

**THE KILL-OR-DIES**

by Meghan Brown

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## CHARACTERS

- MAGGIE** (F, 24): Sharp. Beautiful in a hard-edged, angular way. Can be vicious, stubborn, bossy. Underneath: endlessly sad.
- CHELSEA** (F, 24): Softer. Doe-eyed and skittish. A creature of deep longing.
- BILLY** (M, 30): Dynamic, unpredictable.
- LAWRENCE** (M, 40ish): A professional.

## SETTING

Atchison, Kansas. The living room of a small but well-maintained house. The decor is decidedly "old lady": lots of lace, doilies, Hummel statues, etc. Plants. Overrun with tacky hummingbird-related tchotchkes.

## TIME

This is happening now.

Darkness. A voice:

CHELSEA

(panicked)

Don't--

MAGGIE flips on a light, revealing: The living room of a small house in Atchison, Kansas.

The decor is not particularly subtle. There are hummingbirds *everywhere*: appliquéd on pillows, painted on little flowerpots, etc.

In the room: two women, Maggie and CHELSEA. Maggie looks like she just stepped out of a magazine editorial. Chelsea wears shabby “going out” clothes a few years out of style.

There's a large black bag on the floor.

CHELSEA

Turn that off! What if someone sees?

MAGGIE

Nobody's gonna see.

CHELSEA

You know you're late, right? I've been freaking out.

MAGGIE

Why?

CHELSEA

(a big gesture to the bag)

Hmm. *Let me think.*

MAGGIE

You need to *relax*. Have a drink, smoke a cigarette -- go take a shower or something. That shower? Is *amazing*. Water pressure like I have never seen. And Chelsea, let me tell you, I have *seen* some showers. Do you just take your clothes off and sit in there all day?

Chelsea looks at Maggie, clear.

CHELSEA

Maybe we shouldn't do this.

MAGGIE

It was your idea.

CHELSEA

I thought I could do it, but--

\*

MAGGIE

I'm already having a bad week, OK? Can you just relax? Have a drink.

CHELSEA

Stop pushing drinks on me. I hate that.

(beat)

Why are we doing this?

MAGGIE

What's your net worth, again?

Chelsea shakes her head.

MAGGIE

Ah, yes. *That's* why.

CHELSEA

I've been getting by.

MAGGIE

Last time I showed up you hadn't eaten in two days. That doesn't sound like getting by to me.

CHELSEA

I would've figured something out.

MAGGIE

I'm sure. You've always been so resourceful. You're welcome for the groceries, by the way. Guess it's a good thing I decided to drop by.

(considering)

Maybe you *would* be better off in prison.

CHELSEA

Don't say that.

MAGGIE

I'm serious! I should call the cops, turn you in right now. At least they'd feed you.

CHELSEA

Can you not bring all that up? I can't handle it tonight.

MAGGIE

I'm just saying--

CHELSEA

Just don't. Say. All right? I'm doing the best I can.

MAGGIE

This is a game-changer.

CHELSEA

I know that.

MAGGIE

Fifteen *thousand* dollars.

CHELSEA

I *know*.

MAGGIE

That's why you volunteered.

CHELSEA

Did I volunteer?

MAGGIE

Again, I repeat: It was your--

CHELSEA

Don't try and sugar me. I'm not an idiot. This was my idea as much as it was my idea to steal Ms. Halpern's car--

MAGGIE

Oh my *god*, not this again--

CHELSEA

(“let me finish”)

--to *steal* Ms. Halpern’s car when we were fourteen years old. Which is to say: IT WAS NOT MY IDEA, AT ALL. You know whose idea it was? It was *yours*. It was *your* idea. But you sugared me up and ran me around till I did exactly what you wanted me to do. Just like always. But this? This isn’t just crashing into the mailbox, Maggie. This is some serious criminal activity. I can’t just blindly do your bidding on this one.

MAGGIE

Poor little Chelsea, Maggie always *bossing* her.

CHELSEA

*You do always boss me.*

MAGGIE

Mean old Maggie, never did anything for *you*.

(beat)

What did you say, the last time I was here?

CHELSEA

I said a lot of things.

MAGGIE

At the end. What did you say?

CHELSEA

I don’t remember.

MAGGIE

You said: “Let me help you.”

\*

CHELSEA

You show up unannounced--

MAGGIE

*How does one announce?* You’re a shut-in who doesn’t have a cell phone. I’m supposed to send a carrier pigeon? Maybe get up on the roof and wave a semaphore flag?

CHELSEA

I hadn’t seen you in two *years*, Maggie. I had no idea where you were, what happened to you-- You could’ve been dead, for all I knew!

MAGGIE

You still spent my money.

CHELSEA

I--

MAGGIE

So. Guess I didn't seem *that* dead.

CHELSEA

You could've written me back.

MAGGIE

Your letters were enough for both of us. "Dearest Maggie."

CHELSEA

It was important that they seemed authentic--

MAGGIE

Oh, you nailed the authenticity all right. 100% legit old lady. Perfume and everything.

CHELSEA

I thought the perfume was a nice touch.

MAGGIE

(old-lady voice)

"Oh, Maggie, I do miss my sweet granddaughter Chelsea. Have you heard anything? We're all so worried. Please deposit a little extra into my account this month, if you can. You know. For my *arthritis*."

\*

CHELSEA

I was trying to be careful.

MAGGIE

Hey, I get it. You do what you've gotta do. Just seemed like you were laying it on a little thick.

CHELSEA

You could've come to visit. She would've liked to have seen you.

MAGGIE

The last time I visited she called me Shirley and asked why I'd put her squirrel in the tinfoil. She didn't know if I was here or not.

CHELSEA

I would have liked to have seen you.

I've been busy, OK?

MAGGIE

Apparently.

CHELSEA

And I'm here now, aren't I?

MAGGIE

Yeah, with some batshit plan. That I, of course, had to get pulled into. Obviously. Because why wouldn't I? How could I say no?

CHELSEA

You owe me.

MAGGIE

You think I don't know that?

CHELSEA

I came to see you. I told you what I needed. And you said: "Let me help you."

MAGGIE

I do want to help you, but--

CHELSEA

Such *benevolence*! Give me a fucking break. Your eyes turned into little dollar signs. So don't put this on *me*. You think you're so much better? Let me tell you: you're just as greedy as the rest of us, you're just too chickenshit to actually *do* anything about it.

A silence.

MAGGIE

And I don't "boss" you. Please. You're made of titanium. I couldn't get you to do anything if I tried.

Beat. She checks her watch.

MAGGIE

Just a few more minutes.

CHELSEA

Why don't you just do it?

MAGGIE

Do I have to do *everything*? Billy doesn't want me to.

CHELSEA

Why not?

MAGGIE

Because I *live* with Billy. I *have sex* with Billy. I'm *connected* to Billy. It's not smart to get me too involved. I lead back to him.

CHELSEA

Don't I lead back to you?

MAGGIE

You don't lead back to anybody. You're basically non-existent.

CHELSEA

Thanks for the reminder.

MAGGIE

You don't want me "sugaring" you, right?

CHELSEA

You've done this a million times. Just one more.

MAGGIE

...There's more money involved than we're used to.

CHELSEA

How much more?

MAGGIE

A lot more.

CHELSEA

Is there a number? Or is this like TV, where they write it on a little piece of paper and slide it across the table?

MAGGIE

Five hundred thousand dollars.

Chelsea's eyes widen.

CHELSEA

Are you kidding me?

MAGGIE

It's a lot.

CHELSEA

No kidding it's a lot. I can't go down there and bring back five hundred thousand dollars. \*

MAGGIE

Why not?

CHELSEA

...Can I even *carry* that much money?

MAGGIE

Look. All you have to do is take the bag down the road to the bar. You sit, he sits, he takes your bag, you take his, *done*. The whole thing takes less than five minutes. \*

CHELSEA

And no one's gonna notice me counting out five hundred thousand dollars cash? \*

MAGGIE

Don't even open it. Just come straight back. I'll take it from there. *Done*.

CHELSEA

Done.

MAGGIE

Pass go. Collect fifteen thousand dollars. \*

CHELSEA

Maggie.

MAGGIE

Yeah?

CHELSEA

How deep in this are you?

MAGGIE

Don't you start.

CHELSEA

This just seems...

MAGGIE

Seems what?

CHELSEA

I don't know. Last month you made it seem like this was Billy's thing.

It is Billy's thing.

MAGGIE

But you're helping.

CHELSEA

I'm *facilitating*.

MAGGIE

...Is he the bad guy?

CHELSEA

Yes, Chelsea. Billy's the bad guy. He has a twirly mustache and a goatee. Sometimes he walks around with a big pronged *fork*.

MAGGIE

I'm serious.

CHELSEA

There aren't any bad guys. There are just people doing things. "Getting by." \*

CHELSEA

But deep down.

MAGGIE

You want me to tell you he's our hero? Sure. Fine. We're working for Robin Hood. Noblest pillager in Sherwood Forest.

CHELSEA

Do you love him?

MAGGIE

What does that even mean?

CHELSEA

You look at him and feelings happen.

MAGGIE

Why do you care, all of a sudden? How I'm *feeling*. How I *feel* is irrelevant. You want to know how I feel? I feel like I was pretty fucking tired of being broke, of barely having enough money to cover rent in that rathole I was living in because I was sending every spare dollar out here to you. I feel like waking up not wanting to shoot myself in the face is better than working in some *restaurant*. I feel like I hit the jackpot, and who gives a shit if it comes with some *asshole* attached? \*

CHELSEA

Sorry. Jeez.

Maggie shoots Chelsea a look.

CHELSEA

What?

MAGGIE

I didn't show up to get some *lecture* from you.

CHELSEA

I'm not--

MAGGIE

You've always been like this. You badger me and badger me to tell you how I *feel*, and then the second that I do it's nothing but that *look*. \*

CHELSEA

*This is the way that my face looks.*

MAGGIE

I came here to help you.

CHELSEA

I know that, Maggie.

MAGGIE

You owe me. *You owe me*, and yet I'm the one offering up fifteen grand. Story of my fucking *life*. So just stop acting like you're doing me some big favor, all right? After everything that I have *already* done, I drove 530 miles to your hermit's lair to give you an *opportunity*-- which, I might add, you *readily* accepted. So don't fuck it up now because you're too nervous to drive thirty seconds down the road and switch purses with somebody.

Chelsea doesn't say anything.

Beat. \*

CHELSEA

(gathering courage)

When you gave me money that first time--

MAGGIE

Stop.

CHELSEA

That *first time*, I told you that I wasn't gonna take it if you were gonna hold it over my head for the rest of my life.

MAGGIE

And have I?

CHELSEA

What do you call that little speech?

MAGGIE

You think I'm talking about *money*? I could give a shit about money. These pants cost \$400. I've got access to more *money* than I know what to do with. You know what that feels like, for someone like me? I'm just saying that I'm doing something *good* here. And you're acting like I'm... like I'm taking advantage.

\*

CHELSEA

This is *scary*, Maggie.

MAGGIE

This is *foolproof*.

\*

CHELSEA

Then why do I have such a bad feeling? The last time I felt this way was...

She can't say it.

MAGGIE

What?

CHELSEA

You know. *Then*.

MAGGIE

"*Then*"? That's how you refer to it?

CHELSEA

I don't refer to it.

MAGGIE

'Cause the house might be bugged? 'Cause the cops might be standing outside with water glasses pressed up against the door?

CHELSEA

I don't know.

MAGGIE

You're paranoid. You've always been paranoid. That's good. It makes you careful. And that's what Billy needs from you tonight. He needs you to be careful.

CHELSEA

I wish you wouldn't talk like that.

MAGGIE

Like what?

CHELSEA

...Like what Billy needs means something to me.

MAGGIE

It should.

CHELSEA

And why's that?

MAGGIE

He's the one who's paying you.

CHELSEA

And you too, right? I'm assuming you're getting some cut of this.

MAGGIE

("So?")

Yeah?

CHELSEA

How much do you get?

MAGGIE

So, what, now you want to negotiate?

CHELSEA

No. I just want to understand how this works.

MAGGIE

Right.

CHELSEA  
 (awed disbelief)  
 Five hundred *thousand* dollars.

MAGGIE  
 Just a few minutes left.

CHELSEA  
 ...What's in the bag?

MAGGIE  
 You don't want to know.

CHELSEA  
 I do.

MAGGIE  
 You do not, friend.

CHELSEA  
 Is it drugs?

MAGGIE  
 It's a bag.

CHELSEA  
 Guns?

MAGGIE  
 A black bag with a big zipper.

CHELSEA  
 Antiquities. Billy's an antiquities smuggler! It's a bag full of *vases*.

MAGGIE  
 What does it matter? A bag is a bag is a bar is a trade is a pile of cash. You get what you get and I get what I get. And so the world spins.

CHELSEA  
 ...If I was.

MAGGIE  
 What?

CHELSEA  
 Or were. If I were. If I was? Which is it? I always forget.

MAGGIE

Are you having a stroke? What the hell are you talking about?

CHELSEA

If I can't do it.

MAGGIE

Yeah?

CHELSEA

...What happens? \*

MAGGIE

There's no "can't" here. \*

CHELSEA

There is.

MAGGIE

No, there's not.

CHELSEA

If I don't do it, I don't do it.

MAGGIE

...Well. That would not be good.

CHELSEA

How not-good would it be?

MAGGIE

It would be *bad*, Chelsea.

CHELSEA

It's not too late to back out, though, right? Like, if the two of us do a little cost-benefit analysis and examine the consequences and decide that it's just not worth it -- we could still get out.

MAGGIE

*No*. What's wrong with you? We've got fifteen minutes. The guy's already on his way.

CHELSEA

OK, sorry. I was just... wondering.

Maggie looks at her.

MAGGIE

You better not do this to me.

CHELSEA

I'm not.

A tense silence.

CHELSEA

But what if.

MAGGIE

Chelsea.

CHELSEA

I have a really bad feeling.

MAGGIE

Yeah, well. Welcome to the club. I don't remember the last time I had a good feeling.

CHELSEA

How do you sleep?

MAGGIE

All right, let's ditch the theatrics--

CHELSEA

I'm not-- I'm not asking that *idiomatically*. Can you sleep? Because I can't. I lay down and there's this weight on my chest and everything in my head gets real sharp and loud and my heart clenches up like a fist and before I know it the sun's coming up and I can't even feel relief, because all that means is that there's one more day coming for me, one more night.

\*

MAGGIE

(dry)

That sounds very tiring.

CHELSEA

It is. And I just can't... I can't add anything more onto that.

Maggie looks at her, clear.

MAGGIE

So you want me to call Billy, then?

CHELSEA

I'm not saying I want you to call Billy.

MAGGIE

There's fifteen minutes left. When am I supposed to call him?

CHELSEA

I'm not *saying* that I--

Maggie takes out her phone, moves to the door. \*

MAGGIE

I fucking *knew* it.

CHELSEA

Where are you going?

MAGGIE

I'm going to call and tell him it's off. Gonna tell him that you couldn't go through with it -- that we followed instructions, that I'm here, with you, at your grandmother's house, with the bag, down the street from the bar, fifteen minutes till go time, and *you couldn't do it*.

CHELSEA

I'm not--

MAGGIE

(clear)

You don't get the money if you don't do anything.

CHELSEA

I know.

MAGGIE

I'm not sure that you do. You think I'm some unlimited pool of cash? I skim off the top for you. That's Billy's money. It's not *mine*. I don't control it. Something happens to him? You and I are both fucked. So have fun finding a new place to live with no money and no papers and no job, because I don't know if it's occurred to you yet, *but you can't stay here*. Norma's *dead*. You've got a week, tops, till they turn the electricity off. Any day now, some relative of yours is gonna come poking around wanting to sell this place, and what do you think they're gonna do when they find you?

Let's *suspend our disbelief* for a moment and say that you *do* manage to keep squatting here indefinitely: What're you gonna do for money? I can't help you anymore.

If your little monthly allowance isn't getting laundered through Norma, *I can't send it*. The *last* thing I need is you getting caught and that coming back to bite me in the ass.

CHELSEA

Don't be mad--

MAGGIE

Don't be *mad*? That is the least of your worries. You're not gonna give a shit about me being *mad* after Billy finds out about this, let me tell you.

She starts to dial the phone.

CHELSEA

*Wait.*

MAGGIE

What?

CHELSEA

Just hang up.

She does. \*

CHELSEA

I just need more time to think.

MAGGIE

*We don't have any more time.*

CHELSEA

Just give me a minute. OK?

MAGGIE

(tactic change)

Last time I was here, you were sure you wanted to do this.

CHELSEA

I was.

MAGGIE

Nothing's changed since then. Everything is exactly the same.

CHELSEA

That's not... true, though.

(beat, honest)

I'm pregnant.

MAGGIE

(dismissive)

No, you're not.

A beat. Chelsea nods.

MAGGIE

Please shoot me now. Please just shoot me in the goddam face. You're telling me--

Chelsea nods.

MAGGIE

...Again?

CHELSEA

Shut up.

MAGGIE

What do you mean, shut up? That's a question I'm allowed to ask. Have you ever heard of birth control? Jesus. Wrap it up.

(beat)

I mean... how did that even happen?

CHELSEA

I met this... it was just some guy from the bar.

MAGGIE

(an immediate shift)

What were you doing at the bar?

CHELSEA

...I go there sometimes. It's fine.

MAGGIE

Explain to me how it's *fine*. *Someone could see you*.

CHELSEA

I don't talk to anybody.

MAGGIE

Is it a bar full of blind people, Chelsea? Is there a thriving community of *alcoholic blind people* in Atchison that I don't know about? Because if that is not the case, you getting all dolled up for ladies night at the Snake Pit is a pretty shitty idea.

CHELSEA

It gets lonely out here, Maggie.

MAGGIE

*It gets lonely everywhere.* Buck up.

CHELSEA

I don't talk to anyone, I swear. I just get a beer and sit by myself in the corner.

MAGGIE

Not always, apparently.

CHELSEA

It was just me and my grandma in this house all day, every day, year after year, watching game shows and... she told the same stories over and over, called me by my mother's name...

MAGGIE

Don't tell me this shit.

CHELSEA

It was--

MAGGIE

If you're trying to make me feel guilty, it's not working.

CHELSEA

I'm not trying to make you feel guilty, I'm trying to explain to you that... just getting to feel *normal* for an hour every couple of months? I needed that.

Beat.

MAGGIE

So when did this magical evening take place?

CHELSEA

It was the night my grandma died.

MAGGIE

Of course it was.

CHELSEA

It was! I couldn't just... I couldn't just stay in the house.

MAGGIE

So... what, then?

CHELSEA

This guy came in. Just driving through. He was nice to me. He asked if he could buy me a drink. \*

MAGGIE

Wonder how he thought *that* one up.

CHELSEA

That's not something that happens to me, Maggie. Like, literally something that has *never happened* to me. It was like being in a movie, where the boy and the girl are talking and girl just seems to know what to say.

MAGGIE

What could you *possibly* have talked about?

CHELSEA

I don't know. *Things*. Then he asked if he could kiss me.

MAGGIE

Ugh. I hate that. Be a man.

CHELSEA

He was *nice*. \*

MAGGIE

So you fucked him.

CHELSEA

(disgusted)

*Maggie*.

MAGGIE

What? That's what happened, right? Unless you just stumbled upon a really generous *stork* on the walk home.

CHELSEA

You don't understand.

MAGGIE

(a shift)

I understand plenty. You need money. Hold on.

She goes to her purse, opens her wallet.

MAGGIE

How much does an abortion cost, these days? Five hundred should cover it, right?

CHELSEA

I'm not --

MAGGIE

Six. Take yourself to lunch afterwards. You earned it.

CHELSEA

I'm keeping it.

MAGGIE

...What?

CHELSEA

I'm going to keep it.

A shift.

MAGGIE

Well. *That* is a horse of a different color. Thanks for the heads up. When were you planning on telling me?

CHELSEA

I'm telling you now.

MAGGIE

Guess there's no more "staying off the grid."

CHELSEA

Not necessarily.

MAGGIE

You are such an idiot. That kid's gotta go to *school*, Chelsea. It's gotta have papers. A birth certificate. Social security number. Et cetera.

CHELSEA

You think I haven't thought about this stuff?

MAGGIE

Plus, elephant in the room, *babies are very expensive*.

CHELSEA

Can you not make it about money? Everything isn't about money.

MAGGIE

Really? It's not? Because it sure seems like everything's about money when you're *borrowing money all the fucking time.*

Have you seen a doctor?

CHELSEA

Of course I haven't.

MAGGIE

And you're two months along?

CHELSEA

Yup.

MAGGIE

Jesus. And no doctor? It's gonna have flippers.

CHELSEA

Don't say that.

MAGGIE

(an idea)

You haven't even taken a test. You're not pregnant. You're probably just stressed out because of your grandma--

CHELSEA

I've taken a test. Twice.

MAGGIE

How?

CHELSEA

I lifted a pack from the grocery store.

MAGGIE

*Oh my god Chelsea do you have a death wish?*

CHELSEA

Look.

She pulls a pregnancy test in small plastic bag out of her purse.

MAGGIE

That is. Without a doubt. The most disgusting thing I have ever seen.

CHELSEA

Oh, shut up.

MAGGIE

You *peed* on that.

CHELSEA

It's in a *bag*.

MAGGIE

A bag full of something you *peed on*.

CHELSEA

Read it and weep.

She tosses it to Maggie, who takes it gingerly.

CHELSEA

Plus sign. No denying.

(beat)

So things are different now.

MAGGIE

No shit. Now it's you and little Flipper against the world.

CHELSEA

Stop calling it Flipper.

(clear)

...I can't die now. Last month, I said I'd do this because... I mean, why not? What did it matter, what happened to me? But I don't feel that way anymore. I can't trade myself for a few extra dollars.

MAGGIE

Is that what this is about? You think you're gonna die?

CHELSEA

I think this whole thing you've got going on with Billy is more dangerous than you're letting on. It's like when you used to have us play "pranks" on Sheri Trenton back in Sedalia. "No big deal. They're just *jokes*."

MAGGIE

They *were* just jokes.

CHELSEA

We put bleach in her soda, Maggie. She could've died.

MAGGIE

She took one sip and spit it out. Don't be melodramatic.

CHELSEA

I'm just... trying to make a point.

MAGGIE

Which is?

CHELSEA

That I have always done whatever you wanted, even when I knew that it was wrong. And when, inevitably, there were consequences, I had to stop and ask myself *why*. *Why did I let her make me?*

MAGGIE

I cannot believe that you're gonna do this right now.

CHELSEA

I'm not--

MAGGIE

You are your own person, Chelsea. You make your own decisions. I know that it's real convenient for you to look back and pin everything on me, but the fact of the matter is that you are your own, and you've got no one to blame but yourself.

CHELSEA

What is your *problem*?

MAGGIE

My problem is that ever since I got here, you've been eyeing me like I should be on my knees begging for forgiveness. Whining about being poor like the money I've been sending is nothing. Like I *owe* you. I don't owe you *shit*. You owe me. You should be the one on your knees. You should be licking the soles of my goddam shoes.

CHELSEA

Is that what it's like for you in Chicago? Everyone kneeling in a circle, trembling with fear?

MAGGIE

When we were eighteen years old, you fucked yourself over for life. You. Not me, *you*. Now I live in a *loft*--

CHELSEA

Oh my *god* you and that loft.

MAGGIE

(increasingly upset)

--with a boyfriend who would *literally* kill for me and an AmEx card with a \$40,000 limit and you're knocked up, broke, and completely *screwed*. Trying to make me feel guilty about Sheri *Trenton*? How dare you. Who do you think you are? *That whole thing*? That was Darwinism in action. She deserved what she got. Survival of the fucking fittest.

A beat.

CHELSEA

(quiet)

...What happened to her?

MAGGIE

The fuck does it matter? \*

CHELSEA

"Survival of the--"

MAGGIE

*We're out of time*. Chelsea, can you please just--

CHELSEA

*Maggie*.

A beat.

MAGGIE

She died, OK? For whatever that's worth. ODED on sleeping pills out in Sedalia. Three kids under five running around that shack in diapers. Pathetic.

CHELSEA

(shocked)

When did this happen?

MAGGIE

*A while ago*. And don't even think about trying to pin this one on *me*--

CHELSEA \*

Sheri Trenton is *dead*?

MAGGIE

Presumably not because I pulled her pigtails a few times.

CHELSEA

It wasn't pulling *pigtails*. You destroyed that girl. She was a nice kid and you fucked her up because you were a bully.

MAGGIE

And why was I such a bully, do you think? Because my life was so great? Because things were going *so well* out in that trailer? You're not the only one with a sob story, Chelsea. The rest of us just had to grow up and stop milking it.

CHELSEA

I'm just saying--

MAGGIE

Chelsea, you are always saying the same thing.

CHELSEA

("this again?")

I don't think you're a bad person--

MAGGIE

*Then why are you bringing this up.*

CHELSEA

Because you like to pretend that these things don't have consequences. But they do. You fuck someone up, they stay fucked up. And that *is* on you. This thing you want me to do. It sounds so small. Switch bags with some stranger. Pass go and collect fifteen thousand dollars. But it's not like that. These things... they matter.

\*  
\*

Flat stare.

MAGGIE

I know about consequences.

CHELSEA

I'm not saying--

MAGGIE

Sheri was born dead. She was the kind of girl who wasn't gonna make it out alive. That is just the way that things are. And the thing about you that pisses me off is that you pretend that's not the truth.

You act like the spineless, whiny, *victims* are going to be the ones who eventually get rewarded, when you know as well as I do that the world just *does not work* like that.

You know that thing that people always say? That sometimes bad things happen to good people? Well there's a flip side, Chelsea, that's just as true but nobody ever says it. The flip side is that sometimes *good* things happen to *bad* people.

So yeah. I did some shit I'm not proud of. But don't try and tell me that I don't know about *consequences*. My whole life is a *consequence*. A big fucking element of which, by the way, has been a direct result of being stupid enough to give a shit about what happens to *you*.

A silence. She's done, now. Maggie sits down.

MAGGIE

Five minutes.

CHELSEA

I'm not doing it.

MAGGIE

"I'm in", "I'm out", "I'm in", "I'm out". Fucking tiring. We've done this already.

CHELSEA

Yeah, I know. And you keep reeling me back in. Faking that you'd call Billy. You're not calling Billy.

MAGGIE

Trust me. You do not want me calling Billy. This is a matter of actual life and death for you.

CHELSEA

I don't believe you. I think that's something you're saying to manipulate me.

MAGGIE

It's not.

CHELSEA

I'm sorry I haven't been *grateful* enough, Maggie. I'm sorry that I haven't sucked your toes or rubbed your stomach or done whatever weird metaphorical *worship movement* that you were expecting. But I am in trouble here. I am hanging on by a thread. My grandmother is dead. The only person who loved me is dead. And I can't even let myself feel that, I can't *feel* that loss, because I spend every waking second in a state of complete and utter panic. I have nowhere to go and no way to get there. I need this money, Maggie. But more than fifteen grand, *I need to be alive*.

Because being alive is literally the *one thing* that I've got going for me right now. You might not care if I die, but for the first time in six years, *I do*.

MAGGIE

You don't think I care if you die?

CHELSEA

(honest)

No.

MAGGIE

(sincere, perhaps for the first time)

I care if you die.

...And there are other people who love you.

A beat.

Maggie sits down, deflated.

Chelsea sits. A moment.

MAGGIE

Doesn't it ever just get to you?

CHELSEA

What?

MAGGIE

How little we got?

CHELSEA

(teasing)

I mean... you have a *loft*. What more could you want?

MAGGIE

Freedom.

CHELSEA

Ha. You and me both.

(beat)

That money... it's not even gonna make a difference. It's not sustainable. I can't live off fifteen grand for the rest of my life.

MAGGIE

Take twenty.

...Are you serious?  
CHELSEA

Yeah.  
MAGGIE

Can you do that?  
CHELSEA

Take it out of my cut.  
MAGGIE

That's not...  
CHELSEA

Twenty-five.  
MAGGIE

I'm not--  
CHELSEA

What's the number? You want safety -- what's the safety number?  
MAGGIE

I can't have another bad thing happen to me, Maggie.  
CHELSEA

Eighty thousand dollars.  
MAGGIE

Silence.

...That's too much.  
CHELSEA

It's really not.  
MAGGIE

Beat.

Chelsea shakes her head.

I'm sorry.  
CHELSEA

\*

MAGGIE

(honest)

I'm in trouble, OK? Like, actual trouble. I need you to do this. It's not about Billy or money or the *risk* or whatever. This is about what happens to me. And if you don't go down there -- if this doesn't happen -- it's over.

CHELSEA

Promise me you're telling the truth.

MAGGIE

I promise.

CHELSEA

...OK, then.

MAGGIE

Really?

CHELSEA

Really.

MAGGIE

...Why?

CHELSEA

Because it's in motion. I do it. I can tell. It's just what's going to happen.

MAGGIE

(legitimately, terrifyingly relieved)

Thank you.

You have to go *right now*.

Chelsea gets up, puts on her coat. Maggie gives Chelsea her car keys, hands her the bag.

She's ready. They look at each other.

CHELSEA

I'll be back by midnight.

(beat)

And I don't owe you anything, after this.

Maggie nods. Chelsea squares her shoulders, goes.

Now Maggie's alone.

She shakes out her hands, bounces. Rolls her head, makes a little noise. \*

She opens a drawer, raises her eyebrows. She takes out a canister of pepper spray. Hmm. \*

She puts it back, picks up a hummingbird letter opener from the same drawer. Shakes her head.

MAGGIE

Where do you even get shit like this?

She leaves the letter opener on the hutch, closes the drawer.

Maggie picks up a picture in a frame. It's a goofy photo of Maggie and Chelsea when they were girls, Norma behind them. \*

She takes out a cigarette, prepares to smoke. \*

MAGGIE

Norma, don't be mad.

She can't do it. \*

MAGGIE

I'm sorry! I'm sorry.

Looks back at the picture. \*

MAGGIE

Don't look at me like that. She's gonna be fine. \*

She slams the picture facedown.

A moment of inactivity.

And then: A key in the door. \*

Chelsea's back. Flushed and relieved. Giddy.

CHELSEA

I think I'm gonna pass out. I can't believe that just happened. \*

What? Tell me.
   
 MAGGIE

He was down there, just like you said.
   
 CHELSEA

Did he say anything?
   
 MAGGIE

No.
   
 CHELSEA

Did you?
   
 MAGGIE
 \*

No. He just took the bag and left. It took ten seconds. Less.
   
 CHELSEA
 \*

The room lightens and lightens. They're elated, exuberant.
   
 CHELSEA
 \*

Good girl.
   
 MAGGIE

Good girl. I'm so sorry. I feel so dumb. I don't know what was wrong with me. Oh my god, I'm shaking. Can you feel it? My hands.
   
 CHELSEA

Let me see.
   
 MAGGIE

She grabs Chelsea's hands, which are shaking uncontrollably.

Chelsea starts laughing, a deep sound of release.

It's OK. It's all fine. I'm so *glad* -- we're OK.
   
 CHELSEA

We're OK.
   
 MAGGIE

Maggie lets the act drop for a second.

MAGGIE

Thank you so much.

CHELSEA

You're welcome.

MAGGIE

You have no idea. This changes everything. This is *freedom*. Do you feel that?

CHELSEA

(overcome)

Yes.

Maggie, this is just gonna be some thing that happened to us. All this is just gonna be another memory. It's gonna be different now.

MAGGIE

(this means something)

You know, right? It's just you and me. Always. The only two people. Just me and you.

CHELSEA

I know.

(a beat)

Five hundred *thousand* dollars. I can't even.

MAGGIE

Let's see it.

Chelsea grins, offers up the bag.

MAGGIE

You do the honors. Open 'er up.

CHELSEA

You're sure?

MAGGIE

You earned it.

They're giddy, almost drunk with joy.

Chelsea unzips. Maggie reaches in, eagerly.

Silence.

Utter stillness.

\*

A horrible, thick moment of realization.

MAGGIE

There's no money.

CHELSEA

That can't--

MAGGIE

It's just paper.

CHELSEA

Oh my god.

MAGGIE

You didn't check?

CHELSEA

You told me not to--

MAGGIE

There's nothing there. This is-- this isn't money. There's nothing.

CHELSEA

I--

MAGGIE

We've got nothing.

She's ripping the paper out. Hurling it piece after piece.  
Bill-sized rectangles of blank white fly around the room.

CHELSEA

I'm so sorry, I didn't--

MAGGIE

I'm fucked. I'm so fucked.

CHELSEA

Billy's gonna understand--

Maggie lets out an almost inhuman gasp.

MAGGIE

*Billy.*

CHELSEA

Just tell him the truth, that whoever he'd arranged the deal with--

MAGGIE

*I stole the bag.*

CHELSEA

What?

MAGGIE

*I stole the bag from Billy.*

CHELSEA

Why would you--?

Three thick, thudding knocks at the front door.

Maggie and Chelsea freeze.

CHELSEA

(a whisper)

What was that?

Three more knocks.

The women whisper as the knocks increase in frequency.

CHELSEA

What's happening? What's going on?

MAGGIE

Chelsea, I'm so sorry.

CHELSEA

What do you--?

MAGGIE

I thought it was foolproof. I thought I'd gotten away with it. I swear. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.

A swift kick. The door swings open.

BILLY and LAWRENCE stand in the doorway.

Lawrence holds the original black bag.

A moment.

Billy reaches his hand out to Chelsea.

BILLY

I'm Billy. Nice to meet you.

Chelsea is too terrified to respond.

Billy's hand lingers, uncomfortably.

BILLY

What, you're not gonna shake my hand? Lawrence, doesn't that seem a little *rude*, considering?

Lawrence nods.

BILLY

(to Chelsea)

I think you should shake it.

Chelsea does.

BILLY

Now why don't you go ahead and tell me your name.

CHELSEA

Chelsea.

A brief flash of confusion moves through Billy's face. He looks to Maggie. Nothing. He covers.

BILLY

*Chelsea*. Now that is real pretty.

CHELSEA

Thank you.

BILLY

"Thank you." Just listen to that! You are *welcome*, Chelsea. Right there, that shows the quality of your character.

You've got *manners*, and that is a rare and wonderful thing these days. Would you agree with me on that, Chelsea? That most women in today's society just don't seem to value *manners*? Any *insight* into that?

CHELSEA

I, uh...

BILLY

I mean, it's really not too difficult to be *polite*, is it? To be considerate? Call if you're going to be late. When you make plans, honor them. *Keep your hands off things that don't belong to you.*

(light)

Love the house. It's just adorable.

CHELSEA

Thank you.

BILLY

("she's so polite!")

You're welcome!

(to Lawrence)

Lawrence, do I need to introduce you two?

LAWRENCE

We've already met.

BILLY

Oh, *right*. Silly me. At the bar. Had your little switcheroo.

Lawrence grunts.

BILLY

Don't mind Lawrence. He's a tricky one. Really makes you *earn* it. Not like me, Chelsea. My problem is that I just *give* it away. Too trusting. Gets me taken advantage of.

(to Maggie)

Not even gonna say hello?

Maggie doesn't say anything.

BILLY

You're speechless! I love it. When does *that* ever happen? You, *Chelsea*-- have you ever seen this girl *speechless* before?

CHELSEA

...No.

BILLY

Now that is an example of a woman who is *impolite*.

He walks around the room.

BILLY

Have you ever seen so many hummingbirds, Lawrence?

LAWRENCE

No.

BILLY

I love it. It's amazing to see all this ugly shit in one place.

(to Chelsea)

How old are you, Chelsea?

CHELSEA

I'm sorry?

BILLY

The decor seems a little... *mature*.

CHELSEA

This is my grandmother's house.

BILLY

Ahh.

(he snaps his fingers)

Norma. That's her name. Norma. Slipped my mind there, for a second.

Maggie starts. She sees where this is going, suddenly.  
Puts her head in her hands.

CHELSEA

How did you...?

BILLY

We found a couple of letters, Chelsea. Did a little digging. Wasn't really that hard. On the drive down here, we were half expecting her to be here, waiting for us along with ol' Maggie over there. But then we poked around town a little bit today, took one of those "Haunted Atchison" tours to pass the time. Did you know that Atchison is the most haunted city in all of Kansas?

Chelsea nods.

BILLY

See, Lawrence and I? We did not know that. It was all those settlers, making their way out west. Set out looking for gold, ended up dead in Atchison. Now isn't that just a shame? Those big dreams, and all for nothing? I was moved, Chelsea. I was so moved I bought a mug. It says: "*Boo!* Welcome to Atchison."

\*

Lawrence didn't much care for the tour. But I thought: Who knows the next time we'll be back here? Might as well explore the local culture, make a few friends. And I did make a friend, Chelsea. Erma. Real nice lady. And you know what she told me? She told me that Bethany Wilson's son Michael is a *homosexual*, and that Norma's *dead*. Died a few months back, here in this very room.

\*

That was real confusing for us, Chelsea, seeing as she sent Maggie a letter postmarked just a week ago.

(faux scared)

Do you think it was her ghost?

Chelsea doesn't respond. Billy gets close to her.

BILLY

I think it must have been her ghost, Chelsea. I cannot think of any other possible explanation.

CHELSEA

It wasn't--

BILLY

Wait -- let's put a pin in that. Erma had another story that was *way* more interesting. Norma had lived alone, as I'm sure you know. Was real sensitive about inviting people over. Real private. Anyway, two months back 911 dispatch got a call from this very house -- no words, just silence on the other line -- but then when they got here, Norma had been dead for *days*. Creepy, right? People have been seeing some strange things around here ever since. Lights turning on and off. Footprints. Real spooky stuff. There is some serious supernatural shit going down around here.

He pulls back, looks at her. Drops the act.

BILLY

Unless, of course, you're the ghost.

Chelsea nods.

Billy turns to Lawrence.

BILLY

Now this is getting really interesting. Lawrence, don't you think this is getting interesting?

LAWRENCE

No.

BILLY

See, I was bored by this whole thing, Chelsea. The story just seemed... *done*. Boy meets girl, girl steals a *lot* of coke, gets a bit ballsy, arranges to sell it for half price to the competition. The girl, being *stupid*, fails to take into account that the boy's got friends *everywhere*. He's got friends who aren't fooled so easily.

And the boy's friends figure out what's going on. They say: Hey, boy! That girl that you've been *fucking*, you know the one, the one who's been *living in your house*, the one *who's been sleeping in your bed*, the one who you've been *spoiling* like some goddamned Disney fucking princess? That girl? That girl is gonna *steal your shit*. Boy says, no way, José. And then the friend, who, ironically, *is actually named José*, says *Billy, we're pretty sure it's her*. And the boy thinks, *Nah*. So the boy waits around a little while, feeling it out. And then, right on schedule, the bag goes missing and the girl's not picking up her cell phone. Luckily, the boy knows *right where to find her*.

By now he's up in Maggie's face.

Uh-oh.

BILLY

(back to Chelsea)

Doesn't that story just seem *done*, Chelsea?

CHELSEA

No.

BILLY

Well. *It is*. I've heard it a million times. It's gotten *boring*. But you, you are *interesting*. Because you quite clearly do not belong in this story, like, *at all*. And that's so sad, Chelsea. Because, whether you belong here or not, you're gonna come to the same end. And what do you think that's gonna be?

Chelsea freezes a little.

BILLY

Wait -- let's put a pin in that. How long did that ambulance take to get here, do you figure?

MAGGIE

Leave her alone, Billy.

CHELSEA

I don't--

BILLY

Just a rough estimate. After that 911 call, I bet it took awhile. We're pretty far from the nearest hospital. We're pretty far from the nearest *anything*, really. I mean, we've got that bar down the road...

MAGGIE

A popular bar.

BILLY

Yeah, no. We've got that bar. The truck stop. And that's it. No neighbors--

MAGGIE

There are neighbors.

BILLY

Chelsea?

CHELSEA

There are--

BILLY

Remember how impolite it is to lie.

CHELSEA

No. No neighbors.

BILLY

So it would take an ambulance... what. Fifteen minutes? That is... if someone called an ambulance.

With a start, Maggie flies up from her seat towards the drawer she opened earlier.

As she reaches to open it, Lawrence leaps, blocks her, pins her arms behind her back.

BILLY

OK, *that* was a bad move. What's over there?

MAGGIE

Nothing.

Lawrence.

BILLY

Lawrence twists her arm again.

MAGGIE  
(looking at Billy for the first time)  
Pepper spray. Second drawer.

Billy goes over to the drawer, opens it. He takes out the canister of pepper spray.

BILLY  
You thought this was gonna stop me? Nah.

Lawrence throws Maggie to the couch.

LAWRENCE  
I'm guessing we're not gonna try anything like that again.

MAGGIE  
I guess not.

Lawrence gestures to Billy, snaps/whistles/whatever. Billy tosses the pepper spray canister to Lawrence.

LAWRENCE  
I'll think I'll be holding on to this, though. Just in case.

He pockets it. Billy moves back to Chelsea.

BILLY  
Maggie's pretty gutsy, isn't she? I used to find that quite attractive, but my feelings have soured on that particular trait of hers. So Chelsea. Speaking of Maggie. I got a few questions about how this whole thing went down. I'm not seeing you as the criminal mastermind type.

MAGGIE  
Can you please just leave her out of this?

BILLY  
And why would I do that? So I could just listen to your side of the story? Also known as the *crazy fucking bitch* side?

MAGGIE  
Don't talk to me like that--

BILLY

(to Chelsea, snapping his fingers)

Hey! Dumb girl! What happened?

Chelsea looks to Maggie. Maggie shrugs.

MAGGIE

Tell him.

CHELSEA

Maggie came to the house.

\*

BILLY

When?

CHELSEA

...This morning.

BILLY

Give me a break.

CHELSEA

About a month ago.

BILLY

(to Maggie)

*A month ago? A month ago? What's wrong with you? We were having so much fun a month ago! We went to Mackinac Island for the weekend. You had duck for the first time!*

MAGGIE

(unimpressed)

Eh.

BILLY

You said you loved it.

MAGGIE

*I lied.*

LAWRENCE

(to Chelsea, really asking)

Why would you even do this?

\*

CHELSEA

She's my friend.

Maggie doesn't have friends.

BILLY

I have *friends*--

MAGGIE

Since when?

BILLY

\*

Since we were kids. We're like sisters.

CHELSEA

This bothers Billy.

Is that true? You never mentioned her.

BILLY

(to Maggie)

\*

It never came up.

MAGGIE

The only reason that I had any idea she existed is because I read your mail.

BILLY

How *dare* you--

MAGGIE

Yeah, nice try. Also: Can someone please tell me what she's even doing here? All those letters talked like she'd been lost at sea.

BILLY

Chelsea starts to talk.

Actually, y'know what? I don't care. What I care about is that you've had this *friend* since you were a little kid, you're practically family... and it just "never came up"?

BILLY

Nope.

MAGGIE

She was protecting me.

CHELSEA

Right.

BILLY

(skeptical)

CHELSEA

No, she was. I'm--

MAGGIE

*Chelsea. Shut up.*

BILLY

What did I say? Increasingly interesting.

Chelsea, I relate to you. You aren't seeing Maggie for what she really is. And that's understandable. It's hard to see her for what she really is. I mean, just look at her! She looks so good! She smells so good! And that skin? My god. You touch that girl, and it's just... *pow*. Chemistry. The kind of girl who makes things go *boom*. It's fucking *narcotic*, Chelsea. But underneath all that? *She's a monster*.

MAGGIE

(unimpressed)

Boom.

BILLY

You *are* crazy.

MAGGIE

(bristling)

I'm not crazy.

BILLY

Oh, yes, you are. Trust me.

MAGGIE

You know I hate that.

BILLY

I don't *care* if you hate it. Do you even love me?

MAGGIE

...Of course I love you.

BILLY

Now I know you're lying.

MAGGIE

Why?

BILLY

Because you're being nice.

MAGGIE

Why does everyone act like I'm never nice? I'm nice all the time.

BILLY

*You broke my heart.* Why? Why would you do that? I am devoted as shit to you, Maggie.

MAGGIE

I'm just *fucked up*, OK? I am. You know that. This is not some... *surprise*.

BILLY

*No kidding.*

MAGGIE

It doesn't mean I don't love you. This is how I love you.

BILLY

By stealing from me? Do you have any idea how much trouble I'm in over this?

MAGGIE

I got here and I missed you so much. I wanted to take it back, but I was worried, I was worried you'd be so pissed at me that you'd--

BILLY

(real rage)

*Shut up.*

How stupid do you think I am? Huh? Answer me. This is not a rhetorical question. How stupid do you think I am?

MAGGIE

Not particularly stupid.

BILLY

And there she goes again with another fucking *lie*. You stole from me. You! Stole from *me!* I gave you everything you could have *possibly* wanted. I bought you underwear that had *an emerald* on it. Why would you steal from me?

MAGGIE

I didn't steal from you. I didn't. I swear. I just...

BILLY

You just what?

MAGGIE

(an idea)

I wanted to prove to you that I could do it.

BILLY

Bullshit.

MAGGIE

You keep me out of the business--

BILLY

That's because you're *very untrustworthy*.

MAGGIE

I want in. But first, I needed to prove to you that I could hack it.

BILLY

So let me get this straight. You drugged me -- yeah, everybody, she drugged me -- stole a small fortune's worth of cocaine, facilitated a deal to *secretly sell it* out in the middle of the fucking forest, and you did all of this -- *all of this* -- just to *prove* to me that you could "hack it"?

MAGGIE

Yes.

BILLY

What's *wrong* with you? You're, like, a compulsive liar.

MAGGIE

I'm not! I swear to god, Billy, I'm just--

Billy takes out a gun.

Chelsea lets out a scream. Maggie doesn't flinch.

BILLY

Your friend is way smarter than you are. She knows when a man is serious. She knows when it's time to be afraid.

MAGGIE

You're not gonna hurt me.

BILLY

Don't be so sure.

MAGGIE  
You'd never.

BILLY  
And why's that?

MAGGIE  
Because you know what we've got.

BILLY  
Oh, do not even.

MAGGIE  
You know me, Billy. And I know you. We belong with each other, fucked up or not.  
There's nobody else who--

Quickly, Lawrence takes his gun out, shoots at the ceiling.  
Plaster falls.

MAGGIE  
*What the fuck?*

LAWRENCE  
I'm sorry, but I just cannot listen to any more of this. I don't like these girls. That one --  
(he gestures to Maggie)  
--is a sociopath, and that one --  
(he gestures to Chelsea)  
--is just stupid.

MAGGIE  
Don't call her stupid.

CHELSEA  
It's fine! Call me whatever you want!

MAGGIE  
Billy... can we talk this out, just the two of us?

Billy looks at Lawrence.

LAWRENCE  
I'm not going anywhere.

MAGGIE  
*Billy.*

LAWRENCE

(to Billy)

And you're not either.

BILLY

There's a little concern about leaving the two of us alone together, Maggie. When the two of us are alone, I tend to get a little *irrational*. Not sure why, really. I mean, you're cute enough, but nothing special. And you *never* shut up. Plus, you have a rotten, maggot-infested pile of trash where your heart should be. But for whatever reason, there's just something about you that seems to makes me a little... forgiving. That's why we've got Lawrence, here. Consider him my accountability buddy. And I don't think Lawrence is feeling particularly *forgiving*.

Billy raises his gun.

MAGGIE

(real fear creeping in)

Billy, don't do this--

BILLY

Just shut up. There's nothing stopping me from just *exterminating* you. This is it, Maggie. We had a good run, but now it's time to call it--

MAGGIE

I'm pregnant.

A beat.

Billy keeps the gun pointed at her.

BILLY

...Yeah, again, nice try.

MAGGIE

I have the test.

BILLY

No, you don't.

MAGGIE

I do.

BILLY

Where is it?

MAGGIE  
(to Lawrence)

May I?

Witheringly, Lawrence nods.

Go.  
BILLY

He lowers the gun.

Maggie goes to Chelsea's purse, unflinchingly takes out the pregnancy test in the plastic bag.

She tosses it at Billy.

See for yourself.  
MAGGIE

Is this real?  
BILLY

Is it?  
(to Lawrence)

\*

I don't know.  
LAWRENCE  
("How would I know?")

...And we're sure plus sign means positive?  
BILLY

Lawrence gives him a look. Billy turns to Maggie.

You can't be.  
BILLY

Why couldn't I be?  
MAGGIE

You take pills that prevent this sort of thing from happening.  
BILLY

I skip some sometimes. Not on purpose. It just happens. I'm very scatterbrained. You know that.  
MAGGIE

BILLY

You're telling me that this is for real?

MAGGIE

I am.

BILLY

And it's mine?

\*

MAGGIE

Of course it's yours.

BILLY

Look me in the eye.

She does.

MAGGIE

Billy. We're gonna have a baby.

He reaches for her, ecstatic. She lets him.

BILLY

Maggie!

MAGGIE

Are you happy? I was worried you wouldn't be happy. That's why I ran off--

Lawrence groans. Billy's eating it up.

Chelsea's almost impressed.

BILLY

That's what this is about? You were scared? Honey. Come on. This is amazing news, we're gonna be a--

In a swift kick, Lawrence knocks Billy to the floor, pulls his gun on Maggie.

Chelsea screams.

LAWRENCE

Sorry, Billy.

WAIT!

BILLY

Lawrence pulls the trigger.

Nothing.

A long, cool beat.

LAWRENCE

...This gun is empty.

BILLY

Sorry. I thought something like this might happen.

LAWRENCE

*I just shot it.*

BILLY

(“I know”)

You usually let one go early.

LAWRENCE

Jesus.

MAGGIE

ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME.

LAWRENCE

How did you even do that?

BILLY

Fastest fingers in the Midwest.

MAGGIE

YOU WERE GOING TO KILL ME? I’M *HAVING A BABY*.

LAWRENCE

(ignoring Maggie)

What about your gun?

MAGGIE

ANYBODY?

BILLY

Oh, mine has bullets. And I've got yours too, right here. I'll hand 'em over -- good faith -- if you just hear me out.

LAWRENCE

...Go ahead.

BILLY

So we've got a problem. We're here to get the bag -- check -- and to kill Maggie -- not check. The thing is... with these new developments, I'm feeling like killing her is not something that I'm comfortable with.

LAWRENCE

This is sounding less like a problem that *we* have and more like a problem that *you* have.

BILLY

No, what I have is a *solution*. No one's ever seen her.

LAWRENCE

(skeptical)

No one.

BILLY

No one who matters.

LAWRENCE

...So?

BILLY

So, we've just gotta bring a dead girl back.

\*

LAWRENCE

(gesturing towards Maggie)

We're bringing that dead girl back.

BILLY

Why? Just kill the other one. Who's gonna know?

Chelsea is petrified.

LAWRENCE

(gesturing to Maggie)

That girl is trouble. You don't need me to tell you that.

BILLY

It'll be worth your while.

LAWRENCE

How do you figure?

BILLY

We showed up and the bag was gone.

Lawrence is interested. Maybe.

BILLY

We got to her hideout -- some freaky backwoods place, used to belong to her friend's grandmother -- and the bag? Was *gone*. Maybe her friend ran off with it? We don't know. All we know is that we don't have it.

LAWRENCE

...Where did it go?

BILLY

I have no idea.

Hmmm. Lawrence looks at Billy.

LAWRENCE

I'm going to need those bullets back, now.

Billy hands them over. Lawrence loads the gun, unreadable. It takes a second. No one quite knows what to do. Lawrence tucks the gun away.

LAWRENCE

So this plan. It's dependent upon what, exactly?

BILLY

Maggie stays alive.

LAWRENCE

We just kill the other one.

BILLY

That's what I'm thinking, yeah.

LAWRENCE

And I take the bag.

BILLY

Mmm-hmm.

MAGGIE

Or you could just let us both go. That's a solution to the problem.

LAWRENCE

Not my problem.

BILLY

That is *a* solution to *a* problem.

MAGGIE

You'd never hear from either of us again. I promise.

BILLY

But then what about me?

MAGGIE

What about you?

BILLY

You're carrying my *child*, Maggie.

Maggie winces.

BILLY

We're a *family* now.

LAWRENCE

You're not bringing her back to Chicago.

BILLY

Of course I'm not bringing her back to Chicago. I'm not an idiot. I'll set her up somewhere. Hide her out.

(he looks around)

This place wouldn't be too bad, actually--

MAGGIE

Wait, what?

BILLY

You can't just come back like everything's fine. You're supposed to be dead.

MAGGIE

OK. Fine. Safe house it is. *But*. You let her go.

LAWRENCE

Nope.

MAGGIE

Just tell them we weren't here. Tell them we didn't show up. We're gonna have a baby--

BILLY

(musing, pleasant)

Maybe twins.

MAGGIE

...OK? Twins. Great. *Whatever*. We stay here. Lawrence takes the money and runs. Chelsea disappears. Who's it gonna hurt?

There's a moment where everyone considers.

MAGGIE

Chelsea?

CHELSEA

...Yeah?

MAGGIE

I want you to get up and get out of here. Right now.

CHELSEA

I-- I can't just leave you here--

MAGGIE

Chelsea. I want you to get up. Right now. Take my keys, get in the car, and just go.

The men say nothing.

Chelsea gets up slowly, taking Maggie's keys. She picks up her purse and moves to the door.

CHELSEA

What's going to--

MAGGIE

I'm going to be fine. Just go. Right now. OK?

Chelsea hesitates, makes a decision.

She moves to the door.

Lawrence blocks it.

LAWRENCE

...You're taking her purse.

CHELSEA

What?

LAWRENCE

You're taking Maggie's purse.

Uh-oh.

CHELSEA

You're right. You're right. I got confused.

LAWRENCE

Give it to me.

CHELSEA

No, I just got mixed up, it's hers, I --

LAWRENCE

*Give it to me.*

She does.

He opens up the wallet. Smirks. Tosses it to Billy.

He looks at Maggie.

Busted.

Billy exhales. Quiet. Looks to Chelsea.

BILLY

It's you. Not her.

CHELSEA

No, I was just holding the test for her--

BILLY

*I'm not an idiot.* Damn it. What do I do?

(he looks to Maggie)

I keep trying to *help* you. Over and over and over again.

He starts pacing.

BILLY

Why are you *like* this? What happened to you? Did you have terrible parents? Is that it?

MAGGIE

So the test was in her purse. That doesn't mean--

BILLY

YOU ARE SUCH A LIAR, OH MY GOD.

MAGGIE

You think I'd touch that thing if it wasn't mine? You know how weird I am about other people's pee.

BILLY

(to Lawrence, hopeful)

That's a good point. She does *not* like coming into contact with other people's pee. *Trust me.*

CHELSEA

Ew.

LAWRENCE

*It's not hers.*

MAGGIE

(to Chelsea, misinterpreting)

What, it's gross that I don't like *urine* that belongs to other people?

BILLY

It's *sterile*. I've told you that a million times.

LAWRENCE

Billy.

BILLY

What?

LAWRENCE

I'm getting tired of this shit.

BILLY

You're tired? I'm--

LAWRENCE

(pointing to Maggie)

Crazy over there is not having your baby.

MAGGIE

(to Billy)

Did you hear what he just called me?

BILLY

Yeah, she really doesn't like it when you--

LAWRENCE

*She's not pregnant.*

MAGGIE

Then what about the test?

LAWRENCE

I'm guessing the test belongs to the dumb one.

CHELSEA

Why am I the dumb one, again?

LAWRENCE

(cool)

I'll give you three guesses.

MAGGIE

(to Lawrence)

Who are you, anyway?

\*  
\*

LAWRENCE

You want to know who I am?

BILLY

Uh-oh.

LAWRENCE

You. Want to know. Who *I* am.

MAGGIE

Yeah. I do.

LAWRENCE

I'm a *professional*.

MAGGIE

And why, exactly, do we need a *professional*?

LAWRENCE

Billy's in a little bit of trouble, ladies. This is the third time that there has been an incident of this nature.

CHELSEA

(to Maggie, incredulous)

You've done this before?

MAGGIE

It was foolproof this time.

CHELSEA

*Apparently not.*

LAWRENCE

It's starting to look like Billy might not be telling us the whole story.

BILLY

Wait, what do you--

LAWRENCE

Three times? And she just keeps getting away with it? This girl that no one's seen? Looks a little bit suspicious, don't you think?

Now, I'm not one to pass judgement. I just follow instructions. And in this situation, my instructions are pretty clear: Leave here with a dead girl. I don't particularly care *which* dead girl, but my job is to leave here with a dead girl and I'm leaving here with a dead girl.

He turns to Billy.

LAWRENCE

So. Who's it gonna be?

A long beat.

LAWRENCE

You know what? While you're thinking about it, you should probably just hand over your gun, too. Good faith.

Billy considers, then does it. A long, cool beat.

LAWRENCE

(to Billy)

So?

BILLY

I think I've come up with a solution.

LAWRENCE

Another one?

BILLY

You'll like this one. It's fun. 'Cause here's what I'm thinking: I'm basically fucked. I pick the dumb one, you figure that Maggie and I were in cahoots with this whole bag situation, and then I'm gonna get--

(he mimes getting shot, makes a little explosion sound, then an "I'm dead" sound)

Now, the way I see it, that's not a particularly *satisfying* end to this story. But if I pick Maggie, she gets off too easy. It's all over. Just like that. And then *I'm* the one who's feeling bad. I'm the one walking around with that weight on my shoulders, while she gets off scot-free. And that doesn't seem real fair. *She* should be the one suffering.

LAWRENCE

I'm not following.

BILLY

(an announcement, to the room)

We took a vote on the theme for prom, and we decided to go with Sadie Hawkins. Ladies choice all the way.

MAGGIE

(annoyed)

What are you talking about?

BILLY

(to Lawrence)

Let them decide.

CHELSEA

I'm sorry. You're letting us decide what, exactly?

LAWRENCE

Which one's gonna be the dead girl.

Beat.

CHELSEA

No. Please. That's--

LAWRENCE

This seems like more bullshit, Billy.

BILLY

It's not, though. See? It's perfect. Each one votes. If they agree: the agreed-upon party gets it. If they disagree, they both get it. You take the bag either way.

LAWRENCE

Either way.

BILLY

Either way.

LAWRENCE

(to Billy)

...All right.

MAGGIE

You sick *fuck*.

She goes for Billy, he fends her off.

CHELSEA

*Maggie.*

MAGGIE

What?

LAWRENCE

...It's not gonna do any good.

A beat.

Maggie reassesses.

MAGGIE

(to Billy)

How long do we have?

LAWRENCE

I'll give 'ya ten minutes.

MAGGIE

(ignoring Lawrence, to Billy)

You really want to do this?

BILLY

Yeah. I do.

MAGGIE

Why?

BILLY

*You want a list?*

MAGGIE

You don't want me dead.

BILLY

(honest)

I have to get rid of you.

MAGGIE

Come on.

BILLY

You're ruining my fucking life. You've *ruined* my fucking life! Multiple times. I'm not--

*I know who you are:* You're a shitty person who doesn't love me. But for whatever reason I can't... quite... shake you. You're in here.

(he gestures to his head)

And here.

(his heart)

And *here*.

(his crotch)

You're fucking *everywhere*. I need an *exorcism*. I have to get you out of my body, Maggie. And I think this might be the literal *only way* to do it.

Maggie touches him with legitimate tenderness. Boom.

Billy recoils but can't quite move away.

I'm not that fucking *easy*.  
BILLY

Did I say you were easy?  
MAGGIE

What, then?  
BILLY

She touches his arms, digs her nails in a little. Runs her fingers through his hair. Actual human-to-human contact. The narcotic kind.

She might not be gaming him right now.

Then: a look. He pulls her hair, sharp. She cries out.

BILLY  
You can try to get out of this however you want. It's not gonna make a difference.

Then: Something in Maggie hardens. She walks to the bedroom, goes inside. He doesn't move.

Then: he starts to follow her.

Billy.  
LAWRENCE

(sharp)  
Doesn't matter either way, does it?

Lawrence is silent, but watchful.

Billy follows her into the bedroom. Maggie shuts the door.

Chelsea and Lawrence are alone.

Please.  
CHELSEA

Best we don't talk.  
LAWRENCE

Lawrence stares straight ahead. Stone-faced.

CHELSEA

My favorite color is yellow. I love to read. When I was a kid I had a cat named Ozzie who used to play fetch, like a dog.

LAWRENCE

It's not me you need to plead your case to.

CHELSEA

I don't have a sweet tooth. I don't understand the way that people eroticize desserts. I'd rather have crackers. I have things that I like that are specific to me. I'm a real person.

LAWRENCE

I gathered.

CHELSEA

And Maggie. She's a real person too. We used to "play school" when we were kids. Except it wasn't really a game with Maggie, she'd actually *teach me* things.

Like, did you know that hummingbirds are always a few hours away from starving to death? It's their metabolism. Those little hearts, beating so fast. It's what makes 'em so aggressive. They're not mean, they're just hungry. Just trying to get to the next sweet thing, 'cause if they don't? They're dead. Isn't that beautiful? And sad? Tiny little birds spending their whole lives just trying to... keep going.

(she looks at a figurine, something)

*Trochilidae.*

LAWRENCE

Kill or die?

Chelsea shakes her head.

CHELSEA

Trochilidae's the Latin name for hummingbirds. Maggie taught me that, too.

LAWRENCE

I'm sure Maggie's an expert.

CHELSEA

She really is. She's so smart. Her parents were... She grew up practically feral. She'd spend summers out here with me and my grandma. We'd eat watermelon outside on the porch and make up card games.

LAWRENCE

(clear)

None of this makes any difference.

It has to. CHELSEA

It doesn't. LAWRENCE

You seem like a good person. CHELSEA

Stop. LAWRENCE

You seem like you could be good. CHELSEA

Beat. She stands up, covers her eyes.

Just do it. CHELSEA

Sit down. (disgusted) LAWRENCE

Just do it now. CHELSEA

I'm not gonna-- LAWRENCE

Get it over with. CHELSEA

Open your eyes, sit down, and be quiet. Jesus. LAWRENCE

She does. Beat.

Why would you *do* that? What if I had just killed you, right then? LAWRENCE

You *are* going to kill me, aren't you? It's just a question of when. You're gonna kill us both. CHELSEA

LAWRENCE

Now, why would I do that?

CHELSEA

Maggie's got a big mouth. I don't, but I've seen your face. It would be stupid to let either of us go. Billy either, for that matter.

LAWRENCE

So: not that dumb.

I follow instructions. One dead girl. Unless things go wrong.

CHELSEA

And haven't they?

LAWRENCE

For you, maybe. Not for me.

CHELSEA

We could still get out of this.

LAWRENCE

Probably not you.

CHELSEA

Maggie's looking out for me.

LAWRENCE

No, she's not.

CHELSEA

You don't know her.

LAWRENCE

Yeah, I do. I know a thousand Maggies. A thousand Billys, too. People don't vary by too many degrees.

A single, dull thud from the bedroom.

Chelsea stiffens.

CHELSEA  
 Is he--?

LAWRENCE  
 He's not killing her, if that's what you're worried about. \*

CHELSEA  
 How do you know?

LAWRENCE  
 You ever had someone under your skin like that?

CHELSEA  
 No.

LAWRENCE  
 Lucky girl.

CHELSEA  
 Have you?

LAWRENCE  
 You don't need to concern yourself with what's under my skin.

Beat.

LAWRENCE  
 She was gonna die in the parking lot.

CHELSEA  
 What?

LAWRENCE  
 That was the plan. Do the trade, then take her back to the parking lot and shoot her. But instead... *you* were there.

CHELSEA  
 She didn't know that. \*

Chelsea's breathing is becoming erratic. She's starting to hyperventilate. A full-on panic attack is starting. \*

LAWRENCE  
 You need to calm down.

...She can't.

CHELSEA

(a break)

I deserve it. I do. All of this. I've been hiding out here.

\*  
\*

LAWRENCE

We picked up on that.

CHELSEA

I did something bad.

LAWRENCE

No shit.

CHELSEA

Worse than you think.

LAWRENCE

I can think of some pretty bad things.

CHELSEA

I killed someone. Two people. That doesn't shock you, I guess.

LAWRENCE

Not much shocks me.

She's up, frantic, suddenly.

LAWRENCE

Hey--

CHELSEA

I can't believe I said it like that.

LAWRENCE

Like what?

CHELSEA

I said it like it was nothing. I said it like it was something that -- something that you say. "I killed two people. That doesn't shock you, I guess."

LAWRENCE

Sit down.

She does. An exhale. A little calmer. She looks to Lawrence.

CHELSEA

It wasn't supposed to happen. I promise. I'm a good person.

LAWRENCE

I doubt those two people cared whether you were a good person or not.

CHELSEA

My last year of high school, my mother died. So it was just my little brother Aaron and Aaron's dad and me in this rickety little house out in Sedalia. My mother was dead, and it was--

It had been bad before, but then it just got worse.

LAWRENCE

What did?

CHELSEA

I'm not gonna talk about that part. If this is the last night of my life... I don't want that in it.

I burned the house down. No one was supposed to be in there. I was gonna duck out of school, go right back. There was an insurance policy, I'd get a little money, Maggie and I would use it to get to Chicago--

LAWRENCE

Who were you going to pin the fire on?

Chelsea shrugs. Who knows?

CHELSEA

There are fires every summer.

But when I got to the house... his truck was there.

LAWRENCE

Whose--?

CHELSEA

Aaron's dad's. In the driveway.

And I felt this... power. For the first time in my life. I could've just turned around, I could've gone back to school, but... I didn't. I dumped the lighter fluid, just like I'd planned, all around the outside, that rickety wood porch. I had to be so quiet. I can still hear it: that sloshing sound.

\*

Then it all just went so fast. Whoosh.

(beat)

I didn't find out till later.

LAWRENCE

Find out what?

CHELSEA

Aaron had the flu. Had to be picked up from school. So he was upstairs. That's why his dad was home. He'd been up there with him, giving him saltines, ginger ale. Six years old. My brother.

\*

I just went back to class like it was nothing. Sixth period came and the principal got me. He told me they were both dead and I... there was just nothing. I felt nothing. They told me the police thought that it wasn't an accident, that they were gonna find out who did it.

LAWRENCE

So you ran.

\*

CHELSEA

Maggie took me straight here. She told my Grandma everything while I just... sat there. I couldn't even talk. I don't know what would have happened to me without her.

A few weeks later she dropped out of school and got a job waiting tables so she could send us money. It was nothing at first, thirty, forty bucks... and then she moved to Chicago and met Billy and started sending more and more. She used to come out and visit, follow up... but then my grandma got sick.

There's a part of me that isn't sorry. That can't even feel sorry. There's a part of me that feels like it was inevitable. Like I had no choice. Like it was just what was going to happen.

But then there's another part of me that just thinks... why didn't I just turn around and go back to school? I could've just gone back to school. And then maybe I'd be...

LAWRENCE

What?

CHELSEA

I don't know. Happy? Working some job. Married, maybe, with a couple of kids. I'm not smart like Maggie, but I'm not stupid, either. I could've done something.

\*

LAWRENCE

You should turn yourself in.

CHELSEA

How do you think I'd do in prison?

LAWRENCE

It's gotta be better than this.

CHELSEA

For a long time, this wasn't so bad.

A beat.

CHELSEA

I'm scared.

LAWRENCE

Look. This isn't about you or her or me. This is about cause and effect. You took something. Now, we take something. That's it.

CHELSEA

It's not exact though, is it? You never take back exactly what you lost. I mean, you kill people every day--

LAWRENCE

Not *every* day.

CHELSEA

--and does it ever really balance? Does anything ever really even out?

LAWRENCE

No.

(beat)

That pregnancy test seemed pretty convenient.

CHELSEA

It's not. It's actually... pretty inconvenient.

LAWRENCE

How'd that happen?

CHELSEA

I forgot, for a second, that I wasn't allowed to have anything good.

LAWRENCE

And?

I got something good.

CHELSEA

Beat.

LAWRENCE

Stand up.

CHELSEA

Why?

LAWRENCE

Stand up.

She does.

LAWRENCE

I'm gonna turn my back to you and count to ten.

CHELSEA

Wait, why would--

LAWRENCE

I'm going to count to ten. That's all you get.

CHELSEA

What about--?

He turns his back to her. He silently raises his fingers one by one, counting.

Chelsea freezes. She moves to her purse, grabs it.

Then: She looks back towards Maggie, still in the bedroom.

Beat. She can't do it. She puts her purse down.

Lawrence turns around.

LAWRENCE

I'm going to take back what I said earlier about you not being that dumb.

CHELSEA

I can't leave Maggie.

LAWRENCE

She'd leave you.

CHELSEA

You don't know her. Just let both of us--

LAWRENCE

That was your chance. You're not getting another one.

CHELSEA

If it wasn't for me, Maggie would've finished school. Gone to college. Used all that smart for something. Instead, she had to take care of me--

LAWRENCE

She didn't have to.

CHELSEA

She chose to. She chose me.

LAWRENCE

Maggie could have helped you, *really* helped you, at *any* time. You get that, right? We do it every day. People appear and disappear.

CHELSEA

It was too risky.

LAWRENCE

Not that risky. You don't see her for what she is.

CHELSEA

I know who she is. But what you don't understand is that she *got* that way. That person you met today? She *became* like that. That's not who she is, deep down. You can say whatever you want about her. Most of it I'd probably agree with. But when it comes down to it, she would never, ever, let anyone hurt me. She's my family. And I can't... I can't just leave her because it would be better for me. We're tied together. There's no splintering.

LAWRENCE

We'll see about that.

A stirring at the bedroom door. Chelsea looks up, panicked.

LAWRENCE

This was a great little conversation, but when they get back here, you're on your own.

The door swings open. Maggie stands, resplendent and relaxed. She makes her way to the couch, spreads out, luxurious.

MAGGIE

Hi, guys!

CHELSEA

What are you *doing*?

MAGGIE

Basking in the glow.

\*

CHELSEA

Have you lost your mind?

MAGGIE

(to Lawrence)

We've worked out a compromise.

LAWRENCE

A compromise.

MAGGIE

Yup. Conflict over. Nothing to see here.

CHELSEA

Maggie...

MAGGIE

I think I was scared, is the problem. Scared of my own true feelings. I think I was in *denial*.

Billy stands in the doorway in his underwear.

\*

MAGGIE

It's hard to really give yourself up to somebody, you know? Hard to just... give in. But that's what you've got to do. You've got to be really *vulnerable*. Right Billy? Isn't that what it's all about? Vulnerability?

BILLY

Yup. *Vulnerability*. That's what it's all about.

Chelsea is completely petrified.

MAGGIE

It's about being honest. Being honest with yourself, being honest with others. Making sure that you're really telling the truth. I feel that, now. I really do. I used to feel this heaviness. And now I just feel light as a feather. Now I just see that everything's going to be *fine*.

LAWRENCE

Billy.

BILLY

We're making a run for it!

CHELSEA

What?

BILLY

(to Lawrence)

You're taking the bag, we're going to Mexico. We're gonna raise our family.

LAWRENCE

*She's not pregnant.*

BILLY

She might be. Who's to say?

MAGGIE

Billy and I are gonna get married.

BILLY

I'm gonna cash out my accounts. We'll live off the land.

(to Lawrence)

And you. You're gonna take that bag, and your whole life is gonna change.

LAWRENCE

The bag has lost its appeal.

BILLY

(faux-defensive)

*Shhhh!* Don't say that! You'll hurt its feelings.

LAWRENCE

I'd still have to move it, Billy.

BILLY

You think I'm not looking out for you? I've got you *covered*, friend.

He takes out a scrap of paper, finds a pen. He scrawls something, holds it out to Lawrence.

BILLY

This is an address.

LAWRENCE

I don't want it.

BILLY

You take the bag here. You tell them I sent you. You'll have cash in hand, unmarked bills, a bright future. No questions asked.

LAWRENCE

No questions asked.

BILLY

Nope. Short, declarative statements only. Just think about what your life would *be* after that! You could travel the world! Come find us in Mexico, maybe.

MAGGIE

(to Lawrence)

...Don't do that.

BILLY

(getting excited)

That would be really fun. We could *snorkel*.

LAWRENCE

Billy.

Billy's still holding out the paper.

BILLY

Just take it.

LAWRENCE

*Billy.*

A beat. They look at each other. Lawrence shakes his head. Billy makes a big show of putting the paper down.

BILLY

Well. Here it is. Just in case you want it later.

LAWRENCE

Can I talk to you outside for a minute?

BILLY

We don't need to --

Lawrence cocks his gun. \*

BILLY

Let me put some clothes on.

Lawrence watches him carefully as he goes into the bedroom, pulls on his clothes. Silence, otherwise.

Lawrence opens the door. Billy walks out.

LAWRENCE

You two know better than to try anything.

Lawrence shuts door. Chelsea moves to Maggie. Fast, frantic whispers. \*

CHELSEA

What are you doing?

MAGGIE

I've got it under control.

CHELSEA

He's going to kill one of us.

MAGGIE

No, he's not.

CHELSEA

Not Billy, *Lawrence*.

MAGGIE

It's not gonna happen.

CHELSEA

It *is*. He told me.

Maggie goes to her bag, pulls out an envelope and hands it to Chelsea.

MAGGIE

Look. This is for you. Everything you need. Driver's license, birth certificate, a new social-- \*

CHELSEA

(overcome, joyful)

Are you serious--? *Thank you.* This is...

Wait a second.

CHELSEA

...You had this the whole time?

MAGGIE

I was gonna hand it over, OK? After the bag drop, once we were situated.

CHELSEA

*Situated?*

MAGGIE

*Listen.* We don't have time for this. They're going to let us go. I'm gonna head off with Billy, Lawrence is gonna take that fucking bag, and you are gonna take that envelope and *figure something out.*

CHELSEA

("I don't know what I'm going to do")

Maggie.

MAGGIE

It's better than being dead.

Beat.

CHELSEA

What are you gonna say, when they ask? \*

MAGGIE

They're not actually gonna do that.

CHELSEA

*They are.*

MAGGIE

It'll be me, then. Say me. I'm the one who got us into this. I'll say me too.

CHELSEA

Why?

MAGGIE

Buns. Ovens. Etc.

(“I am so sorry.”)

I--

(...but she just can't say it.)

This one's on me. But it's almost over. Me and Billy. You and Flipper. We'll all get by.

CHELSEA

*Promise me.*

MAGGIE

I promise.

Lawrence and Billy enter.

MAGGIE

Billy, let's get out of here. It's time for us to go.

BILLY

We can't go.

MAGGIE

But we just...

BILLY

Lawrence and I talked it over.

MAGGIE

You love me, don't you?

BILLY

I do.

MAGGIE

So? Let's go.

A silence.

LAWRENCE

Who's it gonna be?

I don't wanna play.

MAGGIE

Who.

LAWRENCE

I'm not playing.

MAGGIE

It's the end of the night. It's time now. Answer or it's both of you.

LAWRENCE

*I said: I'm not playing.*

MAGGIE

*Maggie.*

BILLY

Lawrence cocks the gun, points it at Maggie's face.

BILLY

Lawrence. Do *not*--

LAWRENCE

Shut up, Billy. Maggie. Who's it gonna be.

Maggie looks him in the eye. Unwavering.

MAGGIE

Her.

Chelsea is stunned.

LAWRENCE

Final answer?

MAGGIE

Yes. Final answer. Her.

Lawrence turns the gun to Chelsea.

LAWRENCE

All right. Your turn, now.

She looks searchingly to Maggie.

I can't--

CHELSEA

It's you, or it's both of you.

LAWRENCE

Please. You know that I--

CHELSEA

Who are you gonna choose?

LAWRENCE

...Me.

CHELSEA

Lawrence looks at her.

A moment.

LAWRENCE

All right, then.

He prepares to shoot her.

But he can't.

He exhales. Turns his gun on Maggie.

In a quick beat, Billy grabs the letter opener and attempts to stab Lawrence.

In the ensuing struggle, the gun drops.

BILLY

Maggie--

But Chelsea's too fast. She picks up the gun, steps back.

A frozen moment. Everyone looks at Chelsea.

Then: fast, an instinct. Too quick to be thought out.

Chelsea shoots Billy.

Billy falls to the floor, dead.

Total silence.

Chelsea turns to Lawrence. They lock eyes.

CHELSEA

Thank you.

Something private passes.

He reaches to take his gun back.

Quick, again: She shoots him.

He falls to the floor, dead.

It's just Maggie and Chelsea, now.

Chelsea points the gun at Maggie.

They look at each other.

A long, hard moment.

\*

Chelsea makes her decision.

\*

CHELSEA

\*

Get out.

Maggie moves toward the bag.

CHELSEA

No.

A second.

MAGGIE

I knew he'd let you go. That's the only reason that I--

Chelsea shakes her head.

MAGGIE

I saved us.

CHELSEA

*I* saved us.

Where are you gonna--?

MAGGIE

Chelsea says nothing. Steely.

How am I gonna find you?

MAGGIE

You're not. Now go. *Now.*

CHELSEA

Maggie gathers her things, uneasy.

Then, she goes. \*

Chelsea is alone.

She lowers the gun, sits on the sofa.

She puts her head in her hands, then looks around the room.

No tears. Just quiet.

Blackout.