

Confidential Informant

A play

by Charlie Lyons

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CHARACTERS

LINDA PATTON: A police detective in her forties. Cal is her son.

ERICA DRISCOLL: Early twenties.

CAL PATTON: Linda's son. Early twenties.

Nonspeaking parts: NICOLE: Thirties. EDDIE: Twenties.

PLACE

Boston.

TIME

The present.

Notes:

A slash (/) indicates where the next character starts speaking, so that the characters' dialogue overlaps.

Ellipsis (...) after a character's name indicates the unspoken response of the character.

Addiction does not discriminate based on ethnic background. One way to convey this lack of discrimination is to mix it up with the cast. One possible limitation is that Cal is Linda's biological son. However, the ethnicity of Cal's father is never identified, so this may not be much of a limitation. If it makes sense to change any of the character's names, feel free to do so.

As for the car, it could be either chairs or actual car seats. In the scene where the car moves, the streetlight might fade in and out, to show that the car is passing under multiple streetlights. The sounds of the city might change with this movement, possibly with the projection of city imagery. Or convey this movement however you see fit.

SCENE 1

It's night. We're in the city. A streetlight shines down on a car downstage right.

Linda sits in the drivers seat, wearing a hoodie sweatshirt, with the hood down. She's looking in the sideview mirror, so she can see the door to a house, which is upstage left.

Erica enters, wearing a flannel shirt, jeans, and work boots. She crosses behind Linda's car and walks upstage to the door.

Erica looks around nervously, hits the buzzer. When the intercom clicks on --

ERICA

(into intercom)

Hey, it's me.

Buzz goes the door. Erica looks around again, pushes open the door, and enters.

Linda gets out of the car. She has a gun in a holster that's on her hip.

She walks behind her car, and pulls out her badge, which hangs around her neck on a chain.

She waits.

Erica exits the door. Her head down, her left hand clenched shut, Erica walks directly into Linda.

She looks up, sees the badge.

LINDA

(re: badge)

It's real. Detective Patton. What's that in your hand?

Erica looks around, ready to bolt --

Wanna add resisting arrest?
LINDA

Erica settles.

Let's see it.
LINDA

Erica opens her hand, revealing three corner bags of heroin. Linda takes the bags, puts them in her hoodie's pocket.

Turn around. Hands behind your back.
LINDA

Erica complies.

Linda cuffs her, and pat frisks her. As she goes to reach into her pockets --

Am I gonna get stuck?
LINDA

Erica shakes her head.

You sure? Don't wanna be lying to me.
LINDA

Linda studies her. Then reaches into Erica's pockets, pulls out her keys, her phone, and her wallet. She puts them in her hoodie's pocket.

She leads Erica to the car door, opens it, puts her hand on top of Erica's head, and guides her into the backseat of the car.

Slide over.
LINDA

Linda gets in after her, and throws Erica's keys, phone, wallet, and the corner bags of drugs onto the seat between them.

Comfortable?
LINDA

Erica stares at her.

LINDA

I'll take that as a yes. What's your name?

No answer.

LINDA

I've got you cold. You know that, right?

No answer.

LINDA

The silent treatment, is it cuz you're nervous, or you've been here before?

Linda picks up Erica's wallet. Opens it --

LINDA

Erica Driscoll. Nice -- you've got a CDL license. Drive trucks?

No response. Linda opens the wallet wider.

LINDA

But no cash. Spend it all on the powder? Not driving high on this shit, are you?

Still nothing.

LINDA

You seem nice enough for a mute, but if you don't open your mouth, talk to me, I can't help you. I'm trying to give you some options here --

ERICA

I got an option. Bring me in. Get this done with.

LINDA

In a big hurry to get locked up?

ERICA

In hurry to get booked and bailed, so I can get some sleep.

LINDA

Have to be somewhere tomorrow? Got a job to be at?

No answer.

LINDA

Afraid to tell me if you've got a job?

ERICA

I've got a job.

LINDA

Driving a truck?

ERICA

Yes.

LINDA

Good for you. But if you can't post bail, you'll be sleeping at the station on our comfortable cement benches.

ERICA

Save your bullshit. It's possession. I'll get a low bail.

LINDA

Definitely not your first rodeo. Know why I haven't run your record yet? I'd have to call it in. That would put you in the system. There'd be a record that I'd picked you up. As it is, nobody knows we're having this conversation. Nobody I work with. And none of your friends in that house you came out of --

ERICA

No fuckin' way.

LINDA

No way what?

ERICA

I don't rat.

LINDA

Probation? Drug testing? Someone watching you pee in a cup? That your idea of a good time?

No answer.

LINDA

That's assuming you're a candidate for probation. A word in the right ear, you'll get committed time.

ERICA

I'm not a snitch.

LINDA

You wouldn't be snitching. All you'd do is go back in there a few times, and buy a few corner bags. Except it wouldn't be your money, and you wouldn't get to keep the drugs. Those buys would give me probable cause for a search warrant. That's all I'd need. You'd never testify. No one would ever know it was you --

ERICA

Could give a fuck who knows. I'm not doing it.

LINDA

I can help you. Get you into a program. Outpatient treatment --

ERICA

Thanks. All set.

LINDA

That right? These baggies, you picking 'em up for someone else?

ERICA

I'm not doing it.

LINDA

You're gonna, or I'm gonna nail you to the wall.

ERICA

Nail away. I'm used to it.

LINDA

Then this is a chance for you to change that.

No response.

Linda picks up Erica's keys pockets them.

LINDA

Once I bring you in, it's done --

ERICA

Then let's get it done.

LINDA

This is your one shot at a get outta jail free card.

She looks at Erica.

Pause.

LINDA

No? Fine.

Linda pockets Erica's wallet. Picks up the three baggies.

LINDA

You were gonna have a party? Party's over.

She pockets the baggies.

Pause.

LINDA

The bail commissioner's gonna set whatever bail I ask for. You got ten thousand dollars? Bet you can't even make a thousand. Now you're in the police station overnight. Come tomorrow, could be a problem with the paperwork, so we don't get you to court until the afternoon. That means you miss work tomorrow. How's your boss feel about no-call-no-shows? Then the DA asks that the bail stands. If the judge gives us that, you're in jail for a month. Now your job's gone. And who pays the rent? You? You gonna lose your housing too? You finally get your probation a month from now, but you've got no job and no place to live? All because you won't buy for me?

Erica holds her ground.

LINDA

Your friend in there, Eddie Delany, I'm gonna get him. You'd just be helping me out a bit.

Linda stops.

Lets the moment settle.

LINDA

Your choice.

Linda picks up Erica's phone.

LINDA

Want me to call someone for you? Your parents? They know what's going on with you? Think maybe they should --

ERICA

Leave it.

LINDA

Leave it? ... Really?

Linda clicks the phone's screen. It lights up.

LINDA

Whoa. Who's this? He's adorable. What is he, three, four years old? He yours?

Linda holds the phone up by Erica's hard expression.

LINDA

Totally has your smile.

No answer.

LINDA

Want me to crack this phone open, call everyone in here, ask who this kid is --

ERICA

You can't do that --

LINDA

Can do whatever I want. He yours or not?

ERICA

He's mine.

LINDA

Changes everything, doesn't it? He changes everything. Not just about you anymore.

ERICA

...

LINDA

Good, you get that much. When I had mine. Plunk. There he was. From that moment on, he was a force. The physical pull, in my gut, in my heart ... Scared the shit out of me ... But he was so sweet too ... What's his name?

No answer.

LINDA

Think I'm gonna cast a spell cuz I know his name?

ERICA

Liam.

LINDA

Liam. Nice. Where's Liam now? You leave him alone so you could score --

ERICA

Fuck you.

LINDA

Then where is he? Want me to send a cruiser around your place to do a well-being check?

ERICA

He's not there.

LINDA

Then where is he?

ERICA

At a friend's.

LINDA

At a friend's? Like a boyfriend's?

ERICA

No.

LINDA

You gonna go back to your friend's, do this stuff up --

ERICA

No.

LINDA

Gonna save this stuff for a rainy day? Come on, who's bullshitting who now? How 'bout the father? Where's he at?

Erica shakes her head.

LINDA
Not in the picture?

ERICA
No.

LINDA
Other family?

Erica shakes her head.

LINDA
No one --

ERICA
I've got friends.

LINDA
Like in that house? That's tough. No wonder you get high. This is tough too. If I bring you in, I've got a legal obligation to contact the Department of Children and Families. They'll take custody of Liam, place him in foster care, somewhere good or bad, who knows with them. Then, depending on how you do with the drugs, or how bad they screw things up, could make his placement permanent. And if that happens, your adorable little boy? Gone.

ERICA
Fuck you. Doesn't work that way.

LINDA
That's exactly how it works. It's not about you, remember. About the best interest of the child, and I got news for you, he's not safe with you --

ERICA
You don't know shit.

LINDA
Fine, you're mom of the year. Doesn't matter. DCF can't take that chance. And if I bring you in, I've gotta call 'em.

ERICA
...

LINDA

Good, you get that too. So this is what it boils down to, do what I say, make a few controlled buys, and you're done. You and Liam can live happily ever after. Or keep telling me to get lost, and lose your job, the place you live, spend time in jail, maybe be on probation, and risk losing Liam for what ... months? A year? Forever? Your choice, but seems like a no brainer to me.

Linda stops. Lets the moment settle. Watches Erica's wheels spin.

ERICA

Mess with my kid, I'll kill you. Last thing I do, I'll put you in the fuckin' ground.

Linda lets that settle too.

LINDA

That a yes?

ERICA

It's a fuckin' yes.

LINDA

Good.

ERICA

Good? Using my kid to get me to do this? Fuck you. Fuck you it's good. And what's that make you, huh?

LINDA

Think I care what you think of me? You're a means to end. That's all that matters.

Blackout.

SCENE 2

Cal's bedroom. Night. A bed. Next to the bed is a nightstand with a lamp on it. The lamp is on and there's a shirt over it to dim the light. Next to the lamp is a charred spoon and a lighter.

Cal is sprawled on the bed. He's in a t-shirt and underwear. We know this because the covers are hanging off the bed. His jeans are on the floor.

Surgical tubing is on the bed near his arm, as is a hypodermic needle. There's also an armchair that you could sleep in if you had to.

There's a knock at the door.

LINDA

(off stage)

Cal?

The door opens. Linda looks in. She enters, her bag on her shoulder.

She moves to Cal, feels his forehead, places her fingers on his neck, looking at her watch. She feels his pulse long enough to know his heart rate's OK.

She picks up the needle and surgical tubing that are near his arm, and puts them on the nightstand.

She pulls the covers up, and tucks him in. She brushes his hair back with her fingers. Looks at him. Kisses him. Smells his hair deeply. She sits up, and takes a moment to compose herself.

She moves to the lamp, feels the top of it where the shirt covers it, and removes the shirt.

She looks in the nightstand's drawer, finds the tin box he's using for his kit. She puts the spoon, lighter, needle, and tubing in there. Then puts the tin box in her bag.

She gets up and pulls the arm chair over to the door to block it. She shuts off the lamp, and sits in the chair.

Lights fade, as she tries to get comfortable.

Lights up, as the sunrises.

Linda wakes. Gets up, and moves to the bed.

LINDA

Cal. Wake up.

She shakes him. Cal wakes.

CAL

Ma? ... How'd you ... What are you doing here?

LINDA

You said you'd go into treatment. Yesterday.

CAL

Yeah, I know. I'm gonna go today.

LINDA

...

CAL

I had stuff to do yesterday. Had to wrap things up before I go in --

LINDA

Heard it before. Yesterday was the day. That was our agreement.

CAL

I know, but everything's all set now, I'm gonna go today. It's all good.

LINDA

You're right, you are going today, but it's gonna be courtesy of the court, and the sheriff's department will give you a ride there.

Cal rolls out of bed away from her --

CAL

No fuckin' way. I'm not getting sectioned by some judge.

He grabs his jeans off the floor, and hops into them --

CAL

Told you, I'm gonna do this on my own. That was our agreement too --

LINDA

You had your chance.

CAL

I had shit to do. There's stuff I had to get in order before I go in. Wrap stuff up. Why can't you understand that? Loose ends, Ma.

LINDA

There's nothing you have to wrap up.

He sees the chair blocking the door.

CAL

What the fuck's that? You trying to trap me in here?

He grabs a duffle bag and stuffs clothes in it.

CAL

This is bullshit. You're the one disrespecting our agreement.

LINDA

Put the bag down.

He moves to the nightstand and opens the drawer -- stares in at the empty drawer.

LINDA

I have it.

She moves between him and the door.

CAL

This is what I'm talking about. You don't get to do this. Come in here, take my stuff. Interfere like this. I've gotta do this my way. We agreed. I'm gonna ... I'm gonna get rid of my kit. Duh. Me. Not you. That puts me in control. And your bullshit isn't helping.

Off her look of resolve --

CAL

Fuck this.

Bag in hand, he moves toward the door. She blocks him.

CAL

Get outta my way.

He pushes past her.

As he pushes the chair away from the door, she grabs him around the waist, brings him to the floor, and pulls out her handcuffs.

CAL

Get off me.

He struggles, but she manages to cuff him.

CAL

Ma, Christ, let me go. I'm gonna go. Was gonna go yesterday. Swear. I had an appointment. Call them. What's her name ... Barbara ... doing the intake. She had to reschedule. I meant to tell you, but I forgot. Just call her. Let me go and call her. She'll tell you. And when she rescheduled, figured had shit to wrap up anyway, so I'll just go in today. Didn't know it was such a big deal. Fuck. I get it now. Let me up. I'll go in with you. We'll both go in. You can be there for the intake --

LINDA

Even if I got you there. You'd walk out. It's gotta be a locked facility. I can't find you dead --

CAL

Ma, I'm not gonna die.

He struggles to get up. She pushes him back down.

CAL

What's wrong with you? Said I'd go ... Cuz I didn't do exactly, like to the fucking letter, what you said, you're pulling this shit on me?

She leans over him --

LINDA

I'm gonna let you up. Don't fight me. I don't want to hurt you.

CAL

Don't do this. I can't go in a cell. I can't. I'm gonna suffer in there. I'm already feeling sick. Feel my forehead.

She doesn't feel his forehead.

CAL

By this afternoon, I'm gonna be in serious pain. I'm gonna be in that cell all day before I get a bed. You know I'm right. I'm gonna be in there all fuckin' day. Why won't you call Barbara? ... They don't give me anything in the cell ... I need something. I need something to get me through to detox -- just a little to get me to the bed. There's still some in my kit. That's all I need and I'll go.

LINDA

You're gonna get through this. You've done it before --

CAL

No shit I've done it before. It fuckin' sucked. Please. I'm begging you ... You don't care? You don't give a shit?! I gotta be high. I gotta be high. They won't take me in detox if I'm not high. Swear to god --

LINDA

Cal --

CAL

You've gotta be high for them to take you, I know it's fucked up, but it's true.

LINDA

Stop.

CAL

Christ ... shit ...

He struggles. She quells it.

LINDA

I'm gonna get you something --

CAL

Yes. Thank you. It's in my kit.

LINDA

Try to get up, I'll put your head through the floor. You understand me?

CAL

Yes. Totally.

Linda gets up. Grabs her bag, pulls out the tin, opens it, looks at the contents.

CAL

You know what to do?

LINDA

Uh huh.

She puts the tin back in her bag, pulls out an orange prescription bottle, and takes out two pills.

She takes one, swallows it.

She takes the other, moves to Cal, and tries to put the pill in his mouth, but he moves his head around to keep from taking it --

CAL

What the fuck? No. I need ...

She gets hold of his head, and puts the pill at his lips --

LINDA

Take it. Swallow it.

He takes it, and swallows.

CAL

What the fuck was that?

LINDA

It'll help with anxiety. If you don't give me any trouble, I'll give you another when we get to court --

CAL

If I'm a good boy? Fuck you. And bye. Do this, we're done. Never gonna see you again. Swear to god. It worth it, Ma? Really worth it?

Blackout.

SCENE 3

It's night. Three days later. Linda's in the car, behind the driver's seat. Erica's in the front passenger seat.

Linda counts out money on the seat beside her. Erica watches her. Finished counting, Linda puts the money in her pocket.

ERICA

Aren't you s'pose to give me the money?

LINDA

Hang on a sec ... I have to --

ERICA

Have to what?

Linda pulls out a little note pad and pen, looks at her watch, and makes a note of the time.

LINDA

There's a process. We've gotta follow it.

ERICA

Buy the H. Come back out. Give it to you. That the process?

Linda looks at Erica, up and down, and makes more notes --

ERICA

What the fuck? This shit have a dress code?

LINDA

You know who's gonna be in there?

ERICA

I don't know ... the usual probably.

LINDA

Who's the usual?

ERICA

Don't you know?

LINDA

You have to tell me.

Linda waits, pen at the ready with her pad.

ERICA

Nicole was the one on the phone. You heard her, all she said was it was cool to come by.

LINDA

Who's usually there?

ERICA

I don't know, people come and go.

LINDA

Part of this deal between you and me -- don't jerk me around.

ERICA

Nicole, Eddie, maybe some of Eddie's friends.

LINDA

When you come out, I wanna know who's in there, their names if you know them, and something each of them is wearing --

ERICA

Joke, right? I'm gonna remember everything everyone's wearing while I'm in there for a second?

LINDA

Not everything. Something. Especially who you buy from.

ERICA

Want me to take photos too?

LINDA

Mental ones, yeah.

ERICA

Can I get the money now -- do this?

LINDA

Not yet.

ERICA

I'm not trying to be here any longer than I have to.

LINDA

If we don't do this right, you'll have to do more buys. You want that?

ERICA

...

LINDA

Didn't think so. Then calm down.

Erica does her best to settle.

LINDA

OK. This is how it goes. You give me your money, I search you to make sure you don't have any other money or drugs on you. Then I give you the buy money. You go in and buy the drugs. When you come back out, you give me the drugs, and I search you again to make sure you don't have any other drugs on you.

Erica pulls out her wallet, throws it on the seat.

ERICA

That's all my money. Can we skip you feeling me up --

LINDA

It's a pat down. And no. I have to swear to it in an affidavit --

ERICA

You use my name?

LINDA

No, no one's ever gonna know who you are.

ERICA

Then what's it matter? I'm already doing what you want.

LINDA

You're making me nervous.

ERICA

I didn't know this was part of the deal is all.

LINDA

Tell me you're not holding --

ERICA

I'm not.

LINDA

Then what?

Erica doesn't say anything.

Linda leans in and pats down a tense Erica. As Linda reaches Erica's jeans pockets --

LINDA

See? This is what I'm talking about. You've gotta give me all your money, even the change.

ERICA

It's not money ...

Erica turns her head away from Linda, as Linda fishes into her pocket and pulls out an AA chip.

LINDA

What's this?

ERICA

An AA chip -- Alcoholics Anonymous.

LINDA

Yeah. I know it's an AA chip. What are you doing with it?

Erica doesn't respond. Linda examines it --

LINDA

What are you doing with a one-year chip from AA?

No answer.

LINDA

You gonna go silent on me again?

ERICA

You earn them.

LINDA

I caught you buying. Not for nothing, Erica, doesn't help you if you cheat at AA --

ERICA
I didn't cheat.

LINDA
...

ERICA
Something wrong, detective?

LINDA
Didn't have it on you the other night.

ERICA
Cuz I hadn't been to a meeting in a while. But after "the other night," thought it might be a good idea to go.

Off Linda still piecing it together --

ERICA
Need to be clean, right, if I'm gonna drive trucks?

Linda nods.

ERICA
Still haven't figured it out, detective? You stopped me from slipping. I was gonna use, was gonna light it up with a fuckin' torch, but you stopped me ... Thanks. I guess.

LINDA
You've had a year clean?

ERICA
A year, and a month and a half.

LINDA
That's ... You should be proud --

ERICA
Didn't do it for you.

LINDA
I know, but ...

ERICA
But you're still gonna send me in, right?

LINDA
... Yes --

ERICA
That's special. Touching.

Linda tries to hand the AA chip back to Erica --

LINDA
Here. You can have it back.

ERICA
Sure that's OK? What if they pat me down? Find it.

LINDA
You slipped. You earned it, but you slipped, just like what was going to happen.

ERICA
That's real good, but you hold it for me.

Linda doesn't want to. But Erica won't take it back, so Linda relents, and keeps the chip.

LINDA
This was your choice, alright? Let's be clear on that. Fact is, now it makes even more sense for you to do this. Do a few buys, move on, get back on ... I mean, stay on track --

ERICA
If you say so.

LINDA
Like you said, you're gonna go in, buy, come out, and give me the drugs. That's all.

ERICA
Sounds like a plan. Gonna give me the money now or what?

Linda takes the money out, and hands it to Erica.

ERICA
Thanks.

Erica gets out of the car, slams the door behind her, moves to the house, and gets buzzed in.

Linda watches her go in.

Pause.

She looks at the chip in her hand.

She pockets the chip, pulls out her phone, and makes a call --

LINDA

(on phone)

Hello, this is Linda Patton. I'm calling about my son, Calvin Patton. Yeah, sure, I'll ...

(waits)

Hi, yes, I'm calling about my son, Calvin Patton, to see how he's doing? And if there's anyway I could talk to --

(listens)

What? That's not possible. He was just brought in.

(listens)

Somebody else needed the bed? He needs the bed. The court order was for up to ninety days. It's only been three --

(listens)

I know what "up to" means. It means more than three days. Was he even detoxed?

(listens)

When was he let out? No call? Just spit him out? Put him on the commuter train back to drugville? Great move. Really.

Linda hangs up, throws her phone down, and grabs the steering wheel, banging/resting her head on it.

Her head rests there on the steering wheel.

Erica comes out of the house, moves back to the car, and gets in.

Linda sits up. Looks away from Erica to hide her lack of composure.

Erica throws the corner bags of heroin onto the seat between them --

ERICA

That sucked. Never done anything like that before --

LINDA

What? Bought drugs?

ERICA

Fucked my friends.

LINDA

This so hard for you? Wanna call it off? I can bring you in, right now. Say the word. Your little bags are safe and sound in an evidence bag, ready to go. That what you want?

ERICA

...

LINDA

The mute strikes again. Answer time, Erica. You wanna go in?

ERICA

No --

LINDA

Then shut up.

That hangs in the air for a bit.

ERICA

What the fuck's your problem? I bought for you, didn't I?

Linda doesn't answer, pulls out her pad --

LINDA

Who was in there? And what were they wearing?

ERICA

Nicole ... overalls.

LINDA

Overalls?

ERICA

Yeah, Osh Kosh B'gosh. She lives in them.

As Linda writes it down --

ERICA

And some of Eddie's friends, I don't know, T-shirts, jeans.

LINDA

What about Edward Delany?

ERICA

...

LINDA

Eddie, what about Eddie?

ERICA

He wasn't there.

LINDA

What do you mean he wasn't there? He has to be there.

ERICA

He wasn't --

LINDA

His friends were there.

ERICA

What's it matter?

LINDA

Not at all. Except this buy doesn't count now.

ERICA

No way, it counts. You said three buys --

LINDA

With him. They have to be with Edward Delany --

ERICA

You never said that.

LINDA

Because he's always there. It's his place.

ERICA

That wasn't part of our deal.

LINDA

Do exactly what I say. I cut you loose when I'm done with you. That's the deal.

ERICA

What's it matter --

LINDA

He's the target.

ERICA

I can't make him be there.

LINDA

Better hope he is then.

Pause.

ERICA

He was there. I was just messin' with you/ He was the one who sold to me, he was wearing --

LINDA

Don't do that. Stop it. This has to stick on him. On him. And if I can't trust you --

ERICA

Can't trust me? Wow. Whatever. Can we go now?

LINDA

No. I've gotta pat you down.

Linda leans in and pats her down. Erica turns her head away.

As Linda's hand reaches Erica's upper thigh --

LINDA

Please don't ever give me a reason to search you where I don't want to --

ERICA

Search wherever the fuck you want.

Linda finishes, and sits back --

LINDA

You're gonna have to find your own way home tonight --

ERICA

Long as it gets me outta this car.

Erica throws open the door, gets out, and slams it behind her. Exits.

Linda sits for a moment.

Pulls out her phone, takes a breath, and calls --

LINDA

(on phone)

It's me. Is Cal there?

(listens)

His apartment? He's gonna stay away from there. I had him sectioned --

(listens)

No, I didn't tell you. You would've testified on his behalf.

(listens)

See? That's what I'm talking about --

(listens)

He *is* a danger to himself. Every time he shoots up, he could die --

(listens)

Yes, that simple. They cut heroin with Fentanyl. It kills people. I've gotta go --

(listens)

You weren't there when he took a nose dive. If you had been --

(listens)

Yes, you're always so happy to tell me you didn't leave because of him. Your cute way of saying I was a bitch. You bailed --

(listens)

Don't you dare put his use on me. Call me if you hear from him --

Linda hangs up.

She starts the car, puts it in gear, and pulls into traffic.

As streetlights pass over head, she moves into the sounds and lights of a livelier part of the city -- bars, clubs, and street scene.

Linda scans the streets.

She pulls over in the middle of this. Puts on her hazard lights. Looks. She sees someone --

LINDA

Cal ... ?!

Not him.

She pulls out her phone. Calls, waits --

LINDA

(on phone)

Cal, let me know where you are, that you're alright. I won't try to section you. I promise. Call me, anytime. I'll be up.

She hangs up. Pulls back into traffic.

Streetlights pass over head.

As she scans the streets, continuing her search --

Blackout.

SCENE 4

SPOT on Cal.

He's in one of those places in the city, on the street, semi-hidden. Might sleep here, definitely drink and drug here.

Directly to the audience. But Cal's audience is his street buddies, and he's putting on a show --

CAL

Come on, give me a hit of that shit first.

(beat)

Alright, alright. Wanna hear it? How you get outta there fast? Key is, gotta psych yourself up.

(nods, points at one of his buddies)

You know, you know what I'm talkin' about. You done it before. Gotta do it soon as you get in there. When they're doin' the intake, with all their forms, all their questions, all their rules. You want me to bark like a dog too, motherfuckers?!

(beat)

So I say -- right there at the counter -- "I'm not answering any of your questions 'til you answer one of mine." All calm and shit. But loud. So everyone can hear. Make sure they know there's an issue needs addressing. Sure enough, boom, right off the bat, this guy, this fuckin' mook that works there, that I'm NOT talkin' to, he starts movin' in on me. Tells me to calm down -- "I am calm, motherfucker!"

Cal holds a pose to demonstrate his calm demeanor.

CAL

But they know. They already know we're gonna dance. So I say, "all I wanna know is one thing, explain it to me in plain fuckin' English -- I'm not angry -- I just wanna know, what gives you the right to lock me up, when I HAVEN'T DONE SHIT!"

(beat)

So the mook, puts his hand out all gentle, trying to calm me down, and he says some shit about the law, and I cut him off -- "I'm not talkin' about the law, asshole. I'm talkin' about rights. I'm talkin' about my fuckin' rights." He doesn't know what to say to that, cuz he knows he's wrong. They all know they're wrong.

(beat)

And here's where you gotta notch it up. Get tense. Tighten it up. So I square off with him, fists ready. And I tighten up my springs. I fuckin' tighten 'em 'til they pop. And I start swingin'. GOTTA BRING IT!

(beat)

You take a beating. But minute you're detoxed, the voucher for the train gets stuffed in your hand, and fuckin' see ya later. And here I am. That's how it's done ... Come on, man, gimme a hit of that shit.

(beat)

You all know. You get it. Why you're family. My real fuckin' family.

Blackout.

SCENE 5

It's the next night.

A SPOT on Erica. Downstage.

On her phone.

ERICA

(on phone)

Liam? Hey. How's my baby?

(listens)

I know you're not a baby anymore. Can't wait to see you on Saturday.

(listens)

I know. Won't be much longer, monkey, and we'll be together for good. We're gonna do so much fun stuff. You'll see. You ready for bed?

(listens)

Good for you. In the jammies I sent you?

(listens)

You being good for the Figueras? You say our thing yet?

(listens)

You're going to? OK.

(listens)

You have to go? Already? ... OK. I love you. You know that, right?

(listens)

Sweet dreams. I'll see you Saturday -- Liam, Liam wait. Can you put Mrs. Figueroa back on?

(waits)

Hi, moving the visit to two-thirty still works?

(listens)

Has to be at your house? I thought we could ...

(listens)

No it's ... Thanks for changing the time ... He's been doing good though?

(listens)

Sure, OK ... We'll talk about it then.

Erica hangs up.

Looks at her phone.

Blackout.

SCENE 6

Later that night.

The car's on stage. Linda's behind the driver's seat.

Erica walks to the car, and gets in. She looks at Linda -- who looks tired, a wreck.

ERICA

You look special. Who's the user here?

LINDA

(lies)

Had to work a double shift.

ERICA

No time for a shower? Wanna take one, get some sleep, we can take the night off --

LINDA

Nice try. Look, I'm sorry I came down hard on you last night.

Linda reaches into her pocket, pulls out the AA chip.

LINDA

And I forgot to give back your AA chip.

Linda hands it to Erica, and Erica takes it.

LINDA

I want you to know, I want you to stay clean. So we'll get this done quick as we can.

ERICA

Like ripping a bandaid off?

LINDA

Exactly.

ERICA

Only slower and more painful.

LINDA

I'm trying to hit the reset button here.

ERICA

Wanna hit the reset button? Then let's go back to before you stopped me.

LINDA

When you were about to slip?

ERICA

Before that. Before that whole day, how 'bout that?

LINDA

Sorry, no can do.

ERICA

Can if you want to. Could pretend this whole thing never happened. No one would be the wiser. No one even knows I exist, right?

LINDA

Not even close to happening.

ERICA

Then fuck your reset button.

Pause.

LINDA
How'd you do it?

ERICA
Do what?

LINDA
Stay clean for so long?

Erica stares at her. No response.

LINDA
You made it over a year ... what made you wanna ... what happened that made you want to use again?

ERICA
(smiles)
Something's gotta happen for you to slip? Good to know. I gotta remember that.

LINDA
Then how --

ERICA
What's with the chit chat, detective? Think you play nice for a second, you can get all up in my shit?

LINDA
It's an accomplishment, staying clean for so long. I'm interested / professionally.

ERICA
Bullshit. You wanna get better at fucking people.

LINDA
Right, I'm the ball buster again. That's the only reason I do this.

ERICA
Yeah? Then why now? Didn't ask me shit yesterday.

LINDA
...

ERICA
You seem nice enough for a cop, but if you want me to help you, you're gonna have to open that mouth of yours.

LINDA

...

ERICA

No? Fine. Feel me up/ Give me the buy money. I'll go in and do this.

LINDA

Pat you down.

ERICA

Let's go already.

Linda sits there.

ERICA

Then spit it out. Tell me who it is.

LINDA

Who what is?

ERICA

Who it is can't get clean? Stay clean. Stop using. Who's spiking the smack or doing whatever the fuck it is they can't stop doing?

LINDA

...

ERICA

What's the matter? Worried if you tell me, I'm gonna take away your kid? Arrest you? Fuck with your life, turn it upside down? ... You wanna know my secret, you gotta pony up, bitch.

LINDA

There's no secret --

ERICA

You're right. There's no secret.

Pause.

LINDA

Someone I know --

ERICA

Oh my god. Hint. Honesty's part of it.

LINDA

My son ... He's battling addiction --

ERICA

He's a junkie. What's his drug?

LINDA

... Heroin.

ERICA

Got that in common. He good looking --

LINDA

Don't push it. I'm asking you for a favor, if you don't wanna help me --

ERICA

I don't wanna help you. I've got nothing to tell you. You got it right the first time. There's no secret. The minute you think there is, you're fucked. Cuz thinking you've got the secret means you've let your guard down. And that's all it's waiting for. All the time. Twenty-four fucking seven. Whispering in your ear. Waiting for you to be too happy. Or too sad. Anything to trick you into thinking you can have a taste. It strokes you, hums in your ear -- And nothing -- oh my god -- nothing has to happen. You slip cuz ... cuz anything ... And all that, that only happens when you wanna be clean. Your boy even there yet?

LINDA

...

ERICA

Sucks to be you.

LINDA

Is that what happened, when I caught you buying, you'd let your guard down?

ERICA

Had a day. Just had a day. And at the end of it, dawned on me, no matter how bad I wanted it, no matter what I did, nothing was ever going to work out.

LINDA

...

Erica pulls out her wallet, throws it on the seat.

Do this already.

ERICA

...

LINDA

Come on.

ERICA

Linda runs her hands over Erica, but this time it's perfunctory, until her hands reach Erica's shoulders, and she grips them, wanting to say something.

Erica waits. Linda lets go, pulls out the buy money, and hands it to her.

In and out. In and out, OK?

LINDA

Erica nods, and gets out of the car. Linda watches Erica until she gets buzzed in. She pulls out her phone and calls --

LINDA
(on phone)
Call me. Please. That's all. I don't care about anything else. I just need to know you're safe. I love you.

She hangs up.

Sits there.

What do you do, when there's nothing you can do?

We sit with her, until --

A pounding beat. House music. Party music. Linda looks to the door. And up, where red light, blue light pours down, flashing. We hear yelling mixed with the music. The shadows of moving bodies cast down onto the street.

Linda gets out of the car, and looks up at the source of lights and sound.

As the shadows dance around her, a scream. Erica's?

Linda unholsters her gun, and moves to the door. At the door, she tries the knob -- it's locked.

A scream. This time from behind the door. The door flies open -- Linda raises her gun, pointing it at -- Erica.

Erica freezes. Linda lowers her gun.

Erica exhales hard, her heart pounding out of her chest --

ERICA

Motherfucker. You don't play.

Erica recovers, however long this takes, and regains her looseness because she's high.

She slides in front of Linda, with her hands up, dancing --

ERICA

Know what? You should go in there, cuz they're grinding it, and no disrespect, you could use a dose of that shit.

Erica drops her hands down, and shimmies up to Linda's body -- too close.

She then turns her back to her, bends over and twerks her.

Erica stops. Stands bolt upright. Looks at Linda, feeling free. Free of any control by her. The power of high.

She moves toward the car, doing the airplane, taking a circuitous route, like she's negotiating a winding path --

ERICA

Come on, got your stuff. And bonus, Eddie sold it to me.

Linda watches Erica, and then looks at the open door. She reaches in and closes it, puts her gun in its holster, and takes the direct route to the car.

They both get in.

And stare at each other.

With very different demeanors.

Erica blurts out --

ERICA

Staring contest.

Off Linda's look --

ERICA

I'll kick your ass. I'm sooooo good at this shit. You know it too. That's why you're wussin' out. I'll even give you a head start.

Erica laughs. Linda doesn't.

ERICA

Come on. That's a good one --

LINDA

You're high.

Erica slaps the seat, like she's swatting a fly.

ERICA

You are such a good detective.

LINDA

In and out. In and out.

ERICA

No thank you Eddie. No free drugs for me. I'll just take these drugs that I'm paying for, and be on my way ... No? You'll be buggin' if I don't accept your kind offer? Like, you insist? Well, in that case ... Fuck. Yeah. Line it up.

(beat)

I do something wrong?

LINDA

What did he give you?

ERICA

All he said was -- "special cocktail" -- all coy about it. But I think ... there's definitely ecstasy in this shit, cuz I got this massive rush and I felt all tingly, and the music sounded so fucking good, and ... this car seat? I kinda wanna hump it.

LINDA

...

ERICA

Think I wanted to do that shit? Think I don't know I'm totally fucked now. I'm so fucked --

Erica laughs.

LINDA

It'll be alright .

ERICA

No, it won't.

LINDA

Two more buys. That's all ... Then I'll help you get into treatment.

ERICA

Treatment. Awesome.

LINDA

...

ERICA

Oh yeah, the shit I bought.

Erica pulls out the corner bags, throws them on the seat, and raises her arms --

ERICA
Come and feel me, detective.

Linda's phone rings. She takes it out.

LINDA
Put your arms down.

Linda answers the phone --

LINDA
(on phone)
Hello?
(listens)
This is Linda Patton.
(listens)
Stop. Hold on. I have to --

Linda cups her phone --

LINDA
(to Erica)
Get out.

ERICA
What about --

LINDA
Go home!

This cuts through Erica's high. She looks at Linda, seeing something's wrong --

LINDA
Now!

Erica gets out. Linda watches Erica leave.

She takes a breath as she goes back to the phone call --

LINDA
(on phone)
(listens)
Go ahead.
Tell me. Say it.

(listens)
 You're sure it's him?
 (listens)
 Please don't move him. I'll be there soon as I can.

She hangs up. Takes a breath. Makes a call --

LINDA
 (on phone)
 It's happened. Cal's dead. He's at the Boston Medical Center.
 (listens)
 I'm sorry, I can't --

She hangs up.

Sits there numb.

Until she crumbles, and sobs.

As her sobs become a howl of pain and anger --

Blackout.

SCENE 7

A hospital room.

Cal's on the bed, lying flat, lifeless.

Linda enters, sees Cal.

She moves to him.

Touches his chest.

Touches his face.

She brushes his hair back with her fingers.

Kisses his forehead and cheek.

She hugs his head, and smells his hair.

Long beat.

LINDA
It's still you.

Long beat.

LINDA
It's still you. I love you.

Long beat.

She releases him from her hug.

Looks at his face.

Brushes his hair again.

Strokes his face --

LINDA
I'm gonna get him. I'm gonna get him for you. I promise.

Blackout.

SCENE 8

The next night.

*Cal's bedroom. It's as we last saw it, when
Linda took Cal away.*

Linda enters.

Alone.

*She looks around the room, looking for signs
that he'd returned.*

*She moves to the nightstand. Turns on the light.
Picks up and drops the shirt that had covered it.
She opens the nightstand's drawer. Looks in.
Closes it.*

*She looks around the room for anything that can
tell her something.*

On the floor, she spots the duffle bag he was stuffing clothes into before she cuffed him.

She moves to it. Squats down and fishes through it, and then leaves it.

She moves to the bed, and instinctively starts to make it, pulling up the covers.

She stops. And rips the covers off the bed, throwing them on the floor.

She moves around the bed, and strips the mattress of its sheet, throwing it in the pile with the other sheet and covers.

She moves back to the bed, and picks up the pillow. As she starts to pull the pillow out of its case, she stops cold -- Cal's scent is on it.

She brings the pillow to her face, and smells it.

She hugs the pillow.

She sits on the side of the bed. Bends her head down and buries her face in the pillow, breathing in her drug.

As it takes hold of her, she falls to her side, and lies on the bed with the pillow in her arms.

A long beat.

Lights fade.

When the lights come up. Linda's gone.

The bed's made. The room is neat.

Cal's standing in the middle of it, looking around, making sure it's clean and orderly. He spots burned tinfoil, a straw, and lighter on the nightstand -- shit -- and moves to it, stashing it in the nightstand.

As he makes one more visual sweep --

A knock at his door.

CAL

Yeah? ... Just a sec ...

As he moves to the door, it opens. Linda enters.

CAL

Hey ... Ma ... How'd you ... ?

LINDA

Your roommates must've left the door open.

Cal nods. They move to each other. Hug. Kisses on the cheek, greeting each other.

CAL

Yeah, so ... Glad you made it over.

LINDA

Me too ... What's that smell?

CAL

What smell?

LINDA

There's a funny smell on you.

CAL

Oh ... must be work. The place I'm at right now has this smell, gets in your clothes, hair.

LINDA

Uh huh.

CAL

This warehouse. They got something funky in there. Probably oughta call OSHA or something.

Linda nods. Puts a pin in the smell issue.

LINDA

I brought over some pasta. Put it in the kitchen.

CAL

Great ... Yeah.

LINDA

I don't know what you like anymore ...

CAL

I like pasta. Who doesn't, right? But, to let you know, I'm ... I got busy at work ... so I had this late lunch.

LINDA

You knew I was coming with supper?

CAL

Yeah, of course, but I was starving, and ... Don't worry. It's all good. I'm just saying, I'm not super hungry cuz I got this late lunch.

LINDA

At work?

CAL

Yeah, at work.

LINDA

You still look like you could use a good meal.

CAL

I know. I'm gonna --

LINDA

You're skin and bone, Cal.

CAL

I've always been skinny --

LINDA

Not like this you haven't.

CAL

I'm gonna have some pasta, already. Yum. Bring it on.

That stops everything.

LINDA

I really just wanted to see you, your place. See how you're doing, not living under your mother's roof anymore.

CAL
(regarding room)

Not bad, right?

LINDA

Better than I expected.

CAL

Yeah, things are good. Work's good, my housemates are good ...

LINDA

Good ... Why don't we have some supper then.

CAL

Great. Pasta.

*As Linda starts to walk out of the bedroom, with
Cal following --*

LINDA

I'll just warm it up. It's from this new place on Cabot ... The neighborhood's really ... I don't know ...

She stops. Turns around --

LINDA

Cal, I wanted to come over ... Now that you've been moved out, I want you to know that you can talk to me.

CAL

Sure ... yeah.

LINDA

I know we weren't exactly doing a lot of that when you were living at home. But now ... I know how I could be --

CAL

Ma ...

LINDA

Thought it might be easier to talk to me about what's going on in your life, now you don't have to deal with ... No more "my house, my rules." Know what I mean?

Cal forces a laugh --

CAL

Totally --

LINDA

I'm serious.

CAL

Yeah, no. I hear you.

LINDA

I hope you do.

Beat.

LINDA

So ... ?

CAL

So ... let's eat. I'm kinda hungry after all.

Cal moves toward the door --

LINDA

Christ.

That stops him.

LINDA

Can't you talk to me at all? Isn't there something you want to tell me? I've lived a life, you know. Got in trouble when I was growing up too, when I was your age ...

CAL

...

LINDA

That's it? That's what I get?

CAL

Ma, I'm OK. It's not like when I was at home. The responsibility, the apartment, having to come up with rent, it's been really good for me. Made me better with all that stuff --

LINDA

It hasn't. You're worse. You look sickly. And that smell? Think I haven't smelled that before? On people, on the street, using drugs? Think I'm an idiot, you think I'm stupid --

CAL

It's not drugs. It's from work --

LINDA

Really? Where are you working?

CAL

Jimmy Flynn. He's keeping me busy again. At this warehouse. I'm painting, fixing shit. That's the smell. I don't know what they're keeping in there. Wanna ask 'em?

Linda lets out a sigh.

CAL

What?

LINDA

Jimmy Flynn? Jimmy Flynn from the neighborhood?

CAL

What, don't like him either?

LINDA

Jimmy's fine. He's doing great. I talked to him a few days ago --

CAL

Why would you do that? You spying on me? That's seriously fucked up --

LINDA

I ran into him getting coffee. He asked how you are. What should I have told him? Cal's doing great, he's sharing an apartment with a couple of guys, and you don't know it, but he's woking for you. Oh, and he's into some really bad drugs --

CAL

I'm not.

LINDA

I saw you --

CAL

You're a freak. You are spying on me.

LINDA

If you're gonna buy heroin on the street, don't do it in a section of the city your mother's working. Imagine my surprise -- conducting routine surveillance, and I see my son with Edward Delany -- a known drug dealer. While I'm wrapping my head around that, you engage in a hand to hand to transaction --

CAL

Hand to hand transaction? He sold me some pot, which -- news flash -- legal --

LINDA

He doesn't sell pot. You don't smell like pot. You don't look like you do from smoking pot.

CAL

...

LINDA

Show me your arms.

CAL

What?

LINDA

Roll up your sleeves, and show me your arms.

CAL

Sure. Why not.

*Cal rolls up his sleeves. Holds out his arms.
Linda grabs them by his wrists. Inspects them.
Twists them to see the other side. Then inspects
between his fingers.*

Nothing.

He pulls his arms away.

LINDA

Take off your shoes and socks --

CAL

No fuckin' way.

LINDA

Take 'em off --

CAL

I smoke it. Use your head, Ma. That's why you smell the smell. I don't shoot the stuff, I'm not stupid. I'd never use needles. I party. I get high. But I know what I'm doing. You don't like it? Tough shit. Like you said -- no more "your house, your rules." So why don't you leave? And take the pasta with you, I'm not fuckin' hungry.

Lights fade.

Lights up.

Linda's on the stripped bed, lying down sideways, hugging the pillow, as we left her.

A long beat.

Erica enters. Stands at the doorway.

Erica doesn't look very good. Coming down from a high, maybe on the edge of drug sick.

She looks at Linda, lying down sideways. Waits for Linda to notice her. She doesn't.

ERICA

Um ... Are you ... ?

Linda realizes Erica's there, and snaps back to reality. As she sits up, and fixes herself --

LINDA

Told you to wait in the car.

ERICA

Over an hour ago --

LINDA

I don't care if it's five hours.

ERICA

Said you'd be back out in a few minutes.

LINDA

Can't anyone do what they're told?

Erica looks around the room. Linda sees her doing so --

LINDA

What are you looking at?

ERICA

Nothing. We gonna do this or what?

LINDA

No. We're not gonna do this or what. What are you thinking. You're in no condition. You look like shit. Doped up, drug addict.

Erica's face hardens --

ERICA

You worried Eddie's gonna cut me off?

LINDA

...

ERICA

He's there. He's gonna be there. I wanna get this done.

LINDA

We're on your schedule now? You're high, or you're coming down, you won't have your wits about you. It's too dangerous.

Erica stares at her, but relents ...

ERICA

This your kid's place?

LINDA

...

ERICA

He still strung out?

LINDA

... No.

Then he found his bottom?
ERICA

Linda's eyes well-up.

Yes. He found his bottom ...
LINDA

So, he's in treatment?
ERICA

... No.
LINDA

Trying to do it on his own?
ERICA

He's not ... He's not trying to do anything. He's dead.
LINDA

...
ERICA

I couldn't do nothing.
LINDA

...
ERICA

Before he ... before *it* took him, he was such a sweet boy. You've got no idea.
LINDA

...
ERICA

Lights fade.

A home-movie shows a sweet boy, about four years old, running around a yard, laughing.

SCENE 9

Daytime.

A SPOT on Erica. She's slouched in an arm chair. Nothing else is on stage.

Erica wears a flannel shirt. One sleeve is rolled up very high on her arm. Tubing lies on the arm chair beneath her arm. The other paraphernalia nearby.

Erica's on the backend of a nod. Mostly coherent, but a mix of wasted, and hung over.

She has her phone to her ear.

ERICA

(on phone)

Hey, baby ... sorry, I know you're not a baby. I ... Mommy's not feeling good today, and she doesn't wanna give it to you. So Mommy can't make our visit this week.

(listens)

I know. I'm sorry ...

(listens)

No -- No -- No -- not like before. I don't wanna give you what I've got is all.

(listens)

Liam. Wait. Liam. Listen to me. We're gonna be back together so soon. Permanent. It's gonna be great. We're gonna have so much fun. You won't believe it. And, and we're gonna have a house like the Figueroa's, better, and you're gonna make new friends, in your new neighborhood, and you'll be in your new house. You're gonna be so happy. It's gonna be so good ... You'll see.

(listens)

Liam. Wait, Liam. Listen to me. I wanna tell you something. You're my rock. You know that? You're my friggin' anchor. Couldn't do all this, none of it without you. I love you so much ...

(listens)

Liam. Wait. Liam. I'll see you next week, OK? ... Liam ... ?

She drops the phone.

ERICA

Where'd you go, buddy?

The home-movie of the sweet boy plays. As he runs around the yard, laughing --

ERICA

There you are. Come 'ere, ya little monkey! Get the frig over here!

She laughs.

ERICA

Wild man ...

Erica's laugh dies.

As the movie plays, lights fade.

The movie stops. Frozen on Liam, joyful.

Blackout.

SCENE 10

Linda and Erica are in the car. Linda is running on automatic. Erica isn't noticeably high, but she's in the throes of addiction.

They sit. They're both there, and not there.

Finally, Linda takes a brochure out of her pocket and hands it to Erica.

LINDA

I brought this for you.

ERICA

Quiet Pines Treatment Center. This your idea of helping me get into treatment?

LINDA

We sent Cal there. He didn't hate it. Thought maybe, through your work's insurance, you could go there.

ERICA

Yeah, that's not gonna happen.

She pockets the brochure anyway.

ERICA

You must really have a hard-on for Eddie, won't even take a few days off.

LINDA

The affidavit, the buys, need to be fresh. Can't let too much time pass.

ERICA

A few days --

LINDA

I want this done.

ERICA

You know Eddie's a user? Like me. Like your son --

LINDA

He's not like Cal.

ERICA

He deals to support his habit --

LINDA

He hooked Cal.

ERICA

How do even ... No, forget it. Do what you gotta do, but you know that's bullshit, right?

LINDA

He's the target. That good enough for you?

ERICA

Go get 'em, detective. Kingpin Eddie's really movin' some weight. But so I know, since we're in this deal together, he to blame for my back injury? He to blame for the doctor that pumped me up on Oxies, then cut me off cold? Cuz if he is, helping you nail him would give me some serious satisfaction.

(beat)

He isn't, is he? But you'd never go after them, the doctors, the pill-makers? Just Eddie.

LINDA

I'm sorry you hurt your back. That you got hooked on oxycontin and heroin, and lost your kid to DCF and foster care. Yeah, I know about that. Think I wouldn't look into you? But none of that changes what your friend in there sells.

Linda pulls out the money, and gives it to Erica.

LINDA

You're almost done. One more buy after this, and you'll be free of me.

Erica takes the money, and gets out. Goes to the door, and gets buzzed in.

Linda sits there, numb.

Stares straight ahead.

She doesn't move.

There's nothing for her to do.

Nobody to call.

Nobody to look for.

She just waits.

Erica comes back out, and gets in the car, and throws the corner bags on the seat between them.

Linda pats her down, barely, and sits back.

The controlled buy is over.

ERICA

There's another bag of H.

Linda looks down at the seat --

LINDA

No, this is right. There's three here.

ERICA

There's another. Eddie gave me another, on the house.

LINDA

You have another?

Erica nods. Linda sighs --

LINDA

Thanks for telling me. Let's have it.

ERICA

No.

LINDA

What do you mean, no?

ERICA

I'm keeping it.

LINDA

You can't.

ERICA

Think of it as a little change in our deal.

LINDA

Deal doesn't change. Hand it over.

Erica stares back at her -- No.

LINDA

We're almost ... Why tell me if ... I don't need this.

Erica stands pat.

LINDA

This is ridiculous. Where is it? Give it to me.

ERICA

Didn't want you to find it, so I hid it up my cooch.

Linda stares at her.

LINDA

What's wrong with you?

ERICA

You told me, you had to be able to trust me, so I'm telling you --

LINDA

Get it out of there. Give it to me.

Erica just stares at her.

LINDA

You can't keep it.

ERICA

You'll have to get it.

LINDA

...

ERICA

You've already fucked me. Let's make it official --

LINDA

Stop it.

ERICA

Don't pretend like you haven't done it before. Especially cuz you're a woman. Like that makes it alright. How many times you think you've stuffed your fingers up --

LINDA

It's a body cavity search / and I don't enjoy it.

ERICA

That what you call it --

LINDA

I do it because I have to. Because you hide drugs there, betting we won't search.

ERICA

Can't let us get away with that shit. No fuckin' way. So you search there anytime you want, even if nothing's there --

LINDA

Is it there or not?

ERICA

Snug as a bug in a rug --

LINDA

Why are you doing this to me?

ERICA

Cuz all this? What I'm doing for you, my choice, right? That's what you keep telling me. Well it's your choice too, to do what you do. Least you can do is fuckin' own it --

LINDA

I don't have a choice. It's my job. It's the law.

ERICA

Oh this ...

(motions between them)

This is the law? Doctor that fed me oxies, like to see you stick your fingers up his ass and tell him it's the law --

LINDA

One more buy and you're done --

ERICA

Pill-makers, go ahead, finger-fuck them. Tell 'em it's just a body cavity search --

LINDA

Can call this off, right now. Bring you in. All this would be for nothing --

ERICA

Do whatever the fuck you want, long as it's crystal clear, you're right down here with me.

LINDA

...

As this swirls in the air, and Linda reels --

ERICA

Relax, detective. I lied. If I had something up there, you'd be the last person I'd tell.

LINDA

...

ERICA

Can I go now?

LINDA

...

ERICA

I'll take that as a yes.

As Erica opens the door to get out, she takes the brochure, and throws it on the seat --

ERICA

I was a no-call-no-show at work. Lost my job cuz of it. So I've got no insurance for the Quiet Pines Treatment Center, not unless you know someone who needs a strung out truck driver?

LINDA

...

ERICA

Don't worry. Not your fault. All my choice.

Erica gets out of the car, and walks away.

Linda sits. Alone.

Blackout.

SCENE 11

A SPOT on Erica in the armchair, stage left, on a nod.

A SPOT on Linda, lying down on Cal's bed.

Pause.

Blackout.

SCENE 12

Linda and Erica in the car.

They're both strung out.

ERICA

Seriously, who's the user here?

Linda smiles.

ERICA

This is it, huh? The third buy. I'm not gonna see you again after this, if I'm lucky, right? Or are there any more "get outta jail free cards?"

Linda shakes her head.

ERICA

Didn't think so. Then I want you to know, you'll be in my thoughts and prayers. Already think about you all the time. More than Liam. Think about what you've done to me. I'm sick again cuz of you. Know how long it took me to get unsick? Know how long it's gonna take for me to get unsick, again? You know, you actually know how long I was clean, and you didn't give a shit. So I pray that you know what you've done to me. That you know that I've lost everything cuz of you.

LINDA

You forget what I told you? I don't care what you think of me. You're a means to an end. You make this last buy, I type up my affidavit, and I've got a solid search warrant. That dirtbag in there will go to prison. And you're right, I don't know if he hooked Cal, but he'll have to do. Also know sending him to prison won't change anything, but I can't do nothing. I'm supposed to let him go about his business? Poisoning kids, torturing their parents until all their kids are dead? And you, you're the way I to get him, so I do what I have to.

Linda takes out the buy money and throws it on the seat for Erica --

LINDA

Go make this last buy and you'll be finished.

Erica looks at the money.

LINDA

I do appreciate what you've done. I know you've helped me. And I know you don't feel this way, but you're doing good.

ERICA

Who you trying to convince?

Erica picks up the money, and is out the door --

LINDA

In and out.

Erica goes to the door, and gets buzzed in.

Linda sits there.

Staring off into the distance.

At a total loss.

Long beat.

The door to the house flies open.

Linda looks as --

Nicole in overalls, comes out. Her back to the audience, holding a pair of feet in her hands, Erica's.

Erica's body follows. The other end being held by Eddie.

As they come out of the door, they struggle to hold up Erica's body.

Linda leans over to her glove box, and pulls out her police radio.

LINDA

(on radio)

Need an ambulance at 171 Prospect. Possible overdose.

Nicole and Eddie stop. Put Erica down, losing their grip as they do, dropping her.

Linda drops her radio, and reaches back into the glove box, and pulls out a small steel canister.

She throws open the door, pulls out her gun, and moves toward Eddie and Nicole, pulling out her badge on the chain.

As they see her, they raise their hands, frozen --

LINDA

Get out of here.

Off their lack of movement --

Go!

LINDA

They moves slowly at first, then take off.

Linda moves to Erica's body, and opens the canister, pulling out Narcan, and an applicator.

She sticks it up Erica's nose, and gives her a dose.

She waits.

Nothing happens.

As she refills the applicator --

Please, no ...

LINDA

She gives her another dose.

Erica regains consciousness.

Linda laughs with relief --

Oh my god, thank you.

LINDA

Erica kicks and swings her arms in a fit of disorientation. Linda hugs her to control her --

Get the fuck off me --

ERICA

It's OK. You're OK --

LINDA

Get off me.

ERICA

Linda continues to hold her tight, until Erica calms enough for Linda to release her from the hug --

What ... How'd I ... ?

ERICA

It's alright. You're gonna be OK.

LINDA

How'd I get out here?

ERICA

You OD-ed.

LINDA

The sound of sirens in the distance. She brushes Erica's hair back.

I'm sorry.

LINDA

Lights fade.

The sound of the sirens grows louder.

Lights up.

Linda leans down and kisses Erica's forehead.

Lights fade.

Red lights of the ambulance flash.

Lights up.

Linda leans down and takes a deep breath of Erica's hair.

As Linda rocks with Erica in her arms --

Lights fade.

LINDA

I'm gonna stay with you. I won't leave you until you're all better. I promise.

Lights up.

Linda holds Cal in her arms where Erica was.

She rocks Cal in her arms.

Red lights flash.

As the siren gets louder --

Blackout.

End of Play