

BLACK WIDOWS



S01E06

by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. STRIP MALL - EARLY MORNING

It's early morning, but still dark. The only light is from a FLICKERING fluorescent BULB that also reveals the form of a CREEPY MAN tucked in the shadows. The ash of a cigarette glows as he takes a drag.

A mini-van pulls into a parking spot and MEI exits, striding toward her clothing shop. The Creepy Man flicks the cigarette and makes a determined beeline to Mei.

Tension builds as the Creepy Man gets closer. Mei rummages through her purse, looking for her keys. The Creepy Man's GLOVES SQUEAK as his fists clinch.

Just as the Creepy Man is a few steps away, a bright light floods the sidewalk - it's STEVE turning on the lights to his Karate kwoon (dojo). Mei turns and looks at Steve as the Creepy Man suddenly diverts his path and heads toward the parking lot, disappearing behind a van. Mei is none the wiser as Steve smiles warmly at her.

FLASHBACK - INT. STEVE'S KARATE KWON - DAY

Mei violently flips Steve over her shoulder during a lesson, but she falls with him. They roll and Steve ends up on top of her. The two share a sexually-tense, heated moment.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO STRIP MALL

Mei blushes as she recalls the feelings.

Suddenly, a hand grabs her shoulder. Startled, Mei grabs the hand and hurls it's owner over her shoulder. However, just like with Steve, she falls, rolls and ends up on the bottom of her attacker - DETECTIVE YANG on top. Mei and Detective Yang share an surprisingly hot moment, as DETECTIVE PADILLA watches with surprise. Steve rushes out of his kwoon to intervene.

PADILLA
(flashing her badge)
Slow down, Chuck Norris.

Steve stops in his tracks.

PADILLA (CONT'D)

(to Yang)

Now, if you two are finished...

An embarrassed Yang stands and helps Mei to her feet.

MEI

(to Steve)

It's alright, Steve.

Steve returns to his dojo, but watches from the window.

MEI (CONT'D)

Aren't cops supposed to announce themselves or something?

YANG

(tucking in his shirt)

When we're dealing with criminals.

Mei finally retrieves her keys.

MEI

(unlocking the door)

I suppose you can come in.

INT. CLOTHING SHOP - MORNING

Mei flicks on the lights as they step inside..

PADILLA

You know, you didn't have your feet set properly.

MEI

Excuse me?

Another car pulls up and ECHO and CATHY exit, walking toward Mei's clothing shop.

PADILLA

Your feet. You need a wider stance. That's why you over-rotated and he ended up on top. Which could be good, depending on what kind of mood you're in. Watch this.

Padilla suddenly grabs Yang by the arm and expertly flips him over her shoulder, only she stays on her feet.

YANG
WHAT THE HELL, PADILLA!?!

PADILLA
See? Feet apart.

ECHO
(walking through the door;
confused)
Um ... did we miss something?

Yang huffs and puffs as he gets to his feet. Padilla shoots him a wry smile.

YANG
(trying to maintain his demeanor)
Can we just please get on with this?

CATHY
(dropping her purse on a table)
We told you everything we know.

PADILLA
We have new information about how your
husbands died.

The widows share a tense look as Padilla admires a blouse.

YANG
The boat didn't explode because of a
single bomb. There were two.

MEI
Two boats?

YANG
Two bombs.

The widows share another glance.

YANG (CONT'D)
One was a low-grade device of the
homemade variety. Real amateur-hour.

CATHY
I need tea.

PADILLA
But that bomb didn't go off.

CATHY
(surprised)
Really?

Echo shoots Cathy a look that, if looks could kill, Cathy would leave in pieces. Cathy looks away.

YANG
Forensics determined that there was a second bomb. Something bigger and more sophisticated that used C4. That's the bomb that detonated. That's what -

MEI
Killed our husbands.

All three widows sit down at the same time, stunned.

EXT. STRIP MALL - EARLY MORNING

The Creepy Man from earlier peers from behind a van and watches closely as the widows speak with the detectives. The man turns around, lights another cigarette - it's TIAN.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. DOOR COMPANY WAREHOUSE - DAY

Tian looks over his shoulder as he enters through the back of his door company's warehouse. He looks both pissed and paranoid as he weaves through the maze of doors and machinery. He stops cold when he sees REMI.

Remi is lying in a pool of blood, battered and beaten, his arm crushed and trapped in a hydraulic hot press.

TIAN
(rushing to Remi)
Remi!

Remi is barely conscious.

TIAN (CONT'D)
(pushing buttons on the press)
Hold on, man.

Instead of lifting, the hydraulic press pushes down more.

REMI
(thrashing)
Stop! Stop! Stop!

TIAN
Shit!

Tian turns off the machine.

TIAN (CONT'D)
(searching Remi's pocket and
finding his phone)
I'm calling an ambulance.
(taps on the phone)
Shit! What's your passcode? I can't
unlock it!

REMI
Pete...

TIAN
Pete did this?

REMI
Mei...

TIAN
Mei? What do you mean Mei?

REMI
(fading)
Mei... Pete's men... Don't need...

TIAN
(close to Remi's face)
Remi, what does Mei have to do with
Pete? Remi!

REMI GURGLES one last time and dies. Tian, stunned, takes a beat before frantically wiping away his fingerprints from anything he touched, including Remi's bloody face.

TIAN (CONT'D)
(panicked)
Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit.

As he wipes the buttons on the hydraulic press, the press raises and Remi's body slumps to the floor. As he looks at the body, Tian thinks about Remi's last words and anger flashes across his face as he storms out.

INT. CLOTHING SHOP - DAY

The widows pull chairs into a circle and begin absorbing the information the detectives gave them.

CATHY
Two bombs...

ECHO
Didn't see that one coming.

MEI
What does that mean?

CATHY
It means that someone wanted our
husbands dead more than we did.

ECHO
Well, I wouldn't say more...

MEI
Should we be concerned?

ECHO
Concerned? We should be ecstatic.

A KNOCK at the door. A blonde-haired, blue-eyed REPAIRMAN waves at the widows.

MEI
(cracking the door)
I'm sorry, but we're not open yet.

REPAIRMAN
Oh, no. My name is Carl and I'm from Don's Air Conditioner Repair. I have it here that there's a Friedrich VHA09 Vert-I-Pak that needs serviced.

MEI
Yes. Right. Sorry. Come in.

Mei opens the door as Echo and Cathy glare at her.

CARL (REPAIRMAN)
I'll just be a jiff.

Cathy and Echo's glares continue.

MEI
(sitting back down)
What? I hate rescheduling appointments.

ECHO
(sotto voice as Carl opens the fridge)
If the other bomb –

MEI and CATHY SHUSH her.

ECHO (CONT'D)
(in Chinese; subtitled)
If the other bomb is what killed them and the cops know this, that means we're in the clear.

MEI and CATHY SHUSH her again.

ECHO (CONT'D)
Seriously? There's no one else here, except Captain America. And his name is Carl. You really think he speaks Mandarin?

Hearing his name, Carl pops his head out from around the corner. He's very American. The widows wave.

The widows all speak in Chinese with SUBTITLES.

MEI

So this means we can start dealing with our real problems. We're free.

CATHY

Those cops are still suspicious and it's not like we can just waltz in the police station and tell them that our bomb was just for practice.

ECHO

I agree. We still need to play it safe. We're not free yet.

MEI

At least we're free from the guilt.

ECHO

Guilt? Really?

Carl approaches.

CARL

(to Mei)

Right as rain. Just needed coolant.
(handing Mei a sheet of paper)
You're good to go.

MEI

(in English)

Thank you.

With a smile, Carl leaves. The widows wait until he gets into his truck before resuming.

CATHY

If we didn't kill them, who did?

ECHO

Who cares? They were assholes. There was probably a line around the block waiting for an opportunity.

CATHY

We could be in danger.

MEI

We were already in danger.

Unexpectedly, WANG JEI emerges from the back with a drink holder full of boba.

WANG JEI

Good morning, ladies. Wanted to bring you something to brighten your day.

MEI

(trying to not act surprised)
Morning, Wang.

The widows look at each other. They obviously didn't know what Wang Jei was there and are left wondering what she actually overheard.

INT. YANG'S CAR - DAY

Yang is driving while Padilla is riding shotgun, reading through a case file.

PADILLA

(putting the file down)
Someone else wanted them dead. This kills me, Yang, but I'm afraid you were right. There's something bigger at play here.

Yang pulls out his phone and turns on the voice recorder.

YANG

I'm sorry, can you repeat that?

PADILLA

There's definitely something bigger at play here.

YANG

No, no. I'm sorry. The sentence right before that one.

PADILLA

(not amused; over-enunciating)
Eat - me - Yang.

YANG

(gloating)
That's okay. I don't need to record it. I'll always remember. In fact, this is cause for a celebration.

Yang pulls into an In And Out drive-thru.

PADILLA

I thought Chinese ate healthy.

YANG

I was raised in the Valley, Padilla,
and in the Valley, it's never too
early for a double double.

They're waiting in an obnoxiously long In and Out line.

YANG (CONT'D)

So, what made you see the light?

PADILLA

I talked to Echo's mother-in-law,
Vivian and she put me onto one of
Jack's clients - this guy named
Harvey. He's a bad apple. Ends up the
Feds have been on him for a while;
money laundering, human trafficking, a
dirtbag cornucopia.

YANG

Vivian couldn't have been happy about
the company her son kept.

PADILLA

Well, this guy hides his trail through
a bunch of "legitimate" investments in
China. Shell companies owned by shell
companies. You know the game.

YANG

Investments Jack was facilitating?

PADILLA

That's my gut.

YANG

(pulling up to the speaker)
And now to my gut.
(to Padilla)
You want in? They have a secret menu.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Yang drops a greasy In And Out bag onto his desk.

YANG

Gotta be honest. It kills me too.

PADILLA

Damn right that will kill you.

YANG

No, I mean that I think you're right about the widows. There's a good chance they made the homemade bomb.

(biting into his burger; talking with his mouth full)

Everything is a little too coincidental for me. I think you're right - there's something there.

Padilla stares at a whiteboard where they have the pictures of the victims, suspects, case notes, etc. Another detective, EDDIE, walks over and drops a case file on Yang's desk.

EDDIE

New forensics report.

PADILLA

Talk to me.

EDDIE

Ends up that the lab found trace amounts of phosphate fertilizer on the homemade bomb.

YANG

So?

EDDIE

(excited)

So, that's a direct Chinese link.

Padilla and Yang don't get it.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(talking as if they should know)

China has 9% of the world's arable land and has to feed 21% of the world's population. The problem is that 80% of China's crop land is phosphate poor.

PADILLA

What's the punchline, Rain Man?

EDDIE

You can't use regular fertilizer in China to grow crops. You have to use a
(MORE)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

special Chinese synthetic phosphate fertilizer to make up deficit.

(still waiting for them to get it)

Which means whoever made the homemade bomb, sourced the materials from China. You have three suspects who are Chinese. Hashtag significant.

(to Yang)

I can't believe you didn't know this.

YANG

First of all, no one knows this.

Second of all, I know you have a weird infatuation with Chinese culture, but it's not as glamorous as you think.

EDDIE

Why are you so anti-Chinese?

PADILLA

(piling on for sport)

Yeah, Yang. Why do you hate China?

YANG

I don't hate China! I'm just saying that nothing is all good or all bad. There's always a balance.

EDDIE

Like Thanos. Love that movie.

YANG

(drawing on the whiteboard)

Like the Ying and Yang. Duality. You know, the Way begot one, and the one, two; then the two begot three; and the three, all else – to balance everything in existence.

Padilla and Eddie look at each other, impressed.

PADILLA

Holy chopsticks, Batman. I think he's Chinese after all. So, what does that mean for our case?

YANG

(sitting back down and taking another bite of his burger)

Nothing. We're still in the same

(MORE)

YANG (CONT'D)
place. Two bombs, two theories and
some Chinese fertilizer.

Padilla's PHONE RINGS. She answers.

PADILLA
(into phone)
Got it.
(hangs up; to Yang)
We have another body.

INT. PIANO BAR - DAY

The bar is relatively empty. Echo sits behind the bar looking at job openings on her phone. BETTY approaches and hands her a paycheck.

BETTY
Congrats, doll. You're officially a
contributing member of society.

ECHO
(not looking up from the phone)
Perfect. Thanks.

BETTY
(looking at Echo's phone)
Already looking for another job?

ECHO
Not another - a second.

Echo opens WeChat and quickly types a message:

"MAGNOLIA MAN: I have the rest. I'll
send this PM."

Echo puts her phone down as DAVE approaches the bar.

DAVE
Well, let me be the bearer of good
news. I sent one of your songs to an
A&R guy I know in town.

ECHO
You what?

DAVE
I sent one of your songs -

ECHO

I heard you the first time. How did you get one of my songs?

DAVE

Remember when you played that Gaga record on the piano?

ECHO

Dave...

DAVE

I recorded it.

ECHO

You what?

DAVE

I recorded -

ECHO

I heard you the first time!

DAVE

It was lit. You have pipes.

ECHO

And you had no right!

DAVE

Easy, my gal. My A&R guy thought it was dope too.

ECHO

That's not the point.

DAVE

That is the point. He wants you to send him another cut.

ECHO

(looks up, anger subsiding)
Really?

DAVE

Says he wants something that "reveals your soul."

Even though she wants to be angry, Echo's face betrays her excitement for the opportunity.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I think what you mean to say is "thank you, Dave."

ECHO

(a "you-gotta-be-kidding-me" look on her face)

Thank you, Dave?

DAVE

(smiles)

You're welcome, Echo.

Echo smiles as well, not able to resist Dave's charm.

ECHO

How about a blues song about how I'm homeless, my cat's starving, and I need a second job? And don't forget about the husband I need in two weeks so I'm not deported.

DAVE

Sounds more like a country tune to me.

Betty writes a number on a napkin and pushes it to Echo.

ECHO

I can't help with the husband, but I my have a line on a second job. My sister is hiring.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Echo walks through the hallway of the Sunrise of Topanga retirement home, trying to keep up with the determined strides of MISS MAISEL, a no-nonsense administrator that is the near-identical twin of Betty - if Betty never smiled.

MISS MAISEL

So, you work at the liquor store too?

ECHO

The piano bar.

MISS MAISEL

And what are your responsibilities?

ECHO

I'm a bar back.

MISS MAISEL

It doesn't matter. Are you on time?

ECHO

Now?

MISS MAISEL

At the liquor store?

ECHO

The piano bar. And like a clock.

MISS MAISEL

Have you ever washed dishes?

ECHO

I'm familiar with the concept.

Miss Maisel turns and they enter a room. Miss Maisel stops as they look at a stack of bed pans.

MISS MAISEL

Good. You can start tonight.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - NIGHT

Echo is in scrubs and is working the graveyard shift. She's clearly not loving it, but doing what she needs to do.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Echo goes into an old man's room, gets a bed pan, goes into the bathroom and we hear a PLOP and FLUSH.

Echo goes into an old woman's room, gets a bed pan, goes into the bathroom and we hear a SPLASH and FLUSH.

Echo is hand-washing bed pans.

CUTS GET FASTER

Echo emptying another. PLOP. FLUSH.

Echo emptying another. SPLASH. FLUSH.

Echo hand-washing.

PLOP.

FLUSH.

SPLASH.

FLUSH.

Hand-washing.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Echo collapses on a couch with a hideous floral pattern. She takes a beat to breathe. Her PHONE RINGS. Someone is FaceTiming her.

ECHO
(answering)
Hello?

A MAN, burly and tattooed, appears on her phone. By his clothing and the background, it's clear that he's a prisoner.

MAN
Echo?

ECHO
Yes.

MAN
Lawrence Sousa. Friends call me Law.
You sent me an email last week. We
scheduled a...um...video date.

ECHO
 (remembering; trying to quickly
 fix her hair)
 Oh, yes. Um, nice to meet you. I'm
 actually at work...

MAN (LAWRENCE)
 I don't have a lot of time either, so
 we can just get to it.

Another WORKER comes into the break room. He's micro-waving a
 bowl of beef stew.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)
 I think we can help each other out.

The Worker pulls his beef stew out. A CLOSE SHOT reminds Echo
 of what was in the bed pans.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)
 My mom's old and needs help. And I
 guess you still need a husband.

ECHO
 (trying not to gag because of the
 beef stew)
 I do.

LAWRENCE
 I need you to understand that I won't
 be available, physically,
 for...well...twenty-five years.
 Outside of the occasional conjugal
 visit, of course.

The Worker then pours lemonade into a glass. A CLOSER SHOT is
 another reminder of the bed pans.

ECHO
 (still trying not to gag)
 I don't think that will be a problem.

LAWRENCE
 Are you okay with taking care of old
 folks? Diapers, the whole get up?

The Worker sits down next to her, spoons up a chunk of brown
 beef. Echo tries not to look.

ECHO
 (disgusted, getting up and running
 out of the break room)
 Yeah, I gotta go...

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Cathy unlocks the door and enters her living to see CASS,
 feet kicked up on the coffee table, playing a VIDEO GAME. The
 sound SHOOTING and EXPLOSIONS fill the house as Cass screams
 into his headset.

CASS
 Go! Go! Go! Go! I have the flares. Go
 out the back! No, I said the back!
 (disgusted; throwing his
 controller down)
 Noob.

Cathy, annoyed, unplugs the television as she walks past.

CASS (CONT'D)
 (incensed)
 What the hell, bro!?!

CATHY
 (keeps walking)
 Get a job, bro.

CASS
 Don't be so extra, lady!
 (plugging the TV back in)
 You're angry AF.

CATHY
 I blame my roommates.

CASS
 (sitting; kicking his feet back up)
 My mom wants to talk.

CATHY
 (exhausted, heading upstairs)
 I'm sure she does.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Cathy walks into her bedroom and collapses onto her bed. She
 jumps when TRACEE shuffles out of her walk-in closet wearing
 one of Cathy's sexy negligees.

CATHY
(appalled)
Excuse me! My closet is off limits!

TRACEE
(ignoring her; acting seductive in
a full-length mirror)
Oooh, naughty boy needs spanking...

CATHY
(even more horrified)
What are you doing!?!

TRACEE
(still looking into the mirror)
I need to learn English more better.
You my new teacher.

CATHY
(closing her closet door)
I don't have time for you.

TRACEE
(turning to look at Cathy)
You make time. If not you, maybe
Detective Yang teach me.

CATHY
Funny you say that because I learned
something very interesting today.

TRACEE
What, that your roots are showing?

Cathy quickly contemplates whether to let Tracee know about the other bomb, but ultimately relents.

CATHY
Nevermind. Once a week. And I decide
the time.

Cathy sits back down on the beat and takes her shoes off as Tracee picks up her phone.

TRACEE
Perfect. Oh, and I'm sending you the
address for tonight.

CATHY
What's tonight.

TRACEE

You're going to meet your teacher. I made a schedule with therapist.

CATHY

(laughs)

I'm not seeing a therapist.

TRACEE

(tapping the top of Cathy's head)

You're not thinking clear. And I need you to be clear. You need to get your groove back. Like Stella.

CATHY

And you need to walk into traffic.

Tracee coolly dials a number on her phone and turns on the speakerphone. The PHONE RINGS and a VOICE answers.

VOICE (O.S)

Police department. How can I direct your call?

Cathy spins around.

TRACEE

Detective Yang, please.

VOICE (O.S)

Transferring. Please wait.

Cathy acts like she is going to call her bluff, but she's clearly nervous. Detective Yang's voicemail picks up.

YANG (O.S.)

This is Detective Yang, please leave -

Cathy slaps the phone out of Tracee's hand and it falls on the bed. She quickly hits the red button to end the call. She stares at the phone.

CATHY

One session. That's it.

Tracee smiles and turns back to the mirror.

INT. DOOR COMPANY WAREHOUSE - DAY

A CRIME SCENE TECH photographs Remi's dead body as Yang and Padilla approach.

PADILLA
 (seeing the state of the body)
 Damn.

YANG
 (to the Crime Scene Tech)
 What's the word?

CRIME SCENE TECH
 Male. 48. Badly beaten and tortured
 with this machine. Didn't die happy.

YANG
 Any signs of forced entry?

CRIME SCENE TECH
 No obvious signs and no signs of
 theft, though the Uni's are going
 through inventory lists now.

YANG
 You don't torture when you're
 stealing. Torture's personal.

PADILLA
 So, who had something personal with
 this guy?

Yang ponders for a beat.

YANG
 (to Padilla)
 Can you check the security cameras
 while I run out?

PADILLA
 Where are you headed?

YANG
 I gotta hunch.

EXT. STRIP MALL - DAY

Tian watches again as Mei locks her store, gets in her mini-van and leaves. After her car leaves the parking lot, he goes to the back of the store, jimmys the lock on the backdoor, looks around to see if anyone is watching and finally enters.

INT. CLOTHING SHOP - DAY

Tian frantically hunts through files. He's frustrated, but he

finally finds what he's looking for - the book chronicling his business with Pete. He sees new entries - in Mei's handwriting - and notes from Cathy and Echo.

He becomes infuriated, realizing that Mei has replaced him as Pete's go-to. TIAN SCREAMS and repeatedly punches the ledger.

EXT. LINNY'S SCHOOL - DAY

Mei and Linny walk hand-in-hand to their mini-van.

LINNY

I don't understand why I have to take Spanish. I would rather learn Latin.

MEI

We live in Los Angeles, Sweetheart. Plus Latin is a dead language. No one speaks it anymore.

LINNY

I can bring it back from the dead!

MEI

(patting Linny's head)
Life doesn't work like that, bǎobǎo.

LINNY

(pointing to the mini-van)
The lollipop man!

Mei looks up and sees Pete leaning against the van, a large duffel bag next to him. Mei tries not to react for Linny's sake and continues to the van.

PETE

(bending over; pulling out a lollipop; pulling off the wrapper)
Looks like someone worked very hard in school today.

MEI

(taking the lollipop)
Linny, get in the backseat, please.

LINNY

Could I have the lollipop?

MEI

After dinner.

Linny climbs in the van.

MEI (CONT'D)

What do you want?

PETE

We have a shipment that needs to go
our customers.

MEI

Whatever Tian was into, that's not my
responsibility.

PETE

Well, unfortunately, I see it slightly
differently. Since your husband's
gone, you'll need to take up slack.
Consider it a family business.

(looking through the back window
at Linny)

Family is the most precious thing in
life. We can only pray that tragedy
doesn't strike suddenly.

Mei's looks at Linny and her face betrays fear.

PETE (CONT'D)

(bending down and licking the
lollipop in Mei's hand then
whispering into Mei's ear)

Instructions in the bag.

Mei drops the lollipop as Pete walks away. She takes a beat
to stare at the bag and then puts it in the back of her van.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Detective Yang walks up to a medical records counter. He
pulls out his badge and shows it to a RECEPTIONIST.

YANG

I need to pull some emergency room
records from the past six months.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Cathy sits, annoyed, in the waiting room as a collection of BAD MUSIC plays through the INTERCOM. She pecks on her phone trying to ignore all the mentally "weak" people who are waiting with her.

A pretty young RECEPTIONIST opens the door.

RECEPTIONIST

Cathy?

Cathy peeks above her phone.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Doctor Archie will see you now.

Cathy gets up and begins to shuffle past a mousy, homely-looking LADY.

LADY

(looking up from her magazine)

Good luck.

CATHY

Go away.

The Lady's eyes widen, taken aback as Cathy's rudeness.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - COUNSELING SUITE

Cathy walks in and the suite is expertly and ornately decorated with art depicting the form of the human body. Before she can take it all in, she's surprised by DR. ARCHIE, who is pulling a book off a shelf behind her.

DR. ARCHIE

You must be Cathy.

Cathy turns and see him. He's beautiful - as much as a man can be beautiful. He's in his late-twenties, dressed in jeans and a trendy sport coat and is rocking a perfect three-days-growth beard.

CATHY

(slightly flustered)

Are you really a doctor?

DR. ARCHIE
 Are you a really...
 (checking a file)
 twenty-seven?

And somehow from Dr. Archie, it sounds charming.

DR. ARCHIE (CONT'D)
 (smiling and sitting down)
 I'm a doctor, but the Ph.D. kind, not
 the M.D. kind.

Cathy sits down on the couch.

CATHY
 So, how does this work. Talk about my
 mom? Stress at work?

DR. ARCHIE
 We can, but I would love to first get
 a baseline about your vulnerabilities,
 and observationally assess your
 comfort level.

CATHY
 Comfort level about what?

DR. ARCHIE
 Why don't you lay back, close you eyes
 and just listen as I read a passage
 out of this book.

CATHY
 Really?

DR. ARCHIE
 Really.

With an eye roll, Cathy lays back and closes her eyes.

DR. ARCHIE
 Okay, Cathy. I want you to listen to
 what I'm reading and let me know what
 makes you uncomfortable.
 (opening a novel and reading)
 I saw her fake eyelashes and curled
 hair tips moving. Her bracelets made a
 dry sound against each other. Her
 tongue was long and soft and seemed to
 wrap itself around me.

Cathy's brow begins to furl.

DR. ARCHIE (CONT'D)

She suddenly moved away and began slowly to undress me. She took off my jacket, my tie, my pants, my shirt, my underwear, and made me lie down on the bed. Her own clothes she kept on, though. She sat on the bed, took my hand, and brought it under her dress.

Cathy's eyes open wide.

DR. ARCHIE (CONT'D)

She was not wearing panties. My hand felt the warmth of her -

CATHY

(raising up)

Excuse me!

DR. ARCHIE

Is this making you uncomfortable?

CATHY

You're damn right! What kind of therapist are you?

Suddenly, Cathy begins putting together all the clues - much like in a mystery movie when the inspector solves the crime. She remembers the sexually explicit painting in the waiting room, the sexually topical magazines in the waiting room, the art in the this room, and the novel he was reading.

CATHY

(almost afraid to ask)

Wait. Are you a...sex therapist?

DR. ARCHIE

I am. Does that make you uncomfortable?

Cathy is mortified and storms out.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - REC ROOM - NIGHT

The retirement home is quiet as the residents sleep. After a long graveyard shift, Echo plops down in front a television playing an infomercial. As she watches the infomercial, she notices a piano in the corner of the room. She moves to it, sits on the bench and lightly runs her fingers across the

keys. She presses a few keys, which turns into her playing a very simple Chinese nursery rhyme.

FLASHBACK - INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A middle school-aged Echo plays the same nursery rhyme on a piano. She hears her mother talking from the next room.

MOTHER (O.S.)

She's fat and dark. She doesn't have the looks to be a singer.

Young Echo drops her head.

END FLASHBACK

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - REC ROOM - NIGHT

Echo takes her hands off the keys.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

You play?

Echo turns and sees MR. JACKSON, a sweet, 90-something year old man who wheeled into the Rec Room.

ECHO

You should be sleeping...
(sees a name plate on his
wheelchair)
...Mr. Jackson.

MR. JACKSON

Call me Michael. Room 107.

ECHO

Michael Jackson?

MR. JACKSON

Listen, lady, I had it first. Born way back in 1929.

ECHO

Fair enough.

MR. JACKSON

Mama said I was so fat that I crashed the stock market.

Echo laughs.

MR. JACKSON (CONT'D)
Couldn't sleep.

ECHO
You need me to get a nurse?

MR. JACKSON
Don't need a nurse. I need chocolate.
(takes her by the hand)
C'mon. I know where the nurses keep
their stash.

ECHO
You seem like a good guy to know.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Echo pushes Mr. Jackson down the hallway.

MR. JACKSON
How long have you've been playing?

ECHO
Since I can remember.

MR. JACKSON
I used to play with my kids.

ECHO
How many kids do you have?

MR. JACKSON
Five. Two are in Heaven. The other
three are in Arizona, which I consider
the same as being in hell.

ECHO
(laughing)
What are their names?

MR. JACKSON
Tito, Jermaine, La Toya, Marlon and
Jackie.

ECHO
Shut up. Really?

MR. JACKSON
I'm kiddin'.

Echo slaps him on the shoulder.

MR. JACKSON (CONT'D)
Christopher, Vincent, Holly, Amy and
Margie. The girls are going to visit
me on Father's Day.

ECHO
Well, I look forward to meeting them.

Getting close to the nurses' station.

MR. JACKSON
Okay, so top drawer of the desk. Right
side. Got it?

ECHO
Got it.

MR. JACKSON
Say it back.

ECHO
Top drawer. Right side.

They arrive at the nurses' station. A MALE NURSE sits behind
the desk typing on a computer.

MR. JACKSON
Excuse me, young man.

MALE NURSE
Mr. Jackson, you should be asleep.

MR. JACKSON
Easy George and Weezey. I can't sleep
because I think I have a rash...on my
balls.

Echo's eyes widen. She wasn't expecting that.

MR. JACKSON (CONT'D)
Hoping you could take a look and help
me. Man-to-man stuff, if you know what
I mean.

MALE NURSE
Now, the last couple of times you've
complained about this there hasn't
been anything at all.

ECHO
Well, I don't have balls, but I can
(MORE)

ECHO (CONT'D)
 attest he has been really, um, shifty.
 May need some...ball ointment...

Mr. Jackson winks at her.

MALE NURSE
 (takes a deep breath)
 Sure. Let's go take a look.

The Male Nurse starts to wheel Mr. Jackson away.

MR. JACKSON
 (turns his head and mouths to Echo)
 Top. Drawer.

Echo smiles as they disappear down the hall.

EXT. MEI'S HOUSE - DAY

Mei is rushing. She's lugging a large duffel bag, the one she got from Pete, and a tray of cupcakes to her mini-van.

MEI
 (yelling)
 Linny, we are leaving in two minutes.
 I do not want to hit traffic.

Linny comes out of the house, lugging a book bag of her own.

LINNY
 Mama, I think I'm going to become a
 scientologist.

Mei heaves the duffel bag into the back of the mini-van.

LINNY (CONT'D)
 Jaime Rivers' mom talked to our class
 and she's a scientologist.

MEI
 (half listening; placing a tray of
 cupcakes on top of the drugs)
 Linny, I'll ground you if you become a
 scientologist. But you can bring me -

Linny hands her book bag to Mei.

MEI (CONT'D)
 Thanks, Bǎobǎo. And I cancelling your
 next playdate with Jaime Rivers.

Mei closes her trunk.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Mei drives into a nice neighborhood.

Mei drops Linny off at school.

Mei drives into a seedy, dangerous neighborhood.

Meets DRUG DEALERS in an abandoned, industrial site. The Drug Dealers are a stereotypical, thuggish crew.

Mei opens up the back of the mini-van and has one of the Drug Dealers hold her cupcakes as she lugs the duffel bag out of the back.

She notices that pills are spilling out of the bag. She nervously uses one of Linny's spelling papers to scoop them up and pours them in one the Drug Dealers hands.

Mei is given an envelope full of cash.

INSIDE MEI'S VAN

Mei closes the driver-side door, places the envelope on the dash and takes a beat to stare blankly. She quickly opens her door as she leans over and vomits.

INT. STEVE'S KARATE KWON - DAY

Steve is finishing teaching kung-fu to a group of kids, including Linny. Mei walks in carrying her cupcakes, relieved to be back in a safe space.

Steve bows to Linny and walks over to Mei.

STEVE

I'm glad to see you're not in jail.

Mei's eyes widen, slightly panicked.

MEI

(defensive)

Why would I be in jail?

STEVE

The way you've been flipping people over your shoulder left and right, I figure it was only a matter of time.

Mei nervously laughs.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Not that I minded, of course.

Awkward sexual tension as Mei blushes.

STEVE (CONT'D)
But, I'm glad that in the midst of
your hand-to-hand combat, you
remembered you were snack mom today.

LINNY
(running over)
Mama, I learned how to do a palm
strike today!

MEI
That's great, Linny. Show me.

Linny gets into a stance and thrusts her palm forward.

STEVE
(slightly tweaking Linny's
alignment)
Remember, elbow behind your wrist,
shoulder behind your elbow.

MEI
That's fantastic, bǎobǎo. Now, go wash
your hands and we'll have cupcakes.

Linny runs off and Mei hands the cupcakes to Steve.

MEI (CONT'D)
Mission: Cupcake Drop-Off successful.

STEVE
Well, it's not successful until I try
one. Quality control.

Steve grabs one of the cupcakes and brings it to his mouth to take a bite. Mei panics when she see a pill stuck to the side of the cupcake, mixed in with the sprinkles.

Suddenly, Mei thrusts her palm forward - just like Linny did - and knocks the cupcake out of Steve's hand. Icing smears on his gi as it falls to the ground. Mei quickly picks it up, along with the pill, and throws both in the trash.

Steve is stunned, not knowing exactly what to say.

MEI

There was a...uh...bee. I didn't know
if you were allergic.

Mei tries to wipe the icing from his gi, but is only making
the mess worse. Steve grabs her hand.

STEVE

You actually have impressive form.

They look in each other's eyes - more sexual tension.

They hear a KNOCK on the WINDOW and turn to see Detective
Yang. He motions for her to meet him outside.

STEVE

(scowling)

You gotta be kidding me with this guy.

MEI

(pulling her hand away)

I'm sorry, Steve. Tell Linny I'll just
be a second.

EXT. STRIP MALL - DAY

Tian watches from afar as Mei walks out of Steve's kwoon and
walks with Detective Yang to Mei's shop. This incenses Tian.

FLASHBACK - INT. FASHION COMPANY - DAY

Mei and Tian - both younger - walk down the hall of a
bustling fashion company. Tian is trying to keep up with Mei
while she flips through a book of sample zippers.

TIAN

As you can see, we have a variety of
zippers categorized by use, material,
gauge, end-type, color.

MEI

(unimpressed)

Right.

TIAN

We have aluminum, antique brass,
invisible, molded plastic, nickel,
nylon coil and even rhinestone.

MEI

Rhinestones, huh?

TIAN

The best in China. Listen, I don't expect you to understand everything about zippers -

MEI

I'm a buyer. That's exactly what I'm paid to do.

TIAN

All I'm saying is that's it's more complicated than you think. You have a million things to consider, so I want to be able to help you out.

MEI

So, you just want to help me? You don't want me to switch vendors?

TIAN

Well, switching vendors is what would help you. For example, number five zippers are medium weight and measure five millimeters across the teeth when zipped. Now, my guess is that your current vendor tries to sell you the number fives.

MEI

(mildly impressed)

Actually, you're right. They do.

TIAN

That's because they get a better commission on number fives. But, really, a four-point-five would be better for ladies' jeans because they work better on a lighter weight pant.

Tian bends down and examines her zipper.

MEI

(smacking his hand away)

Excuse me!

TIAN

I knew it. A four-point-five. Now you know I'm telling the truth. See, I'm helping you already.

Mei starts to warm to his older brotherly persona.

MEI
(hands his samples back)
Fine. We can try you out with one
shipment, but no promises after that.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO STRIP MALL

Tian is still watching Mei from afar.

TIAN
(seething)
I got you out of Fujian, got your
brother a job... You owe me for
everything, Mei.

INT. CLOTHING SHOP - MORNING

Mei and Det. Yang enter her clothing shop. A couple of
customers mill about as a young sales associate assists them.

MEI
(to Yang)
We can talk in the back.

BACKROOM

YANG
I'm sorry to disturb you again, but
there's something we need to discuss.

MEI
I feel like we've talked about
everything, Detective.

YANG
Not everything. We haven't talked
about all the times you've been to the
the emergency room. Three times in the
last six months. First for a cut to
the head, second for a concussion, and
the third for neck and rib contusions.

MEI
(panicking; trying to play it cool)
You made a mistake.

Yang pulls a file from his bag and hands it to her.

MEI
(opening the file)
What is this?

YANG
Hospital reports.

MEI
(flustered)
You shouldn't have... You didn't have
permission to look at these...

YANG
Mei, I've seen this before. If you've
been abused by your husband, you need
to tell me. In America, we take
domestic abuse very seriously.

MEI
America? I thought you were Chinese.

YANG
I am. And it's serious everywhere.

MEI
(handing his file back)
Tian's gone. I'm ready to move on.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - NIGHT

Echo is pushing a cart of bed pans down the hall. As she passes Mr. Jackson's room, she sees he's still awake.

MR. JACKSON'S ROOM

Mr. Jackson is extremely excited as he lays out clothes for the next day - his best dress shirt, tie, etc. The Male Nurse is in the room calibrating a medical device. Echo walks in.

ECHO

You getting married again, Mr. Jackson? Who's the lucky girl?

MR. JACKSON

Whoa! Ease up, buttercup. Five times is enough for me. I'm more than fine being a bachelor.

ECHO

I'm sure you are.

MR. JACKSON

The only girls I need to see are my daughters. It's Father's Day tomorrow. Gotta look good.

ECHO

I wish I could meet them.

MR. JACKSON

You going to see your daddy tomorrow?

Echo ignores the questions as she pulls a different tie out of his closet. She lays it on the shirt.

ECHO

I'd wear this one. It pops more against the shirt.

MR. JACKSON

I never could dress myself.

Echo thumbs her necklaces as...

FLASHBACK - INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Young echo is in the hallways, listening to shouting through

the door.

MOTHER (O.S.)

I don't want her to end up like you -
a penniless, worthless piano teacher!

The door bursts open and Echo's FATHER rushes out. He locks eyes with Echo before he leaves.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO MR. JACKSON'S ROOM

MR. JACKSON

...and that's why my third wife said she left me. Ask me, I think she just couldn't handle a man who actually had an opinion about laundry.

ECHO

Well, I hope you have an amazing day with your girls, Mr. Jackson.

MR. JACKSON

Oh, I will. It's my favorite day.

Echo walks out with the Male Nurse.

HALLWAY

ECHO

(to Male Nurse)
That's sweet.

MALE NURSE

No, it's not. They're not coming.

ECHO

Why not?

MALE NURSE

They never do.

The Male Nurse walks away as Echo takes another look at Mr. Jackson, sighs and starts pushing her cart down the hall.

EXT. CATHY'S HOUSE - POOL SIDE - NIGHT

Tracee sits in a pool chair, her air bud in her ears, drinking Cathy's wine. Cathy storms outside, snatches the air buds out of Tracee's ears, throws them into the swimming

pool, takes her glass of wine and pours it out on the ground.

CATHY
My headphones! My wine!

TRACEE
Therapy not so good?

CATHY
Don't play dumb. He was a sex doctor!

TRACEE
And?

CATHY
Are you trying to play games with me,
Tracee? Is that what's going on here?

TRACEE
No games. You need a sex doctor.

CATHY
I do not! I'm fine at...bedroom
business.

TRACEE
The fact that you call it "business"
is problem. Sex is pleasure. Self
expression. Sex is...
(pushing up her breasts slightly
and showing a sensual face)
...art.

Cathy, still holding the wine glass, grabs the bottle, sits
down in a chair beside Tracee and pours a full glass.

CATHY
I don't need sex art. I need wine.

TRACEE
Trust me, Cathy. You need art. You
need wine and...

Tracee goes inside as Cathy guzzles the entire glass and
pours another. Tracee returns with a large bag from the
Hustler store.

TRACEE (CONT'D)
...you need toys.

Tracee plops the bag down in front of Cathy and the BAG

begins to BUZZ.

CATHY
I'm in hell.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Later in the night, one bottle of wine is empty as Cathy opens another. Tracee is downloading the *Kamasutra* app on her smartphone. The bag of sex toys is sitting on the counter.

CATHY
I mean, seriously, that one looks like the propeller of a speed boat - a pink, creepy speed boat.

TRACEE
You should try it.

CATHY
(pouring another glass of wine)
It sounds like a feral mongoose on PCP. People actually use these things?

TRACEE
I do.

CATHY
No, I mean real people. Not extortionist nymphomaniacs.

TRACEE
(looking up)
Hey...

CATHY
Well, there could actually be a business opportunity in all of this. What about a line of pickled bread called - get this - Dill Dough?

TRACEE
You need to get your mind out of business and get it into this.

Tracee holds her phone up to Cathy. It's the *Kamasutra* app. Cathy takes the app and starts swiping through. Her face shows a mix of shock, horror and fascination.

CATHY
No. That can't be healthy.

TRACEE

All of this is most healthy.
(swipes on the app)
My favorite.

CATHY

What!?! How do you...not pull something?

TRACEE

Oh, there's plenty to pull.

CATHY

(eyes getting bigger; swiping)
Number one eighty seven, the Ice Cream? Gross. The Mermaid?

TRACEE

There's whole new world of sex you need to discover.

CATHY

The Asian Cowgirl? Okay, now that's offensive.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - STAIRS - NIGHT

Later again. Well into the second bottle. Tracee and Cathy are both pretty buzzed at this point and sitting on the steps. Cathy is still swiping through the *Kamasutra* app as Tracee fills another cup.

TRACEE

Okay, how many?

CATHY

Enough.

TRACEE

More than five?

CATHY

No!

TRACEE

Four?

CATHY

None of your business.

TRACEE

Three?

CATHY

I'm not telling you.

TRACEE

Two?

(reading Cathy's face)

That's it? Just two?

CATHY

Well, if you must know, yes. Kenny and my old fiancé. Both committed relationships, mind you.

TRACEE

(sarcastic)

Oh, so spicy.

CATHY

I bet you can't ever count the number of men you -

TRACEE

Fifty-seven.

CATHY

(shocked)

Fifty-seven? You actually counted?

TRACEE

(flippant)

I have a good memory.

CATHY

Were they all Chinese?

TRACEE

All but one.

CATHY

Cass' dad.

TRACEE

(acting tough but suddenly showing a trace of vulnerability)

Just a one night stand.

Awkward beat.

CATHY
 (looking back at the app)
 Wait - there's a video tutorial?

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Later again. Now into a third bottle. Tracee and Cathy are both pretty wasted as they sit on Cathy's bed with a laptop open. They're watching how-to videos of the *Karmasutra* positions. A NARRATOR leads them through each step with a soothing voice.

NARRATOR (O.S)
 One-thirty-three. The Amphibian.

CATHY
 (slurred speech)
 I mean, who comes up with these names?
 They need to work on their branding.

TRACEE
 (just as slurred speech)
 Sssshhhh. Concen-tate.

CATHY
 It's concen-trate.

NARRATOR (O.S)
 The man sits down with back straight
 and legs straight and spread apart.

TRACEE
 (following directions)
 I'll be the man.

CATHY
 I want you to know that I'm not doing
 this because I need it.

TRACEE
 Of course not.

CATHY
 It's just out of curiosity. Pure
 physiological curiosity.

NARRATOR (O.S)
 The woman leans on her elbows, fully
 lifting her body up, leaning against
 the male partner with her breasts.

The women continue to follow the directions and look ridiculous doing so.

NARRATOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Her head is between his legs and her hands are under his hips. The woman's legs are straight and spread apart.

The women wobbily get into position.

NARRATOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
The male partner takes his female partner's waist and pulls her to him to caress her crotch with his mouth and hold it in this position.

Cathy viscerally reacts at the phrase 'caress the crotch', which causes them to both tumble off the bed.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

The next morning. Cass opens the door to find Tracee and Cathy passed out in a bizarre sexual position, with the *Kamasutra* website open on the laptop.

CASS
Mom?

Cathy and Tracee wake up and scramble apart once they realize the optics of the situation.

CASS (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

CATHY
(horrified)
Nothing...I was...we were...I was teaching your mom English.

CASS
Whatevs.

Cass turns around and walks away. Cathy gets out of bed and heads to the bathroom as Tracee lights a cigarette.

CATHY
Really?

TRACEE
(leaning back; satisfied)
What? Last night was fun.

CATHY

I have to go to work.

INT. MEI'S HOUSE - MORNING

Mei is in the kitchen quickly packing an expertly balanced lunch in a cute lunch box.

MEI

(shouting upstairs)

Bǎobǎo, do you want yogurt or grapes?

LINNY (O.S)

(yelling)

What?

MEI

(louder)

Yogurt or grapes?

Linny pokes her head around the corner.

LINNY

We're going on a field trip to Al Vera Street today. We're eating tacos.

MEI

And why didn't I know about this?

LINNY

Mom, I told you like five days ago.

MEI

You certainly did not.

LINNY

(holding up her phone)

Look. The text is right here.

MEI

You texted it to me?

LINNY

Yeah. I even used a taco emoji.

MEI

(checking her phone)

Indeed you did.

Linny runs back up the stairs as Mei is reading the text, smiling at her precocious little girl. As she sits the phone

down, it buzzes with a notification. Mei opens a new text message.

"PETE: Look up."

Mei looks up and sees Pete staring at her through the window. She walks over, clearly not happy to see him.

Pete sends another text:

"PETE: Go to Long Beach airport.
Shipment is held up by customs. Need
you to get it - today."

Mei shakes her head "no" and nervously looks for Linny.

Pete shrugs and sends another text. It's a picture of Linny at school. Terrified, Mei finally shakes her head "yes". Pete smiles, holds up his phone and deletes the text he just sent. He waits for Mei to do the same. She does.

Linny bolts down the stairs just as he leaves.

LINNY

Who was that, Mom?

MEI

(clearly shaken)
Wrong address.

LINNY

(giving her a hug)
Don't worry, Mom. My karate is getting
really good.

Mei's eyes well up with tears.

INT. STRIP MALL - BOBA SHOP - DAY

Mei walks into the Boba Shop and sees Wang Jei.

WANG JEI

Good morning, Mei.
(sensing something's off)
Are you okay?

MEI

I'm fine. I'm just tired.

WANG JEI

Would you like me to make you
(MORE)

WANG JEI (CONT'D)
something?

MEI
No, I just wanted to let you know that the nanny is picking Linny up from school today and will be bringing her here for a snack before karate class.

WANG JEI
No problem. You sure you're okay?

MEI
I'm okay.

Mei starts to leave, but turns back around.

MEI (CONT'D)
I need to go pick up a shipment, so if something gets held up at customs, will you keep an eye on Linny?

WANG JEI
Of course, Mei.

Mei leaves and Wang Jei, concerned, watches her drive away.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. CATHY'S OFFICE - DAY

Cathy, wearing her usual boring pant-suit, sits at her desk, dully typing at her computer. Whereas she's usually a bulldozer at work, today she's having trouble focusing.

She types a few words, then stares out the window. Types a few more and then shuts her laptop. She huffs once, grabs her purse and walks out.

EXT. CATHY'S OFFICE - DAY

Cathy storms out of her office and determinedly strides down the sidewalk. She suddenly stops as she's passing a dress shop. After a beat, she walks in.

HARD CUT TO:

Cathy walks out of the shop in a very form-fitting dress.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - COUNSELING SUITE

Dr. Archie is reading over some session notes when Cathy bursts through the door.

DR. ARCHIE

Cathy? Did we have a session?

CATHY

(forceful)

Listen, Doctor Dreamboat. I'm a CEO of a successful company, I have thirty-five employees, I'm an independent and confident woman and I do not need this kind of therapy.

DR. ARCHIE

What kind of therapy is that?

Cathy begins to focus on his hazel eyes, his chest, a hint of a tattoo that is peaking out from the sleeve of his t-shirt.

CATHY

You know, the kind that makes...people...want to...

She gulps, gets weak-knee'd and plops down on the couch.

DR. ARCHIE

Listen, we don't have a session and since you don't need this type of therapy anyway, will you at least do me a favor?

Dr. Archie grabs a DVD off his shelf and hands it to her.

DR. ARCHIE (CONT'D)

I'm supposed to send this video to Tracee, but since you two are friends, would you mind hand delivering it?

CATHY

What is it?

DR. ARCHIE

Nothing you'd be interested in. Just a video that helps women reconnect with their more youthful, exuberant selves.

CATHY

I don't think Tracee needs much assistance there.

DR. ARCHIE

We all have weak spots we don't show others. Thanks for helping, Cathy.

Dr. Archie offers his hand and leads her, still slightly weak-knee'd, out the door.

INT. AIRPORT - CUSTOMS OFFICE - DAY

Mei is sitting a drab, dull office. Her palms are sweaty and she's extremely nervous, but she's trying her best to play it cool. After a tense beat, a customs officer, DANVERS, enters.

DANVERS

Hello, Mrs...
(checking a file)
...Fang. I'm Officer Danvers. I see you have a shipment that received a hold notification.

MEI

(meekly)
Yes.

DANVERS

Well, I know this seems like a hassle,
(MORE)

DANVERS (CONT'D)

but hopefully we can clear your shipment and get you on the road before afternoon traffic.

MEI

I receive commercial shipments from China every week with no issues. I'm not sure what the problem is.

DANVERS

Well, there's not necessarily a problem. Under 19 USC 1467, CBP has the right to examine any shipments imported into the U.S. It says here that your freight was randomly flagged, so we should be able to process you out quickly.

Mei seems intimidated.

DANVERS

(with just the right amount of condescension)

Don't worry, ma'am. We'll sort it out.

Danvers begins typing something in to a computer as Mei becomes quiet and looks down submissively. She looks at the wallpaper picture of Linny on her phone and her body language slowly becomes bolder.

MEI

I know my rights.

DANVERS

Excuse me?

MEI

Was there an issue with the shipper?

DANVERS

Not that I see.

MEI

Was there an issue with me?

DANVERS

We're not necessarily claiming that.

MEI

Was my tariff number accurate?

DANVERS

It seems to be.

Mei gets bolder and louder with every question.

MEI

I've had hundreds of shipments come through here. More than enough to establish credibility as an importer.

DANVERS

(sensing the escalation)

Mrs. Fang -

MEI

I've never had a marking issue or a labeling issue.

DANVERS

This is just a random manifest hold -

MEI

And how do I know that?

DANVERS

Calm down, Mrs. Fang.

MEI

When my husband was the one running the business, I bet you never told him to calm down!

DANVERS

I've never met your husband -

MEI

He just died, you asshole!
(bursting into tears)
Here I am, dealing with his death, raising a child on my own, trying to run a business by myself and now I have to deal with sexism!

Hearing the commotion and seeing the scene through the window, people begin stopping in the hallway.

DANVERS

I can assure you this isn't sexist -

MEI

(acting completely hysterical)
Then it must be racist then! It's
because I'm Chinese, isn't it? Trying
to get one over the Chi-coms? You got
Trump on speed dial, Danvers?

Losing control of the situation, Danvers walks around and
puts his hand on Mei's shoulder to try and calm her down.

DANVERS

Mrs. Fang -

MEI

Don't touch me! You think you can
touch me inappropriately because you
have a badge?
(shouting; pounding on the window)
Me too! Me too! Me too!

Suddenly, a SUITED MAN enters the room and hands Danvers a
piece of paper.

SUITED MAN

(to Mei)

Your shipment's been cleared. It's
being released now. You're free to go.

MEI

(instantly calming down)
Really?
(gathering composure)
Fantastic. You have a good day,
Officer Danvers.

Mei exits, leaving an exasperated Danvers in the office.

INT. YANG'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Detective Yang sits at the dining table, lost in thought as
MAMA YANG finishes cleaning up after dinner.

MAMA YANG

You were quiet tonight, Xīngān.

YANG

Just work. It gets to you sometimes.

She places a plate of lychee in front of him.

MAMA YANG

Your favorite.
 (sitting down)
 You want to talk about it?

YANG

Just a domestic violence victim in a really bad situation. I just can't understand why a woman would stay in that situation, especially when there's a child involved.

MAMA YANG

So many women stuck in that situation don't have a way out.

YANG

But that's my point. They do.

MAMA YANG

(biting tone of voice)
 They don't see it. You have no idea what abuse can do to a person.

Mama Yang's tone carries a conviction that surprises Yang. She gets back up and starts doing dishes. Yang's eyes wonder to a picture of him and Mama Yang on the sideboard - back in China when he was only seven years old.

YANG

How come you never talk about Dad?

MAMA YANG

He's gone. We had to move on.

Yang's heard this before.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - REC ROOM - DAY

Mr. Jackson, a huge smile on his face, is dressed to the nines. He holds three flowers, each a different color, as he waits for his daughters to arrive. Echo walks in.

MR. JACKSON

Hold the phone, Tyrone! I thought you worked the graveyard shift.

ECHO

I do, but I wanted to see if there was any chocolate for us to swipe.

MR. JACKSON

Well, I'm just waiting for my girls to get here. Hoping they take me to the Cracker Barrel.

ECHO

You mind if I keep you company while you wait?

REC ROOM - MONTAGE

Echo and Mr. Jackson play checkers.

They watch television.

They eat lunch.

She plays piano while he sings.

They play cards.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - REC ROOM - NIGHT

The sun is down and Mr. Jackson is asleep in his chair. The flowers lay on the couch beside him. Echo is softly playing piano while singing. Her playing wakes Mr. Jackson up.

She receives a text message:

"DAVE: new song yet?"

She receives another:

"DAVE: need it rn"

ECHO

(annoyed; talking at the phone)

No, I don't have a new song yet, Dave. Leave me alone.

Mr. Jackson wheels over to the piano.

ECHO

Oh, I didn't mean to wake you.

MR. JACKSON

Slide on over, Rover. I got the rest of my life to sleep. Right now, the old man's ready for the eighty eight.

ECHO
 (surprised)
 You play?

MR. JACKSON
 Do I play? Who do you think played
 piano for Sinatra's first Vegas show?

ECHO
 I don't know.

MR. JACKSON
 I don't know either. But I can play
 some mean chopsticks.
 (beat)
 No offense.

ECHO
 (sliding out of his way; grinning)
 None taken.

MR. JACKSON
 Will you sing for me?

ECHO
 I don't know...

MR. JACKSON
 Every Gram needs an Emmy Lou. Every
 Johnny needs a Judith.

Echo sees the flowers still laying on the couch.

ECHO
 You got it, Mr. Jackson.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cathy is alone, watching the nightly business report. Certain words in the new report begin catching her attention.

NEWS CASTER #1
 Escalated trading volume and sharp
 price movements caused a climax of
 stock today...

Cathy switches channels to another financial show.

NEWS CASTER #2
 After a stiff round of trading, the
 tech markets exploded...

Cathy sees the DVD Dr. Archie gave her sitting on the table. She switches channels again, this time the news caster is Dr. Archie himself.

DR. ARCHIE

The best CEO's love doing turnarounds.
There is nothing like coming from
behind and finishing with a huge
liquidity event...

Cathy quickly turns off the television. She takes a beat to think before pouring another glass of wine. She gets up, grabs the DVD off the table, the wine bottle from the counter and Tracee's bag of sex toys that is still sitting in the kitchen. With her arms full, she waddles up the stairs, into her room and closes the door.

INT. CATHY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Cass is pouring a bowl of cereal, mixing two kinds of children's brands into the same bowl. Tracee, who looks hung over from a long night out, is making coffee.

Suddenly, Cathy strides down the stairs - absolutely glowing. Everything about her seems different. Her walk, her confidence - everything she does radiates sexuality.

Cass can't stop looking at her and over-pours the cereal into his bowl. Tracee notices as well and is stunned.

Cathy saunters over to Tracee. Without saying anything, Cathy opens her checkbook, writes a check and slides to Tracee.

CATHY

For the toys.

TRACEE

(looking at the check; shocked)
Wait...all of them?

As she turns to walk away, her and Cass meet eyes.

CASS

(captivated)
Straight fire, Miss C.

Cathy responds with a sexy smile and rubs her fingers across his abs as she walks past. Tracee just stares as she doesn't know what she's unleashed.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - MORNING

Echo is putting things away after a long graveyard shift when she sees Mr. Jackson rolling down the hall toward her.

MR. JACKSON
Going home so soon?

ECHO
A girl can only scrub so many bed pans
in one night.

MR. JACKSON
(handing her a piece of paper)
Here.

Echo takes the paper and looks at it. It's sheet music.

ECHO
What's this?

MR. JACKSON
I wrote you a song.

ECHO
You wrote me a song?

MR. JACKSON
As a 'thank you'.

ECHO
For what?

MR. JACKSON
For Father's Day.

Echo doesn't know what to say.

MR. JACKSON (CONT'D)
I heard you say that you need a song,
so I wrote one.

ECHO
(reading the sheet music)
This actually isn't bad, Mr. Jackson.

MR. JACKSON
Girl, don't sound so surprised!

They both laugh. Echo hands the music back.

ECHO
I don't know...

MR. JACKSON
(takes her hand)
Echo, take it from an old man. Regret
is the worst thing in this world. Your
voice is a gift. Don't waste it.

INT. STRIP MALL - BOBA SHOP - DAY

Mei and Echo sit at a table when the "new" Cathy walks in and joins them. Mei and Echo are both taken aback by her sexy, confident look and attitude.

ECHO
(to Cathy)
Well, hello, Raquel Welch. What have
you done with Cathy?

MEI
Cathy, you look...new.

CATHY
(shrugging it off)
I figured it was time for a change.

Wang Jei comes over to the table.

WANG JEI
I haven't seen you all together for a
few days. You all been busy?

The widows look at each other, knowing what they've individually been through but not knowing where to start.

WANG JEI (CONT'D)
How about some drinks? The usual?

MEI
Sounds great.

Wang Jei walks away and the widows lean into talk.

CATHY
Girls, I have a plan.

ECHO
This can't be good.

CATHY

Now that we know we didn't kill our husbands, we need to take control of the situation. Control of our lives.

MEI

How do we do that?

CATHY

We need to go away and workshop it. Go to the mountains, lock ourselves in a cabin, map out all the options and figure out the optimum solutions.

MEI

Cathy, I don't know. What about Linny?

CATHY

Send her to a slumber party.

ECHO

I'm not going to find my husband by designing a Powerpoint. Mei can't deal with Pete through a spreadsheet.

CATHY

Well, we need to do something to go on offense. I'm sick of just reacting.

The BELL on the door RINGS as Dr. Archie, as dreamy as ever, walks in. Cathy does a double take. They lock eyes.

CATHY

(taken aback)

Doctor Dreambo...Archie. Doctor Archie. What are you doing here?

DR. ARCHIE

Tracee told me that this place has the best Matcha green. I was on this side of town, so I thought I would try it.

ECHO

(standing)

Cathy, are you going to introduce us to your friend?

CATHY

Um, yes. This is Echo and Mei. Ladies, this is Dr. Archie.

MEI

How do you two know each other?

CATHY

He's my therapist.

ECHO

I didn't know you had a therapist.

DR. ARCHIE

Well, she only had one session.

Dr. Archie goes to the counter and orders his drink as the widows all stare at his butt. He looks back and they try to pretend they were doing something else.

DR. ARCHIE (CONT'D)

(to Cathy)

Cathy, I have to say that you're looking incredible today.

CATHY

(blushing)

Thank you.

DR. ARCHIE

And since I'm technically not your therapist right now, I'd love to take you to dinner some time.

Cathy stammers.

ECHO

She would love to.

DR. ARCHIE

(smiling)

Great! I'll text you some times. I have the perfect place.

After he leaves, Cathy spins and gives Echo a "WTF" look.

ECHO

What? I'm just workshopping your problems for you.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Padilla is doing paperwork at her test. Her PHONE RINGS.

PADILLA
(answering)
Padilla.

Padilla nods and takes notes as she listens.

PADILLA (CONT'D)
Perfect. I owe you FBI boys a beer
next time around.

Padilla hangs up, grabs her jacket and leaves.

INT. PIANO BAR - NIGHT

Dave is using his phone to record Echo as she plays the piano and sings. The sheet music on Mr. Jackson gave her is on the stand and it sounds beautiful. It's a soulful song about the true meaning of love.

During the performance, Dave and Echo lock eyes and their chemistry fills the room. Betty watches from the bar and smiles as she sees the connection. Echo seems truly happy.

However, from the back of the bar, Harvey is listening from a shadowy booth. He dials a number on his phone.

HARVEY
(into the phone)
Yes...I found her.

EXT. PIANO BAR - NIGHT

A car is parked across the street from the piano bar. Padilla sits in the driver's seat, watching and waiting. After a beat, Harvey exits the bar, gets into a town car and leaves.

Once the car pulls away, Padilla starts her engine and begins to follow.

INT. MEI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mei sits on her front porch with a large bag next to her. A car pulls up and Pete emerges with a large duffel bag of his own. He walks up to the porch to meet her.

PETE
Well done today, Mei. I heard you put
on quite the show.

MEI

(tossing the bag to him)
I just glad it's done. That I'm done.

Pete chuckles as he checks the content of the bag.

PETE

Mei, sweetheart, you're far from done.
A couple of things you need to know.
First, the man wearing a suit today -
he'll expect to be paid next time.
Second...
(he slides her his duffel bag)
...it's time for you to learn how to
do laundry.

Mei opens the bag and sees a ton of cash - probably \$5 million worth. Pete pulls out a red lollipop and places on the porch railing.

PETE

For Linny.

Pete picks up the bag full of drugs, get in his car and leaves. Mei's face shows that she's beginning to realize that this will never end.

CUT TO:

ACROSS THE STREET

Tian watches the interaction between Pete and Mei as he's putting on his gloves. Once Pete leaves, Tian pulls up the hood on his dark sweatshirt and sneaks around to the back of Mei's house.

BACK OF THE HOUSE

Tian approaches the back porch and watches as Mei is dragging the bag into the living room. After watching for a beat, Tian grabs a chair, lifts it, runs toward the glass door.

HOLD ON Mei's face as she sees the chair hurling towards the glass door.

BLACK OUT.

THE END