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#107  
SHERMAN OAKS, CA 91423

MIF  
Drama

Ro:  
**JESSI**

Male Female drama

45-60

#1

YOUNG NURSE  
I almost forgot, your wife's here.

JESSICA  
Ex-wife.

And she's now standing in the doorway. JESSICA MANNING is as tough as she is beautiful.

Start →

FRANK  
Jess, how's David? ... Did they find, Billy?

No answer. Jessica holds her ground until Frank acquiesces; he looks between the scowling nurse and Jessica: it's obvious that he'll get no answer until he lays down. The nurse steers him back into bed.

~~YOUNG NURSE~~  
~~(to Jessica)~~  
~~Five minutes. He needs to rest.~~

The nurse exits, Jessica approaches Frank's bed. His eyes are tired, but intense; he wants an answer.

JESSICA  
(reluctantly)  
David didn't make it. (beat) And Billy Mason wasn't there.

Wrong answer. Frank starts to get out of bed again, but the sudden movements make him dizzy and he almost loses it; he has to lay back down. Obviously, he's not going anywhere.

JESSICA (CONT'D)  
Frank, every cop in this city is looking for Billy. They practically took the building apart. He wasn't there. (beat) The best thing you can do for him now is rest - and get your strength back.

Frank doesn't like it, but he can't argue.

FRANK  
Bring the phone over. I need to call his parents.

Jessica reaches for the phone, puts it on the side table. She wipes the sweat off his brow. There is a quiet moment between them. If only she could admit the way she still feels. But that would just stir things up again; the painful, unspeakable thing that destroyed them.



1/5

CASTING

DURROW - BOLAND

JESSICA

What were you thinking going in there alone? You could've been killed.

FRANK

I was.

JESSICA

That's not funny.

FRANK

C'mon, it's a little funny.

JESSICA

You can't just go charging in like that. You're not a cop anymore.

FRANK

Good thing, because if I was, I'd still be waiting for your boss in the DA's office to get me a warrant.

Jessica's expression hardens.

JESSICA

So what, you're playing vigilante now? Is that it?

Frank looks at her, disappointed; the wall between them never quite allows them to be vulnerable, or tender for long.

FRANK

... This isn't about me.

JESSICA

You can kid yourself all you want, but this isn't just about Billy Mason, or David Howard. It's about our son and you know it.

Frank can't deny it. Jessica's pager buzzes. She looks at it, clears it, then turns back to Frank.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I have to go.

Frank nods; of course she does. The moment is awkward. Jessica turns to exit.



↓

FRANK

Jess ...

Jessica stops, hesitates -

JESSICA

You have to stop punishing yourself,  
Frank. (beat) It won't bring him back.

She exits. Frank lays his head back, but the sad frustration he feels for losing his wife can't compare to the real issue: the one Jessica was referring to between the lines ... Leave the frame on Frank as his memory takes him back.

FLASH TO:

6 INT - A DARK BEDROOM, 2 YEARS AGO - NIGHT

Happy and content in the immediate aftermath of making love, Frank pulls Jessica into his arms. They settle back against the pillows to catch their breath, content to drift into sleep.

A sudden noise somewhere in the house (barely audible) rouses Jessica.

JESSICA

(reacting)

What was that?

Frank lifts his head, still semi-out-of-it, and listens.

FRANK

What?

JESSICA

Listen ...

(they wait - nothing)

I heard a noise outside. Maybe I  
should check on Kevin.

But a sudden gust of wind rocks the house and Frank scoffs, pulls her closer.

FRANK

It's nothing. Just the wind. Besides,  
Gus barks at his own shadow. He'd go  
nuts if somebody was out there.  
(another gust of wind comes) See? ...  
Storm's coming, that's all.

**END**  
6

3  
5

34

INT -- JESSICA'S KITCHEN -- SAME

34

Frank reaches for a hot cup of coffee ... That's when Jessica realizes his hand is shaking. She says nothing as she looks into his tired, restless eyes. He hasn't had a shave, or a good night's sleep in days.

Ultimately, the urge to comfort him is too instinctive; she reaches out and puts her hand on his.

START

FRANK

I, um, think maybe something's wrong - with me.

JESSICA

What?

FRANK

(beat, awkward)

Ever since that night - since the accident ... I've been seeing things.

JESSICA

What kinds of things?

There's a long pause while Frank gathers the courage to say it.

FRANK

I think I saw him, Jess.

Without consciously doing it, her hand comes off his, as if her defenses have just kicked in.

JESSICA

(wary)

... Who?

FRANK

Kevin. I think I saw him on the other side ... When I was -

JESSICA

- Don't ... Just stop.

She sits back, needing space.

FRANK (O.S.)

Look, I know how it sounds - believe me. But I feel like I'm going out of my mind here ... I have to tell someone.

4/5



JESSICA

If you want to keep punishing yourself, that's up to you. But I won't let you do it to me anymore.

FRANK

I just thought --

JESSICA

(exasperated)

No ... you didn't. You never think - you just do. Kevin's been gone for two years, Frank. Two years!

FRANK

(agitated)

I just want to know -

JESSICA

(fighting emotion)

- What? ... That some twisted psycho murdered our son? Is that what you want to know? Is that the answer you're looking for?

Silence. Jessica stands up, and goes to the threshold of the room. She turns, and we see her emotional wall firmly back in place.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I'm not like you, Frank. Why can't you understand that? I don't want the truth (beat) I won't survive it.

... And so goes the fragile line between hope and despair.

Frank's not at all surprised when she goes into her room and closes the door. In fact, he's kind of relieved.

35

INT - FRANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

35

Frank steps into a steam filled shower, closes his eyes, lets the hot water pour over his tired, aching muscles.

END

5/5