

NEVER FALL IN LOVE WITH A SUPERHERO

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NEVER FALL IN LOVE WITH A SUPERHERO/ "PILOT"

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. RAYNA'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

We're in a eclectic studio apartment brightened by color and several plants.

Sitting in the cozy living room is a black woman-- RAYNA STEVENS, 36-- with long, blonde ombre dreads. She's wearing a T-shirt that reads: "STRAIGHT OUTTA THE CLOSET" in pride flag colors. Round, rimless eyeglass rest on the tip of her nose as she eats a giant bowl of Apple Jacks watching *Judge Judy* on her TV.

TV

Her TV program is interrupted by BREAKING NEWS.

ANCHORS on the screen exclaim about a fight between The Protectors and a disposable army of bad guys attempting to steal alien weapons from a military convoy on it's way to a facility in the Nevada desert.

SHAKY FOOTAGE shows 4 out of the 5 Protectors using their individual superpowers against the bad guys.

One of them, a YOUNG INDIAN WOMAN with hot pink streaks in her dark hair, is covered in dirt and blood as she runs after one of the bad guys that manages to get ahold of a weapon.

(3 beats)

Rayna's cellphone VIBRATES atop the coffee table. An unknown number is calling her. Curious, she answers:

WOMAN (O.S.)

(on phone)

Neon! Where the hell are you?! I need to know where they were trying to take the weapons!

RAYNA

Neon?

Rayna turns to her TV:

An AERIL DRONE VIEW shows the young Indian woman hauling ass after a bad guy...while on a cellphone.

RAYNA (CONT'D)

Um... Juno?

WOMAN/JUNO (O.S.)

Who the hell else would it be?! My comms broke! Tell me where they were going to take the laser guns!

RAYNA

Wish I could, but I'm not Neon.

Rayna sees her nearly trip at telling the other woman she's not her teammate. But she manages to recover easily, still chasing down the henchman.

JUNO (O.S.)

What do you mean you're not Neon?

RAYNA

I mean, I'm a woman and I'm not Neon. You dialed the wrong number. And should really duck right about now.

Rayna watches "JUNO" take her advice, narrowly missing a shock wave hit at her head. She hits the crony with **bright, energy blasts** from her palms, knocking him clean off his feet. The lackey drops the laser gun and "Juno" jumps atop him-- dropping her phone-- pounding his face in, over and over again.

RAYNA (CONT'D)

Looks, like you got it from here, girl, so...

Rayna hangs up.

A beat.

RAYNA (CONT'D)

Fuck.

CUT TO:

ROLL CREDITS OVER THEME SONG: "Slow And Steady" by Of Monsters and Men.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. CAMPBELL RESIDENCE - GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A MAN lies on the L-shaped sofa in the Laura Ashley living room. He's fast asleep in his clothes with a folded washcloth along his forehead.

A pregnant black woman ENTERS quietly and replaces the washcloth on his forehead with another one.

The man, THOMAS "COMMANDER" CAMPBELL, 45, stirs awake at the renewed coolness on his head. He's a matinee idol that's the very definition of a "stand-up guy."

The black woman, QUINN CAMPBELL, 38-- beautiful, smart, quippy, and blunt-- eases her way into an armchair beside him.

THOMAS
(sits up)
How long was I out?

QUINN
Couple of hours.

He YAWNS, big and wide.

THOMAS
Jesus. Shit. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to fall asleep like that.

QUINN
It's fine, Tom. I can't imagine how tired you are. Was the exhaustion and debilitating migraine worth it?

THOMAS
Is it ever? But to answer your question, yes. We got him and took out his whole hive.

QUINN
You were gone for longer than expected...

The "I was worried" doesn't need to be said.

THOMAS
I know. These second-rate villains are learning from their mistakes. It's annoying.

QUINN

Who names themselves The Hornet and expects anyone to take them seriously? Or seriously enough for "world domination."

THOMAS

I miss the low-rate, simple ones that just wanted to steal.

QUINN

Like... Oh, man, what was his name? The lizard guy with the scales and pointy teeth?

THOMAS

The Croc!

QUINN

Yes! He robbed banks by coming up through the sewer system!

THOMAS

He smelled so bad.

QUINN

I doubt anyone splashing around D.C.'s sewers smells like roses, Tom.

THOMAS

But no, he *smelled*, Quinn. Fucking smelled. Aiden threw up trying to take him into custody.

QUINN

(laughs)

That's right! And those kids autotuned the news footage of it and he went viral for like a week.

THOMAS

I've never seen him so mad.

They crack up at the memory.

QUINN

Jesus. He's really got to learn to lean into the joke and laugh at himself.

THOMAS

One day he'll figure that out. Soon hopefully.

Thomas YAWNS again. Quinn opens her mouth to say something, but decides against it the moment Tom's eyes slip open and settle on her.

QUINN
It's...It's getting late.

THOMAS
...I know.

Tom slips on the boots by his feet. He stands and hands her the washcloth.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Thanks. For letting me wind down here.

QUINN
The girls needed to know you were okay. *I* needed to know you were okay.

He nods.

She rises from the armchair to walk him out--

THOMAS
Don't get up.

He places a lingering kiss on her forehead. She closes her eyes, melting into his lips on her skin...

Thomas rubs a gentle hand on her swollen belly before EXITING.

Quinn stays seated, listening to him leave.

She sinks into her chair, wishing she told him to stay.

INT. PROTECTORS HEADQUARTERS - BIANCA & AIDEN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A stunning Latinx woman ENTERS the living area in comfortable clothes, pulling her damp hair atop her head in a messy bun-- BIANCA "MOONSHADOW" SANCHEZ-LI, 30; a badass in the field that can't seem to win at home.

There's an extra-large pizza waiting for her atop the coffee table.

She joins her husband, an attractive East Asian man, AIDEN "NEON" LI, 40, on the L-shaped sofa;

an immature man that could do better. He wears gloves on his hands as he scrolls through his phone.

AIDEN
You're trending on Twitter.

BIANCA
For what?

AIDEN
Some comedian asked a sexist question about you and every woman on Earth jumped down his throat.

BIANCA
Oh. Well, good.

AIDEN
A lot of good points are being made...about you.

BIANCA
Aiden, please. I just want to fall asleep on the couch with you while pretending to watch a scary movie.

AIDEN
I didn't say anything.

BIANCA
You said plenty.

AIDEN
So you're a mind-reader, too?

BIANCA
No, but passive-aggressive comments aren't that hard to sniff out.

AIDEN
I hate when you call me passive-aggressive--

BIANCA
I don't want to fight.

AIDEN
(stands)
And I do?!

She grabs his hand, stilling him.

BIANCA

What just happened? I thought we were going to stuff our faces with greasy pizza and pass out with the TV on until morning.

She removes the glove from the hand she's holding, and squeezes.

Aiden **breathes deep, shuttering...** He squeezes her hand back.

He drops back onto the sofa with her. She curls up under his arm.

He pulls the throw blanket on the back of the couch over her.

She interlocks her hand with his bare one. He presses a kiss to her temple.

AIDEN

I'm sorry.

BIANCA

Me, too.

Aiden grabs the remote and starts their movie.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

A blonde woman sporting a Baltimore Orioles cap and hoodie, with eyeglasses perched on her face EXITS a sandwich shop with takeout-- MALLORY "SAPPHIRE" LYON, 32.

She's keeps her head down, timid and unassuming.

She passes by a COUPLE: an attractive blonde woman, and her older, distinguished male companion. They look so enamored with one another as they coo and GIGGLE over each other.

Mallory watches them as they continue down the sidewalk... Behind her nerdy specs her **eyes burn a bright electric blue.**

She's bumped into by a stranger, jostling her from her thoughts.

She shakes out of it and continues in the opposite direction of the couple down the sidewalk.

INT. INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESEARCH INSTITUTE - LAB - LATE NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

It's quiet and dark, with the exception of a security light.

A beat.

A SECURITY GUARD ENTERS, making his rounds, casually walking through the lab with his flashlight.

(5 beats)

Nothing.

SECURITY GUARD

(on walkie)

6th floor is good, Jon. Heading to the 7th.

SECURITY GUARD #2 (V.O.)

(over walkie)

Copy that.

The security guard heads toward the doors... His back turned, he doesn't take notice of a VENT IN THE CEILING opening up.

A nylon rope drops from the vent. As quietly as humanly possible, THREE INDIVIDUALS take turns sliding down it into the lab; they're all in black and wearing black hockey masks with weapons strapped to their bodies.

DOOR

Just as the security guard steps into the elevator he spots them through the glass doors. He bolts out of the lift and ENTERS the lab.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey! What the fuck--

One of the masked individuals shoots him in the chest without hesitation.

And with military-like precision, they get to work:

TWO more MASKED CRIMINALS hang from the vent, handing the three in the lab a battering ram. Then a tripod. They jump down into the lab joining their team.

The first criminal hacks into the institute's security system.

Two of them set up the mechanical tripod in front of a glass vault at the other end of the lab. They place the battering ram atop it.

The other two stand guard at the door, watching the elevators.

The first criminal finally disables the building's security.

They calibrate the battering ram to smash into the bulletproof glass every 3 seconds. With each hit the glass becomes weaker and more damaged.

The elevator doors open. Inside is a young, SKINNY SECURITY GUARD. He's startled by the masked criminals with guns that greet him. He reaches for his mace, but isn't quick enough-- they shoot him and drag his body from the elevators into the hallway between the lift and the entrance to the lab.

The entrance to the vault finally shatters!

They move the tripod and ram out of the way.

One of the masked criminals WHISTLES at the two outside the doors. One of them at the doors tosses the "whistler" a canister.

They pull the pin on the canister and toss it into the vault. Tear gas smokes throughout the room. A red grid of motion sensor points are now visible.

"Hacker criminal" takes off their hockey mask-- an INDIAN WOMAN in her late 30s-- to slip on a gas mask.

She expertly maneuvers through the motion sensor grid, contorting her body and using gymnastic like moves, to the other end of the vault. She disables the motion sensors. The red line grid disappears.

Along the east and west walls of the room are shelves of individually encased vials of various substances.

She finds the one she's looking for and grabs it.

And just as quickly and quietly as they broke in, they escape. Leaving two dead bodies in their wake.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. PROTECTORS HEADQUARTERS - GYM - DAY

A slick industrial gym with every piece of equipment and machine CrossFit bros could ask for.

BOXING RING

The young Indian woman Rayna spoke to on the phone grabs a long, lead pipe and with all her strength wings it across Thomas' back!

He doesn't even flinch as the pipe breaks in half against his body. And there's not a scratch on him.

THOMAS

Will you stop that please?

She-- KALINDA "JUNO" ANAND, 28-- giggles like a 12 year old. No one loves being a superhero more than Kalinda.

KALINDA

Never gets old.

THOMAS

Come on. I thought I was teaching you how to fight without using your powers.

KALINDA

I thought we were sparring *with* our powers. I know how to fight.

THOMAS

You know how to punch, yes. But I want to teach you to fight. Some basics at least any way. Without powers.

KALINDA

(sighs)

Alright, Mr. Miyagi. What kind of fighting?

THOMAS

We're going to do a little Jujutsu and some Krav Maga. Let's start with some self-defense techniques.

He stands behind her and wraps an arm around her throat.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Okay. Instead of the usual stomp on foot, elbow gut, scratch forearm, I want you to raise your arms back toward my face, trying to claw at my eyes. Then grab my arm around your neck and push your body away from me; create space. Tuck your chin into your shoulder, then slip out of my hold. Once you're out, kick, then punch.

Kalinda nods.

They do a slow dry-run of the move.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Good. One more time.

They do it again.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Once more a little faster.

They do it again a tad quicker.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Okay. Put it all together.

They do the move quickly and perfectly. Her kick and punch connect but obviously do nothing for the indestructible Thomas.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Fucking fantastic.

They hi-five.

KALINDA

Hey, remember when The Juggler got ahold of me in that Funhouse hallway thing and almost snapped my arm off?

THOMAS

Yes. God, that guy was so creepy.

KALINDA

Very fucking creepy. Show me how to get out of a move like that.

THOMAS

Okay. I grab your arm.

He takes hold of her wrist.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Instead of pulling away, pull down,
grabbing my wrist and bringing me
toward you. Swing your arm wide.
Quickly.

He demonstrates.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
It'll twist my arm. Then shove
down, bringing me to my knees.

KALINDA
Got it.

They do it once slow, then faster; perfected that time.

THOMAS
Excellent.

He sweeps her leg, knocking her on her back!

He climbs atop her and holds her by her wrists. She
struggles.

KALINDA
Went looking for you last night.
Wanted to see if you'd be
interested in a *John Wick* marathon.

She raises her hips, which pushes him forward, forcing him to
let go of her wrists to brace himself against the mat.

THOMAS
I wasn't home.

She punches him in the ribs, grabs his arm, pulling it across
his chest, and rolls him onto his back. Ending with a punch
to the face.

KALINDA
Noticed. Where were you?

She grins at him, cheeky.

THOMAS
Bianca teach you that move?

KALINDA
Said you taught it to her and to be
on the lookout for it. The girls
okay?

THOMAS
They're good.

She climbs off his lap. Thomas stands. He helps Kalinda off the mat.

KALINDA
Quinn?

THOMAS
Quinn says 'Hi'.

KALINDA
I miss when she used to cook us all dinner when we got back from a mission.

THOMAS
Me, too.

Thomas sweeps her legs again, taking her by surprise.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Mallory frowns at the floor, staring unblinkingly at nothing.

BARISTA
Mallory. Mallory! Mallory?

Mallory snaps out of it and hears her name being called.

MALLORY
Sorry.

She grabs her caffè americano with soy from the barista.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Mallory makes her way to the condiments station.

There's a dreamy BLONDE MAN beside her adding numerous packets of Stevia to his coffee.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

He finally takes notice of her and leans out of her way as she grabs the bottle of liquid sugar.

BLONDE MAN
(British accent)
My apologies.
(MORE)

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
 You'd think a bloke would take notice to a beautiful woman standing beside him and get out of her way, but unfortunately I'm a knob.

Mallory smiles.

MALLORY
 It's alright.

BLONDE MAN
 I appreciate that, but I would not be the boy my mum raised, or utterly British, if I didn't apologize at least three more times.

MALLORY
 I'm afraid that would just embarrass us both. I was not even close to minorly inconvenienced.

BLONDE MAN
 Good.

MALLORY
 It's the thought that counts.

BLONDE MAN
 Typically. May I introduce myself?

Mallory sees where this is going and decides to cut right to it:

MALLORY
 I'm afraid not. You introducing yourself to me, though polite and sweet, will lead to more small talk. And more small talk will lead to you possibly asking me out. And I can't have you do that, because no matter how charmingly you do it, I'm still going to turn you down. I'm sorry. It's not you personally. I'm just... I'm not in a good enough place to date anyone right now. Understand?

BLONDE MAN
 (scoffs)
 Well, fuck you, too. Slag.

The blonde man EXITS the coffee shop.

Mallory spots him out the windows of the coffee shop. She tilts her eyeglasses down her nose a bit and stares hard at the cup of coffee in his hand.

Her **eyes turn blue** as she concentrates on his coffee, boiling it in his hand.

The blonde man SCREAMS in pain as it burns. He falls to the concrete, clutching his pussy, bloody hand.

PASSERSBY come to his aid.

Mallory smiles wickedly.

EXT. SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL AIR & SPACE MUSEUM - CONTINUOUS

A man wearing a baseball cap and eyeglasses sits atop the stairs outside the museum, pleasantly eating a ham and cheese sandwich as he people-watches-- NICK "MARS" WOODS, 35; unfairly good-looking with a kindness to him that's nothing but sincere. And naïve.

A MAN hurries past him up the stairs. He drops something beside Nick as he makes his way to the museum entrance.

Nick picks it up. It's a badge ID.

NICK
Oh, um, sir? Sir?

The man ENTERS the museum.

Nick holds his nearly-finished sandwich between his teeth, grabs the soda beside him, and chases after him.

INT. SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL AIR & SPACE MUSEUM - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Nick awkwardly tries to juggle everything in his hand and open the door at the same time.

A YOUNG BOY takes pity on him and holds the heavy door open for him.

NICK
Thank you.

The boy merely shakes his head at him and EXITS, following the rest of his family out of the museum.

He approaches a SECURITY GUARD.

NICK (CONT'D)
Hi. I'm looking for a...

Nick gets a good look at the badge ID. It's a NID photo ID with Level 8 clearance. The man pictured on it is devilishly handsome: thick, brown hair, blue eyes, confident smile. And apparently his name is "Dr. James Weiss."

Nick can't help but to smile back at the photo, as though Dr. James Weiss is personally grinning at him.

NICK (CONT'D)
...Dr. James Weiss. He dropped his ID and I wanted to return it to him.

SECURITY GUARD
This is a NID badge. NID headquarters is just half a mile, southwest, from here.

NICK
I know but I saw him come in here.

The security guard grabs his walkie-talkie:

SECURITY GUARD
Hey, Conrad. Is there a Dr. James Weiss doing a Q&A today?

Before the security guard's question can be answered, Nick's cellphone VIBRATES in his pocket.

It's a text. He reads it.

NICK
I have to go.

SECURITY GUARD
Want to leave the ID with me for Dr. Weiss?

Nick remembers it's a Level 8 ID and handing it off to a random security guard isn't wise.

NICK
Um, no. Just tell him I'll return it to him later. At his office.

SECURITY GUARD
Okay.

NICK
Thanks.

Nick EXITS the museum in a mad dash.

SECURITY GUARD
Wait! What's your name?!

INT. BEACON OF HOPE INSURANCE - CORNER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Rayna, in business casual corporate-wear, sits across the desk of her boss, MS. FISHER, 55, a graying woman that pulls no punches.

MS. FISHER
How was suspension? You get high and catch up on *The Marvelous Ms. Maisel*?

RAYNA
She really should've married Benjamin.

MS. FISHER
I liked the idea of her and Lenny getting together. Anybody but fucking Joel.

Rayna shrugs: *I could take it or leave it.*

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)
So, you learn the error of your ways and that your job is not to cost this company half a million dollars and make me look stupid to that circle jerk of Ivy League Chads upstairs?

RAYNA
...I didn't mean to put you in a tight spot. Thanks for fighting for me.

MS. FISHER
Look, I know we're not just an insurance company. Our job is to make people's lives easier, to reassure them, and not let them go bankrupt or homeless or die because superheroes don't care about destroying whole cities in a fight. But the top floor only cares about revenue and golf games with the Secretary of Defense.

(MORE)

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)

If we want to help people, really help them, then we have got to be smarter about how we do it. You have to be smarter about how you do it. As much as you want to, as much as I want to let you, you can't cut a check of \$500k for a single mom in the southside of Chicago. Doesn't matter if The Protectors leveled her house trying to kill some idiot calling himself Red Death.

RAYNA

They do more harm than good.

MS. FISHER

Sometimes, yeah. And other times they save us from genocidal aliens. They're not perfect. Which is why our job is to pick of the pieces of their imperfections.

RAYNA

And sometimes that's telling a woman the home she worked so hard to buy is only worth four grand?

MS. FISHER

Well, now see, if you had came to me with her case, instead of going all maverick about it, then I would have told you that my best friend's sister's boyfriend has his own little shack of a law practice that's made a bit of a name for themselves suing us, and a handful of greedy banks, several times. And winning.

She hands Rayna a folder. Rayna looks through it.

RAYNA

We paid her out \$300,000?

MS. FISHER

Is that not how much her house was worth?

Ms. Fisher winks at her.

MS. FISHER (CONT'D)

I told you: smarter.

Rayna could cry.

RAYNA

Thank you.

MS. FISHER

You're welcome. Don't tell anyone.

RAYNA

I won't.

MS. FISHER

Good. Now, get back to your desk, Stevens. We've got messes to clean up.

Rayna nods. She EXITS.

INT. DEPT. OF NATIONAL & INTERGALATIC DEFENSE (NID) - WAR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Thomas, Bianca, Nick, Kalinda, Mallory, and Aiden ENTER the conference room.

They're all wearing the same thing: a "onesie" made of spandex and lycra, impregnated with rubber; a superhero uniform.

They each take a seat on one side of the long table.

On the other side are the JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, the VICE PRESIDENT, the DIRECTOR OF HOMELAND SECURITY, the FBI DIRECTOR, the DIRECTOR OF THE CDC, and the SECRETARY OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES.

At the head of the table is GENERAL MIGUEL ÁLVAREZ, 65, a barrel-chest Latinx man that also acts as the handler for the superhero sextet.

There's a projector screen behind him.

Aiden leans in close to Thomas:

AIDEN

(whispers)

The Veep is here? What the fuck is going on?

THOMAS

Who knows. Not like they tell us much. But whatever it is is serious as hell apparently.

AIDEN

Aliens?

THOMAS

I fucking hope not. Not after the last time.

A SECRETARY hands files to the superheroes.

General Álvarez leans over the long conference table and touches a set of buttons on the speaker in the middle.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ

You're on, Mr. President.

AIDEN

(under his breath)

Fuuuuck...

PRESIDENT (O.S.)

(on speaker)

Good afternoon, everyone.

ALL

(in unison)

Good afternoon, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT (O.S.)

I wish we were meeting under better circumstances, but unfortunately we're not. There's been a threat to our national security. General Álvarez.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ

(to secretary)

Johanna, please.

The SECRETARY hits the lights at General Álvarez's nod before EXITING.

Projected onto the screen is a PHOTO of the Infectious Diseases Research Institute post break-in.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ (CONT'D)

Last night, at 0315 hours, a laboratory at the Infectious Diseases Research Institute was broken into, and two security guards, Daniel Rodriguez, 50, and Jon Gomez, 24, were killed during the robbery.

He changes slides to a picture of the murdered guards.

THOMAS

Wait a minute, I'm sorry, but you said this place was robbed?

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ

The culprits managed to hack security measures and bypass through the motion sensor for the vault.

He changes slides again; the broken bulletproof glass door of the vault.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ (CONT'D)

Inside the vault are biological weapons.

NICK

A biological weapon? Someone stole a biological weapon?

THOMAS

(annoyed)

I hate supervillains. So much.

KALINDA

So what psycho did this? Deathstrike? The Professor?

NICK

The Professor is dead...right?

AIDEN

Hopefully. But he's died twice and come back, so maybe not.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ

We don't think it was The Professor. We think it was The Scorpion.

He changes slides to a grainy, black-and-white photo: a handsome man with salt-and-pepper hair dressed in an all-black suit and long coat.

Mallory tenses at the picture, eyes quickly darting around nervously.

Bianca reaches UNDER THE TABLE and gives her hand a reassuring squeeze. She smiles lightly at her.

But Mallory just frowns and takes her hand back.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ (CONT'D)
William Hess, aka "The Scorpion,"
was last seen 3 years ago in
Istanbul where this picture was
lifted from security cameras.
Before that, we have intel
suggesting he may have been living
in Bucharest for a time.

PRESIDENT (O.S.)
(on speaker)
Do we know where he is now?

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ
Unfortunately not, Mr. President.
However, we don't believe he's left
the continental US.

FBI DIRECTOR
Director Simons, here, Mr.
President. Given the time and scale
of the crime, we don't believe he
or his team would have enough time
for a grand getaway. We believe
they're hiding somewhere.

KALINDA
Unless they're already in Mexico.

FBI DIRECTOR
Seattle to Mexico is a two-day
drive.

THOMAS
But Seattle to Canada is only three
hours.

DIRECTOR OF HS
We've already alerted law
enforcement at both borders, with
agents at all major airports, train
depots, and all highwaymen. If
they're headed somewhere we'll find
them. But more than likely Director
Simons is right, they're hiding.

KALINDA
So what, you want us to find him?

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ
No. The Scorpion's evaded capture
too often and too long. We need the
operation to be stealth.

BIANCA

(sarcasm)

And sending six superheroes in spandex after a target isn't stealth?

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ

We already have a Special Ops team searching for The Scorpion and his lackeys. You guys are in the loop in case this moves beyond their control.

MALLORY

If he wants to be found, he'll let you find him. He knows how to disappear. And reappear.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ

Evidently.

VICE PRESIDENT

I'm sorry, but are we even sure it's The Scorpion that's behind all this? Lord knows we've tangled with enough villains out there for this to be someone else.

GENERAL ÁLVAREZ

Not this sophisticated, or this big.

FBI DIRECTOR

They're all hellbent on total destruction and chaos, but only four of them have ever come close. One of which is The Scorpion.

NICK

Why does he want a biological weapon anyway?

PRESIDENT (O.S.)

(on speaker)

I'm less concerned about the 'why' and more concerned about the 'how'. As in: "How the hell are we going to stop him from doing something with it?"

THOMAS

What exactly did he take?

CDC DIRECTOR

"Blatallos." It's a white, crystallite-like substance that's deadly to both humans and animals when ingested.

SECRETARY OF HHS

With just the vial that was taken, he could effectively wipe out the entire population of the west coast.

A devastating silence befalls the entire room...

A beat.

THOMAS

I really fucking hate supervillains.

INT. DEPT. OF NATIONAL & INTERGALACTIC DEFENSE (NID) - JAMES' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Nick, in uniform, approaches the open office door. The lost ID in his hand.

DR. JAMES WEISS, 36, works through the complicated schematics of an intergalactic ship on a 3-D hologram board.

He doesn't look like your typical mechanical engineer with a doctorate in physics: he's dressed in beat up, classic Vans, jeans and a geeky graphic tee. There's also a colorful sleeve of tattoos covering his right arm.

Nick KNOCKS on the door, grabbing his attention.

Dr. James Weiss turns and--

It's fireworks. Lightning. Soft, romantic music. Bells and whistles. Waves crashing on the shore. A blazing fire.

Nick's rendered speechless, mouth dry, and knees buckling.

The ID doesn't do James justice because suddenly Nick's in love at first sight.

JAMES

Wow. Hello.

NICK

(voice cracks)

H-Hi.

JAMES

This...is a very unexpected visit.
Um, is there something I can help
you with, Mars?

NICK

Yes-- no. Um, n-no. I just came to,
um, g-give you your ID. I found it.
You dropped it but I found it. I'm
returning it.

He hands James the ID. Their fingers touch and Nick might faint.

JAMES

You found it? The security guard at
the museum said someone found it
but didn't say it was you.

NICK

Sorry about that. I had to go and I
didn't want to leave it with just
anyone. Especially when I saw you
work here, at NID. I hope it wasn't
an inconvenience.

JAMES

I only had to give them a blood
sample and my unnamed first born in
order to be let into the building.
But it's fine.

Nick laughs harder at the tame joke more than he should. He quiets with a nervous chuckle.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Thanks for personally bringing it
back. I'm sorry it was a waste of
your time.

NICK

Wasn't-Wasn't a waste of my time.

JAMES

It might've been. Since they gave
me a brand new ID.

James grabs it off his desk to show Nick.

Nick shrugs.

NICK

Still wasn't a waste of time.

James gives a cool, flattered smile.

JAMES

No. No, I don't think it was...

Nick tries (and fails) not to blush.

NICK

Well, I will leave you to w-what you were doing. Sorry I interrupted.

JAMES

It's fine. You're an attractive distraction.

NICK

(softly)
Fuck.

JAMES

I'm sorry?

NICK

G-Glad you got a new badge and-and have fun on your project thing.

Nick scurries away, EXITING from the office.

We FOLLOW Nick as he makes his way to the elevators.

He smacks the down button.

NICK (CONT'D)

I'm an idiot.

The elevator doors open and Nick gets in.

The doors close and he's gone... Just as James comes running after him.

The scientist looks disappointed he missed the superhero.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - SUNSET, CONTINUOUS

Mallory jogs around the perimeter of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool.

She's exhausted, covered in sweat, but pushes herself anyway.

She circles back to the Lincoln Memorial and forces herself to stop and take a breath.

As she gains her composure, she takes notice of a MAN standing near the edge of the pool.

She approaches him.

It's WILLIAM HESS, 48, aka "The Scorpion." He looks like he should be on the cover of a trashy romance novel with his shoulder-length, salt-and-pepper hair, matching beard, and smoldering scowl.

WILLIAM

I know it's only 60 degrees out, but you really shouldn't jog without water. Especially not with the way you push yourself.

MALLORY

I should set you ablaze where you stand. A biological weapon, William?

WILLIAM

I wanted your attention.

MALLORY

And now you have it. Along with every alphabet agency in the US.

He smirks.

WILLIAM

Riling up the entire executive branch is really just a bonus.

She chuckles wryly at his callous audacity.

He reaches into the light jacket he's wearing and pulls out a bottle of water. He holds it out for her.

She doesn't want to take it, but her mouth is dry and she's sweating a lot. She'll dehydrate if she doesn't drink something.

She snatches the bottle from his hand and downs half of it in big, thirsty gulps.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Better?

MALLORY

What do you plan on doing with the *Blatallos*?

WILLIAM

Telling you would be fair. And boring.

MALLORY

Jesus, William, this isn't a game!

WILLIAM

It's odd how you still fail to see that it is? Have you eaten dinner yet?

MALLORY

Where's the *Blatallos*?

WILLIAM

Secure. Back to my question: have you eaten dinner yet?

MALLORY

...No.

WILLIAM

Neither have I.

He offers her his hand.

MALLORY

I'm not going anywhere with you, William.

WILLIAM

Yes, you are.

MALLORY

I'm not.

WILLIAM

You are. It's just a matter if you come quietly, or not so quietly.

She's a goddamn superhero. She's strong, resilient, and determined. She could dust this dude in a nanosecond, turning him to ash.

But she slaps his hand away and walks off, expecting him to follow.

He smirks again and catches up to her.

INT. CAMPBELL RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

QUINN

I fucking hate supervillains.

Quinn throws the dishtowel on her shoulder onto the counter.

THOMAS

Me, too.

He opens the fridge to grab a beer.

QUINN

I mean, who wakes up one morning and says to themselves: "I think I'll unleash a biological plague today?"

THOMAS

The Scorpion, apparently.

Thomas caps his beer on the edge of the counter.

QUINN

I thought he went deep underground.

THOMAS

Seems he got bored.

QUINN

Shit. How's Mallory?

THOMAS

(shrugs)

How should she be?

QUINN

Thomas, are you serious?

THOMAS

What?

QUINN

The girl found out her fiancé was a fucking supervillain on her wedding day and damn-near killed him.

THOMAS

That was 3 years ago. She's over it now. She knows he's a bad guy, and just like all the rest he needs to be taken down. Especially if he plans on poisoning our goddamn water supply.

QUINN

I don't think it might be as cut-and-dry a situation as you think. And is that his plan?

THOMAS

Strong possibility. So it looks like I'm essentially "on-call" it seems. I can't take the girls to my parents' house this weekend. I already called them and told them.

QUINN

You could take them to HQ.

THOMAS

You know how I feel about that.

QUINN

It's the second most secure building in the world next to The White House.

THOMAS

It's not about security. At least not in that sense. Too many eyes would know they were there and it'll defeat the purpose of making sure they're safe. I'm the only one that knows you're here.

QUINN

Off-the-grid and with aliases.

THOMAS

I don't think I'd call Bethesda, Maryland "off-the-grid."

QUINN

Maybe not...

He puts a gentle hand to her swollen belly. She moves it to a particular spot. He grins, feeling the baby kick.

QUINN (CONT'D)

5 more weeks. Thank God.

THOMAS

I don't think I've ever known a woman to hate being pregnant as much as you do.

QUINN

Do you have any idea how
uncomfortable I am? All. The. Time?

THOMAS

Rarely, if ever?

QUINN

My feet hurt, my back hurts, my
knees hurt. I can't sleep, I can't
breathe, I can't have shrimp. My
skin is itchy and dry, everything
smells bad, and I cried watching
Clover chase a butterfly in the
park the other day.

THOMAS

(teasing)

Pregnant women. Such snowflakes.

QUINN

I also miss you in ways that'll
make a sailor blush. You're not
here. And I want you here all the
time.

THOMAS

...I want to be here. All. The.
Time.

QUINN

Then why are we getting divorced?

THOMAS

I don't know. Just remember it was
your idea.

QUINN

And you said, "it's what's best."

THOMAS

You know I say stupid things when
I'm scared.

Two mixed-race girls-- MEADOW, 10, and CLOVER, 6-- ENTER the
kitchen, interrupting their moment.

MEADOW

Dinner almost ready? We're hungry.

CLOVER

Starving.

QUINN

Guess what, girls? Daddy is not only staying for dinner but he's going to stay this weekend with us, too.

Thomas is taking a back by Quinn's announcement. But his quick moment of surprise is here and gone with his daughters' EXCITED CHEERS.

He and Quinn share a look before she returns to peeling potatoes for dinner.

Thomas grabs plates from the cabinet to set the table.

INT. JAMES' HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

James picks at a bowl of washed green beans while holding a small black boy, XAVIER MCINTYRE, 3, in his arms.

Occupying the contemporary kitchen of gold fixtures and forest green cabinets with him are two fair-skinned black women, his sisters, Instagram model, EMERY WEISS, 25, and overworked ER nurse, GEORGIA MCINTYRE, 30.

EMERY

Mars? Like superhero Mars?

JAMES

For the fifth time, Emery, yes. I met Mars today.

EMERY

Well?

JAMES

Well what?

EMERY

Did you give him my Insta?

JAMES

What? No.

EMERY

What about my OnlyFans?

JAMES

Definitely not.

Emery GROANS like a frustrated teen.

EMERY

I can not believe you work at NID, finally met a superhero there, and forgot to hook me up.

JAMES

Sorry it didn't cross my mind to suggest he look at half-naked pictures of my sister as he returned my ID to me. Besides, I doubt he'd be interested in you. No offense.

EMERY

What? No, he's so not my type. I just want him to like one of my posts, or follow me. Do you know what it'd do for my clout to have a superhero follow me? The Kardashians don't have a superhero following them. Neither does Beyoncé. Although, Moonshadow and Sapphire both follow Lizzo.

GEORGIA

I highly doubt The Protectors themselves run their own accounts, Emery.

EMERY

Well, no, they totally have a team for that. And that team is very particular in who they follow.

GEORGIA

Clearly. Since not even Beyoncé made the cut.

EMERY

Exactly. But regardless of who actually creates their posts, it's still their official socials. And Prince Charming here didn't do me a solid and plug me when he came face-to-face with one of them.

JAMES

I'm sure you'll live, Emery.

James grabs a green bean from the bowl and hands it to Xavier.

GEORGIA

I'm pretty sure you're supposed to be blanching those green beans while I prep this dijon chicken you begged me to make for dinner this morning.

JAMES

Alright, alright.

James hands his nephew off to Emery.

He grabs a pot and fills it halfway with water then rest it on a burner.

GEORGIA

Why don't you think Mars would have been interested in Emery?

James chuckles as he grabs salt from the cabinet.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

What?

JAMES

Nothing. Just... We were flirting. And then he ran off.

GEORGIA

You were flirting with Mars and he bolted in a gay panic?

He salts the water in the pot.

JAMES

It wasn't a "gay panic." He's...a little awkward, and shy. But sweet.

GEORGIA

Oh, my God. You two hit it off.

JAMES

We only talked for about a minute and then he fled, Georgie.

GEORGIA

Seems you talked long enough for you to have called your conversation 'flirty'. How did you not ask him out?

JAMES

He left before I could. And besides, he's not out publicly.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

The whole "secret gay boyfriend" thing is something I have no interest in.

GEORGIA

But he did openly flirt with you.

JAMES

We were the only two people in the room, so I don't know about "open."

EMERY

You miss 90% of the shots you don't take.

They had no idea she was even paying attention to them.

EMERY (CONT'D)

(off their look)

I've learned how to eavesdrop on you two for a long time now.

GEORGIA

James. Somebody in this house needs to get laid.

EMERY

Excuse you. I get mine all the time.

GEORGIA

I can't even picture you putting your phone down long enough to facilitate that happening.

EMERY

My cheeks get clapped. Worry about your own dusty pussy.

Georgia glares at her, ready for a fight.

JAMES

Can we timeout on the potential cage match?

GEORGIA

Anyway... You should try flirting with him again.

JAMES

I've worked at NID for 7 years now and today was the first time I've even seen one of The Protectors.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

So I doubt they'll be another chance to come into contact with him.

EMERY

You know where he lives, right? Just go to Protectors HQ and tell him you want to--

She makes an obscene gesture with her hand and mouth.

JAMES

Showing up on someone's doorstep after having a 5 minute conversation with them is serial killer levels of inappropriate.

GEORGIA

Or instead of being a ho about it, you can send him a 'Thank You' note. Maybe some flowers for finding your ID.

JAMES

That's...not a bad idea. I'd still have to go to HQ in-person though.

EMERY

Why?

JAMES

Do you have any idea how many people try to send flowers and gifts to that building a day? Nothing I have delivered is going to make it to him unless I go myself, abusing my security clearance.

EMERY

Oh, shit! Are you going to shut down their security systems?

JAMES

No! I'm just going to make myself seem more important than I am.

EMERY

Lame. Practical, but still lame.

The doorbell RINGS.

JAMES

Demi. I got it.

FOYER

James ENTERS. He opens the door.

On the other side is an East Asian woman-- DEMI YUN, 36, James' seemingly boring neighbor.

DEMI
Garlic cloves. As so asked.

She hands him a small, folded cheesecloth.

JAMES
Thank you. You have saved our dinner.

DEMI
You're welcome.

JAMES
Want to join us?

DEMI
I wish I could but I've got 25 book reports on *Where the Red Fern Grows* I need to get started.

JAMES
Oof.

DEMI
Tell me about it. But to be honest, I'll take any dog book over *Old Yeller*. Tell Georgia and Emery I said 'Hi'.

JAMES
I will. Thanks for the garlic.

DEMI
You're welcome. 'Night.

JAMES
'Night, Demi.

Demi descends the stoop.

James pokes his head out the door, making sure she gets into her place, next door, safely.

She does.

James slips back into the house and closes the door.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mallory sits atop a barstools at the black marble island as William expertly cooks at the stove.

MALLORY
Who's place is this?

WILLIAM
I don't know. It's an Air B&B.

MALLORY
You booked an Air B&B?

WILLIAM
For the time being.

MALLORY
So you don't plan on staying long?

WILLIAM
I forgot. Is it mushrooms you don't like, or olives?

MALLORY
...Olives.

William opens the fridge and takes out a small carton of chopped mushrooms.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
Is Hasina in D.C., too?

Mallory hates the tinge of jealousy in her tone. She also hates the slight grin it puts on William's face.

He tosses the mushrooms into the frying pan with the other vegetables.

WILLIAM
Hasina is where I need her to be.
But the real answer to your question is: no. She's not staying here with me.

She especially hates that he can read her like a book, too.

MALLORY
Beer?

William opens the fridge again and grabs two beers. He caps them both and hands one to Mallory who takes a long pull.

She wanders to the floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the D.C. cityscape.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
How'd you get here so fast? From
Seattle to D.C.?

WILLIAM
Five minutes. Mushrooms have to
soften a little more.

MALLORY
William.

WILLIAM
What do you want, Mallory? Want me
to tell you my whole evil-doer plan
like some common bad guy?

MALLORY
No! I don't want you to have a plan
at all!

WILLIAM
I know...but that's not the roles
we play.

MALLORY
We don't have to play them...

WILLIAM
I know that, too. Remember?

MALLORY
...I can't do that, William. Ever.

WILLIAM
And I can't be who you want me to
be either.

MALLORY
Yes, you can. You just find being a
villain easier.

William chuckles dryly.

WILLIAM
There's nothing about being a
villain that's easy.

MALLORY
Then why take the road less
traveled then?

William turns back to the stove. He turns the burners off and grabs two bowls from the cabinets.

WILLIAM

You don't want to hear me say it
aloud.

He's right. She doesn't. Because deep down she already knows the answer.

He moves to the small table in the corner and sets down two bowls of steaming pasta. Looks delicious.

Mallory hesitantly takes a seat. William sits in the chair across from her.

MALLORY

So this is what we're going to keep
doing? Pretending?

WILLIAM

If this is pretending, we've been
doing a lousy job of it.

He's right. Again.

Mallory grabs the pepper grinder and sprinkles it over her pasta.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Besides, there's no pretending when
it comes to how I feel about you.

MALLORY

...I know.

She picks up her fork and twirls her *Bucatini* noodles around it.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. YOGA STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Rayna EXITS the studio; mat rolled up under her arm and her keychain mace held firmly in her hand.

Her cellphone RINGS. She's surprised by the flashing number calling her but curiosity wins out:

RAYNA

Hello?

KALINDA (V.O.)

Why am I not getting crank calls
and death threats from racists
homophobes?

RAYNA

I'm sorry?

INTERCUT-- PHONE CONVERSATION

Kalinda's HQ apartment is just as eclectic and colorful as Rayna's apartment. Albeit, nowhere near as neat; clothes, dirty dishes, and marijuana paraphernalia is strewn everywhere.

KALINDA

I assume when a superhero calls you
from their cellphone the number
would expectedly be all over the
internet within record time.

RAYNA

Well, then I guess that's why you
should never assume.

KALINDA

Sold it to the highest bidder, did
you?

RAYNA

No. Though I'm starting to think I
should've. How much do you think I
could've gotten for it?

KALINDA

TMZ definitely would have paid you
at least \$250k for it.

RAYNA

That's it?

KALINDA

Well, it's not like I'm Commander. Or Mars. Dear God, they would have paid you out the nose for Mars' number.

RAYNA

I'll be sure to remember that. Hey, by any chance do you have Mars' number?

Kalinda laughs.

KALINDA

I do, but I couldn't do that to the poor boy. He wouldn't know what to do with all the nudes sent to him.

RAYNA

Is that what this call is really about? Looking for me to send you nudes?

KALINDA

God, you really are horrible at being terrible. See, if you were a piece of shit, not only would you have auctioned my number to every gossip rag on the planet, but you'd do it after making me fall deeply in love with you enough to send you naked pics.

RAYNA

Shit. You're right. I went about this whole thing so ass backwards.

KALINDA

Bass ackwards, you mean.

RAYNA

Okay, let's start over. Give me a chance to call whatever shitty news outlet Rupert Murdoch owns.

KALINDA

Too late, babes. I got to report this little incident to the brass first thing in the morning and get a new phone.

RAYNA

Well, if you're not going to give me a chance to be a scumbag and get rich, I guess I just have to keep making an honest living and occasionally play the lotto.

KALINDA

7, 14, 23, 64, 90. Play those numbers and you'll never lose.

RAYNA

Is that your superpower, too? Picking winner Powerball numbers?

KALINDA

If it was, do you think I'd be fist-fighting aliens?

RAYNA

I don't know. Superhero-ing seems like a pretty solid gig.

KALINDA

(flirty)
It has its perks.

Rayna-- despite herself-- blushes and continues down the pavement.

INT. TRENDY BAR - CONTINUOUS

The industrial, hipster dwelling is busy, nearly packed with thirtysomethings drinking and socializing.

BAR

Nick, Bianca, and Aiden sit at the bar having just gotten their drinks from the BARTENDER with a handlebar moustache.

All three of them are sporting their "incognito" clothes, which simply consists of a T-shirt, jeans, a baseball cap, and fake eyeglasses.

Note: Aiden wears his gloves *everywhere*.

NICK

Is it weird we're here right now?

AIDEN

(rolls eyes)
For the last time, Nick, no.

NICK

Come on, Aiden. You don't think it's weird we're out, at a bar, when--

(whispers)

The Scorpion is hiding somewhere with a biological weapon in his possession?

AIDEN

I couldn't really hear you over the music, but I'm just going to go with 'no'.

BIANCA

Nicky. You're right. It is a little weird to be sitting here pretending everything's fine, but if ever there were a time for a drink, it's now.

NICK

You said the same thing when that three-eyed squid thing was terrorizing Miami.

BIANCA

I was right then, too. Come on, do a shot of tequila with me.

(off his look)

Hey. Alvarez will 911 us at the first sign of trouble. And we'll take care of it. Like we always do.

She pecks his cheek. He smiles lightly, feeling a tad less guilty than he was a minute ago.

She downs her shot with ease.

BIANCA (CONT'D)

Want to play gigantic Jenga?

NICK

Sure.

BIANCA

(to Aiden)

We're going to play Jenga.

AIDEN

Okay. I got to piss.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Aiden walks in, removing his gloves.

There's TWO MEN doing blow on the bathroom sink. They startle at his unexpected presence.

AIDEN

Don't mind me. Go about it.

Aiden moves to the urinals.

MAN #1

What were you saying?

MAN #2

Nothing. Just rambling about this dumbass celebrity gossip show my girl got me hooked on. They were talking about The Protectors.

Aiden's ears perk up, eavesdropping.

MAN #1

I feel like nobody shuts up about them, dude.

MAN #2

Dude. They saved the planet. Like a million times.

MAN #1

So? Doesn't mean I should give a shit about what their favorite color is, or what they had for breakfast. Especially that tool Neon.

MAN #2

Neon's not that bad. I mean he can't be if he's married to Moonshadow.

MAN #1

I can't believe that douchecanoe is slamming hams with Moonshadow. Especially with a pussy-ass power like psychometry. She can walk through walls and make herself invisible but decided to marry that guy? Waste. Bet you a million dollars she pegs him.

The other man cracks up laughing.

Aiden's heard enough. He zips up, flushes the urinal, and hurries to the sink to wash his hands.

MAN #2

You okay, man? Want to do a bump with us?

AIDEN

Go fuck yourself.

Aiden storms out.

GAMES

Nick and Bianca happily play with a giant Jenga set.

Aiden approaches.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Hey. I'm going to cut out, okay?

BIANCA

Why? What's the matter?

AIDEN

Nothing. I just don't want to be here anymore.

BIANCA

Okay, well, I'll come home with you.

AIDEN

No, it's fine. Stay here.

BIANCA

It's not a big deal, Aiden. I can come--

AIDEN

No. Stay here. I just need to go for a walk.

BIANCA

Okay, but can you tell me what--

AIDEN

Nothing happened. I'm just tired. I'm going to go.

He turns to EXIT--

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Don't cloak and follow me.

Bianca, confused, and hurt, watches her husband maneuver through the crowd of people to the entrance/exit doors.

NICK
Everything okay?

BIANCA
(fighting back tears)
Who knows with him sometimes...

NICK
Want to go after him?

She turns back to Nick.

BIANCA
No. He told me not to follow, so we're going to stay here doing tequila shots and having a good time. Fuck him.

Bianca snatches a block piece from the middle of the wobbly Jenga stack and carelessly drops it atop the pile. Impressively the whole thing manages to stay upright.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT - MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

SHOWER

William and Mallory make love in the running shower; steam bellows around them, fogging up the glass, as he fucks her slow against the Italian marble wall.

WILLIAM
I love you.

She loves him, too, but can't bring herself to say it. Instead, she kisses him, hard, as he holds her tight and brings her to climax.

INT. PROTECTORS HEADQUARTERS - KALINDA'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kalinda and Rayna are FaceTime-ing. Rayna's home now.

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION:

Kalinda does a rip from the glass bong in her hands. Rayna smokes from the blunt between her fingers.

Kalinda COUGHS so violently she slips off the couch.

They burst into hysterical laughter.

KALINDA
I forgot what you were saying.

RAYNA
Me, too.

They can't stop laughing.

KALINDA
It was about your grandma.

RAYNA
What?

KALINDA
Your grandma.

Rayna stops laughing long enough to think...

RAYNA
Oh, yeah! My grandma! She was so
pissed she had to pick me up from a
police station, all the way in
Tampa. She cursed me out the whole
drive back to Baltimore.

KALINDA
I would, too.

RAYNA
In all fairness, I had no idea we
couldn't light firecrackers in
there.

Kalinda giggles.

KALINDA
I like talking to you.

RAYNA
I like talking to you, too.
Surprisingly.

KALINDA
Why is it surprising?

Rayna shrugs.

RAYNA
I don't know. I guess I didn't
think I'd like you, or we'd have
that much in common or something.

KALINDA

Glad we do.

RAYNA

Yeah. It's nice. Strange. But nice.

KALINDA

Crazy idea: what if you came over?

RAYNA

For...?

KALINDA

To watch a documentary with me about the declining bee population as it pertains to the disruption of agriculture and inevitable human extinction.

RAYNA

Sexy.

KALINDA

Well, if that gets you going...
Come on. Come over.

RAYNA

I don't think that's a good idea, Kalinda.

KALINDA

I get it-- too far. I'm virtually a stranger. I forget that sometimes because most people treat us like they know us.

RAYNA

Kalinda--

KALINDA

So let's start small: coffee. Not now, but tomorrow morning. If you can.

RAYNA

Kalinda, you seem cool and you're funny. I had a good time talking to you. Getting to know you. I needed that.

KALINDA

Well, this sounds like it's about to be shitty.

RAYNA

Getting involved with a superhero, even casually, isn't... It's not something I want to do.

KALINDA

So, you won't Netflix and Chill with me, because I'm a superhero?

RAYNA

Yes.

KALINDA

That's...a first. I don't even know how to respond to that actually. Like, I'm trying to think of ways to convince you to have sex with me, and I'm drawing a blank on how exactly to do that. It's typically much easier than this.

RAYNA

Well, I'm sorry to have to be the one that breaks your winning streak.

KALINDA

You should be. This is upsetting.

Rayna laughs.

KALINDA (CONT'D)

Hey, remember when you said I was cool and funny and then you laughed just now? That's hot, right? Like sexy banter?

RAYNA

It might be...

KALINDA

So on a scale of #MeToo to a marriage proposal, how am I doing?

RAYNA

You're charming, but my answer is still no.

KALINDA

Can you at least tell me why you're taking such staunch resistance to my usually successful game?

RAYNA

Oh, there are so many reasons...
Far too long a list I'm afraid.

KALINDA

Well, I got a pen, paper, and
nothing but time right now.

Rayna smiles, flattered Kalinda is interested in knowing about her. Even if it's just a clarification as to why she won't sleep with her.

EXT. ROW HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Aiden awaits on the stoop of a row house.

A beat.

Demi opens the door.

AIDEN

Can I come in?

She gives him a sultry smile, then steps aside.

Aiden ENTERS the house. She closes the door.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. CAMPBELL RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

BED

Quinn is awake, watching the sun rise from bed. Thomas is asleep beside her, fully-clothed with the exception of his socks and shoes.

(3 beats)

THOMAS
Couldn't sleep?

QUINN
(scoffs)
No.

THOMAS
Back or knees?

QUINN
Feet. Charlie horse woke me up.

Thomas rolls out of bed with a YAWN and stumbles into the adjoining master bathroom.

A moment later, he returns with an expensive bottle of massage oil.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Thomas, you don't have to--

THOMAS
Shut up.

He sits at the edge of the bed by her feet. He pulls her feet into his lap and gets to work rubbing the perfumed oil into her soles.

Quinn relaxes at the feeling of his strong fingers putting the perfect amount of pressure to her aching arches.

And Thomas enjoys touching her, making her feel better. He misses contact with her skin, her body.

It's far too easy for the two of them to slip into a heated moment as their eyes meet...

Quinn pulls him forward for a hard and hungry kiss.

They're eager as she slides into his lap easily, kissing, and yanking at each other's clothes.

Quinn sucks at his neck as he fondles her breasts--

There's a SOFT KNOCK at their closed door. Then a hard JIGGLE of the locked door handle.

MEADOW (O.S.)

Mommy? Daddy? Can we come in?

THOMAS

(softly)

Fuck.

QUINN

(softly)

Fuck.

Quinn reluctantly climbs from Thomas' lap. She puts her nightclothes back on.

She watches Thomas put his shirt back over hard muscle and sexy chest hair. She's utterly disappointed at the interruption.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I need a shower.

(points to erection)

To deal with this.

Quinn nods in understanding.

He disappears into the bathroom, closing the door behind him.

Quinn opens the door to both their early-rising daughters.

QUINN

Morning, ladies! I'd like to start with a cup of Joe, blonde and sweet. Pigs extra crispy, two hen berries, no sunshine but bring Popeye to the party; grits with a sprinkle of sand, and brown down with cow paste. Got all that?

The two girls giggle at their mother's funny diner ordering.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

BED

Mallory awakes.

She gradually comes to the realization that it's morning. And she's alone. William is gone.

She sits up, wrapping the sheet around her naked body. There's a forlorn look about her face; she misses him, but wishes she didn't.

She reaches to grab her phone off the nightstand when she takes notice of something-- a glass vial. The *Blatallos*.

He left it there. He just...left a biological weapon sitting atop the nightstand by the bed like a love note.

Mallory grabs it, carefully palming it into her hand.

MALLORY

For fuck's sake, William...

EXT. ROW HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Aiden EXITS Demi's house.

She hangs in the doorway in a sexy camisole and panties.

He kisses her, slow and passionate.

AIDEN

Bye.

He descends the stoop, putting on his gloves and makes his way to the Metro station.

INT. PROTECTORS HEADQUARTERS - GYM - CONTINUOUS

Nick beats a heavy bag with ease, rattling it on it's chains as he drips sweat. He's been at it for a while but he's nowhere near out of breath.

He hits it a little too hard and it bursts with sand! Pouring out at his feet.

NICK

(sighs)

Dammit.

INT. PROTECTORS HEADQUARTERS - NICK'S FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Nick, in need of a shower, EXITS the elevator onto his floor.

He makes his way to his apartment door when he spots TWO SECRET SERRVICE AGENTS waiting for him. One of which is holding a colorful bouquet of flowers wrapped in brown paper.

NICK
Frick and Frack.

AGENT #1
These were delivered this morning.

NICK
You guys are actually giving me a
gift someone left for me?

AGENT #2
They were left by someone with a
Level 8 security clearance.

Nick's eyes widen and he snatches the flowers from Agent #1's hands.

Nick opens the card: **THANKS AGAIN. XOXO, JAMES 202-555-0813**

The smile on Nick's face is big and bright.

NICK
Is-Is Dr. Weiss still here?

AGENT #1
No. We don't allow guests to linger
in the lobby.

NICK
Right. Sorry. Thank you.

Nick pushes between them into his apartment.

INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

Bianca ENTERS, looking a tad worse for wear. Seems last night at the hipster bar was a long one.

She trudges toward the booth Mallory is sitting in.

MALLORY
You look like shit.

BIANCA
I made the mistake of trying to
match Nick drink-for-drink.

MALLORY
Why would you do that?

BIANCA
Aiden was being an elusive dick
last night.

MALLORY

About what? Did Time Magazine name you "Person of the Year" again?

BIANCA

Who knows what's bothering him now. He asked to be left alone, so I left him alone. I slept on Nick's couch last night.

MALLORY

Where is Boy Wonder anyway? He loves brunch.

BIANCA

Don't ever call soggy eggs and stale toast at this greasy spoon brunch again.

A WAITRESS comes by and slides a glass of ice water on the table for Bianca, pours her a fresh cup of coffee, then EXITS.

BIANCA (CONT'D)

(sips coffee)

He's going to visit a children's hospital later.

MALLORY

He's such a better superhero than the rest of us.

BIANCA

That tone was pretty maudlin.

Mallory SIGHS. She leans in conspiratorially. Bianca mimics. Mallory shows Bianca the vial of *Blatallos* in her hand.

BIANCA (CONT'D)

Is that...? Jesus. Is he dead? Did you kill him?

(off her look)

Oh. How'd you get it from him?

MALLORY

He left it for me. *After*.

BIANCA

Just left it?

Mallory nods.

BIANCA (CONT'D)

Why?

MALLORY

Because he could. I don't think he ever really wanted it.

BIANCA

What did he want then?

MALLORY

My attention, he claims.

BIANCA

And you gave it to him, girl. Was it worth it?

MALLORY

William was never lacking in that area of our relationship. It was the attempt at world domination that was the problem.

BIANCA

I see you haven't told Alvarez you have the weapon yet?

MALLORY

I wanted soggy eggs and stale toast before I try to come up with a lie as to why my ex-fiancé left me a biological weapon like it was twenty bucks on a nightstand.

BIANCA

In the odd context of your relationship I'd say it's more like a Valentine.

Mallory rolls her eyes, because yeah, it is.

Kalinda approaches and bulldozes her way into the booth beside Mallory.

KALINDA

Long story short: I dialed the wrong number during a mission and a girl answered. I called her back, we talked, then video-chatted-- she's hot, FYI--but she has zero interest in dating me which sucks because I want in her panties like you wouldn't believe.

BIANCA

Can we go back to the part where you revealed your secret identity to a stranger?

MALLORY

One that somehow got your "work number."

KALINDA

Guys, don't worry. She's cool.

BIANCA

Oh, my god. I'm too hungover for either of you.

KALINDA

(to Mallory)

Why? What's going on with you?

MALLORY

Nothing. This girl is obviously not interested in you and it seems like a good thing. Get the tech nerds to dump your phone and give you a new one, then tell Alvarez so he can send someone to her place to have a "chat" with her since you found it necessary to reveal your alter ego for some tail.

KALINDA

(whiny)

But I don't want to. She's cute and really cool and I want to date her.

BIANCA

"Date?" How'd we go from digging clam to dating? You don't date anybody.

KALINDA

But I want to date Rayna.

MALLORY

Because she won't fuck you.

KALINDA

(guiltily)

...Sorta.

BIANCA

She say why she won't date your thirsty ass?

KALINDA
She kind of hates superheroes and
all that we stand for.

MALLORY
Is she a supervillain?

KALINDA
Worse. She works for Beacon of Hope
Insurance Company.

MALLORY Oh, my god. BIANCA Oh, shit.

KALINDA
And she's a ranked member of
C.A.S.I.

BIANCA
Quit while you're ahead. She'll
never be yours.

MALLORY
You can live with me and be a
spinster. We'll adopt a bunch of
cats and give them all WASP-y human
names.

Kalinda GROANS, saddened by her friends' truthful advice.

INT. DEPT. OF NATIONAL & INTERGALATIC DEFENSE (NID) - JAMES'
OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

James is working madly through a series of physics equations
on a white board.

His cellphone RINGS. He picks up.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION:

INT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick is wearing his uniform.

JAMES
Yeah?

NICK
Uh, hi, J-James. This is N-Mars. I
just wanted to say thank you for
the flowers. They were bea--

JAMES
Dinner.

NICK
I'm-I'm sorry?

JAMES
Dinner. I want to take you to
dinner.

NICK
Yes. Yes, I want to have dinner.

JAMES
Any place in particular?

NICK
I don't know... You pick.

JAMES
Ever been to Newport?

NICK
No. But I've heard good things
about it.

JAMES
Alright, well, let's have dinner at
Newport. Tomorrow at 6 enough time
for your security team to check my
dental records and give me a
thorough cavity search?

Nick laughs.

NICK
Should be.

JAMES
Then I'll see you tomorrow at six.

NICK
Okay.

They hang up.

A beat.

REVEAL: TWO YOUNG GIRLS with horrible burn scars all over
their bodies are in patients' beds.

NICK (CONT'D)
He asked me out to dinner tomorrow
night.

They give him an enthusiastic thumbs up.

EXT. NATIONAL MALL - LINCOLN MEMORIAL - CONTINUOUS

William sits casually on the steps to the Lincoln Memorial, eating a Banh Mì sandwich.

The Indian woman-- HASINA ANAND, 40-- from the infectious disease heist, looking all business, climbs the steps and takes a seat beside him.

WILLIAM

I know D.C. isn't New Orleans, or LA, or New York, but I swear I've missed the food here. Especially mumbo sauce.

HASINA

You give it to her?

WILLIAM

Yes.

HASINA

The switched vial?

WILLIAM

Yes, Hasina.

HASINA

Before or after you fucked her?

WILLIAM

...After. If you must know.

HASINA

You miss her.

WILLIAM

Of course I do. I wanted to spend the rest of my life with her.

HASINA

You still do.

WILLIAM

Yes. But that's just a dream. A fantasy now.

HASINA

As long as you're aware.

WILLIAM
Trust me when I say there's nothing
I'm more aware of.

They people watch a moment.

HASINA
I hate being back here.

WILLIAM
Wait until this city is ours.
You'll change your mind then.

HASINA
Doubtful. Sergei is waiting for us.

William nods.

He finishes his sandwich quickly and gathers his trash. They descend the steps.

WILLIAM
Get a chance to spy on your sister?

HASINA
She's still a lesbian burnout. Not
much has changed.

WILLIAM
Then you should be glad for when it
will.

He tosses his garbage in a public trashcan they pass,
casually strolling by ordinary citizens who have no idea
supervillains walk amongst them.

CUT TO BLACK.

ROLL END CREDITS.

END OF SHOW.