

07/03/24 (WHITE)  
REV. 07/04/24 (BLUE)  
REV. 07/06/24 (PINK)  
REV. 07/10/24 (YELLOW)  
REV. 07/16/24 (GREEN)  
REV. 7/22/24 (GOLDENROD)  
REV. 7/29/24 (BUFF)  
REV. 7/30/24 (SALMON)  
REV. 08/06/24 (CHERRY)  
REV. 08/09/24 (TAN)  
REV. 08/13/24 (DOUBLE WHITE)

AFTER THE HUNT  
08.13.24

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"People never lie so much as after the hunt, during a war, or before an election."

- Otto Von Bismarck

A1

## PROLOGUE

A1

In a series of quick cuts, we see ALMA IMHOFF (51) beginning a typical day. We watch as she:

-Blow dries her hair, FREDERIK MENDELSSOHN (Alma's husband, 53, handsome but fatigued; greying all over), getting into the shower behind her.

-Alma checking her reflection in the mirror in her apartment foyer before grabbing her keys, her thermos of coffee.

-Leaving her apartment and passing a PATIENT OF FREDERIK'S, getting off the elevator, as she rushes to get in it.

-Parking in the faculty parking lot, next to HANK GIBSON'S (40, Alma's colleague. Handsome and smart and scrupulous with both, having worked his way up the ladder at Yale from a lower-class background) car.

-Walking past the Beinecke library.

-Walking across Yale University's quad.

-Teaching a small dissertation class to eight students, including her star pupil and TA, MAGGIE RESNICK (mid-late 20's, who bears a striking resemblance to Alma, if not in appearance then in energy), and another male student, ARTHUR, who is in conversation with Maggie about his dissertation.

ARTHUR

No, it's about re-placing emphasis  
on the importance of self-knowledge  
*in order to* cultivate a worldly  
understanding, not wallowing in  
myopia. Kierkegaard said--

MAGGIE

But that's the implication. That  
it's preferable to think only about  
yourself.

-In the HALLWAY outside of her OFFICE, where she runs into PATRICIA ANGLER (40's, a Professor Emeritus of Philosophy; the type of woman who is always losing her keys, her wallet, her badge), who is eating from a to-go container of soup and texting at the same time. She looks up when she sees Alma.

PATRICIA

Busy week, Alma.

ALMA

I'm aware.

(then)

See you tonight, Patricia?

Alma pushes past Patricia into her office.

-Teaching to a large lecture class, the students' attention rapt on her. Maggie is taking notes to Alma's right, acting as TA. Alma is at ease here; the ruler of her own kingdom.

ALMA (CONT'D)

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault paints a scene of public torture, performed in order to maintain the social contract of a time in which displays of power were overt and, we'd say now, "barbaric"...

-Back at home, supervising FAVIOLA (50-60's), her consistent hired help, as Faviola unpacks groceries and wine.

-Faviola, pulling wet sheets and linens out of the washing machine and unloading them into a rattan basket. She meets Alma in the hallway between the laundry room and the kitchen, carrying the basket.

-Frederik comes out of a session, says goodbye to a patient, and then walks to meet Alma in the kitchen, kissing her cheek. She pats his cheek in response.

-Alma refreshing her make-up and hair. We can see, in the bathroom mirror's reflection, Frederik lying on their bed, looking at his phone, nowhere near ready. She returns to the mirror, and Frederik lifts his eyes up from his phone, watching her.

#### **TITLE CARD: AFTER THE HUNT**

1 INT. ALMA AND FREDERIK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 1

Alma is holding court in her living room at the tail end of a raucous--by academia standards--party. The meal is finished; the assembled group sit around Alma drinking wine and enjoying the general salon ambience of elitism mixed with the buzz of intellectual superiority - real or imagined.

Behind the group we are focused on, we can see Faviola clearing the dining table beyond; picking up errant glasses full of half-drunk cocktails, melted ice, cigarette butts.

The sounds of other guests still intermingling can be heard. Satellite conversations are carried on in various corners, but Alma is the nucleus, the center of gravity, here. She holds a bottle of (good) red in one hand.

ALMA

I'm saying--I'm not contesting the perceived existence of a collective morality, I'm saying that--more?

Frederik covers his wineglass with his hand, not looking up.

ALMA (CONT'D)

I'm saying that, to pretend like the ethics of a society, or how it functions for or against a person or group of people--Maggie?

Maggie nods, her attention pulled away from a small reproduction of a BENIN BRONZE artifact she was looking at.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Alex is right, you know. This probably isn't a good idea.

Alma steps towards Maggie, close to her. Alma's back is to Alex, so the two women appear as if a part of one body.

Maggie's breath catches in her throat. Alma touches the side of Maggie's face.

ALMA

People used to tell me that you were like my shadow. Frederik, actually. He used to say it all the time. That you were taking on my mannerisms, copying the way I dressed.

MAGGIE

Stop.

ALMA

I know that you have feelings for me. I've known it for a long, long time.

MAGGIE

Alex is right there--

ALMA

Frederik is wrong about a lot of things but he was always right about you. You're the worst kind of mediocre student: one who has every availability to succeed and no talent or desire to do so. Yet so many resources, so much of other people's time is wasted on you. Not least of all, mine. Pretending to read that paper of yours that was so obviously plagiarized. Reeking of laziness combined with your desperate hope to prove to your mother you're worth the endowment.

MAGGIE

I don't know what you're talking about--

ALMA

Oh, spare me. I've known for ages. You must have known I would find out, eventually.

MAGGIE

I don't feel comfortable having this conversation with you anymore.

ALMA

Not everything in life is supposed to be comfortable, Maggie. Not everything is supposed to be a lukewarm bath for you to sink into until you fall asleep and drown.

MAGGIE

And there are no rewards in death for spending your life suffering as much as fucking possible.

ALMA

You've constructed a life that hides your accidental privilege, your neediness, your desperate desire to impress. At least I have the self-respect to be obvious about what I want. But you, you lie all the time. Living in an apartment ten times cheaper than what you can afford. Dating a person you have nothing in common with because you think their identity makes you interesting. Fawning over me because you think my affection offers you credibility; another adoptive mother to replace your own insufferable one. It's all a lie. It's no wonder everyone thinks you lied about Hank, too.

And with that, Maggie SLAPS Alma. Alex notices this, starts jogging over.

MAGGIE

You stupid fucking bitch. You have no idea what you just did.

ALEX

Okay, that's enough. Let's go.

Alex steers a livid Maggie away. Alma stays stock still.

Alma, holding her stomach, explores the rows of bottles. She picks out a middlingly-priced bottle of whiskey.