COMPANY TOWN

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NORFOLK NAVAL OFFICERS' CLUB - NIGHT

To establish. Nice night.

INT. NAVAL OFFICERS' CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Among the dress uniforms and tablecloths... we find a private gathering. KRISTA WILMONT, 21 and lovely, sits by LT. PAUL WHITE, 25, smart, confident. Her PARENTS CONRAD AND GILLIAN are here, as are HIS, and his pal LT. ANDY MARSHALL, 23, all-American type (we'll see Andy again later, so remember him.)

Paul tinks glass with fork to get everyone's attention. Andy pats his pal on the back as Paul stands.

PAUL
Okay, so: It's not my folks' anniversary. Just wanted to get you here without tipping Krista off.

TITTERS from the group... as Paul takes Krista's hand. Eep!

PAUL (CONT'D)
First time I saw you I thought, that girl really knows how to send back an unsatisfactory order. Kidding. All I could think was: beautiful. Then I got to know you, and you're-- everything, Krista. Everything I want. Perfect.

He pulls out a velvet ring box. Krista's breath catches.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I'm not perfect, I have a job that requires slight travel at times...

Appreciative laughs from the enraptured audience...

PAUL (CONT'D)
But, join me the rest of my life?

Krista all but knocks him over as she embraces him.

INT. PAGE'S PIECE OF SHIT CAR - NIGHT

PAGE MATEO, 21, tough and deadpan, is in back with LT. JORDAN STRONG, 25. Fucking his brains out (shot tastefully).

They settle back, exhausted and sweaty. Super awkward pause.

PAGE
I'll drive you back to the base.

She straightens her clothes, reaches for her keys. Casual--

PAGE (CONT'D)
So, Jordan... guess whose birthday tomorrow.

JORDAN STRONG
Oh. Happy birthday...

PAGE
I had this vision of casual sex.

JORDAN STRONG
Oh, so looking for volunteers.

PAGE
No, issuing an explicit invitation, there's a difference. Text you?

He nods. *Sure*. Then gives her a curious look.

JORDAN STRONG
So, 21, 22? Ever thought about leaving town, you know-- seeing the world, or?

PAGE
(convincing smile)
Hadn't thought about it. Just, having fun, you know?

She starts the car.

INT. PAGE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Page enters. She passes a MANTLE with a framed FOLDED FLAG and photos of a late-30s UNIFORMED MARINE. She sighs...

...and pulls out a shoe box. Dumps it out. PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES. She dumps out each and starts to count the pills.

INT. PAGE'S APARTMENT - HOLLY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER *

Holly, 40s, CUTS OUT articles about war and adds 'em to eerily large piles. *Too* focused. Page enters, holding pill and glass of water-- and sighs when she sees her mom awake. *

PAGE *
Mom. Come on. It's late. *

Holly looks to Page. Smiles, like *oh I'm fine, it's nothing.* *

HOLLY
I know, just finishing--

Page moves to take the pile off the bed--

HOLLY (CONT'D)
Leave it.
(more reasonable)
I'll do it, it's all organized.

Page is over it. She holds out the pill.

PAGE
Fine. Here, you forgot one.
You've been taking them, right?

Holly starts to bristle-- indignant at Page's accusation--

PAGE (CONT'D)
It's late, please just take it.

Holly sees the tension on her face, the worry held in check. She softens. Takes the pill, swallows it with the water.

HOLLY
Page, sweetie. I'd've taken it in the morning.

PAGE
Just-- go to sleep.

Page exits. Her mom watches, guilty. Then, back to work.

EXT. NORFOLK - MORNING

A few shots to establish the new day.

EXT. WILMONT TEXTILES PLANT - MORNING

MORNING SHIFT; WORKERS entering. A FIAT pulls up. Krista emerges, balancing LEDGERS, coffees, and phone, into which--

KRISTA
Emerald cut, you'll die. So, seven?

EXT. KIRK AND MARLA'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

MARLA, 20, sits on the porch, ON CELL. Marla's cultivated a practical, dry sunniness as Krista's best friend and "sidekick"; but she's also got a wistful, artistic side.

INTERCUT MARLA AND KRISTA.

MARLA
Yup, I'll tell everyone.

KRISTA
Thanks, I have to go in today after all, Dad's freaking out.

MARLA
I swear if you didn't work there that whole plant would go under. Just from his crazy alone.

Krista walks by three FACTORY GIRLS, 21, smoking. She gives 'em a smile. They smile back, 'cause, boss' daughter.

KRISTA
I know, right?

MARLA
And Krista, it really is amazing-- *

But Krista hangs up. Marla's a bit miffed by the abruptness. But hey, that's Krista. A BEATER CAR pulls up. Marla GATHERS textbooks and battered laptop and goes to the car, driven by--

INT. KIRK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

KIRK, 19, shy, athletic. Kirk and Marla are siblings, have a good-natured, constant-jabbing kinda groove with each other.

MARLA
Took you long enough, assface.

KIRK
Sue me for having a <u>couple</u> things to wrap up the week I friggin' enlist. So, you hear yet?

MARLA
No. You know what, applying was stupid. I'm just gonna finish out JC, go study something lame at some soul-killing party school, and become a mindless clone.

KIRK
Well you <u>talk</u> like an art school student.

MARLA
Shut up, forget I ever told you, okay? Hey, so Krista wanted me get everyone together at the Bird.

KIRK
(oh so casual)
Huh. Okay--

MARLA
Um... to ogle her engagement ring.

Kirk drops the chill facade and stares at Marla. Finally...

KIRK
Okay, great, good for her...

MARLA
She's too old for you anyway. And she's a brat. I'm like her <u>best friend</u> and I'm telling you--

KIRK
Mar, it's fine, I live in real life. You wanna stop for breakfast before I drop you at school?

INT. PAGE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Page trudges out, waking up... and stops. The table is set with a RAINBOW OF BIRTHDAY PANCAKES. NATALIE, 15, sharp, enthusiastic, emotional to a fault, beams over the surprise.

NATALIE
Happy birthday! Wow. You look honestly shocked.

Page fights to stay deadpan. 'Cause she's moved.

PAGE
Well... thanks. Especially for the green ones.

NATALIE
I know, disgusting. Sit.

Nat pulls out a chair. Page rolls her eyes. She clearly *adores* her sister. We get <u>exactly</u> why Page stays in town.

EXT. NORFOLK - DAY INTO DUSK

Some choice views of the town tell us time's a'passin'.

EXT. EAGLE BAR AND GRILL ("THE BIRD") - EVENING

Unfussy local spot. Sports, burgers, beer. Kirk pulls in.

INT. EAGLE BAR AND GRILL - CONTINUOUS

Kirk and Marla find Krista holding court with FRIENDS who are among the better-off middle to upper-middle class of Norfolk. Kirk goes to the periphery. Marla stands, feeling self-conscious, plain -- like she doesn't quite belong.

Finally she shakes it off-- and hands Krista flowers-- a little congrats gift. Krista, caught up in all the attention, barely acknowledges it, sets it aside. Marla flushes-- feeling snubbed. Life as sidekick.

Krista pours beer from a pitcher-- running dry--

KRISTA
Hey, where's Page? Is she hiding?

Nope, here she comes-- but wearing a BAR T SHIRT, carrying fresh pitchers of beer. And she doesn't look happy.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
<u>There</u> she is. We were dying of thirst, sweetie!

Wow, that was a thin veneer of sweet over prickly. There's a deep, electric, long-established animosity between the girls.

PAGE
Can't have that tragedy.

KRISTA
Hey, isn't it your birthday?

Page stiffens. Not appreciating this being brought up.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Can we get a round of shots, just whenever?

PAGE
(honey-coated napalm)
How bout right this very second, <u>sweetie</u>?

Page walks away. Wow. What happened <u>there</u>?

EXT. WATERFRONT PARK - NIGHT

Under a MONUMENT, our group gathers for post-bar drinking.

FIND Krista's purse, and next to it-- her CELL PHONE. It BUZZES, ignored. Goes to VOICEMAIL. *MISSED CALL-- PAUL.*

Krista plops down between Kirk and Marla. She's tipsy.

KRISTA
Marla said you're off to Basic?

She puts an arm around Kirk. Which takes him aback. He really is nursing a long-standing crush, here.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Can't believe scrawny little bro's a big buff Marine. Look at you. What're you, nineteen now? You must be beating 'em off with a stick.

MARLA
Ew.

KRISTA
Not ew. As an old engaged lady--

KIRK
(quietly)
You're only a couple years older than--

KRISTA
--I'm just informing you that you have certainly grown up just fine.

KIRK
Um... thanks....

But Krista's flitting away. She claps for attention. Grabs a bottle.

KRISTA
Hey! People! A toast. To great friends. To a great life.

EXT. NORFOLK - DAY BREAKING

Good morning. Sun rises over an Aircraft Carrier.

EXT. NORFOLK ROAD - MORNING *

A CAR with U-HAUL drives. *

INT. MCKINLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS - MOVING *

BRIAN, 15, thoughtful, currently sullen, peers out. *

BRIAN *
This place is depressing. *

Parents DON (intuitive, plainspoken; Black) and LOUISE * (smart, tough; Caucasian) exchange a look, up front. Dryly-- *

DON *
You're cheering up, that's great. *

ALLY, 13, also in back, is clearly the optimist in the fam. *

ALLY *
Can we stop for pancakes? *

LOUISE *
Let's just get to base first, Ally, *
then sure. *
(gentler, to Brian) *
It's a nice town, Bri, once we get *
you settled you'll dig it. *

BRIAN *
Mom... *
(so much to say; instead:) *
Don't say "dig." *

EXT. NAVAL BASE - TEMPORARY FAMILY BILLETING - MORNING *

Think motel. McKinleys' car parked there. *

INT. TEMPORARY FAMILY BILLETING - CONTINUOUS *

The McKinleys all carry suitcases and such into their *
temporary home. Brian stops, takes a nonplussed look around. *

BRIAN *
Smells like cigarettes in here. *

LOUISE *
He's not wrong. *
(then) *
You know, best thing about timing *
it like this-- I actually have a
minute to settle us all in before I *
report for duty, maybe bully us up
some permanent housing...

DON
What? But it smells so good here. *

LOUISE
Plus I hear OPTEV's a great place
to work-- and I hear that from
grumpy people-- am I jinxing it by
saying this out loud--?

He pulls her to him, gives her a kiss. *

DON
There's no such thing as jinxing.

Her PHONE RINGS. She checks the ID, frowns. Answers:

LOUISE
This is McKinley.... Yes I am, just arrived-- Yes, sir. Of course. *

She hangs up. Huh. Then looks to Don.

LOUISE (CONT'D)
I have to report to Admiral Laskow. Now.

INT. OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CO - MOMENTS LATER

Behind the desk, ADMIRAL LASKOW. 50s, sharp, to-the-point. Louise is led in by an AIDE, salutes her superior officer.

ADMIRAL LASKOW
Just looking over your record. You were quite the star...

And yet, he doesn't *sound* that friendly or even impressed...

LOUISE
Thank you, sir...

ADMIRAL LASKOW
So what slowed you down? Baby- track? *
(off her hesitation)
Or are we not being blunt?

LOUISE
Well... wouldn't say I slowed down.

ADMIRAL LASKOW
I would. Make a few lateral moves-- hubby's career?

LOUISE
I think I've balanced career and family alright, sir. You?

Spoken respectfully, but we dig her balls.

ADMIRAL LASKOW
My wife and kids despise me. Just trying to get a sense of you-- ambition level and so forth.

What's he getting at? Louise can't pinpoint it, yet.

LOUISE
Well... I enjoy a challenge, sir.

Laskow regards her for a moment. Assessing.

ADMIRAL LASKOW
Good. Now, you're scheduled to report as Division Director when? *

LOUISE
First of the month--

ADMIRAL LASKOW
Those orders have been cancelled.

Louise blinks. What? That's not good.

ADMIRAL LASKOW (CONT'D)
CO Naval Support Activity at * Hampton Roads ran into unexpected personal matters which prevent assumption of command. Obviously, replacing him is an immediate priority. Just received a call * from the Bureau: Captain, you've * been selected--

LOUISE
(blurting, shocked)
I have?

ADMIRAL LASKOW
You're the only one in the room. * That Command oversees five bases, * supporting twenty-five thousand people on five thousand acres. You * need a minute?

Holy shit. That is huge. Job of a lifetime huge.

LOUISE
No, sir. I accept, thank you--

ADMIRAL LASKOW
Then we get you your new orders whereupon command will be turned over to you.
(stands to shake her hand)
And may I be the first to offer you a sincere congratulations. Not many rise to this level of service.

LOUISE
Thank you, sir.

He heads back to his desk. Then, casual but serious--

ADMIRAL LASKOW
About me. I like “it’s handled.” Not “any day now,” not “I don’t know.” You’re about to be mayor of a complicated city; you don’t get to settle in. No grace period for mistakes. Whatever may be going on.
(then)
Now: about this week’s crisis. Sit.

INT. KRISTA’S ROOM - MORNING

Krista’s asleep when-- BANGING on the door wakes her. Krista grumblingly goes to answer-- It’s her MOM. Who grabs her.

GILLIAN WILMONT
Don’t go outside.

KRISTA
What’s going on...

Krista’s sharpening up fast. She pulls away, looks out the window. There’s a MAN on the lawn, in a button-down shirt.

KRISTA (CONT’D)
Who is that.

GILLIAN WILMONT
A reporter-- Krista, sit--

KRISTA
Why?

GILLIAN WILMONT
It’s about Paul.

Krista grabs a sweatshirt, pushes past Gillian and out.

INT. PAGE’S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Page answers the door; it’s a 30s WOMAN, professional.

DIANA
Page Mateo? Diana Pollan, *Daily View*, just got a few questions--

PAGE
About?

DIANA
Aviator named Jordan Strong. According to folks at the Eagle Grill, you recently became friends?

EXT. KRISTA'S HOUSE - PORCH - SAME TIME

Krista faces the Man, MIKE, uneasily examining his CARD.

MIKE
Have you heard from your fiancé?

KRISTA
Why... did something happen--

MIKE
He and two other officers were confined to quarters this morning.

KRISTA
Why--

MIKE
They're being investigated on allegations of sexual assault.

INT. OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CO - SAME TIME

ADMIRAL LASKOW
All on-base, all Navy jurisdiction, all your problem. And the press somehow already knows and is about to have the mother of all field days.

Louise stares. A dawning sense of why the sudden promotion.

INT. PAGE'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME *

DIANA
Care to comment?

Page slams the door in Diana's face. Numb. She turns-- to see Natalie standing in the room behind her. Wide-eyed.

EXT. KRISTA'S HOUSE - PORCH - SAME TIME

MIKE
Can I get a comment?

Krista... bursts out laughing.

KRISTA
I'm sorry. Must be another Paul.

He pulls out his phone, shows her PAUL'S PHOTO AND INFO. *

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Well then-- you just have it wrong. *

INT. PAUL WHITE'S LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

JAG LAWYER LT. CMDR. STEVENS sits opposite a tense Paul.

KRISTA (V.O.) (POSTLAP)
'Cause he simply wouldn't do that.

JAG LT. CMDR. STEVENS
As your counsel, I'm here to walk you through your next few days.

PAUL
Look, can I level with you?

INT. ANDY MARSHALL'S LIVING QUARTERS - SAME TIME

Andy (from the engagement dinner) faces his counsel (O.C.). *

ANDY MARSHALL
Nothing happened. Nothing.

INT. JORDAN STRONG'S LIVING QUARTERS - SAME TIME

Jordan faces his counsel (also O.C; think quick cuts.)

JORDAN STRONG
We've known Riley a long time, I really got no idea why--

INT. PAUL WHITE'S LIVING QUARTERS - SAME TIME

PAUL *
If we could just talk to her--

JAG LT. CMDR. STEVENS
Are you joking? She's not in the * mood to talk.

INT. NAVAL HOSPITAL - ICU - SAME TIME

GRACE RILEY lies hooked to machines. UNCONSCIOUS.

JAG LT. CMDR. STEVENS (V.O.)
Shortly after she submitted to an exam at the hospital, she was found on the floor. She took something. * She hasn't woken up. So no one gets to question her. Just you.

OFF Grace's still form--

BLACKOUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. NAVAL HOSPITAL - ICU - NIGHT

Grace Riley lies unconscious-- as we left her.

Through a window, a YOUNG WOMAN stands peering in, worried.

FLASH TO:

INT. NORFOLK BASE DORMS - CHUCK'S ROOM - NIGHT - **FLASHBACK**

Same young woman, in reading glasses, lounges with a book. This is SEAMAN LEAH "CHUCK" CHARLES, 20. She looks up as-- SEAMAN GRACE RILEY, very much awake and animated, enters.

CHUCK
Where you been, Riley?

Chuck looks closer. Riley's shaky, close to tears.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
...Grace?

BACK TO PRESENT.

Chuck stares, haunted. Finally, she tears herself away.

PAUL'S VOICE (ON MESSAGE) (PRELAP)
Krista, call me, okay? I just...
need to talk to you, I need to...
just call me. Please.

EXT. WILMONT TEXTILES PLANT - DAY *

Krista, stands by her car, hits REPLAY on her cell. Paul's * voice is quiet. There's something... Sadness? Fear? *Guilt?* *

PAUL'S VOICE (ON MESSAGE)
Krista, call me, okay? I just...
need to talk to you, I need to...
just call me. Please.
(she HITS PLAY AGAIN)
Krista, call me, okay? I just...

Krista clicks OFF. Spooked. Uneasy. Then gathers her work * stuff-- ledgers, takeout coffees-- and heads in, mind * churning. Passing-- the Factory Girls. Who throw her knowing * smiles. She moves past, not engaging. *

INT. WILMONT TEXTILE PLANT - CONRAD'S OFFICE - SAME TIME *

Conrad Wilmont's reading the paper. The headline: *SHOCKING * ASSAULT ALLEGATIONS EMERGE ON NAVAL BASE.* He's not happy. *

He looks out the window. Sees Krista coming. His expression moves from anger to concern. He throws the paper away. *

INT. PAGE'S APARTMENT - DAY *

Page sets out cereal, when Nat enters with laptop. Reads:

NATALIE
"The three suspects include Lieutenants Jordan Strong--

PAGE
Stop.

NATALIE
"Andrew Marshall, and Paul White."

Page locks eyes with her sister. No fucking way.

PAGE
Krista Wilmont's fiance?

NATALIE
And the victim's in the hospital.

Page stares. When-- their mother enters, in her robe.

HOLLY
Who's in the hospital?

NATALIE
(quickly)
No one.

But then-- Page thinks better. Deep breath. Gently--

PAGE
Mom. Sit down a minute.

NATALIE
Page--

PAGE
I was kinda seeing this guy. *

HOLLY
Oh my god-- is he--

PAGE
Just listen. Apparently he and some guys may have hurt some woman.

Holly stares, mortified. Like she's been hurt personally.

PAGE (CONT'D)
You can't talk about this, okay? There are reporters in town.

HOLLY
Have they been here?!

PAGE
Just, if someone comes-- don't talk to them. This has nothing to do with me, and it really has nothing to do with Nat. Our family is no one else's business, right?

HOLLY
Of course. I'm so sorry, baby.

Page smiles tightly. Long since inured to Holly's sympathy.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Morning drop-off hubbub. Page's car pulls up.

INT. PAGE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

As Page drops Nat off. Nat gathers her stuff. Then--

NATALIE
Are you honestly okay? That guy was your boyfriend, right?

PAGE
(sharp)
No, he was-- bad judgment, so maybe take some notes.

NATALIE
(bristling)
Um, maybe you note I'm trying to be your sister and stop being my mother for five seconds.

Page takes a breath. Okay, point taken.

PAGE
I'm sorry. I'm not-- I'm just--

NATALIE
You didn't know he was a dick. He didn't have a stamp on his head.

PAGE
Yeah, but what is it with me and the Navy. I swear, never dating a guy off that base again.
(then)
Now go be the smart one.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Nat heads in, CROSSING PATHS with Brian and Don, who are busy examining a school map. But-- she notices Brian. Hi, cute.

ON PAGE watching this through her window. Page sighs with parental concern. Then shrugs it off and drives away.

Nat, walking, is INTERCEPTED by THREE cocky SENIOR BOYS--

PHIL
Hey, Nat, right? Nat Mateo? So-- that's your sister? The one who bangs rapists?

Nat bristles, starts walking away. But they fall into step.

PHIL (CONT'D)
How much like your sister <u>are</u> you?
(leans in close)
I can be nice, I can be rough, I can handle some pretty serious whores. Think it over.

Nat flushes, horrified and genuinely freaked. She takes off fast. Phil and buddies watch her go, amused.

INT. OFFICE OF CO NSA HAMPTON ROADS - DAY *

Louise is greeted at the front entrance by LT. MARK HUFFINGTON, late 20s, down-to-earth, solid, practical.

MARK HUFFINGTON
Ma'am, Mark Huffington, Head of Security, I'll show you around.

LOUISE
Thanks, Mark.

MARK HUFFINGTON
(respectful smile)
And may I say congratulations; but-- hell of a week to get the job.

LOUISE
Right. I got the broad strokes from the Admiral, but--

MARK HUFFINGTON
I'll brief you fully right after you're settled in. *

LOUISE
So scale of one to ten, chance we handle this without further agitating the press?

MARK HUFFINGTON
Respectfully, zero. You can just... feel it when people want to sink their teeth in something.

LOUISE
That's very true. Any idea how they found out so fast?

MARK HUFFINGTON
I'll look into it. And NCIS are here, meeting with the MPs. I'm heading there now to oversee.

She nods; good. Then, a sigh. Quietly--

LOUISE
Interesting week to get the job.

INT. MP OFFICE - DAY

MP BRITTANY WEEKS, early 20s, African American, tidies her already tidy desk, watching as her CO talks to NCIS Special Agent ERIC FRIEL. Mark Huffington enters, joins them, shakes Friel's hand, and leads Friel over to Brittany's desk.

MARK HUFFINGTON
Brittany Weeks, this is Eric Friel, NCIS. Agent Friel, Brittany took the incident report on Grace Riley, she'll get you whatever you need.

She extends a hand, polite, warm; a confident front.

BRITTANY
Absolutely. However I can help.

SPECIAL AGENT FRIEL
Appreciate that. We'll need copies of everything. And we may have a few questions later.

Brittany's smile gets tighter. Made anxious by the scrutiny.

BRITTANY
Not a problem.

INT. TEMPORARY FAMILY BILLETING - NIGHT

The McKinleys around the dinner table-- takeout pizza.

ALLY
So like are you Dad's boss now? *

LOUISE
That's not exactly how it works--

DON
(dry, to Louise)
You're funny.

BRIAN
Does it mean you have to deal with * the rape scandal?

ALLY
Who got raped?!

LOUISE
Okay, not for the dinner table.

BRIAN
Wow. Very Navy code, bravo.

LOUISE
(stares; then)
Okay, we're setting a deadline for this delightful mood of yours. Get right by the end of the week or I <u>will</u> medicate with problem kid drugs. Won't even ask your dad.

DON
(blandly playing along)
She won't.

BRIAN
I'm glad you both think everything is so funny. Like how I feel.

LOUISE
(a sigh; more sincere)
Okay, how do you feel?

BRIAN
Wouldn't matter if I told you, cause I don't get a say. Fifteen schools. Half of which I hated anyway but you know what, half of which I didn't.

DON
We're staying here. Three years. I promise.

BRIAN
(so frustrated)
Because they promised. Can I just go to my-- somewhere?

LOUISE
Yeah. *

He exits in a dark cloud. Louise meets Don's eyes. To Ally-- *

LOUISE (CONT'D)
Do you hate us too?

ALLY
(philosophically)
Nah, I always think, when I'm an admiral you'll have to do whatever I say.

INT. KRISTA'S HOUSE - KRISTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marla and a glum Krista, music, junk food. Marla's trying on one of Krista's shirts. Krista glances at her.

KRISTA
You look pretty in that, keep it.

MARLA
(glows; then)
Hey, we could Netflix something stupid. Stupid things cheer me up.

KRISTA
I usually just think they're stupid.

Marla flushes at that. Krista's oblivious; in her own head.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
These girls at the plant were staring with-- pity. I don't know them, I just vaguely know who they blew in high school, now they pity me? What is that?

MARLA
It'll blow over. Sandra Bullock got through that Nazi guy cheating on her--

KRISTA
This isn't some Nazi, this is my fiancé, what's wrong with you?!

MARLA
I'm-- sorry, I just--

Krista's phone rings. Checks ID. Sits BOLT UPRIGHT--

KRISTA
Paul?!

INT. PAUL WHITE'S LIVING QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Paul's on the phone. His attorney sits across the room.

PAUL
Hey, angel.

INTERCUT PAUL AND KRISTA.

KRISTA
Paul, are you okay? You have no idea, it's been crazy--

PAUL
I'm okay. Krista: it's not true.

KRISTA
But what happened.

He glances to his lawyer. There's only so much he can say.

PAUL
There's this woman on the maintenance crew, just, nice working friendship. Between me and you, Jordan got a little flirty, but he wouldn't go there, she's enlisted. All I know is-- that night we were hanging by my truck, tailgating I guess; she comes by, we give her a beer-- it's public, it's nothing. Whatever she thought went down-- it's crazy.

KRISTA
She's in the hospital--

PAUL
She went to the ER, stole drugs and just took 'em-- that sound like someone okay?
(then)
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)
Look. I'm sorry this is happening. Just-- tell me you're with me.

KRISTA
Of course I'm-- I love you. I know what kind of man you are.

PAUL
That's my girl. Look-- I gotta sit here but-- you can come visit.

KRISTA
Okay. I'll come. Of course.

PAUL
Good. I gotta go. I love you.

He HANGS UP. STAY WITH KRISTA. Staring at the phone. Small--

KRISTA
I just got engaged. I'm supposed to be surrounded by my friends. No one's even called.

MARLA
Your real friends are right here--

KRISTA
I don't want a friend, I want my life. You have no idea what it's like to watch the life you want float past you. It's there, it's just not yours, and it's so unfair.

Marla stares at Krista. Um, yes she does.

EXT. NAVAL HOSPITAL - DAY

To establish.

BILL CUMMINGS (V.O.)
Every surgeon rotates through the ER-- this ain't your first spelling bee so I don't need to tell you rest and take your vitamins. I recommend tai chi but you won't do it, no one does.

INT. NAVAL HOPSITAL - ER - DAY

CMDR. BILL CUMMINGS, MD, shows Don around.

BILL CUMMINGS
Norfolk's the Mall of America-- we get it all, slip-n-falls to PTSD gone wild to just civilian car wrecks-- smart ones come here, they know no one does trauma better.

INT. NAVAL HOSPITAL - ICU - DAY

They enter the ICU.

BILL CUMMINGS
Nurses call this the haunted house.

Bill nods to a room up ahead. Matter of fact.

BILL CUMMINGS (CONT'D)
That's the maintainer ODed in the ER. I'm sure you heard about that.

Don enters. Curious. He looks down at Riley. She looks young, small, fragile. Don's affected by the sight.

INT. THE BIRD - NIGHT *

In a corner, Marla sits with pie and sketchbook, glum. When-- *

A drink is set in front of her. By Diana, the reporter. *

DIANA *
It's called a Tennessee Murder, but *
it tastes like a cupcake. Try it. *

Diana sits before Marla can reply. Peeks at the sketchbook-- *

DIANA (CONT'D) *
Wow. Diana. You're Marla, right? *
(before Marla can ask) *
I'm a reporter. That's how I know. *
Oh, don't worry, I'm not here to *
work. Just, recognized you from *
yearbook pictures with Krista *
Wilmont, thought I'd say hello-- *

MARLA *
I barely even know her fiance, *
okay? No point talking to me. *

DIANA *
Hey, that's fine, like I said, I'm *
not even here for that. I'm *
focusing on base politics. I'm not *
really the tabloid-y type. *

That answer sits well with Marla. She tries the drink. *Mmm.*

MARLA
Wow, can't even taste the alcohol.

Diana subtly signals to the waiter to bring another round.

DIANA
So, are your friends artists too?

MARLA
Yeah, no. I'm weird.

DIANA
It was like that for me too, writing. Deep south, everyone thought I was channeling Satan. And that's before I told 'em I like girls.

Marla looks at her with new respect, for having shared that.

DIANA (CONT'D)
Least you have friends like Krista who really get you and support you--

MARLA
Krista's... Krista.

DIANA
What do you mean?

MARLA
(takes another drink)
Please, let's not talk about my feelings, I'll bore you to death.

Diana smiles her best just-us-girls, casual, inviting smile.

DIANA
Oh, try me.

BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. CHUCK'S ROOM - NIGHT - **FLASHBACK**

We continue the same flashback scene, with Chuck and a shaken Grace Riley, who's digging in her locker for toiletry bag-- *

CHUCK
I'm calling AD-1-- you're reporting this--

Grace turns, to argue-- and WINCES from the motion-- *

CHUCK (CONT'D)
You need to get looked at--

GRACE RILEY *
I just need a hot shower. And you to leave me alone.

CUT TO:

INT. CHUCK'S ROOM - NIGHT - **PRESENT**

Chuck, stares in the mirror, frozen mid-combing her hair. Just... lost in self-doubt.

INT. TEMPORARY FAMILY BILLETING - BEDROOM - MORNING

Don sits on the bed, pensive, as Louise hurries to dress... *

LOUISE
Who even says luncheon? We're gonna foster community relations over tuna? Don? Where are you.

DON
They don't even know if that woman's waking up.
(quietly)
What I wanna know is what I'm supposed to tell Ally.

LOUISE
Ally?! Who says you--

DON
She's dead set on joining up in five years, what do I say, go Navy? When that happens on this base--

LOUISE
Well-- ask me what to tell her, I am a woman in the Navy.

DON
Okay, I'm asking.

LOUISE
Okay. Navy's not special, it's a microcosm of the world. And the world's not safe for women. You gotta be careful. Luckily, most guys are like you. Not them.

She sits next to him. He sighs. Really troubled. *

DON *
Only takes one of the other kind. *

EXT. MARLA'S HOUSE - DAY *

Marla sits on the porch, staring at an ENVELOPE, anxious. * It's from *NY SCHOOL OF ART.* Kirk comes out to join her.

KIRK
You got it? Well?! Open it. *

MARLA
I dunno, I could still just... join * up like you and Dad--

KIRK
Shut up, Mar, not everyone's a Marine. Some people are-- you.

Kirk grabs the letter, rips it open. Studies it.

MARLA
Well?!

KIRK
Well, you're in.

Marla SHRIEKS.

INT. LUNCHEON ROOM - DAY

An assortment of OFFICERS and pillars of LOCAL SOCIETY mingle. FIND Louise, politely glazed as Conrad talks.

CONRAD WILMONT
Please, come take a tour anytime-- *

They're smoothly interrupted by a stylish older man--

BEN EAGLEMAN
Captain McKinley? Ben Eagleman, *New York Times.*

Wilmont bows out, leaving Louise to face the journalist.

LOUISE
All the way from New York, huh?

BEN EAGLEMAN
Always travelling. Congratulations are in order; hear it happened fast--

LOUISE
It's like that sometimes, Navy's got a lot of moving parts.

BEN EAGLEMAN
Right. Right. One being that alleged assault investigation?

LOUISE
(lightly) *
You know I can't talk about it.

BEN EAGLEMAN
Just, timing's interesting. Wonder if the Navy's sending a message?

LOUISE
What message?

BEN EAGLEMAN
Putting a woman in charge, during this highly charged investigation-- message about taking it seriously, maybe more so than in the past.

LOUISE
We do take it seriously. My gender * doesn't really prove that one way or the other though, that I see.

BEN EAGLEMAN
So your selection had nothing to do- *

MARK HUFFINGTON (O.C.)
Pardon me-- Captain, it's urgent. *

Mark Huffington cuts in apologetically. Louise gives * Eagleman a smile-- lets Mark pull her away.

MARK HUFFINGTON (CONT'D)
You looked like you needed an interruption, ma'am.

LOUISE
Thank you. Press, really?

MARK HUFFINGTON
Well, governor's here. You know, I swear these things still make me feel like a bored Navy brat.

LOUISE
That's right-- I looked you up, you're Senator Huffington's son.

Mark's polite, but clearly a bit uncomfy being his dad's son.

MARK HUFFINGTON
It's not important. Now let's escort you to the boring side of the room. More boring.

INT. WILMONT TEXTILES PLANT - MR. WILMONT'S OFFICE - DAY

Krista enters-- notices the look on Conrad's face, stops dead.

KRISTA
What. Dad, I'll google it myself--

Conrad relents, SHOWS her a NEWS site. *Fallen Prom Queen: The Girl At The Heart Of Naval Assault Scandal.* Krista pales.

EXT. PAGE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Page heads to her car-- when-- KRISTA'S CAR PULLS UP. Krista jumps out, livid. Page stops--

PAGE
Well, hello, Krista--

KRISTA
You think this helps you? At least I'm in a relationship, you were slutting it up-- think everyone isn't talking about that?!

PAGE
The hell are you talking about.

Krista shoves the expose article at Page. Page skims. *Whoa.*

KRISTA
There's stuff no one else knows, from when we were kids--

PAGE
You actually think I would--

KRISTA
Do I need to list what you're capable of?

Page starts to walk away-- but Krista stops her.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
See, this is what I never understood. I'm not the one who turned into a complete monster, betrayed everyone in my life-- now just cause you're minorly responsible people actually believe you're different--

PAGE
I don't care what you believe--

KRISTA
You work at a bar, you still drink--

PAGE
Really? You're going there?!

KRISTA
--you have no friends, you sleep with god knows who--

PAGE
WHAT DO YOU WANT. You want me to apologize? I don't care what you think, Krista, you clearly don't care about me, if you wanna know who ratted you out go ask that bitch reporter yourself. You're the one with all the friends.

Page walks away. Shaken, but resolute.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Nat walks the busy hall to class. When--

BRIAN
Hey-- I'm looking for room 150, but--

Nat recognizes him-- the cute guy she spotted before.

NATALIE
Right, logic dictates first floor, and yet, dungeons.
(off his perplexed look)
Basement.

BRIAN
Thanks. Brian. Just moved here.

NATALIE
Nat. Where from?

BRIAN
Everywhere.

NATALIE
Oh. Navy brat?
(off his nod)
You guys get your own guidance counselor. I mean, if you need like guidance. Now I feel awkward ‘cause you’re staring.

BRIAN
I’m <u>not</u>-- don’t. Nice to meet you. Better get to the dungeons.

A shy smile, and they part ways. As they do-- Phil and his two Senior pals INTERCEPT Natalie. She backs up a step-- Brian stops, noticing-- tensing--

PHIL
Thought about my offer? If you’re gonna mess with big boys you need practice, Slut 101 if you will--

Brian moves to help-- Senior #2 SHOVES HIM roughly aside.... Brian comes back with a quick and dirty PUNCH to the face-- Meanwhile Phil blocks Nat. Suddenly-- she SHOVES HIM BACK--

And in a flash, draws a POCKET KNIFE to his throat. <u>Shit</u>!

NATALIE
Call me a slut again. <u>Go</u>.

INT. PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE - LATER

Nat sits, stone-faced. PAGE hurries in, in work clothes.

PAGE
How bad is it.

Nat just throws her a look. Bad.

INT. PRICIPAL’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Brian sits waiting for the hammer to come down, as PRINCIPAL GORMAN and Don face each other for a second of tense silence--

And then they both crack up laughing.

DON
He didn't. A shoelace?!

PRINCIPAL GORMAN
Well, different time-- you've heard old timers talk about patching guys up. Twine and spit, my dad said.

DON
Hey, I've used a roll of duct tape or two in my day.
(then, smooth transition)
So listen. Between us-- Brian was protecting someone he felt needed it. Which frankly I raised him to.

PRINCIPAL GORMAN
I appreciate that. But Brian needs to understand that's not his job-- *

BRIAN *
Yes sir. Won't happen again.

PRINCIPAL GORMAN
Alright. I think we can let this go with detention.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Door opens. Brian emerges. He locks eyes with Nat, who looks scared. He gives her a private smile. *You'll be okay.*

Don and Gorman shake hands. The sight makes Page uneasy. Don's so *adult*. Curtly, as Gorman disappears into his office-

PRINCIPAL GORMAN
One minute.

Awkward moment as Don and Brian stand with Page and Nat.

PAGE
Um-- Page Mateo. Nat's sister. Sorry about this whole mess.

BRIAN
Don't apologize. People have a right to defend themselves. Nat was brave.

Don stares. Door opens; Gorman motions for Page and Nat.

DON
Well. Nice to meet you both.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - LATER

Page and Nat walk to the car. Nat looks relieved.

NATALIE
Hey, you wanna stop for--

PAGE
Don't even, like you're cheerful. You know how close you just came to being expelled? A knife, Nat?!

NATALIE
I'm supposed to let people threaten to like screw me in the hallways?!

PAGE
You're supposed to tell, or scream, or-- fake a seizure--

NATALIE
Well Gorman got it, ten day suspension won't even beat your record--

Page stops walking. Quiet, but dead intense on this:

PAGE
Gorman took pity 'cause your dad is dead, your mom is nuts, and the only one who showed up today is twenty-two and wearing a bar shirt. You so clearly look destined for jail, or welfare or, or--

Natalie stares, taken aback, sobered. Small-- *

NATALIE
I'm really that pathetic?

PAGE
(deep exhale)
No. You're adorable and smart. You just got dealt crap cards.
(more vulnerable)
You can't do crazy things, Nat. Or I start to worry you're crazy, and it kinda runs in the family. Don't.

NATALIE
I'm sorry. I wasn't thinking.

PAGE
Well, you should be grounded. But I'm not your mom. So... I think we need to just go to the movies.

INT. TEMPORARY FAMILY BILLETING - EVENING

Louise and Don share a beer as Louise reads fat files.... *

LOUISE
Thirty-five admirals and generals * live in or work on NSA housing and installations. Now, I am the soul * of diplomacy--

DON
I was just gonna say--

LOUISE
But envision a world where anyone can effectively oversee thirty-five- *

DON
Welcome to Major Command, Captain.

LOUISE
And beyond this alleged assault, in the last week a chapel burnt down, galley inexplicably lost power, * Family Support Services ran into a cash problem, and there's a snake * issue.

DON
Snake like--

LOUISE
Like Northwest Annex has about the largest population of endangered snakes in the nation and guess who the protection of both our sailors and the friggin' snakes falls to?

DON
Babe?

LOUISE
What.

DON
I'm proud of you.

LOUISE
Me too, so is it bad I care people think I got my job because I have ovaries? Okay, rephrase. If I worked for it my whole career, does it matter if landing it right this second smells suspiciously like it did have to do with my ovaries?

DON
You got a job you were up for, qualified for, and any dumbass can see's your thing. So the timing's political. Get through this crisis, no one's gonna question your ovaries again.

LOUISE
You're smart. I like you.
(then)
What do we do with Bri, ground him?

DON
Honestly, only part that bothers me is he got into this defending some girl who pulled a knife.

LOUISE
We could tell him never to speak to her again. Guarantee she's pregnant by Christmas, right? Okay, new idea: let's not have kids.

DON
Brilliant.

INT. PAGE'S CAR - NIGHT

Page and Nat drive, when-- Nat SWITCHES OFF the radio.

NATALIE
Look... I'm sorry. About today. I won't do that again.

PAGE
You better not.

NATALIE
I feel bad cause I was gonna tell you to leave town. And now you won't cause I'm a moron and I got suspended.

Page blinks. What?

PAGE
Why would you want me to leave?

NATALIE
It's not good for you right now.

PAGE
Nat. It'll blow over.

NATALIE
And you hate it here.

PAGE
No I don't--

NATALIE
Page. I'm not actually a moron. You're stuck here cause of mom and cause of me.

Page takes that in. And considers how to respond. Quietly--

PAGE
You ever think maybe I wanna be stuck with you? Like maybe there's not that many people I love and relate to since dad got killed? When you get older--

NATALIE
You're not allowed to start sentences like that--

PAGE
Too bad. Eventually you'll realize most people are just-- stupid. They don't get it. They don't understand what we've been through. They're not like us. Just about the only person on earth who's anything like me is you. I'd want to be with you in a garbage dump. I mean it.

ON NAT, taking that in. She needed the reassurance more than she even realized. She opens her mouth to respond--

And the car engine lets out an alarming shriek--

NATALIE
Oh my god what the hell--

EXT. STRETCH OF ROAD - LATER

Page stands over the open hood, baffled, frustrated. Nat leans against the car, giving her a beat. Finally...

NATALIE
Tow truck?

PAGE
You're writing the check, right?

A WEATHERED, HALF-RESTORED OLD CAR drives past-- and, upon seeing them, TURNS and pulls up behind them.

Page pulls out PEPPER SPRAY. Holds it at her side. As-- JACK WEISS, 26ish, a certain laid-back charm, emerges.

JACK
You need some help?

PAGE
We're okay, thanks-- We were about to call a tow truck--

But Jack's already pulling a battered TOOL BOX out.

JACK
I'm a mechanic, want me to see if I can save you the trouble?

Jack takes a few steps-- enough to see Page is armed. He stops, holds his hands up, trying not to smirk.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey, or not. Sorry-- I'll go.

NATALIE
Wait-- don't leave, just show us some ID or something.
(off Page's glare)
Page, he's not a serial killer.

PAGE
You don't know that--

Jack looks to Page. Who finally sighs. Shrugs. *Go.*

EXT. STRETCH OF ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Jack leans over the hood of the car. Nat stands watching with interest, ignoring Page's *go wait in the car* face.

PAGE
It made this sound like we were killing it.

Jack's eyes narrow. He ducks his head down to look.

JACK
It's your fan belt. Hold up.

As he rummages in his tools-- Nat gives Page a *cute!* look-- * Page glares. Jack comes up with... balled up PANTYHOSE. *

PAGE
Are those...

JACK
Ladies' queen sized, a staple of DIY car repair.

He takes 'em, starts tying 'em around the radiator...

NATALIE
So, where do you live?

PAGE
Nat--

JACK
It's fine-- moved here a few months ago. Not much time to meet people. *
(looks up, little smile)
So, hey, weird venue but nice to meet you both. I'm Jack. Weiss. I have ID if you want.

He locks eyes with Page. Something passes between them-- a moment of direct flirtatious energy. Page's eyes narrow.

PAGE
Take off your hat.

Jack's taken aback. But shrugs, pulls it off: Navy cut.

PAGE (CONT'D)
Moved here-- stationed here.

NATALIE
Uh oh.
(to Jack)
Page doesn't like guys in the Navy. She has like a rule.

Jack raises an eyebrow at that. More curious than offended.

JACK
Huh. Try it now.
(off her WTF look)
The engine. Turn on the car?

Page flushes. Hurries to the driver's seat, turns it on--

Smooth happy engine sound. She leans out the window. Ready for this to be over now. Hello, awkwardness.

PAGE
Great. Look, thanks for your help--

JACK
Sure. So, I don't wanna pry, but--

PAGE
Then don't. Nat?

NATALIE
Thank you. Sorry.

Nat hops in. They peel out. Jack watches 'em go, bemused.

EXT. KIRK AND MARLA'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT *

Marla sits reading the Krista article. Mortified-- it's her fault. Kirk comes out to join her. She puts it away. *

KIRK *
You gonna tell dad you got into *
that school or not? *

MARLA *
Right. Have you met him? Kirk... *
I do a lot of stupid things. I just *
wanted to see if I could get in. *

KIRK
You should go. So Dad'll hulk *
out. It's worth it. Freak. *

MARLA *
I'm gonna miss you. Dickface.

EXT. CHUCK'S BARRACKS - NIGHT *

Chuck heads in. Tired, pensive. She reaches for the door-- *

FLASH TO: *

INT. CHUCK'S ROOM - NIGHT - **FLASHBACK** *

Chuck's on the phone, freaked. *

CHUCK
Sir, I just-- need your help---

INT. HANGAR - SAME TIME

Jack's alone, ON CELL, concerned--

INTERCUT CHUCK AND JACK.

JACK
Get to the hospital, I'll meet you--

CHUCK
She's in the shower--

JACK
No-- Chuck, get her out now-- she's washing off evidence--

Chuck's running with the phone, into the BATHROOM--

CHUCK
Grace! You gotta get out--

Chuck DROPS the phone, charges into the shower and drags Grace out, soaking wet and naked below frame.

GRACE RILEY
What's wrong with you!

CHUCK
We're going to the hospital, okay, AD-1's meeting us--

GRACE RILEY
No. You want this to ruin my life?

Chuck wraps a towel around Grace-- who PUSHES her away.

CHUCK
Okay, just tell me one thing, okay? Who does that to a woman once? Want 'em to keep doing it?

That lands with Grace. She stops dead. She gets it.

BACK TO SCENE.

Chuck snaps back to reality. Regret all over her face.

BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE *

EXT. MARINE TRAINING DEPOT - NIGHT *

In the pre-dawn hours of morning, the bus pulls up. DRILL * INSTRUCTOR RICHARDS, impeccable, awaits. The bus door opens-- *

D.I. RICHARDS *
GET OFF MY BUS. NOW. NOW. NOW. *

The RECRUITS-- now sleep deprived, disoriented, jittery with * nerves-- scramble to obey. They race off the bus.

D.I. RICHARDS (CONT'D)
GET YOUR FEET ON MY YELLOW
FOOTPRINTS. NOW. NOW. NOW.

WE FIND KIRK-- as he races with the others to the iconic YELLOW FOOTPRINTS painted on the ground.

D.I. RICHARDS (CONT'D)
Recruits at attention SAY YES SIR
DRILL INSTRUCTOR SIR!

MARINE RECRUITS
YES SIR DRILL INSTRUCTOR SIR!

D.I. RICHARDS
I am about to break you to make you
United States Marines. Do you want
to be Marines?

MARINE RECRUITS
YES SIR DRILL INSTRUCTOR SIR!

D.I. RICHARDS
Alright then. So know this now and
keep it close: you will transform.

EXT. PLANT - MORNING

Krista heads in. Polished, flawless, face betraying nothing.

D.I. RICHARDS (V.O.) (POSTLAP)
But first you will suffer and you
will wish you were dead.

Krista's facade's holding up great, when--

FACTORY GIRL #1 (O.C.)
Krista. You look so good.

Krista turns-- to see the Girl, smiling knowingly.

FACTORY GIRL #1 (CONT'D)
Well, considering.

Krista blinks. Starts to turn away. But then can't help it:

KRISTA
You think this is funny? Lives detstroyed with no proof-- you know what is true, those officers serve your country and you're smiling like you finally have something to gloat about. That's just-- sick.

CONRAD WILMONT (O.C.)
Krista.

Uh oh. Krista turns. Her dad is not happy.

INT. PLANT - CONRAD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

KRISTA
Dad. She was being ridiculous--

CONRAD WILMONT
I'm more sorry than you know that this is happening. And-- it's happening to this whole town. Anything that inflames it--

KRISTA
I'm not inflaming--

CONRAD WILMONT
--affects this business.

KRISTA
So you're firing me?

CONRAD WILMONT
Go home. Okay?

INT - OFFICE OF CO NSA HAMPTON ROADS - DAY

Louise's AIDE hands her a forms to sign as--

LOUISE'S AIDE
You're scheduled to meet with the Head of Security, then Family Support Services, followed by a tour of the barracks. And *USA Today* called. I told them you weren't available.

A KNOCK, and-- Lt. Huffington pokes his head in.

MARK HUFFINGTON
Sorry, Captain, I'm a little early.

LOUISE
Please, you're the closest thing I got to a familiar face. Sit.

She nods to dismiss her Aide, as Mark hands her a file.

MARK HUFFINGTON
Everything on the Grace Riley case.

She flips through. *Jesus.* Shuts it. Deep breath. *

LOUISE *
Okay. I need to understand exactly *
where this supposedly happened.
And how. Because making sure *
Hampton Roads is a safe environment- *
that buck makes a profound pause
with you and stops with me.

MARK HUFFINGTON
Understood.

LOUISE
Here's the truth, okay? It's not
even about those three guys.
Guilty, not guilty, indicting them
doesn't solve the problem and
vindicating them doesn't erase it.
I'm not suggesting we strap on
capes-- just saying let's take the
hint that there's some work to do.
One woman in ICU's enough.

MARK HUFFINGTON
Yes ma'am.

LOUISE
I'll study this, you pull together
any previous assault reports going *
back three years; we'll reconvene. *
And obviously if you see any press,
shoot to kill.

He laughs. Grim business, but at least they like each other.

INT. JET HANGAR - DAY *

Jack oversees jet maintenance workers ("maintainers"). *

WE FIND CHUCK, putting tools in a box, glazed, mind *
elsewhere. Until-- *ow!* She hisses, looks down-- *

She just cut her palm open with a pliers. Shit. *

JACK *
You okay there, Chuck? *

CHUCK *
Fine, sir, hand just slipped. *

OFF JACK, concerned, watching Chuck get the first aid kit. *

INT. MP OFFICE - MEETING ROOM - DAY *

ON a FLATSCREEN, PHONE CAMERA FOOTAGE of GRACE RILEY in a hospital gown, hair slightly damp. She's exhausted, wired.

GRACE RILEY
--they were tailgating. They said Lieutenant White just got engaged, have a beer with them....

BRITTANY (O.C. HOLDING CAMERA)
How many beers did you have?

GRACE RILEY
Two. Two. How many times do I have to repeat every single thing?!

Grace starts quietly crying. She's at her limit.

BRITTANY (O.C. HOLDING CAMERA)
You want to finish this tomorrow?

GRACE RILEY
(laughs through her tears)
Finish. I told you who raped me, aren't I <u>finished</u>?

BRITTANY (O.C.) *
Why don't you just take a few deep breaths, okay, I'm on your side, Grace, we do this on your clock...

It seems Brittany's succeeded in calming Grace. When-- out of nowhere-- Grace is up like a shot, now intense, terrified-- * *

GRACE RILEY
Just <u>get away from me</u>, you don't know what you're talking about-- lock the door-- shut that off, <u>now</u>--

She looks for all the world like someone who just <u>snapped</u>. (FYI, closer examination will reveal she looked to the door and <u>saw someone O.C</u>. But that's subtle enough for us-- and our heroes-- to miss till someone zooms in, later.)

BRITTANY (O.C.)
Okay-- calm down, just--

GRACE RILEY
<u>You calm down,</u> you don't understand, you can't help me, <u>no one can help me</u>-- *

WE SEE Brittany fumble with the camera to CLICK OFF.

Brittany is affected by the tape. Friel speaks quietly.

SPECIAL AGENT FRIEL
At that point you went for help?

BRITTANY *
Yes. Unfortunately the ER was a *
zoo-- it took a few moments--

SPECIAL AGENT FRIEL
And when you returned?

BRITTANY
I knew something was wrong because
suddenly there was a-- commotion, *
and they were locking down the ER. *

SPECIAL AGENT FRIEL
Because they'd discovered the
missing Haldol.

BRITTANY
A syringe was gone. So I ran back *
in-- <u>ran</u>-- but by then she'd hit
the floor. If I'd known she... *

SPECIAL AGENT FRIEL
Of course.

Friel hits a button, winding back to the moment before Grace gets hysterical. He lets it run a moment, SILENTLY.

SPECIAL AGENT FRIEL (CONT'D)
It does appear you were helping her *
calm down before-- *

BRITTANY
That's what it felt like to me too.
But-- now I know what we're seeing *
is just-- what happens at the
moment someone snaps.

Friel nods. Sighs. Unfortunately, that sounds plausible.

SPECIAL AGENT FRIEL
Okay. Thank you for your time.

Brittany rises. Once her back is turned, we see how shaken and drained she is. *

D.I. RICHARDS (V.O.) (PRELAP)
We call this the Crucible.

EXT. MARINE TRAINING DEPOT - DAY

Recruits, hair BUZZED, LINE UP near a monster hill. We PAN OVER their faces, many hiding fear. D.I. holds a STOPWATCH.

D.I. RICHARDS
You WILL run three miles in the next twenty eight minutes or this WILL be your last day am I CLEAR?

WE FIND KIRK. He's not scared, he's <u>stoked</u>.

MARINE RECRUITS
YES SIR!

D.I. RICHARDS
GO! GO! GO!

EXT. MARINE TRAINING DEPOT - LATER

Kirk, sweaty, pushes up a final hill. D.I. stands at the top-- *

D.I. RICHARDS
Don't you slow down-- this is enemy fire, not a shoe sale at the mall--

Kirk makes it! As he passes the D.I.-- *

D.I. RICHARDS (CONT'D)
Not bad, get some water.

Holy shit, that was like a <u>compliment</u>. He heads for the canteens-- and then-- stops in his tracks. And-- COLLAPSES.

BLACKOUT.

<u>END OF ACT THREE</u>

ACT FOUR

INT. CLINIC - DAY

VARIOUS SCANS of a HUMAN HEART, on a COMPUTER MONITOR.

Kirk sits on an exam table, staring at the screen. A MARINE DOCTOR, 50s, kind but firm, is explaining it to him.

MARINE DOCTOR
It's a congenital defect. You've had this your whole life...

The doctor's voice FADES AWAY as Kirk stares numbly. Till--

MARINE DOCTOR (CONT'D)
...precludes service, but you'll need to talk to your recruiter.

Kirk blinks. Not sure he just heard that.

KIRK
But I can get it fixed, right?

MARINE DOCTOR
This isn't a reversible condition.
(then, gently)
We're sending you home, son.

Kirk stares at the doctor in total disbelief.

INT. NAVAL HOPSITAL - ICU - NIGHT

A NURSE checks Grace Riley's vitals. As he leaves-- Don enters. Sits beside Grace. And just watches her. Troubled.

INT. THE BIRD - NIGHT

Chuck's alone in a corner, nursing a beer, troubled. When-- Jack approaches her table. She's surprised.

JACK
This is where the tough kids hang out, huh? You mind?

She nods-- he joins her. And-- notices PAGE waiting a table.

JACK (CONT'D)
Glad I finally stopped in. So. How's, you know, the weather?

Chuck just sighs. Shakes her head. Not good.

JACK (CONT'D)
Chuck, what three things do I hate?

She meets his eyes. If she weren't miserable she'd smile.

CHUCK
Priests, vegans, and shrinks, sir.

JACK
Exactly. Not here to headshrink you, okay. But let's be real. You did everything you could for Riley--

CHUCK
Exactly, maybe I shoulda left her the hell alone--

JACK
Leave a man wounded?

CHUCK
Well-- I dunno what to tell you, sir, I just feel like-- it's on me.

JACK
It's not on you.
(off her silence)
How come you're such a good maintainer, you think?

CHUCK
I dunno, my dad wanted a boy.

JACK
See, I got a total of two females and drown me alive I did not say this, they're just superior. Except right now I'm down one. And everyone's screwed up over it, bonus, right?

He touches her bandaged hand.

JACK
I can't be down two, Chuck.

CHUCK
I... hear you. Sir. Thanks.

INT. THE BIRD - BAR AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Jack waits for beers. He spots-- PAGE, collecting glasses. He gives her a nod. She reluctantly nods back-- zero sign of friendliness or willingness to talk, and walks away.

STAY WITH Page as she carries a tray of dirty glass-- And is INTERCEPTED BY KRISTA, in a coat, eyes glinting.

KRISTA
Just wanted you to know-- wasn't me. I didn't talk to the bitch.

Krista pulls out a folded printout. It's an ARTICLE.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Gotta hand it to her. Your arrest was sealed, right? Then there's your dad, who at least she says died a hero-- except she makes it sound like now you bang anything in a uniform. Plus of course there's your mom.

Page tenses. Oh Jesus. What's it say...

KRISTA (CONT'D)
I mean, sure, people talk, they know she's got serious issues--

PAGE
(quietly furious)
Pot kettle, babe.

KRISTA
But now they know cops "wrestled her to the ground, breaking her arm," and threw her in a loony bin.
(then)
I almost feel bad for you. And I do feel bad for Nat. She didn't ask to be Holly's kid or your sister. Gonna suck for her when everyone reads this. Trust me.

Krista places the page atop the glasses and walks away. That didn't make her feel any better. In fact-- she feels worse.

INT. NAVAL HOSPITAL - ICU - NIGHT

Don sits quietly in the corner. When he hears--

MALE NURSE(O.C.) *
--because we should-- *

FEMALE NURSE (O.C.) *
You think they'll believe you? *
Think about what comes down on us. *

Don stirs-- two NURSES in the doorway see him, STARTLE. *

FEMALE NURSE (CONT'D)
Sorry, sir, didn't see you there.

DON
It's okay-- couldn't help but overhear-- were you here the night this woman was admitted?

The nurses exchange a quick glance.

FEMALE NURSE
Oh-- no, we weren't. Would you excuse us, sir? *

Don really wants to probe. But knows it's not gonna work.

DON
Sure. Have a good night.

EXT. WATERFRONT PARK - NIGHT

A lone figure approaches the Monument. Krista, carrying a brown bag liquor bottle. She sits. Cracks the bottle--

MALE VOICE (O.C)
Krista?

Krista STARTLES. Sees, in the shadows, wrapped in a blanket--

KRISTA
Kirk?! Jesus--

KIRK
Hey. Didn't mean to scare you.

He sits by her. Drapes the blanket over them. Re: bottle--

KIRK (CONT'D)
What is that?

KRISTA
(dry)
Milk and cookies.

She hands it to him. He takes a big swig. She takes him in.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Why aren't you at Basic?

KIRK
Oh, didn't work out.

KRISTA
Kirk! What does that mean?

KIRK
Let's not talk about it. Really.
So... where's everyone?

She drinks. At this rate, they will be drunk very shortly.

KRISTA
Everyone. With each other, I guess.
(more raw)
Dunno if you heard, my personal life is radioactive. And you know what the really fun part is? People love it. 'Cause I deserve it, right? I'm spoiled, I'm mean--

KIRK
Oh, so now you're some bad person?

KRISTA
(sharp laugh)
You don't know what I am--

KIRK
Hey, maybe I was just the little bro but if anyone had a vantage point--

KRISTA
Then you know-- I've said things, I've walked away from people--

KIRK
Well you were nice to me when no one was. You tutored me in math--

KRISTA
I'm friends with your sister.

He waves that off, a little loose now from the booze, a little emboldened-- but laser focused on his point.

KIRK
Don't. And you're not spoiled, you been working at your family's thing basically since you were born, they're getting a deal.
(then, on a roll)
You never forget a birthday. You throw all the parties. You're just this light. It's why people want to be around you. You're this light.

Krista's taken off guard by that. They lock eyes. A moment passes between them. Then, quiet, raw, a sudden confession--

KRISTA
I think he did it. To that woman.
(quickly)
No I don't, oh my God, I'm drunk.
(quieter)
I haven't even visited. You know, that night-- he left a message, he sounded *weird*, and just-- sometimes he tells me about where he's been, things he's seen and-- how well do I know him? Do I know what he's capable of? Or anyone is?

KIRK
Maybe not.

KRISTA
I'm scared I got engaged to someone evil.

KIRK
Krista. It's not your fault--

KRISTA
Then why do I feel like this?

KIRK
Because, nothing's fair. If I--

Abruptly-- she leans over and KISSES HIM. He's stunned.

And then-- he pulls her to him. It's not sweet, it's heated, full of need, fueled by rejection and pain and everything they don't want to feel right now. They're reaching under each other's clothes, trying to get closer...

BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. THE BIRD - NIGHT

Page sits on her car, back to the bar (and us). Reading the article, smoking a cigarette. When-- Jack APPROACHES.

JACK
Hey. Pepper Spray. Just came to say hi before I...

She glances at him over her shoulder. She's been crying.

PAGE
So you said hi. Drive safe now.

Jack pauses. Considers: crying woman, fairly hostile.

JACK
You okay there?

PAGE
I'm amazing. Look, let's pick this up when I'm not having a breakdown.

JACK
Way I see it, you don't like me, you got a rule, I'm the perfect guy to cry around; I don't even count.

She rolls her eyes. Regards him. Eyes narrowing.

PAGE
Why are you nice? I'm not nice.

JACK
I dunno, must be an idiot. Or you're not so bad. It's anyone's guess.

She gives him a hard look. He shrugs, unruffled.

PAGE
Are you even really a mechanic?

JACK
Just, think bigger than cars.

PAGE
Subsurface or aviation?

JACK
Listen to you, “subsurface.”
(off her shrug)
Jet maintenance.

PAGE
Always liked enlisted guys.
(dry, off his look)
Not like <u>that</u>.

JACK
Just thought you hated us all.

PAGE
No, I can relate. Having to work right out of high school. Et cetera.

JACK
Try getting your GED and ditching home at seventeen.

PAGE
Someone was in a hurry.

JACK
(matter of fact)
I’d’a sold a kidney to get outta that house.

PAGE
I can relate to that too.
(bitter chuckle)
Hey, you can read all about it here. It’s all my dirty laundry in one convenient article.

She holds up the page. He raises a brow, smiles.

JACK
Rather hear your stories from you.

PAGE
Don’t get flirty.

JACK
(holds up hands)
Yes ma’am. My thought was more trade you, messed up story for messed up story. By the end we’d be so disgusted we’d definitely never want to get near each other.

That gets a laugh out of her. Then, just off the cuff friendly-- still not crossing the flirting line--

JACK (CONT'D)
So, you got a rule against sitting next to me?

She hesitates. Trying to put words to her ambivalence--

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey. It's okay. Thought I'd ask. Alright-- I'm heading in--

He moves to go. Page stops him with--

PAGE
You know that girl I was with in the car?

JACK
Your sister?

PAGE
I'm all she's got. Just, so you understand I'm not just a bitch.

JACK
I know you're not.

PAGE
Other girls make a mistake or two, they get to go oh well. I can't. 'Cause I'm it for that girl, and it's so completely unfair to her.

JACK
(beat, then)
So, who do you have?

PAGE
I have her.

JACK
You know what I mean. She's a kid. Who do you have.

She thinks about it. And then just... says nothing.

He sits next to her. She lets him. She doesn't outwardly react but-- we can sense that she's glad he did.

OFF THE TWO OF THEM, sitting together quietly...

EXT. KRISTA'S STREET - NIGHT

Kirk walks Krista home. As they approach--

KRISTA
Thanks. Um-- good luck with your parents and everything.

He kisses her. After a moment she breaks the kiss, smiling too much-- she's conflicted now, torn by what she's done.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
I'll call and check in, 'kay?

Kirk nods. She heads in to her house.

Kirk watches her go. Then turns. And-- a private smile blooms on his face. Holy shit is he in love.

INT. KRISTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Krista enters. Throws herself a guilty look in the mirror. Her gaze is drawn to a PHOTO: her and Paul. She looks away-- and her gaze falls on an old photo-- of her with Page, both 14, lounging on her bed. She stares, raw. We **FLASH TO:**

EXT. WATERFRONT PARK - NIGHT - **2005**

Krista and Page, 14, share fries and watch the boats.

YOUNG PAGE
Ever think, if I don't get out of this town I'll shrivel up and die?

YOUNG KRISTA
Nope. I have a plan. Marry an officer, see the world, then settle down with one boy and one girl and two french bulldogs.

YOUNG PAGE
So, live in a Pottery Barn catalogue.

YOUNG KRISTA
You say that like it's a bad thing.

YOUNG PAGE
Okay, here's my plan. Turn eighteen, get in a car and go.

YOUNG KRISTA
(no judgment)
That sounds like you.
(MORE)

YOUNG KRISTA (CONT'D)
(then)
I'll still call you all the time. I mean, wherever we are.

YOUNG PAGE
You'll have to. How will you even know you picked the right guy? You have to run him by me.

YOUNG KRISTA
Can you imagine? Disaster. We do, like, need each other.

BACK TO PRESENT.

Krista stands there. Alone. Lost.

INT. LOUISE AND DON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Louise is reading in bed. Don enters.

DON
Sorry. I know it's late.
(sits heavily; troubled)
That girl they attacked...

LOUISE
That's where you were? The ICU?
(gently)
Hon. She's not your patient.

DON
I heard something. Some talk.

LOUISE
What kind of talk.

DON
Couple nurses. All I know is they had something to report and they're afraid. Is what I saw.

LOUISE
...Afraid of?

DON
Well, considering the officers responsible are supposedly all confined to quarters, ain't that a question.

INT. MP OFFICE - NIGHT

Only Brittany, still working in the dim. Someone enters...

MARK HUFFINGTON
Just wanted to see how you're holding up.

He leans on the desk. There's a casualness, a familiarity.

MARK HUFFINGTON (CONT'D)
You look tired.

BRITTANY
Ya <u>think</u>? NCIS breathing on me? Anyway... hopefully I'm done.

MARK HUFFINGTON
So relax then. That's good.

He fixes a strand of her hair, and we get what <u>kind</u> of relationship they have. A quite personal one.

MARK HUFFINGTON (CONT'D)
What did you tell them?

BRITTANY
Just... stood by my report. Three officers.
(meets his eyes; quietly)
I didn't tell them she said you were there. And it's not on the tape.

He smiles-- that's great. She smiles back... and there's relief in hers. We start to get... she's scared of him.

MARK HUFFINGTON
That's perfect.
(off her hesitation)
Sweetie. It's okay. You know she's lying anyway, right?

Brittany nods. We can see the ambivalence.

MARK HUFFINGTON (CONT'D)
You did good. Now I can make all this go away. It's gonna be fine. Like it never happened.

BLACKOUT.

<u>END OF ACT FIVE</u>