

MOTHERLESS BROOKLYN

Lionel & Laura - Apartment

INT. LAURA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

LAURA and LIONEL lie in bed, sleeping. Lionel wears his outfit from yesterday. They wake up.

LIONEL

IF! Ah, God I'm sorry, shit. I'm sorry... I don't know what happened. I didn't mean to fall asleep.

LAURA

It's okay, it's okay. Thank you for staying.

LIONEL

Yeah sure. I know how you're feeling, I really do. Pretty soon you're gonna hear his voice in your head. He's gonna tell you to pull yourself together and get moving. And when you do, you're gonna feel him smiling at you again, I promise.

She gets emotional. He holds her.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

I really am sorry.

LAURA

Why are you being so nice to me?

LIONEL

Cause I think you're a good person. You're trying to make a difference. You actually care about what happens to other people. There's not many people who can say that. That's a good way to be.

LAURA

You're sweet.

LIONEL

I don't think that's how most people usually describe me when they meet me, but I'm glad that you think so.

LAURA

Anybody ever tell you you talk in your sleep?

LIONEL  
No, but I never slept with anyone.

LAURA  
You never slept with anyone?

LIONEL  
I mean, I been with a few girls but just not, not the kind who wanna stay and sleep with me.

Beat.

LAURA  
Who's Frank?

LIONEL  
What?

LAURA  
You said that name when you were asleep. You seemed upset. Was he your friend who...?

LIONEL  
Yeah. I worked with him... I worked for him. I met him when I was 12. I was at that Catholic Home for Boys on DeKalb. They threw me in there when I was 6, after my mother died. Frank kinda took me under his wing. You know he never called me my name. He called me "Brooklyn". He'd say "Look at you, Motherless Brooklyn. You got no one looking out for you."

LAURA  
We all need someone looking out for us.

She gives him a quick kiss and gets up. Lionel notices a framed photo of a young woman with a baby.

LIONEL  
Is that your mother? She's beautiful.

Laura grabs the photo.

LAURA  
She died a long time ago. I don't remember her. I guess we both got nobody now.

Beat.

LIONEL

Listen, I, I gotta ask you... is there something you're not telling me?

LAURA

What?

LIONEL

Is there something you're holding out, you and Horowitz, on all this housing deal? Look, those goons at the BA, they're scared of something, okay? There's something big out there that has to do with all this fraud you been digging around in. I think it ties it right up to Moses Randolph. Do you know what it is?

LAURA

No, no. I mean, somebody's getting rich, but no.

LIONEL

You gotta take this seriously. If you're holding onto some card and you're waiting to play it to try to block that vote, you're playing a dangerous game. They already killed Frank. They killed your father. They did this to me last night. These people aren't gonna stop.

LAURA

What's Billy got to do with it?

LIONEL

He knows something about it.

LAURA

No, no. No wait. That's not possible.

LIONEL

He and my friend Frank were working together on--

LAURA

He doesn't even... He didn't even know what I'm working on. I have an uncle who knows Gabby. He got me that job.

Beat.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're not a reporter, are you?

LIONEL

No, and my name's not Jake, it's Lionel. Look, Frank is an investigator, okay? That's who I worked for. They hired him to keep tabs on your committee. He was following you. I wasn't trying to expose anything. I was, I just was poking into it to try to figure out who killed him, and now there's so many Goddamn pieces it's like I've got glass in my brain. And I don't even know what I'm after anymore. I'm sorry for lying to you, but you gotta believe what I'm saying. You're webbed up in this somehow, and you're in danger. Can you stay around here today?

LAURA

Gabby's expecting me. We're preparing her testimony. It's important, but I need to make arrangements, a funeral...

LIONEL

Look, none of that matters, okay? If I'm right, they're gonna keep a tight lid on it, and they won't even let the Coroner's office release his body. Just, please. Get one of the guys from the club to take you down to work. Stay around people that you know for the next few days. I'll come and find you. Okay?

She nods.