

(Name of Project)

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FADE IN:

INT. - HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

MARY MARSHALL, 20's, rubs a clear spot into the steam covered bathroom mirror.

Her reflection looks back at her without expression as she begins to brush her hair.

Small drops of water bead on her tan shoulders.

Her body is wrapped in a white towel. It just barely covers her considerable assets.

She drops her towel in a puddle at her feet as she reaches for a chocolate colored silk robe.

She shrugs into the robe and enters the bed chamber of her hotel suite.

She stops, cocks her head and peers into the dark room.

MARY  
Hello? Anybody here?

Her hand stretches towards the light switch on the wall.

In the instant before she touches it, the floor lamp in the corner SNAPS on.

Mary blinks at the sudden explosion of light.

As her eyes adjust, she sees a man sitting in a chair next to the light.

MARY  
Jesus! You scared me!

STEPHEN COCHRAN, 50's, he reeks of wealth and entitlement. Stephen takes a moment to contemplate her before he replies in a menacing tone.

STEPHEN  
I don't like being threatened,  
Mary. Care to explain yourself?

MARY  
Explain?  
(Laughs)  
Was there something you didn't understand? I thought my attorney was quite articulate.

STEPHEN

Oh, I understood it alright, that's why I'm here. Your barracuda made it perfectly clear you want money.

Mary steps into the room, robe flowing around her, she strolls to the desk in the room.

Stephen follows her every move, he can't quite stop himself from looking at the flashes of her still damp skin as she moves across the room.

Mary taps out a cigarette from the pack sitting on the desk, next to a laptop, and lights it with a old Zippo lighter.

She doesn't offer him a smoke.

MARY

Well then, you really should be talking to her. Not me.

STEPHEN

I don't want to talk to her.

MARY

Looks like we have a Mexican standoff, I don't want to talk to you.

STEPHEN

I'm not leaving until we get this worked out.

Mary stares at him for a long minute, then shrugs in a "have it your way" manner.

Mary crosses the room to sit on the couch furthest away from him.

She blows smoke into the air, as it hides her, she demands

MARY

What do you want, Stephen? Why are you here?

STEPHEN

Your shark claims that she's got recordings of me supposedly harassing you.

MARY

Supposedly? That's rich.

STEPHEN

All I did was give you a couple of compliments.

MARY

Compliments? Stephen, compliments are: "You look nice today." Not:  
(Drops her voice)  
"Great dress, I love how it shows off your tits!"

STEPHEN

What can I say, you've got great tits.

MARY

God, you never learn, do you?

STEPHEN

I don't need to learn anything. I can buy and sell a dozen women like you before breakfast.

MARY

Oh, you've never meet a woman quite like me.

STEPHEN

What makes you so damn unique?

MARY

My being smart enough to record you, for one.

Stephen gets up, strides to the couch and leans over her in a menacing way. In a very quiet voice full of suppressed rage, he threatens her.

STEPHEN

If you're trying to blackmail me, it won't work. One phone call and you're in jail.

MARY

Oh, please. Don't drag the Police Commissioner's name into this. I know you were at his house for dinner last week, I'm the one who RSVP'd for you.

Mary catches him eying her chest as he leans over her, she gathers the silk, closes the gap in the robe.

Stephen notices her discomfort and grins.

STEPHEN

Then you should be aware how  
influential my friends are.

He stares into her eyes for a long moment before he backs off  
and gracefully lowers himself into the chair opposite her.

MARY

I'm not scared of you or your  
friends. They don't give a damn  
about you. As soon as this  
recording gets out, you can kiss  
them and your Congressional hopes  
buh-bye.

STEPHEN

It's just in the talking stages.  
(a double take)  
Wait. How'd you know about that?

Puzzled, his brows furrow as he waits for an answer.

MARY

Stephen, I'm your personal  
assistant, I know everything.

STEPHEN

But-- those calls were always taken  
on my private line.

MARY

Ever heard of a bug?

STEPHEN

You bugged me?

MARY

No, my evil twin did.

STEPHEN

I can't believe you bugged me.

MARY

Oh, Stephen. Really.

She gets up, crosses the room and runs her finger over the  
control pad of her laptop. The screen comes to life.

MARY

It's all on here. Want to hear it?

STEPHEN  
No. Your shark played some of your  
so-called harassment recordings  
this morning.

MARY  
Keep lying to yourself Stephen, it  
won't change things.

STEPHEN  
What, exactly, do you want? You  
should know I'm a bottom line kinda  
guy.

Mary nods in agreement.

MARY  
That you are.

STEPHEN  
So? What's the damage? Let's get  
this over with.

He pulls out a Mont Blanc an expensive checkbook cover.

MARY  
You can put the check book away. I  
wouldn't take a check from you.  
Besides, you don't have enough in  
that account to cover it.

Stephen looks at her with loathing, sighs and demands

STEPHEN  
What's it gonna be?

MARY  
Okay, you want the nitty gritty,  
you got it.

She holds a cd in between her fingers and flips it back and  
forth, taunting him with it.

MARY  
Here's the nitty, I've got you, on  
here, flirting, propositioning and  
otherwise harassing me.

Stephen eyes the disc and Mary with distaste.

STEPHEN  
The rest?

MARY

The gritty? It'll cost you 2.5 Mil  
to make this all go away.

STEPHEN

That's blackmail!

MARY

Not really. Just think of it as  
buying your way out of trouble.  
It's not like you haven't done it  
before.

STEPHEN

What are you talking about?

MARY

Senior year of college, the  
waitress you knocked up and Daddy  
bought off, remember her?

Stephen gapes at her, shocked that she has this information.

Mary strolls to the closet, opens the door, and begins to  
flick through the garments hanging there. They're obviously  
new, expensive looking, some have price tags still attached.

Stephen regains his composure.

STEPHEN

I don't know how you got this  
information, but it's got nothing  
to do with you.

MARY

Oh, that's where you're wrong. It  
has everything to do with me.

She selects an outfit, casually draping the clothes on a  
chair next to the bathroom door.

STEPHEN

I don't see how.

Mary spins around, stalks to the laptop, taps the control pad  
and hits a few keys.

A picture blooms unto the screen. The woman in it looks  
exactly like Mary, dressed in turn of the century clothing.  
Formally posed and staring directly into the camera.

Mary spins the laptop towards Stephen.

He looks at it and shrugs.

STEPHEN

So? That's you-- dressed up for Halloween or something.

MARY

Your Grandmother would be so hurt you didn't recognize her.

STEPHEN

My Grandmother? Nice try.

MARY

Try? No. It's her.

STEPHEN

Even if it is, so what? You look like her, big deal.

Mary turns the laptop towards her, hits the keys again.

MARY

Don't like that picture? OK, let's try this one.

She flips the screen towards Stephen again. It's a picture of a young woman and a younger Stephen.

The couple in the photo smile at the camera, obviously happy, intertwined in each other's arms, they look very much in love.

Stephen is stunned, then furious at this invasion of his privacy.

He explodes from the chair and rushes towards her.

STEPHEN

Where the HELL did you get that?

MARY

The picture of you and my mother?

That stops him in his tracks.

STEPHEN

Your what?

MARY

Mother.



STEPHEN  
You're her daughter?

MARY  
Yes.

He stares at her, suspecting that there's more, he sinks onto the couch.

MARY  
And yours.

STEPHEN  
No. I have two sons, no daughters.

MARY  
Wrong again. Dad.

STEPHEN  
You can't-- she had an abortion.  
My Dad told me.

MARY  
Your Father paid her off, she said  
she would have an abortion but she  
couldn't do it.

STEPHEN  
He showed me medical records.

MARY  
The doctor lied. He felt sorry for  
my Mom.

Stephen becomes suspicious.

STEPHEN  
People lie all the time, how do I  
know you're my kid?

Mary shrugs at him

STEPHEN  
I'll bet you can't prove it.

Mary picks up a leather satchel propped against the desk's leg and selects a sealed envelope from it.

She calls his bluff, drops the envelope in his lap.

MARY  
Read it and weep.

She picks up the clothing and disappears into the bathroom.

Stephen stares at the envelope with trepidation, sighs and picks it up.

He tears it open, unfolds the paper and reads the headline:

RESULT OF PATERNITY TEST

SUBJECTS: STEPHEN COCHRAN, MARY MARSHALL

Color drains from him as he reads the report.

A shaking hand drops the report onto his lap.

His head jerks up as he hears the blow dryer's whine.

He puts the report aside, pulls his wallet out and fishes for something hidden in the folds of it.

He pulls out a duplicate of the photo on the laptop's screen.

His copy is tattered, frayed and worn around edges.

He stares at the picture and then runs a finger along the jawline of the woman. An old sadness dwells in his eyes.

He puts the photo and his wallet away, gathers himself and picks up the report.

His eyes dart back and forth between the closed bathroom door and the report in his hand.

He's stunned and scared.

Mary steps out of the bathroom, calm, composed, dressed to the nines.

MARY

Believe me now?

STEPHEN

You could have faked this, I've never bleed or spit around you.

MARY

No, but you did drink out of several styrofoam coffee cups.

STEPHEN

What's that got to do with it?

MARY  
Saliva. They were able to collect  
enough from the rim to do the test.

Anger settles onto his face.

STEPHEN  
You set me up.

MARY  
Yeah, I did.

STEPHEN  
I don't care who you say you are,  
you're not blackmailing me

He tears the report into progressively smaller pieces.

MARY  
You really think that's the  
original?

Stephen rushes towards her, pulls up just shy of touching  
her, leans into her face and demands

STEPHEN  
Give it to me.

Mary is unfazed.

MARY  
2.5 million, in my numbered  
account, today, you can have it.

STEPHEN  
Bitch.

Mary grins at him

MARY  
Yeah. So? What's it gonna be?

STEPHEN  
I want the original report first.

MARY  
No problem.

Mary goes into the bathroom, opens the top drawer of the  
vanity, she slides it out, and sets the empty drawer on top  
of the vanity.

She turns the drawer over. Another sealed envelope is duct taped to the underside.

She rips the envelope off and walks back into the bed chamber.

STEPHEN  
That it?

MARY  
Yeah.

STEPHEN  
How do I know that's it?

MARY  
It has the original signature in blue ink.

She tears it open and shows it to him. Sure enough, a scribble of blue stands out from a sea of black ink.

He reaches for it.

She snatches it back from his reach.

MARY  
Uh unh. Not so fast.

Stephen looks at her with loathing.

Mary walks to the laptop, punches a few keys, she speaks over her shoulder to him

MARY  
You have enough money in your Cayman account to cover this.

STEPHEN  
How the hell -- Oh, never mind. Go ahead.

Mary tosses a triumphant grin at him.

STEPHEN  
What about the cd?

MARY  
I'll burn it too.

She punches in a series of numbers and calls up a screen that flashes

BEGIN TRANSFER NOW?

YES

NO

She moves the cursor over the "yes" button, turns the laptop toward him.

MARY  
You click on "yes". I'll burn the report and the cd.

STEPHEN  
We do it at the same time.

Mary gets the cd, puts it into the ashtray and holds the report over the top of the ashtray.

Stephen walks to the laptop his finger poised over the keys.

Mary picks up the Zippo, flicks the wheel, a flame flares up.

MARY  
On a count of three.

STEPHEN  
OK.

MARY  
One.

His finger descends slowly towards the keys.

The flame inches closer to the report.

STEPHEN  
Two.

His finger floats this close to the keys

The flame flickers, a millimeter away from the paper.

MARY  
Three.

His finger hits a key.

The flame hits the corner of the report.

Fade to BLACK

MARY (V.O.)  
By the way, I quit.

FADE OUT.