

SIP
by
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First Draft

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - DAY

JEN (20s), disgusted with life, relaxed but ready to coil-and-strike at any moment, and wearing jeans and a plain T-shirt, sits in her parked car with the engine running, and listens to a news report on the radio.

RADIO NEWSCASTER

Today's numerous indictments
against the Vonsonza crime
family come on the heels... of
Sharon Middleton's recently
published exposé.

Jen turns off the car; the engine stops and the radio falls silent. She exhales and stares into the distance, frowning. She doesn't like what she has to do next, but she can't put it off. It has to be today. Jen gets out of the car.

EXT. WALKWAY - DAY

Jen walks up to an apartment building's front door. The stern, plainclothes POLICE OFFICER guarding the door nods in recognition.

JEN

Take a walk.

The Police Officer half-grins and taps a finger on the side of his nose. He walks away.

Jen watches him leave and purses her lips in disgust, at him, and at herself.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Jen's hand knocks firmly on an apartment door.

SHARON (O.S.)

(afraid)

Who's there?

Jen clears her throat.

JEN

It's Jen.

A deadbolt scrapes out of its strike plate.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

SHARON (20s), terrified, sleep-deprived, with tears in her eyes, and looking to Jen for help, sits at the kitchen table with Jen.

An unlabeled open bottle, half-filled with amber-brown hard liquor, sits on the table, near two glasses containing mostly-melted ice cubes.

JEN

You really stepped in it this time, Sharon.

SHARON

What am I going to do?

Jen looks at Sharon detachedly for a moment.

Jen stands up and wraps her hand around the neck of the liquor bottle. Jen's eyes narrow as she briefly considers whether to bash Sharon's head with it.

Sharon doesn't notice the threat.

SHARON (CONT'D)

I've thrown my life away.
"Here lies Sharon the
Wordsmith, twenty-six, alone,
never married, too stupid to
keep her mouth shut."

Jen gets up, taking the bottle with her. She sets the bottle on the counter. She takes the glasses, dumps the ice and meltwater into the sink, and sets the glasses on the counter.

Jen opens the freezer door, and pulls out a tray full of ice cubes.

SHARON (CONT'D)

They're gonna kill me, aren't they?

Jen bangs the ice cube tray loudly on the counter, and the ice cubes jump. Sharon jumps.

JEN

No. (Subtext: I am.)

Jen drops two ice cubes into each glass, and begins to pour.

JEN (CONT'D)

Tell your boss you made a mistake. Bad sources.

SHARON
(idealistically,
hopelessly)
Everything I wrote is true.
That has to count. That has to
mean something.

Jen grimaces; Sharon is beyond saving.

Sharon slouches in her chair and stares up at the ceiling.

Jen pulls a small pill capsule out of her pocket. She separates the capsule halves, and begins sprinkling powder into Sharon's drink.

SHARON (CONT'D)
Jen, what are we doing with
our lives?

Jen finishes pouring the powder, and gives the drink a swirl with her pinky. She picks up the drinks and turns to Sharon.

JEN
What we have to.

Jen hands Sharon the poisoned drink, and Sharon accepts it with gratitude. Jen sits. The women look into their drinks.

SHARON
Things aren't supposed to be
like this.

Sharon looks up. Jen meets her eye.

SHARON (CONT'D)
We're supposed to be married
with children by now. Not
saving the world. Not taking
bullets.

One of Jen's eyes twitches at the mention of "bullets". She's been shot before, by the "good guys", for the wrong reasons.

JEN
(sighs)
This world doesn't work the
way it should.

Jen rolls her ice around in its glass. The ice clinks against the glass in the silence.

Jen takes a drink.

Sharon thinks about taking a drink.

Sharon puts her glass down with a dull thud. Jen looks at Sharon's drink, but her eyes are out of focus in a thousand-yard stare.

SHARON

When's it gonna change? Who's gonna fix things, if not us?

Jen looks at Sharon with tired skepticism; if words were going to change the world, they would have done so already.

SHARON (CONT'D)

This is the future-- this is the future I see. No mob--

Jen looks at one of Sharon's shiny knives.

SHARON (CONT'D)

No corruption--

Jen looks at Sharon's rolling pin.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Just honest people, making an honest living. Being good to each other. Like us.

Jen looks at Sharon; Jen's eyes are cold. Sharon senses something is wrong.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Jen...?

Jen slowly stands up.

Jen has a pistol tucked into the back of her pants.

Sharon slowly stands up; she understands now why Jen came to visit. Sharon shakes with fear at the betrayal and takes a step back.

Jen doesn't move; she knows she is faster than Sharon, and is trained to be lethal, armed or unarmed. Sharon has no chance.

SHARON (CONT'D)

(her throat has gone dry)

We've been friends since we were five. That has to mean something. Jen.

Jen takes a step toward Sharon. Sharon can barely control her arms and legs; she slides a few inches away, with her back to the kitchen counter.

Jen continues to advance as Sharon slides slowly away.

JEN
I tried to tell you. Over and
over. "Don't play with fire."

Sharon looks around for a weapon.

JEN (CONT'D)
But you didn't listen. Now
here we are.

Sharon grabs a large knife from the counter and wields it.

Jen stops advancing.

JEN (CONT'D)
You don't have it in you to
kill me. And you have to. It's
either you or me.

Sharon shakes her head "no". She is shaking and crying.

JEN (CONT'D)
Even if you did, the mob will
still come for you. They got
to me. They can get to anybody
you love. Anybody you trust.

Sharon breaks. She sobs, and her arms go limp.

Jen takes the knife from Sharon. Sharon sinks to her knees.

SHARON
Just kill me. If I can't trust
you, I can't do this--
(gestures
vaguely)
--anymore.

Jen stands above Sharon, looking down on her.

Jen sees Sharon sobbing, all hope gone, ready to die.

Jen closes her eyes. She hears wind chimes. She hears the
echo of two little girls as they chase each other, and laugh.

Jen opens her eyes. Sharon kneels at her feet, sobbing.

Still holding the knife, Jen slowly crouches. Sharon whimpers
and shies away, waiting for the killing blow, scared of it.

JEN
OK.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

After a moment, Sharon, carrying a large duffel bag, sneaks out a side door and disappears.

JEN (V.O.)
Take only what you need to get
through the next three days.

EXT. WALKWAY - DAY

In slow motion, pulling a large, heavy, wheeled suitcase, Jen walks out the front door and down the walkway.

JEN (V.O.)
Use my card to pull out three
hundred a day.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jen struggles to put the suitcase in the trunk of her car.

Jen gets into her car.

JEN (V.O.)
On day three, see this guy.
Tell him I sent you, he'll
give you your new I.D.

Jen starts her car and looks around. No one, not even the Police Officer she told to take a walk, is in sight.

JEN (V.O.)
Go to the library. Find some
place you've never heard of,
someplace with a lot of jobs.
Get one.

Jen makes a phone call.

JEN
It's done.

Jen hangs up. Jen drives away.

SHARON (V.O.)
OK.

JEN (V.O.)
And look me up someday.

FADE OUT.