

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

EXT. PETTIGRU STREET - MORNING - ESTABLISHING

Welcome to Greenville, South Carolina. We pan a pretty street of middle class, suburban homes.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Close on: Toast popping up. A hand grabs the bread, plays hot potato with it, then tosses it on a plate.

LYNN FOSTER, 40's, rushed but put together, spreads some butter across the crispy toast.

LYNN

Avery! Toast's ready. Hurry.

The kitchen, like the house, is clearly lived in. Modest, but no financial complaints.

RUSTY, the family dog, sits, clearly hoping for a scrap to fall.

LYNN (CONT'D)

(to Rusty)

This is not for you. Your food is over there.

JACKSON FOSTER, 40's, suit and tie, walks in and gives his wife a quick peck.

JACKSON

Morning.

LYNN

Any sign of life?

JACKSON

Got assaulted by perfume in the hall. My guess is she's almost ready.

He rushes over to the coffee maker and pours himself a cup, petting Rusty on the way.

LYNN

Can you call the gutter guys again?

JACKSON

They said they'd get back to me in...

LYNN
Just call them again. Forecast says
rain at the end of the week.

JACKSON
Fine. Fine. I'll call again.
(beat)
There she is.

AVERY FOSTER, 14, appears in the kitchen. Her outfit is a
little more scandalous than a mother would like.

LYNN
You only put on half your skirt?

AVERY
Mom!

LYNN
Change.

Avery's face is about to explode in a vibrant protest....

LYNN (CONT'D)
Don't want to hear it. Change. And
take your toast.

She hands her daughter the plate. Avery storms off. Jackson
sighs.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Oh, you're okay with your daughter
wearing that?

JACKSON
I'll see you tonight. Good luck
with the showing.

He kisses her cheek and is out the door.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - MOMENTS LATER

Avery, wearing pants, sits in the passengers seat. Lynn
drives.

AVERY
Can we please just listen to the
radio?

LYNN
Avery Foster, you never used to
dress like that. So what if Jesse
is going steady with Melissa now?

AVERY
Mom! That's not it!

Lynn gives her daughter a dubious look. Avery starts to speak, but it turns into a huff.

LYNN
Trying to get back at someone only hurts you.

AVERY
It's a cool skirt. Katie has it.

LYNN
Oh well, *if Katie has it*. Should I get one then?

AVERY
You're not funny.

Avery turns up the radio, ending conversation. Taylor Swift's, "Delicate" plays. Avery sings along. She loves this song. Lynn glances at her daughter and lets a smile sneak out.

EXT. WADE HAMPTON HIGHSCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

A bustling high school. Home of the Generals. The facade has undergone a recent touch up.

The Ford Explorer pulls into the long car line. The passenger door flies open.

AVERY
It's okay. I can get out here.

LYNN (O.S.)
Avery!

And the door is shut. Lynn rolls down the window and calls out.

LYNN (CONT'D)
I love you!!

Avery's embarrassment causes her to walk a bit faster.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

Lynn watches Avery hurriedly approach the front doors, with an occasional wave or greeting. She runs up to KATIE, 14, her best-friend, and gives her a warm hug.

The pair share a laugh. Avery motions to her pants.

LYNN

Yes, I know, I made you put on pants.

Katie rolls her eyes. She and Avery head into school, disappearing behind the glass doors.

Lynn grips the steering wheel, leather squeaking under her palms, and looks at the car line that she's trapped in.

JOEL, 40's, security guard, gun in a holster on his belt, approaches the driver's side and starts to help direct Lynn's car out of the line.

She lowers her window.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Thanks Joel.

JOEL

Saw Avery jump out on ya early. She really should wait for the unloading area.

LYNN

Thanks again, Joel.

EXT. WADE HAMPTON HIGHSCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

The Ford Explorer drives away. Morning sun gleams off the windows of the school as STUDENTS continue to enter. Idyllic modern Americana.

INT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Lynn walks TOM and JENNIFER, a young couple, around a pretty colonial.

LYNN

Here's the master. Decent size closet. Windows let a lot of light in. I personally love natural light in the morning.

TOM

It's more our vibe than the last few.

He looks at his wife, waiting for confirmation on this. She nods that he's correct.

TOM (CONT'D)
I'm liking this one.

JENNIFER
Have there been any offers?

LYNN
This is a new listing. You put one
in and you have an advantage. Open
house isn't until this weekend.

Tom and Jennifer look at each other.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Recently re-done, including piping,
plumbing, expect this one to get
snatched up pretty quick.

Jennifer walks to the window.

JENNIFER
I do like natural light.

EXT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn walks the couple to their car.

LYNN
Talk it over. If this isn't right,
we'll find the one that is. If it
is, I'd place that offer before
this weekend.

She has quite the charm. The house is about to be sold.

TOM
Thank you so much. We'll definitely
be in touch.

JENNIFER
Thanks, Lynn.

LYNN
Call me.

The couple gets into their car and drives off.

INT. PUBLIX - DAY

Lynn pushes her shopping cart down the aisles, with her phone
resting in-between her shoulder and neck.

LYNN

(on phone)

Pretty sure it's gonna be an offer.
Their faces lit up. Seen it before.
Not the best poker faces. Feel like
revving up that grill?

INT. STATISTIC ADVANTAGES INC - JACKSON'S OFFICE - DAY

A small but growing business software company.

Family photos rest on his desk. A placard reading *Marketing Research Analyst* is proudly displayed.

Jackson looks at some paperwork while on the phone with his wife.

JACKSON

(on phone)

I don't think I have a choice.
Isn't it a little premature for
your victory steaks?

INT. PUBLIX - CONTINUOUS

Lynn is by the meat, looking at beef.

LYNN

(on phone)

Got a good feeling. Worst case
scenario, we have regular steaks.

JACKSON (O.S.)

(on phone)

Avery isn't the biggest fan of
steaks this week. They have fat,
apparently. Did you know that?

LYNN

(on phone)

That girl. I swear. Jacks, you
can't always play the quiet nice
guy. Gotta help me out.

INT. JACKSON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jackson fidgets. Exhales. He's heard this before. And before that.

JACKSON

(on phone)

Okay. Okay. I'm sorry I didn't say anything about the skirt.

LYNN (O.S.)

(on phone)

What'd you say to fatty steaks? Or more importantly, her science project?

Busted.

JACKSON

(on phone)

I'll talk to her tonight over your good-feeling-about-it steaks. Gotta go, love you.

He hangs up.

INT. PUBLIX - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn is being rung up. AMY, the young female cashier, slides her items. Her eyes occasionally sneak a few glances at CRAIG, a young male cashier.

LYNN

Amy. Look at me.

Amy stops and does as she's told.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Ask that boy out. Y'all would be cute together.

AMY

I can't ask him out, Mrs. Foster.

LYNN

Antiquated. Take charge.

Amy slides a big pack of soap across the counter.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Oh, I have a coupon for soap.

Lynn reaches into her pocket.

EXT. FOSTER HOME - DAY

Lynn grabs the last of the groceries, closing her car door.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Rusty, tail wagging, comes to greet her. She pets him.

LYNN

I got you more food. Yes, I did. I
got you so much more food.

She places the last bag on the counter and starts unloading the groceries.

INT. LYNN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Visible listings lay on either side of her laptop. A handful of framed photos of the family, chronicling Avery's life, are prominently on display.

She sits at her desk. Checks the time. Picks up her phone.

LYNN

(on phone)

Hey Celia, it's Lynn. Think I'm
gonna bite that bullet on the real
estate seminar. Why the hell not.
If you still have an extra ticket
for Sat, let me know. I'll make
Jackson handle Avery's stuff for a
change. Chat soon.

She hangs up and begins to rifle through papers.

EXT. WADE HAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

The cars are lining up, waiting to pick up their respective students. PEDESTRIAN traffic starts to pick up as the KIDS start making their way out.

Joel waves to various students.

Lynn's Ford Explorer pulls up to the line. A STUDENT gets into the car in front of her. It drives away and the Explorer inches forward.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

We focus on Lynn's face as she...

Switches radio stations to 93.7 FM for Avery.

Taps her fingers on the steering wheel while she waits.

Hears a few scattered screams. Stops tapping.

Hears the screams grow louder, more intense, with more voices joining in.

Then, she hears gunshots.

Horror washes over her.

LYNN

Avery!

She opens her car door and bolts out.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. RUSSELL SENATE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Lots of foot traffic up and down the hallways. We track a particular pair that belong to EVELYN, 30's, Senator Beauford's chief of staff.

She walks with purpose. Quickly. She turns the corner. And enters...

INT. TUCKER BEAUFORD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Regal. Southern. Blue carpet, white walls. BETTY (30's) sits at the reception desk. The oak door into the office is closed.

BETTY

He's on a call about it right now.

EVELYN

Still going in.

She opens the door to see SENATOR TUCKER BEAUFORD, 50's, graying hair, from the great state of South Carolina, sitting behind his mahogany desk. A small, decorative musket sits on the wood.

He hangs up the phone.

TUCKER

Evelyn.

EVELYN

Six dead, including one parent.
Fifteen injured.

He rubs his face in frustration.

TUCKER

I know. Fuck. Have to issue a statement. The armed guard stopped it. That's a plus for us.

EVELYN

I cleared your upcoming schedule for a trip to Greenville.

TUCKER

Sounds about right.

He motions for her to sit on one of the chairs across from his desk. She obliges.

EVELYN

Release a statement now, try to get ahead of this. Then prepare a speech for South Carolina.

TUCKER

Has anyone else tweeted or mentioned it?

EVELYN

Senator Schumer and the President so far.

TUCKER

Let's add me to that list. Quickly.

He pours himself a whiskey.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

How soon till we leave?

EVELYN

We should be able to gather everyone up and have you be a presence by tomorrow afternoon.

TUCKER

Roy coming?

EVELYN

I'll make sure he's with us on this. And I think it'd be best to bring the family with you. A sign of solidarity.

He takes a slow sip, like it's his lifeline.

TUCKER

How bad is it in the media?

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The couches are filled with MOURNERS. The television set plays CNN news coverage.

Lynn sits in the middle of their couch. Family pictures scattered around the living room.

Lynn's eyes are transfixed on a single spot. Unmoving and stoic. An internal cocktail of grief and anger mixing inside her.

NEWS ANCHOR

(on television)

Senator Tucker Beauford tweeted 'My heart is with the families of Wade Hampton High School. They will be in my thoughts and prayers.'

Senator Beauford is scheduled to go visit the high school personally in the coming days. The gun debate has reared it's head again. With public outcries coming back. This is the third shooting at a school since Parkland...

Jackson tries to play host, thanking the VISITORS and wishing them well as they leave. People have left prepared food for the grieving family and given their condolences.

Katie, Avery's friend, tears in her eyes, hands digging into themselves, stops short in front of Lynn.

KATIE

(barely audible)

Mrs. Foster...

Before anymore words can escape, Katie tumbles into Lynn's open arms. Her grief escaping.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. I miss her so much.

LYNN

Me too, honey.

As they part, the camera racks focus and lands on a picture of Avery smiling, full of life.

JACKSON

How are you holding up, Katie?

KATIE

If I hadn't been with Mr. Williamson after school, I could've...I would've been with Avery.

Jackson nods, unsure of what to say.

KATIE (CONT'D)

You don't think it's gonna happen here. To our school. To my friends.

JACKSON

No. No, you don't.

LATER IN THE EVENING:

Lynn still sits, transfixed, staring at the news.

CELIA, 40's, Lynn's close friend, cautiously sits next to her. Sounds of Jackson cleaning up in the kitchen bleed into the scene.

CELIA

Anything. Anything at all. I can't imagine.

LYNN

If I didn't call for her...

CELIA

No, Lynn. Do not do this to yourself.

LYNN

I thought she had time to get away. I really did.

NEWS ANCHOR

(on tv)

More info is emerging on Roger Winter, the eighteen-year-old senior who terrified Wade Hampton this afternoon by shooting students as they were on their way to be picked up after school. The AR-15 used to carry out the shooting was purchased legally by Roger at the Palmetto State Armory in Greenville, South Carolina.

Jackson enters and goes to turn off the news.

LYNN
 (terse)
 Leave it.

JACKSON
 Lynn, how does this help? I don't
 want to look at him. Don't want him
 in this house.

LYNN
 Leave it.

ON SCREEN: A photo of the shooter. His shaved head, acned
 face, and vacant eyes in front of Lynn once more.

Jackson moves over to console her.

JACKSON
 Why are you watching this?

LYNN
 You didn't see her look at me. Her
 eyes register she was shot.

CELIA
 I can't imagine.
 (to Jackson)
 I told her, we're right down the
 street should you need anything.

JACKSON
 Thank you, Celia.

CELIA
 I'm so sorry.

Celia gets up and grabs her coat. Jackson walks her to the
 door. Roger's image once again appears on the screen. Over
 the image.

NEWS ANCHOR
 (on television)
 At age sixteen, Roger underwent a
 mandatory psychiatric evaluation.
 The result of which was a
 recommendation of involuntary
 admission to a mental institution.
 But his father, it appears,
 protested it. Roger's posts on
 social media were ominous to say
 the least. Most recently posting
 '*The world will notice me. Soon I
 will be part of something no one
 can ignore,*' on his Facebook page.
 (MORE)

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

He was treated for severe depression, taking many mental health medications. His mother lost her battle with cancer two weeks ago. Officials are wondering if this could've triggered him. With this information, the question arises, how someone with this history of mental illness was able to procure his weapon of choice so easily.

Lynn stands. A pulsing beat; her chest heavy. She starts violently throwing her fists at the television with all her strength.

LYNN

You son of a bitch!

BAM! BAM!

JACKSON

Lynn!

He runs over to her and pulls her away. Lynn collapses in his arms.

Celia looks as if she might try to say something to console, but nothing comes out.

Lynn looks at her husband and her friend.

LYNN

I'm sorry.

She excuses herself. As she hurries out of the room...

CELIA

You have nothing to be sorry for.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn stares at her reflection. Her sorrow reflects back. She pulls a towel to her face and screams into it.

Beat. Silence.

Lynn pounds her anger into the bathroom door as she punches it. Harder. Harder. HARDER.

JACKSON (O.S.)

Lynn!

She stops. Waits a moment. Jackson creeps in.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
This isn't what she...

LYNN
Don't. There is nothing about this
she would've wanted.

JACKSON
Come here.

He holds his wife again. She wraps her bloodied hands around him and buries her head in his chest.

INT. LYNN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The lights are off. All that illuminates Lynn's face is the dull light of her computer. She's going down a rabbit hole.

Jackson flicks the lights on.

JACKSON
You okay? It's three in the
morning.

LYNN
I can't sleep.

JACKSON
Maybe we could just lay in bed,
talk? Trade memories?

Lynn looks up from her computer for the first time.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
You've barely said anything.
Please, don't go inside yourself.

Silence. Lynn goes back to her computer. No response.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
I just lost Avery. I can't lose
you, too.

Lynn pauses momentarily, but betrays nothing. Instead, she focuses even more on her computer. Jackson walks over.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

Lynn takes a beat. Then...

LYNN

I could try to sleep. Wake up and hope and wish today was a bad dream. Then, have it sink in again. Relive it all. Have to process the news that Avery is dead all over again. I can't wake up to a world where she isn't here.

Jackson places a consoling arm on her shoulder. He looks like he could crack, but all his focus goes to the rhythm of his calming caress.

LYNN (CONT'D)

She could've been safe. If it wasn't for me. I'm supposed to protect her.

JACKSON

You have to stop. You didn't buy the gun and shoot everyone. There was nothing you could've done. It just... happened.

Jackson seems on the verge of losing it but composes himself.

LYNN

You lost your daughter. You can cry.

He swallows his emotion. Lynn goes back to her laptop.

LYNN (CONT'D)

The news was right. This is the third shooting since Parkland. Newtown was over four years ago. Someone has to be held responsible for this lack of change. This can't be okay anymore.

JACKSON

It's never been okay.

LYNN

Avery is not another statistic. She is my daughter.

Jackson leans in and kisses her forehead.

JACKSON

She will always be our daughter.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

The pews are filled. White flowers line the aisles. Front and center is Avery's casket. A picture of her, full of life, sits above it.

A PRIEST addresses the mourners. Lynn and Jackson sit front and center. Lynn can't stop shaking.

All is eerily silent. The Priest's voice echoes...

PRIEST

We are gathered here today to say
farewell to Avery Foster and to
commit her into the hands of God.
God, our Father, we entrust Avery
into your hands.

The Priest lets three hand-fulls of earth fall on top of the casket.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

From dust you came, to dust you
shall return. You gave her life,
receive her in your peace and give
her, through Jesus Christ, a joyful
resurrection.

Lynn, hands in the prayer position, rocks back and forth as she cries.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

The service is coming to a close. The Priest walks over to the casket and places his hand upon it.

PRIEST

Give her, O Lord, your peace and
let your eternal light shine upon
her.

CONGREGATION

Amen.

Recessional music starts to play as everyone rises.

Quick shots of FAMILY MEMBERS alongside various MEMBERS of the community, Joel, Katie, and Celia included, giving the grieving parents their condolences, replete with hugs and tears.

Lynn walks over and places her open palms on her daughter's casket.

A painful moment of silence until...

LYNN

I love you. I will always love you.
I am so sorry. I promise you, I
promise you, this will never be
okay. Goodbye, my sweet baby.

Lynn waits as if she is hoping for a response that will never come. In the silence that follows, she releases her hands.

Jackson places a hand on her shoulder.

JACKSON

We have to take her.

Lynn sinks further into the floor as Jackson and the other pall bearers lift the casket.

EXT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn notices some news crews. Cameras.

LYNN

(to Jackson)
What's going on?

Tucker Beauford, crisp suit, appears and lends Lynn a somber handshake.

TUCKER

Senator Beauford. I wanted to offer
my condolences personally. It was a
beautiful service. Avery would've
been proud.

LYNN

Thank you.

She's in a bit of shock. Tucker moves over and delivers another somber handshake to Jackson. Jackson seems genuinely touched.

Lynn eyes the photo op.

MELANIE, late 30's, Lynn's sister-in-law and LANCE, late 30's, Jackson's brother, head to Lynn. SAM, their 8-year-old son in tow.

Melanie is pregnant and just starting to show. Lynn glances at her belly and gives a defeated smile.

MELANIE

It was a beautiful service.

SAM

I'm sorry Aunt Lynn. I really liked Avery.

Lynn smiles away her tears, patting his little head.

LYNN

She really liked you, too.

Jackson joins the group, hugging his brother.

LANCE

Can't believe this happened. I'm so sorry, Jacks.

Jackson nods.

JACKSON

Thanks for being here.

LANCE

You know we're always just a phone call away. And, if you need anything, anything at all, Louisville is just a few hour plane ride.

Lance places a comforting hand on his brother's shoulder.

Lynn watches her husband with her in-laws. Her focus then shifts to the hearse that holds her daughter.

EXT. CEMETERY - EVENING

Lynn sits cross legged on the ground in front of Avery's grave.

Jackson comes over and places a hand on her shoulder.

LYNN

I can't leave her yet.

JACKSON

You have to eat something.

LYNN

How are you hungry?

JACKSON
I'm just trying to help you.

LYNN
A few more minutes. I can't leave
her yet.

Jackson sits next to Lynn and holds her hand. Lynn edges, ever so subtly, in the opposite direction of her husband, alone, solitarily distraught.

JACKSON
Okay, a few more minutes.

INT. FOSTER HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lynn heads to Avery's room...

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lynn finds Rusty laying next to Avery's bed. He lets out a cry. She pats his head.

LYNN
I know boy. I miss her, too.

Lynn gets into her bed. The room is untouched from when Avery was last in it. Clothes on the floor. Notebooks and makeup scattered on her desk.

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - MORNING

The sun peacefully washes through the blinds. Lynn stirs and wakes. Rubs her eyes. It all sinks in again.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn sits motionless at the kitchen table. Jackson hurries in, suit and tie.

JACKSON
Please, eat something. Good folks
brought us food.

LYNN
(incredulous)
Are you going to work?

Jackson smooths out his tie as his attempt at a response.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Unbelievable.

JACKSON
Stopping by. Seeing about the work
I've missed.
(beat)
Lynn, I'm doing the best I can.

Lynn studies her feet, uncomfortably shuffling on the tiles.

Jackson moves to a small TV that sits on the counter. He turns to the local news.

ON SCREEN: Tucker Beauford preparing to make a speech in front of the Wade Hampton High School.

LYNN
I don't want to see that place.

JACKSON
I'd like to hear what he has to say.

ON TELEVISION: Tucker Beauford stands at a podium. The high school behind him.

TUCKER
My heart goes out to the families of Greenville. The families of Wade Hampton Highschool. Just three short days ago a student opened fire behind me and the lives of this community were altered forever. To the grieving families I say, you are not alone in this. We, the people of Greenville, and the American people, are with you. This unspeakable tragedy will not stand in the great state of South Carolina or any other state in this great country. This week's tragic violence has no place here in America. The system is broken. The one salutary effect we can take away from the tragedy is that the school's armed guard was able to intervene quickly and save the day. Our children should feel safe, not afraid, in school. School is and will remain a safe place for our kids. I would like to assure the people in this community that this will not go on.

(MORE)

TUCKER (CONT'D)

I offer my condolences to the families whose children were taken from them far too early. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Lynn watches him speak, almost in a daze.

LYNN

Save the day? Did he say save the day? How could he say that?!

INT. BEAUFORD HOME - MORNING

This is a true Southern home. It could be featured on a home decorating show.

A beautiful dining table with Heirloom silverware. Monogrammed napkins. A trumeau mirror. Faded coral curtains on big windows. Framed art.

Tucker is clearly well-funded.

MARIE BEAUFORD (50's), Tucker's wife, looks like she's a perfect first lady in training, decked out in diamonds, comes over to the couch.

MARIE

That speech of yours was moving. I had to dab my eyes.

TUCKER

Thank you, love. Evelyn and Roy pulled it together nicely.

Barbara, 16, Tucker's daughter, walks in. She's distracted by her Ipad. She is followed by her little brother, DAKOTA, 9, snapping at her heels.

MARIE

Don't ignore your brother.

Barbara sighs.

MARIE (CONT'D)

He just loves you.

DAKOTA

I love you!

BARBARA

You're annoying.

TUCKER
What'd you guys think?

Dakota runs and hugs his father.

DAKOTA
Great speech!

TUCKER
Thanks, buddy!

Barbara texts away. Her parents wait.

BARBARA
Good. It was good. I wish you
didn't have to do it.

TUCKER
We can go back to DC soon. I have a
few things to do here and some
other...

BARBARA
Because it's a tragedy, not an
inconvenience. We shouldn't have to
keep addressing children being
shot.

MARIE
(serious)
Honey.

BARBARA
It was a good speech.

She locks eyes with her father.

TUCKER
Don't imply I don't care about
those families. About those
children. I'm here cause I do.

BARBARA
I'm not questioning whether you
care. Just don't know if I agree
with what it is you care about.

MARIE
Barbara! Your father...

She storms off. Marie rubs Tucker's arm in consolation.

TUCKER

She's supposed to challenge me at this age.

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lynn has the news on as she sits on the couch with her laptop in front of her.

She's researching. Tucker comes on the television to talk to a PUNDIT. His words catch her attention.

TUCKER

(on screen)

I just don't think gun control would've stopped this tragedy. This is a mental health issue. The help Roger needed was clearly overlooked. We can't use this tragedy to push any agenda. Now is not the time.

PUNDIT

(on screen)

You said in your speech you want to stop future attacks and that such a violent act has no place in America. Wouldn't gun control help prevent future attacks?

TUCKER

(on screen)

Again, this is not a gun issue, in my opinion. Someone that hellbent on killing would've found a way.

Lynn abruptly turns off the T.V.

LYNN

Fuck you.

She starts Googling Senator Beauford.

LYNN'S POV: A Huffington Post article showing Senator Beauford as receiving massive contributions from the NRA.

She goes to Govtrack.com and searches her Senator.

LYNN'S POV: Quick shots of "no" votes on - Background Check Completion Act - Automatic Gunfire Prevention Act - Ban of bump fire stocks.

A YES vote on The Conceal Carry Reciprocity Act.

She closes her laptop, slowly, letting the information process. Her jaw tenses as she chews on her anger.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

Lynn sits at the table. Jackson microwaves some of the food that was brought over.

LYNN
Can't believe you.

JACKSON
The work's been piling up. Our bills don't stop, they don't give their condolences. We need to pay them. I'm trying. For us. To continue with the little we have left.

Lynn, lost in her own world, doesn't respond. Then, after a beat...

LYNN
Did you know Tucker Beauford is one of the senators receiving the most NRA funding? That he's against any stricter gun laws. Even after this?

JACKSON
That, that's what you've chosen to do instead of grieving together?

The microwaves is done. He stirs the food and lets it stand.

LYNN
He's scum. Insincere and vile.
Fucking scum!

JACKSON
Pointing fingers won't help Avery. It won't help you. If there is anyone at fault it's that shooter, Roger Winter.

LYNN
Don't you *ever* say his name.

He makes a plate for Lynn and brings it to her.

JACKSON
This will never be easy. But, I know she's with God.
(MORE)

JACKSON (CONT'D)

He's looking after her. There's nothing else we can do. It's in God's hands.

LYNN

Where were God's hands when that kid shot Avery?

JACKSON

Grieve this with me. It's the hardest thing we'll ever have to do, but I don't want to lose you in the process.

LYNN

Grieve it? Get to a place where I'm okay with the fact that Avery is dead? That's not possible for me. Something has to be done. We can't just let our daughter be murdered. What if four years ago, our Senator had some balls or real *Christian* compassion for his fellow man and pushed for some change. Avery might still be here.

JACKSON

You don't know that.

Lynn looks ready to kill someone.

LYNN

You grieve and eventually move on. I will *never* be able to move on.

Jackson sighs and extends his hand. Lynn looks at it but doesn't offer hers.

LYNN (CONT'D)

I'm going to do something about it. I'll get justice for Avery.

Jackson's hand retreats. He's hit hard by the disconnect. Lynn's eyes drift off. A plan hatching in her mind.

EXT. PALMETTO STATE ARMORY - DAY

Lynn's car pulls into the parking lot. She gets out and looks at it for a beat before moving forward.

INT. PALMETTO STATE ARMORY - MOMENTS LATER

It's a mega gun-loving store. AR-15s line the walls. Some on sale. Lynn's head spins as she is surrounded by the firepower around her.

Some CUSTOMERS mill about. DAVE, 40's, a sales associate approaches and snaps Lynn out of her daze.

DAVE

Hello, ma'am. Anything I can help you with?

LYNN

Yes, hi. In the market for a gun.

DAVE

We appreciate your business. What are you looking to do with a firearm?

LYNN

Safety. Home protection.

DAVE

Let's get you some protection.

AT A COUNTER: A glass shelf holds various firearms.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Let's give this one a try. It's lightweight. Want to make sure it's comfortable.

He hands her a Smith and Wesson Shield 9mm.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Try aiming it. See how it feels.

Lynn holds it in her hands. It's surreal. It takes her a moment to grip it. Then, she aims.

DAVE (CONT'D)

You likin' the feel?

She nods that she is.

DAVE (CONT'D)

That one there is about one-eighty plus tax. Then bullets, of course.

She grips the gun tighter.

LYNN
I'll take it.

DAVE
Do you have a South Carolina
drivers license?

LYNN
I do.

DAVE
Perfect.

She gets out her drivers license and hands it over. Dave inspects it briefly. Then, he hands her back her license and a 4473 standard form.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Just some brief paperwork to fill
out.

Lynn gives a perfunctory smile and takes the form. She leans on the glass counter.

Her POV: The form. She fills out her information.

She checks *no* on boxes like - *Are you subject to a restraining order* - *Are you an illegal alien* - *Are you a fugitive from justice* - *Have you ever renounced your United States citizenship* - among others.

Within minutes, she is done and hands it back to Dave.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Thank you. Gotta make a quick call,
make sure you're felony free.
Should only take a few minutes.

He picks up a store phone and calls for the background check. Lynn waits. She waits. He hangs up.

DAVE (CONT'D)
You're good to go. For ammo, I'd
recommend the Plano hundred count
ammo boxes. Four bucks each.

LYNN
I'll take two of those.

DAVE
Feel free to use our range to get
more accustomed. If you have time.
That'll be one-hundred-and-ninety
two-dollars.

She gets out her VISA and hands it over.

INT. PALMETTO STATE ARMORY - SHOOTING RANGE - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn, with big ear muffs on, loads her new gun in her private booth.

After she places a few bullets in the clip, it gets harder, and she starts struggling to get the last two in.

LYNN

Come on. Get in there.

Success. She readies herself and aims. BANG. BANG. BANG. She stops. Deep exhale. She aims again. BANG.

An intensity brews with each subsequent bang. BANG. BANG.

She loads the clip again. Again struggling with the last few bullets. All loaded. She fires away, rapidly, with hatred behind her eyes.

EXT. PALMETTO STATE ARMORY - AFTERNOON

Lynn, with baleful determination, walks back to her car.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - MOMENTS LATER

As she is about to pull out of the parking lot, she stops and looks in her bag at her new gun and the ammo. Silence aside from the rapid clicking of her turn signal.

A car zooms past. Once it's gone, she turns out of the parking lot.

INT. DUE SOUTH - AFTERNOON

Lynn sinks in a comfy couch in this trendy, loft-style coffee shop.

She has a required coffee in front of her. Checking her surroundings, she slowly opens her laptop and connects to wifi.

She GOOGLES Tucker Beauford.

The music giving the place ambiance now plays Taylor Swift's "Delicate." Lynn stops, her eyes registering the song.

She sinks into the couch, fighting the tears that have snuck up on her.

INT. TUCKER BEAUFORD'S GREENVILLE OFFICE - AFTERNOON

A little more done up than his DC office.

Tucker sits at his desk. His two staffers, Evelyn and ROY, 20', sit across from him.

ROY

Usual backlash, but mainly along party lines.

TUCKER

Let's keep trying to stay firm on the tragedy aspect. Polls?

EVELYN

Holding slightly steadier than expected.

ROY

You may have to take a strong anti-gun stance, even if it's a small one. Like, retract your support for legal silencers? Something that is cosmetic for the voter, but doesn't upset the donor.

TUCKER

Are there any students organizing from Wade?

EVELYN

Not that we know of. Mostly on social media. A few hashtags to be aware of.

TUCKER

Why is it that people jump to blame guns? One fucked up psycho doesn't dictate our legislation.

EVELYN

I would hold back on your inter-state open carry bill for a few weeks.

TUCKER

I know. I'm getting pressure to pull back.

EVELYN

Give it a few weeks. It'll have a better shot when this blows over.

INT. DUE SOUTH - AFTERNOON

Lynn, trying to regroup from her emotional ambush, scrolls on her laptop, sipping her coffee.

GOOGLE SEARCH: Tucker Beauford's family. Dakota, Marie, and Barbara all pop up.

LYNN

Perfect little family.

Another sip.

INT. TUCKER BEAUFORD'S GREENVILLE OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The three sit in silent contemplation.

ROY

I'd say a few more days.

TUCKER

I can do programs from DC.

EVELYN

Sir, it's really important for the community to feel your presence. To feel you're part of it. In it with them. The city will feel that, and so will the country.

TUCKER

No town halls. Okay. Hear me? I don't want to be crucified over this. I need a drink.

EVELYN

I think we should organize a vigil instead. Let people grieve. Let the grief overtake the anger. You and your wife will be a strong presence there. Keep you with the community.

Tucker nods in approval as he grabs a bottle of Woodford Reserve and a glass.

TUCKER

Thirsty?

Roy and Evelyn nod. He pours three glasses.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Alan Jackson tells me it's five o'clock somewhere.

They clink their glasses in a cheers.

INT. DUE SOUTH - AFTERNOON

Lynn is feverishly taking notes. Addresses and information.

GOOGLE SEARCH: Tucker Beauford's office. ANSWER: 130 South Mainstreet Greenville, SC 29601.

Lynn's lips curl in a troubling smile.

EXT. TUCKER BEAUFORD'S GREENVILLE OFFICE - EVENING

The sun is on its curtain call. Dusk fills the air.

Tucker, Evelyn, and Roy exit the offices.

TUCKER

Can you downplay any backlash on twitter tonight? Liberals are being shits.

EVELYN

The president backed your speech.

TUCKER

Only hurtin' with the blue guys.

Down the street we see Lynn's Ford explorer parked.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

She watches them talk. They laugh. Her new gun resting peacefully in the passengers seat.

She reaches over and grabs her Smith and Wesson. She clutches it as she watches.

The senator and his staffers disperse.

EXT. TUCKER BEAUFORD'S GREENVILLE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Lynn gets out of her car and walks around the grounds. Her phone rings. It's Jackson. She hits ignore.

She looks at her phone and then back at his office. She looks something up and dials a number.

VOICE (O.S.)
 (from phone)
 Augusta Grill, how can I help you?

LYNN
 (on phone)
 Hi, I'm calling to make a reservation for Tucker Beauford tonight.

VOICE (O.S.)
 (from phone)
 Great. How many will be in the party?

She hangs up. Touches the phone to her chin as she thinks. Calls another number.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (from phone)
 Trappe Door.

LYNN
 (on phone)
 Hi, I'm calling to make a reservation for Tucker Beauford.

VOICE (O.S.)
 Sure. We have availability. What time would the Senator like?

She hangs up. Looks through her phone and dials again.

VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (on phone)
 Thanks for calling Halls Chop House.

LYNN
 (on phone)
 Hi, I'm calling to make a reservation for Tucker Beauford.

VOICE (O.S.)
 (on phone)
 Oh, um, it says here the Senator is scheduled to dine with us at seven-thirty. Would he like us to change the time?

LYNN
 (on phone)
 No, that's perfect. Sorry. I guess
 another staffer did it and didn't
 tell me. Have a great day.

She hangs up.

EXT. HALLS CHOPHOUSE - EVENING

Lynn walks up to the restaurant. Her phone rings again.
 Again, it's Jackson. She angrily answers.

LYNN
 (on phone)
 What?

JACKSON (O.S.)
 (on phone)
 What? Really? What? Where the hell
 have you been? I was worried!

LYNN
 (on phone)
 Clearing my head today. That's all.
 Be home soon.

She hangs up and enters...

INT. HALLS CHOPHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

This place is a five-star restaurant from the decor to the
 food. Long wood floors and low hanging lights.

Lynn walks up to the HOSTESS.

HOSTESS
 Evening, ma'am.

LYNN
 Evening. Just getting a drink at
 the bar.

HOSTESS
 If you see a chair, it's yours.

Lynn smiles at her and walks through the restaurant. She puts
 her coat on an open chair at the bar.

LYNN
 (to bartender)
 Restroom?

The BARTENDER gives her a warm smile.

BARTENDER
Down the hall to your left.

LYNN
Thank you. Be right back.

Lynn walks around the restaurant, subtly stealing glances at the various tables.

She passes the restrooms and keeps going. In the back, she spots Tucker eating dinner with his family. Lynn pauses.

She reaches into her pocket...

And pulls out her cellphone. She hits ignore on Jackson's call.

INT. RESTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn washes her hands at the sink. Barbara enters. Lynn recognizes her and watches her as she goes into a stall.

She waits and stares at the stall. Once again, she moves her focus to the mirror. Something rumbling around in her head.

FLUSH. Barbara comes out of the stall and notices Lynn.

LYNN
Hi.

Barbara gives her a once over as she washes her hands.

BARBARA
Hey.

LYNN
Bad date. Killing time. You'll know soon enough. Well, hopefully not. How old?

Barbara relaxes.

BARBARA
Sixteen. Sorry about your date.

LYNN
I have a daughter around your age. Two years younger.

Barbara's demeanor shifts.

BARBARA
Does she go to Wade Hampton?

Lynn nods.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Oh my God, is she okay?

Lynn nods again, albeit a bit painfully.

LYNN
Yes.

BARBARA
Thank God. I'm praying for all those families.

LYNN
Glad they're in your thoughts and prayers. Mine, too. It's shocking how easy it is for something like that to happen.

Tension in the quick silence. Lynn smiles.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Nice talking with you.

Barbara smiles as she exits. Alone, Lynn deflates.

INT. HALLS CHOPHOUSE - BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn reclaims her seat. The Bartender comes over.

LYNN
A glass of the Row 11 Pinot,
please.

The Bartender nods and goes off to fetch the wine. Lynn sinks in her chair and looks back toward Tucker's table.

TUCKER'S TABLE:

The family eats. Dakota is cutting his steak.

MARIE
Dakota, smaller pieces. No choking tonight.

TUCKER
That John King doesn't pull any punches.

BARBARA
Do you really think gun control
wouldn't have helped?

MARIE
Barbara.

BARBARA
Am I not allowed to have an
opinion? I don't receive the
contributions.

TUCKER
Watch it. Yes, you can have an
opinion. I'd prefer a different
dinner conversation tonight, but to
answer your question, I don't think
it would've.

BARBARA
I'm not recording you, Dad.

MARIE
Mind your manners and eat your
filet. Don't talk to your father
like that. Show him some respect.

Barbara takes a sarcastic bite of her steak.

TUCKER
I understand being young. And I
understand being idealistic, but do
you think I am honestly okay with a
high school being shot up in my
state? Nowhere in the constitution
does it suggest the right to bear
arms means a cavalier attitude
toward death from guns.

BARBARA
I met a woman whose kid goes to
Wade Hampton.

The table falls silent.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Her daughter is okay.

MARIE
Where did you meet this woman?

BARBARA
Bathroom.

DAKOTA
Did you guys kiss in the bathroom?

MARIE
Dakota, eat your steak.

TUCKER
I hope you told her that her family
and all the families were in your
prayers.

BARBARA
I did.

AT THE BAR:

Lynn orders a second Pinot and finishes off her current glass
with a final sip.

LYNN
(to herself)
You really gonna shoot a Senator?

Lynn traces her finger along the rim of her glass.

LYNN (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Avery, baby, I miss you. I want you
to come home. Come home.

Lynn's self-talk is interrupted by the bartender placing her
second glass of wine on the bar.

BARTENDER
Ma'am, you okay?

Lynn nods. She takes a sip and goes into her mind.

EXT. WADE HAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Lynn gets out of her car to hug Avery.

LYNN
There's my girl.

AVERY
Okay, okay. Mom, enough.

The embrace stops. Roger, the future shooter, approaches and
gently, almost like a scared cat, taps Avery on the shoulder.

ROGER
Excuse me. Hey, you dropped this.

He hands her a piece of paper. Avery smiles.

AVERY

Oh my God. That's amazing. Thank
you so much.

Roger nods and waves to Lynn, who smile back.

INT. HALLS CHOPHOUSE - BAR - NIGHT

Chills run down Lynn's spine at the realization she was once just a few feet from him. She adjusts herself, trying to move the memory away.

Grabbing her wine, she empties the glass with a generous gulp and sets it back on the bar.

BARTENDER

(re: Lynn's empty glass)
Another one?

LYNN

Yes, but I'll close out after.

She hands the bartender her credit card. Behind her she sees Tucker's family leaving. Tucker stops to shake hands with someone.

The Bartender brings the bill and another glass of wine.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Lynn distractedly fills out the tip and signs while watching Tucker's family. She takes a big gulp of her wine and leaves.

EXT. HALLS CHOPHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn runs to her car. She fiddles with her keys.

LYNN

Fuck, fuck, come on.

She opens the door and gets in.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

She drives up by the valet and waits. The Beauford family is in view. They wait for their car.

EXT. 303 CRESCENT AVE - NIGHT

The Beauford's car pulls into the driveway of a red brick four bedroom, spacious house.

A few cars down we see Lynn's Ford Explorer park. Headlights go off. Dark.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

She jots down the address in a notebook.

LYNN

Well aren't you lucky to be able to afford such a nice house.

She looks at her gun in the passengers seat.

LYNN (CONT'D)

So safe and removed from us all.

INT. FOSTER HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lynn tries to enter as quietly as possible.

JACKSON (O.S.)

Lynn?!

Busted.

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson sits across from Lynn. He does not look happy.

JACKSON

Out...okay...out, where?

LYNN

Halls.

JACKSON

Halls Chophouse? By yourself?

She nods.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

What are you not telling me? What's happening in your head?

Lynn fidgets. About all Jackson's going to get from her.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

We should be together on this. I need you. This isn't easy for me either.

Lynn loses it.

LYNN

You go back to work. You try to move on like life has any semblance of normalcy? That isn't in shit together. I'm nowhere near on that page, nor am I ever gonna be Jackson. Avery got shot. She got shot in the back, running to safety. Gunned down and no one is doing anything. They're praying. Big fucking deal. Avery's still dead. She's in their thoughts. Avery's still dead. And all this mourning, all this focus on us and our little high school and our daughter is gonna disappear next week or the week after when some other piece of shit gets his hands on an AR-15 and kills children. And when that happens, Avery will still be dead.

A tense beat.

JACKSON

This is a tragedy. Finding someone to blame. Finding some outlet for your anger isn't gonna bring our daughter back. You're acting like this just happened to us, when this happened to five other families.

LYNN

Is that supposed to make me feel better?

Jackson goes to respond. Lynn turns away.

JACKSON

Reverend Phillips is starting a grief group at the church for the families. First meeting is tomorrow. I'd love it if you'd go with me.

She doesn't respond.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
I'm begging you. For us.

LYNN
So we can, what? Go on with our
lives. Retire. Go on vacations. Get
a house in Hilton Head. *Enjoy our
lives?* Do you *really* see that
future anymore?

JACKSON
Not the same one, no.

Lynn approaches Jackson, the wooden floor creaking underneath her feet.

LYNN
I'm not gonna go to some grief
group and pray to the same God for
guidance that took Avery. That God
is dead. Shot in the back just like
my little girl. If it becomes a
resurrection group, you let me
know.

Lynn storms off and slams the door. Jackson cradles his head in his hands.

Rusty comes over and gives him some consoling licks. He pets his dog's head.

JACKSON
I know, boy. I know.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Jackson, a little tired, but still trying to go on, sips a cup of coffee. Rusty keeps him company. Jackson starts to make eggs.

He cracks two into a bowl and scrambles. He reaches into the spice cabinet for the Tarragon and sprinkles some in. Suddenly, he stops and stares intently at the eggs.

He pushes them aside.

JACKSON
(defeated)
She's not here anymore.

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson peeks in to see Lynn asleep in Avery's bed. The room is still untouched.

Jackson sighs. Rusty goes to lie down on the floor next to Avery's bed.

INT. JACKSON'S OFFICE - MORNING

Jackson picks up his cell and texts Lynn: *Please come tonight.*

SHELLY, a co-worker, enters.

SHELLY

Jackson, I hate to ask, considering, but Robert wanted me to know if you had the progress report regarding the adoption rate for our new software.

Jackson rubs his eyes and shakes his head.

JACKSON

Not yet, I'm sorry. I know I said I'd get it in. Soon. I promise.

SHELLY

You don't have to explain.

Shelly looks at him like he's a lost dog she wants to give food.

INT. LYNN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lynn, still in her clothes from the night before, sifts through papers.

She picks up the phone. Leaves a voicemail...

LYNN

(on phone)

Tom, it's Lynn. I'm going to pass you along to Celia. She's a great real estate agent. I trust her. She will take care of you guys and she'll continue where we left off. The delay shouldn't affect yours and Jennifer's offer on the house. I'm sorry, I just...I can't...I'm gonna be taking some time off.

(MORE)

LYNN (CONT'D)
Celia, will handle it. I've given
her your number. Um, thank you.

She hangs up. Her cell lights up with Jackson's text. She reads it and puts the phone down.

Back on the computer. A salient headline at the top of her Google search reads: *Senator Beauford to Attend Vigil for the Students of Wade Thompson High.*

Her eyes lock on the article.

EXT. CEMETERY - AVERY'S GRAVE - AFTERNOON

Lynn sits down on the grass.

LYNN
I keep waiting for you to wake up.

She looks up at the sunny sky. The trees. A world at peace.

LYNN (CONT'D)
God, I hope heaven's real.

She rubs her faces and removes a tear or two.

LYNN (CONT'D)
I don't know what to do with
myself, baby.

She collects herself.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Let's see. Rusty misses you. Your
daddy says hi. He's back at work,
but please don't take any offense
to that. He, he's lost. We both
are.

She rubs her hands in the grass.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Everytime I close my eyes, I see
you. Still praying this is all a
bad dream, and soon I'll wake up.

EXT. PETTIGRU STREET - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Balloons are in front of the Foster's house. An eleven-year-old Avery exits. Lynn and Jackson follow. Lynn runs in front of her and holds up her hands.

LYNN

Don't move, birthday girl.

AVERY

Another present? It's a bike? Is it a Schwinn?

JACKSON

I told you she'd figure...

LYNN

It's not a bike. Sorry. Couldn't get you a bike this year.

Avery pouts. Lynn runs behind the house and comes back with a Schwinn. Avery loses it with excitement, hugging both her parents.

LYNN (CONT'D)

It's a bike!

AVERY

I love you. I love you. Thank you. Thank you.

LYNN

Always a helmet. Hear me?

AVERY

But I don't have a helmet.

JACKSON

Is this not yours?

Avery turns to see her father holding out a helmet. She grabs it, wears it, and jumps on her bike. And, she's off, riding down the street.

LYNN

I should run beside her.

JACKSON

She's fine. Look at her.

Avery circles back around, laughing, having the time of her life.

LYNN

Look for cars!

JACKSON

Relax a little. She's doing great. She loves it.

EXT. CEMETERY - AVERY'S GRAVE - AFTERNOON

Lynn smiles.

LYNN

You loved that bike. You'd ride that thing everywhere. I'd be in the kitchen with the window down and I could hear you singing and laughing as you were riding home. I keep going to that window and listening for that sound, hoping it'll be you, laughing and singing and coming home.

Lynn sits in silence, the wind gently blowing her hair.

LYNN (CONT'D)

I'm going to get justice for you, baby. I promise you that.

INT. JACKSON'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Head down, Jackson's languid movements betray his attempt to move on with his life. To get back to work.

A knock interrupts his daze. He lifts his head. ROBERT, 40's, and an apologetic grin are at his door.

JACKSON

Sorry about the adoption rate progress report.

ROBERT

Don't worry. Get it in this week if you can. I feel like the numbers are good. You were excited about it and I trust you.

Jackson nods.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I put a call into Henry's Smokehouse. Gonna have them fix you up some barbecue. On the company. Just pick it up on your way home. Don't want you and Lynn worrying about food.

JACKSON

Thank you, I really appreciate that.

Jackson attempts to go back to work, clearly fighting the urge to fall apart.

INT. FOSTER HOME - GARAGE - AFTERNOON

Lots of clutter. This is more of a storage unit that somehow holds their cars.

Click. The light goes on, illuminating the clutter. Lynn walks in and looks around. There, in the corner, she spots the Schwinn from Avery's birthday.

She walks over and traces a finger across it's dusty handlebars.

RACK FOCUS: To a trunk off in the distance that catches Lynn's eye.

She opens the trunk. In it are mementos from Avery's life.

Quick cuts as she pulls out Avery's baby blanket. She pauses. Gently caresses it.

Avery's ceramic handprints from the hospital. Lynn lets out a weak smile.

She grabs an old drawing of Avery's. A crayon version of the Fosters. Each member with a wide smile drawn on their faces.

Lynn now sits against the wall with the rest of the contents of Avery's life strewn about the garage. Her head in her hands.

EXT. BEAUFORD HOME - EVENING

Lynn's Ford Explorer pulls up across the street. The headlights go out. The engine turns off.

INT. FOSTER HOME - GARAGE - EVENING

Jackson's car pulls in and turns off. He opens his door and stops mid-exit, resting on his car as he looks around. Avery's memorabilia is still scattered about.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

Jackson enters the kitchen and drops off his bag from Henry's Smokehouse.

JACKSON
Lynn. You home?

EXT. BEAUFORD HOME - EVENING

Lynn's Ford Explorer sits parked on the road.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

Headlights wash over the darkness. Lynn ducks a little.
Tucker's Cadillac pulls in. He gets out and enters his home.

Lynn grabs her door handle and gets her gun with the other. A tense beat. She opens her door.

EXT. BEAUFORD HOME - CONTINUOUS

Lynn, gun in hand, takes a few steps toward the house. She looks around. The coast seems clear.

A step closer. Another step....

Her gun hand trembles. Her body tenses.

LYNN
Come on, Lynn. You can do this.

She inches closer...

A NEIGHBOR'S front door opens. Lynn quickly turns around and hurries back to her car.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn sits in silence, letting the running engine serenade the night.

LYNN
Fuck, fuck, fuck!

She starts passionately slamming her fists into the leather of the steering wheel. Then, stops.

She starts sobbing.

LYNN (CONT'D)
I can't.

INT. CHURCH - CLASSROOM - NIGHT

God is ever present in the room. A handful of PARENTS sit in a circle with REVEREND PHILLIPS. Some parents are stoic, some teary-eyed, some looking ready to burst with anger.

Jackson is there, alone. NED and DARCY hold hands as they talk.

DARCY

I didn't call the school to say I was running late. Michael was waiting outside for me.

NED

His birthday was only a few weeks away. We were planning to get him the new iphone. He was always wanting to make movies. Said he wanted to be like Spielberg.

DARCY

His sister took it so hard. She still thinks he's going to come home, bless her heart.

PAUL shoots up from his chair.

PAUL

What are we supposed to do? That monster took everything away from us!

CHARLOTTE, his wife, reaches out to calm.

PAUL (CONT'D)

No, it's not okay. She keeps tryin' make it okay. How is this God's will?

REVEREND PHILLIPS

The Lord is here with us in our grief. And, He is looking after our fallen. When the world makes no sense, like with this horrific tragedy, we must turn to HIM for guidance and strength to overcome the darkness. Darcy, Ned thank you for sharing. Jackson, you've been quiet. Care to share anything about Avery? How you're doing?

Jackson fidgets. He looks at the other parents in attendance, all coupled up.

JACKSON

My wife, Lynn, been going off about guns recently. Wanting to blame someone. She's so angry.

This stirs some of the parents, some clearly agreeing with Lynn, others more hesitant.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

She doesn't know what to do with it. I just miss Avery. I miss my daughter. I hear a song that she used to play and my world stops. I smell her perfume everywhere. Hear her laugh. It's like the world is taunting me. Lynn would get on me about not helping enough with whatever Avery had going on. Said I should be more involved. Was she right? Could I have been? I've lost my chance. It's gone. I hope Avery knew how much I loved her.

For the first time, Jackson breaks down. Reverend Phillips looks on with sympathy.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lynn sits at the kitchen table in tears. She has a bottle of wine and a glass in front of her.

LYNN

I'm sorry, Aves. I couldn't do it.
I couldn't. I'm sorry.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lynn is in the shower. She washes herself off.

After a moment, she stops and stands still. Then, she turns off only the cold water, continuing to stand there. Steam escapes the shower. She grits her teeth and tightens her jaw as her skin reddens.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jackson comes back to find the lights on and a wine glass by the sink. On the kitchen table sits a wine bottle, a few red droplets surrounding it.

He lifts it up to see that it's empty.

JACKSON

Fuck.

Beat. He winds up to the throw the bottle to the floor but stops himself.

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Light still on. Jackson finds Lynn passed out, on top of the covers, on the bed, with Rusty on the floor.

Jackson enters and gently places a blanket over his sleeping wife.

He takes a beat and looks at her. Watches the blanket rise and fall with her breath. Notices a picture of Avery that Lynn has in her hands. He lets out a somber smile.

After a moment, he exits the room, turning the light off behind him. Everything goes dark.

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - MORNING

The sun attacks the room. A new day. Lynn turns over and wakes up. She wipes the sleep from her eyes and sits up.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn shuffles in and stops short when she sees Jackson sitting at the table, gripping his coffee.

LYNN

Office closed?

JACKSON

Took the day off.

Jackson sips his coffee. Hesitates.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Come with me to the Vigil tonight?

LYNN

Back at the school? No.

JACKSON

Avery is being honored. Her name is being read. Isn't that what you want?

LYNN
 You think I want my child's name
 read among the dead?

JACKSON
 I want to honor our daughter.

Lynn looks at him, but offers no response.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
 God dammit! Tell me what you want!

Again, nothing. Jackson exits in a huff, leaving Lynn alone.

EXT. CEMETERY - AVERY'S GRAVE - AFTERNOON

Lynn walks up to the gravesite with the bike from the
 flashback, places it on Avery's grave, and sits down.

LYNN
 Hi, baby. I need to apologize. I
 couldn't do it. Do you think I
 failed you?

She tugs at the grass in frustration and sits in silence.

KATIE (O.S.)
 Mrs. Foster?

Lynn turns to see Katie and her mother, DIANE, dressed in
 black, standing behind.

LYNN
 Hi, Katie. Diane.

DIANE
 Hi, Lynn. How are you? I mean, how
 are you holding up. I can't believe
 it still.

Diane grips her daughter tighter.

LYNN
 Barely hanging on.

KATIE
 We came to visit Avery.

LYNN
 She would really appreciate that.
 That means a lot.

Katie brings Avery's bracelet out of her pocket and lets it dangle in her hands.

KATIE

She let me borrow this. I always loved it. I'd promised to give it back in a few days.

Katie starts to choke up.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Hey Ave, I brought your bracelet back.

Katie walks up to the bike and drapes the bracelet on one of the handle bars. Lynn smiles through tears.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I miss you. I can't believe this happened. Everyone misses you. You were never mean to Roger. He shouldn't have done that to you. He shouldn't....

She stops for a moment. Lynn watches intently. Moved.

KATIE (CONT'D)

School's still closed. It's going to be so strange going back there. Not having you sit next to me in class. Ave....

Katie bursts into tears and runs to her mother's open arms. Lynn watches the mother-daughter embrace.

LYNN

Thank you, Katie, so much for coming.

DIANE

Are you coming to the Vigil?

Lynn gives a forlorn look.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Imagine it'd be tough. Going back there.

Lynn nods.

DIANE (CONT'D)

We'll be there. For Avery.

LYNN

Thank you.

Katie and Diane walk back to their car. Lynn watches them. Then, her eyes focus on the bracelet.

LYNN (CONT'D)

You loved that thing. I'm impressed you let her borrow it.

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lynn watches the twenty-four-hour news stations, flipping between them.

Jackson comes in and sits next to her.

JACKSON

It doesn't seem like this helps you.

ON TELEVISION: An ANCHOR sits behind the desk. Tucker Beauford on the screen next to him, with the words: *Live from South Carolina* under him.

ANCHOR

And you will be attending the vigil at Wade Thompson High School?

TUCKER

Of course. My wife and I along with our children will be there, with the families, with the community, mourning and honoring the victims of this tragedy.

ANCHOR

I have to ask, Senator, with this recent shooting has your position on gun control come under fire?

TUCKER

That a pun?

The Anchor nods for him to answer.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Yes, it has in some circles. Now is not the time for discussion. It's time for remembering and grieving. Not politics.

ANCHOR

There's no world where you see
stricter gun control laws....

Click. Jackson turns off the television.

LYNN

Hey! I wanted to see his answer.

JACKSON

I can't watch anymore. I don't
care.

LYNN

You don't care?

JACKSON

I'm not looking for answers. Do you
know why? Cause there aren't any.

Lynn glares at Jackson before leaving the room.

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - EVENING

Lynn is sitting in silence, holding Avery's t-shirt. Jackson
comes in, pausing at Avery's desk.

LYNN

(re: shirt)

Still smells like her.

Jackson sees Avery's perfume on the desk. He picks it up.

JACKSON

With the amount she sprayed,
surprised there's any left.

He sniffs it, inhaling the memory of his daughter.

After a beat, he moves to the bed and sits next to his wife.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Ninety-plus degrees. Every day. Our
first week-long family vacation and
Hilton Head was at a record heat.
Didn't slow Avery down. Her
excitement was contagious.

Lynn gives her husband a look. She relents.

LYNN

She fell in love with the place at
six-years-old.

(MORE)

LYNN (CONT'D)

It was always stressful making sure we got the same condo in Shelter Cove every time. She'd only stay in *that* one.

JACKSON

We would drink wine every night on that porch after she went to sleep. Place relaxed us, too.

Lynn gets lost in the momentary reverie.

LYNN

Yeah, it did.

JACKSON

Avery came out that one night, unable to sleep and saw us. She wanted to stay up like a grown up. So we let her. She kept asking us about how we met.

LYNN

You danced like an idiot at Sam's barbecue.

JACKSON

Got you to notice me. Remember what you said when she first asked us the, *where did I come from*, question?

LYNN

We loved each other so much we needed something that was ours. And so we got her.

JACKSON

You let her try the wine.

LYNN

Barely a sip!

JACKSON

Her face!

LYNN

She did not like it.

They share in a small laugh. A memory.

Jackson reaches his hand out, leaving it inches from Lynn. After a beat, she folds her hand into her husband's.

LYNN (CONT'D)

We were so happy there. The three of us.

JACKSON

We had a great daughter. Celebrate her memory with me tonight?

Lynn takes a beat. She lets the memories flood her mind.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Let's be a family once more.

Lynn squeeze's Jackson's hand tight. She smiles away the pain, even for a moment.

EXT. WADE HAMPTON HIGHSCHOOL - EVENING

A large crowd. Seven photos - six students, one parent - are surrounded by candles and posters, notes, and memorabilia.

Every MEMBER of the crowd holds a candle of their own.

Lynn and Jackson walk up, holding their candles. Lynn looks at the spot where Avery was shot and deflates.

Diane and Katie come over. Diane's husband, FRANKLIN, follows.

DIANE

You came. Hi, Jackson. Lynn.

FRANKLIN

Hi guys. Emotional night.

Celia comes over and hugs Lynn.

CELIA

There's such love for Avery here.

Jackson sees Ned and Darcy in front of Michael's picture. They're sobbing, holding each other. FRIENDS gather around. Jackson reaches for Lynn's hand.

He sees Paul and Charlotte. She's in tears, he's pacing with fury. They stand in front of JENNIFER's, a junior, photo.

Lynn goes over to Avery's picture. She looks at the notes and the love left in remembrance. Joel comes over.

JOEL

I'm so sorry, Lynn. If I had gotten there sooner.

LYNN

It's not your fault. I called her over.

JOEL

It's not your fault, either. Not at all. I'd have done the same thing for Felicity. Protective instincts.

Joel pats Lynn on the shoulder and goes over to another family.

PRINCIPAL FLOUNDERS holds a microphone.

PRINCIPAL FLOUNDERS

Thank you all for coming. Sorry there is any reason to hold this vigil, but the turn out tonight is truly amazing. Senator Beauford is here, and he'd like to, and I'd like him to, read the names, so they're not forgotten.

Tucker takes the microphone. Marie, Barbara, and Dakota are by his side.

TUCKER

Thank you, Principal Flounders. It is my honor to read these names. But it is with deep regret that I have to do so. That there are any names to read.

As he says each name, we see the PARENTS mourning by their respective child's photo.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Michael Coyne. Jennifer Bishop. Avery Foster.

Jackson grabs Lynn. She looks like she's about to faint.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

Zach Gaskins. Reed Fordham. Laurel Benton. And William Hollins, father of Michelle Hollins. A moment of silence, please.

The entire crowd of people stand in silent solidarity. Retentive crying can be heard scattered around.

Lynn stares at the picture of Avery. Jackson talks to Diane and Franklin. Katie comes over to Lynn.

KATIE

She really looked up to you. Just so you know. I know you guys fought sometimes, but she really loved you.

Lynn hugs Katie.

LYNN

Thank you for saying that.

Katie goes to her mother and father as they wander, looking at the other photos.

Jackson stands by his wife. Celia joins them.

CELIA

It's strange being here.

LYNN

Yes it is.

CELIA

She was a great kid, Lynn. You did good.

Lynn feigns a smile.

JACKSON

I'm gonna pay my other respects. Want to come?

LYNN

Gonna stay here.

Jackson nods. He heads over to Paul and Charlotte.

Lynn moves her attention over to Ned and Darcy, who shake hands with Tucker and Marie. After they part, the senator and his family make their way over to Lynn.

Tucker takes a quick glance at Avery's photo and then extends his hand.

TUCKER

Mrs. Foster.

Lynn shakes his hand, with a bit more force than needed.

LYNN

Call me Lynn.

MARIE

We are so sorry for your loss.

LYNN

Thank you.

Barbara and Lynn make eye contact. Barbara remembers her.

BARBARA

Avery's your daughter?

LYNN

Yes.

BARBARA

But you said...

TUCKER

We are here for you, and with you.

Jackson comes over. Barbara is wearily transfixed by Lynn.

JACKSON

Senator.

TUCKER

Mr. Foster?

He nods that is correct. Tucker shakes his hand.

MARIE

We are so sorry for your loss.

Lynn looks at the press snapping photos.

JACKSON

Thank you. And thank you for being here. For reading the names.

Tucker gives a solicitous smile and guides his family toward the next family.

LYNN

Senator?

Tucker stops. Jackson looks perplexed. Tucker turns toward Lynn. Barbara shrinks.

LYNN (CONT'D)

I need you to admit something to me. I need you to admit that you could've done more.

Tucker is taken off guard.

TUCKER

Excuse me?

JACKSON

Lynn. What are you doing?

LYNN

Voting against all the gun regulations. Making it so that teenager could legally purchase his gun. That my daughter was gunned down, trying to run to safety, by a weapon of war, you fight to have sold.

TUCKER

Mrs. Foster, I am so sorry for your loss. But, I assure you, gun control would not have made a difference. I would not turn a blind eye to your daughter's safety.

LYNN

He had known mental illness and still got one. And not just a gun. A semi-automatic. How is that okay?

Lynn moves forward. Jackson holds her back. Celia tries to calm her.

CELIA

Lynn, honey. Not now.

JACKSON

Senator. I am so sorry.

LYNN

Don't. Don't be the nice guy. This guy, who pretends to mourn with us, is responsible for your daughter's death.

TUCKER

Mrs. Foster, I did not want this. And, at a time like this, I don't think politicizing what happened does anyone any good.

LYNN

Don't worry Senator, the NRA can't hear you. Your funding is safe.

Tucker gives a quick glance to his daughter.

JACKSON

Lynn.

LYNN

Look at me, Senator, and tell me that you could've done more to save my daughter.

Tucker looks at his feet to help compose himself.

JACKSON

Please, don't make a scene.

TUCKER

Mrs. Foster, I understand you're grieving. You're in mourning. I assure you, I am on your side.

LYNN

My daughter was shot right over there.

She points to the spot where Avery was shot.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Admit to me, you could've done more.

Marie grabs her husbands arm.

MARIE

Let's go.

He holds up his hand to wait a minute.

TUCKER

If someone drinks too much and kills someone in a drunk driving accident, do we ban alcohol? Overly regulate it? Does one person's actions dictate the legislation?

LYNN

The shooter couldn't legally purchase alcohol, just an AR-15.

Tucker is at a loss for words.

TUCKER

I'm sorry, Mrs. Foster. I empathize with you during this tough time. I understand what you're going through.

LYNN

You do? You understand? How? How could you even begin to understand?

TUCKER

You have to trust me. I understand.

LYNN

Your daughter is right there.

She points to Barbara, who is visibly unnerved.

MARIE

Tucker, let's go.

She pulls her husband away.

Lynn is crushed. She clenches her fists and breathes heavily. Tucker smiles again, turns, and heads toward the next family.

JACKSON

What the hell was that?

LYNN

He doesn't understand.

JACKSON

Let's go.

Jackson marches Lynn back to their car.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

We came to honor Avery. Not politicize her.

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jackson sits on the couch across from Lynn.

LYNN

How could he even suggest he understands? If he understood, he would've done something.

JACKSON

Please, Lynn. Let me in. Tell me what I can do to help you!

DING-DONG! Both Lynn and Jackson stop. They are clearly not expecting anyone.

FRONT DOOR:

Jackson walks over and opens the door. Charlotte stands there.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Hey.

Charlotte fidgets uncomfortably.

CHARLOTTE

Is your wife here?

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Charlotte hesitantly sits on the couch next to Lynn. Jackson can be heard fiddling with things in the kitchen.

CHARLOTTE

My daughter died at Wade that day, too. I met your husband at Reverend Phillips' grief group. He talked about Avery. How great she was. Full of life.

LYNN

I'm sorry to hear about your daughter.

CHARLOTTE

Thank you. You were there?

Lynn nods.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Jennifer was getting a ride home that day, with a friend. Supposed to be, at least.

LYNN

It's...yeah. I'm sorry. Is there something I can help you with?

Charlotte shifts her position. The faint sound of jeans against the cotton of the couch.

CHARLOTTE

I don't mean to be an imposition. I feel lost. And, I don't know exactly what it is you can help with, but, well, your husband mentioned you were angry. My husband is very angry, not just destroyed. I feel numb. I think he's venting anger for both of us. Cause if I think about it, I'm not just full of sorrow. I'm full of rage. Rage at the injustice.

LYNN

Me too. I'd welcome sorrow. I just have rage.

CHARLOTTE

I saw you talking to the Senator, and I guess, well, that's why I'm here. It looked like it was an argument.

LYNN

He supports freer gun laws. I wanted him to admit he's at fault for Wade. For the murder of the names he read. Of our daughters.

CHARLOTTE

And what did he say?

LYNN

That he wasn't. Gun laws and all that don't help. And that he understands.

Charlotte processes the information. Lynn studies her.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Do you think he understands?

CHARLOTTE

Only we do. Only the families that have been through it do.

Lynn nods in agreement.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

I should get going. I appreciate your time. And, I'm really sorry we had to meet under these circumstances.

She gets up to leave. Lynn sits there letting her thoughts circle in her head. The front door creaks open and gently closes. Jackson comes in.

JACKSON

What did she want?

LYNN

He doesn't understand.

Jackson looks at Lynn with concern. Off Lynn's look:

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - MORNING

Lynn wakes up. Quietly, she collects her things. She opens a drawer of Avery's desk. Inside, her Smith and Wesson rests serenely. She grabs it.

Lynn hurries out of the room, making sure not to make any noise.

EXT. FOSTER HOME - MORNING

Lynn quietly shuts the door and heads to her Ford Explorer.

INT. BISCUIT HEAD - MORNING

A WAITRESS places a breakfast platter in front of Lynn. Lynn looks still, going over today's plans in her head.

INT. FOSTER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Jackson stirs and wakes. His side of the bed messy. Lynn's side still neatly made.

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson goes to check on Lynn, but she's not there.

EXT. CEMETERY - AVERY'S GRAVE - MORNING

Lynn approaches. This time she stands.

LYNN

I just wanted to say hi again. And tell you that I most likely won't be able to visit you for awhile. I, um, I'm going to see the Senator, help him understand what's happened. I'm going to protect you, baby. I'll still think about you every day. Every day. Every minute. Every second. You were such a good kid. You didn't deserve this.

Lynn takes in a long breath and hangs her head in her hands for a moment.

LYNN (CONT'D)

I love you, Avery.

EXT. BEAUFORD HOME - MORNING

Lynn's Ford Explorer pulls up and parks across from the house.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

Top 40 hits play in Avery's honor. She cuts the engine, cutting any and all sound. She stares at the house.

Lynn reaches over and grabs the gun from the glove compartment and clutches it close to her.

Off Lynn's determined look:

EXT. CEMETERY - AVERY'S GRAVE - AFTERNOON

Jackson walks up, looking for Lynn. He sees the bike. The bracelet hanging off the handle bars.

He takes out his cell and calls his wife. It rings and rings. No answer. After a moment of frustration, he takes a moment of pause and looks at his daughter's grave.

It almost looks like he doesn't know how to behave.

JACKSON

Hi, Avery. Looking for your mother.
I'm looking for her. I...I....

Tears burst through his defense and he collapses in front of his daughter's grave, holding himself as he sobs.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - AFTERNOON

Gun in hand, Lynn places her hand on the door. The car's locks all pop open as she pulls.

EXT. CRESCENT AVE - CONTINUOUS

Lynn closes her car door. She looks around. The sun shines. The Beauford house stares at her and she stares right back.

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Jackson walks in and heads straight for Reverend Phillips, who is at a pew in the front.

REVEREND PHILLIPS
Hi, Jackson. What do I owe your company?

JACKSON
I'm worried about Lynn. I don't know where else to go.

REVEREND PHILLIPS
Lynn? What happened?

Jackson attempts to speak, but his tongue trips him up.

JACKSON
She wasn't home when I woke up. I don't know where she is. Do you mind if I sit here and collect my thoughts?

REVEREND PHILLIPS
Not at all. And, I'm here if you need to talk.

A confused and worried Jackson sits down in a pew and prays.

INT. BEAUFORD HOME - AFTERNOON

Barbara sits at her laptop. Marie angrily approaches. Dakota can be heard playing video games in the other room.

MARIE
A protest? You're using your father's name to organize a protest? Did I see that correctly? Off that computer. What has gotten into you?

She grabs the laptop from her daughter.

BARBARA
Give that back!

MARIE
I pray your father doesn't see this before you can shut it down.

BARBARA
I'm not. You were there when that lady fought with dad at the Vigil.

MARIE
Don't tell me you're taking her side.

BARBARA

But she's right. How do you not see it? Being there? I want to be part of a real change. I'm continuing with my protest.

MARIE

You will not dare disrespect your father or the office he holds like this.

BARBARA

Like hell I won't. Didn't you see those families?

MARIE

Barbara Beauford you watch that mouth of yours.

EXT. BEAUFORD HOME - CONTINUOUS

Lynn walks to the front door. She takes a breath and extends her hand.

INT. BEAUFORD HOME - CONTINUOUS

DING-DONG! Argument stalled by the bell.

MARIE

Order something else?

Barbara shakes her head no and goes to open the door. Lynn stands there. Barbara pauses.

BARBARA

You.

MARIE (O.S.)

Who's at the door, honey?

Barbara gives Lynn a confused look.

BARBARA

Your daughter...I'm so sorry.

LYNN

That she's dead?

BARBARA

Mom, call the police!

Lynn takes out her gun, points it at Barbara, and pushes her way in the house.

She grabs Barbara in a bear-hug from behind and holds the gun to her head. Marie rushes over, phone in hand, stopping in shock at what she sees.

LYNN
If you call the police, I shoot
your daughter.

Marie drops the phone.

MARIE
You. You're the one from the vigil.

LYNN
Yeah, I was there mourning my
daughter.

Lynn pushes Barbara in front of her and takes duct tape out of her bag.

LYNN (CONT'D)
I'd love for some hospitality from
you. Tape yourselves up.

As Barbara and Marie hold themselves captive with the tape, Lynn's mind wanders...

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A six-year-old Avery looks scared. Lynn comes up from looking under the bed.

LYNN
Nothing. Monsters you heard must've
left.

Avery clings to her mom.

AVERY
Promise?

LYNN
I promise. You're safe. I'll stand
watch outside while you sleep.

AVERY
Really?

LYNN

I will never let any monsters get to you. I love you too much. And that love will protect you.

Avery visibly becomes a bit more relaxed.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I got this. You go to sleep my sweet baby.

Lynn kisses her daughter's forehead. Avery's muscles relax.

LYNN (CONT'D)

You're safe. I promise.

INT. BEAUFORD HOME - AFTERNOON

Barbara and Marie have their hands and legs taped up, sitting on the sofa, fear in their eyes.

Lynn shakes off the memory. She eyes a picture of Tucker with Barbara, smiling and hugging.

LYNN

Why isn't your daughter in school? Scared of her getting shot by a student who can easily buy a gun?

BARBARA

I go to school in DC. I have a tutor for when we travel here.

LYNN

Ah.

MARIE

What do you want with us?

LYNN

I want to help your husband understand.

Marie is visibly nervous.

BARBARA

This isn't my dad's fault!

LYNN

No?

Marie loudly protests while Barbara hangs her head in resignation.

INT. CELIA'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

It's modest, but not dissimilar to the Foster's home. Some clutter, lived in.

Celia brings a cup of tea over to a worried Jackson.

CELIA

She hasn't mentioned anything to me. I feel like she hasn't said much of anything, aside from passing along some clients.

JACKSON

I can't reach her. She's disappeared.

This gets Celia's attention.

CELIA

I really don't know.

JACKSON

Doesn't feel right.

CELIA

She really hasn't clued me in to any of her thoughts.

JACKSON

Me neither. Thanks for the tea.

INT. TUCKER BEAUFORD'S GREENVILLE OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Tucker paces. Roy and Evelyn sit in the chairs opposite his desk. Both with their binders open.

EVELYN

You got fairly favorable coverage from the press regarding the vigil.

TUCKER

That was brilliant on your part. Overall, it went well.

ROY

Overall?

TUCKER

One woman. A mother of one of the students shot, she started in on me about gun control.

(MORE)

TUCKER (CONT'D)

I can't imagine her grief, but it was, distasteful. I felt for her husband.

ROY

I'm sorry, sir.

Tucker sits back down at his desk.

TUCKER

My daughter is one of the uppity liberals right now. Cursing guns. What she doesn't realize is assholes like this guy misuse the privilege. Falling back let's them win.

Evelyn and Roy nod.

EVELYN

Last night has helped the polls even out. Which is crucial.

TUCKER

I mean, I have a daughter in school. Don't people think I worry about her safety?

INT. BEAUFORD HOME - AFTERNOON

Barbara and Marie sit tied up with duct tape on the couch. Terrified is an understatement.

Lynn, a bit deranged, paces back and forth with her new gun resting on her head.

MARIE

There's no way out of this. My husband's a Senator of the United States. That's a big deal.

LYNN

Avery won't be another number.

Lynn approaches Barbara with her gun extended toward her. Barbara cowers.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Will she be another number?

MARIE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry this tragedy happened.

(MORE)

MARIE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry you lost your daughter. I truly am. Please, from a mother to a mother. Please don't do this. This won't help.

DAKOTA

Mom, who's this? When's dad home?

Everyone stops and turns to see Dakota innocently standing in the living room.

MARIE

Go upstairs.

BARBARA

Go play your game. Play your game.

DAKOTA

What's wrong with you guys?

Lynn slowly turns to him.

LYNN

Hey there. I'm Lynn. I'm here to see your daddy.

Dakota cocks his head in confusion.

MARIE

Go upstairs. Please.

LYNN

Come here.

Dakota doesn't know which way to move.

LYNN (CONT'D)

I have something for you.

Lynn holds up the duct tape. Then, the gun. The young eyes of Dakota fill with tears and fear.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Do it like them.

Dakota fumbles with the tape. Lynn sees her reflection in one of the Beauford family photos. She's holding a gun, aimed at a nine-year-old.

Dakota, now with his hands taped together, sits with his mom and sister.

BARBARA

He's nine! He's just nine-years-old! This is wrong! This is wrong!

Lynn is still in a daze, looking at her now solitary reflection in the framed photo.

MARIE

Hey baby. Hey baby, it's gonna be okay.

DAKOTA

I'm scared.

Dakota can't help but cry.

LYNN

My daughter was crying. But, she's not crying anymore.

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jackson sits on the couch, cell phone in hand.

JACKSON

Lynn, it's me again. Please pick up. Where the hell are you? What are you doing? What are you doing?

He hangs up.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Where are you, Lynn?

EXT. BEAUFORD HOME - EVENING

Tucker's Cadillac pulls up and parks in the driveway. A moment of silence. The driver's side door pops open.

Tucker emerges from his car and shuts the door. He sighs. It's been on a long day. Finally, he's home, a reprieve.

INT. BEAUFORD HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Tucker enters. The lights are on, but there is an eerie silence, an absence of activity. He looks around.

TUCKER

Barb? Dakota? Honey?

INT. BEAUFORD HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tucker walks in. Similar emptiness.

TUCKER
You guys home?

He sifts through the mail. Phone still in hand. Reading headlines.

BARBARA (O.S.)
Dad. We're upstairs.

Her voice is shaky, but he doesn't seem to register.

TUCKER
Be right there.

He's done looking at the mail. He's done looking at his phone. He leaves both on the counter.

INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Tucker climbs the white, wooden stairs.

TUCKER
Where upstairs?

INT. BARBARA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Neatly kept, aside from an unpacked suitcase. Bed made. Looks like it was designed by someone with the *idea* of Barbara, but not by Barbara.

Marie and her two children sit on Barbara's queen bed, still wearing the duct tape.

Tucker opens the door and stops in shock when he sees his family.

TUCKER
What in -

LYNN
Hi, Senator.

Lynn comes up behind him, gun drawn.

TUCKER
Who are you? What do you want?

He raises his hands in compliance.

TUCKER (CONT'D)
Take whatever you want.

LYNN
Sit with your family.

TUCKER
From the vigil. That woman.

LYNN
I said, sit with your family.

Tucker does as he is told. He reaches out and touches their hands.

TUCKER
What do you want?

LYNN
At the vigil, you said you understood. That you understand.

TUCKER
Yes?

LYNN
I'm here to help you with that.

Tucker tries to hide the fear that surfaces. She waves her gun in the air.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Got this legally. Same store as the teenager who shot my daughter. Makes you think. Doesn't it?

BARBARA
Please, let us go. This is wrong. What you're doing. This isn't my father's fault.

LYNN
Your father told me he understood my pain. As if he was there when his daughter was taken from him. Like he knows that feeling.

BARBARA
He does feel for you. For the families. I promise!

TUCKER

I do. I really do. If your quarrel is with me, please let my family go.

LYNN

I'm doing you a favor, Senator. I'm gonna help you understand the plight of your constituents.

She raises the gun again at Barbara.

TUCKER

I understand! Please, I understand! We didn't hurt your child. We are grieving with you.

Lynn still has the gun aimed at a petrified Barbara. Lynn's gun hand shaking more and more with anger and fear.

MARIE

Please don't hurt my daughter.

TUCKER

Please. My daughter has no stake in this. She disagrees with me. Let her go..

Tucker is eying Lynn's shakiness, her inability to follow through.

LYNN

Really? You disagree with your father?

Lynn falls on her heels a bit. And boom! Tucker jumps up, tackling Lynn. The gun fires a shot into the ceiling. Some paint falls on the wrestling pair.

Lynn and Tucker wrestle on the floor. Her gun flies into the corner. Tucker goes to grab it, but Lynn pulls him back. He grips her throat.

She stabs her thumbs into his eyes. He screams in pain and pulls back. She kicks him off her and grabs her gun, a little busted up.

TUCKER

Avery wouldn't want this.

LYNN

You don't know my daughter! She'd want to be alive!

She waves the gun wildly around the room, everyone ducking. And then...

BANG! BANG!

Lynn fires off a shot that lands in Tucker's knee. Bullet hitting flesh makes a horrifying popping noise. Blood stains the innocence of the room.

BARBARA

Dad!

Tucker holds his knee. The color draining from his face.

Lynn, in a brief moment of clarity, rifles through Barbara's suitcase and hands him a t-shirt.

LYNN

Wrap this round your knee. For the bleeding.

Winching in pain, Tucker obliges.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Don't try anything again. Okay?

Tucker nods that he won't try it again.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Good.

Lynn takes out a wallet-sized picture of Avery and holds it up.

LYNN (CONT'D)

You said their names, but I want you to know who you failed. I want you to know who my daughter was. Look at her. Look.

The Beauford family looks at the photo.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Avery was fourteen when she was shot. Fourteen short years. She loved music. Taylor Swift in particular. I would try to educate her on good music. We would listen to Joni Mitchell together on vinyl. Willie Nelson records. Her favorite movie was *Bridesmaids*. She loved, loved to laugh. She loved to ride her bike.

(MORE)

LYNN (CONT'D)

That girl was hard to pin down ever since we got her that Schwinn. When she was a kid and fell, scraped her knee or cut herself, I'd kiss her wound and then blow out the kiss. I'll tell her I was sending the pain into the sky and she would feel better. I can't do that for her now. I can't make her feel better. She wanted to design rooms. Always had a knack for that. I let her style my office. She was going to grow up to design fancy houses and office buildings. Like in magazines. A boy named Jesse was her first boyfriend and first heartbreak. We went to Cold Stone when he dumped her and got so much ice cream we both almost threw up. I told her it would be okay. She would be okay. Her first word was 'Dad'. When we'd go to Hilton Head, we'd always make a bet about the name of her favorite restaurant. Twenty bucks. I said Cranky Crab; she said Crazy Crab. I knew she was right, but lost twenty bucks every summer. I won't lose that money anymore. She won't get to do what she dreamed. And I'll only get to be with her in memory. That's who Avery Foster was. That's who you failed.

Tucker looks at Lynn. At the picture of Avery in her hand.

BARBARA

I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry you lost her. It's not his fault. It's not...

She trails off, defeated.

LYNN

Senator, tell me about your daughter?

TUCKER

Barbara?

LYNN

Yes. Tell me about her. Let me know who she is.

Beat. He winces in pain.

TUCKER

Um...my daughter is sixteen. She doesn't like Taylor Swift, no offense. She prefers alternative. Listens to that hippie, blues shit, as I say. Loves Led Zeppelin.

Tucker looks at his daughter to gauge his accuracy. Barbara watches as he describes her.

TUCKER (CONT'D)

I don't know if she's had her heart broken. She doesn't talk to me about that stuff, but her mother might know. She used to love to wear my suit jackets when she was little. She'd make legislative decisions in the house. Like, pizza Fridays. She got the vote in her favor. I know she wears Chanel lipstick, but only cause she insists on me buying it. And, I love her. She is a gift from God.

Dakota starts crying, piercing the tension.

LYNN

Seems like she'll be hard to forget. I'm so happy I can help you, Senator. Help you understand.

Lynn points the gun at Barbara.

BARBARA

Please. Please. Please.

Lynn is on the verge of hyperventilating. Poised and ready to pull the trigger amidst her quivering hand.

MARIE

No! Please!

BARBARA

God, in Heaven. I ask for your forgiveness of my sins...

TUCKER

Leave her alone.

Lynn shakes and shakes. Tears streaming from her eyes. She bites her lip, trying to find the strength to kill.

BARBARA

Please welcome me to your Kingdom
with open arms...

MARIE

Lynn. Lynn. You're a mother.
Please, don't do this.

LYNN

I was a mother. I'm not anymore.

She shoves her gun closer to Barbara.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Admit you could've done more to
prevent it!

TUCKER

I'm just one man! One vote. Even
if...

MARIE

My baby! Don't hurt her!

Lynn grabs Barbara by the hair. Dakota cries loudly. Marie
and Tucker scream in protest as Lynn pulls Barbara...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lynn throws Barbara to the floor. She stands over her, gun
drawn. Tears in her eyes. Fear in Barbara's.

The pleas by Barbara's parents blast through the room.

BARBARA

I had nothing to do with what
happened! Please. I didn't. HELP!

Barbara starts to scream.

CLOSE ON LYNN: Her eyes close. Her hand shakes with violent
motion.

BANG!

INT. BARBARA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BANG! Marie and Tucker jump in unison with the gunshot.
Barbara's screams end.

Marie and Tucker are frozen.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lynn pulls the trigger again. BANG!

We see Barbara, silently sitting to the side of where the shots are being fired.

LYNN

If you so much as utter a sound, I
will *actually* kill you.

Barbara gives a terrified nod.

INT. BARBARA'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lynn, eyes red with tears, looking haunted, enters and locks eyes with Tucker, who collapses. Marie throws up.

LYNN

Now, you know. Now you can say you
understand. Congratulations.

MARIE

You're a monster.

Lynn stands guard. Tucker and Marie are barely consolable. They share guttural sobs.

DAKOTA

Where's my sister?

TUCKER

How could you?

LYNN

I helped you understand, Senator.
Thank you for telling me who she
was. It paints a nice picture of
who you'll be missing.

Marie, with sudden fury, tries to charge at Lynn, but the duct tape around her legs prevents her from getting any ground without stumbling.

LYNN (CONT'D)

You seem angry. Like you want to
hurt me.

Marie locks eyes with Lynn. A death stare.

LYNN (CONT'D)

I understand.

Marie starts hyperventilating. Tucker starts to pray.

LYNN (CONT'D)
You don't know what to do with
yourself. Where your future just
went. What tomorrow will look like,
waking up to a world without her. I
know. I know what that feels like.

Lynn waits a beat, letting the parents toil in their fresh
and boundless sorrow.

LYNN (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Barbara!

Tucker and Marie go silent, confused.

LYNN (CONT'D)
That feeling. Imagine dealing with
that for the rest of your life.

Barbara cautiously approaches. Tucker and Marie's eyes wide
with euphoric relief.

BARBARA
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. She said
she'd hurt me if I made a sound.
I'm sorry.

TUCKER
It's not your fault.

Barbara, in tears, keeps her eyes trained on Lynn.

Lynn lets her gun hand fall. She deflates a bit, turns, and
walks away.

Barbara watches as Lynn makes her way down the stairs. When
the coast is clear, Barbara runs to the arms of her mother
and father.

Lynn stops at the top of the staircase and watches a reunion
she will never get. Then, she continues down.

EXT. BEAUFORD HOME - NIGHT

Achingly languid movements send Lynn out of their house. She
drops her gun on the lawn. She has nothing left.

INT. LYNN'S FORD EXPLORER - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and she climbs in. Methodically, she places her hands, one after the other, on the steering wheel. Turns on the car. Avery's favorite radio station comes to life.

EXT. CRESCENT AVE - CONTINUOUS

Lynn's Explorer pulls out of its spot and drives away.

As it approaches the end of the street, POLICE CRUISERS, sirens blaring, screech to a halt and box her in.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CNN NEWSROOM - AFTERNOON

A PUNDIT - ala Blitzer, Lemon, or Cooper - suit and tie, looking sharp, sits behind a desk.

PUNDIT

Lynn Foster, are her actions to be celebrated, condemned, or is there a gray area? America is divided on this mournful mother who took the gun control debate into her own hands by taking Senator Beauford and his family hostage. In light of recent events, many are wondering if any effects will be seen on Capitol Hill when new gun control legislation comes across the Senate in a few days, calling for stricter background checks. It calls for a longer federal waiting period and a reversal of the federal open carry legislation. Will the recent events with Senator Beauford and the tragedy at Wade Thompson sway the Republican controlled Senate? It appears Senators Schumer and Kaine hope to capitalize. The gun used to hold the Beauford family hostage was legally purchased by Lynn Foster. Her daughter Avery Foster, who lost her life on that fateful afternoon at Wade Thompson has become the face of a new gun control movement that is picking up steam.

(MORE)

PUNDIT (CONT'D)

There were rumblings online that Barbara Beauford, the Senator's daughter, would be organizing an anti-gun rally of her own, but since the incident at her Greenville home that rally has been postponed indefinitely it seems.

INT. FOSTER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Jackson sits sipping his coffee, looking more like a zombie than a man. Rusty sits at his side.

There are some boxes scattered about. Things are being packed up.

INT. AVERY'S ROOM - MORNING

Jackson enters. This room also has signs of packing. He looks at a picture that still stands on her desk.

PICTURE: A ten-year-old Avery with her Mom and Dad in front of the Crazy Crab restaurant in Hilton Head. All smiles.

EXT. FOSTER HOME - DAY

The sun shines, reflecting on a newly placed *for sale* sign. Celia is the realtor.

Jackson exits the house, with caution, as he surveys the activity on his street. This is his new routine.

THE PRESS rush him.

PRESS

Mr. Foster, any comments? Did you tell your wife to do it? Do you agree with what she did?

JACKSON

No comment.

Jackson pushes through and heads to his car. Once he reaches the door, he pauses and looks out at two GROUPS of PROTESTORS camped on his street.

Signs from the pro read: *Lynn Foster is my hero. Remember Avery. No guns for Avery.*

Signs from the anti read: *Lynn Foster is the devil. Lynn Foster ruins lives. Violence only begets violence.*

PRO
SAVE OUR CHILDREN! PROTECT OUR
CHILDREN! NO MORE GUNS! NO MORE
GUNS FOR AVERY!

ANTI
KEEP OUR RIGHTS! GUNS ARE NOT THE
PROBLEM! VIOLENCE WON'T HELP!

He gets in his car.

EXT. GREENVILLE COUNTY DETENTION CENTER - AFTERNOON

Jackson walks to the entrance. He pauses, rubs his face, and takes in his reality.

INT. JAIL CELL - AFTERNOON

Lynn sits in a cell, wearing the traditional orange jump suit. A GUARD walks over.

GUARD
Visitor.

Lynn looks up. She seems a bit disheveled. The guard opens the cell and roughly sits her up.

She pushes him off with force. The Guard tugs back with more force. No love loss here.

INT. VISITING AREA - DETENTION CENTER - AFTERNOON

Lynn walks to the glass partition. Her hands cuffed. Her face and arms a bit bruised. She sees Jackson shuffling on the other end of the glass.

She sits down and hesitantly grabs the phone and holds it to her ear.

Jackson mirrors her. Long beat. Neither knows what to say.

LYNN
Rusty gets fed twice a day with wet
food. You just need to put the dry
food out in the morning.

JACKSON
I know.

LYNN

I'm sorry. I don't know if that helps, but I am.

Jackson nods, it's unclear what the nod means.

JACKSON

You started a movement. How about that? People using our daughter's name. For both sides.

Lynn nods.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

I miss her, too, you know.

LYNN

I know you do.

A beat as Jackson processes this.

JACKSON

(defeated)

I really tried. I really did.

LYNN

I know. I just needed to protect her.

A silent, teary, and tense beat.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Avery wouldn't have wanted what killed her to continue. She would want it to be different.

Jackson nods. Again, his nod is unclear of its meaning. Lynn looks at her husband. They share in their respective anguish.

Jackson places his hand on the glass. Lynn reciprocates with her own hand.

LYNN (CONT'D)

Can you promise me something?

JACKSON

What?

LYNN

You'll visit her regularly. You'll tell her I'm sorry. That I tried to protect her. That you miss her. That I miss her.

(MORE)

LYNN (CONT'D)

That I'm trying to make it okay until I get to see her again. And put flowers on her grave. Remember how she loved flowers. White Casablanca Lilies were her favorite. Put those on her grave now and then. She'd like that. I know she would.

JACKSON

I promise, I will. She won't be alone.

LYNN

Tell her I'm sorry I can't be there.

JACKSON

I will.

The couple look at each other. A look that acknowledges what will be different. A look that mourns the loss of what was.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Although I don't agree, I understand why you did it.

LYNN

White Casablanca Lilies.

JACKSON

I know. I know.

LYNN

Take care of yourself.

Jackson nods again, gets up, hangs up the phones, and walks away.

Lynn holds her own phone for a beat and then hangs it up.

INT. JAIL CELL - EVENING

Lynn holds a picture of Avery close to her. She kisses it.

LYNN

Goodnight, my sweet baby.

INT. GREENVILLE COUNTY DETENTION CENTER - CAFETERIA - DAY

Lynn sits at a table alone, eating.

INT. FOSTER HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Everything is in boxes. Jackson tapes up the final box.

EXT. FOSTER HOME - DAY

Jackson packs his car with his stuff. He looks at the *for sale* sign momentarily before closing the trunk.

Then, he slams his trunk shut.

INT. LYNN'S JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Lynn watches the news in her cell, holding her picture of Avery close.

She has it turned to CNN. She watches...

ON TELEVISION:

A REPORTER interviews Senator Beauford.

REPORTER

I know you and your family have endured a lot, alongside the tragedy at Wade Thompson High School.

TUCKER

Yes, thank you. Luckily, we're all healthy. I'm convalescing nicely.

REPORTER

That is great to hear.

TUCKER

It was scary, no doubt. I don't wish that on anyone, or anyone's family.

REPORTER

How is everyone in your family doing?

TUCKER

They're recovering. My daughter and my son have started trauma therapy.

REPORTER

Senator, there is a gun control bill coming to the Senate.

(MORE)

REPORTER (CONT'D)

With your recent trauma, has your
stance wavered at all?

There is a beat.

LYNN'S CELL: Lynn watches the screen intently, with great
anticipation of the Senator's answer.

ON TELEVISION:

Tucker still mulls over the question. Finally....

TUCKER

No. My position holds firm. I'm
voting against the bill.

LYNN'S CELL:

The light from the television reflects in Lynn's collapsed
eyes.

She leans her head back on the cold brick and bites her lip.

The emotional weight crushes her and she bursts into tears.
Her tears continue as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END