Eye Candy

by
Emmy Grinwis

Based on the novel
By
R. L. Stine

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TEASER

The SOUND of WIND and faraway BIG CITY BUSTLE mix with the silky, ominous, maple syrup murmur of a man.

MAN (V.O.)
Human life. So delicate. So fragile.

EXT. HIGH ABOVE MANHATTAN - NIGHT

FADE IN: From this height, the city is quiet, just twinkling lights and a universe full of possibilities, softly vibrating with the energy of eight million lives.

MAN (V.O.)
So easy to extinguish.

WE SWOOP down, into the city, ZOOMING through a breathtaking crush of tourists, theater patrons, business folk, and then, as if searching for something, we pause on: A BRUNETTE WITH BUCK TEETH WALKING A DOG, A BANKER, A CHEERLEADER, A CLUB KID, A LITTLE GIRL, A SURGEON...

MAN (V.O.)
Used to be I had to go outside to find them. Not any more.

A whirl of colors, we PULL BACK TO REVEAL: a computer screen, and on it, hundreds of photos and videos of WOMEN. Eyes, lips, faces speed past until we STOP on a BLOND holding a kitten next to her dimpled cheek.

MAN (V.O.)
The internet: God’s gift to psychopaths.

We PULL IN CLOSE on her face until all we see are her LIPS, enormous, plump, cotton-candy pink.

MAN (V.O.)
I look for the freshest, the juiciest, the most tender USDA Prime, grade-A, low-fat, ultra-lean. The one. The Ideal.

TIGHT on the lips, nothing but pink pixels. Then, the lips transform into real flesh, real lips on the face of a real YOUNG WOMAN (19).

MAN (V.O.)
Is she out there? Will I ever find her? Maybe then, this nightmare will end.

Pigeon-blood red liquid bubbles from one corner of her mouth, and trickles down her chin.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: Behind LIPS, a fashionably unfashionable diner, candlelight meets grilled cheese.

INT. THE DINER - WILLIAMSBURG - BROOKLYN - NIGHT

Our focus drifts from her mouth up to a pair BROWN EYES, expectant and hopeful, looking directly into CAMERA.

THE CAMERA IS HER DATE, the man who has been speaking to us in voice over. His identity shall remain unknown. For clarity, let's call him "HUNTER."

CLOSE ON her spoon, cutting into an ice-cream sundae with glistening raspberry hot-sauce. We follow the bite to her mouth, she takes in the morsel, her lips close around it.

She moans, withdrawing the now naked spoon from her mouth, and digs in for another bite. FOCUS DRIFTS to a questionnaire lying on the table, and on top of it a PENCIL, its tip freshly sharpened, you can almost smell the wood shavings.

HUNTER (V.O.)
A standard #2. Perfect, eye-stabbing point. Even a set of bite marks along the shaft. It'd be so easy going in. Her eyeball would give way like sponge cake.

CLOSE on her eye, then a fluttering of light and dark like a blinking eyelid, and suddenly we are —

INT. HUNTER'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

— HOVERING above Lips, she's naked, lying on a bed, looking up at Hunter, waiting, her hair splayed around her face like a blond halo. CLOSE on her nose. A pimple.

HUNTER (V.O.)
Pimple. The size of a champagne grape. I'm gonna bite it and suck out the pulp.

Hunter's right hand appears against the side of her face.

HUNTER (V.O.)
Poor girl. You will die from this fruit on your nose.

His thumb traces the line of her cheek bone, across those plump lips, over to the dimple on her chin, and finally to her delicate throat. Fingers curl around her neck, thumb stroking her cricoid.

She moans and he tightens his grip. She gasps. He tightens again. Her eyes fly open. CLOSE on her left eye: Wide, panicking. It darts, rolls around, unseeing.

INT. HUNTER'S APTARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

The faucet dumps hot water into a bathtub. The room is thick with steam.

HUNTER (V.O.)
She wasn't the one.

Hunter's hand appears, wearing a latex surgical glove. It is covered in BLOOD. He peels the glove off, and dumps it into a plastic garbage bag.

Inside the bag, we see: A cluster of BLOODY TISSUES, A FINGER, SURGICAL SCISSORS, and a clump of HAIR, stuck together with blood and still attached to a bit of SCALP.

A fluttering of light and dark, and we are —

EXT. BUSY STREET - NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

- NO LONGER IN HUNTER'S POV. CLOSE on a black plastic bag, carried low to the ground. We are MOVING WITH IT through a jungle of LEGS, wearing denim, wool, boots.

HUNTER (V.O.)
But I won't freak out 'cause there are so many young ones, so many names, faces, choices, potentials, all for the taking.

Hunter drops the bag into a trash can, it settles between a half-eaten slice of pizza and a crushed soda can.

HUNTER (V.O.)
So which of you thong-wearing, eye-lash curling, FaceBook-using, skinny, sexy, hard-bodied beautiful girls will be next?

We DRIFT up, onto the hundreds of possible hunters and the hundreds of possible prey stuck together like ants in molasses. The throng seeps past, dazed and grotesque under the blinking lights, the flashing billboards, and the empty, chaotic consumerism of New York City.

<u>ACT ONE</u>

EXT. BEN'S APT. - LUDLOW STREET - LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY

FADE IN: AN EYE, human, female. Squiggles of reflected light flicker across the surface of a sky-blue iris.

Then, the REVERSE ANGLE: A busy Manhattan intersection, and through the mayhem, the front door of a brownstone.

WIDER on the young woman's face. Twenty years old. She's beautiful but remote, not quite comfortable inside her billboard-worthy skin. She's focused on the door like it's water and she's dying of thirst. Meet LINDY SAMPSON.

She's standing on the curb, waiting for the light to change. As soon as it does, she bolts across.

An OLD LADY with a pair of mini Schnauzers exits the brownstone. Lindy runs up the stairs two at a time, catching the door just before it swings shut.

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Lindy knocks on the door at the end of a dark hallway. No answer. A light bulb is out. She pounds on the door.

LINDY
Ben?

A LOCK CLICKS OPEN, the doorknob turns: A YOUNG MAN peers out, bleary-eyed, half-asleep, he's rumpled but handsome, curious, genuine. This is BEN REILLY (23). Lindy grins.

LINDY (CONT'D)
Hi.

He stares, too stunned to speak, then a smile spreads across his face.

LINDY (CONT'D)
I got something you need to see.

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY

Red Bull cans, candy wrappers, wads of cash, take-out menus carpet the floor of a studio apartment. A mattress, no frame, in the corner. Two huge computer monitors dwarf a coffee-table-turned-desk.

Lindy pulls a crumpled paper out of her ratty messenger bag: Pictures of NYC subway train tracks, tunnels, and covering every inch are handwritten scribbles of computer code, names, web addresses. She hands him the paper.

BEN
Another terrorist plot?

LINDY
This one's different. Go to that site. Enter those codes. You'll find guys talking about using phones as detonators, as in, to trigger bombs. There's video, two minutes of nothing but train track, *two minutes* —

BEN
Okay, but, Lindy —

LINDY
For an upstanding young member of the New York City police force, you're alarmingly unconcerned about the safety of its citizens. I'm telling you, take that to your rasher chums. Now. Today.

BEN
Okay, but, I haven't seen or heard from you in weeks, not since you ripped out my heart and hurled it against the wall, then you show up like nothing happened.

LINDY
You'll investigate that?

BEN
Yes.

LINDY
Okay. Good.

Satisfied, she relaxes, strolls to the window, looks out.

LINDY (CONT'D)
I owe you an explanation.

BEN
I'll say. Where are you living now? What's going on with your effed up family? How's school?

LINDY
I moved in with Anne-Marie, nothing new, and frickin' fantastic.

She spots a pizza box, flips it open, sniffs the slice inside, meh, smells fine. Takes a bite before Ben can stop her.

BEN
Don't —

She spits it out, gagging.

BEN (CONT'D)
(running to the kitchen)
Man, I'm sorry. I'll get water —

She stops spluttering, notices Ben's computer, glances over her shoulder to make sure he's out of sight, then hits a key to wake it up.

BEN (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Sorry, should've thrown that pizza out days ago. Damn, I can't find —

LINDY
Can I have coffee, actually?

As quick as lightning, Lindy types a command into Ben's computer, a window full of code pops up. She can't help herself, she reads...

BEN (O.C.)
I don't have coffee, how about Red Bull?

LINDY
Ugh, no thanks. What about juice? Tea?

She pulls her cell out of her back pocket, snaps a photo of the screen. She hits a key, the window vanishes just as Ben re-enters, holding a carton of orange juice.

BEN
Sorry, no glasses.

LINDY
(jumping up, wandering towards him)
God, I've missed you.

BEN
Me too. I mean, yeah...

Just inches away, she leans in... They kiss. For a beat. Two. Three. It's hot. They stumble to the mattress. Ben's shirt comes off, Lindy's hair comes loose. She ends up straddling him. She stops.

LINDY
I'm still the screwed up nut job who drove you crazy last year, ya know.

BEN
Drove me crazy like winning the trifecta.

LINDY
Nice spin, lover boy, but what's the point? Aren't you seeing someone now?

BEN
No. I mean, sort of, not really. Are you?

LINDY
Listen, I got to get going. And you have terrorists to thwart.

She gets off him. He clenches his jaw, glares at the ceiling.

EXT. BROOME STREET - LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Lindy's walking across the street when she spots a GIRL standing on the curb, about 16 years old, skin and bones, a gigantic hoodie hangs off her like a wet mop.

LINDY
Chloe?

"Chloe" turns and walks away. Lindy catches up with her, grabs the kid's arm, spins her around. The girl yanks her arm away. She's tweaked out on something, pale, twitchy.

LINDY (CONT'D)
Sorry. I — I thought you were someone else. Sorry.

Lindy watches as the girl vanishes into the crowd.

EXT. LINDY'S APT. - 25 THOMPSON STREET - SOHO - NIGHT

Lindy rushes through a steady drizzle, and dashes into a pre-war apartment building on the corner.

INT. LINDY'S APT. - HALLWAY - 25 THOMPSON STREET - NIGHT

Lindy walks down the hallway, stopping at a door: IT'S AJAR. She touches the locks, there's four of them, three look newly installed, an amateur job.

INT. LINDY'S APT. - FOYER - NIGHT

Lindy steps inside, she hears something, a CLANKING SOUND, coming from deep inside the apartment, as if someone were shaking a shoebox full of wrenches.

Lindy clutches her key chain, attached is a KUBOTAN. She grips it in her fist, two steel spikes stick up between her fingers. She's been trained, and holding the weapon in a low icepick grip by her thigh, she...

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

...creeps down the hallway, stopping outside a door, she peaks inside. LINDY'S POV: Inside the kitchen. A MAN, huge, rifles through a drawer, his back to the door.

CLOSE ON LINDY's EYES: It's not fear we see, but cool, calm calculation.

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

She flies into the room, swinging the kubotan low, knocking the back of the man's knees. He SCREAMS and tumbles to the floor.

She springs onto his chest, her knee at his neck, pinning him, the fingers of her left hand curl around his throat, she raises the weapon, ready to strike. He holds his hands up, palms exposed, surrendering.

MAN
Holy sh—

LINDY
Who are you?

In rushes ANN-MARIE HALLIDAY (22), soaking wet, sexy, wrapped in a towel.

ANN-MARIE
Lindy! Stop!

Lindy doesn't move, eerily calm under the circumstances. She ignores Ann-Marie and stares down at her prisoner.

LINDY
I asked you a question. Who are you?

ANN-MARIE
This is Lou Laucella. I told you, remember? Met him online? Tonight was our second date?

LOU
We had wine. And she asked me to get a...

Lindy looks at the floor next to his head. A CORKSCREW. Lindy stands up, releasing Lou.

LINDY
Jesus, Ann-Marie, the front door's ajar. What did I tell you about locking the front door?

ANN-MARIE
Oh, sorry. We were... sorry.

LINDY
It's alright. I'm sorry. Apologies, Lou. Nice to meet you.

The shake hands, awkwardly. Lindy notices his wrist.

LINDY (CONT'D)
God, you're bleeding. I'll get a bandage.

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lindy digs through the cabinet, Ann-Marie enters.

ANN-MARIE
Sorry about the door. Seriously. You okay?

LINDY
I thought I saw my sister tonight.

ANN-MARIE
What? Where? Oh my god.

LINDY
It wasn't her. But this girl, she looked just like her, could've been her.

ANN-MARIE
When are you going to stop beating yourself up? Chloe ran away because she was raped. It's not your fault.

LINDY
You don't know the whole story.

ANN-MARIE
Then tell me.

Lindy hesitates, about to talk, when Lou appears.

LINDY
Here. Don't let him bleed all over our floor.

She hands Ann-Marie a box of Band-Aids. Ann-Marie exits.

Alone, Lindy leans over the sink, clutching the edge. Takes a deep breath, lifts her head, looks in the mirror. Foreboding flickers through her bright blue eyes.

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lindy pauses at the kitchen door, clutching a tube of antibiotic ointment. She peaks inside. LINDY POV: Lou sits in a chair, Ann-Marie secures the Band-Aid to the back of his hand.

ANN-MARIE
(giggling)
Gross! She's my best friend. I'm not against the idea, entirely, but the other girl *cannot* be my best friend.

LOU
She's super fit though.

ANN-MARIE
She's taken a multitude of self-defense classes.

Lindy pushes the door open and enters.

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING RM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Lindy sits on the couch, laughing, pouring a round of shots. Ann-Marie combs her damp hair, looking at the screen of her laptop on the coffee table, open to a dating website: MeetMe.com.

LINDY
(pouring him another shot)
Here, let me take the pain away.

ANN-MARIE
C'mon. Please? Let me set you up online.

LINDY
(opening her own laptop)
I got more important things to do. *Par example,* I now have access to a plethora of federal servers, don't ask me how.

ANN-MARIE
(to Lou, pointing to the screen)
That's her website: "Weirdos and Creeps and Pervs, Oh My." Lindy's a hacker.

LINDY
I prefer the term 'social engineer.' You wouldn't believe the crap the police hide. Last night, a homeless guy discovered a finger and three square inches of human female scalp, inside a plastic bag, inside a trash can, right around the corner from here.

LOU
Gross.

LINDY
Says there were four others in the past five months with the same MO. In our neighborhood. Women are walking around alone. This is real, we need to know this stuff.

She spins her laptop around: On her website is a police photo of a severed finger painted with candy-cane red nail polish and the words DANGER, KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.

LOU
Awesome. You're like Catwoman meets Sarah Conner meets that dragon tattoo chick.

Ann-Marie notes Lou's obvious attraction to Lindy.

ANN-MARIE
Check it out, I've been working on your online hook-up profile.

LINDY
I don't know, sex with some random d-bag who needs the internet to get laid? Not really my thing.

ANN-MARIE
Hey. This is how I met Lou and look at us, we're cotton candy—

LOU
—and jelly beans.

ANN-MARIE
You're a senior in college. It's Saturday night. An oiled up fratbag should be sucking tequila out of your navel.

There's a KNOCK on the door. Ann-Marie crosses.

LINDY
Check the peephole.

She does. She opens the door (unlocking four bulky locks, and unhooking the chain). It's BEN.

ANN-MARIE
Long time, no see, flyboy.

Ben bypasses Ann-Marie, crossing to Lindy.

BEN
Was it you?

She stands, worried. Is he on to her?

ANN-MARIE
Hey Lou, want some mac & cheese?

LOU
No, I'm cool.

ANN-MARIE
Lou!

She glares at him, he gets the picture. They exit.

BEN
Think before you answer. But remember: I know you better than anyone else on the planet. Was it you? Snooping around in my computer?

LINDY
(small)
Maybe.

Ben exhales, deflated, hurt, disappointed.

BEN
You know, Lindy, the thing that makes you so fearless, so amazing, it’s also the thing that makes me crazy.

LINDY
I saw your computer, I couldn’t help myself.

BEN
Was it for your blog?

He says the word ‘blog’ like it means ‘herpes.’

LINDY
It’s not a blog. It’s an informative website. The public needs to know. We gotta protect ourselves.
(Off his look)
I’m sorry. I just, I had to. I needed that source code.

BEN
I know. You can explain every morally ambiguous thing you do, but the fact is I feel like a fool for opening my door this afternoon. I don't want to feel like that anymore.

He crosses to the door, exits. She follows, opens the door, calls after him.

LINDY
You know you can’t stay mad at me.

INT. LINDY’S APARTMENT BULDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ben is already half-way down the hall. He turns back.

BEN
You're right. I can't stay mad. But I can figure out a way to move on.

They look at each other for a beat, the space between them seems to grow, then Ben turns away.

LINDY
Ben, please. It’s for the greater good.

BEN
And by the way, your terrorist tip? You were wrong. Couple of junior high kids. Not even close to a real threat. You need to learn the difference between reality and fantasy, Lindy.

He opens the stairwell door, and is gone.

INT. HUNTER’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

We are INSIDE HUNTER’S POV as he looks out a window, high-up, Manhattan twinkles below.

HUNTER (O.C.)
Computer. Any red flags?

COMPUTER
One.

HUNTER'S POV drifts from the window to a computer. Streaming lines of code.

HUNTER (O.C.)
Explain.

COMPUTER
Someone is looking for you.

He types. Screen goes black, up pops Lindy’s website: WEIRDOS AND CREEPS AND PERVS, OH MY.

INT. LINDY’S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lindy lies on the couch, one arm thrown over her face. It’s late, dim, quiet, intimate.

LINDY
I can’t believe I was wrong about that terrorist thing.

ANN-MARIE
C’mon. You guys are the leads in some sappy rom com. In the end you’ll walk into the sunset hand-in-hand.

LINDY
Please. I don’t care if ever see him again.

ANN-MARIE
Right. You’re totally convincing me.

LINDY
I'll prove it. Go ahead. Set me up.

ANN-MARIE
You serious?

LINDY
Why not. I need something to distract me.

ANN-MARIE
Yay! I already finished your profile. Voilà.

Ann-Marie spins her laptop around so it faces Lindy. Lindy's jaw drops: It's her headshot, and below it her new screen name: EYE CANDY.

LINDY
EYE CANDY? You've given me the screen name Eye Candy? Change it.

ANN-MARIE
Too late. Already got 32 responses, wait...

A flutter of light and dark like a blinking eyelid and we are in...

INT. HUNTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

HUNTER'S POV: Hundreds of FEMALE FACES peer out from crummy web-cam pictures. They flash past the screen, one, two, ten, fifty, seventy...

HUNTER (O.S.)
Where are you, where are you...

ANN-MARIE (O.S.)
...Thirty-three. Thirty-four!

We HEAR Ann-Marie's voice, but we stay in Hunter's POV. The pictures stop, landing on LINDY'S HEADSHOT.

HUNTER (O.S.)
There you are. Hello, gorgeous.

ANN-MARIE (O.S.)
This'll be the best thing that ever happens to you.

Pull in CLOSE on LINDY'S PICTURE, closer, closer, the pixels turn to real flesh, and we are back with...

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

...LINDY, staring glumly at the computer.

ANN-MARIE
Start with "Tall Doc and Handsome."

CLOSE on the dating profile of 'Tall Doc and Handsome.' TIGHT on the photo, until all we see are his EYES. Then, the eyes transform into...

INT. THE SPOTTED PIG - WEST VILLAGE - NIGHT

...the eyes of a REAL MAN. PULL BACK to reveal ERIK CHAMBERS (26). Tall, yes, doc, yes, but handsome? Not so much.

ERIK
I like the money. Like the nurses. Like the meds. Feel like a god when I save the life of some obese alcoholic.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THE SPOTTED PIG - WEST VILLAGE - NIGHT

BRAD FISHER (24), greasy hair, mustache, ironic bifocals.

BRAD
You know, guys stare at you wherever you go. You realize that? I mean, they really look at you.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THE SPOTTED PIG - WEST VILLAGE - NIGHT

JACK WILLIAMS (29). He's so buttoned-up and starched, one squeeze and he'd shatter into a million pieces.

JACK
I'll have another spritzer. Lindy?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THE SPOTTED PIG - NIGHT

COLIN McCURDY (25) cute, hopeful, a face without guile.

COLIN
Everything around you is filtered through a three pound lump of Jell-O hiding like an agoraphobic emperor inside the dark, soundless castle of your skull.

A WAITER brings lattes in mugs as big as soup bowls.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Microwaves, gamma waves, radio signals, everywhere around us in the atmosphere, we just can't perceive it. But you know what can?

Colin loves this stuff, his passion is infectious. Lindy's heart pounds just listening to him.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Insects.

He stares at her, intense.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Take the tick. Blind. Deaf. His reality is composed of temperature and the scent of butyric acid. Humans could never hope to perceive the scent of butyric acid.

LINDY
To us, he has superpowers. But to him, it's nothing.

Colin sits back in his chair, grins.

COLIN
Exactly.

INT. COLIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They burst into the apartment, kissing, peeling clothes off each other.

LINDY
Tell me more.

COLIN
Rattlesnakes can see infrared.

LINDY
Oh god, what else?

She throws his jacket on the floor, strips off his shirt.

COLIN
Bats? Air-compression waves.

LINDY
And?

He yanks her T-shirt over her head.

COLIN
Honey bees. Ultraviolet.

He slams her up against the wall, kisses her neck.

LINDY
There's a chip. Diagnoses 30,000 diseases in a matter of seconds. Someday we'll implant them under our skin and it'll alert us when bad things invade our bodies.

Colin's impressed. They pull apart, he gazes into her eyes. She stares back, then it hits her: What am I doing?

LINDY (CONT'D)
(pushing him away)
I have to go, it's almost dawn.

COLIN
Uh, okay.

Puzzled, Colin watches her grab her shirt off the floor, snatch her bag, and exit.

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAWN

Lindy tiptoes into the kitchen, but Ann-Marie is up, siting at the table, eating veggie sausages.

ANN-MARIE
Look who's rolling in like the fog. I suppose this one was better than Wine Spritzers?

LINDY
Yeah. I just can't stop thinking —

ANN-MARIE
About Ben? Not this again. Let it go.

LINDY
Don't wanna talk about it. Going to bed.

ANN-MARIE
Wait. Your computer's been making these weird noises. Woke me up.

Lindy flips open her laptop, taps the keyboard, tries to pull up her e-mail, when the screen suddenly goes BLACK.

LINDY
Whoa.

The computer BEEPS, ungodly loud. Lindy jerks her hands off the keys.

ANN-MARIE
There! That's the sound it was making.

The screen flickers to life. Filling it is A PICTURE OF LINDY, crossing the street in Soho. A surveillance shot.

LINDY
What the —

She taps another key, but the computer is frozen, out of her control.

ANN-MARIE
That's two blocks away. Is it from this morning? You're wearing the same clothes.

INT. HUNTER'S APARTMENT - DAWN

HUNTER POV: A pair of expensive speakers.

LINDY
(through the speakers)
Jesus. This was taken a few minutes ago.

HUNTER POV: Drifting from the speakers, across a kitchen counter, to a TOMATO, sitting on a white cutting board. Drops of dew sparkle like diamonds on its skin. Its color is so bright, so garish, it looks like hard candy.

HUNTER (O.S.)
Lindy, Lindy, Lindy.

Hunter's hand, wearing a latex glove, touches the tomato, and strokes it, gently, as if it were alive. In his other hand he holds a large, serrated, very expensive KNIFE.

HUNTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So young, so fresh. Let's have some fun.

The knife pierces the tomato's skin, red juice trickles out. He slices with surgeon-like precision.

HUNTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm watching you. My eyes are always on you, Lindy.

Hunter crosses to the speakers, they're attached to a computer. He peels off his gloves, taps a key...

INT. LINDY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAWN

Lindy and Ann-Marie face the computer screen, stunned as the picture of Lindy crossing the street fades into a series of early morning surveillance stills. Lindy leaving Colin's West Village apartment building, Lindy getting out of a cab, Lindy entering a bodega... we recognize the same corner where the severed finger was dropped in the trash can.

The screen goes BLACK. Then, white letters appear, as if typed onto Lindy's screen one-by-one by an invisible tormentor: BE CAREFUL. DATING SO MANY MAN CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH. YOU NEED TO CHOOSE ONE OF US.

And then: GET SOME SLEEP, YOU LOOK TIRED.

QUICK FLASH: It's Lindy, looking out from her computer. She blinks, confused. And then it hits her: He has control of her computer's camera, and he is watching her, RIGHT NOW.

She SLAMS the laptop shut.

ACT TWO

EXT. PS 83 - RED HOOK - BROOKLYN - DAY

Lindy strides down an industrial street, deserted, cradling cables and computer equipment in her arms.

She slows, checks her phone. She stops in front #71, a two-story brick building with broken windows, across from an empty parking lot and a yellow school bus (deflated tires, busted door, no windshield). She doesn't notice a MAN with his head in the hood of a beat-up Volvo station wagon. She steps towards the door when...

MAN
Fancy equipment you got there. Modify all that yourself?

She whirls around, faces the guy. He straightens up, leans against the car. This is TOMMY FOSTER (27). He's long, lean, casual, makes you want to relax under a willow tree with a pitcher of mint juleps.

LINDY
Maybe.

He grins, wipes his hands with a greasy towel, takes a step towards her.

TOMMY
Beautiful work. Seriously.

He reaches out to touch her phone, she yanks it back.

LINDY
I'm looking for Ben Reilly.

Tommy's sparkling eyes narrow, but he covers with a killer smile.

TOMMY
Sorry. Never heard of him.

LINDY
Fine.

Lindy turns, walks to the door. There's a high-tech electronic key pad, but a concrete brick holds the door open, the power cord from Tommy's fan runs inside.

TOMMY
You can't go in there.

She flings the door open, steps inside. OFF TOMMY, damn it, he hurries back to the car, slams the hood shut, gathers his tools, trying to catch up with Lindy.

INT. CYBER INTELLIGENCE UNIT - PS 83 - DAY

Lindy stands in a dimly-lit room. She stares, amazed.

Cables, tech equipment, eight desks. Every inch of wall space is covered with evidence, (we notice photos of the severed finger and the trash can where it was found) and 'scalps,' the photos and details of individuals under investigation for internet crimes: hacking, pedophilia, spamming, child pornography. Most of them are male and skew young, 20s and early 30s. They stare out from the wall, pale, grim, unsmiling.

At the first desk, TYRONE HALL (23), pulls apart a hard drive. At another, JUAN MENDEZ (21) sits in front of three computer screens, monitoring each of them. Further back, PAGE AUSTIN (21) sexy costume-play geek with glasses and lots of ink, works with a soldering iron and a tangled mass of wires. Ben is hunched over a small glowing screen in the corner.

They are glassy-eyed and weary, their T-shirts rumpled, their jeans ripped. They've spent way too much time indoors, away from the sun.

LINDY
Ben?

Four heads shoot up and face her. The guys check her out.

PAGE
(to Ben)
Who's she?

BEN
She’s my, uh, she’s nobody.

LINDY
Ouch.

He crosses to her, grabs her arm, mutters:

BEN
You can’t be here.

LINDY
Look, I’m sorry about the other night. Honestly. But someone is screwing with my computer. Infected it with a malicious video.

Juan intrudes, already fascinated by Lindy.

JUAN
Screwing with your computer you say?

LINDY
Freak took it over. A talented freak. I think he’s dangerous.

He holds out his hands for the laptop.

JUAN
Come to papa.

Tyrone hops up, wanders over, immediately starts typing.

TYRONE
Let’s have a looksy.

BEN
No, Juan. Tyrone, hey. Lindy’s gotta be running along now.

Tommy appears at the door, points to Lindy.

TOMMY
You. Hot stuff. Take a hike.

JUAN
Hold up, boss man, genuine cyber-crime in process. Chick’s a vic.
(to Lindy)
Need you to authenticate this.

Lindy crosses, types. He takes one look at what she typed and his jaw drops.

JUAN (CONT’D)
Wait. You’re Birdz.

This stops Tommy cold. *She's a legend.*

TOMMY
You're the one who broke through the firewall of that porn distributer —

TYRONE
— and turned their entire network into a backdoor for —

BEN
Guys! She's effing spectacular, now focus, so Ms. Spectacular can go be spectacular somewhere else.

TYRONE
Aren't you gonna introduce us?

Ben gives up, crosses to his desk, sinks into the seat.

TYRONE (CONT'D)
I'm Tyrone.
(points to Juan)
Juan.
(points to Page)
Page. And you met Tommy. He thinks he's the boss, so we humor him.

JUAN
When we call him boss man, it's ironic.

TOMMY
Your mamma's ironic.

PAGE
Wait. You're Lindy. The ex.

The girls size each other up.

PAGE (CONT'D)
Ben told you where he worked, didn't he?

LINDY
(avoiding the question)
Which is where? What the hell is this place?

Tyrone glances at Tommy, who nods 'okay.'

TYRONE
This is New York City Public School number 83. PS 83 for short.

JUAN
Welcome to the super secret cyber intel unit of the NYPD.

Lindy picks up a modified iPad with an antenna.

LINDY
You run homebrew all day? Explore security on gadgets?

PAGE
Hardly. We were recruited from DefCon.

LINDY
So you're, what, official police hackers? Kind of an oxymoron, ain't it?

JUAN
We hunt bad guys online.

TYRONE
By any means necessary.

TOMMY
That's why it's secret. So, Birdz, we'd appreciate if you kept it hush hush.

Pages slides up to Lindy.

PAGE
Ben told me about you.

LINDY
All great things, I'm sure.

TYRONE
Yo, girl, you got a lotta cool bling in here, but no evidence a malicious video was ever on the hard drive.

LINDY
It was there, an hour ago. My best friend saw it too. A video. A warning. I went on a few dates, now one of them's obsessed. Could be one of four guys.

TYRONE
Well, it ain't there now.

BEN
Hold on a sec. Guy who sent you this, message, threat, whatever, you think he's one of four guys?

LINDY
(to Ben)
Yeah.
(to Tyrone)
I've been working on this for hours. How can some hard-up perv with ejaculate for brains be better at this than I am?

BEN
You're dating *four guys*?

TYRONE
You said he was talented.

LINDY
(to Tyrone)
Not *that* talented. Keep looking. And —
(to Ben)
— since when do you care how many guys I date?

TOMMY
My friends, I believe this cyber conundrum calls for the Mister Mister.

A ripple of excitement through the room as Tommy reaches into his pocket and pulls out a sleek plug: a 'hack-back' drive. Lindy's eyes light up. Tyrone plugs it into a port on Lindy's laptop. Code starts streaming. All eyes are locked on the screen. Except —

BEN
You could date the entire NYPD Bomb Squad for all I care.

LINDY
(to Tyrone)
You're running a trace root —

BEN
I hope you used condoms.

LINDY
(to Ben)
Yeah, I stole a handful last time I was at your place. Thanks.

Tyrone pauses the stream, zooms in on it.

TYRONE
Wait. Got something. How did he get —

PAGE
- control of the metloader.

BEN
Without access to the hardware?

TOMMY
Must have rehashed the EID with no back-up flash and then...

Everyone stares at the screen. They're at a loss, until —

LINDY
He decrypted the root keys. Look.

The gang follows Lindy's eyes to the code.

TOMMY
She’s right.

Everyone’s impressed. Even Page.

BEN
Okay, then this is serious. He’s not screwing around. Come out here.

Ben pulls Lindy out the door. Page glares at them.

EXT. PS 83 - RED HOOK - BROOKLYN - EVENING

They’re alone, sun’s beginning to set.

BEN
This is real. You have a stalker who also happens to possess skills necessary to turn anything with a chip into a puppet. A puppet to carry out his evil genius plans.

LINDY
I get that. That’s why I’m here.

BEN
You need to say no to all of the guys, but let them down easy. Plus, we’re tracking a killer right now in your ‘hood. Maybe you should stay with me for a while.

LINDY
You and that girl, Page. She the one you’re doing the sort-of-I-mean-not-really-who-knows with?

BEN
What? Her? No. I mean, Page and I, we were hanging out... Before.

LINDY
Right. Well, don’t worry about me, wild child, I’ll be fine.

Lindy’s phone buzzes. Frustrated, Ben goes back inside.

LINDY(CONT’D)
(into phone)
You hungry?

EXT. GRAND STREET - SOHO - NIGHT

We are INSIDE HUNTER’S POV: ANN-MARIE walks towards us, carrying bags of takeout.

ANN-MARIE
(into phone)
Read your mind. Got La Conchita. See you in ten.

Ann-Marie hangs up. Hunter is hiding behind the corner of a building, she moves closer, closer... She passes us, Hunter spins around and follows her. Ann-Marie glances over her shoulder, cuts through an alley.

EXT. ALLEY - SOHO - NIGHT

He's practically on top of her now. They're in the middle of the alley, Ann-Marie hurries on, oblivious, when -

Hunter lifts his elbow and slams it into the side of her head. She's near a brick wall and her skull cracks against it. She crumples to the ground.

HUNTER (V.O.)
In public. I'm being sloppy. What's happening to me?

He looks down at Ann-Marie, blood already pooling on the pavement, her wrist bent back at a sickening angle, takeout noodles splattered everywhere.

He bends down, curls his fingers around her broken wrist, and yanks it, dragging her backwards into the dark space behind a dumpster.

ACT THREE

INT. NYU MEDICAL CENTER - HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Ann-Marie lies unconscious in a hospital bed. She's badly beaten up, but alive. Her face is unrecognizable. Lindy sits in a chair next to Ann-Marie's head, holding her hand. Ben stands in the corner, arms crossed, watching.

Lou slumps in a chair on the other side of the bed. A NURSE scribbles a note on a whiteboard on the wall.

Tommy pokes his head into the room.

NURSE
(to Tommy)
She's still under general anesthesia. Won't be any use to you.

TOMMY
(ignoring the nurse)
Lindy, Ben. We found something.

Ben stands up, heads toward the door. Lindy is hesitant to follow, but Lou reassures her —

LOU
I'll call you if anything changes. I got this.

Lou watches her go, almost... wistful?

INT. CYBER INTELLIGENCE UNIT - PS 83 - NIGHT

TOMMY'S GROUP is gathered in a loose circle around Ben's desk. Juan, Tyrone, Page. Tommy reads a crumpled paper smoothed flat inside a baggie on the table.

TOMMY
It was in her pocket. "I told you to be careful. Dating so many men can be hazardous."

LINDY
It's not a random mugging. It's *him*. That note is to me, not Ann-Marie. That's exactly what he typed into my computer when he took it over.

Tommy sees that Lindy's onto something. He leans in closer to her.

TOMMY
Why didn't he kill her? Almost did. Why not go all the way? She can ID him.

LINDY
He covered his face. He hit her from behind. He was in public. Maybe someone walked by and he couldn't finish the job.

Tommy's impressed, maybe a bit dazzled. Ben clocks it. Page notices Tommy's admiration for Lindy, she's envious.

PAGE
Why didn't he attack you?

LINDY
He wants to warn me. Let me know he's watching, that he's not screwing around.

She glances at each of their faces. Decides —

LINDY (CONT'D)
This is a waste of time. You guys sit around noodling with keyboards. I want to go out into the actual world and do something real. Lure him out. Before it's too late. With or without your help.

BEN
Lure him out? What do you mean?

LINDY
Go out with each one, observe, try to figure out which one is the psycho.

Tommy stares at Lindy, one eyebrow raised. Then, he nods.

TOMMY
We'll provide surveillance.

BEN
What? You mean, like use Lindy as bait?

TOMMY
(flirtatious)
She'll look good on the end of a fishhook.

Ben shoots Tommy a look.

BEN
This guy is dangerous.

LINDY
I can take care of myself.

BEN
Tommy.

PAGE
You heard her, she can take care of herself.

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Ben holds Lindy's arm, ushering her inside. He flicks on the light, opens a window. He's cleaned up the place.

BEN
You're not sleeping in that apartment alone. You're staying here.

LINDY
I can handle some lame-ass stalker.

BEN
Really? You really think if this guy comes at you, takes you by surprise, you can defend yourself?

LINDY
Sure.

He springs forward, rushing at Lindy, arms spread wide. She latches onto his forearm, twists, they topple onto the floor. Lindy looks down at Ben, she’s straddling his chest, her fingers around his throat.

LINDY (CONT’D)
Told you.

He grabs the back of her head, rolls over so he’s on top.

BEN
Why did you break up with me?

LINDY
Because I have a fear of intimacy.

BEN
You're not afraid of anything.

LINDY
I thought you were cheating on me.

BEN
No you didn't.

Lindy wriggles one hand free and punches Ben in the kidney. He groans, rolls off, she crawls away, but he grabs her ankle and yanks her towards him. They roll across the floor, a blur of arms and legs, when Ben ends up on top. They stop.

BEN (CONT’D)
Tell me the truth.

They're both sweating and panting. She stares up at him, drops all barriers. This is the truth.

LINDY
I had to be the first to leave. It was only a matter of time before you took off. I just beat you to the punch.

BEN
Lindy. I would never... I wouldn't.

He stares down at her for a beat, then leans in and kisses her. Lindy’s into it, she digs her fingers into his hair, but then yanks, hard. He yelps, sits up, rubs his head. She wiggles out from under him.

LINDY
Don't make promises! Everybody leaves. If they don't run away or something, they'll die. Eventually. It's the one constant in life. Death and taxes.

BEN
So you broke up with me because everybody dies!?!

He lunges at her again, grabs her around the waist and throws her over his shoulder, easy, like burlap sack. He tosses her onto the mattress, she bounces.

BEN (CONT'D)
I'm not gonna leave. And I'm not gonna die. At least not for a good 70 years.

She looks at him for a beat. Then she reaches up, grabs his shirt in both fists, pulls him close. She kisses him, rips his shirt off, and they're off to the races, a blur of flesh.

A BEEPING EKG machine brings us to —

INT. NYU MEDICAL CENTER - HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Ann-Marie lies in bed, asleep. The bruises on her face are dark purple. She's breathing, but remains deathly still. PULL BACK to reveal Lindy, holding her hand.

LINDY
It's my fault, it's all my fault.

She steps back, agitated, drops Ann-Marie's hand.

LINDY (CONT'D)
My fault my sister was raped, my fault you're lying in a hospital bed just like she was three years ago.

She turns away from Ann-Marie, can't look at her.

LINDY (CONT'D)
Three years ago, after I snuck a guy into my room when mom was out, after I got so trashed I passed out, after he crept down the hallway and, and he found Chloe, and he, he... Why didn't he just use me? Why Chloe? And now you. Because of me. You got hurt.

She leans in, whispers:

LINDY (CONT'D)
I'm going to destroy the man who did this you.

INT. TOMMY'S CAR - EXT. HAPPY COW DINER - NIGHT

Lindy's in the back seat, adjusting a microphone under her jacket. A receiver and headphones rest on the dash.

TOMMY
I'll be able to hear everything. If I notice something fishy or I think you should leave, I'll warn you with these.

He hands her earrings.

LINDY
I don't wear jewelry.

TOMMY
Shut up and put them on.

She does.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Try to draw him out. Ask him a lot of questions.

The front door opens. Ben slides into the passenger seat.

BEN
I scoped out the place. Lots of exits.

Lindy opens the door and starts to get out. Ben grabs her hand, holds it too long. Tommy notes it.

BEN (CONT'D)
Hey. Be careful.

LINDY
Careful's my middle name.

She smiles. He releases her hand.

INT. THE HAPPY COW DINER - UNION SQUARE - NIGHT

Colin sits across from her in a red booth. He opens a vintage flask, pours a thick, dark liquid into her glass.

COLIN
Taste it. It's mead. Brewed it myself.

He holds up her glass for her to sip. She stares at the ominous dark liquid, when: A LOUD CRASH from the kitchen. Lindy jumps.

COLIN (CONT'D)
Whoa, there, Nelly.

LINDY
Sorry. My dad had three names for me. Lollipop, Buffalo, and...

INT. TOMMY'S CAR - EXT. HAPPY COW DINNER - NIGHT

Tommy and Ben listen to the radio.

LINDY (ON THE RADIO)
...Little Worry Wort.

Tommy glances sidelong at Ben.

TOMMY
She's good at this. Total pro. Chemistry, hard to fake that.

BEN
Shut up.

TOMMY
I don't think she's in love with this yahoo or anything, I'm just sayin'—

BEN
Yes. She's good.

TOMMY
You gonna tell her she was right? About the F train bomb?

BEN
No. Last thing Lindy needs is another reason to stare at her computer all night hunting serial killers and terrorists.

TOMMY
Well, don't worry, next three nights she'll be staring at the best the online dating universe has to offer.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TGI FRIDAYS - FINANCIAL DISTRICT - NIGHT

Uptight, buttoned-up Jack stares back at Lindy.

JACK
You look beautiful.

She dazzles him with a smile. His cheeks turn pink. He reaches across the table, squeezes her hand. Her smile fades.

INT. TOMMY'S CAR - EXT. TGI FRIDAYS - NIGHT

Tommy and Ben munch on apple slices, listening.

BEN
Hold on. She got up from the table.

INT. TGI FRIDAYS - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lindy walks into the bathroom. It's empty, two stalls.

INT. TGI FRIDAYS - BATHROOM - STALL - NIGHT

Lindy pees. (We stay in the stall for the duration of the scene). She hears SOMEONE enter the bathroom, walk towards her stall, jiggle the handle.

LINDY
Uh, hello? Just a second.

She looks down. LINDY POV: A pair of MEN'S SHOES, brown, leather. Lindy freezes. The shoes pause, then disappear. She hears RUSTLING. Like things moving around inside a paper bag. Movement. A weird SQUEAK. Then moving again.

Lindy doesn't breathe. Then it hits her: *It's him.* She springs up, pulling up her jeans, lunges for the stall door. It's LOCKED. She yanks, pulls, it won't open.

She drops to the floor, rolls under the stall door.

HE'S GONE.

INT. TGI FRIDAYS - BATHROOM - NIGHT

She runs to the door, yanks it open. LINDY POV: JACK, sitting at the table. His shoes: BROWN LEATHER. Then, a waiter crosses her line of sight: His shoes, also BROWN LEATHER. A man enters the restaurant: Brown leather shoes. Another man passes by, brown leather shoes. Everywhere, shoes, brown and leather.

Shocked and frustrated, Lindy spins around and notices the mirror above the sink:

LINDY POV: Words are smeared onto the mirror in what looks like pink lipstick: DON'T BREAK MY HEART LINDY I'M WARNING YOU.

ACT FOUR

INT. CYBER INTELLIGENCE UNIT - PS 83 - DAY

Lindy stares at police photographs covering one wall: Harsh red letters from the mirror in the TGIF bathroom. Tommy sits at his desk, looking haggard, exhausted. Ben stands behind him, arms crossed.

TOMMY
He's super-clean. There was no evidence, no DNA, no fingerprints in the sink, on the mirror. Nothing. Not a hair.

Tyrone, Page, and Juan are hunched over a glowing screen. Jack's voice springs from the computer's mic:

JACK'S VOICE
Want another spritzer?

Juan his another key, it stops. Plays it again, looking at the dips and spikes of the sinusoidal plane waves.

PAGE
Voice stress is low. No microtremors.

LINDY
Stayed up all night, tracked his online fingerprints, tried to get inside his head, think like a psycho.

PAGE
Shouldn't be a stretch for you.

LINDY
Erik, Colin, Brad, Jack. They're all freaks. Comic books, cars, porn. Jack is heavy into Broadway musicals though. I mean, really heavy into them.

BEN
Who's next?

LINDY
The surgeon.

OFF Lindy, dreading it.

INT. CHELSEA PIERS - PARKING LOT - TOMMY'S CAR - DAY

Ben clutches the steering wheel. Lindy looks at herself in the rearview and adjusts her hair.

BEN
Tommy had to be in court this afternoon. I'm flying solo.

LINDY
(unconcerned)
Cool.

BEN
Maybe you should call and cancel. There's too many people here. I can't control anything.

LINDY
We need to catch the a-hole who almost killed Ann-Marie.

BEN
You're enjoying this in a weird, twisted way. You like being inside this guy's skin, imagining how he thinks, why he does what he does.

LINDY
So? Know thy enemy, right?

BEN
God. I wish Tommy were here.

Lindy opens the door of the car, turns back, kisses him.

LINDY
I'll take you over Tommy any day.

She leaves. OFF Ben, worried.

EXT. CHELSEA PIERS - PARKING LOT - DAY

Ben gets out of the car, watches Lindy disappear into the crowd.

MAN (O.S.)
Ben Reilly?

BEN
Yeah?

He turns around, but before he can say another word, a fist flies at his nose and he's out cold, flat on the concrete.

EXT. CHELSEA PIER 62 - HUDSON RIVER PARK - EVENING

Erik, holding a stuffed bear and licking a giant ice cream cone, walks next to Lindy along the pier.

The place is jammed, all of New York is there, enjoying the setting sun. Erik's phone rings.

ERIK
Shit, the hospital. One sec. Hold this.

He hands her the bear, the ice cream cone, answers his phone. Lindy walks to a railing overlooking the river, awkwardly holding his paraphernalia. She glances around for some sign of Ben. Erik vanishes into the crowd.

INT. CHELSEA PIERS - TRUNK - TOMMY'S CAR - EVENING

Ben wakes up. He's in a tiny, dark space. He tries to move, can't. Looks around: A spare tire. He's in the trunk of Tommy's Volvo.

BEN
Lindy, oh no. SOMEONE HELP!

He panics, pounds on the roof of the trunk.

EXT. CHELSEA PIER 62 - HUDSON RIVER PARK - EVENING

WE ARE IN HUNTER'S POV, moving through a throng of tourists to discover LINDY, standing at the railing. Alone. He stops a few feet away.

HUNTER (V.O.)
Oh my god.

IN HUNTER'S POV LINDY LOOKS LIKE A SUPERMODEL. She sparkles. She's backlit, the setting sun behind her obscures his vision. She's so hot, so sexy, so PERFECT, it's hard to believe she's a living, breathing woman.

HUNTER (V.O.)
The one.

LITTLE BOY (O.S.)
Hey, he's got Ollie Otter!

Hunter glances down. He's standing on the head of a stuffed animal, an otter. A BOY (6) scowls up at him.

HUNTER (V.O.)
Kid, something inside me is about to snap. Go away.

Hunter lifts his foot. The boy pulls Ollie up, hugging him to his chest, glaring at Hunter. His anger turns to fear. He blanches as Simon's mother drags him away.

Hunter finds Lindy again. She's staring out to sea, lost in her own thoughts.

The wind blows her hair back, she looks like a figurehead on the prow of a ship. He takes a step towards her.

INT. CHELSEA PIERS - TRUNK - TOMMY'S CAR - EVENING

Ben, on his back, pushes the roof with both legs. He's straining, the veins in his neck bulging, but finally the lock gives way and the trunk flies open.

EXT. CHELSEA PIERS - PARKING LOT - EVENING

Ben pops out of the trunk. A gaggle of nearby STATE RATS glance over, shrug, go back to smoking clove cigarettes.

EXT. CHELSEA PIER 62 - HUDSON RIVER PARK - EVENING

Lindy's surrounded by the throng of New Yorkers watching the setting sun. Someone in the passing mob jostles Lindy, she looses her footing, then regains it.

MAN (O.S.)
Nice bear.

Lindy spins around: IT'S LOU, sweating, panting.

LINDY
Lou. What are you doing here?

LOU
Went for a jog. You alone?

LINDY
I'm with Erik, he's on the phone.

LOU
Tall Doc and Handsome? Ha. You really shouldn't be alone. You're not safe. Let me take you home.

LINDY
I'm fine Lou, thanks. Seriously.

He grabs her wrist. The ice cream plops onto the pier.

LINDY (CONT'D)
Let go of me.

She yanks her wrist out of his meaty grip.

LOU
Hey now, I got a trainer. You're not gonna beat me up again. Even though that, yeah, that was pretty hot.

He takes a step towards Lindy, remembering fondly.

LOU (CONT'D)
When I looked into your eyes, I thought, man, we are made for each other.

He grabs her shoulders.

LOU (CONT'D)
You loved it too. I saw it. You're into the rough stuff. I know the look.

Lindy still clutches the teddy bear absurdly in one hand, its head wedged in the crook of her elbow, she makes a move to shove Lou, when -

BEN (O.S.)
Lindy!

LINDY POV: BEN runs towards them, through the crowd.

Lou panics and shoves Lindy, hard. She looses her footing, tries to grab the rail, but the damn stuffed bear is in the way. She SCREAMS and topples over the railing, falling into the Hudson.

Lou starts to run, but BEN SLAMS INTO HIM and the two of them somersault over the railing into the water.

EXT. CHELSEA PIERS - THE HUDSON - EVENING

Lindy's head bobs up between a pizza box and a sneaker. She sucks in air, gasping, coughing. A beat, then the stuffed bear pops up next to her face.

A few feet away, Ben and Lou thrash in the water. Lindy swims over, grabs Lou's head, wraps her fingers around his face, tries to push them into his eye sockets. He thrusts his elbow back, hitting her hard against the side of her face, knocking her out. She sinks under the water.

EXT. CHELSEA PIER 62 - HUDSON RIVER PARK - NIGHT

Ben, dripping wet, bloody nose, leans over Lindy's limp body, she's flat on her back, he grips her shoulders. Erik pushes him away, in full doctor mode, starts checking her vitals, pounds her back. Ben panics.

BEN
Is she, Lindy! No. No, no.

Lindy coughs, spewing water.

ERIK
She's coming to.

LINDY
What happened?

ERIK
Almost got yourself killed.

Ben leans in, close to Lindy’s face.

BEN
You want me to die? Of a heart attack?

LINDY
I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry, for this, for everything. I missed you so much, I can't believe I was such a, such a...

They’re touching foreheads. Lindy cries, splutters.

BEN
It's okay.

LINDY
It's always been you, Ben. Always.

OFF Erik, staring at Lindy and Ben, noting everything.

INT. CYBER INTELLIGENCE UNIT - PS 83 - NIGHT

Ben's hyper, bouncing off the walls after his dip in the Hudson. Lindy sits in a desk chair, sporting a nasty shiner. Tommy watches them.

LINDY
This whole time it’s been Lou.

BEN
He punches me out, locks me in the trunk of my car. Uniforms find a few pairs of your underwear tacked to the wall above his bed. He’s locked up now.

LINDY
Urgh.

BEN
And, three women have restraining orders against him.

Ben leans forward, crouches in front of her.

BEN (CONT’D)
Come back over tonight.

LINDY
Spring break’s over. I have classes tomorrow.

BEN
We need to talk.

LINDY
Yeah, okay.

They kiss. Lindy smiles. He runs out. Tommy watches Lindy, assessing her. She notices his narrow-eyed gaze.

LINDY (CONT'D)
What?

TOMMY
Two "junior high kids" were talking about blowing up the F Train.

LINDY
Yeah. Ben told me. I was wrong. So?

TOMMY
You weren't wrong. He was lying. An Al-Qaeda cell in Queens was gearing up for a hit, but thanks to you, we stopped them.

LINDY
I knew it. I knew it!
(then it hits her)
He lied to me.
(suspicious)
What's in it for you?

TOMMY
You've seen my cyber team. Kind of overwhelmed. Could use someone like you.

Lindy looks at him – it's an interesting offer. Flattering, but...

LINDY
I have to graduate. Plus, the cops, it's not really my style.

TOMMY
Well, door's open, all I'm saying.

Tommy breaks into a smile, answers his ringing phone.

INT. BODEGA - LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

HUNTER POV: Peeking around a pyramid of oranges, Hunter watches A MAN standing at the counter, holding a bouquet of pygmy orchids.

CLERK
Nice buds. For your girl?

The man turns, we have a better view. IT'S BEN.

BEN
Yeah, well, sort of. She's not really one for flowers and candy, though.

CLERK
Here's hoping, man. Sixteen-fifty.

Ben drops a twenty on the counter.

INT. NYU MEDICAL CENTER - HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Ann-Marie sleeps. Lindy leans down and whispers...

LINDY
We got him. We got him, Annie.

Ann-Marie's eyes flutter open, she's alert, but speaking is difficult for her.

ANN-MARIE
'S not your fault. I love you.

Lindy's taken aback - Ann-Marie heard? Then, she smiles.

LINDY
I love you too.

EXT. 67 LUDLOW STREET - LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Ben fiddles with his keys, the bouquet of orchids in one hand making it difficult, but he manages to unlock the front door, pull it open.

HUNTER (O.S.)
Hey, Ben!

INT./EXT. ENTRANCE - BEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

HUNTER'S POV: Ben holds the door, twisting around to see who just called his name. He looks at CAMERA.

BEN
Yeah?

Hunter's hand reaches up, catching the door. Ben looks closely at Hunter, into CAMERA. A flicker of recognition begins to flash across Ben's face when HUNTER'S HAND appears, covered in a latex surgical glove, holding a scalpel. It slices down, vicious.

QUICK FLASH: Red blood splatters onto orchids.

EXT. BEN’S APT. - LUDLOW STREET - LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Lindy walks through the boisterous, pulsing nightlife of New York. She turns a corner and sees...

Flashing colored lights, ambulances. Sirens. A hurricane of FORENSIC INVESTIGATORS, UNIFORMS, EMTs. Is that the door to Ben's apartment building? It's open, emergency personnel stream in and out. She grabs a UNIFORM's arm.

LINDY
What happened?

UNIFORM
You live here?

Lindy nods.

UNIFORM (CONT'D)
Talk to the Lieutenant. White shirt.

Tommy runs up, out of his mind, yelling orders.

TOMMY
Don't go in there. Go home. You need to go home. Go away.

He grips her bicep, spins her around, starts pulling her down the block, but Lindy keeps her eyes on the door. She spots a flicker of red, a crushed flower.

LINDY
What's that?

Tommy pulls Lindy, rag-doll limp, away from the scene.

LINDY (CONT'D)
No. No...

TOMMY
Lindy. Lindy, we’ll find him. You and me. We’ll find him.

Lindy looks up at him. His fierce determination. She tries to focus on his words. She nods. She turns away from his wild-eyed face and drifts through the turmoil.

HUNTER (V.O.)
It’s different, killing a man. Heavier, tougher skin. The esophagus, very muscular.

A gurney rolls by, passersby gawk, a dog barks. Lindy walks a step, stumbles, leans against a street lamp. Slides down it, sits on the pavement.

HUNTER (V.O.)
You are the one. The ideal. My Lindy. And now you'll come looking for me.

CLOSE ON Lindy's face, jolted, stunned, unable to process the chaos, the nightmare, the madness.

HUNTER (V.O.)
But you won't find me. Not until I want you to.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW