

THE RUNNING

by

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CONTINUED:

BLOOD pours from Ruce's nose and mouth. The two guards finally pry Kennedy from Ruce and drag him to the side. Ruce lies, motionless.

GUARD #1
(to driver)
Get to a hospital!

EXT. RUCE HOME - NIGHT

Saunders exits his car. He looks at the house, taking a deep breath. He reaches the house and rings the doorbell. We see the door open and close.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON TELEVISION

Hilton Essex. A press conference in progress.

ESSEX
...And a full investigation is under way.

REPORTER #1
Mr. Essex, do you have any reason to believe the death of James Ruce was something **other than** an unfortunate accident?

ESSEX
No. But we are following proper protocol in view of the fact that Mr. Ruce was in police custody at the time of his death...

CUT TO:

INT. RUCE HOME - DAY

Jaime watches the TV, then SNAPS it off. She hasn't slept; she has been crying. Her tablet next to her; website HEADLINES: "Essex on track for D.A. position..." A few more mentioning Essex MOVE PAST us until "Ruce death a tragic accident, Essex asserts..."

Jaime pulls out her cell phone.

CLOSE ON PHONE

20 messages

(CONTINUED)

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Jaime pushes "delete all." She reaches around her neck and holds onto the heart locket.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Ruce's funeral. MOURNERS pay respects to Jaime. The PREACHER closes his bible. Essex and Clinton watch from the outskirts. Saunders puts an arm around Jaime. She looks up and notices Essex. Their eyes meet.

JAIME

Hey! What are you doing here?

Essex looks away and starts to leave. Jaime goes after him and grabs his arm.

JAIME (CONT'D)

Goddamn you! It's all your fault! How dare you come here!

ESSEX

Miss Ruce. I'm very sorry for your loss --

JAIME

You don't know how sorry you're gonna be!

Saunders reaches them. Essex extracts himself and moves away. Jaime continues SHOUTING after him.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Essex driving, pulls up a well-manicured driveway. He SCREECHES to a stop.

Jaime, with a sledgehammer, busting windows, planters, anything in her path to bits.

ESSEX

What the hell do you think you're doing!?
You can't do this --

JAIME

Just watch me!

She continues. Essex tries to wrest the hammer from her. She yanks it away. The momentum carries over until she STRIKES Essex in the shoulder. He crumbles to the ground. Jaime stops. Sees Essex lying; writhing in pain.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Jaime's already there. Saunders enters and sits.

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SAUNDERS

He's going to be laid up for a week or so
but should recover.

Saunders opens his briefcase. Pulls out letters and several
thumb drives.

SAUNDERS (CONT'D)

Did you send these to him?

Jaime can only nod.

SAUNDERS (CONT'D)

These constitute harassment. Along with
the assault, you are in some big trouble.

JAIME

But I was only trying to let him know
what a scumbag he is. And then he tries
to say my father's death was a "tragic
accident" --

SAUNDERS

It **was** a tragic accident. The man who
caused your father's death had a
seizure --

JAIME

But --

SAUNDERS

He **accidentally** killed your father,
Jaime. How could that possibly be Essex's
fault?

JAIME

(beat)
What's going to happen to me?

SAUNDERS

I explained how distraught you were over
your father's death and not responsible
for your actions. Essex agreed not to
press charges.

JAIME

Oh, thank God --

SAUNDERS

Under the condition that you check
yourself into a psychiatric hospital for
treatment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAIME

What?

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI - MOVING - DAY

Jaime watches the scenery move past her until the taxi pulls up a driveway leading to a institutional building. It stops at the entrance.

SAUNDERS (V.O.)

You avoid a criminal record...

EXT. DETROIT PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY - ESTABLISHING

SAUNDERS (V.O.)

And it appears that you're trying to get help -- voluntarily...

INT. DETROIT PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

Jaime shown her sparsely decorated room by a NURSE. Jaime signs papers. The nurse checks Jaime's belongings; removes things perceived as dangerous.

SAUNDERS (V.O.)

Your records will be sealed. As long as you comply...

INT. DETROIT PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - COMMON ROOM - DAY

Jaime follows the nurse into a room where other PATIENTS mingle. A few other NURSES and a DOCTOR stand behind the nurse's station.

SAUNDERS (V.O.)

It's the only way, Jaime. Otherwise, I guarantee you **will** do jail time.

An African-American MAN, RUNNY SINCLAIR (60s), jet-black hair with a shock of white, wearing foundation makeup and eye liner, executes a little turn showing off a makeshift costume - complete with pantaloons. He moves to Jaime and bows.

RUNNY

"I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir. But what in faith make you from Wittenberg?"

JAIME

I beg your pardon?

DR. McCLAIN, the hospital's attending physician, approaches.

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CONTINUED:

DR. MCCLAIN

Now, Runny. It's Miss Ruce's first day here. She isn't as well versed as you. Leave her be.

Runny doesn't budge.

RUNNY

"But what in faith make you from Wittenberg?"

DR. MCCLAIN

Runny --

JAIME

"A truant disposition, good my lord."

RUNNY

"...And whatever else shall hap tonight..."

JAIME

"...Give it an understanding but no tongue."

Runny gives a hearty laugh and moves away. On his way out, he bends over and picks up some lint and threads from the floor. Puts them in his pocket. Dr. McClain looks back and forth from Jaime to Runny, impressed.

JAIME (CONT'D)

(watching Runny; beat)

Was there something you wanted from me, Doctor...?

DR. MCCLAIN

McClain. I wanted to welcome you. Follow the rules and we'll all get along fine. You have sessions with me every day at one p.m., and are to participate in the group and occupational therapy. The meal and medication schedule will be explained by the charge nurse. Any questions?

JAIME

When do I get to go home?

DR. MCCLAIN

You agreed to let us decide that.

He leaves. Jaime looks around her. Most of the patients are either catatonic or manic.

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CONTINUED: (2)

She lowers her head into her hands. When she looks up, Runny stands in the doorway, watching.

INT. DETROIT PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

A television plays some insipid sitcom while patients pretty much ignore the world around them. Runny turns the channel to PBS. Olivier's version of "Hamlet" is on. Runny settles close to the screen. One of the patients, a tall, SCRUFFY-TYPE, turns it back to the sitcom. Runny changes it back to Hamlet.

SCRUFFY

I was watching that.

RUNNY

"Men at some time are masters of their fates."

SCRUFFY

Fuck off, crazy motherfucker.

He goes back to the television. Runny moves to him. Scruffy grabs him around the neck. Runny struggles but is no match. Jaime reaches them and tries to pull Scruffy's hands off Runny's neck. She WHACKS Scruffy in the balls and he crumbles; Jaime jumping on top of him. Two ORDERLIES rush up and drag Jaime and Scruffy away.

RUNNY

(gasping for air)

What are you doing? She was helping me!

ORDERLY #1

You know the rules, Sinclair. Isolation for any fighting.

Jaime, struggling is placed into...

INT. ISOLATION ROOM - NIGHT

The door shuts on a bare room. Jaime pounds on the door, then sinks to the floor. A pause, then we HEAR a sliding noise.

ANGLE - DOOR

Something is pushed underneath. Jaime picks it up.

CLOSE ON OBJECT

An unusual bronze coin with an intricate profile of a Romanesque face.

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