

EXT. GRAVESITE - TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO -- DAY

A cold drizzle falls on the families standing over the double burial of a man and wife. A father and mother.

Funeral over, family and friends drift awkwardly back to their cars, away from the pain of--

THE LITTLE GIRL, nine, with her GRANDMOTHER-- staring at the open holes of her MOM AND DAD-- misty rain mixes with her tears as she gazes at the cold and grey of the granite tombstones.

Granny pulls on THE LITTLE GIRL and she turns away from the graves.

And TWO MEN WITH SHOVELS start to quickly fill the holes-- before the weather gets worse-- and--

THE LITTLE GIRL stops, frozen in terror, and as the two men throw muddy shovelfuls of soil into the dark holes--

THE LITTLE GIRL SCREAMS! Screams! *SCREAMS!*

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. LIZ BOX

Homicide detective LIZ SHANNON opens her eyes. Almost total darkness. Not quite. A flashlight lays in the wooden box with her. On. Her five battery Mag-lite.

She moves. Hands and feet bound. Mouth covered in duct tape.

Panic sets in. Dirt in the box with her. Wooden box. Like a coffin. *A COFFIN!*

She tries to roll, her fingers dig at the duct tape holding her wrists behind her back. She amps her head, scoots, the flashlight rolls free. More light.

She stretches. Allows panic to grip her for a second, digs into her back pocket.

A folding knife, there. She inches it out and grabs it. Fumbles it. Fingernails get a blade open. Fumbles it more. Slices the duct tape.

FREE! Arms; can't extend them. Wrestles her hands to the front. Gets the flashlight.

Rips the tape from her mouth.

LIZ  
(gasping)  
Jesus Christ...

With arms free, rolls onto her back. Scans the box, fights panic and hysteria. Losing the battle.

She kicks her feet. Pushes against the lid. Ten tons of weight. Doesn't even creak.

Something, by her head touches her. Startles her! Can't crane her neck to see it. Light no good, she has to roll on her side, wedge in and collapse, face down.

A rope handle. Secured to the panel.

Liz: *WTF?*

She grabs it, pulls it. The wooden panel moves. Scrapes open. She pushes it back. It doesn't go. She pulls it again.

DIRT and GRAVEL roll in. She fights it past her head.

LIZ  
Shit...

She wrestles the wooden panel out of the way. Digs at the dirt piling in on her and suddenly--

Her hand plunges into open space. She shines the light into the hole.

Liz digs the dirt out. Makes a hole. Scoots from the box in. Where she wedges tight. She stops. Flashlights the space around her.

Panic sets in again. She fights hard to control it, damn hard. Using her toes, she inches forward. Along the length. Five feet. Ten feet. Suddenly--

A drop off! A hole descending down into BLACKNESS! She stops. The wooden box-like shaft drops straight down!

Liz flashes the light. It's another room.

POV TEN FEET DOWN TO A BIGGER ROOM

A wooden floor in this room, and the barely visible sight of a pair of feet. Bound with duct tape in the darkness.

LIZ

Shit...

INT. KAREN ROBERT'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Liz and her partner, DETECTIVE JOHN MICHENER, shine lights into a bedroom--

JOHN

Karen! Oh my God, no!

Liz spots-- a pair of feet on the floor-- bound with duct tape-- a woman's feet-- in bloody shoes--

LIZ

John! JOHN! WAIT!

JOHN

KAREN!

John lunges forward-- rushes into the room--

ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE! GUNFIRE-- HANDGUNS BARK AND GROWL AND JOHN FLIES BACK--

LIZ

JOHN!

Bullets slap the wall around her-- she jerks her gun--

INT. MONICA BOX

MONICA CARTER lays silent on the floor of this three by eight by five wooden box. Dirt cascades from the hole in the ceiling, shook loose as--

Liz lowers herself, using her body as a wedge to keep from falling. She slides out and drops the three feet to the floor.

Using the open space, she contorts her body, cuts the duct tape off her feet. And stretches out to check the girl.

She rolls Monica over, duct tape on her mouth. Monica is wide awake. Freaked out. Frightened for her life!

Tries to get away. THE STRUGGLE IS ON!

LIZ  
NO! NO, LISTEN TO ME! LISTEN  
TO ME!  
(scrambles for her  
ID)  
I'M A COP! LISTEN! I'M A COP!  
LOOK! LOOK!

Flashlights the wallet, Monica sees the ID, looks at Liz.

LIZ  
I'm a cop, I'm a cop. It's  
okay.

Liz reaches up and gently pulls the duct tape off.

MONICA GASPS FOR AIR! Liz tries to hold back her  
struggles!

MONICA  
Help me.

LIZ  
Calm down

MONICA  
Oh my God! Where are we? What  
happened?

Monica gasps for air. Panicked. Suffocating.

LIZ  
Are you alright?

MONICA  
Asthma. I... can't breathe...

LIZ  
Oh, Jesus.

Liz rolls her on her side. Monica gasps for air. Short,  
raspy gulps.

LIZ  
Close your eyes, try to stay  
calm.

MONICA  
Can't catch my--

LIZ  
Don't talk! Close your eyes,  
concentrate, listen to me.  
(talks her through  
it)  
Slowly, if you can just stay  
calm, I'm here with you.

Monica slowly catches up, forces herself to relax.

MONICA  
Where are we?

LIZ  
I'm not sure.

MONICA  
OH JESUS! OH JESUS!

LIZ  
CALM DOWN!

Monica settles. Tries to calm her breathing.

LIZ  
Let me get your hands free.

Liz looks. HANDCUFFS!

LIZ  
Shit.  
(she digs for her  
keys)  
Wait a minute.  
(finds them and finds  
her empty holster  
as well)

She pulls the keys. Works the cuffs. Unlocks Monica.  
Monica pulls her arms around the front, rubs her wrists.

MONICA  
What's happening to us?

Monica scoots back. Leans against a wall. Her breathing  
settles down.

LIZ  
What's your name?

MONICA  
Monica.

LIZ  
I'm Liz Shannon.

MONICA  
I'm Monica.

Monica goes through her clothes.

LIZ  
What?

MONICA  
My inhaler. I had it.

Liz finds a purse. Monica takes it, pours it out. No inhaler.

MONICA  
Oh God, he took it.  
(gasp)  
He took it!

LIZ  
He?

EXT. BANK ATM -- NIGHT

*Monica walks to the brightly lit kiosk and inserts her card. Across the street, a man suddenly races from the shadows-- wearing a black hoodie! Face obscured! He charges across the street right for her!*

*Monica hears him coming and turns-- screams-- as he PILES INTO HER-- SLAMS A TASER INTO HER BODY!*

INT. MONICA BOX

Monica rubs her chest.

MONICA  
He shocked me with something.

LIZ  
A taser.

MONICA  
Next thing I know, you're falling on me.

Liz shines the light, shows her the hole in the roof.

LIZ

I came from a smaller box up there.

Shines the light all around.

LIZ

There was a panel for me to crawl through.

MONICA

You were up there?

Liz scans for something. There. She ignores Monica's question. Her focus tightens on the corner where three sides come together. A single strand of RUSTED WIRE arcs out at the floor. She moves to it.

MONICA

What are you doing?

Liz pulls at the wire, it's sharp and nasty. She digs at the accumulated dirt at the base of the wooden panel, around the wire. Mixed with her sweat, her hands grimy.

MONICA

What about you?

LIZ

About me what?

MONICA

What do you remember, before?

Liz looks at her hard. Hands her the flashlight.

LIZ

Hold this.

(goes back to working  
the wire)

Last I remember I was in my  
Lieutenant's office.

INT. PAULSON'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

*Liz paces-- upset and angry. LT. PAULSON stands behind his desk.*

PAULSON

*I'm not suspending you, God  
damn it!*

LIZ

*It's the same thing!*

PAULSON

*You're on desk duty because the psyche report says you're still upset over losing your partner.*

LIZ

*OF COURSE I AM! That doesn't mean I'm gonna go shoot up a post office!*

PAULSON

*It's been four weeks since Michener was killed--*

LIZ

*-- Jesus --*

PAULSON

*-- some people just take more time than others.*

LIZ

*Lieutenant--*

PAULSON

*We're through here. You've got three more sessions, I'll talk to the doctor, we'll go from there.*

*Liz turns to the door, about to burst out--*

PAULSON

*Shannon...*

*(she stops)*

*... dial it down, detective. I mean that.*

*Liz walks out slow, closes the door slow, with a click. Walks off-- steaming--*

INT. PARKING GARAGE -- NIGHT

*Liz storms to her car. Cuts across to the back of the garage. Beeps the door open. Opens it. Something moves. She catches it too late--*

*A man in a BLACK HOODIE charges forward-- a TASER extended-- Liz turns-- he catches her in the neck-- WHAP-- down she goes.*

INT. MONICA BOX

MONICA

So, he got you with that taser thing too?

Liz pulls her empty holster off her belt.

LIZ

Yeah.

MONICA

The same guy?

LIZ

Sounds like it.

MONICA

I don't understand. This doesn't make sense.

LIZ

(looks at her)  
I think I was meant to find you.

MONICA

What? Why?

She uses the leather to snag the wire.

LIZ

I don't know yet. We can figure it out later. Keep the light on here.

Monica focuses the flashlight.

MONICA

What are you trying to do?

Liz puts her weight into it, uses the leather holster to snag the wire. She pulls. The WOODEN PANEL INCHES away!

MONICA

Oh my God...

LIZ  
Keep the light here.

Liz digs with her hands. Pulls the wire again. The wooden panel screeches loose. Pulls back. Dirt rolls in around the opening.

MONICA  
It's caving in.

LIZ  
Keep the fucking light still!

MONICA  
Hey! I'm scared to death here!  
I don't wanna be buried alive!

Liz looks at her. They share a moment.

LIZ  
I'm sorry. I'm sorry I snapped.

MONICA  
I'm just... I'm scared, ya know?

LIZ  
You're going to be okay. We're going to get out of here. Help me.

Monica helps dig the dirt back. Liz pulls on the wire. The panel opens up four more inches. Enough for Liz to get her fingers in. She snags the panel and pulls.

It comes free! Plows up dirt.

Liz wrestles the panel out of the way. Digs at the wall of soil. It suddenly collapses!

Reveals another wooden wall, the size of the panel, with a small tight HUMAN SIZED passageway in the middle.

MONICA  
Oh, man.

Liz shines the light in.

INT. PASSAGEWAY

The connecting shaft leads off into darkness. Wooden sides, top and bottom. Filthy, grimy, the light only goes so far.

INT. MONICA BOX

LIZ  
You ready?

MONICA  
No way, I can't do that.

LIZ  
You wanna stay here?

Monica shies back.

LIZ  
You're gonna be okay.

MONICA  
Stop saying that.  
(then)  
I can't stand tight places.

LIZ  
I can't either. But we don't  
have a choice. Okay?

Liz moves to the opening. Stretches out her arms. With the flashlight, she eases into the passageway.

Monica watches her inch away. She panics as the darkness descends around her.

MONICA  
Don't leave me.

LIZ  
Come on, follow me.

Monica moves forward, feral terror clawing at her.

INT. THE PASSAGEWAY

Liz scoots, shoulders through the tight fit. Uses the light to keep the way visible.

Monica wedges in behind her, right behind Liz' feet. Her arms stretched out ahead of her.

MONICA  
It's too small.

LIZ  
Just touch my shoes, just follow  
me. You can make this.

Monica wedges in, gasping, choking, almost sobbing in  
terror.

MONICA  
Don't let me get stuck.

Liz reaches the end of the passageway. Again, it goes  
down at an angle.

LIZ  
Shit.

MONICA  
What?

LIZ  
It's another tunnel. We're  
going down again.

Liz shines the light into the passageway.

POV TEN FEET DOWN TO YET A BIGGER BOX

No visible feet this time. No signs of life at all.

INT. THE PASSAGEWAY

LIZ  
It's another box.

MONICA  
Oh God, please, I can't do this,  
I can't breathe!

Liz pushes into the hole, snags a splinter. Tears a wicked  
gash on her forearm.

LIZ  
Shit.

MONICA  
What?

LIZ  
I'm good, stay with me.

Bends her body, angles down into this new horror!

LIZ  
Stay with me, Monica, you're  
doing fine.

Monica watches her disappear with the light. Moves to  
the opening.

INT. YET A BIGGER BOX

Liz pulls herself out. Scans the bigger box. Then shines  
the light up.

LIZ  
Come on, I see you. You'll be  
fine. Come on down, I'll help  
you.

INT. THE PASSAGEWAY

Monica slides down the opening. Arms first. Each breath  
coming hard.

INT. YET A BIGGER BOX

Four feet high, six by eight. Wooden sides, roof and  
floor. Liz reaches up and pulls her down the passageway.

Liz helps Monica slither into the room. They both collapse  
to the floor of the box. Dirt and debris drift in around  
them.

Monica rolls to her side, almost choking. Trying to catch  
her breath.

MONICA  
Oh God.

LIZ  
Come on, stay with me.

MONICA  
I can't.

LIZ  
Sit up, come on, relax.

Monica does her best to relax. Her breathing gets easier.  
Finds her breath coming slower.

Both women, smeared in dirt, grime and sweat.

Monica spots the blood on Liz's arm.

MONICA

You're hurt!

LIZ

It's nothing, I'm alright. I'm fine.

Liz scans the walls with the light, looking for the next way out. She hits the walls with the flat of her hand.

LIZ

Whoever's behind this has gone to an awful lot of trouble.

And sure enough, there it is, half way up the wall. A pre-cut panel that moves a hair. Same as the others, human sized.

She digs at it. It moves some more. Monica scoots up closer.

MONICA

I gotta tell you.

LIZ

What?

MONICA

My asthma gets worse.

Liz hands her the flashlight. Monica takes it.

LIZ

Try not to think about it.

Liz gets her wallet. Uses the badge to score the cut area in the wooden panel. Digs in, pries the panel loose.

LIZ

Just keep the light steady, okay? Try to stay calm.

Using her badge, the panel comes loose. Liz digs her fingers in. Pops it off, leaving a solid mass of packed earth behind it.

MONICA

What do we do now?

LIZ

Somebody wants something. From you or me or both of us. Or maybe we're dealing with a lunatic. Or a psycho.

MONICA

What's the difference?

Liz digs at the packed earth, wet and clumpy.

LIZ

A psycho will kill you because he's crazy. A lunatic will paint his hair blue and torture you before he does it.

Suddenly-- the earth falls away under her hands.

Revealing the top of a man's head! Buried face up. The hair wet and greasy.

LIZ

OH SHIT!

Monica screams. Both women jump back as far as possible.

MONICA

(panic gasping)  
Oh, Jesus, Jesus God.

Monica starts to freak. Liz grabs her. Turns her head away. Monica buries her face on Liz's shoulder.

LIZ

Hold it! No! Shush! No!  
It's okay, it's okay, I'm right here.

Liz looks at the head of hair. Eases forward. Something off center here. Something catching her cold and hard in her gut.

LIZ

Oh, no! No!

She moves forward, digs around the head. Across the top, down the sides, to the shoulders, revealing folded canvas straps. Connected to a harness.

She grabs them and pulls.