

SCRAMBLING

Written by

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EXT. NYC FINANCIAL DISTRICT - DAY

Skyscrapers jut out of concrete like shiny Lego towers made by a kid without much of an imagination. Cabs HONK as they whiz by. A few meager trees, leaves yellow, dot the sidewalk.

TOURISTS, so many tourists, wander amid the LOCALS: business suits, business shoes, business expressions.

They walk fast, but VERONICA (24, mixed race) is faster.

Her back is to us. Long, straight black hair. Yellow backpack bouncing as she walk-runs, staring down at the GPS on her phone, breathing hard.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY (PAST)

KID VERONICA (8) walks just as fast down an empty hallway, breathing just as hard. Yellow tiles. Empty bulletin boards. Some finger paintings tacked on - vestiges of the few teachers still putting in a bit of effort.

Door after door streams by. They all look the same.

EXT. NYC FINANCIAL DISTRICT - DAY (PRESENT)

Veronica stops short, staring down at her GPS:

...Recalculating...

She shoves her phone into her coat pocket with a frustrated grunt and taps the elbow of a tall man in a TWEED JACKET.

VERONICA

Hey, sorry. Do you know how to get to Front Street from here?

He turns. Eager. This is the moment all New Yorkers are secretly waiting for.

TWEED JACKET

Oh, you're close. What you do is just walk two blocks up.

VERONICA

Okay, two blocks-

TWEED JACKET

Street blocks, not avenue blocks, obviously. Then you hang a left on Broad and a right on Broadway...

As he speaks, his face gets closer, his voice muddled like maybe he's under water or you're under water...

TWEED JACKET (CONT'D)
 ...Keep going north for a few
 blocks until you hit Front Street.

A woman with intense SHOULDER PADS pops into view.

SHOULDER PADS
 Just keep northeast not northwest...

We swing from face to looming face as "words" tumble out.

TWEED JACKET	SHOULDER PADS
Uptown downtown sweater	South of west. North of
vest investment vest best.	south. Left right night kite.

TWEED JACKET & SHOULDER PADS
 You can't miss it!

A beat, then Veronica is off again, rushing past them.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY (PAST)

Little kid Veronica is also on the move, frantically looking from door to closed door. As she rushes on --

Fog rolls in from under all the doors.

The colors in the finger paintings swirl.

A shadow races toward her across the ceiling.

Her steps and breathing quicken, quicken, qui-

TEACHER (O.S.)
 Lost again, Ronnie?

Veronica stops. Turns. Profound relief on her freckled face.

EXT. NYC FINANCIAL DISTRICT - DAY (PRESENT)

Grown up Veronica looks up, just as relieved but with far fewer freckles. She stares up at a street sign - sweet, merciful street sign - that reads:

FRONT ST.

Then *blink*. And now it's:

FULTON ST.

VERONICA
 Fuck you, Fulton!

She kicks the metal sign post. Instant regret.

PEOPLE turn to stare at her hopping around. She does her best impression of a smile. *I'm fine! Everything's fine!*

A yellow cab rushes toward her. She juts out her arm.

INT. TAXI - DAY

Veronica slams the door shut behind her. Checks her watch.

VERONICA
 Corner of Front and Pearl, please.

The car takes off as she stares out the window. You can almost feel the knots in her stomach. Seconds pass. Then --

She *lurches* forward. The car stops.

DRIVER (O.S.)
 We're here.

VERONICA
 Oh.

INT. O&G BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Veronica bursts in through the revolving door and run-limps past the security desk to the elevators, checking her watch.

The GUARD clears his throat and taps the visitor log, not looking up from his crossword.

Veronica flashes him a smile he doesn't see. She scribbles her name in the log. He half-glances at it.

GUARD
 Suite number.

VERONICA
 Oh. It's um- it's O&G.

GUARD
 It's all O&G. Suite number.

He gestures to the board over his shoulder. So. Many. Words.

The guard finally looks at her: a mid-crossword puzzle glare. She blinks, thinking fast. Takes a breath. *Here goes...*