

Jack &
Jill

Phase 9
Part 20

This will be my last entry in this diary, which was given to me four years ago by Dr. Mason. I hope the Platinum Star members will find it enlightening.

For the first time, I will be completely honest. I want to talk about what I've learned— both about this island and about myself.

Enjoy, Davis... you motherfucker.



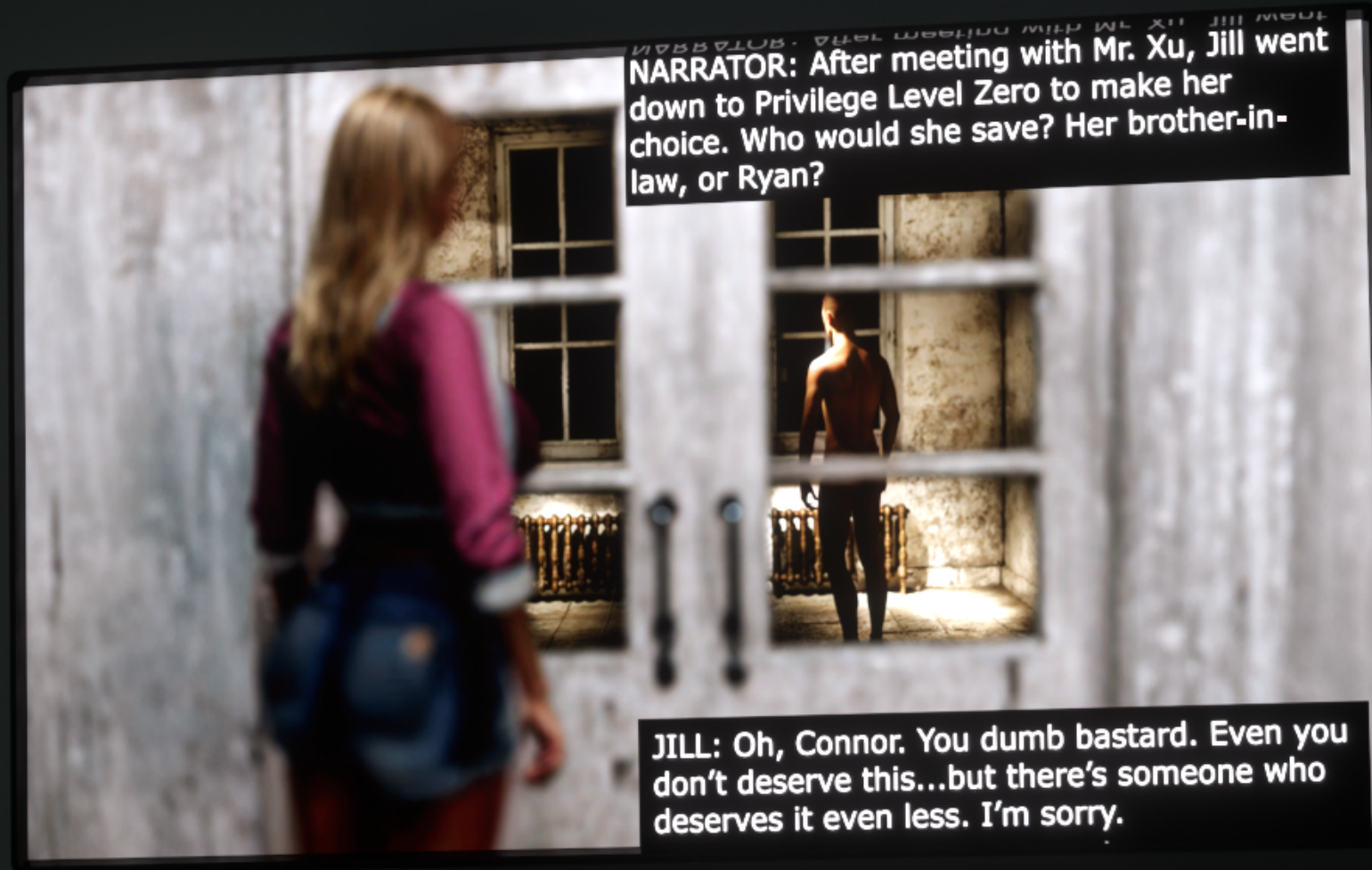
Four years ago, Jack Larson died in the Pacific Ocean. At least, that's what the obituary said. Holly showed me it once, years ago. The truth is, he didn't drown that day—he dissolved, slowly, one molecule at a time. Some days I still feel him, like a phantom limb. Other days, he feels like an old friend who moved far away, unreachable except by memory.

But that doesn't make me special. Nobody is the same person they were four years ago. We're all dissolving, all changing, all becoming someone new. Every conversation, every triumph, every heartbreak rearranges something fundamental within us. The only difference is that I was forced to name this new self, to acknowledge the transition. Everyone else gets to maintain the fiction that they're the same person who began the story, even as the pages turn, even as their beliefs shift, their bodies change, their priorities transform.

They hold onto their names like anchors, never admitting the current has carried them somewhere entirely new.

They say power reveals character. But so does powerlessness. Strip away someone's freedom, their identity, their future, and what remains tells you everything. I've seen people break completely. I've seen them become monsters, turning on others weaker than themselves.





NARRATOR: After meeting with Mr. Xu, Jill went down to Privilege Level Zero to make her choice. Who would she save? Her brother-in-law, or Ryan?

JILL: Oh, Connor. You dumb bastard. Even you don't deserve this...but there's someone who deserves it even less. I'm sorry.

But I've also witnessed moments of staggering courage. Kindness that has no business existing in a place like this. Small acts of defiance that risk everything. It's strange to discover your own strength in your most vulnerable moment, to understand that no matter how much they reshape your body or rewrite your story, there's something at your core they can never touch. Some stubborn spark of self that refuses to be extinguished.

That's what men like Mr. Davis fear. Not our resistance, but our resilience. Not our anger, but our capacity to remain human despite everything they've done to prove we aren't.





Truth is a curious thing in a world built on lies. It doesn't matter how loudly you shout it—people hear only what they're prepared to believe. I used to think that if the world knew what was happening on this island, everything would change overnight. Armies would come. Justice would follow. But now I understand power's greatest trick: making the inconceivable sound impossible.

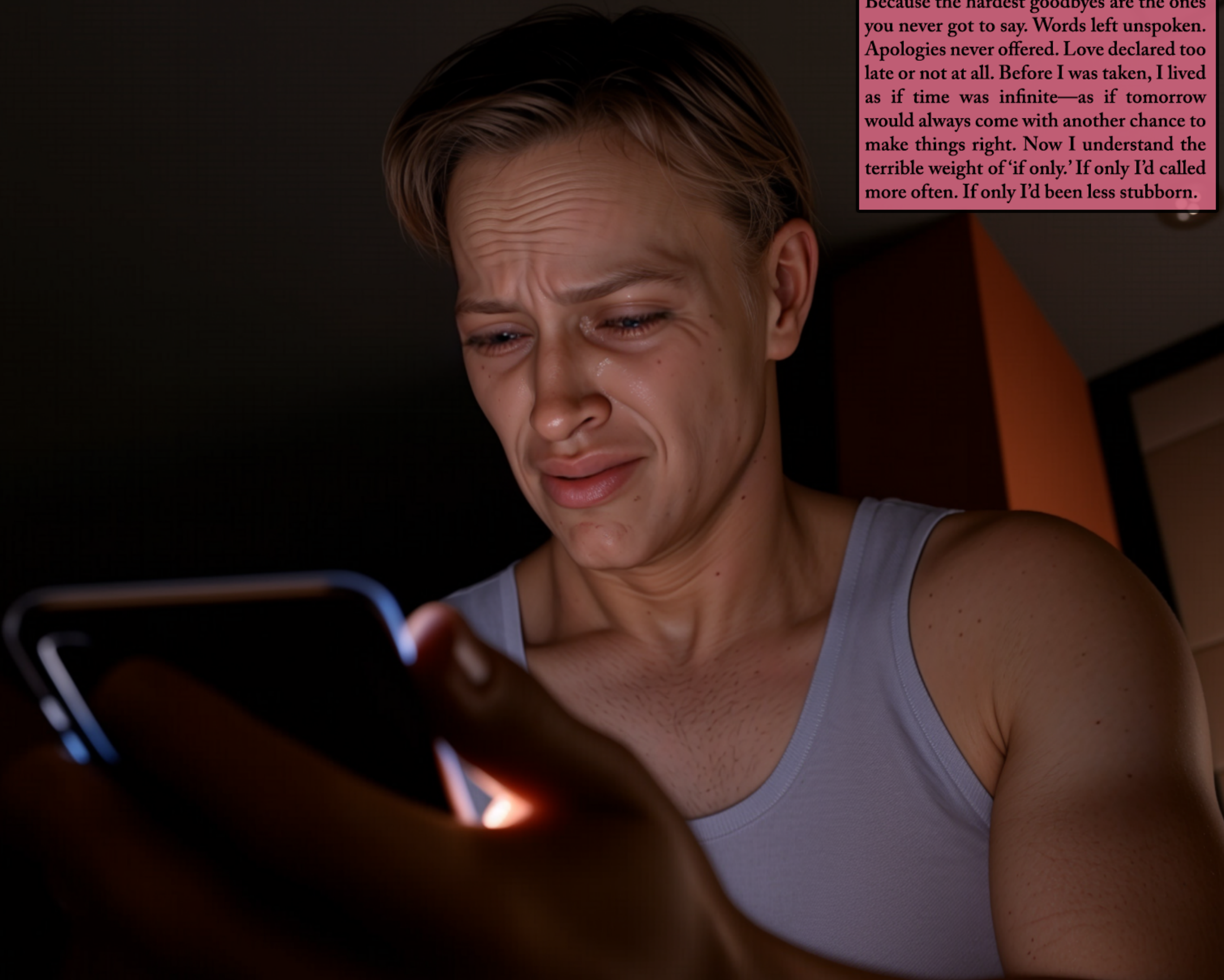
~~ABC7~~
~~LAPD~~
~~FBI~~
~~Project POLARIS~~
~~INTERPOL~~
amnesty international
CIA??

The truth won't set you free if no one will listen. It just becomes another burden you carry alone, another ghost that keeps you awake at night, whispering 'do something' when there's nothing left to do.

Memory is the most persistent form of love. Long after everything else has been taken—names changed, bodies transformed, futures rewritten—it's the memories that haunt me. A sunset on Malibu Beach. The smell of Mom's perfume. The sound of laughter around a dinner table when we were still whole. These fragments became sacred relics of a life that no longer exists. I carry them like stones in my pocket, reaching for them in quiet moments, turning them over and over until their edges soften. And I wonder if those who shared these memories still hold them as tightly, or if I've already been forgotten.



Because the hardest goodbyes are the ones you never got to say. Words left unspoken. Apologies never offered. Love declared too late or not at all. Before I was taken, I lived as if time was infinite—as if tomorrow would always come with another chance to make things right. Now I understand the terrible weight of 'if only.' If only I'd called more often. If only I'd been less stubborn.

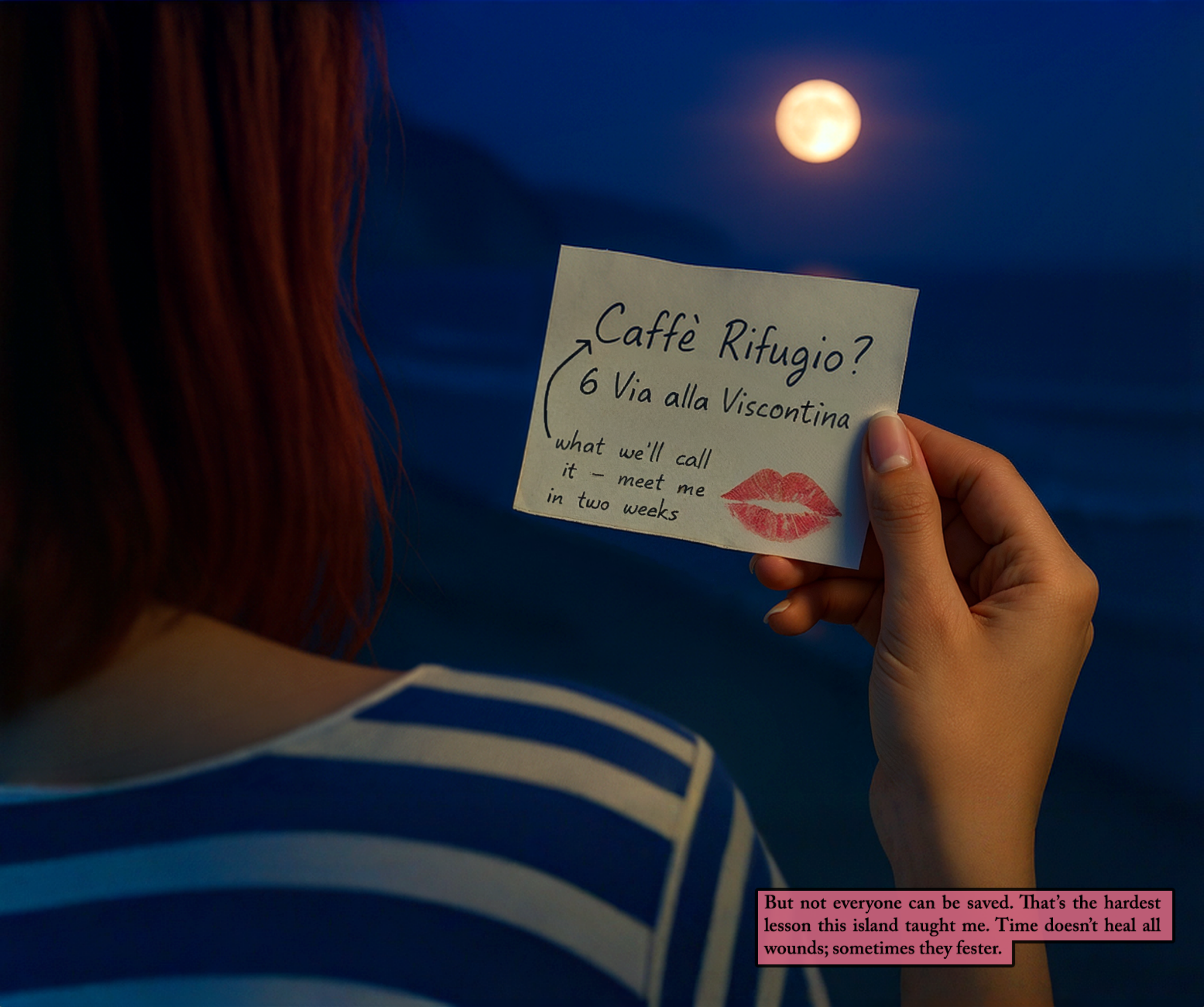




If only I'd known our last argument would truly be our last.


We all tell ourselves stories about the future: about escape, about redemption, about the lives we might lead if given the chance. These fragile, desperate, ridiculous possibilities keep us going when nothing else will.



A person with long, vibrant red hair is seen from behind, wearing a blue and white striped shirt. They are holding a small, rectangular piece of paper with handwritten text. The background is a deep blue night sky with a bright, glowing full moon. The note has a red lipstick smudge on it.

Caffè Rifugio?
6 Via alla Viscontina
what we'll call
it - meet me
in two weeks

But not everyone can be saved. That's the hardest lesson this island taught me. Time doesn't heal all wounds; sometimes they fester.



Thank you for trying
Love, Holly



Alla fine del gioco,
re e pedone finiscono
nella stessa scatola

We talk about escape as if freedom is just a matter of geography, as if crossing enough water could wash away what's been done to us. But the truth is that some cages follow you. Some doors, once opened, can never be closed.

The body remembers things the mind tries to forget. Beneath conscious thought, beneath “identity,” beneath all our careful labels, there’s a language of desire. When everything familiar is stripped away — your name, your form, your future — what remains isn’t just the essence of who you were, but possibilities you never imagined existed within you.





We think of desire as something fixed, unchanging, a constant star to navigate by. But desire is a river, not a star. It shifts course when landscapes transform. It finds new channels when old paths are dammed. The miracle isn't just surviving change, but discovering how change reveals parts of yourself that always existed, dormant and waiting. The body I never asked for has taught me things about pleasure I never knew to seek. About hunger I never knew to name.

There's a specific intimacy that exists only between those who've shared a certain sort of darkness. A recognition that passes without words. We become fluent in one another's silences, experts in the geography of each other's pain. And in that space between shared wounds, something amazing blooms. Not despite the damage, but because of it. Not to erase what was taken, but to create something that couldn't have existed before. Something that belongs only to *us*. Something they never intended but can't take away.



JOEY'S RM

CAMERA
ON/OFF



The most dangerous people aren't those who've never known pain, but those who learned its lessons too well.



What do we become when our bodies are made battlegrounds? When our flesh is carved to match someone else's vision? Some break. Some adapt. And some transform that violation into purpose — a terrible, focused clarity that reshapes the world. They create systems to contain their rage, philosophies to justify their actions, empires built on the foundation of a single, unhealed wound. A wound that whispers: *never again will I be the one without control.*



We're all prisoners of history — our own, and others'. Trapped in cycles we didn't create but perpetuate anyway. The child who was silenced becomes the adult who demands. The one who was unmade rebuilds themselves by unmaking others. And so the pattern continues, generation after generation, each believing they've broken free when they've only reversed the roles. Until someone finds the courage to absorb that pain without passing it on. Until someone says: *this ends with me.*

Back when she was my handler, Holly used to ask me what I missed most about surfing. She expected me to talk about the rush of riding a perfect wave, that moment of weightlessness when you're suspended between sky and sea. But it was never really about the waves for me. It was about the waiting.


I'd paddle out before dawn, when the beach was empty and the water was still dark with night. I'd sit on my board, legs dangling in the cold Pacific, and just... exist. No expectations. No performance. Just breathing with the ocean as it breathed with me.

There was always this moment, just before sunrise, when the world seemed to hold its breath. When everything went so perfectly still that I'd wonder — just for a crazy, impossible second — if maybe this time the sun *wouldn't* rise. If maybe this time the dark would win.

But the sun always came, reliable as heartbeat, painting the water in golds and pinks that made me believe in something greater than myself.

Those were the good old days.





After mom died, that same sunrise made me hate how everything just... continued. I hated how the beauty remained when she couldn't see it anymore. The waves kept coming. The world kept turning while ours had shattered. Dad retreated into work. Emily buried herself in books. And I sat on that board in the pre-dawn darkness, hoping more than anything that something unfathomable would pull me under.

And my secret shame is that when they took me, when I first realized what was happening, a tiny part of me felt... relief. Like now the waiting was over. Like now, finally, the world had acknowledged what I'd known since we scattered her ashes at sea – that nothing would ever be the same again. That nothing could ever be fixed. That nothing I did mattered.

My father's last words to me before I stormed out were that I needed to "grow some balls and become a man." The universe has a sick sense of humor sometimes.

I spent years drifting, chasing meaningless hookups and perfect waves, pretending I was free when really I was just... waiting. For what, I couldn't have told you. Maybe for something that would hurt enough to make me feel alive again. Maybe for something that would finally pull me under for good.

Instead, I got Second Dawn. I got Xu and Davis and Mason. I got hormones and surgeries and a new name and a new body. I got unmade and remade in someone else's image.



But here's the strange part: in being forced to become someone else, I found the person under all the labels. The one who survived. The one who adapted. The one who found strength where there should have been only dissolution.

I look at my reflection and see someone my mother never knew, someone my father wouldn't recognize. But I see someone who – I hope... I *believe* – would make them both proud. Someone who refused to let the dark win, even when the waves threatened to pull her under.

The sun is rising over the island now, painting everything in golds and pinks. Today is the Coming Out dinner. Today all the games and manipulations come to a head. Today is when I fight not just for myself, but for Ryan, for Adileh, for Nicholas, for all of them.

I'm not waiting anymore. I'm not drifting. The waves are coming, and this time, I'll be the dawn.