

EXT. SACRAMENTO CITYSCAPE - NIGHT

Wide VISTAS of the Sacramento skyline. Bright lights, big city shots. Telltale landmarks, pedestrians, and cars.

EXT. MIA'S TAROT PARLOR - NIGHT

The kitschy facade of a classic "Fortune Teller" shop is illuminated with string lights, candles, and fabrics. A **CLOSED** sign is swaying in the window.

An autumn breeze swirls brown leaves along the sidewalk.

INT. MIA'S TAROT PARLOR - NIGHT

**MIA**, 36, 7-months pregnant, is blowing out candles around the cluttered room. Her long black hair flows over her equally black dress as she drifts from table to table, humming the New Age melody on the nearby stereo.

She pauses to massage her womb with both hands.

MIA

Hey. Don't get testy with me. You got two more months before you're out on your own, so enjoy the free ride while you can. Goodness.

The serene moment is interrupted by a BANGING on the door. She turns to the clock and shakes her head.

MIA (CONT'D)

As if my day wasn't long enough...

Mia peeks through the window, then OPENS the door.

A MAN, 50s, hunched and bedraggled, stands in the doorway, staring blankly inside Mia's front room. His white hair sways with the chilly wind. He does not look, or sound, well.

MAN

Thought you were closed.

MIA

I was... just trying to lock up.

MAN

Suppose you won't help me then.

MIA

I open at noon tomorrow.

MAN

(cutting in)

Don't remember me, huh?

Mia, sensing the MAN'S edginess, studies his face. She NEVER forgets a face.

MIA  
 (confessing hesitantly)  
 Yes. I do.

MAN  
 You... ruined... my life.

Mia takes a deep breath and rubs her stomach.

MIA  
 I'm sorry, sir. You'll have to come  
 back another time--

The MAN leans in towards the door, closer to Mia.

MAN  
 YOU! RUINED! MY! LIFE!

Having dealt with this situation before, Mia calmly explains  
 to the MAN.

MIA  
 Now look, sir... this is how I make  
 my living. It's like predicting the  
 weather. Sometimes I'm right,  
 sometimes I'm wrong. But it's not up  
 to me. I just read what's on the  
 table.

MAN  
 I want you to reverse it.

MIA  
 Sir, I can't do that. At least not  
 right now. You'll have to come back--

MAN  
 Listen to me, you bitch.

The MAN pulls a PISTOL from his jacket pocket and points it  
 at Mia's womb.

MAN (CONT'D)  
 Reverse the read or your lousy kid  
 won't have a birthday to celebrate.

Mia TRIES to slam the door shut, but the MAN shoves his body  
 over the threshold and into the parlor front room - sending  
 Mia backwards against the settee and coffee table.

The MAN shuts the door behind him while keeping the shaking  
 gun pointed at Mia.

MAN  
 Get the deck out. The deck you used...

Mia is now visibly worried.

MIA

It doesn't work like that! You can't  
just reverse it like that.

MAN

Get the fucking deck, now!

Shoving the gun closer to Mia, the MAN grabs a lit candle with his other hand and HURLS it against the wall, sending wax and sparks everywhere.