ENTRAPMENT

"Zealous Advocate"

PILOT

Written by

David Wilcox

Network Draft
1/17/14
WBTV
ABC

ENTRAPMENT

ACT ONE

INT. POLITICAL FUNDRAISER – NIGHT

An atmosphere of money and power hangs over this gathering of New York City's political movers. A banner over the stage reads: '*Frank Snyder for State Attorney General*'.

The man of the hour himself, Manhattan District Attorney **FRANKLIN SNYDER** (50s), stands at the podium up front, mid-speech. Snyder's a D.A. cut from Guiliani cloth. Confidence and ambition aplenty. Everything has a political angle. And consequence.

SNYDER
(off the applause)
...My father used to say there was more gospel in a judge's gavel than in any sermon. I grew up believing that real justice mattered. Real justice had real consequences.
(picking up the story)
Apparently so did the defendant, and that's why we were able to convince him to cooperate. My office passed the intel on to the police, and they made a record seizure of drugs and guns...

More APPLAUSE. As Snyder continues (O.S.), we FIND --

A young woman sits at a nearby table. Attractive. Designer dress. You wouldn't know it at first glance, but she's a top prosecutor in the Manhattan DA's office. **GRACEN BLAKE** (30s) discreetly checks her PHONE for the umpteenth time. Nothing. She looks stressed, but tempers it with more wine.

Her colleague, **DAN HARRIS** (30s, heavy-set), leans over --

DAN HARRIS
Snyder's pretty good at taking credit for your work.

GRACEN
You should tell him that, Dan. He loves a compliment.

They share a wry smile. Gracen's husband, **SCOTT BLAKE** (40s, casually handsome in a tailored suit), sits next to her. He pulls her closer, kisses her on the neck. Gracen smiles, leans into him. He whispers into her ear --

SCOTT
I was just thinking. I have a great bottle of wine sitting at home right now, just begging for some attention...

GRACEN
Funny you just said that. Because I was just thinking we could blow this off, go home, and...

She trails off, teasing him. They have an easy intimacy. Playful chemistry. They're clearly in love.

SCOTT
And...?

GRACEN
That's not how it works, pal. You gotta fill in the blank.

Dan Harris cuts into the moment --

DAN HARRIS
What are you two whispering about? Please don't leave yet.

Gracen and Scott share a smile. He knew it --

DAN HARRIS (CONT'D)
You're the only one I know here. Don't make me meet these people --

CLOSE ON GRACEN'S PHONE -- the screen lights up with an incoming text message. It's from 'ALFONSO'. It reads '**FOUND HIM. BE THERE IN 5 TO PICK YOU UP.**'

Gracen sees the message on her phone. Scott sees it too. And he knows what it means. Change of plans.

GRACEN
We can't catch a break.

Scott smiles, disappointed, but he knows the drill. She kisses him, then she's off --

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Gracen waits as an unmarked SEDAN pulls to the curb. She climbs into the back. It speeds away --

EXT./INT. POLICE SEDAN - DRIVING - NIGHT

Gracen clocks fresh-faced DETECTIVE MARCUCCI (30) behind the wheel. Veteran DETECTIVE ALFONSO (50s) in the passenger seat.

ALFONSO
Sorry to pull you outta the party, Counselor. You remember Marcucci.

MARCUCCI
How ya doing, Ms. Blake.

GRACEN
Where is he?

ALFONSO
Washington Heights. Cousin's apartment.

GRACEN
(go figure)
The one place you didn't look.

ALFONSO
We found your witness, Counselor --

GRACEN
You found the guy you were supposed to be watching --

Alfonso's jaw tightens. Marcucci tries to lighten things --

MARCUCCI
Be nice, Ms. Blake. Alfonso's the only cop who actually likes you.

GRACEN
I'll try to remember that.

ALFONSO
(oh yeah, fuck you)
I forgot to mention how we found him. His lawyer called us. He's meeting us there to 'negotiate some terms'. Guy's name is Eddie Costa.

Gracen REACTS. Eddie Costa. Shit.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - WASHINGTON HEIGHTS - NIGHT

Desolate streets of Washington Heights. Not a place you want to be this time of night. But it's where we find low-rent defense attorney **EDDIE COSTA**, 30s, waiting out front.

Don’t let the suit fool you, his hustle’s all Brooklyn -- street sharp, wise, but not as tough as he pretends to be. What Eddie lacks in polish, he makes up for in charm and a killer smile.

The sedan pulls to the curb. The cops get out. Eddie smiles as Gracen steps out of the car looking like a million bucks...

EDDIE
Guess I underdressed --

GRACEN
Where’s O’Mara?

EDDIE
(light)
Y’know Blake, you never called me back. We had a good time, I thought it meant something --

GRACEN
Eddie --

EDDIE
Then you went and got married.
(off her look)
What, no catching up?

GRACEN
(almost a smile)
I’m caught up. Where’s my witness?

EDDIE
Well Ms. Blake, I’ve been retained as Mr. O'Mara’s legal counsel. My client --

GRACEN
Your client’s a material witness to felony murder. Get O'Mara down here now. I’m not here to negotiate, Eddie. This is serious.

EDDIE
No kidding it’s serious. You don’t have a case without my guy’s testimony. McCommas has threatened him and his family, and he’s scared you can’t protect him. Fact is, Blake, you can’t. He needs some guarantees --

Alfonso can’t help himself, his fuse already short. He cuts in --

ALFONSO
I guarantee running out on his police protection gets him killed. Possibly by me.

Alfonso catches Gracen's sharp look. He shuts up. Eddie lays his cards on the table.

EDDIE
Here's the deal. He wants relocation money and new identities for him and his family. And relocation doesn't mean a few grand to rent a condo in Bayside --

GRACEN
I know what you mean. How much of that cash goes in your pocket?

EDDIE
Don't insult me, Blake. It's called a 'fee' and it's protected by privilege --

GRACEN
Right, my mistake --

EDDIE
For the record, my client isn't just some mope. I've been friends with Mike since second grade, alright? I'm trying to help him out. C'mon, it's freezing out here, you gonna do the right thing or what?

GRACEN
If he skips, these detectives will back me up when I call this attempted extortion.

Eddie smiles, and the bite goes out of her threat. He likes her attitude. His smile throws her for a moment, but she covers --

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Something funny to you?

EDDIE
Not at all. Right this way.

As Eddie leads Gracen and the cops into the apartment building --

INT. HALLWAY / APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eddie unlocks three deadbolts, then opens the door. He ushers Gracen and the detectives inside, then relocks the door. Alfonso and Marcucci scan the place.

ALFONSO
Who's in the apartment?

EDDIE
Just O'Mara. Fresh coffee in the kitchen, help yourself.
(to Gracen)
He must be in the bathroom.

Eddie gestures for Gracen to follow. They head down the hall --

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Eddie knocks lightly and pushes the door open. Gracen REACTS when she sees her witness, MIKE O'MARA, 30s, wrinkled cheap suit, sitting on the edge of the tub. One wrist is HANDCUFFED to a handicapped bar. His free hand holds a bag of FROZEN BLUEBERRIES to his swollen eye. He's sweaty, angry, and paranoid.

GRACEN
The hell is this?

O'MARA
This psycho hit me --

EDDIE
C'mon, Mikey. Did I not say I'd come through for you? The DA's giving you a brand new shiny leaf to turn over. Wife and kids too, just like you wanted.

GRACEN
Means you testify against McCommas at trial.

O'MARA
My eye's all swelled up.

GRACEN
Keep the blueberries on it.

O'Mara reluctantly nods to Eddie, then to Gracen. Deal. Gracen turns to Eddie.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
And I'm supposed to pretend I didn't see all this. The assault, the unlawful detention --

EDDIE
You can't have it both ways. He's either here like this, or he's halfway to Orlando right now.

Gracen doesn't like Eddie's style, but at least her witness isn't in the wind. Or dead.

GRACEN
Unlock Mr. O'Mara. Let's go.

As Eddie digs the handcuff key out of his pocket, we CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Gracen and Eddie escort O'Mara out of the bathroom and into the living room, where Alfonso waits.

O'MARA
Where you taking me? Better not be to that dump near LaGuardia.

ALFONSO
Good news. Different dump.
(calls to kitchen)
Marcucci, let's go.

Marcucci steps out of the kitchen, arm at his side. No coffee.

ALFONSO (CONT'D)
Where's my coffee?

Marcucci ignores Alfonso. He lifts his arm, aims a GUN straight at O'Mara before anyone can even react -- BANG!!

Gracen STARTLES -- what the fuck?! O'Mara looks at the bullet hole in his chest. *Did that just happen?!* BANG!! Marcucci shoots the witness again, drops him.

Alfonso reaches for his gun, pulls it -- BANG!! Marcucci shoots Alfonso dead, his gun falling close to Gracen's feet. But then Marcucci turns the gun on her, holy fuck --

Eddie throws himself at Marcucci -- TACKLES him to the ground and fights for the weapon. BANG!! Eddie SCREAMS as a bullet tags him in the side. Marcucci pistol-whips him to the ground. Aims to finish him --

But Gracen's picked up Alfonso's gun and leveled it at the rogue cop. Her finger takes up the slack on the trigger, right on the edge. She can barely find her own voice --

GRACEN
Don't --

Marcucci turns, sees her. BANG!! Marcucci falls backwards, dead before he hits the ground. Gracen holds the smoking gun.

Eddie stares at her, stunned. Gracen finally drops the gun, processing what she just did. She takes in the scene, the three men dead, Eddie holding his bleeding side. Dear God. And off this, we SMASH TO TITLES:

"ENTRAPMENT"

INT. BLAKE HOME - BROWNSTONE - GRAMERCY - MORNING

Quiet, distant city sounds. Sun streams through the windows. We PAN ACROSS a well-appointed, professionally-decorated BEDROOM, past FRAMED PHOTOS of Gracen and her husband Scott, the happy couple smiling and laughing in that picture-perfect way -- their lavish wedding, hiking in Hawaii, dinner with friends, etc.

GRACEN sits on the edge of the king bed, head in her hands, gathering herself. She looks hungover. Her hair's shorter, a shade darker. Finally she pulls herself to her feet and heads for the shower. That looked difficult.

CHYRON: **3 MONTHS LATER** -- QUICK CUTS after her shower -- she puts on her makeup in front of the mirror. She takes anxiety meds and a birth control pill with a swig of VODKA. Brushes her teeth. Gets dressed. Before she walks out, she pulls a loaded .38-CALIBER PISTOL from her nightstand drawer and sticks it in her purse. Things are different now.

INT. KITCHEN - BLAKE HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Her husband, SCOTT, paces with the phone to his ear, one eye on Sportscenter on the TV.

SCOTT
(on the phone)
...No, because if Thomason blinks, then you know he'll settle for less than 50 million on our terms...

Scott's a Wall Street carnivore, but one of the decent ones, if there is such a thing. Gracen enters, dressed for work. Sharp, professional, not overtly sexy, but still a knockout. She doesn't flaunt her wealth. The only jewelry she wears is a simple wedding band and modest diamond stud earrings. She kisses him good morning.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
...Listen, that entire division needs to go...
(to Gracen)
Wasn't sure you were getting up.

Scott is already pouring her a cup. She takes a sip. Better.

GRACEN
Thank you. Good morning.

Scott is still on the phone during all of this, by the way.

SCOTT
Bill wants to know if you're wearing the black dress you bought last week --
(into phone)
Bill, why the hell do you want to know --
(to Gracen)
He's asking for Natalie --
(into phone)
Of course I knew it was Natalie --

Gracen looks nonplussed for a beat. Scott covers the phone --

SCOTT (CONT'D)
His birthday party. Tonight.

GRACEN
(shit)
Yes, the black dress.

SCOTT
(into phone)
Black dress, you got it... Hold on.

GRACEN
I think I told my sister we'd have dinner.

SCOTT
This has been on the books, babe --

GRACEN
I know, I'm kinda scattered, sorry. I'll see her when I get to court. She said she was coming...

Gracen gathers herself to head out. Scott pulls her close.

SCOTT
Babe, I know you got a lot on your shoulders. I didn't forget. You know I wish I could be there...

She nods, covering her disappointment.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
The deal's closing, the chairman's going to be at the meeting --

GRACEN
It's just a motion hearing. Don't worry about it.

SCOTT
I know you're nervous. But you always kick ass in court.
(playing)
Come on, you're a warrior...

She never needed his support before. She tells herself she doesn't now.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
I love you. Call me after and let me know how it went, okay?

She nods, then kisses Scott good-bye and steals a corner of his toast as she heads out the door --

EXT. BLAKE HOME - BROWNSTONE - GRAMERCY - MORNING

A plain sedan idles curbside out front as Gracen walks out. A plainclothes POLICE OFFICER opens the rear door for her. As she climbs in, we CUT TO:

EXT. COURTHOUSE STEPS - MANHATTAN - MORNING

Several local TV news REPORTERS do stand-ups on the sidewalk in front of Manhattan's iconic courthouse steps.

REPORTER #1
Organized crime figure Kevin McCommas appears for a pre-trial hearing in court today --

As we move down the line, catching bits of each report --

REPORTER #2
-- accused of killing a Tribeca restaurant owner and his 19 year old son before setting fire to the building --

REPORTER #3
-- though McCommas has been held at Rikers Island since his arrest, several witnesses against him have disappeared or been killed --

EXT. COURTHOUSE - SECURITY ENTRANCE - DAY

A TRANSPORT VAN with caged windows pulls up outside a security gate. Armed guards and police officers wait to receive the single passenger inside the van.

GUARD
Prisoner, step off the bus.

A PRISONER (in Rikers yellow) steps off the van. Shackled at the ankles and wrists. He's in his 50s. Gray hair combed back. A simmering intensity behind his eyes. Meet **KEVIN McCOMMAS.**

INT. MANHATTAN D.A.'S OFFICE - PRESS ROOM - DAY

Chaotic as REPORTERS crowd into the room for a PRESS CONFERENCE. Gracen and co-counsel Dan Harris flank D.A. Snyder at the podium as he answers a question --

SNYDER
-- Look. We know what Kevin McCommas is about. Extortion. Racketeering. Drugs. And of course, murder. Building a case against him, as you know, has been challenging...

As reporters jockey with their questions --

INT. COURTHOUSE - HOLDING CELL - DAY

A GUARD carrying a pressed suit is BUZZED through a security gate. He delivers the suit to McCommas in his holding cell.

GUARD
From your lawyer. You got about an hour till court time.

The folded suit (no hanger) is passed through the food slot.

INT. MANHATTAN D.A.'S OFFICE - PRESS ROOM - DAY

Snyder steps aside to let Gracen take the podium and answer another question from a REPORTER.

GRACEN
He has a network of criminal associates on the outside doing everything they can to help him walk out of prison. It's how he paid off a bad cop to assassinate a protected witness. It's how he made an attempt on my life.

INT. COURTHOUSE - HOLDING CELL - DAY

McCommas strips off his prison shirt to reveal a sinewy torso of TATTOOS and SCARS. He begins to change into his suit...

INT. MANHATTAN D.A.'S OFFICE - PRESS ROOM - DAY

Gracen answers another question, an emotional edge in her voice.

GRACEN
-- I saw two men executed right in front of me. I had a gun pointed in my face. I think I'm lucky to be alive...

More questions shouted, but the DA's PRESS LIASON steps in --

PRESS LIASON
We're gonna end things there, thank you. We'll issue a statement after the hearing...

As the crowd breaks up, Snyder turns to Gracen in aside --

SNYDER
All they want to talk about is how we can't protect our witnesses.

GRACEN
We're going to convict McCommas.

SNYDER
I got my best ADA on it, so it better happen.

Snyder moves off. Gracen and Dan Harris exchange a look.

INT. MANHATTAN D.A.'S OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

Gracen and Dan Harris move through the bustling lobby. A familiar VOICE catches Gracen before she reaches the door.

EDDIE (O.C.)
Blake --

Gracen's pleasantly surprised to see Eddie approach.

GRACEN
Eddie, hey.
(to Dan Harris)
Dan, give me a sec...

Dan nods, then heads for the street exit.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
You caught me on my way to court.
What're you doing here?

EDDIE
Meeting with the ADA. Working out
a plea for Mrs. Howard over there.

Eddie points to his client sitting nearby -- MRS. HOWARD (70s), an elderly woman working hard at her knitting.

GRACEN
Look at you, helping little old
ladies.

EDDIE
Little old ladies caught dealing
weed out of the Rotary Club.

Gracen covers a smile.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Saw you on the news this morning.
You did good.

GRACEN
Thanks.

EDDIE
Anything you need, you can call me.
You know that, right? Probably
goes without saying, but I got a
personal stake in you nailing that
sonofabitch.

Gracen nods. No need to say more than that. A tacit acknowledgement to the violence they survived. Gracen puts it out of her mind. She can't go there right now.

GRACEN
I gotta go.

EDDIE
Grab a drink next week?

GRACEN
I'll call you...

Gracen heads for the exit. Off Eddie, worried about her --

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Two plainclothes cops escort Gracen and Dan Harris up the wide steps. She meets her sister **SAMANTHA** (28) waiting at the top.

SAMANTHA
Honey, someone's looking a little rough this morning.

GRACEN
Funny, I slept at least a couple hours last night.

SAMANTHA
Drink some orange juice or something, Gracie. Get some color in your cheeks.

Sam's hipster cute, with a boho style. In many ways her sister's opposite, but they're close and have been there for each other their entire lives. She begins digging into her purse.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
I might have a vitamin...

GRACEN
I'm going to skip the random pill you dig out of your purse.

Dan awkwardly puts out his hand to (re)introduce himself to Samantha. He's noticeably insecure with women.

DAN HARRIS
Hey, I'm Dan. Co-counsel --

GRACEN
Sorry. Dan, my sister --

SAMANTHA
Samantha. Head cheerleader.

DAN HARRIS
We met at the Christmas party last year, if you remember...

Samantha clearly doesn't. Dan nudges Gracen to keep moving.

GRACEN
(to Sam)
We gotta go, I'll see you up there. They're taking us through the VIP door. No groupies allowed, sorry.

SAMANTHA
Where's Scott?

GRACEN
He had a work thing.

SAMANTHA
Right, that's more important than being here for you. He is aware this guy tried to have you killed?

GRACEN
Don't get on his case, Sam.

Sam drops it. Gracen settles for a beat, then --

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Hey. I'm glad you're here.

She pulls Sam into a hug.

SAMANTHA
Mom and Dad would be proud of you, Grace. You know that, right?

Gracen nods, emotional. She needed to hear that.

GRACEN
Don't be late. Third floor.

As she follows Dan and her security detail --

COURT OFFICER (PRE-LAP)
All rise... The Honorable Arnold J. Cochran presiding...

<u>INT. COURTROOM - DAY</u>

A Motion Hearing in progress. No jury. JUDGE ARNOLD COCHRAN, 60s, presides over a packed courtroom. Samantha watches her sister from the gallery. Gracen stands at the People's table with Dan Harris. Her OUTRAGE is palpable --

GRACEN
These are extraordinary circumstances, Your Honor.
(MORE)

GRACEN (CONT'D)
At this point using the witnesses' Grand Jury testimony is our only recourse.

McCommas's slick Defense Attorney, BRADLEY BARNETT, stands next to McCommas at the defense table.

BARNETT
It's still inadmissable hearsay. I can't cross-examine a transcript.

GRACEN
Two witnesses have been murdered so they can't testify. His own daughter Valerie McCommas, also a witness for the prosecution, is missing and presumed dead as well.

During all this, EDDIE slips unseen through the door and takes a seat in the last row of the gallery.

BARNETT
We don't know why these people were killed --

GRACEN
Then it's pretty obvious to everyone except you.

BARNETT
Your Honor, these witnesses were known criminals. There could be a thousand reasons why they were murdered. Ms. Blake can't go around making wild accusations, then use it as a pretense to bring in Grand Jury testimony --

GRACEN
So assassinating witnesses is now a viable strategy to win at trial?
(to Judge)
Let's not be naive here, Your Honor. The defendant has the connections to order a hit from prison.

BARNETT
Where's the evidence that he did that? Where's a single affidavit? They record his calls, they read his mail.
(MORE)

BARNETT (CONT'D)
The police have yet to connect my client in any way to these crimes. If he ordered a murder, prove it.

GRACEN
Timing and motive speak for themselves.

McCommas has heard enough. He pulls himself to his feet. Court officers rush to restrain him as he lashes out at Gracen --

MCCOMMAS
How bout you to put up or shut up, lady --

JUDGE COCHRAN
You're out of order, Mr. McCommas --

MCCOMMAS
I'm out of order? She's the one who planted evidence and turned my own daughter against me --

JUDGE COCHRAN
That's enough.

MCCOMMAS
I'm sick, Judge. I got kidney disease. I'm waiting for a transplant. How am I supposed to find a donor sitting in jail? I don't want to die in a cage like some animal.

JUDGE COCHRAN
I'm sympathetic to your health issues, Mr. McCommas, but I won't tolerate any more outbursts.

McCommas stares down Gracen across the aisle. The burly court officers standing behind him make him sit down. The Judge turns back to Gracen --

JUDGE COCHRAN (CONT'D)
To be fair, Ms. Blake. I'm afraid Mr. Barnett's right. I need more than just speculation about the defendant's involvement.

Gracen and Dan exchange a frustrated look. Her case is falling apart. She thinks fast --

GRACEN
Let's be fair, Your Honor, but let's not be stupid. Our investigation's ongoing. Give me more time and I can prove Mr. McCommas's involvement in eliminating these witnesses.

JUDGE COCHRAN
You've got a week, Counselor. Don't disappoint.
(to Barnett)
Let me be clear, Mr. Barnett. If I smell smoke, every word of their testimony comes in as evidence.

BARNETT
Your Honor --

JUDGE COCHRAN
Your Motion to Dismiss is denied. We'll conference on Tuesday the fifteenth. Thank you.

Cochran gavels, then heads for chambers. As Court Officers take McCommas back to holding, he looks to Gracen, taunting her --

MCCOMMAS
You can't keep me down, Lady. You hear me? I'm coming for you...

DAN HARRIS
(quiet, to Gracen)
Don't let him get inside your head.

McCommas disappears into holding. Off Gracen, sick --

INT. CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Gracen rushes out of the courtroom, not waiting for Dan or Samantha. Eddie follows her out, concerned --

EDDIE
Blake -- You okay?

Gracen beelines for the ladies room and disappears inside --

INT. LADIES ROOM - COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Gracen enters a stall. Shuts the door. Takes a deep breath. Tries to steady herself. Some thoughts she can't shut out --

FLASHBACK -- Blood... Bodies... Gunshots... Gracen's POV as she lifts the gun towards Marcucci, hands shaking... She pulls the trigger... Eddie's stunned look...

She digs into her purse, finds a small FLASK, takes a pull. Better. She finds her phone, dials Scott's cell. A beat, then --

VOICE MAIL (OVER PHONE)
Hey, it's Scott. Leave a message and I'll call you back --

Gracen hangs up on the BEEP. Frustrated. Emotional. She finds another number and dials. A man's VOICE answers.

GRACEN
Can I see you?

MAN'S VOICE (OVER PHONE)
Yeah. You okay?

GRACEN
(a beat, then)
I miss you.

She shuts her eyes. But she still can't shut it out as we --

FLASHBACK -- The shooting aftermath... Chaotic... Cops arrive... Paramedics tend to Eddie... A sympathetic DETECTIVE hugs Gracen as she buries her head into his shoulder...

INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Gracen KNOCKS, and that same sympathetic DETECTIVE we just saw opens the door. **DOMINIC LASALLE**, 40s, strong, clear eyes, pulls Gracen into his arms... Her lips find his... She kisses him deeply... They waste no time... She pushes him back onto the bed... Undressing each other... Then hungry, narcotic sex... Scratching some dark emotional itch...

INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL ROOM - DAY - LATER

Gracen steps out of the bathroom, just her shirt and underwear. Dominic sits in bed.

DOMINIC
I got the room for the night.

GRACEN
I have a dinner thing. With Scott.

DOMINIC
Say you gotta work late.

GRACEN
Dominic... Look, I know I called you, but...

The tone in her voice. Distance. Guilt.

DOMINIC
'We shouldn't do this anymore.' What you said last time. Then you stop returning my calls, shut me out until you gotta work through some survivor's guilt --

GRACEN
I had a rough morning. I just wanted to see you, that's all.

She begins to quickly gather her things.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Forget it, you don't even know what I'm talking about.

Dominic sees her frustration, then suddenly puts it together --

DOMINIC
Today was the hearing...
(her look, yep)
I'm an idiot. Gracen, I meant to be there I swear. I had to be uptown this morning --

Dominic gently takes Gracen's arm as she moves past the bed. Pulls her toward him. Contrite. Seductive.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
C'mon. Don't leave. Not yet.

Gracen wavers, then lets him pull her back into bed...

INT. BULLPEN - MANHATTAN D.A.'S OFFICE - DAY - LATER

Gracen rushes through the BULLPEN, passing by **ADA LOUISE CAMARENA**, 30s, a Bronx-tough legal eagle and Gracen's rival in the department. Louise never misses a chance to take a swing.

CAMARENA
Heard you got your ass kicked in court today.

GRACEN
Bet you're sorry you missed that, Louise.

Gracen heads for her office. She enters --

INT. GRACEN'S OFFICE - MANHATTAN D.A. - CONTINUOUS

Gracen's office is a war room dedicated to the McCommas case. The contents of crime scene files -- victims' photos, weapons, autopsy reports -- are spread out over her desk. On one wall is a large WHITEBOARD showing McCommas's criminal connections. McCommas's photo is taped up in the middle, from which arrows point to other criminals and victims.

Gracen moves to her desk. She takes a quick look at her email and calendar. DAN HARRIS appears in the doorway.

DAN HARRIS
Where'd you disappear to?

GRACEN
Just needed to decompress.

Dan enters her office. He looks at the PHOTO OF VALERIE MCCOMMAS, pretty at 16, taped to Gracen's whiteboard.

DAN HARRIS
I was thinking. What about McCommas's daughter?

GRACEN
Valerie? She disappeared after we arrested him. Police never found her body.

DAN HARRIS
(speculates)
Maybe she knew her father might try to have her killed. She went into hiding.

GRACEN
A 16 year old girl, no money, no family or friends. Where would she go? There's still an active BOLO with State Police and the Feds. If she was still out there, you'd think she might've turned up by now.
(shrugs)
Nice thought.

Dan steps into her office and shuts the door for privacy.

DAN HARRIS
Mind if I ask you something?
(off her nod)
Are you drinking these days?

GRACEN
(she rolls her eyes)
Gimme a break --

DAN HARRIS
That wasn't alcohol I smelled on your breath this morning?

GRACEN
What do you want, Dan?

DAN HARRIS
What. You're my friend and I'm worried about you.

GRACEN
Don't be.

Dan studies her for a moment. She doesn't look like she's keeping it all together.

DAN HARRIS
The last three months have been tough, Grace. I've seen what it's done to you. Then with McCommas today, you were shaky --

GRACEN
And here I thought I quit therapy.

DAN HARRIS
Fine, forget I brought it up.

Gracen digs into her purse and finds her .38 pistol.

GRACEN
I can handle it.

As she deposits the gun in her desk drawer and locks it, Dan makes his exit. Her cell phone BEEPS with an incoming TEXT. She checks it --

CLOSE ON HER PHONE -- a text from Eddie: '**great job today**'.

Gracen thumb types back: '**just bought myself some time**'.

A beat, then Eddie's response arrives: '**u know what ur doing.**' A beat, then another text from Eddie: '**I'm a lawyer. I can tell.**'

Off Grace's smile, we CUT TO:

INT. LAW FIRM OF COSTA & COSTA - NIGHT

Low-rent. Lived-in. Some desks, two sofas, ancient phones. Eddie enters from a long day. Dumps his bag on the closest chair. He finds his father **IVAN COSTA**, and the firm's investigator **CORNELL MOSS**, drinking whiskey over a CHESS match. Cornell takes Ivan's queen --

IVAN
Hold on, back it up, I didn't see that. Let me do it over.

CORNELL
Yeah, no. My queen now.

Ivan (50s) is Eddie's partner in the firm and his combative legal yoda. Cornell (40s), black, is an ex-NYPD detective (retired on a medical). They drive Eddie crazy, but they're his FAMILY.

EDDIE
(to Cornell)
When I was a kid, I used to think he was letting me win.

IVAN
How'd it go today, Eddie?

Eddie pours himself a drink and collapses on a sofa.

EDDIE
I got the Howard charge knocked down to a misdemeanor. Continuance in the Alberto assault case.

IVAN
Either client hand you a check?

EDDIE
No, but Mrs. Howard baked us some brownies.
(off Ivan's look)
They don't have the money right now, Pop.

IVAN
Neither do we, that's the problem.

Eddie doesn't feel like getting into it. They've had this argument more than once.

IVAN (CONT'D)
Why don't you reach out to your old friends from the neighborhood? They always kept us busy. Always had plenty of cash too.

CORNELL
You're aware your son got shot trying to help one of those old friends?

IVAN
Bad luck.

EDDIE
Those guys are thugs, Pop. Dirty money.

IVAN
So you're just gonna hope that mythical creature, the innocent defendant, rides through our door on a unicorn --

EDDIE
Anytime you wanna step back into a courtroom, Pop, you can represent any mutt off the street you want --

IVAN
Stop being a crusader. Go down to court tomorrow and take an 18B case. Take ten, if you don't mind. We gotta pay the electric bill.

Ivan turns back to the game, makes a move. Cornell counters, takes another piece. A beat, then Ivan FLIPS the board in frustration, SCATTERING the pieces across the room.

IVAN (CONT'D)
What. Like you weren't gonna win.

Eddie's cell phone RINGS. He answers. Hears Gracen's panicked, frightened voice on the line --

GRACEN (OVER PHONE)
Eddie? Eddie, I'm in trouble --

EDDIE
Blake? Slow down. What's wrong?

GRACEN (OVER PHONE)
I already called the police, they're gonna get Scott.
(MORE)

GRACEN (OVER PHONE) (CONT'D)
But you gotta find my sister, Eddie. Right now. Make sure she's safe --

EDDIE
Yeah yeah I'll take care of it. What's going on? Are you okay?

Off Eddie's concern, we CUT TO the other side of the call --

INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Gracen sits against the wall, wrapped in a towel, phone to her ear. Hair wet, mascara running from her frightened eyes.

GRACEN
I need your help.

WIDEN TO REVEAL -- Blood smears on the walls. The room wrecked from a struggle. And sprawled on the floor next to Gracen, we see the lifeless body of Detective DOMINIC LASALLE... Off this --

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Detectives and CSU Techs work the crime scene. We find Gracen now dressed and sitting in a corner with a cup of water, looking stunned in the aftermath. Her eyes keep wandering over to where Dominic's body lies in situ.

Then -- a COMMOTION as Detective **JOHN GARRIDO**, 40s, pushes into the room, despite some cops trying to hold him back.

GARRIDO
Where's my partner?! Lemme see him, dammit!! Get offa me!!

Gracen watches as Garrido approaches his dead partner...

GARRIDO (CONT'D)
Aw Dominic, no...

He struggles to keep his emotions in check as he's gently pulled away from the body. Garrido sees Gracen and walks over (he knows her as an ADA and Dominic's lover).

GARRIDO (CONT'D)
What happened? Who shot him?

GRACEN
I don't know. I was in the shower when I heard gunshots. Then I found him. I couldn't stop the blood...

She's upset, the horror of the murder lingering in her mind.

GARRIDO
Hey hey, calm down, take a breath. Wasn't your fault...

Garrido approaches DETECTIVE PURCELL (Tommy), 40s.

GARRIDO (CONT'D)
Tommy, do me a favor and be discreet about Ms. Blake being here. I don't want his wife to know he had someone on the side.

The Detective nods and moves off. Gracen checks her cell phone.

CLOSE ON PHONE -- 4 missed calls from Scott, and a TEXT: '**Police pulled me out of party. For security, no details. R U OK?!?!?**'

Off Gracen, and this awful fucking night --

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Eddie waits out front as a POLICE SEDAN pulls up. Garrido helps Gracen out of the back (no cuffs, she's not under arrest). She's clearly shaken and on edge, but seems relieved to see Eddie.

GRACEN
Eddie --

EDDIE
Your sister's safe. I've got my guy Cornell watching the building.

GRACEN
Thank you.

EDDIE
Someone try to hurt you? Was it McCommas?

Garrido tries to move her along --

GRACEN
I gotta talk to the police.

As Garrido escorts Gracen into the precinct --

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Thanks for checking on Sam. I'll call you later.

She disappears inside. Off Eddie, worried --

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Gracen sits across the table from Detective Purcell, who takes notes during the interview.

GRACEN
I'd gone to see Dominic at the hotel during lunch. Then we met again after work.

DETECTIVE PURCELL
You say you went over there to talk. You and Detective LaSalle had sex. Then you were in the shower when the attack took place.

GRACEN
Dominic was watching TV. I had the bathroom door closed.

As Gracen recounts what happened, we CUT TO:

INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM - **FLASHBACK OF THE CRIME**

Just to clarify, this flashback has a different look and style from earlier flashbacks we've seen so far. What we're seeing here is Gracen's version of the murder as she tells it to the police. Not to spoil anything, but we may later discover she's not being totally forthcoming here...

Gracen takes a shower, relaxing under the hot water. Suddenly -- CRASH!! She's startled by a wall-shaking sound from the bedroom. What the fuck was that? Then -- another CRASH!!

GRACEN
Dominic...?!

She hears an unintelligible YELL from the other side of the door. She knows this isn't right. She's in DANGER. She turns off the water. Hears sounds of a struggle, Dominic fighting with someone. She grabs a towel and climbs out of the shower --

BANG!! BANG!! Gunshots. She hears the door SLAM. Then SILENCE. She slowly approaches the bathroom door, fucking terrified...

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Dom...? Are you okay...?

No answer. She opens the door -- Dominic falls into her arms, shot twice in the chest and bleeding badly.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Oh my God -- Dominic!!

As she lays him down and desperately tries to stop the bleeding --

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - RESUME

Gracen's on needles. Unable to shake the horror of the night. The tears welling in her eyes prompt Purcell to offer her a box of tissues. She takes one and quickly wipes her eyes.

DETECTIVE PURCELL
You need a minute?

GRACEN
I'm okay.

DETECTIVE PURCELL
So you never saw the shooter.

GRACEN
He was gone when I came out of the bathroom.

DETECTIVE PURCELL
Why do you think McCommas was behind the attack?

GRACEN
Seriously? He threatened me in court this morning. He tried to have me killed three months ago. You understand? This is what he does. Forget that he's in Rikers. He ordered this.

DETECTIVE PURCELL
I'm sure Detective LaSalle had plenty of enemies too.

GRACEN
I'm sure he did.

Purcell studies her for a moment, trying to discern any deception on her part. She can tell he isn't quite on board.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Detective, you need to understand what kind of man Kevin McCommas is. What he's capable of doing. And how far he's willing to go to settle a score...

DETECTIVE PURCELL
I know who he is, Ms. Blake. I'm not dismissing him. I just don't understand why the shooter didn't finish the job. He must've known you were in the bathroom.
(fishing)
Or maybe that's not how it went down...

She loses her patience.

GRACEN
Tell you what. You catch the guy, I'll be sure to ask him. Now stop treating me like I had anything to do with this. You have my statement, I'd like to go home.

Gracen throws a sharp look to the two-way mirror, fully aware someone is watching her --

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME TIME

D.A. Snyder observes with ADA Louise Camarena. A POLICE CHIEF and DETECTIVE stand behind them.

SNYDER
You buy her story?

CAMARENA
She can't square the fact that we don't have a single suspect on the hotel surveillance. Or that no one else on that floor heard the fight. McCommas is a bad guy, no doubt about that. But I don't think for a second she's telling us everything.

SNYDER
Did we find the gun?

CAMARENA
Behind the nightstand. A .38 revolver, two shots fired.
(then)
Wanna guess who owns a .38?

Snyder's surprised, he didn't know that. As he studies Gracen, through the glass --

INT. BLAKE HOME - BROWNSTONE - GRAMERCY - NIGHT

Gracen comes home, surprised to find Scott waiting for her. She drops her bag on the table, trying to keep herself together.

GRACEN
I had to talk to the police. Took longer than I thought. I didn't expect you to wait up.

SCOTT
You thought I wouldn't?

She can tell he's angry. And it's not because she was late getting home.

GRACEN
I'm sorry they pulled you out of the party. I just wanted to make sure you were safe.

SCOTT
The cops said a detective was murdered in Midtown tonight.
(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)
At a <u>hotel</u>. That's where you were?
At a hotel with this cop?
(beat)
Do you think I'm stupid?

Gracen looks caught. Scott's looking right through her bullshit because he KNOWS.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
How long was it going on...?

Gracen tears up. Scott looks like he's been kicked in the gut.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
How long?!

GRACEN
Couple months. Scott, I didn't mean for it to happen --

Scott stands up. He's done.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Scott, please --

SCOTT
Were you in love with him?

GRACEN
No, I love you. Scott, wait --

But he's already walking out of the room. Off Gracen, crushed --

<u>EXT. CEMETERY - DAY</u>

Dominic's FUNERAL. Roses drape the coffin. Police in full colorguard. Dozens of cops and officials in attendance.

GRACEN stands discreetly near the back, keeping a respectful distance as she watches the somber ceremony. She sees Dominic's distraught wife sitting at the front. The priest intones, "*Ashes to ashes, dust to dust*"...

Gracen wipes an errant tear away. As the rifle team raises their weapons and fires, we CUT TO --

<u>EXT. CEMETERY - DAY - LATER</u>

People make their way back to their cars. Gracen walks alone in the crowd. Someone grabs her arm. She turns to find John Garrido, wrecked from crying and drinking all day.

GRACEN
I'm so sorry, John.

Garrido pulls Gracen into a tight HUG. Those tears she held inside during the funeral threaten to overwhelm her now.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
He was trying to protect me...

GARRIDO
You can cut the act. Ballistics says he got shot with <u>your gun</u>...

A chill runs down her spine. He squeezes her tighter, spits the words into her ear --

GARRIDO (CONT'D)
I'm gonna make sure you burn in Hell for killing my partner.

With that, Garrido walks away. Gracen's stunned. She realizes -- <u>she's now the prime suspect in Dominic's murder</u>.

<u>END OF ACT TWO</u>

ACT THREE

INT. MANHATTAN D.A.'S OFFICE - DAY

Gracen storms into the office, where she finds Snyder meeting with Louise Camarena.

GRACEN
You think I murdered Dominic?!

CAMARENA
Easy, Blake. Think about what you're doing here.

GRACEN
What happened, Frank? Your poll numbers drop? Suddenly I'm a liability --

SNYDER
Someone murdered a highly decorated cop, that's what happened. So far all the evidence points to you.

GRACEN
You know me better than that.

SNYDER
I thought I did, yeah.

Gracen's incredulous. This is a nightmare.

GRACEN
I didn't kill him, Frank. McCommas is behind this. You know he is --

SNYDER
First place I went, trust me. I wanted it to be true, Grace. You've always been my golden girl.

Camarena picks up a BALLISTICS REPORT and hands it to Gracen.

CAMARENA
Ballistics on the murder weapon. No political spin needed there.

She looks through it. From her reaction, it's not good.

GRACEN
This isn't right. I didn't have my gun with me that night. I left it in my desk. I swear --

CAMARENA
We'll see what a Grand Jury thinks.

Gracen hands the report back.

GRACEN
Come on, Frank. This is his game. Turn you against me. Punish me for what I did to him. It's payback --

SNYDER
Listen to yourself. You're paranoid. I should've seen it sooner --

GRACEN
He's coming after me, Frank. Why can't you see that?!

SNYDER
You're not fit. Probably haven't been since the shooting either. I'm sorry it's come to this.

Gracen looks at both of them, incredulous. She walks out.

INT. MANHATTAN D.A.'S OFFICE - GRACEN'S OFFICE - LATER

Dan Harris loiters in the doorway as Gracen quickly packs up her personal effects. She's angry, hurt by Snyder's rejection.

GRACEN
-- He hired me right out of law school, did you know that? I've been working here over ten years. He's a success because I went out there and got it done, not him --

DAN HARRIS
It's going to get straightened out, Gracen.

GRACEN
-- Right before the trial of a man who tried to have me killed.

DAN HARRIS
I've got McCommas covered.

Gracen nods to the white board with McCommas's photo.

GRACEN
Don't ever think you've got things covered with him, Dan.

Dan nods. Gracen picks up her box and heads for the door, taking a final look at the white board before she leaves -- but she's not looking at McCommas's photo. She's looking at Valerie's.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Never let your guard down...

As we PUSH IN on the photo of VALERIE McCOMMAS, with her sweet haunted eyes at 16, we MATCH CUT TO --

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - NIGHT

VALERIE McCOMMAS sits in a booth near the back as a WAITRESS serves her dinner. She looks a little different -- hair lighter, spirit darker. Those haunted eyes keep vigilant watch over everyone who comes in. We realize Dan was right earlier -- she is in hiding, and on the run. Where exactly, we don't yet know.

She has her LAPTOP open as she begins to eat. Scrolling through the news. Then something grabs her attention:

CLOSE ON HER LAPTOP -- Breaking News: Gracen Blake, prosecutor of the Kevin McCommas case, is a suspect in the murder of an NYPD detective. We see photos of Gracen, McCommas, and Dominic.

Valerie reacts, stunned. Suddenly very scared. She quickly closes the laptop, drops a twenty dollar bill on the table, and heads for the door. The Waitress calls after her --

WAITRESS
Hon? What about your food?

But Valerie walks out the door and she's GONE --

INT. BLAKE HOME - BROWNSTONE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gracen has dinner alone at the table. Scott enters. Heavy silence between them. Finally, in a quiet voice --

GRACEN
Are you ever going to ask me what really happened?

SCOTT
So you can say, '*I swear honey, I didn't kill my lover*'. You expect me to believe that's the truth after what you did?
(beat)
I'm not sure I even know who you are.

GRACEN
Scott...
(beat)
I'm only guilty of one thing here.
It's not murder.

SCOTT
I want to know why.

GRACEN
You won't understand...

SCOTT
Try me.

Gracen considers what to say. Then --

GRACEN
The simple answer is, you weren't there. I know you thought you were. But after the shooting, I needed you --

SCOTT
What are you talking about? We went away. I had a new security system installed in the house. What else did you need from me? You never said --

GRACEN
I didn't need expensive alarms. Or four days in St. Barts. You were on the phone the whole time anyway. I watched two people die. I shot and killed a man. You didn't want to deal with it --

SCOTT
Not true --

GRACEN
Couldn't you see I was falling apart?!

SCOTT
I tried to help, you shut me out!!

Flashes of anger and frustration. Gracen gathers herself.

GRACEN
I think you did your best. But I needed more.

SCOTT
Did he make you happy?

GRACEN
He made me feel safe.

Scott considers that for a moment, then --

SCOTT
I need some time to think.

GRACEN
Me too.

SCOTT
I want you to go stay with your sister for awhile.

Scott walks out. Off Gracen, upset --

EXT. BLAKE HOME - BROWNSTONE - GRAMERCY - NIGHT

Gracen walks out the door with an overnight bag. As she heads up the block, she suddenly finds herself in a crush of REPORTERS. Cameras and microphones thrust in her face --

REPORTERS
--Ms. Blake/Did you kill Dominic LaSalle/Were you threatened/Was McCommas involved/Why was your gun found at the scene/etc--

Gracen pushes through the crowd, hailing a TAXI with a sharp whistle. She crosses the street to meet the cab, reporters trailing her. As she climbs into the back --

INT. TAXI - DRIVING - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Gracen shields her face as cameras fill the window, an assault of flashing lights and shouting reporters. The cab driver leans on the horn and peels out of the crowd.

GRACEN
East Village. Avenue A and 10th.

Gracen grabs her cell phone. Dials. Dan Harris answers.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
I'm guessing Snyder leaked my name to the press?

DAN HARRIS (OVER PHONE)
I didn't know he was gonna do it.

GRACEN
I didn't kill him, Dan.

DAN HARRIS (OVER PHONE)
You should know. The case is going to the Grand Jury in the morning. From this point on I can't talk to you anymore. Not without your attorney. Gracen, I'm sorry...

The call ends. Gracen, distraught, suddenly notices the small TV screen (running ads and news) in the back. She REACTS --

CLOSE ON THE SCREEN -- Gracen's press PHOTO, under the sensational headline 'COP KILLER'.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

Gracen KNOCKS. SAMANTHA opens the door, relieved to see her sister.

SAMANTHA
My God, Gracie. It's all over the news...

She pulls Gracen into a tight hug. Off this, we TIME CUT TO --

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - EAST VILLAGE - LATER

Cozy and calm. A guitar leans next to a piano. Gracen's curled on the couch with a blanket, wrecked from crying her eyes out. Sam enters from the kitchen with a bottle of wine.

SAMANTHA
You can crash on my couch as long as you need to.

And then there's the elephant in the room --

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Grace. I know you didn't do it.

Gracen nods, grateful to have her support. Sam refills Gracen's wine glass.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Why didn't you tell me you were seeing that guy?

GRACEN
I was going to. I just...

SAMANTHA
It’s not like I’m your sister, or your best friend...

A gentle jab. But Sam knows she shouldn’t push.

SAMANTHA (CONT’D)
Bet you’ve been saying ‘sorry’ a lot lately, huh?

GRACEN
I was going to tell you. It wasn’t supposed to keep going. I figured I messed up once, I could pretend it never happened. But then he called me. Then I called him. Every time was always the last time, but then...

Gracen trails off, ashamed, adrift. Sam lets her work through it.

SAMANTHA
Don’t be too hard on yourself, Grace. After what you went through. The shooting, the McCommas case. Everything changed.
(lets that land)
Scott should’ve seen it. He should’ve been there for you.

GRACEN
Did I let you down?

SAMANTHA
Never.
(beat)
You know, since the night they told us mom and dad had been murdered, and every time we walked through the door of a new foster home, you’ve always been there for me. Protected me. But maybe this time you let me protect you right back.

Samantha pulls her into a tearful hug.

GRACEN
I’m scared, Sam.

SAMANTHA
You always find a way to come out on top. That’s your superpower.
(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
I play a mean power chord, you stare evil in the eye and kick its ass.

GRACEN
This time, I don't know.
(beat)
I alienated people doing my job. Pissed them off. I don't have a lot of friends right now.

SAMANTHA
You've got me. I can't be the only one. Who else?

Off Gracen, considering --

INT. LAW FIRM OF COSTA & COSTA - DAY

Eddie straightens up the office. Cornell discovers the spread of fresh coffee, muffins and pastries on the conference room table. He's about to help himself, when Eddie sees it --

EDDIE
Hands off, that's for the client.

CORNELL
How many muffins you think she's gonna eat?

Ivan drinks coffee at his desk. He watches Eddie for a moment.

IVAN
She's worth all this trouble?

EDDIE
She's the suspect in a high profile homicide. The media coverage alone could be huge for this firm --

CORNELL
And she's loaded. Husband's a Wall Street guy.

IVAN
That's not what I mean.

EDDIE
She's a friend, Pop. And she saved my life, I kinda owe her one.

Eddie begins cleaning nasty old coffee cups off Ivan's desk.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Look at this place, it's a dump. It gives a lousy first impression.

CORNELL
You're aware we work in Queens?

EDDIE
Both of you just do me a favor and act like professionals, alright? Don't say all the crap you normally say and maybe we won't screw this up right outta the gate.

Then Eddie clocks Cornell's look -- a look like Gracen's standing in the doorway right behind Eddie. Which, in fact, she is. And quite amused by Eddie's efforts.

GRACEN
First impressions are overrated.

EDDIE
Blake, hey. Come in. Welcome.
(introducing)
This is my dad, Ivan. Our crack detective Cornell Moss.

IVAN
The original Costa. How ya doing?

GRACEN
Nice to meet you.

She turns back to Eddie. They're both a little nervous.

EDDIE
So. Would you like a muffin?

Off this --

INT. LAW FIRM OF COSTA & COSTA - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Gracen reviews the case with Eddie, Ivan, and Cornell.

EDDIE
The case against you clearly rests on the gun found at the scene.

CORNELL
(off a file)
A Smith & Wesson .38 caliber revolver. Ballistics was a solid match to the two rounds pulled outta LaSalle's chest.

GRACEN
Except I didn't have my gun with me when I went to see Dominic that night. I'd left it in my desk. Anyone could've stolen it.

IVAN
Impossible to prove that. Then again, you'd have to be pretty stupid to use your own gun in a murder and not get rid of it afterwards.

GRACEN
That's why I think they'll try to frame this as a crime of passion. We had an argument, a lovers' quarrel, and it escalated into violence. I shot him, tossed the room to stage the scene, then took a shower to wash off the blood and gunshot residue.

EDDIE
They'll say you thought the ongoing threats from McCommas would give you some cover.

GRACEN
Cover to get away with a murder that I had no motive to commit.

IVAN
The jury's got an imagination. If they hear solid physical evidence, they'll fill in the blanks.

Cornell hands Gracen a FILE on the gun.

CORNELL
Ballistics is gonna be tough to refute. And no getting around the fact the gun's registered to you.

GRACEN
Unfortunately, I agree. As a prosecutor, I think the case sounds pretty solid.

EDDIE
I think it does too. But that's why we gotta argue our own theory of the crime.

GRACEN
Good. I want the jury to hear the truth. I didn't murder Dominic.

EDDIE
Look, McCommas tried to have you killed once. Not a stretch to think he'd come after you again.

CORNELL
And the first question the prosecution asks is why the shooter didn't finish the job. You were a sitting duck in that room.

IVAN
Been wondering that myself.

GRACEN
I think McCommas is trying to frame me for this. This is his twisted idea of revenge.

Ivan studies her, troubled by something.

IVAN
I'm curious, Ms. Blake. Why'd you pick us? Why not some high-dollar firm with a name? You have money.

EDDIE
Pop, is that important?

IVAN
Nothing against my son, but I find it hard to believe Costa & Costa was your first choice in legal representation.

GRACEN
It's a fair question, Eddie.
(to Ivan)
I could've gone that route. They'd be happy to take my money. But I'd be paying for the zealous advocacy of some attorney who probably thinks I'm guilty and doesn't like me very much anyway. I've made a lot of enemies in the courtroom. Doesn't seem too smart to put my life in their hands.

But Ivan's not quite convinced. Gracen looks at Eddie.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
There's only one defense attorney I trust. He's the guy who almost died with me that night three months ago...

Off Gracen --

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - ROOFTOP - DAY

A gorgeous view of the city. Eddie steps out on the rooftop, finds Ivan hitting old golf balls into the East River.

EDDIE
Looks like we're in business, Pop. The retainer came through, twenty grand to the penny. Thought we'd splurge tonight. Grab dinner at Peter Lugar's.

IVAN
If you're gonna twist my arm...

EDDIE
Reservation's at nine. I'm gonna head downtown, pay a visit to Mr. Blake. See if I can't get him to show at her arraignment, whenever that comes.

Eddie begins to move off...

IVAN
You sure you wanna take this case?

Eddie stops. What the hell is he talking about?

IVAN (CONT'D)
Look, I know I give you a lot of crap about money, but as your father it's still my job to look out for you.
(beat)
I just wanna make sure you're doing this for the right reasons.

EDDIE
She's getting sandbagged for murder and she needs our help. Those are good reasons in my book.
(then)
Where's this coming from?

IVAN
Remember about six years ago, you met this amazing girl. You wouldn't shut up about her...

EDDIE
No.

IVAN
You remember. She had you upside-down in love. I mean it, she really knocked you off your block. I never told you, but I had Cornell check her out.

EDDIE
You what?

IVAN
I almost threw up when I found out she was a DA.

EDDIE
Gracen and I went on one date, that's it. It didn't go anywhere --

IVAN
It went back to her apartment, as I recall. That's why you were late to court the next morning. And then she dropped you pretty hard. I'd never seen you in such a state.

EDDIE
I got over it, Pop.

IVAN
If you're still carrying a torch for this girl and that's why you wanna defend her --

EDDIE
I wanna defend her because she didn't do it.

IVAN
I don't want to see you get your heart broken, son. Her story's weak. It doesn't mean she killed the guy --

EDDIE
She didn't.

IVAN
-- But she didn't ride through our door on a unicorn either.

Off Ivan --

INT. WALL STREET HIGH-RISE - SCOTT BLAKE'S OFFICE - DAY

A luxuriously appointed corner office with a sweeping view of the city. Eddie stands at the window looking out over the city. SCOTT BLAKE enters, surprised to see a stranger in his office.

SCOTT
Who are you?

Eddie smiles, gestures to the view --

EDDIE
Not bad. My office has a view of Popeye's Chicken.
(wry)
But inside it looks just like this.

SCOTT
How'd you get in here?

EDDIE
I don't have an appointment, Mr. Blake. I was hoping we could talk. My name's Eddie's Costa.

SCOTT
Eddie. You were there with my wife that night, when she...

EDDIE
When she saved my life. Now I'm hoping to repay the favor. She's hired me as her defense attorney.

SCOTT
She hired you?
(shrugs)
I guess she knows what she's doing.

Scott's taking a shot -- to him, Eddie may wear a suit, but the Brooklyn doesn't wash off that easily. Eddie ignores the jab.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
What can I help you with?

EDDIE
We're expecting the D.A. to charge your wife with Dominic LaSalle's murder any day now. I know you understand how much your support means to her --

SCOTT
I already said I'd cover her legal fees. Are you here to tell me it's not enough?

EDDIE
I'm not trying to shake you down for more money, Mr. Blake. I'm asking if you'd show up at her arraignment. If the judge knows she has family support, he'll be more inclined to grant bail.

Scott studies Eddie for a moment.

SCOTT
You got your law degree where, Queens College?

EDDIE
Cardoza.

Scott nods, clearly unimpressed. He's clearly trying to put Eddie in his place. Eddie's a model of self-restraint.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
So I'll give you the heads up when she's going to appear --

SCOTT
I'm divorcing my wife, Mr. Costa. So no, I won't be in court.

EDDIE
Sorry to hear that. I'm sure Gracen will be too. She said you were a nice guy.

SCOTT
I'm not being vindictive here.

EDDIE
No I get it. She cheated, not you. Why should you be inconvenienced when she's staring down 25 to Life?

Eddie's turn to take a shot. Scott gives him a look, stung.

SCOTT
Tell her I'm already doing her a favor. If I'm subpoena'd, I won't break spousal privilege. I don't want our private life dragged into this any more than she does.

EDDIE
Not sure I follow. Why would the D.A. want to subpoena you?

Scott wavers, unsure whether to tell Eddie what he knows.

SCOTT
Dominic called me the day of the murder.

EDDIE
(surprised)
Dominic LaSalle. He called you? What time was this?

SCOTT
Must've been late afternoon. He told me he was in love with my wife and wasn't going to let her go. Even if he had to force the issue.

EDDIE
Was that a threat?

SCOTT
He said he was a cop, he could do things. Sounded like one to me.

Eddie processes this for a moment. Then --

EDDIE
Did Gracen find out that Dominic called you?

SCOTT
I don't know. But I know it's bad news for you if she did.

Off Eddie, concerned --

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - EAST VILLAGE - DAY

Gracen sits alone in the quiet apartment. Lost in thought. We PUSH IN on her inscrutable face, as she REMEMBERS:

INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The night of the murder. Perhaps only moments before, we don't yet know. Gracen and Dominic are in a heated argument.

GRACEN
You went behind my back? What do you think this is between us?

DOMINIC
I'm leaving Erica.

GRACEN
You think this is love? God, Dominic. Don't leave your wife on my account.

He reaches out for her but she pushes him away.

DOMINIC
You called me for a reason. Whether or not you want to admit it, you need me.

Gracen looks at him, angry tears in her eyes. Unsure what to do. She's caught off guard when Dominic suddenly grabs her and pulls her into a ROUGH KISS. She pushes him away, but he comes at her again, pushing her against the wall and pinning her there with his body. We're not sure if she's scared or turned on.

We HOLD on this charged moment, Gracen and Dominic face to face, fear and attraction colliding... And off this, we --

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

KNOCKKNOCK. Gracen answers the door to find Eddie waiting.

GRACEN
Eddie. What're you doing here?

EDDIE
Can I come in?

There's an edge in his voice. She can tell something's wrong. She shows Eddie into the apartment where Sam sits on the couch with her guitar.

GRACEN
Sam, you mind if I talk to Eddie alone for a minute?

SAMANTHA
No problem. I'll be in my room.

Sam heads into her room and shuts the door. Eddie hands Gracen a CASHIER'S CHECK for $20,000.

GRACEN
What's this?

EDDIE
Your money. I'm giving it back.

GRACEN
I don't understand.

EDDIE
You need to find another lawyer to handle your case.

GRACEN
You want to tell me why?

EDDIE
Call it a change of perspective.

The look on Eddie's face. The faith gone.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Cornell got his hands on Dominic's phone log. Dominic called your husband the day of his murder. He tried to force the issue so he could be with you.
(MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)
And I know Dominic called you right after that.

Gracen reacts, caught off guard by Eddie's sharp turn.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
I ran the timeline, you left work a few minutes later and went straight to the hotel. I'm guessing you had your gun with you. You two had some kinda confrontation...

GRACEN
That's not what happened.

EDDIE
Then what did? Why don't you want me to know the truth?

GRACEN
I told you what happened.

EDDIE
(getting angry)
What you told me left out a lotta details. Stop lying to me -- stop acting like people do when they're guilty of killing someone --

GRACEN
Lying doesn't make me a murderer --

EDDIE
It makes me think I don't know you as well as I thought I did.
(beat)
And when I start thinking about it, I start wondering -- I saw you pull a trigger once. Maybe the second time wasn't so hard.

GRACEN
(stung)
You're wrong.

EDDIE
Tell me you didn't have a choice. Tell me he threatened you --

GRACEN
Your job is to represent your client with zealous advocacy, regardless of your personal feelings about their guilt.

EDDIE
Not after my dirtbag client got whacked and I almost got my brains blown out. I don't take those clients. That's the deal for me.

GRACEN
So to hell with legal ethics?

EDDIE
I got my own ethic now. And it starts with the truth.

GRACEN
I didn't kill Dominic.

But Gracen can tell she's not going to change his mind. Eddie heads out. She follows him to the door.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
Eddie, wait.

Eddie stops at the door.

GRACEN (CONT'D)
It's gonna be bad, you know that? The arrest. The arraignment. Snyder's gonna throw the full court press at me. You picked a helluva time to walk out --

EDDIE
Don't try to manipulate me.

GRACEN
I'm being honest. I thought you were a decent guy. Was I wrong about that?

She appeals to the decent guy she knows he is. He reluctantly comes around. Begrudges it. But it means he cares about her --

EDDIE
I'll walk you through the arraignment. You can line up another lawyer after that.

Gracen nods. Eddie walks out the door, and we CUT TO --

<u>EXT. MANHATTAN - MORNING</u>

Early. The sun begins to rise. The city awakens.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Fresh from the shower, Gracen stands before the sink in a towel. She looks at herself in the mirror. Touches the diamond pendant necklace around her neck. Then she unclasps it and drops it into a small keepsake box. She removes her rings and earrings next. Puts them in the same box. She takes a deep breath, looks herself in the eye -- she can do this.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - EAST VILLAGE - MORNING

KNOCKKNOCK. Gracen opens the front door to find Detective Garrido and two other burly cops waiting in the hall. She's been expecting them.

GARRIDO
Step out into the hall please?

Gracen complies. Garrido pulls her arms behind her back.

GARRIDO (CONT'D)
Gracen Blake, you're under arrest for the murder of Dominic LaSalle.
(cuffing her)
Thought you should know, these handcuffs belonged to Dominic.

GRACEN
I hope he's having a good laugh, wherever he is.

As they lead her away, hands cuffed behind her back --

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

The patrol car pulls curbside outside the precinct, where cameras, lights, and REPORTERS are waiting. Garrido opens the rear door and helps Gracen out. She's perp-walked through the shouting reporters and into the precinct.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - BOOKING - DAY

QUICK CUTS -- They take her MUGSHOT. Fingerprint her. A female officer gloves up for the strip search. Gracen does everything she can to hold on to her dignity, to rise above her shame as she's booked. It's hard to keep it together, but she does. Barely. Finally, she's escorted into a HOLDING CELL. Gracen takes a seat on the concrete bench. Alone.

Off Gracen, framed through the bars of the cell, her world turned upside-down. As the cell door slams SHUT --

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. ARRAIGNMENT COURT - DAY

Chaotic. A stew of lawyers, families, cops, and criminals. Attorneys conference in the aisle. Cops banter. Someone's mother quietly cries on a bench near the back.

EDDIE enters and makes his way to the front. He sees Samantha looking worried, sitting alone in the gallery.

SAMANTHA
Eddie, thank God. Will you talk to them? They won't tell me anything.

EDDIE
It's okay, she's coming out now.

Sam finds a seat. Eddie steps up to the defense table, acknowledging ADA LOUISE CAMARENA standing 'for the People'. On the bench, JUDGE KENNETH HERSH (60s) presides.

JUDGE HERSH
Mr. Costa, welcome back. I see once again you brought your mouth.

EDDIE
Washed and ready to go, Judge.

A court officer escorts Gracen out of holding. She looks tired, scared. She's relieved to see Samantha in the gallery. Not so happy to see Detective GARRIDO walking in (b.g.). As she joins Eddie at the table --

GRACEN
Thanks for being here.

EDDIE
Don't thank me yet. This judge has me on his shit list full time.

The Clerk reads the docket and hands the case file to Judge Hersh as the arraignment proceedings get underway.

CLERK
Case number 112407, People versus Gracen Blake, single count of Murder in the First Degree.

JUDGE HERSH
Your plea, Ms. Blake?

GRACEN
Not guilty, Your Honor.

CAMARENA
The People seek remand.

EDDIE
That's ridiculous.

CAMARENA
The defendant has tremendous financial resources at her disposal. Her husband has access to a private plane. She poses a significant flight risk.

EDDIE
So she'll surrender her passport.

CAMARENA
Your Honor, the defendant killed a police detective in cold blood --

EDDIE
Allegedly killed --

CAMARENA
She has clearly demonstrated she believes she's above the law.

Now that pisses Gracen off. She's quickly on her feet --

GRACEN
I wouldn't put much stock in Ms. Camarena's grasp of the law. I'm not going anywhere, Your Honor. I intend to fight to clear my name.

JUDGE HERSH
I understand you're no stranger to these proceedings, Ms. Blake, but please let your attorney speak for you --

GRACEN
He's not my attorney.

JUDGE HERSH
What do you mean?

EDDIE
I'm technically not, Your Honor. I mean, I filed an 'Appearance' just for this proceeding.

JUDGE HERSH
Do you have other legal representation, Ms. Blake?

GRACEN
No, Your Honor. But I don't plan to hire anyone else.

EDDIE
What?

GRACEN
I've decided to represent myself at trial.

People REACT. Murmurs through the courtroom. Camarena hides a smile. Eddie turns to Gracen in a heated aside --

EDDIE
The hell are you doing?

GRACEN
What does it look like I'm doing?

EDDIE
Like you're making a bad move.

GRACEN
You didn't leave me much of a choice.

EDDIE
I didn't think you'd do this.

GRACEN
You made it pretty clear what you think about me.

Judge Hersh grows impatient with their impromptu conference.

JUDGE HERSH
Mr. Costa?

EDDIE
Yes, Your Honor. Can I have a moment with my, uh -- a moment, please?

GRACEN
Actually we're good, Your Honor. I'm ready to proceed.

Gracen shuts Eddie down. He's not happy about it.

JUDGE HERSH
Ms. Blake, you know that going *pro se* is a risky move for a host of reasons. There are other attorneys.

GRACEN
I have the legal right to defend myself.

CAMARENA
The People don't object, Your Honor.

GRACEN
That said, I wouldn't be opposed to having 'stand-by counsel' assigned to help my defense.

JUDGE HERSH
I think that can be arranged.

GRACEN
If it pleases the court I'd like Mr. Costa to be assigned.

EDDIE
Excuse me?

Eddie shoots Gracen a surprised look.

JUDGE HERSH
Mr. Costa? Any reason that's a problem?

EDDIE
Judge, I already stepped down as her counsel. Just because she doesn't like it doesn't mean she can shanghai me into the job.

JUDGE HERSH
She'd be doing the job, Mr. Costa. You'd be there to help.

EDDIE
Someone else can't be assigned?

JUDGE HERSH
They can, but if you don't have a legitimate reason, then I'm going to honor the defendant's request.
(enjoying this)
Are we going to have a problem with that, Mr. Costa?

EDDIE
No, Your Honor.

JUDGE HERSH
Then you're hereby assigned.
(beat)
And Mr. Costa, I'd like to remind you of your ethical obligation here. She's in charge. And I expect you to serve Ms. Blake's defense with zealous advocacy or you will face sanction. Are we clear, Counselor?

EDDIE
Crystal, Your Honor. Yes.

JUDGE HERSH
Bail is set at two million dollars. Ms. Blake, you'll surrender your passport.

Gracen is escorted back to holding. Camarena approaches Eddie with a wry smile --

CAMARENA
Helluva move. Best part was the look on your face...

Eddie heads out of the courtroom and we CUT TO --

INT. LAW FIRM OF COSTA & COSTA - LATER THAT NIGHT

Eddie sits at his desk watching the local news on a small TV.

CLOSE ON THE TV -- the local newscast shows Eddie mobbed on the courthouse steps by REPORTERS. As he's barraged with questions --

EDDIE (ON TV)
Doesn't matter who's running her defense. She's a capable attorney and she's innocent of the charges. The firm of Costa & Costa is eager to help clear her name...

WIDEN -- Eddie turns OFF the TV, then turns to find Gracen standing in the doorway.

GRACEN
You look good on camera. Nice plug for the firm, too.

EDDIE
Phone hasn't started ringing yet.

GRACEN
Ivan and Cornell went home. What are you still doing here?

Eddie gestures to a pile of files on his desk.

EDDIE
Other clients.

GRACEN
You need fresh eyes, I'm happy to look at any cases.

EDDIE
I'm good, thanks.

Eddie shuts her down. Awkward silence. Then he can't help himself --

EDDIE (CONT'D)
That little move in court. That's why you wanted me to be at the arraignment? So I'd be first in line when the Judge assigned stand-by counsel?

GRACEN
You quit, I did what I had to do. Lucky the Judge had it out for you.

Gracen hands Eddie back the CASHIER'S CHECK for $20,000. He looks at it for a beat, then --

EDDIE
My father almost had a stroke when I told him I gave the money back.

GRACEN
Tell me you didn't regret it. Even a little.

Eddie keeps his poker face.

EDDIE
Tell me what really happened between you and Dominic.

GRACEN
Not yet.

EDDIE
Not yet. What does that mean?

GRACEN
It means this whole thing with McCommas, and Dominic, is a lot more complicated than you know.

EDDIE
I'm all ears.

GRACEN
At some point I'll tell you the truth, but not now. There are other people in danger. And I need to protect them as long as McCommas is a threat.

Eddie processes that. Who is she hiding?

GRACEN (CONT'D)
I meant what I said. You're the only one I trust.

EDDIE
Funny, I don't trust you.

GRACEN
You have a good heart, Eddie. That's what I need from you. Because I'm pretty sure at some point you're going to have to save my life.

With that, Gracen walks out. Eddie watching her, and we CUT TO --

INT. RIKERS ISLAND JAIL - HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

BUZZ!! Another door OPENS as a NURSE enters the jail's MEDICAL WING and walks past several beds occupied by tattoo'd inmates in various states of convalescence.

The Nurse makes her way to the last bed where KEVIN MCCOMMAS lies on a gurney. He's hooked up to a kidney DIALYSIS machine. She hands him a folded NEWSPAPER with the photo and headline of Gracen on the front page. Inside the folded paper, he finds a disposable CELL PHONE.

McCommas nods his thanks as the Nurse moves off. He discreetly lifts the phone -- there's already a call waiting for him.

MAN'S VOICE (OVER PHONE)
The labs came back. Your daughter's a perfect six-for-six type tissue match for a transplant.

MCCOMMAS
Good news for a change.

MAN'S VOICE
We still can't find her.

MCCOMMAS
I told you. That ADA, the one with the guilty look on her face. She knows where Valerie is...

As we PUSH IN on Gracen's PHOTO on the front page, we CUT TO --

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - NIGHT

Middle of nowhere. At the end of a dirt road on the edge of a desolate field, we find a tiny cottage with peeling paint and warped wood from years of neglect. Abandoned, we might think, except there's a single light in the front window.

Suddenly -- HEADLIGHTS wash across the front of the house as a CAR speeds up the road. The vehicle stops quickly right in front of the house.

The front door opens -- Valerie McCommas walks out with a SHOTGUN. The blinding headlights of the car reveal the fear in her eyes. She lifts the gun to her shoulder and levels it in the direction of the unseen driver. She's ready to defend herself.

A tense beat, then the car door opens and the driver steps out, still in shadow. But then the VOICE --

GRACEN
Valerie --

Valerie breathes with relief. Lowers the shotgun. Gracen approaches and embraces her. Yes, she did know where Valerie was all along...

VALERIE
My God, Gracen. I saw the news, I've been freaking out...

GRACEN
Get your stuff.

Valerie nods and rushes back into the cottage to get her things. Off Gracen, we TIME CUT TO:

INT. GRACEN'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Gracen sits behind the wheel with a .9mm GLOCK next to her. She watches as Valerie walks out of the house with a duffle bag and rushes to the car.

She throws her bag in the backseat and climbs into the car.

VALERIE
Where are you taking me?

GRACEN
A safehouse in Jersey. Not too far from the city. I can keep an eye on you that way.
(beat)
From now on, you stay close to me.

Gracen peels away from the cabin...

EXT. DIRT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

As Gracen's car speeds up the dirt road and disappears over the crest of the hill in the distance, we --

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW