

ABSTRACT

“Alice”

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Lewis Carroll’s books "Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking Glass" have one of the fantasy genre’s greatest examples of a character learning to find her place in the world. They pose the question: how do you know if you are a sane person in an insane world or an insane person in a sane world? My dark comedy screenplay is about a woman named Alice who believes she is the former but slowly has to accept the fact that she may just be the latter. She is independent to a fault and has to learn through the trials she faces in the story, most of which are caused by her own stubbornness, that there are times when she does indeed need to accept help from others. Alice must acknowledge that not everyone around her is insane, or rather, that she is just as insane as they are.

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“ALICE”

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Honors Program

By
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PREFACE

People often tell stories not because they simply want to entertain, but because they want to impart some Truth in an entertaining way. Even the Bible uses fictional stories called parables in order to teach morality. Any story can reveal some aspect of human nature or philosophical conjecture to the audience, no matter how fantastical the plot. When I came up with the idea of writing “Alice,” I had no intention of writing a plot that might be believable. Rather my intentions were to write characters and a story that were believable. The difference is that while the inciting actions of the plot may remain the same, the reactions depend entirely upon the characters I create. The situations may be unbelievable, but my hope is that the characters and the emotions that the characters experience as a result of the situations they are put in are believable. I based my story off my own interpretations of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*. My goal in writing this was not only to get the experience of writing my first feature-length screenplay, but also to dig into my favorite book and discover what it was about the story to which I so relate.

Something to keep in mind when reading this script is that although I did indeed draw the foundation of my script from Carroll’s famous fantasy stories, it is in no way a member of the same genre. It is meant to ask some of the same questions but in a different way, in a more adult way. My Alice is a woman living in a modern, grown-up world and dealing with modern, grown-up problems. In many ways she is quite similar to Carroll’s Alice, but because my story is a dark comedy rather than a frivolous tale of nonsense, she takes on a much more pessimistic attitude than her namesake. I guess what I’m trying to say is that this is not a children’s story. It is a snapshot of the life of a young woman who sees everything but herself with awful clarity.

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FOR AUDREY, DOMINIC, AND CALEB

You're mad, bonkers, completely off your head.

But I'll tell you a secret.

All the best people are.

-Lewis Carroll

Alice

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EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - AFTERNOON

Est. shot of a garish, purple and green building with a fading glittery sign proclaiming to the world that this is the STARPLEX GALAXY 16 movie theatre.

ALICE, a twenty-two-but-thinks-she's-forty-two-year-old woman, is "working" in the Box Office on this slow May afternoon. She slouches on her stool, reading a book written by some ancient Greek philosopher.

Alice is disturbed from her study by a hand shoving money at her through the semi-circular hole in the window.

She looks up to greet CUSTOMER #1 and hear what movie they want to see, but the young gentleman is simply standing there, staring at her.

TITLE: SUNDAY

Finally, Alice is forced to make the first move.

ALICE
Can I help you?

CUSTOMER #1
Twilight.

ALICE
Okay. That will be seven dollars.

CUSTOMER #1
For a student??

ALICE
Well, for students we do have a discount.

CUSTOMER #1
Right, I'm a student.

ALICE
In that case it will be five dollars.

CUSTOMER #1
I need two.

ALICE
Is the other person also a student?

(CONTINUED)

CUSTOMER #1
Other person...

ALICE
The other person you're buying a
ticket for.

CUSTOMER #1
Um, ya.

ALICE
Ten dollars.

Alice puts Customer #1's cash in her drawer and prints the
tickets. By the time she has completed his transaction
CUSTOMER #2 has stepped in line behind him.

The woman is like a Sesame Street puppet come horribly to
life.

CUSTOMER #2
Hi! How are you today?

Alice pauses to avoid giving an honest answer. Rallies.

ALICE
How can I help you?

CUSTOMER #2
I would like FIVE tickets to the
Alvin and the Chipmunks movie!

ALICE
Are there any students or military
for discount?

CUSTOMER #2
What's a student?

ALICE
(biting back sarcastic retort)
Anyone enrolled in a school. It can
be high school, college, whatever.

CUSTOMER #2
Alrighty then, I have three
students and two old folks! haha!

Alice attempts to begrudge the woman a smile without
vomiting.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
That'll be 29 dollars.

After the completion of this transaction, Customer #1 comes back.

CUSTOMER #1
I wanted the 8:10 showing, but you gave me the 5:30.

Alice looks at the time on her computer. It reads 5:20

ALICE
You have to tell us if you want a later showtime; otherwise the computer will print the next closest time.

CUSTOMER #1
Can I just go into the 8 with these?

ALICE
No, you have to go into the showtime printed on the ticket.

CUSTOMER #1
Then can you switch them out for me?

ALICE
(pointing to a large red sign that says WE DO NOT DO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES)
We do not do refunds or exchanges.

CUSTOMER #1
Can I talk to a manager.

Alice unabashedly grabs her walkie-talkie from the counter.

ALICE
(into walkie)
Can I get a manager in the box office?

LORY (V.O.)
(through walkie speaker)
On my way.

Alice looks back to the customer.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
She's on her way.

LORY, a fifty-something woman who has been working at Starplex so long she might as well live there, pushes through the door behind Alice. Keys jangling. Exasperated look already forming.

Alice turns away from the microphone on her window so that Customer #1 cannot hear what she says.

ALICE
This guy wants to know if he can switch out his tickets because he didn't tell me what time he wanted before I printed them, but I told him we don't do exchanges.

Lory fully releases her look of exasperation before leaning to the microphone.

LORY
(to Customer #1)
Sir? I will go ahead and switch them out for you this time, but you should know we don't normally do this.

CUSTOMER #1
Okay, thanks.

Lory steps back to exchange the tickets. She speaks to Alice, who now has her back turned to the line starting to form outside.

LORY
You know, you could have exchanged these without me.

ALICE
I know. But he was being an asshole, and I didn't want to help him.

LORY
I've fired employees before for being less lazy, ya know?

ALICE
(without smiling)
But what would you do without my winning smile and charming attitude to welcome people into the hallowed halls of the Starplex Galaxy 16?

(CONTINUED)

LORY

You're lucky you're cute or I
would've gotten rid of you a long
time ago for being such a smartass.
Guess you're stuck here forever.

As Lory leans out the window to hand Customer #1 his new
tickets, Alice reacts:

ALICE

Fuck that!

Lory shoots her a look.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Excuse me. Fuck that! I finally
graduated, and I'm moving to Greece
in 2 weeks.

LORY

You haven't mentioned moving.
(stepping to the door)
Oh, wait, you did mention that once
or twice...or a hundred times over
the last couple months.

ALICE

I can't help it. I've got Starplex
senioritis.

LORY

(indicating out the window)
You've got Starplex customers.

Lory exits.

Alice turns to find a 30-yr-old trophy wife named MRS.
SCHMIDT, waiting impatiently at the window along with
her ten year old brat, ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR.

ALICE

(a little more rudely than she
intended)
Can I help you?

MRS. SCHMIDT

I want one for "Knocked Up" and one
for the Chipmunks movie.

ALICE

Is he going to have an adult
accompanying him into his movie?

(CONTINUED)

MRS. SCHMIDT
(obviously)
I am.

ALICE
But you're going to see a different
movie?

MRS. SCHMIDT
Well, ya. I'm going to see "Knocked
Up" with my girlfriends, but I
don't want him seeing an R-rated
movie so I'm sending him to see the
Chipmunks.

ALICE
Okay, but kids under 16 are not
allowed to go into the theatre
unless they are accompanied by an
adult guardian 21 years or older.

MRS. SCHMIDT
I just told you-

ALICE
-yes, but you have to go into the
same movie with him.

MRS. SCHMIDT
Are you serious?

Alice points to a sign that clearly spells out everything
she just said.

MRS. SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
(reading the sign)
This is bullshit.

ALICE
(shrugging)
It's just the theatre's policy.

A nice-looking yet bland couple in their 60s, MR AND MRS
HEART, stand in line behind Mrs. Schmidt. They have been
listening to the altercation and, finally, the wife speaks
up.

MRS. HEART
We're going to see the Chipmunks.
He could sit with us.

Her husband, never taking his eyes off the boy, nods in
agreement.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. SCHMIDT
(to Mrs. Heart)
Oh, that would be great! You sure
you don't mind?

MRS. HEART
Not at all.

Mrs. Schmidt turns back to Alice with rancor.

MRS. SCHMIDT
NOW can I buy my tickets?

ALICE
Seriously? I mean, you don't want
your kid to see an R-rated movie,
but you'll let him sit with two
strangers in a dark theatre?

Without her noticing, Mr. Heart glares at Alice.

MRS. SCHMIDT
Omigod. Just tell me how much I owe
you.

Alice makes a point to ring up two adult instead of one
child and one adult tickets just to spite the bitch.

ALICE
14 dollars.

Mrs. Schmidt hands Alice a \$20, and as Alice hands the
tickets back she warns:

ALICE (CONT'D)
Just don't blame me if you never
see your son again.

FREEZE FRAME. SONG "SHE'S LONG GONE" BY THE BLACK KEYS
BEGINS

TITLE: ALICE

SONG CONTINUES AS CREDITS ROLL OVER MONTAGE OF NEXT COUPLE
HOURS OF ALICE WAITING ON MORE CUSTOMERS AS AFTERNOON TURNS
TO EVENING TO NIGHT

Towards the end of the night an UNSAVORY CUSTOMER, who
happens to be a black man in his late 20s, saunters up to
Alice's window.

(CONTINUED)

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

Two

...he manages around the toothpick stuck between his lips.

ALICE

For which movie?

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

Whach'yall got playin?

ALICE

(checking her computer)

Uh..There's the new Tyler Perry movie about to start-

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

-Woah, whatchoo think cuz I'm black I wanna see Tyler Perry?

ALICE

Look, you asked what was playing, and that's the next showtime-

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

-Whatever, man, you probly just racist.

Alice is not going to take this lying down.

ALICE

Excuse me? How many Tyler Perry movies have you seen?

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

I dunno, 2, maybe 3. So?

ALICE

Well, I've seen zero. So I don't think it's racist if it's statistically probable that you would be more inclined to see a Tyler Perry movie than me.

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

Hold up, bitch. Whatchoo tryina say?

ALICE

What kind of response is that? I said what I was trying to say.

(CONTINUED)

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

You think you smarter than me cuz
I'm black or sumthin?

ALICE

I think I'm smarter than you
because I have a noticeably larger
vocabulary.

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

Man what the fuck- you fuckin- you
crazy bitch-

As the Unsavory Customer continues to spew expletives, Alice
grabs her walkie-talkie again.

ALICE

(on walkie)

Can I get an officer to the box
office please?

OFFICER COOK (V.O.)

(through walkie speaker)

Who'd you piss off, now, Alice?

Alice holds the walkie up to her mic so OFFICER COOK can
hear the continually swearing patron.

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

What? You callin some renta cop
fudgepacker to come cuff me? You
think they gon' protect yo racist
cracker ass?

Officer Cook, a no-nonsense, burly man in his early 50s
strolls out of the front doors of the theatre.

OFFICER COOK

As a matter of fact I am a sheriff,
and yes, I am going to cuff you if
you don't vacate the premises
immediately.

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

Oh, hell no! I got rights, man.
This bitch be gettin all racist and
if she don't watch herself-

OFFICER COOK

Now, son, I don't want to hear any
threats being made or I will have
to escort you off-

(CONTINUED)

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER

-ooh, I'm scared now! Porky's gonna escort me off the premiss! Why don't you go ahead and cuff me and we can get this party started!

CUT TO:

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Unsavory Customer handcuffed, bent over the hood of Officer Cook's Crown Vic.

The theatre's second officer, GRYPHON, escorts Alice past the still protesting Unsavory Customer to Alice's own car. Though she's a compact blonde woman in her 40s, Gryphon is somehow more fearsome looking than Cook.

OFFICER GRYPHON

Why did you take that guy's bait, Alice? You know he was just looking for trouble.

ALICE

What can I say? The dam is slipping.

OFFICER GRYPHON

(softening)
Just be careful.

As Alice gets into her car Gryphon continues.

OFFICER GRYPHON (CONT'D)

And you may want to come back tomorrow before you leave. Say goodbye to Lory at least.

This makes Alice pause.

ALICE

How did you know I was planning to-

OFFICER GRYPHON

-skip town early? Everyone may not be as smart as you, but we're not completely ignorant.

ALICE

I don't think I'm smarter-

(CONTINUED)

OFFICER GRYPHON

-and you better bet if I've figured it out, Lory has too. She's been good to you, kid. Least you could do is say goodbye. No matter how much you wanna avoid it.

Gryphon strides back towards the theatre.

Alice closes her car door and drives off in the opposite direction.

EXT. HEART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Est. shot of a pricey-yet-cozy home, built amidst a dense wood. The peacefulness of complete and utter privacy is beautiful, unless of course you're being held there against your will.

INT. HEART RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

A warmly decorated room with plush couches and hand-crafted wooden furniture, lit by the dim glow of a few lamps. Mrs. Heart sits curled up on a love seat reading a book, while Mr. Heart slouches in an armchair, speaking on a portable phone.

The scene is quite home-on-the-prairie-esque. Except for the ten-year-old boy, bound and gagged in the rocking-chair. This is ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR, the boy Alice so tactlessly handed over to the Hearts at the theatre earlier.

MR. HEART

(into phone)

Yep, got him right here. Bound and gagged. Gagged because the little brat wouldn't shut up about missing Glee? Don't know what he expected...not many experience much glee when they're kidnapped.

DODGSON (V.O)

(through phone)

It's a television show.

INT. DODGSON RESIDENCE - SAME

DODGSON is a silver fox wearing plain, dark pajamas, sitting up in his plain, dark bedroom. It's late, and though it's not the first time he's been woken up by a phone call from his boss, he is still not completely conscious of what's going on yet.

MR. HEART

What is?

DODGSON

(checking the time: 2AM)

"Glee", sir. It's a popular television show among teens about a high school-

MR. HEART

-I know what the hell it is! Wish I didn't...The point is-

INT. INTERCUT BETWEEN HEART AND DODGSON THROUGHOUT - SAME

DODGSON

Did he not DVR it?

MR. HEART

DVR what?

DODGSON

Did he not record "Glee" on his DVR? Why was he so worried about missing it?

MR. HEART

What-? Why the hell do you care?! The point is the stupid fucking brat practically fell into our laps. Even got ourselves a fall girl to pin it on.

DODGSON

A fall girl?

MR. HEART

Yes! A fall girl. A scapegoat. A patsy. Whatever you wanna call her: we're all set to put the heat on her to alleviate the media problem. I just need you to go down to the Starplex movie theatre tomorrow morning, first thing.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

First thing? Are you sure we're ready?

MR. HEART

Of course we're ready! He's sitting right here in my living room anyhow. Now, stop asking stupid questions and start taking orders. Are you a follower or a leader?

DODGSON

I'm a-

MR. HEART

-that's right, you're a follower. Now, do what you're good at, *what we pay you to do*: get down to that theatre tomorrow, and get a confession out of an employee named Alice.

DODGSON

What's this girl, Alice's deal?

MR. HEART

If you'd stop asking questions, I would tell you. As a matter of fact, Alice has a very interesting deal here.

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - MORNING

The next morning, Alice drives back to the Starplex to pay her respects. She does not notice the two sleek, dark SUVs with government plates parked in the lot.

She walks up to one of the outside windows to greet one of her now-former box office co-workers, HATTA. This sweet yet gossipy woman in her fifties looks like she is about to burst with some serious new dish.

TITLE: MONDAY

No sooner is Alice within hearing distance of the window when Hatta starts bombarding her with hushed tones.

HATTA

(fast and muffled)

Hey! Alice! Did you hear what happened last night? It's just awful. I wasn't working, but Lory just came and told me all about it-

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(full volume)
-Woah woah woah. Slow down. Did I
hear about what, now?

HATTA
(still whispering)
About last night.

ALICE
(louder)
One more time?

HATTA
(finally a little louder)
Have you heard about what happened
last night?

Alice goes pale.

ALICE
Did news already spread that fast?

HATTA
Well, it's a pretty big deal. Said
they don't want any media getting
any wind of it, but they're
questioning all the employees. Is
that why you're here today? Did
they call you in?

ALICE
No, I just came in on my own.
But...pretty big deal? Really? And
why are they questioning everyone?
I mean I'm really the only one who
was involved...

HATTA
You were involved?

ALICE
Well, it was kind of my fault.
Actually if you ask me he had it
coming... But that's beside the
point. Who's doing the questioning?

Hatta looks stunned, but before she can answer, Lory pushes
into the Box office with another manager, BILL. Bill is a
young, gay go-getter. I.E. he's sharply dressed, dripping in
sarcasm, and never passes up an opportunity for
self-advancement.

(CONTINUED)

LORY
Hatta, they're ready for you
upstairs.

Hatta takes one last unsure look at Alice and exits.

BILL
(to Alice)
Look who decided to come back. I
figured Little Miss Sunshine would
be half-way to the Mediterranean by
now.

Alice doesn't have time for Bill's shit today. Instead she
turns to Lory.

ALICE
Hatta said something about all the
employees being questioned?

LORY
I'm glad you're here. I was just
about to call you in. I was afraid
you had already left.

ALICE
Lory, I-

LORY
-Come with me upstairs. Bill, think
you can handle box all by yourself?

BILL
I'll see if I can manage without
being racist or getting anyone
arrested.

ALICE
Hey, Bill, your boyfriend is
straight.

BILL
Great comeback.

ALICE
(as she walks toward the lobby
entrance)
Not a comeback. He hit on me at
Scruff's last Saturday.

BILL
(to self)
He wasn't at Scruffs last
Saturday...

EXT./INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Lory has already given up on making peace between the two and is in the lobby of the theatre. Alice follows through the main entrance.

A man named RED stands on the bridge up over the lobby. He wears a plain, dark suit and an inscrutable expression. As soon as Alice is through the doors into the lobby, he starts typing on his smartphone.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Alice follows Lory through the lobby, up the elevator, across the bridge, and into the shabby, movie-poster-covered hallway outside the manager's office.

There is a non-descript, uniformed OFFICER guarding the door. Lory walks up to him and mumbles something, gesturing to Alice.

Officer immediately turns, knocks on the door, and enters without waiting for a response.

Before the door swings shut, Alice catches a glimpse of the room inside. Hatta is sitting in a fold-out chair across the desk from Dodgson, who is wearing a suit identical to the one worn by the man named Red.

A minute later Officer comes back out with Hatta. She mouths "I'm sorry" to Alice, but before Alice can be completely disturbed by this, Officer catches her attention.

OFFICER
(holding the door open)
Please step inside, miss.

Alice steals one last glance at the retreating forms of Hatta and Lory before being gruffly pushed inside by Officer.

INT. STARPLEX MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

Officer follows her in and stands at the door as if Alice is a threat to the silver-haired man.

DODGSON
(to Officer)
You may wait outside.

Officer, chastised, exits the room.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON (CONT'D)
(to Alice)
You must be Alice.

ALICE
Yes.

DODGSON
I'm Agent Smith.

Alice gives a nervous laugh.

DODGSON (CONT'D)
Something funny?

ALICE
Oh. No I just- um- I it uh- it's

DODGSON
You seem nervous.

ALICE
No. I mean, well, yes. Obviously.

DODGSON
Obviously?

ALICE
What? No. I just meant- Have you
seen "The Matrix"?

DODGSON
Pardon?

ALICE
The movie. "The Matrix"

DODGSON
No.

ALICE
Oh. Right.

DODGSON
May I ask you a few questions,
Alice?

ALICE
Yes, but can I just say-

DODGSON
-How long have you been working at
the Starplex Galaxy 16?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

4 years. But I just want to tell you-

DODGSON

-We already know you were involved in the kidnapping of Robert Schmidt Junior last night as you confessed to your coworker earlier this morning-

ALICE

Whaaat...

DODGSON

(continuing as if
uninterrupted)

-But we'd like to verify a few more details with you from your file here before moving on to an official confession.

ALICE

Woah! Wait one second.

She is frozen for a second as her entire brain completely refocuses.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Robert Schmidt Junior. As in son of Robert Schmidt Senior? The Governor of Texas?

DODGSON

You seem very familiar with the family.

ALICE

Well, I do live in Texas. At least, for now.

DODGSON

Planning on leaving the state soon?

ALICE

Well, actually I just graduated college, and I was planning to move to Greece.

DODGSON

That's pretty far away. Common graduate destination?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(picking up on his tone)
Look, I think there's been a big misunderstanding.

DODGSON
Do you?

ALICE
I- well, yes! First of all, how do you know he's been kidnapped? Don't you have to wait like 24 hours or something? Or have you gotten a ransom already?

DODGSON
That's classified, and the 24 hour policy is irrelevant since this is a special case-

ALICE
-And what kind of agent are you? Are you FBI? Since when does FBI get involved in kidnappings overnight?

DODGSON
I just told you this is a special case. And I need you to calm down.

ALICE
(practically shouting now)
Calm down?? I'm being accused of a kidnapping here! I thought this was all about that incident last night-

DODGSON
-Incident?

ALICE
That guy who got arrested who was accusing me of being racist.

DODGSON
You're not helping your case-

ALICE
(jumping to her feet)
-Oh my God!-

DODGSON
-Ma'am, seriously-

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(pacing - putting things
together)
That boy! And that like really
attractive bitchy woman- Oh my God!

DODGSON
Attractive bitchy woman? Are you-

ALICE
(barreling on)
-It's all my fault! I basically
handed that kid over to them!

DODGSON
(also standing in his
excitement)
Are you admitting that you-

Officer barges into the office, breaking Dodgson off.

DODGSON
Damn it! Officer..Whatever! There
were to be no interruptions unless-

OFFICER
(holding out a phone)
-I'm sorry, Mr. Dodgson. It's Mr.
Heart, sir. He says he needs to
speak to you immediately.

After a frustrated glance at Alice, Dodgson grudgingly stomps around the desk, grabs the phone from Officer, and the two exit the room together.

Alice mouths to herself, "Mr. Dodgson?"

Left alone with her revelations, Alice looks wildly around the office, unsure what to do next. She spots an official-looking manila envelope on the desk where Dodgson was sitting.

She pauses only for a half-second before her impetuousness takes over. Racing around the desk, she grabs the folder, opens it, and drops her jaw at what she sees. After flipping through a few pages, she thinks fast, stuffs the folder into her bag, and goes to the door.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Cracking it open she sees that the hallway is empty. "Agent Smith" must've taken his phone call somewhere more private, and Officer Dumbass probably took this as his queue to take a break.

She sprints down the hall to the "Emergency Exit" stairs whose alarm she knows full well has never actually been hooked up, and exits the building through the side.

Meanwhile, Dodgson comes back from his phone call, looking disconcerted. He opens the door to the office, sees that Alice nor Officer is there. Pause. Then David Banner turns into the Hulk.

Dodgson tears back down the hallway to the bridge over the lobby. Frantically skims the handful of people below, but does not see Alice among them. Slams on the elevator button until it arrives, then bursts out the doors as soon as they open on the 1st floor.

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Dodgson explodes through the front doors but doesn't see Alice in the parking lot through his inflamed red vision.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Dodgson pounds up to Lory who is helping a lost-looking customer.

DODGSON
Where is she?!

LORY
Who?

DODGSON
You know who I'm fuckin-

He realizes that he is drawing stares. Lowers his voice, but his rage remains as he sputters words through clenched teeth.

DODGSON (CONT'D)
Alice. Where. Is. Alice.

LORY
(shaking her head)
I don't-

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

Where is Officer..fucking..the guy
who was supposed to guard the door!

LORY

I saw him go out back for a
cigarette.

DODGSON

(almost calmly, his anger
having now reached a deadly
level)

Thank you, Lory.

EXT. BACK OF STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Dodgson walks purposefully out the back entrance of the
theatre with an inhuman glint in his eyes.

Officer is leaning against the building enhattaing a smoke
when he sees this cold terror waltzing towards him. Spidey
sense tingling, he immediately attempts to put the cigarette
out and appeal to Dodgson. No dice.

Dodgson wastes no time. He strides right up to the poor
sonuvabitch, snaps his neck, and turns heel straight back
into the theatre before the door swings shut behind him.

Officer's body lies there on the unforgiving concrete, face
still frozen with a look of uncertain fear and supplication.
Someone will be paid to clear the body before anyone even
misses him.

INT. ALICE'S APT - AFTERNOON

Alice bursts in through the front door and blows around the
mostly packed up apartment. She grabs a couple suitcases
with essential clothes and toiletries. She also stops to
grab a couple books. Just in case there's down time.

She puts her most important items like a change of clothes,
computer and electronics, toothbrush and money into her
brown leather shoulder bag she carries with her.

Then she is gone.

INT. DODGSON'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Dodgson's office is normally as plain as his bedroom and wardrobe. At the moment, however, the room looks like a set from a detective movie with pictures, maps, and misc clues pinned all over memo boards.

He is sitting at his desk with his eyes closed, talking to the phone sitting on the opposite edge of his desk.

DODGSON

I have some more bad news.

MR. HEART (V.O.)

(through speakerphone)

Worse than letting our fall girl go?

DODGSON

She took my folder with her. The one with all the Schmidt information.

MR. HEART (V.O.)

(after a pause)

This is bad news.

DODGSON

I think-

MR. HEART (V.O.)

How much does she know?

DODGSON

(opening his eyes)

Not everything. But she definitely knows that something is suspicious. I think that's why she booked.

MR. HEART (V.O.)

Hold on. I'm getting another call.

(beat)

Hey, sorry for not returning your call. I'm dealing with fucking chimps today.

DODGSON

Excuse me?

Beat.

(CONTINUED)

MR. HEART (V.O.)
Who is this?

DODGSON
Dodgson.

MR. HEART (V.O.)
Right. Actually just hang up this
time. I need to take this. Take
care of the girl.

Dial tone. Dodgson stares at the phone a beat before reaching over and hanging it up. Then he picks the receiver back up, dials another number, and this time speaks directly into it.

DODGSON
Yes, can I speak to Dinah, please.

EXT. A STREET - AFTERNOON

Alice drives aimlessly, trying to figure out what to do. She pulls into a random parking lot. It happens to be that of a corner store right next to a cathedral.

As Alice gazes up at the stained glass windows, she makes a decision. Grabbing her leather bag, she steps purposefully from her car and towards the large wooden doors.

INT. CATHEDRAL - SAME

Alice wanders in, peering around as if she might be kicked out at any moment. She spots a confessional booth against a wall.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - SAME

She steps into it and closes her eyes, unaware that a PRIEST is currently sitting on the other side of the divide.

ALICE
(sotto)
Shit.

PRIEST
Excuse me?

ALICE
(eyes snapping open)
Fuckshitassniggers!

(CONTINUED)

Then she realizes her mistake.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Oh. Oh my god.

Going from bad to worse.

ALICE (CONT'D)
I mean-shit. Sorry-fuck. I mean- oh
wow. I did not realize someone was
in there

PRIEST
Obviously.

ALICE
(surprised at the sarcasm in
his voice)
Um. Sorry, I just came in to-

PRIEST
-I know why you came in here.

ALICE
(a little spooked now)
Really? Because I actually have no
idea.

PRIEST
Most don't. But you came in for
guidance.

ALICE
Solid guess. But I'm not sure what
guidance your holiness could
possibly give me for my situation.

PRIEST
Try me.

ALICE
This isn't a "Oh no, I had
relations with my boyfriend and got
knocked up" or a "My daddy beats my
mommy thing." This is serious.

PRIEST
Those other situations are not?

ALICE
Okay, that came out wrong. I just
meant- I can't really discuss this
with anyone.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Maybe I can still give you guidance. Some of the best advice is pretty universal.

ALICE

Like "don't do drugs"?

PRIEST

That. And practice abstinence, stay in school, know your strengths and weaknesses. And always know when to ask for help.

ALICE

Damn. That is good advice. Can I confess now?

PRIEST

(smiling despite himself)

Not the conventional order of doing things, but who am I to deny a lost soul?

ALICE

Well, the thing is- I did something...bad.

PRIEST

I gathered as much.

Alice shoots a sideways glance for the remark.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

A police cruiser pulls up next to Alice's parked car. The OFFICER #1 calls something inaudible in on his radio.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - SAME

ALICE

No! I didn't actually do what they were trying to get me to confess to. I was framed!

PRIEST

By a federal agent?

ALICE

No, I think he was impersonating one. He told me his name was Agent

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALICE (cont'd)
Smith, like from "The Matrix"? But
the officer called him
Dodgson..Unless Dodgson is some
kind of code for something, and he
is a real agent..But that would
mean there's some kind of
government conspiracy thing going
on because the cop was in on it
too...

PRIEST
I'm confused.

ALICE
So am I!

PRIEST
Why don't you just tell me what the
crime was.

ALICE
I really don't wanna get you
involved.

PRIEST
I think that bridge has been
burned.

ALICE
I just need to figure this whole
thing out on my own before they
catch up to me.

PRIEST
Do you remember a recent
conversation about knowing when to
ask for help?

Alice takes a second to think this over. She does not want
to admit he's right, but she doesn't know what else to do so
she makes a compromise.

ALICE
Alright. If I get into a tight
spot, I'll call you. Do you have a
business card or something?

PRIEST
I don't think you're getting it.
First: it sounds like you're
already in a tight spot. And
second: priests are not an on-call
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST (cont'd)
emergency service. I would love to help you, but I don't believe there's really anything else I can do but advise you. You need to find someone who can actually do something about it.

ALICE
How do I do that?

PRIEST
I think knowing *who* to ask goes along with knowing *when* to ask for help. That part is up to you. As for me, it's time for my break.

He exits the booth. Alice frowns after him.

ALICE
Well. At least he was nice.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

Alice withdraws from the cathedral, but stops short just outside the heavy wooden doors.

There are now two police cruisers parked next to her car. OFFICER #2 is inspecting the contents of the backseat with a flashlight, and OFFICER #1 is inside the corner store, questioning the proprietor.

Alice backpedals away from the scene onto a nearby side street.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - SAME

Alice makes her way down a few blocks to put some distance between herself and her car until she finds herself on a familiar street.

INT. DIVE BAR - SAME

She sidles into a particular dive bar, where she won't be recognized, walks to the back, and plops down in a dim booth.

After furtively checking that no one has followed her or is paying any attention to her, she lays her head down on her arms.

INT. INDIE COFFEE SHOP - EVENING

Dodgson perches on the edge of a plush purple couch. Across a table fashioned out of a tree trunk sits DINAH. In his perfectly tailored designer suit, Dodgson sticks out in this hippie paradise like a sore thumb, but Dinah is the perfect Anthropologie cover model of hipster chic.

Dinah may look like a tree-hugging blogger in her mid-twenties, but her cunning eyes and smile betray her wicked inclinations for subterfuge. As does the fact that she's meeting with Dodgson.

DINAH

Really? That's kind of exciting.

DODGSON

You're twisted, Dinah.

DINAH

That's why you call me.

DODGSON

It's a very tricky case. You sure you're in?

DINAH

I think I definitely am. Let me just clear a few things in my schedule, but I think I can start on this tomorrow?

DODGSON

Well, due to extenuating circumstances, I'm actually gonna need you to start immediately.

DINAH

What is immediately?

DODGSON

Tonight.

DINAH

Wow. Now I'm really intrigued. Okay.

DODGSON

Okay?

DINAH

Okay.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

We reported her car as stolen and already received word that it was found abandoned half an hour ago. Since she already suspects something, we want to go ahead and encourage her to believe the cops are also mixed up in this so that she won't go to them. However, we don't want any real cops getting involved. Since this particular case is so sensitive I need you to follow her for now, but seduce her and bring her in before she figures anything else out.

DINAH

Done. Any idea where she could have gone?

INT. DIVE BAR - EVENING

Alice's sleeping form is approached by a greasy-looking SERVER.

SERVER

Hey, you can't use this as a crashpad, man.

ALICE

(sitting straight up)

Woah, hey, sorry. I didn't realize I fell asleep. I just laid my head down for a second.

SERVER

Whatever, man. But you gotta go. This is a bar, not a shelter.

Server finally gets Alice to get up and start walking.

ALICE

Sorry, I just-

She suddenly registers what time it is when she looks out a window.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Holy fuck! It's dark outside! I must've been asleep for hours. Why did nobody wake me before?

(CONTINUED)

SERVER

I dunno. I just started my shift. I
guess no one noticed you before. No
one really comes here in the day.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - SAME

As Alice steps out the door she turns back.

ALICE

(noting the insult)
Well, don't worry then. I won't
come back day or night.

LEWIS (O.S.)

Alice?

She whips around.

ALICE

Lewis.

She is shocked slash horrified to see LEWIS standing there.
He's a
so-casually-good-looking-there-must-be-something-wrong-with-him
man a couple years older than Alice.

At the wrong moment she becomes painfully aware of the fact
that it looks like she just got thrown out of a bar at 8 PM.

ALICE

I didn't just get kicked out of a
bar at 8 PM.

Lewis looks at the dive bar. Back at Alice.

LEWIS

Neither did I?

Alice hates herself now. This is the last person she wants
to make a fool of herself in front of.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

It's been a while.

ALICE

Ya, I-

LEWIS

I'd ask if you wanted to go have a
drink but maybe...

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(noticing him glance uneasily
at the bar)
I'm not drunk. I just passed out in
there for a while- Not that- I mean
it's just been a really rough day.

LEWIS
I know the feeling.

ALICE
I seriously doubt it.

LEWIS
You haven't changed at all.

ALICE
What is that supposed to mean?

LEWIS
Seriously? The whole reason we
broke up was because you kept
pushing me away like that.

ALICE
I didn't realize we were ever
officially dating. I remember you
only ever wanting to "hook up" when
it was convenient for you.

LEWIS
Okay, pot calling the kettle black,
why would I want to commit to
someone who can't even commit to
watching an entire movie?

ALICE
You really have to get over that.
I'm sorry I couldn't sit through a
4-hour movie about a self-absorbed
tool wandering through the deserts
in Africa-

LEWIS
-"Lawrence of Arabia" is one of the
greatest films of all time! And
Peter O'Toole was not a tool- Okay.
Walked right into that one.

Alice laughs. Despite himself, Lewis cracks a smile.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
See? This is why we "broke up."

LEWIS
The offer for the drink is still on the table.

ALICE
(though tempted)
I think it will have to wait on the table for a while. I'm kind of caught up in something.

LEWIS
(not hiding his disappointment well)
Alright, well, see you around then.

Alice only smiles and heads off.

Lewis stares after her only for a second then continues in the other direction.

He rounds a corner and runs right into Dinah. She is carrying a pile of papers that gets knocked all over the ground.

LEWIS
Oh, I'm so sorry!

DINAH
It's okay! I wasn't looking where I-

Lewis' mind is still with Alice so he does not notice that Dinah's papers are covered in info about her. Nor does he notice when Dinah looks up into his face and instantly loses her breath.

DINAH (CONT'D)
-was going.

LEWIS
No sweat. I was a bit distracted myself.

He hands her the last of her papers and continues walking. It takes Dinah another few seconds before she clears her head and remembers to tail Alice.

As she walks Dinah attempts to cram all her papers into her organic tote bag. On the top page in her grasp we see that she and Dodgson have marked Alice as homosexual.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NEXT MORNING

Est. shot of a tall downtown building.

INT. ELEVATOR - SAME

Dodgson is riding a sluggish elevator with two women whose conversation he'd rather not have to endure.

TITLE: TUESDAY

WOMAN #1

I had never seen him before!

WOMAN #2

Was he at least attractive?

WOMAN #1

He was one of those guys that you could just tell had inbreeding somewhere in his ancestry.

They both laugh.

WOMAN #1 (CONT'D)

You know? It's hard to say he was ugly...there was something just not quite right about him.

WOMAN #2

That's so awkward.

WOMAN #1

Well, what's more awkward was that when got home I realized I bought the wrong kind of alfredo and had to go back!

WOMAN #2

Oh lord! Why didn't you just wait til the next day?

WOMAN #1

I needed it for dinner that night. But anyway, he was still there and we kept awkwardly making eye contac-

The elevator finally reaches Dodgson's stop. He escapes onto a floor covered in cubicles and bustling office drones.

He heads straight for an office at the end of the main hallway.

INT. MR. HEART'S OFFICE - SAME

Entering the room without even knocking, he registers that there was no need to anyway. It is unoccupied, ruining his grand entrance.

The office is cold and pristine as if the occupant is rarely ever there. Or that he simply does not tolerate clutter in his workspace. Probably a little of both are true.

Before Dodgson has the chance to turn around, Mr. Heart strides into the room, forcing Dodgson to be the one caught off guard.

MR. HEART
(walking around to his desk)
You're late, *Dodgson*.

DODGSON
I'm ten minutes early, *Heart*.

MR. HEART
Like I said. So what do you have for me?

DODGSON
I have my most able source on the girl's tail.

MR. HEART
The girl?

DODGSON
Alice. Sir.

MR. HEART
I know her name. I wanted to make sure you knew it. Thought maybe the reason a 22 year old child wasn't under your so expert custody already was that you were missing some crucial piece of information.

DODGSON
I almost had a confession before you called and pulled me out of that interrogat-

MR. HEART
-I'm sorry, but it almost sounds like you're blaming me for this mess. Am I the one who left a damning piece of evidence lying out in plain sight on the desk?

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

I had no reason to think-

MR. HEART

-You never seem to have any reason to think, do you?! You turned a confused little girl into the most dangerous type of enemy. You pissed her off then handed her our most important piece of intel! Why don't you just cover us all in honey, bring in a bee hive, and start whacking it with a piñata stick!!

DODGSON

(calmly)

My source is onto her, and I expect to have her brought in by the weekend.

MR. HEART

(too furious to yell anymore)

Great. Then we'll all be able to relax, maybe take in a movie, have some brunch, go bar-hopping and dancing before the weekly grind begins again on Monday.

DODGSON

I'm not sure-

MR. HEART

(reaching hysterics again)

This is not a game! This is not junior year at phi gamma delta! We are not waitressing our way through law school, here! We are professionals!!

DODGSON

I'm well aware-

MR. HEART

-Let me finish!

Beat.

MR. HEART (CONT'D)

I thought I made it clear that this was an important case?

Dodgson almost replies, but Mr. Heart shoots him a look that tells him it will be the last mistake he ever makes.

(CONTINUED)

MR. HEART (CONT'D)

As such, it was supposed to be simple. Clean. I suppose it is my own fault for assuming that something so important would not go so wrong.

Dodgson glowers. It is Heart's fault but for a drastically different reason.

MR. HEART (CONT'D)

Do you realize that if we do not complete this operation effectively we will lose our biggest client and, therefore, ALL FUTURE CLIENTS??

Beat.

MR. HEART (CONT'D)

I am looking for a "yes" or "no, sir"!

DODGSON

Yessir.

MR. HEART

Now my blood pressure is back up. I need you to leave, and do not contact me again until you have good news for me.

Dodgson turns to exit.

MR. HEART (CONT'D)

And by good news, I mean that you've caught our little friend.

Dodgson takes a few steps. Hand on the door.

MR. HEART (CONT'D)

And by little friend, I mean Alice.

Dodgson opens the door and steps through.

MR. HEART (CONT'D)

(yelling after him)

And it better be soon, Dodgson!

Mr. Heart leans back against his chair with his hand on his chest.

EXT. SHITTY MOTEL DOWNTOWN - MORNING

Alice stumbles out of a motel that's been sold and resold so many times the current owner probably doesn't even remember its present name.

After she checks out, she ambles over to the corner store that backs up against the wall of the sun-bleached building.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

As she peruses the single-serving foods of the snack aisle in pursuit of a decent breakfast, she notices a police officer saunter in.

She immediately backs into the nearest door to hide, not realizing it is the:

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE MEN'S ROOM - SAME

Or that Lewis is at the sink washing his hands.

As Alice peeps through a crack in the door at the officer in the store, Lewis turns around and sees her. He is about to say something when she suddenly spins around and spots him.

ALICE

Lewis!

LEWIS

Damn, I was trying to say something clever before you turned around. Can you turn back around again so I can say something cool?

ALICE

What?

LEWIS

Well, how often do I run into you?

Alice opens her mouth to respond with the obvious.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

-I mean before yesterday. Wait, why am I running into you again? In the men's restroom?

ALICE

Um.

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS
(going to door)
Are you hiding from someone?

ALICE
(blocking door)
No!

Lewis pushes her aside with ease and looks outside.

LEWIS
You know that cop out there?

ALICE
Not yet?

LEWIS
When you said you were having a bad
day yesterday-

ALICE
-please don't ask-

LEWIS
-you didn't mean illegal bad, did
you?

Alice checks the door again. The officer has gone.

ALICE
It's a really long story. I don't
want to drag you into it.

She exits.

EXT. STREET BY CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

Alice exits the convenience store and begins walking towards
a bus stop when she is regaled by yet another unwelcome
visitor from her past.

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Hey!

Alice turns and recognizes her customer from 2 nights ago.

ALICE
(sotto)
Seriously?

(CONTINUED)

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER
(walking towards her)
Hey, I gotta hundred dolla fine
cuzza you bitch.

Meanwhile, Dinah walks out of the motel towards the corner store and sees the violent scene about to unfold in front of her. She stops short and observes from behind the corner of the building.

There is nowhere for Alice to run, and there is no way in Hell she can defend herself against this man physically. Guess it's up to her amazing diplomatic skills to get her out of this one...

ALICE
Sir, I realize we had a
disagreement the other night-

...or not.

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER
-disagreement? Disagreement! Oh,
honey, you ain't seen disagreement
yet.

Alice opens her mouth to respond. Closes it.

UNSAVORY CUSTOMER (CONT'D)
(bearing down on her)
That's right. You ain't got nuthin
to say to me now you ain't got no
rent-a-cop buddy to back you up, do
you?

At this moment, Lewis pulls up in his car alongside Alice and honks at her. As soon as she recognizes him, Alice jumps into the vehicle and they peel off.

Dinah rushes back to her car, but by the time she starts it, Alice and Lewis are long gone.

INT. LEWIS' CAR - SAME

ALICE
Holy shit!

LEWIS
I saw that guy walk up to you after
I left, and I did the only manly
thing I could think of.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

You ran in the opposite direction
and got your car?

LEWIS

I saved you. By running in the
opposite direction to get my car.

ALICE

Sorry. I mean thank you. This is
just not my week.

LEWIS

Ya, what's going on exactly? I mean
I did just save your life so I feel
like I deserve to know what's going
on with my investment here.

ALICE

You can just drop me anywhere.

LEWIS

So you can what? Get attacked
again? Or get arrested? What the
Hell have you gotten yourself into,
Alice?

ALICE

That's a damn good question.

LEWIS

Seriously. I'm not pulling over
anytime soon, and I've got a full
tank of gas so-

ALICE

-Don't you have a job to get to or
something?

LEWIS

Not now I don't.

Alice looks at him quizzically. Decides not to ask.

ALICE

Fine. But you're on a need to know
basis.

LEWIS

I need to know everything.

Alice looks out her window. This is going to be a long car
ride.

INT. HEART RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The picturesque room is no longer neat and tidy. Lamps are over turned, pictures are hanging crooked, there are mass amounts of food everywhere, and a hole has been smashed into the center of the television screen.

Robert Schmidt Junior's bindings have been altered so that only his torso is fastened to his chair, and his arms are free to feed himself from the TV dinner tray placed in front of him. Or to fling the contents of the tray all over the room, which is what he apparently prefers to do.

Mr. Heart stands in the center of the wrecked room, staring the boy down.

MR. HEART

You got somethin' to say, boy?

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR

(mocking)

You got somethin' to say, boy?

MR. HEART

What the Hell was that?

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR

What the Hell was that?

MR. HEART

Are you mimicking me?

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR

Are you mimicking me?

MR. HEART

Stop it!

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR

Stop it!

MR. HEART

Boy, I have killed men for being less cheeky.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR

Boy, I have killed men for being less cheeky.

MR. HEART

If you do that one more time...

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
If you do that one more-

Mr. Heart crosses to Junior and slugs him. The kid is stunned into silence. Then:

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
Wait til my father gets to you.

MR. HEART
hah! Oh yeah?

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
He's got bodyguards. They're all mixed martial arts champions, and they'll kill you.

Mr. Heart laughs.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
Dad said one of them once killed a man without with one punch.

Mr. Heart laughs harder.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
He's not gonna give you any money either. Just gonna-

Mr. Heart's laughter finally drowns Junior out. Once it subsides a little, Junior tries again.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
You think I'm lying?

MR. HEART
Oh no, I believe you. Your father definitely won't pay me any money. But not because he's got ninja bodyguards to protect him. He's not gonna pay me because he can't.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
(proudly)
Yes, he can. My daddy's the richest man in Texas.

MR. HEART
Ya, he wishes. Son, your daddy is broke. He can't even afford the paper he writes his checks on.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
That's not true.

MR. HEART
Why do you think it's taking so long to get the ransom? Your mother's the one with the money, and while I babysit you, your daddy's out there working on getting the money from her without letting her figure out he doesn't have any of his own.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
But...he owns his own helicopter.

MR. HEART
That belongs to the state, Junior.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
My daddy loves me.

MR. HEART
I'm sure he does. But money can't buy love, can it?

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR
I dunno.

MR. HEART
But you should know I'm not as desperate for money as your daddy is. I'm willing to lose a few bucks from my cut of the ransom in exchange for giving you a few bruises, maybe some cracked ribs. Keep that in mind next time you decide you wanna throw a fork into my flat screen.

Heart begins to exit. Instead he turns back, pulling a pocket knife out of his back pocket, and advances towards Junior.

Junior cowers, but Heart only uses the weapon to cut his bonds.

MR. HEART (CONT'D)
When I come back in an hour this mess better be cleaned up. If I were you I'd go ahead and eat what I could of it seeing as you're not getting anything else til lunch tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

He makes his way again to the exit. Without turning he says:

MR. HEART

And if you feel like trying to
stretch your legs outside, be ware
of the rottweilers that roam the
property. We don't feed them very
often so they're kinda
foul-tempered.

Heart disappears up the stairs. Junior looks uncertainly
around the room at his scattered dinner.

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DODGSON'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Dinah sits in an unadorned, brown chair, waiting to speak to
Dodgson. She flips through a magazine without pausing to
look at any page. Her eyes dart to the large white clock on
the wall more often than to the pictures.

Finally, a door to the side of the empty receptionist's desk
opens, and an ASSISTANT wearing yet another plain dark suit
identical to Dodgson's beckons Dinah through.

She follows him down a plain hallway to a plain door. The
Assistant knocks, and after an inaudible voice presumably
invites them in, he opens it for her.

Dinah enters...

INT. DODGSON'S OFFICE - SAME

...and does not react to the explosion of color created by
pictures and maps strewn about as they contrast with the
preamble of monotony before the office.

Dodgson himself slumps at his desk, staring at his phone as
if he just lost a battle against it.

DINAH

I'm sorry I lost her.

DODGSON

I know. You'll find her again,
though.

DINAH

You have another lead for me?

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

I have faith.

DINAH

(noting his depressed state)
What's going on? I've never seen
you like this. What's so special
about this girl?

DODGSON

Nothing. She's a twenty-something
nobody who threw a wrench in the
works, and it's my job to fix it.
But if I'm having this much trouble
with her, why am I even-

DINAH

-Hey! You've solved way bigger
problems than this before. It's
what you do. You'll be fine.

DODGSON

I snapped a guy's neck the other
day, Dinah. Why? Because he took a
smoke break.

DINAH

(at a loss)
Have you been drinking?

DODGSON

Water. And I had a lemon-lime
Gatorade with breakfast.

DINAH

Okay. Good. That's good. You called
me in here, though...

DODGSON

I have a present for you.

He stands and moves to a cabinet against one wall. Reaching
in to the top shelf, he pulls out a wooden box a little
smaller and flatter than a shoe box.

He hands it to her, but when she opens it, she blinks with
incomprehension.

DINAH

A gun?

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

It's a .44 Magnum Colt Anaconda. Similar to Dirty Harry's gun, but it's a little less accurate. When I first got into the whole "information retrieval business," those were standard issue. But now they're outdated. Like me.

DINAH

I think someone's being a little melodramatic.

DODGSON

I just thought you might appreciate it. And I have no use for it anymore. There's 50 extra rounds in the box there. In case you need to use it.

DINAH

(a little worried now)
Do you think that's likely?

DODGSON

(walking back to his chair)
You're young. Just promise me you won't let this job consume you.

DINAH

I should probably go.
(beat)
Thanks for the gun.

As she turns to exit:

DODGSON

Dinah-

DINAH

-Don't worry about me. I won't do this forever. I'm actually working on a business degree right now. Night school.

DODGSON

Really?

DINAH

(defensively)
I wanna open a bakery.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON
I didn't know you like to bake.

DINAH
We're in the business right now of
using that kind of info against one
another. Maybe I'll make you a cake
for your retirement.

She walks out the door.

DODGSON
(yelling after her)
I like red velvet!

INT. NICE HOTEL ROOM 308 - EVENING

Alice and Lewis walk into a room much nicer than the one
Alice booked the previous night.

LEWIS
All I'm saying is you shouldn't
have used your card to buy the
sandwich if you really think the
police are looking for you.

ALICE
But I bought it around the corner.
They're not gonna think to look for
me here at the hotel.

LEWIS
They might. They could start asking
around. Did you use your card at
the "motel" you stayed at last
night?

Alice sets her stuff down on the nightstand between the two
twin beds.

ALICE
Maybe.

LEWIS
Ugh, Alice!

ALICE
They haven't tracked me yet, have
they?
(looking around)
I still think we could've found a
much cheaper place.

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

You might be okay with staying in some hollowed out tree somewhere, but I like having a few creature comforts. For instance: a mattress without bloodstains.

ALICE

Ya, well not all of us can afford such lavish creature comforts.

LEWIS

I told you I really don't mind paying. It was my idea to get a more expensive room anyway.

ALICE

I don't-

LEWIS

-I really don't have time to argue with you any more. I have to go make my feet fall asleep.

ALICE

Make your...?

LEWIS

Feet fall asleep. It's a euphemism. For taking a dump.

He starts for the bathroom.

ALICE

Your feet fall asleep when you...

LEWIS

(closing bathroom door)

Yep.

ALICE

(to self)

Why did I ask?

INT. INDIE COFFEE SHOP - EVENING

Dinah is sitting on a faded orange couch under a chandelier made from antlers and candles. She is doing business school homework when her email icon dings at her.

She opens her browser and sees that the user of a checking account she's monitoring has just made a purchase at a sandwich shop across town.

She smiles and starts packing up her belongings.

INT. NICE HOTEL ROOM 308 - EVENING

Alice is sitting on one of the twin beds eating her sandwich, reading a book. Another ancient paperback with a picture of some naked Greek hero on the cover.

Lewis sits on the opposite bed, staring at Alice.

Alice finally notices the staring.

ALICE

What?

LEWIS

(snapping out of it)

Nothing. I just uh, didn't bring anything to read.

ALICE

Oh. Sorry.

She sets her book aside.

ALICE (CONT'D)

When we're done eating, you wanna-

Over each other

ALICE (CONT'D)

-grab a drink?

LEWIS

-go to the hotel bar?

They laugh and each go back to finishing their sandwiches.

EXT. SANDWICH SHOP - NIGHT

Dinah stands outside the sandwich shop, tapping at her phone.

She uses an app to find local bars and hotels. There happens to be a location quite close by that has both. She heads toward it.

INT. NICE HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

Alice and Lewis sit at the bar, drinking and laughing. There are a few empty glasses in front of each of them already.

ALICE

So why did you say earlier that you weren't going to work? You're still a software engineer at that GPS place, right?

LEWIS

Ya...no...I sort of quit?

ALICE

Really? Why?

LEWIS

Well, it was more like I got fired.

ALICE

Oh. So what happened?

LEWIS

I mean technically it hasn't happened yet.

ALICE

Is this some sort of weird *Donnie Darko* thing?

LEWIS

No. But hey! Great movie reference! See? I knew I'd get you into this new-fangled cinema thing eventually.

ALICE

You're avoiding the question.

LEWIS

Probably. But it's really not that interesting of a story.

ALICE

The more you build it up the more interested I get.

LEWIS

Fine, but you're gonna be disappointed. All it is...is that I did something maybe a little bit bad, and they haven't discovered it

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS (cont'd)
yet, but when they do, they'll
probably fire me.

ALICE
What did you do?

LEWIS
I may have accidentally created a,
for lack of a better term, massive
virus that is slowly but surely
erasing all of their backup files
and may eventually end up shutting
down their entire system.

ALICE
Lewis! How long until eventually?

LEWIS
That's another problem. Could be
days. Could be years.

ALICE
How do you create a virus like that
"accidentally"?

LEWIS
I'm not sure exactly! I was
supposed to set a finite loop to
erase old data to make room for
updates, but somehow I set the
endpoint wrong and made it an
infinite loop instead. So even if
they shut the system off, it will
just keep running. And because it's
on an infinite loop, it's also
exponential.

ALICE
I understood loop, erase old data,
and shut the system off.

LEWIS
Basically, I created a juggernaut.
Instead of stopping deleting data
at a certain point, it keeps on
deleting data it's not supposed to.
And the more it deletes, the faster
it deletes.

ALICE
Well fuck. How long has it been
going?

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

A week...

ALICE

Jesus, Lewis! You have to go back
and tell them!

LEWIS

I'm sure they'll figure it out
soon.

ALICE

You can't just let it keep going!
You need to take responsibility for
this.

LEWIS

Oh, like you're so great at taking
responsibility for things.

ALICE

What the Hell is that supposed to
mean?

LEWIS

You think you're just being
independent by trying to refuse my
help, but really you just don't
want to have to face being in my
debt.

ALICE

What does that even-

LEWIS

-You don't ever want to have to say
"thank you." You don't want to have
to take responsibility for anyone
else. If no one helps you then you
don't have to help anyone else.

ALICE

I said thank you-

LEWIS

-Sure. But you don't wanna have to
listen to a thing I say. No one's
advice is ever as good as yours.
Obviously you have everything
figured out so I'll just leave you
to it.

(CONTINUED)

He storms off, but turns back before he gets to the exit. Without either of the two noticing, Dinah sneaks into the bar and sits at a table on the far wall, watching them.

Lewis walks back up to where Alice is sitting.

ALICE
What...

LEWIS
(to BARTENDER)
Excuse me.

He gestures signing the bill.

LEWIS
(to Alice while signing his
check)
Am I allowed to pay for the drinks?

ALICE
I don't know what just happened-

LEWIS
-I'm just a little pissed about
things right now. I'm gonna go for
a walk. I'll see you back in the
room later.

Lewis grabs his card from the bar and leaves.

Alice still sits there a little stunned

ALICE
(to Bartender)
Can I get another whiskey?

INT. NICE HOTEL BAR - LATER

There is large group of MEN and WOMEN at the bar, who are on some business trip, and Alice is talking to a BUSINESSMAN from the group. There are several more empty glasses in front of her, and she has another glass in sloshing around in her hand that's still half-full of amber liquid.

ALICE
I tried telling him he can't keep
avoiding it. He needs to go back,
tell them what happened, and figure
it all out. Even if they do fire
him at least he'll have fixed the
problem and won't have to keep
running, ya know?

(CONTINUED)

She takes a swig.

BUSINESSMAN

Maybe that's what you should do.

ALICE

What?

BUSINESSMAN

Stop running.

ALICE

I'm not running from anything. I mean okay I am running from some people. But they're evil. They're trying to kidnap me. I mean like make me kidnap someone. They might kill me. Well, I don't know if they want to kill me, but they might. If they're not above kidnapping I have to assume they're not above killing. You know like tie up loose ends? Or maybe they need me alive. It's like Boethius said in his *Consolation of Philosophy*: about the wheel of fortune. Fate has control of the wheel, and sometimes you're up and sometimes you're down.

BUSINESSMAN

Wheel of Fortune?

ALICE

The wheel of fortune. It's a philosophy thing. Sorry I tend to start over-analyzing things when I drink and get all philosophical. Anyway the thing is, my point is I can't help that I'm on the bottom of the wheel right now. I gotta wait til I'm back on top.

BUSINESSMAN

Maybe that's what your friend is doing.

ALICE

I don't think you're understanding what I'm saying. Or maybe you're right. Maybe I should stop running and just go to the cops and hash this whole thing out. Nip it in the butt.

(CONTINUED)

BUSINESSMAN

Why the police?

Alice downs the rest of her drink and stands up. After gaining her balance, she grabs her bag.

ALICE

I'll see you later.

Dinah, across the room, watches Alice wobble out of the bar and follows.

EXT. NICE HOTEL - NIGHT

Alice spots a UNIFORM just down the street, putting a ticket on an illegally parked car.

She lurches straight for him.

ALICE

Hey, officer! I need to talk to you.

UNIFORM

Is there a problem, ma'am?

Dinah hurries up behind Alice and answers first.

DINAH

Oh no, sorry officer! My friend here is just a little drunk and got away from me.

UNIFORM

She says she needs to talk to me.

ALICE

(to Dinah)

Who are you?

DINAH

(to Alice)

Ha! It's okay, Alice, we're going home now. It's alright.

(to Uniform)

Sorry to trouble you, sir.

ALICE

Hey, how do you know my name?

(CONTINUED)

UNIFORM
(to Dinah)
Are you driving her?

DINAH
Yes, sir. I'm taking her home right now. I'm sorry she got away from me for a minute. I won't let it happen again.

Dinah starts to drag Alice away before the Uniform can get any more suspicious. Alice points at the hotel.

ALICE
I live there.

Dinah laughs and keeps walking her past the hotel and around a corner. Alice is confused but near passing out so she allows herself to be dragged along by this strange hipster.

INT. NICE HOTEL LUNCH BUFFET - AFTERNOON

The next day, Dinah is talking on her cell phone in the hotel's dining room while piling two plates full of food.

DINAH
It was kind of perfect actually. She was drunk enough that I don't think she'll remember much of anything, but even if she does it's not like I did or said anything really incriminating.

INT. DODGSON'S OFFICE - SAME

Dodgson sits at his cluttered desk, talking to Dinah. He does not appear to have gone home since they last spoke.

DODGSON
Some good news then finally. Is she up yet?

INT. NICE HOTEL LUNCH BUFFET/DODGSON'S OFFICE - SAME

DINAH
No, I'm getting some lunch for us right now. Gonna take it up to the room. The problem, though, is her friend. First of all I'm not sure where he went last night, but I'm
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DINAH (cont'd)
certain she'll want to find him.
Second, he may recognize me.

DODGSON
You don't think you'll be able to
bring her in without him?

DINAH
Not without her suspecting
something. I'm guessing compliance
is more important than speed in
getting her there at this point?

DODGSON
It's a delicate balance, but yes.

DINAH
Do you think I would have to kill
the friend?

DODGSON
Would that be a problem for you?

DINAH
(a little too quickly)
No.

DODGSON
You've never killed anyone before,
have you?

DINAH
No.

DODGSON
It shouldn't be necessary as long
as you can get him to somehow leave
her on his own. If he recognizes
you, just act like you don't
remember. Like he must've run into
someone who looks like you. Just
whatever you do: don't get attached
to either of them. Be prepared for
any eventuality.

DINAH
Yes, mom. I'll keep you updated.

She hangs up.

INT. NICE HOTEL ROOM 257 - AFTERNOON

Alice wakes up in a queen-sized hotel bed, groggy and confused.

TITLE: WEDNESDAY

She sits up and catches her reflection in the mirror on the wall. Not pretty. She swings her legs over the side of the bed. Pauses. Puts her feet on the floor. Pauses. Slowly stands. Pauses. Makes her way one tentative footstep at a time to the bathroom. She pees for like 5 minutes then washes her hands.

INT. NICE HOTEL BATHROOM - SAME

Alice gazes at her reflection. After fruitlessly trying to run her fingers through her hair a few times, she gives up and pulls it into a messy bun.

INT. NICE HOTEL ROOM 257 - SAME

She moves back into the bedroom and spots a mini fridge. When she opens it she finds two water bottles. Grabbing both, she heads to the bed, sits back down, and begins sipping one of them.

Then she notices her bag on the night stand. She digs through it and pulls out her cell phone. It's dead. She digs back into her bag for her charger and plugs it in.

As she goes back to sipping her water, the door opens and Dinah walks in.

Alice panics slightly and grabs a pen from the nightstand: the closest weapon she can find.

ALICE
Who the Hell are you?

DINAH
Oh! I was afraid you wouldn't remember.

Dinah sets down the food and a bag with clothes in it on the small table near the door.

Alice looks uncertainly around the room and at the single bed, which she must have shared with this stranger.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
Wouldn't remember?

DINAH
Oh, don't worry. We didn't do anything like that. We just talked for a long time after I sort of saved your life, but you were really drunk and-

ALICE
-Wait, what? You saved my life?

DINAH
Oh no need to thank me or anything. Like I said you were really drunk, and I kind of thought you might not remember.

ALICE
I'm sorry. I didn't realize- what happened?

DINAH
I said don't worry about it. Really. I actually had a good time.

Dinah sits on the bed next to Alice with the plates of food and faces her. Alice is still a bit uncomfortable and a bit more confused at the signals she's receiving from Dinah.

ALICE
(accepting a plate of food)
Thank you. So much. Um I'm sorry, I really don't remember much from last night. I was at the bar downstairs with my friend...Oh shit! Lewis!

Alice puts down her plate and reaches for her phone.

ALICE (CONT'D)
Oh, I bet he's so worried right now. I should go find him.

She starts to get up but looks really woozy.

DINAH
Wait! Slow down. Eat something first. You don't look so good. I don't think you're in any condition to go running off anywhere just yet.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

You're right. Okay I'll just eat something and call him in a few minutes.

(looking at phone)

Jeez, I have like 30 missed calls from him. And about 15 texts. I think he's still in the hotel, though.

She takes a small bite of fruit from her plate.

Dinah picks up a strawberry from the plate and feeds it to Alice.

DINAH

Here, try the strawberries. They're really fresh.

Alice is a little weirded out but tries not to show it.

DINAH (CONT'D)

What else do you remember from last night?

ALICE

Well, after Lewis stormed off, I had a few more drinks. Then this group of business people came down, and I started talking to them and that's where things start going blank. Just some flashes. I remember walking around outside or something, and I think I threw up in an alleyway?

DINAH

Ya...ya did.

ALICE

Oh no, you were there for that part?

DINAH

(nodding)

Is that all you remember?

ALICE

Basically. A flash of coming into a hotel room. I guess that was this one. Then waking up this morning.

(CONTINUED)

DINAH

You mean this afternoon? ha It's almost 1:30.

ALICE

Wow, so what else happened? How did you save my life?

Alice nibbles at her food as Dinah fills her in.

DINAH

I don't know what happened with the guys at the bar, but I came along when you were on the street outside the hotel badgering some cop.

ALICE

(eyes getting huge)
Badgering a cop?

DINAH

Ya, I stepped in because you were obviously drunk and didn't seem like you wanted to get put in jail for public intoxication. So I pretended to be your friend and said I was driving you home. But you kept saying you lived in the hotel so I booked you a room here.

ALICE

O wow, thanks.

DINAH

No problem. You were kinda cute, anyway.

Alice looks a little abashed at this comment.

DINAH (CONT'D)

But then you didn't wanna go upstairs just yet so I walked around outside with you for a while. That's when you threw up in the alley behind the hotel.

Alice grimaces.

DINAH (CONT'D)

And you begged me to stay with you.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

That doesn't even sound like me.

DINAH

It's true, though.

ALICE

Oh, I believe you. With all the weird things that have been happening lately...I feel like I woke up as myself the other day but somehow turned into someone else before I went to sleep, and I have no idea how I got here.

DINAH

Well, then we came up here and talked for while before you passed out. I took your change of clothes to the laundry room downstairs this morning so you'd have something clean to wear today.

ALICE

(looking over at the bag with her clothes)

Again: Thank you. What exactly did we talk about?

DINAH

It was a little incoherent, but you told me all about some plan to frame you for a kidnapping?

ALICE

Uh oh.

DINAH

It's okay. Your secret's safe with me. As a matter of fact I wanna help.

ALICE

Look, I already-

Alice is interrupted by her phone ringing.

ALICE

(into phone)

Hello-

She pulls the phone back from her ear as everyone in the room can hear the incoherent shouting from the other end. It's Lewis. And he's pissed.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Woah! Lewis, slow down! Where are you?

INT. NICE HOTEL ROOM 308 - SAME

Lewis paces the floor of his hotel room, while ranting into his phone.

LEWIS

Where am I?? Where the Hell are you? I came back to the room last night. You weren't here. You weren't at the bar. I couldn't reach you on your phone-

INT. NICE HOTEL ROOM 257/308 - SAME

ALICE

-Lewis-

LEWIS

-so I just come back to the room and hope you call because I don't know what else to do, and I hope you come back before morning. But I wake up. And no Alice.

ALICE

Lewis, I'm sorry. I'm at the hotel. I had a little incident last night because I had a bit too much to drink-

LEWIS

-What happened? Are you alright?

ALICE

Yes! I'm fine. I feel like shit, but I'm fine. Can you just come to my room, and I'll explain everything. Or at least my new friend-

(to Dinah while covering the mouth of the phone)

I'm so sorry, what was your name?

DINAH

Dinah.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(back into phone)
Dinah, will explain.

LEWIS
Your new friend? You don't even
know her name?

ALICE
Will you just come down here? It's
room-

DINAH
-257-

ALICE
-257.

LEWIS
Fine. I'm on my way.

They hang up.

ALICE
He's on his way.

She continues to peck at her food.

DINAH
Cool.

ALICE
Do you have any Advil?

DINAH
Sure.

Dinah goes to get some pills from her bag.

ALICE
Great thanks.

Dinah's fingers linger on Alice's just a tad longer than
necessary when she hands her the pills. Alice pops them in
her mouth then moves away from Dinah.

ALICE
I'm gonna go ahead and hop in the
shower. Can you just let Lewis in
when he gets here?

(CONTINUED)

DINAH

Sure.

While Alice is in the bathroom, there is a knock at the front door. Dinah opens it to find Lewis standing there, still in his clothes from the day before.

DINAH

Hi, you must be Lewis.

LEWIS

You must be Dinah. Nice to finally meet you. I've heard so much about you.

Dinah humors him with a laugh, but as he pushes past her into the room she stares after him indignantly. He didn't recognize her.

DINAH

(emphasizing)

So since we've never met before...I thought I should tell you I don't usually pick up strange women off the street and take them to a hotel room.

LEWIS

(laughing)

Ya, well, Alice tends to do that to people.

DINAH

Do what to people?

LEWIS

Make them do weird things.

ALICE O.S.

I can hear you! Asshole!

INT. DUCHESS DAY SPA - AFTERNOON

Mrs. Schmidt is resting in a chair wearing only a silk robe with towel wrapped around her head. Her face is covered in a brown paste, and there are plastic packets filled with a fragrant gel-like substance resting on her closed eye-lids.

Her phone rings, and she lazily picks it up and puts it on speakerphone without opening her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. SCHMIDT

Yes?

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

(through speakerphone)

I've been trying to reach you all day! Where the Hell are you?

MRS. SCHMIDT

I'm at The Duchess. I just got out of a mudbath.

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

The..Duchess *Day Spa*?? Are you serious?

MRS. SCHMIDT

I needed some relaxation, okay. I've been under a lot of stress lately. Even before...

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

I know. But I need you here. You're not safe out on your own. I just got a call from the kidnap-

MRS. SCHMIDT

-Don't call them that! I told you I hate that word.

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

Baby, they want their money.

MRS. SCHMIDT

You only call me baby when you're upset.

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

I am upset! I'm under a lot of stress too, ya know. I have to go on running the state like nothing's wrong all while my son is missing and my wife refuses to pay his ransom!

MRS. SCHMIDT

I told you I know what they look like so I'm not going to pay one red cent until they're found.

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

Goddamnit, Lilly! They could kill him!

(CONTINUED)

MRS. SCHMIDT

They won't if they really want their money.

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

And if they decide to give up and try someone else who's not so stingy?

MRS. SCHMIDT

Please. Talk to me about stingy. What's your excuse for not putting up the money yourself, again?

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

It would not go unnoticed if the governor of Texas suddenly withdrew 2 million dollars and handed it off to an unknown source.

MRS. SCHMIDT

That's the lamest excuse...wouldn't it *help* your campaign if people knew you were the victim of a- a- an abduction?

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

I am not going to use the "abduction" of my son to win votes. That's sick.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Our son.

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

Can you please just come home so we can talk about this?

MRS. SCHMIDT

There's no point in talking about it any further. We will just keep going in circles. But I will be home in about 2 hours.

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

Can you pick up some toilet paper and bananas on your way?

MRS. SCHMIDT

Yes. I'll see you when I get home.

(CONTINUED)

MR. SCHMIDT (O.S)

See you.

They both hang up.

INT. LEWIS' CAR - AFTERNOON

Dinah and Lewis wait in his car outside a Chase bank.

DINAH

(breaking the ice)

Got any tunes?

LEWIS

(teasing)

Tunes? Wow, slow down with the hip, lingo, dog. You like INSERT BAND?

DINAH

A. I'm bringing "tunes" back, and
B. I don't like INSERT BAND. I love them.

LEWIS

Game on.

He shuffles through the cd's in the player until he gets to the right one and starts playing the album.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

You seem alright for a stranger
Alice picked up on the street.

DINAH

(pointing to self)

Dinah.

LEWIS

So what's your deal, Dinah?

DINAH

What do you mean?

LEWIS

Well, I'm a software engineer who
fucked over a major GPS company.
Alice is a college grad who just
got a kid abducted. Time to confess
your sins.

She thinks for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

DINAH
Parking tickets.

LEWIS
Parking tickets?

DINAH
Yes, I have tons of them. I simply ignore parking signs and park wherever I want. I probably have hundreds of them by now. And I've even had my car booted a few times.

LEWIS
Okay, Dinah: welcome to the fuckups club. I guess Alice is the president, and I'm the vice president. What would you like to be?

DINAH
I was class historian senior year of high school.

LEWIS
So you wanna be that?

DINAH
Hell no. I hated it. Just did it to look good on my college applications. I'm gonna be the cool kid this time and make fun of the nerds who are officers.

LEWIS
Wow, a rebel in a club of rebels. Impressive.

DINAH
Do what I can. Just don't let me drive ever.

Dinah stares longingly at Lewis, but he is completely unaware that he is flirting with her.

LEWIS
Oh I wasn't planning to. This car hasn't gotten a single ticket yet, and I don't plan on letting Miss Parks-Wherever-the-Hell-She-Pleases fuck that up.

He unleashes a heartbreaking smile on her, but her pining is interrupted by Alice hopping into the back seat.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Okay. I got 300 in cash out. You happy?

LEWIS

Getting there. I'll be a lot happier when I can get something to eat.

DINAH

I'm hungry again too.

ALICE

Y'all wanna go somewhere across town to eat and figure out our next move?

DINAH

Ooh, let's go someplace that serves breakfast all day.

LEWIS

My stomach literally just growled at the word breakfast.

ALICE

IHOP?

LEWIS

There's one on Westheimer close to Fountainview. That's pretty far, ya?

ALICE

Sounds good to me. Dinah?

DINAH

Let's do it.

Alice notices that the song "INSERT SONG" has come on.

ALICE

Oh, turn it up! I love this song.

Lewis turns the dial, and Alice starts singing loudly along with the chorus. Singing is clearly not her forte. Lewis and Dinah look at each other, and he turns the dial a little louder.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - AFTERNOON

Mrs. Schmidt walks in the door, carrying two grocery bags with toilet paper and bananas.

A man in an perfectly tailored, navy blue suit greets her at the door. When he turns we see his visage and it is readily apparent that THIS is our governor: the closely shaved and unnaturally tanned face, the perfect smile of flawlessly straight, white teeth, the finely coiffed helmet of hair topping off the billboard face that says "Vote for me, the family man with family values."

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

Finally!

MRS. SCHMIDT

Here's your TP, Governor.

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

Thanks, honey. Look, the kidn- the abductors called again. They arranged a drop off.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Robert, I don't know...

Sensing a crack in her resolve, Robert Senior pushes harder.

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

Come on. I'll go myself to make sure he's safe.

MRS. SCHMIDT

2 million dollars?

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

It's nothing compared to how much our son is worth. This will all be over soon if you just go get the money from the bank right now.

He always knew she couldn't resist his persuasive charm forever. Perhaps she did too.

MRS. SCHMIDT

How would I even get the money out? Surely there's a withdrawal limit.

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

Doesn't your family have a safe deposit box with that much in it?

(CONTINUED)

MRS. SCHMIDT

Well, ya, but I'm not supposed to touch that.

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

Well, this is an emergency! What else is it there for? You can replace the money later from your trust fund, but we need the 2 million immediately.

MRS. SCHMIDT

When is the drop off?

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

Tonight. 8 O'clock. If you go get the money now, I'll have plenty of time to get to the location.

She looks at him for a long moment, still unsure.

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR (CONT'D)

It'll all be over soon and no one will ever even have to know about it.

(beat)

No paparazzi. No press. Nothing. Just peace.

MRS. SCHMIDT

I know what they look like.

ROBERT SCHMIDT SENIOR

(looking deep in her eyes,
willing her to agree with him)

I know, baby.

MRS. HEART

Can you at least call me a driver?
I don't want to be carrying that much money alone.

Without another word, Robert Senior kisses his wife on the forehead and whips out his phone to make the call.

EXT. IHOP - AFTERNOON

Lewis, Alice and Dinah all get out of the car and head towards the establishment.

(CONTINUED)

DINAH

Hey, you guys go ahead and get a table. I need to make a phone call.

LEWIS

Alright, but you better hurry because I'm gonna order whether you're in there or not. I'm starving.

DINAH

I'll just be a minute.

The other two head inside while Dinah dials Dodgson.

INT. DODGSON'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Dodgson is speeding down the highway, weaving between slower cars. He does not look happy. His cell rings, and he answers.

DODGSON

Yes?

DINAH (O.S.)

(through phone)

Hey, what are you doing right now?

DODGSON

I'm on my way to Heart's place.

EXT. IHOP/INT. DODGSON'S CAR - SAME

DINAH

Well, hurry up and do what you have to do because I think I can bring Alice in soon.

DODGSON

How soon? I'm not sure how long this will take.

DINAH

We're going into IHOP right now to eat and figure out our next move. I'll text you whatever we decide. Just thought you should be ready for us to be heading your way within a couple hours.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

Okay. Just stall a bit for now. I will let you know when I leave Heart's.

DINAH

Talk to you soon then.

They both hang up.

INT. IHOP - AFTERNOON

Alice, Dinah, and Lewis sit in a booth at the International House of Pancakes. Dinah and Lewis scarf down plates of pancakes while Alice picks at some waffles.

LEWIS

(to Alice)

Something wrong?

ALICE

I just still feel kinda

(shrugging)

blehh

LEWIS

You're also thinking about that boy, aren't you?

ALICE

It's just...why isn't there anything in the media about this? Why were they trying to pin it on me? If the government or whatever really is behind all this, what's their motivation?

DINAH

What do you mean?

ALICE

The only thing I could think of is that they would use this to get votes for Schmidt, ya know? Swing the election in his favor? The whole sympathy vote thing. But then they would definitely want it leaked to the media.

LEWIS

You're right, I haven't heard one word about this anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

DINAH

Maybe they're waiting for the right time?

ALICE

I think there's a different motivation. I don't think it's the government at all. At least not the whole thing. I think there's one main government official behind this.

DINAH

Who?

ALICE

Schmidt.

LEWIS

What, he kidnapped his own son?

ALICE

Well, I mean he had someone do it for him. I think maybe he wanted it kept out of the media because he's not doing it for votes.

DINAH

What else would he be doing it for?

ALICE

Money?

DINAH

How would he collect ransom from himself?

ALICE

Not from himself. From his wife. I've worked at that theatre long enough to recognize the difference between people who feel privileged because they were born into money and people who feel privileged because they married into it. She was definitely born into it.

LEWIS

From your description, she does seem kinda ditsy and irresponsible.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Exactly. I think they planned for the kid to be taken from her because it would be easy to convince her to put up the money for being such an irresponsible mother.

DINAH

But what about that file they had on Schmidt?

ALICE

That's another weird thing.

Alice pulls the folder out of her bag.

ALICE (CONT'D)

It doesn't look like a normal police file.

LEWIS

How do you know what a normal police file looks like?

ALICE

I dunno. *Law & Order*. *CSI*. Whatever.

(pulling documents out)

The point is it's full of info about his whole family. Their day to day activities. Look at these photos of them. They were clearly taken by people who have been following them for a while. And they have intimate details about their schedules and appointments, activities and habits. Only someone very close to them could have given them access to all this.

DINAH

But they are a political family. Anyone on their Secret Service detail or any number of other secretaries or advisers who work with Schmidt could have leaked this stuff.

ALICE

I guess that's true. But it still means this had to be an inside job. And there's still the whole keeping it out of the media thing.

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

Speaking of which, how do you know they're still after you? Maybe they already got their money and just gave up on you.

ALICE

There's no way. I have all this. They have to know I suspect something. I'm way too big of a risk now. If they can't pin it on me, they at least have to silence me.

DINAH

Maybe we should confront Dodgson head on?

ALICE

Just walk right into the lion's den? Serve myself up on a silver platter? I at least need some sort of proof first.

LEWIS

Maybe we can get some.

ALICE

How?

LEWIS

Starplex.

DINAH

Of course! Surveillance footage!

ALICE

That would be great, but you guys are overlooking a couple of big hurtles here.

LEWIS

Besides the fact that the theatre is probably being watched, what else?

ALICE

First of all, that's a pretty big hurtle, don't you think?

LEWIS

Wel-

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

-PLUS..How do we find Agent Dodgson even if we do get the evidence?

LEWIS

First, they won't be looking for Dinah or me at the theatre so we could go in without you. And second, we don't need to look for Dodgson.

Dinah doesn't look sure about this.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

We just need to find the kidnappers.

DINAH

I'm with you up until that part. How is it gonna be easier to find them than Dodgson?

LEWIS

Dodgson is obviously some sort of con artist.

Dinah narrows her eyes.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

But those other people, judging by their recklessness, are just hired hands. I bet we can find a way to look up their address or something from their credit card info at the theatre.

ALICE

Oh ya, because credit card companies just love giving away that kind of information.

LEWIS

You're forgetting you have a computer genius with you.

ALICE

Oh, you wanna upload a virus at Starplex too?

LEWIS

You really wanna do this?

(CONTINUED)

DINAH
(breaking it up)
What if they paid cash?

ALICE
Oh shit. I think they did.

LEWIS
Well, we can try to find something.

ALICE
Look, this all sounds great, but if these people are really as twisted as I think, they won't go down without a fight. I don't wanna get you guys hurt.

DINAH
Oh, come on. We've come this far.

LEWIS
Ya, we already know too much. And it's not like I've got anything better to do today.

DINAH
Me neither.

LEWIS
Come on Alice, unless you've got a better plan I think this is worth a shot.

Alice is still unsure, but at this moment she looks across the aisle and spots a man wearing a clerical collar being seated in a nearby booth.

ALICE
You've got to be kidding me.

Lewis and Dinah turn to look for what has Alice's attention.

DINAH
What?

ALICE
I think it's a sign from God.

LEWIS
What does that mean?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
Means I'll accept your help.

Dinah starts texting Dodgson on her phone.

INT. HEART RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Dodgson's phone lies unattended on a table. It receives no text.

EXT. HEART RESIDENCE - AFTERNOON

Dodgson and Heart walk along the perimeter of Heart's property around the edge of the forest, each carrying a shot gun.

DODGSON
Are there really bloodthirsty
rotweillers out here?

HEART
Of course not. You think the missus
would let me mistreat animals like
that?

DODGSON
I wish the irony of that statement
wasn't lost on you.

HEART
Eh?

DODGSON
Like I said...

Heart stops walking.

HEART
This is fucking pointless. We
should just wait for him to come
back.

DODGSON
And why would he do that?

HEART
He'll starve before he finds
another hint of human life out
there. He has to come back soon.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

And if he starves? Remind me why
the fuck you untied him?

HEART

(growling)

Not your concern.

DODGSON

It is my concern if *I'm* gonna lose
my cut of 2 million dollars because
you let the little brat outside!
And then waited over 24 hours to
tell me!

HEART

I'm going back inside. You can keep
looking if you want, but when
you're done make sure you put that
rifle back in the shed.

Heart makes his way back to the main house while Dodgson
stares after him, simmering in unquenched rage.

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE/INT. LEWIS' CAR - AFTERNOON

Lewis looks over his seat at Alice, who is curled up on the
floor in the back.

LEWIS

We'll be back before you know it.

Lewis and Dinah get out of the car and head towards the
front doors of the theatre.

After a few seconds...

ALICE

(to self)

Oh, screw this.

She gets out and slams the door

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

As she catches up with the others...

LEWIS

What the Hell are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

I'm not gonna sit in the backseat of a car, overheating, while you guys get kicked out of the theatre for trying to con your way up to the office. I don't have time for this. Sorry, I just wanna get this over with.

DINAH

What if they're watching for you?

ALICE

Let them come.

(a thought striking)

As a matter of fact, that would be great because then we won't have to track Dodgson down. He'll come to me.

LEWIS

Unless cops get here before we find any evidence.

Alice stops walking. The others stop too, and no one says anything for a minute.

ALICE

(continuing)

Fuck it. I'm here now. I'm tired of driving around aimlessly. Might as well get this over with.

Dinah and Lewis shrug and follow Alice up to the theatre.

There is a new girl, ROSE, about the same age and build as Alice, occupying her former position.

ALICE

Hi. I'm guessing you're my replacement?

ROSE

You're Alice?

ALICE

Hey, I'm famous.

ROSE

Actually they told me I was replacing a girl named Alice. But Lory told me you were moving to Greece?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Oh. Ya. I am. My flight's been postponed a bit. Is Lory here now.

ROSE

Ya, of course. Want me to walkie her?

ALICE

That's okay. Actually best not to alert anyone that I'm here. Thanks, and good luck-

(reads name tag)

-Rose. Hope your adventures here are much less scary than mine.

Rose looks a little confused as Alice and gang move into the lobby.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Alice immediately spots Lory getting into the elevator, but her progress towards her is impeded by the sudden appearance of Bill.

BILL

Little Miss Sunshine.

ALICE

Bill, I really need to talk to Lory right now.

BILL

I really didn't think you would ever come back, but I'm kind of glad you did. I get to call the authorities now.

DINAH

We don't want any trouble, sir. We jus-

BILL

(to Dinah)

-You seem like a nice young lady. But unfortunately I've been given orders to call the FBI if your friend ever showed her face here again.

(to Alice)

I knew you'd get yourself into something like this eventually, but

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BILL (cont'd)
I never thought I'd be the one to
turn you in.

ALICE
Seriously, Bill? I know you don't
like me, but there's a kid's life
on the line, here.

BILL
That's exactly why I need to call
you in.

LEWIS
Come on! You don't actually believe
Alice was involved in this, do you?

BILL
(to Alice)
Didn't you specifically admit that
you were?

ALICE
That's not what- I technically was
involved, but only because I was in
the wrong place at the wrong time.
Do you honestly think I could've
orchestrated something like that?

Bill looks at her doubtfully. Reaches for his cell phone in
his pocket anyway.

Alice grabs a packet of ketchup from her bag and points it
at Bill. Everyone looks at her skeptically.

ALICE
Stop! I swear on all that you hold
dear, if you make that phone call I
will end your Christian Dior
sweater.

BILL
You think it's worth it to me to
risk my job over a sweater?

ALICE
Obviously or I wouldn't be standing
here pointing a packet of ketchup
at you that I swiped from IHOP.
(responding to their looks)
You never know when you're gonna
want ketchup on something, and it's
really convenient to have some
packets handy.

(CONTINUED)

BILL
Fair enough.

ALICE
But you also know deep down that
I'm not guilty of anything, and
you'd have innocent blood on your
hands if you stopped me now.

Bill contemplates this for a moment then grabs his phone anyway. Alice throws the ketchup packet at his forehead and wrestles the phone from him.

ALICE
(to Lewis)
Grab his walkie!

Lewis does so, and once they have each of his communication devices, Alice glances at a door to the side of the lobby.

ALICE
There's a supply closet over there
that locks from the outside.

Lewis and Dinah look around and note that the lobby is empty. Another look at each other and they each grab one of Bill's arms and drag him to the closet while Alice books it up the stairs. They don't, however, notice Rose in the box office watching them.

INT. STARPLEX MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

Alice frantically knocks on the door. When Lory finally opens it, she is dumbfounded to see Alice standing on the other side.

Alice says nothing but pushes into the room.

LORY
Alice- What are you-

ALICE
I'm sorry, I don't have time to
explain. I need to look at the
surveillance logs from this past
weekend.

LORY
What are you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
I really can't-

LORY
-After you disappeared that Agent Smith guy lost it and closed the investigation here. Said he didn't need to question anyone else. Just told me to call if you came back.

ALICE
Did he leave you with his personal phone number?

LORY
He just gave me the number for the FBI offices downtown. Said to call them and not the local police. Alice, what on earth have you gotten yourself into?

ALICE
Why does everyone keep asking what I've gotten myself into? You know I've sold thousands of tickets to thousands of customers over the four years I've been here, no questions asked. Then suddenly this couple decides to kidnap a kid, and it's me that's "gotten myself into this"? How is that my fault?

LORY
Alice, would you calm down?

ALICE
I was just doing my job, selling tickets like always, and yet somehow it's me that's "gotten myself into this"! As if I get myself into psycho twisted political kidnappings all the time!

LORY
Political kidnappings? What are you talking about?

ALICE
I thought you knew why everyone was being questioned?

(CONTINUED)

LORY

I knew there was a kidnapping. But they wouldn't give me any details. Was it someone important? Would explain why they were so strict about being discreet.

ALICE

Oh Jesus, this is so messed up.

LORY

(walking around her desk
towards her phone)

Maybe you didn't get yourself into this, but you need to talk to the police and tell them what you know.

ALICE

That's exactly my plan, but I need evidence first.

LORY

That's what you came here for?

ALICE

Yes. Please. I just need to look at the tapes from the other day when I was working.

LORY

That agent took them.

ALICE

Shit.

LORY

Alice.

ALICE

All of them? There are no like back logs or extra copies or anything?

LORY

I gave Smith the only copy we had. He's a federal agent. What was I gonna do? Say, "No, Alice may come back and need a copy of this"?

ALICE

He's not even a real federal agent! And I'm pretty sure his real name is Dodgson, not Smith...Can I at least get my computer geek friend

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALICE (cont'd)
up here to see if there's anything
else we can find?

LORY
I don't know what you expect to-

ALICE
-I'll be right back.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Alice runs to the bridge over the lobby and yells down to
Lewis who is guarding the supply closet door with Dinah.

ALICE
Lewis!

LEWIS
Ya?

ALICE
Can you come up here for a minute?

LEWIS
(to Dinah)
Think you can watch the door for a
few minutes?

DINAH
I'll be fine. Go.

LEWIS
(to Alice)
On my way!

INT. STARPLEX MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

Alice re-enters the office with Lewis

LEWIS
You find the footage from the other
day?

ALICE
Dodgson has all of it.

LEWIS
Shit.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
That's what I said.

LEWIS
We should have seen this coming.

ALICE
Well, we didn't, but we're here.
There anything else you can look
for in the system to help back me
up?

LEWIS
There's a couple things I can try.
(to Lory)
Can I use one of these computers?

LORY
Oh no. Don't you involve me in this
any more. Do what you will, but if
anyone asks I told you leave
immediately.

ALICE
(as Lewis moves to a computer)
You're the best, Lory.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Dinah tries repeatedly to reach Dodgson on her cell phone
but cannot get through. Meanwhile a movie lets out and the
few patrons who came to see it in the middle of the
afternoon on a weekday trickle into the lobby.

Dinah spots the man named Red among them. She catches up to
him as he makes his way toward a bathroom and pulls him to a
corner.

DINAH
Where the Hell have you been? I
can't get a hold of Dodgson.

RED
(caught)
It was kinda slow so I just thought
I'd catch a couple movies. Is Alice
here?

DINAH
Yes! She's upstairs right now with
her friend, but she was supposed to
wait in the car while he went
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DINAH (cont'd)
upstairs so I could go take her to
Dodgson.

RED
And you can't get a hold of him?

DINAH
Seriously, am I the only one doing
what I'm supposed to at this point?
How did you guys get into the
kidnapping business if you can't
even properly kidnap a governor's
son for him?

RED
Calm down. I'll try Dodgson on my
phone.

He tries, but Dodgson doesn't answer.

RED
Damn it. Any cops on their way?

DINAH
So far we've kept other employees
from calling any.

RED
That's good. Can you go upstairs
and stall Alice for a while-

He stops as something horrific catches his attention
outside.

Dinah turns to see what has caught him off guard and sees
two police officers talking to Rose in the box office.

DINAH
Shit. I guess the new girl missed
the memo.

RED
Why would she call them?

DINAH
I'm guessing she saw us trap one of
her managers in a closet?

GUY
Go get Alice. I'll try to stall
them.

Dinah goes up the elevator, runs across the bridge, and down the hall to the manager's office. She pounds on the door.

INT. STARPLEX MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME

Lory answers the door.

LORY
Can I help you?

DINAH
Is Alice in here?

ALICE
(turning from the computer
bank)
Dinah?

Dinah rushes in.

DINAH
We gotta go. Now. That Rose girl
called the cops, and they're
downstairs. They'll be up here any
second.

Time stops for a split-second as Alice and Lewis share a look. Then it speeds up as they scramble to grab their things and get out.

LEWIS
(as he trips over a chair and
over Alice)
Fuck. Shit. Assniggers.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

They exit through the side door where Alice escaped from her interrogation.

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

They make it to the side of the building and peer around at the parking lot. They will not have to go too close to the police cruiser parked by the front entrance, but they will have to walk through a fairly empty lot to get to Lewis' car.

One of the COPS is leaning against the hood of the car so Lewis comes up with a plan.

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

Okay, Dinah: you and me will walk in the front with Alice behind us. We'll walk to the car completely normal like we're not suspicious at all.

(he looks directly into Alice's eyes)

And then maybe they won't even notice us.

ALICE

(understanding something he didn't say)

Okay.

DINAH

Sounds good.

They get into formation and walk casually towards the car. The Cop faces the entrance of the building and does not notice them. Before they get to the car, though, Alice turns back and walks straight up to him.

Lewis and Dinah get all the way to the car without noticing she is not with them anymore. They get in before they turn around and see that she is not there. Too late.

DINAH

Alice!

She jumps out of the car and is about to run back when Lewis stops her.

LEWIS

Wait! If we run over there now, we won't be able to help her.

DINAH

And we will once she's been arrested??

LEWIS

We need to get some evidence first. Right now we'll just get ourselves arrested too.

Dinah looks at him incredulously.

DINAH

But-

She turns to look at Alice, looks back to Lewis one more time, then runs after Alice.

(CONTINUED)

We can only see Alice talking to the Cop, but whatever she says to him, he cuffs her and puts her in the backseat before Dinah makes it back.

DINAH

Officer, I think there's been a mistake-

COP

-Ma'am, I appreciate your concern, but I've got the situation under control.

DINAH

I really don't think you do-

COP

-Ma'am, Please step back from the vehicle.

DINAH

If you'll just listen-

COP

Ma'am. Step. Back.

Dinah finally obeys. The Cop speaks into the walkie on his shoulder.

COP

Hey, I've got the suspect in custody. But it seems we need to get back to the station immediately.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

The OTHER COP is in the lobby trying to get away from Guy.

OTHER COP

Thank you, sir, but it seems we've got it from here.

RED

But I saw the whole thing. The girl went out back. If you'll just follow me-

OTHER COP

-Like I said, we've got it. I really need to be leaving now.

He exits the building. Red hesitates, then runs through the theatre and out of a side exit.

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Red hurries through the lot to his dark, fortified SUV with forged government plates. He hops in, tunes his hi-tech radio to the police channel, then speeds off.

INT. LEWIS' CAR - SAME

Lewis waits in his car for the cops with Alice to pull out, then he follows.

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Dinah is still standing in front of the building, but when the police cruiser pulls out she makes for Lewis' car. As she sees him pull out too she panics. Looking around she realizes Red's car is gone too. She calls him.

INT. RED'S CAR/EXT. STARPLEX - SAME

RED

Don't have much time to talk,
Dinah. What do you need?

DINAH

I'm fucking stranded here. Come
back and get me.

RED

No can do. I've got to intercept
those cops and get Alice over to
Heart before she can do any more
damage.

He hangs up.

EXT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - SAME

Dinah looks at her disconnected phone in a rage.

DINAH

Goddamnit! Fucking ass shit hole-

She spots a PATRON pulling into a space in the lot so she hurries over to him. Pulling out the .44 Dodgson gave her, she points it in the window at him.

(CONTINUED)

DINAH

Get out! I'm commandeering your car. Police emergency!

PATRON

Ah uhhh..Okay!

He stumbles out of his car, leaving the keys in the ignition. Dinah steps in and peels out of the Starplex parking lot.

INT. LEWIS' CAR - SAME

Lewis is still right behind the cruiser with Alice in it.

LEWIS

Okay. Everything is going to be fine. Just gotta get to the-

BAM!

LEWIS (CONT'D)

Holy fuck!

Red's SUV t-bones the police cruiser in front of Lewis. Before anyone has time to react, Red is out of his car, dragging a limp Alice into the back of his SUV. Then he's back in the driver's seat, barreling onto the freeway.

The cop car is out of commission, but Lewis tears on after Red.

INT. LEWIS' CAR/EXT. HIGHWAY, DIRT ROADS, ETC - SAME

They both enter the freeway. Red threads expertly through the other vehicles, and though Lewis is clearly a fish out of water when it comes to a car chase, he keeps up. He haphazardly zigs and zags along the highway, intent on not losing Alice to this psycho.

As the sun gets lower in the sky and the roads begin to get more difficult to see anyway, Red veers off an exit ramp towards what appears to be the middle of nowhere.

There is no longer a threat of losing him amongst other cars, but Lewis just might lose Red in the winding, unpaved roads they end up on as dirt is flung high in the air in nearly opaque clouds.

Surrounded by trees and an ever darkening sky, Lewis keeps up the chase, undaunted by the eerie silence of this secluded locale.

They eventually come to a clearing in the forestry.

EXT. HEART RESIDENCE - EVENING

Red pulls off the dirt road onto a grassy area near the garage of Heart's main house. He immediately jumps out, pulls a gun with a silencer on the end, and begins shooting at Lewis' car, which pulls in right behind him.

Lewis manages to duck down, get out of his car, and run for cover under the nearby foliage of the thick forest surrounding Heart's property.

INT. HEART RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

Dodgson and Heart are having a heated argument.

DODGSON

Why should I have to tell him? I'm not the one who lost his kid.

HEART

Because I'm the one who gives the orders, and you're the one who takes them. That's how this works.

DODGSON

Obviously that system is falling apart because every order you've given has turned into one stinking clusterfuck after another.

HEART

Maybe it's just that my orders aren't being-

Red bursts through the door carrying Alice.

DODGSON

What the fuck is this?

HEART

(to Dodgson)

Didn't I tell you to lock that door? Can you not even take simple orders any more?

DODGSON

I think we have bigger problems right now than not locking the fucking door.

(CONTINUED)

(to Red)
Why the fuck do you have her here?
What happened?

RED
(taking Alice to the couch)
Actually we have even bigger
problems than that right now. We
have company out in the woods. That
guy who was with Alice followed me
here.

DODGSON
Why the fuck did you come here in
the first place?

RED
Because you wouldn't answer your
phone, and I didn't know where else
to take her.

DODGSON
I get no service out here. Why did
you have to take her anywhere?

RED
She came back to the theatre
looking for evidence and someone
called the cops on her. I had to
get her away from them. I have no
idea if she found anything, though.

HEART
Wait, what do you mean "get her
from them"? How exactly did you
take her from police custody?

EXT. HEART RESIDENCE - SAME

Lewis is in the woods trying to get service on his phone to
call the cops.

LEWIS
Shit.

He hears a twig snap and looks up to see Robert Junior
cowering at the base of a tree.

LEWIS
Robert?

The boy looks wildly around for a direction to run.

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

No no! I'm not gonna hurt you.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR

Who are you?

LEWIS

My name is Lewis. I'm here to help you.

ROBERT SCHMIDT JUNIOR

Why?

DINAH (O.S.)

That's a very good question.

Lewis whips around to find Dinah standing stealthily behind him, pointing her Colt Anaconda directly between his eyes.

LEWIS

(innocently)

Dinah. I-

DINAH

Save it. Why did you ditch me?

LEWIS

I was just in a hurry to get to-

DINAH

Seriously. I'm not stupid. What did you find at the theatre?

LEWIS

Nothing.

She slaps him.

LEWIS

Did you just slap me?

DINAH

Next time I'll do it with the gun in my hand. What did you find?

LEWIS

Nothing.

She pulls her hand with the gun back to hit him.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

(fast)

You were standing right under the surveillance camera when you were

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
talking to that guy in the suit and
we caught everything you said on
tape.

DINAH
Get up.
(to Robert)
You too, Junior. Let's go inside.

She starts walking them toward the main house.

INT. HEART RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

Now Dodgson, Heart, and Red are all three having a heated argument. All talking over one another with Alice still passed out on the couch across the room near the door.

RED
Well, nobody could get a hold of
you-

HEART
-you fucking imbeciles!

DODGSON
Oh, you're one to talk, Heart.
You're the one who got this girl
involved-

HEART
-and everything would have been
grand if you hadn't left that damn
file out-

DODGSON
How could I have known she would
look in it-

RED
What difference does it make who's
fault it is? We need to figure out
what to do with her now that we
have her-

DODGSON
Oh shut up, you fucking-

HEART
Don't yell at him. That's my job.
(to Red)
You should have called my house
phone before you came here-

(CONTINUED)

RED

I don't have your house number, nor
was I informed that there is no
cell reception- Oh shit.

DODGSON & HEART

What?

They both turn to see what Red is gazing at out the window.

Dinah is walking towards them pushing Lewis and Robert along
with her gun.

HEART

Oh thank God.

Dinah walks in through the door.

DINAH

Missing something?

She walks her captives over to the couch then rejoins the
group as they continue their conversation.

DODGSON

Is this the friend? What is he
doing here?

HEART

What friend? What the fuck is going
on?

DODGSON

Alice's friend.

HEART

She's got friends now?

RED

I told you he followed me here.

DODGSON

(to Heart)

I know the concept of maintaining
friends is novel to you, but some
people-

HEART

Oh shut the fuck up. What are we
supposed to do with him?

(CONTINUED)

DINAH
He's got evidence.

While the four of them freak out and try to figure out their next move, Alice stirs on the couch.

LEWIS
Alice! Are you okay?

ALICE
(groaning)
Fuck me.

LEWIS
Um.

ALICE
As if I didn't already have enough
of a headache today. Where are we?

LEWIS
I'm not sure. I found the kid,
though.

He gestures to Robert sitting on the other side of him.

ALICE
Thank God. Now what do we-

Lewis can no longer hold back: he kisses her full on the mouth. Before Alice can even be surprised, a shriek from Dinah across the room breaks them up.

DINAH
What the fuck was that?

Everyone else looks at Alice and Lewis. The two look back, deer in the headlights.

LEWIS
What?

DINAH
You have been flirting with me
like-like-

ALICE
Oh wow. I'm sorry. I thought there
were some weird moments, but I'm
not a- I mean it's okay if you are,
but I'm just not-

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

What?

ALICE

I mean I didn't mean to send any signals that I-

DINAH

-Not you! I was talking to him!

ALICE

Wait, you're not-

DINAH

I thought you were.

ALICE

So you were just trying to- Oh, that actually explains a lot.

LEWIS

I am so lost.

HEART

I think we all are.

DINAH

(to Alice)

So this whole time- you two...

ALICE

No! I mean we used to be-

DINAH

(to Lewis)

You little fucker!

She starts to raise her gun at Lewis, but Dodgson realizes her intentions just in time. He hits her arms just as she fires and throws her shot wide.

DODGSON

Damn it, Dinah! I warned you about getting attached.

HEART

Dodgson, when are you gonna learn to keep your people in check. Seems like you can't give or receive orders properly.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

That's it.

Dodgson grabs the .44 from Dinah, aims it at Heart and fires. But just as he pulls the trigger Heart grabs his chest and falls to the ground.

DINAH

Oh my God!

RED

What did you do that for?

Red runs to Heart and kneels next to him.

DODGSON

But- I missed-

RED

He's having a heart attack!

DODGSON

(looking around)

Oh fuck! They're gone!

RED

(looking up)

What?

Dinah runs outside after Lewis, Alice, and Robert, who amidst the melee, have disappeared from the couch.

EXT. HEART RESIDENCE - NIGHT

She makes it outside just in time to see Lewis helping Alice into the passenger side of Red's SUV in the distance; Robert is already in the backseat. Lewis runs around and into the driver's side before she can stop them so she runs back to the car she commandeered and peels off after them.

INT. HEART RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

Red is still inclined to help Heart on the ground, but Dodgson looks for his keys on an end table.

DODGSON

Leave him. We gotta go.

RED

We need to call an ambulance.

(CONTINUED)

DODGSON

Let him die for fuck's sake. He deserves to rot in Hell, and this way I didn't even have to pull the trigger. I mean I did...

Dodgson locates his keys on the ground under the table.

DODGSON (CONT'D)

Come on, let's just go.

Red gets up and follows Dodgson outside.

EXT. HEART RESIDENCE - SAME

Red sees that his car is gone.

RED

Damn it!

DODGSON

Come with me. My car is in the garage.

INT. LEWIS' CAR - NIGHT

As Lewis speeds through the back roads surrounding Heart's property to get back to the highway, Alice shimmies her arms under her legs so that her cuffed hands are in front of her.

LEWIS

Can you use the GPS to find the closest police station?

ALICE

Ya, okay.

She starts typing on the device.

LEWIS

You've still got the footage of Dinah at the theatre, right?

ALICE

Ya, they never got to search me.
(beat)
Thanks for coming for me, by the way.

Before Lewis can respond, Alice reacts to an odd message on the GPS device.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE (CONT'D)
What the-?

LEWIS
What's wrong?

ALICE
This thing is telling me the
satellite system is not
transmitting data at this time...

Lewis stiffens in his seat and doesn't look at her.

ALICE (CONT'D)
That couldn't by any chance be
because of a virus-

LEWIS
-Okay! okay, let's not point any
fingers.

ALICE
I'm just saying-

LEWIS
-Yep. Nope. I got it. Let's just
find another way to a police
station. You have any service on
your cell?

ALICE
I left my phone in your car.

LEWIS
Grab mine from my pocket and ask
SIRI.

Alice reaches into his pocket, trying to suppress a smile.

Lewis punches the wheel.

LEWIS
FUCK!
(to Robert in the back)
Sorry.

INT. DINAH'S CAR - SAME

She's hot on Lewis' tail. She pulls out her phone to call
Dodgson. No answer.

(CONTINUED)

DINAH

Damn.

INT. DODGSON'S CAR - SAME

They are not within sight of the others, and he also tries to call Dinah. Doesn't get through.

DODGSON

Damn.

INT. LEWIS' CAR - SAME

Alice is holding Lewis' phone up to her mouth and speaking to it as if it has a learning disability.

ALICE

PO-LEESE STAY-SHUN.

SIRI

Calling Lisa Hance.

ALICE

No! Damn you, SIRI!

SIRI

Sorry, I don't understand "Oh damn you Siri"

Alice is about to throw the phone out of her window when she spots their savior parked in a gas station off the highway.

ALICE

There!

LEWIS

What?

ALICE

A police cruiser! Parked in that gas station. Take the next exit.

He veers across a couple lanes of traffic to exit and U-eyes around to the station, stopping right behind the parked car.

LEWIS

(to Robert)

Wait in the car!

INT. GAS STATION - SAME

Alice and Lewis run inside to where the DRIVER of the cruiser is perusing the energy drinks and begin to barrage him with non sequiturs concerning their plight.

Dinah rushes in seconds later and adds to the mayhem with her own version of what has transpired.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME

Dodgson and Red drive past the gas station, see Alice and company talking to a cop. They keep driving.

INT. GAS STATION - SAME

Driver finally gets the three of them to shut up. He looks over them, noting Alice's cuffed hands and overall battered appearance.

DRIVER

(pointing to Alice)

You. In short sentences. Tell me exactly what all this is about.

ALICE

(from the top)

Okay. I was working at this movie theatre. The Starplex Galaxy 16.

LEWIS

(cutting to the chase)

This woman

(pointing to Dinah)

has been involved in a kidnapping. Her cohorts are also following us right now. We have the boy they abducted in the car, but we need to get him to safety. His name is Robert Schmidt Junior and we have reason to believe that his father, the governor, is also involved.

DRIVER

The governor?

LEWIS

Yes, sir. But his whereabouts are unknown at the moment. Our most pressing concern is the safety of the kid.

(CONTINUED)

DRIVER

Whom you left outside in your
vehicle?

Lewis, who was doing so well up to this point, suddenly has
nothing to say.

DRIVER

The three of you wait right here.
Which is your car?

LEWIS

It's, um. The one blocking you in,
sir.

DRIVER

Just sit tight.

He saunters outside and checks their SUV, noting Robert in
the backseat, the bashed in front bumper, and the government
plates. He then sits half way in his own car and gets on his
radio.

Alice, Lewis, and Dinah simply exchange looks. All
alternating between uncertainty, apprehension, and hostility
while they wait to find out what will become of them.

Driver walks back in with a completely new composure.
Whatever he learned from his communication over the radio,
it was serious.

DRIVER

There is a back up cruiser on his
way. Once he gets here, the four of
you are gonna come with us.

"The Cave" by Mumford and Sons comes up as the scene fades
and turns to a montage.

INT. KARAOKE BAR, GREECE - NIGHT

Alice stands at the mic, begins singing "The Cave" over the
following scenes. Lewis sits at a table watching her, amused
by her lack of vocal talent but still happy to be hearing
her voice at all. It may not be apparent right away that
they are in Greece, but it will become so as the scene
unfolds.

Flashes to this scene will be interspersed throughout the
rest of the montage as Alice sings and eventually the actual
band joins her on the soundtrack, though not actually on
stage.

(CONTINUED)

INT. POLICE STATION, THAT WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Alice and Lewis sit with the sheriff and explain everything to him.

Robert Schmidt Junior sits with another officer. His mother runs in and embraces him.

An officer speaks to Mrs. Schmidt, shaking his head.

INT. AIRPLANE, UNKNOWN LOCATION - NIGHT

A stewardess walks down an aisle and hands a pillow to a man wearing a hat pulled low over his face. When he looks up slightly, we see that it is Robert Schmidt Senior.

INT. POLICE STATION, THAT WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Dinah, hands cuffed behind her back, is walked by an officer to a holding cell.

INT. STARPLEX MOVIE THEATRE - DAY

Alice finally gives her farewells to her Starplex coworkers. Lory appears happy for her. Bill does not.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

Lewis, sleeves rolled up his arms and sweat rolling down his face, works at several computers in a row in a complicated looking lab basement. There is a man in a suit standing guard at the exit.

INT. WOMEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Dinah, behind legit bars now, receives a present in a plain, white box.

INT. FOREIGN AIRPORT - DAY

Dodgson and Red walk off a plane in some unspecified European country.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - DAY

Mrs. Schmidt helps her son, who seems much less bratty now, get dressed and ready to presumably go back to his private school.

INT. GPS COMPANY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Lewis runs a test of the GPS system. It seems to work, and an official-looking man sternly shakes his hand.

(CONTINUED)

INT. WOMEN'S CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Dinah opens her gift and inside is a cake that has been torn up by security checking for any metal files. It is red velvet. A note reads: "You can still finish your business degree"

She does not look amused by this but shoves a handful of cake into her mouth anyway.

EXT. FOREIGN AIRPORT - DAY

Dodgson and Red nod to each other and get into separate cabs. Go their separate ways.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

Mrs. Schmidt and son maneuver through a crowd of press and paparazzi to get into a waiting limousine.

EXT. GPS COMPANY HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Lewis leaves the building, holding a box full of personal items. As he gets into his car he gazes back at the building one last time. He won't be returning.

As the song reaches its climax, flashes of all these scenes continue but cut and overlap faster and faster.

Alice continues to sing at the bar in Greece with Lewis.

Dinah suffers in prison. Getting into fights.

Dodgson soaks up the sun on some European beach.

Red buys a passport in a shady European bistro.

Alice and Lewis dance and enjoy Greek nightlife.

Finally Alice and Lewis walk out of the bar together, hand in hand.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

As the music fades, one final scene plays out.

Mr. Heart lies in a hospital bed, while Mrs. Heart sits at his side, reading a book.

As he stirs she puts the book down and looks at him, her face full of relief but still mixed with some lingering worry.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. HEART

There you are. What happened to
you?

Mr. Heart motions for a pad of paper and pen on the table next to his bed. She hands them to him. He manages to scrawl one word. She reads it and looks back at him a little baffled.

It simply says: ALICE.

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