

THE RAVINE

by

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SCENE 1

City ravine. Finn Kagan, 40, sits on a log near a lean-to belonging to Michele Gayle, 55, while she describes her problem.

MICHELE

If a man walks out on his family in the middle of the night when he knows the rent is due and there's nothing in the house for his children to eat, and he stays away for weeks then just walks back in one day without offering any kind of apology or a clue to where's he been and then pretty soon starts doing very dangerous illegal things that put his family in extreme peril, and does those things right up until the day he disappears for good... well then that man should be tracked down and made accountable for his actions. Don't you think? Don't you think he should be made accountable?

FINN

Probably.

MICHELE

"Probably." What the hell does that mean? After what I've told you about him? How he treated his family? How he was a drug taker, and drug dealer, and a whole lot of other things as well.

(handing him a piece of paper)

Here.

FINN

What's this?

MICHELE

A list of all the rotten things he was. And all the illegal things he did. Right up to the moment he vanished almost twenty-five years ago.

FINN

Twenty-five years.

MICHELE

Yeah. Twenty-five carefree years for him and crappy poverty soaked years for me.

FINN

Okay. And after all this time you suddenly want to make him--

MICHELE

Accountable, yeah. Well I've tried to move past it. But I know I'll only have peace of mind if he's made to answer for it in a very big way. That's why I came to this nasty soulless city and put myself in this vulnerable situation. You think a person would put herself in a situation like this if she didn't have to? I mean look around fella. I'm living amongst the most desperate members of our society here. And by desperate I mean fucking terrifying. So... I'm hoping you'll find him before a certain "neighbour" of mine who's living in those bushes behind me, hears the voices in his head tell him to slit my throat.

FINN

If you think that might actually happen, maybe you should move into a shelter.

MICHELE

And maybe you should keep your advice to yourself. Just go find the son-of-a-bitch and make him accountable, like I asked.

FINN

Well here's the problem with that. I'm a skip tracer. That means I find people. Nothing more. You're going to have to look for accountability somewhere else.

MICHELE

Like where?

FINN

Well most people turn to the police.

MICHELE

Jesus. This man had no respect for the law.

(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)

He ignored multiple restraining orders, came into my house and terrorized me and my kids any time he felt like it. Do you have a gun? I was told you do.

FINN

Told by who?

MICHELE

Whom. Told by whom, dear. Why's that important? I'm just saying, with a gun you could definitely make him accountable. You could put a bullet in his brain and leave his body in the street for people to relieve themselves on. People who found out what he'd done to me and his children could piss on his corpse to demonstrate their total contempt for the asshole. He needs to be remembered with contempt and disgust. Because he was less than human. Less than a rabid animal. And especially less than me. Don't be fooled by my current living arrangements. I am an educated useful person. The man you'll be looking for is a deceitful snake. I studied to be a nurse. Only thing he ever studied for was how to be a cowardly piece of shit. I'm a mother who cared for her children, and he's a selfish creep who left them to starve. So if you have that gun like I've been told you do, when you find him you should definitely reconsider making him finally and completely accountable. Will you do that?

FINN

No.

MICHELE

Oh Jesus Christ. Are you sure?

FINN

Yes.

MICHELE

Well can you at least recommend someone who will?

FINN

No.

MICHELE

Come on. There has to be someone who's up for it. Just give me a phone number. I'll do the asking.

FINN

No. I'll find this man you're looking for, but that's it, okay.

MICHELE

Well it's a start. I can pay you a hundred dollars. But it'll have to be on time. Is ten dollars a year good enough?

FINN

Not really. But maybe there's another way we can work this. I'm guessing he owed money to people.

MICHELE

To everyone. For example, he never made a single payment on our fridge and stove. But that was from a store back home. Bert's Appliances.

FINN

Yeah they've got a place here too. Maybe I can track him down on their dime. I've located a few debtors for them in the past.

MICHELE

Just located them?

FINN

I don't kill people for Bert's Appliances, if that's what you're getting at.

MICHELE

Well you must be doing it for someone because you've got a reputation for it.

FINN

People talk a lot of nonsense about shit like that. Look I'll find him and let you know where he is. What you do with that information is your decision. You mentioned a photo.

MICHELE

Yeah...
(takes it from her pocket)
Here you go.

She hands him the picture.

FINN

(smiling at photo)
Where was this taken?

MICHELE

On the escarpment. Should have pushed the prick over when I had the chance ... Why are you smiling? Do you recognize him?

FINN

I'll get back to you.
(starts off)
You know, there are *three* paths off the reservoir. If you don't want people getting lost, you should tell them to take the one that leads south.

MICHELE

What people? You think I'll be throwing a party here or something? Look if you're planning to find the bastard through friends or family that won't work. No one in his family is still alive. And the few friends he had were all mean and stupid just like him. If you go anywhere near them you should definitely take your gun.

He just smiles and makes his way out through the brush.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

I'm not kidding, you know!

Blackout.

SCENE 2

A condo. Finn is talking to candidate for Mayor, Oscar Wallace and his assistant Cassie Franz.

OSCAR

She's living in a freakin' ravine?
What the hell's that about?

FINN

I'm not really sure.

CASSIE

What's she want from him?

FINN

She wants him dead.

CASSIE

She told you that?

FINN

She said she wants him made
accountable.

OSCAR

What the hell does that mean?

CASSIE

She sounds unstable.

(to Finn)

Do you think she's all there?

OSCAR

She was never all there. She was
moody as hell and prone to weird
exaggerations. The woman drove me
to drugs. She really did.

Cassie moves closer to Oscar.

CASSIE

(quietly)

That's going to be your defense, is
it? When she gets the press down
into that ravine and tells her
story, you'll be saying it was her
fault? Your addiction, your dope
dealing it was all because she was
difficult to live with?

OSCAR

First off, I was never a dope
dealer. And I wasn't really
addicted. It was just a--

CASSIE

(to Finn)

That's what she's planning to say, right? That he was a dealer.

FINN

(to Oscar)

And also that you deserted her and your kids.

OSCAR

What kids?

FINN

You saying you didn't have children?

OSCAR

No way, man. Look this was a very brief thing. We got married. She drove me nuts. I got the hell away from her, moved here, rehabilitated myself and--

FINN

Changed your name.

OSCAR

So what? I never felt like a Wally Oslo. Oscar Wallace is a name I knew would take me places. And changing your name isn't a crime by the way. I checked.

CASSIE

Good for you.

(back to Finn)

Okay so what's this really about?

FINN

Well as soon as there's confirmation that Oscar here's the same man she was married to, she's going to--

CASSIE

Threaten to expose him unless he pays her off.

FINN

No. Have him killed.

OSCAR

Jesus. So what are you planning to do?

FINN

Nothing.

CASSIE

He means what are you going to tell her?

FINN

I'm going to tell her I found him. I only came here to warn him that he might be in danger.

(to Oscar)

She hired me to find you, and I'm obligated to tell her that I did.

OSCAR

How about we hire you to tell her you that you *didn't*?

FINN

That won't work for me.

CASSIE

You mean for ethical reasons?

FINN

I guess.

CASSIE

Please. You're talking like I don't know you, Finn.

FINN

You may think you know me, but you got yourself into a lot of trouble from thinking that once before.

OSCAR

It's the money, isn't it?

(to Cassie)

He wants to hear how much we're offering first.

CASSIE

How much is she paying you?

FINN

She offered a hundred.

OSCAR

What the...

(to Cassie)

Can we top a hundred grand?

FINN

Not a hundred grand. Just a hundred. Ten bucks a year for ten years.

OSCAR

Really? Well we can do better than that, no problem.

CASSIE

He's kidding.

(to Finn)

Okay stop messing with us. How much do you want?

FINN

Like I said, I just came with a warning.

(to Oscar)

If I were you I'd get a little extra protection. She seems pretty determined.

Finn stands.

FINN (CONT'D)

(to Oscar)

Good luck with the election.

OSCAR

It's in the bag.

Finn starts off.

FINN

(smiling)

See ya, Cass.

She gives him the finger.

OSCAR

Maybe we should call the police.

CASSIE

And tell them what?

OSCAR

The truth.

CASSIE

The truth about what? Your past? Maybe we should just send a picture to all the papers of you shooting heroin ... We need to take the initiative.

OSCAR

How?

CASSIE

Well I'll need a minute or two to think about it, right.

OSCAR

Sure. Take your time. I mean there's a loony bitch out there trying to hire someone to murder me, but that's nothing to be--

CASSIE

Hey! Whatever we do has to actually work. So it deserves a little consideration, okay. I've put in too many hours on this campaign to have it all blown apart at the last minute. You were quite a prick, weren't you?

OSCAR

I was young. And I'm not perfect. Maybe you are but--

CASSIE

Oh shut up. That's going to be your excuse? You're not perfect? That woman is going to be telling people that you were a dope dealer and a negligent abusive father.

OSCAR

She'll be lying.

CASSIE

She's living in a ravine. People will give her the benefit of the doubt.

OSCAR

What people?

CASSIE

People who don't think anyone should be living in a freakin' ravine. We're finished, take my word for it. If we don't get her to back off, we're--

OSCAR

What about that thing?

CASSIE

What thing?

OSCAR

That thing you call it when people ask what I'm going to-

CASSIE

Your agenda?

OSCAR

Yeah. People will remain supportive because of all the things I'm planning to do for this city.

CASSIE

You mean all the things you say you're planning to do.

OSCAR

Who was that guy Finn anyway? You seemed to know each other.

CASSIE

A friend of a friend. It's just a coincidence.

OSCAR

What is?

CASSIE

That he's the one she hired to find you, what else.

OSCAR

What is he, an ex-cop or something?

CASSIE

What's wrong with you? I told you what he was when I introduced him to you.

OSCAR

You know I never pay attention at the beginning of a conversation. It's one of my quirks.

CASSIE

No it's one of your deficiencies, trust me. He's a skip tracer now.

OSCAR

A what?

CASSIE

(hands him Finn's business card)

He...finds people.

She is thinking.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Why would she need a skip tracer? Your name change wouldn't have fooled her. Neither would your nose job.

OSCAR

What nose job? I didn't have a--

CASSIE

(throws him a look)

She could have just confronted you at any one of your public appearances. What's going on?

OSCAR

I don't know.

CASSIE

I wasn't asking you. I was just--

The phone rings.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

That's your radio interview.

OSCAR

Cancel it for me. I'm too upset. Also, I'm pretty hung over from last night's rally so--

CASSIE

Pick up the goddamn phone. You're doing the interview.

OSCAR

Come on, it's just one of those little pukes who've been ridiculing me for months. And now he probably wants to kiss my ass because he knows I'm gonna win.

CASSIE

Okay. So let him.

She hands him the phone.

OSCAR

Oscar Wallace here... Yeah hi... Sure no problem ... Yes. I'm very excited ... Whatya mean why?

(covers speaker)

I told you. The guy's douche bag.

(into phone)

Well I guess I'm excited because it's... very exciting. We're at the beginning of new era, a new way of doing business in this city. There'll be no more waste on my watch. The tax payers will be honoured. The rich, the poor, and everyone in between... Yes obviously that would be the middle class ... I don't care.

(MORE)

OSCAR (CONT'D)

You can write "everyone in between"
or "the middle class," what's it
matter?

Cassie mouths "middle class."

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Actually middle class is better.
Write middle class...

(covers phone)

And then you can suck my very large
dick, you pile of dog vomit.

He grabs his crotch and shoves it in the face of a kneeling
invisible person. Finn sticks his head back in the condo.

FINN

I forgot. Bert's Appliances wants
their money.

OSCAR

(into phone)

Hold on a second.

(to Finn)

What the hell are you talking
about?

FINN

You owe them for a fridge and
stove. Two thousand bucks. Six
hundred for the appliances and the
rest is interest.

Finn leaves again. Cassie turns to Oscar.

CASSIE

Is that true?

OSCAR

Maybe. I don't remember. Take care
of it, will ya.

(back to phone)

Still there?... No I don't know why
you *wouldn't* be there.

(covers phone)

You snarky pus-filled troll.

(into phone)

It was just an expression.

Blackout.

SCENE 3

The ravine. Michele is sitting in front of her lean-to reading a book. Parnell, an ageless homeless guy, stands in the rough watching her. He steps forward.

PARNELL

Hey.

Michele is startled.

PARNELL (CONT'D)

I heard you talking to that guy, you know. I heard you say you were worried I might slit your throat.

MICHELE

Yeah? What makes you think I was talking about you?

(lowers book)

You ever done that kind of thing?

PARNELL

No. But the way you look at me suggests you think I might have. And it kinda hurts my feelings. I know I don't look so great right now, but I'm not--

MICHELE

I was talking about that guy who lives lower down by the creek. You know, with the ferret.

PARNELL

Cal? He's okay.

MICHELE

No. He is absolutely not okay. People should be careful around him. He's sitting on a lot of anger. You don't want to be anywhere near him when he blows. Look for the warning signs.

PARNELL

What are they?

MICHELE

You'll know them when you see them. And try not to irritate him. That's the thing to avoid the most. Trust me, I have experience with the male temperament.

PARNELL

Okay. I'll try be careful around him.

MICHELE

Good. And I guess I can try to view you in a more kindly way.

PARNELL

It's just that I'm not used to it yet. You know, looking the way I do. Having people treat me like there's something wrong with me. Thing is, I was actually doing all right up until about three months ago.

MICHELE

Something go wrong...
(touches her head)
...up here?

PARNELL

No. Okay, yeah. Kinda. But I'm better now.

MICHELE

Because of the medication?

PARNELL

Sometimes. Sometimes just from willpower. Anyway, I'm better.

MICHELE

Really. So why aren't you out there doing something?

PARNELL

Like what?

MICHELE

Like working.

PARNELL

I don't know. I guess I don't see the point. You must feel kinda the same way, right?

MICHELE

Absolutely not. Productive work is essential to a healthy life.

PARNELL

Except here you are...

MICHELE

Yes here I am... doing probably the most productive thing I've ever done in my life. Was it something specific that messed up your mind?

PARNELL

A table.

MICHELE

Excuse me?

PARNELL

I put a table out with the garbage.
And they wouldn't take it.

MICHELE

That's it?

PARNELL

Oh no that was just the beginning.
You see, I thought that anything I
deemed to be garbage should be
taken away with all the other
garbage. But the "sanitation
workers" wouldn't do it. No matter
how often I asked. And when it was
still on my lawn after seven weeks
I started to get annoyed.

MICHELE

Just annoyed?

PARNELL

Deeply annoyed. And that deep
annoyance led to a feeling of
victimization. And that *feeling* led
to an examination of all the other
ways I was being bullied and
victimized.

MICHELE

By the people who picked up your
garbage?

PARNELL

Them. And others. First it was my
insurance company and how after I'd
had a minor car accident and paid
my five hundred dollar deductible,
they reluctantly agreed to pay for
the damage but immediately raised
my monthly payment and then refused
to lower it even after they'd
recouped their costs. And do you
know what that makes them? It makes
them unscrupulous purveyors of high
interest loans with the moral fibre
of common thieves. I mean that's
just an example. You know, of where
I was putting my energy.

(MORE)

PARNELL (CONT'D)

And the more involved I got in looking at how I was being screwed by just about everyone, but especially the insurance company and of course the various levels of government--

MICHELE

The more annoyed you got.

PARNELL

Well it was way beyond annoyance at that point. It was--

MICHELE

Anger. A lot of anger.

PARNELL

Yeah. Raging anger. I raged and ranted at everything. From morning to night. I ranted until my family left me. I screamed until the neighbours called the police. I ran through the streets crying and ranting at everyone I came across. And then one night I was running and ranting and...all of a sudden everything went kinda blurry. And then there was darkness. And then after quite awhile... there wasn't. There was a bit of light. And noise. And a really bad smell. And that's when I found myself... put away.

MICHELE

In a hospital.

PARNELL

Eventually. But first in jail. Apparently while I was in the darkness, I'd become an arsonist. They said I'd set nine fires. Five government buildings. Three insurance companies and one animal hospital. That last one was probably because of the outrageous fee they charged to put my beloved dog down. Don't know for sure. I have no memory of doing any of it.

MICHELE

That's because you'd had a psychotic break.

(off his look)

A sudden loss of contact with reality.

PARNELL

And you know this because...?

MICHELE

I was a psychiatric nurse. And also well, I had one myself.

PARNELL

Really. And that's why you're here?

MICHELE

No. I told you why I'm here. I'm trying to do something productive.

PARNELL

Right. Okay. Do you need any help?

MICHELE

Maybe. Are you any good in a fight?

PARNELL

You mean a real fight? Not just a heated argument?

MICHELE

I'm about to enter into a conflict with a dark and powerful force.

PARNELL

You're not talking about the devil, are you? There are a lot of people around us here who seem to be obsessed with the devil. And most of them are...unwell. Actually as long as we're on the subject, I'm still pretty unwell myself. So I probably won't be much use to you. Tell you what though...

(produces a hunting knife
from his belt)

...you can borrow this if you think you might need it.

She produces a much larger hunting knife from under the bottom of her pant leg.

MICHELE

That's okay. This should do.

Blackout.

SCENE 4

Late night under a lamp post on the bridge. Cassie is watching Finn approach.

CASSIE

You're late.

FINN

You're lucky I came at all. I'm a busy guy.

CASSIE

Really. You've got a lot of people to track down, have you?

FINN

Yeah well when things are this rough out there, people sometimes head for the hills. How's Lesley?

CASSIE

She's fine.

FINN

Send her my best.

CASSIE

I'll think about it... So these people you find, they've usually defaulted on a debt of some kind. Except for my boss. That was a little different.

FINN

Well he owed that appliance store.

CASSIE

Right. But essentially, you located him for a woman who wants to kill him.

FINN

Did he take care of that by the way?

(off her look)

Pay for that fridge and stove.

CASSIE

It'll get sorted out.

FINN

When? Because I'll only get my fee if--

CASSIE

Hey! I didn't ask to meet you so we could talk about some goddamn appliances... Look he's basically a good man.

FINN

According to his ex-wife, he's basically a piece of shit.

CASSIE

It's possible that he *used* to be a piece of shit. He's changed. I think he'll be a good mayor. I mean if you were wondering if he's worth protecting.

FINN

I wasn't. But now that you bring it up, a lot of people think he's not very smart.

CASSIE

Well he's smart enough to surround himself with the right people.

FINN

You mean *you*.

CASSIE

Yeah I do. So Finn, what's the deal with you anyway? I mean Lesley thinks you've actually left your old life behind. But you wanna know what I think?

FINN

Sure. What the hell.

CASSIE

I think this skip tracer thing is just a way to make tracking people down look legitimate. You find them then one of your pals puts a bullet in their head.

FINN

Instead of getting them to pay their bills, you mean.

CASSIE

Well isn't that what the mob considers to be payment? Or are you saying Carmen just takes people who owe him to court these days?

FINN

I don't know what Carmen does these days. We don't move in the same circles anymore.

CASSIE

Right. Because you're a different person than you used to be.

FINN

Who I used to be was something you had all wrong, Cassie.

CASSIE

What I had was evidence that you were a hired killer.

FINN

Evidence that you fabricated.

CASSIE

Ah come on, Finn. There's no one around. Just admit that you killed all those poor bastards. Bare your soul. Cleanse your conscience. Get right with Jesus, man!!

FINN

Wow. You're even crazier than you used to be.

CASSIE

You're a fucking assassin!
(grabs him)
Why else would that woman have hired you!?

FINN

(holding her off)
Hey. Get it together. That lady contacted me because she heard the same wrong things about me you did.
(pushes her off)
Yeah, she wanted me to kill your boss, but I set her straight.

CASSIE

You talked her out of it?

FINN

No that would have been presumptuous. I told her she'd have to find someone else. Just like any other law abiding citizen would have done.

CASSIE

(putting it together)

So she wants him dead because he mistreated her, and she thinks he should pay for it. But not with money. She's living in a ravine, but she doesn't want *money* from him. She just wants him dead. Is she crazy?

FINN

Maybe.

CASSIE

Or maybe she just wants to get him to think that. You know, get him squirming, then come at us with her real intention.

FINN

Which is?

CASSIE

To expose him as a piece of shit.

FINN

You mean the piece of shit he used to be.

CASSIE

Go talk to her. Tell her we're willing to pay her to go away.

FINN

I don't think trying to buy her off is gonna work.

CASSIE

Well we should still try that approach first. If it fails, we can revisit the issue.

FINN

So there's a plan B.

CASSIE

Yeah. So how much do you want?

FINN

To talk to her? Five hundred.

CASSIE

That's a bit steep.

FINN

She's pretty hard to talk to.

Cassie takes out an envelope stuffed with bills.

CASSIE
(handing him five hundred
dollar bills)
Here...

FINN
Looks like you've still got about a
grand in there. You usually carry
that much cash around?

CASSIE
It was to pay you in case we
skipped right to plan B.

FINN
Plan B being the thing you think I
used to do. That wouldn't have been
enough, sweetheart.

He touches her cheek.

CASSIE
(pushing his hand away)
Don't!

FINN
(touches her cheek again)
Not nearly enough...

CASSIE
(pushes his hand off
again)
I said don't!!

He smiles and walks away.

CASSIE (CONT'D)
Asshole! Blow me!!

Blackout.

SCENE 5

Michele is outside the lean-to reading a newspaper as Finn approaches.

MICHELE

Says here that there's going to be a big rally for his supporters at the convention centre tomorrow. He's going to be making a speech.

FINN

Where'd you get the newspaper?

MICHELE

I have it delivered. It took some doing, but it's important to stay informed. So whatya say? That convention hall. You in the rafters with a long-range rifle. You'll probably never get a better chance.

FINN

He's never done anything to me.

MICHELE

Like that's the issue.

FINN

Why didn't you just tell me who he was?

MICHELE

Why didn't you tell me you recognized him from that photo? I guess you informed the asswipe that I was gunning for him.

FINN

Isn't that what you wanted me to do?

MICHELE

Maybe. I'm not sure. What now?

FINN

Well that's up to you. You know where he's gonna be tomorrow. If you're willing to settle for just ruining his career you can show up and tell everyone your story.

MICHELE

You think people will care about what he did to me? Some slightly unbalanced middle-aged woman who no one wants to listen to, fuck, or in any other way engage.

FINN

I think I can convince them to give you some money.

MICHELE

Them?

FINN

He has an... advisor. She's the one I'd be negotiating with.

MICHELE

And as a "negotiator," you'll probably want a piece for yourself, right.

FINN

Twenty percent of whatever I can squeeze out of them. I think that's fair.

MICHELE

I think it's too much.

FINN

Well that's my fee. And if that's an option you'd like to explore--

MICHELE

It's better if he gets killed. He's not through causing harm. His kind just keeps finding new ways to do it. One bullet in the forehead and whatever ugliness he's planning to unleash won't be an issue.

FINN

Take the money.

MICHELE

Kill him.

FINN

No.

MICHELE

(grabs him)

Kill the bastard, or I'll do it myself!

FINN

Okay do it yourself then! Jesus!
(pushes her off)
What the hell is it to me!?

Finn leaves. Michele goes after him.

MICHELE

You're a human being, aren't you?!

Finn starts to run.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

You've got an obligation to be helpful!

Michele turns back just as Parnell stumbles out of the brush.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

What the hell do you want?

PARNELL

I'll do it. I mean if you feel that strongly about it. I don't have a rifle though.

(a tad debonair)

I'll have to use my knife. Or maybe my bare hands.

MICHELE

Are you serious?

PARNELL

I'm always serious.

Blackout.

SCENE 6

Convention hall. Oscar in a spotlight. The crowd chants "Oscar, Oscar, Oscar" for awhile then goes silent. Oscar looks confused and/or lost in thought. Cassie is in the audience with her partner Lesley who is eight months pregnant. Cassie is holding a placard which reads: "OSCAR WALLACE, Tough but Fair."

LESLEY

What's wrong with him?

CASSIE

He's gathering his thoughts.

LESLEY

You mean *your* thoughts.

CASSIE

Yeah. Also, he's probably hoping they'll start to chant his name again. He likes that a lot.

LESLEY

(looks around)
I don't think that's gonna happen, sweetie.

CASSIE

Well not without a little help.
(starts a chant)
Oscar! Oscar! Oscar!
(nudges Lesley)
Oscar! Oscar!

Lesley joins in.

LESLEY/CASSIE

Oscar, Oscar, Oscar....

And many more people join in, and the Oscar chant grows to a deafening height. Oscar looks out, smiles and raises his hand for them to be quiet. And quiet, they gradually become.

OSCAR

(while they quiet)
Thank you. Thank you... Thanks.
Thanks a lot. Thanks. Thank you.

CASSIE

(to herself)
Okay...that's enough. Just...

OSCAR

Thanks...

CASSIE

Start. Why won't he just start!

LESLEY
(to Cassie)
Shush.

OSCAR
Thanks... Thanks a lot...

CASSIE
Jesus...

OSCAR
Tonight... tonight is... tonight
is...

CASSIE
(to herself)
The beginning...

OSCAR
Tonight is the beginning of--

CASSIE
(to herself)
The beginning of a new era...

OSCAR
A new era. A new era when...
when...

CASSIE
(loudly to Oscar)
...when tough choices will no
longer be avoided and--

OSCAR
No. I think I want to tell you all
a story first...

CASSIE
Oh sweet mother of god.

OSCAR
(to Cassie)
Relax.
(to crowd)
A story about a man who I met on my
way into the hall. A man who's had
experience with a level of
bureaucratic insensitivity that
would drive most of us insane.
A man who... Well why don't I just
let him tell you for himself.

CASSIE
What?

OSCAR

Yeah I'm just gonna bring him out here and let him tell you what he, one of your fellow citizens, has had to endure.

CASSIE

(starting forward)
The hell you are, you moron!

LESLEY

(grabbing her)
Cassie!!

OSCAR

(to wings)
Come on. Come on out, and tell these people your story!

Parnell enters shyly.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Let them hear just what's wrong with the way we're conducting business in this city.

Parnell joins Oscar in the spotlight.

LESLEY

That man doesn't look very well.

OSCAR

(to Parnell)
Go ahead. Tell these people your story. Go ahead...

PARNELL

Okay.
(to crowd)
Well the thing is, I just wanted to get rid of this old table I had. So I put it out with the garbage. But they wouldn't take it.

OSCAR

Who wouldn't take it?

PARNELL

The garbage collectors.

OSCAR

The garbage collectors would not take this man's garbage. They're being paid very well to take it, their union has made sure of that, but they refused.

PARNELL

Yeah. They refused.

OSCAR

And why? Why did they refuse?

PARNELL

They said it wasn't garbage.

OSCAR

Not garbage.

PARNELL

No. I mean yes, not garbage.

OSCAR

To which you replied...?

PARNELL

It is. It is garbage. So please take it away.

OSCAR

Please take it away. You said please, right?

PARNELL

Yes. I did.

OSCAR

In other words you begged.

PARNELL

Yes. I did.

OSCAR

And did they take it away then?

PARNELL

No. They didn't.

OSCAR

But surely they must have taken it away eventually. Did they take it away eventually?

PARNELL

No they did not.

OSCAR

They *did not*. They *never* took it away, did they. You begged those very well paid civic employees to take away your garbage, and still they refused. In other words, they would not do their jobs.

(MORE)

OSCAR (CONT'D)

They were being paid by you taxpayers to do these jobs, but they believed they could just ignore their duty and their obligation to this man and by association every other tax payer who pays their wages, and just... refuse! Well I for one refuse to take their refusal lying down. I take their refusal to do the jobs we pay them to do as a personal insult and a clear sign that we need a change of leadership in this city. And believe me, if I am your mayor, you will never hear about anyone refusing to do their very well paid union jobs ever again!

LESLEY

Oscar! Oscar! Oscar!

Cassie looks at her as the crowd joins in.

CASSIE

What are you doing?

LESLEY

I've had serious issues with our garbage collection too.

CASSIE

(grabbing her)

Jesus...

They leave.

Oscar acknowledges the crowd, grabs Parnell's hand and raises it. They both acknowledge the crowd's chanting. They hug. Parnell seems overwhelmed.

OSCAR

And one more thing! DO... YOU...
HATE GOVERNMENT!?

A rousing YES from the crowd.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Well so do I! I hate government so much it makes me wanna throw up! And if I'm elected, I promise there will be no more government! No more wasted time. No more "differences of opinion" about what to do. There will just be you and me actually *doing* what needs to be done! You will voice your concerns. And I will listen, and do something about them! You. And me. You and Me!

(MORE)

OSCAR (CONT'D)

You and Me!

(urging the crowd to join
in)

You. And. Me!

And the crowd does!

Blackout.

SCENE 7

The ravine. Cassie and Lesley are approaching the campsite.

CASSIE

What's he care about why the goddamn garbage isn't taken away? Of all the issues he could use to rile people up. I worked on that speech for three goddamn months. It covered all the policy issues. It outlined in detail a five-year plan to eliminate-- Are you all right? You look pale.

LESLEY

I'm fine.

They are in the campsite.

CASSIE

(looking around)

Good. Two months of painstaking research and another month to put it into language that he could get his mouth and brain around. If Oscar's not going to bother delivering the speeches I write for him, what's the point of me staying on.

LESLEY

The pay cheque.

CASSIE

Right. But other than that...

LESLEY

The pay cheque's a good enough reason, trust me. Or are we prepared to let this baby starve?

CASSIE

(looking around)

I don't think you should be here. This woman might be--

LESLEY

I'll be fine.

(finding somewhere to sit)

And you're too worked up to do any negotiating on your own. It would have been better to let Finn handle this.

CASSIE

Well have I heard from the prick?
He probably had to hop a plane and
go ice someone for his boss.

LESLEY

You've gotta let that go, Cass.
When Finn was a young guy, Carmen
would occasionally have him lean on
someone. But he never--

CASSIE

Gino Volpe, Michael Gallagher,
Chris Starkman. He did them all.
And I proved it. Idiot judge just
didn't like the way I did it.

LESLEY

Neither did your boss.

CASSIE

Prosecutorial malice. What a pile
of shit.

Michele is coming out of the bushes, doing up her pants.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

(seeing Michele approach)
Jesus. Look at her. You better go.

LESLEY

I don't wanna go.

CASSIE

But she looks--

MICHELE

(walking up to them)
Who are you?

CASSIE

My name is Cassie Franz. And this
is my partner...

LESLEY

(waving)
Lesley Jane Smith...

MICHELE

(ignoring hand)
What kind of partner? You cops?

LESLEY

No we're--

MICHELE

Lawyers?

LESLEY

No we're---

CASSIE

Together. We're just together.
She's my--

MICHELE

Partner. Yeah I get it.
(to Cassie)
Why are you looking at me like
that? Have we met before?

CASSIE

No.

MICHELE

Then why are you looking at me like
you know something about me.

LESLEY

Because she does. She works for
Oscar Wallace.

MICHELE

Oh. Who do you work for?

LESLEY

Well right now I'm on leave. But
I'm a probation supervisor.

MICHELE

Am I supposed to be intimidated by
that?

LESLEY

Are you breaching a probation?

MICHELE

No.

LESLEY

(smiles)
Then we're probably fine.

CASSIE

She's just here because--

LESLEY

I was worried about her coming here
on her own.

MICHELE

Yeah?
(to Cassie)
So you let your pregnant "partner"
come along to protect you.
(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)

You brought her down into this refuge for the unloved and hopeless where just about any kind of behaviour is possible. You're obviously the kind of person who'd get along just fine with Wally.

LESLIE

Wally?

CASSIE

Oscar...

(to Michele)

Who said I got along with him? I just I work for him.

MICHELE

Doing what?

CASSIE

Well basically I handle whatever problems arise.

MICHELE

A problem like me, you mean.

CASSIE

Why don't you just tell me what your actual issue is with my boss?

MICHELE

He's vile, selfish, untrustworthy, kind of dumb and totally unfit for public office.

CASSIE

And that's based solely on your past dealings with him?

MICHELE

(to Lesley)

I was married to the dirt-bag.

LESLEY

She told me.

MICHELE

Did she tell you how he treated me and his kids during that marriage?

CASSIE

He says you never had kids.

MICHELE

What else would he say?

LESLEY

Apparently he admitted that he wasn't very nice though.

MICHELE

Not very nice.

(to Cassie)

I guess you just didn't want to upset her with the details. You know, on account of her delicate condition?

LESLEY

My condition isn't delicate.

MICHELE

That sounded like a threat.

(to Cassie)

You going to have your pregnant partner beat me up if things don't go well?

CASSIE

How much money do you want to just go away?

MICHELE

Five hundred million dollars.

(off her look)

Too much?

CASSIE

So you don't want money.

MICHELE

No. But I wouldn't mind a bit of company. Why don't the two of you stay awhile and visit?

Lesley and Cassie share a look.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

Come on, it'll be fun.

(off Lesley's stomach)

So did you go the vitro route or did some guy help you out with that?

CASSIE

That's none of your business.

MICHELE

You're right. I just get so damn curious about some of the things that are transpiring these days.

LESLEY

Aren't you scared... being down here all on your own?

MICHELE

It's worth the sacrifice.

LESLEY

I don't get it.

MICHELE

She does.

CASSIE

(off Lesley's look)
I think she might be planning to hold a press conference.

MICHELE

That's just one of my many options.
(reaching into her pocket)
Would you like a saltine, Lesley?

LESLEY

Yes, please.

Blackout.

SCENE 8

Condo. Parnell and Finn.

PARNELL

He's a great man. A man who will make a difference. A man who can create the large picture from the smallest detail. And see the smallest detail *in* the large picture he has created. I told him my story and he *heard* a million stories inside that one story. And from those million stories he came to understand the importance of my one story.

FINN

And then he hired you.

PARNELL

Yes. I'm his executive director in charge of collecting stories.

FINN

Where's Cassie?

PARNELL

Who's she?

FINN

She manages his campaign.

PARNELL

Well then let's hope she's out there somewhere doing that.

FINN

I need to contact her.

PARNELL

Why?

FINN

Do you mean what's my story?

PARNELL

Yes. I suppose I do.

FINN

Okay we'll do it that way then. I'll tell you my story and you can tell her.

PARNELL

Will I need to embellish it to make it resonate.

FINN

No I think it will resonate just fine. She wanted me to talk to a certain woman, and I did that. You can tell her this woman claims not to be interested in money, but I'm not sure I believe her.

PARNELL

Why not?

FINN

Instinct. Tell her I think they should offer her twenty thousand dollars to start, and see what she says.

PARNELL

See what who says? Cassie?

FINN

No. The woman.

PARNELL

She'll say no.
(off his look)
Instinct.

FINN

Right. Cassie can call me when she's decided what to do.
(starts out)
I hope you enjoy your new job.

PARNELL

I'm trying very hard to do that. He picked me off the street, you know. I was on the street just waiting to go up to him, but he approached *me* instead. He came right over to me and said... "What's your story?"

FINN

(returning)
You were waiting for him?

PARNELL

Yes. I was going to kill him.

FINN

Really.

PARNELL

He was misrepresented to me. That happens in politics all the time apparently. I was told he was one thing when clearly he's quite the opposite.

FINN

Does he know this?

PARNELL

That he was misrepresented?

FINN

No. That you were going to kill him.

PARNELL

Well *I* didn't tell him if that's what you're asking. Do you think we'd have bonded like we did if he'd known that was my original intention?

FINN

Probably not.

Blackout.

SCENE 9

The ravine. Cassie and Lesley are watching Michele read the newspaper.

LESLEY

That was pretty weird. I mean the guy just scrambled down here, handed you the paper and went away. He does that every day?

MICHELE

I'm a subscriber.
(off the paper)
Says here your boss made quite an impression at that rally. Pulling that man off the street like that.

CASSIE

Yeah it worked out well. Those kinda of things can sometimes backfire.

LESLEY

She means the guy could have been a whackjob.
(a gesture to Michele)
Sorry.

Cassie laughs.

LESLEY (CONT'D)

(discreetly)
Stop it.

MICHELE

Wally has a gift when it comes to using people. He used a couple of seven year old kids as drug mules for a time.

LESLEY

(to Cassie)
Did you know he was a drug dealer?

CASSIE

He was a bit of a user for awhile. And that was a long time ago. He's a different man now. And he has plans to make life better for a lot of people.

LESLEY

She means *she* has plans to do that.

CASSIE

He trusts me. He'll do what I tell him to do.

MICHELE

Did you tell him to bring that man onto the stage with him?

LESLEY

No. And she didn't tell him to say all the stuff he said either. She'd written him a really excellent speech which he just--

MICHELE

Sounds to me like he still does basically whatever he wants.

CASSIE

You really are going to call the press, aren't you? You're going to get them all down here to your sad little campsite and tell them this is the life he drove you to.

MICHELE

And quite the life it is too. Living in a ravine, surviving on a diet of Rice Krispie squares, and Fruit Roll-ups.

CASSIE

Is there anything that could stop you from doing that?

MICHELE

Sure, if someone offered to buy me a kebab every so often.

CASSIE

I meant what would make you change your mind about talking to the press about Oscar and you?

MICHELE

Well he could disappear.

CASSIE

Disappear as in...?

MICHELE

As in going away voluntarily or being assisted in some way.

CASSIE

I've been told you're already looking for someone to "assist" with that.

MICHELE

Yeah but I haven't had much luck so far.

(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)

I thought Parnell might give it a shot, but look what happened to him.

CASSIE

Parnell?

Michele points to a picture of Parnell and Oscar on the front page of the newspaper.

MICHELE

Your boss's new pal.

CASSIE

Jesus. He's an assassin? You actually sent someone to kill him, you lunatic?

(pulls out her cell phone)

I think I'll just call the police.

MICHELE

Okay. You call the police...

(taking out *her* cell phone)

And I'll call the press. Let's see who gets here first.

(to Lesley)

Look I felt bad about exploiting Parnell's weakened mental state. But if her boss gets power he'll do a lot of real harm.

(to Cassie)

So are you going to help me or not?

CASSIE

I'm sorry? Now you want *me* to kill him?

MICHELE

Not if you can think of some other way to take him out of the picture.

CASSIE

(to Lesley)

Let's get out of here. She's cracked.

MICHELE

Hey. Be nice.

CASSIE

(to Lesley)

Come on...

LESLEY

No. I think I'll stay. I want to hear more about this guy you're working for.

MICHELE

You're welcome to stay as long as you want.

(to Cassie)

You, on the other hand, probably have too much invested in Wally to ever hear the truth about him.

CASSIE

He's told me all about his past.

(to Lesley)

He had a horrible childhood. Both his parents were addicted.

MICHELE

Yeah. Addicted to money. Daddy was CEO of an investment firm. Mummsy was his social convener. He was brought up in extreme comfort. And obscene wealth.

CASSIE

And yet he hooked up with someone like you?

MICHELE

Meaning?

CASSIE

Well how'd you even meet? Are you from obscene wealth too?

MICHELE

My mother was his nanny.

CASSIE

What is this? A Dickens novel?

(to Lesley)

I really think we should both leave.

MICHELE

She doesn't want to leave.

CASSIE

Stay out of this, you crazy bitch!

MICHELE

(standing)

Hey, I told you to be nice.

LESLEY

Cassie.

CASSIE

What!

LESLEY

Just go.

CASSIE

And leave you here with her and all
the other loons hiding in the
bushes.

LESLEY

I'll be fine. Maybe this lady and I-

MICHELE

Michele...

LESLEY

Maybe Michele and I can come to
some... arrangement.

MICHELE

Well we can try.

LESLEY

Right...
(to Cassie)
Go. I'll be fine.

Cassie just looks at her. Starts off. Stops.

CASSIE

I'll wait up top. Holler if there's
a problem.

LESLEY

Get going. Come on.

Cassie starts off again, hesitantly.

LESLEY (CONT'D)

Jesus. Go!!

Cassie leaves

MICHELE

So... you two seem very happy
together.

Blackout.

SCENE 10

Parnell and Oscar on the couch in Oscar's condo. Oscar is on the crack pipe.

PARNELL

It's my property. Why should I pay a fee for parking on my own property?

OSCAR

(exhaling)
You shouldn't.

PARNELL

Right. But they say all parking pads are at least partly on city property. I think it's a government cash grab.

OSCAR

Well what isn't?

PARNELL

Yeah. Just like when they wanted me to pay fifty bucks for a dog license.

OSCAR

That's a lot.

PARNELL

You're telling me. So I said screw that. But then they said they were gonna fine me. So I said screw that too. There was no way I was gonna let them suck any more money out of me.

OSCAR

(lighting it up for)
So what did you do?

Parnell takes a hit. Exhales.

PARNELL

I got rid of the dog.

OSCAR

You gave him to a shelter?

PARNELL

Are you kidding? That was *my* dog. I'd had him since he was a puppy. I wasn't going to hand him over to a bunch of strangers. I had him put down.

OSCAR
Jesus Christ...

PARNELL
It was a matter of principle!

OSCAR
Right. But even I wouldn't--

PARNELL
Okay. I've made some mistakes. I've taken my protests to some extreme places both physically and emotionally, but that's only because of how I've been treated.

OSCAR
Yes. You've been treated very poorly.

PARNELL
I've been abused and ignored by a government drunk on power just like a kid gets abused by a drunken father.

OSCAR
I was abused by my drunken father. But I learned to fight back. It took time, but eventually I was able to defend myself.

PARNELL
And now you're going to defend all of us.

OSCAR
If I can.

PARNELL
Well who has the balls to stop you? Those pathetic wimps running against you?

OSCAR
No. It won't come from a political opponent. It'll come out of the blue... unexpected, inflammatory, and hard to defend against and.

PARNELL
Yeah, but you've got a power that can't be overcome. I can smell it all over you.

OSCAR
You can?

PARNELL

Yeah. It's kinda like the smell of porridge. Just before it burns.

OSCAR

(grabbing his face)
I need you to help me.

PARNELL

Why *wouldn't* I help you. You're the man who's going to put an end to all the abuses we've had to suffer. The land transfer tax, the tax on gas... and the worst tax of all, the tax on success.

OSCAR

It'll come from a woman.

PARNELL

What will?

OSCAR

The attempt to bring me down. A woman I used to know. She's out to destroy me. So I have to get her before she gets me.

PARNELL

And me. I mean if she gets you, she'll be getting me too. Because what am I without you? Just a guy with behavioral issues.

OSCAR

So you'll help me get rid of her?

PARNELL

Absolutely. One other thing though. What are you planning to do about the insurance companies. Because I hate *them* too. I really do.

OSCAR

Number one on the list!

They hug

Blackout.

SCENE 11

Finn waits on a park bench. Lesley approaches.

FINN
Well look at you.
(points to stomach)
Is that why we're meeting?

LESLEY
No.

FINN
Are you sure? I mean if it's not
mine then why am I here--

LESLEY
I need your help with something.

FINN
You in trouble?

LESLEY
Cassie might be. You know we're
together, right.

FINN
Yeah. Why?

LESLEY
You mean why am I with a woman?

FINN
No I mean why are you with a lying
vindictive woman.

LESLEY
So you're still bitter.

FINN
She tried to put me away for
something she knew I didn't do.

LESLEY
She was just doing her job, Finn.

FINN
Oh. So prosecutors are *supposed*
invent evidence. Do you think she
wanted me back in prison so she'd
have a clear shot at you?

LESLEY
She and I barely knew each other at
the time. And a little later, when
we were both working out of the
same courthouse... well something
just clicked between us.

FINN

Really. You think maybe that was our problem? Not enough clicking?

LESLEY

It just became too awkward for me, Finn. I mean all those loser friends of yours being dragged in and out of court every day...

FINN

Sure. I get it. Ex-con/probation officer romances hardly ever work out anyway.

LESLEY

Cassie told me you were working for that woman. You know, the one who has some issues with Cassie's boss.

FINN

Issues. Right.

LESLEY

Anyway, I was wondering if you'd mind--

FINN

Talking to her?

LESLEY

She needs to be convinced to just forget about whatever she's after.

FINN

She's after justice.

LESLEY

Yeah but--

FINN

Justice, and revenge. And she also wants to prevent that asshole from being elected. You want me to convince her to just forget all that. Does Cassie know you're meeting me?

LESLEY

No. She wouldn't want you involved.

FINN

Actually, that's not true. She wanted me to do a little "convincing" herself.

LESLEY

No. She wanted you to talk to her. But that was just to find out what she was planning to--

FINN

She wanted me to *start* by talking. But if that didn't work, she had a back up plan.

LESLEY

I don't believe you.

FINN

Are you sure? I mean that's what she was trying to prove in court, isn't it? That I'm a killer for hire. She was definitely interested in having me end that woman.

LESLEY

I'm sure she was just speculating. Sure she's a little desperate but... Look she really needs her guy to win. If he wins, she'd really be the one in charge. She'd be--

FINN

His brain?

LESLEY

Pretty much. And because she's got some actual ideas about what this city needs... really terrific ideas about taxes and infrastructure and... sewage.

FINN

Oh, so you saying *she's* the one worth killing for?

LESLEY

I don't want you to kill anyone. But maybe if you applied a little pressure...

FINN

You mean just threaten her? What the hell's happened to you, Les?

LESLEY

(points to belly)

This has happened to me, Finn. And if I can help Cassie launch her career and secure our future a little by-

FINN

So you're what, seven months along?

LESLEY

Close to nine.

FINN

Nine. Really.

LESLEY

Yeah. Are you doing the math?

FINN

Yeah...

They just look at each other.

LESLEY

Yeah.

Finn looks at her stomach. Almost smiles.

Blackout.

SCENE 12

The ravine. Parnell has his knife to Michele's throat.

PARNELL

I'm sorry. But he needs to be protected from whatever you're planning.

MICHELE

I thought he'd probably get to you. He's a very persuasive man.

PARNELL

I'm just trying to do the right thing.

MICHELE

This isn't it.

PARNELL

He has an agenda. When he's in power he's going to do something about the excesses of the insurance and veterinary industries.

MICHELE

His campaign will be partly funded by the insurance industry.

PARNELL

I don't believe that. You'll say anything to stay alive.

MICHELE

No I won't. I won't say that if you spare my life I'll just go away and leave him alone. He can't be trusted. He's a psychopath.

PARNELL

Some people think I'm a psychopath.

MICHELE

They're wrong. You're just delusional.

PARNELL

Like you?

MICHELE

No I'm a functioning bi-polar. You and I are relatively harmless. But he's capable of anything. I have reason to believe he killed both his parents.

(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)

He definitely tried to kill me on three separate occasions, and he once threatened to cut out our son's tongue for talking back.

PARNELL

(lowers knife)

Oh my God...

MICHELE

Yeah. He's a real monster.

PARNELL

Yeah...

(drops knife)

It's just that he seemed to actually understand my problem.

MICHELE

You mean that you have all this *blame* inside you, and you need somewhere to put it.

PARNELL

Yeah. Maybe...

MICHELE

He's always been a big blamer himself. It just means he has a problem with personal responsibility.

PARNELL

But there are things that should be blamed. And he promised--

MICHELE

That he would make government more "accountable." Look it's just something that gets said. Anyway, government's too easy a target. We need to be fighting the evil in specific individuals. It's those individuals who do all the harm.

(picks up the knife)

Please. Take this. Go back there and do what you were planning to do in the first place.

PARNELL

I don't know if I can.

MICHELE

Just don't let him talk to you. If he talks to you he'll fill your head with emptiness. The emptiness of his beliefs. And the falseness of his certainty.

(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)

So before he opens his evil lying mouth you have to slit his throat.

PARNELL

But what about his agenda? He has big plans for this city.

MICHELE

Plans that will eventually destroy you. Here's the God's Awful Truth, Parnell. He hates you. And everyone like you!

(hands him the knife)

Here. Now go.

Parnell takes the knife. Stares at it.

PARNELL

God's awful truth.

Starts off. Stops. Stares at knife again.

PARNELL (CONT'D)

God's... awful ... truth.

MICHELE

No. Actually go!

She pushes him.

Blackout.

SCENE 13

Cassie in the condo making notes in a day planner. Lesley storms on

LESLEY

Hey! Are you nuts? You actually suggested to Finn that he murder her?

CASSIE

I don't want to lose this job.

LESLEY

So keeping a job makes it okay to have someone killed?

CASSIE

Not *any* job. But this one could propel me to a whole new level. Anyway I was just floating the idea.

LESLEY

Yeah because you thought Finn might actually do it.

CASSIE

No point floating it if there wasn't a chance it'd float.

LESLEY

She hasn't done anything to you, Cass.

CASSIE

Not yet.

LESLEY

If she takes him down you can just go find yourself another politician to control.

CASSIE

All the time I've put in with this guy? If he gets covered in shit, I'm gonna smell too.

LESLEY

So quit before that happens. Eventually you could run for office yourself.

CASSIE

Except your asshole pal tarnished my reputation when he got me fired.

LESLEY

You got yourself fired.

CASSIE

Who lodged the complaint?

LESLEY

You were trying to frame him!

CASSIE

Big deal. How about all the murders I didn't prosecute him for. He was a major mob enforcer.

LESLEY

For the hundredth time, that was just a rumour. The only thing he was ever convicted of was armed robbery. And that was--

CASSIE

What, just a hobby? Look, I know you're still fond of the dirtbag but--

LESLEY

All I'm saying is don't blame him because you lost your job. And while you're at it, don't blame Michele for wanting to bring down Oscar either.

CASSIE

Michele?

LESLEY

That's his ex-wife's name. She has a name.

CASSIE

Okay she has a name.

LESLEY

And maybe she even has someone who cares about her.

CASSIE

Not children though. We already know that was a lie.

LESLEY

Do we?

CASSIE

I told you what Oscar said.

LESLEY

And we should just believe him?

CASSIE

Well should believe *Marlyn*?

LESLEY

Marlyn? Michele!

CASSIE

Whatever. Look I'd just feel better if I could take the situation into my own hands. It's all too murky now. You know how I feel about things being murky.

LESLEY

Sure. Just like every other control freak does. I think you need to step back from this, and let it just resolve itself.

CASSIE

And deal with the fallout no matter what it is?

LESLEY

Yes. Will you at least think about doing that, please? Please!

CASSIE

Okay.

(a beat)

No. That won't work for me.

LESLEY

That was you thinking about it? That little pause you took.

CASSIE

I think fast.

LESLEY

So whatya going to do? Did you get that figured out just then too?

CASSIE

Yeah. I did. I'm going to start by finding out who's lying about what and why. Or if they're both lying, whose lies are more damaging to Oscar. Hers or his own? Was he a total prick and is he still a total prick and a liar and maybe even worse, or was he just a stupid young guy who did stupid thoughtless things that she just can't get over. Things that have helped make her a very dangerous person.

(starts off)

(MORE)

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Can you handle the phone while I'm gone. It'll be mostly people looking to interview Oscar.

LESLEY

And what should I tell them?

CASSIE

Tell them he'll talk to anyone. He's got nothing to hide.

LESLEY

Except a whole other life. And maybe a whole other personality.

Cassie leaves.

Lesley sits down on the couch.

The phone rings.

Blackout.

SCENE 14

The ravine. Michele is eating an apple. Finn comes on with a purpose.

MICHELE

Well it's about time.

FINN

Excuse me?

MICHELE

You might have checked in on me occasionally. You know, because of our relationship.

FINN

What relationship?

MICHELE

Well we've talked, haven't we? We've exchanged ideas and a bit of history.

FINN

Okay it's time to get serious.

MICHELE

Really. You think I've only been kidding up to now? You think I've just been messing around here!?

FINN

I'm not actually sure what you've been doing here. But I'm in the middle of this thing, and I need you to tell me what it is that will make you go away.

MICHELE

Oh we're back to talking money. He's given up on the more drastic measures for the time being, has he?

FINN

What's that mean?

MICHELE

He sent someone to kill me.

FINN

Who?

MICHELE

One of my neighbours.

FINN

One of your neighbours...here?

MICHELE

Well this is where I live, so yeah!
Anyway, it was only because I was
familiar with the assassin's weak
spot that I survived the attack.

FINN

What are you talking about?

MICHELE

Indiscriminate rage. The man he
sent has so much of it he
definitely needs to kill someone. I
just pointed out that it didn't
necessarily have to be me.

FINN

It could be Oscar Wallace...

MICHELE

For example...

FINN

So you sent a mentally ill person
to do your dirty work?

MICHELE

It'll be good therapy for him.

FINN

Oh fuck off.

MICHELE

What?

FINN

You heard me.
(starting off)
That's just cruel.

MICHELE

Well that's pretty judgmental,
coming from a hired assassin.

She takes a bite of the apple.

Blackout

SCENE 15

The condo. Oscar is on the phone.

OSCAR

(into phone)

Whatya mean premature? I sat on that council for six years. But it only took me a week to see that this city needed a whole other approach to getting things done. I tried my best to make those other councillors see it my way but- ... No I never threatened any of them ... No "I'll wup your ass" is not a threat. It's an expression. Those elitist bastards are afraid of their own shadows. Hold on a minute.

Parnell enters.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

(hand over phone)

How'd it go?

But Parnell is pacing manically. He is holding several files, occasionally reading from one and muttering to himself in disgust.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Hey! I said how did it go? Did you do what I asked?

PARNELL

I don't want to talk about that now. I want to talk about what's in these position papers of yours.

OSCAR

What are you doing reading those things?

(into phone)

What? ... No I didn't ... No I did not vote "no" on everything that came up. I sometimes abstained. And everything I voted against involved spending taxpayer money. Hold on.

(to Parnell)

Try to calm down, for chrissake. You're making it hard for me to concentrate.

PARNELL

There are some very upsetting things in these papers.

OSCAR

Look just ignore that shit. It doesn't mean anything.

PARNELL

It means you're not a man of your word.

OSCAR

(into phone)

Excuse me. I just need a minute to--

(to Parnell)

I don't even know what's in those position papers.

PARNELL

Your *positions* are what's in them. And your positions aren't--

OSCAR

Listen, we'll discuss it after I finish with this asshole, okay.

(back to phone)

Look pal, we both know there's nothing I can say to get you on my side. Your paper has it in for me ... Oh no. There's *nothing* fair about how you've reported my campaign. You've made it sound like I'm-- ... What ridiculous ideas? First of all, I don't have ideas. I have beliefs ... You heard me. I believe in the tax payer. I believe in *protecting* the tax payer.

PARNELL

(throws down the files)

Like hell you do!!

(trying to speak into phone)

That's a lie! You hear me? A lie!

OSCAR

(into phone)

I'll have to call you back. Actually, forget it. Write whatever you want, scumbag.

He disconnects. Moves towards Parnell.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Look you gotta settle down, okay. Whatever you've read in there is just--

PARNELL

You believe in protecting the tax payer, do you.

(MORE)

PARNELL (CONT'D)

Well what about the insurance customer. Isn't the insurance customer a tax payer? There's nothing in your so-called "agenda" about helping out the insurance customer. I've looked and looked and looked and looked!! But there's nothing! And you promised me. You promised!

OSCAR

Okay just--

PARNELL

I gave you my support. Didn't I? Didn't I give you my total support?

OSCAR

Yes you did. You gave me your support.

PARNELL

My *total* support. Wasn't I there when you needed me. When you needed to show them a victim of government abuse and indifference wasn't I always there for you?

OSCAR

Yes. You were.

PARNELL

Yes I was. But she was right.

OSCAR

Who was right.

PARNELL

Your wife. She was so right! She told me you'd let me down. She told me you couldn't be trusted and...
(out comes his knife)
She was so so right--

OSCAR

Hey. Hold on--

PARNELL

No. She was definitely right. You have to die!

He attacks Oscar.

They struggle.

But Oscar manages take the knife away. He gets behind Parnell and puts the knife to Parnell's throat.

OSCAR

You pathetic turd. What made you think you were in any condition to take a man like me on?

PARNELL

I'm not sure. I think maybe I lost touch with reality again.

OSCAR

This is very disappointing, Parnell. I sent you to waste that unforgiving bitch, and...

(checks watch)

...not even two hours later you're back here trying to waste *me*? Did she offer you money?

PARNELL

No. But she made a good case against letting you live.

OSCAR

Yeah? Well here's a case against letting *you* live.

He cuts Parnell's throat, lets his body fall to the floor.

He rushes out.

Blackout.

SCENE 16

Finn intercepts Oscar leaving his condo building.

FINN
Hey, slow down. We need to talk.

OSCAR
Not now. I have to-- Wait. Maybe you can help me.

FINN
No listen, I have to tell you-- Help you do what?

OSCAR
I need assistance in disposing of some things.

FINN
What kind of things?

OSCAR
Things like bodies. Well just one really. I mean for now. Because it's possible there might be more. At least one more. But in the meantime. What's the charge for just one?

FINN
What are you talking about?

OSCAR
I don't think that's a question you should be asking. Isn't there a code of silence that goes along with this kind of stuff?

FINN
What the hell did you do?!

OSCAR
Jesus. Okay forget it. I'll find someone else. Questions, questions...

He rushes off, taking out his cell.

Transition.

Finn hurries into the condo and sees Parnell's body

FINN
Holy shit!

Blackout.

SCENE 17

In a park. Lesley is on her back on the grass, knees up. Cassie is supposed to be helping her do birthing exercises. But she starts to fade into her own world, doing primal breathing expulsions which are getting louder and scarier and bringing Lesley up on to her elbows to watch.

LESLEY

Hey. Nutbar! You're supposed to be helping me. That was the whole point of this, right? Helping *me*.

CASSIE

Yeah, Sorry. I was just--

Cassie's cell rings.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

It's Oscar.

LESLEY

Ignore it.

CASSIE

It might be important. I'll keep it short.

(answers the phone)

Hi ... What's wrong, it sounds like you're running or something ... Why the hell are you running? ... Sorry Say that again ... Jesus.

LESLEY

What?

CASSIE

Parnell attacked him.

LESLEY

Parnell? That crazy guy he has following him around. Why would he do that?

CASSIE

Maybe because he's crazy?

(into phone)

But you're okay, right. So what's the problem? ... You did what? ... Jesus...

LESLEY

What? What did he do?

CASSIE

He killed him.

LESLEY
Parnell?

CASSIE
Yeah...

LESLEY
He killed him? Really? Maybe he
just hurt him. Ask him if he's
sure.

CASSIE
(into phone)
Are you sure he's dead ...
(to Lesley)
Definitely.

LESLEY
Did he take his pulse?

CASSIE
(into phone)
Did you take his pulse? ...
(to Lesley)
No, he slit his throat!

LESLEY
On my god...

CASSIE
(into phone)
Okay... but if it was self defense
you can just call the police ...
Why not ... What are you talking
about?

LESLEY
What's he talking about?

CASSIE
How he did it. He thinks how he did
it is important.

LESLEY
And how's that?

CASSIE
Professionally...

LESLEY
He slit his throat professionally?
What the hell does that mean?

CASSIE
(into phone)
Oscar listen, you should still call
the police.
(MORE)

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Just because you were able to defend yourself with a certain amount of expertise isn't-- ... Oh...

(to Leslie)

He think it will look like he's done it before.

LESLEY

Has he?

CASSIE

(into phone)

Have you?

Cassie is listening to Oscar.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

(into phone)

What?

LESLEY

Well has he, or hasn't he?

CASSIE

He won't say.

LESLEY

Well he's saying something.

CASSIE

Yeah he's saying he wants me to dispose of the body.

(into phone)

Oscar, I can't do that kind of thing ... Yes I value my job, but there's no way I can do that, okay.

LESLEY

(thinking)

Yes you can.

CASSIE

What?

LESLEY

Tell him you'll do it. Trust me. Go ahead. Tell him.

CASSIE

Yeah but--

LESLEY

Think of your reputation. Think of our unborn child. Do it!

CASSIE

Yeah, okay.

(into phone)

Okay. I'll do it ... Yeah really
... Right. Get rid of the blood too
... Wash with bleach, yeah ...

Yeah. Got it...

(disconnects, turns to
Lesley)

What the fuck!

Blackout.

SCENE 18

The ravine. Michele is drawing in a large sketch pad. Looking occasionally at a handful of leaves which she lets drop one by one to the ground

MICHELE

(to herself)

Every leaf does *not* look the same.
Struggle to grant everything its
own identity. Find it in yourself
to be a just and attentive creator.
But demand from yourself obedience
to the laws of fairness.

(hears something)

And the solemn purpose of
retribution.

Oscar comes out of the brush. They just look at each other for a moment.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

So you've finally come.

OSCAR

What?

MICHELE

You're here.

OSCAR

Yeah... right. Is this where
Michele lives?

MICHELE

Yeah. This is where "Michele" lives
all right. You like it?

OSCAR

Yeah it's great. I'm sorry... who
are you?

MICHELE

You're saying you don't recognize
me? That's your strategy? She can't
really be my ex-wife because I
"don't recognize" her.

OSCAR

My ex-wife. You're saying you're
Michele?

MICHELE

Yeah. You got a problem with that?

OSCAR
Fucking right I do.
(grabs he)
Now where the hell is she?

MICHELE
Hey. Come on. People are watching.

OSCAR
(looks around)
What?

MICHELE
I'm just saying you should probably
be nicer.

OSCAR
(grabs her tighter)
Yeah sure. I'll be nice as hell as
soon as you tell me where Michele
is!

MICHELE
(grabs him)
What happened to my messenger?

OSCAR
What messenger?

MICHELE
The one I sent to kill you!

OSCAR
That was you? What the--

MICHELE
Where is he, you miserable
bastard?!

OSCAR
He's dead! Just like you'll be if
you don't tell me where that
scheming resentful bitch is!

He begins to shake her. She struggles and knees him in the
groin. He falls to the ground in pain

MICHELE
(kicks him)
How's it feel, asshole!?

OSCAR
(reaching for her)
Where is she!?

He bites Michele's leg. She yells in pain.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Where the fuck is she?!

Finn comes out of the brush.

FINN

All right, that's enough!

Oscar crawls away from Michele.

OSCAR

Good. You're here. Maybe now you can finish your job.

FINN

Excuse me?

OSCAR

You were asked to do something about the situation I'm faced with, right.

MICHELE

(to Finn)

What's he mean by that?

FINN

Don't worry about it.

OSCAR

Yeah just shut your trap, whoever you are.

FINN

What's going on, Michele? He doesn't seem to know you.

MICHELE

It's obviously part of a strategy to avoid responsibility.

FINN

(to Oscar)

She's not your ex-wife?

OSCAR

What? No. I don't have a goddamn clue who she is.

MICHELE

(to Finn)

I told you. He's a real piece of work. Violent and conniving.

OSCAR

Like you'd know shit about what I am.

(to Finn)

(MORE)

OSCAR (CONT'D)

She's not her. She's not Michele. But she won't tell me where Michele is, so just beat it out of her okay. Go ahead, I haven't got all day. We need to find Michele and put an end to this crap.

(off his look)

What is it? What do you want? Just name your price. Or maybe you want a favour? Do you pay taxes? Because if you do, you won't anymore. Not once I'm elected. And that's a promise. Something else? A job? Jobs for your friends and family? Just tell me for chrissake. Okay look, I can't give you what you want if you don't tell me what it is. Just tell me what is it that you want? Right now. What do you freakin' want more than anything?!

Finn takes out his gun and shoots him. Oscar falls, dying. Finn walks over and stands above Oscar's body.

FINN

I guess I just wanted you to shut up.

Oscar dies.

Blackout.

SCENE 19

In the condo. Lesley and Cassie are standing over Parnell's body.

LESLEY

Oh my god. Look at that. Oscar musta totally lost it.

CASSIE

Right.

LESLEY

I mean really! That's nasty. That's pretty much ear to ear.

CASSIE

Right. So what's the plan?

LESLEY

Why are you asking me?

CASSIE

You mean you made me agree to do this without having a plan?

LESLEY

(thinking out loud)
Getting him down to the car is gonna be a problem. I forgot Oscar lived so high up.

CASSIE

You forgot. Really. You've been here a dozen times. You were *just* here, for godsake!

LESLEY

Yeah. "forgot" isn't really the right word. I guess I was just so worried about you getting caught up in all this. Hey. You know I'm hormonal. You shouldn't have listened to a word I said on the subject.

CASSIE

Yeah, right. It's my fault.

LESLEY

Doesn't he have anyone who usually does his dirty work?

CASSIE

Yeah. Me.

LESLEY

I mean his really dirty work.

CASSIE

Well apparently that's me too.

LESLEY

Right. Well okay, first things first.

(groans a little)

We have to...

CASSIE

What's wrong?

LESLEY

I'm not sure, but I think...

CASSIE

What? You think what? Tell me what you're thinking!

LESLEY

No it's okay...

(a pain)

No. It's not. I think I'm having this baby.

CASSIE

Now?

LESLEY

Well maybe not right away. But--

(groans)

Yeah. Right away.

CASSIE

Oh Jesus...

Cassie is helping her on to the couch.

LESLEY

Okay...

(groans)

...first things first. Get something and cover that guy up.

CASSIE

What?

LESLEY

I'm not having this baby in front of this corpse.

CASSIE

Why not? I mean he won't be watching or anything.

LESLEY

Cover him up! Get something to cover him the fuck up!

CASSIE

Okay okay...

Cassie looks around, grabs a throw off the couch.

LESLEY

(groans)

Hurry up!

CASSIE

Okay...

She covers Parnell's body.

LESLEY

(a pain)

Ah shit...

Lesley screams.

CASSIE

Jesus. Do you have to be that loud?

Lesley screams again.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

Come on. Try to keep it down.
We're in a precarious situation
here.

LESLEY

(weakly)

It hurts...

She screams in pain.

Blackout.

SCENE 20

The ravine. Michele is sharpening her hatchet near the corpse. Finn sits on a log watching her. Oscar lies dead where he fell.

MICHELE

We met in the hospital. I was recovering from a breakdown caused by twenty-six years of very stressful and grotesquely under-paid nursing work. Michele was in very bad shape, and it was clear she was *never* going to recover. She'd been on the street for over two decades and had suffered just about every form of abuse you can imagine. Anyway, here we were in the same ward. Me with my middle-class upbringing hoping to spring back to health and her well... not really hoping for anything except a relatively pain-free exit from it all. So we played crazy eights. And we talked. Well *she* talked. She talked in a kind of free-flowing mixture of the here and now and the then and there. And after she'd asked me to do this favour, which occurred about two months into our relationship and one month before she took her own life, I started paying much closer attention to what she was saying and also trying much harder to remember what she'd already said. But I might have gotten a lot of the details mixed up, which is why some of what I told you about her life with that man might be, well somewhat... contradictory.

FINN

Somewhat...

MICHELE

Remind me of what I said. I've been self medicating a little because of the stress.

FINN

The details don't matter. Basically he did a lot of really awful things. And then he deserted her.

MICHELE

Yeah. And all of it was pretty heartbreaking because she'd started out adoring and trusting him so much. She said he always made everyone, even the little kids who peddled dope for him, trust and adore him at the beginning. But the truth was he didn't give a shit about anyone.

FINN

And were there children of their own?

MICHELE

Michelle got pregnant three times, but she had them all aborted. That's who I was thinking about when I talked about her kids.

FINN

And about him coming from money?

MICHELE

Yeah he was born evil and brought up rich. Or maybe the reverse. And Michele thought it was a definite possibility that he killed his parents for disowning him at some point ... He used Michele to sell his dope too. And not just that. He did a bunch of insane things to her.

FINN

So this favour...?

MICHELE

Very near the end Michelle asked me if I could find a way to cause...

(gestures to corpse)

...this man even the tiniest fraction of the pain and misery he'd caused *her*.

FINN

She wanted revenge.

MICHELE

She wanted justice. Well she probably wanted both. Anyway I said I'd consider it. And while I was considering it, she continued to detail more of what that pain and misery had been like.

(MORE)

MICHELE (CONT'D)

Eventually I came to believe that making him suffer the tiniest fraction of what she had wouldn't be nearly enough. I mean this man here, at some point just decided to change his act. Just decided to become a public person...*sought* public office, sought public trust, and gained some measure of public respect. I mean screw that.

(tests the hatchet)

Okay that'll probably do it.

FINN

Do what?

MICHELE

If I'm gonna get rid of the body without causing a fuss, I'm gonna have to chop him up.

Finn takes away her hatchet.

FINN

It's okay. I know people who do this kind of thing.

MICHELE

(touches him affectionately)

I thought you might.

Blackout.

SCENE 21

Park. Cassie and Lesley, with a baby in a stroller, wait on a park bench. Cassie is on her cell.

CASSIE

(into phone)

Well maybe he realized he wasn't up to the job of being mayor. It takes a big person to admit that. Maybe disappearing was his way of admitting it ... No it's not a joke. I was just -- Yes I'm totally committed to running in his place ... Well someone has to oppose those three idiots. And I think I'm - ... Yes you can quote me. I think they're all idiots and I intend to fry their asses in this election. That is, if your newspaper will cut me some slack and stop telling everyone I'm not qualified ... Yeah? Well I think you're not qualified ... It means you're not qualified to say who's qualified! What the hell do you think it means?! ... Ah bite me!

She disconnects.

LESLEY

You should probably do a little work on your tone.

CASSIE

My tone isn't the issue. It's my substance they have a problem with.
(looking around)
Where the hell is she?

LESLEY

Is she really the kind of person you expect to be on time? What is it you hope to accomplish with this meeting anyway?

CASSIE

I just want to make sure she's okay with what I'm doing.

LESLEY

Why would she care one way or the other?

CASSIE

I don't know. I don't know why she cares or doesn't care about anything.

(MORE)

CASSIE (CONT'D)

She's not right in her head, Les. I mean the woman is still living in a ravine. What's that about?

LESLEY

Finn says she likes the simplicity of it.

CASSIE

She can't find simplicity in a nice little apartment?

LESLEY

So because she's living outdoors you think she might be a threat to your campaign.

CASSIE

She's unbalanced.

LESLEY

But she's a good person at core.

CASSIE

What do you know about her core?

LESLEY

I know it's good. Its a good core. Think about everything she did for that dying woman.

CASSIE

She did it because she's at least partly insane. A normal person does not agree to do something like that. I just want to make sure she won't be popping out of the bushes again once I start to campaign.

Finn is approaching.

CASSIE (CONT'D)

What's he doing here?

LESLEY

He wanted to see his daughter.
(off Cassie's look)
It's okay.

CASSIE

I still don't think he had to know.

LESLEY

It makes good financial sense. Someone as resourceful as him, who feels he has a connection to her...

FINN
(big smile)
Hi, there. How's everyone today?

LESLEY
We're good.

CASSIE
Why are you so goddamn happy?

FINN
Don't know. Just woke up today
feeling great
(gestures to stroller)
Can I take a look?

CASSIE
She's asleep.

FINN
I'll look quietly.
(he does)
Hey, she looks like you, Cassie.

CASSIE
Don't push it.

FINN
(hands her a piece of
paper)
Here.

CASSIE
What's this?

FINN
Michele's list.

LESLEY
Her what?

FINN
It's her list of--

CASSIE
She's not coming?

FINN
No. It's just me and the list. It's
all the issues she cares about
most. And her positions on those
issues.

CASSIE
And what an I supposed to do with
it?

FINN

Read it.

CASSIE

Read it...

FINN

Yeah. And then adopt those positions as your own.

CASSIE

And if I don't?

FINN

She comes forward and implicates you.

Lesley takes the paper, starts to read.

CASSIE

Implicates me in what?

FINN

Don't know exactly. Your boss's death?

CASSIE

I had nothing to do with that. I don't even know for sure that he's dead.

FINN

Okay. How about his groupie Parnell? You know for sure *he's* dead, right? Or did you just dump his body in the lake without checking?

CASSIE

(to Lesley)
You told him?

FINN

She needed some advice.

LESLEY

About the best place to do it.

FINN

And as luck would have it, I'd heard of somewhere that's pretty popular for that kind of thing.

CASSIE

Right. Well whatever. She's got no proof I was involved in that.

FINN

Doesn't matter. She'll probably just focus on how you attempted to hire someone to kill her.

CASSIE

You mean you. I tried to hire you to kill her.

FINN

Yes you did. And I'm willing to testify to that.

CASSIE

To what? That you really are a hired killer?

FINN

No, that you've refused, even after it got you fired, to believe that I'm *not* a hired killer. And that you offered me a over a thousand dollars to do away with her in order to protect your boss. And yourself.

CASSIE

(clenched teeth)

Asshole.

LESLEY

(off list)

No it's okay. These are reasonable positions. Universal daycare, a total revamp of the mental health situation as it relates to the criminal justice system, and an end to--

CASSIE

Let me see that thing.

She grabs the binder.

LESLEY

She sounds very coherent.

FINN

She is.

LESLEY

But she wants to keep living in that ravine?

FINN

It'll offer a good photo op if she needs to provide one.

CASSIE

(to Lesley)

I told you. She's blackmailing me. I do what she says or she gets the press down there and pisses all over me.

(off list)

No one who publicly supported even one of these positions could get elected to anything, anywhere in this country.

LESLEY

Maybe she just wants you to try.

FINN

That's possible.

LESLEY

So you've stayed in touch with her then.

FINN

I'm worried about her.

(off the stroller)

So... can I hold her?

CASSIE

I told you she's asleep!

FINN

Yeah. I meant when she wakes up.

CASSIE

(off the list)

You know, it's not that I'm actually *against* these things.

LESLEY

Yeah. And if anyone can sell them to the public, it's you, sweetie. You just have to write some great speeches.

Finn is leaning over the stroller.

CASSIE

And even if I lose...

(to Finn)

Don't touch.

(to Lesley)

...and I probably will, there are jobs you can get advocating for these causes. I mean they don't pay much, but...

Lesley just smiles at her. Finn leans in to take another look at the baby.

FINN

Hey. She's got my mother's eyes.

CASSIE

Great.

Lesley smiles at them both.

Blackout.

SCENE 22

The ravine. Michele is making her sleeping area comfortable.

MICHELE

(to herself)

Always insist on the best possible outcome by suggesting a much worse alternative. Never be afraid to threaten power with an exaggeration of your own power. Always stay informed, alert and ready to act for the common good. Or to just get even. And always keep that axe sharp in case you have to really mess someone up and remove his evil spirit from the face of the earth.

(to Us)

If you think I'm kidding about that last part, then you haven't been paying attention.

She gets into the sleeping bag.

MICHELE (CONT'D)

(still to Us)

Because I am no one's fool. And I am not a fucking saint.

She pulls the sleeping bag over her head. Goes to sleep.

Blackout.

The End.