

IF I HAD LEGS I'D KICK YOU

Written by
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LINDA (White, 38-45 years old) sits on a couch, across from DR. SPRING (any race, late 40s/early 50s), who sits in desk chair. Next to LINDA sits CHILD (female, 7).

LINDA looks just on the edge of being put together. She wears pricey and stylishly professional clothing with a hip edge. Tattoos reveal she was maybe cool once. Her entire look says, "Look, I'm trying here. What do you want from me?" Her face says she has been through a lot and really could use a nap.

NOTE TO READER: We never SEE the character of CHILD. Her physical presence in a scene is always felt, but only indicated. Sometimes we may see her hand or maybe her hair blowing into the frame, etc. She sounds like a spirited, highly intelligent 7-year-old girl, not frail or sick.

As CHILD is speaking we are very tight on LINDA's face.

CHILD (O.S.)
Mommy is...stretchable.

LINDA looks at CHILD intensely. She is clearly surprised and possibly hurt, but does not say anything.

DR. SPRING
What do you mean "stretchable?"

CHILD (O.S.)
Daddy is hard, you can't move him.
He gets mad and--uh, that's it.
Mommy gets mad too but you can
stretch her. She's more like putty.
And she gets sad, too. That's when
it is the most stretch.

LINDA scrunches up her lips. She really does not want to cry.

DR. SPRING
Like putty...I wonder how you think
you can stretch her?

LINDA looks like she might burst.

CHILD (O.S.)
You just...she's...

LINDA can't take it anymore.

LINDA
Can I--can I talk now?

DR. SPRING

Is it okay if Mommy talks now?

Linda darts her eyes in the direction of CHILD.

CHILD (O.S.)

Yeah.

LINDA

I'm not stretchable. I'm not putty.

DR. SPRING

That's her experience of you.

LINDA

It isn't true. I try very hard to be in control of her and *everything* but I might as well not even be there at all.

DR. SPRING

We both know that perception *is* reality--

LINDA

Also, I don't get sad.

DR. SPRING

You seem sad right now.

CHILD (O.S.)

You do seem sad right now.

LINDA

(to child)

We are here to talk about how to get you better. All we ever do is talk about me. I can be sad. I'm allowed to be sad. Right?

DR. SPRING

Of course, but you must know that it is all tangled up together. You of all people know this.

LINDA

I know. I know. But see-- this isn't how it is going to get better.

LINDA starts to cry.

CHILD (O.S.)
 Mommy! Don't cry because then I
 will cry. Please!

Silence in the room. LINDA wipes the tears off her face and gets very serious.

LINDA
 (takes a deep breath)
 We want the tube removed. Now. To
 do that--

CHILD (O.S.)
 (screaming)
 NO! YOU CAN'T KILL ME!

LINDA
 (ignoring child)
 She won't do what she has to do
 because she knows she has this
 safety net.

DR. SPRING
 Things are not stable enough--

LINDA
 It's clear we have different goals.
 You want her to get better before
 the tube comes out. I think the
 tube needs to come out before she
 can get better!

DR. SPRING
 We all have the same goal here. But
 I think as we talk about this more
 there are--

We slow zoom into LINDA's face as the sound of DR. SPRING's voice drones on a fades into nothing.

2

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY - LATER

2

We are in a pleasantly upper-middle class neighborhood in Del Mar, California. It's sunny and beach-y feeling but also somehow completely and blandly suburban.

LINDA walks down the street holding a pizza box with one hand and holding the hand of CHILD with the other.

CHILD (O.S.)
 I can tell I might not be hungry.

LINDA

We aren't starting with that, did you hear what Dr. Spring was talking about? It is dinner time. When we get home the first thing we are doing is sitting down and eating.

CHILD (O.S.)

Did you get no cheese?

LINDA

I cannot explain this to you every single time: they'd laugh at me and say it's just bread.

Weighted pause.

LINDA (CONT'D)

I'm going to take the cheese off when we get home. Of course.

CHILD (O.S.)

Is it the kind with the little green and black things in the sauce?

LINDA

It is the same kind we always get.

CHILD (O.S.)

That kind has the little things in the sauce. I can't eat it. Can you scrape the sauce off and put the kind in the jar that--

LINDA

(frustrated, yelling)

Do you even want the tube out? Or is it just me who wants it out? You have to--

Suddenly LINDA trips. She manages to not fall but the pizza box lands upside down on the ground in a thud.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Great.

LINDA bends over to pick up the pizza box. She flips it over and opens the top: all the cheese has stuck to the roof of the box.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Look, you got your wish. No cheese.

CHILD cheers off screen.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Did you will that to happen? Are
you some kind of witch or
something?

LINDA and CHILD laugh.

3

INT. LINDA'S APARTMENT - DAY

3

******START OPENING CREDITS******

LINDA enters the apartment with the pizza box. We can hear
CHILD coming in behind her.

LINDA
Right to the table! Actually, no--
go to wash your hands first and
then right to the table!

CHILD (O.S.)
I don't have to go to the bathroom.

LINDA
No one is making you, I just asked
you to wash your hands.

We hear CHILD run in another direction as we follow LINDA
through her apartment. She goes directly to the kitchen and
starts setting up plates and napkins for the pizza.

CHILD (O.S.)
(yelling from the other
room)
Is Daddy coming? Where's Daddy?

LINDA
He said maybe by bedtime.

CHILD (O.S.)
(yelling from the other
room)
When does he go again?

LINDA
He just got back, remember? Next
month!

LINDA takes a piece of the already mangled pizza and starts
scraping every last bit of cheese off of it. She takes all
the scraped cheese and stuffs it in her mouth, along with
cheese that is stuck to the box.

CHILD (O.S.)

Mommy?

LINDA

(through a full mouth)

Yeah?

CHILD (O.S.)

I did have to go to the bathroom!

LINDA

Ok!

CHILD (O.S.)

This might take a while!

LINDA

Fine!

LINDA arranges plates and napkins on the table while she quickly eats a slice of the pizza. She sits at the table with her head in one hand, as if she is thankful for this little moment of peace, quiet and solitude. She is barely even chewing, just inhaling the pizza.

CHILD (O.S.)

Mommy?

LINDA

(very full mouth)

What?

CHILD (O.S.)

The bathroom has water in it...

LINDA

(confused)

Uh...yeah? I hope so.

CHILD (O.S.)

No, I mean on the floor!

3A LINDA runs to the bathroom and opens the door, pizza still in hand...and mouth. We catch a glimpse of CHILD's feet dangling from the toilet as we see an inch of water on the floor.

LINDA

Oh my god! What? Why didn't you tell me as soon as you came in here?

CHILD (O.S.)

I just noticed...because I had to go to the bathroom so bad.

LINDA looks up at the ceiling in the bathroom. Looks normal. She opens the shower curtain to look at the bathtub. Dry and normal.

LINDA turns slowly and looks at the floor behind her. There is water on the floor in the hallway outside of the bathroom too. She looks up at the hallway ceiling. Nothing.

LINDA begins to walk in the water, which seems to be rising. We can hear the water slush as she walks. The water takes her to a closed door near the bathroom. There is water seeping out of the crack at the bottom of the door.

She stands outside the door eating the remainder of her pizza slice for a moment.

CHILD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Mommy?

LINDA

Hold on! Just stay there.

CHILD (O.S.)

It's too wet! I can't! Mommy! I don't want to walk in it.

LINDA

Then please don't. Stay there!

CHILD (O.S.)

But I'm done!

LINDA

Just sit on the toilet for a minute!

4

INT. LINDA'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

4

LINDA opens the door to find her bedroom completely soaked in water. There is two or three inches of water on the floor, the bed is soaked and dripping. A desk in the corner is completely flooded. She looks up and sees the the ceiling over her bed is flowing water at a furious rate through several cracks.

LINDA

(quietly to herself)

Fuuuuck. Fuck me.

LINDA continues to eat the pizza, now down to just the crust, completely overwhelmed at what she is seeing.

She enters further into the room and walks right up to the edge of the bed, looking carefully at the ceiling. She pulls her phone out of her pocket and dials.

LINDA (CONT'D)
(on phone)
Hey, we just came home and you
won't believe what--

Suddenly **BOOM! CRASH!** The ceiling gives way and bursts!

Chunks of ceiling land on the bed and the floor in loud, angry thumps. The bed collapses, the desk falls over. A waterfall comes pouring out.

LINDA screams and covers her head as she runs out of the room. We can hear CHILD shrieking.

CHILD (O.S.)
What is it?? Is it coming from your
room?? What's in there??

LINDA (O.S.)
(yelling as she runs out
of frame)
Go to the living room, go to the
living room!

CHILD (O.S.)
(shrieking)
Are we going to die?

We stay in the bedroom after LINDA and CHILD leave the scene. Water continues to pour and more parts of the ceiling crumble. It is a disaster. Chunks of plaster float around the bed. The pizza crust LINDA was eating also floats in the rising water. It is completely quiet except for the sound of the water pouring out at a steady rate.

5

INT. THE HOLE - CONTINUOUS

5

We zoom slowly toward the hole. It is huge. It is dark. The water seems to be coming out in endless supply. Globbs of thick, black sludge start to ooze out with the water. The flow of the water begins to take on a kind of pulsation.

We go further into the hole. It is silent. We start to hear a sound:

BEEP.

Very slowly we drift towards the black moldy edges of the hole into total darkness--

BEEP BEEP.

Drift further towards a dim white light.

BEEP BEEP BEEP.

As we drift closer, a white light fills the screen we hear voices that seem muffled and very far away:

LINDA (V.O.)
 Nothing is familiar or real. Ever.
 Every time I feel this way I get
 further and further away from being
 in myself and I can never get back.

We abruptly pull back from the white light -- like getting sucked by a vacuum -- back into complete blackness.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
 When you think about time, how do
 you see it?

LINDA (V.O.)
 How do I see time? Um...
 Time is a series of things to get
 through. Each goal is a cliff,
 there is nothing at the end of it.
 But then it comes and...there's
 just another cliff...

6

INT. THE VOID

6

The void now feels like we are drifting in dust, weightlessness -- particles drifting around until we see something forming into a female-type figure.

The figure is hard to make out, we cannot see her face. She is pacing back and forth in the darkness. She looks toward the camera and reaches out a hand to the viewer. She reaches with two hands. The camera is getting closer but it never seems to reach her. *Are there more figures looming behind her as well??*

The camera backs away from the void until we see the moldy edges of the HOLE IN THE CEILING. A milky white substance drips from deep inside. The figure abruptly retreats into nothingness as particles fall out of the hole.

It's creepy. Nightmarish. Gross. Silent UNTIL--:

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEEEEEEEP

****END OPENING CREDITS****

7 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL ROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT 7

LINDA is fast asleep, completely out. It is dark in the room, the only light coming from a light out the window and some sort of machine on the other side of the room, seemingly floating and emanating a red light with with flashing "0."

The beeping is coming from this machine. It continues along with a mechanical whirring noise. The beeping gets faster, louder. LINDA stirs and finally opens her eyes. She groans and looks across the room to another bed.

We see the form of CHILD curled up under blankets- the machine is attached to a pole near the bed. From the pole hangs a bag nearly empty of a white chalky liquid. It has tubing that connects to somewhere under the blanket.

The beeping reaches a high pitch as LINDA stumbles out of her bed and frantically presses buttons on the machine to make it stop THEN--

8 EXT. EXIT - EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - NIGHT 8

BOOM!

LINDA busts through the stairwell doors of an extended stay hotel. It is very bright. She squints as if emerging from a cave. She is clutching a baby monitor in one hand.

TITLE CARD: IF I HAD LEGS I'D KICK YOU

9 EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - NIGHT 9

It is very dark outside. Headlights from a few passing cars pierce the fog. The extended stay hotel glows a few hundred yards away from this overgrown little league baseball field.

LINDA is sitting on a bench in the dugout, smoking a joint. The baby monitor is beside her, lights blinking and emitting the sound of mechanical whirring from the machine in her room. With one hand she holds up an iPhone to her ear-- the tinny sound of the song "**Hot Freaks**" by **Guided by Voices** fights with the noise of cars passing and the sound from the baby monitor.

She looks at the sky, trying to get lost in the stars and fog. Transfixed by this, LINDA drops the joint in the grass.

She frantically feels around the grassy ground. She finds the joint and picks it up. It's no longer lit. She pops it in her mouth quickly, pulls matches out of her pocket and lights it.

The joint catches fire as she takes a deep drag -- it burns her lips.

LINDA

FUCK!

LINDA abruptly drops the joint, still on fire, into her lap. Her shirt catches fire -- LINDA jumps up, coughing, and tries to brush the fire off of her--

10

INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

10

LINDA enters the lobby of the hotel. The interior is over-lit with fluorescents, and she squints. The sound from the baby monitor seems to take over the whole room.

The front of LINDA's clothing is drenched in water and there is a burn hole at the bottom from her joint.

LINDA is QUITE HIGH---

JAMES (mid-20s, Black, effortlessly cool and handsome) is speaking to the FRONT DESK GUY (any race, a total slob in his late 20s/early 30s).

JAMES

...a way to open the mind without it being illegal. It's like you make your brain think it's dying and then you see the universe.

JAMES laughs hard.

LINDA pretends to have a hard time deciding between all the different sodas that are for sale in the refrigerator case next to the front desk, but she is actually looking at the two wine bottles on the bottom shelf. She takes them both out.

DIANA

Yeah, I mean I have a friend that does that Reiki and shit like that--

JAMES

This is different it's not bullshit energy work laying of hands shit, it's more like turning yourself inside out...living in your dead mind. Being brain dead is alive...

DIANA

Holographic?

JAMES
Holotropic.

The FRONT DESK GUY nods seriously at JAMES and then focuses on LINDA.

DIANA
Yes?

LINDA
Yes, uh, I'll get these.

LINDA holds up the bottles of wine.

LINDA (CONT'D)
And this.

LINDA grabs a package of peanut butter cups from a basket on the counter at the last second.

DIANA
Oh right, well yes on the peanut
butter cups and no on the wine.

LINDA
Why?

DIANA
So California law prohibits me from
selling you that wine right now.

LINDA
It isn't even 2.

DIANA
It's 1:58.

LINDA
Right...

DIANA
By the time I ring you up it will
be past 2.

LINDA
But...
(too tired and high to
argue)
Ok. Peanut butter cups. Put them on
my room, ok?

JAMES stares at her. She looks at him curiously.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Is that real?

JAMES
What?

LINDA
The...dead brain thing?

JAMES
Anything can be real.

LINDA
Yeah.

JAMES
And anything can be bullshit.

LINDA
Yeah, but you know that feeling,
like--

The two men look at each other and then back at LINDA with a smirk. She sounds high.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Are you making fun of me?

JAMES
Me?

LINDA
Yeah. You.

JAMES
No, Miss -- I am just living my
life. About to head down to the
beach for a midnight swim-a-dim-
dim...

LINDA
Right....

LINDA walks away from the front desk. We can hear the two men resume their conversation with lots of laughter.

As LINDA exits the lobby and enters the stairwell she opens the peanut butter cups and eats them with an incredibly disgusting speed, but with no enjoyment. She gags.

11 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS 11

LINDA runs up the stairs and out onto the second floor hallway.

12 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY 12

The second floor hallway looks exactly the same as the first floor. LINDA uses a keycard to enter a room.

13 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM 13

LINDA closes the door completely, leaving us in the dark before turning on the light. She turns the monitor off and casts it aside.

LINDA undresses. She picks up crumpled pajamas from the bathroom floor and puts those on.

LINDA washes her hands, then smells her arms and washes again, this time all the way up to her elbows.

LINDA examines herself --"Do I look high or normal?" when she hears from the other room:

A faint child's voice.

CHILD (O.S.)

Mommy?

LINDA freezes, like a deer who has just heard a hunter.

14 INT. HOTEL BREAKFAST AREA - MORNING 14

LINDA

(talking into a phone)

I cannot talk about this anymore
right now, I am telling you.

LINDA and CHILD are sitting at the breakfast buffet area at the extended stay hotel. The other patrons are varied, but everyone in the room has an air of not being in the best place in life at the moment.

LINDA is on the phone with her husband CHARLES trying to keep a fight cordial.

CHARLES (O.S.)

(just a voice on the other
end of the phone)

(MORE)

CHARLES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
If that's what Dr. Spring thinks is
best then we have to--

LINDA
There is no WE here-- there is ME!
It is too much. It isn't fair.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Fair? I am WORKING! WE agreed it
was good for US for ME to take this
job and that YOU would handle OUR
apartment and OUR child. YOU have
to go there today and check in and
tell me what-

LINDA sees JAMES from last night approaching the table.

LINDA
The problem with that logic is that
I am NOT a housewife. I work too.

LINDA hangs up the call.

JAMES
You guys look like twins, do people
tell you that?

LINDA
No, you are the first person ever
to notice and/or say that.

CHILD (O.S.)
Everyone says that.

JAMES does a magic trick in which he makes a cookie appear in
his empty palm.

JAMES
(to CHILD)
Cookie?

CHILD (O.S.)
(sounds scared)
Mommy?

LINDA
(coldly)
She won't eat it. Keep it.

JAMES takes the overt hint and walks away.

CHILD (O.S.)
Am I gonna throw up now?

LINDA shakes her head. Her phone rings again. Exasperated, she picks up the phone.

LINDA

Yeah?

CHARLES (O.S.)

You hung up on me. Look. I know you have a lot on your plate. But she's getting better. And the rest of it is totally temporary. The ceiling will get fixed. The sky is not falling. None of this is your fault, ok? Can we please not fight?

LINDA

I don't want to fight either.

CHARLES (O.S.)

Just check on the ceiling today, please?

LINDA

I will, but I'm telling you it is either going to be worse or the same. I don't know why you are blaming me for something--

CHARLES (O.S.)

Stop! I love you! Just check on it! The more you bug them the sooner you guys can get back home.

LINDA watches JAMES as she replies to CHARLES.

LINDA

(flat)

Sorry. I love you.

CHARLES (O.S.)

But maybe while you are there take advantage of the pool and everything. You are right on the beach! You know? When's the next time you'll be able to live at the beach with a pool and maid service, huh?

She hangs up the phone.

CHILD (O.S.)

Did you know that you can train hamsters to love you?

LINDA

No...

CHILD (O.S.)

You can train them to love you.

LINDA

Eat your bacon. I want to be able
to tell them you got 100% for
breakfast.

CHILD (O.S.)

Once they love you you can get them
to do anything! Even tricks!

15 INT. LINDA'S CAR

15

LINDA and CHILD are singing along to **Roger Miller's "My Uncle Used to Love Me But She Died"** at the top of their lungs. They are laughing and having a great time.

16 EXT. PROGRAM PARKING LOT - MORNING

16

LINDA pulls into a parking lot in the back of a nondescript medical type building. She passes a PARKING ATTENDANT booth with an older, uniformed man standing outside of it (Latino, 50s-60s). He is watching all the cars coming in and out of the lot like a hawk. This guy is serious about his parking lot. He gives LINDA an extra-long glare that is deep with implied history.

LINDA avoids his eyes. She scans for spots. There are only two open ones, one on each side of a huge SUV. She slows down in front of one of the spots and starts to pull in.

She looks in the rearview mirror and sees the parking attendant still looking right at her. Judging her.

LINDA

(under her breath)

Fuck you.

She stops abruptly as a MAN gets out of the giant SUV. She lowers her window and sticks her head out.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Hey! Excuse me! Hey!

The MAN looks bewildered.

MAN

Yeah?

LINDA
Would you mind moving your car over
one?

MAN
Why?

CHILD (O.S.)
My Mom needs two spaces!

MAN
(shaking his head)
I'm late.

The MAN dashes away. LINDA is super annoyed. She does a three-point turn without looking and hastily double parks in front of the building.

LINDA
Come on, we have to be fast, you
know what happened last time.

17

INT. CHILD'S TREATMENT PROGRAM - DAY

17

LINDA stands in the hallway of a hospital-like facility.

LINDA is transfixed by a display of child-sized body cutouts taped to the wall. The cutouts are drawn and colored in by children and have descriptor words on them in children's handwriting such as: fat, big, too much, soft, jiggly, full, pain, hurts, want to die, sick, ugly, worried...

She is carefully examining one in particular in which the body tracing seems to resemble her, but in child form. Over the stomach there is a crude drawing of a huge black hole with a tube coming out of it and the word "HELP."

DR. SPRING (O.S.)
She's doing great this week, but we
really do need to talk.

LINDA snaps out of her trance to see DR. SPRING.

DR. SPRING (CONT'D)
I just realized we hadn't checked
in with each other for several
weeks and--

LINDA
I know, it's been crazy. Charles is
still out of town and--

DR. SPRING
You have been missed the last few
weekly family sessions.

LINDA
I told you what happened. Our
entire ceiling fell down. Between
all the chaos with that and living
out of this hotel--

DR. SPRING
We need to schedule a family
session for as soon as possible, to
go over goals and where we are with
the treatment. She's so, so close!

LINDA
Yes. Of course. Duh.

LINDA laughs and tries to make light -- DR. SPRING is all
business...

LINDA (CONT'D)
Oh. You meant now. Yes. I just need
to look at my schedule--

DR. SPRING (O.S.)
Let's pencil something in. We can
always change it later.

LINDA
I really need to leave, I have a
busy morning at work and left my
car double parked so...

DR. SPRING
Let's just set a date right now.

LINDA
Ok.

The two women stand in silence for a beat, looking at each
other.

DR. SPRING
(quietly, gently)
I know you know this, but it is
really important not to get
consumed by whatever feelings of
guilt or control you have about
this illness and treatment process.

LINDA
Right.

DR. SPRING
It is no one's fault.

LINDA
That's what I keep hearing.

DR. SPRING
This is not all on you. We all need to work together. I need you to take care of yourself so you can--

LINDA
I know, I know, put my oxygen mask on first, mmm hmm. I understand. Maybe do some self-care, maybe I should take a swim or walk on the beach instead of the one thousand things I have to do and worry about?

DR. SPRING
Let me put it bluntly: she needs to reach her weight goal in the next week. If she is able to do that then we can put the tube removal and discharge dates on the books. If not then we need to reassess the level of care because obviously something is not working. This is what I want to talk about, when can we sit down properly?

LINDA
Fine -- February 7th.

DR. SPRING
It's February 15th.

18 EXT. PROGRAM PARKING LOT - MORNING

18

LINDA is exiting the building quickly, making a beeline for her car.

LINDA gets into her car in time to see THE PARKING ATTENDANT storming towards her. She tries to slip into her car unnoticed, but it is impossible.

PARKING ATTENDANT
Hey! I told you not to do that and the next time I will report you to the building, I mean it, you can't--

LINDA
 (out her car window)
 You have no authority to report me.

PARKING ATTENDANT
 You won't be allowed in the lot,
 I'll have you towed!

LINDA rolls her eyes.

LINDA
 Sure, call them. I'm not in there
 long enough for them to even come.

PARKING ATTENDANT
 I can have them waiting. You do
 this every single day!

Linda shakes her head dismissively and gives him a quick middle finger as she quickly pulls out of the spot.

LINDA
 (under breath)
 Asshole.

19 INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

19

THERAPIST is a white man in his early 50s -- his is the MALE VOICE we heard asking LINDA about time earlier. The room tone is a loud white noise machine.

LINDA lays on the couch in the fetal position.

THERAPIST sits at the chair by the desk, facing out but the two are not looking at each other.

LINDA
 They aren't doing what they should
 be doing with the ceiling and it
 has been *two months* since the
 fucking thing came down! Every time
 I go check it looks worse and I
 have no control.

THERAPIST
 Well it's not your job to be in
 control over it, is it? It's the
 landlord's job, right?

LINDA
 According to Charles it is my job.
 I just-- I can't stay at that hotel
 much longer.

THERAPIST

Have you tried discussing a compromise with your landlord? Perhaps they could section off the room with the - uh - hole and you could live freely in the rest of the apartment?

LINDA

Live freely? With asbestos and 100 year old dust and black mold spores? That's your advice?

THERAPIST

It was not advice, it was a question to consider.

LINDA

Our landlord is enjoying this. I know he is. I really should show you this hole. It is an entire nightmare on my ceiling.

THERAPIST

When does Charles return?

LINDA

Who knows. Soon. I don't remember. Not soon enough. I can't take it! I am doing this alone and it isn't fair.

THERAPIST is silent.

LINDA (CONT'D)

This is week three of eight. You know that. Don't you write things down? It's your job to remember the boring details of my fucking life.

THERAPIST is silent.

LINDA (CONT'D)

I am stuck. In that hotel. With her. This is my life now. And there's nowhere to go. She goes to sleep and I'm stuck in the dark room, just laying there. With that whirring. And beeping--

THERAPIST

But you go outside at night. So you are getting unstuck sometimes, correct?

LINDA stares at the ceiling and then closes her eyes.

LINDA

You will never understand what it's like. I need to get away for just a minute sometimes...first I'd sit in the hall, then I'd sit in the lobby but now it isn't good enough and I have to get outside--

THERAPIST

(sighs)

Are you mad at me?

LINDA

What? I...what? No...?

THERAPIST

You are upset about things you can't control. The ceiling. Your daughter health. Charles being out of town for work--

LINDA

So what? Yeah. I am. Who wouldn't be?

THERAPIST

What about me?

LINDA

What about you?

THERAPIST

You can't control me either.

LINDA

I don't want to control you.

THERAPIST

Ok.

LINDA

I don't. I'm not even trying to.

THERAPIST

We do have to stop now.

LINDA

If I was trying to control you, you would know it and you wouldn't have to ask.

THERAPIST

I said we are out of time.

LINDA

Now? What about the ten minutes?

THERAPIST

I'm sorry, I wasn't really watching the clock--

LINDA

You are supposed to give me a ten minute warning. We have been over this so many times and I told you it's important to me--

THERAPIST

We have to--

LINDA

You never responded to the email I sent you about my dream. The one with the pigeon? And the scarf?

THERAPIST

I don't respond to my client's dream emails.

LINDA

But you told me to write it to you.

THERAPIST

Yes, to save time and allow me to digest it beforehand for any further discussion.

LINDA

(indignant)

But if you don't bring it up, what's the point??

THERAPIST

We--

LINDA

I had a dream and I need you to respond to *today* and I didn't even have time because you didn't give me the warning. This is not fair.

THERAPIST

We can discuss the dream you emailed next time.

LINDA
It's a different dream.

THERAPIST
I--

LINDA
It is about you.

Brief pause.

THERAPIST
(in spite of himself)
Ok, quickly.

LINDA
(excitedly, speaking fast)
I was in a hospital day room or recreation room or something. And I knew my daughter was in the hospital, but far away, another part. It didn't look like the hospital she was in last year though when everything happened, it was different...weird. I was there waiting for Charles to come and get me and take me to her. But instead you were there. You wanted to sit really close to me. I kept inching away on the bench and you kept inching closer.

THERAPIST is listening to LINDA intently, but looks uncomfortable.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Then I got out my phone to text Charles--I was very nervous if he came in he'd see you there. You tried to grab my phone and then started to tickle me to get me to drop it. I was enjoying it but also I was really scared Charles would come in and see.

THERAPIST is stone faced. He looks at the clock.

THERAPIST
Ok.

LINDA
(incredulous)
Ok?

THERAPIST

You got to tell me. We can talk more about it next time.

LINDA

Have you ever heard of holotropic breathwork? I'm thinking of trying it.

THERAPIST doesn't say anything. Silence. He clearly just wants her to leave.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Charles had the nerve to tell me to enjoy the pool and beach proximity of the fucking hotel. Can you believe that?

THERAPIST says nothing but rather pointedly glances at the clock that only he can see.

LINDA is incredibly annoyed. She stretches her body out on the couch. She covers her face with her hands. She sighs and languishes for a moment on the couch.

She sits up and looks at THERAPIST squarely in the eyes. He meets her eyes and then turns away.

LINDA (CONT'D)

We will not talk about it next time, you know that. There is no thread, no thread at all.

LINDA gets up and walks toward the door. THERAPIST turns back to his desk. LINDA exits the office quickly and closes the door with a passive aggressive slam behind her.

20

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

20

Outside the door, LINDA stands indignant. Her phone rings.

We are in a long white hallway, lined with doors. This is an office suite housing lots of therapy offices. All the doors have white noise machines whirring right outside them. The sound is deafening.

LINDA looks at the phone-- immediately annoyed when she sees who it is, but answers. She walks down the hall as she speaks.

LINDA

What now?

SUPER (O.S.)
 (a thick, completely
 unidentifiable accent)
 Hi, yes. So sorry. Have to leave.
 Stop work.

LINDA
 What?

SUPER (O.S.)
 Mother died. Have to leave and
 sorry work is to take longer--

LINDA passes many doors as she approaches a specific one down the hall-- a woman, CAROLINE (any race, late 20s-early 30s, mousy but attractive and squarely upper middle class looking), is waiting sitting in a chair outside of it. CAROLINE is sheepishly holding a baby carrier in her lap, looking like she wants to disappear.

LINDA holds up a finger to her and whispers:

LINDA
 I just need a second.

CAROLINE nods.

SUPER (O.S.)
 Have to go!

LINDA enters an office door -- HER office door.

21 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LINDA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 21

LINDA closes the door behind her quietly.

There is a desk and a chair on wheels, a stuffed chair and a couch, much like THERAPIST's office.

LINDA
 Listen-- I need you to tell me who
 is going to finish the fucking job.
 It's enough already. I've been
 displaced for over two months, my
 daughter is very sick and I don't
 get why the hole looks *BIGGER* each
 time I check on--

LINDA sits down at the desk. She hits her head on her desk repeatedly.

SUPER (O.S.)
It's not normal job. Big hole. Hard
to close. I-

LINDA
Hard to close?

SUPER (O.S.)
Very hard to close. Not normal.

LINDA
What is the issue then? Can you
tell me? Because this has been
going on--

SUPER
No, no, no issue! The hole is
spread. And very full. Very, very
full.

LINDA
Spread?

SUPER
Is not easy to explain you, miss,
in not my language.

LINDA
¡Yo hablo español! Explícame en tu
idioma, ¡lo entenderé!

SUPER (O.S.)
What? I don't know that words is.

LINDA
(exasperated)
How long will you be grieving for
your mother?

SUPER (O.S.)
I don't--

LINDA
I need a date. It needs to be
fixed. My husband--

SUPER (O.S.)
I be back in week.

LINDA
Fine. But I'm going to be going
there and checking on what you've
done so far. I'll be taking
pictures and you--

LINDA stares at her phone. She's been hung up on. Even so she whispers directly into the phone:

LINDA (CONT'D)
(whisper)
Vete a la mierda, el cabrón...

LINDA violently shakes her whole body out in a sudden seizure-like movement before opening her door and addressing CAROLINE.

LINDA (CONT'D)
(calm, cool and collected)
I am ready for you now.

22

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DAY

22

CAROLINE sits across from her on the chair. On the couch is the baby carrier with a blanket draped over it. Neither woman is speaking and there is an awkward tension to it. There's a buzz on LINDA's cell phone, which is on her desk. She desperately wants to turn around and check it but resists.

LINDA
I really am happy to hold silent space for you, but as usual I'm interested in what you might be thinking about.

CAROLINE
Riley. That's all I think about.

LINDA
Right. But have you noticed that when I try to switch the focus from Riley to you it becomes very silent in here?

CAROLINE
How can I talk about myself with what's going on with him?

LINDA
Tell me what's going on.

CAROLINE
I keep telling you! It's like I keep saying to his doctor: he doesn't smile, he looks at me weirdly and he's very uncomfortable all the time and no one will do anything about it!

LINDA

He seems comfortable right now.

CAROLINE

Yes...but at night I mean. All night. Crying. I stay awake too. And when he's awake he doesn't smile or want to look at me.

LINDA

Is Riley even three months yet?

CAROLINE

Not for two more weeks.

LINDA

We've talked about this before and developmental milestones--

CAROLINE

I know.

Silence.

LINDA

What I would love, and I think this would be extremely helpful, is if you might be able to come to a session without Riley. I think it--

CAROLINE

I can't. You know that.

LINDA

I know that you feel that you can't, but I think if you were able to find a sitter that you--

CAROLINE

Did you hear about that nanny in New York? The mom came home from work and the nanny had stabbed both kids to death in the bathtub? Like a few years ago? That's real. That happened. It can happen.

LINDA

Something like that is a very, very unusual situation. Most people--

CAROLINE

I can't.

LINDA

I believe you can but you don't want to or are afraid to. For now I'd love to stick to--

CAROLINE

I need to protect him.

LINDA

From something specific?

CAROLINE

From the world. From everyone. From me even. Something very bad--

LINDA's phone buzzes on her desk again.

LINDA

Sorry, I'm so sorry but this might be about my daughter, one second, I'm so sorry.

LINDA grabs her phone quickly and sees a text message from CHARLES: "did you check on the apartment this morning?" LINDA shoves the phone into a desk drawer.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Look, I'm not Riley's doctor, so I can't speak to what may or may not be going on with him. We can only talk about how you are feeling about what you perceive is going on with Riley.

CAROLINE

I'm not perceiving it. It is happening. And I feel awful about it.

CAROLINE leans her body toward LINDA and whispers:

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

It is because of what I did. You know. It was me.

LINDA

We've gone over this. Lots of new moms roll over for a second onto their babies if they fall asleep breastfeeding.

CAROLINE

He is not the same. I am not crazy.
He changed and I can't undo what I
did.

LINDA

You are not crazy, no not at all.
But you also aren't evil. Or bad.
You didn't do anything wrong.

CAROLINE stares at LINDA. RILEY stirs a little in the carrier and we see the blanket move a little. Silence. LINDA moves her chair closer to CAROLINE.

LINDA (CONT'D)

(softly)

Ok. Listen. When you have these
feelings of deep panic at home with
Riley, put him in his crib or
carrier, somewhere safe, and draw a
bath.

The camera begins to move closer into LINDA as she speaks.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Breathe until your heart isn't
racing anymore.

The camera continues to slowly move into her face. Her voice is soothing and slow, but a little far away. Like she is wishing she could enact her own advice on herself.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Come out and get dressed and start
the day over again. Put on real
clothes.

The camera is tight on LINDA's face now. Do her eyes seem a little teary? Does she wish someone was giving her permission to take care of herself in this way?

CAROLINE looks at her with rapt attention, as if she were listening to a spiritual leader.

LINDA (CONT'D)

The feelings you are
experiencing...they are very, very
dark and very scary and that is why
you need to keep moving. You need
to keep going. You need to be busy.
You need to not sit inside the fear
and doubt and scariness.

LINDA quickly blinks and snaps out of whatever zone she was in. She finishes the rest of her advice in a more impersonal, clipped tone.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Just get out of the house with Riley. Get out of the house. Just get out of there. Spend as much time out of the house as you possibly can. Can you do that?

CAROLINE

Maybe I can do that. I don't know.

LINDA

If you try it and it doesn't help and you're still overwhelmed with these thoughts, just call me. But only if you have actually tried. You have to really try.

23

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - KITCHEN - DAY

23

LINDA is standing in a little kitchen area off of the hallway in her office building. It's very small. She is drinking tea, eating a huge piece of cake and browsing on her phone.

We see her screen. On a new age healing website there is a link called **"Holotropic Breathwork Will Get You High As Fuck!"** She clicks on it and it leads to a video:

BREATHWORK MAN

Holotropic breathwork is a way of breathing your way into a new state of consciousness! The best part: they haven't figured out a way to make breathing illegal...yet! Psychedelics are the cheat code to reaching enlightenment. Fortunately, our body is the best drug mule we could want. Through meditation, lucid dreaming, sensory deprivation, and a myriad of other natural means, we can achieve altered states of consciousness...and get fucked up in the process.

In the midst of this video playing, THERAPIST enters the kitchen area.

LINDA smiles at him awkwardly and lowers the volume but does not turn it off. He also smiles awkwardly and doesn't say

anything. THERAPIST makes a cup of coffee quickly and leaves as the video continues to play.

An overweight, professionally dressed woman enters the kitchen area. This is MICHELLE (any race, 40-45, overweight and meticulously styled), another therapist.

MICHELLE

Hey.

LINDA gives her a nod but doesn't look up from her phone. MICHELLE proceeds to make tea.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

(referring to the cake)

Is that from downstairs?

LINDA

(as she is eating a bite,
with a full mouth)

Yeah. It's disgusting.

MICHELLE

What the hell are you watching?

LINDA

Do you know about this? Holotropic
breathwork?

MICHELLE

Oh god, yeah I saw a Vice
documentary about it last year.
Silly stuff.

LINDA

It seems interesting, actually.

MICHELLE

It's just another one of these
things people do as short cuts.

LINDA

I was reading that it can be used
in conjunction with therapy--

MICHELLE

(laughing)

Please!

LINDA is irritated but sucks it in as she goes back to her video. MICHELLE is taking a very long (and very noisy) time stirring her tea, hovering around LINDA

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
Hey...uh...how is everything going?

LINDA
Fine.

MICHELLE
I mean, with your daughter and all?

LINDA
Everything is fine. I'm fine.

MICHELLE
If you need to talk ever--

LINDA
Thanks, but it would be too awkward
to switch to you.

MICHELLE
What? Oh. No, no, I'm not trying to
steal you from him! Imagine! I
meant like, as a friend...

LINDA
(as if this never occurred
to her)
Oh. Huh.

24 INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DAY

24

LINDA sits at her desk eating a miserable looking salad from
a fast food place. She has a milkshake as a beverage.

CUT TO:

LINDA's computer screen. It is an article about the nanny
murderer in New York that CAROLINE was talking about. She
clicks on a video link labeled "Murdering Nanny's Sentencing
Statement!"

The video begins. It is tight on a 60 year old, unassuming
looking Hispanic woman sitting at a defendant's table in a
courtroom. She has bandages around her neck. The woman speaks
in Spanish and is crying, emoting and gesturing wildly but
her words are translated by a flat, emotionless, English-
speaking female translator off-camera, making the whole thing
very off-putting and eery:

MURDERING NANNY
(translator's voice)
I ask for a great deal of
forgiveness today.
(MORE)

MURDERING NANNY (CONT'D)

I don't wish that anyone has to go through what I have gone through. To my family-- I told my family that I didn't feel well. I told the kids I didn't feel well. I made more appointments but I was not able to go because the mother always had more things for me to do. I really feel it deep in my soul-- it was not me, it wasn't me. I was not myself. I told the oldest girl, but she only said, "I'm hungry! I'm hungry! You need to make me the snack!"

LINDA scrubs through the video timeline, previewing the thumbnails of the rest of the NANNY's speech until she sees the JUDGE begin to speak.

JUDGE

You clearly were going to end your life that day. What's unclear is why you decided to take the lives of the children. That's always going to be a mystery to us, because you refuse to tell anyone. The only time I have seen you shed a tear in this courtroom is for yourself. You are the--

There is a knock on the door. Begrudgingly LINDA pauses the video, closes her laptop and goes to answer the door.

She opens the door and wordlessly lets in a female patient, with just a nod and slight smile.

The patient (KATE, White, 25, wears intense privilege and entitlement like a neon sign) hurries in carrying a giant designer bag and sits down, not even looking at LINDA. She holds her bag like a security blanket as she begins talking before LINDA has even returned to her chair.

KATE

(hugely dramatic)

You won't believe what I have been through today--

25

INT. UNDERGROUND GARAGE - LATE AFTERNOON

25

LINDA is buckling CHILD into the car.

CHARLES is on speaker phone.

CHARLES (O.S.)

I'm so proud of you! That's great.
You are doing so great. Let's keep
it up!

CHILD (O.S.)

Yeah, but you know what? I can't
hear you that well because Mommy
parked underground. I hate it when
she does that.

CHARLES (O.S.)

Don't be hard on Mommy, sometimes
there aren't spaces.

CHILD (O.S.)

No! It's because Mommy's scared of
the parking attendant.

LINDA

I'm not scared of him. The lot was
full.

CHARLES (O.S.)

Oh...well, you know your mother.
She refuses to learn.

LINDA

Charles, the connection is really
bad and it's hard to hear you--

CHILD (O.S.)

Daddy, can I get a hamster?

LINDA

You are not getting a hamster. I
already--

CHARLES (O.S.)

Eh, we'll see. Maybe when you get
back into the apart--

LINDA

She's not getting a hamster.

CHILD (O.S.)

Daddy, when are you coming home?

LINDA

(to CHARLES)

Where are you? I hear something
weird.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Oh, I'm catching a game.

LINDA
A game?

CHARLES (O.S.)
We docked this morning and there's
a minor league team here on the
island so--

LINDA
Oh. It must be nice to be able to
go do things for yourself. What's
that like?

CHARLES
Hey. Do you want to switch places?
Ok, I'll go sit on my ass--

CHILD (O.S.)
Daddy!!!!

CHARLES (O.S.)
--sorry, on my butt, listening to
people whine and you can captain
this fu--stupid boat. Ok? I'm
allowed to do things on my time
off, Jesus Christ.

LINDA
Time off! Right. Ok, Daddy has to
go and we have to drive now, say
bye to Daddy ok?

LINDA hangs up the phone, gets into the drivers seat, slams
the door and puts on her seatbelt.

LINDA (CONT'D)
I told you: it's a rodent. And just
something to take care of for no
reason. Please. Please don't ask
again. And don't ask Daddy things I
already said no to.

The lights are dim in the room. LINDA stands next to CHILD's
machine. She is opening a container of thick, white liquid
and pouring it into a bag attached to the machine. She takes
the tubing that is attached to the bag and pops a cap off the
end of it.

LINDA
Ready?

CHILD (O.S.)
Yeah.

LINDA reaches under some blankets where CHILD is lying and fiddles around. Then she turns the machine on. Immediate whirring.

LINDA
Dr. Spring said this is a big week,
did she tell you?

CHILD (O.S.)
Mmm hmm.

LINDA
I think you can do it.

CHILD (O.S.)
I am already doing it my best.

LINDA
You have to do a little better.
Then we can get rid of this and
everything is going to be ok.

CHILD (O.S.)
I'll do better.

LINDA
You have to. It isn't up to me,
it's up to you.

Pause.

LINDA (CONT'D)
What do you want me to read you
tonight?

CHILD (O.S.)
I'm too tired. Just a song.

LINDA turns off the lights. The room is dark except for the red lights and descending numbers on the machine.

LINDA gets into the bed with CHILD. She gets under the covers.

LINDA
(whispering)
What song?

CHILD (O.S.)
The dead whale one...

CUT TO:

Extremely tight close up on LINDA's lips against CHILD's ear as she sings **Harry Nilsson's "Think About Your Troubles"**:

LINDA
(singing)
Sit beside the breakfast table
Think about your troubles....

Etcetera. The two alternate the lines of the song, ending very calmly, quietly, sleepily:

LINDA (CONT'D)
(singing)
--'Cause it tastes just like a
teardrop--

CHILD (O.S.)
(whisper singing, barely
audible)
--So they run it through a filter--

LINDA
(singing)
--And it comes out from a faucet--

CHILD (O.S.)
(whisper singing, barely
audible)
--and it pours into a teapot--

LINDA
(singing)
--which is just about to bubble.
Now...think about your troubles....

After this line LINDA's lips kiss CHILD's ear.

CUT TO:

26A LATER. CHILD is asleep. LINDA is sitting on top of the covers on the other bed, drinking wine, eating from a huge bag of Doritos and watching TV. Still dark, but now added to the machine lights and numbers is the light from the television. 26A

LINDA is watching DR. PHIL:

In a taped piece, hidden camera footage shows MAD MOM yelling at a child: "WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WHEN ONE DAY I'M NOT HERE!"

MAD MOM (V.O.)
 I'll call them stupid, a bitch, a
 bleep-head. I've called them
 retarded.

Hidden camera footage shows MAD MOM yelling at the child
 again: "YOU ARE LAZY, YOU DON'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOURSELF AND
 YOU'LL NEVER GET IT!"

MAD MOM (V.O.)
 I'll tell them, you know, get out
 of my face--

Hidden camera footage shows MAD MOM yelling: "IS ANYONE EVEN
 LISTENING TO ME?"

LINDA is engrossed in the show, drinking her wine, shoveling
 Doritos. LINDA gets up and goes to the kitchenette to pour
 another glass, but the bottle is empty.

27

INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - LOBBY

27

LINDA enters the lobby of the hotel holding the baby monitor
 and lingers around the refrigeration case. She pulls out a
 bottle of white wine and shows it to the man behind the desk.

LINDA
 Can you put this on my room? It is
 definitely before 2 this time.

DIANA
 Can I see ID?

LINDA
 You never asked before.

DIANA
 I'm sorry but I do need to see ID.

LINDA
 Are you really going to make me go
 all the way upstairs and get my ID
 and come all the way back down
 here? You know who I am.

FRONT DESK GUY pauses.

DIANA
 It's the rule. Aren't you only on
 the second floor anyway?

JAMES approaches the front desk out of nowhere.

JAMES
Here's my ID. Use it for the wine.

DIANA
I can't do that.

JAMES
Why?

DIANA
I can't use your ID for her wine.

JAMES
It's my wine then. She's just
paying.

JAMES looks at LINDA and winks.

28

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - NIGHT

28

LINDA is sitting in a corner of the field, hunched over and concentrating greatly on something. Then we see: in her hand is a little pouch and a rolling paper. She is trying to roll a joint from a ridiculously small amount of weed remnants. She stops to take a huge swig from the bottle of wine, which we notice is nearly empty. The baby monitor is in her back pocket and we can hear CHILD's machine loudly through it. It's dead quiet except for this sound. LINDA gives up and sprinkles what amounts to seeds and dust into the grass.

She takes out her phone and sends a voice-to-text:

LINDA
(over pronouncing into the
phone)
Can you deliver tonight?

Almost immediately a response comes. We see on the dimly lit phone it is from someone saved in her phone as JOVIAL SEAN:

JOVIAL SEAN (TEXT MESSAGE)
Hrs are 12 to 5 I told u

LINDA
(voice-to-text over
pronouncing)
I will pay extra.

She watches tensely as the grey dot-dot-dot of JOVIAL SEAN writing appears. The dots keep going. For too long. And then disappear without any response.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 Loser.

Just then, LINDA sees JAMES exiting the hotel. He pauses and looks in her direction. She makes no moves to acknowledge him as he waves and starts to walk toward her.

As JAMES is getting closer, LINDA drinks what's left in the wine bottle. JAMES jogs up to her.

JAMES
 Hey!

LINDA
 What?

JAMES
 James. Do you have a light?

LINDA
 Not interested.

JAMES
 In what?

LINDA
 I need to be alone.

LINDA takes off walking very fast.

JAMES
 (calling after her)
 A fucking thank you would be nice!

LINDA heads toward the hotel and then right past it. It is as if she suddenly remembered something she had to do and must do it this instant. She turns down a sidewalk on a main street with traffic. The noise from the baby monitor noticeably cuts out. Silence now. She's out of range...

29 EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

29

LINDA continues walking very fast, she's on a mission. Her phone rings.

LINDA
 (out of breath)
 Hello?

CHARLES (O.S.)
 Where are you?

LINDA
(as she continues walking
fast)
At the hotel. Outside, I needed
some fresh air.

CHARLES (O.S.)
I don't like when you leave her
there by herself, even for a
minute, it isn't safe.

LINDA
I'm just outside for a minute to
get some air. The windows in there
don't even open, you know. To stop
everyone from killing themselves
obviously.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Yeah but what if she wakes up and
is scared?

LINDA
She never wakes up. But anyway I
have someone at the hotel now, a
babysitter.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Really? Who?

LINDA
His name is James.

CHARLES (O.S.)
A male babysitter?

LINDA
Did you call just to call me a bad
mother or what? You don't know what
it's like not to be able to even go
outside for a minute by yourself,
you can go outside at night
whenever you want to. You can go
wherever you want to. The machine
doesn't fucking stop and nothing I
do--

CHARLES (O.S.)
I'm over here working my ass off--

LINDA

Oh yeah? Who is the one who went to a baseball game today and who is the one that filled her bag with gloop 500 times, saw patients, picked her up, had to do dinner where she only got 20% and--

CHARLES (O.S.)

Can we not do this?

LINDA

I have to go. Reception is bad out here, everything is fine.

CHARLES (O.S.)

Wait-wait-did you go to the apartment today? You didn't send me any pic--

LINDA puts the phone back in her pocket and keeps walking fast.

30 INT. LINDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

30

LINDA bursts into the door of her apartment.

31 INT. LINDA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

31

LINDA rushes into the bedroom. It is dark. There are no lights working in the room, so LINDA uses her phone's flashlight to look around.

LINDA rips a tarp off of something to reveal her desk, opens the drawer and rummages around before she pulls out a baggie of pot, a small ceramic pipe and two lighters.

LINDA

(quietly)

Yessss....

She looks up at the hole. There is a faint light coming from it. Iridescent dust particles seem to be dancing around inside of it. LINDA is taken with the sight. It is weirdly beautiful and ethereal.

Then water trickles down in what seems like slow motion. She is fascinated.

She haphazardly takes some photos with her phone and texts them to CHARLES:

LINDA (TEXT MESSAGE) (CONT'D)
 Here are the pics of the apt. Sorry
 forgot to send before! I went
 during lunch.

Instantly CHARLES texts back.

CHARLES (TEXT MESSAGE)
 Shit. Why so dark in daytime tho?

LINDA hastily puts the tarp back on the desk and walks out to
 the living room, texting CHARLES.

LINDA (TEXT MESSAGE)
 The lights are out and it was
 cloudy, I don't know. Have to go.

31A In the living room, LINDA turns on the TV instead of turning 31A
 on the lights. She throws her phone onto the couch and sits
 on the floor, quickly packing the tiny bowl with pot. She
 lights it and takes a deep inhale.

LINDA lays on her back. She breathes deeply a few times with
 her eyes tightly closed. She opens them again.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 Stupid.

LINDA grabs the remote and flips through channels in a
 complete daze. She lands on a channel just as a promo for "**A
 Question of Guilt**" (TV Movie, 1978) comes on. She takes a
 long, deep drag on the pipe and then we see are full screen
 on the TV:

ANNOUNCER
 Coming up on Movies...She was a
 flashy divorcee with sexual charms
 no man could resist and when her
 two small children were murdered...
 the world named her as their number
 one suspect!

DETECTIVE CHARACTER
 (interviewing the accused
 woman)
 Your kids were in the way of your
 stinking slutty life...so you got
 rid of them!

ANNOUNCER
 Was she guilty of murdering her
 children?

DETECTIVE CHARACTER
 (in court on the stand
 during trial)
 She admitted to having had affairs
 with over fifty different men!

LINDA's eyes are wide as she takes another very long toke.

ANNOUNCER
 Or was she merely on trial for her
 promiscuous lifestyle?

JUDGE CHARACTER
 So she sleeps around...there isn't
 one bit of evidence that she killed
 her children!

ANNOUNCER
 A powerful drama based on a real-
 life case that shocked the nation!
 Tuesday Weld and Ron Leibman star
 in...A QUESTION OF GUILT! Next on
 Movies.

LINDA's interest is definitely piqued. She takes another deep
 inhale off of the pipe and grabs her phone. She activates
 SIRI:

SIRI
 How can I help you? Can can ask me
 things like--

LINDA
 Who is RON LIEBMAN?

SIRI
 Ron Leibman was an American actor.
 He won both the Tony Award for Best
 Actor in a--

Suddenly -- **BANG!** -- a crashing sound from the bedroom.

LINDA is startled, frightened. She gets up and dashes to the
 bedroom. As she does this SIRI is still speaking.

SIRI (CONT'D)
 --also acted in films such as
 Where's Poppa? (1970), The Hot Rock
 (1972), Norma Rae (1979), and
 Zorro, The Gay Blade (1982)--

31B

As she enters the room she turns SIRI off. Now it is
 completely quiet. Unnaturally quiet.

31B

The room is pitch black, except for that very faint light coming from the hole. LINDA flips her phone's flashlight on and points it chaotically around the room, looking for what caused that loud noise. Everything looks the same as it was, though.

She goes to leave the room but something catches her eye-- a full length mirror leaning against the wall. It is standing upright but the glass is completely shattered and sitting almost neatly piled in front of it. Next to that is a chunk of ceiling paster, but it is too far away from the mirror for it to completely make sense.

LINDA
(quietly to herself)
What the fuck.

LINDA approaches the mirror. She starts to pick up the broken pieces but then stops cold-- she is looking in the glass that remains in the mirror and what she makes her freeze:

In the reflection of the mirror it appears that behind LINDA are a trio of ethereal shapes or blobs of light. It is very hard to make out what exactly it is. LINDA abruptly turns around to see it for herself. She is faced with the light shapes. They are beautiful but creepy. LINDA looks awestruck.

LINDA (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Mom?

Suddenly, nothing is there. Pitch blackness. Stillness. LINDA flashes her light all around the room, frantically. She points it directly into the hole. The hole has an energy to it - there's an essence to it that makes it seem like it is capable of watching, hearing. LINDA stands directly under it.

Suddenly an impossibly bright light floods the room from the hole. It is as bright as looking directly into the sun, and as painful. LINDA winces and covers her eyes but at the same time is struggling to look. The light is so bright that it is causing her actual physical pain. She falls down with a thud.

As soon as she falls the light is gone. There is complete, unearthly silence, as if the entire universe was put on pause. Extreme close-up on LINDA's face as her watery, pained eyes widen in fear.

LINDA runs down a sidewalk like a mad woman. She is distraught and is holding onto the baby monitor for dear life.

LINDA hits herself a few times on the head in frustration - really hits herself.

LINDA (V.O.)
It doesn't matter if I am there or not...not really. I can't really make things better. Or worse.

THERAPIST (V.O.)
You are effecting change at all times. Just by being.

LINDA (V.O.)
I'm not being. I'm not anywhere.
I'VE BEEING TRYING TO TELL YOU--

33

EXT. PARKING LOT - MORNING

33

CHILD is singing loudly to whatever is on her headphones.

LINDA sees an empty spot but it is in between two giant SUVs and is very tight. She winces. The Parking Attendant is staring at her, waiting for her to attempt this. She looks him in her mirror, defiant.

LINDA inches into the parking space excruciatingly slowly. It's so slow it's almost as if the car is not even moving. Horns are honking. She looks in her mirror and sees a line of cars that she is blocking. THE PARKING ATTENDANT is approaching. She aborts mission, quickly backs up and speeds around the lot, toward the front of the building.

LINDA
You know what would be super fun?
And like a really, really big kid
thing to do?

CHILD (O.S.)
I can't hear you.

LINDA
Take your headphones off! I said,
you know what would be super fun?
And a really big kid type of thing
to do?

CHILD (O.S.)
What?

LINDA
If I drop you in front of the door
and you go in by yourself! Oh my
god, that would be so cool of you!

CHILD (O.S.)

No.

LINDA

Why not?

CHILD (O.S.)

All the moms walk you in. You are a mom so you have to walk me in. You have to sign me in!

A car beeps. LINDA looks in her mirror and sees that there are several cars waiting behind her so they can pass.

LINDA

Honey, please? Little bear? Please?

PARKING ATTENDANT starts to approach her car. CHILD shakes her head, puts her headphones on and starts singing again. LINDA spots another mother (EVA) walking up to the building with a pre-teen child (ADDIE). LINDA lowers her window and calls to her. Cars continue to beep.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Eva!

EVA turns around.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Can you walk her in? Please, please, please? I cannot deal with parking today!

EVA

Of course! No problem!

LINDA

(to child)

Take those off, we are here. Exciting news: Eva will walk you in, go! Go!

CHILD (O.S.)

(whispering)

Mommy...Addie scares me. She only eats Nutella. I need you, to be with you!

LINDA

Sshh! For Mommy, ok? Please?

CHILD (O.S.)

You are my mom.

LINDA
I see other kids go with other moms
all the time, do it. Eva will sign
you in. Now! Go!

CHILD (O.S.)
No.

The PARKING ATTENDANT is almost at LINDA's car. The parent in
the car behind her starts to get out of her car.

LINDA
(sighing)
We'll go look at hamsters today if
you do it.

CHILD (O.S.)
Looooook at them?

LINDA
I'll get you one, ok? Just go!

We hear CHILD squeal with delight.

LINDA (CONT'D)
I love you! I love you so much!
See? Everything is going to be--

We hear the car door open and then slam.

LINDA speeds off amidst continued beeping.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Shit. SHIT. SHIT.

LINDA drives.

LINDA (CONT'D)
(screaming)
I AM THE WORST. I AM THE FUCKING
WORST.

34 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - ELEVATOR - DAY

34

LINDA stands in the elevator and pushes a button. As the
doors are about to close a hand extends between them and they
reopen. The hand belongs to THERAPIST. He enters the
elevator. They looks at each other and awkwardly smile but do
not speak.

35

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DAY

35

LINDA is in the middle of a session with a man named STEPHEN (any race, late 20s, lanky and somewhat creepy). He sits upright on the couch and LINDA sits at her desk chair. Her body language is slightly closed off as she keeps herself turned away from him.

STEPHEN

--and they said "be nice, be nice Stephen." So I was really nice to them. To the animals.

LINDA

Mmm hmm...

STEPHEN

And then you told me that if you touch baby birds the mama bird will not come back if they know you touched them.

LINDA

That must have been some dream--

STEPHEN

I'm not done. You kissed me.

Silence.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I said you kissed me.

LINDA

I heard you. In your dream I kissed you.

STEPHEN

And then the next day I felt a crushing guilt and I knew somehow that your husband had called me an asshole.

LINDA

Stephen, you know we can talk about these feelings apart from your dreams.

STEPHEN

But...I can't help it if in my dreams you always want to kiss me.

36

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

36

LINDA is curled up on the couch.

LINDA

I had to run all the way back to the hotel and the whole time I was thinking, what if she had woken up and gotten scared? What if she had left the room and went outside? I mean, she can't really because of the machine, but what if the machine started beeping and woke her up. Sometimes she rolls over on the line and it beeps and--

THERAPIST

In your mind, what is the difference between going outside on the hotel property while she is sleeping and going all the way home?

LINDA

What do you mean? It is *very different*. Are you insane?

THERAPIST

I want to know why you think so.

LINDA

Well...I guess because in one I am a regular mom making a shitty choice and in the other I'm a straight up shitty mom.

Pause.

LINDA (CONT'D)

I take a baby monitor with me outside. But it's range sucks. Like a leash.

THERAPIST

Look, it isn't for me to say whether you should or should not--

LINDA

No, no, I shouldn't. I know I shouldn't. I shouldn't even leave her for a second. And you should tell me I shouldn't!

(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

It *is* for you to say! Tell me not
to do it! *Tell me what to do!*

THERAPIST

I don't think you actually want me
to tell you what to do. You know
what to do.

LINDA

No one is telling me what to do.
How to fix this. I'm supposed to
know how to fix her.

THERAPIST

What is it that you think it is
your job to fix?

Silence.

LINDA

She has to weigh 50 pounds by next
week. Dr. Spring says. That's a
gain of 2.5 pounds. That's 8,750
extra calories. Each day is
supposed to be 2,500 calories in,
compensating for her resting rate
of 1,800 calories burned. That's at
least gotta be 80% of each meal for
7 days plus the tube and that's IF
she just lays still all day.
There's no way. And if she doesn't
then getting the tube out is not on
the horizon, something about
reassessing the level of care. I
can't make her put shit in her
mouth. I can't make her do it. I
can pour more stuff in the tube but
we are supposed to cut that down--

THERAPIST

Tonight I'd like you to get a full
night's sleep.

LINDA

So would I. But I'm telling you a
real thing. An actual thing. A
problem to fix. I need help with
this. I'm supposed to sit around
and watch her fail and this is
going to go on forever? What do I
do?

THERAPIST

That means no drinking. No drugs.
No walks outside--

LINDA

Are you listening to me? *Can you hear me?* I'm asking you what I am supposed to do! Specifically!
(pause)
Why don't you like me?

THERAPIST

Why don't I like you?

LINDA

I know you won't answer me. Forget it.

THERAPIST

That's incredibly unfair.

Silence.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)

Why is this so important to you right now?

LINDA covers her face with her hands and looks like she might gouge her eyes out.

LINDA

I just want someone to tell me what to do. No one is telling me.

37

INT. LINDA'S CAR - DAY

37

LINDA is driving and nervously looking into the rear view mirror at CHILD. We see her little hands tightly gripped around something in her lap: a cardboard box with holes in it. We see her hands opening the flap a little and the pink nose of a hamster peeks out.

LINDA

I said don't open the box!

CHILD (O.S.)

I just want to see him, he keeps scratching, he doesn't like being in the box.

LINDA

He's going to try to get out, close it back up and hold it closed!

We see CHILD trying to close the flap of the box as a hamster paw pokes out and desperately claws at CHILD's hand.

CHILD (O.S.)
He's scratching me!

LINDA
Close the box!

CHILD (O.S.)
I can't!

We see the hamster head pop out. His face is maniacal and reminiscent of Jack Nicholson busting through the bathroom door in *The Shining*. He is trying to escape from the box frantically, bearing his teeth and waving his paws as CHILD is screeching and begins to cry.

CHILD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mommy! He's getting out!

LINDA is driving fast as she reaches her arm behind her to the back seat.

LINDA
Hand it to me!

CHILD (O.S.)
(fully crying now)
He's going to jump out! He hates us!

LINDA
Give it to me, I can't see!

LINDA manages to get the box in her hand and throws it onto the passenger seat. She shoves the hamster's head into the box as he bites her hand.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Shit!

With one hand she is trying to keep the box closed and with the other she is steering. She swerves and someone honks.

CHILD (O.S.)
We are going to die!

LINDA
We aren't going to die, but I have to pull over.

The hamster is feverishly trying to get out of the small opening available to him as LINDA keeps shoving him back in the box. He bites LINDA on the hand again. When she recoils he jumps out.

LINDA (CONT'D)
He's out, oh my god, he's out!

CHILD (O.S.)
Mommy!!

LINDA pulls over to the shoulder of the busy street. CHILD is hysterically crying. LINDA takes a deep breath and looks at the passenger seat. The brown and white fluffy hamster is sitting there staring at her silently. He looks shocked to be out of the box and face to face with her. LINDA grabs him roughly and puts him in the box. She turns the box upside down and puts her purse on top of it. The box is rumbling around underneath the purse.

CHILD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Why does he hate us! It's not fair!
I don't want him, I don't want him
anymore! He's bad!

LINDA
He's just anxious. It's fine...

LINDA is very rattled but carefully pulls back into traffic. As soon as she does there is a red light. She stops and -- **WHAM-- she is rear ended.** The purse and hamster box fly on to the floor. CHILD is now screaming. LINDA looks back at her.

LINDA (CONT'D)
You are fine, I am fine. No one is
hurt. I'll be right back.

CHILD (O.S.)
Take the it with you! He's going to
get me! He wants to kill us!

LINDA gets out of the car and walks around to the passenger side. She opens the door and grabs the hamster box. She holds it tight against her chest as she approaches the man who has exited the car behind her.

MAN
Look, lucky, lucky, there's no
damage. We don't even have to
exchange information.

LINDA

My kid is in that car, do you hear
her crying? You scared her to
death, you dick.

MAN

Hey! It was barely a tap.

LINDA

She thought we were going to die.
Don't fuck with me about my child's
safety. I need all your
information.

The hamster is trying to get out again but LINDA is so angry
at this man that she isn't paying attention. The hamster's
nose pokes out.

MAN

What the fuck is that?

LINDA

What?

MAN

That!

The man points at the box just as the hamster breaks free,
jumps out and runs into the street. **He is immediately run
over by a car.** LINDA stares at the street in disbelief.

38

INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

38

LINDA sits, knees bent over the front edge of the bed,
chugging a glass of wine, eating a large family-size tray of
microwave lasagna and looking at her phone. She whispers a
voice-to-text to CHARLES:

LINDA

(speaking into her phone)
I miss you I love you come back
here

CHARLES (TEXT MESSAGE)

I love you too. You are so strong.
Can't wait to come home.

LINDA

(speaking into her phone)
Everything is under control

CHILD is asleep in the other bed. Her machine is whirring as
usual.

But now there is another noise in the room: the metallic creaking of a hamster wheel going a million miles an hour.

LINDA looks over the side of her bed and we see a cage placed between her bed and CHILD's bed. Inside a totally different hamster, this time a black skinny one with short hair, runs on the wheel. It stops for a second to twitch it's nose at LINDA. LINDA throws a pillow on top of the cage.

LINDA makes her way to the other bed and silently lays down beside the lump under the blanket that is CHILD. She puts her arms around her and cuddles her.

CHILD (O.S.)
(half asleep)
Stop!

LINDA
Did you know I love you and you are
the best and I am so proud of you
for everything, you can do it, and
you are almost all better and--

CHILD (O.S.)
Mommy! Stop!

LINDA
I can't. I love you too much.

CHILD (O.S.)
(gagging)
You smell like wine! Agghh!

LINDA snaps up from the bed at this rejection. She gets her arms caught the machine's tubing for a moment and shakes them off in frustration.

Her phone rings. She runs to her side of the room for it. She is alarmed because it is so late at night, but also relieved to have something to attend to. She is kind of drunk. Her face is puffy from crying.

LINDA
(answering the phone)
Hello?

CAROLINE (O.S.)
Hi. It's Caroline. Um, Caroline
Primm, your patient? I'm sorry it
is so late...

LINDA is momentarily disoriented but gets her bearings.

LINDA
 (using a hushed tone so as
 not to wake CHILD)
 Is this an emergency? If it's an
 emergency you ha--

CAROLINE (O.S.)
 It's not an emergency. I just...I
 forgot to call you yesterday.

LINDA
 What?

CAROLINE (O.S.)
 You told me to take Riley for a
 walk after I took a bath and calmed
 down. I did it! But I forgot to
 call you.

As LINDA talks on the phone, she grabs the baby monitor and
 leaves the room to stand in the hallway.

39

INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

39

The hallway is extremely bright in comparison to the room and
 LINDA has to squint until her eyes adjust. She switches on
 the baby monitor and sticks it in her back pocket. Loud
 machine whir as always.

LINDA
 Oh. Yes. Ok. That's good. I do feel
 like I need to say though that this
 number is for emergencies only.

CAROLINE (O.S.)
 I'm sorry. I just...I couldn't
 sleep thinking that you were
 worried.

LINDA
 I wasn't worried.

CAROLINE (O.S.)
 You weren't? You weren't thinking
 about me?

LINDA
 I said you could call me if you
 couldn't calm down, not that you
 had to call me. Ok? But Caroline,
 are you safe?

CAROLINE (O.S.)
I'm sorry. I misunderstood. I'm so
dumb. Ugh. Yes...I'm safe.

LINDA
Is the baby-- is Riley safe?

CAROLINE (O.S.)
Well...I think he had a seizure
today. I read that sometimes--

LINDA
A seizure?? Did you take him to the
hospital?

CAROLINE (O.S.)
No. I-I mean, I didn't actually see
him have it but he is acting how
they say a baby acts after one.

LINDA
Oh. Let's talk about it in session,
ok?

CAROLINE (O.S.)
Sorry, I'm obviously bothering you.

LINDA
It is not your fault. I'll see you--

CAROLINE (O.S.)
Can I come tomorrow? Waiting until
next week seems too long.

LINDA
Uh...ok. Ok. I can see you at 1.

CAROLINE (O.S.)
Ok. I'm sorry. Bye.

LINDA hangs up the phone and looks very irritated as she goes
to open her door. She discovers she didn't bring her key with
her. She's in pajamas with bare feet.

LINDA
(under breath)
You have to be fucking kidding me.
Shit!

She knocks on the door. No answer. She knocks louder. No
answer.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 (calling into the room
 through the door)
 Little bear? Little BEAR? HELLO?

40 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - LOBBY

40

LINDA enters the lobby and is annoyed to see no one is behind the desk. Before she even gets to the desk she starts calling for someone.

LINDA
 HELLOOOOOOOO? HELLO??? IS ANYONE
 DOING THEIR JOB TONIGHT?

When she stands right in front of the desk she sees a sloppy hand-written sign that reads: "BB IN 20"

LINDA's frustration, anger and general misery is on full display on her face. Her eyes dart to the case of wine. She quickly grabs a bottle and exits the lobby to the outside.

41 EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - NIGHT

41

LINDA is sitting on the bench drinking directly from the wine bottle. The baby monitor sits on the bench, blasting the machine noise at top volume. She has her phone on her lap, playing a deep cut **Janis Joplin** song "**Let's Don't Quit**".

JAMES appears behind her shoulders out of nowhere.

JAMES
 Hi.

LINDA is startled. She quickly and clumsily turns off the music, clearly embarrassed and feeling exposed.

JAMES (CONT'D)
 I didn't mean to scare you.

LINDA
 Ok, usually when you walk up behind women in the dark you scare them.
 Jesus Christ.

JAMES
 Noted.

Silence.

JAMES (CONT'D)

What are you, one of those white chicks into dirty blues or some esoteric shit?

LINDA gets up, gathers her stuff and starts to walk quickly toward the hotel. JAMES walks behind her.

JAMES (CONT'D)

So...what are you into?

LINDA does not turn around. She keeps walking with JAMES walking behind her as they talk.

LINDA

What am I into?

JAMES

Yeah.

LINDA

I don't know what the fuck that means. What music do I like? Is this 10th grade?

JAMES laughs in an easy, amused way that further embarrasses LINDA, who is wound so tight she could pop.

JAMES

Just that I've seen you smoking shit out here at night. Into anything else?

LINDA

None of your business.

JAMES

Seriously though, what else are you into?

LINDA stops in her tracks and turns around to face JAMES.

LINDA

I'm into you leaving me the fuck alone. I'm into being a mother to my sick fucking kid. Stuff like that.

JAMES looks at her carefully, almost up and down and laughs again.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What is so funny?

JAMES
How long is the range on that
thing?

LINDA
Is that a threat? Are you
threatening my daughter?

JAMES shrugs.

JAMES
Nah. Curious guy.

LINDA stares at him.

JAMES (CONT'D)
What's wrong with your daughter
anyway?

LINDA
What's it to you?

JAMES
Is that why you live here?

LINDA ignores him as she keeps walking, chugging at the
bottle of wine simultaneously.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Something to pass the time. Is it
like cancer or something weirder?

She suddenly turns back around, throws the bottle at him and
walks fast into the hotel. The bottle lands with a thud by
JAMES' feet but does not break.

JAMES (CONT'D)
What the fuck!

42 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - LOBBY

42

LINDA goes into the lobby, but there is still no one behind
the front desk. JAMES follows her.

LINDA pounds on the desk.

LINDA
ARE YOU THERE??? HELLO???

No answer. JAMES stands quietly to the side, watching her.
LINDA ignores him, grabs another bottle from the case and
fake-casually walks out of the lobby. JAMES follows.

43 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY

43

They walk down the hallway in this way. LINDA clearly wants to look behind her but is fighting it. She stops in front of the elevator and pushes the button. JAMES catches up and stands right next to her. LINDA goes to open the wine bottle but notices it is a cork, not a twist-off. She's pissed.

JAMES

I have a pocket knife and know a trick.

LINDA ignores him. The elevator opens and they both enter.

44 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - ELEVATOR

44

LINDA and JAMES stand at opposite sides of the elevator.

JAMES

That's so interesting.

LINDA

What?

JAMES

Trying so hard to get away from me,
you could have taken the stairs.

LINDA ignores him. The doors open and she rushes to her room.

45 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

45

LINDA runs up to her door and knocks. Nothing. She knocks again. She puts her mouth directly to side of the door frame, where it meets the wall.

LINDA

Open up for Mommy!

JAMES is walking down the hall to his room and leans against his door watching. LINDA looks over quickly. She sits in front of the door and ridiculously attempts to open the cork with her nails. Then her teeth. She looks at JAMES again, who is watching her like one might a crazy person on the sidewalk. Then she gets up and charges at him like a bull.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What the fuck is your problem?

JAMES

Whoa, what?

LINDA

You know what. Why are you obsessed with me?

JAMES

Lady, I am not obsessed with you. But really you don't want to be sitting out here where some freak might walk by.

LINDA

What freak?

JAMES

How should I know? This entire place is full of freaks.

LINDA

Shut up and don't call me lady.

JAMES

Ma'am.

LINDA

Don't call me ma'am.

JAMES

Miss.

LINDA

Oh my god.

LINDA starts to walk backward.

JAMES

Frau?

LINDA turns on a dime and walks back to her room and knocks, hoping CHILD will wake up and let her in. Nothing.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hag? Crone?

LINDA knocks louder. Still nothing. LINDA slumps in front of the door.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Rachet? Boseulachi? What do you want to call you exactly? *Female?*

She bangs her head against it as one last effort. Nothing.

JAMES (CONT'D)
 (from down the hall)
 Dickybird...look, have you ever
 been on the dark web?

Pause and silence. LINDA turns to look at him down the hall.

JAMES (CONT'D)
 If you want to come in and chill
 til morning when your daughter
 wakes up, I was just going to do
 some stuff on there...if you are
 interested in getting some shit
 too.

LINDA
 Do what on there? Get what?

JAMES shrugs and smiles.

46

INT. JAMES'S ROOM - EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - NIGHT

46

LINDA and JAMES are in front of JAMES's laptop. They are drinking the wine LINDA had. The baby monitor sits next to the laptop, blasting that machine sound as usual.

JAMES types a long and complicated web address. A weird website marketplace comes up and he types "molly" into a search bar. Pictures of pills come up with descriptions.

LINDA
 But isn't the dark web where you
 like do stuff like...buy people?

JAMES
 I've never bought a person.
 Wouldn't know.

LINDA
 But...you could? Or sell them?

JAMES
 I guess you could. But I don't want
 to so I never thought about it.

LINDA
 Yeah but doesn't it bother you that
 you could click a couple things and
 buy a person or something? Doesn't
 that scare you? That you could?
 That people are doing that on this
 thing? Kids even...

JAMES

(annoyed)

No. Because I don't want to buy a person. Or sell one, or look at kiddie shit, so it isn't really a problem for me...

Silence.

LINDA

And aren't there like places on there where people show each other videos of murders and people they are holding captive? In cages and stuff?

JAMES

I guess. But I'm not a fucking sicko, I don't play with that shit.

LINDA

It doesn't make your nervous that you might look at it? By accident or something?

JAMES

There's no accidents with that. If you are looking at that shit then you really meant to. Can we stop talking about it?

LINDA is silent, staring at the computer.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Look, what do you want to buy? Let's buy some stuff.

LINDA

Umm...I don't know. Do they have cocaine?

JAMES

(laughs)

No one does cocaine.

LINDA

Of course people do cocaine. It's a popular drug.

JAMES

When was the last time you did it?

LINDA

I like it.

JAMES

Fine. I'm buying molly right now so...we'll get both. But see the thing is I might need you to cover this for me and I'll give you cash when I can.

JAMES types stuff into a browser while LINDA drinks her wine and looks around the room. She looks at her phone. 2:43am.

LINDA

Why do you live here?

JAMES

Same as you.

LINDA

Your house fell down on top of you and it's the only place your landlord will pay for?

JAMES

No...So yeah, it's 400 bucks for yours.

LINDA

Wait, what? I don't want a whole brick of cocaine or something. I just meant...a little. To do. tonight. A tiny bag.

JAMES

You have to buy bulk. And then it comes by a delivery guy in like two days direct. We'll split it.

LINDA

Yeah...no. I see what this is about. No thanks.

LINDA gets up, grabs the baby monitor and starts to walk toward the door.

JAMES

Where are you going?

LINDA

Back to my room.

JAMES

How? That dude is for sure passed out in an empty room or something. He's a lazy marshmallow.

Pause. LINDA is thinking deeply.

LINDA

I could put it on my credit card I guess...

JAMES

What?

LINDA

The 400, I could put it on my credit card.

JAMES

You can't buy shit with your credit card. It has to be anonymous.

LINDA

Oh. Then how--

JAMES

You get like Visa gift cards. They have them at CVS. We could go now. Let's go. I mean, unless you have Bitcoin or another crypto?

LINDA

No, of course I don't-- but I can't get in a car and leave my daughter alone in the middle of the night!

JAMES

You leave her all the time.

LINDA

No, I don't. That's just to go in the field...

JAMES

Ha. I've seen you leave the property before, what's the big deal now?

LINDA

What are you, stalking me?

JAMES

No, just a concerned citizen. It takes a village, right?

LINDA pauses for a second, clearly truly considering getting in a car and doing this, when suddenly there are noises coming from the baby monitor. Groggy, sleepy noises from CHIILD. LINDA puts it to her ear.

CHILD (O.S.)
 (through the monitor)
 Mommy? Mommy? Where are you?

46A LINDA dashes out of JAMES' room and is in front of her own door in no time. She bangs on the door as loud as she can. 46A

JAMES can be seen in the background slowing peaking his head out of his door. He's laughing at her. She ignores him.

CHILD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Mommy...get the door...

CHILD's voice is in stereo because we can hear it through the door AND through the baby monitor at the same time.

LINDA
 (yelling through the crack
 of the door)
 Can you open the door? I'm out
 here, I locked myself out! It's
 Mommy!

JAMES continues to linger in his doorway, watching the scene as if it were a sitcom.

CHILD (O.S.)
 (through door and monitor
 at the same time)
 Mommy? Where are you? The bathroom?

LINDA
 OPEN THE DOOR PLEASE! JUST WHEEL
 THE MACHINE OVER AND--

JAMES slowly recedes into his, shutting the door with a huge BANG that makes LINDA jump.

CHILD (O.S.)
 (through door and monitor
 at the same time)
 Mommy...someone's at the door...

47 INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DAY

47

LINDA sits across from CAROLINE in her office. LINDA looks more worse for wear than usual. If a bad headache was an entire person it would be LINDA in this moment. RILEY is in his baby carrier on the couch. He is quiet. CAROLINE is quietly sobbing and looking at the floor.

LINDA

How are we supposed to talk about anything that can be helpful if you won't look even look at me? You asked for this extra session.

CAROLINE

It's just...I can't. You must be so mad at me.

LINDA

For calling me? I'm not mad. Let's move on.

CAROLINE

You have a daughter.

LINDA

(very uncomfortable)
Well I--

CAROLINE

You said you did, last time. I didn't know you were a mom too. Why didn't you ever tell me?

LINDA

Well, this isn't about me.

CAROLINE

So, now I know that you know. You know.

LINDA

What is it you want me to know?

CAROLINE

(crying)
It's all my fault. He told me!

LINDA

Who told you? Your husband? Can we talk about Nick in all of this?

CAROLINE

He doesn't know.

LINDA

But you said he told you. That it is all your fault? What is your fault?

CAROLINE
(cries harder, shakes
head)
No, no. You know.

LINDA
I don't know. You need to tell me.

CAROLINE
It's not your fault. But it IS
mine.

LINDA
Caroline...you know I was wondering
if it might be time to consult with
someone about medication--

CAROLINE
I can't take any medication! I am
breastfeeding! Do you want me to
kill my baby?

LINDA
Of course not. But if a doctor
thinks medication is a good idea
then maybe we need to prioritize
your health over the breastfeeding
for now.

CAROLINE looks at LINDA. She grabs a bunch of tissues and
aggressively wipes her face.

LINDA (CONT'D)
You have to take care of yourself
so that you can take care of Riley,
right?

CAROLINE
I have to go to the bathroom.

LINDA
Well we only have about fifteen
minutes left.

CAROLINE
I have to go now.

LINDA
Can you wait until the session is
over?

CAROLINE shakes her head. She gets up to leave without even
looking at the baby carrier.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Wait, are you planning to come back and finish the few remaining minutes or do you just want to leave and end now?

CAROLINE

Don't you trust me?

LINDA

Trust you? To go to the bathroom? What do you mean?

CAROLINE looks at LINDA intently.

CAROLINE

Can I leave Riley here and go to the bathroom and then come back and finish? I just, I have to go badly and putting him down on the bathroom floor makes me upset about germs.

LINDA eyes the baby carrier. It is completely silent and motionless. She looks at CAROLINE who is completely frazzled and agitated.

LINDA

That's fine. But please hurry or we won't have any time to finish up once you get back. And I have another patient directly after your session.

CAROLINE dashes out of the office leaving the door open.

LINDA sits still for a moment staring at the open door. She gets up and walks over to the baby carrier. She lifts up the blanket that covers the carrier and peaks inside. As she does this we hear the baby wake up and begin to cry. The crying starts quietly and quickly escalates to loud and piercing sounds. She quickly puts the blanket back over the carrier.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Fuck!

LINDA rocks the carrier back and forth on the couch. She lifts the carrier up and goes to the door of the office. She stands in the doorway and looks down the hall. She steps out into the hallway. Riley continues to cry.

48 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

48

The hallway is completely empty. LINDA stands outside her office with the carrier. RILEY is now losing his mind, wailing and crying. LINDA walks down the hall toward the bathroom.

49 INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

49

LINDA enters the women's bathroom. It's a small, sterile office bathroom with three stalls. Inside the bathroom RILEY's crying echoes and becomes ten times louder. The noise is completely unbearable to LINDA and it's clear the bathroom is empty. She panics.

LINDA
Caroline?

LINDA pushes open each one of the empty stalls. She runs out of the bathroom, now holding the carrier in both arms.

50 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

50

LINDA runs down the empty hallway with the crying baby.

LINDA
(yelling)
Caroline?

She gets to her office. The door is still open. She stops for a second to peak in but then keeps going down the hallway to THERAPIST's office.

As LINDA runs down the rest of the hallway the blanket falls off the carrier and RILEY's arms and feet can be seen flailing about like an alien creature as he screams.

She gets to the outside of THERAPIST's door. She knocks. No answer. She knocks again. No answer. She knocks harder. Finally the door opens, but just a tiny bit. We can just see about half of THERAPIST's face through the slit of the door opening.

THERAPIST
What is going on out here? I am in
a session.

LINDA
Ok, so my patient she has this baby
and she said she was going to the
bathroom but then she left the baby
and she--

THERAPIST
I'm with a patient.

LINDA looks in the door and can make out the feet of someone on the therapist's couch. This seems to bother her more than RILEY's continuous crying.

LINDA
I need your help right now!

THERAPIST
I'm with a patient. Also I'm not your supervisor, this seems like a professional issue not a treatment issue.

LINDA looks at him blankly as he starts to shut the door. She kicks the door open.

THERAPIST (CONT'D)
You can't--

LINDA
What's happening with me is more important than whatever is happening in there. She can come back, I really need you and--

THERAPIST
Goodbye.

THERAPIST tries again to shut the door but LINDA sticks her foot into the opening. Riley continues to cry.

THERAPIST quickly and gently kicks her foot out of the way and shuts the door. We can hear the click of a lock as well. LINDA kicks the door hard, almost losing her balance from the impact.

A door across the way opens slowly. MICHELLE looks out.

MICHELLE
What's going on out here, it's super loud! Wait, who's baby is that?

LINDA rushes over to MICHELLE's door. She sees a young man sitting in the office watching all this with interest.

LINDA
My patient said she was going to the bathroom and ran off and left her baby!

MICHELLE

Oh my god. Um. Call her emergency contact I guess? I mean, sorry I can't help I have back to back--

LINDA doesn't wait for her to finish and dashes back toward her office with the screaming baby.

LINDA

(under her breath)

Fucking phonies. All of them phonies.

51

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DAY

51

LINDA is sitting on the couch holding RILEY, who is still crying, but softer now. She is extremely uncomfortable holding him and he is squirming. She is also dialing her phone. She looks terrified. RILEY is red from crying.

NICK (O.S.)

Hello?

LINDA

Hello, hello, yes. I am your wife's psychotherapist and she left in the middle of the appointment and left Riley here--

NICK (O.S.)

Who--who is this? A therapist? Who?

LINDA

I'm your wife's therapist? She was here today at an appointment and--

NICK (O.S.)

My wife doesn't go to therapy. Who is this? Is that my baby crying?

LINDA

Um...is your wife named Caroline Primm? Is your son named Riley Primm and you are Nick? Um...Primm?

NICK (O.S.)

Yeah...

LINDA

Yes, well, she's been my patient at the Center for Psychological Arts in Del Mar since she was about six months pregnant with Riley and--

NICK (O.S.)
Why? What are you talking about?

LINDA
Whether you knew she was in therapy or not, what I'm trying to say is this is an emergency. She left Riley here. With me. And now she isn't answering her phone.

NICK (O.S.)
You let her just leave my baby?
Where did she go?

LINDA
I've left several messages...you should do the same, maybe if it is you she would pick up?

NICK (O.S.)
I can't fucking believe this shit.
This is so fucking typical.

LINDA
I'm sure she's ok. I'm sure she just...needed some space and--

NICK (O.S.)
I can't get him until 5, where are you? Del Mar you said?

LINDA
Excuse me?

NICK (O.S.)
I'm at work. I can't leave right now, I'm in goddamn Carlsbad working. That's why she is supposed to be taking care of the fucking baby. Can you just bring him here?

LINDA
Ok...well no I can't. Also I'm concerned about your wife. This is an emergency.

NICK (O.S.)
You lost my fucking wife.

LINDA
I need you to come down here and pick up your baby immediately! I'll text you the address.

(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

If you aren't here in a half an hour I'm calling the police.

LINDA hangs up the phone. She looks at the still-screaming RILEY. She puts him back in the carrier and puts the blanket back on top of him. She sits next to the carrier and rests her head back on the couch and closes her eyes.

A buzz startles LINDA. She gets up and pushes a button on an intercom on her desk.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Yes?

STEPHEN (V.O.)

It's Stephen.

LINDA groans as she buzzes him into the building.

LINDA

(to Riley)

Shit.

RILEY is quieter now. He is making a lot of noises but has exhausted himself from screaming and crying for so long. He looks sleepy.

A knock at the office door. Still holding RILEY, LINDA opens the door. She is surprised to find THERAPIST standing there instead of STEPHEN.

THERAPIST

Can I come in?

LINDA

I'm expecting a patient. He just buzzed in...

THERAPIST sits on the couch next to RILEY's carrier.

There is another knock on the door. STEPHEN opens it and enters before waiting for LINDA. He is shocked to see another person in the room already.

STEPHEN

Hey, this is *my* time!

LINDA doesn't know what to do in this moment-- she looks to THERAPIST.

LINDA

(quietly)

Say something.

THERAPIST doesn't say anything.

LINDA (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Please just say something--

THERAPIST
(to Stephen)
Would you mind waiting in my office
down the hall for a few moments?

STEPHEN
Your office? Who are you? The boss?

THERAPIST
No, no, I'm just another therapist
here, I have an office just down
the hall. You'll see it, the door
is wide open.

STEPHEN
This is my time. She's mine right
now. You can't make me wait.

THERAPIST
There is an emergency situation.
You need to either wait in my
office or leave the building
entirely.

STEPHEN starts to say something and then sees the baby
carrier.

STEPHEN
Is that a baby? Is that your baby?
You have a baby? You guys have a
baby together?

THERAPIST
The situation doesn't concern you.
Please make a choice.

STEPHEN
Ok. I'll be in your office but I
won't wait that long.

STEPHEN looks at LINDA like a hurt child and then leaves.

LINDA
I am sorry about this but--

THERAPIST
Is someone coming to pick up the
baby?

LINDA

I don't know. I said I'd give him a half hour and then call the police...

They are both silent. LINDA sits in her chair as THERAPIST leans back on the couch.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Would you believe I got talked into the hamster after all? I had to throw him into the cage when we got him home and I think he hit his head and got brain damage and it's--

THERAPIST

You know, when I was a medical student I had to do a stint in a medical experiments lab and we were looking at the effects of a medication on the brains of rats.

LINDA

I--

THERAPIST

And the way it worked is we had to put the rats in these tiny guillotine things, chop their heads off individually and then peel the skin back and look at it's brain under a microscope.

LINDA

I just--

THERAPIST

The rats would try to bite and claw you when you stuck your hand in to pick them up so you had to use these steel chainmail gloves. You stick your hand in the cage and they just attach themselves to the glove and then you have to shake them off when you get to the guillotine box. I was always worried I would hurt the rat when I shook it off the glove and it landed in the guillotine on its head or something. But their brains were always fine when we looked under the microscope.

LINDA

Oh.

THERAPIST

Rodents are resilient creatures.

LINDA

Who chopped the heads off though?

THERAPIST

I did. I made the entire process worse by naming them.

LINDA

Rodents shouldn't have names ever.

THERAPIST

Agreed.

Silence.

LINDA

I have to get Stephen.

THERAPIST

I'll go and tell Stephen your session is canceled. You need to deal with this.

LINDA

I know.

LINDA puts her head in her hands.

THERAPIST gets up and goes to leave the room.

LINDA (CONT'D)

(quietly, without taking
her head out of her
hands)

I love you.

THERAPIST leaves without turning around. It isn't clear if he heard what LINDA said.

52

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE- LATER

52

LINDA hands over the baby carrier to a police officer as she answers questions in her doorway.

POLICE OFFICER

What is her diagnosis?

LINDA
She doesn't have a diagnosis.

POLICE OFFICER
What are you treating her for then?

LINDA
Well, I practice non-diagnostic
therapy which is--

POLICE OFFICER
(impatient)
Yeah, yeah, so what was she doing
here?

LINDA
She was talking. About her life.
She was depressed. Anxious.
Um...some delusions maybe.

POLICE OFFICER
Delusions?

LINDA
She thought there was something
wrong with her baby.

POLICE OFFICER
Was there?

LINDA
I don't think so. I think it was
something she was fixating on, a
place to put all her anxiety...

POLICE OFFICER looks annoyed as he scribbles all this down.

LINDA (CONT'D)
It's also possible something, um,
postpartum was going on but I--I
was trying to refer her to a
medical doctor for medication but--

POLICE OFFICER
(bored sigh)
Just tell me, was she suicidal?
Homicidal?

LINDA
No. She never discussed anything
like that. She was obsessed with
protecting the baby, not hurting
him. And suicide..no. She wouldn't
abandon Riley.

POLICE OFFICER
She just did abandon him.

LINDA
I meant forever...I think she just needed a break. That's really what I think this is. Now is that all? Because I have a patient waiting who really needs my help.

POLICE OFFICER
(shrugs)
It's fine. More common than you think. Women trying to run away from their responsibilities and everyone gets all upset. Then they come back with their tails between their legs.

53 INT. CVS - DAY

53

LINDA stands in line at CVS, she's next up. She's on the phone and it is ringing. A voicemail picks up.

VOICEMAIL MESSAGE (O.S.)
Hello, you have reached Roscoe.
Leave a message for Roscoe.

LINDA
Hello. This is your tenant at 526 Camino, unit 2. You know, the one with the GIANT FUCKING HOLE IN THE CEILING? Your repair guy ran off and the thing is worse. I want to know why you are doing nothing and why you are happy for us to stay in a flop house full of freaks while I continue to pay you rent. I have a very prominent lawyer as a patient and I am--

BEEEEEP. The time on her message has run out.

LINDA (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Oh my fucking god, I swear to god--

CHECK-OUT LADY
Ma'am? Next guest?

LINDA quickly shoves her phone in her pocket and approaches the check-out counter.

She flashes a super smile and her tone is a drastic shift from the anger and frustration that's just happened.

LINDA

Hi! I need a few Visa gift cards.
What denominations do you have?

54

INT. CHILD'S TREATMENT PROGRAM - DAY

54

LINDA steps off an elevator and walks down a hall to a waiting room.

There is a cluster of OTHER MOTHERS in the waiting room, but LINDA sits apart from them. They look at LINDA while they continue talking in hushed tones. Its clear from this moment that LINDA puts no time or effort into knowing these other women.

DR. SPRING enters the room and approaches before LINDA can take a seat.

DR. SPRING

So glad to see you, do you have a
minute to talk before the children
come out?

LINDA

Sure...

DR. SPRING leads LINDA into a corner of the waiting room away from the other moms.

DR. SPRING

I noticed you still hadn't called
and made a family therapy
appointment yet like we talked
about the other morning.

LINDA

It has been a crazy at work and
with the apartment and--

DR. SPRING

I can't stress how important this
is. I am on your side here.

LINDA

Yes, I understand.

DR. SPRING

We want her off of the machine.

LINDA

So do I.

DR. SPRING

I'll be frank. I told you when she entered the program that we usually don't take tube kids. She needs to get off of it as soon as possible to remain here. And to do that she needs to gain faster.

LINDA

We have until next week, right? The 50 pounds goal?

DR. SPRING

The way things are looking today she is not going to meet that goal.

LINDA

Wait...what are you saying?

DR. SPRING

We are doing weigh-ins every day. She won't meet that goal.

LINDA

The goal you set was impossible. We were set up to fail.

DR. SPRING

We need to reassess the level of treatment.

LINDA

But what does that mean?

DR. SPRING

We can talk about it in our meeting.

LINDA

You know what would make me feel so much better? What if we got a surgery date on the calendar for removing the tube and that way it's a concrete goal to work toward and--

DR. SPRING

Oh, it isn't a surgery.

LINDA

To remove the tube? Procedure then, whatever you call it.

DR. SPRING
No, it's not a procedure either.
When it's time to remove it the
doctor simply pulls it out.

LINDA
(shocked)
Pulls it out??

DR. SPRING
Yes, it just slides out.

LINDA
It just sli-- they just pull it
out? She's awake?

DR. SPRING
Sure, she might have a tugging
sensation but it is painless.

LINDA
(cannot grasp this at all)
So they really just pull it out?

DR. SPRING
(getting impatient)
Yes. It is that simple.

LINDA
But...the hole?

DR. SPRING
It closes on it's own. Sometimes it
leaks but it usually closes quite
quickly.

LINDA
Oh...but are you--

DR. SPRINGS
Bodies are amazing things and
children's bodies are even more
resilient. It wants to heal itself
quickly, almost like a cut on your
tongue. It *wants* to close back up.

LINDA looks at her in suspicious disbelief.

LINDA crouches in a corner of the bedroom under a clear tarp.

LINDA
 (calling to another room)
 Find me fast, ok? I don't want to
 stay in here for long!

CHILD (O.S.)
 Don't talk, I'll be able to find
 you too easy!

LINDA
 Fine! But I just wanted to check on
 the apartment I didn't want to do a
 whole--

CHILD (O.S.)
 Stop talking!

LINDA looks up at the hole through the tarp. It seems to have
 gotten much bigger than the last time we saw it. As she looks
 into it the hole seems to begin to emanate a kind of steam.
 Suddenly flies swarm out of the hole in massive numbers and
 begin to cover the room. The flies are pounding against the
 tarp that covers LINDA.

LINDA
 (screaming)
 DON'T COME IN HERE! STAY OUT! DO
 YOU HEAR ME?

CHILD (O.S.)
 (entering the room)
 Mommy?

CHILD begins screaming.

56 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE OF LINDA'S APARTMENT - DAY

56

LINDA is on the phone. She is livid. We can hear CHILD
 sobbing and screaming in the background.

LINDA
 --unacceptable! I am beginning to
 think you don't WANT to fix it,
 that you don't WANT us to move back
 in! What is it, huh? You get a cut
 from that hotel?

ROSCOE (O.S.)
 No, no, no ma'am. You really don't
 understand how complicated--

LINDA
DON'T CALL ME MA'AM! YOU ARE MAKING
ME AND MY SICK CHID LIVE WITH DRUG
ADDICTS WHILE OUR HOUSE ROTS!

57 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

57

LINDA knocks on JAMES'S door. An attractive African-American Vanessa (20s) answers.

VANESSA
Yes?

LINDA
Oh. Hi. Is James here...?

VANESSA
Who are you?

LINDA
I'm his...neighbor? There. I'm in
that room there.

VANESSA
He's not here.

LINDA
Do you know when he will be back? I
have something to give him.

VANESSA
Give it to me. I'll see he gets it.

LINDA
No...I kind of have to give it to
him myself. It's...of value.

VANESSA
Of value?

LINDA
Yeah. Of value.

58 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - BATHROOM - NIGHT

58

LINDA sits on the bathroom floor talking to MICHELE on the phone. As she talks she is plucking her leg hairs out with a tweezer. It is clearly painful, but the only way this shows is how her eyes begin to water as the scene progresses.

MICHELLE (O.S.)
When's your next appointment? I bet
she'll show up for it.

LINDA
What if she kills herself before
then?

MICHELLE (O.S.)
Is she suicidal?

LINDA
I don't know...but what if she
does? What happens then?

MICHELLE (O.S.)
Um...I'm not sure. I never had a
patient kill themselves before.

Pause. LINDA plucks several hairs in quick succession.

MICHELLE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Did you talk about it in
supervision yet?

LINDA
Oh...I don't really do that
anymore.

MICHELLE (O.S.)
Wait--since when?

LINDA
Umm...I'm not sure. I just feel
like doing my own therapy is
enough. I talk about work in there
too. You know.

MICHELLE (O.S.)
But you know it's a license
requirement? Supervision hours?

LINDA
Maybe you could do my supervision
hours. Since you are so interested
and everything.

MICHELLE (O.S.)
Oh--no, no, I mean-- no, I don't
think that would be appropriate...

LINDA examines the small, red, inflamed bald spot on her leg.

CUT TO:

58A LINDA is lying on her back on the floor of the bathroom with her phone next to her head. It is playing a holotropic breathwork tutorial. 58A

BREATHWORK VOICE

--and remembering that this work is a way to create death for our ego in order to open up the answers that are already locked inside of us. Start by closing your eyes and taking deep inhales through your mouth, also exhaling through your mouth. Keep your mouth open and loose--

LINDA complies. Her stomach rises and falls with very deep breaths.

BREATHWORK VOICE (CONT'D)

--Fill your lungs completely with each breath. Let's start the breath that will open our minds: deeply go in, in, out. In, in, out. In, in out--

LINDA does the breaths. Her face is tense.

BREATHWORK VOICE (CONT'D)

As you engage with the breath pattern remember: in the ancient Indian Upanishads, the answer to the question "Who am I?" is "Tat tvam asi" in Sanskrit. This means literally: "Thou art That," you are not name and form. Your deepest identity lies within a divine spark in our innermost being that is ultimately identical with the supreme universal principle--

LINDA's hands begin to stiffen and freeze in a lobster claw like way. She looks like she is trying to move them but cannot.

BREATHWORK VOICE (CONT'D)

--As your mind open your body will begin to shut.

(MORE)

BREATHWORK VOICE (CONT'D)

You can't move but it is ok. You
don't want to move. You are ok. You
are--

CUT TO:

59 INT/EXT. THE VOID

59

Black. An oval shape takes form in the darkness. It swells and expands in rhythm with LINDA's breathing pattern. We start to move toward it.

BREATHWORK VOICE

(sounding very far away)

Don't try to change it, don't try
to move. Your mind is going to do
all the moving. People love you,
the universe--

As the BREATHWORK VOICE sounds farther and farther away we are inside of the oval. An image up ahead starts to take shape. A scene. It is in the distance and not fully visible...until suddenly we are -- WHAM -- zoomed right into the scene:

60 INT. HOSPITAL TREATMENT ROOM

60

LINDA is helping to hold down a screaming and completely hysterical CHILD. We see her thrashing limbs and hear her screams, but continue to not see her in full. The room is loud, bright and chaotic. There seem to be a dozen nurses and doctors all trying to subdue CHILD.

We are tight on LINDA as she holds in tears and attempts to comply with the instructions being wielded at her. Lot's of limbs and backs of heads come in and out of frame. The tone is frantic.

NURSE 1

Hold her leg, hold her leg!

NURSE 2

Mom! Mom! Hold her legs!

LINDA tries to comply. The screaming is ear piercing. Tears start to leak from LINDA's eyes as she attempts to remain stoic. Very abruptly, we snap out of this scene--

HARD CUT TO:

61 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - BATHROOM - NIGHT

61

LINDA suddenly gasps deeply and loudly. She is on her back, beginning to move her hands, breathing deeply. She opens her eyes and looks terrified. She is shaking. She jumps up from the floor, unsteady on her feet, dizzy, scared and clings to the sink. She frantically splashes cold water on her face as we hear the recording continue to play:

BREATHWORK VOICE

As you are in the magical unlocked
realm of your mind, look around,
embrace the beauty--

Suddenly, without warning, LINDA's legs completely give out underneath her. She's on the floor, on her knees. She puts her head on the tile floor and stares blankly.

BREATHWORK VOICE (CONT'D)

Your mind is a place of calm and
security and you can come back here
anything you wish--

62 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

62

LINDA paces the room, checking CHILD's machine, not sure what to do with herself. She is extremely freaked out and agitated. She looks like she has the urgent need to jump out of her skin.

She crouches in front of the hamster cage. The hamster is frantically running on its wheel. LINDA reaches through the bars and stops the wheel from moving. The hamster continues to run and falls off. She takes the wheel out of the cage and shoves it under her bed.

She looks out the window. She sees JAMES swimming by himself in the pool. She looks around to see if anyone else is out there.

63 EXT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - POOL - NIGHT

63

LINDA, now wearing a bathing suit, dashes toward the pool and jumps in. JAMES is at the other end of the pool. LINDA swims over to him. The two tread water as they talk.

After the breathwork experience LINDA seems almost manic. Disturbed. Completely ungrounded.

LINDA

Hi.

JAMES
How'd you know I was out here?

LINDA
I didn't. Just wanted a swim break.

JAMES
Cool.

LINDA
Uh, I got the cards, the cards for
the...stuff or whatever.

JAMES
Oh, great. Give them to me and I'll
order it tonight.

LINDA
I went by your room before but
your, um, friend said she didn't
know where you were. I didn't
really trust her with them so--

JAMES
Well, you found me.

LINDA
Yeah.

Awkward pause as they continue to swim around each other.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Do you want to see something weird?

JAMES
Depends.

LINDA
I'd really like someone else to see
it because it's...I don't know how
to describe it. I have to go see it
but I really need a second set of
eyes.

JAMES
(as he swims away toward
the edge of the pool)
Calm down.

64

INT. LINDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

64

LINDA and JAMES walk through LINDA's dark apartment toward the bedroom door. They are passing back and forth a joint and a bottle of wine.

LINDA

Ok, we have to be fast so I can get back but I just had to show someone this before--

LINDA opens the bedroom door and braces herself for a fly invasion but...there are no flies.

JAMES

A room with plastic wrap over everything? Awesome. What is this, your kill room?

LINDA

No, no -- there were flies here today, millions of flies. Attacking us. I called the landlord, he probably took care of it...or something...

JAMES

Or you just wanted to get me in this weird plastic room.

JAMES sees the hole.

JAMES (CONT'D)

What the fuck is that?

LINDA

That's the hole! That's why I'm in the hotel! The flies came out of there. I'm telling you--

JAMES

That's why you are at the fucking hotel?

LINDA

Yeah.

JAMES

It isn't even bad. You can't just sleep on the couch for a few weeks?

LINDA

It *is* bad. And its been months. They can't-- or won't --fix it.

(MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

And the dust and the fumes and the mold...

JAMES takes a deep drag on the joint and exhales out toward the hole. The hole seems to suck the smoke into itself and then spews it back out with dust and gravel, which hits JAMES and LINDA with force.

JAMES

What the fuck!

LINDA

I told you...

JAMES

What the fuck is up there?

LINDA

Up where?

JAMES

Above the fucking hole!

LINDA

An apartment they are renovating. When they were redoing the bathroom a pipe broke and--

JAMES

No, no, no way. There's some weird shit up there.

LINDA

Weird shit?

JAMES

Voodoo shit. You said flies came out? And that motherfucker just spit at us.

65

INT. UPSTAIRS APARTMENT - NIGHT

65

LINDA and JAMES enter the apartment above LINDA's. It is empty and dark. LINDA tries some light switches but they don't work.

LINDA

They've been renovating it forever...

They wander into a room and see the hole on the floor.

LINDA (CONT'D)

See, it is just an empty room.

JAMES

Don't tell me you think this shit is normal.

LINDA

It's a from a pipe bursting...

JAMES

You are so closed up into your bullshit you can't even tell when something is normal or not. I know evil and I am telling you this is evil.

LINDA

Do you actually think so--

JAMES

I saw what I saw and this hole hates us. Or you at least. It doesn't know me from shit.

LINDA

I did that thing, that breath thing and it took me here, inside of this...I think. Maybe. That's why I needed to come here and see.

JAMES

You can't just do that shit if you don't know what you are doing. You need a guide and shit.

LINDA

It took me here. I feel like it wants me here. But the flies and--

JAMES gets on the floor and crawls toward the hole.

LINDA (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

JAMES

I'm gonna look inside this, I have to see what is inside of this fucker. Flies and shit?--

When he gets to the edge of the hole and looks in it he freezes as if he has seen a ghost.

LINDA
 What? Is it milky stuff? Is it?
 Maybe you shouldn't go so close...

JAMES looks at LINDA and silently motions for her to come and look. He puts his finger to his mouth to tell LINDA to shut up. LINDA gets on the floor and crawls over next to JAMES.

LINDA looks down into the hole.

There are lots of quick movements happening beneath the hole. It is as if lots of energy is dashing from one end of the room to another.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 What the fuck?

JAMES ignores her and keeps looking.

65pt From above, through the hole, we see a woman standing in 65pt front of a full length mirror, which no longer has a tarp over it. In fact, we can see that the bedroom appears without any tarps, fully furnished and clean. The woman takes a knife out of her pocket.

LINDA (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 Oh my god...

JAMES
 (whispering)
 Shut up!

The woman takes the knife and plunges it into her chest. Instead of blood pouring out a wide, black hole starts to open on her chest. She puts the knife into one arm and does the same thing, and then the other arm. The openings on her body keep widening. They are cavernous, black and full of nothing. She sticks the knife into the back of her head. It opens up into another empty black hole.

LINDA
 (whispering)
 Oh my god I know this.

JAMES
 Sshh!

LINDA
 (whispering)
 No, no, I know this! I had this! A dream once!
 (MORE)

LINDA (CONT'D)

I mean, this is a thing I have seen
in my head, I talked about it in
therapy and--

The woman freezes, she has heard them. She turns her head slowly to look up into the hole. **The woman is LINDA. We see the impression of her face for just long enough to recognize it, but just as fast her face is sucked inward and a cavernous black hole is where the face should be.**

LINDA is so scared that she goes to grab on to JAMES, to pull him back from the hole, but it all happens so fast he loses his balance and **falls into the hole** instead. He screams on the way down. We hear a loud thud when he lands below. Then there is silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

James! James?

65pt2 Horrified, LINDA slowly peaks into the hole. It is back 65pt2 way it was in the room, tarps and dust everywhere. JAMES is on his back clutching his leg to his chest and whimpering.

66 EXT. CHILD'S PROGRAM - PARKING LOT - MORNING

66

LINDA sits in her car with her head on the steering wheel. There is a loud tapping on the window. LINDA looks up and sees THE PARKING ATTENDANT angrily hitting the window with a flashlight. She lowers the window.

LINDA

You are going to break my window.

PARKING ATTENDANT

You are in a reserved spot.

LINDA

No, I'm not.

THE PARKING ATTENDANT points to a sign directly in front of LINDA's car. It reads: DR. NISHAWALA ONLY.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Oh.

THE PARKING ATTENDANT stays put as LINDA carefully pulls out. He is watching her like a hawk.

67 INT. CHILD'S PROGRAM - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

67

LINDA sits at a large conference table looking around anxiously.

Other parents are also sitting around the table and still others are milling in. DR. SPRING enters and approaches LINDA.

DR. SPRING
Still meeting after group?

LINDA
Yup. Yes.

DR. SPRING
Wonderful.

LINDA awkwardly nods. As DR. SPRING settles at the table and organizes some handouts, EVA enters the room and makes a beeline for LINDA.

EVA
You scratched my car.

LINDA looks up, completely wear but still offended.

LINDA
Excuse me?

EVA
You scratched my car.

LINDA
What car?

EVA
I went down to get something out of my car and there is a scratch on the driver's side door.

LINDA
I did not scratch your car.

EVA
I know you did. The parking guy saw you get really close to my car and then readjust.

LINDA is pissed.

LINDA
If I scratched it, I wasn't aware and also it wasn't on purpose.

EVA
It doesn't matter if it was on purpose--

DR. SPRING stands up and claps her hands as if the grown-ups in this room were rowdy children. Everyone is immediately quiet. EVA hurries to an empty seat on the other side of the table, far away from LINDA.

DR. SPRING
(to the group)
Today we are going to go over something that's so fundamental it seems almost silly, but is just so important to your children's recovery and your ability to help them recover.

All eyes are on DR. SPRING.

DR. SPRING (CONT'D)
Blame and shame.

All the parents in the room nod, giggle or otherwise acknowledge this statement in recognition. LINDA's face tightens. EVA is staring at her.

DR. SPRING (CONT'D)
A lot of times as parents we look at ourselves too closely. Is this my fault? What could I have done differently? What if this, what if that...this is a thinking trap that doesn't help your child at all.

LINDA looks around at the other parents. Everyone is attentive to DR. SPRING'S words. One mother is quietly crying. Some others are taking notes. EVA is texting under the table while pretending to listen. LINDA looks agitated.

DR. SPRING (CONT'D)
(to the mother who is crying)
Melanie, do you want to put words to your feelings?

MELANIE
Sometimes I just think it is all my fault.

Just as DR. SPRING opens her mouth to respond, LINDA snorts. All eyes whip over to her.

DR. SPRING
(to LINDA, annoyed)
Did you have something to say to that?

LINDA

Oh. Well. Never mind. Don't mind me.

DR. SPRING

No, I want to hear it. Did you have something to share with Melanie?

MELANIE is crying again.

LINDA

It's just that...you keep telling us that it isn't our fault.

DR. SPRING

Right.

LINDA

But it is.

DR. SPRING

Excuse me?

LINDA

If it isn't our fault then we are really super fucked. We just go around pretending we have power to change something that we don't even-

DR. SPRING

Let's unpack this because--

LINDA stands up.

LINDA

I don't-- I have to go.

DR. SPRING

Stay.

LINDA

It's our fault. It isn't fair. But it is. That's how I see it. That's it. That's what this whole thing is. Our fault.

Melanie starts crying harder. The parents are whispering to each other. There is confusion in the room about what to do. EVA is shaking her head in irritated disbelief.

DR. SPRING

Sit, please. Let's talk about this.

LINDA

No! No! I don't want to talk about it. I already know it! And we don't have to meet today because I know what you are going to say. She's failed, I've failed. You set us up to fail! No one does anything hard if they have a safety net! We'll be here forever and I'll be pouring shit into that tube every night until the day I die.

DR. SPRING

Please. Sit down.

LINDA walks backwards toward the door.

LINDA

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. This doesn't help any of us.

68 INT. CHILD'S PROGRAM - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

68

LINDA walks quickly down the hallway, looking like she needs to get out of this building like her life depends on it. She heads directly to an elevator and pushes the button. She barely waits for it before she opens a door and runs down the stairs.

69 EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

69

LINDA sits in her car hyperventilating. She makes a call.

CHARLES (O.S.)

Isn't parent group now?

LINDA

I couldn't sit there, I'm in the car. I'll pick her up later, I can't stay there.

CHARLES (O.S.)

What do you mean you couldn't sit there?

LINDA

I can't do it. She has to get better but I can't do it. I can't. I can't make her better. She's not going to make the goal and I don't get what's going to happen now.

CHARLES (O.S.)
You need to get back in there.

LINDA
The hole is getting bigger!

CHARLES (O.S.)
What hole? Her tube hole? Did you--

LINDA
No! The apartment hole! The goddamn
HOLE!

CHARLES (O.S.)
Why can't you keep tabs on--

LINDA
NO! The guy is gone for a week!
There is no one working on it!

CHARLES (O.S.)
What?! When were you going to
mention that?

LINDA
I'm telling you now. It's too
complicated to explain--

CHARLES (O.S.)
(sighing)
Look. Just take more pictures today
and send it to me. I'll find
someone--

LINDA
No, no more pictures. I'm not going
back there. I'm never going back
there. I talked to Roscoe, he isn't
doing shit and you know what? I
think he has a weird deal with that
hotel where he--

CHARLES (O.S.)
Stop! Let me get this straight: you
aren't going into program anymore
and you aren't going into our
apartment anymore?

LINDA
That's right.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Then how is any of this going to
get back to normal?

LINDA
It won't.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Excuse me?

LINDA
(screaming)
IT WON'T!

Pause.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Are you done?

LINDA
Also there's a woman missing.

CHARLES (O.S.)
What? Who?

LINDA
My patient. She is missing. She
left and she's not--

CHARLES (O.S.)
Ok. Look. Let's take a deep breath
and--

LINDA
No! I can't talk to you about this,
I'll just wait to talk to my
therapist later.

CHARLES (O.S.)
How often are you seeing him
anyway? I saw in the bank--

LINDA
Everyday.

CHARLES (O.S.)
Everyday? Are you crazy? We
absolutely cannot aff-

LINDA
Hold on.

PARKING ATTENDANT suddenly knocks on the window. LINDA lowers
it.

PARKING ATTENDANT
No sitting idle in vehicles, please
move the car or yourself.

LINDA

I have a right to sit in my car
without you harassing me!

CHARLES (O.S.)

Hello?

LINDA

(to Charles but for
Parking Attendant's
benefit)

This creepy asshole is harassing
me, every day he fucking *harasses*
me, he's *obsessed* with me and--

CHARLES (O.S.)

What?? Who? Who is there??

PARKING ATTENDANT

You need to leave the parking lot
or get out of your car!

LINDA

(to Parking Attendant)

You are a sick guy, you know that?
Telling people I scratch their
cars?

PARKING ATTENDANT

You scratched her car. I have it on
cameras anyway. She called police
for me to give report.

LINDA

Oh my god, *are you serious??*

CHARLES (O.S.)

What is happening? Hello?

LINDA throws her phone onto the passenger seat and without
acknowledging PARKING ATTENDANT or looking behind her she
turns the car on and drives backwards at breakneck speed,
clipping the mirror of the car next to her in the process.

PARKING ATTENDANT yells after her something about the police
as LINDA peels out of the parking lot, just as a police car
is entering.

70

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

70

LINDA is on the couch in a fetal position. There is complete
silence in the room for several beats.

THERAPIST

Is there...anything in particular
that is keeping you silent right
now?

LINDA

The fact that I want to be silent
is keeping me silent.

Silence.

THERAPIST

Ok. But I--

LINDA

This isn't about you.

THERAPIST

What I mean--

LINDA

I pay you for your time, right? I
can do anything I want with that
time and right now I want to lay
here without you talking.

THERAPIST

You didn't have to come in here for
that. Go lie on your own couch.

LINDA

Do you wish I went and lied on my
own couch instead of coming here?

THERAPIST

I am saying that you chose not to
be alone.

LINDA

I am alone.

THERAPIST

No. I'm here.

LINDA

No you aren't. Not really.

THERAPIST

But what we can do--

LINDA

Let's not. Seriously.

THERAPIST

Ok.

Silence. LINDA uncurls her body and lies straight on her back, looking at the ceiling.

LINDA

You know what? Did I ever tell you I was pregnant before? I mean, I've been pregnant twice.

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

I never tell anyone this. It was when Charles and I were first dating. I got an abortion right away. Like, I took the pregnancy test and went to a random clinic the next day. I got the surgical kind. With the vacuum thing. It hurt so badly and the nurse held my hand. For some reason I didn't know how badly it would hurt. But it really did.

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

This was almost twenty years ago. I'd have a kid in college if I hadn't done that.

LINDA starts crying. It comes on suddenly and intensely. She is sobbing so heavily she can barely breathe. She is hyperventilating. She sits up.

LINDA (CONT'D)

(struggling to breathe normally)

Aren't you going to say anything. I can't breathe! I can't breathe!

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

You don't get it. You don't see.

THERAPIST

You love to tell me I don't get it. What is it you think I don't get? What is it that you are so sure I can't help you with?

LINDA

I am one of those people who wasn't supposed to be a mom.

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

I am not a mom. I'm not. This is not what it was supposed to be. This isn't it, this can't be it.

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

(yelling)

SAY SOMETHING!

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Not everyone can do it. I can't do it--

LINDA abruptly stops talking. THERAPIST is looking at her, but is still remaining silent.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Do you have kids?

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Do you have A KID?

Silence.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Hello? Why won't you talk to me? Why won't you help me!

THERAPIST

I know what you are doing and I can't have it.

LINDA

What am I doing?

THERAPIST

I don't think this is working.

LINDA

What do you mean?

THERAPIST

We can't see each other anymore.

LINDA looks like she's been punched in the face.

71 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

71

LINDA is coming out of THERAPIST's office. She closes the door very gently and walks down the hallway to her own office.

As she approaches her door we see her patient KATE standing standing by it.

LINDA

Hello.

KATE

I got here early!

LINDA

You aren't for another half hour.
You'll have to wait out here.

KATE looks annoyed but doesn't say anything.

72 INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

72

LINDA enters her office and closes the door. She sits at her desk and sees a red light on her office phone is blinking. She puts her voicemail on speaker.

VOICEMAIL 1

(CHARLES)

I don't know why you aren't
answering your cell but Dr. Spring
called me an--

LINDA skips the message.

VOICEMAIL 2

(DR. SPRING)

Hello, tried your cell. Charles
said I might have more luck on your
office line. This is Dr. Spring. We
need to talk about how--

LINDA skips the message.

VOICEMAIL 3

(CHARLES)

You are too much, you are
impossible and it is too scary from
all the way over here, just please--

LINDA skips the message.

VOICEMAIL 4

(Nick)

Thanks a lot for calling the
fucking police. I don't need this
shit and was on my way anyway.
Caroline is still not--

LINDA skips the message.

VOICEMAIL 5

Hello this is Officer Munez with
the La Jolla police following up on
a report of property damage at the--

LINDA hangs up the phone. It immediately starts ringing but
she ignores it. Her cell phone also begins to ring and buzz.
She ignores this too.

LINDA mindlessly moves the mouse around on her desktop and
her computer wakes up. Her eyes widen as she clicks on
something.

It is an email from CAROLINE! There is one line of text: I AM
TRYING NOT TO BE HER.

LINDA

(mumbling)

What the fuck...

There is a video attached. LINDA clicks on it.

The image of ANDREA YATES fills the screen. She is sitting in
an interrogation room.

PSYCHIATRIST VOICE (O.S.)

What were you trying to accomplish
when you did take your children's
lives?

CUT TO:

73

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE

73

LINDA is looking at KATE, appearing to listen and nodding her head. KATE is talking in an animated way. We can't hear her words, instead we hear the following voiceover:

ANDREA YATES (V.O.)
Maybe in their innocent years, God
would take them up.

PSYCHIATRIST VOICE (V.O.)
God would take them up to be in
heaven? Is that what you mean?

ANDREA YATES (V.O.)
Mmm hmm.

PSYCHIATRIST VOICE (V.O.)
Alright...and if you had not taken
their lives, what do you think
would have happened to them?

ANDREA YATES (V.O.)
I guess they would have continued
stumbling.

PSYCHIATRIST VOICE (V.O.)
And where would they end up?

ANDREA YATES (V.O.)
Hell.

PSYCHIATRIST VOICE (V.O.)
Did you think they'd be better off
without you?

ANDREA YATES (V.O.)
Yes.

LINDA is snapped back into the present by KATE's voice.

KATE
And? Hello?

LINDA
(pretending to know what
she is talking about)
Hmmm...yes.

KATE
It's totally unbelievable right?
Right?

LINDA

That's right. You are right. All of this is completely unbelievable.

74

INT. LINDA'S CAR - DAY

74

CHILD (O.S.)

But Dr. Spring said--

LINDA

I don't care what she said, I'm telling you I had a work emergency and I couldn't stay, I had to leave. It wasn't my fault. I came right back to pick you up exactly when I was supposed to, like I always do but I just could not stay for the group or anything else. I work with a lot of very sick people and sometimes--

CHILD (O.S.)

Sicker than me?

LINDA

Sick in a different way than you.

CHILD (O.S.)

But Dr. Spring--

LINDA

I told you, I don't care what she said. I'm your mother.

CHILD (O.S.)

She loves me though. She said so.

LINDA

She said that?

CHILD (O.S.)

She loves all of us. The kids.

LINDA

She has no right to tell you that. She's a doctor, she doesn't--

CHILD (O.S.)

It's true though.

LINDA

I don't think we need the program anymore.

CHILD (O.S.)
I'm better?

LINDA
I think maybe. Maybe we can just do
it. You and me.

CHILD (O.S.)
What would happen?

LINDA
So many wonderful things! We'd get
your tube out and you'd go back to
school and you'd be eat everything
delicious in the whole world.
Wouldn't that be great?

CHILD (O.S.)
You can do that?

LINDA
What?

CHILD (O.S.)
Make me better? I won't need the
machine?

LINDA
Well--

CHILD (O.S.)
I'm better? They said that?

LINDA
I think maybe...Or if not we can
just deal with it ourselves. You
are better than you were. Dr.
Spring isn't the boss of us.

CHILD (O.S.)
Mommy...

LINDA
Yeah?

CHILD (O.S.)
(quietly, sniffing)
I'm really sorry but I'm not
better. Please don't be mad or sad
Fthat I said that.

LINDA looks at her in the rear view mirror.

75 INT. HOTEL ROOM - EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - NIGHT

75

The hotel phone buzzes. LINDA, who has been drinking in bed, gets out of bed to answer it.

LINDA

Yes?

DIANA (O.S.)

There's someone here who wants to see you in the lobby.

LINDA

Now? Who?

DIANA

Won't say. Come down or don't.

The phone clicks off. LINDA hangs up the receiver.

76 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

76

LINDA opens her door and carefully checks her pocket for her keycard before closing it. She is holding the baby monitor, which is making it's usual noise. Just then JAMES pops his head out of his door, clearly having heard her.

LINDA stops and looks at him. She gives him a pathetic little wave.

He emerges from his room and stands balancing on a huge plaster leg cast. LINDA stares down at his leg and the cast.

JAMES

Thanks for checking on me.

LINDA

You wouldn't believe the--

JAMES

You know, after leaving me abandoned in *your home* with my leg bone sticking out of my skin and all.

LINDA

I called an ambulance.

JAMES

It's very painful, thanks for asking.

LINDA

It isn't my fault you fell. I didn't tell you to lean over like that. I was actually trying to pull you back!

JAMES

You saw that shit.

LINDA

What shit?

JAMES

You know.

LINDA

I don't. I didn't see anything.

JAMES

Ok. You know what you are?

LINDA

No.

JAMES

A fucking misery.

LINDA

Ok.

JAMES

Evil. You--

LINDA

I had to get back here to my kid!

JAMES

Right. Right. Mother of the year. I know shit. I know you. I see you. I could tell people.

LINDA

Give me my money back.

JAMES

Can't. Spent it. On molls and a brick of fucking cocaine.

LINDA

Keep it then. I don't want it.

JAMES

What the fuck am I going to do with a brick of goddamn cocaine?

LINDA
Flush it? Turn it into crack. I
don't really care.

JAMES
Must be nice. Must be real nice.

JAMES hobbles away. She turns and calls to him.

LINDA
They didn't give you crutches?

JAMES
Fuck crutches.

77

INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

77

LINDA enters lobby and stops in her tracks as if she has seen a ghost. CAROLINE sits on a couch biting her nails. She sees LINDA and jumps up. LINDA rushes to her and grabs her by the shoulders.

LINDA
You are here?

CAROLINE
I hope that's ok, I accidentally
followed you one time...so I knew
where you lived. You live here?

LINDA
Are you ok?

CAROLINE
I'm ok.

LINDA
Why--where did you go?

CAROLINE
I had to get out of there.

LINDA
Ok, I understand. So--

CAROLINE
Do you? Do you really understand?

LINDA
I think so. But tell me.

CAROLINE

(panicking)

Holy shit, holy shit. This is...a mistake. This is not--I thought you understood and I wouldn't even have to say anything--

LINDA

Calm down...I think that we should go right now in a car to the emergency room and--

CAROLINE

A hospital?

LINDA

Yes.

CAROLINE

Why? Why? For what? I'm not sick.

LINDA

Well, it's a safe place to go right now if you don't feel ready to--

CAROLINE

What about your daughter?

LINDA

What?

CAROLINE

Where's your daughter?

LINDA

She's...sleeping. Upstairs. She's asleep.

CAROLINE

Who is with her? Your husband?

LINDA

It's not really your job to worry about.

CAROLINE

It's your job.

LINDA

Yes. It's my job.

CAROLINE

I don't want to go to a hospital. I want YOU to help me! Help me!

LINDA
I am trying to!

CAROLINE
No, you don't see it. All their
faces! The little faces! They look
at us and there is nothing there--

LINDA
You need to calm down--

CAROLINE
No, I am awake now. I am fine! I
trusted you, I trusted you to know
and you don't know!

LINDA
Please, take some breaths, breathe
with me, ok, let's--

Suddenly, without warning, CAROLINE slaps LINDA clean in the
face. LINDA is so taken off guard that she falls backward.
CAROLINE runs out of the lobby.

LINDA jumps up and chases her. CAROLINE has a good head
start, but LINDA is running very fast and gaining on her. She
holds the baby monitor in her hand as she runs. Her fast
breath and pounding feet mix with the sound of CHILD's
machine coming through the baby monitor.

78 EXT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - POOL - CONTINUOUS 78

LINDA runs after CAROLINE through the pool area of the hotel.

79 EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS 79

- through the parking lot

80 EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - CONTINUOUS 80

- past the little league field and then down a narrow path.

As fast as she runs CAROLINE is running even faster.

81 EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - CONTINUOUS 81

The path leads to a railroad track, which CAROLINE dashes
across and momentarily disappears.

82 EXT. CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

82

LINDA crosses the tracks and sees CAROLINE climbing down a small cliff onto the beach. It is dark and no one is around.

LINDA

STOP!

CAROLINE briefly stops on the beach and looks up at LINDA, who is having a hard time climbing down the cliff. LINDA drops the baby monitor! We see it break into a million pieces on the rocks.

83 EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

83

CAROLINE takes off down the beach.

LINDA makes it onto the beach and starts to run in the same direction but it is too dark to see where she's gone. The moonlight is not enough. She can't see CAROLINE anymore. She's disappeared into blackness.

LINDA stands still, panting, trying to catch her breath.

84 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - BATHROOM, LINDA'S ROOM

84

LINDA is frantically pacing around her bathroom while leaving a message with THERAPIST on the phone.

LINDA

(complete frenzy)

--and you need to call me back right away. Right away. It's an emergency. I need an emergency phone session right now. I need to talk to you. Right now. Right now. Call me back. Call me back tonight. You said you would help me! Please. Call me back. Now. Please. Ok. I need you. Bye.

She hangs up. From the other room we can hear CHILD's machine beeping loudly.

85 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

85

LINDA is pushing some buttons trying to quell the machine's beeping but it but it isn't working. She opens the top of the bag of milky liquid that hangs from the pole on the machine and the liquid sprays up into her face.

LINDA coughs and spits the liquid out and puts the top back on. She pushes more buttons but the beeping seems to get louder and more frantic. She pulls at the tubing attached to the bag on the machine to see if there is a kink in it. She keeps pulling and pulling.

LINDA keeps pulling as she throws the blankets off of sleeping CHILD. We still don't see her face, but we see LINDA lift her shirt and expose her torso. We see that the tubing goes directly into a hole in CHILD's abdomen. There are no bandages around it. The hole in her stomach appears to widen and contract with every breath. The hole is black. There is some pooling of excess milky liquid around it, right where the tube enters.

LINDA looks hypnotized as she keeps pulling the tubing out of CHILD's body. It seems impossibly long. She keeps pulling. CHILD stirs, wriggles around. LINDA keeps pulling. Suddenly, POP! The last of it comes out. The machine's noises go wild! LINDA runs to the wall and unplugs the machine. All is silent.

The room is completely silent for the first time.

LINDA looks at CHILD, who hasn't woken up during this but is wriggling around. LINDA is scared, fascinated, triumphant, transfixed...all at once.

Close-up on the hole in CHILD's abdomen, which is leaking a white, vaporous, smokey liquid. **It reminds us of the hole in the ceiling of the apartment: otherworldly, scary and wrong.**

Close-up on LINDA's face. Her eyes widen to impossible proportions.

CHILD (O.S.)

Mommy?

LINDA

Ssh, ssh. Everything is ok, go back to sleep...

CHILD (O.S.)

My tummy is wet--

LINDA

Ssh. I made everything better. Go back to sleep...

Slow zoom to the hole in CHILD's stomach as we see LINDA's hand gently, lovingly wiping the liquid away with a tissue. As the zoom gets right up against the hole we see it slowly tightening and closing in the tiniest of movements.

Cut to LINDA, looking gobsmacked, frightened and elated all at the same time. **Slow zoom into her face as a realization begins to dawn on her.** We see it in her eyes as we realize it ourselves. If this hole is closing then maybe---

86 EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

86

LINDA runs in a mad dash in the familiar route toward her apartment. She looks frightened but determined. She is moving at a superhuman speed.

87 EXT. LINDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

87

As LINDA approaches the building she runs past a HULKING BODY in shadow. The HULKING BODY is hauling a giant sack to a waiting truck. She slows down to a walk as she gets closer to the building's entrance. TWO HULKING BODIES carrying giant sacks exit the building, hunched over, shrouded in complete darkness. A bit of light hits them and it's revealed that they are completely covered in a white powder.

LINDA halts to a stop and stares at them. Something is registering, but it is unclear what.

The MYSTERIOUS HULKING BODIES pass right by her on their way to the truck and seem to not even see her standing there. LINDA watches as they rather mysteriously and ominously enter into the back of the truck.

She enters the building just as a LARGE MAN comes out of the elevator, completely covered in white powder and carrying two bulging garbage bags. He walks past her as if she is invisible.

88 INT. LINDA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

88

LINDA runs down a hallway and is disturbed to see the front door of her apartment is wide open. She stops in her tracks and then enters. The lights are all on. There are white dusty foot prints all over the floors.

LINDA

Hello?

There are no noises. She walks further into the apartment. She sticks her head into the kitchen. It's empty but the lights are on. She is scared as she sticks her head into CHILD's room. Again, the lights are all on but it is empty.

She very slowly approaches her bedroom door.

Suddenly the bedroom door whips open! LINDA screams.

It is CHARLES (White, 50).

CHARLES
Why are you here?

LINDA stands face to face with CHARLES. She smiles weakly.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

LINDA
(trying to distract)
Why am *I* here? When did you get
here? Why are you here?

CHARLES
Where is she?

LINDA
Asleep.

CHARLES
With the babysitter?

LINDA
Mmm hmm.

CHARLES
I couldn't stay working there like
that. I couldn't pay attention to
anything, I couldn't do anything,
you weren't talking to me, all I
could do was worry about you and
her and the apartment and you
scared me ...so I came home. To
help. But--

CHARLES steps aside and LINDA looks into the room. THREE
MEXICAN MEN are quietly and efficiently sweeping the floor
and painting the ceiling. **There is no longer a hole.**

LINDA
Wait--

CHARLES
You just have to know how to talk
to these guys.

LINDA
Did you...look at it? The hole? Did
you see it? Did you see anything?

LINDA peaks her head further into the room, but can't see the hole from where she is.

CHARLES

Yeah, it wasn't fixed. Now it is.

LINDA looks at the men working. None of them will meet her eye. It's unclear if this is purposeful. LINDA looks up at the ceiling. It is fully repaired and glistening with wet paint.

LINDA

I--ok. Ok. Can we go? Now.

CHARLES

I just don't see how it could have gotten that bad.

LINDA

Why are you trying to blame me?

CHARLES

I'm not blaming you, I'm just--

LINDA

I want to get out of here.

89 INT. UBER CAR- NIGHT

89

CHARLES and LINDA in the backseat. Both are silent. CHARLES is gritting his teeth and staring straight ahead.

LINDA wears the weight of everything on her face: everything that has just happened and everything that she knows is facing her at the hotel. She is on a rollercoaster of personal hell that she knows she can't stop now. She looks at CHARLES. He looks at her.

LINDA

Do you love me?

CHARLES

Yes.

LINDA

Ok. I need you to remember that.
Promise?

90 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

90

CHARLES bounds down the hallway toward the hotel room with LINDA rushing after him.

He reaches the room first.

LINDA

Wait!

She catches up and squeezes her body between CHARLES and the hotel room door.

CHARLES

What?

LINDA

Why are you in such a rush to get in there?

CHARLES

You were the one in a rush to get back here.

LINDA

But now I don't want to be here.

CHARLES

But we ARE here. Let's relieve the sitter and go to sleep. I'm exhausted. And I'm excited to see her even if she's asleep.

LINDA

Yeah but, why don't you go downstairs and get us something to drink or something and I'll deal with the sitter and then you come up and--

CHARLES

What is the problem?

LINDA

There's no problem.

CHARLES

Open the door.

LINDA

Me?

CHARLES

I don't have a key.

LINDA

Oh, right. Ok.

CHARLES

Don't tell me you left here without
a key?

LINDA

No, no. I have a key. What do you
think I am?

LINDA slowly takes a key card out of her pocket and slips it
into the door. Her face bares the weight of the entire world.

The door opens and there sits JAMES on CHILD's bed. He gets
up and hobbles on his cast to the door. He is giving LINDA
death darts from his eyes. He pushes LINDA and CHARLES away
from the door and into the hallway, closing the door behind
himself.

CHARLES

Hi, I'm Charles, you must be the
babysitter.

JAMES

Babysitter?

CHARLES

James, right?

JAMES

James. Yeah. Right.

CHARLES

Thank you for--

JAMES

Yeah, I'm not doing this.

CHARLES

Not doing what?

JAMES

I'm not a fucking babysitter.

CHARLES

Excuse me?

JAMES

Your kid woke up and was scared
shitless and screaming and I heard
her and pounded on the door until
she let me in and I convinced her I
was friends with your fucking wife
here and safe and she finally
calmed down and fell back asleep.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

I put a band-aid on her, she was
also oozing crazy fucking shit from-
-

CHARLES

Hold on-- who the fuck are you and
what the hell are you doing in my
room?

JAMES

Your room?

CHARLES

That is *my* child and this is *my*
wife and so it is also *my* room.

CHILD (O.S.)

(from inside the room)

Mommy?

JAMES

I just fucking told you what I'm
doing here. Ask your wife why I
have a broken leg, too.

CHILD (O.S.)

(from inside the room)

Mommy!

JAMES tries to push past CHARLES but CHARLES blocks him.

LINDA

I don't know what he is talking
about, I swear.

CHARLES

(to LINDA)

Who the fuck is he?

CHILD (O.S.)

Mommy are you out there--

CHARLES

I said, who the fuck is this guy?

JAMES

I'm standing right here.

CHARLES

Then you both can answer me then.

JAMES

I told you the truth.

LINDA

Please, Charles, she's awake and listening, let's just--

CHARLES

My wife wouldn't leave our child like that. She wouldn't do that. And you better tell me why her machine is off and the tube is--

CHILD (O.S.)

(from inside the room)

Mommy come, look at me! Look what happened! You'll be happy!

JAMES

I am not in this, man. I'm not in this shit.

CHILD (O.S.)

(from inside the room)

Daddy? Look. Mommy made me better. Look! She did it like magic!

CHARLES registers what CHILD has said and looks in her direction. His eyes become wide with a mix of emotions, disbelief, and fear.

CHILD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Look at me Daddy, Mommy did it.

A momentary, tight close up of the hole of CHILD'S stomach, which almost seems to shrink and close in front of our very eyes.

CHARLES is transfixed, paralyzed. He looks at LINDA, who is looking at him as a scared child might to a parent who is about to enact a punishment. They lock on this look for an intense moment. This look is heavy with history, pain, fear, love, and more meaning than we can even understand. He is snapped out when--

JAMES

Your wife is a fuck up, man.

As if someone has splashes ice water on his head, CHARLES is snapped out of the moment and whips his head around to meet JAMES' glare.

CHARLES

What did you call her?

JAMES

A fuck up!

CHARLES instantly punches JAMES square in the face. JAMES and CHARLES fight sloppily for a minute while LINDA stares at the men with complete helplessness.

Amidst the chaos, without warning, LINDA bolts.

91 INT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - LOBBY 91

She runs through the hallway, down the stairs, through the lobby.

There is a second set of footsteps behind her.

CHILD (O.S.)
(from a distance)
Mommy! Mommy come back, look at me!
Mommy!

92 EXT. EXTENDED STAY HOTEL - POOL - CONTINUOUS 92

LINDA does not turn around, she does not stop. She runs past the pool. The footsteps behind her continue.

CHILD (O.S.)
(from a distance)
Mommy! Stop!

93 EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - CONTINUOUS 93

LINDA runs through the field as fast as she can. She keeps running past the field.

94 EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - CONTINUOUS 94

She runs along railroad tracks. We can hear the ocean. She keeps running, crossing the tracks. **This is the same route that she chased CAROLINE through.**

CHILD (O.S.)
(in the distance)
Daddy-- the beach--

95 EXT. CLIFF - CONTINUOUS 95

LINDA runs from the tracks to the cliff. She climbs down the cliff and is on the beach.

96 EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

96

It is so dark we can only make out her moonlit outline and she runs to the water, slowed down by the sand.

Without stopping, LINDA runs into the water and tries to swim out but waves keep pulling her back to shore. She tries three more times, each time getting thrown farther onto the sand.

Finally she backs up onto the sand, runs at full speed and dives into the water. She is thrown out of the ocean with a supernatural force and lands with a thud on the sand. The universe is not letting her escape.

She is on her back gasping for breath. She starts to breath deeply. Then she switches her breath to the holotropic breathwork breathing pattern.

CUT ABRUPTLY TO:

97 INT/EXT. THE VOID

97

We can hear LINDA's breathwork breathing pattern loudly in the blackness. She breathes faster and faster, louder and louder as light begins to swirl. The FEMALE FIGURE from the first time we went into the void emerges, seeming to beckon us further and further in. Far away we hear CHILD's voice.

CHILD (O.S.)

Mommy?

We hear it again, closer this time. We are moving back out, away from the figure. There is a feeling of sadness that we are leaving her there.

CHILD (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(loud, close)

Mommy, I'm here. Daddy's here too.

CUT TO:

97A Abruptly we are out of the void and tight on LINDA's face. 97A She opens her eyes and gasps for breath.

Close up on LINDA's ear. CHILD's lips are right by it, softly singing:

CHILD (CONT'D)

(singing softly)

Sit beside the breakfast table
Think about your troubles
Pour yourself a cup of tea
Then think about the bubbles

The camera pans out from LINDA's ear and CHILD's lips. **We see CHILD, all of her, kneeling beside LINDA. LINDA turns and looks at her full in the face. So do we.** She truly is a child-version of LINDA. She looks incredibly serious for a child.

CHARLES is in the distance, walking toward them. He's smiling.

CHILD (CONT'D)

Mommy?

LINDA

(takes a deep breath)

I'll be better. I swear. I'll be better.

THE END