

# DÉTENUÉ

A black and white graphic illustration of a person's silhouette, possibly a prisoner, standing behind a grid of vertical and horizontal bars. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking towards the right. The bars are thick and dark, creating a strong grid pattern over the entire scene.

Written by  
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FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A DREAMY SLO-MO of a boy and a girl blonde, in a POOL OF LIGHT, staring confusedly into the barrel of the lens.

REVERSE on Kassandra, tall, blonde, being pinned down, handcuffed by two SWAT OFFICERS. She looks up, desperately, at us, her children. And we hear, WARBLY, underwater --

S.W.A.T. GUY  
You won't be seeing your kids for a long time. So say goodbye.

KASSANDRA  
No!

She struggles to lift her head; shouts towards us --

KASSANDRA (CONT'D)  
I love you.

And then she's DRAGGED OFF, into the dark void.

REVERSE on the two children, staring dazed into the camera.

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - CELL - LATE NIGHT

TIGHT ON the SILHOUETTE OF Kassandra, shrouded in darkness, curled up with her knees on her face. The room is COLD, DARK, illuminated by a single fluorescent light from a hallway, FLICKERING ON AND OFF. She whispers...

KASSANDRA  
My babies! Where are you? Where are they? Where are my children?

And after a series of this, we hear, from the void --

ELIZABETH (O.S.)  
Shut the fuck up! Do you know where you're at?

REVEAL

KASSANDRA, 45, a six-foot tall blonde model, her gangly limbs in a fetal position on top of a bunk bed. Below her is ELIZABETH, 21, Hispanic/Caucasian, black hair, big round eyes, PREGNANT. She is pretty and young; she looks 17.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
You're in high-power, bitch. Out in the streets, I wear steel-toe boots. If you don't shut up, I'll go up there and put my foot in your mouth.

Kass now begins a different tactic, CHANTING for inner peace.

KASSANDRA  
 Nam myoho rengo kyo... nam myoho  
 rengo kyo...

ELIZABETH  
 What the fuck are you doing?

KASSANDRA  
 It's a Buddhist mantra. I'm  
 chanting!

ELIZABETH  
 You worship some fat dude? What the  
 fuck is wrong with you?

Elizabeth reaches under her pillow, pulls out a Bible.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
 The reason you're in jail is 'cause  
 you're practicing devil worship.  
 You need to read the Bible if you  
 want to get out of here.

She tosses the Bible upward at Cassandra. Irritated, Kass  
 HURLS IT ACROSS THE ROOM, in protest.

The tension is broken by a HIGH-PITCHED SQUEALING, coming  
 from far away. It sounds like a screaming chimpanzee.

KASSANDRA  
 What is that?

ELIZABETH  
 Fool, don't you know what that is?  
 Them bitches be fuckin' each other.

And the SQUEALING CONTINUES, women's exaggerated sex noises.  
 Other inmates join in, mocking the noise.

KASSANDRA  
 People have sex *here*?

ELIZABETH  
 Yes, Vanna White. Don't you know  
 any fucking shit about jail?

KASSANDRA  
 No.

ELIZABETH  
 First time? What you in here for?  
 Tax fraud? White bitches like you  
 only come here for tax fraud.

KASSANDRA  
 I was charged with solicitation of  
 murder. They said I could do 12  
 years. My bail is 3 million.

ELIZABETH  
 What the fuck, man? You kill your  
 husband or some shit?

KASSANDRA  
 No one died. I'm innocent.

ELIZABETH  
 Oh, shut the fuck up, bitch. Yeah,  
 we're all fucking innocent. I don't  
 want to hear your bullshit.

KASSANDRA  
 I think he molested our daughter.

A LONG SILENCE as Elizabeth takes this in, somewhat moved.

ELIZABETH  
 If it was me and somebody touched  
 my baby girl, I'd kill them myself.  
 I ran over the bitch who slept with  
 my man. And I'd do it again, too.  
 That's the problem with you White  
 bitches. You always get someone  
 else to do it. Why didn't you kill  
 him yourself, bitch?

KASSANDRA  
 I didn't try to kill him! It was a  
 setup!

ELIZABETH  
 What the fuck is he? Some fat-ass  
 politician?

KASSANDRA  
 He's a screenwriter.

A LONG SILENCE again as Elizabeth considers Cassandra is  
 speaking the truth. Kass climbs down from the bed, sits at a  
 desk with a little round chair, soldered into the floor.  
 Along with a toilet, this is their entire cell, sealed by an  
 iron door, with its two-inch window and a slot for food.

Elizabeth steps up from her bed, approaches Kass at the desk,  
 whose head is in her hands as she cries.

ELIZABETH  
 You need a heavy hitter for  
 something like that. *Necesitas un  
 bateador pesado.*

KASSANDRA  
 What's a heavy hitter?

ELIZABETH  
 You know, a lawyer. Someone that  
 knows the judges. Someone that can  
 give you out of here. You don't  
 want no public pretender. Those  
 fools work for the DA. With them,  
 you don't stand a chance.

And Cassandra is lost in thought, staring at the cell door.

KASS'S POV: Slow PUSH IN on the iron bars.

TIGHT ON KASS --

KASSANDRA

It's funny. I just realized he can't get to me in here. I haven't felt relief like this in years. I know it's backwards... but I feel safer inside this jail than I did outside, in my three-story home.

And BANG! The DOOR POPS OPEN, simultaneously with every other door on the floor. Cassandra jumps. She stares LONG AND HARD at the open door, confused. Elizabeth snickers.

ELIZABETH

What the fuck is wrong with you, bitch? It's program time. Come on, *Van-naaa*.

Kassandra regains her confidence, ready to defend herself.

KASSANDRA

My name isn't Vanna. It's Kassandra.

Elizabeth is taken aback. She tries to regain power by responding like a bratty teenager having been reprimanded.

ELIZABETH

Okay, *Kuh-sawn-druuuuh...*

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - UPPER TIER - EARLY MORNING

It is now 6 AM. Elizabeth and Cassandra emerge from their cell in tandem with every other inmate on the top floor of a two-tier block. All wearing blue jumpsuits.

KASS'S POV

TWENTY INMATES line up. They look back at us, all terrifying-looking people, hostile energy, with odd physical features.

REVERSE

Kass' eyes dart around, curiously taking in her surroundings.

The inmates shuffle forward in unison. People behind Kass SHOVE the group. Kass ends up FALLING INTO the woman in front of her. This woman, "TIGER," turns around -- a beautiful Black woman, tall, stocky. She has cornrows and bright yellow contact lenses. She GLARES at Cassandra.

TIGER

Bitch, I... DO... NOT... PLAY.

Kass is scared but says nothing, afraid to engage. A woman next to Tiger turns -- SOCORRO, she's tall and graceful, with a pale white face and her hair tied up in a chignon.

SOCORRO  
(gently)  
Are you new here?

Kass nods.

SOCORRO (CONT'D)  
Don't worry. I got you. My name is Socorro.

KASSANDRA  
I'm Cassandra.

Socorro smiles in response. Elizabeth watches this silently.

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - CHOW AREA - MOMENTS LATER

The cluster of inmates have reached the stairs. They pass trustees (long-term inmates) behind glass, doing tasks. Over the loudspeaker, we hear a soft-spoken woman speaking in an exaggerated false bravado --

DEPUTY RAMIREZ (O.S.)  
Chow time! If you wanna eat, tuck your shirts in! This is a classy jail.

REVEAL DEPUTY RAMIREZ behind a glass partition, 5'4", Hispanic, her hair tied in a tight black bun, huge diamond earrings. A false toughness.

DEPUTY RAMIREZ (CONT'D)  
Stay in line! Listen, ladies, don't make me do what I want to do! You, 063457, back up! Back up! If you don't like it, don't come to jail!

Kassandra grimaces. She notices the FOOD STATION further up. Inmates are handed pre-selected trays of food.

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - CHOW HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Holding a tray of food, Kass looks around for a place to sit. Socorro appears behind her.

SOCORRO  
Just sit next to me. Everything's going to be okay.

They find two empty seats. And at the other end is TIGER and her friends, all glaring at Cassandra. One Hispanic woman has the word ANGEL tattooed on her forehead. She comments --

ANGEL  
Oh, look, we got a White bitch.

Kass ignores them. Looks down at

THE PLATE OF GELATIN WITH CHUNKS OF MEAT, alongside an apple, a slice of brown Wonder bread, powdered milk.

SOCORRO  
Don't eat it. It's scary-aki.

KASSANDRA  
Scary-aki?

SOCORRO  
That's what we call it. 'Cause we don't know what's in it.

She laughs. Cassandra is surprised she is able to be upbeat.

SOCORRO (CONT'D)  
You should buy food at the commissary. Do you have anybody putting money in your books?

KASSANDRA  
No, nobody's putting money anywhere. What are my books?

SOCORRO  
If people put money in your account, you can use it to buy things. Like food, coffee, or razors.

KASSANDRA  
I don't care about any of that. I just want to call my kids.

SOCORRO  
You can also use money for phone cards.

IN THE BACKGROUND, inmates trade food -- an apple for bread, milk for bread. Kass looks down, slides her tray away. Tiger's friends notice.

ANGEL  
Ain't you gonna eat that?

Kass shakes her head, no.

KASSANDRA  
You can have it. My pleasure.

The group dives on her plate, trying to claim the food.

ANGEL  
Bitch, she said I could have it.

TIGER  
She meant all of us.

The two scuffle and then we hear Deputy Ramirez calling --

DEPUTY RAMIREZ (O.S.)  
This is a classy jail! Act like  
ladies!

Kassandra stands up, crosses to Deputy Ramirez.

KASSANDRA  
Excuse me, please? Deputy?

And in the background, there is a murmur of...

RANDOM INMATE #1  
Oh, look, honky's got a question!

Kass ignores this --

KASSANDRA  
I was wondering... may I make a  
phone call? I want to find out  
where my children...

DEPUTY RAMIREZ  
I don't give a shit about who you  
have to call. There's a time and a  
place. Sit back down before I put  
your ass on lockdown.

The crowd erupts in an "OOH-OOH." The sound of commotion --

RANDOM INMATE #1  
Man, Ramirez, she don't play.

RANDOM INMATE #2  
You got that right, boo.

RANDOM INMATE #1  
The Snow Bunny gonna get it from  
the deputy.

DEPUTY RAMIREZ  
I'll put you all on lockdown if you  
don't shut up.

Socorro appears behind the defeated Kass, leads her away.

SOCORRO  
Walk with me.

The two start off, INTO THE LOWER TIER OF THE MODULE.

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - LOWER TIER - MOMENTS LATER

Socorro holds Kass' arm, leads her down the lower tier.

SOCORRO  
Don't worry. They call this place  
the Miracle Module. It's the only  
module that inmates always end up  
getting out of. I've gotten used to  
it. I haven't been here that long.



KASSANDRA  
How many days?

SOCORRO  
No, I meant, two years.

KASSANDRA  
Two years?

SOCORRO  
But I'm confident I'll get out soon. I'm fighting my case. I keep to my prayers. And read my Bible.

Socorro turns around and lifts the back of her shirt, revealing DOZENS OF STAB WOUNDS, scabbed over.

SOCORRO (CONT'D)  
My husband did this to me.

KASSANDRA  
Oh, my God. Then how did you end up here?

SOCORRO  
He stabbed me with a knife 23 times. So I got a hold of the knife and I stabbed him once, in the heart. I was railroaded 'cause his family had a lot of money. And I didn't have any.

Out of nowhere, Elizabeth appears, having been trailing them.

ELIZABETH  
Oh, you killed your husband? Nice friend you've made, Vanna.

And Elizabeth storms past them, angry.

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - CELL - EVENING

Kass returns to her cell to find Elizabeth already inside. THE DOOR SLAMS BEHIND HER.

ELIZABETH  
You know, now that I see you want to be friends with that ho, that fucking murderer... I don't know about you, bunkie. Maybe you did kill your husband.

Kass smiles.

KASSANDRA  
It's really cute that you're jealous. I guess you like me after all.

ELIZABETH  
 Whatever. I'm just trying to survive. I don't care about you, you White bitch.

Kassandra rolls her eyes. Heads to bed.

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - CELL - EARLY MORNING

TIGHT ON Kass, asleep. There is a beam of light from the hallway. PULL BACK TO REVEAL a small Jolly Rancher on her pillow. Kass snags it, studies it.

REVEAL ELIZABETH seated at the desk, beaming up at Kass.

ELIZABETH  
 I'm sorry I was mean to you.

KASSANDRA  
 It's okay. I know that you're pregnant and you're hormonal. Don't worry about it.

ELIZABETH  
 Yeah. I don't even know who the baby daddy is.

KASSANDRA  
 Baby daddy? You mean the baby's daddy?

ELIZABETH  
 (laughing)  
 No... the baby daddy! Baby daddy!

KASSANDRA  
 I don't know what that means.

ELIZABETH  
 The father of the baby. I fucked three different guys before I got in here. One was this old guy and he was really disgusting but he'd give me drugs so I let him fuck me. Another was this Armenian guy who owned Loco Jeans.

KASSANDRA  
 Who's the third guy?

ELIZABETH  
 Andy. I love him the most.

Kass is touched by this admission. And then --

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
 I hope it was the jeans guy. 'Cause he's rich.

Kass is no longer touched.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
 You know what? Maybe I'll make you  
 the godmother. I wish my mom was  
 calm like you. She's always  
 flipping out on me.

Kass repositions herself, so her legs dangle over the bed.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
 When you get out of here, you have  
 to find me. You probably won't do  
 more than six years. They'll  
 probably send you to Chowchilla.  
 It's not in Los Angeles. It's up  
 near San Francisco. And when you do  
 get back to L.A., I want to  
 introduce you to this guy. He's  
 loaded. He's got a big-ass house  
 with a swimming pool. He always  
 takes care of me, takes me to nice  
 dinners. He's fat and balding. But  
 he never forces himself on me. He's  
 a good guy. I'll introduce you.  
 That's the kind of guy you need.

Kass smiles at Elizabeth trying to endear herself. And then  
 the DOOR CLICKS and BUZZES OPEN. Deputy Ramirez is on the  
 intercom.

DEPUTY RAMIREZ (ON INTERCOM)  
 WEINBERG! COURT! Let's go!

INT. JAIL UNIT - HIGH POWER - HALLWAY #1 - EARLY MORNING

The group walks down a bright fluorescent hallway where  
 trustees are mopping the floor. The other inmates are  
 intense, afraid of the guards. Among the crowd are ANGEL and  
 TIGER. We hear whispers --

RANDOM INMATE #3  
 Who she be?

RANDOM INMATE #4  
 She looks like Malibu Barbie.

RANDOM INMATE #3  
 Maybe she's a snitch. Be careful.

Kass turns back but they just glare at her.

EXT. JAIL UNIT - PARKING LOT - LATER THAT MORNING

The women, each now SHACKLED TO ANOTHER PERSON, board a bus.