

Faux

by

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## THE LEADING LADIES OF LOS ANGELES CAST &amp; CREW

ALEX NISHIMURA. 34. Plastic surgeon. Not good at reality shows. But eager. Has an innocence everyone else lacks.

MONTANA BELLE WOLFOWITZ. 44. Burlesque host turned sugar baby. Direct. Flamboyant. Touches things she shouldn't.

"DUCHESS" TAVORRA BEENHOUER. 50. Restaurateur. The leader. Saccharine appearance. Steely insides. Loves her dog.

CHAYENNE P. JONES. 51. TV Judge. Busybody. A reasonable Lady. Proud of being a reasonable one. Snacks when stressed.

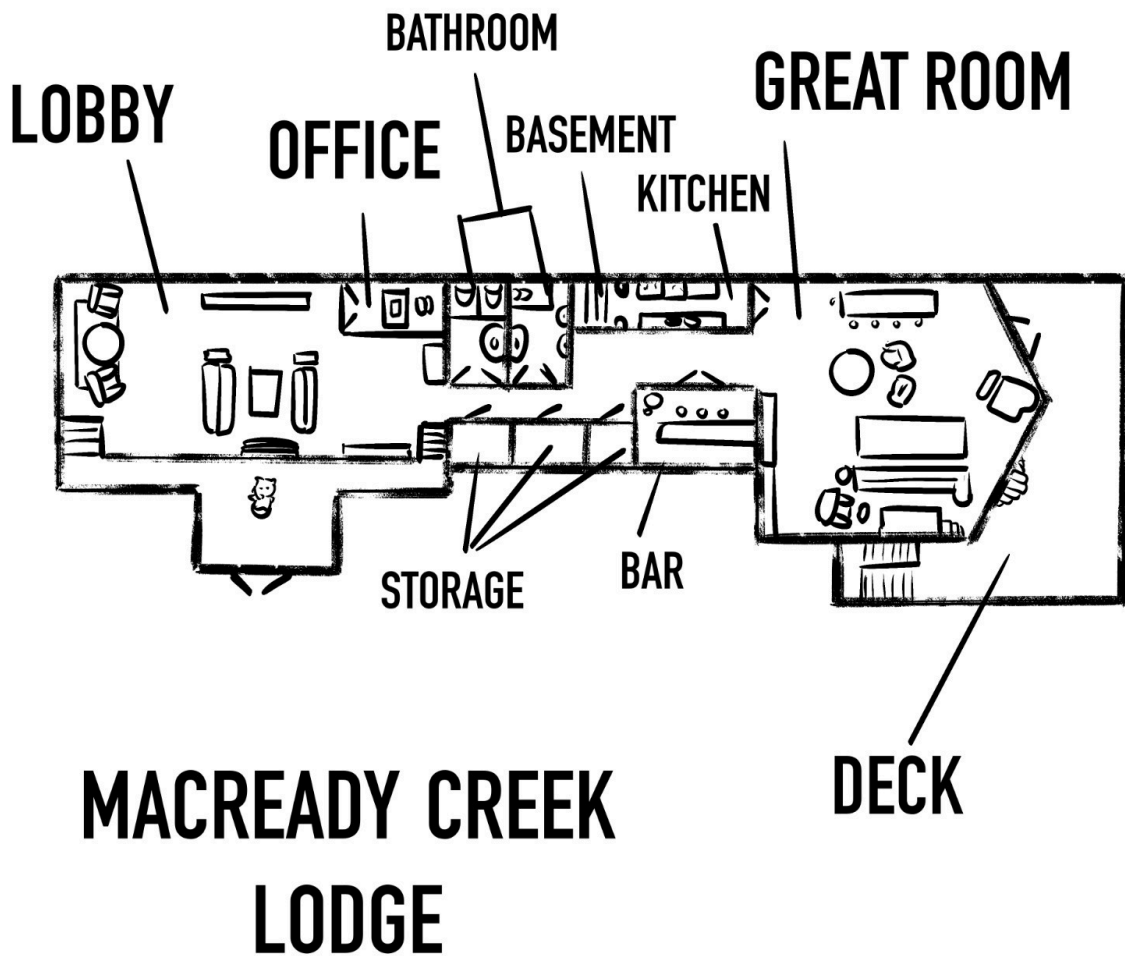
XENIA POPLVAKOVA. 42. Russian oligarchy money. The LADIES' drug connection. Spacey. Sweet. Sex-addled.

JULIA CANTOR. 38. CEO of her own fashion/mocktail company. High-strung. Quippy. Convicted fraudster. Carries 3 phones.

ELISA ORTIZ. 52. Telenovela star. Loud. Surgically fortified face. Stirs shit. Doesn't wear glasses, but brings them.

PHIL STURGEON. 31. Stoic. Sweaty. Takes his Reality Cameraman vows of neutrality and silence very seriously.

THE MACREADY CREEK LODGE (LOBBY AND GREAT ROOM)



EXT. IDAHO WILDERNESS - EVENING

A black so black it looks like space without the stars. But it's not. It's the eye of a huge, belligerent elk BUCK. The BUCK bends for water at a frigid, picturesque stream.

A noise: a foot in combat boots steps on a twig. The BUCK looks up, ready for a fight. But it sees nothing, not even the nebula of blood that comes washing through the stream.

It drinks. Strange tendrils stealthily rise -- hard to see in the gloom. They dart out and latch onto the BUCK, encircling its snout.

Drag it into the water with otherworldly strength as it rears, snorts, and jerks.

The buck's struggles go on for an uncomfortably long time.

Then suddenly the tendrils let go. The buck is bizarrely docile. As it stares through the woods at a line of cars only just visible, a human hand pets its hide.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

A low wooden gate stretches across a snowy drive. On it, a sign: "MacReady Creek Lodge and Ranch."

A line of cars extends up the drive, waiting to exit. A tall production van noisily scrapes the top of the low gate.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ALEX'S CABIN - EVENING

BANG! A bathroom door swings open in a rustic-chic room.

On the periphery, someone gets ready. Skincare and haircare products everywhere. A tight, flashy dress lies on the bed. It's a "FelonyGurl." There's a post-it: "So You'll Fit Right In - XOXO, Julia."

The TV blares. It's a hostile housewife-type reality show.

LLLA INTRO - EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - DAY

Eerily empty. One by one, the glamorous LADIES strut down the street, gowns flowing. Each stops, spits a catchphrase.

ALEX

I lift spirits, and faces!

MONTANA

I may be a state, but I'm also a statement.

THE DUCHESS

If I see a bitch, darling, I put them down.

CHAYENNE

I don't just run this town. I judge this town.

XENIA

I always work without a nyet.

JULIA

I've done hard labor. Shouldn't I  
enjoy the fruits of it, too?

ELISA

I'm not just an A-lister. I'm THE  
lister.

The LADIES assemble around a spotlighted ALEX. With a flourish, ALEX presents a golden statue to the viewers. The show's title appears: "THE LEADING LADIES OF LOS ANGELES."

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ALEX'S CABIN - EVENING

Reveal we're with ALEX, but we can't quite see her: she's in a beauty mask. She tries on the dress. Tugs mightily. Checks the mirror. Frowns. Won't fit right.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

Now ready, ALEX bounds along, shivering but smiling, toting a big gift. Even by reality TV standards, her skimpy outfit isn't smart. This patch of Idaho is a blanket of white.

The title rolls as she treks: "FAUX."

ALEX pauses, unsure of her direction.

SAM (O.C.)

You lost, Alex?

SAM, a boyish, swaggering ranch hand, trudges up.

SAM (CONT'D)

Couldn't even get our neighbors  
just now. Shoulda shut down.

ALEX

And miss skiing after?

SAM

Or miss freezing to death. Either  
way, no shooting range tomorrow.

ALEX

Oh, it's okay.

SAM

Really? Thought you had something.

ALEX

The Ladies, they weren't into it.  
 (Off his look)  
 I like what they like.

He looks disappointed. She feels guilty.

ALEX

But, no, it was great! "Breath deep, get square, and think of your enemy's bloody face."

SAM

God help us all.

ALEX

They there already?

SAM

Yeah. Is it possible they're having a buttocks party?

ALEX

Botox party.

He laughs, and starts to go.

ALEX

Sam.

He turns to look. She trembles in the tundra.

ALEX

... Which way?

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

A silver dome lifts on a meal that cost mad money. Most of the LADIES sit at a large dining table. Only ROSBOTTOM, the hotel's unctuous manager, is around to serve them.

MONTANA, the show's pariah, sits apart from the others. Unlike the LADIES, she isn't in a matching FelonyGurl dress.

ALEX enters and checks her makeup. PHIL, the group's cameraman, crowds her. She halts, still awkward around him. ALEX delivers a round of air kisses.

ALEX

What'd I miss?

JULIA  
4 hours without cell service.

MONTANA  
The horror.

DUCHESS  
Some of us are expecting calls.

ELISA  
Oh, Xe struck out with our guide.

ALEX  
Sam.

XENIA lazily swings an antique axe she took from the wall.

XENIA  
He said selfie together would  
anger "Great Camera Demon." I feel  
much sadness, he is very cute.

ELISA  
Maybe don't take the only worker  
that stayed.

ROSBOTTOM clears his throat. The LADIES don't notice.

DUCHESS  
(To Alex)  
You're tardy. Did you find this  
place all right, darling?

ALEX  
The lodge? Yeah. Well, sorta.

ELISA  
Harvard med school over here.

ALEX  
They didn't teach me directions.

Alex sits down. She hesitates, stows her gift, and looks  
down at her plate.

ROSBOTTOM  
Seared Asian Carp. All invasive  
species on the plate.

JULIA  
And these won't invade my bowels?

DUCHESS  
We don't do toxins, darling.

ROSBOTTOM

No, er, these --

ALEX

Oh, they're just creatures deemed non-native to the state.

CHAYENNE

How do you know?

ALEX

...Wikipedia.

The LADIES look askance at ALEX. She wishes she hadn't spoken up. Scrape. Clink. DUCHESS forks up her plate.

DUCHESS

Can't let an invasive species in, darling. Ask my husband, he tried with a blonde once.

Titters. ALEX sees a chance, brings her gift to DUCHESS.

DUCHESS

We said no gifts, love.

It's clear that no one followed that directive. A banner hangs in the room: "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, OUR DUCHESS." A pile of presents are already unwrapped on a table.

ALEX

I know. But it's small...

DUCHESS

Give it here, you scamp.

DUCHESS brushes away the snow, and opens it.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

Oh. Oh, I love it.

ALEX

Do you?

DUCHESS shows it to the group. It's a bejeweled, stuffed recreation of her terrier. Even has a little tag -- MÓMO. It's hideous to anyone not filthy rich.

DUCHESS

Yes, truly.

MONTANA

Wow, it matches her vajazzle.



Everyone except ALEX scoffs at MONTANA, then turn to ALEX, waiting for her to join in. She does, belatedly.

ALEX  
AH, I'm so relieved!

ALEX tries to hug DUCHESS. It's like hugging a scarecrow.

DUCHESS  
Where is my little one, anyway?

ALEX  
I can --

ELISA  
I'll help you look.

DUCHESS and ELISA depart for the LOBBY.

XENIA  
I think being stuck in Iowa  
snowstorm would be more romantish.

CHAYENNE  
Idaho.

JULIA rights herself for the camera.

JULIA  
This is nothing compared to jail.

CHAYENNE  
Oh, oh. Here we go.

JULIA  
You wouldn't get it, Chayenne.  
Those six months of penal  
experience...

MONTANA  
I had that with my first  
boyfriend.

DUCHESS' phone rings. The tune is "Staying Alive." The DUCHESS's background is her in a Diana Ross costume.

ALEX  
Duchess?

JULIA  
That bitch has service? She was  
waiting for that. Take it.

ALEX  
You sure? Ah, OK. Hello?

PRODUCER  
Duchess? Sniff if she's there.

ALEX hesitates. The LADIES encourage her. Alex sniffs.

PRODUCER (O.C.)  
So I looked at Alex's contract.  
There's nothing we can do about  
the intro. I'm sorry.

The color drains from ALEX's face.

PRODUCER (O.C.)  
But I'm gonna make it up to you.  
Feature her stories less, you  
know? And next season, she'll be  
gone. No questions. We want you  
happy.

ALEX  
(Mimicking DUCHESS)  
Wonderful, darling.

ALEX hangs up and quickly exits.

CHAYENNE  
Who was that?

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / BATHROOM - EVENING

ALEX sits on a closed toilet in a stall, shaken by the betrayal. She scratches her forearms -- her ALEX behavior. After listening for signs of movement, ALEX pulls out CHEWING TOBACCO from a hidden chamber of her purse.

She hears a skittering. Panicked, ALEX flings the tobacco back in her bag. MOMÓ, the DUCHESS' toy terrier, squeezes under the stall door. ALEX relaxes a little. Secret's safe.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ALEX returns with MÓMO. Hawk-eyed DUCHESS spots them.

DUCHESS  
Whatever are you doing with Mómo?

ALEX  
Found him. In the bathroom.

DUCHESS

He's like my husband, you see: he likes to roam. Give him here.

ALEX hands over the dog. Instinctively, she bows. Then turns. DUCHESS can't see her berate herself -- stupid bow.

DUCHESS

Oh, Alex.

ALEX stops. Cocks her head.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

We're so very glad to have you.

DUCHESS smiles. ALEX smiles back. A long time. It's a smiling standoff in the Passive-Aggressive Coral. PHIL rushes over, knocking over ROSBOTTOM. Gets the shot.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - LATER

ROSBOTTOM scorches some creme brûlée. Xenia is mid-toast.

XENIA

-- that's why I think of she, wonderful woman, whenever I take shower. Za vas!

They toast. ALEX downs her glass. DUCHESS rises.

DUCHESS

Right, well, thank you for making my 50th birthday so very splendid! But, before we talk more about me, I did want to take a moment to welcome our newest. Alex, this is your first trip, yes?

ALEX

M-me? Yes.

DUCHESS

No matter what people say, know that many were...proud that you're the face of our program. Chin chin.

ALEX smiles, but inside she's dying. She abruptly leaves.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM DECK - EVENING

ALEX overlooks a milky sea of firs. She checks to see if she's alone, then puts a wad of chewing tobacco in her lip.

ALEX

Ahhh.

MONTANA cracks open the glass door. ALEX immediately spits out her dark secret. MONTANA sidles up. ALEX tightens.

MONTANA

How ya doing there, pardner?

ALEX

Fine. Why wouldn't I be?

MONTANA

It's about 25 degrees and you're in a washcloth from FelonyGurl?

(A beat)

Bullshit's getting to you, huh?

(A beat)

Ya know, this height. This view. I could really...

MONTANA flashes the wilderness. We see it from behind, like a photo on Instagram. (No boobs.)

ALEX

What are you -- Montana!

MONTANA

Feel that cold air. Free titties!

ALEX sizes up this strange woman. She's in disbelief.

MONTANA (CONT'D)

Now, you.

ALEX

What? No. Why?

MONTANA

'Cause. Women shouldn't just fit in. They should act out.

ALEX

I really couldn't --

ALEX stops. Sighs. Checks to make sure PHIL is inside. Then, she flashes the forest perfunctorily.

ALEX  
There, I did it.

MONTANA  
Look, I know I'm not the most popular girl around here since I streaked through Elisa's third wedding, but you can talk to me.

ALEX  
Yeah, maybe.  
(A beat)  
I guess -- do you think people are, ya know, fake? Like they play to the cameras?

MONTANA  
Oh, honey. They're about as real as my nails, hair, tits, and tan ...

MONTANA shivers.

MONTANA  
You coming?

ALEX  
In a sec.

MONTANA  
Another boring weekend!

MONTANA exits. ALEX soaks up a last look. She turns to go, but gets an idea. She starts to flash the woods one more time -- and gets met with an echoing scream. ALEX jumps, pauses to make sure she's not crazy, and races inside.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

The LADIES crowd around frosted windows. DUCHESS is missing. BANG! BANG BANG!

JULIA  
The fuck was that shit? A car?

MONTANA  
A car, in this? It's a gun, moron.

JULIA  
Maybe Duchess caught her husband cheating on the way back to the cabin.

ELISA  
Anyone, see anything?

MONTANA  
Snow. Trees.

ELISA flicks MONTANA off.

JULIA  
(To Rosbottom)  
I paid for a five-star ski lodge,  
not a trip to the ghetto!

ROSBOTTOM  
I'm sure it's --

CHAYENNE  
You ever been to the ghetto?

JULIA  
Um, hello? Well established. Jail.

CHAYENNE  
A halfway house in Silver Lake?

ALEX  
Should we check?

The LADIES looks at her, astonished.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Someone could be hurt.

ELISA takes center stage. Nods. Now showily brave.

ELISA  
Yes, definitely check.

ROSBOTTOM  
I'm sure Mr. Washakie was merely  
scaring off a scavenger. They get  
close, I'm told.

He retrieves a PA MIC.

ROSBOTTOM  
Mr. Washakie. Could you report to  
the Lodge?

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / STABLE - CONTINUOUS

A speaker hangs over the stable. A spectrum of light plays  
out under the doors.

ROSBOTTOM (O.C.)  
 Or, er, if you're just somewhat  
 OK, fire a shot in the air.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The LADIES wait for some sign or sound. It's quiet.

MONTANA  
 I'm with Alex. We should look.

JULIA looks at PHIL warily. Huddles closer in.

JULIA  
 Uh, and get eaten?

ROSBOTTOM  
 Ladies, I really must insist that  
 we not go off on a-a jaunt in  
 these conditions. On account of  
 the peril. The hotel could be  
 liable, and some of you have  
 such... litigious instincts.

XENIA  
 Sam is cute one...

MONTANA  
 We're going. You're guiding. Or  
 we'll torch you on Yelp.

ROSBOTTOM, smiling grimly, relents.

ROSBOTTOM  
 I know he had to see to the  
 horses.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

ALEX, MONTANA, XENIA, ROSBOTTOM, and PHIL trek across the  
 ice. Underdressed, they waddle like penguins. PHIL hops in  
 front to film. Cognizant of the camera, the LADIES  
 alternate between shivers and struts.

XENIA  
 Like springtime in Yakutsk!

ROSBOTTOM  
 J-just a few more steps to the --

Another BANG. A SCREAM cleaves the jabber. They speed up.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / STABLES - EVENING

MONTANA and ALEX enter the L-shaped stable first. PHIL fiddles with his settings, missing something big as it WHOOSHES through the darkness. Montana whips out her phone's light -- nothing but horses.

MONTANA  
You see that?

ALEX  
Yeah. Sam?

ROSBOTTOM  
Samuel!

Lights rake towards a pained moan. SAM lays motionless atop a bale of hay. Dark liquid soaks through it. The LADIES runs over. ALEX grabs XENIA's wrist, and positions her light over SAM's body. A horse laps at the ichor.

XENIA  
Ah, the horse is -- bad horse.  
Carnivo-horse.

Forgetting herself, XENIA grins at PHIL.

ALEX  
Just hold your hand steady!

ALEX checks SAM'S ghastly lacerations. It's like a bullwhip hit him.

MONTANA scouts the row of stalls, but finds only horses. The door at the end of the L is ajar. She closes it.

MONTANA  
Door was open, but...

ALEX  
Deep lacerations. Bad blood loss.

MONTANA  
Damn. That's gnarly.

ROSBOTTOM bends down. Gags at the site of exposed muscle.

ROSBOTTOM  
A coyote did this?

ALEX  
The marks don't track.

Everyone peers at her. That wasn't lady-like. ALEX blushes.



ALEX (CONT'D)  
But, um, I mostly see nose jobs.

XENIA  
Poor, handsome Sam. How your  
people have suffered.

ALEX scans the ground. Finds little pellets, like fallen  
blueberries. She frowns at them, stuffs them in her coat.

ALEX  
It's freezing. We need to get him  
warm, stop the bleeding.

ROSBOTTOM  
I could try Dr. Wan...

MONTANA  
We had to do a March of the  
Penguins out here. He ain't  
comin'.

ALEX  
I need to stop the bleeding.

ROSBOTTOM  
Oh?

XENIA  
She fix my nose and ass.

ROSBOTTOM  
I thought that was for the show.

ALEX  
You think I went through 8 years  
of training for a reality show? We  
should get him up.

ALEX and MONTANA strain and lift SAM -- barely. ROSBOTTOM  
puts an ineffectual hand on his back to help. XENIA breaks  
off, scrounges for something.

MONTANA  
Jesus, Xenia, come help!

XENIA reluctantly joins.

XENIA  
Shouldn't leave firearm around.  
Gun safety 101. C'mon, you from  
U.S.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

The LADIES struggle with SAM in the snowy expanse. They resort to dragging him. One of his boots falls off.

MONTANA  
 Seriously, though, did no one see  
 anything in there?

XENIA and ROSBOTTOM shake their heads. PHIL keeps silent.

ALEX  
 Something. But I have no idea --

MÓMO scampers up to them. Disappearing in the drifts.

XENIA  
 Oh, no, you naughty thing! How'd  
 you get all the way out here?  
 Come, come with Auntie Xenia.

She picks him up, leaving the others to hold SAM. Again.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ALEX and crew burst in. The rest of the LADIES leap up, shocked. DUCHESS has returned, wearing what looks to be a general's uniform made of polar bear. CHAYENNE joins MONTANA and ALEX as they haul SAM to a rug by the fire. ROSBOTTOM stokes the flames. Hands slick with blood, the women lose their grips. SAM falls the last foot.

ELISA  
 The fuck happened over there?!

CHAYENNE  
 Kid's bleeding all over my shoes.  
 (Looks at PHIL guiltily)  
 I mean, the floor. Ah, I'm light-  
 headed.

XENIA lets MÓMO down.

XENIA  
 Found him outside, poor thing.

DUCHESS  
 Beastly boy! Gunshots spook him.

The dog runs when DUCHESS reaches for him. PHIL changes cards. JULIA notices his absence, and lets her guard down.

JULIA

Nuh uh. Nope. Don't like this.  
Stuck here with some murderer or  
-- or a w-wendigo up my ass.

CHAYENNE

We shouldn't panic. There's a  
rational reason for this.

DUCHESS

Yes, don't be daft. It's a bloody  
forest. It's a puma, that's all.

ALEX frowns. She doesn't think it was a puma.

ALEX

Xenia, can I get an oxycontin?

XENIA

Hardly time, no?

(A beat)

Oh, for him? Think I have in  
purse.

PHIL resumes filming.

ALEX

Montana, can you put pressure  
here?

ALEX points to the largest wound on SAM's torso. Blood  
seeps from it. MONTANA obeys. Doesn't hide her thrill.

ALEX

Rosbottom, I need a needle,  
thread, and hot water.

DUCHESS

What do you intend to do? This  
isn't a facelift now, is it?

The camera rushes towards ALEX. She fumbles her moment.

ALEX

I, uh -- no, that would be an  
inappropriate procedure.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / SPOOKY SUPPLY SHED - EVENING

ALEX shuffles into a dusty, ramshackle shed, muttering to  
herself. A lone bulb flickers. It doesn't match the posh  
resort's outward face. In fact, it's spooky.

ALEX

"No, Duchess! Screw plastic, I'm a surgeon!" Gah, it was right there.

ROSBOTTOM peers in, swings a padlock. Content to be outside.

ROSBOTTOM

You all right in there?

Rickety shelves line the walls. There are lawnmowers, gas canisters, lawn and welding equipment, rifles, murky jars, and canned food. ALEX picks up a jar. Blows dust off of it.

ROSBOTTOM

Obviously, it's been quite some time since we -- what I mean is, we have very little use for this shed.

ALEX

Your cans are bulging. You should throw them out.

ALEX tosses him one. She continues to medical supplies. Most are veterinary. She efficiently scrounges through, grabbing antiseptic, thread, needle, and painkillers.

ALEX

Time to stitch a bitch.

She looks around for PHIL. Deflates a little when she realizes he's not there for her line.

ALEX

Always when the camera isn't there.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ALEX finishes the last stitch. Sits back, proud. PHIL circles. XENIA watches dreamily, SAM's feet in her lap.

XENIA

Poor Sam. Hurt his ankle, too.

ALEX looks. It does look swollen. She checks elsewhere. Cuts all over his hands and forearms.

ELISA

Defensive wounds.

ELISA sucks on her glasses. Everyone looks skeptical.

ELISA

What, I played a detective in *Ola de Azul*.

JULIA

Something is out there. I knew it!

CHAYENNE

Just a mountain lion. Duchess said.

JULIA

Just? I'm Jew jerky to them.

MONTANA

What I saw wasn't no cat.

ALEX

I found these in the stable.

Alex pulls the PELLETS out of the pocket of her jacket.

ALEX

Deer or elk droppings.

CHAYENNE

How do you know?

ALEX

I, um, googled it after Sam's wildlife lecture.

ELISA

You kept poop in an Alex Perry?

DUCHESS

You're saying Bambi did this.

ALEX

No, I don't -- all I'm saying is that one was there.

DUCHESS

An elk.

MONTANA

Is it crazier than reality show bitches stuck in an Arctic noir?

DUCHESS rolls her eyes at MONTANA.

ALEX

I patched him, but he needs blood.

DUCHESS  
We should get him a helicopter.

ROSBOTTOM  
And how would one get that?

DUCHESS  
You don't have one on standby? And you call this five stars?

ALEX  
Check for cell service.

With the exception of DUCHESS and XENIA, they all wander around looking for reception. JULIA checks on all three of her phones. Frowns all around.

JULIA  
Nothing! On any of them! I told my staff we should have a satellite!

CHAYENNE  
Fewer bars than Salt Lake City.

MONTANA  
Nice one, girl.

XENIA  
Why would anyone hurt handsome Sam? Horse is right next door.

A beat.

ALEX  
Next door. Sam mentioned a -- a neighbor.

ELISA  
What?

ROSBOTTOM  
McMurdo. It's a...government lab.

JULIA  
McMurder? Did he say McMurder?!

MONTANA  
They're probably up to their assholes in blood.

JULIA  
What, you going to just hook Mómo up to a dog sled?

ELISA  
You'll freeze your tits off!

MONTANA  
That what happened to yours?

ELISA flicks her off.

MONTANA (CONT'D)  
Anyway, my ski gear's Dior so...

CHAYENNE  
It could still be out there.

MONTANA  
Gun probably scared it off, too.  
(Turning to Alex)  
You said he needs blood.

ALEX shies away from the sudden spotlight.

ALEX  
I...uh...

MONTANA  
I don't know what to ask for.

ALEX  
Well...

DUCHESS  
Oh, for Christ's sake, Montana,  
Alex doesn't want want to go on  
your bloody Alpine adventure!  
Especially not on my birthday! No  
one does. We'll stay put, thank  
you, and wait for the phones to  
come back like rational people.  
He's a strapping boy, he'll live.

ALEX shifts uncomfortably. MONTANA pleads with her eyes.  
ALEX turns from MONTANA to DUCHESS. The latter folds her  
arms, commanding. ALEX shrinks.

She looks at the camera, gestures lamely to SAM.

ALEX  
Duchess is -- I should probably  
stay here. I mean, with him.

MONTANA  
It was your idea! Whatever, you're  
all cunts.

DUCHESS

Be so, so careful, dear.

MONTANA exits. DUCHESS snaps at PHIL to turn off the camera. He reluctantly does.

DUCHESS

Always a bug up her arse, that one.

ELISA

Totally. Ug, v. bitchy.

DUCHESS

Told them when she came on the show. Tawdry working girl.

ALEX flinches. She peers at her hands, covered in evidence of her work. Her fists clench. She rises, but lamely says:

ALEX

Maybe I should go, too. Just make sure he keeps breathing. Sorry.

ALEX tugs at her dress. It won't do. She exits, eyes down, avoiding DUCHESS. ELISA leans into DUCHESS.

ELISA

Then there's that one.

DUCHESS swirls her wine. Somehow, she makes it menacing.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

Dense woods. Strong winds. Snow to your shins. MONTANA and ALEX struggle through. The women have sturdy boots and backpacks. ALEX has ski poles. MONTANA wears neon. ALEX nearly blends in in white.

ALEX looks around, perpetually lost.

ALEX

Sure it's this way?

MONTANA nods. They trudge on.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Think there'll be guards?

MONTANA

Oh, honey, I've never had a problem handling men in uniform.



They arrive at a creek whited out by the storm. Across it, a 10-foot-high fence with barbed wire coiled wickedly on top. Grim red signs warn off trespassers.

ALEX

That must be it.

The crossing log is now slick with snow. The water is icy. ALEX shuffles across, using the poles to brace herself. She realizes MONTANA is stuck, and invites her to grab ahold. They make a funny little train across.

The fence looms before them.

MONTANA

Maybe the guards got evacuated.

ALEX

What is that?

Fifteen yards down, a bulge in the fence. The threads of the fence are mangled. Turned outward. THICK BLOOD icicles down.

MONTANA

Holy shit. Something wanted out.

MONTANA, entranced, reaches to touch the blood. WHAP! ALEX grabs MONTANA's wrist.

ALEX

Don't touch it.

MONTANA

I get a little grabby.

The tall women have to duck to get through. As they're crouching, MONTANA halts in her tracks.

MONTANA

Whoa.

ALEX

What?

Something in the snow. A ribbon? MONTANA fishes. It's a lanyard, connected to an I.D. BADGE. Caked with blood.

MONTANA

A badge.

She wipes off the gunk with snow. The badge reads: "DR. WILLIAM J. CRADDOCK, EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY." The women trade looks. MONTANA stores the badge in her pack.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

DUCHESS storms about the room. The LADIES exhibit either boredom or nervousness: slouching, twitching ...

DUCHESS  
A stain! That's all they are!

ELISA  
You tell 'em, sister.

DUCHESS  
This show meant something. Class!

DUCHESS paces. SAM stirs in the background. No one sees except PHIL, who films him.

ELISA  
Amen.

DUCHESS  
Tarts bundled up, taking polar excursions, detracting from my special day? Recalcitrance!

XENIA  
I miss camera crew ...

DUCHESS  
And all I do is care!

In the background, SAM looks like he's choking.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)  
Some birthday vacation!

JULIA  
Paris suggested this place, not me.

CHAYENNE  
You know it's a steal, though.

DUCHESS  
I really don't, darling. All I know is that we're sitting here like Agatha Christie and her Indians.

CHAYENNE  
Thank God she said Indians.

DUCHESS tilts back her wine...as SAM gasps, and sits up coughing. The LADIES nearly fall backwards.

DUCHESS

Oh my God! Someone! Do something!

ELISA

How?! What the fuck do I do?!

DUCHESS

Haven't you played a Mexican doctor enough times? First aid, woman!

JULIA

Stop filming!

They all stare at each other. No one helps. SAM goes rigid. His eyes roll back. He erupts in a seizure.

ELISA

Oh, I know this! Put something in his mouth!

CHAYENNE

Everyone knows that!

JULIA

What, though?!

(Holds up three phones)

I don't carry a wooden spoon or whatever! That'd be impractical!

A frantic search. CHAYENNE scales a wall for antlers on the mantle. Gingerly fits them into SAM's mouth.

CHAYENNE

This?

The antlers rattle between SAM's teeth, but hold. ELISA bursts out laughing.

ELISA

He gives great horn.

XENIA

Is not funny!

DUCHESS

Rosbottom, for God's sake, doesn't this place have sedatives?

ROSBOTTOM

Y-yes, of course. I'll check.

ROSBOTTOM departs. DUCHESS addresses PHIL.

DUCHESS

You. Get some b-roll.

(Turns)

Xenia, we might need something stronger.

XENIA

Think I have morphine in room.

XENIA exits. SAM's eyes are as white as the snow.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

XENIA trudges past a cabin as fast as the snow will allow her, humming some old Soviet anthem. A BUCK peeks out from the corner of the cabin.

EXT. MCMURDO FACILITY / GROUNDS - EVENING

ALEX and MONTANA hike up a slope. Snow cascades down. There's a cluster of brutalist office buildings ahead. Otherwise, it's primordial. An Ice Age redux.

MONTANA

Fucking spooky.

ALEX

Shoulda had another cocktail.

A beat.

MONTANA

Think that guy chopped up Sam?

Alex doesn't answer.

MONTANA (CONT'D)

You doing okay, though?

ALEX

Yeah, it's not that steep.

MONTANA

No, I meant this. This life.

ALEX

(Gestures to the snow)  
Kinda new to me.

MONTANA

Not that. Your reality show one.

ALEX

...I mean, it's taking awhile. To fit in. It's a...culture.

MONTANA

See, that's horseshit.

ALEX

P-Pardon?

MONTANA

You're so smart. A doctor! Why do you want to fit in with those fake bitches?

ALEX

My Dad...

ALEX swallows whatever she was about to say.

ALEX (CONT'D)

They're so glamorous! Colorful.

MONTANA

They're not peacocks.

ALEX

I like them, OK? That's all.

MONTANA

Your likable people? They smiled, then mocked me behind my back when Tummy went belly up. Appearances, that's all they care about.

ALEX

That was...for the show. People get carried away.

MONTANA

Think it mattered to everyone who saw it on social and jumped on? Restaurants wouldn't seat me!

ALEX

Montana, I would never. I wasn't even there!

MONTANA

You sure you wouldn't?

ALEX

Why even bother doing it, then?  
The show, I mean. If you're so  
good?

MONTANA

Some of us need the money, honey.

ALEX

I'm just not loud like you. I try  
to fit in.

MONTANA

Ya know, there's a hill that goes  
from fitting in to joining in. And  
it's not that steep, either.

ALEX flinches. MONTANA keeps walking.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / SPOOKY SUPPLY SHED - EVENING

Grumbling, ROSBOTTOM checks the shelves. The flickering  
light has died. The door is open for the moonlight, but  
it's not enough. He turns his phone light on. We see his  
phone's background: an elegantly arched woman's foot.

Outside, the snow squelches. Footsteps.

ROSBOTTOM

...l-ladies? Duchess?

He frowns. The sounds aren't human. He looks back at the  
door and sees a cloud of breath. But not what is breathing.  
He licks his lips. Creeps forward to the door. Swings it  
shut. Then suddenly pounces for the lock. But the lock is  
only from the outside. And whatever's there noticed him.

ROSBOTTOM rushes to brace the door as something big rams  
it. He sinks, frantic, tearful. The door buckles...

EXT./INT. MCMURDO BUILDING / LOBBY - EVENING

ALEX and MONTANA step lightly around the building. Despite  
their fight, they stick close to each other, scared now.

MONTANA

Look.

The windows of the lobby are splintered by bullets. The  
women exchange of "oh, shit" looks. MONTANA squeezes  
through a shattered set of glass entry doors.

Alex, more hesitant, cleans out the glass with her ski pole before entering.

They inspect the place. It's a wide, marble lobby with an insignia for an unrecognizable government agency. A FIGURE in a high-backed chair sits at a security desk, facing away.

MONTANA

Sir? Hello? We're from the Leading Ladies of Los Angeles on Idolo --

ALEX clamps a hand on MONTANA who falls quiet. They creep closer. Only the top of the FIGURE's head can be seen over the chair. MONTANA, ALEX's ski pole raised, nods at ALEX, who spins the chair around...

It's the remains of a GUARD, with a gaping, dripping cavern where his neck should be. Tissue flaps in a fan's artificial breeze. A pistol rests in his hand. The women shriek.

MONTANA

Where the FUCK is this man's neck?

ALEX

Yeah, he's dead.

MONTANA grabs the guard's gun and spins him around so they can't see him anymore. ALEX starts to walk deeper.

MONTANA

What? No! Time to go, girl! I don't need an emergency...uh, you know.

ALEX

Tracheotomy.

MONTANA

Tracheotomy!

ALEX wants to quit. But she banishes the notion.

ALEX

We'll get the blood. And be good.

ALEX flashes a thumbs up. MONTANA isn't convinced.

MONTANA

Fucksticks and tartar sauce!

MONTANA sighs, gives up. She heads to the lobby's security gate. MONTANA jumps it, but ALEX frowns.

ALEX

The badge. Give it here.

MONTANA throws her the badge. Rule-abiding ALEX uses it to enter. The pair uncomfortably boards an elevator.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ROSBOTTOM flies through the door. Throws on the lock. He slides down the glass, hyperventilating. The LADIES hurry over, including XENIA, who has returned.

DUCHESS

What's wrong with you, man?

ROSBOTTOM

It -- it came -- after me!

The LADIES look out the window. Nothing but white.

ELISA

What did?

ROSBOTTOM

I heard it! Grunting.

CHAYENNE

What was it?

ROSBOTTOM

A creature! It had me -- I was barricaded in the shed, holding on for dear life.

CHAYENNE

So you didn't "see it" see it.

ROSBOTTOM

No, but I heard awful things --

DUCHESS

(To XENIA)

Did you see anything?

XENIA shakes her head, perplexed.

JULIA

How did you get away?

ROSBOTTOM

I -- he, he just left. Suddenly. And I ran as fast as I could.



ELISA  
So...no medicine?

ROSBOTTOM  
It was all I could do to...

DUCHESS  
And they call us hysterics.  
Luckily, Xenia hath provided.

He grabs DUCHESS' cape. She looks down on him.

ROSBOTTOM  
I swear to you. It was real.

She stares at him. It's unclear whether she believes him...

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A finger presses a doorbell. A fleck of BLOOD drips from it.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The doorbell rings.

No one moves. No one speaks. The LADIES and ROSBOTTOM look to the lobby, the source of the sound, and each other.

INT. MCMURDO BUILDING / 7<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR - EVENING

The elevator doors slither open. It's a bedlam of flashing alarms, dangling wires, and drizzling sprinklers. They slink out. Auxiliary power is on, but it barely lights the place.

ALEX slips on a pond of blood she didn't see. With horror, she realizes she's face-to-face with a corpse. MONTANA helps her scramble up.

MONTANA  
Oh God, you're really going to  
need a clay mask.

They switch on their phone-lights. A dozen BODIES slump behind makeshift barricades. Most in military fatigues. A few blood-stained lab coats. Gruesome perforations and lacerations tattoo them. One is bizarrely shoeless.

MONTANA  
Oh, fuck me!

ALEX

Shhh.

MONTANA

This shit's like...when I played the witch-stripper in Evil Eye-sis.

ALEX

Just gonna get the blood. You got that gun, right?

MONTANA lifts it, feels safer. Carnage guides them forward.

ALEX

You know how to use that, huh?

MONTANA

Yeah. The witch-stripper in Evil Eye-sis had Marine training, so.  
(Looking around)  
So fucked up. Gonna need like 5 extra sessions with Dr. Tuttle.

ALEX scans the bodies. Most wounds are on their backs. But at least one has wrists slit: suicide.

ALEX

It's like they were attacked by --

MONTANA

No spooky medical shit!

ALEX

Fine. Just find a Red Cross, and ignore literally everything else!

INT. MCMURDO BUILDING / EXAM ROOM 3 - EVENING

ALEX stands, mouth agape, fixated on something that's NOT a Red Cross. MONTANA bends and fusses in the background.

MONTANA

Aw, these were my favorite boots.

We see what ALEX is gaping at: it's a CREATURE, blackened and smoldering. It has a small, uneven torso with a large, jagged, off-kilter mouth. The torso sprouts a willowy collection of clawed and toothed tentacles.

Some tentacles stretch into the nostrils of a human corpse on the floor -- a ghastly arterial network.

Several more lie severed on the floor, unburnt. Translucent and jelly-like.

MONTANA  
 (About her boots)  
 I'll never forgive myself, they --

MONTANA plows into ALEX from behind, spooking them both.

MONTANA  
 Sorry, I -- JESUS!

ALEX  
 Yeah.

MONTANA  
 Is it a giant squid?

ALEX  
 Not one I've seen. On Wiki.

MONTANA  
 What is it doing to that man?!

ALEX gingerly pokes it.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
 No one will ever believe us. Of  
 all the times to be without a  
 camera.

They both take out their phones, and take bursts of pictures. ALEX notes the restraints. One is severed.

ALEX  
 This was cut, I think.

MONTANA  
 Government bastards. But...why is  
 it still here?

ALEX  
 (Mimes shooting)  
 Maybe the soldiers got it  
 before...

MONTANA  
 Then what got the guys outside?  
 And Neckless the Guard?

ALEX  
 There must have been another.

The team continues to circle the THING, unable to peel their eyes off its strangeness. As they do, MONTANA's boot brushes a two-foot severed TENTACLE on the floor. It twitches. The preoccupied women don't notice.

MONTANA

It really could be from the ocean floor. Shit's wild down there.

ALEX

Yeah...

MONTANA

What?!

ALEX

It's not symmetrical. Almost everything on Earth is. Actually

--

MONTANA glares at ALEX. She doesn't want to know.

MONTANA

Hey, this guy is a Phil.

They squat down next to a fallen cameraman. MONTANA fiddles with his camera bays, finally bagging a gold SD CARD. ALEX gently shuts his eyes.

MONTANA

Now, what the fuck does --

MONTANA screams as the severed TENTACLE latches onto her boot. Blood sprays as its large claw digs in. The TENTACLE's filament light up, bathing the room in light and color.

ALEX, horrorstruck, falls backwards.

The TENTACLE crawls up to MONTANA'S face as she bats at it. With a ripping sound, it splits in two and aim's for MONTANA's nostrils. Its color goes pink.

MONTANA

The gun! The gun!

ALEX

I can't! I'll hit you!

ALEX grasps for a weapon. Finds a heavy microscope. Smashes the TENTACLE, which partially smushes. But it flies back at her. She grabs it at the point of division. It twists and wraps around her arms, knocking her off balance. Struggling, they overturn a desk.

It constricts at her wrists. ALEX cries out.

She hears a crunch and looks down: a large shard of glass. She grabs it barehanded, grimacing at the pain. MONTANA sits back up. The women pry the tentacle off, and pin it.

ALEX  
Watch yourself!

MONTANA  
Go!

ALEX stabs down, over and over. Dark blood sprays them both. The TENTACLE spasms, then settles. The LADIES collapse, gulping air like boxers, checking their injuries.

MONTANA  
OK, that's an alien, right? An actual fucking alien.

ALEX  
I gotta...

ALEX squats. She reaches into her coat, and pulls out chewing tobacco. Stuffs it in her cheek.

MONTANA  
Is that...chaw? You do chaw?

ALEX  
Yeah, when I'm stressed, OK!

MONTANA  
(Gleeful)  
Oh, man, if they ever knew...

ALEX stands and pulls MONTANA close, slurring words.

ALEX  
Please, Montana. You can't tell.  
I'd die without this show.

MONTANA  
Silent mode, motherfucker.

Littered all over are the lab's files. ALEX scoops them up. MONTANA tries to get up, but clutches her foot.

ALEX  
I'll find blood. You stay here and check the phones.

MONTANA

Well, shit, this wasn't boring.  
I'm glad I was here with you, ya  
bitch.

MONTANA smiles. A little nod of acknowledgement from ALEX.

MONTANA watches her go. She looks at the INERT tentacle,  
then at her boot, the label of which says "DIOB." A good  
fake. MONTANA, entranced, reaches for the tentacle.

EXT. MCMURDO FACILITY / GROUNDS - EVENING

MONTANA leans on ALEX as they slowly wade through the snow.

ALEX

We need to warn them.

MONTANA

Don't worry. They'd probably  
criticize an alien to death.

ALEX

You want me to carry your bag?

MONTANA

No! No, I got it.

Their blood leaves a trail. Suddenly, they stop. A chilling  
bugle comes from somewhere in the forest. They spin,  
seeking its origin. On a ridge, they spot a huge BUCK,  
watching. With a scared look, ALEX drags MONTANA along.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

A BANG on the glass. The LADIES jump from their cocktails.  
ROSBOTTOM cautiously approaches and scrutinizes the bundled  
figures at the door.

ROSBOTTOM

Who is it?

DUCHESS

Her Majesty, the Queen.

ROSBOTTOM

What?

DUCHESS

It's obviously them, you dunce.

ROSBOTTOM unlocks the door. The explorers steam in. MONTANA collapses on a chair, pawing her foot. ALEX steers for SAM. She looks askance at the antlers.

CHAYENNE

What happened? You look...rugged.

DUCHESS

There's a surprise, dear.

ALEX

Huh? Guess we have one for you too.

ALEX feels for a pulse. Lifts SAM's wrist. It flops down.

ALEX

Xenia, we talked about this!

XENIA looks bashful. ALEX rummages through her bag for blood, but notices something odd: an extra cocktail.

CRADDOCK (O.C.)

Oh, I administered diazepam.

ALEX spins. MONTANA rises. PHIL focuses. Because in strides CRADDOCK, hair coiffed and teeth gleaming like he's fresh off of a set. Wearing big combat boots. He limps a little, and finishes bandaging his hand.

CRADDOCK

Seizure. Great stitches, by the by.

ALEX

Well...my patients hate scarring.

CRADDOCK

What's the surprise?

ALEX shoots MONTANA a wary look, but MONTANA doesn't get it. In her bag, we see CRADDOCK's badge. ALEX closes her own bag, hiding the blood. CRADDOCK crosses the distance.

CRADDOCK

Where are my manners? I'm Bill Craddock. Former doctor, current agricultural biologist. Sorry about the hand. Barbed wire.

ALEX

And the leg?

CRADDOCK  
Slipped on the ice.

MONTANA recognizes him. Stifles a gasp. CRADDOCK glances.

ALEX  
Alex Nishimura. Beverly Hills  
Plastic Surgery Specialists.

They shake. Blood smears from her hand onto his.

MONTANA  
Montana. Psychosexual Impressario.

CRADDOCK  
Heard you were at McMurdo?

ALEX  
No.

CRADDOCK  
No?

ALEX  
We got lost. Sooo like me.

ELISA  
Typical.

MONTANA  
We, uh, just walked the fence.

XENIA  
What about blood?

ALEX  
No good. But his color's better.

CRADDOCK  
He's lucky. To get attacked by a  
cougar like that, and live?

ALEX frowns. She doesn't believe it was a cougar.

JULIA  
The doc told us all about cougars.  
Then we taught him some things.

JULIA smirks at the camera. CRADDOCK blushes.

ALEX  
So, um, what brings you out here?



DUCHESS

Don't make him tell this again.

CRADDOCK

Oh, I don't mind. Had a bit of car trouble. The lab closed, so this was the closest place to ride out the storm. Mind if we sit? I'm dog tired after climbing that fence.

ALEX and MONTANA reluctantly move to the seating area. CRADDOCK notices MONTANA's limp.

CRADDOCK

You want I should check?

MONTANA

Oh, I'm fine.

CRADDOCK

No charge. It's a hobby now.

ELISA

She couldn't pay, anyway.

MONTANA flicks ELISA off.

MONTANA

I'm telling you: I'm really OK.

ALEX

Yeah, I gave it a look.

CRADDOCK

I can see the blood through --

MONTANA

Touch me and I'll --

DUCHESS

He's a doctor, Montana! Why this constant stubbornness?

ALEX nods at MONTANA to do it. DUCHESS notes their closeness with alarm. MONTANA takes off her backpack, and sits down on the sofa, armed folded. CRADDOCK kneels in her space.

He gently removes her boot. MONTANA can't squash her wimper.

ALEX catches ROSBOTTOM giving a wistful look. When he sees her looking, his expression immediately goes blank.

CRADDOCK unravels MONTANA's socks, and peers at the wound. A beat. Maybe even a fleeting look of recognition.

CRADDOCK  
What on Earth did this?

MONTANA freezes. ALEX searches for an answer.

ALEX  
...Bear trap. It was crazy.

MONTANA  
Uh, yeah.

The LADIES murmur. CRADDOCK wraps MONTANA's foot.

CRADDOCK  
Holy cow. I'll wrap it up good, but make sure you get a tetanus shot.

DUCHESS  
Nice to have a real doctor with us.  
Tell Alex where you went to school.

Some note in DUCHESS' voice fills ALEX with dread, but she tries to be casual.

ALEX  
Uh, where?

CRADDOCK  
Harvard Med School. Class of '91.

ALEX  
Oh.

DUCHESS  
Oh? You went to the same school!

CRADDOCK  
How about that? What year?

ALEX  
2011. But I-I kept to myself then.

CRADDOCK  
So you must know Larry Friarson?

ALEX is conscious of the camera, DUCHESS watching.

ALEX  
Yeah. He taught human anatomy.

CRADDOCK  
That's Larry, all right.

CRADDOCK winks. ALEX gives a taut smile.

ALEX  
Well, I need a drink.

ELISA  
Typical.

ALEX  
Montana, you wanna come get one?

CRADDOCK  
Oh, I'm not done --

ALEX drags MONTANA to the exit. Shoots PHIL a timeout sign.

CRADDOCK  
It's freezing.

CHAYENNE  
Are you guys OK? You said a drink.

The pair pauses. Sheepish grins. Head out anyway.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / DECK - EVENING

ALEX positions them away from the window.

MONTANA  
Wanna flash your tits again?

ALEX  
He lied.

MONTANA  
And that breath.

ALEX  
His field. And Larry Friarson.

MONTANA  
You didn't know him?

ALEX  
I've researched everyone at  
Harvard Med School that year. He's  
not one.

MONTANA  
 ...Researched?

ALEX  
 I -- so we lock him up, I think.

MONTANA  
 (Frowning)  
 You wanna do it on camera?  
 Because, technically, I'm still a  
 quote unquote sex offender because  
 of that streaking incident at  
 Elisa's.

ALEX  
 No, good point. Try to distract  
 Phil. Where's the gun?

A beat.

MONTANA  
 It's in my goddamned bag.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ALEX and MONTANA slink in. CRADDOCK sits on the sofa. They see MONTANA's bag at his feet.

ALEX  
 Fuck!

The LADIES notice the swear. ELISA marches over, glass out.

ELISA  
 Make me something, love.

ALEX pours haphazardly. MONTANA shoos away PHIL.

ELISA  
 Ooh, Mama like strong!  
 (Drops her voice)  
 You guys are being weird. And,  
 honestly, kinda rude. The man is  
 our guest, a doctor, and frickin'  
 gorgeous to boot!

ALEX  
 Elisa, keep quiet, OK? Something's  
 wrong. We might be in danger.

ELISA  
 You're spilling my drink, hon.

MONTANA  
 He's not who you think. We found  
 his I.D., covered in blood.

ELISA  
 He climbed a fence! That can be...  
 (She's unsure)  
 dangerous?

ALEX  
 There were bodies, Elisa.

ELISA  
 What?

MONTANA  
 At the place. We went.

ELISA  
 What bodies?

ALEX  
 Dead ones. I don't know.

MONTANA  
 In fucking creative ways, too.

ELISA cocks her head. It's unclear if she believes them.

ELISA  
 (To the room)  
 OK, I think everyone has got their  
 thongs in a twist, so let's just  
 air those bitches out before they  
 get musty, all right?

MONTANA  
 Elisa, you dumb sh--

ELISA  
 These two think they saw bodies at  
 the scary lab. That right?

MONTANA and ALEX give little nods. It does sound crazy.

MONTANA  
 Of all the times to have no  
 camera.

ELISA  
 Doc, anything you want to tell us?

CRADDOCK  
 Some teams do run tests on  
 corpses.  
 But there's something I should  
 say.

ALEX and MONTANA lean in, waiting for the gross admission.

CRADDOCK  
 My wife and I -- she got me  
 watching your show. Now, I can't  
 stop. My car really wouldn't  
 start, but I heard you'd be here,  
 so I didn't try real hard to fix  
 it ...

CRADDOCK meets his skeptics' gaze. The SOB is earnest.

CRADDOCK  
 So sorry if I misled.

XENIA  
 Aw, this man should be on Dr. Oz-  
 type show.

DUCHESS  
 I've certainly heard worse.

ELISA  
 He's a fan, see?

XENIA  
 We should get picture!

DUCHESS  
 Rosbonnet! Take the shot, will  
 you?

ELISA drags the pair over to the couch. Shoves them down.  
 The LADIES crowd around CRADDOCK. ROSBOTTOM frames a shot.  
 CRADDOCK drapes his arm around ALEX. She cringes.

CRADDOCK's leg is over MONTANA's backpack. She can't get  
 it.

XENIA  
 What about dog?

DUCHESS  
 Mómo! Where the devil are you?

MÓMO trots in. Skids to a stop. Hair frizzed, he barks at  
 the group at a fevered pitch. Spittle flies.

DUCHESS

What's wrong, lovely? It's fine.  
Come here. Grab his leash, Julia.

JULIA, the closest, grabs the leash. He digs in, frothing.

CHAYENNE

He is, uh, adamant, isn't he?

Then ALEX spots it. A protrusion. Poking out of CRADDOCK's bandaged hand. She goes stiff. Then, IT MOVES. Like it's looking at her. She bolts, putting herself in front of SAM.

ELISA

Jesus, Alex.

MONTANA

What is it?!

CRADDOCK

W-w-what?

Mute with horror, ALEX can only point. The rest of the LADIES start to notice as CRADDOCK dumbly plays whack-a-mole with the protrusion. The bulk of the LADIES lean away, and whisper, like it's some embarrassing medical issue.

CRADDOCK (CONT'D)

Oh, no.

DUCHESS

Mómo, stop! This instant!

JULIA

I think he might have a hernia.

ELISA

Should you do something?

MONTANA

Who the fuck should do something?!

The growth treks up CRADDOCK's sleeve to his cheek.

CRADDOCK

Ah. I feel like I -- agh --

His words become an alien scream. The LADIES match him. CRADDOCK punches at his own cheek. But a TENTACLE chews through and skewers his hand, pinning it to his face.

The tentacle vomits part of him. It bounces off Julia.

JULIA  
It touched my dress!!

Everything goes nuts. The LADIES scramble, ducking behind furniture, PHIL, and each other. CRADDOCK staggers up off the couch towards the exit, blocking it.

Fresh tendrils peek out. No eyes. Lines of filament within the creature's jelly splash an array of colors on the wall. It's like a disco ball exploded.

ROSBOTTOM faints. His hand lands on DUCHESS' phone, which plays disco hit "Heaven Must Be Missing An Angel." The song thumps on the speakers. EVERYTHING is in time to the music.

The tentacles dumbly sense a chandelier, and tear it down, scattering the women. MÓMO barks at CRADDOCK's heels. DUCHESS inches forward, clapping rhythmically.

DUCHESS  
Mómo! Come here! Come here now!

MÓMO snarls at her. More tentacles spurt from CRADDOCK's legs and feet, shredding his boots. They form a wobbly base on the ground like Dr. Octopus. CRADDOCK-THING takes a step.

ALEX recovers her senses. Tries to lift SAM. Too heavy. MONTANA sees and rushes to help. Still too much.

CRADDOCK-THING's main stalk notices MÓMO. Almost like it's curious. Then, like a den of snakes, tentacles encircle the dog. Too late, MÓMO tries to wriggle free. There's a thick sound of bone and tissue coalescing.

DUCHESS  
MÓMO! God, no ...

MONTANA  
KILL THE DOG-KILLING BASTARD!

ELISA  
WAIT!

ELISA puts on her "smart" glasses, then takes center stage. PHIL follows her. She nears CRADDOCK-THING, which seems confused.

ELISA  
This creature may be ugly, but  
it's scared. I want it to know --  
(She turns to it)  
-- that I don't see species. I  
just see living being.



ELISA is proud. The tentacles regard her quizzically. Then they puff up and rattle, looming over her. ELISA screams. Tries to run. Gets mixed up. Runs directly into the THING.

She falls with a THUD. The THING's tentacles seek her face. They almost sniff her. Suddenly, their filament turns a sickly yellow-green. It vomits black tar all over her. They quickly withdraw. ELISA screams.

MONTANA stops watching the drama. Tugs at ALEX's shoulder.

MONTANA

We gotta move, honey.

ALEX

I can't just leave him!

As the CRADDOCK-THING attacks a stuffed warthog, MONTANA looks to her backpack. It's close, she can make it.

ALEX

Wait, no --

MONTANA flashes a wink. Dashes for the bag. The THING turns. Whips a tentacle into her shoulder. She falls, screaming. MONTANA grabs the gun with her good arm, but a tentacle chokes it to bits. MONTANA is trapped.

WHACK! A FLAMING LOG smashes into the THING's back: ALEX. She waves her arms; it follows her as she races off. A tentacle trips her. The beast swarms her, pinning her.

CRADDOCK-THING bring two tentacles to ALEX's nose. Its hue turns a hot pink. With surprising delicacy, the tips invade her nostrils like a nightmare version of a COVID test.

ALEX can see them moving up her own nose.

BLAM. A pink and silver handgun sends bullet after bullet ripping into the trunk of the THING. DUCHESS holds it. CRADDOCK-THING squeals. Backpedals. Trips over a couch, tendrils writhing. With a wheeze, it settles and spasms.

EVERYONE breaths harshly, in shock.

JULIA

OH MY GOD! WHAT DID -- DID THAT  
JUST --

ELISA

INSIDE HIM! First, his hand and  
then -- it's on me! It's on me!

CHAYENNE

I just can't. I need --

CHAYENNE sprints into the kitchen.

MONTANA

Turn the damn disco off!

The music cuts. CHAYENNE comes back with a bag of chips.

CHAYENNE

We had a cigarette. He was so lame.

(Off their looks)

What? It's a coping mechanism.

ALEX checks her nose over and over again.

JULIA

I CAN'T DIE HERE. I NEED TO DIE  
SOMEWHERE FANCIER.

DUCHESS awakens from a trance, staring at MÓMO's lifeless body. She marches over to JULIA, and SMACKS her.

DUCHESS

We are on camera.

JULIA

I -- I'm sorry, I --

ELISA

It -- it was up your nose.

ALEX

Yeah, but it didn't do anything.

ELISA

Well, thank God.

ELISA crosses herself incorrectly.

ALEX

Someone check Rosbottom.

ALEX squats next to the still-prone MONTANA.

MONTANA

(Croaking)

Alive, motherfucker.

ALEX brushes MONTANA's damp hair out of her face.

A tentacle twitches. The LADIES freak, push PHIL in front. But it spasms, curls up, and appears to die. Suddenly, ALEX remembers the tentacle in the lab.

ALEX

I-I don't want to freak anyone out. But I think we need to get this out of her, now. It can come back.

DUCHESS

Back to life? This is reality TV, darling. Not fantasy.

MONTANA

A dead tentacle bit my foot.

CHAYENNE

What?

ALEX

If everyone helps --

DUCHESS

No one touches it. Is that clear? Who knows what toxins it carries?

ALEX

But we have to!

DUCHESS

I think I have an idea that will solve everything.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - LATER

CLOSE on a glass of wine being poured. DUCHESS has gathered the LADIES in the dining area. MONTANA recovers on a sofa.

Smiles plaster the LADIES' faces as they chat, but they cast dark, frequent glances over at ALEX, who comes into view grunting and straining to move the THING's carcass on a rug.

MONTANA

You're doing good!

ELISA

I don't know. Does this make it look like we're laborers?

DUCHESS

Give it up, darling, and come have  
some wine.

(Lower)

After you disinfect yourself.

Sweating profusely, ALEX reaches the glass door. She tries to lift the rug over the lip, but can't get it over.

MONTANA

With your pelvis. Use your pelvis.

ALEX tries again, but the THING won't fit through the door. She pulls so hard she tumbles out into the snow.

ALEX steels herself. This time, she yanks directly on the THING's tentacles. The LADIES go green. But the tentacles squelch through ALEX's grasp. Goo flies, and she falls back again like a cartoon.

CHAYENNE

Maybe you shouldn't get so close.

ALEX sits up, hands in hair, distributing goo, and prompting renewed disgust from the LADIES. She mumbles to herself, then trudges over to the kitchen.

ELISA

She can't leave it at the door,  
that's a fire hazard.

ALEX grabs a large kitchen knife, looking kind of unhinged.

JULIA

Whoa, whoa, what are you doing?

ALEX ignores them, and heads to the corpse. She starts pruning tentacles, and throwing them outside. The other women dodge splatters of fluid, getting a bit nervous as ALEX repeatedly and savagely knifes the alien.

MONTANA tries to get PHIL to cut filming.

ALEX's haze lifts. She relents.

ALEX

OK, I think it'll fit now.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - LATER

XENIA has built a pyre for the THING in a space cleared by ROSBOTTOM. ALEX watches as flames lick at it. She stares at CRADDOCK's face. It's so human, so real, even now.

ALEX becomes aware of XENIA standing next to her.

ALEX  
Thanks for building the fire, Xe.

XENIA  
Is no problem. Like childhood.

XENIA joins ALEX staring at CRADDOCK's face.

XENIA (CONT'D)  
Like matryoshka. Nesting doll.

ALEX  
Yeah, I can see it.

XENIA  
Or Incredible Hulk.

That one escapes ALEX.

XENIA  
Speak of, I found this.

XENIA presents ALEX with an expensive designer boot, twisted and ripped.

XENIA  
How come shirt and shoes  
destroyed, but not pants? You  
know?

ALEX  
Xenia, where did you get this?

XENIA  
In snow, near cabins.

ALEX  
Don't you see what this means?!

XENIA does not see what it means.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ALEX slams the tattered boot on the table, and waits for a reaction. DUCHESS has her back turned, watching the pyre.

ALEX  
Whose is this?

The LADIES react with the intensity of grazing cattle.

JULIA  
Should that really be on the  
table?

ALEX  
Xenia found it outside, torn up.  
Like that Thing's shoes.

CHAYENNE  
Is anyone else not following?

ALEX  
That Thing -- it mimics humans.  
But when its other comes out,  
their shoes get destroyed.

Blank looks. ALEX gets frustrated.

ALEX  
Someone here had destroyed shoes.  
Someone here could be one of  
those.

ELISA  
But that's a Louboutin!

ALEX  
What? No, not -- we need to find  
the owner, and...take steps.

JULIA raises her hand.

JULIA  
I think we should go.

ELISA  
Yeah, take that party van.

JULIA  
I'm a CEO. I should die on a yacht  
or something, in international  
waters.

XENIA  
Honey, weather is too bad! Believe  
me, snow is in my genetic coat.

ELISA  
I've been to colder skating rinks  
in Palm Springs. We should GTFO.

ALEX  
Guys, you don't understand.

JULIA  
So you're always saying!

ALEX  
This thing ... it's like a stitch-  
perfect faux Fendi purse.

ELISA  
Shoes, purse. Pick an accessory!

ALEX  
Look.

ALEX grabs JULIA's nearby purse to illustrate.

JULIA  
If you're saying I have a fake  
purse, I'm gonna snap.

ALEX  
We can't tell if we're looking at  
the real thing or not until, BOOM,  
it fingers our noses or eats us.

XENIA  
Incredible Hulk.

ALEX  
If it got out, it could infect  
everywhere.

MONTANA  
Beverly Hills, Bel Air, Brentwood.

XENIA  
All the nice neighborhoods...

But ELISA and JULIA look nonplussed.

MONTANA  
In other words, (coughing) you  
want your fiancé to pop a  
tentacle?

JULIA  
I wish he would more, am I right?

JULIA smirks at PHIL. The LADIES snicker. ALEX thinks.

ALEX  
...If you leave, Phil won't go  
with you. Will you, Phil?

PHIL stays silent, but slightly nods.

ALEX

Us trapped here, that's drama.  
Think of the airtime...

JULIA

You. You dirty fighting bitch.

ELISA

So then what?

ALEX

OK, so, I think we should --

DUCHESS

We won't be doing anything.

DUCHESS turns.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

Alex believes someone is a faux.

ALEX

I think...it's a possibility.

The LADIES look suspiciously at their neighbors.

DUCHESS

Chayenne, for instance. You smoked  
an entire cigarette with Craddock.

JULIA

That's so -- so absurd! I'm a  
judge! On TV!

(Pointing at ROSBOTTOM)

He ran into something out there!

ROSBOTTOM

Well, I did but I -- I got away!  
Why would I tell you, otherwise?

(About XENIA)

She claimed she heard nothing!

XENIA

It's true. I hear nothing.

CHAYENNE

Why did it let you go, though?  
Odd.

ROSBOTTOM

I can't be here. I can't.

JULIA

OK, I'm with him now.



ELISA

Not pointing a finger. At all.  
 (She points at Alex)  
 But, I mean, it did go up her  
 nose.

ALEX's hand flies self-consciously to her nose.

MONTANA

Yeah, and the alien caught one  
 whiff of your ass and ran. Maybe  
 it knows not to be a cannibal, ya  
 dig?

ALEX

This is why we need to come up  
 with a test somehow! We'll go  
 crazy!

DUCHESS

How invasive will that be? For  
 what untested science?

ALEX

But -- this is an alien attack!

DUCHESS

You think I can't tell who's real  
 on my show? I've been doing it for  
 eleven years. Fendis, all!

The LADIES are mollified. But still a bit uneasy.

CHAYENNE

Fine. So we go, right?

DUCHESS

No. We celebrate.

ALEX

Excuse me?

DUCHESS

It's my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday weekend,  
 darling. We still need footage.

ALEX

But, Duchess, it's an invasive  
 species.

DUCHESS

That, as far as we know, has been  
 eradicated. You're welcome.

ALEX  
I -- let's check shoes at least.

DUCHESS  
Unnecessary.

ALEX  
How can you be so myopic,  
Tavorra?!

A collective gasp. DUCHESS's Christian name is not to be uttered. DUCHESS glowers at ALEX.

DUCHESS  
You may be front and center in the  
intro now, but I run this show.

ALEX looks for support, but doesn't find much. She scratches at her arms, suddenly fiending for chewing tobacco.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)  
PERHAPS we should see what  
supplies the basement holds for  
our party?

The other LADIES hesitate. Sounds scary.

DUCHESS  
GO! You too, videographer!

PHIL reluctantly leaves. ALEX remains. DUCHESS beckons her over with one finger.

DUCHESS  
The stress is getting to you,  
dear.

ALEX  
We should be stressed! There's a  
fucking murderous alien around!

DUCHESS  
It's not Ladylike. The manager's  
office. Quiet. Safe. Rest up.

ALEX  
What about Sam?

DUCHESS  
He'll be fine. Stone's throw away.

ALEX sizes up the older woman.

ALEX

This is life and death. I can't.

DUCHESS extends her arms. It's not a hug, so much as a setup for a judo throw.

DUCHESS

Remember, darling: Duchesses lead.  
Not fraudulent plastic surgeons. I  
know what you really are.

She leaves a wide-eyed ALEX.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - LATER

In a slobbish, cramped office, ALEX is still in a state of shock. ROSBOTTOM hastily trashes junk.

ROSBOTTOM

Forgive me, madam! I-I don't  
typically have guests here.

She watches with pity as he fumbles nervously.

ALEX

Hey. We're all stuck, you know.  
You can be scared shitless, too.

ROSBOTTOM

That feels better. And worse.

ROSBOTTOM exits, taking the trash can with him. ALEX sags, feeling useless. She spies her bag, and is relieved to remember the files inside: something to do at least.

She sifts through a heap. Finds a FIELD REPORT with pics of a mountain cavern. A rough, rocky alien craft in ice.

ALEX

Holy shit.

She lingers on it, then pins it up on a nearby bulletin board. A cackling from the other room. It disturbs her.

ALEX dives deeper, growing more frenzied. She finds a typed SPECIES REPORT, signed by CRADDOCK. She runs her finger over the text. We see: "enhanced strength," "cellular-level imitation," and "regenerative properties cease upon cauterization."

She pins it on the board. More whooping and cackling. ALEX touches her temple.

ALEX

Can I get some quiet?

(Lower)

I'm trying to save us all.

There's too much here. ALEX skips to the last pages -- seemingly boring administrative stuff. CRADDOCK's timesheet, plus a biography of him. There's a photo clipped on. She taps her finger on it. There's something about it.

CLOSE as she pins it on the board.

Outside, screaming erupts. ALEX, startled, jumps up.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

She frantically runs, plucking an oar off the wall along the way, gearing up for battle ...

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She pulls up short. The LADIES are in hydrating face masks, downing cocktails and hollering. Even MONTANA. PHIL flits about. For a second, there's wistfulness on ALEX's face.

CHAYENNE

And then he says, "I'm not as hungry as I thought I'd be!"

The exterior door is wide open. ALEX slams and locks it. The LADIES finally notice her.

ALEX

What are you guys doing?!

JULIA

Jesus! You scared me.

ALEX

I could say the same thing.

XENIA

Alexshka! Come, put on face.

ALEX

Can we all agree to stay inside?

ALEX turns to MONTANA, disbelieving. PHIL gets up close, as ALEX swats him away.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Montana, really?

MONTANA

I got alien on my face.

DUCHESS

She's relaxing, dear. Enjoying my special weekend. You should try -- if you want to rejoin us.

ALEX

No masks, not with --

DUCHESS

Well, then, be a dear and add some wood to the fire.

ALEX gives an incredulous look, then turns to the wood pile. The logs are too big to fit. She looks for the axe.

It's gone.

ALEX

Where's the axe?

CHAYENNE

Elisa went to the bathroom.

ALEX

What? No. There was an axe right here! None of you took the axe?

A bunch of blank stares and vacant head shakes.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

Sunlight hits the room's nooks. It's summer. SAM, dressed in Shoshone tribal gear, reads magazines on the sofa.

ALEX enters, in doctor's whites. Her teeth are blindingly bright, lighting the walls when she smiles. SAM holds up his magazine to shield his eyes. It's *Astrobiology Quarterly*.

ALEX

The doctor will see you now.

SAM

Aren't you the doctor?

She has to think.

ALEX

Yes.

ALEX points to a medical degree on the wall. It says:  
"UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA."

ALEX  
Wait, that's not right.

She crosses it out, and writes HARVARD.

The LADIES enter, wearing nurses outfits. Each injects SAM'S face, then poses. His face swells monstrously.

SAM  
Don ah rook ifteen ears ounger?

His swollen lips swallow his words. He falls off the couch. The LADIES turn towards ALEX, syringes out.

ELISA  
We say hooray! Hooray! Hooray!

ALEX is terrified. She flees to the lobby, and collapses, winded, on its grizzly bear statue. But a tentacle emerges from it, snares her arm. She resists. Tentacles slither out of its open mouth, hugging her in until she chokes on fur.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - DAY

ALEX awakens, gasping for breath, not remembering where she is. There are imprints of files where she slept on them.

She becomes aware of a presence. She turns.

JULIA is sitting next to her. ALEX jumps.

ALEX  
What the fuck? You scared the shit out of me.

JULIA  
Easy, tremors. They sent me to get you for breakfast.  
(Distastefully)  
You slept in here all night.

JULIA exits. ALEX watches her go, suspiciously.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

ROSBOTTOM serves the seated (and hungover) LADIES.

CHAYENNE  
I'll take one more.

ALEX watches CHAYENNE gorge on food. Everyone else is quiet, shooting looks at one another in the dim light of morning. Cutlery clinks.

ELISA  
Well, I actually slept fantastic.

ALEX turns to ELISA. She's without her trademark glasses.

ALEX  
What happened to your glasses?

ELISA  
What? Oh, they were smashed in the  
-- in the event.

JULIA  
Who cares?

ALEX  
Just curious.

ALEX sips her coffee. She suspects something.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

The blizzard roars. No human could last out there.

DUCHESS (O.C.)  
Well, who's ready?

DUCHESS appears before the seated group in full winter gear, holding ice skates. A few scattered groans from the LADIES.

ALEX  
Wait, what?

DUCHESS (CONT'D)  
A birthday skate! What's a little  
storm to stop us?

ALEX  
In that?

DUCHESS  
It looks worse than it is.

ALEX  
But -- Duchess, what about THEM?

DUCHESS  
Who, dear?

ALEX is so flabbergasted she squeaks in response.

ELISA

Ug, I dunno, I think I'm getting my period.

MONTANA

After ten years of menopause?

ELISA throws a biscotti. It hits MONTANA in her bad shoulder. She crumples. DUCHESS slams a fist on the table.

DUCHESS

(To Elisa)

You're going! It's my 50<sup>th</sup>, dammit. Understand me?

Meek nods all around. PHIL enters with his camera. The meek nods turn into girlish cheers.

ALEX

Hold on! No outside, we said.

DUCHESS

You said. But one of the benefits of age, darling, is selective hearing. Now are you coming?

ALEX looks down and sees DUCHESS's ice skates. She slowly shakes her head; she has an idea.

DUCHESS

As you like it.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - LATER

ALEX watches the LADIES, sans MONTANA, head off the porch. Once they're gone, she suits up herself.

MONTANA

What are you doing?

ALEX

Finding Cinderella, I guess.

MONTANA

Damn, girl detective over here.

ALEX

You woke something.



## MONTANA

Just don't get caught. By anything.

ALEX flashes a confident grin.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - DAY

ALEX's eyes can hardly be seen behind her mask, but they're desperate. She ducks behind a building. The weather's so relentless it's hard to breathe.

She checks a map of the lodge, struggling to get it oriented correctly. She's frustratingly lost. The blizzard has erased the land's features. Without options, she stumbles onwards.

She passes a peculiar mound of snow. Comes back to it. Rubs the excess off. A sign: CABINS. Relieved, she follows it.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ELISA'S CABIN - DAY

ALEX enters through a window, tracking in snow. She shakes her head at the signed picture of ELISA on the nightstand.

A comical number of giant suitcases crowd the room. Carefully, ALEX unzips one and rifles through: it's an embarrassment of hair products, no shoes.

ALEX

No wonder her hair never moves.

ALEX tries several more. She finally finds it: a suitcase of shoes. She retrieves the ripped shoe from her pack and puts it aside as a model, then sifts through the rest like a prospector looking for gold.

The shoes are legion. But she can't find its mate.

There's a sound -- human voices, coming towards her. Shit. ALEX scoops up gobs of shoes, dumps them in the suitcase. Zips it at top speed. But she sees she forgot one.

ALEX

Shit, shit, shit.

ALEX grabs the lone shoe and hauls ass to the closet. She looks out through slats in the door. ELISA and JULIA enter.

ELISA

Who could skate in this? Turning  
50 again has her acting funny.

JULIA  
What'd it do to you?

ELISA  
Shut up.

JULIA  
At least she let us get our stuff.

ELISA  
Whole thing's insane! Letting that  
other one run around after that  
thing was all in her nose.

JULIA  
Ugh, I know.

In the closet, ALEX instinctively rubs her nose.

ELISA  
You know she stole my spot in the  
intro, right? After --

In the closet, ALEX is like, "her too? give me a break."  
This is evidently a frequent rant, because Julia says:

JULIA  
-- five seasons, yeah.

ELISA  
Help me get this.

ELISA hefts a bag, but, unaccustomed to carrying anything,  
she loses her balance. Ends up on the floor. But she  
notices the melted snow. The trail ends at a rug. ALEX  
gulps.

ELISA  
Hello?

JULIA  
What?! Someone's here?

ELISA scouts the bathroom, then searches for other hiding  
places. ALEX tenses. ELISA nears the closet. ALEX can see  
her eyes...

PHIL enters. ELISA immediately warps into a bubbly woman,  
and abandons her search.

ELISA  
Oh my god, look at me. I can't  
even carry this bag!

JULIA  
 You're, like, literally a bag  
 lady!

As ELISA exits, she peers at the room again. Then she's gone. ALEX exhales in relief. But she notices the shoes -- different kinds, both size 8.5. It could be ELISA.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

ALEX skulks in, like a teenager late for curfew. The LADIES cease chatting; some give her dark looks.

ALEX  
 Just went for, um, fresh air.

ALEX shuffles back to the office. The LADIES whisper. ALEX looks back. They bob their heads up like meerkats.

On the way out, ALEX sees a large sign. It's a SHOOTING SCHEDULE for DUCHESS's birthday weekend, and you can bet that "BOTOX PARTY" is on there. She reads incredulously:

ALEX  
 ...Fashion Show?

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - DAY

ALEX lays on her back on a couch and stares up at the picture of CRADDOCK she's holding. She can't figure out what's different.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ALEX strides in, lost in her thoughts.

ALEX  
 Did anyone hear Craddock say  
 anything about --

She slows -- because this is a changed room. Chairs are lined up in front of a makeshift catwalk, while curtains create a sort of backstage. She sits down next to ROSBOTTOM.

ALEX  
 This is...

ROSBOTTOM  
 I'm just glad for the break.

Throbbing electronic music blares. ALEX sees a line of shoes set out -- accessorizing for the show.

ALEX

Hey, will you keep an eye out for any 8.5s?

ROSBOTTOM

Surely. But, you know, that's the most common size.

ALEX frowns at the soured lead. The song changes. The show begins.

One by one, the LADIES strut down, dressed in nude-colored outfits and wrapped with Christmas lights. Imitations of the THING. They wiggle their arms like tentacles. ALEX glares at ELISA. Is she not a little too good at this?

Well, it's all weird as hell. ALEX even rubs her eyes, and looks at ROSBOTTOM like, "you seeing this, bruh?" But he's just a timid passenger on this crazy train.

Finally, a pained MONTANA walks the aisle, waving despite her shoulder. ALEX feels betrayed, both as a doctor and a friend. She jumps up, throwing her arms around.

ALEX

OK! Stop! Hold the fuck on!

ELISA

What, we're just letting off steam.

ALEX

She can't -- she needs rest!

JULIA

Um, she said she wanted to do it.

MONTANA

This place is pretty boring without cell service, OK?

ALEX

But -- just -- this is insane. Insane! Those things could be out there. At this moment. Outside, looking in at us. Or, worse, inside.

She dares everyone to look at her.

ALEX

But God knows we wouldn't want to ruin the view, and, I dunno, build barricades. Instead, we're here doing pageants!

ELISA

Runway. Big difference.

ALEX

Shut up!

ELISA

(To Phil)

She attacked me. Did you get that?

DUCHESS

Elisa.

DUCHESS shuts down the music, and pauses dramatically.

ALEX

What?!

DUCHESS

Honestly, I'm a little worried.

ALEX

OK, fine! Let's hear it.

DUCHESS

This was your world.

CHAYENNE

No one loved runway more than you.

DUCHESS

Are you...feeling okay, darling?

ALEX

What do you mean?

DUCHESS

I'm worried that you don't see it.

ALEX

I'm the same. I'm sane.

DUCHESS

(Pained)

Perhaps it's best if you stayed in the office tonight. Out of an abundance of caution.

ALEX

Fine.

ALEX storms out, trying to ignore the muttering about her.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - EVENING

ALEX, back in her office chair, closes her eyes. But every sound is magnified...including a scuffling that gets closer. She tenses, but it's MONTANA who pops into view.

MONTANA

'Sup, slut?

ALEX

Oh. Hi.

MONTANA

Doing okay?

(A beat)

Still mad, huh?

ALEX wipes her hands on her pants.

MONTANA (CONT'D)

Look, I know how it must seem, but they're finally being uncunt-y. That a word?

ALEX

Birthdays get canceled for weather, let alone a shapeshifting alien.

MONTANA

Maybe there aren't any more, though. Anyway, for your scrapbook.

MONTANA pulls out the SD CARD from her bag's side pocket and throws it on the desk. ALEX picks it up and twiddles it.

ALEX

Thanks.

(A beat)

Have you noticed some...vibes?

MONTANA lingers on ROSBOTTOM's things, (badly) trying to avoid the conversation.

MONTANA  
Must be weird, working a regular  
job. Like, a fucking fax machine?

ALEX  
Montana.

MONTANA  
They don't talk about it, but...

ALEX  
Yeah?

MONTANA  
They're watching you. The nose  
stuff. Then the alien chiffonade.

ALEX  
Shit.

ALEX  
Are you?

MONTANA  
Am I what?

ALEX  
Are you watching me?

MONTANA looks at her hard, but doesn't say anything.

ALEX  
I tried so hard to be something  
they'd like. I made myself into  
something, and now that I'm being  
me, they're suspicious.  
(Losing it a little)  
Maybe I am a Faux.

A beat.

MONTANA  
Maybe you're just a fau-ox. A fox.

ALEX laughs. It was dumb. It dies quickly.

ALEX  
Montana, I found something. When I  
went out --

MONTANA  
Oh, wait, lemme get the badge --

MONTANA unzips her bag...

... and the revived TENTACLE leaps out and onto the floor, skittering out and away before they can react.

MONTANA  
Oh, shit.

ALEX  
What was that?!

MONTANA  
It went this way.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

They see a brief flash of TENTACLE as it disappears towards the Great Room.

MONTANA  
Shiiit, it went to the big room.

ALEX grabs MONTANA's shirt and yanks the bigger woman in.

ALEX  
What is it, Montana?!

MONTANA  
The tentacle. From the lab.

ALEX  
Oh, no...

MONTANA  
I told you, I get grabby. Plus,  
that thing's worth something.

ALEX  
Yeah, as a bioweapon! Which you  
shouldn't keep in your fake Gucci!

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ALEX and MONTANA race in, surveying the area. The rest of the LADIES haven't wakened.

A beat.

MONTANA  
So, you knew my purse was fake?



ALEX

Just -- let's fan out and get this thing before it takes someone over.

Something chitters under a sofa occupied by DUCHESS.

MONTANA

That's it.

ALEX nabs a fireplace poker and sweeps the under-sofa with her phone-light. MONTANA spots the TENTACLE. She tries to barehand it, but it scurries away with frightening speed. The LADIES stir.

DUCHESS

What -- what the hell is going on?

MONTANA

Unexpected guest. Go back to sleep.

MONTANA and ALEX kick over chairs and snatch up blankets, but there's nothing. They hear a dull scratching coming from the cold fireplace. The LADIES rise and converge.

XENIA

The thing, it came from outside?  
But we make fire!

ALEX

Not now, Xe.

MONTANA reaches her hand into the chimney.

ALEX

Montana...please be careful.

MONTANA

It's fine. Just like a hand job at a glory hole.

She bends down cautiously to take a look. A POSSUM family runs out of the chimney and away into the Lodge. The LADIES shriek and scatter, DUCHESS being particularly loud.

A beat.

The TENTACLE lurches out from the stack of firewood towards CHAYENNE's neck, where it coils like a boa. Its tip seeks her nostrils. The LADIES wrench the tentacle off the judge. She crumples, breathless. Like wildlife handlers, the LADIES carry the TENTACLE as it writhes.

JULIA  
What the fuck do we do now?!

DUCHESS  
Take it outside. I'll shoot the  
bastard.

CHAYENNE grabs a CALVARY SWORD from the wall.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / DECK - CONTINUOUS

The LADIES crunch out into the deep snow.

ALEX  
We're going throw it. Ready?

DUCHESS  
Go!

They sling the TENTACLE. DUCHESS aims, fires, misses. The  
TENTACLE buries itself in the deep snow. There's a ripple.

ALEX  
Something brushed past my foot.

DUCHESS  
I'm sure it fled. It's not stupid.

ALEX  
I'm telling you, Duchess!

JULIA  
Shoot something!

DUCHESS  
I won't waste the damn bullets!

JULIA  
Yeah, let's let it go on the lam!

The rippling stops. It's quiet. No one dares move.

Suddenly, WHAM! XENIA whips down, yanked by the TENTACLE.  
She slides into the deep snow. Her exposed arms flail  
wildly. JULIA grabs hold of them, straining against the  
creature's formidable strength.

CHAYENNE, recovered, readies the sword. The women  
frantically dig through snow. Searching for the TENTACLE.  
Afraid they'll hit the leg it's attached to.

CHAYENNE  
Where is that motherfucker?

ELISA  
I felt it!

CHAYENNE  
Out of the way, out of the way.

XENIA  
No! You mustn't --

The TENTACLE jolts forward, bringing XENIA's leg with it as the sword zings down. SCHLUCK. XENIA howls as the blade cleaves her leg. The snow turns crimson. XENIA flails, her near-stump showering the LADIES like a sprinkler.

JULIA  
Oh, I'm gonna be sick.

ALEX  
There!

For a split second, blood draws the creature out of hiding. CHAYENNE thunks the sword deep. It's a bloody mess: XENIA growls curses, PHIL wipes his lens, the TENTACLE twitches.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

The tentacle roasts on the fire, forcing the LADIES to wave away black smoke as they dab at their blood-splattered clothes.

XENIA's leg is in a tourniquet; her foot lies in an iced champagne bucket. ALEX administers painkillers.

MONTANA sits alone in a chair, like a prisoner being interrogated. DUCHESS and ELISA lord over her.

MONTANA  
-- though I could sell it, you know? "First Alien!" You know we've had...problems.

DUCHESS  
(Innocently)  
With what?

MONTANA looks at PHIL.

MONTANA  
Don't make me.

ELISA  
We can't help you if you don't say.

MONTANA

...With money, OK? W-we made some bad investments. It's been tight.

DUCHESS

Phil, you can leave. This next part won't be making the show.

PHIL hesitates. DUCHESS pointedly caresses her gun. He lowers his camera and departs.

DUCHESS

Yes, well, the thing is, Montana, it's not very Lady-like behavior.

MONTANA

Julia uses slave labor!

JULIA

Used!

DUCHESS

Don't deflect.

MONTANA

I never meant to hurt anyone. It was dead, wasn't it?

MONTANA looks imploringly at ALEX, who nods tersely. DUCHESS thrusts a hand in the air, demanding silence.

DUCHESS

We've conferred. You need to leave.

ALEX steps forward.

ALEX

Wait, what?!

MONTANA

But you said you'd help if I admitted it!

DUCHESS

Someone else did, darling.

MONTANA

Y-you're exiling me?

XENIA

Yes! You go.

DUCHESS

Xenia. Don't be emotional. Feet  
are the least of our appendages.

MONTANA

But the blizzard.  
(Getting hysterical)  
The Things!

DUCHESS

We're roasting the last of their  
kind. Plus, you do boxing and  
such.

ALEX

Duchess, think. If she was a faux,  
why would she need some little  
tentacle to infect us?

DUCHESS turns to regard ALEX like she's a stranger.

DUCHESS

You think this is because of some  
alien conspiracy? My party,  
ruined! A bloody foot upstaged me.

ALEX

W-what? At least -- at least give  
her a weapon. Please.

DUCHESS

Darling, honestly, why do you  
care?

ALEX

...The hill from fitting in to  
joining in, it's not that steep.

DUCHESS

The price is, unfortunately.

MONTANA

Frizzy bitch, I always kn--

DUCHESS

Excuse me? I go to Andy Lecompte,  
you manky chav -- no, no, time to  
go, I think. Time to go.

MONTANA

Just -- let me just get my stuff.

DUCHESS

Now!

DUCHESS marches MONTANA out the door at gunpoint. It's a great, white death sentence. MONTANA shivers instantly. DUCHESS motions for her to empty her pockets. MONTANA's keys fall in the snow. DUCHESS grabs them.

ALEX  
Please don't do this.

DUCHESS  
It's done.

DUCHESS shuts and locks the door. She stares at ALEX, as if daring her to make a move.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)  
I know you're upset, darling, but  
I've come around on something.

ALEX stares, furious and forlorn, at a bewildered MONTANA as she disappears into the whiteness.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)  
We all need a little more  
protection.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - EVENING

ALEX watches the squall in the darkness. It doesn't look like anyone could withstand it, but she's determined.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

ALEX marches in, bleary after a hard, sleepless night. She wears snow gear.

But she stops in her tracks. The LADIES are putting the finishing touches on a ramshackle, if masterfully color coordinated, barricade. ALEX is taken aback.

She makes eye contact with ELISA. The two women glare at each other. ALEX heads for the blocked door, but ELISA cuts her off.

ELISA  
Whoa, whoa, where you going?

ALEX  
I need to get Montana.

JULIA  
You said we'd infect Beverly  
Hills.

ALEX

I'm not escaping. It's a rescue.  
This has gone too far.

DUCHESS wades into the scene.

DUCHESS

Darling, we decided to lock down.  
In case of...visitors.

ALEX

One of ours is out there with  
them.

DUCHESS

No, dear. Can't have it.

ALEX

Seriously? Why the hell not?!

DUCHESS

If you go, how will we know if  
what comes back is really you?

ALEX

But you don't know that now!

DUCHESS

Oh, I'm aware.

ALEX

Send someone with me, then.

DUCHESS

But I need you all here.

ALEX raises her hands, like "what for?"

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

Partner yoga later.

ALEX shakes her head, turns, and veers to the exit. ELISA and JULIA wrestle ALEX to the ground. She lands awkwardly on her wrist.

ALEX

...Why are you doing this?

DUCHESS

It's for your own good. We need to  
be as one.

They step over ALEX who writhes in pain. PHIL hovers, but sees her look and kindly steps away.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - DAY

ALEX slumps despondently against a wall, reeling over MONTANA and clutching her hurt wrist. She lingers in it, feeling sorry for herself.

The SD CARD lays on the desk where MONTANA left it. ALEX frowns. It speaks of unfinished work. She sighs, and takes it in hand. Fumbles for a slot in ROSBOTTOM's computer.

ALEX

Rosbottom! Rosbottom! Ros--

The little man pokes his head in the door.

ALEX

Hey, what's your first name?

ROSBOTTOM

My...first name?

ALEX

Yeah, you know. Bob. Jim.

ROSBOTTOM

Oh, it's just that no guest has ever asked. It's Elliott.

ALEX

Elliott. This have a card reader?

He pulls out a dongle from a drawer. She inserts the card.

ALEX

And I need the password.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - LATER

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM watch footage on his computer. In it, a practically glowing CRADDOCK selects a scalpel and holds it up to the light.

The camera zooms out. It's positioned in the lab's raised gallery, amidst a crowd of BESUITED WATCHERS. One watcher turns to another:

WATCHER

Rejuvenated him, this project.  
Took twenty years off at least.

ALEX furrows her brow. Something there.



CRADDOCK signals two soldiers, who uncover the THING on the slab. He raises the scalpel, but stops. His hand won't obey.

The camera zooms back in, close enough to see the BOIL on CRADDOCK's cheek. It moves independently. Murmurs from the audience now as CRADDOCK doubles over in agony.

ALEX  
Pause. See that?

ROSBOTTOM rewinds. CRADDOCK surreptitiously slices a restraint on the THING. The audience panics as tentacles burst from him, grabbing the camera and cameraman.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Let's see what else we have.

ROSBOTTOM nods and picks through the files.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
...You know, the others think I'm,  
ya know, one of them. Faux.

ROSBOTTOM is silent.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
But you -- you're here. Why?

ROSBOTTOM  
Even if you're a bad alien, you're  
a decent human. Don't pretend  
otherwise.

She smiles. He shyly picks one of the earlier files on the card. The video plays. CRADDOCK sits at a desk. He looks worn and sallow.

CRADDOCK  
Evidence of bacterial infection at  
site of incision. We administed  
antibiotic and --

ALEX hijacks the mouse and presses pause. She stares at CRADDOCK's face -- his drooping mouth and neck.

ALEX  
Jesus.

ROSBOTTOM  
What?

ALEX

Am I crazy or has he had work done?

She digs through her files, looking for CRADDOCK's timesheet.

ALEX

But...yeah. Like I thought.

ROSBOTTOM

I, er, don't get it.

ALEX

The video was dated October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Craddock didn't take off between then and now.

ROSBOTTOM

He's industrious.

ALEX

No, he had no time to get work done. The alien makes you appear younger!

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

An electrified ALEX sprints in. The lounging, hungover women glance up at her.

DUCHESS

We mustn't run, dear. It's not good for our carriages.

ALEX nods, and studies them. She's almost vibrating.

Fattened lips. Sculpted noses. Full sweaters. Glowing skin. All of them have had work done, and recently. Back to ALEX, who realizes all that in a crashing moment and says:

ALEX

Fuck.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / OFFICE - EVENING

ALEX tries to sleep, but can't get comfortable. Suddenly, she hears a knock coming from the lobby.

She immediately rises, alert.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

ALEX pads out. Sure enough, there's a steady knocking on the locked lobby door. She flicks on her phone-light.

ALEX

Montana?

She approaches cautiously. There's no peephole -- dammit -- but there's a window next to the door. She inches towards it, craning her neck, trying to see who's there.

No one.

Befuddled, ALEX withdraws -- just as a tentacle snaps at her through the glass. She falls on her ass and hurriedly scrambles out of range.

Panicked, she loops around to check the door's lock, then rips down the shades for every window.

Something lumbers along the perimeter of the building. ALEX follows it...

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...into the main room. But ALEX is still wary about the LADIES, so she turns off her phone-light. A screeching, haunting bugle cuts the stillness, startling her. She drops her phone, which clatters. The LADIES briefly stir.

ALEX sees something lurking on the porch, near the windows, but view of it is obscured by the barricades. Whatever it is, the boards rattle when it steps.

She follows the creature, forgetting about the LADIES in her terror. But abruptly stops. Because someone has removed the furniture blocking the glass door. It's wide open.

ALEX inches to the opening. Tips it closed, locks it. Tries to shift a nearby sofa into place.

ALEX

(Hissing)

Julia! Julia!

JULIA blinks dreamily. Jumps when she sees ALEX waving.

JULIA

What's going on?!

ALEX

Something is coming, OK?!

JULIA trips on a yoga mat that's been left out, but makes it over. The women heft the sofa, and block the door. The table scrapes the floor as they move it. The LADIES awaken.

ELISA

Who is making all that noise?

ELISA hits a switch. Light splashes the room. Outside, too. ALEX and JULIA pause, apprehensive. Sure enough, the creature bellows. Stampedes towards the light.

The LADIES rush to help. ELISA trips and nearly breaks her neck on a yoga block.

ELISA

Fucking yoga shit everywhere!

ELISA recovers. The LADIES lift a heavy table onto the sofa. While ALEX and JULIA brace the heavy pieces, CHAYENNE and ELISA plug holes in the gaps with nonsensical items: yoga mats, yoga blocks, and balance balls. Sensing PHIL watching, they arch their backs like fitness models.

Silence drops. ALEX peers through a hole in the barricade.

ALEX

I can't see...

Tentacles and antlers crash through the glass door. The LADIES fall back, shocked, but quickly retake their places.

ALEX

Someone! Get the gun!

DUCHESS runs over to her purse.

A tentacle snaps off a table leg. ALEX ducks the bludgeon, punches at the tendril. No damage. She sees a chance: a large shard of glass on the window frame. ALEX grabs the tentacle and bangs it hard, impaling it.

JULIA dodges and weaves a probing tendril. CHAYENNE throws her the calvary sword. The CEO swings. Cuts one off.

More tentacles push through. Wrap around ALEX and JULIA.

JULIA

Nuh uh! Nuh uh!

Tentacles yank JULIA through the hole as she fights and kicks. The LADIES latch onto her, but she slips further and further. In desperation, JULIA grabs onto the glass-strewn window frame, shrieking in pain.

JULIA  
 Help! Please help me! I run a  
 company!

The LADIES almost drag her back ...

But she suddenly goes rigid -- something pokes out of her stomach. Guts rain down as a tentacle eats through her and emerges. The LADIES fall back, wrenching. JULIA's skewered body is whisked outside, sword and all.

The tentacles turn to ALEX. With horror, she realizes that her face is being dragged towards spikes of glass left on the door. Immobilized, she can only watch.

BANG! BANG! DUCHESS fires the gun blindly. ALEX clutches her ears, deafened. The creature recedes. The LADIES pause for a moment, astonished and addled.

CHAYENNE  
 Jenga it the fuck up!

CHAYENNE and ELISA haphazardly restore the barricade.

ALEX  
 Julia.

ELISA  
 Fuck that, she's dead. I have to  
 exist through that trauma.  
 (To Phil)  
 This is all so much, I don't know  
 what I'm saying!

CHAYENNE  
 What was that?

ELISA  
 A thing! Another thing!

CHAYENNE  
 I mean the no-show barricade?

ALEX  
 It was like that when I came in.

CHAYENNE  
 Mmm, no. That doesn't wash.

ALEX  
 Why would I do that, and then try  
 to stop it?

ELISA  
Why would anyone else do it?!

ALEX  
To roll out the red carpet for a  
thing?

ELISA  
Oh, no, don't give me the evil  
eye!

XENIA (O.C.)  
Hello? Why is there this shouting?  
Come, shout by me.

DUCHESS  
Alex. Stay on your side. From now  
on.

ALEX  
What about Sam?

DUCHESS  
The storm can't last forever.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - DAY

But is it day, REALLY? Because the storm threatens to suck  
the light out of the sky. It could go on forever.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - DAY

ALEX watches out the gray out of the window, a bit  
hopelessly. PHIL enters with his camera.

ALEX  
Oh, Phil. Surprised you're not  
filming over there.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

DUCHESS checks to make sure the coast is clear. The LADIES  
face her. They're all in matching colors; it looks more  
like a cult than a reality show.

DUCHESS  
Now that the prying eyes have been  
shut, what say you, Ladies?

DUCHESS, ELISA, and CHAYENNE raise their hands. XENIA folds  
her arms.

DUCHESS  
The motion carries.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - DAY

ALEX, worn by stress, scratches at her arms. She listens for signs of life outside. None. Satisfied, she scrounges for her chew and stuffs her lips. Reclines happily.

ELISA (O.C.)  
Hellooooo?

ALEX panics, and searches everywhere for a place to spit, but ROSBOTTOM removed the trash can. ELISA gets closer. So ALEX stashes the chew in a cheek.

ELISA pops in the doorway.

ELISA  
There you are.

ELISA looks around. Notes the weird conspiracy vibes.

ELISA  
This is so...cozy.

ALEX  
Mmm.

ELISA  
Look, I wanted to say I'm sorry.

ALEX  
Mmm.

ELISA  
We've been harsh on you. But you were right about more...you know.

ALEX  
Mmm, yeah.

ELISA  
...You have anything to say to me?

ALEX tries to talk, but a bit of black liquid spills out. ELISA sees it, then sees the lump in her cheek -- it's like CRADDOCK. She takes a few steps back.

ALEX pieces the picture together as ELISA flees.

ALEX  
No, no, it's not -- wait!

ALEX tries to get up, but in her hurry she bangs her knees on the desk and nearly falls.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

ALEX limps in, but ELISA is already mid-conversation with the LADIES. They look at ALEX with shock.

ALEX  
It's not what you think!

ELISA  
What I think is you're about to go Octopussy!

ALEX  
No, no, nothing like --

After a hesitation, ALEX reaches into her mouth and procures the wad of tobacco. She shows it to the LADIES.

XENIA  
You put in mouth? No, honey.

ALEX  
It's chewing tobacco.

DUCHESS  
Really? A Harvard doctor using chewing tobacco?

There's a glint in DUCHESS' eye. She knows more than she's saying. ALEX looks around. PHIL's strangely missing.

ALEX  
I don't -- please don't make me.

DUCHESS  
It's the only way we can be sure.

ALEX's posh accent fades, replaced by something less refined, more backwoods.

ALEX  
There's more to me than -- than you know. I didn't have no money growing up. Daddy tried hard, but he -- he never fit in with the men downtown. So I always wanted to -- be better. Reach higher. For him.

ALEX takes a breath.



ALEX (CONT'D)

So I tried to remake myself to be a Lady. When I got an audition for the show, I lied. I said Harvard, but I went to Alabama. And, shit, I've been doing chaw since I was 14.

The LADIES look at her more strangely than if she had just told them her plans for subjugating all humanity.

DUCHESS

Well.

ELISA

There's plastic surgery in Alabama?

ALEX

I understand if you hate me. I hate me, too, sometimes.

DUCHESS

Hate you? Why, darling, whatever do you mean? I feel like I finally know you.

DUCHESS approaches. She gently grabs ALEX's hands. ALEX braves a smile. She's wanted this.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

Now let's do it again, on camera.

ALEX

W-what?

CHAYENNE

Ooh, I'm going to get more snacks.

CHAYENNE departs for the kitchen.

ALEX

You can't be serious. It's mortifying.

DUCHESS

Where is he when you need him? But don't look like that, dear, this is good stuff.

A SCREAM issues from the kitchen. Everyone looks up, and runs towards it.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

CHAYENNE is pointing, speaking gibberish. Because PHIL is pinned up on the heavy walk-in refrigerator door, face cleaved in two by the missing axe.

His camera is on the floor.

DUCHESS

This is very serious.

ALEX

To do that? It would take unbelievable strength.

DUCHESS

I mean we don't have a cameraman.

The LADIES walk off, leaving ALEX aghast. She shuts PHIL's vacant eyes.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

ALEX and the LADIES sit in a dismal silence. ALEX, agitated, builds up the courage to break it.

ALEX

We need to do something. We're going to get picked off, or worse.

DUCHESS

My thoughts exactly.

ALEX

I noticed earlier that --

DUCHESS

I had my own realization.

ALEX

You?

ELISA

You don't need to be a doctor to do science.

ALEX

Sorry, I didn't mean --

DUCHESS

It came to me after poor Xenia.  
The doctor. Montana. Even this  
lad.

(She gestures at Danny)

ALEX

OK...

DUCHESS

They had foot problems.

ALEX

But Montana wasn't --

DUCHESS

She carried a tentacle, Alex. The  
whole time.

ALEX

So, what do we do?

DUCHESS

The question is: what will you do?

ALEX narrows her eyes.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

The boy. We weren't watching him.  
Who knows what he's been doing?  
But we can't be seen to -- but a  
doctor might get medicines mixed  
up...

ALEX is scarcely breathing.

ALEX

Are you suggesting...?

DUCHESS

We have to be pragmatic. What if  
he is the attacker? He's not one  
of us. He doesn't fit.

ALEX recoils.

DUCHESS (CONT'D)

It's a human choice. An alien  
wouldn't kill its own.

ALEX

...Let me think about it.

DUCHESS is actually surprised. ALEX walks out.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - DUSK

ALEX, wearing her snow gear, peeks into the great room, She takes care to stay hidden.

She scans the LADIES. Satisfied that they're inert. She looks over to SAM, sadly.

ALEX  
I'll bring help.

There's a window haphazardly boarded. ALEX cautiously pries off the boards, wincing as the window squeals upon opening.

She sticks a leg through the window. Suddenly, the building seems to sigh. The power dies. ALEX quickly retreats.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DUSK

ALEX cautiously enters. The LADIES are waiting. She just now notices they're dressed in snow gear.

ELISA  
Generator. I mean, we guess.

ALEX  
Where is it?

CHAYENNE  
Oh, wait for this! This -- this is great!

ROSBOTTOM  
I'm not, er, entirely sure.

DUCHESS  
Unbelievable.

ROSBOTTOM  
Samuel, he handled such matters!

ALEX  
It's OK, Elliot.

ELISA  
We won't last five minutes without cold drinks.

ALEX  
Um, when we find it, what do we do?

DUCHESS

Pull a lever! Do I look like Joe,  
the electrician? You're going with  
Rosbottom. Safer in groups. Check  
the garage.

DUCHESS notices ALEX's garb for the first time.

DUCHESS

Why were you already dressed?

ALEX

Why were you?

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM head for the door. Some sixth sense  
tells her to look back. The LADIES lean forward. When she  
looks, they slouch, trying to act casual.

XENIA

Goodbye, my friend.

DUCHESS

Alex, darling? Be so very safe.

ALEX glares. We see she has the AXE up her sleeve.

ALEX

I will.

SEXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

The storm nears its apex. ALEX has to shout.

ALEX

Thank God you're here. I get lost  
when it's sunny.

ROSBOTTOM

The garage is on the outskirts of  
the property. West.

ALEX trudges the wrong way. ROSBOTTOM corrects her.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GARAGE - EVENING

The garage squats on the far side of the creek, accessible  
via a little bridge. The pair have to lean into the wind to  
get there. ALEX and ROSBOTTOM trek to the door. It's  
locked. ALEX sticks a gloved palm out.

ROSBOTTOM

They said they needed my keys.

ALEX shakes her head at the LADIES.

ROSBOTTOM (CONT'D)  
I managed to keep the Lodge key,  
though.

They share a secret smile. He pats his jacket pocket.

ROSBOTTOM (CONT'D)  
Perhaps a window is unlocked?

ALEX is through caring. She grabs a massive icicle, smashes it through a window. She reaches in and opens it.

ROSBOTTOM  
Or that.

ALEX  
I'm starting to like the direct  
approach.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

ALEX, in the lead, climbs in and flicks on her phone-light. There's a veil of smoke, so ROSBOTTOM props the door open. In the haze, cars, trucks, vans, and snowmobiles emerge out of nowhere. The pair pass a large party van.

On one side of the garage, there's a loading dock. In it, caged, is a generator. It's silent.

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM walk over to it, wafting away the smoke. ROSBOTTOM coughs.

ALEX  
Any ideas?

ROSBOTTOM  
We are safely outside my  
jurisdiction.

ALEX  
Can't hurt to press a button.

ALEX presses a starter button. The machine whines, spews smoke. ALEX draws back. ROSBOTTOM chokes.

ALEX  
You OK?

He waves her off. A sniff. She smells something.

ALEX  
You getting that?

ROSBOTTOM  
(coughing)  
Maple syrup?

ALEX looks around. Behind a workbench, she finds anti-freeze. She turns the bottle upside down. It's empty. She closes her eyes. Some realization is knitting together.

ALEX  
Elliot. Did anyone leave the Lodge  
in the last couple of hours?

ROSBOTTOM  
I'm not --

ALEX  
Think!

ROSBOTTOM  
...I did hear someone say they  
were going to their room to pick  
up sundries and such.

ALEX  
Who? They already did that.

ROSBOTTOM  
Ms. Elisa.

ALEX  
Made a point to announce it.

ROSBOTTOM  
Why? What's the matter?

ALEX  
We need to get back. Quick.

CLANG! A sound near the entrance. ALEX and ROSBOTTOM jump. They can't see what it is through the smoke.

ALEX signals for ROSBOTTOM to follow through the vehicles. Finally, they see the silhouette of an ungulate, breathing heavily. They quickly flatten. The shape moves on.

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM move out. But he feels a tickle in his throat. She silently pleads, but he can't hold it.

His cough alerts the shadowy shape, which reappears.

ALEX drags ROSBOTTOM into the nearest shelter: the party van. They huddle in the driver's seat. She clamps down on his mouth, but the door is still open. ALEX sees keys in the ignition and powers up. Mouthing a little prayer for quiet, she shuts the doors.

The thing hears.

Horrified, ALEX sees the tips of antlers bobbing around the van. But the beast stops short of the entrance. ROSBOTTOM's eyes water. He's trying hard to hold it.

The antlers pause...then continue around.

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM exhale and collapse -- leaning onto the sound system controls. "A Milli" by Lil' Wayne blasts.

THE BUCK COMES BACK INTO VIEW.

ALEX

Run.

They fly to the outside. The BUCK bleats in rage. Charges. It misses ROSBOTTOM by inches, instead ramming a vehicle, entangling its antlers.

ALEX kicks out the prop on the heavy door as they exit.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Enraged, the BUCK-THING rams the door. Huge dents.

ALEX

We need to move.

ROSBOTTOM

Another Craddock?

ALEX

Different style. Same brand. Stay low, and move quietly, yeah?

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM wade through the snow on the far side of the creek. With a KA-THUNK, the door gives way. A chilling bugling sounds from behind them. The phantom of the ELK is visible through the squall. It crosses the bridge, head down, trying to find their scent.

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM run farther.

The BUCK's nostrils flare; it's found the trail.



ALEX

Get flat!

They plunge into the snow. From above, we see the BUCK-THING stalking them. It closes in, sniffing and digging, but it can't find them. The creature grows agitated.

The BUCK groans as a tentacle erupts from its skin, and extends like a periscope. Lights from it splash hypnotically on the white canvas. The BUCK-THING goes taut as it spots them. It bugles.

ALEX

Go, go!

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM get up and sprint along the creek. He tumbles. She yanks him up.

The BUCK-THING gains, but the deep snow slows it, too.

ALEX and ROSBOTTOM fall as they stumble onto a gully. It takes a second to right themselves. A tentacle whips out, latching onto ROSBOTTOM's leg. He yelps.

ALEX, with a surgeon's grace, flips the axe and slashes. The BUCK-THING brays. But ALEX can't get the axe out of the limp tentacle before the BUCK pulls it back.

ALEX

No!

Confused, blinded, the BUCK pauses to grow more tentacles.

The humans race again, gaining distance on the BUCK-THING. Up ahead, the log-crossing. They're now on the far side.

The revived BUCK-THING bounds towards them.

ALEX looks at the slippery log. There's no choice. She takes a hesitant step, and nearly falls into the icy water.

ROSBOTTOM, frantic, watches the BUCK-THING coming. Scans the land. Sees the nearby gap in the fence. His face hardens as he comes up with a plan.

He picks ALEX up and steers her on the log.

ROSBOTTOM

Miss -- Alex. I must insist you go.

ALEX

What?!

ROSBOTTOM  
It can't fit.

ALEX  
Elliot, no!

ROSBOTTOM  
You were a wonderful guest.

ROSBOTTOM sprints to the gap, hollering and waving at the BUCK-THING. It sees red and bypasses ALEX, who hugs the log and shuffles across.

The little manager slides easily through the fence and sprints off into the woods. The BUCK-THING rams into the gap. It screams as half of its tentacles are sheered off.

ALEX  
No...

ALEX makes it across. She hears a scream. She turns.

It's ROSBOTTOM. One tentacle is halfway through swallowing him whole -- like a snake. Horribly, his pained face is still outside. The rest is visible through translucent hide. The tentacle's muscles grind, and some part of ROSBOTTOM bursts.

ALEX vomits. Then with a spit, she flees.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - EVENING

Nothing but white. Visibility measures in inches. ALEX appears, hopelessly lost, but trying to quell her panic.

ALEX  
Gotta be this way. You're fine,  
you're gonna be fine.

ALEX sees the outlines of a structure and plows towards it, falling and eating snow in her haste. When she gets close enough, she recognizes it: the supply shed. Dismayed, she curses under her breath.

A bugle. It's the BUCK-THING, obscured by the storm. Then it vanishes.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / SPOOKY SUPPLY SHED - CONTINUOUS

ALEX barges in. Hunts for a lock. Nothing.

ALEX

Shit!

She pauses, regains herself. Tears through the shelves. Patting her way around. Grasps a hard cylinder. She feels its dimensions. It's a shotgun.

ALEX grabs it and fumbles for ammo. Growls in frustration. Talks herself through the loading process:

ALEX

What did Sam say? Butt of gun.  
Left thigh. Push shell up. Click.

The BUCK-THING's call reaches her over the banshee wind. Her hands shake. She forces them to be still as she loads.

ALEX

C'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

The creature darkens the doorway. Silhouettes of tentacles waving. Too big for the place, it tears away chunks of the shed as it bows to enter. Lights erupt, blinding ALEX.

She grits her teeth. Pumps. Aims. Fires. Nothing happens.

ALEX

Shiiiiit!

The BUCK-THING pounces.

It grabs ALEX's arm and leg with its tentacles. The gun clatters to the floor as ALEX is whooshed off her feet. Tentacles constrict. Something cracks. ALEX cries in pain.

Her free hand frantically seeks her weapon. She finds the shelves. Shakes them, tips them over. The BUCK-THING, startled by falling items, backs away a few steps.

ALEX grabs at a rake. The BUCK-THING swats it away. She's desperate. The only thing within reach: a bulging can.

The BUCK-THING recovers its killer instincts. A tentacle descends towards her nose...but then it stops.

Suddenly, the tentacles jockey for position. A large one, smeared with ROSBOTTOM's blood, beats the others down. It slowly moves towards ALEX.

Terror gives her new resolve. She tries to wriggle free, but its grip is too strong. Its hooves are her jailor. Closer and closer the bloody tentacle slithers.

ALEX looks towards the bulging can -- it's all she has. She sees the tentacle's gaping maw. Jams the can down it. She yelps as its claws and teeth take her skin with it.

She watches the can move down the length of the tentacle. The BUCK-THING seems confused by it.

Its muscle constrict. The jar pops.

A BEAT.

The BUCK-THING takes a tiny step back. Then another. Groans. The lights emitted by the THING turn a sickly yellow-green. Black bile issues from the bloody tentacle's maw. Then, all the tentacles. Finally, the BUCK's mouth oozes.

It staggers against a shelf, then releases ALEX. She crawls back and away.

There's some terrible reaction. The BUCK-THING's form can't hold itself. It shifts. Cycles. New screams with each painful mutation. Gashes open up. ALEX shudders upon seeing ROSBOTTOM's dead form. But there are glimpses of others in its lineage: CRADDOCK, then alien forms beyond human ken.

ALEX almost feels pity. A vicious tentacle whip reminds her. She picks up the shotgun. This time, she remembers to flick off the safety. She's point blank.

ALEX  
You look like shit.

Screaming, ALEX shoots the nest of tentacles. Then she aims lower, blasting chunks out of the buck until her gun clicks. She snatches up more ammo. Reloads steadily. Hoarse now, but still screaming as she fires. She lets the smoke clear. It's down, but twitching.

ALEX picks up another bulging jar. Studies it. She realizes.

ALEX  
...Botulism! Earth toxins.

Some other realization hits her.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
I gotta get back to the Lodge.  
(Remembering)  
Fuck, the key.

She looks to the creature's carcass. ROSBOTTOM's resting place. It twitches, healing already.

ALEX kneels by the creature. Touches one of the many holes she blasted in it. Finds something close to what looks like its gut through the jelly. Braces herself.

ALEX (CONT'D)

This is just a body. A gross body  
that could wake up and kill you.

She drives her fist down into the tissue, blanching. Up to her elbow now. Working back and forth, searching. She peers in, looking at the foggy shapes inside.

ALEX

Where are you, Elliot?

The BUCK-THING twitches again. Her sweat drips. She's up to her shoulder, like a vet birthing a calf. Finally, she latches onto something.

ALEX

There you are. Got you. Now  
just...

She strains. Grunts. Smiles. She has the key.

With a SLURP, the THING's wound knits around ALEX's arm. Lights flare. She pulls, then yanks at her trapped arm with her free one. She digs her feet in for leverage.

Tentacles twitch with alarming frequency. The beast stirs.

ALEX

No! Fuck! Fuuuuck!

Using her feet, ALEX grabs the shotgun and passes it to her hand. She noses the barrel up against the creature. She sees her arm inside. Scared she might hit herself. But there's no choice. She aims. Her fingers constrict...

BANG.

The BUCK-THING lets her go. It falls limp on the concrete. ALEX gasps, relieved to have her arm back in one piece. She sweeps ammo and bulging cans into her bag.

She notices a canister of fuel next to the lawnmowers.

She sets the canister on top of the BUCK-THING, and limps out into the snow on her cracked leg. Slowly, painfully, she lays down atop a snowbank and aims.

ALEX

Godspeed, Elliot.

ALEX fires at the gas canister. No explosion. Grumbles. Tries again. The shed explodes, sending blackened bits of tentacle to mix with the snow.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / DECK - EVENING

ALEX tries the door. It's locked. She shakes her head: those bitches. She pulls out ROSBOTTOM's key and unlocks the door.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - EVENING

ALEX cracks the door and squeezes past a barricade. She quietly readies her shotgun.

From the lobby, a cackle.

ALEX limps towards the sound. As she goes, she strips off her winter gear, leaving it on the floor. Covered with goo, blood, and sweat, she's barely recognizable.

CHAYENNE (O.C.)  
I can't. Someone else go.

ELISA (O.C.)  
Just follow the brochure!

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - EVENING

ALEX turns the corner, and stops -- because it's like a sleepover in here. The LADIES spread out on sofas in pajamas, lit by candlelight. PHIL's camera perches on a chair, filming.. On a coffee table, a home Botox kit.

One by one, the LADIES see ALEX. XENIA waves happily.

DUCHESS  
Ah, so, you're back, darling.

ALEX  
That's it?

DUCHESS  
Power's still off, though. Pity.  
We'll need to recharge the camera soon enough.

ALEX  
That was you, the power outage.  
All to get me out.

DUCHESS

Well, yes, of course. You were the most likely candidate. And the tiny man had his run-in, too.

XENIA

I voted to keep you!

ALEX

You couldn't have -- I dunno, been the smallest bit direct with me?

DUCHESS

What good would that do? An alien would lie.

ALEX

I had to fight a faux! I almost died! Rosbottom did die!

DUCHESS

Truly unfortunate. Well, sit down. You look awful!

For a second, ALEX considers shooting her. But she remembers the camera. Still shaking her head at the effrontery, ALEX eases into a chair.

ELISA

So, um, hey, Botox party?

ALEX

After you exiled me. A botox party.

CHAYENNE

We deserved something. Do you know how many lines I got from this?

ELISA

You really are self-centered.

ALEX glares at ELISA. Then, a chilly smile.

ALEX

What the hell, right? Shall I?

Her turn-of-face surprises the LADIES. ALEX puts the shotgun down within reach. She prepares doses of Botox from the kit, then holds up a mirror to her face.

ALEX

Right between the eyebrows. You want it almost perpendicular.

ALEX breathes in sharply, then appears to inject the tiny needle. She sets the syringe down.

ALEX  
Done. Shall I do you?

CHAYENNE  
No blood?

ALEX grabs ELISA's shoulder. She roughly shoves her down in the chair next to the shotgun.

ELISA  
Oh!

ALEX  
Now you.

ELISA  
I think I'd like it in --

ALEX injects botox in ELISA's forehead. Quickly steps away.

ELISA  
Ow.

ALEX waits. Her hand cheats to the shotgun.

ALEX  
Nothing?

ELISA  
What?

ALEX barely hides her disappointment. But she moves to the next patient, brushing by XENIA.

XENIA  
Do I not get turn?

ALEX  
Chayenne!

CHAYENNE  
Um, what is this?

ALEX  
Just having fun, right?

ALEX moves CHAYENNE to the light. Injects her.

CHAYENNE  
Hey! That was hard!



No reaction.

CHAYENNE (CONT'D)  
 Girl, this bedside manner needs  
 work.

ALEX turns to DUCHESS.

ALEX  
 ...Duchess.

DUCHESS  
 A moment, dear.

DUCHESS checks her phone.

DUCHESS  
 Fine, I'm here if you want me. A  
 strong woman moves for no one, not  
 even her plastic surgeon.

ALEX hesitates. Frowns. The shotgun is too far away.  
 DUCHESS beckons with a manicured finger. Still so powerful.  
 ALEX cautiously approaches, syringe in hand.

DUCHESS  
 At my age, you start to look like  
 topography. Let's have it.

ALEX  
 Ready, Duchess?

DUCHESS  
 Always.

ALEX plunges the syringe. She steps back. Anticipating.  
 There's no reaction. ALEX is confused. She turns to XENIA.

ALEX  
 OK, Xenia, I guess we should --

A gurgling sound interrupts ALEX. She watches the LADIES  
 staring at something behind her, horror on their faces.  
 ALEX spins. Multiple protrusions move in the DUCHESS' neck.  
 Her voice is strangled by them.

DUCHESS  
 Cut camera. Cut it now.

Tentacles explode out. They shoot directly through the lens  
 of the camera. Sparks fly. The LADIES scream.

The tentacles' light is sickly. Black bile froths from them. They thrash. The DUCHESS-THING stands. Tentacle flail into the walls. The building shakes.

A tentacle grabs a sofa and flings it. It upsets the shotgun, which goes flying off into the lobby. Vials of Botox shatter as a tentacle smashes it.

ALEX

Go! Go!

ALEX waves to the LADIES as she dives behind a counter. But they're paralyzed by fear, hypnotized by lights.

DUCHESS-THING totters over to CHAYENNE. Too late, the judge moves. Two tentacles lift her off the ground, then rip her in half. CHAYENNE shrieks as her guts and a lot of snack food spill onto the floor.

ELISA

Oh my CHRIST!

CHAYENNE thuds down, futilely trying to gather her lower half back up as her life ebbs from her.

ALEX scans the place. Finds the shotgun near the entrance. She sprints to it, ducking a whipping tendril.

ELISA looks at the hobbled XENIA in the path the THING -- and bolts as fast as she can out to the great room.

XENIA

You cockfucking razvaluha!

DUCHESS-THING staggers to the exit, knocking XENIA over. ALEX reaches the shotgun. Cocks it. Aims. But the barrel is engulfed by a tentacle, leaking its froth.

ALEX

I'll kill you, aristocratic bitch!

ALEX fires off one shot. A lone tentacle explodes. Then the gun jams, black bile caking it. DUCHESS-THING roars.

ALEX

No, no --

ALEX frantically cleans the gun with her shirt.

DUCHESS-THING changes direction, towards ALEX. It SLAMS her. She desperately wards it off with blows from her shotgun. But DUCHESS-THING regroups. Rips the shotgun away.

A tentacle lifts ALEX up by the neck. She starts to fade. But the family of POSSUMS, spooked by the noise, runs into view, freaking the DUCHESS-THING.

The THING drops ALEX, who crawls away. But it reasserts itself, pinioning ALEX's sleeves, holding her in place.

Her puppeted face looms. Its lips tremble and purse into a demonic air kiss. A tentacle reaches towards ALEX's nose...

...and the face vomits black tar. DUCHESS-THING rears back.

Behind her, SAM stands tall. Holds blood-dripping DEER ANTLERS. He darts in, striking at the creature. But his attacks wane as he takes a glancing blow. A tentacle heaves him away.

DUCHESS-THING, injured, flings aside the grizzly statue and barrels through the door, taking half of it with her.

ALEX gasps, and rises. She wobbles over to SAM.

SAM

At least I give good horn.  
(Weakly)  
Can't leave you for one second.

ALEX

You were out for days. You hurt?

SAM

Very much so.

XENIA hops over. ALEX scouts the casualties.

XENIA

Sam! You are alive! And not a nightmare story!

SAM

I should try to sit--

SAM tries to sit up. Groans. Falls back.

ALEX

We need to get you to a hospital.  
I saw a snowmobile in the garage.

XENIA

But you say -- how do you know I'm not one of them?

ALEX  
It heals fast. You two ...  
(Gestures to their  
wounds)

XENIA faces the open hole where DUCHESS fled.

XENIA  
What about her?

ALEX  
Earth-born toxins.

ALEX reveals a vial of Botox. Unbroken.

ALEX  
Clostridium botulinum. Everyday, I  
inject it in people's faces. But  
as botulism? It hurts.

XENIA  
But all of it was shattered?

ALEX  
Not all. I faked my dose. Plus, I  
have some old cans I found.

XENIA  
(A little suspicious)  
Why you fake?

ALEX  
I think I know who I am.

XENIA looks at ALEX funny, but she's not one to think too  
deeply. SAM tries again to sit up.

SAM  
I can help. My land, my fight.

ALEX  
It's cute you think you can stand,  
but this has been brewing awhile.

XENIA  
But...Duchess will run, yes? Give  
more people tentacle pandemic?

DUCHESS' phone dings. They all look for it.

ALEX  
She still had service. And the  
Duchess was on her phone ...

ALEX picks it up, with confidence this time. Scans through.

ALEX

The crew, they're coming back. The storm is almost over. Three hours. The alien knows.

XENIA

What do we do?

ALEX

Welcome her to reality.

ALEX sets a countdown timer on DUCHESS' phone.

SUIT-UP SEQUENCE MONTAGE

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

XENIA and SAM stand behind ALEX. She gently removes an SD card from PHIL's shattered camera.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / XENIA'S CABIN - DAY

ALEX hurriedly sorts through cosmetics. Finds hairspray. Then two more from other cabins.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / KITCHEN - DAY

XENIA finds a kitchen torch. Checks the light.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / PORCH - DAY

SAM scrubs the alien bile out of the shotgun.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE/ ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - DAY

XENIA flips through video footage. Finds a shot of The Duchess in transformation. Copies it.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GREAT ROOM - DAY

SAM attaches a camera cage to a hairspray can using rubber bands. Then mounts the kitchen torch on it.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / KITCHEN - DAY

Over a sink, using tongs, ALEX dips shotgun shells into an open can of botulism tomatoes.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / PORCH - DAY

SAM and XENIA stand back as ALEX tries out her makeshift flamethrower. Flame scorches the air. ALEX nods.

ALEX

As soon as you hear me, you go.

SAM

Sure about this?

ALEX

Yeah. Like Daddy used to say:  
she's being ugly.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - DAY

ALEX fumbles with the speaker. It whines to life.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

ALEX's voice echoes.

ALEX (V.O.)

To the thing out there.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ALEX'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

ALEX (V.O.)

I know you can hear me.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / STABLES - CONTINUOUS

ALEX (V.O.)

I have something you want.  
Evidence of your existence.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / CREEK - CONTINUOUS

ALEX (V.O.)

All I ask is that you meet with  
me. See if we can be civil about  
this.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / ROSBOTTOM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ALEX  
The Shooting Range.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / LOBBY - DAY

ALEX straps into her gear. She checks the lodge. There are bundles of firewood everywhere, including around two white shrouded forms: the bodies of PHIL and CHAYENNE.

ALEX struggles to think of a proper eulogy.

ALEX  
I'll get her. For real.

Best she can do. She sprays the place with the flamethrower. It lights up. ALEX loads up on chew, then exits. Immense heat warps the air. Beams crack and crumble behind her.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

ALEX waits in the snow, bulky coat on. No visible weapons. Something obscured behind her. She spits: chaw.

Hay bails encircles the field. Lights ripple in the clouds. Snow thunder booms.

DUCHESS, dressed for Rodéo Drive, and by all appearances human again, strolls up. Stop just short of the ring. There's a tiny flicker of disappointment on ALEX's face.

They size each other up.

DUCHESS  
I'd kiss you but I don't know if  
that'd be entirely appropriate.

ALEX  
Duchess.

An unseen tentacle drags a body into the circle. It's ELISA. There are dark marks around her floppy neck.

DUCHESS  
Loved her. But she was pumped full  
of Botox. I've learned my lesson.

ALEX  
That you have.

DUCHESS  
So you have something I want.

ALEX  
I think so.

ALEX picks up the thing behind her. Flops it on the snow.  
It's the stuffed doll of MÓMO.

ALEX  
Thought you might need a  
replacement.

DUCHESS glares.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Just kidding.

ALEX reaches for a pocket, and presents the Gold SD Card  
like it's an awards trophy.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
SD card. It holds data -- video  
data. Your transformation.

DUCHESS takes a step towards the ring.

DUCHESS  
No need to be patronizing, I still  
have my memories, you know.

ALEX  
What's it like?

DUCHESS  
I was as surprised as you were,  
frankly. Should've seen your face.  
(Mimics her face)  
I'm thirstier, I suppose. And I've  
seen so much. You don't know how  
small you really are.

ALEX  
Craddock couldn't hurt the alien.  
Why could you?

DUCHESS  
Craddock loved it. Studied it. I  
had no ... reservations.

ALEX  
Body of an alien, ruthlessness of  
a Leading Lady...



DUCHESS takes a step forward.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Earlier. I picked up your phone.

DUCHESS  
Alex, stop stalling. I will have you altered.

ALEX  
Hold on. You turned the producers against me. Were you one already?

A coy smile. DUCHESS shrugs. Takes one step closer.

DUCHESS  
What do you want for it, darling?

ALEX  
You never say a word.

DUCHESS takes a step. She doesn't quite understand ALEX's meaning. She's almost inside the ring of hay.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Harvard. I don't know how you figured it out. If it got out ... it'd ruin me.

ALEX's foot is close to a string tied to a stake. It's hard to see in the snow. It runs up to the trigger of a makeshift flamethrower, pointed at the hay bails.

DUCHESS  
I can honestly say I'd consider it.

ALEX cheats over to the string.

DUCHESS  
But I'm not sure you have the leverage.

The tentacle reaches back again. Grabs a bound MONTANA, dressed to the nines.

DUCHESS  
Give me the card, and I let her go. Otherwise...

ALEX's lip quivers in rage. Her eyes dart back and forth between DUCHESS and MONTANA. It's an impossible choice.

She crumbles. Throws the card onto the snow. A tentacle deftly removes MONTANA's bonds. She brushes herself off, and walks forward. They embrace.

MONTANA  
Miss me, ho?

ALEX  
Are you OK?

MONTANA bends down.

MONTANA  
Interesting.

She rips out the stake with alien strength. Tosses it out of ALEX's reach. Then picks up the SD Card. MONTANA stands and drapes her arm around ALEX.

MONTANA  
I dunno, Duchess. She fell for that. Maybe she isn't alteration material, after all.

ALEX tries to piece it together. She sputters.

ALEX  
But --

MONTANA  
Yeah, it's weird, I know. I wanted her dead, too!

DUCHESS  
The feeling was mutual.

MONTANA  
But now -- I dunno. It's like we're a part of something greater. Kind of like a cult, but with more, like, nostril fucking.

DUCHESS  
We all fit in with one another.

ALEX  
So you're...

MONTANA  
Alien, yeah. That elk.

DUCHESS waltzes into the ring, comfortable with ALEX immobilized.

DUCHESS

Thank you for the card! As a woman, one can't be too careful about one's image. Or as an alien, for that matter.

MONTANA's arm around ALEX tightens. ALEX suppresses a cry.

DUCHESS takes the card from MONTANA. Holds it up, exultant. A spotlight almost beams down on her. ALEX reaches her free hand inside her jacket.

ALEX

(Panting, in pain)  
Duchess ... how do you know it's not a faux?

DUCHESS stares at the card, alarmed.

MONTANA

She's too basic to --

ALEX flicks on the flamethrower inside her jacket, and instantly moves to wriggle out of it as flames engulf her. MONTANA removes her now-burning arm. ALEX throws the jacket on MONTANA, whose nylons burst afire immediately.

MONTANA flails, running blindly at the hay, which catches fire, too.

But ALEX is on fire, too. She flings herself to the ground and rolls, putting out the flames and coming up with the SHOTGUN that was also hidden in her coat.

ALEX

Don't call me basic, bitch.

ALEX fires several rounds into MONTANA at close range. MONTANA shakes, chokes on black-tar bile as the botulism bullets slam into her.

ALEX turns and fires a shot at DUCHESS. She misses. DUCHESS hisses, and shoots out a tentacle with bad intentions.

ALEX instinctively throws up the shotgun to block it. The gun bends. Useless now. DUCHESS smiles wickedly.

ALEX shoots a burst of flame as a deterrent. But both she and DUCHESS laugh at its pitifully short range. So ALEX runs, twisting through the firewall like a contortionist.

The DUCHESS-THING marches to the burning ring. But she hesitates for a moment, petrified by it.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - DAY

ALEX lurches through the snow. Just an undershirt. Ripley remade. Hustling. Grunting. She follows a string of tobacco stains in the snow like a trail of breadcrumbs.

DUCHESS-THING chases.

ALEX turns to the Lodge. An inferno. No good.

The path leads to the stables. Her eyes dance, searching for some plan. She heads for it. DUCHESS watches her. Follows. She's methodical, a mature woman-alien.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / STABLES - DAY

DUCHESS' tentacle pushes open the heavy doors. She shudders as the tentacles recede into her body.

DUCHESS

Darling?

Beat. DUCHESS begins checking under the stalls.

DUCHESS

You know it's quite useless now,  
don't you?

Another row. Nothing.

DUCHESS

You might be thinking: oh, but  
Xenia and the little Indian boy  
escaped with the info about the  
big, bad Duchess.

DUCHESS continues down the line. Halfway through now. She rounds the corner, and continues down the L.

DUCHESS

But I disabled the vehicles, first  
thing. And on foot? With only  
three feet? Those two can't  
possibly.

DUCHESS arrives at the last stall. She gloats. Her quarry's time is up.

DUCHESS

How fitting. You tried to hide  
yourself and now you're trapped.

DUCHESS bends down...and there's nothing. She stands, puzzled. Only then she notices the tiny crack in the exterior door. She heads back around the corner of the L.

ALEX

Yah!

ALEX bursts from a far stall on a giant horse, spraying fire as she rides. Tramples DUCHESS under hoof, stunning her.

The stable starts to go up.

The tentacles emerge, skewering the horse against the roof. One gashes Alex across the ribs. She falls hard, breaking the flamethrower apart.

Terrified horses buck in their stalls. ALEX scurries to reassemble her sole weapon.

WHAP! A tentacle whips her face. ALEX falls.

DUCHESS mounts her, like an alien MMA fighter. Rains down punches and slaps while the tentacles pin ALEX's arms to her side, near her pockets.

ALEX's head knocks the cement. Blood smears the floor.

Tentacle stuff ALEX's nose. The hot pink of them mixes with fiery orange. ALEX manages to break one off, two off, before she's pinned again. They keep coming. Deeper now. She gags.

DUCHESS leans in. Venomous. A whispered rant.

DUCHESS

Shall I tell you something? I  
don't like you. Pure human  
dislike, for such a fraud. Is that  
what you want to hear, you little  
bitch? Fuck you for stealing my  
spotlight! Fuck you!

The intensity of DUCHESS' rant leaves her out of breath. She gulps air. The tentacles loosen on ALEX's arms. Just enough.

ALEX

Good -- good to be yourself,  
right, Tavorra?

ALEX stabs DUCHESS with the last remaining syringe of BOTOX RIGHT IN THE HEART. Like she's killing DRACULA in pink tweed.

The reaction is immediate. DUCHESS' form loses stability. The light grows sickly. She chokes and spits up. But tentacles snap violently in every direction. ALEX kicks back as far she can. Puts the horse carcass in between them.

DUCHESS' voice is not her own. Unfamiliar octaves join it. DUCHESS-THING finally sounds as inhuman as she looks.

DUCHESS  
Tawdry little ...

ALEX dodges errant tentacles as the feverish transformation grows. She has to do something to survive. She remembers ...

ALEX  
Sam.

ALEX digs through the nearby blood-stained hay. DUCHESS, out of control and deadly, crawls towards ALEX. A tentacle latches around ALEX's ankle, pulls her back.

ALEX finds the gun in the hay. She turns.

ALEX  
Breath deep. Square your  
shoulders. And think of someone  
you hate.

ALEX fires. The shot explodes the back of the DUCHESS' head. The tentacles spasm. ALEX unloads into her torso, sending the THING wobbling. It falls.

ALEX, bloodied, drops to a knee.

ALEX  
This -- this'll be hard to top  
next season.

ALEX slumps, spent. Unmoored. An empty syringe in view. ALEX looks at it.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GARAGE - DAY

An ashy, smoky mess. ALEX, SAM, and XENIA huddle under blankets. PRODUCTION CREW and FIRST RESPONDERS surround them. Their glassy eyes suggest they've seen hell.

A PRODUCER stomps up to an ASSOCIATE PRODUCER.

PRODUCER  
Gone! Fucking ruined!

The AP nods at the victims. Pulls the PRODUCER away.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

What?

PRODUCER

(Quieter)

All this. Ladies missing. It's a legal nightmare. And the footage -- lost. Burned. We've got NOTHING.

A beat. The PRODUCERS stare at ALEX.

PRODUCER

God, she still looks good somehow.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

...guess they had that Botox party.

Aside from some dirt, ALEX does. Or is just our imagination?

Suddenly, SCREAMS. ALEX and crew turn: it's DUCHESS, half-burned, truly monstrous now. DUCHESS-THING screams something unintelligible at ALEX and stomps forward.

She grabs XENIA and SAM and sprints into the garage.

INT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

There's the party van, like a beacon.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

The party van bursts through the garage doors and flies down the steep snowy drive. DUCHESS growls.

Immediately, it's clear that something is off. DUCHESS wasn't joking: she slashed the tires.

INT. PARTY VAN - CONTINUOUS

XENIA strains against the compromised van and her own missing limb. Someone has loaded the van with the LADIES' luggage. It rolls everywhere.

ALEX tracks DUCHESS behind them.

ALEX  
Don't worry, she can't go that --

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

DUCHESS fashions ski poles out of her tentacles, and accelerates.

INT. PARTY VAN - CONTINUOUS

SAM dramatically reaches for his pistol. But, of course, it's gone.

SAM  
Shit.

ALEX  
There's gotta be something.

ALEX starts tearing open the luggage. She pulls out a FELONYGURL dress, and flings it aside with disgust.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

DUCHESS slaloms after the party van as it treacherously descends, nearly running off the road.

INT. PARTY VAN - CONTINUOUS

XENIA  
This very hard on wrong foot!

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

DUCHESS pulls even with the van, and climbs on top. She rips the party van's rear door off with a tentacle. Luggage spills out. Her tentacle finds ALEX, who screams.

ALEX  
Nooo!

INT. PARTY VAN - CONTINUOUS

SAM grabs ALEX and braces himself on a stripper pole. But it's no use. She starts to slide out.

XENIA spots the ranch gate ahead of them. It's low.



XENIA

This might be close.

EXT. MACREADY CREEK LODGE / GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

The party van flies through the gate at full speed. DUCHESS-THING smears as she hits the heavy wooden gate. The party van brakes, then reverses over DUCHESS.

ALEX and SAM hop out. DUCHESS is a twitching pile of goo.

ALEX

We gotta burn her.

ALEX stares at the FELONYGURL dress in the van.

They position the van directly over the THING's corpse.

XENIA and SAM watch as ALEX stuffs the dress in the gas tank. SAM lights it. The whole van goes up atop DUCHESS. The sign catches fire, too.

INT. ALEX'S PRACTICE / WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bright, upscale. Photos of Alex abound. A nervous WOMAN (52) waits, tapping her foot. Her nervousness is noted by a nearby DAME of indeterminate age. She looks terrific.

DAME

First time?

WOMAN

Oh. Is it obvious?

DAME

There's nothing to worry about.

WOMAN

Someone just sent me an article. Some scandal, Harvard or something?

The DAME leans in.

DAME

Believe me, you'll forget all that. Wanna know a secret? I'm 73. And it's all thanks to Dr. Nishimura.

The women gapes at her, disbelieving.

WOMAN

How does she do it?

DAME

Elk glands, I heard. Purely  
organic.

ALEX pops her head out of the door to the back.

ALEX

Mrs. Mastromono? Let's see if we  
can fit you in.

The camera lingers on a photo of ALEX, the LEADING LADIES,  
and CRADDOCK on the couch.