

Latent Guilt

by

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DARK SCREEN:

LAWRENCE'S VOICE:

A human's ability to reason is the single intangible quality that separates us from a lower species. Decision-making is the manifestation of that ability. The decision I made to go to the club that night to watch Raina dance was the best decision I had ever made...and the worst.

FADE IN:

Shots of various familiar locations in Washington, DC to establish location, panning down to a seedy neighborhood.

INT. INSIDE WASHINGTON, DC STRIP CLUB

LAWRENCE, early 30's, clean cut professional, watching STRIPPERS dancing on stage. The MUSIC is a hot dance track and the room is dimly lit, loud and smoky.

DJ (V.O.)

Now that y'all are warmed up, get
your umbrellas fellas...you know
why...it's raaiinning!!!!

The lights go down and a SPOTLIGHT hits the middle of the DANCE FLOOR as RAINA, EARLY 30's, voluptuous, scantily clad, begins to dance. The men are spellbound; Lawrence lifts a five dollar bill toward the stage she refuses it.

She finishes her performance and the men go wild HOWLING and throwing money. Lawrence turns to leave when he walks right into her.

RAINA

You only come in on weekends, you
only stay long enough to watch me,
and you leave without as much as a
hello. Your wife must have you on
some short leash.

LAWRENCE

I'm not married.

RAINA

Girlfriend then?

LAWRENCE

I'm not seeing anyone.

RAINA
Children?

LAWRENCE
Nope.

RAINA
Hmm...partner?

LAWRENCE
Ah, no.

RAINA
(to herself)
Jackpot.

LAWRENCE
Excuse me?

RAINA
Nothing.

LAWRENCE
You look...nice.

RAINA
Thanks.

LAWRENCE
So...

Lawrence stares at Raina's body and looks around uncomfortably.

RAINA
So?

LAWRENCE
So...would you like to have coffee or something sometime?

RAINA
Coffee? That's Cute. I get off in about...well, I could leave now.

LAWRENCE
OK, I'll wait for you outside.

RAINA

OK. By the way, I didn't get your name.

LAWRENCE

Lawrence.

RAINA

OK Lawrence; I'm gonna change and I'll see you back here in a minute.

Raina changes and she and Lawrence leave the club.

INT. CAFE AT TABLE -- NIGHT

They are seated in a small cafe.

RESTAURANT PATRONS are eating, milling about at the bar, SERVERS, are standing around taking orders. LIGHT MUSIC is playing.

A SERVER, female 20's, stands close to Lawrence and takes their orders. The server admires Lawrence and smiles at Raina.

SERVER

What can I get you?

LAWRENCE

Two Cokes, please?

SERVER

Aren't you gonna eat something?

LAWRENCE

I guess I could nibble on something.

SERVER

I ain't mad at you sister.

The women laugh and HIGH FIVE. Lawrence looks puzzled as the women smile at him.

LAWRENCE

Did I miss something?

RAINA

Forget it. So I guess you're wondering what my real name is, huh?

LAWRENCE

The thought had occurred to me.

RAINA

My name is Sarah but I prefer Raina,
please. I'm in my third year at
Georgetown Law.

LAWRENCE

Really?

RAINA

Yep, I'll be done soon.

LAWRENCE

That's great.

The server brings over the DRINKS.

RAINA

Thanks, I'll be thrilled when I can
stop dancing 'cause it's getting a
little tiresome.

LAWRENCE

I'm sure. So you dance at night and
go to school all day?

RAINA

Classes, library, moot court,
interviews, it goes on and on.

LAWRENCE

You should be proud of yourself.

RAINA

It hasn't been easy; tell me
something about you.

LAWRENCE

I'm divorced, no kids and I work for
a foundation here in the city.

RAINA

That's it?

LAWRENCE

Not much more I'm afraid. I'm just a
regular guy.

RAINA

You're not so regular.

LAWRENCE

You think?

RAINA

I'm sure I'll get an opportunity to find out more at some point. I'm sorry but it's getting late and I have class in the morning.

LAWRENCE

So soon? I was hoping I could have some more time.

RAINA

Is that your way of asking me over?

LAWRENCE

I'll beg if you want.

They leave the table and walk toward the exit.

RAINA

No you don't have to beg; but I'm not sleeping with you so you can forget that.

LAWRENCE

I wasn't asking for that; besides, if that does happen between us I don't think we'll be the one's deciding.

RAINA

Then who will.

Lawrence turns back to Raina and looks into her eyes.

LAWRENCE

Our hearts; c'mon, I think you're gonna like my place.

Raina stands speechless and stares at Laurence as he takes out some money and leaves it on the table. They leave the restaurant.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF LAWRENCE'S TOWNHOUSE -- NIGHT

Establishing shot of a row of TOWNHOUSES, cars parked in front.

A mid-size sedan pulls into a driveway. Raina gets out of the car. Lawrence stands of his car door and looks over at Raina.

RAINA
Is this your house?

LAWRENCE
Yep. C'mon in.

INT. INSIDE LIVING ROOM JUST PAST FOYER -- NIGHT

Raina stands in the family room and admires all of the FURNISHINGS and shakes her head.

RAINA
This is nice.

LAWRENCE
Yeah, it took me months to get this place the way I wanted it.

RAINA
You have good taste.

LAWRENCE
Thanks. Merlot?

RAINA
Sure.

LAWRENCE
Make yourself comfortable, I'll be right back.

Lawrence walks away.

Raina Kicks off her shoes and rubs her feet as she sits on the sofa. Lawrence returns to a sleeping Raina.

He places the drinks on his COFFEE TABLE and shakes Raina.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)
Raina...Raina wake up, let me take you home.

Raina waves off Lawrence and turns over on the sofa.

He walks her up to his bedroom, places her in his bed, covers her up and shuts the light as he leaves.

INT. HALLWAY IN FRONT OF LAWRENCE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bright sunlight pours over the screen as the interior of Lawrence's home comes into frame. Lawrence walks up the stairway toward his bedroom and stands at the door.

Lawrence speaks through the door. A naked Raina is inside.

LAWRENCE (O.S.)

Did you find everything OK? I left a towel and wash cloth for you.

RAINA

You are such a sweetheart; I was so tired. You can come in; this *is* your room you know.

Lawrence walks in and freezes. Raina is rubbing lotion on her skin. Lawrence turns to walk out.

RAINA (CONT'D)

Would you mind putting some of this lotion on my back? My skin's been so dry. C'mon Lawrence, I don't bite, besides, you've seen me naked dozens of times.

Lawrence blushes, pauses, and then nervously walks toward Raina. He lotions her back and kisses her neck.

RAINA (CONT'D)

Ooh, that feels so good. Do you always treat your first dates this way?

LAWRENCE

Actually no; but I always wanted some private time with you. You know, without other people looking on.

Raina swoons.

RAINA

Ooh, your hands...

LAWRENCE

Am I doing something wrong?

RAINA

Yes, you're rubbing the wrong spot.

Raina places his hand on her BREAST.

RAINA (CONT'D)

There, that's much better.

Lawrence is excited but tries to remain calm.

LAWRENCE

Maybe I should leave you to get dressed.

RAINA

Maybe you should kiss me.

They kiss. Lawrence leans and Raina lies back on the bed pulling Lawrence toward her. He kisses her down the center of her chest.

RAINA (CONT'D)

So much for class today.

They make love and remain in bed. Lawrence awakens and Raina is wrapped in part of the bed sheet staring at him.

RAINA (CONT'D)

So tell me, why do you go to that place so often?

LAWRENCE

What do you mean?

RAINA

You don't fit the profile of the strip joint regular.

LAWRENCE

It's something to do.

RAINA

I understand what you're saying but the guys that come in there...they're dreamers. They're looking for the big score, you know? What are you looking for?

LAWRENCE

You.

RAINA

That was cute, but seriously.

LAWRENCE

From the first time I saw you I'd been trying to get your attention but I didn't think you'd ever notice me.

RAINA

Let's see, guy with the nice oxford shirts...you've given me approximately one thousand, four hundred and eleven dollars, give or take a dollar.

Lawrence sits up in bed.

LAWRENCE

How could you possibly know that?

RAINA

I'd been watching you too. I'll be sure to show you the full envelope whenever you come over.

LAWRENCE

What envelope?

RAINA

I've kept every dime you've ever given me...well, except for about twenty bucks I used for laundry when things got a little tight.

LAWRENCE

Why?

RAINA

Since the first time I saw you, I looked at you and joked to some of the girls that you were my future baby's daddy, I didn't want your money; oh yeah, and don't worry, I'm on birth control.

LAWRENCE

Grown and reckless.

RAINA

Mmm hmm. You need to wrap that puppy up 'cause I *will* get pregnant.

LAWRENCE

Even on birth control.

RAINA

I don't even wanna go there.

LAWRENCE

Condoms it is, sorry.

RAINA

Don't apologize. It was beautiful, dangerous as hell, but very sweet.

LAWRENCE

Hey, there's a party the mayor's office throws every year, all the sharks come out for it, wanna go?

RAINA

I have so much studying to do; I don't have time for that.

LAWRENCE

Yeah, but you had time to...

RAINA

...but that's not heading out to some late night party.

LAWRENCE

If you're gonna be a lawyer in this town, you need to be out meeting people.

RAINA

I don't have anything to wear to something like that.

LAWRENCE

Then let's go shopping, my treat.

RAINA

Lawrence, you're really sweet but I should get going.

LAWRENCE

I'm trying to impress you and you're not being the least bit cooperative.

RAINA

OK, alright. You win, I'll go.

Lawrence and Raina get dressed.

EXT. WASHINGTON, DC (STOCK FOOTAGE OF THE CAPITOL) -- NIGHT

INT. HOTEL GRAND BALLROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Establishing shot of a hotel entrance, limousines and cars in front.

Many well dressed people milling about, laughing drinking. A JAZZ ENSEMBLE, dressed in tuxedos, is playing. Lawrence hands a MAN at the door an Invitation as they walk in.

RAINA

Do I look OK? I hope I didn't smudge my lipstick. Is my makeup OK? I'm so nervous I have to pee.

LAWRENCE

Relax, you look beautiful. Stop worrying, you'll be fine.

RAINA

I don't want to be an embarrassment.

LAWRENCE

An embarrassment? No way. I'm the one being escorted by the high-powered attorney.

RAINA

Not yet; uh oh! There's someone walking over here. Do you know her?

LAWRENCE

I sure do and she has deep pockets with lots of old money in them. Just follow my lead.

Socialite and philanthropist ALLISON WEXLER, 40's, evening gown, walks up to Lawrence and Raina.

ALLISON

Lawrence, darling, you're easily the most scrumptious looking thing in this place. Have you seen the mayor yet? These parties are so droll.

LAWRENCE

Well I...

ALLISON

That suit is delicious. Who's your friend? It's not like you to show up at these things escorted, she must be special.

LAWRENCE

Well, uh...

RAINA

...I'm Sarah Wilkerson-Brownlee.

ALLISON

Charmed, I'm Allison. That's a gorgeous outfit. And your shoes...you've got exquisite taste in clothing and men. I hope you can keep him. You are bidding tonight aren't you?

RAINA

I intend to hold onto him very tightly.

ALLISON

Well Lawrence dear, you're obviously in very good hands here. It is always wonderful to see you and an absolute pleasure to meet you Sarah. Good luck tonight.

RAINA

And to you, Allison.

(TURNING TO LAWRENCE)

RAINA (CONT'D)

Follow your lead, huh? You know, I have to check my bag and see how much money I have.

LAWRENCE

For what, I'm not going anywhere with anyone.

RAINA

Did you even bother to read the invitation that says, *Bachelor Auction* on it with your name as one of the eligibles?

LAWRENCE

Sure, but that doesn't mean anything. I came with you, I leave with you.

RAINA

So naive. You will leave with the woman, *or man*, that bids the most for you. Those are the rules.

LAWRENCE

What do you mean, *or man*? Check your purse and here, take this...I ain't leavin' with no man.

Raina chuckles as Lawrence hands her a handful of money and walks away toward the MEN'S ROOM.

The party is in full swing. PEOPLE are dancing, LIGHTS are flashing.

Lawrence returns and sees Raina cowered in a corner wiping her eyes.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

What's the matter? Why are you crying?

RAINA

Can we go? I don't even know why I came here with you.

LAWRENCE

What happened?

RAINA

One of those jerks over there threw a dollar at my feet. I think they recognized me from the club.

LAWRENCE

Just ignore them.

Lawrence glares at the MEN and they turn away. The AUCTIONEER, 50's, glamorous, walks to the STAGE.

Lawrence runs up to join the Auctioneer on stage.

AUCTIONEER

OK, Ladies. For those of you who have no idea who this hunk of burning love is, his name is

Lawrence Pettigrew and he's a true champion of the children of this city. Lawrence, would you please turn around and show the ladies your personality?

Lawrence TURNS, the Ladies HOWL as Raina edges closer to the stage. WOMEN, various races, ages, are dressed in gowns.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

...we'll start the bidding at twenty-five dollars. Do I hear twenty-five?

RAINA

Two hundred dollars!

AUCTIONEER

Whoa! Now there's a woman that won't be denied! OK, Ladies, two hundred going once...twice...

WOMAN 2

Two-fifty.

AUCTIONEER

We have two fifty from the lady in blue. Do I hear...

RAINA

Four hundred!

AUCTIONEER

It's getting ugly already; I have a bid of four hundred for the handsome Lawrence Pettigrew; and ladies I must say, if I was only a few years younger...four hundred going once, twice...

KIMBER (O.S.)

Five thousand dollars!!!

There is a gasp from the CROWD. A hush falls over the room. KIMBER GAINES, 30's, an attractive supermodel type, walks through the group of women gathered and up to the stage.

AUCTIONEER

Five thousand dollars! Going once, twice, he's yours Ms. Gaines. You sure do know how to make an entrance.

KIMBER
*(snatching the
 microphone)*

Thank you so much. I'm so happy that I have the opportunity to help out the youth of this great city. I hope you all have a great time tonight.

Raina makes a face and walks over to where Lawrence is standing.

RAINA
 There really is no need to prolong this so I'll get a cab. Do the world and yourself a favor and use a condom this time? I'm sure you've seen the tabloids.

LAWRENCE
 Look, take my keys and the car and wait at my place, I won't be long.

RAINA
 I don't know Lawrence, five G's and I'd be looking for a little more than a drink and chat; maybe I'll see you at the club or something. You're sweet, thanks for tonight.

Raina turns to walk away and Lawrence grabs her arm and turns her to him.

LAWRENCE
 Are we finished? I promise you I'm not gonna be that long so just wait at my place.

RAINA
 ...and then what, just sit around watching TV? Nah, that's OK.

LAWRENCE
 Raina, please, I'm not quite ready to say goodnight.

RAINA
 Neither am I.

Lawrence is dangling the keys front of her.

LAWRENCE

Then take these, go back to the house and make yourself comfortable, I'll be there soon.

RAINA
I knew I should have gone home.

LAWRENCE
Please.

RAINA
Forget it, no, I'm leaving.

LAWRENCE
Please Raina.

RAINA
OK. But don't you dare come in smelling like her or I'm outta there.

LAWRENCE
Jealousy doesn't become you.

RAINA
Gimme the damn keys; and make sure you get there soon.

LAWRENCE
You sound like a wife.

Raina stares intently.

RAINA
Soon, Lawrence.

LAWRENCE
OK, OK. I heard you.

INT. INSIDE LIMOUSINE -- NIGHT

Kimber is drunk and reaching for a BOTTLE of liquor as Lawrence reaches to take it away. Kimber's speech is slurred.

KIMBER
You don't have to look so goddamn enthused to be here Larry.

LAWRENCE

It's Lawrence and I think you've had quite enough to drink.

KIMBER

I would've paid ten grand for you. You're the cutest dick I've ever seen. I sure would like to see you wake up in my bed in the morning.

LAWRENCE

I don't think that's gonna happen.

KIMBER

You're such a pussy.

LAWRENCE

And you're disgustingly drunk.

KIMBER

Oh, stop being so damned sensitive, shit. You do-gooder people are all alike, all work and no play. One thing's for sure, I paid five thousand dollars and you're going to fuck at least that much out of me.

LAWRENCE

No Kimber, that's not how this works. You didn't pay that money to sleep with me; you did it for the kids.

KIMBER

Fuck the kids! They aren't worth the tax money I pay.

LAWRENCE

You can't just go around saying stuff like that. These are people we're talking about.

KIMBER

Whatever. If they'd go to school and get off welfare we'd all be better off.

LAWRENCE

All of that money and look at you.

KIMBER

That's right baby, look at me! I got about eight million and more to play with! C'mon baby, let me give you a blowjob and we can tape it, it'll be scandalous.

LAWRENCE
Tell you what, why don't we talk?

KIMBER
I'd rather fuck.

LAWRENCE
You don't look so good. Are you OK?

Kimber VOMITS on Lawrence and slumps onto the seat. The DRIVER, 30's, suit and tie, burly, pulls over, assists Lawrence in exiting the vehicle and hands him money for a cab and drives away with a passed out Kimber in the back seat.

EXT. LAWRENCE PETTIGREW'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

A TAXI pulls up to the curb; Lawrence pays the driver and steps out.

LAWRENCE SHOWN WALKING TO HIS FRONT DOOR, FINDING HIS KEYS IN THE MAILBOX AND WALKING IN.

INT. MAIN FOYER BY STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

Raina walks downstairs wearing one of Lawrence's dress shirts and nothing else.

RAINA
You're in early.

LAWRENCE
I couldn't keep my mind off of you.

RAINA
Did you keep your hands off her?

Walking closer to Lawrence.

LAWRENCE
Yes I did.

RAINA
Then what is that awful smell?

LAWRENCE

She had too much to drink.

RAINA

That's disgusting. You should shower
you should get ready for bed, it's
late.

They walk upstairs holding hands. Raina walks into the
bedroom and begins to take off his clothing. Raina climbs
into bed and watches him.

Raina looks pensive.

RAINA (CONT'D)

How's this gonna end?

LAWRENCE

How's what gonna end?

RAINA

Maybe it's me, but I feel like
you're about to tell me what I hear
all the time.

LAWRENCE

And what's that?

RAINA

I really like you, but...we had a good
time, but...I was just thinking,
but...just come out with it.

LAWRENCE

What are you so worried about? We've
known each other what, a whole day?
We're still getting to know each
other and you're...

RAINA

...a stripper.

LAWRENCE

I didn't say that.

RAINA

Maybe you should have, it might make
you feel better.

LAWRENCE

That's not even what I was gonna
say.

RAINA

Look at us, I'm in your bed, again;
I just met you! I can't imagine what
you must be thinking.

LAWRENCE

Can't we just enjoy this for now?

RAINA

Oh, there it is, *for now*, and then
what, you walk away?

LAWRENCE

It doesn't have to be that way. What
do you intend to do about your
dancing? Since we're talking about
this.

RAINA

Nothing. I'll do it until I'm
finished law school.

LAWRENCE

So that's it?

RAINA

What's wrong Lawrence? Fucking you
not enough? I have to listen too?
Now the truth comes out.

LAWRENCE

Wait a minute, why am I holding your
baggage? If you're looking for
absolution, you've come to the wrong
place.

RAINA

What the hell are you talking about?
You asked about my dancing, what
about you? I guess you'll be staying
out of the club, right?

LAWRENCE

Oh, I see. I stay away from the club
while you keep shaking your ass? Now
there's a contradiction.

RAINA

I just think it would be better if
you stayed away from there.

LAWRENCE

Why? So you could do this with the next guy? No thanks.

Raina snaps her head and stares at Lawrence; she uncovers herself and gets out of the bed.

RAINA

Is that what you think?

LAWRENCE

What I think is that this was a big mistake.

RAINA

Why? Because I won't do what you say?

LAWRENCE

No, because I don't know you like that.

RAINA

What? You fuck me without a condom over and over and now you don't know me like that? OK. You know, this was nice and I appreciate your kindness but I'm not your wife or your bitch. I'll sleep downstairs and be gone by morning.

LAWRENCE

OK, fine. See ya.

Raina is stunned and turns slowly. She's teary-eyed.

RAINA

I would've never believed you could be so cold.

LAWRENCE

Look, I'm sorry OK?

RAINA

I'm sorry too Lawrence. Goodnight.

Raina walks out of his bedroom and slams the DOOR behind her.

WEEKS LATER

INT. INSIDE THE DRESSING ROOM AT THE STRIP CLUB

A DANCER, 20's, scantily dressed is peering out of the dressing room door and sees Lawrence.

DANCER

Hey girl, isn't that your friend out there? I thought you said he wouldn't be coming here no more?

Raina peeks through the dressing room door and sees Lawrence chatting it up with a DANCER, 20's unnamed, large breasts, g-string, who's shaking her breasts in his face.

RAINA

Guess he changed his mind. What's it to you anyway?

DANCER

You seem a little uptight for somebody that *said* your thing was no big deal.

RAINA

Why don't you mind your goddamn business?

DANCER

Whoa! Girl, I was just messin' with you. Sorry.

RAINA

No, I'm sorry, I'm just a little edgy, I'm cool.

Raina peeks through the door again and sees the dancer giving Lawrence a private show. Lawrence is caressing her back.

She leaves the dressing room to confront him.

RAINA (CONT'D)

Hey girl, thanks for keeping my man company.

(dancer walks away)

(turns to Lawrence,
angrily whispers)

What are you doing here? I thought we agreed you'd stay out of this place!

LAWRENCE

I haven't heard from you in weeks,
I've been calling you like crazy.

RAINA

I've been busy. What are you doing
here?

LAWRENCE

Is there some law that prevents me
from coming here?

RAINA

No.

LAWRENCE

Have the city planners changed the
zoning laws and this place is now
illegal or something?

RAINA

No.

LAWRENCE

Should I have some reason to believe
that coming here is bad for me?

RAINA

Not really.

LAWRENCE

The defense rests.

Raina steps back and FOLDS HER ARMS, SMILING broadly.

RAINA

May I inquire?

LAWRENCE

Sure.

RAINA

Did we or did we not have a
conversation about you staying away
from here for your comfort level as
well as mine?

LAWRENCE

We did, but...

RAINA

Did we argue about it?

LAWRENCE

Yes, but...

RAINA

Tell me, was it your intention to get me to sleep with you and walk away?

LAWRENCE

No, that's not what I was...

RAINA

Oh, I get it! You just wanted to fuck me.

LAWRENCE

I didn't say that...

RAINA

I ask again. What are you doing here?

LAWRENCE

I came to apologize. I was stupid and I'm sorry.

RAINA

And squeezing on her ass was your way of apologizing?

LAWRENCE

No! I wasn't squeezing.

RAINA

Oh yeah that's right, you were just rubbing.

LAWRENCE

I'm sorry, OK. Can we start over? Please?

RAINA

Now isn't this uncomfortable?

LAWRENCE

Very.

RAINA

This is what I was talking about. If we're gonna see each other you have to stay out of here; I won't be here forever.

LAWRENCE

I don't want you here now. You wanna come over tonight?

RAINA

I can't tonight, I have exams and I don't want to end up in your bed again.

LAWRENCE

OK. I'll agree to stay away from the club but I want to see you, exclusively.

RAINA

Are you asking me out? Like you wanna be my boyfriend?

LAWRENCE

You don't have to give an answer now.

RAINA

What about my dancing? I know you don't like it.

LAWRENCE

Let me worry about that, I have a plan.

RAINA

A plan?

LAWRENCE

Of course. Now let's get you home.

INT. LAWRENCE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Lawrence is seated at his desk flipping through REPORTS, organizing paper.

YOLANDA JIMINEZ, 20's, Lawrence's secretary, greets him at his office door.

YOLANDA

Hey Larry! How was your weekend?

(phone rings)

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

Child save, this is Ms. Jiminez; may I ask who's calling? Hold please...Larry, its some lady and she wouldn't give her name.

LAWRENCE

I'll take it...hello.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Did you enjoy your romp with that slut? Nasty little freak isn't she? Wow. Dinner parties with the mayor, fucking 'til dawn; you must be quite the man. I didn't even know she liked men.

LAWRENCE

Who is this? You called a children's charity, miss. Maybe you should try some other place. Good day.

Lawrence hangs up.

(phone rings)

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

Child Sa...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

...Hanging up on people is extremely rude.

LAWRENCE

Yeah, whatever. Freakin' weirdos.

Lawrence hangs up in a huff.

(phone rings)

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

Child Save.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

If I were you, I'd be very careful about the company I keep.

Lawrence gently hangs up the phone and stares at it. He leaves the office.

EXT. BOTTOM OF PARKING GARAGE RAMP -- DAY

Lawrence walks down the ramp toward his car. He is greeted by an anxious PARKING ATTENDANT, 30's, dressed in a parking garage uniform and speaks broken English.

PARKING ATTENDANT

Mister, I was just telling your wife that your car needs work to fix that leak. It looks like the break line or something.

LAWRENCE

Wait, wait, hold it. I come in here everyday, you ever see me with a lady in here?

PARKING ATTENDANT

I don't know Mister, she say she is your wife.

(LAWRENCE INSPECTS HIS CAR)

LAWRENCE

What happened to my car man? As much money as I pay here; I might as well had left it on the street.

PARKING ATTENDANT

I sorry Mister, she say she is your wife. I know nothing.

LAWRENCE

Oh, now you don't know nothin' huh? Where's the manager?

INT. RAINA'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Raina is walking through her apartment and runs to the door.

When she opens the door she sees an attractive WOMAN 30's, well dressed but aggressive.

WOMAN

Who the fuck is he?! Did you think I wouldn't find out?!

RAINA

What are you doing here? I thought I told you to...

(SLOW MOTION SHOT) WOMAN SLAPS RAINA ACROSS THE FACE. RAINA FALLS BACKWARD ONTO THE FLOOR.

WOMAN

Shut up bitch! I told you not to play with me!

RAINA

And I told you I didn't want to have anything to do with you; why don't you just leave me alone?

WOMAN

Because you keep playing games. We were supposed to get together after your set and I see you leave with some man?

RAINA

You really are crazy, get out!

WOMAN

You're not worth it; I hope he figures that out before it's too late. By the way, did you say something about him having car trouble?

RAINA

What did you do? Leave him out of this.

WOMAN

You put him in this!

RAINA

I said get out!

The woman leaves as Raina slams the door behind her. She BANGS on the door, distraught.

EXT. RAINA'S LOBBY -- DAY

Lawrence walks past a beautiful, well-dressed woman in a big hurry and arrives at Raina's door.

INT. RAINA'S FRONT DOOR -- DAY

(LAWRENCE KNOCKS)

RAINA (O.S.)

I told you to stay the fuck away
from me! I'm gonna call the police!

LAWRENCE

Raina, open up, it's me, Lawrence.

RAINA (O.S.)

Shit, Lawrence. I can't see you
right now...I'm kinda busy.

INT. RAINA'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Raina runs and looks in the mirror and sees her nose bloody
and face slightly swollen. She runs back to the door.

LAWRENCE (O.S.)

Raina, are you OK?

RAINA

I'm fine. Why don't you call me
later?

LAWRENCE (O.S.)

What's the matter? I was calling
you...Raina open the door.

RAINA OPENS THE DOOR

LAWRENCE

What happened to your face? What's
going on?

RAINA

Nothing.

LAWRENCE

You wanna tell me what happened? I
really like you but it seems like
strange things are starting to
happen since you've been around and
it's making me a little nervous.

RAINA

You're exaggerating.

LAWRENCE

Am I? I got a strange phone call at
my job from some woman telling me
not to waste my time with you. Some
woman may have tampered with my car
and I walk in to your bloody nose

and swollen face...let me guess, a woman did it?

RAINA

Dick fucking Tracy. Look, we all have our drama. I'm purposely changing the subject 'cause I can't deal with this shit right now. Let's talk about you and what happened in your marriage.

LAWRENCE

What? What do you mean?

RAINA

What happened with your wife?

LAWRENCE

Ex-wife.

RAINA

Well?

LAWRENCE

Nothing.

RAINA

Are we gonna do the one word answer thing? I just wanna know what happened.

LAWRENCE

Ancient history. She went left and I went right. That's it.

RAINA

So you never cheated on her?

LAWRENCE

No.

RAINA

Never?

LAWRENCE

Never.

RAINA

You never had a fling at work, the gym, nothing?

LAWRENCE

Nope.

RAINA

So I've found the only monogamous
guy in America?

LAWRENCE

I'm not perfect, things just didn't
work out, and that's all.

RAINA

What about me?

LAWRENCE

I don't follow you.

RAINA

Before we met, at best I thought I'd
meet a decent enough guy to have a
child with, but I feel so much more
is possible every time I'm with you.

LAWRENCE

I don't know what to say to that,
but I have to know what's going on
with you before I think about...

RAINA

...let me help you Lawrence, I know
the drill; you're not ready for
another commitment just now, right?

LAWRENCE

Would you stop doing that; I've been
ready to settle down for sometime
now, my concern is whether or not
you're ready. Truth is, I'm not even
sure who you are.

RAINA

You're right, you don't know me;
none of my news is good news.

LAWRENCE

Now you're being melodramatic. You
make it sound like you're a murderer
or something.

Raina turns away and looks concerned. She begins to pace the
floor.

RAINA

The lady that called you did this to my face, probably tampered with your car too.

LAWRENCE

OK, you've got my attention.

RAINA

I met her at the club and I allowed her to parade me around from time to time, I accepted a few gifts...and I slept with her a few times. It was no big deal.

LAWRENCE

So you're bisexual?

RAINA

No! It was just one of those awkward moments in my life that I don't care to revisit. (pause) It's hard to explain; I hope it doesn't turn you off. I can't think of when but she must have gotten hold of your information and acted out. I'm sorry.

LAWRENCE

She has to answer for my car. Do you have any idea how much it's gonna cost?

RAINA

Whatever I have to do I'll pay for it; it's my fault.

LAWRENCE

Don't worry about it.

(LAWRENCE'S BLACKBERRY RINGS)

RAINA

Work business?

LAWRENCE

Looks that way. I have to run but I'll be back. Wanna have dinner out?

RAINA

You spend way too much money on me.

LAWRENCE

You're worth it. See you later?

RAINA

Be careful. Wait...speaking of money,
take this with you.

Raina reaches in a TABLE DRAWER near the door and pulls out a MONEY STUFFED ENVELOPE and hands it to Lawrence. He flips through it.

LAWRENCE

What's this?

RAINA

It's the money I was telling you
about; your tips. I want it out of
my house.

LAWRENCE

Why haven't you used this to pay
your rent, buy food or something?

RAINA

From the day I saw you, I only
wanted you. I thought that holding
on to the money would be a way to
keep you close to me. I know that
sounds silly.

LAWRENCE

Not as silly as me thinking if I
gave you more and more money that
you'd notice me.

RAINA

I noticed; please take it.

Lawrence leans closer to Raina and kisses her forehead.

LAWRENCE

Tell you what, I'll donate it to the
foundation in your name. How's that?

RAINA

That's fine, but there's else
something I need to tell you.

(KNOCK ON DOOR)

LAWRENCE

You expecting someone?

RAINA

No.

Lawrence opens the door and sees two MALE DETECTIVES, middle aged, in suits. The one in front flashes a badge. Lawrence takes it, examines it and hands it back to the man.

Raina stands behind Lawrence.

LAWRENCE

Can I help you, detective?

DETECTIVE 1

We're from the Robbery-Homicide and we're looking for this man. Have you seen him?

They show Lawrence and Raina a PHOTOGRAPH.

LAWRENCE & RAINA

No, we don't know him.

RAINA

Who is he?

DETECTIVE 2

His name is Michael Granby. He's been missing for a while and his family is worried he might have met with some harm. He was last known to have visited a lady friend in this building that wasn't his wife, if you know what I mean? Is that your wife sir?

LAWRENCE

Not that that's any of your business, but no, not yet. I'm sorry gentlemen but if there's nothing else?

DETECTIVE 2

We apologize for the intrusion; by the way, I noticed your face, miss, is everything OK here?

RAINA

Everything's fine detective, really. Good day.

The detectives look at Lawrence as he closes the door and Raina walks away. She pulls out a CIGARETTE and lights it.

LAWRENCE

I never took you for a smoker.
What's goin' on?

RAINA

What exactly did you mean by *not yet*
when you were talking to the suits?

LAWRENCE

I don't know, why? Didn't you say
something about wanting to talk to
me before they came?

RAINA

It's a couple of things, but you
have to promise me you'll listen to
everything I have to say before you
say anything, OK?

LAWRENCE

OK.

RAINA

Please sit down.

LAWRENCE

Is it that bad?

RAINA

Just sit...remember when I told you
that you don't know me?

LAWRENCE

Yes.

RAINA

Some years ago I was a young kid
running the streets of Oakland,
California. I dropped out of school,
started hanging with the wrong
crowd, taking drugs, you know the
story...well...I ended up trickin' for
money, drugs.

(emotional)

I had a boyfriend that was kinda
like my pimp too. One day I went
back to the room I was renting, I
walked in and saw him having sex

with this girl named Tina; she was supposed to be my best friend. I started screaming, picked up a lamp that was close by and hit him upside his head. He fell back on the bed, Tina ran past me into the night and I haven't seen her since.

LAWRENCE

That doesn't seem so bad.

RAINA

I'm not finished.

LAWRENCE

Sorry.

RAINA

I thought I had just knocked him out and just figured he'd have a bad headache or something when he woke up. Anyway, I had a drink and I took some pills so I could sleep. The next day I tried to wake him and he didn't move. I panicked and called another guy came over and he told me he was dead. We didn't know what to do so we dumped his body in the Bay; we weighed it down with barbells.

Lawrence turns his back to Raina.

RAINA (CONT'D)

I am a murderer Lawrence. I killed him.

There is a long pause as Lawrence stands staring out of a WINDOW.

LAWRENCE

Who else knows about this?

RAINA

I guess Tina and anyone she might have told. The guy that helped me get rid of the body was murdered some time later, and no, I didn't have anything to do with that. Anyway, after that incident, I got myself back in school, went to one of the city colleges, graduated and

applied to law schools on the advice of my counselors and here I am.

LAWRENCE

If you've kept this a secret for so long, why are you telling me now?

RAINA

I needed to let you know who you've been dealing with; I really care about you.

LAWRENCE

Why haven't you gone to the police?

RAINA

Are you serious? The police would investigate and lock me up and throw away the key. I'm sorry for what I did and...I did know that guy in the picture just now; he used to come by every now and then and...

LAWRENCE

...Raina stop.

RAINA

...but I...

LAWRENCE

...don't say another word. Let's talk about this dancing thing.

RAINA

My danci...did you hear everything I just told you?

LAWRENCE

Quit dancing, move in with me, let me take care of you?

RAINA

What about all I told you?

LAWRENCE

What about it?

RAINA

I don't know what to say.

Lawrence moves closer to Raina.

LAWRENCE

Say you'll stop dancing and move in with me.

RAINA

I could fall in love with you.

LAWRENCE

I think I already have.

They kiss.

MONTHS LATER

Establishing shot of a college campus. STUDENTS milling about the grounds.

INT. LAW SCHOOL HALLWAY -- DAY

STUDENTS walking through wide hallways, some talking. A FEMALE STUDENT, 20's, walks up to Raina.

FEMALE STUDENT

Hey girl, congrats on making Law Review.

RAINA

Oh yeah, thanks.

FEMALE STUDENT

Your modesty kills me. You know you're the best, everybody does. Good luck on the bar, and with that gorgeous man that drops you off.

RAINA

Thanks.

Raina turns and walks into DEAN COLLINS, LATE 50's, distinguished and conservatively dressed and ARTHUR SAGE, LATE 50's, casually dressed.

RAINA (CONT'D)

Hello Dean Collins.

DEAN COLLINS

Ms. Brownlee. You're making quite the name for yourself. Law Review, 1st place in Mock Trial again?

RAINA

Just trying to keep up Dean Collins.

DEAN COLLINS

Ms. Brownlee, allow me to introduce...

RAINA

...Arthur Sage of Chrinelis, Sage and Missina. I read that you're stepping into the criminal arena; very ambitious. Excuse my straightforwardness but I would appreciate an opportunity to speak with you about an opportunity in that area.

SAGE

Ms. Brownlee, I've received quite a report from Dean Collins, so I'll see you in my office the Monday after graduation?

RAINA

Are you offering me a job?

SAGE

No, you've already got the job, well, that is unless you have a better offer?

RAINA

No sir! I'll see you in a few weeks...and thank you sir.

SAGE

No, Ms. Brownlee, thank you.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF TOWNHOUSE -- NIGHT

Lawrence and Raina arrive about the same time; Raina greets him with a kiss and she has a bottle of CHAMPANGE in her hand.

LAWRENCE

What's with the bubbly?

RAINA

I got a job.

INT. FAMILY ROOM -- NIGHT

Walking into the townhouse, Raina takes off her shoes and her jacket.

LAWRENCE

Wow! Law Review, graduation and a job?

RAINA

Guess where?

LAWRENCE

Tell me.

RAINA

Chrinelis, Sage and Missina.

LAWRENCE

You mean the stiff guys in those commercials that look like dead people talking?

RAINA

HA HA HA...I'll have the good taste not to mention that my first day.

LAWRENCE

Aren't they solely corporate?

RAINA

They're getting into the criminal arena and it looks like I'll be their associate for that division.

LAWRENCE

That's great! I have a little surprise for you too.

RAINA

Really? And what would that be?

LAWRENCE

Well...

Lawrence sits Raina on the sofa and drops to one knee. Raina tears up. He opens a VELVET POUCH and pulls out a DIAMOND RING and places it on her RING FINGER.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

We haven't been seeing each other that long but since we've been together...

Raina places her fingers to his lips.

RAINA

...yes I'll marry you.

Lawrence and Raina kiss. The scene fades.

MONTHS LATER

Large Boardroom with LAWYERS, various races and ages, men and women are seated around a large conference table.

INT. CHRINELLIS, SAGE AND MISSINA CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

SAGE

...and for the good of the order, our new criminal law associate Mrs. Sarah Pettigrew will be taking on the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Wilson Matter, the case history is in your briefs. If there's nothing else, we're adjourned.

The lawyers all get up to leave. Raina turns to a SECRETARY, 20's, and Arthur Sage.

RAINA

Call the press and inform them of our intentions, the more publicity we generate for this case the better.

SECRETARY

Yes, ma'am.

RAINA

Art, do you think you could run some interference in the mayor's office? I'm going to need all the help I can get.

SAGE

I'm certain I can scare up something.

RAINA

Great, I'm just hoping they're willing to play ball.

SAGE

With you driving this effort I don't think there will be a problem.

RAINA
You're too generous.

SAGE
Good luck.

INT. RESTAURANT IN DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON, DC -- DAY

Lawrence walks in to a restaurant and is greeted by the hostess. He sees Raina and walks over to the table.

RAINA
How are you, my love?

A SERVER, male, walks over and places water at their table.

LAWRENCE
Taking me to lunch?

RAINA
I just wanted to see my husband. Is that a crime?

LAWRENCE
If it is then you're guilty.

RAINA
I'll cop that plea anytime.

LAWRENCE
I can't stay long, I have to get back to the office.

RAINA
I know Baby, me too. Oh, by the way, this is for you.

LAWRENCE
A gift?

RAINA
Don't open it now. I'll see you at home, I'd better run, I've been late once already. Don't open this 'til I'm gone, OK? I love you.

LAWRENCE
I love you too.

Raina walks out. As Raina exits frame, Lawrence opens the bag.

CLOSE UP: SMALL SHOPPING BAG CONTAINING A TINY BABY T-SHIRT

Lawrence smiles as he looks at the baby shirt.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE OF LAWRENCE AND RAINA'S NEW HOME -- EVENING

Establishing shot of a gated community with LARGE HOMES.

TINA, EARLY 30's, VERY SHAPELY AND GHETTO CHIC is sitting on the front stairwell of the Pettigrew home chewing gum. A LUXURY CAR drives up; Tina stands and struts toward the car.

Lawrence nearly runs into another car in his CARPORT staring at her. He steps out of the car.

TINA

Hi, I'm sorry for the intrusion but I figured that Puddin' wouldn't mind.

LAWRENCE

Puddin'?

TINA

Oh, that's what we used to call Sarah back home.

LAWRENCE

Your name is?

TINA

I'm Tina Huey. Me and Sarah go way back.

LAWRENCE

Of course.

TINA

You must be her man.

LAWRENCE

Yes, I'm Lawrence, Sarah's husband. Why don't you come on in? She'll be here soon.

TINA

God, I can't believe Puddin' has a husband; no wonder the weather's been so off.

LAWRENCE

Is she expecting you?

TINA

Not really, I wanted to surprise her, her mother gave me the address. We saw her on Court TV defending that man the system fucked...sorry, you know what I mean. So where's Pudd...ah, Sarah?

INT. GRAND FOYER -- DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Lawrence opens the front door and they walk in.

LAWRENCE

She's gonna be surprised to see you. Come on in...can I get you something?

TINA

I am a little horny...ah, hungry...whew! I think I got jet lag or somethin' but I can wait if you two have a set dinnertime.

LAWRENCE

Then why don't you go and freshen up? There's a towel and washcloth in the guest bedroom suite, it's at the top of the stairs to the right. Make yourself at home.

TINA

Thanks, Lawrence. Can I ask you a question?

LAWRENCE

Sure.

Tina is staring at Lawrence and looks down toward his crotch.

TINA

Damn, how big is your...house?

LAWRENCE

It's about forty-five hundred square feet but it seems much bigger to me. The folks who had it built suddenly couldn't afford to keep it and the bank was falling all over itself to unload it. Not only did we get the house, but we got all of the furnishings too. The company that was decorating finished the job, also at the bank's expense.

TINA

(mumbling)

Lucky bitch.

LAWRENCE

Excuse me?

TINA

Oh, I said, lucky stiff.

LAWRENCE

We were just in the right place at the right time. You know, I don't know what's keeping Raina, she's usually home by now.

TINA

What did you call her?

LAWRENCE

I call her Raina.

TINA

She never did like her name much; she said it made her sound like an old lady. I'm a get out yo' ear and *freshen up*.

LAWRENCE

OK. I'll be in the library if you need something.

TINA

OK. Thanks.

Tina takes off her shoes, heads upstairs, unzipping her short skirt along the way. Lawrence watches.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Lawrence walks over to the phone and dials and hears a BUSY SIGNAL. He hangs up and dials again and hears the same then hangs up.

Tina walks into the kitchen later wearing a BRA with the straps hanging and her skirt hiked up.

LAWRENCE
Something wrong?

TINA
Yeah, this damn bra keeps sticking on me; you'd think a designer bra would be perfect. Could you help me unhook it?

LAWRENCE
I don't think that's such a good idea. Can't you just kinda slip it off or something?

TINA
Lawrence, I'm sure you've seen breasts before. Besides, I'll have my back to you. C'mon, if you hurry I can get back upstairs.

LAWRENCE
OK, turn around.

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND FOYER -- DAY

Raina walks in and sees Lawrence and Tina in a compromising position. She closes the front door loudly.

INT. KITCHEN -- DAY

TINA
Whew! I'm glad these things can breathe.

Lawrence jumps and looks sheepishly at a frowning Raina.

RAINA
I know, I know honey. It's not what it looks like, right?

Raina lunges, slaps Lawrence and loses control.

RAINA (CONT'D)

You bastard!

LAWRENCE

Raina wait, listen...

RAINA

(furious)

No, you listen. I want you and this bitch out of my house! Now!

LAWRENCE

I didn't even know who she was until she came here lookin' for Puddin'! How would I know that?!

TINA

Puddin', it's my fault; I just decided to have a little fun but it was harmless, really. We didn't do nothin' I swear! You know how I go girl; I pressed him to help me with my bra, I swear on my motha!

Raina looks angrily at both of them and walks away. Lawrence walks out of the house and slams the door.

INT. HALLWAY IN FRONT OF MASTER SUITE -- NIGHT

Raina walks Tina down the hallway past the master suite.

RAINA

Tina, what were you thinking about? First, you show up at my house unannounced then you play with my husband? Did you fuck him? Tell me the truth too 'cause I know you.

TINA

Girl please, if you really know me you know you would've walked in on it. He's cute; you still want him? 'Cause I could use a good tightening up.

RAINA

Forget it bitch, now what are you doing here?

TINA

When I saw you on TV all dressed up,
I figured you was doin' big things
so I came out here as soon as I
could. You know, when I walked into
this house and looked around, I felt
like I wanted to start singin', *Said*
we movin' on up, to the east-
siiiiide, to a deluxe department in
the sky hi hi...

RAINA

Would you be quiet? Lawrence is
asleep.

TINA

You wanna two-bag him like we used
to do back in the day?
(cackle laughter)

TINA (CONT'D)

...yeah we movin' oooooonnnnn
uuuuuuuuup, to the east siiiiiide,
we finally got a piece of the pie.

RAINA

Stop it.

TINA

...beans don't burn in the kitchen,
cheese don't stick to the grill...I
dun fucked a whole bunch o' men, a-
just to get up that hill.

RAINA

That's enough Tina.

TINA

Why? You afraid I'll tell Larry boy
about how many mothafuckas was up in
you before he got there? *Now we*
uuuuup in the pig feeeeeet, ain't
gon' lose my stuff...long as you here,
doin' me baby, all we got to do is
fuck. Said we movin' on uuuuup...

RAINA

He already knows about that.

TINA

Bitch you lyin'! If he really knew
what you was really about he'd a

He looks away when Raina walks in.

RAINA
How much did you hear?

LAWRENCE
More than I cared to.

RAINA
Can I talk to you when I get back? I need to take Tina to a hotel.

LAWRENCE
Isn't that like slamming the barn door shut after the horse gets out? What's the harm in letting her stay now?

RAINA
She's caused enough trouble. I'm so sorry about all this.

LAWRENCE
Don't worry about it.

RAINA
I told you none of my news was good. Do you still want me?

LAWRENCE
Don't be ridiculous Raina. I'll be here when you get back.

RAINA
Promise?

LAWRENCE
Sure.

RAINA
I'll be right back.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF PETTIGREW HOME (CARPORT) -- NIGHT

Tina stands smoking a cigarette and offers one to Raina. Raina refuses and points to her BELLY.

TINA
Oh yeah, sorry. I think I had too much to drink from your bar. Where's Lawrence?

RAINA

He's upstairs.

TINA

Whew! Good 'cause I thought he might have heard me.

RAINA

He did.

TINA

Fuck! Girl, I didn't mean nothin' by it, I swear, I was just bein' me.

RAINA

And *you being you* may have cost me my marriage.

TINA

He's a really sweet guy, Puddin'. I don't think he'd leave you over some shit like that. Do you?

RAINA

Forget it; I'll deal with him when I get back.

TINA

He must be pretty mad huh?

RAINA

You think?

TINA

That man loves you girl. It might sting a little right now but he'll be fine, you'll see. So how you been doin' about that thing? I know it's been a long time but I still lose sleep over it.

RAINA

It was a long time ago. I hadn't thought much about it until you showed up. I told Lawrence about it.

TINA

What?! Girl, why would you take that kind of risk? I never told nobody.

RAINA

I had to, but I'm starting to wonder about that now that you're here.

TINA

Look, I didn't come here to start no trouble and I don't want nothin', I just missed seeing you, I mean that. That guy was bad news. You really did a lot of people a favor that night, you know?

RAINA

Did I? What about me? I look at this house, these cars and all the other stuff we have and wonder what it all means; you know, if it all went away tomorrow?

TINA

You talkin' crazy now. If I had a house like this, a fine husband like you have and you about to have his baby? Sounds like a few good things baby-girl. Don't fuck this up 'cause you feelin' bad about some shit that happened a while ago. I told you I never said nothin' to no one and I never will. You're my sister and I love you. Can you ever forgive me for what I did?

RAINA

Now who's talkin' crazy? There's nothing to forgive.

TINA

Puddin', don't do nothin' stupid; just live your life and be happy. You got a good man that *really* loves you.

(pause)

'Cause I don't know too many men that wouldn't have been all over this ass if they had five minutes.

RAINA

You are still wild! I'm gonna miss you, but you have to promise you'll come back out when things calm down.

TINA

You invitin' me back?

Raina reaches in her pocket, pulls out a wad of CASH and hands it to Tina.

RAINA

Oh yeah, and take this.

TINA

Girl I can't take no money from you,
I told you I didn't want nothin'.

RAINA

Listen, do something you've always
wanted; go to school, travel, get
some new clothes, just please, take
it. This is not for your silence;
it's for your future.

TINA

I don't understand.

RAINA

It's OK, just take it, please?

TINA

Alright. So what hotel you takin' me
to? The Ritz-Carlton?

RAINA

Honey, I don't think the Ritz is
quite ready for you?

The two women hug, and they get in a CAR.

INT. PETTIGREW BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Raina returns to find Lawrence asleep and an open BOTTLE OF
BOURBON by the bed.

LAWRENCE

I was about to drown my sorrows, I
guess I fell asleep.

RAINA

I was going to ask you how you
managed to get drunk and not smell
like liquor. I know I have some
explaining to do.

Lawrence places his finger at her lips; she begins to cry then suddenly doubles over in pain.

RAINA (CONT'D)

Lawrence, the baby...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Sun peeks through hospital curtain. Lawrence is curled up in chair, Raina is asleep. A DOCTOR, early 40's, walks in.

DOCTOR

Mr. Pettigrew?

LAWRENCE

Yes, doctor.

DOCTOR

I'm very sorry, Mr. Pettigrew... you'll be able to try again after a while. We'll need to run a few more tests then you can take your wife home. I'm sorry sir.

LAWRENCE

Thanks doctor.

DOCTOR

You bet.

Later that day, Lawrence returns to the room to find PEOPLE going in and out of the room with PDA's and CELL PHONES in hand.

A GROUP OF ATTORNEY'S, young, various races, styles, talking on cell phones, huddling in small groups. Lawrence walks in as she's speaking.

RAINA

...and Dave, I expect that information on my Blackberry in three hours. You'd better not piss before Wilson's a free man, got it? Honey! OK you all can leave now. Wait, one more thing, because you guys did such a great job, party when I get back?

GROUP OF ATTORNEYS

Yeah!

RAINA

OK, see you guys. Thanks for stopping up to see me.

LAWRENCE

War council in room 614? You look as though nothing was wrong with you...but you will *not* be returning to work right away, will you?

RAINA

You don't have to tiptoe around me. My plumbing is fine so we will be trying again, soon. And about Tina...

LAWRENCE

Tina's gone home.

RAINA

I need you to hear me out.

LAWRENCE

Alright.

RAINA

I grew up rough Baby...

LAWRENCE

Raina...

RAINA

...just listen, so you'll truly understand. I've been living with a lifetime of shame and embarrassment so it's past time I got this out.

(pause)

Do you know my own mother doesn't even believe I'm an attorney? She swears I'm the cleaning lady they dressed up and paraded on TV to make the firm look good. Isn't that twisted? I've never been more humiliated in my life. I love you so much and I promise that I'll make you proud of me one day.

LAWRENCE

I'm already proud of you.

INT. PETTIGREW BEDROOM -- DAY

Lawrence is lying down with Raina watching the evening news.
The telephone RINGS, Raina reaches to pick it up.

RAINA

Hello...yes Art, I'm watching right
now...thank you...thank you...yes sir,
I'll see you at the benefit.
Goodnight.

LAWRENCE

Congratulations baby, you did it.

RAINA

I just did my job. That man didn't
deserve thirty years in jail. Honey,
one thing, how many of your folks
are coming to the benefit again?

LAWRENCE

All of them, it's about 26, plus one
guest each.

RAINA

Their tickets have been taken care
of. You think we could actually have
a little fun at one of these things
for a change?

LAWRENCE

I would like that very much.

RAINA

I was thinking, I've danced for you
a dozen times...
(laughing)
but I've never danced *with* you.

LAWRENCE

I would love to dance with you.

RAINA

Yeah, then we could go home and make
a baby.

LAWRENCE

In time darling, in time.

EXT. HOTEL ENTRANCE (STOCK FOOTAGE) - NIGHT

Establishing shot of large hotel entrance.

Lots of WELL-DRESSED PEOPLE exiting limousines, taxis, walking into hotel lobby for fund-raiser.

INT. BALLROOM

Lawrence and Raina hob-knob with the semi-rich, smiling, shaking hands. A HOT DANCE TRACK comes on; Raina grabs Lawrence.

RAINA
Recognize this song?

LAWRENCE
Not really.

RAINA
I danced to this at the club one night you were there. May I have this dance?

LAWRENCE
Come on.

Raina leads Lawrence to the dance floor where they engage in a very sensual up-tempo dance.

A SECURITY OFFICER, 30's burly, dressed in a suit, very deep voice, walks through a CROWD of PEOPLE dancing toward Lawrence and Raina.

They are interrupted after just a few minutes of dancing together. PEOPLE on the dance floor continue dancing around them as they walk off the dance floor.

SECURITY OFFICER
Mr. Pettigrew, I apologize but there's a lady at the door screaming about speaking with you. She said her name is Ms. Johnson?

LAWRENCE
C'mon Honey.

RAINA
What's wrong?

LAWRENCE
Probably Keva.

RAINA
One of your kids?

LAWRENCE

I'm afraid so.

MS. JOHNSON, 40's, heavy West Indian accent, finally sees Lawrence and Raina and calls out to him.

MS. JOHNSON

Mr. Pettigrew! Mr. Pettigrew, thank God! Keva been arrested by de police. I don't know what happened but dem say t'ings lookin' bad. I need your wife to talk to her.

(turning to Raina)

Mrs. Pettigrew, please. I know you're important and handle big case but dis me only daughter. I need your help, I beg you.

Lawrence turns to Raina.

LAWRENCE

There's no telling what this child might have done. Could you talk to her? I'll make some calls, try to find something out.

RAINA

Sure, Baby. Ms. Johnson, we can talk in here.

Raina walks Ms. Johnson into one of the private lounges and sits with her.

Lawrence returns some time later and begins looking for Raina. He sees the security officer standing near one of the exits.

LAWRENCE

Have you seen my wife?

SECURITY OFFICER

Yes sir. She asked me to tell you she took a car back to the house and you should meet her there.

LAWRENCE

That's odd. Did she say anything else?

SECURITY OFFICER

No sir, but she was in pretty bad shape.

LAWRENCE

How so?

SECURITY OFFICER

Well sir, she looked as though she had been crying...and...

LAWRENCE

...and what?

SECURITY OFFICER

She was drunk sir.

LAWRENCE

Drunk?

SECURITY OFFICER

Yes sir.

Lawrence reaches in his pocket and hands the Security Officer MONEY.

LAWRENCE

Thanks, here's a little something for your trouble.

SECURITY OFFICER

Thank you sir.

EXT. LAWRENCE IN AUTO DRIVING HOME AT HIGH SPEED -- NIGHT

LAWRENCE SHOWN JUMPING OUT OF HIS CAR AND RUSHING INTO THE HOUSE AND UPSTAIRS TO HIS BEDROOM.

INT. PETTIGREW BEDROOM -- NIGHT

He sees Raina sprawled out on their bed. He leaves the room, closing the door behind him.

INT. PETTIGREW BEDROOM -- DAY

Lawrence brings TWO CUPS of coffee into the bedroom and hears Raina vomiting violently in the bathroom.

LAWRENCE

Porcelain for breakfast?

RAINA

Fuck off.

LAWRENCE

Hey, hey, I'm sorry. I didn't know you were upset, I just thought you tied one on or something.

RAINA

I'm just not in the joking mood right now. Do you remember the young man that was murdered and incorrectly identified? It caused a big problem for the police department and the families?

LAWRENCE

Yeah, that was a mess. The department really took a hit on that one. How'd they manage to do that anyway?

RAINA

Sloppy police work; a mix-up of fingerprints. The prints they used to identify him were actually the one's they found on the wallet they pulled from his car and not the ones from his own hand. I try not to make such a big deal about things like that, cops are human too.

LAWRENCE

Ain't that the truth; so what did you find out?

RAINA

Ms. Johnson's daughter, Keva, has been charged with Kyle Jefferson's murder. It's bad Baby. She's going to need the very best representation she can get.

LAWRENCE

Ms. Johnson can't afford a lawyer so she's probably going to have to go with the PD.

RAINA

Keva wouldn't stand a chance. I'm gonna take the case pro bono. Look at this house, these things, can't we give some of it back? The U.S.

Attorney's Office is going for the death penalty. She's only 16!

LAWRENCE
What about the firm?

RAINA
I'll have to meet with them but I'm sure they won't have a problem. I'll need foundation help, though.

LAWRENCE
Anything.

RAINA
I need a team of folks to run errands, make calls, things like that. Think you could find me three good people?

LAWRENCE
Count me as number one.

MONTHS LATER

INT. COURTROOM

The courtroom is crowded, COURT OFFICERS, burly, are ushering onlookers to their seats. EVERETT CINTRON, 40's, prosecuting attorney is seated, looking over at KEVA WASHINGTON, late teens, who is without counsel.

The COURT CLERK, 30's, JUDGE, 50's and BAILIFF, 40's burly, appear in the scene as well as a large GALLERY AUDIENCE.

COURT CLERK
Docket Number 21A, U.S. v. Washington!

CINTRON
Everett Cintron, U.S. Attorney's Office.

JUDGE
Young lady, do you have representation?

Raina walks through the doors as he speaks and stands next to Keva.

RAINA

Sarah Pettigrew, Chrinelis, Sage and Missina for the defense, Your Honor. I apologize for my late arrival.

JUDGE

Forget it. Why didn't someone tell me the superbowl had come to my courtroom? Applications?

CINTRON

Your Honor, we've agreed to a short date and I'd like the defendant held without bail due to the nature of the crime.

RAINA

Your Honor we have yet to see what the prosecution is proffering.

CINTRON

Wait 'til you see the photos, they're a killer.

RAINA

That was unnecessary.

CINTRON

So was her crime.

JUDGE

Approach.

The attorney's step forward for a sidebar.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

We're on display folks, cameras in the courtroom, you know, a la People V. Simpson. We need to be on our best behavior, now play nice.

RAINA

Your Honor, he's trying to sandbag my client and me and we're not even out of the gate yet.

CINTRON

Your Honor, I'm not going to stand here and be insulted by this over-paid associate. Your strong-arming to free that raping murderer Wilson is gonna come back to bite you.

JUDGE

That's enough you two. Now get back
to your places

The attorney's step back to their respective TABLES.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

...regarding bail, I have to tell you
Mrs. Pettigrew that I'm really
against it and that's primarily for
the safety of the defendant. She's
alleged to have killed an alleged
drug dealer and corrections is very
concerned all the way around. I'll
place her in protective custody and
you'll have total access Mrs.
Pettigrew. Any objections Mr.
Cintron?

CINTRON

No, Your Honor, she can get used to
the cell before she gets the needle.

RAINA

Your Honor!

JUDGE

Mr. Cintron, that was grossly
inappropriate! I won't have that in
my courtroom, do you understand?

CINTRON

Yes Your Honor.

RAINA

Sanctions Your Honor?

JUDGE

Approach...listen you two. It's an
honor and privilege to have you both
in my court but make no mistake
about it; you'll be sharing a cell
downstairs if you keep it up. Got
it?

RAINA AND CINTRON

Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE

Good.

WEEKS LATER

The COURTROOM GALLERY is full, Raina and Cintron are at their places as the JURORS, various ages, races, file in.

The BAILIFF, 30's burly, uniformed, announces the judge.

BAILIFF

All rise! Judge Pablo Cuevas presiding.

JUDGE

Be seated. We're here in the matter of The United States of America vs. Keva Wendy Washington on the charge of murder in the first degree with special circumstances. Mr. Cintron, would you care to make your opening statement?

CINTRON

Yes, Your Honor. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury; allow me to introduce the person you'll be convicting in a few weeks. The well-dressed young lady at the table over there is called the defendant. Oh, I'm sorry, it's not the one sitting closest to you...

RAINA

Your Honor?

JUDGE

Do I have to say anything?

CINTRON

My apologies to my capable and learned counsel. Back to the person you'll be convicting; I won't be like others and just call her *the defendant* because she has a name and I want you to remember it; it's Keva Wendy Washington, go ahead, write it down if you need to because Miss Washington killed a one Kyle David Jefferson, he's the victim in this case. He was killed in one of the most frightening manners many people in my office have ever seen and we've seen a lot. So you see ladies

and gentlemen, Keva Washington is no victim as she claims. She's an admitted drug abuser, school dropout, prostitute...

RAINA

Objection!

CINTRON

...to my opening? Your honor?

JUDGE

Over-ruled, continue Mr. Cintron.

CINTRON

Prostitute, yes. Don't look so surprised! When a woman sells her body for money, drugs or favors, she's a prostitute. Now she can add murderer to her long list of crimes but I need something from you. I need you to see beyond the David Copperfield-esque dramatizations my opponent will use to flip the script, as the homeboys say...

(flashing a gang
sign)

Raina whispers to Keva.

RAINA

Now you listen good baby, I know this is hard, but you have to keep your head up and do not react when he says things, it'll just make you look guilty.

KEVA

OK. I understand.

CINTRON

(animated)

...it's almost not fair; they don't have to prove anything beyond a reasonable doubt, like we do. They don't have to offer a rhyme or reason and if she doesn't want to, Miss Washington doesn't even have to testify. All they have to do is raise reasonable doubt. They could say, hmm, here's one, the dog ate my

evidence, reasonable doubt; or, the
check's in the mail, reasonable
doubt; or how about, I'll call you
baby...reasonable doubt...

The gallery erupts with spontaneous LAUGHTER. Raina's face
shows disgust. The judge BANGS his gavel to restore order.

CINTRON (CONT'D)

...but once you've heard all of the
evidence, the facts, the truth,
you'll return a verdict of guilty.

JUDGE

Mrs. Pettigrew, do you wish to open
now or during your case in chief?

RAINA

Your Honor, if it please the court,
I wish to hold my opening.

JUDGE

First witness, Mr. Cintron?

CINTRON

I call Dr. Hal Uriba to the stand.

A modestly dressed man, DR. URIBA, 60's, walks through the
rear doors, is sworn in and sits down on the witness stand.

CINTRON (CONT'D)

Good morning, Doctor. How would you
characterize the defendant?

DR. URIBA

Miss Washington was quite
interesting to speak with, when she
spoke. She exhibited signs of two
well-known disorders but seemed well
aware of her circumstances and the
serious consequences she faces.

CINTRON

So she knows what's up?

RAINA

Objection.

CINTRON

Withdrawn. Doctor, what are these
two disorders and did they play a

pivotal role in this crime she committed?

RAINA

Objection, leading, speculative, assumes facts not in evidence.

CINTRON

Never mind. Doctor, please tell us these disorders and give us the layman's version please.

DR. URIBA

Certainly. The first was Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. ADHD, as the first one is better known, manifests itself in many different ways and to the untrained eye, one might consider such behaviors as normal.

CINTRON

Please continue Doctor.

DR. URIBA

Miss Washington was anxious, seemed to want to get up every few moments or so and seemed very distracted; losing focus each and every time she was asked to perform a task or follow a command. Oppositional Defiant Disorder is also quite difficult to understand, but is often seen in children her age.

RAINA

Objection to the characterization, *children*.

JUDGE

Over-ruled.

DR. URIBA

It is often seen in young people like Miss Washington in the teen years. They will generally disobey the commands, orders and directives of adults, of superiors and repeatedly lose their tempers. I measured Ms. Washington's level of

ODD as nominal, meaning not easily detected clinically.

CINTRON

Let me get this straight; she didn't follow your commands, directions and so on. So would you say that these factors contributed to the death of Kyle Jefferson?

RAINA

Objection! He's trying to slip one past and I request the jury be admonished.

CINTRON

It goes to the defendant's state of mind, Your Honor.

JUDGE

No, Mr. Cintron, ask another question.

CINTRON

No thank you, I'm done.

JUDGE

Mrs. Pettigrew?

RAINA

Good day, Doctor, what is the DSM IV?

DR. URIBA

The DSM IV is the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. There is an indicator inventory and an explanation of each listed condition, very similar to that of a medical doctor's handy guide or the penal code you use.

RAINA

Well said, Doctor. Are the two disorders you mentioned in the DSM IV?

DR. URIBA

They are, yes.

RAINA

You mentioned my client being edgy, not wanting to answer questions, seeming not to be paying any attention. When exactly was your interview with her?

DR. URIBA

I believe it was one week after she was arrested.

RAINA

Which is close to the time the incident occurred, isn't that right?

DR. URIBA

Yes, I believe so.

RAINA

Doctor, what does PTSD stand for?

CINTRON

Objection.

JUDGE

Over-ruled, the witness may answer.

DR. URIBA

PTSD is an acronym for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. It is usually diagnosed in those who have been in particularly traumatic or violent situations.

RAINA

...like a rape?

CINTRON

Objection, speculation, assumes facts not in evidence...pandering.

JUDGE

The histrionics don't help, Mr. Cintron. Over-ruled.

DR. URIBA

Yes.

RAINA

Nothing further, thank you Doctor.

JUDGE

Re-direct?

CINTRON

Do people that suffer from these common symptoms just start torturing and killing folks?

RAINA

Objection, argumentative.

JUDGE

Over-ruled.

RAINA

Your Honor?

JUDGE

It's a little unorthodox but the witness may answer the question.

DR. URIBA

No, not generally.

CINTRON

Then would you agree that people that suffer from these disorders and commit capitol crimes often suffer more serious disorders and are in fact in an elite group of mentally ill individuals?

DR. URIBA

That's a unique categorization, but I would have to agree, yes.

CINTRON

Nothing further.

Raina sits at the defense table clutching her PENCIL.

Jurors glare at Keva.

EXT. COURTHOUSE STEPS -- DAY

Reporters have gathered, awaiting the attorney's. Raina emerges and they immediately begin SHOUTING questions. One reporter pushes forward.

REPORTER 3

Mrs. Pettigrew, I wasn't aware that
Chrinelis, Sage and Missina defended
hookers?!

RAINA

Who said that?

REPORTER 3

I did. Harry Gilman of the World
Beat Commentator.

RAINA

Mr. Gilman, it's a pleasure to make
your acquaintance. Thank you so much
for showing us your sensitivities.
I'm certain that your wife and
mother would be proud of the
language you just used to identify a
young girl who's been raped. The
women of America should rest easy
knowing that your odious, visceral
diatribes await them if they've been
victimized and you happen to be
anywhere nearby. Good day ladies and
gentlemen.

Other reporters HOWL as Raina walks away. Lawrence is
holding Raina by the arm as they walk down the street away
from the courthouse.

LAWRENCE

Are you OK?

RAINA

I'm fine but I'm concerned. How am
I gonna defend this girl against all
this? I'm just one person.

LAWRENCE

Don't worry Baby, you'll get your
chance and when you do, you'll take
him down.

RAINA

Yeah, but at what cost?

LAWRENCE

What do you mean by that?

RAINA

No matter who wins the case, neither of us are gonna really win this.

LAWRENCE

I don't follow you.

RAINA

Remember the last Ali-Frazier fight? The two men fought to damn near their last breath and after that, neither man was right again, they left it all in the ring that day. That's how this feels already and it's just the first day.

LAWRENCE

Let's cross that bridge when we get to it. Don't worry yourself about that now; looks like our time is about up, court will be back in session shortly.

INT. COURTROOM

Ms. Johnson is speaking with a REPORTER, 30's, notepad in hand, trial watchers are milling about, waiting for court to begin.

Cintron is seated at his table with his head down. Raina is looking over. They make eye contact, he nods affirmatively and Raina responds in kind.

BAILIFF

All rise!

JUDGE

Be seated. Mr. Cintron.

CINTRON

You Honor I call Sergeant James Williams to the stand.

SERGEANT WILLIAMS, 50's, slim, glasses, walks toward the witness stand. He is sworn in and takes his seat.

CINTRON (CONT'D)

Sgt. Williams, I only have a few questions for you; are you responsible for the photographs we've seen in court today?

SGT. WILLIAMS

I am.

CINTRON

How long were you at the scene?

SGT. WILLIAMS

A few hours.

CINTRON

A few as in two?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Yes, about two hours.

CINTRON

When you arrived, did you notice anything unusual?

RAINA

Objection, leading.

CINTRON

Moving on. Sgt. Williams, how many crime scenes have you photographed in your career?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Too many to remember, but I would say hundreds.

CINTRON

Hundreds. I'm showing you some photographs, marked People's Two for identification. Are these the photos you took?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Yeah, most of them.

Raina looks up and stares at Sgt. Williams.

CINTRON

Your Honor, would you direct the witness to answer the question either yes or no?

JUDGE

Stick with the facts as they are presented to you Sergeant.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Yes, those are the pictures.

CINTRON

And how long did it take to process these photos after you took them?

SGT. WILLIAMS

I processed them right away but I think there might have been more.

CINTRON

Move to strike as non-responsive.

JUDGE

Sgt. Williams, please answer only what you're being asked, the jury will disregard.

CINTRON

I have enough, your honor.

Raina sits up straight in her chair and feverishly jots down notes as Cintron walks over to her.

CINTRON (CONT'D)

Wait until you see what I have saved up for rebuttal. If you want to talk plea now is the time while I'm feeling charitable. Who knows, it just might save your pathetic client and your miserable career.

RAINA

Save it for the cameras.

JUDGE

Mrs. Pettigrew?

RAINA

Sergeant, approximately how many pictures do you take at a crime scene?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Usually about one or two rolls.

RAINA

How many photographs is that?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Depending on the size and scope of the crime scene, there may be as few as twenty-four, or as many as sixty, possibly more.

RAINA

So do you take pictures on your own or are you directed to do so by a superior or a lead detective?

CINTRON

Objection!

JUDGE

Yes, Mr. Cintron?

CINTRON

Never mind your honor.

RAINA

Are you going to allow him to get away with that?

JUDGE

Get on with it Mrs. Pettigrew.

RAINA

Sergeant, How do you know what pictures to take and how many?

CINTRON

Objection, asked and...oh, he didn't answer, did he?

RAINA

Your Honor?!

JUDGE

You're in contempt Mr. Cintron, get out your checkbook. That'll be \$500. Next one will be a thousand; *you know what I'm saying*, since you like to quote the homeboys.

The gallery erupts with LAUGHTER as Cintron writes a check and passes it to the court clerk. Judge bangs GAVEL.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

The witness will answer.

SGT. WILLIAMS

I forgot the question.

The gallery LAUGHS again.

JUDGE

Court clerk, could you read back the question for the witness?

COURT CLERK

Sergeant, how do you know what pictures to take and how many?

SGT. WILLIAMS

I usually take shots of the entire area then await further instructions from the lead detectives or CSI.

RAINA

CSI?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Yes, ma'am, crime scene investigators, like the TV show.

RAINA

Nothing further, Your Honor but request an opportunity to recall.

JUDGE

Granted. For clarification, you wish to recall the mail carrier that testified and this gentleman correct?

RAINA

Correct.

JUDGE

It's late in the day and there are a few other matters that require my attention. Since its Friday, we're going to adjourn early and be back here bright and early Monday Morning. We're adjourned.

Everyone gets up and leaves. Keva is allowed to hug her mom before returning to her cell.

Lawrence and Raina walk out to a huge media crush.

INT. PETTIGREW HOME -- DAY

The next day, Lawrence looks out of his window and sees news vans and satellite trucks parked on his lawn.

He walks downstairs to investigate and hears Raina in her LIBRARY.

 RAINA (O.S.)
 (screaming)
 Oh my God! No! Not this, not now!

 LAWRENCE
 Raina, what?!

 RAINA
 Look!

Raina shows Lawrence a print-out off of a TV news website. It is a PICTURE of her as a stripper.

Local news runs GRAINY VIDEOTAPE of one of her performances.

Lawrence goes to the front door and picks up the newspaper and it has the caption under Raina in a provocative pose, "TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE".

PHOTOGRAPHERS begin snapping pictures of a surprised Lawrence.

The picture of Raina is of her in a cut-off t-shirt and a g-string. Lawrence quickly walks in and closes the door.

 RAINA (CONT'D)
 (ad lib, crying)

He walks over to Raina and holds her.

INT. PETTIGREW LIBRARY -- DAY

 RAINA
 I'm ruined. I should've known
 something like this would happen.

 LAWRENCE
 I know this is difficult, but you
 can't give up now.

 RAINA
 Are you listening to yourself? Look
 at these pictures.

Doorbell rings. Lawrence rushes to answer. Ms. Johnson is standing at the door, he opens it and hears a throng of

REPORTERS, various news agencies, shouting questions about Raina.

LAWRENCE

Ms. Johnson?

MS. JOHNSON

How's your wife?

LAWRENCE

Not good. You might want to be in on the discussion.

MS. JOHNSON

I came as soon as I heard, I knew someone was gonna do some dirty trick.

RAINA

I'm sorry, Ms. Johnson, I'm so ashamed.

MS. JOHNSON

Ashamed? Of what? What did you do wrong? Nothin'. But you need to do something, you can't just say nothing.

LAWRENCE

...and I know just the thing to do.

Lawrence goes to the front door and walks out to face the LIGHTS, PEOPLE SHOUTING and CAMERAS FLASHING.

EXT. FRONT OF PETTIGREW HOME -- DAY

LAWRENCE

Ladies and gentlemen; as you have become aware, my wife is indeed the person you've been reporting about. While we are surprised of this development at such a critical time in Keva Washington's trial, we would like to offer you an opportunity to get the full story but we will need time to prepare. We will be in touch regarding the location and time. Thank you.

Reporters begin SHOUTING questions as Lawrence shuts the door behind him.

INT. MAIN FOYER -- DAY

An angry Raina confronts Lawrence.

RAINA

Have you lost your goddamn mind?!

LAWRENCE

Do you trust me?

RAINA

What?

LAWRENCE

Do you trust me?

Raina calms suddenly and stares into Lawrence's eyes.

RAINA

Yeah, sure. I trust you.

LAWRENCE

Raina, do you trust me?

RAINA

Yes, Baby, yes, I do.

LAWRENCE

If we give them what they want, there won't be anywhere else for them to go. Tell the story of why you started dancing, better yet, tell our story. Talk about law school and paying your bills. Tell them of how many girls you personally paid tuition for to go back to school long after you'd left the place. Your reputation as an attorney isn't tarnished because you stripped, but you have to respond fast or those guys out there will nail you to the cross.

MS. JOHNSON

You got a good man, a smart man. You're blessed, me dear. Him have a point; if you tell it all now, no one else has nothing to say. Don't quit on me daughter and don't quit on yourself.

RAINA

Right down there, that's where Lawrence always sat. He came in here often, usually to see me. He always managed to get my attention and tipped me well, but he was different.

INTERVIEWER

How so?

RAINA

He was always exceedingly polite, never groped at me and didn't ask me for a number, he was just so nice and I wanted to know more about him so I had to break the ice; I invited myself out to dinner with him one night.

INTERVIEWER

Was that your first date?

RAINA

Actually yes and we began a relationship a short time later. Subsequently, I quit dancing *at his urging*, finished school, married him, passed the bar and the rest is history.

INTERVIEWER

You are a rising star in the firm of Chrinelis, Sage and Missina, one of the oldest, most respected law firms in the city and might I add, well known for its far right conservative edge. We spoke with one of the partners a short while before this interview and here's what he had to say.

INT. CHRINELIS, SAGE AND MISSINA OFFICES -- DAY (TAPED)

INTERVIEWER

Now that this revelation regarding one of your firm's top performers has come to light, how does the firm respond?

SAGE

We are not concerned with Mrs. Pettigrew's past life. Sarah is an individual of high moral character and integrity and we stand behind her. She's a superb attorney and we wish her and her husband well during what must be a very difficult time for them. But she need not worry about her place in this firm, not at all.

INT. STRIP CLUB

Back to the live interview. Raina is emotional.

INTERVIEWER

Why are you crying?

Raina pauses.

RAINA

All of this has taken a heavy toll on my husband and me.

INTERVIEWER

You and your husband lost a child recently. How's your health? And how's he doing through all of this?

RAINA

My health is fine and we're definitely going to try again. My husband...

INTERVIEWER

Do you need a moment?

RAINA

(sobbing)

No...thank you...my husband is a wonderful man, period...period.

Lawrence turns away and sobs quietly.

INTERVIEWER

Mrs. Pettigrew, is there anything you'd like to say to young women out there who, for some reason, might be feeling betrayed or just stunned by all of this?

RAINA

I've done some things I'm not proud of, things I'm ashamed of, but this is not one of them. I made the conscious decision to dance here at an age well above twenty-five when most girls that come through here are just turning eighteen. I put myself through law school, met my husband here and he's a kind, gentle and faithful man that loves me. I didn't let my past circumstances define my future and neither should anyone else.

INTERVIEWER

Mrs. Pettigrew, Monday morning will be very interesting I'm certain. Thank you and good luck to you.

MONDAY MORNING

INT. COURTROOM

BAILIFF

Remain seated and come to order, the Honorable Pablo Cuevas presiding.

The courtroom is full and HUSHED. All eyes are on the judge as he walks to the BENCH. He sits down and TURNS his CHAIR toward the JURY BOX.

JUDGE

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, while you are routinely admonished regarding television and news coverage, it was virtually impossible to miss the massive amount of media attention this case has generated. This past weekend, someone with an agenda unbeknownst to this court, decided to deride and beleaguer an individual for whom I have the greatest respect and admiration. In spite of what must have been intense personal pressure, Mrs. Pettigrew has shown the kind of professionalism and class that befits her growing stature in the legal community and the community at large. I bristle at the notion that

anyone would make an issue of something as innocuous as the one leaked to the media. This situation could have jeopardized the future of the defendant if her counsel was unable to continue. My comments are not in support of Mrs. Pettigrew's case nor in defense of her client, Miss Washington. I am merely offering these comments to put the matter to rest. No one is to make inferences or judgments regarding effectiveness of defense counsel no matter how titillating or tempting. Mrs. Pettigrew, are you ready to begin your case?

Raina stands tall.

RAINA

I am Your Honor.

The gallery erupts with applause. Cintron leads the courtroom in a STANDING OVATION for an embarrassed Raina.

Judge bangs his gavel to quiet the court.

RAINA (CONT'D)

I thank you, all of you, for your concern of me but this case is not about me. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, do we know where our teenage children really are when they leave us to go to school or out with friends? Who are their friends? What do they do? Are they drinking? Are there drugs around? Are they having sex? Ms. Johnson, my client's mother wondered the same thing each and every time her daughter, Keva, went out. Unfortunately, as will happen with some young people, Keva got herself into some trouble.

Jurors eyes focused on Raina, who is standing directly in front of them POINTING to Keva frequently.

RAINA (CONT'D)

But ladies and gentlemen, there is another victim in this case. Keva Wendy Washington is a victim in the

rawest sense of the word. We have DNA evidence to prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that several men raped and sodomized her during the same incident when Kyle Jefferson was brutally murdered. I know that's hard to hear but imagine what she went through. She watched helplessly as her friend was beaten to death and shot, then she's beaten and raped repeatedly by several men. You know, I was wondering why my client was arrested and not given proper medical attention but Mr. Cintron wouldn't tell you that, would he? I have pictures too.

Members of the JURY stare intently at Raina.

RAINA (CONT'D)

You will view defensive wounds, rips and tears in her vagina and anus. But no, the prosecution claims that we'll try to pull the wool over your eyes, but we're not going to even attempt something like that; we don't have to. All we need to do is find a reasonable doubt in their case, which will not be hard. Opposing counsel will use everything in his arsenal to try and seal Keva inside of a concrete mound of circumstantial evidence that we've already begun chiseling away. Please wait until you hear *all* of the evidence in this case and let's send Keva back home to Ms. Johnson, who, after this, will never again have to worry about where her daughter is. Thank you.

INT. PETTIGREW HOME LIBRARY -- NIGHT

Lawrence walks into Raina's home library where she is reading. They greet each other.

LAWRENCE

Hi, Baby. Sorry I couldn't stay in court but your opening was spectacular. How'd everything else go?

RAINA

I guess you haven't heard the news.

LAWRENCE

What now?

RAINA

Nothing really. Cintron just destroyed every witness I called. I'm down to my last two already and that includes Keva. The last witness I called today, one of Keva's teachers, purgered herself in open court. She changed her story three times when Cintron bullied her on cross about her divorce. Turns out that the woman lied about her husband abusing her child to gain an advantage, so she caved in like a bad soufflé.

LAWRENCE

Cintron's a jerk.

RAINA

No, Cintron's winning.

LAWRENCE

So what now?

RAINA

I need a miracle; I can't put Keva on the stand.

Lawrence and Raina fall asleep on a chair in the living room while watching TV.

She jumps up and begins scrambling around.

INT. PETTIGREW LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

RAINA

Baby, wake up! Help me find this paper.

LAWRENCE

What paper? What?!

RAINA

I don't know! Damn! It...it looks like a spreadsheet of some kind...no, more like a grocery list.

LAWRENCE

You mean like this?

Lawrence hands Raina a sheet of PAPER.

RAINA

Gotcha!

INT. COURTROOM

People are milling about in the courtroom; the jurors are filing in as court is about to reconvene.

KEVA

Mrs. Pettigrew?

RAINA

Yes, Keva.

KEVA

I swear, if I make it through this I'm gonna change my life for good. No more boys, drinking, drugs, I'm done with all that. I'm gonna go back to school. I'm so sorry I put you and momma through this.

RAINA

You're a lot like I was growing up, but a lot more courageous. You're here, facing down these charges. You're standing up. Me? Well, let's just say I didn't have the same guts you do. I admire you.

KEVA

Thank you Mrs. Pettigrew.

RAINA

I mean it, baby. Now sit up tall, we're about to start.

JUDGE

Mrs. Pettigrew?

RAINA

Thank you, Your Honor. I re-call
Sergeant Williams to the stand.

Sgt. Williams walks slowly up to the WITNESS STAND.

JUDGE

Sergeant, you've already been sworn.
Go ahead Mrs. Pettigrew.

RAINA

Thank you. Sergeant Williams, when
we last spoke we talked about
pictures, do you remember that?

SGT. WILLIAMS

I do, yes.

RAINA

Do you also remember that we talked
about how many pictures you take at
a crime scene and who decides what
pictures are taken? Remember that?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Yes, I remember.

RAINA

Do you remember how many pictures
you took the night you were called
to photograph the body of the victim
in this case, Kyle Jefferson?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Oh, yes. I remember very well
because I had to leave and come
back.

Raina is surprised by his answer and spins around, Cintron
seems concerned as he stops WRITING and looks up.

RAINA

Why is that?

SGT. WILLIAMS

I had to leave twice. First, I left
because I needed more film so I ran
out to the car to get another few
rolls.

RAINA

How many rolls did you bring initially?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Just one. I'd usually have one in the camera and have a second one on me, but I didn't that night. I bring extra because you never know which photographs are going to be most useful in an investigation.

RAINA

And the second time, why did you leave?

SGT. WILLIAMS

I was feeling ill when I saw the crime scene and I had to get out of there.

RAINA

You're an experienced photographer, an experienced forensic photographer. Why did you feel ill?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Well...

RAINA

Yes, Sergeant?

SGT. WILLIAMS

Well, I just looked around at all of the blood that was everywhere and the victim and thought there was no way that little girl did all of that.

CINTRON

Objection! Move to strike! Move to strike and please instruct the jury to disregard his entire answer! Your Honor, he's in no position to make judgments!

MURMURS fill the gallery. The judge BANGS his gavel repeatedly.

JUDGE

Objection sustained. Jury will disregard the Sergeant's entire

answer and it must not be a part of any deliberations once this case is completed. Sergeant, please stick to the facts of the case.

SGT. WILLIAMS
Yes, Your Honor.

RAINA
Sergeant, how many photographs did you take that night?

SGT. WILLIAMS
I believe it was 45.

RAINA
You believe. Don't you know?

CINTRON
Badgering, Your Honor, asked and answered.

JUDGE
I'm going to sustain the objection, move along Mrs. Pettigrew.

RAINA
How do you know how many photos you take at a crime scene?

SGT. WILLIAMS
I keep a log of each crime scene and the photos taken. How many frames shot and how many useful photographs are yielded from each roll.

RAINA
You mean like this grocery-like listing of each shot?

CINTRON
Your Honor, Mrs. Pettigrew is re-trying my case, its labeled People's Two in the log. Where are we going with this?

JUDGE
You've been heard Mr. Cintron. Mrs. Pettigrew, are you going forward or backward with this line of questioning?

RAINA

Both, Your Honor. Mr. Cintron presented the log, marked People's Two and showed a few of the photographs but because they were so horrific no one actually saw them all. Sergeant Williams took sixty frames that night that yielded forty-five useful prints, only of which thirty have been presented to this court.

CINTRON

Defense counsel is not the gatekeeper of evidence Your Honor, photographic or otherwise. We chose the best photographs from the lot...

RAINA

...you mean the best photographs that would convict my client. Something stinks here.

CINTRON

Yeah, it's your case.

RAINA

You know, I've had just about enough of your...

JUDGE

Approach!

An animated and angry SIDEBAR takes place in the presence of the jury. There is a dull MURMUR from the gallery.

They return to their respective tables.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Mrs. Pettigrew?

RAINA

Your Honor, the defense requests a recess until this court conducts an investigation into the matter of the missing photographs not turned in for discovery by the prosecution. We believe there are photographs that may exonerate my client and were excluded because of their probative value to the defense. Further, we

are requesting time to have the photographs examined by our experts and to be allowed to have these individuals added to the witness list, if necessary. We welcome Mr. Cintron's cross but only after we've received time to prepare.

CINTRON

You Honor for this court to even consider such a request would be outrageous.

JUDGE

Mr. Cintron, wait your turn to wear this robe, now give me the law.

CINTRON

I can assure you they were not excluded in some criminal wrongdoing by my office as defense counsel suggests. We submitted the available photographs in good faith according to the rules of discovery. They may very well be double exposures or just poor prints...

RAINA

...neither of which we have seen Your Honor. It's unfair to ask this young girl who I might add, is on trial for her very life, to sit and not be given every conceivable opportunity to be acquitted of a crime she clearly did not commit.

CINTRON

Objection, counsel's testifying.

JUDGE

The jury will disregard the last statement by defense counsel. One more like that out of either of you and your spouses will be bringing your dinner to lock-up. Understood? Now, is it possible, Mr. Cintron, to have these photographs delivered to Mrs. Pettigrew by close of business today?

CINTRON

I would imagine so, Your Honor;
we'll have the photos to her at some
point.

RAINA

Your Honor, please. Again, I remind
you my client is on trial for her
life and *at some point* is just
unacceptable.

JUDGE

I would have to agree. I order the
missing photos from People's Exhibit
Two be placed in the hands of
defense counsel immediately. Mrs.
Pettigrew, I will further grant your
motion for a recess until next week;
that gives you time for a look and
chat with your experts. Anything
else? Court is adjourned.

Judge BANGS his gavel and reporters scramble. Keva stands
and glares at Cintron.

Raina escorts an angry and tearful Keva out of the courtroom
toward her cell.

KEVA

Would he really do that?

RAINA

Do what baby?

KEVA

Hide evidence that could free me! He
would do that to me?! Why?!

RAINA

Calm down, I can't answer that baby,
but I'll get to the bottom of it.

KEVA

Oh!

RAINA

What's wrong Keva?

Keva vomits in a nearby TRASHCAN.

INT. INTERIOR HALLWAY

Raina is escorting Keva along with a FEMALE CORRECTION OFFICER, African American, 20's uniform.

RAINA (CONT'D)

You OK?

KEVA

I feel a little sick. I've never been through anything like this before.

RAINA

You went through a lot. Try to get some rest; I'll be back a bit later. You want me to bring you something?

KEVA

Some cookies. I like Oreo cookies.

RAINA

I'll bring a huge bag and we'll pig out, just don't tell my husband.

KEVA

OK. You know, I was wondering why Mr. Cintron never mentioned the fight?

RAINA

I guess it wasn't relevant or helpful to his case. I'll see you later.

Raina turns and begins walking toward the door leading away from the cells. She stops suddenly and turns to see the guard about to close Keva's cell door.

RAINA (CONT'D)

Wait! Wait a second...what fight?

KEVA

There was a fight that night. I thought you already knew?

RAINA

No, tell me what you remember, we can do the cookies later.

KEVA

I was hanging out with Kyle and we were drinking. We went to this hotel

room he had and I was gonna have sex with him. A few of his friends showed up a little while later; I thought it was kinda fun at first 'cause they all wanted me but things got out of control when this one guy wanted to do something else to me.

RAINA

Like what?

KEVA

He wanted to go in my other place and I wasn't doin' that.

RAINA

Your other place?

KEVA

He wanted to have anal sex and I said no, that's when he slapped me and all hell broke loose. Kyle punched him and another guy grabbed me and held me down and they did whatever they wanted. The guy I went there with...

RAINA

...Jefferson?

KEVA

Yeah, Kyle; he tried to help me but they beat me up real bad then they turned on him then they raped me. That's all I know.

RAINA

Why didn't you tell me all of this before?

KEVA

I'm sorry, but it was hard to remember everything, besides it's the same thing I told the man that came to the hospital.

RAINA

What man?

KEVA

This man, I don't think it was Cintron, but he kinda looked like him. He was hanging around and even burst in while I was being checked; I was so embarrassed.

RAINA

What kinds of things did he ask you?

KEVA

Just about everything you did, but he also asked about the fight and how many people were involved. I told him everything I could remember.

RAINA

OK, Keva. That's good, baby, that's real good.

INT. PETTIGREW HOME -- NIGHT

Raina rushes into her library. She picks up the phone and listens to messages.

LAWRENCE

How's Keva?

RAINA

She's gonna be fine. She told me something that could break this thing wide open.

LAWRENCE

How reliable is her word?

RAINA

We'll see.

LAWRENCE

But even if she's sure that's not proof.

RAINA

No, but I know how to get it.

ONE WEEK LATER

INT. COURTROOM

People are standing around. Raina notices the clock and the fact that court is late getting started.

She turns to Keva.

RAINA

We're usually the last ones in the courtroom, something's up.

KEVA

Like what? Everyone's here right?

Raina notices that Cintron is missing from the PROSECUTION TABLE but his BRIEFCASE is there.

RAINA

Not quite.

BAILIFF

Mrs. Pettigrew, the judge would like to see you in chambers.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS -- DAY

Cintron and another man are seated. The judge is standing near his book wall, smoking a pipe.

A man, SAMUEL HADEN, 50's, private investigator, trench coat, glasses, is seated in one of the chairs.

JUDGE

Mrs. Pettigrew.

RAINA

Your Honor.

JUDGE

Mr. Cintron has something he'd like to say.

CINTRON

Have a seat counselor.

RAINA

No thank you, what's going on?

CINTRON

This is Samuel Haden; he worked for me and was responsible for the collection of the photographic evidence that would be presented in

court. After a lengthy discussion he admitted to having purposely left the missing photos out. I had long since explained to him that it may cost us the case and his job if there was another problem like this.

RAINA

Another problem?

JUDGE

The Wymar Case. Mr. Haden made some evidence disappear in that case too and paid a heavy fine.

RAINA

So you're telling me that this man, on his own, decided not to include the photographs I requested to see?

CINTRON

Yes, and I apologize. He's being brought up on charges.

RAINA

Wait a minute Everett, hold it. I have a question or two, may I Your Honor?

JUDGE

By all means.

RAINA

Everett, did you send someone from your office to the hospital when you learned of what happened to Keva?

CINTRON

I don't know anything about that. All we did was catch this case.

RAINA

The log in your office states you *caught* a multiple assailant gang rape and now Keva's on trial for murder. How did that happen? You never even mentioned in your opening that the child was raped and you knew about it. Four guys raped and sodomized this girl, Everett. How could you? Your Honor, I don't know

what's really going on here but I'd like an opportunity to call Mr. Haden to the stand, and maybe Everett too.

CINTRON

That's highly irregular and improper and certainly unnecessary, Your Honor. Mrs. Pettigrew can have the damned pictures, we're done here.

JUDGE

You're treading on very thin ice with me Everett. I agree Mrs. Pettigrew, I don't like what I've been hearing myself and I'm going to allow you to call Mr. Haden to the stand. Now if you'll excuse me, I have a call or two to make.

RAINA AND CINTRON

Thank you Your Honor.

They all begin filing out of the room; Raina and Everett reach the door at the same time but he angrily brushes past her without allowing her the opportunity to leave first.

CINTRON

Bitch.

RAINA

What did you call me?

CINTRON

I wasn't talking to you.

Raina stops and stares at Everett as he walks back to the courtroom, he never turns around.

INT. COURTROOM

JUDGE

Your witness, Mrs. Pettigrew.

RAINA

I call Samuel Haden.

The Bailiff swears in Samuel Haden and Keva feverishly tugs on Raina's skirt and looks nervous.

KEVA

That's him, that's the man that was
in the hospital.

RAINA

Mr. Haden, do you know the
defendant, Keva Washington?

HADEN

No, uh, no I don't.

RAINA

No? Have you ever seen her vagina?

Cintron leaps from his chair. The GALLERY gasps loudly as
the Judge bangs his gavel repeatedly.

CINTRON

Your Honor! That's a cheap shot. He
just said he didn't know her.

JUDGE

That was indeed an interesting query
Mrs. Pettigrew, where are you going
with this?

RAINA

To expose a liar Your Honor. I
wouldn't ask a question I already
know the answer to; first year law.

CINTRON

Sidebar, Your Honor?

A lengthy sidebar takes place with the jury present. Cintron
nods frequently as Raina GLARES at him.

The people in the gallery begin to murmur as well as the
jurors.

JUDGE

Sir, you may step down but do not
leave the courtroom. Mrs. Pettigrew?

RAINA

At this time, Your Honor, I move for
the dismissal of all charges against
my client, Keva Wendy Washington.

JUDGE

Mr. Cintron?

CINTRON

No objection, Your Honor.

Loud murmurings in court cause the judge to again bang his gavel repeatedly. Keva shifts in her seat.

JUDGE

Keva Wendy Washington, you are hereby released forthwith. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you are excused with this court's profound thanks.

The onlookers in court appear confused as jurors STAND and begin to file out. Reporters quickly stream out of the courtroom to file their stories.

KEVA

I can go now.

RAINA

Yes, Keva, you're free to go.

KEVA

What happened?

RAINA

It's over; you can go back home to your mom.

KEVA

I don't understand.

RAINA

There's nothing to understand baby. Just go home and stay out of trouble. Promise me you'll get yourself back in school and stay there until you've finished.

KEVA

I swear I will.

Raina reaches in her PURSE and pulls out a BUSINESS CARD and writes on it.

RAINA

Keep my numbers and call me sometime, we'll go shopping, have lunch and do some girl stuff. I'll

take you to get your hair done where I go. Deal?

KEVA

Deal. Mrs. Pettigrew, do you think I could do what you did?

RAINA

Absolutely Keva.

KEVA

Good, 'cause I love to dance.

RAINA

No baby, excluding that.

THE NEXT YEAR

Raina walks downstairs and sees Lawrence asleep, holding their BABY daughter, about six months old.

Raina smiles and leans down to kiss him, waking him.

INT. PETTIGREW BEDROOM -- DAY (BEFORE DAWN)

LAWRENCE

Hey, where are you going? What time is it?

RAINA

It's about six. I have business out West and I have an early flight. I'm sorry this is last minute but I'll call. Take care of the baby and yourself for me? And let that baby sleep in her crib.

LAWRENCE

Of course. Hey, you be careful.

RAINA

I will, Baby.

A tearful Raina turns to leave then turns back to Lawrence. She picks up the baby and holds her tightly, kisses her and gives her back to Lawrence.

LAWRENCE

Raina, are you OK?

RAINA

Yes, I'm fine. I'll call you Baby.

LAWRENCE

OK, honey, safe journey.

MONTAGE

- Raina arrives in LA, takes a cab to Sheriff's Office
- Raina speaking to a detective, he recognizes her, nods
- While listening to her story, his face drops
- Raina is taken to interview room
- Shown removing her jewelry, being printed, photographed

BACK TO SCENE:

INT. DETECTIVES DESK -- DAY

DETECTIVE POLSON, 40's well dressed, Raina spoke with solemnly walks back to his desk and sits with Raina.

DETECTIVE POLSON

Mrs. Pettigrew, is there someone you'd like to call?

RAINA

Yes, I want to call my husband.

DETECTIVE POLSON

I'll give you some privacy; take all the time you need.

The detective walks away. PEOPLE TRAFFIC on the floor where she is increases dramatically with POLICE OFFICERS walking through to see Raina for themselves.

INT. PETTIGREW HOME -- DAY

Lawrence is getting the baby dressed as the phone RINGS.

The screen SPLITS to reflect the emotions felt by both characters.

LAWRENCE

Hello.

RAINA

Hey you.

LAWRENCE

Hey you, how's sunny California?
Getting anything done.

RAINA

Yes, I got a lot done.

LAWRENCE

Good. The baby misses you but I miss
you more. We can't wait 'til you
come home.

Holding the phone to the baby's ear. Baby reaches for phone.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

Say hi to momma, c'mon; guess she
doesn't get the phone thing yet. I
miss you so much.

Raina silently sobbing. A police officer walks over and
hands her a soft drink and some tissue.

LAWRENCE (CONT'D)

Honey, I know you're busy, so call
me later. I'm gonna take the baby to
the sitter.

RAINA

OK...OK, Baby. I love you so much.

LAWRENCE

I love you too. You sure you OK?

RAINA

I'm OK.

INT. LAWRENCE IN CAR -- DAY

Lawrence is disgusted by the enormous amount of TRAFFIC and
reaches for the radio and turns it up to listen.

RADIO NEWS REPORTER

...For those of you who are just
joining us, superstar criminal
defense attorney Sarah Pettigrew,
who gained fame by engineering the
release of Thomas Wilson and the
successful defense of Keva
Washington has turned herself in to
authorities in Los Angeles for a
murder she claims to have committed

some years ago. Mrs. Pettigrew also gained some unwanted attention when it was revealed that she was once an exotic dancer; she weathered that storm to complete the task of winning the acquittal of Keva Washington, who, as you've probably heard enrolled in Prince George's Community College this fall. More on this compelling story at the top of the hour.

Lawrence's hands are GRIPPED tightly on the steering wheel as cars honk, being moving around him, people gesturing.

DISSOLVE TO:

SHOT OF RAINA WALKING THROUGH PRISON WITH A BLUE PRISON JUMPSUIT ON BEING ESCORTED TO HER CELL.

DISSOLVE TO:

SHOT OF LAWRENCE (OLDER), SEATED ON HIS DECK, HIS DAUGHTER, NOW A TEENAGER, BRINGS HIM SOME ICED TEA. SHE KISSES AND HUGS HIM. HE STARES OFF INTO THE DISTANCE.

NARRATION:

LAWRENCE'S VOICE:

Raina confessed to the murder of her former boyfriend and was sentenced to life in prison. After the baby was born everything seemed perfect. I made executive director, she made partner, I never saw it coming. Once everything happened, people would often ask me how I was feeling...I didn't know how to answer then, but it felt like getting to the seventh game of the World Series and losing on a dramatic home run with two outs in the bottom of the ninth. It felt like being a wide receiver in the Super Bowl getting within one inch of the goal line and being tackled with no time left on the clock, that's how I felt. She had a productive present and an exciting future, but she got caught by the past. Every dream, every hope I had was locked behind bars three thousand miles away and there was nothing I could do about it. I'd already decided though, that I'd be waiting for her when she got out; I didn't care how long. She's all I've got.

Establishing shot of a large prison

EXT. PRISON ENTRANCE GATE - DAY

A matured Lawrence is standing with his daughter and SON-IN-LAW and GRANDDAUGHTER.

Raina, slightly heavier, graying hair, emerges from the prison and sees Lawrence...

The scene fades.

NARRATION

LAWRENCE'S VOICE:

When this all began I mentioned my decision to go to the club that night to watch her dance; maybe it wasn't such a bad decision after all.

FADE OUT: