



Cinder  
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By  
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A Cinderella inspired story with an unusual twist.

# LYNCHIAN

FILM FESTIVAL



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INT. PARENTS' TRAILER- EVENING

Wide shot of the main living area of a messy, outdated trailer.

MOTHER and FATHER are fighting, in the foreground is a CRIB with a BABY crying out to her parents who continue to scream at each other.

FATHER screams at the MOTHER and throws the bottle of ALCOHOL in his hand. Froth from the drink flies through the air.

CUT

INT. PARENTS' TRAILER - EVENING

The BABY is now GIRL (3). The trailer is messier; trash on the floors, dishes overflowing.

The parents have aged quickly. Hair a mess and graying, both appear disheveled and the father has gotten a beer belly.

A BABY BOY now sits in GIRL's arms on the living room floor. Both are crying. GIRL wraps her arms in an embrace around BABY BOY's face, she rocks back and forth.

MOTHER and FATHER are in the kitchen fighting. This time, more violent. As they yell at each other, MOTHER strikes FATHER across the face with a closed fist.

FATHER reacts, grabbing MOTHER's neck and shoving her into the wall.

The children continue to cry.

CUT

EXT. PARENTS' TRAILER - LATE NIGHT

GIRL (6) and BOY (3) are sitting on the staircase of the trailer's porch. Their faces red from crying.

A pan out reveals their parents fighting once again. This time by the CAR. FATHER is screaming at MOTHER as she stands by the open driver's side door. A container of ALCOHOL is sloshing in his hand.

FATHER throws the BOTTLE at MOTHER and quickly climbs into the CAR, turns the engine on and peels out of the driveway.

CUT

INT. PARENTS' TRAILER GIRL'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

GIRL (10) and BOY (7) are distraught, backs pressed against the BEDROOM DOOR as banging from the other side ensues. FATHER is belligerent, slurring as he yells to get in.

MOTHER screams from the other side, demanding him to stop.

The kids sit, sniffing and teary eyed as they do everything in their power to prevent FATHER from coming in.

CUT

INT. PARENTS' TRAILER - EARLY MORNING

It's 3 AM, GIRL (13) hovers over BOY (10). He is unconscious on the floor, bloodied.

GIRL has him scooped up in her arms, trying to wake him up as MOTHER wails from the other room.

MOTHER (WAILING)

WHY! WHY!

FATHER sits in his chair unfazed as he takes his smoke and blows it out. A beer in his hand.

The glow of POLICE LIGHTS grows in the room and on GIRL's face. SIREN NOISES become prominent. GIRL just sits there with BOY in hand, bawling.

FILM FESTIVAL CUT

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

GIRL (13) is disheveled, but dressed appropriately for a funeral donned in a conservative BLACK LACE DRESS. Groups of similarly dressed people are around in clusters, but no one approaches GIRL.

She sits on the ground, numb, as she just stares at the HEADSTONE in front of her. No tears roll down her face. She is truly expressionless.

CUT

INT. PARENTS' TRAILER - DAY

It's just GIRL (15) and MOTHER left. The trailer has seen better days.

MOTHER has begun smoking and drinking profusely. GIRL sits there miserable.

CUT

INT. PARENTS' TRAILER - EVENING

There is a knock on the front door, MOTHER jumps up, quickly adjusts herself, and approaches the door to welcome MAN into the house.

GIRL (17) walks in to see MAN giving MOTHER a peck on the cheek. MOTHER appears to be smitten with this new guy. MAN is immediately cold towards GIRL.

MAN

I'm not exactly a fan of children. How about you head to your room and leave the adults to doing... adult things.

GIRL looks toward MOTHER for guidance and MOTHER returns her look with a glare. MOTHER quickly brings her gaze back to MAN.

GIRL exits the room devastated as MOTHER doesn't defend her, but instead, gets cozy with MAN.

CUT

EXT. PARENTS' TRAILER - LATE NIGHT

GIRL (19) storms out the front door with a BACKPACK draped on her shoulders. Following behind her is MAN.

MAN

That's right, you fucking whore! Get your ass out my house!

MAN stumbles out the door and across the porch inebriated.

GIRL

It's not your house, scumbag!

MAN spits in her direction as he throws a BEER BOTTLE at her. It crashes feet away from GIRL as she walks away. GIRL finds her way trekking down the ROAD, leaving for good.

CUT

EXT. STREET SIDEWALK - DAY

GIRL finds herself living on the STREETS, disheveled. Bundled up, she sits along the side of a BUILDING with the BACKPACK at her side. Her and her belongings are worn and dirtied.

An off duty COP approaches her and gets down on his knee. He

flashes his badge at GIRL. COP shows concern.

COP

Do you have anywhere to go?

GIRL shakes her head 'no'. She is very fatigued, weak.

COP

Well, let's find you somewhere. I can get you some resources to help you off the street.

COP stands up, extending his hand out to GIRL. She nods and takes it, allowing COP to pull her to her feet. GIRL collects her belongings and allows COP to escort her away.

CUT

EXT. PARK - DAY

GIRL (20) is healthier, alert and clean. She is wearing nicer clothing and appears to have her life together. Sitting on a park bench, GIRL has a book cracked open in her hands.

She is about a quarter of the way through the book. A soft breeze messes with her hair. Overall she is the most peaceful GIRL has ever looked or felt.

Footsteps approach, a charismatic, charmingly handsome man approaches the bench and sits down next to her.

PRINCE CHARMING

Has anyone ever told you how intensely beautiful you look while reading?

PRINCE CHARMING flashes a smile at GIRL. She blushes.

GIRL

Oh, uh. Thanks.

She closes the book and lays it to rest on her lap.

GIRL

Er-

PRINCE CHARMING

I'm James. Listen,(chuckles) I don't normally do stuff like this, but, uh-

He inches closer to GIRL on the bench.

PRINCE CHARMING

I'd really like to get your number-

He stalls to get GIRL to reveal her name to him.

GIRL

-Fiona.

PRINCE CHARMING

I'd really like to get your number,  
Fiona.

He politely gestures towards FIONA's CELL PHONE.

PRINCE CHARMING

May I?

Blushing, FIONA unlocks her CELL PHONE and hands it to PRINCE CHARMING. He puts his number in and places the CELL PHONE back in her hands.

PRINCE CHARMING

There. I await your text any moment.

He pauses to make Fiona take a hint. She does and sends him a quick text.

PRINCE CHARMING

I'll save you in my contacts as  
Princess Fiona. I truly hope to see  
you again soon.

PRINCE CHARMING gently places his hand on FIONA's shoulder. He gets up from the bench and plants his feet on the pathway. He looks back at Fiona.

PRINCE CHARMING

I hope the rest of your day is swell.  
Enjoy your book.

PRINCE CHARMING walks away, leaving FIONA blushing. A small grin forms as she puts her nose back into her book.

CUT

EXT. CAFE - DAY

FIONA and PRINCE CHARMING are sitting at an OUTDOOR TABLE of a little café. They laugh as they share stories over

COFFEE.

CUT

EXT. PARK - DAY

FIONA and PRINCE CHARMING are walking the park hand in hand. Both are dressed fashionably. FIONA in a SUN DRESS. PRINCE CHARMING in a CLASSY SWEATER.

As they approach the BENCH they met at, PRINCE CHARMING stops, lets go of FIONA's hand and gets down on one knee. He pulls a RING out.

FIONA tackles him. PRINCE CHARMING pulls himself back up to his feet and brings her into his embrace.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

PRINCE CHARMING and FIONA are house hunting, they stumble into an immaculate kitchen. REALTOR follows behind them.

REALTOR

So, what are we thinking?

PRINCE CHARMING gives FIONA a look.

PRINCE CHARMING

Well, what do you choose?

FIONA

What, me? It- it's my choice?

Surprise comes over FIONA. PRINCE CHARMING lets out a chuckle.

PRINCE CHARMING

Of course, you deserve the home of your dreams. Especially since I'll be working all day. If you can't be with who you love all day, might as well be somewhere you love.

FIONA

How can I argue that logic?

FIONA turns to REALTOR.

FIONA

We'll take it!

The trio celebrate together.

REALTOR

Well, with an offer like this, they

aren't gunna refuse!

CUT

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

PRINCE CHARMING and FIONA walk up a CHURCH AISLE towards the exit. FIONA in a beautiful WEDDING GOWN, PRINCE CHARMING in a slick TUXEDO.

A crowd cheers the newly weds as they head off. His family ecstatic and hugging them. Her family isn't there, noticed by an EMPTY PEW near the front.

They exit the CHURCH and descend the stairs as the crowd pours out the front doors, still cheering them on. They climb into their CAR donning a "JUST MARRIED" SIGN and drive into the sunset. Fiona is the happiest she has ever been, grinning ear to ear.

CUT

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A car rolls up in the CEMETERY and parks near a familiar grave.

FIONA and PRINCE CHARMING climb out of their car both in their wedding attire. The car is still donned in a "JUST MARRIED" SIGN. FIONA has her bouquet in hand.

The two walk up to a HEADSTONE, her brother's headstone. FIONA kneels on the ground in her WEDDING DRESS with no regard for ruining it. PRINCE CHARMING takes a couple steps back to give her a moment.

FIONA caresses the headstone and places her BOUQUET at the base.

FIONA

Hey, Max. I'm sure you saw. I got married today.

Tears start to trickle down her face.

FIONA

It kills me you couldn't be here for it. I miss you so much. Dad's obviously... gone. Mom? She- She has been in her own world since- uh, yeah. No one came.

FIONA wipes away some of her tears with the back of her hand.

FIONA

But I could feel you there today. And I really want you to know he is good to me. I'm happy and safe.

The sun begins to set, the orange glow of the sunset radiates. PRINCE CHARMING takes a couple steps back towards FIONA, signifying it is time to go.

FIONA

I promise to visit and chat again soon. I love you.

FIONA climbs back up to her feet with PRINCE CHARMING extending an arm out to help her. FIONA brushes off her dress and they head back to the car.

The bouquet sitting at the grave, the newlyweds climb into the car and pull away in the background.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

3 months later, they live in the elaborate home.

FIONA sets her CAR KEYS on the KITCHEN ISLAND and exits the room for a moment.

The CAR KEYS vanish.

She comes back in the room confused to see the CAR KEYS gone. FIONA scrambles around the kitchen to try to find them.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

FIONA stirs in BED. The smell of breakfast being made wafts into the room. The sizzle of bacon cooking can be heard as PRINCE CHARMING preps their meal.

FIONA wakes to the aroma of the breakfast. She lets out a soft moan as she squeezes the plush BEDDING around her.

FIONA

Ow!

She cringes with pain. FIONA looks to see BRUISING along her arm.

FIONA

What the-

FIONA looks at the solid HEADBOARD then back to her arms. She sighs and shrugs it off, heading downstairs for breakfast.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - MORNING

A fish-eyed Snorricam Shot on FIONA's face as she stumbles her way down the hall. She is tired, groggy.

FIONA passes through the living room where their MINI-BAR is seen in the background. Subtly mixed in with the ALCOHOLS, you see a GREEN LIQUID in a bottle. She continues into the kitchen.

PRINCE CHARMING

Good morning, sleepyhead! Wow, you look exhausted!

Still in the Snorricam Shot focusing on a disoriented FIONA, PRINCE CHARMING leans in to kiss FIONA on the cheek.

PRINCE CHARMING

Let's get some breakfast in you! You will feel much more awake soon!

PRINCE CHARMING nudges the FOOD in front of FIONA. Like a zombie, she digs in slowly and without a thought.

CUT

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

FILM FESTIVAL

COP sits in his cubicle in the back corner of the room at the POLICE PRECINCT. His DESK piled high with FILES. The two he has opened look to be MISSING PERSONS REPORTS, specifically of young women.

His CORKBOARD is filled with pictures of him with young women he has helped. One picture contains COP and FIONA outside a door with boxes in hand. He helped her find an apartment.

COP's DESKTOP displays help programs on one side, their missing person's database on the other side.

COP, frustrated with the files in front of him, lets out a huge sigh. He closes the files, leans back in his chair and finds himself focusing on the picture of FIONA.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

FIONA sits upright on the COUCH. She stares into space. The TELEVISION in front of her is on, but she stares past it. Fiona's demeanor hints she may be hallucinating or drugged.

From the living room, you hear the FRONT DOOR open as PRINCE CHARMING returns home from work.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Fiona darling, I'm home!

FIONA remains on the couch unfazed and entranced. PRINCE CHARMING enters the living room, looking to get her attention.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Fiona? Honey?

He sits next to FIONA on the couch and puts his hand on her shoulder. Fiona snaps out of her trance.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Is this what you've been doing all day?

FIONA  
All... day?

Prince Charming looks at Fiona with a warm smile.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Yeah, I just got home from work. Did-  
Did you do anything today?

FIONA  
I- uh-

PRINCE CHARMING  
Don't sweat it. I mean, it would have been nice if the house was tidied, but it looks like you have had a rough day.

PRINCE CHARMING gets up and takes a couple strides towards their MINI-BAR.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Let me fix you up a drink.

PRINCE CHARMING smiles.

FIONA

Oh, uh - okay.

PRINCE CHARMING grabs a GLASS from the MINI-BAR and pours some alcohol into it. The GREEN LIQUID still sits on the MINI-BAR.

PRINCE CHARMING turns to walk back to FIONA on the couch, who is looking around confused. The GREEN LIQUID is now in a different spot on the MINI-BAR. The GREEN LIQUID sloshes around a little.

CUT

PRINCE CHARMING MONTAGE

PRINCE CHARMING goes about his day-to-day outside of the home. He:

-Drives to work, getting a coffee along the way.

-Answers several calls at his desk job, determined to get the client.

-Grabs a quick lunch at the cafe across the street.

-Treats the receptionist at work with respect, works his charm.

-Gets groceries from the store, tips the old lady bagging his groceries.

-Heads into a sketchy alley, into a store that looks to sell alcohol and grabs some GREEN LIQUID. A spark of evil in his eye. He makes his way to the counter and charms the cashier, complementing her and leaving a hefty tip in the jar with a smile.

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - DAY

FIONA glides throughout the house, enjoying her time to herself while PRINCE CHARMING is at work.

She gets settled on the COUCH with a BOOK in hand, sipping a COCKTAIL.

When her cup is empty, FIONA gets up and walks across the room to the MINI-CART full of alcohol to mix another drink. On the cart, FIONA notices the GREEN LIQUID. She stops mixing her drink and picks up the bottle of GREEN

LIQUID.

FIONA

What?

She removes the cap from the bottle and smells. The rancid smell causes Fiona to crinkle her nose and cover her mouth and nose with her arm. She coughs and quickly recaps the bottle.

FIONA

What the fuck is this shit?

She plays with the bottle in her hand and ultimately decides to put it back.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Before bed, PRINCE CHARMING whips up another drink for FIONA. She notices he slips the GREEN LIQUID into the mixture and pretends to drink from it, not ingesting anything. The couple goes to bed after.

FIONA is laying in bed wearing a BAGGY T-SHIRT and UNDERWEAR. In and out of consciousness, FIONA sees glimpses of PRINCE CHARMING on top of her.

Those glimpses flicker to images of FATHER's face, then MAN's face, then back to PRINCE CHARMING's again in rapid succession. Her heart rate elevates.

FILM FESTIVAL FIONA

(WHISPERING)

No!

A close up on FIONA's face captures a tear rolling down her cheek.

The images of PRINCE CHARMING, FATHER and MAN continue to race until she sees black.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

FIONA is sitting at the kitchen island with her feet curled up onto the stool. She sips a cup of coffee while staring at the floor.

PRINCE CHARMING walks in the kitchen with a warm and glowing demeanor.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Good morning, sunshine!

PRINCE CHARMING walks over to FIONA and leans in to give her a peck on the cheek. FIONA pulls away from him.

PRINCE CHARMING  
What's wrong?

FIONA glares at PRICE CHARMING with a long stare. She takes a slow sip from her mug then clears her throat.

FIONA  
So what? Last night just- just didn't happen?

PRINCE CHARMING looks at her with surprise.

PRINCE CHARMING  
What are you talking about, honey?  
Nothing happened last night. Must've been a bad dream.

PRINCE CHARMING exits the room. On his way out, he hollers:

PRINCE CHARMING  
I'm getting ready for work. Hopefully you cheer up. Don't like to see you like this.

Rage grows on FIONA's face. She snaps out of her trance and slams her mug down on the counter.

She sits enraged for a long while. Eventually, the front door audibly slams shut in the other room.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Blood boiling, FIONA sits at the kitchen counter with a LAPTOP in hand. She is searching the internet for jobs. She applies to several and receives an E-MAIL, asking her to interview immediately. FIONA does the interview via video call and is offered the job.

VOICE THROUGH COMPUTER  
We think you'd be perfect for the job!  
Let us know your choice by the end of the week!

FIONA beams at the computer.

FIONA

Thank you for your time. I will!

The video call disconnects and she is elated. Her heart pounds with excitement and a sense of relief takes over her.

FIONA

Yes! I can finally get out of this house.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

PRINCE CHARMING returns home with the sound of the front door closing and his feet pattering into the LIVING ROOM.

PRINCE CHARMING

(SINGING)

Honey, I'm home!

FIONA rushes into the room with a giddiness in her step.

FIONA

Oh, James! I have some incredible news to share with you!

FIONA continues to glide through the room and right into PRINCE CHARMING's embrace. PRINCE CHARMING lets out a chuckle.

PRINCE CHARMING

Oh, yeah? What's up, darling?

FIONA pulls her face up from being buried in PRINCE CHARMING's chest and looks him in the face. She is smiling right at him.

FIONA

I got a job offer today!

PRINCE CHARMING

I'm sorry, a what?

PRINCE CHARMING's smile is wiped clean, his face now expressionless.

FIONA

I- I got a job offer today! And I really want to take it. It- It pays well, gets me out of the house a little bit, and I can have my own money, so I- I won't be so reliant on

yours.

PRINCE CHARMING drops FIONA from his embrace and annoyance takes over his expression.

PRINCE CHARMING

Fi, I don't think that's necessary. My money is your money, and honestly, I don't really like the idea of you working.

FIONA's previous excitement has transformed into frustration.

FIONA

(ANNOYED)

Excuse you? Why not?

PRINCE CHARMING stiffens, and looks to backtrack his comment.

PRINCE CHARMING

It's just that I take pride in taking care of you, Fi. And I like coming home to a clean house and a wife as wonderful as you. We don't need the money, and I don't want you burdened by all that nonsense.

FIONA looks like she is about to cry as PRINCE CHARMING shatters her world.

FIONA

(QUIVERING)

But- But what if I want to be burdened by it?

PRINCE CHARMING lets out a laugh.

PRINCE CHARMING

You don't want that sweetie, can you just drop this silly idea?

FIONA's fists are clenched hard, the white of her knuckles showing.

FIONA

(ANGRY)

Fine. I'll drop it. I'm giving you one last chance to confess. I'll drop it if you admit what you've been doing to me this whole time.

PRINCE CHARMING's facade flickers just slightly, but he composes himself again.

PRINCE CHARMING  
 What I've been doing to you? You mean  
 loving you?

FIONA shakes her head.

FIONA  
 (ANGRY)  
 No. I'm talking about how you  
 assaulted me.

PRINCE CHARMING's face turns nasty as he leans into FIONA,  
 getting in her face.

PRINCE CHARMING  
 (VENOMOUS)  
 Now you listen here, you little bitch.  
 You ever accuse me of something like  
 that again and I'll show you what  
 assault really looks like.

PRINCE CHARMING collects his composure and acts as if he  
 never snapped.

PRINCE CHARMING  
 I'm feeling like a whiskey and coke.  
 PRINCE CHARMING walks away from FIONA, making his way to the  
 MINI-CART. FIONA remains in place, paralyzed with tears  
 pouring down her face.

FILM FESTIVAL CUT

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

FIONA storms into the POLICE PRECINCT very distraught. She is  
 hyperactive and shaky.

FIONA  
 (SCARED)  
 I need help? Help, please!

COP #2 walks up to FIONA with COP 3# in tow.

COP #2  
 How can we help you, Miss?

FIONA continues to shake and stutters, unable to get a word  
 out.

COP #3  
 Here sit, let me get you a cup of  
 water and then we can talk.

COP #3 gestures towards a CHAIR behind FIONA and she sits down, nodding in agreement as COP #3 walks away to grab her water.

COP #2 sits down in a CHAIR opposite FIONA and kindly stares at her until COP #3 returns.

COP #3 walks back in with a CUP OF WATER for FIONA and gently places it in her hand. She takes a sip and a big breath in.

FIONA  
(QUIETLY)  
Thank you.

COP #2 leans in politely and attentively.

COP #2  
So you say you need help? What can we do for you-?

FIONA  
Fiona.

COP #2 gives a small smile.

COP #2  
What can we help with, Fiona?

COP #2 and COP #3 get settled and FIONA finds herself comfortable to talk.

FIONA  
My husband has been drugging and assaulting me and... I need help.

Both cops look at her in awe.

COP #3  
What has he been drugging you with?

FIONA  
I don't know, some liquid he is spiking my drinks with. Maybe poison.

COP #2 furrows his brows.

COP #2  
Well? Which is it? Were you drugged, or were you poisoned?

FIONA is taken aback. She gets flustered and struggles to remember.

FIONA

I- I don't know which one. But- But he spikes my drinks and- And assaults me when I'm under.

The cops share a glance and FIONA spots it.

FIONA

You've got to believe me!

COP #3 gets up and composes himself.

COP #3

Can we see your I.D.?

FIONA looks at him confused but abides. She pulls her DRIVER'S LICENSE from her WALLET and hands it to COP #3. She then puts her hands to her head in embarrassment.

COP #3

We'll be back in just a moment.

COP #3 leaves with COP #2 getting up and following behind him. FIONA waits for what feels like eternity. The cops return.

COP #2

Ma'am, do you have any proof?

FIONA

Proof?

Cop #2 nods.

COP #2

Yes Ma'am, do you have any proof your husband has been doing this to you?

FIONA returns a baffled look.

FIONA

I mean, no. Not unless you test my blood or- a- uh- rape kit-

COP #3

(CALMLY)

Ma'am... Fiona, listen to me. Without any tangible evidence, we can't look into this. So think for me, please? Is there any proof you can provide?

FIONA dwells for a moment.

FIONA

I guess I can come back with the vial  
of whatever he's drugging me with.

Both cops nod in satisfaction, but share a look that FIONA catches once again.

FIONA

Are- Are you making fun of me?

COP #2 lets out a snicker, COP #3 looks away, refusing to make contact.

FIONA

(Annoyed)

You don't believe me! This is  
ridiculous!

Both cops tense up and stand in an attempt to intimidate and diffuse the situation.

FIONA

(Voice Raised)

You don't believe me, and you don't  
want to help me when I'm begging you  
to test my blood and check for  
assault!

COP #2

Ma'am, we checked your record. We know  
your past. You're saying these things  
without proof. How do we not know you  
didn't do this to yourself to get a  
man in trouble.

FIONA looks at COP #2 with an appalled look.

FIONA

Are you saying I raped myself?

COP #3 clears his throat, flustered.

COP #3

No, Ma'am. Uhm, we're just saying  
  
that the kit only really checks for  
DNA and trauma.

FIONA is exasperated.

FIONA

Isn't that what you need for proof?

COP #2

Ma'am, what he's trying to say is that if he is your husband, we can't just assume DNA means rape. And trauma? Well (clears throat) We don't know what your intimate relationship is like.

FIONA's jaw drops.

FIONA

Meaning?

COP #3

If you have rough intercourse with your husband the results aren't going to vary much. Like I said, we are going to need solid evidence.

FIONA storms off, discouraged by the lack of effort from the two cops.

COP, the man who previously saved FIONA from the streets walks into the precinct, recognizing her as she exits and noticing she is not okay. COP glances around and sees COP #2 and COP #3 goofing around and laughing. He approaches them.

COP

Hey, why did that woman leave crying?

COP #2 and COP #3 look at him with entertainment painted on their faces.

COP #2

Woman's just crying wolf on her husband. Probably got into a fight and wants revenge.

COP looks at the two warily.

COP

Hmm.

COP leaves the two, worry across his face as he makes his way to his desk.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - MORNING

PRINCE CHARMING gets ready to leave for work.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Bye, honey! Enjoy your day!

FIONA walks through the front foyer where PRINCE CHARMING gets ready.

FIONA  
Don't worry, I will. I accepted the job and I'm going to buy some new clothes for it today.

PRINCE CHARMING's brow furrows as FIONA exits the foyer. He steps forward to follow FIONA, then checks his watch, realizing he doesn't have time to chase after her.

PRINCE CHARMING  
(YELLING)  
I told you I didn't want you taking it!

FIONA  
(O.C.)  
Well, I told you I wanted to! You aren't gunna stop me!

PRINCE CHARMING doesn't approve and swipes both sets of car keys as he leaves for work.

FIONA hears PRINCE CHARMING leave and takes advantage. She scrambles all over the house to collect belongings and packs a couple SUITCASES and DUFFEL BAGS.

CUT

EXT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - DAY

FIONA exits the front door with SUITCASES and DUFFEL BAGS and rushes them to her LUXURY CAR.

She realizes she doesn't have keys on her and frantically pats her body looking for them.

She tucks the LUGGAGE under her car to hide it. FIONA rushes back inside, looking over her shoulder paranoid.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - DAY

FIONA rushes through the house looking for the CAR KEYS anything that can be used as a weapon. She grabs KNIVES from the kitchen, SCISSORS from the home office.

FIONA  
 (MUMBLING)  
 Keys, keys, keys.

When she enters the living room, FIONA notices the GREEN LIQUID on the MINI-CART.

FIONA  
 (UNDER BREATH)  
 Dumbass cops. Fucking James.

She pockets it, then continues her search.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

FIONA storms into the bedroom in search of weapons. She swings open the closet door and pilfers through the CLOTHING. A BASEBALL BAT sits tucked in the corner. She grabs it.

Then FIONA notices a SHOE BOX sitting on the floor. FIONA gets on her knees and pulls out the SHOE BOX. She opens it and gasps in awe.

The SHOE BOX is filled with photos of her. Some sleeping, others a little more indecent. And many photos are of her before she met PRINCE CHARMING.

FIONA  
 Oh my God!

FIONA collapses to the floor in a panic and starts hyperventilating.

Memories flood her mind in a flashback as her reality crumbles.

FIONA'S MEMORY MONTAGE

- FIONA and PRINCE CHARMING sit at the cafe on their first date. PRINCE CHARMING slips GREEN LIQUID into her drink. - FIONA wakes up in bed, noticing the bruising. - PRINCE CHARMING doses the food he gives FIONA at breakfast. - PRINCE CHARMING in the LIVING ROOM pouring the GREEN LIQUID into FIONA's drink. - PRINCE CHARMING on top of FIONA in bed, which flickers to faces of FATHER and MAN again as she relives her assaults.

FIONA calms down. FIONA scrambles to close the SHOE BOX and put it back exactly as she found it. She quickly tries to make the closet look untouched. She rushes out of the bedroom with the BASEBALL BAT in hand.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - DAY

FIONA hurries down the stairs and bolts to the kitchen. The WEAPONS she has collected sit on the counter. FIONA quickly packs a couple on her body. The KNIFE in her WAISTBAND, the SCISSORS in her BRA between her shoulder blades, tucked into her SHOE and SOCKS are a BOX CUTTER and POCKET KNIFE.

She looks at the bottle of GREEN LIQUID and decides to mix a drink, pouring some of the GREEN LIQUID into a GLASS CUP with some other drink laying around. FIONA leaves the cup on the counter with a NOTE for PRINCE CHARMING. FIONA sneaks out of the room and waits.

CUT

EXT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - EVENING

PRINCE CHARMING pulls into the driveway alongside FIONA's CAR and parks. He gets out, grabs his briefcase from the passenger's side and heads into the house.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - EVENING

PRINCE CHARMING enters the house and sets his briefcase down by the door. He walks further into the house.

PRINCE CHARMING

Fiona?

He continues towards the kitchen as he hears no response.

PRINCE CHARMING

Fiona? Honey?

PRINCE CHARMING enters the kitchen and sees the GLASS CUP and NOTE FIONA left for him. He picks up the NOTE, reads it, and smiles. PRINCE CHARMING places the NOTE back on the counter and picks up the GLASS CUP, stirs it a moment, then takes a big swig from the drink. PRINCE CHARMING coughs hard.

PRINCE CHARMING

Fiona?

PRINCE CHARMING tries to step away from the kitchen counter and suddenly clutches his chest. Cringing in pain he collapses to the floor.

PRINCE CHARMING  
What the fuck!

Footsteps approach and FIONA walks into the room. Her hand clutching her waistband, a KNIFE is visible in the WAISTBAND near her grasp.

PRINCE CHARMING  
What the fuck, Fiona? What are you doing?

FIONA pulls the KNIFE from her WAISTBAND and points it at PRINCE CHARMING.

FIONA  
Good question, what have you been up to, James?

PRINCE CHARMING  
Working! What? Did- Did you poison me?  
And- A - a knife is on me?

FIONA steps closer to PRINCE CHARMING, still pointing the KNIFE at him.

FIONA  
You provided a home where trapping, abusing, drugging, and RAPING ME has been status quo! What in the actual fuck is wrong with you?!?

PRINCE CHARMING drags himself backward, towards the wall. He is in awe.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Baby! What? I'd never do that. Where- Where would you get an idea like that?

PRINCE CHARMING props himself up against the wall.

PRINCE CHARMING  
Look, you've had a rough life, but bringing that baggage into the life we are building - That's not gonna help!  
Babe- Honey, please put the knife down. Let me help you.

FIONA's strength waivers as the KNIFE shakes in her hands. Tears begin to well up as she lowers the KNIFE. She shakes it off.

FIONA

Don't give me that shit. I know you are lying!

FIONA gets closer to PRINCE CHARMING, the KNIFE is now within a foot of his face.

FIONA

I found the roofies, you son of a bitch. Why would you do that to me?

PRINCE CHARMING pulls himself up the wall and to his feet. He is still clutching his side, grimacing. FIONA follows his movements with the KNIFE.

PRINCE CHARMING

I have no idea what you are talking about. Please put the knife down so I can help you.

PRINCE CHARMING's other hand slowly slips behind him as if he is trying to use the wall to balance. Instead, he pulls a GUN from the back of his waistband, tucked under his SPORTS COAT. PRINCE CHARMING aims the gun at FIONA.

PRINCE CHARMING

Step back. Don't make me use it.

A mid-shot profile view replicates the moment FIONA and PRINCE CHARMING met, except anger and fear are on their faces and a gun is pointed at FIONA. FIONA stumbles backward in surprise. She catches herself with the countertop, KNIFE in the hand that sits on the counter. PRINCE CHARMING falters while trying to keep himself standing. Noticing the weakness, FIONA escapes the room with the KNIFE and grabs the BASEBALL BAT on her way out to get away from PRINCE CHARMING and the GUN. PRINCE CHARMING notices FIONA has fled the kitchen.

PRINCE CHARMING

Shit.

PRINCE CHARMING finds the strength to get up and plan his next moves.

CUT

INT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - NIGHT

PRINCE CHARMING paces around the first floor of their home, searching for FIONA. He doesn't hear or spot her. The home is eerily quiet.

PRINCE CHARMING returns to the KITCHEN.

PRINCE CHARMING

Fiona! Fiona! Come out and talk to me!  
This is ridiculous!

PRINCE CHARMING's pleas are returned with silence. He is losing his patience. He grabs a PAN from one of the cupboards and places it on the STOVE. He fills it with COOKING OIL and turns the burner on. A fire ignites under the oil.

PRINCE CHARMING

Fiona, darling! Come on, we're married! You can talk to me. Just come out and talk to me!

Once again, PRINCE CHARMING's pleas are returned with silence. He turns towards the living room doorway and takes a step through. FIONA waits on the other side of the doorway, KNIFE and BASEBALL BAT aimed at him.

FIONA

Not another inch.

PRINCE CHARMING stays frozen in his spot, except to put his hands up in the air, as if surrendering.

The room starts to get smoky and FIONA crinkles her nose.

FIONA

(Concerned)

Did you start a fire?

PRINCE CHARMING smirks as an orange glow flickers on his face from the kitchen, his hands still in the air.

PRINCE CHARMING

You tell me, Fi!

FIONA looks back at him mortified as the glow intensifies and the smoke takes over the living room.

FIONA

What did you do?

PRINCE CHARMING lets out a brief but maniacal laugh.

PRINCE CHARMING

I told you I didn't want you taking that job. I don't want you leaving me.  
'Til death do us part, Fiona!

PRINCE CHARMING takes a step closer to FIONA, backing her closer to the corner of the room.

FIONA  
Leaving you? Taking a job doesn't mean  
I'm leaving-

PRINCE CHARMING  
(Interjecting)  
I didn't want to have to do this,  
you're making me do this.

FIONA  
(Pleading)  
I just want you to tell me the truth!

Tears well up in FIONA's eyes as her grip on the BASEBALL BAT and KNIFE quiver from the weight and her fear. PRINCE CHARMING takes another step closer to FIONA. FIONA takes another step back towards the corner.

FIONA  
(Crying)  
Please!

PRINCE CHARMING lowers his hands to his side and continues to approach FIONA calmly.

PRINCE CHARMING  
My truth? My truth Fiona is that I  
vowed to be with you 'til death do us  
part. And I plan to keep that vow.  
Even if our deaths are... premature.

FIONA  
Our?

FIONA's hands begin to tremble more. PRINCE CHARMING steps closer, the BASEBALL BAT in FIONA's hand now pressed against PRINCE CHARMING's chest.

FIONA  
You're never gonna leave me be, huh?  
You're really telling me my only  
escape from your abuse is death?

PRINCE CHARMING shrugs, continuing to approach her. The light of the flames in the other room grows larger and the crackle of the fire grows louder.

PRINCE CHARMING  
(Hysterical)  
I have never abused you, Fiona!

FIONA  
 (Whispering)  
 Lies.

PRINCE CHARMING takes one more step towards FIONA. The BASEBALL BAT slides up from his chest and is now squeezed between the two of them. FIONA loses her composure, as her breathing intensifies and some tears begin to roll down her face.

FIONA  
 (Crying)  
 Please, James! Just- just let me go!  
 You're scaring me.

FIONA uses the BASEBALL BAT to push PRINCE CHARMING away from her and tries to pull away. PRINCE CHARMING grabs at her wrist and yanks her right back into his embrace,

PRINCE CHARMING  
 (Hissing)  
 Oh, hell no, I'm not letting you  
 leave!

The light of the FIRE in the other room intensifies, the sound of the fire crackle grows even louder. As the two stand in each other's grasp, an EXPLOSION goes off in the kitchen, startling the two. PRINCE CHARMING releases his grip on FIONA and she scrambles out of his reach and down the hall.

Another explosion goes off as you see the light shoot towards FIONA running down the hallway. PRINCE CHARMING is nowhere in sight.

A final explosion goes off, the fire engulfing FIONA in it's light.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The fire's explosion blasts through the house, shattering the windows and doors. The house a total wreck as the blaze continues to eat at it.

CUT

EXT. PRINCE CHARMING'S HOUSE - DAY

A crime scene tapes off the edge of PRINCE CHARMING'S property. Several POLICE CARS are around, EMTs, and a reporter van. A reporter is framed up in a camera with a photographer behind. They stand by the edge of the road.

REPORTER

We don't have many details as authorities are investigating.

The reporter continues on as the camera tracks towards the house, passing several police.

REPORTER (V.O)

A fire has ripped through this home in Fischer's Landing. We're told the fire originated in the kitchen and rapidly spread. The body of a female, early to mid twenties was found dead. Two are believed to have lived in the home. Authorities tell us the

home is so severely damaged, it may take days to recover another victim, if there is one. Outside the home, suitcases were found under a car, leading us to believe this is the result of a lover's quarrel. We'll update you as we learn more.

The camera continues into the the house, towards FIONA's dead body in the front foyer. COP approaches and leans over FIONA.

COP gasps as he recognizes her. All but FIONA's face was burned badly as she can still be identified. A tear forms in COP's eye and his hands begin to shake, knowing he didn't save her.

COP

Hey! I know her! One of the homeless women I saved a year or so ago. Name's Fiona. Fiona McDowell. No family.

COP respectfully covers FIONA's body with a tarp and kneels in devastation.

COP

I wish I could have done more to help. You deserved so much better.

A shot of FIONA's body under the tarp fades out.

FADE

INT. VICTIMS ASSISTANCE OFFICES - DAY

COP sits in a waiting room, tapping his feet nervously on the floor. He flashes a friendly smile at the RECEPTIONIST sitting at the counter near him. The RECEPTIONIST returns the

smile.

A PHONE on the counter rings and the RECEPTIONIST picks it up.

RECEPTIONIST

Hello?

She holds the PHONE to her face for a moment then hangs up.

RECEPTIONIST

Sir? She can see you now.

COP politely nods and gets up from his chair. He walks down a hallway the RECEPTIONIST gestures towards until he hits an office door. The DOOR PLAQUE reads "Marissa Bennett, Case Worker" He gently knocks on the door.

MARISSA BENNETT

(Through door)

Come in!

A shot of COP's feet enters the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

A shot of PRINCE CHARMING's feet walks across a path.

FILM FESTIVAL CUT TO:

INT. VICTIMS ASSISTANCE OFFICES - DAY

COP sits down in a chair facing the desk MARISSA BENNETT is sitting at.

MARISSA BENNETT

Hey, Ben. What can I do you for?

COP adjusts in his seat, he is uncomfortable.

COP

Honestly, 'Rissa. I really need your guidance. You know that fire? The one that killed a young girl, probably her husband?

MARISSA BENNETT nods in acknowledgment.

MARISSA BENNETT

Yeah, what about it?

COP clears his throat and nervously adjusts in the chair again.

COP  
(Nervous)  
Well the woman, Fiona McDowell when I knew her... Uh, she was one of the girls I saved from the streets. And I think I failed her.

MARISSA BENNETT piques interest.

MARISSA BENNETT  
Oh?

COP  
Yeah, I helped get her off the streets, she had no family. Was abused and abandoned growing up. And I- I guess I'm here to make sure I give the people I help going forward better tools.

COP looks down at his hands, fidgeting in his lap.

COP  
I don't want another girl to end up abused again like she was.

LYNCHIAN  
CUT TO:  
FILM FESTIVAL

EXT. PARK - DAY

A well dressed and attractive WOMAN (20) is sitting on a park bench, with a NEWSPAPER in hand. The paper features the picture of FIONA, listing her as dead from the fire.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTIMS ASSISTANCE OFFICES - DAY

MARISSA BENNETT nods understandingly and reaches a hand out across the desk, letting it sit on the surface in a comforting manner.

MARISSA BENNETT  
Well first, we have to understand abuse breeds abuse, Ben. This Fiona, she grew up in a toxic home?

COP nods.

MARISSA BENNETT

Well when that's all you've known,  
that's what you end up drawn to. And  
any sign of affection, no matter how  
unhealthy, is something an abuse  
victim will latch onto.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Footsteps approach WOMAN (20), who is sitting on the bench. A charismatic, charmingly handsome man approaches the bench and sits down next to her.

MARISSA BENNETT

(V.O.)

The key is teaching them to recognize  
the signs and get out. Because abusers  
will always abuse. They'll always try  
to find another victim. You just...  
don't want to be it.

The man on the bench looks up into the eyes of WOMAN next to him. He puts on his best smile.

PRINCE CHARMING

Has anyone ever told you how intensely  
beautiful you look while reading?

PRINCE CHARMING looks a little different, his hair a different color and cut now. He wears large plastic framed GLASSES now. He looks unrecognizable enough. A BURN SCAR faintly noticeable on one of his cheeks, the one facing away from WOMAN,

PRINCE CHARMING flashes a smile at WOMAN. She blushes and folds the NEWSPAPER into her lap as PRINCE CHARMING sits down next to her.

PRINCE CHARMING

Hi, I'm James.

CUT