

THE DOMINATRIX WAS BLUE

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FADE IN:

INT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS - DAY

ELISE, an early 40's, beautiful, long-haired brunette, with luscious curves, is impatiently standing as the crowd ebbs and flows around her.

She looks at her watch, glances toward the security exit, then sighs and looks around for something to draw her focus.

Still with an angry face, she looks in anticipation toward the security exit.

Leaving is PENSELY - not his birth name - a tall, thin, flamboyant man with a shaggy mop of red hair. Pensely is the same age as Elise. His face is negligently apologetic.

ELISE

Waiting. Just waiting. Again.

PENSLEY

Sorry.

(not sorry)

I sat beside a beautiful young man and we had the most astonishing conversation.

(coy look)

I couldn't let it end with just that.

ELISE

(shaking head with resignation)

You got checkin or we good to go?

PENSELY

Packed light. Let's blow this joint.

Elise gives him a neutral glance as they walk toward the exit.

He has a big smile.

She breaks out in one of her own.

She punches him in the shoulder hard enough to hurt.

He takes a half step away and rubs it.

INT. CAB - DAY

Belted side-by-side, obviously familiar with each other, yet clearly not lovers.

PENSELY

OK, girlfriend, tell me about your new man.

ELISE

(eyes narrowing)
Who betrayed me?

PENSELY

(in an absurd fake German accent)
Ve have vays of makink people talk.

ELISE

Hmm. I haven't told very many people, and I thought they were all trustworthy.

Elise puts a hand to her chin and studies Pensely's face.

Pensely mimes zipping his lips, locking the zipper, and throwing away the key.

ELISE

I do have a basement filled with torture devices, you know.

PENSELY

It isn't torture if I like it, is it?

ELISE

(shaking her head)
I guess threatening to never use them won't work either, since we never work together professionally.

PENSELY

Nope. Besides, you lack the right equipment to satisfy my needs.

ELISE

What do you mean? I have tons of equipment!

PENSELY

Your ass ain't hairy and you have too many curves.

ELISE

Hmph.

She taps the side of her face with a finger, then leans toward him with a menacing face, and, using her best Marsellus Wallace voice and cadence,

ELISE
I'm gonna get somea my bros, and we
gonna get medieval on yo ass.

PENSELY
(clapping hands)
That's cute! How long you been
working on that?

Elise ignores him and stares up at the roof as she leans
back.

ELISE
(musing)
I could use your given name.

PENSELY
(gasping)
You wouldn't!

Elise gets an evil look on her face, then suddenly sits
up, twists toward him and points a finger.

ELISE
Mary!

Pensely's face freezes for an instant.

ELISE
Ah hah! What did you torture her
with?

PENSELY
(staring down at the
floor)
Streusel.

ELISE
You fiend! I'd say it was her
kryptonite, but she has so many.

Pensely gets a coy look on his face as he slowly looks up,

PENSELY
Raspberry streusel.

ELISE
(licking her lips)
Well, that might work on me, so I
won't hold that against her.

PENSELY
(eyeing Elise)
As amusing as this diversion has
been, I will not allow you to divert
me from my interrogation. Tell me
about your man.

Elise delays by staring out the window.

ELISE

I told you how I became a murder suspect.

Pensely nods.

EXT. ELISE' STREET - DAY

The street is lined with nice three-story brownstones. It's quiet with no through traffic. Lots of expensive cars are parked along the street.

The cab arrives at the curb.

Pensely gets out, then holds a hand for Elise.

They walk up the steps.

ELISE

Well, I got a little too bold and tried to beard the lion in its own den.

After a pause,

PENSELY

And that has what to do with him?

She enters a code to open the front door.

ELISE

He wound up saving me from certain death.

PENSELY

(raising eyebrows)

Yep, I can see that doing it. What's the story?

INT. ELISE' BROWNSTONE HALLWAY - DAY

Hallway of high-end brownstone, elegant and expensive. Antique tables and lamps line the way.

Pensely leaves his bag at the door and they walk down the hallway.

ELISE

I'm not supposed to tell anyone about this until after the trial.

PENSELY

I'm not anyone. Spill.

Elise eyes him, then shrugs.

INT. ELISE' BROWNSTONE KITCHEN - DAY

A moderately high-end kitchen that clearly gets regular use. Elise goes to the stove and puts on a kettle.

Pensely leans against the wall.

ELISE

I think I can trust you have my back.

Pensely gives her a lascivious look,

PENSELY

Baybee, I'm all over your sexy back!
More muscular than half my men.

ELISE

Yeah, right.

She opens a cupboard and takes out a box of expensive cookies.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. ELISE' BROWNSTONE HALLWAY - DAY

From behind, Elise, with a whip in her hand, is standing inside the doorway in a slinky red dress down to the middle of her thighs, a slit on one side up to the middle of her waist.

Standing outside the doorway are detectives HAPWEL (HAP) JONES, a distinguished looking fit gentleman in his late 40's and DEREK (DB) BOYDE, a late 30's ex football player.

ELISE (V.O.)

I've been bothered by cops from time to time, so came up with a strategy to put them off their game.

Elise turns and the detectives follow her down the hallway; she has a knowing smile on her face.

They appear to be mesmerized by her rear as she slowly waggles it back and forth.

About halfway down the corridor, she turns into a doorway.

INT. ELISE' BROWNSTONE OFFICE - DAY

The office looks like something Hollywood would come up with for a university professor. The walls are lined with bookshelves, all full. Many of the book titles appeared to be related to psychology, but a number are neurobiology related. The large desk has neat stacks of manila folders covering about half its surface.

Hap and DB crane their necks looking around.

Elise, in a clearly rehearsed motion, sets the whip down, puts on a long white lab coat and wraps her hair up in a bun.

She strides to the desk, quickly puts on glasses and turns to the men.

DB gawks at her while Hap has a neutral expression.

ELISE (V.O.)

I was clearly able to trip the junior detective, he could catch flies with his open mouth.

Hap gives DB a shove and they settle down.

ELISE (V.O.)

I could tell the other was at least slightly rattled, he went straight into interrogation, no warm up or anything.

A MONTAGE of Hap asking questions and Elise coolly responding.

ELISE (V.O.)

They were asking about a former client, name of Sidwell, dangerously into erotic asphyxiation. It seemed, at that time, the guy had simply gone too far and got himself killed, so I didn't think much about it. But the lead detective was cute, so when he asked for some consulting I decided to play along.

END FLASHBACK

PENSELY

Cute, eh? Got any pictures?

ELISE

(placing the cookies on a plate)

You know I don't kiss and tell.

PENSELY

Hmph. It seems rude not to share with your BFF.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. ELISE' BROWNSTONE HALLWAY - DAY

Elise, dressed in a conservative white blouse and tan slacks, opens the door and steps outside.

There's a brief instance of dismay on Hap's face.

ELISE (V.O.)

I knew instantly Hap was there for more than just information, why else would his face fall so much when he saw what I was, or rather, wasn't wearing.

PENSELY (V.O.)

At least I got a name.

ELISE (V.O.)

(snorts)

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The coffee shop is eclectic, with old, but serviceable furniture and has a collection of modern art.

Hap motions for Elise to order first, and gestures to the woman behind the counter that he'll pay.

ELISE (V.O.)

I wanted to keep him off balance, so refused to let him pay.

Hap reaches past her with cash, but Elise gently pulls his hand down and proceeds to pay herself.

Hap shrugs.

EXT. CAFE SIDEWALK - DAY

The street has tall office/condo buildings lining the street with the ground level mostly made up of small shops, cafes and restaurants. A portion of the sidewalk is cordoned off and has a number of small tables. The tables are all empty. A small amount of foot traffic passes.

Elise selects a small table off to the side.

Hap holds her chair.

He sits on the opposite side.

ELISE (V.O.)

I decided right away I was going to test his equilibrium and go on a flirt offensive. Besides, it'd been a long time and I needed the practice.

A MONTAGE of Elise reaching out to touch Hap's hand with hers and his legs with her feet.

ELISE (V.O.)

Either he was really into it or had his own ulterior motives, he flirted right back.

A MONTAGE of Hap touching back and making his own intimate gestures.

ELISE (V.O.)

I wanted to get closer, so suggested a visit to an art gallery.

INT. GALLERY - DAY

The gallery is high-end and the decor, other than the art, is subdued. A wide variety of paintings, sculpture and pictures line the walls or hang from the ceiling.

Pausing in front of a detailed painting of a landscape, Hap leans forward to look at the work.

Elise leans such that her hair brushes the side of his face.

ELISE (V.O.)

At first everything seemed to be working, he got really touchy-feely, particularly my hair.

A MONTAGE of them being very close together, touching and almost kissing.

ELISE (V.O.)

But either he was gay, had an iron will, or was working something of his own, I couldn't get him to commit.

END FLASHBACK

PENSELY

Did you ever figure which it was?

ELISE

A little of the latter two. I have convincing evidence he's not gay.

PENSELY

So sad. I'd take bi, though. That'd work for me.

Elise snorts.

ELISE

Sorry to disappoint, but he doesn't
give off bi vibes either.

PENSELY

Then what happened?

Without meeting his eyes, she takes the plate with the
cookies, places it on a tray, adds two tea cups and places
the teapot on the tray.

Pensely eyes her.

She glances at him, shrugs, then gets a tea bag and puts
it in the teapot.

Turning to look at him,

ELISE

I got arrested.

Pensely's eyes get wide.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. GABRIELLA'S CONDO HALLWAY - NIGHT

The floor is polished marble and wallpaper is a high-end
fabric. Elise, wearing a conservative blouse and skirt,
reaches out to knock on the door and it opens slightly.

The jam has been smashed and splintered.

She grasps the knob and pushes the door in.

ELISE (V.O.)

Curiosity overcame common sense.
Plus I wanted to know what happened
to Sidwell. I tracked down the dom,
Gabriella, that was working him.
When she didn't answer my calls I
decided to contact her in person.
Clearly something was wrong.

INT. GABRIELLA'S CONDO LIVING AREA - NIGHT

What was once an elegant living area is a mess. Everything
has been turned over and valuables collected in a pile in
the middle of the floor.

ELISE (V.O.)

I called out to her, but didn't get
any response, so I went in. Kind of
dumb, when I think about it.

INT. GABRIELLA'S CONDO BEDROOM - NIGHT

Inside is more elegance. A king-sized bed with a large wooden headboard and antique dressers. The place has also been tossed, with valuables piled up on the bed. There's a light in the bathroom.

Elise walks toward the bathroom.

INT. GABRIELLA'S CONDO BATHROOM - NIGHT

A nice, if snug, bathroom with bathtub. The sink has all the usual stuff expected in a woman's bathroom.

Sprawled backwards into the tub, is a twenty-something blonde woman with short hair. A towel partially knotted around her torso is dislodged. There's a bright red stain on the towel over her heart.

ELISE (V.O.)

I heard some shouting back in the living area.

INT. GABRIELLA'S CONDO LIVING AREA - NIGHT

Elise steps out of the bedroom and a UNIFORMED OFFICER points a gun at her.

ELISE (V.O.)

I started to think this was too much of a coincidence and must have been set up somehow.

The officer motions Elise to the floor and handcuffs her.

DB dashes into the room to the left, Hap to the right, guns pointing forward. Both men tip their pistols up in the air at the same moment when they see the officer and Elise.

ELISE (V.O.)

Then those detectives showed up and I got the sick feeling I was about to become a fall guy.

END FLASHBACK

PENSELY

What was it like in handcuffs?

She picks up the tray and walks past him, turning into a room.

Pensely follows.

INT. ELISE' SITTING ROOM - DAY

An intimate seating area with a loveseat, a small round table and two chairs. The decor is subtle but elegant, some reproductions of the old masters on the wall. In the corner is a majestic grandfather clock, slowly ticking away. She places the tray on the table.

Pensely pulls the chair out for her. Once she's seated he sits on the other chair.

She pours tea in both cups and picks one up.

She stares expressionlessly over her cup.

ELISE

Funny, Hap asked the same thing.

Pensely picks up and nibbles on a cookie.

PENSELY

Well?

ELISE

I tried them on during training, so I'd know how to deliver the right experience to my customers.

Pensely yawns.

PENSELY

Was he as bored with that as I am?

ELISE

(ignoring him)

I was taken down to the station and booked. An interesting experience, but one I hope to avoid in the future.

PENSELY

Get grilled in front of the one-way mirror?

Elise nods.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. PRECINCT INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Standard interview room. A bland table with a chair on the side opposite of the mirror where Elise sits and two chairs on the side with the mirror. She glances around the room.

Then studies her reflection.

Hap and DB enter.

Elise looks up expectantly.

They settle in chairs across from her and begin a MONTAGE of Q&A.

ELISE (V.O.)

Since I hadn't done anything, I knew they had no physical evidence, but I also knew I looked caught totally red handed. I violated all the law enforcement training I've been given and spoke without a lawyer in the hopes to avoid a long standoff.

PENSELY (V.O.)

Sounds dumb.

ELISE (V.O.)

Probably, but it worked out.

END FLASHBACK

PENSELY

So they didn't even hold you overnight?

ELISE

Trying to keep lawyers out of it, I'm sure.

PENSELY

When do you get to shagging the detective?

ELISE

(frowning)

Do you want to hear the story or not?

PENSELY

Hmph. Well, go on.

Elise nibbles a cookie and takes another sip of tea.

Pensely sighs and slumps back in the chair.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. LUCAS' STREET - DAY

In front of a house, in a similar neighborhood to Elise', she walks up the steps and rings a bell.

The door opens revealing LUCAS, a tall, portly man. He's very measured when he greets Elise, quickly pulling her in the house while looking up and down the street.

ELISE (V.O.)

I wanted to find out who was framing me, so started to work my contacts. I have ties in a lot of places and got some information on Sidwell and his intelligence community work.

END FLASHBACK

Pensely perks up and straightens.

ELISE

I also found out Sidwell was a druggie. Coke mostly, but had really been flashing money around lately and tried some new things. That helped explain why he was offering so much to get me to visit him the night he died.

Pensely leans forward again.

ELISE

Oh, you'll like this. Part way through my investigation Hap stopped by my house and I gave him a tour of my dungeon.

Elise's eyes go unfocused and she has a small smile.

PENSELY

Finally, the good part. Is that when you first shagged him?

ELISE

(exasperated)

The fuck is it with you and shagging?

PENSELY

I just want to know what changed my cold ice queen into someone who gets misty eyed when she thinks about some guy. Besides me, of course.

ELISE

Misty eyed, my ass.

PENSELY

Girl, you go on denying what's obvious if you like.

ELISE

(shrugging)

Well nothing happened. We flirted,
but I couldn't even get him to give
me a damn kiss. He sure looked,
though, but that was all.

Pensely has an exaggerated sad face and slumps back in his
chair again.

PENSELY

Well, get on with the story then.

ELISE

I was eventually able to work out
that a local mob group was intent on
putting all their accounts online
and had been using Sidwell to scope
out what the cops could do about it.

(pause)

I decided to approach the mob boss
directly.

PENSELY

So you're the co-ed in the horror
flick, heading down into the
basement after the lights went off.

Elise nods sheepishly.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. NUNZIO'S WAREHOUSE STREET - NIGHT

In a not-very-nice neighborhood with a number of the
several story buildings boarded up. All have at least some
graffiti. Very few people are on the street and those that
are tend to walk briskly and keep awareness of everything
around them.

It's dark and any illumination is from street lights. In
front of an old warehouse is several steps up to a door.
At the door are TWO LARGE MUSCULAR GUYS.

Elise, wearing a professional, yet still sexy, dress gets
out of a yellow cab.

One of the men comes down the stairs.

The remaining one puts his back to the door.

The one at the bottom of the stairs takes an obvious
belligerent stance, blocking her way.

ELISE (V.O.)

I started using some of the
(MORE)

ELISE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 psychological tricks I've learned
 over the years.

The man's face remains hard, but his body language softens.

ELISE (V.O.)
 He was a lot harder to manipulate
 than guys higher in the food chain.

The one at the bottom of the stairs steps to the side and she heads up.

The guard at the door opens it for her.

ELISE (V.O.)
 But I still got what I wanted.

INT. NUNZIO'S WAREHOUSE DIM HALLWAY - NIGHT

A darkened, carpeted hallway. The men are studying Elise as she walks down the hall.

When she reaches a T intersection she looks back.

One of them gestures with a nod which way to turn.

INT. NUNZIO'S OTHER HALLWAY - NIGHT

She sees two large muscular men, LUPO THE WOLF and SAM THE CIGAR, standing on either side of a door. One of them opens the door and gestures for her to go inside.

INT. NUNZIO'S WAREHOUSE ROOM - NIGHT

The room is rather dull. Some cheap prints on the wall that look like they've been there for decades. There's a couple of old sofas against a wall and a few tired chairs. Everything looks like it has a layer of dust.

Sitting at the desk is NUNZIO, a florid-faced man with wisps of light-colored curly hair on his balding head. He gestures for Elise to sit in the chair across the desk from him.

As she does so, Lupo and Sam go to stand behind her.

A MONTAGE of Elise and Nunzio discussing things.

ELISE (V.O.)
 I worked up a bit of a mad by then
 and probably wasn't on my A game
 when I started talking with him. I
 was certain I'd been set up, but it
 seems the whole thing was an
 (MORE)

ELISE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 incredible series of coincidences
 and the detectives focused on me by
 accident.

(pause)
 He even had a laugh at my expense.

PENSELY (V.O.)
 How did you not die?

ELISE (V.O.)
 Be patient.

Elise is very cool and relaxed and is clearly working
 persuasion on Nunzio.

Sam and Lupo are getting tense.

ELISE (V.O.)
 I'm not used to working persuasion
 on more than one person at a time
 and made what was nearly a fatal
 mistake.

Elise continues talking and Nunzio begins to nod.

Sam quickly steps to Elise's side and punches her in the
 side of the head.

ELISE (V.O.)
 Knocked me right out. It was weeks
 before the pain in my neck finally
 went away.

END FLASHBACK

PENSELY
 (hand to mouth)
 Obviously you didn't die, what
 happened next?

ELISE
 It took me a while to get things
 straight. Evidently Hap and DB had
 followed me in and were listening at
 the door that whole time. They
 rushed in after I was knocked down.
 Hap shot Lupo and they arrested Sam
 and Nunzio.

Pensely is shaking his head, his eyes wide and concerned.

PENSELY
 Were you in the hospital long?

ELISE

(shaking her head)

Overnight, but I should have stayed longer. Hap picked me up and took me home, then got me settled in. A real stand up guy, he stayed with me awhile.

(pause)

And before you ask, there was no shagging - I could barely move without being in agony.

PENSELY

Hmph. If he stayed he was into you, it's that simple.

ELISE

It's taken me a while to be OK with having my life saved by a man.

PENSELY

I imagine you resented that.

ELISE

I wanted to, but he was so much the gentleman I couldn't sustain it.

PENSELY

So what happened with the mob guys?

ELISE

They're to go on trial very soon. It's all preliminary motions right now and I'm not part of any of that.

PENSELY

I didn't see any cops out there. Shouldn't you have protective custody?

ELISE

I told them that was silly and a waste of tax dollars. They made me sign a bunch of documents before they'd leave me alone.

PENSELY

That sounds kind of dumb. What if this mob guy comes after you?

ELISE

This place is a fortress.

PENSELY

You don't stay here twenty-four seven, though.

ELISE
 (shrugging)
 I don't go around empty handed, you know.

Pensely studies her for a few moments.

PENSELY
 You know, things have changed over the years. Maybe I should look into things.

ELISE
 And do what? Get yourself killed?

PENSELY
 (sniffs)
 I can take care of myself.

ELISE
 Still keeping up with your martial arts, then.

PENSELY
 (nodding)
 He has no issues with how you make a living?

ELISE
 He knew all about that before we became friendly.

PENSELY
 (nodding)
 Friendly. That's an ambiguous way of putting it.

ELISE
 Yes, just friends. No amount of your gutter-infected fantasies will change that.

PENSELY
 Un hunh, right.
 (sips his own tea)
 Mary says he's hot.

Elise smiles, her eyes going unfocused,

ELISE
 Well, handsome for sure. And smart. And a great conversationalist. And with no interest in my work.

PENSLEY
 You're in love!

Her eyes snap back on the room,

ELISE

Nonsense. Besides, he's married to his work, and there's no way I'm being second to anyone or anything.

PENSLEY

(pouncing)

So, you have thought about it!

Elise briefly gets a concerned look on her face, before it smooths out,

ELISE

I'm very happy the way I am. My career and research fulfill me and nothing is lacking.

PENSELY

You might be able to fool yourself, but you can't fool me!

ELISE

(snorts)

As I've said, several times already, we're just friends.

PENSELY

Right.

(snorts)

Friends with benefits.

ELISE

And if that's the case, what's the harm?

PENSELY

No harm, no foul, just a semi-platonic, little, small, innocent kind of kiss.

ELISE

(eyes narrowing)

No kissing. No telling.

Pensely shrugs, and reaches for the last cookie.

ELISE

OK, now that that's out of the way, why are you here? We've got by with phone and email for years.

Pensely looks at her with puppy-dog eyes.

PENSELY

Because I missed your beautiful face
so much!

ELISE

Yeah, right. Spill.

A cloud goes over his face. He pauses as he studies her.

PENSELY

Since we've been out of touch the
last decade or so, I've fallen in
with, shall we say, a rather rough
crowd.

Concerned by his seriousness, she tries to make light and
responds, smiling,

ELISE

I thought you liked it rough.

Heaving a big sigh, he nods.

PENSELY

Not that kind of crowd, sadly. I've
been working with some very serious
people doing some very serious
things and right now I think I'm
seriously fucked.

ELISE

(gravely)

Is there anything I can help you
with?

PENSELY

(sighs)

No. And I'm probably endangering you
just by being here.

ELISE

I don't think so. I have some of the
best security on the planet.

PENSELY

I'm counting on that. But I can't
stay here, that'll provoke a direct
response.

ELISE

That's what the police are for.

PENSELY

Except if they control the police.

Elise studies Pensely with a serious expression.

ELISE

I'm guessing, with all your cryptic comments, that you're not going to elaborate.

He shakes his head.

ELISE

I can't believe there's nothing I can do. I have lots of contacts, not all of them, you know, on the daylight side of the law.

PENSELY

These people control both sides of the law.

Eyes wide, she stares at him with shock.

ELISE

Then you really are seriously fucked.

With a glum expression, he nods. He finishes the last of his cookie and takes a sip of tea.

PENSELY

Got any more?

ELISE

Sure. I'll be right back.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELISE' SITTING ROOM - DAY

After a few moments Elise returns with another small plate of cookies.

Pensely is smiling.

ELISE

You wanted a cookie that bad?

PENSELY

I shouldn't have worried you. I'm overreacting.

Suspicious about his rapid change in mood,

ELISE

Bullshit.

He openly meets her eyes and is his usual open, smiling self.

PENSELY

It's nothing, really. What's his ass like? You know I'm an ass man.

ELISE

How is that different from kissing and telling?

PENSELY

(pouting)

You sure know how to bring a guy down.

MONTAGE

They catch up on some of the things that have gone on since they last had the leisure to be together for a while.

END MONTAGE

As Pensely gets ready to leave,

PENSELY

You know, don't you, that I only use Pensely in a very select group of people?

ELISE

(smiling)

Right. All your men. I guess that is a select group, since you selected them.

PENSELY

(laughing)

Just my closest friends know me by that name.

His face still smiling, though his eyes stop.

PENSELY

You know if anyone asks for me by my given name, they're up to no good.

She looks at him with an expression that says she clearly caught the significance of that change.

ELISE

Right. Blow off anyone who knows you by-

PENSELY

Don't say it!

(shudders)

It hurts my ears to hear it from your lovely mouth!

ELISE
Yeah, right.

INT. ELISE' BROWNSTONE HALLWAY - DAY

They walk to the front door, arm in arm.

At the front door, he gives her a kiss on each cheek, then a long hug.

With his face buried in her hair,

PENSELY
If something happens to me, you have everything you need.

She pulls away and looks at him.

ELISE
Hunh?

He smiles and waves it off.

PENSELY
We're still on for Friday, right?

With a confused expression, she nods.

ELISE
You'll be on time, right? No making me wait?

PENSELY
You bet! With bells on!

He turns and walks down the street to the taxi that meets him.

She stares at him as he gets in and waves as he leaves.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A standard courtroom. It's cleared except for the older red-faced JUDGE, man or woman, who's glaring down at the equally red-faced DISTRICT ATTORNEY (DA), middle-aged, man or woman. Beside the DA are Hap, DB and their CAPTAIN, a late 30's woman.

Clustered to one side are several standard-issue MOB LAWYERS in extremely expensive tailored suits. They make everyone else, including the judge, look ruffled and unkempt. They have very confident, smarmy expressions.

JUDGE
You mean to tell me your entire case rested on the testimony of one guy?

DA

No, your honor, but it was the lynchpin of our prosecution. With the additional supporting testimony we already had, we didn't feel we needed anything else.

JUDGE

And now, with him dead, what?

DA

There's no way that man killed himself!

JUDGE

That's totally irrelevant to this case.

The DA takes a deep breath.

DA

We'd like to ask for a six month continuance.

One of the smarmy lawyers leans in,

LAWYER

(quietly)

We object, your honor.

The judge glares at him and waves him back.

The lawyer smirks at the DA as he straightens.

JUDGE

There's no way I'm going to allow that. I'm not even sure twenty-four hours is acceptable. We've already seated a sequestered jury!

The DA looks down in consternation.

Sighing in frustration, the judge leans back.

JUDGE

OK, spill. What else have you got?

Glancing at the other lawyers,

DA

These detectives,
(pointing at Hap and DB)
heard the defendant's discussion where he as much as admitted he'd arranged the deaths of Sidwell, the cabbie and Gabriella.

The smarmy lawyer opens his mouth and takes a breath to object.

The judge glares at him.

The lawyer relaxes and smiles.

JUDGE

I've read those transcripts and there's no admission of guilt. Anything else?

Red faced,

DA

We have the assault on Davenport, along with the threat to her life.

When the judge's face relaxes a little,

LAWYER

Your honor, that so-called evidence is tainted and we object to it being used in court.

The judge raises his eyebrows.

JUDGE

What's this?

The DA clears his throat, looking down, then sideways at Hap.

DA

It's true that there was no search warrant issued when the detectives entered the defendant's facility, but there were extenuating circumstances.

JUDGE

Hmph. Let's hear it.

DA

The detectives were observing the defendant's facility when they saw Davenport enter. They felt that was probable cause for entering and searching.

The judge doesn't even look over at the smarmy lawyer, just holds his hand up.

JUDGE

So, Davenport, who had earlier been completely cleared as a suspect, was
(MORE)

JUDGE (CONT'D)
suddenly enough to warrant violating
the defendant's constitutional
rights?

Red faced again,

DA
(stammering)
Y-yes.

The judge leans back,

JUDGE
I don't say this to the state very
often, but you're full of shit.

The judge glances over at the smarmy lawyers, then back to
the DA.

JUDGE
You give me no choice at all.

He reaches for his gavel.

JUDGE
This case is dismissed. With
prejudice.

He hammers the gavel.

The DA glares at Hap, DB and their Captain. Without
looking at the smarmy lawyers, he stalks out of the
courtroom.

The judge leaves the room, also in a huff.

The smarmy lawyers congratulate each other.

The Captain looks around with a neutral expression, then
at Hap and DB, sighs, then shakes her head.

INT. PRECINCT CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

A typical office with a large desk and several chairs in
front of it. The upper half of the walls to the precinct
open area are glass with blinds pulled up. To the side is
a small table with a couple of other chairs. The desk is
covered with neat stacks of folders.

In the Captain's office, Hap and DB are seated across the
desk from the Captain, who's also in her seat.

CAPTAIN

Well, the pooch is thoroughly
screwed this time, gentlemen.

(shakes head)

I totally agree there's no way that
guy killed himself, but, just the
same, I can't fault the judge.

DB looks back and forth between Hap and the Captain.

DB

Was the judge bought off?

The Captain looks at Hap, who shrugs.

HAP

Even if he was, it wouldn't matter.
Everything depended on that goon
showing up to court to spill his
guts.

(looking sharply at the
Captain)

We need to find out who's been
bought in our jail.

The Captain meets Hap's eyes,

CAPTAIN

I'm working on that, but don't think
it will change anything, even in the
unlikely event we can tie it back to
Nunzio.

Hap shrugs and nods, dispiritedly.

There's a long awkward silence. Hap breaks it,

HAP

Just drop the shoe...

DB's confused, looking back and forth between Hap and the
Captain.

CAPTAIN

I've been able to limit the damage,
but that's the best I've been able
to do.

DB

What damage?

Hap, with wan smile, to DB,

HAP

Just like anywhere else, fella, with
a fuckup like this somebody gotta
pay.

CAPTAIN
Assuming you take complete
responsibility, I've protected DB.

Hap, consternation on his face,

HAP
Well, of course. Was there any
question?

CAPTAIN
(calming)
Not by me, Hap.

DB
I don't need any damn protection!

CAPTAIN
(snapping)
Don't be naive. Hap's taking a
bullet for your career. The least
you can do is be thankful.

Chastened, DB starts to flush,

DB
(mumbling)
I didn't ask him to do that.

Hap reaches out to pat DB on his shoulder,

HAP
No worries, mate.

Looking at the Captain,

HAP
So, what's the damage this time?

CAPTAIN
I was able to hold it down to
thirty.

HAP
(shrugging)
Better than I expected. When?

DB
Wait. Thirty what?

The Captain looks at DB,

CAPTAIN
Thirty day suspension, without pay.

DB's eyes open wide and his mouth makes an 'Oh' shape.

The Captain looks back to Hap,

CAPTAIN
Starting immediately.

Hap stands up, takes out his gun and badge and puts it on the Captain's desk.

As Hap turns to walk out, DB gets up to follow.

CAPTAIN
You stay here. We have things to discuss.

FADE OUT.

The End.