,
rather...

SAMANTHA
Who are you-- what do you want?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I'll give you that one for free: I
want to tear... you... down-- piece
by self-absorbed piece-- I want you
to lose everything and everyone you
hold dear so that I can watch you
grovel and grasp at the ashes of your
life, attempting to recapture the
beauty and magic you once took for
granted as if rebuilding a collapsed
sand castle...
(then)
My God, will that be a sight to
behold: Samantha Jensen's life
slipping through her hands like hour-
glass sand...

Sam shakes with fear-- feeling as if there's a .45 aimed at
her temple, cocked & loaded-- VROOOOOOM-- traveling faster,
now: 90 MPH as Sam grips her seat belt like a roller coaster
harness-- an anchor in the storm as...

SAMANTHA
Who are you... really?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Now *that's* the million dollar
question, isn't it-- the question we
should all be asking. Of others-- of
ourselves...

(MORE)

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

(then)

Tell me, Samantha: does Jason know who you *really* are?

SAM

What do you-- I don't know what you mean.

OUTSIDE, dusk has turned to dark-- only the occasional streetlight serving to illuminate the path ahead as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Does he know where you're from-- Why you moved here-- Who you were-- What you *did*... Who you really are?

Sam searches her mind, perhaps uncertain or unsettled by the implication.

SAM

I don't know what you think I've done--

VROOOOOOOOM! as the SUV ratchets up in speed -- hitting 95, 100 MPH just as the HEADLIGHTS SHUT OFF!

Sam all alone in this pitch-black casket as:

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Tell me, Samantha: Did you move to escape the thoughts of others or to escape your *own* thoughts? Do you still think about it-- Do you still wish it hadn't happened-- How far and how long must you run until you forget the *lives* you've taken...?

Accusation hangs heavy in the air as the SUV continues *barreling* through the dark...

SAM

Please... Please, don't do this. I'm-- I'm sorry. I don't know who-- I don't know who you think I am but--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Stop lying, Sam! How did you get your DUI? Why are you forced to use a *breathalyzer* to start your vehicle? Tell me what you did and who you *killed* or I wrap this fucking car around a tree...

VROOOOOOOOOM! and we're up to 110, 115 MPH and climbing as Sam takes a HIGH-HEEL and slams it against her window-- over and over again-- desperate to escape but the only thing cracking... is Sam:

SAM

Okay, okay, please-- Please...
(sobbing)

I drove drunk and hit another car, okay? Is that what you wanted to hear...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

What were their names...

VROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM! as the speedometer reads 122 MPH...

SAM

Jennifer and William Dobson...

Abruptly, the car *swerves* onto the shoulder, heading for a DITCH on the side of the road at a startling pace-- Sam jostling in her seat-- clinging to anything she can reach-- veering closer and closer to the edge as...

SAM (cont'd)

Please, don't-- Please stop! Just tell me-- Tell me what you want! What do you want from me? *WHAT DO YOU WANT!*

SKRRRRRRRRRRRR! as the SUV *screeches* into a 180-dime-stop-- two tires momentarily lifted off asphalt-- SUV's advanced traction control pushed to its limits.

Sam collects her breath now, sitting alone in a dark SUV on a dark road... her cell *SHINES BRIGHT* as...

A NEW TEXT PICTURE

shows *SILHOUETTES OF HER HUSBAND AND DAUGHTER* at the dinner table waiting on her-- perhaps doing homework-- perhaps praying...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Today is a day of changes, Samantha. You will drink every drop or I will ring your doorbell...

(then)

What happens after that is on you.

She stares at the BOTTLE in her hands... her family on the screen... the breathalyzer before her and the unwanted memories that go with it until she mutters:

SAM

...I know who you are.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Is it that obvious?

ON SAM, realizing exactly who it is before we do... eyes brimming with tears... guilt so much stronger now...

SAM

I've wondered about you... where you ended up... what became of you...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

And I you...

SAM

I'm so sorry-- I've always wanted to say that to you. I'm so sorry for what I did, for what happened... to your parents... to you...

(breaking down)

I wish I could take it back...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Do you...

SAM

Of course, it's the only thing in my life I would change if I could-- the only thing I've ever hidden... the only thing I wish for everyday of my life...

(as if a prayer)

Please forgive me-- I hope you can forgive me-- please, please... forgive me... forgive me... *forgive--*

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

I can forgive you if you do as I say.

She unscrews the cap and guzzles as much of the cheap vodka as she can bare, pausing to compose herself as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

It took me a long time to find you. Even longer to learn the skills necessary to do this...

(MORE)

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 (a sigh, then)
 You may think this is about revenge,
 but you would be wrong. This is about
 redemption... for me... *for you...*

Sam continues to drink, as if drowning her sorrows.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 When I found you, I was overcome with
 curiosity-- what had you been doing
 all this time? I learned that you
 were 3 credits shy of becoming a
 nurse before you changed course,
 moving into human resources. And I've
 wondered, I also need to know: why?

SAM
 (a little inebriated)
 Why what-- Why'd I choose a better-
 paying career--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Why did you decide that money matters
 more than people-- that green-dye on
 paper matters more than the
 satisfaction of *saving lives...*?

A quizzical expression flashes across Sam's face-- almost a
 SMIRK-- as if liquid courage is allowing her to see this all
 with a fresh perspective...

SAM
 I didn't decide that "paper matters
 more than people," man... I just
 chose a career that allows me to
support the people that matter to *me*.

UNKNOWN CALLER
 Speak of the devil-- let's pay those
 people that matter to you a visit,
 shall we?

SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEECH! as the SUV peels out, *screaming* through
 the night once more, barreling into...

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD -- NIGHT

and BOOMING down this residential artery, between parked
 cars, a CUL-DE-SAC ahead as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Why, *exactly*, did you choose to go
 into the medical field, in the first
 place?

INT. SUV (MOVING) -- NIGHT

VRROOOOOM! as the SUV thunders forward and the TACHOMETER hit
 redline-- SUV devouring asphalt as the open bottle of vodka
 sloshes all over Sam's lap.

SAM
 What're you doing-- Where are we...
 (realizing)
 No, no, stop... Stop! *STOP, PLEASE!*

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Tell me why!

Through the windshield, we notice SAM'S HOUSE, not even 50
 yards ahead and closing fast...

SAM
 I don't know-- I don't know!

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Tell me why or you will cause the
 death of two people again... this
 time your own loved ones...

SAM
 I, I... I wanted to pay it back,
 yunno? What I did, what I caused... I
 wanted to *undo* it... I wanted to undo
 it but I couldn't so... I wanted to
 at least *help* people... *someway*...
somehow...

CLOSE ON: SAM'S EYES

brimming with tears as she squeezes them closed, forced to
 come to peace with what's about to happen until...

SCRRRRRRRRREEEEEECH! and Sam squints her eyes open to find...

They've managed to recklessly park across the street from
 her home.

EXT. SAM'S HOME -- NIGHT

Her SUV idles across the street as her husband's SILHOUETTE slaves at their kitchen island-- her daughter scribbling in a TEXTBOOK on a stool.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Welcome home...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Sam eyes her home with dread-- eyes shimmering...

SAMANTHA
I never meant to hurt anyone.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
But you did.

Sam nods in silence.

SAMANTHA
You're right.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
And how did you pay for what you did-- what was your sentence again? Something incredibly difficult, I'm sure...

Sam gulps down her guilt...

SAMANTHA
Community service. Suspended license and mandatory counseling sessions for a year...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
A single year.

SAMANTHA
(re: breathalyzer)
Then *this*.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
What a burden to carry... forced to stay sober just to start your ignition... A veritable albatross round your neck.

Sam sits with her thoughts a moment.

SAMANTHA

I pled guilty, no contest-- what more could I do?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

(seething)

Whatever I tell you to.

Sam snuffles, collecting her emotions, nodding.

SAMANTHA

Okay, yes-- whatever you want.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

I'm going to patch-in to your headset and you're going to call your husband and you're going to tell him what you did-- what you've been hiding all these years...

She takes a deep, shaky breath-- releasing hesitantly.

SAMANTHA

How will that--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

No more questions. Now, do it.

Hands SHAKING, Sam places her bluetooth earpiece back on, then presses a BUTTON on her steering wheel-- a DING and a pause...

SAMANTHA

Call home...

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Calling *home*, Jason...

SPEAKERS resound with rapid ringing until...

JACE (V.O.)

Babe, where are you-- we're waiting with dinner...

Sam pauses, lips trembling.

UNKNOWN CALLER (FROM HEADSET)

Tell him, Samantha.

SAMANTHA

I'm still stuck in traffic. Accident on 75.

JACE (V.O.)
Haven't seen anything on TV-- checked
the local stations-- the traffic
updates online...

SAMANTHA
Maybe it's not an accident, I dunno.
I can't see that far ahead...

JACE (V.O.)
How long do you think you'll be? Cee-
Cee is dying for some--

SAMANTHA
I need to tell you something.

Jace pauses, probably trembling on his end too.

JACE (V.O.)
...you can tell me anything-- you
know that.

Sam eyes his silhouette through their BAY WINDOW.

SAMANTHA
You know the breathalyzer in my car--
the ignition interlock thing.

JACE (V.O.)
Of course, yeah...

SAMANTHA
I didn't just get a DUI when I was
younger.

Jace clears his throat, the anticipation getting to him.

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <p>UNKNOWN CALLER Come clean, Samantha-- the truth will set you free--</p> | <p>JACE (V.O.) Then... what--</p> |
|--|---------------------------------------|

SAMANTHA
I crashed my car... into another
car...
(fighting the tears)
I killed two people. A couple coming
home from dinner... with their child
sleeping in the backseat.

A long BEAT as Jace swallows that revelation...

JACE (V.O.)
 ...a child?

Sam wipes tears and snot from her face, truly guilt-ridden.

SAMANTHA
 He... survived. They didn't...

JACE (V.O.)
 ... wow. I don't-- I'm not sure what
 to say.

SAMANTHA
 You don't have to say anything--

JACE (V.O.)
 I'm so sorry that happened to you.

UNKNOWN CALLER (FROM HEADSET)
 Peas in a pod, you two...

SAMANTHA
 I'm sorry I never told you, I just...
 I wanted to pretend it never
 happened-- that I was someone
 different-- someone else, someone
 other than the girl who made that
 stupid mistake, but... *I am.*

Silence as that sinks in.

UNKNOWN CALLER (FROM HEADSET)
 Tell him you won't be home tonight...
 (beat)
 Tell him you're working late and you
 won't be home tonight, Samantha.

SAMANTHA
 Listen, Jace-- this traffic isn't
 letting up and I have work to catch
 up on at the office...
 (then)
 I'm gonna head back, I'm sorry. I
 just-- I really need to catch-up on
 some paperwork or Dean won't let me
 hear the end of it.

THROUGH WINDOWS: Jace leaves the kitchen, moving into their
 living room.

JACE (V.O.)

Are you sure-- you know I have to go
in tonight...

SAMANTHA

I know, I'm sorry. Maybe I can get
out earlier than I--

UNKNOWN CALLER (FROM HEADSET)

No you can't, you're working all
night.

SAMANTHA

But don't count on it-- call your
mom, see if she can make it
tonight... I'm so sorry.

UNKNOWN CALLER (FROM HEADSET)

Now, hang up...

SAMANTHA

I love you...

JACE (V.O.)

I love you too.

-CLICK- as Caller transfers his voice to the SPEAKERS again.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

You did good, Samantha.

Sam reeling in the wake of that tumultuous experience-- a
little relieved, a little enraged...

SAMANTHA

Now what...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Now, we wait.

THROUGH WINDOWS, we can discern Jace hanging up his landline
and dialing a number on his CELL, moving back to the LIVING
ROOM to speak shortly as we...

FADE TO:

LATER

and Sam is fighting sleep-- eyes slitting with fatigue as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
There's the culprit...

Sam pries her eyes open to spot a GIRL walking swiftly down a SIDEWALK, approaching Sam's home.

SAMANTHA
 Emery...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 An on-call babysitter-- must be expensive... wonder how much she charges...

SAMANTHA
 It's a school night-- it's almost ten o'clock...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Maybe mother dearest wasn't available...

SAMANTHA
 She's retired and widowed.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Many retirees find new hobbies and cohorts-- like high school all over again...

EMERY turns up their walkway, heading for the front door, kneeling to inspect the BOX on the front stoop...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Ever seen "*Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead*"? Tremendous film, you'd really enjoy it-- in fact there may be an encore showing in 3, 2...

SAMANTHA
EMERY!

Sam bangs on her window, slamming her WEDDING RING against the glass to get her attention but...

Emery RINGS the doorbell at the same time, holding the BOX in her arms as JACE'S SILHOUETTE moves through the home, passing various windows until he opens the front door...

And Emery disappears inside, carrying the BOX with her.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

... no.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

How will they open the package, I wonder? Together-- as a family? Just Jason-- just CeeCee? The babysitter by herself, perhaps?

(then)

That would be disappointing, I have to admit...

OFF Samantha, helpless...

WEBCAM FOOTAGE

of the inside of Sam's home-- first time we've been inside.

Indeed, the whole family crowds around the package addressed to Sam, contemplating opening it.

6-year-old **CEE-CEE** standing on a chair, **JACE** beside her-- a hard-working father in his mid-30s. Their teenage babysitter beside them, seeing her in better lighting now: she's nearly 18, the kinda teen who believes she's already full-grown.

CEE-CEE

Can we open it?

JACE

It's addressed to your mom--

CEE-CEE

But she's not *heeeeeeeere!*

EMERY

Technically, you're allowed to open it, I think. Right? What's yours is hers...

CEE-CEE

Yeah! What's hers is yours and what's yours is mine so...

(realizing)

...it's a present for me!

Emery heaves Cee-Cee into her arms before she rips it open.

EMERY

Not so fast, cherry! That's up to your dad...

PULL BACK to reveal: we're still in Sam's SUV, watching this footage on her DASHBOARD MONITOR, Sam wiping stray tears as she holds her breath.

SAMANTHA

Don't... don't... please, Jace.

JACE (O.S.)

What the hell, let's open it.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

That's the spirit.

Cee-Cee celebrates on the monitor as we...

CUT TO BLACK.

AND WITHIN IT: LAUGHING & GIGGLING

A tiny pinprick of light appears, it's becoming larger, brighter, stronger... drawing us near until... it suddenly grows *longer*, turning into a SLIT OF LIGHT as we realize:

We're inside the box.

Looking up to see Jace's furrowed brow, presumably the moment before he's blown to bits but...

He reaches inside, lifting us out of the box and...

INT. SAM'S HOME -- CONTINUOUS

Jace removes a stuffed WHITE RABBIT from the package: floppy pink ears, cold eyes much like that smiley face pin.

There's no explosion.

Only a gift...

CEE-CEE

A rabbit!

Cee-Cee lunges for it but Jace rightly holds her at bay.

JACE

Hang on, Ceece. We don't know who it's from yet...

CEE-CEE

Who cares who it's *from*-- it's *for* me...

JACE

Ain't how this whole parenting thing works. I'm gonna hold onto it for now-- til your mom okays it.

CEE-CEE

Ughhhhhhh...

Cee-Cee stomps back to the kitchen table where the remnants of dinner are, smashes an entire HANDFUL of mashed potatoes into her mouth rebelliously.

EMERY

Cherry! That's disgusting!

CEE-CEE

(mouth full)

Mmmmm. Toe nails!

She runs away, Emery chasing after playfully.

EMERY (O.S.)

C'mere you little munchkin!

Left alone, Jace just stares at the rabbit, its dead eyes.

INT. SAM'S SUV -- SIMULTANEOUS

Jace stares directly into Sam's DASHBOARD MONITOR, Sam staring back-- eyes glistening.

SAMANTHA

It's a *toy*...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Gimme some credit, Samantha... I'm not a *monster*.

Jace carries the toy-- view *jostling* as we move upstairs.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Consider it a gift-- from me to you.

SAMANTHA

...I-- I don't understand.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
You will soon.

THROUGH WINDOWS: we see Jace's SILHOUETTE in their bedroom, another bedroom window *lighting up*, Emery's SILHOUETTE putting little Cee-Cee to bed.

ON THE MONITOR: Jace places the white rabbit on a DRESSER and we SEE him sit on his bed, taking off his shoes, his socks, rolling his neck... *long day*.

He finds his WORK CLOTHES and lays them out: khakis, a button-up, neck tie, wing tip shoes.

Moving into his MASTER BATHROOM, he leaves the door cracked behind him, hearing him URINATE and...

We're all alone in Sam's bedroom, now-- studying the PHOTOGRAPHS and DECOR and BED SPREAD... clearly a woman's touch, here.

After a moment, Emery *enters*, eyeing the work clothes.

Searching for Jace, she peeks inside the bathroom, *entering*.

ON SAMANTHA

as she furrows her brow, confused, unable to see or hear them inside-- looking through her TINTED WINDOWS to see their SILHOUETTES standing in the bathroom.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Tell me, Sam: how does it feel to be
so close yet so far away?

SAMANTHA
Great-- just great. Is that what you
wanna hear?

Those SILHOUETTES move closer, perhaps discussing Cee-Cee.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I want to hear the truth.

SAMANTHA
Doesn't feel good. But you know that.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
We must all go through darkness to
find the light...

SILHOUETTES move out of the bathroom and...

ON THE MONITOR

as Emery pushes Jace backwards into the bedroom and onto the bed, atop his work clothes.

She stands there, Jace pausing, our collective breaths held.

Are they arguing? A misunderstanding? Was she insulted?

But Emery pulls her SHIRT over her head, tosses it.

EMERY

What'd I say earlier? "What's yours is hers"?

(then, a grin)

Well... *what's hers is mine.*

She straddles him, air bloated with tension until they KISS.

SAMANTHA

is shell-shocked, in awe at what she's witnessing.

SAMANTHA

... that *bitch*.

She finds her phone, dialing Jace but... *no dial tone*.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

C'mon, c'mon!

She pulls at her door handles, slapping her window, scratching and clawing at the glass as we HEAR MOANING, HARD BREATHING-- sounds of passion long-held, of taboo realized.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

Please, please let me out-- why are you doing this... why are you doing this...?

And finally, they CLIMAX together-- their bodies atop strewn blankets and sheets, throw pillows thrown, work clothes sweaty and wrinkled as Samantha draws in a deep, shaky breath and the walls seems to *bow* with pressure until...

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

(in tears)

WHYYY!

She *SCRRRRRRREAMS* that from the bottom of her empty soul and, sitting in silence, she seems paralyzed by the realization that her entire life is now in shambles.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I'm sorry, Samantha. But you deserved to know-- you, too, deserve the truth.

Sam sobs helplessly-- a spectator of her own life.

EMERY (O.S.)
You usually last longer...

JACE (O.S.)
I'm usually not late for work.

Sam looks up, jaw dropped -- *this has happened before* -- and any hope Sam had left is lost as she hits rock bottom.

She's fighting for air-- for breath as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I know this is difficult, Samantha. And perhaps you would have chosen the blue pill-- to live in ignorant bliss, but...
(a pause)
Knowledge is *power*, as they say.

Caller gives her a moment to pull it together.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
I'm going to let you call him, now.

Sam looks up, confused.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
You're going to call the bastard, but you're *not* going to let on that you know what he's done...
(then)
Despite my sympathy for you, do not forget what I'm capable of...

He says this softly, as if a question-- Sam nodding.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Now, then: I want you to call Jason
 and to tell him you're going to visit
 him at work-- because you feel bad
 you missed dinner-- and you're going
 to come see him, now...
 (an order)
 That you will be there in 20 minutes.

Sam collects herself-- taking deep breaths and wiping
 mascara from her streaked face.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Are you okay? Samantha...

SAMANTHA
 I'm fan-*fucking*-tastic.

Sam forcefully presses a BUTTON on her steering wheel while
 placing her BLUETOOTH EARPIECE on-- used to the routine by
 now as...

SAMANTHA (cont'd)
 Call... Jason, mobile.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
 Calling *home*, Jason.

RINGING as Sam protests:

SAMANTHA
 No, not home, not--

EMERY (V.O.)
 Hello, Jensen residence?

Sam watches Emery holding her bedroom PHONE on the monitor--
 hate in her wet eyes.

EMERY (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Hello?

SAMANTHA
 Emery? It's Sam...

EMERY (V.O.)
 (a tip to Jace)
 Sam! Heyyyy! What's... up?

ON MONITOR: Jace waving his arms to say "*I'm not here*"

SAMANTHA

Is Jason there...?

EMERY (V.O.)

He's... not.

(charades from Jace)

He's... left... driving... to...
work! He's already left and driving
to work.

Sam eyeing her monitor, Jace playing charades like some
stupid monkey after a banana...

SAMANTHA

Okay, then...

(can't help herself)

Bitch.

EMERY (V.O.)

What, uh-- what was that, Sam?

SAMANTHA

Stitch. I have a... stitch I need you
to fix. One of my dresses, can't
remember which one actually. Just
check them all and fix any broken
stitches you find. Thanks.

-CLICK- as Sam hangs up, Caller LAUGHING in her ear as he
switches to her SPEAKERS.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Good one, Sam. Fast thinker-- quick
on your feet. A valuable trait.

Sam ducks down as Jace *exits* their home-- tucking in his
work shirt-- fumbling with his keys as he *enters* his TRUCK.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Safe to assume he won't answer a call
so...

KEY CLICKS as Caller hijacks Sam's CELL-- sending a text
that reads:

*"Coming to visit you,
see you in 20 xoxo"*

Jace's face is ILLUMINATED by the text as he reads-- then
promptly *reverses*-- racing down the street, already late.

SAMANTHA
Why aren't we moving...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I believe you've earned this
privilege, Sam.

Sam takes the wheel, presses the gas and brakes-- *it works.*

SAMANTHA
I think I've-- Haven't I had too much
to drink...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Never stopped you before...

She shifts gears, easing down the street-- back in control
of her own life.

EXT. SAM'S NEIGHBORHOOD -- NIGHT

Jace's TRUCK runs a stop sign, moving down a rural highway
as Sam's SUV follows at a safe distance.

INT. SAM'S SUV (MOVING) -- NIGHT

Sam slows and speeds at her discretion to avoid suspicion as
Caller fills the silence...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
I found you nearly 13 months ago--
began surveillance round-the-clock. I
learned your schedule-- your routine.
Even learned Jason's...

(a pause)
Suffice it to say, it was a surprise
to learn one of his hobbies was
fucking the babysitter. How old is
she, anyway?

SAMANTHA
Seventeen...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Sixteen, at the time then...

Sam's chin trembles-- almost too much to bear.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 First time I noticed, you were in Los Angeles-- twelve days. I listened to their conversations...

(a pause)

They laughed at you, Samantha-- they played you for a *fool*...

Sam grits her teeth, jaw tightening-- eyes locked on Jace's truck ahead.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 He would fuck her on your bed and then call her mother to thank her for allowing her daughter to watch *his* daughter...

(letting that sink in)

Sometimes, I wondered whether I should continue-- whether you would suffer enough at his hand to render my actions useless...

(then)

But I felt sorry for you.

Jace hits the interstate-- Sam not far behind.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 I couldn't stand watching this woman who had taken the lives of the ones I love and *wasted* her own...

(pause)

I wanted to see you pay, yes-- but I wanted to see *him* pay more...

(pause)

I knew that I had to help you-- not hurt you... but *help* you to better your life. To make you see what your life could be... and to help you achieve that-- to be the accelerant that would burn your past ablaze to allow you to rebuild-- to rise from the ashes of your life... a *new woman*...

(then)

If I could, then that horrific tragedy that we share... maybe it would cease to be tragic. Maybe it could be the seed for something positive, something... *good*.

Jace takes an OFF-RAMP, Sam following-- a STOPLIGHT ahead switching from GREEN to YELLOW and Jace rolls through with a right turn as...

Sam attempts to do the same, but the light switches to RED.

She turns right anyway and *WHOO-WHOO!* as a COP CAR sounds its sirens-- FLASHING BLUES blinding us from behind.

Sam SIGHS, unsure of how to handle this.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Pull over, Sam-- we don't need a
spectacle...

She does, flicking her HAZARDS on in the process.

SAMANTHA
I guess it was no turn on red, I
didn't see the sign--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Listen closely, Samantha: you are
likely wanted for questioning in your
boss' death. This officer is going to
run your information and, when he
does, you're going to be arrested...
(then)
You don't want that and neither do I.
If that happens, you will be on trial
for murder...
(let that sink in)
So... very quickly, I want you to
crawl to the back of the vehicle.

Sam confused.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Go, Sam. *Hurry.*

She does-- crawling between seats to the rear cargo hold-- TINTED WINDOWS hiding her movement from the officer still in his vehicle.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Do you see the emergency first aid
kit?

SAMANTHA
...yes.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Open it-- there's something inside
 for you...

Sam hesitantly pulls the FIRST-AID KIT open and...

Her breath is caught in her throat-- pausing-- frozen stiff
 at the sight of the...

COLT 45 TACTICAL HANDGUN

resting upon a silver SPACE BLANKET-- a SUPPRESSOR with it.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Take it. Samantha, take the gun and
 the suppressor and return to the
 front. Now...

She does, crawling back to her seat, GUN between her thighs.

SAMANTHA
 Why-- what-- why is there a...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 You know why.

AN OFFICER approaches from the rear, pausing to eye her
 LICENSE PLATE.

SAMANTHA
 I'm not going to-- you can't possibly
 think that I would...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 If you don't, you will never see your
 daughter again. Jason will be free to
 do as he pleases-- he will get away
 with what he's done...

(then)
 Is that what you want? Is that what
 you deserve-- what *he* deserves?

Sam studies the 45 in her hand-- a foreign object to her.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 You have no choice, Samantha. Do it
 or go to prison... sometimes the
 right thing feels wrong...
 (pause)
 I trust you will do the right thing.

Sam tucks the gun between her thighs just as the OFFICER taps on her window-- Sam rolling it down.

POLICE OFFICER
License and registration, ma'am.

Sam hands over her information as a FLASHLIGHT blinds her.

POLICE OFFICER (cont'd)
Know why I pulled you over...?

SAMANTHA
No-turn on red?

POLICE OFFICER
Correct.

SAMANTHA
I didn't see it, officer. I'm sorry--

POLICE OFFICER
Don't be sorry, just pay attention.

SAMANTHA
Of course, it's just been... it's been a *really* long day.

Sam begins to break down, overwhelmed-- officer *thrown*.

POLICE OFFICER
It'll be alright-- wait here.

SAMANTHA
I just...

Officer turns but pauses-- Sam attempting to SCREW that suppressor onto the muzzle of the 45...

SAMANTHA (cont'd)
I feel like everything is falling apart-- like nothing is in my control-- that no matter what I do... I can't escape...

True emotion finds her as the SUPPRESSOR slips from her grip and falls to the floorboard-- rolling beneath her seat.

ON SAM

realizing any shot she takes will not be suppressed.

EXT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Officer steps back to her window, FLASHLIGHT on her again.

POLICE OFFICER
Escape? Is everything alright, ma'am?

SAMANTHA
Alright? No, officer. Everything is
not alright...

Sam BREAKS DOWN, now-- head on her steering wheel-- *crying*.

Officer just stands there awkwardly but he's a good guy, so he reaches inside the window, one HAND on her shoulder, reassuringly:

POLICE OFFICER
It's all gonna be okay.

Sam catches her breath, sniffing, NOTICES: A BULLETPROOF VEST barely visible above the neck of his shirt.

SAMANTHA
I am so, so sorry for this...

Officer removes his hand, confused-- but before he has time to react:

BOOM! as Sam's FIRES a shot directly into his chest.

He falls to the pavement, gasping for breath, clawing at his chest-- Sam FLOORING it as we STAY WITH THE OFFICER until he catches his breath... removing his BULLET PROOF VEST to find... NO BLOOD... just a GUNSHOT BRUISE.

Sam purposefully shot him dead-center in his vest.

POLICE OFFICER
Officer down-- repeat, officer down.
Intersection of West Cross and Race
Street-- repeat...

INT. SAM'S SUV (MOVING) -- NIGHT

Sam SPEEDS away from the scene of the crime but her hands aren't on the wheel... she's no longer in control... WHEEL spinning as her car turns down an ALLEYWAY and shoots across DARK STREETS-- attempting to evade any possible pursuit.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
You did good, Sam.

SAMANTHA
Don't say that-- that wasn't... that
wasn't good. Don't say that.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
You did what had to be done.

Sam nods, unconvinced.

SAMANTHA
What you *made* me do...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
The choice was yours, Sam--

SAMANTHA
You said I had no choice!

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Come, now... we always have a choice.

EXT. PORT OF BALTIMORE -- NIGHT

Sam's Mercedes cruises past Baltimore's residential fringes
and into the industrial underbelly of the city-- a grid-like
warehouse district called *Locust Point*.

NOTICE the distant POLICE SIRENS and SPRINKLING RAIN as...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Caller roots Sam in a DARK ALLEY and all we hear is Sam's
panicked BREATHING, the incessant SLOSHING of the Patapsco
River behind her and the *pitter-patter* of RAIN ON THE
WINDSHIELD.

We wait and wait and wait, Sam on pins and needles until...

A POLICE PATROL CAR glides past like a shark in deep water.

SAMANTHA
What are we doing here--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Biding time.

SAMANTHA

This is silly, they'll see us.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

They'll see you. And they'll arrest you. Hell, they'll probably *shoot* you-- isn't that what they do to cop killers?

SAMANTHA

I didn't kill him...

ANOTHER COP CAR passes-by, SPOTLIGHT searching the night.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Are you sure about that? I have their frequency playing right now-- do you think they'd be so motivated to find you if he were *alive*?

ON SAM: uncertain of the fate of the man she shot-- torn.

SAMANTHA

No, no way he's dead. I shot his vest. Right in the middle-- I shot his vest...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Are you sure about that...?

AND A THIRD POLICE VEHICLE passes, SPOTLIGHT hitting Sam directly in the face as...

INT. MESSENGER VAN, REAR -- NIGHT

His back to us, Messenger slowly STRETCHES, preparing for a show-- or for a fight.

NOTICE his setup includes several large COMPUTER MONITORS and hardware bays, all blinking and *humming*, tethered to a rat-nest of cables snaking across the van's floor.

QUICK CLOSE-UPS OF:

--Messenger's fingers flying, parsing illegible reams of code while using his other hand to work a custom designed JOYSTICK, controlling Sam's SUV.

--MONITOR FEEDS show: live TRAFFIC CAM footage, Sam's REAR AND FRONT BUMPER CAMS, real-time satellite maps and traffic updates, a police scanner and CB radio, and a GPS beacon tracking Sam's location.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
... yes, I'm sure.

Caller laughs, though we can't see his face:

UNKNOWN CALLER
Well, then-- let's go for a ride,
shall we?

EXT. PORT OF BALTIMORE -- SIMULTANEOUS

COPS CONVERGE on the alleyway just as the Mercedes' transmission catches-- tires finding asphalt and the SUV thunders forward, rooster-tailing GRAVEL AND MUD as--

It barrels directly for the PATROL CAR ahead.

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Sam is *slammed* against her seat-- pistol dropped to the floorboard-- holding her seat-belt with a death grip like it's a life vest as--

We approach the idle PATROL CAR and swerve around it, CLIPPING and SHATTERING one of its headlights and--

IT'S RAINING BUCKETS NOW-- Sam only seeing glimpses of road for half-second intervals as her front and rear wipers work overtime but it's not enough to beat away the onslaught...

WHOO-*WHOO-*WHOO!** as THREE COPS give pursuit-- sirens blare as red-and-blue reflections strobe across Sam's face-- A COP pulling a G-inducing 180-degree turn, nearly losing traction as he drifts on slick pavement and--

We barrel ahead, past HEAVY EQUIPMENT & SHIPPING CONTAINERS as we watch the whole scene play-out from INSIDE THE VEHICLE-- from Sam's perspective as...

THREE BLUE-AND-REDS STROBE through her rear windows-- one fast approaching until--

BOOM! as Sam is *jostled*-- her eyes red-rimmed-- searching the windows for any clear view of what the fuck is happening-- for a buoy in her storm but--

HEADLIGHTS approach again, nearing Sam's rear left tire until--

INT. PATROL CAR -- SIMULTANEOUS

A COP white-knuckles the wheel-- his SCANNER *chirping* a relay of the events like sports commentary until he swerves to hit the Mercedes again but--

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

MESSENGER'S DIRTY FINGERS still typing furious code as his OTHER HAND pulls back on the JOYSTICK *ever-so-slightly* and--

INT. SAM'S SUV -- SIMULTANEOUS

Sam is THRUST FORWARD as the vehicle BRAKES VIOLENTLY-- COP CAR barely missing her this time and SLOW-MOTION AS--

Sam watches its HEADLIGHTS and POLICE STROBES speed past her left and swerve across her RAIN-SOAKED WINDSHIELD until *BOOOOOM!* as it hits a BRICK BUILDING and disappears...

SAMANTHA

Jesus... Jesus...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

I'd say that one is dead... if I had to guess.

TWO POLICE STROBES still left behind her as--

EXT. PORT OF BALTIMORE -- NIGHT

BARELY SEEN THROUGH POURING RAIN: the Mercedes leads two POLICE VEHICLES into the LOADING DOCKS between TWO FACTORIES-- 18-wheeler trailers jut from buildings on either side, creating a *gauntlet* as--

ONE COP CAR side-saddles the SUV, nudging it sideways for--

INT. SAM'S SUV -- SIMULTANEOUS

A ROW OF TRAILERS creeping into view as Sam turns away...

SAMANTHA

Turn! Turn, Goddamnit-- look out!

She spins the wheel but it's no use as--

EXT. PORT OF BALTIMORE -- SIMULTANEOUS

Her SUV barely misses a TRAILER and counter-punches the COP CAR with a side-swipe that sends it careening to its right and CRASHING INTO A TRAILER...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Two down...

Mercedes screams forward-- heading toward the HARBOR and the dark, icy water of the Patapsco as--

INT. SAM'S SUV -- SIMULTANEOUS

Sam closes her eyes-- perhaps silently praying until...

SAMANTHA

I wanna go home-- I wanna go home--
please, please...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Shhh, Samantha-- I'm working, here.

We CAREEN through AN EMPTY SHIPPING CONTAINER as we begin to lose the last HEADLIGHTS behind us and--

INT. COP CAR -- SIMULTANEOUS

COP slams the gas to catch up, brake lights of the Mercedes barely visible through the rain as--

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Messenger eyes the RADAR BLIPS on his monitors-- clearly identified is the edge of the harbor and the fast-approaching water as he hits the JOYSTICK and--

INT. SAM'S SUV -- SIMULTANEOUS

Sam is thrown into the DRIVER WINDOW as her SUV swerves to miss the drop-off just as--

INT. COP CAR -- SIMULTANEOUS

Last officer barrels forward-- hardly discerning the BRAKE LIGHTS disappearing to his right and--

He hits his BRAKES but it's no use as--

EXT. PORT OF BALTIMORE -- SIMULTANEOUS

COP CAR careens over the edge and into Baltimore's Inner Harbor with a massive *CRASH!* creating a giant crater that closes itself like the maw of a monster, upheaval of water swallowing the car whole...

IN THE DISTANCE: more SIRENS, so the Mercedes makes escape.

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Thud-thud-thud-thud-thud as we hit RAILROAD TRACKS and pass the THUNDERING ROAR OF A TRAIN-- its HEADLIGHTS blinding Sam even through the rain as...

Sam cries shortly-- confounding relief finding escape, even if she can't...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
We're home-free, Samantha. You did good... you did good.

EXT. COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND -- NIGHT

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND emblazoned upon a sign on this lonely campus-- a few DRINKING BUDDIES staggering back to their dorm as...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

SUV pulls into a large parking lot of a HOSPITAL ahead, tracking MUD behind it as we traverse the mostly-empty parking lot to find Jace's TRUCK parked near a side entrance-- dark and empty.

Sam places her BLUETOOTH EARPIECE on, ready to move.

UNKNOWN CALLER (VIA HEADSET)
 Don't forget your pin-- we want you
 to appear as approachable as
 possible...
 (a laugh)
 ... and your gun.
 (then)
 Don't forget the suppressor this time.

Sam PINS that smiley face on her chest, then pauses.

SAMANTHA
 ...why?

UNKNOWN CALLER (VIA HEADSET)
 Call it an insurance policy. You'll
 also need the thermos beneath your
 seat.

Sam finds a **METAL THERMOS**, shakes the liquid inside.

SAMANTHA
 They have metal detectors, yunno...

UNKNOWN CALLER (VIA HEADSET)
 ...which are *hackable*. Samantha,
 please: trust me. You will breeze
 through security like a cockroach
 through a kitchen.

Sam closes her eyes-- breathing deep-- finding her center or
 preparing for battle...

SAMANTHA
 I don't wanna do this.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 Yes you do.

SAMANTHA
 I *really* don't. I just-- I wanna go
 home. Please, I wanna go home...

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 There is no home anymore, Sam. Jason
 made sure of that. He *deseccrated* your
 home-- defiled your marital bed--
 disrespected the most sacred of vows.

Sam welling with emotion.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 Now, show him you are not the woman
 who gets pushed to the side-- that
 you do the pushing...

Sam's eyes move from shimmering to dark like an alligator
 preparing for a dive-- focused and determined.

EXT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Sam exits her SUV, securing her GUN in her rear waistband.

As she nears the building ahead, we now notice the SIGN
 illuminated above the entrance:

*University of Maryland
 Medical Center*

She enters.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY -- CONTINUOUS

Sam approaches the lone HOSPITAL GUARD perched at a desk.

HOSPITAL GUARD
 Mrs. Jensen!

SAMANTHA
 (faking calm)
 Yo, Joe.

HOSPITAL GUARD
 Jason's in his office-- should I
 phone him?

SAMANTHA
 Actually, I was hoping to surprise
 him...

HOSPITAL GUARD
 (re: thermos)
 Come bearing gifts?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Tell him it's coffee.

SAMANTHA
 Coffee-- he's pulling an all-nighter.

HOSPITAL GUARD

Wish my wife would do that-- 'stead I
get an earful of complaints and a
mouthful of nuthin'.

He motions toward the METAL DETECTOR to their right-- Sam
placing her CAR KEYS and THERMOS in a bin on a conveyor
belt.

She takes a deep breath, then steps through.

BEEP-BEEP-BEEP! as the machine detects metal.

HOSPITAL GUARD (cont'd)

Get everything outta your pockets?

Sam pats her hips-- nothing.

Hospital Guard approaches with a WAND DETECTOR but...

Sam feels her NECKLACE still around her neck.

SAMANTHA

Forgot my necklace.

HOSPITAL GUARD

There's the culprit.

She places it, too, in a BIN on the conveyor belt.

HOSPITAL GUARD (cont'd)

One more time, Sam.

She moves through again-- fingers crossed-- her eyes
glancing at a SECURITY CAMERA overhead as...

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Caller hacks on his laptop-- source code on the screen-- his
DIRTY FINGERS clicking keys at a furious pace as...

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY -- SIMULTANEOUS

Sam passes through the detector again and...

NOTHING-- she comes up clean.

HOSPITAL GUARD
All good under the hood-- you know
your way, right?

SAMANTHA
(realizing)
...I'm finding it.

He returns to his perch-- a tad confused by that comment--
as Sam takes her KEYS & THERMOS, moving down...

A HALLWAY

and turns various corners-- following her by way of...

SECURITY FOOTAGE

the same way Caller is until Sam moves into the RADIATION
DEPARTMENT and pauses at a door-- pacing back and forth as
she convinces herself to...

INT. JASON'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

...enter and find Jace on his DESKTOP COMPUTER-- glasses on
his nose-- attempting to behave normally.

JACE
Hey, babe.

She just stands there, letting the door close behind her,
unable or uncertain as to how to proceed.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
For God sake, say *something* Samantha.

JACE
(re: her expression)
...everything okay?

Despite her anger, she's momentarily overcome with grief--
as if she's standing at the precipice of the end of her
marriage-- the fall of Rome-- a funeral for her life.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
Here we go again...

She begins to sob, a dam inside her breaking.

JACE

Sam? Babe...

He stands, moving to console her but...

SAMANTHA

Don't touch me.

He pauses, reaching for her again.

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

Don't *fucking* touch me, Jason!

She recoils.

JACE

...what's going on?

SAMANTHA

Don't play dumb.

JACE

I'm not playing du--

SAMANTHA

I saw you.

Jace thrown-- temporarily confused and paranoid.

JACE

What do you mean--

SAMANTHA

I fucking saw you, Jason...

(silence)

The rabbit-- the fucking white rabbit
you sat on our *bedroom* dresser.

QUICK-FLASH of rabbit's beady little eyes.

JACE

You saw what--

Sam erupts-- pulling that GUN from her waistband, SUPPRESSOR
now affixed.

SAMANTHA

I said don't play dumb, Jason.

JACE

Whoa, whoa-- Sam... Jesus, what the hell are you do--

SAMANTHA

Why... *why*...

JACE

Is that a silencer-- where did you--

SAMANTHA

TELL ME WHY!

Jace holds his hands in front of him like shields-- backing away from Sam-- pausing and gulping before...

JACE

What do you think you saw, Sam--

SAMANTHA

Don't make me fucking shoot you, Jason-- I saw you! I saw you... and Emery... our seventeen-year-old babysitter-- *Jesus*...

(suppressing tears)

Tell me why...

Jace finally reaches his SWIVEL CHAIR, collapsing upon it-- mind spinning as he searches for words.

JACE

You were gone-- you're *always* gone, Samantha.

SAMANTHA

So it's *my* fault...

JACE

I didn't say that.

SAMANTHA

Then what *are* you saying...?

Pause.

JACE

I'm saying... I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I-- I didn't plan for it to happen. I didn't even want it to happen-- I love you, Sam. *Truly*...

(then)

It only happened once--

PFFT-CRASH! as Sam shoots a FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH on his desk-- bullet hole through Jace's visage.

SAMANTHA

Don't lie to me.

Jace thrown-- unsure of how much she knows or even *how* she knows in the first place.

JACE

...okay... okay... I don't know when it started-- honest. I don't even remember *how* it started.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)

(nonchalant)

I do.

JACE

I just know that it *did*... and I wanted to stop it but-- I guess I didn't know how...

(then, finding truth)

Part of me was terrified of you finding out-- another part was terrified that you were doing the same thing...

SAMANTHA

I never cheated on you.

Jace finds comfort and extreme guilt in that revelation.

JACE

You're a better person than me-- always have been.

Sam finds the same in that statement-- GUN lowering...

JACE (cont'd)

I just... I wish I could pretend it never happened-- that I'm someone different-- someone else... someone other than the guy who made that stupid mistake, but... *I am*.

Jace looks to Sam, aching to be forgiven and Sam takes a step in that direction but...

Then she steps back-- *recoiling* because...

SAMANTHA
Is that a joke...?

JACE
What--

SAMANTHA
You use my own words against me? I
said that-- I said that to you, Jace.

JACE
Babe, you're not making sense--

Sam raises the GUN again, Jace raising those flesh-shields
once more.

SAMANTHA
Earlier, when I told you my-- when I
called you and told you my secret--
about my accident-- why I have a
breathalyzer in my car... Why would
you...
(realizing)
You don't even feel guilty.

Jace stands-- approaching as...

JACE
Babe, of course I do--

SAMANTHA
Stop.

But he keeps stepping slowly toward her.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
He's not even sorry, Sam-- he's a
low-down degenerate who played you
for a fool...
(then)
He's *still* playing you for a fool.

Sam knows he's right-- eyes welling with sorrow and rage.

SAMANTHA
Back up, Jason-- *Back up!*

JACE
...okay, Sam... okay.

He does, awaiting further instruction.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 Now, then. You're going to escort
 your husband to the radiation
 oncology ward-- quickly.

She nods.

SAMANTHA
 We're going to oncology-- move.

Jace slides past her, hands still up, leading her...

INT. RADIATION ONCOLOGY DEPARTMENT -- CONTINUOUS

Jace walking through dark hallways, Sam following-- her GUN
 pressed to Jace's back.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 Tell him to take you to the gamma
 knife-- you want to see it.

SAMANTHA
 I wanna see the gamma knife machine.

JACE
 Why--

SAMANTHA
 Just do it.

They turn a corner, approaching a room with a large LEAD
 DOOR nearly two feet thick.

Jace heaves it open.

INT. GAMMA KNIFE TREATMENT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jace leads Sam inside a room that is austere in its decor--
 a calculated spartan-ness-- all meant to focus on the main
 attraction-- the incredibly expensive, state-of-the-art:

GAMMA KNIFE MACHINE

sitting against a far wall-- resembling an MRI or CAT SCAN
 machine but made for pin-pointing radiation treatment.

JACE
 There it is...

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 You want to see the radiation core--
 tell him...

SAMANTHA
 Show me the inside.

JACE
 It's dangerous to--

SAMANTHA
I'm dangerous. Do it.

JACE
 Samantha...
 (very serious)
 What the hell are you doing?

Sam's eyes well-- perhaps her own doubt surfacing.

SAMANTHA
 (echoing Caller)
 No more questions.

Jace reluctantly pulls KEYS from his pocket-- unlocking the machine and revealing its RADIATION CORE: a kind of miniature death star made of 200 little PLUGS holding 200 little tubes filled with radioactive Cobalt-60 powder.

Its center glows NEON BLUE.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) SAMANTHA
 It's beautiful... Beautiful.

JACE
 Get a good look-- that what you
 wanted to see?

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 You're going to take three plugs.

SAMANTHA
 (thrown)
 No...

JACE
 (confused)
 No what...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 Tell him to sit down and shut up.

SAMANTHA
Sit down...

JACE
Are you ok--

SAMANTHA
Shut up.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
(laughs)
Good. Now find something to bind him
with...

She shuffles through cabinets and drawers.

SAMANTHA
Where's the medical tape?

Jace SIGHS-- still her helpful husband:

JACE
Far right cabinet... not that one...
to the right of--

SAMANTHA
Got it.

She returns-- tapes his hands behind his back with PURPLE
medical tape, then secures his wrists to the chair.

JACE
Sam, what the hell is this going to
accomplish? Can't we just go home and
talk about this?

SAMANTHA
"Home"-- what home?
(echoing caller)
We don't have a home anymore, Jace.
You made sure of that. We have a
house in our name though-- is that
what you meant? The house with our
daughter and your *fuck toy* inside it?
Is that what you meant...?

Gulp...

JACE
No, of course not--

She SLAPS a rectangle of tape over his mouth.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 Finally, some peace and quiet. Now, I
 want you to empty the coffee from the
 thermos and dry it out.

Sam pours the THERMOS of coffee down a sink drain, dries the
 insides with a paper towel.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 Now, Sam... please... take three of
the plugs and place them in the
thermos.

SAMANTHA
 No-- why?

Sam turns her head whenever she hears caller speak-- as if
 she's hearing voices-- as if she's gone insane.

Which, clearly: Jace is beginning to think.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 Because I said so. This is your last
 order, Samantha. Do this and you go
 home...
 (then)
 Do this and you're free. You can go
 back to living a lie if you please--
 your choice. Or you can take your
 daughter and make a new home
 elsewhere-- whatever you wish...
 (finally)
 But you must do this first.

Sam eyeing the COBALT PLUGS.

SAMANTHA
 ...what is it?

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 It's how you punish Jason.

Sam shakes her head like a vagrant seeing visions.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 It's your ticket to freedom.

Sam SIGHS, not enough to convince her...

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 It's the only way to save your
 family, Samantha...
 (MORE)

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 (Sam confused)
 You didn't *really* think that toy was
 harmless, did you?
 (laughing)
 I hope, that if you've learned
 anything, it's to not call my
bluff...

Her CELL buzzes: LIVE VIDEO FEED of Cee-Cee's BEDROOM... the
 little girl sleeping soundly.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 A good villain always has a backup
 plan-- a fail safe.

SAMANTHA
 The toy...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET)
 (correcting)
 The *explosive*. Looks like Emery gave
 in to CeeCee's pleas for the stuffed
 rabbit...
 (twisting the knife)
 Such a *nurturer*, that Emery-- don't
 you think?

Sam trembles with fear and anger-- eyeing Jace who is still
 pleading through his gag-- so overwhelmingly *alone...*

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 Do it, Samantha. This time, you have
no choice.

Sam pockets her GUN, moving for the COBALT SOURCES as Jace
 YELLS through his TAPE GAG-- something indecipherable.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 Twist them clockwise slightly-- do
 not attempt to pull them straight
 out...

She twists a plug, pulling out a COBALT-60 ROD.

UNKNOWN CALLER (HEADSET) (cont'd)
 Good-- place them inside the thermos.

Sam does as she's told, removing two more COBALT RODS and
 sliding them inside the THERMOS where THREE THIN SLOTS are
 situated specifically for this purpose.

She begins to leave but pauses-- looking back at Jace as he SCREAMS through the tape-- begging, pleading... *warning*.

Sam returns to him, kneeling down to... kiss his forehead.

SAMANTHA

... I'm doing this for us.

She gathers her emotions, here-- perhaps a new beginning-- before she stands once more and *exits*.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY -- MOMENTS LATER

Sam passes the Hospital Guard, waving a faint goodbye as...

HOSPITAL GUARD

I see you...

Sam halts, turning.

SAMANTHA

What was that?

HOSPITAL GUARD

Said "I'll see ya..."

SAMANTHA

See ya, Joe...

She can't hide her nerves as she eyes the SECURITY CAM above before she *exits* the building.

INT. SAM'S SUV (MOVING) -- NIGHT

Sam enters the idling vehicle-- deadly thermos in-hand.

-CLICK- from the locking doors which somehow sound LOUDER this time-- like a prison cell closing-- a bell tolling.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Now, Samantha: one last thing...

SAMANTHA

You said *that* was the last thing.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

I lied.

Sam releases a SIGH-- *is there no way out of this?*

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 I need you to crawl to the rear of
 the vehicle again... I want you to
 open the floor cover.

SAMANTHA
 Why... I've done everything you
 asked-- *everything*. Just let me go...
 please...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Do it, Sam... and you will be free.

She SIGHS, moves lethargically to the...

REAR CARGO HOLD

once more and she kneels in the corner, uses her FINGERNAILS
 to lift the FLOOR COVER and reveal...

THE EXPLOSIVE

in all its hi-tech glory-- a rainbow of WIRES crisscrossing
 a metal contraption with two clear tubes in the middle
 containing BLUE AND RED liquids.

Four CONTAINERS of gasoline surround it.

Sam wipes her brow.

SAMANTHA
 Jesus...

In the center of it all: a little hollow tube, like a cup
 holder.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Place the thermos inside...

SAMANTHA
 What is this?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Please, Sam... don't make me explain
 the physics behind a bomb exploding
 in your daughter's bedroom...
 (a laugh)
 Boom-boom... bye-bye... simple.

SAMANTHA

Please... whatever this is about...
whatever I've done--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Put the thermos inside or what's left
of your daughter when you return home
could fit in a pocket...

Sam trembles-- tears streak her face like rain down windows.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Three... two... don't make me do it,
Sam... you know I will...
(finally)

One--

SAMANTHA

Don't! OK! OK, I'm doing it... I'm
doing it.

Sam slips the thermos into the slot inside the explosive
and, automatically: A LID FLICKS DOWN AND TWISTS, AIR *HISSES*
AS IT VACUUM-SEALS.

A small MONITOR reads: *Armed* :)

UNKNOWN CALLER

Very good, Samantha. Very good.

The SUV lurches forward, Sam falling backward.

As we leave the hospital behind-- *SIRENS* in the distance:

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Technology is a wondrous thing, isn't
it. At once improving our lives, yet
endangering them exponentially...

Ahead: the Baltimore SKYLINE illuminating the horizon as we
head back toward downtown and Sam watches HALF A DOZEN
POLICE VEHICLES thunder past-- blinded by blue lights--
struck by chaotic *SIRENS*.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

You really thought this was about
you, didn't you... About poor, little
Samantha Jensen from Sugar Creek,
Missouri who did what all spoiled
assholes do: drank too much and drove
home. A simple choice. Do or don't.

(MORE)

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

You chose: *Do*. Like a code imprinted
in your hardware.

(then)

You were just unlucky enough to cross
paths with two other people who also
had a spoiled little shit...

(Sam thinking)

Did you know they were only on that
side of town-- on that *exact* road
that night because their kid couldn't
make it a single night without them?

Sam leans back, head in her hands, guilt-ridden.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Imagine that. You're at a sleepover
and your ache for your parents is so
strong that you beg them to pick you
up and take you home in the middle of
the night. And it's because of *that*
request-- because of that overriding
need... that he's without them for a
lifetime...

(then)

Bet the poor bastard feels guilty to
this day... wherever he is.

And there's the rub-- scab lifted to reveal what's beneath.

SAMANTHA

(though she knows)

What do you mean...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

This was never about you, Sam.

Speed increasing-- 70, 75, 80 mph-- terror on her face...

SAMANTHA

...who-- who are you?

Silence from Sam, engine rumbling as we barrel forward-- car
chassis *vibrating*-- SPEEDOMETER showing 100 MPH-- this
speeding coffin now DRIVERLESS-- an empty seat as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Do you know what's in those plugs you
took-- what's in that thermos?

(MORE)

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

(then)

Cobalt-60-- a synthetic radioactive isotope of cobalt with a half-life of 5.27 years that is widely used in radiotherapy.

(then)

But do you know another use that was considered but subsequently abandoned? A salting element... as in: "*to salt the Earth.*"

(long pause)

In ancient times, it was the ritual of spreading salt over conquered cities to curse them-- to render the land uninhabitable. The Israelites, The Romans, even The Pope ordered Palestrina be salted-- the land poisoned and cursed. And in 1950, an American-Hungarian physicist proposed the idea... of a salted bomb.

That word hits Sam like a gut punch-- breath caught as if she's been poisoned herself.

AN INTERSTATE SIGN reads "Washington D.C. in 3 miles" -- Sam noticing, heart nearly stopping.

Sam eyes the EXPLOSIVE-- better understanding its contents.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Your vehicle is currently transporting approximately 90 curies of cobalt-60. And when it *explodes*-- those capsules will release their radioactive material... belching it into the air-- into the *atmosphere*...

(summarizing)

When it falls back to the earth, it will contaminate the entirety of your capital-- its landmarks, buildings and, of course... people. Washington DC will be the American *Chernobyl*. A no-go zone-- salted and cursed. For the first time in over two centuries, your country will be forced to build an entirely new capital in a new state-- to evacuate the heart of the country for a decade-- you'll be directionless, rudderless-- a nation without an anchor...

(laughing)

The imagery is profound isn't it? Poetic, really...

SAMANTHA
 ...so that's what this was about.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Not you.

SAMANTHA
 Not me. *Jason...*

She says that with guilt, with shame-- a little jealousy.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Your husband had access to enough
 cobalt to salt the entire state of
 Maryland.

SAMANTHA
 Why him? Plenty of hospitals have
 radiotherapy machines.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 26 in North America, in fact.

SAMANTHA
 So why--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Because of you, Samantha...
 (confessing)
 Not because you fired me or my family
 member-- not because you killed my
 parents or destroyed my life-- not
 because you needed help to make a
 positive change in your life...
 (then, softly)
 But because you are weak.

Sam's eyes welling again-- part of her knowing it's true.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 You see, Cobalt-60 is heavily
 controlled. Many facilities actually
 guard it. But not hospitals. Only one
 person stands between you and enough
 radioactive cobalt to salt an entire
 state: the chief--

SAMANTHA
 Medical Physicist.

Sam SHAKES now, as if naked in a frozen tundra.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Of course, a person isn't going to
hand over cobalt-60. Nor are they
going to allow it to be taken by some
stranger...

Sam moves back to the DRIVER SEAT-- straps on her seatbelt,
hands gripping it TIGHTLY for some sense of security.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
But humans are fallible. That is the
weakness in every plan: *human*
fallibility.
(pause)
Everything and every person has a
weakness.

She eyes that BREATHALYZER-- the albatross she can't shake.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
So I looked into all 26 facilities
with cobalt radiotherapy-- all 26
chief medical physicists. And I chose
Jason because he had a wife with a
dark past and a dark secret-- a
weakness...that could be *exploited.*

Tears find escape.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
I'm afraid it's as simple as that,
Samantha: you were weighed, measured,
and found wanting...

Sam unable to speak-- mind spinning-- car racing for a
distant CITY on the horizon-- realizing:

SAMANTHA
I'm the fall guy.

QUICK-FLASH of Messenger's dirty hands as we hear again:

UNKNOWN CALLER (FROM EARLIER)
"Never forget: People need someone to
blame. They need a scapegoat-- a
whipping boy-- a fall guy..."

Back with Sam, overcome by the burden of her predicament.

SAMANTHA
I was never getting out of this. You
need a fall guy to take the blame.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
So much better than the others--
leaps and bounds.

SAMANTHA
...others... what others?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
A Times Square bombing at a military
recruiting station. A suicidal plane
crash at an IRS building in Austin,
Texas. A shooting at a congressional
baseball game in DC-- many others.

Sam trembles with fear.

SAMANTHA
...why?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
*"When the people fear their
government, there is tyranny; But
when government fears the people...
that is liberty."*

(then)

Do you know who said that? Thomas
Jefferson... one of your founding
fathers. The government should fear
its people-- what a novel idea. But
do they, Sam? Do you think they fear
the average citizen? Do you think
they fear you?

SAMANTHA
...I would hope not.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Of course not. Why would they. All
you do is talk-- all you do is
complain... there is no action from
your lot-- your caste... there is no
backbone...

Caller is growing angry now-- a noticeable shift in tone.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Why is that? Because Americans fear
their own government-- that's why.
And who could blame them? Your
government, if you attack them...
they *will* find you.

(MORE)

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Bin Laden, he needed disciples-- followers-- suicide bombers with families & friends. Every person, they are a dot-- you are a dot, I am a dot, he was a dot. Everyone who knows you, who interacts with you... they are a dot. Dots can be connected-- they will be connected. It was only a matter of time until those soldiers breached his compound, dragging his dead body onto a helicopter in the middle of the night... dropping him into an ocean like chum for sharks.

(then)

It was inevitable. Because he took *credit* for what he did. But I have no other dots-- no disciples-- no family-- no possibility of connecting an attack to me... I am a ghost...

Sam thinking-- realizing: it's true, he'll never be caught-- noticing a POLICE VEHICLE passing her-- attempting to wave it down and its SIRENS blare but...

It's gone, another emergency taking precedence.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

So you ask me why, Samantha? My answer is: liberty. You are not free if you live beneath the boot of a tyrant. Your government is tyrannical. This is the only way to keep it on a leash-- to keep it in check. It must fear its own people. And to do that, it must be unable to connect the dots-- to anticipate attacks-- to prevent attacks. It must come to the inevitable conclusion that the only way they will feel safe is to represent the very people they fear...

(a chuckle)

And if you won't do it yourselves... then I will do it for you.

AHEAD we glimpse the Washington Monument.

SAMANTHA

No one will believe I did this, they'll know I was forced-- that I'm a *victim* in this--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Will they? Think, Samantha: you are
 the prime suspect in your boss'
 death, wanted for attempted murder of
 a police officer, for burglary of a
 controlled substance... Every person
 who has interacted with you today
 would *testify* to your erratic
 behavior...

(twisting the knife)
 Even your own husband.

QUICK-FLASH! of Messenger's hands upon a KEYBOARD and...

QUICK-FLASH! of his LAPTOP SCREEN showing open SOCIAL MEDIA
 PAGES-- all of them belonging to Samantha Jensen and...

QUICK-FLASH! of various posts, tweets, text messages-- all
 building a case against her...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 You are very active online, Samantha.
 You've had choice words for your
 current administration. An unhappy
 citizen-- that is all it takes...

Taking an off-ramp, we stop at a RED LIGHT-- Sam's face
 awash with RED as her last drop of hope is drained.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Hell hath no fury...

Sam struggles to breathe-- to think.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Face it, Samantha. You are my suicide
 bomber-- a martyr of whatever belief
 I ascribe to you. The next Timothy
 McVeigh-- a lone wolf operating in
 isolation until she snapped when she
 learned of her husband's
infidelities...

Moving over Arlington Memorial Bridge, now-- the Potomac
 reflecting the MOON as we turn at the LINCOLN MEMORIAL.

SAMANTHA
 So you salt the capital-- killing
 thousands of innocents--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
Tens of thousands...

SAMANTHA

I go down as a domestic terrorist,
that's the plan...?

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Sounds so simple when you put it that
way. Think of the aftermath-- the
chaos-- the fallout-- the decade of
destruction & decay to follow. You'll
go down as the *worst* domestic
terrorist of all time, Samantha...

(then)

Take some pride in making history.

He LAUGHS, enjoying the game as we move onto Independence
Avenue, passing the WASHINGTON MONUMENT and spotting for the
first time: the CAPITOL BUILDING in the distance.

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Messenger watches the BLIP of Sam's SUV on a RADAR IMAGE on
his MONITORS-- a final RED DOT where the Capitol awaits--
Sam approaching it rapidly.

Messenger's dirty finger hovers over the ENTER KEY.

UNKNOWN CALLER

Do you see it, now? Your final
destination, Samantha...

MATCH-FADE TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. -- NIGHT

Radar image replaced by REAL VIDEO as Sam's SUV barrels
straight for the Capitol Building and...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

Did you know your congress is
currently meeting in the middle of
the night to pass a bill that will
rape the middle class of their social
security?

INT. SAM'S SUV (MOVING) -- NIGHT

Sam eyeing the lit-up CAPITOL with dread-- overcome with the
burden of this new information.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Their midnight surprise just got a
 system update I don't think they'll
 like...

SAMANTHA
 You don't have to do this-- please.
 This isn't the way to--

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Spare me your pleading-- you're
 better than that, Samantha. Don't
 fill your last moments with tears.

Sam begins HYPERVENTILATING-- racking her brain for an
 answer to this riddle-- how to prevent her personal tragedy
 from becoming a national tragedy...

SAMANTHA
 Please, let me call my daughter...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 Any attempt to tell her--

SAMANTHA
 I just want to say goodbye. Please.
 If there's any decency left in you,
 please: let me say goodbye.

A moment of silence...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 I'll be listening...

CLICK as he hangs up-- Sam pressing the CALL button on her
 steering wheel.

SAMANTHA
 Call home.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
 Calling home, *Jason*...

That name brings a tear to her eye.

EMERY (V.O.)
 Hello? Jensen residence.

SAMANTHA
 Emery, hi. It's Sam, um...
 (MORE)

SAMANTHA (cont'd)
 (suppressing emotion)
 Please, give the phone to Cee-Cee.
 Quickly-- I don't have much time.

EMERY (V.O.)
 She's sleeping--

SAMANTHA
 Wake her up and give her the phone.
Now...

EMERY (V.O.)
 ...okay.

SAMANTHA
 And Emery? Take the white rabbit from
 her room and throw it in the trash
 outside-- do you understand?

EMERY (V.O.)
 (annoyed)
 ...whatever you say.

We HEAR footfalls and a door CREAKING open and the muffled
 EXCHANGE between Emery and a groggy Cee-Cee as the CAPITOL
 BUILDING looms larger in the distance...

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
 Mommy?

Sam momentarily breaks down-- the weight of it all hitting
 her at once.

SAMANTHA
 Hey, baby...

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
 It's nighttime--

SAMANTHA
 I know, honey. I know. I just needed
 to tell you something is all...

Sam pausing, hadn't thought of what to say until now but
 before she can say anything:

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
 I had a dream.

SAMANTHA
 You did?

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
I was Alice chasing the rabbit and I
fell down the hole.

SAMANTHA
(emotion surfacing)
...oh no!

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
And it was dark and I couldn't see
anything and it was scary--

SAMANTHA
(tears streaming)
It's okay, baby. You're okay, now.

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
But there was light at the bottom, so
I just swam for it-- the light got
brighter and brighter...

Sam holding a hand over her mouth to suppress her crying.

CEE-CEE (V.O.) (cont'd)
And then I woke up. I dunno how it
ends...

CeeCee YAWNS audibly as we pass the NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
AMERICA and turn onto Maryland Avenue-- Capitol just a mile
ahead.

SAMANTHA
Mommy has to go, sweetheart.

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
What did you wanna tell me?

SAMANTHA
...that I love you. And that I'm
proud of you. And that...
(finding her message)
Alice doesn't die when she goes down
the rabbit hole. She lives. She goes
down the rabbit hole to *live*,
sweetie. Because there is always a
way out of the hole. Always...

CEE-CEE (V.O.)
I love you, mommy. G'night.

SAMANTHA
Goodnight, my Ceehorse.

Sam cries, eyes closing as the line goes dead and we...

FADE TO BLACK

AND WITHIN IT:

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

I want you to close your eyes-- Go on, close them... Now, I want you to imagine something very specific for me: picture a single, solitary pin-prick of light within a void of utter nothingness. Thick, black emptiness. But this pin-prick of light, it's becoming larger, brighter, stronger. It's calling you, drawing you near...

A tiny dot of LIGHT appears like a BLUE beacon as...

SAM'S POV: her eyes slitting open, through SHIMMERING tears she sees the BLINKING BLUE LIGHT on her IGNITION INTERLOCK BREATHALYZER and...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)

(echoed from earlier)

"But humans are fallible. That is the weakness in every plan: *human fallibility.*"

(pause)

"Everything and every person has a weakness."

INT. SAM'S SUV -- CONTINUOUS

Sam sparks with an idea-- moving to the rear to find the...

FIRST AID KIT

that once held the gun & silencer but which now only holds that SILVER SPACE BLANKET.

She takes that & wraps it around her shoulders like a cape.

Returning to the front, she finds the nearly empty VODKA BOTTLE and *smashes* it against the dashboard-- using the sharp shard of the BOTTLE NECK as...

SHE BEGINS TO SAW THROUGH THE BREATHALYZER CORD!

Its steady blue light starts BLINKING RED as she WRENCHES it as hard as she can-- SAWING HARDER-- a shrill ALARM blasting as the RED LIGHT INTENSIFIES and morphs into a brilliant, shimmering VIOLET PURPLE-- *its light growing brighter and brighter until it IGNITES THE FRAME as...*

SAM SEVERS THE CORD and--

Vehicle's engine immediately *DIES* as--

SUV slows from 90 MPH to 80 then 70 then 60 but---

We're still going fast enough to collide with the Capitol steps and--

SUV is now veering off-course wildly and--

Sam attempts to wrangle the steering wheel but it's LOCKED in place as--

SUV HOPS A CURB AND VIOLENTLY *SKIIIIIIIDS* SIDEWAYS AND--

EXT. CAPITOL LAWN -- SIMULTANEOUS

SUV flips sideways-- over and over-- metal and glass SHATTER as the vehicle hits the Capitol Lawn and...

Comes to a rest upside down-- 20 yards from the Capitol.

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Messenger's dirty finger still hovers over the ENTER KEY-- the BLUE DOT halted an inch from the RED DOT.

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
 What happened-- how'd she stop-- it's almost there. It's almost there, *keep going goddamnit!*

His finger trembles over the ENTER KEY, wavering as...

INT. SAM'S SUV -- NIGHT

Sam hangs UPSIDE DOWN, releases her seatbelt and falls to the ceiling/ground with a THUD-- *soaked with airbag powder, gasoline and blood.*

She finds her driver window BUSTED OPEN and...

EXT. CAPITOL LAWN -- CONTINUOUS

Sam painfully crawls from the wrecked coffin-- leg broken-- glass fragments embedded in her skin-- space blanket clinging to her aching shoulders as...

GAWKERS & ONLOOKERS collect on the periphery, Sam motioning & weakly pleading for them to run.

GASOLINE is still spilling from the vehicle's rear, Sam still within blast radius as...

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

DIRTY FINGER wavering over ENTER as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (O.S.)
 ...not close enough...she's not close
 enough! *WHY DID IT STOP! HOW!*

EXT. CAPITOL LAWN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Sam is *thisclose* to escaping the gasoline but the crawl is so slow and tortuous that she chooses to *stop*-- eyeing the crowd that is eyeing her back.

All those innocent lives at stake-- and the millions of others out there beyond them-- remembering, echoing:

SAMANTHA (V.O.)
*"I wanted to at least help people...
 someway... somehow..."*

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
*"...poor, little Samantha Jensen from
 Sugar Creek, Missouri who did what
 all spoiled assholes do..."*
 (beat)
*"Like a code imprinted in your
 hardware."*

She turns to the upside-down SUV, makes a choice:

AT THE SUV

Sam scrambles through the BROKEN DRIVER WINDOW, crawls painfully through GLASS SHARDS & SPILLING GASOLINE into the...

REAR OF THE SUV

And she CLAWS at the floor cover that is now more of a CEILING COVER and she wrenches it off and--

She fumbles with the EXPLOSIVE, desperately heaving the NOW BROKEN LOCK to reveal the RADIOACTIVE THERMOS.

Sam takes a few deep breaths-- CRYING NOW-- for her self, for her daughter, for the long life she'll likely live without her until...

She grabs the thermos, wrapping it in the SPACE BLANKET.

EXT. CAPITOL LAWN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Sam army crawls from the vehicle, WRAPPED THERMOS in her shaking hand, desperate to escape the blast radius, climbing to her feet-- LIMPING away as...

SAMANTHA
(to onlookers)
Run... Run!... *RUUUUUN!*

INT. MESSENGER VAN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Messenger SLAMS a dirty fist upon a workstation, SCREWS & BOLTS shaking as...

UNKNOWN CALLER (V.O.)
...fuck it... good enough.

His DIRTY FINGER stabs the ENTER KEY and...

EXT. CAPITOL LAWN -- SIMULTANEOUS

Sam limps painfully away from the ticking-clock of the SUV until she HEARS: the quick *BEEP-BEEP-BEEP* of the explosive so...

She closes her eyes as if in silent prayer and...

With her last ounce of strength, just as the SUV explodes:

Sam LAUNCHES the THERMOS as...

She's consumed by the outer edge of the BLAST, but...

THE THERMOS

sails free-- rolling and landing at the feet of the CROWD as they run for cover and...

MATCH-FADE TO:

THE THERMOS

upright in a contamination case inside of...

INT. QUARANTINE UNIT -- DAY

where Sam lies in a hospital bed-- a layer of bandages covering her burned skin like proverbial *salt* in the wound.

She lies unconscious and, amongst the steady *drip... drip... drip...* of morphine, valium and saline, we HEAR snippets of REPORTERS relaying the chaos of what has occurred OVER bystander cell-phone footage on a corner TV:

1ST REPORTER (V.O.)

--in an attempted terrorist attack on the nation's capitol where witnesses say Mrs. Jensen pulled herself from the wrecked vehicle--

We then slowly ZOOM IN on Sam as...

2ND REPORTER (V.O.)

--throwing a thermos containing radioactive material to safety before the vehicle exploded--

NOTICE: her broken leg now in an ELEVATED CAST...

3RD REPORTER (V.O.)

--not yet known what the cause of the accident was or why Mrs. Jensen was in possession of such a substance--

ARMS BANDAGED from radiation exposure...

4TH REPORTER (V.O.)

--said by officials that it is believed Mrs. Jensen was the victim of an extreme case of terrorist grooming--

MEDICAL VENTILATOR down her throat...

5TH REPORTER (V.O.)
 --the result of the vehicle being
 hacked and controlled by an as-of-yet
 unknown and unidentified terror
 group--

BURN BANDAGES partially obscuring her face and hair...

6TH REPORTER (V.O.)
 --perhaps all that is really known at
 this time is that she is now in
 critical condition... and that she is
a true American hero.

CLOSER AND CLOSER until Sam blinks awake and...

SAM'S POV

as her eyes attempt to FOCUS-- mind attempting to piece
 together the fragments of memories available to her.

Fingers weakly clawing at her IV-- hands pulling at the
 VENTILATOR snaking to her lungs until she *slips* it out and a
 TINY ALARM *blares* as Sam COUGHS, catching her breath.

She eyes the room: the FLOWERS on a side table, GIFT BASKETS
 on another, GET WELL CARDS littering the surface of a long
 table on a far wall and...

A STUFFED WHITE RABBIT

perched amongst the cards-- its black eyes staring absently,
 betraying neither the source of its delivery nor the
 contents it may hold inside...

SMASH TO BLACK.

THE END