

DIANE FARR

sc 2 of 2

1.

EXT. NATIONAL ZOO - ENTRANCE - MORNING - FLASHBACK

A BRONZE LION looks to the heavens as it guards the entrance to the SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL ZOO. TILT DOWN as --

DIANE FARR approaches the front gate where PETER waits for her, RIGHT ARM in a SLING, SCRATCHES on his face, still healing a week after the subway bombing.

START

FARR
Peter? Diane Farr.

PETER
Nice to meet you, ma'am.

FARR
Farr is fine. Looking good all things considered.

PETER
Could've been worse.

FARR
It certainly could've... Shall we?

EXT. NATIONAL ZOO - WALKWAY - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Empty besides Peter and Farr. As they pass animals --

FARR
Appreciate you meeting me here. The animals keep my morning walks spicy.

As they walk past a family of ZEBRAS --

PETER
Last time I was here was twenty years ago with my mom and dad. Spent the whole time arguing about which zoo animal we'd rather be.

FARR
And what'd you pick?

PETER
Lion. Basic, I know, but I used to get beat up a lot back then...
(beat)
On the phone, you said you had an opportunity for me?

FARR
Have you ever heard of Night Action?
(off Peter -- clearly not)
Good. You shouldn't have. Night Action is a Special Investigation Program within the FBI.

PETER
What do they investigate?

FARR

I don't know. It's not my business to know. I suppose it varies. All I do know is that it involves matters of national security. Top secret, eyes only. For their safety, the agents' identities are completely anonymous. We refer to them simply as Night Agents.

PETER

I don't understand... You're asking me to be a Night Agent?

FARR

God, no, sorry. I want you to answer the phone for them.

PETER

What?

FARR

There's a secure emergency line in the basement of the White House. Officially, it's a redundancy, in case the FBI needs to contact the President and other methods are compromised.

(as Peter processes)

In actuality, if shit ever hits the fan, a Night Agent can call that line for help, pass along a final message, whatever. I want you to be the agent on the receiving end of that call. Well, one of the agents.

(beat)

You'd answer to Deputy Director Hawkins and to me. It's a dual-role. FBI and White House.

PETER

So I'd be a glorified 911 dispatcher?

Farr leads them to --

EXT. NATIONAL ZOO - GREAT CATS EXHIBIT - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

They enter. A ZOOKEEPER feeds TWO LIONS in their enclosure.

FARR

The phone rarely rings.

PETER

So I just sit at a desk all day?

FARR

All night, actually. The opening is for the 8PM to 4AM shift.

(MORE)

FARR (CONT'D)

There's analysis to be done while you're there. Less classified things so you have something to do --

PETER

-- While waiting for the phone not to ring.

As Farr talks, CLOSE ON the Zookeeper, throwing RED MEAT to the lions. They devour it -- famished.

FARR

It isn't sexy, but it is important. We need someone hardworking, trustworthy, loyal. Someone who does what's asked of them... who knows how to step up, like you did on that subway car.

PETER

Feels like a demotion.

FARR

It shouldn't. You'd be working in the White House, around the real decision makers. And people who work the phone have their pick of assignments afterwards, wherever they want. Or you can keep grinding in surveillance, and hope someone in the FBI bureaucracy gives you a shot someday -- despite your infamous name. Seems like a pretty clear choice to me.

PETER

(considers, a long beat)
And if I'm interested?

Farr smiles. As The Zookeeper finishes feeding the lions --

FARR

You gave the wrong answer by the way. Before. In the wild, sure, lion -- powerful, majestic, all that shit. But in here, they're basically giant tabby cats. In here, there's only one creature I'd wanna be.

PETER

Which one?

FARR

The one who decides when these lions sleep, what they eat, who they fuck.

Farr nods to THE ZOOKEEPER as she exits the enclosure, locking the door behind her.

END

FARR (CONT'D)
The bitch with all the keys...
(beat)
Welcome to the White House, Peter.