

THE TOWER OF DISSENT

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DARKNESS

The sounds of vibrant city streets at night. Cars whipping by. Ignored security alarms. A distant siren. The urban cacophony crescendoed by --

SOPHIA (O.S.)
(slight European accent)
I can't fucking believe you Alex!
What the fuck!

FADE UP

A blurry abstract image slowly racks to... perfect bright red lips... spitting fire.

INT. SOPHIA'S CAR - NIGHT

SOPHIA (30's), elegant, sophisticated, she'll eat your heart out and you'll beg for desert... fanatically drives her luxury SUV while pounding the steering wheel. Her neurosis compliments her ruffled five thousand dollar cocktail dress as she rages into the handsfree system.

*NOTE - The entire film will be one continuous take inside the car. Additional cameras, strategically rigged out-of-sight, will popup in smaller windows within the main, widescreen frame. Occasionally, a window will show what Sophia is thinking or discussing.

SOPHIA
I can't fucking believe you aren't going to be there... Again.

ALEX (O.S.)
(on phone, stern)
Settle down Sophia. You know this is important to me. You know the stakes... Or do I have to spell it out for you... Again?

SOPHIA
Don't you fucking patronize me!
Last time you said it was the last time. Too many last fucking times...

ALEX (O.S.)
(phone, zen calm)
You know there will be other birthday parties. You know this.
(MORE)

ALEX (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 But if I fail to impress the guys
 from Beijing the last year will be
 wasted. A year of my life down the
 drain. This is it Sophia. This is
 what we've been working for, for so
 long. This is my chance... I can
 almost taste it...

SOPHIA
 Alexander... I want you to listen
 to me and I want you to listen to
 me good... Are you listening?

ALEX (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Yes Sophia, I'm listening... I'm
 always listening --

SOPHIA
 But are you really listening?

ALEX (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Yes, I'm really listening --

SOPHIA
 Good. Because I'm going to say it
 this one last time... If you don't,
 if you don't get it, if you don't
 care to get it, if you try to solve
 it with a thousand fucking dollar
 FAO Schwarz Teddy fucking Bear...
 None of it fucking matters... Now
 listen real hard... If you aren't
 at Cassie's birthday party when
 you're supposed to be there we're
 leaving. That's it... You will
 never see or hear from us again.

A 75FPS POPUP FEATURES CASSIE PLAYING IN THE YARD

ALEX (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Sophia... I want you to listen to
 me and I want you to listen to me
 good... and this is for real... If
 you leave... IF YOU LEAVE... That
 is to say, if you take Cassie away
 from me in anyway whatsoever.....
 you will regret it... Forever. Do
 you understand me? Forever.

Beat

ALEX (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (phone, agitated)
 Do you understand me?

SOPHIA
 (calm like we've never
 seen her before)
 Then we'll see you in hell.

Sophia punches the END CALL button on the dash as she fights the tears. As the system ends the call her music resumes. It's horribly inappropriate pop fluff, probably Cassie's. The irony cheers her for a beat as she grabs a smoke from her LV bag riding shotgun.

She lights the smoke, inhales deeply and deliberates as the mean streets blur through the protective windows.

Sophia reaches back into her security bag and grabs a prescription bottle. She fumbles with it, eventually downing it with a gulp from a bottle.

Then she punches off the music and initiates another call.

The system snaps into shape and rings over the car speaker system.

ANNA (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Hey sis.

SOPHIA
 Thank god you answered...

ANNA (O.S.)
 (phone)
 What is it?

SOPHIA
 I can't, I'm trying... But I
 can't...

ANNA (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Let it all out baby sister...

Sophia inhales three quarters of her smoke.

SOPHIA
 Alex is not going to make it to
 Cassie's birthday party...

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
Sweetie, are you saying what I
think you are saying?

SOPHIA
I can't go on like this.

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
Are you going to leave him?

Beat

SOPHIA
You know I can't do that. He'll
take Cassie away... He actually
threatened me this time... I think
he actually threatened to kill
me... I know he's just being a
fucking writer and really he's just
a spoiled little brat but I think
he's serious. He's really gonna
leave.

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
He really threatened you?

SOPHIA
Yes he really fucking threatened
me!

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
I knew this would happen... That's
why I already made arrangements...

SOPHIA
What? You're a fucking florist now?

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
You know what I mean.

SOPHIA
I have no idea what you fucking
mean!

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
I mean, it's all set up.

SOPHIA
What's all set up?

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
You know what's all set up... Like
we were talking... The Russian
night.

Sophia stares through the windshield...

ANNA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(phone)
The COSMO NIGHT!

SOPHIA
Oh that Russian night! Shit, the
only thing I remember about that
night is that we agreed never to
discuss it.

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
You don't remember my husband's
friend Yuri? Wanna talk to Yuri?
Ringin' any bells? Talk to Yuri?

SOPHIA
Oh my god it's totally coming bak
to me! You were ringin' all kinds
of bells that night. You little
slut!

ANNA (O.S.)
(PHONE)
Fuck you! You were the one lettin'
loose that night!

SOPHIA
Fuck you slut!

A beat as the dreary returns...

SOPHIA (CONT'D)
Thanks for trying to make me feel
better, but I'm trapped. I'm really
trapped.

Sophia examines the pill bottle but can't focus on the label.

ANNA (O.S.)
(phone)
You can change everything with one
call.

(MORE)

ANNA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Why don't you see if Yuri's number
 is still in your phone. You won't
 be sorry. I gotta go. Make the
 call.

Anna clicks off.

Sophia deliberates for a beat, swigs the bottle, then
 searches her phone. Yuri. She makes the call. It rings.

YURI (O.S.)
 (phone - Heavy Russian
 accent)
 American Recycling.

SOPHIA
 Is Yuri... is Yuri there... I would
 like to talk to Yuri.

YURI (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Are you sure you want to talk to
 Yuri?

SOPHIA
 Yes, yes I'm sure.

YURI (O.S.)
 (phone)
 And what are you sure you are sure
 of?

SOPHIA
 That I want to talk to Yuri.

YURI (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Is this Sophia?

SOPHIA
 How did you... Never mind. Yes,
 this is Sophia. Do you remember me?

YURI (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Doesn't matter. You understand that
 if you talk to Yuri you can never
 not talk to Yuri?

SOPHIA
 Um, yep.

Sophia moves to disconnect when Yuri chimes back in.

YURI (O.S.)
 (phone)
 And you still want to talk to Yuri?

SOPHIA
 Am I not talking to Yuri right now?
 Hello? Yes god damn it! I want to
 talk to Yuri.

YURI (O.S.)
 (phone)
 You are now speaking with Yuri.
 Everything is setup and ready to go
 immediately. Everything will happen
 by remote control... There is no
 more Yuri anymore.

The line goes DEAD.

SOPHIA
 The fuck did I just do?

A little shell shocked, Sophia blearily examines the pill
 bottle. Lights another smoke. Washes down another pill. For
 the first time she seems calm. Serene. Resigned to fate.

Then she punches the instrument panel, dialing a number... It
 rings and rings and eventually --

ALEX (O.S.)
 (phone)
 What is it Sophia?

SOPHIA
 (drunkenly)
 Your action has set the truth in
 motion... Goodbye Alex... You'll
 never hurt us again.

ALEX (O.S.)
 (phone)
 What do you mean us? Cassie is with
 me. She chooses me.

CASSIE (O.S.)
 (phone)
 Hi Mommy!

SOPHIA
 Oh my god! Cassie baby! Cassie!..
 How did you, why are you with your
 father? Get out of the car.

(MORE)

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Get out of the car right fucking
now Cassie! Do you hear me Cassie!
Cassie!

The sound of tires squealing, metal crushing metal, windows
exploding...

SMASH TO BLACK