

Start

COLE

Wow. That's genius. I love that idea. Now, that's a creative idea, but it's not a business strategy, so that's not much of a side hustle, is it?

ESTELLE

I guess not--

COLE digs into his bag for a document and a pen.

COLE

Not yet. What you need is somebody who can take that idea and give it legs, which for most people it'd be very difficult to land a meeting with somebody like that. But you have it made, because you're already sitting across the table from that person, and that person already believes in your idea. It's a brilliant idea. Icing on the cake? No side hustle even required. How about that. I always keep documents at the ready, precisely for moments like this. When I see potential, I want to give somebody an opportunity immediately. I want to option your idea from you. This is a super simple contract that places it under the umbrella of our organization, which means it'll have the future it deserves. We just input a name for the project, we summarize the idea here, sign at the bottom, all the rest is already in writing, and you'll find a check in your mailbox for \$10,000 within the next 2 weeks. What do you say to that?

ESTELLE

(pause)

Holy cow.

(pause)

I don't know what to say.

COLE

Well you don't need to say anything. You can just use the pen. Just your signature's fine. I can fill in the rest of the blanks later. I want to talk about your other interest. You said you've done some voice acting, right?

ESTELLE

Oh. Yeah, I'm a big fan of audio drama; movie for the ears kind of stuff--

COLE

Good. That's perfect. Did you sign the NDA?

ESTELLE has signed the agreement. COLE puts it away.

ESTELLE

The what?

COLE

Non-Disclosure Agreement, for the audio series.

COLE

We already sent that to you, right?

ESTELLE

Oh, yeah, Crystal emailed it.

ESTELLE (cont'd)

But I didn't know what it was for.

COLE digs into his bag for an NDA.

COLE

Oh, no worries. I've got that too. So the audio show is a totally separate thing that somebody else hosts, but we own it. Hardly anybody knows that. It's focused on kind of investigating issues around the world, and we pull from our research to create stories, then we interview people, receive reports, testimony, you know, from the subjects or witnesses of those stories. You can just sign here. And that's where you come in. We hire voice actors to perform those roles. We hand them a sort of loose script, then they take it and run with it. There's some improvisation involved. It's fun to watch. So, you'll just coordinate with Crystal to submit an audition, and if you're a good fit, we're in business, again. Haha.

COLE stores the signed NDA.

ESTELLE

Wow. Cool. Uh, at first I thought you were saying it's a non-fiction thing, but you're still fictionalizing--

COLE

(quiet)

Oh right, it's not real. But the audience thinking it's real is the source of the entertainment. That's the magic of it--

ESTELLE

(quiet)

Wait, so, people don't know that it's fake?

COLE

No, of course not. That's why we don't talk about it with anyone else, because that would ruin the magic, right?

ESTELLE

Uh, right, that makes sense.

COLE

(normal volume)

All right, quick timeout. I'm going to check on my son who's in the car. Got him a Cinnamon Spice Chai here. It's his favorite drink.

COLE

Tastes like Christmas. Be right back.

ESTELLE

Oh, fun. That's great. Okay, sure.

With COLE gone, ESTELLE's eyes drift to his bag. After 2 beats of pondering, she heads to the restroom. LINA leaves, eyeing COLE's car while walking. Somewhere behind its dark windows is the boy who sent her there to drop eaves.

End

58 INT. LINA'S HOUSE - EVENING

58

SUMMARY:

RENEE finishes a call with LINA (who is driving back from Ft. Worth), who has informed her about the meeting at the coffee shop.

RENEE reels from the realization that both COLE & CRYSTAL are hiding behind a facade.

She manages to grab the poker and swing it around to whack him a couple of times. He gets hold of it but the tussle continues.

DISPATCHER 1 (V.O.)  
Ma'am, you're saying it's the boy who's under duress?

LINA  
Yes, he's being beaten! They're beating him right now!

RENEE backs COLE into a wall, pinning him while trying with all her might to position the poker so she can stab him, but he countermoves and takes her down.

78 INT./EXT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

78

Inside a police cruiser:

DISPATCHER 1 (V.O.)  
INSERT DISPATCHER LINGO  
INSERT DISPATCHER LINGO

OFFICER 1  
INSERT COP LINGO

OFFICER 1 kicks into gear.

RENEE is on the floor, chest down as COLE ties her hands behind her back. Then he leans over, next to her ear.

COLE  
Let's go for a little drive.

COLE pulls RENEE to her feet and guides her to the garage.

LINA  
I'm not hearing the music anymore.

BLYDE  
It faded out. I think she moved.

79 INT./EXT. COLE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

79

COLE pushes the garage door button, then puts RENEE into the passenger seat of his vehicle.

LINA  
Was that a car door?

COLE gets in, turns on the car, and takes off.

start

RENEE

Where are you taking me?

COLE

You'll find out soon enough.

LINA &amp; BLYDE register the horror.

LINA

He knows.

LINA rushes off.

BLYDE

What are you doing?

LINA

I have to figure out where he's taking her!

OFFICER 1 turns off his siren.

OFFICER 1

Approaching subdivision. 3 minutes out.

DISPATCHER 1 (V.O.)

Copy. Backup is 1 minute behind you.

RENEE looks at the clock.

LINA grabs all of the intel and notes about KENDRY's world.

RENEE

Well if this is how you feel about me, why haven't you killed me already?

COLE

Because that's my last resort, Renee. I don't want to kill you. I'm here to negotiate.

LINA goes to the map and thinks hard.

COLE shows RENEE a document.

COLE (cont'd)

This is a non-disclosure agreement. You sign it, that means you keep your mouth shut, or else it'll cost you everything. You don't sign it... it'll cost you everything.

(MORE)

Skip

COLE (cont'd)  
 (looks at RENEE)  
 Everything.

OFFICER 1 turns off his takedown lights, then turns into the subdivision.

COLE (cont'd)  
 No rush. You've got time to think about it. You just enjoy the ride now. Look at the pretty lights.

RENEE looks at the clock again.

LINA sees one unidentified place on the map: PLACEHOLDER.

LINA  
 The trappers own land to the southeast. That might be it.

BLYDE  
 What's that mean?

LINA  
 That means it's Cole's property. He might take her there.

BLYDE  
 Where is it?

LINA frantically sets out papers. She starts panicking.

LINA  
 In the middle of nowhere! Kendry didn't give us anything!

BLYDE  
 So he's never been there?

LINA  
 I'm not sure. If he has, he didn't know exactly where it was.

LINA sees the maze. A beat.

OFFICER 1 turns onto the street lined with luminarias.

LINA (cont'd)  
 Wait.

RENEE  
 You know that my sister heard you over the phone. If you were actually dumb enough to knock me off, it would lead right back to you.

skip

COLE screeches to halt, grabs her head, shoves it into the dash, and holds it there.

COLE

DUMB ENOUGH?! YOU THINK I'M SOME KIND OF RETARDED IMBECILE?! YOU THINK I'M NOT SMART ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU DISAPPEAR?! I'm not going to leave a body for some detective to come dig up. I'm not going to leave a single drop of blood for them to find. They'll see a pile of ashes in a bonfire pit that won't mean anything. That's what your life will be. There's not a scrap of evidence that we've done anything to that boy, and your story is going to be no different! If you decide to be a traitor, you'll force me to turn you into a ghost.

He lets go and resumes driving. She remains slouched.

RENEE

You've already done that.

OFFICER 1 disembarks as OFFICER 2 parks his cruiser.

DISPATCHER 1 (V.O.)

Ma'am, we have 2 officers at the house right now. You've just observed an abduction happening there?

LINA

Several minutes ago! The owner of the house fled the scene with my sister! She has an open phone line and I heard the whole thing!

DISPATCHER 1 (V.O.)

Wait, ma'am, are you saying you're on the phone with her right -

LINA

I can't give you a specific location. I can only give you a route starting at that house! I think I know where--

DISPATCHER 1 (V.O.)

Ma'am, are you saying that you're following them--

End