

ABBY & MARILYN - CALLBACK SIDE

(MARILYN enters the room. ABBY is reading a book.)

MARILYN: We missed you in the dining room. You should see it down there. They have it all done up for Halloween now. Pumpkins up on the walls, skeletons, black cats. You'd love it.

ABBY: Why would you think that?

MARILYN: They're like classroom decorations. And Mr. Hantz said you used to be a teacher. Grade school, he said. I don't know how he got it out of ya, you won't tell me anything.

ABBY: *(Looks to the windowsill)* My plants are droopy.

MARILYN: But teacher makes sense. I can picture it. I bet you were very stern with the children. I was an office manager. In my husband's business. Did I mention he was a skydiving instructor?

ABBY: Several times.

MARILYN: We were based down at Alexandria field. I could tell you some stories, boy. My children run the business now. They're good kids. And they'd do anything for me. *(beat)* Did you hear that Mrs. Moore died? Poor thing. Went in her sleep. Such a nice woman.

ABBY: Such a nice room.

MARILYN: Room?

ABBY: It's too bad she's dead, but silver linings, right?

MARILYN: How do you mean?

ABBY: That room is prime real estate in this place. First floor—
Between the mailboxes and the day room. Less walking, more space.

MARILYN: Are you thinking of changing rooms?

ABBY: What? No, I'm not thinking of changing rooms.

MARILYN: Oh, you sound so enamored of it.

ABBY: I'm not. I only mentioned because I thought you might want it.

MARILYN: Oh no, I'm perfectly happy where I am. There's much more sunlight up here.

ABBY: No there isn't.

MARILYN: *(looks out the window)* Sure there is, we don't have that building blocking our view like they do downstairs. And I can see the park from up here. There's your bench where you like to sit and read. It's a lovely view.

ABBY: I guess I've never noticed.

MARILYN: Well, that's a waste, with you so close to the window. Maybe you'd like to swap beds.

ABBY: I would not.

MARILYN: No, I don't blame you. It's the nicest spot in the room. *(Takes a child's picture from her dresser.)* Did I show you this? My grandson made it for me. Caleb. So sweet. Do you know what it is?

ABBY: A pap smear?

MARILYN: It's a fire truck.

ABBY: I don't see it.

MARILYN: He loves fire trucks. Ambulances too. Anything with a siren. He can hear one from blocks away. He gets this big grin, and flies to the window to see them pass by. They make him so happy.

ABBY: That's so creepy.

MARILYN: Creepy?

ABBY: Those sirens are blaring because people are dying.

MARILYN: *(Chuckles)* Now come / on.

ABBY: They are. Or their homes are going up in flames. Or there's a car accident, or some old man is falling down the stairs. That's what those sirens mean. People in pain.

MARILYN: Caleb doesn't know any of that. It's just a fire truck to him.

ABBY: Well, when you've heard as many sirens as I have . . . They're nothing to be happy about. Is he alright? In the head I mean, or is he a little . . .

MARILYN: What kind of question is that?

ABBY: Well if he's chasing after fire trucks, you have to wonder. My son never did that. Normal boys don't do that.

MARILYN: Of course they do. You're just trying to get a rise out of me. *(Pause)* So you have a son, huh? What's his name?

ABBY: Barbara.