

Legacy of Lies
by
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FADE IN:

INT. ELEGANT RESTAURANT - EVENING

SLOAN is seated at a table, across from JOE. Her body language is clear that she's reluctant. Uninterested. Joe is interested. He is nice-looking. Clean-cut. Enamored.

JOE

You are just so beautiful!

Sloan's eyes cut sharply to him. She smiles politely.

SLOAN

Thank you.

JOE

Tell me about yourself. I want to know all about you!

Sloan brushes a tendril of hair back. She glances around.

SLOAN

What would you like to know?

JOE

Everything! How is a woman like you not married, already!?

She clears her throat.

SLOAN

I was married.

He looks intrigued.

JOE

What happened?

SLOAN

He was murdered.

Joe's eyes widen. His jaw drops and Sloan chuckles.

JOE

Murdered?!

She catches herself twirling the wine glass between her fingertips. She eyes it for a second, and then stops.

SLOAN

Yeah. You know, I'd just rather not discuss it.

JOE

You're right. Too heavy for first date conversation, right? It's fine. Any children?

Sloan sits back slightly. Her eyes flick upward to his.
CUT TO: FLASHBACK FROM HER FATHER'S FUNERAL. THE SHOOTING. SHE GRIPS HER STOMACH AS VAN FALLS TO HER FEET.
Sloan shakes her head.

SLOAN

No.

JOE

Well, all that matters is that we're here now, right?

Sloan forces a smile and then brings her glass to her lips.
BEGIN CREDITS:

as Sloan is driving on the Las Vegas Strip. Her car pulls into the parking garage at Bellezza. She gets out and walks through the casino in her little black dress. Employees nod hello, and she reciprocates. She gets into the elevator and hits the button. When she steps out she walks down the hall and lets herself into her condo. Leaving the light off, the condo is illuminated from lights coming from The Strip. She steps out of her heels. She unzips the back of her dress.

INT. VAN'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS - LATE NIGHT

Someone knocks. Sloan emerges from the bedroom in sweats and opens the door to an excited ANGELA, who comes inside and takes a seat on the couch.

ANGELA

How was it? You're home early!

Sloan takes a seat adjacent to her.

SLOAN

Eh, I'm not sure I'm ready to let anyone in, yet.

ANGELA

You're just rotting away, here.
You need to get out and enjoy
life! I thought for sure you'd
like him!

SLOAN

Maybe I need more time.

ANGELA

It's been over a year.

SLOAN

Just barely...

Angela cocks her head at Sloan.

ANGELA

Well, I'm proud of you for at
least giving the guy a chance.

SLOAN

You made me.

ANGELA

I did not.

SLOAN

You said you weren't going to
speak to me for a month if I
didn't go.

ANGELA

(smiling)

We both know I can't go a month
without talking to you.

Sloan shoots her a skeptical look.

ANGELA

Was he at least respectful? Did he
open doors for you?

SLOAN

He did. He's a really nice guy.

Angela gives her a sympathetic look.

ANGELA

Nice isn't what gets us hot.

SLOAN

Not us.

INT. GUS & GRETA'S HOME - AFTERNOON

The front door opens, and Sloan is greeted inside the home of Van's parents. The sounds of voices and laughter fill the air. There is a party starting to happen. GRETA is happy to see Sloan and welcomes her with a hug.

SLOAN

Thanks again for hosting this party. It means so much to GAGE. He's been bragging about it for weeks.

GRETA

The ceremony was beautiful. Van was the last one we had graduate, and his class was so tiny they held graduation in their auditorium!

GUS

Is Piper coming?

SLOAN

(shrugging)

She hasn't returned my texts or phone calls, but I'm sure she wouldn't miss this.

They move throughout the house. Greta is bustling around the kitchen. Gage is out back with his girlfriend SAMMI, among friends and Capitani relatives. Angela and JIONNI enter, and smiling Angela puts an arm around Sloan's shoulder.

ANGELA

Does it feel like your kid is finally grown up?

Sloan smiles wistfully, but doesn't have a chance to respond. We see Piper strolling in, in a bright sundress that highlights her fake breasts. Her hair is long. She's wearing lots of makeup. Tattoos. Gage hugs her. Sloan turns around.

SLOAN
(mutters)
Piper just arrived..

GRETA
Which is good! She is supportive
of her brother.

Angela peeks around the corner.

ANGELA
She looks like she's dressed for
work..

GRETA
It's never too late to save a lost
soul.

SLOAN
You can't help someone that
doesn't want to be helped.

GRETA
(chastising)
Family never gives up on family.
Nothing is stopping either of you
from being a good influence.

Sloan scowls. Angela scratches her head. Sloan tosses a
look at Piper, who looks at her and immediately looks away.
Sloan rolls her eyes and approaches Piper.

SLOAN
(brightly)
I'm glad you made it, today!

PIPER
(awkwardly)
Thanks..

SLOAN
(brightly)
How are you? Still living with
friends?

PIPER
I'm living with my boyfriend, now.

Sloan deliberately looks around.

SLOAN
Where is he?

PIPER
He'll be here later. He had some
business to take care of.

SLOAN
(laughing)
What, is he a Capitani?

PIPER
(smirking)
Actually, yes. Van's cousin,
Tommy.

Sloan looks surprised, but gives her an approving nod.

SLOAN
Well... don't be such a stranger. We
should do dinner this week. At the
condo. You can bring Tommy.

A look of surprise and then skepticism overcomes Piper.

SLOAN
It'll be fun. We can catch up.

PIPER
I'm off Monday night...

SLOAN
Monday it is, then.

Piper looks more at ease, before Sammi comes and excitedly
steals her away to go outside, leaving Gage standing nearby
to approach her.

GAGE
Everything good here? I didn't see
any hair-pulling, or shanks.

SLOAN
Funny. I invited her to dinner,
actually. Monday at the condo. You
and Sammi better be there. Seven.

GAGE
You're cooking? That in itself is
worth seeing.

SLOAN
(smiling)
I was considering take-out.

GAGE
(laughs)
That's the Sloan I know.

INT. SWANKY BAR - EVENING
Sloan leads Joe into the bar, where they take two stools at the counter.

JOE
Dinner was really good. I'm glad you recommended that place.

SLOAN
Yes, it's one of my favorites.

BARTENDER
Good evening. What'll you have?

SLOAN
A glass of chardonnay, please.

JOE
Scotch. On the rocks. Thanks.

He turns and eyes Sloan as she settles upon her bar stool. Her eyes impishly meet his. He grins at her.

SLOAN
What are your bad habits, Joe? Are you always so fucking nice?

Joe cracks, and starts to laugh, as does Sloan.

JOE
Wow, odd questions to ask! Is there something wrong with being nice?!

SLOAN
No! I just - I'm not used to it.

JOE
That's a shame, honestly.

Sloan is staring at him blankly.

SLOAN

Do you have a kinky fetish, or an affinity for porn? Do you kick small, cute animals around, or make fun of old people?

JOE

No!

SLOAN

Do you ever wear the same clothes more than once without washing them?

JOE

Absolutely not!

SLOAN

Where's your wild side!?

Sloan lifts her glass and chuckles at him. He's not sure how to take her. She sips her drink and contemplates him.

INT. VAN'S CONDO - LATE NIGHT

The door opens. Sloan stumbles in, and Joe is hugging her close. He is kissing her all over. She drops her purse upon the kitchen counter and looks drunk. They look awkward. As he paws at her, she allows him into the bedroom. He falls upon her, atop the bed. She does not look like she's enjoying it so much as she's just letting it happen.

JOE

(murmurs)

You are so beautiful...

Her eyes open, she scowls, and it's clear she's checking out.

FADE OUT.

INT. VAN'S CONDO - BEDROOM - MORNING

We see Sloan asleep, with Joe asleep; his back is to her.

VAN (O.S.)

Good morning, Beautiful.

Sloan reacts immediately, stirring and scratching her head. Her eyes open. She turns over and bolts upward as soon as she sees Van seated casually in the armchair at her side of the bed. Joe begins to stir. She is confused and panicked.

SLOAN
What the fuck!?

Joe jumps out of bed in just his underwear. Sloan stares in awe and horror. His tone remains calm and even.

JOE
What the!?

VAN
I certainly wasn't expecting to see this when I came home.
(pointing)
Who's this?

Joe is frantically, hurriedly getting dressed.

JOE
Who are you!?

VAN
I'm Sloan's husband.

Joe looks to Sloan with wide eyes.

JOE
You said your husband was dead!

VAN
Girls lie. It's what they do.

Van stands up and smiles tightly.

VAN
Sorry, buddy. Time to go.

Joe tosses a wounded look in Sloan's direction and heads for the door. Sloan and Van are staring at one another. Her mouth is agape. The second the door closes, Van lifts an eyebrow.

SLOAN
Don't look at me like that! What *is* this? I don't understand!

VAN
How long's he been sleeping in my bed?

SLOAN
My bed! You're dead!

VAN
(sarcastically)
Obviously. Do you love him?

SLOAN
(disgustedly)
No!

Sloan throws the covers aside and gets out of bed to pace before him, giving him conflicted looks.

SLOAN (CONT'D)
How is this even possible!? How
are you here right now?

VAN
I had to leave town for a while...

Sloan stops pacing, looks down at a picture frame of them that was turned downward, picks it up, looks at him, then hurls it at him. He ducks as it shatters against the wall.

SLOAN
(angrily)
They told me you died! I had a
fucking funeral for you! Where the
hell have you been!?

VAN
Sloan, I had people after me -

Sloan's nostrils flare and she picks up the heavy crystal vase from the table. Van's eyes widen as she paces with it.

SLOAN
Let me get this straight... Vegas's
biggest drug lord *lit up* my
father's goddamned funeral -

VAN
I'm a *little* insulted that you
think Destri's bigger than me, but
-

Sloan angrily continues without missing a beat.

SLOAN

And he *shot* both of us - killing our unborn child. So when shit got deep, you jumped ship to go hide out somewhere for a year? While I was left here to pick up the pieces and try to move on!?

VAN

He was trying to kill me! He would've killed you, too!

SLOAN

(yelling)

You have no idea what I went through! Asshole! Where did you go!?

VAN

(softly)

Brazil.

Sloan appears stunned. She hurls the vase, and it crashes into the wall to his left, and he stares at it, shocked.

SLOAN

(sarcastically)

Did you have a nice vacation?!

VAN

Sloan, I -

SLOAN

(yelling)

Who else knew? Who was in on this, lying to my damn face all this time, Van? You didn't come up with this all on your own!

VAN

JIONNI. And my father.

She exhales a deep breath and stares downward with jaw agape.

SLOAN

I was your wife, Van! Your wife!

VAN
You still are!

SLOAN
You're a fucking liar! I spent the last year hating you for tricking me, and missing the illusion you created to make me think you actually loved me!

Van throws his hands up in the air.

VAN
What does that even mean!?

SLOAN
I really like that thing you did, replacing my birth control pills with fakes. That takes even *your* antics to a new low, Van. Knocking me up on purpose? Hurrying me down the aisle? I knew you had something up your sleeve, but I never thought *this* would be your grand fucking scheme! You used me!

She shakes her head and leaves him in the bedroom.

VAN
Immature, yes, but I didn't use you! I just didn't want to lose you!

SLOAN
Lose me? Or lose your millions of fucking dollars and businesses!? I was just someone to watch over your shit while you were frolicking on some beach in Brazil!

VAN
I love *you*!

She whirls around; her eyes narrowed as she bellows.

SLOAN

A million times, I wished for this exact moment, where you'd magically come back to life so I could tell you what a raging, psychotic asshole you were for everything you put me through. And I had just reached the point where I thought I could go on with my life, and finally go on a date, and now this happens!

VAN

You screwed him on the first date!?

SLOAN

Second! Regardless, you're shitty! The pills... *that* was desperate. But the fake death?!

He releases a sigh of defeat.

VAN

I know. I know!!!

SLOAN

How can I hate you and love you at the same fucking time!? Do you have any idea how crazy *I* feel for even being happy to see you!?

VAN

You can be mad all you want, but you know you love me! And you know underneath all the bullshit that follows us, what we have is real.

Sloan scowls at him, and then puts her hands on her hips.

SLOAN

So now what? You were dead - *now* you're alive! What does this mean? Where does this put us?

VAN

(gently)

I need you to go take a shower.

Sloan looks at him, perplexed.

VAN (CONT'D)

I want my wife to wash last
night's indiscretion off of her,
so I can make her mine again.

She stares at him, and her anger softens.

SLOAN

(softly)

Why should I even consider it?

He steps forward and he reaches up to twine his fingers
into her hair. Her breath quickens. His eyes sweep over
her.

VAN

Because Joe Blow didn't do this to
you. He didn't make you feel this
way. But I do.

Sloan takes a step back and blinks the daze from her eyes.

SLOAN

(mutters)

You're still an asshole.

She grabs a change of clothes and disappears into the
bathroom. He's right behind her. He joins her in the
shower. It's steamy, and he kisses her neck and shoulders,
lathering her with soap. He swipes a soapy finger over her
lips.

VAN

(hoarsely)

I wanted to kill him. I would've...

SLOAN

You deserve it... Fucking liar...

He grabs her and aggressively kisses her.

VAN

Anyone else I should know about?

She shakes her head. He takes her right there in the
shower.

EXT. GUS & GRETA'S HOME - EARLY EVENING

Sloan is standing on the back deck. Cringing, Angela comes
out with two beers. Inside, GRETA is yelling and swatting
at Van, as Jionni and GUS stand by.

GRETA
(barely audible)
You took my son away from me!

JIONNI
Ma! He's alive! MA! Stop!

SLOAN
And I thought I was upset...

ANGELA
I've never seen her so mad.

You see Greta's arms flailing about as she's yelling in Italian, off beyond Sloan and Angela in the house.

GRETA
You made me think I buried my own son! You should be ashamed!

SLOAN
He deserves it. Hell, he's probably wondering why he even bothered to come home.

Sloan tosses a backward glance behind her into the house, as GAGE and SAMMI are shown walking in to the commotion. Sloan opens the door to GAGE and SAMMI, just as PIPER and TOMMY walk up behind them. Both faces are stunned as they step inside. Greta tries to compose herself. Van's face lights up.

GAGE
How is this even possible?! Sammi, you remember my sister's dead husband, right?

Completely confused, Sammi nods. Van hugs Gage. Sloan turns away from the window and gives Angela another cynical look.

SLOAN
The more I think about things, the more I feel at unrest. There's still so many questions left unanswered.

She thoughtfully bites her lip, staring at him inside.

INT. VAN'S CONDO - LATE EVENING

She marches into the bedroom and throws the closet open. She takes out her suitcase. He helplessly looks on.

VAN

Put the suitcase back, Sloan.

She shakes her head and continues tossing items into the bag. He charges at her and in one swipe, the suitcase goes flying. Clothes everywhere. Sloan tries to dart past him, but he catches her. His fingers dig into her arms. He looks serious. His hands reach up and take her face into them as she glares.

VAN

You don't *want* to leave! We're not going back to fighting, stomping out, coming back... *This* is where you belong. With me. Just, stop!

She takes a step back, and he drops his hands. Her hands are on her hips, and she's trying to be calm.

SLOAN

Did you know they were going to shoot up my father's funeral?

Van shakes his head.

VAN

No.

SLOAN

But you were planning on playing dead, at some point. Weren't you?

Van bows his head slightly.

VAN

(softly)

It was a last resort kinda thing...

Her hands reach up and frustratedly twine in her hair.

SLOAN

Fuck! Why does everything have to be so complicated, with you!?

She shakes her head and begins to pace.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Ever since day one, it's been a struggle! One thing after another! Nothing was normal for us! It's never going to be normal for us!

He steps forward and possessively takes her into his arms, pulling her against him. His face is at her ear and neck.

VAN

I want you! I want you as my wife, Sloan. I knew it the first moment I saw you... I know everything I've put you through so far is shitty. I'm sorry for that! And that time away from you killed me!

He spins her around to face him.

VAN (CONT'D)

Don't walk away from me, when you're the most important thing I have.

She looks pained, as her hand reaches up to his face.

SLOAN

You're killing me slowly. Every day. Every night. Every start. Every stop.

She drops her hand, shakes her head and looks down.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Every secret. Every lie..

He pulls her in and holds her tight.

VAN

I promise you, no more lies.

INT. VAN'S CONDO - BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Sounds of shuffling startle Sloan from her sleep and she bolts from the bed. Light from The Strip floods the condo. Van is tearing his shirt off at the kitchen sink, tosses it in, and lights it on fire. He then washes his hands. She crosses her arms over her breasts while watching on worriedly. Van dries his hands and walks toward and past her.

VAN

Go back to bed, beautiful.

He flicks the light on in the bathroom. She remains there, and Van shuts the door, closing Sloan out. He leans forward and stares at his reflection pensively.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - JIONNI'S VEHICLE - NEVADA DESERT - EVENING

Jionni is driving off the road. Van is tense in the passenger seat. Both men look disheveled. Jionni stops the car and dims the headlights. Tosses a look at Van.

JIONNI

What - you didn't think there'd be
any backlash for taking Leykin
out?

Van glances back at him. He opens the passenger door and gets out. As does Jionni. They walk around to the trunk and open it. HITMAN 1 - a Latin man, is dressed in black, bound and bloodied. Not completely dead. He moans, and Van angrily punches him across the face with the handle of his handgun.

JIONNI

Dude, let's get him outta here
first, before you make a bigger
mess outta my trunk.

Jionni and Van lift him from the trunk and drag him several yards from the car. HITMAN 1 weakly struggles. They toss him down and then Jionni rips the gag from his mouth.

JIONNI

Who sent you?

The man spits blood, glares at Jionni, and then Van, who shifts suspiciously upon his feet.

HITMAN 1
(heavily accented)
You can kill me, but you've got
plenty others heading your way.

Jionni steps forward and aims his gun directly in Hitman
1's face. Van looks unnerved.

JIONNI
That's not what I asked!

VAN
Just kill him, or I will!

Hitman 1 chuckles, eyeing Van.

HITMAN 1
You already know who sent me,
don'tcha. He's comin'. Comin' for
you. He's gonna find ya. Just
wait.

Van shoots him between the eyes. His jaw is tense. He takes
the lighter from his pocket and flicks it.

VAN
Yeah, but he'll never find you.

CUT TO:

VAN STANDING IN THE BATHROOM, STARING AT HIS REFLECTION.
He expels a deep breath, turns around and starts the
shower.

INT. VAN'S CONDO - MORNING

Sloan comes out from the bedroom. Van is up making coffee.

VAN
We should probably get outta town
for a bit.

SLOAN
And go where, exactly?

VAN
Atlantic City. We can start
relatively fresh. No one knows me
there. I won't have to lay low.

SLOAN

Sounds like you've given this some thought.

Sloan's eyebrow twitches upward as she glances at him.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Does this have anything to do with last night?

He approaches her and wraps his arms around her.

VAN

We can get a great place on the beach. Gage and Sammi could come. And Piper. Whatever you want.

She bites her lip thoughtfully and draws in a deep breath, before resignedly resting her head against him.

MONTAGE:

A. A PLANE LANDING IN ATLANTIC CITY

B. SLOAN STARING OUT THE WINDOW OF AN SUV

C. SLOAN WALKS INTO A FURNISHED HIGH-RISE CONDO, HALF-UNPACKED.

Sloan drops her purse off upon the kitchen counter, and strolls a few steps further.

SLOAN

Home sweet home...

She walks out of the shot.

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - MORNING

Angela and Sloan are seated in chairs, on the beach. Angela is reading a magazine. Gage and Sammi are beyond them, splashing around in the ocean.

ANGELA

So... I got an interesting phone call.

Angela tosses a look behind her shoulder.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Apparently, Nick's back in Vegas.

Sloan's eyebrow lifts.

ANGELA

He went into the bar, asking about you, and where you were.

SLOAN

He hasn't even returned a single call or text since my father passed..

ANGELA

Maybe he's just home for a visit, and wanted to catch up.

Sloan eyes her cell phone, and Angela lifts her eyebrows.

ANGELA

You know it's better that you leave it alone though, right?

SLOAN

(snaps)

Then why'd you bother telling me?

Angela scowls and continues thumbing through her magazine. Sloan stares off for a moment, towards Gage and Sammi.

ANGELA

(mumbles)

Van would flip a switch, that's all.

SLOAN

He's *there*, and I'm *here*..

Sloan rolls her eyes and turns a page in her magazine.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Sloan steps inside and as she takes her sunglasses off, she is startled as RAINA - a beautiful 20-something Brazilian woman who's been waiting on the couch jumps to her feet.

RAINA

(demanding)

Who are you???

SLOAN

Who are *you*!?!?

RAINA

Where's Van?

Sloan sets her stuff down upon the counter and takes a couple steps toward her with risen eyebrows.

SLOAN

I'm sorry, but why are you looking for Van? How'd you even get in here?

RAINA

This has nothing to do with you. Just tell me where to find him.

SLOAN

You're in *my* home -

RAINA

I'm not leaving until I see him!

Incensed, Sloan plucks her cell phone from her bag.

SLOAN

I'm calling the cops.

RAINA

I'm his girlfriend! I just need to see him!

Sloan pauses, and her face twists with surprise.

SLOAN

Girlfriend?! Funny. I'm Van's *wife*.

A disturbed, genuinely shocked look washes over Raina's face.

SLOAN

How do you know him!?

Enter Van. He nonchalantly strides through the front door, and as it shuts, his eyes find the two women. He freezes as both angry sets of eyes are upon him.

SLOAN

(pointing)
Who is this!?

Van shoots an irritated look to Raina and heads toward Sloan.

VAN

Sloan, I can explain -

RAINA
Explain what!?

Raina races around the couch, to where Van is heading toward Sloan. Van puts himself between the women and turns to Raina.

VAN
What are you doing here!? Are you
- did you come alone? Is - is your
father here, too?

RAINA
No! I come by myself! And a wife?!
How could you lie to me like
that?!

Raina slaps him across the face, and Sloan reacts by trying to get her hands on her.

SLOAN
Don't fucking smack him! Van -
what the hell is she talking
about?

RAINA
Tell her! Tell her how you live
with me for a year! Talked about
marrying me! Having babies! TELL
HER!

Sloan steps back and looks at Van, dumbfounded and angry.

SLOAN
You what!? You lived with her?

RAINA
Tell her!

Van glares at Raina.

VAN
You need to go sit down. GO! Sit!

Raina glares back at him. Sloan's eyes dart back and forth between them. Raina prowls back to the couch and has a seat. Van takes a step towards Sloan, whose arms are crossed.

SLOAN
(growls)
What is going on!?

VAN
(muttering)
I met her in Brazil.

SLOAN
She's your girlfriend!?

VAN
Obviously not! I'm here, aren't I?

SLOAN
And so is she, now!

Van hangs his head in defeat and sighs.

VAN
It's done! I'm not even sure why
she's here.

Raina jumps back up to her feet.

RAINA
Done? Funny, but you didn't tell
me it was over! No note! No
goodbye! I thought someone had
killed you!

Sloan stares at her almost like she's looking at a reflection of herself, before her eyes dart suspiciously to Van.

SLOAN
Why would someone have killed you
down there, Van? Now it makes
sense why you didn't get mad
enough to kill the guy you came
home and found me in bed with. You
played house with her while you
were off having the time of your
fucking life!

RAINA
You lived with me! In *my* house!
You worked for *my* family! That's
it - I'm calling my father!

Van reaches toward her, causing Raina to jerk backward.

VAN

No, no! You can't do that!

SLOAN

Why not!?

RAINA

He will cut your balls off, which is exactly what you deserve!

VAN

I had to leave! I have a life here!

RAINA

(starts yelling at him in Portuguese)

Van throws his hands up in the air. Sloan grabs her purse and keys from the counter, before pointing to Raina.

SLOAN

You need to figure *that* out!

VAN

Don't leave!

As if in a daze, she continues for the door.

VAN

Sloan!

She whirls around, at the door.

SLOAN

What, you didn't think this would ever catch up to you?!

VAN

I want *you*!

SLOAN

I can't even look at you, right now.

Then out the door she goes.

INT. JIONNI & ANGELA'S APT. - EVENING

Jionni walks in and looks tired. All is silent. He tosses his keys and wallet down and rubs the back of his neck, yawning. He eyes Angela's purse on the table.

JIONNI
(calls out)
Angela?

No answer. He continues on, and quietly strolls into the bedroom. Sees light coming from under the bathroom door. He put his ear close to the door and hears sniffing. He pushes the door open and Angela, disheveled, is snorting a line of cocaine from the bathroom counter. Jionni's eyes widen in shock. She is instantly agitated at being found.

ANGELA
The fuck!? Don't you know to knock before you barge in on someone!?

JIONNI
What the hell are you doing!?

Angela rolls her eyes and shakes her head. Jionni steps in, and stares down in horror at the mess on the counter.

JIONNI
Where'd you get this?

She continues shaking her head. She wipes at her nose with her forearm and hand. He grabs her by the arms and she tries to jerk away but he won't allow it.

JIONNI
(mutters)
Jesus Christ, Angie...

She squirms once more, and he releases her. He is dazed.

ANGELA
Just mind your own fucking business. Getting your stupid brother outta trouble is all you care about, so go back to playing with him, okay?

JIONNI
That's a really shitty thing to say.

She tosses him an arrogant, brazen glare.

ANGELA
Truth hurts, sometimes.

JIONNI
When did this start?

He gestures toward the sink.

JIONNI
Is my money paying for this shit?

ANGELA
Don't worry about it.

He angrily steps forward and with his arm sweeps the line of cocaine to the floor, sending Angela into a furious rage.

ANGELA
Fuck you!

His hands are at the back of his neck as he tries to rein in his anger. He exits the bathroom because he has to. Angela drops to her knees and tries to gather the powder frantically. He turns and gives her a look of pity.

JIONNI
Don't, Angie...

ANGELA
Don't pretend you care! You haven't paid me a second of attention since we came out here! Why start now!?

Jionni's jaw clenches as he watches her for a second longer, and then he grabs his keys and charges out the door.

EXT. BELLEZZA RESORT A.C. - AFTERNOON

Sloan is seated in a chair by herself. Her gaze goes out to Gage and Sammi in the ocean. She sighs, pulls her phone out, and types a text to Nick saying "You've been looking for me?" Within seconds after sending, her phone rings.

SLOAN
Funny how all of a sudden you know how to use a phone.

NICK (O.S.)

I was hurt. What do ya want from me?

SLOAN

I went looking for you at your parents' house, you know.

NICK (O.S.)

They told me... Where are you? Outside? Look, we should grab lunch or something and hash things out.

Sloan's jaw tenses. She looks around cautiously.

SLOAN

Can't. I'm in Atlantic City.

NICK (O.S.)

Okay, so when do you get back?

SLOAN

I'm not... on vacation. I live here, now. And Van? Not dead.

NICK (O.S.)

Um, what?

She sees Angela heading her way and looks hurried.

SLOAN

Long story, but I gotta go. I'll text you later.

Sloan drops her phone down into her lap. Angela approaches with a large straw hat on, a white, one-piece swimsuit, and oversized sunglasses. She flops down in the chair next to Sloan's. Sloan eyes her as she wipes her nose and snuffles.

SLOAN

Are you okay?

ANGELA

Yeah, why?

SLOAN

You're sniffling. Are you crying?

ANGELA

Oh, no. I've been dying of fuckin' allergies ever since we got here.

Sloan looks at her strangely and then eyes her phone that is lit up with a text from Nick. "Thanks for hanging up on me!" Angela reaches over and snags one of Sloan's magazines.

ANGELA

Have you kissed and made up with Van, yet? Or are you planning on living out of a hotel room forever while he enjoys all your shit?

Sloan lifts an eyebrow at her.

SLOAN

(sharply)

You sure you're okay?

Angela scoffs and shakes her head, staring down at the magazine. Sloan looks bewildered by her as Sammi walks up and takes the chair on the other side of Sloan.

ANGELA

Typical Capitani bullshit. Taking people for granted, uncaring of the consequences.

Sammi and Sloan both eye Angela strangely. Angela doesn't notice. Angela's focused glare causes both girls to turn and look. Raina, in a bikini, is approaching them.

SLOAN

Certainly doesn't look like she has any intention on leaving town...

Sammi casts Sloan a sympathetic glance. Angela leans forward in her chair, putting her magazine down as Raina stops.

ANGELA

(to Raina)

What are you still doing here? Go back to wherever you came from!

SLOAN
(to Angela)
Calm down! What's gotten into
you?!

Angela scowls, like she doesn't understand why Sloan's
upset.

RAINA
Look, I'm not here to start
trouble.

SLOAN
Then why *are* you here?

RAINA
I needed answers. I didn't know
Van was married. If I'd known
that, I wouldn't have let him in
my house. I wouldn't be here right
now. That being said, it's better
I find him and not my father!

SLOAN
What *does* your father do, if I may
ask?

Raina draws in a breath and looks around before answering.

RAINA
He... produces and supplies product
for a cartel back home.

ANGELA
A cartel? Like, drugs?

Raina nods.

RAINA
Weed and cocaine, mostly...

Sloan rolls her eyes. Sammi looks to her, confused.

SLOAN
Why's your father looking for him?

RAINA

Van took almost a million dollars worth of product he was supposed to sell. If my father finds him, he'll kill him. If I can bring the drugs back, or money to show for it, chances are my father will back off.

Sloan wearily rubs at her face.

SLOAN

Jesus Christ... Give me a number to reach you. I'll see what I can do...

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Van is shirtless, with his coffee mug almost to his lips when Jionni storms in, furious.

JIONNI

You...

Jionni's fists are clenched as he stops just short of Van.

JIONNI

I found Angela with a nose full of coke last night. Tell me she didn't get it from you, and the fuckin' stash you've been unloading since you came back to town!

Van's eyes widen slightly, as Jionni's fist raises like he wants to punch him. Van steps back and holds up his hand.

VAN

I never volunteered it to her!

Jionni looks like a man on the verge of losing his mind.

JIONNI

So what - did she hold a gun to your fuckin' head and steal it?!

VAN

Dude, she's been a coke-head since before we even knew her!

JIONNI

What are you even talking about?!

VAN

She's been snorting lines since
she was a cheerleader in high
school!

Jionni shoves Van, and Van's mug falls from his hands as he
smacks into the kitchen counter in surprise. Jionni steps
back, trying to keep sane. Van is shaky and wide-eyed.

JIONNI

You're ruining a good girl, bro!

VAN

(yelling)
She's already ruined!

Jionni and Van stare at one another.

JIONNI

(speaking low)
If what you're saying is even
true, how have I lived with her
for the last few years and not
known!?

Van shakes his head.

VAN

She's been getting the shit from
me since Vegas...

Jionni charges forward and Van swerves around the island.

VAN

She told me if I said anything to
anybody, she'd gladly get it from
Destri's people instead, and tell
them where to find me!

Jionni's eyes go blank.

JIONNI

She wouldn't say that...

VAN

I fucking swear, Jionni!

JIONNI

You understand that if you left
the shit alone, this wouldn't be

happening right now, right?
Everything! Every issue we ever
have goes back to your drug deals!
Why can't you just knock it off!?

VAN

Because it's not that easy!

Jionni's nostrils flare. You can see how quick his breaths are. He swallows hard, and then rubs at his face.

VAN

I'm sorry.

Jionni exhales and walks to the window and stares out. He covers his mouth with his hands, and then runs them back through his hair. Van looks on solemnly and bows his head.

EXT. BELLEZZA ATLANTIC CITY - EARLY EVENING

A white Escalade with darkly-tinted windows pulls up and parks across the street.

INT. WHITE ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

RAMONE SANTOS, a handsome Latin man in his early 50's, sits in the backseat in an expensive suit. There are two men in suits, seated up front. He stares thoughtfully at Bellezza.

RAMONE

I want to know every move my
daughter makes, as well as
Capitani.

SUIT 1

Yes, sir.

Ramone's eyes narrow as he continues staring out the window.

RAMONE

If he even drives *near* the
airport, run him off the road, you
hear me?

SUIT 1

Yes, sir. Of course.

Ramone brings a cigar to his lips, and looks away.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - EVENING

Van, disheveled and wearing rumpled clothes, is sitting on the edge of the bed. An empty whiskey bottle sits on the nightstand. There's a handgun in his hands, and he's spinning the barrel. The only sound audible is the clicking. He rubs at his eyes. He looks broken. Desperate. He is staring at it absently when Sloan appears in the bedroom doorway, startled by what she sees. She softly knocks on the doorframe. He looks up at her with red eyes. He studies her for a moment, looking like a drunken mess. She points to the gun.

SLOAN

What's with the gun? Can you put it down, please?
Over there.

He looks at the gun like he forgot he was even holding it, and she steps forward, looking unsure.

SLOAN

(softly)

What are you doing?

He shakes his head and stares back downward at the gun. He spins the barrel once more.

VAN

The entire time I was gone, you were with me. In my thoughts. You were in my head, the whole time. I thought coming back here would be so much different than this...

He shakes his head again and lifts his eyes to hers.

VAN (CONT'D)

If I don't have you, I don't have anything.

Sloan sighs.

SLOAN

You want to know what sucks? As angry as I was, when I found out what you did with my birth control pills, the entire time I thought you were dead, I wished for that baby. A piece of you, left behind. Something innocent and pure to come from both of us. It was a kind of heartbreak I've never felt, before. And now, here you are. But instead of a second chance, I feel like I've been given another disaster to deal with.

Sloan props herself against the doorway, folding her arms over her breasts. He smiles sadly and stares down at the gun.

VAN

I've fucked everything up.
Everything around me.

Sloan takes a breath and strolls inside the bedroom. He watches her try to find her words.

SLOAN

Yanno, I get it. I do. I know you did what you had to do to survive.

His smile diminishes as she thinks out loud.

SLOAN

This whole situation with Raina sucks. It sucks that I have to see her, face-to-face. How genuinely nice she is makes it even worse.

She stops and faces him.

SLOAN

I just keep telling myself that you left her, to come back to me. But... you didn't completely leave her behind, Van.

He now looks confused.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

You took a million dollars from her father.

His jaw tenses.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

We leave one situation like that behind in Vegas, and now we're in one that's somehow worse.

VAN

(softly)
I needed that to come back here...

SLOAN

It didn't cost a million dollars to come back here. You took advantage of a situation that's coming back to haunt you. You don't think! You never *think*, Van! You act, and you act selfishly - without it ever crossing your mind that any of your wrongdoings will catch up to you!

He rubs self-consciously at the back of his neck.

SLOAN

(decidedly)

I'm going to give Raina a million dollars to take back to her father.

VAN

It's bigger than that, now...

SLOAN

He wants his money. I give her the money, and then I get my life back.

Van winces.

VAN

If only it were that simple...

Sloan puts her hands on her hips, and the two of them stare at one another, frowning. She steps forward and plucks the gun from his hands, before dumping the bullets from the barrel and setting the gun down upon the nightstand.

SLOAN

You're a headache, Van. You know that?

He releases a short, almost bitter chuckle.

VAN

How ironic. The very woman I was pondering happens to come in, just seconds before I stuck the barrel of a gun in my mouth.

He rises to his feet, shaking his head with another chuckle.

Van

Is that a coincidence, Sloan? Or is it fate? You coming here... You saving me, essentially. You're all I want. Nothing else matters.

It pains her to look at him, so she lowers her eyes.

SLOAN

You lived without me for over a year, just fine.

VAN

With every intention on finding my way back to you. Tell me you're going to come back home. And that you won't give up on me, yet.

SLOAN

(sheepishly)

I'm here, aren't I?

He steps forward and puts his arms around her. His lips are pressed to her cheek. She hugs him tightly.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

There's a knock at the door. Sloan answers it to find Piper with two suitcases, in a demure sundress and minimal make-up.

PIPER

Hi.

Sloan blinks back her surprise, and opens the door wider, stepping back to welcome Piper inside.

SLOAN

Wow, this is a surprise! What brings you here?

Piper steps inside. Van narrows his eyes and tosses the hand towel he wipes his hands with over his shoulder.

VAN

More importantly, what'd my idiot cousin do, to chase you outta Vegas?

Piper sets her suitcases down and releases an airy sigh.

PIPER

Oh, yanno. The usual. Accusing me of cheating. Picking at the job I have, even though I've been a dancer since before we even got together. Being a jealous prick. The list goes on.

VAN

Did he put his hands on you?

PIPER

No, that's one thing he *didn't* do. But I told him after, like, days of arguing and him putting holes in walls, that I needed to leave and get my head right. *He* accused me of moving out so I could have an affair. I mean, really? I can't even deal with him, anymore!

Van picks up her suitcases and smiles.

VAN

Well, you're here now. That's all that matters.

He starts for the stairs, and Piper grins at Sloan.

PIPER

Nice digs you've got, here.

She winks and then starts for the stairs after Van. Sloan's smile fades as she watches them both disappear.

INT. JIONNI & ANGELA'S CONDO - EVENING

Van is seated at the kitchen table, looking pensive with his elbows propped upon the table. Jionni paces thoughtfully.

JIONNI

When Ma and Pops gets here, it's gonna be a little hard to hide everything from them.

He tosses Van a look. Van's jaw tenses.

VAN

Raina should've never come.

JIONNI

Raina is the least of my concerns, right now. You should've left that million dollars of powder alone, and she probably *wouldn't* have come.

Van casts him a sharp look, then stares straight ahead again.

JIONNI

Finally got Leykin off our backs,
and now you've got people coming
from Brazil for your ass?
Brilliant, bro. Fuckin' brilliant.
Creating chaos everywhere,
aren'tcha?

Distraught, Van purses his lips as his hands clasp in a fist, in front of his mouth. His nostrils flare. His brow furrows.

EXT. A.C. BOARDWALK - MORNING

Sloan walks out from a shop with coffee in hand. She plucks her ringing cell phone from her purse and puts it to her ear.

SLOAN

I was *just* thinking about fifth grade; that day you caught me during recess and told me I was your girlfriend. Remember that? I thought you were the grossest thing ever.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE IN VEGAS - CONTINUOUS

Nick is laughing at her question. He squints beneath the hot sun, as he has the phone to his ear.

NICK

Hey, it took a couple years, but I was able to convince you otherwise.

SLOAN (O.S.)

How'd you know you could call me?

NICK

(smirking)

You sent me a picture of your coffee, and I knew you wouldn't be texting me if you were around that crazy, dead husband of yours.

EXT. A.C. BOARDWALK - CONTINUOUS

Sloan chuckles into the phone as she walks.

SLOAN

Touche. How are you?

NICK (O.S.)

Eh. Working. Bowling. The usual. Everything back to fine-and-dandy with Mister Wonderful? Wait, don't tell me - he's still up to no good, and his girlfriend's still visiting.

Sloan rolls her eyes but continues to smirk.

SLOAN

Oh, it gets even better than that. Piper decided to show up here yesterday. Tommy apparently ran her out of Vegas.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE IN VEGAS - CONTINUOUS
Nick's eyebrows lift in disbelief.

NICK

Yanno, if you just come back here, I'd gladly give you a boring life of dinner dates, beer on the front porch, and I wouldn't even sleep with other girls! Crazy thought, isn't it?

Sloan sighs into the phone.

SLOAN (O.S.)

I'm so glad I answered this phone call. Talking to you always makes me feel so much better about things!

NICK

That's what I'm here for!

EXT. A.C. BOARDWALK - CONTINUOUS
Sloan scowls as she approaches Bellezza.

SLOAN

I'll text you later, okay?

NICK (O.S.)

Yeah right.

Sloan cocks her head.

SLOAN

Bye Nick.

She shoves her phone into her purse and continues through the lobby of the resort. She heads out toward the exit for the beach, stepping outside to look around for familiar faces. Piper and Sammi are in beach chairs. Their laughter is loud as she walks up. Piper turns her head and spots Sloan.

PIPER

Hey old lady! Where's the swimsuit!?

Sloan lifts an eyebrow at her.

SLOAN

Old lady? I'm not staying out here. I don't know if I can take another afternoon of sitting around reading junk magazines.

PIPER

Such a hard life! You know you're spoiled rotten when you become bored of having a beach at your disposal!

Piper's laugh rings loudly at Sloan's expense.

PIPER

I need to get off my ass and find a job.

SLOAN

A *decent* job would be nice.

PIPER

(shrugging)

You can think whatever you want. I happen to enjoy what I do. It pays better than any boring desk job.

SAMMI

How can you enjoy rubbing up on
perverted old men? Seriously?

PIPER

(smugly)

It's crazy how much cash those
dirty pervs will throw at a hot
girl.

Sammi shakes her head and lays back again.

SAMMI

(mutters)

Gross.

SLOAN

On that note, I'm heading
upstairs. Looks like we're about
to finalize on the Miami property,
so I need to prepare for that.

Sammi perks up.

SAMMI

That's awesome! Gage has been
foaming at the mouth about that,
hoping he gets to go down there
and work on it.

SLOAN

Well, keep your fingers crossed.
If all goes well, I'll be heading
down there to sign the papers. Try
not to bake like Easter hams out
here all day, okay?

Piper waves her off and shifts on her chair, as Sloan walks
back toward the resort entrance.

INT. BELLEZZA RESORT A.C. - CASINO - EVENING

Van is walking through the casino. His eyes catch SUIT 1,
eyeing him off to the right. He continues walking, and
straight ahead there is a similar-looking man. He pauses,
squints, and to the left there is another man in a suit. He
knows something is up. He turns to head back out, and the
three men and another who had been behind him start to
close in. He is grabbed by the arm by Suit 1.

SUIT 1
(heavily accented)
Come with me, please.

Van tries to look calm, but his eyes are wildly looking about. The three men escort him to the parking garage. He appears nervous as they approach a white Escalade. One of the men open the back passenger door and Van is shoved inside, next to Ramone Santos. Van is paralyzed by fear.

RAMONE
(smiles)
Hola, Van.

Van looks out the windows. The suits are standing guard. He looks back to Ramone and forces a smile.

VAN
Ramone! How are you?

Ramone continues to look composed.

RAMONE
I'm wonderful. Couldn't be better.

VAN
What brings you to Atlantic City?
Vacation? Did - are you here to
pick up Raina?

RAMONE
(shrugs nonchalantly)
It seems this is the place to go
when you wish to run away from it
all. Thought it'd make for a nice
little trip. Say, have you seen
the fourteen kilos of cocaine I
left in your care, before you took
off?

Van stares back at him blankly. He adamantly shakes his head.

VAN
No. No, sir - I have not. I left
it.

RAMONE

Oh, I must've over-looked it.
Where?

Van blinks.

VAN

I, uh, I thought it was up Raina's
attic. That's - that's where I
kept everything. She didn't tell
you?

Ramone shakes his head slowly.

RAMONE

Van, Van, Van...

Ramone sniffs the cigar between his fingers, and exhales.

RAMONE (CONT'D)

I took you into my home. Into my
family. My daughter convinced me
you were a good man. A trustworthy
man. You failed us both. Now
there's a million dollars
vanished, and my daughter took off
to this dirty town to find you.

Ramone casually removes a gun from his jacket and sets it
upon his knee. The barrel is aimed at Van. Van's eyes
widen.

VAN

(quickly)

If this is about the money, I can
get it for you. Yanno, and if you
find the kilos, you can just - you
can just... keep it. Or pay me back?
I don't care! It's whatever!

Ramone's smile is vicious.

RAMONE

What I don't understand, Van, is why you would steal from me, and think that you might get away with it. You don't think I know why you came back? I had your number before you even left Brazil. I knew about your life here in the states. I know about your businesses, and your little dealings on the side. Your wife. Your family. I know about it all. But you underestimate me. And I know you know where my money is.

Ramone picks up the gun and cocks it. Van holds up his hands in defense as he starts to speak.

VAN

Sir, I will -

Ramone shoots the gun, and Van howls as the bullet grazes the outside of his hand, and through the window, causing the men outside to duck. Van starts to rock back and forth, wincing as his hand bleeds in his lap.

RAMONE

I'll be in touch. Get out.

Van flees the vehicle, rushing back through the parking garage. He goes through a back way, avoiding the casino and there is blood soaking into his clothes from his hand.

VAN

(whispering)

Fuck, fuck, fuck!

Running down a white empty corridor, he disappears from shot.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Van hurries into the condo. He's rifling through the kitchen drawers, and grabs a hand towel as Piper comes down the stairs with wet hair, wrapped in a towel.

PIPER

Whoa, what the hell happened to you?

Van pulls out a sewing kit, and he turns to look at her. His eyes sweep up and down over her, but he turns his attention back to the wound in his hand.

VAN
(mutters)
Nothing...

Piper hurries to him and grabs his hand, unwrapping the towel he wrapped around it. Her eyes widen at the bullet wound.

PIPER
Shit. We gotta get that stitched
up.

She springs into action, grabbing the bottle of whiskey from atop the fridge, and setting it in front of him while she opens the sewing kit. His eyes follow her.

PIPER (CONT'D)
Drink that. You're gonna need it.

She grabs the needle and thread. He winces and quickly downs as much whiskey as he can. He watches her thread the needle, and he looks away first, but then his eyes settle upon her face, and her exposed skin. She starts sewing him up.

VAN
(gruffly)
Looks like you've done this
before.

She shrugs but continues to concentrate.

PIPER
Your cousin was good practice.

His eyes continue to study her. She briefly looks up, and then smirks at him before returning to her task.

PIPER (CONT'D)
Though, you're not nearly half the
sissy he is. Does Sloan do this
for you?

Van shakes his head.

VAN
Jionni, usually.

Piper chuckles.

PIPER
As smart as she is, she'll always
be stupid when it comes to shit
like this. *She* sees blood. *You* see
doctors asking questions.

Van's eyes are still upon her, as he nods slightly in agreement. Piper is still working on his hand. Then she gives him a sheepish smile.

PIPER
I'd apologize for what I'm
wearing, but you've seen me in
less.

Van blushes, turning his gaze to the bottle of whiskey. Her smile is more of a smirk, now.

PIPER (CONT'D)
What's Sloan heading off to Miami
for, anyway?

Van's briefly eyes her, and then he scratches his head.

VAN
New hotel property that she and
Jionni are signing papers on.

PIPER
Dead men can't sign papers, eh?

She gives him an amused look.

VAN
(chuckling)
No, I guess not.

PIPER
Any chance you're gonna tell me
where this wound came from?

She rises from where she sits and he watches her strut away, towards the downstairs bathroom. His eyes remain upon her while she deliberately bends over, giving him a direct peek up her towel. She reaches below the sink for gauze and wrap. He takes a deep breath and looks down at his hand. She strolls back over with an innocent smile. He shakes his head.

VAN

Nope.

She nods in amusement.

PIPER

Right. Of course.

She wraps his hand, and he studies her as she does so.

PIPER

Looks like you're all set!

Her fingers rake through her hair, and she tosses the needle and thread into the trash. He watches her disappear back upstairs, just as Sloan enters the condo with bags in hand.

SLOAN

I forgot how much I hate packing!

She smiles as she passes through. Her eyes land on Van's hand. And the bottle of whiskey.

SLOAN

What happened?

Van rises from the stool and forces a smile.

VAN

An accident. I was being stupid.

Sloan leans in and kisses him. Her eyes drop back to his hand, before she continues on her way to the bedroom. He draws in a deep breath. Then his eyes flick upward thoughtfully in the direction Piper disappeared to, as the blow-dryer is now heard.

INT. MIAMI HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sloan is standing before the window, looking out. She is staring down at a text from Nick that says "Thinking of you." She dials the phone and puts it to her ear.

SLOAN

You wouldn't believe the amazing
view I'm staring at, right now!

NICK (O.S.)

I find most of the things in your
life hard to believe. Where are
you?

SLOAN

Miami.

NICK (O.S.)

Romantic getaway?

Sloan cocks her head and starts to pace away from the
window.

SLOAN

Business. I'm by myself.

NICK (O.S.)

When are you going to come back
here for a visit? By yourself?

She pulls the curtain aside to look out, and thoughtfully
bites the inside of her lip.

EXT. BELLEZZA RESORT A.C. - PARKING GARAGE - EVENING
We see Gage and Van at his car. The trunk's popped. We are
far enough away that we cannot hear them, but the shot
suggests that someone is watching them. They are taking
black duffel bags out of the car. They appear to be
talking. Van looks like he's directing Gage. Gage starts
shuffling the duffel bags from Van's vehicle to his own.
Gage gets into the car and drives off. Van takes the
remaining bags and heads off into the direction of the
resort.

INT. MIAMI HOTEL BAR - EVENING

Jionni and Sloan are seated by themselves, smiling, and
raising their drink glasses. They clink them together.

JIONNI

To making money!

SLOAN

I'll drink to that!

They take a drink. Jionni sets his down and looks around. Sloan sets hers down and then turns amused eyes upon him.

JIONNI

Any new developments on the Raina situation?

Sloan exhales a long sigh.

SLOAN

Your brother is going to be the death of me.

Jionni takes another drink.

JIONNI

He's gonna be the death of us, both.

SLOAN

It sucks that it always falls back on you or I to keep Van out of trouble.

JIONNI

No, we *get* him out of trouble. There's a difference.

Sloan stares down into her glass, and half-smiles.

SLOAN

Well, I'm glad he has you.

Jionni takes another drink and looks at Sloan thoughtfully.

JIONNI

Yeah, but how much longer will he have you?

Her eyes flick upward to meet his, but she says nothing.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - LIVING ROOM - LATE EVENING
Van is on the couch. Piper, in a slutty dress, is sitting next to him. He sounds drunk and disoriented as he babbles. Bottles of liquor litter the kitchen counter. She's watching him amusedly, as she sips from her glass.

VAN

Jesus, these drinks are good!

He eyes his almost-empty glass. His eyes fall upon her skirt that has ridden up so high he can see her panties.

VAN

Where's Gage?

PIPER

He and Sammi rode up to New York for the weekend. I told you that, already. It's just you and me!

She takes a drink, and eyes him finishing his.

PIPER

Another?

Van stares blankly as she rises to her feet, takes his empty glass and struts to the kitchen.

VAN

I don't know if I need another...

PIPER

Oh, nonsense. We're having fun, aren't we?

She pours liquor into his glass. She reaches into the drawer where she stands, and takes out a half-empty packet of powder that she also adds to his drink.

VAN

I haven't heard from Sloan. Did you?

PIPER

Nope!

Piper stirs the drink, and then adds a little more powder.

PIPER (CONT'D)

I suppose she's just having a great time, out with your brother. She always did love a man with muscles.

She winks and hands the drink to Van, who looks bewildered.

VAN

Huh?

She arranges herself to face him on the couch, with her breasts on display. She smiles sweetly at him.

PIPER

Oh, yanno. I'm sure you've noticed. Nick was pretty built. Anyway, I imagine she and your brother are probably sitting around right now, having drinks just like we are!

Van fumbles with his phone.

VAN

I should call her...

Piper snatches his phone from him, and then chuckles.

PIPER

No, no. Not a good idea. You'll just get all jealous and make her mad.

Van stares at Piper, out of it. His eyes drift closed, but he struggles to keep them open. She winks and lifts her glass.

PIPER

Drink up!

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY AIRPORT - EARLY EVENING

Sloan and Jionni are walking out from the airport with their luggage. They are surprised by Van, Angela, Gus and Greta getting out of the SUV to greet them. Sloan's eyes are wide as Greta rushes over to hug her.

GRETA

My dear!

SLOAN

Wow, hi! When did you guys arrive?

GRETA

Yesterday. We wanted to surprise you, but you two weren't here!

Gus leans in to hug her.

GUS
How was Miami?

SLOAN
Successful.

Van comes over, smiles and draws her in for a hug and kiss.

VAN
Welcome back, Beautiful.

She smiles up at him.

SLOAN
(softly)
Your parents! What a surprise!

He smiles back tightly.

VAN
They don't listen to the word
"no."

She chuckles as he opens the car door for her.

SLOAN
Another inherited Capitani trait.

Van laughs and disappears around to the driver's side.
INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - LATER
The bathroom door opens. All is quiet as Sloan steps out. She rolls her head tiredly upon her neck and rubs it. She's wearing lounge-clothes. Her hair is damp. She pauses and straightens the newly re-framed wedding photo on her bedside table. She walks out into the living room, and her hand runs along the leather on the couch as she passes it, looking around. Her eyes catch the bottles of liquor left on the counter. There's an urgent knock at the door. She walks toward it, and they knock again.

SLOAN
(calling out)
Who is it!?

HENCHMAN 1
(thickly accented)
Pizza delivery!

Sloan stops.

SLOAN

Wrong door.

She turns away, and they pound on the door again.

HENCHMAN 1

Mrs. Capitani! Open up!

She stops; her eyes narrowing as she looks back at the door. At that moment, a loud bang and crash pierces the air as the door busts open. A flood of men dressed in black, wearing bulletproof vests and guns storm into the condo, and HENCHMAN 1 grabs her and slams her back to the wall to restrain her as they continue inside. She fights back, but stops the moment he presses a gun to her temple.

SLOAN

Who are you!?

HENCHMAN 1

Where's Van?

Sloan desperately looks around before he screams in her face.

HENCHMAN 1 (CONT'D)

Where's Van Capitani!?

SLOAN

(yells)

I don't know! What do you want with him!?

Henchman 1 takes a step back but holds her at gunpoint as the entire place is being ransacked. He grabs her cell phone from the counter and smiles, sticking it in his pocket. They are looking for something. They're breaking stuff, emptying cabinets. Glass shatters from somewhere in the bedroom.

SLOAN

What are you looking for?!

One of the men in the bedroom calls out to the living room.

HENCHMAN 2

Nothing, sir!

HENCHMAN 3

Nothing here, either.

SLOAN

What's this about?! Stop breaking everything!

Henchman 1 comes up behind her in the doorway.

HENCHMAN 1

Your husband knows what we're looking for. Perhaps you should ask him. We'll be back.

He smiles curtly, and then whistles, rounding up the guys.

HENCHMAN 1

That's it, boys! Let's go!

Sloan stands there, wide-eyed and trembling. Henchman 1 stands at the door, watching and waiting while his men file out. He smiles viciously at Sloan and tosses her cell phone down upon the kitchen counter.

HENCHMAN 1

We'll be seeing you.

He walks out, and the busted door remains open. She rushes to it and tries unsuccessfully to shut it. She looks around at the mess, and as she winces, she covers her mouth with the back of her hand. She snatches her phone from the counter and tries to call Van. It goes to voicemail. She tosses it angrily down upon the counter and grabs the trash can. She begins picking up pieces of glass from the kitchen floor. In the midst of this, the door pushes back open, and she jumps to her feet, startled. But it's Van, who is wide-eyed.

VAN

What happened in here!?

She wipes her eyes with her forearm and rises to her feet.

SLOAN

I don't know, Van, but they were looking for you.

Van's eyes grow wider as he looks around.

VAN

Were they cops?!

SLOAN

No, they weren't cops! They all had accents and guns! They ransacked the entire goddamn place, and I can only assume it had something to do with Raina and her father!

VAN

Did they find anything?!

Sloan's hands are on her hips as she eyes him crossly.

SLOAN

Like what!? Do you have the drugs here!? Look at this fucking place! They destroyed everything!

She turns on her feet, disgusted, and stalks off toward the bedroom. He is pacing about. His fingers are in his hair.

VAN

Fuck!

She appears in the bedroom doorway.

SLOAN

What happens when they come back, Van? Because they're coming back. *Then* what?

VAN

I don't fucking know! Why did you even answer the damn door!?

SLOAN

(screaming)
Clearly, I didn't!

She gestures angrily at the door.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

That, right there, is pretty obvious that I didn't *invite* them in!

Van draws in a deep breath as he continues to pace.

VAN

We need to get out of here.

Sloan throws her hands up in the air.

SLOAN
And move again? Sure, Van! Why
not? Let's just continue life on
the run!

The door pushes open slowly, and Gage and Sammi cautiously
step inside.

GAGE
Whoa, what happened here?

SLOAN
(sarcastically)
Van's friends decided we need a
new door.

She watches as Gage tries to close it.

SLOAN
Don't bother.

Gage looks around. Sloan disappears into the bedroom, re-
emerges with shoes and grabs her keys from the counter.

SLOAN
I'll be back.

She storms out, slamming the door so hard it bounces back
open. Sammi bends down to start picking things up. Gage
sends a concerned glance at Van, who's pacing. Piper
appears in the doorway, in a tiny cocktail dress and
stiletto heels and too much make-up. She tosses a confused
look down the hallway outside the apartment, and then steps
inside. Van frowns upon seeing her and turns his back to
her. Gage looks to Piper.

GAGE
Isn't it a bit early for you to be
home from work?

PIPER
(smugly)
I was on a date.

She eyes Van and tosses her clutch on the kitchen table.

PIPER
Did I miss a party?

Gage gives Van a threatening look.

GAGE

(to Van)

Dude, if you don't go after her, I will.

Van grabs his keys and expels a breath.

VAN

Yeah, I'm on it.

Van leaves. Piper rolls her eyes and leaves Sammi and Gage to continue cleaning, disappearing upstairs.

INT. JIONNI & ANGELA'S APT. - CONTINUOUS

Sloan lets herself in, and the living room is dark. Jionni is standing in the living room, staring out at the windows, on his cell phone. He eyes her in alarm as she bounds through their place. Through the bedroom. The door to the bathroom is cracked open. She speaks as she pushes it open.

SLOAN

Angela, I need your help-

She stops, as Angela is hovered over the sink, snorting cocaine through a rolled up dollar bill.

SLOAN

Angela! What the hell!?

Startled, Angela stands straight and wipes her nose.

ANGELA

What - does no one knock, anymore?!

Sloan's jaw drop. Her eyes widen.

SLOAN

Oh my God, Angela! I wondered what the hell had gotten into you lately, but I never expected this!

Sloan grabs the dollar bill from Angela, angering her.

ANGELA

Just get out!

Jionni hurries in behind Sloan and Sloan whirls around.

SLOAN
You know about this!?

JIONNI
Yes...

The disappointed look Sloan gives Jionni lingers, before she addresses Angela.

SLOAN
You need help.

ANGELA
Get yourself some help, for
Christ's sake. You and your joke
of a marriage. Your lying,
cheating husband!

JIONNI
That's enough!

Teary-eyed, Sloan gapes at her. She then gives Jionni another wounded glance.

SLOAN
(croaks)
I have to go...

She gets around Jionni in the doorway, and doesn't give a backwards glance. We see her exit their place, beyond Jionni's guilty expression.

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY BELLEZZA - EVENING

Sloan's hair is damp, hanging stringy around her face. She exits the casino with a briefcase in hand. She stands there, looking around. Her eyes land on the white Escalade. Her eyes narrow. She looks around again. Then she starts toward it like she's on a mission. She stops at it. She can't see inside. She taps on the front passenger window. The back window rolls down, so she takes two steps to her left and looks inside at Ramone, sitting there with a book.

SLOAN

(smartly)

I couldn't help but notice this vehicle's been parked here for several days. Do you need some assistance? A tow truck, perhaps?

RAMONE

No, dear. Thank you, though.

SLOAN

(tensely)

I know who you are.

Ramone cocks his head.

RAMONE

Oh? Come inside, then. Have a seat.

SLOAN

No thanks.

Sloan tosses the suitcase into the vehicle, and all three men inside react by pulling a gun and pointing it at her face. She is undaunted.

SLOAN

Save it. One million dollars. Right there. Take it, take your daughter, take your fucking men that destroyed all my shit, and get out of town.

She turns and starts to walk off.

RAMONE

(calls out)

It's not that easy, sweetness!

Sloan spins around on her feet and approaches the vehicle again angrily. Boldly.

SLOAN

It *is* that simple. That's the money my husband owed you. It's a debt paid. By him.

RAMONE

He will not be let off that easily.

Sloan throws her hands up in the air.

SLOAN

Then maybe you should've just killed him instead of shooting him in the hand!

She steps forward and narrows her eyes at him.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

I'll tell you this; you might be something wherever you came from, you fuck, but here? The Capitanis rule the roost. And you don't wanna piss Papa Capitani off. Trust me. Take the money, get back on your fuckin' plane, and leave us the fuck alone before you open up a bigger can of worms for yourself.

She reaches into her pocket and tosses a key at him.

SLOAN

That'll let you into room four-oh-three, where your daughter's been holed up. Take her with you.

She turns away and marches off. Ramone's eyebrows lift.

RAMONE

(mutters)

Tough broad...

He stares after her thoughtfully, before the window goes up.

INT. COZY RESTAURANT - DAYTIME

Sloan and Van are seated at a table in an empty restaurant, having lunch. They are engrossed in conversation and he is holding Sloan's hand in his.

VAN

If you knew then what you know
now, would you still have married
me?

SLOAN

Maybe. Maybe not.

Van looks down briefly, wincing.

SLOAN

Why drugs? Why ever, but why now?

Van looks uneasy. He scratches the back of his head and
shifts in his seat, but he remains holding Sloan's hand.

VAN

It started in high school, when
kids were popping Xanax, and other
cocktails of pills. My parents
didn't want me working while I was
in school, but they weren't
swimming in money, either. I told
them I had anxiety. The doctor
started scribbling prescriptions
for shit I didn't need, and I just
wanted to sell it all. I saw
payday.

SLOAN

And you just never stopped...

Van solemnly shakes his head.

VAN

Weed got tossed into the mix. Then
coke. People came to depend on me.
It was just easy...

SLOAN

And then it got you in trouble on
the streets...

Van fidgets with his drink.

VAN

Something like that, yes...

She lets her gaze linger upon him, thoughtfully. Then she picks up her drink and squeezes his hand. She takes a drink and smiles impishly.

SLOAN

Did you notice the white Escalade
is gone from outside Bellezza?

Van's eyes narrow at her.

VAN

Is it?

She smugly smiles at him with a sideways glance. She gently shakes her drink and takes a sip.

SLOAN

Yup.

He looks utterly intrigued. A smile plays in and out over his lips as he stares at her.

VAN

What did...? Did you have something
to do with that?

SLOAN

I believe the correct term would
be "cojones." Wait, is that how
they say it in Brazil?

VAN

(laughing)
Close.

SLOAN

(shrugging)
Hey - you're the expert, not me.

He continues to chuckle, wraps his arm around her shoulder, and pulls her in tight.

VAN

I love you, you know that?

She chuckles, grabbing his hand and pulling his arm tighter.

SLOAN

Yeah, yeah.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - BATHROOM - EVENING

Sloan's wearing a little black dress. Her hair is up. She's applying makeup when Van comes in, dressed nicely. He slips his arm around her waist. Her eyes close as he presses his lips to her neck.

VAN

I'm the luckiest man alive.

Sloan's eyes lazily reopen. She smiles at him in the mirror.

SLOAN

I like it when you pretend to be romantic.

VAN

Pretend! Tell me who's more romantic than me. I'll kill 'em.

SLOAN

(laughing)

Then you can put your charm to good use in prison. I'm sure you'd get plenty of romance, there.

VAN

(winking)

I thought you found my killer instincts sexy!

SLOAN

You think anyone else in the world is having a similar conversation, right now?

VAN

(shrugging)

There's got to be at least one, maybe two of my family members having this exact discussion.

She chuckles at him. He winks and grins at her, and her eyes linger upon him as he exits her sight. From somewhere else, you hear Gage call out.

GAGE (O.S.)

C'mon! You guys are making me late for my own birthday dinner!

Sloan shakes her head amusedly at her reflection as she puts her earrings on, grabs her clutch, and flicks the light off.

INT. SWANKY RESTAURANT - LATE EVENING

Half-finished drinks are all over the table. Gage, Sammi, Piper, her date AARON, Van, Sloan, Angela, Jionni, Gus and Greta are seated around a table eating and conversing. Van seems inebriated and avoiding Piper's smug glance, as she hangs on her date. Gus rises to his feet.

GUS

(announces)

We have a gift for the birthday boy.

Greta beams excitedly and claps lightly.

VAN

We're doing that now? I thought we would wait...

GUS

No better time than the present!
Besides, I'm pretty excited about it. It's a big deal!

Gus strolls over to Gage and puts his hand on his shoulder as Gage stares up at him with admiration and respect.

GUS

My boy... You've become a son to me, over the years we have known you. We look at everyone at this table as our own. Except for this guy.

He chuckles and extends his hand to Aaron.

GUS (CONT'D)

I've never seen you before, but hi. I'm Gus.

The table snickers as the two men shake hands.

GUS (CONT'D)

Anyway, having said all that, with all the hard work you've been putting in lately at our resort here, I've decided to bestow upon you the same opportunity I gave to both of my sons. We just signed papers for a new place in Miami recently, and yanno, I just have so much on my plate already. I don't have time to fly here and there, back and forth, all over this great country. So I'm giving you what would've been my stake in the Miami property. Van and Jionni will show you the ropes from here on out.

Gage is humbled. His jaw is agape. He rises to his feet to rush and give Gus an emotional hug.

GAGE

(throatily)

Thank you.

GUS

Enjoy Miami, son.

GAGE

I won't let you down.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - EVENING

Van is seated on the couch, thumbing through his cell phone. Piper comes downstairs in boy-shorts and a slouchy top. She's eyeing Van. She struts into the kitchen and keeps glancing at him as she fixes a drink. Then she takes out another glass.

VAN

Don't bother.

She pauses and looks crestfallen.

PIPER

What, I can't fix you a drink?

She proceeds with her task as he focuses on his phone.

PIPER (CONT'D)

I'm surprised you didn't make the trek to Miami with them.

She frowns when Van doesn't acknowledge her. She finishes making the two drinks, and struts over to him. She tries to hand it to him, but he ignores her. She sets it down before him and settles into the couch, beside him. He eyes the drink, and looks like he isn't sure what to say.

PIPER

You think too much. Relax and have a drink with me.

She sips hers, and he reluctantly picks his up. He watches as she gets back up from the couch and struts out to the kitchen. She tops her drink off with the bottle of liquor on the counter. As if she's been aware this whole time that he's been studying her, she turns and flicks her eyes upon him.

VAN

Look, I don't know what happened that night, but...

He looks like he's struggling. He stares downward into his glass. He shakes his head frustratedly as she approaches him.

PIPER

We had some fun. That's all.

VAN

It shouldn't have happened. I - I don't even know what got into me.

Piper smirks down at him.

PIPER

It's more like, what *you* got into.

Van rubs at his face and then downs the rest of his drink. He sets the glass down frustratedly with some force. She picks up the glass and brings it back out into the kitchen.

VAN

I love my wife.

Piper shrugs. Her back is to him. She empties some powder into his glass, with whiskey.

PIPER

You didn't seem to love her when
you were fucking me.

He winces and rubs his face. She adds a little more powder
for good measure, then smiles as she approaches him again.

PIPER (CONT'D)

But I won't tell if you won't.

She winks, sets his drink down, and then retreats.
Flustered, he stares straight ahead as she disappears up
the stairs. He then picks up his drink and downs it.

EXT. MIAMI INT'L AIRPORT - EARLY MORNING

Jionni and Sloan get out of the back of Gage's car. Gage
and Sammi get out from the front, and Jionni retrieves his
and Sloan's bags from the trunk. Sloan takes her sunglasses
off and gives her brother a sentimental look and smile.

SLOAN

I'm proud of you, little brother.
I feel like I can't express it
enough.

GAGE

Thanks, sis.

JIONNI

Remember you can call Van or I at
any time. For anything.

Gage nods and Jionni hugs him as Sloan hugs Sammi.

GAGE

I promise I won't let you down.

SLOAN

We know.

JIONNI

Alright, we gotta plane to catch.
Thanks for the ride, bro.

GAGE

Thanks for booking a flight that
leaves at the butt-crack of dawn.
You're lucky I'm a morning person.

Sloan looks a mixture of sad and happy for her brother as she has to turn and leave him. She gives an awaiting Jionni a meaningful smile, and they disappear into the airport.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - MORNING

Piper comes down the stairs in her boy-shorts and shirt. Walking through the living room, she takes her shirt off and tosses it onto the couch. She continues to Van's bedroom and stops before the bed, where he's passed out. She pulls her shorts down and climbs into bed with him. He is dead to the world until she touches him and he murmurs. She shushes him.

EXT. MCCARRAN AIRPORT - MORNING - ESTABLISHING

A shot shows a plane landing.

INT. AIRPLANE - MORNING

Sloan sighs and looks out the window. Jionni is reading the newspaper, drinking coffee, seated beside her.

JIONNI

You feel like you left a piece of
ya behind in Miami?

Sloan wistfully stares out the window.

SLOAN

Slightly. But this is a good
thing. This is him starting a life
of his own. Being successful.

She shoots him a soft smile.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Van stirs, as Piper pulls the covers over her and kisses his back. He groggily murmurs in protest but she pays no attention. She continues seducing him. He's still doped up on whatever she gave him. She is straddling him. He's having issues turning over. She even chuckles at his attempts. Then she puts her mouth over his.

INT. JIONNI'S SUV - DRIVING FROM AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

Jionni's driving. Sloan checks her phone, and then stares out the passenger side window at The Strip as they drive.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Piper ducks under the covers. Van's eyes groggily open, and his protest comes out garbled. She emerges from under the covers, and she kisses the inside of his neck before she raises up over him and smiles down at him. Then she sits down on top of him, and her look is of complete bliss. She starts to rock back and forth on top of him, and the sheet falls down to show as she's riding him. Sloan appears in the doorway and her eyes go stark. Her jaw drops. Her free hand rises up to her throat. She drops the suitcase from her hand and the thud causes Piper to stop what she was doing and turn around, unsurprised. Van struggles to look around Piper.

VAN
(croaks)
Sloan...

Sloan's look is of stark surprise as she looks between them both. She picks her suitcase back up, turns and continues out of sight from the bedroom. Van panics and pushes Piper aside. He falls out of bed and stumbles to get up. He pulls his boxer briefs up, and wobbles to the doorway, frantic.

VAN
Sloan, wait!

SLOAN
(snaps)
There's nothing left to wait for.

VAN
Sloan!

She pauses at the front door. Tears spill down her face. She leaves and slams the door. Van is left propped against the frame of the bedroom doorway in a daze. He turns, and sees Piper still sitting there smugly.

PIPER
Come back to bed, why don't ya.

Afflicted, he ducks into the bathroom, and she rolls her eyes as we hear him vomit.

EXT. REHAB CENTER - AFTERNOON

Sloan is seated in a courtyard, on a stone bench. Angela approaches sits down. Her eyes are shielded by her large sunglasses, but she removes them and smiles.

ANGELA

Thanks for coming to see me.

SLOAN

Thanks for allowing me to get you some help. How are you feeling?

Angela's smile diminishes. She draws in a deep breath.

ANGELA

Jionni and I broke up. Like, he came here right after you guys landed, and just... pulled the trigger.

Sloan sits back slightly, and is sheerly surprised. Angela exhales an emotional sigh. Her voice trembles as she speaks.

ANGELA

I'm fucked up. I know that. I kept it a secret for forever, and once we got out here, it just... got worse. I know I need help. I get that. I brought this all upon myself...

SLOAN

He just wants to see you clean, Angela. Once you get outta here, he will see that you worked hard to fix yourself, and he will come around!

ANGELA

What about you?

Sloan inhales deeply

SLOAN

Well, that's the other thing I wanted to talk about. I left Van.

ANGELA

What?! Why? What happened?

SLOAN

I caught him in bed with Piper
this morning. I've been driving
around, ever since... For hours,
now...

Now Angela looks stunned.

ANGELA

Piper?! Oh my...

Sloan nods.

SLOAN

I'm going back to Vegas. Figure
I'll stay at my father's house. I
don't even know where to begin,
regarding a divorce...

ANGELA

(smirking)

Can you even divorce someone who's
dead? Think about it. Mommy and
Daddy bought him a death
certificate. Van doesn't exist.
So, without you, he pretty much *is*
dead.

Sloan chuckles and looks at her crazy for a second.

ANGELA

You're rich. You have control of
all his money.

SLOAN

He has debit cards.

ANGELA

(winking)

Better get moving, so you beat him
to the punch. Wipe it all out.
Cancel his shit. He deserves it.
When I get outta here, screw
Jersey. I'm hopping on the first
plane to Vegas and we can both
start fresh.

FADE OUT.

INT. SLOAN'S FATHER'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON
Renovations. A fridge is being hauled out. A new one is coming in. Sloan is directing men bringing in furniture. She is wearing paint-spattered clothes. Her hair is tossed up.

INT. SLOAN'S FATHER'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - EVENING
Sloan rounds the top of the stairs and she's on the phone.

ANGELA (O.S.)
How's it feel to be back?

SLOAN
I've been tearing this house apart. You should see it. It already looks completely different.

ANGELA (O.S.)
I look forward to moving in!

Sloan wanders into her old bedroom. There's just a mattress on the floor.

SLOAN
It still needs work... How are you?

ANGELA (O.S.)
Eager to get outta here, honestly.
I'm ready for the next chapter.

Sloan stares absently at the set of rings atop her TV stand.

SLOAN
Me too..

ANGELA
Okay, well curfew is calling. I swear they don't have anything to do around here except spy on people.

Sloan sits on the mattress and her eyes stay upon the rings.

ANGELA
I'll see you soon, okay?

SLOAN
(softly)
Okay. Goodnight, Angela.

ANGELA
Bye, babe.

Sloan puts the phone down beside her. Her face is inches away from the rings. The diamonds sparkle in the light. Her elbows are upon her knees; her hands cover her mouth. Her eyes become teary. She squeezes them shut, rubs over her face, and then sits back and turns her eyes toward the ceiling, trying to keep composed. But tears have smeared her eyeliner and down her face. She lays back on the mattress, snuffles and turns over. She curls up the bare mattress, and the camera zooms out from her, as she cries herself to sleep.

FADE OUT.

INT. SLOAN'S FATHER'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - AFTERNOON
Sloan's hair is wrapped up in a towel, and she's taking a bubble-bath. She picks up her phone and thumbs through the many messages from Van, to a message from Nick from two days before that reads "New number? Odd that you kept the Vegas area code." She types back "I kept it because I'm back in Vegas." She stares at it for a moment, and then before she can set the phone back on the ledge of the tub, it rings and she answers it.

NICK (O.S.)
What are you doing back here?

SLOAN
I'm back to stay. I've spent the last few days completely overhauling Dad's house, actually.

NICK (O.S.)
Where's the hubby?

SLOAN
Fucking my sister, probably.

There was silence for a moment, as Sloan wipes the bubbly suds down her exposed leg.

NICK (O.S.)
Did I hear that correctly?

Sloan sits up and inhales a breath.

SLOAN

I'm about to get out of my bath.
Either I can call you back later,
or you can come by for a beer. I
desperately need a drink.

NICK (O.S.)

Lucky for you, I've got nothin'
goin on, tonight. See you in
thirty.

She sets her phone down and stares at it, before reaching for her towel.

INT. ATLANTIC CITY CONDO - LATE EVENING

Van is sitting in the armchair. He has an empty glass with just ice left, in one hand. He has one of the small, empty packets Piper had been dumping in his drinks, in the other. The light from the moon casts a blue glow over him. He looks tense. Scary. He's just sitting. Waiting. He glances at the clock. It's almost three a.m. when he hears someone unlocking the door. He sets the glass down, jumps to his feet, and Piper closes the door before she is taken surprise by Van's hand at her neck, pressing her angrily back against the door.

VAN

(angrily)

What is this?

He dangles the packet in front of her face. She tries to shake her head. Her eyes are panicked.

VAN

Were you feeding me this shit?

He tightens his grip around her neck. She whimpers as he shoves her against the door again, and she's scared.

PIPER

Fuck, Van! Stop! That hurts!

He doesn't ease up.

VAN

You fuckin' drugged me!

She tries to shove him back, but he doesn't budge.

PIPER

Your dick sure didn't protest!

His hand slides up and squeezes again. His nostrils flare as he leans in closer to her face.

VAN

You really hate her that much?
After everything she's done for
you?

Piper squeezes her eyes shut and lets out a shaky breath.

VAN

(yelling)

You knew *exactly* what you were
doing when you crawled into bed
with me! You *knew* her plane was
landing!

He drops his hand and stalks away from her. Piper stays pressed to the door, as her chest heaves with her breaths.

PIPER

You wanna know what I find sad?

Van tosses a sneer behind him, and then shakes his head.

PIPER

You don't see anyone but the chick
who shits on you and threatens to
leave you every other day!

He storms back over like he's going to hit her. She winces and presses her back to the door. His face is inches from hers, as he points a finger in her face.

VAN

(hissing)

I should fucking kill you. And I
would, if you weren't my wife's
flesh and blood. So, once again,
you have her to thank.

Van stomps away. Relieved, she looks upward, as he disappears into the bedroom and slams the door shut. Her exhale is shaky. She turns and tiptoes up the stairs.

FADE OUT.

INT. SLOAN'S FATHER'S HOUSE - LATE EVENING

Sloan and Nick are seated on the new couch that is still covered in plastic. There are many beer bottles on the table, and they are both laughing. The television is on, but they aren't paying attention to it.

NICK

I can't really say I'm all that surprised, though. I remember back when we were together, and she used to parade around me wearing next to nothing. And she was just thirteen or fourteen at the time.

Sloan nods slightly, and then looks over at him. She starts to fidget with the bottle in her hands, as she blushes and smiles sheepishly at him. She looks like she wants to say something. He smiles at her, and she chuckles and loses her nerve. Then she playfully pushes at him.

SLOAN

Angela will be here tomorrow.

He rolls his eyes and shakes his head.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

C'mon, she's single now and she's always had a crush on you!

He gives her an amused look.

NICK

And that answer will always be no.
Always no!!!

She laughs and drinks some more beer.

SLOAN

It's midnight already!?

Nick lifts his bottle and winks at her.

NICK

Time flies when you're with the man of your dreams.

She laughs at him.

SLOAN

You ever talk to the rent-a-date chick you brought out to double-date with Van and I, that one night?

Nick lifts a skeptical eyebrow at her.

NICK

Oh, you really wanna talk about that night?

She is playfully defensive.

SLOAN

I never wanted to go, in the first place!

NICK

Why not?

SLOAN

Why would I?! My high school sweetheart and my current boyfriend at the same table as me?!

NICK

(chuckling)

It was definitely awkward.

SLOAN

(bitterly)

I think your make-believe girlfriend was more into him than you.

He grins as he watches her take a drink.

NICK

She could've been Mother Teresa, but because she was with me, you automatically hated her.

Sloan shrugs with a pout.

SLOAN

I didn't like her.

NICK

You do wear envy quite well,
though.

Sloan's eyebrow twitches upward at him.

SLOAN

Oh really?

Nick nods.

NICK

It made me want to rip your
clothes off back then, and I can't
say I feel any different right
now.

Sloan blushes and lifts her empty bottle.

SLOAN

You ready for another one, yet?

NICK

Yeah, I'll take one.

He studies Sloan with ease, as she disappears to the kitchen and promptly returns with two bottles of beer. She sits down a little closer beside him. He takes one of the bottles.

SLOAN

We've trudded through a lotta
crap, and we're still sitting here
together right now. That means
something, right?

His eyes pour over her face. He blinks and gathers himself.

NICK

How much did all this cost,
anyway?

SLOAN

(laughs softly)
Don't even ask... I'm beginning to
suffer from buyer's remorse.

NICK

Nah - you're good for it. You've got more money than Jesus. You know he was too good for you, right? You were just too stubborn to back out.

She tilts her head and nods.

SLOAN

There might be some truth to that. But as you know, if there's one thing I can't tolerate, it's being cheated on.

Nick lifts his eyebrows.

NICK

I know that wasn't aimed at me.

SLOAN

(shrugging)

You don't have to have sex to cheat, yanno. If you really did make out with Tammy Swarek in eleventh grade, that was cheating.

He laughs. His eyes widen before he puts on a serious face.

NICK

Every time you think about me naked, you're cheating.

SLOAN

Bullshit.

NICK

So you do think about me naked?

Blushing, she laughs as Nick grins.

SLOAN

You're totally going off-track here!

NICK

No, you wanna talk about old bullshit.

Sloan rolls her eyes, and then picks up the TV remote.

SLOAN

Brand new.

He laughs, amused.

NICK

That's right. Be proud of your self-pity purchases.

SLOAN

Hey, when that's all you've got!

NICK

Whatever. You're hotter than ever, you've got this fantastic, newly-renovated house. And oh, you got me!

SLOAN

It's just a matter of time before you are swept off your feet and get married to some lucky girl.

His smile is somewhat sad. He looks down into his beer.

NICK

I think you got swept and married enough for the both of us.

Her eyes swing over to meet his. They both look solemn.

EXT. ATLANTIC CITY BANK BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Van is standing in front of an ATM machine in the sun. He looks frustrated. One hand on his hip. He's looking around.

BANK TELLER (O.S.)

Thank you for holding. The account has been closed, sir.

Van appears like he's trying to keep himself composed.

VAN

How can the account have been closed without me? I'm on the account.

BANK TELLER (O.S.)
You can contact the authorities,
however I assure you we make sure
we see the proper paperwork and
follow procedures, when -

Wide-eyed, Van loses it.

VAN
(yelling)
Apparently not! I'm her husband,
and my name was on the account!

BANK TELLER (O.S.)
I personally handled her account,
and there was a death certificate
presented, showing that her
husband was, in fact, deceased. If
you're saying that this was done
in error-

Van hangs up on her. He paces before the ATM machine with
his hands in his hair.

VAN
(yelling)
FUCK!!!

INT. SLOAN'S FATHER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING
Sloan is on the couch. Angela comes in from the kitchen
with two drinks in hand. Her hair is wet. Both are in
pajamas.

SLOAN
You can have drinks?

ANGELA
I was treated for cocaine
addiction. Surprisingly, my
alcohol intake isn't a concern.

Sloan chuckles as Angela sits down beside her on the couch
and curls her feet up beneath her.

SLOAN
Sorry, I thought if you gave one
up, you had to give it all up.

Angela takes a sip from her glass.

ANGELA

All that bullshit about gateway drugs is a crock. Alcohol doesn't make me want to snort cocaine. Cocaine makes me want to snort cocaine. You gonna dish about the Nick thing last night?

Sloan's eyes cut to her sharply before she takes a drink.

SLOAN

We had a good time, and then I fell asleep. When I woke up, he was gone. Haven't heard from him all day.

Angela leans forward and sets her glass down.

ANGELA

The boy is still in love with you.

They startle when someone pounds on the front door. Angela jumps up, and Sloan is frozen, wide-eyed. Angela hurries to the front door and looks out, before turning back to Sloan.

SLOAN

It's him, isn't it?

Angela nods. Sloan hops up. Angela steps back, and Sloan inhales before opening the door to Van standing there, looking perturbed.

SLOAN

I really don't have anything to say to you, Van... Why are you here?

VAN

(smartly)

I couldn't get a hold of you, otherwise. Apparently, someone turned their phone off.

SLOAN

Changed my number, actually.

Van nods toward Angela.

ANGELA

What's she doing here? I thought she was in the looney bin.

ANGELA
(yelling out)
Rehab, asshole! Whatever. I'll be
upstairs if you need me.

Angela disappears up the stairs. Sloan folds her arms over
her chest and eyes Van coldly, as his eyes plead with her.

VAN
I never wanted her, Sloan. Never.

Sloan lifts her chin defiantly.

SLOAN
It didn't look like it, to me.

Van looks conflicted.

VAN
I didn't - I didn't realize what
was happening... But I swear to you
-

SLOAN
You didn't realize you were
fucking my sister?!

VAN
(snaps)
I didn't fuck her!

He looks exasperated. He throws his hands up at her.

VAN (CONT'D)
I know you don't believe me, but -

SLOAN
I've done so much for you! I've
sacrificed so much for you!

Overcome by tears, her hands rub her face. He steps up and
comes inside, taking her and pulling her to him tightly.

VAN
(raspily)
I don't expect you to believe me,
Sloan. But I was drunk. She... she
was really drunk, too.

His eyes squeeze shut before his nostrils flare.

VAN (CONT'D)

But I swear I'll never look at her again! I love you... I need you to forgive me. I want us to be together. I'll never so much as look at her ever again... Babe... Please...

SLOAN

I can't, Van... It makes me sick to even think about it... To know you slept with her is one thing, but...

She pulls away from him, wincing.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

To have seen it? So much worse...

Van watches her pace away from him, wiping her face.

VAN

I really need you to try.

SLOAN

(crossly)

I don't think you're in a position to ask anything of me.

Van draws in a breath.

VAN

I'm meeting with a realtor this afternoon. You're happier here. I'm willing to put down anchor back here in Vegas, and start over.

Sloan shakes her head, frustrated.

SLOAN

Van, no. It's just best we stay separated.

He narrows his eyes at her, and then nods. He turns, opens the front door, and pauses.

VAN

We don't believe in divorce, in this family. Just a reminder.

He looks around the house.

VAN

By the way, I really like what you did with the place. It really increases the value. In case we decide to sell.

She cocks her head at him.

SLOAN

I'm not interested in selling.
This house is mine.

Van opens the front door and smiles coolly.

VAN

Not in the eyes of the court.

Van exits, closing the door. Sloan stares at it, irritated.

INT. BREAKFAST CAFE - MORNING

Gage takes a seat across from Sloan at a table for two. He flashes her a smile. She is trying to be light.

SLOAN

How's it feel to be back?

GAGE

Good! A bit strange, considering the Miami property literally just opened. But when Van called me up and said he needed me in Vegas, I hopped on the first plane back.

Sloan's look sobers up as she nods slightly.

SLOAN

Look, I wanted to talk to you about Dad's house.

GAGE

Okay?

SLOAN

I want to sign it over to you.

Gage is bewildered.

GAGE

Why?

Sloan shrugs.

SLOAN

As a young couple saving up to get married, I think giving you the house you grew up in would be a great gift for you two starting your life together.

Gage leans back in his chair. He looks impressed.

GAGE

I certainly wasn't expecting this.

Sloan smiles at him.

SLOAN

It's the least I could do. Everything's been updated. The place looks amazing. You've worked hard. You've earned it. I called a lawyer this morning to draw up the papers, assuming you'd be okay with it all.

Gage blinks back his surprise.

GAGE

Yeah! I mean, sure - as long as this is what you want!

Sloan's smile struggles to look positive.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Joe- early 20's -sits on the couch, dividing crack into baggies. Tommy walks in from the kitchen.

TOMMY

Dude, you're making a mess.

Van hurriedly barges in the front door, causing Tommy to draw his gun. He lowers it as soon as he sees who it is.

VAN

Where is everyone?

TOMMY

Where's the fire, bro?!

VAN

I thought I told you to keep an eye on Sloan.

Tommy casually shrugs.

TOMMY

I'm on it.

VAN

Obviously not. You're here.

TOMMY

I can't be here *and* following your wife around, at the same time.

Van eyes him coldly.

VAN

I want to know the second you see company show up at her house again.

TOMMY

Not sure why you feel like you gotta repeat yourself over and over.

Van angrily swipes the bags of drugs from the coffee table, surprising both men as he storms to the sink and tears them up, dumps them down and turns the disposal on.

TOMMY

Dude! What the fuck are you doin'?!

VAN

Change of plans. No more. None of this. We're done. I want everything destroyed, and this place torched tonight.

TOMMY

Are you fuckin' kidding me!?

Van turns to him, wild-eyed.

VAN
(yelling)
Do I look like I'm fucking
kidding!? Do what you're fuckin'
told, Tommy!
(to Joe)
Three a.m. - you will empty the
gas cans in the shed all over this
damn house and light it up, you
hear me?

Joe nods quickly. Van's eyes travel to Tommy.

VAN
Don't fuck this up.

Van throws the front door open and exits the shot.

EXT. SLOAN'S FATHER'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING
Sloan steps outside. She takes notice of a silver sedan
across the street. She rolls her eyes.

SLOAN
(mutters)
Typical.

Shaking her head, she goes to her vehicle, gets in, backs
out of the driveway, and eyeballs the sedan as she drives
by.

INT. NICK'S PARENTS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS
Nick opens the door, where Sloan stands with a smirk. He
opens the door wider, allowing her to come in.

NICK
This is a pleasant surprise.

She steps inside. He closes the door, and she looks around.

SLOAN
Wow, it's as if this place has
been stuck inside a time capsule.

He chuckles at her, and looks her over.

NICK
What brings you here?

She contemplates him, and then puts her purse down.

SLOAN

You.

He looks intrigued as she strolls through the living room.

SLOAN

Where is everyone?

He begins to follow her.

NICK

The 'rents went outta town for the weekend.

She tosses a playful look behind her and steps into the den.

SLOAN

Is that so?

He chuckles, looking a bit confused by her. He stands there and watches her take a seat on the old, sunken couch.

NICK

You want something to drink?

She smiles brightly at him.

SLOAN

I'd love that.

He disappears from the doorway, and Sloan's look sobers as she looks around the room. Her eyes settle upon the old television on the stand, when Nick returns with two beers. He takes a seat, leaving a foot or so of room between them. He looks awkward. Her eyes study him.

SLOAN

You disappeared after the other night.

He toys with his beer. He nods and brings it to his lips.

NICK

Been busy.

Sloan nods, studying him.

SLOAN

I want to know why you ran away to
Houston after my father passed
away.

His eyes cut sharply to her and roam her face. Then they
lower to his beer again.

NICK

Which answer are you looking for?
Hmm? The part where I was
devastated that you married a
complete asshole? Or that you
allowed him to come between us?

Sloan looks down at her beer.

SLOAN

Maybe I need to hear both.

Nick boldly eyes her.

NICK

I did what I had to, to move on.

Her eyes are still fixed upon him.

SLOAN

Did you move on?

His jaw tenses as he considers her question.

NICK

That's not a fair question.

Sloan's chest rises and falls with every quick breath. She
quickly leans forward, pressing her mouth to his.
Instantly, Nick reciprocates, eagerly. His hands are upon
her, in her hair - his kiss is passionate. He sends her to
her back. Her hands roam beneath his shirt, until he takes
it off. His mouth is on her neck. Her hands are at his
belt. He swiftly rolls them over, and she sits up over him,
pulling her shirt off and lowering herself to kiss him
again.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. SLOAN'S CAR - EARLY MORNING

Sloan turns onto her street. Her hair is slightly disheveled, and make-up is absent from her face. As she pulls up to her house, she sees the silver sedan parked across the street. She gets out and brazenly marches across the street to it. Pounding on the window, she startles the two men awake, inside. As the window rolls down, she's irritated to find Tommy and Joe. Joe points a gun at her from the passenger seat, and Sloan angrily punches Tommy in the eye.

SLOAN

(yelling)

Did Van put you up to this!?

(to Joe)

And who the hell are you!? Trust me, you little prick, you don't want to keep pointing that gun at me.

Tommy reaches over and lowers Joe's gun.

TOMMY

Look, I don't mean any harm. I'm just doing a friend a favor -

SLOAN

A friend? Or your cousin!? Lame! All of you are lame. Back off!

She turns begins to stomp off.

TOMMY

How's Nick doin'?

Sloan pauses and sneers back at him.

SLOAN

Piper's back in town, yanno. Go on and contact her. Get your turn in!

She continues up the path to her front door. You hear Tommy start his car, as she disappears inside and slams the door.

INT. SLOAN'S FATHER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

No sooner does Sloan lock the front door that her phone rings. Angrily, she brings it to her ear.

SLOAN

What perfect timing you have! Do you have cameras stashed around my house, in addition to having your idiot cousin following me around!?

VAN (O.S.)

Cameras? You underestimate me, beautiful.

SLOAN

Nice that you're so wrapped up in whatever else you're doing, to follow me around so you get Tommy to do it for you.

VAN (O.S.)

He says you gave him a black eye. I'm impressed! Are you ready to check out the new house I bought us? The moving truck will be at Gage's house about noon.

Sloan freezes with a look of panic.

SLOAN

With what money?!

VAN (O.S.)

Have you seen the news, lately? A drug house on the south side of town went up in flames, two nights ago.

SLOAN

What does that have to do with anything?

VAN (O.S.)

Because I'm done. With all of it. The drugs. I put an end to it all.

Sloan's eyebrows lift.

SLOAN

So you're telling me that was yours?

VAN (O.S.)

I'm trying to prove to you how serious I am about getting us back.

Sloan sighs and shakes her head.

SLOAN

This whole scheme you've got going - the manipulative bullshit doesn't make me want to be with you. It's not charming. It's not gonna work.

VAN (O.S.)

The moving truck will be there at Gage's house at noon, beautiful.

Sloan looks around at the living room.

SLOAN

You wasted no time, after finding out I signed this house over to Gage. Nothing here is even packed!

VAN (O.S.)

I'll be there shortly to help.

There's a knock at the door. She looks through the peephole, sees Van on the front stoop, and rolls her eyes.

SLOAN

Cute.

She hangs up the phone and opens the door. Her smile is tight and sarcastic. So is his as he steps in, past her. She is surprised as Tommy strolls inside, glaring at her, followed by Joe. Angela comes down the stairs, and awkwardly pauses as the men begin to pick things up and move them around. Sloan starts after Van, into the kitchen.

SLOAN

This is bullshit! I never agreed to give things another try, with you!

Van stops and turns to face her.

VAN

Honestly, if you knew exactly what transpired between me and Piper, you wouldn't be so upset with me.

SLOAN

I find that hard to believe.

VAN

Believe it. But it's not going to be an issue, any longer.

SLOAN

You can't just buy us a house and think that's magically going to fix everything, Van!

VAN

No, there is no magical fix. Just me fucking telling you I never wanted Piper in the first place, and she climbed into bed when I was passed out. She used me to get back at you, and I came *this close* to killing her when I found out!

Sloan stares after him as he paces before her. The other men are still actively moving stuff around the downstairs.

SLOAN

What do you mean, she used you?

He steps forward, and his lips part to speak, but he stops. He leans into her, and Sloan freezes as he breathes her in, and then blinks. His eyes go blank. He exhales like someone has punched him in the gut, and his eyes lower. Angela stops in the doorway to the kitchen, and Van takes a step back, very visually affected by catching a whiff of men's cologne on Sloan. Realizing what he just picked up on, Sloan's hand rises to fidget with her necklace, and she takes a step back. Van simply turns and exits the kitchen past Angela. She then enters the kitchen.

ANGELA

It's surreal that all of a sudden, both Capitani brothers are trying to fix things and get us back.

Sloan is still staring after him.

ANGELA

Not that any of this can be fixed
overnight... What's wrong?

SLOAN

(hoarsely)
I think I was just found out...

ANGELA

What?

Sloan's eyes meet hers with reluctance.

SLOAN

(softly)
I slept with someone last night...

Angela's eyes widen.

ANGELA

Oh shit...

Sloan nervously scratches her head.

FADE OUT.

INT. SLOAN & VAN'S HOME - EARLY EVENING

Sloan comes down an elegant staircase, freshly showered. The house is fully unpacked. She is alone. Her fingers rake along the granite kitchen counter, before she grabs a bottle of Riesling from the wine fridge. She opens it and grabs a glass from the cabinet. Her eyes fall upon a handgun that lays in clear view in her purse, atop the counter. She pours the wine into her glass, sets the bottle down, and brings the glass to her lips. She thumbs through the mail atop the counter. She pauses at a piece forwarded from the old condo, to the house. She opens it, and it's an electric bill in Van's name. She picks up the phone and calls him. It goes to voicemail. She takes a deep breath and paces.

SLOAN

(softly)
Hey. It's me again... Kind of feels
like we need to talk, but I
haven't seen you since the day we
moved in, here. Or, I moved in,
here. No idea where you've been...

She sighs into the phone and scratches her head.

SLOAN (CONT'D)
At least let me know you're okay.
You can come home, you know. I
mean, it *is* your house...

She rubs at her face, frustrated.

SLOAN (CONT'D)
Call me back, Van. Please.

She hangs up the phone, and stares at it.
INT. VAN'S CONDO - BELLEZZA - EARLY EVENING
Van is standing before the window, and Piper joins him in
the living room from the bedroom. She winks at him as she
passes through. His face is devoid of emotion.

PIPER
Your wife called again. She's
really gonna flip her shit when
she finds out I'm staying here
with you.

Van's smile disappears.

VAN
You're not staying here. You're
getting out. I told you to see if
Gage will let you stay with him.

Van gives her a sideways glance. She is annoyed.

PIPER
I just got here! You know he won't
let me stay there! He always takes
Sloan's side! Besides, what if I
don't want to go quietly!?

He lifts an eyebrow at her.

VAN
What's that supposed to mean?

PIPER
You know how much trouble you'd be
in for faking your own death?

He rolls his eyes and looks back out the window.

VAN

You wouldn't be that stupid.
Tomorrow, you're out. I mean it.

EXT. NICK'S PARENTS HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Sloan is standing on the front stoop. Nick opens the door, and his mother ELLEN, standing behind him, lights up.

ELLEN

Oh my word! Sloan! How are you?

Nick smiles sheepishly at her, and holds the door open wide. She walks inside.

INT. NICK'S PARENTS HOUSE'S - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ellen instantly draws Sloan in for a hug. Nick watches on amusedly as Sloan looks overwhelmed.

ELLEN

I didn't even know you were in town!

NICK

We were just finishing up with dinner, if you're hungry.

Sloan shakes her head.

SLOAN

No, but thank you.

It's awkward. Silent. Nick rubs his hands together anxiously.

NICK

C'mon into the den. You wanna beer?

SLOAN

Oh, no. I'm fine.

She follows him into the den, and he sits in the middle of the couch. She sits on the very end. He winces briefly.

NICK

You've been quiet, lately. As in, you haven't returned any of my texts, or calls.

Sloan's lips part, but nothing comes out. She looks downward.

NICK
You all settled in at the new
place?

She nods.

SLOAN
Big house. Kind of lonely,
actually.

NICK
Sorry to hear that.

SLOAN
Van knows I'm sleeping with
someone.

Nick looks intrigued.

NICK
You gonna elaborate on that, some?

She draws in a deep breath.

SLOAN
We were arguing... the morning I
came home from here. I reeked of
your cologne. I smelled it. He
smelled it. I haven't heard from
him, since.

NICK
So you were found out, felt
ashamed, and stopped taking my
calls.

Sloan rolls her eyes.

SLOAN
I don't like feeling guilty, no!

Nick's look is sharp.

NICK
Well, by all means, don't let me
add any extra stress to your
situation.

She hesitates.

SLOAN

Angela is working things out with Jionni, my brother is up Gage's ass, and I feel like I have no one!

He instantly looks offended.

NICK

I'd choose my words a little more carefully, if I were you. Putting the night we spent together completely aside, I've been your friend through all the shit he's put you through, which trust me, has not been easy.

Now Sloan looks hurt.

SLOAN

Well, I'm sorry to have put you through that.

Frustrated, Nick jumps to his feet.

NICK

I begged you not to marry that guy! I even put my own heart on the line for you, and not only did you shrug me off, but you expected nothing would change when you waltzed back into my life like you never stomped on my heart! And if seeing you again wasn't hard enough, you expected me to be the guy that deals with all your emotional bullshit, while Van continued to be a shitty husband, ruining your life in the process!

Offended, Sloan rises to her feet.

SLOAN

You weren't always the best option for me, either. Remember? What could've made running away with you more appealing than being with Van, when you and I couldn't even keep our own sinking ship afloat!?

Hurt, Nick's hands find his hips.

NICK

You're right, Sloan. I guess I'm
really no better than he is.

His jaw tenses, and softens.

NICK (CONT'D)

I think it's just best you go. You
need to figure things out, and
what's best for you. But I can't
be your back-up plan. I care too
much for you. And this is shitty.

You can literally see both of their hearts breaking. Teary-eyed, Sloan turns and hurries out of the room. His hands cover his face, and he exhales a long sigh. The front door shuts, and he runs his hands over to the back of his head, and turns to watch her get into her car, outside and drive off. He collapses upon the couch and rubs at his face.

EXT. SLOAN & VAN'S HOME - EARLY EVENING

Sloan gets out of her car, crying. She's wiping at her face. Sniffling. She goes to the mailbox and retrieves mail, and starts up the walkway. She unlocks the door and is about to go inside, when a Cadillac pulls into the driveway behind hers. She pauses as Van's uncle ANGELO and cousin VINNY get out of the car and approach. She eyes them with uncertainty. Angelo bends down and picks up an envelope Sloan dropped, and presents it to her when they reach the stoop.

ANGELO

You dropped something.

Sloan takes the envelope and shifts uncomfortably.

SLOAN

What can I do for you gentlemen?

ANGELO

We're here on business.

SLOAN

As long as I've known this family,
that's never been a good response.

ANGELO

Nope. Never good. Where's Van?

SLOAN

I've been wondering the same thing, myself. What do you want him for?

ANGELO

He's been stealing from me. A lotta money. Perhaps the money he used to buy this little love-nest, here.

She shakes her head and chuckles bitterly.

SLOAN

Nothing surprises me, anymore...

ANGELO

He's in a lotta trouble, Sloan. You don't steal from family.

He hands Sloan a card.

ANGELO

Call me when you hear from him.

Both men turn and stroll back down the sidewalk, as Sloan watches, bewildered. When Angelo's car backs out of the driveway, she goes inside and sets the mail down on the kitchen counter. She looks at Angelo's card, and then her eyes focus on the piece of mail on top of the stack. Forwarded from the Bellezza condo. She grabs her purse and heads back out the front door.

INT. VAN'S CONDO - BELLEZZA - LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING
The front door opens. Van and Piper walk in. Stone-faced, he hands her a wad of money.

PIPER

(sarcastically)

Gee, this is awfully sweet of you.

VAN

Consider it a parting gift.

She frowns. The angle of the shot moves from the doorway of the bedroom. Piper cocks her head at Van and smiles.

PIPER

Such a shame. We had some good times.

VAN

You fucked me. Literally and figuratively.

She stops thumbing through the wad of money in her hand. Their attention is suddenly attracted to the doorway. Sloan is standing there, with tear-stained eyes and a gun aimed at Van. Piper's eyes go wide. Van doesn't look fazed.

SLOAN

(shakily)

You've been missing in action for days, and turns out you've been holed up here, with her?!

Van's eyes narrow, observing her unstable, jittery movements.

VAN

(calmly)

What are you doing with that? You don't know how to use that.

SLOAN

The fuck I don't. You know you have people out there looking for you? What would make you stupid enough to steal money from your family!?

Van looks confused as she continues.

SLOAN

You deserve to be turned in for everything you've done, so I can get on with my life. Without you hanging over my head.

PIPER

Maybe you should put that down, and-

SLOAN

You should shut your fucking mouth
- how about that!? It wasn't
enough that I gave up my sanity
for years trying to keep a roof
over your head, but you had to get
your hands on my husband, too!?

Van scoffs.

VAN

Husband. That word means nothing
to you, anymore.

SLOAN

(voice cracking)
That's your fault.

Van's expression is riddled with hurt.

VAN

(gravely)
Who was it, Sloan? Was it Nick?

She lowers the gun, and then wipes beneath her eyes as
she's literally crumbling.

SLOAN

(cracking)
It doesn't matter... You've already
moved on.

Van's head shakes in protest.

VAN

No! She *just* showed back up, here!

SLOAN

(yelling over him)
I'm done! Done moving and running!
I was stupid for even coming here!
And seeing you both here proves
that this is over, Van. I'm done
with you. You deserve everything
you're about to get.

His jaw tenses.

VAN

What does that mean!? You plan on turning me in? You gonna call the cops? Or my lunatic uncle who is completely delusional?

Sloan half-smiles bitterly.

SLOAN

Or maybe I'll just finish you off, myself.

CUT TO:

INT. SLOAN'S CAR - BELLEZZA PARKING GARAGE - CONTINUOUS
Trembling and crying, she's sitting in the driver's seat. She hugs the steering wheel for a long moment, then sits back in her seat, wiping her eyes and looking upward.

SLOAN

(whispers)

Fuck!

She wipes her eyes and with paranoid eyes she looks out around the car. She eyes the gun in her purse. She plucks Angelo's card from her purse and stares down at it. She snuffles and wipes her eyes, glancing in the rearview mirror. Then she snatches her phone from her purse. We see her tapping around the screen on her phone, before she puts it to her ear.

FADE TO BLACK.