



Flip the Script

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ABSTRACT

The following project illustrates how one storytelling medium can be altered to tell a story using a different medium. The project consists of three parts. The first part is a fictional short story. The second part is a screenplay that was further developed from the short story. The final part is a reflection on storytelling as well as my creative process while crafting these two fictional pieces. While exercising both narrative and screen writing, this project demonstrates what techniques a short story and a screenplay share and how those techniques may be used to transform the short story into the screenplay. After developing the short story, I examined how the story and writing style changed as I moved to the next medium.

Within my own world of multimedia and storytelling, I have learned that some tools are often expected while others need to be re-imagined. Therefore, during my creative process, each of these tools, methods and mediums have taught me that there is no one way to tell a story and many components of crafting the story can be shared as well as transformed. While working on diverse range of projects, I have learned how language is used differently, discovered things about characters and continue to notice how the creative process adjusts along the way.

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CHARACTER INTRODUCTION

“CLOCKWORK”
JODY GRAY

Life is simple. For most of us, we try to be healthy, maintain a social life and work hard enough to enjoy the perks. And if you're lucky enough you just might fall in love with someone who loves your ass back. Simple, right? Not even the slightest bit.

From the moment we are born, we evolve and our bodies adjust accordingly. We grow and develop as physical beings, mostly made of meat, bones and water. But, what about our minds? Our vulnerabilities? They hold us captive, capable of dreams and thoughts far beyond this world.

We put so much emphasis on maintaining clean and healthy bodies to live longer. That's because our bodies can fight and handle practically anything. But, it's the mind that we often lose to. We must reassure ourselves that we have all the answers, convincing our mind of its consciousness when really, we all don't know what the hell we are doing here and how long we've got.

Is education mental food? Perhaps. But how do you differentiate the good food from the bad food and what really is a healthy mind? Well, if you were to ask me, arguably one of the most deranged women on this planet, I'd say we're all just living and waiting for our expiration dates. Tangled in our own hopes and desires.

Even the times when I am most silent, I find that my mind runs endlessly. I think up things I may never speak of. I create all types of possibilities and false illusions of what my life

should be but rarely move mountains to make it happen. Recently, I have started to observe everything and everyone around me. They are all enchanted by my charm.

The mind is such a beautiful place. Yet it takes a simple thing to trap me completely. One bad thought to damage a series of good thoughts. It can drive my creativity as well as drive me insane. I lose myself in it.

My own mind has convinced me that I am a monster. But to those around me, I'm just Jody. Now I've got about three weeks to convince the jury and these doctors that I don't belong in jail. I've murdered several people. True. But if solitary doesn't kill me, my mind certainly will.

jgray

“CLOCKWORK”
PART I:
**THE SHORT
STORY**

I can't believe I got away with it.

I know you're probably wondering how an average, somewhat law-abiding high school graduate ended up a murderer. Hell, me too. But what I'm trying to figure out even more is why I like it. I wouldn't exactly call myself normal but I've never displayed the typical characteristics of your everyday serial killer. Sure, I can be a little anti-social at times but I'm no Ted Bundy.

I guess my biggest fault is that I wear my heart on my sleeve and my emotions do get the best of me. I always kept my guard up and planned to keep it that way until I met him. I saw something different in him. I loved him. I loved him more than I have ever loved anything. You would think that if you give your all to a person they'd return the favor-- at least love you back.

I knew he loved me. He just had a different way of showing it. And I'd take some getting used to. It was almost as if we were two people destined to be together but the timing was off. Perhaps we were meant to be together at a later time or in a later life but I didn't have time and I didn't want to wait. So I needed a plan to make him mine.

I see David everyday on the New York City subway. He rides the crowded A-train to Manhattan and gets off at Columbus Circle. I loved the way his face tensed up when the train was delayed or the way he pulled his beard hairs when he was nervous. I memorized his schedule hoping to one day strike up a decent conversation, thought that maybe David would recognize a familiar face and want to chat about the weather, politics, or baby names. Small talk.

Every day I thought of the things I could say to him but my lips would never budge. I mean, how could I express my love for him on a crowded platform without everyone thinking I was mental? And he didn't exactly make it easy for me either. He was always in a rush and checking the time. I was almost invisible, invisible enough to be the vulture waiting for his moment of weakness.

I knew he was always trapped in his own mind just as I was. He was probably thinking about that deadline or impressing the new client. He didn't have time to notice that his whole future was standing right across from him.

Well, just imagine his confusion when he caught me watching him sleep after sneaking into his apartment.

"Hi...wait, please don't call the cops."

Even though I, myself, am a vulture, the real animals are all around me. The kind of animals that give me false hope and false love. Animals that don't understand that no means no and not maybe.

I crave love. I deserve it. But I always found myself loving the wrong people and each of them have failed me differently. We often define love by our own experiences. My definition of love derived from a father that left too soon and a step-father I wished had left a bit sooner. Every other night I watched him put his hands on my mother until he became my first kill. The 70-foot fall surely brought him to his senses. My mother hated me after that. But the truth was that she hated being alone more than she hated being abused. I could never understand it. At least we both got a chunk of his life insurance plan and went our separate ways.

I was desperate to take control of my life and the people I let into it. Taking control meant doing anything necessary to get what I wanted. Anything.

It was almost as if I was living in a parallel universe, one where who I was and who I wanted to be seemed to coexist but never intersected. My two worlds were equal parts of me but never made sense to anyone other than myself. Jody the sweetheart or Jody the murderer?

Well, I didn't kill David, if that's what you're thinking. David was in fact the first time I had ever loved anyone more than my pet iguana. This says a lot because I like animals more than I like people. But I find that, like animals, people are easy to control or manipulate. Give them something they want and you've got them. I needed to get David.

It was almost 1:30 p.m. and I was still waiting for him to show. It's unlike him to be late or miss lunch time. He could have been stuck in a meeting or making a quick bathroom run, who knows. But it's rare. See, he's the kind of man that runs on schedule. He always caught the 8:32 train in the morning, picked up his lunch around 1:15 and clocked out at around 6:30. But today felt different. Today felt unplanned. I couldn't help but think that something was wrong and of course I decided it was time to investigate.

Without much time to plan or think, I walked over to the front entrance of David's office building and hugged one of the men walking out. Startled, this man had no idea who I was and left enough time in between his confusion and checking out my ass, without noticing I grabbed the key card clipped to his pants buckle. Completely satisfied and untraced, I buzzed in through the turnstiles and headed straight for the elevator. I gave a quick "hello" to the two guards who were too busy gossiping than to notice I didn't match the scanned image on the monitor.

Luckily, the elevator was already open and waiting for me as I quickly pressed floor 18. That was David's floor. I knew because I overheard a delivery man one day bringing catered food for his clients. Just as the elevator door began to close, I noticed a woman sprinting and yelling for me to hold the door.

With no patience or time to spare, I immediately reached for the “door close” button and pretended not to see or hear anything. But in a matter of milliseconds I was alarmed by a size seven red pump caught in between the doors, forcing them to open. In came the young woman, out of breath and with a riled look on her face. I wasn’t distracted. I pressed for the doors to close a second time. The woman was too busy being angry with me than to notice she forgot to press what floor she was heading to. But that was none of my business. I just knew this was going to be one awkward ride.

We started to go express until suddenly the elevator began to slow down, as we approached the ninth floor. Fuck.

The doors opened and a crowd of people swarmed in to fill every open inch of space. The small space immediately filled with aromas of mixed lunches and afternoon arm pits. And with the assumption that they all weren’t getting off at my floor, I was then stuck with Cruella and all her Dalmatians.

I’m never gonna make it, I thought to myself.

What if he already made it downstairs for lunch? All of this would have been for nothing. Looking at the time on my watch that now read 1:42, I knew I might have screwed up but came too far to turn back now.

By this point you’re probably thinking what’s this girl’s issue? Does she have nothing better to do? Shouldn’t she be at work? Well, that’s beside the point and a story for a later time. So, back to this one.

The crowd dispersed one by one until it was once again me and Cruella. By the time we reached the fourteenth floor I noticed her straightening herself up a bit. To my surprise, she headed out the door first as we reached the eighteenth. She moved straight toward the front desk

as I kept my distance a few steps behind her. I sat down and pretended to look for something inside of my purse. I listened closely and overheard her chatting with the receptionist.

“Good afternoon, I’m here to see David,” she said.

What! David?! No, not my David. David is a common name. There are a million “Davids” in the world and probably a few here in this office. Cruella then headed toward a restroom nearby as I awkwardly made eye contact with the receptionist.

“Excuse me ma’am, can I help you with something?”

“Oh, no honey, I’m just waiting for a colleague. She should be out any minute. She told me to wait on her floor.”

“No problem. You sure you don’t want me to call and let her know you arrived?”

“No! No, that won’t be necessary, we just texted and she said she’ll be out in a few minutes.

Thank you though. What’s your name by the way?”

“It’s Cathy.”

“Cathy, what a lovely name. You are doing a great job, I’ll be sure to let your manager know how helpful you were.”

Before Cathy could then ask me another annoying ass question, a delivery guy appeared from around the corner, pushing a cart full of packages. Cathy began to chat with him and sort through the boxes as Cruella returned from the bathroom with freshly done lipstick. Just as she was about to take a seat across from me, I heard a familiar voice call out from the end of the hall.

“Jen. Baby. I’m sorry to keep you waiting, come on back.”

Anxious to see, I poked my head slightly around the corner just enough to catch a glimpse of a fine, chocolate, tall, bearded man, wearing a grey suit. I began to sink in my seat. It

was most certainly my David. How were we supposed to be together when he was so distracted by other women!

As I filled with anger I gathered my things and headed for the restroom. All of this frustration had my bladder going. See, a part of me wanted to grab little miss Jen by the hair but not just yet. Not like this. I had a better idea. Adjacent to the wall was a fire alarm. And you guessed it. Drill time. I put my head down and quickly pulled the alarm. As I waited for the employees to rush out I hid in the bathroom. I didn't have much time before the fire department would arrive. I had to act fast. I waited until the coast was clear and snuck into David's office. It smelled just like him. Fresh lavender and bergamot.

I needed to grab something of his. Something valuable that I could use later. I started to look around a bit until I noticed a set of keys on the table. Bingo. I grabbed the keys and sprinted out to a nearby stairwell. Eighteen floors were going to be a long way down but I got what I needed. I wasn't going to do this tonight though. It would be too soon. I would make my move in about a week.

On that special day, I snuck right into David's apartment. Maybe I took it a little too far but watching him sleep was so beautiful. I love it when men sleep because it's the only time they aren't doing dumb shit. And how could I not love a man after I sneak into his apartment and he doesn't strangle me to death? Well, he certainly did strangle me but in a good way.

I finally got him to notice me that night and many nights after. We ended up dating for seven months until the bastard decided I wasn't enough. He cheated and I got even. The funny thing is, as much as I loved David, I loved to see him in excruciating pain. Watching his flesh burn and peel, I felt this overwhelming sensation of something I haven't felt since I pushed my stepdad out the window. Not happiness, but satisfaction.

I wasn't stupid. I knew I had to skip town and get a fresh sense of "satisfaction" somewhere else. Or a fresh start just in case David decided to press charges.

So, now you're probably wondering about the juicy details like how I got caught or how I got into this mental institution in the first place. I didn't kill David but he was a trigger. The first of many triggers to come. He triggered something much deeper within myself that I could no longer control despite my desperation to have control. But I couldn't take control being stuck inside this place. I was drugged up and slowed down.

I didn't understand why I was in here in the first place. I was doing the world a favor and eliminating the waste. If I'm guilty of anything I guess it's loving a little too hard.

It's funny how you live your life invested in someone you think would never hurt you. But, there's no manual to this. They don't teach you "love" in school. All I have learned is that love will either bring out the best or worst in you. Maybe a little of both.

I think the worst feeling of them all must be loving someone who doesn't love you back, or at least not in the way you want them to. Like my mother, I don't really like being alone. When I'm alone I think too much, too freely. I began to stare at the broken clock on the wall wishing it could really stop time. Before I knew it, the meds kicked in and I was out again.

"CLOCKWORK"
PART II:
THE SCREENPLAY

EXTERNAL. WAKE FALLS - DAY

Clouds scatter across miles over miles of green forests in the old secluded town in New Hampshire.

We center on a mid-century stone building, a figure appears in the window -- JODY, 24, stands in her gown, a dead look in her eyes as she stares into the distance.

INTERNAL. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - COMMON AREA - DAY

Calming elevator music plays on the speakers. The Price Is Right plays on a beat up old TV set. MENTALLY ILL PATIENTS (ages 24-80) sit idly in their proper places.

Jody, probably the youngest in this facility, is slouched on the couch, barely conscious.

An OLD NURSE places a tray on the table before her, a little plastic cup with four pills inside and a side of water.

The nurse taps Jody on the shoulder. Jody stirs.

JODY

What?

NURSE

You know what time it is, Jody.

JODY

(groggy)

Time to kick some ass?

NURSE

Four o'clock. Time to take your medication, honey.

Jody looks at the tiny cup of pills in annoyance.

JODY

You know this is for crazy people, right? I'm not crazy.

NURSE

You need to take your meds, we won't have another incident like last

week.

Jody gives the nurse the stink eye. She snatches the medication and downs it.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Good girl. Now let me see.

Jody snorts, then sticks her tongue out revealing a disgusting yellow spit loogie.

The Nurse winces then scurries off as Jody snickers, she leans back in her seat then fades into a deep sleep.

INT. NEW YORK SUBWAY STATION - DAY

The hustle and bustle of NEW YORK CITIZENS roaming in and out of the subway station. Jody walks down the stairs onto a crowded platform.

JODY (V.O.)

For the longest time, I tried to convince myself that it was fine to open up.

A train SCREECHES to a stop as a horde of PASSENGERS flood in and out of the automatic doors.

JODY (V.O.)

I knew he loved me... he just had a different way of showing it.

Jody moves through the crowd, yards away from her train.

She bumps shoulders into a HIP HOPPER as she barely makes it in the subway car before the doors shut.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - MOVING

Jody enters the car as the train shuts and beeps. She looks about the crowded car; her eyes wander as if she's looking for something or someone.

Seated along the side, DAVID, 27, in a grey suit, clean cut and professional.

JODY (V.O.)

First time I saw him was right here on this subway. That was two years ago.

Jody spots him, can't help but smirk. She tries to blend into the crowd, she steadily tries to move closer to him.

JODY (V.O.)

I remember he smelled like fresh lavender and bergamot, that's right, I got close enough to smell him. Not weird at all.

Jody studies him as she moves closer.

JODY (V.O.)

I memorized his schedule. Tuesdays he takes the 3:45 train to Queens. Wednesdays he goes to the gym at six. Saturday morning he and his buddies bike at Central Park.

David checks his phone, then picks up his briefcase, puts it on his lap.

JODY (V.O.)

I was hoping one day he would recognize a familiar face and strike up a decent conversation. Maybe we'd get that "love at first sight" type of feeling that Mariah Carey always sings about.

David continues checking his phone, in his own world. Jody grabs the train handle, drawing closer. She fixes her mouth to say something but she can't.

The train SLOWS to a stop. David rises from his seat.

JODY (V.O.)

Every time, he always slips away.

The doors POP open as David and a slew of passengers exit.

JODY (V.O.)

But I was determined.

Jody watches him longingly, sad and frustrated.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

David lies fast asleep in his queen-sized bed. He turns over on the other side where we see Jody, standing by the opened window.

JODY (V.O.)

Maybe I took it a little too far.

Jody nears David slowly as he sleeps, tries not to make a sound as she moves toward him.

JODY (V.O.)

He was so beautiful. I only wanted to smell him one more time.

Jody bumps into the dresser, the lamp falls over.

JODY

Shit!

David awakens, shocked to see the strange woman in his room.

DAVID

What the hell?!

JODY

Hi, wait! Please don't freak out.

David quickly gets up, switches the lights on.

DAVID

Who the hell are you? What are you doing in my apartment?!

JODY

I'm sorry, I just--

DAVID

Fucking crazy--

Jody points a finger at him.

JODY

Hey, do not call me crazy. I'm not crazy. Just hear me out, please.

David continues panting and begins to look for his phone as Jody sits on the bed.

JODY (CONT'D)

It's just I... I see you all the time on the subway. For some reason I could never work up enough courage to... you know, talk to you.

DAVID

So you break into my fucking

apartment? That's quite a leap.

JODY

I wasn't trying to wake you.

DAVID

Oh, my bad, break into my apartment to watch me sleep. That makes me feel a lot better. If I knew where my phone was I'd call the cops. Or did you already steal that?

Jody takes the phone out of her bra and tosses it to David.

JODY

Okay I'm sorry. I just wanted... you don't know what it's like to completely feel invisible to a man like you. And I don't know... maybe I did want you to see me.

David thinks on this. He takes a long look at Jody, she is kind of cute. He sighs and takes a seat on the bed next to her. Jody looks away, embarrassed.

JODY (CONT'D)

I promise I have never done anything like this before. Although this is a bit much now that I think about it.

David puts his arm around her.

DAVID

Hey. You're wrong. You're not invisible.

Jody looks into David's eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I have noticed you at the subway plenty of times. The cute-curly headed girl with the tattoos.

Jody smiles and bats her eyelashes.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Hell I travel the city so much, the only time I know I'm on the right train is if you're around.

David smiles, he raises his hand to her cheek, he caresses it. He touches her hair and twirls a curl around his finger.

DAVID (CONT'D)
What's your name anyway?

JODY
Jody Gray.

DAVID
David.

JODY
(chuckles)
David Lancaster. I've read your mail.

David and Jody nervously laugh together. She leans in for a kiss, David obliges.

JODY (V.O.)
Well that was a bit easier than I thought. I figured he would at least be creeped out or something. Men amaze me.

They continue to make out as they fade into the bed.

JODY (V.O.)
As much as I hate to admit, I was most definitely the aggressor that night. And you'd think David would have at least had some reservations about me and breaking in, but nope. All it took was a little sympathy and TLC. Things went pretty fast afterwards.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

MONTAGE

Jody and David lay in bed together, holding hands and staring into each other's eyes.

JODY (V.O.)
The first couple of months were amazing.

In the living room -- David watches TV on the couch, Jody arrives in her underwear with a bowl of popcorn, she lays on his lap as they get comfortable. She puts popcorn in his mouth.

JODY (V.O.)
We were inseparable. A dream come
true.

In the bathroom, Jody brushes her teeth in the mirror, David comes up behind her and kisses her neck. She giggles.

JODY (V.O.)
We were like a young fifties couple.

Water boils on the stove. David arrives home in his suit, carrying his briefcase. Jody serves David a plate of spaghetti. She kisses him on the cheek.

JODY (V.O.)
What could have possibly gone wrong?

Jody and David finish having sex. Jody lays there, visibly unsatisfied. She reaches for David as he gets up from the bed.

JODY (V.O.)
A couple more months went by...

In the living room, Jody sits on the couch, eating popcorn. David walks by, not paying her any attention.

JODY (V.O.)
Things changed. He wasn't as...
passionate and my cuteness only
seemed to annoy him now.

In the bathroom, David brushes his teeth in the mirror, spits. Jody walks in and tries to kiss him on the neck. David ignores her and walks out of the bathroom.

JODY (V.O.)
It's like... we were completely
off of our high.

END MONTAGE

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

In the kitchen, spaghetti noodles boil on the stove. Jody takes the noodles and pours them into the strainer.

She places spaghetti sauce on a plate of noodles, then looks up at the front door, expecting David to walk through any minute. He doesn't.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jody watches TV on the couch, a plate of half empty spaghetti rests on the coffee table.

David comes through the front door, tired.

JODY

Hey babe, you're home late again.

DAVID

Yeah.

JODY

I left you some dinner in the pot.
You should put it in the microwave
for a little while.

David drops the keys on the counter. He loosens his tie, Jody senses he's annoyed.

JODY (CONT'D)

Something wrong?

DAVID

Nothing. It's just... Can you make
something other than pasta?

JODY

I thought you liked spaghetti.

DAVID

Yeah. But it's the only thing you
fucking make, Jody.

JODY

Well, what do you want to eat then?

DAVID

I don't know. Something. Anything
else. Be creative, watch a... YouTube
tutorial or something.

David walks off into the other room.

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You're in the damn apartment all day...

Jody stares off into the void, sunken.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM

David and Jody brush their teeth. Jody looks closely at David as he brushes. She spits.

JODY
Hey, babe.

DAVID
(mid brush)
Hmmm?

JODY
Is that the second tooth brush you bought?

David spits.

DAVID
What?

JODY
Your toothbrush. You changed it again. First it was blue, then red with a white stripe and now two days later, it's yellow.

DAVID
Yeah, the other one fell on the floor. So, I bought a new one. By the way, I'm gonna be working late again tomorrow night.

David raises an eyebrow, then continues brushing.

Jody continues watching David as he finishes.

JODY (V.O.)
Was I paranoid? Yes.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY

In the morning, Jody watches David as he fixes his tie in the mirror.

JODY (V.O.)
But was I stupid...?

David exits out the door.

Jody digs into the dresser. She finds some sunglasses.

JODY (V.O.)
I'd like to think not.

Jody looks into the mirror, grabs a black hoodie out of her closet and puts it on.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

David sits in the subway car, he texts on his phone. He minds his business.

On the other side, a hooded figure in sunglasses watches him from afar. It's Jody in disguise.

JODY (V.O.)
Don't judge me, okay?

She focuses on David's fingers as he taps on his iPhone screen.

The subway car comes to a stop. PASSENGERS move toward the exit as the automatic doors open up.

David exits along with the crowd. Jody follows.

INT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT

David, eyes on his phone, stops walking once he reaches a brownstone apartment. He waits.

About fifty yards behind him, Jody in her disguise rests behind a tree and observes David. She sees a YOUNG WOMAN open the front door. The woman kisses David and lets him in.

Jody takes off her sunglasses, revealing her angry eyes.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jody's hand turns the knob on the stove, click click click, the flames engulf the pot of water.

Jody, eyes watery and red, sniffs and maintains her composure as she pours tomato sauce into a smaller pot.

Jody gazes at the pot of water with a bitter and riled look on her face. The water slowly begins to bubble and boil.

She dumps the noodles into the water.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - LATE NIGHT

David emerges from the elevator. He takes out the keys as he approaches apartment 4C.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

As David enters the apartment SPLASH! He's hit with boiling water and noodles. David SCREAMS as he convulses and falls onto the floor with his skin burning.

Jody watches as David continues to scream on the floor.

JODY

You like that! It's spaghetti! Your favorite.

DAVID

Ahhhhhhh! My face!

JODY

Does the other woman cook spaghetti?!

Jody throws the empty pot at David's head.

JODY (CONT'D)

Huh? I bet it's not as good as mine!

DAVID

WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?! CRAZY BITCH!!!

JODY

I'M NOT CRAZY!!!

Jody bursts into tears.

JODY (CONT'D)

How could you do this to me, David? I loved you!

David continues rolling around on the floor in pain. SCREAMING.

JODY (V.O.)

The funny thing is, as much as I loved David, with all my heart, a part of me loved to see him in excruciating pain that night. Watching his flesh burn and peel, I felt this overwhelming sensation of

something I haven't felt in a long
time... not happiness, but
satisfaction

Jody steps over David and exits.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jody makes her way down the hall toward the elevator. We hear David SCREAMING from inside his apartment.

JODY (V.O.)
David wasn't the only man to do me
dirty. And I knew he wasn't going to
be the last.

Jody steps into the elevator, as the door closes, the corners of her mouth contort into a smile.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

David lies in the hospital bed, face and body wrapped in bandages. A NURSE enters with a plate of food.

JODY (V.O.)
David got off lucky. He only
suffered minor first degree burns.

David looks down at his food... it's spaghetti.

JODY (V.O.)
That bastard.

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - DAY

Jody makes her way down the street.

JODY (V.O.)
I never heard from David again. But

I needed a fresh start. I decided to
do a full 180.

INT. GYM - MORNING

Jody jogs on the treadmill, sweating.

JODY (V.O.)

I stopped feeling sorry for myself...joined a gym. Got in shape...moved out of state, you know, just in case David decided to press charges. But I made sure he kept his mouth shut or else his job would know exactly where the extra budget money was going.

INT. CLASSROOM AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A large auditorium where the UNIVERSITY STUDENTS sit in attendance. Jody sits in the front, rigorously taking notes.

JODY (V.O.)

I even enrolled in a Women's Studies course at a community college, just for fun.

Jody RAISES her hand, eagerly.

INT. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY - NIGHT

In between towering book cases, Jody lays on the floor, reading *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*.

JODY (V.O.)

I even read at the bigger university. You know the library at community college is a joke.

Beside her are a stack of revenge books; *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *True Grit*, *Hamlet*, *Gone Girl*.

INTERCOM

Attention. The library will be closing in twenty minutes.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - LIBRARY - NIGHTS

Neatly trimmed lawns. STUDENTS (18-24) roam the campus. Jody makes her way down the grand steps.

She spots a trio of COLLEGE BASKETBALL PLAYERS in black sweat suits hanging out.

The tallest one, CHRIS, 20, approaches Jody.

CHRIS

Hey...

JODY (V.O.)

He was cute, but... I didn't want to waste my time after David.

Jody blows past him.

CHRIS

Hey, come here.

Chris pulls Jody by the arm.

JODY

(with attitude)

Yes!

Chris hands her a flyer.

CHRIS

Come watch us ball out. Our last playoff game is tomorrow, bring that flyer and you get a free t-shirt with your entry, just bring your student ID and you all set.

JODY

I'm sorry, I don't even go here.

Jody begins to walk away.

CHRIS

Hey wait.

Chris pulls her back.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I'll save you a ticket. Come on, I play better with a beautiful girl in the crowd. And if we win we head to the championship.

Jody smiles.

JODY (V.O.)

Hell, he was cute... goofy, but cute. His height definitely helped. And you know what they say about big feet.

Chris winks and smiles back.

JODY (V.O.)

But if I was going to do this, it

would be on my terms.

Jody grabs Chris by the shirt, looks up at him.

JODY

Okay, you're going to save me a ticket
and I'm going to that game tomorrow.
If you drop over twenty points... I
will blow your brains out after the
game. You understand?

Chris nods, awestruck.

JODY (CONT'D)

Good luck.

Jody smiles and walks off.

JODY (V.O.)

What can I say... it's about time I
took control, and I liked it.

Chris stands there, his mouth agape.

INT. BASKETBALL GYMNAISUM - NIGHT

A rowdy crowd of FANS cheer and rave.

On the court, Chris shoots the ball over a DEFENDER. SCORES!

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Chriiiiiis Claburn!

Chris pumps his fist as he and his TEAMMATES run back down
the court on defense.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Eighteen points! His season high!

CHEERLEADERS jump and chant.

Jody watches the crowd, munching on a hotdog.

On the court, Chris STEALS the ball from the opposing player.

The Crowd CHEERS.

Chris dribbles straight to the hoop, he LEAPS in the air,
SLAM DUNK!

Jody smiles.

Chris back pedals on defense, he makes eye contact with Jody in the stands. She waves.

INT. COLLEGE DORM - NIGHT

Jody and Chris hump like wild animals under the covers. Chris stops and catches his breath.

CHRIS
Wait.... What's your name?

JODY
Do you really care?

Chris pauses, then nods.

JODY (CONT'D)
It's Jody.

Chris continues, Jody moans.

INT. COLLEGE DORM - MORNING

Jody scans through a MATH textbook on the bed. Chris lays on her belly, he plays NBA 2K17 on his small flat screen.

JODY
Can I have these books when you're done?

CHRIS
Take them. I don't read em anyway.

JODY
Why not?

CHRIS
Shit. Full ride means full ride. I haven't done homework all semester.

Jody drops the textbook on the floor.

JODY
So spoiled.

Jody looks on the floor, she sees a packet of papers. She grabs them and flips through them. On them are a variety of *basketball plays*.

JODY (CONT'D)
Didn't know basketball players
studied plays.

CHRIS
Coach makes us, wants us to be
"students of the game."

Jody looks through the papers.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Most of those plays are new, coach
wants to keep em on their toes
tomorrow night.

Jody puts the papers down. Chris checks his phone.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Shit. We got weights...

Chris pops out of bed.

JODY
I'll be here when you get back. Maybe
I'll even help you with the dishes.

CHRIS
Awww, good luck. Dirty plates have
been in there since orientation.

Chris kisses Jody and he darts out the door.

JODY (V.O.)
I thought this could be fun... No
labels, no strings attached. Just
fun.

Jody looks around the room, she spots an open MacBook on the
counter facing her, keys and an ID card beside it.

JODY
What a dummy.

Jody grabs the keys and ID.

INT. BASKETBALL GYMNAISUM - HALLWAY - DAY

Jody makes her way down the hall. She approaches the Men's
Basketball Locker Room. Knocks on the door.

JODY

Hey Chris... Someone, open up.

Jody puts her ear to the door, she hears music and familiar moaning followed by LAUGHS and GIGGLES.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Wait... what's your name?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Do you really care?

Jody recognizes that voice.... hers.

INT. MEN'S BASKETBALL LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Several TEAMMATES watch on Chris's iPhone: *webcam footage of him and Jody having sex.*

TEAMMATE

You the man!

Chris smiles and the other players egg him on.

INT. BASKETBALL GYMNAISUM - HALLWAY - DAY

Jody leans against the door, blank stare on her face, deflated.

JODY (V.O.)

Was I embarrassed? Yes. Surprised? Of course not. But I wasn't going to physically hurt him, that was too risky. I just had a good idea to kill that ego.

INT. BASKETBALL GYMNAISUM - NIGHT

The big game. The CROWD boos.

SCOREBOARD-- Home Team: 36. Away Team: 74.

Chris, ball in hand, calls a play. He passes it and the ball is immediately stolen by the DEFENDER.

The Crowd continues to boo as Jody sits in the stands satisfied. She looks at the Away Team bench where the COACH, 50, claps and cheers on his team. The Coach looks up in the stands and winks at Jody.

Jody salutes him as she walks down the benches.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

Jody lies on the firm leather couch, she looks up at the ceiling. DOCTOR MARGE WILSON PhD, her therapist, sits on the seat opposite, note pad in hand.

DOCTOR WILSON
So, did you enjoy it?

JODY
Enjoy what, exactly? Me getting
cheated on or me getting exposed?

DOCTOR WILSON
The revenge.

JODY
Why'd you ask that?

DOCTOR WILSON
Well from the way you described these
incidents, you seem to take glee
in... pay back.

JODY
It's very natural to want vengeance
towards those who have done wrong to me.

DOCTOR WILSON
I understand that but look at you. Such
a sweet and innocent face, I can't
believe you of all people would be
capable of the things I see here on
your report.

JODY
Well Doc, looks can be deceiving.

Doctor Wilson nods, then writes in her note pad.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - DAY

Jody sips water at the water fountain as Nurses push catatonic PATIENTS in wheelchairs. Jody spots someone in the corner of her eye--

An ELDERLY WOMAN sits by herself watching television in the recreation room, a large bandage wrapped around her forehead.

Jody walks over to her and she doesn't flinch, instead

continues watching Maury on TV. On the coffee table in front of her is a box of checkers.

JODY
Wanna play?

The woman's eyes slowly look to Jody, then back to the TV. Jody pulls up a seat beside her, she begins putting the checker pieces in their proper places.

JODY (CONT'D)
I haven't played this game since Junior High.

Jody looks up to the woman, her attention still on the TV. Jody continues setting up the board.

JODY (CONT'D)
Junior High must have been like sixty years ago for you, huh? Was there even such a thing as Junior High back then?

No response from the woman.

JODY (CONT'D)
I'll go first.

Jody makes the first move, sliding the red piece diagonally.

JODY (CONT'D)
Your turn.

The elderly woman coughs violently, totally ignoring Jody.

Jody nods.

JODY (CONT'D)
Okay, I'll move for you.

Jody moves her black piece.

JODY (CONT'D)
My turn.

She moves her red piece again.

JODY (CONT'D)
Your turn.

She slides the black piece again, then jumps her with the red

piece.

JODY (CONT'D)

Wow, you really suck at this game.

The Nurse taps Jody on the shoulder.

NURSE

Jody... you know you are not to
bother the older patients.

JODY

I'm just playing a game.

NURSE

Come on. Into your room, now.

A wrinkled hand touches the Nurse on her arm--

ELDERLY WOMAN

But we haven't finished our game.

Elaine looks to the Nurse, then back to Jody and smiles.

NURSE

One game. Then it's back to your
room, Jody.

Jody nods. The Nurse walks off. Elaine waits until she turns
the corner.

ELDERLY WOMAN

She always was a nasty bitch.

Jody chuckles.

JODY

So you can speak.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Of course I speak, I'm nuts... not a
mute.

JODY

No one ever talks to me in here...
Except old horny Harold.

Jody turns to see... HAROLD, 79, who sits in the corner licking his lips, his hands down his pants, a sick fucker.

Jody shivers.

JODY (CONT'D)

And the nurses just treat me like a child... I'm just as lonely in here as I felt on the outside.

ELDERLY WOMAN

No offense, Jonie. But what makes you think I give a shit?

JODY

It's Jody.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Trust me, if you wanna maintain an ounce of your sanity, it's best you get the HELL away from me!

The woman gets up and THROWS the checker board all over the floor. The pieces scatter. She gets in Jody's face.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)

I said GO!!!

The Nurse guides Jody to her room.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - JODY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jody rests wide awake in her bed. She turns to the window, she sees a pair of hands slide the window open.

Jody sits up, as a shadowy figure climbs into her room. Jody remains frozen as the figure approaches her. He steps out of the shadows--

It's David, with the shadow covering half of his face.

DAVID

Remember me, baby?

Jody freezes, nods.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. For what I did, for taking you for granted, for

everything. I love you so much and
didn't mean to hurt you.

David steps forward revealing the other half of his face
blistering and burned, steam seeping from his flaky skin.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - JODY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jody's eyes open, it was just a dream. She looks toward the
window-- no one's there. She drifts back asleep.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

Jody lays on the couch, peeling away bits of leather that have
chipped off.

Doctor Wilson continues writing her notes.

DOCTOR WILSON
So, what about the others?

JODY
Others? What makes you think there
were others?

DOCTOR WILSON
We wouldn't be here if there
weren't.

JODY
I'm starting to think you like these
stories as much as I do.

DOCTOR WILSON
Stories? Are you suggesting that your
testimonies might not be true?

JODY
(smiles)
You be the judge.

EXT. BAR - BOSTON - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Bright NEON lights read CLANCY'S PUB. CUSTOMERS (18 and over)
flock inside.

INT. BAR - BOSTON - NIGHT

CLACK! A group of large MEN play billiards.

ROCK N' ROLL MUSIC plays as a RED SOX game plays on the TV screens above.

AT THE BAR:

BRANDON, 31, hot tie with tribal tattoos on his buff arms, tends the bar, wiping off a glass. Someone who just entered catches his eye.

Jody enters and makes her way toward the bar stool. She pulls up a seat.

BRANDON
Never seen you around here...

Jody gives him a sly look, doesn't respond.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
What would it be?

JODY
Cranberry juice with a straw please.

Brandon laughs.

BRANDON
You on your period?

JODY
Lucky for you... Not at the moment.

Brandon smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. JODY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jody and Brandon make out on her bed, they ravage each other, shredding off each other's clothes.

INT. JODY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jody wakes up on her bed, she pats the space beside her. No one's there.

She slides off the bed, in her underwear. Stretches as she yawns.

JODY (V.O.)

I was able to snatch up a chunk of
my savings.

Her apartment is a nice spacious studio. She meanders to her
kitchen.

JODY (V.O.)
I made it last pretty well... Moved
to Boston, but stayed pretty low-
key... Until I met Brandon.

INT. JODY'S BEDROOM - DAY - LATER

Jody opens a shoebox under her bed -- she takes out a stack of
about a couple thousand in bills. She looks under the bed
frantically.

JODY
What the fuck!

Jody picks up the shoe box, looks underneath. Nothing. She
freaks out.

JODY (V.O.)
I let my guard down.

INT. BAR - BOSTON - NIGHT

Brandon, sporting a brand-new Rolex, buttoned down shirt and
tie, pours a HOT WOMAN a drink. She smiles and winks at him.

Jody enters through the double doors wearing sunglasses, a
purse in hand and a small duffle bag on her shoulder. She
storms over to Brandon at the bar.

Once Brandon sees her, his eyes expand. She smiles.

JODY
Hey... Braden?

BRANDON
Brandon.

JODY
Right.

Jody smiles, gingerly. Brandon doesn't know what to make of it.

JODY (CONT'D)
(whispers)

Last night was... great. I was just thinking if we could maybe... do it again.

Brandon bites his lip, over-confident.

BRANDON
I'm working right now.

Jody unbuttons her blouse, shows off her small but pert breasts. Brandon's turned on. He looks around the bar and sees ROB, the other bartender, on the other side pouring drinks.

BRANDON (CONT'D)
Hey Rob, cover me.

INT. BAR - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Brandon and Jody KISS in the cramped washroom, nothing but a toilet, a sink, and a tall decorative plant. Jody quickly locks the door and continues making out.

She pushes him down on the toilet and begins undoing his pants.

JODY
Wait... take off your tie.

Brandon takes off his tie. Jody takes it and ties it around his eyes, blindfolding him.

BRANDON
What are you doing? I thought this was a quickie.

JODY
It will be... just want to make it interesting.

Jody kisses Brandon as he yanks down his pants. Brandon exhales, leans his head back.

JODY (CONT'D)
Now just relax and let me take care of you...

Jody reaches into the duffel bag, pulls out a baseball bat. She raises the bat over her head-- WHACK!

Jody strikes Brandon in his genitals. He bows in agony, still blindfolded and out of breath.

JODY (CONT'D)
Like you took care of my money.

INT. BAR - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A LARGE ASIAN MAN waits near the restroom.

WHACK! WHACK! WHACK!

He faintly hears the noise coming from the inside. Jody pretends to moan.

INT. BAR - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jody gives Brandon one final blow as if striking a piñata and watching the candy fall.

She turns to the mirror and sees her outfit is spattered with Brandon's blood.

She drops the bat, exhausted and lets out a climactic moan.

JODY
Ooooh baby!

Brandon's lifeless body falls over, his skull caved in, blood and brains oozing out.

Jody quickly takes off her blouse, digs into her purse nearby and pulls out a brand-new outfit.

She throws the bat and bloody clothes into the duffel bag and snatches the Rolex off his lifeless body.

INT. BAR - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jody exits from the bathroom and quickly shuts the door behind her.

The Large Asian Man sees her, he looks down and spots a hint of blood on her skirt.

JODY
Period stuff, don't ask.

The man wrinkles his nose and walks away in disgust.

Jody puts her purse over her shoulder and promptly exits.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

A tired Jody walks into Doctor Wilson's office. She yawns and grabs a chocolate out of the candy bowl on the marble desk.

DOCTOR WILSON

So today, Jody... I want you to tell me about your family.

Jody laughs, stuffs the chocolate into her mouth and then lies back on the couch.

JODY

My family? Oh, well... what's there to know?

Doctor Wilson looks at her clipboard.

DOCTOR WILSON

According to the form you filled out, you didn't know your dad.

JODY

Oh, I knew my dad, or knew of him.

DOCTOR WILSON

So you were closer to your mom?

JODY

(laughs)

Closer? That's a good one.

DOCTOR WILSON

Why is this funny to you?

JODY

You know what's funny? The concept of family. These people that you're just born into that you're supposed to love simply because you share the same space and DNA. That to me is hilarious.

DOCTOR WILSON

Sounds like you didn't have a lot in common with your mother.

JODY

Oh, we had so much in common... that's the problem.

Jody sits up, reminisces.

INT. GRAY HOUSEHOLD - BATHROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jody, age 17, sits in the bathtub, her head barely above the bubbles. She leans back as the water runs... she moans, clear that she's pleasuring herself.

JULIE, 40s, Jody's mom, is visually an older version of Jody but younger than she looks. It's probably the heavy make-up. She calls out to Jody from the kitchen.

JULIE (O.S.)

Joodyyy.

Jody groans, she sinks her head below water.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Jody Elizabeth get your ass in here now!

Jody rises out of the water.

She grabs a towel and heads out of the bathroom, dripping water along the wooden floor.

INT. GRAY HOUSEHOLD - LIVING ROOM - DAY

On the TV - An NFL game, the Giants vs. The Falcons.

A huge lump of a man rests on the couch, ANTHONY, late 30s, half black, half Mexican, 100 percent asshole. He takes a sip of liquor and places the bottle on the table.

Jody comes from the bathroom, still in a towel. She stops and sees Anthony, surprised.

Anthony peeps at her and smirks.

Julie emerges from the kitchen. Jody turns to her.

JODY

What did--

JULIE

We have company, I told you to clean your damn room eight times, you're not a child anymore.

JODY

Can I talk to you in the kitchen?

INT. GRAY HOUSEHOLD - KITCHEN - DAY

Jody leads Julie into the kitchen.

JODY

What the fuck is he doing here?

JULIE

You watch your damn mouth.

JODY

Watch my damn mouth? I said, what is he, captain-fucking-scumbag, doing in our house?

JULIE

First of all, this is my house not your house.

JODY

Mom, I go to work. I contribute, therefore it's our house...

JULIE

Anthony is a part of this family.

JODY

Bull-sh-

JULIE

Stop. Cursing.

JODY

Stop being naive. He beats you!

From the living room, we see Anthony looking into the kitchen, eavesdropping on their conversation.

JULIE

He made a mistake. People make mistakes.

JODY

He beats you, again and again, and you allow him back into our house... mother of the year.

JULIE

Anthony contributes way more to this household than your little pocket change ever will--

Jody opens her mouth to speak.

JULIE (CONT'D)

And furthermore, you will respect him
and you will watch your goddamn mouth!

Anthony enters the kitchen.

ANTHONY

What's the problem? A mother and
daughter shouldn't be arguing like
this.

Anthony grabs Julie from behind, kisses her neck. Jody's
completely disgusted by their affection.

Jody leaves. Anthony continues kissing Julie's neck, she
giggles.

JULIE

And clean that room, young lady!

INT. GRAY HOUSEHOLD - JODY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jody sits on her bed, legs folded, she sketches a realistic
picture of herself with a half skeletal face using colored
pencils, while listening to Neo Soul.

Crawling on her leg, her scaly pet Iguana, Iggy. Jody picks up
the Iguana.

JODY

You hungry, huh baby?

Jody kisses the Iguana then puts it down. She grabs a worm out
of the container and watches the lizard attack it.

JODY (CONT'D)

Fatty.

KNOCK KNOCK.

JODY (CONT'D)

Yeah.

The door opens -- it's Anthony.

ANTHONY

Hey J.

Jody immediately huffs, she continues sketching.

JODY

What?

ANTHONY

I...

Anthony slowly enters and closes the door.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

... just wanted to talk to you for a minute.

JODY

59 seconds now. Go.

Anthony sits on the bed, uncomfortably close to Jody.

ANTHONY

Look, I know your mom and I have had our arguments. Sometimes, things got a little heated, sometimes too heated-- But it happens.

JODY

Hitting someone repeatedly and cracking the roof of their mouth doesn't just happen.

Anthony laughs it off.

ANTHONY

Your mother has forgiven me. Just recently, I finally had the courage to forgive myself. But God forgave me a long time ago...

Anthony puts his hand on Jody's thigh.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

I'm not asking you to forgive me, that's something you'll have to figure out on your own. Maybe you will as you get older...

Anthony chuckles.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

You already look so much like your mother... Don't you think?

A shiver goes down Jody's spine.

Anthony's hand rests on Jody's thigh, he gently slides it off as he gets up.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)
If you ever need someone to talk to.
About school, life... boys. Just
holla, alright?

Jody glares at him, Anthony nods then closes the door. Jody
explodes out of her bed and locks the door.

JODY
What a creep.

EXT. GRAY HOUSEHOLD - QUEENS, NY - NIGHT

The apartment is in a twenty-story brick housing complex.

SPONGEBOB (O.S.)
Hey Squidward!

We close in on a window on the fifteenth floor with a dim
light still on.

INT. GRAY HOUSEHOLD - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Spongebob plays on the TV.

Jody lies on the couch bundled under a thick blanket. She pets
her lizard while eating Frosted Flakes straight from the box.
She laughs at the show.

Jody hears keys jingling from the outside.

Julie and Anthony enter from the front door, both LAUGHING
and TIPSY from the alcohol. Obviously back from a night on
the town.

JULIE
(giggling)
Anthony... stop it.

ANTHONY
Come here, sexy.

Anthony kisses Julie's neck, she slithers away.

JULIE
(snickers)
I need to go to the bathroom.

Jody rolls her eyes.

Julie enters the living room. She spots Jody on the couch.

JULIE (CONT'D)
What are you doing up? Don't you
have school in the morning?

JODY
(scoffs)
It's Saturday.

Jody watches as Anthony goes into the kitchen. He opens the refrigerator and pulls out a bottle of beer. CHUGS it.

JULIE
It's stuffy in here.

Julie opens the window then heads to the bathroom. Anthony leans on the door frame, looks at Jody lustfully.

Jody glares at him, then turns up the volume on the TV. Anthony glances at the TV, still playing SpongeBob.

ANTHONY
A little too old for cartoons, don't
you think?

JODY
You're a little too old for
teenagers, don't you think?

Anthony winces. We hear the toilet flush and water running.

Julie emerges from the bathroom, bumps past Anthony. He grabs her and pulls her toward him. Anthony kisses her on the neck, Julie resists.

ANTHONY
I want you, now.

JULIE
(giggles)
No.

Jody watches, visibly uncomfortable.

ANTHONY
Come on.

JULIE
(annoyed)

I said no. Not in front of Jody.

ANTHONY

Don't worry about her. Jody, go to your room.

Julie pulls free from Anthony's grasp.

JULIE

Stop it.

Julie goes over to the couch and sits beside Jody.

JULIE (CONT'D)

I just wanna relax with my daughter now. Oh, I love this episode, scoot over.

Julie huddles next to Jody.

Anthony clenches his fist. He goes over to the TV, and knocks it over on its side.

Jody gets up, pissed.

JODY

I was watching that, you psycho!

ANTHONY

Jody, I'm not gonna tell you again. Go to your room.

Anthony takes another sip of beer.

JULIE

Anthony, you're out of line. You need to get some sleep.

ANTHONY

You need to shut up.

JODY

Oh come on, this is the only TV in the house. Can I have peace just for once?

ANTHONY

I pay the bills around here, including cable... so if I wanna fuck your mother in the living room then so be it.

JULIE

You don't own me or anything in this house.

Anthony marches to Julie. He yanks her toward him.

JULIE (CONT'D)
Stop. You're drunk!

ANTHONY
Come here, baby.

Anthony tries to kiss Julie. Julie struggles, she slaps him. Anthony quickly STRIKES her-- sending her to the floor.

JODY
What the hell is wrong with you?!

Jody comes to Julie's aid. She helps her up.

JULIE
I'm okay, honey. Just go to your room like he said. I'll handle it.

ANTHONY
Yeah. Maybe once I'm done with her you can get some too, Jody. Eh? We'll call it an early eighteenth birthday present.

Jody gives him the finger.

JODY
Screw you, perv.

Anthony grabs Jody by the shirt, SLAPS her.

ANTHONY
Don't you dare disrespect me, you little slut! Just like your mother.

Julie charges Anthony into the wall by the open window, hitting him repeatedly.

JULIE
She's a kid, goddammit!

Anthony grabs Julie by the hair and PUNCHES her in the face, her nose gushes blood. Then HITS her again, and again.

Jody seizes the moment, she grabs Anthony's ankle and lifts his leg in the air -- he FALLS out of the open window.

Anthony SCREAMS... until... CRASH!

Jody and Julie look out of the window.

From Jody's POV -- Anthony's limp body lies on the windshield of a parked car. He's dead.

Blood oozes on the pavement.

Jody and Julie look to each other, Julie's nose still running with blood. Both confused, shook, and scared.

INT. GRAY HOUSEHOLD - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Two POLICE OFFICERS write down a report as Jody and Julie both give their testimony.

JODY (V.O.)

Together, we made up our story. Said Anthony was drunk, and fell out of the window... simple as that. It's amazing how two people can cooperate under such... unfortunate circumstances.

The Officers nod in belief.

JODY (V.O.)

As much as I resented my mother, I had to give her credit. She did protect me that night.

Jody looks at Julie apathetically as she wipes her tears, mournful of her boyfriend's death.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - CHAPEL - DAY

All alone in the chapel, Jody chews gum. She looks down at Anthony's dead body in the casket.

His eyes closed, peaceful.

Jody turns her head and makes sure no one's looking. She takes out her gum and places it in Anthony's hair. She laughs.

She hears footsteps. Julie approaches her, in a black dress and sun glasses.

JODY

I'm sorry, mom.

JULIE

No. No you're not.

Julie takes her off her glasses, her face a mess of tears and mascara runs ruining her makeup.

JULIE (CONT'D)

You wanted him dead. I know you did. The only man in my life who ever loved me, and you take him away.

(beat)

You think Anthony was a piece of shit? No, your father... he was the real piece of shit. At least Anthony had the balls to put his hands on me.

JODY

You're sick.

JULIE

And you're a killer. You've killed every relationship I've had. I'm getting old and I'm gonna die alone if I keep this up. Be grateful that I love you. Never ever--

Julie's eyes begin to water.

JULIE (CONT'D)

-- speak to me ever again. Don't call. Don't text. Don't come by the house to feed that ugly ass lizard. Me and you are done, do you understand me? Get your things and go. You turn eighteen next week. You're grown now.

Jody's face slightly trembles, but she holds strong not to break or cry.

JODY (V.O.)

My mother lied that day... she didn't love me. But she was telling the truth about one thing...

Jody storms past Julie and towards the exit.

JODY (V.O.)

I really did want to kill him. And I was itching to do it again.

Jody exits.

INT. GEORGIA HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - 1 YEAR AGO

A DEAD WOMAN, twenties, lies face down on the carpet, her face sprinkled with blood. FLASH!

Several C.S.I. OFFICERS scour the area, taking pictures and collecting swabs of DNA in their protective wear.

One of the Officers holds up a piece of brown curly hair with his latex gloves, looks closely.

JODY (V.O.)

And I almost got away with it all.

INT. JODY'S APARTMENT - ATLANTA - DAY

Jody sits in her apartment, watching cartoons. She hears muffled MOANS come from the other room.

She grabs the remote, turns up the volume. The MOANS grow louder, escalate to screaming. Jodie tosses the remote aside and walks over to the other room.

INT. JODY'S APARTMENT - CLOSET - ATLANTA- DAY

Jody opens the door, inside the closet is BLAKE, thirties, tied to a chair, mouth duck taped and bleeding.

JODY

What?

Blake moans and cries in pain.

Jody yanks the tape off.

Blake exhales, his mouth red with blood, teeth missing.

BLAKE

Please, let me go...I'm begging you.

JODY

(mimicking)

"Please, let me go." God, you're such a pussy.

Jody pulls out steel pliers.

JODY (CONT'D)
First I find out you're married,
with four kids... despite you
telling me that you loved me.

Jody holds Blake's mouth open, inserts the pliers.

JODY (CONT'D)
Then I find out your wife has
cancer. Fucking cancer.

Blake GROANS. Jody slaps him in the face.

JODY (CONT'D)
Shut it!

Blake hyperventilates.

JODY (CONT'D)
Now, if you don't shut up and let me
watch my show in peace... We're
going to move from playing deranged
dentist to operation, you got that?

Blake quickly nods. Jody pockets her pliers.

JODY (CONT'D)
Good. And you have cavities, no
sweets for you.

Jody applies a new fresh strip of duct tape on Blake's mouth,
then SLAMS the door. She heads back to the living room.

INT. JODY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - ATLANTA - DAY

Jody plops on the couch, sighs, relaxed. Beyond the T.V. she
notices a shadow underneath the front door.

Jody gets up slowly to check it out. As she gets closer, she
hears slight rustling... and then...

BAM! Nine POLICE OFFICERS barge in, armed, waving their
pistols.

Jody immediately drops to the ground, hands behind her head.

JODY
I was going to let him go, I swear!

OFFICER #1 grabs Jody by the wrist, tilts his head in
confusion.

OFFICER #1

Let who go?

Jody raises an eyebrow.

JODY

Ummmm, nothing. What am I being charged with?

OFFICER #1

Jody Gray, you are under arrest for the murder of Amanda Saxton.

JODY

What!? I haven't killed any women.

OFFICER #2

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against--

JODY

Yeah, yeah. I watch Law & Order, I know the deal.

BLAKE (O.S.)

MMMrmmmm! Mmmmm!

INT. JODY'S APARTMENT - CLOSET -

Muffled moans come from the closet. The Officers open the closet door -- to see Blake, tied up, in the fetal position and crying.

Officer #1 gives Jody a judgmental look. Jody gives him a nervously guilty smile.

OFFICER #1

Get her out of here.

CUT TO:

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

The JUDGE, 55's, in-charge black woman, BANGS on her gavel.

Jody, in handcuffs and an orange jumpsuit sits beside her spectacled, DEFENSE ATTORNEY, 39.

The PLANTIFF, a youngish looking MAN in his 40's, steps forward.

PLANTIFF

Now, your honor ... the Georgia Police Department has found DNA evidence that she committed the violent murder of Ms. Amanda Saxton...

Jody slams her hand on the table and gets up.

JODY

I object! Your honor, that is bullshit. I would never murder a woman... at least I don't think I would...I never even considered it.

The Judge BANGS her gavel.

JUDGE

Order! Now, Jody, if you disrupt again with that foul language, I will hold you in contempt. Is that understood?

Jody sits, she leans to her Defense Attorney.

JODY

(whispers)
How rude. I don't even know what contempt means.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Your honor, my client is clearly disturbed. Her history of torture, manipulation and gleeful testimony of murder is concerning to say the least.

JODY

(whispers)
Oh screw you. What happened to being on my side?

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

We are requesting that you and the jury would at least consider granting her clearance for mental insanity.

The COURT ROOM JURORS mutter amongst themselves. The Judge BANGS the gavel.

Jody gets up.

JODY

Your honor, if I may...

The Judge nods.

JODY (CONT'D)

If you want a confession that I killed this... Amanda? That was her name right? To her parents... My condolences.

Jody waves at the crowd in attendance.

JODY (CONT'D)

I didn't kill her...

(shrugs)

I never felt the need to kill a woman, not even my mother who at least brought me into this world. It's men, goddamned men, who dome wrong repeatedly.

Jody turns to the court room.

JODY (CONT'D)

I know some ladies in here can relate, right ladies?

A couple of the WOMEN in attendance slightly nod their head in shame.

JODY (CONT'D)

See your honor, I consider myself the real hero here. Doing the work of the law. A vigilante this town needs.

JUDGE

Are you finished?

JODY

No, unfortunately I can't confess to whatshername's murder. But there is something I'd like to confess while we're here...

Jody smiles mischievously.

BEGIN MONTAGE - VARIOUS

INT. CAR - NIGHT

A POTHEAD, 23 rolls up a joint alone in the driver's seat. Suddenly, Jody appears from behind him, CHOKES him with a wire. She pulls for dear life as the Pothead clasps his neck for air.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A BEARDED BLACK MAN, 35, sleeps besides a WHITE GUY, 29, both shirtless. Sleeping lovers.

Jody stands over them, she pulls out a knife that glimmers in the moonlight.

SHANK! SHANK! SHANK!

Jody stabs both men in the chest repeatedly. The Men YELL in excruciating pain.

Jody wipes the knife as both men die in the bed together in a pool of blood.

INT. MANSION - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jody, in a nice dress sits across from a WEALTHY MAN, 50's as they both have a lovely chicken dinner and champagne before them. A blatant sugar daddy relationship.

Jody smiles flirtatiously as she cuts into her food.

The man smirks as he takes a sip of his champagne. He grabs his neck. Chokes. Then falls over on the floor.

Jody stands over him and holds up a small medical bottle with a black label -- rat poison.

The man SPURTS foam from the mouth as he looks at Jody in terror.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A BDSM inspired chamber, complete with chains, whips and all sorts of 50 Shades of Grey inspired sexual contraptions.

A LOVE SLAVE, 20's with a zipped black mask over his face is chained to the bed. His eyes covered.

Jody in a skin tight black outfit, takes off his pants to reveal his tightie whities.

LOVE SLAVE

Do it, baby. Hurt me!

Jody holds his drawers in one hand, then pulls out scissors in the other.

JODY

My pleasure.

SHINK!

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

The entire audience WINCES in pain as Jody retells her story.

JODY

-- and trust me, that guy was into kiddie porn. So he definitely had it coming.

The crowd becomes loud.

JUDGE

Order! Order! Ms. Gray, we have heard enough. It is clear to me that not only are you not well, but you are perhaps one of the most disturbed young women I've seen in quite a long time. I grant the defendant one year at the Wake Falls Psychiatric Ward to determine if you are fit to withstand a trial.

Jody glares at the judge, in shock.

The Judge BANGS the gavel.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY - "ONE YEAR LATER"

Jody peeks over at Doctor Wilson's clipboard.

JODY

I hope somewhere on there you are writing "Jody is free to go."

DOCTOR WILSON

I am not at liberty to discuss the details of your case, Jody. But your attorney will be in shortly to discuss that information with you. I am only here to determine your condition.

JODY

Condition? Which is?

DOCTOR WILSON

I don't believe you are insane. I--

Doctor Wilson is interrupted by a KNOCK at the door.

DOCTOR WILSON (CONT'D)

Come in please, it's open.

The Defense Attorney enters and takes a seat.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Good afternoon Dr. Wilson. Ms. Gray, how are you feeling today?

JODY

I'm feeling like I want to take that pen to Dr. Wilson's throat.

The defense attorney and Doctor turn to each other.

JODY (CONT'D)

Kidding. Kidding.

DOCTOR WILSON

Jody, from my understanding, I can tell you are a smart woman, very meticulous even. But your previous actions are completely unacceptable. You don't get to play God and decide who needs to live or die. I just don't understand why a smart and sweet young lady like yourself would want to kill.

JODY

Because I can.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

You have two options. The judge is demanding that you remain in the institution or you will be placed at the Wake Falls Correctional Facility in solitary confinement. For life.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - COMMON AREA - DAY

The PATIENTS litter the common area, most of them in a haze as Nurses roam in and out of the room.

Jody stacks checker pieces on the coffee table a foot high. She turns to see two men wheeling a stretcher with a body bag out of the elderly woman's room.

Jody's face sinks. She turns to the portly PATIENT behind her who is reading a newspaper.

JODY

What happened?

PATIENT

Bashed her head in last night...
bled to death.

JODY

Shame.

PATIENT

She was a cranky bitch anyway.

The portly patient closes his newspaper and waddles away. Jody knocks over the checker pieces.

MASON (O.S.)

Mind if I play?

Jody turns around to see a young man -- MASON, 27, handsome with half of his head shaved, different from any man Jody is used to.

JODY

I guess.

Mason takes a seat, Jody stares at him while he sets up the pieces with care.

Jody nods.

MASON
What are you here for?

JODY
Nothing big. Multiple homicides.

MASON
Oh...

Jody frowns.

Mason chuckles.

MASON (CONT'D)
Shit. Me too.

Jody and Mason both laugh together, almost maniacally.

JODY (V.O.)
It was so surreal.

BEGIN MONTAGE

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - CAFETERIA - DAY

Jody and Mason eat their pudding together. Mason takes a scoop of chocolate and puts it on Jody's nose.

JODY (V.O.)
Finally, someone I could relate to.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - COMMON AREA - DAY

Jody and Mason hold hands as they watch *SpongeBob*. The nurse gives them their medication -- they sigh and take it. Mason kisses Jody on the cheek.

JODY (V.O.)
He was truly unlike any other man
I've been with.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jody lies in bed wide awake. She looks over to her door and sees a piece of paper slide underneath the door.

She walks over to it and picks it up.

It's a note with a crude crayon drawing of Jody and Mason. "I love you" written in script.

JODY

He was sweet... In like a deranged Forest Gump kind of way.

Jody hugs the paper and smiles.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - COMMON AREA - DAY

Jody and Mason hold hands while watching TV.

JODY

What are you watching?

MASON

The news. What are you watching?

REVEAL -- there's nothing on the TV.

JODY

Telemundo.

Mason laughs.

MASON

You don't know Spanish.

JODY

I know, but I watch it for the drama mostly. Drama is a universal language.

Jody rubs Mason's hand. They stare into each other's eyes. Mason digs into his pocket.

MASON

I was never good at these things but...

Mason pulls out a small key chain.

JODY

What are you doing with that? You know the nurses think you'll choke on it or something.

MASON

No... it's your engagement ring.

Jody, I want you to marry me.

JODY
Marry you? We've only known each other for a short time.

MASON
It feels like it's been a lifetime
And hell we're stuck here for one.

JODY
This is crazy.

MASON
We're both fucking crazy.

Jody chuckles.

JODY (V.O.)
That was the first time I let someone
call me crazy and not think about
killing them. I knew he was the one.

Mason holds up the ring. Jody considers it.

ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
Jody Gray.

An ADMINISTRATOR, 50s, in a blue suit, approaches Jody along with two other men.

ADMINISTRATOR (CONT'D)
Come with us, please.

Jody and Mason look to each other. Jody shrugs and goes with them.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

Doctor Wilson and the Defense Attorney sit across from Jody.

JODY
Are you serious?

DOCTOR WILSON
They're putting you on trial.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY
Apparently, there was other DNA found
at the scene of the crime, proven to
be yours.

JODY

But, look at me. You both know what I've been through. Have I not struggled enough!

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

I'm sorry, oddly there is enough evidence to pin point you as the culprit, for multiple murders. And your mental condition is proven to be well enough for trial. Gather your things. You leave tomorrow.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - COMMON AREA - DAY

Jody storms out of Dr. Wilson's office. She spots Mason across the room. She whistles to grab his attention.

MASON

Picked a wedding date yet, my love?

JODY

Uh, yeah. But I need you to do something for me first.

MASON

You know I would do anything for you. What is it?

JODY

(whispers)

I need you to help me bust out of here.

MASON

Why don't we both bust out then?

JODY

No!

Jody looks around to make sure no one is listening.

JODY

I mean, look, sweetheart. If we both leave, that'll be too suspicious. Once I'm out, I promise I will come back for you.

MASON

Okay. Let's do it tonight. The last

bus leaves at eight.

EXT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Jody walks out of the front doors with her few belongings folded in hand.

She steps onto the street and sits at the bus stop.

Jody then digs in her pocket, pulls out the crude drawing of her and Mason. In her other pocket, it's the keychain.

She looks back to the psych ward.

INT. PSYCHIATRIC WARD - DR. WILSON'S OFFICE- NIGHT

Mason looks out of the window -- he sees Jody as the bus pulls up to the stop. She reluctantly gets in wearing glasses, a pants suit and a jacket with a name tag that reads "Dr. Wilson."

Mason puts his hand on the window in sadness as the bus drives away.

We see blood on his clothing and a bare bloody foot appearing from behind the desk.

INT. BUS - MOVING - DAY

Jody enters the moving bus. Not many people on board. She nods her head to the KIND OLD LADY seated at the front.

She takes a seat in the back -- looks out of the window, deep in thought.

EXT. BUS - DAY

The Bus cruises down the road -- it makes a stop by a MAN in cowboy boots.

INT. BUS - MOVING - DAY

The cowboy boots make their way down the aisle. The man, 30, spots Jody and decides to take a seat right next to her. He's a corn-fed type, in a jean jacket.

Jody scoots to the side, the Cowboy takes a long look at Jody, smirks. Jody continues looking out of the window.

COWBOY

Name's Lewis.

Jody smiles nonchalantly.
She pulls out her keychain ring, begins to straighten it on

the side, hidden.

COWBOY (CONT'D)

You ever been with a real man
before?

The Cowboy places his hand on Jody's knee, he licks his lips.
Jody turns to him. She looks behind him to the very back of the bus.

JODY

How about you and me get off on the
next stop... and I'll show you what a
"real woman" looks like?

The Cowboy smirks.

Jody smiles, little does the Cowboy know, in her hands is the
straightened key chain, pointy and sharp. She grips it between
her knuckles, strikes his neck.

INT. WAKE FALLS CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - CELL B - DAY

Jody steps into a cell surrounded by nothing but white walls, a
thin raggedy mattress on the floor and a metal door with
several locks.

A compartment on the door opens and a tray slides in,
revealing sloppy prison food.

Jody picks up the tray and notices something underneath. It's a
small drawing of a man and woman kissing with "forever" written
at the bottom.

Jody smiles, holding the drawing.

JODY (V.O.)

It was at this moment I realized I
didn't care whether I was guilty or
innocent anymore. I was addicted and

no better than the men I killed.

Jody places the tray on the floor and lies on her mattress, staring at the ceiling.

JODY (V.O.)

My addiction wasn't a drug or an emotion, a physical space, a belonging or even Mason. I was addicted to doing what I loved most. I loved to kill and I was good at it! I was desperate to do it again.

INTERCOM (O.S.)

Lights out!

FADE TO BLACK.

**FLIP THE SCRIPT:
A REFLECTION ESSAY ON STORYTELLING**

It is evident that humans tell stories. Yet, what makes us so unique is our ability to create and capture life through it. Whether to supply information, create entertainment or enact persuasion, storytelling techniques have drastically changed. As a result,] modern society represents storytelling using a diverse range of forms, not limited to photography, videography, digital blogs and even social media statuses. So, what happens as we move from one medium to the next? What can we learn about the creative process and what expectations or limitations does a particular medium impose?

Constructing my “Flip the Script” master’s project, allowed me to better comprehend storytelling techniques but also challenge the way my stories are told. I decided to focus on two specific methods; narrative writing and screenwriting. These methods led to writing a finished short story and screenplay. While using my own original content, I wanted to challenge the way my fictional story unfolded. These two completely different writing styles influenced the way characters were introduced and interacted with one another as well as how lessons or themes were learned. The short story, for example, focuses on a specific event and doesn’t need to form a conclusion. The reader learns about Jody through her thoughts and actions but is left with just that. However, I developed my screenplay to include more background and events leading up to the protagonist’s conclusion.

In any story, the protagonist typically pursues a goal with a clear end point. Specifically, for a romance novel, the goal of the main character will usually be winning the love of another character. This remains true for my short story. In the short story, Jody’s first objective is to try

and win a guy's heart, David's. Yet, by the end of the screenplay, Jody realizes she isn't looking for love at all, although she finds someone who begins to love her. She likes being in control, taking revenge and manipulating people to get what she wants. Once the goal is clearly defined, it represents a journey for the character. I had to decide what steps were going to be necessary along this journey and what other details and key turning points would be crucial to understanding that goal.

Jody's development was slightly difficult because I didn't want to specifically diagnose her with having a mental disorder or behavioral disorder. However, many of her actions and traits are similar to someone who has antisocial personality disorder or psychopathy. Psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder are both categorized as spectrum disorders. I didn't want Jody to be a direct representation or example of either because the behaviors may range. Jody understands her actions, consequences and continues to do what she wants simply because "she can." She mostly has no reasoning for her cruelty other than enjoyment and payback for the men who upset or take advantage of her. As most stories include a hero and villain that the audience follows, Jody is not your typical heroine; although she views herself as one. I decided to give her a role that includes being both the hero and the villain in her story. She is her biggest fan and her worst enemy.

In the screenplay, the audience learns about her characteristics through interactions with other cast members as well as her voice overs. The voice overs are crucial to sharing information that may not make sense without a written direction. The screenplay contains lots of dialogue, actions, locations, minor descriptions of the characters and any emotions they may express. The dialogue especially needed to be precise. I needed to have my characters say exactly what was important to the scene. Also, using this information, the reader learns underlying details that are

not as easily given. No one can believe Jody is as conniving and manipulative as she is in the script. Even during the court room scene, she can connect with the jury and audience, but in a rather merciless kind of way. David especially can't associate her with wrong doing even after she breaks into his apartment. He is sympathetic and a bit turned on by it.

In the short story, I needed to use more descriptive words to help the reader reconstruct these images. I wanted to give humor to her story while creating a deeper understanding of her development as a character. The short story gave me more freedom to have specific emotions in characters, their actions, and environments, while being as descriptive as possible.

However, my greatest challenge wasn't the story or character development. It was the writing style and format.

As evident in my project, scripts are much different from short stories. Scripts are constructed to map out everything you would see on screen. It is a guide for actors to be able to express the story verbally and visually. Short stories on the other hand are meant to be read. They may have minimal dialogue and are far more descriptive. Short stories allow you to use your imagination whereas scripts tell you exactly what you are seeing, with more dialogue. The dialogue for scripts is more intensive because the actors need to talk and interact with one another as well as take direction.

While creating the short story, I found myself mostly free-writing. In contrast, I needed to plan the screenplay and think about the story structure. During my creative processes using both mediums, I was required to imagine scenarios and further expand upon them. I found my planning more beneficial while writing the screenplay. For the short story, I mostly created scenarios, but used a "treatment" for the screenplay. The treatment method is used to pitch a story but also to highlight and summarize the key events that occur. It breaks the story down with a

play-by-play analogy, giving structure to the story. The story structure simply refers to the sequence of events. Although screenwriting typically uses the treatment plan, it can also be used in planning a short story. The treatment can be beneficial and simple enough to establish characters, scenes and motives. I chose to do the treatment only for the screenplay because the script included multiple scenes while the short story focused on one particular scene. An example of the treatment is as follows:

Story Setup:

- Jody introduces herself and this concept of love, who she is and what she wants.
- Jody retells her first love to her therapist and how it affected her.
- Jody tells about when she meets David and how she interacts with him.
- Jody meets two other guys who betray her.
- Jody tells her therapist about her family history
- Jody recalls getting caught.
- Jody goes to court
- Jody remains in the psych ward awaiting a trial
- Jody strikes again

The treatment introduces key factors in the story without giving too much away. It is roughly a guide to get you from point A to point B and to help you fill in the details in between. Using Jody's narrative, we learn that she is re-telling these stories from inside of the psychiatric ward. These events in the screenplay are mapped out using the slug lines that give her every move or location, whether she is re-telling an event from the past or in the present (psych ward, court, therapist office or jail). The slug lines help guide the reader from scene to scene using a structured heading. The reader can easily understand the time and location using this

information. A slug line formula will always read as (INT.) or (EXT.) , the specific location, and the time of day. (Int) or interior refers to an inside area and (ext) or exterior refers to outside.

The heading will also be in capital letters. An example of this is:

(INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - DAY)

Format plays an important role in how these stories are developed. From my experience writing, scripts can often be non-linear while my short stories are linear. These different styles create a new dynamic in the flow of the story. This time, I chose to make both my short story and screen play non-linear. It is the difference between narrating from beginning to end, in chronological order, or bouncing around throughout different time periods. Although I have found chronological order to be safer and easier, I also think it is less interesting. The style I have chosen places readers at moments where they must engage with the text and connect with what is happening. Readers can piece scenarios together and draw their own conclusions about the character and their motives. Both stories eventually seek the same end goal.

Two major differences between my creative processes when writing the short story versus the screenplay was collaborative feedback and story formats. When constructing the short story I was mostly constructing and editing alone and with the help of my advisor. On the other hand, the screenplay allowed for collaborative feedback from peers, classmates and elders. I found that people are more drawn to reading a script, especially when they have the chance to act it out and become the character. By having more eyes and ears on my writing, it was easier to find what things worked within the story and what needed to be scrapped or re-imagined.

Regarding formatting, screenplays and short stories greatly differ between aspects like length, physical structure, dialogue, and action. The length of screenplay can be anywhere between 110 to 120 pages as a short story varies. Novels may also be several hundred pages. I

was challenged to shorten my screen play for this project. I needed to figure out what scenes were worth keeping and which weren't as essential. Novelists typically take time to build up chapters as screen writers need to get to specific points leading up to the climax and resolution, if any.

The physical structure of a short story is completely up to the writer, whereas screenplays follow a more consistent and clear format. That format includes specific indentations, margins and a (Courier, 12 pitch) font. This structure is fixed and usually requires a screenwriting software to keep consistency. In addition, the most important elements needed in the screenplay are the scene heading/slug line, the action, the character name, the dialogue and sometimes the type of shot. When introducing each of my characters for the first time I had to put their names in all caps (JODY) . Additionally, these characters must be introduced while performing an action. (CHRIS, 20, approaches Jody.)

The short story and screen play are very different in their formats but more similar in their underlining story structures. The story is always the core of all different types of media I have worked with. A short story/novel and screenplay will continually have a common story although the formats are different. In fact, a novel would be the next step for my short story and the screenplay could be used to help expand that. The same story principles are interchangeable but share different qualities that make them equally distinctive. Although screenplays take a great bit of time, they are less time consuming than novels and short stories can be done quicker than screenplays. However, the tenses would need to change. Screenplays must be written in present tense as novels can speak to the past, like my short story. The short story references what has happened and the screenplay, for the most part directs what is currently happening. Although Jody speaks to past events, her present state is the focal point.

Some other elements that set these two structures apart was the way dialogue and actions were presented. The dialogue carries more weight in the screenplay than the short story. You can't read thoughts as a viewer, like a reader can. As the viewer, you await dialogue to be able to conclude what will happen within the scene. Along with dialogue, the visuals and actions need to be evident in both mediums. However, the methods are distinctly different as seen below.

Short Story Style:

I see David everyday on the New York City subway. He rides the crowded A-train to Manhattan and gets off at Columbus Circle. I loved the way his face tensed up when the train was delayed or the way he pulled his beard hairs when he was nervous. I memorized his schedule hoping to one day strike up a decent conversation.

Screenplay Style:

INT. SUBWAY CAR - MOVING

Jody enters the car as the train shuts and beeps. She looks about crowded car; her eyes wander as if she's looking for something or someone.

JODY (V.O.)
First time I saw him was right here on this subway. That was two years ago.

Jody spots David, can't help but smirk. She tries to blend into the crowd, she steadily tries to move closer to him.

JODY (V.O.)
I memorized his schedule. Tuesdays he takes the 3:45 train to Queens. Wednesdays he goes to the gym at six. Saturday morning he and his buddies bike at Central Park.

The same subway scene is represented using both methods. The short story relies on the description as the screenplay relies on the voiceover to give descriptions. This tells the same story using two methods.

I had to make many important decisions when writing the screenplay. I was challenged with cutting out elements that were not necessary for the screenplay but important for the story. For example, in the script, it was necessary to have Jody's family in there because the therapist specifically asked Jody, but in the short story I shortened it to a simple statement. "My definition of love derived from a father that left too soon and a step-father I wished had left a bit sooner." This easily reveals a bit about her background without taking too much time to explain.

The art of storytelling encapsulates the way we capture, mimic and express life. Although I would never relate myself to my character, we share certain similarities that helped to give a reference point for her understanding of the world and people around her, minus the irrational behavior and multiple murders of course. I found that screenwriting presented a greater challenge to me than the short story for many reasons. The simplest reason is that I was more comfortable with the style of writing short stories. All my life I have created short stories and similar creative work. As a writer, it is easy to put yourself in a specific category of writing. Therefore, as I am forced to step outside of those comforts I must learn and quickly adapt.

The truth is, there are so many styles of writing. I needed to learn to conform to different styles as the circumstances often changed. The styles have changed from writing academic papers, photo essays, broadcast scripts, journalism articles, short stories and now, screenplays. Whether fictional or non-fictional, each of these stories capture elements of life and all its intricate details.

My experiences in the Duke Graduate Liberal Studies program has both emphasized storytelling and enhanced the way I tell stories. More importantly, my experience doing this thesis project has challenged my creative process along the way. I found that using both styles pushed my creative methods and challenged me to better understand my own creative process. Throughout my time studying at Duke, interning at Nickelodeon and working at Blue Devil Network, I have learned skills and assets that put great storytelling at the core of each successful endeavor. Several courses have enhanced my knowledge of storytelling as well as my ability to produce and re-work stories. Writing for broadcast journalism and media production, has allowed me to move into non-fiction storytelling using video packages and written articles. On the other hand, my creative process alternates when writing fiction such as short stories, screenplays and poetry. As a storyteller, I must continue to adapt to new methods as I produce creative work for both enjoyment and analysis.

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