

## STUMPTOWN

"Forget it Dex, it's Stumptown."

1/24/19

Written by

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3rd Revised Network Draft

*"We always return to our first love."*

Tribe Unknown

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EXT. PORTLAND/INT. CAR - DAY

FROM ABOVE, a sun flare glints off an orange-ish 1984 Mustang GT; a veritable mustard blob rolling down an empty road.

INSIDE: Two thugs (30'S), DILL and WHALE, names doubling as physical descriptions. Dill drives, gun on his lap, gripping the leopard skin wheel. Whale sips a thermos, gruffly noting -

WHALE

Caramel, macadamia, hints of black currant... tart yet earthy in the finish. Ethiopian..?

DILL

Kenyan.

WHALE

Pour over?

DILL

(*what am I, an asshole?*)

Dude... French Press.

Off Whale - *Whatevs* - we hear POUNDING coming from the trunk.

WHALE

Sounds like someone's getting antsy back there.

DILL

Pre dirt-nap jitters.

As we realize there's a person in that trunk they are going to kill, the car THUNKS over a pothole and the tape deck kicks on, playing Neil Diamond's *SWEET CAROLINE* --

DILL (CONT'D)

The hell..?

Whale hits buttons, trying everything, but --

WHALE

Damn thing's stuck on!

So they sit there. Irrksome. But what happens next is unexpected. Almost subconsciously, their fingers start tapping to the beat. And then, because really, who can resist, these two killers begin humming along with Neil --

***Where it began, I can't begin to knowing...***

And while their captive kicks around in the trunk, this goon duo starts singing along --

DILL & WHALE

***Was in the spring. Then spring  
became the summer. Who'd have  
believed you'd come along..?***

They approach a bridge and are now so full-throated into it,  
that they don't notice --

A NOZZLE poke through a crack in the back seat. Before we  
can ascertain what it is - WHOOSH! The car instantly fills  
with WHITE FIRE RETARDANT, blinding the thugs, who gasp and  
cough as Neil sings:

***Hands, touching hands...***

Whale desperately wipes his eyes, now stunned to see in the  
rear view --

A WOMAN

rising in the back seat - our hero, DEX PARIOS (30'S), who at  
this moment is covered in white powder, looking like a ghost.

***Reaching out...***

Dex gets Dill (the driver) in a headlock. The car swerves  
erratically onto the bridge. Neil crescendos --

***Touching me...***

Whale draws his gun on Dex, but before he can shoot, Dex  
looks through the dust covered windshield at --

***Touching you...***

A DRAW BRIDGE AHEAD, opening over the Willamette river. At  
this speed it's too late to stop, so Dex yells --

DEX

PUNCH IT!!!

Dill PINS the gas. And as Neil Diamond belts out the chorus  
to his anthem --

***Sweet Caroline, da-da-da...***

The Mustang goes airborne, sailing over the gap in the draw  
bridge, retardant billowing out like a contrail, the Portland  
skyline beaming in the B.G, which morphs into our TITLE CARD:

**"STUMPTOWN"**

**INT. WHISPERING WIND CASINO - NIGHT (3 DAYS EARLIER)**

Electronica plays as we move through a sleek, rustic-luxe bar, past done-up party people, finding DEX; our whip-smart, hard luck hero with a Han Solo charm you can't help but get behind. She sits, peeling the label off a beer bottle --

ROB (O.S.)  
You killed it...

Dex turns to a man, ROB (35), blazer over a tee over muscles, dog tags on display. He sets down his phone and keys, noting -

ROB (CONT'D)  
The label. Nervous habit?

DEX  
Nah, just a regular one.

Rob pushes over his credit card, telling the Bartenderess --

ROB  
Screw-driver, another beer for the lady, and I'll start a tab.  
(to Dex)  
You from around here?

DEX  
Born and raised. You?

ROB  
Michigan. Here for a meeting.  
Flying out at the crack of dawn. I know, up too late, up too early. I think my body clock broke during my third tour in The 'Stan.  
(Off Dex, *The What?*)  
Afghanistan.

DEX  
Ah. Explains the dog tags.

The Bartendress hands Rob his drink. He sips it and winces --

ROB  
Is this pineapple juice? I ordered a screwdriver. Vodka and orange, sweetheart, it ain't brain surgery.

The Bartendress takes the reproach. But Dex's eyes narrow.

ROB (CONT'D)  
Yeah, saw some pretty crazy stuff over there.  
(MORE)

ROB (CONT'D)

But the thing you never forget?  
Your first firefight. The noise,  
the chaos, the blood, it's...

DEX

Bullshit?

(off his glare)

Like they say in *Pashtu*, he who  
spreads his own goat dung is bound  
to step in it.

ROB

*Pash..?*

DEX

*Tu*. It's what they speak. In The  
'Stan. Anyone who actually served  
there would know, which you don't.  
Your dog tags don't match the name  
on your credit card, FYI, and  
nothing about your car keys says  
rental, so I'm guessing you're not  
in from out of town, either. You  
asked if I'm from around here,  
figuring we could go back to my  
place, probably cause there's a  
woman back at yours. Am I right?

(he stalls)

Hesitation; it's when your body  
says yes before your mouth can say  
no; i.e., until you get your bull-  
shit straight, I'm pretty sure only  
one of us is getting lucky tonight.

Off Rob, red faced, and the Bartendress, eking out an  
irrepressible *My Hero* grin at Dex, we SMASH TO:

DICE - tumbling across green felt --

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

Snake eyes!

**INT. WHISPERING WIND CASINO - TABLES - AN HOUR LATER - NIGHT**

Lively, fun. Think the Wynn in Vegas with a Pac-Northwest  
spin. We find Dex at a craps table, a tad lit, and on fire.  
She hi-fives a gaggle of businessmen cheering her on --

DEX

That's water and power, boys...  
Now we play for beer and cable!

She pushes in half her chip pile. The DEALER is dubious --

DEALER

Sure you wanna do that, honey?

DEX

Maybe you're right, toots. I'm feeling lucky tonight.

Off his look, *Toots*? Dex antes all her chips and rolls --

DEX (CONT'D)

Gimme eight, Eight, EIGHT!!!

DEALER

Seven out!

Ride's over. Dex deflates as the dealer rakes up her chips. The fan boys dissipate, revealing the Floor Manager, HOLLIS GREEN (55), invariably dapper and a consummate gentleman.

HOLLIS

Know why you're such a bad gambler?

DEX

Because your dice are loaded?

HOLLIS

Because you don't know when to quit. ...Boss wants a word.

DEX

Maybe some other time.

But as Dex turns, two large security guards step in her path.

DEX (CONT'D)

Or now is good, too...

**INT. CASINO - POSH BACK OFFICES - NIGHT**

Dex stands before SUE LYNN BLACKBIRD, Native American, a matronly (65), but don't let the knitting needles fool you. She's Angela Merkel meets Don Corleone meets your grandma.

DEX

C'mon, Sue Lynn, how about a marker? A measly two G's.

SUE LYNN

You already owe us eleven.

DEX

I'm good for it.

SUE LYNN

My dear, there's 93 dollars and 46 cents in your bank account, your credit cards are maxed out, and you just blew your military pension check at the craps table.

DEX

Your point?  
...Look, you'll get your money, you don't have to knit me a noose.

SUE LYNN

This isn't a collections call.  
(ashamed to say)  
My rather rebellious granddaughter has run away. ...Again.

DEX

Nina? Cancel her credit cards, she'll be back in an hour.

HOLLIS

She left three days ago. *Without* her cards or her car, and she's not answering her phone.

DEX

Did you call the police?

SUE LYNN

We prefer to keep them out of our business. And we can't afford a scandal. Not with so many eyes on us. As CEO of this casino and elder of the Confederated Tribes, it is my responsibility to ensure this family's image is upheld.

DEX

How is that my problem?

SUE LYNN

You're going to bring Nina back...

DEX

Ha! Have Hollis do it.

HOLLIS

Our people have been out there day and night, trying to find her --

DEX

And you think I can do better?

SUE LYNN

You were Military intelligence.  
Isn't that why they gave you a  
medal, for finding people?

DEX

Those were enemy combatants. In  
Afghanistan. Slight difference...

SUE LYNN

I'd think you'd want to help, given  
how close you were to her father.

That hits a raw nerve in Dex, who's eyes fall on a family  
photo atop Sue Lynn's desk of a NATIVE AMERICAN MAN (25), his  
pretty Native American wife, and baby --

DEX

Benny and I were close. But you put  
an end to that. So you could put a  
perfect picture on your desk...

SUE LYNN

You're still bitter.

DEX

Just mystified. I wasn't good  
enough for your son but now I'm  
good enough to track down his  
daughter? That's your thinking?

SUE LYNN

I can think of eleven  
thousand other reasons...

DEX (CONT'D)

Intimidation. How un-you.

SUE LYNN

She's my only grandchild!! ...This  
is not easy for me. Coming to you.  
...I have nowhere else to turn.

DEX

War ended for me twelve years ago.  
I'm not up to it. Sorry.

Dex exits. Off Sue Lynn, desperation setting in, we CUT TO:

**EXT./INT. DEX'S HOUSE - ARLINGTON HEIGHTS - NIGHT**

Dex pulls her orange-ish, '84 Mustang GT in the drive of a  
cute house, modest, yet with a killer view of downtown.

INSIDE: Dex enters and a soccer ball comes flying at her!  
She has to drop her keys to catch it --

DEX

Ansel, c'mon, not in the house!

She tosses the ball back to her brother, ANSEL PARIOS (19), in a soccer jersey; a sweet natured kid with Downs Syndrome.

ANSEL

Wanna play?!

DEX

It's midnight, bro. You shouldn't even be up this late.

ANSEL

I wanted to see how much you lost.

DEX

*Punk.* At least I got a job offer.

ANSEL

Now we both have jobs! I think we're gonna need another lunchbox.

DEX

Hey, I didn't say I took it -- I know, we're behind on rent, we need the money. Now c'mon, it's late. You know the drill...

Dex takes the soccer ball. Ansel places his right hand on it.

ANSEL

I, Ansel Parios, future midfield menace for the Portland Timbers, hereby promise to brush, floss --

DEX

And not sleep with your boots on..?

ANSEL

I swear.

DEX

Good. Bedsky! Go!

### **INT. DEX'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Dex cracks a beer and slides open a drawer where we see a 45 (trigger locked), 3 condoms, a silver star combat medal, parking tickets, and an old photo, which she pulls out.

It's of Dex with that man from the family photo on Sue Lynn's desk. Younger here, (20'S BOTH), college sweethearts.

Emotion swells in Dex as she stares at the photo like it's a road she's hesitant to go down. ...but she dials her cell --

DEX (INTO PHONE)

It's Dex. Clear my debt, give me a grand for expenses, a list of Nina's friends, and I'll do it.

She hangs up. She then pulls a small box from the drawer and opens it revealing A DIAMOND ENGAGEMENT RING.

Dex sips her beer eying the ring with deep trepidation, as --

GREY (V.O.)

That break-up with Benny was the whole reason you joined the army.

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NEXT DAY**

We move through what was an old split level brew pub, newly renovated into a modern-sleek, craft beer and mixology joint. Find GREY MCCONNELL, (LATE 30'S) ruggedly handsome, upbeat, unflappable, and an all around good guy. He hands Dex a beer.

GREY

Sue Lynn ruins your life and now you're gonna bring home her spoiled, runaway granddaughter?

DEX

Hey, it's not Nina's fault she grew up without a dad.

GREY

It's not yours either. I'd be careful turning over old stones.

DEX

C'mon, it's a milk run. I almost feel guilty taking the money.  
(off his dubious look)  
Don't you have a bar opening to worry about?

GREY

T-minus three days and still so much to do. We're gonna stain the bar top later, right bud?

On Ansel, sweeping the floor, looking unsure because --

ANSEL

Dex gets mad when I stain stuff.

Dex and Grey share a smile. His lingers longer than hers.

GREY

I could really use you behind the bar. All the beer you can drink...

DEX

I haven't held down a steady job since I left the service. I'd screw up, you'd fire me; it'd only be awkward till hardcore resentment kicked in and before you know it, ten years of BFF-dom is down the toilet. But I will take you up on the *All the beer I can drink* part.

GREY

Naturally.

DEX

Thanks for helping out with Ansel. Don't know what I'd do without you.

Dex gives him a peck on the cheek. Off Grey, watching her go, perpetually unrequited, we CUT TO:

**EXT. LAUREL-HAVEN, PORTLAND - DAY**

Landscaped manors, this is where the rich folks live. Dex pulls up to a large house. She gets out and heads up the walk where an Asian girl (17), sits on the steps, stink-eying Dex's car. She's rich, pretty, smart, and her name is --

DEX

Lucy Chen?

LUCY

I actually ordered an Uber select?

DEX

I'm not your ride. Detective Parios, Portland PB. I'm looking for your friend, Nina Blackbird?

LUCY

Bull.

DEX

Excuse me?

LUCY

I call bull. Cops don't drive piece of crap cars.

DEX  
I'm undercover.

LUCY  
Then lemme see your badge.

DEX  
...Alright, fine, listen, I'm a  
friend of Nina's grandmother, okay?  
Sue Lynn is really worried --

LUCY  
I already told Hollis, I haven't  
talked to Nina in a week.

DEX  
So if I look through your phone,  
I'm not gonna find anything from  
Nina? No calls, texts..?

LUCY  
No. But even if they were on my  
phone, I wouldn't give you the  
password. So it's, like, moot.

DEX  
*(I know you're lying)*  
Thanks for all your help. Really,  
you've been invaluable.

Lucy smirks, *Anytime*, and Dex walks back to her car. It takes  
3 tries to start before she drives off. Soon as Dex turns the  
corner, Lucy's on her phone. What happens next happens fast --

LUCY (INTO PHONE)  
Answer, answer, come on, answer..!

NINA (V.O.) (THROUGH PHONE)  
Hi! It's Nina, leave a message...

LUCY (INTO PHONE)  
Hey, it's me! Listen, there's  
someone looking for you. I think  
your grandmother sent her...

Behind Lucy's back, we see Dex's car BURN around the opposite  
corner, having circled the block. Dex hops out of her car,  
unseen, crossing the lawn, approaching Lucy from behind, as --

LUCY (CONT'D)  
...Call me as soon as you --

SNATCH! Dex yanks the phone out of Lucy's hand. Lucy whips  
around stunned to see Dex going through her phone, finding --

DEX

What have we here? Text messages from Nina, who's been hanging out with a boy, I see. *Michael*. Don't suppose you know his last name..?

NINA

I'm not telling you anything.

ON A TEXT SELFIE of Nina, arm in arm, with a YOUNG MAN (22).

DEX

Is this Michael?

Lucy zips her lip. Which is a yes. Dex blows up the photo, alarmed to see a motel sign in the B.G., '*PDX ALOHA INN*' --

DEX (CONT'D)

(alarmed)

Lucy, are they going somewhere?

Off Lucy's silence, Dex heads off, with --

LUCY

Hey! You can't take my phone!

DEX

Got a problem with it? Call the cops!

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Grey and Ansel hang an old framed black and white photo of --

GREY

Greyson Powell McConnell the first.

ANSEL

...But that's your name.

GREY

Sure is, pal. That handsome gent is my grandfather. Standing in this very bar. He used to own it.

ANSEL

He has a funny haircut. Is he dead?

GREY

Before I was born. Never got to meet him, but after saving so long to buy this place and fixing it up, I feel like I know him pretty good.

ANSEL

Me too.

They trade a satisfied smile as a man enters (40), sport coat, tie, not a hair out of place.

GREY

Sorry, don't open for a few days.

MAN

Can't drink on duty anyway.

He flashes his badge, I-D-ing himself as DETECTIVE MILES --

HOFFMAN

Hoffman, PPB. As long as we're looking through old photos...

Hoffman lays a mug shot on the bar of a surly Caucasian man (50's). Grey stiffens slightly. Hoffman clocks it --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Recognize this guy?

GREY

Something tells me you already know the answer.

HOFFMAN

I'm interested in what you know.

GREY

Samuel Kane. Irish guy I knew in the joint. I did six months for --

HOFFMAN

Grand theft auto.

GREY

Mostly mini vans. Didn't feel so grand at the time. Haven't spoken to Kane in fifteen years. He's doing life.

HOFFMAN

For killing a cop.

GREY

Yeah, I heard it was a pretty nasty shootout.

HOFFMAN

Is that what Kane told you? He'd just robbed a couple of dealers.

(MORE)

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Had half a million dollars in the trunk. Only the cop didn't know that when he pulled Kane over for a busted tail light... Was only gonna write him a fix-it ticket.

GREY

Then I guess Kane is in the right place.

HOFFMAN

Was. Two days ago he escaped from a transport bus in Washington State.  
(off Grey's concern)  
He might be looking for a friend to help him lay low.

GREY

Kane was my cellmate but, trust me, he wasn't the friend type.

HOFFMAN

He may try and buy a friend. Cops never found that half mil...  
(handing over his card)  
Either way, if he makes any attempt to contact you...

GREY

You'll be my first call.

Hoffman nods, *I'd appreciate it*, then goes.

ANSEL

What's a cellmate?

GREY

Kind of like a roommate they give you when you get in trouble.

ANSEL

I had a roommate at the home while Dex was in the army. He smelled like peanut butter.

GREY

Well, I think those days are way behind us, aren't they pal?

Grey smiles, tosses Hoffman's card in a drawer, as we CUT TO:

A JET AIRLINER - descends overhead, taking us to a sign above a kitschy-cute, Hawaiian themed motel: 'PDX ALOHA INN', which oddly boasts, '*The Best Espresso in Portland!*'

**INT. ALOHA INN - FRONT OFFICE - DAY**

Dex shows that cell phone photo of Nina and her boyfriend Michael to the MOTEL MANAGER, (60) East Indian, aloha shirt --

DEX  
Seen these two?

MOTEL MANAGER  
Are you a police?

DEX  
Yes, sir.

MOTEL MANAGER  
Where's your badge?

Off Dex, *Gimme a break*, we CUT TO:

**EXT. ALOHA/INT. MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

SMASH! - Dex elbows the glass, pulling a fire alarm. RIIING! She walks into the pool area, taking in a view of all the rooms as guests drift out to see what the fuss is about.

Dex spots Michael. Bingo! Seeing no emergency, Michael enters HIS ROOM and shuts the door, but Dex barges in --

DEX  
Room service...

She sees suitcases packed and airline tickets on the table. MICHAEL MORGAN (22, boyish innocence), politely tells her --

MICHAEL  
Uh... we didn't order anything.

DEX  
(no worries)  
This is more of a pick-up --

Off his confusion, NINA BLACKBIRD (17) deep, old-soul eyes, strong willed yet not at all the entitled brat we thought we'd find, emerges from the bathroom, surprised to see --

NINA  
Dex, what are you doing here?

DEX  
Taking you home.

MICHAEL  
I'm calling the cops.

DEX

Go ahead, though I'm pretty sure transporting a minor across state lines is jailable.

NINA

I bought my own ticket. We're eloping.

DEX

Where's your ring?

MICHAEL

I'm saving up for it.

DEX

Gee, what a catch. C'mon, the honeymoon'll have to wait.

Dex drags Nina past Micheal, and we CUT TO:

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - DAY**

The wipers drag a piece of paper across the windshield. Dex reaches out the window and plucks off a parking ticket --

NINA

Just say you didn't find me.

DEX

Sorry, lying to Sue Lynn is hazardous to one's health.

Dex crumples the ticket, tossing it into the back seat, where we see ten more. And as she drives Nina away, they pass two men just pulling up. We recognize them immediately as DILL AND WHALE, the thugs from the intro, as we CUT TO:

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - DAY**

Dex drives. Nina gazes out the window, angry and defeated --

NINA

I knew this was going to happen. I just didn't expect it to be you.

DEX

Wanna blame someone? Blame grandma.

NINA

Really, Dex, you of all people. How ironic. Is she paying you?

Off Dex, trying to hide the growing self loathing --

DEX

How about we have some quiet time?

NINA

Don't you hate yourself just a little, doing to me and Michael what she did to you and my dad? I mean, what does that make you?

DEX

Employed.

NINA

Hypocrite, is more like it --

DEX

When you're 18 you can make all the stupid choices you want. Till then, your family makes them for you.

NINA

You think I hate you. I don't. What happened with you and my dad, it's the whole reason I'm doing this. I don't want it happen to me.

Off Dex, utterly stunned, a car BUMPS them from behind --

DEX

Seriously?!

-- triggering Elton John & Kiki Dee's *DON'T GO BREAKING MY HEART*. As Dex pulls over, Nina tries to turn it off, but --

NINA

Your radio is broken.

DEX

It's a cassette. Songs of the 70's. Came with the car. Don't antagonize it and it might go off on it's own.

NINA

...Perfect song, huh?

The two share a stilted, albeit connective smile, an olive branch, until Dex cuffs Nina to the wheel --

DEX

Just in case.

Off Nina's eye roll, *Don't go Breaking my Heart* plays as --

**EXT. NOB HILL, PORTLAND - DAY**

A quaint street of Victorian houses, turned into artsy shops, boutiques and book stores. Dex gets out of the Mustang, seeing a ding in her fender. But we realize this is no accident as Dill and Whale emerge from the offending vehicle.

DEX

Lucky for you that dent matches the others. How about give me twenty bucks and we'll call it a --

BAM! Dill cold-cocks Dex across the face. It's shocking. Dex drops to her knees, punch-drunk, everything a blur. As the song plays au-surreal, she blinks in -- Dill and Whale moving toward the Mustang. Something in Dex ignites. She teeters up and CHARGES, yelling for Nina to --

DEX (CONT'D)

RUN!!

But Nina is cuffed to the wheel. She tugs futilely at the chain as Dex tackles Dill over the hood. As Dill reaches for his gun, Dex's combat training kicks in. She punches him square in the solar plexus, stunning him, then goes for his weapon. As the two struggle for control, Dex yells to a horrified Old Lady watching from the sidewalk.

DEX (CONT'D)

Call the cops!

The Old Lady fumbles for her phone, as Whale pulls out a tac knife, about to kill a terrified Nina, we think, but instead - Whale pops the steering wheel panel and jams the knife in the retaining nut, furiously unscrewing it, as --

Dex gets both hands on Dill's gun, but he KNEES her in the ribs, bowling her over. He then delivers a final blow combo, GUT! JAW! GUT! DEX drops to the ground, squinting up at --

DILL

You gotta learn when to quit, lady.

The thugs grab Nina, cuffed to Dex's steering wheel, which they also remove. As they muscle Nina in their car --

NINA

Dex -- HELP ME..!

But they quickly PEEL AWAY. Dex staggers to her feet to Elton and Kiki, no steering wheel, a bloody nose, and no clue what the fuck just happened. So much for the milk run, we --

END ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

**EXT. NOB HILL - PORTLAND - DAY**

Refined Nob Hill yuppy hipsters, sip to-go-cup cappuccinos, ogling the busy crime scene. Cops string tape, detectives interview witnesses, and EMT's tend to --

DEX, a bit black and blue, dazed as she talks on her cell --

DEX (INTO CELL)  
...I don't know what happened, they  
came out of nowhere.

**INTERCUT - INT. SUE LYNN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Sue Lynn is at her desk, trying to process the nightmare --

SUE LYNN  
They, who's they?

DEX  
I don't know --

SUE LYNN  
You were there, weren't you?!

DEX  
It happened so fast...

SUE LYNN (CONT'D)  
What happened, Dex, I don't  
understand what you're  
saying! --

DEX  
They took Nina!

SILENCE! Reality takes hold. Sue Lynn looks down at her knitting needles, realizing she dropped them on the floor.

DEX (CONT'D)  
I promise. I'm going to find her.

SUE LYNN  
That's you, always promising. I  
hope for Nina's sake, this is one  
time you'll actually deliver.

BACK WITH DEX -- CLICK. The line goes dead. Her mind whirls. And just as her fog gives way to determination --

MAN (O.S.)  
Ms. Parios..?

She looks up and WE are surprised to see --

HOFFMAN

Detective Hoffman, PPB. Looks like you've been through the ringer.

DEX

(all business)

Use that line on all the ladies?

He suppresses a grin as she throws on her jacket --

DEX (CONT'D)

I already gave a description of the suspects and their car. Didn't catch a plate.

HOFFMAN

APB went out hot. Every cop in the city is looking for them.

DEX

Except you, I guess.

He's thrown, albeit clearly piqued by her rough edge.

HOFFMAN

Can you tell me what happened? --

DEX

Look, I literally just told two other cops the whole story --

HOFFMAN

Kidnapping is serious business, so you'll probably have to tell a few more down at the station.

DEX

I don't think so. As long as she's out there I need to be looking. Station's up, FYI, not down. Why do people always say that?

Dex starts to go. Hoffman thinks quick, then nods to --

HOFFMAN

Your vehicle, Ma'am?

DEX

That's a fancy word for it. And don't call me ma'am. It's Dex.

HOFFMAN

Very well, Dex, I'm placing you under arrest --

DEX (CONT'D)

For what, getting beat up?!!

HOFFMAN

You have 14 unpaid parking tickets.  
Apparently there's a warrant out.  
Guess we're goin' UP to the  
station.

As Hoffman puts her in cuffs --

DEX

What about my phone call?

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Grey plants a HOUSE PHONE on the bar, telling Ansel --

GREY

Go ahead, give it a try.

ANSEL

It has to ring first.

GREY

Right. RING! RING!

ANSEL (INTO PHONE)

Bad Alibi, I'm Ansel. Can I help  
you?

GREY

Dude, that was the perfect answer!

Ansel is pleased. Then, out of the blue, as is his tendency --

ANSEL

You like Dex.

GREY

Sure I do. We're best buds.

Ansel laughs to himself like he's onto a secret.

GREY (CONT'D)

Hey, I don't know what you're  
thinking, but whatever you're  
thinking, big guy, it's not what  
you think it is.

Grey frowns, having confused himself. But Ansel is clear --

ANSEL

Yes it is.

Grey smirks and the phone RINGS for real. Off Ansel, UH OH!

GREY  
Come on, dude, it's showtime.

ANSEL  
(answering)  
Bad Alibi, I'm Ansel. Can I..?  
Hi, Dex! Me and Grey were just  
talking about how much he...

Grey SNAGS the phone before Ansel can OUT his feelings --

GREY (INTO PHONE)  
Uh, hey, what's up?

**INTERCUT/INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING - DAY**

Dex is on a pay-phone --

DEX  
I'll explain everything later but I  
need you to come bail me out. Oh,  
and bring a steering wheel.

Off Grey, WTF? We CUT TO:

A STEERING WHEEL - bolt cutters SNAP the handcuff-chain, as --

**INT. ABANDONED OFFICE - DAY**

A framed 'Made in Portland' poster sits askew on the wall. We're in an executive suite, now shuttered, furniture left behind. Nina kicks and flails as Whale pushes her onto a leather couch, struggling to tie her to the arm rail.

NINA  
You jack-wads touch one hair on my  
head and my grandmother will --

Dill rolls DUCT TAPE over Nina's mouth, silencing her. But her eyes widen fearfully as Whale pulls out that knife. He cuts through Nina's sweater, tearing it off. The thugs stand over her, like they may do something unspeakable, until --

DILL  
Burger?

WHALE  
We had burgers yesterday. How  
about Pho?

With that, the two exit with the orange sweater, leaving Nina bound, gagged, and writhing, as we CUT TO:

**INT. POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY**

Dex sits, tapping her foot, anxious, worried. Hoffman enters with LT. ROBERTA VOLK (50'S), a no-nonsense, big city vibe.

LT. VOLK

Ms. Parios, I'm Lieutenant Volk, thanks for coming down.

DEX

You can thank *Kauffman*, here.

HOFFMAN

Hoffman. ...Ma'am.

DEX

Whatevs. Any word on Nina?

VOLK

We found the suspects' car. It was stolen last week out of Bend. Our techs are processing it as we speak. If they left prints --

DEX

You won't find any. They were wearing gloves. The boyfriend give you anything useful?

VOLK

How do you know we talked to the boyfriend?

DEX

Always the first place you look. Since I've been here for two hours, enjoying Portland's crappiest coffee, I figured you were --

HOFFMAN

-- The boyfriend claims you forced your way into their motel room and took Nina against her will.

DEX

She's 17. She's not allowed to have her own will. By the way, there were plane tickets on the --

VOLK

(getting vexed)

We found them. Boyfriend's not going anywhere. Now, about your connection to Nina --

DEX

For the third time, I dated her father, Benny, in college. I still see the family around the Casino.

HOFFMAN

The relationship with Benny, if you were to describe how it ended --

DEX

With him marrying someone else.

VOLK

So, not well. For you.

DEX

You say that like I'm a suspect.

HOFFMAN

Everyone's a suspect until we establish the facts.

DEX

Adorbs. Is that in the cop manual? What about surveillance cameras? --

VOLK

How about we ask the questions?

DEX

Go ahead. But since you're never gonna ask a question you don't know the answer to, I'm not going to tell you anything you don't already know. So really, why waste any more time talking to me?

VOLK

The kidnapper's vehicle was spotted at the motel when you were leaving. You either led the them to Nina, or just happened to get to her first.

(off Dex, stunned)

That's why you call the police for something like this. Hire an amateur, you get amateur mistakes.

Off Dex, as if she wasn't blaming herself enough, we CUT TO:

**INT. SUE LYNN'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

Sue Lynn looks down at NINA'S TORN ORANGE SWEATER in a box, though stoic, her fangs are beginning to show --

HOLLIS

Security found it at the parking lot entrance. We have to consider all possibilities; disgruntled employees, some of our more disreputable business associates, Perhaps even an act of retribution.

SUE LYNN

I've made my share of enemies; but this... we find Nina, then show them what retribution looks like.

HOLLIS

The police want to come talk to us.

SUE LYNN

I'm not about to put Nina's life in their hands.

HOLLIS

Should I hold them off?

SUE LYNN

No. If they pry into our affairs, they may find things they're not looking for. If we keep them close, we'll always know what they know.

**EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT**

Wood, steel, and glass, even the station evokes a modern sense of place. Dex exits *Processing* to find Grey waiting --

DEX

Thanks, I'll pay you back.

GREY

I'll add it to your tab. What the hell happened to your face?

DEX

Long story. Tell you in the car --

They turn a corner and Grey is a bit thrown to see --

HOFFMAN (O.S.)

Interesting. So you two are..?

DEX

Friends.

Which rankles Grey. But now Dex is wondering how --

DEX (CONT'D)

You guys know each other?

GREY

Long story. Tell you in the car.

HOFFMAN

Listen, Dex, I'm sorry Volk went so hard on you in there. We all want to see a happy ending on this one.

DEX

I know the drill, good cop bad cop. But which one are you trying to be?

Grey throws Hoffman an awkward nod and they exit. Hoffman watches Dex off, definitely intrigued as Volk drifts in --

VOLK

A kidnapping, a connection to Samuel Kane. Coincidence? What do you think?

HOFFMAN

I'm not sure what to think, L-T.

VOLK

Look into her. Never know, she may be our key to finding the girl and the man who killed your partner.

Off Hoffman, conflicted now, perhaps hoping Dex is neither.

**INT. GREY'S CAR - NIGHT**

Grey drives, Dex checks her bruised eye in the visor mirror.

DEX

You wanna punch me in the other eye? Maybe it'll look better if they match.

GREY

You're lucky they didn't kill you.

Dex reaches down, pulling up a LEOPARD SKIN STEERING WHEEL.

DEX

Really..?

GREY

Hey, beggars can't be choosers at this hour.

She sinks in her seat --

DEX

I really screwed up, Grey. First Benny and now Nina. It's like everything I touch --

GREY

What happened with Benny wasn't your fault.

DEX

Yeah, well that's not how it feels. I'll go see Nina's boyfriend. He has to know something.

GREY

The cops already questioned him.

DEX

It's not about the questions. It's about how you ask.

GREY

Maybe you should just let the police handle it --

DEX

And walk away? Like I always do? Ever since I've been home; jobs, relationships, anytime something gets hard, I walk away. I can't walk away from this. I gotta find her.

Grey nods, feeling the gravity.

DEX (CONT'D)

So what's up with you and Hoffman?

GREY

It's nothing. He's looking for someone I knew.

DEX

What is it with this town? Everybody's looking for someone.

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT**

Ansel dribbles his soccer ball. The phone RINGS! No one else around. He breathes deep, then as rehearsed, answers --

ANSEL

Bad Alibi, I'm Ansel. Can I help  
you?

And when we hear the Irish accent, we know it's --

SAMUEL KANE (V.O.)

Evening, Ansel. I'm looking for an  
old friend...

END ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

EXT. ALOHA INN - NIGHT

A JET ROARS overhead. Michael sits on the steps, looking up at a string of lights, cued in the sky. Dex walks up --

MICHAEL

The police think I'm involved.

DEX

There's a lot of people looking for Nina. Sue Lynn is a powerful woman.

MICHAEL

That's why we had to leave. Guy like me. Mechanic. No money. Out of the bloodline... no way I'm good enough for the family empire.

Though it clearly mirrors her own story, Dex hides any hint --

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Nina didn't care. She was gonna choose her own life. And for some reason she chose me. Crazy, you meet in a club, month later you're running away together to some dream you didn't even know was possible.

DEX

I understand.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Bullshit. You ruined it!

DEX

And sorry won't mean anything! But maybe I can make it right. Michael, if you have any idea who --

MICHAEL

The cops grilled me for five hours. I already told them everything!

DEX

You wouldn't know it to look at me, but I used to interrogate people in the service. I'd get this sense when someone was holding back on me. A feeling. It was always right. I'm getting that feeling now. Nina trusted you. She told you things that you swore not to tell anyone --

MICHAEL

Then why should I trust you?

DEX

Because if something happens to her, you'll never forgive yourself.

MICHAEL

...Sue Lynn had a deal with this gangster, Baxter Hall.

DEX

Wasn't he caught moving black market oysters a few years back?

MICHAEL

She let him use tribal lands to smuggle his stuff into Portland. In return, she got a cut. But when opioids started showing up on the reservation. She intercepted his shipments and torched them.

DEX

So Baxter's out a ton of money; maybe he's trying to get it back from Sue Lynn another way.

MICHAEL

I wouldn't know where to find him.

DEX

But I know someone who might.

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT**

Grey enters, walking through the empty bar. He finds Ansel in the storeroom, amazed to find it completely organized.

GREY

You did all this?

ANSEL

I also cleaned the mirrors in the bathroom and ate a pickle sandwich.

GREY

I'm blown away. Great work, buddy.

ANSEL

Thanks. Oh, and your roommate they gave you when you got in trouble called. He's coming to see you so have his stuff ready and I didn't even need to write it on a napkin.

With that, Ansel goes. Off Grey, utterly ashen, we CUT TO:

**INT. SUE LYNN'S OFFICE - CASINO - NIGHT**

TIGHT ON HOLLIS, reading a note --

HOLLIS

Two million dollars, cash. If we see police, the next box will contain your granddaughter's fingers. Expect instructions.

REVERSE on a room full of cops. Sue Lynn suspiciously eyes Volk and Hoffman as a CSI TECH examines the sweater --

CSI TECH

Looks like some hair, dirt, saw dust maybe...

SUE LYNN

Blood?

Everybody trades eyes, perhaps shocked by the bluntness.

CSI TECH

No, ma'am.

VOLK

Mrs. Blackbird, we need to ask --

SUE LYNN

If I knew who was responsible, Nina would be home already. And you'd be counting *their* fingers in a box.

VOLK

We'd like to speak to her parents.

SUE LYNN

Nina's mother is too distraught.

HOFFMAN

What about the father?

HOLLIS

He was killed in Afghanistan serving his country. Sue Lynn speaks for the family.

VOLK

We'll need to review all Casino footage, monitor incoming calls...

HOFFMAN

If you could get us lists of employees, business associates...

SUE LYNN

Anything we can do to be helpful.  
You'll include my people at every  
step of your investigation --

VOLK

Given our experience in these  
matters, we're really accustomed to  
operating independently --

SUE LYNN

Out there, no doubt! In here, you  
have no jurisdiction, pursuant to  
any number of self-governance  
treaties, I'd be happy to cite. In  
here, you are guests of The  
Confederated Tribes. We look  
forward to working hand in hand.

Sue Lynn resumes knitting. Off cops, trading awkward looks --

**EXT. PORTLAND - DOWNTOWN - DAY**

Dex walks through the Culinary Corridor; a lush plaza where  
rows of high-end food trucks and carts team with foodies.  
Think Mario Batali's Eataly under the sun.

Dex approaches a taco truck, *TOOKIE'S PDX MEX*, which, oddly,  
also boasts, '*Portland's best Espresso.*' Dex barks up at the  
order window --

DEX

Need some help in there?!

The chef, TOOKIE (45) Latino, looks down at her and smiles --

TOOKIE

No offense, but you were the worst  
short order cook in Stumptown.

MOMENTS LATER - Dex and Tookie sit on a bench in front of the  
truck, watching the foodsters stream past --

DEX

It's been a few years. Tell me,  
how's the taco trade?

TOOKIE

Complicated. Back when you worked  
for me, a taco was a taco. Now,  
all the competition, social media,  
it's like every taquito needs to  
win a Michelin star.

DEX

Listen, Took, I need your help.

TOOKIE

Anything. As long as it's not asking for your old job back.

DEX

I'm looking for Baxter Hall.

TOOKIE

How would I know where he is?

DEX

C'mon, twenty years, rolling around in that tin can, no one knows the city like you.

TOOKIE

What can I say? I'm outta the loop.

DEX

You know, your eye does this little twitch thing when you lie.

DEX (CONT'D)

TOOKIE

Like when you tell people  
your chicken is free range or  
your veggies are non-GMO...      ...I only use organic!

DEX

See? A twitch. We both know you buy everything on the cheap --

TOOKIE

Hey, HEY, keep it down! Someone hears you and it's death by Yelp. Baxter is bad news, Dex, trust me --

DEX

He may have taken something I need.

TOOKIE

Let him have it.

DEX

That's not an option.

TOOKIE

(reluctantly)

...Alright. Last I heard, but on your life, you didn't hear it from me, he was working out of the Counter Culture in Old Town.

DEX

Thanks, Took, I owe you one.

TOOKIE

Don't thank me, just hit me on Instagram. I need the *likes*.

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Grey is perched on a ladder, shelving bottles --

JAKE (O.S.)

Nice place!

Grey looks up, not so happy to see a man, (35) rail thin, weathered, and two decks of GOLD FRONTS. He is --

GREY

Jake Feeney, in the flesh.

MOMENTS LATER: Grey and Jake sit in a corner over a beer.

JAKE

What's it been, a dime and half?

GREY

Plus or minus. Been back inside?

JAKE

Few times. Nothing real. Guys like us can't even scratch our balls without looking at time.

GREY

(laughs, then soberly)  
I got the call, too, Jake.

JAKE

We shouldn't have agreed to babysit his money for him.

GREY

It's not like we had a choice. Two kids in that prison, we'd have been torn apart without his protection.

JAKE

Two fifty k's a lot of scratch to just sit on. Months, years go by, you start gettin' ideas...

GREY

Jesus, you blew it all, didn't you?

JAKE

Kane was in for life! I never  
thought he'd get out! ...You still  
sittin' on the other half?

GREY

You're looking at it. How do you  
think I bought this place?

JAKE

We're cooked, bro! You got a car?  
We gotta get out of town A-Sap.

Grey eyes Ansel outside, cleaning the window with a squeegee.

GREY

I can't. Everything I got is here.  
Jake, listen to me, we stick  
together, we double our chances.

JAKE

Yeah? What's zero times two? Good  
luck, brother. You never saw me.

With that, Jake exits. Off Grey, walls closing in, CUT TO:

**EXT. COUNTER CULTURE CLUB - NIGHT**

Music booms as Dex approaches the door. The BOUNCER (30'S),  
handsome and muscled, fake smiles her in, a bit resentful.

BOUNCER

Dex... Long time.

DEX

(just recognizing him)  
Oh, hey, you're working here now.

BOUNCER

You never called me after that  
night. I thought we hit it off.

DEX

We slept together, didn't we, Ted?

BOUNCER

Todd.

DEX

Right. My bad. Soooo... you gonna  
let me in or what?

He smirks, petulant. Off her eye roll, *Oh the Drama*, CUT TO:

**INT. COUNTER CULTURE CLUB - NIGHT**

Dex walks through the sexy nightclub, a fish out of water. Gucci mingles with gypsy chic, Go-go dancers, flaming coffee cocktails, this place is helping to keep Portland weird. She approaches a VIP area, flanked by two Security Guards.

DEX

I'm here to see Baxter.

The Guards eye her and step aside. Off Dex, *That was easy --*

**INT. COUNTER CULTURE CLUB - VIP AREA - NIGHT**

Dex enters the VIP loft overlooking the club where BAXTER HALL (35), odd hipster kingpin of the Portland underground, holds court. Think Zach Galifianakis, but dangerous.

BAXTER

You bring the money?

Dex's eyes FLARE!! She plays along --

DEX

Money's nearby. But I'll need to see the girl first.

BAXTER

Girl is nearby. But I'm gonna need some assurances first. You a cop?

Opting for an new tactic, Dex gives a firm --

DEX

No.

BAXTER

Exactly what a cop would say.

(off Dex, *I can't win*)

We'll need to check for a wire.

DEX

Good thing I wore my 2nd best bra.

BAXTER

(a blank stare, then--)

That's hilarious. When something's not funny I don't laugh. When something's kind of funny, I laugh. When something's very funny... I don't laugh. Check her out, fellas.

Off Dex, thinking this Baxter guy might be a psycho, CUT TO:

**INT. STAIRWELL/INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

As Baxter leads Dex down a stairwell, armed posse in tow --

BAXTER

Lotta of people looking for the girl. Wasn't easy getting her here.

DEX

Bet she put up a fight too.

BAXTER

Nah, she had lousy security. It was practically a milk run.

Off Dex, absorbing the snub, they enter a MASSIVE GARAGE full of classic cars, a steel roll-up door seals off the far end.

DEX

So... where is she?

Baxter nods to a thug who pulls the cover off a beautiful --

BAXTER

1971 Pontiac GTO Judge Convertible.  
Only 17 ever Produced. Ain't she gorgeous?

It is at this moment that Dex realizes she wandered into the wrong deal and that *THE GIRL* is not Nina, but a rare car.

DEX

Oh, Tsch! You kiddin? Beautiful.  
I mean look at that... her. Wow!

BAXTER

Right? Go on, do your inspection thing and we'll count some money.

DEX

Cool. I'll just...take a peekaroo --

As Dex gets in the car, trying to figure how she'll get the hell out of this one - *Shit* - she sees what Baxter cannot as one of his men ushers in another WOMAN (45) with a briefcase.

DEX (CONT'D)

Mind if I listen to her purr?

BAXTER

(handing Dex the keys)  
Be my guest. It's your half mil.

Dex turns the engine and REVS the gas --

DEX  
Oh yeah, listen to that baby.

But at that moment, Baxter notices the other woman --

BAXTER  
Who the hell are you?

OTHER WOMAN  
Your buyer. Why is that woman in  
my vehicle?

A beat, then Baxter's entire crew draws on DEX - who STOMPS  
ON THE GAS, peeling out, tearing through the garage toward --

BAXTER  
She's gonna hit the door. Door,  
door, door, open the GODDAMN DOOR!

One of Baxter's men punches a button. The door rolls up, Dex  
barely clears it, tearing out of the garage onto the street.

BAXTER (CONT'D)  
Can somebody tell me that didn't  
just happen? Anybody..? Anybody?

But they all avoid eye contact.

BAXTER (CONT'D)  
How about we find out who she is?!!

**INT. PONTIAC (MOVING) - NIGHT**

DEX drives away in shock. Her cell RINGS. She fumbles for it.

DEX (ANSWERING PHONE)  
Yeah?

HOFFMAN (V.O.)  
It's Hoffman. I have some good  
news. Nina has been returned.

DEX  
She what..?

HOFFMAN  
She's back. With her family.  
Thought you'd want to know...

Off Dex, stunned by this news and exhilarated by what just  
happened, *Holy Shitballs*, we --

**END ACT THREE**

## ACT FOUR

INT. CASINO - OFFICE SUITE - NIGHT

Hollis walks Dex through the casino --

HOLLIS

Dropped her off a half mile down  
the road. Not a hair out of place.

They arrive at Sue Lynn's office. She sits at her desk,  
knitting. Hollis exits. Sue Lynn never looks up --

DEX

I'm sorry. I let you down.

SUE LYNN

You came to apologize? How un-you.

DEX

I'd like to tell Nina in  
person--

SUE LYNN (CONT'D)

She's with her mother. Maybe  
now is not the best time.

SUE LYNN (CONT'D)

I hear rumors of an incident with  
our ex-associate, Baxter Hall, and  
a woman fitting your description?

DEX

I was trying to do the right thing.

SUE LYNN

When I was a child, we had a snow  
storm. A man came out to fix the  
chimney. A plumber. He was all we  
could find. But before he finished  
the job, he fell through the roof  
leaving us completely exposed and  
with no chimney. Let's hope you  
haven't escalated our troubles with  
Baxter.

DEX

(as Dex pulls out --)

The advance you gave me. Keeping  
it wouldn't feel right.

SUE LYNN

That won't be necessary. It was my  
mistake. You don't hire a plumber  
to fix a chimney.

Dex takes the gut punch. Then graciously --

DEX

Nina's sharp. I'm sure she gave the police enough to catch these guys.

SUE LYNN

Yes. I'm sure it's only a matter of time.

With that, Dex leaves the cash on a table and goes. CUT TO:

**INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT**

Hoffman sits working amid a web of color-coded post-its. He's surprised when Dex appears, a bit sullen, dropping the keys from the stolen car on his desk --

DEX

Found them next to a car out front.  
(off his suspicious look)  
I'm a good samaritan. So where are we with the kidnapers?

HOFFMAN

We? We're working on it.

DEX

I take it that's what the creepy Post-it fetish is about.

HOFFMAN

Helps me track leads, mysteries...

DEX

I like a good mystery. Any on this case you wanna share?

HOFFMAN

Here's one I've been working on.  
(reading from post-its)  
Subject's marriage falls apart. Despite having a cushy job in the family business, he joins the army and deploys to Afghanistan.

Dex's face shifts. Though she clearly knows where this is going, her eyes clouding, she never even blinks as --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Six months into his tour, he gets leave but doesn't go home. He goes to Kabul where his Humvee hits an I-E-D, killing him instantly. But why is he in Kabul?

DEX

First rule of interrogation: never ask a question you don't know the answer to.

HOFFMAN

(pulling out a --)

Personal Effects Form for one PFC Benjamin Blackbird. Items found on the deceased: eighty-six dollars in cash, various photos, and one diamond engagement ring.

Dex looks like she's barely holding it together --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

You're the reason Benny was there. You were stationed in Kabul. His death left you feeling responsible. You thought saving Nina would somehow make up for losing him.

DEX

Put that together on your own?

HOFFMAN

We had to know how you fit in.

They hold a charged look until Dex sees Nina's sweater in an evidence bag. She picks it up, noticing the shavings --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

Saw dust. We think they might have held her at a construction site.

DEX

What does Nina say?

HOFFMAN

Sue Lynn wouldn't let us near her.

DEX

Why would she do that? These people just kidnapped her granddaughter --

HOFFMAN

-- and dropped her in front of the Casino, apparently.

DEX

Hollis told me they dropped her a mile down the road! Conflicting stories, they won't let anybody talk to Nina; something's wrong!



Suddenly, Dex turns, grabs Grey and kisses him on the lips.  
Off Ansel's shocked grin --

DEX  
False flag! You're amazing!

GREY  
(still stunned)  
I am?! Wait, false what..?

DEX  
False flag... it's an intelligence  
tactic, a con, like smoke and  
mirrors. You create a fake result  
in order to produce the outcome you  
want.

GREY  
Dex, it's really just an old bar  
trick.

DEX  
No, it's the only answer!

Grey trade eyes with Ansel like Dex is losing it --

DEX (CONT'D)  
We ran an op in Afghanistan, trying  
to nab this bad guy but he went  
underground. So we announce he'd  
been arrested. Thinking we had the  
wrong man and the heat was off, the  
guy emerged and we captured him.

GREY  
Hold on. Ansel, you speak Dex.  
You getting this?

ANSEL  
Nope!

DEX  
Sue Lynn doesn't trust the police!  
What if she lied about Nina's  
release so she could sideline the  
cops and handle the ransom herself?  
What if the kidnapers are still  
holding her?

Grey reaches out and grabs Dex's beer --

GREY  
...I'm cutting you off.

**INT. WHISPERING WINDS CASINO - NEXT DAY**

Dex sits at the bar, ball cap pulled low over her brow as she watches Sue Lynn and Hollis walk to the Casino count room. When they emerge, Hollis carries two large briefcases --

**INT. DEX'S CAR/EXT. PORTLAND STREETS - DAY**

Dex follows Hollis' car through the streets, keeping her distance, sure he's on his way to trade the ransom for Nina. Hollis turns a corner and a car cuts Dex off. Two men open her door and yank Dex out as Hoffman rushes up with Volk --

VOLK

You're gonna blow this whole operation.

Hoffman pulls her 45 pistol from her belt --

HOFFMAN

You have a permit for this?

DEX

My pet moose ate it. Mr. Pickles.

HOFFMAN

Then I'll have to confiscate it.

VOLK

What did I say about amateurs?

DEX

Yet we both came to the same conclusion. So if I'm an amateur, what does that make you?

Volk peels off, steamed. Dex dagger-eyes Hoffman --

DEX (CONT'D)

Threw it to the Feds, huh?

HOFFMAN

Yeah, I lied... for your own good.

DEX

I'd write thank you on a post-it note, but you wouldn't like where I'd stick it.

HOFFMAN

You're in way over your head, Dex. If you really want to do what's best for Nina? Go home.

**INT. DEX'S HOUSE - DAY**

Dex sits on the couch, staring at that old photo of her and Nina's father (Benny), guilt stirring. Ansel walks up --

ANSEL

I liked Benny. He was always nice to me and knew lots of funny jokes.

DEX

I'm surprised you remember. You were just a little kid...

ANSEL

When you got mad he used to call you Tyrannosaurus Dex.

DEX

He did, didn't he?

ANSEL

And he would make dinosaur sounds and you would get madder and madder and your face would turn red and then you always started laughing.

Dex grins, lost in the memory of it. But that fades. Ansel observes her for a beat, sensing her deep sorrow --

ANSEL (CONT'D)

When I get sad about mom and dad moving away I go to the park and kick the ball and pretend I win the game and I always feel better.

DEX

Hey, you got me, don't you? ...Get your ball. We're going to the park.

Ansel grins and runs off, elated. Dex drops the photo back in the drawer... hangs a beat, then reaches for that small box which she flips open, revealing the ENGAGEMENT RING.

DEX (CONT'D)

We're just gonna make a quick stop! I could use a win.

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG/EXT. ALOHA INN - DAY**

Dex pulls into the lot. She hands Ansel her phone --

DEX

You can play a few games, if you want. I'll just be a minute.

**INT. MICHAEL'S MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

Michael and Dex stand in the doorway of the small room --

DEX

Nina is gonna be okay. Don't ask me how I know, but I know. You said you were saving up for one, so...

With that, she hands him the small box. He opens it and as his eyes WIDEN, seeing the ring, INTERCUT:

BACK IN THE CAR: ANSEL pockets Dex's phone and gets out with his ball. He begins kicking it against a wall but the ball rolls down the ramp. As Ansel goes after it, CUT BACK TO:

MICHAEL'S MOTEL ROOM

DEX (CONT'D)

The guy who was gonna give me that? He let some people talk him out of it. By the time he listened to himself it was too late.

MICHAEL

I don't know what to say.

DEX

Say you won't make the same mistake he did.

Dex smiles, proud of herself, but that smile fades as she dials in on TWO SAW DUST SHAVINGS on Michael's hoodie... like the ones she saw on Nina's sweater. She hides her suspicion --

DEX (CONT'D)

Okay, then. I gotta, you know...

But she turns, stunned as DILL and WHALE step in her path --

MICHAEL

This is bad... What do we do?!

DILL

What do you think, genius?!

MICHAEL

No one gets hurt! That was the plan. This was my idea!

DEX

And right now it's still just a bad one. Call it off before it turns into something you can't undo--!

Dill grabs Dex, cupping her mouth, silencing her --

DILL

We're in this together, man. We don't stick together, we're all going to jail. That what you want? Or you wanna go get our money?

Michael hangs in indecision until, regretfully, he nods in agreement.

WHALE

Relax, Dude, it's just a hick-up. No one's ever gonna find her body.

Whale arches back to pistol whip Dex, and we SMASH TO:

**EXT. ALOHA INN - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**

Dex's car TEARS out of the lot, Dill and Whale in the front seat. Off Ansel, holding his ball, as Dex's car WHIPS past --

END ACT FOUR

## ACT FIVE

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - DAY**

Dill drives, Whale rides shotgun, and it's déjà vu all over again as Dill hands Whale his thermos --

DILL

Fresh batch. Fifty bucks says you  
can't name the roast...

But this time, we INTERCUT THE TRUNK as Dex comes to, groggy and claustrophobic. She POUNDS on the lid, and we CUT TO:

**INT. BAD ALIBI - DAY**

Grey stands on a chair, hanging a '*Portland's Best Espresso*', sign. The Phone RINGS! Grey struggles to answer --

GREY

Yeah?

ANSEL (V.O.)

You answered wrong.

GREY

Ansel..? You okay?

INTERCUT: ANSEL, holding his soccer ball, outside the motel, talking on Dex's phone.

ANSEL

Dex's car left without me.

GREY

What do you mean, where'd she go?

ANSEL

I don't know. She wasn't driving.

GREY

Stay there. I'm coming to get you!

Grey drops the sign, SMASH! -- and reaches over the bar. He pulls out Hoffman's card, considering it, as we PRELAP:

HOFFMAN (V.O.)

Maybe he knows we're onto him.

**INT. HOFFMAN'S CRUISER (MOVING) - DAY**

Hoffman sits at the wheel of an unmarked cruiser. Volk rides shotgun, looking at Hollis' moving car through binocs --

HOFFMAN  
He's been leading us in  
circles all day.

COP (V.O.) (ON RADIO)  
Target making a left. Let's  
swap the follow on my mark...

VOLK  
If he knew, he'd abort. Kidnapper's  
are just being extra cautious...  
Hold on. He's making a move --

Hollis pulls into the Nite Hawk Cafe & Lounge, a local haunt,  
boasting '*Steaks, Chops*', and you guessed it; '*Portland's  
Best Espresso*.' He pops the trunk pulling out the briefcases.

Volk watches through binocs as Hollis heads inside the iconic  
diner and sits at a booth. When another man sits down across -

VOLK (INTO RADIO) (CONT'D)  
Let's move, folks. And careful,  
we've got civilians in there...

**INTERCUT: INT. DEX'S MUSTANG - TRUNK - DAY**

Dex jams her hand into a crack in the seat, peering through,  
making out Dill and Whale up front. But the light illuminates  
a FIRE EXTINGUISHER, nestled at her feet, as we SMASH TO:

**INT. NITE HAWK CAFE - DAY**

Swat cops flood in, from every doorway, yelling --

SWAT COPS  
LEMME SEE YOUR HANDS!

SWAT COPS  
POLICE! POLICE..!

Patrons duck, terrified, as Hollis and the other man raise  
their hands, staring down gun barrels. Volk throws a nod to  
Hoffman, who opens a briefcase, finding, Native American --

HOFFMAN  
Rugs..?

HOLLIS  
I'm a collector. This man is here  
to verify their authenticity.

Off Hollis' grin, Volk and Hoffman trade eyes, *We've been  
tricked*. Hoffman's phone RINGS. He steps away to answer --

HOFFMAN (INTO PHONE)  
Hoffman.

GREY (V.O.)  
Hey, it's, Grey McConnell, from...

HOFFMAN (INTO PHONE)  
I remember who you are. Look, I'm  
a little busy here --

GREY  
I think something happened to Dex!

Off Hoffman, teeth gnashed, damn sure he's right, SMASH TO:

**EXT. WHISPERING WINDS CASINO - DAY**

Sue Lynn looks at a briefcase full of cash, set in the trunk of her Caddy beside a similar case. She closes the trunk and as she gets in her car, her phone RINGS! She answers --

SUE LYNN (INTO PHONE)  
I'm listening.

KIDNAPPER (V.O.)  
Your decoy worked out.

INTERCUT: ECU OF MICHAEL (The Kidnapper), disguising his voice through a modulator to hide his identity.

MICHAEL  
Police have been taken care of.

SUE LYNN  
Of course they have. That's what  
you asked for. I've held up my  
end. You'd better hold up yours.

With that, she hangs up and drives off alone, as we CUT TO:

**INT. ABANDONED OFFICE - DAY**

Nina, hard at work, furiously scrapes her worn wrist ties against the pipe - SNAP! She's free. She moves to the door. Locked! Then to the window, seeing a three story drop.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR: A GUARD hears a SMASH! He pulls a gun, unlocks the door, and enters the room, seeing the window broken, a blanket-rope threaded out. As he walks to it --

Nina emerges from behind the door with Dex's steering wheel. She CLOCKS him over the head, knocking him cold. She then rushes out, down the steps, around a corner, and right into --

NINA  
MICHAEL! Thank god!

-- who takes her in his arms, her rescuer, she thinks --

NINA (CONT'D)

We have to get out of here! He'll  
wake up..!

She tugs at him, but he just stares back, crestfallen, like  
it's all falling apart now.

NINA (CONT'D)

Michael, what's wrong with you?

MICHAEL

Remember when you said you saw me  
for who I really was? I liked that.

And just as it dawns on Nina, Michael palms her mouth. As he  
muscles her, kicking and fighting, back upstairs, we PRELAP:

NEIL DIAMOND (V.O.) (SINGING)

*Then spring became the summer...*

INT. DEX'S CAR - DAY

DILL and WHALE, up front, heads bobbing as they sing --

DILL & WHALE (SINGING)

*Who'd have believed you'd come  
along..?*

BACK IN THE TRUNK - Dex threads the nozzle through the crack  
in the seat. She pulls the lever and WHOOSH! - holds on for  
dear life as the car starts swerving wildly --

Dex pulls the seat latch, emerging into the cab awash in fire  
retardant, as - **Reaching out...** She gets Dill in a headlock --  
**Touching me...** Whale pulls his gun on Dex -- **Touching you...** -  
- who now sees THE BRIDGE TIPPING UP AHEAD, as we INTERCUT:

A KAYAKER, under the bridge, on headphones, listening to --

MINDFULNESS COACH (V.O.)

Watch every thought come and go, be  
it a worry, fear, anxiety...

-- unaware of the Mustang, soaring over his head.

THE MUSTANG hits the other side of the bridge, careening down  
onto the road, where it spins to a stop. The thugs bail out,  
coughing white powder. Dex climbs out after them.

Echoing their first encounter, Dill swings at Dex. But this  
time, she blocks the blow, kicks out his knee and sends him  
to the ground, pulling his gun. As Whale comes at her, she  
wheels the barrel around to meet his face. He freezes --

DEX

Wise move, Sasquatch. Phones.  
Gimme.

The Thugs pull out their phones, trade a look, then huck them into the river. Off Dex's grimace, they laugh. As she pats them down --

DEX (CONT'D)

Where're you keeping her?

WHALE

We're not telling you Jack.

DEX

You don't have to.

She pulls out a SECURITY GATE PASS for 'PARSON'S MILL & LUMBER YARD.' Off Dex's eureka --

DEX (CONT'D)

Saw dust.

WE CUT TO:

*PARSON'S MILL & LUMBER YARD ESTD' 1912*

on a huge sign above a now defunct industrial complex.

**EXT. PARSON'S LUMBER MILL - DAY**

Sue Lynn pulls her caddy into the deserted yard. She exits the car and barely holds her composure as Michael, manic and desperate, emerges with Nina, her mouth duct taped. CUT TO:

**INT. DEX'S MUSTANG/EXT. PEARL DISTRICT - DAY**

As DEX tears through the streets we INTERCUT: THE TRUNK: Dill and Whale are tied up, laying like sardines, as --

Dex BLOWS a light, swerves to avoid a STREETCAR, and BUMPS over a curb. The TAPE DECK KICKS ON, blasting LOVE TRAIN by the O'JAYS as she whips past A COP, reaching for his radio --

**INT. HOFFMAN'S CRUISER - DAY**

Hoffman and Volk are on the move. From over the radio --

COP DISPATCH (V.O.)

All units, Orange Mustang, GT,  
heading East on Alder...



Michael takes off on foot. As Dex pulls along-side him, she throws open her door, KNOCKING Michael to the dirt. She SLAMS on the breaks, jumping out, as --

MICHAEL crawls for his gun. Just as he grabs it -- STOMP - a SNEAKER pins his hand to the ground. He looks up at --

DEX

I was right about you holding back on me. I was just wrong about what it was you were hiding.

As the two become awash in the dust of encircling cruisers, Hoffman and Volk jump out, guns trained on Michael --

HOFFMAN

We got it from here, Dex!! You okay..?

DEX

Yeah. There's two more in my trunk.

Hoffman and Volk trade a look, a bit amazed as we SWING TO: Nina shaking, clutching her relieved grandmother. Dex approaches looking contrite.

DEX (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. For everything.

But Nina embraces Dex, who is completely thrown, perhaps just now realizing...

NINA

Are you kidding? You saved me!

DEX

...I was just doing my job.

SUE LYNN

And I suppose you *might* have been the right person for it.

Sue Lynn smiles, but the smile fades --

SUE LYNN (CONT'D)

I hope you understand why I did what I did all those years ago. I know we've certainly both had to live with the consequences.

DEX

You always were the master of the non apology apology.

Dex and Sue Lynn hold a smile, signaling, not peace, but perhaps detente between two iron willed women. As Hoffman cuffs Michael, Dill and Whale, Volk approaches.

VOLK

Some people find trouble. Other people, trouble finds them.

DEX

You saying I'm one of those people?

VOLK

Girl, you're both.

DEX

I'm gonna choose to take that as a compliment.

They share a grin, definitely mutual respect. And off Dex, locking eyes with Michael as he's loaded into a cruiser, his face betraying relief that it's all over, we CUT TO:

A GIANT WHITE STAG - In neon, leaping over the words 'PORTLAND OREGON.' We move off the iconic 1940'S era sign to a street below, where a crowd gathers outside THE BAD ALIBI.

#### INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT

The place is grand-opening packed with a sexy crowd. Ansel heads through, hauling trash-bags and he is *The Man*. A few hipsters high-five him on his way out the back door.

We SWING TO: THE BAR, where DEX and GREY clink beers --

DEX

Safe to say someone's off to a pretty good start.

GREY

Yeah, so far so good, I think.

DEX

And Grey... thanks.

GREY

For what?

DEX

For how you are with Ansel, all the times you get me out of trouble...

GREY

The free beer --

DEX

That too.

GREY

It's nothing.

DEX

No. It's not. It's something.

Their smile holds, hinting that maybe there's a lane for them after all. But the moment is interrupted by --

ANSEL

Grey, someone wants to see you.

GREY

Little busy, here, Ansel.

ANSEL

But he says it's important.

GREY

Who does?

ANSEL

Your old roommate.

Off Grey, his eyes flaring, we CUT TO:

**EXT. BAD ALIBI - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT**

Grey walks out, chilled to see, emerging from the shadows --

GREY

Kane..?

A hard (50) every line on his weathered face a story, none with a happy ending. Grey tries to mask his fear.

KANE

Congrats on your big night.

GREY

Glad you could make it.

KANE

No you're not. With all the cops looking for me, this might be the only place I'm not wanted.

Kane looks down the alley, on edge --

KANE (CONT'D)

Jake sends his best. He wanted to be here but a rather catastrophic error in judgement led to a conflicting engagement.

Kane opens his fist, eerily revealing Jake's gold fronts, which he jostles in his palm like dice, as --

GREY

Give me time. I'll get your money.

KANE

Already used up all my spare time, Greyson. So if you don't mind, I'd like to collect. I'm supposing you have fire insurance...

GREY

You want me to burn down my bar?

KANE

It's my bar, son. Every beer glass, goddam pool ball, and lightbulb belongs to me.

GREY

Maybe I'll tell the cops everything.

KANE

Then you'll lose everything --

GREY

I don't care what they do to me! --

KANE

It's not you I'd be worried about!  
(off Grey's glare)  
Been watching through the window, you and your pretty girlfriend...

GREY

(unnerved now)  
She's not my girlfriend.

KANE

She's something to you. I can see it on your face. Fuck with me and I'll make sure she pays for it. You don't wanna live with that...

Kane drops the gold fronts in Grey's shirt pocket. He gives Grey a patronizing muss of the hair, and goes. CUT TO:

**INT. BAD ALIBI - NIGHT**

Shaken, Grey walks to the bar and stops, seeing Hoffman enter, heading right for him. Grey stiffens, sure he's about to be busted. But Hoffman merely nods on his way to --

HOFFMAN

Ma'am...

DEX swivels around on her bar stool, surprised to see --

DEX

Kauffman. Almost didn't recognize you without the post-its.

HOFFMAN

Michael admitted he and the others had been planning the kidnapping for months. Idea was to break up with her after, then they were all just gonna sit on the money for a while until suspicion faded away.

DEX

Best laid plans...

Off Grey, looking like they could be talking about him as Hoffman pops open a small box, revealing her engagement ring.

HOFFMAN

Thought you might want this back.

DEX

Aren't you gonna get on one knee?

HOFFMAN

(grins, then sincerely)  
Things could have ended badly on this one. Why didn't they? You.

Off Dex, pleased, and clearly not expecting that --

HOFFMAN (CONT'D)

I don't know how you did it, but if you're thinking about doing it some more... get a P.I License. I don't wanna have to arrest you again.

Dex is dazed at the show of respect. She and Hoffman trade a nod. And as Hoffman goes, Grey looks miffed by what looks like an inevitable rivalry, as we SWING UP TO:

THE 2ND FLOOR -- BAXTER HALL and his HIPSTER HENCHMAN, hidden from view, gaze down at Dex from the balustrade --

BAXTER

Ex military operator on Sue Lynn's payroll; first she steals my car, now she's kickin it with the cops. What's her game?

HIPSTER HENCHMAN

You hire a soldier for one reason.

BAXTER

If Sue Lynn wants a war, we'll give her one.

Off Baxter, tipping to the coming storm, we SWING DOWN TO:

DEX

So..? What do you think?  
(off Grey, *About what?*)  
The P.I. thing?

GREY

You, a private detective? You can barely find your keys half the time. It's not a line of work you just jump into out of the blue.

Dex eyes the engagement ring with a touch of melancholy, and then something shifts in her; somewhere between aspiration and clarity --

DEX

Maybe it's not so out of the blue. Maybe everything that's happened in my life; the war, the crappy jobs, maybe they were all just stepping stones, guiding me to something I'm actually half decent at.

Dex can't help but smile, considering what might be a new vocation, but --

DEX (CONT'D)

On the other hand, how much trouble can there really be around here?

GREY

Yeah, forget it, Dex... it's Stumptown.

Off Grey, if she only knew. And Dex, a devious glint in her eye, signaling her exploits are only beginning, we --

END PILOT